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## *Flotsam and Jetsam* - December 1995

South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology--University of South Carolina

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# Flotsam and Jetsam

Volume Six, Number Four, SCIAA, Underwater Archaeology Division, December 1995

## H.L. HUNLEY UPDATE

by Christopher Amer  
and Jonathan Leader

Through the diligent work of the SC Hunley Commission, several meetings have been held with the federal government and the Navy. These meetings are designed to define the nature and relationship of the cooperative fieldwork that will verify the vessel's identity and location, and assess its integrity. A programmatic agreement may be expected shortly. The SCIAA Hunley Project Working Group (HPWG) has been pleased to assist the Commission in this work; and sees the discussions as an important step forward for this project.

Dr. William Dudley, Director of the Naval Historical Center, has reported to the HPWG that Mr. Clive Cussler has released the vessel's coordinates to the Navy. Mr. Cussler's action will most likely reduce the budgeted expenses for the initial phase of the project. The implementation of this phase is dependent on mutual consent of the Navy and the SC Hunley Commission and the cooperation of the weather. Results of the field work, when it occurs, will be reported as an update.

The H.L. Hunley is a war grave. The protection and appropriate treatment of the crew's remains, if and when they are encountered, has been an important concern of the HPWG, the SC Hunley Commission, and the Navy. Several members of the SC Hunley Commission have championed the pub-

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## A French Cargo Found in the Cooper River

by Steve Nash

In July Phil Myers and I discovered what appears to be the cargo of a mid-1700s ship while diving in the Cooper River. This cargo included a great variety of items such as buttons (brass and copper), buckles, leather shoe soles, lead seals and bottle caps, kaolin clay pipes, bottles, lead glazed pottery, wooden pulley blocks, spikes, brass sword scabbards, hundreds of musket balls (four different calibers), gunflint and lead flint holders, pig bones, barrel staves, cordage, lead gaming pieces, some coins (a half real, one piece-of-eight, and British half pennies) and ballast - in the form of cobbles, flint and gravel. But...where was the ship? We searched the river in the vicinity for timbers or some form of wreckage with no luck.

Trying to figure out what we had actually found was somewhat of a problem initially. By fortunate coincidence, I had just recently completed the SCIAA Underwater Archaeology Field Training Course held earlier that month. One thing the staff stressed was that they were "there to help" and that it was important to "inventory, research, and map sites" to reconstruct the history represented by artifacts. I called the Charleston SCIAA Field Office for guidance and was glad I did. We spent a few days mapping the site, laying datum points, and recording the locations of artifacts by taking offsets from baselines. The items were all in discrete groupings which might be meaningful in regard to how the cargo was originally stowed aboard the ship or what had occurred since it settled on the river bottom.

The staff took the collection to the main SCIAA office to consult with historical archaeological and military experts such as Stanley South and Jim Legg. Their learned opinion was that the majority of items were French in origin! This included French military buttons, musket balls and cannister shot, buckles and the ceramics. A wine seal with the word "Bordeaux," further reinforced this opinion. Our interest peaked and we all went to the Charleston Public Library to conduct further research. The coins' dates, ranging from 1731 to 1749, gave us a starting point and timeframe. Perusing through old newspapers on microfilm, we discovered that in 1852 a severe hurricane hit Charleston area causing many ships to sink. In the September 19th issue of the *South Carolina Gazette*, we found a notice about the ship, *Lucy*, which ran aground during the hurricane approximately seven miles up the Cooper River

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# The Flotsam and Jetsam

*The Flotsam and Jetsam* is a quarterly publication of the Underwater Archaeology Division of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina.

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Carl Naylor

*The Flotsam and Jetsam* welcomes submissions from the diving community. We are especially interested in photos and information on artifacts you collect. Send your articles, suggestions, ideas, and questions about hobby diving related topics that interest you to: *The Flotsam and Jetsam*, SCIAA Underwater Archaeology Division Field Office, P.O. Box 12448, Charleston, S.C. 29422.

