

southwest Florence. The number of landowners declined from 34 to 21 African American-owned farms, and the overall number of households

of color in Oakland declined to 37%. Still, this was over one-third of the total population and a sizable community.

It appears that long-term landownership may have played a role in determining whether to stay on the farm or join the movement of families to the suburbs of Canaan. Of the 21 farms, 15 were owned by the same person in 1930; four of those farmers had owned their farm since at least 1910. It appears that those who had decades invested in their farm had

either fared better or were more reluctant to leave rural Oakland.

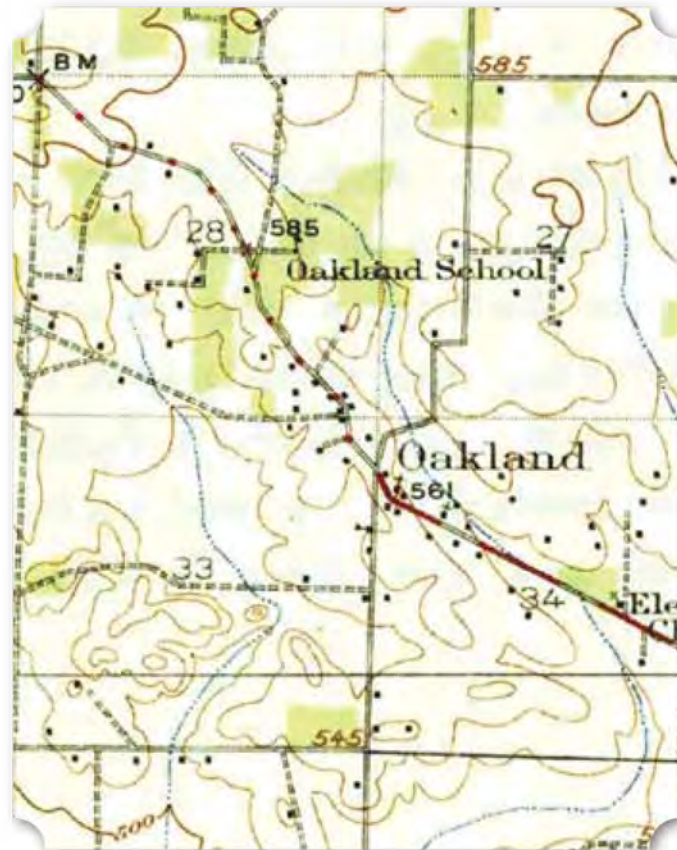
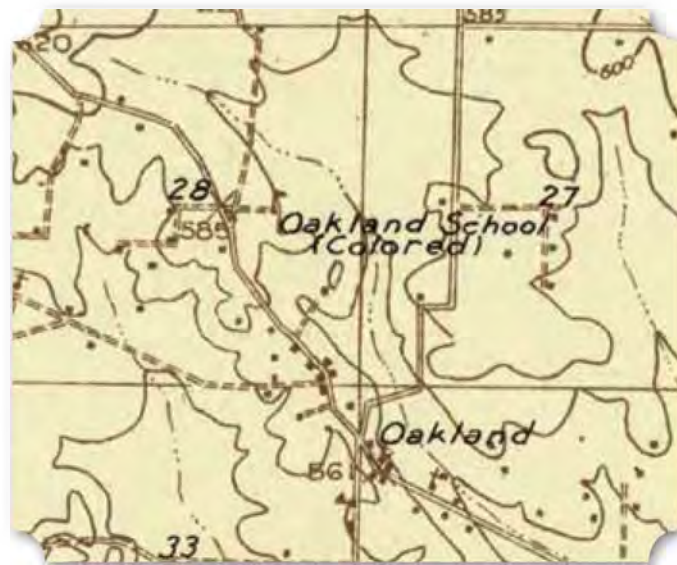
In an oral history interview with the Florence African American Heritage Project in 2017, Ms. Anita Cobb mentions that Ms. Sallie Koger “owned a large part of the Oakland community, where the black community lives in Oakland.” Ms. Koger does not appear in the census records from 1900 to 1940, but she may have lived in the area before then or her name might be misspelled. Ms. Cobb remembers that Ms. Koger was a member of the Mt. Zion AME Church and had no children.

