

NEW HOPE COMMUNITY HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida



Prepared for



Prepared by



*Special thanks to the New Hope descendants for their
contributions to the Historical Narrative.*

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Prepared for



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Image Credits: (Right) Worker on Welaunee Plantation, 1924: State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory | (Left) Luvenia and Ed Austin, sharecroppers on Welaunee Plantation, 1940: State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory

Executive Summary

This report is a historical survey and narrative that examines the origins and context of the New Hope Community in Tallahassee, Florida. At the direction of the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board (IA Board) in December 2022, Blueprint was charged to provide a comprehensive community study that included: identifying the geographic location of the New Hope Community, consolidating, analyzing, and contextualizing existing archival and historical materials related to the area, documenting families, landmarks, and significant historical events within the community through archival research or oral history, and developing a written history that highlights the historical landscape and cultural contributions of the community.

Organized into three major sections, this report begins with an overview of the cultural and historical context of Northwest Florida, tracing the region's development from its prehistory through the Civil War and Reconstruction eras. The second section addresses the development of the New Hope Community within the framework of the African American Churches in Leon County, the New Hope Plantation, and the Welaunee Hunting Plantation. Particular attention is given to New Hope Plantation, its transformation from an antebellum cotton plantation to tenant farming, then briefly to dairy operations, and finally its absorption into the Welaunee Hunting Plantation in 1929. The final section focuses on the New Hope Community's recent past and status, providing historical context regarding the Testerina Primitive Baptist Church, Tuskeena School, and the New Hope Cemetery.

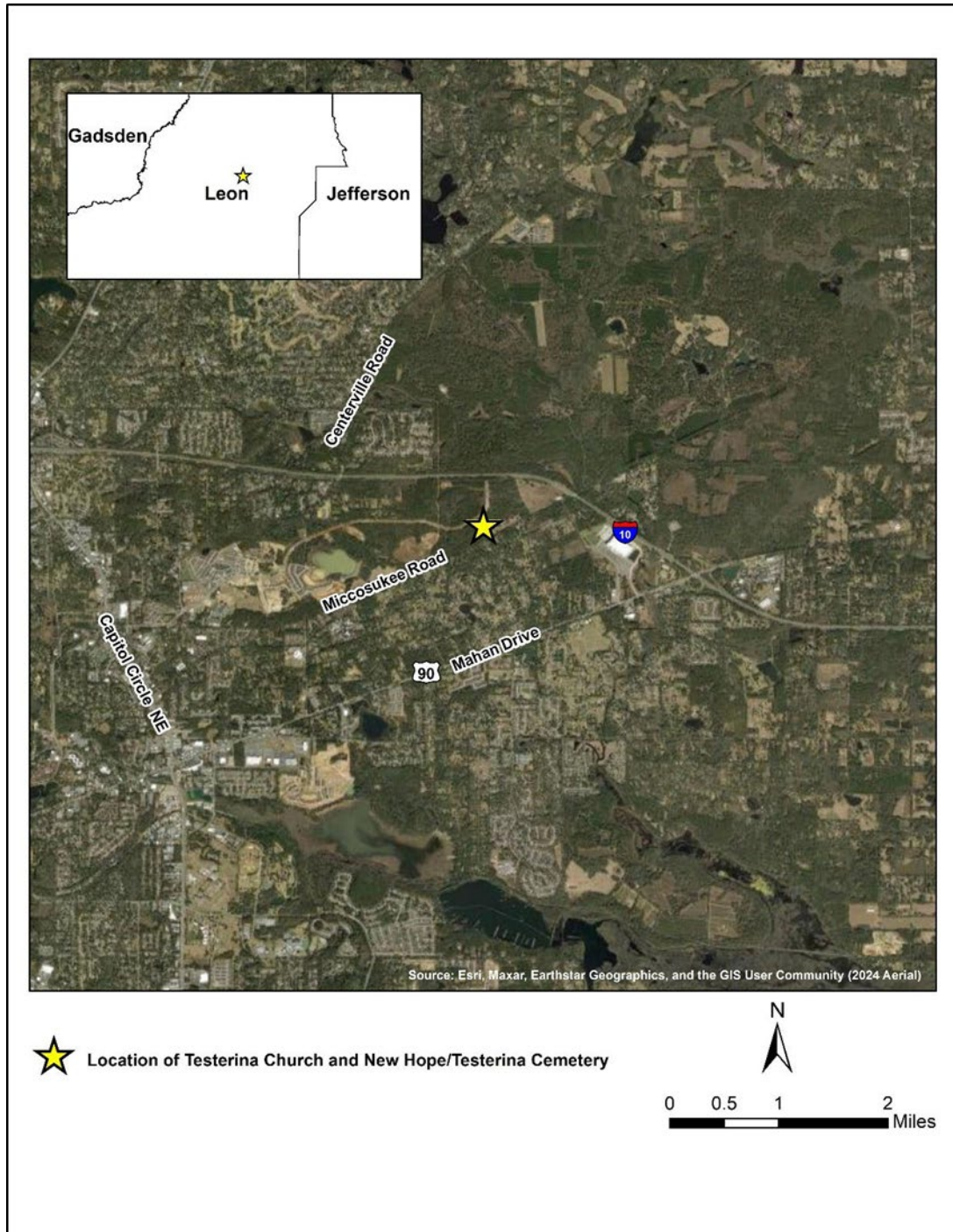
Originally a community of formerly enslaved people – sharecroppers and tenant farmers – “New Hope” likely got its name from the New Hope Plantation, which was a large parcel of land located immediately north of where the Testerina Primitive Baptist Church stands today. Research shows that the New Hope Community was not considered a legally incorporated town or a Census Designated Place (CDP). A CDP is defined as statistical equivalents of incorporated places and represent unincorporated communities that do not have a legally defined boundary or an active, functioning governmental structure. Figure 1 on page 4 shows the location of the Testerina Church and New Hope/Testerina Cemetery reflecting the general location of the New Hope Community.

Despite lacking this formal designation, the New Hope Community held a social and cultural significance to the Tallahassee area. New Hope functioned as a cohesive community defined by shared labor, worship, education, and kinship ties. Testerina Church is both the geographical and spiritual center of what is known as the New Hope Community, a place where people gathered, worshiped, and communed with one another. Tuskeena School, closed in 1951, served the children of New Hope and those in neighboring communities, providing an education for the underserved. Some community members were freed African Americans who may have previously worked on New Hope Plantation. Others were the descendants of enslaved people who may have worked at Welaunee Plantation. Within the New Hope Community, it is likely there were members of other nearby churches on Miccosukee Road, such as Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church or New Zion Primitive Baptist Church.

To compile this report, research efforts were thorough to ensure that every reasonable avenue was explored to find any historical references to a “New Hope Community” in Leon County. Researchers met with New Hope residents and descendants, and these discussions involved sharing of oral histories and questions pertaining to the character of the community as well as any significant landmarks and events. These discussions provided a well-rounded understanding of the New Hope Community and added depth to the historical documents and materials uncovered throughout the project. Two genealogy workshops were held in 2025 to assist community members to undertake personal research to trace their lineage and identify family members who may be buried in the New Hope Cemetery. The workshops were led by Juanita Gaston of the Tallahassee African American Genealogical Society (TAAGS) and attendees learned how to use primary and secondary sources to trace their lineage.

Additional research was conducted onsite at archival institutions, including the State Archives of Florida, John G. Riley Center and Museum, African American Collection at Florida A&M, Meek-Eaton Black Archives Research Center and Museum, and Special Collections and Archives Division of the Florida State University Libraries. This phase of research included locating documents, maps, and photos. Extensive online research, including census data analysis, review of local newspapers, and examination of government documents, such as deeds and bill of sale, further supplemented these efforts. Online archival libraries were heavily utilized, including Florida Memory, US National Archives and Records Administration, and the John G Riley Digital Archives. Exhaustive efforts were made to uncover any information pertaining to the New Hope Community.

As documented in this report, the history of the New Hope Community represents historic- and post-reconstruction-era African American communities. Findings from the report illustrate an important chapter in Leon County’s African American history, highlighting their resilience and impact that spans generations. The descendants of New Hope carry the legacy of those who have passed on, and prior to the start of this historical survey, descendants of the New Hope Community were actively collecting information and oral histories. This survey acknowledges and incorporates the work of the New Hope descendants and their dedicated effort to document and memorialize the New Hope Community. As such, this report is designed to be a living document, and as additional information is uncovered, it will be added to the report in the form of appendices. For example, death records were uncovered after the completion of the body of this Report which may be associated with the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery. An examination of these recently uncovered death records is presented as the first of these additional appendices (Appendix B).



*Figure 1. Aerial view of general project location.
Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community, 2024 aerial*

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Cultural and Historical Context

Cultural Prehistory of Northwest Florida

Understanding the rich prehistory of Northwest Florida requires a careful synthesis of archaeological data spanning millennia. Scholars such as Milanich and Fairbanks (1980), Bense (1994), Tesar (1980), and others have developed comprehensive frameworks that articulate the cultural development of the region from the first Paleoindian arrivals through the early historic periods. These frameworks reveal a sequence of occupation that not only reflects changing environmental conditions but also evolving subsistence strategies, technological innovations, and sociopolitical structures. The chronology from the Paleoindian through the Leon-Jefferson period represents a dynamic cultural landscape that continually responded to both internal and external stimuli.

The Paleoindian period, marking the earliest human presence in Florida, began near the end of the Pleistocene epoch. During this time, sea levels were approximately 59 meters lower than present, and the landscape consisted of xerophytic oak-pine scrub (Milanich 1994:38). Potable water was scarce and likely limited to karst sinkholes (Dunbar 1991:185–213). This environment remained intact until approximately 5,000 years Before Present (B.P.), limiting widespread human settlement (Watts 1975).

Artifacts from the Paleoindian period are predominantly found as surface finds near rivers such as the Suwannee, St. Marks, and Chipola (Milanich 1994). The Suwannee point is the most iconic, described as “slightly waisted...with a concave base” (Bullen 1975:55). The toolkit also included unifacial scrapers, microliths, and bolas. Organic tools and textiles from sites like Little Salt Springs illustrate advanced adaptations using wood, shell, and bone (Clausen et al. 1979; Waller 1976).

Subsistence strategies included a broad range of fauna and flora, indicating a diversified diet rather than exclusive megafauna dependence (Bense 1994:38–47). White-tailed deer, rabbits, opossums, and various fish and shellfish were commonly resourced. Archaeological data suggest that PaleoNative Americans possessed the technological flexibility to respond to diverse environments. Despite the limited number of sites west of the Apalachicola River, it is premature to suggest Paleoindian populations were sparse in this region (Milanich 1994:42).

The Early Archaic period emerged around 9,500 B.P., as rising sea levels began transforming ecosystems. This led to more abundant wetland environments and a shift in settlement patterns. Early Archaic sites appeared in a broader range of locations, signifying increased population and adaptive versatility (Milanich 1994:64). While similar in some ways to the preceding Paleoindian lifestyle, the Early Archaic shows more diversity in material culture, particularly in projectile points like Bolen and Kirk Serrated types.

The Middle Archaic, beginning around 7,000 B.P., was characterized by continued adaptation to increasingly wetter conditions. Larger surface water sources supported more widespread and complex settlements, including base camps and freshwater shell middens (Tesar 1980). Middle

Archaic habitation sites often overlooked lakes, swamps, or sinks and displayed seasonal occupation patterns consistent with a band-level society. These social units were mobile, organized around seasonal rounds of environmental resource use.

Tool technology advanced with heat treatment of lithics, resulting in easier-to-work materials. This process left the stone reddish or bluish in color and improved workability. Diagnostic artifacts included Newnan and Hillsborough points, and to a lesser degree, Alachua, and Marion types. Organic artifacts such as bone pins and fishhooks reflect a continuing reliance on aquatic resources.

By the Late Archaic, around 5,000 B.P., climate conditions had stabilized into a pattern similar to today. This period saw cultural regionalization and greater exploitation of estuarine and freshwater resources. Though fewer Late Archaic sites have been documented in northwest Florida compared to other regions, the significance of wetland ecosystems is evident (Milanich 1994:85). These habitats provided rich and predictable sources of food and raw materials.

Ceramic technology made its first appearance in this period, with fiber-tempered wares like Norwood ceramics prevalent in the region. These ceramics were often tempered with palmetto fibers or Spanish moss. Attempts to distinguish Norwood from the Orange series of East Florida remain inconclusive (Phelps 1965). Satilla ceramics, found in south Georgia, likely represent a related variety.

The Deptford culture (800 BC–700 AD) followed the transitional phase, marked by distinctive check-stamped and simple-stamped ceramics produced using carved paddles (Milanich 1994:111). These ceramics differ significantly from Late Archaic fiber-tempered pottery. Their stylistic consistency allows for temporal subphases and cultural diagnostics (Tesar 1980:680). This visibility contributed to Deptford's early identification in the archaeological record.

Deptford sites include shell middens, burial mounds, and inland middens. Coastal shell middens are commonly situated in live oak-hickory hammocks adjacent to salt marshes. Inland sites, often near springheads and lakes, suggest either intensive inland habitation or secondary exploitation of resources (Milanich 1973; Tesar 1980:78). Each site type reflects differing functions within the cultural landscape.

Burial mounds associated with the Deptford period, such as Yent and Pierce Mounds, reflect increasing ceremonialism. These are linked to the Yent Complex, which includes exotic artifacts such as copper panpipes and stone plummets (Sears 1962). Such artifacts indicate extensive trade and sociopolitical differentiation. The rise of ceremonialism suggests greater social complexity and possibly ranked societies.

The Swift Creek culture (100–800 AD), identifiable by elaborately stamped ceramics with cosmological motifs, followed Deptford and introduced significant artistic innovation. This ceramic style supplemented and eventually replaced Deptford wares, especially during the Late Swift Creek phase when vessel decoration became more limited (Anderson 1998). The stylistic evolution likely corresponds with shifting ritual and sociopolitical roles. Coastal and interior distribution patterns suggest a mix of mobile and more permanent settlement strategies.

Swift Creek communities were involved in wide-ranging trade and ceremonial networks. Inland sites often sit on arable soils, hinting at horticultural practices. Structural remains are rare, especially along the coast, but tools such as manos and metates have been recovered from sites like Block-Sterns. These finds suggest some dependence on cultivated foods, though hunting and gathering remained essential.

Weeden Island culture (500–1000 AD) evolved from Swift Creek traditions and is primarily defined by distinct ceramic styles. Scholars divide Weeden Island into multiple subperiods based on stylistic changes, including the increasing prevalence of Wakulla Check Stamped pottery and the eventual disappearance of complicated stamping (Percy and Brose 1974; Willey 1949). This typology allows finer temporal control over archaeological interpretation. Regional variants developed based on both social and environmental differences.

Settlement patterns continued earlier trends, with sites located near freshwater and estuarine environments. The transition into Wakulla Weeden Island (Weeden Island 4 and 5) involved a greater emphasis on maize agriculture and interior settlement, potentially due to environmental or demographic pressures. Interior settlement may also reflect growing territoriality. Increased burial mound frequency suggests heightened ceremonialism.

Wakulla Weeden Island sites often comprise small villages with nearby burial mounds. The ceramic assemblages here—dominated by Wakulla Check Stamped and Weeden Island Plain—highlight regional variation. Lithics, including Hernando points, turtle-backed scrapers, and quartzite tools, reflect both continuity and innovation (Milanich 1994:203). These small village centers likely reflect kin-based communities with agricultural bases.

The Fort Walton period (1200–1500 AD) marked the regional expression of Middle Mississippian culture. Fort Walton sites, characterized by platform mounds and maize agriculture, expanded along major river valleys, though notable exceptions occurred in lake-oriented systems like those in the Tallahassee Hills (Milanich 1994:356; Scarry 1981). These sites include homesteads, hamlets, and major mound centers. Their density suggests population growth or agricultural intensification.

Fort Walton material culture includes sand-, grog-, and shell-tempered ceramics with incised and punctated designs. Lithics were less prominent, but included small arrow points, celts, and greenstone artifacts. Ornamentation included shell and copper items, reflecting the culture's ceremonial complexity. These artifacts point to continued long-distance trade and ritual engagement.

The final prehistoric period, Leon-Jefferson (1500–1704), reflects the transition of the Apalachee into the early historic era, shaped profoundly by Spanish contact. Settlement patterns continued from the Fort Walton phase, but depopulation and missionization soon transformed village life (Tesar 1980:626). European diseases, forced religious conversion, and political disruption led to cultural decline. These impacts are visible in both material culture and site abandonment.

Early Leon-Jefferson ceramics were well-made, grit-tempered wares, but later examples increasingly incorporated grog and clay. These changes coincide with the arrival of Lamar-influenced pottery from Georgia, supporting theories of population movement and cultural fusion

(Tesar 1980:618). By the Mission Period (A.D. 1633–1704), villages clustered around Spanish churches. Such structural changes signal the end of pre-contact lifeways.

In conclusion, the cultural prehistory of Northwest Florida encapsulates a long trajectory of adaptation and innovation. From early hunter-gatherer communities to maize agriculturalists influenced by Mississippian ideologies, each cultural phase reflects a unique interplay of environment, technology, and intergroup exchange. This archaeological chronology, supported by extensive regional research, offers valuable insights into the resilience and transformation of Native societies in the southeastern United States.

European and African Contact with Native Americans in North Florida and Leon County

The town of Anhaica is believed to have been established around the year 1500. Anhaica was built on the present-day site of Tallahassee as the capital of the Apalachee Province. The historical record indicates that the Apalachee were well known and respected by neighboring groups. The Apalachee province is described as having numerous towns and an abundance of food, and archaeological finds confirm this description. There are many recorded sites dating from the Fort Walton period. The archaeology of the area shows a widespread settlement pattern in which principal towns were surrounded by small villages and individual homesteads. The exact sociopolitical structure of the Apalachee is unclear. Historical narratives suggest that their capital was located at Anhaica, but there may have been an alternate capital at Ivitachuco, which was probably on the Aucilla River. Little information is available about the everyday life of Apalachee. Future archaeological work may one day provide additional information about Apalachee life in the early 16th century and before.

The historical record of Leon County and the project area begins in the early 16th century with Spanish expeditions into Florida. Britain and France also sponsored expeditions to the New World, but their attention would not be directed towards Florida or the panhandle for at least 200 years. The Spanish Crown awarded royal charters (*asientos*) to expedition leaders to regulate these expeditions and assure the Crown a portion of any valuable resources recovered. Juan Ponce de Leon led the first officially chartered voyage in 1513. De Leon's charter directed him to find and claim for Spain the island of Bimini. However, since the Bahamas were known to the Spanish, it is likely that he sought lands that were further north and west. The expedition sighted the Atlantic coast of Florida, just north of Cape Canaveral, during Easter week in 1513. De Leon's expedition continued south along the Atlantic coast to Charlotte Harbor on the Gulf Coast and possibly as far north as Apalachicola. By 1519, Spain had explored enough of Florida to know that it was a peninsula.

Panfilo de Narvaez was granted a royal charter in 1527 to colonize the region north and east of Mexico, around the Gulf of Mexico, and Christianize its people. De Narvaez's expedition presumably never penetrated the interior of the panhandle area. The only archaeological evidence of this expedition comes from two sites in Wakulla County with early 16th century European material. However, it is unclear whether these artifacts were salvaged from shipwrecks, trade items, or associated with the later de Soto expedition (Bense 1994:246; Jones 1993). Hernando de Soto was the next to explore the panhandle during the winter of 1539-1540. After landing at Tampa Bay in May 1539, the expedition continued north to present-day Tallahassee where they

spent the winter at the Anhaica. Calvin Jones identified a portion of Anhaica in the front yard of the Governor Martin House on Lafayette Street in 1987. De Soto sent a scouting party west towards Pensacola. Although de Soto turned his attention to the northwest, the reports of a magnificent bay by his scouting party would influence unsuccessful plans to colonize the Pensacola area by Tristan de Luna y Arrellano in 1559.

A sustained Spanish presence in the area did not occur until a system of missions was built to Christianize the Apalachee, beginning in 1633 with the establishment of Mission San Luis de Apalachee by Franciscan friars Pedro Munoz and Francisco Martinez. This mission was moved to a more strategic location, nearby, in 1656. The new San Luis de Talimali served as the administrative and military capital of the Apalachee missions until 1704.

By 1674 there were 13 operating missions in the province of Apalachee (Hann 1988:32). Spanish desires to proselytize the Apalachee fulfilled religious obligations that stemmed from the reconquest of Spain from the Moors. Secular motives stemmed from the strategic importance of St. Augustine. St. Augustine was in a relatively infertile area and depended heavily on locally produced resources and a chronically unreliable royal subsidy. The establishment of the missions in the fertile Apalachee Province provided a source of foodstuffs and security to St. Augustine (Shapiro 1986:8-9). To help provide security to the area, a wooden stockade, San Marcos de Apalachee, was constructed south of San Luis de Talimali in 1679.

