

**HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS AND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF
ORTON AND KENDAL PLANTATIONS,
BRUNSWICK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**



Chicora Research Contribution 546

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF ORTON AND KENDAL PLANTATIONS, BRUNSWICK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The 2010 purchase of Orton and Kendal plantations by Louis Moore Bacon under the name of Orton Plantation Holding, LLC brought many changes. While previously Orton had been managed as public gardens, the property would in the future be a private residence. The management of the property would focus on environmental stewardship. The long leaf pine forests, previously converted to more quickly growing pines were thinned and long leaf pines were re-established. The rice fields, previously converted to wildlife management ponds, were repaired in anticipation of once again growing rice.

These changes in the management of the Orton and Kendal plantations had the potential to cause significant – and irreversible – impact to the cultural resources of the property.

Fortunately, the management firm for Orton Plantation Holding, Belvedere Property Management, recognized the extraordinary archaeological and archaeological potential of the property. Chicora Foundation was asked to become involved in documenting the archaeology, history, and oral history of the property. This report provides a synopsis of that effort.

A significant amount of time and effort was devoted to unraveling the unique history of Orton and Kendal. While much remains to be done, this study provides perhaps the first professional investigation of available sources, distinguishing legend from fact and providing a carefully documented title search. Maps, charts, and arials are combined to provide critical details concerning the land use history of Orton and Kendal. Primary historical documents have been researched, not only to better understand events on the plantations, but also to document the African Americans who made Orton and Kendal the extraordinary plantations they were during the colonial, antebellum, and postbellum periods.

Some historical mysteries have been at least partially unraveled. Others have been framed and await additional historic research. In an effort to give both a voice and face to the African Americans who created the houses, built the rice fields, harvested the navel stores, and labored in the modern gardens, we have created an appendix listing as many of their names as possible.

The historical documents also provided a foundation for an archaeological reconnaissance of the core areas of the plantations, focusing on the main settlements, slave settlements, and postbellum laborer occupations. A total of 27 archaeological sites were identified during this work, including the main settlements, two burial grounds, and a great many settlements associated with the African Americans who lived and worked on the two plantations.

Most of these archaeological sites are recommended potentially significant and we recommend that they either be preserved or that they receive additional archaeological investigations to ensure that the story of Orton and Kendal not be lost.

Belvedere Property Management has already conducted underwater archaeological investigations along the Cape Fear frontage of Orton. Our historical research suggests that additional investigations are warranted along Kendal, although it is especially critical that investigations be conducted in the water canals that may be affected by proposed rice field improvements. Original dikes, trunks, and other water control features should be carefully documented.

It is especially important as the National Register boundaries of Orton are expanded and as National Historic Landmark status is sought, that the archaeological resources that give Orton its significance not be overlooked or damaged by other activities on the property.

Orton also includes standing architecture – beyond the main house - that requires very careful documentation. We provide provisional comments concerning the one extant laborer's house on the property, as well as providing comparisons to other structures since lost.

Orton and Kendal plantations represent unique historical and archaeological resources not only in Brunswick County, but also in North Carolina. The remains that are beginning to be documented deserve very careful management and preservation for future generations.

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Introduction

Orton and Kendal Plantations are situated on the west bank of the Cape Fear River in Brunswick County, about 12 miles south of Wilmington by water and nearly 18 miles by way of US 17 and River Road SE (NC 133). The property today is in excess of 7,500 acres, although the core of the property consists of the nearly 400 acres surrounding the Orton House. The largest community near Orton and Kendal is Southport, about 13 miles to the south.

Brunswick County is located in extreme southeastern North Carolina. Consisting of a combination of rural and coastal communities, Brunswick is wedged between the rapidly

developing metropolitan areas of Wilmington, North Carolina to the north and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to the south.

The pressures of these large metropolitan areas can be seen by the steady population growth of the county, from 73,000 in 2000 to 107,000 in 2010. It's estimated that the peak seasonal population is 2.6 times the total year-round population (Holland Consulting Planners 2006:17). Nevertheless, nearly two-thirds of the residents live in rural areas of the county. Over 85% of the population in 2010 was identified as white, with the majority of the remainder representing African Americans. Less than 1% of

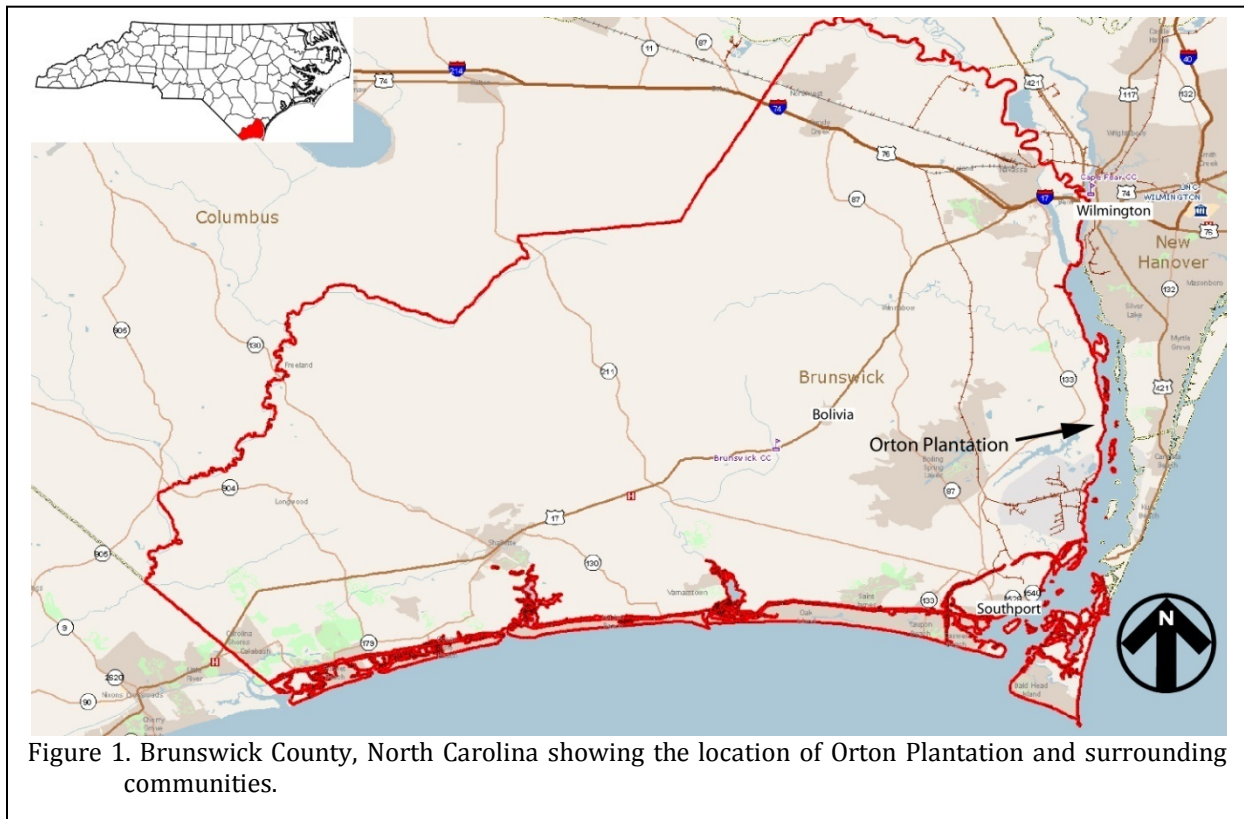


Figure 1. Brunswick County, North Carolina showing the location of Orton Plantation and surrounding communities.



Figure 2. The main house at Orton Plantation during the initial visit in February 2012.

principal shareholder of the owner's parent company, Louis Bacon, is a direct lineal descendant of Roger Moore, one of the earliest settlers in Brunswick and the founder of Orton Plantation.

During this visit on February 9 and 10 not only were the plantation cemetery and an associated African American burial ground examined, but we had the opportunity visit several other historic sites on the property, including the

the population classifies itself as Native American.

ruins of the main settlement at Kendal Plantation and several of the standing buildings on Orton Plantation.

Although construction was the largest employer in Brunswick in 2000, the retail trade is now the largest employer, followed by accommodations and food services – additional indicators of the growing pressure of nearby metropolitan communities.

Over the following several weeks we developed a proposal that would examine the

The Project

In early February 2012 we were contacted by Mr. Nick Dawson with Belvedere Property Management, LLC with the request to visit Orton Plantation and examine several cemeteries on the property. Belvedere Property Management is the firm that oversees the property for its owner, Orton Plantation Holdings, LLC. The



Figure 3. Examination of the African American burial ground during the February 2012 visit.

archaeological resources on the property, conducting a reconnaissance level survey and recording significant sites. This would be combined with the development of historical research specific to archaeological topics, including a detailed chain of title, research of the various owners, examination of available plats and photographs, and the collection of at least a limited oral history from the area's African Americans who worked on the property. This proposal was submitted on February 21 and approved shortly thereafter on March 3.

The on-site investigations by the authors took place April 16 through 27, 2012. Historical research took place intermittently before the field investigations, although extensive research was conducted from May 12 through 17. A second visit to Orton for the purpose of speaking to several oral informants occurred on May 23.

A component of this work was additional documentation of the plantation's two cemeteries. At both, GEL Geophysics was retained to conduct a ground penetrating radar study to determine if unmarked burials were present, as well as the boundaries. Chicora recorded the graves at both cemeteries, transcribing the stones, and compiling a photographic record. At the African American burial ground several stones were reset to permit inscriptions to be read and to prevent damage to the markers.

This report documents the various archaeological and historical work conducted by Chicora at Orton and Kendal plantations.

The Natural Setting

Physiography and Drainage

Brunswick County is in the Inner Coastal Plain and ranges in elevation from sea level to 75 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). At higher elevations, the land is dissected to form gently rolling hills and valleys. In the vicinity of Orton Plantation elevations range from about 5 to 20 feet AMSL. A nearly identical range is found on adjacent Kendal Plantation.

This physiographic province consists of stair-step-like planer terraces that dip gently toward the ocean. In Brunswick County these consists of the Wicomico, Talbot, and Pamlico terraces. The Wicomico surface covers about one-third of the County and ranges from 75 to 45 feet AMSL. The Talbot surface, with elevations of 45 to 25 feet AMSL, covers more than half of the County. The Pamlico surface covers a narrow strip of mainland near the ocean and Cape Fear River, as well as the floodplain of the Waccamaw River, and ranges from 25 feet AMSL to sea level.

Most of the County is nearly level with short slopes along the main drainageways. The main streams are wide and shallow, and those near the ocean are affected by tides. A short distance inland, the streams become narrow with broad interstream areas.

The tidal range at Fort Caswell, situated at the mouth of the Cape Fear and essentially representing oceanic tides, is about 6.7 feet. The measured salinity of the water at this location is 24ppt. Open ocean salinity is generally in the range from 32 to 37ppt. About 16 miles upriver, at the mouth of Town Creek, the tidal range is about 6.2 feet and the salinity drops to an average of about 15ppt, with a low of 6ppt and a high of 27ppt – falling into what would be considered brackish water. As one moves up the creek the tidal range decreases and salinities drop to an average of 10ppt (Hackney 2007).

The Green Swamp is a roughly circular area of about 175,000 acres in the north central part of the County. The east side is drained by the Cape Fear River, the west side by the Waccamaw River, and the south side drains to the Atlantic Ocean. It has the widest undissected interstream area in the County and the largest area of muck soils. This very poorly drained interstream area has an accumulated organic surface layer of variable thickness. The accumulations are thickest where they have filled in the Carolina bays and in drainageways. The accumulated organic matter blankets the landscape and has obliterated the landscape features outlining Carolina bays and the upper part of many drainageways.

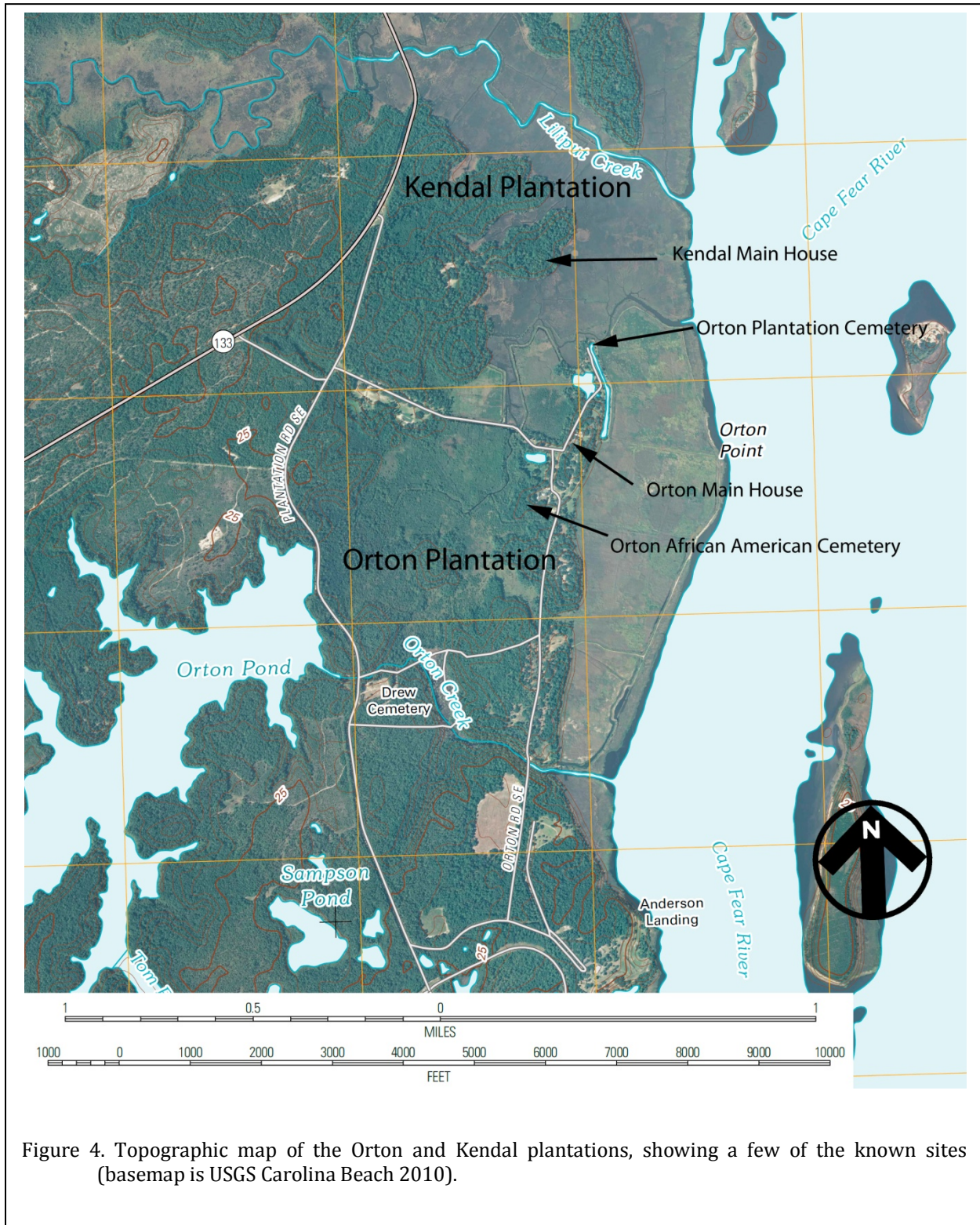


Figure 4. Topographic map of the Orton and Kendal plantations, showing a few of the known sites (basemap is USGS Carolina Beach 2010).

The Cape Fear River drainage, on the east side of the county, includes numerous irregularly-shaped ponds and lakes created by sinkholes or the dissolution and removal of underlying limestone that results in ground collapse or subsidence. In most areas of Brunswick County, the limestone bedrock is not directly exposed at the surface, but is covered by a variable thickness of sand, silt, and clay. This overburden may bridge subsurface cavities for long periods of time. Eventually a catastrophic collapse of the overburden into the subsurface cavity may occur, and a sinkhole is formed.

Some sinkholes may fill with water forming ponds or lakes, such as around the town of Boiling Springs Lake and Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal. These features are distinct from the elliptical Carolina Bays which are much larger than sinkholes, and have an oval shape pointing in a northwest to southeast direction.

Soils

All of the soils in Brunswick County are formed by coastal plain sediment or by sediment deposited by streams flowing through the County. Orton and Kendal plantations are found on the Baymeade-Blanton-Norfolk Soil Association. These consist of nearly level to gently sloping, well drained and moderately well drained soils that have a loamy subsoil on the uplands. While many such areas in the county have been under agriculture, the soils tend to leach nutrients and are susceptible to wind damage. The area's rice fields consist of the Bohicket-Newhan-Lafitte Soil Association. These are nearly level, very poorly drained soils having a clayey subsoil or that are mucky throughout. They are typical of tidal flats.

As the soil survey map (Figure 5) reveals, most of the plantation upland soils are Blanton fine sands, 0-5% slopes. These are moderately well drained soils formed on slightly convex divides near drainages. The typical soil profile consists of an A horizon of gray (10YR 5/1) fine sand about 0.4 foot in depth. It overlies an E horizon about 0.75 foot in depth of light gray (10YR 5/4) fine sand. This in turn sits on an E/Bh horizon to a depth of about 2.3 feet below grade.

This consists of a yellowish-brown (10YR 5/4) fine sand. Below this is the E' horizon to a depth of 4 feet that consists of a light yellowish brown (2.5YR 6/4) fine sand.

The Blanton soils tend to be acidic and have no risk of seasonal flooding. The seasonal high water table may be 5-6 feet below the surface (Barnhill 1986:117).

The rice fields around the plantations are identified as Yaupon silty clay loams with 0-3% slopes. These are somewhat poorly drained to moderately well drained clayey soils found near the edges of the mainland and the Cape Fear River. Typically the surface layer is a dark gray silty clay loam about 0.6 foot in depth overlying a dark gray silty clay grading into a dark greenish gray silty clay. Surface runoff is slow; permeability is slow to very slow. The soil is strongly acidic and the high water table is about 2-4 feet below the surface year round.

Narrow drainages and sloping areas overlooking these rice fields are identified as Baymeade and Marvyn soils with 6-12% slopes. Surface layers range from black to grayish brown, while subsurface soils range from light gray to yellowish brown fine sands. Flooding is uncommon and the seasonal high water tables range from 4 to deeper than 6 feet below the surface. These soils may be found in native woodlands, although because of the steep slopes they are rarely cultivated.

Another common soil in the Orton and Kendal area is the Bohicket silty clay loam found on tidal flats just above sea level. Typically, the surface layer is a dark gray silty clay loam about 1.2 feet in depth. Below this is a dark silty clay. Soils tend to be alkaline, both runoff and permeability are slow. The soils have daily tidal flooding to depths of about 3 feet.

Other soils in the region tend to be uncommon. Newhan soils comprise the dredge spoil piles deposited on old rice fields at the edge of the Cape Fear. Dorovan muck is poorly drained soil found on low floodplains of freshwater streams. Kureb fine sands are excessively drained

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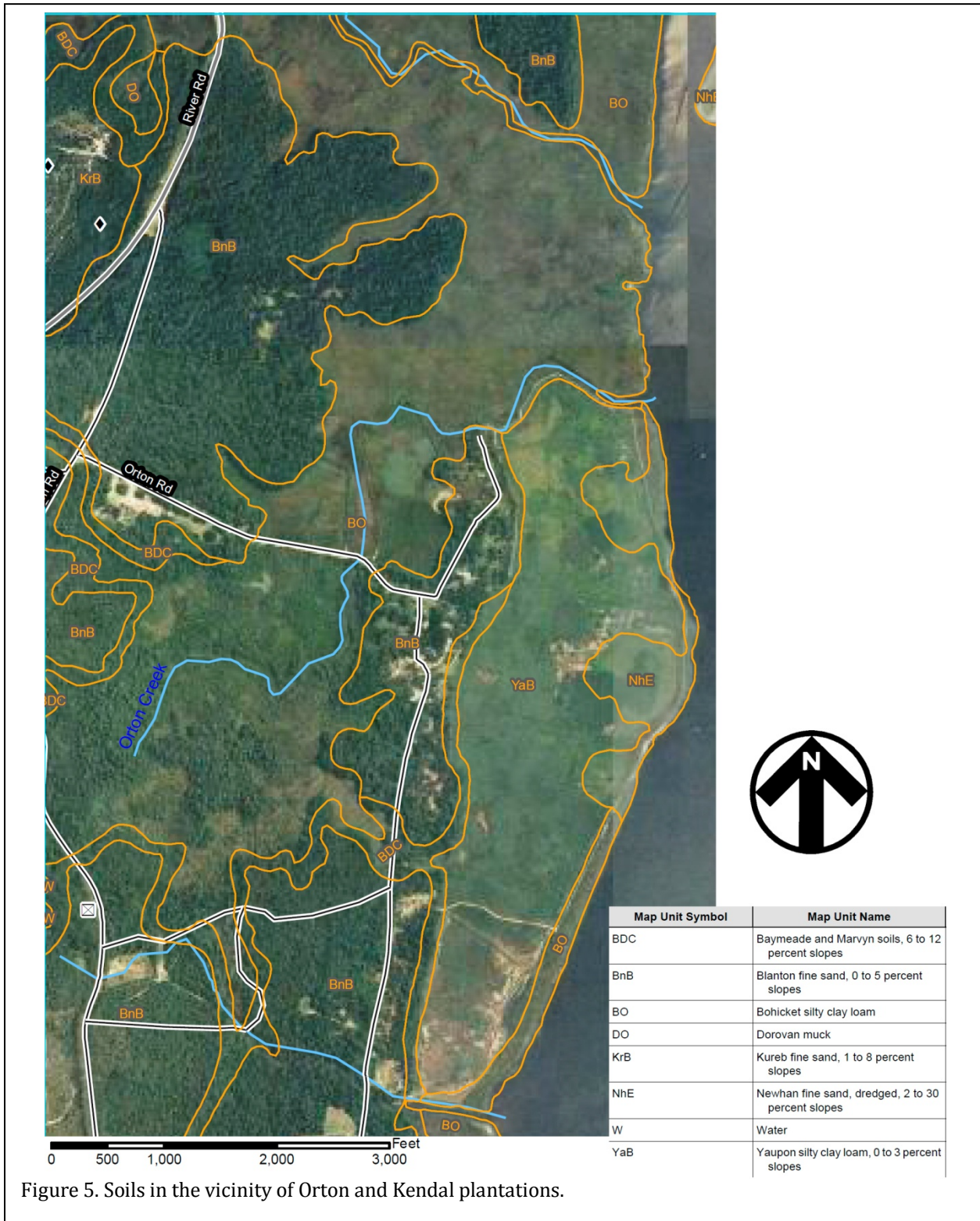


Figure 5. Soils in the vicinity of Orton and Kendal plantations.

soils found in undulating areas, often associated with Blanton or Wando soils.

Climate

Brunswick County is hot and humid in the summer, although the coastal area is moderated by ocean breezes, typically from the south-southwest. In the winter the area is cool and damp with occasional very cold spells.

In the summer the average temperature is 78°F and the average high is 86°F. The average winter temperature is 47°F and the average daily minimum is 37°F. The average relative humidity is about 60%, although the dawn average is about 85%.

Average rainfall is about 55 inches, falling throughout the year. Thunderstorms occur about 45 days a year, mostly in the summer. About 32 inches, or 60%, usually falls during the growing season of April through September. The area has a growing season of 265 days. This, combined with the rainfall levels, creates a climate that is supportive of a range of Southeastern crops. For example, rice requires about 25 inches of rain and a growing season of about 180 days. Corn requires about 22 inches of rainfall and 150 days of frost-free weather.

The region's climate with its moderate winters and hot, humid summers influenced not only crops, but also the health and politics of the inhabitants. The Brunswick summers likely caused the Barbadian and Carolina immigrants to feel that they had resettled in the tropics, perhaps reinforcing the view that slavery was inevitable (Donnan 1928).

Early reports, such as Robert Horne's *A Brief Description*

of the Province of Carolina, reported the Cape Fear climate to be better than that of Virginia since Cape Fear was "freed from the inconstancy of the Weather, which is a great cause of the unhealthfulness" found to the north. The climate was described as "most temperate" with the summer "not too hot, and the Winter is very short and moderate, best agreeing with English Constitutions" (Horne 1666).

Later accounts question this rosy view. In 1763 Anglican missionary John MacDowell complained, "this is a dismal climate & when one get sickly here, I have hardly ever known an instance of his recovering" (quoted in Wood 2004:90). Janet Schaw described the residents

Table 1.
Significant Brunswick County Hurricanes
(Barnes 1995, Ludlum 1963)

Date	Damage
June 13-16, 1586	4-day storm brought to an end Drake's Roanoke Hundred settlement
September 15, 1752	Destroyed much of Johnston in Onslow County, including the court house.
September 6, 1769	Extensive damage to Brunswick, New Bern, and Edenton; storm tide of 20 feet reported.
August 22-23, 1806	Great damage at Smithville; tides of over 20 feet.
September 3-4, 1815	Streets in New Bern under 6 feet of water; many structures destroyed. Damaged extended inland to Fayetteville and Raleigh.
June 3-4, 1825	New Bern flooded; 20 ships driven ashore at Ocracoke Island and 27 driven ashore near Washington.
August 24-25, 1827	Tidal surge of 10 feet in many areas, 12 feet in Washington. Much destruction in Edenton and Wilmington.
August 19, 1837	Wind and flood damage while rice was in blossom; tides 6 feet above normal.
September 17, 1876	Minimal hurricane causing damage to Smithville, Brunswick, and Wilmington; trees down and bridges lost.
September 9, 1881	Severe hurricane made landfall at Smithville; property damage in the Wilmington area estimated at \$100,000.
September 11, 1883	Sustained winds of 93mph at Smithville; severe crop damage and 53 known deaths.
August 25, 1885	Smithville suffered winds of 98+mph; damage at Smithville estimated to be \$100,000.
October 30-31, 1899	Intense damage to Southport, Wilmington, and Wrightsville Beach; tides 5 feet above normal in Southport with damage to houses.
August 1, 1944	Cat. 1 landfall at Southport; trees and power lines downed.
October 15, 1954	Hurricane Hazel, Cat. 3/4 storm with flood tides of 18 feet and winds of up to 150mph.

with “short waists and long limbs, sallow complexions and languid eyes” (Andrews and Andrews 1921:153).

Wood conducted an analysis of demographic disruption by examining extant wills of Brunswick and New Hanover counties before 1776. He found a strong similarity to the conditions known to prevail in Colonial South Carolina. He found, “only slightly more than one-half of the testators had a spouse, almost two-thirds were childless, and almost one-quarter lacked a male child to serve as a traditional patrilineal heir” (Wood 2004:93).

No discussion of the region’s climate is complete without at least a brief mention of the tropical storms, or hurricanes, that periodically buffet the coast. These storms occur in the late summer and early fall, the period critical to antebellum cotton and rice growers. The storms, however, are capricious in occurrence and those along the coast lived in fear of the next storm.

One of the most severe of the early storms was the September 1769 hurricane that swept through the area from Smithville (today Southport) northward to New Bern:

The fury of its influence was so violent as throw down thousands and I believe from report hundreds of thousands of the most vigorous trees in the country, tearing some up by the roots, others snapping short in the middle. Many houses blown down with the Court House of Brunswick County. All the Indian corn and rice leveled to the ground and the fences blown down, add to this upwards of twenty saw mill dams carried away with many of the timber works of the mills, and lastly

scarce a ship in the river that was not drove from her anchor and many received damaged. . . . In short, my Lord, the inhabitants never knew so violent a storm (letter from Governor Tryon to Lord Hillsborough, September 15, 1769, quoted in Lundlum 1963:49).



Figure 6. Damage from Hurricane Hazel on Carolina Beach (photo courtesy NC State Archives).

Hurricanes on the North Carolina coast today are measured against the damage of Hurricane Hazel in 1954. After the storm, the Weather Bureau issued a report:

All traces of civilization on that portion of the immediate waterfront between the state line and Cape Fear were practically annihilated. Grass covered dunes some 10 to 20 feet high along and behind which beach homes had been built in a continuous line 5 miles long simply disappeared, dunes, houses, and all (quoted in Barnes 1995:90)

Wilmington fared better than the beaches, although there was much flooding of waterfront warehouses and the city was without power for

three days (Barnes 1995:94).

Vegetation

Just as early explorers such as Horne described the Cape Fear as healthful, the area's vegetation was generally viewed as both bountiful and fruitful. While Horne didn't elaborate on the native plants, he reported that the soils and climate allowed virtually any plant to "thrive very well" while the marsh meadows provided "excellent food for Cattle, and will bear any Grain being prepared."

Küchler (1964) identified the potential natural vegetation of the Brunswick County area

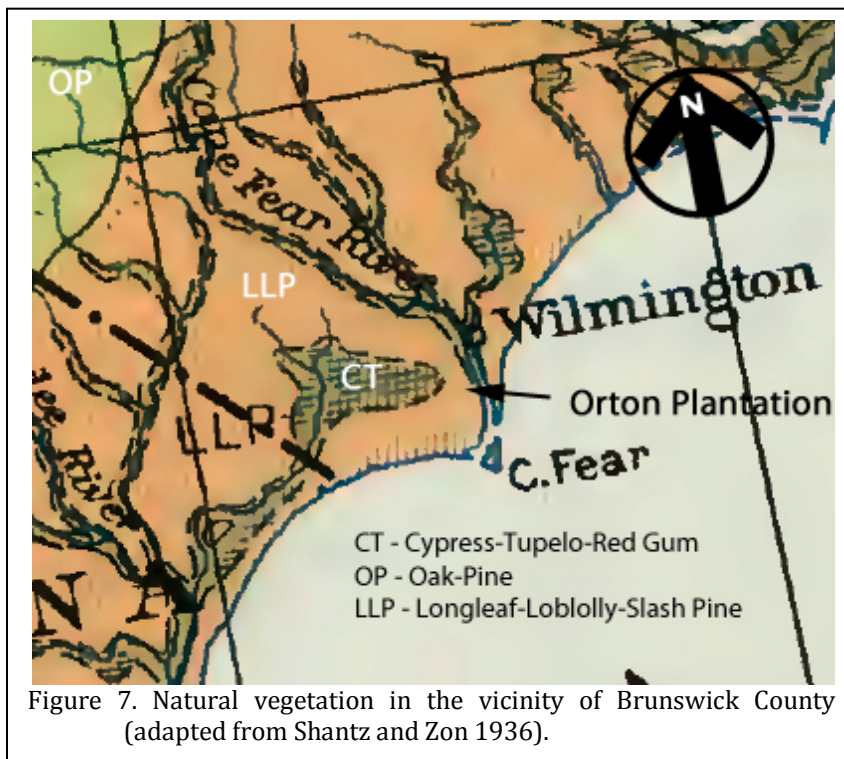
forest of broadleaf deciduous and needleleaf evergreen trees. The Pocosin areas were low, open forests of needleleaf evergreen trees (mostly pond pine) and broadleaf evergreen low trees (primarily gall berry).

Shantz and Zon (1936) identified the plantation area along the Cape Fear as having a natural vegetation of Longleaf-Loblolly-Slash Pines. While incorporating 10 different pine species, the most common was the longleaf pine. They commented that the forest not only provided the bulk of America's timber production, but also was the source of naval stores. They also commented that the sandy soil and rapid evaporation gave the forests an "open parklike character" with the ground covered by coarse grasses or low shrubs (Shantz and Zon 1936:14).

To the west and along the Cape Fear in a few locations were Cypress-Tupelo-Red Gum or Riverbottom Forests. Also present in these areas were yellow and overcup oaks. Three situations were noted: glades, ridges, and back sloughs. The back sloughs remain under water for most of the growing season and are dominated by cypress and tupelo gum. The glades are bottoms subject to occasional overflow, but are not consistently under water. There forests of cypress, tupelo, water ash, cottonwood, and bays will be found. With poorer drainage the tupelo is replaced by pond pine or black gum. The glades

are often irregularly divided by low ridges, which comprise the third situation. These low elevations support forests of red gum, ash, red maple, and honey locust.

These discussions do not adequately focus on the role, or importance, of longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris* Mill.). At the time of European settlement it has been estimated that longleaf pine



as his Southern Mixed Forest, although in close proximity were larger areas of Oak-Hickory Pine Forest and Pocosin.

The Southern Mixed Forest, described as a tall forest of broadleaf deciduous, evergreen, and needleleaf evergreen trees, is dominated by beech, sweet gum, southern magnolia, slash pine, loblolly pine, white oak, and laurel oak. The adjacent Oak-Hickory-Pine Forest is a medium tall to tall

was dominant on over 741 million acres and was found on another 17 million acres of mixed stands (Van Lear et al. 2005:150). Croker (1987:3) is more conservative, suggesting that the longleaf pine was dominant on about 60 million acres. Regardless, the forest provided abundant resources for Native Americans, whose occupation

climax forest since it was beneficial to their needs, including hunting and grazing. Even the early production of naval stores did little to change the forest ecology since heartwood was gathered off the forest floor and stacked in pits where it was covered with sand and slowly burned. This firing boiled out the tar, which was collected in barrels. It could also be further processed to produce pitch (Croker 1987:7).

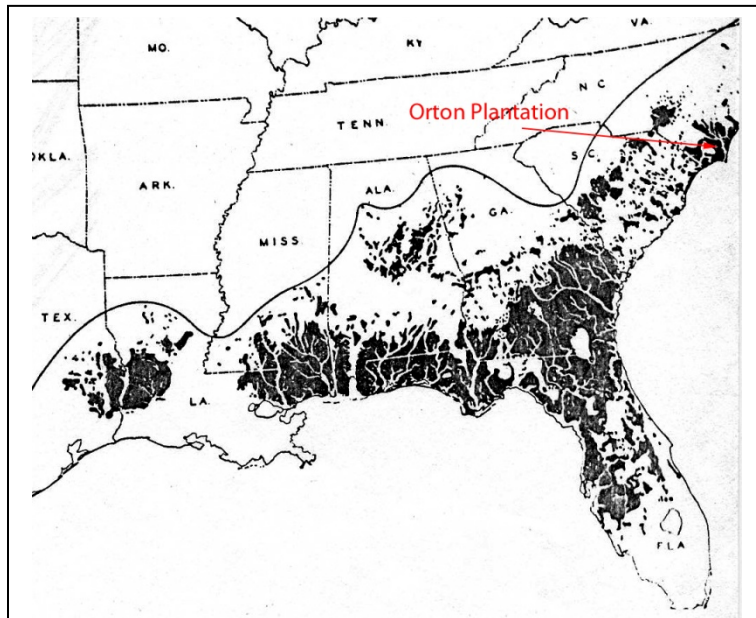


Figure 8. Longleaf pine in the southern United States. The line shows the extent, the dark areas show major stands at the arrival of the Europeans (adapted from Wahlenberg 1946).

After the American Revolution, naval stores began to be gathered by securing gum by tapping living trees. A cavity, called a box, was cut in the base of the tree about 10 inches above the ground in order to collect gum. In early spring, the bark was removed and two V-shaped cuts were made into the wood. Gum would ooze out and collect in the box. Additional cuts were made weekly to keep the gum flowing. When the box was full, a crew would collect the oleoresin. At the end of the season, in the fall, the gum would crystallize on the face of the tree. This, too, was collected, although it was far less valuable than the gum (Croker 1987:9).

did not materially change the forest or its ecology. In fact, their frequent burning of the woods improved hunting and promoted species such as the deer and quail.

The nineteenth century brought loggers into the forests and many acres were cut, but the worst damage was to occur in the late nineteenth century with the introduction of the railroad into the virgin forest. Often turpentiners worked the trees before they were cut. By the end of the nineteenth century Charles H. Herty and W.W. Ashe developed a system using shallow chipping with a cup and gutter. This reduced waste and damage to the trees.

The longleaf pine forest was a “fire climax” type, meaning that it was maintained by regular fires of low-to-moderate intensity and severity. Because the interval between fires was in the range of 1-3 years, fuels did not accumulate to levels that would result in damage to the dominant species. These fires were necessary to prevent the longleaf pine and its associated herbaceous understory from being replaced by other vegetation (Croker 1987:3; Van Lear et al. 2005: 152).

Little thought was given to regeneration of longleaf pine. Most viewed the forest as a non-renewable resource to be mined like iron ore. Local tax policies encouraged loggers to “cut and get out.” By the 1930s the vast longleaf forests of the Southeast were depleted and loggers moved west to log the virgin stands of Douglas fir, ponderosa pine, and redwood (Croker 1987:13).

Initially Europeans maintained the fire

While annual burning continued, it was



Figure 9. Scars of turpentine production on longleaf pines. On the far left are marks of at least two different episodes of V-shaped cuts to channel gum to a cup. The middle and far right photos show two trees boxed trees with cuts to collect the rosin (photos courtesy of the Cultural Landscape Foundation).

more intense after the lands were cut over because of the heavier fuel loads from logging slash (Van Lear et al. 2005:153).

By the early twentieth century forest policy makers began to implement a policy of fire exclusion (Croker 1987:17, Van Lear et al. 2005:154-155). Many foresters adopted this practice, seeking to prevent any fire at all in

forested areas. While prescribed burns were occasionally conducted, they were done on only a very small portion of forest acreage and many saw little difference between a forest fire and a proscribed burn – all fire was viewed as bad (Croker 1987:17).

While there were regeneration efforts during the Depression with the CCC replanting longleaf pine seedlings, there was almost no natural regeneration. Small seedlings are easily killed by fire and feral hogs destroyed the few that survived (Van Lear et al. 2005:153).

The forest that developed was vastly different from the original longleaf pine lands. Croker notes:

Often the stands were poorly stocked and sometimes nothing but scattered “mule tail” pines overlooking a wilderness of grass and stumps. . . . hardwoods, other pine species, and razorback hogs



Figure 10. Late nineteenth century turpentine production. On the left a worker is dipping gum from a boxed longleaf pine. On the right gum is being chipped from a tree (courtesy Florida Department of State, PR12636).



Figure 11. Typical longleaf stand showing grass understory.

prevented regeneration of longleaf pine on millions of acres (Croker 1987:18).

While research was conducted to help regenerate longleaf pine forests, owners were prejudiced against the efforts and instead removed longleaf pine, planting the forests in slash and loblolly pines (Croker 1987:26). In the decade between 1955 and 1965, the longleaf pine forest was reduced from 13 to 7 million acres and it was predicted that the species might disappear from southern forests by the early 1970s. Fortunately, extensive Forest Service research, including at the Croatan District on the North Carolina coast, began to turn the tide against the removal of longleaf pines (Croker 1987:32). A reliable natural regeneration system has been developed (Croker 1987:33) and it is better understood how many species rely on longleaf

pine for their survival (Van Lear et al. 2005:155-157).

Today, Brunswick County vegetation consist of a patchwork of various ecosystems mixed with agricultural fields and urban development.

On upland areas are remnant longleaf pine savannahs, mixed pine and hardwood forests (consisting of loblolly pine, sweetgum, maple, hickory, white oak, water oak, and willow oak), pine flatwoods (with uneven-aged loblolly pines in the overstory and deciduous plants in understory), pine plantations, and pine scrub (longleaf pine, turkey oak, and wiregrass).

Lowland areas consists of floodplain forests (cypress, black gum, green ash, water oak, willow oak, and hackberry), pocosins (peat soils dominated by evergreen shrubs, pond pine, and wax myrtle), and Carolina Bays where vegetation may range from that found in pocosins to various bays.

Also present are Maritime Forests, wetlands, and stream edge areas with distinct vegetation systems. Wetland areas ranging from sea grass meadows to coastal salt marshes to freshwater marshes are also present.

The environment at Orton and Kendal plantations represents this patchwork with ecosystems ranging from the wetland vegetation of Orton Pond to upland areas of loblolly plantation to large areas of freshwater impoundment used by wildlife. Recently, however, there have been extensive modifications returning much of the vegetation to an earlier stage. The loblolly plantations have been removed in order to regenerate longleaf pine (“Work at Orton Will Encourage Longleaf Pine Growth,” *Star News* (Wilmington, NC), June 10, 2011). Modifications of wetland areas, which introduced invasive species, are being removed in order to allow the fields to once again be planted in rice (“Orton’s Old is New,” *Star News* (Wilmington, NC), March 23, 2012).

Historical Synopsis of Orton Plantation

This research represents a brief examination of historic documents associated with Orton Plantation in Brunswick County, North Carolina.

There are a variety of popular histories of the region, including Susan Taylor Block's *Along the Cape Fear* (1998) and *Cape Fear Lost* (1999), Claude V. Jackson III's *The Big Book of the Cape Fear River* (2008), and James Sprunt's *Chronicles of the Cape Fear River, 1660-1916* (2005). There are other documents that deal with the region in a broader context, including *Society in Colonial North Carolina* by Alan D. Watson (1996), E. Lawrence Lee's *The Lower Cape Fear in Colonial Days* (1965), H.R. Merrens's *Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Historical Geography* (1964), and Bradford J. Wood's *This Remote Part of the World* (2004). Each can provide some unique insights into the region and the events that affected Orton, Kendal, and their owners. Some are well researched and sources are well documented. Others are not so well documented. Unfortunately, much of Orton's popular history falls into this latter category.

Research was conducted at the Brunswick County Register of Deeds, the Brunswick County Clerk of Court, the New Hanover County Register of Deeds, the New Hanover County Clerk of Court, The New Hanover County Main Library, the North Carolina Department of Archives and History, the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina, the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina, and at the remnant Sprunt account books at Orton Plantation. Some information was obtained from the National Archives, although funds were not available for more extensive research of their collections. Although the Duke University Rubenstein Library houses the Alexander Sprunt & Son cotton exporting firm account books, these

do not seem to pertain to the Sprunt's activities at Orton, and so were not examined.

Native Americans

Mintz and his colleagues comment that while much progress has been made understanding the prehistoric archaeology of coastal North Carolina, the proto-historic and historic Native American occupations have received very little attention (Mintz et al. 2011:8-1). In fact, of the approximately 27 villages shown on John White's maps, not one has been definitively located and investigated.

In the south coastal region South (1972) summarized what little was known about the Cape Fear and Waccamaw, the two groups that seem most clearly associated with the lower North Carolina coast. Presumably these groups correlate with what he and other archaeologists have identified as the Oak Island (and White Oak) ceramic complex of shell tempered pottery with plain, cord marked, fabric impressed, and net impressed surface treatments.

The earliest contact was by Verrazano in 1524 (Lee 1965:69), followed by Hilton in 1662 who noted their number at about 100 and described them as "very poor and silly Creatures" (Lee 1965:70). Hilton returned in the fall of 1663 and was again well received by the Cape Fear, visiting their village of Necoos (Salley 1959:45-46). He purchased the river and surrounding lands from Wattcoosa (also Wat Coosa) and other chiefs. As a result of an insult, Hilton also describes how he "pulled down" a hut, and broke pots, platters, and spoons. Foods mentioned included acorns, corn, and fish. By this time the Cape Fear also possessed both cattle and pigs, abandoned by an earlier New England settlement.

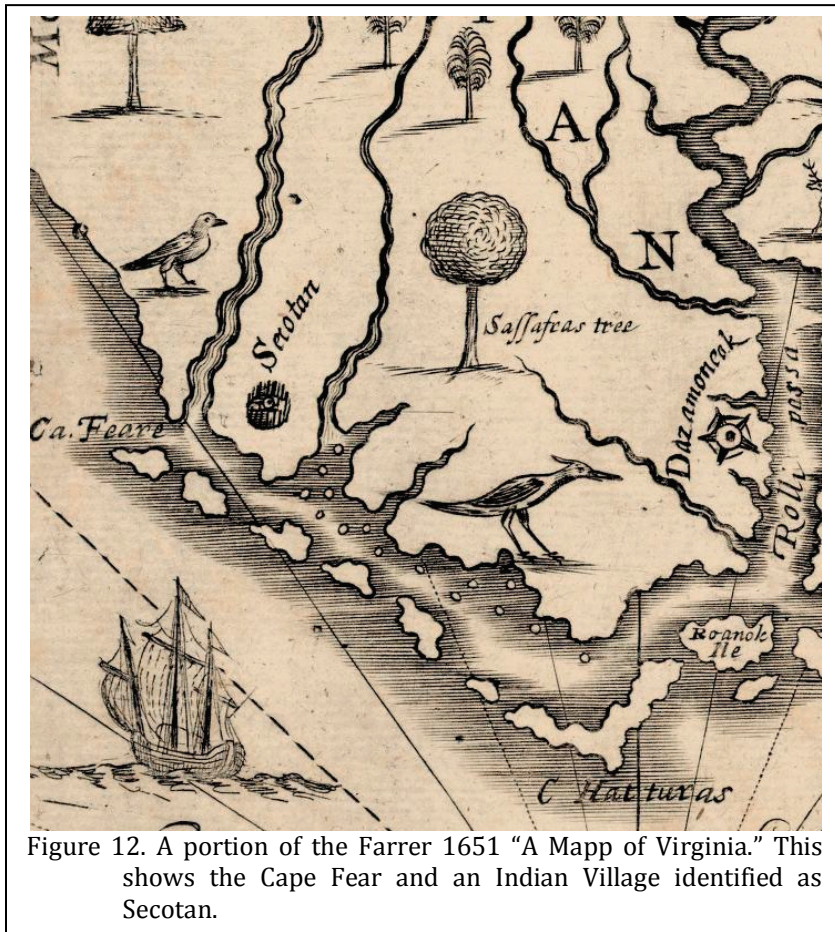


Figure 12. A portion of the Farrer 1651 “A Mapp of Virginia.” This shows the Cape Fear and an Indian Village identified as Secotan.

Apparently the Cape Fear developed a taste for beef since they also stole cattle from the 1664-1667 settlement of Charles Town on the West Bank of the Cape Fear (Lee 1965:50).

A small contingent of Cape Fear Indians participated with the colonists during the Tuscarora War (1711-1715). Almost immediately thereafter, however, Cape Fear villages were attacked by Colonel Maurice Moore during the Yemassee War (1715-1717). He apparently took many prisoner, although he was allowed to keep (and sell into slavery) only 80 (Lee 1965:80-81). In 1715 the Cape Fear numbered 206 individuals (76 men and 130 women) in five towns (Rivers 1874:94). Swanton (1946:103) suggests that they were removed to South Carolina, settling in the vicinity of Williamsburg County. While lacking in documentary evidence, there is local legend that the Cape Fear burned Orton about 1725 (Sprunt

1958:7-8). Another account, dating to at least the 1840s, has Indians being defeated at Sugar Loaf (now in Carolina Beach State Park on the east side of the Cape Fear) by Moore also about 1725 (Sprunt 1958:8-9; see also Bliss 2005:6).

The group appears to be so weakened that they gradually disappeared. Hugh Meredith in 1731 reported that there was “not an Indian to be seen” in the vicinity of Brunswick and that other tribes “have almost totally destroyed those called Cape Fear Indians and the small remains of them abide among the thickest of the South Carolina inhabitants, not daring to appear near the out Settlements” (Swem 1922:28). This is supported by South Carolina enacting a law in 1749 to protect the group from their white neighbors (Swanton 1946:103).

Lee (1965:82-83) reports that the last were living with the Pedee in South Carolina. Swanton (1946:103; see specifically Ramsay 1858:292) repeats the view that at the end of the eighteenth century there were 30 Cape Fear and Pedee living in the area of St. Stephens and St. Johns under “King Johnny.” Ramsay notes that in 1858, “all this remnant of these ancient tribes are now extinct, except one woman of a half-breed” (Ramsay 1858:292).

It is possible that the settlement of Charles Town is also the native village of Necoce (31BW133), about 6 miles north of Brunswick.

Early Exploration

Exploration of the lower North Carolina coast began with the “discovery” of the area by the Italian Giovanni da Verrazano for France in 1524. He reached the area of Cape Fear about March 1,

went south and then doubled back to the Cape Fear area before continuing north. Although he typically sailed and anchored well out to sea, he had at least one encounter with the Native Americans somewhere around the Cape Fear area (Corbitt 1953:139-145, Morison 1971). He

eventually mistook the Pamlico Sound for the beginning of the Pacific Ocean.

Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon and his Spanish expedition entered the Cape Fear River in 1526, explored the immediate area, and then moved south to his ill-fated settlement of San Miguel de Gualdape on the Georgia coast.

The area was next explored by William Hilton in 1662 for Massachusetts Bay colonists who formed a company, "Adventurers about Cape Fayre" and who subsequently attempted to establish a settlement there in 1663 (Lee 1965:29). Hilton entered the Cape Fear, naming it the "Charles River." Town Creek, about 20 miles from the mouth of the Cape Fear, was called "Indian River." The Nicholas Shapley map of 1662 is the first to show the area in any detail (Figure 13). Hilton again visited the area in late 1663, this time sponsored by Barbadian planters. The New England puritans were impressed with Hilton's favorable account and a group arrived at the Cape Fear in late 1663, apparently just after Hilton left. Lee explains that within a few months these settlers made a hasty departure, leaving behind their cattle and swine. He remarks, "why they left is not known definitely, but some seventy years later a writer explained that they had been driven away by the local Indians" (Lee 1968:14).

Hilton's explorations led John Vassall of Barbados to finance and lead a group of settlers to the Lower Cape Fear where they established Charles Town, 20 miles upstream on the west bank of the Cape Fear, in the vicinity of Indian River in 1664. The settlement grew to about 800, but was crippled by

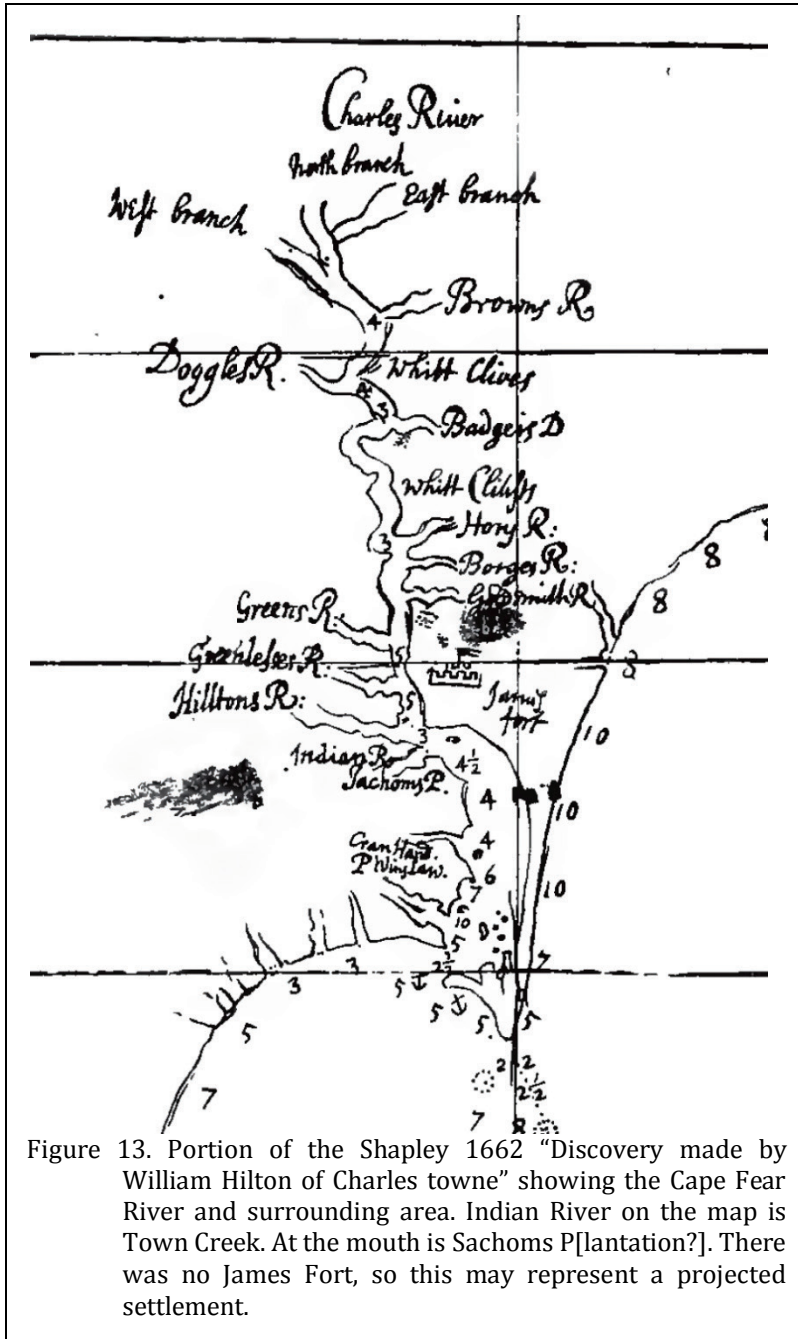


Figure 13. Portion of the Shapley 1662 "Discovery made by William Hilton of Charles towne" showing the Cape Fear River and surrounding area. Indian River on the map is Town Creek. At the mouth is Sachoms P[lantation?]. There was no James Fort, so this may represent a projected settlement.

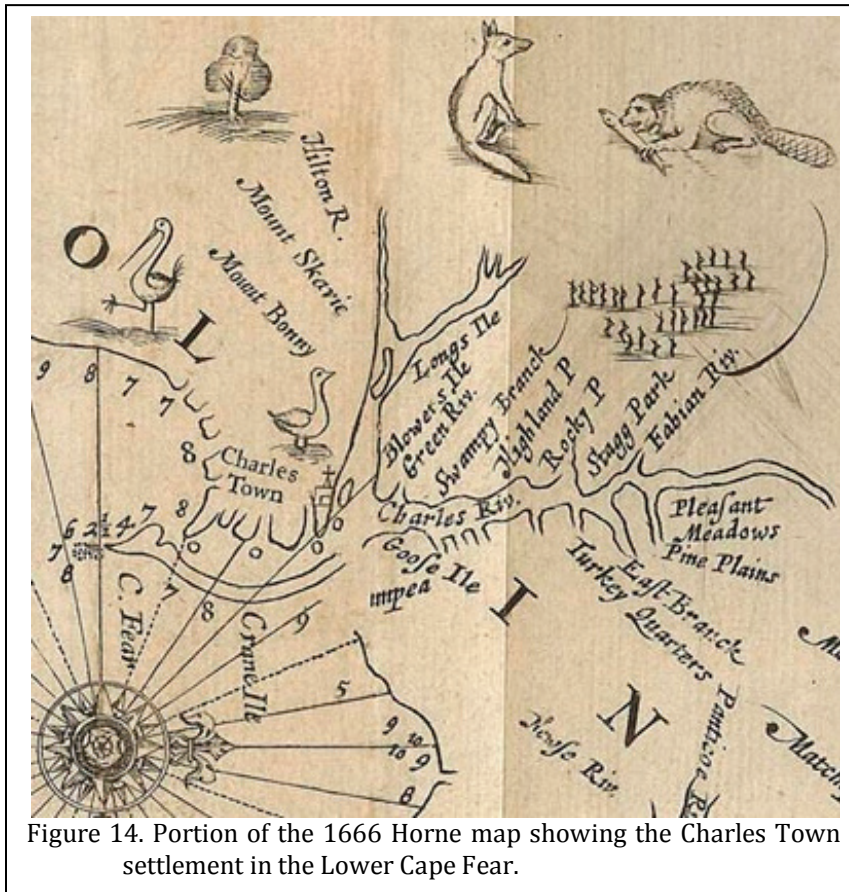


Figure 14. Portion of the 1666 Horne map showing the Charles Town settlement in the Lower Cape Fear.

Vassall's failed negotiations with the Lords Proprietors (the settlement was made prior to any final agreement with them regarding the terms). When the Proprietors chose Vassall's rival, John Yeamans, as governor, Yeamans began an active campaign against the Cape Fear settlement. That, coupled with difficulties with the local Indians, caused settlers to leave the area and by the end of 1667 the site was deserted (Landmark Preservation Associates 2010:1-2). Wood recounts that this string of failures was the result of Indian hostilities coupled with the lack of support from England. Moreover, the two failed expeditions ruined the reputation of the Cape Fear region for years to come (Wood 2004:46).

The "Pestiferous" Moores

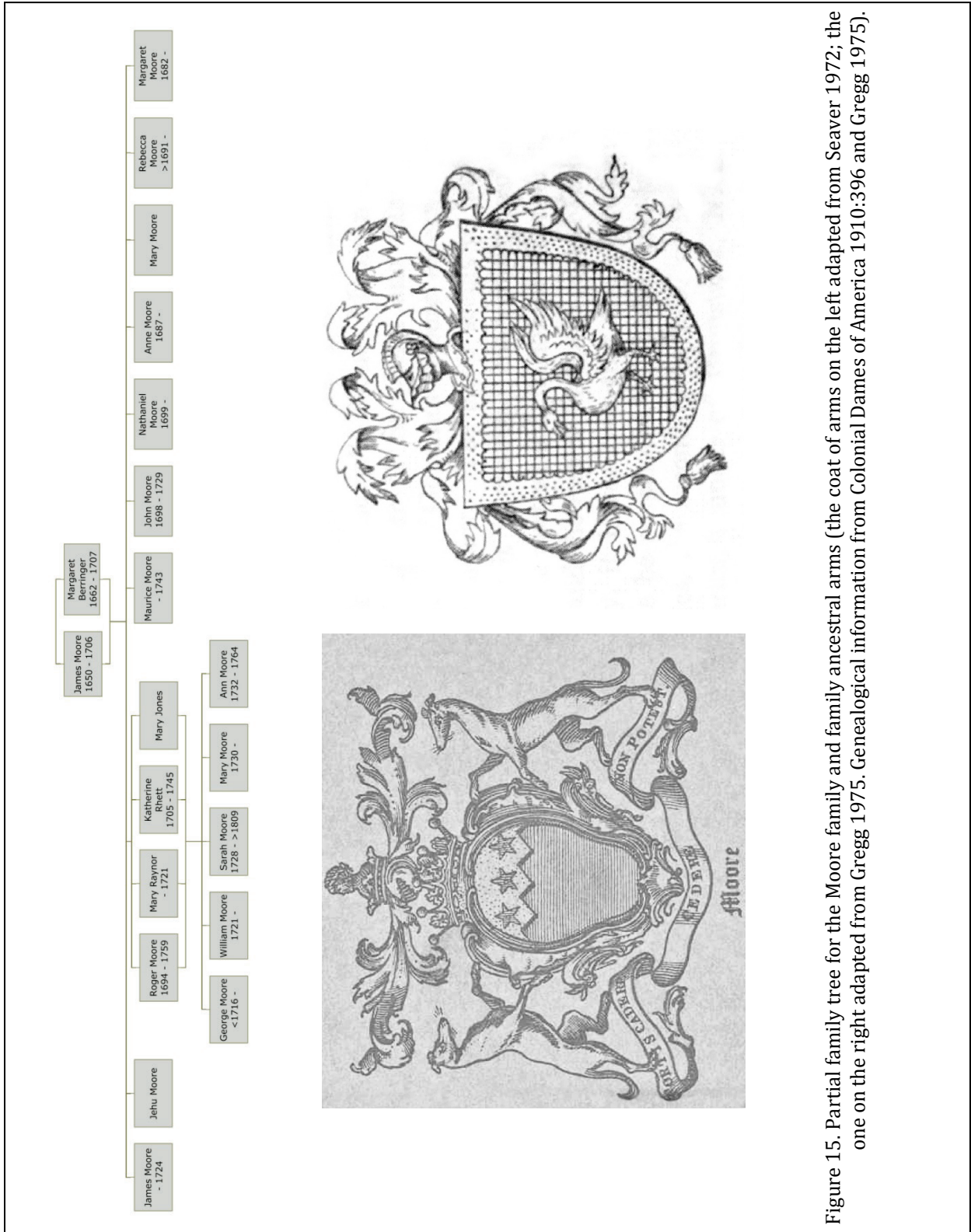
The First Moore in SC

The Moores were first associated with

South Carolina. Gregg explains that some believe that the Moores arrived in Carolina as early as 1665, although Charleston was not settled until 1670. Other sources reveal that he came to Carolina by way of the Barbados, arriving with Sir John Yeamans, the future Governor of Carolina (Colonial Dames of America 1910:397). The earliest record for James Moore appears to be his February 15, 1674/75 appearance before the Grand Council as the attorney for Margaret (Berringer), Lady Yeamans, the Administratrix of the will of her second husband, Sir John Yeamans. Shortly thereafter James Moore married Lady Yeamans' daughter, Margaret Berringer (Gregg 1975:177).

Edgar and Bailey (1977:466-467) note that Moore used every opportunity to increase his wealth, as well as power. He acquired two plantations, owned several Charleston town lots, and remained an active merchant. He engaged in fur trade, dealt with pirates, sold Native American slaves against Proprietary rules, and was the part owner of two merchant vessels. In 1690, he traveled 600 miles into the Carolina interior looking for new trading opportunities and at his death he owned 64 African American slaves (Indian slaves he acquired were sold in the Barbados).

Almost immediately he was embroiled in the Colony's political disputes, becoming the acknowledged leader of the anti-proprietary Goose Creek men and being elected to the First Assembly (1692-1694). His subsequent support of governors John Archdale (1695-1696) and Joseph Blake (1694-1695, 1696-1700) won him favor with the Proprietors, leading to his appointment to the Council, as well as a variety of public offices.



James Moore went on to become the colony's governor from 1700 to 1703 (Colonial Dames of America 1910:397; Edgar and Bailey 1977:467). He immediately clashed with the Commons House over his goal to secure the Indian Trade as a public monopoly. Moore eventually dissolved the assembly and called for new elections. He maneuvered to lead an expedition against the Spanish at St. Augustine, Florida in October 1702; the town was burned but his troops withdrew as Spanish reinforcements appeared. Weir has described the expedition as a "fiasco" that involved Moore burning his own ships as well as engaging in a hasty retreat (Weir 1997:81).

Upon returning to Charleston Moore was attacked for his St. Augustine failure, as well as the cost of the expedition. When he sought to delay the bills of his political opponents, they withdrew from the assembly, leaving it without a quorum. Riots occurred in Charleston and it was likely only the arrival of a new governor, Sir Nathaniel Johnson, which prevented additional violence.

Johnson appointed Moore Attorney General, a position along with his post on the Council that he held until his death. Johnson also approved of Moore's second Spanish expedition, this time to the mission system of Apalache in northwestern Florida. In spite of the Governor's support, the assembly refused to fund the expedition, so Moore financed it himself. Weir notes that he and his troops slaughtered and tortured both Indians and whites, "plundered church silver . . . and laid waste" (Weir 1997:81). Moore also acquired about 1,000 Indian slaves.

Moore's Indian slave trading was technically illegal, but it appears to have overlooked by both locals and the Proprietors themselves. Governor Bull is reported to have exonerated Moore, relaying to another party:

the Indians being a terrible scourge to the colony, Moore had been very energetic and successful in having them captured and shipped to the West Indies, but that the proceeds of sales were always paid into the

public treasury (Johnson 1851:229).

James and Margaret Moore had six sons and four daughters. At least one account reports that "Governor Moore afterwards married his mother-in-law" (Colonial Dames of America 1910:397). While certainly possible since both had the same first name, making it difficult to distinguish them in historical records, we have found no other source to support this.

James Moore's Children

James Moore (Jr.) inherited Boochawee Hall, a 2,400 acre plantation in St. James Goose Creek and owned 43 enslaved African Americans.

He commanded South Carolina troops against the Tuscarora Indians in 1713. His military career saw promotions from a captain in 1707 to a colonel in 1713, to a lieutenant general during the Yemassee War in 1715. Like his father, his anti-proprietary views kept him out of politics until, with the demise of proprietary rule, the Commons elected him Governor until the first Royal Governor, Francis Nicholson, arrived in 1721. He was subsequently elected to the First Royal Assembly (1721-1724) (Edgar and Bailey 1977:469).

Little is known about Jehu Moore and it is thought that he died young and was perhaps kidnapped by the Spanish (Gregg 1975:184).

Maurice Moore participated in the 1712 Tuscarora campaign with his brother, James Moore, Jr. He apparently chose to stay in the Albemarle area at the conclusion of hostilities. He married Elizabeth, the daughter of Alexander Lillington and widow of Samuel Swann. This marriage solidified his connections with Edward Mosely and John Porter, who were also married into the Lillington family (Lee 1965:91). By the 1720s it appears that he was in the Cape Fear area, owning a plantation on Old Town Creek in the vicinity of the failed 1665 settlement (Gregg 1975:189).

John Moore was active in Carolina's

Indian trade and was also a member of both the Eleventh Assembly (1708-1709) under the proprietors and the Third Royal Assembly (1728). He lived in South Carolina, dying in the Goose Creek area by January 1729 (Edgar and Bailey 1977:470, Gregg 1975:190).

Nathaniel Moore owned considerable property in the Charleston area, but he also owned a tract in the Cape Fear area (discussed below in more detail), as well as a lot and house in Brunswick. By 1732 he was appointed a Justice of Peace for New Hanover, indicating that he was living in the region (Gregg 1975:194). By 1735 he wrote the Board of Trade, alleging that he was “wretchedly poor” and fearing that his property would be taken by the Crown (State Records of North Carolina, vol. 4, pg. 308-315).

Ann Moore married Capt. David Davis of Goose Creek.

Mary Moore married Robert Howe and upon his death, Thomas Clifford.

Rebecca Moore, a twin of Roger Moore, married Thomas Barker and, at his death, William Dry. In 1733/4 Dry advertised his two plantations in the Goose Creek area for sale and moved his family to the Cape Fear region (Gregg 1975:192).

Margaret Moore married Benjamin Schenckingh. They lived their lives in Goose Creek, South Carolina.

Thus, of James Moore’s 10 children, four (Maurice, Nathaniel, Rebecca, and Roger, discussed below) eventually left South Carolina for the Cape Fear.

Roger Moore and the Settlement of the Cape Fear

While most of his brothers were at least initially Indian traders, Roger Moore quickly focused on planting in St. James Goose Creek Parish. Like his father and brothers, however, he was vehemently opposed to Proprietary rule and as a member of the Seventeenth Assembly (1720-1721) petitioned the king to assume

control of the South Carolina colony. In 1721 he entered into his second marriage with William Rhett’s daughter, Katherine.

In spite of this linkage between the Moore and Rhett families, the two lineages were often at very sharp odds. For example, Governor James Moore wrote that William Rhett was an enemy “to his country & destestable reviler of mankind” (quoted in Edger and Bailey 1977:556).

Regardless, Roger Moore deserted his anti-proprietary roots and joined with the proprietary factions unsuccessful efforts to regain control of Carolina. When that failed, he moved to Cape Fear.

In 1724-1725 North Carolina’s new proprietary governor George Burrington spent the winter exploring the Cape Fear region in an effort to create a development plan. In 1725 he began issuing grants to almost 9,000 acres in the Cape Fear area. Since this was in violation of the proprietor’s wishes, his warrants could be held until such time as the proprietors stated the terms for the conveyance. Holders might then accept the terms or abandon the land, but in the meantime they could occupy the tracts (Lee 1965:93).

Much of the land disposed of by Burrington went to a powerful group of settlers joined by blood and marriage. This group became known as “The Family” and included Maurice, Roger, James, and Nathaniel Moore of South Carolina, along with the North Carolina families of Allen, Porter, Moseley, and Swann, all joined by marriage (Lee 1952:230, Powell 2006, Wood 2004:18).

Maurice Moore, of course, was already familiar with the region, having fought Waccamaw and Cape Fear groups in the area during the 1712 Tuscarora campaign. This campaign succeeded in reducing the Native American threat in the region (Wood 2004:17). It is likely that the various Moores had done their own scouting and prospecting in the region, even before Burrington.

Nevertheless, the crucial event was the appointment of a governor like Burrington who

would overlook proprietary rules and prohibitions and sought quick settlement.

As early as 1720, South Carolinians were having trouble getting land. Some of these went to the Cape Fear and found they “like[d] it pretty well” (quoted in Wood 2004:17). During this period South Carolina faced a severe depression and taxes were raised steeply to generate money for the government. Adding to the debt load were military expenditures in fear of slave revolts, coupled with the requirement that all planters keep at least one white indentured servant for every 10 slaves he owned (Lee 1965:98). There is compelling evidence that many in South Carolina left for the Cape Fear to avoid the taxes and strong central control of the colony’s government in Charleston. In the Cape Fear they found a far weaker and centralized government with no or lower taxes (Wood 2004:20). Of course, many in South Carolina also claimed that the Cape Fear provided a refuge for debtors, with North Carolina helping them defraud their creditors (Wood 2004:19). This view was summarized by Thomas Lowndes when he wrote the Board of Trade in 1724, “North Carolina which ever since t’was a separate Government has only been a Receptacle for Pyrates Thieves and Vagabonds of all sorts” (quoted in Wood 2004:21).

Carolina’s proprietors were also significantly less interested in North Carolina where the treacherous coast made overseas exportation of tobacco and other staple crops difficult and costly.

Wood comments that when Maurice and Roger Moore entered the Cape Fear they were “exhibiting the expansiveness and dynamism of colonial South Carolina society” (Wood 2004:16). Wood also suggests that it was the inept and weak North Carolina government that provided the Moores with important incentives for settlement in Cape Fear. He notes that they were far removed from the tax collectors and creditors in Charleston. In addition, “North Carolina offered elites an opportunity to impose their will in ways that, by that time, had become impossible for men of their means within the reach of the burgeoning South Carolina government and society” (Wood

2004:147).

There is no doubt that these South Carolina migrants played a disproportionate role in the region’s development. Through the maneuvering of the Moores and Governor Burrington, many of the South Carolinians managed to acquire enormous land grants. Roger Moore owned more slaves and acquired more land in the Lower Cape Fear than any other individual in the region prior to the American Revolution. Eight former South Carolina residents documented by Wood, who patented land in the region prior to 1730, expanded their patents to include more than 91,000 acres (Wood 2004:18). Lee noted that by 1731 there were 28 patentees in the Lower Cape Fear; at least half of them were related to the Moores and they held nearly 80% of the land (Merrens 1964:27).

Nevertheless, only 24 of the 150 traceable ties to original locales lead to South Carolina during the first 15 years of settlement. During this same period 22 people came from northeastern North Carolina, 14 came from the middle colonies, 18 came from Scotland and Ireland, and an additional 20 came directly from England. Those linked to South Carolina did, however, own more slaves than those from other locations. Wood notes that while the other groups never seemed to be quite as prominent as the Moores, the others “offered the region alternative expectations and visions of success” (Wood 2004:19-21).

Period Land Policies

While Hugh Meredith in 1731 conjectured that the Cape Fear “might make tolerable good Rice-Ground, as is done with the like in South Carolina” (quoted in Wood 2004:48), many settlers found rice difficult. In fact, as early as 1753 John Rutherford reported that, “the Inhabitants there [at Cape Fear] were really in Distress for want of Grain” and Wood notes that the North Carolina assembly several times passed laws banning grain exportation from the Cape Fear region (Wood 2004:49). In 1765 Lord Adam Gordon, after visiting the region, remarked that the land did not produce rice comparable to that from South Carolina and most settlers preferred to

devote their attention to the production of naval stores.

The failure of early rice and the prominence of naval stores can be readily traced to shortage of good land in the Cape Fear, which was dominated by pine barrens – areas that were almost entirely excessively drained sands that supported little besides the long-leaf pine. While there was a good profit in pitch, tar, and turpentine, the lands would support virtually no cultivation.

Wood comments that the distribution of land was particularly important in the development of the Cape Fear region. The system the proprietors – and later the Crown – had in place for land distribution should have allowed for fairly equitable distribution, preventing large concentrations, providing the government with revenue, and encouraging settlement by small planters. In spite of these plans, officials in London demonstrated themselves totally unable to enforce their rules (Wood 2004:49-50). Blatant opposition and disregard, coupled with Governor Burrington's administration, allowed the Moores, Edward Mosely, and others to accumulate vast land tracts, while others were unable to obtain any land worth owning (Wood 2004: 51). Making matters worse, Burrington issued many warrants for land, but few actual patents from 1731 to 1734, further throwing the system into turmoil. It was also claimed that Burrington was distributing blank patents that could be filled in later.

Those lands for which patents existed were poorly surveyed and documented, leading to overlapping claims and disputed boundaries – a problem that will be seen throughout our discussions of the Orton and Kendal lands. It was also claimed that the Moores and Burrington even sought to make the Lower Cape Fear a separate colony, distinct from both North and South Carolina (Lee 1965:100, Wood 2004:150).

A later royal governor, Arthur Dobbs, complained that some surveyors simply examined the vegetation in the area of a needed survey “and at the fire side laid down their plan, if not joined to any neighbouring Plantation then named an

imaginary Tree, a pine red white or black oak or hickory etc and so enter beginning at a hickory and so name imaginary Trees at any angle and conclude as usual so on to the first station . . . You may judge what confusion that has & does create” (quoted in Merrens 1964:25).

When Governor Gabriel Johnson took office (1734-1752) he made the land fiasco a central theme in his administration. While patented land was supposed to require owners to pay quitrents or taxes to the Crown – a critical source of revenue – no one had ever been able to collect quitrents reliably. Moseley, the colony's treasurer – but not the collector of quitrents – made the matter worse by publically refusing to pay quitrents on his own property. Others took confidence in this because, “they are assured by Mr. Moseley and the Family of the Moores that the Quitt Rents are too high for the poor people” (although this doesn't explain why the rich were equally unwilling to pay their taxes) (Wood 2004:54). Johnson proposed that all patents issued after 1725 be invalidated. However valid his claims, such a move would have thrown property ownership into turmoil.

Not only were few paying their quitrent taxes, but the rich threatened to leave altogether. Wood quotes a claim that Roger Moore was making plans “to remove with his family to Virginia” (Wood 2004:55).

Faced with strong opposition, Johnson compromised and in 1739 the assembly passed a bill that allowed all patents to stand, but sought to improve the quitrent system, making it enforceable. The law was struck down in London through the lobbying of Henry McCulloch who feared some of the disputed patents infringed on his own land. It was perhaps these events that caused King George to comment on “those pestiferous Moores” (Gregg 1975:187). Even though the law was never enacted, it did little to ameliorate the situation. Evidence of this can be found in two accounts.

It is thought that the Moores obtained their nickname “The Family” as a result of a 1735 letter to the Board of Trade regarding the patent

controversy where the authors asserted the importance of the Moores to the region and assert their large family size of nearly 1,200 to explain their need for large amounts of land. It seems that this explanation created the derisive name “The Family” that sought to convey the sense of their power structure (Wood 2004:86).

The Moores were also related to other clans, such as Ashe, Swann, Moseley, Port, Davis, Jones, and Lillington families. Wood notes:

The Moores provide an instructive if exceptional example. As the most powerful family in the region, they articulated an elite model of behavior that many other families no doubt emulated. A close look at the Moores’ family relationships also illustrates that contemporaries were correct about them in at least one respect: the Moores, like many other early settlers, clearly developed impressive and complex kinship ties in the Lower Cape Fear (Wood 2004:86).

A second example of the continuing disharmony is found in a 1735 petition to the Governor by George Gibbs against Roger Moore regarding land practices. Gibbs migrated to the Cape Fear area, obtained a warrant for land in 1728, moved his family, cleared the land, and paid quitrents. He intended to use the land “raising . . . Bread for . . . [his] family.” He occupied the land for seven years and sought to improve it sufficiently that his three sons would each have a hundred acres of good land.

Gibbs then discovered that Roger Moore claimed to have a warrant for the land obtained from Burrington long after the date of Gibbs own warrant. Gibbs claimed that “Mr. Roger Moores Covetous Eye” had been drawn to his land and had determined “he must and will have Land” regardless of Gibbs. Wood notes:

Gibbs was clearly embittered that

a man of Moore’s wealth and means would, to swell his enormous landholding, threaten the Gibbs’s family livelihood. To make matters worse, Gibbs knew he had fewer headrights with which to obtain land because his large family remained vastly outnumbered by Moore’s slaves. Gibbs worried about having enough land to leave his sons, but “Mr. Moore is pleased to have so many Tracts of each of Sons which he pretends to hold by the rights of his Negroe’s.” Gibbs added, with savage irony, “I suppose he’ll give none of the Land his Negro’s.” Gibbs must have spoken for many less-wealthy settlers in the Lower Cape Fear who felt abused and threatened by imperious behavior of “King Roger” Moore and others like him (Wood 2004:64).

In fact, Gibbs was not alone in claiming that Roger Moore was seizing land not belonging to him (Council Journals, September 9, 1735, June 18, 1736; *Colonial Records* 4:57, 220).

In another account we learn that Roger Moore interfered with all “designs for settling ye country,” writing letters to discourage immigration from Ireland fearing the immigrants would “be a weight against him in ye Assembly” (quoted in Wood 2004:155).

Brunswick

Brunswick by all accounts was a town built by the Moores. Maurice Moore was granted 1,500 acres on June 3, 1725. He set aside 320 acres with a portion being divided into half-acre lots 82½ feet in width by 264 feet in depth (New Hanover County Register of Deeds, DB AB, pg. 188). A total of 24 blocks were laid out, each seven lots across and two lots deep. Roger Moore added additional land to the town (Lee 1952:239, South 2010:2).

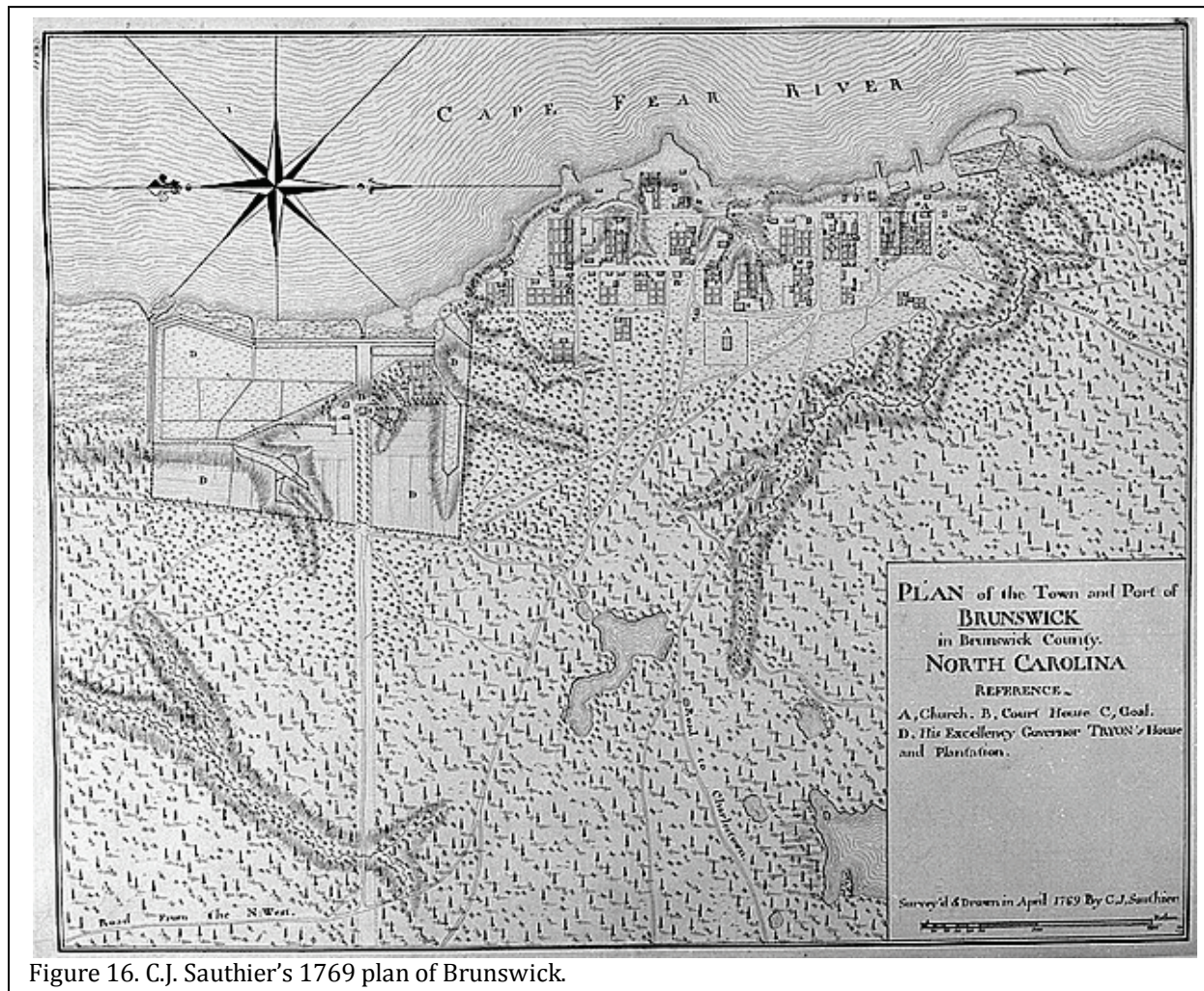


Figure 16. C.J. Sauthier's 1769 plan of Brunswick.

It appears that Maurice Moore used slightly more than half of the 320 acres to lay out 336 half acre lots; Roger Moore added 20 lots to the northern edge of the town plan, making 356 lots. Many of these lots, however, were never sold. In June 1726, Maurice Moore made a plan of the proposed village and another was made by the assembly in 1745. Neither of these plans survive and the settlement is known from the 1769 drawing by C.J. Sauthier (Lee 1952:238-239; Figure 16).

Maurice Moore, as developer of the town, sought to make a profit. In order to accomplish this as quickly as possible while avoiding speculators, he stipulated that a habitable house measuring at least 16 by 20 feet, be built within

eight months.

Lots were identified for a courthouse, church, cemetery, markets, and common areas for the public. The location, below shoals in the Cape Fear River, ensured that large ships would be able to use the port – and the Moores actively lobbied to make the town an official port of entry by British authorities. The naming of the town was certainly part of that effort since the new English King, George I, was of the house of Brunswick-Hanover (Wood 2004:15).

The first lots sold were purchased by Cornelius Harnett, a tavern keeper, on June 30, 1726. The following year he obtained a license to operate a ferry from Brunswick across the Cape

Fear, to link the town with the only road connecting northern colonies with South Carolina (Lee 1952:232). Contemporary travelers complained about the quality of this road, with one noting that it was “the most tedious and disagreeable of any on the Continent of North America” (quote in Wood 2004:119). Another described it as tiresome and disagreeable.

By 1729 Brunswick was designated as the seat of New Hanover Precinct, established that year. A courthouse was built, church and government elections would be held there, as would precinct court.

When Governor Johnson arrived in 1734 he began challenging Brunswick as the appropriate location for the area’s government – and by extension the authority of the Moores (Lee 1952:233, Wood 2004:151).

Commodity	Quantity	% of NC Total
Naval Stores	63,265 barrels	49
Sawn Lumber	2,328,075 feet	74
Shingles	1,504,000 pieces	25
Staves	139,340 pieces	8
Indian Corn	966 bushels	1
Rice	84 barrels	100
Indigo	646 pounds	100

A few miles upstream the village of Newton (or Newtown) began to develop about 1733. By 1740 Newton was incorporated as Wilmington and the seat of New Hanover government was transferred to Wilmington, as well as all port officials (Lee 1952:233). Brunswick did not cede power gracefully. In fact, even the assembly was so divided that the supporters of Newton accused the Moores and their followers demonstrated, “such a violent, restless and arbitrary Spirit that We are sure it will not admit of a parallel in any Province of America from the first Settlement” (quoted in Wood 2004:152).

The Moores managed to have the port officials transferred back to Brunswick and all ships entering had to stop there to be cleared first. In 1745 the assembly enacted various laws governing the town and improving its appearance and establishing a local commission to oversee the law (Lee 1952:234). Part of this effort sought to clear titles to lots. In 1736 Maurice Moore had given half of his interest in Brunswick to John Porter, exempting only two lots he owned (New Hanover County Register of Deeds, DB AB, pg. 188). By 1745 both men had died and a dispute over ownership had arisen among the heirs. To clear title, the assembly transferred ownership to a commission, allowing the sale of lots to proceed (Lee 1965:138).

The continuing, bitter rivalry between Brunswick and Wilmington is seen in the sale of Great Island by Roger Moore to John Jean in 1743. Moore’s deed specified that Jean was not to allow storage of commodities on the island, fearing that it might compete with Brunswick. Should the provisions of the deed be violated, the property would revert to Moore (Lee 1965:166). Table 2 shows the products shipped from Brunswick in 1768.

When Brunswick County was established in 1764, Brunswick was made the seat of its government and the community obtained representation in the assembly. Woods notes that it took 30 years for this second county to be created because many residents opposed the cost of new jurisdictions (Wood 2004:169).

Lee notes, however, that most of the town’s significant history is linked with the decision by the royal governors to make their home in Brunswick from 1758 to 1770 (Lee 1952:234). Their residence, Russellboro, was not actually within the limits of the community, but was adjacent to the north. In 1770 the next to the last royal governor, William Tryon (1765-1771) had The Palace constructed in New Bern and moved there. Russellboro was purchased by William Dry, who changed its name to Bellfont (Lee 1962:241).

Population estimates suggest that the

village was never densely populated. Lee documents accounts indicating 10 to 12 houses in 1731, and only 20 families in 1754 (compared to 70 families in Wilmington). Sauthier's map indicates about 35 residential buildings in 1769 and just prior to the Revolution the town had a population of about 200 whites and 50 African Americans (Lee 1952:230).

Lee notes that, "the town became concentrated in the upper four squares along the river." The church was located just beyond this area and the courthouse and jail were built on lots diagonally across from the church (Lee 1952:239).

