

## The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall



Second Annual Citrus Seminar: Agricultural Experiment Station East Entrance

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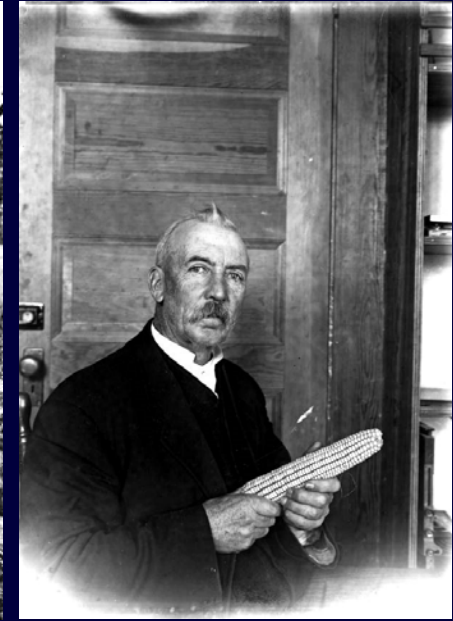


*Experiment Station Hall.  
Plant Introductions in foreground.*



- The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station moved to the University of Florida in **1905** when its host school, Florida Agricultural College in Lake City, was abolished.
- In **1910**, a new building opened on UF's Stadium Road as the home of the Experiment Station whose work had been carried out in Thomas Hall. The building's grounds were landscaped to provide hands-on research for students.

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Professor C.K. McQuarrie

- The primary precursor to the University of Florida was the Florida Agricultural College (FAC) established at Lake City in 1884 by Jordan Probst. Florida Agricultural College became the first land-grant college in the state.

On July 6, 1905, the state legislature selected Gainesville for a new university campus. Andrew Sledd from the Florida Agricultural College at Lake City became the first president. The Agricultural Experimentation Station (Newell Hall) became a central feature of the University. Providing students with valuable hands on experience in the field.

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Horticultural grounds south of Newell Hall showing rows of beans that were damaged two weeks into growth, due to frost.



Horticultural grounds south of Newell Hall as it looked in 1925

- In 1908, the Agricultural Experimentation Station grew velvet beans and cow peas on this sandy plot of ground. It was looking for better ways to fatten cattle.



## The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall



Velvet beans in field showing Newell Hall in the background.

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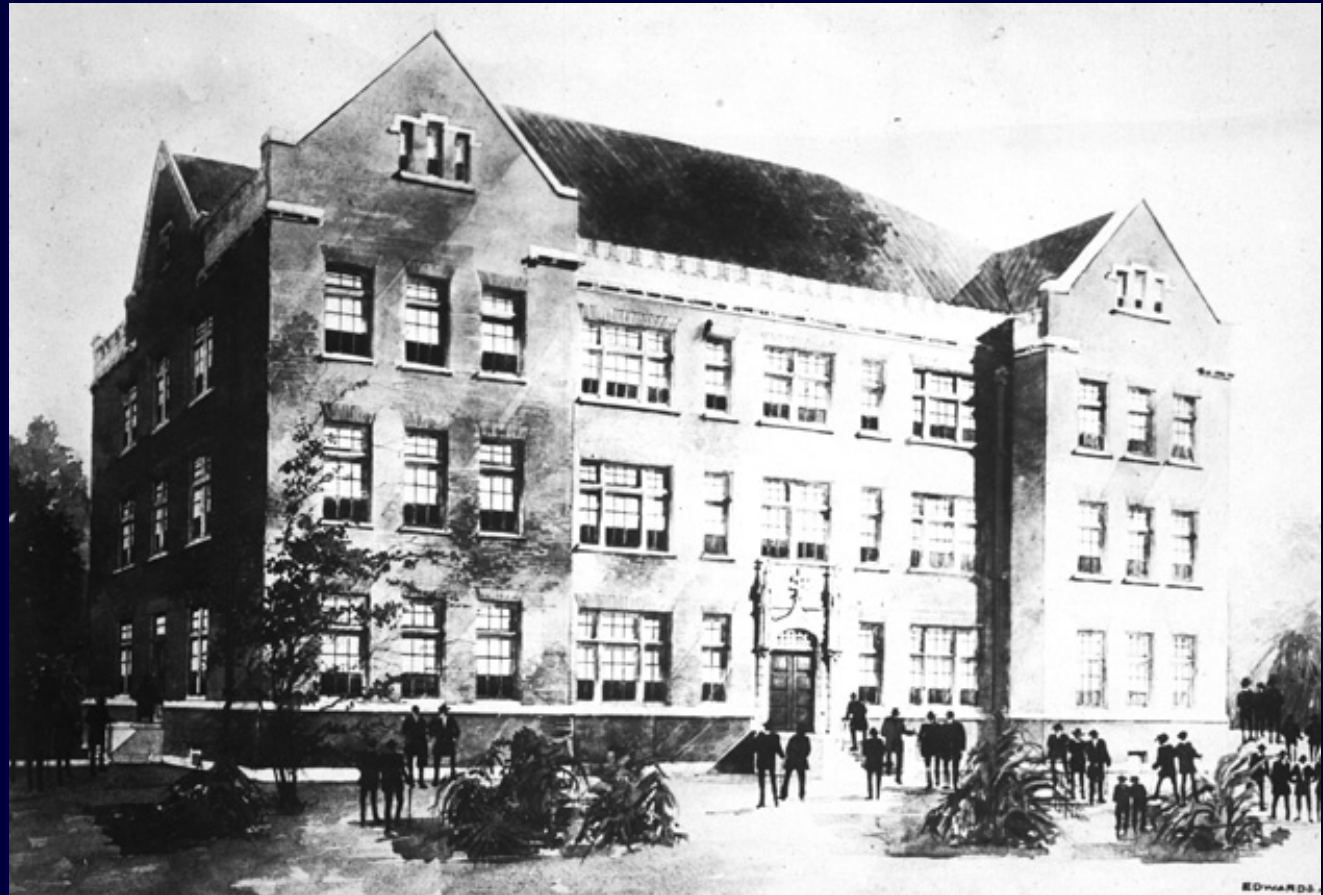
Early view (South Façade)