The first enslaved people from Africa arrived in Spanish-controlled Florida in 1526 (Rivers 2000:2). Beginning in 1686, Spanish Florida attracted numerous runaway Black people escaping from slavery in the English colonies. For those converting to Roman Catholicism, Spanish authorities made them freedmen. The decree of Spain's King Charles II of November 7, 1693, made the policy official. This move, however, did not free those enslaved under Spanish governance in Florida – it only applied to those running away from the English. Slavery continued to exist in Spanish Florida until the area was ceded to the United States in 1819. The nation of Spain finally abolished slavery in their last remaining colonies, Puerto Rico and Cuba, in 1873 and 1886, respectively.

The Apalachee mission system flourished in relative peace until 1704, when English Colonel James Moore and Creek allies attacked and brought ruin to the province during Queen Anne's War (1702-1713). Only Mission San Lorenzo de Ivitachuco survived the destruction of Moore's invasion. The Spanish abandoned San Luis and San Lorenzo de Ivitachuco. Apalachee survivors fled to San Marcos de Apalachee, south of present-day Tallahassee, while others escaped to Pensacola or St. Augustine. Moore returned to South Carolina with about 1,300 enslaved Apalachee (Shapiro 1986:9). According to Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, the French governor of Mobile, raids into Florida during this time resulted in the deaths of 2,000 Apalachees and the capture of 32 Spaniards, 17 of whom were burned alive. By the end of 1706, because of Moore's attack and further raids, the Spanish presence in Florida had been reduced to St. Augustine

and Pensacola. The devastating warfare resulted in the Apalachee abandoning their homelands and resettling in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama.

Beginning in the 1730s, Lower Creeks migrated into the former territories of the Apalachee and Timucua in northern Florida. Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose was established in the vicinity

of St. Augustine in 1738. Also known as Fort Mose, it was established by Manuel de Montiano, Spanish governor of Florida, as the first free Black settlement in Florida. The community was a haven for runaways from the English colonies of South Carolina and Georgia. While most free Black people resided in the vicinity of St. Augustine, runaways began moving into the vicinity of present-day Tallahassee during this time, especially along the Apalachicola River, where they built farms with the knowledge they acquired from plantation work.

In 1763 Spain traded Florida to Great Britain for Havana, Cuba, which was captured by the British during the Seven Years War (1756-63). This conflict, also known as the French and Indian War, resulted in a large acquisition of territory in North America by Great Britain.

U.S. Military Intervention in North Florida and the Acquisition of Florida

The colonies of East and West Florida remained loyal to the British crown during the American Revolutionary War, but after the close of the conflict, they were returned to Spanish control in 1783 through the Treaty of Paris. The fledgling United States viewed the Spanish presence in Florida as a threat to its interests in the region. The Gulf of Mexico was a natural boundary between the U.S. and much of Spain's territory in the New World, so American leaders were concerned that an adjacent Spanish presence in Florida compromised the nation's security. Moreover, the lack of control exhibited by the Spanish in Florida was viewed as troublesome by the United States government: Florida was a haven for runaway enslaved people, while British traders and adventurers were believed to be agitating Native American tribes and Black freedmen against U.S. settlers in the region.

During the first Spanish period, the territory was opened in 1704 to fugitive African Americans from British colonies to the north. Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose, three miles north of St. Augustine, was established by the Spanish government as a refuge for runaways in 1739 (Garvin 1967:1). The following year, British colonists lead by James Oglethorpe descended upon St. Augustine, destroying the fort and driving out its inhabitants (Garvin 1967:2). Further to the west, Black immigrants found refuge among a faction of Creek Native Americans called Seminoles, working alongside them and forming settlements along the Apalachicola and Suwannee Rivers (Garvin 1967:2-3).

By the early 19th century, it was estimated that more than 1,000 runaways and free Black people were living among the Native Americans in Florida (Brown 1995a:289). This presence was a great concern to the U.S. government and was, in part, what started the Seminole War of 1817 and 1818 (Wright 1986:202-203). During the First Seminole War, Andrew Jackson descended the Apalachicola River, under presidential approval, to "chastize hostile Native Americans and Negroes and...follow them into their Florida sanctuaries if necessary" (Wright 1986:203). Jackson led a group of Regulars and Georgia militia into Florida, destroying several small villages, inhabited almost entirely by Black people, along the east side of the Apalachicola River (Garvin 1967:4). In the subsequent years following the First Seminole War, a massive influx of white settlers migrated into Florida, pushing the Indian and Black populations deeper into the peninsula and preventing any substantial efforts at re-establishing pre-1816 conditions within the region (Garvin 1967:5). Jackson went on to attack Spanish settlements, capturing forts at St. Marks and Pensacola. Spain began to realize they were unlikely to be able to maintain control of Florida, and

in 1819 they ceded the territory to the United States with the signing of the Adams-Onís Treaty.

Directly following the signing of the Adams-Onís Treaty, Andrew Jackson, newly appointed Provisional Governor of Florida, requested permission from his superiors to attack Red Stick Creeks and free Black people residing along the Peach and Manatee Rivers in April 1821. Secretary of War John C. Calhoun declined Jackson's request and ordered him to take no immediate measures. The raids were undertaken instead by Jackson's Creek allies, William McIntosh and William Weatherford. While the Red Stick settlement escaped harm, Black settlements at the Manatee River, as well as some along the Gulf coast, were not so lucky. They, as well as Creek and Seminole communities in what would become Alachua, Marion, Sumter, Hernando, and Hillsborough Counties, suffered significant damage from the raids (Brown 1995b: 421). These raids served to move these populations off valuable agricultural lands to make way for white settlers to immigrate. The resulting influx of plantation owners brought with them increasing numbers of enslaved Black people, some of whom, within the Tallahassee region, may have included the ancestors of the New Hope community.

In its infancy as a U.S. territory, Florida was divided into West Florida, with its principal city of Pensacola, and East Florida, with its principal city in St. Augustine. The first meeting of the Territorial Council, the precursor to the Florida Legislature, was held in 1822 in Pensacola, and the following year the group convened in St. Augustine. It quickly became evident that the great distance between the two towns was creating difficulties in governance, so the Council decided to find a central location for conducting their duties. In 1823, representatives from the former East and West Florida selected a location near the old Seminole village of Tallahassa Taloofa, and, in March 1824, it was announced that the next Council meeting would take place in Tallahassee. On May 24, 1824, Congress appropriated a section of land and established Tallahassee as the new seat of government for the Florida Territory (Works Progress Administration 1941).

Tensions continued to rise between white settlers coming in search of new agricultural land and Native Americans and their associated Black populations in the region. After the Treaty of Payne's Landing in 1832, which called for Seminole removal from Florida, a series of small incidents led to Dade's massacre, in 1835, which started the Second Seminole War. Regarded as one of the longest and most costly of the many conflicts between the United States and Native Americans, the war resulted in only a few hundred indigenous people remaining in Florida. No peace treaty was ever signed, but the war was declared over on August 14, 1842, by Colonel William Jenkins Worth.

Antebellum History of Leon County and the Development of the Plantation System

Tallahassee's Red Hills attractant, prehistorically and historically, was its subtropical climate and the substantial acreage of Orangeburg soils in the area, which were ideal for cotton and corn – the mainstay of Leon County agriculture. These elements enticed planters and yeoman farmers from Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Agriculture was never viable on a large scale in the southern part of the county where the soil is sandy, leached, and acidic (Brueckheimer 1992; Paisley 1968, 1989). Native Americans knew well the significance of the climate and soils of the area. Horticulture in the region became important during the Swift Creek period.

During the later prehistoric periods, the upland soils of the Tallahassee Red Hills saw the growth

of maize, squash, pumpkin, and other crops. Narratives from de Soto's expedition described fertile fields of maize, beans, pumpkins, and fruit. The fields were described as "on both sides of the road and have spread out as far as the eye could see across two leagues of the plain" (Clayton et al. 1993). These fields later became known as "old fields," and settlers paid higher dollar to obtain them. By the time the Spanish arrived in the 16th century, Native Americans had well-developed agricultural practices in place. Fertile soil, along with available water resources, was ideal not only for growing crops but also as an attractant for birds and game. These agricultural areas were sought after by settlers due to Native American agricultural practices. Controlled burns kept the area's vegetation growth to a minimum, added nutrients to the soil, and attracted birds and other game. Fields were tilled by hand, which resulted in nutrient-dense soils and very little erosion .

In 1823, William H. Simmons and John Lee Williams decided upon the site of Tallahassee as the location for the new capital. In 1824 and 1825, the Federal Land Office surveyed more than 20 townships using the township and range system. In 1828, the Tallahassee Land Office sold 140,587 acres for \$189,182. Within 20 years most of the land in the county was sold to planters, yeoman farmers, land speculators, and investors. Florida achieved statehood in 1845. There was not a lottery system that limited the amount of land an individual could buy. Planters in Florida were only limited by what they could pay at auctions. The lower production of exhausted lands in the older cotton and tobacco regions and the growing cotton market in Europe created a boon for planters in Middle Florida (Gadsden, Hamilton, Jefferson, Leon, and Madison Counties). Planters from regions to the north were moving south and buying large swaths of property to farm cotton to supply a growing market in New England and overseas (Brueckheimer 1992; Paisley 1968, 1989). In the early 1830s, the Marquis de Lafayette sent French settlers to develop lands overlooking Lake Lafayette. The goal was to build a silk industry, grow grapes, and develop a winery. This attempt failed.

The county's population grew rapidly in the early years. Between 1825 and 1840 the population grew from 966 to 10,713 before leveling off at around 12,000 in 1860. The white population remained stable, from 3,300 in 1830 to 3,194 in 1860, while the enslaved population nearly tripled, from 3,152 to 9,089, during that same period. County tax rolls revealed that 48% of the population of Leon County were enslaved people in 1830, and by 1860 that percentage had increased to 73% of the total population (Rivers 1981:237).

While the enslaved population increased in size in Florida, the population of freedmen remained stable or decreased. The perceived threat of "free negroes" resulted in the passage of several laws by the territorial government. In 1827, freedmen were banned from entering Florida, and in 1828 they were prohibited from assembling in public. An 1829 statute required a fee of \$200 for freeing enslaved people. Once freed, they were required to leave the territory within 30 days. Leon County, the wealthiest and most populous county in Florida, petitioned the state government to have all freedmen removed from the state. Instead, 1847, the legislature required all freedmen to have a white person as legal guardian.

The development of transportation systems was important to draw settlers to the area and provide access to markets. A system of roads and trails in the area was connected to Thomasville, Bainbridge, and Quitman by the Coffee Road, while an east-west federal road provided a route from Tallahassee to Pensacola and St. Augustine (Smith 1973). The ports of Magnolia and St.

Marks, on the St. Marks River, served as export/import locations for the area. The Tallahassee Railroad, completed in 1837, provided a primitive link, which consisted of mules pulling cars on wooden rails, from Tallahassee to St. Marks and the Gulf of Mexico. For many years this was the city's only rail line. In 1855 the Pensacola & Georgia Railroad purchased and began modernizing the Tallahassee Railroad. The company also began construction of a rail line eastward from Tallahassee to Lake City, which was completed in 1860. Between 1832 and 1852, some plantation owners hired-out enslaved people to the Tallahassee Railroad Company. An advertisement from the *Florida Sentinel* placed by the company offered \$180 for the year for enslaved workers (Rivers 1981:242). At Lake City, the Pensacola & Georgia connected with the Florida, Atlantic & Gulf Central, which provided Tallahassee a rail route to Jacksonville. During the Civil War, a line was built north from Live Oak, Florida, to Lawton, Georgia, connecting the Pensacola & Georgia to the Atlantic & Gulf Railroad in March 1865. This line, the first between Georgia and Florida, provided Tallahassee rail access to Bainbridge and Savannah.

The plantation system in Leon County was no different from the rest of the South. The planters, loosely defined as anyone who owned 20 or more enslaved workers, dominated the economy, local and state government, and other institutions. Plantations consisted of large acreage with only portions "improved" with buildings or structures. The vast majority of the plantation was devoted to agriculture fields or, possibly, pasture. Livestock was generally left to roam free, with fencing designed to keep them out of the fields. A general antebellum plantation layout was a localized setting of structures that may have included a combination of a main house, slave cabins located near the main house, the overseer's house, other domestic structures, and a slave cemetery. Plantations may have had a gin house, sugar mill, wheelwright, tannery, and grist mill. Many of those enslaved on the plantations in Leon County learned skilled and semi-skilled trades, such as blacksmithing, carpentry, and other trades. They would work in cotton production from March to the end of November and work in their trades in the off-season. Census data from 1850 suggests that enslaved labor was utilized in most industries throughout the nation (Rivers 1981:241). There were about twice as many yeoman farmers as planters in Leon County in 1860. Typically, yeoman farmers owned less than 20 enslaved workers and practiced subsistence farming while planting cotton as a cash crop. These farmers worked in the fields alongside their enslaved workers. They likely owned one or more draught animals, hogs, poultry, and milk cows.

Most of what was produced in Leon County in the antebellum period was locally consumed with the only major export being cotton. Cotton sales provided the necessary cash to import the goods that the planters and farmers needed to continue their operations. If cotton was the cash crop, corn was the energy crop that provided fuel for animals and man. Corn was eaten fresh, dried, or shelled. It was ground in grist mills to make flour. It was also used to fatten hogs, cattle, and poultry.

At the dawn of the Civil War, Leon County far outpaced the other counties in Florida in agricultural production. The county led in the number of farms, harvested land, draught, and dairy animals, and in the production of cotton, corn, sweet potatoes, and livestock. In 1860, Leon County produced over 16,000 bales of cotton, over twice its nearest rival, Jefferson County.

The Civil War and Reconstruction

Soon after Florida seceded in January 1861, Union ships blocked the major ports of the Gulf. The export of cotton dramatically decreased, and poor rail connections with other Confederate states effectively isolated Leon County. After the war, Confederate currency and bonds were worthless. The economic loss was overwhelming. Federal agents seized cotton and other resources to pay taxes. Leon County was effectively bankrupt.

Some of the earliest operations of U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) fighting for the Union took place in Florida. Led by Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a white officer, several companies of his regiment of Black soldiers participated in a raid up the St. Mary River, along the Georgia-Florida border, in January 1863 (Florida Memory 2013). USCT continued to play a part in the war in Florida and made up the majority of the Union troops engaged in a skirmish south of Tallahassee at Natural Bridge on March 6, 1865. Confederate forces won the battle, but USCT returned to Tallahassee two months later, on May 20, 1865, and were part of the Union occupying force that entered the capital to receive the surrender of Confederate Florida (Florida Memory 2013).

Though Leon County remained largely uninvolved in armed conflict during the Civil War, except for the Natural Bridge skirmish, its economy, being dependent on cotton mono-cropping, had been severely crippled. In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, cotton prices were unstable, with the price in the Liverpool market in 1865 being 50-54 cents per pound, dropping to below 40 cents per pound by January 1866 and continuing to drop over the subsequent months, reaching a low of 18 cents per pound in May of 1866 (Ouzts 1996:5).

After the war, the agricultural system changed from one based on enslaved labor to one of tenancy. In May 1865, General John Newton, commander of Union forces in Florida, issued a decree urging freedmen to enter into agreements with landowners to cultivate, harvest, and share the incoming crops. This change in the labor system and the need to adjust to the instability of the cotton market resulted in a change in agricultural production methods. Instead of enslaved workers living together in slave quarters and working together in labor gangs, the freedmen were now scattered over the plantation, farming their own individual small plots. Tenant homes were located throughout the landscape, near the most agriculturally productive areas, thereby creating “patch crop” farming. This new way did not prove financially lucrative to landowners, and they began to look for different ways to turn a profit. Depleted soils caused by the aggressive mono-cropping of cotton during the antebellum years contributed to low crop yields during the Reconstruction era, and during the disastrous 1866-1868 period, many planters abandoned their pursuits in Leon County and began selling off their plantations. Regardless, agriculture in Leon County continued to be dominated by the stagnant cotton culture well into the 20th century (Ouzts 1996:18-23). Between 1865 and 1880, while the white population in Leon County was slowly dwindling, the population of newly freed Black people swelled. In 1870 the population of the county consisted of 12,341 Black and 2,895 white people. Ten years later, the African American population had increased to 16,840, while the white population had remained relatively unchanged, falling slightly to 2,822 (Ouzts 1996:15-16).

Community Development

African American Churches in Leon County

When studying the development of African American communities in the South, such as the New Hope Community, one must study the development of Black churches after the Civil War, because churches served as the backbone of those communities. With the failure of Reconstruction and the advent of Black Codes, the newly emancipated population was barred from participating in many social, political, and economic activities over which the whites held control. The churches were the one institute in which African Americans chose to separate from the white population. This “self-segregation” enabled them to establish a semblance of autonomy and control over their lives. According to Robert L. Hall, in his article “Tallahassee’s Black Churches, 1865-1885,”

The development of religious freedom and the establishment of independent churches by Blacks, following the Civil War, was a momentous change in Black-white social relations. Although the Black churches of various denominations shared a general feeling of assertiveness and independence, the individual churches in Tallahassee, representing distinctive denominations, were not uniform in their historical origins, political orientations, or leadership styles (Hall 1979:185).

Many Methodist freedmen joined the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, which was founded in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1786. Ministers had begun proselytizing newly freed African Americans across the South during the Civil War, following the Emancipation Proclamation. By 1868 the Tallahassee district had 13 AME Churches. (Hall 1979:186). Due to the denomination’s size, AME congregations became actively and effectively involved in politics, temperance initiatives, and education efforts. The large increase in AME membership was the beginning of “self-segregation” and resulted in a significant decrease in the size of some southern, white-controlled denominations.

Some Methodist freedmen stayed in the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church following the war. About 500 in Florida continued to retain ties with the church through 1869. The appeal of belonging to an independent denomination, however, was too strong for the African Americans. This resulted in the organization of the Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church of America in 1870.

Newly freed African American Christians also had a choice when it came to Baptist denominations in Tallahassee, such as Missionary Baptists or Primitive Baptists. The Reverend James Page founded Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, with a congregation of around 200 people, near downtown Tallahassee in 1870. Rev. Page, who was ordained as Florida’s first Black minister, had been preaching since 1835, when he was an enslaved person on the Parkhill Plantation. He was so well respected and sought after that, before emancipation, he would travel to Tallahassee and surrounding plantations to preach (Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, 2018).

The Primitive Baptist Churches of the South established a separate organization for African Americans in 1865, the Colored Primitive Baptists in America. The Florida Primitive Orthodox Zion Baptist Association was founded in 1869. Tallahassee’s first Primitive Baptist Church, St. Mary’s, grew so quickly that a new, larger church was built in 1873.

Organizationally speaking, Baptist churches were less structured than the Methodist denominations, which had a national organization run by bishops. The Baptist churches were self-governed and functioned as loose coalitions of autonomous congregations. This autonomy allowed Black Baptist denominations to expand quickly, as needed, with less bureaucracy. In Tallahassee, Black Baptist churches, whose ministers and members were mostly formerly enslaved people, enjoyed a large amount of independence in their leadership governance and spiritual expression (Hall 1979:193).

With the appearance of Jim Crow and the legal implementation of White Supremacy throughout the South following Reconstruction, Black churches took on another level of significance to their congregants. Centers of spiritual power, churches also became de facto centers of political power. With almost the entire Black community disenfranchised by Jim Crow's literacy tests and poll taxes, there were very few political leaders who worked in the best interests of Black citizens. In a world of "separate but equal," white elected leaders viewed their white constituencies as "more equal" than the local Black communities. African American churches became "non-governmental organizations" that helped represent their members in the outside world, beyond the sanctuary. Church pastors served, in many ways, like elected government leaders. It is no coincidence, therefore, that many of the most prominent and effective leaders in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s were clergy of African American churches.

The Establishment of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church and Tuskeena School

Testerina Primitive Baptist Church has been important to the African American community along Miccosukee Road for over 150 years. A backbone to the community, the church, located northeast of Tallahassee, has a marble cornerstone that states that the church was established in 1871. According to a "Historical Sketch" of the church in the John G. Riley Center & Museum digital archives, the church "was first organized in a brush hobble about one-half mile east of its present location just a few years after emancipation of the Slaves" (John G. Riley Center & Museum N.D.). A *Tallahassee Democrat* newspaper article, commemorating the church's 100th year, claimed the congregation was officially formed July 21, 1871, "by a handful of ex-slaves, many of whom had worked on the numerous Big Bend plantations before emancipation." The article states, they "'got religion,' built an arbor of logs and palm fronds, northeast of Tallahassee." Testerina's centennial in 1971 was a five-day celebration that featured sermons from preachers of other Primitive Baptist congregations in the state and out-of-town gospel singing groups. The highlight of the festivities was a Saturday night banquet at the Carriage House restaurant with Dr. Benjamin L. Perry, president of Florida A&M University, as guest speaker (N.A., *Tallahassee Democrat* [TD], 1971, 20 July:7).

