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The Sullivan Tabby Point Ruin: Callawassie Island, South Carolina

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With Contributions by:

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South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology
Research Manuscript Series 233

College of Arts and Sciences
The University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina
The Sullivan Tabby Point Ruin: Callawassie Island, South Carolina
Fontispiece

Aerial view of Callawassie Island on October 23, 1939. Courtesy of U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland (from Behan 2004: 181).
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Dedication

To Bill and Shanna Sullivan
Preface

Archeological testing for the tabby ruin project reported here was carried out from January 23, to February 9, 2006, by a grant provided by William and Shanna Sullivan, to the Historical Archaeology Research Fund (A31059) at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina’s College of Arts and Sciences. The project was conducted by Stanley South and Michael Stoner.

On June 26, 2006, Stan and Mike returned to the site to excavate more shovel tests in an area extending 80 feet east of the tabby ruin, where Tommy Ryan, in 1971, had seen the ruin of what he thought might be the kitchen for the larger tabby ruin, but no evidence of the ruin Ryan saw was found, either by test excavation or probing.

The goal of the project was to record the ruin through mapping, photography, and by systematically excavating test units one by two feet in size, on all sides of the ruin. This process was expected to recover artifacts associated with the structure useful in determining the time of its use, and clues to its function, which it did. In addition to this effort, a steel probe was used to attempt to locate architectural evidence of chimney bases and porch support footings if such were a part of the original structure. No such architectural evidence was found.

This project provided an excellent opportunity to examine the relationship between theory and evidence through middle-range theory, which connects the preconceptions and suppositions of theory through arguments of relevance, to demonstrated historical and archaeological evidence. In this process (known as historical archaeology), if there is documented historical record for a specific site, this information is interwoven with the archaeological record through arguments of relevance (middle range theory), to produce the explanation for the culture process that produced the documented evidence, both historical and archaeological.

If a structure, because of its documented historical significance, is moved to a new site and no archaeology is done on the abandoned site, then the interpretation of that building must rest solely on the historical record. The rich legacy in the earth associated with the building, a legacy involving the time period it was occupied and the function it served in the past cultural system, and its relationship to the world cultural system at the time, is not available.

To prevent this rape of association of architecture with the archaeological record from happening, as development of previously used land takes place, a vast archaeological process has developed. This process has come to be known, first as “salvage archaeology,” and later as “cultural resource management archaeology.” It was created by Federal, State and local governments to mitigate the loss of the important aspect of association through separation and destruction of cultural architecture and artifact resources, by “salvaging” at least some historical archaeology information before it is lost forever. Oversight of this process is administered by State Historic Preservation Offices throughout America.
In the absence of site specific historical documentation, however, such as is
the case at the Callawassie Tabby Point ruin, the burden of proof for the
occupation period of the site as well as the explanation of the function the
structure served in the past culture, must then rest on the interpretation of the
architecture, the artifacts, and the associations found in the archaeological record.

In such cases, there is sometimes a temptation to stretch or “enrich” the
explanation through supposition and preconceptions — drawing on conclusions
reached by researchers, historians, archaeologists and others not benefiting by the
knowledge provided by the archaeological record, and not specifically focused on
the structure involved, but on “of the period,” “might have been,” “likely was,”
and “is thought to be” — received knowledge explanations not anchored in fact
regarding the site itself.

More than a half-century of historical archaeology research has been carried
out, and during that period of time, scientific methods and techniques have been
developed to examine historic site architecture, artifacts and their associations on
a site, to arrive at patterns that speak to the time and function in the past cultural
process, represented by the surviving assemblage of data.

The fact that archaeology was not able to confirm previous expectations and
assumptions is no surprise to archaeologists, who sometimes find that their
analysis of the data do not support many of the old tales and beliefs associated
with an historic site. It is therefore the responsibility of the archaeologist to offer
explanations anchored in the patterned archaeological record that are far closer to
truth regarding past culture processes than previous assumptions might warrant.
Such was the case at the Callawassie Tabby Point ruin. In this report historical
archaeology has provided a temporal and functional explanation for the Tabby
Point ruin.

Acknowledgements

The primary acknowledgement for the Callawassie Tabby Point Project is to
William and Shanna Sullivan, whose interest in discovering clues to what lay
beneath the surface of the site prompted them to fund the research reported here.
Thanks, also, to my colleague, Chester DePratter, who brought it to my attention,
and who offered comments on the report, as did Walter Boone and Mike Stoner.

A special thanks to my colleague, Michael Stoner, who excavated the test
units reported herein, from which the data critical to our interpretation were
recovered. Mike and I are appreciative of the shovel work, the probing, and
screening help provided by volunteers, Bill Behan, Jim Scott, and Richard
Schwarz. We are indebted to John Kirby and Ken Steffy, who assisted with the
artifact identification in the laboratory at SCIAA

Thanks too, to Chris Clement for his computer expertise, and to Tommy
Charles for scanning the photographs included in this report. We are grateful to
Barbara Brundage for research help, and Nena Powell Rice for handling the
paperwork needed for successful execution of the project. The team effort of all
these individuals allowed the project to be carried out.

Stanley South, H.H.D. December 12, 2006

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Chapter 1

TABBY BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

Project Background and Goals

William R. Sullivan, owner of the Tabby Point ruin in his yard on Callawassie Island, South Carolina, expressed to Chester DePratter his interest in an archaeological examination of the ruin. Chester asked that South accompany him to view the ruin, which they did late in 2005. As a result of that visit, Bill Sullivan requested a budget estimate (Appendix I). Later, he and Shanna agreed to fund the exploratory archaeology project reported herein.

The goals were to map the structure, photograph it, record architectural details, excavate shovel tests to reveal artifacts associated with it, and through this process make an interpretation of the date of its use and its function.

What Is Tabby?

Earlier researchers on Callawassie Island, South Carolina, have spoken of a "tabby structure" and a "tabby ruins," a type of construction, made of shells, characteristically found between 1816 and 1856, on the Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia. But, as early as 1805, "Thomas Spalding revived the use of tabby and perfected the art of this type of construction" (Coulter 1937: 72). Known for his experimental plantations near Darien, Georgia, Thomas Spalding wrote an important letter regarding tabby building construction, providing details allowing us to understand that process.

Eighteenth century examples of tabby construction exist, such as Fort Dorchester, South Carolina, which dates to the late 1750s (Brundage 2006). Coulter, in his study of tabby ruins in Georgia, says: "every sort of building seems to have been made of it" [tabby] (Coulter 1937: 79).

Because of the importance of Spalding’s letter as background for our study of the early nineteenth century Tabby Point ruin in William and Shanna Sullivan’s yard, we present it here (Spalding Thomas, letter dated July 20, 1816, in the Georgia Historical Society, courtesy of William Behan).

Dear Sir:

Your letter form being directed to me McIntosh County in the place of Darien, in Georgia. I will with pleasure give you the information upon the subject of Taby [sic] building. Taby [sic] is composed of shells, lime, and sand in equal proportions; they are well mixed together upon a floor with water; and then put into boxes the thickness of your walls. The boxes are made of good boards in this way... They are kept apart by pins, at every three or
four feet, which as soon as the Taby [sic] begins to harden are driven out and the boxes saved for another round. This in the summer will be in two or three days. Care must be taken in carrying up your walls, that they be kept straight by a line and perpendicular with a plum bob. It is always well to have a range of boxes, to go all around your building; it saves trouble and the Taby [sic] becomes better cemented, add to which it takes but a few hands to fill in a foot of this material around your whole building. As Taby [sic] is very strong the walls need not be any thicker than two feet lest heavy rains, high winds, or their own weight, while green, bring them down, when dry they become like a heap of living rock, and grow stronger with the time. They are the cheapest buildings I know of, the easiest in the construction, may be made very beautiful, and are very permanent [sic]. They are the buildings of Spain, the coast of Barbary where some of them have stood these many centuries. All the success is in the making of the boxes carefully, carefully mixing the material and a thorough dry season for this erection. As the boxes taken to pieces at every round, they are put together at the end in this way one board secures them. Then the round off is completed, the pegs are taken out and the boxes raised for another. Good gravel and pebbles are a very good mix with Taby [sic].

On the subject of roofs the inclosed [sic] is a letter I wrote to Major Hamilton in South Carolina will give you my opinion in detail. I can add nothing to that letter. I shall be happy if this information can be of any service, to Mr. Nester and I remain

Yours with esteem
Thos Spalding

Sapelo Darien, Georgia

Twenty-eight years later, in 1844, Spalding wrote another letter. Coulter points out that it was Spalding, who "perfected the art of this type of construction," (Coulter 1937: 72-76). In this letter, in addition to changing the way he spelled tabby, he provides additional detail on tabby construction...

