

The Quail Plantations of the Thomasville- Tallahassee-Albany Regions*

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The stretch of highway (U.S. 319) between Thomasville, Georgia, and Tallahassee, Florida, must rank as one of the more pleasant drives to be found in the southeastern United States. The highway passes through quail plantation country, a varying forest-grassland country which ranges from beautiful longleaf pine and grass park-like landscapes to dense hardwood hammocks. In contrast to the land north of Thomasville, little in the way of agricultural cultivation is evident and farm houses and buildings are rare. On the other hand, wildlife, particularly birdlife, abounds. The variety and abundance of birds, in fact, are major reasons explaining the beautiful landscapes one finds today.

Driving through the area, one need only slow down a bit to notice many signs posting the names of plantation properties and their owners, some of the wealthiest families in the nation. In 1976, there were 50 separate northern owners who, between them, owned seventy-one separate plantation properties encompassing approximately 300,000 acres in an area stretching 35 miles north and south and 50 east and west between Thomasville and Tallahassee.

*I am indebted to Tall Timbers Research, Inc. for funds that supported my research on the quail plantations during the summers of 1973-1977. This paper presents a few highlights from a forthcoming book to be published under Tall Timbers auspices. A particular expression of gratitude is due E. V. Komarek, Roy Komarek and other staff members who gave so freely of their time.

In general, these plantations meet the criteria used by Merle Prunty in defining and describing what he called “woodland plantations” in his classic 1963 study “The Woodland Plantation As a Contemporary Occupance Type in the South.”¹ The plantations are large and located in areas in the South with a plantation tradition. They also feature a distinct division of labor and management functions, boast product specialization, and present a distinctive spatial organization of settlements and land use reflecting centralized control. In keeping with Prunty’s definition, the plantations also look to wood products and field crops and/or beef cattle for income. But not all “woodland plantations” are “quail plantations.” Many such properties are owned by local people rather than northerners and quail hunting is a minor activity on the property at best.

A quail plantation in the context of this study, then, is defined as a large property whose most important product over the years has been quail for the hunting pleasure of their northern owners and their guests. In modern times, the sale of timber and cash crops has grown in importance as the plantations have come to be operated as businesses, but most of the land is still being managed so as to continue to produce an outstanding crop of quail for their owners. The designation “northern owner” has been stretched to include several absentee owners who call such states as Texas, Tennessee, and Missouri home as well as several individuals of northern origin who now call the Thomasville-Tallahassee region home such as several members of the Chubb and Phipps families. Most of the owners, however, are individuals who have their permanent homes in the northern United States. The plantations are concentrated in the northern portions of Leon and Jefferson counties in Florida and the southern half of Thomas County and southeastern part of Grady County in Georgia (Fig. 1).

In addition, there were 19 northern owners in the Albany area, 40 to 60 miles north-northwest of Thomasville, who owned in excess of 150,000 acres in another 20 plantations for a grand total of 91 plantations encompassing over 450,000 acres in the 2 regions. The Albany region plantations are heavily concentrated in Baker and Dougherty counties with smaller acreages in neighboring counties (Fig. 2). The concentrations are so remarkable as to suggest questions.

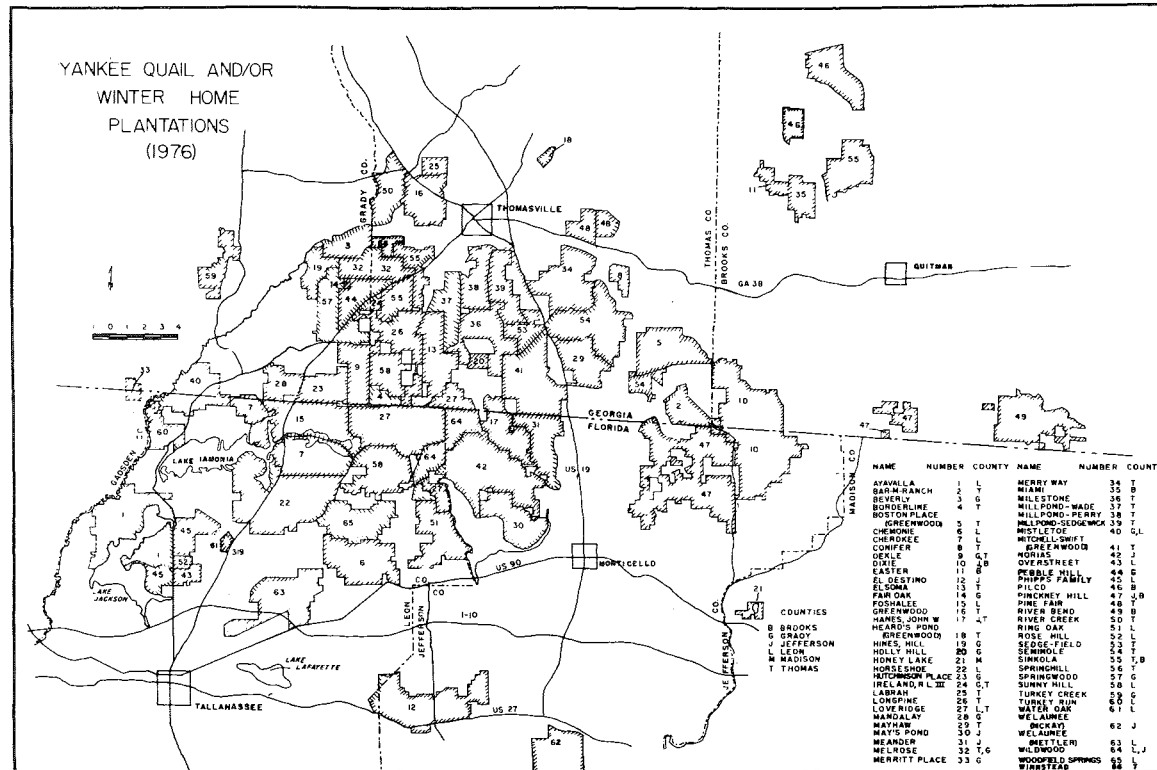


Fig. 1. Quail Plantations in the Thomasville-Tallahassee region.
Sources: Georgia-Florida Field Trial Club Map, privately published, and tax books for Thomas, Grady, Leon, Jefferson and Brooks counties.

