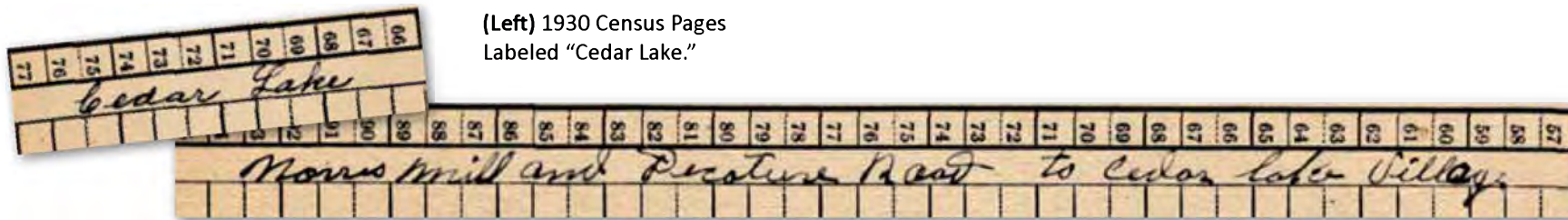


generosity was focused on creating opportunities for a particular set of vetted individuals who were deemed industrious enough to support themselves, their families, and community within a semi-isolated environment. The Cedar Lake Colony was meant to be a self-contained community that produced its own food, governed itself, and built its own necessary institutions without the need to rely upon or interact with the outside community much more than beyond trading skills and products. Higher education was simply not necessary to achieve these goals.

In 1930, there were only 43 households in Cedar Lake – far short of the 140 homes that were planned, funded, and required for the city charter. Since the charter was never fulfilled, it is possible there was never a mayor or city council elected; there is no record of anyone serving as the constable, notary public, or ex-officio Justice in Cedar Lake. The rewriting of the Alabama State Constitution in 1901 impacted the dreams of the Cedar Lake Colony. While some families were able to buy land, build houses, schools, and churches, and farm the land, the colony never became the city it was intended to be. The disenfranchisement

of African Americans in the new 1901 constitution ensured that “an experiment” such as the colony would never succeed to its full potential – most importantly in obtaining any form of city government. While this effect may not have been any conscious effort on the part of the people of Morgan County or the state of Alabama, the undeniable disenfranchisement of the African Americans of Alabama must have taken a toll on the efforts of the Nelsons and the community of Cedar Lake.

(Left) 1930 Census Pages Labeled “Cedar Lake.”



(Below) 1930 Census Excerpts for Hillard Tate, Will R. Garth, Jim Skinner, and Will Martin – Showing Home Ownership and Farming Occupation.

15	253 271	Tate, Hillard Jr.	Head	W	1870	58	31	Alabama	Virginia	Alabama	12	Farmer	General farm	VVVV	0	70	15
16		Mattie	Wife-H			45	18	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					16
17		Ethel	Daughter			19	8	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					17

61	62	Garth Will R	Head	W	1874	49	25	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	Farmer	General farm	VVVV	0	70	89
		Mattie Jr	Wife-H			42	18	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					90
		Willie Jr	Son			14	1	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	Laborer	General farm	VVVV	0	70	91
		Benjamin	Son			12	0	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					92

55		Bowling, Emma	Wife			44	20	Alabama	Alabama	Virginia	12	None					85
56	220 238	Skinner, Jim	Head	W	1870	55	26	Alabama	Alabama	Mississippi	12	Farmer	General farm	VVVV	0	70	86
57		Mahala	Wife-H			38	24	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					87
58	221 239	Martin, Hill	Head	W	1873	51	29	Mississippi	Alabama	Alabama	13	Farmer	General farm	VVVV	0	70	88
59		Virgie	Wife-H			43	19	Mississippi	Mississippi	Alabama	13	None					89
60		Stash	Daughter			21	10	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	Farmer	General farm	VVVV	0	70	90
61		Lucy	Daughter			14	27	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					91
62		Brown, William H	Wife			47	5	Ohio	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					92
63	222 240	Burke, William M.	Head	W	1872	52	20	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	Farmer	General farm	VVVV	0	70	93
64		Louisa	Wife-H			25	16	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					94
65		Lucie	Daughter			12	8	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	12	None					95