# Broken Dishes Reveal River's Secrets

What can archaeologists learn from artifacts found on the bottom of a river near a plantation? That is the question the SCIAA Underwater Archaeology Division is answering as staff members study a collection of artifacts, consisting mostly of prehistoric and historic ceramics, found in the river near a Combahee River plantation.

The artifacts, collected by sport diver Robert Black (hobby license #2579) of Seabrook, SC, are presently undergoing preliminary sorting and cataloguing at the Charleston office of the Underwater Archaeology Division by Lynn Harris and Carl Naylor of SCIAA and Eddie Weathersbee, a College of Charleston history major who is interning for the semester at the Charleston office. Also assisting in the effort is sport diver George Pledger (hobby license #218).

The artifacts include several varieties of prehistoric ceramics, including some dating as far back as 2500 B.C. The types and quantities of these ceramics may indicate the previous existence of a small settlement of the earliest South Carolinians, prehistoric native Americans from the Late Archaic or early Woodland periods of occupation, according to Lynn Harris, who is supervising the artifact study.

The site also includes several forms of historic stoneware, earthenware, and porcelain, and may indicate the location of the plantation's trash deposits. "Commonly, broken dishes and other discarded items were tossed into the river as a means of disposal," Harris said. "This practice ended with the invention of trash dumpsters and garbage trucks."

The stonewares encompass German, British, and American varieties. These were mostly utilitarian wares

in the form of jugs, chamber pots, urns, and bottles, and date from the early colonial period up until the early twentieth century. The German stoneware pieces are comprised of both grey and brown varieties, including Westerwald grey salt-glazed stoneware which was produced from about 1575 until about 1775.

British forms of stoneware found on the site encompass example of British Brown Stoneware (c.1690-1775), commonly called "Tavernware" since it was produced in the form of jugs and mugs and Nottingham brown stoneware (c.1700-1810). American stonewares include American Blue and Grey (c. 1775-1900), Albany slipped stonewares (post-1875), and Bristol glazed varieties (post-1890).

The earthenware found on the site include creamwares (c.1750-1820), transfer-printed pearlware (c.1787-1840), finger-painted pearlware (c.1790-1820), glazed redwares (c.1800-1900), annular pearlware (c.1795-1820), slipwares (c.1670-1795), whitewares (c.1820-1900+), and yellowwares (c.1827-1920).

The porcelain recovered contain pieces from distinct sets of "china," and includes examples of Chinese, Japanese, and British varieties of porcelain dating from the colonial period up to the mid-twentieth century.

"By studying these historic ceramics we hope to learn more about the people who inhabited the plantation," Lynn Harris said. "For instance, the dates of the porcelain may indicate periods when the plantation was enjoying increased prosperity."

Other items found on the site include kaolin clay pipes, furniture hardware, buckles, and green glass wine bottles.

# Workshops, Conferences, and Field Courses

The dates for the 1996 ASSC Conference, Underwater Archaeology Field Training Course 1 and workshop series, which can be credited towards Course 2 to 4, are set. Please circle all the events you are interested in attending to secure a place. Each workshop costs \$15. Make checks out to SCIAA and send to SDAMP, P.O. Box 12448, Charleston, SC 29422 and send with this form.

**Fossil Workshop (Columbia):**  
February 24.

**Pre-historic Artifact Workshop (Columbia):** March 23.

**ASSC Conference (Columbia):**  
April 20.

**Field Training Course 1 (Charleston):** May 24, 25, 26. For divers and non-divers. Cost of course is \$75. Motel rates in Charleston are very expensive. We have already booked two cabins, which each sleep eight, at the James Island Park. These highly recommended spacious cabins are situated close to the field course venue. Each one has a scenic marsh view, barbecue place, and is

well furnished. The cost is \$80 per night. If we have eight per cabin it will be a very reasonable \$10 per night each. Let us know if you are interested in these accommodations. We have to cancel 30 days in advance.