The effort to defend the town began in 1745, and the tabby fortification was named Fort

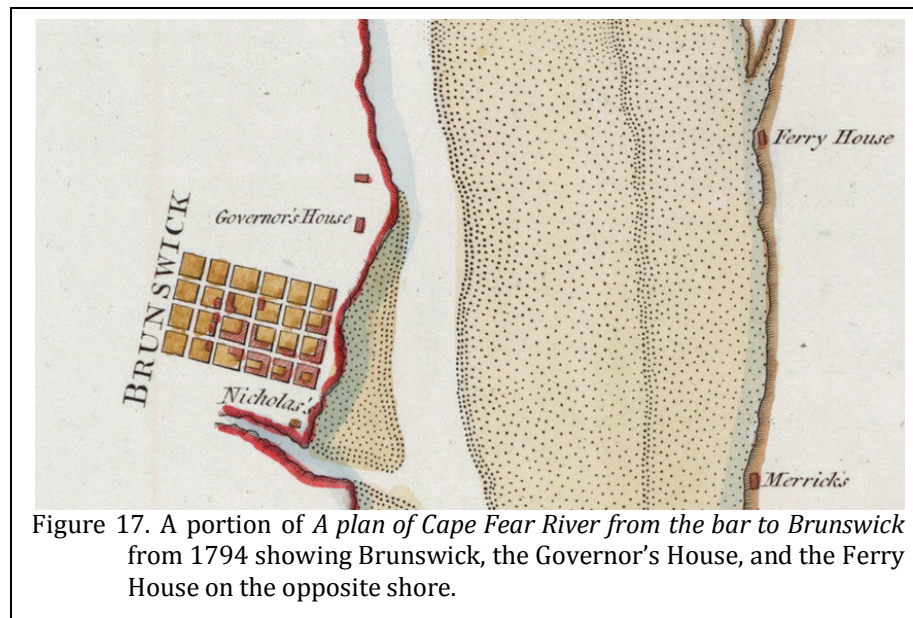


Figure 17. A portion of *A plan of Cape Fear River from the bar to Brunswick* from 1794 showing Brunswick, the Governor's House, and the Ferry House on the opposite shore.

Johnston. It was not, however, complete when the Spanish invaded Brunswick in 1748. The fort was never thought of very highly. In 1766 Governor Tryon noted there was so much sand in the tabby mix "that every gun fired brings down some of the parapet. Governor Josiah Martin called the fort a "most contemptible thing" and a "little wretched place" (Landmark Preservation Associates 2010:1-5). Smithville, today Southport, grew up around the fort.

Brunswick suffered several attacks. In 1748 the community was badly damaged by the

bombardment and temporary occupation of Spanish ships. During this event Orton Plantation was briefly shelled by one of the Spanish ships (Lee 1965:23). In 1776 at least part of the town was burned by the British (Lee 1952:236, 244).

Lee notes that after the Revolution there was little left of Brunswick, with visitors consistently noting only a few rebuilt houses and ruins. Curiously, lots continued to change hands as late as 1819 (Lee 1952:245). In 1845, Brunswick was purchased for \$4.25 and made part of Orton Plantation (NC Land Grants, Book CL, pg. 150).

The Plantation Setting

Wood observes that Colonial Cape Fear was anomalous in two ways. First, it wasn't transformed into a plantation society; it effectively began as one, complete with slave holding. Second, it lacked an economic focus on a staple crop during the colonial period (Wood 2004:177).

Certainly the large tracts of land that the Moores and their allies obtained were consistent with a plantation society. Perhaps equally important was the presence of the slave community. While it is likely that Roger Moore

and others brought slaves with them from South Carolina, they found it difficult to procure additional slaves in their new settlement.

In 1733 Governor Burrington noted this difficulty since the state had no established slave trade with Africa. It appears that the community, while wealthy, lacked the wealth of locations like Charleston to attract slavers to make regular visits. Wood suggests that slaves arrived haphazardly, in small numbers, and on ships that were engaged in other trading activities.

Table 3.
Slaves as a Percentage of Total Estimated Population in
Various Areas of North Carolina in 1767
(adapted from Wood 2004:99).

Area of NC	Est. Total Pop.	% slaves
Lower Cape Fear	4,216	63
NE NC	37,284	24
Upper Cape Fear	2,040	29
Backcountry	40,313	15

Moreover, many of those enslaved Africans entering the Cape Fear may have been rejects from other venues (Wood 2004:38-39).

Regardless, Cape Fear residents were far more likely to own slaves during the colonial period than were families elsewhere in North Carolina. In fact, the Lower Cape Fear was the only region in North Carolina where enslaved Africans made up most of the population (Table 2). While land ownership might provide economic competence and even independence, the ownership of slaves indicated “mastery over social inferiors” – both white and black (Wood 2004:133, see also Merrens 1964:75).

Most of these slaves in the Lower Cape Fear, about 73%, lived on plantations with 20 or more slaves, and more than 87% lived on plantations with 10 or more slaves (Wood 2004:100). This suggests the presence of large and relatively stable black communities along the Cape Fear River.

One account of colonial Cape Fear slavery provides a particularly cheerful account:

Young healthy negroes are bought there for between 25 and 40 £. Five of these will clear and labour a plantation the first year, so as you shall have every thing in abundance for your family, with little trouble to yourself, and be able to spare many articles for market; to which every year again, as the ground advances in being cleared, you may send great quantities of flower,

flax-seed, indico, rice, butter, tallow, pease, potatoes, live stock, pork, beef, and tobacco. And I cannot help mentioning here, the happiness in which blacks live in this and most of the provinces of America, compared to the wretchedness of their condition in the sugar islands. Good usage is what alone can make the negroes well attached to their masters interest. The inhabitants of Carolina, sensible of this, treat these valuable servants in an indulgent manner, and something like rational beings. They have small houses or huts, like peasants, thatched, to which they have little gardens, and live in families separated from each other. Their work is performed by a daily task, allotted by their master or overseer, which they have generally done by one or two o'clock in the afternoon, and have the rest of the day for themselves, which they spend in working in their own private fields, consisting of 5 or 6 acres of ground, allowed them by their masters, for planting of rice, corn, potatoes, tobacco, &c. for their own use and profit, of which the industrious among them make a great deal. In some plantations, they have also the liberty to raise hogs and poultry, which, with the former articles, they are to dispose of to none but their masters (this is done to prevent bad consequences) for which, in exchange, when they do not chuse money, their masters give Osnaburgs, negro cloths, caps, hats, handkerchiefs, pipes, and knives. They do not plant in their fields for subsistence, but for amusement, pleasure, and profit, their masters giving them clothes, and sufficient provisions

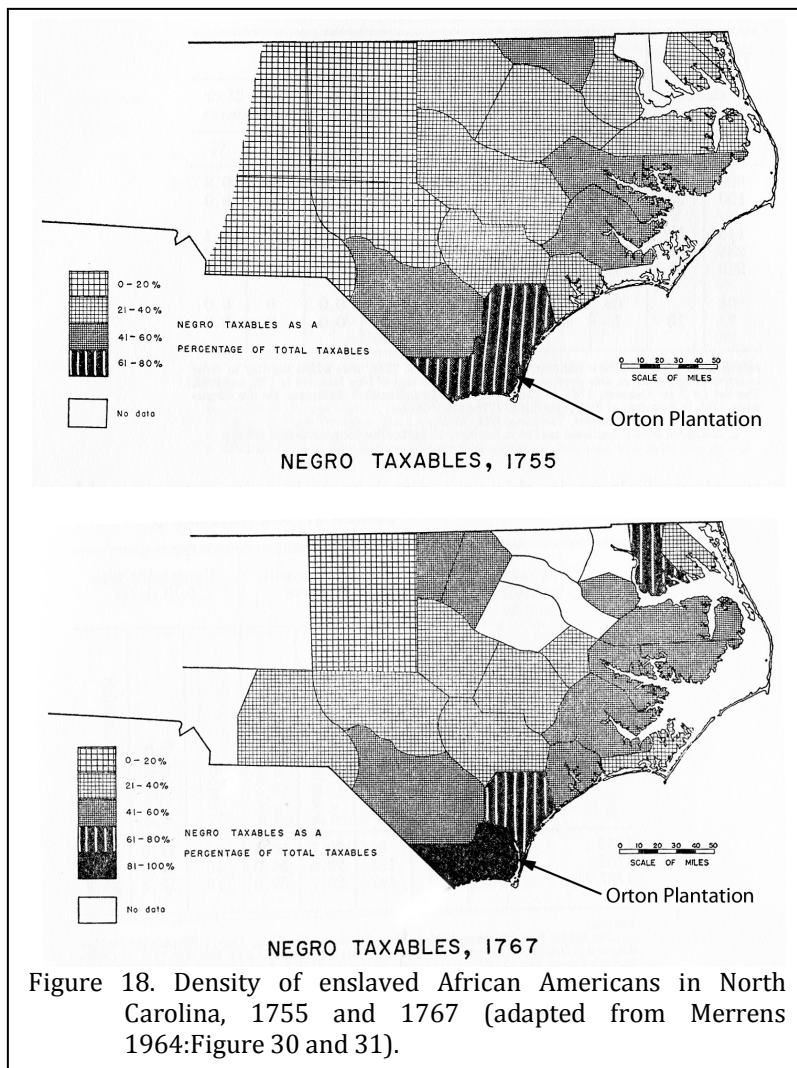


Figure 18. Density of enslaved African Americans in North Carolina, 1755 and 1767 (adapted from Merrens 1964:Figure 30 and 31).

from their granaries. (Scotus Americanus 1927:445-446).

Such accounts are far more flattering than those where slave families at auctions in Wilmington were:

driven in from the country, like swine for market. A wench clung to a little daughter, and implored, with the most agonizing supplication, that they might not be separated. But alas, either the master or circumstances were inexorable: they were sold to different purchasers. The

husband and residue of the family were knocked off to the highest bidder (Watson 1856:69).

Just as in South Carolina, there was a near constant fear among whites in the Cape Fear region of slave rebellion. To minimize the danger, only one slave on a plantation was allowed to possess a weapon and that individual had to be approved and issued a certificate by the county court. In 1753 each county was also ordered to establish “searchers” that would yearly go into plantation slave quarters and search for weapons with any found to be seized (Lee 1965:192).

Early Production

Wood provides a compelling argument that during the colonial period rice played a very limited role in the Lower Cape Fear. The available colonial merchant accounts for the region provide no significant reference to rice (Wood 2004:182). Table 2, showing colonial exports from the port of Brunswick, suggests that little rice was being produced, especially when compared to other commodities such as naval stores. A much later list, dating to 1775, shows exports from North Carolina to Jamaica. While North Carolina shipped 1,716,295 feet of boards and scantling, 3,893,000 staves, shingles, and headings, and 1,305 barrels of pitch, tar, and turpentine, only 36 tierces of rice were shipped (British Colonial Office, “A List of Imports into the Island Jamaica from North Carolina for the Year 1775).

There is also commentary suggesting that what rice was produced on the Lower Cape Fear was of poorer quality than that of South Carolina (Wood 2004:183). Literature available for one rice producer, Hugh Meredith, reveals that while he

predicted large returns, these never materialized and by the late colonial period he complained that “My Crop of Rice comes much short” (quoted in Wood 2004:184).

Governor Martin in a 1772 letter to the Marquis of Downshire, reported, “a spirit of industry and improvement dawning in this Province exemplified by the beginnings that are making by several planters on Cape Fear River to raise rice” (Colonial and State Records of North Carolina, vol. 9, pg. 270). A year later Martin’s letter to the Earl of Dartmouth reported, “the experiments of Rice . . . that I had the honor some time ago to inform your Lordship were making in the Southern parts of this Colony have failed this year, almost totally, owing to the extreme drought of the summer” suggesting that even this late rice was still considered something of an “experiment” (Colonial and State Records of North Carolina, vol. 9, pg. 687).

Even as late as just prior to the Revolution, the detailed accounts existing for Benjamin Heron reveal that while he owned a large, and very profitable, plantation, 37% of his returns came from tar and 17% came from turpentine. While he was one of the few planters on the Lower Cape Fear at the time with the resources to invest in rice, only 6% of his return came from this product (Wood 2004:204-205).

Clifton cites a variety of colonial newspaper advertisements that suggest rice may have been planted. For example, in 1751 Lilliput was advertised as having “at least two hundred Acres of Marsh, and Swamp, very good Rice Land, fronting on the River.” Further north, Spring Field was advertised as containing 150 acres of “very good Rice Land” (Clifton 1973:366). Of course, we know that many newspaper ads spoke as much about what could be developed as they did about what was already present. Thus, having very good rice land doesn’t mean the land was actually producing rice – it might be only a teaser to entice prospective purchasers.

By the end of the colonial period, in 1790, Clifton reports that Schawfields, the plantation of Robert Schaw, about six miles up the Northwest

branch, contained fifty acres of rice land, twenty of which had been ditched. By 1798, General Hugh Waddell’s plantation, Castle Haynes, had seventy acres of rice fields (Clifton 1973:366). These late accounts are perhaps more trustworthy. Regardless, Clifton himself notes that based on recorded rice exports, it is unlikely that there were more than 500 acres actually in production along the entire Lower Cape Fear. Some portion of this production may have been from interior swamp or upland fields, rather than tidal fields along the Cape Fear (for a discussion of upland and interior swamp production see Trinkley et al. 2003:13-42).

Although indigo required less labor and capital than rice, it still required far more labor than most Lower Cape Fear planters could muster and it therefore appears to have played a minor role. Wood notes that few inventories mention the tools specific to indigo production (Wood 2004:185). Regardless, whatever expansion of indigo that may have occurred was probably cut short by the American Revolution and the loss of the British bounty.

While huge slave populations would have allowed production of rice or indigo, such large populations were not uniformly present in the Lower Cape Fear. Owners found tar, pitch, and lumber more profitable than fields of corn, rice, or indigo (Merrens 1964:131, Wood 2004:186). In addition, unlike field crops, naval stores could be produced at almost any time of the year and this allowed very effective use of slave labor, especially by the owners of relatively small numbers of slaves (Merrens 1964:89). Consequently, naval stores accounted for about 82% of the Lower Cape Fear’s exports (Wood 2004:179). Even where the slave resources existed for rice production, Wood suggests that planters found other resources – like naval stores – were simply more profitable (Wood 2004:207).

While we have found no indication that Roger Moore invested much time or effort in rice production, there are accounts that clearly indicate his efforts in naval store production, including the export of turpentine, shingles, peas, and even bread (Colonial Court Records, Box 190,

Personal Accounts 1730-1739; see also Wood 2004:187).

Both Merrens (1964) and Wood (2004) provide detailed accounts of naval store production, revealing the colonial practices did not change appreciably into the late nineteenth century.

Tar was produced by gathering wood from long leaf pines, stacked in piles about 30 feet in diameter and 10 to 20 feet in height, covered with sand, set afire, and burned until tar began running out of the kiln bottom. Kilns were typically graded to encourage the tar to run through a pipe and into barrels. One such burning would produce 150 to 200 barrels of tar and it was reported that 10 slaves using this process would run through 1,000 acres of pines in as little as three years (Lee 1965:151, Wood 2004:188, 209).

The best tar, known as green tar, came from living trees and was typically produced by northern European countries. But the process was more involved and took longer. Common tar, made from dead pines, was the type produced by the colonies even though it was less valuable.

Pitch was made by boiling the tar, with three barrels of tar yielding about two of pitch (Lee 1965:151). Although profitable, it was time consuming and typically planters found it more profitable to leave this processing to English buyers or competitors in other countries (Wood 2004:192).

Turpentine production, briefly mentioned in the previous section, consisted of cutting incisions in trees and periodically gathering the collected rosin. The process began in the late fall and continued largely uninterrupted into the summer. Consequently, turpentine production was far more labor intensive than tar production (Wood 2004:192).

Lee notes that the quality of North Carolina's naval stores was generally low and the planters ignored repeated pleas to improve production and the quality of their products. Even

though they could make more money producing higher quality naval stores, production and quality remained unchanged, perhaps because of the reliance on slave labor (Lee 1965:153-155).

Other products of the forest included lumber, shingles, and staves. The Lower Cape Fear produced few barrel staves, but a vast quantity of lumber (see Table 2). By 1764 Governor Dobbs reported 40 saw mills on the branches of the Cape Fear. Two years later Dobbs's successor, Governor Tryon, reported the number had increased to 50. Wood has identified 18 saw mills on the Lower Cape Fear, employing between 30 and 50 slaves (Wood 2004:194). Roger Moore's will, proved in 1751, reveals that he owned one completed saw mill and another was being built – clearly indicating his involvement in this very profitable activity (Grimes 1912:309-312).

Formation and History of Orton Prior to the Revolution

Attempting to identify the origins of Orton Plantation is a difficult task considering North Carolina colonial land policies and practice, including multiple patents, poor or missing plats, vague verbal descriptions, and inaccurate filing systems. As clear evidence of these problems is a 1921 plat that attempted to piece together the various plats and deeds that comprised the huge tract at the time. Careful inspection reveals few of the corners meet, many lines overlap, and some areas simply couldn't be accounted for (Figure 19).

Add to these historical issues the liberal use of family legend by previous historians, and the result is a very muddled history. Nevertheless, it appears that Orton consists of at least three tracts, all acquired by Roger Moore as patents or deeds between 1728 and 1729.

The first of these is an initial 500 acres that Roger Moore obtained as a patent from North Carolina on March 30, 1728. This property was described as:

On the S. side of town creek,
Springing out of the West side of

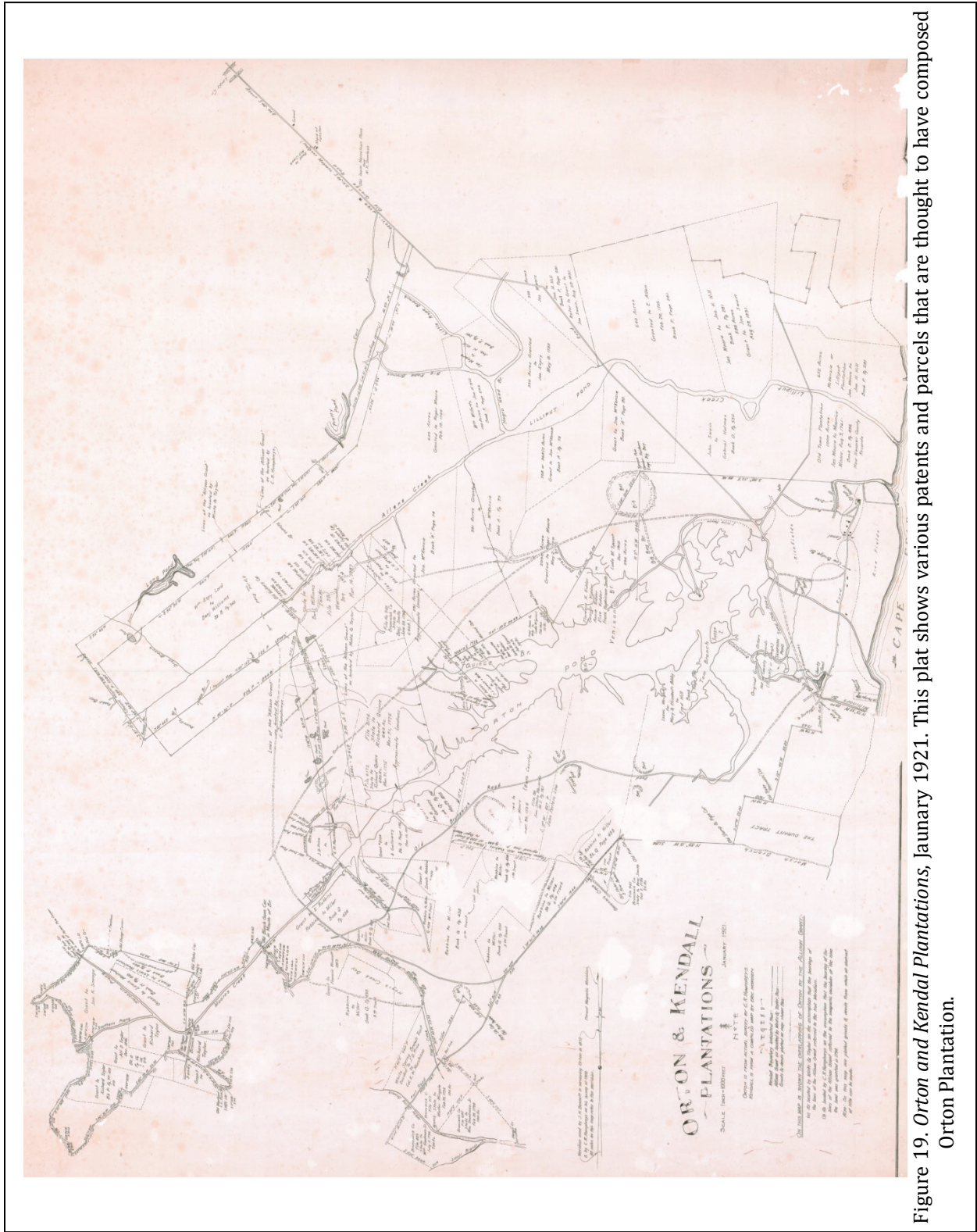


Figure 19. Orton and Kendal Plantations, January 1921. This plat shows various patents and parcels that are thought to have composed Orton Plantation.

Cape Fear River, Beginning at a pine the corner Tree, between this and Laid out for John Porter, running up that dividing line S. 12. Wt. 427 pole to a pine No. 78 Wt. 240 pole to a pine No. 12 Et. 290 pole to a Gum by the Creek side, so down the creek by Various courses to the first station (State File 88, BK 2, pg. 261).

The second parcel is an additional 500 acres sold to Roger Moore by his brother, Maurice Moore, on December 14, 1728 for the sum of £200 NC currency. The deed references the original patent of 1,500 acres dated June 3, 1725. Thus, it was also this patent from which Brunswick was created. The property description is equally vague:

Lying on the west side of Cape Fear River, beginning on the River at an Oak the town corner tree [Brunswick], running thence West 10 North to a branch that makes out of the said Roger Moore's lower Creek [indicating that Roger Moore held land in this area under his own name already], thence down the said branch to the Creek, thence down the Meanders of the Creek to the River, thence down to River to the first station (State File 461, Bk 2P, pg. 272).

Maurice Moore gave Roger Moore all of the usual privileges associated with ownership, including "hunting, Hawking, fishing, and fowling, with all woods waters and rivers with all profits, commodities and hereditaments."

The plantation was added to by the grant of a third parcel, an additional 2,000 acres on May 2, 1729:

on the West side of Cape Fear Beginning at an Hickory tree, on the lower side of Allens [Lilliput]

Creek, running thence down the said creek, the Various courses thereof 920 pole to a Cypress tree Standing on the Creek side, running thence in the Said Roger Moores head line 600 pole to a cypress tree on Town Creek thence up the said Creek the Various courses thereof five hundred pole to a cypress, thence across the neck North forty five West four hundred and seventy pole to the first Station (State File 438, Bk 2, pg. 268).

In a reference to the politics of the period the patent notes that these 2,000 acres were "Taken up before the Arrival of the Lords Proprietors orders forbidding the sale of Lands." Although a doubtful claim, it was no doubt expressed to provide some additional legal protection.

Thus, these three deeds created at least 3,000 acres of Orton bordering the Cape Fear and running from Brunswick on the south to Lilliput Creek on the north.

The second of these three known patents is probably what Sprunt referred to when he said that "Colonel Maurice Moore first owned the land to be known as Orton, but disposed of it almost immediately to his brother Roger" (Sprunt 1958:7). Clearly, only a portion of Maurice Moore's property was given to his brother; we have not determined the disposition of the remainder.

Other commentaries, such as that by DeRosset (1938:6), note that Orton was "originally granted to Roger Moore by the Lords Proprietors" seem to be built on legend.

Similar legends are encountered in the accounts of Roger Moore's dealings with the native groups. Sprunt, for example, claims that the first Orton house "was destroyed by local Indians" (Sprunt 1958:7-8; this legend is even repeated in the National Register nomination for the property). It seems unlikely that as late as first quarter of the eighteenth century there were still

hostile native groups circulating the area. It is far more likely, if the original house was in fact destroyed, that it was a natural event – a lightning strike or sparks from a nearby kitchen.

Regardless, we have found no evidence of an initial, earlier, or destroyed structure. Regrettably, those making such a claim offer no documentation in support. Only detailed archaeological research would allow the presence of an earlier Orton structure to be identified and such work has not taken place.

Sprunt (1958:8-10) recounts further traditions apparently dating to perhaps the 1840s, although admitting that the stories confuse Maurice Moore and Roger Moore, as well as the Cape Fear River and Albemarle Sound.

A slim volume, *A New Voyage to Georgia by a Young Gentleman* (Anonymous 1737) describes events in travels through Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. In middle June 1734 he visited Roger Moore, “the chief Gentleman in all of *Cape Fear*” (Anonymous 1737:43). At that time Moore was residing in a brick house:

exceedingly pleasantly situated about two Miles from the Town [of Brunswick], and about a half a Mile from the River; through there is a Creek comes close up to the Door, between two beautiful Meadows about three Miles length. He has a Prospect of the Town of *Brunswick*, and of another beautiful Brick House, a building about half a Mile from him, belonging to *Eleaver Allen*, Esq. [Lilliput Plantation] (Anonymous 1737:43).

Only a few days later, as the visitor traveled up the Northwest Branch of the Cape Fear, he reached another of Roger Moore’s plantations, Blue Banks, “where he is a going to build another very large Brick House” (Anonymous 1737:45).

Lee has identified the first brick

plantation house about 2 miles from Brunswick as Kendal and on this basis assumes that Orton had not yet been built, but was constructed after 1734 (Lee 1965:187-188).

Since, based on archaeological evidence, Kendal was of frame construction the 1734 visitor was actually at Orton – not Kendal. This means that the main brick Orton house was constructed by that time (1734) and it was at Blue Banks that Moore intended to build another brick house.

In December 1747 Charleston merchant Henry Laurens visited Roger Moore and subsequently wrote to enlist his aid in recovering a debt owed Laurens by his uncle, Augustus Laurens. Henry Laurens provided Moore with his power of attorney, as well as documents proving the debt (Hamer et al. 1968:88-90).

By March 1748 Laurens was writing another colleague who was having a similar problem collecting from an individual who had “eloped” to North Carolina. Laurens offered to send the colleague’ power of attorney to Roger Moore, but questioned whether it was worth the effort:

Whether sending a Power to No. Carolina would be of any service to you or not I will not pretend to say, but you may form some Judgment from the following Story. A Person in my debt near Three hundred Pounds Sterling absconded from hence about 2½ Years ago & went to that Province. A power of Attorney was immediately sent after him & he was arrested, & judgment obtain’d but nothing further done; in November Last I went my self to Cape Fear, where I found my Debtor in good Circumstances, sufficient to pay twice the Sum above mention’d. However to get clear of the affair I made him an offer to give up all the Interest if he would Pay me the Principal of his Bond, which

he refuse'd to do unless I would take it in Pitch & Tar at his own Price and time. I then empower'd another Person to Act for me & recover the Amount due & from that time to this moment I have not had a Line or Message on the affair, altho more than twenty conveyances have since presented" (Hamer et al, 1968:120).

By May 1748 Roger Moore had written Laurens, apparently reporting that he had obtained 300 barrels of pitch ready to be shipped in payment of the debt. Laurens was still complaining that the resolution favored the debtor since the pitch might be worth "little or much." It appears that he nevertheless accepted the payment since it was clear he would do no better (Hamer et al. 1968:140). A subsequent letter dated June 1748, this time to William Moore, the eldest son of Roger Moore, indicated that Laurens had chartered a ship to pick up the naval stores and was attempting to exchange the tar for pitch (Hamer et al. 1968:146).

There are no further letter exchanges between the Moores and Henry Laurens, so presumably he obtained what he could from his uncle and wrote off whatever may have remained of the debt. While Roger Moore sought to intervene, it does not appear that he was especially proactive in looking for a settlement and it seems unlikely that Henry Laurens got full satisfaction on his debt. Also of interest, these discussions focus entirely on naval stores, with no suggestion that rice or other commodities were readily available for export.

In March 1747/8 Roger Moore prepared his will, to which a codicil was added in June 1750. By May 1751 Roger Moore had died and his will was proved in the Wilmington Court (Grimes 1912:312). The will provides one of few primary documents providing clear evidence of Moore's plantation activities since there is no surviving inventory of his estate.

At the time Moore wrote his will he

possessed "Twenty Odd Thousand Acres of Land & Near Two Hundred & fifty Slaves, with the Stock of Horses, Cattle, &c., & besides the Debts Due To me" (Grimes 1912:311). Among those slaves was "the Carpenter" Higate, specifically mentioned, as well as four additional "Carpinters now at Nuce" (Grimes 1912:310,311). Also mentioned are "House slaves," although only Bess is mentioned by name. What Moore did not mention were any slaves skilled in rice or indigo production. The large number of carpenters seems appropriate, however, for plantations focused on naval stores.

Moore mentions horses, cattle, and sheep, all at Orton. He also indicates the presence of plate and household furniture, also specifically associated with Orton.

William Moore, Roger Moore's youngest son, was bequeathed "my Plantation Called Orton where I now dwell," amounting to about 2,500 acres. Roger Moore establishes the boundaries as Kendal and southward "on the Creek where My Mill now is." We can suppose that this creek is what is today Orton Pond, but there is no mention of the mill dam or other flood control structures in the will. It sounds as though the mill was situated inland, near the creek, and was not on the Cape Fear.

William also obtained the 640 acre Rocky Point, half of the 55,000 acres on the neck known as Mount Misery, a tract of land bounded by the Cape Fear and Smiths Creek, and 5,000 acres near the Haw or Eno old fields.

William was also to receive a fifth of his slaves, divided among his children by "Chance by Lott." William was to receive the horses, cattle, and sheep at Orton, as well as the plate and household furniture. For the bequeath, however, William was obligated to pay his elder brother George £100. Roger Moore left his primary estate, Orton, to his youngest - not eldest - son. Regardless, it appears that Orton remained the Moore's family seat. William was one of the area's largest slave holders with 118 enslaved African Americans according to tax lists (Watson 1996:12).

William Moore held the plantation for only a few years. His will, dated November 18, 1754, left his wife, Mary "one half of all my personal Estate, her heirs and assigns forever," as well as "the use of my Plantation at Orton." His estate, however, was bequeathed to his son, Roger Moore (II) (New Hanover County Register of Deeds, Record Book D, pg. 134-135).

Roger Moore at the time was a minor and the estate was managed by William's executors, George and Maurice Moore. An inventory documented the presence of two carpenters, three coopers, and a blacksmith, as well as 13 mares and 17 horses. Enslaved African Americans included six boys, one girl, and "nineteen young negroes that at present do not work".

The estate came with a sizable debt of nearly £1,700 plus annual payments of over £130, suggesting that either William was a poor businessman or that he had somehow become overextended. Another option is that the Orton Plantation was not as profitable as it has historically been assumed.

Regardless, in an effort to resolve the debt and maintain the property in the Moore family, George and Maurice Moore entered into an agreement with Richard Quince and William Dry in 1764. Quince and Dry would repay the debt in exchange for operating the plantation until Roger Moore came of age about 1773 at which time he would own the plantation free of any debt. The agreement, in fact, stipulated that Roger would receive "the said lands together with the negroes and their increase only to be delivered up to the said Roger Moore, free and clear of all the encumbrances." To ensure the faithful performance George and Maurice held a bond (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB A, pg. 1-5).

Both Quince and Dry were wealthy, owning a combined 254 slaves (Brunswick County Tax List, 1769). In addition, both men had marriage ties to the Moore family. Thus, this agreement may have represented a life line to the young Roger Moore and an effort to keep Orton Plantation in the Moore family.

Orton During the Revolution

Morrill (1993) and Russell (1965) provide a broad overview of the events surrounding the late 1775 and early 1776 actions on the Cape Fear River. North Carolina's Royal Governor, Josiah Martin, fearing for his safety, fled Tryon Palace and took up residence at Fort Johnson below Brunswick on June 2, 1775. Anticipating an attack, the governor fled to a British ship anchored in the river and had the fortifications' armament laid on the beach for protection by the guns of the British ship. When American forces under the command of Col. Robert Howe took possession of the fort on the night of July 18, it was burned. Unable to recover the armament on the beach, American forces abandoned the ruins.

The following winter the British sent seven regular army regiments and two companies of artillery to the Lower Cape Fear, anticipating that Governor Martin would be able to rally Loyalist supporters. These plans were thwarted by the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge on February 27, 1776 when Scottish Highlanders under Lt. Col. Donald McLeod were met by American forces, resulting in the first Patriot victory in the American Revolution.

An effort by the British to either retake or further destroy Fort Johnson on March 10, 1776 was repulsed by American forces at the fortification. On March 12 the rest of the British Maj. Gen. Henry Clinton's fleet from New York arrived in the Lower Cape Fear. Learning that he would have no Loyalists meeting his forces, Clinton chose not to land his soldiers, but kept them on his ships. Occasional foraging parties were sent on shore and accounts report that American snipers fired intermittently on the British for several days during late April and early May. One account relates that the British troops were sickly from the voyage and small pox, so the landing may have been necessary for their health, if not morale (Allen 1814:59). American forces apparently moved inland about May 3 and British forces landed on Battery and Bald Head islands, as well as at Fort Johnson for daily exercises.

On May 11 Clinton led a night raid on the coast. The best account comes from a letter subsequently published in various newspapers:

The enemy having landed at General Robert Howe's plantation on Sunday morning, between two and three o'clock, about nine hundred troops, under the command of Generals Clinton and Cornwallis, the sentry posted on the river bank immediately gave the alarm to the guards, who had only time to collect their horses and throw down the fences to let a few cattle out, which they drove off before the enemy surrounded the house. On their march up the

causeway from the river, part of the guard kept up a fire on them, which the enemy returned. A few women who lived in the house were treated with great barbarity, one of whom was shot through the hips, another stabbed, with a bayonet, and a third knocked down with the butt of a musket. The enemy had two men killed, several wounded, and a Sergeant of the Thirty-Third Regiment taken prisoner. They proceeded on their march to Orton Mill, with a design to surprise Major Davis, who commanded a detachment of about ninety men stationed at that place. In this they failed, as

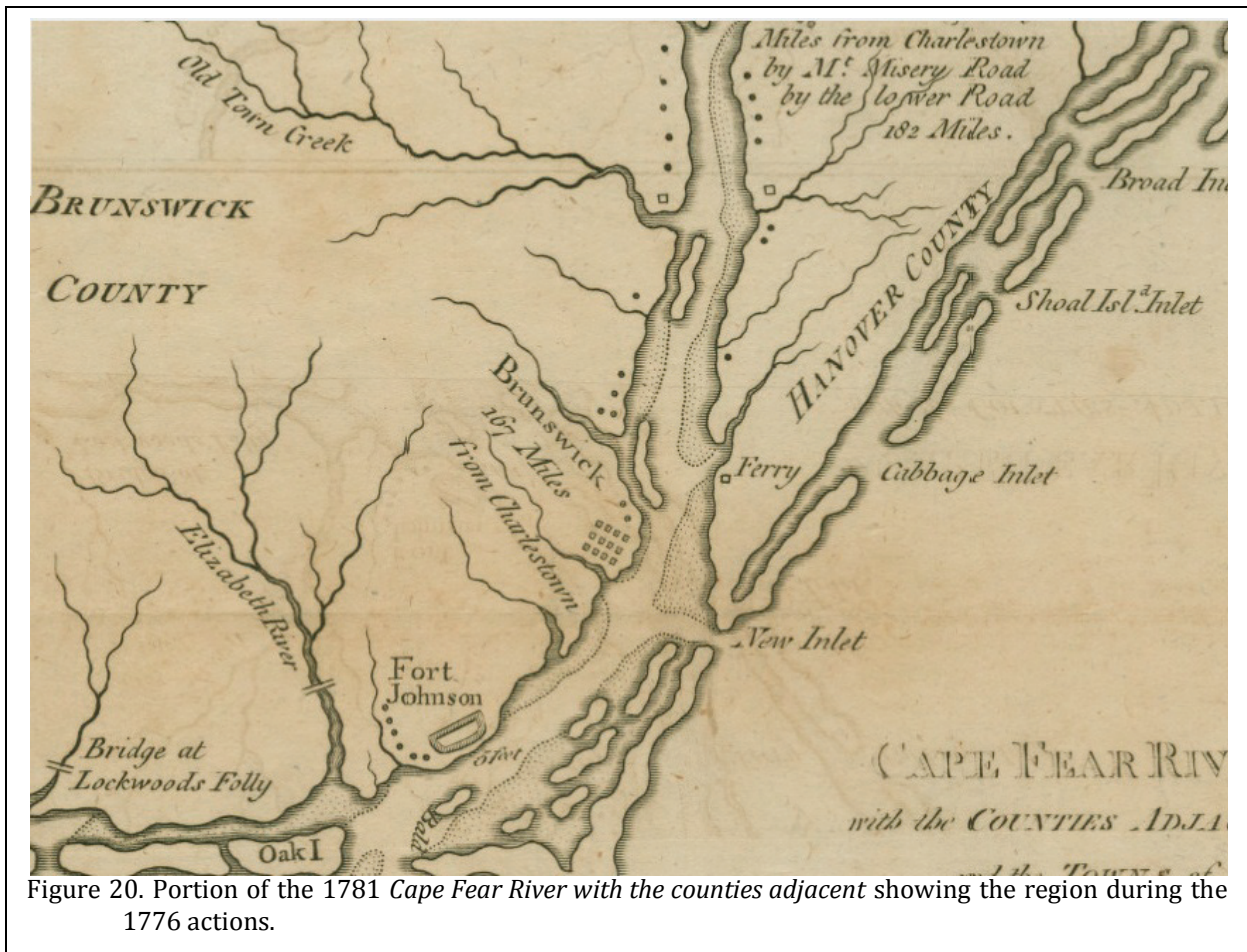


Figure 20. Portion of the 1781 Cape Fear River with the counties adjacent showing the region during the 1776 actions.

the Major had received the alarm from the guard, and had retired, with his baggage and two small swivels, in very good order, unpursued by the enemy. They have burned the Mill, and retreated to the vessels at the Fort. Upon the whole the Generals have very little to boast of, they having got by this descent three horses and three cows. We had not a man killed or wounded (Clarke and Force 1843:432; *South Carolina & American General Gazette*, May 8-22, 1776).

This account has been repeated by various historians since, although often some of the details became embellished. For example, Ashe reports that “twenty bullocks” were taken by the British (Ashe 1908:534). Martin incorrectly reports the mill as “Ostin’s,” but otherwise the account is nearly identical (Martin 1829:391).

Allen further explains that while the British claimed to have lost only one man, “a negro man who was with them, and heard what was said, soon after told me that he helped to bury thirty-one of them” (Allen 1814:61). In addition, the ship’s log of *H.M. Sloop Scorpion* indicates that on Sunday, May 12, 1776 a boat was sent ashore to supply the transports with “Rum and Rice.” In addition the small contingent “interred the Body of Jno Jefferies at Brunswick [a seaman who had died the day before]” (Morgan 1970:81).

Although this account has typically been taken to reference the nineteenth century Orton mill near the Cape Fear, it seems far more reasonable to assume the mill was the structure referenced by Roger Moore in his will. If so, it was almost certainly located inland, perhaps in the vicinity of the Orton Pond mill dam today.

After two and a half months on the Cape Fear, with very little to show for the effort, Clinton sailed south to Charleston, South Carolina on May 31, 1776. The North Carolina General Assembly appropriated funds to repair Fort Anderson in

1778 and it was subsequently garrisoned by a small command through 1780. The post was again abandoned when British regulars under the command of Maj. James H. Craig entered the Cape Fear on January 25, 1781. During the British occupation of Wilmington it is likely that the fort saw additional destruction. We have not identified documents concerning activities at plantations such as Orton.

Richard Quince

We presume that Quince and Dry surrendered Orton Plantation to Roger Moore when he came of age in 1773 and we know the property was still in the Moore family in 1775 (NC Secretary of State, File 172). Nevertheless, through undetermined means Richard Quince the elder acquired Orton Plantation prior to his death in 1778. It appears that Roger Moore was either unable to operate Orton, was not interested in life on the tract, or perhaps incurred a significant debt.

Richard Quince the elder was a very well known and prosperous merchant, doing business in Brunswick under the name of Richard Quince & Sons. He was a member of a very old Cape Fear family (Lee 1965:138, 157, 160) and was a member of the Wilmington District Committee of Safety during the early days of the Revolution (Wheeler 1851:74). He married twice and had five children, Richard II, Parker, John, Jane, and Ann (The Quince Family, Bill Reaves Collection, New Hanover Public Library). When Richard Quince the elder died, his property, not named in the will, was divided equally among his children, nieces, and nephews, with Richard II and Parker serving as executors (New Hanover County Will Book C, pg. 354).

Little is known about Quince’s tenure at Orton. The inventory of the property fails to identify any strong ties to rice and the coopers on the plantation may have made barrels for naval stores, rice, or indigo. A quantity of lumber (14,000 feet) and timber were purchased by North Carolina for use at the Brunswick breastworks and for a fire raft (NCDAH, General Assembly Records, April 25, 1777).

We also know that the marriage of Richard Quince II to Ann Davis maintained the Moore line at Orton since Ann was the granddaughter of Ann Moore, a sister of Roger Moore.

Benjamin Smith

On January 23, 1796 Richard Quince III sold the 2,700 acre "plantation parcel or tract of land well known by the name of Orton" to Benjamin Smith for \$5,200 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 149).

Also included in the conveyance were two additional 640 acre tracts "patented to the said Richard Quince the elder" the whole amounting to about 4,000 acres. These two parcels are perhaps the tracts on the north and south sides of Orton Creek dating from May 19, 1773 and March 31, 1775 (Secretary of State, File 174 and File 172).

This deed is of special importance since it contains the derivation of the property, noting that the plantation was devised "by the late Roger Moore Esquire to his son William Moore by him devised unto his son Roger Moore and by him sold unto Richard Quince grandfather of Richd. Quince aforesaid party."

Consequently, this deed allows us to better understand who held the property after it was passed by Roger Moore to his son, William. According to this deed it passed from William (who died in 1757) to his son Roger. It was this Roger Moore who then sold the property to Richard Quince the elder, prior to 1778. By 1783 when Richard II died it passed to Richard III and was sold 13 years later to Benjamin Smith. While this continues to leave unanswered much about ownership and activities, it at least helps to fill the gap. Unfortunately, Benjamin Smith's ownership leaves us with just as many questions.

Smith is relatively well known, with a biography having recently been produced (Watson 2011). Just as the Quince ownership was tied to Orton's Roger Moore, so too was Smith since his mother Sarah was a daughter of Roger Moore.

While little is known of Smith's early years, by 1774 he was admitted to the Middle Temple of London's Inns of Court (Middle Temple is one of the four Inns of Court which have the exclusive right to admit individuals to the Bar). He returned to America and served under George Washington in New York and William Moultrie in South Carolina, rising to the rank of colonel. Smith held various elected positions. He may be best known in North Carolina for serving on the original board of the University of North Carolina and donating 20,000 acres of land to the new University (*The Daily Advertiser*, New Bern, NC, April 12, 1790). He obtained a contract with the federal government to rebuilt Fort Johnson. By 1796 he was made a Brigadier-General of the militia. In 1810 he served one term as governor. He returned from Raleigh to the life of a prosperous planter, but his wealth began slipping from him as a result of financial errors, personal extravagance, and long-term debt obligations. Another account explained that "Governor Smith lost his health by high living and his fortune by too generous suretyship. He became irascible and prone to resent fancied slights. His tongue became venomous to opponents" (quoted in Cobb 1911:165).

Within a year and half Smith had his slave Bob approved to keep a gun on Orton to procure game and protect stock (Watson 2011:102; Brunswick County Court Minutes, July 1797). This suggests that Smith himself may have spent time at the plantation.

One of the earliest indications of possible rice cultivation used by historians is an August 10, 1797 letter in which Smith notes that, "my rice is most certain dependence that will yield handsomely" (Benjamin Smith, Bill Reaves Collection, New Hanover Public Library). Unfortunately, Smith at the time owned not only Orton, but also Belvedere Plantation and this particular letter was written from Belvedere, suggesting it was that plantation being referenced.

A letter from the same period when he references sending his rice to New York and Philadelphia, to "two honest Quakers who never deceive me" (quoted in Watson 2011:122) may

also be a reference to rice from Belvedere.

The 1800 federal census for Smith shows his household consisted of himself and his wife, as well as two white females aged between 26 and 44. In addition, he owned 199 slaves. Watson (2011:123) believes that in 1802 Smith had only one mill in operation, probably the one at Belvedere. There is no indication that any rice or lumber mill was operating at Orton. A decade later the number of slaves remained stable, increasing to only 204. Of course, this number almost certainly reflect slaves held on both Belvedere and Orton.

There is an 1801 advertisement in the *Wilmington Gazette* in which Smith announced he owned a new cotton gin on Orton Plantation. The gin could “clean at least 1,000 weight from the seed per day so as to injure the staples as little as any Saw gin in the State” (quoted in “Pine Products Still Drove Commerce,” *Star News*, July 23, 1989). It seems unlikely that Smith would have a cotton gin – even to rent to his neighbors – if he wasn’t also producing cotton on Orton. This is the earliest documented presence of cotton cultivation on the plantation.

Economic Collapse

Beginning in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Smith’s creditors began mounting and both slaves and properties alike were sold off. In 1812 Smith conveyed Belvedere, Orton, and seven additional tracts – nearly 11,000 acres in all – to William B. Mears and John R. London, agents for the Bank of Cape Fear (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 139; see also New Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB P, pg. 402).

The deed reveals that these tracts were a result of a court judgment for \$25,898 in principal and \$316.27 in interest due the bank. The Bank gave Smith a three year extension (to 1815), using these itemized tracts to secure the judgment and allowing the Bank the profits of the properties. Moreover, should Smith not make the necessary payment, the deed authorized the Bank to sell the property at public auction.

In 1815 Smith faced another creditor who obtained two additional judgments, one for £3,348 in principal and £202.11.0 in interest and another for £551.9.3 in principal and interest. The property was seized and sold by the Sheriff to the Bank of Cape Fear, which paid \$2,600 for Orton and \$9,000 for Belvedere on February 1, 1815 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB G, pg. 173). The Bank apparently felt it was better to pay for the property than to lose its investment entirely. The sale is also interesting since it suggests that Belvedere was considered significantly more valuable than Orton by this point in time.

Shortly thereafter the Bank, through their agents Meares and London, placed advertisements in area papers announcing the auction of Belvedere and Orton. The later was described as

Including all the lands conveyed by Richard Quince to Benjamin Smith by Deed bearing date 23d Jan. 1796 containing by estimation 4000 acres together with all the Mills, Machines & improvements thereon (*Wilmington Gazette*, April 27, 1815, pg. 4; Kendal was placed up for auction at the same time).

Although it has been assumed by many historians that this sale never occurred or that there were no bidders, this doesn’t appear to be the case. The Bank of Cape Fear sold Orton and four additional tracts to a John F. Burgwin on June 21, 1816 for \$19,653.50 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB I, pg. 4). A mortgage for the property to the Bank was entered on June 22, 1816 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB H, pg. 206).

We know that Burgwin was a member of the North Carolina assembly and a well known commission merchant in Wilmington, operating under the name Burgwin & Company (Watson 2003:200). He was also “an agent and a friend of Smith and his wife” (90 Federal Reporter 256) and it may be that this was an effort to keep the property available to Smith. Other property

acquired by Burgwin, and Smith's financial collapse, remained a subject of court action well into the 1890s and involved another friend, Joseph G. Swift. In 1818, Smith's friend, General Swift, visited Smith who was still living at Orton and "found him greatly depressed by his debts" (Cobb 1911:167). Swift went to Wilmington in an effort to arrange some solution but reported he "found it a fruitless essay to liquidate the large claims of the General's creditors" (quoted in Cobb 1911:167). Thus, while it appears that Smith was buried in so much debt held by so many different creditors it was impossible to find any solution, his friends engaged in multiple efforts to avoid the sale of Smith's holdings.

By 1820 the number of slaves had fallen precipitously to only 43, correlating with Smith's increasing financial problems. The census indicates that his slaves were nearly evenly divided between males (22) and females (21), perhaps representing about 14 family units. Also present were 11 free persons of color, probably representing two families. Smith had 25 individuals involved in agriculture and two in manufacturing, leaving an equal number of the African Americans on his plantations seemingly not engaged in any activity. Even if the 11 free persons of color are excluded, this leaves 16 individuals not accounted for.

Creditors began to complain that Smith was constantly moving slaves from property to property in an effort to prevent them from being seized (Watson 2011:189). A possible example of this is a June 12, 1822 letter from Smith, still at Orton, to his nephew, Thomas Grimke in Charleston. Smith had sent an enslaved bricklayer, Prince, to Charleston (Southern Historical Collection, Benjamin Smith Papers, 1793-1826).

In 1824 the Orton lands were again advertised for sale, this time as far away as in Charleston, South Carolina:

Valuable Rice and Cotton Lands,
for sale.
Will be sold at Public Auction, at
the Court House, in the town of
Wilmington, N.C. on the first day

of December next –

All that Plantation, lying in the county of Brunswick, State of North-Carolina, known by the name of *Orton*, late the residence of Gov. Benjamin Smith, containing 4975 acres, more or less. Of this tract, between 400 and 500 acres is swamp land, of a strong and fertile soil, which, it is believed, will produce at least 1000 lbs. of Cotton, or 4 tierces of Rice, to the acre, and is more capable of being well drained than any on the river, the fall of the tide being at least 4½ feet. *Orton* is a valuable and beautiful Plantation, situate on the Cape-Fear river, about 16 miles below Wilmington, which affords a good market for all kinds of produce, and about 14 miles above Smithville, a place in high repute for its salubrity and pleasantness as a summer retreat. Included in the premises is a very superior and never failing Mill Stream, with an excellent Dam, wanting only flood gates – the Rice Machine, Mill and Gin having been recently destroyed by fire. The Pond may be used at all times as a reservoir of water to flow the low lands, thus rendering Orton one of the most valuable Rice Plantations in the country.

A liberal credit will be given, the particulars of which will be made known on the day of sale, or sooner, if application be made to the subscriber. I.e. premises can be viewed at any time, and possession will be delivered immediately after the sale (*City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, Charleston, SC, December 31, 1824, pg. 4).

This description is of importance since it provides

good evidence that a substantial pond – perhaps what is today known as Orton Pond – existed by this time, although in poor repair. Of equal significance, no mention is made of any rice production on the property – only that the property could be made suitable for rice production. There seems to be little evidence based on this document that Orton had yet produced any significant amount of rice and we have only documented the probable presence of cotton on the property.

Smith had been cast from his last plantation and by this time was living in a “partially furnished house in Smithville” being cared for by old friends (Watson 2011:196). His only other property was an “old pitiful dwelling” in the dilapidated village of Brunswick. Although we have not been able to identify any further documentation regarding the sale to Burgwin, this suggests that he defaulted on the mortgage to the Bank of Cape Fear and they recovered the property, finally deciding to be done with the issue and sell it. We have found that another of Burgwin’s tracts, in Jones County, was advertised for auction by the Bank of Cape Fear (*Carolina Centennial* (New Bern, North Carolina), December 9, 1820).

Smith wrote his will on November 21, 1825. His first instruction was that he be buried with his “excellent & dear wife” (who died in 1821) at St. Philips in Brunswick. He instructed, “I desire that a handsome tomb equal to that over her [his wife’s] mother’s remains to be erected with a suitable inscription written” (New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137). It is believed that Smith was first buried in Smithville and subsequently moved to an unmarked grave in St. Philips. By 1853 a ledger was placed over the graves of both Smith and his wife (Cobb 1911:176, South 2010:227).

Smith also instructed that his “servants Betty, Horace, Laura, Lucetta, Sam & John may be manumitted and set free, but more especially Laura, for her affectionate & unbounded attention and services to my Dear Wife, particularly in her last illness” (New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137). North Carolina’s manumission law dates to

1777 (*An Act to Prevent Domestic Insurrections, and for other Purposes*) and specified that no slave would be set free without “meritorious Services” and the owner must post a bond. It seems no more likely that these slaves were freed were than that Smith obtained the grand monument he desired.

The Late Antebellum and Dr. Frederick J. Hill

In 1826, The Bank of Cape Fear finally identified a purchaser for Orton Plantation, Joseph A. Hill (New Hanover County Register of Deeds, DB S, pg. 523). Beyond Hill’s service in the North Carolina assembly in 1823-1824, 1826-1827, and 1830, we have little additional information. In any event, he sold the property to Dr. Frederick Jones Hill (his cousin) on May 24, 1826 for \$8,000 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB J, pg. 264). The deed specified the property, “known as the Orton lands” contained 4,975 acres.

The circuitous route of ownership may be the result of Frederick’s father, Dr. John Hill, serving as the President of the Bank of Cape Fear. Perhaps it wouldn’t appear appropriate for Frederick to bid directly on the property. Regardless, by mid-1826 Frederick Hill became a planter.

Susan Taylor Block has posted considerable research on Frederick J. Hill that she has accumulated for an upcoming book concerning the Moore family (<http://susantaylorblock.com/2012/03/07/frederick-jones-hill-architect-of-grace/>).

The Lower Cape Fear continued to exhibit the extraordinary kinship of the Moore family; Frederick Hill was a great-great grandson of James Moore and a great-grandson of Roger Moore’s brother, Nathaniel. His paternal grandfather, William Hill, married Margaret, daughter of Nathaniel Moore, at Orton Plantation in 1757 while the plantation was owned by Roger Moore (II) and was being operated by Quince and Dry.

Block reports that Frederick received his medical training at the College of Physicians and

Surgeons (today Columbia University Medical Center). Afterwards he worked as a physician only briefly, although he was made an honorary member of the North Carolina Medical Society. He served briefly in the North Carolina assembly and is perhaps best remembered for his support of public education. He also served as the Director of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad, which eventually became the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.

Frederick and his wife, Ann Watters, apparently lived at Orton since the 1830 census reports five free whites living at Orton in addition to the 55 enslaved African Americans. Also in 1830 we find advertisements in the Wilmington newspaper offering lumber for sale from the plantation:

Lumber below the Flats

Lumber, in all respects equal to the best sawed at the Steam Mills, can be obtained at the Mill at Orton, 4 miles below the lower flats at \$12 p.m. for all lengths and sizes except when sawed to bill, in which case an extra price will be charged. A good wharf has been constructed, where Vessels can lay securely, free of expense and supplies of wood and water be procured with facility.

Apply to F.J. Hill at Orton or to Wm. C. Lord. Wilmington (*Cape Fear Recorder*, Wilmington, NC, February 10, 1830).

Block reports that William C. Lord was Frederick's brother-in-law (he married Eliza Hill in 1811; *Raleigh Minerva*, Raleigh, NC, February 28, 1811) and while she suggests that he managed the mill at Orton, the advertisement places him in Wilmington, so he may have provided the commercial oversight. Block also reports that Lord also lived at Orton, at least during some portions of the year (personal communication 2012).

In May 1827 the *Carolina Gazette* reprinted an article from the *Cape Fear Recorder* that reported what was likely a tornado that

struck many of the plantations along the Cape Fear, including Orton, where the machine and winnowing house as "unroofed" and the barn was "utterly demolished" (*Carolina Gazette*, Charleston, SC, May 25, 1827, pg. 3)

Orton's Mill was a postal stop in Brunswick County from April 1828 to April 1834 when it was discontinued (Winter 2008:24).

In addition to timber, Orton was planted in rice at least by 1838, when a news article mentioned the "rice crops at Lilliput, Kendall, and Orton," noting that the reporter had "never seen a richer promise or the prospect of a greater yield" (*Wilmington Advertiser*, Wilmington, NC, August 3, 1838).

In 1833 Hill hosted Bishop Levi S. Ives at Orton where he visited the ruins of St. Philips in Brunswick (Haywood 1910:95).

Moore's Orton house was reported damaged as a result of what may have been a tornado on June 20, 1835. A newspaper account described hailstones of 6 inches in diameter and

A whirlwind arose about 15 miles below town, and did considerable damage on the plantation of Dr. Frederick J. Hill, carrying off the roof of his dwelling house to a considerable distance, and very much shattering the body, &c. (*Charleston Courier*, Charleston, SC, June 29, 1835).

By 1840 the number of slaves on Orton increased to 76, while the white population remained stable.

Hill seems to have a special interest in the Brunswick ruins. One account remarks that during his ownership "Dr. Hill . . . was careful to have the ruins of the church and the adjoining grounds keep free from the approaches of the luxuriant undergrowth" ("A Visit to Old Brunswick and the Ruins of St. Philips Church," *Church Messenger*, Winston Salem, NC, September 28, 1880). It may

Table 4.
Industrial and Agricultural Production of Orton Plantation in 1850

	Raw Material Used			Kind of Power	Average # Hands	Wages	Annual Product		
	Capital Invested	Quant.	Kinds				\$ Value	Quant.	Kinds
Saw Mill	10,000	3,000,000 ft	timber	water	10 males	130	2,160,000 ft	good timber	21,600
Rice Trashing Machine	400	250 tons	rice in straw	water	7 females	49	15,000 bu	rough rice	12,400
Acres									
Improved	1500	30,000							
Unimproved	500								
Value of Implements									
Horses	8								
Asses	3								
Milk Cows	12								
Oxen	12								
Other Cattle	20								
Sheep	58								
Swine	20								
\$ of Livestock	1197								
Corn (bu)	400								
Rice (lbs)	325,000								
Wood (lbs)	100								
Pens (bu)	30								
Sweet Potatoes (bu)	3,000								
Butter (lbs)	75								

have been this interest in the ruins that propelled Hill to acquire the Brunswick property in 1845 for the price of \$4.25 (NC Land Grants BK CL, pg. 150).

Consistent with his status, Hill also offered lavish parties at Orton and one was carefully detailed in a local newspaper article that described the:

house and grounds beautifully illuminated with variegated lights. The large balcony in front was decorated for the Ball Room; and in the rear garden a miniature stage was erected, tastefully decorated, the which forming a coup d'wil, calculated to entrance the senses and force upon the conviction that our worthy host held in his possession the famous lamp of Alladin ("Smithville - A Fashionable Watering Place," *Wilmington Herald*, Wilmington, BC, August 30, 1851).

The article went on to describe romantic arbors, a Chinese pagoda, and other garden features. Present were "beautiful flowers (native and exotic) which bloomed around" with "rich clusters of Scuppernong grapes."

Orton in 1850

In 1850, we have the first detailed census report for Orton Plantation. Frederick Hill was by this time 56 years old and he identified himself as a planter. His wife, Ann, was 57 years old. Hill's real estate was valued at \$30,000.

Only 87 of the 114 households in the Town Creek Township listed a real estate value in 1850. The average real estate value was \$2,287; the median was only \$250. Frederick Hill's value of \$30,000 is second, below the \$75,000 listed by James Moore. It is \$10,000 more than his brother John Hill listed for adjacent Kendal Plantation.

In addition to Hill and his family, the

census also listed an overseer, William McKeithan, 49 years old, living on the property. There were also 77 African American slaves on Orton.

Table 4 provides information on the agricultural and industrial production of Orton in 1850. The industrial census reveals that Orton had both a saw mill and a rice mill, with the latter capable of producing rough rice, but not polishing the finished rice. The two mills employed 17 slaves, although presumably not full time. What is more interesting is that both in the value of raw materials used and the value of the annual product, Orton's timber resources continued to be more significant than the rice crop. In fact, in terms of the final product, lumber was nearly double the value of rice.

Looking at the agricultural production, the plantation appears fairly typical. The 12 oxen were likely used to plow the rice fields. Cattle produced both milk and beef. Sheep produced a small quantity of wool and were likely also used for meat. Looking only at agricultural production, rice appears to be very significant, with only modest amounts of corn and sweet potatoes being grown on the plantation. Yet, when the effort of lumber production is added, the rice production is placed in a better prospective. In fairness, however, Orton produced significantly more rice in 1850 than any of the other plantations in the Town Creek Township.

Continued Use of the Orton Burial Ground

In 1847 Dr. John Hill of Kendal was buried in the Orton burial ground. Why Orton was used rather than the burial ground at Lilliput is not known. Others buried on Orton during Frederick Hill's tenure include James A. Berry (1832), Marie Ivie (Toomer) Winsow (1843), Catharine Ann Berry (1844), and Louisa Catharine Burr (1852).

James A. Berry was a Wilmington commission merchant who faced sudden and unexpected failure in 1825. By 1828 he had applied to the Court for relief as an Insolvent Debtor and moved from Wilmington to Smithville, where he worked as a clerk for the engineer in

charge of public works (Richardson 1845:114-122, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). His wife, Catharine Ann, was a sister of Frederick Hill. It is this family connection that places these burials at Orton. Similarly, Louisa Catharine Burr was the granddaughter of James and Catharine Berry, explaining her relationship to Orton.

We also know that James A. Berry married into the Winslow family. Sprunt (1958:48) claims that Marie Ivie was the great granddaughter of James Moore, furthering her connection to Orton.

It is perhaps worth noting that when Frederick Hill himself died in 1861 he was buried in Wilmington's Oakdale Cemetery. By this time Orton was under different ownership and this combined with the Civil War may have precluded his burial at Orton. Alternatively, it may be that the remote and rather unkempt burial ground at Orton was not suitable for Hill's status in Wilmington society or his aesthetic sensibilities.

Supporting this view is the account of the graveyard in 1849, described as being surrounded by a "wilderness of vines, brush-wood, and reeds, all growing 'in a wild state of nature.'" (Wile 1866:152). Within the cemetery sat "old brick vaults, without a name, and without a date" but "not a shrub, nor a blade of grass" was present and the burials fronted on the "lonely expanse of water." It may not have been a place that a gentleman cared to be buried.

Turning to South Carolina, Fick (2005:371, 374) notes that creating a family burial plot "reinforced a planter's emotional claim to his land," but this behavior changed by the nineteenth century, when few new cemeteries were created.

Orton Point Light

In August 1848 Congress appropriated funds to establish a light on the Cape Fear River at what was known as Orton Point (Act of August 14, 1848, Jackson 2008:170). It was part of the beacon system for the area that also included lights at Bald Head Island, Oak Island, and Upper

Jetty (Block 1999:52). Not all of the work was immediately accomplished. For example, an examination of the Upper Jetty found it so decayed that it would not support a light and the project was initially abandoned (Anonymous 1871:536). The work at Orton, however, progressed. Years later the location was noted to be 12.88 miles from the foot of Market Street in Wilmington ("River Distances," *Wilmington Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, March 10, 1888, pg. 5).

The property was deeded to the U.S. Government by Hill on February 10, 1849 for the sum of \$100. The location was described as:

at a point on the Marsh Bank of the Cape Fear river, known as Orton Point; beginning at a stake at high water mark from which the center of the "Sugar Loaf" bears South 43°10' East and Federal Point light bears South 12°40' East, thence running North 9°40' West one hundred and twenty seven feet to a stake, thence South 82° West sixty two and a half feet to a stake at the edge of a ditch, thence South 3° 40' East two hundred feet along the said ditch to a stake, thence South 42° East sixty eight feet to a stake, thence North 11° East one hundred and thirty six feet to the beginning (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB H, pg. 195).

In spite of an accompanying survey (Figure 21), years later the Government would note that the property would be "difficult to locate as the available description is vague and indefinite" (National Archives, RG 26: U.S. Coast Guard, Entry 66, Lighthouse Site Files).

Records indicate that the light was constructed by 1850 at a cost of about \$3,500. During the Civil War the light was destroyed. An 1867 report notes that it had not yet been re-established and required "a new lantern, new sash and doors, plastering repaired, and breakwater in front to protect the site" (National

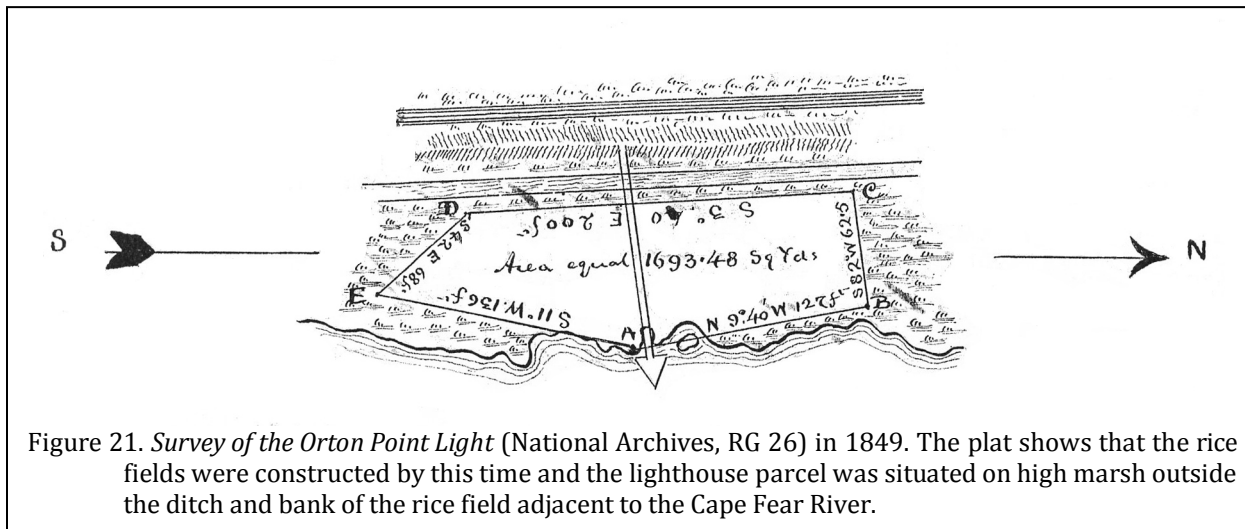


Figure 21. *Survey of the Orton Point Light* (National Archives, RG 26) in 1849. The plat shows that the rice fields were constructed by this time and the lighthouse parcel was situated on high marsh outside the ditch and bank of the rice field adjacent to the Cape Fear River.

Archives, RG 26: U.S. Coast Guard, Entry 13, Clipping Files). While supplies to repair the light were available by the following year, no work was undertaken and in 1873 a report explained:

There was a light formerly at this place, which was discontinued during the war, and has not been re-established. An inspection of the chart will almost of itself show its value. . . . The engineer of the district made a personal examination of this abandoned station in March. The light was formerly exhibited from a lantern on a keeper's dwelling, which had been built close up to the water's edge. The house is now in ruins. The walls and a portion of the flooring remain; but as the house was on wooden piles, some of them have decayed, others have been eaten up by the worms, and they no longer form a reliable support. It would cost more to repair the old house than to build a new one. It is therefore recommended that an appropriation be made to re-establish this light by building a new light-house on cast-iron piles close to the site of the old one. The material in the latter can

be used as rip-rap protection to the shore, which has washed away somewhat under the abrasive action of the water. The light should be of the fifth order, illuminating an arc of 220°. The estimated cost of such a structure at or near this point is \$15,000, for which an appropriation is asked (National Archives, RG 26: U.S. Coast Guard, Entry 13, Clipping Files).

The light must have been repaired since it is shown on coastal charts from 1878 through 1913. It disappeared, however, by 1922. On April 9, 1956 the Orton Point Light property was quit claimed by the U.S. Government back to James L. Sprunt, Jr., Kenneth M. Sprunt, Samuel N. Sprunt, and Laurence G. Sprunt, the owners of Orton at the time (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 125, pg. 580). As late as about 1998 Jackson reported that foundation remains were still present and visible in the marsh (Jackson 2008:170).

Expansion of the Mansion

Sprunt comments that Hill "contributed to Orton's interest and beauty" by undertaking various modifications to Moore's "story and a house." Specifically he claimed that Hill added:

About 1840, another floor and

attic and install[ed] the four fluted Doric columns in the style then popular (Sprunt 1958:14).

This seems to have been universally accepted. The National Register nomination for Orton reiterates the original structure a “one-and-one-half story dwelling” and that:

in the 1840s the house was enlarged into a two-story Greek Revival temple-form structure. Evidence in the attic suggests a possible intermediate state of development, with the front part of the house being raised to two stories (a center hall plan one room deep) earlier (Anonymous 1972:2).

Block repeats these claims (<http://susantaylorblock.com/2012/03/07/fredrick-jones-hill-architect-of-grace/>), but like other authors, offers no substantive documentation, other than Hill’s time spent in Raleigh when the state capitol was being constructed with its Doric columns. She observes that the capitol was finished in 1840, the same year modifications began at Orton, but of course there is no documentation of when Orton was modified. Since the building was badly damaged in 1835, it seems far more probable that the modifications were done in conjunction with the replacement of the roof and the other repairs needed to the

structure itself.

The best opportunity to fully understand what has transpired at Orton can perhaps be found in the structure itself. However, we are not aware of any detailed architectural assessment of the building or the documentation of various elements. Such an effort should receive a very high priority.

Thomas C. Miller and the Civil War

In 1854 Frederick J. Hill conveyed Orton Plantation to Thomas C. Miller for \$100,000 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583). This sale, like others before it, was not without the influence of family ties. Miller is reported to have married a niece of the owner’s wife, Sarah Ann Hill (“Orton’s Old Oaks: Gate to the Past,” *News* [Wilmington, NC], April 6, 1970, Sprunt 1958:15).

Prior to his becoming a planter Miller was a successful attorney whose talent made newspapers even as far away as Charleston, South Carolina (*Charleston Courier*, Charleston, SC, April 30, 1847, pg. 2; *Charleston Mercury*, Charleston, SC, February 14, 1847, pg. 1)

The property was described as “the Orton lands & estimated to contain 4975 acres being the same which were conveyed to the said Frederick J.

Table 5.
Enslaved African Americans at Orton sold by Hill in 1854

Dolly & 3 children	Pompey	Bob
Nathan	Dinah	Lucinda
Ishan & Duncan	Caso	Peggy
Sukey & 2 children	Thomas	Guilford
Ben & Rachel	Andrew	Moses
Sam & wife Lucy	Jenny	Isaac
Cuffee	Lewis	Nat Jr.
Mingo	Nelson	Isaac Black
Sally & 4 children, Sam, Euelina, Eliza, Peter	Harriet & 4 children, John, Davy, Edenboro & Annabella	Sandy
Warren	Hannah	Betty
Walker	Solomon	Judy & child
Frederick	Nat	Josh
Burguin	Jimmy	Rachael
Fidler John	Job	Mingo Jr.
Tom & his wife, Abbey	Hercules	Dennis
Phillis & her child	Katy	Billy & Mary Claypole
Ceaser		

Hill by deed dated the 24th day of May 1826.” Also included were two 50 acre parcels, one on the west side of Tom Branch and the other on the south side of the Orton Mill Pond.

Hill also sold 70 African Americans that presumably were living on the plantation (Table 5) – seven fewer than were itemized in the 1850 census.

The names provide an exceptional resource, revealing at least five probably husband and wife units and five households with a single mother and children. The list includes 20 adult females and 34 adult males. Several of the names have special identifiers – two are juniors, although this term may simply identify an individual as younger and not necessarily related. One is identified as “black,” suggesting a particular dark skin color. One is identified as “Fidler,” [sic] presumably a reference to his musical ability. None are identified by work skills, such as sawyer, bricklayer, hunter, or gate tender.

The names also illustrate a mix of African “country names” such as Cuffee and Mingo, classical and Biblical names such as Hercules, Caesar, Pompey, Dinah, Job, and Moses, as well as English names such as Thomas and Warren (Cohen 1952). One slave family actually possessed a surname, Claypole, which is very unusual.

In a memorandum separate from the deed, Hill agreed to provide a new deed as soon as Miller had obtained a proper survey for the property (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 581). Since no secondary deed is found either no survey was made or Miller failed to record the new deed. In either event, in spite of the transfer, we have no plat of the plantation.

Sprunt mentions a slave of the Miller’s who died in the 1920s, Sister Kate, who reported that the plantation had a hot house where oranges were raised. He also quotes at length from a letter written by one the Miller daughters to a relative:

I remember the last time I saw the place, it was beautiful beyond imagination. The family having

spent the winter there my mother and father took great pleasure and pains in adding to the beauties of nature without destroying. We remained quite late that spring and when we left the rice was about a foot high, looking like immense green velvet carpets reaching to the river. My father owned two schooners, the “Blue Perch” and “Eureka” . . . (Sprunt 1958:15).

Miller appears in the census in Wilmington, indicating that he was not living on Orton. He reported real estate valued at \$85,000, but we presume this was his Wilmington property. In 1860, the census also collected information on individuals’ personal estates. Miller declared his value to be \$150,000. Some portion of this would have included the value of the 16 slaves he held in Wilmington where he also reported three slave structures.

Orton is listed in the census in Smithville Township and is itemized under Wesley Hodge and his wife Mary A., identified as the “Overseer for T.C. Miller.” Hodge claimed \$1,200 in real estate under his own name, along with \$6,075 in personal estate. The bulk of this was almost certainly tied up in the four slaves that Hodge reported owning. One was a 65 year old black woman that may have served as his cook. Also present were a 35 year old male, a 32 year old female, and a 4 year old male child. The latter three individuals were likely a family. Hodge reported for Miller real estate valued at \$38,000. This represents a very modest increase from the 1850 report that Orton was valued at \$30,000. Inflation would account for an increase of about \$2,300, so there may have been some minor improvements to the plantation over the past decade. Hodge does not list any personal property at the plantation, suggesting that the \$150,000 reported by Miller covered not only his 16 slaves in Wilmington, but also his 144 slaves at Orton. If so, than an average value for the slaves may have been about \$900.

Table 6.
Industrial and Agricultural Production of Orton Plantation in 1860

Type	Capital Invested	Raw Material		Power	Hands Employed		Average Monthly Cost of Labor		Annual Product		
		Quantity	Kinds		\$ Value	Male	Female	Male	Female	Quantity	Kinds
Grist Mill	500	2,000 bu	Corn	2,000	1	10	2,250 bu				2,250
Threshing Machine	750	561,000 lbs	Rice in Straw	5,200	2	25	280,000 lbs	14		{ Rough Rice { Rice Straw	5,200 504

Acres		Value of Implements	Horses	Asses	Milk Cows	Oxen	Other Cattle	Sheep	Swine	\$ of Livestock	Corn (bu)	Oats (bu)	Rice (lbs)	Wool (lbs)	Peas (bu)	Sweet Potatoes (bu)	Butter (lbs)
Improved	Unimproved																
417	3376	700	4	9	18	12	65	78	90	2250	1200	300	561,600	100	100	400	100

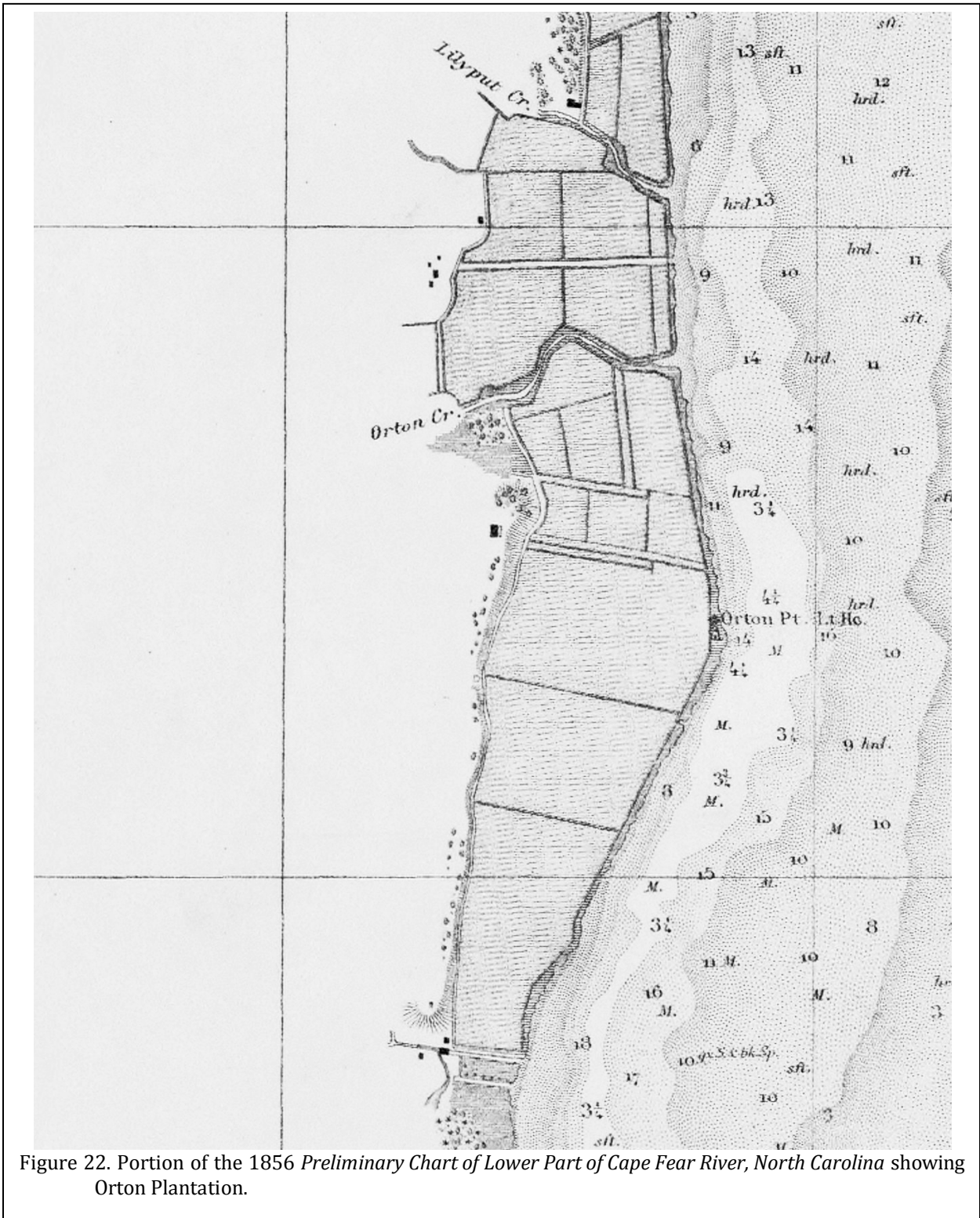


Figure 22. Portion of the 1856 *Preliminary Chart of Lower Part of Cape Fear River, North Carolina* showing Orton Plantation.

The census also reported 40 slave cabins at Orton, representing between 3 and 4 individuals per structure.

If we look at the real estate and personal wealth identified in the Smithville Township, it becomes clear that Miller was undoubtedly one of the wealthiest, perhaps the wealthiest, individual in the community.

The average real estate value in the township was about \$2,300 among the 103 families reporting a value, with a low of \$100, a median of \$800, and a high of \$38,000 – representing Miller.

Turning to personal wealth, 177 individuals reported some wealth, ranging from a low of only \$10 to a high of \$93,840 reported by Thomas Meares. Not far behind him was Owen D. Holmes reporting \$69,355. The township's average was only \$4,100.

In Wilmington, the Miller household consisted of Miller, aged 41, his wife Annie (40), and six children ranging in ages from 18 to 1 year.

The 1860 agricultural and industrial schedules are summarized in Table 6. Orton appears to no longer have been producing lumber – at least there is no mention of a saw mill in the industrial schedule, only a grist mill. Since the quantity of corn processed by the mill is 800 bushels more than was produced, it is likely that Miller took in corn from neighbors for grinding, a common practice. In contrast, the rice mill reports threshing only as much rice as was grown on the plantation – 561,000 pounds. This suggests that each rice planter had their own means of thrashing rice, whether it was by hand or using a mill on the premises. Table 5 also reveals that Cape Fear planters had realized that even the rice straw had value and at Orton \$504 was made by selling the straw.

The two mills at Orton employed only five slaves – three men and two women.

Turning to the agricultural production, the figures are especially instructive when

compared to those from 1850 (Table 4). We see that the improved acreage had not increased; in fact, it actually declined slightly. This suggests that the rice and agricultural fields were well developed by 1850 and there was little change afterwards.

The value of the plantation is reported at \$43,500 – significantly higher than 1850 and also higher than was reported in the population census. Generally these figures agree, so the difference here cannot be explained. Nor can the very sharp decline in the value of agricultural implements between 1850, when they were valued at \$2000, and 1860 when they were listed as being worth only \$700. One explanation is that with fewer slaves in 1850, Hill used plows and planters to maximize production. With more slaves, Miller may have dispensed with mechanization and reduced equipment costs.

When crop production is examined, perhaps most notable is that rice production increased from 325,000 pounds to 561,600 pounds (an increase of 72%). Oats, while a minor crop, had been added. Corn production tripled. In contrast, sweet potatoes, a staple of many enslaved African Americans fell from 3,000 bushels to only 400 bushels. This may only reflect a poor year, or it may suggest that Miller reduced the self-dependence of the plantation in order to maximize his cash crop.

Looking at the livestock on the plantation, every category increased except for horses, which declined by 50%, and oxen, the number of which remained unchanged. The number of oxen, used to cultivate the rice fields, provides additional evidence that rice field acreage did not increase.

Looking at these figures suggests that Orton was successful and growing prior to the Civil War, although there is evidence that the plantation was becoming more dependent on the outside world to provide subsistence for the slave population.

With the failure to identify plats of the plantation, the first map we have found of Orton is of particular importance since it shows the layout

of significant features. The plan, dated 1856, is shown in Figure 22.

This map appears to show the main house with a portico or porch facing the Cape Fear River. This may provide the only documentary evidence that the Doric columns had been added by this time. A causeway appears to extend east-southeast from the house to the Cape Fear. The Orton Point Light House is also shown. Its location should be compared to Figure 21 to reveal how accurately it was placed. The only other structures on Orton are three structures at the south edge (dots along the shore edge are indistinct). One is situated in the middle of the mill pond canal and must have been the antebellum mill. While we can't determine with any certainty whether both the grist mill and rice mill were in the same building, this plan suggests they were. Nearby to the north is a structure that may have been a rice barn, while to the southwest is a structure that may have been a structure for the individual tending the mill and the water flow. The rice fields are well defined and limited to the area along the Cape Fear. They incorporate approximately 276 acres. This suggests that there were approximately 141 acres of interior high ground composing the 417 improved acres on Orton.

To the north is the Kendal house at the end of a well defined canal extending to the Cape Fear. Three support structures are found around the main house. To the northeast is another structure, perhaps a rice barn for this plantation's rice fields along the Cape Fear.

Beyond Kendal and Lilyput (today Lilliput) Creek is the Lilliput main house, which also fronts the rice fields.

The Civil War

The port of Wilmington and the Cape Fear River took on special importance during the Civil War, allowing blockade runners and their supplies access to a railroad network to the South. As it turned out, Orton was in the midst of the efforts to keep the river and port open.

The events in the Wilmington area are well told by Fonvielle (1999) and Moore (1999). The two routes into the Cape Fear and leading to Wilmington were the Old Inlet, located between Oak Island and Bald Head (or Smith's) Island, and the New Inlet, between Bald Head Island the Wilmington peninsula. The Confederates sought to secure both routes, constructing Forts Caswell and Campbell and Battery Shaw on Oak Island, as well as Fort Holmes on Bald Head Island to guard the Old Inlet. At the New Inlet Fort Fisher was built. Should Union forces get past these entrances, the Confederates built a chain of defenses up the river. Fort Johnson (renamed Pender in 1864) was built in Smithville, Battery Lamb was constructed opposite Fort Fisher, across from Battery Buchanan, and Fort St. Philip (later renamed Fort Anderson) was constructed on the southern tip of Orton Plantation, over the remains of Brunswick and incorporating the old St. Philip's Church.

The construction of Fort Anderson took place in the fall of 1862 and was conducted by Major Thomas Rowland. In a March 25, 1862 letter home we find that he and the supervisors of the labor parties stayed at the Orton mansion:

I am now the solitary tenant of a large house upon a rice plantation on the banks of the Cape Fear. Mr. Wood, master-workman, and Mr. Rose, Master-carpenter stay here at night. The gentleman who owns the plantation gives us the use of his house, and servants to cook for us and wait upon us. He is a lawyer and spends most of his time in Wilmington, so we have the whole house to ourselves (Rowland and Rowland 1917:230).

In another letter he comments on having "plenty of milk and clabber" (curdled milk often eaten for breakfast). He also mentioned that the entrenchments extended "almost a mile a length" from the Battery on the river to "a pond eight miles in length" which was Orton Pond. He commented on the alligators and also that the

Orton grounds, even at this time, had gardens with “beautiful flowers” (Rowland and Rowland 1917:231).

In 1864 Fort Anderson was further improved under the direction of Major William Lamb, who began at Fort Anderson in 1862, was transferred to Fort Fisher, and then back to Fort Anderson (Lamb 1912:349). Upon returning to Fort Anderson, Lamb had his wife with him and they lived in a small cottage built just beyond the fort. Fearing an attack on the fort, Lamb wrote that he, “sent two boats with household articles to Orton” indicating the Miller continued to allow the use of his plantation by Confederate forces (Navy OR 11:746).

The first Union offensive against Fort Fisher began on December 24, 1862 with the Union fleet shelling the fort. An infantry division disembarked from transports, testing the fort’s defenses. About this time Confederate reinforcements arrived and the expedition was called off on December 27.

A January 9, 1863 letter by Col. Lamb’s wife provided a personal perspective:

I staid in my comfortable little home [at Fort Fisher] until the fleet appeared, when I packed up and went across the river to a large but empty house [Orton], of which I took possession . . . I could see it [the attack of Fort Fisher] very plainly from where I was; I had very powerful glasses, and sat on a stile outdoor all day watching it – an awful but magnificent sight . . . I was overcome at last and laid my head on the fence and cried for the first and last time during it all (Thomas 1965:84).

Work continued on the Fort Anderson defenses after the Union troops were repulsed at Fort Fisher. A Confederate wrote in 1863:

We have at length, by the sweat

of our brows, and the power of our bone and muscle, completed one of the most formidable batteries in the Southern Confederacy. Guided and sustained by the energy and perseverance of Major [John J.] Hedrick, commanding . . . we have put up a work which will compare favourably with any work of its kind in the country, and now only want certain additions to our armament to feel confident of being able to defy all Yankeedom to reach Wilmington by this route. We have, up to this time, done our full duty in building fortifications for the defense of Wilmington, as well as for the protection of our homes and firesides, our wives and children, and of most of all near and dear to us. If the enemy should ever approach us here, we intend to give him a warm reception. With the help of God, we intend to stand by our guns until the last man falls, or gain the victory (*The Wilmington Journal*, Wilmington, NC, May 28, 1863).

