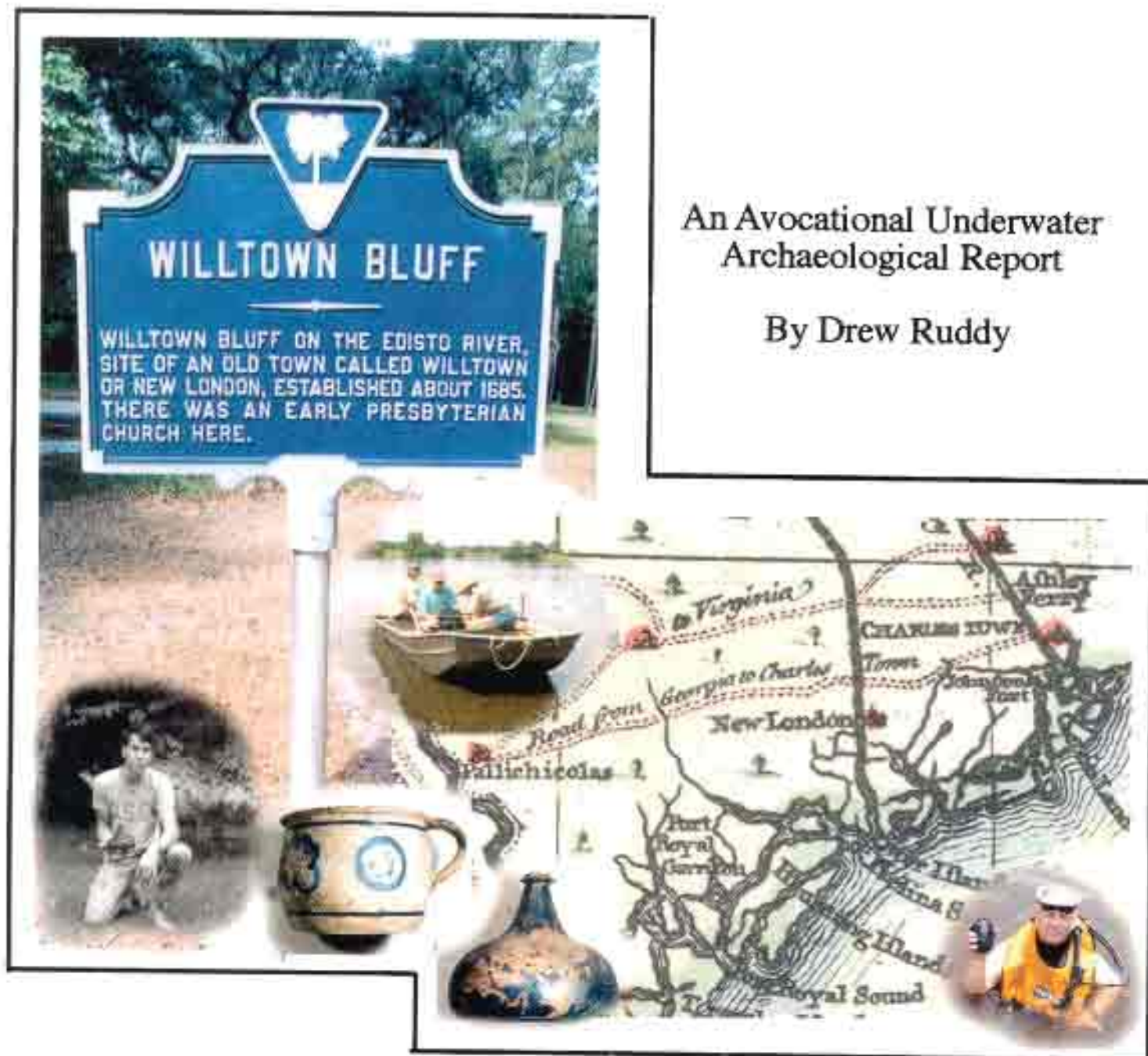


Willtown Bluff

"... a convenient fertill piece of land fitt to build a towne on ..."

An Avocational Underwater Archaeological Report

By Drew Ruddy



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The South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology

The University of South Carolina

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Acknowledgments

In reflecting upon the many persons who have played a role in underwater activities at Willtown Bluff, I contemplate some whom I have not seen in thirty years and those who have shared a recent involvement.

Members of the then newly formed South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology staff were Dr. Robert L. Stephenson, Stanley South, John Combs, and Paul Brockington who in various ways played a guiding, administrative, or supportive role.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Heyward Jervay were owners of the Willtown Bluff plantation at the time and were as gracious as they were supportive.

Divers who played a role in the 1969-70 project were Jim Batey, Steve Howard, Owen Batey, Lee Spence, Chris Bueter, Jim Stark, Eddie Phillips, Larry Roberts, Casey Herbert, Rick Rodgers, and Leon Robinson.

Divers having a part in diving the site since 1970 include Steve Howard, Chris Bueter, Bob Denster, Bill Ripley, John Carr, Fred Wood, Jeff Meyer, George Pledger, and Doug Boelme.

Providing underwater work for this report was my long-standing partner, Steve Howard, who not only spent time in the water, but many hours behind the computer organizing and preparing pictures for publication. One of my newest partners was my son, David Michael Ruddy, who at the age of twelve, proved to be a worthy assistant both in the water and behind the helm. Also, thanks to Cinda Meyer for her day of diving on the Edisto River.

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behind the keyboard preparing the text and polishing the final product. He also contributed his keen skill in artifact dating and identification.

SCIAA staff member Joe Beatty contributed by working with Carl and Lynn in bottom contour mapping at Willtown. He also handed me his research on the Civil War activity at Willtown which was extremely helpful.

My thanks to all.

Table Of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Location..... | 6 |
| Historical Background | |
| The Decades Preceding the 1682 Settlement On The Edisto..... | 9 |
| The Concept of Proprietary Government..... | 9 |
| Early English Exploration in the Edisto Area..... | 10 |
| English Political Dynamics Leading to Early Settlement on the Edisto River and Surrounding Area..... | 11 |
| The Founding of the Town of London..... | 17 |
| English Encroachment On The Spanish Missions..... | 18 |
| Settlement of Scottish Dissenters and Spanish Attack..... | 19 |
| 1700-1720..... | 21 |
| Yemassee War..... | 22 |
| The End Of The Proprietary Government..... | 23 |
| The Reverend Archibald Stobo And The Willtown Church..... | 23 |
| African Americans at Willtown..... | 25 |
| The Stono Uprising..... | 26 |
| The 1863 Gunboat Expedition..... | 28 |
| Project Background..... | 33 |
| Project History | |
| History of Diving on Submerged S.C. Historical Sites Prior ToThe 1969-1970 Willtown Project..... | 35 |
| Willtown and The Terms of S.C. Salvage License 69-3..... | 35 |
| The Willtown Museum—An Additional Dimension..... | 37 |
| Dives During the 1969-1970 Willtown Project..... | 38 |
| Dives Made Since the Completion of the 69-3 License Period..... | 38 |
| 1998 Field Work | |
| Mapping..... | 41 |
| Willtown Underwater Site Description..... | 41 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Artifact Distribution..... | 49 |
| Artifact Analysis..... | 49 |
| Fragmented Artifacts..... | 49 |
| Native American Artifacts..... | 49 |
| Historic Artifacts..... | 51 |
| Ceramics..... | 54 |
| Site Analysis..... | 65 |
| Artifact Display..... | 71 |
| Conclusion..... | 72 |
| Bibliography..... | 73 |

List of Figures

| | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Historical marker At Willtown Bluff..... | v |
| 2. Drawing of the Edisto, Stono and Ashely Rivers showing the relationship of Willtown to Charleston..... | 4 |
| 3. Aerial infrared photograph showing Willtown Bluff in the center of the picture..... | 5 |
| 4. View of Willtown Bluff on the Fenwick Quadrangle topographical map..... | 7 |
| 5. Black and white aerial photograph of Willtown Bluff..... | 8 |
| 6. 1695 Thorton-Morden Map..... | 14 |
| 7. 1697 Carte-Particuliere De La Caroline..... | 14 |
| 8. 1715 Map..... | 15 |
| 9. 1718 French Map..... | 15 |
| 10. 1748 Map..... | 16 |
| 11. 1704 Crisp Map of Charlestowne showing the Stobo House outside of the city wall..... | 24 |
| 12. Jefferys' Map of 1762 showing the "Negroe Fort" north of St. Augustine..... | 27 |
| 13. The 1863 Gunboat Expedition..... | 31 |
| 14. Divers Jim Baley and Drew Ruddy at Willtown, June 1969..... | 36 |
| 15. Steve Howard with a bottle from the Oakhurst Sector, 1970..... | 39 |
| 16. Panoramic view of Willtown Bluff..... | 40 |
| 17. SCIAA staff Lynn Harris, Joe Beatty and Carl Naylor conducting a bottom profile survey with a fathometer unit..... | 42 |
| 18. Willtown Bluff—Sector Drawing..... | 43 |
| 19. Aerial photograph of the survey area..... | 44 |
| 20. Dock at the Oakhurst Plantation Sector..... | 45 |
| 21. View of the bluff facing the Parsonage Sector..... | 45 |
| 22. Willtown boathouse..... | 46 |
| 23. Willtown tea house..... | 46 |
| 24,25,26,27. Edisto river bottom topography (in the search area)..... | 47-48 |
| 28. Prehistoric pottery..... | 50 |
| 29. Date range of bottle bases..... | 52 |
| 30. Date range of bottle necks..... | 53 |
| 31. Graph showing historic period ceramics..... | 54 |
| 32. Steve Howard recovers an iron pot for photographing and it is returned to the bottom..... | 55 |
| 33. David Michael Ruddy diving on the Edisto River..... | 55 |
| 34, 35. Artifacts—Oakhurst Sector..... | 56-57 |
| 36, 37, 38. Artifacts—Parsonage Sector..... | 58-60 |
| 39. Artifacts—Boat House Sector..... | 61 |
| 40. Artifacts—Tea House Sector..... | 62 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 41. George Pledger and Willtown artifacts..... | 63 |
| 42. List of registered landmarks recording the distinctive MB design found etched on a bottle from the Parsonage Sector..... | 64 |
| 43. Willtown plat with shaded areas indicating lots which were known to have been issued in grants—based on the research of Elaine Herold..... | 66 |
| 44. Willtown plat superimposed on an aerial view of Willtown Bluff from the research of Elaine Herold..... | 67 |
| 45. Waterfront at low tide in the Parsonage Sector..... | 68 |
| 46. Growth on the bluff in the Parsonage Sector..... | 68 |
| 47. Drew Ruddy holding a solid shot projectile..... | 70 |
| 48. The Colleton County Museum, Walterboro, SC..... | 71 |
| 49. Martha Demosthenes stands beside the Willtown display which she designed..... | 71 |



Figure 1. Historical Marker at Willtown Bluff.

Introduction

In January 1975, the Conference on Underwater Archaeology was held in Charleston. Several archaeologists and treasure hunters of international renown were in attendance, including the pre-eminent underwater archaeologist George Bass and Bob Marx, a well known treasure hunter. The final event of the conference was a panel discussion of archaeology versus treasure hunting; professionals versus amateurs working on historic and prehistoric sites. Many opinions were expressed and it was apparent that there was a great lack of common ground. The closing remarks were made by Dr. Robert L. Stephenson, the director of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. In his own unique style, Dr. Stephenson never ceased to smile as he made his brief but poignant statement. Due to his words being spoken in the context of his broad grin, it was difficult for me to determine whether he offered encouragement or a strong admonition. His message was simple but bold as he addressed amateur and professional alike: All of our endeavors, all of our efforts are in vain, *unless we tell the story* . . .

To my knowledge, sport diving on historic sites began in this state about 1965. I was certified as a diver in 1967 and immediately began to invest much time and energy in the pursuit of uncovering traces of South Carolina's past. While attending college in 1969 and working part-time on a shopping center maintenance crew, I conversed with a fellow employee, Isaac White, about my underwater and historic interests. He told me of having worked for several years as a house servant at Willtown Bluff Plantation on the Edisto River. He alluded to the historical significance of this site, but it was when he brought me a single page history of Willtown, which had been given out as a flyer on an Edisto River Plantation Tour, that my interest really peaked. I learned of the colonial town of the late seventeenth century which seemed to die by the late eighteenth century, only to evolve into a successful rice plantation in the nineteenth century. Also, that a Confederate battery was erected on the site and saw action in a skirmish with three Union gunboats.

A short time later, my diving partner, James L. Batey, and I went to Willtown and made a dive from the boat landing. The area looked promising and a week later we returned with a boat and another diver, Steve Howard. On this day we checked locations along the bluff and recovered a number of eighteenth and nineteenth century artifacts.

Due to our involvement as divers with the Shipwrecks, Inc., project on the wrecks of the Civil War blockade runners *Georgianna* and *Mary Bowers* we were both somewhat familiar with the recently enacted legislation involving the recovery of submerged antiquities. Jim and I agreed that we would "do the right thing" and report the Willtown site to the state officials and apply for salvage rights to dive this site. We informally called ourselves Palmetto Divers and intended to have exclusive rights to work

there on a part-time basis.

My first report of the Willtown site was to Barney Slawson, coordinator of the S. C. Division of Historical Resources. My letter was apparently a source of some displeasure to Mr. Slawson who was quick in his reply to inform me that we were in violation of public law 1301-1969 for having removed artifacts from a historic site. He did however send me an application for a salvage permit and also the name of Dr. Robert L. Stephenson, who had recently become the State Archaeologist. It was with Dr. Stephenson that we would have all further dealings.

It is with some amazement that I reflect today on how two teenagers with some diving experience but no archaeological training or background were able to secure a one-year underwater salvage license within two months of making an application. There was no Underwater Archaeology Division to provide supervision or training and the land archaeologists were busy with their own endeavors. One of the highest profile sites then being the major project at Charlestown Landing which was working against time to prepare for the 1970 Tricentennial Park and Celebration. There was very little literature available on underwater excavation techniques and probably some of the most informative articles available could be found in National Geographic magazine.

Today, 27 years later, I find myself in a different place in my life, a different level of maturity, and although not a professional archaeologist, I have acquired a greater sense of appreciation for the precision and documentation necessary to adequately work and record an underwater historic site. Much has evolved in the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA) in the ensuing years. The Institute now has a professional underwater archaeology staff and a supportive Hobby Diver Program to provide guidance and support to the amateur enthusiast in this field. A few months ago, I met Lynn Harris and Carl Naylor of the SCIAA Charleston office and began to discuss with them the idea of writing a report to more adequately document the work of Palmetto Divers at colonial Willtown from 1969 to 1970 and dives made at random at the site since. They immediately responded with affirmation and encouragement.

It was much to my surprise that Lynn Harris informed me of the Charleston Museum's archaeological dig at Willtown this year. She was able to arrange a meeting with Charleston Museum archaeologists Martha Zeiriden and Ron Anthony, and we were able to begin a dialogue of the relationship between findings on land and in the water.

It is exciting to know that interest in this obscure and almost forgotten colonial town is growing, and the goal of this report is to try to retrace our underwater steps and to put the existing data in a useful and meaningful form.

Resources exist today primarily in the form of artifact collections and recorded data both at the SCIAA and in private collections. Some additional field work will be required for the purpose of an up-to-date analysis and interpretation of site dynamics.

My final goals in preparing this report revolve around my belief in the historical significance of colonial Willtown and my desire to ensure that, as much as possible, the data from the underwater work will serve as an enhancement to the proper interpretation of the site. I would also like to attempt to

begin to try to right some of the wrongs perpetrated by some of us who were involved with historic sites when the development of scuba diving preceded the development of underwater archaeology.

And, finally, I would like to write in honor of Dr. Robert L. Stephenson, who always met us with a smile and who entrusted two youngsters with the task of "helping to tell the story."

Drew Ruddy, October 1997



Figure 2. Drawing of the Edisto, Stono, and Ashley Rivers showing the relationship of Willtown to Charleston.



Figure 3. Aerial infrared photograph showing Willtown Bluff in the center of the picture.

Location

Willtown is situated on a high bluff of the eastern bank of the Edisto River approximately 24.5 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. About 3.5 miles below Willtown, the river divides. The main fork is called the South Edisto River and meets the ocean at the northern shore of St. Helena Sound. The other fork is called the Dawho River and flows 11 miles to join the North Edisto River at a point between Seabrook Island and Edisto Island.

The river today is called the Edisto but in the time of colonial settlement other names can be found. The North Edisto was identified as the Grandy in some accounts, probably reflecting Spanish influence. The Indian name Pon Pon is applied for the segment of the river below Jacksonboro. This segment can also be identified as the South Edisto although this name today is more accurately applied to the segment below the fork at the Dawho River. In 1683, Maurice Mathews, surveyor-general of the province, is recorded as declaring that all parts of the Edisto River would officially be called the Colleton River. This name does not survive in common usage today.

Willtown is situated on a significant bluff which is unique for miles in either direction on the Edisto. This affords immunity from the flood waters that periodically impact lower-lying areas in the Edisto Basin. It also provides a commanding view for some distance along the river which adds to the strategic dimension.

Also significant is Willtown's proximity to what was known in colonial times as the inland passage. This waterway could allow the maritime traveler to cover most of the trip from Charleston to Florida with little need to enter the ocean. Keeping in mind that in colonial times one could make about 30 miles per day on foot as opposed to perhaps 100 miles by sailing vessel, this water highway was of much importance. In addition, a vessel could transport considerable cargo for trade or supply (Rouse 1973:3).

A 1708 account of Willtown or New London describes a little town about two miles above the convergence of the North and South Edisto Rivers (Salley 1911:367). Actually the distance is about 3.5 miles above the convergence of the Dawho and the South Edisto. This is a very convenient location for a town, being such a short distance from the intersection of the inland passage by which one had to navigate the Dawho to the South Edisto. This situation changed somewhat after 1734 when an act was passed resulting in the creation of Watts Cut (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1977:03-15), and a more direct route was established, moving the inland passage about eight miles further down river from Willtown. Since the late 1930s this major waterway has been known as the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and is heavily trafficked today.

