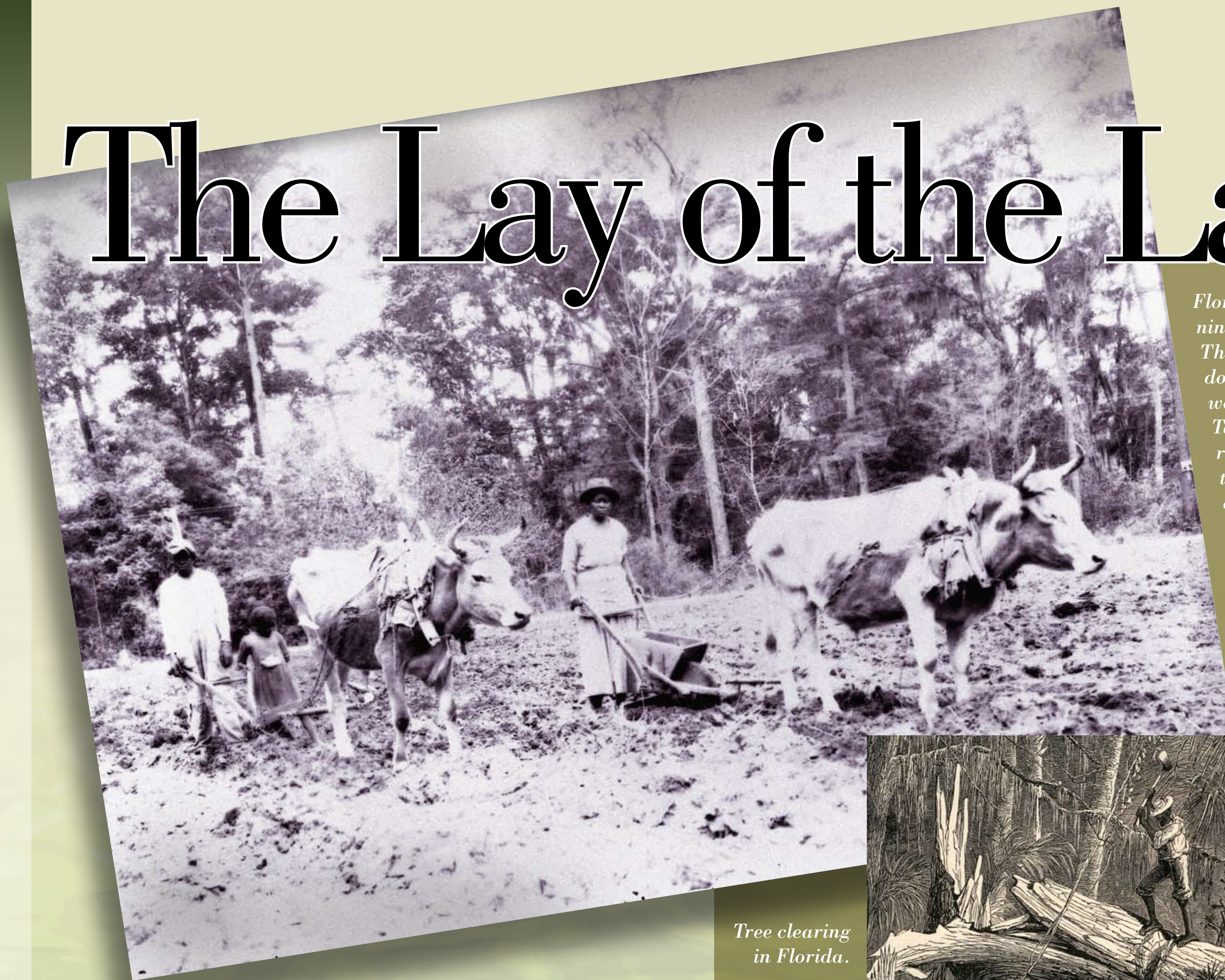


GREEN SPRINGS PARK

Some watercourses in Green Springs Park are former orange grove ditches. But below this overlook flows a *natural* creek draining both the ditches and receiving water from the area's springs. One named spring has vanished since hotel guests came exploring here in the 1840s. Yet the lay of the land is not so different from then: low and wet where the stream runs to Lake Monroe; higher and drier where visitors now enter the park. Much of the area is classed as hardwood hammock, and the trees here include live oak, magnolia, hickory, cedar, cabbage palm, and pine.

The Lay of the Land



Florida farming in the nineteenth century. Through their skilled, domestic, and field work, slaves kept Taylor's "plantation" running. According to one eyewitness, cultivating his lands meant contending with "stumps, roots, and rank growth of weeds."

Photo courtesy of the Florida Photographic Collection/State Archives.

Tree clearing in Florida.

Print from *Picturesque America*, 1871.



Even so, these lands are far from untouched. Enterprise founder Cornelius Taylor—once a U.S. timber agent—probably harvested his own live oaks for ship building in the 1840s. Taylor's African-American slaves cleared acres of stubborn ground, then tended their master's cotton, tobacco, and corn in growing conditions that seemed hopeless to some observers. Later owners used large areas of today's park for orange groves.

To one visitor in 1845, land use here seemed simple. Seeing no reason to settle in Enterprise, he turned instead to the *setting*. The location, the mineral spring, and the view from Cornelius Taylor's inn all pleased Whitfield Brooks. But the agricultural scene left him cold. "Take away the beautiful sheet of water in front of the house and the climate," he wrote, "and I would not give Major Taylor \$1 per acre for his land."