This view of the defenses was not shared by all military men. Lt. Col. G.T. Gordon, inspecting the lines from the Fort to Orton Pond in January 1865 observed that they were “thoroughly repaired but bad in design” and that improvements at this point included “only 609 shovels” (OR 96:1142).

We have a small number of vouchers dealing with supplies obtained from Miller at Orton Plantation. Presumably the documents were identified in the Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, 1861-1865 (NA M346; commonly called the “Citizens File”). We have not been able to confirm this, or to determine if more exist. For example, we have been unable to find Thomas Miller in on-line databases of the Confederate Citizens File

(http://www.fold3.com/title_60/confederate_citizens_file/). Regardless, these documents are synthesized in Table 7 below.

The most common purchases off Orton were hay and rice straw. The quantities suggest that the Confederates had relatively large numbers of animals requiring forage. Studies show that rice straw has significantly less crude protein, only half the phosphorus, and is more difficult to digest than field hay (Drake et al. n.d.); nevertheless, both field hay and rice straw were purchased for the same price. Wood was also

acquired, both as lumber and also as cord wood. One voucher specifically mentions that lumber was used “for the Battery at Brunswick Point” (April 30, 1862), while another notes it was used “in necessary buildings connected with Fort St. Philip” (June 19, 1862). A December 14, 1862 voucher explains that logs were used for the casement battery at Fort Fisher. Only one barrel of a navel store product (rosin) was acquired. The vouchers also indicate that Miller retained a blacksmith at Orton. One of Orton’s flats was lost during a storm transporting turf for Fort Anderson. Turf was placed on earthworks to prevent erosion and a flatboat is a small river craft that was flat on the bottom and had a shallow draft. They were used on rice plantations for gathering the crop and transporting it to the mill.

Also of interest is that between 1862 and 1863 prices began escalating. At the beginning of 1862 it is estimated that the Confederate inflation rate was about 22%. Since the Confederate States paid for the war by printing money, in early 1863 the inflation rate increased to about 136% and peaked at about 700% at the beginning of 1864. The price increases no doubt reflect this economic deterioration.

The Union’s second attack on Fort Fisher occurred on January 13-15, 1865. After a bloody battle and the loss of more than 2,000 on both sides, the Confederate garrison surrendered, permitting a Union thrust against Wilmington. With control of Fort Fisher, an assault against Fort Anderson began on February 16, 1865. The battle began with a Union bombardment and troops facing the fort. On February 17-18 the Union troops began a flanking maneuver that caused the Confederates to evacuate the fort during the night of February 18th, withdrawing to the Town Creek area, north of Orton Plantation.

Union accounts mention the “tangled undergrowth at the head of Orton Pond and described the pond’s “wide, marshy banks” (OR 98:929). The creek feeding the pond (Moore’s Creek) was bordered by “a deep marsh about 100 yards in width and crossed only by a narrow causeway (OR 98:960). Another accounts vaguely

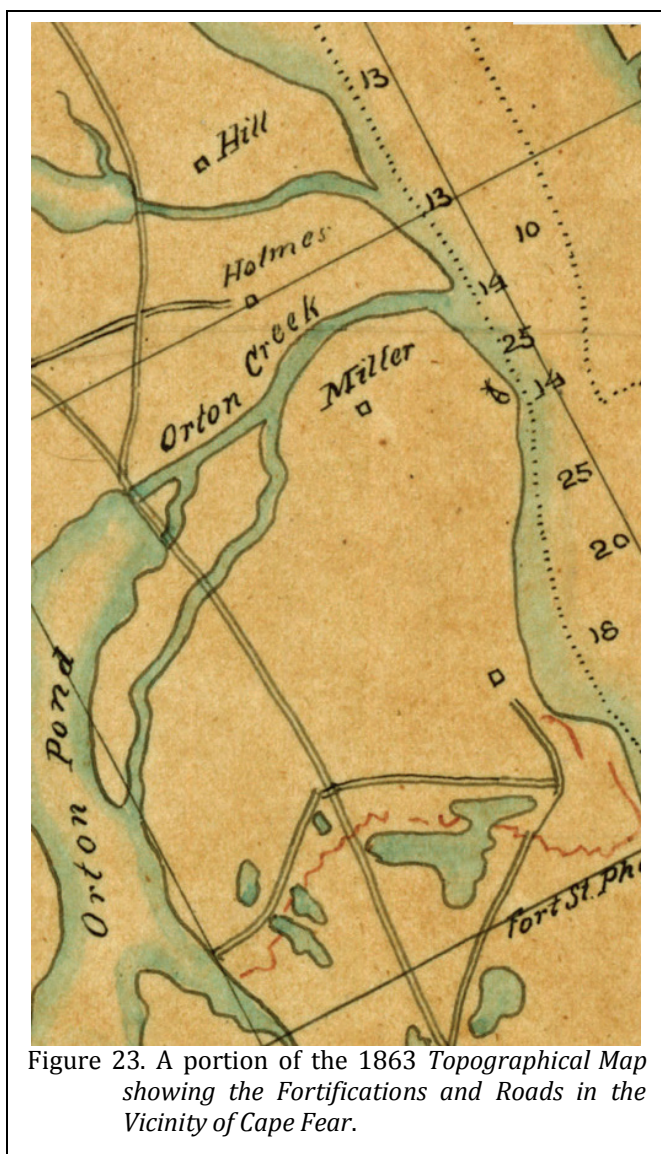


Figure 23. A portion of the 1863 Topographical Map showing the Fortifications and Roads in the Vicinity of Cape Fear.

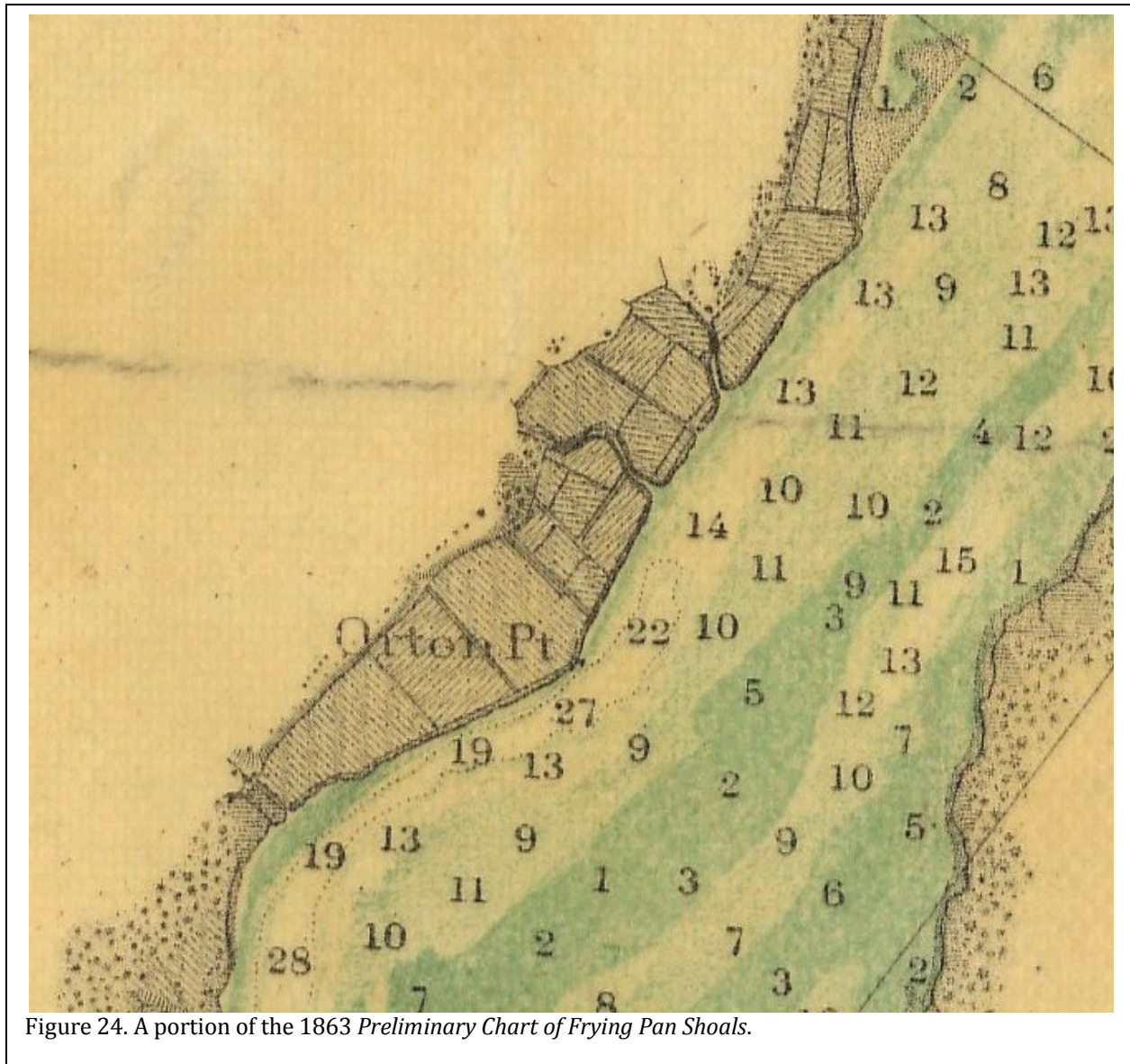


Figure 24. A portion of the 1863 *Preliminary Chart of Frying Pan Shoals*.

noted that “the bridges of the canal were, however, burned and the sluices of Orton Pond cut” (OR 99:1228). Thus, while there is no mention of any damage to the Orton house, slave settlement, fields, or other structures, the damage to the pond would have allowed the rice fields to become flooded and severely impact the plantation’s infrastructure.

Several accounts mention that the Orton house was used as a small pox hospital by Union forces (DeRosset 1938:6, Sprunt 1946, 1958:15).

Initial research at the National Archives examining field records of hospitals (RG 94, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office) does list a “Small Pox Hospital” in Wilmington, but does not identify any hospital in the outlying country. Nor does it appear that any records survive from the Wilmington hospital itself. Thus, it appears that the Union use of Orton may be only a legend.

By the night of February 21th the Confederates evacuated Wilmington, setting fire to the cotton, tobacco, and other government



Figure 25. Portion of the 1864 *Map of parts of Brunswick and New Hanover Counties* showing the approaches to Wilmington, N.C.

stores in the City. Union troops marched into Wilmington on February 22, 1865. One account mentions that while the “aristocrats” were generally quiet during the fall of the town, the “commoners” were excited to see the Union forces (Umfleet 2006:2). On April 27, 1865 General John M. Schofield assumed command of the military occupation in North Carolina. General Orders 31 and 32 announced the end of the war in the state and declared all enslaved African Americans freed by the Emancipation Proclamation.

The Civil War Maps

During the Civil War we begin to see a number of plans and drawings that, for the first time, provide information on the layout of Orton Plantation.

The first is an 1863 map showing the plantations, roads, ponds, and in red earthworks associated with Fort Anderson. It otherwise provides few details. The plan does show the respective positions of Orton (Miller), Kendal (Holmes), and Lilliput (Hill).

Another 1863 plan is a preliminary chart of Frying Plan Shoals. This plan is a nearly identical copy of the 1856 chart shown in Figure 22. The main Orton house is shown, although without the portico detail. To the northeast is another single structure. Structures are shown at and around the mill. The dots along the coast appear more likely to represent structures, although it remains difficult to determine the difference between vegetation and structures. There may be six structures south of the main house and before the first slough, with an additional nine or more between the slough and mill.

The cluster of four structures at Kendal Plantation are also shown, along with what we suppose is the Kendal rice barn. Additional structures are shown at Lilliput, although here, too, they tend to bleed into the vegetation.

In 1864 a map was prepared showing parts of the country surrounding Wilmington. Because of the scale it fails to add many details, although it does a good job of placing owners,

Table 7.
Vouchers for Supplies Taken from Orton Plantation

Date	Item	Cost per Unit	Total
April 4, 1862	2,701 lbs rice [straw] or hay	.0185¢/lb	49.96
	76 cords wood	\$3.50/cord	56.00
April 7, 1862	8,218 lbs rice [straw] or hay	.0185¢/lb	152.03
April 8, 1862	10 cords wood delivered Ft. Fisher	\$3.50/cord	35.00
April 15, 1862	6742 lbs rice [straw] or hay	.0185¢/lb	124.72
April 18, 1862	7,904 lbs rice [straw] or hay	.01625¢/lb	128.44
April 19, 1862	7,723 lbs rice [straw] or hay	.01625¢/lb	126.63
April 25, 1862	7,571 lbs rice [straw] or hay	.01625¢/lb	123.02
April 28, 1862	10 cords wood	\$3.25/cord	32.50
	9,672 lbs hay	0.1625¢/lb	156.20
	1,050 lbs [rice] straw	0.01¢/lb	10.50
April 30, 1862	22,265 feet lumber	\$15/1000 ft	333.97
May 31, 1862	17,850 lbs hay	.01625¢/lb	290.06
June 4, 1862	15 cords wood	\$3.25/cord	48.75
	8,296 lbs rice [hay]	.01625¢/lb	134.81
June 7, 1862	40 bales, 13,026 lbs. hay	.01625¢/lb	211.67
June 10, 1862	16 bales, 4,666 lbs hay	.01625¢/lb	75.82
June 12, 1862	49 bales, 14,743 lbs hay	.01625¢/lb	239.56
June 19, 1862	9,305 ft merchantable lumber	\$15/1000 ft	139.57
	1,416 ft refuse lumber	\$7.50/1000 ft	10.62
	5½ cords wood	\$3.25/cord	17.875
June 24, 1862	58,106 lbs hay	.01625¢/lb	944.22
June 25, 1862	67 cords wood	\$3.25/cord	217.75
July 21, 1862	Care of 2 mules from Ft. Caswell	-	2.25
July 23, 1862	52½ cords wood	\$3.23/cord	170.63
	25,804 lbs rice hay	.01625¢/lb	419.32
July 28, 1862	2,516 ft 1 in plank	\$15/1000 ft	37.74
August 2, 1862	4,763 ft 2 or 3 in plank	\$15/1000 ft	71.44
August 8, 1862	11,233 ft scantling & boards	\$15/1000 ft	168.50
August 27, 1862	9,000 ft plank	\$15/1000 ft	135.00
	1,503 ft scantling	\$15/1000 ft	22.54
December 14, 1862	27 logs	\$2/ea	54.00
	95 cords wood	\$3.25/cord	308.75
April, 1863	Blacksmith work on wagon	-	10.50
	8,911 ft merchantable lumber	\$25/1000 ft	222.77
	2,962 ft refuse lumber	\$12.50/1000 ft	44.43
	70 cords wood	\$8/cord	560.00
April 1, 1883	1,236 pine poles	.25¢/each	309.00
April 30, 1863	5,663 ft lumber	\$25/1000 ft	141.57
	94 cords wood	\$8/cord	752.00
May, 1863	16,150 ft lumber	\$25/1000 ft	403.75
	3,891 ft refuse lumber	\$12.50/1000 ft	48.64
	700 pine poles	.25¢/each	175.00
	72 cords wood	\$8/cord	576.00
	5,776 shingles	\$4/1000	23.10
	2 barrels lime	\$6/barrel	12.00
	1 barrel rosin	\$2.50/barrel	2.50
June, 1863	1 flat [boat] lost	-	100.00

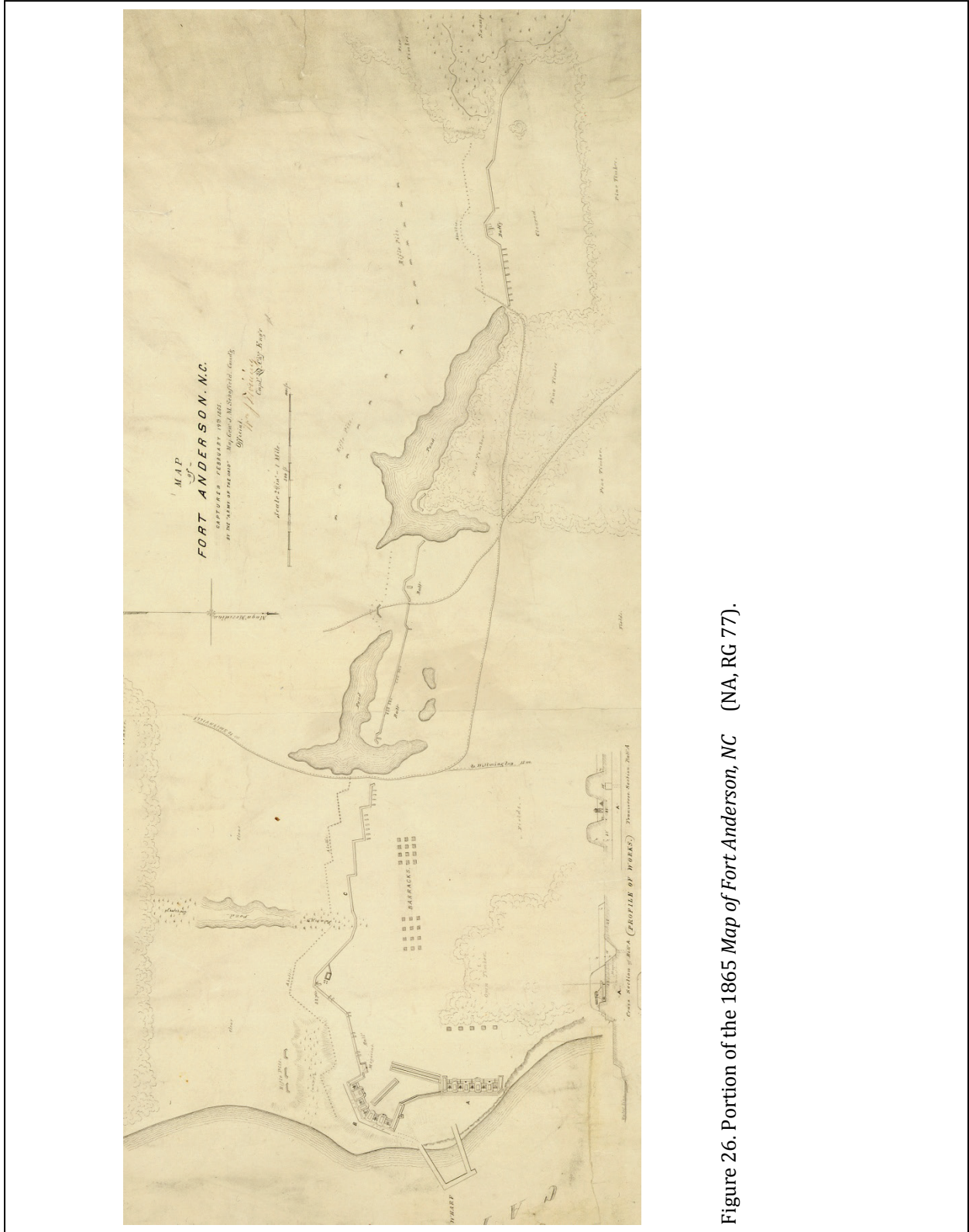


Figure 26. Portion of the 1865 Map of Fort Anderson, NC (NA, RG 77).

roads, and other major topographical details. It shows the Orton Pond, the canal leading to the Orton Mill, and the road and causeway that went over this canal and its associated swamp.

While the rice fields are not shown in detail, this is one of the only maps from the period that clearly reveals what we assume are rice fields extending up Orton Creek. Although these fields are clearly visible today, there is no earlier indication of their existence since there are no plats of the property. These rice fields would expand 276 acres or rice identified along the Cape Fear, reducing the upland acreage that comprised the plantation's improved land.

The final map is the 1865 *Plan of Fort Anderson, N.C.* that was prepared by the Union forces after the capture of the area. This plan provides excellent detail and although the area covered is south of Orton's core, it does provide some landscape clues. For example, it notes that while much of the area around the various small ponds was in "pine timber" there were also swamp lands and, toward the river, at least one large area identified as "fields."

Orton in the Postbellum

Umfleet compares the social pyramid in Wilmington before and after the Civil War. After the Civil War, the antebellum enslaved and freed African Americans collapsed into one larger group of blacks with internal divisions. The white working class expanded, and the white merchants and planter classes (or "white gentry and traditional elite") also collapsed into the white upper class. Prior to the Civil War the wealth of the merchant class was tied to liquid assets, while the planter's wealth was tied to seasonal crop production and the ownership of land and slaves – which were both unpredictable and more difficult to liquidate (Umfleet 2006:4-9). After the Civil War the merger of the planters and merchants was uneasy. The planters maintained their social status, but their economic base was largely shattered.

With the passage of a national bankruptcy law in 1867, in 1868 Umfleet reports 65 people

declared their inability to pay their debts. The common explanations were the depreciation of land values and the use of slaves as collateral for loans (Umfleet 2006:9). Added to this were a range of land, labor, and agricultural issues that sapped economic strength.

Thomas Miller wrote his will on August 19, 1861 and apparently died in early 1866, with the will being probated in March of that year. His will is vague, leaving his property to his wife and children with no itemization or description (New Hanover County Will Book D, pg. 179).

It is unlikely that Miller envisioned the social, economic, or political turmoil that reconstruction would cause. He certainly seems to have underestimated the problems that continuing to make payments on the \$100,000 purchase price to Dr. Hill would create for his family.

Further complicating the situation, Dr. Hill predeceased Miller and his will appointed Miller as an executor. Subsequently filed court documents reveal:

Mr. Miller had been appointed and qualified, and had acted as one of the executors of Dr. Hill, and that at the death of his testator he was indebted to him by bond in a large amount; that this debt, as part of the residue of his estate, had been bequeathed by Dr. Hill to his widow, and afterwards at her death was by her bequeathed in trust for the sole and separate use of . . . Annie, then the wife of Thomas C. Miller; that before completing the execution of Dr. Hill's will, Mr. Miller had died leaving an estate of realty and personality sufficient to pay his own bond debts, but insufficient to pay also his debts due by simple contract; that . . . Annie, as executrix, by virtue of a power of sale given her in the will, was selling land

belonging to the estate of said Thomas [Miller], and applying the proceeds, and other assets to the payment of the debt claimed by . . . Boudinot as surviving executor of Dr. Hill (Phillips 1868:359-360; 62 N.C. 359).

Essentially Annie Miller was selling her husband's property in order that she could repay the debt to the estate of Dr. Hill, which would then be directed to her benefit. Other creditors objected to this and in 1867 filed a court case in the Court of Equity of Wake County (B.F. Miller v. Annie W. Miller and others). The case was transmitted to the Supreme Court and in 1868 the court determined that Annie Miller was within her rights to favor the debt to Dr. Hill's estate. A nearly identical case (John D. Taylor and another v. Annie W. Miller, Extr., and Wm. E. Boudinot, Extr.) was heard by the court the same session and was dismissed based on the previous case (Phillips 1868:365-366).

Also in 1867 Annie Miller was sued by William Boudinot in the Superior Court of Cumberland County for the payment of the bond that originated with sale of Orton to Miller in 1854. The court issued a judgment against Annie Miller in the amount of \$40,957.33.

In 1869 Annie Miller brought suit in the Superior Court of New Hanover attempting to void a trust established by her husband in his will (Annie W. Miller v. Thomas Atkinson). Miller's will wished to establish a trust for "the poor orphans of the State of North Carolina" to be administered by Bishop Thomas Atkinson. Annie Miller claimed that the purposes of the trust were too vague and she had no obligation to honor the bequeath of a piece of land and \$10,000. The New Hanover Court decided in favor of the Bishop upon which Annie Hill appealed to the Supreme Court. The decision of the lower court was upheld (63 N.C. 537).

The Hill estate had its own problems, with at least one case involving the ability of Boudinot to pay the estate's debts extending well into the late 1870s (Samuel Moore v. Frederick J. Lord,

John H. Hill, Wm. E. Boudinot, Ex. Of Frederick J. Hill).

Having survived the court challenges, in April 1869 Annie Miller as the executrix of Thomas C. Miller sold Orton Plantation to William E, Boudinot, surviving executor of Frederick J. Hill for \$5.00 and satisfaction (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB T, pg. 777).

The deed identifies the property as "Orton" and "all the other tracts adjoining or adjacent to 'Orton' which were subsequently purchased by said Thos. C. Miller from different persons." The deed also explains that the sale was in satisfaction of the judgment against her from the Superior Court of Cumberland County in 1867.

What is of more interest is what exactly was happening on Orton during the late 1860s and early 1870s. With the sale of the plantation to Boudinot in April 1869 the plantation appears to disappear. The 1870 census lists Boudinot living in Smithville and reporting lands valued at only 3,500. He listed himself as an agent for Rail Point, perhaps a speculative venture.

We have not been unable to identify any familiar names in the 1870 agricultural census for the Smithville or Town Creek Townships (although there could have been a caretaker or overseer on the plantation). Regardless, the 1870 agricultural census does not indicate anyone in the Smithville Township harvested more than 200 pounds of rice and most returns were between 50 and 100 pounds. Later harvests were found in the Town Creek Township with John D. Taylor producing 126,000 pounds of rice and T.C. McClammy producing 126,800 pounds. We also have found nothing in the 1870 industrial schedule that might suggest there was a functioning mill at Orton.

In sum, it appears that Orton simply sat while ownership and debts were litigated and a clear title sought. This seems to be reflected in the advice offered by John C. MacRae to his brother, Donald, on February 3, 1866, "If you wish to make an investment, let me advise you to take hold of Orton. It is now a complete wreck, but

nevertheless can be made valuable” (Hugh MacRae Collection. Perkins Library, Special Collections, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina).

Eventually the property returned to the Hill estate, where it continued to sit until once again legal action intervened.

Legal action was filed in the New Hanover Superior Court by William B. Giles, as administrator de bonis non cum testamento annexo (administrator of goods not administered with the will annexed) of John Swann, for himself and other creditors of Frederick J. Hill against William Boudinot, surviving executor of Frederick J. Hill, Annie W. Miller in her own right and as executrix of the late will of Thomas C. Miller, Thomas Atkinson, and others. Essentially the creditors of Hill were seeking payment on claims against the estate. By the October 1872 session, the court judged in favor of Giles and the plaintiffs, ordering that the commissioners DuBrutz Cutler and Charles M. Steadman were “empowered if in their discretion it may be deemed judicious to make sale of [the properties owned by the Frederick J. Hill estate] . . . by private contract upon such terms as to them may seem best.”

The first auction for Orton, approved by the New Hanover Superior Court order, was set for August 22, 1872. The firm handling the sale, Cronly and Morris, produced a flyer that revealed the plantation consisted of 9,026 acres “by actual survey,” meaning that a plat had been prepared of the property. Curiously, it announced that the plantation “covered” 800 acres of “superior rice land,” although it went on to explain “of which 225 acres have produced 16,300 bushels.” Using a conversion of 45 pounds to a bushel of rice, this suggests production of 733,500 pounds – significantly more than reported by the 1860 agricultural census. The differences in rice lands suggests that 225 acres were actually producing rice – consistent with the acreage determined from the 1856 chart – while there were an additional 575 acres that might be converted into rice lands. Orton Pond was described as an “immense water power” providing 12 feet of head. Improvements included the “two story dwelling

house containing 10 rooms, brick basement, and all necessary out-houses, extensive barns, stables, &c. with houses detached for 200 hands.”

This auction apparently produced no acceptable bids since the plantation was again being offered in auction February 26, 1873. This notice was far smaller, but again reported 9,026 acres and explained that a plat and full description were available at the office of M. Cronly, Auctioneer (*The Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 15, 1873).

On March 2, 1874 Cutler, Steadman, and Boudinot sold Orton Plantation for \$6,500 to Isaac B. Grainger (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB W, pg. 336).

Isaac B. Grainger

The 1870 census identified Isaac B. Grainger as a 29 year old banker living in Wilmington with his 25 year old wife, Josie C., and their two children, John V. (4 years old) and Mary McR. (2 years old). Isaac emigrated from Ireland, marrying Josie in North Carolina. He served in the 2nd NC Artillery Regiment, 1st Company C during the Civil War and was also assigned to the Quartermasters Corps in Wilmington.

Also in their household in 1870 were seven others. Three of these may have been family members and included Isaac Bates, a 22 year old bank clerk from Ireland; his brother, William Bates, an 18 year old store clerk, from Ireland; and John McRae, the brother of Josie and a 30 year old store clerk. Also present were three African American “domestic servants,” Violet Merrick, 35; Mary A. Russ, 60; Robert Martin, 30; and a child, John Ryles, 12.

Isaac Grainger reported \$8,200 in real estate (this was prior to his purchase of Orton) and \$300 in personal wealth.

Grainger is listed in as a cashier for James Dawson’s Banking House, living on Dock at the corner of 6th Street (Haddock 1871:114). Dawson’s bank was listed on Front Street, between Market and Princess (Haddock 1871:92).

A banking house was essentially a merchant bank, what is today known as an investment bank, distinct from commercial banks, such as the First National Bank of Wilmington, located on the same block as Dawson. James Dawson is listed in the 1870 census as a 56 year old Irish Banker. He listed his real estate value at \$85,000 and his personal estate at \$90,000.

How Grainger, as a recent Irish immigrant, managed to obtain the funds to purchase Orton is unknown. Susan Taylor Block (personal communication 2012) suggests that they may have been related to the New York mercantilist Alexander Stewart and it is possible that he provided funds.

The deed does stipulate that \$500 was to be paid in cash “and the balance in one year, with certain other terms and provisions set forth in full in the report of said contract of sale bearing date the 25th day of February 1874, made by said Referees and Commissioners to the Court aforesaid” (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB W, pg. 336). Since no evidence of this report has ever been found, we don’t know what sort of terms were set out for the purchase, but they must have been very liberal.

A series of advertisements have been identified signed by I.B. Grainger during 1874 and 1875 posting his Orton property against trespassers. The earlier notices are fairly benign:

Notice to trespassers
All persons are hereby warned against shooting, hunting, fishing, ranging or otherwise trespassing on the lands known as the Orton plantation, in the county of Brunswick. Signed by I.B. Grainger (New Hanover County Public Library Newspaper Clipping File, December 9, 1874).

Subsequent ads became more threatening:

Orton Plantation
Notice to Trespassers
All persons are hereby warned

against shooting, hunting, fishing, ranging or otherwise trespassing on the lands known as the Orton Plantation in the County of Brunswick. The indiscriminate slaughter of game at all seasons and the incessant depredations in other and more important respects, have rendered it necessary to post these lands; and fair notice is now given that the law will be rigidly enforced against all offenders. I.B. Grainger (New Hanover County Public Library Newspaper Clipping File, November 20, 1875).

Two years after his acquisition, on January 7, 1876, Grainger entered into a lease of the lands to Charles W. McClammy for a period of four years for the purpose of producing turpentine (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB W-2, pg. 324). Specifically McClammy was given permission to cut pine trees for turpentine, to cut trees to make barrels or erect buildings, and to use the public landings for the shipment of the turpentine. The terms of the lease were \$2,000, to paid in two \$1000 installments with 6% interest.

The 1870 census identifies McClammy as a 55 year old laborer with real estate valued at \$1000. His family consisted of his wife, Margaret, their six children, and one boarder. The Bill Reaves Collection indicates that McClammy was a brick mason and contractor by trade. He served in Co. F, Third North Carolina Regiment during the Civil War. It appears that his only involvement in naval stores was the time spent on Orton (Bill Reaves Collection, New Hanover Public Library). This document, however, identifies both a different birth year and wife’s name, so it is not certain if they are the same individual.

Regardless, this is the only evidence that we have of any activities on Orton during the period. It is clear that no rice was being planted on Orton since an 1875 report for North Carolina’s rice production noted, “no crop has taken place upon the large and valuable rice-plantations, which have consequently almost gone to ruin”

(Anonymous 1876:433).

Whatever Grainger was doing it was very profitable since by 1877 he was the president of Bank of New Hanover with cash capital of \$350,000 (Sheriff 1877:73). The Board of Directors included a number of familiar names, including John Dawson (previously owner of Dawson's Banking House and by this time major of Wilmington), D.R. Murchison (who would eventually own Orton), C.M. Stedman (the attorney who sold Grainer Orton), and Donald McRae (associated with a fertilizer company).

On February 11, 1876 Grainger sold Orton plantation to Currier Richardson Roundell from London for \$18,000 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB W, pg. 343). The sale included two parcels, one of 7,918 acres and another of 1,108 acres, but excluded a 180 acre parcel already sold and the lease rights held by Charles W. McClammy.

The 1880 industrial census for the Town Creek township identified Charles W. McClammy producing tar and turpentine on Allens (Lilliput) Creek using between 8 and 10 slaves. The value of his annual production was listed as \$6,000.

The Sad Story of Currier R. Roundell

Currier Richardson Roundell was the son of Henry Roundel, the vicar of Buckingham, and was at the end of a long pedigree of Roundells, beginning with John Roundell of Scriven, near Knaresborough County, York in the fifteenth century. He was born in 1854 and was a lieutenant in the 2nd West Yorkshire Militia (Foster 1874; *London Gazette*, May 7, 1872).

Perhaps faced with declining prospects at home, Roundell left Liverpool on the *Germanic* and arrived in New York on May 31, 1875. Where he was for the next eight months is unknown, but by December 11, 1875 he had made his way to Wilmington and had purchased Orton (although the deed would not be recorded until the following February). An account of the purchase

was brief:

Mr. C.R. Roundell, of England, who has been spending some days in our city with a view to locating in this section, has purchased the well-known "Orton" plantation The "Orton" tract embraces 9,000 acres of land, including over 300 acres of the finest rice land on the Cape Fear. Mr. Roundell intends residing on the place; and, being a gentleman of means, will no doubt soon make "Orton" what it once was, the most productive plantation in this section (New Hanover County Public Library Newspaper Clipping File, December 9, 1874; the story was repeated December 17, 1875).

Another account (New Hanover County Public Library Newspaper Clipping File, February 11, 1876) reported that Roundell had returned from England "to reside on his place." He also began publishing no trespassing notices in the local papers:

Notice to Trespassers

The undersigned having purchased the plantation known as Orton, with the view of residing on it, notice is hereby given that any person trespassing on the premises will be prosecuted; and all permissions hitherto given for shooting and hunting on said premises are hereby cancelled. C.R. Roundell J.A. Byrne, Attorney (New Hanover County Public Library Newspaper Clipping File, February 11, 1876).

What happened between February and the end of July 1876 is not known. We can speculate that the Orton house was in generally poor condition after years of abandonment, so Roundell was living in the Manning House, located

at 61 Market Street (Sheriff 1877:110). On July 26, between 8 and 9:00am, Roundell was found dead in his room “with a ghastly pistol shot in his forehead” (New Hanover County Public Library Newspaper Clipping File, July 27, 1876).

The coroner was called and a coroner’s jury was summoned. They viewed the body in the hotel room, where Roundell was naked from the waist up and wearing no shoes or socks. They observed a pistol lying on the floor at his left side. Afterwards the jury retired to the courthouse for testimony. The proprietor reported hearing a “report or crash” about 11pm the evening before. They found nothing wrong and while noticing a light on in Roundell’s room this was not unusual since “Mr. Roundell seemed restless and uncommunicative, and often appears to be troubled, which seemed to be his natural temperament.” Another witness reported talking to Roundell who at the time was “unusually talkative” and that Roundell asked about “the reclamation of plantations adjoining his” and that he “would remain here all the fall and winter.” Another witness said that Roundell spoke of returning to England until the fall. Several viewed him as “exceedingly eccentric” or as “a very undecided person and rather eccentric.” Others viewed him as “melancholy.”

Dr. M.J. DeRosset examined the body and wound and concluded the “deceased came to his death by shooting himself with the pistol which was found lying by him.” The report claimed the contents of his trunk were “badly disarranged,” but still contained \$400 in cash, a gold watch, and a diamond ring. “No writing of any description whatever could be found to indicate any cause for the unfortunate occurrence.”

After sending a telegram to his mother and sisters in England, the body was “embalmed, placed in a metallic coffin and taken to St. James Church.”

A subsequent story reported that the family wished for Col. W.L. DeRosset to take charge of Roundell’s personal effects and the Orton lands (*The Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, July 28, 1876).

By September 1876 DeRosset filed to administer the estate of Roundel, identifying an estate valued at about \$5000 and containing Orton Plantation and personal property in the amount of about \$500 (Roundell Estate, North Carolina State Archives). An inventory completed in October and filed with the court in November. Itemized were:

Gold watch and chain with mourning ring attached	\$50.00
Silver watch	8.00
Gold locket	1.00
Engraved seal	2.00
3 pearl and gilt studs	.10
Adams pistol and cartridges	8.00
Pair gilt sleeve buttons	.25
Shot gun and accoutrements	15.00
Trunk and clothing	30.00
Hand valise and clothing	2.00
Bunch of keys	{
Chamber set	{
Rocking chair	{
Bed spring	{
6 chairs	{
2 pillows	{ 75.00
1 bolster	{
2 mattresses	{
1 table	{
1 safe	{
2 comfortables	{
Postage stamps	1.07
British coin	5.00
Currency	340.90

Historians since have assumed that Roundell became overwhelmed with the cost and efforts required to make Orton profitable and/or was “deranged mentally” (see, for example, Sprunt 1958:17). This is a simple explanation, but it ignores the historical evidence. The odd wound location, the noted absence of stippling characteristic of close contact gunshot wounds, the lack of a suicide note, the presence of two empty chambers in the weapon, the lack of an exit wound for a ½-inch diameter ball, and the disturbance noted in Roundell’s trunk, are all suggestive of a more complex explanation. The absence of a careful forensic examination and what appears to be a rush to judgment, however, make it impossible to know for sure. The

motivation also remains uncertain, although Roundell may have possessed more money than was found with his body and a promissory note mentioned in his possession in the original news article was never included in the estate.

By February 18, 1877 the plantation was once again on the market:

Orton

Plantation for Sale!

I offer at private sale the above property, lying on the west side of Cape Fear River, fifteen miles from this city, in the county of Brunswick, containing about 9008 acres of land, including 300 acres of superior rice land, which 235 acres have produced 16,000 bushels and which is unsurpassed for the production of small grain and grasses. About 8000 acres of pine land, and a large amount of live oak timber. A fine water power, supplied by a never-failing pond of spring water, seven miles in length and twelve feet head, with eligible sites for manufactories of any description. The lands abound in deer and other game and the pond is well stocked with fish of all varieties. The improvements consist of a two-story dwelling house of ten rooms, with brick basement and all necessary out houses, stables, barns, &c., and Houses for two hundred farm hands. This magnificent estate, the palatial winter residence of the late Dr. F.J. Hill, was valued prior 1861 at \$100,000.00, and will be sold for cash only, at a great sacrifice. The late Currier R. Roundell, Esq., of London, paid over \$10,000 cash for the property. A map of the estate may be seen by applying to the undersigned, or Mr. Owen D. Holmes, who will take pleasure in showing the Property to any one

desiring to inspect the same in person. For further particulars apply to Wm. L. DeRosset, Agent (*The Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, February 18, 1877, pg. 1).

This ad was virtually identical to the one used in 1872. While it is possible that the plantation received no improvements in the interval, this suggests that the property must have been in declining condition, perhaps accounting for DeRosset's desire to speedily dispose of the property.

Short Term Owners During the Last Quarter of the Nineteenth Century

After only a month (on April 7, 1877), DeRosset identified purchasers for Orton and the property was sold by Roundell's sisters, Laura Eleanor Roundell and Mary Dorothea Lucy Roundell to David R. Murchison, Isaac B. Grainger, Charles M. Steadman, and Kenneth M. Murchison (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB X, pg. 189). These four individuals, all from Wilmington with the exception of Kenneth M. Murchison, who lived in New York, were able to acquire the plantation for the very modest sum of \$4,000 -- \$14,000 less than Roundell paid for the tract in 1876 and \$2,500 less than Grainger had paid for the property in 1874. While we don't know the condition of the plantation, it appears that \$4,000 was a very inconsiderable sum for over 9,000 acres fronting on the Cape Fear River and containing 300 acres of rice fields.

The deed explains that the 180 acres excepted from Orton, known as the Durant tract, had been contracted to be sold by Grainger to "one - Hooper (colored)." It is unclear if the contract was ever fulfilled and we were unable to find a recorded deed in the name of Hooper.

Kenneth M. Murchison was born near Fayetteville, North Carolina in 1831. He attended the University of North Carolina, graduating in 1853 with classmates Walter Meares and W.L.

DeRosset. He apparently sought work in New York, but returned to North Carolina at the outbreak of the Civil War. He served in Shaw's Eighth North Carolina regiment and later was a colonel in the 54th North Carolina regiment, Hoke's Brigade. After the Civil War he returned to New York where he engaged in business. In North Carolina he was the founder of the Murchison National Bank in Wilmington, owner of Wilmington's Orton Hotel, and one of the largest stockholders of Wilmington's Coal, Cement & Supply Company. In 1871 a New York city directory listed his mercantile business at 151 Front Street, with his residence at 317 Adelphi in Brooklyn (Wilson 1871:833).

David R. Murchison was the son of Kenneth Murchison. While listed in the 1871 New York directory at his father's mercantile business, his residence was listed simply as North Carolina (Wilson 1871:833). The Wilmington city directory identified him as a partner in the grocery and commercial merchant business of Williams & Murchison located on Water Street between Market and Princess (Sheriff 1877:118, 164). This firm later separated into D.R. Murchison & Co. and G.W. Williams & Co. (*The Morning Star* [Wilmington, NC], March 1, 1882, pg. 1). David R. Murchison was also the president of the Carolina Central Railroad Company, Wilmington Compress & Warehouse Company, Express Steamboat Company, and Produce Exchange.

The 1870 federal census lists Murchison living with George W. Williams and his family. Murchison, while owning no property, listed \$20,000 in personal estate. The house included a white housekeeper and seamstress, as well as five African Americans listed as domestic servants.

Isaac B. Grainger we have already mentioned was the president of the Bank of New Hanover. His wealth, however, seems to have less substantial, being listed in the 1870 census as \$8,200 in real estate and \$300 in personal estate.

Charles M. Stedman, also previously mentioned, was an attorney in the firm of Wright and Stedman, with offices on Front Street on the corner of Princess (Sheriff 1871:147, 168). The

1870 census found him living with his wife, a son, three boarders, and three African American servants. He listed \$2,500 in real estate and a personal estate of \$1,000.

Thus it appears that the bulk of the money for this partnership may have come from the Murchisons.

In November 1879 Charles Steadman sold his one-quarter interest in the property to David Murchison for \$15,000 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Y, pg. 474). This represents an exceptional profit on a \$4,000 total investment and left David Murchison holding a 50% interest in Orton.

In 1881 D.R. Murchison died and his holding of Orton passed to his wife, Lucy W. Murchison. A court case was filed to force division of the property (Kenneth M. Murchison v. Lucy Murchison and others, Minutes Brunswick County Superior Court, 1882-1892, pg. 95). The plaintiffs desired a partition of the property, while the defendants requested a judgment, not a sale of the property. The plaintiffs however recognized that the "chief value . . . consists in the rice plantation [and] . . . that the dykes dams and ditches which are exhaustive have been constructed with the view of working and operating the said plantation as a single farm, and the . . . improvements are made with the same view, there being on fine dwelling house, one saw mill, and one mill pond to supply the fresh water, which is not only necessary but indispensable in the rice cultivation." In addition, the property had been damaged during a recent storm and the repairs would require "a considerable expenditure of money" and it would be impossible to bind the minor child of David R. Murchison to any contract.

Orton was placed up for auction by the decision of the court. Although we have not found the deed, we presume that Grainger had also divested his interest in Orton since on April 18, 1884 Kenneth M. Murchison became the owner of the property paying \$24,000 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB BB, pg. 527). It was reported to the court that this represented the "full value" of the property (Kenneth M. Murchison v. Lucy

Murchison and others, Minutes Brunswick County Superior Court, 1882-1892, pg. 95). Lucy Murchison subsequently demanded the cash equivalence of her dower from the sale, which the court determined to be \$3,369.12. The remainder was divided among David Murchison's heirs.

Although there is relatively little information regarding activities during this transition, we have identified a few newspaper accounts or advertisements that provide some information.

In 1879 an advertisement appeared announcing that Orton was looking for 50 laborers, with instructions to apply to F.J. Lord (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, December 3, 1879). Lord may have been an overseer, and Susan Taylor Block reveals that he was the son of William Campbell Lord, who was the brother-in-law of Frederick Hill.

Similar advertisements were found in 1880. The first sought "30 experienced rice field hands, or those accustomed to working in ditches or on banks" and the second sought "50 men wanted to work at Orton" and offered to pay 75¢ a day, with both advertisements posted by Williams & Murchison, the grocery and commercial merchant firm (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 11, 1880, March 4, 1880). By 1882 an article noted that the "Brunswick rice planters" agreed to a uniform price for harvesting rice, "Two (2) dollars per acre for cutting, binding and hacking" and it was reported that this would "enable the hands to earn seventy-five cents or more per day, if they do more than a 'task,' as many will do" (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, September 3, 1882). Agreements such as this were common in the postbellum as a means of controlling labor.

A February 1880 account reported the Orton fields were being burned off and that "the sight was a grand one, the flames in some instances reaching to a great height" (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, February 5, 1881).

In 1882 the Wilmington papers reported a sensational murder at Orton Plantation. An

African American, Pharaoh Sykes, killed a woman, Isabella Jones, using an ax to "split open" her head and crush her skull on Wednesday, May 24, 1882. The murder was committed in front of two children and was apparently the result of jealousy (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, May 25, 1882, May 26, 1882, May 27, 1882). By June 9 the newspaper was complaining that there had been "no action taken looking to the arrest of Pharaoh Sykes . . . although we have heard of his having been frequently seen in the neighborhood" (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, June 9, 1882). There was apparently never any effort to capture Sykes. We have been unable to find the alleged murderer in the federal census, although a Susan I. Jones (possibly the victim) of the correct age was identified in the 1880 Pender County census.

Maps and Photographs of Orton at End of the Nineteenth Century

Maps

The earliest identified map from this period is the Coast Survey Chart T-1464a, Cape Fear River from Orton's Creek to Cape Fear Point, dating 1878. The plan identifies Orton as commonly known to belong to Grainger and we're fortunate that a later map resolves these lost details. What we can see from this map is that the main house is flanked by two structures to the north. While not shown, access to the main house must have been by way of a road approaching from the southwest, implying that there was no major land access with oak avenue. Orton was architecturally oriented to the water.

A road extends south along the high ground parallel to the rice fields (shown on this map as blank). This high ground is broken into three relatively equal portions by two sloughs or canals linking the rice fields with Orton Pond. Just north of the first slough entering the rice field are five structures, three west of the road and two to the northeast. Between the two sloughs are three structures (what looks like a fourth is actually a symbol for a pine forest). Between the second

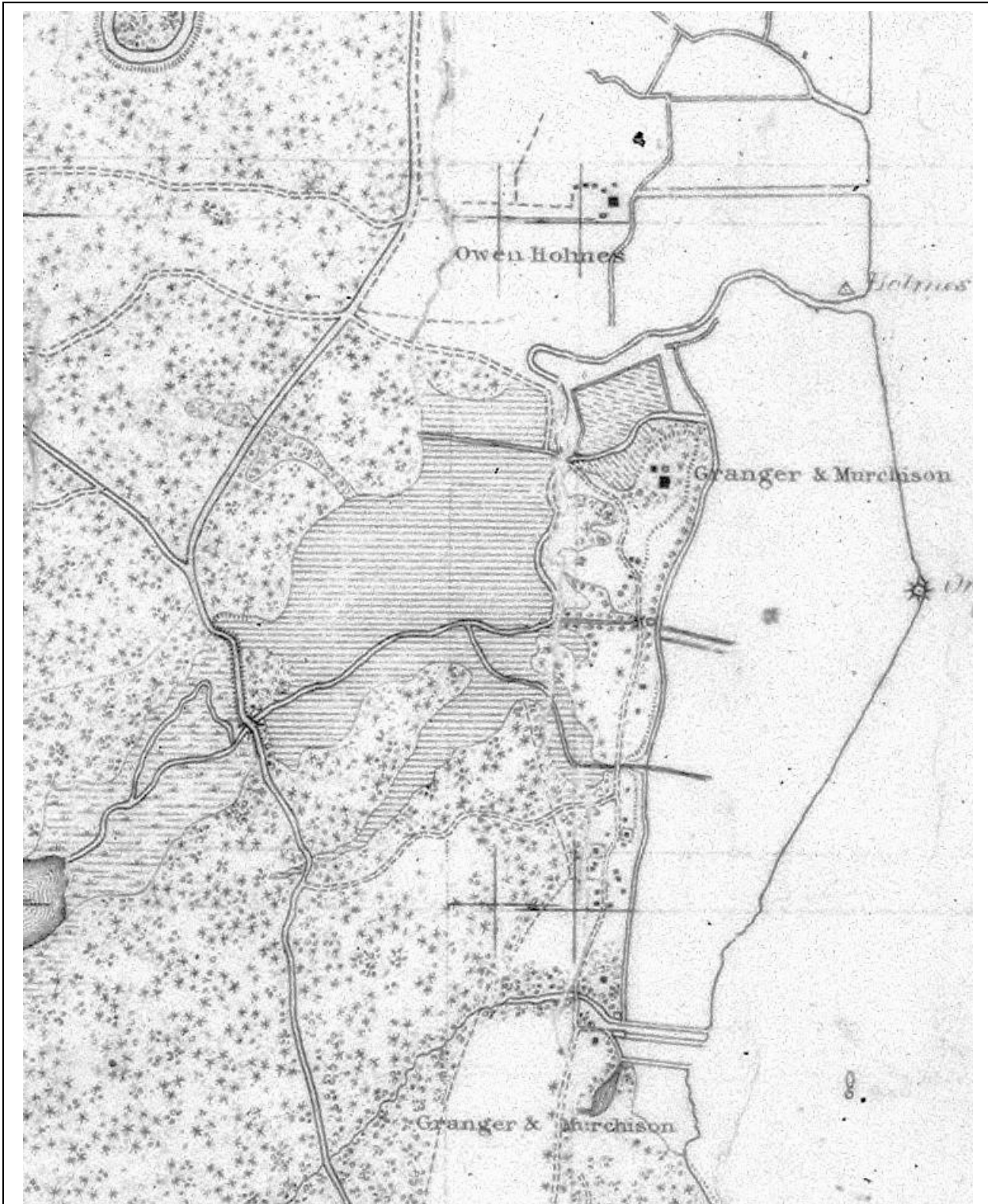


Figure 27. Portion of the 1878 Coast Chart T-1464a showing the vicinity of Orton Plantation.

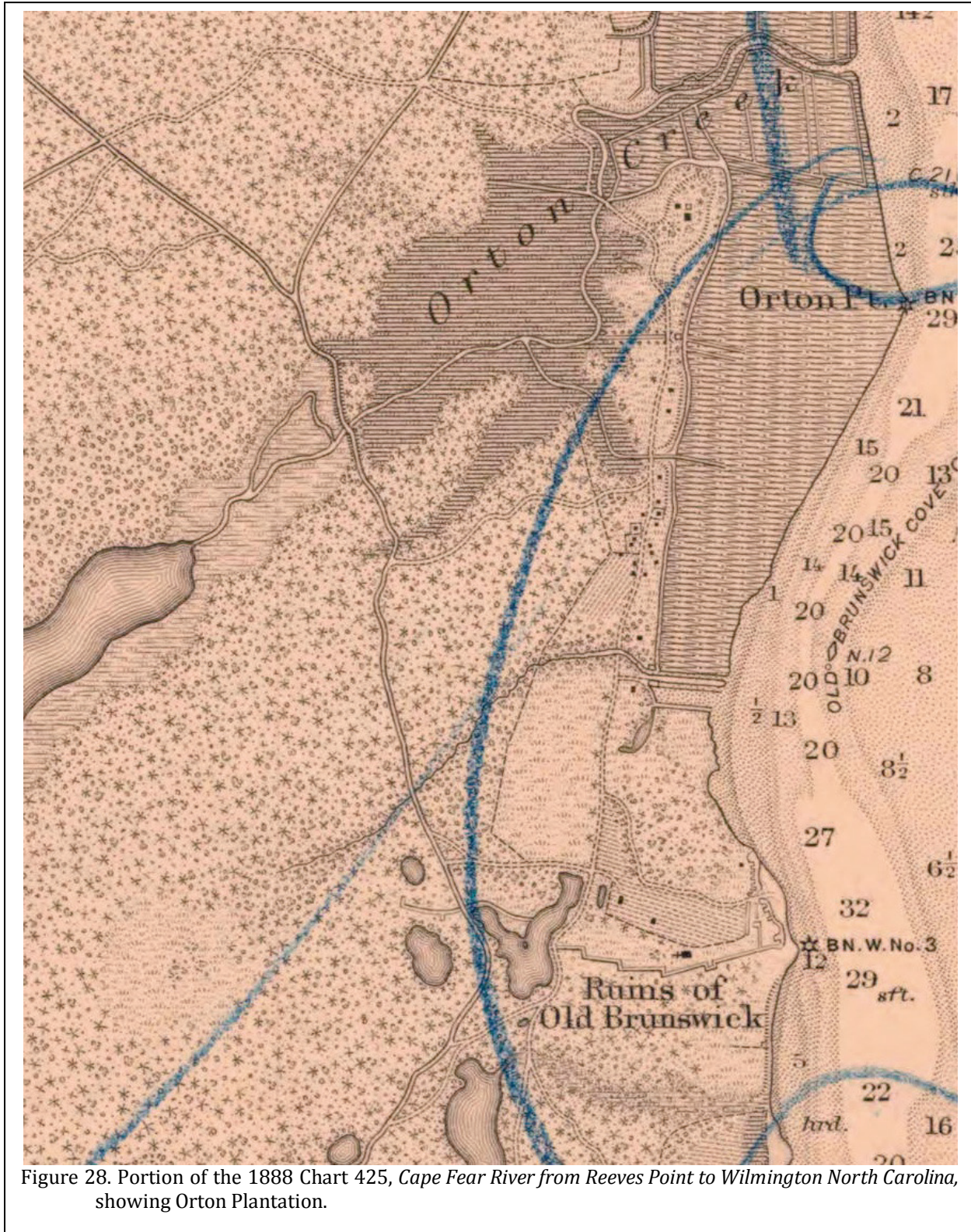


Figure 28. Portion of the 1888 Chart 425, Cape Fear River from Reeves Point to Wilmington North Carolina, showing Orton Plantation.

slough or canal and the mill area are as many as 17 structures, 10 on the east side of the road and an additional 7 on the west. One structure on the east and two on the west are surrounded by fences.

We presume that the bulk of these structures represent the houses for 200 workers mentioned in the sales ads. Those with fences around them were almost certainly occupied and the fences were keeping in animals owned by the workers. Two possible structures are shown at the mill site.

The 1888 chart for the area provides many details missing from the earlier T-chart.

For example, it shows the causeway crossing the Orton Creek swamp, with the creek dividing east of the causeway. One branch flows southeast into the rice fields; the clean, evenly spaced shifting of the course suggests this may have been an artificial canal. The other branch flows northward, inland from the rice field, to a junction with a short canal that runs eastward into the rice field. The main branch continues northward until it meets the entrance road to Orton. There, probably because of its convenient location, a water control device channeled flow into two canals leading into the rice fields, while the main creek continued north and eventually emptied into the Cape Fear River.

Thus, Orton Pond fed the rice fields at four locations.

Turning our attention southward to what had been the mill, fed by a canal running off Orton Pond (see, for example, Figure 26), we find that there is no longer any good evidence of a mill. The canal that once fed the mill is now shown as no longer connected to the pond. At the mill site there is a wharf and dock. Evidence of the canal extends inland about 0.25 mile. Perhaps this is an error, or perhaps the canal was allowed to silt in.

This plan also allows a much clearer understanding of the various fields. As previously mentioned, rice fields extend along the Cape Fear and two fields are found inland along Orton Creek.

Beyond these fields, running back to the main road, is a large area in which the symbol for salt marsh has been used. West of the causeway, the swamp is designated as fresh water.

The bulk of the surrounding forests are identified as pine, although scattered areas of oaks are shown. There is one large grassed field at the south end of Orton, probably serving as pasturage. There is only one very small area of cultivated crops shown on the map north of the mill area. Southward, in the area of old Fort Anderson, north of St. Philips and west of a small pond, there is an extensive field, with at least two additional structures.

The structures shown on the 1878 chart continue to be illustrated on the 1888 plan, although at a better resolution. Of particular interest is the non-nucleated residential pattern at Orton that grew up as a replacement for the regimen of the slave row.

When we examine acreage on Figure 28 there are approximately 300 acres of rice fields, 32 acres of cultivated land, and 68 acres of pasture, a total of almost 400 improved acres. While we have no agricultural census for the plantation, the rice field acreage does seem to correspond with the acreage in the various sales ads for Orton.

The label of "Grainger & Murchison," on the plan suggests that Grainger may have been involved in the property as late as 1878. To the north is Kendal, owned at the time by Owen Holmes.

Photographs

Orton Plantation's main house caught the attention of photographers during the late nineteenth century and we have a series of photographs showing the front of the house from various angles. While there are also a variety of rice field photographs, we have been unable to find any photographs showing other structures on Orton or even the rear of the main house. Since none of the photographs are dated they are illustrated here in no particular order.



Figure 29. Frontal view of Orton, ca. 1896, that appears to show dense vegetation at the sites of the building. Compare the very short chimney in this photograph with the rebuilt chimney illustrated in the following photographs.

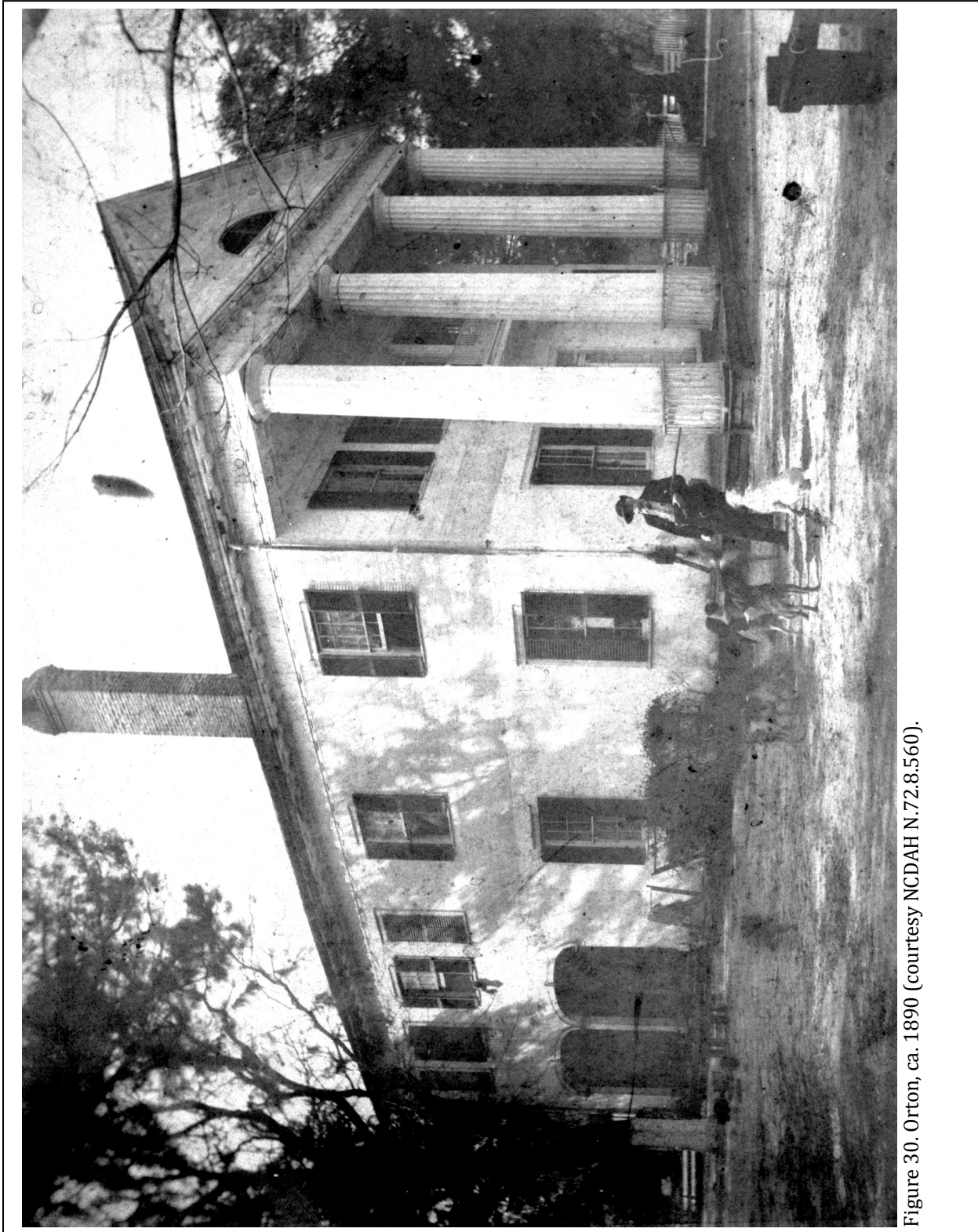


Figure 30. Orton, ca. 1890 (courtesy NCDAH N.72.8.560).

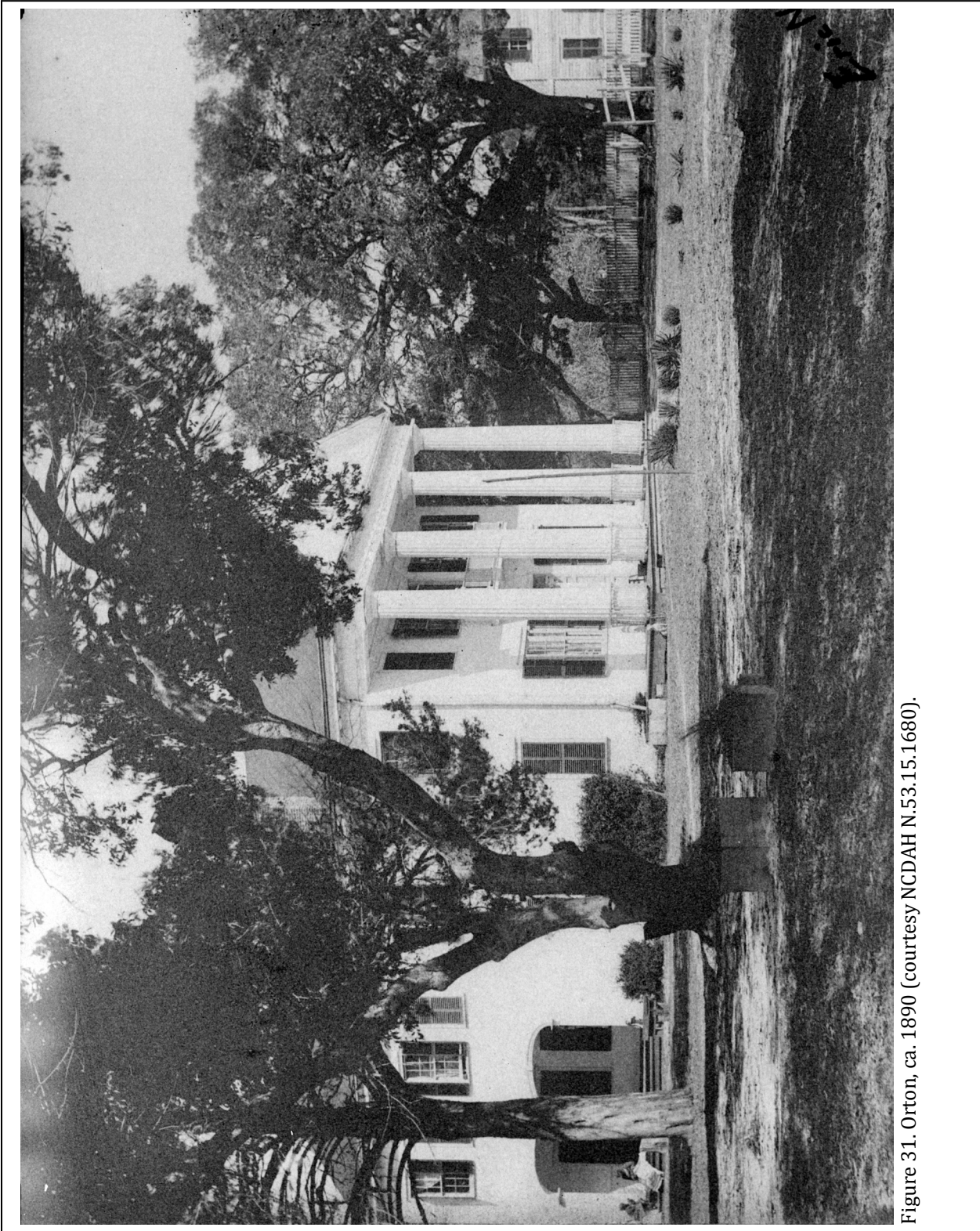


Figure 31. Orton, ca. 1890 (courtesy NCDAH N.53.15.1680).



Figure 32. Orton (courtesy NCDAH N.78.7.71; see also N.72.8.561).



Figure 33. Orton (courtesy NCDAH PhC42 Bx20).

Although Figure 29 is the only full frontal view, it is so grainy that it provides relatively little insight. It, along with all of the figures except for Figure 33, show the four Doric columns surrounded by column guards, suggesting these were present until the turn of the century. While all of the figures show Orton as white, presumably a stucco covering the bricks, Figure 30 provides evidence that the stucco at that time was scored to imitate Ashlar block construction. In the remaining photographs this detail is either not visible or newer applications of stucco have obliterated the early scoring.

Figures 30 and 32 show a barren and sandy yard with no evidence of “improvements,” although both show what appear to be boxwoods against the side walls. Figure 32 also seems to show a net of some sort in the front yard. Figure 30 shows a line of small plants, probably yucca, lining a path to the Orton landing. Figure 33 shows no yucca or other plants in the yard and even the boxwood against the house seems to be missing. Several of the photographs show tree trunks painted white.

All of the figures suggest the presence of a cistern at the left corner of the porch, evidenced by a box-like device perhaps measuring about 3 feet square and raised about a foot above the ground. The downspout is seen terminating in this box in all of the photos (although in Figure 32 the downspout has been repositioned). Figure 30 shows a second cistern just outside the two arched doorways on the left side. This cistern has attached to it a hand pump.

The photographs also reveal a number of people engaged in real or staged activities. Figure 30 shows a white man holding a breech loading shotgun surrounded by five hunting dogs. Figure 31 illustrated two African American women. One is sitting on the steps and appears to be working on a large quilt. The other, a child, is watching. A small dog is also seen sitting at the edge of the porch. Figure 32 shows a large number of people, both black and white. At the far left side there is a horse and carriage. Sitting on a bench is an African American child. On the porch are four women, two men, three children, and a prostrate dog.

Several of the photographs illustrate fences and nearby structures. At the far right of Figure 30 there are decorative white picket fences and a white board gate. Figure 31 provides an especially good view of a white picket fence that appears to separate the mansion yard from that of a structure to the north, just in view at the right edge of the photograph. The structure is wood frame and two stories in height. Figure 33 provides a more oblique view of this structure. It can be recognized as a frame dwelling built on brick piers and having a front shed porch. The structure appears to be in the process of being extended in the rear, with inner sheathing visible in the photograph. The fence separating the two areas is not present in this photograph. The structure is consistent with what might be used by an overseer during the nineteenth century.

The angle of Figure 31 does not show this structure, but it does allow us to see two other structures. Beyond the yard and a board fence there is a small shed-like structure, perhaps an animal pen. A much larger and better constructed building is found further to the northwest. This appears to be a rice barn or perhaps a winnowing house. It is two stories in height, sided in shingles and has a hipped roof.

Late Nineteenth Century Rice Production

Antebellum Antecedents

William Washington’s (1828) queries to Carolina rice planters is especially interesting not only for its early period, but also for the variation as a result of many different planters responding. Nevertheless, Ruffin (1848) provides a reasonable synthesis of the process, which is largely repeated by DeBow (1852).

The fields of a tidal rice plantation were constructed on land that had been ordinarily overflowed by tides:

When reclaimed they are furnished with a sufficient dam to exclude the tide-water, and a

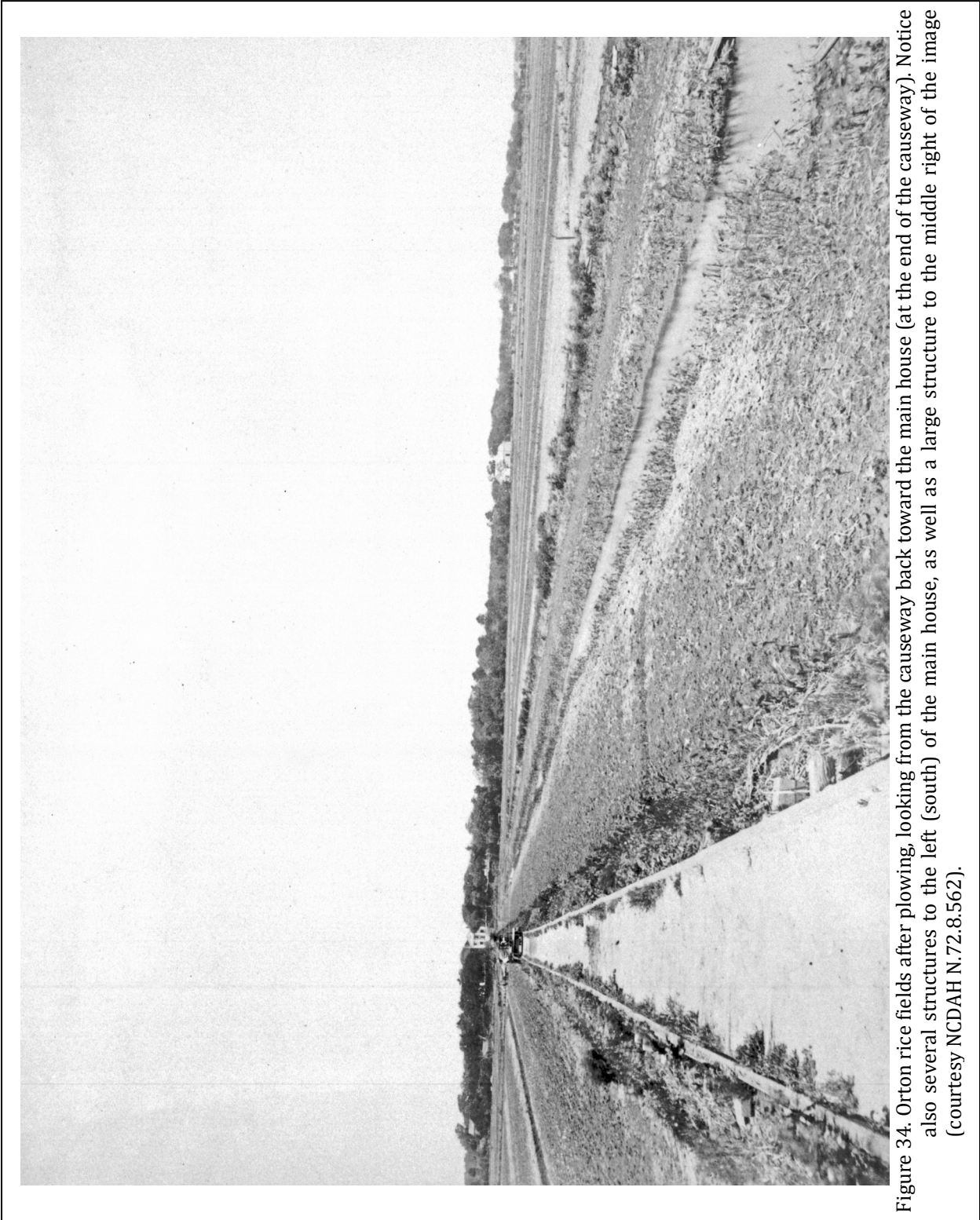


Figure 34. Orton rice fields after plowing, looking from the causeway back toward the main house (at the end of the causeway). Notice also several structures to the left (south) of the main house, as well as a large structure to the middle right of the image (courtesy NCDAH N.72.8.562).

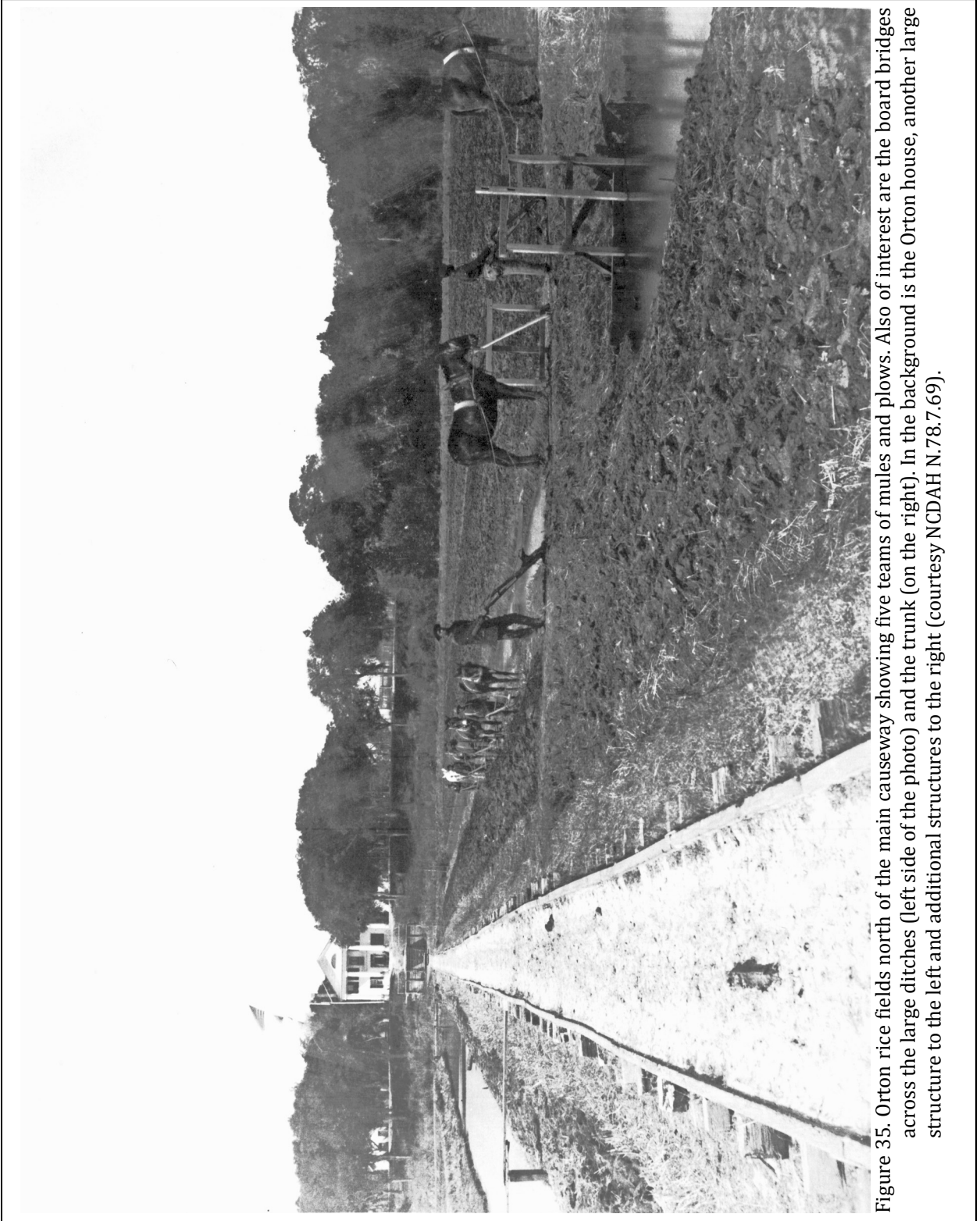


Figure 35. Orton rice fields north of the main causeway showing five teams of mules and plows. Also of interest are the board bridges across the large ditches (left side of the photo) and the trunk (on the right). In the background is the Orton house, another large structure to the left and additional structures to the right (courtesy NCDAH N.78.7.69).

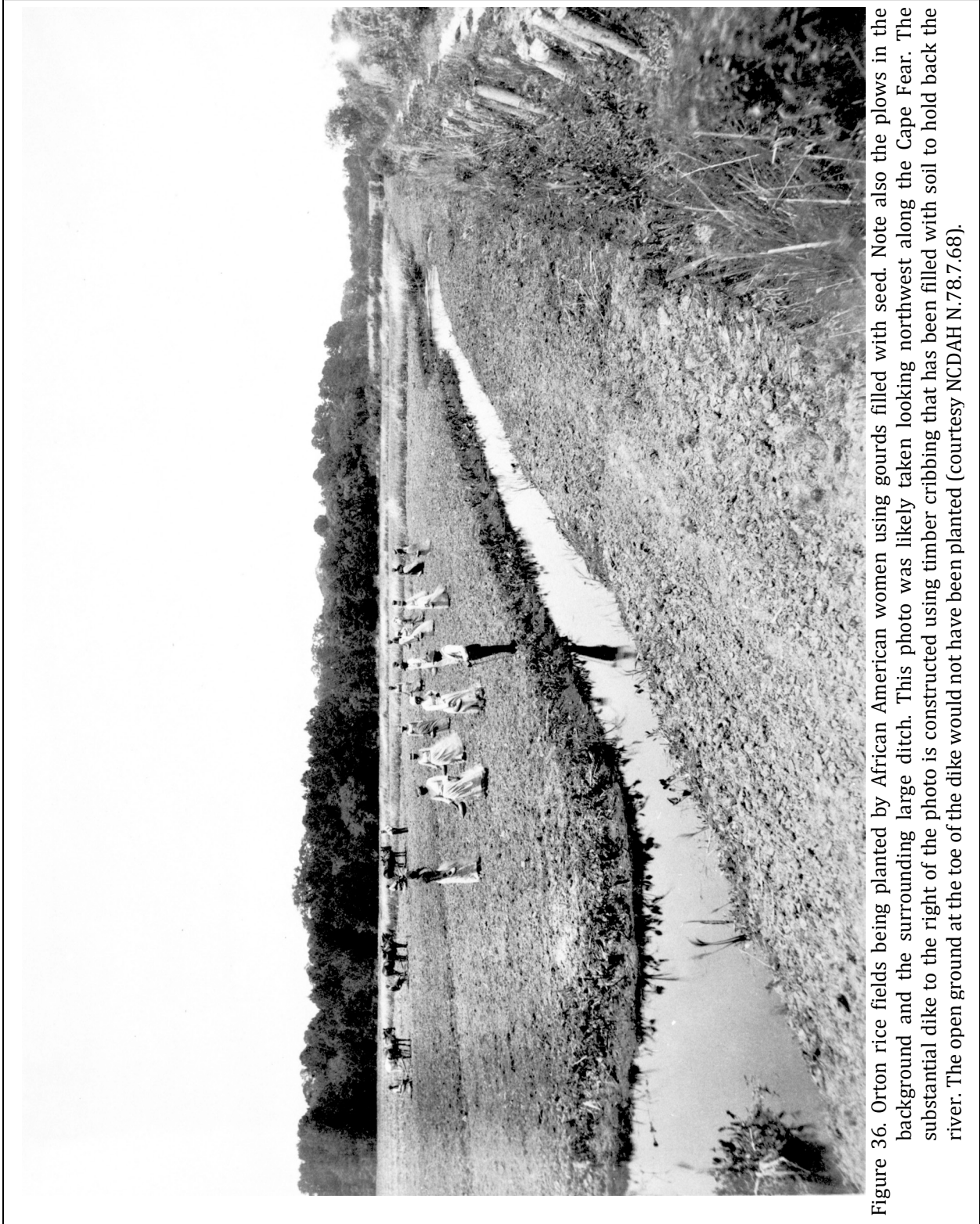


Figure 36. Orton rice fields being planted by African American women using gourds filled with seed. Note also the plows in the background and the surrounding large ditch. This photo was likely taken northwest along the Cape Fear. The substantial dike to the right of the photo is constructed using timber cribbing that has been filled with soil to hold back the river. The open ground at the toe of the dike would not have been planted (courtesy NCDAH N.78.7.68).

"trunk," or framed culvert, furnished with a door at each end swinging upon long levers, which are attached to sturdy uprights, so as to admit or exclude the tide at pleasure—retain or discharge it, after being admitted. The large enclosure is subdivided by "cross-banks," or dams, into fields of convenient size, containing variously from fourteen to twenty-two acres. In constructing the banks, large ditches (five to eight feet wide,) are excavated to the depth of five feet, leaving between the ditch and bank, a margin of twelve feet or more. These serve to drain the field. From one of these ditches to another, in one direction, and at the distance of 37½ to fifty feet apart, are cut smaller ditches or "drains," eighteen inches wide, and three feet deep. Thus thoroughly reclaimed, and completely drained, the swamp, if well seeded, will produce abundantly from the first (Ruffin 1848:15).

In preparation of planting the land would be plowed or hoed; the stubble might be turned under or burned. The field would be leveled and planting would begin sometime between the middle of March and the middle of April. Trenches for the seeds would be opened up about 15-inches apart and about 2 bushels of seed would be sowed per acre. The seed might be lightly covered with soil, or more commonly what was known as "clayed" rice or rice that had clay applied to it, would be planted. This clayed rice would not float when water was applied to the fields and thus was not covered with soil.

Planters had a variety of opinions regarding appropriate seed rice. Some believed that rice from the north was better, others believed the rice should be either from the north or south, while others felt that it really made no significant difference. All, however, agreed that

appropriate seed rice should be heavy, well formed, not damaged by processing, and should be free from volunteer or red rice. It appears that relatively few planters during the antebellum were raying rice – a process of screening to remove weeds and damaged grains.

A sprout or point flow was then applied to the field for about two weeks. It was reported that this protected the seed from birds, rid the fields of trash, and would set the seed. After that the fields were drained. When the crop was five to six weeks old it might receive its first hoeing in order to remove grasses. Alternating water and hoeing would occur during the season, with planters typically hoeing at least twice and sometimes as often as three times.

Joint water would be put on the fields at the last hoeing and would remain there until the grain was mature, usually in about two months. Each planter had their own means of judging when the rice was ready for harvest, but they all involved the rice ripening from the bottom of the stalk upwards. The rice would be cut with a sickle or hook. Tasks for the African American slaves ranged from a quarter an acre per day up to three-quarters of an acre.

The cut rice would be laid on the stubble to cure. The following day, once the dew was off, this rice would be gathered up, tied in sheaves and then packed in rice flats that would carry five to seven acres of rice production, and taken back to the barn yard. There it would be stacked in small ricks to cure. In the barnyard the rice would be separated from the straw by flailing to produce what was called rough rice (rice removed from the straw, but not yet hulled).

The next step was milling, which removed the indigestible hulls from the grains of rice. In the antebellum the rough rice would be placed in a wooden mortar and it would be pounded by hand using a wooden pestle. By using a tapping and rolling motion, a skilled slave could produce 95% unbroken, whole rice, while a less skilled or tired slave could easily shatter half of the rice. It was at this stage that rice would be separated into "whole rice" that was exported, "middling rice," which

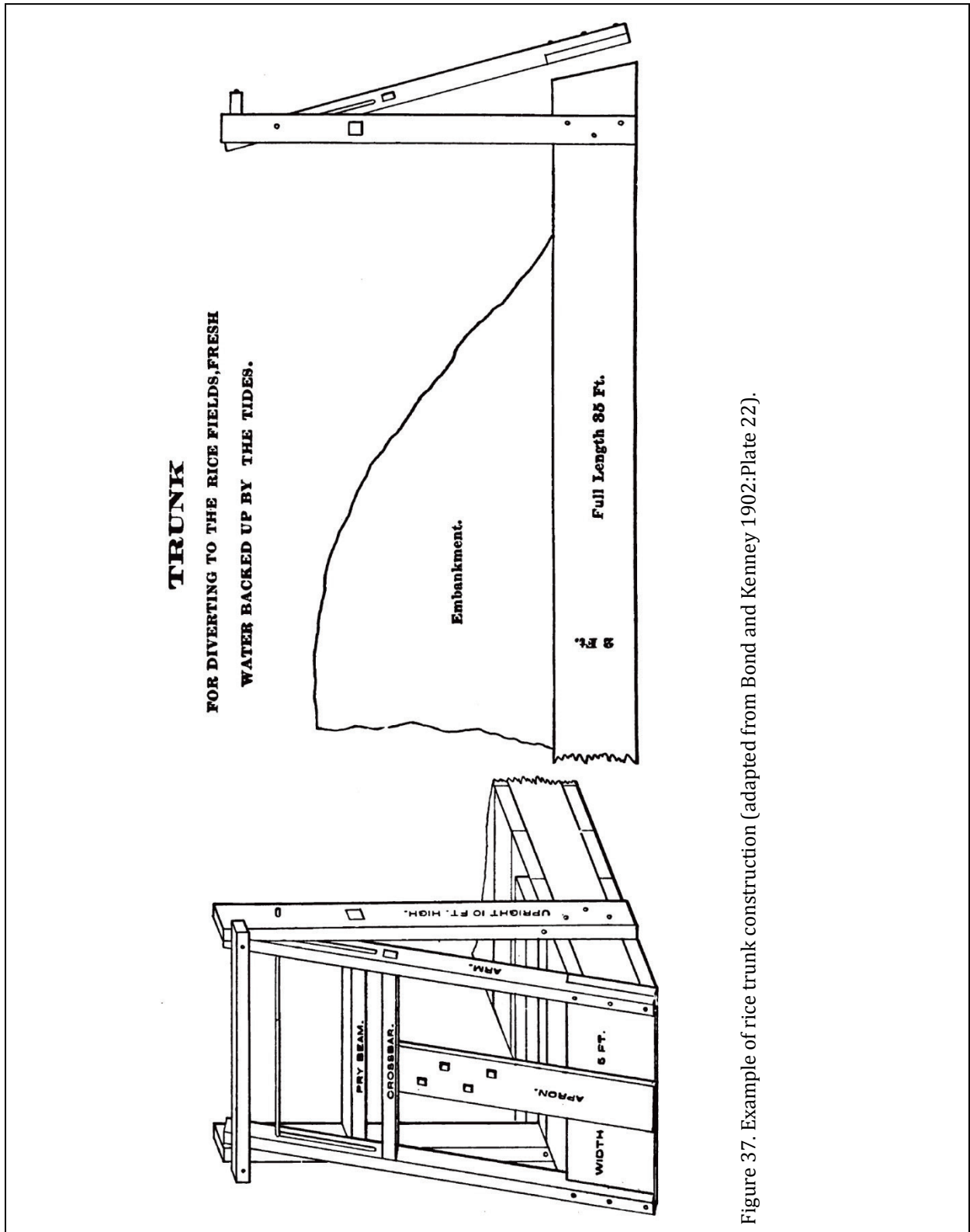


Figure 37. Example of rice trunk construction (adapted from Bond and Kenney 1902:Plate 22).

were partially broken grains and put aside for use by the planter, and “small rice,” or small broken grains that would be given to the slaves. Milling also produced a small amount of rice flour that needed to be used immediately or it would spoil.