**Bottle and Ceramic Workshop (Charleston or Beaufort):** June 22. (Are there any dive stores, clubs or archaeology chapters in these areas who are interested in hosting this workshop? Let us know).

**Cooper River Shipwreck Workshop (Berkeley County):** July 27. Completion of Field Training Course 1 is a necessary qualification for this workshop.

**Small Watercraft Documentation Workshop (Charleston):** September 21 and 22. Completion of Field Training Course 1 is a necessary qualification for this workshop. We hope produce a publication using the work done during this session

**Archaeology Week Events (all around the state):** 28 September - 5 October. We are in the process of planning a special first-time public archaeology event. This could include a

conference (papers to be given primarily by avocational archaeologists and students - and maybe a few professionals as fillers) followed by an oyster roast/shrimp boil on James Island at Fort Johnson. Conference attendance cost (participation as a speaker is free) is \$15.

Please make a note of the two conferences (ASSC and Archaeology Week) and start thinking now about possible presentations that you could give. This could range from project participation, historical research, underwater archaeology training courses offered by scuba instructors, analysis of an artifact collection, methods and techniques (mapping, artifact photography, videography, drawing, setting up exhibits etc.) and even philosophical discourses and innovative ideas about how archaeologists and the public can work together more effectively to document, interpret, preserve and display our heritage.

The Charleston office SCIAA staff are very willing to help first-time hobby divers or student presenters with guidance in ideas for papers and in the making of appropriate slides. We also hope to publish a conference proceedings.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work)

Enclosed is a check for: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

# Today's Rivers, Yesterday's Highways

by Eddie Weathersbee

Transportation played a crucial role in South Carolina's social and economic history. Inland maritime travel and a diverse collection of vernacular boats were an integral part of these transportation developments. Roads, in early South Carolina, were seldom more than foot paths originally used by Native Americans. These thoroughfares were inadequate for transporting large quantities of agricultural goods such as rice and cotton. Riverine arteries in the Lowcountry were the most efficient means of transportation. Barges, sloops, and schooners, were used to transport goods directly from plantations to harbors like Charleston, Savannah, Beaufort, and Georgetown. When these vessels reached the harbor, the cargoes would be loaded onto ships to make the long trip to England. After reaching England, these goods would be traded throughout Europe.

Barges or "flats" (as they are referred to in historic literature) were flat rectangular shaped vessels used for carrying various types of cargo. An avocational group has developed a nomenclature or glossary for construction details of these vernacular craft (see page 5) Barges measured approximately four meters in beam by fifteen meters in length. After the Civil War, barges were used to carry phosphate. These vessels measured approximately five to seven meters in beam and twenty to thirty meters in length. Tidal waters were utilized as a means of propulsion. These vessels traveled upriver with the incoming tide and down river with the outgoing tide and were steered in the stern with a large oar. Upon reaching their destination, many of these barges would be taken apart and sold as lumber. Various barges have been documented by SCIAA in the Cooper, Waccamaw, Black, and Edisto rivers.

One variation of the barge was the "cotton box." The cotton box was a rectangular shaped vessel similar to the barge, except it was wider at the top than at the bottom. This allowed the vessels to be stacked on top of one another to save money on canal tolls during the return trip cotton boxes were designed specifically to carry bales of cotton and usually

measured about three meters in beam by fifteen meters in length, thus allowing the vessels to fit through the canal locks.

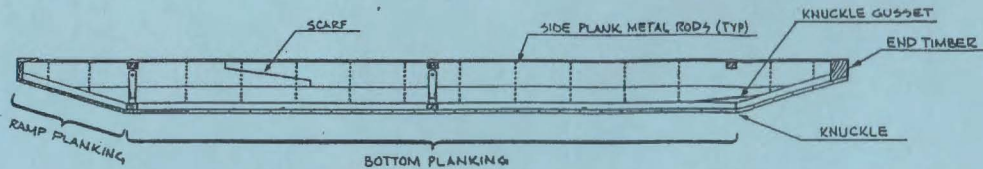
Sloops and schooners were also effective at transporting goods. After unloading their cargo, sloops and schooners could be reloaded with plantation goods for the

