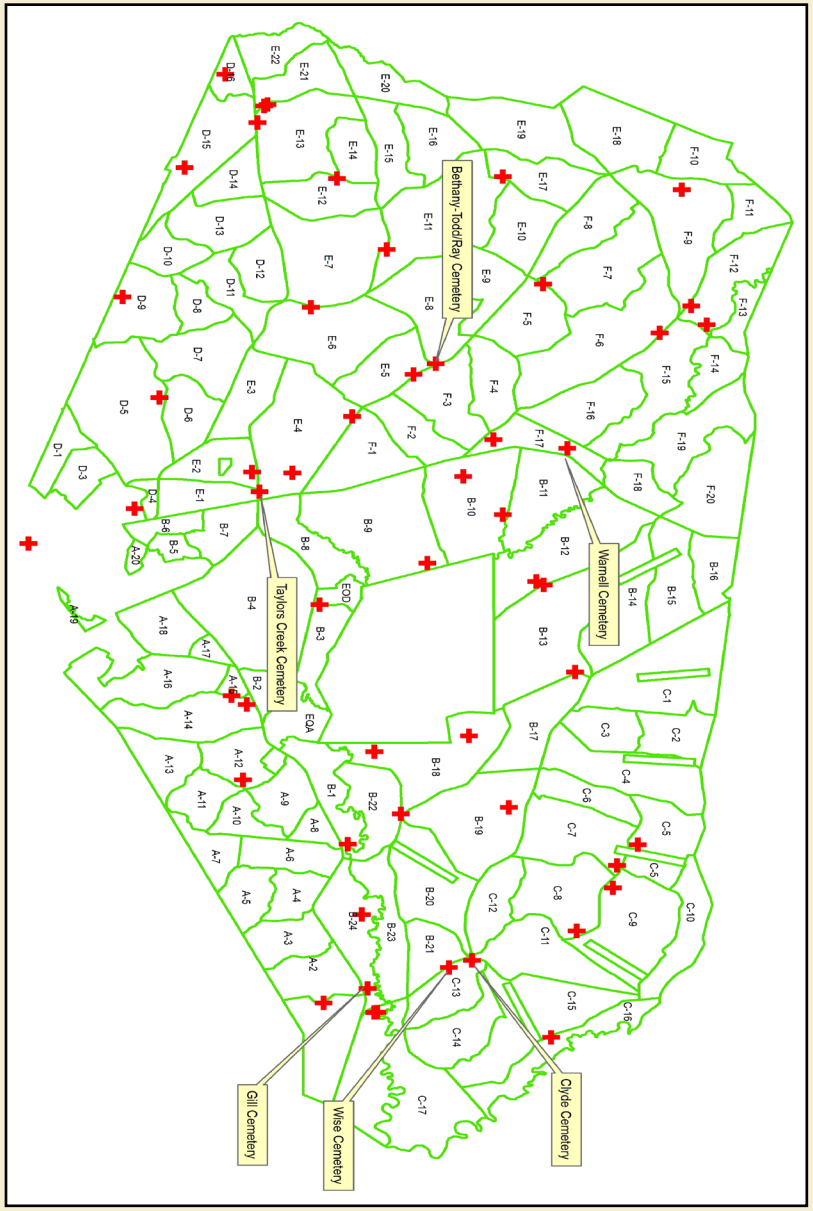