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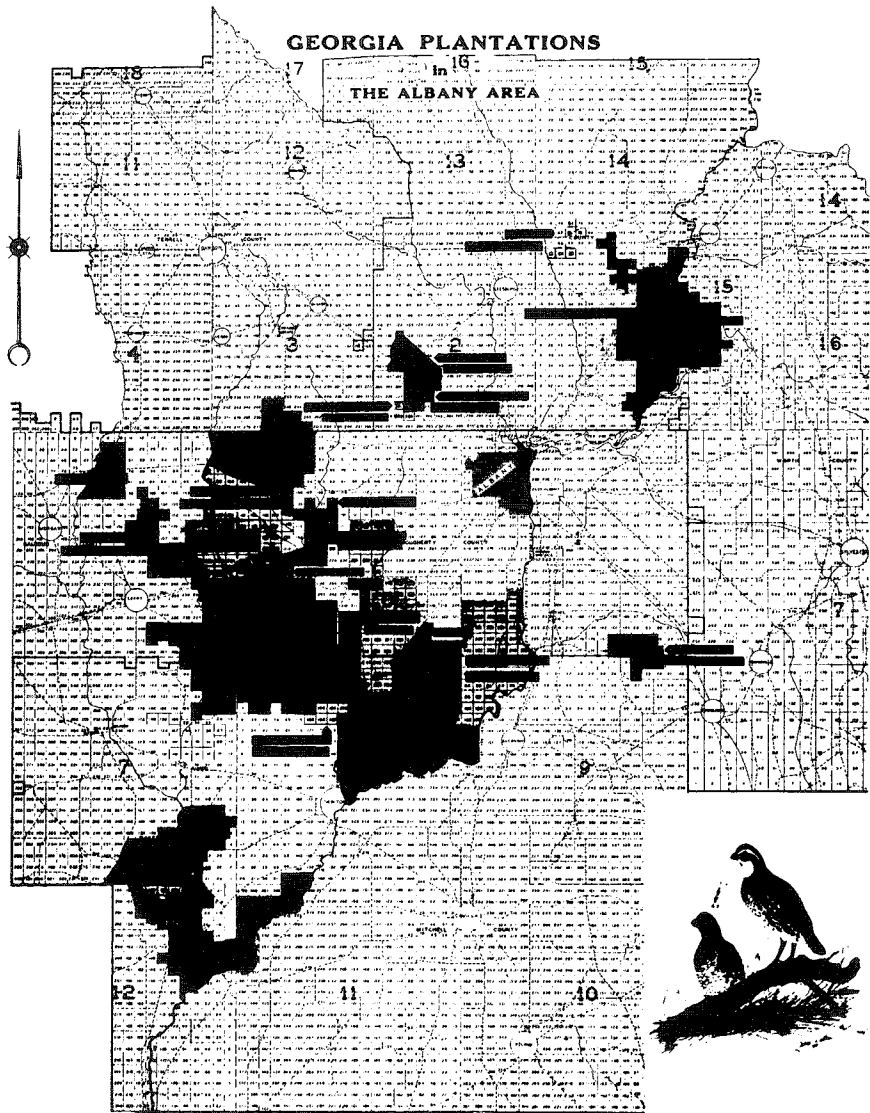


Fig. 2. Georgia plantations in the Albany area.

Source: Map privately published by Richard Tift, Albany, Georgia.

Why are these plantations found where they are?

What natural environmental factors might help to explain the distribution of the plantations?

What cultural factors would help to explain why some of America's wealthiest families chose to develop 'quail plantations' and winter homes in the region?

How does the quail plantation type of land use and ownership compare with forestry and agriculture in employment, property taxes paid, services received, and services rendered?

What are the present trends in land use and land ownership of the plantations?

What is the probable future of the plantations?

An examination of such environmental factors as weather, climatic conditions, geologic history, landforms, and drainage are not particularly revealing except as they may have affected soils. Such conditions vary little between the quail plantation areas and the bordering countryside without quail plantations. Soils, on the other hand, appear to have had an important bearing on the distribution of both the ante-bellum cotton plantations and the present day quail plantations.

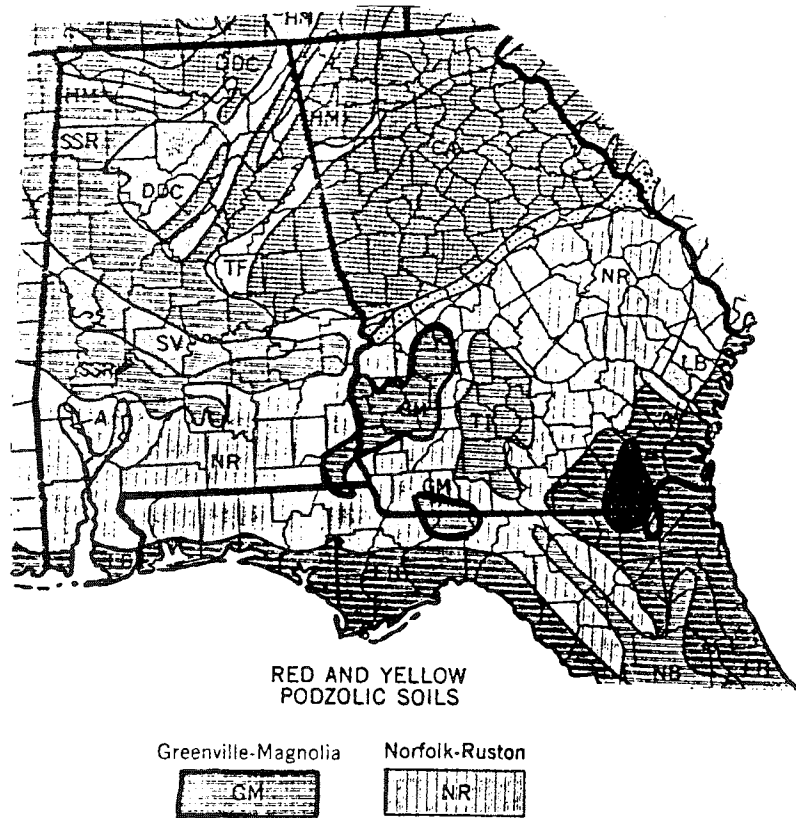
The 1938 Yearbook of Agriculture, *Soils and Men*, contains a general soils map of the United States. The map (Fig. 3) shows two distinctive areas dominated by the Greenville-Magnolia soils association—the Tallahassee red hills area between Tallahassee and Thomasville and the somewhat larger red lime lands region near Albany, Georgia. The Yearbook describes these soils as the "reddest soils in the eastern Coastal Plain . . . the strongest and most fertile soils in this part of the country . . . (and as) important cotton producing soils before the coming of the boll weevil."²

