THE EDWARD HOUSTOUN PLANTATION
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

INCLUDING A DISCUSSION OF AN UNMARKED CEMETERY ON FORMER PLANTATION LANDS AT THE CAPITAL CITY COUNTRY CLUB

Detail from Le Roy D. Ball's 1883 map of Leon County showing land owned by the Houstoun family.¹

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Introduction

This report provides a history of the lands that once comprised the Houstoun plantation of Leon County, Florida. The goal is to provide historic documentation that will help inform any future investigations or interpretation of an unmarked cemetery located on the grounds of the Capital City Country Club Golf Course. Historic records provide strong anecdotal evidence that this cemetery is associated with the former plantation of Edward Houstoun. The cemetery may include burials of enslaved persons who worked on the plantation. It may also include burials dating to the post-Civil War period, when former slaves likely continued working on the plantation as tenant farmers. At least a few grave markers remained at the site through circa the 1930s. Today, however, the cemetery is marked only by a series of regular depressions in the ground along the western edge of the tee for the 7th hole.

The chronology presented here is important as it establishes that the core of the plantation lands in Tallahassee remained intact from circa the 1840s through the period when the golf course was developed. Much of the information is heavily indebted to three prior reports which touched on the Houstoun plantation. The first is a site form prepared by the archaeologist Calvin Jones in 1974. It provides a rough site map of the area, and indicates that burials were present at that time.

Second, and most important, was Sharyn M.E. Thompson’s survey of the Country Club Estates Neighborhood, published in 1986 as Historic and Architectural Survey of the Country Club Estates Neighborhood, Tallahassee, Florida. This work devotes considerable attention to the Houstoun plantation and its later redevelopment as the Country Club Estates and Woodland Drives subdivisions. Crucially, the report includes transcriptions of interviews with longtime residents of the neighborhood, including two residents who remembered seeing a cemetery where the golf course is located today. Excerpts from those interviews are included in the second half of this report.

Another important source was the Historic American Landscapes Survey of the Smoky Hollow Community, prepared by historians Jennifer Koslow Ph.D. and Anthony Dixon Ph.D in 2014. This work also provides a focused discussion of the Houstoun plantation, especially as it relates to the genesis of the Smoky Hollow neighborhood—a historic African American enclave located between downtown and the Myers Park area. The report posits that many of the earliest residents of Smoky Hollow may have been former slaves who continued working as tenant farmers on the Houstoun plantation lands after the Civil War.

What’s in a Name: Houstoun or Houston?

In many historical documents, Edward Houstoun’s name is spelled “Houston.” However, the spelling used in this report follows that used by the Houstoun family. It is the spelling used on Edward Houstoun’s grave marker, as well as the grave marker of his son, Patrick Houstoun. Likewise, Patrick’s son, James P. S. Houstoun, was appointed by the Governor of Florida to serve as Leon County Sherriff in 1909. The name is pronounced “house-ton,” following the pronunciation used for Houston County, Georgia, which was named for a family relative.
The Houstoun Plantation

The former Houstoun plantation is an intrinsic part of the larger history of Leon County. For nearly 100 years, the plantation marked the eastern edge of Tallahassee. It stretched for nearly a mile north and south of Lafayette Street (Old St. Augustine Road), which was then the principal east-west road into Tallahassee. Members of the Houstoun family first began purchasing land in Tallahassee in 1826, shortly after the city’s founding. In time, the plantation holdings grew to encompass more than four square miles of land. This included all the area that is today the Country Club Estates, Myers Park, Woodland Drives and Indianhead Acres neighborhoods, as well as land that today includes the Tallahassee Democrat offices, Governor's Square Mall, and portions of the Hilaman Golf Course.

Edward Houstoun

Edward Houstoun (1806-1875) was born on the “Rose Dhu” plantation near Savannah, Georgia as a member of a leading Georgia family. His great-grandfather, Patrick Houstoun, was one of the founders of the Georgia Colony and royal administer of land grants. His great uncle, John Houstoun, was a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1775, and later served two terms as Governor of Georgia. Another relative, John Houstoun McIntosh, established the first permanent settlement at Jacksonville, Florida in 1791.

Edward Houstoun moved to Tallahassee around 1836 to take over management of his family’s lands. The initial heart of the plantation was a 320 acre plot (half-square mile) that today roughly...
encompasses the Woodland Drives subdivision. By 1839, tax rolls indicate that the plantation had
grown to 560 acres and was home to 26 enslaved persons.3

March 15, 1826 General Land Office Patent for 80 acres to Patrick and George Houston in trust
for their sister Eliza. This was one of four similar patents, representing a total of 320 acres in what is today
part of the Woodland Drives and Indianhead Acres subdivisions. (General Land Office)

Leon County in Houstoun’s day was at the center of Florida’s plantation economy, a system built
almost entirely on slave labor. In fact, Leon County was home to the densest concentration of enslaved
persons in all of Florida. As early as 1840, enslaved persons constituted nearly 70 percent of
the population. By 1860, the number of whites living in Leon County had actually declined from previous
years to 3,194, while the enslaved population numbered almost 9,100 persons. Slave ownership was
ubiquitous. Of the 779 white families living in Leon County in 1860, nearly 66 percent owned at least
one slave.5 Houstoun prospered in this environment.

Houstoun’s plantation was not the largest in Leon County, but he was among an elite group of
“planters” who dominated the area’s economy and politics. During the 1840s, Edward Houstoun was
nominated as a director of the Union Bank of Florida. During the 1850s, he helped organize the
Central Association of Cotton Planters of Florida,5 as well as a southern convention of cotton growers.
Houstoun served on the board of the West Florida Seminary, which eventually evolved into Florida
State University. He also was also nominated by Florida Governor James E. Broome to serve as Pay
Mater General for the General Assembly.6
Houstoun was best known as the developer and owner of the Pensacola & Georgia Railroad (P&G). The railroad was chartered in 1853 by Houstoun and business partner Edward C. Cabell, a three-term member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Construction began in 1855, the same year Houstoun and Cabell also gained control of the Tallahassee Railroad running between Tallahassee and St. Marks. The principal object of both of these lines was to ship cotton to market. Ironically, the Pensacola & Georgia Railroad never ran to either Pensacola or Georgia. But the name speaks to the ambition of connecting Florida’s cotton belt in the panhandle to Savannah, Houstoun’s hometown and one of principal cotton ports in the country.

Houstoun soon took over management of the railroads, and until 1868 served continuously as the president and superintendent of both the Tallahassee and Pensacola & Georgia Railroads. In central Tallahassee, the route of the P&G Railroad ran through or along the edge of Edward Houstoun’s plantation. This is the same route seen today as the tracks curve between Myers Park and Cascades Park before turning east toward Magnolia Boulevard. Work on the Tallahassee section of the railroad was underway by 1856, with hundreds of hired slaves clearing trees, digging ditches, and building up the roadbed. It is believed that this work resulted in the destruction of the waterfall that once existed in Cascades Park.

1868 illustration of Tallahassee from a sketch by James. E. Taylor. The couple in the foreground are standing on Houstoun’s Plantation near today’s Myers Park, looking across the railroad developed by Houstoun.

(Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper, October 31, 1868)

The most complex undertaking, directed by the contractor R. A. Shine, was construction of the “deep cut” near what is today the railroad overpass on Magnolia Drive. In order to maintain the rail grade as it approached a hill owned by Houstoun, the workers made a cut some one thousand feet long and forty-five feet deep at the deepest point. It was “the biggest ditch that had ever been dug in Florida.”
Completion of the deep cut was celebrated with a picnic for the workers on July 4, 1857. By January of 1858 the line was complete as far as Jefferson County, and by 1860 had grown into a 128-mile line that stretched from Quincy to Lake City, where it met another railroad running out from Jacksonville. Houstoun prospered. In 1860 he reported owning 900 acres of improved land and 3,600 acres of unimproved land, which he valued at $25,500. He estimated his personal estate at $70,000.

As with most of his contemporaries, Edward Houstoun was staunchly pro-slavery. As early as 1851, he participated in creating a pro-slavery organization called the Southern Rights Association of Centreville District. The organization’s primary goal was “the protection of Southern rights … to preserve and protect the Constitution in its purity as the basis of Federal compact, and the only foundation on which the Union of the States was made.” In 1859, Houstoun also advocated for a system of military training at the West Florida Seminary.