*Continued on page 6*

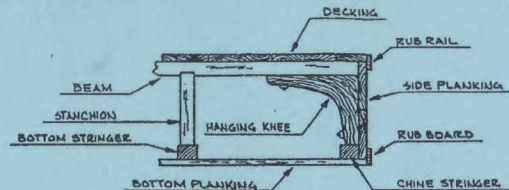


Photo by Doug Boehme

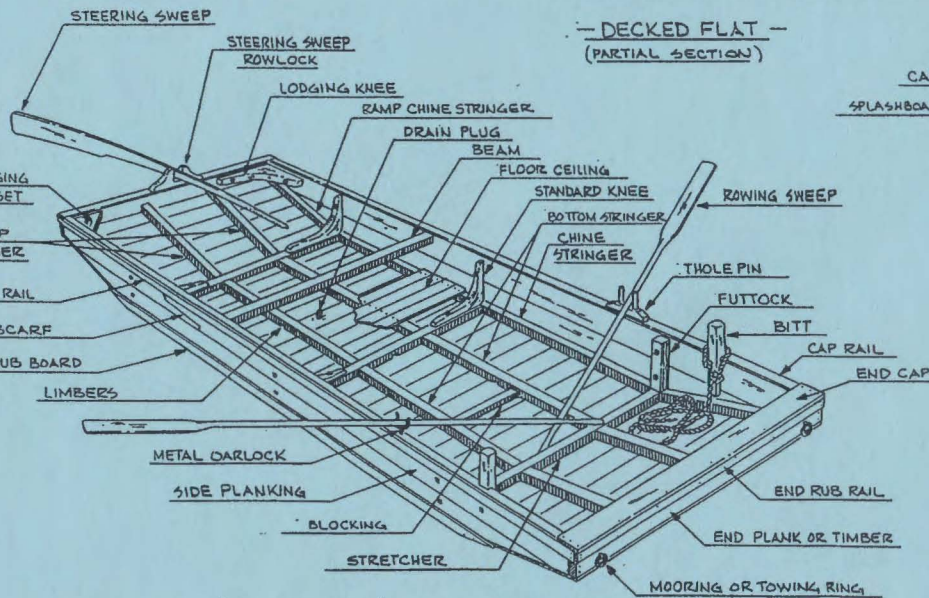
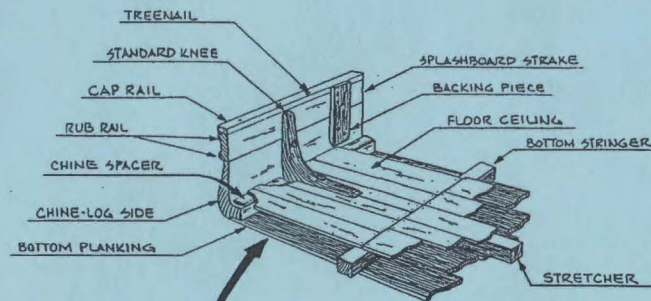
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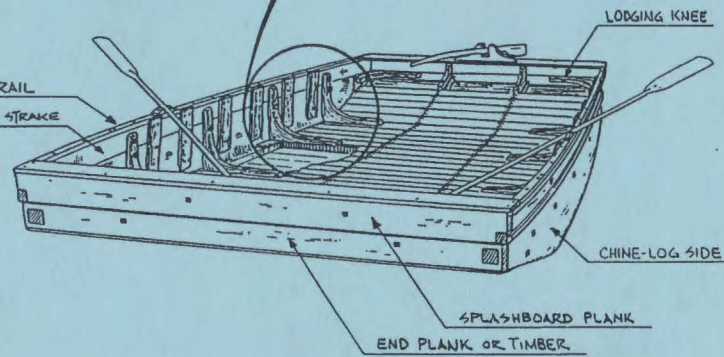
LONGITUDINAL SECTION