Between Thomasville and Albany lies a swath, 40 to 50 miles wide, of Norfolk-Ruston association soils which dominate much of the wire-grass country of the older Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plains stretching from Virginia to Texas. The soils are described by the 1938 Yearbook as follows:³

Climate, vegetation, and character of the soils have not favored the accumulation of organic matter; therefore, soils are light-colored, dominantly sandy in the surface portion, ranging

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SOIL ASSOCIATIONS OF SOUTHWEST GEORGIA
AND NORTH FLORIDA



The associations shown on the map represent individual types of landscape, defined according to the character of the soils that compose them and the pattern of their distribution. Local details have been submerged in order to present a general view of the features of broad significance on a small map. Each association receives its name from the dominant soil or soils in the group, but contains others of less significance not mentioned in the name. Most of them contain some Alluvial soils; some include areas of Bag soils; and several include significant areas of Lithosols and shallow soils. The more important of these variations are discussed in the text.

Fig. 3. Soil associations of southwest Georgia and north Florida.

Source: U.S.D.A. *Soils and Men*, 1938 Yearbook

from coarse sands to fine sandy loams, and are medium to strongly acid in reaction.

The soils of the geologically more recent coastal plain south of Tallahassee are predominantly thick sands laid down during the late Pleistocene Age.

It was not until after the purchase of Florida from Spain in 1821 that settlement in the region, even the Georgia portions, began in earnest. The acquisition of Florida gave southwest Georgia an easy access southward to the sea for the important cash crop of the time, cotton.

The ante-bellum planters from Virginia and the Carolinas came into southwest Georgia and north Florida looking for the redder, heavier soils. These they found and developed in both the Tallahassee red hills and red lime lands regions leaving the lighter soils in between to the small farmers. It is not implied or suggested that the planters developed the larger cotton plantations exclusively on the red soils in the region. However, the relative numbers of such plantations on the red lands as compared to adjacent lands is striking. By 1860, the contrasts in size of farms, number of slaves, and bales of cotton produced were considerable between those counties with the red soils and those counties with different soil associations. Leon County (Tallahassee) had 30 farms, Dougherty County (Albany) 28 farms, and Thomas County (Thomasville) 16 farms over 1,000 acres in size as compared to 1 farm over 1,000 acres in Mitchell, Worth, and Colquitt counties combined with their lighter soils lying between Thomas and Dougherty counties. There were no large cotton plantations in Wakulla County with its heavy sands to the south of Leon County. Fifty-one plantation owners in Leon County, 37 in Dougherty County, and 29 in Thomas County owned over 50 slaves each, while there were no owners in Colquitt County and only 2 each in Worth and Mitchell counties owning over 50 or more slaves. There were similar disparities in cotton production figures and in slaves as a percentage of total populations between the same counties (Table 1).

The lands immediately to the east and west of the Tallahassee red hills were designated by Harper as being in the geographical division he called the 'hammock belt.' He described the hammock belt as follows:⁴

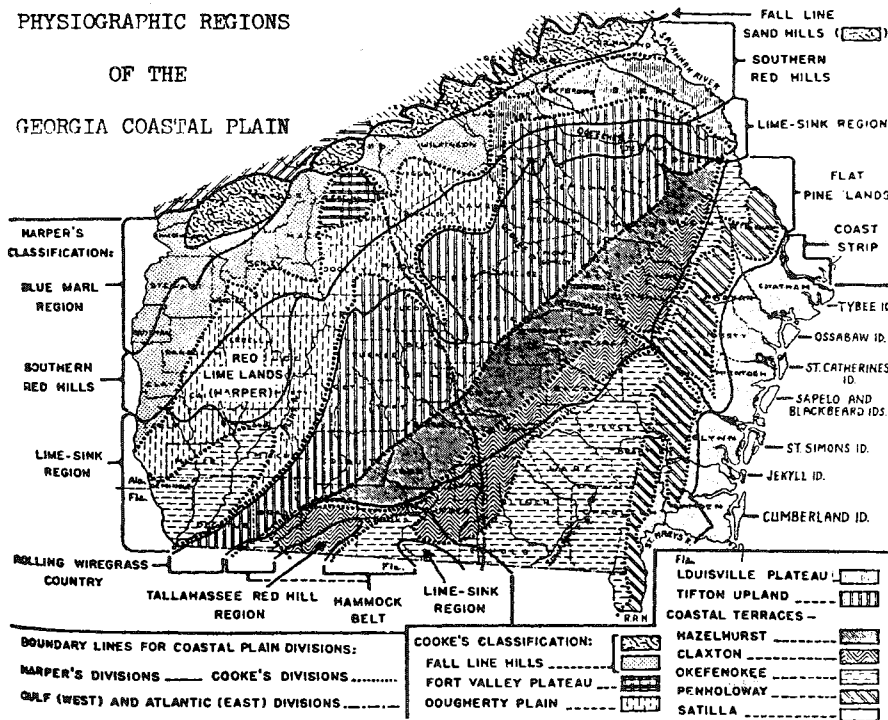


Fig. 4. Physiographic regions of the coastal plain of Georgia showing Harper's Tallahassee red hills, hammock belt, red lime lands, and rolling wiregrass country divisions. The map is the southern half of a map prepared by Robert A. Norris.
 Source: Burleigh, Thomas. *Georgia Birds*.