He says that: “Tabby and not Tappy...,” is “a mixture of shells, lime and sand in equal proportions by measure and not weight, makes the best and cheapest buildings where the materials are at hand, I have ever seen; and when rough cast, equals in beauty stone” (Coulter 1937: 72-73).

In regard to the materials used, he says: “The shells I have used were old shells from ancient Indian Barrows, some of them of great extent scattered over our Sea Islands from Charleston to St. Johns River in Florida.” And, as far as skill required, he says: “There is little art required in the construction of these buildings. A view for fifteen minutes of a house erecting would explain everything.” (Coulter 1937: 73)

Spalding makes an important point relevant to the virtual absence of fallen wall sections at the Tabby Point ruin. He says: “...when it having been
discovered that Tabby walls could be sawn into good building stone, spoilers from every quarter came and have sawed them up and have carried them away” (Coulter 1937:73).

He provided valuable construction details in his letter as follows:

Manner of building.

Two planks as long as convenient to handle, 2 inches thick and about 12 inches wide, are made to unite and to go the round of your building. These planks are kept apart by spreader pins with a double head as thus: the first head keeps the outer plank in its place, the last with the pin run through the point, keeps the inner plank firm while the workmen are filling in the material and setting it down, either with a spade or a light rammer, which, if shells, bring these into a flat position. Then, the planks at the ends are let into each other thus:

with an iron wire with eye to draw it out at each round of Tabby. The corners of the building are thus:

The same kind of iron wire binding the sides together.

All that is necessary when you construct doors or windows, is to drop a short board across the wall between the outer and inner planks and steady it with two poles, to be drawn out at each round and replaced at the next, and so continue until you have reached the height you intend your doors and windows. When you then drop your Lintall into the Tabby Box so as to secure the next round of Tabby your wall then becomes an intire whole.

I have attempted to represent with the pen the manner in which the walls are carried round (Coulter 1937: 74-75).

Coulter explains that “When the course or ‘round’ was completed, the boxes could be quickly taken apart by the removal of pegs and then reassembled for another course” (Coulter 1937: 80).
A quarter of a century after he wrote his letter describing his method of tabby construction, it was published. The editor commented that such construction, “has of late fallen entirely into disuse” (Southern Agriculturist III, December, 1830: 623; in Coulter 1937: 79). This comment certainly suggests the tabby construction revival had almost run its course by 1830, but this generalization was not literally true, as the following story illustrates.

When Stan South was excavating at the Paca House in Annapolis, Maryland in 1967, attention of Historic Annapolis was focused on a house built by Confederate prisoners housed nearby during the Civil War. As the study of that house was underway, damaged weatherboarding was ripped away, and it was discovered that the building was made of tabby! Apparently, some of those Confederate prisoners, when put to building a house, used a method of construction familiar to them at the time, resulting in what is perhaps the most northern tabby building known — far beyond the Sea Islands of the coastal Carolina and Georgia low country.

This chapter has introduced the reader to tabby construction in the Southeast. In the chapter to follow we look at the archaeological background of the specific ruin in the yard of William and Shanna Sullivan.
Chapter 2

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Tommy Ryan's 1971 Survey

The Tabby Point ruin has seen previous investigations by Tommy Ryan, James Michie and Tommy Charles. The results of those investigations are summarized here.

The ruin was examined by Thomas M. Ryan in 1971, and entered into the site survey record of the University of South Carolina's South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA) as 38BU70 (Ryan 1971: 2). Ryan reported that the Beaufort County site is "situated on the end of a very narrow neck" (Frontispiece, and Figures 1 and 2; also see Behan 2004: 88 and 181).

Figure 1. The location of Callawassie Island in relation to Port Royal Sound. (Detail from Beaufort County General Highway Map 1978, from Michie 1982: 2).
Figure 2. Location of the Tabby Point ruin on Callawassie Island. (From a U.S. Coastal Survey map dating to ca. 1855, published in 1873. Courtesy of Bill Behan. See Behan 2004: 181. From the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland).
Ryan stated that the “Elevation above high tide [is] 15-18 feet” [20 feet assumed elevation for R.P. 1 in this project], [and an] “old wooden pier extends out into the Colleton River from the end of the neck” (Ryan 1971: 1). He took photographs (Figure 3), and said it was a “tabby ruin measuring 37 by 37 feet” [inside measurement — 40 by 40 outside], and that, 75 feet east of the ruin there was a “footing for an outbuilding (kitchen)” (Ryan 1971: 2). Shovel testing to attempt to locate this ruin Ryan saw is reported later herein.

In 1971, when Ryan recorded the ruin, its walls were standing in a palmetto forest. The eight-foot high section on the south wall at the junction with the east inner wall impressed him. This T-shaped fragment provided strength to survive the ravages of time that had lowered the other walls of the ruin. His photograph of the wall section is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Thomas Ryan’s photograph of the interior of the eight-foot high south wall of the Tabby Point ruin, taken from inside the ruin facing southwest.
The James Michie and Tommy Charles’ Survey Reported in 1980-1982

SCIAA archaeologists James Michie and Tommy Charles visited Site 38BU70, took photographs (Figure 4), and conducted a posthole-digger “testing program.” Michie described the Tabby Point ruin they saw at that time (Michie 1982: 38-39, Figure 16; see also, Behan 2004: 188).

This site is a tabby structure on the extreme western edge of the island. ...Two of the interior walls have collapsed, and various sections of the outer walls are missing. Other portions have eroded severely. A testing program on the north and south of the structure did not provide any artifacts from the original occupation. The following artifacts were found: 3 eroded pottery sherds, unidentifiable; 1 chert scraper affected by fire; 1 brown bottle fragment; 3 clear glass bottle fragments.

Figure 4. The southwest corner and the south wall of the Tabby Point ruin, as recorded from the west by James Michie in 1981 (Michie 1982: 39, Figure 16).
The Ryan and Michie survey reported on the Tabby Point ruin before it was beautifully landscaped in recent years to become an attraction in the yard of Bill and Shanna Sullivan. The importance of recording the extant structure seemed self-evident, because several portions of the ruin have degraded to ground level through the years, and that erosion from exposure to weather continues. Our testing study adds to the information provided by Ryan and Michie. The following chapter presents our process of recording the Tabby Point ruin.
Chapter 3

THE 2006 PROJECT: RECORDING THE RUIN

Mapping and Photographically Recording the Ruin

The 2006 South and Stoner project adds to the information provided by Ryan and Michie. Transit mapping resulted in a comprehensive plan view of the foundation walls and the three areas inside the ruin (Figure 5). The measured profiles of the standing walls are shown in Figure 6.

Photographs were taken and are presented in Figures 7 through 35. In addition, the remains were examined for evidence of the specialized techniques of tabby construction described by Spalding. This mapping and recording process is the subject of this chapter.

To record and map not only the above architectural evidence of the standing walls, it was necessary to probe beneath the surface to discover chimney bases that may have been present within or outside the walls. Also, we needed to record any porch-support footings on one or more sides of the structure, for our map of the ruin plan to be complete. Probing revealed no evidence for a chimney or porch-support footings. The complete plan of the structure is represented by the drawing seen in Figure 5.

With all four sides of equal length, the ruin was a perfect square with walls 40-feet long. The two interior walls divided the structure into three disproportionate areas. The east area measured 12 ½ feet wide, while the west area was 15 feet wide. The middle area was substantially narrower, being 7 ½ feet wide, making it a likely candidate for the structure's central hallway for access to a second floor. While these exterior and interior walls were easily visible on the surface, other details of the structure were not so apparent.

