Historic Overview
of
Fort Stewart and
Hunter Army Airfield

Communities and Associated Cemeteries

United States Department of Defense
Department of the Army

Prepared by
DPW, Environmental Division

2007

Fort Stewart Popular Report Series 4

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Preface

The mission of the Prevention and Compliance Branch of the Fort Stewart Environmental Division is to support military training by achieving and exceeding environmental, natural, and cultural resource stewardship and legal standards.

To be better stewards of the public lands we manage, Fort Stewart has compiled this booklet to provide background on the many former communities and cemeteries found across the installation. A thorough listing of known burials on post may be found in *Fort Stewart Cemeteries* (May 1998), available in local libraries. An electronic database of burials found on Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield (HAAF) is available online at *http://www.stewart.army.mil/ima/sites/directorates/DPW/fscr/dbintro.asp*.

The United States Army is only the latest in a chain of many users of the land on which Fort Stewart and HAAF is located. For thousands of years before us, people hunted, fished, and farmed here. As you drive across the Installation and HAAF and see one of our cemeteries, you might pause and reflect upon those who preceded you and their legacy—the very ground upon which you stand.

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Native American and Spanish Settlers (1492–1715)

Although there is little documentary evidence of settlements in the Fort Stewart area during this period, Spanish soldiers, missionaries, and English traders passed through. The first European claim was by the Spanish in the sixteenth century. The land south of the Savannah River to present-day north Florida was known as the Guale Mission Province. A series of missions were established in this area, especially along the coast and barrier islands, during the 1500s. One such mission close to the study area was that of Mission Santa Catalina, located near the mouth of the Ogeechee River (Worth 1995:10). At first, the Native American population assimilated to this missionary system, but, by 1597, Native American resentment led to a successful uprising.

During the 1600s, the English settlement of the Carolinas pushed its boundaries farther south towards the Spanish mission lands. At first, the Carolinians established trade with the Guale Native Americans to the south, but eventually hostilities occurred between the two groups. Increasing pressure from the aggressive English newcomers forced the withdrawal of the Spanish missions and the Guale Native Americans (called the Yamasee) from the northern portions of Guale Province by the 1680s. This retrograde movement prompted a successful Native American revolt against the Spanish in Guale Province by 1684. Shortly thereafter, the Yamasee migrated to inland portions of present-day Georgia and northern Florida.

Up until 1702, the Guale Province area remained relatively quiet. By this time, Queen Anne's War had spread to the American colonies. In the same year, the governor of Carolina, James Moore, marched through Guale Province into present-day Florida, where he proceeded to destroy the Spanish mission settlements. In 1713, the war had ended. In 1714, however, the frontier again erupted in open warfare when the Yamasee began a bloody revolt against the English. The English defeated the Yamasee by 1715. After the failed revolt, the Yamasee migrated to coastal sections of Guale Province in present-day Georgia, but were quickly expelled by the English. This was the final expulsion of the original inhabitants of Guale Province and their Lower Creek allies.

Early British Influence (1715–1732)

Due to the expulsion of the Yamasee and Lower Creek allies, the area between the Savannah and Altamaha Rivers became virtually uninhabited. British colonists quickly moved into this area to protect its borders. The Carolinians established Fort King George at the mouth of the Altamaha River in 1721 to create a buffer between Spanish-held lands to the south and the Carolinas. By 1729, this fort was abandoned by the Carolinas as a result of relinquishment to the British crown for the creation of the buffer colony of Georgia. The only other known settlement during this period in the Fort Stewart area was the Yamasee Camp. It may have existed before the Yamasee war in 1715, but is believed to have been established after the war. While the exact location is unknown, it is believed to have been in the vicinity of Fort Stewart's present-day Taro Stage Field DZ (Drop Zone).

Colonial Georgia Period (1732–1775)

The first settlement near Fort Stewart was the colony of Savannah in 1733. A few years later, through an agreement with the Creek Indians, land was ceded to the colonists as far west as portions of present-day Bryan and Liberty Counties in the Fort Stewart area. Fort Argyle (named after James Campbell, the Duke of Argyle) was established as a military post in 1733 to protect the buffer zone between the western edge of the ceded lands and the colony of Savannah. Other fortifications were constructed to protect the new colony, including Hampstead, Highgate, Thunderbolt, Abercorn, Tybee Island, and Skidaway Island (Helms and McKivergan 1997:20). Beard's Bluff (southwest of Fort Stewart in Long County), Fort Barrington, and Darien also garrisoned men to protect Savannah (Coxan 1979:162).

Between 1758 and 1763, more lands were ceded to the colony of Georgia to include present-day Bryan and Liberty Counties. By 1773, Georgia expanded westward to include all of present-day Fort Stewart. Colonists settled along the Georgia coast between the Savannah and Altamaha Rivers. The colonists established an agricultural economy based upon rice, indigo, corn, potatoes, and eventually cotton. Due to the initial restrictions of land granted to individuals by the trustees, labor intensive economies could not produce marketable quantities. By 1740, the size of land grants was increased, and, in 1751, slave labor was permitted.

After twenty-one years as a trustee charter, Georgia became a crown colony in 1752. In 1758, it was subdivided into parishes. The Fort Stewart area included portions of St. Johns, St. Phillips, and St. Andrews Parishes. During this time period, inland areas of the crown colony were beginning to be used for crops, such as rice and cotton, timber harvesting, and the raising of livestock. Within the boundaries of present-day Fort Stewart, the two most important settlements were Fort Argyle and Taylors Creek.

Fort Argyle's original site "…lay on the east bank of the Ogeechee River at a point about 8.75 miles above the mouth of the Canoochee River and just above present-day Morgan Bridge" (Campbell et al. 1996:82). Due to flooding, the fort was relocated to the west bank of the Ogeechee River approximately "…3.2 miles upstream from the mouth of the Canoochee River (Campbell et al. 1996:82). The first settlers of Fort Argyle were Captain James McPherson and a small group of Rangers—provincial militia that patrolled the periphery of the Georgia colony. By 1734, twenty people occupied Fort Argyle. Between 1734 and 1738, the fort fell into disrepair before being restored in 1739. At this time, McPherson's Rangers were discharged, leaving two men to oversee the fort. In 1740, the War of Jenkin's Ear initiated the reestablishment of a garrison at Fort Argyle. By 1741, a wooden stockade was built to replace the earlier earthenwork defenses. In 1742, John Milledge and twenty Rangers were stationed at Fort Argyle. The community of Williamsburg was also established for the soldiers south of Fort Argyle, outside of present-day Fort Stewart.