Congregants believe that the first church building was erected between 1865 and 1890. Church tradition states that two wooden churches preceded the current church. Gloria Jefferson Anderson, a long-time member of the congregation who has conducted research on the church's history, believes these earlier churches were located closer to Miccosukee Road. It is believed that the first classes for Tuskeena School were held inside the church. An early reference to Tuskeena is in *The Weekly Floridian* newspaper of September 19, 1891, which names Mamie McGriff as the teacher for the new term (N.A., *The Weekly Floridian* [WF], 1891, 19 September:5). Tuskeena and Testerina were located on the same site, eventually in separate buildings, for at least 60 years. This

site was on a tract of land directly south and adjacent to a parcel of land known as New Hope Plantation.

New Hope Plantation

The focus of this report is on the African American community of New Hope, as mentioned in the introduction to this historical narrative. While focusing on the people of this community, however, it is essential that their origins and the world in which they and their descendants lived be taken into account. Therefore, a relatively large amount of information is provided in this report about white plantation owners and the land they owned. This is possible because a vast amount of historical data about plantation owners is available, whereas relatively little is known about those who actually worked on the land. It is important to note here that much of the success of these plantation owners should be attributed to the large source of uncompensated labor, in the form of enslaved people, that they had at their disposal.

As much information as possible has been included here about the African Americans who lived in the New Hope Community. Those held in bondage are almost entirely invisible to history. The only evidence of their existence might be their first names, found on the tax records of their “owners.” Those who lived in this community before the Civil Rights Movement were legally marginalized; economically, socially, and politically. Nonetheless, they must be all recognized among the many anonymous Americans of different racial and ethnic backgrounds whose crushing, backbreaking labor built this country. Indeed, even after emancipation very little historical information was recorded about Black communities, well into the 20th century.

Paisley (1989) documents three large antebellum plantations located around Miccosukee Road in the vicinity of Testerina Church: LaGrange, Barrow Hill, and The House Place (see Figure 2). The large parcel of land known as “New Hope Plantation” was originally part of LaGrange Plantation. LaGrange Plantation also included the land upon which Testerina is located. Barrow Hill Plantation consisted of two tracts. The smallest, approximately 3,000 acres, was west of LaGrange and in proximity to Tallahassee. The larger Barrow Hill tract was adjacent to LaGrange, on the east side. This section of Barrow Hill is near the present-day community of Chaires. On the northwest side of LaGrange was The House Place, which was established by R. A. Whitfield on approximately 1,300 acres.

The biggest of these plantations, LaGrange, was established by Joseph John Williams, the largest cotton and corn producer in Leon County in 1860. Much of Williams’ land was inherited from his late father-in-law, Noah Thompson. Thompson also owned a second plantation, Clearview. The location of Clearview is not known, but, regardless, Thompson’s estate was quite extensive. Including agricultural equipment, draught animals, and enslaved people, his estate was worth over \$114,000 in 1855. (Smith 1973:227). After Thompson’s death, New Hope Plantation was absorbed into his son-in-law’s LaGrange Plantation.

LaGrange Plantation extended approximately a half mile north of Miccosukee Road and over two miles south of Buck Lake Road. Williams owned about 7,000 acres, described as situated on the largest area of Orangeburg sandy loam in the county, and 245 enslaved people. Tax rolls indicate that LaGrange, which included New Hope Plantation, was worth \$121,000, with a value of \$150,000 placed on his enslaved workers. On the eve of the Civil War, Williams’ plantations

produced 1,113 bales of cotton and 10,800 bushels of corn on 3,900 acres of improved land. Williams served as a Confederate colonel in the Florida Militia and lost much of his land during Reconstruction. Following Reconstruction, Charles E. “C.E.” Bradley of Spencer, New York, purchased most of Section 12, Township 1 North, Range 1 East in 1884 from Eliza Thompson Williams, the widow of Williams and the daughter of Thompson (see Figure 3). Referred to in the deed as “‘New Hope’ plantation,” the purchase amounted to 984.76 acres, more or less (Leon County Courthouse, Tallahassee, FL [LCC] 1884: Deed Book [DB] Z:308). C.E. Bradley was one of many Northerners who came South in the late 1800s and purchased large quantities of inexpensive agricultural land with the intention of trying their hand at farming.

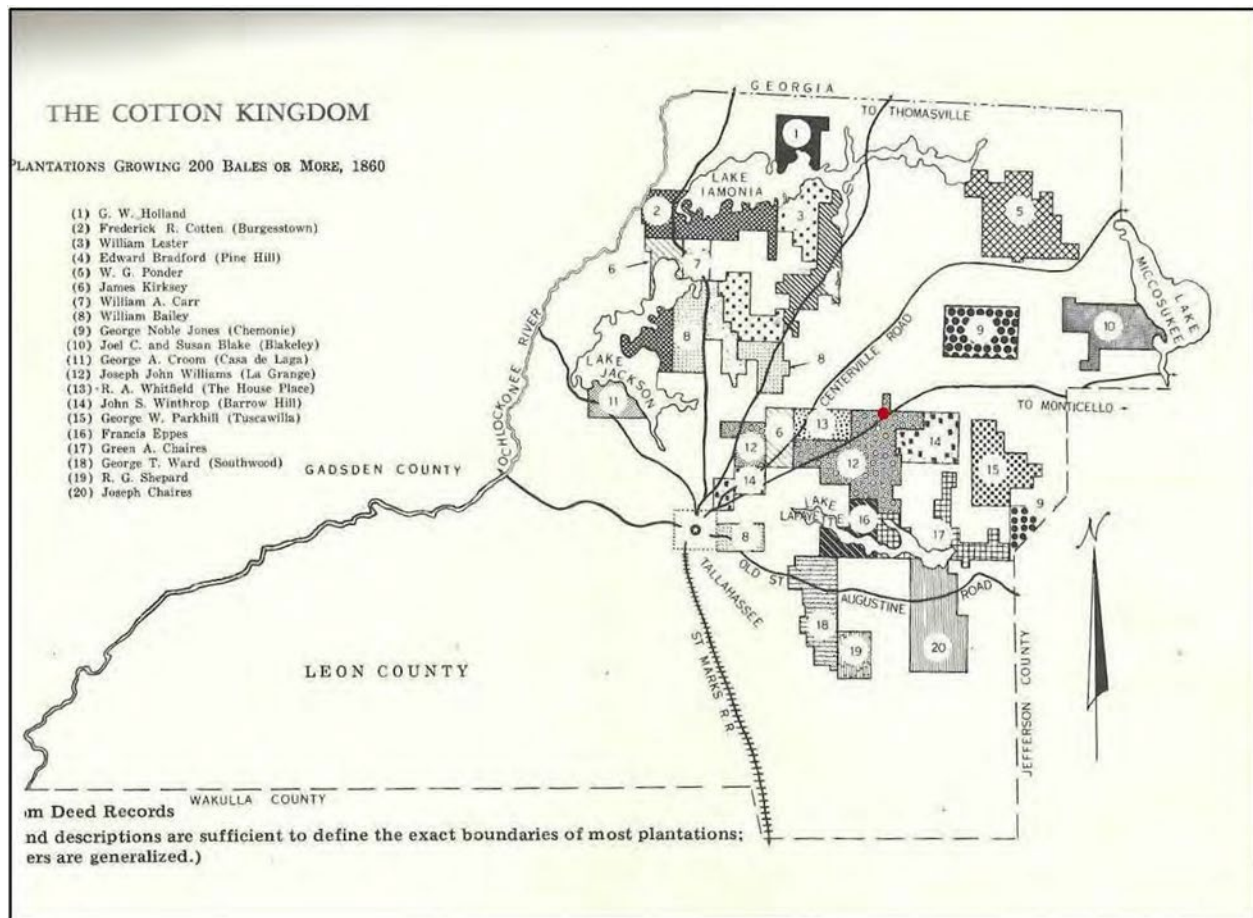


Figure 2. Map of the largest antebellum plantations in Leon County in 1860. Approximate location of New Hope Plantation is indicated by red dot. Source: Paisley 1968.

A great variety of agricultural activity occurred at New Hope Plantation, according to some newspaper reports. Bradley experimented in horticulture and engaged in animal husbandry. Contrary to popular contemporary belief, New Hope Plantation was not initially a “dairy farm.” Notices in *The Weekly Floridian* of Tallahassee mention Bradley’s early work. One of his first crops was Thomas “Velvet Cob” corn, which had “beautiful white grains and is weevil proof.” Another notice mentioned that “Mr. C.E. Bradley of New York . . . is another Northern gentleman who is successfully conducting a large plantation in Leon County.” He planted a variety of fruit trees and had recently planted 2,500 English walnuts at “New Hope.” Also, as he replaced his old fencing with wire fencing, “wherever a post was put there he had a pecan nut planted.” Throughout

the coming decades, much mention is made of Bradley in the local newspapers with respect to his comings and goings between Tallahassee, his winter home, and his hometown of Spencer, New York. Bradley's success with the farm was mentioned in *The Weekly Floridian* in Spring 1887. According to the notice, "Mr. Bradley is a New Yorker, uses improved farming implements, cultivates thoroughly and is making money on his plantation." Bradley had planted 800 pecan trees along his fence line. One of his 6.5-foot stalks of rye was on display at Saxon and Company. He was recognized in a notice entitled "Fine Cotton" in *The Weekly Floridian* in September 1888. It was reported that an eight-foot-tall cotton stalk of the "J. Welford variety" grown on Bradley's plantation was on display at Saxon & Company. The manager of New Hope Plantation, J.G. Hamlin, stated that he had 2.5 acres planted in this particular type of cotton, and he expected the patch to produce three bales -- over a bale an acre -- which would have been a good yield (N.A., WF, 1887, 24 March; N.A., WF, 1888, March:10).

In addition to his own farming enterprises, Bradley had sharecroppers, or tenant farmers, on his land. One individual who lived and worked at New Hope Plantation during this time was Wade Williams, "a young colored man." As reported by *The Weekly Floridian*, Williams went to work without a dollar, but with a rented ox, rented land, and "a determination to succeed," and he made his crop on a store account of "Messrs. Saxon and Company" of \$6.00. He told the newspaper reporter that he produced "four bales of cotton, one hundred bushels of corn, several stacks of fodder and a big crop of potatoes and garden trucks." He was able to pay his rent and other expenses and "has a snug sum of money left" (N.A., WF, 1888, 27 November:5).

A note in *The Weekly Floridian* in mid-1889 bragged on the success that Bradley brought to New Hope Plantation. Despite a drought, "his oats stand, on average five and a half feet high, is heavily headed, and the yield has been immense." He also had "an excellent corn crop, and potatoes in quantities and of fine quality." Bradley's success was attributed to his "mode of cultivation" and his "excellent and fertile land" (N.A., WF, 1889, 4 June:5).

Many ads are found in which Bradley advertises for sale his seed oats, Scotch Collie puppies, and Poland China pigs. Apparently, he also tried cultivating tobacco: in September 1893, the *Elmira Star-Gazette* reported that Charles E. Bradley had started a cigar factory in the nearby town of Spencer, using tobacco raised on his plantation in Florida (N.A., *Elmira Star-Gazette* [ESG], 1893, 19 September:6).

Just before the turn of the twentieth century is when references to "the New Hope Dairy Farm" first began to occur in local newspapers. Mrs. Sarah Atkinson of "the New Hope Dairy Farm" is mentioned in notes published in *The Weekly Tallahasseean*. The wife of the farm's manager, she was highly regarded. As the newspaper stated, "Mrs. Atkinson has mastered the dairy business in a manner that few people do, and hundreds of people have gone to New Hope during her stay there to learn something of her methods." While at the plantation, the newspaper mentioned that she also worked with a crop of cassava in the 1900 growing season, and that she planned to "plant largely of it another year." The Atkinsons moved to Sheffield, Alabama, in Spring 1901. At that time Bradley reportedly had "one of the finest dairy farms in the county." Continued use of New Hope as a dairy farm at that time may have come to an end with the departure of the Atkinsons. Newspaper references to New Hope as a "dairy farm" would not occur again for another 20 years (N.A., *The Weekly Tallahasseean* [WT], 1900, 29 November:8; N.A., WT, 1901, 14 March:8; N.A., WT, 1901, 17 January:5).

By the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century, C.E. Bradley had apparently implemented the sharecropping or tenant farming system at New Hope on a larger scale. Perhaps, as an older man, he was less interested in agricultural experimentation, or he was physically unable to be as fully involved as in the past. Regardless, Bradley appeared at the December 11, 1906, meeting of the Leon County School Board where he presented a petition for a white school to be established at his New Hope Plantation. He was hopeful that a white school on his property would “encourage some white farmers from Georgia to settle there . . .” The board agreed to build the school for \$260.00 “provided that Mr. Bradley would enter into a written agreement with the Board to purchase the building at that figure in case said white settlers became dissatisfied and moved away.” It appears, also, that the Bradleys provided a room for the new teacher at the new school. The Tallahassee’s *Weekly True Democrat* reported that C.E. Bradley’s residence at New Hope Plantation was destroyed by fire on Sunday morning, June 9, 1907. The family lost most of their clothes and household furnishings. The notice also mentioned that Miss Jennie Childs, who boarded with the Bradleys and taught at the nearby school, lost all her clothes in the fire (*Weekly True Democrat* [WTD], 1907, 14 June:1; Leon County School Board [LCSB], Minutes Ledger 1901-1906, 11 December 1906).

By December 1911 a supplement to *The Weekly True Democrat*, entitled “The Lands of Leon,” describes New Hope Farm as a 1,000-acre farm “tilled by tenants.” The entry states that little individual farming is done by Bradley, but he uses it as a summer home. C.R. Cole was the caretaker, but “Negroes and oxen do the work, making crops of cotton and corn about equally divided; each tenant tending some twenty acres. No fertilizer is employed.” Bradley had apparently been unsuccessful in keeping white farmers at New Hope. Cole, meanwhile, focused his energy on chickens, producing some premium Rock Island Red and Black Minorca, which he sold in Tallahassee for table use (Reese, WTD, 1911, 15 December:48).

C.E. Bradley died Friday afternoon, December 24, 1915, at the age of 73 following surgery at City Hospital in Ithaca, New York. In November he was operated on for mastoiditis, but resulting complications resulted in the need for a second operation, which claimed his life. His remains were taken to Spencer and buried in Evergreen Cemetery. Surviving him were two daughters, Mrs. R.H. Fisher of Ithaca and Mrs. A. Benziat of New Orleans, and a son, Lyman R. Bradley of Hartford, Connecticut. Following C.E. Bradley’s death, letters of administration for his estate were granted to Lyman, and the estate was valued at \$4,000 (N.A., ESG, 1915, 29 December:5).

It appears that at some point shortly after the death of his father, Lyman Bradley decided that he wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father and go into farming. He and his wife, Katherine, took out a mortgage on New Hope Plantation in 1918, and they moved from Connecticut to Tallahassee. It was at this time that Lyman apparently transformed New Hope Plantation into a dairy farm. He was initially successful in his efforts. By 1922 he was working 250 head of cattle and 50 milk cows on almost 1,000 acres. He reported to an interviewer from the Florida Quarterly Bulletin of the Department of Agriculture that he was “enthusiastic” about the climate, soil, and water in Leon County. Experiments with various kinds of grasses, such as Bermuda, Carpet and Napier, and stock foods, like stock peas, velvet beans, burr, sweet and Lespedeza clover had gone well. He had also tried corn for silage. According to the article, Bradley believed the opportunities in Leon County for the dairy business “to be among the best found in the United States.” In that same publication, it was reported that there were 100 farms, from small to large,

engaged in Leon County dairy production and that the county had two Black dairy farmers: John Rollins and Tom Carr (LCC 1918: DB 20:264; Florida Department of Agriculture 1922:27, 29). In 1921 the Leon County Milk Company was formed for selling products from area dairy farms, including New Hope. The new company purchased the Purity Ice Cream and Dairy Company milk plant in Tallahassee, near the Seaboard Railroad depot, and installed equipment to produce butter and ice cream. The plant was very successful in its first year and the demand for its dairy products, which were shipped throughout the state, far exceeded its production capacity. The Tallahassee plant was one of several in the state that included the Marion County Creamery, Hernando County Cooperative Dairy, Inc., the Orange County Creamery, and the West Florida Ice Cream and Dairy Company in Jackson County (Florida Department of Agriculture 1922:21).

Lyman continued to grow in notoriety and expertise in the livestock and dairy industries. In July 1922, the Livestock Breeders Association of Leon County elected him second vice president. He was listed as one of the prominent citizens from Tallahassee participating in a motorcade from Tallahassee to Ashburn, Georgia, in February 1923. The trip was made under the leadership of H.L. Brown, extension dairy agent of the University of Florida, and was for local farmers and businessmen to learn about successful dairy operations in Ashburn. According to the article, Ashburn, in Turner County, was at the center of one of the largest and most productive dairy regions in the South (N.A., TD, 1922, 31 July:1; N.A., TD, 1923, 26 February:1).

In July 1923, Lyman Bradley, “manager of New Hope Dairy Plantation,” was endorsed by the Leon County Board of County Commissioners for the Florida Live Stock Sanitary Board. The article noted that “Mr. Bradley is an experienced dairy man” and that “his application will no doubt receive favorable consideration.” Despite his prominent involvement and apparent expertise in livestock breeding and dairy production, Lyman may not have been a very successful businessman when it came to agriculture. He may have had problems with cash flow because a tax notice in the Tallahassee Democrat of July 6, 1923, indicates that he had an outstanding bill of \$159.84 on 627 acres of his land. This may be a clue as to why Lyman R. Bradley, after July 1923, never again appears in area newspapers within the context of the livestock or dairy industries of Leon County (N.A., TD, 1923, 12 July:1).

As may be gathered by newspaper accounts, Lyman moved on from the New Hope Dairy Farm business to become a highly successful realtor. In April 1926 it was announced that he had been elected as the newest member of the Tallahassee Real Estate Board. By 1937 he was vice president of the board with his office in the Lewis State Bank Building in downtown Tallahassee (N.A., TD, 1926, 30 April:4; N.A., TD, 1937, 7 March:3). Lyman Richard Bradley died Sunday afternoon, August 7, 1955, at the age of 84 in Tallahassee. It is telling, perhaps, that his obituary makes no mention of his work in the livestock and dairy industries – it highlights that he was a longtime Tallahassee realtor who was elected lifetime president emeritus of the Tallahassee Board of Realtors in 1952. Born in Spencer, New York, December 1, 1870, Lyman attended Cornell University, where he studied civil engineering and was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity.

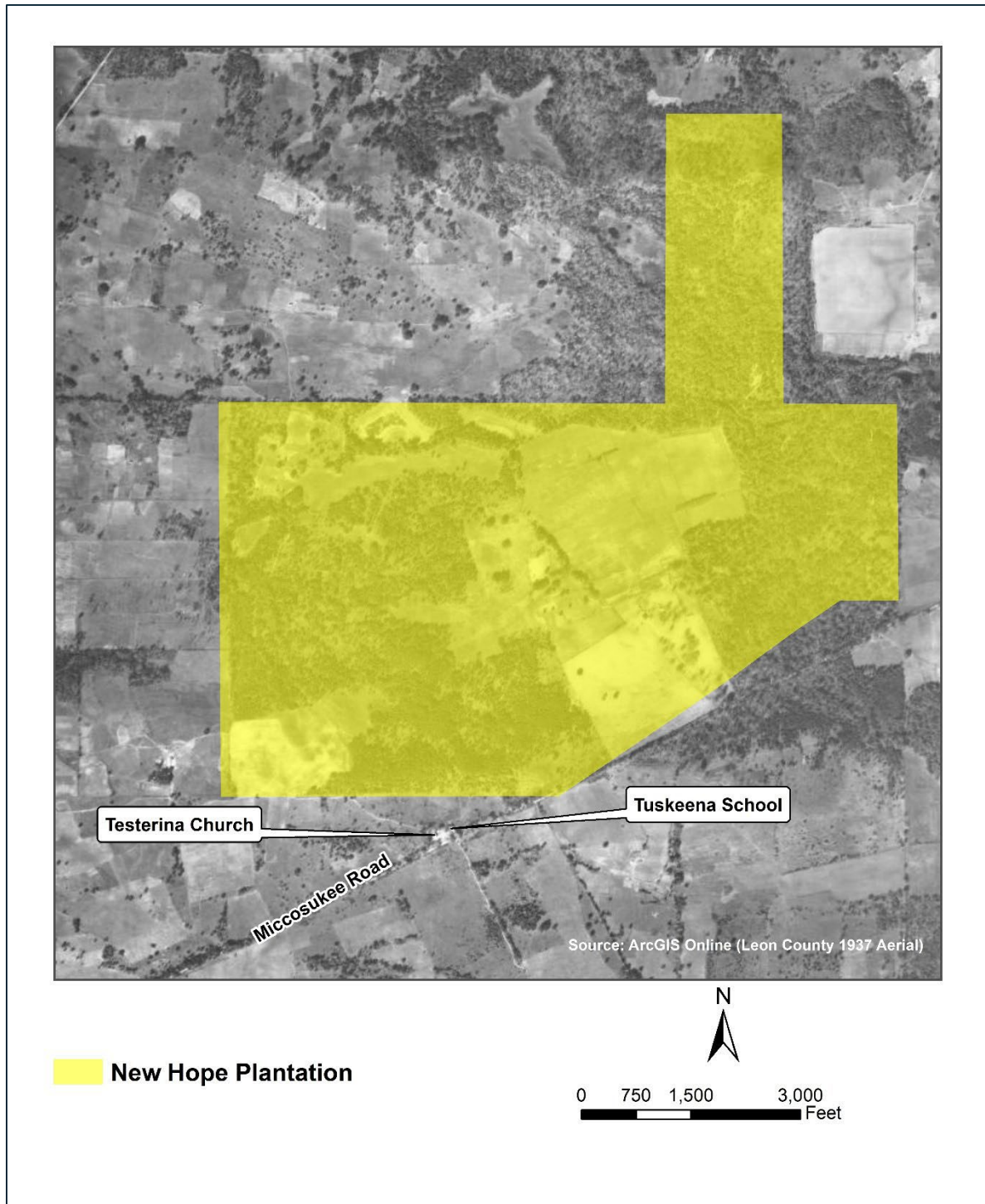


Figure 3. Detailed aerial view of New Hope Plantation, Testerina Primitive Baptist Church, and Tuskeena School from 1937. Source: ArcGIS Online.