Also shown in Figure 5, are the brick and shell paths and the current board walkways inside the ruin, along with the archaeological test units (TUs) excavated in the project. Our examination of the standing walls and straight vertical faces revealed where windows and doorways had been located. Doorways were identified on the north and east walls. Although the current entrance from the Sullivan house is by a boardwalk across the wall near the southwest corner of the ruin, we could not establish that an original doorway was ever located there (Figure 6), nor does Tommy Ryan’s sketch indicate a doorway on the west wall of the ruin (Ryan 1971). Observations of each of the ruin walls are presented, beginning with the south wall. A short summary of the project has recently been published (South 2006a 2, 2006b 1, 20, 2006c: See Appendix III, herein: pp. 73-80).
THE TABBY POINT RUIN
Callawassie Island South Carolina
38BU70
A University of South Carolina Educational Foundation Research Project
Sponsored by Bill and Shanna Sullivan
South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology
Archaeologists: Stanley South
Michael Stoner

Volunteers: Bill Behan
Jim Scott
Dick Schwarz

Scale: Feet
0 5 10

Lawn
Brick Wall
Tabby Wall

Landscaped Plantings

Excavated Squares

Visible Window Evidence

Landscaped Plantings

Doorway

Test Units

High Ground
Bank Edge

Figure 5: The plan view of the Tabby Point ruin, revealing the landscaped plantings, the brick and shell walls, and the archaeological test units in relation to the Sullivan House west of the ruin.
(See also, Figure 47 for a shovel test unit dog madder east searching for evidence of the kitchen.)
Figure 6. Profiles of the Tabby Point ruin.
The South Wall

We photographed the southwest corner of the ruin (Figures 7 and 8), as had Jim Michie (Figure 4). Four feet from the corner on the south wall, a vertical edge suggested to us that a window had once been located there (Figures 5 and 6). By measuring these vertical faces we were able to suggest where windows had once been located on those walls where enough of the wall had survived to provide such clues (Figure 6). We suggested no windows where there was not a vertical face to indicate a window.

Figure 7. The southwest corner of the ruin from the west.

Figure 8. The interior view of the southwest corner. Note the horizontal pour-frame seam lines for the 18" thick pour-frame used to form the wall. The Sullivan guest house and parking lot are in the background.
The highest section of the ruin is seen near the center of the south wall. This was the section of the ruin photographed by Ryan in 1971 (Figure 3). It is now covered with a mantle of vines, which Mike Stoner pulled away sufficiently to allow us to photograph a significant clue to the interpretation of the size of the windows in the structure (Figure 9). On the east face of the second window from the southeast corner of the south wall, both the top and bottom window frame holes were present, being five and one-half feet apart from top to bottom (Figure 9). This measurement allowed us to suggest the window height for other windows where the side was present, but the height could not be observed (Figure 6).

*Figure 9.* A view of the east face of the second window from the southeast corner of the south wall. This shows the top and bottom window frame socket holes. It also reveals the window frame was put in place before the wall “rounds” were poured into the pour-frames. Note the slurry-slip coating near the top of the wall produced at the end of the pour-frames as the tabby mixture dried. The face of the east inner wall is seen at the right.
Detail photographs of the bottom window frame socket (Figure 10), and the top frame socket (Figure 11) of the second window from the southeast corner of the ruin, are recorded here. The measured drawing of this window face is seen in Figure 12. The top window frame socket is loose from the wall, and is in danger of future damage, as are the walls of the ruin, as erosion from weather takes it toll on this historical artifact from the past.

Figure 10. (Below), The bottom window frame socket for the west face of the second window from the southeast corner of the ruin is shown below. Note the pin or peg hole for the pour-frame to the right of the window frame socket. The south edge of the south wall is to the left.

Figure 11. (Above), Detail of the top window frame socket in the west face of the second window from the southeast corner of the ruin. This window frame provided the only measurement for the height of the windows. This evidence provided an interpretation for the height of the other windows in the ruin.
Figure 12. The west face of the second window frame from the southeast corner of the south wall of the Tabby Point ruin.
The North Wall of the Ruin

The north wall has a central entrance with a window adjacent to the doorway (Figure 5). It stands four feet high, with the tabby “rounds” above that having been removed at the pour-line, resulting in the flat top of the surviving wall sections. The northeast corner, however, stands five and one-half feet high (Figures 6, 13, 14). The following figures record the views and details of the north wall.

Figure 13. Outside the north wall east of the doorway. The east window is to the left.

Figure 14. Interior of the east side of the north wall, with Mike Stoner placing the photo board.
Figure 15. Exterior of north wall east of the doorway. The east ruin wall is seen through the window frame opening to the left. The only fragment of fallen tabby wall on the site is revealed in Test Unit 10 in the right foreground.

Figure 16. Exterior view of the north wall west of the doorway, showing a section of the west inner wall to the left.
The Northeast Corner of the Ruin

The northeast corner of the ruin is shown in Figure 17. In describing the pour-frames in 1816, Thomas Spalding says: "They are kept apart by pegs, at every three or four feet, which as soon as the Taby [sic] begins to harden are driven out and the boxes saved for another round." This results in a 1 1/8" by 2 1/4" hole extending entirely through the tabby wall, as seen in Figure 18. When we measured these "spreader pin" holes, we also found smaller "pin" or "peg" holes 1 1/8" by 7/8" in size. These also extend through the wall (Figures 19 and 20). We also found that some of the holes indicated a smaller "pin" or "peg" was placed on top of the larger ones. We suspect this was done to facilitate the removal of the "pegs" after the tabby had set, by driving out the smaller one first, perhaps this allowed easier removal of the larger "peg." "Peg" and "pin" holes are shown in Figure 20.

Figure 18. (Above) Detail of one of the north wall pour-frame "spreader pin" holes near the junction of the north wall with the east wall. These holes were formed after the tabby hardened and the "spreader pins" were removed.

Figure 17. Inside the northeast corner of the ruin.
Figure 19. Inside the northeast corner of the ruin showing the north wall (L) and east wall (R).
In addition to the holes for the pour-frame box braces and peg holes, we found inside the northeast corner, the triangular tabby corner formed when the pour-frame boxes for the north and east walls joined. From this evidence, we were able to determine that the pour frame boards were one and one-quarter thick (Figure 19). Also on the north wall, the east window frame is clearly seen (Figure 21).

Figure 20. A “pin” hole (L) and a larger “spreader pin” hole (R), on the east wall inside the northeast corner of the ruin, were created when the “spreader pins” were removed from the pour-frame after the tabby hardened (Photo 27).

Figure 21. The impression of the face of the east window frame, near the northeast corner of the ruin, reveals the width of the frame. Note the bottom socket hole for the frame. The north side of the ruin is to the left.
Figure 22. View inside the northeast corner of the ruin. The bottom window frame hole for the north window on the east wall can be seen to the right.

Figure 23. The exterior of the window opening on the east wall that allowed the window frame width to be determined.
The East Wall of the Ruin

The bottom window frame hole for the north window on the east wall can be seen in Figure 22. Both sides of this window frame opening have survived, as was the case with the east window on the north wall, allowing the window width to be determined (Figure 6). The exterior of this window opening can be seen in Figure 23. Most of the east wall of the ruin has been removed, leaving only higher sections at the northeast and southeast corners. The central area is two feet high (Figures 6 and 24). Figure 25 shows the manner in which the mortar bonding the shells in the tabby has eroded away, releasing shells through time, forming a loose shell ridge along the base of the wall.

Figure 24. (Left) The east wall of the ruin facing north.

Figure 25. (Below) The exterior view of the east wall, showing the effects of erosion which leaves the shells exposed and subject to falling into a shell ridge along the base of the wall.
Figure 26. Inside view of the southeast corner of the ruin. The shelf on the right may have resulted from a saw cut, for as Spalding said in his 1844 letter, when it was discovered that: "Tabby walls could be sawn into good building stone, spoilers from every quarter came and have sawed them up and have carried them away" (Coulter 1937:73).

Figure 27. Exterior view of the east wall, at the southeast corner of the ruin. The Sullivan house is seen at the right.
The West Wall of the Ruin

The west wall of the ruin is the lowest of the outer walls, being about a foot or so high above the ground surface (Figure 6). It is through the west wall, however, that the visitors from the Sullivan house enter the heavily landscaped area by way of a brick walk outside the ruin and a boardwalk within it (Figure 28). We could see no evidence for a doorway on the west wall. It was against the outside of this wall where Mike Stoner placed Square 2, revealing that the walls of the ruin extend three feet below ground surface. Figures 29 through 35 reveal the inner walls of the tabby ruin within the heavily landscaped interior.
The Inner Walls

Both of the inner walls are almost at ground level (Figure 28), except at the junction with the north and south ruin walls (Figure 6). The ruin is heavily landscaped on the interior among palmetto palms from the natural forest growing there. This limited the area available for archaeology. Bill Sullivan gave permission to dig up whatever plants were in the way, but we were reluctant to take advantage of his offer.

Figure 30. The west inner wall at the junction with the south wall. Note the ridge of loose shell at the base of the wall, from erosion, and probably from the salvaging of tabby blocks.

