CHAPTER THREE
Low Country Carolina (1670-1783)

Society

European settlement of South Carolina's lower coastal plain took place very early in the colony's history. In 1675 South Carolina consisted of "a fairly compact settlement of 500 to 600 people living along the Ashley River a few miles from the ocean" (Clowse 1971:67). By 1706 ten political and religious divisions, called parishes, were laid out (Terry 1981:16). In St. John's parish, the greatest influx of settlement occurred between 1670 and 1700 (Terry 1981:69).

Three different groups settled St. John's parish. Two areas in upper St. John's, Wanpee and Wantoot, were settled by Anabaptist and French Protestants. Lower St. John's was settled by people from England, Ireland, and the British West Indies, primarily Barbados. This area of dispersed farms and plantations grew up along the banks of the Cooper River (Terry 1981:48-52, 54-56, 57-58).

The settlers in lower St. John's were not socially or economically equal to those who settled the upper portions of the parish (Coclanis 1989:21, 61; Greene 1987:198; Molen 1971; Nash 1984:235-242; Sirmans 1966:19:19-34; Terry 1981; Weir 1983:49, 51). They were individuals who had secured their social status and economic position prior to their arrival in South Carolina. They saw advantage in leaving their homes in England and Barbados in a bid, not to secure their fortune, but to improve upon it (Coclanis 1989:62; Greene 1987:198; Molen 1971:288; Sirmans 1966:27; Terry 1981:246; Weir 1983:51). They were the elite.
Most of the land granted in lower St. John's parish lay along the banks of the Cooper River. This land was considered "some of the best available in the parish" (Terry 1981:60). Over 59% of the residents along the Cooper River owned 1,000 acres or more. This was approximately 38% more land per individual than the other two areas of settlement in upper St. John's (Terry 1981:61). Of twenty-seven identified landowners in the Cooper River area (1680-1704) only six were from Barbados yet, they controlled 72% of the lands granted (Terry 1981:58-59).

Inter-marriage among the families in lower St. John's was quite common (Moore and Simmons 1960). Similar to elite families in England, who consolidated their wealth and purpose through marriage, these families continued the practice in South Carolina. As "a group of families at the top of the social structure in St. John's [they formed] their own local kinship system [which] became part of a larger, almost colony wide network" (Terry 1981:13; Weir 1983:123, 235). As wealthy planters and businessmen they became an integral part of Charles Town's business, social, and political community. Many owned stock in Charles Town merchant firms and invested in local shipbuilding (Rogers et al. 1974:598-599). All held some form of political office that ranged from Lieutenant Governor of the colony to local magistrate (McCord 1841; Terry 1981).

The Europeans who settled lower St. John's were "universally recognized as the leading men" within the local community (Salley 1973[1910-1915]:631). Although socially and economically dominant and considered ruthless by some (Salley 1973[1910-1915]:631; Waterhouse 1988:203), they were "not intrinsically the most important part of local society" (Weir 1983:229). This is because a number of ethnically diverse groups settled low country South Carolina. Other than white Europeans, the parish included Native Americans and imported Africans.

Local and regional Native American tribes affected settlement policy through their ability to support wars against European incursion. St. John's parish contained tribal members of the Santee, Etiwan, and eventually members of the Cape Fears. Low
country groups were considered a formidable force to deal with prior to the conclusion of the Yamasee War in 1716 (Coclanis 1989:47). Regional tribes included Cherokees, Creeks, and Catawbas to the north, Yamasee to the south and Westoes to the west (Coclanis 1989:46; Sirmans 1966:23). Regionally, they were used by the European powers as pawns to either support or fight against English interests. The conclusion of the Cherokee War in 1761 finally subdued the back country tribes (Weir 1983:275).

Between 1672 and 1682 over 1,000 Indians are estimated as living in low country South Carolina. These numbers steadily declined to less than 250 souls by 1750 (Coclanis 1989:47). Much of their decline throughout the colony and in St. John’s parish resulted from the pivotal role they played in the European economic exploitation of the colony’s natural resources.

In St. John’s parish, the Etiwan’s were the only group to establish permanent settlements (Terry 1981:32). The proximity of English plantations to their settlements along the head-waters of the Cooper River gave impetus to the Indian trade (Terry 1981:34). By 1700 the majority of the Etiwan’s “began to be destroyed through enslavement and sickness” (Terry 1981:36). By the 1720s there were only twelve Etiwan families who survived by “straying about from place to place” (Milling 1940:60).