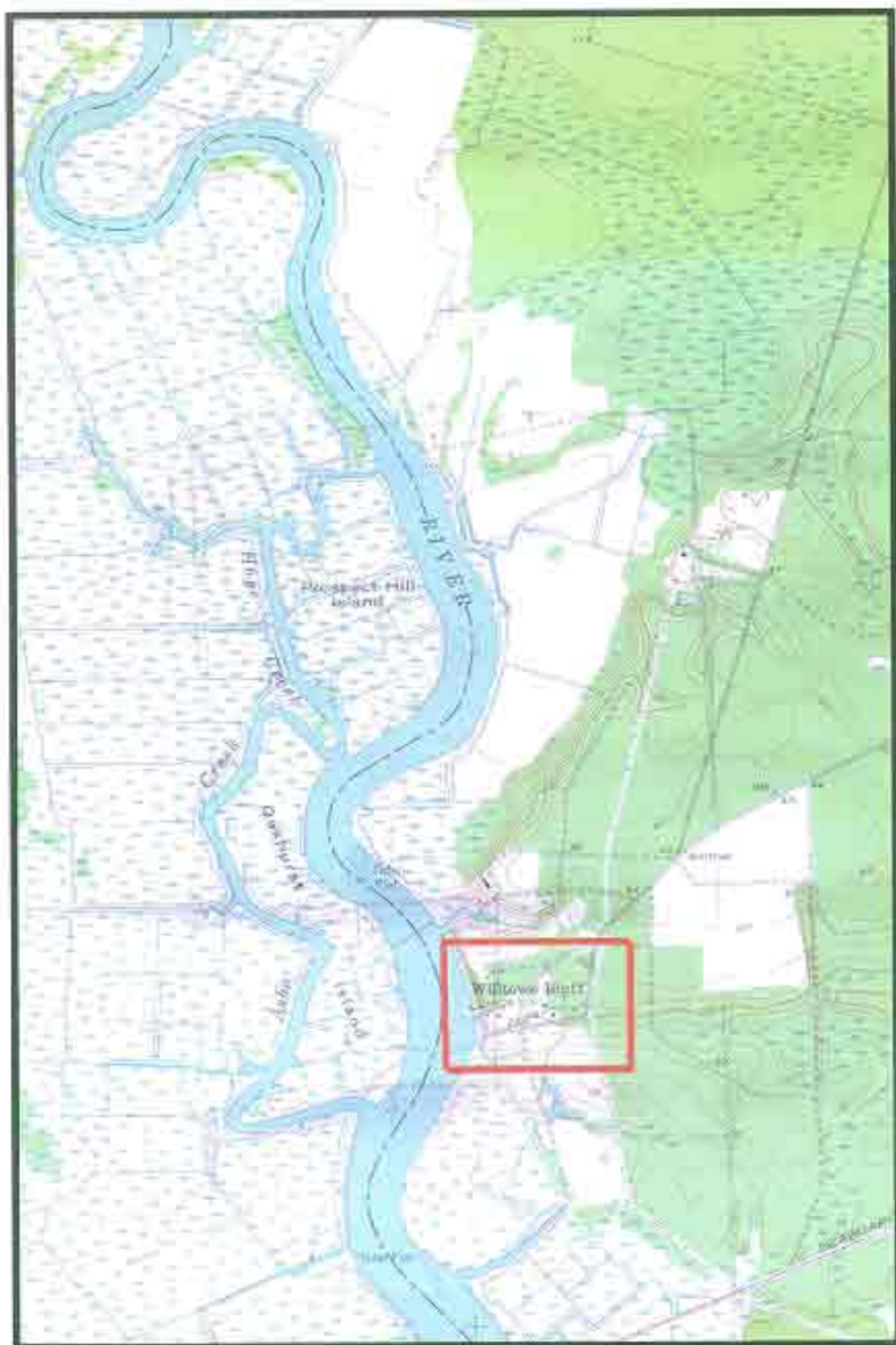


Figure 4. View of Willtown Bluff on Fenwick Quadrangle topographical map.

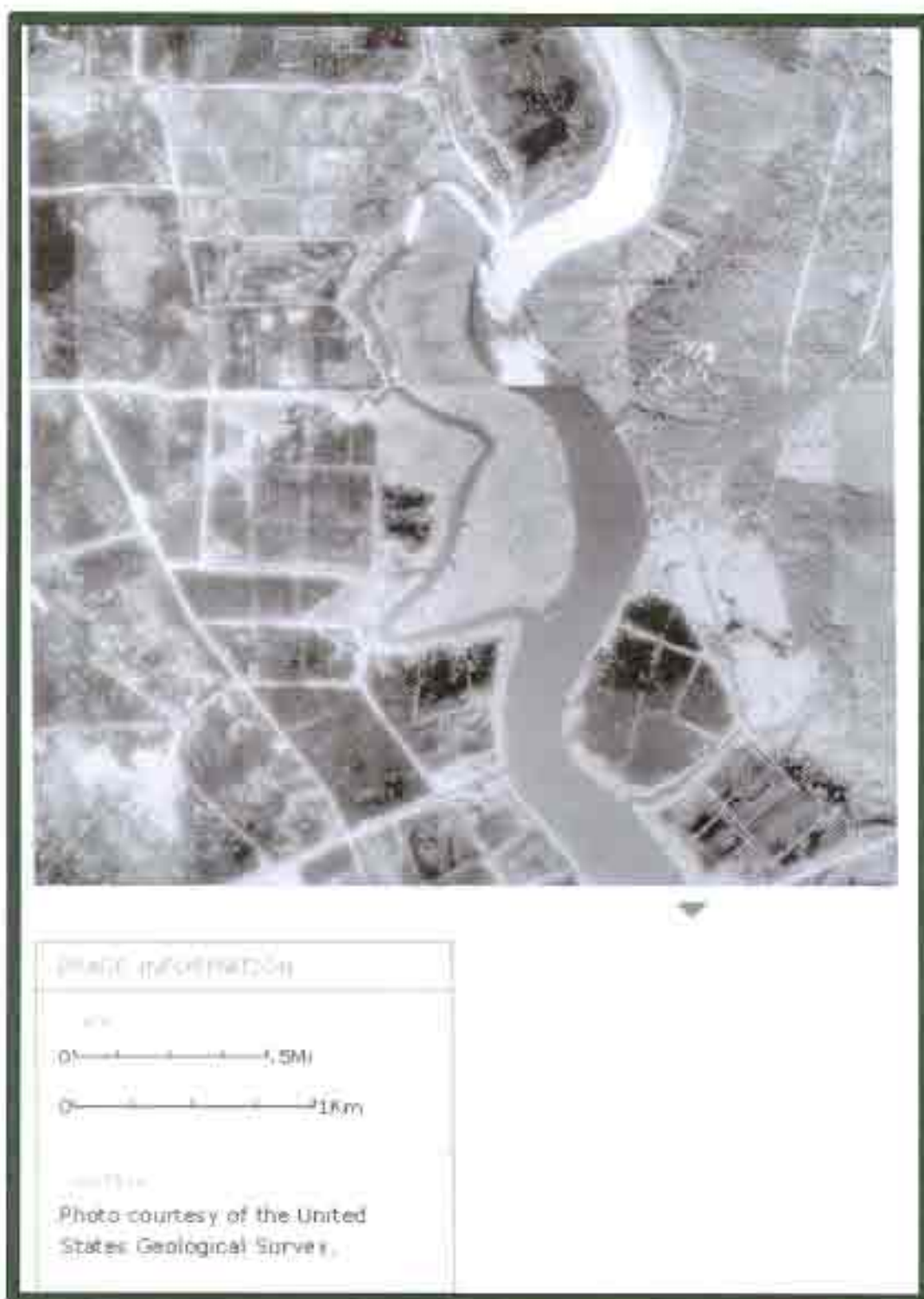


Figure 5: Black and white aerial photograph of Willtown Bluff.

Historical Background

Willtown is associated with numerous threads of South Carolina's history, i.e., the Indian deerskin trade, immigration dynamics, settlement patterns, slave rebellion, and the Civil War. First it is important to establish the European backdrop influencing early settlement events that took place at Willtown, as this early frontier society represents an important part of the evolving narrative of local history.

The Decades Preceding The 1682 Settlement On The Edisto

Continental Europe in the early seventeenth century was embattled in the chaos and carnage of the Thirty Years War. It began with much emphasis on religious dimensions spawned by the Reformation, but evolved into major political battles over the balance of European power.

In addition, the early 1640s saw the eruption of the civil war which raged in England, Scotland, and Ireland for almost 20 years. It was against this backdrop of conflict, religious dissension, and political turmoil that the scene was being set for the English settlement of South Carolina as Charles II returned to London on May 29, 1660, to regain his position on the throne.

The Concept of Proprietary Government

Just as the English civil war was waged around the issues of birthing a constitutional monarchy out of a dynamic of royal absolutism, proprietary government marked a political/economic link on the evolutionary scale from feudalism to republicanism.

During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries a socio-economic shift was occurring in England that defined a deterioration of the system of the manor. The influence of the feudal lord at the top of a hierarchy of lesser subjects who ensured his wealth through service and payments in kind on his estate was diminishing. Labor was becoming more mobile and large numbers moved to towns and seaports, leading to the depopulation of the rural countryside. The rise of the artisan class was occurring and the former dedication of the working class to "servility" was deteriorating. A distinct shift from a service system to a money system was taking place. By 1660, even the king was not able to support his household from the profits of his manors (Andrews 1936:199-211).

Even as the feudal lord was losing his income from the agrarian manor, his role was changing to a member of a social caste which sought success through commercial and industrial enterprise which might be secured through favoritism at court and through establishment of monopolies.

It was in this milieu that proprietary arrangements of varying sorts were established in new world English colonies. Certain members of the gentry hoped to capitalize on their opportunities to enlarge their estates and increase their fortunes in the new world through the creation of new products and markets (Andrews 1936:212-222).

With enterprise and profit in mind, the eight Carolina Proprietors began their endeavors of colonization with the 1670 settlement at Albemarle Point on the Ashley River.

Early English Exploration in the Edisto Area

On August 10, 1663, shortly after the establishment of the Carolina Proprietors, Captain William Hilton of Barbados set sail on his second exploratory expedition to the Carolina coast.

Upon making landfall in the area of St. Helena Sound the expedition encountered local Indians who came aboard Hilton's vessel, the *Adventure*, and communicated information about the area. One of the Indian guests was identified as the Grandy Captain of Edistow. From the Indians, Hilton's group learned of marooned Englishmen who had been held prisoners by the Indians and were able to negotiate the return of a few (Salley 1911:39,40). As the expedition sailed northward they passed the mouth of the Edisto River. Hilton chose not to enter the river due to fear of conflict with the Indians since the Edisto chief was on board against his will and because of uncertainty about the winds and conditions. Some of the newly retrieved English prisoners who had spent time in the Edisto area described the river as a "very fair and goodly river, branching into several branches, and deep, and is fresh water at low tide within two leagues of the mouth" (Salley 1911:44). Hilton goes on to provide a glowing account of the areas in the proximity of Port Royal and the Combahee and Edisto Rivers. He comments on the quality of the trees, soil, crops of the Indians, wild game, fish and shell fish. Hilton comments not only on the health of the Indians but that of the English castaways whom they had recovered. His monologue on the benefits of this country concludes:

The ayr is clear and sweet, the country very pleasant and delightful; and we could wish, that all they that want a happy settlement, of our English nation, were well transported thither, etc. (Salley 1911:45)

In 1666, another venture under the auspices of the Proprietors sailed from Barbados to the Carolina coast under the command of Robert Sandford. During this expedition, Sandford entered the North Edisto River. Landing in the vicinity of Wadmalaw Island, Sandford took formal possession "by turffe and twigg of that whole country from the latitude of 36 degrees north and 29 degrees south and west to the south seas by the name of Carolina," for Charles II, King of England, and the Lords Proprietors. Sandford and his men further explored the area, possibly traversing the Dawho River into the South Edisto and proceeded southward. During his exploration in the Edisto area, Sandford visited an Edisto Indian town and like Hilton wrote an account of the desirability of the region (Salley 1911:87-89).

There is probably little doubt that the accounts of Hilton and Sandford had a significant impact on the Proprietors and potential settlers to envision success in the Edisto to Port Royal region.

It was in Port Royal that the settlers under the colony's first governor, William Sayle, endeavored to establish a settlement in March 1670. After a brief landing, a discussion of the sense of vulnerability against the nearby Spanish and Westo Indians was held. The group decided to move to the Ashley River, further north, and the Proprietors intentions of settlement in the Port Royal area was not realized at that time.

At the time of the 1670 Albemarle Point settlement on the Ashley River, Lord Anthony Ashley Cooper was the Palatine or senior member of the Lords Proprietors. Assisted by his confidant and secretary John Locke, he took a major role in organizing and promoting the settlement of the Carolina colony. From very early in the colonization process, Lord Ashley envisioned a scheme for orderly settlement in well designed towns. As early as September 1671 he sent a directive to Sir John Yeamans to designate one town on every navigable river as a port. The Proprietors who had in recent memory experienced such events as the 1666 fire in London, plague, and the like, apparently had visions of creating more orderly and livable conditions in the Carolina towns. Such ideas as towns having a public wharf, a common, and main streets with a width of 100 feet were presented. Also, orderly and symmetric lots were desired to avoid the chaotic and cluttered patterns of many earlier European cities. In addition, the Proprietary plan for settlement required that land fronting the river would be limited to about one fifth of the depth of the plot. This concept was designed to ensure compact settlements which would be easier to defend from waterborne attack and would allow greater access of the population to the waterways. In addition, the Proprietors directed that land which was to be granted away from the towns should be granted contiguously with each new parcel being adjacent to the previous.

Settlement in Carolina was exceptionally slow during the first five years with only about 500 to 600 settlers living in close proximity to the Ashley River. In 1674 a group of Dutch colonists from New York migrated to Carolina and began to settle lands south of the Ashley River toward the Stono River, moving the settlement pattern toward the direction of the Edisto (Petit 1976:31).

The various social, political, and economic dynamics at play in the 1670s which may have inhibited growth in the Carolina colony are beyond the scope of this report to fully explore. One factor may have been the Dutch War which was fought until 1678. Although England withdrew in 1674, ocean travel and colonization schemes may have been hampered. In addition, the settlers in Carolina were in a very vulnerable state with no secure economic structure, fear of attack by the Spanish or Indians, and putting much energy into ensuring their own survival.

English Political Dynamics Leading To Early Settlement On The Edisto River And Surrounding Area

When Charles II was restored to the English throne in 1660, he was well received by Parliament as well as the common man. By 1667 conditions were deteriorating. The second Dutch War, which ended in July of that year, had greatly taxed England and weakened Charles' position as monarch. Parliament demanded supervision of governmental expenses. It also called for the dismissal of Chancellor Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon and a Carolina Proprietor, for mishandling of foreign affairs. In replacing Clarendon, Charles selected a group of five men of whom one was Lord Anthony Ashley Cooper. Charles had two significant goals: to restore the authority of the monarchy and to elevate Roman Catholicism in England. Although Lord Ashley was a counselor to the king, he became increasingly oppositional as the years ensued. In 1675 Lord Ashley was a major leader in the Country Party which issued propaganda to defend Parliament and Protestantism in opposition to the king's leaning toward

Catholic France and his potential successor, the Duke of York (later James II) who was a Catholic. By 1680 the Country Party was called the Whigs, a name which may have evolved from Whiggamore, which was a name of the group of Scot opponents of Charles I in the 1640s (Durant 1963:276-279).

In 1678 the religious/political situation became more complex and chaotic due to an alleged "popish plot" by which Catholic forces were said to be planning to kill Charles, burn London, enthrone James, and impose Catholicism on Protestant England. Although these accusations, as well as later allegations that the queen was plotting to poison her husband Charles, were not proven, a major fear set in with Protestant officials causing much defensiveness and persecution of Catholics for the next four years. James fled to the Netherlands and in January 1679 Charles dissolved the Parliament (Durant 1963:279, 281; Blum 1966-1970:356, 357).

In March of 1679 the Parliament reconvened as the first "Whig" Parliament and Lord Ashley, now Earl of Shaftsbury, was chosen lord president of the council. Almost immediately he introduced the first exclusion bill which would inhibit James, Duke of York, from inheriting the crown. In May, Charles prorogued the Parliament with concerns that the bill would be passed (Durant 1963:282; Blum 1966-1970:356, 357).

Lord Ashley progressively evolved into an increasingly ambitious opponent of Charles. He first tried to persuade Charles to divorce his barren wife and marry a Protestant queen by whom he may have a Protestant heir. When Charles refused, he mounted a campaign to spread the idea that Charles' illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, was actually the rightful heir because Charles had actually married the duke's mother, Lucy Walter. Charles denounced this claim and dismissed Lord Ashley from the council in October 1679. Becoming more zealous, Lord Ashley tried to reorganize the disbanded House of Commons and stir rebellion. Charles had him arrested but he was acquitted by the jury. He then boldly joined in open rebellion with the Duke of Monmouth against the king. Both were quickly arrested. Lord Ashley was imprisoned in the Tower of London but escaped to exile in Holland where he died in 1683 (Durant 1963:284, 287; Blum 1966-1970:356-358).

Even after the exile of Lord Ashley, some of his Whig followers persisted in their opposition, and as late as 1683 the failed "Rye House Plot" was a plan to capture or kill Charles and thwart the possibility of catholicizing England. In February 1685 Charles did die and catholic James did ascend to the throne (Durant 1963:286,287; Blum 1966-1970:357).

This cursory view of English political intrigue is provided to help set the stage for an understanding of some of the dynamics of first settlement in the Edisto River area. Although Lord Ashley was thought to be a Deist, many of his political cohorts in the Whig Party were dissenters. English Calvinists who in their opposition to Charles and his catholic leanings, also did not politically fit neatly with the Anglicans or Puritans who at varying times played major political roles.

As a result of Royalist reaction to the turmoil sparked by the Whig Party and concerns over the possibility of another civil war, a political persecution of the dissenters was begun (Durant 1963:251-257; Blum 1966-1970:355, 356).

By the time of Lord Ashley Cooper's exile in 1679, Lord Craven was the Palatine of the Carolina

Proprietors. Sir Peter Colleton and a new Proprietor, John Archdale, also became active promoters of the Carolina colony in the early 1680s (Childs 1940:194, 218).

There is little doubt that Lord Ashley Cooper's Whig connections led to the promotion of immigration of persecuted dissenters to Carolina and that this group would comprise a majority of the settlers in the Edisto River area.

It is possible that although the initial 1670 settlement had occurred in the Ashley River area as opposed to Port Royal, the earlier reports of Hilton and Sandford of the Edisto region still held promise for the Proprietors. Lord Ashley himself owned a vessel which plied between England and Carolina which was named the *Edisto* (Childs 1940:184).

The Proprietors in the early 1680s again raised the idea of establishing a port town on every navigable river with the reservation of a 500 acre site on each river. There was apparent belief that the poor water and proximity to marshes and salt water may have contributed to health problems and promotion of malaria which did apparently reach increased proportions in the 1680s (Clowse 1971:48).

The Proprietors' instructions to Governor Morton in May of 1682 read:

"Wee understand that there is on Edisto^h River about 20 miles above the head of Ashley River a convenient fertill piece of land fitt to build a towne on . . . five hundred akers of which we would have reserved for that use & 11,500 more about it for a collony and it being above the salts and marches wee are of opinion will be more healthy then nearer the sea. . ." (Childs 1940:204; Smith 1909:101)

Upon the 1682 directive, a town of currently uncertain stature was begun on the Edisto River. Initial accounts cite an Indian name for the river, Pon Pon, being used for the town but dissenter immigrants apparently established the name of London. In 1683 the Proprietors designated the area settled in the Ashley River area as Berkeley County with Charles Town as the seat. The Edisto River settlement area was dubbed Colleton County and London was the seat.

The years 1682 and 1683 probably saw some of the greatest migration to the Carolina colony owing largely to the connection of the Whig plots in England. The dissenters helped to bring the population of Carolina to about 2,000 to 2,500 settlers which virtually doubled the population of about 1,000 in 1680.

In 1682, Joseph Morton, Benjamin Blake of Somerset, and Daniel Axtell of London entered the colony. Morton and Axtell were later credited by the Proprietors with having brought in more than 500 persons in a single month (Clowse 1971:74; Childs 1940:210-212, 245).

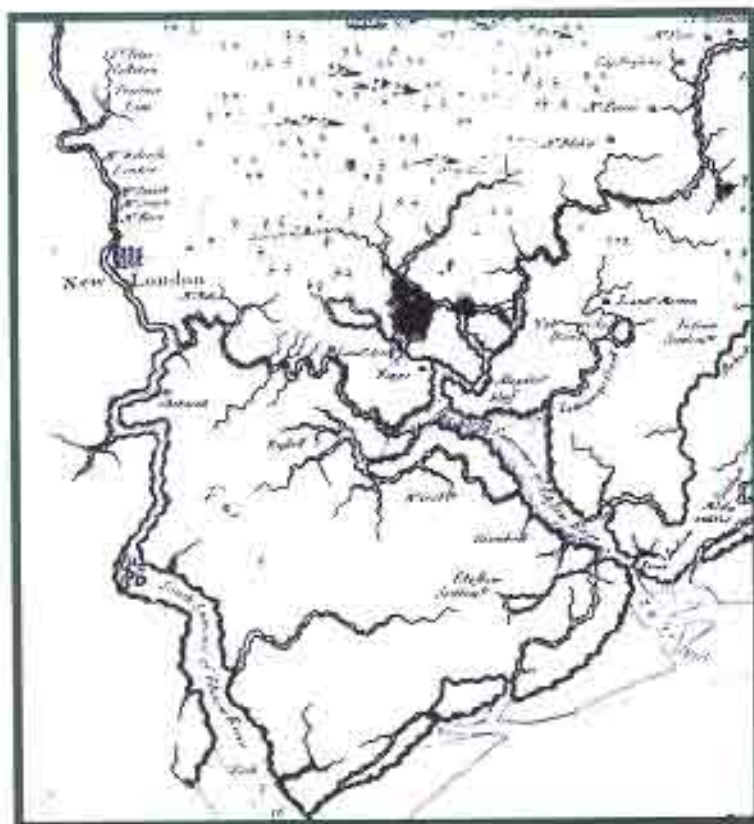


Figure 6. 1695 Thornton-Morden Map (Copy on file in the South Carolina State Archives).