Between 1743 and 1747, the Rangers still garrisoned Fort Argyle during King George's War. In 1747, they disbanded and the fort fell into disrepair, leaving the land in and around Fort Argyle for public use. In 1756, the Rangers were again stationed at Fort Argyle as a scouting garrison. It is unknown if the fort was occupied between 1757 and 1766. In 1766, thirty-five men were assigned to Fort Argyle, and, the next year, 300 acres were added to the fort's holdings. From this point until the Revolutionary War in 1776, Fort Argyle was not garrisoned. Lands around Fort Argyle became private property, but the fort still remained a landmark.

Portions of the land granted to John Harn in 1745 in the Fort Argyle area may have been on present-day Fort Stewart. Harn and his descendents lived in the area until the Fort Stewart land acquisition. The Butlers settled in the Sterling Creek vicinity (south of Fort Argyle) in the 1750s. They acquired more land to the north within present-day Fort Stewart.

Around 1752, the area then known as Barbecue Creek (also Barbicue or Barbicu) was settled by landholders from the Richmond Hill area. The Barbecue Creek area lies north of the Canoochee River and southwest of the Ogeechee River close to the junction of the two rivers. These lands were initially used for raising livestock and timber harvesting. During the 1760s, several more tracts of land were granted in the Barbecue Creek vicinity. In 1763, Halfmoon Bluff was settled in the Barbecue Creek area. In 1764, 1,000 acres were granted to Thomas Eatton on both sides of the Canoochee River, which was then called Mill Land. In 1765, maps indicate an area within the Barbecue Creek vicinity as the Canoochee Settlement. Some of the other known land holders in the Barbecue Creek area included David Black, Jonathon Bryan, John Milledge (Fort Argyle Commander), Robert Houstoun, Sarah Sinclair, Robert Kirkwood, John Jagger, Elizabeth Wright (later Skillins), Thomas Camber, William LeConte, William Malden, Abraham Williams, Francis Graham, John Matthews (Fort Argyle Ranger), and Joseph Wood.

During the 1750s, the area between the Canoochee and Ogeechee Rivers was referred to as Cross Swamp. The original 1754 land grant went to Joseph Butler from the Sterling Creek area. The land that Shem Butler acquired north of the Canoochee in 1757 was sold to John Harn (the younger) in 1767. By this time, houses and other structures had been built on the land grants. In Harn's request for land, references to topographical markers were given. Bear Town was noted as being 2 miles upstream of a branch of the Canoochee River (possibly Clyde Creek); this area was also near Rattlesnake Hill (Candler 1906:515, 739). Little other information has been gathered concerning the two place names, Bear Town and Rattlesnake Hill. Also during the 1750s, lands in and around Fort Argyle were sought after by settlers. Although the land on which Fort Argyle was located was reserved for public use, areas around the fort were granted. Some of the other known landholders in the Cross Swamp/Fort Argyle area included Daniel Nunez (Nunes or Nunis), J. Bulloch, Elisha Butler, Lewis Smith, W. West, William Butler, James Savage, Governor James Wright (1767), John Fox, Thomas Burrington, William LeConte, Thomas Camber, William Elliot, James Mossman, David Huguenin, and James Read.

Around 1760, colonists began to settle the Taylors Creek area. Various names and locations of Taylors and Canoochee Creeks and their tributaries have caused confusion as to the exact location of the original land grant. According to Campbell et al. (1996:94), the location of Taylors Creek land

grant "formed a sort of corridor anchored at one end by the junction of the Canoochee River and present-day Canoochee Creek and Taylors Creek. This corridor may have been as much as two or three miles wide." The first settlers raised livestock and harvested timber. David Dicks and David Dicks Jr. requested land in the Taylors Creek area in 1760. During the 1760s, Sylvanus Robinson, Archibold Bulloch, and James Taylor also acquired land in the vicinity. James and William Ducker acquired land in the Taylors Creek area near what was known as Tom's Creek on the Little Canoochee. William Deveaux, Charles Mearn (Maran or Moran), Roger Kelsall, Luke Mann, and William Simpson acquired land in the Taylors Creek area during the late 1760s and early 1770s.

Only one cemetery may be associated with this time period. The Fort Argyle cemetery is a single burial that was discovered during archaeological testing of the site. No headstone was present, and, therefore, no interment date was available. From archaeological evidence, it has been suggested that the burial may be as old as 1775, but most likely dates to much later (Elliot et al. 1997:103). Since the Fort Argyle site was not fully excavated, there are, in all likelihood, additional burials. The Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America (1929) mentions a cemetery at the Fort Argyle site during a visit in 1929. The one known burial, although probably dating to later than the fort itself, is located north of the fort. The initial cemetery is probably in the same area. As residents settled in the area after the fort's use, they probably recognized the original cemetery and continued to use it (Elliot et al. 1997:201). Elliot et al. (1997:84) also mentioned a 20-by-40-foot family burial plot on Joseph Butler's land. And, according to an article from a local Fort Stewart newspaper, "Legend states that a pit about 125 feet from the bluff was a cellar within the fort, and between the pit and the bank is said to have been an old cemetery" (The Patriot, 30 August 1973).

Revolutionary War Period (1776–1781)

During the Revolutionary War, the colony of Georgia supported independence from England. But by 1778, the British regained control of Savannah and its surrounding areas until 1782. Many settlers in the Fort Stewart area remained pro-Whig during this period. Shortly after the war ended, lands were ceded from the Cherokee and Creek Indians, which included additional portions of land between the Ogeechee and Oconee Rivers.

Early American Period (1782–1820)

During the 1780s, lands opened up to settlement west of Fort Stewart near the Ohoopee River. Because of this westward expansion, transportation routes were constructed through the Fort Stewart area connecting the coastal towns to the inland settlements. These new routes created small crossroad communities within the Fort Stewart area. As the new American government was developing and settlement was moving westward across Georgia, smaller counties were created in the Fort Stewart area. In addition to Liberty, Effingham, and Washington Counties, Bryan and Tattnall Counties were formed in 1793 and 1801, respectively. By 1820, the county seat of Bryan County (known as Bryan Courthouse) was moved to the community of Eden, which eventually became known as Clyde. By 1818, the Sturges map of Georgia depicts the various small communities within the Fort Stewart area, including Fort Argyle, Bryan Courthouse, and Canoochee Bluff. Other communities existed but were rather dispersed.

The Taylors Creek community was primarily settled by residents from Bryan County and other Georgia counties in the 1790s and early 1800s. Settlers also came from Massachusetts, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. In 1807, Rev. Angus McDonald established a Methodist congregation, which, by 1809, was known as the Little Canoochee Meeting House. The Taylors Creek Campground (see Antebellum Period) may have been established this same year (Yarbrough and Yarbrough 1963:75). Taylors Creek residents were primarily farmers and remained so throughout the nineteenth century. The names of some of the families that settled and/or resided in the community during this time included Dicks, Delk, Mann, Hills, Gaulden (ca. late 1700s), Robinson, Daniel, Abram of Bulloch County (1801–1802), Bradley, Eli and Newman (ca. 1800), Dorsey (Darsey), James (1799), Gaulden (Rev. Jonathon of South Carolina, ca. 1801), Caswell, Martin James from North Carolina (ca. 1790 or 1801?), Martin (before 1800), McFerrell (McFail) from South Carolina, Hendry (Robert from North Carolina, then to Burke County, 1801), Hog, Harville, Oswall (Oswald), Warren, Swilly, Terrell, Davis, Slade, Dyess, Herrington, MacNair, Togner, Underwood, Chessler, Tatom, Buchanan, Hendry (1801–1802), Laing (before 1820 or 1828?), and Surley.