A major factor in the decline of Native American populations was the Indian slave trade. Primarily women and children were locally enslaved, while the men were sold and shipped to other colonies and plantations in the Caribbean. Almost one-third of the slaves in South Carolina in 1710 were Native American (Ferguson 1992:60). Many came from as far away as Florida and North Carolina (Ferguson 1992:60).

The enslavement of local indigenous populations was considered unethical and religiously wrong by a number of people who settled the Carolina colony (Terry 1981:33-37). Yet, African slaves were considered in a whole different light. The Barbadian plantation system was built upon the enslavement and ownership of black Africans. Europeans and Africans reflected a world view that was, culturally, closer to the world of
the Caribbean (Fischer 1989:817). Just as the agricultural system was imported to South Carolina, the use of African slaves as labor for those newly emerging plantations was also imported.

Large numbers of black Africans came to the low country to work the cattle barons, tar kilns, and upland rice fields of their European owners. They constructed roads, bridges and ferry landings, and housing. They developed the fields from which the low country’s agricultural wealth came. Most were imported from various countries along the west coast of Africa, Gambia and Angola, where they practiced rice cultivation. Their in-depth knowledge of this crop was instrumental in its cultivation in the colony (Ferguson 1992:61).

Within the low country, demographically large populations of African slaves were a fact of life quite early in the colony’s settlement (Wood 1974:25-26). In 1705 there were “180 African slaves living in the parish [of St. John’s] along with 315 Europeans” (Terry 1981:145). By 1710 African slaves totaled over half the local population (Coclanis 1989:64). The number of African slaves would steadily increase throughout the majority of the colonial period. Their numbers rapidly overtook the white population. In 1715, African slaves made up approximately 41% of the population (Terry 1981:145). By 1762 they would exceed 80% of the local population.

Although Indians, Africans, and Europeans were socially exempt from mixing due to social taboos or fear of black and red alliances against European domination, they did. Most Indian slaves were female, whereas most African slaves were male (Terry 1981:145-146; Weir 1983:30). Marriage and sexual relationships between whites and Indians and whites and Africans were not uncommon (Sirmans 1966:266; Terry 1981:130). They were probably not uncommon between female Indian slaves and their African male counterparts. This social relationship is reflected in the folklore and foodways from African America’s cultural legacy (Ferguson 1992:90, 92; Weir 1983:31). Each of these diverse ethnic groups would collide in low country colonial South Carolina.
Each would add to or adopt certain aspects of the other’s culture, effecting a creolization, which was adapted into a formidable cultural force of its own (Ferguson 1992:xli-xlv, 20; Terry 1981:143).

Yet, it was the elite that continued to dominate all facets of low country South Carolina culture and society during the colonial period. They controlled the land, the labor, and the law. They provided the capital for the construction of large plantations and the purchase of ships to export what was produced. Native American and African slaves provided the labor from which these planters acquired the ability to continue their dominance over those on the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder.

Economy

The early and rapid diversification of South Carolina’s economic landscape is the principal reason for Childsbury Towne’s initial economic success during the colonial period (Coclanis 1989:54, 61-62; Terry 1981:83; Weir 1983:153). This economic diversification led to economic independence in St. John’s by 1680 (Terry 1981:83). “The economic system which emerged in St. John’s before 1720 defies simple description. During this period economic activities were more varied than at any other time in the parish’s history” (Terry 1981:87).

The deer skin trade, livestock raising, and naval stores production was significant to economic expansion during this time. Staple crop production, in the form of rice in the late 17th and 18th century and indigo during the mid-colonial period, led to unprecedented financial gains for the people of South Carolina. The settlers along the western branch of the Cooper River, through the construction of Strawberry Ferry and the settlement of Childsbury Towne, were in a unique position along Carolina’s frontier to take advantage of the trade in these products and their export to regional and world markets.
The deer skin trade was of initial importance to this early economic success (Terry 1981:83). Over 18% of the lower South's export earnings during the colonial period are attributed to this product (McCusker and Menard 1976:173-174). Great quantities of these skins were exported from Charles Town during the colonial period. More than 53,000 skins were sent annually to England per year between 1699 and 1715 (Weir 1983:143). This trade continued to be lucrative even into the late colonial period with hunts going as far west as the Ninety-Six District in the Piedmont (Meriwether 1974:169).

Many individuals along the western branch of the Cooper River were involved in this traffic. Most notable was son-in-law of early governor Nathaniel Johnson, Thomas Broughton, along with James Colleton, George Chicken, and James Child (Crane 1964:56, 147; Salley 1973 [1910-1915]:631; Weir 1983:116). Approximately 14% of twenty-seven St. John's property owners were involved in the Indian trade during the late 17th and early 18th century (Crane 1964:147; Salley 1973 [1910-1915]:631; Terry 1981:277).