Figure 7. 1697 Carte Particuliere De La Caroline (Copy on file in the South Carolina State Archives).

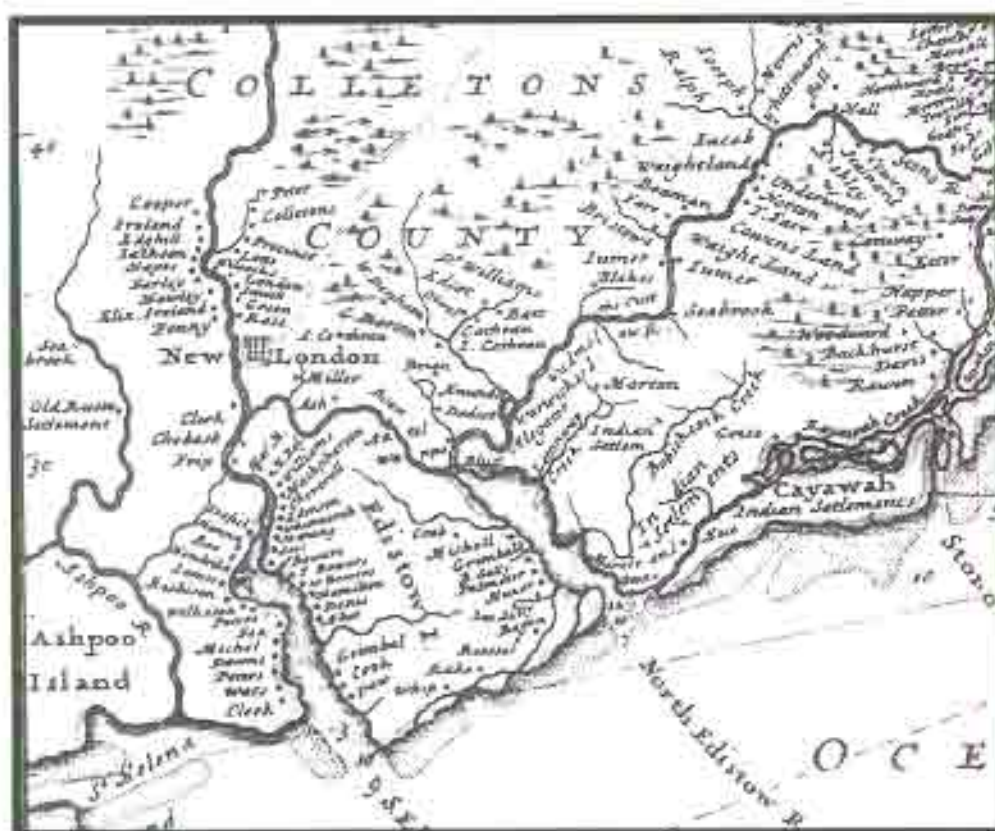


Figure 8. 1715 map by Herman Moll.
(Copy on file at the South Carolina
Department Of Archives and History.)



Figure 9. 1718 French map of colonial America
(Engraving in the Cornell University Library.)

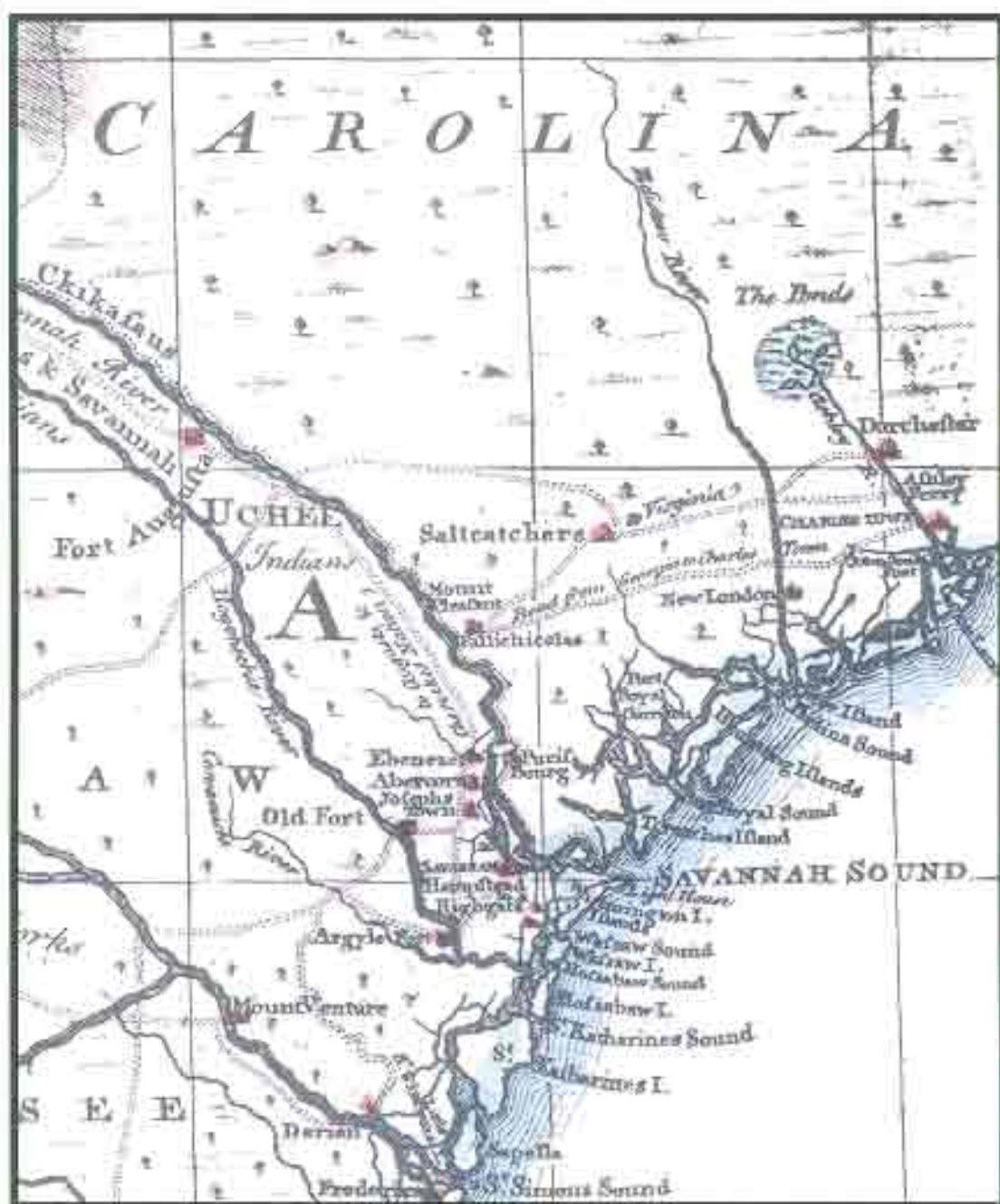


Figure 10. 1748 map of Georgia with part of Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. (Copy on file at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.)

The Founding Of The Town Of London

With the directive of the Proprietors to found a town on the Edisto and the migration of the sizable number of Calvinist dissenters from England, the initiation of the town of London is observed. In 1691 a reference is made to a new town in the letters of the Proprietors and in 1697 are found two grants for lots in the "Town of Wilton" to Landgrave Joseph Morton.

With a discussion of London on the Edisto, two major questions must be raised. One is to what extent London was actually a town or a frontier settlement or a fairly isolated community of very few inhabitants. The second question involves establishing the exact location of London (Childs 1940:230; Smith 1909:102, 103).

Although very little written information appears concerning New London or Willtown in the last decade of the seventeenth century, the 1695 Thornton-Morden map shows New London prominently displayed as a town on the Edisto bluff.

It is also noted that a delegation of Congregationalists who ultimately settled the town of Dorchester were entertained by Landgrave Morton in 1695 as they perused New London as a possible site for settlement. Although it is unknown as to how established New London may have been at this time, it does suggest that a settlement of some degree did already exist (Salley 1911:196).

Maps of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries primarily show the name of New London, but common usage favored the name Willtown which Henry A.M. Smith suggests was given in honor of the king, William of Orange.

The S.C. Historical and Genealogical Magazine article "Willtown or New London," by Henry A.M. Smith cites primary sources which mention London. It must be noted that these few seventeenth century references to London are quite nondescript and it is impossible to draw any definite conclusions as to what type of settlement actually existed. Suzanne Linder (1997:6,7) lists the following names for whom warrants for lots and precinct lots in Colleton County were issued:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Jonathan Bonner Marriner | Cassique Thomas Row(Rowe) |
| George Willock | Sir Peter Colleton (Lord Proprieter) |
| John Farr, Sr. | Joseph Morton, Jr. |
| John Palmer, Jr. | Gilbert Ashley |
| Gyles Russell | John Smyth |

Dr. Linder explains that the Proprietors directed that each person receiving a grant will be given a precinct lot in proximity to the town that is of larger acreage than their town lot upon the stipulation that they build a house in the town. It is uncertain as to whether these instructions were conscientiously observed and if each individual receiving a grant of a precinct lot actually did build in the town. It is also uncertain as to whether those individuals who received warrants actually received grants and settled on the land Linder 1997:5, 6). The 1695 John Thornton-Robert Morden map does list the names

Wilcocks (Willock?), Smith (Smyth?), and Rose (Row or Rowe?) in proximity to the name London. In addition the name Green appears in the area.

The name Russell is found on the map in proximity to Russell Creek on Edisto Island. The name Farr appears adjacent to the Stono River near the Rantowels area. The name Landgrave Morton (Joseph Morton, Jr.) is found adjacent to the head waters of Leadenwah Creek. The precinct lot of Sir Peter Colleton is shown as being near the headwaters of Penny Creek above London. Also of interest on this map is the name Governor Morton which is shown to be at the headwaters of Toogoodoo Creek, which is by land about four miles from the London settlement area.

Henry A.M. Smith raises the question as to whether the actual site of London was the same as that of Willtown (New London) or a different location (Smith 1909:103). The 1695 Thorton-Morden Map does list the names separately with London being shown about a mile upriver of New London. Further archaeological investigation might provide more clarification.

A 1715 map by Herman Moll (Figure 8) shows a great deal of settlement up and down the Edisto River. This distribution probably reflects the shifting dynamics to a plantation economy. The Willtown (London) settlements appear to have served in the late seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries as a settlement on the edge of the frontier perhaps playing a significant role in the Indian deerskin trade which was prime factor in the colonial South Carolina economy. As the eighteenth century progressed, the Indian trade and settlement moved further west and Willtown's role as frontier outpost diminished. With the English movement southward and the settlement of Georgia, Willtown's role in the defense against the Spanish at St. Augustine also lessened.

A 1748 map still shows New London as a town, but as the eighteenth century wore on, the property became more consolidated in ownership and as the town gently died, the land was formed into plantation tracts.

Little further mention of London seems to exist and the actual location and size of the site, or if it even consisted of anything resembling a village or community, is now left to speculation and the archaeologist's trowel to reveal.

English Encroachment On The Spanish Missions

Throughout the seventeenth century, Spanish missionaries established a thriving mission system along the Georgia coast and across the northern peninsula of Florida.

In 1674, Bishop Calderon, visiting the missions of La Florida, lists as those in the region of Guale, along the coast north of St. Augustine:

- La Natividad De Nuestra Senora De Tolomato (two leagues north of St. Augustine).
- San Juan Del Puerto (on Fort George Island at the mouth of the St. Johns River).
- Santa Maria (on Amelia Island).
- San Felipe (on Cumberland Island).
- Santa Buenaventura De Guadalquini (on Jekyll Island).

- Santo Domingo De Asaho (on St. Simon Island).
- San Jose De Zapala (on Sapelo Island).
- Santa Catalina (on St. Catherines Island).

(Murphy 1997:75; Gannon 1965:64)

In 1670, the Treaty of Madrid was signed and in it the English and Spanish thrones agreed to respect the lands which each occupied in the New World. This agreement was almost immediately overlooked by the Carolina English settlers who began to trade with the Indians (Murphy 1997:77; Milanich 1998:222).

In 1680, English Indian traders had allied with Creek Indians and a combined force attacked the mission Indian community on St. Simons Island. Following that raid, the mission of Santa Catalina on St. Catherines Island was attacked. Additional buccaneer and slaving raids persisted.

Following the English/Indian hostilities on the Georgia coast, Governor Cabrera of St. Augustine ordered the withdrawal of Spaniards and mission Indians to missions south of the St. Marys River. By 1685 all of the Spanish missions and towns on the Georgia coast had been abandoned (Murphy 1997:77,78; Gannon 1965:71,72).

Both Creek and Yamasee Indians established early alliances with the English traders and very much enjoyed the new found possession of firearms as an incentive. Within the first years of English trade with the Indians, the Creeks and Yamasees learned of the profit to be realized by capturing Indians (largely Christianized Indians living in Georgia and north Florida missions) for enslavement by the English. The stage was being set for Spanish retaliation (Milanich 1998:222; Gannon 1965:72-74; Murphy 1997:78).

Settlement of Scottish Dissenters and Spanish Attack

Upon the political demise of Lord Ashley Cooper, Lord Craven became palatine of the Proprietors. Sir Peter Colleton became a Proprietor and leader in the promotion of Carolina settlement (Childs 1940:218). In addition to the migration of English Dissenters, a growing interest was occurring among Scot and Irish Dissenters. In 1684 a group of Scots under the direction of Lord Cardross and William Dunlop lead a group of Scottish Dissenters to Port Royal and established a small settlement called Stuart Town. In 1684 it is possible that there were several hundred immigrants to Carolina from Scotland and Ireland. In the late fall a ship sailing from Belfast to bring settlers to Stuart Town foundered, possibly on the Charlestown bar.

In 1685, as Stuart Town and London were in early formation, a British instigated raid conducted by Yamasee Indians was perpetrated against the Spanish mission of Santa Catalina De Ahoica near the junction of the Sante Fe and Suwanee Rivers in northern Florida. The raiders sacked and burned the mission and killed or enslaved many mission Indians. The British/Indians attack on the Spanish mission system had begun to target the missions of northern Florida which had built Christianized communities among the Timucua and Apalachee (Milanich 1998: 222; Murphy 1997:78; Gannon 1965:72).

On August 17, 1686, the Spanish landed below Stuart Town in three Spanish perreaugoes or half galleys and for three days plundered and made waste of the town. Lord Cardross escaped and was able to reach Governor Morton's home near London. Three days after the Spanish landed, Governor Morton left for Charlestown and began to mobilize militia regiments to counter the Spanish intrusion. The Spaniards, after leaving Stuart Town, traveled further north to the Edisto and attacked and destroyed the Edisto Island plantation of Paul Grimball and the plantation of Governor Morton near London. The raid on Governor Morton's home saw the death of his brother-in-law, Edward Bowell, and the capture of thirteen Black and two White prisoners. As the Spanish retreated, a major hurricane struck the area and the Spanish lost one of their galleys and the commander was drowned. Not only the Spaniards suffered loss in the storm but the Carolina settlers lost many of their homes. It was reported that all of the "vessels in the road and harbours were driven up on the land and whether any of them can bee fitted out again may bee yett a question." (Dunlap 1929:81-85) In addition crops were destroyed and cattle and hogs ran loose about the country side.

While recovering from the Spanish attack and the devastation of the hurricane, Governor Morton and the Carolinians experienced additional concern over a return Spanish attack. The Spanish while at Port Royal had informed some Scottish prisoners that the raid on Stuart Town was just for reconnaissance and that they planned to return in four months with a major force and lay waste to Charlestown and the surrounding area (Dunlap 1929:86).

In a letter to the Proprietors, the Carolinians requested a ship of force and ammunition be sent for their defense. Among the signatures on this dispatch were Governor Morton, Joseph Morton, Jr., and John Farr, previously noted as being associated with precinct lots in Colleton County (Dunlap 1929:86-87).

It has been suggested that the Spanish attack on Stuart Town and the Edisto region was due in part to the socio/political/economic dynamics of the English and Scot interaction with the Indians in Spanish/English border regions. It is reported the English residents of Charlestown were unsupportive of the Stuart Town settlers and this may have been for economic reasons in addition to those of political and religious differences. It may have involved competition in the Indian trade. Evidence of this friction is demonstrated by the arrest of Henry Woodward, a Charlestown Indian trader. He was arrested by Lord Cardross while traveling in the area of Stuart Town in an attempt to initiate dialogue with the Indians in the area (Childs 1940:259).

Joseph Blake, the English Dissenter of significance who would become a landgrave, governor, and a Proprietor from Colleton County, was noted for his involvement in the Indian trade and westward expansionism (Crane 1956: 24,38,45,63-65; Childs 1940:258).

The Indian trade in deer skins and to a lesser degree in Indian slaves proved to be from the first decade of English settlement in Carolina and for many decades following one of the biggest sources of profit (Clowse 1971:120).

As London and Stuart Town represented the frontier of the Indian trade, growth in these areas may have threatened the interests of traders in Charlestown and created shifting alliances among the

Indians, disturbing the Spanish/Indian mission dynamics in the region south of the Edisto (Clowse 1971:86).

With the destruction of Stuart Town, the Scot Dissenters abandoned the endeavor at Port Royal and Lord Cardross sailed for Holland and aligned with William of Orange.

Much continued political turmoil existed in the homeland of England between the Catholic King James II, Parliament, the Anglican Church and the Dissenters. In November 1688 Cardross sailed with William, the Dutch-born Calvinist husband of James' daughter, Mary. They landed on English soil in a maneuver known as the Gunpowder Plot. By December, James left England and in February 1689, William and Mary were placed on the English throne (Durant 1963:298-299; Blum 1966-1970:358, 359).

1700-1720

One of the dramatic political issues in the Carolina colony at the dawning of the eighteenth century which probably did much to galvanize the Dissenters of the Colleton County region was the controversy between the Dissenters and the Anglicans.

During the governorship of strong Anglicans James Moore and Sir Nathaniel Johnson, the Dissenters were greatly out represented. Although the issue is rather complex, an exclusion act in which non-Anglicans were barred from being seated in the House of Commons was passed. Outraged at their ouster from local government, the Dissenters sent two representatives to London to address the issue. One was Joseph Boone who later is registered as owning a lot in Willtown. He took the case to the Anglican hierarchy and the Parliament. Ultimately the case was heard in the House of Lords and the Carolina legislation was overturned. Although the Dissenters gained political representation through these efforts, the 1706 Church Act endorsed the Anglican Church as the official state church (Weir 1983:75-80).

Another event at the beginning of the eighteenth century which had an impact on the Colleton County settlers of the southern frontier was Governor Moore's attack on St. Augustine.

About the time that the London/Willtown settlement on the Edisto had begun, the French were making claims in the Louisiana Territory which included all lands impacted by the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. In 1700, King Charles II of Spain died and being without a direct heir he designated as his successor the Duke of Anjou, from the French House of Bourbon. The territory, wealth, and military power of the French and Spanish thrones were now united. This event led to the War of Spanish Succession which lasted between 1702 and 1713 and was known as Queen Anne's War by the English Carolinians.

