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## A GREAT STIRRING IN THE LAND: TALLAHASSEE AND LEON COUNTY IN 1860

by WILLIAM WARREN ROGERS

ON the eve of the Civil War Tallahassee and Leon County were the center of Florida's economic, political, and social life. Tallahasseeans read about themselves in their two weekly, and decidedly political, newspapers: the strongly Democratic *Floridian and Journal* (circulation 1,500) and the Whiggish *Florida Sentinel* (circulation 1,000).<sup>1</sup> As a national force the Whigs had disintegrated, but the *Florida Sentinel* retained the party's principles. Local people kept further informed by talking among themselves. Conversations ranging from philosophical discussions to plain gossip were held on street corners, at stores, at churches, and at meetings of clubs and fraternal orders such as Jackson Lodge, No. 1, the state's oldest masonic organization.<sup>2</sup>

A look at who the Leon countians were, where they came from, and what they did reveals both the predictable and the unexpected. Tallahassee ranked fourth in the state in population (Pensacola was number one), but Leon with 12,343 people was Florida's most populous county. There were 3,194 whites, sixty free persons of color, and 9,089 slaves. Within Tallahassee the racial division was almost equal. Out of a total of 1,932 there were 997 whites, forty-six free persons of color, and 889 slaves.<sup>3</sup>

Native-born Floridians made up a majority of the white population. Georgia was second, and all of the states of the future

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1. Manuscript returns of the Eighth U. S. Census, 1860, Leon County, Florida, Social Statistics, n.p. [hereinafter cited as Manuscript census, with appropriate schedule]. Unless otherwise designated, all totals are compiled from this census. For the broader picture, see Thomas Sentell Graham, "Ante-Bellum Tallahassee Newspapers, 1845-1861," (master's thesis, Florida State University, 1967), 1-93; John Kilgore, "Leon County's Newspapers," *Tallahassee Historical Society Annual*, IV (1939), 68-79.
2. The only history of Tallahassee before the Civil War (it deals peripherally with Leon County) is Bertram H. Groene, *Ante-Bellum Tallahassee* (Tallahassee, 1971).
3. U. S. Bureau of Census, *Eighth Census of the United States*, Florida, Schedule 1, Free Population (Washington, 1864), 51-53, 55.

Confederacy were represented. The only Midwesterners were from Indiana, while the border states of Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware furnished a few settlers. Immigrants had also moved in from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. The largest number of foreign-born were from Germany, England, Ireland, and France.

The population also included people from Italy, Denmark, Scotland, the West Indies, Canada, Nova Scotia, East India, Prussia, the Kingdom of Saxony, and Holland. Six other citizens also listed Europe as their place of origin without specifying a particular country.<sup>4</sup>

Tallahassee was established in 1824 on the site of an old Indian village and was specifically created to be the capital of the Territory of Florida. Incorporated in 1825, Tallahassee was also designated as the seat of government for Leon County in 1828. The provincial capital lay outside the routes of most travellers to the South and was not often visited. Yet by 1860 the town and county were prosperous. There was a great stirring in the land. A visitor from South Carolina noted the "business men, merchants and planters, bringing with them all the wealth, luxury and taste of many years gathering up. Style predominates to a great extent. . . . You wonder at seeing all this in the bosom of a country not yet developed, and scarcely known to the world."<sup>5</sup>

Tallahassee's greatest importance was as a trading center for the rich agricultural area of Leon County and Middle Florida. St. Marks, eighteen miles south on the Gulf of Mexico, was the town's port. Because agriculture dominated the economy, farming and directly related occupations were the chief means of livelihood. Leon County led the state in the amount of farm land, the value of livestock, the production of corn, and the number of bales of cotton ginned. The total cash value of Leon's farm products made it number one in Florida.<sup>6</sup>

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4. Manuscript census, Free Population, n.p. Exact page references are provided only for specific citations.

5. William Warren Rogers, ed., "Florida On the Eve of the Civil War as Seen by a Southern Reporter," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. XXXIX (October 1960), 152.

6. U. S. Bureau of Census, *Agriculture of the United States in 1860* (Washington, 1864), 18-19.

Farming engaged almost the entire slave population. Among the whites, 300 men, thirteen of whom lived in Tallahassee, listed themselves as farmers. John H. Rhodes, the census taker in 1860, recorded that one such yeoman was a combination blacksmith-farmer, another was a butcher-farmer, while a third was a gardener. In addition, one resident said that he was a hog raiser, and another man was a hay raiser. Fifteen citizens were farm laborers.