Other areas in Fort Stewart grew slowly during this period. It has been suggested that settlements grew up along the upper Canoochee River and the roads that crossed the Fort Stewart area. Although documentation for

settlements other than the major communities is limited, it is assumed that settlement patterns were associated with access to transportation routes (i.e., roads and rivers) in areas of present-day Long County and portions of southwest Liberty County. The northeastern portion of Fort Stewart appears to have been less settled than other areas.

The land around Fort Argyle during the Revolutionary War traded hands several times between the opposing sides. When the war ended, confiscated lands were sold by Georgia, as were lands in the Cross Swamp area. Lands in the Fort Argyle area owned by former Governor James Wright were confiscated during the war and sold to John Ward in 1782 (Elliot et al. 1997:84). Lands owned by James Butler and Roger Kelsall in the Cross Swamp area were sold to George Walton during this period. It has been suggested that the Savage family, as well as John Waldron and Jacob Green, resided in the Fort Argyle area during the Early American period. By 1800, the community name of Fort Argyle was well established.

By 1806, the Well's Ferry–Lane's Ford Road was established in the western section of Fort Stewart across the Canoochee River (near present-day landing sites L-15 and L-22 in the northwestern portion of the fort). Nathan Smart and John Futch owned and operated this ferry crossing. The Durrence family cemetery lies a few miles west of the Well's Ferry–Lane's Ford Road. Although no headstones are currently present in the cemetery, it has been suggested that the earliest interment was 1808 (Lopis et al. 1992). Salem Church might have also been established in this area in 1811 (Hodges n.d.: Box [B]1, Folder [F]2, Item [I]?).

In 1809, two roads were petitioned to be built through Taylors Creek community. These roads further established Taylors Creek as an important crossroads community by 1820. The Hencart Road (or Handcart Road), another important road, was constructed in 1809, linking the western to the eastern portions of present-day Fort Stewart (Yarbrough and Yarbrough 1963:15). Hencart Road was located approximately where present-day GA 144 and Fort Stewart Road 144 are now located.

Antebellum Period (1820–1860)

During the Antebellum period, there was a steady growth of settlements in the Fort Stewart area. The local agricultural economies continued to rely on subsistence farming and rice cultivation. Meanwhile, raising livestock

and harvesting timber still played important roles. Cotton was produced on the few plantations that used slave labor, and gristmills were being constructed throughout most of the Fort Stewart area.

By 1827, areas in Bryan County were producing rice as their primary agricultural economy. By the 1850s, livestock raising and timber harvesting were the primary economic endeavors. According to Census Bureaus of 1850, lumber cutters resided in the Fort Argyle and Eden areas of Fort Stewart. By 1860, cattle raising and rice cultivation declined in this same area. By 1847, the county seat of Bryan County was known as Eden, and the Fort Argyle community continued to show up on maps. Canal construction began in the 1820s and, by 1830, was an important development for the residents in and around the Fort Argyle area. First settled during the Colonial period, the Harn family settlement was located between the Canoochee River and Fort Argyle. The lands around Fort Argyle, and possibly Fort Argyle itself, were sold to Lewis Hines in 1839. North of the area around Fort Argyle, 2,229 acres were sold in the same year to William Savage. This area was called Silk Hope Plantation (Braley et al. 1985:27). Although little is known about land use around this time, it has been assumed that the land was used for livestock raising, timber harvesting, and possibly tenant farming.

Associated cemeteries from the Antebellum period in present-day Bryan County include Bandy, Gordon Strickland, Liberty Chapel, and Waters. Between Liberty Chapel and Waters cemeteries lies the W. H. Strickland cemetery. Probably a small family cemetery, no inscriptions remain on the headstones. This cemetery is assumed to be associated with the surrounding communities and would probably date from this same time period.

Liberty County agricultural censuses for the 1850s and 1860s indicate a reliance on subsistence and some sugarcane farming at Taylors Creek. Cotton was cultivated on some of the larger plantations, but not on the scale of the coastal plantations. Livestock raising (hogs, cattle, sheep) continued to play a role in local economies. The Taylors Creek area "…unmistakably remained one of multiple small, family-owned farms where no shortage of food sources existed, but on which almost no market crops were produced" (Campbell et al. 1996:107). Settlers in the Taylors Creek area during this time included the families Bird (ca. 1825–1830), McGillis (before 1849), May (before 1861), and Shuptrine (1850–1860).

The original location of the Taylors Creek Methodist Church and cemetery was in a flood-prone area. According to Yarbrough and Yarbrough (1986:130–131), the church was located along the Canoochee Creek near the bridge crossing of the Sunbury to Greensboro roads. The church was reestablished in 1841, and the cemetery was moved to its current location. The earliest interment was 1832. The church remained active until 1941. Taylors Creek Campground was also established during the Antebellum period, and the land was permanently donated to the Methodist Conference in 1859. There has been some confusion as to when the campground was first established. According to Yarbrough and Yarbrough (1963:75), it was established by 1812, possibly as early as 1807. The campground was both a social and religious tradition for nearby residents. A religious revival, open to all denominations, was held annually in October (Martin 1979:45).

The Taylors Creek Campground cemetery was somewhere in the vicinity, but the exact location is unknown. At the Taylors Creek cemetery, a headstone mentions the burial of three individuals with interment dates ranging from 1849 to 1853 near the Taylors Creek Campground. Another important feature near the Taylors Creek community was the Taylors Creek Baptist Church, built sometime after 1847. The Taylors Creek Union Academy, a high school that later became Liberty Institute (ca. 1887–1889), was constructed sometime after 1833. In 1849, the Liberty Union Freemanson Lodge No. 96, F. & A. M. was established in Taylors Creek. The Lodge prospered for several years thereafter, but then declined in importance during the latter half of the Civil War. The charter was forfeited in 1866 (Yarbrough and Yarbrough 1963:71).

The Thomas Hill community and cemetery developed during the Antebellum period. Another community was west of Thomas Hill sometime before 1860. It was later associated with Bethany Baptist Church (near the present location of Todd Ray cemetery). The Bethany Baptist Church would later be established in the 1890s (Mobley 1979:155). Another community near Antioch Baptist Church was established around 1845. The Soules Chapel Methodist Church, also located in the vicinity, was established in the mid 1800s (possibly as early as 1836) (Mobley 1979:154). Other Antebellum cemeteries in present-day Liberty County include Gaulden, Parker Sapp, Pinholster, Salem (the church may have been established as early as 1811) (Hodges n.d.: B1, F2), and Zoucks.