Unfortunately, the trade in deer skins was closely tied to the trade in Indian slaves (Terry 1981:83; Weir 1983:30, 142-143). Robert Weir states that "South Carolinians were the slave traders of North America" (Weir 1983:26, author's italics). Substantial numbers of local and regional Indians were used as domestic slaves and for export to other colonies. In 1708, Native Americans constituted approximately 33% of South Carolina's 4,300 slaves. Women and children comprised 64% of that population (Weir 1983:27, 30). So great were the number of Indian slaves exported from South Carolina that by 1715 their shipment to a number of New England colonies was banned (Weir 1983:26).

The trade in slaves was an enterprise inextricably tied to the profits of the early colonial governors (Weir 1983:83). They personally retained "all presents made by the Indians to the province" (Crane 1964:147). Governor Nathaniel Johnson refused a lump
sum payment in 1706 of £200 a year “in lieu of these presents, an amount equal to his salary” (Crane 1964:147). These presents often included profits from auctions held in Charles Town’s slave market.

In 1706 James Child, founder of Childsbury Towne, was accused by the assembly of inciting the Carolina Indians to attack each others villages for the explicit purpose of acquiring slaves for trade with English settlers along the coast. In that year, Child personally offered up, on the block in Charles Town, 30 captives for sale. “The assembly set the captives free, but the governor paid no heed to their petitions to prosecute Child” (Crane 1964:147).

The issue of regulating the trade in Indian slaves was of major concern to the proprietors of South Carolina. “By 1680 the conduct of [this trade] overshadowed other proprietary complaints” (Sirmans 1966:33). In 1707 Governor Johnson’s son-in-law was prosecuted for participating in the Indian trade. Johnson was so incensed with these charges that he “retaliated by charging [Thomas] Nairne (the first colonial Indian trade commissioner) with treason” (Weir 1983:83). Yet, by 1725, problems related to the Indian slave trade were essentially resolved. George Chicken, an associate of Nairne, owner of 10 Indian slaves at his death, and future nephew-in-law to James Child, was appointed colonial commissioner for Indian affairs (Sirmans 1966:136-137). With this appointment, “South Carolina had found an answer to an old and vexing problem” (Sirmans 1966:137). Eventually, “the declining supply [of Indian slaves], problems with the captives, and proprietary opposition [effectively] limited the size of this trade” (Weir 1983:143). As well, the trade in deer skins declined to a point in which it played a “secondary role in the economy” (Weir 1983:143).

The raising of cattle was important to the success of South Carolina’s diverse economic landscape. The initial, attempted, settlement in 1666 was instructed to take on cattle from Virginia for shipment to Carolina shortly after the establishment of Port Royal
The coastal uplands and pine barrens were considered perfect for the “development of a livestock industry” (Weir 1983:142).

As early as 1682 cattle became established as a major Carolina export. Contemporary sources state that by that year some planters had herds containing at least 800 head (Craven 1970:357). Probate inventories show that there were many lower and middle class planters within St. John’s parish that owned cattle (Terry 1981:253). Over 90% of the planters in St. John’s possessed cattle between 1720 and 1729. These totals never dropped below 70% throughout the entire colonial period (Terry 1981:87). The majority of cattle raised in St. John’s during the late colonial period were probably used for either personal or local consumption. This product comprised less than 01% of the traffic across Strawberry Ferry in 1777 (Wates and Lee 1964).


Archaeological and historical evidence shows the naval stores industry to be substantial. Much of its influence on the economy is tied to bounties, established between 1705 and 1774 by England’s parliament, designed to promote its production (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:101; Hart 1986:6). These bounties assisted in the large production values of naval stores shipped from the port of Charleston. The impact of the bounties was visible by 1712 when over “6,617 barrels of tar and pitch were exported from Charles Town” (Terry 1981:81). These totals increased from 40,000 barrels in 1720
to over 81,000 barrels by 1725 (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:101; Hart 1986:7). A five year lapse in the bounties, caused by overproduction in South Carolina and England's access to Baltic production between 1724 and 1729, led to a collapse in the industry (Kovacik and Winberry 1989:71; Weir 1983:144). By 1727, production had dropped to less than 35,000 barrels (Hart 1986:7). Reinstatement of these bounties between 1729 and 1774 revived the industry but, never to the levels achieved during the early 1700s (Clowse 1981; Perry 1968:511; Weir 1983:145). As seen from the above export figures, tar and pitch production was a very lucrative business in South Carolina. At least 36% of identified settlers in lower St. John's parish were involved in this trade (Crane 1964:147; Terry 1981:80, 82, 253, 260).