The obituary noted that upon the death of his father, he moved to Tallahassee to assume operations of the New Hope Plantation. He also served several years as a deputy U.S. Marshal for the northern district of Florida. Survivors included his wife, Katherine Lewis Bradley; two daughters, Mrs. T. A. Pasto of Tallahassee, and Mrs. Clinton Stimson of Ithaca; and two sons, Lyman R. Hall Jr., of New York City and Ben Bradley of Ithaca (N.A., TD, 1955, 9 August:4).

Katherine Lewis Bradley, the wife of Lyman, died at age 87 in Tallahassee on Friday, June 2, 1961, at Forsyth Memorial Hospital following an extended illness. Mrs. Bradley was born in Spencer, New York, and taught school before she married Lyman in 1897. Her obituary notes that in 1918 they moved to the New Hope Plantation. She was a long-time member of the First Presbyterian Church and belonged to many civic organizations. She was buried beside Lyman at Oakland Cemetery (N.A., TD, 1961, 4 June:8).

Maynard D. ("M.D.") Hazen and his son, Roger N. Hazen, assumed dairy operations at New Hope after Lyman Bradley went into the real estate business. According to the March 25, 1925, edition of *Smith's Weekly* newspaper, Hazen, a native of Boston, Massachusetts, moved to Tallahassee and bought the 900-acre farm adjacent to the Bradley plantation in June 1924. Leon County Deed Book 10, pages 205-206, indicates that Hazen purchased New Hope Plantation from Bradley on February 23, 1925. The article states that the Bradley purchase brought Hazen's combined holdings to 1,905 acres. The article proclaims that "D.M. [sic] Hazen has Wrought Wonders on His Big Farm" (N.A., *Smith's Weekly* [SW], 1925, 26 March:5).

The article also states that the Hazen's property was worth \$75,000.00 and located seven miles out of Tallahassee on the Miccosukee Road. Mr. and Mrs. Hazen lived in an "elegant two-story concrete block dwelling" on 1,905 acres with their son and two daughters. The farm had milk cows, mostly Jerseys, numbering about 150, of which 40 were currently being milked. They also had pigs, chickens, and horses. An orchard, garden, and strawberry patch were also located on the farm. The article claimed that Hazen was "rapidly transforming [the plantation] into one of the most substantial and admired farm properties in the county." He was eager to adapt himself and his work to local conditions, so he was "working with the county agent, receiving numerous bulletins, many farm papers and magazines, and acting upon some of the most practical suggestions which come to him from these sources from time to time" (N.A., SW, 1925, 26 March:5).

Smith's Weekly provided an update on the Hazen property over a year later. It was noted in the newspaper piece that after owning the farm for two years, M.D. Hazen and his son Roger had taken the "deserted . . . uninhabitable" farm and turned its 2,000 acres into "a million dollar proposition." Although known as a dairy farm with "good, natural pasture," 1,000 acres of the farm were in cultivation, 400 of which were in corn and "velvet beans" for livestock feed. Mr. Hazen was known for his Poland China Hogs and horse breeding, while Mrs. Hazen was raising "a fine flock of pure-bred Ancona chickens." The farm had 125 dairy cattle, about half of which were Jerseys. The article mentions that Hazen catered to the wholesale trade but would sell milk by the gallon to individuals. The article was full of praise for this agricultural enterprise and noted, "Efficient management, keen business judgment coupled with yankee grit to do and conquer has wrought a miracle with New Hope Plantation and what formerly was a run down, dilapidated and almost entirely deserted country place is now a well-kept, beautiful plantation home, run on business

principles and made to pay” (N.A., SW, 1926, 29 October:6).

“New Hope Plantations” was mentioned in a number of advertisements for the dairy farm, as well as the Leon County Milk Company, from late 1926 into mid-1927. The use of “New Hope Plantations,” plural, seems to suggest that Hazen’s two tracts, totaling almost 2,000 acres, were seen as more than one New Hope plantation. In June 1927, M.D. Hazen is listed as a “Leon County Dairy Farmer” from New Hope Plantation in a Charles Lindburgh-themed ad for the Leon County Milk Company, “Manufacturers of Leon County Butter—Leon County Ice Cream” (Figure 6). (N.A., TD, 1926, 4 December:4; N.A., TD, 1926, 10 December:10; N.A., TD, 1927, 1 January:6; N.A., TD, 1927, 18 June:6).

Things were apparently not going well for the New Hope Dairy Plantation, however, regardless of glowing newspaper reports or enthusiastic advertisements. Roger N. Hazen left the farm and got a job with the *Tallahassee Daily Democrat* and *Florida Morning State* newspapers during the summer of 1927 as their “exclusive traveling representative.” It appears that they were unable to make the mortgage payments on New Hope Dairy Plantation, because this property was returned to Lyman Bradley on September 14, 1927, in a transaction recorded in Deed Book 17, pages 256-258. M.D. Hazen moved on to the citrus industry in Loughman, Florida. He is mentioned in a November 1927 newspaper article as the “former owner of the New Hope plantations.” He had grove properties in Polk County and reported bumper crops of oranges, grapefruits, and tangerines (N.A., Tallahassee Daily Democrat [TDD], 1927, 19 August:1; N.A., Florida Morning State [FMS], 1927, 26 November:1).

Any further dairy farming at New Hope Plantation came to an abrupt end in the summer of 1928. At that time newspaper notices began appearing for an impending foreclosure sale of personal property to pay on two of the Hazen’s mortgages. The following was offered for sale at New Hope Plantation “at public outcry, to the highest ad best bidder for cash:” 12 Jersey cows, 43 Grade 78 Jersey cows, two Jersey bulls, 14 yearling heifers, two yearling bulls, two yearling steers, 23 Jersey and Grade Jersey calves, one Jersey bull calf, all offspring of said cows from 1926 and 1927, four Percheron draft horses, three light type horses (one colt, one filly, and one mare), a Fordson tractor with tractor implements, wagons, cultivators, various plows, and other farming implements (N.A., TD, 1928, 4 August:7).

MAN --

is the only adult animal that uses milk as a food, yet it is one of the most staple and at the same time one of the most healthful and necessary articles of mankind's diet. More reason, therefore, why you should insist at all times on purity, wholesomeness and quality of product from peaceful, healthy, contented cows.



WE HAVE invested over \$200,000 to see that Tallahassee gets a pure milk product. Our plant is managed so that you may be assured of this.

WHILE our business is primarily a wholesale enterprise, we dispense whole sweet milk to customers in this city who require one gallon or more per day, at 50 cents per gallon. We solicit your patronage on this basis.

NEW HOPE PLANTATIONS
"Tallahassee's Largest Milk Supply."

Figure 4. Advertisement for "New Hope Plantations," "Tallahassee's Largest Milk Supply" (Tallahassee Democrat, December 10, 1926).



Figure 5. Advertisement for New Hope Plantation Dairy Service identifies M.D. Hazen as proprietor (Tallahassee Democrat, January 1, 1927).

First Call for Fame!

Lindbergh! According to press dispatches on his arrival in Paris

Asked for a BOTTLE of MILK and a ROLL

A previous dispatch from France telling of plans made to receive this greatest of all flyers and to care for him, once he landed safely, told of the various stimulants which the doctors thought he would welcome. They never had a chance to offer them.

HIS FIRST REQUEST WAS FOR A BOTTLE OF MILK

Nothing could be a greater endorsement of mankind's greatest food drink—PURE SWEET MILK! The fact that America's greatest hero asked for milk does not make milk any more nourishing than before but it does prove that the keen intellect of this young hero recognizes MILK as his greatest "refreshment" as well as a highly vital food. We have known these facts for years and take this opportunity to remind you that we have a modern plant producing the finest, purest milk from selected herds, delivered fresh and sweet to your door daily. Follow Lindbergh's example, when you are tired or need refreshment—ASK FOR MILK.

LEON COUNTY DAIRY FARMERS

New Hope Plantation, Ltd. O. Howell Mrs. Katherine Hoveland J. J. Crenshaw Florida State College Farm W. L. Conkey G. W. Evans (Benton Farm) John C. Moore H. B. Hall W. B. Moore Dixie Highway Dairy Walter Phillips P. H. Goode E. L. Prentice T. H. Sanders Cliff Chaffin James Brown C. L. Evans John Wrenn Joe Grove	John Rutledge James Landrum A. Halsey John Austin Will McGuffey Robert Wyatt Lewis Ford Sam Adams Will Gardner A. S. Crump Fletcher Road Bishop and Hopkins, Monticello W. W. Thompson G. F. Ford, Monticello E. B. Howell W. C. Beardsley, Monticello F. C. Graham	D. L. Moore Dr. Baileys P. C. Laughlin H. E. Moore J. M. Morgan Jeff Brown E. C. Cline W. H. Holiday Alfred Thompson Taylor Williams Jack Chambers Ed. Jackson Harry Allen William Matthews Ed. Spencer Curtis Holiday Forrest Harris I. H. King, Nevada A. Gooding, Marianna
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FROM PURE, WHOLESOME MILK PRODUCED BY THE ABOVE NAMED LEON COUNTY DAIRY FARMERS.

LEON COUNTY MILK COMPANY
Manufacturers of
LEON COUNTY BUTTER—LEON COUNTY ICE CREAM

"We Sell Ice Cream That Won't Come Back to People Who Will."
Leon County Ice Cream is Served at the Following Places in Tallahassee:

Maxwell's Pharmacy Blue Bird Tea Room Rembrandt Grill Whimsy Tea Room Commercial Hotel Strawberry Cakeshop Hickins Inn	Fain Drug Co. Cherokee Hotel Union Station Cafe Harry Ray Cafe Pines De Louis Grill Nassau House Barrett House W. F. Thayer	College Inn Pharmacy The Grand Hotel The Dutch Kitchen Liberty Cafe Three Pines Grill Florida State College J. L. Costa
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Figure 6. Leon County Milk Company Advertisement (Tallahassee Democrat, June 18, 1927).

Despite its commercial failure, New Hope Dairy Farm was an important part of the dairy economy of Tallahassee and Leon County for almost a decade. During antebellum times, dairying was a small part of the agricultural economy of Leon County. It began to grow, however, in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, and the county eventually led the state in milk production. Before the outbreak of World War II, there were around 25 dairy farms producing about 745,000 gallons a year in the county. In the postwar boom, however, dairy farms suffered economically as land values rose in the Tallahassee area. Also, local environmental conditions adversely affected cows and, therefore, the price competitiveness of Florida dairy products: the climate was much hotter than other parts of the country, and the low nutrients in local grasses dictated the need for dietary supplements. Consequently, there was only one dairy farm left in the county by 1968. The fate of the dairy industry reflects, overall, the transformation of the area's economy since the Civil War and, especially, since World War II. Soaring prices made agricultural use impractical for the land surrounding a growing Tallahassee (Paisely 1968). The Tallahassee economy is no longer dominated by agriculture but by the businesses of state government and education.

Udo Fleischmann and Welaunee Hunting Plantation

The tract of land that C.E. Bradley originally purchased for his winter home was sold to Udo M. Fleischmann and Jeanne K. Fleischman on March 29, 1929. The transaction consisted of the exact acreage, 984.76 acres, originally conveyed from Eliza Thompson Williams to Charles E. Bradley in 1884. The 1929 deed referred to the property as “New Hope Plantation” and noted Lyman and Katherine had previously taken out a mortgage on this property March 26, 1918. On April 11, 1929, the Bradleys also sold the Fleischmanns Section 13, Section 24, and the north half of Section 23 of Township 1 North, Range 1 East lying south of State Road 1 right-of-way, containing 563.76 acres. This deed included a recently built tenant house located near the state road and stipulated that the Bradleys would continue making advancements to and getting rents from tenants to the end of 1929 (LCC 1929: DB 20:264-267).

The purchase of New Hope Plantation was just one acquisition of many for the Fleischmanns. They had already purchased numerous tracts in the vicinity of New Hope for their estate, which was a hunting plantation they named “Welaunee,” which means “muddy water” in the Creek language. Udo Maximillian Fleischmann was a well-known person in Tallahassee. As early as 1909, the New York banker and nephew of Charles Fleischmann, founder of the Fleischmann yeast empire, had leased hunting rights from several small farmers in the area (Brueckheimer 1988). The Fleischmanns’ intent was to use the land for vacationing during the 1910 hunting season (Paisley 1981).

In 1912 the Fleischmanns began purchasing land instead of leasing it. Welaunee Plantation included tracts once part of the La Grange Plantation, owned by Joseph John Williams; the Whitaker Plantation, owned by Eli Whitaker; the James Kirksey Plantation; Clifford Hill Plantation, owned by the Gamble Family; Rachel W. Cohen's 1,600 acres; and Hickory Hill Plantation owned by Charles E. Emery (Brueckheimer 1988).

The appearance and eventual predominance of hunting plantations in Leon County in the first half of the twentieth century was a result of the evolution, or, rather, lack of evolution of agriculture in the area following the Civil War. In the late 1880s and early 1900s farms attempted to turn from the popular, antebellum crops of corn and cotton and seek new and more lucrative cash crops, such as pecans, pears, and tobacco. (Bauer 2005:9). As previously mentioned, C.E. Bradley’s New Hope Plantation explored the production of cassava, oats, rye, and tobacco, and his son, Lyman, attempted to turn it into a successful dairy farm. The decline in profitability of agriculture gave rise to the advent of hunting plantations. Like many of the farms in Leon County, New Hope ended up as a small part of a large hunting plantation. Portions of the old plantations, however, were still devoted to tenant farms producing the traditional crops of corn and cotton.

The story of hunting plantations in Tallahassee begins in the 1880s in Thomasville, Georgia, about 30 miles north of Tallahassee. That town developed a reputation as a sportsman’s winter paradise, due to its pleasant climate and plentiful quantity of game birds. The area around Thomasville, south Georgia and north Florida, began attracting affluent northerners who first leased and then began purchasing small tracts of farms and forests. Some of them began cobbling their tracts together into huge hunting plantations consisting of thousands of acres – much larger than some of the original, antebellum cotton plantations of the region. By 1910 there were seven hunting

plantations on 18,898 acres in Leon County. The number more than doubled to 15 on 81,004 of Leon County's 426,752 acres by 1930 (Hamburger 1996:2). By 1950, there were 20 plantations covering nearly 107,000 acres.

The cultural and physical landscape of a hunting plantation was similar to an antebellum, agricultural plantation, but usually on a larger scale. There were residential buildings for the landowners, workers, and tenants; stables and kennels for horses and dogs; and other support buildings for storage and maintenance of farming and hunting equipment. Hunting trails, wide enough for hunting wagons, wound throughout the plantation.

These part-time residents had a profound effect on the economy and ecology of northern Leon County with their hunting plantations. To help conserve the dwindling quail population, Udo Fleischmann and others funded and supported Herbert L. Stoddard's work in the Cooperative Quail Investigation and the Cooperative Quail Study Association. Quail require a habitat and food sources that are gradually destroyed by natural field and forest growth. Therefore, Stoddard sought to preserve an optimal habitat, in which the quail population would flourish, by stopping the net growth of vegetation through selective, controlled burning. Small plots, separated by fire lanes, would be burned at night between mid-February and the end of March on the hunting plantations. (Hamburger 1996:3).

Because of the need for controlled burns, tenant farmers could no longer grow large fields of cotton for cash. Owners required more primitive farming techniques so the quail would not be disturbed (Brueckheimer 1988). Cotton production was discouraged, because it depleted the soil, while corn was encouraged. Some plantations prohibited fences, so livestock could not be kept. Tenant farmers were restricted to small, scattered patches located throughout the hunting plantation, which, consequently, resulted in fewer tenant farmers on each property. These policies resulted in a sharp decline in tenant farming in Leon County throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Leon County had 1,775 tenant farms in 1900 and only 360 in 1950. Black tenant farmers were affected most because they constituted 90 percent of tenant farmers. Between 85 and 90 percent of them lived and farmed on hunting plantations (Hamburger 1996:3). By the 1950s, this farming system was no longer profitable for the tenant or landowner. It is believed that a large increase in state highway construction, which created construction jobs that afforded agricultural workers a better salary, contributed greatly to the demise of tenant farming (Paisley 1968).

Hunting plantation owners were not concerned by the lack of agricultural production on their land – their main concern was the propagation of the quail population, which was not helped by large cotton or corn fields. Tenants often had dual roles, therefore, to subsist on their severely restricted farming activities. During the hunting season, northern plantation owners might pay them to work as gardeners, housekeepers, cooks, laundresses, wagon drivers, dog handlers, or stable hands. In the off-season, tenant farmers, in addition to planting and harvesting their crops, might help with maintenance: mow lawns, trim shrubs, clear away storm debris, repair fences and barns, and harrow firebreaks in preparation for the annual burning.

Fleischmann was very wealthy and had the resources to create an enormous hunting plantation. During his banking career he served as president of the Land Brokerage Company of New York,

director and executive committee member of Pennick and Ford, and director and vice president of the New Netherland Bank, which eventually merged with Chase National Bank. He had a great passion for quail hunting and bird dogs and was “well known in the field trial world.” Fleischmann served as president of the Continental Field Trial Club and the exclusive Georgia-Florida Field Trials, and he was one of the founders of the English Setter Club of Medford, New Jersey. His dogs were award winners (N.A., TD, 1936, 17 February:5; N.A., TD, 1952, 3 March:1).



Figure 7. Luvenia and Ed Austin, sharecroppers on the Welaunee Plantation, ca. 1940. (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).



Figure 8. Pauline Brim and Cleotha Willis grew up on Welaunee Plantation on Miccosukee Road. (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).

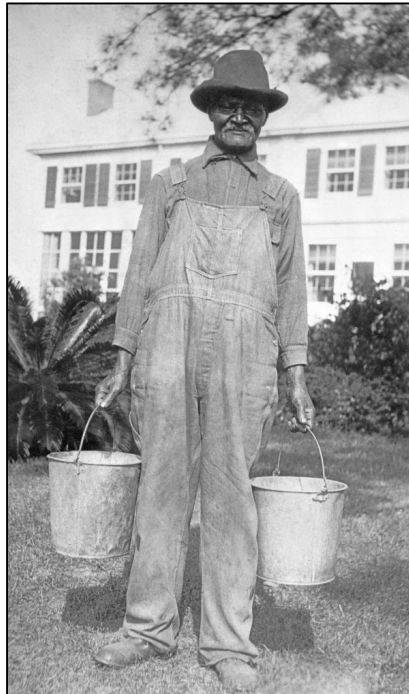


Figure 9. Worker at Welaunee Plantation, ca. 1924 (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).



Figure 10. Mary and Essex Barnes, ca. 1929, married, lived, and raised their family on Welaunee Plantation (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).



Figure 11. Hunting wagon on Welaunee Plantation, 1929 (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).



Figure 12. Picnic lunch break during hunt at Welaunee Plantation. Two African American servants are standing in center background (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).

In 1918, at the end of the mile-long driveway off Centerville Road, Fleischmann built a one-story, three-bay house which, over time, gradually expanded to a much larger two-story Colonial Revival residence (Figure 13). Other features and structures associated with the house include an elaborate garden, dog kennels, dairy barns, horse stables, and machine sheds. According to forms completed in 1986 for the National Register of Historic Places, there are three concrete-block workers' houses near the main entrance.

At its largest, Welaunee Plantation covered 16,594 acres in Leon County (Paisley 1981). Many tenant farmers, from plantations such as Hickory Hill and LaGrange, stayed to live and work for the Fleischmanns, as the land upon which they farmed was absorbed into the hunting plantation (Chandler 2022:21). Born into slavery on LaGrange in 1851, Richard Robinson remained on the plantation following emancipation. Records indicate he opened a bank account with the Freedman's Bureau in 1868 as a resident farmer on the plantation of Joseph John Williams. (Chandler 2022). At the end of World War II, about 60 tenant farmers lived on Welaunee, but by the early 1950s none remained. (Chandler 2022).