Although Tattnall County saw an increase in settlement during the Antebellum period, the portions of the county that comprise the Fort Stewart area still remained rural. Economic life was similar to that in other areas of Fort Stewart. By the 1860s, the turpentine industry made its appearance in the Fort Stewart area. Families who settled this area of Fort Stewart included Durrance, Rogers, Smith, Deloatch (Deloach), Todd, Sands, Waters, Boggs, Dasher, Smart, Martin, Bacon, Prevatt, Easterling, Glisson, Gainer, and Baker.

The Long Branch community, near Wells Ferry, is located near the site of Z. R. Moody cemetery in present-day Evans County. James Moody settled in the area around 1844, and his family continued to live here throughout the Antebellum period.

A family community existed during this time period in present-day Long County. The J. E. Moody cemetery is located west of Strickland Pond. The earliest interment date for this cemetery is 1840. The closest known settlement in relation to this possible community was Taylors Creek, which is located several miles to the east of the J. E. Moody cemetery.

Poplar Head (or Popular Head) cemetery is located in present-day Long County west-northwest of Pinholster cemetery. This cemetery is a small family cemetery with the earliest interment date of 1848. A small family community was evidently established near the Kirkland Creek area during the Antebellum period. The Poplar Head Church was associated with this cemetery.

Civil War Period (1861–1865)

Although little military action occurred in the Fort Stewart area, the communities were economically affected by the war, especially farmers who relied on slave labor to cultivate rice and cotton. In 1864 and 1865, General Sherman's army marched through the area near the lower Canoochee and Ogeechee Rivers towards Savannah through Fort Argyle and Bryan Courthouse. Sherman's objective was to destroy the Ogeechee Canal and the nearby Central Georgia Railroad. Marching through the area, Sherman met with little resistance and set up a temporary Union camp at Bryan Courthouse (Eden). According to Yarbrough and Yarbrough (1963:37–47), Liberty County (presumably in and around the Taylors Creek community)

suffered greatly during the Civil War. Union raiding parties stole food and destroyed property. Confederate troops cut off by Sherman's army, as well as stragglers and deserters of General Wheeler's Southern Cavalry, also raided plantations and farmsteads in Liberty County.

Cemeteries associated with the Civil War period include Fleming, Wells, and Strickland Pond (also known as Toms or Thoms Creek). The latter is located at the former site of the Anglo-American Toms Creek Methodist Church. This cemetery was also used by the African-American Toms Creek Church, located south of the Strickland Pond cemetery. One of the Thoms Creek churches (which one is unsure) was in use in 1855, but disbanded in 1866 (Hodges n.d.: B1, F2, I86).

Reconstruction Period (1865–1880)

Although many areas of the South experienced economic recovery after the Civil War, communities in the Fort Stewart area essentially were unchanged. Unlike other areas of the South that experienced significant devastation, communities in the Fort Stewart area were directly affected only on a small scale. Many of the communities in the Fort Stewart area were small farms rather than large-scale plantations. However, economic improvements, such as increased naval stores and a timber-harvesting industry, occurred in the Fort Stewart area. Ownership of small farms by African Americans increased, and rural areas rose in population as well.

In the Taylors Creek community, livestock herds had declined due to foraging by occupying Union soldiers. "By 1880, [Taylors Creek], with a population of 80, featured four sawmills and four general stores; the surrounding countryside produce[d] cotton, rice and lumber" (Campbell et al. 1996:119). The community was also described by contemporaries as "only a country post office" (Norwood 1879).

In areas of present-day Bryan County, the agricultural economy remained essentially the same as it was during the Civil War. One important industry that did grow in importance during this time was that of the naval stores industry (i.e., production of turpentine and rosin from local pine). This industry primarily employed African Americans, who either lived in communities or camps provided by their employers or worked part-time to supplement their incomes during the agricultural off-seasons.

The Fort Argyle community still appeared on maps during this time, although its population only numbered fifteen. Twenty-five people lived in the Bryan County Seat (Eden); by about 1880, a post office was opened. Some twenty-five people lived in the community of Long Branch in the western part of Fort Stewart. Other new communities were springing up. Darlot, near the Taylors Creek Campground, had a Methodist church and two saw mills. Its population numbered about fifty. The main agricultural products of Darlot were cotton and rice (Hodges n.d.: B1, F2, I5). Pinholster was northwest of Taylors Creek in present-day Liberty County, while Leonard was north of Eden in present-day Bryan County. These three communities were established in the 1880s. Two African American communities were also established during this time period. An African American Episcopal Church was formed in the Taylors Creek area, and the Pleasant Grove Church in the Cypress Slash area.

In present-day Evans (then Tattnall) County, the community of Brewton Mills was established by at least 1874. Brewton Mills is on the upper portion of Little Canoochee Creek. It is not known with certainty if this community was within present-day Fort Stewart's boundaries.

Cemeteries associated with the Reconstruction period include: Corinth, located southwest of Little Creek cemetery; Cox, north of Liberty Chapel cemetery; Gill, near the Cross Swamp area; Little Creek, near the Taylors Creek community; Sand Hill (associated with Mt. Pleasant M. E. Church), near Beards Creek; Todds, south of the Cross Swamp area; Warnell, between the Taylors Creek and Longbranch communities; Wise (or New Hope) in the Cross Swamp area; and Z. R. Moody, near the Long Branch community.

New Growth Period (1880–1920)

Local economies of the New Growth period, as during Reconstruction, relied on raising livestock and subsistence farming. Technological advances, such as the introduction of the copper still and the cup-and-gutter method of collecting gum from pine trees, along with an increased demand for timber and naval stores products, led to a boom in these industries. The Fort Stewart area, with its vast pine forests, was greatly affected. Railroads were constructed throughout the area to transport the products now in great demand. As timber was cleared and cheaper fertilizer became available, many acres opened up for agriculture.

While the boom resulted in increased populations in some parts of the region, the Fort Argyle area declined in population as lands were purchased for the naval stores and timber industry. In 1891, the Fort Argyle Brick and Lumber Factory was established and remained in production until 1909–1910 when it was closed. In 1912, the land around Fort Argyle was leased to the Georgia-Carolina Lumber Company. But, in 1919, R. C. Jacobs purchased the remaining years of this lease.

The community of Eden (Bryan Courthouse) became known as Clyde during the New Growth period, and Clyde cemetery was established. The earliest interment was in 1888. The communities of Long Branch and Taylors Creek continued to prosper with the increase in naval stores production. By 1901, Liberty County had twelve turpentine distilleries.