The treatment of enslaved persons in Leon County varied with the attitudes of the owners. There is at least one troubling reference that suggests Edward Houstoun could be severe in the extreme. In 1868, a Republican Party operative was in Tallahassee trying to register African American voters. In a note to a friend, Richards states that a “rebel by the name of Houston who has with his own hands whipped to death more than one colored person, and who is now president of this railroad, sent his carriage to the depot three times for Colonel Saunders [a political figure] to take him to his own house when he arrived.”

During the Civil War, two of Houstoun’s sons, Patrick and Edward, Jr., enlisted for service in the Confederate Army. Patrick saw service at the Battle of Natural Bridge, and his father likewise contributed by donating land for the construction of an earthen fort. Located on what was then a hilltop in the heart of the plantation, the earthwork is today known as Old Fort Park.

In February of 1864, the largest Florida battle of the Civil War took place at Olustee, as federal troops marched west with a goal of disrupting rail operations—including destroying the P&G Railroad’s bridge over the Suwannee River. At this time, Houstoun was part of a desperate effort to construct a branch railroad from Lake City into southern Georgia. This was deemed a priority by Robert E. Lee in order to supply the Confederate armies with beef. In 1865, the P&G grossed some $875,000, the most it would ever earn.

After the Civil War, the economy of Florida was devastated, and Houstoun’s railroads were both in poor repair and suffering from declining traffic. As a result, Houstoun was inclined to sell his railroads—a factor which led to his being enmeshed in one of the greatest swindles in Florida history.
The facts of the swindle are complicated, but Houstoun’s role for a time was to act as agent for George W. Swepson, the leading figure of the swindle.

Swepson posed as a railroad investor, and convinced Houstoun to help him consolidate the P&G into a new entity called the Florida Central Railroad. Through a combination of bribery, forgeries and political manipulations, Swepson then traded the bonds of a proposed railroad running from Jacksonville to Mobile (including the Florida Central and Houstoun’s P&G track) for bonds issued by the State of Florida. In the end, Swepson was able to defraud the State of Florida of several million dollars. It is unclear how much Houstoun profited from the scheme. For the 1870 Census, his personal wealth had grown by only $5,000 since 1860 (to $75,000), and his land was valued at $10,000, less than half of what it had been a decade prior. About 1871, Houstoun moved back to Savannah, leaving his plantation lands in Leon County to be managed by his son, Patrick. Five years later, Edward Houstoun died and was buried in Savannah’s Bonaventure Cemetery.

**Patrick Houstoun**

In the decades after the Civil War, the cotton economy was wrecked and many Leon County plantations were sold to wealthy northerners who used them as hunting plantations. Patrick Houstoun, however, focused on converting his father’s plantation into a stock farm called “Lakeland Farm” or the “Lakeland Stock Farm.” The name was drawn from the presence of several small scenic lakes on the property, including today’s Chapman Pond, which was originally known as “Houstoun’s Pond,” or “Houstoun’s First.” The plantation residence built for his father circa 1840s was located several hundred feet east-northeast of the pond, near the intersection of what is today Azalea Drive and Alban Avenue. (At least two live oaks that stood in the yard of the plantation house survive today—see pages 41-42). The family also owned an “in-town” home at 404 North Monroe Street during the 1860s.
Circa 1894 photo of the Houstoun Plantation house.  
(Florida Memory, Image No. HA00114)

Circa 1894 scenic view of the hill country from Leon Heights on the Lakeland Plantation. This photo was likely taken near the present-day intersection of Seminole Drive and Circle Drive, overlooking Chapman Pond, then known as “Houstoun’s Pond.” (Florida Memory, Image No. RC04034)
Patrick Houstoun diversified his agricultural operation. He grew corn, wheat, oats, potatoes, and other crops, as well as orchards of LaConte pears, Kelsy plums, and pecan trees. In 1880, his livestock consisted of 50 cows, half of which were milk cows, along with assorted mules, oxen, and 500 sheep. A decade later the herds of dairy cows had grown to 250. Much of the agricultural work was done by African Americans. That year, Houstoun paid wages for “264 man-weeks of work by Negroes.”

Many of these tenant farmers lived on or immediately adjacent to the property. A study of the historic African American enclave known as Smoky Hollow observes that the 1900 census recorded several families of African American farmers living adjacent to Patrick Houstoun. One source points to these families living on the plantation near the intersection of today’s Magnolia Drive and Lafayette Street.

Houstoun also earned income by leasing or selling some of his property. In August 1889, he leased the “Duval Pond and Houston’s Springs” to the Tallahassee Water Works Company. Located in present-day Myers Park, the area was home to a creek formed by natural seep springs. A portion of the creek was dammed to create a 125’ x 180’ reservoir. The company agreed to pay Houstoun $200 a year for 99 years. He was also given shares of stock in the company.

The following year, Houstoun sold 156 acres in the Myers Park area to the Leon Heights Improvement Company. He also sold land further north for residential development. Located along East Park Avenue, the area is today known as the Magnolia Heights Historic District.
A contemporary account of the Patrick Houstoun’s Lakeland Stock Farm was published in 1894 by the naturalist Bradford Torrey during a visit to Tallahassee. In *A Florida Sketch-Book*, Torrey writes romantically of walking out Lafayette Street (the Old St. Augustine Road) toward the plantation.

“I had gone down the hill past some negro cabins [Smoky Hollow], into a small straggling wood and through the wood to a gate which let me into a plantation lane. It was the fairest of summer forenoon … and one of the fairest of quiet landscapes: broad fields rising gently to the horizon, and before me, winding upward, a grassy lane open on one side and bordered on the other by a deep red gulch and a zig-zag fence, along which grew vines, shrubs, and tall trees. The tender and varied tints of the new leaves, the lively green of the young grain, the dark ploughed fields, the red earth of the wayside—I can see them yet, with all that Florida sunshine on them.”

Like his father, Patrick was active in civic circles, and served as a state senator from Leon County. He then served as Adjutant General of Florida, a position he held for eight years until his death in 1901. He is buried in Tallahassee’s St. John’s Episcopal Church Cemetery.

December 1906 *Weekly True Democrat* advertisement to rent the former Houstoun plantation.

After Patrick’s death, his brother James P. S. Houstoun lived in the family home. James worked as a horse dealer and livery operator with teams for hire. In 1905 he purchased the Hancock stables in downtown Tallahassee which he then operated as the Capital City Livery Stables. The following January, James began advertising in the *Weekly True Democrat* that the “the Houstoun Home Place, one mile east of the city” was for sale. His efforts to sell were unsuccessful, and so in December of that year he began advertising that the property was for rent. At that time, it appears that the size of the former plantation had been reduced to 480 acres, or three-quarters of a square mile.
George B. Perkins and the Golf Course

J. P. S. Houstoun leased the Lakeland Farm to Andrew J. Knight and Edward M. Henry, who in turn leased the land with an option to purchase to George B. Perkins (1869-1941), a respected lawyer. In 1907 Perkins was a founder of the American Sumatra Tobacco Company. That same year, the Tobacco Company paid $10,000 for the Houstoun land, reserving a life estate to Martha Bradford Houstoun (1841-1927), Patrick’s widow. By 1912, Perkins had gained personal control of the land, which he continued to operate as a farm.

Perkins was well-connected socially, and around 1914 he used a portion of the former Houstoun plantation to develop a nine-hole golf course with sand greens. The land for the golf course likely consisted of former pasture, as well as groves of “immense native live oaks, magnolias, and other native trees.” This was not the city’s first course. The Tallahassee Country Club, incorporated in 1908, operated a six-hole golf course at the Grove—the home of former territorial governor, Richard Keith Call. Another early club was located on the grounds of the Live Oak Plantation.