In November of 1702 this conflict occasioned the formation of an army of 600 Carolinians and 600 Indians which was led by Governor James Moore of Charlestown. His plan was to attack Spanish St. Augustine and its surrounding settlements prior to the French being able to align with and strengthen the possessions of Spanish Florida.

During his campaign, the troops of Governor Moore captured and destroyed the Spanish missions

and settlements from Amelia Island down to St. Augustine. The population of the town (1,445 persons) and the Spanish military force of 323 remained sequestered in the newly completed Castillo De San Marcos while Moore's troops kept them surrounded.

For more than a month the Carolinian force kept the Spanish isolated in the fort, but on December 26 four Spanish warships arrived from Havana for reinforcement. Moore, seeing that his ships were trapped in the harbor, had all 13 burned and his forces returned to Charlestown by land. Five hundred Christian Indians were taken as slaves and St. Augustine was burned, destroying almost all of the town.

This raid was devastating to the Spanish, but upon his return to Charlestown Moore resigned as governor as the English suffered greatly from the major financial expenditure and the loss of the 13 vessels (Murphy 1997:78-80; Milanich 1998:224-225; Gannon 1965:74,75; Weir 1983:80-81).

Although no longer serving as governor, Moore was commissioned in 1703 to lead a force to attack the Spanish mission system in northern Florida. With 50 Carolinian soldiers and more than 1,000 Creek Indians, he attacked the Apalachee mission and settlement of Conception De Ayubale on January 25, 1704. The raiding conducted by Moore and Indian parties continued until August with 14 missions destroyed and thousands killed, enslaved, or exiled. By the end of 1708, the expansive Spanish mission system of the seventeenth century was gone and the small remaining Spanish community lived in the vicinity of the ashes of St. Augustine (Milanich 1998: 229,230; Murphy 1997:81-85; Braund 1993:32; Gannon 1965:76,77).

The role of the dissenter population of Colleton County in the raids of Queen Anne's War is a question for the historians research, but the change in dynamics in Florida greatly shifted and set the stage for further English expansion in the Carolina frontier and the settlement of Georgia.

Yamassee War

One of the most significant early eighteenth century events that impacted the Carolina colony and the balance of power and trade among the Spanish, French, English and the Indian nations was the Yamassee War. There continues to be exploration of factors which may have contributed to the Yamassee Indian uprising against the English colony. Some speculation involves the role of the Spanish and French in encouraging and supplying the Indians in their revolt and in competing with the English for trade. Another factor which greatly involved the settlers of Colleton County was the continued encroachment on the borders of the Yamassee lands. As Colleton County and the Port Royal area was growing and expanding in the 1690s, large cattle ranches were being established, with stock wandering onto Yamassee property. In 1707 an act was passed "to limit the bounds of the Yamassee settlement, to prevent persons from disturbing them with their stocks, and to remove such as are settled," (Crane 1956:162,163) Border issues may have contributed to the unrest, but by far the greatest factor contributing to the war was that of excessive and unfair business practices perpetrated against the Indians in which great debt was amassed and owed to unscrupulous Indian traders. In 1711 the Indian Commission estimated that the debt owed by the Indians was 100,000 deer skins—the equivalent of a whole year's trade (Crane 1956:164-167)

The accounts of this war are better documented elsewhere, but a brief look at the role of Willtown is in order. Although the size of Willtown is in question in the early years of the eighteenth century, it was able to support a garrison with a fortification and act as a base for scout boats. Watchers or scouts had been operative on the inland passage since the late 1600s, but after the Spanish-French raid on Charleston in 1706, nine detachments of scouts were ordered for patrol between the Stono River and Port Royal area (Ivers 1972:117,121; Linder 1997:26).

In July 1715, a group of 500 to 700 Apalaches crossed the Edisto River. Their attack on the Willtown garrison was defended with no reported loss. The Native Americans then destroyed about thirty plantations in the region between Willtown and Charlestown (Crane 1956:173).

The End of the Proprietary Government

As the second decade of the eighteenth century progressed, government and political dynamics continued to evolve. A major shift in London government occurred during the reigns of William and Mary as well as Queen Anne. Governmental authority ultimately passed from the monarchy to the Parliament with the last Royal veto of a parliamentary decision occurring in 1707 (Durant 1963:310).

In a very complex collection of events, the Proprietary Government in Carolina was becoming defunct owing largely to the lack of support given the Carolina colony during the Yamasee War. The aristocracy envisioned by the original Lords Proprietors could not compete with the needs and forces evolving within the colony. With the adoption of a royal colonial system, a new Carolina aristocracy was developing based not on a Proprietary model but on a wealth generated from rice, indigo, and an expanding Indian trade (Sass 1958:102,103 [1884]).

The Reverend Archibald Stobo And The Wiltown Church

Archibald Stobo grew up in a Scotland where the covenanters, Scot Presbyterians, suffered much persecution under the Stuart Kings Charles II and James II. Presbyterians were forbidden from assembly and during the 1670s and 1680s frequent battling and deprivation took place. It was in this milieu that the failed Stuart Town attempt was made by Lord Cadross and William Dunlap (Howe 1870:87-95).

Upon the accession of William of Orange, the persecutions quieted, but by the 1690s another expedition for a Scot colony in the new world was afoot. There was a grand plan to establish a large colony on the Isthmus of Darien in the vicinity of Panama with the intent of opening up trade between the Pacific Far East and Europe by transporting goods across land from one ocean to the other. In the nation of Scotland, investors ranged from the nobility to the common man. William Dunlap was a director of the Darien Company and the investors were also obtained in England, Holland, and Hamburg (Howe 1870:135, 136).

In July 1698, 1,200 men in five ships made their way to the new world establishing a town called St. Andrews in the country of New Caledonia,

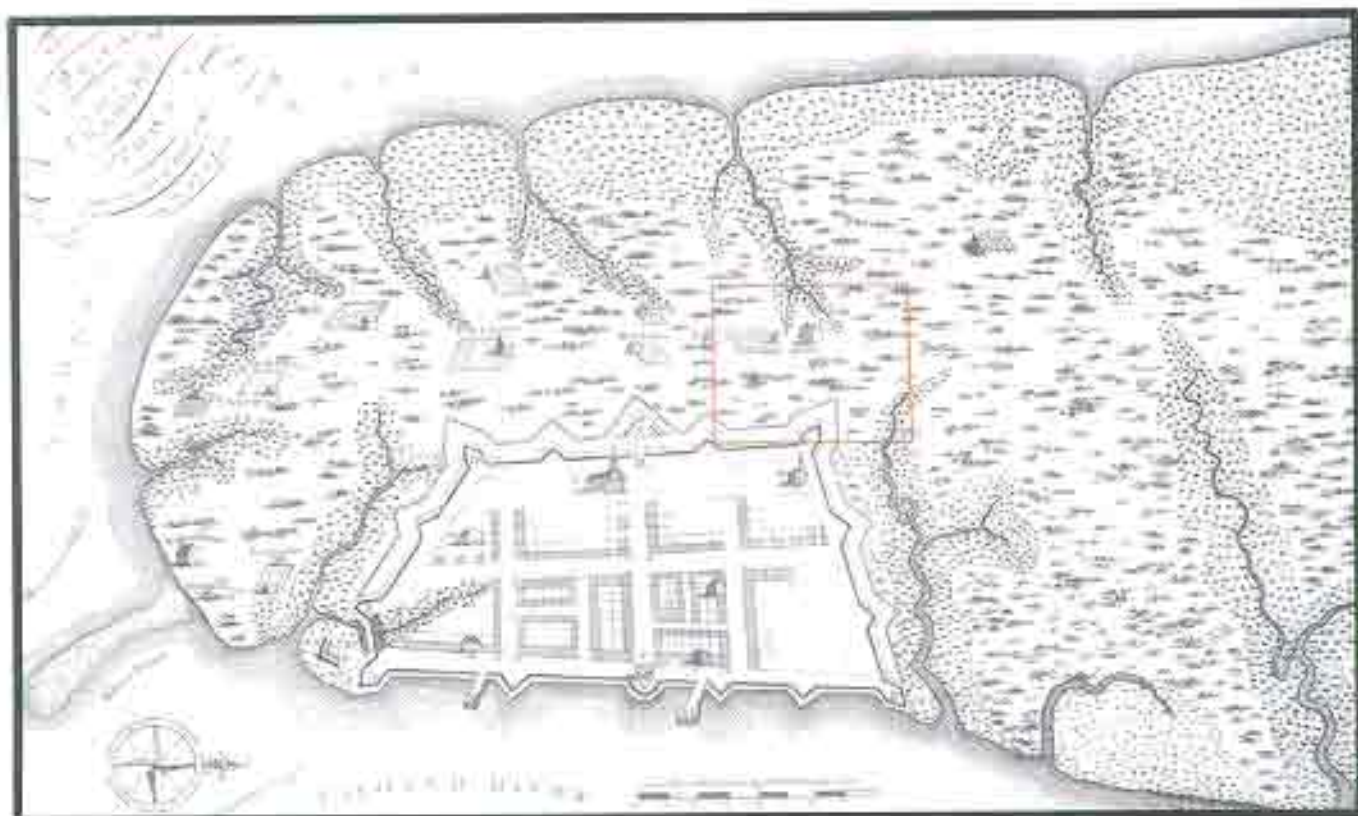


Figure 11. 1704 Crisp Map of Charlestowne showing the Stobo house outside of the city wall.(Copy on file at the Charleston County Library).

A great deal of economic opposition to the colony arose when representatives of the Dutch East India Company and English merchants voiced that English commerce may be destroyed by the Scottish presence in the trade loop. William of Orange withdrew his support as did the English, Dutch, and Hamburg merchants. William ordered that English colonies in the Caribbean were not to provide supplies and assistance (Howe 1870:137).

As a result, the colony suffered from much want of supplies and support, and was in a state of deterioration when Archibald Stobo arrived in a second party of 1,200 settlers. He was one of four ministers commissioned to form the Presbytery of Caledonia (Howe 1870:138).

A brief period of insufficient food and disease ensued and a large fleet of eleven Spanish ships attacked the town. After a siege of six weeks, the Scots surrendered to the Spanish and agreed to abandon their attempt at colonization.

In his exodus, Archibald Stobo sailed on the 60-gun ship *Rising Sun* on which many were stricken with fevers and illness. In a gale off the Florida coast the ship was damaged and made for assistance in Charlestown. Arriving off Charlestown in September 1700, The *Rising Sun* anchored with a plan of lightening the vessel so that it might safely cross the Charlestown bar. Archibald Stobo along with his wife and several others went into Charlestown by boat. Almost immediately a hurricane hit and the *Rising Sun* was sunk with the loss of more than 300 lives. Although Charlestown was greatly inundated, causing much damage, Archibald Stobo survived and took up the pulpit in the Charlestown church (Petit 1976:39; Howe 1870:140-141). He ministered in the congregation until 1704. His home is conspicuously noted outside the city wall on the Crisp map of 1704.

Archibald Stobo is credited with establishing Presbyterian churches at Willtown, Pon-Pon, James Island, and Camhoy. It is not until 1728 that there is documented evidence of the Willtown Church but Howe suggests that "it is most probable that a church organization, more or less complete, existed there soon after Mr. Stobo retired from the pastorate of the Charlestown church" (Howe 1870:146).

Stobo ministered in the Willtown Church until his death in 1741 (Howe 1870:229).

African Americans at Willtown

The story of African history on the Edisto is largely one of slavery. As one might expect, very little written documentation is readily available but the remnants of the elaborate rice fields along the river speak loudly of the history of the African presence.

The 1683 warrant issued to Jonathan Bonner is for one town lot and one precinct lot at Pan Pan in Colleton County for himself and four "Negroes" (Linder 1997:6).

In a will dated 1746, Royal Spry left four slaves, "Little London," Seallie, Jacob, and Hannah and their issue to the Willtown Presbyterian Church. The 1739 will of Timothy Hendrick had left the congregation Cesar and Nanny and their issue (Simmons 1960:160,161; Simmons 1961:35).

These slaves would be hired out on contract to landowners who would use their labor and pay the church a yearly sum. In 1762, it is noted that James Fabian hired Jacob, London, Sully, Hamah, Nanny, Boatswain and children for eleven months from the Willtown Congregation for £150 (Simmons

1961:41).

Although little personal history is recorded, the thriving plantation economy found in this region at the time of the Civil War was built on the knowledge and labor of these largely anonymous African Americans.

The Stono Uprising

The years from 1720 to 1739 saw an expansion of the South Carolina rice industry and with that a dramatic increase in the importation of slaves. In the decade preceding 1740, more than 20,000 slaves were imported from Africa bringing the African population in South Carolina in 1740 to about 39,000. The white European population in that year is estimated at about 20,000. Prior to this major importation of African slaves during these years, many of the slaves had lived in the West Indies or Carolina for more than a decade and were somewhat enculturated into the landowners socio-political process and were basically controlled by the white system (Wood 1974:302).

During these years, growing apprehension was felt by white landowners and citizens that perhaps a growing sense of autonomy was experienced among the African population. Another dynamic at play was the continued influence of the Spanish at St. Augustine. In 1727 a raiding party of four dozen Yamassees was reported to be sent to Carolina by the Spanish governor. It is stated that he promised "thirty pieces of eight for every English scalp and one hundred for every live Negro they should bring." It is reported that this party encountered and killed several border scouts and came to a plantation "within 10 miles of PonPon, where they took the scalps of two more whites named Micheau and Wood." They were pursued by local planters who recovered ten slaves (Wood 1974:305 - quoted from BPRO trans. XIII, June 13, 1728, 61-67).

Another raid was reported by a Spanish schooner in 1727 which entered the North Edisto River and took seven Negroes from the plantation of David Ferguson. A prominent South Carolinian of the time stated "it seems the governor of Augustine makes merchandise of all our slaves, and ships them off to Havanah for his own profit, as we are told by the Spaniards themselves at St. Augustine." (Wood 1974:305).

In 1733 the king of Spain ordered that Negroes arriving in St. Augustine from Carolina would be granted freedom but it was not until 1738 that the new governor, Seignior Don Manuel De Montiano, began to enforce this royal ce'dula by establishing a community just north of St. Augustine as a settlement for freed Africans. It was called the Pueblae De Gracia Real De Santa Terese De Mose, commonly called "Moosa" (Wood 1974:306).

In 1738 a small group of Carolina slaves escaped to St. Augustine and were established as freed men in Moosa. Their former owner, Captain Caleb Davis, was informed by the Spanish officials that there would be no negotiations for their return (Wood 1974:306,307). These circumstances greatly alarmed the white Carolina legislature and this was the major item on the 1739 agenda.

Lt. Gov. Bull presided over the Assembly. He is quoted in a letter of that year as stating: "There was a growing awareness among whites that their Negroes which were their chief support may in little

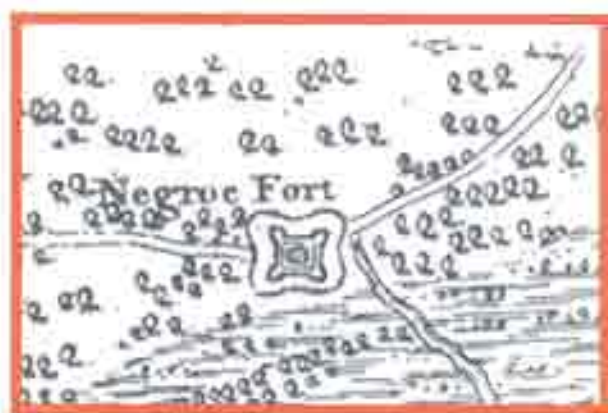
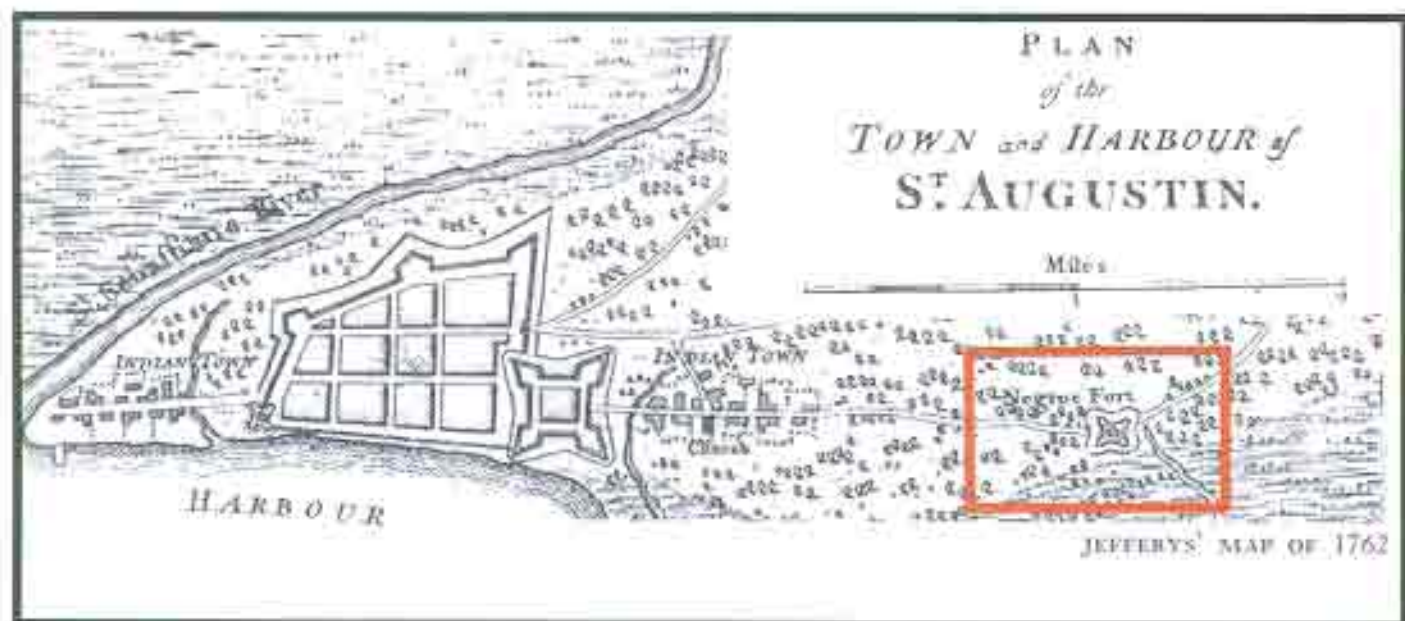


Figure 12. Jefferys' Map of 1762 showing the "Negro Fort" north of Saint Augustine. (Copy on file at the University of Florida).

time become their enemies, if not their masters, and that this government is unable to withstand or prevent it" (Wood 1974:312).

The Assembly made recommendations to appeal to King George for help; to establish two additional scout boats along the coastal passage for nine months, and to establish bounties for slaves captured in Georgia and returned. They were £40 for men, £25 for women, and £10 for children. A bounty of £20 for each adult scalp was recommended (Wood 1974:310).

In addition a security act was passed which strengthened the previously enacted but poorly complied with practice of requiring all white men to carry arms to church and other public meetings (Wood 1974:313).

Early on Sunday morning, September 9, 1739, an uprising began on the banks of the Stono River. Charlestown had been suffering for some months with a yellow fever epidemic and the Assembly was in recess. About twenty slaves met and traveled from the Stono bridge to the Ponpon road, gathering further recruits and strength as they progressed to a point near Jacksonboro crossing on the Edisto River about eight miles from Willtown. Having robbed arms and ammunition from Hutchenson's store on the Stono, they killed the storekeepers and left their heads on display on the steps of the store. On their journey to the Edisto, several white people were killed and houses burned (Wood 1974:314-315).

Lt. Gov. William Bull and four companions met the slave band as they traveled from the Edisto towards Charlestown. They assisted in raising the alarm among the white population, alerting the people of Willtown during the Sunday morning service in the Presbyterian Church (Wood 1974:315-316).

