



Photo by Suzette Brumbaugh

Volume #23

Spring 2025

Friends of Hofwyl–Broadfield Plantation Newsletter

**Located at 5556 US Hwy 17N
Near the intersection of US17 and GA99 Phone 912-264-7333**

The historic site is open Tuesday-Sunday with the tour of the historic house beginning on the hour. If you have any questions about visiting, please call the office staff at 912-264-7333. This park is maintained by the state of Georgia. Bill Giles, Site Manager, can be reached at bill.giles@dnr.ga.gov.

March 18-April 20 Easter Egg Hunt Daily when park is open

April 5, 2025 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Plein Air Artists paint outside at the park

April 26, 2025 10-11 a.m. Snake Program

May, 2025 Plein air art is exhibited at Movable Feast

June and July 2025 Plein air art is exhibited at the Macintosh Art Gallery

Easter Scavenger Hunt
Dates March 18-April 20, 2025
Everyday the park is open



Come out to the park for Family Fun this Spring.



**Our Annual Plein Air Event will be April 5th 2025 from 9-3 at
Hofwyl-Broadfield**

It's not called "Wet Paint Sale" without reason. It is magical to see the artists spread all over the plantation grounds and even more exciting to watch art being made with the opportunity to buy a favorite right off the easel! This year we have a special opportunity to see the Plein Art displayed throughout March and April at A Moveable Feast Restaurant. Plan to come savor "Good Things to Eat in or Take Away" while enjoying a collection of paintings by area artists!



In May the exhibit will be at the:

Horton Gallery

Southeast GA Health Center

In June and July the exhibit will be at the :

McIntosh Art Center

At the Old Jail

In Darien, GA



The Friends of the Camellias at Hofwyl are trying to prepare for next winter's Camellia Celebration in spite of the snow and ice damaging the trees.



We have discovered and tagged 70 trees. The task of photographing the bloom with the tag number continues. The goal is identifying the names of the varieties. Hopefully in the future we can use a tree tag with a QR code, so that Camellia fans can see the blooms at any time they visit the park.





Introducing the new state mission statement for the Friends of the State Parks.

Our Mission is to: Serve, Support and Celebrate

We volunteer for and support many activities at the park.



Plein Air



Classic Car Show



Easter Scavenger Hunt



The Ring Shouters



Saturday, Apr 26, 2025 (10 AM to 11 AM)

“The Most Dreadful Looking Things In the World” Miss Ophelia Dent

Learn about snakes (and other scaly critters) that inhabit Hofwyl-Broadfield and the surrounding area.

Ophelia Dent, the last owner of Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation, once remarked that there were two things she hated, one was hurricanes, the other was rattlesnakes. This attitude was typical of those living on the edge of the wilderness in the mid-20th century and before.

Today, many are beginning to understand the vital role that snakes (even rattlesnakes) play in the environment.

Learn about the beneficial role that snakes play in the environment and how to mitigate encounters with venomous species. We’ll also talk about some of Ophelia Dent’s near legendary run-in with the creatures.

Afterwards we will walk to the plantation area through habitat frequented by several species of snakes. If we are lucky, we might spot a few. Walk will be about 1 mile in length. Bring water and insect repellant if desired. Wear shoes comfortable for walking.



Plan to Join Us This Summer For Junior Ranger Camp

June 19th or June 26th 9 a.m.-12 noon

Leading the camp this year will be Allie Ellis, Jordan Daniels, and Andrea Deck.

