

James H Gamble	1000 730	16000 375	23	9	12	12	20	30	230	3230	6000 900	4
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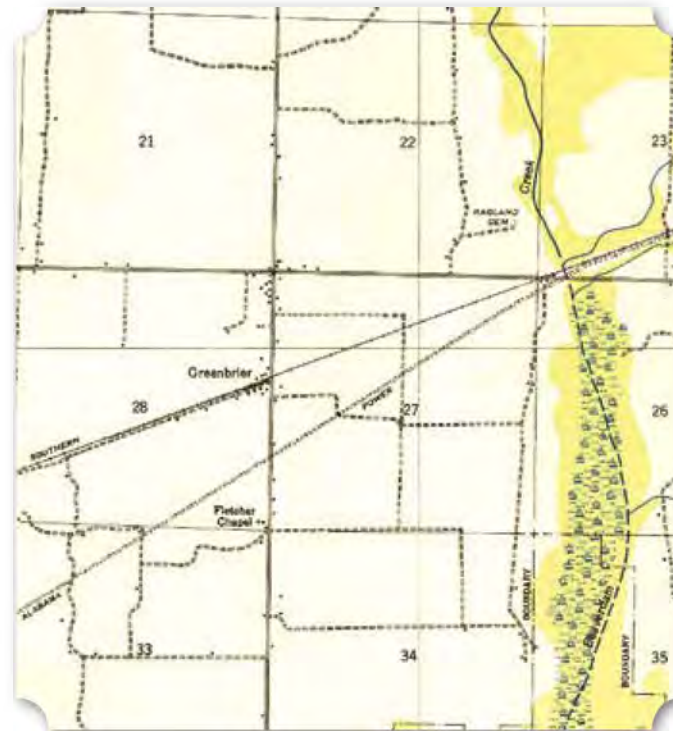
(Above) Excerpt from the 1850 Agricultural Census Showing the Listings for James H. Gamble

county. The land was originally owned by Joseph Johnston but is named for the Gamble family, who occupied the house by 1840. James Hurt Gamble (1791-1855) lived in Limestone County by this time and is recorded as owning 56 enslaved people. By 1850, he owned 1,450 acres and 86 slaves. James passed away in 1855, but the house and property passed to his son, Ruffin Coleman Gamble (1832-1909). The 1860 slave schedule indicates R.C. Gamble owned 49 slaves by the Civil War. The house still stands at the northeast corner of Huntsville Browns Ferry Road and Lindsay Lane.

## 17 Greenbrier

Greenbrier is located in southeast Limestone County along the Madison County border. As a census district, it encompasses parts of Peets Corner (a crossroads town established about 1888), Belle Mina, and expands along the county line to the Tennessee River. At the beginning of the 20th century, there were few African American landowners in this area. In 1900, there were two African American landowners: Martha Anne Jones and Aaron Russell. By 1910, the population of the area increased and so did the number of African American landowners, but there were still only nine African American-owned farms that year. This number fell to four in 1920, when many other districts of Limestone County were experiencing high numbers. The number of farms rebounded to 10 by 1930 and reached a peak in 1940 with 37 African American-owned farms in the Greenbrier area.

