Have you not hard of floryda?

[Anonymous]
Anonymous, Have You Not Hard of Floryda?

One of the earliest poetic references to Florida appears in an anonymous and undated ballad, entitled “the preme Rose in the grene forest.” Other stanzas, probably written in the sixteenth century, make no reference to the Americas, and in this short section, the balladeer clearly alludes as much to Renaissance conceits of the Golden Age as to the physical place that was the Americas. The refrain that closes the third stanza, editors Pennington and Northrup note, was probably to be repeated with each verse. Spelling has been left unchanged from the manuscript, which is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, although the editors did add punctuation. “Have You Not Hard of Floryda” yet awaits adaptation and performance by contemporary musicians.

— Abraham Ortelius, La Florida (George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida)


And as I walked toward s poles

I met a frend of myne,

Who toke [me] by the hand and sayde,

"Com drynk a pynt of wyne,

Wher you shall here

Such news, I fere,

As you abrode wyll compell.

with hy!

"Have you not hard of floryda,

A coontre far bewest,

Where savage pepell planted are

By nature and by hest,

Who in the mold

Fynd glysterynge gold
and yt for tryfels sell?

with hy!

“Ye all alonge the watere side,
Where yt doth eb and flowe,
Are turkeyse founde and where also
Do perles in oysteres growe,
And on the land
Do cedars stand
Whose bewty do[th] excel.

with hy!

trysk, trym, go trysk, wun not a wallet do well?

“The prymerose in the greene forest,
The vyolets the grow gaye,
The Dubbell Dayses with the rest
So merryly deks the waye
To moove my Sprytes
Through fond delyghts
Lyke pretty wons as the be.

with hy!

“The sweete record, the ntyngale,
The leveret and the thrushe,
Which whyps & skyps & wages there tales
From every bank to busshe
And chyrpyngly
Do pas the day
Like prety wond as the be.

"Have over the water to floryda,
Farewell, gay lundon, nowe,
Throw long deles by land and sese,
I am brawght, I cannot tell howe,
To plymwoorthe towne
In a thredbare goowne
and mony never Dele
with hy!
wunnot a wallet do well?

"When Aprell sylver showers so sweet
Can make may flowers to sprynge
And every pretty byrd prepars
Her wystlyng throte to synge,
The nyghtyngale
In every Dale
They doth ther duty well.

with hy!”