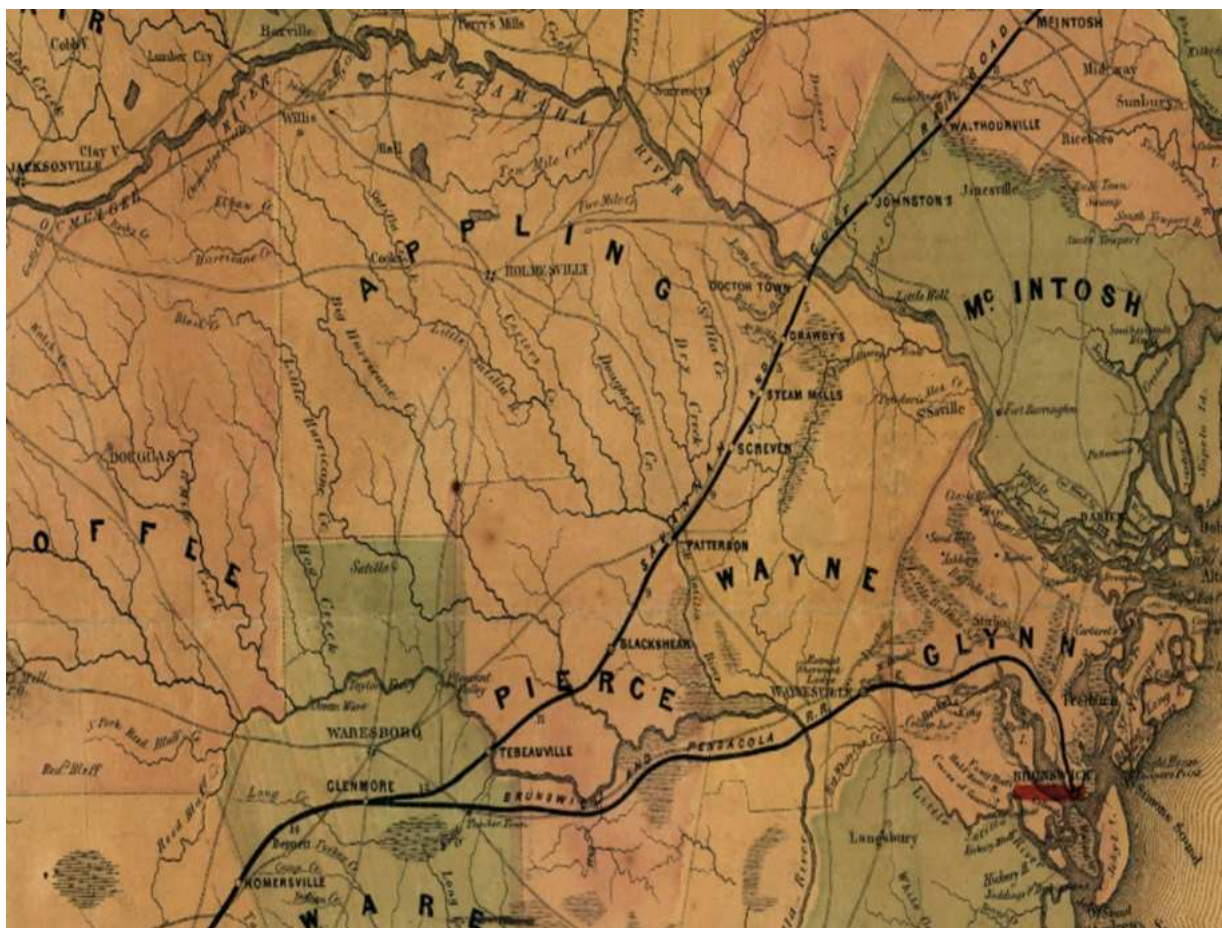
The camp registration link is :<https://forms.gle/HL2nXs7jQYC6TXg17>

Some of the activities will be related to the division's annual theme for the year, which is Wild Georgia: A Plan for Tomorrow. The focus is on the species in Georgia that have been identified as priorities for conservation. In order to conserve native wildlife species their habitats must be saved before these animals, plants, and places are lost forever.

Questions? Call Allie Ellis at 912-264-7333 or email allie.ellis@dnr.ga.gov

“A Miserable Wiregrass Country...” Refugeeing at Tebeauville, Ware County, Georgia

By
S.T. Lanter



A contemporary 1864 Map of Georgia showing railroads and roads from Hofwyl to Tebeauville. Tebeauville is located at the bottom left center of the map. Library of Congress.

Major General Robert E. Lee was given command of the Department of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida November 5, 1861. He immediately left on an inspection tour to determine the viability of his new command. The inadequacies of his command were obvious, he wrote: *I have been down the coast to examine the defenses [of my command]. They are poor indeed. I hope the enemy will be polite enough to wait for us [to set up strong fortifications].* 1

He found that there were not enough troops, guns and supplies to defend his vast department. Reluctantly bowing to reality, in late 1861, he ordered the area to be abandoned. He would concentrate on defending the cities of Savannah and Charleston.