The hammock belt includes parts of a few of the southern tier of counties in Georgia, but is more extensive in Florida . . . The topography and soil vary greatly in short distances, from red loamy soils something like those in the red hill belt already described to flat sandy pine woods . . .

The soils are evidently more fertile on the average than those in the wiregrass country (to the north) . . .

In keeping with Harper's descriptions of the several geographic divisions (Fig. 4), the 1860 census statistics on agriculture show the hammock belt counties of Gadsden, Decatur, Brooks and Madison as having more slave holders with more than 50 slaves each, larger farms, and greater cotton production than the wiregrass counties with their Norfolk-Ruston lighter soils to the north, but significantly less than the red hills counties of Leon, Thomas and Jefferson they bordered to the east and west. Whatever the reasons, in 1860, the two distinctive red soil regions boasted the largest cotton plantations in southwest Georgia and north Florida.

Although the planters lost their slaves following the Civil War, most of them were able to keep their lands intact. During the Reconstruction Period, a new set of relationships evolved between the planters and the blacks. Tenancy, both cash and share, replaced slavery and the black populations and land holdings remained large in Leon, Thomas, and Dougherty counties. In fact, the number of large land holdings actually grew between 1860 and 1900.

Brubaker's study of large land holdings in Leon County, Florida (Table 2), using county tax records revealed that the number of holdings over 1,000 acres including non-farm acreages actually increased from 71 to 88 between 1860 and 1900.⁵ A study of the Thomas County Tax Book for 1900 showed 61 holdings vs. 16 in 1860 exceeding 1,000 acres each for a total of 149 large holdings in the two counties.⁶

All in all, then, conditions in the Tallahassee red hills region were such that there were a large number of large land holdings in the late 19th century which because of depressed agricultural prices and depleted soils were available for purchase at low prices. The patch agriculture with its abundant border cover situations and frequent burning made for an abundance of quail. Once wealthy northerners became aware of the possibilities of these lands for quail hunting, the large existing holdings became most attractive. The northerners discovered the land and its hunting possibilities largely because of the emergence of Thomasville, Georgia, as first a health resort and, then, a winter resort in the late 19th century.

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TABLE 1. Selected Census Data (Selected Georgia and Florida Counties) 1860

	Number of Farms over 1,000 Acres	Number of Slaveholders over 50 Slaves Each	Percent Slaves in Population	Bales of Cotton
<u>Red Soil Counties</u>				
Leon, FL	30	51	74	16,686
Thomas, GA	16	29	58	6,582
Dougherty, GA	28	40	73	19,580
<u>Lighter Soil Counties</u>				
<u>Wiregrass Country</u>				
Colquitt, GA	0	0	9	282
Worth, GA	0	2	23	1,657
Mitchell, GA	1	2	37	3,533
<u>Heavy Sand Soils</u>				
Wakulla, FL	0	1	41	794
<u>Hammock Belt Counties</u>				
Gadsden, FL	7	20	58	4,335
Madison, FL	7	18	55	6,438
Decatur, GA	6	20	50	7,996
Brooks, GA	4	9	52	4,406

Source: *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860.*

TABLE 2. Large Land Holdings, 1860-1900 Leon County, Florida

	1860	1875	1890	1900	Percent Change (1860-1900)
<u>Over 1,000 Acres</u>					
Number	71	80	92	88	+ 23.9
Total Acres	229,275	179,164	253,126	249,858	+ 9.0
Average Acreage	3,229	2,240	2,751	2,839	- 12.1

Source: Brubaker, *Land Classification*

The Thomasville story begins with a Thomasville physician, Thomas Spalding Hopkins, who noticed that consumption cases were extremely rare in the Thomasville area as compared to other areas of the United States. In April, 1874, Dr. Hopkins read a paper titled "The Pine Forests of Southern Georgia, Its Climate and Adaptability to the Consumptive" before the Medical Association of Georgia. He wrote of the favorable climate, dryness, good natural drainage, pine forests and concluded: "Surely a climate where consumption so rarely occurs must be a safe climate for those in whom that disease exists."⁷

Hopkins speculated further and settled on the idea that there was something basically healthy in the atmosphere, more particularly in the balsamic or terrabinthin vapors which pervaded the virgin pine forests of the region. In a letter, he wrote:⁸

. . . there is no better residence than in the interior of Georgia, where the immense pine forests might add the advantages of their exhalations to those afforded by the dryness and warmth of the climate; and where the dry air and uniform temperature in connection with the aroma of the pine would exert a highly beneficial influence.

The ideas of climatotherapy were popular at the time and many doctors practiced the art by sending their patients, particularly pulmonary tuberculosis patients, to other areas where the air supposedly had curative powers or would at least arrest the progress of the disease. Given the popularity of climatotherapy and Dr. Hopkins paper, Thomasville became a mecca for the afflicted including the ill from many wealthy northern families during the late 1870s and 1880s.

With the discovery and description of the tuberculosis bacteria in 1882, the people of Thomasville realized tuberculosis was contagious and consumption patients were no longer encouraged to come to Thomasville. But the reputation of the city as a marvelous place to spend the winter had been made and the wealthy, particularly those with other health problems, continued to come to Thomasville for the winter.

Although there had been a few earlier purchases of plantations by northerners in the region including the purchase of Live Oak Plantation north of Tallahassee by Howard S. Case of Columbia, Pennsylvania, in 1870, the lease and purchase of plantations by northerners primarily for hunting preserves appears to have really begun in a

significant way in the 1880s—those same years during which Thomasville became a major winter resort center for the wealthy. It is also interesting to note that it was during the decades of the 1870s and 1880s that modern quail hunting became possible and popular for it was during this period that the modern shotgun was developed. Breech-loading, hammerless, self-ejecting, choke-bored guns using smokeless powders replaced muzzle-loading guns. As the gun became perfected so did the dog through breeding and training. The first field trial held in America was held in 1874 in Germantown, Tennessee. The *American Field* magazine which chronicles all of the field trials was also founded in the same year, 1874.⁹ The magazine established a free registry for all sporting dogs in 1876. The clay target, or clay pigeon, and a trap to throw them were developed in 1880. The first national trapshooting tournament using live birds was held in 1885 in New Orleans.¹⁰

One cannot help but be impressed by the fact that most of these developments were contemporary with the development of Thomasville, Georgia, as a winter resort and quail hunting paradise. These developments also coincided with the explosion of private wealth which accompanied the development of the oil, steel, shipping, banking, railroad, and other 19th century enterprises.