There are no accepted definitions for the words planter and plantation. Yet on a plantation the basic work force was slave labor, and agricultural production was its reason for being. A planter was a person who owned sufficient land to require its cultivation by slaves. In turn, the management of his bondsmen occupied the majority of the owner's time and concentration. The number of slaves and acres necessary to put one in the planter class varied from one location to another. In the society of Tallahassee and Leon County, it was the planter who occupied the top rung of wealth, power, and social prestige.<sup>7</sup>

Fifteen planters lived in Tallahassee, but the majority, ninety-one, resided in the county. Generally, their holdings lay on a line parallel with Tallahassee and stretched northward to the Georgia boundary. To the south and southwest the land was not well suited to plantation agriculture. The owners, including one physician-planter and one planter-merchant, utilized foremen and managers. These overseers, the key men in determining a plantation's success, numbered seventy-eight in Leon County.

Some owners who qualified as planters preferred to call themselves farmers. The aristocratic Thomas Brown was such a man. He had migrated from Virginia to Leon County in 1827 and brought 140 slaves with him. Throughout an active life, he owned hotels, operated a race track, sat in the legislature, and served as Florida's second governor (1848-1853). Seventy-four years old in 1860, Brown described himself as a "retired farmer."<sup>8</sup>

7. Interview with John Hebron Moore, December 3, 1984. See Julia Floyd Smith, *Slavery and Plantation Growth in Antebellum Florida 1821-1860* (Gainesville, 1973), 122-52; Larry E. Rivers, "Slavery in Microcosm: Leon County, 1824-1860," *Journal of Negro History*, XLVI (Fall 1981), 235-45.

8. Manuscript census, Free Population, 56; Mary D. Lewis, "Thomas Brown," *Apalachee*, I (1944), 90-95; Elizabeth F. Smith, *Tom Brown's Tallahassee Days, 1825-1850* (Crawfordville, 1971), n.p.

Benjamin Chaires, Sr., whose property (and that of his family) lay east of Tallahassee near Lake Lafayette, was an archetypal planter. Neither the county's largest landowner nor its smallest, Chaires in 1860 ran a largely self-sufficient operation. He owned 1,000 improved acres and 1,500 more that were unimproved. The cash value of his plantation was \$20,000, while his farm implements and machinery were worth \$650. He had four horses, twenty-five mules, thirty milk cows, sixty other cattle, twenty-five sheep, and 120 swine. The livestock had a valuation of \$4,235. Chaires used ten tons of home-grown hay to help feed his livestock. He harvested 300 bushels of rye, 200 bushels of peas and beans, ten bushels of Irish potatoes, 1,500 bushels of sweet potatoes, and 2,500 bushels of corn. Cotton was the main money crop, and 160 bales were ginned. Most of the labor was performed by sixty-six slaves.<sup>9</sup>

Besides the men and women who worked the land, a number of people were directly dependent upon agriculture. They included a cotton weigher, a cotton buyer, a cotton broker, and three commission merchants. The list was extended by the presence of nine blacksmiths, a horse trader, two livery stable keepers (particularly P. B. Brokaw's Livery And Sale Stables), two ditchers, a harness maker, seven carriage makers, and a wheelwright.

There was little industrial activity in Tallahassee and Leon County at the time. In combination their total manufacturing output in 1860 was valued at \$28,900. The chief industries were the Tallahassee Railroad Company, an investment of \$30,000, and the Pensacola and Georgia Railroad Company, worth \$50,000.<sup>10</sup> Operations such as the railroads, machine shops, and foundries employed eighty-one workers. Another thirty-two men, less specialized in their occupations, were classified as laborers. More skilled were eight engineers, a civil engineer, a mold maker, two molders, eight machinist, six mechanics, a

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9. Manuscript census, Agriculture, 2-3; Manuscript census, Slave Population, 5-6. For the Chaires family, see Mary Louise Ellis, "Benjamin Chaires: Territorial Florida's Man For All Seasons," *Florida State Historical Journal*, I (1983-1984), 39-49.

10. Manuscript census, Industry, 2. Besides their technical and maintenance staffs, the railroads also employed office personnel such as an agent and a treasurer. See George W. Pettengill, Jr., *The Story of Florida Railroads 1834-1903* (Boston, 1952), 11-15, 24-26; Dorothy Dodd, "The Tallahassee Railroad and the Town of St. Marks," *Apalachee*, IV (1950-1956), 1-12.

superintendent of machines, a master machinist, and a master car shop man. The combined work force, ranging from the unskilled to craftsmen, was 142.