In 1947, the Fleischmanns sold some of Welaunee Plantation for a residential subdivision, Hickory Hills Farm. Ironically, African Americans, some of whom might have been descendants of those enslaved people who toiled on the original Hickory Hill Plantation, were legally prevented from living in the development. Property deeds stipulated, among other requirements, that all residents must be



Figure 13. Welaunee Plantation House, ca. 1923 (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).



Figure 14. House for servants at Welaunee Plantation, ca. 1923 (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).

white: "No person other than the Caucasian race shall own, use, or occupy property in said subdivision, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race or nationality employed by the owner or tenant" (LCC 1946:DB 3:24).

Udo Fleischmann passed away on March 1, 1952. According to his obituary, he had "resided at Welaunee continuously for the past few years and previously had lived there part-time for about 35 years. He was one of Leon County's largest property owners" (N.A., TD, 1952, 3 March:1). With Udo's death, his wife Jeanne became the sole owner of Welaunee Plantation (Paisley 1981). Shortly after his death, Mrs. Fleischmann began selling large portions of the plantation, some of which were for residential developments, such as, most notably, Killearn Estates. In a short time, the size of Welaunee was reduced from 16,594 acres to about 6,800 acres (Brueckheimer 1988). Some of the land sold included areas occupied by African American churches. As a result of these land sales, New Zion Primitive Baptist Church, for example, which was located at the present-day intersection of Edenfield Road and Highway 90, had to move its congregation to another site. The new location, its present location, was formally donated to the church by Mrs. Fleischmann (Thompson 1997).

The use of Welaunee changed as its boundaries shrank. Land sales reduced it from a vast hunting plantation to a large cattle ranch. When Mrs. Fleischmann died in 1962, her nephew, John W. Mettler, Jr., inherited Welaunee. According to Welaunee's current owner, Kit Davenport, there were no sharecroppers living on the plantation when the Mettlers inherited the property (Chandler 2022:28). Mettler founded Powerhouse, Inc. in 1962 as a company for managing the estate and cattle ranch. He continued raising Hereford cattle with great success. During its early years of operation, Mettler had about 500 head of cattle (Brueckheimer 1988). These cattle required over 2,000 acres of grazing land with another 300 acres for growing feed. As his livestock numbers grew, Mettler began buying more land. By 1967 Welaunee's total acreage was back up to 13,400 acres (Brueckheimer 1988).

Through Powerhouse, Mettler transformed Welaunee into a successful commercial hunting reserve. Wealthy hunters could lease portions of the plantation for private hunting during quail season. Because plantation employees raised quail on-site, hunters were almost always guaranteed a successful season (Brueckheimer 1988). Welaunee became an all-inclusive hunting destination by offering its guests "room, board, dog handlers, horses, shooting buggies, and all the necessary paraphernalia of quail hunting" (Brueckheimer 1988:240). When the Mettlers moved to Welaunee in 1966, they ended the commercial quail hunting business. The family decided to focus on cattle raising, which they found more profitable.

The Mettlers continued cattle ranching into the late 1980s. By 1985, the family-owned "800 cows with calves, 200 two-year-old heifers, 185 yearling heifers, and 150 bulls" (Brueckheimer 1988). The ranch operation also included grain elevators (Brueckheimer 1988). Following the death of Mr. Mettler in 1990 and Mrs. Mettler in 1994, their daughter Louise and her husband Kit Davenport inherited Welaunee Plantation (Chandler 2022: 27).

After they inherited Welaunee, Mr. and Mrs. Davenport began donating various tracts of the plantation to government and religious organizations. These transactions were facilitated, in part,

by The Trust for Public Land. In 1998, the Davenports donated approximately 500 acres to the State of Florida for the construction of Miccosukee Greenway. Construction began in the early 2000s, and it is now a popular recreational trail. The City of Tallahassee owns approximately 429 acres between I-10 and the greenway. Welaunee Boulevard and Fleischmann Road, throughfares memorializing the hunting plantation and its founder, now crisscross the area, intersecting north of Miccosukee Road and west of the old boundaries of the New Hope Plantation. The Welaunee Plantation north of I-10 now consists of pasture, pine plantation, and some row crops. Most of the plantation in the vicinity of Testerina Church, south of I-10 and north of Miccosukee Road, consists of heavily wooded, second-growth mixed hardwoods, and planted pines. The area south of Miccosukee Road consists of residential subdivisions.

The New Hope Community

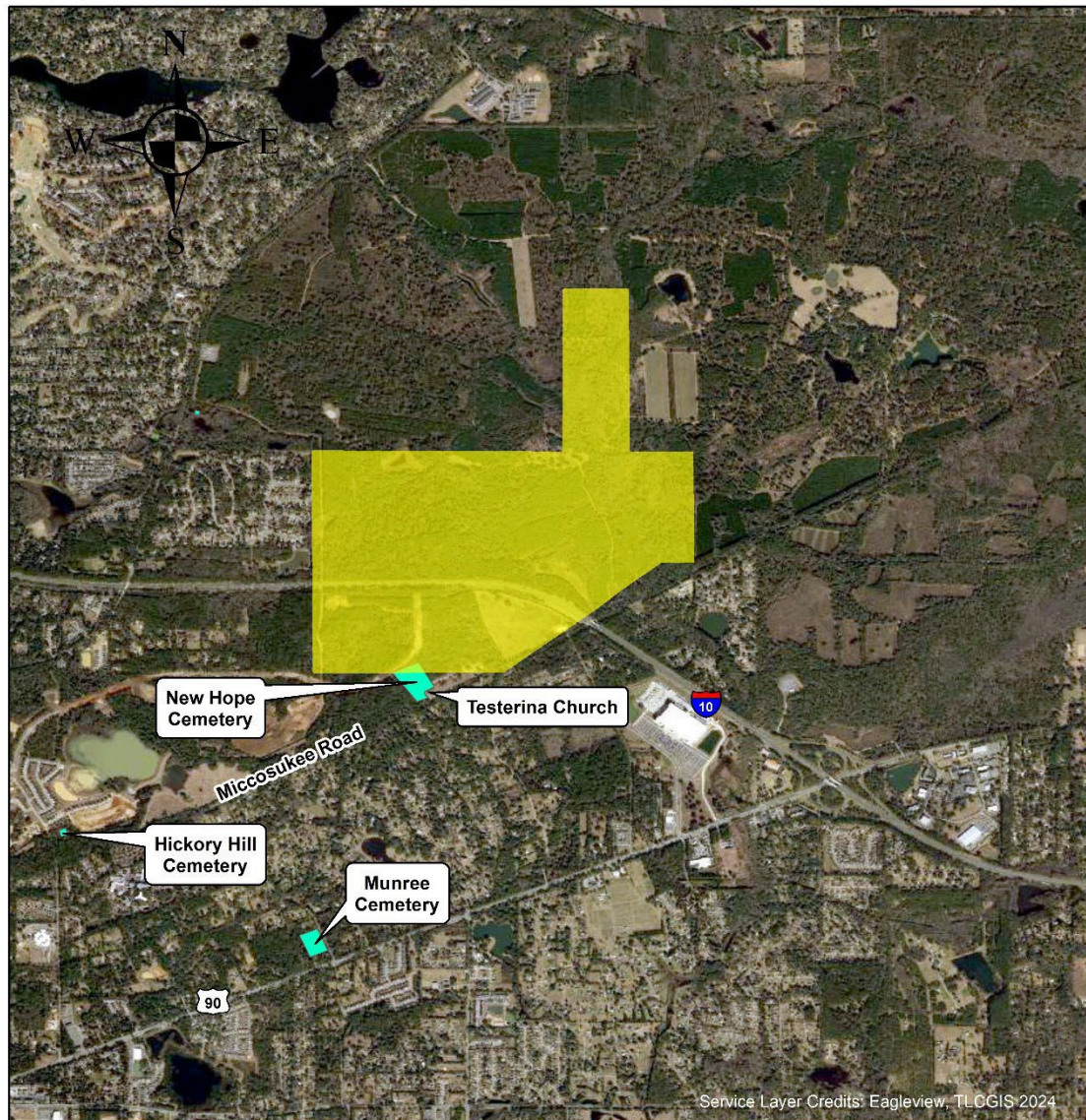
As mentioned in the introduction of this report, what is now popularly referred to as the “New Hope Community” might be considered the people who lived and institutions that developed in and around the 984.76-acre tract of land that was the antebellum cotton plantation of Joseph John Williams known as “New Hope.” This is the same tract of land, identified as New Hope Plantation in deed records, that was later operated as a farm by C.E. Bradley and as a dairy by his son, Lyman Bradley. In the mid- to late 1920s, M.D. Hazen and his son, Roger, were proprietors of a large dairy operation that combined New Hope and another large tract of land into the ca. 2,000-acre New Hope Plantations. Eventually, New Hope would be absorbed into the Welaunee hunting plantation by Udo Fleischmann in 1929. For the next four decades, the New Hope tract served as part of a recreational destination for quail hunters and as a home for sharecroppers who also helped maintain and operate Welaunee.

Extensive database research was conducted, but no historical references to a “New Hope Community” in Leon County, Florida, could be found. The only tangible, physical remains of New Hope Community appear to be the Testerina Primitive Baptist Church and the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery, which has been located and recorded behind the church. They are located directly south of the New Hope Plantation site.

Testerina Primitive Baptist Church

According to the “Historical Sketch,” found in the commemorative booklet, *Testerina Primitive Baptist Church Centennial Celebration July 21-25*, the first pastor of Testerina was Moses Vaughn, who was an “Ex-Slave” chosen by the congregation to lead them. He may be the same Moses who appears on Noah Thompson’s estate records for New Hope Plantation, which was northeast of the church’s present-day location. The 1870 Census for Leon County lists 41-year-old Moses Vaughn as a “Farm Labourer” and his wife, Hannah, 35, as “Keeping House.” Betty and Moses, their oldest children, 16 and 13 years old, respectively, are both listed as “Farm Labourer.” Hannah and Moses (senior) were born in North Carolina, while Betty, Moses (junior), and the other five children were born in Florida. The census also records the Vaughns’ neighbors, Alfred (22) and Ann (19) Austin and baby Allice (3 months), who became members of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church (FamilySearch, image 444 of 877; United States. National Archives and Records Administration. Image Group Number: 004263357).

Selected and ordained as deacons under Elder Moses Vaughn were Burden Clack, Henry Wilken, and Alfred Austin. Trustees included Caleb Hawkins, John Davis, and Malachi Barnes, Sr. The land upon which the church now sits was acquired by the congregation in 1884, according to the “Historical Sketch,” at which time a wooden sanctuary was built. 1884 was the same year C.E. Bradley purchased New Hope Plantation, located north of the church. Following the death of Elder Vaughn in 1890, Elder Henry Johnson became pastor. Rev. Johnson served until his death in 1932, and during his tenure “he baptized and received more members in the church than any minister of his time.” He also oversaw the physical growth of the church, which was enlarged with several additions. Elder Clifford T. Hillyard of Wakulla County served



New Hope Plantation
 Historic Cemeteries

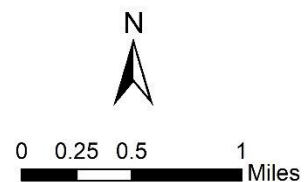


Figure 15. Historic cemeteries in the vicinity of New Hope Plantation (2024).

as pastor from 1933 to 48. He organized the first usher board under his pastorate in 1943. A tragic fire completely destroyed the church in 1942, but it was rebuilt in 1943.

Rev. Gus W. Hill (1911-1992) served as pastor from 1949 to 1957. He made music an important part of the church's ministry by establishing the first two choirs of the congregation, Junior and Senior. Several additions were made to the building, including the choir stand and the choir room. The church obtained clear title of the deed at this time. According to the "Historical Sketch," Rev. Culbert W. Williams succeeded Rev. Hill, serving 1957-63. During Rev. Williams' tenure, the present sanctuary was built, and a cafeteria was added. Following Rev. William, Rev. Hill returned as pastor of Testerina and served there for almost 30 years, until he passed away August 7, 1992.

Rev. Hill's obituary notes that he was in the ministry for over 50 years. He was a descendant of Alfred Austin, who was a neighbor of Rev. Vaughn and one of the founders and first deacons of the "1871 Bush Arbor Congregation," which became Testerina Primitive Baptist Church. Rev. Hill's pastorships included Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, and Palm Beach Counties. He was active as a leader in the Primitive Baptist Association at the local, state, and national levels. An article in the *Tallahassee Democrat* on leadership in Tallahassee's Black churches during the Civil Rights Era identified Rev. Hill as a minister of one of the rural churches in Leon County who preached "the need to become involved in the movement and the rights of members to register and vote" (N.A., TD, 2014, 30 January). In 2024, as Tallahassee celebrated its bicentennial, the Florida Civil Rights Museum highlighted their "List of the 200 Most Influential African-American Leon Countians of the Last Two Centuries." Rev. Hill was on the list because of the vital part he played in the establishment of Miracle Hill Nursing and Convalescent Home. (N.A., TD, 2024, 29 February:A3).

The Rev. Larry Austin was installed as the pastor of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church on September 25, 1994. A Tallahassee native and Florida State Trooper, Rev. Austin was ordained an elder and served as pastor of Swain Bethel Primitive Baptist Church 1990-92. He was officially installed as pastor-in-charge on January 19, 1992. Clinton Smith of Testerina served as the moderator. He returned to Testerina later in 1992 to assist Rev. Hill, who was selected to be Testerina pastor in April 1994. The installation included a Sunday morning service with the Rev. Ronald Rackley and the St. Peter Male Chorus, an afternoon service with the Rev. Matthew Rogers and the St. Stevens Primitive Baptist Church of Gretna, and an evening musical concert led by Jason Wiggins and the church's youth department (N.A., TD, 1992, 18 January:45; N.A., TD, 1994, 24 September:21)

Adding additional insight into the church's early history and physical development is a Works Progress Administration (WPA) Church Inventory Form that was completed for Testerina Church on April 4, 1938. According to the four-page survey, taken by Mary Lucile Cook, the church was organized in 1871, and Moses Vaughn was the first pastor of the church, whose dates of tenure were 1871-79. A description of the church sanctuary indicates that it was erected in 1910 and was a "plain, rectangular, wooden structure; painted white" with "a bell in small steeple on front." According to the interview, the present clergyman was J. C. Hilliard, who had begun his tenure in 1935. Assisting with the completion of the form was Joseph Austin, who was a deacon (Works

Progress Administration, Historical Records Survey. Testerina Baptist Church. 1871. State Archives of Florida, *Florida Memory*).

A deed executed April 23, 1956, conveyed the 1.1-acre property upon which the church sits, from Jeanne K. Fleischmann to Charlie Austin, Ed Austin, Jr., and Ivory D. Vaughn “in fee simple forever, for the use, benefit and behoof of the Testerina Primitive Baptist Church . . .” for and in consideration of 10.00 (LCC 1956:DB 203:63).

Leon County Property Appraiser records show that the most recent sanctuary was built in 1960. A set of photos from the Florida Folklife Program indicates that the current brick sanctuary was erected in 1961. Congregants believe there is a time capsule located in the cornerstone of the present church. Figure 16 is a photo of the church, believed to be from the early 1950s, as a wood-frame weatherboard-clad building. A notice in the *Tallahassee Democrat* on Saturday, May 11, 1968, mentioned a “first anniversary celebration” at the church. The subject of the event was not mentioned, but it may have been a church renovation. A candlelight service was held the following Thursday night, and then, on Sunday, the Rev. Leroy Thompson spoke at a special observance, which was followed by “sacred music” and refreshments (N.A., TD, 1968, 11 May:5).



Figure 16. Testerina Primitive Baptist Church, early 1950s.

Whether worshipping in an arbor, in a simple weatherboard-sided church, or in a brick sanctuary with stained-glass windows, the members of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church have been a blessing to the Tallahassee community through the sharing of their spiritual gifts. They would never boast of their good works, but by perusing the local newspapers one may read about their service to the community, their fellowship with other Christians, and their commitment to God. From 1949 to present, the newspaper record of Testerina shows a congregation involved in celebrations, special events, and their musical ministry.

As mentioned earlier, Rev. Hill started the church’s first two choirs after he first became pastor of Testerina. The choirs of Testerina have had a rich tradition of providing inspiration through their spirituality for the past 75 years. Church announcements for activities and events at Testerina span

several decades in the *Tallahassee Democrat* newspaper. Musical performances are frequently found in the digitized versions of the newspaper, as found online.

The Men's Chorus celebrated their first anniversary on Saturday, April 27, 1963, with an evening concert at the church. The Rev. Jeremiah Gee delivered their anniversary sermon the following day. They sponsored a musical concert at the church on Sunday evening, February 7, 1965. The next year another newspaper notice announced a special guest speaker, Rev. Ernest Ferrell, at Testerina, for whom the Men's Choir provided accompaniment. The Rev. Ferrell was widely known in the area as a dynamic, inspiring Gospel preacher. He was a Lincoln High School graduate of 1962 and had been recently called to the ministry. He was a member of Testerina who made visits to churches in Tallahassee and throughout the state. He was also a member of a local group called The Walls of Zion. Proceeds from free-will offerings made during his visit to Testerina on November 7, 1965, benefited the church Usher Board (N.A., TD, 1963, 27 April:1; N.A., TD, 1965, 6 February:2; N.A., TD, 1965, 6 November:2; N.A., TD, 1966, 5 March:3).

On September 3, 1967, the church hosted a Gospel Music Concert, sponsored by Choir No. 2, that featured music from 20 choirs and gospel singing groups – there was no admission, and door prizes were given away. Choir No. 1 sponsored a musical program at the church on Sunday, October 6, 1968. Testerina hosted a combined choir performance with special vocalists on Sunday, June 28, 1970. Testerina choir members performed in a large benefit for Funders, Inc., which helped children in need, on May 2, 1971, at Doak Campbell Stadium. They were part of Florida A&M University's 200-voice Community Choir, which had choir members from three denominations in Leon and Gadsden County. On Sunday, April 2, 1972, Choir No. 1 celebrated their 22nd anniversary by performing during the 11 a.m. service. During the afternoon "gospel sing," the Male Choir, the three numbered choirs of Testerina, and the Interdenominational Choir of Tallahassee performed. Testerina's Choir No. 2 hosted the featured singer, Frances Hicks of Pensacola, at the annual gospel festival on Sunday, September 3, 1972. The General Messengers of Thomasville, Georgia, also performed. The East Hill Interdenominational Choir Union was held Sunday, March 27, 1977, at Testerina (N.A., TD, 1967, 26 August; N.A., TD, 1968, 5 October; N.A., TD, 1970, 27 June:16; N.A., TD, 1971, 29 April:17; N.A., TD, 1972, 1 April:7; N.A., TD, 1972, 2 September:6; N.A., TD, 1977, 27 March:6).

At Testerina's 106th anniversary celebration, Sunday, July 24, 1977, the focus was on the children. The Sunday School Hour featured a "Mini Children's Extravaganza," and in the afternoon the "100 Voice Children's Choir" sang and performed a skit, "All of God's Children." The Rev. Joseph Hargrett of Orlando was the guest minister. Testerina Choir No. 1 sang at the Munree Pallbearer Lodge anniversary celebration at Testerina Church on April 21, 1991. On Sunday November 1, 1992, Testerina Choir No. 3 participated in the youth group anniversary at Mount Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church. Revival '94 Gospel Explosion was sponsored by East Spring Primitive Baptist Church in July 1994, and Testerina was one of the Primitive Baptist churches that hosted an evening in the five-day series (N.A., TD, 1977, 23 July:18; N.A., TD, 1991, 20 April; N.A., TD, 1992, 31 October:16; N.A., TD, 1994, 16 July).

Over the decades, the reputation of Testerina's musical ministry became highly respected. In 2007 the State Archives of Florida released a recording of Black gospel music entitled "Shall We Gather

at the River” in honor of Black History Month. Among the groups featured is one of the choirs from Testerina Primitive Baptist Church.

Because the Church was intertwined throughout Tallahassee’s religious community, it was not unusual for the clergy of Testerina to visit, preach, and participate in services or other activities at other churches or for other preachers and churches to visit Testerina. On Sunday, February 18, 1968, Testerina held one of its annual Fellowship Services with the Rev. W.M. Sutton and his Friendship Missionary Baptist Church of Panama City, Florida. Rev. Sutton returned with church members in February 1972 to celebrate Homecoming with Testerina. Usher Board No. 2 sponsored an evening gospel concert featuring Jacobs Chapel No. 2 and Testerina No. 2 choirs on Sunday, February 20. When Bethel AME held their Homecoming in November 1976, one of their events was a Wednesday night service on November 24 at Testerina. St. Mary’s Primitive Baptist Church No. 2 celebrated the 6th anniversary of its Young Adult Choir at the 11am service on October 7, 1984. Rev. Larry Austin visited as guest speaker, and Testerina Choir No. 1 sang during the service. When Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church at Dawkins Pond held an appreciation service for Elder Robert Gaines on May 20, 1990, the Rev. G.W. Hill was the guest minister. On February 15, 1995, Testerina Church and Rev. Austin hosted one of the several pre-installation services for Elder F.R. Rush of New Zion Primitive Baptist Church. Rev. Austin served as guest speaker at the 5th Annual Inspirational Choir Fellowship service, which was held at St. Mary’s Church on July 28, 1996. At Testerina’s Homecoming 2003, Rev. Youmans brought the Panama City church back to Tallahassee for church services on Miccosukee Road, February 23. For Easter 2005, the three Primitive Baptist Church neighbors, New Zion, Mount Olive, and Testerina had a combined morning service and Easter egg hunt hosted by New Zion on March 20. New Zion and Testerina had a combined Vacation Bible School July 30-August 3, 2007, at New Zion (N.A., TD, 1968, 17 February:5; N.A., TD, 1972, 19 February:8; N.A., TD, 1976, 20 November:10; N.A., TD, 1984, 6 October:8; N.A., TD, 1995, 4 February:12; N.A., TD, 1996, 27 July:24; N.A., TD, 2003, 22 February:28; N.A., TD, 2005, 19 March:30; N.A., TD, 2007, 12 May:34).