Apparently the first northerner to buy a plantation in the Thomasville area specifically for hunting purposes was a New York physician, Dr. John T. Metcalfe, who purchased a 1,163 acre property known as Seward Plantation on January 30, 1883 from the children of Matilda C. Stevens.¹¹ In 1886, Metcalfe sold his property located about four miles east-southeast of Thomasville to David McCartney of Fort Howard, Wisconsin.¹² Over the next six years, McCartney acquired a total of approximately 8,000 acres including portions of present day Millpond Plantation located immediately to the south of Thomasville.

In the meantime, Dr. Metcalfe had not given up on the Thomasville region, for on January 31, 1887, he purchased the 1,634 acre Cedar Grove Plantation on Meridian Road from the Blackshear family and promptly renamed it Susina for his wife, Susan.¹³ An early booster of Thomasville, Metcalfe wrote a letter published in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* which praised the hunting and fishing saying, “to the angler and the sportsman, Thomas County is paradise . . . I wish more northern doctors knew what I know . . . of

this corner of the vineyard. I have just bought me a ranch of some 1,600 acres on account of the excellent shooting and fishing obtainable from it."¹⁴ Dr. Metcalfe continued acquiring additional land until 1891 when he sold Susina, then 3,200 acres, to Alfred Heywood Mason, son of James S. Mason who had founded a successful shoe polish business in Philadelphia when he hit upon the idea of mixing lard and printers ink to make a shoe polish. The son suffered from respiratory ailments and had been spending his winters in Thomasville since 1880.¹⁵

Another early plantation in Thomas County was that of John W. Masury, a New Yorker, who is reported to have been the first man to put paint up in cans. In April of 1887, Mr. Masury purchased approximately 1,506 acres from another branch of the Blackshear family and named his property Cleveland Park.¹⁶ Mr. Masury built one of the large hotels in Thomasville, named appropriately the Masury Hotel.

Selah R. Van Duzer, also of New York, became an early owner of a quail plantation in Thomas County in 1889 when he purchased the 1,310 acre Greenwood Plantation from Mrs. Lavinia Jones, widow of Thomas Jones.¹⁷ Greenwood, or Vallynsten Plantation, as Van Duzer called it, remained the property of Van Duzer until 1899 when, because of ill health, he sold his property to Colonel Oliver Hazard Payne of Cleveland, Ohio, and Standard Oil fame.¹⁸

It was people with Cleveland and/or Standard Oil connections who came in time to own most of the plantation properties in the Thomasville-Tallahassee region. The world's first oil well was brought in by Colonel Edwin L. Drake at Titusville, Pennsylvania in 1859. Much of the Pennsylvania crude produced in the early days was refined in and then marketed from nearby Cleveland, Ohio. To make a long story a bit shorter, John D. Rockefeller and his partners were able to consolidate the several Cleveland area oil refining firms into the Standard Oil Company. Among those who made large fortunes with Standard Oil were several members of the Hanna family, Oliver Hazard Payne, Colonel William Thompson, John D. Archbold, several members of the Whitney and Harkness families, Clement A. Griscom, Walter C. Teagle, and William Stamps Farish.

Both Howard Melville Hanna and Mark Alonzo Hanna, early members of the Standard Oil Trust, had spent winters in Thomasville. In

fact, Mark Hanna rented a house, still standing, on Dawson Street where in the winter of 1896 he introduced William McKinley of Ohio to all of the southern Republican leaders and thereby was able to corner their convention votes for McKinley at the 1896 Republican Convention.¹⁹ Two sisters of Mark, Salome and Sevilla, were among the first plantation owners in the area. Salome Hanna, following the death of her first husband, George Washington Chapin, a partner of her brother, married J. Wyman Jones, a wealthy businessman from Englewood, N.J. The Joneses bought and developed Glen Arven, now the Thomasville Country Club, in 1888 and Elsoma Plantation in 1891.²⁰ Elsoma was an anagram for Salome. Charles Merrill Chapin, a son by her first marriage, also purchased the 1,323 acre Melrose Plantation from the local S. J. Jones family in 1891.²¹ Later he secured Elsoma from his mother and the plantation is still owned by the Chapin family today.

Howard Melville Hanna, an uncle of Chapin and brother of Mark and Salome, entered the scene in 1896 when he purchased Melrose Plantation from Chapin. In the same year, he also purchased Pebble Hill Plantation.²² Pebble Hill was first owned by Thomas Jefferson Johnson who, as a state legislator, became the father of Thomas County when he sponsored the bill establishing the county in 1825.²³ Howard Melville Hanna was a partner with his uncle Robert and brother Mark in 1867 in the firm of Hanna, Dougherty and Co., oil refiners. In 1872, the name of the firm was changed to Hanna, Chapin and Company—the Chapin being George W. Chapin, first husband of Howard's sister Salome. In 1876, the refinery was acquired by Standard Oil with both Howard Melville Hanna and Chapin becoming directors. Among other high positions, Howard Melville "Mel" Hanna was a partner with Mark in M. A. Hanna and Company, operating a conglomerate of coal, iron ore mining and shipping interests.²⁴

From these beginnings, the Hanna family holdings have expanded to the point where today nineteen different individuals separately or jointly in some cases own 22 plantations encompassing over 70,000 acres of land. Interestingly enough, none of today's owners have the last name of Hanna, but all are descended from aforementioned members of the Hanna family.

Of considerable further interest is the fact that another 19 plantations encompassing an additional 78,000 acres are owned by Cleve-

land friends, business associates in the Hanna companies, and their descendants. Among these were George Magoffin Humphrey, president of the M. A. Hanna Company before he became President Eisenhower's Secretary of the Treasury, George Hutchinson Love, a former president of M. A. Hanna Company as well as of the Chrysler Corporation, and Joseph H. Thompson, also a former president of the M. A. Hanna Company. Between them the descendants of the Hannas, Hanna Company executives, and Cleveland friends owned 41 plantations containing over 150,000 acres in 1976.