If there was no large scale manufacturing, local interests were served by a thriving cottage industry and a variety of speciality shops and enterprises. Cottage industries included two silversmiths, two shoemakers, two watchmakers, two gunsmiths, a cooper, numerous seamstresses and washwomen, a mattress maker, and nine millers. Joseph Weber was the leader among seven tailors, and in 1860 his firm produced 300 items of clothing valued at \$2,000.<sup>11</sup> John Cardy, owner of the Fulton Foundry, kept castings for saw mills and gins on hand. He also built to order steam engines from six to thirty-five horsepower.<sup>12</sup> Those whose income depended upon special services included two hotel keepers, a billiard parlor operator, two printers, a baker, a jeweler, a bookbinder, a ferryman, and a daguerreotypist.

An on-going series of building projects—residences, stores, churches—demonstrated several levels of craftsmanship. There were twenty-three carpenters and another three men who were classified as “boss carpenters.” James Shine was the local brick manufacturer, and there were five brick masons. Thirteen painters put the finishing touches on structures that were usually designed by the owners, although there was one architect. The more intricate inside work was done by three cabinet makers. Despite the use of brick (there was even a marble cutter), the basic building material was wood. To supply the need there was a hewer, as well as four shingle getters. The seven suppliers of wood were known variously as lumbermen, lumber getters, and timber getters. One hedged by declaring that he was also a farmer.

Scattered across the county, but concentrated in Tallahassee, were a number of general or dry goods stores and businesses. The result was that thirty-four men held the position of clerk. There was also a clerk in the State Bank of Florida (chartered by the General Assembly in 1851). Because a number of merchants were self-employed, they outnumbered the clerks; there were forty-six town merchants and three in the country. Among

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11. Manuscript census, Industry, 2.

12. Tallahassee *Floridian and Journal*, August 18, 1860.

the better-known stores were J. M. Calloway, "Grocer & Commission Merchant"; Alex Gallie, "Dealer in Dry Goods, Provisions"; "D. C. Wilson & Son"; "Geo. W. Scott & Co."; and "A. F. Hayward, Staple Goods."<sup>13</sup> Keeping up with the flow of business and providing an accounting were nine bookkeepers.

A separate and somewhat amorphous category was that of "agent." Representing out-of-town financial institutions, two men are listed in the census as bank agents. Four others are also described as agents and one is listed as a "trader." No person gave his primary occupation as that of slave trader, although some agents and commission merchants added the euphemism "auctioneer" to their title and openly advertised the sale of slaves. R. H. Berry, Edward M. West, and R. A. Shine, Jr., each advertised himself as an "Auctioneer and Commission Merchant." Occasionally, slaves were auctioned off at bankruptcy sales held in front of the courthouse.

The holding of public office was an exclusively male category of employment. There were city officers, clerks of court, deputy clerks, a post office clerk, a mail rider, a tax collector, a supreme court judge, sheriff, secretary of state, and state treasurer. Because land transactions were so important there was a United States Land Office Register, a state land agent, and a Swamp Land Agent. There was also an independent surveyor.

The professions—law, medicine, teaching, and the ministry—did not lack for adherents. Tallahassee's position as state capital caused a large number of lawyers to settle within its confines. There were twenty lawyers in town and five more out in the country. Some lawyers were in practice for themselves and others formed powerful firms with political ties. Among the latter were M. D. Papy and Hugh Archer, D. P. Hogue and A. Perry Amaker, and Wilkinson Call and T. W. Brevard, Jr.

Fifteen of the region's thirty-two doctors lived in Tallahassee and seventeen in the county. Although not all actively practiced medicine, a number did. There were two dentists, one for urban and one for rural patients. Among the doctors were Stuart White, George Badger, and partners J. B. Taylor and J. S. Bond.<sup>14</sup> Filling prescriptions for the doctors, as well as selling a

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13. *Ibid.*, January 28, 1860.

14. Henry E. Palmer, "Physicians of Early Tallahassee and Vicinity," *Apalachee*, I (1944), 29-46; Groene, *Ante-Bellum Tallahassee*, 51-58.

variety of patent medicines, were four druggists. J. R. Gregory & Co. drew a large patronage, but the largest drug firm was that of D. H. Ames and Matthew Lively.