That afternoon about 4 p.m. a group of white planters struck the encamped slaves and overcame them.

One account reports that the planters "cut off their heads and set them up at every mile post they came to" (Wood 1974:317).

Although the rebellion was largely halted in that battle, further hunting for escaped members of the slave party and fear of further uprising went on for several months. In 1740 the Negro Act was passed by the Assembly which did much to define the deprivation of the civil liberties of the slaves from that time to the Civil War (Wood 1974:318-324).

The 1863 Gunboat Expedition

Under the cover of darkness during the early morning hours of July 10, 1863, three small Union vessels clandestinely made their way along the Edisto rice fields and were halted by the pilings blocking the river about 800 yards below Willtown Bluff. The Confederate Chesnut Light Artillery unit briefly engaged the vessels from Willtown Bluff but ceased and withdrew after firing only three rounds due to technical difficulties which temporarily disabled both field pieces. About 150 soldiers landed on the rice field bank and as dawn broke over the Edisto that morning, Willtown Bluff Plantation was in the hands of Union forces (Scott 1890:197; Beecher 1901:239; Higginson 1870:170,171).

The expedition was under the command of Col. Thomas Higginson, officer in charge of the First South Carolina Colored Infantry. Also present was a section of the First Connecticut Battery who

were present to handle the shipboard artillery. The mission of the expedition was to liberate slaves and to harass the Confederates. Many coastal plantations had been abandoned after the fall of Port Royal to the Union and on this section of the Edisto were some of the closest plantations still occupied. To prevent attack and passage, the Confederates installed the pilings across the river below Willtown Bluff and had various light artillery units operating in the area. A secondary goal of the expedition was to proceed to the railroad bridge below Jacksonboro and destroy it (Higginson 1870:167-169).

Also present on the endeavor was engineering officer Capt. Charles Trowbridge, who helped to co-author the plan for the raid. Capt. Trowbridge had previously conducted a clandestine reconnaissance upriver, hiding during the day and traveling in a small boat at night. He made soundings and drawings to be used for bringing the larger vessels up the river. He also scouted the nature of the obstructions and made provision for opening a safe passage through them (Beecher 1901:240).

On the morning of the attack, Capt. Trowbridge attempted to extract pilings with the capstan of the vessel but this did not work. He then set up a makeshift arrangement in which a blade was lowered against the pilings and, operated from the surface by ropes, which cut some of the pilings below the waterline, allowing the vessels to proceed (Beecher 1901:240).

The *John Adams*, the largest of the three vessels, was a ferry boat converted for government service. Col. Higginson later wrote that if he remembered correctly, it was armed with "two Parrott guns (of twenty and ten pounds calibre) and a howitzer or two" (Higginson 1870:170).

The *Enoch Dean* was a small river steamboat which was plagued with engine problems on this trip. This was the command vessel of Col. Higginson and was armed with "a ten-pound Parrott gun and a small howitzer" (Higginson 1870, 169,170).

The third vessel was the *Governor Milton* which had been employed as a Confederate tug in the St. Johns River in Florida and had been captured the previous October and pressed into Union service. As it employed wood for fuel, it was not really suitable for naval duty and was assigned to the army for support services. The *Governor Milton* had a length of eighty feet and a beam of twenty feet, with a displacement of sixty-eight tons. She carried two 12-pound Armstrong guns (Higginson 1870:170; Rawson 1890:371,372).

During the morning hours, as Capt. Trowbridge worked on clearing the obstructions to the point that the vessels were able to pass, many slaves came forward for liberation. Many of the soldiers of the First South Carolina engaged the Confederates in the dense woods surrounding Willtown Bluff and this action continued for most of the day (Higginson 1870:171-175; Beecher 1901:239,240).

Lt. White, after having abandoned his position at Willtown Bluff took his Chesnut Light Artillery unit to Gibbs Farm (Rosemont) and set up a firing position overlooking the bend of the river above Willtown. Around noon with the tide rising, the *Enoch Dean* and the *Governor Milton* steamed up river to proceed to the railroad bridge. The *Governor Milton* quickly ran aground and the *Enoch Dean* alone rounded the bend to face the Confederates on the Gibbs land. A cannon duel took place until the *Governor Milton* and the *Enoch Dean* were able to steam past the Confederates and proceeded up the river. The *Governor Milton* navigated without further mishap but the *Enoch Dean* grounded repeatedly.

At a bar just below Dr. Glover's farm (West Bank Landing) about three miles below the railroad bridge, the *Enoch Dean* grounded substantially. The *Governor Milton* steamed on to try for the bridge when they met a unit of the Washington Light Artillery at West Bank. In an action which lasted about an hour, the *Governor Milton* took a hit which killed the engineer and damaged the engine. One of the soldiers, William Shepard, who had previously worked as a railroad engineer, heroically worked with a steam valve and was able to get the vessel in reverse. The action continued as the *Governor Milton* made it back to the *Enoch Dean* which was struggling to free itself from the bar. The bow gun of the *Dean* ran out of ammunition and the stern gun of the *Milton* dislodged. By putting out an anchor and using the capstan to pull the *Dean* in reverse, it again floated free and joined the *Governor Milton* in retreat down the river with the tide which had now turned and was beginning to fall. The mission of destroying the railroad bridge was abandoned (Rawson 1890:194-198; Beecher 1901:242,243; Higginson 1870:175, 180).

As the two vessels approached Prospect Hill Plantation, they encountered rather fierce fire from the Chestnut Artillery at Rosemont which had now been joined by a section of the Marion Artillery. During this fight, one soldier was killed and Col. Higginson was grazed by a shot but not seriously injured (Rawson 1890:195,196).

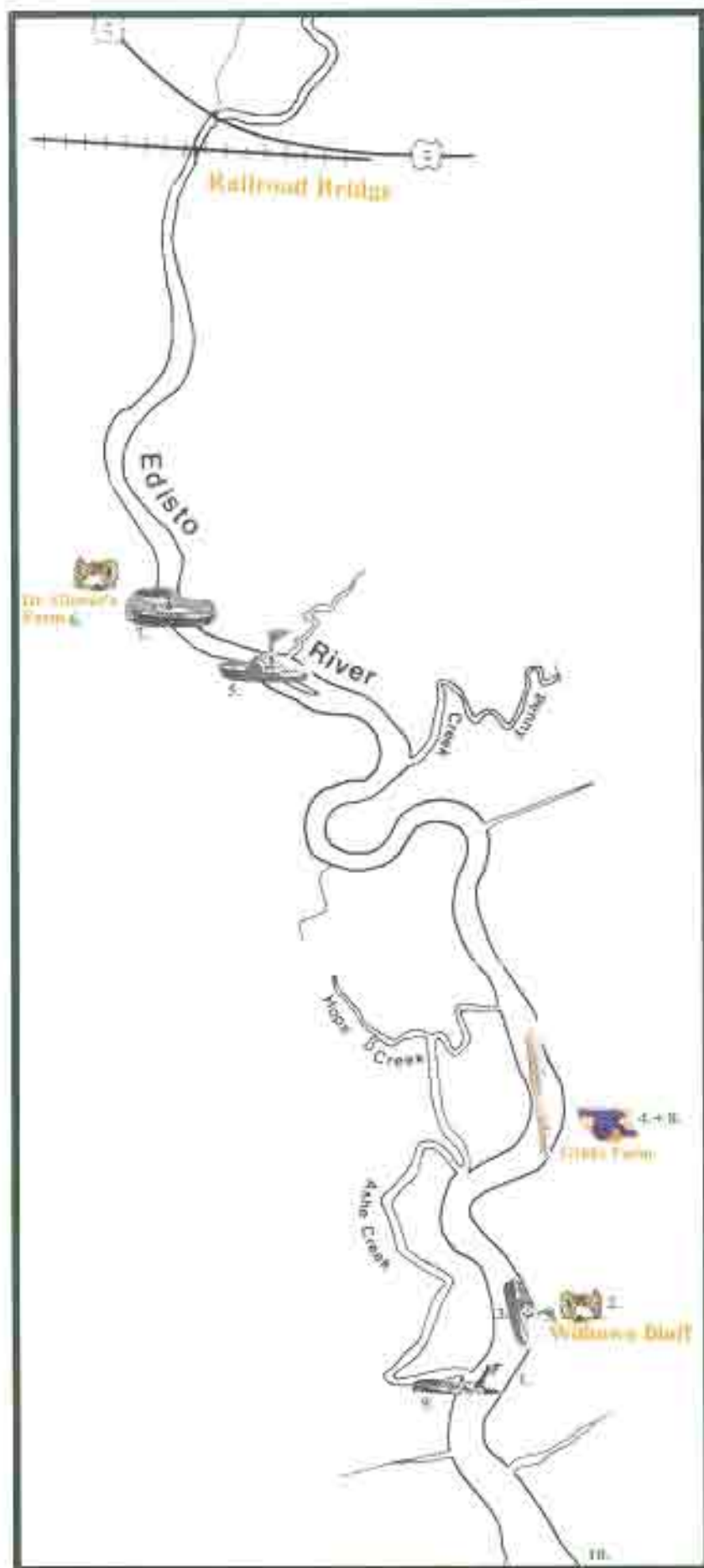
During the trip up the river, slaves made their way to the boats and were taken on board. In the process of the fighting, a young slave who had been helping to handle ammunition was hit and lost a leg. Two others were drowned when their boat overturned, as they tried to reach the Union vessels during the battle (Beecher 1901:247, 248).

The *Enoch Dean* and the *Governor Milton* returned to Willtown Bluff. Both in quite injured condition. While the excursion up the river was taking place, the *John Adams* was moored at the Willtown Bluff dock, holding the position and taking on slaves. An incident occurred in which three slaves, a man and two women, came along side in a dugout canoe. It overturned and as the women were being rescued, the man disappeared from view. The two women were struck with grief believing their loved one had drowned but were relieved when they learned that he had been rescued on the other side of the *Adams* (Beecher 1901:247).

During the brief occupation of Willtown Bluff, the rice mill was burned and rice field dikes were damaged (Beecher 1901:248; Rawson 1890:196, 198).

As the three vessels began to embark, the *Governor Milton* grounded on the pilings obstructing the river, was pulled off and again grounded on them hopelessly. The *John Adams*, which was assisting, was also in danger of grounding. It abandoned the *Milton* after the personnel were taken off, the *Milton's* guns thrown overboard, and the tug set on fire (Higginson 1870:180, 181; Beecher 1901:244, 247).

A section of the Chesnut Artillery and a company of the Sixth Cavalry were dispatched down river and further skirmishing took place. At a point about "four miles" below Willtown Bluff another heated artillery duel occurred during which slaves on the upper deck were wounded (Beecher 1901:248; Rawson 1890:196) The expedition returned to Beaufort on July 12. Col. Higginson reported that they



1. Early morning shelling of Confederate battery on Willtown Bluff by Federal gunboats John Adams, Enoch Dean, and Governor Milton.
2. The Chesnut Light Artillery withdraws after firing only three rounds due to problems with two field pieces.
3. After capturing the plantation, the John Adams holds the position while the Enoch Dean and the Gov. Milton proceed up river toward the railroad bridge.
4. The Chesnut Artillery engages the vessels as they travel up river.
5. The Enoch Dean grounds substantially.
6. A unit of the Washington Light Artillery fires on the two vessels in a duel which lasts about an hour.
7. The Governor Milton takes a hit which kills the engineer and damages the engine.
8. The two vessels encounter fierce fire from the Chesnut Light Artillery and a section of the Marion Artillery.
9. Upon abandoning Willtown Bluff, the Governor Milton grounds on pilings and is scuttled and burned.
10. A section of the Chesnut Artillery and a company of the Sixth Cavalry fire on the John Adams and the Enoch Dean at a point about four miles below Willtown Bluff.

Figure 13. The 1863 Gunboat Expedition.

had "brought away about 200 contrabands (slaves), 6 bails of cotton of the best quality, and two prisoners," (Beecher 1901:250).

Writing an account after the war, Col. Higginson states of the endeavor on the Edisto:

Before the war, how great a thing seemed the rescue of even one man from slavery; and since the war had emancipated all, how little seems the liberation of two hundred! But no one then knew how the contest might end; and when I think of that morning sunlight, those emerald fields, those thronging numbers, the old women with their prayers, and the little boys with their living burdens, I know that the day was worth all the cost, and more. (Higginson 1870:184)

Col. Aiken of the Confederate Sixth South Carolina Calvary wrote in his report on July 12 that his men had salvaged the "two brass rifled 6 pounders, with carriages, etc., uninjured and in good order" (Scott 1890:197).

Col. Higginson in a later account reported that a year after the Edisto expedition, the First South Carolina Regiment participated in the capture of a Confederate artillery battery on James Island. He states that as his men took possession of their prize, they found that they had recaptured the salvaged guns from the *Governor Milton* (Higginson 1870:183, 184).

Project Background

In 1969 when Isaac White gave me the flyer which had been handed out on a Willtown Bluff Plantation tour, it contained the following brief historical description:

In 1682, the Lords Proprietors planned a town that would rival Charleston in its facilities for overseas trade and would offer a more salubrious climate. Called New London, it was laid out and mapped with streets and stairs running down to the river. Following the accession of William III in 1689, it came gradually to be known as Willtown. It should be pointed out that Willtown was the oldest English settlement after Charles Towne.

The only census taken shows that in 1708 the community already consisted of eighty houses. But the original hope of developing a large and prosperous town was destined to disappointment. The Edisto River could not compete with Charleston Harbor. Nor had the cause of the malaria that infected the region yet been discovered.

During the eighteenth century the community slowly disintegrated, and all but a few of its population disappeared. The stage coach road and the ferry across the river were discontinued. The Presbyterian Church, which was abandoned in 1767, was rebuilt again a generation later; but was destroyed in 1820. A single remaining column distinguished the site.

In 1863, Willtown Bluff was the site of a Civil War battle engagement, Federal troops planned to cut the Charleston-Savannah road at Jacksonboro. On July 10 of that year, three Union gunboats advanced up the Edisto enroute to Jacksonboro Bridge. They were turned back, however, when they were intercepted by a section of the Washington Artillery. When upon passing Willtown Bluff, they again encountered artillery which set the Governor Milton (one of the gunboats) on fire. It burned to the water's edge and to this day it can be seen at low tide.

During the time of our 1969-70 project, this account served as the foundation of our knowledge of the history of Willtown.

In 1997, upon meeting Martha Zeirden and Ron Anthony, archaeologists with the Charleston Museum who supervised the 1997 excavation at Willtown, I learned of two reports which presented a scholarly approach to understanding the history of Willtown and provided a foundation for the archaeological interpretation of the site. These reports were the *Historical and Archaeological Survey of Willtown Bluff Plantation* by Elaine B. Harold and *Willtown, Colonial Village on the*

Edisto by Suzanne C. Linder. Martha graciously provided me with a copy of both reports as well as a copy of the *Archaeological Investigations of Willtown, Plan of Work, 1997 Season* by Martha and Ron. Upon examining these works, I was quite impressed with the accomplishments of these professionals and was additionally motivated to add the underwater piece of the story to the overall interpretation of the site.

In recounting the history of Willtown in this report, I tried not to paraphrase the scholarship of the above mentioned works but instead tapped resources for perhaps additional tidbits which may add to the understanding of the site, especially from the maritime perspective.

Project History

History of Diving on Submerged S.C. Historical Sites prior to the 1969-1970 Willtown Project

In the early 1960s, it can be safely stated that few historic underwater sites had been disturbed by scuba divers. By about 1965, an interest in the sport blossomed amongst a handful of enthusiasts. Probably the first site to attract attention was the colonial fort and town of Dorchester on the Ashley River.

I can recall about 10 divers who were surface hunting for artifacts on this site. By the time I began to dive at Dorchester in 1967, it was very difficult to locate even fragments without digging into the bottom. It is important to note that at that time there was no law governing the recovery of underwater antiquities. One of the avid divers at the Dorchester site was a very talented and intelligent young man named Lee Spence. At this time, he was researching and working toward locating the wrecks of three Confederate blockade runners that were sunk off the Isle of Palms. Early in 1968, Spence located the *Georgianna*, *Mary Bowers*, and the *Constance* wrecks. To secure exclusive salvage rights to work the shipwrecks, Spence and his two business partners, Wally Schaffer, a shrimper, and George Campsen, an attorney, formed Shipwrecks, Inc., and began work on getting legislation introduced to define a law governing underwater antiquities and their salvage. At that time, most persons thought recovering sunken antiquities revolved around the concept of salvage for profit or historical interest. The idea of a carefully executed underwater excavation was virtually unknown.

In early 1969, legislation was enacted which defined the terms of agreement for salvage of underwater antiquities, and the Shipwrecks, Inc., work on the Confederate blockade runners began that summer with state underwater salvage permit number one.

Willtown and the Terms of S.C. Salvage License 69-3

It was shortly after the passage of the law that Jim Batey and I made our first dives at Willtown, which to my knowledge was one of the very few historic river sites to be dived outside of the Dorchester area. Important precedents were about to be established. Now that there was a law governing recovery of underwater antiquities, how would divers respond? How would the state respond? Who was responsible for overseeing potential projects? And, how would the law be enforced? Whether good underwater archaeology would be conducted was probably not much of a question since I'm not sure if anyone really knew what that was.

When Jim Batey and I decided to communicate our finds to the authorities, we expected a favorable reply that we might continue to recover artifacts from Willtown with an exclusive Salvage License. Although our intentions may have been reasonably honorable, in retrospect I can say that we were quite unknowledgable about how to conduct a scientific archaeological survey. Our project basically consisted of underwater salvage of artifacts using random and uncontrolled collecting.



Figure 14. Divers Jim Batey and
Drew Ruddy at Willtown, 1969.

Photos by Murton as published
in the *Charleston News and Courier*
August 2, 1969.



techniques.

As I review the terms of our license, Palmetto Divers agreed to keep a daily log of salvage operations and on the first of each month provide the state with a copy which included a list of artifacts recovered, locations, and names of divers, etc. During the operation, I am sure that we did not honor this agreement on the first of each month, but on file with SCIAA are a collection of field notes which were provided by the completion of the one-year project.

Artifacts that were significant to Palmetto Divers, which primarily consisted of finds older than 1900 and reasonably intact, were assigned a catalog number. Fragments of items, which were not important to Palmetto Divers, were basically collected and given to the state but not cataloged or labeled as to their location of recovery.

The initial terms of the Salvage License delineated that recovered artifacts would be divided with a 25 percent share to the SCIAA and 75 percent to Palmetto Divers. On June 20, 1969, a division was conducted between Archaeologist Stanley South of the SCIAA staff and Palmetto Divers. At the time of this first and only official division of artifacts, it became apparent that the state was setting a precedent of willingly taking the fragmented material, which was of no value to Palmetto Divers, and was quite cooperative about negotiating our interest. It should also be noted that although additional fragmented material was given to the SCIAA, no official final division was ever conducted.

SCIAA documentation reveals that on June 4, 1970, staff member M. Gardner recorded, with some descriptive drawings and measurements, the artifacts given to the state.

The Willtown Museum — An Additional Dimension

Early in our project at Willtown, Palmetto Divers made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Heyward Jervey, owners and residents of the Willtown Bluff Plantation. They proved to be exceptionally supportive and affirming. They were kind enough to allow us ready access to work from their property and dock and to use a dock house for the storage of diving equipment. On the bluff overlooking the river was a small building, which the Jerveys called the Tea House, in which Mr. Jervey had displayed artifact fragments which he had collected at random on the property. He called this his museum. After some negotiation, it was decided that we would build display cases for the artifacts recovered from the river and expand the scope of his museum. With the help of William Hunt as carpenter and Mr. Jervey defraying the cost of materials, three permanent display cases were installed, complete with indirect lighting. In addition, a portable glass display case on loan to us by the Charleston Museum, was used in the "Willtown Museum." Mr. Jervey had a sign professionally painted for the museum entrance.