John D. Archbold was the first president of Standard Oil after John D. Rockefeller. His son, John F. Archbold, also a Standard Oil officer, was the one-time owner of Chinquapin, Milestone, and Paradise Plantations totaling 10,149 acres. Mr. Archbold was succeeded as president of Standard Oil of New Jersey by Walter C. Teagle who owned the 18,395 acre Norias Plantation in Leon and Jefferson counties until his death in 1962. Teagle, in turn, was succeeded as president of Jersey Standard by William Stamps Farish who had created Humble Oil and Refining Company which became a major subsidiary of Jersey Standard. Mr. Farish bought and developed the 17,000 plus acre Pinckney Hill Plantation in Jefferson County.

Oliver Hazard Payne, a signer of the original Standard Oil Trust agreement, was owner of Greenwood Plantation until his death when he left the plantation to his nephew, Payne Whitney. The 18,000 acre Greenwood is now owned by Payne Whitney's son, John Hay Whitney, financier and one-time Ambassador to the Court of St. James. Payne Whitney's brother, Harry Payne Whitney, was a one-time owner of the 11,500 acre Foshalee Plantation in Leon County.

Today, the northern half of Foshalee Plantation is owned by Robert L. Ireland, II, son of Kate Hanna Ireland, while the southern half, now called Cherokee Plantation, is owned by Louise Harkness Ingalls, an heiress to the Harkness Standard Oil fortune. The Ingalls also own Ring Oak and Chemonie Plantations in Leon County for a total of approximately 17,000 acres.

Colonel William Thompson was a West Virginia oil refiner before he threw in with Rockefeller and later became secretary and treasurer of Standard Oil. His son, Lewis S. Thompson, who inherited much of his father's wealth, was the long-time owner of both the Hall in Grady County, Georgia, and Sunny Hill Plantation in Leon County.

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Clement A. Griscom, who made a fortune in marine shipping as well as in Standard Oil, was president of the National Transit Company which owned an extended system of pipelines when it became a part of the Standard Oil Trust. Mr. Griscom was owner of Horseshoe Plantation on Lake Iamonia in Leon County before his death in 1912.²⁵ Griscom family members also owned Luna, Watroak, and Meridian Plantations at one time, totaling between 17,000 and 18,000 acres.

As related above, the Albany and Thomasville regions have much in common—the same humid subtropical climate, soil types, vegetation, and similar land use histories with large cotton plantations worked by black slaves before the Civil War and by black cash or share tenants after the war. The major difference between the two regions from the point of view of this study lies in the timing of land purchases by northerners in the two areas. Northerners did not begin to acquire quail plantations in the Albany region until the 1920s—four decades after the first such purchases in the Thomasville-Tallahassee region. One of the keys to understanding this difference in timing lies in the development of Thomasville as a winter resort center in the 1880s while Albany never could boast that distinction. The purchase of quail plantations in the Albany region, then, was not a product of events in Albany so much as it was a product of a situation wherein individuals desiring such properties in the original Thomasville-Tallahassee core region were forced by existing land ownership to go further afield to find such properties.

By the 1920s, most of the available land in the immediate Thomasville-Tallahassee core region was already in the hands of northern owners. In the years that followed, the new purchases tended to be located to the east in Jefferson County, Florida, and Brooks County, Georgia, to the west in Grady County and 50 miles to the northwest in the Albany region.

All of the Jefferson County, Florida, quail plantations date from the 1920s and 1930s. Walter C. Teagle, Percy Chubb, Gerald M. Livingston, and Sheldon Whitehouse bought plantations in the 1920s while William Stamps Farish, Katherine and Ralph Perkins, and Benjamin Moore bought their properties in the 1930s.²⁶ Except for the Brooks County portion of Gerald M. Livingston's Dixie Plantation, the addi-

tional northern owned plantations in Brooks County and west of the Ochlockonee River in Grady County date from the 1950s and 1960s.²⁷

The Albany region did not feature any northern owned quail plantations until the 1920s when Judge Robert Bingham, Walter C. White, Robert W. Woodruff, and others began to purchase and consolidate former cotton plantations into quail plantations in Baker and Dougherty counties. In general, these early plantation purchases were made by people who had business or family connections with northern plantation owners in the Thomasville region.

The Standard Oil connection so evident in the Thomasville region was also important in the Albany region in the cases of Charles E. Bedford, Lewis S. Thompson, Jr., both of whom were officers in Standard Oil subsidiaries, and Judge Robert Bingham, whose wealth in large measure was attributable to his marrying the widow of Henry Morrison Flagler, one of the five original incorporators of Standard Oil. The oil industry connection in the Albany area also included Richard King Mellon (Gulf Oil), W. Alton Jones (president of Cities Service), J. D. Stetson Coleman (Pennzoil), John D. Murchison, and Frederic C. Hamilton (Hamilton Oil). If one considers the closely related chemical industry, the family grows to include Dr. Charles Allen Thomas (Monsanto), Raymond F. Evans (Diamond Shamrock), John M. Olin (Olin-Mathieson), and Clarence Mahlon Kline (Smith, Kline and French).

The Hanna family and Cleveland, Ohio, connections, so important in the Thomasville region, also spread to the Albany region with Mary Haskell Hunter (a granddaughter of Howard M. Hanna), Walter C. White (White Motors), Raymond F. Evans (Diamond Shamrock), Horace A. Sheppard (TRW), Charles F. Elms, and B.C. Goss—all of Cleveland, Ohio. Walter C. White and Robert W. Woodruff, who was vice president of White Motors before becoming president of Coca Cola, were both members of the original Norias Hunting Club which owned the large Norias Plantation in Leon and Jefferson counties before they sold out to Walter C. Teagle and purchased their own Ichuaway Plantation in Baker County.

It is apparent, then, that the basic reasons explaining the development of quail plantations in both regions were the many family and business connections that tied these people together in work and play. When land suitable for quail plantations became scarce in the

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Thomasville-Tallahassee region, these family and business friends turned to a nearby region of similar soils, climate, land use history, large land holdings, and abundant quail populations.