A number of archaeological studies were conducted on the physical remains of tar kilns found in North and South Carolina (Harmon and Snedeker 1993; Hart 1986; Smith and Gresham 1989). Unfortunately, with all the archaeological and historical data available, there are problems related to dating the physical remains of tar kilns. Conclusions reached by a number of archaeologists have provided information concerning the extent of naval stores production north of Childsby Towne.

Linda Hart's (1986), study of tar kiln sites at Limerick Plantation, approximately seven miles northeast of Childsby, bemoans the "lack of temporal information" (Hart 1986:14). Although Michael Harmon and Rodney Snedeker (1993) agree that the "temporal placement of tar kilns is a major concern" (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:119, 121), they have established a typology for colonial tar kilns (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:100-122; Smith and Gresham 1989:108).

The physical remains of tar kilns represent three types: early, middle, and late (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:121). Ethnographic data records that round kilns with single drains and pits were used prior to the late 18th century. Late 18th and early 19th century kilns were round with multiple drains and collection pits. Twentieth century kilns were rectangular or keyhole in shape (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:121). Harmon
and Snedeker (1993) suggest those found in South Carolina tend to predate the Civil War period because of a reduction in tar and pitch production during the late 18th century (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:119).

They also suggest that an additional technique for dating kilns is “through [the] reconstruction of historic context and determining the relationship to archaeological sites” (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:119). It is believed that access routes to these tar kiln locations may be important determinants to age. They discovered that in North Carolina “kilns are usually located near roadways and waterways” (Harmon and Snedeker 1993:119). The provenience of probable tar and pitch production areas north of Childsbury Towne and Strawberry Ferry were most likely affected by the location of colonial roads and navigable streams. Thus, kiln and tar pit typology, combined with data concerning transportation routes, are primary factors for determining the economic importance of this industry to Childsbury.

Since 1990, a number of archaeological surveys have been conducted for the National Forest Service in Francis Marion and Sumpter National Forest. Three, conducted by New South Associates (1992, 1993) and Brockington and Associates, Inc. (1990), covered approximately 8,397 acres (Fig. 1). These covered a majority of Berkeley county from 3 miles north of the “Tee” on the Cooper River to the Santee River, a distance of 24 miles. Thirteen tar kilns were recorded during these surveys (Allen and Espenshade 1990; Williams et al., 1992, 1993).

All of these kilns and their associated pits, with minor variation within one or two, fit the colonial period typology (Harmon and Snedeker 1993; Fig. 2). When combined with the location of colonial roads within the parish, as defined by George Terry (1981), they confirm the locational model developed by Harmon and Snedeker (1993). The integration of tar kiln and pit location data with the transportation infrastructure in St. John’s parish offers strong empirical support for the economic significance of the naval
FIGURE 1. Map of Berkeley County containing survey conducted by New South Associates and Brockington and Associates.
FIGURE 2. Colonial period tar pit. (New South Associates.)
stores industry to the construction of Strawberry Ferry and the development of Childsbury Towne (Fig. 3).

In the middle colonies, i.e., Maryland and Virginia, the lack of inland transportation networks and westward expansion are tied to staple crop production (McCusker and Menard 1976:180-181). The profit from its growth and shipment depended on an economical mode of transportation from the producer to an overseas market. Rivers were that transportation system and by their existence eliminated the need for a core center to export their crops. The combination of a staple export crop and a low cost transportation system retarded Maryland's frontier settlement (Porter 1975:329).

Staple crop production was of major importance to South Carolina's economy during the colonial period. The definition of staple crop production is limiting as it normally applies to one product, such as sugar that once dominated the local economy of Barbados in the 17th century (Greene 1987:192-210; Molen 1971:287-300; Weir 1983:49). In colonial British America, staple export agriculture generally refers to tobacco, rice, indigo, and cotton. The main staple crop produced in South Carolina during the early colonial period was rice. Local environmental conditions, which included inland swamps and an extensive tidewater riverine system north of Charleston fed by the Cooper and Santee Rivers, were extremely conducive to this type of agriculture. Advertisements, for lands for sale within St. John's parish between 1735 and 1760, indicate that 61% was either cypress or swamp land (Terry 1981:29).