A second pounding was typically done to remove the inner skin, or bran. This produced a white rice and without the fatty bran, the rice was less likely to turn rancid during transit.

After pounding, the rice was winnowed in order to remove the rice grains from their associated trash. Afterwards the rice would be packed in barrels.

Planters estimated two to three 600 pound barrels of rice to the acre was a good yield and expected each slave to harvest about 10 barrels.

The Late Nineteenth Century

In spite of a wide range of planting idiosyncrasies seen from one planter to the next during the antebellum, the basic process of planting, growing, and harvesting rice hardly changed along the Carolina coast for over 100 years. When planting was resumed after the Civil War the process was the same, except that labor had to be paid. Thus, the outline of rice cultivation offered by Alexander (1893) and Sprunt (1898) is very similar to antebellum practices. In many cases differences are the result of labor costs. The discussions by Doar (1936) must be interpreted carefully since he tends to coningle antebellum and postbellum practices.

Sprunt (1898:203) explains that cleaning ditches was done every third year, while the smaller drains were cleaned after every plowing. The fields would be plowed and stubble turned under shortly after the rice was harvested. This prepared the fields for the next year’s crop and also helped reduce the problem of volunteer rice. He comments that the work was usually done by oxen, although there is evidence that many plantations – such as Orton – also used mules.

Planting time in the Wilmington area was

about March; plows and harrows went over the fields and afterwards

The “plow turns” should be broken up with the spade, sinking the spade as deep as the plow had gone, say eight inches; an able-bodied man will break up in this, and thoroughly, a surface of fifteen hundred square feet in a day. The field should be well drained, however. The hoe follows to cut up and break the remaining clods and level the surface. The more the soil is comminuted, and the surface brought to a common level, the better. The trenchers then come in with hoes made for the purpose, and trace out with great accuracy the drills in which to sow the seed, fourteen, thirteen or twelve inches apart from centre to centre. They will average . . . three-quarters of an acre to the hand in a day’s work (Sprunt 1898:204).

Alexander (1893:371) explains that the mules and the plows were provided by the owner and that workers were typically paid 75¢ a day. The mules would wear boots made by twisting rice straw around the hoof and holding it in place with rawhide straps. Workers harrowing the ground were paid 30¢ an acre and would typically accomplish about 3 acres a day.

Drills (the trenches into which the rice seed was placed) tended to be only 3-inches in width, making it easier to hoe out any grass that might come up outside this narrow row. He described how the sowers, almost always women, “with great care, yet with wonderful facility and precision, string the seed in the drills, putting two and a quarter bushels to the acre” (Sprunt 1898:204). Given the skill required, he advised against assigning a task, but noted that two or three acres can be done with proficiency by most. Pay for this critical task amounted to between 50¢ and 75¢ a day (Alexander 1893:371).

Sprunt (1898:204-205) goes on to note that the seeds may be covered with soil, but if they are not, then the seed “must first be prepared by rolling it in clayed water” – the same techniques used during the early antebellum. By the twentieth century some planters began to also tar their seeds to reduce the potential of birds eating the seed in the field. Bond and Kenney note this was not a certain protection since, “birds have been killed whose craws were filled with the black grains, and whose flesh itself tasted of the tar” (Bond and Kenney 1902:66).

If the seeds were not covered with soil, Sprunt reports that the fields were flooded for five or six days to encourage the rice to sprout and then drawn off in order to prevent the small seedling from floating off. Once the rice was well rooted “in the needle state,” the field was again flooded (Sprunt 1898:205).

Bond and Kenney (1902:66) note that immediately after planting and the seeds covered, the fields are flooded by what was called the “sprout flow” and this was allowed to stand for six to eight days and then drained off. This protected the seeds and allowed germination. When the plants were up and the individual rows could be plainly seen, water – called the “stretch flow” – was again placed on the field. Within two or three days the plants were nearly six inches in height and the planter would begin to gradually lower the water to about four inches and kept on the fields for 13 to 30 days, depending on the soil, the condition of the plants, and the temperature. This water was still called the “stretch flow” and when finally drawn completely off, the rice entered the period of “dry growth” which might last 40 to 45 days.

A trunk minder, who “attends all the trunks on perhaps 300 acres at 50 cents per day” is responsible for controlling the flows (Alexander 1893:371).

Sprunt noted that prior to the period of dry growth some planters put down water to wash out ditches and had hands clean the ditches to ensure good flow. After about a week after draining, the fields should be dry and the first

hoeing was conducted. After another 15 to 18 days the crop would be hoed again. Each hoeing was done with small hoes to prevent damage to the rice and workers were paid about 50¢ for a task of a half acre (Alexander 1893:371). Sprunt (1898:207) indicated this dry period to be about 90 days and then described the use of a “lay-by” flow where the fields were again slowly flooded – some planters keeping the water shallow and others using a greater depth.

During the following 60 to 70 days the water was frequently changed in order to keep it fresh, but it was never entirely drawn off until the rice was ready for harvest. To accomplish this he noted that planters adopted:

two trunks – one to admit fresh water at every flood tide, and the other to void it with the ebb, so that twice every twenty-four hours there is obtained a slight current through the field. This besides lessening the infection of the atmosphere (miasmata) by stagnant water, keeps the roots of the plant cool and healthy, though it postpones the ripening of the rice some five or eight days. Meantime, should any grass have escaped the previous hoeings and weedings, it will show its crest before the rice matures and be plucked up by the roots. All white rice will be stripped off by hand (Sprunt 1898:207-208).

Virtually every author comments on the depravations caused by the rice birds or bobolinks (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus* Linn.) that began arriving in the latter part of August. They were able to so destroy a field that virtually every hand would be employed with old muskets, whips, sling shots, and voices to chase the birds off. These bird minders are paid about 50¢ a day for men and 35¢ a day for boys; most plantations would have about one minder per 5 acres. The rice bird season lasted for about 30 days before they flew further south (Alexander 1893:371).

One news account explained that:

The bird-minders, who are employed to keep the birds away, usually fail in their duty. The sun is hot, and the water of the rice-fields is hot, and the bird-minder, who is presumed to be on duty, to avoid these disagreeable conditions usually seeks the shade, while the confiding employers, sitting at home, simply trusts to luck and hopes the birds won't get the whole crop ("The Rice Birds and the Rice Crop," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 23, 1889).

Another account from 1895 recounts the arrival of millions of these birds from August 21 to September 25. It was reported that an average of one quart of powder was used per day, with guns firing continuously from sunup to sunset. In spite of the effort losses were reported to be about 5 bushels per acre and if the grain was soft rather than hard, "the destruction of such fields is complete, it not paying to cut and bring the rice out of the field" (quoted in Pearson et al. 1919:217-218).

The only benefit provided by the birds was that they were viewed as "the most delicious mouthfuls to be had from the air above" (Alexander 1893:371). Local papers reported in 1893 that while the rice birds had appeared in the market, they were not yet fat and therefore could be purchased for 25¢ per dozen (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, September 1, 1893). A few years later another brief article reported that they were fat and selling at 40¢ a dozen (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, September 8, 1900). The birds were so popular to eat that Alexander Sprunt and Son actually had an employee serving as a rice bird broker (Susan Taylor Block, personal communication 2012). Alexander also reported that the birds should be eaten as soon after killing as possible, although if cooked immediately and packed in their own fat, they retained their freshness for months, recommending that they be

commercially canned (Alexander 1893:371).

Sprunt described the harvest as occurring before most observers would find the rice quite ripe – for rice sown April 1 the harvest would generally begin between September 1 and 10. The water was first drawn off and by the next morning it was being cut by hand, being stacked on the stubble just as it was during the antebellum. After the next day's dew had evaporated the rice was gathered up, tied into sheaves, and taken to the threshing yard and again stacked (Sprunt 1898:208).

A reaper's task was a half acre and he was paid 50¢. The tying up of the rice into shocks cost an additional 75¢ an acre. The cost of transporting the rice to the flats on the edge of the fields was 75¢ to \$1.00 per acre, while the two men working on the flats were typically paid \$1.00 a day.

Bond and Kenney observe that the harvest occurred "when the straw barely begins to color, when the lower part of the head (about one-eighth) is still 'in the milk'" (Bond and Kenney 1902:67). If rice was cut too late, when entirely ripe, the quality was inferior and the quantity was significantly reduced by the loss resulting from handling. The cutting occurred about 10 to 12 inches off the ground and otherwise the description is in uniformity with Sprunt. They do explain that workers were typically paid about \$2 an acre for the work of cutting, tying, and hauling the sheaves.

If the rice was sent to a threshing mill the cost was about 7% of the yield. Shipment to the pounding mill involved a freight charge, typically 1-2¢ per bushel of 45 pounds with the pounding costing about 8-9¢ per bushel. In spite of all these costs, Alexander observes that the return on rice, at least during good years, "the margin for profits is quite equal to the average in other kinds of planting" (Alexander 1893:372).

An account of the rice profits a few years later offered equally promising returns:

One acre of average rice land yields 40 bushels at 75¢, \$30.00,

one and a half tons rice straw per acre \$8.00, to \$12.00; a total per acre of \$42.00; and so a one horse crop of 30 acres is equal to \$1,260. The cost of cultivating and harvesting a one horse crop should not exceed \$360.00, which would leave a net profit to each one horse crop of \$900.00 ("Rice Culture in This State," *Wilmington Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, December 21, 1901).

While the agricultural census associated a value with rice straw and the Confederate forces purchased this straw during the Civil War, it wasn't until the early twentieth century that rice straw began to be recognized as a commercial product. A 1903 article reported that what was once thrown away (or burned) was now worth \$7 a ton and was being used "by fruit packers" although it was principally used for horse bedding and was growing as stock and cattle feed (*Daily Review*, Wilmington, NC, January 30, 1903). It seems, however, that the article may have been a little dated, since at least one advertisement has been found announcing the availability of 5,000 bales of superior quality rice straw as early as January 9, 1889 (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 9, 1889) and by 1882 the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station was reporting that straw made good fodder (Anonymous 1883:92).

Wilmington's rice milling was dominated by the National Rice Milling Company beginning about 1892 ("New Rice Mill Syndicate," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, July 10, 1892), although the Carolina Rice Mills was organized in early 1901 ("Carolina Rice Mills - To Be Made Second to None in the South," *Daily Review*, Wilmington, NC, January 10, 1901). By 1904, however, all of the Wilmington mills had shut down or were moved to more profitable locations such as Greensboro, North Carolina. The article remarked that, "the rice industry in this section of North Carolina is not now what it was in former years . . . not enough rice is grown around Wilmington to keep a large mill running" ("Entire Plant is Being

Moved," *Daily Review*, Wilmington, NC, June 22, 1904).

The Shift to Other Crops

As rice became less profitable in the Wilmington area (and elsewhere) planters often simply abandoned their rice lands. As early as 1904 the Department of Agriculture noted that "the problem of substituting other crops for rice on these fertile, irrigated lands is absorbing the attention of many growers (Anonymous 1904:68).

This caused the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Experiment Stations, to establish a special office to explore the drainage of what they termed "swamp lands":

it would be of value to know whether such lands can be economically drained and cultivated to dry-land crops. Surveys and plans were made by George M. Warrant and D.L. Yarnell for draining 340 acres of such land on the Orton plantation and the Garrell tract, near Wilmington, N.C. The construction of levees, the excavation of ditches, and the installation of pumping plants seem the most practicable method of reclamation (Anonymous 1911:47).

Although the process had begun in 1910 with a survey of Orton (Anonymous 1910:762), we have found no further report regarding the progress or if any alternative crops were every planted.

Of course, this discussion should not overshadow the choice made by African Americans to turn their backs on rice. Littlefield quotes Theodore D. Ravenel, who in 1935 at the Carolina Plantation Society, commenting on the decline of rice:

I wish to dwell on this labor question and it is my opinion and the opinion of many of my friends

who are forever gone that this lack of efficient labor was the biggest contribution to the slow but sure decline of rice culture in this section (quoted in Littlefield 2010:59).

Littlefield understandably questions how Ravenel could be so removed from the lives of African Americans and the horrible conditions associated with rice cultivation that he was unable to understand “why laborers with no stake in the land, when offered other opportunities, could not be paid enough to remain on it” (Littlefield 2010:59).

Seed Rice

A brief report by Roberts and his colleagues claims that, “the rice grown and produced at Orton was of a high quality, fine grain which was highly prized and sought after as seed rice by the larger southern plantations” (Roberts et al. 2012:3).

This opinion appears largely based on the results of a postbellum test of gold seed rice in India with the results evaluated by several South Carolina rice growers of the period. One, J.R. Sparkman of Georgetown, explained that the gold seed remained true “because of the local fixation upon eliminating red rice from seed stock and because of the salubriousness of the environment for the grain.” He went on, “even planters in southern South Carolina and Georgia resupplied themselves with ‘northern’ seed every four years” (quoted in Shields 2010:23). Of course, even Shields acknowledged that the reviewers had a vested interest in creating a mystique surrounding their seed since they would have profited from providing a constant supply to foreign growers. Therefore, it seems appropriate to consider such accounts carefully and search elsewhere for evidence.

An early discussion of seed rice was written by Joseph S. Bossard (1828:115-117), a Sumter area planter. His comments, while noteworthy for the time period, were rather simplistic, focusing on only three issues: first, seed

rice “should not be planted earlier than the middle of April, nor later than the tenth of May;” second, since rice is an “aquatic plant,” it should have an adequate “supply of this necessary means of its growth;” and third, that seed rice should not be cut before being fully ripe. Based on the discussions offered by Washington (1828), planting was typical of the time period suggested, and there is little indication that water was used to force premature growth. Cutting was a different issue, since most planters cut before all of the grains were fully ripe in order to prevent loss during the cutting, stacking, tying, and transportation. Regardless, as a planter of upland rice, the applicability of these comments to tidal cultural practice is uncertain.

We are grateful for Dr. David S. Shields’ reference to the 1831 report of a competition by Georgetown planters concerning the production of seed rice. The judgment of quality was based, at least in this contest, solely on the quantity of red rice contamination. The winner was Col. R.F.W. Allston, who had only 8 grains of red rice in 5,178 – a rate of less than 0.2%. Of course by 1843 Ruffin reported that seed rice with even 1% red rice was considered “inferior” (Ruffin 1843:15).

When the comments provided to William Washington are examined, it appears that planters, while recognizing the importance of quality seed, saw it as but one of a number of critical issues. Those that commented specifically on seed tended to reveal little consistency among the group. All eight commentators agreed only on selecting seed as free as possible from red or volunteer rice. Even this, however, was open to interpretation, with one noting that seed rice with up to 3% red rice would be considered “good” (Washington 1828:499). Six mentioned judging the seed rice on the basis of the grains’ weight or size, and four made some reference to the grains’ quality, such as “perfect grain” or “best filled, well ripened” (Washington 1828:216, 310). Only one of the planters also specifically mentioned seeking seed rice that was also free of white rice (Washington 1828:168).

There was very little agreement concerning how often seed rice sources had to be

changed. One said changes weren't necessary, another said his hadn't been changed "for many years," and two recommended "occasionally." Only one made a claim of actually changing seed sources every two years. Three of the planters made equivocal statements that suggested they were parroting "approved" practices. One "approved" of occasional changes, another "preferred" changing every third year, and the third planter thought changing every third year was "advisable."

Only four of the eight specifically addressed the question of whether a more northern source for seed rice was useful. Two said they didn't care and two thought it beneficial. One of those two, however, indicated that he relied on his own crop using "Mr. Duprix's pendulum screen" in order to ray or sort his rice (Washington 1828:353). Huger promoted the raying of rice seed, noting that without raying upwards of 15% of the seed would be "sickly and unproductive" and "utterly unfit for agricultural purposes" (Huger 1850:56).

In terms of reality, six of the eight specified that seed rice came from their own crop (86% of those responding). Only one planter indicated that the seed should not come from land adjacent to his own (Washington 1828:310). To this we can add the comment by Elizabeth Allston Pringle who commented that in the postbellum her hands were "whipping out the seed rice, which is a tedious business, but no planter in this county will use mill-threshed rice for seed" although elsewhere mill-threshed was used by planting more to the acre (Pringle 1913:44-45).

South Carolina newspapers have thousands of advertisements for seed rice. As early as 1792 some cargoes were specifically advertised as "gold seed rice," although few make any reference to being free of red rice (*City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, November 13, 1792, pg. 1). From at least the 1830s most advertisements told prospective buyers that the seed was "entirely free from red" or "quite free from red" (*Charleston Courier*, March 31, 1835, pg. 3 and *Charleston Courier*, February 6, 1843, pg. 3). The majority of the sellers are either commission

merchants with cargoes on their docks or planters willing to provide the seed to different locations, such as Solomon Legare, Jr. who was willing to deliver to either Willtown (on the Edisto River) or Charleston (*City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, April 20, 1795, pg. 1) or Harry Grant who would deliver to "any landing on Cooper River" (*City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, November 13, 1792, pg. 1). Some specify either a tidal or inland swamp origin for the rice. We found only one advertisement, however, that specifically offered "white seed rice" (*Charleston Mercury*, November 20, 1858, pg. 3). This suggests that while white may have been replaced rapidly (Shields 2010:6), the replacement was not complete

There are only a few hundred advertisements offering "North Carolina" or "Wilmington" seed rice, and these appear to begin only in the 1820s. For example:

Seed Rice

A small cargo of Wilmington seed rice, landing at Craft's north wharf, from schooner William. For sale by Howland & Co. (*City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, February 21, 1823, pg. 3).

A relative large shipment of 1,600 bushels of "prime North Carolina seed rice" arrived in 1824 (*City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, March 11, 1824, pg. 3), although most of the advertisements for seed rice were prefaced by something like "a small cargo" (*Charleston Courier*, March 7, 1826, pg. 3).

Until 1828 there doesn't seem to be any plantation identified for these North Carolina or Wilmington shipments. About this time, however, advertisements begin to specifically mention "Meares" (*Charleston Courier*, December 18, 1828, pg. 3) and by 1831 advertisements refer to this rice as "the well known Meares' seed rice" (*Charleston Courier*, January 15, 1831). A notice in 1844 is of special interest:

Meares' North Carolina Seed Rice, from Virgin Land, very pure, and superior in quality to any hitherto received. For sale by

Winslow & Heckman (*Charleston Courier*, February 20, 1844, pg. 3).

While this examination is neither exhaustive nor statistical, it does suggest something about the acquisition of seed rice by Carolina planters.

First, much of the trade appears to have been coastwise, with one planter selling to another. This may reflect concerns over quality or it may simply be that some planters failed to save enough seed from their own fields.

Second, local seed was advertised much more frequently than North Carolina seed and this calls into question the idea that North Carolina seed was recognized as significantly more valuable. On the other hand, the very presence of advertisements that specifically mention North Carolina confirms that some planters may have placed much stock in its quality.

Third, relatively few advertisements for North Carolina specify the planter producing the seed. In fact, the only one we have identified is William Belvidere Meares (1787-1841), the owner of Meares Bluff Plantation north of Wilmington. We found no references to Orton, Frederick J. Hill, or Thomas C. Miller.

In fact, the only evidence that Orton provided seed rice is an account listing from 1851 (David S. Shields, personal communication 2012).

An 1874 advertisement "To Rice Planters" announced that the firm of J.H. McGarity & Co. of Wilmington had 300 bushels of "seed rice, No. 1 article" for sale (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 25, 1874). Trade journals of the period also included advertisements such as the one from Sol L. Wright announcing the availability of "Louisiana Pearl seed rice" (*The Rice Journal*, April 1916, pg. 4).

By 1916 there was at least one article advising planters to cultivate their own patch of seed rice. By doing so, the article claimed, not only

could money be saved, but dwarf plants could be picked out. The author recommended that it should not be harvested:

until after the berry is fully matured, so that the full strength is in the germ. Nor should seed rice be put through a thresher, the process of which is often injurious to the seed. In fact, the whole operation of growing seed should be done as much by hand as possible (Anonymous 1916:34).

It is certainly true that all planters had to select seed for the next planting season. This would have included Orton's owners. It would, however, be circular reasoning to conclude that because of this Orton was a significant producer of seed rice.

Orton Under Murchison

With the 1884 purchase, Kenneth M. Murchison became the sole owner of Orton, its saw mill, mill pond, rice fields, and "fine dwelling house." By this time Murchison was 53 years old and a very successful merchant who spent most of his time in New York. He apparently didn't retire until about 1900 after which he began to spend more of his time "in the congenial and quiet atmosphere of Orton plantation" (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, June 5, 1904). Nevertheless, he was always listed in the New York census, suggesting that Orton was primarily a winter residence and financial investment.

Recognizing the dearth of appropriate accommodations in Wilmington, and perhaps looking for another investment, Murchison employed architect J.A. Wood (a New York architect famous for his hotel designs) and contractor J.S. Allen (a Raleigh and Wilmington contractor who had just completed the Pender County Courthouse) in 1884 to design and build the Orton Hotel on Front Street (Block 1999:92). By 1889 the hotel had an extraordinary "5-star" reputation:

The Orton, an ornate and commodious edifice, recently constructed on North Front Street, with its elegantly furnished chambers, its parlors fitted up with every luxury, its exquisitely appointed dining-room, the careful and polite attention of its employés, and, most important of all, its perfect *cuisine*, offers to the voyager a pleasant house of rest during his journeying, or to the invalid a beautiful home, supplied with every comfort during the months of winter, and crowned with every attraction during the heat of summer. The guests of the Orton Hotel have the privileges of the fishing and hunting of the Orton plantation, one of the princely possessions of the builder and owner of the hotel, Colonel K.M. Murchison, of New York (Anonymous 1889:29; see also "A Southern Winter Resort," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, November 18, 1888).

The hotel burned in January 1949 (*Robinsonian*, Lumberton, NC, January 21, 1949).

Late Nineteenth Century Plantation Activities

In 1883, the year prior to Murchison purchasing Orton, the plantation was reported to contain 240 acres of active rice fields that produced 12,000 bushels of rice. It was projected that in 1884 the rice field acreage would increase to 300 acres (Sprunt 1883:210). Whether this occurred is unknown since we have been unable to identify any data on rice field acreage. None of the reported yields, however, appear to exceed this until 1897 when 13,000 bushels were reported.

At least as early as 1887 we know that a

THE ORTON,
— THE ONLY —
First-Class Hotel
— IN —
WILMINGTON, N. C.



Important Announcement!

To meet the requirements of the travelling public, rates at this Hotel are reduced to **\$2.00 PER DAY AND UPWARDS.**

The rooms at **TWO DOLLARS** are equally as well furnished as those on the first floor, and for the accommodation offered there is no cheaper Hotel in the United States.

Rooms with Bath and Ensuite.

“THE ORTON”

is furnished with every modern appliance for the comfort and convenience of its guests, including Otis Elevator, Electric Lights, Steam Heating, &c.

J. E. MONTAGUE
MANAGER.

au 9 2m

Figure 38. Advertisement for The Orton (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, September 4, 1891).

cargo of rice, presumably rough rice since there was no mill at Orton, was delivered by the schooner *Mary Ann* to the Carolina Rice Mills in Wilmington (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 20, 1887). The following year we also have documentation that Orton was producing seed rice, offering 5,000 bushels. The advertisement was signed by "S.R. Chinnis, Sup't Orton Plantation" (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, November 27, 1888). Chinnis is mentioned in another article as the "manager" of Orton (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, November 7, 1887).

Captain Samuel R. Chinnis served in the 51st North Carolina, Co. G during the Civil War. Although called Captain in the various news accounts, he was mustered out in October 1863 at the rank of a first lieutenant. The 1880 federal census reported Chinnis as a farmer in the northwest portion of Brunswick County supporting a family consisting of his wife, Emma E., and their nine children, varying in age from 24 to 9 months. A decade earlier he was a farmer in the Town Creek area, so he had some familiarity with Orton. In 1870, however, he listed no real estate, suggesting that he was either a tenant or was managing some other property at the time. Prior to the Civil War he lived in Columbus County and was the owner of a small farm, valued at \$800.

By 1891 Chinnis has contracted malaria – a hazard of full-time life at a rice plantation – and died on August 20, 1891 (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 21, 1891). By 1893 two of his adult sons succumbed to pneumonia, suggesting to the local paper that the family was "afflicted" (*Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, February 10, 1893).

An 1888 article suggests that the first four years after acquisition, Murchison may have been busy improving the plantation. An article reporting on an "old-time festivity," the first in a quarter of a century at Orton, revealed that Murchison had constructed a rail line from his landing on the Cape Fear to the main house. On the tracks operated his "special train" . . . in charge of Capt. R.L. Williams." Some effort had also been

taken to decorate the yard at Orton with trailing bamboo and holly evergreens ("A Pleasant Occasion," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, March 16, 1888).

Local papers have numerous articles reporting on the arrival and departure of the Murchisons, revealing that they tended to arrive around November and depart the following January, apparently taking full advantage of the season thought to be free of malarial fevers. There are, however, accounts that reveal Murchison was occasionally at Orton much later. For example, an April article reported a fishing trip to Orton in which "about one hundred fish" were caught, probably from Orton Pond (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 16, 1890). Another article revealed that Murchison was keeping English foxhounds at the plantation, probably for use during his hunting trips (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, March 17, 1891). By 1898 he kept a "pack of twenty fine dogs" including a number from the "best strains of the English foxhound" for his hunting entertainment ("Fine Sport at Orton," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 11, 1898). Other accounts described Murchison's "annual hunting and fishing pilgrimage at Orton" as well as his ownership of a Piedmont "game preserve on Caney river, Yancey county" (*Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, December 3, 1895; *Citizen*, Asheville, NC, August 23, 1897).

The night of March 30, 1890 a fire on Orton destroyed two barns and their contents – 2,500 bales of rice straw and 920 bushels of seed rice. The barns were reported insured for \$1,875 and the rice and straw for an additional \$2,000 (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 1, 1890).

We presume the barns were rebuilt since in early 1892 it was reported that "about twenty-five acres additional will be planted in rice this spring," suggesting that Murchison was expanding operations (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, March 4, 1892). In spite of these efforts, Orton was not as profitable as Kendal:

The average per acre for last year at Kendal was fifty-three bushels,

at Orton thirty-five bushels. Mr. Fred Kidder, the owner of Kendal, gives most careful personal attention to the work on his plantation, which without doubt accounts for the excellent showing and high average yield per acre (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, February 20, 1892).

While difficult to evaluate, this suggests that Kidder was more active in management, while Murchison left the operation of his plantation in the hands of others and viewed the property more as a resort – a view certainly supported by the news accounts of parties and hunting trips at Orton. The local papers periodically mentioned hunting ducks, deer, fox, alligators, turkeys, and even eagle, one of which “measuring six feet three inches from tip to tip” (“Game From Orton.” *Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, December 3, 1897).

In January 1893 a long-time African American laborer on Orton, Henry Wiggins, “died suddenly of heart disease.” The news accounts described him as “one of the best men on the plantation” and as “an old and trusted employee” (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 1, 1893).

In November 1892 the African American church at Orton was burned. The community was not able to rebuild until assistance was provided by Murchison (who contributed \$100), James Sprunt (who contributed \$25), and A.B. Gwathmey (who donated an organ) (“The Colored Church at Orton,” *Messenger*, March 12, 1893). Within a month the replacement church had been completed:

The new A.M.E. Church at Orton has been dedicated and Red. Scipio Sauls duly installed as pastor. The church has thirty-four members and an average attendance of about fifty persons. It is a neat frame structure and the colored people on the plantation and in the

neighborhood are very proud of the it and speak in glowing terms of the kindly aid received in its construction and furnishing from Col. K.M. Murchison and wife, Mr. James Sprunt and wife, and Mr. A.B. Gwathmey of New York, who has been visiting Col. Murchison at Orton this winter. Mr. Gwathmey also gave the church an organ, Mr. Sprunt a large Bible, a dozen hymn books, and three lamps for lighting the edifice (“New Colored Church at Orton,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 6, 1893).

Scipio Sauls appears in the 1870 federal census as a 39 year old African American preacher reporting \$800 in real estate and \$250 in personal estate. His family consisted of his wife, Celia, and their 12 year old daughter, Sylvia. He is also found in the 1880 census, although his name is misreported as Scipio Saultz. An 1889 city directory lists him as living at 713 N. 6th Street in Wilmington (Bonitz 1889:123). Since he is not found in the 1897 city directory, he had probably died by that time.

During Gwathmey’s visit to Orton we learn that Murchison also arranged a “cake walk,” described as an “old time festivity” for his entertainment.

The “master of ceremonies” was Daniel Robinson, Murchison’s New York butler and the events were described at length in the local papers:

The plantation hands at Orton had a grand “cake-walk” last Saturday night, and from all accounts it surpassed anything of the kind witnessed in Brunswick county “sence befo’ de wah.”

The “walk” took place on the broad court-yard in front of the mansion, by the weird light of

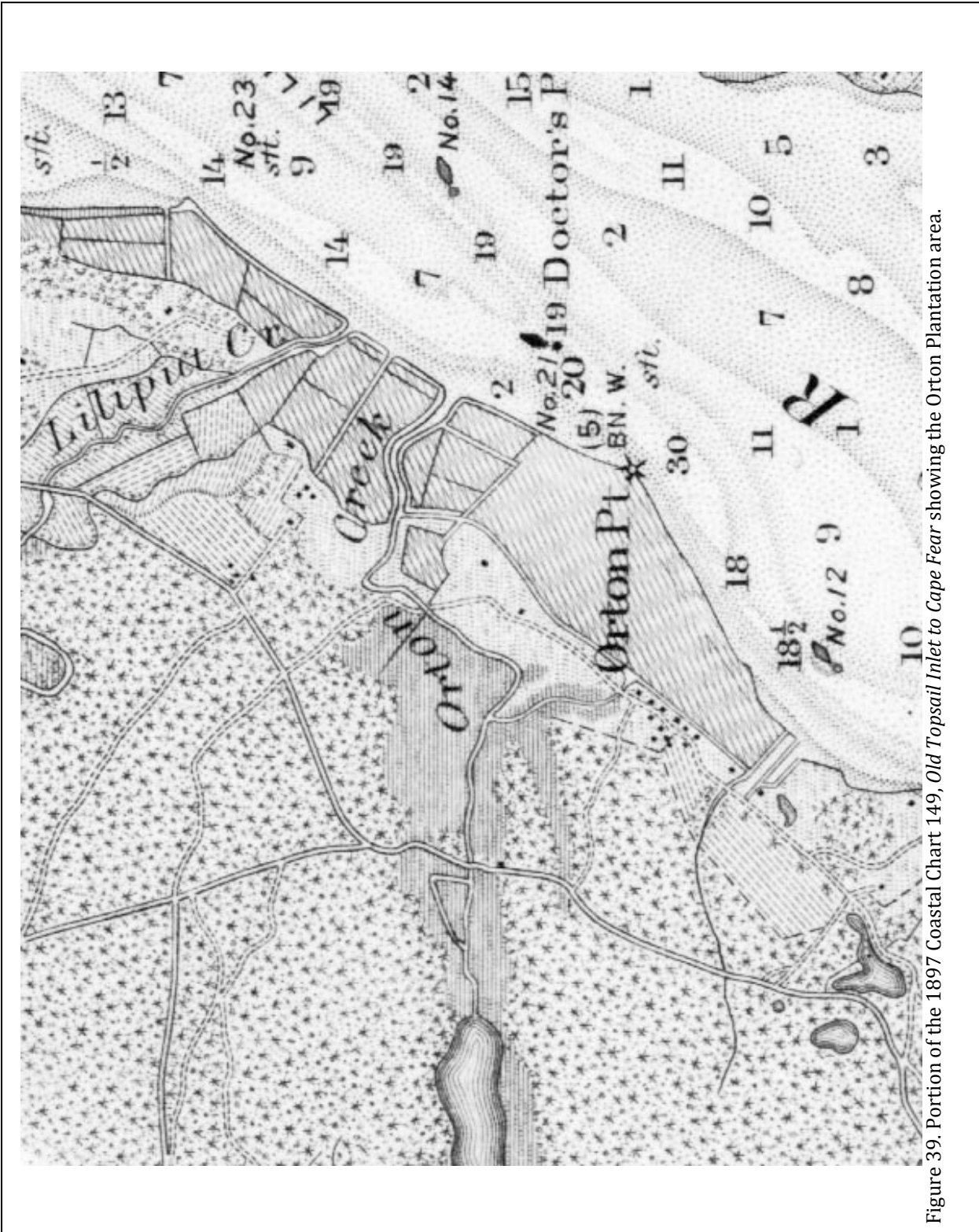


Figure 39. Portion of the 1897 Coastal Chart 149, Old Topsail Inlet to Cape Fear showing the Orton Plantation area.

blazing tar barrels Some twenty or more couples – all young colored people employed on the plantation – participated in the walk and contested for the prizes – two large and handsome cakes presented by Mr. A.B. Gwathmey, one of the guests, to be awarded to the most graceful walkers.

The colored belles and their beaux, “all dressed in their Sunday clothes,” engaged in the contest with great glee, but were “retired” gradually by the judges until only two couples were left – Chas. Patterson with Josephine Watters, and John Pearson with Phoebe Mills (“Cake Walk at Orton,” *Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893).

Murchison held another “cake walk” the Christmas of 1894, with the local paper noting such events were always of “great delight of the darkies.” Not satisfied with simply having his workers parade around, this time “prizes” were given for the “most graceful” – won by Friday Pickett and partner – and the “most awkward” – won by John E. Pearson and partner (“Christmas at Orton,” *Weekly Star*, December 28, 1894).

Another fire destroyed one of Murchison’s barns in September 1893. This fire, which again occurred at night, destroyed a barn valued at \$2,000, 4,900 bushels of rough rice valued at about \$5,000, and a baling press and rice thresher, valued at about \$500. The items were insured for \$6,850, so again Murchison suffered only a minor loss (“Fire at Orton,” *Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, September 27, 1893; “Fire at Orton,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, September 27, 1893). Since the 1892 crop accounted for 4,000 bushels, it is likely that this fire consumed virtually all of the 1893 crop (*Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, March 5, 1893).

Although 1893 was not reported as a

major hurricane season (see Table 1), news accounts reveal how even small events could have a significant impact on rice plantations with an elevation of only a few feet above the river.

On August 29 a hurricane that came ashore on Hilton Head, South Carolina entered North Carolina around Charlotte. In spite of the distance, Wilmington had winds of over 70 mph and coastal flooding (Barnes 1995:48). An account reported that banks at Kendal were broken and partially washed away, but damage at Orton was worse (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 29, 1893).

Only six weeks later another hurricane came ashore in the Myrtle Beach, South Carolina area and tracked through Raleigh. Again, while Wilmington was distant, it received massive coastal flooding, with Wilmington reporting flooding 16 inches higher than the 1853 hurricane (Barnes 1895:48). This storm brought additional damage to Orton and, to the north, at Kendal:

At Col. K.M. Murchison’s plantation, Orton, the banks were washed and badly damaged. At Mr. Fred Kidder’s plantations Kendal and Lilliput, not much damage was done to the banks, but the wharf at Kendal was wrecked. There was no rice in the fields at either of these places (“The Great Storm,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, October 15, 1893).

The 1897 crop at Orton was described as “the largest crop grown in the county” that year, 13,000 bushels. Adjacent Kendal plantation produced 10,500 bushels (“Rice Crop in Brunswick,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, March 5, 1898). In 1899 about 40 hands were employed (“Repairs to Rice Fields,” *Evening Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, November 15, 1899).

Figure 39 shows Orton plantation in 1897 and is identical to the following 1900 edition. These are also identical to Coastal Chart 150,

Masonboro Inlet to Shallotte Inlet charts that date 1888 and 1900. By this time only the main plantation house at Orton is shown, while all of the surrounding structures seen on earlier plans and in photographs have disappeared. The one structure on the south side of the road, southwest of the main house, is possibly the chapel built for the blacks on the plantation. The primary African American settlement at the turn of the century is found just south of the canal providing water to the rice fields and consists of 12 structures on both the north and south side of the road. There remain two structures around the old mill area, although neither appears to be a mill since they are not in proximity to flowing water.

Early Twentieth Century Plantation Activities

We have identified very little about activities on Orton during the twentieth century except for Murchison's hunting parties, supporting our view that he retired about this time and began to spend more time using Orton as a hunting retreat.

An article reported that the Orton rice crop, which had just been cut and presumably was in the field drying, was "practically lost . . . by the high tides that flooded the rice fields" ("Rice Crop Injured," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, October 4, 1901).

About this time Captain J.C. Smith was the manager of Orton and his son, Wade Hampton Smith was reported to be "in charge of extensive work being done by Col. K.M. Murchison" (*Evening Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, March 17, 1903). Unfortunately the article doesn't explain what work was being done and neither the 1900 or 1910 federal census provides any real clues. In 1900 J.C. Smith was a steamboat captain and his son was a salesman. By 1910 W.H. Smith was a streetcar conductor in Fayetteville.

Murchison and His Estate

Murchison died on June 3, 1904. His will, dated October 10, 1903, was probated on June 9,

1904 (Brunswick County Record of Wills Bk. A, pg. 185). Murchison appointed his son, Kenneth M. Murchison, Jr. and two sons-in-law, James Sprunt (who married his daughter Luola) and Shirley Carter (who married his daughter Jessie) as executors. His will directed that his wife, Katherine Williams Murchison (who would not die until 1912 at the age of 75), be provided for in any way necessary, and that estate otherwise be divided among his five living children, Luola M. Sprunt, Jane M. Ellis, Jesse M. Carter, Kenneth M. Murchison, Jr., and Marion Hurkamp. The only exception he made was that Marion Hurkamp's portion was to be placed in a trust with payments made semi-annually. He explained, "My reason for this exception is that her husband has not the necessary business experience to manage her part of the estate."

Murchison also specified that, "Believing that Orton Plantation and my property in Yancy County known as Caney River will be enhanced in value on account of the growing timber, I direct that these properties not be sold until such as time as seems best." Murchison did not believe rice would create any significant cash flow at Orton – it was the plantation's timber that was valuable, just as it had been during the colonial period.

The inventory of Murchison's estate reveals considerable wealth, including \$96,380.90 in personal property, stocks, and bonds. More specifically, the household furniture at Orton amounted to only \$300, suggesting even for the time that the plantation was relatively sparsely furnished. There were, in addition, \$1,000 of plantation stock, tools, farming implements, and machinery.

Murchison had \$23,455.49 in cash on hand. There was \$47,437.16 in debt due the estate, as well as an additional \$12,294.50 in debts due the estate that were considered doubtful. This included over \$10,000 that Murchison had loaned the Coal Cement & Supply Co. of Wilmington. Murchison held 90 shares of the company's stock at a par value of \$100 per share, but having an actual value of only 1¢ a share at the time of his death.

His real estate holdings included the 9,000 acre Orton Plantation, valued at \$25,000. In contrast, Murchison's two lots in Wilmington that included the Orton Hotel, stores, and a warehouse were valued at \$75,000. Even Murchison's half interest in Caney River with 13,000 acres had a value of \$38,000 – significantly greater than Orton (NCDAH, K.M. Murchison estate).

Orton and the Sprunt Family

Luola Sprunt

Luola Murchison married James Sprunt in 1883 at the Murchison house in New York (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, December 2, 1883). They would have three children, Kate, James Laurence (sometimes spelled Lawrence), and Marion, but only James Laurence would survive to adulthood.

The Sprunt family rose to prominence in the late nineteenth century as the owners of what for a brief period was the largest cotton exporting house in the United States (Killick 1981:145). Alexander Sprunt and Son reached its peak about 1914, held their position during the 1920s, but began a decline that corresponded with the wane of cotton in the United States. Killick provides profit and losses for selected years, revealing that in total the firm made a profit of \$3,270,763 and posted a loss of \$1,062,548. Significant losses began at the Great Depression and continued into the late 1940s. Killick comments that “some of the Sprunts’ ablest offspring chose other careers, and those that were left were either too speculative with the business or too cautious” (Killick 1981:165).

While the bulk of the Sprunt account books were donated to Duke University, one book remains at Orton. This book, entitled “Personal Accounts Removed from the General and Private Ledgers of the Sprunt Corporation, Alexander Sprunt & Son, Inc. and Alex Sprunt & Son (partnership), J. Laurence Sprunt & Family and James Sprunt & Family” (cited here as Sprunt

Personal Accounts), covers a period from 1909 to 1950.

In September 1909 Luola Sprunt, the daughter of Kenneth Murchison, purchased Orton by paying each of the other heirs to the property (Jennia [Jane] Ellis, Jessie Carter, Kenneth Murchison, Jr., and Marion Hurhamp)\$5,000. The purchase price equaled the appraised value of the property and the division occurred without the necessity of a court case. The deed, however, stipulated that should Luola sell the property within 10 years, the profits would be split between all of the children. If the property wasn't sold the deed specified that the property would descend to James Laurence Sprunt. If he should die without issue, then the land would then be split among the heirs (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 12, pg. 383).

The deed was also accompanied by a resurvey of the property made by C.R. Humphreys in May-June, 1909. According to the Hanover County Register of Deeds, the plat was to be in the back of the deed book, but is not. The loss of this plat is unfortunate since it would provide important information about the property at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Fortunately, a version of this survey exists as the 1939 survey by Carl J. Josenhans for J. Laurence Sprunt. The plan reveals that it was based on a 1908 (not 1909 as indicated by the deed) survey by Humphreys, as well as a 1921 survey also by Humphreys.

A family myth has grown up that Orton was purchased by Luola's husband James:

Orton was purchased from the estate of Colonel Murchison, who died in 1904, by a son-in-law, the late James Sprung LLD, and presented to Mrs. Sprunt (Sprunt 1958:17).

The reason for such a fundamental historical error is unclear, but it has been so widely repeated that it has become ingrained in Wilmington “history.”

What is clear is that Luola was a very strong woman and there are indications that she carefully guarded her financial independence. For example, in 1889 she filed a corrective deed to a lot of land in Wilmington (New Hanover Register of Deeds, Bk 17, pg. 247, 265). The original deed mistakenly conveyed the parcel to her husband, with a second deed conveying it from James to Luola to correct the record.

Nor is it particularly clear why Luola had such a strong attraction to Orton. What is clear, however, that Orton's agricultural prime had passed and the Sprunts looked to Orton as "a beauty spot rather than exploiting it for agricultural purposes" (Fogg 1911:259). That doesn't mean that the property wasn't farmed, only that its function seemed to be gradually changing.

James and Luola Sprunt never lived at Orton, being enumerated by the 1910 and 1920 census at their home in Wilmington. In 1910 the household consisted of James, then 63, Luola, 51, and their son, James L., 24 and identified as a student. Also in the household was a German butler, Adolph Van Mohle, his wife, Marguerite, listed as a seamstress, and three African American "servants," Lincoln Hall, Louise Washington, and Ida Pearson.

One of the earliest accounts we have of the plantation helps reinforce its new role. James Laurence, home from Princeton, held a "most enjoyable week-end house party" at Orton ("Delightful House Party," *Evening Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, December 23, 1907).

In 1909 an article explained how "the launch *Lilly* has been engaged for the past few days at The Orton Place in dynamiting stumps and dredging out the canal which was dug some time ago from the river to Mr. Sprunt's home" ("Lilly at Orton Place," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, December 16, 1909). The work was being done to allow "Mr. Sprunt's handsome new launch [*Luola*] . . . splendidly fitted-up" to travel between Wilmington and the settlement. This new yacht, purchased in December 1909, cost \$3,000.

In 1910 new flue boilers for the Orton dredge were required at a cost of \$50.39 and a new dredge bucket cost \$325. The dredge was rented to Nevassa Plantation for \$455, but towing it back to Orton cost \$12.

Since it was necessary to dredge a channel to reach the house, there must have been no causeway to the river and no dock at the end. The earliest map on which a dock appears is 1921, so the causeway and dock must have been built between about 1910 and 1920. James Sprunt purchased ties from R.G. Windley in 1913 for \$22.50 and in 1914 purchased coquina and rails (Sprunt Personal Accounts). Thus, a good estimate for the construction of the causeway to the Cape Fear is probably about 1913 through 1914.

Clarence Jones reported that the work was done by J.P. Jones, who we have been unable to identify in period census records. He reports that in order to transport the sand necessary to build the causeway, train tracks were laid and a small steam engine hauled the sand out. It was reported that:

[J.P. Jones] left this engine and all this stuff right down to Orton when he got through building the dike. It deteriorate right down there. Never did move it no where. So the Sprunts didn't use it. . . . They just parked it you know. Then they used the tract. Had a flat car on it. And they had a mule that would pull it back and forth every day and then we'd push it a lot by hand (Clarence Jones interview by Susan Taylor Block, December 1999).

In March 1910 James Sprunt paid a Dr. Ackerman \$10 for "attending R. McClammy's daughter." McClammy was one of the workers on the plantation, although the bulk of the McClammys listed in the 1910 census were living in neighboring Pender County (Sprunt Personal Accounts 1910).

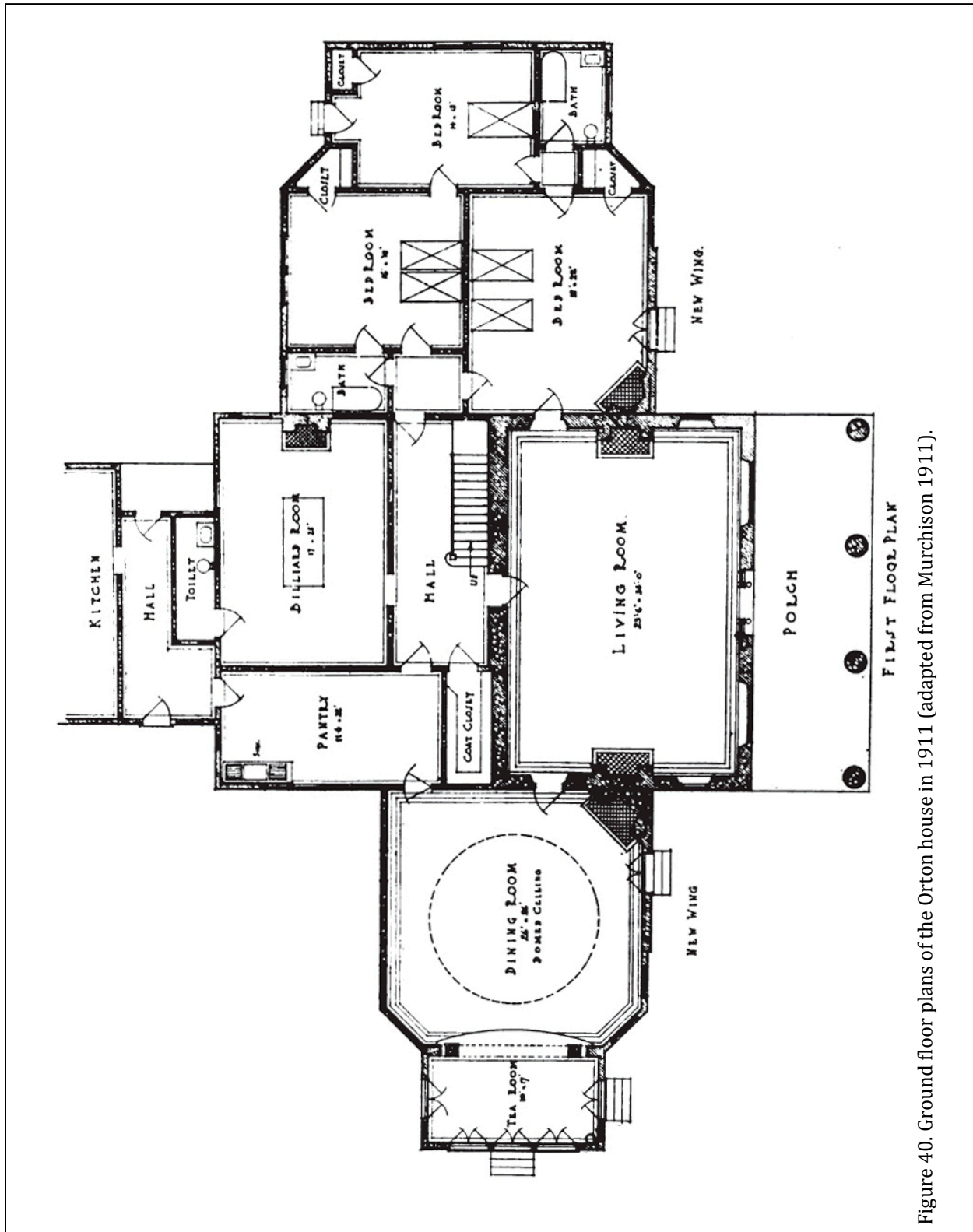


Figure 40. Ground floor plans of the Orton house in 1911 (adapted from Murchison 1911).



Figure 41. Orton before and after the 1910 remodeling (adapted from Murchison 1911)



Figure 42. The living room interior of Orton after remodeling (adapted from Murchison 1911).



Figure 43. Jeffrey Lawrence at St. Philips near his home on Orton (adapted from Block 1998:94).

It's reported that major additions were made at Orton in 1910. The architect for this work was Kenneth Murchison, Jr., the brother of Luola. Kenneth Murchison designed a number of train stations, several hotels and clubs, and several apartments with most of his work in New York or the northeast. One historian commented that Murchison was an architect "better known in his own day than he is now, for he failed to develop a signature style" (Mohr 2008:9). Most of his work was in the Beaux Art and Classical Revival styles.

By 1911 the work must have been largely completed, since a series of photographs and ground floor plan were published

(Murchison 1911:200-204).

The plan reveals a central core measuring about 23 feet 6 inches by 34 feet. Consisting of a single room with end chimneys the walls are notably thicker than any of the others and it is probably this space that represents the original Roger Moore structure.

There are a number of payments that suggest the work at the Orton mansion extended past 1910-1911. For example, in September 1912, S.J. Hodges was paid \$21.75 for painting at the house and in November 1912 some sort of work was done to one of the fireplaces at a cost of \$14.10. Meurs Marble was paid \$458.76 for tiling at Orton in March 1913. The drawings prepared by Murchison were not paid for until June 1913 (Sprunt Personal Accounts).

One of the more interesting accounts is for \$3.10 on August 24, 1910 and was listed as "charity supplies for Jeff Lawrence." This was an African American who took up residence in the area after the Civil War. He claimed to be the butler of the Porcher family in Charleston and he said that he followed Union troops through North Carolina (Sprunt 1958:30). While Sprunt claims he lived in their Wilmington basement, it is more likely that he always resided on or adjacent to



Figure 44. Doll house, later ticket house at Orton (courtesy Cape Fear Museum).

Orton. In 1911 “Uncle Jeffrey Lawrence died in his “cabin at Fort Anderson” where it was reported to have lived for the past 45 years after drifting to the area “with many others of his misguided race in the rear of Sherman’s army.” The news article reports that for the last 20 years he had been “dependent . . . upon the bounty of Mr. and Mrs. Sprunt, who provided for all his needs” (“Old Jeffrey Lawrence,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 9, 1911).

During 1913 the Sprunts purchased several surrounding parcels from black families and in 1913 another plat was prepared by C.R. Humphreys showing the dividing line between Orton and its northern neighbor, Kendal.

Water appears to have been a concern of Sprunt since in 1910 he paid \$30.59 on the freight to ship a water tower to Orton. This tower appears on coastal charts by 1924. That same year R.H. Brady, a Wilmington brickmason, was paid \$113.80 for his work on two cisterns at Orton. In 1914 two cisterns were cleaned (Sprunt Personal Accounts).

There are also occasional accounts for the Orton cottage or lodge, although we aren’t sure where this structure was located (Sprunt Personal Accounts). There is a 1916 news account of two black men who were convicted of breaking into Sprunt’s club house and stealing a rain coat, flashlight, and a few other items (“Thieves to Roads,” *Evening Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, April 7, 1916).

There are also oral history accounts of a “doll house” that was near the Orton house apparently constructed for Marion, the Sprunts’ only daughter. Clarence Jones explained that the doll house:

had everything in it, stoves – it was fixed up just like a house. It was real fancy, but she died [in 1901]. We got together and moved it down to where it’s at now. No, we didn’t raise the ceiling. They’ve got a lot of

addition to it, remodeled it like an office, but the front of it is just like it was (Clarence Jones interview by Susan Taylor Block, October 22, 1999).

Susan Taylor Block has identified a ca. 1920 photograph of the structure while it was still

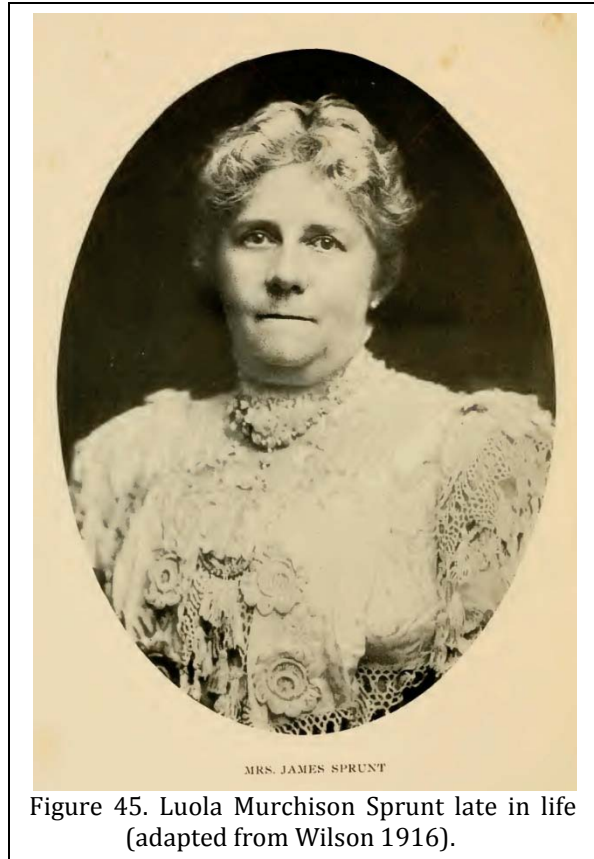


Figure 45. Luola Murchison Sprunt late in life (adapted from Wilson 1916).

being used as playhouse (Figure 44). We have not found a photograph of it being used as the ticket house for Orton.

On February 17, 1916 Luola Sprunt died in Wilmington after a long illness (Wilson 1917). A memorial publication mentioned her love of Orton and went on to explain:

she builded [sic] near the dwelling-house a beautiful chapel of pure colonial design by her

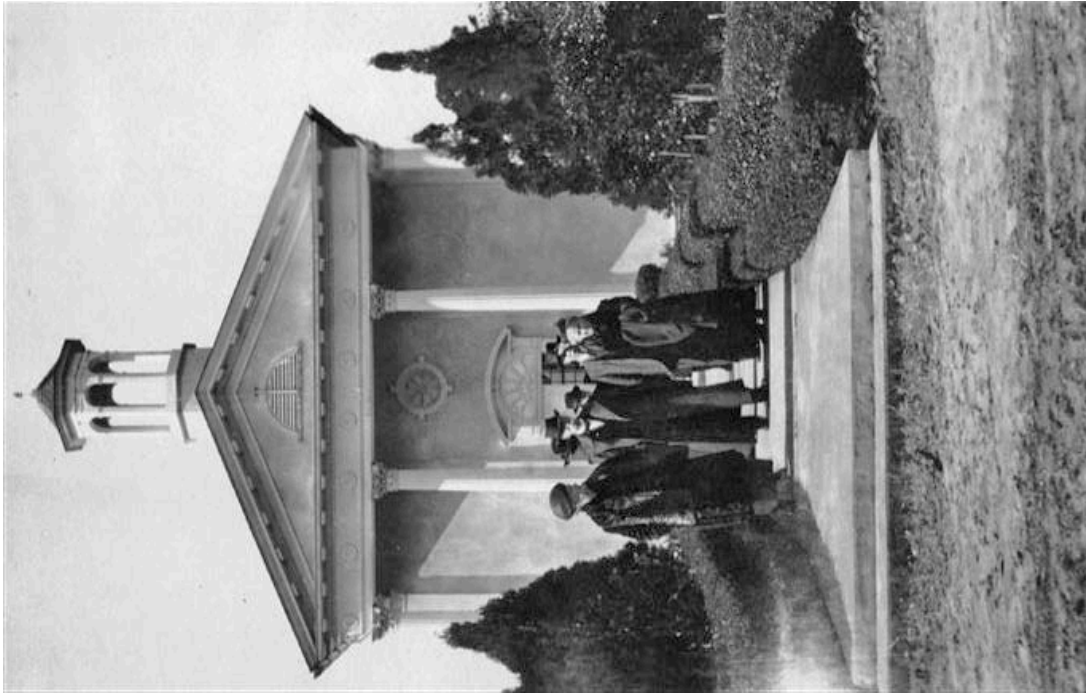
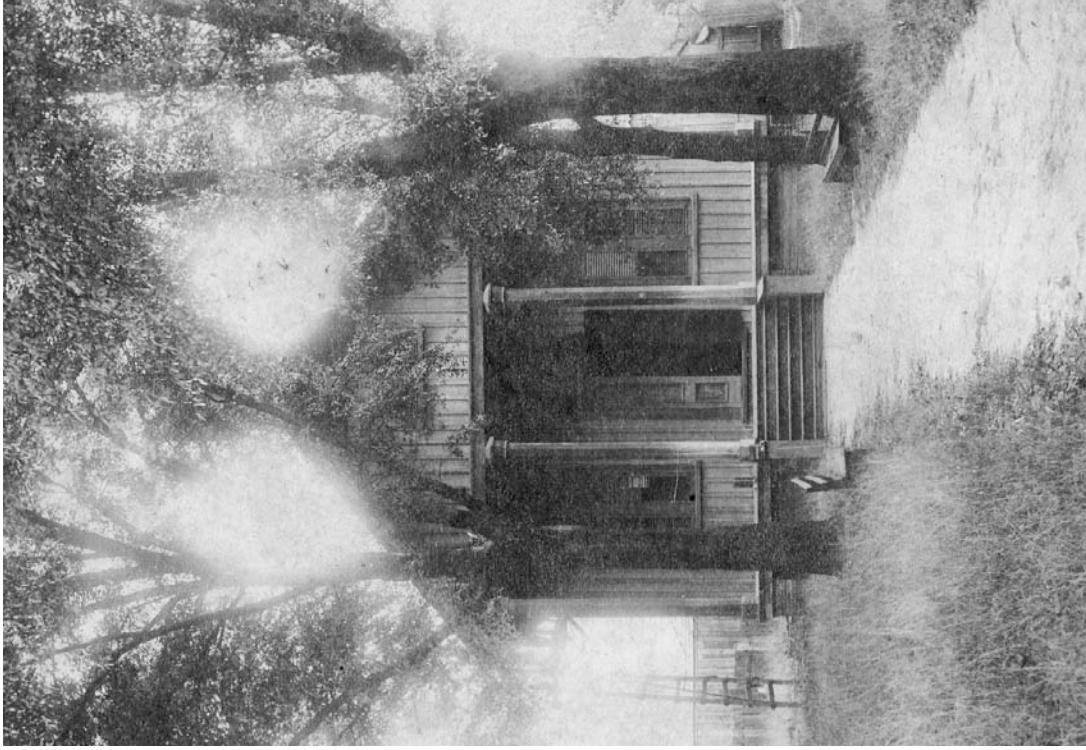


Figure 46. Chapels on Orton. On the left is Luola's Chapel, probably shown shortly after its construction. On the right is possibly the 1916 African American chapel also constructed by 1916.

brother, an eminent New York architect, for the use of our guests and for the neighborhood white people, for there was no other church for miles around. It seats 100 persons and it is not yet dedicated, but it will ever be known as "Luola's Chapel."

Her last gift was another beautiful church for the colored people of Orton and their friends, which seats 110 persons (Wilson 1916:22).

We believe that the structure shown in Figure 46 is this 1916 African American church, based on the similarity to Luola's Chapel and the relatively complex design. Board-and-batten siding was common for Gothic Revival buildings during the period. Yet the Orton chapel is clearly not Gothic; it is instead best described as Greek Revival with a mid- to late-nineteenth century cliché – the semicircular opening at the gable end.

While glazed and sashed double windows might seem elaborate for a period black structure, we suspect there was a certain vanity in funding such fine accommodations for the plantation workers. The panel doors and beveled posts are interesting, but difficult to interpret.

By April 1916 the new chapel "planned and erected by the late Mrs. James Sprunt for the colored people living on the plantation" was dedicated by Dr. Wilbur Chapman and "many of the colored persons at the services accepted Dr. Chapman's invitation to become Christians" ("Dedicated Church," *Evening Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, April 24, 1916).

The chapel held services and Sunday School teachers were brought in by James Sprunt. The structure remained until sometime in mid-century when it was moved by ox-cart to Salem Hill. The brick church at Salem Hill is reported to be the third church at that location. The bell from the Orton Chapel is still out front of the Kendal Chapel (Eugene Vaught interview by

Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

If there was any doubt that Luola purchased Orton Plantation, her will makes it clear that the property remained in her name. She devised a house and lot at Wrightsville Beach, as well as Front Street property to her husband, James Sprunt. Orton was a different matter. The plantation, the Orton mansion, its furniture, and all improvements were given to James Sprunt "for and during the term of his natural life" after which the property and furnishings were to go to her son, James Laurence Sprunt "for and during the term of his natural life." From James Laurence Sprunt the property was to pass to his children "absolutely and in fee simple." In other words, both her husband and her son had the use of the property for their lives, but neither owned it. Ownership of Orton was reserved for the third generation (Brunswick County Will Books, WB B, pg. 366).

By 1916 James Laurence (frequently misspelled Lawrence) Sprunt was more active on Orton, planning and hosting a tour of the property for Brunswick County teachers. He provided them access to "the Chapel" (probably Luola's Chapel), other buildings, and of course the Orton house and its "various historical treasures" ("Brunswick Teachers Enjoy Visit to Orton Plantation," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 18, 1916).

By the next year a visitor to the plantation mentioned that a tram car pulled by a mule was still being used to transport visitors from the wharf to the main house – probably after extensive repairs of the old Murchison tracks by Sprunt. Also mentioned is the plantation graveyard:

There is a graveyard at Orton House, in which Roger Moore, who was known as "King Moore" lies, in a vault which was very stately in its day, of brick and with a roof, but the latter has now fallen in. Around him lie other notable dead, here and there, but very few of their



Figure 47. Posited tomb of Roger Moore looking northeast ca. 1917 (NCDAH N.73.5.919A).

graves are marked with their names and on all of these vaults, like that of King Moore, there are no slabs ("Pilgrimage to Old Brunswick," *The Orphan's Friend and Masonic Journal*, Oxford, NC, April 20, 1917).

An undated photograph of this tomb (Figure 47) shows the collapsed roof. The bricked entrance has lost bricks or been broken into, and the stucco on the tomb had failed by this time.

In August 1917 heavy rains in the area caused the Orton Pond dam to partially collapse. According to news accounts:

pressure on the north water-gates of the Orton pond, a large expanse of water to the rear of the Dr. Sprunt's home, caused the earth embankment to wash and weaken the gate to such an extent that it gave way, freeing thousands of gallons of water and allowing it to rush out through the sluice-ways into the lowland fields of Orton Plantation, completely covering acres of growing corn and cotton, and making an almost unbroken sheet of water between the Wilmington and Southport road, known as the river road, and the highlands upon which is situated the old colonial mansion ("Acres of Growing Cotton and Corn Were Inundated," *Wilmington Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, August 11, 1917).

Also destroyed was the road and bridge. Telephone service was also disrupted with the loss of the telephone poles along the roadway. Sprunt indicated that the gate and dam had just been repaired. While a public road, Sprunt explained that he had been caring for it for a number of years, but after this event, "he will not in the future maintain it" ("Acres of Growing

Cotton and Corn Were Inundated," *Wilmington Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, August 11, 1917).

In 1917 Charles H. Hurkamp, guardian for Charles H. Hurkamp, Jr., Luola M. Hurkamp, and in his own right, filed suit against James Laurence Sprunt, George E. Kidder, John R. Murchison, Kenneth M. Murchison, James Sprunt, Shirley Carter, Charles H. Hurkamp, and Luola M. Hurkamp in Virginia chancery court (*The Free Lance*, Fredericksburg, VA, June 12, 1918, pg. 4). The suit sought the court's assistance in administration of the trust created by Luola Sprunt as well as an additional trust created by Katherine Murchison, which created a similar trust. We have not further examined the court case or its outcome since it does not appear to have directly affected the management of Orton.

The Sprunt Personal Accounts reveal that peanuts were being planted at Orton at least by 1914 (see also Block 1998:56), although a far more common entry had to do with cutting timber off the plantation. By 1922 the peanut crop was sold for \$48, while a pea crop sold for \$23.96. By 1917 potatoes and corn can be documented and by 1918 turnips were planted. In 1918, however, cotton was the most significant crop, with \$97.56 being paid for picking between September 12 and December 5 (Sprunt Personal Accounts).

In 1918 James Sprunt purchased adjacent Kendal and Lilliput plantations, amounting to about 4,000 acres, from the heirs of Frederick Kidder (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 29, pg. 388). Although the deed specifies the property was obtained for \$10,000, Sprunt's account books list the purchase price at \$20,000 (Sprunt Personal Accounts). An additional \$1,175 was paid in legal costs associated with the purchase. By 1921 Sprunt was renting out the Kendal house (Sprunt Personal Accounts).

It was also in early 1918 that James Sprunt erected the gates and concrete eagles that still stand at the entrance to Orton, paying L.H. Vollers \$1,253.41. Vollers was apparently a builder responsible for both private and commercial construction in the Wilmington area

(Susan Taylor Block, person communication 2012).

By the early 1920s James Laurence Sprunt was married to Annie G. Sprunt and the two were taking a more active social role at Orton. A 1922 news article, for example, recounts a party at Orton they gave, noting that the "houseparty which began on Saturday, will probably last until the middle of the week" ("Houseparty at Orton Plantation," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, February 7, 1922).

By 1922 James Sprunt was involved in legal battle with the Brunswick Land and Lumber Company over ownership of several outlying parcels. The land company claimed ownership as a result of what was known as the Allison grant ("Land Suit Hotly Contested Before Judge H.G. Connor," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, February 22, 1924). This grant has been previously discussed in reference to Benjamin Smith's ownership of Orton, so it had been causing owners of Orton intermittent problems for most of the tracts' history. In late February the jury returned a verdict for Sprunt after only an hour of deliberation (Jury's Verdict in Land Suit Returned in Favor of Sprunt," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, February 24, 1924).

Work on the beautification of Orton had begun by at least 1923 when we find listings in the account books for the purchase of fruit trees (\$25.12), the freight on bulbs (\$164.40), and the cost of bulbs (\$111.48) (Sprunt Personal Accounts).

In May 1924 news accounts explains that S. J. Bryant (Sylvester J. Bryan in both the federal census and a 1920 Wilmington city directory) was recently appointed a fishing warden at Orton. While on Orton Pond he suffered a heart attack and although able to get his boat to shore died before he could be transported to the Orton Landing ("S.J. Bryan, Suddenly Ill, Dies, Orton Plantation," *Wilmington Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, May 9, 1924). The article mentions that in addition to Bryan, the Superintendent on the plantation was a Mr.

Padgett and another employee was a Mr. Burriss.

Orton and Rice

Of considerable interest is the discovery that James Sprunt planted at least small amounts of rice. In October 1922 the account book identifies that Sprunt paid \$61.92 for the cutting of rice and an additional \$8.75 for its hauling, presumably off the fields and to a rice thresher. An additional \$30 was entered for rice with no specific notation (Sprunt Personal Accounts). Rice was again found in the 1923 accounts and in the 1924 accounts payments were made to the Arkansas Rice Company and the Standard Rice Company, presumably for seed rice, suggesting that Orton was no longer setting aside any of its rice for seed and that it is unlikely that Carolina gold rice was being planted. In 1925, \$21 was paid for sowing rice at Orton.

In an interview by Susan Taylor Block with long-time gardener Clarence Jones, Jones reported that the last rice planted at Orton was in 1931. Both Orton and adjacent Kendal had thrashing barns where the rice and straw were separated and the rough rice bagged for shipment to Wilmington where it was milled. On Orton, however, some aspects of life had not appreciably changed since the antebellum. Jones reports that while the plantation's workers had all the rice they desired, it was still being prepared using mortars and pestles. He also explained that green corn shucks would be placed in the mortar and the hulled rice would be beaten. (Clarence Jones interview by Susan Taylor Block, no date). The phytoliths or silica bodies in the corn would abrade the rice to polish it, making it white.

The Sprunt account book provides no detail concerning rice production after 1924 until November 1929 when \$127.40 was paid on the freight for a rice threshing machine, suggesting that a decision to cease rice production had not yet been made at Orton. The last entry we've found where Orton likely produced rice is in 1930 when \$164.20 of rice straw was sold to W.H. McEachirin [McEachern], a Wilmington wholesale products dealer. A May 1934 entry to the American Express Company for 81.48 appears to

be a shipping charge for the last of the rice on the plantation.

James Laurence Sprunt and Orton

Shortly after this, on July 9, 1924, James Sprunt died in Wilmington of pneumonia at the age of 78 (North Carolina Death Certificate). Sprunt's estate included "about one million dollars" along with Orton and Kendal, as well as a house and lot in Wrightsville Beach and the Wilmington property (New Hanover County Will Book L, pg. 400). With his death, James Laurence Sprunt became the next life estate owner of the property.

Going into the 1930s the Sprunt account book includes fewer entries. There may have been a different book that has not survived or has not been found. But it appears that Orton's timber resources were taking on much greater importance. In October 1927 there is an entry that a steel fire tower was purchased for \$960, with freight of an additional \$132.

The presence of this tower may have prevented an October 1931 forest fire from being worse than it was. The fire apparently began near Orton at a time of continued drought and pushed by a stiff breeze it consumed over 5 square miles ("Brunswick Fire Still Unchecked," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, October 8, 1931).

By 1931 the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development had developed Forest Protective Associations - groups of landowners that contributed on a per acre basis to assist in fire control. In that year the Orton Protective Association was noted as having been formed with one owner - James Laurence Sprunt - and 12,000 acres. The following year another owner had joined and the acreage had increased to 23,000 acres. These owners paid into the state fund 2¢ per acre. The report identified the Orton tower as steel, 80 feet in height. Orton was also making old woods roads suitable for use during fire fighting (Harrelson 1932:46, 48-49).

In 1932 a branch Civilian Conservation Corp camp was established near Orton. The men were under the control of C.H. Hearn, and the work on the 43,000 acres of association land included construction of fire lanes, roads, and telephone lines ("Branch CCC Camp Planned Near Orton," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, November 11, 1933).

By 1936 there were two associations: Orton Protective Association with 19 members and 36,000 acres and the J.L. Sprunt Association with one member and 15,000 acres. The members of the Orton association paid 2¢ an acre, while Sprunt paid 7½¢ per acre - the largest amount of any group in the state (Etheridge 1936:40). During 1935 and 1936 over 12 miles of telephone lines had been installed to connect the Orton tower to Reed's tower, allowing for fires to be triangulated (Etheridge 1936:42). More detailed research would be necessary to determine why Sprunt had organized his own association, as well as if he continued to pay into the Orton Protective Association.

Nevertheless, the report for 1938 found both organizations still in existence with Orton composed of 11 members and 62,000 acres, while the Sprunt Protective Association had only one member and 15,000 acres. The Orton members paid 2¢ per acre, while Sprunt paid between 2 and 4¼¢ per acre (Etheridge 1938:45).

The Sprunt Protective Association was no longer active by 1940 and the Orton Protective Association had declined to only 34,000 acres with members paying 2½¢ per acre. The Orton Tower was reported to be jointly operated by the North Carolina Forest Service and private individuals, likely employees of Orton (Etheridge 1940:46, 49).

The report also indicates that Orton Plantation had received a permit or license to "propagate game birds in captivity" (Etheridge 1940:106). These may have been quail that were being raised to stock the Orton forests for hunting purposes. The Sprunts also kept geese on the property to eat the weeds and grass in the

plantings (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

By 1950 there were six members accounting for 65,529 acres assessed at 3½¢ per acre. By this time there was also a Protective Association Ranger assigned to Orton, G.T. Reid (Ross 1950:42, 90). It appears that this association continued until at least 1958 with Reid as its Forester. There are occasional accounts for the payment of fire control (Sprunt Personal Accounts).

In 1935 it was necessary to clean the canal from Orton Pond to the Cape Fear at a cost of over \$800. Apparently involved in this work was some blasting, perhaps to remove stumps or other snags (Sprunt Personal Accounts).

For reasons that are not clear, after James Sprunt's death in 1924, his son James Laurence Sprunt failed to pay federal taxes from 1924 through 1929. The bill to the IRS by 1936, when it was finally paid, amounted to \$30,448.19, with an additional \$15,467.12 in interest and penalties (Sprunt Personal Accounts). It is likely that this strained activities at Orton.

Perhaps the strain on finances wasn't too severe since the beautification work at the plantation begun in the late 1920s was expanded during the 1930s with the hiring of Robert Sturtevant, a well-known landscape architect who had worked with the Olmsted firm ("Summer Sun Shows Off Orton's Gardens," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, June 17, 2005). Sturtevant is perhaps best remembered for his extensive work with irises, although he published on garden design (*Beneath the Surface of Garden Design*), ground covers and garden flowers.

Unfortunately, no plans of the original garden have been identified and the few photographs from the period provide insufficient information to allow a plan to be reconstructed. The Sprunt Personal Accounts also fail to reveal any payments made to Sturtevant or even much about the plants purchased.

In an interview, Kenneth M. Sprunt believes that the pre-Sturtevant garden contained "some camellias, azaleas, and banana shrubs and one or two other plants that were indigenous to the area" (Bissette 1995:5).

In 1930 John E. Batchelor was listed in the federal census as the Superintendent of Orton Plantation. Oral histories identify his wife, Eva, as also working at Orton. Working as the Foreman of the plantation was John E. Pearson, also listed in the 1930 census.

One of the earliest news accounts of the gardens opening to the public reveals that Mrs. Laurence Sprunt allowed the Brunswick County Hospital auxiliary to open the gardens to the public, asking them to "charge a small admission price and donate it to the hospital." The article went on to explain that this was "in keeping with a custom created by Mr. and Mrs. Sprunt several years ago" ("Orton Opening to Aid Hospital," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 7, 1936).

By 1938 the newspaper reported that Orton would be open to the public indefinitely since "so many people made the trip to Orton and were disappointed to find it closed" ("Orton Plantation Open Indefinitely," *Wilmington Star*, June 2, 1938). The article reported that as usual, the entrance fee would go to charity. By at least 1940 gate receipts were no longer devoted to charity, but were considered profits.

About 1937 Sprunt hired a young North Carolina State University graduate in horticulture, Henry C. Bragaw, to take charge of the plantation. The hiring of a trained individual was perhaps the result of the growing public interest in the gardens. He came with considerable credentials, including a year of study at the Smithsonian and consultant to Airlie Gardens. But he was also apparently a cousin of Annie Gray Sprunt, wife of James Laurence Sprunt. He remained at Orton for only a few years before World War II broke out. As an ROTC graduate he entered the Army in 1942 and was quickly sent to Europe where he was once wounded and subsequently killed in action ("Bragaw Noted for Work with Snakes and



Figure 48. Eva and John Batchelor (courtesy <http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/10646176/person/-603972743/photo/929af639-7556-451d-8782-66fe0c9ff95e?src=search>).

Flowers," *News and Observer*, Raleigh, NC, March 22, 1944; Clarence Jones interview by Susan Taylor Block, October 22, 1999).

Replacing Bragaw was James Ferger, a landscape architect, tree surgeon, and horticulturist who graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ("James Ferger Appointed Manager of Orton," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, December 27, 1941). Ferger remained at Orton for four years, until he opened a garden center in Wilmington. Also in 1941 Orton plantation received a shipment of 300 quail to supplement what was already "one of the best quail-stocked areas in the state" ("Orton Plantation Gets 300 Fully Grown Quail," *Morning*

Star, Wilmington, NC, October 3, 1941).

These quail may have arrived to replace losses resulting from a second major fire around Orton in April. Over 2,000 acres were burned, including "all the area immediately surrounding the ruins of ancient St. Phillip's [sic] church." About 650 acres were located on the southern end of Orton and it was only a wind shift that saved the Orton gardens and nurseries from destruction according to Sprunt. In fact, the only structural loss was an abandoned fish cannery on the Cape Fear River south of St. Philips. The fire was eventually brought under control with the assistance of about 100 men from the Bolivia CCC camp ("Brunswick Woods Hit by Flames," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 18, 1941; "Second Major Wood Fire Is Raging in Brunswick," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 19, 1941).

The only mention we have found of Luola's Chapel is the 1939 account that Pioneer Exterminating Company billed Sprunt \$49 for work at the Chapel. Although the entry doesn't indicate what the work was for, just a month later there is another \$5 charge for rat poison (Sprunt Personal Accounts).

Life on the plantation attracted the interest of *Life* photographer Elliot Elisofon in December 1940. For about a week he visited Orton taking photographs for a planned story, "*Life* Goes to an Old Southern Plantation Christmas Party" ("*Life* Cameraman Finds Orton's Christmas Party Unusual Event," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, December 29, 1940). Unfortunately no article ever appeared; the photographs, however, are in the Elisofon collection at the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas, Austin.

Other news articles (e.g., "Orton Plantation Plans Yule Party for All Employees," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, December 21, 1948) provide little detail. There are two items in the Sprunt Personal Accounts relating to employee gifts. The first, on December 21, 1935, was for fruits, etc. in the amount of \$30. The other mention, on December 22, 1938, was identified as "Christmas distribution" in the amount of \$68.00.

More detail is offered by Susan Taylor Block's interview with Orton gardener Clarence Jones, who remembered the Christmas gifts that dated at least back to James Sprunt:

He would provide things for the black people. You know they were poor as snakes you know, didn't have nothing. So he would . . . send his workmen to these fruit stands, grocery stores and everywhere to buy up just tons of all kinds of things: meat, lard, flour, rice, meat. And he's have a barrel, a little barrel . . . and he'd pack those barrels just as long as he could put something in it. Then he'd put fruit on top and cover it over with a burlap and put a hoop on it and then all his employees would get a barrel. Everybody, with Christmas coming. The steamer *Wilmington* would come down and bring the barrels. . . . Everybody would come down Christmas and get a barrel. . . . he did that every year up until guess he got too old to do it . . . Mr. Laurence, he carried it on, right on -and then what he did was he had - I think there was about 25 or 30 people working at the time and he would have the office to pack bags, a certain amount in a bag - everybody get a bag for Christmas, see. It changes from the barrel. As time went on, to fix a barrel that high and that big around would be a little expensive. Four or five dollars then would do a barrel. You couldn't do a barrel now for fifty dollars. Ham was a big thing. [James Sprunt] put a ham in every barrel, You could get a ham for about \$2.99 or \$2.50 (Clarence Jones interview by Susan Taylor Block, October 15,

1999).

While probably excessive in his description, the account does suggest that the antebellum tradition of Christmas gifts to the slaves, later workers, continued at Orton, but was reduced over time.

Plantation activities during the late 1930s and early 1940s appear to have been primarily focused on truck crops such as asparagus and sweet potatoes being grown in the large field at the rear or southern entrance to Orton. It also appears that in the late 1930s the plantation even briefly experimented with tobacco and a tobacco barn was situated at the edge of this field (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

It was also during the late 1930s that rural electrification came to Brunswick County. Prior to this, however, Orton was lighted using a dynamo - a type of electric generator that produced direct current. Clarence Jones explained that it operated on water power and was apparently situated on a flood gate west of the main house. During this period they weren't using storage batteries and he reported that Sam Betts was in charge of its operation, living at the Corbett House, which he placed "back of the big house" (Clarence Jones, interview by Susan Taylor Block, December 1999). Later storage batteries were located in the barn, still located south of the Orton office (Charles Jones and Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

By the early 1940s Orton's pine were being harvested. Sprunt leased Southern Kraft Corporation (a subsidiary of International Paper) a 2 acre tract for the storage of pulp logs. Its location immediately adjacent to the "wharf located on Orton Plantation just south of Governor's Cove and East of Old Fort Anderson" may suggest that they also used this landing, although that is not stated in this agreement. The lease does, however, prohibit any "camps, houses or shacks" from being erected by the company or its employees (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 72, pg. 19). Three companies, SGN Kraft Corporation, Cape Fear Lumber Company, and

Bale Lumber Company were making sizeable payments to Sprunt for timber removed from his property throughout the 1940s. During this period there were also as many as four portable saw mills operating on Orton and another on Kendal (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

Another interesting account explains that in 1943 there were about 170 people living on Orton Plantation and the birth of James Ferger's child on the property was the first white child born at Orton in 15 years ("First White Child," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 31, 1943).

In 1946 the Orton Pond Dam was breached for the second time. On August 5th it was reported that heavy rains and strong winds were piling water against the dam and undermining it. The threatened failure of over 100 feet of roadway was prevented when the highway department piled sand bags against the dam ("Orton Dam Saved," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 5, 1946). The success must have been short lived since by early October it was reported that the dam had failed and repair work was postponed. Another article reported that the dam had been broken in two locations and the water in the pond was about 4 feet below normal ("Work to Start on Orton Plantation Dam," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, October 3, 1946).

During the 1940s the Orton gardens hired a number of local youths, especially during the summer, but you had to be at least 12 years old (Charles Jones interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012). They received 50¢ a day, graduating to \$1 a day as they got older. The youth raked pine straw and gathered forest duff for the gardens, working under Duncan McCoy. There were two hothouses, with the one near the Orton office today being used for the expensive camellia varieties, while the low greenhouses were used for azaleas. The water tank previously discussed and present at least by 1924 was erected east of the Orton office for the use of the greenhouses. Remains of this tank are still visible today (Charles Jones and Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

By 1947 Kenneth Sprunt, the son of J. Laurence Sprunt, had been made the manager of the plantation. Eugene Vaught remembered huge fields planted exclusively in daffodils (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012). Kenneth Sprunt began to turn away from daffodils and other bulb plants and refocus efforts on planting and tending camellias in the plantation gardens, not only to attract visitors, but also to sell the blossoms. During 1946, over 2,000 blossoms had been sold (the variety *Methotiana* sold for \$1.75 each) and 7,000 individuals paid to visit the gardens. There were, by this time, 8 acres in camellias and azaleas and a nursery that encompassed 10 acres of blooming plants. The plantation had already constructed one greenhouse 120 feet in length and 40 feet wide and expected to have 2 to 3 acres of "cellar glass buildings" built shortly. The admission fees from January 1 to May 31 were \$1 and from June 1 to December 31 the cost was .50¢ ("Camellias Paying Way for Orton Plantation," January 4, 1947, New Hanover County Public Library Clipping File).

In another article Kenneth Sprunt expressed hope that the gardens would provide a financial return that the plantation had not seen since the disappearance of rice ("Financial Aid for Old Orton is in Flowers," April 9, 1947, New Hanover County Public Library Clipping File).

By 1949 J. Laurence Sprunt and his four sons, James L. Sprunt, Jr., Sam Nash Sprunt, Kenneth M. Sprunt, and Laurence Gray Sprunt, registered the name Orton Plantation as a business (NCDAH, Brunswick County, Certificate of Ownership of Business, August 5, 1949).