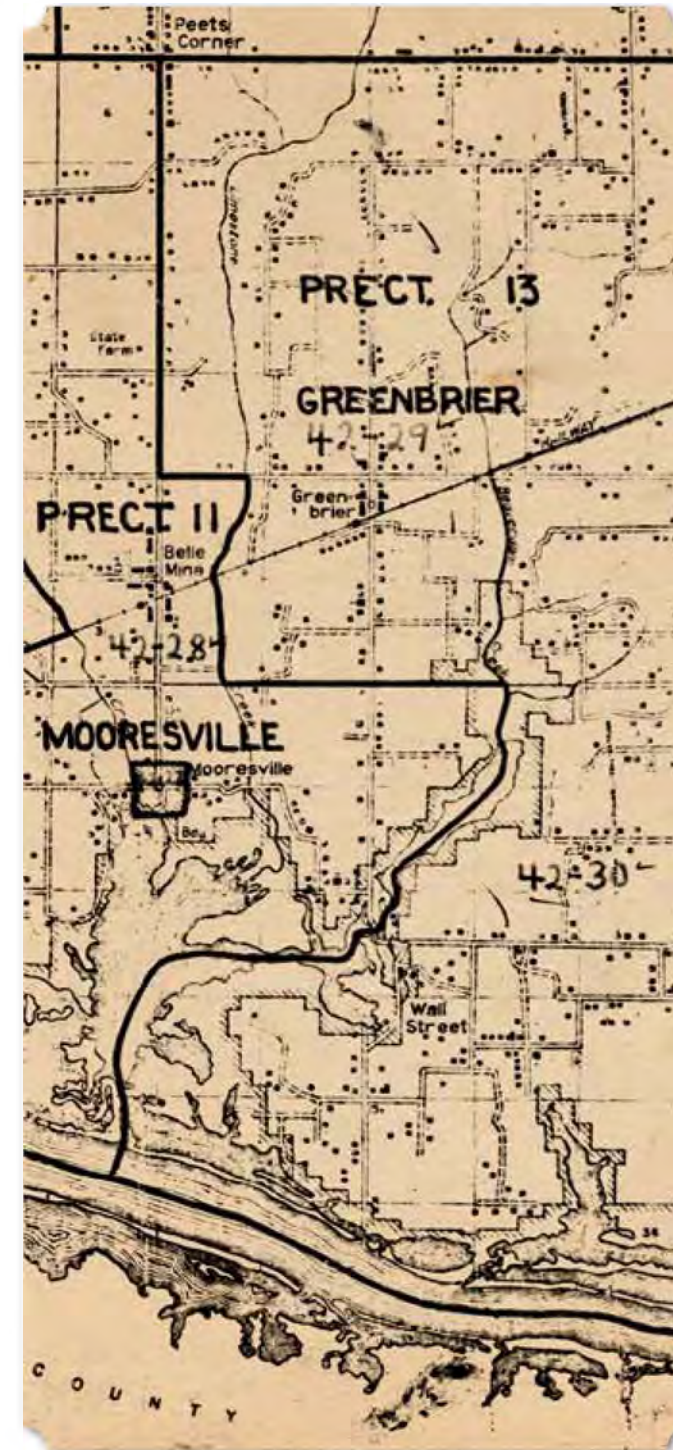
The Greenbrier district was divided into two in 1940 – the area north of the Southern Railroad and west of Beaverdam Creek and the area south of the railroad and east of the creek. The majority of African



(Above) Fig 64. 1936 USGS/TVA Topographic Map of Greenbrier, Greenbrier, Alabama Quadrangle (Right) Census District Map of Limestone County, 1940 (National Archives and Records Administration via Ancestry.com)

American farmers lived in the southeastern area along Madison County and the Tennessee River. A total of eight African American farmers owned land on the northwest side, but 29 African American-owned farms were located on the southeast side.

Few families had more than one member that owned a farm before 1940. Many African Americans did not own their farm for more than 10 years, although based on the surname and the ages of individuals, it appears that several farms were passed onto either children or widows. By 1930, half of the individuals that owned their farms were also recorded as owning



John N. Jones	400 240	15000 900	9	15	5	8	11	30	120	3570	3000 400	8
John N. Jones	1130 8	130	10	33	20	0	35	30	240	3520	5000 630	9

### KEY

- COMMUNITIES
- CEMETERIES
- CHURCHES
- PLANTATIONS
- SCHOOLS

in 1940 – the first instance of retention in the area. Interestingly, while the majority of African American-owned farms were southeast of Greenbrier in 1940, the five farms that were retained from 1930 were all on the northwest side. A total of five families owned more than one farm by 1940, including the Irvin family, who owned three farms, and the Dent, Miller, Rice and Ward families that owned two farms each.

### Druid's Grove Plantation\*

On the southwest corner of Old Highway 20 and Greenbrier Road, in the heart of Greenbrier, is Druid's Grove Plantation. This plantation was owned by Llewellyn Jones (1760-1820), the same man who owned Avalon Plantation in Madison County, now on the University of Alabama-Huntsville campus where Redstone Arsenal archaeologist, Ben Hoksbergen, has conducted archaeological investigations with students. Druid's Grove Plantation effectively established the community of Greenbrier by 1820. Unfortunately, Llewellyn Jones' fortunes fell short in 1819 and he committed suicide at the age of 60.

While Jones' son, Alexander, inherited Avalon Plantation, another son, John Nelson Spotswood Jones (1792-1854), inherited Druid's Grove Plantation. John N. S. Jones and his large family moved into the house at Druid's Grove. By 1830, Jones, his wife, and nine children lived in the house and he had 73 slaves on the property. By the time of his death, Jones owned at least 1,980 acres in Greenbrier and 115 slaves at Druid's Grove. The house no longer stands after it burned in a fire in the 1930s. Many of the Jones family are buried in the Jones-Donnell Family Cemetery on the old plantation property.

### Greenbrier School\*

Greenbrier School was located in southeast Limestone County near the Southern Railroad at the intersection of present-day Old Highway 20 and Greenbrier Road.

(Below) 1850 Non-Population, Agricultural Census Showing John N. S. Jones (National Archives and Records Administration via Ancestry.com)