DECKED FLAT  
(PARTIAL SECTION)



"PLANKED"



"CHINE-LOG"

A COMPOSITE DRAWING OF A RICE FLAT  
INCLUDING ITS  
STRUCTURAL & NON-STRUCTURAL COMPONENT NOMENCLATURE

return trip. Sloops were single-masted vessels used mostly in coastal trade among colonies. This rig was most effective where consistent and little maneuverability was needed. Sloops accounted for thirty percent of all vessels registered in the colonies, except for South Carolina. Schooners were vessels with fore and aft rigged sails. Additional sails maximized use of wind and improved maneuverability, which were both necessities for inland river travel. Schooners soon became the vessel of choice in South Carolina, accounting for eighty percent of the registered vessels versus twenty five percent in other colonies, according to SCIAA staff member Carl Naylor, who derived these numbers from ship registers.

The historic dugout was an interesting vessel that was also used on plantations. Usually built by slaves, the dugout was made from a single tree trunk. The tree would be shaped and hollowed out to form a large canoe. The "Bessie" is one of the best surviving examples of a canoe of this kind, which is now on display at the Charleston Museum. This canoe measures five feet eight inches in beam and twenty nine feet five inches in length. It was rigged with sails which would push the long slender canoe through the water with ease. This type of vessel did not have a large cargo area for bulk transport, but instead it was used for transportation between plantations, the harbor, and other destinations of this sort. Such a vessel might also be used to pick up or deliver small quantities of goods for use on the plantation. Smaller dugouts were used for personal transportation as well.

In the upcountry, sloops, schooners, and barges were too wide to go through the rapids, and dugouts were very heavy and therefore rode too deep in the water. The need for a suitable vessel to transport goods downriver through rapids and shoals led to the development of the mountain boat. Mountain boats were extremely long and narrow boats, usually about fifty six feet in length by

seven and one half feet wide, with a very shallow draft. One man would steer with a long pole at the stern, while pole men would fend off rocks. Mountain boats were double-ended so that if they spun around in the river, the steering pole could be moved from one end of the boat to the other. This was beneficial because there was no time to turn around in the swift waters of the rapids. The trip down river was often hazardous. After descending downriver with its cargo the mountain boat could then be reloaded for the trip back up river. Propulsion was achieved by the pole men who used their poles to push against the river bottom while walking from the bow to the stern of the boat.

In 1993 some of the Institute staff participated in the construction of a replica of a mountain boat—"The Petersberg Vessel"—which was actually tested in an experimental voyage from Augusta to Savannah. The replica measured fifty seven feet in length and seven feet in the beam. In a telephone interview with Mark Newell, one of the project coordinators, the boat was described as handling like a light canoe. Newell said that the boat performed very well and could turn on a dime. This confirmed the superb maneuverability of these vessels, which was essential in negotiating the rapids of the Upcountry. Traveling six to eight hours per day, the 189 mile voyage took one week with the nine crew members rowing only when steering was necessary.

In the 1820s steamboats started appearing on South Carolina's waterways. Steamboats had an advantage over other vessels because they did not have to rely on wind or tidal conditions for propulsion. In addition to transporting goods and passengers in South Carolina, steamboats also towed sailboats and barges behind them on their trips upriver. However steamboats had their limitations as well. A constant supply of wood was necessary for steam boilers, limiting where a steamboat could travel, such as overseas. Shoals, rapids and canals of fall line cities such as Columbia, Camden, and Cheraw limited travel for steamboats because of the draft of these vessels. Although steamboats were very useful in inland travel

they never reached their full potential due to the introduction of railroads in the 1860s.

It is evident that until the introduction of railroads in the 1860s, water craft were the most practical means of transportation in the Lowcountry. If you are interested in more information in this subject secondary sources such as, "Tidecraft," by Rusty Fleetwood, P.C. Coker's, "Charleston's Maritime Heritage 1550-1950," and the SCIAA "Malcolm Boat" report are very useful and provided much of the information for this article. The 1995 South Carolina Archaeology Week poster also features these vessels with short textual descriptions.