The production of rice is significant to the local economic landscape of the Carolina low country and its social, economic, and transportation history. The assumption that the majority of rice cultivated during the colonial period was grown next to rivers or within their adapted mash lands is erroneous. For the first one hundred years rice was primarily grown in the upland swamps of the low country using reservoir irrigation (Ferguson and Babson n.d.; Haywood 1937:8; Rowland 1987:122; Terry 1981:25-26).
FIGURE 3. Colonial roads and tar pit locations north of Childsbury Towne.
Weir (1983) suggests that inter-tidal rice agriculture began in 1738 (Weir 1983:150). Others suggest later but, historically, by the late-18th century inter-tidal rice production had induced major landscape adaptations along both branches of the Cooper River (Ferguson and Babson n.d.:4; Kovacik and Winberry 1989:73; Rowland 1987:122). By 1759, Robert Raper, Charles Town businessman and representative of the Colleton family interests along the western branch of the Cooper River, had adopted this type of agriculture (McCann 1981:113).

The introduction of inter-tidal rice agriculture effected major changes in the local environmental landscape. Earthen dams, called rice dikes, constructed to assist in rice production, would eventually line both sides of the rivers edge. Quite often they served a dual purpose having had roads constructed along the top of them (Rowland 1987:126). Wooden and brick rice gates and rice trunks, devices designed to control the flooding and draining of the rice fields, were installed in the dikes. Many plantations excavated canals for the transportation of raw rice to plantation docks or known landings, similar to the public landing at Childsbury Towne (Amer et al., 1992:25). Little archaeological data exists to establish a temporal period for these canals.

The early importance of rice to the economic landscape of South Carolina may be found, not only in extensive landscape adaptations, but through colonial production figures. The growth and export of rice rose from an initial “69 pounds per capita in 1670,” to a high during the colonial period in 1740 of over 900 pounds (McCusker and Menard 1976:180-181). A substantial increase occurred between 1712 and 1716. In that four year period rice production increased 99% (Terry 1981:75). There was an additional expansion of 174% between 1715 and 1720 (Terry 1981:75). Along with intensive inter-tidal production rice accounted for “10 percent of the value of all commodities shipped from British North America” in 1770 (McCusker and Menard 1976:180-181). Over 33% of twenty-seven property owners in lower St. John’s parish are identified as being
involved in rice production during the colonial period (Terry 1981:78, 80, 253, 257, 260, 264, 265, 277, 278, 279).

South Carolina had an advantage over other staple producing colonies in that it had two staple crops within the low country during the colonial era. The first being rice, the second indigo (Terry 1981:225; Weir 1983:146). The production of indigo began late in comparison to rice but quickly became important to South Carolina’s economic landscape (McCusker and Menard 1976:187; Terry 1981:259; Weir 1983:146).

According to Henry Laurens, owner of Mepkin plantation, indigo production began in the mid 1740s during King George’s War (Hamer et al., 1968:309). England’s war retarded the importation of the dye from French producers. An economic depression in South Carolina at the same time gave impetus to the development of this second staple crop (Terry 1981:255; Weir 1983:146). England’s Parliament passed bounties in 1745 designed to advance the production of indigo. Thus, colonial South Carolina became England’s new source of supply for this product. By the mid 1750s “exports of [indigo] peaked at nearly 900,000” pounds (McCusker and Menard 1976:187). Indigo production in St. John’s parish was practiced by 29% of twenty-seven lower St. John’s planters during the colonial period (Terry 1981:182, 265, 267, 276, 277, 278).

In the mid 1740s indigo production began in earnest in South Carolina. Many of the soon to be abandoned upland rice fields were perfect for growing the indigo plant. Fresh water, required for steeping the plant in brick or wooden vats, was easily obtained. Once the curing process was complete, the raw product was dried and pressed into small cakes. The dye cakes were then packed in barrels which facilitated their transportation overland to the river for shipment down stream. Although few of these vats exist today within the Carolina low country, one brick indigo vat has been located south of Strawberry Ferry (Dr. Eric Poplin 1995, pers. comm.).

The economic landscape of South Carolina did not exist within a vacuum. Ties to a world market placed the economy of South Carolina and St. John’s parish within a
dynamic world economic system. As such, the economy was affected, positively and adversely, by changes within that system. Bull markets, war among European powers, worldwide and local recession and depression, as well as overproduction within the colony, are factors that affected the local economy and settlers in and around the community of Childsbury Towne. Each of these aspects must be considered within the study of economic factors and their role in the development and demise of Strawberry Ferry and Childsbury.