# The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall



Early view (North Facade)

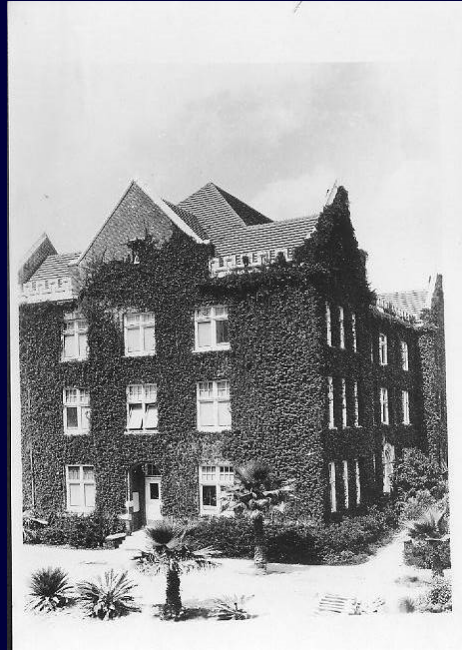
## The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall



Rendering done by Architect William Edwards prior to construction



# The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall



East façade views (circa 1930)

## The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall



Early view of Newell Hall during construction

- The Experiment Station building was designed in the Collegiate Gothic style by **William Edwards** and built by the J. J. Cain Company in 1910 .

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- In 1924, the Florida Legislature ruled that women of a "mature age" (at least 21 years old) who had completed 60 semester hours from a "reputable educational institution" would be allowed to enroll during regular semesters at UF in programs that were unavailable at Florida State College for Women.



- Before this, only the summer semester was coeducational, to accommodate teachers. Lassie Goodbread-Black from Lake City became the first woman to enroll at the University of Florida, at the College of Agriculture in 1925.

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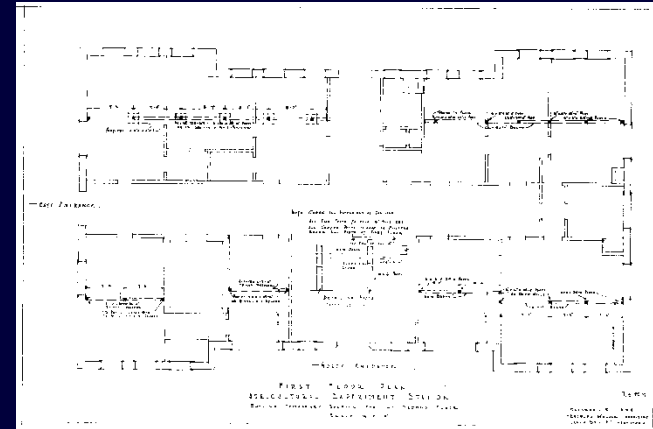
Experiment Station staff picture North Entrance