The Oakland School was located north of Waterloo Road off Peerless Drive and County Road 243. It was built before 1924 when it appears on a USGS topographic map as “Oakland School (colored).” The school is still noted on the 1972 map, but it most likely closed due to integration.

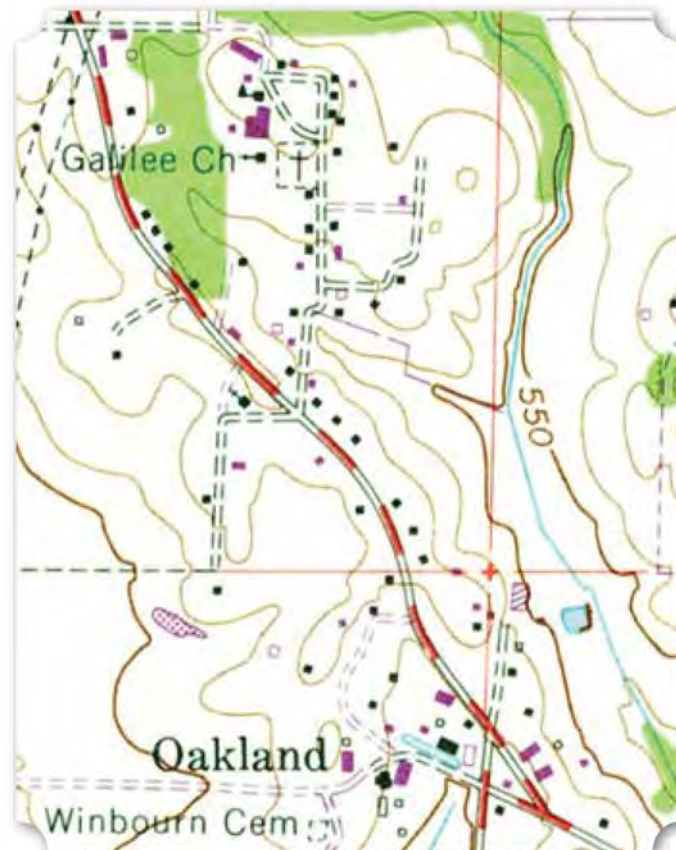
Nearby was the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church. According to the Alabama Historic Atlas, this was “a black church established after 1892.” In the early 20th century, the church was located off County Road 81. It appears on the 1924 topographic map but is not labeled. By 1972, Galilee Church had moved adjacent to Oakland School, and a large cemetery is marked to the east. The church burned sometime around 2010, leaving only the cemetery.

Galilee Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery has over 250 graves. The first known interment is Louis Peters, who died in 1937, which suggests that the cemetery was established before the church moved to this location. Common surnames here include: Baugh, Gilbert, Jackson, Johnson, Noel, Parker, Scott, Thompson, and Walker. Some local African American landowners are laid to rest here as well. Robert Anderson (1883-1975) owned a farm in Oakland from at least 1920 to 1940; Tom Baker (1872-1949) and Bamma Bryant (1867-1949) owned farms from at least 1930 to 1940; and George W. Carroll (1871-1947) owned in 1940. Ms. Bryant’s memorial states: “Founder, organizer, and president of the charitable burial society at rest.”

(Below) 1924 USGS Topographic Map of Oakland School, Gravelly Spring, Alabama Quadrangle **(Bottom)** 1926 USGS Topographic Map of Oakland School, Gravelly Spring, Alabama Quadrangle



(Below) 1936 USGS Topographic Map of Oakland School, Sinking Creek Alabama Quadrangle **(Bottom)** 1972 USGS Topographic Map of Galilee Church, Sinking Creek Alabama Quadrangle



(Top) Aerial Photograph of Oakland School, 1958 (University of Alabama, Historical Map Collection, Online) **(Above)** Aerial Photograph of Oakland School, 1962 (University of Alabama, Historical Map Collection, Online)