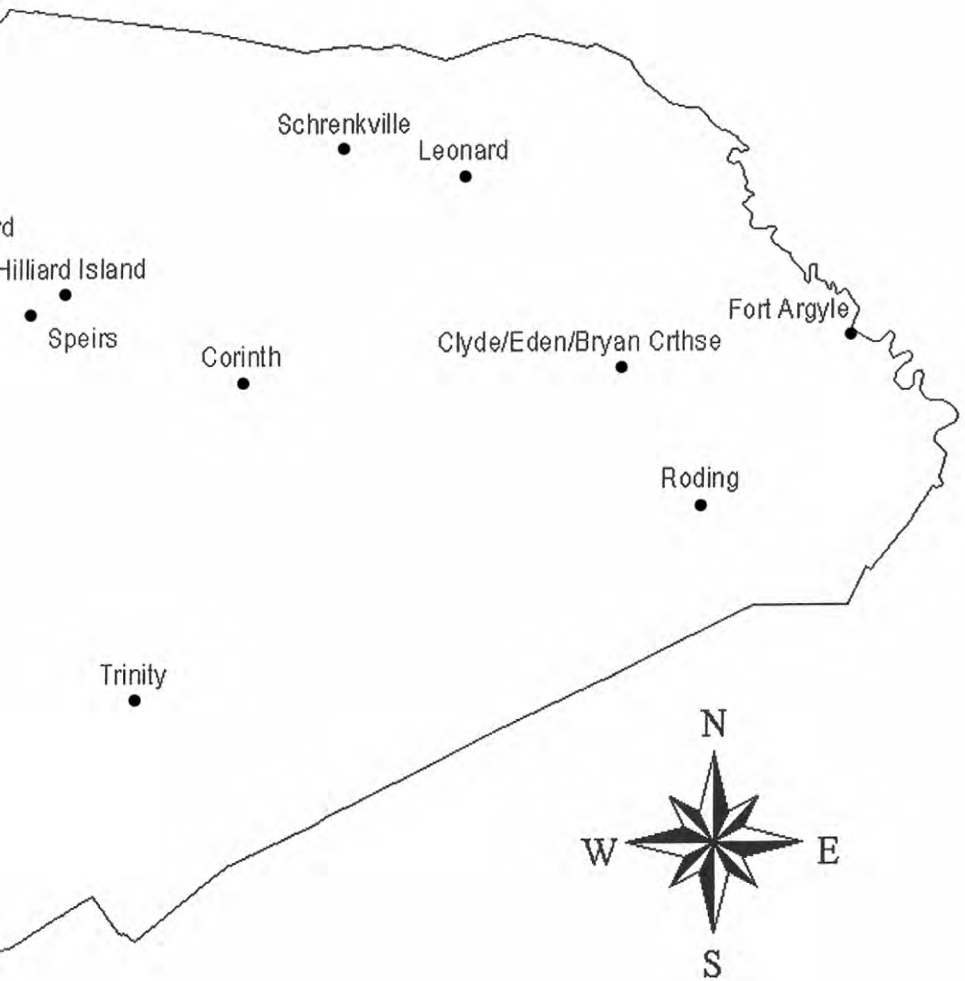
Although many new communities sprung up during the New Growth period thanks to the boom in the lumber and naval stores industries, these communities tended to be short-lived, ceasing to exist as raw materials were exhausted. Communities established along rail lines were usually more permanent. Among the new communities were Banner, Dukes, Kent, Letford, Lida, McCan, Onida (Oneida), Roding, Sigma, Smiley, Stewart Town, Strum Bay, Trinity, and Willie.

Smiley, located in the southwestern portion of Fort Stewart, was established around 1887. By 1900, it had a population of about fifty people and was described as a small agricultural trading district. Banner, established by 1888, appears to have been a short-lived community as it does not show up on maps published after 1889. Congregational (or Oak Grove) and Smith cemeteries, located between the communities of Smiley and Banner, were established during this same period.

Onida (Oneida) was established around 1887 and continued through 1906. To the west-southwest of Onida was the small- to medium-sized Haygrove cemetery associated with Philadelphia Church. The earliest interment date at Haygrove was 1884; the cemetery was used until 1932.

The turpentine community of Strum Bay was located in the area that would become Willie (near Rimes cemetery). Stewart Town, an African American community near Strum Bay, was also probably a turpentine community. The Strum Bay cemetery is most likely associated with the Stewart Town community rather than the Strum Bay community. It has also been

Jerusalem
Glisson Pond
Salem
Long Branch
Brewton Mill
Onida
Cherry Grove
Dyess-Shuman
Strum Bay
Easterling
Willie
Shady Grove
Dukes/Lenas
Stewart T
Strain
Lida/Swindel
Tyty Crossing
McCan
Kent
Banner
Jug Courthouse
Taylors Creek
Smiley
Pinholster
Darlot/Sig



Historic communities within Fort Stewart's boundaries.

suggested that the Strum Bay cemetery was originally two separate cemeteries divided by a fence. Residents of the Strum Bay area were served by the Harmony Methodist Church, established around 1888. Some members of Soules Chapel Methodist Church transferred to Harmony Methodist, whose congregation included the families Floyd, Jones, Lanier, Lowther, Richardson, and Smith (Mobley 1979:156).

To add further confusion in determining the names and/or locations of cemeteries, the chain of title search conducted during the Fort Stewart land acquisition in the 1940s listed Stewart Town cemetery as being bounded to the west by Stewart Town Church or Pleasant Grove (Missionary) Baptist Church. A second cemetery in Taylors Creek shares the same name. Both were African-American cemeteries. According to land acquisition records, H. A. Swindle deeded the land in the Stewart Town area for use as a cemetery. The person recording the acquisition described the area as "…a community thickly settled by colored people, who have continued to bury their dead to this day."

Sigma was also probably a turpentine community. Although little is known about Sigma, it appears to have diminished sometime after 1896. Roding, a turpentine community with several stills operating in the area, was the location of Bragg Baptist Church (and its associated cemetery), Braggs Bridge, Bragg's Landing, Ellis Landing, Hines Landing, and Ellis' Turpentine Still. Dreggars cemetery is situated next to Bragg cemetery. The earliest interment date for Dreggars and Bragg cemeteries was 1897. By 1906, Roding had a population of sixty-one. Maps dating to 1911 and 1912 still show the community of Roding.

The neighborhood of Willie consisted of several smaller communities, including the railroad station community of Letford, which was established sometime before 1911. As indicated on present-day maps, the dismantled railroad running across Fort Stewart was the tram line built by William Tuten. Known then as the Savannah and Southern Railroad, the tram ran from Letford—the first base of operations for Tuten's sawmill—to Strum Bay, and, by 1910, to the Old Sunbury Road and the community of Willie (named after Tuten's daughter).

Other railroad station communities in the Willie neighborhood (towards the southwest to Glennville) included Dukes, Lida, and possibly Kent.