The number of teachers totaled fourteen (nine were in Tallahassee). Although the region was not an educational center, its record was better than the census figures indicated—only two young men were classified as students. In 1857 the General Assembly designated Tallahassee as the locale for a seminary of learning. Earlier, in 1851, provision had been made for two such institutions, one on either side of the Suwannee River. The West Florida Seminary in Tallahassee was divided into a male department (four teachers, eighty students) and a female department (three teachers, seventy-five students). Each had its own campus and administration. In addition, there were fourteen “common” schools. These were one-teacher schools with a combined enrollment of 400 pupils. None of the schools had an endowment, although the seminaries each received \$1,700 from public funds and \$4,500 from “other sources.” The common schools’ combined county appropriations were \$500, but they managed to raise \$2,400 from tuition and other means.<sup>15</sup>

By 1860 Tallahassee had lost much of its reputation for violence and lawlessness. The stigma had been justly earned in earlier decades. John S. Tappan, the stern temperance leader from New England, visited Tallahassee in 1841, and pronounced the recent yellow fever epidemic a blessing because it killed so many “Gamblers & Blacklegs of the place.” According to Tappan, “A year ago you could not walk the Streets without being armed to the teeth.”<sup>16</sup> Now, there were only a few saloons, and even bowling and tenpin alleys were outlawed. While there were county and municipal law enforcement officials, they were not overworked. In 1860 only three criminals were convicted,

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15. *Acts and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of Florida, 1850-1851* (Tallahassee, 1851), 97-101; *ibid.*, 1856 (Tallahassee, 1856), 28-29; Manuscript census, Social Statistics. See also William G. Dodd, “Early Education in Tallahassee and the West Florida Seminary, Now Florida State University,” *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXVII (July 1948), 1-27, and (October 1948), 157-80.

16. John S. Tappan, “Tallahassee and St. Marks in 1841; A Letter of John S. Tappan,” *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (October 1945), 108-12. See also James Michael Denham, “An Upper Class Institution: Dueling in Territorial Middle Florida During the Early 1830s,” *Apalachee*, IX (1980-1983), 29-40.



and the local jail housed only four inmates.<sup>17</sup> A number of citizens ascribed the law-abiding tendencies to the influence of the church.

Perhaps they were correct. Town and county had two Presbyterian, one Roman Catholic, thirteen Methodist, two Episcopal, seven Missionary Baptist, and two United Baptist churches. Although church membership totals are missing, the buildings, taken together, could accommodate 1,300 people.<sup>18</sup>

Several of the churches had more black members than white. Usually services were held for slaves on Sunday afternoons, with white preachers supervising the sermons of black ministers. Even at church services, whites reasoned, a gathering of blacks opened the possibility of plotting a slave insurrection. Sometimes, as in Tallahassee's Presbyterian church, slave pews were built in the balcony, and services were conducted simultaneously for both races. The style of the church buildings varied widely, although cumulatively, the structures were valued at \$41,900.<sup>19</sup>

The style of preaching was no less varied. Some men of the cloth were uneducated and proud of it. Such a pastor claimed to have received a call to preach that was irresistible. Whatever he lacked in oratorical polish was made up for in sincerity and fervor. Some denominations, such as the Presbyterians, stressed an educated clergy, and the typical Calvinist minister was trained in theology.

Ministers were usually men of influence in the community. Yet that was relative depending on the size and influence of the congregation. An aristocratic South Carolinian, the Reverend Francis Huger Rutledge, preached at St. John's Episcopal church in Tallahassee from 1845 to 1851. At that time he was elected bishop of the Diocese of Florida but continued to live in Tallahassee. Bishop Rutledge was a graduate of Yale University and owned real estate valued at \$25,000 and a personal estate of \$82,000. His secular possessions contrasted sharply with those

17. Manuscript census, Social Statistics.

18. Ibid. See also W. T. Cash, "History of Trinity Methodist Church," *Apalachee*, II (1946), 46-58; Norman Edward Booth, "Tallahassee Trinity's Ante-Bellum Times, 1824-1861," (master's thesis, Florida State University, 1971); Mary Margaret Prichard Rhodes, "From Mission Bells to Cathedral Chimes," *Apalachee*, IX (1980-1983), 67-88; Jack Dalton, "A History of Florida Baptists," (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1952); Groene, *Ante-Bellum Tallahassee*, 119-29.

