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Tallahassee library organized in 1883

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



TALLAHASSEE LIBRARY ORGANIZED IN 1883

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TALLAHASSEE --- David Shelby Walker, who served as Florida's eighth Governor, from 1865 to 1868, was a man who believed in education and pioneered in many ways to bring opportunities to his neighbors. A lasting recognition of that effort is the Walker Library at East Park Avenue and Calhoun Street here in the capital city.

Walker organized this private library in 1883. It was housed in the present building and has been open to the public continuously since then. It is a boxlike red brick building, its main entrance flanked by two white stucco columns with red Corinthian capitals.

Besides a goodly selection of volumes on its shelves, the Walker Library also exhibits mementoes of Prince Achille Murat, a kinsman of Napoleon Bonaparte who was a popular citizen of this area. There are other interesting displays, including relics connected with Hernando DeSoto's march through Tallahassee.

A native of Kentucky, Walker came to Tallahassee in 1837 and began the practice of law. He was active in everything and soon got involved in politics, being elected to the very first Legislature after Florida became a state in 1845. He served, as Senator from Leon and Wakulla counties.

For a period, Walker was the Registrar, of Public Lands, whose duties included that of being State School Superintendent. He pushed for public schools and in the capital city a tax-supported free school resulted from his efforts.

Walker also served as Tallahassee Mayor and as a Supreme Court Justice.