The diversification of South Carolina’s economic landscape assisted in the rapid accumulation of wealth for the colony’s residents, particularly those in St. John’s parish (Weir 1983:153). From the colony’s inception “the early growth of population was greatly influenced by these economic developments” (Terry 1981:88). The vast majority of this economic production came directly to Charles Town for export. Buyers, sellers, importers, exporters, merchants, and shipbuilders reaped enormous profits. The commercial nature of St. John’s diversified economy established “many links with areas outside the parish . . . which connected the parish with the rest of the colony; England, and the world” (Terry 1981:15). There was unprecedented economic growth within the colony (Weir 1983:141). South Carolina was considered the wealthiest society in British colonial America (Fischer 1989:817; Weir 1983:214). This wealth was “highly concentrated in a few hands” within the low country, and by 1740 already averaged £450 per person (Fischer 1989:817). Just 34 years later, in 1774, the estimated per capita income within Charles Town proper had grown to £2,337. This amount was “more than four times that of the people living in the tobacco areas of the Chesapeake and nearly six times greater than that of the people living in the towns of New York and Philadelphia” (Greene 1987:207-208). A number of those residents owned large estates along the western branch of the Cooper River. The rise in personal wealth is closely linked to the diversified economic landscape of St. John’s and was dependent upon a transportation infrastructure of both navigable rivers and roads to ensure its profitable success.
Transportation Factors

Archaeological and historical investigations, which focus on frontiers and colonial expansion, often concentrate on lands within the Piedmont or western regions of the East coast of North America. This is because of the importance given to waterborne transportation in colonial settlement (Ernst and Merrens 1973:550; Kovacik and Winberry 1989:26; Lewis 1984; Perry 1968:329; Terry 1981:07). Strawberry Ferry and Childsbury Towne's location, thirty miles overland from the coast, is not generally considered to be the frontier. Yet, at one time Charles Town was a peripheral settlement on the leading edge of English expansion. Childsbury Towne was tied to Charles Town by a series of roads and rivers.

The lowland environment of coastal Carolina's colonial landscape was conducive to waterborne transportation. "The presence of an extensive river system in the area ... had an enormous effect upon the manner in which St. John's was initially settled" (Terry 1981:07). With the establishment of small farms and plantations throughout the colony the need arose for the exportation of finished products to England and Europe. Initially, the most expedient way to transport these products was by the extensive river system available within the lowland coastal areas of the colony.

The development of plantations affected the form and scope of the internal overland transportation network. This network is reflective of systematic development within the colony, as well as notions of linkage and continuity within the social and economic landscape (South 1988:31-43; Trigger 1989:351-355). With the establishment of dispersed settlements throughout the colony, a need arose for a means to process raw materials into a commercial form for export to markets in England and Europe. This required transporting the raw product, i.e., rice, tobacco, cotton, indigo, naval stores, and deer hides, from the field to the mill, drying shed, or processing center by waterways or roads. If shipped by waterways, then dock structures and landings had to be constructed to facilitate the loading or unloading of products before and after the milling or curing
process was completed. If not conveyed by waterway, then a system of roads had to be established (Barr 1993).

The relevance of time between these two modes of travel is best visualized by using Strawberry Ferry and Childsbury Towne as an example. They were both approximately 30 miles by road from Charles Town (Fig. 4). According to A Gentlemen's Travels 1733-34 (Merrens 1978), it would take approximately four to six hours to travel, by horseback, between Strawberry Ferry and Charles Town (Merrens 1978:110-121). This time span is based on the journals account that these men “crossed the [Strawberry] ferry at ten ... [and] reached Mr. Katirg's [tavern] in Goose Creek (a distance of 11 miles) by noon” (Merrens 1978:112, 118). Extrapolation of this data to the approximately nineteen miles remaining between Goose Creek and Charles Town would indicate a four to six hour trip.

The distance between Strawberry Ferry and Charleston via the Cooper River is approximately sixty miles (Fig. 4). Unfortunately little documentary evidence refers to the length of time it took vessels to travel up or down river. In an effort to determine this time frame archaeological tests were conducted in October of 1993 and November of 1994 using a reproduction of a fifty-four foot long oared Petersburg cotton boat, the Fort Augusta (Barr 1994:81; Newell 1994:85-89; Fig. 5).

Initial tests, conducted in 1993, were on the lower section of the Savannah River. It took approximately 8.5 hours for the vessel to travel thirty miles between Ebeneezer Landing, Georgia and Fort Jackson, a 19th century military fortification, south of Savannah, Georgia. This test determined that the average speed of the Fort Augusta was 3.5 mph (Barr 1994:81). This test is partially biased, for on the last twenty miles of this section the vessel was towed by a motor driven craft.