The big news in Brunswick County in early 1950 was the announcement that the Army intended to create a huge deep water shipping facility on the Cape Fear immediately south of Orton Plantation covering about 20,200 acres, including about a third to half of Orton Plantation on both sides of Orton Creek ("\$22.8 Million Army Facility Planned in Wilmington Area," *News and Observer*, Raleigh, NC, September 6, 1951). The condemnation order included five different parcels of Orton (Brunswick County Register of

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS OF ORTON PLANTATION

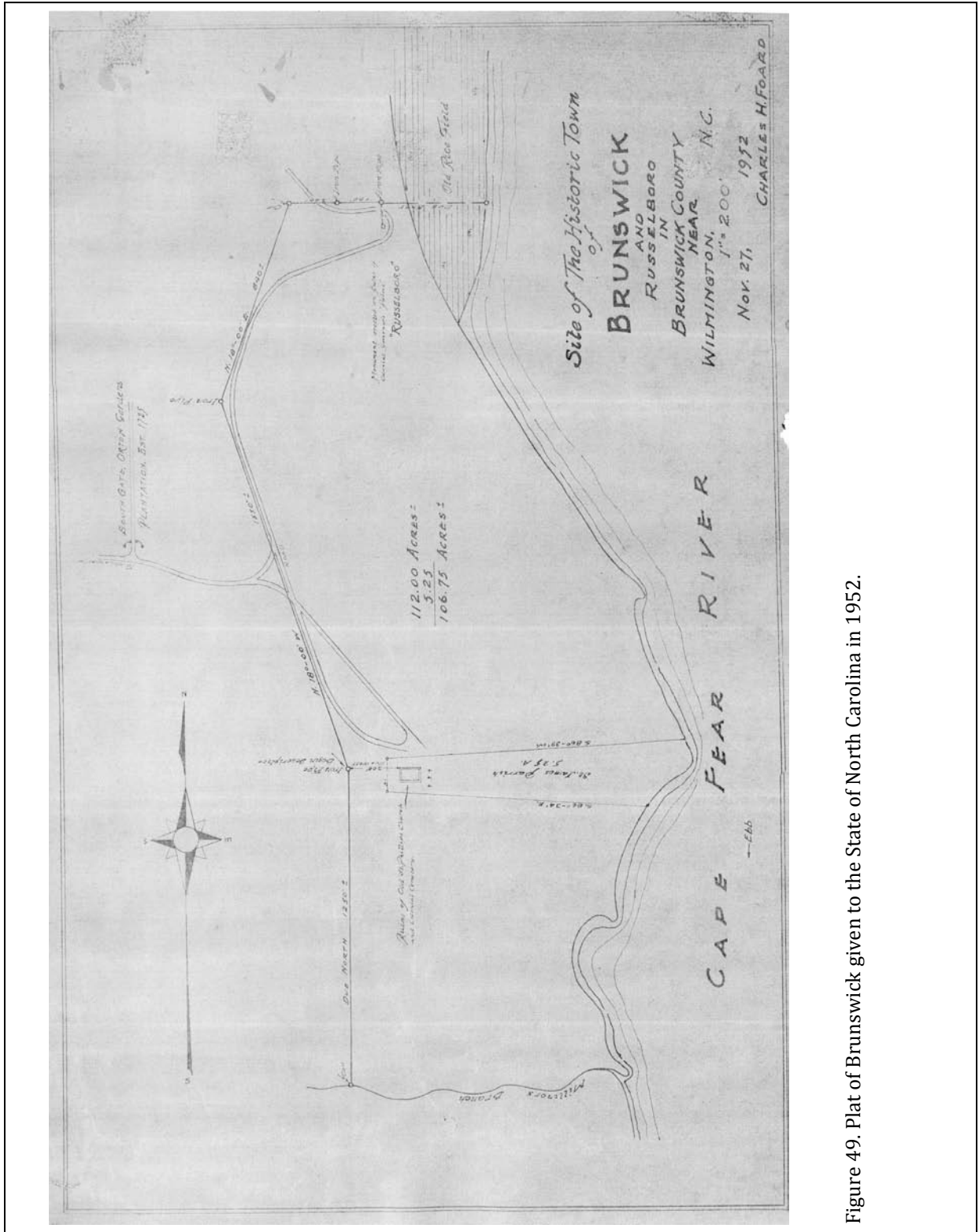


Figure 49. Plat of Brunswick given to the State of North Carolina in 1952.

Deeds, DB 189, pg. 513).

By 1954 the Sprunts won a significant court victory that significantly increased the price the government would pay for the Orton lands and the facility was reduced to about 8,500 acres, with an additional 5,000 acre permanent restrictive easement that formed a safety buffer zone "Orton Plantation Owners Awarded Pay for Lands," *Asheville Citizen*, Asheville, NC, January 27, 1954). The facility eventually became known as Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point or often just Sunny Point.

Part of the public relations fight against the Army perhaps involved the 1951 decision by the Sprunts to provide the State of North Carolina with an ongoing lease to make sizeable portions of Orton Plantation a "refuge and sanctuary for the protection and propagation of wildlife," creating the Orton Waterfowl Development (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 105, pg. 439).

As part of this agreement the state would conduct work on the Kendal Pond, restoring and maintaining the dike and spillway, repair the dikes between the Kendal and Lilliput fields, and in the approximately 200 acres known as the "Orton Front Fields," would grade and dike the area "to make it available for planting for small grain or other crop suitable for wildfowl food." Over time this consisted primarily of wild millet, smartweed, and alligator weed.

While this may have served in some way to help prevent the taking of the property by the government, it also dramatically changed the nature, use, topography, drainage, and ecology of the rice fields.

As late as the early 1970s the Game Division of the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission was seeking a renewal of their "annual maintenance on [the] dike surrounding [the] state controlled waterfowl impoundment" at Orton. The fill, consisting of 40% peat and 60% sand, was to be placed on top of the existing dikes using a dragline in order to stop leaks. The material for the work was to come from the

interior, surrounding canal. There is no evidence that any archaeological studies were conducted for this work, which had the potential to impact both terrestrial and underwater archaeological sites.

In 1952, perhaps to slow the government's development of Sunny Point, James Laurence Sprunt deeded the site of Brunswick, including St. Philips Church to the state of North Carolina For \$1 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 110, pg. 378). The deed, dated December 22, 1952 specified that the property would be used exclusively for a "State Historical Park" and if that use ever ceases the property reverts to the grantors or their heirs. The Sprunts also reserved the right to remove merchantable timber. Another clause committed North Carolina to using any funds it might receive from the federal government for easements across the property to the maintenance of the lands.

Also in 1952 the Sprunts deeded 2.6 acres of land to Kenneth M. Sprunt, Jr., James A. Bogie, William H. Joyner, and Harris Davis, as Trustees of the New Drew Cemetery (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB110, pg. 379). This property was a replacement cemetery for the Old Drew Cemetery that was located on parcel B-229 within the proposed Sunny Point facility. The Old Drew Cemetery was apparently located on the 2.06 acre Hector Smith Estate parcel and the government documents indicated that the cemetery was originally used by whites, abandoned, and then began being used by local blacks (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 189, pg. 514).

In more local news, Orton was the subject of a mural wallpaper released by a New York firm in 1952 (*News and Observer*, Raleigh, NC, May 26, 1952). Orton was also selected to be incorporated into a full wall mural in the Lee Dining Room of the Blair House in Washington, D.C. ("Orton in Blair House Mural," *News and Observer*, Raleigh, NC, July 18, 1954). Unfortunately, by about 1964 First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy had the mural covered over with pine paneling and by the late 1980s when the paneling was removed to be refinished, the underlying mural was no longer

recognizable (Candace Shireman, personal communication 2012).

On Orton, J. Laurence Sprunt, as part of the continuing garden design, installed a marble statue of a young girl called, “The Morning Star” in a fountain that at the time sprayed “clean spring water” (*News and Observer*, Raleigh, NC, August 30, 1953). The sculpture was created by the Italian Ferdinando Andreini (1843-1922) who studied under Ulysse Cambo and who did most of his work in Florence. The sculpture belongs to a series he executed during the late quarter of the nineteenth century focusing on nudes or partially clothed female figures. Many of his sculptures are signed, “Fatto Prof. Andreini.”

In 1955 one of the premier landscape architects associated with the restoration of historic gardens, Charles F. Gillette, created a plan for Orton in which he made major suggestions for virtually every area of the main settlement area. A copy of the plan and accompanying text has been identified by Belvedere Property Management. Originals have been located by Chicora at the Library of Virginia, where the file includes both a tracing paper drawing, the plan identified by Belvedere, and a correspondence file.

While some of the plan may have been implemented (it is difficult without additional study to determine what was existing at the time), it is clear that at least some portions were not acted on, such as the recommendation that a new gate be established for “the Chapel and The Residence” (Orton Plantation, Wilmington, North Carolina – Notes to Accompany Plan # 2065-1). In addition, Gillette recommended that Moore burial site be “kept cool and clean and natural looking with native yaupons, ferns and ivy.” Eventually the tomb area was planted in azaleas.

While the gardens remained an important part of Orton throughout the late twentieth century, the commercial nursery declined as a result of the introduction of the Camellia Flower Blight caused by *Sclerotinia camelliae* by the late 1950s. Clarence Jones mentioned this event in his interviews with Susan Taylor Block:

We finally got to a point where they closed the nursery up. What happened at Orton. They didn’t have to close it up, but you know how people is. If you the boss, you the boss: I’ve got the last word to say. We couldn’t convince Kenneth – he was the manager then, that the nursery could go on – and carry on. We were making a lot of money. But, there came a fungus, something they call blight. It was a bad thing. I’ll tell you that. It was bad. And he had the state to come down and look and see what was going on and they quarantined us. Put us under quarantine. Well, you know what happened then? People, we had customers out of South Carolina and Georgia. When they heard that Orton was under quarantine, they: “I don’t want none of that stuff, it’s poison.” Rather have the chicken pox. It spreaded – and it slowed the nursery down, it just slowed it down to – drone on down to what it is now (Clarence Jones interview by Susan Taylor Block, October 22, 1999).

It appears that Orton’s owners turned increasingly to forestry production (“Sprunt Family Begins Reworking Orton Plantation Landscape,” *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, May 16, 2009). Orton was also listed in a 1957 publication on charcoal production, which lists it as one of 27 producers in North Carolina (compared to South Carolina, which had only two) (Anonymous 1957:10).

In 1966 a chain link fence was erected around Historic Brunswick as an effort to curb the looting of the site that was taking place. Initially an on-site caretaker’s residence was planned, but the state discovered that the site is located entirely within the restricted easement of Sunny Point, making it impossible to build a new house

("Fence Protects Historic Brunswick Town," *News and Observer*, Raleigh, NC, October 16, 1966).

The restricted easement also brought changes to Orton. A number of the houses on the property were torn down and at least two others were allowed by the Sprunts to be moved off-site (Charles Jones and Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012). These are found along River Road today.

The Sprunt Children Take Over Orton

One June 18, 1973 James Laurence Sprunt, Jr. died, allowing his children to have fee simple ownership of Orton Plantation (Kendal had been previously deeded by Sprunt to his children in 1950; Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 102, pg. 143). His wife, Annie Gray Nash Sprunt, died in 1978. Surviving children included James L. Sprunt Jr., Kenneth Sprunt, Samuel L. Nash Sprunt, and Laurence G. Sprunt.

It appears that Kenneth and Elizabeth (Betsy) Sprunt moved into the Orton House since Betsy Sprunt conducted a tour in 1978, explaining that by that time, "none of the furnishings [at Orton] are original to the house" ("Residents Tell of Life Inside Orton House," *Fayetteville Observer-Times*, Fayetteville, NC, April 23, 1978).

The article continues to explain that the original scroll garden, designed by Sturdivant, included azaleas, Japanese yew, pansies, camellias, cherry trees, and peach trees planted in the area by the lagoon. White belvederes (structures designed to incorporate a view), suggested by the gardener at Tryon Palace, flanked the garden.

What was called the "Sun garden" had apparently become a jungle, but was bulldozed by Kenneth Sprunt and his father James Laurence Sprunt, with the ground leveled, mounded, and planted afterwards in pansies.

By the late 1970s the gardens contained azaleas, flowering fruit trees, camellias, wisteria, Indian hawthorn, dogwood, Cherokee and

banksias roses, pansies, oleander, hydrangea, daylilies, as well as a range of other flowers and shrubs ("Orton Blooming for Visitors' Eyes," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, April 10, 1977). Garden areas received specific names, such as the South Belvedere and Scroll Garden, the Triangle Garden, the Sun Garden, and the White Circle (where all of the plants bloomed white). Another area was called the natural amphitheater ("Orton's Role Changes, But House Never Does," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, August 12, 1985).

In spite of the effort by Luola Sprunt to ensure the maintenance of the plantation, with the death of the last caretaker generation and the passing of Orton to the four grandchildren, there was immediate trouble. James L. Sprunt, Jr. filed a petition requesting the court to partition the plantation. He further requested that those items which could not be divided, such as oil portraits and a 256 piece set of sterling flatware, be auctioned ("Heirs Could Become Orton Plantation's Undoing," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, March 28, 1982; "Progress Report on Carving Up Orton Due," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, September 22, 1982). The court ruled that the 50 acre core of Orton, containing the house, gardens, chapel, greenhouses, and access road, had to be sold as a unit to protect its historical significance. It could, however, afterwards be divided and resold.

By March 29, 1984 the four heirs sold their interest in the property to Orton Plantation, a North Carolina corporation for \$10 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 600, pg. 931).

A few days later a news account revealed that James L. Sprunt, Jr.'s interest in the plantation had been bought out by the other three brothers (Kenneth M., Laurence G., and Samuel N. Sprunt). The court action forcing the sale of the plantation was dismissed, after earlier signing an agreement to halt the partition indefinitely. By this time, however, the brothers had spent about \$50,000 for surveys and another \$1,800 to inventory the contents of the house. The personal property report, completed in December 1982, valued the house's contents at more than \$100,000 ("Orton Owners Plan to Buy Out Brother's Share of

Plantation," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, April 7, 1984).

In the midst of the family and legal issues, Orton Plantation was approached by film producer Dino De Laurentiis for a film version of Stephen Kings' *Firestarter* ("Orton Plantation Gets Consideration for Film," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, July 9, 1983). Eventually chosen by De Laurentiis and Frank Capra, Jr., the \$17 million film pumped \$5 million into Wilmington's economy and began Orton's new career in the movies (Shah 2008:80-81). Some of that money was put directly into the repair and rehabilitation of the Orton house itself. In an interview Kenneth M. Sprunt explained that De Laurentiis repaired toilet leaks and cornice damage (Bissette 1995:6).

Since that time it is reported that Orton has been featured in 23 films, including *Lolita*, *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*, *Hounddog*, and *A Walk to Remember*. It has also been seen in 34 television shows or series, including "One Tree Hill," "Dawson's Creek," and "Matlock."

In 1989 the Orton Plantation corporation sold a portion of the property to Kenneth M. Sprunt for "\$10.00 and other valuable considerations" (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 791, pg. 464) while retaining the rest of the tract.

In 2007 what was called the Bonnie House, built about 1950, near the main entrance, caught fire and burned to the ground, leaving only the metal roof and standing chimney. The cause of the fire was undetermined and the structure, used by Orton employees, was unoccupied at the time ("Fire Destroys House on Orton Grounds," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, November 15, 2007).

By 2009, David Sprunt, nephew of Kenneth Sprunt, had taken over management of the gardens. News accounts report that much overgrown vegetation was removed and there were efforts to revamp the flower exhibits on the property. The manager's house was repaired and the ticket office – presumably the doll house – was "basically torn down and rebuilt", the main house

was painted, the shutters were replaced, and the window screens were removed "for a better overall appearance" ("Sprunt Family Begins Reworking Orton Plantation Landscape," *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, May 16, 2009). Work was beginning on exhibits focusing on rice planting and the role of African Americans at the plantation.

Twentieth Century Maps and Aerials

Two of the earliest twentieth century maps showing Orton are the Coastal Survey charts that continue those previously illustrated as Figures 28 and 39. The 1913 chart shows no change from 1897, except that both Orton and adjacent Kendal now have wharfs extending into the Cape Fear. By 1924, however, the water tower, as well as the cupolas of Luola's Chapel and the African American church are clearly indicated as navigation aids. In addition, the light house is now shown only as an old tower.

By 1932 Figure 52 reveals a decline in the number of structures on the plantation, perhaps as the economic basis began to change from rice to the gardens.

The 1939 tracing of the earlier Humphrey plats (Figure 53) is difficult to interpret since we don't know if the plan was updated to 1939 or whether it represents the plantation nearly two decades earlier. The presence of the "U.S. Government Line" suggests that it may have been undated through at least the early 1950s.

Regardless, it provides some interesting details (such as the water line from Sand Pond Dam to the water tower) as well as names for different topographic features (such as Cow Branch). There continues to be a reduction in the number of structures and it appears that several green houses are shown in the main Orton complex.

By 1942 the plantation has taken on a relatively modern appearance, although the

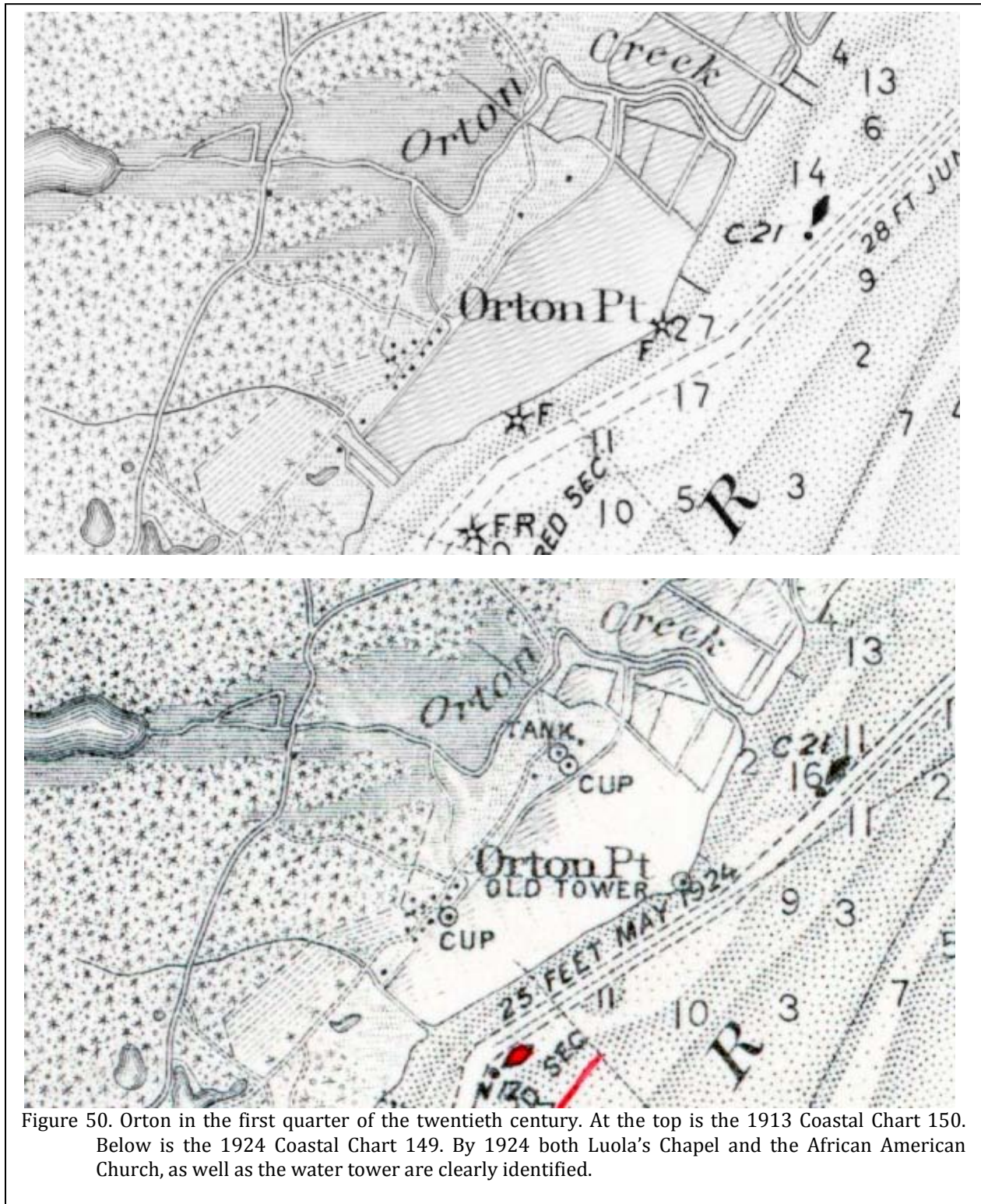


Figure 50. Orton in the first quarter of the twentieth century. At the top is the 1913 Coastal Chart 150. Below is the 1924 Coastal Chart 149. By 1924 both Luola's Chapel and the African American Church, as well as the water tower are clearly identified.

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS OF ORTON PLANTATION

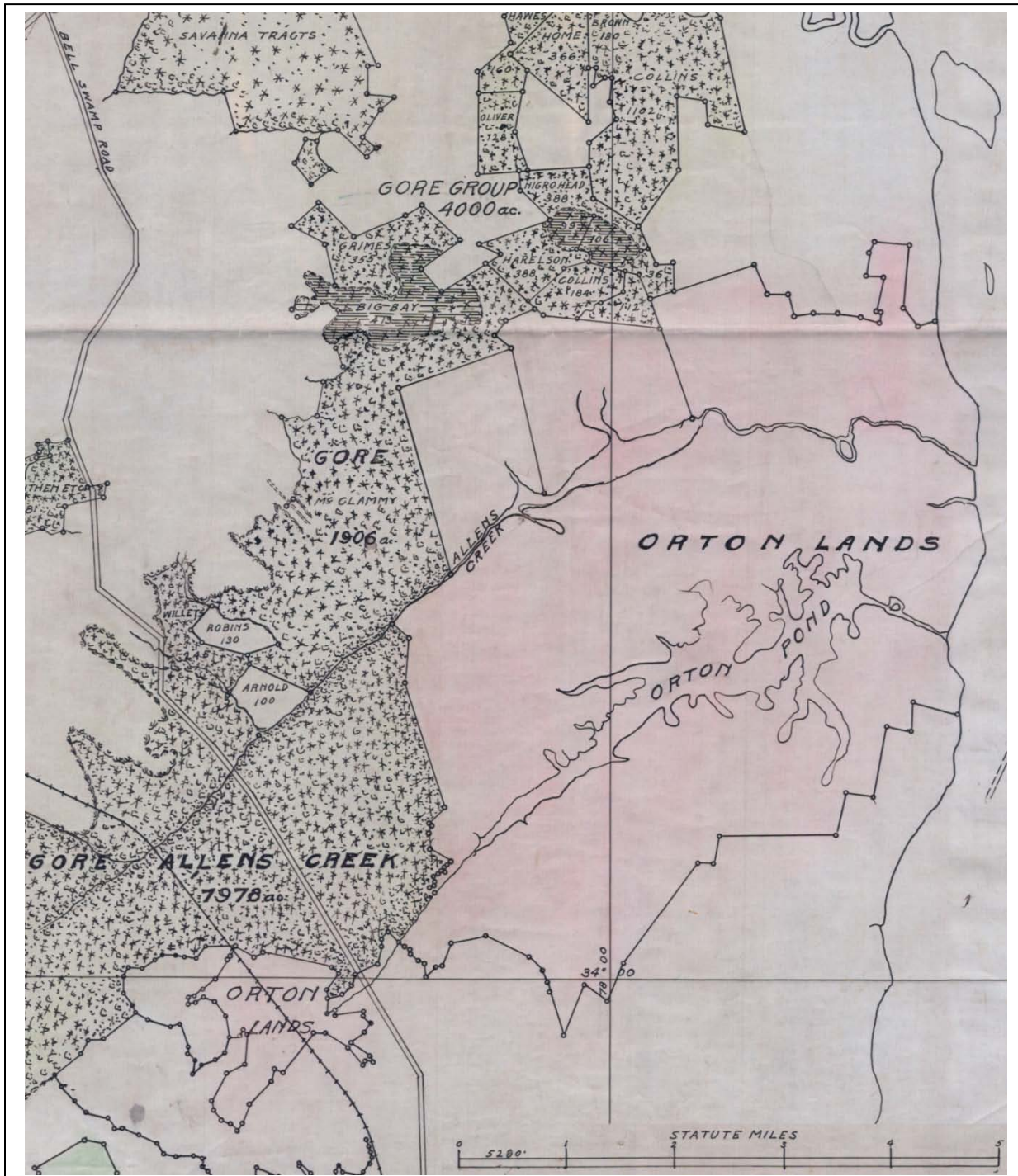


Figure 51. Portion of the Eric Norden "Forest Lands" map showing the Orton lands in the early twentieth century (NCDAH, BNK-24).

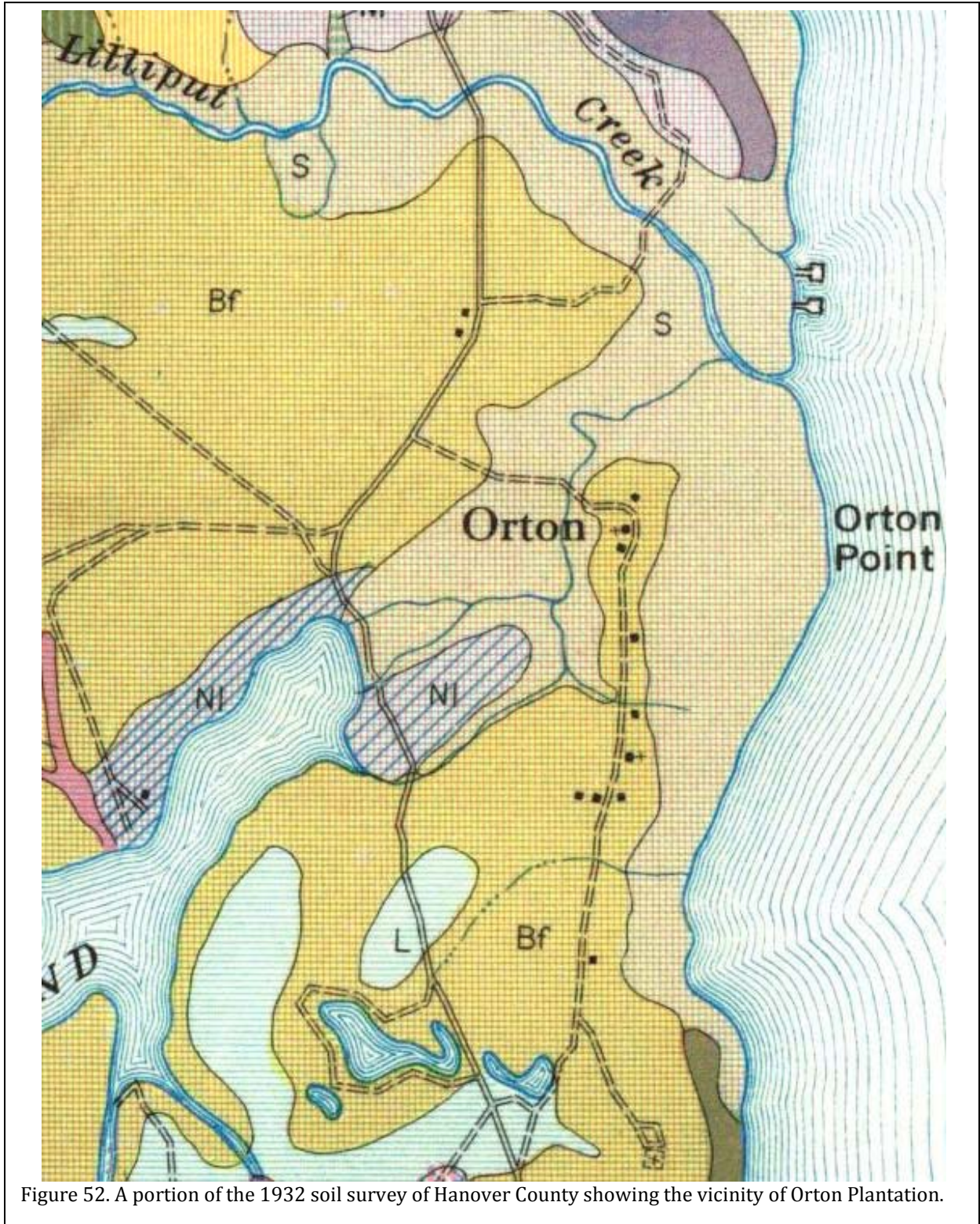


Figure 52. A portion of the 1932 soil survey of Hanover County showing the vicinity of Orton Plantation.

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS OF ORTON PLANTATION

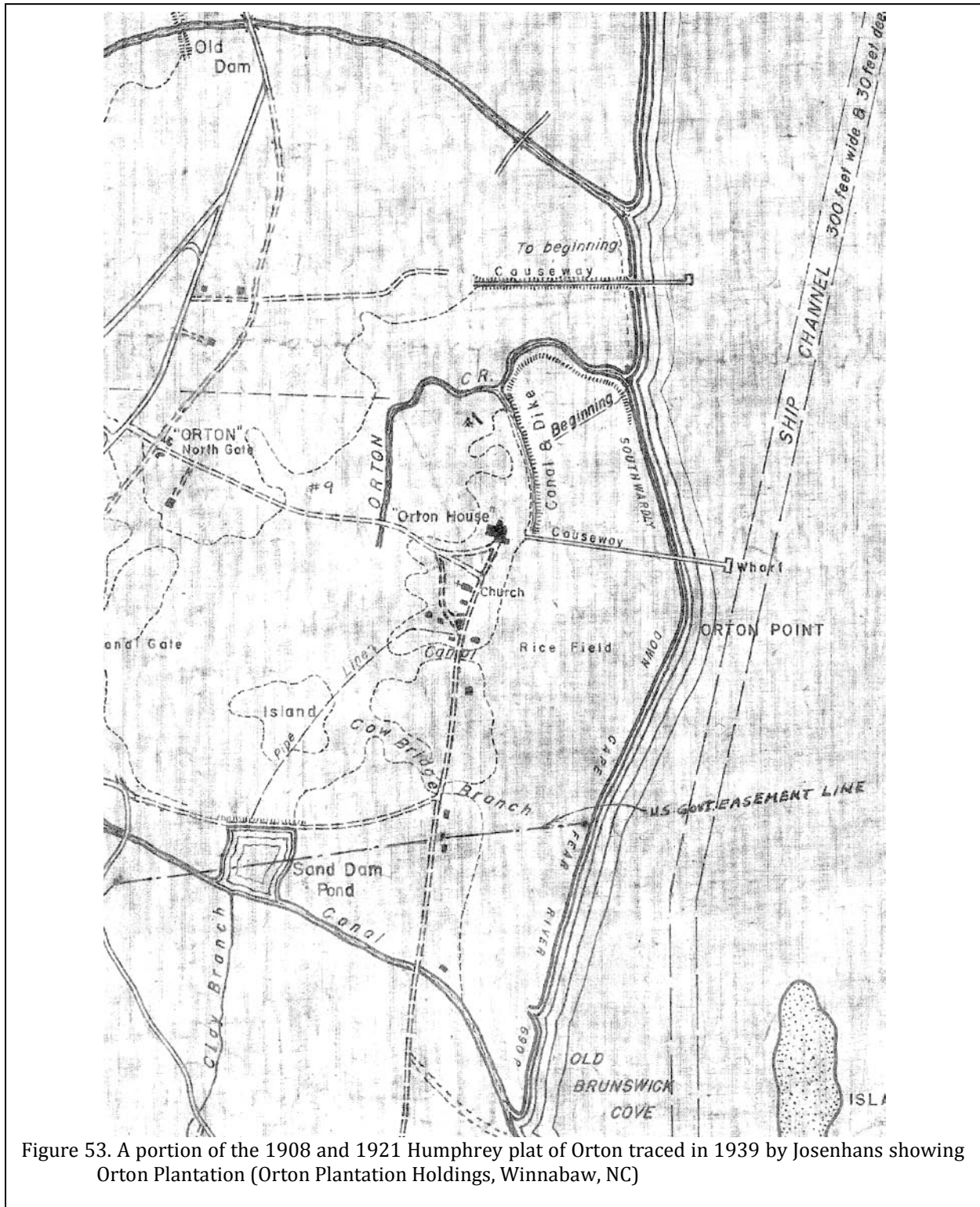


Figure 53. A portion of the 1908 and 1921 Humphrey plat of Orton traced in 1939 by Josenhans showing Orton Plantation (Orton Plantation Holdings, Winnabaw, NC)

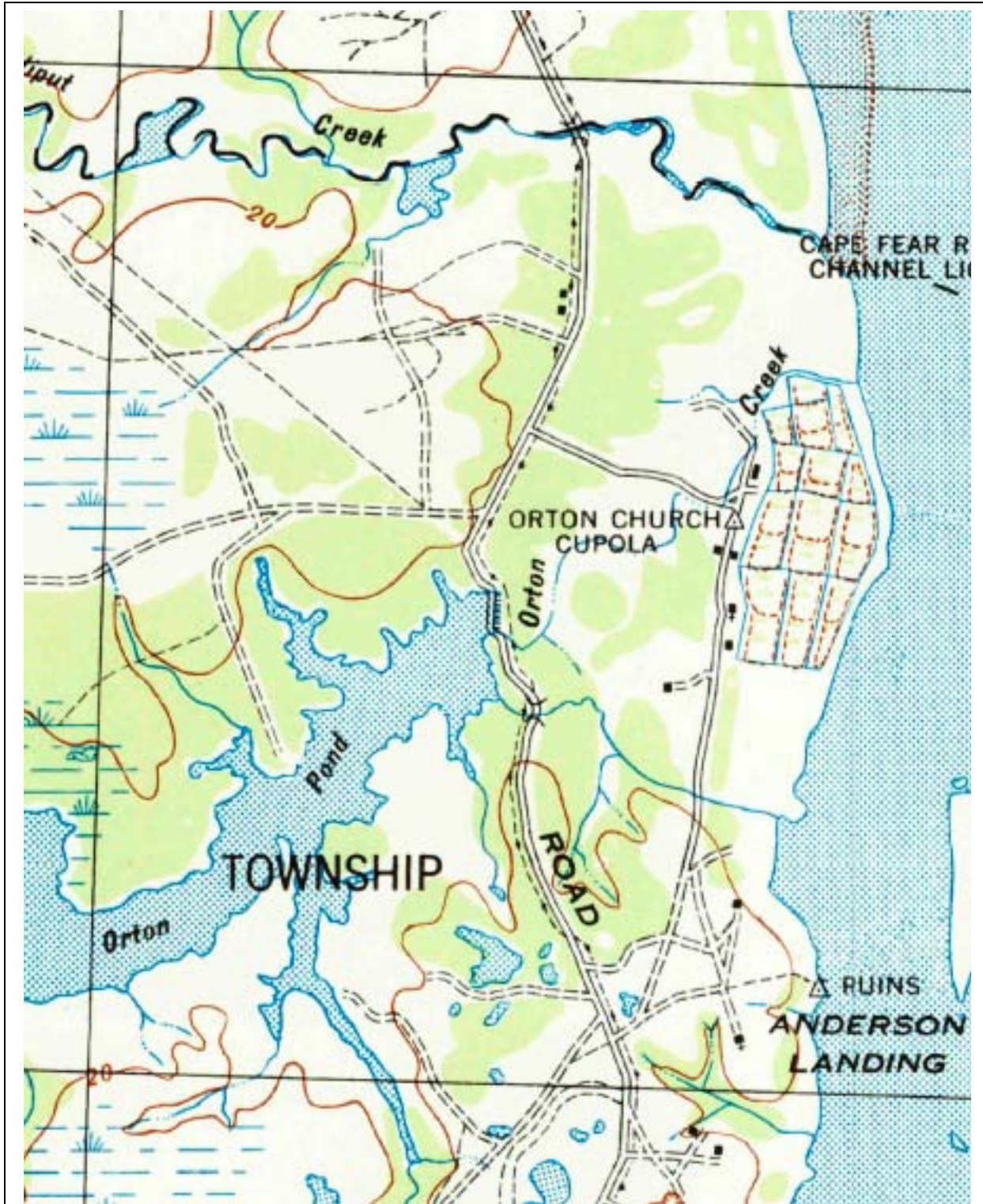


Figure 54. A portion of the 1942 Wilmington, NC 15' topographic map.

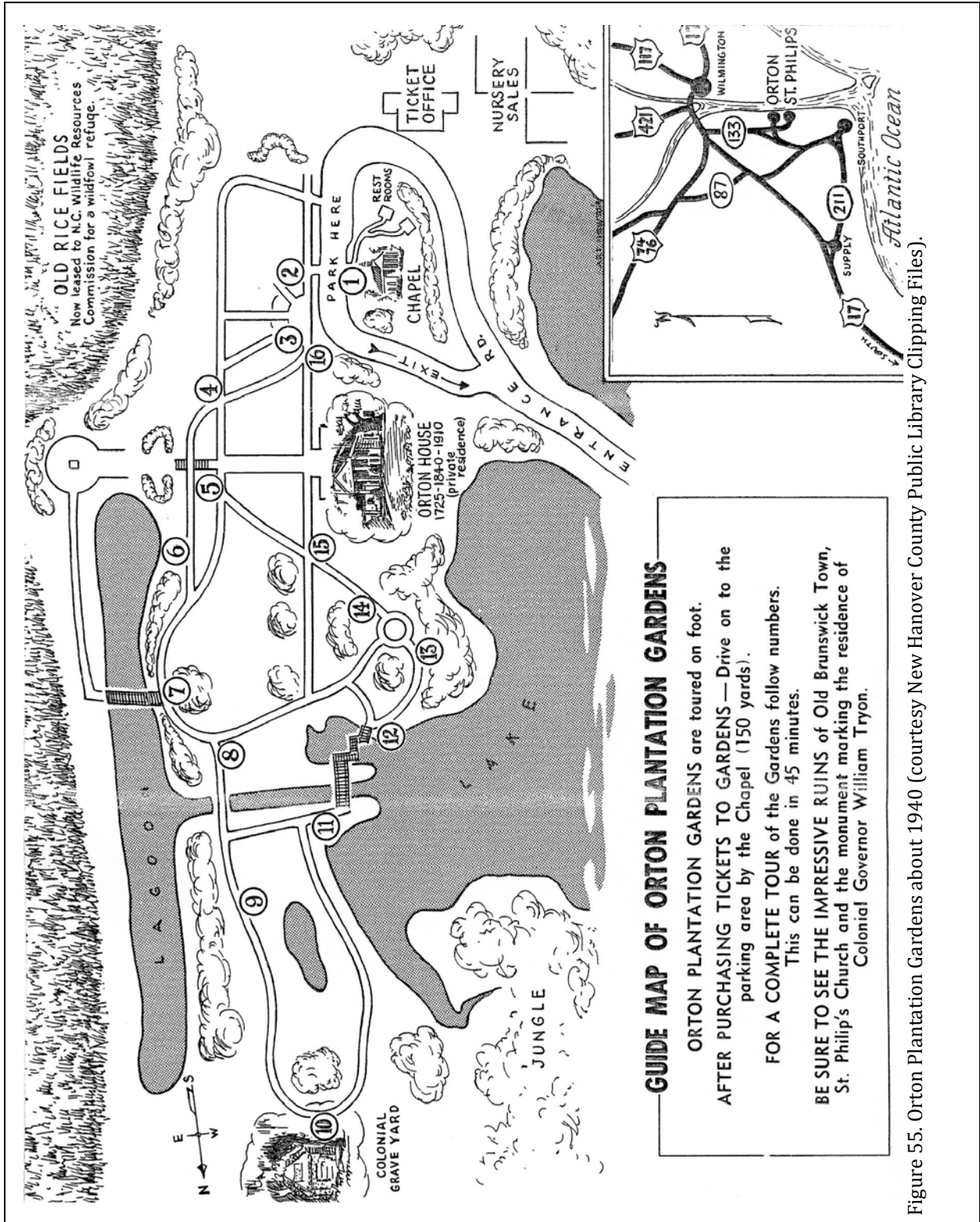


Figure 55. Orton Plantation Gardens about 1940 (courtesy New Hanover County Public Library Clipping Files).



Figure 56. Portion of the April 4, 1938 aerial AOQ-39-67 showing the Orton complex.



Figure 57. Portion of the January 12, 1959 aerial showing the Orton complex.



Figure 58. Portion of the March 12, 1969 aerial photograph GS-1-67 showing the Orton complex.

African American chapel is still present and there were apparently only four tenant or worker houses on the property.

Figure 55 shows an essentially modern plan, showing the plantation during the height of its garden design.

Figure 56 shows the 1938 aerial of the Orton area and while the quality is not high, it does provide important details concerning the road network, the fields under cultivation, and the rice fields. The rice fields shown on this aerial are far more extensive than we have seen on any of the plans and are far in excess of the nineteenth century estimates of about 300 acres. This may suggest that under Murchison the fields were significantly expanded. By the 1930s, however, these more inland fields had been abandoned and were rapidly growing up. Careful inspection of the main house area also illustrates the scroll walkways and garden design.

We see significant changes between 1938 (Figure 57) and the subsequent 1958 (Figure 58) aeriels. The Orton wharf is no longer present and the rice fields, essentially pristine in 1938, show significant changes resulting from the dumping of dredge spoil and wildlife planting. Vegetation is overtaking many of the previously planted fields, with only the southernmost two still intact.

By 1958 the borrow pit adjacent to the mill complex had begun and is very clearly defined, even on the somewhat grainy photograph. It also appears that some areas of the plantation had been logged within the past decade. By 1958 the northern lagoon just inland from the rice field has been dredged and is filled with water. The 1938 aerial shows the area to be low and wet but to have no standing water. By 1958 the interior pond in this northern area has also been excavated. The area around the main house is also far more wooded in 1958.

Compared to earlier changes, the 1969 aerial (not illustrated here) suggests relatively little additional ground modification.

Acquisition of Orton by Louis Moore Bacon

In 2010 Louis Moore Bacon, the founder and CEO of Moore Capital Management, LP, acquired approximately 8,500 acres of Orton Plantation under the name of Orton Plantation Holding, LLC (“Builder’s Descendent Buys Part of Orton Plantation,” *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, May 6, 2010). This Delaware corporation was organized in October 2010 with attorney Lawrence M. Noe as President and Treasurer (North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State). The purchase left the Sprunt family owning portions of the plantation around Orton Pond.

Initial efforts have focused on the conversion of the forests back to longleaf pine that involved extensive logging and burning off understory vegetation – returning the forests to an open appearance that characterized the early forests. In addition, considerable attention has been directed to the rice fields which face multiple problems. Shipping on the Cape fear has caused – and is continuing to cause – extensive erosion of the protective dikes. In addition, since the creation of the 1951 Orton Waterfowl Development, the rice fields have been used as food plots for wild birds and an effort is being made to restore them for use in rice cultivation (“Closed to Public, Orton Plantation is Transforming on a ‘Grand Scale,’” *News and Observer*, Raleigh, NC, July 29, 2012).

Unfortunately, an early casualty of the effort to restore the longleaf pine forest was one of the two remaining African American structures on the property (“Wildfire Destroys Building Near Orton Plantation,” *Star News*, Wilmington, NC, March 19, 2011). The structure was used by workers on the plantation, and was last lived in by Hannah McCoy (Charles Jones and Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

Historical Synopsis of Kendal Plantation

Introduction

We have previously discussed the methodology of our historic research, as well as the early periods of Native American occupation and European exploration. In this section we will focus exclusively on the history of the plantation located immediately north of Orton, known as Kendal.

We must note that the depth of research is not as detailed as that for Orton and there remain some significant gaps in the plantation's ownership and history. Additional research would no doubt be able to fill these gaps.

We found, however, that there is an equal amount of legend surrounding this plantation, partly because it, too, was a Moore property and, in fact, was intimately associated with Orton during both its earliest and latest history.

Kendal has never been viewed as important, or perhaps exciting, as Orton for a variety of reasons. Orton has a standing plantation house, Orton figured prominently in a variety of historical events, Orton was the location of an extensive garden. Nevertheless, a careful examination of Kendal reveals that it, too, had a significant plantation structure that was lost during the early twentieth century from fire. Kendal was equally prominent in the history of the Cape Fear, at times overshadowing Orton. Recently our examination of Kendal revealed the remains of a large gardenia garden west of the house, documenting its own garden design. Thus, Kendal is worthy of far more research than it has received in the past. Greatly assisting us in our efforts is the research of Susan Taylor Block (2011).

The Colonial Owners

Kendal was not initially owned by Roger Moore. Rather it was part of a 640 acre parcel deeded by the Proprietors directly to Maurice Moore on June 3, 1725. Maurice held it only a few months before assigning the deed to his brother, Roger Moore on March 25, 1726 (New Hanover County Register of Deeds, DB E, pg. 242).

The property was owned by Roger Moore until his death in 1759 and at some point between 1726 and 1759 it developed its own identity as Kendal Plantation. When Roger Moore died in 1751 he left "all that Part of my Plantation Called by the Name of Kendall [sic]" to his eldest son, George Moore. The plantation location was described as:

Bounding to the Southward by the Creek that runs up to my Mill as far as there is a Post to be fixt about three Hundred yards up the Creek above the House where Gready Lately removed from; and from thence a Due west Line to be Continued as far my Lands runs up the Neck, and Bounded to the Northward by Mr. Allens Creek [Lilliput Creek today], with the Little Island of Marsh fronting the said Plantation in the River (Grimes 1912:309).

While vague, this description is important for several reasons. First, it fixes Roger Moore's mill on Lilliput Creek, perhaps at what become known as McKenzie Pond. Second, it is clear there was no rice on Kendal at this early date, given the reference to marsh fronting the plantation.

George Moore also specifically received

Roger Moore's "Negro man Higate, the Carpenter, His wife Rose, with all her Issue & Encrease." But there is no mention of a dwelling at Kendal. In fact, the only dwelling, stock, or silver mentioned is at Orton, where Moore was living at the time of his death. This implies that Kendal was entirely undeveloped. It may simply have represented pine woods valued for its naval store production. George Moore may have received Higate the carpenter since it would be necessary to build a residence.

James Sprunt (1896:59) suggests that George Moore had his residence at Rocky Point, north of Wilmington, so it is unclear if he ever used Kendal for anything other than its forest resource.

In 1765 George Moore and his wife Sarah sold 100 acres of Kendal Plantation to John Davis, the Younger for £400 provincial money (New Hanover County Register of Deeds, DB E, pg. 242). The precise location of these 100 acres could not be determined with certainty, but appear to be along the river, with Moore retaining more interior lands that were part of the 640 acre grant.

Very shortly afterward on October 2, 1769, Davis sold 6 acres to Governor William Tryon for 5 shillings sterling (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB A, pg. 104). The deed reveals that Tryon had already purchased Lilliput (north of Lilliput Creek) and this small parcel was adjoining.

Almost nothing is known of John Davis and we have been able to identify him in only one record. In 1779 his name appeared on two petitions to the North Carolina General Assembly from residents of New Hanover, Duplin, and Bladen counties requesting the formation of a new county for the convenience of those situated in outlying areas (NC State Archives, General Assembly, Box January-February 1779).

Although we have not identified the deed, the derivation in a subsequent transaction reveals that Kendal was sold to Robert Howe of Revolutionary War fame by Davis (see, for example the deed from Thomas Davis to George

Hooper; Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB C, pg. 326). There is not, however, any evidence that Howe lived on this property. Prior to and during the Revolutionary War his principal seat was Howe's Point, which was burned by the British. After the war and facing crippling debt as a result of his love of horse racing, he retired to his wife's plantation Grange Farms, where he died in 1786. It is likely that Kendal was either a speculative venture or, more likely, used for its naval stores.

Howe had what has been described as a "less-than-glorious military record," and personally was described as a "libertine" by Josiah Quincy, Jr. Although perhaps not uncommon, he pocketed public money intended for his garrison and supplies while he was in command of Fort Johnson prior to the Revolution, and by the time of the Revolution had managed to bet his inherited wealth away on horse racing. Perhaps most damaging to his reputation is the evidence that he may have had shifting loyalties during the Revolution (Ranlet 1991). Russell also mentions Howe's unsuccessful planting career (Russell 2006:86) quoting Governor Josiah Martin who noted that Howe "had inherited a fortune and wrecked it."

At his death in 1786 the property appears to have passed to his only heir, Robert Howe, Jr. (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB C, pg. 283).

Robert Howe, Jr. in 1794 sold the 420 acre Kendal Plantation to James McAlister (variously spelled McClister and McClalister) for £1,200 provincial money (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB C, pg. 283). The deed clearly identified the property as bounded by Lilliput Creek to the north, Orton Creek to the south, and the Cape Fear to the west. Otherwise there is no specific mention of mills, rice fields, or any other development on the parcel.

Although we have not attempted to trace the movement of the portion of Kendal that was in 1765 retained by George Moore, the lands show up in 1788 with the State of North Carolina selling a series of parcels that had been confiscated from

Thomas Hooper, a loyalist. In all 1,525 acres of Kendal lands were sold to John MacKenzie (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB A, pg. 74).

The Antebellum Owners

By the turn of the century Benjamin Smith, who acquired Orton in 1796, also had possession of Kendal. Benjamin “for and in consideration of the natural love and affection which he hath and beareth unto the said James Smith, his Brother and to induce and encourage him to settle finally in the Neighborhood of him the Said Benjamin Smith on Cape Fear River also to advance the interest and fortune of the said James Smith” deeded the 285 acre Kendal Plantation to James Smith (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB E, pg. 378).

This 1806 deed specifically mentions that a house was present at Kendal – the first and earliest documentation concerning a structure on the land.

However brotherly Benjamin may have felt, he did place some conditions on the deed:

That the said James Smith his heirs or assigns cultivate and keeps in constant cultivation the Swamp and marsh land aforesaid for and during the time of natural life of the said Benjamin and reserving a right to him the Said Benjamin Smith his heirs and assigns, To Cut Mill timber from all that part of the high land of Kendal to the westward of the line marked A,B in the Platt there of here unto annexed and to cart off the same in such manner and at such times and by such Roads as he the said Benjamin Smith his heirs or assigns may think proper or convenient (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB E, pg. 378).

Unfortunately the referenced plat has been stripped from the deed and can no longer be

located – the same situation had been identified in Brunswick County for the Orton property as well.

By 1800 James Smith was in the area and the federal census for Brunswick reveals six members of the household, but no African American slaves. In 1810, by which time he had settled on Kendal, his household had declined to five, but there were 102 African American slaves. This is suggestive of an extensive operation, but we are not able to document the presence of rice.

James Smith served in what was called the “Silk Stocking Company” of light infantry, comprised of Charleston aristocracy, during the Revolution. He was captured at the fall of Savannah in May 1780 and was released through the influence of his father, Thomas Smith, who immediately sent James to England for schooling as a means of keeping him out of the war. James studied law and was eventually admitted to practice in the courts of equity at the Middle Temple in London. When he returned to Charleston after the Revolution he practiced only a little law in Charleston; when his father died in 1787 he took his inheritance of \$50,000 and purchased a plantation in St. Helena Parish. There he met and married Marianna Gough in 1791.

As Davis notes, Smith’s famous bloodline was not able to save him from himself. One of his future sons explained that his father, James, was “totally unsuited for planting or for any money-making occupation” (quoted in Davis 2001:9). Davis goes on to note that everyone was able to cheat Smith, even his slaves. By 1803 his wife had given birth to four boys and three girls and it looked as though he would lose his St. Helena plantation.

When James received the invitation to move to the Cape Fear this appeared to be a lifeline. Benjamin was far more successful, serving as North Carolina’s governor at the time. James moved his wife and girls to Kendal, leaving his boys in Beaufort to be educated there (Davis 2001:10).

Davis (2001:14) reports that James spent winters at Kendal, but otherwise lived at the small

Exeter Plantation near Smithfield (today Southport).

The conditions that Benjamin Smith placed on the use of the property by his brother were lifted by Benjamin Smith on May 10, 1812 for the payment of £5 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 144). The reason for the change of heart may have had to do with the increasing financial distress of James.

In an 1812 letter James Smith wrote John J. Swann, another area planter, he offered several slaves to Swann. Included were:

an elderly wench, a good field hand & good plantation Nurse & spinner. A young wench about 17 – her daughter. The two I would sell together for a note of \$550. . . . a prime fellow, about 26 yrs. old – stout & tall, an excellent field hand & good plowman with harness – a young wench about the same age – a good field hand – 2 girls – one of 7, the other of 5 yrs old – An old fellow – the father – a half hand – I estimate these five at \$1100 Cash (Letter from James Smith, July 22, 1812 to John J. Swann, Swann Family Papers #2827, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

Smith also asked Swann “to say nothing to the bearer about my offer for sale of Negroes.” It was likely he was seeking to keep his financial situation out of public discussion. Nevertheless, we do not know if the slaves were sold or upon what terms.

That same year a judgment was obtained against James Smith in the August 1812 session of New Hanover court for \$595.23. In an effort to pay this judgment Smith deeded the slave Rose and her two sons, Jacob and Landy, with several other slaves to Jesse Wingate as trustee, giving him the authority to sell the slaves at auction if Smith

failed to pay on the judgment by 1816. With no payment made, Wingate auctioned the slaves on February 14, 1816. James Swann was the high bidder at \$635 and the three slaves were sold to him (Deed from Jesse Wingate to James Swann, March 1, 1816, Swann Family Papers #2827, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). A few days later Swann also obtained a deed for the slaves directly from Smith (Deed from James Smith to James Swann, March 4, 1816, Swann Family Papers #2827, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

James Smith was no better a businessman than his brother since in May 1812, the Bank of Cape Fear received a court judgment against Smith in the sum of \$5,920. Unable to pay, Smith deeded Kendal and Bevendo plantations, as well as eight African American slaves to the Bank and their trustees, William B. Mears and John R. London for £5 and a stay of execution until March 1816. As with his brother, the Bank allowed James to continue living on Kendal (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197).

The slaves listed were “George, a fellow about forty years of age; Katy a Wench about thirty three years; a boy about seven; Phoebe a girl about eight; Penny an infant; Lemses, a fellow about thirty four; Clarita a wench about thirty four; and Quince a boy about ten.”

The arrangement apparently did not work out since the bank advertised the sale of the plantation in March 1815, a year ahead of the deadline provided Smith. The advertisement was very short, providing no description of Kendal, other than that it was “agreeable” to the description provided in the deed to James from his brother Benjamin. In addition, the slaves George, Katy, April, Phoebe, Penny, Linus, Clarissa, and July were to also be sold at auction (*Wilmington Gazette*, Wilmington, NC, April 27, 1815, pg. 4).

James, with the failure of both Exeter and Kendal, returned to Beaufort where he took up residence in the house left by the death of his wife’s mother. That estate, plus the small amount

of money he had remaining, kept the family together (Davis 2001:15). James died in 1835 and in 1837 his sons petitioned the court to change their surname to Rhett in honor of their great-grandfather, Col. William Rhett, whose name had died out.

We have been unable to trace Kendal from the Bank of Cape Fear until it again appears just prior to the Civil War. In the interim there is an 1838 news account mentioning the “rice crops at Lilliput, Kendall, and Orton,” noting that the reporter had “never seen a richer promise or the prospect of a greater yield” (*Wilmington Advertiser*, Wilmington, NC, August 3, 1838).

By the 1840s Kendal was owned by Frederick Hill’s brother, Dr. John Hill (Sprunt 1986:324; Poole 1978) and in 1847 Dr. Hill, often referred to as John “Bank” Hill because of his involvement in the Bank of the Cape Fear, was buried in the Orton burial ground.

In 1860 we have identified a deed where Gabriel Holmes of Sampson County sold his one-third interest in Kendal to Owen D. Holmes of Brunswick and William H. Holmes of Sampson for \$24,566 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB S, pg. 339). The deed identifies the derivation of the property as being from Gabriel Holmes’s father, Gabriel Holmes. Subsequent deeds suggest the property was being operated by the firm of Owen D. Holmes & Brothers.

While initially confusing, we have identified the elder Gabriel Holmes (1786-1837) and his three sons referenced in this transaction, Owen D. Holmes (1824-1883), Gabriel Holmes (1831-1874), and William H. Holmes (1835-). An 1852 newspaper notice announced the marriage of J.A. Brown to Miss Mildred Holmes, daughter of the late Gabriel Holmes of Wilmington at Kendal, “the residence of Owen D. Holmes, Esq.” her brother (*Fayetteville Observer*, Fayetteville, NC, April 20, 1852; Curtis 1900:8).

Therefore, although we have not identified the deeds, it appears that the property passed from John Hill to Gabriel Holmes, Sr. and from him to his three sons, each with one share.

About 1850 Owen D. Holmes was living on the plantation and eventually he and his younger brother bought out Gabriel Holmes, Jr.

We have not found an Owen D. Holmes in the 1850 federal census, although Holmes held 20 slaves in Wilmington according to the 1850 slave schedules. This suggests that Holmes maintained a large house with a number of servants in Wilmington and he only visited or lived at Kendal during the winter.

Of greater interest, however, is the discovery of Owen D. Holmes in the 1850 agricultural schedule. Kendal was, as we know, smaller than Orton with just over half as many improved acres. Nevertheless, the value of the plantation was only \$5,000 less than Orton. The value of agricultural implements is significantly lower, only \$700 compared with the \$2,000 reported at Orton. Horses, asses, and mules were less numerous at Kendal; nevertheless, the four oxen were likely sufficient to plow the rice fields. Cattle and swine were slightly more common at Kendal; nevertheless, the value of the livestock was about two-thirds that of Orton. In 1850 Kendal produced 156,000 pounds of rice. While less than half of that produced by Orton, it represents a nearly identical amount on a per acreage basis, indicating that both plantations were equally well managed. Kendal produced more corn and peas than Orton, although Orton produced a third more sweet potatoes.

The industrial schedule for 1850 reveals that Owen D. Holmes possessed a rice threshing machine on Kendal which processed 106 tons of rice in 1850, producing 5,540 bushels of rough rice valued at \$4,432. While less rice than found at Orton, the Kendal rice was valued at \$1.25 per bushel, while that at Orton was valued at only \$1.20 per bushel. A minor difference, but it seems that Kendal was in almost all respects comparable to Orton.

The earliest plan we have identified for Kendal dates from 1856 and illustrates a cluster of four structures that appear to represent a main structure, two flankers, and an ancillary building to the northeast. These structures are in a place of

Table 8.
Industrial and Agricultural Production of Kendal Plantation in 1850 and the 1860 Agricultural Schedule.

		Raw Material Used				Kind of Power				Average # Hands				Annual Product			
		Capital Invested	Quant.	Kinds	\$ Value	Kind of Power	Water	Wages	Quant.	Kinds	\$ Value	Wages	Quant.	Kinds	\$ Value		
Rice Threshing Machine		350	106 tons	rice in straw	3,600	water	7 females	49	5,540 bu	rough rice	4,432						
1850																	
Acres																	
Improved	Unimproved	\$ Value	Horses	Asses	Milk Cows	Oxen	Other Cattle	Sheep	Swine	\$ of Livestock	Corn (bu)	Rice (lbs)	Wool (lbs)	Peas (bu)	Sweet Potatoes (bu)	Butter (lbs)	
244	1256	25,000	2	2	14	4	30	37	30	765	569	156,000	80	208	2,000	100	
1860																	
Acres																	
Improved	Unimproved	\$ Value	Horses	Asses	Milk Cows	Oxen	Other Cattle	Sheep	Swine	\$ of Livestock	Corn (bu)	Rice (lbs)	Wool (lbs)	Peas (bu)	Sweet Potatoes (bu)	Butter (lbs)	
221	5370	17,000	4	2	11	7	55	45	150	2140	550	22,700	18	250	3500	100	

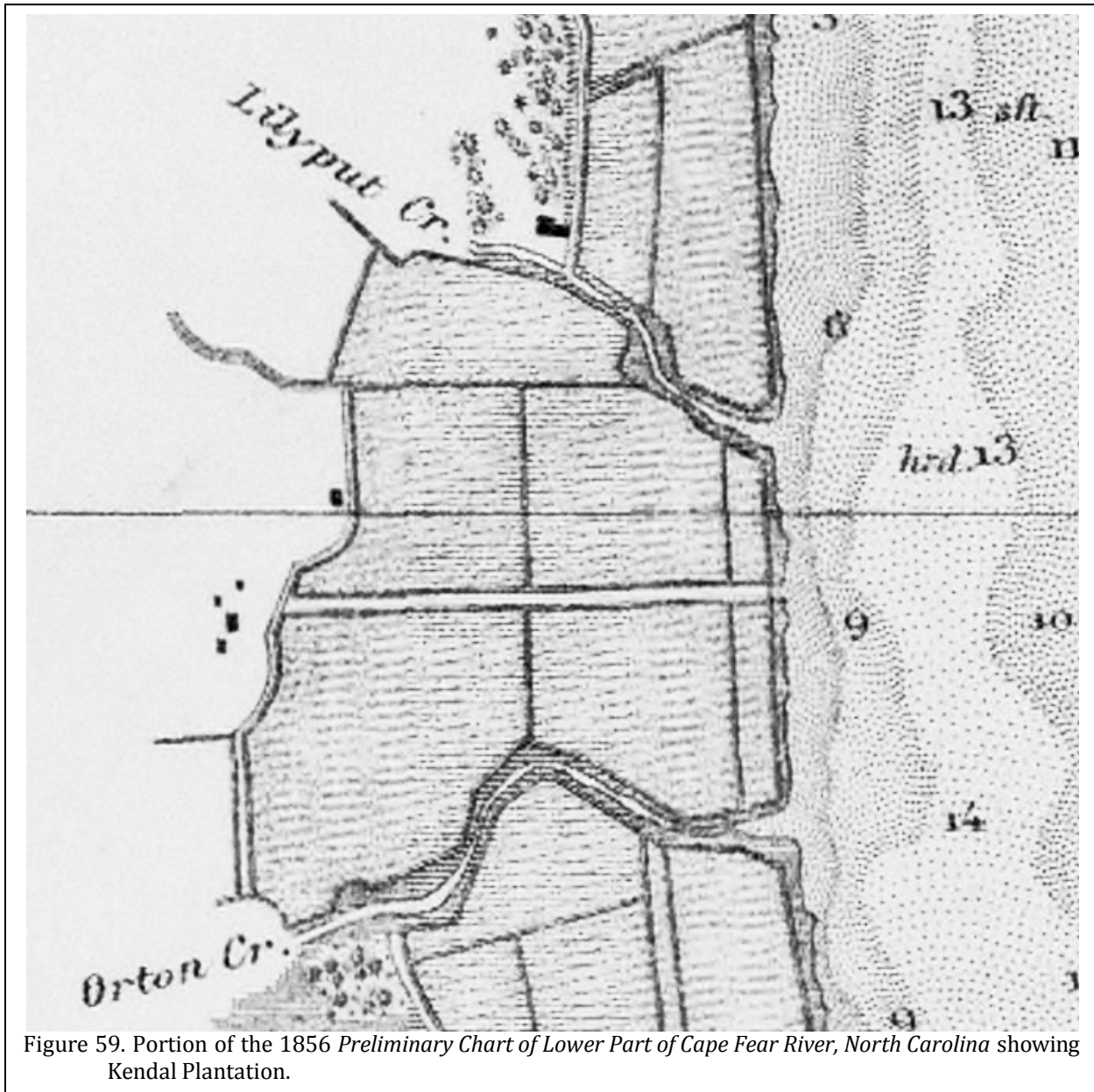


Figure 59. Portion of the 1856 *Preliminary Chart of Lower Part of Cape Fear River, North Carolina* showing Kendal Plantation.

prominence overlooking the rice fields – like Orton – and at the end of a canal that would have provided ship access to the high ground on which the plantation was constructed.

Further to the northeast, at the edge of the rice fields, is a very large structure that was almost certainly a rice barn. It was likely here that rice was stored and thrashed.

The map also illustrates four well defined rice fields comprising approximately 125 acres. This represented slightly over half of the improved acres on the plantation in 1850. If our calculations are correct, the Kendal fields yielded about 44 bushels of rough rice per acre. Based on period accounts (see, for example Washington 1828) this was a good crop.

By 1860 Owen D. Holmes was listed in the

Smithville Township of Brunswick County along with his wife, Anna Moore, and five children. The census also notes that Owen was the agent for Gabriel Holmes, suggesting that Owen was operating the plantation for his brother. The real estate value is divided between the two, with Owen's share listed as \$17,000 and Gabriel's share listed as \$15,000. Only Owen has a personal estate value, identified as \$69,355.

The 1860 slave schedule for Owen D. Holmes lists 58 enslaved African Americans: 22 females and 36 males. Gabriel Holmes is listed only in Samson County, North Carolina where he was planting with his 16 slaves.

This probably tells us something of the operation at Kendal. While the two brothers had some sort of partnership, it appears that Owen was providing not only oversight, but also the slave labor. Presumably Gabriel's contribution was monetary.

The parity found between Kendal and Orton in 1850 had begun to break down by 1860. Improved acreage declined by only 23 acres from 1850, suggesting no substantive change in the area cultivated. Value, however, declined by \$8,000, well over the estimated 8% inflation rate between 1850 and 1860, suggesting that some other factor was at work to devalue Kendal. The 1860 value was also only 40% of Orton's value. The value of implements remained relatively stable between the two decades and was actually slightly more than reported for Orton.

In general, Kendal had less livestock than Orton in 1860. The only exception was the category of swine, with Kendal having 150 compared to only 90 at Orton. Otherwise, the number of oxen at Kendal had increased from 4 to 7 and cattle increased from 30 to 55. The total value of the Kendal livestock also increased by \$1,450 between 1850 and 1860, nearly tripling.

Corn production fell, sweet potato production increased, and most other crops remained about the same. The only notable exception was rice production, which fell from 156,000 pounds to only 22,700 pounds – only

14% of a decade earlier. In comparison, Orton posted a 70% increase in production between 1850 and 1860. This suggests that the decline in Kendal's production was not weather related, but due to some other factor.

It appears that Kendal's rice production peaked in the early antebellum and declined as the Civil War approached.

We also failed to identify an industrial schedule for Kendal. Whether this means that the plantation no longer had the capability to thrash its own rice is unknown, and it may simply represent an oversight.

The only information concerning Civil War actions on Kendal is the brief mention by Curtis that Owen D. Holmes moved his slaves:

into Sampson county where they thought no enemy would ever discover them. But sad and bitter was their experience for they got right in the tract of Sherman and his bummers and all the negroes who had been so carefully taken to this place of safety went over to the enemy and assisted them in their work of destruction and depredation (Curtis 1900:31)

The Holmes family was still in Sampson County in the late 1860s when the IRS assessment lists reveal that the family took their silver with them when they left Kendal, as well as several gold pocket watches and 20 pigs.

Otherwise we have found nothing in the on-line Confederate Citizens Files. Previous discussions for Orton mention the Confederate use of available supplies, such as rice straw and timber. It is possible similar resources were removed from Kendal, but otherwise, the plantation does not figure prominently in period accounts.

The Postbellum Owners

It appears that by the end of the Civil War

the plantation was owned exclusively by Owen D. Holmes and his wife, Ann Moore Holmes. We have not determined what became of Gabriel Holmes (he did not die until 1874). The 1870 federal census identifies Owen Holmes in Smithville with his wife and 10 children, including twins Stonewall Jackson and Jefferson Davis. Also present in the household was an African American house servant, 14 year old Adaline Chesmer. Holmes identified himself as a planter with \$50 of personal estate and \$1,350 in real estate – suggesting that Kendal had dramatically declined in value during the Civil War. We have not found a Holmes on the 1870 agricultural schedule for either Smithville or Town Creek township.

In 1872 Kendal was transferred from Owen Holmes and his wife Ann M. Holmes to W.G. Curtis (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB V, pg. 24).

The deed specifies that Curtis repaid a loan to Richard Doshier in the amount of \$2,700 taken by Ann M. Holmes for the purchase of the property. No other details are offered. With the repayment of this loan and \$5 consideration, the three tracts that comprised the 3,365 acre Kendal were transferred. The core area from the Cape Fear inland to the main road consisted of 285 acres.

Richard Doshier, from whom the money was borrowed by the Holmes family, is listed in the 1870 census as a 44 year old boat pilot, living in Smithville with his wife, Mary and a black house servant, 22 year old Nancy Hawkins. He listed no personal or real estate.

Walter G. Curtis was a native of Massachusetts, graduating from Dartmouth College in 1842 and subsequently attending Harvard for his medical training. By 1847 he arrived in Southport where he began an extensive medical practice. In 1852 he was appointed acting assistant surgeon in the United States Army. He was the “citizen physician” at the Smithville post hospital in at least 1868 and was the state quarantine officer for the port of Wilmington, from 1868 through 1895 (Julian 1910:87; W.G. Curtis Papers, Southern Historical Collection,

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

He first appears in the IRS Assessment List of 1864 when he claimed a salary of \$265 and a gold watch. The 1870 federal census identifies Curtis as a “Doctor of Medicine” with \$3,000 in real estate and \$750 in personal estate. In this household are his wife, Sarah and two African American house servants, Elizabeth Davis, 16 years old, and Bena Wescott, 10 years old.

By 1880, at which time Curtis owned Kendal, the census still lists him in Smithville and that year information on wealth was not collected. Sarah was no longer listed and his new wife, Marjane J. was 30 years old and had borne him a son, identified as C.W. (later as Howard C.).

In spite of his northern roots, his third wife, Margaret Coit Curtis, wrote in her diary during reconstruction, “God help us if the Negroes get control; but they never will while a Southern white man lives to help prevent it (Diary of Margaret Coit Curtis, October, 1896).

In 1875 Walter G. Curtis and his wife, Sarah, sell Kendal for \$5,000 to Owen M. Holmes (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB W, pg. 226). Holmes provided Curtis with five \$1,000 promissory notes, mortgaging the property to Curtis to secure payment (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB W, pg. 228).

Owen McRae Holmes was the son of Owen D. Holmes and perhaps bought the plantation to restore his family’s prominence in the area. The 1880 census identified then 25 year old Owen M. Holmes as farming, but he was still living with his parents, six siblings, and two boarders. Enumerated in Wilmington, it does not appear that any of the family was living at Kendal, at least during June when the census was taken.

We have unfortunately little information about the Holmes’s efforts at Kendal. Their effort to return the plantation to a profitable condition apparently did not succeed. On January 5, 1879, the fifth year of the mortgage, reveals that Owen M. Holmes was attempting to find someone to

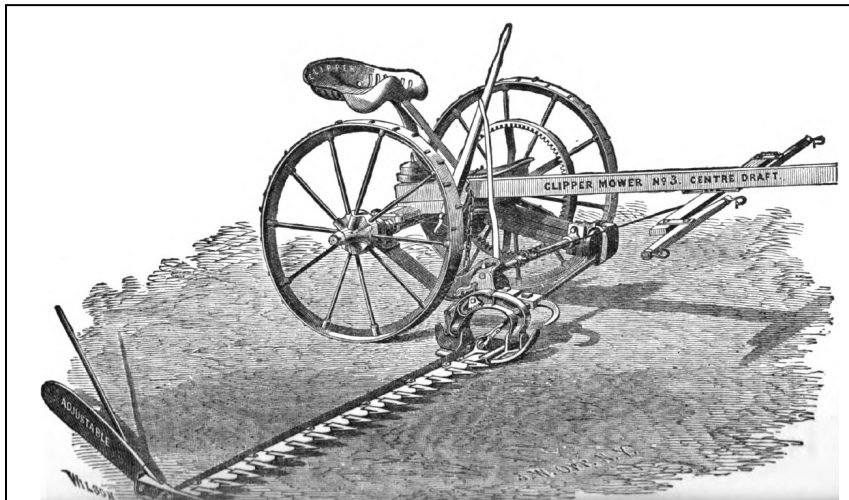


Figure 60. Example of a “Clipper Mower” for hay and similar crops (adapted from Greeley 1872).

The “Clipper Mower” mentioned in the article may have been the Dutton patent manufactured by the Clipper Mower and Reaper Company although several others were available. This machine was designed to cut hay or grass (Greeley 1872:343-344).

As Ardrey observed, “The introduction of the mowing machine naturally created a desire for some speedier method of raking the mown hay” (Ardrey 1894:96). The revolving horse rake that dates prior to the Civil War was modified to make it a more

practical tool. Whether the one at Kendal was an improved version can’t be determined.

either purchase or rent the plantation since he was unable to make the mortgage payments:

For Sale or Rent

Kendal Plantation, situated on Cape Fear River, 12 miles below Wilmington, with Working Implements, Stock, &c., consisting of 1 Clipper Mower, 1 Horse Rake, 1 Hay Press, 2 Mules, 25 Head Cattle, 30 Sheep, 1 Buggy, 1 Wagon and Harness, 1 Flat, Plows, &c. The Plantation consists of 150 acres Rice Land – 75 acres being banked and drained, 300 acres cleared Upland, fenced; 2,500 acres well-timbered Woodland, in which 5 to 10 crops of boxes can be cut; lightwood plentiful, with water facilities for flatting wood to wharf, (wharf belonging to Plantation) where wood can be sold readily at \$3 per cord. There is a good Dwelling House, with six rooms, on Plantation, also an Office, Crib, Stables, &c. Terms of sale easy. For further information apply to O. McR. Holmes (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 5, 1879).

The last specified item was a hay press. This was a device that allowed hay to be made into compact bales easy to transport. One version produced bales measuring 24 by 24 by 48 inches and weighing 250 pounds (Ardrey 1894:102).

These devices suggest that Holmes was producing a significant amount of hay on his plantation – perhaps on the 300 acres of cleared and fenced upland. It may be important that the list includes no rice machinery, such as a rice thresher, a staple on virtually every rice plantation.

The advertisement also indicates that although there were 150 acres of rice land, only half of that was “banked and drained.” Since it appears that in the antebellum there were perhaps 125 acres, the amount of rice lands increased at some point, although by the postbellum fully half of the fields had fallen out of production.

The reference to boxing pines and lighterwood indicates that naval stores were either being turned to once again on Kendal, or this was offered as an alternative to the more labor intensive rice production.

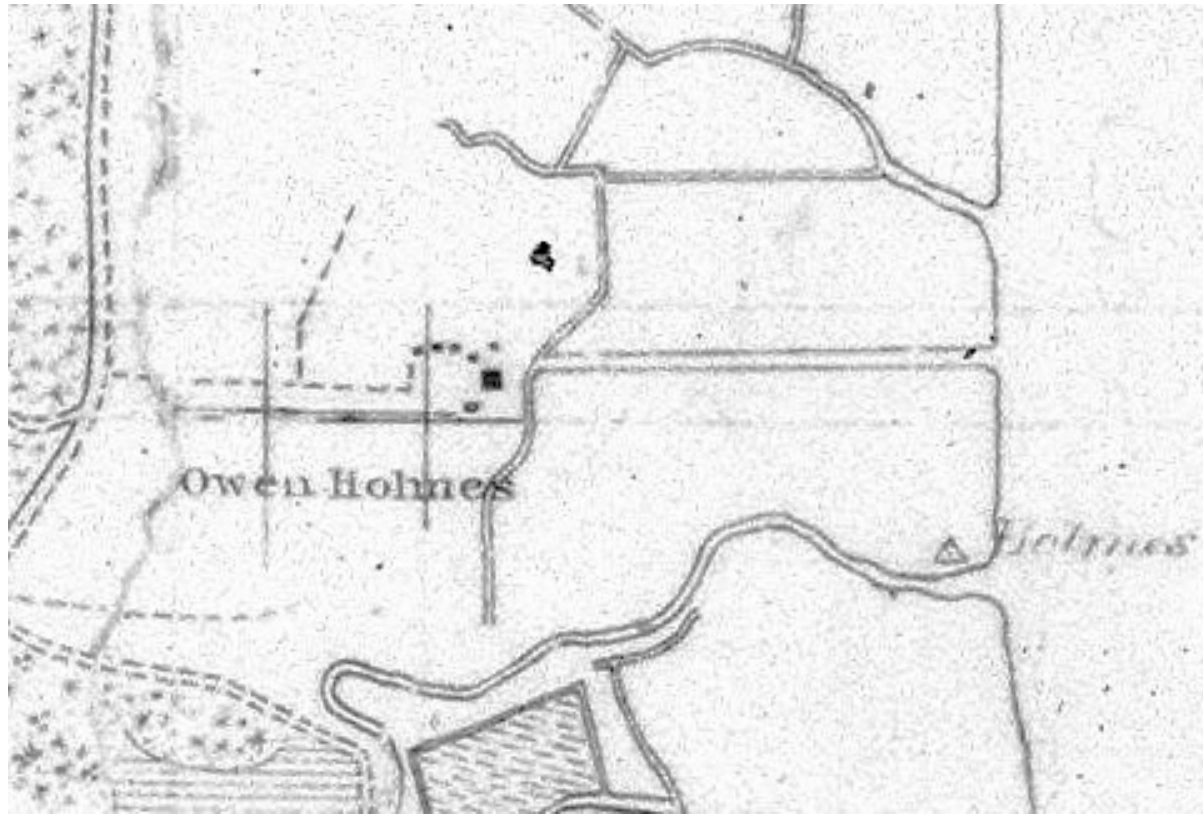


Figure 61. Portion of the 1878 Coastal Chart T-1464a Cape Fear River showing Kendal Plantation.

For the first time we learn that the structure on Kendal was considered “good” and while this may not be the same as “fine,” it does suggest that the house was fit for habitation. The presence of six rooms might represent a two story structure with two bedrooms above and four rooms below. During the antebellum it was common to have one of the flankers serve as an office, while the other might be a guest house, kitchen, or other support service.

In 1878 another plan of Kendal became available and it continues to illustrate the cluster of four structures seen on the 1856 plan, as well as what we suggested was a rice barn to the northeast. The 1878 map also illustrates three additional structures to the west of the main house in a line. These appear to be dwellings for servants, perhaps former slave houses.

The canal leading to the Cape Fear is clearly shown, as is a road that leads out to the

Wilmington-Smithville Road. Another plantation road runs northward from this avenue to the main house. Interestingly, no such avenue is seen at Orton, whose road meanders through woods and around marsh areas.

Apparently Holmes was unable to rent or sell Kendal and it was recovered by Walter G. Curtis and his wife by 1882, when it was again sold, this time to Frederic Kidder (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB AA, pg. 266).

The Curtis Account Book

An account book of Kendal and Lilliput (W.G. Curtis Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) provides information on activities from 1871-1872 and then picks up again in 1879-1882. It appears that Curtis kept the accounts during his two periods of ownership. The first is in the early 1870s after he acquired it from Owen D. Holmes,

stopping about the time it was sold to Owen McRae Holmes. The accounts pick up again in 1879 when Holmes was unable to find a purchaser and continue until Curtis was able to sell the property to Frederick Kidder.

The early transactions suggest that the purchase in 1872 may be more complex than the deed suggests. Apparently Ann M. Holmes paid \$2,500 and Curtis paid only \$600 toward the purchase, although the deed placed the property in Curtis's name. By November 1871 100 acres of Kendal were sold, generating \$300. We have not tracked this parcel.

Almost immediately the account book reveals that Curtis and Holmes were nearly equal partners in the plantation, making purchases and repairs necessary to increase the profitability of the tract. The account books reveal, for example, that 14 head of cattle, 23 sheep, and a mule were purchased, along with tools such as scythes, spades, axes, and rakes. Lumber was purchased and work was begun on a wharf. Stumps were cleaned out and work was conducted on trunks. All of these activities in 1871 make it appear that the plantation has been allowed to lapse into decay.

Almost immediately Curtis and Holmes hired Tom Clark and Robert Hooper to work on the plantations. Both are found in the 1870 federal census from Smithville and were listed as African American farmers. Hooper was being \$12.34 a month, while Clark was being paid \$7.43. Both were also paid a share of the sweet potato crop that they apparently raised on the property in 1871. Shortly thereafter turnips were planted. Other African Americans working on Kendal and Lilliput were noted only by their first names, and included Jam, Kali, Dick, Charles, Bob, Elias, Gilbert, and Scipio.

In April 1872 the account book indicates that Kendal was valued at \$4,000 (Lilliput was valued at \$3,000). The stock was valued at \$1,000, while the tools, wagons, carts, and other goods were valued at \$150 and the flat boat, purchased the previous December, was valued at its purchase price of \$150. Sometime around 1872 Ann

Holmes's interest in Kendal is dissolved, although additional research would be needed to fully understand the transaction.

When Curtis again picks up operations at Kendal about September 1879, the plantation had 24 ewes, one Southdown ram, 10 cows, three heifers calves, four bull calves, two bulls, two oxen, one pair of mules, and one horse.

Items purchased in 1879 provide an interesting picture of operations at Kendal. The purchase of lumber, shingles, lime, and nails suggests on-going maintenance of houses. Scythes, and a mowing machine knife indicate that hay was being grown. Items such as a milk pail, milk pans, and churn indicate the value of the cattle on the plantation. The purchase of oakum indicates maintenance of the flat used in the rice fields, while tools such as a square, drawing knife, and caulking iron suggest carpentry and perhaps maintenance of the flat. There are also entries for the purchase of salt, corn, and occasional tobacco for Robert and Tom, who were still employed on Kendal.

In addition to Tom Clark and Robert Hooper, the 1879 accounts reveal payments to William Brown, Frank Brown, Virgil Smith, Charles Allen, Ned Clark, Moses Chisholm, George Clark, Tom Davis, and Nick Clark for cutting hay and working on the banks. Most are found in the 1880 federal census as farmers, although Virgil Smith was listed as a turpentine worker, indicating that African Americans of the period worked where opportunities presented themselves.

During 1879 Kendal was selling eggs, lambs, butter, shoats, and especially lumber. A brief recounting of the year revealed that lumber brought in \$263, compared to the \$137 in stock. Total income was \$439.84, compared to costs of \$490.39. Repair of houses cost \$48, the cutting of hay cost \$118, while the hauling and flattening of wood cost \$70. By the end of 1879 Curtis and Holmes paid Lewis Jones for building chimneys and houses - presumably servants' quarters on Kendal. Additional houses were being built on Kendal during early 1880 by J.B. Sellers.

By 1880 other African Americans being paid for work on Kendal included Lewn Berry, Jo Davis, Robert Leake, and Alick Smith. The latter two are found in the 1880 Smithville census as “rice hands.”

In February 1880 Curtis paid four African Americans, Lewis James, O. Ball, William Fulwood, and William Spencer for building a store on Kendal.

In March 1880 350 bushels of seed rice were purchased for Kendal at a cost of \$958.11. At the same time a barrel of coal tar was acquired. This may have been to tar the seeds in an effort to prevent the seeds from being eaten by birds. In August 1881 Curtis purchased a threshing machine for Kendal at a cost of \$414. Throughout the accounts there are constant references to labor for ditching and banking.

In spite of this effort a notation explains the reality of attempting to raise rice during the 1880s. The loss of the rice crop of 1880 and 1881 was \$1,100. The loss on the 1881-1882 rice crop was an additional \$835.22. Combined, the two crops lost Curtis nearly \$2,000. He must have felt considerable relief to find a purchaser for Lilliput and Kendal in 1882 – especially one willing to pay \$15,000 for the tracts which seemed to be making money only from their timber.

Kendal Reborn Under Kidder

With the 1882 sale of Kendal, Walter G. Curtis made \$15,000, a sizable sum for the period – and \$10,000 more than they would have made with their sale to Holmes.

It appears that Kidder immediately redoubled efforts to make Kendal a paying rice plantation and within a year Sprunt reported that Kidder had 130 acres in rice (far more than the 75 acres reported in the earlier advertisement) and planned an additional 70 acres, to make a full 200 acres of rice, 50 more acres than reported (Sprunt 1883:210). This suggests that Kidder was not simply planting – he was expanding the plantation. He had raised 5,000 bushels (or about 225,000 pounds) of rice. This represents only 38

bushels per acre, short of what defined a fair or good crop during the antebellum, but for an initial showing it was impressive. Nevertheless Kidder was in fifth place, behind Orton (50 bushels per acre); Feliz, owned by his brother George W. Kidder (45 bushels per acre); Green Island (40 bushels per acre); and Dudley’s (40 bushels per acre). With an overall average of 33 bushels per acre, Kidder was able to do slightly better than average on his first year.

An interesting history of Frederic Kidder has been compiled by Susan Taylor Block (2011). Born on November 12, 1847 Block reports that he was educated at Harvard before returning to Wilmington. In 1870, at the age of 22 he was living with his parents and his three siblings, in a household with a white seamstress, a white housekeeper, and no fewer than six African American “domestic servants.” His father, Edward Kidder, a wholesale lumber dealer, reported real estate valued at \$127,000 and a personal estate of \$246,000. Frederic’s older brother, George, already claimed real estate valued at \$12,000 and was in the lumber business with his father. Frederic was listed as having “no occupation.”

Frederic’s father Edward and his uncle Frederic were born in New England, the sons of Isaiah and Hepsey Kidder. Isaiah Kidder was a merchant, farmer, and cotton mill owner. In the late 1820s Edward and Frederic moved south, opening a mercantile business in the city. Edward eventually found a position with a much larger firm and Frederic returned north to become an antiquarian and author (Dean 1887).

In August 1878 Frederic Kidder took a trip to England, returning from Liverpool via New York on the *Egypt*. In 1880, Frederic Kidder, now 32 was still living in Wilmington with his father and two older brothers, by this time all listed as mill owners. Present in the household was George’s wife, as well as eight African American servants. Frederic’s occupation was listed as “rice.” Since he had not yet purchased Kendal this may indicate that he was renting a plantation and planting rice ahead of his purchase – and if he was renting Kendal, this would certainly explain his very good “first” year showings in terms of



Figure 62. A portion of the 1888 Cape Fear River from Reeves Point to Wilmington Coastal Chart showing Kendal Plantation.

acreage and rice production.

Edward and his son George were owners of the Cowan Saw and Planning Mills in Wilmington which covered 10 acres of ground. They exported about 8,000,000 feet of timber to the West Indies and South America yearly (Reilly1884:113-114).

In 1890 Frederic Kidder took his second overseas voyage, this time to France and in a party of four.

Between 1882, when Kidder purchased Kendal, and 1885, he was the local postmaster with mail being delivered to his dock for distribution to other residents (Winter 2008:16).

A news article also reported that in 1882 Kidder's plantation store at Kendal was robbed:

the store of Mr. Fred Kidder, at the Kendall plantation . . . was broken open and robbed of \$25 or \$30 in money, which seemed to be the sole object of the thieves, as nothing else was missing. On Monday morning, when the robbery was discovered, Mr. J.T. Batson, who has been clerking for Mr. Kidder, came up to the city and saw Officer Carr, securing his services to hunt up the thieves. Suspicion rested upon two colored men who have been working the neighborhood, and it was supposed they would come up to the city on one of the steamers Monday evening. While waiting

for the boats at the foot of Market street the officer detected David Statcher – one of the suspected men – in the crowd, dressed in a new suit of clothes, with new shoes, etc., which coupled with the fact that the man came to store in question on Saturday and professed to be entirely destitute, being dressed at the time in nothing better than rags, was taken as pretty strong circumstantial evidence of his guilt (“Store Robbery,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, June 28, 1882).

Reference to the 1880 census revealed a John T. Batson in nearby Pender County who at the time was a farmer. No David Statcher could be identified, although a Henry Statcher, a 22 year old African American laborer, was found in Wilmington. This story is of particular importance since it reveals that Kendal had a plantation store, probably for the local blacks.