Figure 31. Detail of the junction of the west inner wall (below) with the south wall.
Figure 32. The junction of the east interior wall at the doorway on the north wall.

Figure 33. View to the South inside the ruin, with the east inner wall showing at top center left. The transit is set up over Reference Point #1.
Figure 34. View of the west side of the east inner wall (left), at the junction with the south wall, facing southeast.
In this chapter we have described and illustrated the appearance of the Tabby Point ruin as we see it today. In the following chapter we present the archaeological testing we conducted at the Tabby Point site.
Chapter 4

THE FUNCTION OF THE TABBT POINT STRUCTURE:
HISTORICAL DATA, ASSUMPTIONS AND CONJECTURES

What Was the Function of the Tabby Point Structure?

In the previous chapter we have described the ruin of the Tabby Point structure as it appears today, but what function did that structure serve? When the historical record, or the architecture of a ruin reveals the function it once served, then the question of function is easily answered. At the Tabby Point ruin neither of these conditions were present, so the question of function was not obvious. This being the case, conjecture and assumptions were made through time regarding the function once served by the structure — with “house” being the primary one. In this chapter we present as background to our report on our archaeological testing in the next chapter, some of the conjectures and assumptions that have resulted from the absence of documentary evidence answering the question of function.

According to Spalding, tabby was used to build “barns, cotton gin houses, mansions, slave quarters, hotels, sugar houses, churches, rum distilleries, and tiny milk houses…” (Coulter, ed. 1937: 79). We also add mid-eighteenth century forts “at Fort Frederick, near Beaufort, South Carolina, at Frederica, on St. Simons Island, Georgia, and the small tabby fort erected by Jones at Wormsloe, on the Isle of Hope near Savannah” (Coulter, ed. 1937: 81), [as well as Fort Dorchester, near Charleston, South Carolina (Barbara Brundage, personal communication 3/10/06).

We can probably eliminate forts from the list of possible functions of the Tabby Point ruin, because the shape is different, but where do we go from there? Is the square shape of this ruin different from tabby plantation house ruins elsewhere, or does it fit the pattern of such domestic household ruins?

In our research, we could find no reference to a square tabby structure demonstrated to have been a domestic household dwelling (Brooker, n.d.; Michie 1982; Trinkley 1991; Trinkley and Hacker 2000). The only square tabby structure we found mentioned is on the Georgia coast. It was said to be a mill house 43 feet square — not a domestic household dwelling (Floyd 1937: 149). Another square tabby structure was excavated in Florida by Carl Halbert, but his excavation revealed no evidence that it was a domestic household residence (Halbert, personal communication). Our research indicates that bona fide domestic household ruins are rectangular.

Other researchers have addressed the function of the Tabby Point ruin. It was assumed by archaeologist Tommy Ryan to be a dwelling, with a “kitchen” ruin located nearby (Ryan 1971: 1, 6). Historian William Behan, referred to it as a “tabby constructed home,” built by James Hamilton, Jr., in 1816 (Behan 2004: 50). Archaeologist Michael Trinkley has referred to the ruin as representing “the main plantation house” (Trinkley 1991: 33). Colin Brooker, an architectural
design consultant, refers to the ruin as the "Heyward House," and the "Heyward-Hamilton House" on drawings he made of the ruin (Brooker n.d.).

In a conversation South had with Brooker on January 31, 2006, they talked about what the ruin might represent. Brooker said that if it had porch footings on one side, or perhaps on all sides, that would indicate that it was a domestic household structure. They talked about chimney bases, which domestic households have and which the Tabby Point structure should have to be considered the ruin of a domestic household.

Colin examined the ruin more than a decade ago and noticed the remains of a wooden beam separating the east room into two, which suggested two rooms there on the ground floor. He conjectured that footings for steps to a hypothesized second floor might be found, which would again indicate a second floor, probably of wood siding, not tabby. Brooker's drawing of the Tabby Point ruin is seen in Appendix 4.

They agreed that what we see is possibly a first floor underpinning for a second floor, probably wood, if footings for a porch on one or more sides could be found. If porches were present, the architecture might represent a domestic household. Brooker suggested the upper floor likely had three rooms — a large one (a ballroom) on the west side, and two smaller ones on the east side. The ballroom was conjectured under the assumption that the ruin was indeed the household of an assumed past occupant documented to have lived somewhere on the island. Extensive probing produced no porch footings, no chimney bases, no step footings, or other architectural evidence that the ruin represents a domestic household dwelling.

Brooker gave me a few pages from his manuscript on tabby structures of Beaufort County, South Carolina, in which he discusses plantation residences. There he describes the "Double Pile House Plan," a T-shaped form, and the "Tripartite and Linear Plan," all using basic rectangular elements (Brooker n.d.). If, as Behan, Brooker, Ryan, and Trinkley agree, the 40 foot square structure on Tabby Point represents a domestic household, domestic household construction pattern must have been present to validate such an interpretation. We wanted to know where we could visit other such square tabby ruins of similar size in order to demonstrate the square plantation domestic household pattern.

When Brooker was asked for the location of such ruins, he quickly said the Tabby Point ruin was somewhat "unique." He knew of only one other nearly square example, a tabby ruin on Haig Point (Brooker, personal communication).

Several days before talking with Brooker, South recorded in his daily log: "The absence of the domestic household refuse pattern artifacts suggests a function other than a domestic household is involved—but we will see what other squares reveal" (Appendix II, Daily Log, 1/21/06). If they also revealed the absence of domestic household artifacts, the Tabby Point ruin would not only be somewhat unique architecturally from a domestic household ruin (according to Brooker), it would also uniquely differ archaeologically from the domestic household artifact pattern for a domestic household structure. More will be said of the archaeology in Chapter 6. In the following chapter we look at who is thought to have built the Tabby Point ruin, when, and why.
Chapter 5

WHO BUILT THE TABBY POINT STRUCTURE: WHEN AND WHY?

Who Built the Tabby Point Structure?

William Behan has written a book detailing the history of the various owners of Callawassie Island during the historic period (Behan 2004). Our focus here, however, is on the specific ruin on Tabby Point, where the Okatie River joins Chechessee Creek to become the Colleton River (Figure 1 and Frontispiece).

Jim Michie examined the tabby point ruin and stated that his testing program “on the north and south of the structure did not provide any artifacts from the original occupation” [of the Tabby Point structure] (Michie 1982: 38). This statement suggests presumed knowledge of the “original occupation.” He was saying the four glass bottle fragments he found were later than when he assumed the structure was built. He found no concentration of ceramic fragments that might be expected to have been discarded around the ruin.

Michie’s comment certainly raises the question: Who built the Tabby Point structure and when? We present here some of the statements made by other researchers who have spent far more time on Callawassie Island research than we have (contributions of these researchers appear in Appendices IV through VI).

We begin with William Behan, who has published A Short History of Callawassie Island (2004; see also Appendix VI). Bill said, “In November 1813, James Hamilton, Jr., gained legal control of Callawassie Island,” and in 1815 he moved there and began planting cotton. He says: “It appears that during the summer of 1816 James had a tabby sugar mill constructed” on the north side of the island (38BU409) (Behan 2004: 56). And he adds that the Hamiltons, “are believed to have lived in a tabby constructed home, which they probably had built, whose ruins can still be seen at the end of Tabby Point” (38BU70) (Behan 2004: 50. Also see, Frontispiece.). But what if the Hamiltons simply moved into a domestic household structure they had built at the sugar mill site one and one-third miles away from Tabby Point? More on this question later.

Unfortunately, in the absence of a specific document, we must deduce from the archaeological evidence, who built the structure, when it was built, and for what reason. Michael Trinkley, who has conducted considerable research on Callawassie Island, says of the Tabby Point structure (Trinkley, ed., 1991: 62):

Clearly very little concerning this site is known. The historical research conducted for Callawassie strongly suggests that this was the main plantation house built by James Hamilton [Jr.] in the nineteenth century. Consequently, this site is of particular importance to the region’s cultural and architectural history. Currently the site is intact and is situated almost entirely on Lot 73.
Unfortunately, Trinkley presents no documented data as to what “strongly suggests” the Tabby Point structure, which he considers “the main plantation house,” was occupied by James Hamilton, Jr. (Trinkley ed., 1991: 30-31, 62).