The similarities continue when one considers the recent history of the plantations, land use changes, property taxes, and “noblesse oblige” or the good works of the plantation owners.

Table 3 summarizes the growth in the number of northern owners and the total acreage of their plantations for selected years. Between 1910 and 1976, the number of owners more than tripled from 21 to 69, the acreage increased nearly ten-fold from 48,870 to 467,640 and the average acreage nearly tripled from 2,327 to 6,777 acres.

TABLE 3. Northern Owned Quail Plantations in the Thomasville-Tallahassee and Albany Regions (Selected Years)¹

	1910	1930	1950	1976
<u>Thomasville-Tallahassee</u>				
<u>Region</u>				
Number of Owners	21	32	52	50
Total Acreage	48,870	200,960	292,140	298,840
Average Acreage	2,327	6,280	5,618	5,977
<u>Albany Region</u>				
Number of Owners		6	13	19
Total Acreage		50,400	116,200	168,800
Average Acreage		8,400	8,939	8,884
<u>Totals</u>				
Number of Owners	21	38	65	69
Total Acreage	48,870	251,360	408,340	467,640
Average Acreage	2,327	6,615	6,282	6,777

¹Sources: Tax Books for the Eleven Counties Involved.

At the same time this substantial growth was taking place, a number of former quail plantations (approximately 65,000 acres) moved from northern ownerships into the hands of real estate developers, paper companies, lumber companies, and other corporate interests. Watroak, Bull Run, Wood Run, Waverly, Live Oak, Goodwood,

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TABLE 4. Comparative Assessed Valuations Thomas County, Georgia, Northern Owned Quail Plantations and Other Large Holdings

	1910	1940	1960	1970
<u>Quail Plantations (No.)</u>	12	22	26	34
Acreage	22,744	89,411	85,971	93,139
Assessed Valuation	\$283,199	\$1,143,340	\$1,470,973	\$5,417,875
Per Acre	\$12.45	\$12.79	\$17.10	\$58.17
<u>Other Holdings (No.)</u>				
<u>Over 1,000 Acres</u>	41	23	15	18
Acreage	79,737	46,066	31,964	34,523
Assessed Valuation	\$397,363	\$286,946	\$261,660	\$1,739,005
Per Acre	\$4.98	\$6.23	\$8.19	\$50.37
<u>Lumber & Wood Products</u>				
<u>Firms (No.)</u>				
Acreage			13,922	12,374
Assessed Valuation			\$107,570	\$556,470
Per Acre			\$7.73	\$44.97
<u>Selected Farms (No.)</u>				11
Acreage				4,169
Assessed Valuation				\$318,820
Per Acre				\$76.47

Source: Thomas County Tax Books, 1910, 1940, 1960 and 1970.

Inwood, Hollywood and portions of Welaunee, Meridian, and Ayavalla plantations have become residential developments; Cleveland Park, Disston Place, and sizable portions of Susina and Ichuaway plantations are now owned by paper or wood products firms; Pinebloom is owned by U.S. Steel, and Aucilla Farms is owned by N.G. Wade Investment Company of Jacksonville, Florida. Killearn is now a Florida State Park by the name of Maclay Gardens, Tall Timbers is an ecological research station, while Luna, Turkey Run, and Devereux are now owned by local people.

It seems certain that the peak in northern quail plantation ownerships has passed and that the future will see more erosion of such

ownerships. The present ages of many of the owners, inheritance taxes, and the different life styles of the young who may inherit the places all conspire to this end.

In assessing the significance of the plantations on the local scene, the question arises, "How have the quail plantation ownerships compared with their logical alternatives, farming and forestry, in providing tax revenues, employment, and public service?"

In the attempt to assess the relative merits of different types of land ownership and land use, the assessed valuations of different properties in Thomas County for selected years—1910, 1940, 1960 and 1970 were examined. Before 1962, there were no official state criteria for classifying land for assessed valuation purposes and, therefore, the matter was left up to the individual taxpayer, his conscience, and the often acquiescent assessors in each county. The 1910, 1940, and 1960 assessed valuations for Thomas County reveal that the plantations paid substantially higher taxes per acre on the average than did the other large local owners on the average. In fact, the plantations paid more than twice as much in property taxes per acre than the local owners of large farms and/or forest holdings in all three years. This situation actually prevailed from the late 19th century until the middle 1960s.

In 1962, the Georgia legislature passed a bill which required each county to undertake a property valuation and equalization program for eliminating disparities in assessment procedures within counties and between counties. The appraisers utilized aerial photographs, soil maps, vegetation, and the techniques of the Soil Conservation Service to appraise rural land values and in the process eliminated much of the disparity which had brought about the legislation in the first place.

The assessed valuations of 1970 reflect the changes, but it is interesting to note that the plantations were still paying higher property taxes per acre on average than the other large holdings on average although there are marked differences if the large holdings are separated into farm and forest holdings. The lands of the plantation lie somewhere in between full scale forestry (tree farms) and full scale agricultural use, and the average assessed valuation in 1970 was a little less than half way between: \$44.97 per acre for forest holdings vs. \$58.17 for plantations vs. \$76.47 for farms.

In summary, then, the Thomas County quail plantations paid more than their share of property taxes during most of their history. Since equalization, they have been paying property taxes that are, at the least, comparable to those paid on similar lands used for forestry and farming elsewhere in the county.

Most of the plantations are operated on a business basis with the necessity for showing a profit in at least two years out of every five. This has led to some expansion of land in crops, increased livestock production, and the increased cutting of timber and pulpwood. Nevertheless, most of the properties are still being managed so as to produce large quail populations with most of the land in an open parkland (mixed grassland-forest) condition dotted by small fields, thickets, and hammock areas.