Further research is needed, but there is at least one reference that indicates Perkins constructed a clubhouse and swimming pool on the property—or that they had already been built during the Houstoun period of ownership. In 1915, the Daily Democrat reported that a new Hill City Golf and Country Club had been organized with plans to improve “the old Houstoun country club grounds, now owned by George Perkins and admitted to be the finest natural park and golf course south of Washington, D.C. … tennis courts will be made, the swimming pool put in good condition, the club house already there will be renovated.” Based on a historic sketch of the 9-hole golf course, the area today occupied by the unmarked cemetery was not part of the original course, and likely remained undisturbed.
Away from the golf course, most of the former Houstoun plantation’s core holdings remained undeveloped. Many residents recalled that they had roamed through “Houstoun’s Woods” or gone swimming in the ponds of the property. In an essay for the Tallahassee Democrat, James R. Knott fondly recalled his childhood explorations of the area:

We’d sometime swim at “Houstoun’s Second.” There were two small, round lakes in the woods south of present Apalachee Parkway, formerly part of J.P.S. Houstoun’s plantation. One lake was called “Houstoun’s First,” [Chapman Pond] just north of the Tallahassee Country Club’s old frame clubhouse, the other called “the Second,” about half a mile east of that in the deep woods west of present Magnolia Drive. Here in the lonely silence of the tall pines, we’d go swimming in the raw.25

Development picked up beginning in the mid-1920s, as Perkins began selling off some sections of the former plantation. In 1924, George Perkins sold the 200 acre golf course to the country club members, who had reorganized as the Tallahassee Country Club. The following year, the city acquired 47-acres of land for what became Myers Park.26 In 1925, Perkins also sold 33 acres of land to Ralph “Hutch” Gibson, the owner of a successful forestry and naval stores operation. Gibson subdivided the land to develop Country Club Estates, located along the western boundary of the golf course. The first lots were sold in 1926.27

During this same period, George Perkins’ brother moved into the old Houstoun plantation home.28 The property was still surrounded by woods and agricultural land and included the main five-room house, along with a cottage, office structure, three large dairy barns, and two stables. There were also
eight tenant houses, which were located near the present-day intersection of Magnolia Drive and Lafayette Street. The old plantation home was demolished in the 1940s.

Around 1930, Perkins sold another 27-acre tract of the former Houstoun plantation to John Martin, who had served as Governor of Florida during the 1920s. Martin built a house called “Apalachee” on the land. Archaeological investigations at the Martin House during the 1980s revealed that it had been built on the site of the Hernando de Soto winter encampment in 1538-1539, and that much of the land in the vicinity had been part of an Apalachee village named “Anhaica.”

**Golf Course Expansion Incorporates the Cemetery**

During the depths of the Great Depression, the Tallahassee Country Club was beset by financial difficulties and in 1935 deeded the nine-hole golf course to the city of Tallahassee. A short time later, the city received $35,000 in funding from the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) to expand the golf course to 18 holes. Consulting on the design was one of America’s premier golf course architects, Albert W. Tillinghast, who visited Tallahassee in 1936. Construction began the same year, and was largely complete by 1937. It is during this period when the area containing the cemetery was incorporated into the golf course.
Anecdotal evidence suggests that several of the graves were still marked at the time of the expansion. Whether any markers were removed during construction is not clear. However, historic aerial photos demonstrate that the new design for the course largely avoided the area where most grave depressions are concentrated today. Likewise, the walking path for the course was laid out west of the cemetery area, while today it travels to the east side. Unfortunately, the resolution in the historic aerial photos is insufficient for identifying any cemetery features.

At the time the new Municipal Golf Course was opened to the public, there were still very few homes in the vicinity. However, George Perkins soon began selling lots in his Woodland Drives subdivision, and Country Club Drive was graded along the eastern edge of the golf course. Since that time, aerial photos reveal relatively little change to the overall layout of the golf course. Nevertheless, there does appear to have been some land disturbance in the vicinity of the unmarked cemetery. This includes land contouring for the tee area, as well as the installation of an irrigation system during the 1950s. The tree cover has also changed, with fewer trees present in the rough and far more trees grown up along Country Club Drive.
1937 aerial photo of the golf course. The arrow points to the vicinity of the cemetery. Note the path runs west of, or beneath the trees. (Leon GIS)

1941 aerial photo of the golf course. It appears that a tree or trees have been removed from the vicinity of the cemetery. (Leon GIS)
The Houstoun Plantation Cemetery

It can be definitely stated that the unmarked cemetery at the Capital City County Club Golf Course is not a burial ground for members of the Houstoun family. Edward Houstoun, along with several members of his immediate family, are all interred in Savannah’s famed Bonaventure Cemetery. Edward’s son Patrick is buried in St. John’s Episcopal Church Cemetery in Tallahassee along with his wife and several children.

In addition, the land where the cemetery is located remained in the hands of the Houstoun family from circa 1830s through 1906. It is therefore reasonable to speculate that this area was formerly used as a burial ground for enslaved persons working on the Houstoun plantation, as well as former slaves who continued to work on the land as tenant farmers after emancipation. Based on the absence of any concrete grave markers, which first came into widespread use around the 1890s, it is likely that no persons were buried there after 1900.

The site is located near the crest of a 170-foot hilltop overlooking a steep valley to the north bisected by a natural stream. The land would have remained dry throughout the year, as well as remote from the Houstoun family’s “big house” which was located approximately 7/10 of a mile northeast of the cemetery. This location is consistent with a recent comparative study of slave cemeteries in central Virginia. It noted:

Plantation cemeteries were often located on higher elevations, in wooded areas, or in sections of the land that were not in agricultural production. These graveyards rarely
contained inscribed stones, so Rainville’s maps [Lynn Rainville, the study author] helped to interpret family groupings at these sites.32

Aerial view of the golf course showing a series of regular depressions visible as darkened areas.  
(Google maps, annotated by author)

Although few historic maps of Leon County plantations are known to depict the locations of slave cemeteries, a map of the El Destino plantation near Capitola shows that the “quarters” for the enslaved workers were located far from the plantation owner’s house, but within easy walking distance of the cemetery for the enslaved workers. This raises the possibility that archaeological remains of slave residences once existed in the general area. However, it is also likely that these remains may have been disturbed or destroyed by prior construction and grading activities.

As mentioned previously, the strongest evidence for use of the cemetery by African Americans is found in oral history transcripts contained in the 1986 report, Historic and Architectural Survey of the Country Club Estates Neighborhood, Tallahassee, Florida. Two longtime residents of the area shared recollections of the cemetery, although both were children when they saw the cemetery. One of the interviewees was George B. Perkins’ niece, Joanna Perkins Wadsworth, who had lived in the old Houstoun plantation home during the 1920s and 1930s. She recalled:

I think it was a Negro cemetery. Probably for just here on the plantation. Nobody was ever buried there as long as I’ve lived here. I knew where it was because we would ride all over the property. I’d ride with my father at times and we’d ride back there and he’d
say he had to clean the bushes and briars that covered those graves … There were five, maybe three or four graves … As well as I remember, there were wooden headstones, wooden boards. They were carved. They were of course not permanent, so they probably rotted away.33

Two other persons interviewed for the report, Mrs. Llewellyn D. Fain and her daughter, Angel Brooks, also shared memories of the cemetery. Angel Brooks stated she visited the cemetery on outings to “Houstoun’s Woods” to pick flowers.

About all that’s left now are depressions. I never knew who was buried there. When we were children we played over there and they were very distinctive, the graves. You could tell where they were and they had lilies and things that had been planted … I don’t remember that there were any markers. There could have been, but they were somewhat outlined with lilies and plantings and Ligustrum and plants like that. And mostly it’s been mowed over and your really have to know it’s there. I know when mom and pop built here there was a big contingency of black people down where Golf Terrace ends.34

Complete excerpts of these interviews are included later in the report in the Reference Documents section.

Folk Burial Traditions

While the graves at the golf course are unmarked and disturbed to an extent by prior landscaping and land contouring activities, it is useful to review prior studies of African American burial traditions. This could help inform any future archaeological testing at the site which may uncover diagnostic artifacts associated with the cemetery.

Mrs. Wadsworth’s recollection of carved wooden grave markers is consistent with folk burial traditions both before and after the Civil War. A 1991 study of folk graveyards in Wakulla County by Sherrie Stokes noted that both white and black cemeteries contained wooden grave markers.

The most fragile of funerary objects—wooden grave markers—survive in the form of small pine boards or shakes carved to resemble a “head and shoulders.” In various stages of decay, they survive in four white cemeteries … and one black churchyard (Mt. Olive). Some markers are anchored firmly in the ground with their surface smooth from weathering, others are rotted and broken.35

Overall, Stokes found that Wakulla County’s folk cemeteries contained three major types of folk grave markers: shells placed on the surface or head of the grave, hand-carved headboards, and homemade cement markers, which began appearing in the late 19th century.

