

MALACHI MARTIN HOUSE

also known as The Hermitage

Old Mt. Pleasant

Property was located on north side of U.S. 90 about ½ mile west of Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. The house was destroyed several years ago.

The Malachi Martin House is an unusual and unique example of an attempt to imitate the octagon mode of architecture, popularized in the mid-nineteenth century by Orson Fowler. Malachi Martin was a figure of some importance in state political affairs during the Reconstruction, providing a good example of the evolution of the career of “Carpetbagger.” He also played a prominent role in the initial phases of the evolution of Florida’s convict lease prison system. Martin, born in Ireland about 1823, emigrated to the United States in 1847. By 1852, he was in the business of retail dry goods in New York City. In 1863, he volunteered for service in the Union Army which eventually brought him to Gadsden County. The construction of Martin’s house began ca. 1870, and there on his plantation in Old Mt. Pleasant, he enjoyed moderate success with the cultivation of scuppernong grapes and the production of wine. At the time of his death in 1884, his body was returned to New York for burial. Malachi Martin was described in the journal of a contemporary physician, Dr. Charles Hentz, as having been a very large man weighing over 250 pounds. (National Register of Historic Places)