The tests in 1994 were considerably more extensive. Conducted over a three day period on the upper section of the river, they covered approximately seventy-one miles. On November 3, the Fort Augusta traveled from just below the dam at the confluence of
FIGURE 4. Map showing location of Childscury Towne in relation to Charles Town.

(Mills Atlas, 1964[1825].)
FIGURE 5. Petersburg cotton boat. (Artist Rendering.)
the Savannah River and the Augusta Canal to Hancock Landing, Georgia. The vessel covered thirty-five miles in eleven hours and averaged 3.18 mph. On November 4, the *Fort Augusta* traveled from Hancock Landing to Stoney Bluff Landing. The vessel covered approximately nineteen miles in 5.25 hours and averaged 3.61 mph. On the evening of November 4, the vessel anchored in the Savannah down river of Stoney Landing. November 5, the vessel traveled from the anchorage to Burton's Ferry, established in 1765, where the Savannah River intersects South Carolina state Highway #301. It took approximately five hours to travel the seventeen mile portion of this section of the river. The *Fort Augusta* averaged 3.40 mph.

From a series of tests conducted in 1993 and 1994, I concluded that the *Fort Augusta* averaged 3.42 mph. The rate of speed was not affected by environmental conditions, i.e., incoming or outgoing tides, on either the lower or upper sections of the river. When used in comparison to the up river data, the data from the lower section, though biased by the tow, had little affect upon the true and accurate speed of the *Fort Augusta*. The towing capability of the vessel was hampered by a fishtail effect inherent in its flat bottom design primarily because it contained no keel. The principal difference in vessel speed on various days is determined to be affected, not by winds or tides, but by daily factors related to the performance of the crew and their experience in working the vessel.

Sailing vessels may have averaged approximately the same speed along inland rivers because of geographical, meteorological, and environmental conditions. Quite often they had to be warped upriver, i.e., pulled by crew members along the banks using ropes, or towed by several rowed craft. Limited tacking room, i.e., the ability to turn the vessel to take advantage of a favorable wind, would affect the down river speed (Christopher F. Amer 1993, pers. comm.). Thus neither a sailed nor oared vessel may have had an advantage over the other along navigable streams in the lower coastal plain.
Winds and tides, crew experience, and crew performance may work to the disadvantage of both types of vessels.

The environmental landscape 30 miles upriver on the Savannah River is similar to that which extends approximately 60 miles upriver on the Cooper River; open marsh and savanna (Fig. 6). The prevailing winds of both river basins tend to blow cross channel as well as directly either up or down river. The direction is generally dependent upon the season. The topography and environment of the Cooper River allows for a more constant and steadier wind to blow in one direction or the other. As seen from the data presented, this makes little difference in the estimates for vessel speed. At an average rate of 3.42 mph it would take approximately seventeen or more hours to travel in either direction along the Cooper River from Strawberry Ferry and Childsbury Towne to Charles Town.

The difference between riverine and overland transportation within St. John’s parish is reflected through probate inventories from that parish dating from 1720 to 1790. As late as 1720 only 04% of the residents living in St. John’s parish owned water craft of any type. This percentage never exceeded 17% during the entire colonial period. Terry (1981) suggests that these inventories reflect vessels of a larger burthen as opposed to vessels referred to as canoes or dugouts. Most of these larger vessels would range from 30 to 180 tons burthen, but averaged approximately 50 tons (Coker 1987:47-48; Goldenberg 1976:131-255). Ships of this burthen would correspond to ownership of these vessels by the elite.

Local entrepreneurs, who could afford to invest in large vessels to ply the river, offered space for the shipment of goods down river to Charles Town. The Colleton family, who owned Wadboo Barony, offered such a packet service. Johnathon Drake employed three schooners in the 1750s. One, advertised in the November 14, 1754, edition of the South Carolina Gazette, had the capacity to carry 120 barrels of rice (Terry 1981:203). Drake’s vessel would average 21 to 36 tons burthen.
FIGURE 6. Western branch of Cooper River. (USGS 1950.)
The same inventories indicate that during the colonial period no less than 90% of St. John's parish residents owned horses, 33% owned saddles and bridles; and 48% owned carts and wagons (Terry 1981:201). These inventories indicate that “by the 1720s travel by horseback had become the most common means of transportation in the parish” (Terry 1981:200). Terry (1981) suggests that the primary reason for the ownership of horses was economic. Horses cost less than £10 while vessels capable of carrying large amounts of cargo could cost as much as £1,400 (Rogers et al., 1974:639-642). By the 1720s the price of horses had dropped to as little as £4 to £5 (Terry 1981:200). Maintenance may have been a factor for the large amounts of horses owned within the parish.

