

# HISTORY OF ZEPHYRHILLS PART 1

(1886 – 2010)

Nov. 11, 1886. Simon J. Temple purchases 280.74 acres of land for \$1,026.69 from Florida Railway and Navigation Corp. [He named the area Abbott; it later became Zephyrhills.]

1888. Abbott is surveyed for Simon J. Temple, who owned much of the land.

Feb. 2, 1888. The Abbott post office is established. [The name was changed to Hegman in 1890 and back to Abbott in 1892. In 1910 the post office was either renamed Zephyrhills or discontinued and replaced with the Zephyrhills post office.]

Apr. 17, 1888. Abbott is platted and recorded in Plat Book Number 1 on page 5.

1892. An article in the Pasco County Democrat refers to John D. Austin of Hegman.

Aug. 3, 1899. The San Antonio Herald reports, "Mr. Tanner, a turpentine operator, with two colored assistants succeeded in arresting a colored fugitive, whom they located in Abbott. The prisoner, who is wanted for murder, was brought to Dade City and turned over to Sheriff Griffin for safekeeping until the sheriff of Hernando county could be notified and send for him."

Mar. 6, 1906. The Gainesville Daily Sun reports: "One of the most important transfers in real estate recorded in Florida in some time was the sale of 18,000 acres of timber land, together with forty 'crops,' or 400,000 boxes, and the complete naval stores outfit of W. B. Phifer, located at Abbott, Pasco county, a few days ago. It is understood that the consideration was \$90,000. A large acreage of the tract is virgin timber, and said to be among the finest for turpentine purposes in Pasco county."

Feb. 1909. Capt. Howard B. Jeffries, a Civil War veteran from Pennsylvania, searching for a site for a colony for Union Civil War veterans, selects the site of Abbott.

Aug. 6, 1909. The land for Zephyrhills is purchased for the Zephyrhills Colony by Capt. Jeffries, according to a 1928 newspaper article.

Sept. 26, 1909. The Tampa Morning Tribune reports, "The Stebbins Real Estate company, Tampa, has sold to New York Capitalists 35,000 acres of land in Hillsborough and Pasco counties for development."

Sept. 28, 1909. The Tampa Morning Tribune reports, "J. L. Greer left Abbott last night for Jacksonville to transact business. Mr. Greer is the lumberman who recently transferred 35,000 acres of land in Pasco and Hillsborough counties to eastern capitalists for colonization purposes."

Oct. 1, 1909. The Weekly True Democrat of Tallahassee reports, "A big colonization company has purchased 35,000 acres of land in the southern portion of Pasco County for colonization purposes. The settlement will be known as Zephyrhills, and it has already been arranged to settle 6,000 families thereon."

Oct. 15, 1909. A newspaper reports that the State Department of Delaware issued certificates of incorporation to the Zephyr Hills Colony Co., to develop industrial farming and manufacturing colonies in Florida. The incorporators are Ferdinand M. Jeffries, of Pleasantville, N. J.; Wallace Campbell, of Bayonne, N. J.; William L. B. G. Allen and G. G. Baker, of New York. The capital stock is \$500,000.

Nov. 9, 1909. An advertisement in the Tampa Morning Tribune has: "Mr. H. B. Jeffries of New York City, the Vice-President of the Zephyrhills Colony Company, is in the city [Tampa] and has opened up headquarters in Suite 219, American Bank Building, with the Stebbins Realty Co. He will be here only a short time, as he will soon move up to the Colony site, where he is now locating a town site."

Jan. 27, 1910. The Zephyrhills Colonist reports, "There are a few houses near the station at Abbott now. It will be but a few months until it will be a bustling town." It also reports, "Mr. Hennington's store on the Colony Town site is large and well stocked for the small community at present relying upon it for dry goods, groceries, hardware, etc., but by and by there will be need of enlargement and multiplication."

Feb. 9, 1910. The Tampa Morning Tribune reports, "A. E. Stebbins, of the Stebbins Realty Company, of this city, has returned from Abbott, where he went to assist the purchasers in the Zephyr Hills colony to select their lands and reports that all were greatly satisfied and pleased with their purchases. He declares that some of them were so well pleased that after being there a few days, they purchased additional tracts."

Feb. 11, 1910. The Tampa Morning Tribune reports: "DADE CITY, February 10—Meager details of a dual tragedy have just been received here in which William Stafford, a prominent farmer of that section, shot and killed Joseph and Mit (?) Hale. According to the reports received, Stafford had accused the young men of taking hogs that did not belong to them and which were his property. Meeting on the streets of Abbott this afternoon, the quarrel was renewed, and from the best information obtainable the Hale boys picked a quarrel with Stafford. The latter went off and procured a double barrel shot gun, with which he shot both men. The bodies of the two dead men were taken to Dade City tonight and a coroner's inquest will be held tomorrow. All of the principals are well known in this county."

May 31, 1910. The name of the Abbott post office is changed to Zephyrhills. [A newspaper from November 10, 1909, listing towns, shows Zephyrhills colony.]

July 2, 1910. The Tampa Morning Tribune reports, "Captain J. B. Jeffries, of the Zephyr Hills Colony near Dade City, was in Tampa yesterday. The genial Captain has just returned from a trip to New York made in the interests of the colony, and reports that the affairs of Zephyr Hill are in a most flourishing condition. They are now mailing the 120,000 edition of the 'Zephyr Hills Colonist,' recently put out by the presses of The Tribune Publishing Co."

July 20, 1910. The Tampa Morning Tribune reports, "Captain H. B. Jeffries, president of the colony, has engaged E. A. Nolan, of Tampa, to erect for him a house on the corner of Fifth avenue and Eighth street. The building will be two stories, with suitable porches."

Sept. 7, 1910. The Tampa Morning Tribune reports that the school house will soon be completed. (See a separate article on the Zephyrhills school.) it also reports:

Capt. H. B. Jeffries, president of the company, will soon move into his new house on Fifth avenue. It is receiving the finishing touches from the skilled hands of E. H. Goold and G. F. Hayden.

The Northern hotel has been completed and is receiving its share of the newcomers. The Colony House, while not yet completed, has been compelled to take a part of the arrivals as they cannot be permitted to lie out in the woods; although quite a number have put up tents and are living in them while their homes are being built.

The Hennington's have moved into their new store. It is a very fine building 50x80 feet, two stories high.

A. D. Penry has moved down from Dade City, has bought a lot, put up a building and has opened up a Racket Store. He is doing a good business.

W. A. Stebbins, who has made his home at Manatee, Fla., for the past 33 years, being one of the successful vegetable growers of that famous section, was a visitor at Zephyrhills last week. He came up to visit his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Stebbins, and his brother, J. F. Stebbins. He was delighted with the prospect and surprised to see such high hills in Florida. He asked his father to select him five acres on one of the highest hills and he would come up during the winter and clear it and set it to peach trees.