Testerina hosted many events, organizations, and churches in its building over the years. The 87th annual meeting of the Old West Florida Zion Orthodox Primitive Baptist Association met at Testerina October 16-21, 1956. Various community organizations participated, and the keynote address was delivered by J.W. Anderson. Testerina’s Pastor’s Aid Club presented “Youth in Action” on Sunday, April 16, 1972. Dorothy Richardson spoke at the 2 p.m. service to the youth of Testerina, and the Tallahassee Community Youth Gospel Choir performed. Also scheduled was a contest, “All in the Clubs Family.” The Old West Florida Sunday School Convention was held at Testerina June 13-18, 1972. The pre-opening session featured a “Mystery Music Extravaganza,” with performances from the choir of the convention as well as Gasdonian’s 100 Voices of Quincy. The guest choir was directed by Mrs. Betty Keaton. James Eaton, professor at Florida A&M University, was the keynote speaker at the Youth Congress Black History Program, which was held during the Old West Florida Association Church School Convention on February 1, 1992. The Old West Florida District Matrons had their annual Thanksgiving Program at the church, with Rev. Larry Austin speaking and the St. Rosa Primitive Baptist Church Male Chorus singing, on Christmas Eve 1994. Testerina held a family workshop entitled “Making Your House a Home . . . God’s Way,” on Saturday, February 5, 2000. In September 2003, the church served as one of the hosts for the city-wide recruitment campaign of the Urban League. “I want to encourage all of our

members and friends to join me by taking out a membership in this outstanding service organization.” (N.A., TD, 1956, 22 September:1; N. A., TD, 1972, 15 April:6; N.A., TD, 1972, 10 June:6; N.A., TD, 1992, 1 February:44; N.A., TD, 1994, 24 December:14; N. A., TD, 2000, 5 February:23; N.A., TD, 2003, 26 September:133).

Another way the congregation worshiped at Testerina was Dual Day, which was held the last Sunday in July. Guests would speak in the morning and afternoon services. It was first held in 1972. On Sunday, July 29, 1973, a parade was held between services, depicting women of the Bible, with Bessie Wells narrating. In 1974, Mrs. W.M. Miles spoke at the morning service while the Rev. Ira Hinson of Bethel Baptist Church preached in the afternoon. The 1980 celebration featured Johnnie B. Taylor, an instructor at Gilchrist Elementary School, speaking in the morning and Elder J. Feagin in the afternoon (N.A., TD, 1973, 28 July:7; N.A., TD, 1974, 27 July:8; N.A., TD, 1980, 26 July:15).

Only two wedding notices for Testerina Primitive Baptist Church were found in the *Tallahassee Democrat*. These occurred in 1978 and 1999. The Gaskins-Denefield wedding was on February 11, 1978. Beverly Ann Gaskins was a graduate of Godby High School and a student at the Lively Vocational Technical School, pursuing a nursing degree. James Edward Denefield was also a graduate of Godby High School. He was attending the DeVry Technology Institute in Atlanta. Rev. G.W. Hill was the officiant. A July 17, 1999, wedding was planned for Sabrina Carmita Leon to Walter Carlyle Davis. She was a 1990 graduate of Lincoln High School and an employee of Hewitt Associates LLC. He was a 1988 graduate of Hampton (Virginia) High School. He received a bachelor’s degree in computer science from Norfolk State University and was an employee of Oracle Corporation (N.A., TD, 1978, 5 February:64; N.A., TD, 1999, 4 July).

In later years, the church became involved in sports. In the 1989 city youth tournament, Testerina defeated Faith Presbyterian in the intermediate basketball league 67-48. The Testerina Primitive Baptist Church Tournament was held July 17, 1993, at the Florida A&M Softball Complex. (N.A., TD, 1989, 9 March:10; N.A., TD, 1993, 6 July:34).

In 2009 three Primitive Baptists Churches, Testerina, New Zion, and Mount Olive, were deeded the one-acre Hickory Hill Cemetery. The cemetery held 28 marked graves, dating from 1919 to 1947, and several unmarked graves. The churches help maintain the cemetery. The Hickory Hill Community, created after 1865, was a community of Black tenant farmers who lived along Miccosukee Road (N.A., TD, 2009, 21 February:7).

One event for which Testerina Primitive Baptist Church was well-known locally was the commemoration of Freedom Day. Before Juneteenth was written into law as a national holiday on June 17, 2021, the freedom of the nation’s enslaved people was celebrated nationally on February 1. This date was officially designated by President Harry Truman on June 30, 1948, and was selected because President Abraham Lincoln signed the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery, on February 1, 1865. According to newspapers, however, none of the African Americans in the Tallahassee area observed Freedom Day on February 1: they chose May 20. The February 1, 1967, *Tallahassee Democrat* noted that “there isn’t much hoopla around Tallahassee for celebration of ‘Freedom Day.’ They’re saving it for May 20.” The reason for the May 20 celebration was because on that date, in 1865, Brigadier General Edward M. McCook sent his

calvary through the countryside around Tallahassee to notify all those held in bondage that they were free. He even issued his own “emancipation proclamation,” which stated,

“In order to avoid further importunities from citizens of this vicinity, with regards to Negroes, the general commanding announces, for those who seem to be ignorant of the fact, that the President of the United States, on the 1st day of January, 1863, issued a proclamation changing the status of persons held as slaves . . .” (*Floridian and Journal*, 20 May 1865).

Testerina celebrated Freedom Day on May 20 every year with “merry picnics with dinner on the ground,” singing, drumbeating, and the “tooting of homemade reed flutes called ‘quails.’” It was “a sort of homecoming and jubilee, combined.” The 1975 event was attended by hundreds, with some attendees traveling from as far away as Los Angeles, California. After a bountiful dinner, children, teenagers, young adults, and senior citizens marched behind a big bass drum during the traditional parade (N.A., TD, 1967, 1 February:2; N.A., *The Stuart News*, 1967, 5 February; N.A., TD, 1975, 22 May:9).

Another tradition that lasted for many years at Testerina Primitive Baptist Church was Men’s Day and Women’s Day. Those were days filled with special events, music, and guest speakers. Mary J. Riley, counselor for sophomore women at Florida A&M University, was the guest speaker at Women’s Day in 1956. For 1966 Women’s Day, the guest superintendent for Sunday School was Mrs. Mable Kelly, the guest speaker for morning services was Mrs. Margaret B. Miller, librarian at Suwannee River Junior College in Madison, and Mrs. Evetta M. Cromer, a former instructor at Florida A&M University, spoke at the afternoon service. The 1967 Men’s Day had Daniel Glenn as guest Sunday School attendant. For the morning service, Dr. M.C. Williams was guest speaker, and the New Bethlehem Male Chorus provided music. Jacob Chapel Choir provided the music for the afternoon service, which was led by the Rev. T.L. Jetter and Mt. Zion of Dawkins Pond. A combined Men’s and Women’s Day occurred Sunday, July 26, 1975. Dr. C.E. Walker, Director of Sponsored Research at Florida A&M University delivered the message, “The Influence of the Christian Family in the Now Generation.” Becky Dickey spoke at Women’s Day 1998. Men’s Day in 2001 was held on July 15 (N.A., TD, 1956, 17 March:1; N.A., TD, 1966, 23 July:2; N.A., TD, 1967, 29 July:1; N.A., TD, 1975, 26 July:6; N.A., TD, 1998, 25 July:23; N.A., TD, 2001, 14 July:28).

The congregation of Testerina consisted of the salt of the earth. There were no limits for them when it came to worshipping and serving God. When it came to education and employment opportunities, however, those who lived under segregation and Jim Crow laws were severely limited. One need only read through decades of newspaper obituaries to learn that sitting in the pews at Testerina were custodians, maids, domestics workers, landscapers, nurse’s aides, cooks, food-service workers, and laborers. Deacon Emanuel K. Davis was a maintenance worker at Florida State University for many years. Pleasant Austin, who was born in 1908, was a self-employed woodsman. LeRoy Fredrick Conway, Sr., was foreman leader at the Tallahassee Department of Water & Sewer. Deacon Isaac Yant, Sr., who was born in 1899, was a farmer. Major R. “Buddy Boy” Jefferson retired as the head custodian at Fairview Middle School. Otis B. Wilson and James Wesley Austin were contractors.

Most of the “professionals” or “white collar workers” at Testerina were educators. Johnnie Mae Austin received a bachelor’s degree from Florida A&M University, a master’s degree from Florida State University, and was a member of Beta Phi Beta sorority. She served as a librarian for over 40 years with the Alachua Public Schools. Susie Harley Germon had a 30-year teaching career in Leon and Bay counties. Mrs. Irene Mills Meeks was a 1965 Florida A&M graduate who taught at Lillian Ruediger Elementary School. She was a member of the Leon County Teachers Association, Florida Teachers Association, and National Teachers Association of Childhood Education. Charlie Mae “Peggy” Fambro majored in library sciences at Florida A&M University, and Savannah Stanley retired as a librarian at Florida A&M University.

Changes resulting from the Civil Rights Movement resulted in many more employment opportunities for the members of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church. Irlies “Chuckie” Jefferson worked at the Florida Highway Patrol Training Academy. David (“Joe Joe” or “Buddy”) Barnes was a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning supervisor at Florida A&M University. Phillip Davis, Jr., worked for the Florida Department of Children and Families. Juanita “Marie” Allen Hackley, Lincoln High School Class of 1962, was initially a cosmetologist, following graduation, but she later became a nurse, working at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital for 34 years. Learnon Leon, Sr., 65, Omega Psi Phi, worked in the insurance industry for many years and served in the Leon County Sheriff’s Reserve Unit. Antonio Lorenzo Leon was a deputy sheriff with the Leon County Sheriff’s Office for 31 years. He was the first African-American Motor Officer and Trainer and was a Recognized Man of Honor by the City of Tallahassee. Deacon Elbert “Buddy” Ferrell, Sr., was a very successful entrepreneur as the owner and master chef at Ferrell’s Deli and Catering Service.

Members of Testerina Baptist Church were very involved in church life. They served in a variety of ways. Some belonged to the choirs and participated in the many musical programs. Deacon Daniel Leon, Jr., was president of Choir No. 1 and president of the East Hill Denomination Church Choir Union. Victoria E. “Vicki” Burgess, a 1973 graduate of Lincoln High School, was a talented soloist who performed in many community programs. She was a member of the Sisters of Harmony and Philadelphia Mass Choir. Besides the musical ministry, members could serve on one of the Usher Boards. Testerina had a number of organizations through which its members could serve. As mentioned above, Rev. Hillyard organized the first usher board in 1943 under his pastorate. On March 13, 1983, the church celebrated the 43rd anniversaries of Usher Board No. 1 and Usher Board No. 2. The Rev. Leroy Brown, of Macedonia AME Church in Monticello was the guest speaker while the Miles Gospel Singers provided music. The Mothers Board consisted of ladies with exceptional leadership ability. Some members served in pallbearer lodges, such as the Testerina Pallbearer Lodge, Clifford Hill Pallbearer Lodge, Munree Pallbearer Lodge No. 179, and Indian Branch Pallbearer Lodge. Sister Dosie McGee of Testerina held the position of Ushers Chaplain at the 121st Florida Primitive Baptist Convention. Held at Tallahassee April 18-22, 2022, the event was hosted by the Old West Florida Primitive Baptist Association, which consists of the 39 churches in Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, and Gulf counties (N.A., TD, 1983, 12 March:9; N.A., TD, 2022, 14 April:E3).

No matter what their background, education, or training was, the members of Testerina have always been very involved in the community. They belonged to a variety of civic and fraternal

organizations. Some of the groups that included Testerina members were the H.E. Daniels Chapter No. 132 Order of the Eastern Star, Chaires Masonic Lodge No. 259, Springfield Floral Club, Heroines of Jericho Lodge No. 245, Lady Colston Chapter No. 256 Order of the Eastern Star, Old West Florida Women's Congress, 4H Social Club, Universal Brotherhood No. 444, Elite Women's Club, Sons & Daughters of Israel Lodge, 50 Yardline Club, and Big Bend Football Officials Association. Also counted among the congregation were many military veterans.

Tuskeena School

For over 60 years the Tuskeena School was co-located with Testerina Church on Miccosukee Road. "Tuskeena" is an Otasees name, and the school may be named for Chief Tuskeena, who is mentioned in the *Daily National Intelligencer* newspaper of June 28, 1837, as a native chief who lived in West Florida. The earliest reference to Tuskeena School found in newspapers is in the *Weekly Floridian* of September 19, 1891, in which Mamie McGriff is listed as the teacher for the fall term at Tuskeena. Local newspapers and the Leon County School Board Minutes Ledger provide the names of many of the teachers who taught there over the years. The September 27, 1900, *Weekley Tallahasseean* noted that H.T. Robinson was the teacher assigned to Tuskeena School. Mrs. Robinson had a monthly salary of \$22.00 in 1901, \$20.00 in 1906, \$25.00 in 1910, and \$25.00 in 1915. The raise in 1910 was because "enrollment and attendance of Tuskeena School has greatly increased since last term." In July 1917, Lottie Wilson was appointed Tuskeena teacher at a salary of \$25.00 per month, which was raised to \$35.00 in September 1917. At the September 9, 1927, board meeting, J.W.C. Reed was appointed as the teacher at Tuskeena for the 1927-28 school year (N.A., *Daily National Intelligencer*, 1837, 28 June:2; LCSB, Minutes Ledger 1906-1923:201, 611, 622; LCSB, Minutes Ledger 1923-1931:299).

It was a big struggle for the teachers and families to suitably educate the children who attended Tuskeena. Tuskeena was a small, rural school with very limited resources. One to three teachers taught their students in a one or two room building. The attendees were not affluent: they were the children of sharecroppers, laborers, and domestics. Even the skilled laborers and craftsmen received relatively low wages. Tuskeena existed when schools throughout Leon County and the South were segregated. Although segregation was defended by those who claimed that access to goods and services was "separate but equal," one need only to examine the minutes of the Leon County School Board to see that "separate but equal" was not true. The school budget for the 1931-1932 school year was \$88,760.00 for white children and \$32,430.00 for Black children. Tuskeena and other "colored" or "Negro" schools in Leon County received less than half of what the white schools received. It is a testament to the fortitude and dedication of the New Hope Community that they were able to educate their children despite the discrimination they faced (LCSB, Minutes Ledger 1923-1931:595).

The school board appointed Robert Gordon, Altamease Edwards, and Lucille Wynn on July 6, 1937, as Tuskeena teachers for 1937-38 school year. Robert Gordon and Beatrice Norwood were appointed Tuskeena teachers for 1938-39 school year. In February 1939 Robert Gordon resigned and was replaced by Amy Jackson, who transferred from Moseley School to Tuskeena. Minutes from the August 6, 1940, board meeting show the teachers for the 1940-1941 school year to be Amy Jackson, Beatrice Norwood, and Lucile Wanza. On September 1, 1942, contracts were

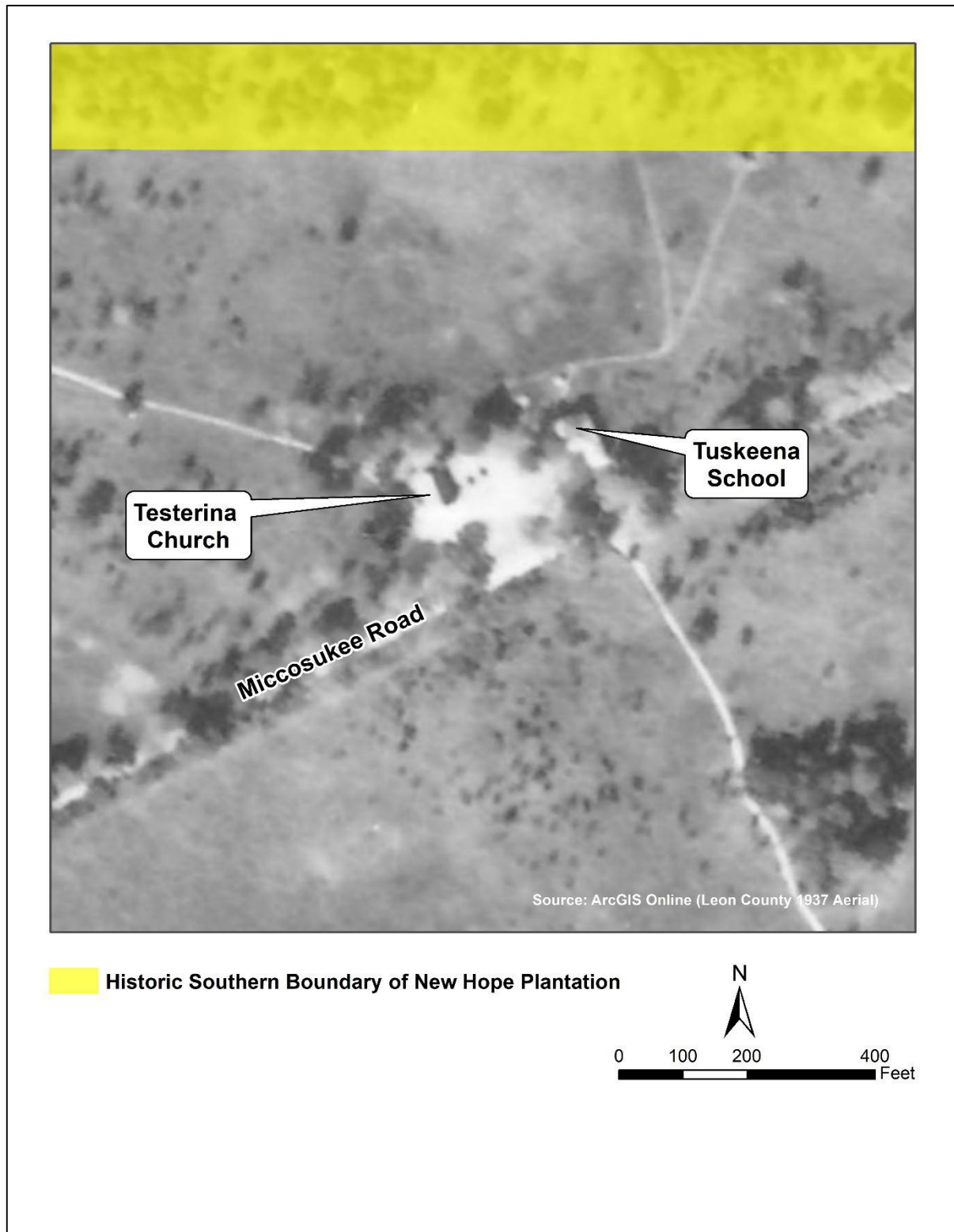


Figure 17. Location of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church and Tuskeena School in 1937. Source: ArcGIS Online.



Figure 18. Tuskeena School at original location adjacent to Testerina Primitive Baptist Church.

renewed for Amy Jackson and Beatrice Norwood at Tuskeena, which by that time had been designated school #59. In May 1947, Marie Adams and Victorine Blake were announced as Tuskeena teachers for the 1947-48 school year (LCSB, Minutes Ledger 1937-1946:86, 217, 250, 312, 376; N.A., WT, 1900, 20 December:8; N.A., WT, 1901, 3 January:4; N.A., WTD, 1906, 18 May:4; N.A., TD, 1915, 14 May:5; N.A., TD, 1947, 11 May:7).

Tuskeena served as a center of the community for not only education, but health, as well. The Leon County Health Unit conducted smallpox examinations and diphtheria and typhoid inoculations at rural schools during the summer of 1931. A total of three doses of typhoid and diphtheria were necessary, so health staff visited Tuskeena on July 22, 29, and August 5. Tuskeena raised \$1.00 for the Tallahassee chapter of the Junior Red Cross in December 1945. The entire school system raised a total of \$275.28. (N.A., TD, 1931, 17 July:3; N.A., TD, 1945, 2 December:16).