Churches and cemeteries associated with these railroad station communities included: Bethany Church/Todd Ray cemetery (Dukes); Brannen, a family plot with one known burial near Dukes; Letford, which was in or near Letford community; Rimes, east of Strum Bay and Stewart Town; Shuman, between Rimes and Letford; and Bethel Church (Lida).

In the Long Branch neighborhood, Jerusalem Church and cemetery and the Cherry Grove neighborhood were established during the New Growth period. The earliest interment at the large Jerusalem cemetery dates to 1890. The Cherry Grove Baptist Church was established in 1892. "The land [was] donated by Henry Joshua Shuman, for church and school purposes…[and was located] on or near the Old Hencart road in the Dyess-Shuman community, which is near the Camp Oliver area of Fort Stewart" (Hodges n.d.: B1, F2, I1). By the 1920s, the church had become inactive, but was later revived in the 1930s.

Little is known about the Trinity and McCan (McCann) communities. The first known interments at Trinity and the nearby Cypress Slash cemeteries were in 1886 and 1902, respectively. McCan is believed to have been a lumber and turpentine community. The Ryon family name has been associated with McCan. The Deloach cemetery, a small family cemetery near McCan, has 1911 as its earliest interment date.

Other cemeteries from this time period included: Golden Family, a small family cemetery northeast of Pinholster; Greenbay, west of Eden/Clyde; Irene Driggers, a small family cemetery south of Green Bay cemetery and west of Eden/Clyde along the Canoochee River; Pleasant Grove, associated with Pleasant Grove A. M. E. Church, southeast of Taylors Creek cemetery in the Taylors Creek community; and Porter, a small family cemetery near Willie with one marked grave and several unmarked graves. There is a possible small family cemetery at Bonnet Bay. The only known headstone there had been broken into several pieces, so no known interment date has been determined. Bonnet Bay, which flows into Savage Creek, is located between Little Creek and Letford cemeteries. Another possible cemetery from this time period is the Branch Family cemetery. It is located approximately 1 mile northwest of Bethel cemetery. Since no headstones remain, an interment date has not been determined. It is probable, however, that this family cemetery was associated with the community near Bethel Church.

American Period (1920–1940)

Throughout the American period, the communities in the Fort Stewart area continued to prosper. The lumber, naval stores, and livestock raising (primarily sheep and hog) industries expanded during this time period. In addition to these industries, tobacco began to be produced in the 1920s in communities in Long and Tattnall Counties. The cotton industry, however, experienced a significant decline due to the boll weevil infestation.

Unlike the rest of the nation, communities in the Fort Stewart area were affected to a lesser degree by the Great Depression of the 1930s. Since many of these communities relied on agriculture, residents could at least be somewhat self-sufficient. The main impact of the Great Depression on area residents was the lack of surplus cash available. One positive development that occurred during the 1930s was a new technology to process the locally abundant yellow-pine for use in pulp wood mills. This, along with the continued growth of the naval stores industry, characterized the economic livelihood in the Fort Stewart area during the American period.

Because of the transitory nature of the naval stores and lumber industries, many communities in the Fort Stewart area ceased to exist. Trees tapped for the naval stores industry tended to produce gum for an average of only seven years. After this time, the trees were often sold for lumber. Meanwhile, the industry would move its operations on to the next stand of trees. Communities associated with the naval stores and lumber industries would often diminish and set up elsewhere. Examples of these types of communities were Letford, Lida, McCan, Sigma, and Strum Bay.

During the latter half of the 1930s, the communities of Clyde, Taylors Creek, and Willie were the most prosperous within the Fort Stewart area. Then Willie began to decline due to the diminished lumber and naval store industries in the immediate vicinity. By 1940, Taylors Creek had grown to accommodate eighty-four structures. Although Clyde was not as large as Willie or Taylors Creek, it did remain the county seat until the government land acquisition. The area around Fort Argyle, by this time, was not considered a community but rather a place where residents of Clyde would picnic. Sometime during the 1920s, the lands around Fort Argyle were sold to Russel C. Jacobs. A turpentine still, lumber mill, and two houses were located on the properties.

One community that probably developed during this time period was Glisson's Mill Pond (or Glisson Pond), located in the extreme northwestern part of present-day Fort Stewart west of Camp Oliver. Glisson's Mill Pond may have developed out of the Brewton Mills community (ca. 1870–1885). Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Glisson's General Store still stands at its original location and is the only pre–Fort Stewart structure found on the installation today. Only two known cemeteries are associated with this time period. Smith Chapel cemetery is located near Smith and Congregational cemeteries between the former communities of Smiley and Banner. Zion Traveler cemetery is southwest of Smith Chapel and Congregational cemeteries, near the former community of Banner.

Zion Traveler cemetery, associated with an African-American Baptist church of the same name, consists of only one known burial. On 1920 maps, a church symbol appears just outside of present-day Fort Stewart, probably marking the Zion Traveler Baptist Church. Maps depicting land ownership in 1946—during the government land acquisition—indicated that the church was still standing (Helms and McKivergan 1997:55).

World War II and the Late Twentieth Century (1940–Present)

With war threatening, several military bases were created by Congress in June 1940, some eighteen months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Among these bases was Camp Stewart (later Fort Stewart), named for Brigadier General Daniel Stewart from Liberty County, who fought during the American Revolutionary War. Stewart, who became a Georgia statesman, was the great-grandfather of Theodore Roosevelt.

The government's initial land purchase for Camp Stewart was a 5,000-acre tract. (Today, Fort Stewart encompasses 280,000 acres.) The main reasons for choosing the area near Hinesville for a military base were strategic, economic, and political. The port of Savannah was considered a strategic port to maintain; the land acquired by the government held a relatively low property value; and, at the time, only a small number of families would have to be displaced. As it turned out, the government may have underestimated the number of families affected.

Camp Stewart was originally established as an artillery training post, as well as a basic training post. Personnel started to arrive in September 1940.

Anti-aircraft artillery training began in January 1941. By December 1941, the United States had declared war, thereby emphasizing the importance of troop training at Camp Stewart. Base expansion occurred throughout the war, but peaked in the latter half of 1943. By the end of 1944, Camp Stewart became inactive as an anti-aircraft training base. In 1945, it was used as a postal unit training center, as well as a cookery school.

After World War II ended, Camp Stewart was deactivated in July 1946. Between World War II and the Korean Conflict, Camp Stewart was used as a National Guard Training camp during the summer months. From August 1950 through 1953, the base operated as the 3rd Army Anti-Aircraft Artillery Training Center in response to the Korean Conflict. Starting in 1953, firing and maneuvering areas for tanks were being developed. In March 1956, Camp Stewart was renamed Fort Stewart and became a permanent military installation.