## Book Locker

by Carl Naylor

Fleetwood, Rusty *Tidecraft: The Boats of South Carolina, Georgia and Northeastern Florida, 1550-1950*. Tybee Island, Georgia: WBG Marine Press, 1995.

For years Rusty Fleetwood's *Tidecraft: The Boats of Lower South Carolina and Georgia* has been the standard reference on the use, construction, and development of small boats in the Southeast, and therefore, in its own way, an excellent general history of the region. Unfortunately, the publication has been out of print and hard-to-impossible to find on bookstore shelves. Well, finally *Tidecraft* has been expanded with the addition of much new material, reprinted in hardback, and is now widely available.

As the cover notes explain, the new *Tidecraft* is "Updated with new findings and recent archival and archaeological research, more photographs, and fully annotated and indexed, . . ." "This succinctly sums up the difference between the two versions, although it understates the importance of these additions to the new

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# In Search of the Elusive Clovis

by Doug Boehme

I, like many divers, have had a Clovis very high on my list of "wanna finds" for many years. Now, after hours and hours of bottom time and considerable luck, I found my elusive Clovis! Many of you are asking "what the heck is a Clovis and why would I want to find one?" Clovis is the name given to the earliest distinctive nomadic culture that came into the United States. These people were named after a town in New Mexico where their projectile points were first found among the bones of their favorite prey, the mammoth. Within a few hundred years the expertly crafted stone points of the Clovis people were the length and breadth of North America. Since their numbers were small and they had no fixed settlements, they have left very little behind from which to learn about their culture. Consequently, these projectile points are rare - mine was the 400th documented for the state.

What do they look like? These points are usually very well made, thin blades tapering from a broad blunt base to a sharp point. The alteration that distinguishes these points as Clovis is a central channel or flute extending at least one third the distance from the base to the tip. They also have been smoothed by grinding on the base

and the sides near the base. The channels and grinding allowed these points to be fitted firmly to a notched haft and lashed into place. This innovation was a major advance in hunting technology. If you find or have found one of these points, please give Lynn or Carl a call at the field office or call Al Goodyear or Tommy Charles at the Institute in Columbia. They will record the information on your point and keep it confidential just like your hobby diver reports.

I had been working on a site that had produced points and tools from every time frame except paleo (14,000-10,000 years ago) and was planning on making a trip to Columbia to register the area in the state site file. The lure of making one more dive at the site before going to Columbia proved irresistible. That's when fortune smiled and I found my Clovis point. Continuous occupation is one of the things that makes this such an interesting site. Other questions have been raised by this site - Where did the material originally come from? What made this site such an attractive location? Why were the artifacts distributed as they were? The answer to these and other questions lies at the bottom of the river.

## Book Locker

*Continued from page 6*

*Tidecraft*, where the new information, and especially the new photographs, breathe important new life into the publication. Also important was the addition of reference notes in the text. For those of us who do historic research, the lack of this vital feature in the original version was somewhat annoying.

Other additions to the new *Tidecraft* include four appendixes. The first is "A Comparative Analysis of Three Sailing Merchant Vessels from the Carolina Coast," by our very own Chris Amer and Fred Hocker of Texas A&M. The three vessels studied include the Browns Ferry Vessel, raised from the bottom of the Black River by SCIAA in 1976, the Malcolm Boat, excavated by SCIAA in 1992 on the banks of the Ashley River, and the Clydesdale Plantation sloop, excavated in the Savannah Back River during 1992 by a team from Texas A&M.

The second appendix features "The Flat-Bottom South Carolina Oyster Sloop," by Gilbert J. Maggioni. As a former oyster packer, Mr. Maggioni has considerable first-hand experience with this type of craft and presents compelling information as to their importance.

The third appendix is "The Small Craft of the Low Country Rice Culture," by Mark M. Newell, formerly of

SCIAA. The fourth appendix is "Further Thoughts on the Dugout & Bateau," by Fleetwood himself.