In 1885 the Kendal banks “were broken and some injury done to the crop” (“The Rice Crop,” *Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, October 16, 1885). This may have been the result of the August hurricane. Two years later the plantation was in “fine condition” (“Rice Plantations,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 1, 1887).

In 1891 the paper reported that Kidder was “building a new dock just below the old one, on the Cape Fear river, with a depth of ten feet of water at low tide” (“Orton and Kendal Notes,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, September 4, 1891).

An 1888 plan of Kendal is available showing the plantation during the early years of Kidder’s operation. The old dock is shown extending into the river. The rice fields are clearly illustrated, as are the drained fresh water swamps extending westward along Lilliput Creek that were planted in field crops. The plantation house, two flankers, and smaller structures to the northeast are still present, as is the large rice barn

along the edge of the rice fields to the northeast. The three houses that we have previously suggested may be servant’s houses are still present, as is an additional structure to the south. Finally, there are an additional four structures found along the entrance avenue at the main road. There is also, for the first time, a structure situated at the south of the main road leading to the main house.

In 1892 Kidder’s production at Kendal overtook that by Murchison at Orton, with 53 bushels per acre – a result that rivaled antebellum production. It was reported that Kidder’s success was a result of his “most careful personal attention to the work on his plantation” (“Rice Yields,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, February 20, 1892).

By 1893 another storm damaged the Kendal banks (“The Rice Fields,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 29, 1893). A tropical storm that season also “wrecked” the new wharf although “not much damage was done to the banks” (“The Rice Plantations,” *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, October 15, 1893).

As a result of the October 1899 hurricane a news account reported:

Mr. Fred Kidder has forty or fifty hands at work making repairs made necessary by the storm. The wharf is being repaired and the banking of the rice field rebuilt (“Repairs to Rice Fields,” *Evening Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, November 15, 1899).

Kidder was no less interested in society than others of his status. Block describes his membership in the Carolina Yacht Club where he raced his boat, *Clarendon*, as well as the parties he attended in Wilmington and Wrightsville Beach. In particular is one party that Kidder hosted at Kendal, reminiscent of those previously described for adjacent Orton.

The party included 75 individuals brought to Kendal by the tugboat *Alexander Jones*.

Party-goers refreshed themselves in the house, with the article noting the many fireplaces and “brilliantly illuminated hallway.” A free-standing pavilion housed a string ensemble and apparently dance floors had also been built. The party lasted for over 10 hours before a steamboat returned them to Wilmington (Block 2011:68).

Block also reports that Kidder engaged in turpentine collection, although we have not identified additional information concerning this effort.

Kidder died in 1908 and was buried in Wilmington’s Oakdale Cemetery. Block quotes an eulogy by James Sprunt:

Mr. Fred Kidder, a type of the Old School Gentleman, of the most prominent and industrious planters on the river, a worthy and honored successor of the distinguished settlers on the Cape Fear: Gentlemen of birth and education, bred in the refinement of polished society, and bringing with them ample fortunes, gentle manners, and cultivated minds (quoted in Block: 2011:68).

Kidder’s will, prepared in 1906, contained a relatively elaborate series of bequeaths. For example, to his sister, Anne P. Kidder, he bequeathed his Dresden china and the “cabinet containing the same.” His friend, Dr. George G. Thomas, was to receive the two bronzes on the dining room mantle. Even his “old leather chair used by me in my college days” was specifically gifted.

One item is of special interest. His “friend Mrs. Luola Sprunt, wife of James Sprunt” was to receive his etching, “Darby and Joan” which she specifically admired. McCauley noted that this etching was by:

W.H. Boucher after Walter Dendy Sadler’s leading painting shown in the Grosvenor Gallery exhibit

of 1889. In it Mr. Sadler sympathetically and poetically dealt with the happier autumnal aspects of human life. . . . The picture represents a dining-room of the Queen Anne period where a comely old gentleman, the Darby of the composition, sits at table with his still handsome and now venerable Joan. In the background in a panel in the wainscot is the portrait by Gainsborough (McCauley 1907:58-59).

A great many other etchings were likewise distributed to family and friends by Kidder’s will.

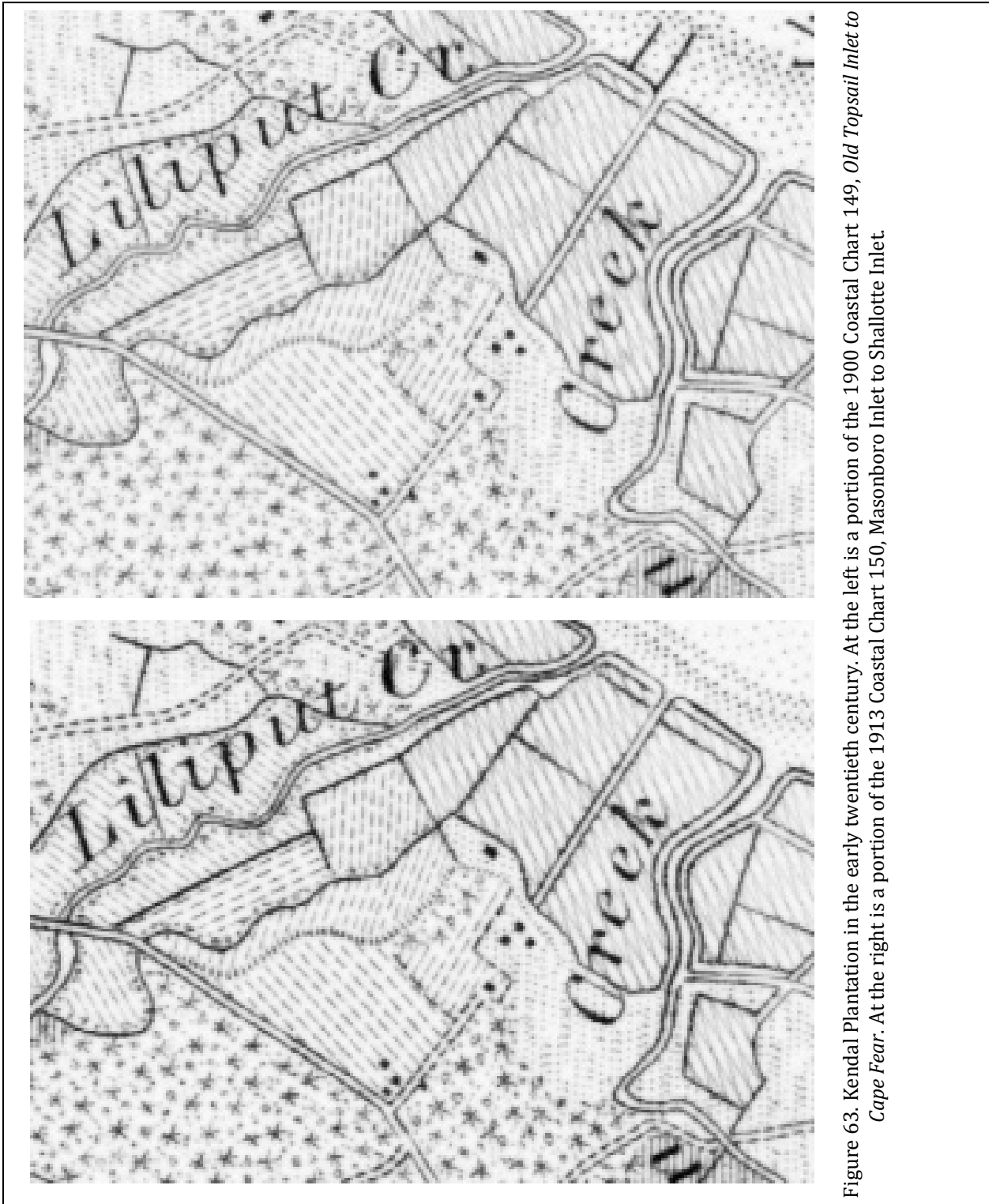
Kidder gave his “old servants” Liza Smith, Tom Allen, Peyton Boneham, and Scip Clark each \$100. We have not been able to identify any of these individuals in the 1900 census.

With no wife or children of his own, Kendal and all of its associated items not otherwise bequeathed were given to his nephew, George E. Kidder, and his three nieces, Annie K. Smith, Florence Kidder, and Elise Kidder (Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235).

If we base our judgment on the inventory of the estate, the plantation was Spartan. The furniture at Kendal was valued at only \$124. The 26 etchings were valued at \$614, the Dresden china was valued at \$100, the student’s chair was valued at only \$1, a bookcase and books were valued at \$100, and a sideboard was valued at \$10. The silver at the plantation, identified as “mostly plated,” was valued at only \$10.

The four mules on the plantation were characterized as “old” and given a value of only \$25 each. The farming implements were equally as old and were worth only \$41.

The current year’s rice crop, apparently not yet harvested, was valued at \$2,500. Kidder’s total personal estate was valued at only \$12,579 (NCDAH, Brunswick County, Frederic Kidder



Estate, 1908).

As the 1908 crop was harvested, it brought \$3,095.43, although we have no information on the acres planted or the size of the harvest. The estate papers do tell us that the cost of maturing, harvesting, and selling this rice and straw was \$1,460.15, resulting in a return to the estate of only \$1,635.28. Factoring in the cost of the seed, planting, and tending, it seems that by 1908 rice was only a marginally profitable crop.

Two plans of the plantation, dating from 1900 – prior to Kidder’s death – and 1913 – a few years after – are shown in Figure x. The structures along the main road are unaltered and the large rice barn along the edge of the rice fields remains constant. The configuration of the main settlement, however, changes substantially. The northern flanker and three servant’s quarters to the west are lost, as is another small structure to the northeast. In addition, what had previously been shown to be a structure at the south edge of the road to Kendal now seems to assume more importance and is a terminal point. In addition, more fields were opened for cultivation.

There is nothing in the inventory or estate records to suggest that Kidder was involved in any other plantation activities or was even successful. For example, there was no corn on hand, there was no evidence of turpentine or tar production, and there was not even evidence that the plantation had its own threshing machine for rice. Coupled with the limited contents of the plantation house, such as the silver plate, it seems that Kendal was a “flower-crowned waste” in the words of Henry James and that Frederic Kidder was, in the words of Peter Coclanis (1989), living in the “shadow of a dream.”

Kendal in Photographs

We are fortunate to have a series of photographs courtesy of Susan Taylor Block. While many of these appear in Block’s genealogy of the Moore family (Block 2011), they are worthy of more detailed inspection here.

The Kendal house sat on a relatively level

area overlooking the rice fields. The yard appears well maintained and grassed, although there is no evidence of gardens in these photographs. Access to the river causeway was slightly north of the house and it circled down the bank.

The house, as at Orton, was oriented toward the river, with abundant windows to allow for ventilation. While this makes sense for a house occupied in the summer, it makes less sense for a winter residence, when the winds off the water would have been cold.

The core is a narrow two-story frame structure on foundation piers of brick and built relatively low to the ground. Access was provided by wooden steps centered on the porch. It is a farmhouse style that was typical along the South Carolina coast. These structures typically had six main rooms, with four on the ground floor and two above, with a central hall on each floor. This would have provided the six rooms described in the 1879 advertisement.

It also suggests that the side wings and rear extension post-date 1879, perhaps reflecting expansions added by Kidder after his purchase in 1882.

The original structure also had a broad two-tiered front porch; access to the upper level was by way of the slightly off center upper floor door. By the time of the photographs this upper porch had been removed, but the gambrel roof line remained. At the time of the photographs, this roof was standing seam metal.

The exterior was clad in cedar shakes. There seem to be a mix of double sash windows, although many cannot be clearly seen. The second floor of the structure had nine-over-six, while the first floor had nine-over-nine windows, all with exterior shutters. Both the main entrance and upper porch door had transoms. The upper paneled door is still visible, while the lower appears to have been obscured by a screen door.

The left wing had a hipped roof; the right wing had a gable roof, as did the rear wing or

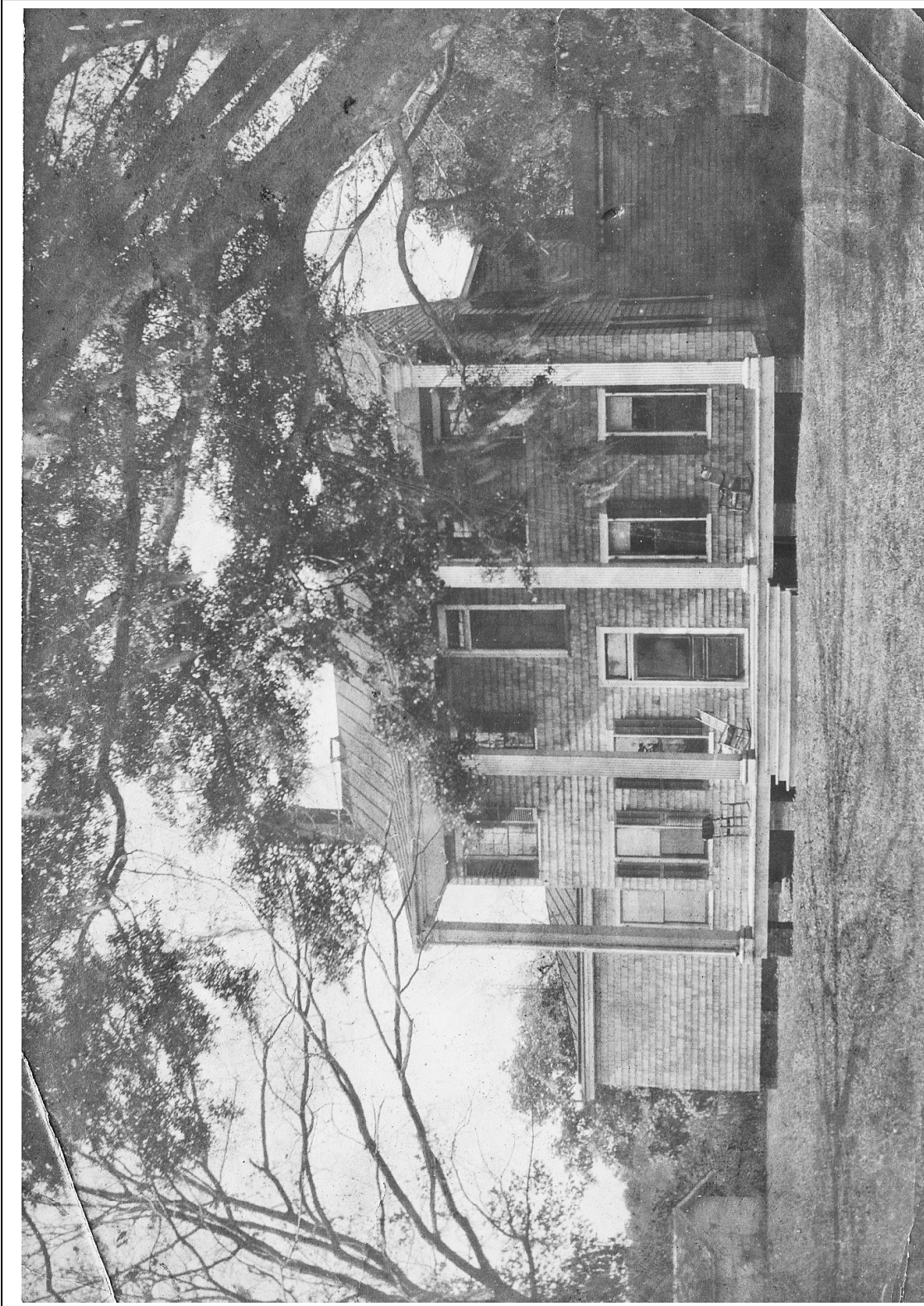


Figure 64. Kendal main house showing wings and rear extension, as well as a flanking structure to the south (left) (courtesy Susan Taylor Block).

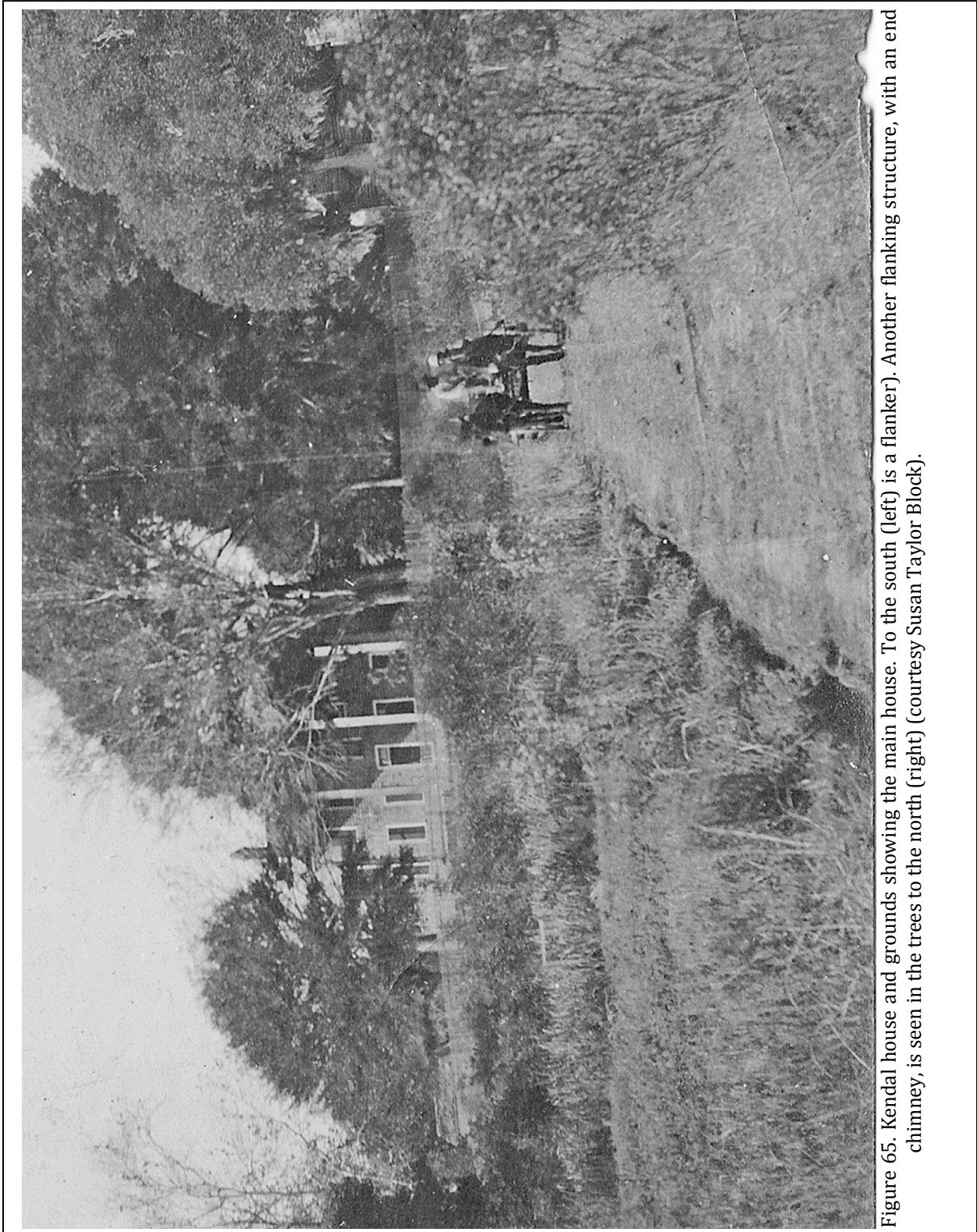


Figure 65. Kendal house and grounds showing the main house. To the south (left) is a flanker). Another flanking structure, with an end chimney, is seen in the trees to the north (right) (courtesy Susan Taylor Block).



Figure 66. Kendal main house and rice fields. The northern flanker can be identified in the trees. Note that the causeway did not extend straight to the shore, but circled to the north (a mule and wagon are on the path, just above the rice trunk in the photograph). The causeway still evidences ties and track for a conveyance similar to that used at Orton, although by the time of this photograph it appears to have been abandoned. Note also the white picket fence that surrounded the high ground of the formal yard (courtesy Susan Taylor Block).



Figure 67. The main house is to the left corner of the photograph, while a flanking structure, possibly the kitchen, is seen at the right edge of the image. This single story frame structure is set on brick piers and has a large end chimney. Note the yard is entirely grassed (courtesy Susan Taylor Block).



Figure 68. A photograph of one of Kidder's African American servants at Kendal standing on the front porch of the main house. Note the large fluted wood columns. In the background is the flanking structure to the north, possibly the kitchen (courtesy Susan Taylor Block).

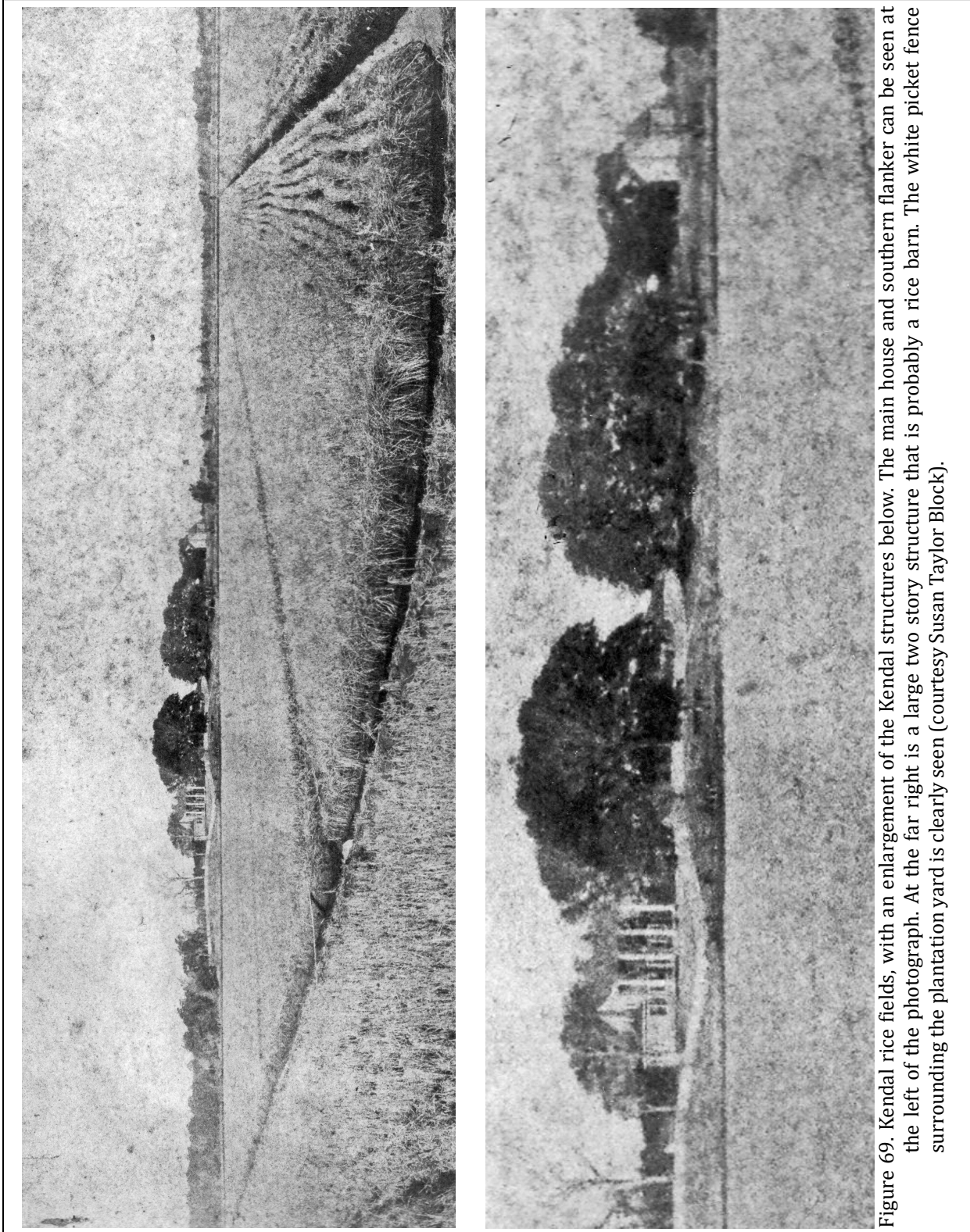


Figure 69. Kendal rice fields, with an enlargement of the Kendal structures below. The main house and southern flanker can be seen at the left of the photograph. At the far right is a large two story structure that is probably a rice barn. The white picket fence surrounding the plantation yard is clearly seen (courtesy Susan Taylor Block).

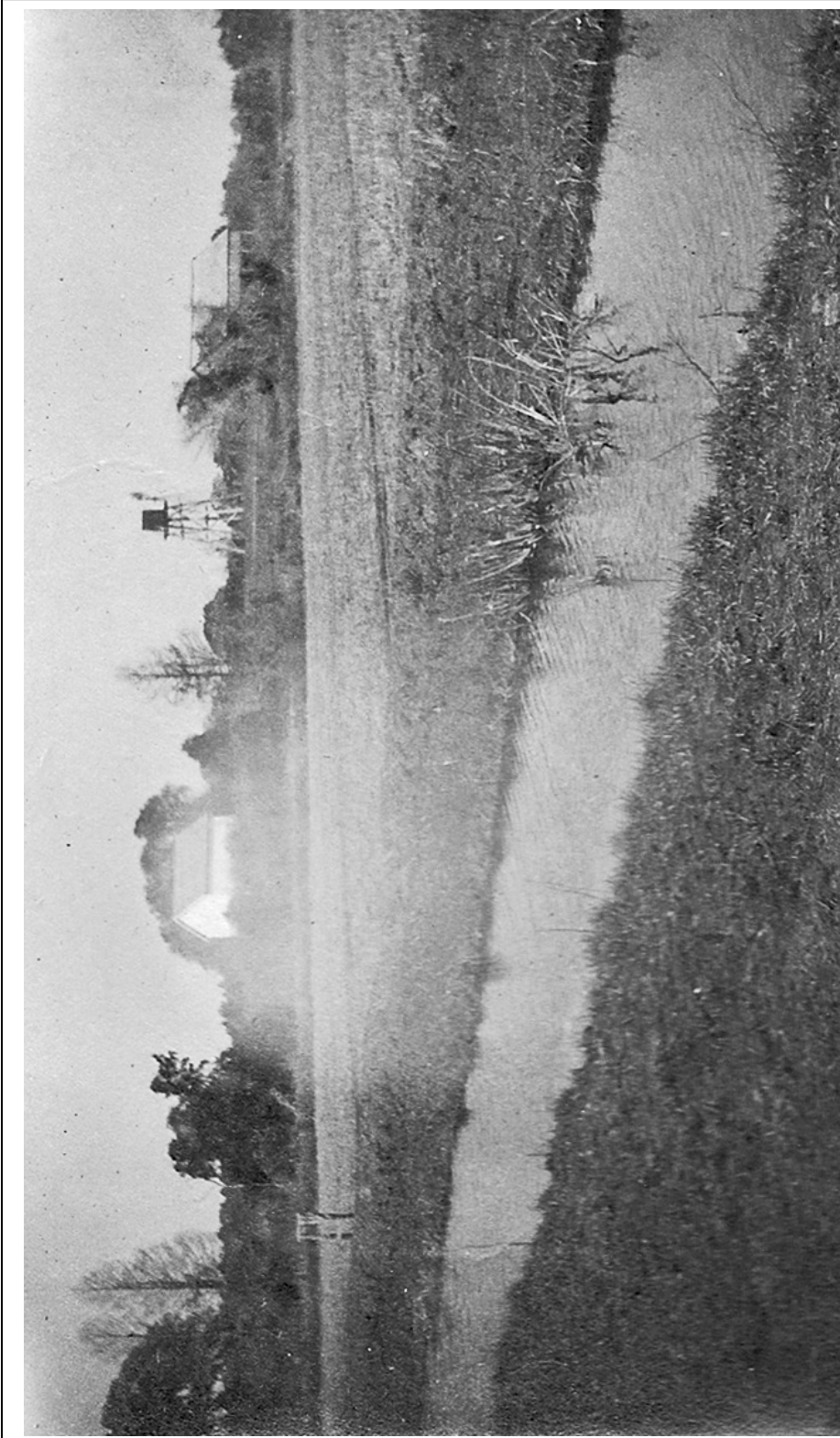


Figure 70. Portion of Kendal to the north of the main house. This view shows the large white rice bank, a water tower (which does not appear on any of the charts) and a dilapidated structure immediately on the rice field (courtesy Susan Taylor Block).



Figure 71. A log pig pen at Kendal plantation.

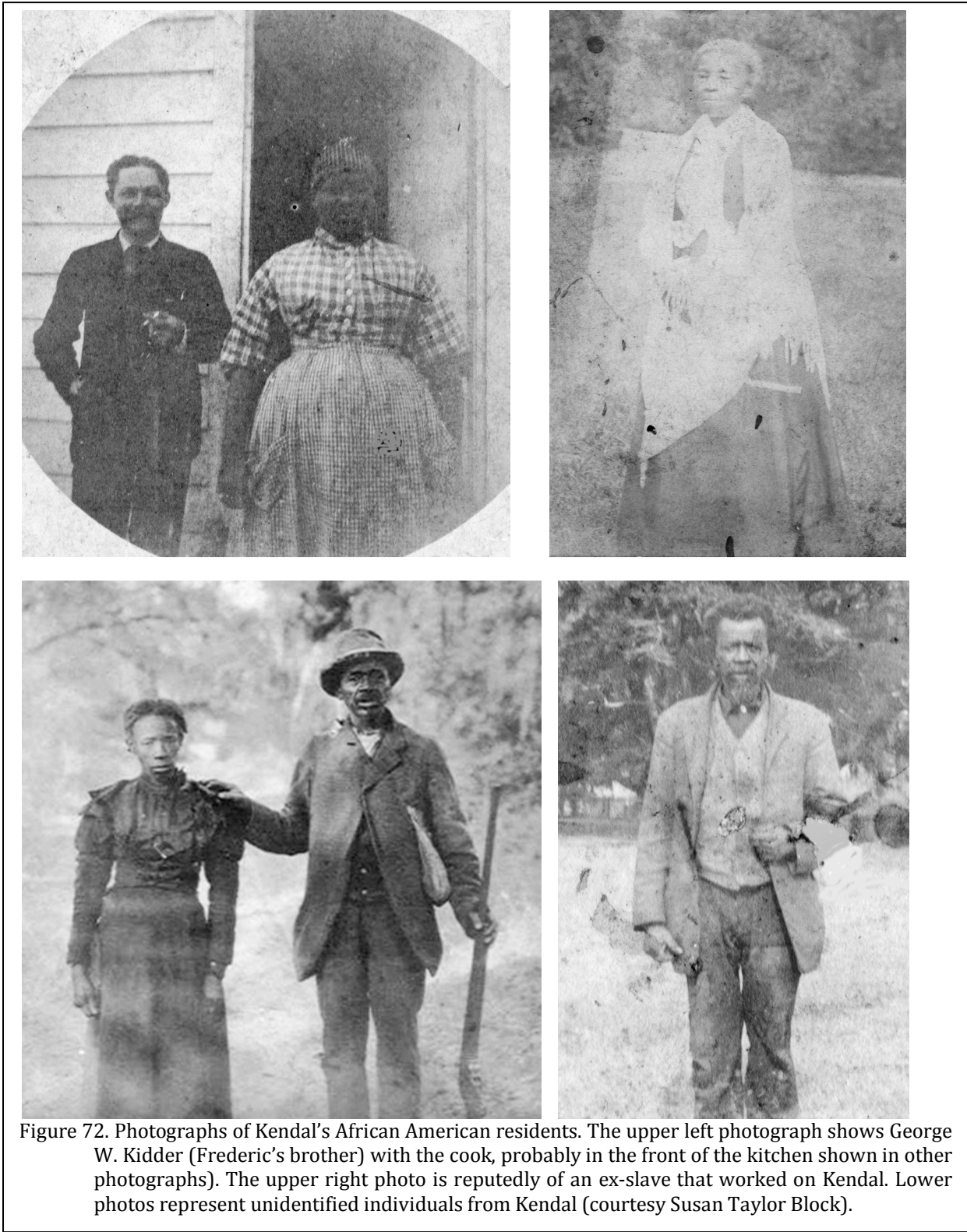


Figure 72. Photographs of Kendal's African American residents. The upper left photograph shows George W. Kidder (Frederic's brother) with the cook, probably in the front of the kitchen shown in other photographs). The upper right photo is reputedly of an ex-slave that worked on Kendal. Lower photos represent unidentified individuals from Kendal (courtesy Susan Taylor Block).

extension.

This structure appears to have had at least one and possibly two periods of expansion and modification (the rear addition, the modification of the porch, and the addition of a metal roof).

The various maps have shown flanking buildings to the north and south, verified by these photographs. The one to the north was a one story frame building set on brick piers. There was a door at the west end and a window at the east. A brick chimney was located along the western wall.

A gable roof was present, but none of the photographs reveal whether it, too, was metal. We suspect this may be the kitchen.

The southern flanking structure is shown far less clearly in these photographs. In fact, it is only possible to determine that it was rectangular, oriented with the main house and had a gable roof. There appears to be a door on the north gable end, but no windows are present. This may have been a smoke house.

Another photograph (Figure x) shows the structures north of the main settlement, including a large, two story white frame structure with no windows. This is probably the plantation's rice barn, given its proximity to the rice field; it may, however, have been a barn or stable. Further to the north the photograph shows a water tower. Further north, and immediately adjacent to the rice fields is another structure that appears to be little more than a shed. Its function cannot be determined.

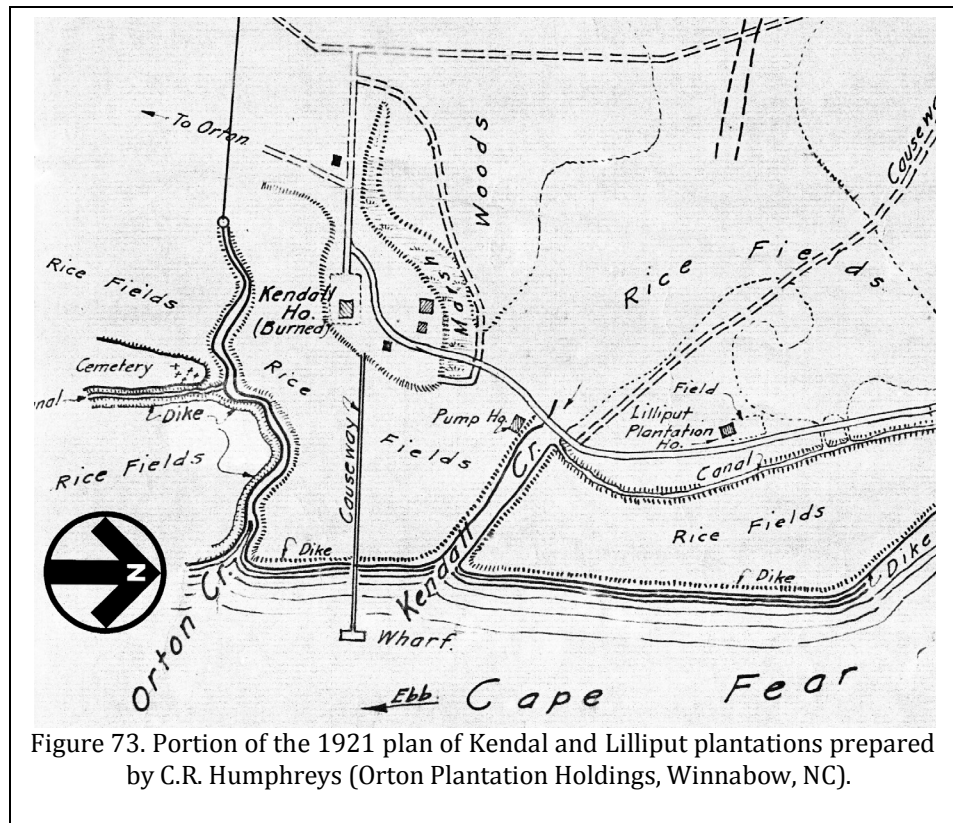


Figure 73. Portion of the 1921 plan of Kendal and Lilliput plantations prepared by C.R. Humphreys (Orton Plantation Holdings, Winnabow, NC).

Block quotes an interview with Peggy Moore Perdew who remembered her mother, Florence Kidder Moore, commenting that Frederic Kidder “had plans drawn for an edifice that would have been even more impressive, but he died before the project was ever began” (Block 2011:65). While it is hard to imagine how Kidder with his limited financial resources could have spent much money on Kendal, but we imagine that the view of the structure as “impressive” stems from the memories of childhood. Kendal was a rustic farmhouse, not a “mansion.”

A photograph is also available showing a pig barn. Since such plantation structures are so rarely photographed or illustrated, it is worthy of brief comment. The earthfast structure was of log construction and some form of roof. The entrance was square and sized for the pigs. The two shown in the photographs are American spots, a breed descended from Poland China hogs, but that have a lighter frame and distinctive black and white spotting.

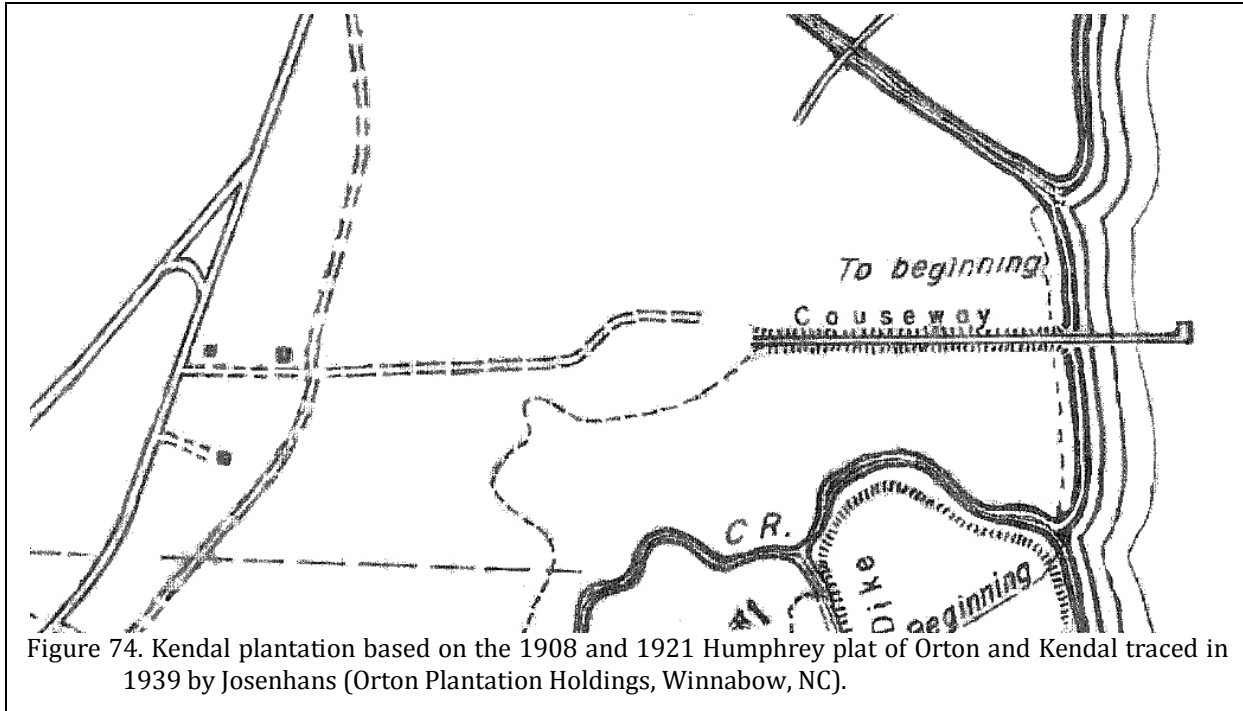


Figure 74. Kendal plantation based on the 1908 and 1921 Humphrey plat of Orton and Kendal traced in 1939 by Josenhans (Orton Plantation Holdings, Winnabow, NC).

Figures 68 and 72 show six different African Americans who lived and worked at Kendal in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Given that they were recorded photographically, some may have been those singled out by Kidder as his “old servants” but we have no information about their names.

Kendal Under the Sprunt Family

The Kidder heirs held Kendal for nearly a decade and we know nothing about how – or if – the plantation was operated during this period.

On December 21, 1912 Luola Sprunt purchased 394 acres of Kendal from the Kidder heirs for \$10 and “other good and valuable considerations” (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 21, pg. 229). This portion of Kendal provided access to Orton Pond at Venison Branch. Six years later, on May 16, 1918 the heirs sold the remainder of Kendal (and Lilliput, with which it had been associated for a number of years) for \$10,000 to James Sprunt (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 29, pg. 388).

Only nine months later, on February 15, 1919, the plantation house burned to the ground. Block reports that the fire began when:

strong winds off the Cape Fear River fanned sparks flying from the detached kitchen’s chimney. The kitchen’s wooden shingles acted as kindling for the large fire that destroyed the mansion, despite metal shingles. Nothing was salvaged but a few pieces of furniture (Block 2011:68).

There is anecdotal information that Kendal was rented during much of Sprunt’s ownership.

The 1921 plan showing Kendal and Lilliput made by C.R. Humphreys shows the Kendal house as burned, suggesting that enough remained to allow an outline to be identified. There are three additional structures shown to the north on high ground. Two are west of the Kendal road leading across Kendal Creek to Lilliput, the other is on the east side of this road. None of these

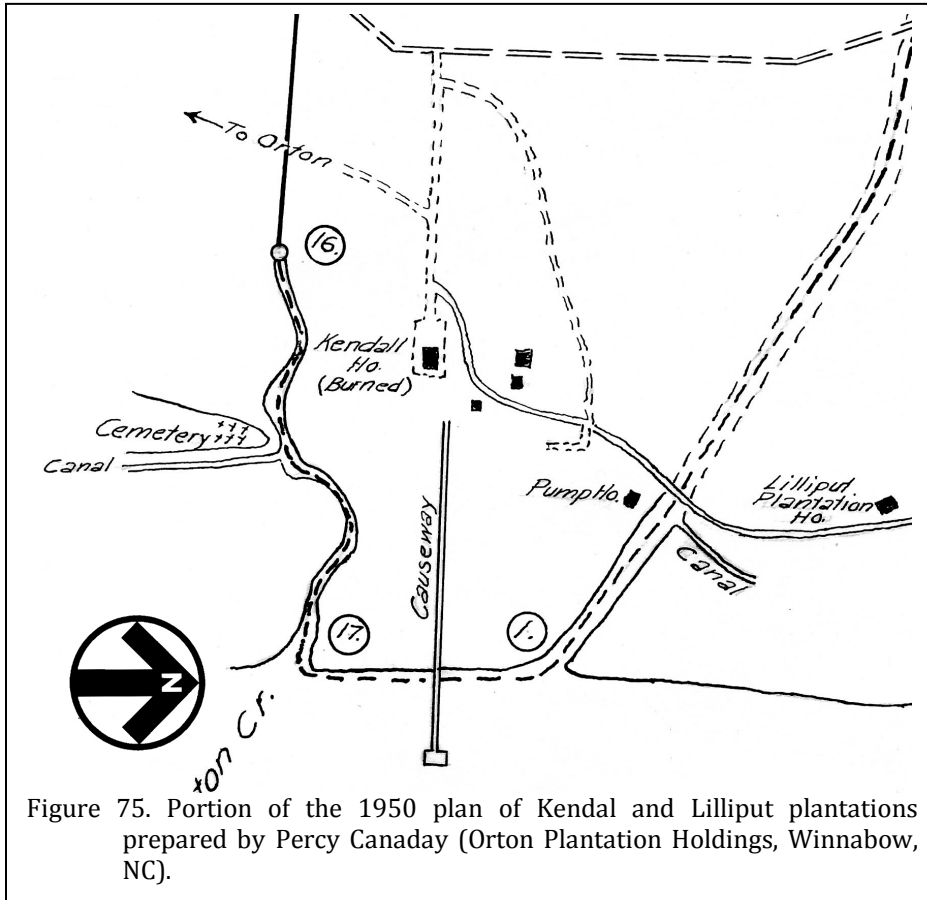


Figure 75. Portion of the 1950 plan of Kendal and Lilliput plantations prepared by Percy Canaday (Orton Plantation Holdings, Winnabow, NC).

structures are found on earlier maps; nor is the road itself. Also present on this plan is a pump house situated in the rice field, just within the dike and on the edge of Kendal Creek. To the west of the burnt house is the structure along the main avenue shown on maps since 1888.

The 1939 plan shows all of the structures in the plantation core now gone. Only those structures at the west edge of the property along the avenue are still present and these can be seen in the 1938 aerial.

By the mid-1930s we begin to have reputable oral history. Eugene Vaught, who was born in 1932, explained that the houses seen since at least 1888 were known as Hagfield and the last person living there in his memory was the mother of Robert Eno; by his time the houses were gone and the area was occasionally planted in provision

crops by his father.

Mr. Vaught's family lived in the new settlement to the north of Hagfield and between the two areas was a swamp. The bamboo that is now so prevalent in the area was planted by his father from a few slips taken from Orton.

He was raised in a family of three boys and three girls in a four room house. There were two bedrooms, one for his parents and another for the children, a kitchen, and a main parlor. Later Sprunt built a smaller house to the west, consisting of just one room, where his father lived alone. The family moved off the property about 1950.

There were never any trees around his house, only the fields in which the family grew potatoes, corn, and vegetables. They had two horses. While his father tended the farm, his mother worked in the Orton flower gardens. His grandfather lived on neighboring Lilliput.

He also recalls that all travel around the plantations was by ox cart, even into the 1940s. The main road - River Road - that is shown in the various pre-1950 aerials and maps was dirt and can still be seen today within the plantation boundaries. His mother told him that there was a road that used to run from Kendal, crossing the rice fields, through the white cemetery, to Orton (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012). Block mentions that Kidder "would walk to Sprunt's house at twilight, braving the

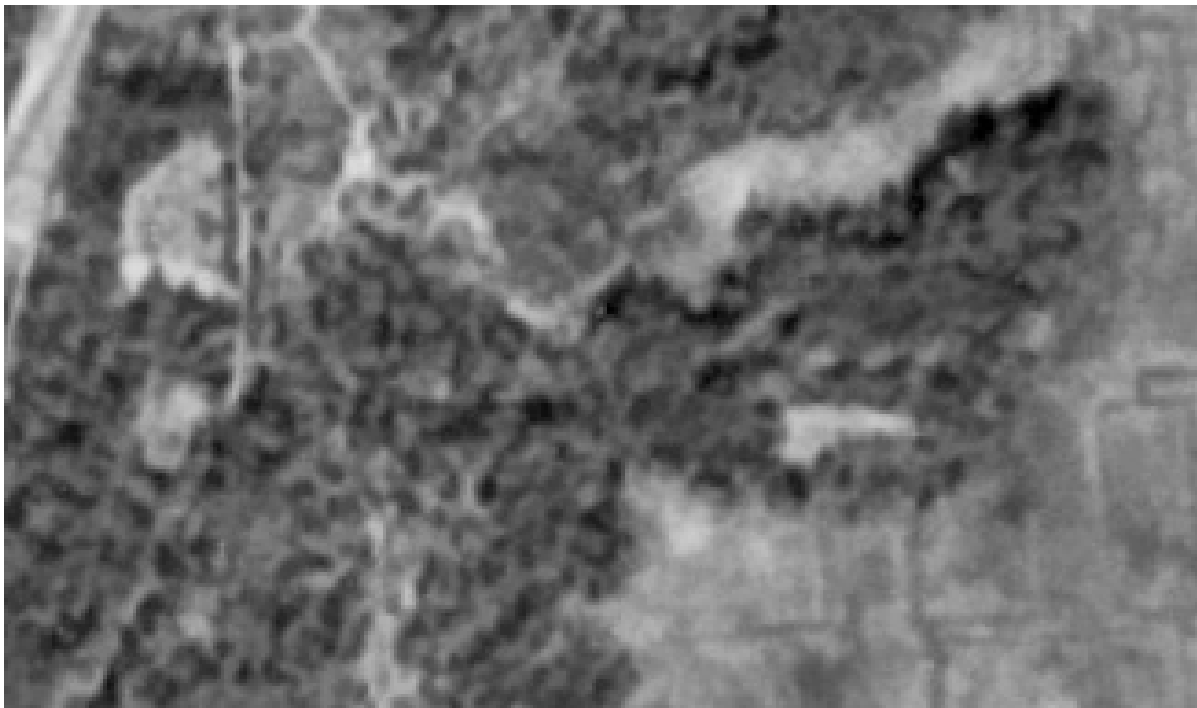


Figure 76. Aerials of Kendal Plantation. At the top is a portion of the April 4, 1938 aerial A0Q-39-67. While the main plantation complex is gone, there remain three cultivated fields and one field that has gone out of cultivation. To the west, at the road is the field in which the structures seen in the 1939 plan are located. Also visible is the main road into Kendal. Below is the January 12, 1959 aerial showing that only a small field remains on the rice fields. The area of the structures along the main road in 1939 has become wooded, although a new area of cultivation to the north has been opened and structures are present in this area.

graveyard cut-through" (Block 2011:66), probably taking this road.

Kendal had burned before he was born, but Mr. Vaught did recall that he and his brother would scavenge brick from Kendal (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

While Mr. Vaught didn't recall the reason that they moved off Kendal, it was in 1947 and 1950 that J. Laurence Sprunt sold Kendal to his children, James L. Sprunt, Jr., Kenneth M. Sprunt, Sam N. Sprunt, and Laurence Gray Sprunt for \$1 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 79, pg. 626; DB 102, pg. 143).

The 1950 plan of Kendal shows the houses along the west edge of the property, including those associated with the Vaughn family, gone – confirming the oral history. The location of the burnt house, the three nearby structures, and the pump house are still present, suggesting that they remained visible on the landscape.

Archaeological Reconnaissance

Goal and Methodology

The goal of this work is essentially exploratory: to examine Orton and Kendal plantations for evidence of archaeological sites. Sites, when found, would be briefly documented and recorded. The rationale is equally straight forward; the work is intended to provide the owner and managers of the plantations with information regarding the archaeological resources present on the tracts to ensure that critical historical assets are not damaged by activities such as forestry operations, rice field improvements, or other activities.

Given the size of the tract it was not, however, possible to conduct an intensive examination of the entire property – although such an endeavor would be highly valuable and should be considered. Instead, some initial effort was devoted to the examination of readily available cartographic resources in order to identify areas where it was thought reasonable that historic properties would be found.

There are a variety of predictive models for archaeological resources in the coastal plains of North and South Carolina. Virtually all examine issues such as elevation, water proximity, and soils. Variations may include factoring in agricultural productivity or vegetation. Many archaeologists also preclude areas of standing water, mucky soils, areas with slopes over 20%, and areas with extensive erosion or eroded landforms. In this case, virtually all the soils are

Blanton fine sands. These soils do not have significant elevations and while they are often excessively drained, they have reasonably good agricultural potential. We selected areas for prehistoric sites based on topography and proximity to freshwater resources, especially edge areas. Nevertheless, this proved to be less than successful since one of our selected areas was not accessible.

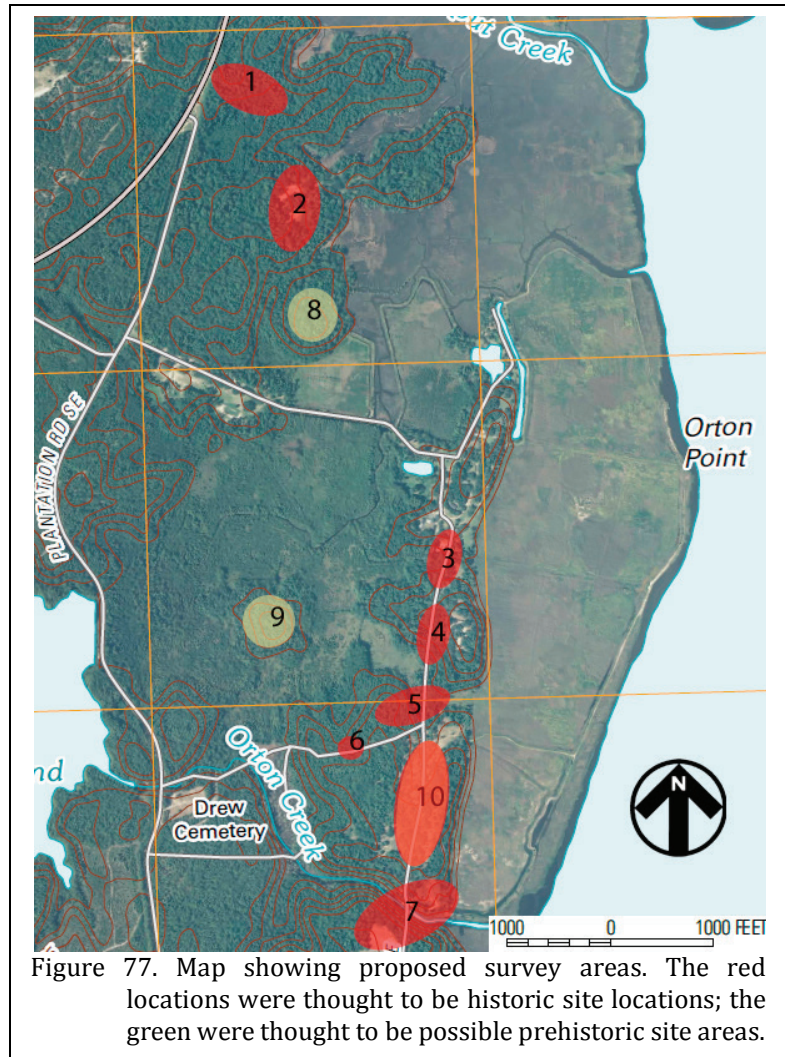


Figure 77. Map showing proposed survey areas. The red locations were thought to be historic site locations; the green were thought to be possible prehistoric site areas.

Table 9.
Site and Accession Numbers for Identified
Archaeological Sites

Site Number	OSA Accession Number
Orton	
31BW548**	Cemetery
31BW787**1	2012.0158
31BW787**2	Cemetery
31BW787**3	2012.0157
31BW787**4	2012.0159
31BW787**5	2012.0160
31BW787**6	2012.0161
31BW787**7	2012.0162
31BW787**8	Architectural only
31BW787**9	2012.0163
31BW787**10	2012.0164
31BW787**11	2012.0165
31BW787**12	2012.0166
31BW787**13	2012.0167
31BW787**14	2012.0168
31BW787**15	Architectural only
31BW787**16	Property line ditch
Kendal	
31BW788**	2012.0147
31BW789**	2012.0148
31BW790**	2012.0149
31BW791**	2012.0150
31BW792**	2012.0151
31BW793**	2012.0152
31BW794	2012.0153
31BW795**	2012.0154
31BW796**	2012.0155
31BW797 & 797**	2012.0156

We identified 10 areas that we thought warranted investigation. Seven of these areas were suspected to be locations of historic settlements, based on map evidence. Two, identified as Areas 8 and 9 on Figure 77, were thought to be potential prehistoric sites given their relatively high ground locations in close proximity to the swamp edge. During the investigation we discovered it was not possible to reach Area 9 as there was no causeway access. Area 8 was not examined because of a lack of time during the survey. In addition, we discovered that we had mislocated Area 2; it should actually have been located on the finger of land extending into the rice fields to the east of its location on Figure 77.

The physical survey incorporated

judgmental shovel testing, transect shovel testing, and pedestrian survey. The survey methodology was selected on the basis of what would be most likely to provide immediate information on the presence or absence of archaeological sites. Where there was good surface visibility, a pedestrian survey was conducted. Where sites were found, we often used judgmental shovel testing to provide additional information. In areas of dense vegetation, shovel test transects were used, typically with shovel tests at 50 to 100 foot intervals and soil screened through ¼-inch mesh.

Archaeological site forms were submitted to the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology and received state site numbers. Those associated with Orton Plantation have all been given one number, 31BW787**, followed by component numbers. The Orton Cemetery, however, had been previously assigned a site number which has been retained. The sites found on Kendal Plantation, in contrast, have all been given individual site numbers. The collections have been assigned accession numbers and artifacts recovered from the sites have been prepared for curation with the Office of State Archaeology (Table 9).

It is typically impossible to provide an assessment of a site's National Register eligibility based on a reconnaissance study. Such studies do not provide the data necessary on either the data sets present at the site or, more importantly, the site's ability to address significant research questions. Thus, for most of the sites identified during this work we recommend preservation through avoidance.

Even if the identified sites could be more fully evaluated, avoidance is an appropriate preservation strategy at Orton since there is an ongoing effort to expand the boundaries of the existing National Register site.

Previous Archaeology

Archaeology specific to the area include some relatively dated studies, such as the 1984 examination of Reaves Point, south of Orton, on the Sunny Point tract (Hargrove 1984) and the examination of primarily underwater

archaeological resources in several Cape Fear River study areas (Overton and Lawrence 1994). Stanley South's excavations at Brunswick, previously available only as a series of short technical reports, has recently been published for a wider audience (South 2010). There remain, however, some reports such as the investigation of a brick kiln on Town Creek, about 5 miles north of Orton and 6.5 miles north of Brunswick, that are available only as manuscript reports (South 1963).

There are any number of sources where a reader may obtain an overview of North Carolina, such as Mathis and Crow (1983) or Ward and Davis (1999), although neither of these provide any synthesis of North Carolina's historic archaeology.

Recently Ewen (2011) and Samford (2011) tackled this concern with brief symposia papers that incorporated the historic resources. Ewen observed that, "at least on the Coastal Plain, [there] has been a happy symbiosis between the State, the Private Sector, and Academia, with the Office of State Archaeology safeguarding important historic sites and the university students performing much needed interpretative investigation upon them" (Ewen 2011:7-2). In spite of this happy assessment, he cites research on only three plantation sites in North Carolina, providing citations for 26 studies. Of these, 17 are manuscripts on file, four are thesis with limited availability, one is a compliance or contract report (which is actually another manuscript on file), and four consist only of field notes on file. With none of the research cited readily available to other researchers or the public, it is difficult to see much of a "happy symbiosis."

Samford perhaps provides a different view, exploring the archaeology associated with the study of African Americans in North Carolina. She begins by observing that along the 30 coastal counties and confining her examination to the past 25 or so years, she identified 41 sites in 15 counties with definite or probable African American components. While she does not compare these results to either Virginia or South

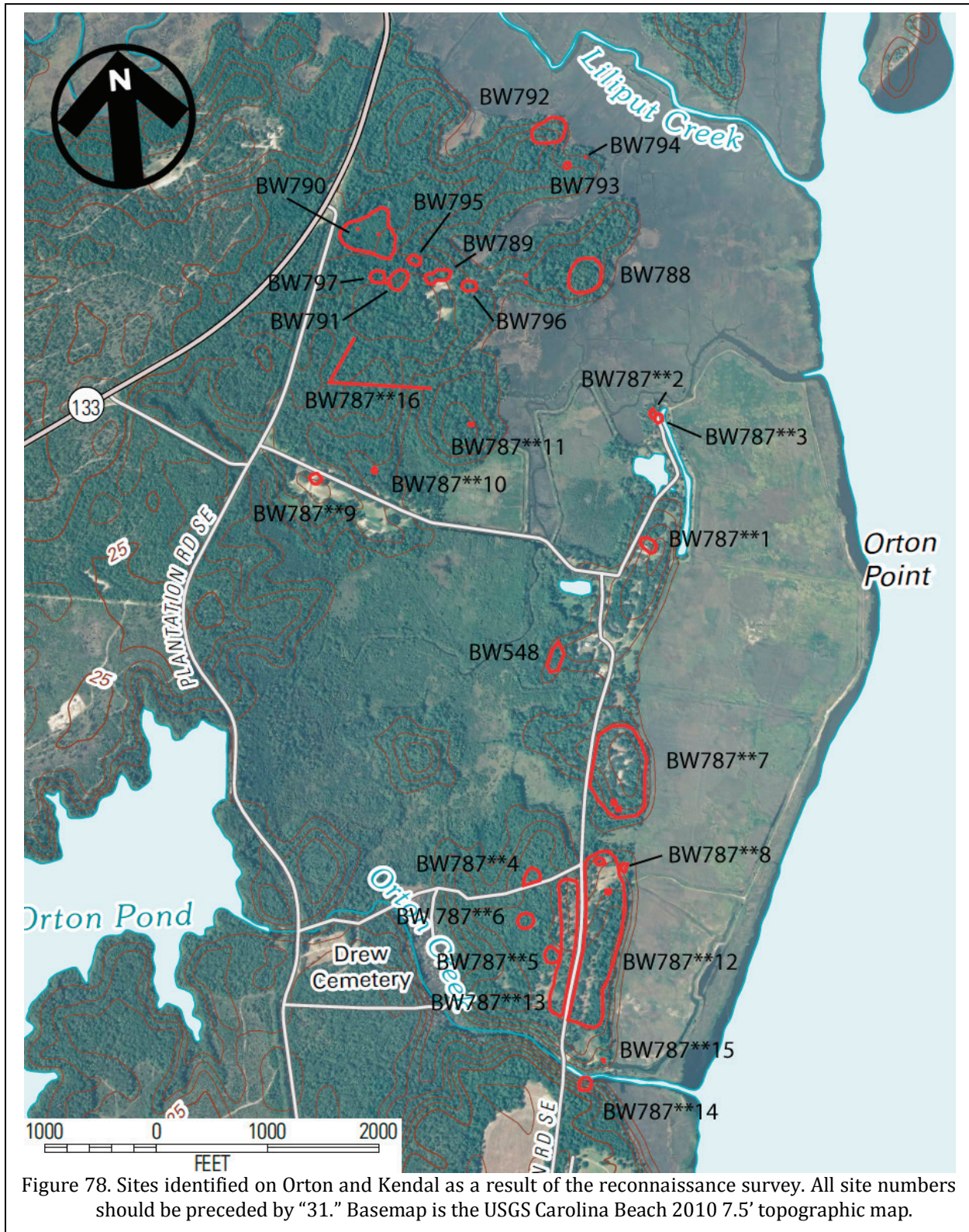
Carolina, they seem rather austere, especially since some of the sites are cemeteries.

She briefly recounts work at Somerset Plantation (31WH14) in Washington County; Clermont (31CV350) in Craven County; in Columbus County a variety of sites representing components of a plantation (31CB88-93, 98, 110); at an early planter's dwelling (31ON1582) in Onslow County; and at an early eighteenth century slave structure in Bertie County (31BR52).

Many of the observations coming from these settlements are familiar to archaeologists conducting research in South Carolina. For example, Samford remarks that slave quarters reveal fewer artifacts, fewer architectural remains, but more tobacco pipes than the main house. She also notes that ceramics from slave dwellings and the main house are similar, except that the range of vessel form at the planter's residence was far more varied than from slave dwellings (Samford 2011:11-5).

She observes that North Carolina plantation work exhibits a dearth of foodway research and that additional research is needed to understand the role of Colono wares along the North Carolina coast at both urban and plantation sites. She also makes a convincing argument that low artifact density tenant and sharecropper sites also receive archaeological attention since the individuals living at these sites are also those poorly represented in the documentary record (Samford 2011:11-8).

Another study of interest – and particular relevance to Orton and Kendal – is that by Adams at the Samuel Neale Plantation (31CB110) on the Cape Fear River in Columbus County (Adams 2002). Adams uses historical documents to provide a brief synthesis of the lives of African American slaves that labored in the coastal longleaf pine forests collecting and processing turpentine and then turns her attention to a probable structure used by these enslaved Africans on the Neale Plantation during the colonial period. Put into the woods in small



groups, African Americans on navel store plantations apparently left very ephemeral archaeological signatures.

Similarly small settlements were noted at the Onslow County Spicer plantation (31ON1582). Several transient structures and a number of storage pits were encountered, apparently dating from the eighteenth century (Tibbetts et al. 2008).

The nature of these sites is not, however, unique to North Carolina. A very similar site was found in South Carolina at 38BU1214 where structural remains consisted of only a packed floor and remnant mortar covered log chimney (Trinkley 1991:104-109). There the interpretation was a shelter occupied by a single slave tending fields or watching over animals. Such settlements were noted then to be easily overlooked in the archaeological record – a problem that is still all too possible today.

Orton Archaeological Sites

31BW548** (Orton Graveyard)

Location: Zone 18; 3772281N 227712E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 10 feet AMSL

Component: nineteenth to mid-twentieth century African American burial ground

Size: approximately 200 by 200 feet

Previous disturbance: none observed

Landform location: ridge slope overlooking swamp to the west

Vegetation: mixed hardwood and scrub

Site Description

The cemetery was first identified in 1980 by individuals conducting a survey of Brunswick’s “abandoned” cemeteries (of course, at that time the cemetery had been used for a burial only three years earlier). It was described as a tenant burial ground. The coding of the cemetery into the OSA database added that the research potential was “unknown, but probably low” and “removal” was an option – evaluations that we have refined by this investigation.

The Orton African American burial ground is situated on the west edge of a ridge slope overlooking a swamp impoundment. Topography is undulating, characteristic of unmarked graves, and has a distinct slope toward the swamp. The vegetation is primarily small hardwood and, when the site was first examined, a fairly dense understory of scrub vegetation.

Burials are primarily found in four rows oriented north-northeast to south-southwest, following the edge of the swamp. Many graves are distinct and are oriented west-northwest by east-southeast, although there is considerable variation. Many of the graves are defined by sunken depressions; others appear to have been infilled at some point.

We have identified 37 graves with markers, although only 32 are legible (the five that cannot be read include three eroded concrete markers and two funeral home plaques with no surviving information). This information is provided in Table 10. The earliest documented burial is that of Schuyler Hooper, who died in 1876. The most recent burial that is marked is that of Maggie Delts Moore, who was buried in 1977. At least 12 of the individuals were, however, born as slaves, including Mary Ann Brown (b. 1818), Amy Davis (b. 1842), and Eli Davis (b. 1852).

Also shown in Table 11 are an additional eight burials at Orton from a non-exhaustive examination of North Carolina death certificates.

Nineteen surnames are present, although 11 of these occur only once. The most common surnames are McClammy (seven occurrences) and Delt or Delts (five occurrences).

The cemetery seems distinct from those in South Carolina in several respects. Perhaps the most notable is the organization of the burials in relatively well laid out rows. While kinship associations can be distinguished, they are far less defined than in typical South Carolina low country graveyards. Another unusual feature is the abundance of markers – many of them commercial marble. Missing from the graveyard are graves marked exclusively by living memorials or by



Figure 79. 31BW548**. The upper photo shows the cemetery looking toward the southwest. The lower photo shows one of the stones being read with the assistance of oblique lighting.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE

Table 10.
Identified Gravestones at 31BW548**

Stone #	Name	Birth	Death
DC	Brewington, Harry	December 31, 1936	January 5, 1937
22	Brown, Alexander	-	-
DC	Brown, Eliza	January 26, 1863	May 13, 1957
21	Brown, Mary Ann Davis	January 1818	September 16, 1918
12	Brown, William A.	February 29, 1872	September 16, 1950
3	Davis, Amy	April 1842	January 26, 1892
4	Davis, Eli	September 10, 1854	April 30, 1881
10	Delt, Carrie	December 23, 1904	July 27, 1917
DC	Delt, Henry	ca. 1849	April 19, 1919
9	Delt, Sarah	ca. 1863	March 6, 1918
DC	Delts, Kaine	June 29, 1933	February 28, 1934
DC	Delts, Matthew	ca. 1894	April 5, 1936
30	Dixon, Kate	November 1, 1857	February 4, 1936
33	Ellis, Herman Franklin	October 27, 1915	December 29, 1969
23	G[], B[]	ca. 1810	September 20, 1883
34	Hollins, Annie	October 15, 1865	October 30, 1918
5	Hooper, Schuyler	ca. 1840	November 24, 1876
2	Hopper, Sarah	ca. 1848	April 10, 1923
18	Howard, Eliza	January 23, 1863	May 13, 1957
29	Larence, Mary	August 11, 1882	May 11, 1917
DC	Lawrence, Marion	ca. 1897	July 16, 1917
DC	Lawrence, Mary	ca. 1879	May 11, 1917
27	McClammy, James Franklin	October 19, 1918	January 30, 1919
13	McClammy, Lucy A.	May 22, 1870	May 6, 1945
20	McClammy, Minnie L.	December 15, 1903	January 30, 1910
14	McClammy, R.K., Jr.	September 11, 1902	September 25, 1940
16	McClammy, Richard C.	May 19, 1865	January 24, 1937
DC	McClammy, Thomas Franklin	ca. November 1918	January 30, 1919
17	McClammy, William A.	May 4, 1891	November 11, 1934
24	McCoy, Betsy Ann	November 20, 1867	October 8, 1883
25	McCoy, Jacob	March 11, 1882	July 13, 1912
8	Mickins, Mary	ca. 1876	March 16, 1899
11	Moore, Maggie Delts	1897	1977
32	Pearson, Hannah	1875	1958
31	Pearson, John E.	June 15, 1864	December 18, 1936
37	Pickett, Elijah	July 11, 1886	August 12, 1889
7	Pickett, Friday	March 22, 1859	July 30, 1819
6	Pickett, Teana	May 23, 1872	January 20, 1908
15	Smith, Mary Ellen McClammy	July 10, 1908	July 26, 1937
35	Walker, Maggie	-	September 16, 1956
1	-	-	-
19	-	-	-
26	-	-	-
28	-	-	-
36	-	-	-

Stones with "DC" listed under the Stone # column were identified from death certificates as being buried at Orton; no stone is present. Numbered stones with no information are either illegible or funeral home markers without legible information.

alternative markers, such as pipes. Grave goods were found associated with only one grave.

Investigation Methods

The initial investigation involved numbering the marked graves and obtaining a full transcription, as well as photographic documentation of the markers.

Belvedere Property Management assisted the investigation by removing the underbrush at the cemetery, leaving trees 5 inches dbh or larger. This allowed a second phase of investigation involving ground penetrating radar conducted by GEL Geophysics. This work used a RAMAC ground penetrating radar (GPR) system configured with a 250 MHz and 500 MHz antenna arrays and a 400 MHz Computer Assisted Radar Tomography (CART) system. CART was used in accessible areas and was supplemented with GPR in areas where the CART could not be used.

GPR is an electromagnetic method that detects interfaces between subsurface materials with differing dielectric constants. The GPR system consists of an antenna, which houses a transmitter and receiver; a profiling recorder, which processes the received signal and produces a graphic display of the data; and a video display unit, which processes and transmits the GPR signal to a color video display and recording device.

The transmitter radiates repetitive short-duration EM signals into the earth from an antenna moving across the ground surface. Electromagnetic waves are reflected back to the receiver by interfaces between materials with differing dielectric constants. The intensity of the reflected signal is a function of the contrast in the dielectric constant at the interface, the conductivity of the material that the wave is traveling through, and the frequency of the signal. Subsurface features that may cause reflections include natural geologic conditions such as changes in sediment composition, bedding and cementation horizons, voids, and water content; or man introduced materials or changes to the subsurface such as soil backfill, buried debris,

tanks, pipelines, and utilities. The profiling recorder receives the signal from the antenna and produces a continuous cross section of the subsurface interface reflections, referred to as “reflectors” or “reflection events.”

Computer Assisted Radar Tomography or CART is a vehicle for a multi-channel ground penetrating radar system. A multi-channel system means that several GPR transmitters and receivers operate in harmony over the same ground surface area with the goal of providing images of underground objects not achievable with conventional single channel systems. The CART systems contain 16 antennas that are housed in a box mounted on a trailer approximately 5 to 8 feet wide (depending on antenna frequency) and is towed in open, relatively level areas.

The premise of multi-channel systems is that GPR energy can be beamed at an object underground from several different angles with several different antennas. Subsequent processing of the data with specialized software creates a reconstructed 3-dimensional image of objects which reflect radar energy.

Mapping support is provided during the collection of the CART subsurface information. During CART mapping, the unit positions and limited surface features are tracked and located utilizing Trimble robotic total stations with geodimeter onboard data collection.

The maximum GPR and CART system penetration at the site varied from 3-6 feet below land surface. Any subsurface objects below the depth of penetration were not detectable during this investigation. The extensive root networks in the forested areas along with the presumed deterioration and condition of the burials all contributed to less than ideal conditions for identification using geophysical technologies. Given the site conditions and the age of the burials, it is possible that additional burials exist at the site that were not detected with the geophysical methods deployed.

The work found seven burials without

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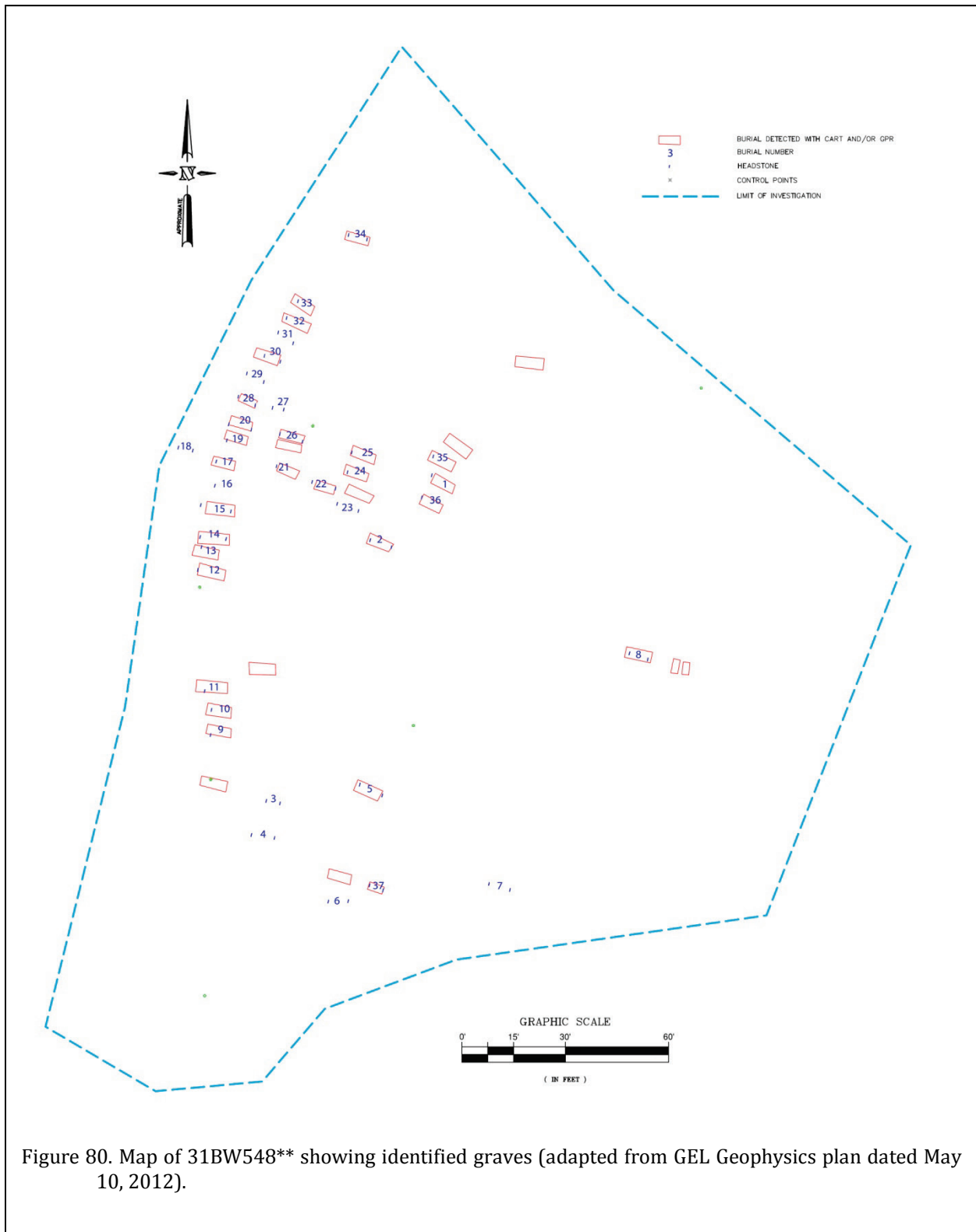


Figure 80. Map of 31BW548** showing identified graves (adapted from GEL Geophysics plan dated May 10, 2012).

markers, but also failed to identify any anomalies associated with seven markers. Combining all of the data, 46 posited graves were identified at the graveyard.

For a plantation that through much of its history had 200 or more enslaved African Americans, and for an area where health would have been poor and deaths common, this is a very small number of burials. There are at least two possible explanations. Either there is another unidentified burial ground on the plantation or there are more burials at this location that GPR is simply unable to identify.

While it is possible that another burial ground exists, it seems unlikely given the strong desire by African Americans to be buried with family members and the number of individuals in this cemetery that were born during slavery. Eugene Vaught does report that many Orton residents are buried at Dark Branch or Brown Cemetery, although this cemetery appears to have developed after the removal of African Americans from Sunny Point (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012; Planning and Community Development Department 2010:2-48). In addition, Mr. Vaught also reported his parents are buried at nearby Lilliput Cemetery (31BW550**), as are some with the same surname as individuals in the Orton graveyard, such as Robert Hooper. This cemetery, however, was started only after residents were removed from Sunny Point and does not have antebellum roots.

In addition, a quick examination of death certificates suggests the presence of additional burials in this cemetery. *The failure of GPR to identify burials should not be taken as evidence that little or nothing remains of the burials.* While the soils are acidic and this may well affect bone preservation, it is also possible that the use of shrouded burials or coffins with few nails might fail to provide a clear GPR signature.

Only one funeral home was identified on legible funeral home plaques

– John H. Shaw’s Sons. More information is available from the death certificates. Three list either no undertaker or “Friends,” and a fourth lists “Duncan McCay, Acting.” McCay was a farm laborer in 1940, so we presume that he was “acting” as a friend or family member. Another such individual listed on one death certificate is Joseph Galloway.

In the first quarter of the twentieth century the most common undertaker was John E. Pearson. Pearson, who is buried at Orton himself, was listed in various censuses as a laborer at a cotton press and at a fish factory, suggesting that his undertaking was a part time profession. As early as 1918, J.H. Shaw was burying many residents of Orton and listed himself in the 1920 census as an undertaker (the firm is reported to have been established in 1895). The business was later identified as John H. Shaw’s Sons and burials at Orton continued into the late 1930s. Although this company is still operating, the last Shaw, William L. Shaw, Jr. died a few years ago and the manager, William Boykin, reports that he has no records past the 1970s and he never conducted a burial at Orton (William Boykin, person communication 2012).

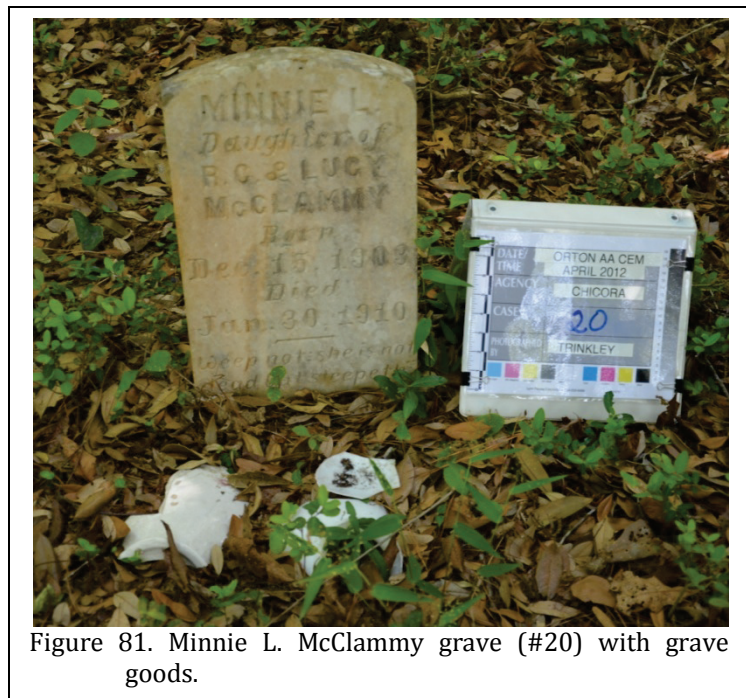


Figure 81. Minnie L. McClammy grave (#20) with grave goods.

By the 1950s there was one burial by the Jordan Funeral Home, which apparently began in 1944 and merged with another African American funeral home in 2008 (“Davis, Jordan Merge Funeral Businesses, *Star News*, June 18, 2008). No records are available for the Jordan business (Karen Yates, personal communication 2012). By the late 1960s there was a burial by the Green Funeral Home, which is no longer in business.

During this work, six stones were identified that required resetting (4, 23, 24, 25, 32, and 37) in order to read the inscription and also to ensure that the stone was not damaged. In each case the stone was excavated, removed, the excavation infilled with pea gravel, and the stone reset plumb.

Artifacts

No shovel tests were conducted in the graveyard, but one grave (#20) was identified with burial goods still present. These included whiteware and white porcelain pitcher fragments. During the examination of the cemetery, as well as during stone resetting, several additional graves were found with flower pot fragments, but these are generally not characterized as grave goods. All materials were left in the cemetery.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

While we have previously explained that reconnaissance studies typically do not allow archaeological sites to be evaluated for National Register eligibility, in this case sufficient work has been accomplished to permit an assessment. As a result, the Orton Graveyard is recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria C (physical features) and D (information potential). The cemetery has many of the features and characteristics that are typical of African American burial places. It is an excellent representation of the stylistic type.

The site retains excellent integrity, easily conveying the qualities that make the site significant. The isolated, rural site easily conveys the feelings of the overall setting consistent with its use during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This feeling is assisted

by the presence of the adjacent swamp and forest setting, and shielding from nearby modern structures. The proximity of the swamp provides a clear reminder of the economic origins of the plantation and the low, wet areas to which African American cemeteries were relegated by white landowners.

There is virtually no visible damage or modification to the cemetery nor is there evidence that any significant features have been lost. Grave goods, while present, are not abundant. This, however, may be a reflection of the location, somewhat removed from the Gullah core area to the south. Gravestones are intact and exhibit remarkably little damage. There are also numerous depressions, clearly marking the location of burials. These characteristics are consistent of the cemetery’s period of historic use and help convey a feeling that is consistent with African American burial locations.

The cemetery is likewise eligible under Criterion D, information potential. There is a very strong potential for the recovery of bioanthropological data (e.g., skeletal remains) that would address a broad range of questions concerning the health, diet, and disease of rural low country African Americans during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Assisting such studies, many of the graves are marked and the identification of others may be determinable. The cemetery reflects a transitional period between plantation and modern medicine. There are suggestions, however, that African American health may actually have declined during the postbellum. Studies at sites such as the Orton graveyard would begin to allow these significant questions to be more fully examined. It may be possible to investigate injuries and bone deterioration that would be characteristic of rice cultivation.

In addition, the site would provide the opportunity to examine African American mortuary patterns typical of a rural, low income population along the southern North Carolina coast. Research questions might involve the exploration of traditions documented through oral history, such as the use of coins on the eyes or the

inclusion of salt in the coffin. Other research might involve the examination of soil samples to determine the frequency of embalming, which would be expected to leave tale-tell traces of heavy metals, such as arsenic.

There would also be an opportunity to explore the use of coffins and coffin hardware, looking at the incidence of trimmed versus untrimmed coffins, or the prevalence of shrouds as opposed to dressed bodies.

It may be possible to explore differences in mortuary behavior between individuals buried by friends and family and those whose burials were handled by commercial undertakers and funeral homes.

Finally, the cemetery offers an exceptional opportunity to explore maternal DNA to determine geographic origins of the African American population that called Orton home. Previous research with archaeological collections reveals that DNA can survive and yield reliable data on matrilineal descent.

Overall, the cemetery exhibits excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The cemetery meets Criteria Consideration C for cemeteries since its significance involves design characteristics and forensic data.

Of course these discussions should not be taken to imply that excavation is either recommended or necessary. In fact, preservation of the graveyard should be of the highest priority. However, National Register eligibility under Criterion D does not depend on impending removal – any more than does the eligibility of any archaeological site. Rather, these discussions demonstrate the value of the cemetery and its importance.