Scholarly studies which focus exclusively on cemeteries created by enslaved persons are generally rare. In 1984, the archaeologist Charles H. Fairbanks published a review of African American burial sites in the Southeast and Barbados which provides some general characteristics.
The pattern is characterized by irregular grave orientation, presence of grave offerings of ceramics on the surface, and general lack of headstone markers. Some patterns of locally carved wooden headstones have been described. No Southeastern slave cemetery has been systematically excavated and there are probably sufficient reasons for avoiding such excavations due to ethical considerations ... it is far from clear whether Black burial patterns developed during slavery times or in the post-Civil War period. While more specific evidence and comparative studies are certainly needed, we clearly are dealing with a significant segment of the Afro-American tradition.36

A similar study of African American burial practices by Ross W. Jamieson published in *Historical Archaeology* concurs with the use of ceramics as a common grave marker, along with several other objects:

In North America the surface decoration of graves with ceramics and other objects in the most commonly recognized African American material culture indicator of cemetery sites. William Faulkner, in *Go Down, Moses*, described a black cemetery with "shards of pottery and broken bottles and old brick and other objects insignificant to sight, but actually of profound meaning." .... Particular categories of material have been favored in surface assemblages. The color white, evident in ceramics, shells, and pebbles, is of importance. Association with water is also evident, which took the form of water jugs, marine shells, or mirrors.37

Jamieson further noted African mortuary practices almost certainly influenced those used by American slaves. Further, mortuary practices were one of the few places where enslaved persons were free to exercise a relative degree of autonomy.

**Understanding Slave Mortality**

In the era prior to vaccines and antibiotics—or even basic knowledge about how diseases were spread, a relatively small percentage of enslaved persons lived past their forties. To be certain, the mortality rates among both whites and enslaved African Americans were far higher than today. But life on a plantation was particularly harsh. Numerous studies have concluded that the mortality rate for enslaved persons prior to the Civil War was often twice that of the larger population. Children were especially vulnerable. Richard H. Steckles' research, published as “The Excess Mortality of American Slaves,” concluded that 55 percent of enslaved children died before their fifth birthday.38

The high rate of infant mortality was also present on the Houstoun plantation. In 1860, the U.S. Census enumerators prepared mortality schedules that recorded the deaths of both free and enslaved persons. This included the person’s name, age, and the cause of death. In Leon County, the mortality schedule included the death of Edward Houstoun’s sister, Eliza McQueen Houstoun at the age of 60. It also noted the deaths of five enslaved children, the oldest of which was three years old. These included:

Ben, aged 2, cause of death listed as “pneumonia.”

Nelly, aged 1, cause of death listed as “teething.”
Robert, aged 3, cause of death listed as “pneumonia.”

Phillip, aged 1, cause of death listed as “remittent fever.”

Joe, aged 2, cause of death listed as “unknown.”

By contrast, the 1850 mortality schedule for Leon County shows only one death on the Houstoun plantation: that of “Neale,” a 26-year-old man for unknown reasons. However, other entries on the same page are telling. Of the 35 total entries, nearly half (16) detail the deaths of enslaved children aged 3 or younger.

Although the sample size is small, the mortality schedules provides at least some basis for understanding how many persons might be buried in the cemetery. Enslaved persons lived on the plantation for some 30 years, from 1836 to 1865. From various sources we have some figures that illustrate the growth of the enslaved population over time. These include the following:

- 1839 26 enslaved persons
- 1840 40 enslaved persons
- 1850 46 enslaved persons
- 1859 57 enslaved persons
- 1860 78 enslaved persons

Few enslaved persons lived into old age. In 1850, the majority of slaves on Houstoun’s plantation were aged 10 to 30 years old. Only four were older than 40. Although it is purely hypothetical, using even a modest mortality rate of around three to five percent a year indicates there may be dozens of burials, the majority of which are likely to be children. However, this estimate does not account for periods of heightened mortality, such as the yellow fever epidemics which struck Tallahassee in 1841 and 1853.39

Anecdotal evidence about slave mortality is also provided by the journal of Elizabeth Taylor, who lived on various plantations in Leon County. She notes in her journal that the enslaved persons Maria, Emanuel and Emily died in 1859, Mary Branson and Capitola died in 1860, and “Old Dr. Alick and Dora, Till’s daughter” died in 1863. Other deaths are recorded for the years 1850 and 1867.40
As mentioned in the introduction, it is possible—even probable—that many enslaved persons who worked on the Houstoun plantation continued on the land as tenant farmers after the Civil War. Thus, burials may have continued in the cemetery for years after emancipation.

The 1870 Census shows at least four African American living in Leon County with a last name of “Houston” (or variant).

- Julia Houston (60), farm laborer, 60. Born about 1810 in Florida.
- Florida Houstin (5), living with Marcus and Jane Page, farm laborers.

Intriguingly, the census also shows 17 African Americans with the last name of “McQueen.” This was Edward Houstoun’s middle name, as well as his mother’s maiden name. All of these people, whether named Houstoun or McQueen, lived in Subdivision 22 of the enumeration district. The only white resident shown in Subdivision 22 is Perez B. Brokaw, who owned land immediately northwest of Houstoun's.
1986 Country Club Estates Historic Survey

In the mid-1980s, the Historic Tallahassee Preservation Board and principal surveyor, Sharyn M.E. Thompson, undertook a historic survey of the Country Club Estates Neighborhood. This was published in the spring of 1986 as a 168-page report entitled *Historic and Architectural Survey of the Country Club Estates Neighborhood, Tallahassee, Florida*.

Thompson devotes considerable attention to the history of the Houstoun plantation and various land sales that occurred in the area over time. Part of the report also includes transcripts of oral history interviews with longtime residents of the neighborhood. These included a discussion with Joanna Perkins Wadsworth about the cemetery. Wadsworth was the niece of George B. Perkins—who had purchased most of the former Houstoun plantation in the early 1900s. From circa 1925 to 1939, Wadsworth had also lived in the old Houstoun home off of Lafayette Street. She thought the graves had been moved at one point, although there is no other corroboration for this.

Sharyn Thompson likewise interviewed Mrs. Llewellyn D. Fain, who had lived at 1526 Golf Terrace Drive since 1928. Mrs. Fain’s daughter, Angel Brooks, was also part of the discussion and likewise recalled the cemetery. Her mother also mentioned that the land around the golf course had once been known as “Houston’s Woods.”

Excerpts from both these interviews are included on the following pages. The final excerpt is part of the Sharyn Thompson’s synopsis of the area. She said the statement that the cemetery contained 150-200 burials was based on her discussions with the state archaeologist, Calvin Jones, about the site.
S. Thompson  Did you ever see an old cemetery out here?

Mrs. Wadsworth  Yes. I think it was a Negro cemetery. Probably for just here on the plantation. Nobody was ever buried there as long as I've lived here. I knew where it was because we would ride all over the property. I'd ride with my father at times and we'd ride back there and he'd say that he had to clean the bushes and briars that covered those graves. The graves were moved, I think, when the city bought the property for the colored cemetery west of town. I think all of them were moved. There were five, maybe three or four graves.

S. Thompson  Were there gravestones?

Mrs. Wadsworth  As well as I remember, there were wooden headstones, wooden boards. They were carved. They were of course not permanent, so they probably rotted away.

S. Thompson  Do you remember any houses, quarters or tenant houses, when you lived on the farm?

Mrs. Wadsworth  No. There weren't any there. There were tenant houses but they were over farther. There weren't any back that way. Just woods and fields.

S. Thompson  What happened to the old plantation house?

Mrs. Wadsworth  After the property was sold, Mrs. Alvin Stewart bought it, I think vandals got into the house and really tore it up. Chopped down the stair rail--it was a beautiful stair rail--it was a lovely old house. It was run down, it wasn't a mansion or anything like that. But it was a big, nice, comfortable home.

S. Thompson  Was that the house that Patrick Houston and his family lived in?

Mrs. Wadsworth  Yes, I think so.
S. Thompson: Col. Houston?

Mrs. Fain: Yes. Used to call this Hoston's Woods. My uncle, when I was a little girl, would gather his nieces and nephews and we'd walk from town out to Houston's Woods and pick flowers. Violets. I've had violets growing in the yard here. Who died not long ago?

S. Thompson: You mentioned a cemetery?

Mrs. Brooks: Yes. About all that's left now are depressions. I never knew who was buried there. When we were children we played over there and they were very distinctive, the graves. You could tell where they were and they had lillies and things that had been planted.