It is unclear whether Tuskeena was rebuilt or replaced in 1936 by a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project, but the *Tallahassee Democrat* reported on September 1, 1936, that “about 10 men are engaged in building two school buildings, one at Kirksey and another at Tuskeena.” By 1946 the school was still not on city water lines, so, in 1946, the board approved the digging of wells at both Tuskeena and Barrow Hill Schools (N.A., TD, 1936, 1 September:5; LCSB, Minutes Ledger 1937-1946:495).

Tuskeena was one of 23 “negro” schools on the closure list for school consolidation in 1949. For the 1949-50 school year, six Black bus drivers were hired -- as rural schools were closed, distances to the new schools were so far that students could no longer walk to school (N.A., TD, 1949, 2 February:2; N.A., TD, 1971, 22 October:5).

Other news about Tuskeena included Rebecca Tucker and Margaret Woodbury, from the junior high level, who won the honor of representing Tuskeena and District IV in the *Tallahassee Democrat's* Negro Spelling Bee of 1950. They would be among the 30 students competing at Lincoln High School on Wednesday, April 5. The following June 2, Rebecca Louise Tucker, Margaret Elizabeth Woodberry [sic], and Essie Lee Austin graduated from Tuskeena and advanced to Lincoln High School. (N.A., TD, 1950, 2 June:6).

In 1951 newspaper articles again began discussing the closure of Tuskeena. The plan was to move the “three-room Tuskeena school to the Barrow Hill schoolgrounds.” The Leon County Board of Public Instruction placed a legal notice for accepting bids from contractors on April 10, 1951. Tuskeena, Dawkins Pond School, and Bellair School were rural schools slated for moving to other school grounds. Only one contractor submitted bids for moving the three schools: E.M. Davis of Midway requested \$10,300.00 to move all three. Bids of \$1,325.00 for the Bellair building and \$3,125.00 for the Dawkins Pond buildings were accepted by the board, but the \$5,850.00 to move Tuskeena was deferred until a committee could investigate the condition of the building. The committee consisted of Ben Willis, Kent Hall, W.T. Moore Jr., and T.B. Revell. At the May board meeting, the \$5,800.00 bid was accepted, and the construction of a rock wall beneath the relocated school for \$480.00 was also approved (N.A., TD, 1951, 4 April:1; N.A., TD, 1951, 10 April:7; N.A., TD, 1951, 16 May:3).

Mrs. Udo Fleischmann protested the moving of Tuskeena School down Miccosukee Road out of concern that trees would be cut down. She owned most of the property on the four-mile route along which the school would be transported, and she noted that when she granted right-of-way for the road to Leon County it was under the stipulation that no trees would be removed at a later date. The County Board of Commissioners assured her “that there would be a minimum of limb cutting,” and permission was granted. Also, during this time, it was decided by the school board “to restore the former site of the Tuskeena Negro school to a condition as near as possible to its original condition.” (N.A., TD, 1951, 17 May:2; N.A., TD, 1951, 24 June:2).

“This is in response to a request from Mrs. Udo Fleishmann [sic], owner of the property. She originally gave the property for school purposes, with the stipulation that it was to be returned to her when no longer used as a school site. The property reverted to Mrs. Fleishman [sic] when Tuskeena school was moved from Miccosukee road to a site on Jacksonville highway” (N.A., TD, 1951, 8 August:1).

By August 19, 1951, Tuskeena School had been moved to the Barrow Hill School site, at the corner of Crump Road and Miles Johnson Road. The school was remodeled, deep wells were drilled, and toilet facilities installed. From 1948-1953 the Leon County school system consolidated 30 African American schools, closing 16 schools while enlarging the other 14. Tuskeena was incorporated into the Barrow Hill School, which operated until 1968 (N.A., TD, 1951, 19 August:25; N.A., TD, 1953, 2 December:13; John G. Riley Center & Museum 1996).



Figure 19. Barrow Hill School Building (November 11, 1965). (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).



Figure 20. Barrow Hill School Building, side view (November 11, 1965). (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory).

New Hope/Testerina Cemetery

In June 2020, the Florida Division of Historic Resources (FDHR) conducted a preliminary assessment of the general area around Testerina Church. It was concluded at that time that ground penetrating radar (GPR) for the detection of graves was not an option due to the heavily vegetated nature of the area (Goodwin and Ackermann 2021). Three reconnaissance-level and cadaver dog surveys were conducted in the north and east area of the present church building (Call 2020; Goodwin 2021; Godwin and Ackerman 2021). During the November 2020 cadaver dog assessment,



 **New Hope Cemetery**

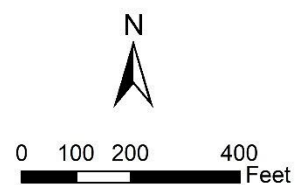


Figure 21. Location of New Hope/Testerina Cemetery (2024).

handlers suggested that the dogs' behavior indicated that the adjacent city-owned property should be evaluated (Goodwin 2021). The investigators surveyed a hilltop and slope to the north in February 2021 and noted depressions, believed to be graves, within the county-maintained Miccosukee Greenway. The dogs alerted at 18 locations during this assessment. As a result, the boundaries of the cemetery were expanded to include these locations. As noted in Goodwin and Ackermann (2021), the current boundary is not exact. Based on current information, however, the boundary provides "an overarching protective diameter" believed to have the greatest potential for interments. The current cemetery boundary extends along the east side of the church property and north of the church and is approximately 10 acres.

No remains of headstones or markers were noted during the survey. Mary Helen Austin Rogers, who attended Tuskeena School in the late in the late 1940s and early 1950s, recollected that she could see simple headstones from her classroom seat (Mary Helen Austin Rogers, personal communication 2025). She believes her ancestors are buried in the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery. Extensive research by Gloria Jefferson Anderson suggested that the cemetery is in an area north of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church, which is within the current boundary shown in Figure 21.

There are three African-American cemeteries within one mile of Testerina Church: Hickory Hill, Munree, originally known as the Fleischmann Cemetery, and Clifford Hill. According to the information on the site file form, land for the Hickory Hill and Munree cemeteries was given to tenant farmers by Ms. Udo Fleischmann. Burials ceased at these cemeteries in 1948 at her request. Local churches were assigned upkeep of the cemeteries after burials ceased.

The New Hope/Testerina Cemetery (8LE06465) was recorded with the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) by Lonnie Mann, member of the Panhandle Archaeological Society in Tallahassee (PAST), on behalf of Ms. Anderson. Her ancestors were enslaved at the antebellum plantations in the area, became tenant farmers in the late nineteenth century, and were interred at the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery. Additionally, it was determined that the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery is within the boundaries of the Welaunee Plantation Resource Group (8LE05007), and the FMSF form for the resource group was updated to reflect the inclusion of New Hope/Testerina Cemetery as a non-contributing resource. According to Mr. Mann, the cemetery was established in 1881 (Lonnie Mann, personal communication, 2021).

Currently there are signs along the Miccosukee Greenway, north of the church, alerting users of the presence of New Hope/Testerina Cemetery. The area is located on a hilltop of pines and mixed hardwoods. The understory consists of a variety of grasses and shrubs. There is no evidence of headstones or ornamental vegetation. Early burials would have probably utilized wooden headstones. If concrete or stone headstones were present, they were removed sometime in the past.

Although there are no markers or headstones to identify who is buried in New Hope/Testerina Cemetery – when or where – the cemetery is a tangible link to those who lived and worked in and around the former site of New Hope Plantation. Despite their anonymity, the cemetery is a monument and memorial to enslaved Americans and their children of the New Hope Community.

New Hope Today

The site of Testerina Church is located between the Miccosukee Canopy Road Greenway, a pedestrian trail to the north, and Miccosukee Road, an automobile throughfare, to the south. It consists of a 1.01-acre tract, upon which the church sits, and a 6.10-acre rectangle-shaped tract that wraps around the church site and runs parallel to Miccosukee Road. Miccosukee Road is now one of eight Canopy Roads designated by Leon County. The road is flanked by huge, moss-draped live oaks, red oaks, sweet gums, hickory trees, and pines that cast a protective shade over the road for almost nine miles. Limbs meet to form a towering canopy above the road. One could say that this stretch of Miccosukee Road is the physical axis of the New Hope Community. The Miccosukee Canopy Road Greenway, which runs behind the church, and possibly through the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery, encompasses, in its entirety, 501.4 acres. It is a public recreational facility that consists of seven miles of maintained trails, running from Fleischmann Road to Crump Road, through picturesque pastureland and forests.

Existing development is low density residential, open space, and agricultural. The City of Tallahassee and Leon County have taken steps to ensure development is completed with respect to the cultural and natural resources in the area. From Fleischmann Road to Crump Road, most residential development exists on the south side of the road, west of the I-10 overpass. This area is zoned mostly RP, for Residential Preservation. North of the road, around Testerina Church, the area is zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD), a type of zoning that allows for a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses in a single, master-planned community. The area north of the church, on both sides of I-10, is mostly forested.

A new roadway is being constructed by Blueprint that is designed to improve regional mobility and reduce transportation pressures on existing canopy roads. The Northeast Gateway: Welaunee Boulevard project will create a new gateway into northeast Tallahassee Leon County by extending Welaunee Boulevard five miles to Roberts Road. During extensive planning prior to design of the Northeast Gateway project, a Cultural Resources Assessment (CRA) was conducted for the six mile long, 150-foot-wide project corridor. The CRA consisted of background research and fieldwork to locate any historic resources within the Areas of Potential Effect (APE). This assessment occurred at the same time as the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery 2020-2021 cadaver dog surveys. Based on the findings from the CRA and the cadaver dog surveys, the current boundaries provide an overarching protective diameter around the area believed to be the Cemetery. Additional shovel tests conducted by Atkins, on behalf of Blueprint, to the area north of the recorded boundary of the New Hope Cemetery were negative and confirmed that the proposed roadway would avoid the cemetery area.

West of I-10, land use is agriculture/forestry north of the road, and it is zoned either CPA (Critical Planning Area) or PD (Planned Development). Northeast of I-10 and south of Miccosukee Road, the land is zoned for rural or residential use with a large portion zoned Welaunee PUD. Past Crump Road, most land is zoned for rural use, both north and south of Miccosukee Road. The thoughtful planning of future development along this transportation and recreation corridor has been essential to preserving the historical setting of Testerina Church and New Hope/Testerina Cemetery. This project conducted 77 shovel tests in a +/-1 acre area of the greenway, adjacent the cemetery. There were also seven (7) shovel tests to the west of the cemetery for a grassed parking area and path

connecting to the greenway. All shovel tests were negative.

While the exact number of burials and the names of those laid to rest in the New Hope Cemetery is not known, efforts are ongoing toward learning more about them. Descendants of those interred here have established the Descendants of Historic New Hope Cemetery (Testerina) Association, Inc. (Descendants Association). Through their research, they have created a list of surnames of those believed to be buried at the site. This list includes Ardleys, Austin, Banks, Barnes, Brims, Burney, Crewell, Crowell, Ferrell, Footman, Gaphney, Garney, Green, Griffins, Hughes, Jefferson, Jenkins, Joyce, Knight, Knowlons, Lewis, Pemberton, Penny, Reed, Rush, Thompson, Wilson, and Young.

Archival research conducted during the initial project was unable to uncover records to verify any specific burials at the site based on the list of surnames. However, subsequent to the conclusion of the project, death records which may be associated with the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery were uncovered; these are discussed in Appendix B. The founding pastor, Rev. Moses Vaughn is believed to be buried here, though no death or burial records were found. Ms. Anderson, president of the Descendants Association, provided a burial certificate for her great-great-grandmother, Marriah Jefferson, who passed away in 1937, which lists her place of burial as Testerina (Figure 22).

The certificate lists the coroner as W.M. Mitchell, likely referencing the Mitchell Funeral Home, which later became Strong & Jones Funeral Home. Established in 1945 by Thomas Strong and his wife, Mamie Johnson Simmons Strong and incorporated as Thomas Strong Funeral Home in 1947 before Thomas's untimely death that same year, Strong & Jones is Tallahassee's oldest Black-owned business. After her husband's death, Mamie enlisted Elbert W. Jones to take over as the funeral director, and on September 1, 1947, Jones purchased half the business, and thus Strong & Jones was created (Waters 2024). Still in business today, Strong & Jones was more than a funeral home; according to co-owner and daughter of Jones, Linn Ann Griffin, in its early days it also functioned as an ambulance service for Tallahassee's Black community. In an effort to find additional burial records for the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery, staff contacted Strong & Jones Funeral home. To date, no additional records have been located.

Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency and Oneida ESC Group hosted two genealogy workshops for New Hope descendants and local residents with ties to the New Hope Community in August and September 2025. The workshop was held at Eastside Branch Library, 1583 Pedrick Road in Tallahassee. Blueprint and OE staff enlisted the help of Ms. Juanita Gaston to guide the genealogy workshops. Ms. Gaston is a professional genealogist and family historian. She is the founder of JG RootsFinders, LLC, which was established in 2013 as a company that specializes in African American family histories. Her stated mission is to "help others, especially African Americans, better understand where they've come from and some of the pivotal events and circumstances that create their unique family histories," thereby finding inspiration and connection by knowing the paths of their ancestors.

Female Colored
2. If married, widowed or divorced
HUSBAND of *Willie Jefferson*
(or) WIFE of

6. DATE OF BIRTH (month, day and year)
April
7. AGE Years *57* Months Days
If LESS than 1 day, hrs. min.

8. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, weaver, bookkeeper, etc.
Cooking
9. Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, sawmill, bank, etc.
10. Date deceased last worked at this occupation (month and year)
11. Total time (years) spent in this occupation

12. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country)
Leon County, Fla.
13. NAME *Julia Jackson*
14. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country)
Leon County, Fla.
15. MAIDEN NAME *Willie Jones*
16. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country)
Leon County, Fla.
17. DEFORMANT (Address)
377 N. Colburn
18. SURVIVAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL
Testerina, Fla. April 18, 1937
19. UNDERTAKER (Address)
W. M. Mitchell, 501 N. Colburn, Leon County, Fla.
20. FILED *April 18, 1937*

21. DATE OF DEATH (month, day, and year)
4/15/37
22. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from *4/16/37*
I last saw *deceased* alive on *4/15/37* death is said to have occurred on the date stated above, at *48* m.
The principal cause of death and related causes of importance in order of onset were as follows:
Cardio-renal-vascular disease
Contributory causes of importance not related to principal cause:
Name of operation: Date of:
What last confirmed diagnosis: *arteriosclerosis* Was there an autopsy? *yes*
23. If death was due to external causes (violence) fill in also the following:
Accident, suicide, or homicide? Date of injury:
Where did injury occur? *privately*
Specify whether injury occurred in industry, in home, or in public place.
Manner of injury:
Nature of injury:
24. Was disease or injury in any way related to occupation of deceased? *yes*
If so, specify: *yes*
(Signed) *W. M. Mitchell* M.D.
(Address) *501 N. Colburn, Leon County, Fla.*

Figure 22. Burial certificate for Marriah Jefferson, stating she was interred at Testerina on April 18, 1937.

Ms. Gaston's passion and expertise made her an outstanding resource to guide the Descendants Association as they embarked on their journey to learn more about their ancestors. Those in attendance included Ms. Gloria Anderson, Ms. Mary Helen Austin Rogers, Sandi Jefferson, Wilbert Jefferson, Wyneva Austin, Carla Lippett, Harry Brown, James Vaughn, Althemese Barnes, Sade Williams, and Iranetta Williams.

The attendees were provided an introduction to genealogy that included tips on how and where to start. Handouts included worksheets and resource guides. Those at the first session were given a “homework assignment” for the next session. During the second workshop, Ms. Gaston provided the class with an array of websites, such as state archives, library resources, and subscription-based databases, through which genealogical information could be obtained. She also informed attendees that she would further facilitate their research through individual guidance, if requested. With descendants actively engaged in family research, their labors will result in identifying those who rest in peace behind the sanctuary of Testerina Primitive Baptist Church.

The most definitive document for learning who is buried at New Hope/Testerina Cemetery, however, is a death certificate that lists the burial site. Death certificates may be obtained from the Florida Department of Health. For death records less than 50 years old that contain the cause of death and full social security number, an *Application for Florida Death or Fetal Death Certificate* (Form DH727), with fee, can be mailed to Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Attention: Vital Records Section, P.O. Box 210, Jacksonville, Florida, 32202. Those completing the application must be to the descendant’s spouse or parents; adult children, grandchildren or siblings; person with a documented estate interest, or person working on behalf of the family members with affidavit proving their representation, from each descendant for whom they are

working. Anyone of legal age can request death records that omit cause of death and redact the first five social security numbers. To request those records from the Florida Department of Health, applicants need to provide the deceased's name, date or year of death, and location. More information is available at <https://www.floridahealth.gov/certificates/certificates/index.html>.

It is possible that there are no death records available for an individual. The State of Florida began keeping death records around 1877, but the first state law mandating registration of deaths was passed in 1899. Records kept before 1917 are not complete. Even so, if Descendants Association members create their family trees by using available online records, they can piece together a picture of who their ancestors were. If they can identify their ancestors, they can begin looking for their graves in the cemeteries located in the New Hope Community that have headstones or burial records. Also, although indefinite, one could ultimately conclude who is buried in New Hope/Testerina Cemetery by their absence in other cemeteries.

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APPENDIX A: Site Visit

Several site visits were conducted at Testerina Church and New Hope/Testerina Cemetery to learn more about the church and cemetery. In June 2025, the condition of both the cemetery and the Testerina Church was the subject of a field survey. Located at 5520 Miccosukee Road, Tallahassee, FL, Leon County, 32308 (Figure A-1), the church was constructed in 1961. The building is a central tower church type, a common church type constructed primarily between the 1850s and the 1930s in rural areas and small to medium size towns. There are well maintained shrubs around the building perimeter, and the front tower is flanked by palmetto plants. The structure sits on a gently rolling, well-manicured grassy lawn with densely wooded areas to the north and west. The New Hope/Testerina Cemetery is in the wooded area to the north.



Figure A-1. Testerina Primitive Baptist Church, located at 5520 Miccosukee Road, facing northwest.

The masonry church features a front facing gable roof clad in asphalt shingles with a stepped central tower with two hip roof components; a smaller hip roof section is stacked on top of a larger hip roof section. The structural system is concrete (CMU) block with brick facing set in a running bond pattern on the front (south) elevation, and the tower is also clad in brick. A marble cornerstone is located at the southeastern corner on the east elevation. It states that the church was founded in 1871 by the Rev. Moses Vaughn and the building was remodeled in 1952 by the Rev. G.W. Hill. The spelling of the church's name on the cornerstone, "Testreana," matches its spelling on the United States Geological Service (USGS) topographic map from 1954 (Figure A-2).



Figure A-2. USGS topographic map, Lafayette Quadrangle, 1954, displaying the name of the church as "Testreana Ch."

A round, louvered vent is located above a small tile or stained-glass cross on the smaller, top section of the tower. The lower section is the main entrance. It consists of two wood panel doors with a segmental arched transom window under a segmental arched brick eyebrow. The entrance is accessed via a set of brick steps with metal handrails. The overall façade is symmetrical, with the tower flanked by stained glass windows with triangular arches with brick sills and eyebrows. The side elevations display the same triangular arched stained-glass windows, evenly spaced along the east and west elevations, and divided by concrete block pilasters (Figure A-3). These windows have brick sills and a stepped brick detail above triangular arched brick eyebrows.

Towards the rear of the church are small, gabled, side wings that extend slightly from both sides of the sanctuary. They are constructed of concrete block and have windows that are the same style and design as the windows on the sides of the main block. There is also an open shed roof addition on the west elevation, supported by a single square wood post, that provides shelter for two individual secondary entrances, one of which is accessed via a set of concrete steps. The other provides Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access via a wood ramp. The rear elevation of the main structure is largely obscured by attached HVAC equipment. There is a small modern shed to the northwest corner of the church structure.



Figure A-3. West elevation of the Testerina Church, facing east.

A one-story concrete block addition is on the northeast corner of the church (Figure A-5). This addition first appears on aerial photography in 1983. It is constructed in the same style and material as the church's main block. This includes, on the addition's south elevation, the same triangular arched windows divided by concrete block pilasters. It has a side gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. There is a modern panel door at the western end of the addition. Windows on the east elevation consist of two narrow, vinyl 1/1 single-hung-sash windows with brick sills to the south side of the elevation, and one larger vinyl 1/1 single-hung-sash window with a brick sill on the north side of the elevation. There is board-and-batten in the gable end.

The north elevation of this addition has a flush metal door at its eastern corner with a concrete block and poured concrete stoop that has two poured concrete steps. This elevation also displays the concrete block pilasters present elsewhere on the structure but no decorative windows. There is a single window on this elevation that consists of an aluminum three-light awning window with a brick sill. There is a small, shed roof portion, enclosed with vertically pressed plywood, that connects the addition to the rear of the main structure at its rear elevation (Figure A-4).

The Miccosukee Canopy Road Greenway runs generally in an east-west direction north of the church; the path leads directly to the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery, providing access to the site (Figure A-6). While the exact boundaries of the historic cemetery are unknown, previous survey utilizing cadaver dogs has provided an estimated boundary of about 10 acres area north of the Testerina Primitive Baptist Church. The cemetery site is densely wooded. Vegetation consists of mixed pines and hardwoods with an understory of persimmon, smilax, waxmyrtle, beautyberry, coralbean, and other woody shrubs on a gently sloping terrain (Figure A-7). No headstones or markers were noted.



