DAN McCARTY'S IS "A LIVING MONUMENT"

By HAMPTON DUNN

FORT PIERCE --- It is appropriate that a memorial to the late Dan McCarty, Governor of Florida for an all-too-brief 10 months in 1953, should be a "living" monument. Such is the beautifully landscaped Dan McCarty Highway on that 15-mile stretch of U.S. 1 between his home town here in Fort Pierce and Vero Beach.

McCarty was a grower and planter himself. He was a soldier, a statesman, a civic worker, a family man, all these and more. He had run for the highest office in the state in 1948 and was defeated by Fuller Warren. The next time around in 1952, McCarty was elected. Inaugurated in January, 1953, the native Floridian served actively only a few weeks; he suffered a disabling heart attack on Feb. 25 that year, and died Sept. 28, 1953. He was only 41 years old.

A close friend of Governor McCarty and of other Governors and politicians in the state was the late Fred Mahan, a nurseryman in Monticello. He was the developer and owner of the Mahan pecan. Mahan made many contributions to the State, but his most lasting ones were the beautification of the highway between his home town of Monticello and the capital city of. Tallahassee (which was designated "Fred Mahan Drive") and the Dan McCarty Highway on the east coast.

The McCarty memorial was dedicated on Feb. 23, 1956, by his close friend, then Gov. LeRoy Collins. A marker at the Fort Pierce end announces the roadway was dedicated "to one of Florida's favorite sons: Statesman, Valiant Soldier, Governor of Florida."

McCarty was the 31st Governor of the state. A native of Fort Pierce, he was graduated from the University of Florida where he served as president of the Student Body. He was a successful rancher and citrus grower and served St. Lucie County in the Legislature. He was the youngest Speaker of the House of Representatives, a post he held in 1941. McCarty served with distinction as a Colonel in the U.S. Army in France during World War II and was heavily decorated for valor.