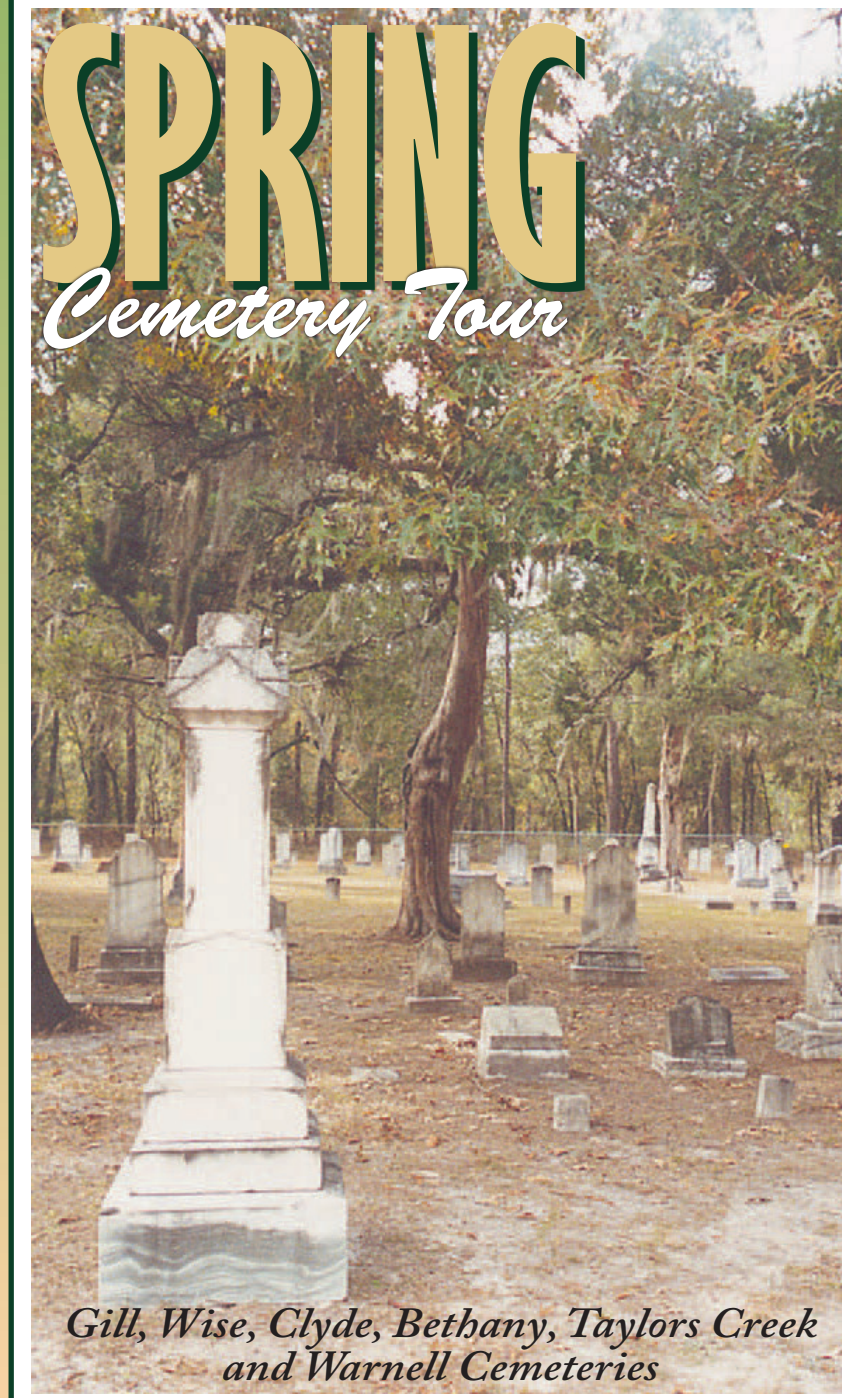
Spring Cemetery Tour Map