**When Was the Tabby Point Structure Built?**

Behan also suggests perhaps the Tabby Point site, after 1815, was the home of James Hamilton, Jr., and his wife, Elizabeth Heyward Hamilton. (Behan 2004: 50, 188). Trinkley also points out that Hamilton sold Callawassie Island to John A. Cuthbert in 1819, providing an assumed Hamilton occupation date of between 1816 to 1819 (Trinkley ed., 1991: 30).

Trinkley refers to the Tabby Point ruin as “the main house,” shown on Coast Chart 55, “based on surveys conducted from 1852 to 1872” (Trinkley ed., 1991: 30-31). He concludes: “The 1873 ‘Map of Beaufort County’ by Law and Kirk identifies only one structure on Callawassie island.” He says: “This indicates that [38BU70] the antebellum plantation house was still standing as late as the last quarter of the nineteenth century” (Trinkley 1991: 35).

There is another interpretation, however, that suggests the Tabby Point structure was likely destroyed in the 1860s, at a time when Union forces were salvaging wood, window frames and other building materials to house refugees. Foraging parties were sent out to obtain these materials and the Tabby Point structure may have been the source of such materials (Behan 2004: 79). But, suppose the Tabby Point ruin did not function as a domestic household? More on this later.

**Why Was the Tabby Point Structure Built?**

As seen above, William Behan and Michael Trinkley interpret the Tabby Point ruin as having been built as a plantation home for James Hamilton, Jr. They note when Hamilton began his sugar mill adventure in 1816, the Tabby Point ruin was constructed on a narrow point of high ground with a nice view, adjacent to deep water (Behan 2004: 56; Trinkley 1991: 41).

As pointed out in 1980 (South and Hartley 1980, 1985), the choice of deep water adjacent to high ground was a major consideration regarding transportation for the earliest settlements in the coastal area of South Carolina in the seventeenth century. This was because of the ease of access by deep water vessels to the high ground, where plantations were established, and commercial crops were shipped to distant markets. At such locations, no piers had to be built, so the products could be loaded onto vessels by the deepwater “highway”— cotton, sugar, deer hides, olive oil, indigo, etc. These were the energy resources driving the culture process of the time. The importance of deep water adjacent to high ground was that it avoided having to build piers across low ground to shipment by deep-water vessels (although the marsh at Tabby Point required that a pier be built out to the deep water channel). Therefore, the “why” questions, addressing culture process are answered in the broad perspective by the degree of energy harnessed per capita per year, as Leslie White has so effectively demonstrated (White 1947).
Why then, was the Tabby Point structure constructed and placed where it was in relation to deep water and to Hamilton’s sugar mill complex one and one-third miles away? If James Hamilton Jr., was indeed the builder of the Tabby Point structure (whether as a household or for storage), the answer is: The tabby point structure was built because there was an expectation that through it (and the distant sugar mill complex), more energy would be forthcoming from that effort than was expended in its construction (South and Green 2005).

In other words, Hamilton wanted to make a profit! Unfortunately for Hamilton’s three-year venture into the sugar mill business (1816 to 1819), the energy he poured into the project far outweighed the energy flow into his bank account, forcing him into serious indebtedness. He was apparently a bad judge of energy input vs. outflow. Behan says: “By 1842, James Hamilton, Jr.’s debts in toto were $700,000, an enormous sum for the time.” This misjudgment of energy flow and the relationship between economic theory and practice, left Hamilton, “with a tarred reputation for the rest of his life” (Behan 2004: 44-45).

We still haven’t answered the question of what specific function the Tabby Point structure served. In the absence of historical documentation clearly indicating the structure was a household, or a “main plantation house,” The question of function can be addressed through the historical archaeology process carried out in this project. In Chapter 6, to follow, we examine the artifact evidence from our archaeological testing to determine the relationship of those data to previous assumptions and conjectures.

Other Studies of the General History of Callawassie Island

Since Ryan, and later, Michie, conducted their preliminary studies on Tabby Point, there have been other tabby ruins excavated elsewhere on Callawassie Island by Trinkley and others — studies not focused on the Tabby Point ruin. A summary of those archaeological efforts is seen in William Behan’s forthcoming book (Behan n. d.). However, for those interested in the general history of Callawassie Island, Behan has already published A Short History of Callawassie Island, South Carolina: The Lives and Times of its Owners and Residents (Behan 2004).

A look at the broader history of the area adjacent to Callawassie Island, on neighboring Spring Island east of Callawassie, has been taken by Bill Sullivan, whose notes appear in Appendix V. The spotlight of history cast its beam on both islands, as well as on the other sea-islands, and Sullivan’s Spring Island study reflects this shared heritage.

A broader historical setting of the Lowcountry and the State of South Carolina through time, can be enjoyed by reading the rest of the story in Walter Edgar’s masterpiece South Carolina: A History (Edgar 1998)

In Chapter 6, to follow, the Tabby Point focus of our study continues, with Mike Stoner’s analysis of the 50 test units (TUs) he excavated in and around the Tabby Point ruin. The location of these in relation to the ruin is seen in Figure 5.
Chapter 6

THE FUNCTION OF THE TABBY POINT STRUCTURE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL TESTING — THE ARTIFACT EVIDENCE

The Brunswick Pattern of Domestic Household Refuse Disposal

It is an exciting challenge when the walls of an archaeological ruin remain standing intact rather than being totally beneath the surface. With the skeletal remains of a square tabby structure still in place at the 38BU70 archaeological site, we undertook such an investigation. Given the availability of the site, the overall strategy of the investigation was to target areas of high probability for high-density artifact recovery. This high density artifact pattern, found around eighteenth and nineteenth century domestic household ruins, is known as the Brunswick Pattern of Refuse Disposal (South 1977: 47-80).

The Brunswick Pattern of Refuse Disposal, named after the eighteenth-century North Carolina settlement of Brunswick Town, was first observed and recorded by Stanley South. Noting the distribution of eighteenth-century artifacts at a number of structures in Brunswick Town, South declared that “[on] British-American sites of the eighteenth-century a concentrated refuse deposit will be found at the points of entrance and exit in dwellings, shops, and military fortifications” (South 1977: 48).

Later, in 2001, this same pattern was observed at 1670 Charles Towne, near Charleston, South Carolina, for a seventeenth-century dwelling (Stoner and South 2001; Stoner 2005). With the same pattern of artifact refuse disposal spanning two centuries, the excavations at 38BU70 sought to target the extant tabby structure’s area of refuse disposal using South’s Brunswick Pattern model. That pattern, was also found at the 16th century Spanish colonial town of Santa Elena (South 1980: 33-40).

If the domestic household artifact pattern was found to be present, then that evidence would reveal the structure had functioned as a domestic household. If the pattern was not present, then the structure served some other function. With the lack of documented or architectural evidence for a domestic household function of the structure, seen in the previous chapter, the determination of the function of the Tabby Point structure depended on the artifacts recovered in our testing project.

The Test Unit Search for the Brunswick Domestic Artifact Refuse Pattern

During the landscape development of the Tabby Point (38BU70) ruin, the appearance was altered from its original state with a raised wooden walkway and deck in the interior (Figure 5). With the walkway providing access to the ruin’s interior from three directions – east, west, and north – the archaeological investigation introduced a working assumption that at least one of these “entrances” was true to the original layout of the structure. It was therefore determined that all three sides should undergo sampling by excavation, for the
area or areas with the highest artifact density would then correlate with the Brunswick Pattern of Refuse Disposal as it predicts for domestic households.

Because the tabby ruin was heavily landscaped (Figures 28-29, 33), the archaeological investigation used non-standard sized test units to sample areas between various species of ornamental vegetation. On the west side of the ruin, TU 2, a three foot by eighteen-inch unit, was dug to examine the depth of the tabby wall, and to see if household refuse was disposed of there—more on this square later. On the north side of the ruin, Test Unit (TU) 3 (Figure 36) — a three-foot square — and TU 8 — a two-foot square — were wedged in between flowerbeds and oyster-shell walkways—no refuse here. Test unit TU 4 (Figure 37) — a two by three-foot rectangle — was placed near the east entrance, next to a bush and an oyster-shell walkway. No household refuse was found here either.

Figure 36. Test square TU3, near the north doorway, had an electric wire for the sprinkler system running through it, but it contained no ceramics. Ceramics are a basic indicator of domestic household occupation.
Also on the east side, TU 7 (Figure 38) – a two-foot square – was placed further from the entrance, but away from irrigation and small trees. TU 11 – a two-foot square – was squarely in a flowerbed next to a brick walkway on the west side of the ruin. These test units were placed in high-probability areas for artifact density reflecting the Brunswick Pattern of Refuse Disposal. *No ceramics or other artifact concentrations were found!*

*Figure 37.* Square TU7, near the north doorway, contained no ceramic fragments.