In the spring of 1970, Willtown Bluff was included in a Lowcountry Plantation Tour and the public was invited to view the plantation house and museum.

Our original intent was to leave significant Willtown artifacts on display in the museum upon completion of the term of the salvage license, but later in 1970, Willtown Bluff was sold and the artifacts were removed and the museum dismantled.

Dives During the 1969-1970 Willtown Project

Upon examination of the Palmetto Divers field notes which were given to the SCIAA in 1970, 22 diving days are noted. In addition to the SCIAA records, a card file exists which records major finds (excluding fragments), which coincides nicely with cataloging on SCIAA-held field notes.

Dives were made with more frequency in the spring and summer of 1969, with a marked decrease later in the year. No dives were recorded in 1970 from January until the end of the contract period in June. This is explained somewhat by the fact that a majority of finds were made early in the project and as surface collecting diminished, less time was spent. Although some experimenting was done with a water jet and a water propelled transfer tube, no appreciable excavation was conducted at the site.

Upon completion of the project, a site plan drawing was made and given to SCIAA. As no underwater grid was used, all recorded artifact positions were approximate. This fact does reduce the scientific value of the work, but a good sense of the random distribution of the finds can be noted.

Dives Made Since the Completion of the 69-3 License Period

Following the expiration of the 69-3 license, Palmetto Divers did not seek to renew the contract and did not seek to file for a license at any additional sites. During the course of the 1969-70 contract year myself, Jim Batey, and additional divers began to explore sites in other rivers and to make additional finds. Much of what was happening was reported to Dr. Stephenson in an effort to cooperate with the state and report sites. It was during this time that some of the first diving was done in the Cooper, Ashepoo, and Combahee Rivers. Dr. Stephenson was tolerant, if not supportive of diving sites without a license, and it seems that the seeds of the South Carolina Hobby Diver Program were being sowed.

Additional dives have been made at random over the years since the Willtown Project which terminated in June 1970. Some of the finds are noted in this report. As is the case in some other South Carolina rivers sites, bottom dynamics can change with currents and shifting sediments, and artifacts may be located which were previously buried or missed.



Figure 15. Steve Howard with a bottle from the Oakhurst Sector, 1970.

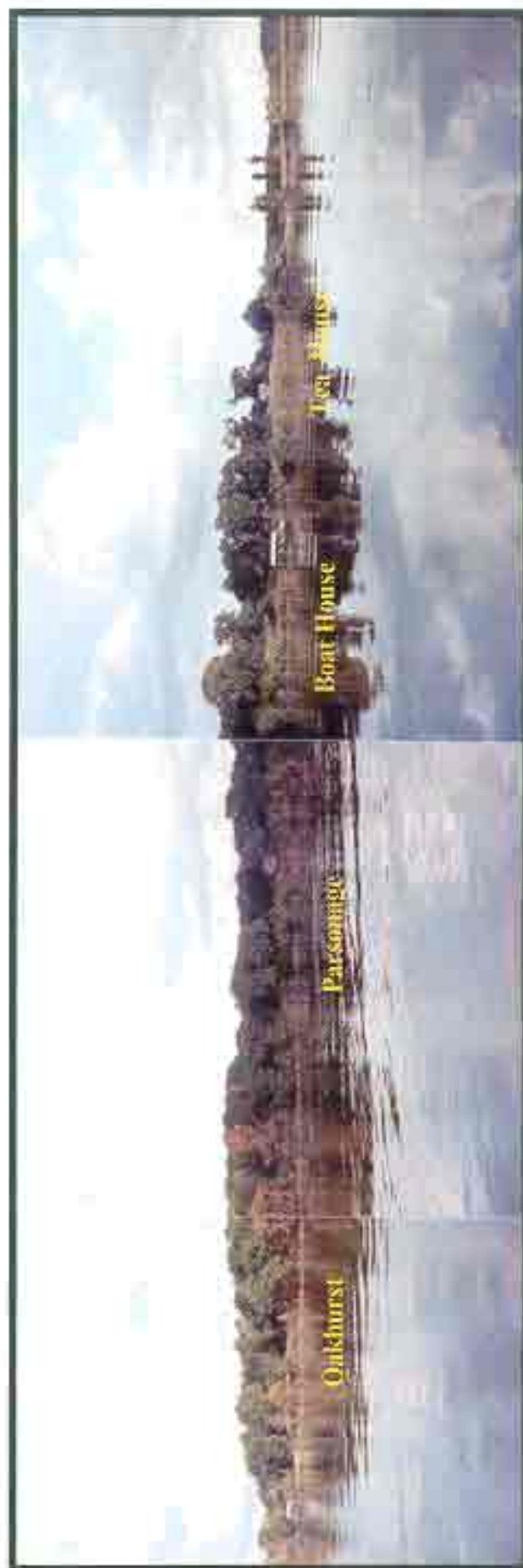


Figure 16. Panoramic view of Wiltown Bluff.

1998 Field Work

In an effort to collect further data at the Willtown River site, four days of field work were conducted. The objectives were to secure information for mapping the site and to randomly collect artifacts to assess dates and types of material still remaining at the site.

Mapping

To provide a reference for mapping the site, a datum line was established from the Hutton (Oakhurst) Plantation dock to the dock below the Willtown Bluff boat landing. The line was 5/16 inch nylon color coded to allow divers on the bottom to identify the survey section where they were looking. The color coded sections were 50 meters (160 ft.) each in length. Bouys were attached at each 50 meter section and a photo mosaic of the bluff and bouys was made to allow for surface analysis of the datum line.

On August 24, 1998, Lynn Harris, Carl Naylor, and Joe Beatty of SCIAA came to the site with fathometer equipment and ran six designated lanes perpendicular to the bluff to map topographical features of the riverbed.

In addition to mapping work, dives were made to collect artifacts and to record section locations where they were found.

Willtown Underwater Site Description

For purposes of mapping and analyzing the Willtown underwater site, it was divided into four sections along the bluff, each consisting of two 50-meter, color-coded grid units. The northern most sector is the 100 meter area beginning at the Hutton (Oakhurst) Plantation dock and running southward. It is designated as the Oakhurst sector for purposes of this report, not because it corresponds to any real property line on the land but because it roughly corresponds to the land area on the bluff which was Oakhurst Plantation. The next 100 meter section heading south along the bluff is designated as the Parsonage sector, the third section as the Willtown Boathouse sector, and the fourth as the Willtown Tea House sector. Each sector is named for an obvious landmark visible from the river bank.

If one were to walk the bank at the Willtown waterfront at low tide, one would find a basic substrate with the consistency of a hard clay. Moving out into the river, the bottom slopes and reaches a maximum depth of 16 to 18 feet (at high tide) at a distance of about 75 to 100 feet from the shore line. At each end of the bluff, the Oakhurst and Willtown Tea House sectors, have more pronounced drop offs than the central parts of the bluff, the Parsonage and Willtown Boathouse sectors display a more gradual slope to depth. Beyond the initial drop offs can be found areas of sediment beds which are composed of sand, gravel, and logs. These are the most prolific areas for collecting artifacts.

Out in the river beyond the sediment beds are large volumes of sand overburden which cover a majority of the river bottom causing the depth to gradually decrease as one moves to the western shore.



Figure 17. SCIAA staff Lynn Harris, Joe Beatty, and Carl Naylor conducting a bottom profile survey with a fathometer unit.

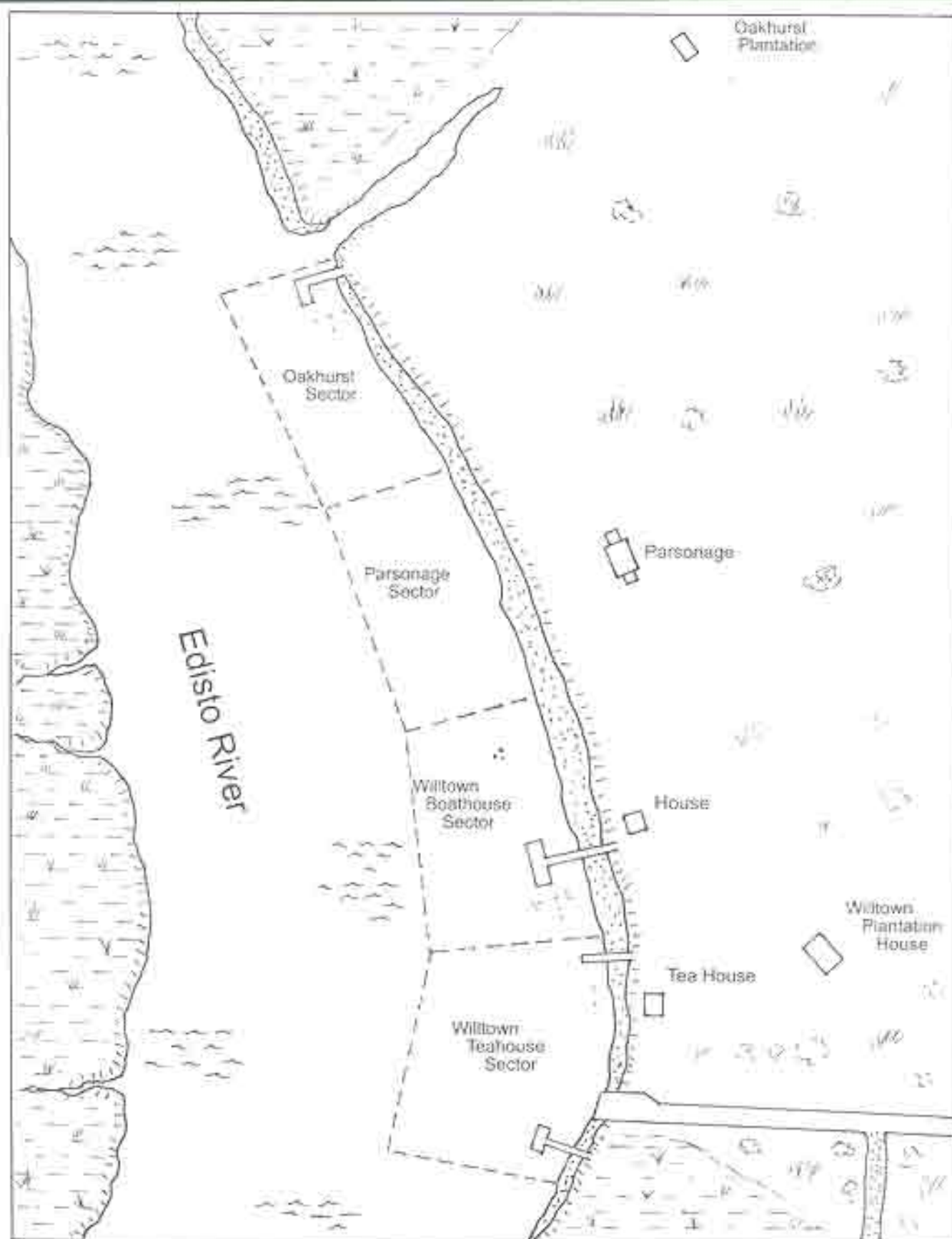


Figure 18. Wiltown Bluff- Sector Drawing.

Scale: 1" = 100 ft (approx)
= 30 m (approx)



Figure 19. Aerial photograph of the survey area.



Figure 20. Dock at the Oakhurst Plantation Sector.



Figure 21. View of the Bluff facing the Parsonage Sector.



Figure 22. Willtown boathouse,



Figure 23. Willtown tea house

Edisto River Bottom Topography (in search areas)

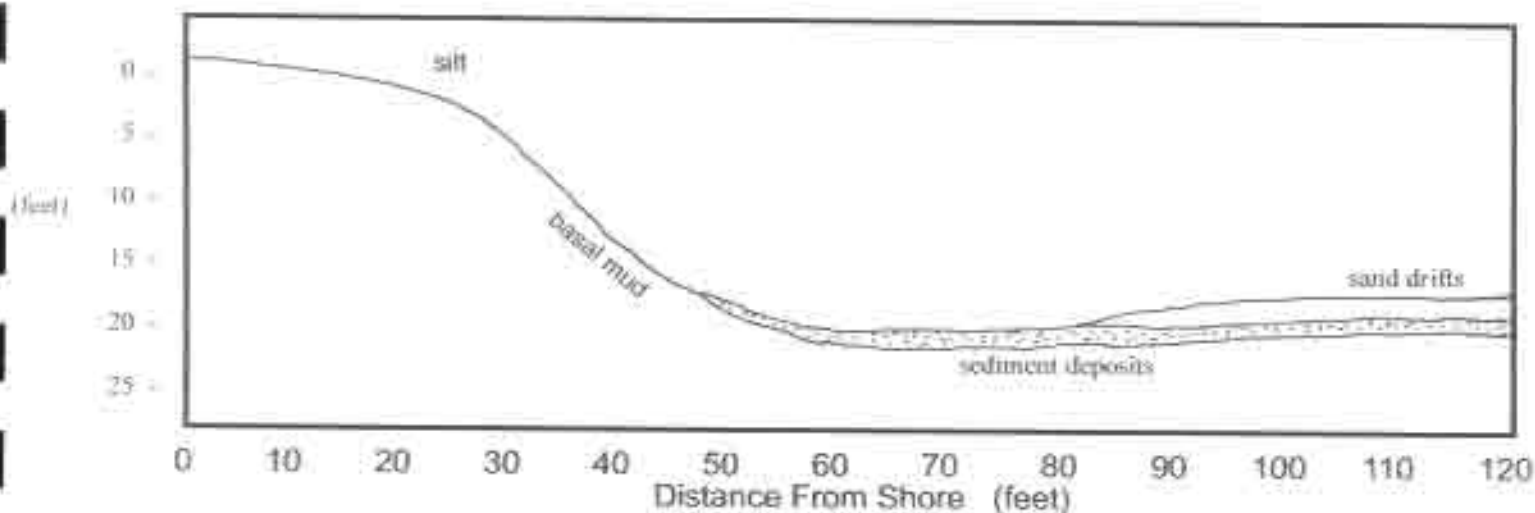


Figure 24. Oakhurst Sector

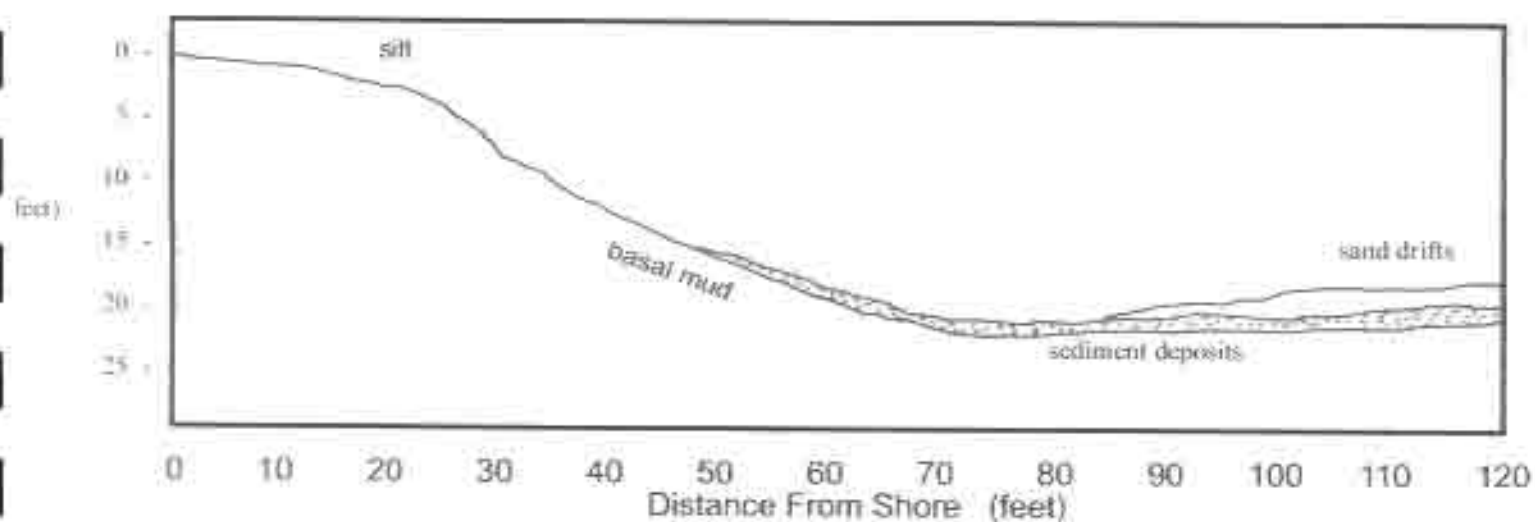


Figure 25. Parsonage Sector

Edisto River Bottom Topography (in search areas)

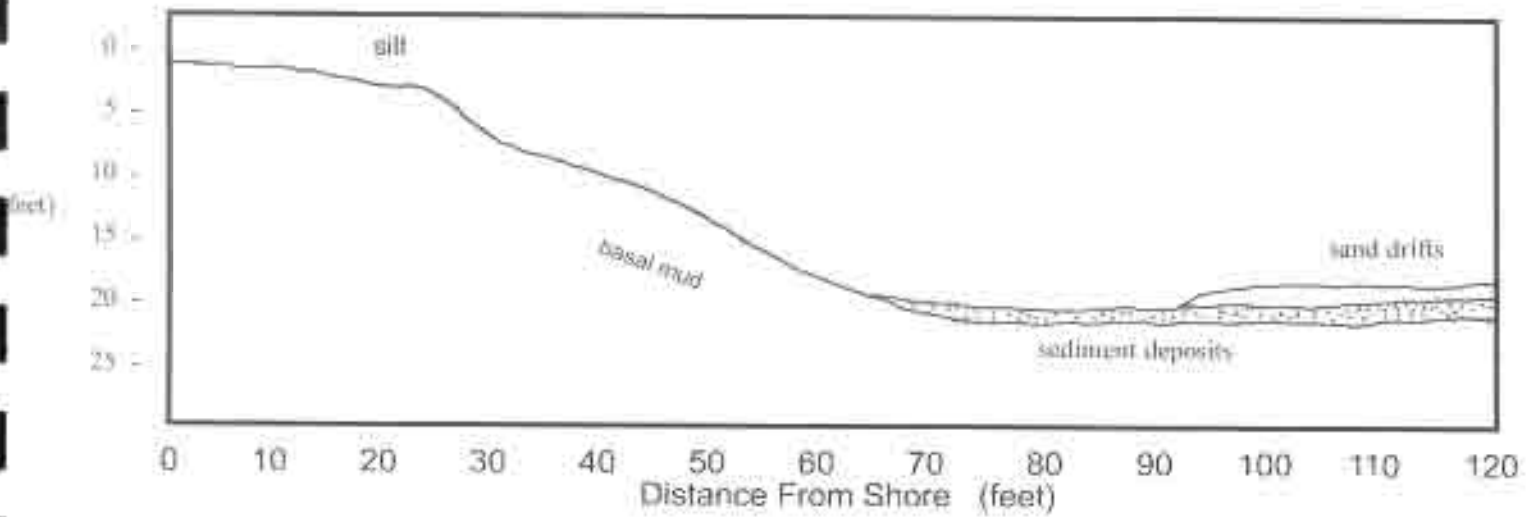


Figure 26. Willtown Boathouse Sector

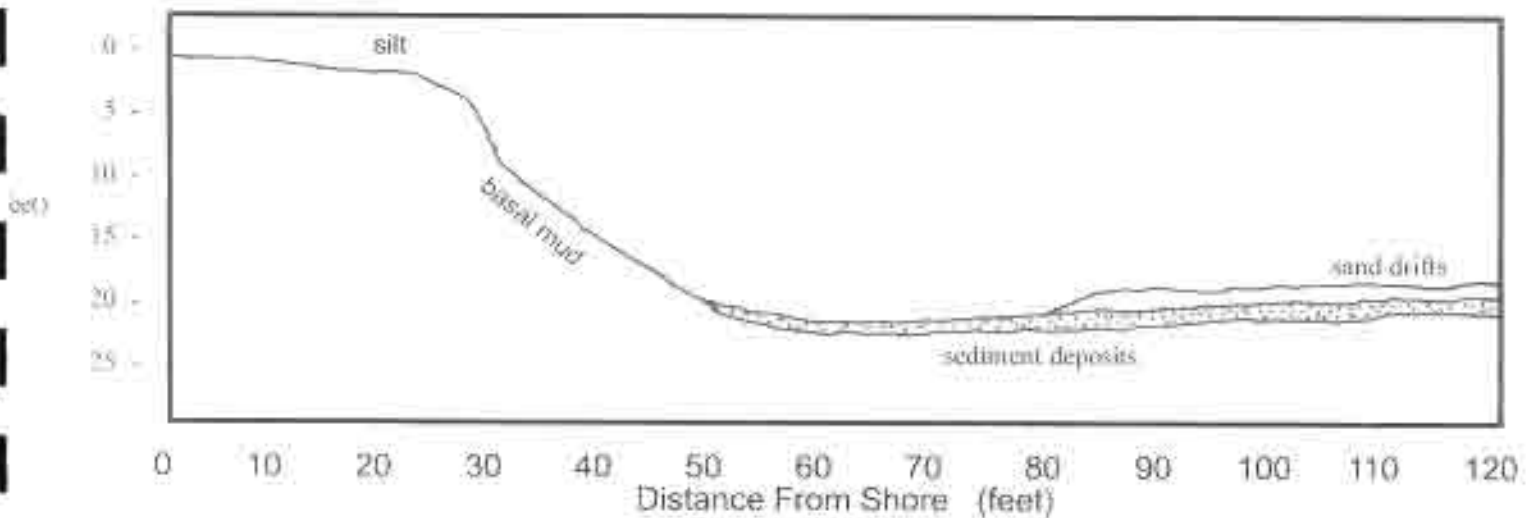


Figure 27. Willtown Teahouse Sector

The sectors at each end of the bluff (Oakhurst and Tea House) have significant silt overburden which covers and obscures large areas of the sediment bed. The mid-bluff sectors (Parsonage and Boathouse) are much more free of silt overburden.