DPW Environmental Division 1550 Veterans Parkway, Bldg. 1137
Fort Stewart, GA 31314 Phone: 912-767-2010



COMMUNITY OF RODING

The community of Roding was a late 19th/early 20th century town associated with the Bragg Settlement which began by the late 1860s. The town center was located on the south side of the Canoochee River at the intersection of present day Fort Stewart Road 67 and Georgia Highway 144. Roding had acquired its first Post Office in 1893 and its first Postmaster was William Bragg, followed by John Campbell and William G. Gill through 1904. Between 1905 and 1924, Ola B. Gill was the Roding Postmaster. Two turpentine distilleries operated in the Roding Community, the Gill Distillery (owned by William G. Gill, Sr.) and the Ellis Distillery which were established by at least 1880. By the late 1890s, the Bragg Baptist Church was formed and served the community up until the land was acquired by the U.S. government in 1941. In 1906, Roding was described as having a population of 61 and contained several stores to serve the community.

GILL CEMETERY

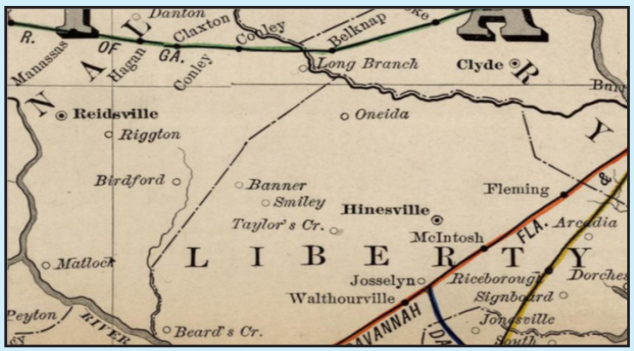
The Gill Cemetery is named after previous landowner, J. W. Gill at the time of government acquisition. The Gill Family initially settled in the area around the town that would become Roding by the late 1840s. The Gill cemetery (also known as Briggs Cemetery…although likely just a misnomer of the family surname of Bragg), is associated with the community of Roding. One of the more prominent members of the Gill Family was William W. Gill, Sr. (1848-1904) who owned vast property, including several large tracts on what would someday be Fort Stewart. William Gill, Sr. is buried at nearby Bragg Baptist Church. Another member of the Gill family served as postmaster (William G. Gill) and owned the Turpentine Still located near Roding.

With only two marked graves, the Gill Cemetery represents a small family cemetery. The marked burials include Private Bedford Bragg, a retail dealer in general merchandise, born in 1829 and died in 1870 at age 41 and Horace C. Bragg (Bedford's son), who died in 1871 at age 4. It is also believed that a third, unmarked burial includes Benjamin Bragg, who died in 1875 at age 15. Presumably, the latter two burials are the children or close relatives of Bedford and his wife Virginia Elarbee Bragg (b. 1839, d. 1870).

WARNELL CEMETERY

Located between Taylors Creek Methodist Church and the Long Branch Community, Warnell Cemetery served the community of Oneida, a far spread sparsely populated turpentine community located north of Willie. The community of Oneida consisted of a small number of widely spread businesses and farms centered on the turpentine operations of Samuel Bascombe Giradeau and William Allen Kennedy. By 1898, the Oneida community boasted three naval stores manufacturers, three sawmills, two gristmills, four general stores, two cotton gins, a turpentine distillery, commissary, and a blacksmith. Community leaders included William Allen Kennedy who had been a farmer in Taylors Creek in 1881, Samuel Giradeau (son of Jane Warnell and John E. Giradeau), and William Jackson Bacon. The community never consolidated into a town center and like other turpentine communities lasted only as long as the timber and naval stores were able to be harvested. From 1887 to 1906, the community had a Post Office (opened in the home of Samuel B. Giradeau) before moving to the home of W. A. Kennedy in 1888 and James S. Darsey in 1889. Upon James Darsey's death in 1904, his son Everette O. Darsey became the Post Master. The Post Office was eventually discontinued on March 15, 1906. The community of Oneida appears on maps from 1889 although declined from about 1900. In 1910, the community had a population of only 35 and by 1920, was not present on maps published during that time as the town of nearby Willie began to become increasingly more populated.

Warnell cemetery has a total of 88 marked burials and at least one unmarked burial. Interment dates range from 1869 to 1948. Family names associated with the Warnell Cemetry include: Braddy, Caswell, Collins, Darsey, Denmark, Driggers, Elarbee, Elders, Floyd, Futch, Girardeau, Girtman, Gooden, Grice, Hart, Henderson, Hendry, Kennedy, Lang, McCallum, McGahee, Richardson, Roach, Smith, Stafford, Stubbs, Warnell, and Wright.