Although river transportation never replaced overland transportation as the principal means of shipping goods to Charles Town, roads played an important role in the socio-economic development and settlement of the low country (Coclanis 1989: 147) and St. John’s parish. It is suggested by some archaeologists and historians that roads and their associated structures, such as ferry crossings, bridges, taverns and inns, have been generally overlooked within this developmental period (Barr 1993; Merrens 1978: 138). I suggest that of these structures ferry crossings are of primary significance to socio-economic patterns found in settlement. As stated by Terry (1981),

The planters living in the areas not adjacent to the [Cooper River] who lacked the funds to build or purchase a vessel became more dependent on the roads for transporting their goods to the Charleston market. As a result of this growing dependence on overland travel, the ferries in St. Johns were rapidly becoming a ‘vital link in transportation’ in the parish (Terry 1981: 190)
The inherent purpose of ferry crossings is the establishment of a link for overland transportation routes across natural or constructed boundaries. In St. John's, ferries were established prior to the creation of the parish boundaries in 1706 (Terry 1981:16, 189). Strawberry Ferry was constructed across the western branch of the Cooper River in 1705 as part of an ambitious extension of the overland transportation network of the lower coastal plain (McCord 1841:6-8). At the time of the crossings construction, the Carolina colony was but thirty years old. Two other crossings were established within the parish by 1736. Bonneau's Ferry was constructed over the eastern branch of the Cooper River in 1712. Colleton's Ferry was established across the Santee River, northwest of Strawberry, in 1736 (Terry 1981:189).

Each of these crossings reflect a rapidly growing overland transportation network within the parish, and by 1737 the inland transportation infrastructure of St. John's was essentially complete (Terry 1981:187). These roads were considered to be “among the best in the colonies” (Weir 1983:158). Even though these roads were “used predominantly for travel by light carriage and horseback” (Weir 1983:158), their significance to known production areas and the socio-economic landscape of St. John's must not be overlooked. Not only did the crossings within this road network assist in the transportation of locally produced materials and agricultural products to market, they were also tied to the protection of settlements. The rapid movement of troops for the protection of the colony is related to the expressed desire by James Child for the construction of a fortification along the banks of the Cooper River at Childsbury Towne (Smith 1914:107-112). The granting of a Chapel of Ease at Childsbury Towne, Strawberry Chapel, reflects a social need for the establishment of a convenient overland transportation for the parish's residents. Over 82% of the residents in St. John's were 12 to 30 miles distance from the parish church at Biggin and the Chapel of Ease at Childsbury Towne (Terry 1981:241). These crossings also reflect an entrepreneurial
belief that a profit could be made through control of major intersections where these roads and rivers crossed (Barr 1994:82; Terry 1981:190).

The establishment and construction of an overland transportation infrastructure was as vital to frontier development as the rivers were during initial settlement (Lewis 1984:157-159). Prior to these road systems, and their accompanying ferry crossings and bridges, rivers may have hindered social and economic development. Military requirements, economic access to markets, inter-colony and intra-colony communication, social interaction, and religious activity were all facilitated by the establishment of these inter-connecting links within the community. The development of a transportation network in St. John’s parish was instrumental to the social and economic landscape of power and control that developed within this area of South Carolina.

Although ferry crossings are referred to in archaeological studies and historical literature, few of these sources describe their long term socio-economic relationship within the settlement process (Beard 1993; Cropper 1977; McCann 1981; Mc Cord 1841; Mills 1964[1825]; Neuffer 1958, 1963, 1967, 1968; Newell n.d.; Nylund 1989; Walker and Abernathie 1787). Some archaeological investigations of ferry crossings have been conducted in response to vandalism, bridge construction, and related small craft research (Newell n.d.; Watts and Hall 1986). Others have been cursory reconnaissance surveys to note their existence upon the banks of South Carolina’s rivers and bays (Beard 1993:62-63). A few of these studies have suggested the need for research related to the major components that make up these sites (Beard 1993; Newell, n.d.).

Ferry crossings contain a number of components: (1) Terrestrial features, i.e., taverns, inns, barns, stables, landing equipment, associated infrastructure and possible urban development, (2) submerged features, i.e., ferry craft and artifacts associated with the operation of the ferry craft, and (3) the landing itself, considered to be a separate yet connecting link between the terrestrial and submerged areas, and its associated artifacts. Each of these parts are integral to the study of ferry crossings. They reflect the socio-
economic function of transportation systems within settlement patterns in South Carolina. Theoretical concerns developed using landscape and settlement theories provide a useful model for their investigation.