S. Thompson: This is on the golf course property today?

Mrs. Brooks: It's on the golf course property, yes. And they probably don't even know it's there anymore.

S. Thompson: You said that when you were a child there were still some stones?

Mrs. Brooks: I don't remember that there were any markers. There could have been, but they were somewhat outlined with lillies and plantings and lingustrum and plants like that. And mostly it's been mowed over and you really have to know it's there. I know when Mom and Pop built here there was a big contingency of black people down where Golf Terrace ends. She had a family of servants that come for years and years. We called them Uncle Ike and Aunt Annie. Aunt Annie was here...
Do you remember what was over there before the houses were?

Just dirt roads. And I don't even think the streets were laid out. My older brother would have a better memory than I because he hunted all through section. He has an enormous collection of arrow heads that he got mostly from the golf course. Right there where that big oak tree is, over on the golf course, there's a line, like an old fence line. It must have been part of an old field at one time. After a hard rain you can see lines in the golf course that look like maybe it was plowed at one time. I have an oak tree that way up here is a gall all the way around it, like it was one time part of a fence. My father told me he hunted out here when he was a boy, so it very likely was. My oldest sister, who lives in Blakely, Georgia, was old enough to really remember about it when we built out here because, I think I was four or maybe five, and my memory is very fuzzy about what was here. I just remembered there were no paved streets at all.


A cemetery is located on the eastern side of the golf course. It has long been abandoned and shallow depressions are the only evidence of its location. Historical tradition and archaeological evidence indicate that this was a burying ground for Black persons and that there are 150-200 burials in the area. The graves are in rows and aligned on an east-west axis, indicating a Christian belief that the dead must be buried with head to the west, facing the east, so when Christ appears on Judgement Day the dead will rise facing the Sun.

Florida Master Site File Form

The Florida Master Site File is administered by the Division of Historical Resources. It is the state’s official record of archaeological and historic sites. Since the 1960s, most sites are recorded using a standardized site form. The Capital City Country Club cemetery was recorded on an archaeological site form by state archaeologist, Calvin Jones, in February 1974 (see following pages). The site was given the number LE1574, meaning that it was the 1,574th site to be recorded within Leon County.

Based on an older newspaper article (see following pages), the site had been known to Jones since at least 1971. Jones noted the following in the site form:

“Black cemetery in fairway; still marked during late 20’s [number somewhat illegible] when golf course first established. Houston Plantation slaves?”

In other sections of the site form, Jones conjectures that the “cemetery dates from after Civil War [indistinct]? He further noted that the local vegetation was oak, pine, and hickory, and that there was a “tee over part of cemetery.”

Jones also noted that there were Native American artifacts at the site dating to circa A.D. 1000 through circa A.D. 1600. This is not surprising, given the area’s location on a hilltop with ready access to water.

Under methods for site detection, Jones states he looked at exposed ground and conducted a shovel test. Under diagnostic artifacts, Jones noted a “wooden box casket,” along with various types of Native American ceramics and lithics. He likewise noted the presence of human bone.

Jones drew a map of the site, which does not necessarily represent just the size of the cemetery, but rather is his estimate of the total area that included both Native American artifacts and the cemetery. To underscore this, the site form notes “bounds unknown.”
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FORM
FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE

SITE NAME(S)  Black Crossing
PROJECT NAME  

OWNERSHIP  
USGS MAP NAME  
COUNTY  
UTM: ZONE 16 / 17
EASTING  
NORTHING  

LATITUDE  
LONGITUDE  

ADDRESS/VICINITY OR ROUTE TO 

TYPE OF SITE  (All that apply)  prehistoric unspecified  historic aboriginal  historic nonaboriginal  historic unspecified

SETTING  
STRUCTURES OR FEATURES  
FUNCTION  
DENSITY  

HISTORIC CONTEXTS  (All that apply)  unknown culture  historic unspecified  historic unspecified

ABORIGINAL  

NONABORIGINAL  

OTHER  

RECORDE'S EVALUATION OF SITE
Eligible for National Register?  yes  no  Likely, need information  insufficient information
Significant as part of district?  yes  no  Likely, need information  insufficient information
Significant at the local level?  yes  no  Likely, need information  insufficient information

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT FOR COMPUTER FILES (Limit to 3 lines here; attach full justification)

DHR USE ONLY  
DATE LISTED  
ON NAT REG.  
KEEPER DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY:  Yes  No  Date  
SHPO EVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY:  Yes  No  Date  
LOCAL DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY:  Yes  No  Date  

DHR USE ONLY  
Florida Master Site File/Division of Historical Resources/The Capitol/Tallahassee, FL 32303-0004-347-3203
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FORM**

**METHODS FOR SITE DETECTION**

- no field check
- literature search
- remote sensing
- not applicable

**METHODS FOR SITE BOUNDARIES**

- boundary unknown
- remote sensing
- unscreened shoveling
- not applicable

**COLLECTION STRATEGY**

- unknown
- unsselective (all artifacts)
- selective (some artifacts)
- general (not by subareas)
- controlled (by subareas)

**ARTIFACT CATEGORIES**

- unknown
- daub
- nonlocal-exotic
- bone-unspecified
- flint
- brick/bldg material
- metal
- worked shell
- ceramic-sherds
- glass
- bone-human
- worked shell
- ceramic-nonsherd
- prec metal/coin
- bone-animal
- subsurface finds

**SITE EXTENT**

- Size (m²) 400
- Depth/Stratigraphy of Cultural Deposit 60/100

**Perpendicular Dimensions**

- 220 m E-W
- 500 m N-S

**SPACE COLLECTED**

- Surface: #units, total area 100 m²
- Excavation: #units, total vol 100 m³

**TOTAL ARTIFACTS**

- Count or Estimate? Surface #
- Subsurface #

**DIAGNOSTICS (TYPE OR MODE & FREQUENCY)**

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3

**TEMPORAL INTERPRETATION**

- Components: single, probable single, multiple, uncertain
- Describe each occupation spatially: For each, estimate begin, end dates BP; basin; if absolute dates, give method, lab, id, date, range, etc.

**ENVIRONMENT**

- Nearest Fresh Water: Spring
- Natural Community: UMF
- Local Vegetation: oak park, hickory
- Topographic Setting: n/a
- Present Land Use: golf course
- SCS Soil Series: Not applicable
- Soil Association: S

**SITE INTEGRITY**

- Overall Disturbance: none, seen
- Nature of Disturbances/Threats: see our past of remediation

**INFORMANT(S) Contact Information**

- C. Jones

**REPOSITORY Field Notes, Artifacts**

- Photographs (negative nos):

**MANUSCRIPTS OR PUBLICATIONS ON THE SITE**

- None

**RECORDERS: Name**

- B. Ruby

- Date of Form: 1/1/83

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SITE**

- further exploration + protection

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

- Attach information on site discovery, history, current integrity, apparent threats, environment, and your temporal and functional interpretations.

**DISCUSSION OF SIGNIFICANCE**

- Attach justification for recorder's evaluation (Page 1).

**REQUIRED: USGS MAP OR COPY WITH SITE LOCATION MARKED**
Calvin Jones map of the archaeological site at the golf course.
Old Cemetery Uncovered At Golf Course

Historical research by Florida State University archaeology student Joe Hottor turned up a forgotten cemetery on the Capital City Country Club property this week.

A state archaeologist, Calvin Jones, said the graveyard was possibly an old slave cemetery but definitely was not remains from a Spanish Mission, as first believed.

Bunk Berry, the CCCC golf pro, told Jones the graveyard had a fence around it until a few years ago and that there were a few markers at one time.

However, all that is present now are a few depressions in the earth according to Jones.

Jones said no dig is planned at this time. "More historical research should be all we need," he said.

_Tallahassee Democrat, January 27, 1971_
Officials seek slave burial site

Commissioner, NAACP leader say bodies may lie beneath golf course

By John Sevgay

A Tallahassee city commissioner and the head of the local NAACP want to unearth part of a golf course that was once a cemetery for slaves. The commission said they want to dig up the site to honor the memory of those who were buried there.

"We need to make sure that we adequately respect and honor those who were once buried there," said Commissioner John Smith. "This is a part of our history that needs to be remembered and respected." He added that the site should be turned into a memorial to honor the lives of those who once lived and worked there.

Billings, President of the NAACP, echoed Smith's sentiments. "This is not just a history issue, it's a human rights issue," he said. "We need to ensure that our history is accurately written and that we honor those who were once denied the right to live in peace.