The employment picture is complex in that tree products, cash crops, and livestock do provide employment for others after the product has left the land in sawmills, paper mills, and in food processing and meat packing plants. These kinds of employment are not considered here. Only on site (on the land) employment was used to compare the plantations with agriculture and forestry. Plantation employment varies greatly from place to place depending upon the amount of forestry and agriculture carried on, the size of the house and grounds, the number of guest houses, the presence or lack of golf courses, tennis courts, greenhouses, swimming pools, stables, kennels, and other facilities not usually associated with farming or forestry operations. The crop acreage requires more labor per acre than does the typical farm acre because of the small size and scattered nature of the fields. Varying from plantation to plantation, labor is also required for handling their timber, pecan groves, cash crops, and cattle feeding and breeding programs. The typical plantation will have 10 to 20 percent of its land in crops with additional acreages sometimes in pasture and/or pecan groves.

The managers of 13 plantations were interviewed in 1975. Between them, the plantations encompassing some 71,900 acres employed 236 people for an average of 305 acres per employee. The average American farm today numbers approximately 400 acres and most agricultural experts suggest the economies of scale will continue to cause further consolidation of farm land into even larger units. If the national average were used, the 13 plantations contain the equivalent

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of 180 farms (72,000 acres divided by 400). But the plantation lands are not the equal of cropland elsewhere because physical factors, particularly relief and drainage, make modern machine agriculture difficult on much of the plantation acreage. A viable full-time farm operation in southern Thomas County or northern Leon County would require a substantially greater acreage than would say a farm in the Middle West. It seems doubtful that the plantations, if divided up into economically viable farms, could support any more people than they do under present circumstances. They might very well support less people if all of the rather specialized plantation types of employment were eliminated. The 236 plantation employees and their families in 1975 compares favorably with the estimated 180 farm families the land could support as farm land based on the U.S. average, a doubtful assumption to begin with. The speculation is academic, for it is certain that there will not be any subdivision of the plantations into smaller farms. The trends in American agriculture are clearly the exact opposite.

As for forestry, full-time employment would be substantially less if the plantations were operated strictly as tree farms. Discussion with several individuals involved in forestry operations suggest that overall employment on large scale tree farms would average less than one person per 1,000 acres as compared to the three employees per 1,000 acres on the quail plantations. It should also be noted that the plantations do produce large quantities of both pulp wood and saw timber. Greenwood Plantation, for example, cuts over one million board feet of high quality timber per year. Such timber is almost always cut under lease by outside firms and processed by wood products firms in the region. The actual employment generated by the plantations, then, is greater than indicated by the figures cited earlier which only included employees employed on the plantations by the plantations.

When all is said and done, plantation employment is at the very least comparable to agricultural employment and triple that of potential tree farm employment.

The question then arises as to how the different forms of land use compare in terms of services required from or services rendered to the counties. Any detailed analysis would show that the biggest

differences would occur in the demand for road upkeep, schools, and social welfare funds. Farm country with its greater density of population and roads will require more public funds per acre than either plantation country or forest country. In fact, much of the road network in plantation country is maintained by the plantations themselves with, for example, Millpond Plantation maintaining some 65 miles of road including bridges on its property. As for schooling, in the past, the children of the plantation owners were likely to have been educated in northern schools while many of the children of plantation employees received their schooling in schools built and staffed by the owners themselves. John F. Archbold, Alfred Heywood Mason, Mrs. Kate Hanna Ireland Harvey, Walter C. Teagle, and others provided some of the first schools for black children in the region.

As for social welfare, there also seems to have been something of a spirit of 'noblesse oblige' evident among many of the plantation owners who have time and time again shown a considerable concern for the needs of local people although their own permanent residences were located elsewhere in the country. Perhaps the outstanding example of this trait in the Thomasville region is the John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital. In 1925, John F. Archbold, owner of Cinquapin, Milestone, and Aucilla Farms (Paradise) plantations, gave a new hospital named for his father along with the Annie Mills Archbold School of Nursing named for his mother to the city. Over the years, a large share of the costs of building, then enlarging, and continually modernizing Archbold Memorial Hospital has been paid for by donations from most of the plantation owners in the region including gifts of property as well as of money.

Other notable examples of 'noblesse oblige' among many in the medical vein are Mrs. Kate Hanna Ireland's Pebble Hill Visiting Nurse Association which for many years helped meet the medical needs of families on several plantations in addition to those owned by the Hannas; the Gerry Medical Clinic in Monticello, Florida, built with funds provided by the Edward H. Gerry and William Stamps Farish families; and the clinic, doctors, and facilities provided by Robert Winship Woodruff on Ichuaway Plantation to rid Baker County, Georgia, of malaria.

Other outstanding examples of good citizenship would be the gift of

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Maclay Gardens (formerly Killearn Gardens) by Mrs. Alfred B. Maclay to the State of Florida; the gifts of the Joseph H. Flowers home to the Thomas County Historical Society and "The Big Oak" to the Thomasville Garden Club as a park by Mrs. Elisabeth Ireland Poe; the development of the Tallahassee Junior Museum with considerable financial support and work by plantation families; the support of Herbert L. Stoddard's monumental and classic quail study by many of the owners; the development of Tall Timbers Research, Inc. on land provided by Henry and Gerald Beadel and using funds provided by them and many other plantation people.

To use an old cliché, I have only scratched the surface, and, therefore, feel obliged to apologize to the many families, both northern and local, who have also been involved in these and other good works. Suffice it to record that the plantation people, most of whom had their permanent voting residences elsewhere, have been outstanding citizens on the local scene even if in residence only a few weeks of each year.

Space does not permit a detailed treatment of the ecological benefits of the quail plantation form of land use as compared to both forestry and agriculture. It should be recorded, however, that the diversity of plant life, habitats, and associated wildlife of the plantations are highly desirable from an ecological point of view and far superior to the sterile homogeneity of most tree farms and modern day farms.

In summary, it is doubtful that either large corporate farms or tree farms would have brought positive benefits to match those described briefly above. The importance of the plantations goes far beyond that of providing a green belt of beautiful countryside. The owners have indeed been good citizens. They have paid more than their share of property taxes over most of their years of ownership, provided substantial employment, and exhibited commendable 'noblesse oblige.' Their lands are rich in their variety of vegetation, game and birds, are operated on sound ecological principles, and offer some of the more pleasant vistas to be found anywhere on the coastal plains. I, for one, will be sad to see them replaced by subdivisions and large corporate ownerships in the years to come.

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