In our opinion, the new *Tidecraft* is much improved over the original version and long overdue. If you have read the original *Tidecraft*, you will find much in the text that has not been changed, however, the additional information added to the text makes re-reading the book well worthwhile. The new *Tidecraft* will be a fine addition to the library of those interested in maritime history and deserves a place of its own. One negative note: the cost. At \$47.50 the book is a bit pricey to say the least. The original *Tidecraft*, published in 1982, went for \$9.95, albeit in paperback form.

## H.L. Hunley

*Continued from page 1*

lic concerns and goals for the human remains. Needless to say, there has been a great deal of support for the careful and dignified treatment of the skeletal materials and personal effects.

At the request of the SC Hunley Commission, the HPWG has prepared and delivered a statement concerning the scientific aspects of this issue. This statement is now available on the Net in the **SCIAA homepage** (<http://www.cla.sc.edu/sciaa/sciaa.html>).

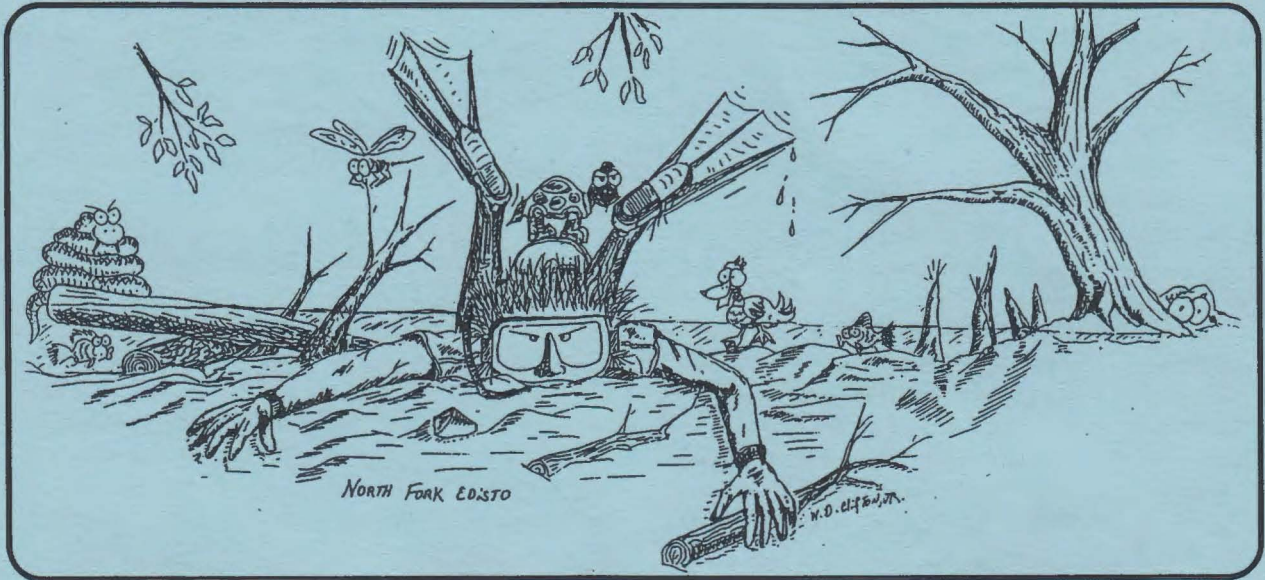


# French Cargo

*Continued from page 1*

but later managed to be hauled off. In addition, we also found advertisements around that time that listed the kinds of cargoes which were carried locally. Some actually include french flint and wines.

Of course, we can't be certain yet that is the cargo of the *Lucy* - but it may have been a similar situation where a ship discharged or lost a cargo while in distress. I believe one thing for sure - the Cooper River still holds many of South Carolina's historical secrets just waiting to be answered !



Many thanks to Clifton Doyle for contributing his artwork on the lighter side of river diving in South Carolina !

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