31BW7871**

Location: Zone 18; 3772568N 227983E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 18 feet AMSL

Component: eighteenth and nineteenth century

domestic site immediately north of the main Orton house

Size: approximately 200 by 150 feet

Previous disturbance: some grading for gardens ca. 1940-1960; additional grading during 2011-12 work

Landform location: terrace edge overlooking rice fields to the east

Vegetation: hardwoods and garden

Site Description

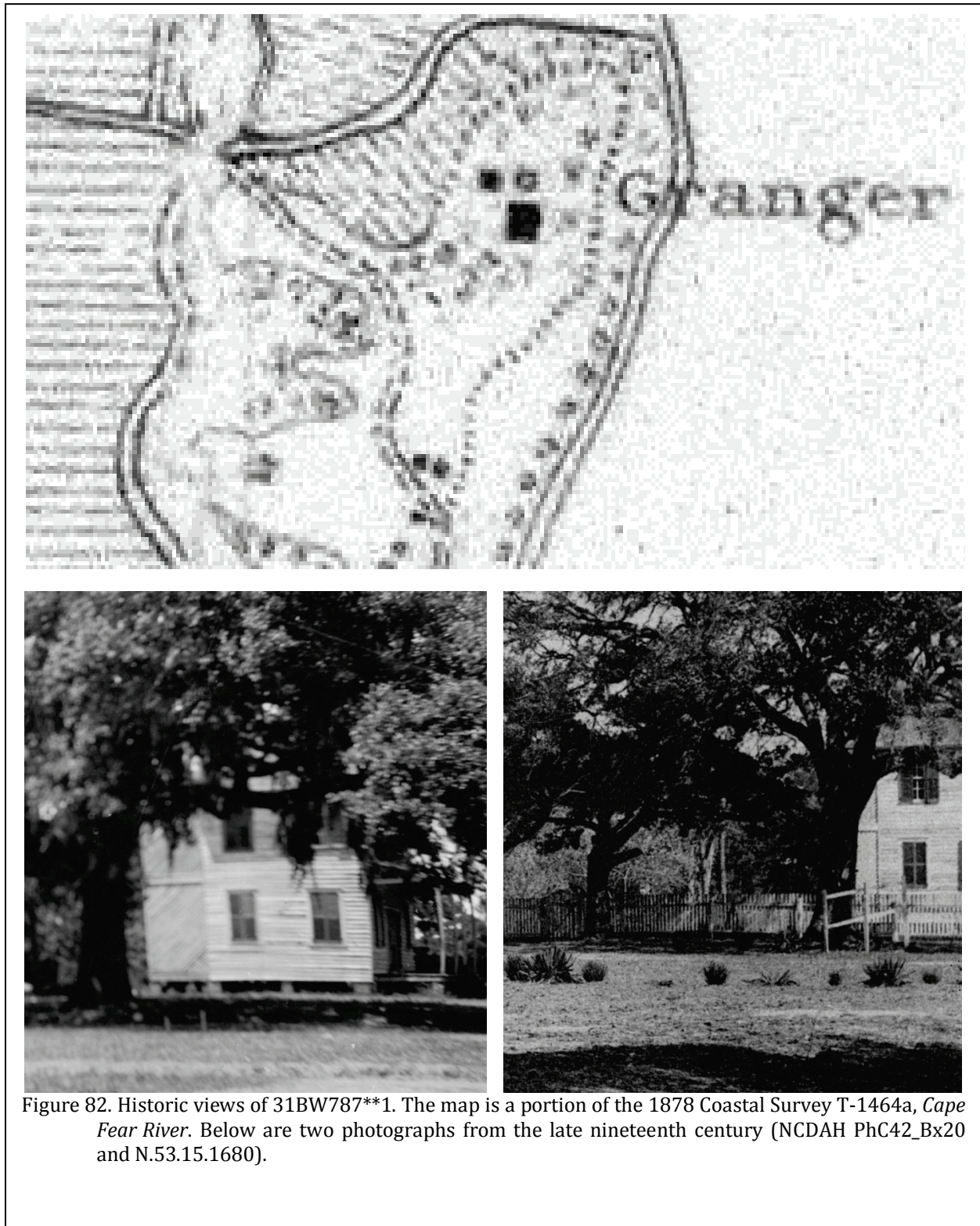
This site consists of a scatter of historic artifacts to the north of the main Orton house that have been exposed by recent landscaping and earth movement. The topography in the lawn and garden areas is level, but it slopes westward to a swamp area than runs behind the main house and this site.

At least as early 1878 two structures are shown north of the main house. Portions of these structures are illustrated in several of the photographs of the main house, probably taken in the last decade of the nineteenth century. While earlier maps fail to show structures in this area, it would not be unexpected to have a kitchen, possibly servants' quarters and even possibly an overseer's house. A brick well (3772588N 227986E) is recorded as part of this site, although it is located in the yard of the main house. This well is not seen in any of the period photographs.

Investigation Methods

This site was examined using a pedestrian survey and surface collecting. Areas to both the north and south were inaccessible. To the north are garden areas with much vegetation, mulch, and underground sprinklers. To the south is the main house yard, which has recently had fresh sod laid. As a result there was no surface visibility and it was not possible to supplement the survey using shovel testing.

It seems likely that this site extends southward, blurring with remains associated with the main house. In fact, there is likely no significant separation between the two areas.



Unfortunately, by the time of this study the main house has had extensive modifications, including landscaping.

Artifacts

The collection includes nine dateable ceramics with a mean ceramic date of 1782 (Table 11). The collection, however, spans the early colonial through postbellum, reflecting the entire range of occupation at Orton. Although the

Table 11.
Mean Ceramic Date for 31BW787**1

Ceramic	Date Range	Mean Date (xi)	(fi)	fi x xi
White salt glazed stoneware	1740-1775	1758	3	5274
Decorated delft	1600-1802	1750	1	1750
Plain delft	1640-1800	1720	1	1720
Creamware, undecorated	1762-1820	1791	2	3582
Whiteware, blue trans printed	1831-1865	1848	1	1848
Whiteware, undecorated	1813-1900	1860	1	1860
Total			9	16034
Mean Ceramic Date	1781.6			

collection is too small to make any substantive statements, many of the ceramics are relatively high status and appropriate for use on the planter’s table.

Other artifacts recovered include a range of glass containers, including two fragments of black glass often associated with colonial and antebellum wine bottles. Window glass and slate fragments are present, as are several plaster or stucco fragments. Also recovered was a small fragment of worked marble. These may be from either various repairs of the main house or from the structures known to exist to the north of the main house.

A single lead shot and a small number of animal bones were recovered. These remains would be expected in a kitchen context.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

This site is within the boundaries of the 1972 National Register nomination and should be considered a contributing archaeological resource.

Even with this limited research and collecting, there is a very good possibility that archaeological excavations would produce abundant artifacts in this area, as well as a good potential for the recovery of structural remains. These features and artifacts would begin to better tell the story of Orton Plantation by providing data on the ancillary support structures, such as the kitchen and possibly overseer’s structure.

We recommend that the yard areas around the main house be carefully maintained and that prior to any additional ground disturbance, additional archaeological investigations be undertaken.

31BW7872 (Roger Moore Cemetery)**

Location: Zone 18; 3772938N 228001E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 6 feet AMSL

Component: Euro-American plantation cemetery

Size: 50 by 50 feet

Previous disturbance: site is at the edge of planned gardens and there is evidence of plantings, otherwise no documented disturbance

Landform location: terrace/high ground edge overlooking Orton Creek to the north and rice fields to the east

Vegetation: live oak and azalea gardens today

Site Description

The site consists of one gabled brick vault and three domed vaults with end pediments. Also present are three brick box tombs with marble ledgers, one marble box with a marble ledger, and one head and footstone. These tombs and monuments form three lines oriented north-northwest by south-southeast, with each individual tomb or grave oriented west-northwest by east-northeast.

The largest, gabled vault by tradition is ascribed to Roger Moore, with the smaller surrounding vaults assigned to wives and other family members.



Figure 83. Site 31BW787**2, Roger Moore Cemetery. Upper view is to the southwest, lower view is to the northeast.

Table 12.
Inscriptions at 31BW787**2

1. HERE RESTS KING ROGER MOORE. / GRANTED 8,000 ACRES BY THE LORDS / PROPRIETORS IN 1720. HE BUILT OLDER / PART OF ORTON MANSION IN 1725. [this is a modern plaque]
5. In Memory / OF / LOUISA CATHARINE / Eldest daughter of / J.G. & M.A. BURR, / Born Feb'y. 1. 1843 / Died Sept. 6. 1852 / aged 9 yrs. 7 mo's. & 6 dys. / Of Such is the Kingdom of Heaven.
6. MRS. CATHARINE ANN BERRY. / RELICK OF / JAMES A. BERRY. / WAS BORN 3RD OF OCT. 1803. / Died 20th OF AUG. 1844. / Elevated in Sentiments / Ardent and firm in her affections, / Pure generous and disinterested by nature; / the Christian virtues / crowned her with their graves / and as she lived admired, trusted and loved, / so she died lamented / and mourned, / in the blissful hope of glorious / immortality. [footstone: L.C.B.]
7. SACRED / TO THE MEMORY OF / JAMES A. BERRY, / WHO DIED / 22^d NOVEMBER 1832 / AGED 32 YRS. / BRAVE GENEROUS AND KIND, / HONORABLE AND DEVOUT / A GENTLEMAN AND CHRISTIAN.
8. IN MEMORY OF MARIE IVIE, / WIFE OF / WARREN WINSLOW, / OF FAYETTEVILLE / & DAUGHTER OF JOHN D. TOOMER. / BORN MAY 12, 1811, / DIED MAY 22, 1843. // R.I. BROWN / N.Y.
9. JOHN HILL, M.D. / DIED / MAY 9. / 1847. / AGED 51 yrs.

If the gable vault is that of Roger Moore there would have been ample room in it for his wives. It is more likely that the surrounding tombs are other family members, although since none have any sort of marble plaque (except for a very late addition to the one thought to be Roger Moore). The three smaller brick tombs have entrance areas where often a marble ledger is attached, but none are present here.

All of the brickwork exhibits multiple repair episodes, all using hard Portland cement mortar. Much of the stucco, present on all of the vaults, is today gone, although bits of the underlying scratch coat are still present.

The condition of the cemetery is vastly improved since 1917 at which time the roof was reported to have fallen in ("Pilgrimage to Old Brunswick," *The Orphans' Friend and Masonic Journal*, Oxford, NC, April 20, 1917). This is verified by a photograph showing the vault with its roof collapsed inward (see Figure 47).

Many of the period photographs show the

cemetery completely overtaken by undergrowth, such as the panoramic photo by Louis Moore in the 1920s. It is likely that the vegetation changed and the tombs were repaired in the 1940s when the gardens were expanded. Today the location is well tended and recently much of the garden vegetation has been removed.

Investigation Methods

These investigations included a detailed conservation assessment of the tombs to determine the level of intervention necessary to stabilize the tombs and prevent damage from the hard Portland cement mortar. Plans are underway to remove this mortar, replacing it with a suitable soft, high-lime mortar and consideration is also being given to the replacement of the stucco on the brick work. During this phase transcriptions were prepared and the condition of each tomb was documented photographically.

Given the scattered layout of the tombs and the presence of scattered brick in the cemetery, we questioned if there might be

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE

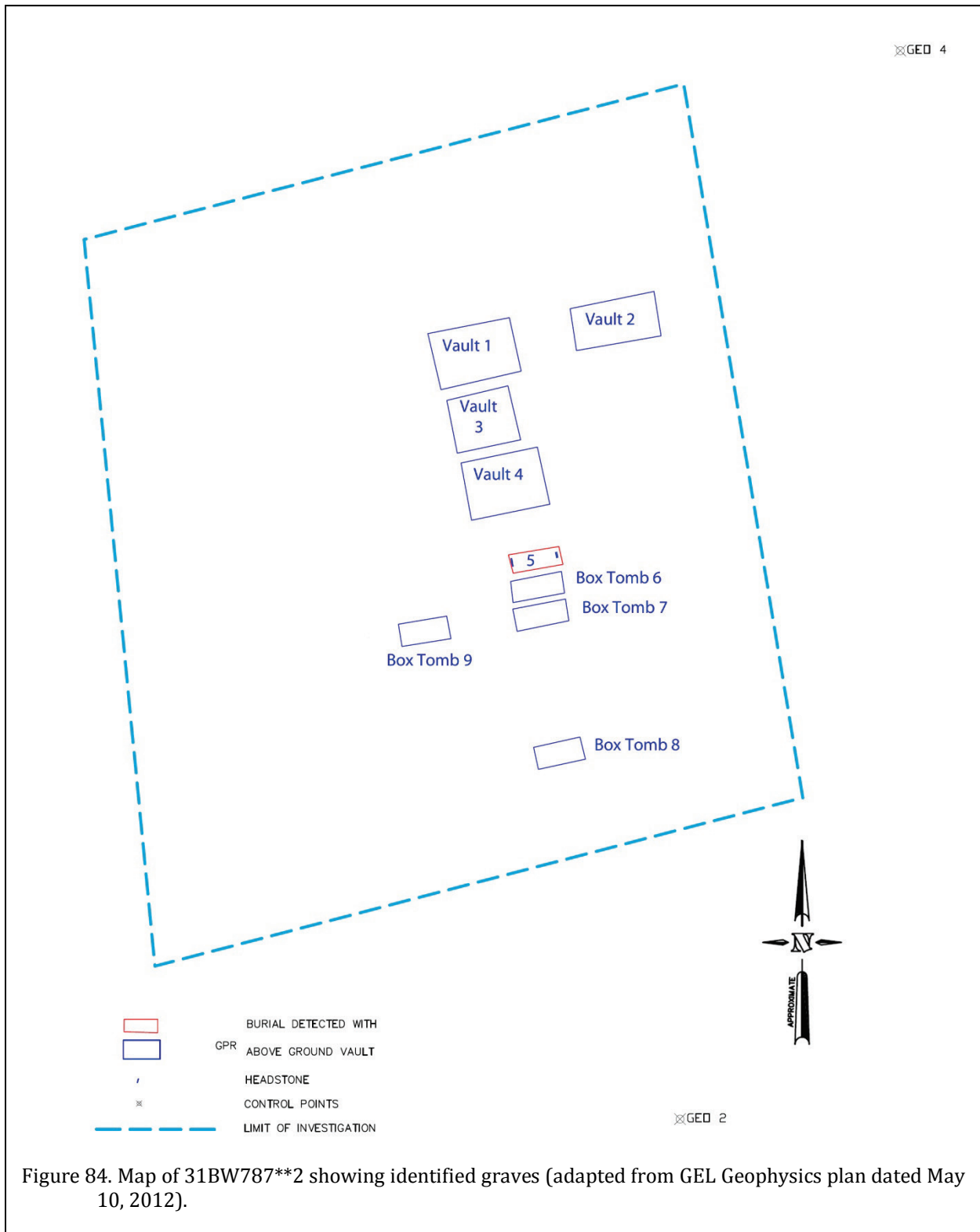


Figure 84. Map of 31BW787**2 showing identified graves (adapted from GEL Geophysics plan dated May 10, 2012).

additional tombs that had collapsed. To address this issue GEL Geophysics conducted a ground penetrating radar survey of the cemetery, examining an area measuring about 80 feet square. As described for 31BW548**, this work used a RAMAC ground penetrating radar (GPR) system configured with a 250 MHz and 500 MHz antenna arrays. As a result of the work, no additional burials or evidence of collapsed tombs were encountered.

Thus, the arrangement of the burials is culturally derived, with those associated with Hill's ownership at the southern end of the cemetery. The cluster of four brick vaults at the northern end may all belong to the Moore family.

Artifacts

No shovel testing was conducted in the cemetery, but there was excellent visibility with the sandy soil supporting only limited vegetation. No artifacts were identified, other than the previously mentioned brick rubble that is found scattered throughout the cemetery. An iron object was found on the surface, but it is likely from some other location and has been abandoned at this location.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

This site is within the boundaries of the 1972 National Register nomination and should be considered a contributing resource. The cemetery is also likely eligible on its own merits under Criteria C (physical features) and D (information potential). There are far better resources to commemorate the Moore family and therefore we do not recommend it eligible criterion B (life of a significant person).

The cemetery includes many features and characteristics that are typical of colonial and early antebellum family burial grounds and is an excellent representation of this stylistic type.

The site retains excellent integrity, easily conveying the qualities that make the site significant. The isolated, rural site easily conveys the feelings of the overall setting

consistent with its use during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This feeling is assisted by the presence of the adjacent rice fields and towering live oaks.

Little (1998:45-47) briefly discusses similar brick vaults at other coastal plain graveyards in the context of "vernacular" markers. While these brick vaults may be considered local, they extend southward through South Carolina and throughout Georgia. Thus, they have a very wide occurrence that may go beyond "local."

Little suggests that these tombs were brought to this country by the wealthy, "no doubt from Great Britain," yet she cites only the presence of similar tombs in Boston and New Orleans (Little 1998:10). Perhaps antecedents can be found in England, although Mytum (2000) provides no meaningful parallel. In spite of their spread across the colonial south, there has never been a detailed study of their origin and only one study of their construction (Trinkley and Hacker 1999). Although these concerns cannot be directly addressed at Orton, this cemetery provides another example of this architectural form.

The box tombs present at the cemetery are typical of the period. The 1843 ledger of Marie Ivie Winslow is interesting as an example of extralocal stone carving. Additional historical research may be able to determine why a New York carver was used, rather than far more local sources such as either Wilmington or Charleston.

Although the old repairs are of a low quality, they are typical of the mid-twentieth century. Work is underway to remove the worst offending repairs and this will dramatically improve the visual appearance of the cemetery,

The cemetery is likewise eligible under Criterion D, information potential. The coffins, and the coffin hardware would provide an exceptional opportunity to explore colonial and early antebellum mortuary patterns.

The human remains thought to be present may offer an opportunity to explore several successive generations and would allow mDNA

studies. The remains, if well preserved, would also offer an exceptional opportunity to examine high status individuals of the colonial period, exploring issues such as diet and disease. This information would take on special importance when compared and contrasted to studies of African American plantation populations.

31BW7873**

Location: Zone 18; 3772925N 228010E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 5 feet AMSL

Component: scatter of prehistoric and historic remains on a low rise south of the Roger Moore Cemetery (31BW787**2)

Size: 75 by 50 feet

Previous disturbance: damage from road (evidence of coal slag being used on the road) and possible garden landscape disturbance

Landform location: terrace edge overlooking rice fields to the east

Vegetation: primarily live oak and very light scrub; previously garden plantings

Site Description

The site represents a vague scatter of surface materials found on the slightly depressed road surface and on the surrounding sandy soils. Also present are two piles of coal slag, one about 10 feet in diameter adjacent to the rice fields that is a thin scatter and another about 5 feet in diameter that is situated on a low rise.

Investigation Methods

In an effort to determine if there were subsurface deposits, a series of six shovel tests 25 feet apart were excavated running north-south parallel to the road and about 10 feet west of the road. Two additional tests were excavated east and west of this line.

As Figure 85 reveals, only three of the shovel tests produced artifacts – and all of these

items were prehistoric. No subsurface historic remains were identified.

Artifacts

The recovered artifacts are itemized in

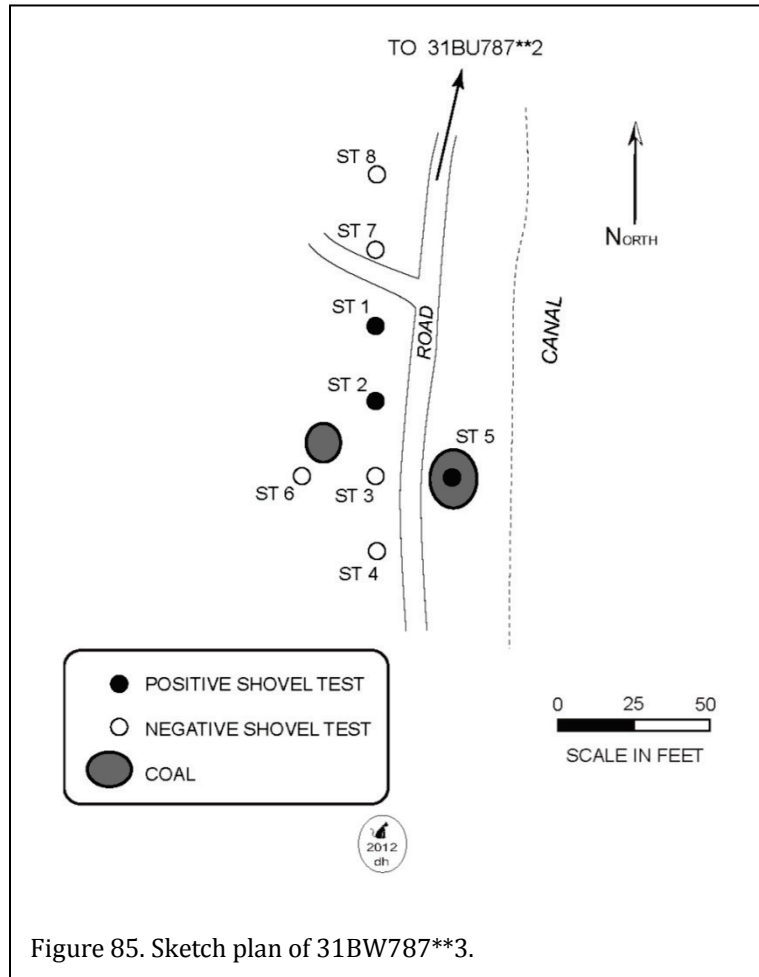


Figure 85. Sketch plan of 31BW787**3.

Table 13. The prehistoric materials are small pottery fragments with fine sand in the paste and have surface treatment of cordmarking. They are likely Cape Fear Cordmarked, a common Middle Woodland pottery. Also recovered from the shovel tests was one chert flake.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

The prehistoric remains are lightly scattered, small, and confined to an area no larger than about 70 by 30 feet. The historic remains are

Table 13.
Artifacts Recovered from 31BW787**3

	Surface	ST 1	ST 2	ST 5
PW, undecorated	1			
WW, undecorated	7			
WW, blue edged	1			
Yellowware	2			
Glass, brown	2			
Glass, milk	2			
Glass, aqua	3			
Glass, manganese	1			
Glass, clear	6			
Window glass	1			
Animal bone	2			
Prehistoric sherd		1	4	
Flake, chert				1

denser, but appear limited to the immediate roadway area. The prehistoric remains may represent a limited activity site that has been impacted by the road and possibly garden activities. The historic ceramics yield a mean ceramic date of 1853 with the remains characteristic of the late antebellum. One explanation for the remains, especially given their close association with the rice fields, is that they represent a short-term occupation, perhaps by a field tender. The remains are not associated with either pile of slag and are so tightly clustered it doesn't appear they were brought in with any road fill. Regardless, neither the prehistoric nor historic remains exhibit good integrity and neither is likely to address significant research questions. As a result, we do not recommend additional investigation in this area.

31BW787**4

Location: Zone 18; 3771679N 227628E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 18 feet AMSL

Component: late nineteenth through mid-twentieth century settlement

Size: 150 by 120 feet

Previous disturbance: Recent silvacultural activities have caused some disturbance to the site, although structural remains are still clustered

Landform location: North facing ridge overlooking low swamp area

Vegetation: Currently clear cut; previously pine and associated scrub

Site Description

This site consists of a brick mound measuring about 10 feet in diameter and 2 feet in height that probably represents a chimney fall. Other footings are not visible on the surface. There is a light scatter of artifacts scattered on the surface, measuring about 150 feet along the adjacent road, south of the brick pile and about 120 feet north.

The site has been impacted by mechanical cutting and clearing of timber and afterwards it appears that the area has been lightly disked.

This structure is not found on coastal charts from the first quarter of the twentieth century, but is shown by 1942, as is the road it is

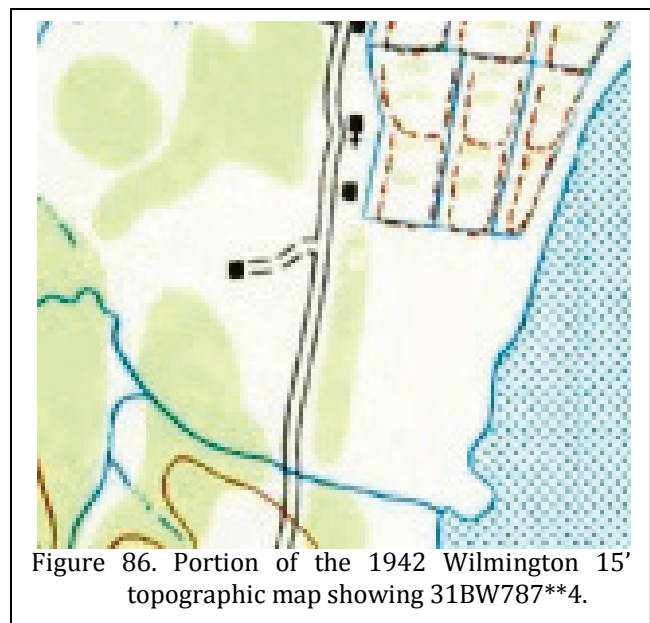


Figure 86. Portion of the 1942 Wilmington 15' topographic map showing 31BW787**4.

located on (Figure 86).

Investigation Methods

Because of the excellent surface visibility we initially made a surface collection that revealed the approximate extent of the remains. Subsequently a line of shovel tests were excavated extending from the road just east of the brick pile northward. Seven shovel tests were excavated at

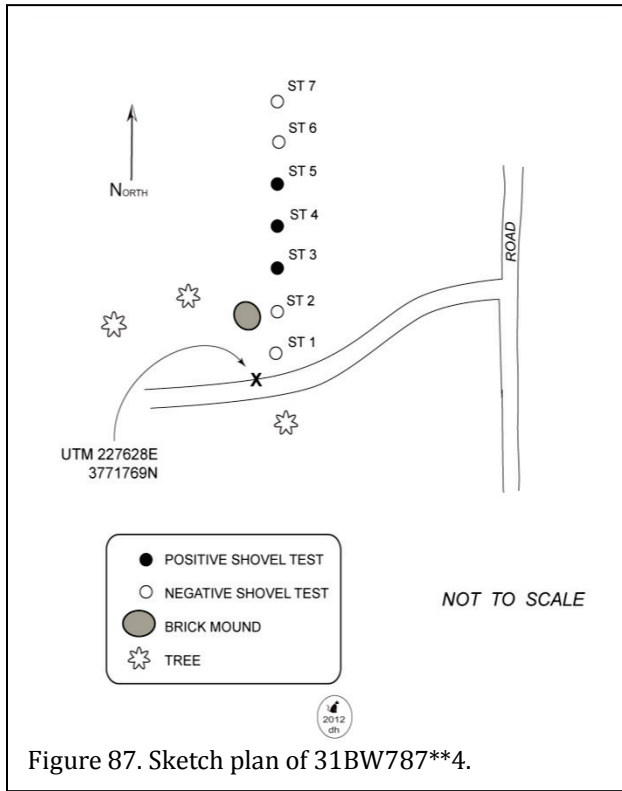


Figure 87. Sketch plan of 31BW787**4.

25 foot intervals. Three of these (STs 3-5) were positive (Figure 87).

Artifacts

The recovered artifacts are characteristic of a late nineteenth through early to mid-twentieth century farm settlement. Whiteware and container glass dominate the collection. A single fragment of window glass suggests that glazed windows were present. A 4-hole porcelain button was recovered and suggests that artifacts other than kitchen items are likely to be present at the site.

The shovel tests produced artifacts consistent with the surface collection, The presence of a machine cut nail indicates that the structure was older than the 1942 map on which it is shown.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

This site should not be dismissed without additional investigation. The presence of pearlware and black glass possibly indicates an earlier date for the site than the whiteware would suggest or, alternatively, that an earlier occupation exists in this area but was not recognized by the reconnaissance survey.

Even the early twentieth century remains are worthy of additional investigation since we know so little – even after collecting oral history – about how tenants and workers lived on Orton.

The additional work here could profitably benefit from close interval shovel

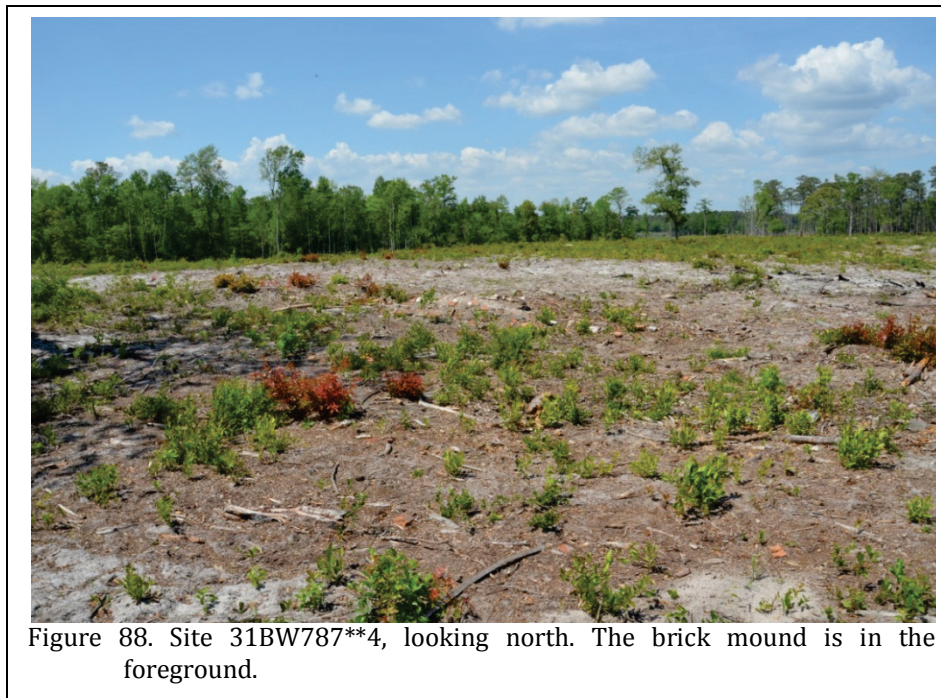


Figure 88. Site 31BW787**4, looking north. The brick mound is in the foreground.

Table 14.
Artifacts Recovered from 31BW787**4

	Surface	ST 3	ST 4	ST 5
PW, undecorated	1			
WW, undecorated	20			
WW, poly handpainted	1			
Wh Porc, undecorated	1			
Wh Porc, decal	1			
Coarse red earthenware	1			
SGSW, beige	6			
Glass, light green	1			
Glass, aqua	7			
Glass, brown	2		1	
Glass, milk	4			
Glass, manganese	6		1	
Glass, clear		1		
Glass, black			1	
Window glass	1			
Nail, machine cut 10d				1
Button, 4-hole porcelain	1			
Bolt, brass	1			
UID iron			1	

testing, followed by the excavation of several 5-foot units and the removal of brick rubble from the chimney footing. This work should definitely be conducted prior to any additional silvacultural work in this area.

31BW787**5

Location: Zone 18; 3771491N 277707E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 20 feet AMSL

Component: Late nineteenth century domestic site

Size: 100 by 100 feet

Previous disturbance: Recent silvacultural activities have caused some disturbance to the site, although structural remains are still clustered

Landform location: flat uplands

Vegetation: Currently clear cut; previously pine and associated scrub

Site Description

This site consists of distinct fire place remains and brick rubble associated with a late nineteenth century structure. This structure was likely demolished as a result of the Sunny Point easement. The remains are tightly clustered and while there has been recent silvacultural activity, it does not appear to have significantly affected

this site.

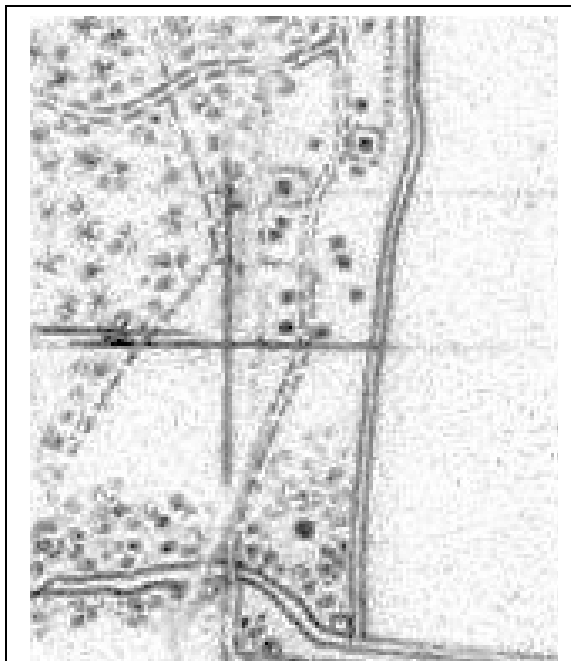


Figure 89. Vicinity of 31BW787**5. The upper map is the 1878 T-1464a chart. Below is the 1897 Chart 149. Both show abundant structures in the site area.

This area is shown on maps from at least the late 1870s as a densely occupied area with numerous structures and small cultivated fields. We have documented that several structures were sold and moved off Orton. The remainder were likely demolished. This is almost certainly one of the structures shown in Figure 89.

Investigation Methods

This site was examined only by a pedestrian survey.

Artifacts

Only three whiteware ceramics were recovered from the site area.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

While this site was initially dismissed, as additional work was conducted and we were able to identify it as likely being one of the structures identified on maps from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it is possible that additional research is appropriate. Our investigations of Orton have been unable to clearly define the lifeways of the African Americans living on the plantation. They may have engaged in some sort of tenancy, working on the rice fields in exchange for land and housing. Additional investigations of the Orton tenancy pattern is worthwhile since so little is known about the lives of the plantation's African Americans during the late nineteenth century.

Consequently, we recommend that this site – and similar sites – be either preserved without additional damage or be subjected to archaeological studies to document the structural remains and obtain better information on the artifacts left behind.

31BW7876**

Location: Zone 18; 3771582N 227637E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 20 feet AMSL

Component: Late nineteenth century domestic site

Size: approximately 100 by 100 feet

Previous disturbance: Recent silvacultural activities have caused disturbance to the site and structural remains are no longer well defined

Landform location: upland flats

Vegetation: Currently clear cut; previously pine and associated scrub

Site Description

This site is very similar to 31BW787**5 except that the remains are not as well preserved and only brick rubble was identified. Artifacts were more common.

This is the same area shown on the map in Figure 89. The absence of well defined remains may suggest that this structure was removed earlier than 31BW787**5. Nevertheless, there has been recent silvacultural damage.

Investigation Methods

This site was examined only by a pedestrian survey.

Artifacts

Dominated by whitewares, this assemblage lacks more recent ceramics or artifacts and may predate the demolition resulting from Sunny Point's safety easement.

Present are four undecorated whitewares, four annular whitewares, one undecorated white porcelain, two brown saltglazed stonewares, two beige saltglazed stonewares, one fragment of black glass, and one clear container glass fragment.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

This site was also initially dismissed, but as more work was conducted and the remains were identified as likely associated with the cluster of structures dating from at least the last quarter of nineteenth century, the site took on greater importance. In addition, the assemblage from this site lacks decal decorated wares and the collection could easily extend into the late antebellum. The mean ceramic date for this small

assemblage is 1864.

Consequently, we recommend that this site – and similar sites – be either preserved without additional damage or be subjected to archaeological studies to document the structural remains and obtain better information on the artifacts left behind.

31BW787**7

Location: Zone 18; 3772004N 227907E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 18 to 22 feet AMSL

Component: Nineteenth and twentieth century domestic sites, including a standing structure and chimney ruins for at least two more

Size: 1,000 by 600 feet

Previous disturbance: some areas have been logged, but disturbance is minimal

Landform location: upland flats at edge of rice fields to the east

Vegetation: occasional live oaks, grass; area of pine and scrub has been logged

Site Description

The site, on the east side of the dirt road along high ground overlooking the rice fields,

extends from a rice field canal on the north to what is known as Cow Bridge Branch on the south. Topography is generally level, except at the north and south ends where the site drops into the drainage area. Archaeological deposits are found not only on the high ground, but also extending into these lower areas.

There is a standing structure at the north end of the site. The 1939 plat (as well as an earlier 1932 soils map) reveal that this was the only structure present from the 1930s on. Prior to that time, an 1877 chart reveals at least two structures in the middle of the site area.

The standing structure is sheathed with board-and-batten siding which extends up to roof level at the rear gable ends. The gable end has been resided with modern weatherboard; the opposite end is clad in similar wood shingle, without a vent opening.

The porch has a shed roof, but it is separate from the main roof, resulting in a porch with a low ceiling. The roof structure at the rear porch is separate from the main roof. Roofing is V-crimped metal.

The central chimney is nicely detailed

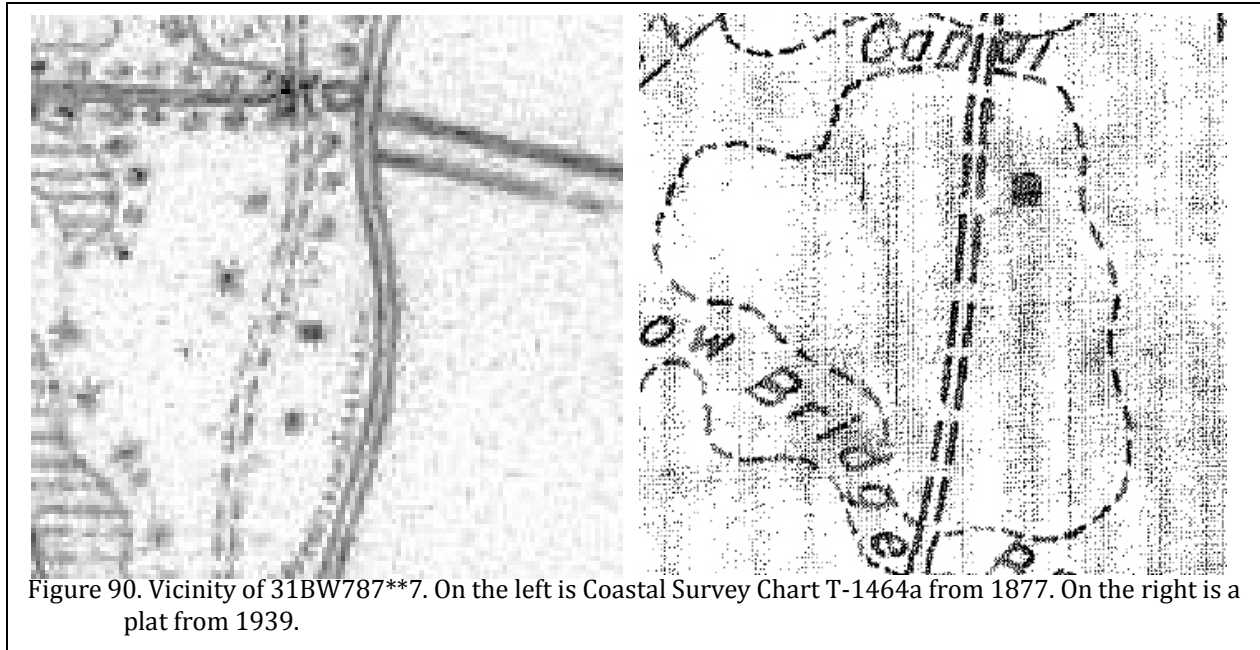


Figure 90. Vicinity of 31BW787**7. On the left is Coastal Survey Chart T-1464a from 1877. On the right is a plat from 1939.

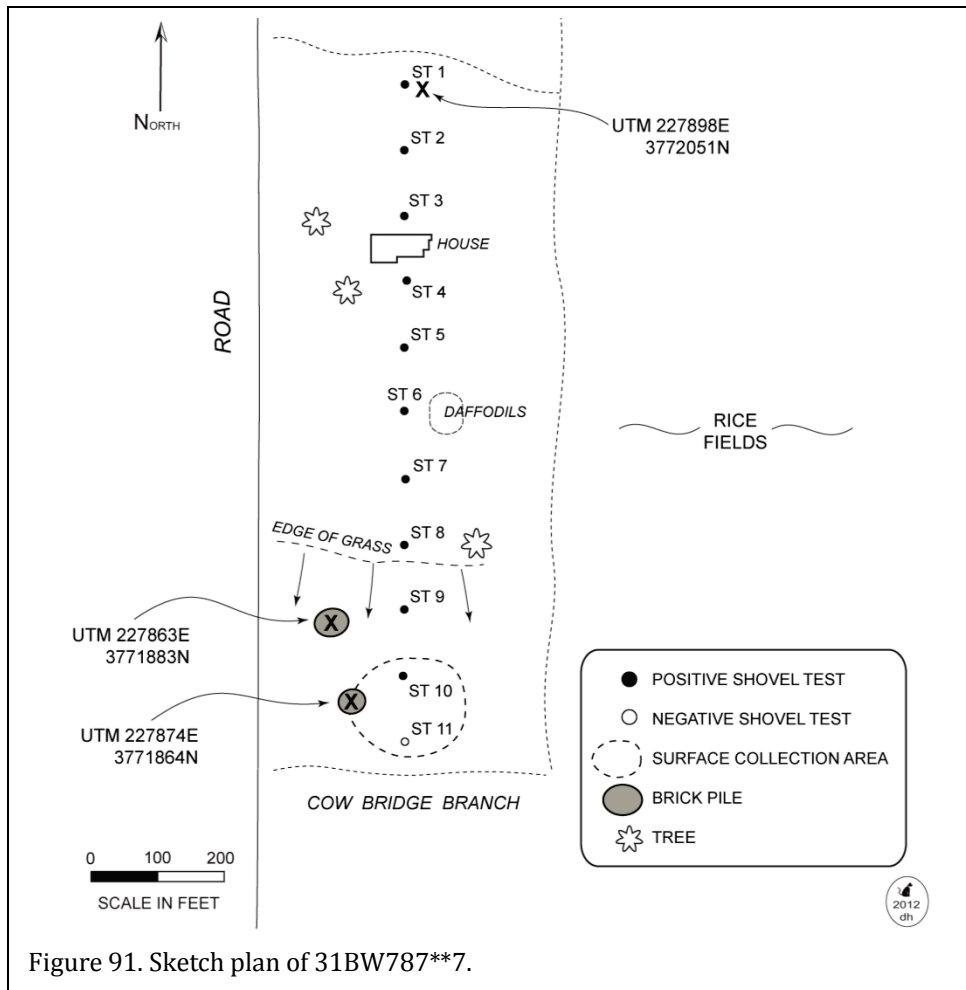


Figure 91. Sketch plan of 31BW787**7.

with corbeled banding and appears to be original configuration. The structure has a smaller exterior chimney or flue at the rear elevation. The single and double window openings retain wood sash with 6/6 lights.

Foundation piers that are visible are brick, although the central chimney is built on ballast stone, possibly salvaged from Brunswick Town to the south of Orton.

The structure is an interesting example of employee housing in a rural area. With a four-room plan much more spacious than the small dwellings commonly built for tenant farmers or sharecroppers, it appears to be as substantial as the houses of moderately-successful farmers who worked their own land, and would

not have been out of place in a textile mill village. Paired front rooms with separate entry doors, each with a fireplace, would have allowed one room to be set aside for “company” while the other side of the house provided spaces for sleeping, cooking, and eating.

The interior has beaded-board paneling at walls and ceilings, and wood flooring, simple fireplace hearths that appear to be concrete poured in place. Like the paneling, the six-paneled doors and simple fireplace mantels of paneled wood with deep narrow shelves are building elements that could readily be sourced in Wilmington or

another city during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The infill along the south side obscures the original back porch, and a room has been added behind the north wing. These changes have not obscured the historic design or fabric of the building, which is worthy of preservation and further study.

Investigation Methods

Most of the site area is grassed and the pedestrian survey identified relatively few artifacts, although two brick piles representing demolished structures were identified at the south end of the site. Both are situated on the slope toward Cow Branch. Further north we also

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF ORTON AND KENDAL PLANTATIONS

Table 15.
Historic Artifacts Recovered from 31BW787**7

	Surface	ST 1	ST 2	ST 3	ST 4	ST 5	ST 6	ST 7	ST 8	ST 9	ST 10	Totals	%
Kitchen Group												65	59.1
Chinese porcelain, poly HPOG										2			
Pearlware, annular							2						
Whiteware, undecorated	4								2	2			
Glass, black				1									
Glass, aqua				4									
Glass, light green								1		1	1		
Glass, other				2			1		1	5	3		
Glass, clear	12		1		8	1			1	4	1		
Tin can fragment									1	4			
Architecture Group												39	35.5
Window glass									2	1			
Nails, wire				1	2					3	1		
Nails, machine cut			1		1					9			
Nails, UID			5		2	1	3		1	5	1		
Furniture Group												0	0.0
Arms Group												0	0.0
Tobacco Group												1	0.9
Pipe bowl fragments					1								
Clothing Group												1	0.9
Buttons									1				
Personal Group												0	0.0
Activities Group												4	3.6
Brass tag	1												
Flower pot fragments				2				1					
TOTAL	17	0	7	5	19	2	6	2	9	36	7	110	

Table 16.
Pattern Analysis Comparison for 31BW787**7

	31BW787**7 Pattern	Revised Carolina Artifact Pattern ¹	Georgia Slave Artifact Pattern ²	Carolina Slave Artifact Pattern ¹	Yeoman Pattern ³
Kitchen Group	59.10	51.8 - 65.0	20.0 - 25.8	70.9 - 84.2	40.0 - 61.2
Architectural Group	35.50	25.2 - 31.4	67.9 - 73.2	11.8 - 24.8	35.8 - 56.3
Furniture Group	0.00	0.2 - 0.6	0.0 - 0.1	0.1	0.4
Arms Group	0.00	0.1 - 0.3	0.0 - 0.2	0.1 - 0.3	-
Tobacco Group	0.90	1.9 - 13.9	0.3 - 9.7	2.4 - 5.4	-
Clothing Group	0.90	0.6 - 5.4	0.3 - 1.7	0.3 - 0.8	1.8
Personal Group	0.00	0.2 - 0.5	0.1 - 0.2	0.1	0.4
Activities Group	3.60	0.9 - 1.7	0.2 - 0.4	0.2 - 0.9	1.8

¹ Garrow 1982

² Singleton 1980

³ Drucker et al. 1984



Figure 92. Standing structure at 31BW787**7. Top photograph is an oblique view to the southeast. Below is a view of the front, looking east.



Figure 93. Standing structure at 31BW787**7. Top photograph shows the rear of the structure looking northwest. Below is a view of the central chimney base laid in ballast stones, possibly salvaged from nearby Brunswick.

identified a mass of daffodils. These are often associated with African American dwellings, but Orton also produced daffodils, so the association is less certain.

A series of 11 shovel tests were excavated bisecting the site north-south at 100 foot intervals. Ten of these tests produced artifacts.

Artifacts

The recovered artifacts are itemized in Table 15. While the collection is dominated by late nineteenth century whitewares, pearlwares and porcelains are also present, perhaps documenting an antebellum settlement. The mean ceramic date of the assemblage is 1838.

It is also helpful to examine the settlement from the perspective of what archaeologists call the artifact pattern — a way of arranging the collection of artifacts in various categories. This helps compare sites and has resulted in the definition of several broad or defining patterns. There are patterns representative of eighteenth century slaves, nineteenth century slaves, yeoman or freedmen, and of course plantation owners. The pattern shown by the collection at 31BW787**7 approximates the Yeoman Pattern, characteristic of Piedmont tenants. Differences are likely the result of limited testing, although the results may be affected by the presence of white supervisors.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

Site 31BW787**7 is situated within the existing Orton National Register boundaries and should be considered a contributing archaeological and architectural property.

The standing structure is eligible under Criterion C, distinctive characteristics and is the only remnant structure from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century besides the

main house. A maintenance program should be developed to ensure that the structure is retained in sound condition.

The archaeological site is significant under Criterion D, research potential, especially in comparison with other sites on the property. If protection is not possible, extensive testing and data recovery excavations are recommended.

31BW7878**

Location: Zone 18; 3771710N 227882E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 14-16 feet AMSL

Component: Twentieth century structural remains

Size: 18 by 39 feet

Previous disturbance: structure has been burned down; only a concrete pad remains

Landform location: upland area overlooking rice fields to the east

Vegetation: currently incorporated into construction staging area; previously pine and scrub

Site Description

The site consists of a concrete pad measuring 18 by 39 feet and oriented parallel with the rice fields, about 100 feet to the west. The



Figure 94. Site 31BW787**8 looking east.

northern 9 feet of the pad was a shed or office, while the remaining 30 feet were an open garage or storage area. There are remnant anchors and sill plates denoting the different spaces.

This structure, or what was left of it, apparently burned when a nearby controlled burn was allowed to get out of control. Oral history identifies the structure as having been built by the North Carolina Wildlife Department for storage of grain and equipment when they were tending the impoundments and planting them for wildlife in the 1950s (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012).

The pad currently has a variety of construction materials stored on it or in the immediate area, restricting access.

Investigation Methods

The only investigative technique was a brief pedestrian walkover. No shovel tests or other excavations were conducted in this area.

Artifacts

The surface around the structure contains abundant wire nails, window glass, some melted glass, roofing tin, door hinges, door lock, porcelain doorknob fragments and other modern architectural items. No collection was made.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

This site may be at the southern edge of the portion of Orton currently listed on the National Register. It is not, however, recommended as a contributing site and we do not believe any further archaeological investigations of these remains would be able to address

significant research questions.

31BW7879**

Location: Zone 18; 3772795N 227068E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 15-20 feet AMSL

Component: nineteenth and twentieth century domestic artifacts with architectural remains

Size: 180 by 150 feet

Previous disturbance: structure may have burned, now incorporated into plowed field

Landform location: upland flat

Vegetation: located between two large live oaks, but the area is cultivated

Site Description

This site is situated in a cultivated field immediately within the Orton gates and adjacent



Figure 95. Site 31BW787**9 looking to the southwest.

to the road. The site is spread over a broad area and is recognized primarily as scattered artifacts, although in the middle of the debris field there are several large piles of articulated brick, possibly representing a chimney base or pier remains.

The historical research identified this as the Bonnie house that burned in 2007. At the time it was reported that the house dated to about

1950, although the artifacts present suggest a much earlier date, perhaps in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

Investigation Methods

A pedestrian survey was conducted immediately after the field had been disced. This allowed excellent surface visibility.

Artifacts

The collection includes two undecorated white porcelains, six undecorated whitewares, two blue transfer printed whitewares, two beige saltglazed stonewares, and three glass fragments, including one milk glass, one light green glass, and one manganese glass.

The manganese glass is suggestive of dates between the last quarter of the nineteenth century and WWI (Jones and Sullivan 1985:13). The mean ceramic date for the recovered artifacts is 1844, although several of the recovered items were used for a very long time. Regardless, the assemblage is suggestive of a pre-1950 period.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

While a reconnaissance is not adequate to determine the eligibility of this structure, the relatively early date of the remains recovered suggest that this site deserves additional attention.

Until additional investigation is possible, we recommend that the area be planted in grass and taken out of cultivation. This will assist in the long-term preservation of the archaeological remains.

31BW78710**

Location: Zone 18; 3772810N 227232E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 29 feet AMSL

Component: Low incidence of both prehistoric and historic remains

Size: 75 by 75 feet

Previous disturbance: The area has been clear

cut

Landform location: Upland flat overlooking a swampy slough to the east

Vegetation: Currently clear cut; previously pine and scrub understory

Site Description

The site is situated on an upland flat overlooking rice fields to the east and is bisected by a recently created woods road associated with the silvacultural activities.

Investigation Methods

Only a pedestrian walk over was conducted at this site since surface visibility was near 100%.

Artifacts

Only two artifacts were encountered. The prehistoric specimen is a Hanover fabric impressed sherd. This represents the Middle Woodland and likely dates 300 B.C. to as late as A.D. 800. The historic item is a fragment of undecorated pearlware. This ceramic has a mean date of 1805, but can extend over a range of 1780 to 1830.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

In spite of good surface visibility these two isolated items were the only artifacts recovered from the site. It seems unlikely that this site can make significant research contributions.

31BW78711**

Location: Zone 18; 3772928N 227501E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 20 feet AMSL

Component: Low incidence of prehistoric remains

Size: 50 by 50 feet

Previous disturbance: Heavily impacted by silvaculture; a woods road has also been cut through the site

Landform location: The site is situated on a ridge top overlooking rice fields to the east

Vegetation: Previously there was a pine forest; the area has been clear cut and will be replanted.

Site Description

The site consists of only two prehistoric flakes, although excellent surface visibility permitted careful inspection of the surround area. The remains were found on the crest of a slight rise overlooking the rice fields.

Investigation Methods

A pedestrian survey was conducted of the immediate area. No shovel testing was conducted because of the excellent surface visibility.

Artifacts

Only two artifacts were recovered, a quartz secondary flake and a rhyolite secondary flake.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

In spite of good surface visibility these two isolated items were the only artifacts recovered from the site, which appears to be a limited or specialized use site by Native Americans. It seems unlikely that this site can make significant research contributions.

31BW78712**

Location: Zone 18; 3771425N 227800E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 5 to 20 feet AMSL

Component: Nineteenth century domestic site

Size: 1,700 by 300 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture

Landform location: Upland ridge overlooking rice fields to the east

Vegetation: Grass and live oaks cover most of the site

Site Description

This site is found on the east side of the dirt road running parallel to the Orton rice fields and begins at Cow Bridge Branch and extends

about 1,700 feet south to the borrow pit that was begun by at least 1958 (Figure 96).

At the north end of the site there was a structure that accidentally burned in 2011 when a nearby controlled burn was allowed to get out of control. Just to the south of this structure a large construction staging area has been established that has caused considerable soil compaction and displacement. At least one brick pile from another demolished structure is found on the south edge of this staging area.

The photo of the burned house shows the original configuration of the extant building.

The long sides of the rectangular core present the front façade and rear of the dwelling. The lateral gabled roof is fairly steeply pitched above the narrow side elevations, and has a brick central chimney rising through the ridgeline. A rear gabled wing one room wide gives the dwelling an L-shape. The height of the wing is slightly lower than the front core, so that the ridgelines are not engaged with each other. At the inside of the rear ell, a narrow porch with a hipped roof covers rear door openings from each wing.

The house was sheathed with board-and-batten siding which extended up to roof level at the rear gable ends. It had wood-shingle siding and a small peaked vent at the main gable end visible in the photo.

The shed roof structure of the porch of the burned house was formed as an extension of the slope of the main roof. The roof structure at the rear porch is separate from the main roof. Roofing is V-crimped metal.

The central chimney is nicely detailed with corbeled banding, but appears to have had its upper upper section replaced or extended with newer brick. It had a smaller exterior chimney or flue at the rear elevation. The single and double window openings had wood sash with 6/6 lights.

The visible foundation piers are formed concrete. This might indicate that the house was

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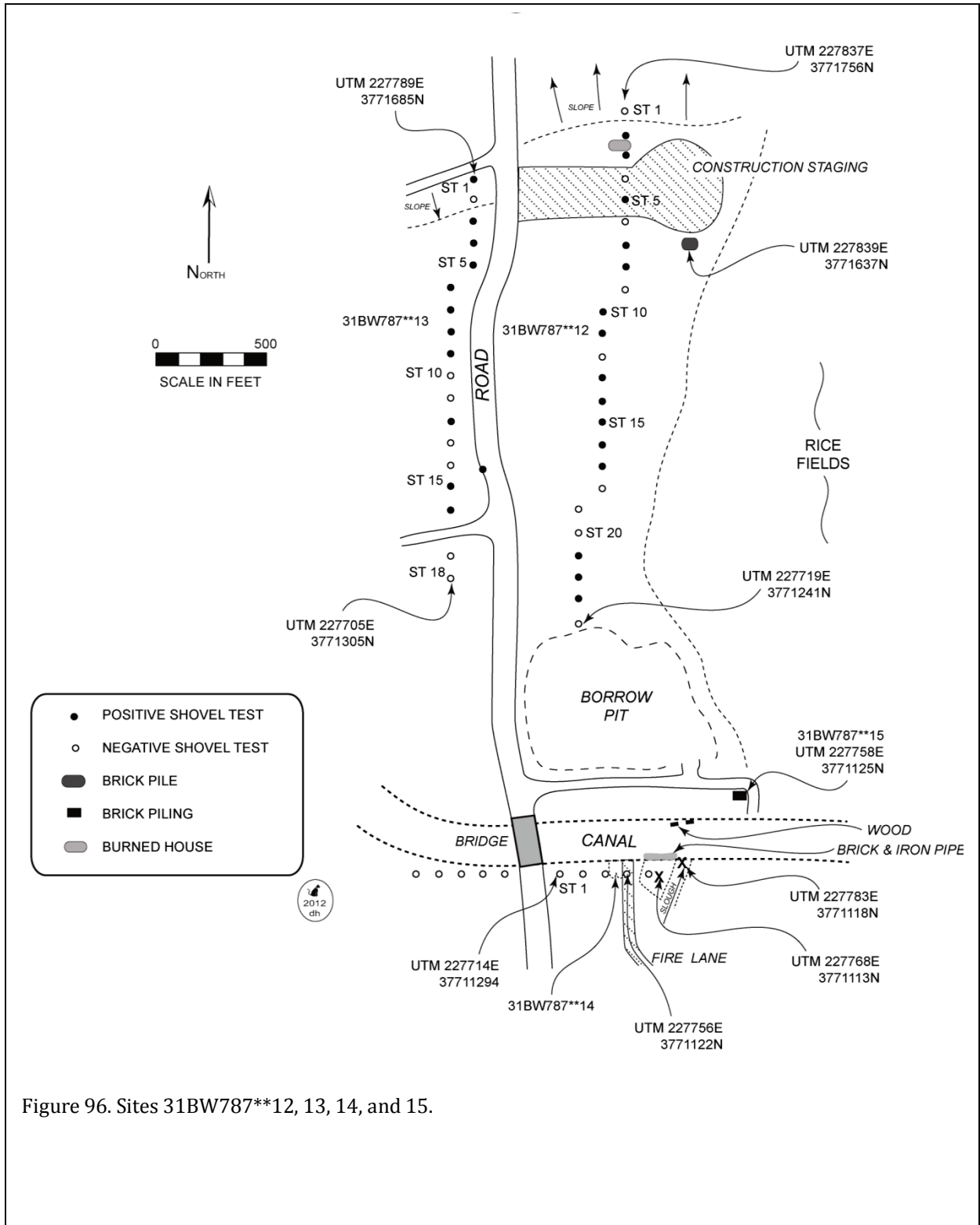


Figure 96. Sites 31BW787**12, 13, 14, and 15.



Figure 97. Photograph of the structure at 31BW787**12 before it was burned, looking to the northwest.



Figure 98. Site 31BW787**12. The upper photo shows the burned house looking north. The lower photo shows the site, looking north from the borrow pit at the southern edge.

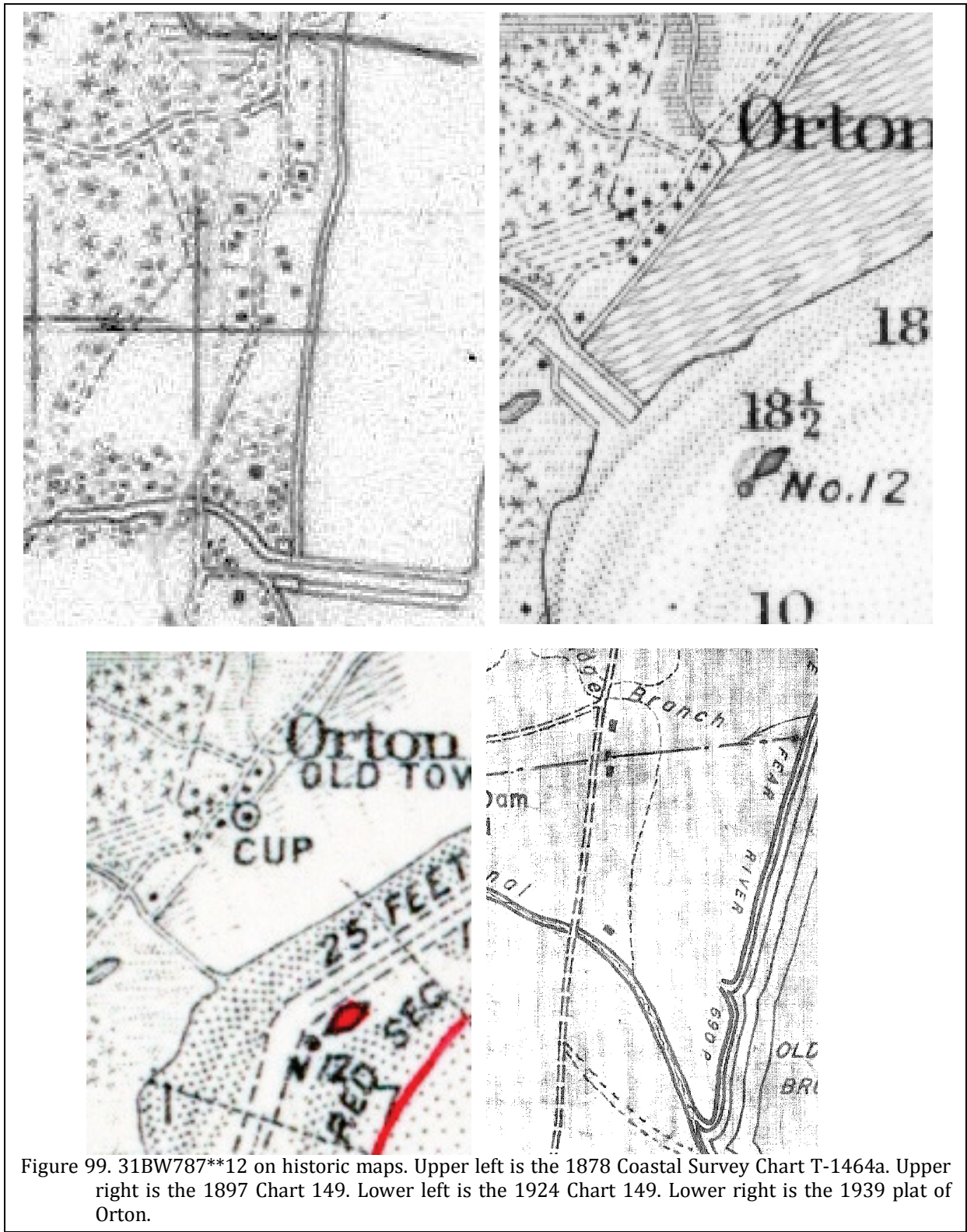


Figure 99. 31BW787**12 on historic maps. Upper left is the 1878 Coastal Survey Chart T-1464a. Upper right is the 1897 Chart 149. Lower left is the 1924 Chart 149. Lower right is the 1939 plat of Orton.

Table 17.
Mean Ceramic Date for 31BW787**12

Ceramic	Date Range	Mean Date (xi)	(fi)	fi x xi
English porc	1745-1795	1770	1	1770
NA salt glazed stoneware	1826-1905	1866	1	1866
Whiteware, blue edged	1826-1880	1853	3	5559
Whiteware, blue trans printed	1831-1865	1848	3	5544
Whiteware, annular	1831-1900	1866	1	1866
Whiteware, undecorated	1813-1900	1860	16	29760
Yellow ware	1826-1880	1853	1	1853
Total			26	48218
Mean Ceramic Date	1854.5			

moved at some point, but it seems more likely that the foundation was shored up or reinforced.

The earliest plan we have for this site is from 1878 and it shows eight structures stretching down the edge of the rice fields, as well as one structure that was likely destroyed by the borrow pit (Figure 99). It is reasonable to assume that many of these represented the dwellings used by Orton’s enslaved African Americans to cultivate the rice fields.

By 1897 two of these structures have disappeared. By 1924 the number of structures has increased to eight and one, on the edge of the rice fields, is identified as “CUP,” a reference to a cupola intended to help mariners. This was almost certainly a reference to the African American church built by Luola Sprunt prior to her death in 1916. The last plan, from 1939, shows only two structures, plus one much further south in the vicinity of the borrow pit (which is not shown on this plan and so was likely not yet dug). The most northern structure is likely the house that was burned in 2011.

Investigation Methods

Although there are some areas of open ground on this site and a small surface collection was made, the grass precluded a complete collection. A series 24 shovel tests were excavated at 100 foot intervals down the centerline of this ridge. It was necessary to periodically shift the line westward to prevent it from running into the

rice fields.

Of the 24 shovel tests, 15 were positive, producing a range of nineteenth and early twentieth century artifacts.

Artifacts

The datable ceramics recovered from the site yield a mean ceramic date of 1854 (Table 17) and are dominated by whitewares. Many of these, such as the annular and edged wares are

relatively inexpensive motifs and what would be expected from a slave settlement. The transfer printed wares are more expensive, at least during the antebellum, but may either date from the postbellum or may have been discards from the planter’s table.

Table 18 itemizes the historic artifacts recovered from the site. Not included on the list is a single Cape Fear cord marked sherd. This pottery dates from the Middle Woodland, about 300 B.C. to A.D. 800.

When the artifact pattern from 31BW787**12 is compared to those shown in Table 16, it is clear that the collection here fails to fall neatly into any pre-existing pattern. This is likely the result of the small sample exacerbated by the mixing of remains from both slave and postbellum structures, as well as the mixing of collections from structures occupied by both whites and blacks. It will likely be necessary to conduct more detailed investigations before individual structural areas can be identified and thoroughly studied.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

The density of artifacts in this area is high, as is the variety of materials recovered. Although there is a borrow pit at the south end and damage from a staging area at the other, overall the site’s integrity is high. The historic documents clearly reveal considerable activity on the property, including the presence of an African American

Table 18.
Artifacts Recovered from 31BW787**12

	Surface	ST 2	ST 3	ST 5	ST 7	ST 8	ST 10	ST 11	ST 13	ST 14	ST 16	ST 17	ST 21	ST 22	ST 23	Total	%
Kitchen Group																54	65.9
White porcelain, undecorated												1					
White porcelain, decal	1																
White ware, undecorated	13	1				1			1								
White ware, annular	2																
White ware, blue edged	3																
White ware, blue transfer printed	2								1								
Yellow ware, undecorated	1																
Albany slip SW	1																
Glass, black	1									1		1					
Glass, aqua					1		1	1									
Glass, light green	1																
Glass, other										2							
Glass, clear	2	3	1										3	2			
Glass, milk																1	
Glass, manganese	1		1							1	1	1					
Architecture Group																24	29.3
Window glass			3	1		6		1									
Door knob								1									
Nails, wire												1					
Nails, UID		2	5					1	2	1							
Furniture Group																0	0.0
Arms Group																0	0.0
Tobacco Group																1	1.2
Pipe bowl fragments				1													
Clothing Group																0	0.0
Personal Group																0	0.0
Activities Group																3	3.7
Slate	1		1														
Other												1					
TOTAL	29	6	11		1	7	1	4	4	5	3	4	3	2	2	82	

church, as well as multiple dwellings.

Additional investigations are necessary, but the data collected documents that this area should be carefully preserved until such time as additional archaeological studies are possible. There is a potential for recovery of discrete loci associated with the African American church, as well as evidence of slave dwellings. This research is of special importance since North Carolina has few documented slave dwellings on colonial or antebellum plantations, and none associated with rice cultivation.

Until additional investigations are possible, it is important that no additional disturbances be permitted on this site. Neither the construction staging area or borrow pit should be allowed to expand. The area should be maintained in grass.

31BW787**13

Location: Zone 18; 3771525N 227726E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 5-20 feet AMSL

Component: Nineteenth century domestic site

Size: 1,300 by 150 feet

Previous disturbance: Silvicultural work

Landform location: Upland ridge, sloping to the north toward Cow Bridge Branch and to the south toward the canal feeding the rice fields

Vegetation: previously pine and scrub; recently cleared and now growing up in scrub

Site Description

This site is situated west of the road that separates this site from 31BW787**12 (Figure 96). The topography is generally level, sloping at the north end to another dirt road and toward

Cow Bridge Branch. To the south the topography drops off slightly, with the site ending prior to a second dirt road running off to the west. West of this site are several additional loci, 31BW787**5 and 6, which may be part of this larger group of structures.

Figure 99 shows four to five structures clustering on the west side of the road as early as 1878, although by the 1930s all have been removed. The maps show that the structures were concentrated in the northern area, consistent with the findings of this reconnaissance survey.

Investigation Methods

While there were areas of open ground, and a sizable surface collection was obtained, a series of 18 shovel tests were excavated beginning at the north limit of the site and extending southward. Since the road takes a slight bend west, the shovel tests were adjusted to avoid

getting too close to the ditchline.

Artifacts

Only six datable ceramics were recovered and these provide a mean ceramic date of 1858. Although whiteware does have a long period of use, missing from the assemblage are later wares such as decalcomania, sponge/splatter wares, or tinted glaze, all of which would be characteristic of much later occupation. Thus, it is likely that these remains are consistent with a late antebellum through late postbellum occupation

Table 19 tabulates the artifacts from the various proveniences. As was the case with 31BW787**12, the assemblage does not match any of the typical artifact patterns, likely because of the very small collection and the fact that it is taken from a variety of structures. The kitchen and architecture groups are similar to the Carolina Artifact Pattern, characterizing nineteenth century

Table 19.
Artifacts Recovered from 31BW787**13

	Surface	ST 1	ST 3	ST 4	ST 5	ST 6	ST 7	ST 8	ST 9	ST 12	ST 15	ST 16	Totals	%
Kitchen Group													22	68.8
Whiteware, blue transfer printed										1				
Yellow ware, undecorated	5													
Glass, black						1		1					1	
Glass, light green					3								1	
Glass, other				1									1	
Glass, clear			1										1	
Glass, manganese				1	3								1	
Architecture Group													8	25.0
Window glass										1	1			
Nails, wire											1	1		
Nails, machine cut		1	2											
Nails, UID									1					
Furniture Group													0	0.0
Arms Group													1	3.1
Gun flint								1						
Tobacco Group													0	0.0
Clothing Group													0	0.0
Personal Group													0	0.0
Activities Group													1	3.1
Misc. hardware					1									
TOTAL	5	1	3	2	7	1	1	1	1	2	2	6	32	

slave settlements.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

The density of artifacts in this site is high, as is the variety of materials recovered. As previously mentioned, this site may be associated with 31BW787**5 and 31BW787**6 when additional investigations are conducted. The historic documents clearly reveal considerable activity on the property, including the presence of multiple African American dwellings, several of which appear to have their own small agricultural plots or livestock fences.

Additional investigations are necessary, but the data collected documents that this area should be carefully preserved until such time as additional archaeological studies are possible. There is a potential for recovery of discrete loci associated with the African American settlements, as well as evidence of slave dwellings. This research is of special importance since North Carolina has few documented slave dwellings on colonial or antebellum plantations, and none associated with rice cultivation.

Until additional investigations are possible, it is important that no additional disturbances be permitted on this site. The area should be maintained in grass and we recommend that no additional silvacultural activities be conducted here.

31BW78714**

Location: Zone 18; 3771122N 227756E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 5-20 feet AMSL

Component: Eighteenth to nineteenth century domestic or industrial site

Size: 100 by 100 feet

Previous disturbance: This site has been extensively eroded by Orton Canal; additional disturbance from cultivation and the construction of a fire lane through the site

Landform location: stream bank

Vegetation: mesic hardwoods and cultivated field

Site Description

The site is situated partially within Orton Canal, identifiable at low tide on both the north and south sides of the canal. Remains consist of wood planking to shore the canal banks, support timbers, metal pipes of a probable industrial function, and abundant brick that may represent a remnant structure (Figure 100).

On the south bank of the canal, in a cultivated field and within a fire plow area, a surface scatter of archaeological remains were identified. To the east and west of this scatter there are scoured areas, perhaps created by floods. A slough is found further to the east emptying into the canal.

Figure 101 shows the two earliest plans for the structures in the vicinity of 31BW787**14. At the north of both is a structure that has been destroyed by the borrow pit found at the southern end of 31BW787**12. South and to the west on both plans is another structure, which we believe is 31BW787**15 (discussed below). Over the canal and to the south of the canal are two additional structures. The one over the water was likely the mill, the one to the south was almost certainly the structure of mill tender.

Investigation Methods

The investigation was designed to identify any structural remains along the south side of Orton Canal. Shovel tests, at 25 foot intervals, began on the west side of the road parallel to the canal. They picked up on the east side of the road at 50 foot intervals and extended east for 200 feet, crossing two scoured areas, and stopping just prior to the slough leading into the canal. This slough appears to be shown on the 1856 chart.

The location of these features are shown on Figure 100, revealing a very close spatial match to the historic charts. The slough, while still present, is no longer as well defined as it was in the antebellum.



Figure 100. Remains of the mill in Orton Canal at low tide. The upper photo shows wood supports. The lower photo shows planking.

Artifacts

The surface collection was recovered primarily from the fire plowed lane from the canal edge southward for about 75 feet. The materials include primarily whiteware, although several earlier wares are also present, including Chinese porcelain and Westerwald stoneware. These suggest the site may date to the antebellum; the mean ceramic date for the collection is 1845.

The presence of milk glass (and the identification of the site on a chart dating to 1913) indicates that occupation continued into the postbellum, although the southernmost structure was no longer present by 1924. Only the structure destroyed by the borrow pit was present into the 1920s.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

Site 31BW787**14 has been heavily impacted by the erosion of Orton Canal and whatever remains may be identified of the mill will be found only through underwater archaeological investigations. Minimal evidence is present along the shores as brick rubble, timbers, and iron pipe.

The domestic structure to the south of the canal, however, may survive. If so, this site has the potential to address significant questions concerning how a particular industrial occupation was treated on the plantation.

This site warrants additional attention, including investigation by an underwater

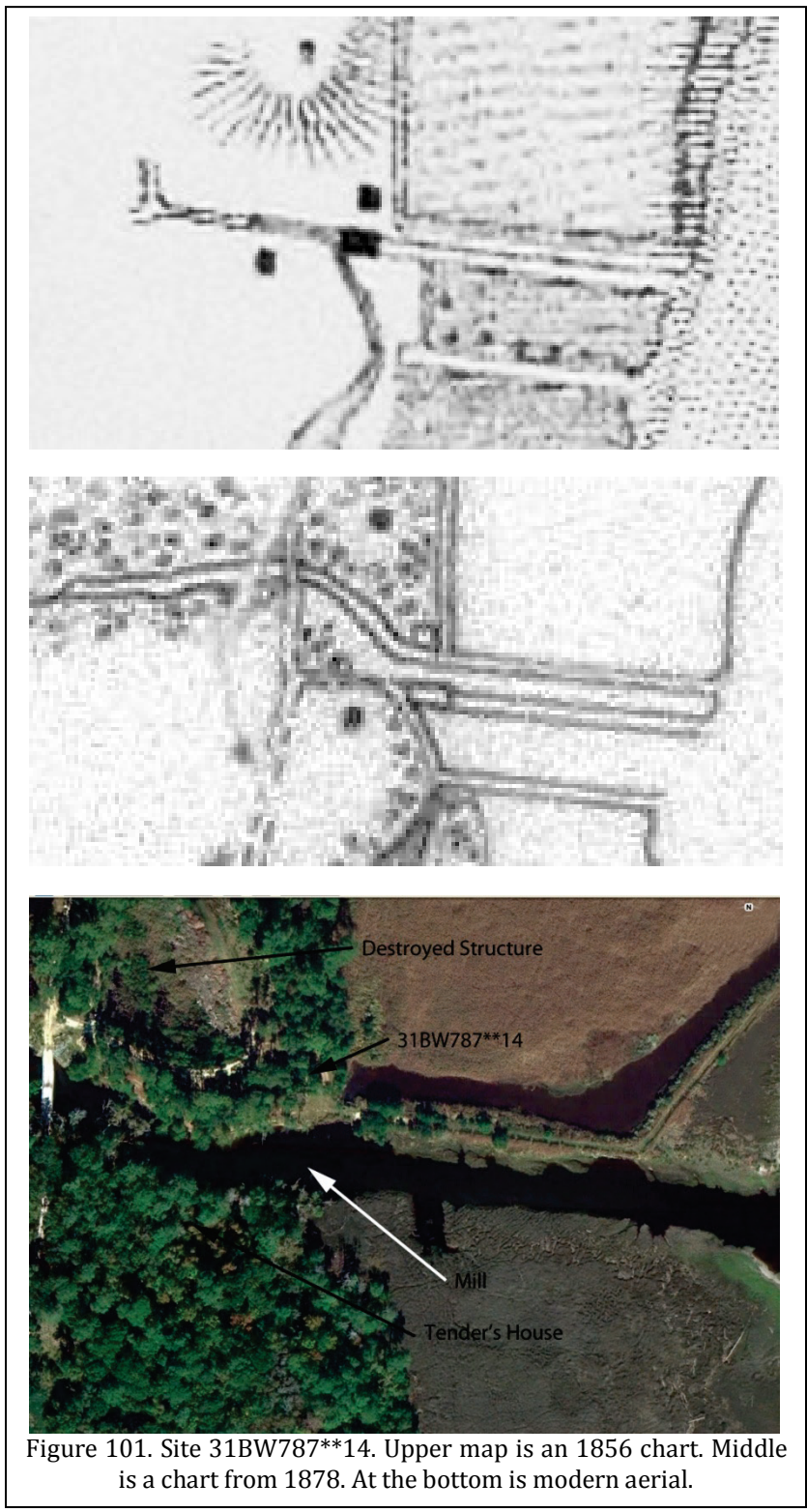


Figure 101. Site 31BW787**14. Upper map is an 1856 chart. Middle is a chart from 1878. At the bottom is modern aerial.

archaeologist. Until such work can be conducted, the site should be carefully preserved. This includes being aware that any modifications of the canal to allow flooding of the rice fields may cause additional erosion and damage.

31BW787**15

Location: Zone 18; 3771178N 227820E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 10 feet AMSL

Component: Probable antebellum structural remains, possibly of threshing structure

Size: 50 by 50 feet

Previous disturbance: Very heavy damage by borrow pit and other, indeterminate activities

Landform location: Edge of the rice fields

Vegetation: Pine and hardwood scrub

Site Description

The site consists of a brick column, possibly representing either a corner or, more likely, pier associated with a structure built in close association with Orton's antebellum rice mill. This proximity suggests that it may have been for threshing the rice or was possibly a barn. Unfortunately, considerable damage has occurred

to the site and it appears that most of the structure has been destroyed. The cause of the original damage is uncertain, but more recently the area was burned over and considerable excavation was conducted to repair the rice dikes east of the site.

Only a small portion of brick is exposed, but what is laid up in common bond with every sixth course being headers. The mortar is a relatively soft lime with white inclusions. This is entirely consistent with nineteenth century brick work.

Investigation Methods

Only a pedestrian survey was conducted in this area. No shovel tests were excavated because of the disturbed terrain.

Artifacts

No artifacts were recovered from this area, but as explained no excavations were conducted.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

In spite of the disturbance this site should not be dismissed without additional investigation. It appears to be associated with an extremely important antebellum industrial site.

Investigation here using terrestrial methods should be combined with the underwater investigation of adjacent 31BW787**14 since the two sites may best be understood when considered together.

No additional work should be conducted in this area until such time as it is possible to more fully investigate the site.



Figure 102. Remnant brick pier or wall at 31BW787**15, view to the southwest.

31BW787**16

Location: Zone 18; 3773030N 227385E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 5-20 feet AMSL

Component: Antebellum drainage ditch and property boundary

Size: About 1,400 linear feet; about 2-4 feet in width and 1-2 feet in depth; with an associated dike feature

Previous disturbance: Silvicultural with some portions of the ditch destroyed to provide field or road access; most, however, is in good condition

Landform location: Upland and swamp margin

Vegetation: Previously pine and scrub, the area has been clear cut

It ranges about 2-4 feet in width, although it was likely wider prior to infilling began. It is about 1 to 2 feet in depth, but was likely much deeper prior to partial filling. The soil from the ditch was banked on the Orton side.

The portion of the ditch that turns and runs northeast appears to have originally followed the road that lead to the Orton gate, but has since been moved to the west.

Although this ditch was intended to mark the boundary between the two plantations, it also appears to have been constructed to provide drainage.

Investigation Methods

The ditch was walked and recorded with a hand-held GPS unit. No shovel testing was conducted.

Artifacts

No artifacts were identified during the assessment.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

Although an important geospatial and landscape feature, the ditch and associated bank have little archaeological research potential.



Figure 103. Site 31BW787**16 looking east. Ditch and dike to the right (south).

Site Description

This site represents a property line ditch that separated Kendal to the north and Orton to the south. This ditch ran almost due east to Orton Creek. Today there are gaps where portions have been infilled to provide access to fields or create woods roads. Most of the ditch, however, remains distinct.

Preservation of the site should be considered in order to preserve remnant landscape features, especially since this appears to be the only intact ditch of this type on the property.

Kendal Archaeological Sites

31BW788**

Location: Zone 18; 3773325N 227825E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 20 feet AMSL

Component: Eighteenth through early twentieth century main plantation settlement

Size: 300 by 400 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with clear cutting of some areas; otherwise little damage

Landform location: Upland flat at the edge of rice fields

Vegetation: Clear cut today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

The site consists of a broad flat area overlooking rice fields to the east. There are likely multiple distinct areas, although during this investigation only three were identified. The central core represents the remains of the main house burned in 1919. Two chimneys and a number of associated walls are well defined. To

the northeast is another area of relatively dense remains and this likely represents the kitchen, which also burned in 1919. To the southeast is another smaller deposit, in an area that we have suggested may represent a smoke house or some similar utilitarian structure.

Figure 105 shows several plans and photographs of the cluster at the main site. While this study focused on the main house and other structures in the immediate area, there were additional buildings, probably slave structures, extending to the west, just north of the oak avenue that ran from River Road to the Kendal house.

Initial mapping identified what appear to be two chimney bases, approximately 30 feet apart. Abundant piers and foundations are still found around the main house, indicating that architectural details could be resolved with additional investigation. A cistern is found near the end chimney; it probably collected water from the roofs of the structure. To the northeast of the main house is evidence of what we believe is the kitchen.

North of the main house, and on the opposite side of the road to the site today there is a gardenia garden covering an area of perhaps an acre. While many of the plants have succumbed to neglect and all have been damaged by logging, many are healthy enough to have come back and bloom.

The main house is threatened by the secondary vegetation that quickly overtakes any effort to clear



Figure 104. View of brick piles at the Kendal ruins (31BW788**) looking south into the rice fields.

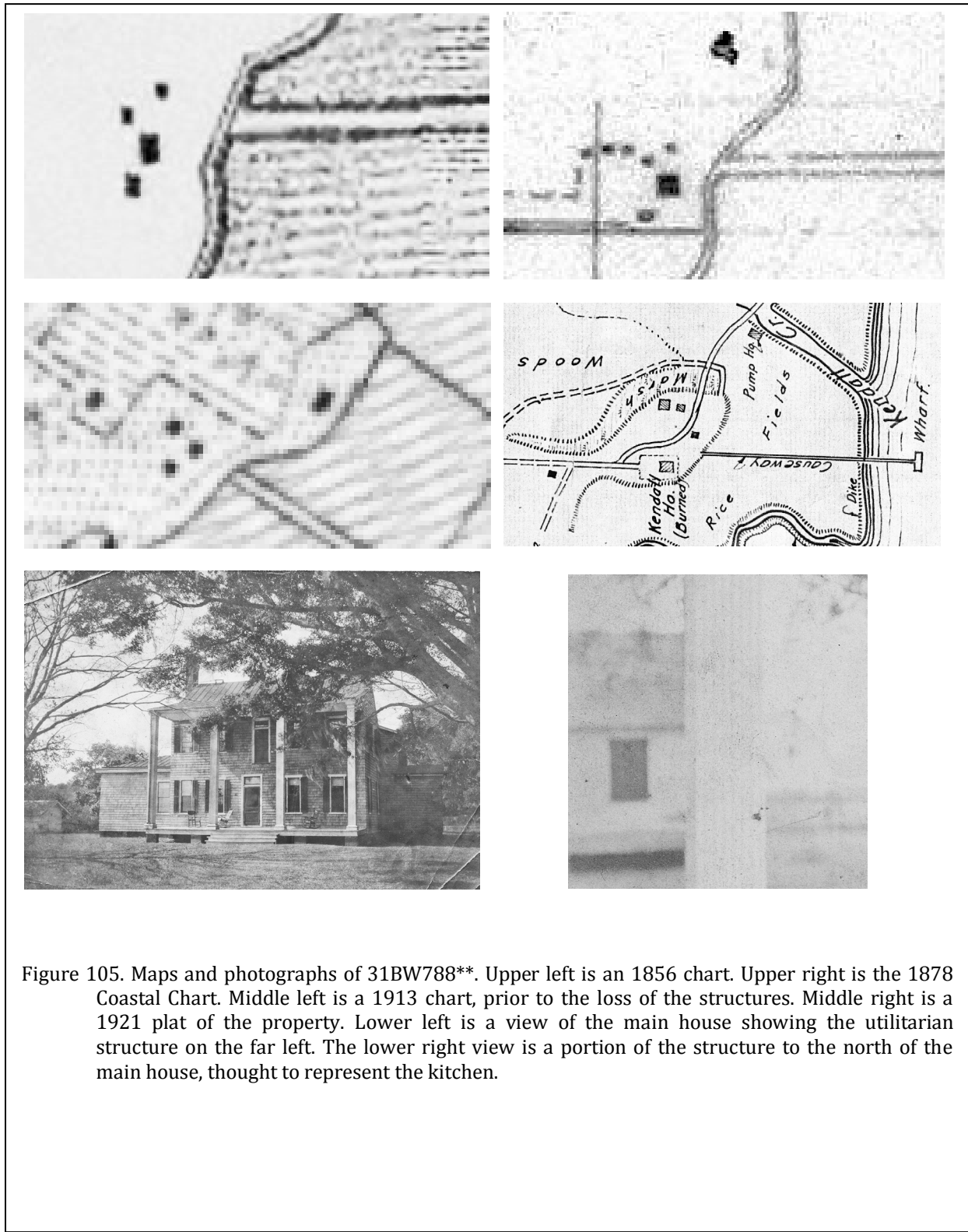


Figure 105. Maps and photographs of 31BW788**. Upper left is an 1856 chart. Upper right is the 1878 Coastal Chart. Middle left is a 1913 chart, prior to the loss of the structures. Middle right is a 1921 plat of the property. Lower left is a view of the main house showing the utilitarian structure on the far left. The lower right view is a portion of the structure to the north of the main house, thought to represent the kitchen.