BETHANY (TODD-RAY) CEMETERY

Bethany Cemetery is named after the Bethany Baptist Church that was established on September 11, 1893 when Joseph J. Whitten gave the trustees of the church 1.5 acres of land. During the late 1800s, the community was known as the "Ray Settlement". Around 1917, the community would become known as Lenas when the Savannah & Southern Railroad extended from the neighboring town of Willie to the east. However, that community name was short-lived and would be changed to Dukes by 1920. The name of Dukes (the name of a local family) was given to the recently established rail depot. After the Savannah & Southern Railroad was abandoned in 1923, Dukes slowly faded away and the area became known as the Bethany community. The cemetery has also been known as Todd-Ray, after the Todd and Ray families that are prominent in the cemetery. The Bethany Baptist Church served the community until it was disbanded in 1941, when the federal government acquired the land for Camp Stewart Military Reservation. During this time it was estimated there were between 100 and 150 members of the church. A total of 45 marked burials and ten unmarked burials have been documented at this cemetery. The earliest interment was in 1886 and the most recent was in 1980.

COMMUNITY OF CLYDE

The Community of Clyde has had different names over the years. Initially, the location was known simply as "Courthouse" or "Bryan County Courthouse" by 1814. By 1847, it was known as "Eden" and consisted of a small village with one general store and a population of only 25. In 1886, to avoid confusion, the Bryan County Commissioners voted to change the name of the town to Clyde because there was another town named Eden in the neighboring county of Effingham, not far to the north. In 1887, the Post Office was officially renamed Clyde. It was also during this time period that the Clyde Cemetery was established with its first known interment in 1888. Bryan County Commissioners named the town Clyde in honor of Sir Colin Campbell, First Baron of Clyde, a noted Scottish Field Marshall. By 1906, the town had grown to over 100 people and included several stores and residences At least two turpentine companies were operating in Clyde by 1910. By 1917, the population of Clyde had grown to 200.

By the 1930s, Clyde was the home of two fraternal organizations, Bryan Lodge Number 303 of the Free and Accepted Masons and the American Legion Post Number 27, as well as the Clyde Methodist Church. Clyde remained as the Bryan County Seat until 1935 when the County Commissioners decided to move it to the town of Pembroke. Clyde remained an important town through 1940 when the government acquired the land.

CLYDE CEMETERY

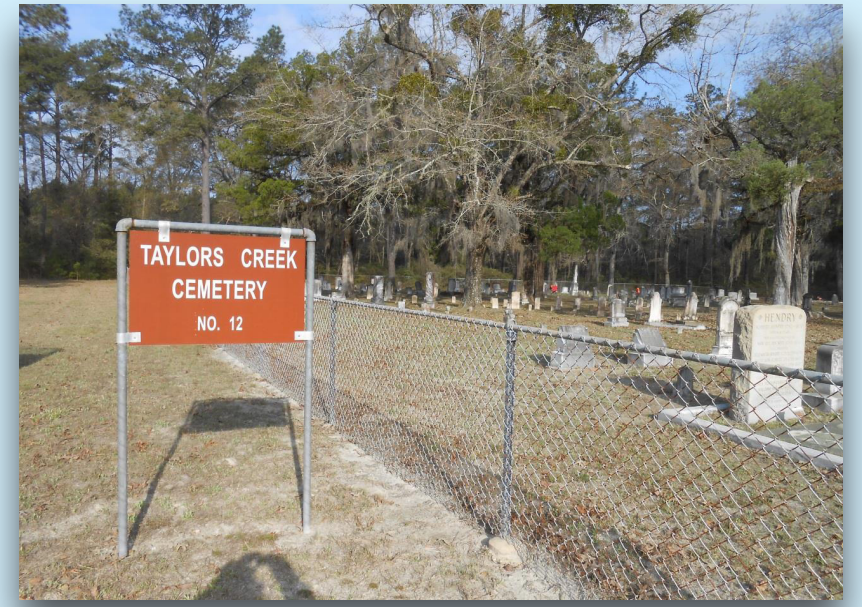
In 1886, the Clyde Methodist Church was established near the middle of the Clyde Community. The earliest marked burial within Clyde Cemetery was in 1888 with the burial of Henry Wise and the latest interment was in 1967. A total of 80 marked burials and nine unmarked burials have been documented for this cemetery. Family names associated with the Clyde Cemetery include: Bradshaw, Dukes, Harn, Harvey, Haymans, Hendry, Shuman, Stephens, Stewart, and Wise.