The site is said to be located at the old Capital City Country Club, which is now a golf course. The club has been around since the 1920s and is known for its beautiful scenery and challenging course.

"It's time we acknowledged the past and ensured that future generations know the truth," said Billings. "This is not just about justice for the past, but for the future as well.

The city of Tallahassee has been working on the project for several months and has received permission from the club to dig up the site. They plan to use archaeological techniques to identify the remains of those who were buried there.

"We need to ensure that we are doing this with care and respect," said Smith. "This is a delicate process and we need to ensure that we do it right.

The site is located near the city center and is close to several important landmarks. The city plans to use the site as a community center and a place to honor the history of the city.

"This is a chance for us to honor our past and ensure that it is written in a way that is accurate and true," said Billings. "We need to ensure that we do it right and that we honor the lives of those who were once buried there.

The project is expected to take several months and is expected to be completed in the spring of next year.

Please see GRAVES, 2B for more information.

GRAVES

From page 18

probably when it was discovered by a state archaeologist.

"Although the exact history and origin of this cemetery is not known, it was reported by oral sources that some markers were still evident in the late 1990s," the report reads in part. The cemetery may have been associated with a nearby plantation, according to the report, penned by Jackville historian preservationist Joel McEachin.

Capital City Country Club officials declined to comment Tuesday afternoon, but a former greenskeeper at the golf course was not so reticent.

"Lewistski, 83, supervised a crew of seven men at the golf course between 1969 and 1975. He said he was never aware of any graves on the property, but in retrospect, he remembers geometrical features of the course that might have been burial sites.

"There were five or six dips under an oak tree," Lewistski said.

Local/Florida

Trick-or-treating one mall, on all

By James Jordan

Taking cues from other malls across the country, Tallahassee Mall is canceling its Mall-a-ween activities this year, saying it doesn't want to chance lawsuits even though an email warning of trouble at U.S. malls on Halloween has been found to be a hoax.

Dissent in malls nationwide are following suit, yet another sign that the fallout from the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon is keeping the nation on edge. Since Sept. 11, mall managers have taken measures to step up security, increase foot patrols, mobilize shipments and keep in close contact with local and federal law enforcement officials.

But the email that warned of malls being targeted by terrorists attacks on Halloween is partly to blame for Tallahassee Mall's decision and the threat are "hot stuff," Jordan told the Democrat.

On Monday, Bob We are president and CEO of Jole LaBelle, Tallahassee Mall company, said he and in the industry spoke we officials and Tom Ridge, CEO of the federal Office of Homeland Security, to get the latest on the anonymous letter. They, too, were told the letter was not credible, he said.

"We're just being extra cautious," Renninger said. "We've been told that this year, but we won't take chances here.

The event, which has been going for the past six years, draws nearly 1,500 to 2,000 parents and children door to door in neighborhoods.

At least 27 of James
“$40 Reward.—Ran away from the subscriber in Savannah, his negro girl Patsey. She was purchased among the gang of negroes, known as the Hargreave’s estate. She is no doubt lurking about Liberty county, at which place she has relatives. Edward Houstoun, of Florida.”

Text of an advertisement placed in the Savannah Republican newspaper, May 24, 1838. (Reprised from the 1839 American Anti-Slavery Society publication, American Slavery As it Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses, page 165.

The Hargreave estate mentioned in the advertisement was likely that of Joseph Hargreave of Liberty County, Georgia. Hargreave’s estate was probated in 1828. Among his requests was a bequest of one-fourth of his estate to one of his slaves, Shadrach, to be used for an “English Education.” His will further states that “It is my will and desire that should it so happen that any of my slaves should be necessarily sold or disposed of, that they be disposed of in families, as nearly as possible as they may be connected, and to humane masters, and my executors are hereby vested with authority, in such case, to sell at private sale in preference of public auction.”41
1850 U.S. Census schedule of “Slave Inhabitants” showing the age and gender of enslaved persons living on the Edward Houstoun plantation.
### TABLE 1
**POPULATION OF LEON COUNTY, 1830–1860**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Free Blacks</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>6,493</td>
<td>3,335</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>3,152</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>10,713</td>
<td>3,461</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>7,231</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>11,442</td>
<td>3,183</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>8,203</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>12,343</td>
<td>3,194</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>9,089</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### TABLE 2
**CLASSIFICATION OF SLAVEHOLDING FAMILIES IN LEON COUNTY IN 1830**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Slave</th>
<th>2–4 Slaves</th>
<th>5–9 Slaves</th>
<th>10–19 Slaves</th>
<th>20–49 Slaves</th>
<th>50–99 Slaves</th>
<th>100 or More Slaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### TABLE 3
**CLASSIFICATION OF SLAVEHOLDING FAMILIES IN LEON COUNTY IN 1860**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Slave</th>
<th>2–4 Slaves</th>
<th>5–9 Slaves</th>
<th>10–19 Slaves</th>
<th>20–49 Slaves</th>
<th>50–99 Slaves</th>
<th>100 Slaves</th>
<th>200 Slaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>113</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: *Agriculture of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington, 1864), p. 225; *Statistics of the United States (Including Mortality, Property, etc.) in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns and Being the Final Exhibit of the Eighth Census* (Washington, 1866), pp. 340–341.

Left: An advertisement for a slave auction to be held in Tallahassee in May, 1842.
Right: 1907 photo a former slave living on the Live Oak Plantation north of Tallahassee.
(Collections of the State Library of Florida)

Table 1  Mortality rates per thousand for slaves and the antebellum population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
<th>Entire United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–4</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15–19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–24</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Age 0, slaves, see Notes 5 and 17; slaves aged 1 and above, Steckel (1979b: 92); United States, Haines and Avery (1980: 88), average of Model West and logit tables.

Tallahassee Railroad.
From Tallahassee to St. Marks, Fla., 21 miles.
Office, Tallahassee, Fla.
Capital, $200,000. Funded Debt, $87,200.
Earnings, $40,960; Net, $27,572.

President & Supt. Edward Houston, Tallahassee, Fla.
Secretary......... Thomas Barnard,
Treasurer.......... W. E. Dunnelly,
Chief Engineer.... J. N. Whitner,
Freight Agent..... B. Williams,
                   A. B. Noyes, St. Marks,
Master of Machin'y. John Bowman, Tallahassee,
                   Gabriel Hernandez,
Car Reps. ...... Wm. L. Vinson,
Road Master.....

7 Directors.
Wm. Bailey.
Jas. E. Broome.
R. A. Shine.
Edward Houston.
E. C. Cabell.
Wm. R. Pettus.
B. F. Whitner.

Pensacola and Georgia Railroad.
From Tallahassee, Fla., to Lake City, 105 miles; to Montecello, 4 miles; completed 25 miles; progressing.
Operated by Tallahassee Railroad Company.
Office, Tallahassee, Fla.
Capital paid in, $598,600; Funded Debt, $95,000.
Earnings last year: Gross, $36,249; Net, $13,139.48.
Time of Election—Second Wednesday in January. Gauge of Road, 5 feet.

Treas. & Sec. . F. H. Flagg,
Assist. Supt. . W. L. Vinson,
Chief Engineer John L. Randolph,
Assist. Eng. . G. G. Hunter,
Road Master . W. L. Vinson,
Gen. Ftg. Agt. . B. Williams,
Mast. of Mach. . C. T. W. Syfan,
Mast. Car Rep. . G. Hernandez,
Chief Clerk . P. Houston,

Nine Directors.
Edward Houston, Tallahassee.
D. W. Gwynn,
Green A. Chaires, Leon Co.
Wm. Bailey, Jefferson Co.
E. E. Blackburn,
S. Simkins,
W. P. Moseley, Madison Co.
G. M. T. Brinson,
Isaac R. Harris, Quincy.
Grave Monument for Edward Houstoun and his family, located in Savannah’s Bonaventure Cemetery. (Findagrave.com)

EDWARD HOUSTON.

Edward Houston, son of John and Eliza (Williamson) Houston, was born in Savannah, Ga., about 1810, and died at “Rose Dhu” the family estate near Savannah, Ga.

He was by right a baronet of “Nova Scotia”, a new creation, being first in descent from Sir Patrick Houston.