*Figure 38.* Square TU7, on the north side of the ruin, contained the usual A-level with shell, with the B-level below.
Some Artifacts Were Found
From these six test units, TU 2 and 3 each revealed an iron nail contemporaneous with the James Hamilton, Jr. occupation on Callawassie Island between 1816 and 1819 (Table I). These were two cut iron nails with a wrought head (Figure 39). According to architect Lee H. Nelson, from approximately 1790 to the mid-1820s early machines cut nails from flat iron plates. These cut nails were then “headed” by hand using a hammer and heading tool. (Nelson 1968: 4) While these artifacts are an important part of the artifact assemblage at 38BU70, the low density (five ceramic sherds) was certainly not indicative of the Brunswick Pattern of Refuse Disposal typical at domestic household ruins (Table I).

Table I. The Historic Period Artifact Catalog

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<th>Nomenclature</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<td>1837-1940¹</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>Nail, Cut</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Tabby Mortar fragments</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Stoneware, Albany slipped decoration</td>
<td>1805-1920¹</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ see www.bottlebooks.com
⁴ John Ramsey, 1939 American Pottery and Porcelain Hall, Cushman, and Flint, New York.
Archaeological Testing: The Artifact Evidence

Figure 39. Twelve of the historic period artifacts recovered from test units excavated in and around the Tabby Point ruin (Top Row (left to right): Cut nail with wrought head (2A); annular decorated white earthenware (43a) whiteware (17a & 24a);, blue “BROMO-SELTZER, EMERSON DRUG CO. M 32” bottle (1). Row 2: Brown bottle fragment (39a); window glass fragment (4a). Row 3: Oyster shell mortar fragment (24a); Native American shell bead (10A); Native American sherd from the ruin wall (1), Native American tobacco pipe bowl fragment (28a).

A Shovel Testing Strategy Broadens the Search Area

As the test unit (TU) strategy, in and adjacent to the house, yielded little artifact data, the investigation sought to expand coverage of the site area by surrounding the tabby ruin with shovel tests. Shovel tests (ST) are smaller units of excavation, approximately one foot square. Even though they reduce the artifact sampling size, shovel tests offer greater flexibility for excavation around vegetation and other encumbrances, such as utility and water lines underground. A total of 46 shovel tests and squares were situated to enclose the immediate area surrounding the tabby ruins, with the exception of the west side, where the modern residence was built within 30 feet of the ruin.

Shovel tests yielded few additional artifacts, with only five datable ceramics from four holes (Table I, and Figure 39). In ST 17, a single sherd of plain whiteware was recovered, as two sherds of the same nineteenth-century ceramic was found in ST 24. Shovel test 43 yielded a single sherd of annular-decorated earthenware, which ranges in date of manufacture from 1785-1840 (Sussman 1997: passim). One Stoneware sherd was recovered in ST 18. The stoneware – an Albany slip decorated fragment – ranges in date of manufacture from 1805 to 1920 (Ramsey 1939: 21-22 and 59) (Figure 39).
Clues from the Soil Stratigraphy

While artifacts were the primary concern of the investigation, a secondary method of site interpretation was undertaken using the stratigraphy of the shovel tests. According to the USDA soil Conservation Service’s Soil Survey of Beaufort and Jasper Counties, the soil at Tabby Point (38BU70) is classified under the Chisolm sequence, which consists of loamy fine sand. As reported in 1980, the Chisolm sequence is “typically a grayish brown loamy fine sand” to approximately 7 inches deep. This layer is followed by a pale, brown loamy fine sand that is “about 18 inches thick.” Subsoils thereafter may extend to a depth of 57 inches below surface, of which the first 20 inches are “yellowish red sandy clay” (Stuck 1980: 21). This level is recognized as being well below ground levels of human occupation on the coast of South Carolina, and therefore, units of excavation are terminated before reaching such depths. The upper levels of strata in the shovel tests, however, are notably useful in site interpretation.

At 38BU70, surprisingly not all shovel tests exhibited stratigraphy as noted above. The shovel tests (Figure 5), from which artifacts were recovered are listed in Table I. Other shovel tests revealed previous disturbance. In ST 12, a water line to the Sullivan house had been dug to a depth of nearly 1.5 feet. ST 13, 16, 28, 28, 43, and 49 appeared to have landscaping humus, i.e. peat moss, added to the natural humus layer. This was especially evident as crushed oyster shell was absent from this added stratum.

Also of significance was the presence of a clay layer in STs 23, 31-36 on the sites northernmost edge, and in ST 39, 45, and 46 to the east of the tabby ruin. Local tradition suggests a road that pre-dated the present Callawassie community existed along the bluff’s edge to the north and south sides of the site. With a dark colored clay on the site’s east side, one wonders if this too was a road or an old approach to the structure. See Appendix II for profiles of the test units (TUs) and shovel tests (STs).

Test Units to Examine the Interior of the Ruin

The interior of the tabby ruin was also examined, although landscaping material prohibited any expanded excavation. Only TU 5 was excavated in the ruin’s center (Figure 40) and ST 49 (Figure 41) was small enough to fit between trees and bush. In addition, the interior was extensively probed with an iron rod where not even enough room to employ the shovel test method was available.
Figure 40. Mike Stoner at test unit (TU5) inside the central area of the ruin.

Figure 41. Dick Schwarz, Michael Stoner, and William Behan screening soil from shovel test 49.
A Close Encounter with the Ruin, in Test Unit 2 on the West Wall

Test Units 2 and 10 were excavated with the intention of closely examining the exterior of the tabby ruin wall below ground surface. Test unit TU2 – an unconventionally dimensioned 3’ by 1.5’ hole – was placed tangent to the exterior west wall. Extending nearly 3 feet below the ground surface, this test unit revealed the foundation of the tabby structure was built using two courses of tabby “rounds” from pour-frame boxes (Figures 42 and 43).

Figure 42. Mike Stoner's computerized drawing of the tabby wall revealed in test unit TU2.

Figure 43. The east profile of test unit TU2, revealed the west side of the west wall.
The original expectation for this test unit was to locate a builder’s trench – in which the tabby pour-frames were placed to receive the shell, lime, and sand mortar mixture to form the wall. The idea was that the builder’s trench would have been re-filled by the builder with refuse from occupation, and possibly contain artifacts useful in determining the *terminus post quem*, the time after which the trench was dug—a standard method of archaeologically estimating the time the structure was built (South 1977; 2002a: 202, 217).

Although a darker stain was noted near the top of the first – or bottom – tabby course, a true builder’s trench was not seen. It is, therefore, thought that a builder’s trench used on the construction of the tabby structure must have been in the interior of the building.

In excavating TU2, however, we were disappointed that no ceramics or other Brunswick Pattern or Kitchen Group artifacts were discovered to assist in dating the ruin. The Kitchen Group of artifacts “characterize midden deposits [trash] thrown from British colonial kitchens” and households (South 1977: 97-99). We had hoped, however, that later squares would reveal the occupation of the structure as a domestic household [home], consistent with published assumptions to that effect. But, that hope did not materialize, leaving the function of the ruin in doubt.

We did find, in the deeper B-level in TU2, (possibly associated with the construction of the building) (Figures 44 and 45), the cut nail with wrought head, mentioned above (dating from the 1790s to the 1820s). This single clue, meager as it is, would suggest a construction date, which includes the 1815-1819 occupation documented for the ownership of the island by James Hamilton, Jr., suggesting he probably built the structure represented by the Tabby Point ruin.

Conversely, Test Unit 10 was excavated in an effort not to demonstrate the method of building the structure, but rather to demonstrate the destruction of the building. Local tradition, once again (Behan 2004: 79), suggests that tabby blocks were robbed from the structure by local African-American enslaved peoples or by white residents in need of building blocks in the early 20th century, contributing to the decay of the once proud tabby structure. TU 10, located on the ruin’s north side, was first probed and then a thin layer of humus was removed to expose a fallen tabby block (Figure 46). While this excavation could not definitively confirm or refute allegations of intentional destruction, the tabby block would suggest that exposure to natural environmental elements are indeed destructive to tabby construction.
The Tabby Point Ruin

Figure 44. Mike Stoner's computer drawing of the south profile of Square TU2, showing the B-level wall-construction period soil. The A-level reveals the layers of shell accumulated as salvaging of blocks from the tabby wall, and erosion, took its toll of the ruin walls.