[A circular was] sent to each planter on the adjacent rivers ... that ... with as little delay as possible ... [to remove] their negroes, with subsistence for one year, to different points inland, not less than 15 to 20 miles from the coast. ... beyond the reach of enemy gunboats and vessels. ... a military force [will be] ... furnished them to insist on obedience on the part of slaves to their master's orders.²

The order was mandatory, George Dent obediently moved his family, possessions, and slaves from Hofwyl Plantation to Tebeauville in Ware county Georgia. George and Ophelia's son Sidney was born there on April 22, 1862. Ophelia expounds just two sentences on her experience there in her memoir: *The house at Hofwyl was not finished when our Civil War broke out and we left, **for four years living in Ware county near Waycross, a miserable wiregrass country.** Before we returned the extinguishing cap of defeat was on our heads, our pleasant things were all gone, and strangers in our homes.³*

Tebeauville (pronounced "tuh-bo") was approximately sixty miles from Brunswick on the tracks operated by the 'Savannah & Gulf Railroad'. The Savannah & Gulf Railroad (S & G RR) intersects with the Brunswick & Pensacola Railroad at Glenmore a small town 15 miles south and west of Tebeauville. Tebeauville was the ninth stop on the S & G RR was popularly known as 'Old Nine' incorporated in 1867, but founded, and named by Philip Coleman Pendleton for his maternal grandfather Frederick Edmund Tebeau when he built a station house there in 1857.

During the Civil War slaves, such as those from Hofwyl, routinely arrived in Tebeauville for 'safekeeping.' After the war schools, churches and homes were built to the north and most people moved there. Finally, the tracks moved to Waycross, a mile away, and Tebeauville virtually disappeared. The location absorbed by Waycross.

There is some doubt as to the mechanics of the Dent's move from Hofwyl to Ware County following General Lee's decision to abandon the Georgia coast. Dent moved his

goods, animals, and slaves to Tebeauville sometime in February 1862. Ophelia, who was heavily pregnant, does not explain how the Dent's arrived at Tebeauville. The move was hasty, nothing was prepared to receive the refugees. In her memoirs she says that they stored some possessions in a warehouse on the banks of the Satilla River in Tebeauville.

[A] very old English Bible, ... filled with devotional thoughts, particularly the book of Psalms, written on the margin in a beautiful English hand, was lost during the war in a warehouse at the Satilla crossing. I tried to recover it but was unsuccessful' 4

Undoubtedly they loaded all their household goods, slaves, and provisions on the freight wagons of the B&A RR and 'took to the cars' in the evacuation to Ware County. Sixteen year old Maria C. Blain, who refugeeed with the Dent's at Tebeauville, corroborates the chaos of the experience and that they went to 'refugeeing' by rail writing: *We went first to Waynesville, Wayne County, in the spring of 1862... No shelter could be found so father bought a piece of ground at Tebeauville, Ware County, Ga. (now Waycross). He came back for the family and, with the aid of Mr. Burns, our house and out buildings, even the fence, were all taken down and a train was placed at our disposal. Everything, horses and all, was loaded on this train.*⁵

Blain continues in her description of the harsh realities that were associated with Tebeauville, at least in the early days. *Mrs. Spears and daughters and servants landed at Tebeauville with absolutely no shelter. After an hour or two, Capt. John Lee, who had been in my brother's regiment, the 26th Georgia, but was invalided home, came and offered the only shelter he could—an open loft with one room cut off so that Mrs. Spears and her daughters could use it and father and mother the other. But for that kindness they would have had to sleep outdoors.*⁶

Other people helped as much as they could, being as generous as conditions permitted. *Major Grant, ... offered part of his store house for our household and store goods and a few boards were laid across some rails to shelter our stove and my good old black mammy Lizzie did our cooking there.* ⁷

But the primitive conditions were not always permanent. Much of the hardship occurred simply because of poor planning for the evacuation of the coast. Supplies, at this time, were still readily available.

While our buildings were being erected, father went to Augusta to get more goods and bring me home, or rather to camp. ⁸

The railroad line itself eventually suffered disruption to its tracks, not by rampaging Federal troops, but from the Confederate government expropriating the rails of the line for use/repair of more strategic railroads elsewhere.

In October, 1863, the government ordered the railroad, which was at that time only about forty miles in length, reaching from Waynesville to Tebeauville, torn up, as the iron was needed elsewhere. The line from Waynesville on to Brunswick had previously been torn up. Rail Service was not fully restored until 1869.