## The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall



Newly appointed Home Demonstration agents (North Entrance ~ 1925)

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- The Experimentation Station Building was closed on Tuesday September 18, 1934 due to recommendations made by Rudolph Weaver. The building was structurally unsafe; in fact it would be condemned and closed several times over a period of ten years before being renovated by Rudolph Weaver. The structural beams were the type generally used in residential applications and were too shallow to support the loads generated by heavy laboratory equipment and book stacks. By the end of October 1934 the building was reopened after extensive shoring. Beams and columns were added on the first floor to support load of up to 75 pounds on the second floor. The third floor could support loads of up to 40 pounds, which could accommodate most office use. However Weaver made recommendations concerning use; even recommending that office workers not stack books or papers on their desks. In fact Weaver inspected the building on a semi-monthly bases after the temporary shoring allowed the building to be reopened.

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Tigert stands at entrance to Newell Hall.

- It was also determined that the building posed a fire hazard. The one central stair did not provide an adequate means of egress. As a result iron ladders or fire escapes were added to both the east and west ends of the building.

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William Newell (Center)



- Newell was renovated under the direction of Rudolph Weaver and many of the historical features were removed. The original entrance, the grand double staircase and many other features were destroyed. During its reopening ceremony in 1944, it was named for noted entomologist Dr. William E. Newell, a director of the Station and provost for Agriculture.



# The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall



Reopening Ceremony in 1944

March 27, 1944

Dear Governor Holland:

I wired you this morning as follows:

THE DEDICATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION BUILDING WILL TAKE PLACE ON THE AFTERNOON OF FRIDAY MAY 12 AT 3:30. PLEASE FIX DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR. WILL WRITE YOU REGARDING DETAILS. WE ARE HAPPY THAT YOU CAN BE WITH US. BEST WISHES.

We have invited Mr. Nathan Mayo, Commissioner of Agriculture; Dr. James T. Jardine, Director of the Office of Experiment Stations, Department of Agriculture in Washington; and Mr. Thomas W. Bryant, Chairman of the University Committee of the State Board of Control to be speakers on our program.

In accordance with the wishes of the Board of Education and the Board of Control, the dedication will be in honor of the late Dr. Wilmon Newell.

We hope that Mrs. Holland will be able to accompany you, and you may, of course, feel free to bring other persons of your choice. If you desire to have us send invitations to anyone, either in the State or out of the State, please let us know and we will be glad to do so.

We are very grateful for your having made it possible for us to have this new building and appreciate your coming to help us dedicate it. If you have any suggestions to make, we will be glad to have them. We hope to have some kind of tablet ready to unveil.

I look forward with a great deal of anticipation to seeing you at this occasion.

With kindest regards,

Cordially yours,

President

Honorable Spessard L. Holland,  
Governor of the State of Florida,  
Tallahassee, Florida

# The Florida Agricultural Experiment Station: Newell Hall

January 22, 1942

MEMORANDUM

TO: Director Rudolph Weaver

Attention: Mr. Guy Fulton

This is to advise that I have given approval to the detailed plans for the rehabilitation of the Agricultural Experiment Station which were submitted to my office and you may go ahead on this basis.

Cordially yours,

President

cc: Provost Wilson Newell

February 23, 1943

Dear Governor Holland:

You have manifested great interest in the Agricultural Experiment Station building, and I am sending you herewith a copy of report which I have received from Mr. Fulton, who is supervising the construction, regarding those things which we are able to secure and the approximate costs. These will run to about \$10,000 over our appropriation of \$90,000. Our estimate was made some years ago before the war came on. Furthermore, it became necessary for us to contract for certain things that we had intended to do with our maintenance department. The contract involved labor costs that were much higher than we could have anticipated. However, we expect to take care of these additional costs out of incidental funds. Mr. Henry has agreed to make available some of the incidental funds of the Station for this purpose.

When the war is over, additional materials will be available, and the building can be finished very completely, including certain improvements which did not exist in the old building, for approximately another \$10,000. I am hopeful that the building can be put into condition for dedication before you leave office, without calling upon the State for additional funds.

With kindest regards,

Cordially yours,

President

Honorable Spessard L. Holland  
Executive Department  
Tallahassee, Florida

encl.

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