He attended the schools of his city and entered the “Academy” in 1825, and graduated in 1828. He engaged in planting in Georgia until 1840, when he removed to a fine farm near Tallahasee, Fla. In 1870, he sold his farm and removed to the old Houston estate, “Rose Dhu,” near Savannah, where he made his home until his death. He was interested in many business enterprises. He was president and a large stock holder in the Tallahasee & Jacksonville R. R., until 1870, when he sold his interest to the Florida Central & P. R. R. He met with marked success in his business ventures and acquired a large fortune.

He was married about 1835, to Claudia Bond of McIntosh County, Ga.

From Norwich University 1819-1911 Her History, Her Graduates, Her Roll of Honor, (Montpelier, VT: Capital City Press, 1911), 142.

Detail from the Charles G. Platen Map of Chatham County, Georgia (1875) showing the Houstoun family plantation, “Rosedew.” Note that the plantation is bisected by “Houstoun’s Creek.”
Circa 1880s photo of the Tallahassee Railroad Depot. This building was constructed in 1858 as part of the P&G Railroad. Today it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (State Library & Archives of Florida)

1859 bill for transporting cloth to J. R. Cotton from the Tallahassee Rail Road. Note Patrick Houstoun signed as clerk. (State Library & Archives of Florida)
1893 federal survey map of sections surrounding the prime meridian. Note Houstoun’s Pond and the line of the railroad. During this period the land was owned by Patrick Houstoun. (General Land Office)

J. P. S. Houstoun’s Livery Stable, located on the northwest corner of Adams and Pensacola Streets.
http://fpc.dos.state.fl.us/reference/rc09756.jpg
1920s image of the Tallahassee Country Club Course. The location of the unmarked cemetery would have been up the hill and off to the left (not visible).
(State Library and Archives of Florida)

Circa 1930s map of the Tallahassee Municipal Golf Course. (Courtesy Jay Revell)
Former location of Houston House

Live Oak trees.
These two patriarch trees along Azalea Drive formerly shaded the yard of the Houstoun Plantation house.

(Google Maps, annotated by author)
Armed with a couple of dated newspaper clippings, an archaeological site review from 1974 and fueled by a passion for preserving history, Delatre Hollinger has found his next big challenge: bringing dignity to a neglected burial ground on the grounds of the Capital City Country Club.

The golf course was built on land that once belonged to the Houstoun Plantation, originally owned by Edward Houstoun, and later by his son, Patrick. Research pinpoints the cemetery site on the Country Club Drive side, near where the 7th hole is today.

The site contains no headstones or markers. At one point in the early 70s, it was surrounded by a fence that is no longer there.

Hollinger’s quest has not gone unnoticed. He’s quickly established an informal network of preservationists, archaeologists, neighborhood leaders and engaged the historian of the country club.

They are working toward learning the truth, and if successful, dignifying those buried there with a historic marker, while unearthing a slice of history that until now has been forgotten.

Hollinger’s interest was piqued while appearing on a local radio program when a listener called in with a query about a possible slave cemetery. It immediately took him back to an Oct. 24, 2001, story published in the Tallahassee Democrat.
Digging deeper, Hollinger discovered a four-paragraph story published in Jan. 28, 1971, in the Democrat, indicating the discovery of the cemetery by Florida State University anthropology student Joe Hutto. The late state archaeologist Calvin Jones said the graveyard was possibly a slave cemetery, but no dig was planned at the time.

Jones, who died in 1980, sketched out an archaeological form dated Feb. 2, 1974, describing a "black cemetery" on the "east side of Capital City Golf Course on Country Club Drive."

His notes indicated "tee over part of cemetery."

Hollinger brought his concerns before the City Commission on Feb. 20, appealing for the placement of a marker on the Country Club Drive side of the course — emphasizing it's been 18 years since Billings and Davis first brought it to the city's attention.

"I think it's high-time that on this city-owned property, there be some type of recognition given to the fact that there is a cemetery there containing the bodies of black people," said Hollinger, executive director of The National Association for the Preservation of African-American History & Culture, Inc. and immediate past president of the Tallahassee branch of the NAACP.

Commissioners voted unanimously to have staff research the request at the urging of City Commissioner Elaine Bryant.

In response, City Attorney Cassandra Jackson reminded the board that although the city owns the property in Myers Park, the Capital City Country Club and Golf Course is regulated by its board. She said the agreement and the request would be reviewed.
After initially scheduling a tour of the site, Assistant City Manager Wayne Tedder changed gears when a local archaeologist, Barbara Clark, expressed interest in the project.

"I think we let the professionals do what professionals do and at the end of the day, she advises us on some work to be done and how to do it," he said.

Once that is determined, staff will report back to the commission.

Since the City Commission meeting, Hollinger has been contacted by Jay Revell, Capital City Country Club historian.

Revell, Hollinger, Clark, historian Jonathan Lammers, Jeffrey Shanks, an archaeologist with the National Parks Service's Southeast Archaeological Center, and Jason Bentz, the club’s general manager, toured the site Tuesday afternoon, but the Democrat was not invited to attend.

"It was a very good meeting," Revell said afterward. "After our site visit and consulting historical evidence there is consensus that an area on the course deserves further investigation. There are certain tests that would need to be done to better understand what may be there and the group has devised a potential path to do so."

Hollinger said Clark was able to determine several depressions in the ground. He also was impressed that the site has been preserved by the club and not disrupted by golfers or their carts.

"It was agreed upon that we request the board members of the club and the city accept the ground penetrating radar services which would be offered free of charge by the National Parks Service," Hollinger said. "We won’t know for sure until we get ground penetrating radar (findings)."

'A statewide problem'

Clark, regional director for the North-Central Florida Office of the Florida Public Archaeology Network, said she won’t know more until she further studies the site.

"It is definitely a cemetery, that's all I know," said Clark, who has reviewed Jones' report. "It's what we call an 'unmarked cemetery.'"

Clark said the reality of unmarked graves is a "statewide problem," but at the same time, state archaeologists have been doing "everything in their power" in protecting those sites.

"Leon County had a lot of plantations and there were lots of slaves," she said. "It goes without saying there are cemeteries."

Lammers, who has done extensive research on the Houstoun Plantation, also visited the site last week with local archaeologist Jim Miller and Hurto, a nationally known nature writer who has since moved back to the area.
Lammers said "only about 15 depressions were visible, but the cemetery is likely much larger than that." His research leads him to believe "more than 100, mostly children" could be buried there. But it is impossible to know without testing.

The history of the country club

The club dates back to 1909 when the original Tallahassee Country Club was founded on the grounds of the Grove near the Governor's mansion.

In 1914, it moved to the new golf course built by George Perkins on the grounds of the old plantation in what is now Myers Park. The original golf course there was nine holes and was designed by English golfer named H.H. Barker.

The club purchased the land from Perkins in 1924 for $10,000. In 1936, the club struck an agreement with the city in which the land was given to the city for the purpose of expanding and maintaining the golf course for public use.

As part of that agreement, the city worked closely with the members to expand the golf course using funding from the Works Progress Administration. The expanded golf course operated as a municipal course for 20 years as a segregated club.

In 1956, a controversial decision was made for the city to lease the course back to the club. The city leased the course to the club for a period of 99 years at $1 per year. It is commonly recognized this was done to avoid desegregating the operation, which is no longer the case.

The history of Capital City Country Club

- Capital City golf course rectifies and embraces its history
- Capital City golf club to get makeover under new company

It is open to the public and is part of the Florida Historic Golf Trail. A marker already exists at the entrance to the clubhouse on Golf Terrace Drive laying out the history of the golf course.

Revell said he is supportive of the idea of placing an additional marker on the Country Club Drive side of the course to provide the public with a complete history of the property.

"Any opportunity to paint the whole history of the property is important," Revell said. "We are the only golf course located in the city's only historic district (Myers Park) and it's important to paint the full picture of the history of the area."

Hollinger is encouraged by the support he's received in finding answers and hopefully, resolution, to a long-lost part of the city's history.

"There are many bodies buried (throughout the state) that we don't know about," Hollinger said. "This is not a unique situation, but one that we need to come in and correct."

Tallahassee Democrat, April 10, 2019.
Chronology

1806: Edward Houstoun is born on the “Rose Dhu” plantation near Savannah, Georgia

1824: Tallahassee is officially designated as the territorial capital of Florida.