The intersecting line from Savannah to Thomasville, Georgia was more 'strategic' and kept open until forty miles of track, bridges and trestles destroyed by General Sherman's 'bummers' in the 1864 March to the Sea effectively cut the line.

Georgia Bryan Conrad, Ophelia Dent's second cousin, writes of the days 'refugeeing' in Ware County in her 1901 'Reminiscences' as a time of increasing troubles.

In '62 ... domestic troubles coming on us thick and fast, it ended in our going to live with our cousins, the Troup's, at Tebeauville, Georgia. They, with many other rice planters, had bought large stretches of pine barrens, and settled them with their slaves. We all lived in log houses or rough frame ones, unplastered and unpainted. The land was so poor, after it was cleared, that it did not supply enough corn for man and beast. The man had to be considered first, so the beast suffered.⁹

Conrad's word choice is interesting and informative. The "... rice planters had bought large stretches of pine barrens...we all lived in log houses or rough frame ones, unplastered and unpainted." To live in the "pine barrens" in "unplastered and unpainted" houses signifies that the aristocratic rice planters had suffered a precipitous and degrading fall in status. For only the lazy, shiftless, and degraded poor white "Pinelanders" lived like that.

But even though circumstances drove the rice planters from their plantations they still maintained their positions and obligations. They may have been living with and similar to Pinelanders, but they were not Pinelanders.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the mistress or master of a large plantation in Georgia ... lived in idleness. They were the busiest people I have ever known. [They] ... had charge of a hundred or of several hundred human beings, who looked to them for everything.

I have seen my cousin, Miss Troup (Matilda) superintend the cutting out of every garment on her plantation, have seen the bundles of clothes rolled up, tied and delivered to the seamstresses who were to make them. Then rations had to be given out, which was generally done by the overseer or by the driver, a Negro man, who was next to the overseer. The sick were visited. ... The Mistress would go from house to house looking after the sick. Once during the war, when we were refugeeing, smallpox broke out among the poor whites around us. Owing to the fact that we could get no vaccine matter (that being contraband), it spread to the Negroes. Mrs. [Ophelia] Dent and Miss [Matilda] Troup went from cabin to cabin, looking after them, and continued their visits until they both [were] taken down with varioloid. 10 Two children of our household were desperately ill with the disease. Fortunately, there were no deaths.11

If housing at Tebeauville was less than expected, the food was just as substandard. As the Federal blockade of Southern ports became ever more effective, Federal armies destroyed the very limited Southern transportation infrastructure and rampant inflation rapidly wrecked the value of Confederate currency. Hunger and outright starvation became all-consuming realities.

Food, clothing, medicine and most necessities were scarce and difficult to obtain. The refugee families, led by the women, as all military age men were in the army, had to figure out how to fix up, make do, make it themselves or do without.

My cousins had but small supplies of coffee, tea, and loaf-sugar put aside for emergencies, so we fared as all around us did, having many substitutes for coffee and tea, and using brown sugar to sweeten them. The last year of the war, bacon, corn-meal, and hominy were the chief of our diet. There was no complaining, though this rough home was called Repineville.

Mustard and arrowroot were planted and gathered. Castor oil was obtained from the bean. Soap was made, even for toilet purposes. Myrtle berries and beeswax supplied us with candles. Some very pretty homespun dresses were made and worn. ... Everything possible was used for clothing.12

As the war went on, familiar items and food virtually disappeared. The refugees had

to adapt and make do with what was available.

Of course, there were some amusing things that helped us bear the many anxieties. The various makeshifts we learned varied the monotony. Whenever one thing would fail, we would find a substitute. Parched okra seed, rye, sweet potatoes, etc. took the place of the fine old coffee we once knew. Blackberry leaves looked like tea, even if the taste was not exactly the same. 13

Inflation, the handmaiden of scarcity, made for astronomic prices for mundane items. Maria C. Blain records that: *War time prices were wonderful (she probably means wonderful). Coates' spool thread sold for \$2.50 per spool; coffee \$100.00 per lb; and everything else in proportion. 14*

Tebeauville, for much of the war, was beyond the reach of the Federal armies but not the war. The headquarters for the 4th Georgia Cavalry and a hospital were located there. Women from the refugee families volunteered as matrons and nurses.

In the aftermath of the Battle of Olustee, Florida in February 1864 casualties evacuated from the battlefield to Tebeauville severely taxed the facility.