Figure 45. The south wall of test unit (TU2) showing the A- and B-layers, with the tabby wall to the left.

Figure 46. Test unit TU10, showing the fallen fragment of tabby outside the north wall.
Native Americans on Tabby Point

In the 46 test units dug by Mike Stoner at the Tabby Point ruin, he recovered twenty Native American pottery fragments, a shell bead, and a tobacco pipe fragment (Table II), compared to the five nineteenth century sherds also associated with the site (Table I). Based on their association with the ruin, and what we know of Native American cultural practices elsewhere (Coe 1995; Griffin 1952; South 1955; 1959; 1995, 2002b), and what we know of the cultural periods represented in the area (Caldwell and McCann 1941; DePratter 1991; South 2002b; Trinkley 1990, 1991 ed.), and on Callawassie Island (Michie 1982: 19-22), we can confidently say that, although there is a strong quantitative association of American Indian pottery and the tabby ruin, the Indians did not build the tabby structure.

What we do know, however, is that those Native American-made pottery fragments were types known as Irene Complicated Stamped and Irene Plain (Caldwell and McCann 1941) (Table II, Figure 39). These types are in the Chicora Ware Group (South 1972, 1973), which is a part of the South Appalachian Mississippian Culture (Ferguson 1971, 1974 [2002]; Griffin 1952; South 2002b). The radiocarbon dates for the type of pottery found at the Tabby Point ruin, range from around 1200 to 1500 A. D. (South 2002b: 226-227). Also found, in TU10, was a Native American shell bead (Figure 39).

It is apparent, therefore, that sometime during the 300-year period, people making Irene pottery, and wearing shell beads (and losing some), made their home on what is now called Tabby Point. Other Native Americans may have lived there before or after those three hundred years, but they left no broken pottery from their visit to 38BU70 for us to wonder over.

However, elsewhere on the island, they consumed so many oysters that many oyster shell middens (refuse deposits) containing the remains of their meals, along with broken potsherds and other material remains from their way of life, and burial mounds from ca. 1000-1150 A.D., were left behind to be found by other archaeologists (Brooks et. al. 1982: 48; Michie 1980, 1982; Trinkley 1991). Trinkley said the goal on Callawassie and Spring Islands, “included detailed examination of subsistence, settlement, and the associated cultural materials,” from the Middle and Late Woodland Periods (Trinkley 1991: 41).

Table II. Prehistoric Native American Artifacts from Tabby Point 38BU70

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provenience</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2A</th>
<th>2B</th>
<th>3A</th>
<th>10A</th>
<th>24A</th>
<th>28A</th>
<th>40A</th>
<th>49A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irene Series</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irene Complicated Stamped</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irene Plain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tobacco Pipe Fragment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell (Oyster) Bead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

The Tabby Point ruin (38BU70) has been assumed by historians and archaeologists, and others, to have been built and occupied by the family of James Hamilton, Jr. between 1815 and 1819. South also shared this assumption when he first visited the site. However, as the data were gathered, architectural and archaeological, the story changed as questions arose. Why did the size of the structure, and the ground floor plan, not fit the observed pattern of other homes built of tabby?

If we attempt to solve this interpretive problem we can create a porch along one side, or if we prefer, all sides of the ruin; and if we imagine a foundation footing for a set of steps to an hypothesized second floor; and for heat for rooms on both floors, we create two chimneys (one for each side), then we have transformed a ruin into an imagined domestic household structure because of our preconception that it must have been a home for James Hamilton, Jr. and his family.

There is a problem here. There are no porch footings, no base for steps, or a chimney, and only a few crumbs of bricks were recovered. Someone might attempt to explain the absence of these basic architectural elements by saying they were all dug up and carried away, leaving only a few crumbs of bricks to testify to their absence. The skeptic to this interpretation might ask where are the mortar joints from between the bricks in the missing chimneys if bricks were salvaged? No mortar joints were recovered. Were all those mortar joints gathered up and removed by salvagers? If the walls and ceilings were plastered, there should be a large quantity of fragments found during excavation, but such was not the case.

There are indeed large parts of the wall missing, and we know from witnesses such as Thomas Spalding, that salvaging blocks from tabby walls was widespread as tabby structures were abandoned. But missing brick mortar joints and plaster, argues against extensive digging up of porch footings to the extent that not even a fragment of one remains. The necessary energy that would have to be expended to dig up footings, as opposed to simply removing additional tabby blocks, argues against the salvaging of porch and step footings.

But what if the ruin does not represent a dwelling? Then these missing architectural pieces would not have to be forced into our interpretation of the ruin as having been a dwelling.

So, to approach the question from another direction, we turn to the artifacts found, and not found, by archaeology. Then we discover the virtual absence of domestic household objects. There were more architecturally related artifacts (nails, window glass brick crumbs, etc.) recovered than there were ceramics, bottle glass, wine glass, tobacco pipes, etc.

We dig to recover data, such as the trash that would have been thrown from the doorways of a home, if the ruin were indeed a home. Archaeologists on many sites have recorded such trash deposits associated with domestic households for decades. It has been given a name — The Brunswick Pattern of Refuse Disposal. In the half century between 1816, when James Hamilton Jr., is thought to have built the structure, and the 1860s, there should be a half-century of occupation debris scattered around the ruin if it represents a home place — there was none.
When we dug at the Tabby Point ruin we did not find the refuse characteristically associated with a domestic household. Neither did we find the Brunswick Pattern of domestic household refuse when we dug ST Units to the area 75 feet east of the 40 foot square ruin area, where Ryan saw what he thought was “possibly the kitchen” (Ryan 1971: 7) We thought shovel-test units dug there should surely locate the expected refuse pattern. Many ST Units were dug to the east of the ruin (Figures 5 and 47) searching for kitchen refuse, but no artifacts were found. Extensive probing in the area also did not locate any evidence, structural or artifacts associated with the supposed “kitchen” ruin Ryan and others once saw (Figure 47).

![Diagram](image_url)

Figure 47. The “kitchen” search area east of the Tabby Point ruin.

The question arises, if the ruin was not a home, what was it? Can it be a home without the presence of typically found refuse? So, again, we must bring our imagination into play. Perhaps the slaves (whose quarters were located 2000 feet from the “main house”) (Trinkley 1991: 41), were put to carrying the household refuse and dumping it off the edge of the high bank nearby. Perhaps the yard was kept so neat and clean that nothing was allowed to be discarded anywhere near the “house.” Perhaps the occupants were so careful they never broke anything to be tossed out the doorways, as most others elsewhere during the Colonial and Early American Periods did. Perhaps the “house” was occupied for only a few months — holidays, for example.
One or more of these excuses can be used to explain away the unique nature of the archaeologically recovered artifact record at this ruin — unique for a domestic household. Perhaps if we ignore this uniqueness of the artifact record, and that of the architectural record, we can conclude, if we choose, to interpret the ruin as the dwelling of James Hamilton, Jr. and his family and the families of those who followed him in the decades to follow.

If, on the other hand, our inclination is to believe what the architectural and archaeological evidence is trying to tell us, we might offer another explanation, based on the preponderance of evidence. Suppose in 1815, when James Hamilton Jr., moved to Callawassie Island, he first moved into the home already having been occupied by others before him. When he built his expensive sugar mill complex in 1816, his new (rectangular floor plan) home awaited him there (the ruin of which has been archaeologically dug but, unfortunately never reported), in which he and his family lived close to Hamilton’s sugar mill operation until he sold the island in 1819. That ruin, would have had the Brunswick Pattern revealed in the yard when the archaeology was carried out! Indeed, that rectangular ruin had a chimney base and domestic household refuse was present (Larry Lepionka, archaeologist, personal communication, September 2006).

The rest of the story is: the Tabby Point ruin was likely built (perhaps by James Hamilton Jr.) as a necessary adjunct structure for staging and storage the products of the sugar mill operation, while awaiting the arrival of vessels to load the products and carry them to market, for which Hamilton expected to receive enough profit to eventually help make him rich. This commercial storage facility produced no Brunswick Pattern artifacts, because it did not serve a domestic household function! Its architectural shape was different from a home, because it was a storage facility serving a different function than a home. Unfortunately, his venture into the sugar mill business was not a good investment because more energy flowed into that effort than was forthcoming from it. Hamilton sold the island and continued to go into debt for some years to follow.