Artifact Distribution

At the completion of the 1969-70 project, a site map was prepared which listed the approximate locations of each recorded artifact recovered. As previously mentioned, fragmented materials were not mapped.

Artifact Analysis

For purposes of this study, four sources of artifact information were studied. These were:

1. Willtown artifacts in the private collections of Steve Howard and myself.
 2. Artifacts in the SCIAA collection from the 1969-70 artifact division.
 3. Artifacts collected in 1998.
 4. Artifacts recorded from the 1969-70 diving project which are no longer available for study.
- All available artifacts were photographed and analyzed and the results follow.

Fragmented Artifacts

Fragmented artifacts collected in 1969-1970 and 1998 are tabulated in the following graphs. This information reflects artifact type and date ranges. The reader is asked to allow for a degree of error. This is accounted for by the difficulty at times in dating fragmented materials. Also, some typing and dating was done from photographs and catalogs of the state collection.

Native American Artifacts

The underwater site at Willtown contains prolific quantities of Native American material. It must be noted that samples of fragmented pottery were recovered for study but that many pieces remain on the river bottom and are easily located. Date ranges are diverse and suggest periods of occupation over a wide span of centuries. One projectile point (Morrow Mountain type) was recovered, suggesting an Archaic Period presence at about 6000 B.C. to 4000 B.C.

Pottery fragments of the Punctate Pattern suggest a date range of 1800 B.C. to 500 B.C. The largest styles sampled were Fabric Impressed (100 B.C. - A.D. 1200); Cordmarked (100 B.C. - A.D. 1200); and Check Stamped (500 B.C. - A.D. 1200). A small sample of Simple Stamped (1000 B.C. - A.D. 1200) and Rectilinear Complicated (A.D. 100 - A.D. 1720) was collected. A large sample labeled miscellaneous consisted of fragments in an eroded condition that made them difficult to adequately identify.

Native American pottery covering a wide date span may suggest the presence of land sites adjacent to the river banks.

Prehistoric Pottery

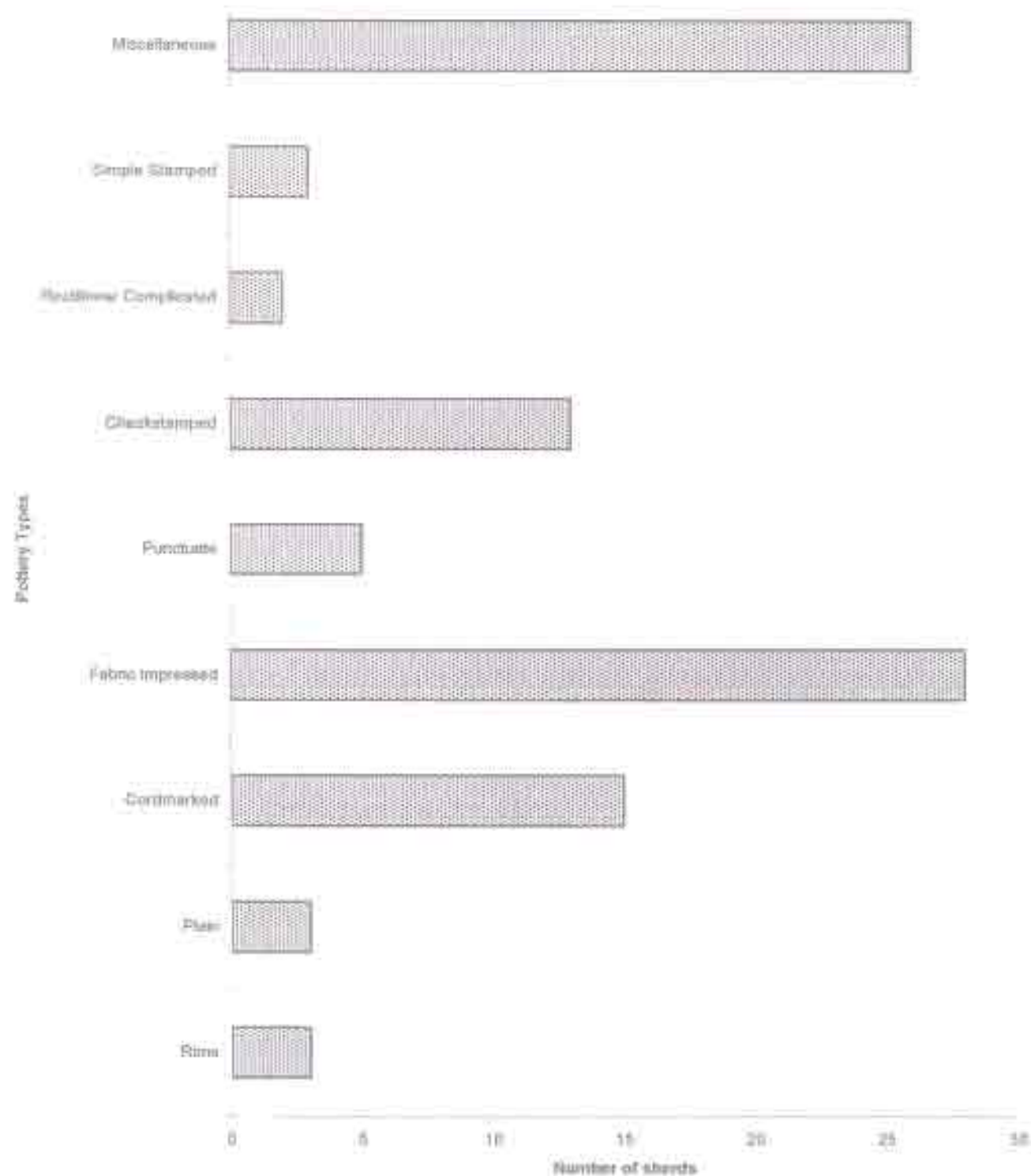


Figure 28. Prehistoric pottery.

Historic Artifacts

Many bottle necks and bases were recovered during the 1969-1970 and 1998 projects. It should be noted that this type of material was prolific in quantity and many pieces were left on the riverbed.

The reader is asked to allow for a small margin of error in dating of fragmented bottle parts. For this reason we have kept our date ranges deliberately broad. Our analysis demonstrates a sampling with greatest numbers of both bases and necks in the 1700-1750 range, suggesting a period of deposit during the more active lifetime of the town. Samples become progressively smaller during the 1750-1830 period reflecting the demise of the town and establishment of the plantations and later the nineteenth and twentieth century activities in the area.

Two artifacts of particular interest are bottles with a date range of 1730-1750, both recovered from the Parsonage Sector. Each had initials crudely etched in the side of the body with a sharp object. One had the initials MB done in a distinctive fashion in which the last vertical line of the M formed the vertical line of the B. The other had the initials SL.

Etching on bottles, to my knowledge, is not widely seen. I am aware of two other such finds. Diver Lee Spence recovered a first quarter eighteenth century bottle from the Ashley River site at Dorchester with the initials SC. Diver Howard Tower of Jacksonville, FL, reports a find of a second quarter of eighteenth century bottle with elaborate initials and decorative etching done with a sharp object.

The question should be raised as to the purpose of the initials. One explanation may be that the initials denote ownership in much the fashion of a glass seal. A listing of registered cattle brand marks found in the South Carolina State Archives shows the distinctive MB monogram as being registered to William Moore of Winyah, South Carolina in 1730. There is a possibility that a registered cattle brand may be used to mark other items of property. Future research on bottle etchings may yield a more concrete explanation.

Date Range of Bottle Bases

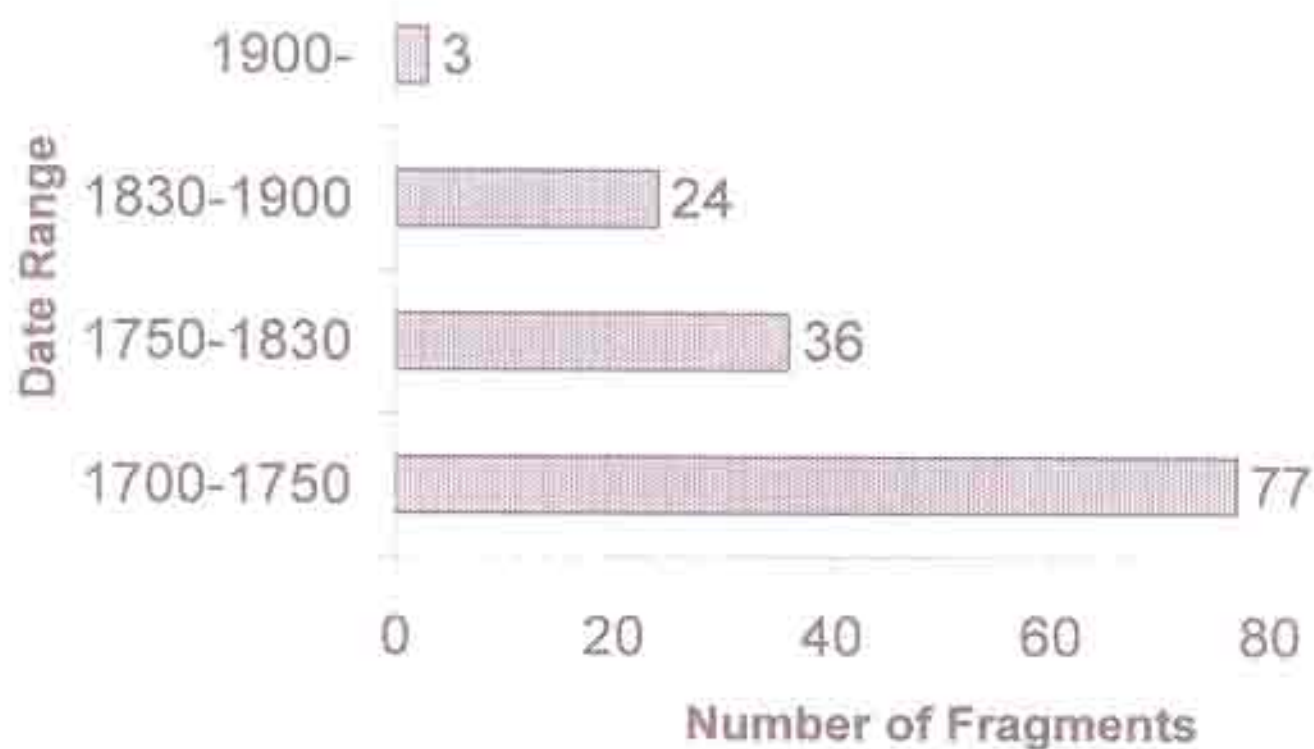


Figure 29. Date range of bottle bases.

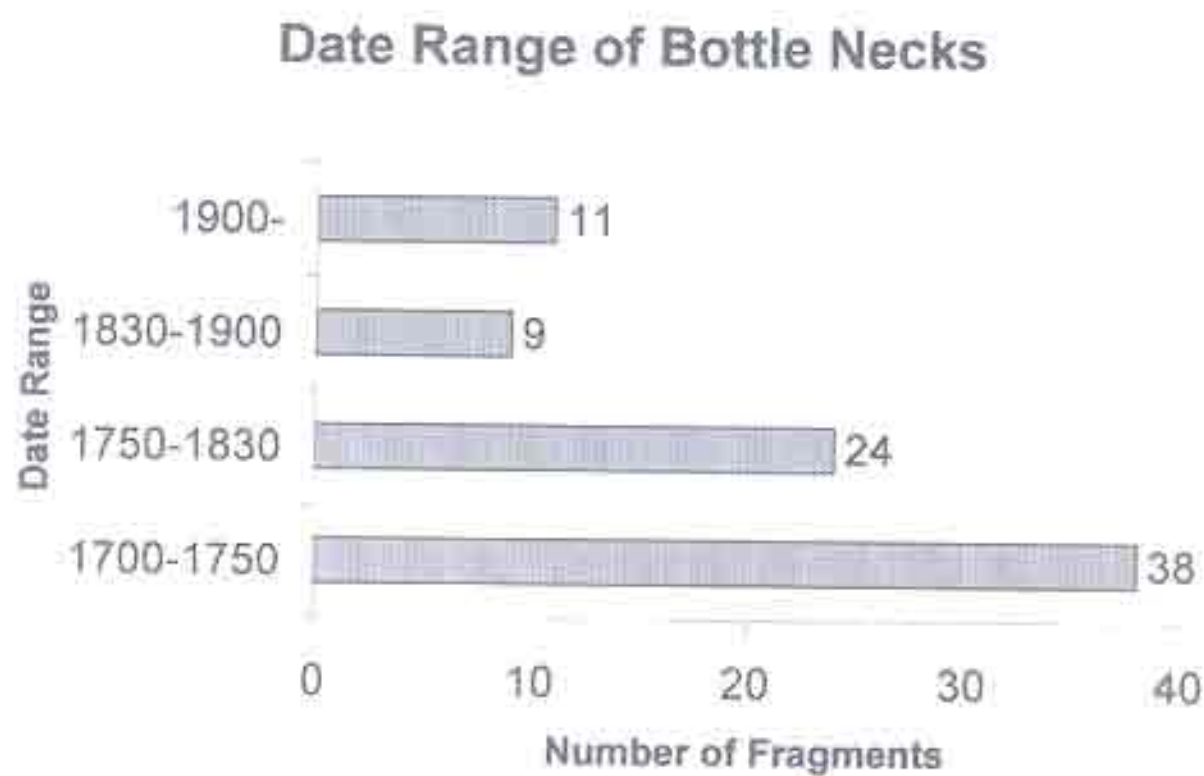


Figure 30. Date range of bottle necks.

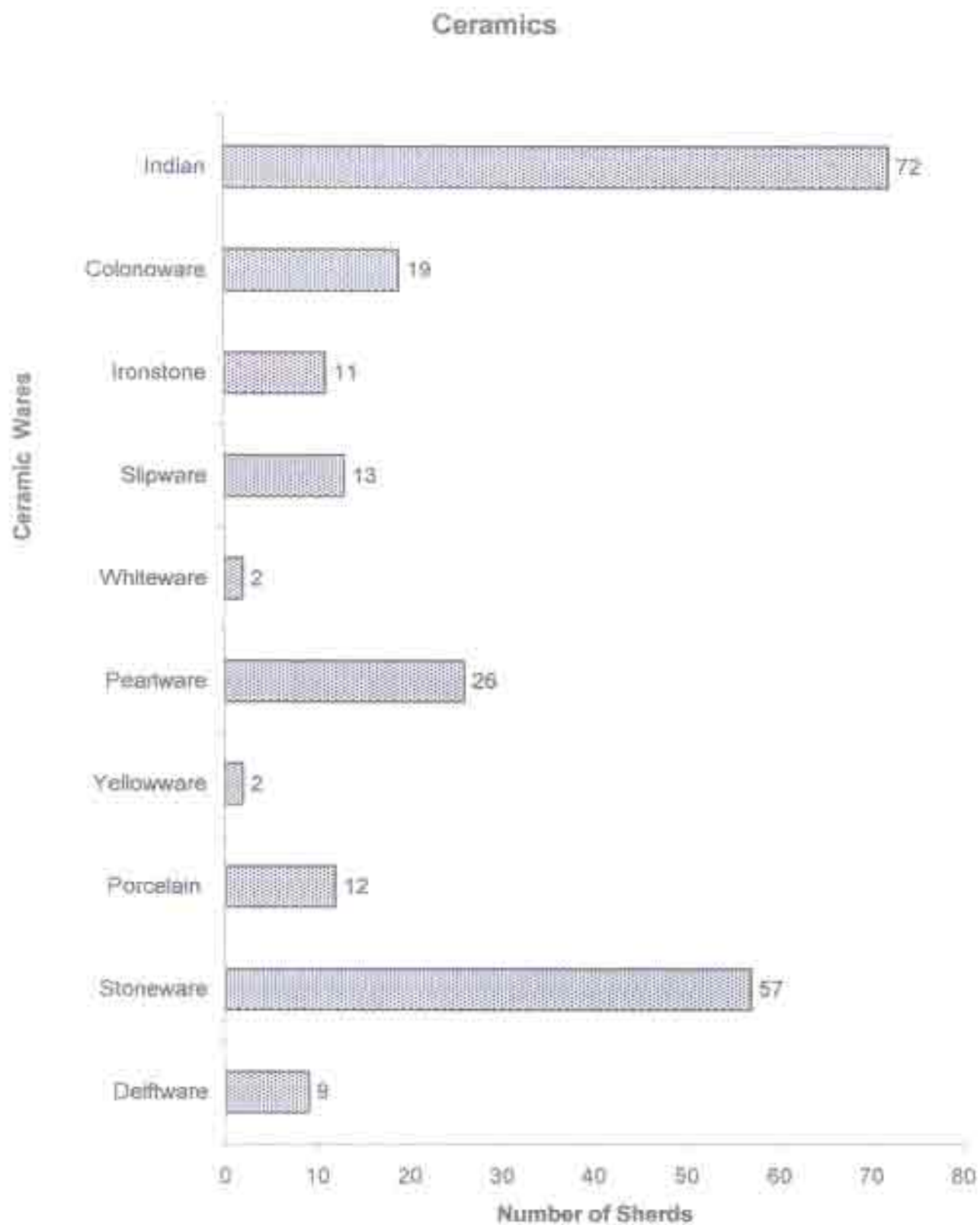


Figure 31. Graph showing historic period ceramics.



Figure 32. Steve Howard recovers an iron pot for photographing and it is returned to the bottom.



Figure 33. David Michael Ruddy diving on the Edisto River.