Between the late 1950s and early 1960s, building construction on Fort Stewart increased. However, by 1963, there was little activity on the base. By 1966, the Vietnam Conflict created changes at Fort Stewart. In 1967, Hunter Army Airfield (HAAF), together with Fort Stewart, became an Army Flight Training Center. By 1969, HAAF became a subinstallation of Fort Stewart. After Vietnam, Fort Stewart again experienced slow activity and was being threatened with closure until the 1st Brigade, 24th Infantry Division, was stationed there in 1973.

In 1979, the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force was organized, and, by October 1980, the 24th Infantry Division was upgraded to a Mechanized Division. For ten years, the 24th Infantry trained for rapid deployment. In August 1990, the 24th Infantry, then known as the Victory Division, was mobilized to Saudi Arabia for Desert Shield/Desert Storm. In 1996, the 24th Infantry Division was reflagged as the Third Infantry Division.

Other Possible Cemeteries on Fort Stewart

The names and locations of the cemeteries on Fort Stewart have changed over the years. An attempt has been made to refer to all cemeteries by their commonly known names. Where applicable, other names associated with the cemeteries have been given. An effort has also been made to correctly locate each cemetery. Over the years, maps have depicted various cemeteries in locations where none exist. Cemetery names have also been erroneously labeled both on maps and the signs associated with certain cemeteries.

Another problem with inventorying all of Fort Stewart's cemeteries is that when Fort Stewart acquired its present land holdings, not all of the cemeteries were listed in the land transfer. Often, when a church's property deed was sold to the government, an associated cemetery was not always listed. So too, small family cemeteries were not always listed on property inventories. Over the years, cemeteries have been added to the inventory through discovery by Fort Stewart personnel. A recent example is the addition of the Porter and Bonnet Bay cemeteries.

Not all cemeteries noted in historical documents or on maps, or recalled during oral histories have been located. For example, the Taylors Creek Campground reportedly was once used as a burial ground, but the exact location of the campground and its associated burials are still unknown today. Although a grave marker at the Taylors Creek cemetery mentions the burials of three individuals (all from one family) near the Taylors Creek Campground, it is unknown if there were any additional burials at or near the campground.

A plot marker in the Taylors Creek cemetery states that the headstones of eight individuals were moved to Taylors Creek from the Hendry family cemetery three miles northwest. The location of this cemetery, however, remains unknown.

According to May (1998), there may also be a cemetery associated with the Glisson Pond area in the northwest corner of present-day Fort Stewart. Little information has been uncovered regarding this cemetery (McKivergan 1997:V6). The J. O. Rahn cemetery was listed on the 1940's land transfer maps as being near present-day Wright Army Airfield (then known as Liberty Field). Attempts have been made to locate this cemetery, but none

have been successful (McKivergan 1997:V6). Nor has the Herrin Chapel Baptist Church cemetery been located. The land acquisition maps also indicate an associated cemetery with the Herrin Baptist Church. The exact location is unknown at this time, but it is supposedly in Fort Stewart Training Area E18 (McKivergan 1997:V6). The Downs cemetery, as reported by May (1998), was on Fort Stewart's property as well. While the exact location is also unknown, it reportedly is in Fort Stewart Training Area C2 (McKivergan 1997:V6). Two other cemeteries might be on Fort Stewart's property according to May (1998). The Elders Family cemetery is reportedly somewhere in Bryan County, possibly in Fort Stewart Training Area F5 (McKivergan 1997:6). Boggs cemetery may be in Fort Stewart Training Area C2, but is probably located outside of present-day Fort Stewart (McKivergan 1997:V6).

In addition to these potential "lost" cemeteries, various church properties listed in the Fort Stewart Land Acquisition Records that did not include cemeteries in the property transfer descriptions to the U.S. Government may, nonetheless, have associated cemeteries not yet investigated. These include:

- Mount Zion Baptist Church, located between the Cantonment area and Wright Army Airfield (USDCSDOG 1941a);
- Melwood Sunday or Sabbath School (Pigot Church), just northwest of Taylors Creek Campground (USDCSDOG 1941a);
- Strumbay Church or Peter Chapel (although this may in all likelihood be associated with Strumbay cemetery) (USDCSDOG 1941b);
- Methodist Episcopal Church South in the town of Willie (USDCSDOG 1941c);
- Abraham Chapel, located approximately one mile west of Cypress Slash and Trinity cemeteries (USDCSDOG 1941a); and
- Christian Church of Willie in the town of Willie (or Methodist Church of Willie) (USDCSDOG 1941d).

Colonial Period to Early American Period (1733–1820)

James Oglethorpe, along with approximately one hundred people, arrived on the Georgia Coast in February 1733. The city of Savannah was established on the Savannah River east of present-day Hunter Army Airfield (HAAF). Upon arriving to the area of Yamacraw Bluff on the Savannah River, Oglethorpe met with Tomochichi (a Creek chieftain) to secure a place for a settlement. Tomochichi ceded lands between the Savannah and Altamaha Rivers. Varying amounts of land (no more than 500 acres per person at that time) were then parceled out to colonists. The primary reason for the Georgia settlement was to create a buffer zone between Spanish territory to the south and the Carolinas. Because of this, Georgia was envisioned as a colony of armed yeomanry, and, therefore, no slaves were allowed. Georgia was also seen as a source of raw materials (e.g., indigo, silk, and lumber) to be exploited by England's industries.

In order to protect Savannah, smaller communities were established inland. One of the buffer-zone settlements was Fort Argyle, which was located on present-day Fort Stewart. Two other buffer-zone settlements, established between 1733 and 1734, were Highgate and Hampstead, which were located approximately five miles to the southwest of Savannah (in the northeastern portion of present-day HAAF). Hampstead, with only twelve families, was only occupied until 1743. Highgate was similar in size to Hampstead, but, by 1740, the community consisted of only two families. No indication of the community of Highgate was found on a map dating to 1780. South of Savannah, Darien was settled by Highland Scots in 1735. Fort Frederica was established in 1736 on the island of Saint Simons. During the early 1740s, the communities of Acton and Vernonburg were established. An 1817 map no longer indicates the community of Acton. Vernonburg (also known as Dutchtown), on the other hand, survived through the American Revolution period.

In 1750, slaves were permitted in the colony and land-grant size restrictions were loosened, thus creating a potential for larger agricultural economies. Gaining in importance, rice was cultivated in the lower parts of Savannah. On higher ground, cotton and indigo were cultivated. Around present-day HAAF, it appears that the earliest settlement was during the 1750s in the area known as the Little Ogeechee District.

During the Revolutionary War, many of the landowners in the Savannah area remained loyal to Britain. After the war, starting in 1782, their lands were confiscated and sold.

Antebellum Period to Civil War (1820–1865)

A railroad was constructed in the late 1850s at the western edge of present-day HAAF. This transportation route helped encourage settlement along the Savannah River to the north and west of the city.

Records indicate that the sparsely populated HAAF area was mostly plantation and farmland. Maps from the Civil War period indicate few structures. During the Civil War, Confederate earthworks may have been constructed in what is now the western section of HAAF.

