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## The Search for Francis Marion Continues

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# Cultural Resources Consulting Division

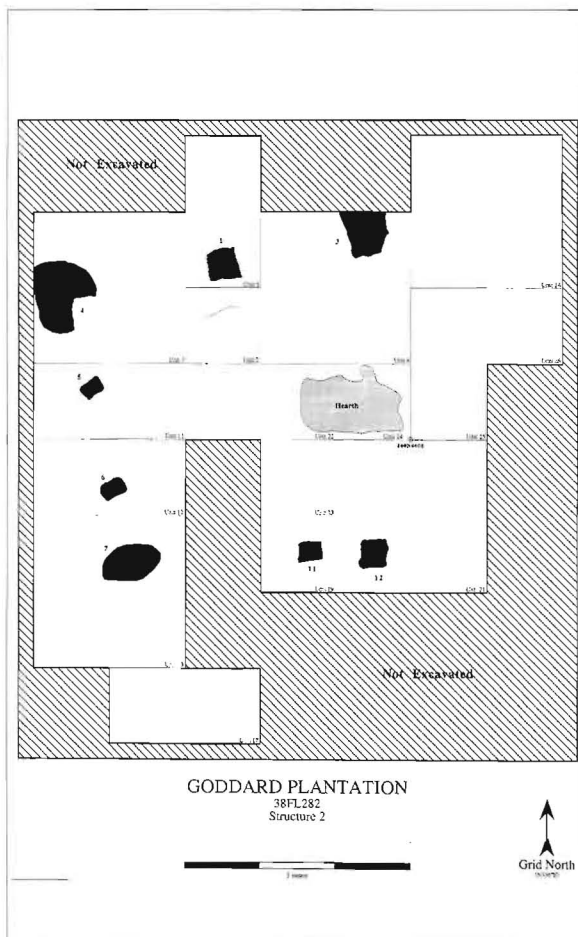
## The Search for Francis Marion Continues

By Steven D. Smith

The Cultural Resources Consulting Division (CRCD) returned to the Snow's Island region in March on their El Dorado quest to locate the Winter 1780-81 camps of Francis Marion, the Swamp Fox. Thanks to a greatly appreciated anonymous donation, the division was able to spend three weeks in the field at the suspected plantation of William Goddard, a local planter, who supported Marion's cause by providing a campsite and beef for Marion's men. The division, including regulars Ramona Grunden, Christopher Clement, and myself, discovered another post-in-ground, open-ended structure, similar to the structure discovered in 1993. While, no definitive evidence of Marion's militia band was found, the site continues to offer intriguing questions as to exactly what it is.

What can be factually stated is that the artifacts are consistent with a late 18th century period site, dating sometime after 1775. The site is littered with broken kettle fragments,

a light scatter of tiny creamware ceramic sherds, a small assortment of salt-glazed ceramics, occasional pipestem fragments, and very few nails. Many of the ceramic pieces have been burned. There is also a Native American presence. Both structures consist of post-in-ground construction, the structure found this year having a hearth in its center. It is only 2 x 2.5 meters in size compared with the 1993 structure, which was 3.2 x 2 meters. A cluster of metal-detector hits imply that another structure exists near the recent discovery, but time



Plan of block excavation at Goddard plantation. (SCIAA drawing)



(Left to right): Ramona Grunden, Jason Smith (standing), Amy Joyce, and Betsy Carlson preparing block excavation for photograph. (SCIAA photo)

did not permit excavation. Unfortunately, rain and poor drainage cost the crew five of the 15 field days scheduled.

The debate now rages within CRCD as to what the site represents. Hypotheses range from: A) William

Goddard's slave cabins, B) Goddard's plantation outbuildings, C) partisan sheds, D) A and C, E) B and C, and F) a random collection of postholes. The latter hypothesis best fits the data at hand.

Whatever interpretation we decide upon, it is a fascinating site, worthy of long-term efforts to decipher its mysteries, and CRCD hopes that its next visit is not another seven years away. Funds for this effort were donated in honor of Horace Rudisell, a distinguished historian of Darlington County.