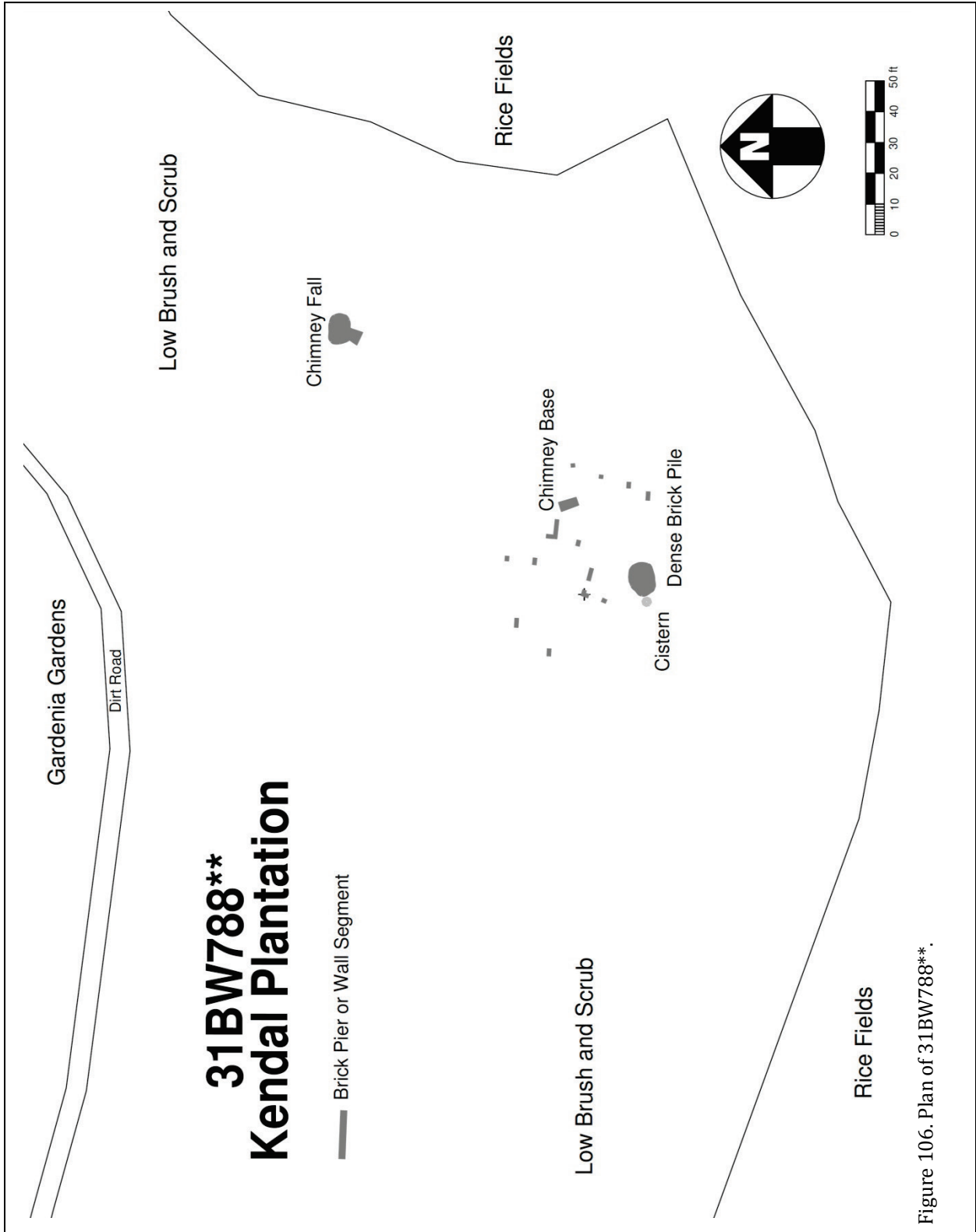


Figure 106. Plan of 31BW788**.

and expose the brick ruins. Every additional clearing effort has the potential for causing additional damage to the site. Similarly, any clearing or silvacultural activity has the potential for doing significant damage to the gardens north of the road.

Investigation Methods

This investigation consisted only of a pedestrian survey and the mapping of immediately recognizable structural remains. The surface collection, however, produced a relatively large collection, indicating that while the structure has been robbed of brick, it has been protected from relic collectors and looters.

Holmes. Artifacts almost certainly date to the ownership of General Robert Howe.

Table 21 itemizes the artifacts recovered in the surface collections. There is little point in examining the artifact pattern – a surface collection such as this is typically heavily weighted toward ceramics and these do, in fact, comprise 94% of the collection.

Ceramic motifs include expensive motifs identified by archaeologists as high status, such as transfer printed and hand painted wares. These were most likely used by the owner, although when damaged or out of fashion they were often passed down to enslaved African Americans. A

few annular and edged wares were also recovered. These are typically associated with African Americans since the motifs were less costly. Their presence is likely the result of servant’s quarters being in close proximity to the main house. They might also have been used in the kitchen.

Other items observed on the surface, but not collected, include a wide range of architectural items, including nails, window glass (some of which

was melted), and door hardware.

Table 20.
Mean Ceramic Date for 31BW788**

Ceramic	Date Range	Mean Date (xi)	(fi)	fi x xi
Canton porcelain	1800-1830	1815	3	5445
Overglazed enamelled porc	1660-1800	1730	3	5190
NA salt glazed stoneware	1826-1905	1866	1	1866
Lead glazed slipware	1670-1795	1733	1	1733
Plain delft	1640-1800	1720	2	3440
Creamware, annular	1780-1815	1798	1	1798
Creamware, undecorated	1762-1820	1791	13	23283
Pearlware, poly hand painted	1795-1815	1805	2	3610
Pearlware, blue trans printed	1795-1840	1818	5	9090
Pearlware, undecorated	1780-1830	1805	3	5415
Whiteware, blue edged	1826-1880	1853	2	3706
Whiteware, poly hand painted	1826-1870	1848	4	7392
Whiteware, blue trans printed	1831-1865	1848	2	3696
Whiteware, non-blue trans printed	1826-1875	1851	1	1851
Whiteware, annular	1831-1900	1866	1	1866
Whiteware, undecorated	1813-1900	1860	28	52080
Total			72	131461
Mean Ceramic Date	1825.8			

Artifacts

Although the collection from Kendal contains materials that may date from the early eighteenth century, they are probably not that early and likely date from the mid- to late-eighteenth century. The mean ceramic date for the collection, combining all three of the identified loci, is 1826 (Table 20). This would be during the ownership of John Hill or Gabriel

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

Site 31BW788** is a very important site as the main settlement for Kendal Plantation. It assumes even greater research significance since the Orton settlement has been so heavily altered by gardens and house modifications.

The Kendal site exhibits excellent

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE

Table 21.
Artifacts Recovered from 31BW788**

	Main House	NE Main House	SE Main House	Totals	%
Kitchen Group				110	94.0
Overglazed enamelled porcelain			1		
Chinese porcelain, poly HPOG	1	1			
White porcelain, undecorated	1	2			
Delft, undecorated	2				
Lead glazed slipware	1				
Creamware, undecorated	12	1			
Creamware, annular	1				
Pearlware, undecorated	3				
Pearlware, poly hand painted	2				
Pearlware, blue transfer printed	3	2			
Whiteware, undecorated	9	19			
Whiteware, poly hand painted		1			
Whiteware, annular			1		
Whiteware, blue edged	1	1			
Whiteware, blue transfer printed	1	2			
Whiteware, brown transfer printed		1			
Brown SG SW		1			
Burnt refined earthenware	3				
Glass, black		1			
Glass, aqua		2	5		
Glass, light green	4	3			
Glass, other	2	15			
Glass, clear		1			
Architecture Group				4	3.4
Window glass	3	1			
Furniture Group				0	0.0
Arms Group				0	0.0
Tobacco Group				0	0.0
Clothing Group				0	0.0
Personal Group				0	0.0
Activities Group				3	2.6
Well pump part		1			
Flower pot fragments	1	1			
TOTAL	52	59	6	117	

integrity, evidenced by the well preserved foundations, the intact cistern, the intact gardenia gardens, the still recognizable oak avenue to the mansion, and the abundant artifacts.

Special care should be taken to ensure the preservation of the gardens and the associated structures. No silvicultural activities should take place on the point of land containing this site.

The vegetation around the main house should be cleared by hand and a low maintenance grass, such as buffalo grass, planted around the ruins to stabilize the ground and help prevent scrub vegetation from overtaking the ruins.

The gardenias should be flagged and evaluated for long-term maintenance. They should also be plotted and incorporated into the site mapping to determine if a specific pattern can be identified.

The gardenia species was not determined, but *Gardenia jasminoides* (Cape Jasmine) was available to colonial gardeners as early as 1807. *G. thumbergia* (Starry Gardinia) and *G. radicans* (Rooting Gardenia) were available to southern gardeners by 1814 (Cothran 2003:267). They were planted as single plants and hedges, with the double variety well established by 1850 (Cothran 2003:192). Adams, quoting Henry Nehrling from the first quarter of the twentieth century, noted “with the Camellia and the Rose, the Gardenia belonged to a trio of the most fashionable flowers during antebellum days” (Adams 2004:115).

Flint (1997:233) notes that the gardenia grows best in light shade in areas with hot summers and the forest setting may have helped preserve the plants for the past 100 years with no care or attention.

The available maps indicate that additional structures exist in association with the main settlement. These should be identified and the boundaries of the site adjusted to ensure that they are incorporated for preservation.

This site should also be considered for more detailed test excavations, more fully

mapping the ruins and garden, and exploring the various structures.

31BW789**

Location: Zone 18; 3773342N 227431E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 15 feet AMSL

Component: Nineteenth century plantation structure

Size: 220 by 110 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with clear cutting of site, large push pile and burn area extending to the northeast

Landform location: Upland slope southwest of marsh slough

Vegetation: Clear cut today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

This site is located in the immediate vicinity of the oak avenue leading from River Road to Kendal and the artifacts recovered suggest that it dates to the antebellum. Unfortunately, the site has been damaged by silvicultural activities and there is some dispersion resulting from a push pile of debris on the north side of the road that was burned. On the south side, however, there is still a brick mound that may represent a chimney fall.

There is no definitive association with any structure identified on period maps. Figure 105 does illustrate a structure in this general area, although it doesn't appear on the available maps until the postbellum.

Investigation Methods

Because of the excellent surface visibility only a pedestrian survey was conducted in this area. A small collection was obtained as a result of the survey.

Artifacts

Artifacts include primarily pearlwares and whitewares – ceramics that are indicative of a nineteenth century occupation. The mean ceramic

Table 22.
Mean Ceramic Date for 31BW789**

Ceramic	Date Range	Mean Date (xi)	(fi)	fi x xi
English porc	1745-1795	1770	2	3540
NA salt glazed stoneware	1826-1905	1866	1	1866
Pearlware, blue trans printed	1795-1840	1818	1	1818
Pearlware, undecorated	1780-1830	1805	1	1805
Whiteware, poly hand painted	1826-1870	1848	2	3696
Whiteware, blue trans printed	1831-1865	1848	1	1848
Whiteware, annular	1831-1900	1866	2	3732
Total			27	49925
Mean Ceramic Date	1849.1			

date for the site is 1849 (Table 22). Whiteware is the most abundant ceramic in the collection and relatively few of the remains are decorated. Those that are tend to be higher status ceramics, such as transfer prints and hand painted motifs.

Other artifacts recovered from the site include 10 glass fragments, four of which are manganese glass, suggesting that the site component may extend into the postbellum.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

This site should be preserved; no additional silvacultural activity should take place in this area and the site should be planted in grass to stabilize the soil. Additional archaeological research is warranted to determine the site function and whether it is the structure shown on maps from the postbellum.

31BW790**

Location: Zone 18; 3773460N 227240E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 15 feet AMSL

Component: Late nineteenth and early twentieth century tenant structures

Size: 500 by 400 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with clear cutting of site

Landform location: Swamp margin with wetland area to the east and low area to the south

Vegetation: Clear cut today, but

previously pine and scrub

Site Description

This site covers a relatively large area, bounded to the east by a wetland slough and to the south by a low area that is now growing cane. Present are two clearly defined structures and a possible third structure at the north edge of the site.

We are fortunate to have excellent oral history for 31BW790**. Eugene Vaught lived at this farm with his mother, father, and five siblings. The settlement dates from about 1930 through about 1950 and consisted of two structures – a four room house that his mother and the children lived in and, to the west, a one room house where his father lived (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012). The bamboo found to the south was planted by Vaught’s father from a few slips taken from Orton. He recalls that there were never any trees around their house and that crops such as potatoes, corn, and vegetates were cultivated up to the house.

The eastern structure includes the remains of a fire box that would have heated the



Figure 107. 31BW790** from the southeast, looking northwest. The remains of the fire box and flue for the eastern structure and the flue for the western structure are visible in the distance.



Figure 108. Site 31BW790**. The upper photo shows the fire box and flue associated with the eastern house. The lower photo shows the flue that was attached to the smaller, western structure. Note the bamboo overtaking the cleared site.

house. To the west is a stove flue, associated with the kitchen stove. About 180 feet to the west there is a stove flue, associated with the small structure in which Mr. Vaught's father lived. Artifacts, including brick rubble from piers, are scattered around both structures and into the nearby fields.

The possible third structure consists of a pile of ballast stones, slate roofing tiles, and old brick, situated about 300 feet to the north.

Investigative Methods

Surface visibility was good and a pedestrian survey was conducted of the area. A grab collection of artifacts was made, focusing on ceramics and glass, as well as any unusual items. Not collected were a large number of architectural items.

Artifacts

Artifacts recovered from this site are itemized in Table 23. Ceramics and glass dominate the collection and this is often typical of tenant sites. Whitewares are the most common ceramic, although one pearlware was also recovered (and may be associated with the one black glass blown bottle base). Absent are saltglazed storage containers. Architectural remains are relatively sparse, but this is likely a bias of surface collecting.

The resulting artifact pattern is dissimilar to other defined patterns, but this is almost certainly the result of the surface collection bias for ceramics and against architectural items, such as nails. Nevertheless, since the Vaught family's position on Orton was distinct from that of an agricultural tenant, we do not have a good comparison pattern. Additional work at this site has the potential to define a variation of tenancy and this may be of assistance recognizing differences at rural or agricultural African American domestic sites.

Of special interest is the presence of the Herty cup fragment on the site. This may not be associated with the settlement, but may instead be an artifact of an earlier period of naval store production on Kendal.

Table 23.
Artifacts Recovered from 31BW790**

	Totals	
Kitchen Group	105	84.7
Porcelain bisque	1	
White porcelain, undecorated	1	
White porcelain, decal	2	
Pearlware, undecorated	1	
Whiteware, undecorated	41	
Whiteware, decalcomania	7	
Whiteware, annular	1	
Whiteware, blue edged	1	
Whiteware, blue transfer printed	1	
Whiteware, red transfer printed	2	
Whiteware, gilt	6	
Glass, black	1	
Glass, aqua	5	
Glass, blue	10	
Glass, light green	2	
Glass, other	2	
Glass, clear	10	
Glass, milk	10	
Stove part	1	
Architecture Group	6	4.8
Window glass	3	
Pintle	1	
Hinge fragments	1	
Nails, machine cut	1	
Furniture Group	0	0.0
Arms Group	0	0.0
Tobacco Group	0	0.0
Clothing Group	1	0.8
Flat iron	1	
Personal Group	0	0.0
Activities Group	12	9.7
Herty cup fragments	1	
Misc. hardware	4	
Flower pot fragments	6	
Chain	1	
TOTAL		124

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

The research potential of this site is significant, especially with an informant who lived at the site and can provide a wide range of details for comparison with the archaeological record. Site integrity is good, with standing architectural remains.

Until additional archaeological research can be conducted, we recommend the site be grassed to prevent erosion. No additional silvicultural activities should be conducted at this site.

31BW791**

Location: Zone 18; 3773333N 227314E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 20 feet AMSL

Component: Late nineteenth or early twentieth century dwelling

Size: 200 by 150 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with removal of much site vegetation

Landform location: Upland slope overlooking slough to the north

Vegetation: Clear cut today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

31BW791** is a probable domestic site somewhat scattered by silvicultural activities. It is today found on both the north and south of the main road to the Kendal house and immediately east of the original River Road. It is in the vicinity of Hagfield, described by Eugene Vaught (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012). A small quantity of brick is present, but it has been scattered by logging operations.

Investigative Methods

Surface visibility was good and a pedestrian survey was conducted of the area. A grab collection of artifacts was made, focusing on ceramics and glass, as well as any unusual items.

Artifacts

The assemblage includes two fragments of undecorated white porcelain, three undecorated pearlwares, three undecorated whitewares, two blue edged whitewares, the base of a Herty cup, two fragments of light green glass and two fragments of manganese glass.

The ceramics yield a mean ceramic date

of 1837, although the manganese glass suggests a date between the last quarter of the nineteenth century and WWI (Jones and Sullivan 1985:13).

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

This is an example of a site type that has often been dismissed as being “too ephemeral,” “too disturbed,” “too scattered,” or “too sparse” to address significant research questions. The recent work by Adams (2002) suggests that dismissing the value of this site may be a mistake. Given what we know of Kendal and Orton’s late nineteenth century return to naval stores, this site may be worthy of additional investigation.

Consequently, we recommend that until additional archaeological studies are conducted, the site be grassed to prevent erosion and that no additional silvicultural activities be conducted.

31BW792**

Location: Zone 18; 3773723N 227740E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 15 feet AMSL

Component: Eighteenth to nineteenth century dwelling

Size: 350 by 200 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with much removal of site vegetation

Landform location: Ridge overlooking marsh and rice fields to the north, west, and east

Vegetation: Cut over today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

The site is located on a point overlooking Lilliput Creek and the associated rice fields. Artifacts were widely scattered, perhaps as a result of the logging that removed most of the vegetation on the site. A woods road cuts the western edge of the site.

Investigative Methods

Surface visibility was good and a pedestrian survey was conducted of the area. A grab collection of artifacts was made, with all



Figure 109. 31BW792** looking to the northeast.

observed remains collected.

Artifacts

The mean ceramic date for the collection recovered is 1820 (Table 24), a very early date compared to other sites recovered on the Kendal property. The settlement was likely present

Ceramic	Date Range	Mean Date (xi)	(fi)	fi x xi
Creamware, undecorated	1762-1820	1791	4	7164
Pearlware, poly hand painted	1795-1815	1805	3	5415
Pearlware, blue/black trans printed	1795-1840	1818	3	5454
Pearlware, annular/cable	1790-1820	1805	1	1805
Pearlware, undecorated	1780-1830	1805	4	7220
Whiteware, annular/cable	1831-1900	1866	1	1866
Whiteware, undecorated	1813-1900	1860	5	9300
Total			21	38224
Mean Ceramic Date	1820.2			

during the period Kendal was owned by John Hill and later Gabriel Holmes. The assemblage contains both expensive wares, such as the transfer printed and polychrome hand painted pearlwares, as well as wares more typical of slave use, such as annular wares. This may suggest a small slave settlement that was receiving the cast

off wares from the planter's table.

Also present were two fragments of black glass, four fragments of clear glass, and two clay pipe stem fragments.

The black glass is typical of eighteenth and nineteenth century wine or ale bottles, commonly reused by African Americans for storage containers. The clear glass fragments included a tumbler fragment and a fragment of a square medicine bottle.

This was likely a slave dwelling, perhaps associated with tending the fields or some other occupation that permitted living somewhat away from the main settlement.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

Most slave settlements are arrangements of multiple houses - a convenience for the owner or overseer since it allowed easier control of enslaved African Americans. Single settlements such as this are less common - or at least are less commonly reported in the archaeological literature. Adams (2002), as well as other researchers (e.g., Trinkley 1991) have identified individual settlements, but these are exceptions. Such sites are more difficult to identify and, when found, are often dismissed.

Site 31BW792** should be carefully preserved until such time as archaeological studies are possible. No silvacultural activities should take place on the site. Instead a grass should be planted to prevent erosion on the slopes

and the site should be periodically bush hogged to prevent the return of vegetation that could damage the archaeological features.

31BW793**

Location: Zone 18; 3773632N 227786E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 10 feet AMSL

Component: Eighteenth century dwelling

Size: 100 by 100 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with removal of much site vegetation

Landform location: Ridge slope

Vegetation: Cut over today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

The northern edge of the site is bisected by a woods road and the bulk of the remains were recovered from the area south of the road. It is about 300 feet southwest of 31BW792** and is found in a more interior location, slightly removed from the edge of the rice fields.

Investigative Methods

Surface visibility was good and a pedestrian survey was conducted of the area. A grab collection of artifacts was made, focusing on ceramics and glass, as well as any unusual items.

Artifacts

Recovered from site 31BW793** were seven kaolin pipe bowl fragments, one pipe stem fragment, one fragment of window glass, one lead glazed slipware and one white saltglazed stoneware ceramic.

The two ceramics yield a mean ceramic date of 1745, although both were widely available through the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

While fewer artifacts were recovered from this site than from 31BW792**, the sites are very similar. 31BW793** may represent another

isolated, eighteenth century slave dwelling, although its function is not known. It is this ambiguity that makes the site significant and worthy of protection.

Site 31BW793** should be protected from any further silvicultural activity and preserved until such time that additional archaeological investigations can be conducted.

31BW794**

Location: Zone 18; 3773652N 227835E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 5 feet AMSL

Component: Prehistoric isolated find

Size: 20 by 20 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with removal of much site vegetation

Landform location: Ridge slope

Vegetation: Cut over today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

This site consists of an isolated Morrow Mount II projectile point. No other artifacts were recovered and the site area is an ridge slope overlooking the marsh about 300 feet to the north.

Artifacts

The single Morrow Mountain II point measures 48 mm in length and 26 mm in width. It is within Coe's (1964:32) range, but slightly shorter and wider than his average of 60 mm for length and 20 mm for width. The thickness is 8 mm and the stem length is 10 mm.

Investigative Methods

Because of surface visibility, only a pedestrian survey was conducted.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

As an isolated find, the research potential of this site is severely limited. We do not recommend any further investigation of the site. Nor do we recommend any special management activities at this site.

31BW795**

Location: Zone 18; 3773380N 227365E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 15 feet AMSL

Component: Eighteenth and nineteenth century settlement

Size: 150 by 100 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with removal of much site vegetation

Landform location: Ridge slope overlooking a small slough to the west

Vegetation: Cut over today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

These remains encircle a small slough or low area that at one time may have been a pond or water hole. Occasional brick fragments were noted, but there was no core area or concentration of remains. While close to 31BW791** the two sites represent different time periods and there appears to be no connection.

Investigative Methods

Surface visibility was good and a pedestrian survey was conducted of the area. A grab collection of artifacts was made, with all observed materials collected.

Artifacts

The collection consists primarily of ceramics and the mean ceramic date of these remains is shown in Table 25. Although the collection is dominated by whitewares, earlier ceramics are also present and account for over a third of the assemblage.

Also present in the collection are two lead glazed coarse red earthenware ceramics, and nine fragments of black glass – all specimens likely associated with the earlier wares at the site. One light green glass fragment, one milk glass

fragment, three aqua glass fragments, and one manganese glass fragment are likely associated with the whitewares present at the site.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

Like 31BW792** and 31BW793**, this site seems to be associated with an isolated settlement of an enslaved African American, although it is possible that occupation continued into the early postbellum. As previously discussed, this isolated occupation is worthy of additional investigation since it is significantly different from the traditional slave row settlement.

We recommend that no additional silvicultural activities take place on this site and that the site be planted in grass. This will preserve the site for future archaeological investigation.

Table 25.
Mean Ceramic Date for 31BW795**

Ceramic	Date Range	Mean Date (xi)	(fi)	fi x xi
Underglazed blue porc	1660-1800	1730	1	1730
English porc	1745-1795	1770	1	1770
NA salt glazed stoneware	1826-1905	1866	3	5598
Westerwald	1700-1775	1738	1	1738
Creamware, undecorated	1762-1820	1791	8	14328
Pearlware, poly hand painted	1795-1815	1805	2	3610
Pearlware, blue hand painted	1780-1820	1800	2	3600
Pearlware, blue trans printed	1795-1840	1818	5	9090
Pearlware, edged	1780-1830	1805	4	7220
Pearlware, undecorated	1780-1830	1805	11	19855
Whiteware, blue edged	1826-1880	1853	10	18530
Whiteware, poly hand painted	1826-1870	1848	5	9240
Whiteware, blue trans printed	1831-1865	1848	3	5544
Whiteware, non-blue trans printed	1826-1875	1851	4	7404
Whiteware, annular/cable	1831-1900	1866	12	22392
Whiteware, undecorated	1813-1900	1860	32	59520
Total			104	191169
Mean Ceramic Date		1838.2		

31BW796**

Location: Zone 18; 3773308N 227503E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 10 feet AMSL

Component: Nineteenth century settlement

Size: 150 by 100 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with removal

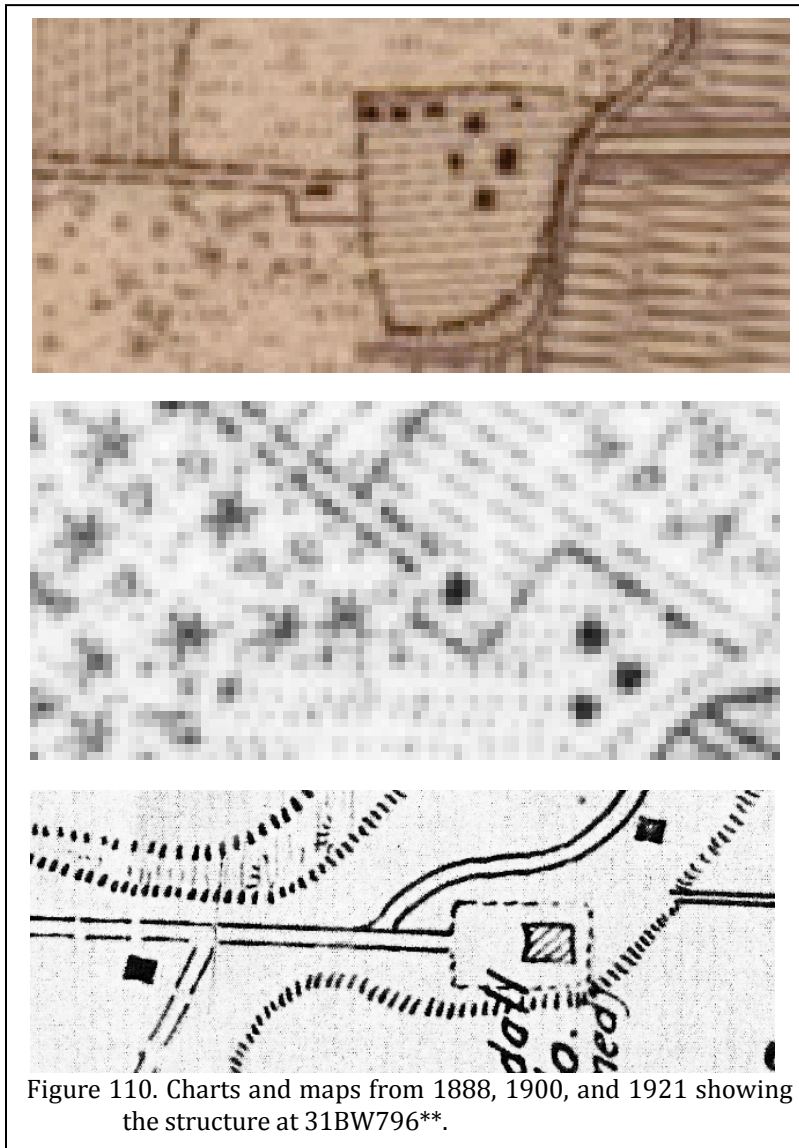


Figure 110. Charts and maps from 1888, 1900, and 1921 showing the structure at 31BW796**.

of much site vegetation

Landform location: Ridge slope overlooking a small slough or wet area to the north

Vegetation: Cut over today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

This site is situated at the south edge of the east-west running woods road that approximates the location of the original road leading to the main Kendal house from River Road. The site appears to be located directly in the

middle of the access road and at the southern edge of the site there is a small pile of collapsed brick rubble.

This site appears on charts of Kendal beginning in 1888 and its location remains unchanged through the first quarter of the twentieth century (Figure 110). It is located beyond the Kendal core and would have been a structure that visitors would have passed prior to their arrival at the main house. Its location might even have required visitors to detour around it in order to reach Kendal and would likely have blocked the view of the house down the oak avenue.

Investigative Methods

Surface visibility was good and a pedestrian survey was conducted of the area. A grab collection of artifacts was made, with all observed materials collected.

Artifacts

The artifacts recovered are itemized in Table 26. Although the Chinese porcelain seems out of place, the remainder of the collection is entirely appropriate for a structure constructed in the early postbellum. The presence of a toy

saucer also suggests that at one point the structure was home to a child.

The collection is suggestive of an overseer and the location may have been centralized, allowing easy access to agricultural fields and the main settlement, as well as allowing the overseer to keep track of those coming down the road. Of course, other possible residents may include the Kendal cook or perhaps even the Kendal store operated by Frederick Kidder. The structure may even have had multiple functions through time.

Table 26,
Artifacts Recovered at 31BW796**

Kitchen Group		47	87.0
Chinese porcelain, blue hand painted	1		
White porcelain, undecorated	1		
Whiteware, undecorated	19		
Whiteware, annular	1		
Albany slip SW	1		
Coarse Red earthenware	1		
Glass, black	2		
Glass, aqua	13		
Glass, green	1		
Glass, milk	1		
Glass, manganese	6		
Architecture Group		6	11.1
Window glass	4		
bolt plate	1		
Nails, machine cut	1		
Furniture Group		0	0.0
Arms Group		0	0.0
Tobacco Group		0	0.0
Clothing Group		0	0.0
Personal Group		0	0.0
Activities Group		1	1.9
TOTAL		54	

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

This site, clearly associated with the Kendal plans and charts, and having several possible functions should be preserved for archaeological investigation. Each of the possible occupants of the site provides significant research potential. Additional oral history may expand the research interest in this particular site.

No additional silvacultural activity should take place in this area and the site should be planted in grass to help control erosion. Special care should be taken during planting and future bush hogging to avoid damage to the brick pile at the site.

31BW797**

Location: Zone 18; 3773334N 227268E (NAD 27 datum)

Elevation: 15 feet AMSL

Component: Nineteenth century settlement
Size: 150 by 100 feet

Previous disturbance: Silviculture with removal of much site vegetation

Landform location: Upland flats

Vegetation: Cut over today, but previously pine and scrub

Site Description

This site was originally situated on the south side of the River Road and, according to oral history, was known as Hagfield (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012). By mid century there was nothing left of the structure and the area was being cultivated.

Remnants of fencing along the boundary of the property with a dirt road that ran parallel to River Road are still present at the site, as is a turn-in probably used by the occupants and later by agricultural implements.

This site is present on charts dating to 1888, but is not shown on the 1878 chart. It continues to be shown through the early 1920s and then disappears.

Investigative Methods

Surface visibility was good and a pedestrian survey was conducted of the area. A grab collection of artifacts was made, with all observed materials collected.

Artifacts

The artifacts present at this site are consistent with a late postbellum occupation, consisting primarily of whitewares. Other materials include three Herty cup fragments. These may have been lost or discarded during an earlier period of naval stores production, or may

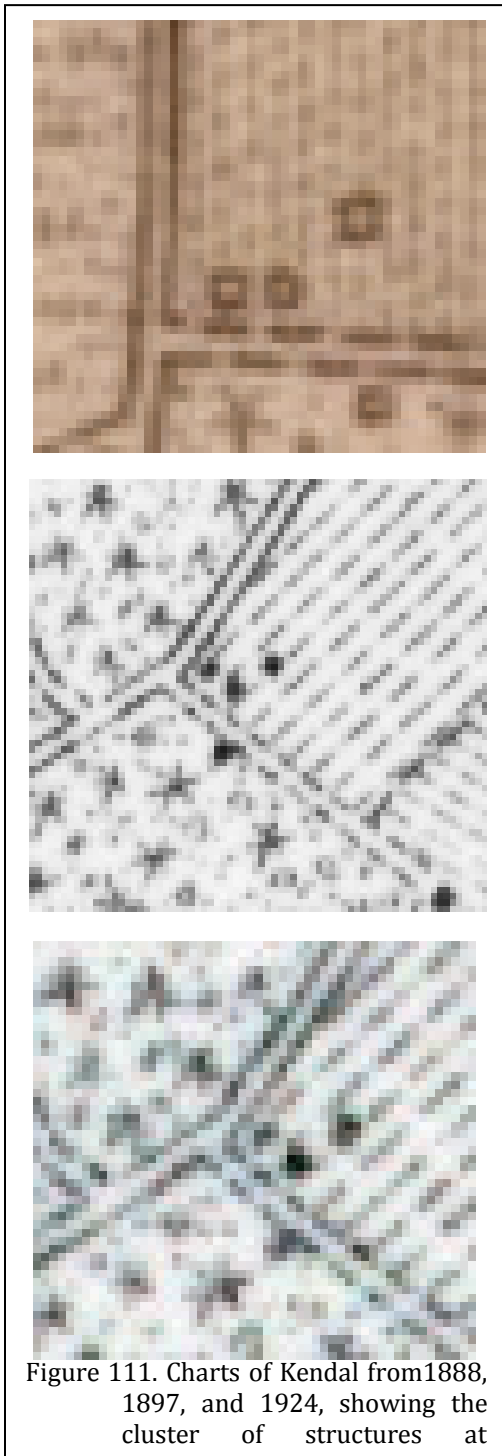


Figure 111. Charts of Kendal from 1888, 1897, and 1924, showing the cluster of structures at

indicate that resin collection continued into the late postbellum. The artifacts recovered are listed in Table 27.

As with other surface collections, this collection is overly weighted toward ceramics, so the pattern presented is not especially useful for comparisons with other assemblages.

Also present is a single quartz flake

Table 27.
Artifacts Recovered from 31BW797**

Kitchen Group		30	81.1
White porcelain, undecorated	8		
Whiteware, undecorated	13		
Whiteware, blue transfer printed	2		
Glass, aqua	2		
Glass, light green	2		
Glass, clear	1		
Glass, manganese	2		
Architecture Group		4	10.8
Window glass	3		
Nails, wire	1		
Furniture Group		0	0.0
Arms Group		0	0.0
Tobacco Group		0	0.0
Clothing Group		0	0.0
Personal Group		0	0.0
Activities Group		3	8.1
Herty cup fragments	3		
TOTAL		37	37

representing an isolated prehistoric item.

Summary and NRHP Evaluation

While earlier than nearby 31BW790**, this site's research potential is nearly identical. Additional research could offer a glimpse into the lives of Kendal's African American population shortly after freedom and provide information on how wage workers lived. The data would serve as an invaluable comparison to research on enslaved African Americans who toiled in the rice fields.

We recommend that the site be removed from any further silvacultural activity and planted in grass to stabilize the soil. This will help preserve the site until such time as additional archaeological research can be conducted.

Underwater Remains

An underwater archaeological study was conducted by Tidewater Atlantic Research (Watts 2012). Their report should be examined for additional details.

This work involved a magnetometer and sidescan sonar survey of the Orton waterfront on the Cape Fear River from the mouth of Orton Creek in the north to the mouth of Orton Pond Spillway in the south. Ten magnetic anomalies and/or sonar targets were identified that are considered significant. One is associated with the Orton Plantation vessel dock and another is associated with the Orton Point Lighthouse.

The marsh frontage was also subjected to a pedestrian survey during low tide. This phase of the investigations identified 11 features. Nine of these are remains of pilings and plank bulkheads, and occasional iron pipe fragments. The remaining two features include a riveted iron cylinder thought to be associated with a late 19th-century Funck tubular navigation lantern and structural elements thought to be the remains of a dike trunk.

Similar bulkhead features were identified during Chicora Foundation's examination of the low tide areas associated with the massive rice fields of William Aiken's Jehossee Island plantation in Charleston County, South Carolina (Trinkley et al. 2002:176-177, 185).

Those in South Carolina consisted of double rows of pilings to which planks were attached. Those above mean sea level had weathered away, but preservation was adequate between low and high tide to examine and document construction.

The various accounts of rice field dike construction fail to mention the use of wood bulkheads, instead just describing how the marsh soils were "thrown up" to form the dike systems. These descriptions do not seem to be describing banks along active rivers – such as either Edisto in South Carolina or the Cape Fear in North Carolina. It seems likely, given the tidal flow and power of

the rivers that bulkheads would have been essential to stabilize and hold the soils against the river. Leach and Wood (1994) provide documentation for the use of bulkheads during rice dike construction and as a means to control shoreline erosion along the Back River in Chatham County, Georgia and Jasper County, South Carolina.

Nearly 1,500 linear feet of these bulkheads were identified during the Jehossee survey – sufficient to suggest that these devices were widely used, not isolated or unique to specific locations.

In addition, just as a trunk was identified at Orton, a similar feature was found well preserved at Jehossee (Trinkley et al. 2002:175-176).

The Tidewater Atlantic Research study did not extend northward to Kendal Plantation, but it seems reasonable that similar features (excepting of course the lighthouse remains) will be found there as well. It would also be useful to examine the multiple locations of the Kendal dock, as well as the pump house documented in the Kendal rice fields during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Orton Plantation

The Mythology

In their more prosaic moments historians are prone to make references to the vast pageant

Every historian we have found tells how Orton was purchased by James Sprunt for his wife. This is an intriguing historical distortion since the plantation was actually purchased by Luola and her will very carefully insured that her husband and child would have only life interests in the property.

Table 28.
Simplified Ownership Chart for Orton Plantation

1728-1751	Roger Moore
1751-1754	William Moore
1754-?	Mary Moore, widow of William
1764-c.1773	Richard Quince and William Dry (operated)
c. 1773-c.1775	Roger Moore
c.1775-1778	Richard Quince
1778-1786	Richard Quince III
1796-1815	Benjamin Smith
1815-1816	Bank of Cape Fear
1816-1824	John Burgwin
1824-1826	Bank of Cape Fear
1826	Joseph Hill
1826-1854	Dr. Frederick Hill
1854-1866	Thomas C. Miller
1866-1869	Annie M. Miller, widow of Thomas
1869-1874	William C. Boudinot (Hill estate)
1874-1876	Isaac B. Grainger
1876-1877	Currier R. Roundell
1877-c.1884	D. & K. Murchison, Isaac Grainger, Charles Steadman
1884-1904	Kenneth M. Murchison
1904-1909	Murchison heirs
1909-1916	Luola M. Sprunt
1916-1924	James Sprunt (life interest only)
1924-1973	James Laurence Sprunt (life interest only)
1973-1984	James L., Kenneth M., Sam N., Laurence G. Sprunt
1984-2010	Kenneth M., Sam N., Laurence G. Sprunt
2010-	Orton Plantation Holdings, LLC

of history. Certainly this is true of Orton with its 27 owners (Table 28) over the past 284 years. While Orton will forever be associated with the Moore family, they held the property less than 50 years, although many of the successive owners had a very close relationship.

Similarly, while Orton is also intimately associated with rice production, the earliest, well documented evidence we have identified of rice production on Orton is the 1838 news article reporting on the rice crop of Frederick Hill.

The evidence for Benjamin Smith planting rice is tantalizing, but equivocal. While the 1824 sales advertisement for the plantation indicates that a rice machine was destroyed by a fire, the notice describes the 400 to 500 acres as “swamp land,” not rice land. We have equally convincing evidence that Smith was planting cotton. An early letter by Smith, dating from 1797, mentions rice, but it may have been a reference to his Belvedere Plantation, where he lived, not Orton.

Any earlier than this and there is virtually no evidence to support rice production. In fact, in

1768 only 84 barrels of rice were shipped out of Brunswick, compared to nearly 63,300 barrels of naval stores.

Although it is enticing to suggest that Roger Moore’s large slave population must have

been planting rice, this is at best a supposition and it is just as easy to imagine his enslaved African Americans planting indigo (for which is there is equally little evidence) or engaged in the exploitation of the area's rich forests, for which there is possibly more evidence.

It is easier to identify when rice fell from favor, with oral history and other lines of evidence suggesting a period during the late 1920s or early 1930s. Thus, the planters most intimately associated with rice on Orton before the Civil War were Hill and Miller, while Grainger and Murchison continued the process in the postbellum. Although rice continued through the ownership of Luola Sprunt and her husband, James Sprunt, it seems unlikely that the effort ever matched that of earlier planters.

The issue of seed rice at Orton has also intrigued researchers and rice historians, but sadly there is little conclusive evidence. It appears that many – perhaps most – planters produced some seed rice, either for their own use or for sale. There is also conflicting evidence regarding the value of northern seed rice. While the Charleston, SC newspapers have thousands of advertisements for seed rice from local planters in the antebellum, there are only a few hundred ads for seed rice from North Carolina. Generally, these ads are for relatively small cargoes from unnamed planters. The one exception we identified are the advertisements for “Meares’ seed rice” coming from a plantation on the Cape Fear north of Wilmington.

The Main House

Equally complex – and tentative – is our understanding of the main house. Previous authors have taken a very complex – and poorly understood – story and made it quite simple: a house built by Robert Moore, burned, then was replaced with a mansion, followed by expansion by Frederick Hill, and ultimately further expansion by James and Luola Sprunt.

Roger Moore (1694-1751) was already a prosperous man when he acquired Orton, assembling the tract in multiple purchases.

Although there is no documentary evidence about his initial residence there, it has long been said that Moore's first house at Orton was destroyed by fire or Native Americans. Given his status and personal history, it seems likely that he selected the most favorable area of his plantation for his first house, and that it was a substantial dwelling. If Moore built a predecessor to the present house, it must have been a short-lived mansion. Built no earlier than 1728, it had been destroyed and replaced by 1734, when the Orton house was a notable building. The traveler found it comparable to Lilliput, “another beautiful Brick House.” If Moore built two houses in a six-year span, it seems most likely that the same location was used for both. Regardless of its construction history, Roger Moore was living in the Orton house when he wrote his will in March 1747/8.

The only way to resolve whether there was an earlier structure is through archaeological research, combined with careful architectural evaluations of the standing structure.

Architect's drawings prepared in 1910 suggest that thick masonry perimeter walls of today's “living room” represent the core of Roger Moore's pre-1734 Orton House. The thirty-four foot wide building with internal chimneys centered on the twenty-three foot side walls was not grand in its size or scale – but grandeur was not the impression that struck the 1734 traveler. Rather, he described Orton and nearby Lilliput as “beautiful.” He remarked equally regarding their brick construction.

Roger Moore died sometime between June 1750, and May 1751. His son William inherited Orton. William Moore was about 30 years old, and had grown up there. As the youngest son, he would have stayed with his parents as his elder brothers matured and acquired their own plantations. It was typical for the youngest son to inherit the family's home plantation, and he might have already taken over effective management of Orton for his elderly father.

William Moore died in 1757, about six years after his father, leaving a valid will which he

had written in 1754. To his widow, Mary, William gave a life interest in Orton; their son, Roger Moore, who was a very young child, would inherit when he came of age in 1773. Until that time, the estate would be managed by the executors, George Moore, William's elder brother, and their cousin Maurice Moore. The executors found that William's estate was in debt in the amount of £1,700, and was further obligated to make various annual payments of more than £130. The reason for the debt has not been discovered. However, there is no reason to believe that William Moore had replaced his father's house, and even less reason to think that the house was rebuilt during Roger Moore's minority.

In 1764, William Moore's executors entered into an agreement with Richard Quince and William Dry, both successful Brunswick merchants. Dry was closely related to the Moore family - his wife, Rebecca, was a sister of Roger Moore - and Quince would become connected to them through his son's marriage to a grand-niece of Roger Moore. Quince and Dry would repay the estate's debt in exchange for operating the plantation until Roger Moore came of age, at which time he would own the plantation free of any debt.

Occupancy of Orton in the years after 1764 is not clear, nor is it known where young Roger Moore and his mother resided. At some point after Roger reached legal age, he sold Orton Plantation to Richard Quince. The property was in the Moore family in 1775, and was owned by Quince at his death in 1778. In 1796, Richard Quince III, grandson of Richard Quince, sold Orton as 2,700 acres to Benjamin Smith, who was a nephew of the first Roger Moore.

Benjamin Smith seems to have made his primary residence at nearby Belvedere Plantation. By 1797, just a year after his purchase of Orton, Smith was anticipating his rice fields to "yield handsomely." He must have been referring to the fields at Belvedere; Orton would not yet have been producing rice unless fields had been engineered by a previous owner, which seems unlikely.

After several years of financial difficulties,

in 1812 Benjamin Smith came to an agreement with the Bank of Cape Fear for repayment of his substantial obligations. He would continue operating Belvedere, Orton, and seven additional tracts - nearly 11,000 acres in all - but all profits would go to the bank, which retained the right to foreclose on the property. Following an action by another of Smith's creditors, in early 1815 the bank bought Smith's plantations at sheriff's auction, paying \$2,600 for Orton and \$9,000 for Belvedere's 4,000 acres.

In April, 1815, John F. Burgwin of Wilmington bought Orton and four other tracts formerly belonging to Smith from the Bank of Cape Fear. Burgwin was acting as an ally of Smith's, not as a disinterested purchaser. Burgwin became Orton's legal owner, and made it available to Benjamin Smith. Having lost Belvedere completely, Benjamin Smith moved to Orton Plantation. How well the house had been maintained during his ownership since 1796 is questionable. There might have been a resident overseer from time to time, but this has not been verified. With his hand-to-mouth finances, Smith is unlikely to have modernized the sturdy brick house, but it seems to have survived the years of neglect. He was still living at Orton in 1818, planting rice and cotton in a vain effort to pay off his debts. His wife died in 1821, and just a few years later, Smith gave up entirely and moved to Smithville.

Whatever the arrangement Benjamin Smith had had with John Burgwin, it was not enough to pay the mortgage on Orton. In 1824, the plantation was advertised for sale at public auction as Valuable Rice and Cotton Lands, late the residence of Gov. Benjamin Smith, containing 4,975 acres, more or less. The advertisement suggests that the land, some suitable for rice and some for cotton, had been neglected. Equipment was in ruins, the rice machine, mill, and cotton gin having recently burned, and the dam lacking floodgates.

In 1826, Joseph A. Hill bought Orton Plantation from the Bank of Cape Fear, and very shortly, on May 24, 1826, he sold the 4,975 acres to Dr. Frederick Jones Hill for \$8,000. Joseph Hill

was the first cousin of Frederick J. Hill, who was a son of Dr. John Hill. Genealogists have shown that John Hill's family descended from Nathaniel Moore, a brother of the first Roger Moore. Dr. Frederick Hill, then in his early thirties, was a trained physician, a profession well-suited to a white man responsible for the lives and health of the slave population on an isolated rice plantation.

When Frederick Hill bought Orton Plantation, the house had been vacant for at least two years. For the quarter-century before his purchase, there had been little maintenance and no modernizations to the building. By 1830, Hill and his wife were living at Orton, then on June 20, 1835, the house was damaged by a tornado.

These two events – acquisition by a wealthy young family and storm damage – probably account for the evolution of Roger Moore's small mansion into a large Greek Revival edifice. It is reported that the attic retains physical traces of an enlargement that took place before the present gabled roof was constructed. That enlargement would have been part of the work required to bring the neglected building up to acceptable condition for the Hills' residence. Ten years later, when repairs were required after the storm, the house was thoroughly redesigned as the stylish dwelling of a successful rice planter.

Although the core of Frederick J. Hill's Orton Plantation House is thought to be the outer masonry walls of Roger Moore's eighteenth century dwelling, in its design and appearance Orton is a product of mid-1830s architectural taste. With a sizeable rear addition, the lateral rectangle of Moore's house became a long front-to-back rectangle characteristic of the Greek Revival temple form most popular for religious and public buildings. Hill retained the eastward orientation of the façade, but redesigned it with a pedimented front gable above the monumental portico.

There is no information about who designed the house, or who planned and executed its construction. By the 1830s, carpenters and architects nationwide were familiar with Greek Revival forms and details. Competent craftsmen

could be found in Wilmington, but Hill might have secured the services of an architect or builder from farther away.

Late-nineteenth century photographs show a well-proportioned building set low to the ground above a full basement. Its dominant feature is the riverfront façade, with four full-height Doric columns and a frieze that is carried all around the building. The entry opening is flanked by tripartite windows in oversized openings; at the second level are five openings, single windows and an entry opening with a small iron balcony. The placement of this opening indicates a center hall plan at the second level. At the rear addition, Orton's designer took advantage of the southern orientation of the house's left side by setting an open ground-level room behind an arcaded double opening. Whether this was planned as an outdoor domestic work area, or an entertaining area to supplement the fairly shallow front porch, is left for further research. Orton's notable winter garden, which Major Thomas Rowland commented upon in 1862, might have been organized around the rear patio. No photographs are available for the north elevation, which looked toward the mill and other work buildings.

A newspaper advertisement from 1872 describes Orton as two stories, with ten rooms above the basement. It is safe to assume that four rooms were in the 34' X 23'6" front section – two rooms on each floor, divided by a center hall. The arrangement of the other six rooms cannot be determined from the photographs, nor is it known whether the center hall extended as a through corridor to a rear entry.

The property did not receive serious attention as a residence for many years after the Civil War. In 1877, Isaac Grainger (a former owner), Charles Stedman, and David Murchison, all of Wilmington, partnered with Murchison's father, Kenneth Murchison of New York, a former Wilmingtonian, to buy Orton Plantation. In the late 1880s, Kenneth Murchison had become sole owner of Orton Plantation, and began to spend the winter months there, hunting game and entertaining other sportsmen. His use was similar

to that of other struggling or inactive rice plantations throughout the southeast. Upon Murchison's death in 1904, his five children inherited undivided shares in Orton.

In 1909, Luola Murchison Sprunt, one of Kenneth Murchison's four daughters, bought Orton from her siblings. Luola had married James Sprunt in 1883, the year before her father acquired full ownership of Orton; her son James L. Sprunt was in his early twenties when she attained ownership. Although she had not "grown up" there, Luola Sprunt revitalized her father's Orton Plantation. While her brother Kenneth Murchison, Jr., designed two one-story wings that doubled the size of the house, well-known landscape architect Robert Swan Sturtevant, an officer of the American Iris Society, collaborated in planning extensive new gardens.

Kenneth M. Murchison, Jr. (1872-1938) was a professional architect, a graduate of Columbia University and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Early in his career, he established himself as a designer of railroad stations and other large commercial buildings for which he usually employed Beaux Arts or Classical Revival architecture. Among his commissions were railroad stations in Hoboken, Buffalo, Long Island, Baltimore, Jacksonville; Scranton and Johnstown, Pennsylvania; and even Havana, Cuba.

The wings Murchison added to the Orton House in 1910-1911 are very good examples of Classical Revival design, entirely compatible with the Greek Revival style of the nineteenth century main house. The architect's work also included hotels, apartment buildings, and notable clubs and recreation buildings such as the Sands Point Bath and Tennis Club on Long Island, West Side Tennis Club in Forest Hills, New York, and the Dunes Club in Narragansett, Rhode Island. He also designed several guest houses near the Dunes Club, and private summer houses on Long Island. The architectural styles of these rambling dwellings varied among several revival styles, Tudor Revival for some of the private buildings, "Normandy farmhouse" for the 1928 Dunes Club, and more eclectic designs for the Dunes guest houses. Such sampling of architectural vocabularies was

characteristic of large-scale residential design during the first decades of the twentieth century, before the taste for Colonial Revival architecture became predominant.

Other Standing Architecture

There have been several additional standing structures on the plantation, but these have been gradually lost. The third Orton chapel for African Americans was moved off the property. What was known as the Bonnie House, at the plantation entrance, was burned in 2007. Another structure burned in 2011. The fate of the Orton "doll house" is unknown. Several additional structures used by workers were moved off the property in the 1950s as a result of the Sunny Point safety easement.

As a result, only two historic structures other than the main house remain on the plantation – at 31BW787**7 and a barn south of today's office. Comparison of the Orton African American chapel (and a structure to the rear), the structure at 31BW787**7, the single photograph of the burned structure at 31BW787**12, the barn, and the structure moved off the plantation, reveal a number of similarities.

Perhaps most notably all of them are of board and batten construction. This particular type of siding seems to be used commonly where builders must use green lumber. Since Orton had multiple mills during its history there was likely a ready supply of green, rough sawn lumber.

If the two dwellings are examined they both have board and batten siding. Where gable ends had not been resided, they had wood shingle siding. The central chimneys are nicely detailed with corbeled banding. The African American church was also sided in board and batten and the gable exhibited a detailed vent, similar to the one found on the burned house.

Building elements in the houses and at the small chapel are all items that could have been sourced from Wilmington and appear much finer than generally found in tenant structures. This suggests that the houses may have begun their

lives as homes for supervisors and were subsequently used for valued African American workers.

Archaeological Sites

The archaeological reconnaissance on Orton Plantation identified 17 sites briefly summarized in Table 29 below. Readers should be aware that because this was a reconnaissance survey, it is not possible to fully assess National Register eligibility. Thus, the recommendations offered in Table 29 are “best guesses” based on the information available. Where sites are recommended “potentially eligible,” we view the archaeological resources as potentially significant to the story of Orton and worthy of either careful protection of additional archaeological investigation.

Regardless, relatively few eighteenth century settlements were identified and only one of these, 31BW787**14, may represent African Americans. In addition, the reconnaissance survey provides only scant evidence of Roger Moore’s earliest settlement at Orton. While 31BW787**1 provides some evidence of early settlement around the main house, but the time of these investigations the yard at the Orton House had been landscaped.

Kendal Plantation

Kendal Plantation has historically received less intense scrutiny than has Orton. In spite of this, Kendal is reported to have also been owned by Moore family. This research identified that Moores held the property for 40 years – only a decade less than Orton. Subsequently, 20

additional owners held Kendal over the next 200 years (Table 30).

Although it has been popular to speculate that Moore built a house on Kendal, we have been unable to document any structure prior to perhaps the early antebellum. The Kendal house has attracted far less attention or interest than Orton, although the Kendal

Table 29.
Orton Plantation Archaeological Sites

Archaeological Site	Site Type	UTM (NAD 27)		Size (ft)	Recommendation
		N	E		
31BW548**	Orton AA Graveyard	3772281	227712	200x200	PE
31BW787**1	18th - 19th c domestic	3772568	227983	200x150	PE
31BW787**2	Roger Moore Cemetery	3772938	228001	50x50	PE
31BW787**3	prehistoric & historic scatter	3772925	228010	75x50	NE
31BW787**4	late 19th - 20th c domestic	3771679	227628	150x200	PE
31BW787**5	late 19th c domestic	3771491	227707	100x100	PE
31BW787**6	late 19th c domestic	3771582	227637	100x100	PE
31BW787**7	19th & 20th c domestic	3772004	227907	1000x600	PE
31BW787**8	20th c structure	3771710	227882	18x39	NE
31BW787**9	19th & 20th c domestic	3772795	227068	180x150	PE
31BW787**10	prehistoric & historic scatter	3772810	227232	75x75	NE
31BW787**11	prehistoric	3772928	227501	50x50	NE
31BW787**12	19th c domestic	3771425	227800	1700x300	PE
31BW787**13	19th c domestic	3771525	227726	1300x150	PE
31BW787**14	18th - 19th c domestic or industrial	3771122	227756	100x100	PE
31BW787**15	19th c industrial	3771178	227820	50x50	PE
31BW787**16	19th c ditch	3773030	227385	1400	PE

PE = potentially eligible; NE = not eligible

The bulk of the sites identified represent settlements that can be securely dated to the last half of the 19th century, using the available maps and charts showing Orton. Many of these are postbellum settlements of African Americans. We assume that some of these sites, especially 31BW787**12 and 31BW787**13, also represent earlier slave settlements where antebellum artifacts have simply been overlooked as a result of sampling bias.

structure was almost certainly more typical of period architecture. The frame construction, however, has been perceived as both less interesting and less impressive than the brick settlement at Orton.

In spite of this the Kendal plantation house is worth careful study in its own right, reflecting as it does a once common style. Today there are only two documented antebellum structures in Brunswick, Hickory Hall (31BW234)

Table 30.
Simplified Ownership Chart for Kendal Plantation

1725-1726	Maurice Moore
1726-1751	Roger Moore
1751-1765	George Moore
1765-?	John Davis
?-1786	General Robert Howe
1786-1794	Robert Howe, Jr., heir
1794-?	James McAlester
?- 1806	Benjamin Smith
1806-c.1815	James Smith
?	John Hill
?-1837	Gabriel Holmes
1837-1860	Owen D. Holmes, Gabriel Holmes, William H. Holmes
1860-?	Owen D. Holmes and William H. Holmes
?-1872	Owen D. Holmes
1872-1875	Walter G. Curtis
1875-c.1879	Owen M. Holmes
c.1879-1882	Walter G. Curtis
1882-1908	Frederic Kidder
1908-1918	Heirs of Frederic Kidder
1912-	Luola Sprunt
1918-	James Sprunt
-1950	J. Laurence Sprunt
1950-	James L. Sprunt, Jr., Kenneth M. Sprunt, Sam N. Sprunt, and Laurence G. Sprunt

Kendal's eighteenth and nineteenth century history parallels that of Orton, with the property being used for naval stores and rice production. While Orton Plantation was being developed in the twentieth century as first a nursery and subsequently a tourist garden, Kendal was largely ignored, although agricultural activities continued – perhaps focusing on truck farming similar to a few areas on Orton.

Archaeological Sites

Ten archaeological sites were identified on the portion of the Kendal property examined during this reconnaissance (Table 31). These sites include the main Kendal structure (31BW788**), as well as several late nineteenth and early twentieth structures used by African American laborers on the

and Winnabow (31BW253) (Landmark Preservation Associates 2010:1-11). Both are two-story frame structures; Hickory Hall dates to the first quarter of the nineteenth century and its original section is a simplified Georgian style. Winnabow, dating to the first half of the nineteenth century, is a Greek Revival structure. Both possess architectural details reminiscent of Kendal.

property (such as 31BW790**).

In addition, our work found at least six sites that include eighteenth and nineteenth

Fortunately, Kendal's structure is well documented by a series of late nineteenth century photographs taken prior to its loss in 1919. In addition, the archaeological site has been carefully preserved from relic collectors or other damage.

Table 31.
Archaeological Sites on Kendal Plantation

Archaeological Site	Site Type	UTM (NAD 27)		Size (ft)	Recommendation
		N	E		
31BW788**	18th - 20th c domestic	3773325	227825	300x400	PE
31BW789**	19th c domestic	3773342	227431	220x110	PE
31BW790**	19th - 20th c domestic	3773460	227240	500x400	PE
31BW791**	19th - 20th c domestic	3773333	227314	200x150	PE
31BW792**	18th - 19th c domestic	3773723	227740	350x200	PE
31BW793**	18th c domestic	3773632	227786	100x100	PE
31BW794**	prehistoric	3773652	227835	20x20	NE
31BW795**	18th - 19th c domestic	3773380	227365	150x100	PE
31BW796**	19th c domestic	3773308	227503	150x100	PE
31BW797**	19th c domestic	3773334	227268	150x100	PE

PE = potentially eligible; NE = not eligible

century artifacts suggestive of dispersed slave settlements. These may represent slave sites associated with tending rice fields or possibly associated with naval stores production. Moreover, additional survey in the vicinity of the

main Kendal house is likely to produce additional structures associated with African American house servants.

Because Kendal Plantation was less involved in the evolution of Orton to a tourist destination, many of the sites on the plantation remain in excellent condition. It may be easier to explore eighteenth and nineteenth century lifeways on Kendal than on Orton, but additional research will be necessary to determine if this is the case.

Recommendations

The acquisition of Orton and Kendal plantations by an individual with the resources and desire to identify and protect the historic resources has presented a unique opportunity. One outcome has been the preparation of this report, exploring the historical resources and beginning the documentation of the property's archaeological sites. The following section provides recommendations to ensure the protection of these resources.

Historical Research

Our research has compiled extensive information regarding Orton Plantation, detailed most of the property transfers, examined many of the owners, and explored many of the plantation's features. There remain some questions that additional research might be able to resolve, such as what Mary Moore, the widow of William, did on the plantation during her brief tenure, or how William left such a staggering debt that the plantation had to be operated by Quince and Dry. Additional research may be able to resolve why Roger, William's son, chose to sell the property once he came of age. More research might be able to tease apart the contractual arrangement between the Murchisons, Isaac Grainger, and Charles Steadman.

At a broader scale of interest, further research may identify records that would provide more information on naval store and rice production at Orton. More careful research into the Sprunt records at Duke might reconcile some of the later activities on the plantation. All of these

topics, however, are likely to require a considerable investment of time and energy – and success is by no means certain.

The need for additional historical research at Kendal is far easier to justify – and more likely to produce immediately useful results. Table 30, for example, reveals that much could still be done to resolve ownership of Kendal. Of special interest is an effort to document economic activity at Kendal during the antebellum. Unfortunately, local newspapers are not available in digital formats, so they must be visually scanned. While labor intensive, this may provide significant information regarding activities at both Orton and Kendal.

This additional historic research would be of considerable assistance in correctly interpreting the plantations and ensuring that sound management decisions are made.

Documenting Standing Architecture

One structure on Orton has already been lost to fire and we recommend that the other structures on the plantation be thoroughly documented as quickly as possible.

Orton Plantation contains several structures that should be carefully documented. In terms of priority these include the standing structure at 31BW787**7 and the barn located south of the current office. For these structures we recommend HABS quality B/W photography and measured drawings. Photographs must be taken with large format (4x5 or larger) cameras, with the images perspective corrected in the field at the time of capture using the view camera.

The film used should be polyester-based, slow speed (e.g., ASA 100).

Views should include the general view that captures the setting and adjacent landscaping; the front façade; perspective views of the front and one side, and rear and the opposite side; details of the front entrance; typical window; exterior details of the structure that may be

indicative of the era of construction or of architectural interest; and interior views to capture spatial arrangements, structural evidence, typical room(s), and decorative elements (including hallways, framing, fireplaces and mantels, and moldings).

Processing of the film and prints must be to the manufacturer's specifications. In addition, it must be of archival quality. This involves, for example, using fresh chemistry, hypo eliminator, appropriate water washes, and selenium toner.

Prints should be produced at the size of contact prints. If photographic prints are produced they must be printed on paper, not RC paper. Since contact speed paper is increasingly difficult to find, it is possible to scan the negatives at a resolution of 5,000 pixels across (about 800ppi for a 5x7 negative). This can be downsized for printing ease to 400 ppi.

In addition to the photography, drawings comparable to HABS Documentation Level 3, a sketch plan, should be prepared.

We also recommend that the main Orton house receive additional investigation by an architectural historian capable of documenting construction details that may assist in better understanding the evolution of the structure. For example, it is critical that details reportedly present in the attic be carefully photographed, drawn, and assessed.

Because of the inherent instability of the structure at 31BW787**7 and the barn located south of the current office, we recommend that the documentation of these structures receive a very high priority. Although the main house is not threatened, we recommend its investigation in the near term simply because that information may help resolve lingering questions concerning how the Orton house changed over time.

The documents resulting from this work should be forwarded to the Non-Textual Materials Unit at the North Carolina State Archives for permanent curation.

Maintenance of Standing Architecture

The structure at 31BW787**7 and the barn are both subject to a variety of threats, including fire, water damage, and insects. Steps should be taken to ensure these structures are made as safe as possible.

Initially, the structures should be cleaned, removing all unneeded items and sweeping out all debris. Care should be taken if birds, bats, or rodents have nested in either structure since the fecal material can carry significant disease. All open vents must be carefully screened to prevent the entry of pests, birds, and bats. The use of ¼-inch hardware cloth backed with window screen is often sufficient to deter pests.

To achieve some protection from wildlife, establish a 100 foot safety zone around these structures. In this area:

- Remove all dead trees, plants, and shrubs.
- Reduce excess leaves.
- Remove plants and debris under trees that allow ground fires to jump into trees.
- Prune trees up at least 15 feet.
- Where mulch is necessary, use non-flammable items such stone or gravel.
- Ensure that shrubs are at least 20 feet away from buildings.
- Select plantings that grow close to the ground and have a low sap or resin content.
- If possible, create and maintain a 12 foot fire lane around structures.
- No flammable materials should be stored in either building.

Short of fire, the next greatest threat to historic structures is water intrusion. We recommend that the roofs of both structures be inspected by a licensed roofing contractor with repairs or replacement in kind, as necessary. Roofs should be visually inspected by a licensed roofing contractor annually, as well as after any severe wind event. Each inspection should verify

Table 32.
Maintenance Schedule for Historic Structures

Task & Frequency	Staff	Outside Contractor
Daily		
Drive-by surveillance	X	
Weekly		
Walk-around inspection	X	
Monthly		
Interior inspection	X	
Check condition of doors & windows	X	
Mow grass, clean yard	X	
Inspect termiticides bait stations		X
Semi-Annually		
Replow fire lanes	X	
Verify adequate ventilation	X	
Check condition of siding	X	
Yearly		
Complete pest inspection		X
Check roof and flashing		X

protection for only 5-7 years, assuming that the perimeter treatment is perfect and that the resulting barrier remains undamaged over its life. As a result, we recommend that Orton consider the use of termite bait stations. These include the Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System (Dow AgroSciences; noviflumuron), FirstLine (FMC Corp.; sulfluramid), Exterra Termite Interception and Baiting System (Ensystem, Inc.; diflubenzuron), and Subterfuge (BASF Corp.; hydramethylnon). It is important, however, to understand that all bait stations require careful installation and monitoring by

that none of the flashing is missing and that the caulking (if any) is sound.

trained technicians.

All windows must be inspected and repaired as necessary to maintain weather-tightness and prevent rainwater entry. If complete replacement is not possible, then it is appropriate to install plywood panels, properly installed to protect wooden frames and ventilated. The National Park Service recommends bringing the upper and lower sash of a double hung unit to the mid-point of the opening and then installing pre-cut plywood panels using long carriage bolts anchored into horizontal wooden bracing, or strong backs, on the inside face of the window. These plywood panels should be minimally ½-inch either CDX or marine grade plywood. The plywood can have vents installed to aid airflow through the structure. Interior doors should all be propped open to help ensure airflow through the structure.

Bait stations do not provide protection against other wood destroying pests such as carpenter ants or wood borers, nor do they protect against mold and wood rot. The best protection against these organisms involve yearly pest inspections that involve a careful inspection of the interior, an inspection of the crawlspace (for 31BW787**7), and an examination of wood moisture content using a simple moisture probe.

Table 32 provides a simple maintenance schedule for these structures.

Archaeological Sites

It is also critical to ensure that the structures are protected from pests, especially termites and other wood destroying organisms. It is important to understand that the EPA requires only five years of efficacy for termiticides licensing. Most termiticides will provide

The archaeological investigations conducted at Orton and Kendal were at a reconnaissance level with the goal of quickly identifying sites based on examination of the high probability areas. These locations were generally defined based on historic research. Thus, these sites are weighted toward historic settlements and prehistoric sites are nearly absent. In addition, the survey was not intended to represent the level of survey that would be necessary for compliance with Section 106 of the National

Historic Preservation Act.

As previously explained, the level of survey is also inadequate to assess the National Register eligibility of the sites. Some sites are found within the current 300+ acre National Register site boundary and can be considered contributing resources. Others that are outside these boundaries have been evaluated in the context of their research potential. Those capable of addressing significant research questions have been characterized as “potentially eligible.”

Of the 27 sites identified, five are likely not able to make significant research contributions. The remaining 22 sites are potentially important to the history of Orton and Kendal plantations and we recommend that every possible effort be made to preserve and protect these sites.

We have periodically recommended that these sites be seeded in grass for coverage. No silvicultural activities should take place on these sites. Planting, management activities, and harvesting will all potentially damage these sites and thus should not occur.

On some sites, such as the Kendal main settlement (31BW788**) it will be necessary to clear the site of vegetation by hand. No mechanical equipment should be used. The work should be done in a fashion that causes a minimum of disturbance to the brick and surface artifacts.

If there are sites where this process of protection, called green spacing, is not practical, we strongly recommend additional archaeological investigations.

Archaeologists have a variety of techniques at their disposal, but none of these options are inexpensive or quick. Thus, it is critical that adequate time be allowed for sites to be fully investigated if preservation is not feasible.

In general, the next phase of investigation may incorporate shovel testing, followed by some level of excavation. This may involve the excavation of a few 10-foot units or it may

incorporate the excavation of large expanses in order to expose structural remains. Research at each site should be coordinated with the level of impact the site is expected to receive.

It is especially important to realize that while the white owners of Orton and Kendal may be researched using available historical and legal documents, white overseers left little imprint in the historical records. Their lives can be studied only by examining the archaeological sites they left behind (see, for example, Chicora’s work at a very ephemeral overseer’s site in Charleston County, South Carolina provided by Trinkley et al. 2005).

But the most invisible persons on Orton and Kendal plantations were the African Americans. During the plantations histories it was the enslaved blacks that engaged in naval store production, planted rice and cotton, processed the crops, and even constructed the houses and mansions. The African American population continued to be the backbone of the plantations in the postbellum and into the twentieth century, whether it continued to involve planting, tending, and harvesting rice or incorporated truck crops and later garden plants.

Without archaeological investigations and research the lives of Orton and Kendal’s African Americans will remain shrouded in obscurity.

Thus, it is critical that the unique history and heritage of Orton is protected for future generations through either the protection of the archaeological resources or, alternatively, their investigation.

Underwater Archaeology

Watts (2012) has completed underwater and shoreline studies of Orton. He has made similar recommendations for the preservation of significant archaeological resources in these areas.

This current historical research and the associated archaeological studies, however, suggest that his work should be expanded into the canals of Orton, as well as northward to Kendal

Plantation.

On Orton there remain significant questions concerning the mill remains associated with the southern canal at 31BW787**14. Examination and documentation of these remains, coupled with the identification of additional materials that may be found underwater are of critical importance in our efforts to document the Orton mill.

Maps and charts reveal that the Orton rice fields were flooded using perhaps five access points. Each of these may exhibit a variety of water control devices. Even if these devices are no longer obvious above grade, remains may exist in the water or mud. Their documentation is critical to reconstructing the extraordinary system that was found at Orton by the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

On Kendal there are known to be at least two wharfs, as well as pilings and bulkheads similar to those documented at Orton. In addition, in the twentieth century there was a pump house in the marsh. These should all be carefully documented and recorded before they are lost.

There may remain evidence of far earlier gates and water control devices on Orton Pond than are currently present. Underwater research may help document the early history of this impoundment.

Finally, it is worthwhile to expand research efforts to incorporate Lilliput Pond since it may represent the location of the Moores' early mill.

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Appendix 1. African Americans Associated with Orton and Kendal Plantations

This is a list of African Americans identified through our research that lived or worked at either Orton or Kendal Plantation. Where possible we have indicated their function at the plantation, as well as the source of the information.

Clearly there are hundreds more and enslaved African Americans are especially poorly represented in the following pages. Nevertheless, this provides an initial beginning for those who may wish to further explore African American settlement and occupation at Orton and Kendal plantations.

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF ORTON AND KENDAL PLANTATIONS

Individual	Position / Job	Source
- Sally	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Abbey	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Andrew	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Annabella	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Ben	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Betty	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Betty	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Bob	Orton (slave)	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
- Bob	Kendal laborer; 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
- Bob	Orton livestock tender (slave)	Brunswick County Court Minutes, July 1797
- Bob	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Burgess	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Burriss	Orton (slave)	Wilmington Star, Wilmington, NC, May 9, 1924
- Caso	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Ceaser	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Charles	Kendal laborer; 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
- Clarissa	Kendal (slave)	Wilmington Gazette, Wilmington, NC, April 27, 1815
- Clarita	Kendal (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
- Cuffee	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Davy	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Dennis	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Dick	Kendal laborer; 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
- Dinah	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Dolly	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Duncan	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Edemboro	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Elias	Kendal laborer; 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
- Eliza	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Euelina	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Freddrick	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- George	Kendal (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Gilbert	Kendal laborer; 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
- Guilford	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Hannah	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Harriet	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Hercules	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Higate	Kendal and Orton, carpenter (slave)	Roger Moore's will; Ormes (1912:3:10:311)
- Horace	Orton (slave)	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
- Isaac	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Ishan	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Jacob	Kendal (slave)	Swann Family Papers #2827, Wilson Library, UNC at Chapel Hill
- Jam	Kendal laborer; 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
- Jenkins	Orton, farm labor 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
- Jenny	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Jimmy	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Job	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- John	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- John	Orton (slave)	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
- Josh	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Judy	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- July	Kendal (slave)	Wilmington Gazette, Wilmington, NC, April 27, 1815
- Kail	Kendal laborer; 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
- Katy	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Katy	Kendal (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
- Landy	Kendal (slave)	Swann Family Papers #2827, Wilson Library, UNC at Chapel Hill
- Laura	Orton (slave)	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
- Lemses	Kendal (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
- Lewis	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
- Linus	Kendal (slave)	Wilmington Gazette, Wilmington, NC, April 27, 1815
- Lucetta	Orton (slave)	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
- Lucinda	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Lucy	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583

APPENDIX 1

Individual	Position/job	Source
- Mingo	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Mingo Jr	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Moses	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Nat	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Nat Jr	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Nathan	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Nelson	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Peggy	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Penny	Kendal (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
- Peter	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Phillis	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Phoebe	Kendal (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
- Pompey	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Prince	Orton, brickmason (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
- Priscilla	Orton cook, 1923	Southern Historical Collection, Benjamin Smith Papers, 1793-1826
- Quince	Kendal (slave)	Sprunt Personal Accounts
- Rachael	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
- Rose	Kendal (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Sam	Orton (slave)	Swann Family Papers #2827, Wilson Library, UNC at Chapel Hill
- Sam	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Sam	Orton (slave)	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
- Sandy	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Scipio	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
- Solomon	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Sukey	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Thomas	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Tom	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Walker	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
- Warren	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
Aldridge, Emma	Orton, wife of Lewis	1940 census
Aldridge, Lewis	Orton, farm labor	1940 census
Aldridge, Lillian	Orton, daughter of Lewis	1940 census
Allen, Charles	Kendal Laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Allen, Thomas	Orton, laborer c. 1918-1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Allen, Thomas	Kendal, overseer	Clarence Jones interview, December 1999, pg. 2
Allen, Thomas	Orton, caretaker 1918, 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Allen, Tom	Kendal, servant	Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235
Ball, O.	Kendal carpenter, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Bennett, Daniel	Orton, laborer c 1894	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Berry, Lewin	Kendal laborer, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Betts, Sam	Orton	Sprunt Personal Accounts 1919, 1920, 1924, 1925
Betts, Sam (uncle of Clarence Jones)	operated dredge that kept canal open & operated Orton dynamo	Clarence Jones interview, October 22, 1999, pg. 4, December 1999, pg. 1
Black Isaac	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
Boneham, Peyton	Kendal, servant	Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235
Brewington, B.L.	Orton, nephew of Duncan McCoy	1940 census
Brewington, Jenkins	Orton, 1924-1925	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Brown, Alexander	Orton Cemetery	Orton Cemetery
Brown, Frank	Kendal Laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Brown, Laney	Orton, laborer 1919	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Brown, Mary Ann	Orton, lodger in house of Duncan McCoy	Orton Cemetery (1818-1919)
Brown, Mary L.	Kendal laborer, 1879	1940 census
Brown, William	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Brown, William A.	Kendal laborer, 1879	Orton Cemetery (1872-1950)
Bunting, Miles	Orton, 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Chisolm, Moses	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Clark, George	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Clark, Ned	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Clark, Nick	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Clark, Scip	Kendal, servant	Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235
Clark, Tom	Kendal laborer, 1871-1880	Curtis Account Book
Claypole, Billy	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
Claypole, Mary	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF ORTON AND KENDAL PLANTATIONS

Individual	Position/job	Source
Davis, Amy		Orton Cemetery (1842-1892)
Davis, Billy	Orton	news 1894, Orton Cemetery d. 10/24/1895
Davis, Eli		Orton Cemetery (1854-1881)
Davis, Henry		Sprunt Personal Accounts
Davis, Jo	Orton, 1920	Curtis Account Book
Davis, Tom	Kendal laborer, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Delt, Charlie	Orton, 1920	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Delt, Carrie		Orton Cemetery (1904-1917)
Delt, Sarah		Orton Cemetery (1863-1918)
Delts, Abraham	Orton, farm labor, son of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Catherine	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Charles	Orton, farm labor	1930 census
Delts, Christa Bell	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Christiana	Orton, farm labor	1940 census
Delts, Costelia	Orton, farm labor, daughter Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Estelle	Orton, wife of Charles	1930 census
Delts, Harlee	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Hazel	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Henry	Orton, farm labor, son of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Irene	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Katie L.	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Margaret	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Marie I.	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Mary	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Pearl	Orton, daughter of Christiana	1940 census
Delts, Queen	Orton, worker, 1941	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Dickson, Kate	Orton	1930 census
Dixon, Kate		Orton Cemetery (1857-1936)
Ellis, Herman Franklin	Orton, farm labor; grandson of John Ed Pearson	1940 census; Orton Cemetery (1915-1969); 1930 census
Ellis, John E.	Orton, grandson of John Ed. Pearson	1930 census
Fidler, John	Orton (slave)	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg 583
Fulwood, William	Kendal carpenter, 1880	Curtis Account Book
G [J. B]		Orton Cemetery (1810-1883)
Grimes, J. Bryan	Orton, 1919	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Harrison, Pug	Orton, nursery worker	post-1940; Clarence Jones interview, October 22, 1999, pg. 3
Henry, J	Orton renter, 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Hill, Link	Orton, labor 1919-1923	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Hodge, Mary A	Orton, overseer	1860 census
Hodge, Wesley		1860 census
Hollins, Annie		Orton Cemetery (1865-1918)
Hooper, Robert	Orton, worker 1920	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Hooper, Robert	Kendal laborer, 1871-1880	Curtis Account Book
Hooper, Sarah		Orton Cemetery (1848-1923)
Hooper, Schuyler		Orton Cemetery (1840-1876)
Hoskins, Jos.	Orton, 1922	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Howard, Eliza		Orton Cemetery (1863-1957)
James, Lewis	Kendal carpenter, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Jenkins, -	Orton, labor 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Jones, Clarence	Orton, gardener	Susan Taylor Block interview
Jones, Lewis	Kendal, built chimneys 1879	Curtis Account Book
Jones, Susan Isabella	Orton	1880 census
Laurence, Mary	Orton, labor	Orton Cemetery (1882-1917)
Lassiter, E.B.		Sprunt Personal Accounts
Lawrence, Jeffry	Orton, Civil War refugee	Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, April 9, 1911; Sprunt Personal Accounts
Leake, Robert	Kendal Laborer, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Martin, Robert	Orton, domestic servant	1870 census
McGay, Jacob	Orton, brick mason and contractor	Orton Cemetery (1882-1912)
McClammy, Charles W		1870 census
McClammy, James Franklin		Orton Cemetery (1918-1919)
McClammy, Lucy	Orton, cook, 1919-1920	Clarence Jones interview, December 1999, pg. 5; Sprunt Personal Accounts; Orton Cemetery (1870-1945)
McClammy, Margaret	Orton, housewife	1870 census

APPENDIX 1

Individual	Position/job	Source
McClammy, Minnie L.		Orton Cemetery (1903-1910)
McClammy, R	Orton, worker 1910	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McClammy, R.K., Jr.		Orton Cemetery (1902-1940)
McClammy, Richard C.		Orton Cemetery (1865-1937)
McClammy, William A.		Orton Cemetery (1891-1934)
McCoy, Annie May	Orton, daughter of Duncan, farm labor	1940 census
McCoy, Betsy Ann	Orton, wife of Duncan	Orton Cemetery (1867-1883)
McCoy, Clara Lee	Orton, nephew of Duncan	1940 census
McCoy, Dillard	Orton, gardener, farm labor	1940 census
McCoy, Duncan	Orton, garden manager	Debi Hacker interview, May 23,2012; 1940 census
McGraw, Churchill	Orton, 1918	news
McMillan, Charles	Orton, caretaker 1927	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McMillan, Jim	Orton, 1922	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McQueen, H.C	Orton, domestic servant	1870 census
Merrick, Violet		Orton Cemetery (1876-1899)
Mickins, Mary	Orton, laborer	Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893
Mills, Phoebe		Orton Cemetery
Moore, Maggie Delts	Orton, nephew of Duncan McCoy	1940 census
Murray, Chancy L.	Orton, niece of Duncan McCoy, farm labor	1940 census
Murray, Lassie	Orton, nephew of Duncan McCoy	1940 census
Murray, Leroy C.	Orton, niece of Duncan McCoy	1940 census
Murray, Vernice	Orton, laborer	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Ornell, Louis	Orton, 1924-1925	Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893
Patterson, Charles	Orton, laborer to foreman	Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893 & Census of 1930 & Clarence Jones interview, October 15, 1999, p. 2
Pearson (Pearshall), John Edward	Orton, grandmother Herman Ellis	1940 census
Pearson, Ella	Orton, wife of John E.	Orton Cemetery (1875-1958); 1930 census
Pearson, Hannah	Orton, 1919-1920, foreman	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Orton Cemetery (1864-1936); 1930 census
Pearson, John Ed	Orton, laborer	Orton Cemetery (1886-1889)
Pickett, Elijah		Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, December 28, 1894; Orton Cemetery (1859-1918)
Pickett, Friday		Orton Cemetery (1872-1908)
Pickett, Teana		Sprunt Personal Accounts
Pierce, Belle	Orton, worker 1916	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Powers, J.O.	Orton, labor 1919	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Roberts, Frank	Orton, employee 1938	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Russ, Mary A	Orton, domestic servant	1870 census
Rutledge, Hill	Orton, 1924-1925	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Ryles, John	Orton, domestic servant	1870 census
Sauls, Scipo	Orton, Pastor	news 1892-1893
Smith, Aleck	Kendal Laborer; 1880	Curtis Account Book
Smith, Christsheil	Orton, worker 1935	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Smith, Liza	Kendal, servant	Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235
Smith, Mary Ellen McClammy		Orton Cemetery (1908-1937)
Smith, Thomas	Orton, labor 1919	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Smith, Virgil	Kendal Laborer; 1879	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Solomon, King	Orton, 1924	Curtis Account Book
Spencer, William	Kendal carpenter; 1880	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Stewart, J.C	Orton, 1920	Curtis Account Book
Swann, Ed	Orton, labor 1913	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Sykes, Pharaoh	Orton	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Tarlton, Robert	Orton, worker 1913	Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, May 25-27, 1882
Vaight, Joe	Orton, 1941	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Vaight, Annie R.	Orton, daughter of Joseph	1940 census
Vaight, Clara Bell	Orton, daughter of Joseph	1940 census
Vaight, Clayton A.	Orton, son of Joseph	1940 census
Vaight, Eugene	Kendal and Orton, laborer; son of Joseph	Debi Hacker interview, May 23,2012; 1940 census
Vaight, Jessie Ann	Orton, wife of Joseph	1940 census
Vaight, Joseph	Orton, farm labor	1940 census
Vaight, Joseph Jr.	Orton, son of Joseph	1940 census
Vaight, Lottie May	Orton, daughter of Joseph	1940 census
Voight, J	Orton, 1923	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Walker, Arthur	Orton, son of Sara Jane Walker	1930 census

Individual	Position/job	Source
Walker, Isaiah	Orton, son of Sara Jane Walker; farm labor	1930 census
Walker, John W.	Orton, son of Sara Jane Walker	1930 census
Walker, Maggie		Orton Cemetery (d. 1956)
Walker, Sara Jane	Orton, 1924; farm labor	Sprunt Personal Accounts; 1930 census
Walker, Sarah J.	Orton, daughter of Sara Jane Walker	1930 census
Walker, Walter	Orton, son of Sara Jane Walker	1930 census
Wallace, Gus	Orton, laborer 1937	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Watters, Josephine	Orton, laborer	Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893
Wiggins, Henry	Orton, laborer	Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, January 1, 1893; Orton Cemetery (d. 1892)
Windley, Prilla	Orton, cook 1920s	Sprunt Personal Accounts

Appendix 2. Euro Americans Associated with Orton and Kendal Plantations

This is a list of whites identified through our research that lived or worked at either Orton or Kendal Plantation. Where possible we have indicated their function at the plantation, as well as the source of the information. We have not included owners in this list since they are well documented in the accompanying report.

Clearly there are others and we anticipate that overseers during the colonial and antebellum are especially poorly represented in this list. Nevertheless, this provides an initial document for future researchers.

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF ORTON AND KENDAL PLANTATIONS

Individual	Position/job	Source
-,Padgett	Orton, superintendent	Wilmington Star, Wilmington, NC, May 9, 1924
-,Wood	Orton, Fort Anderson master workman	Rowland and Rowland (1917:230)
Batchelor, Colon J.	Orton, brother of John E.	1930 census
Batchelor, Eva	Orton, wife of John E.	1930 census
Batchelor, John E	Orton, superintendent	1930 census
Bates, Isaac	Orton, bank clerk	1870 census
Bates, Josie	Orton, store clerk	1870 census
Bates, William	Orton, store clerk	1870 census
Batson, J.T	Kendal, store clerk	Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, June 28, 1882
Bennett, Daniel	Orton	news 1894
Bogie, Alex	Orton, assistant manager	1940 census
Bogie, Doris	Orton, daughter of Alex	1940 census
Bogie, Janie	Orton, wife of Alex	1940 census
Bragaw, Henry Churchhill	Orton Manager, horticulturist	News & Observer, Raleigh, NC, March 22, 1944; 1940 census
Bryan, Sylvester J	Orton, fishing warden	1920 census & Wilmington City Directory, 1920
Chinnis, Samuel R	Orton, overseer	Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, November 27, 1880
Ferger, Jim	Orton, garden manager, horticulturist	Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, December 27, 1941
Fox, C.A.	Orton, farm forester, lodger in house of S.D. Harrelson	1940 census
Harrelson, Edwin C.	Orton, son of S.D.	1940 census
Harrelson, Emma Lou	Orton, manager of nursery dept., daughter of S.D.	1940 census
Harrelson, S.D.	Orton, retail grocery manager	1940 census
Hodgetts, S.J.	Orton, 1913	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Jeeks, J.W.	Orton, possible overseer 1913	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McKeithan, William	Orton,overseer	1850 census
McMillan, Jim	Orton caretaker, 1927	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Reid, G.T	Orton, forest ranger 1958	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Rose,	Orton, Fort Anderson master carpenter	Rowland and Rowland (1917:230)
Rowland, Major Thomas	Orton, Fort Anderson supervisor, Major CSA	Rowland and Rowland (1917:230)
Ruffin, Peter Browne	caretaker at Orton in Laurence Sprunt's absence	Clarence Jones interview, October 22, 1999, pg. 3
Smith, Captain J.C	Orton, manager	Evening Dispatch, Wilmington, NC, March 17, 1903
Smith, Fred	Kendal, overseer 1918	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Smith, Wade Hampton	Orton	1903
Taylor, Walker	Orton, overseer 1920	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Wilder, Metts	Orton, superintendent 1913	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Wood, -	Orton, Fort Anderson master workman	Rowland and Rowland (1917:230)

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