Reconstruction Period to American Period (1865–1940)

Between the Civil War and 1912, population was slowly increasing on the lands of present-day HAAF. Better land drainage improved land use. By 1912, maps indicate several structures in the area, including a dairy and a church. Three farmsteads also appear at this time. The Poulain, Kollack, and possibly the R. Woodhouse properties were in the White Bluff Road area. Along the west side of the Middleground Road corridor, several structures appear on maps from 1912. Up until the 1940s, land use continued to improve. This was attributed to the invention of the automobile. Savannah was about 6 miles from the HAAF area at that time, and travel by horse-drawn carts and on foot could take a few days. Automobiles allowed commodities to be transported to and from Savannah in one-day. Maps from this time period indicate increased construction of paved roads (Smith et al. 1984:31–32).

In 1928, the city of Savannah selected 730 acres of the Belmont Tract for the site of a municipal airport. The area was chosen, in part, because of its sparse population in the late 1920s, which meant there would be less public nuisance and disruption than in an urban area. Initial land acquisition also allowed for future expansion.

Opened on September 20, 1929, the municipal airport was designated the Savannah Airport in 1930. By 1932, it was renamed the Hunter Airfield/

Savannah Airport in honor of a U.S. Army World War I pilot, Captain Frank O'Driscoll Hunter. Through a Works Progress Administration project that began in 1935, a hangar, three runways, and an administration building were constructed at the airport (Byrd et al. 1998:22–62).

World War II and Late Twentieth Century (1940–Present)

By September 1940, with the military buildup to war, the U.S. Army Air Corps acquired Hunter Airfield and an additional 150 acres for the defense of the nation. The land was to be returned to the city of Savannah after the war. On September 27, 1940, the first personnel began to arrive at the newly named Savannah Army Airbase. The 3rd and 27th Bombardment Groups soon arrived. Fifty-five barracks and sixty-seven other buildings were built. By February 1943, the Savannah Army Airbase was designated as a staging area. By December of that same year, the airbase became the staging area for the 3rd Air Force Staging Wing.

After the war ended, the airbase transitioned to inactive status. Between 1946 and 1950, it was used for an industrial park, apartments, an orphanage, and a University of Georgia extension campus. In 1950, the airbase was purchased by the U.S. government for $1.00 and exchanged for Chatham County Airport. At this time, Hunter Airfield was designated a permanent base for the Strategic Air Command until 1963. Afterwards, it became a base for Military Air Transport Services. Scheduled to close by 1967, the government instead established an Army Helicopter Pilot Training Base by December 1966.

In April 1968, the U.S. Army took over the airfield from the U.S. Air Force, and Hunter Airfield was officially renamed Hunter Army Airfield. Between March 1970 and May 1972, during the Vietnam conflict, Vietnamese were instructed in aviation as part of the Allied Military Training Program at HAAF. Then, in 1973, the base was closed. Only a skeleton crew remained until July 1974, when the base reopened as part of the Army's Fort Stewart–Hunter Complex (Maggioni 2005:109–112).

Associated Cemeteries

Two cemeteries, McNish and Belmont, are associated with HAAF's current land holdings. McNish is a small family cemetery with four burials. Belmont (also erroneously known as the Pet Cemetery) is a relocation cemetery located north of Perimeter Road on present-day HAAF. Unidentified human remains discovered during construction projects at HAAF, were interred at the Belmont cemetery and marked with small metal grave markers. According to Smith et al. (1984:110), most of the burials originated north and west of the former community of Hampstead. This area also included portions of the former community of Highgate. It has been suggested that the origin of these burials were from epidemics in the city of Savannah during the nineteenth century (Smith et al. 1984:110).

McNish cemetery was named after John McNish who died in 1826. Despite limited documentary evidence regarding ownership of the land where the cemetery is located, research was conducted in 1986 to ascertain the history of the area (Council et al. 1986). An 1875 map labels the area of the McNish site as the Hermitage Plantation. Researchers first thought that the Hermitage Plantation might have been part of the Rose Dew (Rose Due, Rose Dhu) Plantation owned by Joseph and Benjamin Butler. Further investigation indicated otherwise. Since documentary evidence of the McNish site is limited, information regarding the Rose Dew Plantation was gathered to possibly clarify similar land development in nearby areas.

Rose Dew Plantation was created with a 500-acre land grant to Patrick Houstoun in November 1755. The plantation "…was located between the Vernon and Little Ogeechee Rivers and bounded on the north by a 500-acre grant made of the same day to James Houstoun" (Council et al. 1986:11–12). In 1758, a 300-acre island to the south of these lands was granted to Thomas Parker. Patrick Houstoun's and Thomas Parker's lands were combined into one holding owned by Benjamin Butler in 1766. The McNish site was located north of James Houston's land. Butler sold a portion of his land in 1788 to James Houstoun. North of the Hermitage, 500 acres were granted to Charles Watson in March 1743. In 1755, this land (then known as Rockingham) was sold to Henry Bourguin. Thus, the area around the McNish site was settled by at least the 1750s.

Thomas Johnston, owner of the Hermitage Plantation died in 1815. His estate was divided among the family and ultimately sold to his daughter

Ann Mary Johnston between 1815 and 1817. In 1819, Ann Mary married John McNish, a Scottish immigrant who arrived in 1805. McNish was an attorney, merchant, and factor. In 1820, he sold half of the Hermitage to his wife's sister, Jane Johnston. McNish died in 1826, and his estate was divided in 1829. Jane Johnston sold her half of the Hermitage back to Ann Mary (Johnston) McNish and her niece Mary Jane McNish. In 1843, Mary Jane McNish sold her portion to Theodosius Bachor and Jane E. Johnston. In 1870, Jane Johnston sold her portion to Mary Jane Hazelhurst, her niece. Mary Jane Hazelhurst died in 1878 leaving the Hermitage to her husband and children. In 1879, the land was deeded to their children: John McNish Hazelhurst, Elizabeth P. W. Burroughs, Anna J. Hazelhurst, Mary R. Hazelhurst, and Sarah E. Hazelhurst. The Hermitage remained in the Hazelhurst family through the nineteenth century.

In 1906, the Hazelhursts sold the property to Gustave A. Miller and William L. Webster. By 1908, Webster was the sole proprietor of the Hermitage, but then sold the land to his wife Annie Meta Webster. At the time, the Websters owned about half of the western portion of present-day HAAF. In 1912, the land was sold to Charles J. Allen. After Allen's death in 1913, the land was sold to Mrs. Rosalie K. Walker. The same day the title was recorded, she resold the property to Michael J. O'Leary.

Between 1913 and 1918, the land was subdivided into several portions and sold off individually. Council et al. (1986) did not conduct documentary research for after 1918. The Hermitage Plantation area was not used to a great extent after 1918, until HAAF acquired the land.

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