When the wounded from the Battle of Olustee (February 20, 1864) began to pass, as no notice had been given us, there was no food for the poor fellows. My mother said this must not happen again so we girls...were mounted and sent in four directions calling for supplies of cooked food to be sent to the committee of ladies for each day's train. Nobly did the people respond. The Couper's, the Dent's, the Troup's, the Grant's, the Bailey's, The Williamses and many others six and seven miles away kept a good supply....

The second train bearing wounded found every thing ready and, as we went through the cars serving such as needed it, my mother noticed one man who was in such agony that he could take nothing. She made inquiry and found that he was severely wounded through the body; and although three days had passed, the wound had never been cared for. She urged the officer in charge to let her take the poor fellow and care for him for he would surely die unless cared for at once...I then mounted my horse again and rode three miles to Mrs. Geo. C. Dent's with a request from my mother for a nurse—and got her, too—good old Mammy Easter [Esther?], who proved a jewel of tender faithfulness. 15

Conrad comments in her 'reminiscences' that the slaves at Tebeauville minded their manners and followed their master's orders until the end of the war. She records that at Tebeauville slavery ended with a whimper.

*'65 saw the end of the contest, but not until my cousin [possibly Matilda or Ophelia], calling the Negroes together, told them that they were free, and could leave when they chose, did they begin to go. Then they left in twos and threes, carrying with them their belongings tied in immense bundles, on their heads. When the rice planters returned to the coast, they found that the Negroes had simply proceeded them. There they were, settled down in their old quarters again.'*¹⁶

Conrad was amazed that the freedmen and women returned to their former cabins seeing it as an example of the loyal 'servants' repaying their former master's benevolence. However, the freed people were with their kith and kin—and essentially had nowhere else to go. For good or ill the plantation was home.

As for Dent's, the first to return to Broadfield were Matilda (Maude) and Clelia. James returned to Hofwyl in 1871 and may have lived in the slave cabin behind the house, with his bride Miriam, as late as the 1880's. When George and Ophelia came home isn't known, possibly circa 1876. The old order was gone, and a new one was aborning.

1. Capt. Robert E. Lee, Jr., *The Recollections and Letters of General Robert E. Lee*, Chapter III. A letter to his daughters, November 18, 1861.

2. *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, 6/1:337-338. December 6, 1861 letter from Colonel A.M. Manigault to Headquarters of the First Military District of South Carolina. Manigault was of course commenting on measures in his district in South Carolina but the policy he was complying with applied to the entire South Carolina, Georgia and Florida military district commanded by General Robert E. Lee.

3. Dent, *OTD Memoir*, 17. Ophelia, writing nearly 50 years later, may be mistaken about the house being unfinished, confusing needed repairs to house after the family's return from 'exile'.

4. *Ibid.*, 2.

5. Margaret Davis Cate, *Our Todays and Yesterdays: The Story of Brunswick and the Coastal Islands*, hereafter cited as *Our Todays and Yesterdays*, Glover Bros. Inc., Brunswick, Georgia, 1930, 214-215.

6. *Ibid.*, 214-215.

7. *Ibid.*, 214-215.

8. *Ibid.*, 214-215. Miss Maria C. Blain Cates was staying in Augusta until suitable shelter was constructed in Tebeauville.

9. Georgia Bryan Conrad, "Reminiscences of a Southern Woman," *Southern Workman Magazine*, Vol. XXX, No. 7, July 1901, 408. Georgia is referring to her cousins, Ophelia Troup Dent and Matilda 'Maude' Troup.

10. Varioloid is a mild form of smallpox affecting people who have already had smallpox or the vaccination to prevent it.

11. Georgia Bryan Conrad, "Reminiscences of a Southern Woman," *Southern Workman Magazine*, Vol. XXX, No. 3, March 1901, 169.

12. *Ibid.*, July 1901, 408-409. Georgia refers to 'Repineville' the name given by the refugees to their settlement, meaning that they were 'pining' for the better days from before the war.

13. Cate, *Our Todays and Yesterdays*, 214-215.

14. *Ibid.*, 216-217.

15. *Ibid.*, 216-217.

16. Georgia Bryan Conrad, "Reminiscences of a Southern Woman," July 1901, 410.

17. George was elected for one two-year term as Glynn County Tax Receiver in the election of 1876. George and Ophelia most likely lived at 'the Parsonage.'