Figure A-4. Concrete block addition at the northeast corner of the east elevation of Testerina Church, facing southwest.



Figure A-5. Concrete block addition at the northeast corner of the east elevation of Testerina Church, facing north.



Figure A-6. View down the Miccosukee Greenway toward the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery, facing west



Figure A-7. New Hope/Testerina Cemetery site, facing south toward the Testerina Primitive Baptist Church

Modern signage has been installed at an unknown time to identify the cemetery location for those using the Miccosukee Canopy Road Greenway trail (Figure A-8). This is a good first step to protecting and preserving the cemetery to avoid further deterioration. During the site visit, several members of the community were observed walking the trail, which is currently open to the public until 9 pm nightly. A historical marker providing history for the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery may be a good way to further protect the cemetery, or to provide history for those using the trail.



Figure A-8. Signage denoting the presence of the cemetery for those using the Miccosukee Greenway trail, facing west.

APPENDIX B: New Hope Death Records May 2026

After the initial site visits and the creation of the main body of this report, additional archival research was conducted which uncovered six death certificates, dated between 1918 and 1937, linked to New Hope Cemetery (Table 1). While these death certificates could not definitively be verified to belong to individuals interred at the New Hope Cemetery located behind the Testerina Primitive Baptist Church, it has been determined that it is probable for at least some of these individuals.

Table 1. Death Certificates for potential New Hope/Testerina Cemetery

Name	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Place of Burial
Jackson, Ann	-	12 October 1918	New Hope Cemetery
Byrd, Daisy	-	6 December 1919	New Hope Cemetery
Burney, Sallie	2 June 1914	19 July 1920	New Hope Cemetery
Ferrell, Annie Louise	15 January 1928	29 January 1928	New Hope Cemetery
Footman, Fannie	-	29 April 1929	New Hope Cemetery
Leon, Maria	-	25 August 1937	New Hope Cemetery

A second New Hope Cemetery was identified close to the Georgia border, located off Apalachee Parkway at 11214 Sunny Hill Road, on the northwest corner of the intersection of Sunny Hill Road and New Hope Church Road, in Leon County; a site visit was conducted to confirm that these death certificates were not associated with this New Hope Cemetery. In May 2026, the site visit revealed thirty marked graves at the New Hope Cemetery north of Tallahassee. The burials date from 1942 and 2011; the oldest burial belongs to Thomas Meeks (1870-1942), and the most recent is for Bruce Meeks Sr. (June 3, 2011). Surnames at this cemetery included Meeks, Lawyer, Gibbs, and Hatcher. None of the surnames on the six death certificates were identified at this New Hope Cemetery, and no evidence of unmarked burials was noted at the time of site visit, though further research would be necessary to definitively establish if this is the case. The New Hope CME Church building is still present but has been abandoned and is in a deteriorated condition. The graves in the adjacent cemetery, located just north of the church, continue to be maintained and recent offerings were present on several of the burial sites.

The team contacted Ms. Gloria Jefferson Anderson, president of the Descendents of Historic New Hope (Testerina) Association, Inc. Ms. Anderson reviewed the uncovered death certificates and recognized surnames that might be associated with families that had been part of the Old Testerina Church and the Old Indian Branch (St. Peter) Church. Information specific to individual death certificates is detailed further below.

Ms. Anderson also stated that her group has collected oral histories from many of the Testerina elders before they had passed away, and that some elders are still living. While oral histories should always be corroborated, obtaining these histories and conducting interviews with the remaining elders could be of value for future research into the New Hope community and the identification of those interred at the New Hope/Testerina Cemetery.

State Board of Health of Florida
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

1 PLACE OF DEATH
County Leon
Precinct Bradfordville
Inc. Town Bradfordville
City Bradfordville

REGISTRATION DISTRICT NO. 26087
PRIMARY REGISTRATION DIST. NO. _____

FILE NO. 11586
Registered No. 65

2 FULL NAME Ann Jackson

3 SEX Female 4 COLOR OR RACE Black 5 MARRIAGE STATUS Married
(Write the word)

6 DATE OF BIRTH _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

7 AGE about 55
(Month) (Day) (Year)

8 OCCUPATION Farm Laborer
(a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work
(b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer)

9 BIRTHPLACE (State or country) Florida

10 NAME OF FATHER Joe Smith
11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country) Florida
12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Harriet Hawkins
13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country) Florida

14 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE
(Informant) Lee Jackson
(Address) Wich

15 DATE OF DEATH Oct 12, 1918
(Month) (Day) (Year)

16 I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from _____, 191____, to _____, 191____,
that I last saw h_____ alive on _____, 191____,
and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at _____m.
The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows:
Dropsy

17 CONTRIBUTORY (Secondary) See Jackson
(Signed) Lee Jackson (Address) Fullerton St. Re
(Date) Oct 13, 1918

* State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH, or, in deaths from VIOLENT CAUSES state (1) MEANS OF INJURY; and (2) whether ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, or HOMICIDAL.

18 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (For Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents)
At place of death _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. In the State _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.
Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? _____
Former or usual residence _____

19 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL New Hope Cemetery DATE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL Oct 13, 1918
20 UNDERTAKER Frank Hall ADDRESS Fullerton St. Re
Da RA

Form V. S. No. 4 60m 3-13-16 D.

WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD
N. B.—Every item of information should be carefully supplied. AGE should be stated EXACTLY. PHYSICIANS should state CAUSE OF DEATH in full terms, so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important. See instructions on back of certificate.

Figure 1. Death Certificate for Ann Jackson, 1918

Summary:

Ann Jackson is listed on her death certificate as a Black, married female aged approximately 55 years of age at the time of her death. Her occupation is listed as “Farm Laborer.” She may have been born into slavery and tying her to one of the area plantations could be helpful in any future research endeavors. She was born to Joe Smith and Harriet Hawkins and lived in the Bradfordville Precinct. She died on October 12, 1918.

WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD

N.B.—Every item of information should be carefully supplied. AGE should be stated EXACTLY. PHYSICIANS should state CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms, so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important. See instructions on back of certificate.

STATE OF FLORIDA
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

1 PLACE OF DEATH
County Leon

Precinct _____
(Write name, not number)

Inc. Town _____
or _____
City _____ (Mo. _____ St. _____ Ward _____)

2 FULL NAME Daisy Byrd

(a) Residence No. _____ St. _____ Ward _____
(Usual place of abode)

Length of residence in city or town where death occurred 86 yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. (If nonresident give city or town and State)

How long in U. S., if of foreign birth? _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
3 SEX <u>Female</u>	4 COLOR OR RACE <u>col</u>	5 MARRIAGE STATUS <u>widow</u> (Write the word)	16 DATE OF DEATH (Month, day and year) <u>12/6</u> 19 <u>19</u>	
5a If married, widowed, or divorced <u>Widowed</u> (or) WIFE of <u>Wash Byrd</u>			17 I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from _____ 19____ to _____ 19____ that I last saw him _____ alive on _____ 19____ and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at _____ m. The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows: <u>old age</u> <u>(no doctor)</u>	
6 DATE OF BIRTH _____ (Month) _____ (Day) _____ (Year)			18 Where was disease contracted if not at place of death? _____ Did an operation precede death? _____ Date of _____ Was there an autopsy? _____ What test confirmed diagnosis? _____ (Signed) <u>W. B. Cully</u> 19 (Address) _____	
7 AGE <u>86</u> yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. IF LESS than 1 day, _____ hrs. or _____ min.			*State the Disease Causing Death, or in deaths from Violent Causes, state (1) Means and Nature of Injury, and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal, or Homicidal. (See reverse side for additional space).	
8 OCCUPATION OF DECEASED (a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work _____ (b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer) _____ (c) Name of employer _____			19 Place of Burial, Cremation, or Removal <u>New Hope Cemetery</u> Date of Burial or Removal <u>12/7</u> 19 <u>19</u>	
9 BIRTHPLACE (city or town) _____ (State or country) <u>Leon Co</u>			20 UNDERTAKER <u>J. R. Laster</u>	
10 NAME OF FATHER <u>don't know</u>				
11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (City or town) _____ (State or country) <u>don't know</u>				
12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <u>don't know</u>				
13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country) <u>Leon Co.</u>				
14 Informant (Address) <u>Wash Byrd</u>				
15 Filed <u>2-10</u> , 19 <u>20</u> <u>W. B. Cully</u> Registrar				

Form V. S. No. 4 20 M-9-19

Figure 2. Death Certificate for Daisy Byrd, 1919

Summary:

Daisy Byrd is listed on her death certificate as a colored female who was widow to Wash Byrd. She was aged 86 years at the time of her death and died of “old age (no doctor).” She was born in Leon County and the identity of both mother and father are listed as “don’t know.” It is possible that she was born into slavery, and tying her to one of the area plantations could be helpful in any future research endeavors. She died on December 6, 1919.

STATE OF FLORIDA
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

1 PLACE OF DEATH
County Leon
Precinct Bradfordville
Incl. Town _____
City _____

Registration District No. 2664
Primary Registration Dist. No. 26087

File No. 7949
Registered No. 126

[If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number]

2 FULL NAME Sallie Burney
(a) Residence. No. _____ St. _____ Ward _____
(Usual place of abode)
(If nonresident give city or town and State)
Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. mos. ds. How long in U. S., if of foreign birth? yrs. mos. ds.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3 SEX Female 4 COLOR OR RACE Black 5 SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED (Write the word) _____
5a If married, widowed, or divorced HUSBAND of (or) WIFE of _____

6 DATE OF BIRTH June 2, 1914
(Month) (Day) (Year)
7 AGE 6 yrs. 1 mos. 17 ds. IF LESS than 1 day, hrs. or min. _____

8 OCCUPATION OF DECEASED
(a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work none
(b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer) _____
(c) Name of employer _____

9 BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country) Florida

PARENTS
10 NAME OF FATHER Sandy Burney
11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (City or town) (State or country) Florida
12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Lujanie Burquet
13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (City or town) (State or country) Florida

14 Informant (Address) John Oliver Tallahassee Fla.

15 Filed July 20, 1920 by A. J. Whitehead Registrar
Form V. B. No. 4-15M-1-20-19

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
16 DATE OF DEATH (Month, day and year) July 19, 1920
17 I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from _____, 19____ to _____, 19____
that I last saw him alive on _____, 19____
and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at _____m.
The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows: acute indigestion
(duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.
CONTRIBUTORY (Secondary) _____
(duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.
18 Where was disease contracted _____
if not at place of death? _____
Did an operation precede death? _____ Date of _____
Was there an autopsy? _____
What test confirmed diagnosis? _____
(Signed) _____ M. D.
19 (Address) _____
*State the Disease Causing Death, or in deaths from violent causes, state (1) Means and Nature of Injury, and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal, or Homicidal (See reverse side for additional space).

19 Place of Burial, Cremation or Removal New Hope Cemt. Date of Burial or Removal July 20, 1920
20 UNDERTAKER Neil Haynes ADDRESS Tallahassee Fla.

Figure 3. Death Certificate for Sallie Burney, 1920

Summary:

Sallie Burney is listed on her death certificate as a Black female born on June 2, 1914 and lived in the Bradfordville Precinct. She was aged 6 years, 1 month, and 17 days at the time of her death. Sallie was born to father Sandy [sic] Burney and mother Lujanie [sic] Burquet [sic]. She died on July 19, 1920. Her cause of death is listed as “acute indigestion.”

FLORIDA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH 1131

State File No. ~~1131~~

Registered No. 346

1 PLACE OF DEATH
County Leon District No. 26-01
Precinct Tallahassee Precinct No. 26512
(Write name, not number)
City or Town No. 26512
City _____ St. _____ Ward _____
(If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number)

2 FULL NAME Annie Louise Ferrell
(a) Residence No. Leon 60 St. _____ Ward _____
(Usual place of abode)
Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. mos. ds. How long in U. S., if of foreign birth? yrs. mos. ds.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3 SEX F. 4 COLOR OR RACE col. 5 Single _____ Married _____
Widowed _____ Divorced _____ WRITE THE WORD

5a If married, widowed, or divorced
HUSBAND of _____
(or) WIFE of _____

6 DATE OF BIRTH Jan 15 1928
(Month) (Day) (Year)

7 AGE _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds. IF LESS than 1 day, hrs. min.

8 OCCUPATION OF DECEASED
(a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work _____
(b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer) _____
(c) Name of employer _____

9 BIRTHPLACE (city or town) Leon Co. Fla.
(State or country)

10 NAME OF FATHER Robert Ferrell
(City or town)

11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER Leon Co.
(State or country)

12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Hallie Vaughn
(City or town)

13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER Leon Co.
(State or country)

14 Informant Robert Ferrell
(Address)

15 Jan 30 1928 Gordon Long
Filed _____ V. S. No. 4 Registrar

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

16 DATE OF DEATH (Month, day and year) Jan 29 1928

17 I HEREBY CERTIFY That I attended deceased from _____ 19____ to _____ 19____
that I last saw him alive on _____ 19____
and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 20 m.
The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows:
injury at birth
(duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.

CONTRIBUTORY (Secondary) _____
(duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.

18 Where was disease contracted _____
if not at place of death? _____
Did an operation precede death? _____ Date of _____
Was there an autopsy? _____
What test confirmed diagnosis? _____
(Signed) Gordon Long - L. B. Long
19 (Address) _____

*State the Disease Causing Death, or in deaths from Violent Causes, state (1) Means and Nature of Injury, and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal, or Homicidal. (See reverse side for additional space.)
1618

19 Place of Burial, Cremation, or Removal _____ Date of Burial or Removal Jan 30 1928

20 UNDERTAKER Art Lofton
ADDRESS _____

N.B. - Every item of information should be carefully supplied. AGF should be listed EXACTLY. PHYSICIAN should state CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms, so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important. See instructions on back of certificate.

Figure 4. Death Certificate for Annie Louise Ferrell, 1928

Summary:

Annie Louise Ferrell is listed on her death certificate as a female colored child born on January 15, 1928 in the Tallahassee Precinct to Robert Ferrell and Hallie Vaughn (maiden name). Annie died just two weeks later on January 29, 1928 with the cause of death listed as “injury at birth.”

According to information provided by Ms. Anderson, Hallie Vaughn, mother to Annie Louise Ferrell, was the daughter of Moses Vaughn, founding preacher of the Testerina Church (Anderson 2026). According to the Find a Grave website, Hallie Vaughn Ferrell (1909-1988) and husband Robert Ferrell Sr. (1906-1953) are both interred at Clifford Hill Cemetery. The headstone for the Ferrells includes the monikers “mother” and “father,” respectively. The website lists an associated grave for son, Clarence Ferrell (1941-2020), but no other burials for additional children at Clifford Hill Cemetery (Find a Grave 2026).

**FLORIDA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS**

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

1 PLACE OF DEATH
County Leon District No. 26-01 State File No. 7227
Precinct 6 Precinct No. _____ Registered No. 606
(Write name, not number)
or Inc. Town _____ City or Town No. 26067 Ward _____
City _____ No. _____ St. _____ (If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number)

2 FULL NAME Fannie Footman
(a) Residence, No. _____ St. _____ Ward _____
(Usual place of abode)
Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. mos. ds. How long in U. S., if of foreign birth? yrs. mos. ds.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3 SEX Female 4 COLOR OR RACE col 5 Single m
Married, Widowed, or Divorced
5a If married, widowed, or divorced HUSBAND of (or) WIFE of _____
6 DATE OF BIRTH _____ (Month) _____ (Day) _____ (Year)
7 AGE 42 yrs. mos. ds. IF LESS than 1 day, hrs. min.

8 OCCUPATION OF DECEASED
(a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work Housewife
(b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer)
(c) Name of employer

9 BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country) Leon
10 NAME OF FATHER Robert Lane (City or State or country)
11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (Town) (State or country) Leon
12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER OR
13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (Town) (State or country)

14 Informant Abram Knight (Address)
15 Filled June 10, 1929 by Lordon Long Registrar

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

16 DATE OF DEATH (Month, day and year) 4/29 1929
17 I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from 4/29 1929 to 4/29 1929 that I last saw her alive on 4/29 1929 and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 9 P. m.
The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows:
Paralysis
(duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.
CONTRIBUTORY nephritis
(Secondary) (duration) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ ds.
18 Where was disease contracted _____ if not at place of death?
Did an operation precede death? _____ Date of _____
Was there an autopsy? _____
What test confirmed diagnosis? _____ (Signed) J. E. Calver M. D.
19 (Address) Tallahassee
*State the Disease Causing Death, or in deaths from Violent Causes, state (1) Means and Nature of Injury, and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal, or Homicidal. (See reverse side for additional space.)
20 Place of Burial, Cremation, or Removal New Hope Date of Burial or Removal 4/30 1929
20 UNDERTAKER Abram Knight ADDRESS _____

NOTE: Every item of information should be carefully supplied. AGE should be stated EXACTLY. PHYSICIANS should state CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms, so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important. See instructions on back of certificate.

Figure 5. Death Certificate for Fannie Footman, 1929

Summary:

Fannie Footman is listed as a married, colored female on her death certificate aged 42 years old at the time of her death. Her occupation is listed as that of a housewife. Her father is listed as Robert Leon. Ms. Footman died on April 29, 1929, and her cause of death is listed as paralysis for a duration of two years.

According to information provided by Ms. Anderson, the Leon family are members of the descendants of Testerina; it is possible that Ms. Footman and her father, Robert Leon, are ancestors to the Leon's associated with the descendants of Testerina (Anderson 2026).

FLORIDA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

1. PLACE OF DEATH
County Leon District No. 26-01
Precinct (Write name, not number) Precinct No.
or Inc. Town City or Town No. 26511
City Tallahassee No. St. Ward
(If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number)
Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. mos. ds. How long in U. S. of foreign birth? yrs. mos. ds.

2. FULL NAME Maria Leon (Leon)
(a) Residence: No. Old St. Augustine Road St. Ward
(Usual place of abode) (If nonresident, give city or town and State)

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3. SEX Female 4. COLOR OR RACE Negro 5. Single, married, widowed or divorced (write the word) Single
6a. If married, widowed or divorced HUSBAND of (or) WIFE of
6. DATE OF BIRTH (month, day and year)
7. AGE Years 48 Months Days If LESS than 1 day, hrs. or min.
8. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, sawyer, bookkeeper, etc. House Work
9. Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, sawmill, bank, etc.
10. Date deceased last worked at this occupation (month and year) 11. Total time (years) spent in this occupation
12. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country) Leon County, Fla.
13. NAME Robert Leon
14. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country) Leon County, Fla.
15. MAIDEN NAME Cherry Hunter
16. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country) Leon County, Fla.
17. INFORMANT Robert Miles (Address) Tallahassee, Fla.
18. BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL Place New Hope Home Date Aug. 26, 1937
19. UNDERTAKER Wm. Mitchell (Address) 551 W. Carolina St.
20. FILED Aug. 28, 1937 Edwin Reag Local Registrar.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

21. DATE OF DEATH (month, day, and year) Aug 25 1937
22. HEREBY CERTIFY That I attended deceased from March 12 1937 to March 12 1937
I last saw her alive on March 12 1937 death is said to have occurred on the date stated above, at 5:30 p.m.
The principal cause of death and related causes of importance in order of onset were as follows:
Arteriosclerosis Date of onset
Cardiac Renal Vascular Disease Date of onset
Contributory causes of importance not related to principal cause:
Local Infection
Arteriosclerosis
Name of operation Date of
What test confirmed diagnosis? Was there an autopsy?
23. If death was due to external causes (violence) fill in also the following: Accident, suicide, or homicide? X Date of injury 19
Where did injury occur? (Specify city or town, county, and State)
Specify whether injury occurred in industry, in home, or in public place.
Manner of injury
Nature of injury
24. Was disease or injury in any way related to occupation of deceased? No
If so, specify
(Signed) A. O. Campbell M.D.
(Address) Tallahassee, Fla.

S. No. 4

Figure 6. Death Certificate for Mary Leon, 1937

Summary:

Maria Leon is listed as single, female negro on her death certificate. She was approximately 48 years of age at the time of her death. Ms. Leon's occupation is listed as that of housework. She was born to Robert Leon and Cherry Hunter (maiden name) in Leon County. Her residence is listed as Old St. Augustine Road, which no longer appears to be extant under this name. She died of cardiovascular disease on August 25, 1937.

According to information provided by Ms. Anderson, the Leon family are members of the descendants of Testerina; it is possible that Maria and her father, Robert Leon, are ancestors to the Leons associated with the descendants of Testerina (Anderson 2026).

References for Appendix B

Anderson, Gloria Jefferson

2026 “New Hope Death Records” received by Sarah McDonald. 1 May 2026, Email Correspondence

Find a Grave

2026 Hallie Vaughn Ferrell, website <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/70738919/hallie-ferrell>.
Accessed 13 May 2026.