WISE CEMETERY

Although the Wise Cemetery is associated with the Reconstruction period in Bryan County, the cemetery is also connected to the Harn Family and possibly an earlier Colonial period. In 1745, John Harn received a land grant in the Sterling Creek area, just outside the Fort Stewart area. By the mid-19th century, members of the Harn family were associated with New Hope Cemetery (otherwise known as Wise Cemetery). The Harn family remained in the area up until the formation of Camp Stewart in 1940 living along or near the lower Canoochee River.

Wise Cemetery contains 46 marked and at least 19 unmarked burials. The earliest known interment is 1869 and the latest was in 1979. One source suggests that at least one of the unmarked burials predates the earliest marked burial of 1869. Covington Brannick (or Branick) Cribbs (b. 1791, d. 1844) is believed to be buried in one of the unmarked burial plots. Covington Cribbs moved to the area from South Carolina and is of Dutch descent. After moving to Georgia, he fathered at least 15 children with his wife, Sarah B. Cannon (married in 1816). Other family surnames associated with the Wise Cemetery include: Brown, Butler, Denmark, Driggers, Duffy, Durham, Fisher, Gill, Harn, Harvey, Heery, Lamb, Olive, Strickland, Thompson, Webb, Williams, and Wise.

Members of the displaced Taylors Creek community continued their beloved tradition of Camp Meeting, keeping it alive by organizing the Taylors Creek Cemetery's Association in 1946. That year, the group sponsored its first October annual meeting at the Taylors Creek Cemetery, the enduring visible reminder of their Taylors Creek heritage. In addition to bringing the tight-knit community back together each year, the association formed to preserve and maintain the cemetery by meeting at it annually. A new fence was erected around the cemetery in 1952 and the Georgia Historical Commission and the Liberty County Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy placed a bronze marker containing a brief history of the site at the cemetery in 1958. In 2003 the Taylors Creek Cemetery was recommended eligible for listing on the National Register as a Traditional Cultural Property, one of only four such properties in the State of Georgia (a distinction shared with the nearby Pleasant Grove Cemetery also located in Taylors Creek).



TAYLORS CREEK CEMETERY (CONT.)

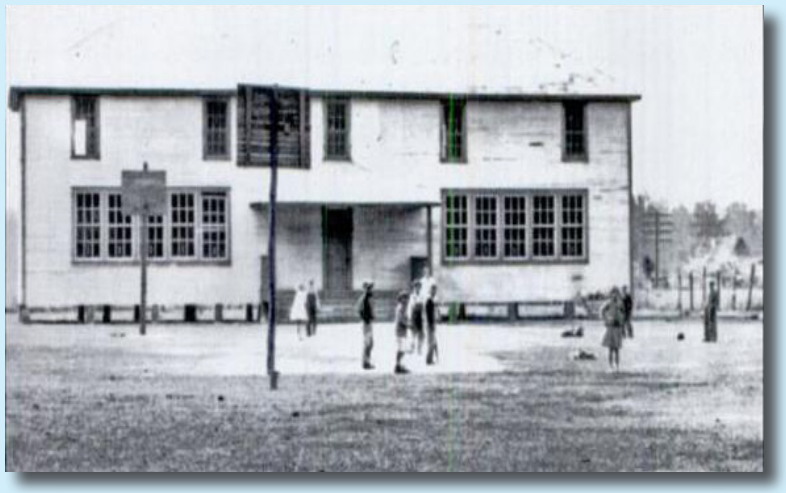
The origins of the Taylors Creek Methodist Church begin in 1807 when a traveling Methodist circuit rider named Rev. Angus McDonald organized a Methodist congregation at Taylors Creek. Two years later, a small house of worship known as the "Little Canoochee Meeting House" was constructed along the Canoochee Creek. By 1812, the Taylors Creek Campground had been established and was sponsoring an annual religious retreat and revival known as the Taylors Creek Camp Meeting. A few of the early camp meetings occurred near the Little Canoochee Causeway on Sunbury Road. But after 1819, the annual event was based at the Taylors Creek Campground, north of Hencart Road. Members quickly realized that the location was too close to the river and prone to flooding; they rebuilt the church, known at that time as the Taylors Creek Methodist Church, at a safe distance from the water in 1841. The church remained at the community's center along Hencart Road; the single story building stood on piers and featured two front entries while the Taylors Creek Cemetery lay directly behind the building.