Artifacts - Oakhurst Sector



1) Bottle 1700 - 1725

2) Bottle 1700 - 1725 *not shown*



3) Bottle 1730 - 1750



4) Bottle 1760 - 1800



5) Bottle 1830 *



6) Bottle 1860 - 1870 **

* Bottle #5 base embossed - H. RICKETTS & Co GLASS WORKS BRISTOL

**Bottle #6 Three piece mold embossed - PATENT



7) Chamber Pot - Westerwald



Figure 34. Artifacts in Oakhurst Sector



8.) Pipe (Kaolin) Dove and olive branch relief.



9.) Block Sheave.

10.) Iron Pot



11.) Stone Wheel

12.) Cannon Ball - 3" Diameter.

13) S.C. Dispensary Bottle Tree - 1/2 Pint

Figure 35. Artifacts in the Oakhurst Sector

Artifacts - Parsonage Sector



1 - 3) Bottles 1700 - 1725



4) Bottle 1700 - 1725

5 - 6) Bottles 1725 - 1740



7) Bottle 1740 - 1750

8) Bottle 1730 - 1750

S L etched in the side



9) Bottle 1740 - 1750

10) Bottle 1775 - 1800

11-12) Wine Bottles

Figure 36. Artifacts in Parsonage Sector



13) Ink bottle circa 1750



14) Dish- Delft



15) Pipe - (Kaolin)



16) Glass Stopper



17) Ironstone Lid



18) Stoneware



19) Glass vase



with broken pontil



20) Clay Beer

21) 3 Piece Mold Bottle - wine *still intact*

22) Eight sided bottle - *circa 1830*

23) South Carolina Dispensary Bottle(*Half pint- Tree embossed*) X2

24) South Carolina Dispensary Bottle(*Half Pint - SCD Monogram embossed*) X3

25) South Carolina Dispensary Bottle(*Quart*) X 2

26) Medicine Bottles X2

27) Medicine Bottle (*Embossed - E.P. Durker & Co., New York.*)

28) Soda Bottle (*2 - Piece Mold*)

29) Medicine Bottle (*Embossed - Dowie & Moise Wholesale Druggist, Charleston, SC*)

30) Medicine Bottle (*Embossed - Packard & James, New York*)

Figure 37. Artifacts in the Parsonage Sector

- 31) Wine Bottles X2
- 32) Carters Ink Bottle
- 33) Ink Bottle - Clay
- 34) Ink Bottle - Brown Stoneware
- 35) Pewter Plate (*Touch marks - "King" and "London"*)
- 36) Pewter Button
- 37) Assorted 18th and 19th Century pipe fragments
- 38) Bottle (1725 - 1740 *MB etched in side*)
- 39) Projectile Point (*Morrow Mountain Type*)

Projectiles



- 40) Exploding - Cannon shot
- 41) Shinkle Projectile
- 42) Projectiles (*Possibly Burton*) X 2
- 43) Cannon Ball (*Solid Shot*) X 2
- 44) Grape Shot Ball

Figure 38. Artifacts in the Parsonage Sector

Artifacts - Boat House Sector



1) Bottles



2) Clay Beer

- 3) SC Dispensary Bottle (*Quart SCD Monogram*)
- 4) Milk Bottles X 2
- 5) Wine Bottle (*Embossed Dubonet*)
- 6) Wine Bottle
- 7) SC Dispensary (*Half pint - Tree*)
- 8) SC Dispensary (*Pint - Tree*)

Figure 39. Artifacts in the Boat House Sector

Artifacts - Tea House Sector



1) Bottle circa 1800



2) Iron pot

3) Cup - Ironstone

4) SC Dispensary Bottle

5) SC Dispensary Bottle (Quart - *(SCD Monogram)*)

6) Ink Bottle

7) Medicine Bottle (*Embossed "Deadshot Vermifudge"*)

8) Medicine Bottle

9) Bottle - Clear glass

10) SC Dispensary - (*Half Pint Monogram*)

11) Solid Cannon Projectile

12) Coin (*Spanish 1 Real dated 1809*)

13) Kedge Anchors - X 2

14) Brass spike

15) Soda water Bottle (*Embossed - Germania Brewing Co.*)

Figure 40. Artifacts in the Tea House Sector

George Pledger - Wiltown Artifacts



1) Stoneware Jug



2) Stoneware



3) Medicine Bottle



4) Bottle 1860-1880



5) Toothbrush Handle



6) Kaolin Pipe



5) Bottle circa 1880

Figure 41 George Pledger - Wiltown Artifacts

| | | |
|-------------|--|-----|
| Transcribed | 18 June 1730 | 270 |
| MB | William Moore of Wingham Lane & recorded his Brand Mark as in the Margin | |
| MW | Major Wray of St James Lane & recorded his Brand Mark as in the Margin. 1 st July 1730 17 th Aug 1730 | |
| 4 | Thomas Boone Sen ^r of Christ Church Parish recorded his Brand Mark as in the Margin. | |
| T | An upper shoe in the left ear & a slit in the right Thomas Boone Jun ^r of the same Parish / son of the said Thomas Boone recorded his Brand Mark as in the Margin An under shoe & a flap in each ear | |
| * G | in Rochester John North of St George's Parish Lane live day to the contrary Office in Charles Town & recorded his Ear Mark a swallow fork in each ear, & the Brand Mark a G & spur. Recorded it as in the Margin Also the same Mark for his Little Horse & saddle in Poyon parish 19 th Dec 1730 | |
| JS | Wilson Saunders of St James Goosecroft Lane lived day to the contrary Office & recorded his Brand mark, His Ear Mark is a G & a slit & an under shoe in the right & in the Margin, the left ear whole The same Mark for his Little Horse and saddle in the parish of St George's Rochester The same Mark for his Little Horse & saddle in the Parish of St Bartholomew 19 th Dec 1730 22 nd Dec 1730 | |

Figure 42. List of registered brandmarks recording the distinctive MB design found etched on a bottle from the Parsonage sector. (Original document-S.C. State Archives)

Site Analysis

An overview of the collected cultural materials reveals distribution patterns that may reveal information about land and water usage, in addition to local geomorphological processes.

Native American pottery was found in fragmented condition in each of the four sectors. The higher quantities of fabric impressed, cordmarked and checkstamped sherds are typical of a prehistoric site in South Carolina.

A view of the plot map researched by H.A.M. Smith shows four sets of stairs providing access from the bluff to the water. From north to south, the Tower Stairs are shown in the area of the current dock in the Oakhurst Section. This part of the land rather naturally slopes to the river and offers the potential for a landing.

A brief look at the bank found rocks beneath the modern dock but they appear to be somewhat recent, not the round ballast stones or bricks typically associated with an eighteenth or nineteenth century crib dock. No remnants of dock cribbing were located.

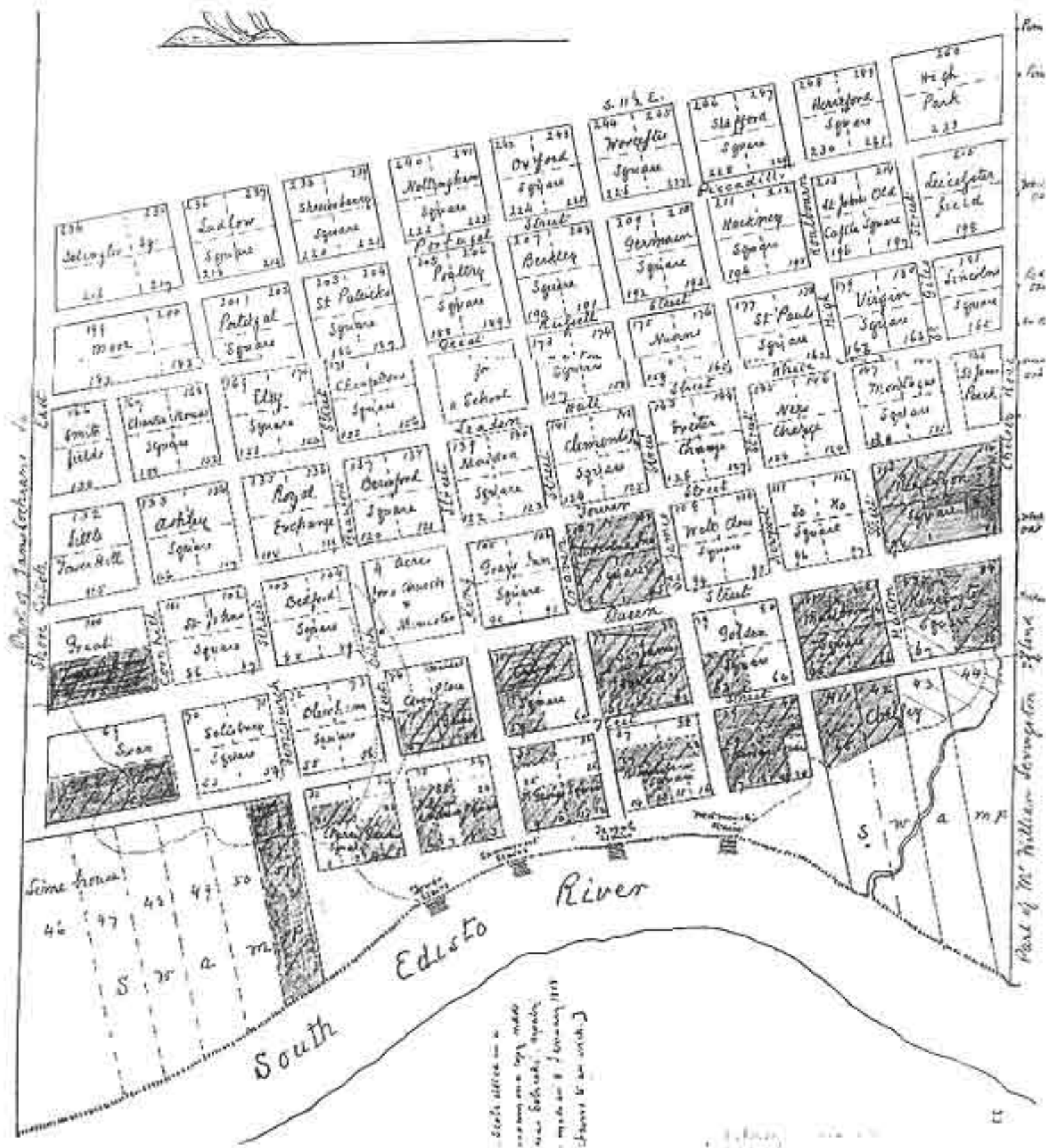
The Oakhurst Sector yielded the second most densely collected area with significant quantities of early eighteenth century material. One artifact recovered in 1998 was a wooden block sheave indicating a possible nautical origin.

The most prolific area for eighteenth and nineteenth century finds was the Parsonage Sector. Of the four sectors, this area has the least amount of overburden. One possible explanation for a greater quantity of artifacts may be that this area may have been more naturally exposed for collection. Another theory may be that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this area may have seen significant waterfront activity.

In the 1980 research report by Elaine Herold for the Charleston Museum, she published a superimposed view of an aerial photo of Willtown and the H.A.M. Smith plat map (Smith 1909:13). This picture indicates that the Parsonage House today stands on Lot 10 on the plat with King Street lying a short distance to the north. The Sommerset Stairs are situated at the foot of King Street. Whether the stairs were ever constructed in the eighteenth century is questionable. At this approximate location on the bluff is a significant ravine, probably man-made, which allows for a path from the bluff to the river bank with relative ease. This feature is quite overgrown at this time and when viewed from the river it is totally undiscernible. In 1969, however, the ravine was cleared and we used it as an entry point from the bluff to the water. It is speculative as to whether this pathway was created during the Native American occupation, European settlement, or in more recent times. It is evident that our largest collection sample came from the Parsonage Sector directly off this point.

The riverbed profile here is most gradual and clear of logs and debris with a relatively hard basal mud substrate on the bottom and the bank. The bank is exposed and dry for about 25 feet at low tide and would be a convenient anchorage and loading area for boats if there were activity in the town requiring mid-bluff water access.

Elaine Herold's research study (1980) included an illustration of the H.A.M. Smith plat with shading to indicate the lots documented in the town. It is not known how the town was actually layed



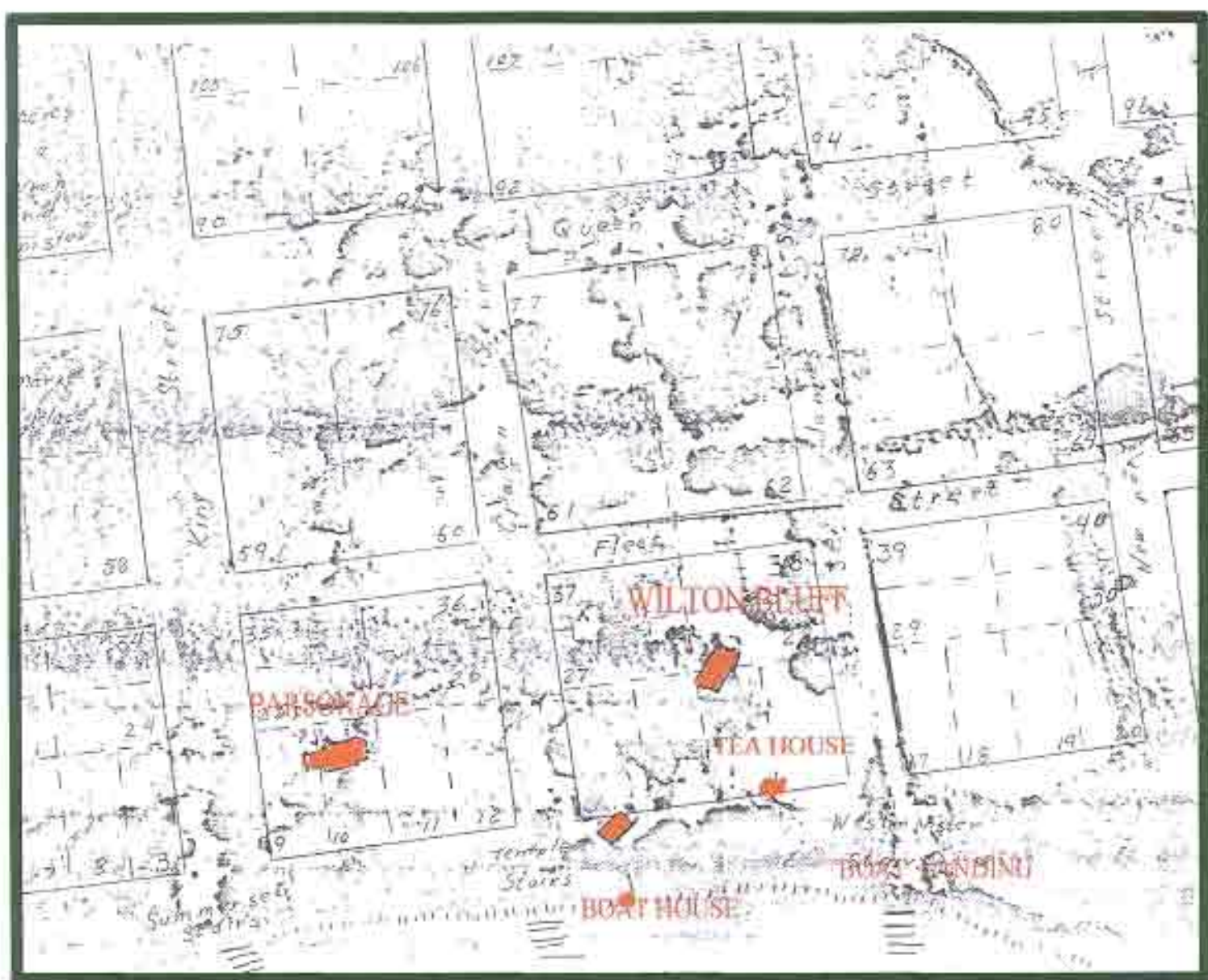


Figure 44. Willtown Plat superimposed on an aerial view of Willtown Bluff. Based on the research of Elaine Herold. (Courtesy of the Charleston Museum.)



Figure 45. Waterfront at low tide in the Parsonage Sector.



Figure 46. Growth on the bluff in the Parsonage Sector.

out or how the lots were used. Future land archaeology may provide answers to these questions. Based on the evidence provided by the underwater survey there was significant eighteenth century development and waterfront activity adjacent to the Oakhurst and Parsonage Sectors.

The H.A.M. Smith plat shows the Temple Stairs in the vicinity of the Willtown Boathouse Sector. I have not seen anything resembling a ravine or water access features in this area. As our inventory list reveals, very few artifacts were collected in this sector.

In the Willtown Teahouse Sector, artifacts recovered dated primarily from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in addition to fragmented Native American pottery. The Willtown Plantation House (Mount Hope) was constructed in 1807. A Spanish one-real coin dated 1809 was recovered in this sector.

The H.A.M. Smith plat shows the Westminster Stairs located close to the site of the current Willtown public boat landing. The present road corresponds to St. James Street on the plat. The land contour at the boat landing naturally meets the water at the south end of the bluff and would be a logical place for an eighteenth century boat landing. A pile of ballast rocks lies on the bottom off the modern boat landing. These rocks often indicate the presence of a crib dock which may have been used as fill and later deposited on the bottom as the dock deteriorated. Alternately, it could have been a site where a ship may have deballasted. This would probably have been a convenient river access for private dwellings or businesses at the southern end of the town. Two small kedge anchors dating from the nineteenth or twentieth centuries were recovered in this area during the 1969 project.

No significant eighteenth century material was collected in the southern sector, but diver George Pledger reported the find of an eighteenth century stoneware Bellarmine jug below the boat landing. He also reported a pile of ballast rocks about 200 yards below the boat landing. I was able to locate this site and found one late eighteenth-century bottle neck.

A low density of eighteenth-century artifacts in this area may indicate less use than the Oakhurst/Parsonage Sector waterfront during that period. It may also be that the heavier overburden in the Willtown Teahouse Sector and area south of the boat landing may conceal significant artifacts yet to be recovered and studied. Excavation equipment may be required to dredge overburden in this area.

Some deteriorating dock pilings in the Willtown Teahouse Sector are remnants of a dock which stood in good repair during the 1969-1970 project. Older pilings stand just to the south from a previous dock. Although I cannot date this earlier dock, the Civil War account of the 1863 gunboat expedition indicates that the *John Adams* moored at a pier at Willtown Plantation. I believe that it is probable that the Civil War-period dock was in this sector.

As may be noted in the provenience listings, sample of "shot, shell, and grape" were located in the various sectors along the bluff, providing probable evidence of the events of July 10, 1863.



Figure 47. Drew Ruddy holding a solid shot projectile.

Artifact Display

Ironically, Willtown, the original county seat of Colleton County is today in Charleston County. However, in an effort to assist in the interpretation of early Colleton County and ACE Basin history, I contacted Martha Demosthenes, curator of the Colleton County Museum in Walterboro. She graciously agreed to create a Willtown display, and a number of artifacts are currently housed and interpreted for the visiting public.



Figure 49. Martha Demosthenes stands beside the Willtown Display that she designed.



Figure 48. Colleton County Museum, Walterboro, S.C.

Conclusion

The archaeological site at Willtown has important historical significance. It has virtually escaped the threats of modern development, which is not true for many other South Carolina sites. The underwater project at Willtown represents one of the first examples of cooperation between recreational divers and SCIAA.

The state of South Carolina is unique in that it is one of the few places in the world that has a hobby diver program which allows sport divers the privilege to descend into its waters and to touch and collect elements of its cultural heritage. But with privilege comes responsibility—responsibility to record, to share, and to conserve our history. It is my hope that those of us who have the opportunity to explore South Carolina's past in this unique way, when it is our time to slip into history, will not be remembered for having collected its treasures and then allowed them to slip out of context and into obscurity. It is my hope that we will be remembered and appreciated by future generations as a special breed who helped "to tell the story."

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