19. Manuscript census, Social Statistics.

of a thirty-two-year-old Baptist preacher named Farneth Norris, whose real estate came to \$50 and his personal estate to \$100. The Reverend E. F. Gates offered an even more dramatic comparison. At the age of thirty-four, Methodist preacher Gates had no personal or real estate whatsoever.<sup>20</sup>

A small part of Leon County's population lived in a twilight zone. These were the sixty people (thirty-four females, twenty-six males) legally classified as free persons of color. They were not slaves, but neither did they possess the rights and privileges of white citizens. Always occupying an anomalous position, they became a source of increasing concern for the white population as the Civil War approached. A free black was hardly the role model slaveowners wanted their chattels to emulate. Free blacks were automatically excluded from the professions and occupations that would have earned them much beyond marginal incomes. Yet despite their limitations, free blacks manage to cope. Beyond defining blacks as males and females, slaves and free persons, the census differentiated according to skin pigmentation. If a person were of mixed racial descent, he or she was still a black but was designated as a mulatto. The tendency throughout the South was for a high percentage of free persons to be mulattos. The division, however, was almost equal in Leon County.

Most free blacks worked as laborers but there were several gradations of their labor. Georgia-born Jack Hall (sixty-four years old) was the only free black officially cited as a "farm laborer." Nonetheless, he had real estate valued at \$800 and a personal estate of \$200. Robert Ponder (forty-seven years old), another Georgian, was an overseer on the plantation where he lived.<sup>21</sup>

Two free blacks, Starling Jones (forty-nine years old) and Jason Heart (fifty years old), found that their skills as carpenters were in steady demand. The important job of freighting and hauling was performed by two draymen, both of them free.

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20. Manuscript census, Free Population, 11, 31. See Carl Stauffer, *God Willing: A History of St. John's Episcopal Church 1829-1979* (Tallahassee, 1984), 73-75, 81; Joseph D. Cushman, Jr., *A Godly Heritage The Episcopal Church in Florida 1821-1892* (Gainesville, 1965), 24, 27-34.

21. Manuscript census, Free Population, 24, 46. See also Garvin Russell, "The Free Negro in Florida Before the Civil War," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XLVI (July 1967), 1-17; Julie Anne Lisenby, "The Free Negro in Antebellum Florida," (master's thesis, Florida State University, 1967).

Payton Brown, a forty-two-year-old Virginian, and fifty-year-old William Chavis, a native of Georgia, earned more money than many whites.<sup>22</sup>

While several white music teachers lived in the area, only one resident was described as a "musician." That person was James T. Selby, a free black. Born in France, Selby was of mixed blood. By whatever means, he was in Leon County by 1842 at which time he bought a lot in Tallahassee. Between then and 1860 when he was sixty-four, Selby married a young woman of mixed blood named Cynthia. They had three children. It seems improbable that Selby earned a livelihood as a musician, but any other work that he performed remains unknown. Yet he was a good provider, and after his death, Cynthia Selby was able to purchase 360 acres of land in 1863 and pay cash for it.<sup>23</sup>

The female population of the area was divided almost equally with that of the male citizens, yet little is known of the role that women played. By the time the white women of Tallahassee and Leon County reached maturity, most were married and busily engaged in the demanding tasks of caring for their homes and raising their families. The pattern was so accepted by 1860 that census taker Rhodes did not bother to report what most white women were doing. A woman was merely assigned a number; everyone knew what her status was. In only two instances were women listed as housekeepers, and that was because they were not married or the heads of households.

Most women who were black or of mixed descent were slaves. As private property they were subject to the arbitrary will of their masters. There were important exceptions to these stereotypes. It was not uncommon for single women or widows, white and black, to support themselves, or for married women of both races to earn money with their own labor. Such women received pay or income as washwomen (exclusively blacks), teachers (whites only), farmers, and seamstresses (both races).

All of the area's fourteen washwomen listed as living within the limits of Tallahassee were either black or mulatto. Lucinda Rosberry, forty-four-years-old, and her daughter Julia, eighteen, worked as washwomen; William, her sixteen-year-old son,

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22. Manuscript census, Free Population, 19, 21, 24-25.