1825: Edward Houstoun enrolls at the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy in Norwich, Vermont (today Norwich University). He graduates in 1828.42

1826: Two of Edward Houstoun’s siblings, Patrick and George Houstoun, purchase approximately 320 acres of land (or one-half of a square mile) in Tallahassee from the federal government. This land comprises all of the eastern half of Township 1 South, Range 1 East. The western boundary of this land roughly follows the line of Golf Terrace Drive along the edge of the Capital City Country Club Golf Course. Over the years, Edward Houstoun and his family will greatly increase their land holdings by purchasing adjoining property.

1830: U.S. Census records show the population of Leon County as having 3,335 white residents, 3,152 enslaved persons, and 6 free blacks.

1833: The Tallahassee Railroad is chartered with a line running from Tallahassee south to St. Marks. Richard Keith Call was the company’s principal stockholder.

1834: Edward Houstoun marries Claudia Wilhelmina Bond.

1836: Edward Houstoun moves to Leon County where he takes over management of the lands purchased by his siblings in 1826.

1837: Edward and Claudia Houstoun have their second child, Patrick.

1839: The Leon County Tax Roll of 1839 shows that Edward Houstoun owned 560 acres of land and 26 enslaved persons. Historic research shows that his residence was located on a broad hilltop in the vicinity of the present-day intersection of Azalea Drive and Alban Avenue.

1840: U.S. Census records show the population of Leon County as having 3,461 white residents, 7,231 enslaved persons, and 21 free blacks.

The 1840 U.S. Census shows 46 persons on the Houstoun plantation. These included Edward’s wife and 4 children, along with 40 enslaved persons.

1844: Florida Territorial Governor, Richard Keith Call, nominates Edward Houstoun as one of the director’s of the Union Bank of Florida.

1850: The U.S. Census shows 54 persons on the Houstoun plantation. These included Edward’s wife and 6 children, along with 46 enslaved persons. His land holdings had increased to 1,280 acres.
1851: Edward Houstoun participates in creating a pro-slavery organization called the Southern Rights Association of Centreville District. He also helps found the Central Association of the Cotton Planters of Florida.

1853: Edward Houstoun and E. B. Cabell charter the Pensacola & Georgia Railroad.

Edward Houstoun purchases 160 acres comprising the northwest corner of Section 6, Township 1 South, Range 1 East. This tract had originally been purchased by Florida Territorial Governor, William Pope Duval, in 1827. Today this land includes portions of Cascades Park, Myers Park, and the northern half of the Capital City Country Club Golf Course.

1855: Houstoun and Cabell purchases the Tallahassee Railroad running from Tallahassee to St. Marks. Houstoun becomes president of both the Tallahassee Railroad and the Pensacola & Georgia Railroad.

1856: Construction begins on the Pensacola & Georgia Railroad

Edward Houstoun purchases an additional 319 acres in Leon County from the federal government. These lands are not contiguous to the main plantation, but are located approximately a mile northeast of Lake Munson.

1858: The Pensacola & Georgia Railroad construct the Tallahassee Railroad Station and the Lloyd Railroad Depot. Both buildings remain standing and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1860: The U.S. Census shows 54 persons on the Houstoun plantation, including 78 enslaved persons. Edward Houstoun estimated the value of his real at $25,000 and his personal assets at $75,000.43

1863: Edward Houstoun’s Pensacola & Georgia Railroad grosses approximately $207,000.

1864: Edward Houstoun allows Brigadier General William Miller and Captain Theodore Moreno to construct an earthen fort on his land. This area is today known as Old Fort Park.

1865: Patrick Houstoun serves as Captain in the Kilcrease Company of Gamble’s Battery in the Battle of Natural Bridge south of Tallahassee on March 6.

1867: Edward Houstoun begins working with George Swepson on a scheme to sell his railroads.

Houstoun’s wife, Claudia, is shown as the owner of the Brown House at 404 North Monroe Street. This house was sold to the Catholic Church in 1870 and later used as a convent.

1869: The Pensacola & Georgia Railroad is sold at a forced sale for lack of payment into a State of Florida sinking fund.

1870: George Swepson is able to defraud the State of Florida of more than $3 million by exchanging worthless railroad bonds for state bonds.
The U.S. Census shows Edward Houstoun with real estate valued at $10,000, and personal wealth valued at $75,000. He later moves back to Savannah, Georgia, leaving Patrick in charge of the Tallahassee plantation.

1874: The publication *Home Life in Florida* shows Patrick Houstoun as raising Durham, Jersey and Guernsey cattle on the family plantation, which Patrick had renamed the “Lakeland Stock Farm.”

1875: Edward Houstoun dies and is buried at Bonaventure Cemetery in Savannah. His will leaves his estate to his children.

1880: The U.S. Census agricultural report shows Patrick Houstoun’s Lakeland Stock Farm as having 25 milk cows, 20 cattle, 20 horses, 10 mules, and 500 sheep. 90 acres were planted in corn, 75 in wheat, and 70 in cotton, with additional land giving to growing Irish and sweet potatoes, as well as various fruit and nut groves.

1887: Patrick Houstoun is elected president of the Florida Senate, having previously served as a state senator and county commissioner for Leon County.

1890: Patrick Houstoun sells the northwest quarter of Section 6 to the Leon Heights Improvement Company. This includes all of the land that is today Myers Park, as well as northern portions of the golf course.

1893: Patrick Houstoun is appointed Adjutant General of Florida, a position he holds for eight years.

1901: Patrick Houstoun dies in Tallahassee and is buried at the St. Johns Episcopal Church Cemetery.

1907: Patrick Houstoun’s son, James P. S. Houstoun leases the former plantation land to Andrew Knight and Edward Henry for five years.

Knight and Henry convey an option to purchase the land to George B. Perkins. Perkins was a successful Tallahassee lawyer and the secretary and Treasurer of the American Sumatra Tobacco Company.

1914: George Perkins develops a nine-hole golf course with a clubhouse and swimming pool on a portion of the land that now comprises the Capital City County Club course.

1915: The Hill City Golf and Country Club forms with plans to improve the golf course and clubhouse and to install tennis courts.

1922: The Tallahassee golf links clubhouse is destroyed by fire.

1924: George and Margaret Perkins sell 201.2 acres to the Tallahassee Country Club for $20,000 and shares of stock in the Club.

1925: George Perkins sells 33 acres of land to Ralph “Hutch” Gibson, which is developed as Country Club Estates. Around the same time, Perkins’ brother moved into the old Houstoun plantation home.
1935: The Tallahassee Country Club deeds the nine-hole golf course to the city of Tallahassee and it becomes the Tallahassee Municipal Golf Course. A short time later, the city received $35,000 in funding from the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) to expand the golf course to 18 holes.44

1937: Perkins begins laying out streets and selling lots for the Woodland Drives subdivision.

1956: The City of Tallahassee leases the Municipal Golf Course to the Capital City Country Club, Inc. for 99 years at a cost of $1 per year. The lease agreement is widely understood to ensure that the golf course can remain segregated.

1957: The Capital City Country Club purchases 9.2 acres of the golf course from the City of Tallahassee to build a new clubhouse, pool, and other facilities.

1971: FSU archaeology student Joe Hutto and state archaeologist Calvin Jones announced they had located an old cemetery on the golf course. An article in the Tallahassee Democrat mentioned that one of the golf pros at the course stated the graveyard had a fence around it “until a few years ago, and that were a few markers at one time.”

1974: Calvin Jones formally recorded the site on a Florida Master Site File form. He mentions finding Native American artifacts at the site, in addition to the grave depressions.

1986: Sharyn M.E. Thompson completes a historical and architectural survey of the County Club Estates Neighborhood. Thompson stated in her report that there were an estimated 150-200 burials at the cemetery, per an estimate of Calvin Jones.

2001: City Commissioner Charles Billings and local NAACP leader Anita Davis propose hiring an archaeologist to test the cemetery site and determine if any burials are present.

2019: Former local NAACP leader, Delaitre Hollinger asks the city council to investigate the cemetery.


6 *Journal of the Florida Senate*, Thursday, January 11, 1855, p. 301.


20 Notice in *The Weekly True Democrat*, August 11, 1905.


29 Advertisement, *Tallahassee Democrat*, April 24, 1914. Located in the State Library and Archives clipping files.


31 Jay Revell, personal communication, April 9, 2019.


42 Norwich University 1819-1911 Her History, Her Graduates, Her Roll of Honor, (Montpelier, VT: Capital City Press, 1911), 142.
