

Even in 2010, when the area included in Elkmont is expanded, the population was only 15% African American.

During the early 20th century, most African American families living in the Elkmont community were enumerated in the Athens district of the census. Many of the landowning farmers of color lived along Elkmont Road. The highest number of Elkmont farms owned by African Americans was 15 in 1900, representing just over 5% of all households. The number generally declined over the next 40 years even as the overall population grew. By 1940, there were only six African American-owned farms in the district, which made up less than 2% of all households.

**Elkmont School\***

Despite what appears to be a low population of African Americans in the area of Elkmont, there were enough families of color between Elkmont and north Athens to require a school. The Elkmont School for children of color was built in 1937 when members of the white community donated lumber for the building. The exact location of the school is unclear but has been described as one mile outside

of Elkmont on the west side of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad near old Fort Hampton. It was built as a junior high school with a first year enrollment of 115 students. The first teachers included Mrs. J. D. Horton, principal, Ms. Margret Matthews, Mr. Tune, and Mr. Wallace. By 1947, there were only 20 students enrolled and Mrs. Johnnie D. Horton was the teacher. Trustees included Mr. Joseph Martindale, Mr. McWilliams, and Mr. Randolph Smith.

In northwest Elkmont, just north of where the Elkmont School might have been near Smithfield Road, is Smithfield Cemetery. This site has over 200 graves and several unmarked burials. The first known interment is Martha Brown (1862-1867). Other surnames include Bell, Jackson, Malone, McWilliams, and Springer. Ms. Johnnie Dawson Horton (1898-1969), a teacher at Elmont School and Joe Martindale (1898-1993), school trustee are laid to rest here. Local farm owners buried here include Walter Martindale (1867-1939), Huston Redus (1862-1922), and R. Landrus Ford (1871-1941) and his wife, Margret Ford (1886-1983).

**(Below)** Class in Front of Elkmont School, Date Unknown (School Days, 2011)

10	Schuyler Harris	570	400	1800	270	17	8	10	30	30	120	1570	3000	200
11	Luke Pryor	570	360	1800	460	18	4	12	16	32	270	1502	2.5	3300

**(Above)** Excerpt from the 1850 Agricultural Census Showing Listings for Schuyler Harris and Luke Pryor

## 15 ■ Flower Hill Plantation

The Flower Hill Plantation is located east of Beulahland and south of Tanner. The main house, built circa 1858, still stands near present-day Bee Line Highway and is also referred to as the Harris-Pryor House or Flower Hill Farm. While the land was first owned by Henry Augustine Washington (1749-1825) – a distant relative of the first U.S. president – the house was built by Schuyler Harris (1823-1880). According to slave schedules and agricultural censuses, Harris owned about 900 acres. In 1850, he had 18 enslaved African Americans on the property, and by 1860, this number had risen to 40.

By 1910, the area was known as Harris or Harris Station. The road that runs from Beulahland to Oakland is called Harris Station Road. According to

the historical marker placed outside the home by the Limestone Historical Society, the family land holdings continued to grow “through purchases, marriages, and inheritance between the Washington, Harris, and Pryor families” resulting in a plantation of over 3,000 acres. In the decades after slavery, about 60 tenant families lived on the large plantation. The house and surrounding property are on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage.

## 16 ■ Gamble House Plantation

The Gamble House is located east of Tanner and adjacent to Cotton Hill. According to the historical marker placed by the Limestone County Historical Society, the building, which dates to between 1822 and 1828, is one of the oldest brick houses in the

**(Below)** Gamble House (Limestone County Historical Society)