23. Leon County Deed Book G, 424-25; H, 45-46; N, Part 1, 271-72, on file at the Leon County Courthouse, Tallahassee. See also Manuscript census, Free Population, 29.

was a brick mason.<sup>24</sup> Other combinations of mother and daughter washwomen were Malinda Norris and her daughter, Eliza, and Harriet Hudson and her mother, Eliza (all mulattoes). Both Malinda and Harriet had personal estates valued at \$1,000. Georgia-born Jane Christian (black) still washed and ironed clothes at sixty-five, and her two daughters, Susan (sixteen) and Sarah (fourteen), were similarly employed.<sup>25</sup> One free mulatto couple, Mary and Robert Jones, natives of Georgia, combined their incomes and earned a good living. He was a laborer, but she was the major wage earner as a washwoman. Her real estate came to \$1,000 and her personal estate to \$100. Other washwomen included Sally Robinson, Hanah Baker, and Katie Jones.<sup>26</sup>

The South's social restraints precluded white women from earning money by laundering clothes for other people. Although the typical white woman worked long hours washing and ironing for her family, performing similar labors for others would have been demeaning and unacceptable. No black women earned money by working for whites as domestics Tallahassee, and there were only two such women in the county. Both were Caucasian and were listed respectively as a servant and as a domestic.<sup>27</sup>

Two free black women shared an avocation dominated by white women. In the town and county there were thirty-seven seamstresses. Lidia Stout, a forty-two-year-old Florida-born free black had \$600 worth of real estate and a personal estate of \$500, Mary Owens (nineteen), was the other black seamstress.<sup>28</sup> Another five white women engaged in more sophisticated and renumerative crafts involving cloth. Two called themselves tailoresses, two others made manteaus (loose cloaks or coats), and one worked as a spinner and weaver.

Some women owned land as a result of inheritance, purchase, or both, and were successful planters. Two who directed more modest agricultural ventures adopted the title farmeress. Dorothy O'Cane, a fifty-nine-year-old mulatto, was an unusual member of the planter class. The native of South Carolina had real estate valued at \$2,000 and a personal estate worth \$12,000.

24. Manuscript census, Free Population, 22.

25. *Ibid.*, 26-27.

26. *Ibid.*, 21, 23, 25.

27. *Ibid.*, 23, 47. The two women were Martha Jackson, forty-one, and Elizabeth Henderson, twenty-eight.

28. *Ibid.*, 24, 38.

She owned ten slaves (five females and five males). Her land covered 400 acres, 160 of them improved, and she produced eighteen bales of cotton and 700 bushels of corn. She had a horse, three mules, six milk cows, four other head of cattle, and thirty hogs. Besides cotton, she raised Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, and produced butter, syrup, and meat.<sup>29</sup>

The law that forbade teaching blacks to read and write made axiomatic the exclusion of black teachers of either sex. Yet in the broad field of education women were more numerous than men. The common schools for whites were usually segregated by sex, and that of Mrs. L. E. Grant was typical. The term began October 1, and ended June 30. By various combinations of music, guitar, drawing and painting, waxwork, embroidery, and French the young women were charged \$25.00, \$30.00, or \$40.00. Each student also paid \$2.00 in incidental expenses. As Mrs. Grant explained, "This embraces Fuel and Servant's attention upon the School Room."<sup>30</sup>

After the Civil War many southern women— often they were widows— operated boarding houses and hotels. This was a relatively uncommon activity in the antebellum period. In 1860 Tallahassee had only one boarding house managed by a woman. Ever the faithful recorder, census taker Rhodes included three practitioners of the world's oldest profession. Each of the young women shared a common address and acknowledged that her business was "one of pleasure." They were sixteen, twenty, and twenty-eight respectively. The oldest and most solvent had \$1,500 worth of real estate and a personal estate of \$200.<sup>31</sup>

What gave the surface appearance of an uncomplicated agrarian society was in fact a highly complicated one. Shadings, nuances, a pecking order of privilege— all were part of the intricate mosaic formed from a bi-racial society in a time of both tension and prosperity. Given the expanding economy of Tallahassee and Leon County, the populace had much cause for optimism. At every hand there was evidence of improved roads and newly-laid rail connections, good crops and high prices, institutional and educational progress. Population, business, professional services— all were expanding. It was true that the

29. *Ibid.*, 26; Manuscript census, Slave Population, 34; Manuscript census, Agriculture, 5.

30. Tallahassee *Floridian and Journal*, June 30, 1860.

31. Manuscript census, Free Population, 13.

nation was being torn asunder by political divisions, but the people of Leon County and Tallahassee were more concerned with affairs at home and the daily demands of making a living. Yet it was unthinkable in 1860 that Abraham Lincoln and the Republican party could win control of the White House.

It was further true that the burden of slavery seemed heavier than ever. The peculiar institution was so deeply entrenched that to abandon it seemed impossible. The two races were dependent upon each other, as the curse of human bondage refused to relax its grip. For every free person in Leon County there were three who were slaves. Surely, though, the whites believed, it could all be worked out in the future. For the time being, the only world they knew was that of 1860.