While 1832 is the earliest recorded burial, Archibald Hendry's gravestone dates to 1818. His grave, together with seven other Hendry headstones, were moved to the cemetery at an unknown date from a small family cemetery which was located approximately three miles northwest of the Taylors Creek Cemetery (place not known). Up to and during the Civil War, African Americans worshipped in the church. After the war, the African-American members left the church to establish the Pleasant Grove Church. The Taylors Creek Methodist Church continued to grow in the second half of the century. The building received renovations and the additions of a porch, bell tower, and steeple toward the end of the century. The church remained active until its last service on May 25, 1941. Six hundred people, including many former residents of the town, gathered to sing hymns, eat dinner and bid farewell to the church before it was torn down.

TAYLORS CREEK CEMETERY

Taylors Creek Cemetery, located in Liberty County has a total of 424 marked burials and five unmarked burials, making it the largest cemetery on Fort Stewart. The earliest interment is recorded as 1832, which makes it one of the oldest cemeteries on the Installation. The area around Taylors Creek was initially settled in about 1760 by two brothers, James and William Taylor. In 1768, a land grant refers to the area as a "place called Taylors Creek on little Coneechee [sic] within three Miles of Land of William Taylor." Another petition the same year reports that upon going to survey 1500 acres of land "at a Place called Taylor's Creek or little Connochee…[William De Veaux] found that the Quantity could not be had in one Tract." William De Veaux settled 500 acres on Taylors Creek about a mile and a half from James Taylor's land in 1768. In 1769, James Taylor asked for an additional 200 acres (he currently had 150 acres) for his wife and seven children.

Prior to the American Revolution, the area was part of St. John Parish, not far from the frontier. To connect the fledgling settlements to civilization, new roads were built. By about 1791, the Sunbury Road connected the coastal community of Sunbury to inland Greensboro near Taylors Creek. The northwest-southeast section of the well-traveled road through Liberty and Evans counties was reportedly called "Old Colony Road". Another east-west route known as Hencart Road (presently F.S. 144) ran through early Taylors Creek by around 1800. These roads were important to the community and enabled them to export goods and grow as a crossroads community.



TAYLORS CREEK CEMETERY (CONT.)

Many of the community's early settlers arrived from nearby areas. African-American descendants of Taylors Creek inhabitants believe that their ancestors arrived in the area from South Carolina sometime before the Civil War. Mid-20th century historian authors Bird and Paul Yarbrough write that Taylors Creek had proportionally fewer African-American slaves than adjacent counties where larger plantations grew rice and sea island cotton for export. The presence of slaves in Taylor's Creek is supported not only be the presence of African American surnames at the Strum Bay-Stewart Town and Pleasant Grove cemeteries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries but also by the deed records of settlers like Archibald Bulloch who brought slaves with him in the 18th century.

During the Antebellum Period, Taylors Creek established itself as a crossroads community and intellectual center for Liberty County. Residents established two churches, one Methodist and the other, Baptist. In 1833, the Georgia General Assembly established the Taylors Creek Union Academy grade school (renamed the Liberty Institute in the 1887) (Joseph 2003). By the 1850s and 1860s, most farmers at Taylors Creek were making a living with some combination of the following industries: subsistence crops: sugarcane, cotton, livestock, hogs, and sheep and harvesting timber. By 1861, Taylors Creek had a post office and steam-powered saw and gristmills.

Not long after the Civil War, Taylors Creek stood as a crossroads community of 80 people, four sawmills, four general stores, and a post office, with a hinterland of cotton and rice farms and lumber. The community attracted doctors, lawyers, and educators in the late nineteenth century. In 1886, a physician, professional photographer, and five business firms operated at Taylors Creek, then one of the largest communities in Liberty County. By the century's end, Taylors Creek had developed into a village consisting of a blacksmith, two cotton gins, two general stores, two gristmills, two saw mills, two naval-stores, manufacturers, a physician, three churches, a school, and a post office. Taylors Creek functioned as a market and industrial center due to its crossroads location. Residents of Taylors Creek farmed small plots of subsistence crops and many were employed by the turpentine industry.