A clue to the likely function of the structure on Tabby Point is seen in Bill Behan’s book on the broad history of Callawassie Island. A photograph, ca. 1929, shows two men standing on the dock at the end of Tabby Point. Behind them can be seen a building about which Behan says: “The small building behind them, probably had a utility purpose for boats” (Behan 2004: 164). This 20th century building probably replaced the earlier 19th century Tabby Point building behind it, that had also served a “utility purpose,” judging from the documentary, architectural, and archaeological evidence.

If the artifacts from the excavation at the rectangular home ruin at the sugar mill site could be examined, it would likely be found that the artifact assemblage will contain those objects, ceramics and otherwise, representing the Brunswick Pattern of Refuse Disposal created by objects thrown from that home when it was occupied by the family of James Hamilton, Jr. and those who lived there after 1819 — but that is another, untold story, of Hamilton’s real “main house” at the sugar mill complex.
Chapter 7

“THE SULLIVAN’S LOVE NEST”

When Bill and Shanna Sullivan invited Chester DePratter and me to enjoy their hospitality at their beautiful modern home between the tabby ruin and the tip of tabby point, we walked onto the pier to absorb the setting, and saw the floating dock he built for his boat (Figure 48). What a view of the river and marsh Tabby Point provides—with the scenic-river and distant marsh to the west—and a shy lone house nestling beneath a canopy of distant trees. Words “idyllic paradise” come to mind, in an attempt to express what the inner senses are feeling.

When we were in the second floor bedroom to be used by Stan, Bill cautioned that the drapes should be closed so that movement in the room in the morning would not disturb the bald eagle perching in the pine tree ten feet from the house. Peeping through the drapes later became a morning ritual; as Stan watched the eagle, “with eagle eye” scan the world for breakfast from his pine tree perch (Figure 49).

In the morning kitchen, coffee in hand, we watched entranced, as two large white egrets, each perched on one leg in a giant dead oak, preened their ruffled feathers in the gentle morning breeze.

Figure 48. The westward view of the pier and the Sullivan’s boat dock from Tabby Point.
During the dig on the Tabby Point ruin, Mike and Stan were standing near Reference Point 3, and Mike said, "Look up!" As we did, two large black shadows swooped closely overhead and roosted in the lofty pine. We watched, as the pair of bald eagles enjoyed the setting, as we did, providing us with one of the memorable moments of our adventure on Tabby Point as guests of Bill and Shanna Sullivan. Archaeologists seldom enjoy as we did from our hosts and from the natural setting, such remarkable enchantment and hospitality as we received as guests at "The Sullivan's Love Nest" (Figure 49).
When Bill Sullivan gave Chester and me the tour of his wonderful home, on the wall we saw a framed cover of *Coastal Living* magazine, with a photograph of the front of the Sullivan home (2001 4[6] Nov. – Dec.). The caption on the cover announced, "The Sullivan’s Love Nest." It was an artful creation done for Bill by his friends at the magazine and presented to him upon his retirement. For Us, it was the delightful truth!

*Figure 50. The pier from the window of the Sullivan’s home*
"The Sullivan's Love Nest"
Appendix I

Proposal for Archaeologically Testing a Tabby Ruin on Callawassee Island, South Carolina
Stanley South, Principal Investigator

At the invitation of Bill Sullivan, Chester DePratter and Stan South viewed a square tabby ruin in the Sullivan yard on Callawassee Island, South Carolina. The walls of the ruin stand eight feet high in places and slightly over ground surface in others. The width of the 40-foot-square outer wall is wider than two parallel interior partition walls, which divide the interior into three rectangular areas. The ruin is an integral part of a landscaped garden with wooden walkways running through it.

The ruin was recorded in 1971 as (38BU70) by Thomas Ryan, in the site survey record of the University of South Carolina’s Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. Test holes were dug on the north and south sides by James Michie and Tommy Charles in their investigation of the cultural resources of Callawassee Island (Michie 1982:38-39). Three eroded and unidentifiable pottery sherds [Indian?], a fire-damaged chert scraper, a brown bottle fragment [beer?], and three clear glass bottle fragments were the only artifacts found in the two test holes. This is the only recorded archaeology on the site.

The tabby ruin has been thought to possibly be a dwelling built by James Hamilton, Jr., who began a new settlement on Callawassee in 1813. (Trinkley 1991: 30, 33).

In addition to the above tabby ruin, Thomas Ryan noted that, 75 feet from the southeast side-doorway, was a brick and tabby footing for a possible kitchen. There are at present no visible signs of this second structure (Ryan 1971).

Archaeological Goals: Mapping the Structure

A transit-mapped plan drawing of the ruin walls in relation to the Sullivan house, roadways, etc., is needed, showing the location of the walkways, planting areas, and spaces where test holes can be excavated with a minimum encroachment onto the landscaping plants.

Photographing the structure:

Photographs will be used as a data-collecting tool to record the various phases of the project as they are undertaken, as well as details of interest as they are revealed.

Discovering architectural details

Excavating several three-foot squares against the outside wall, and inside the tabby ruin, will reveal details of the below-ground architecture, such as the construction ditch, width of the outer and inner walls, and the depth thought by the builders to be needed to support the number of stories involved in the structure.
Dating the structure:
The period of use of the structure represented by the tabby ruin can be
determined through recovery of artifacts associated it, especially ceramics, as well
as glass bottle fragments.

Determining the function of the structures:
A concentration of such refuse deposited at the doorways of structures, are
indicators that the structure was likely used as a domestic household dwelling.
An extreme scarcity of such refuse might suggest another function, in which case
artifacts associated with that function might reveal what that was: storage,
outbuilding, store, barn, etc.

Locating the brick and tabby (kitchen?) footing:
The brick and tabby "possibly the kitchen" ruin observed by Ryan to be
located 75 feet east of the main ruin, can probably be located using a steel probe
unless it has been removed by driveway construction or landscaping of that area.
Once that is done test excavations can be dug as necessary to delineate and
transit-map this ruin and recover associated artifacts.

Proposal:
We propose to excavate 3-foot square test holes adjacent to the main ruin
walls, outside and inside as needed, to accomplish the above archaeological,
architectural, and artifact analysis goals. This will be done with a minimum
degree of damage to existing plantings. We will sift the soil from the holes to
recover artifacts using 1/4-inch hardware cloth screens. We will backfill all holes
and replace any turf or shrubs we remove into the holes from which they came.

We propose to probe the area 75 feet east of the ruin to attempt to locate the
brick and tabby ruin (kitchen?) footing said by Ryan to be there. If probing
reveals brick or tabby walls or footings, test holes will be excavated to examine
them more closely, and the plan of this ruin will be transit-mapped.

Before this project can be carried out, property-owner Bill Sullivan will need
to contact the utilities companies to request that they locate any buried telephone,
power, or plumbing lines so these can be avoided by our testing methods.
We will catalog, analyze, and curate the recovered artifacts at the South Carolina
Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina,
and write a report on the results of the archaeological testing project. This report
will include photographs and drawings used to record the information recovered
from the ruins examined.

Our time frame for carrying out the proposed archaeological testing project is
estimated to be two weeks, but these cannot be scheduled until sometime early in
2006. The personnel will consist of Dr. Stanley South and Chester DePratter,*
assisted by archaeologist Michael Stoner and an additional archaeological
technician. The estimated budget for the project is as follows:

*As it turned out, DePratter was not able to take part in this project.
August 15, 2005
References Cited

Ryan, Thomas 1971: SCIAA Site Survey Record, 38BU70.

Budget 1: (August 15, 2005)

Personnel: Co-Pis—Stan South and Chester DePratter  
Equipment: Vehicle, tools, camera, transit  
Archaeological Assistant: 4 weeks @ $600.  
Archaeological Technician: 2 weeks @ 500.  
Lodging: 2 rooms, 4 people, for 8 days @ 80  
Per diem: 4 people @ 25. per diem for 10 days  
Supplies:  
Report preparation and copies  
Total Project Cost  

$2,400.  
1,000.  
640.  
1,000.  
60.  
1,900  

Total Project Cost  

$7,000.  

Note: When Bill Sullivan offered to provide housing, and DePratter and the archaeological technician (James Legg) were not able to take part in the project, the budget was reduced as follows, with additional days of field work added as necessary to allow the project goals to be carried out.

Budget 2: (Jan. 3, 2006)

Personnel: PI: Stan South  
Equipment: Vehicle, tools, camera, transit  
Lodging:  
Archaeologist Michael Stoner: 6 weeks (field and lab.)  
USC Fringe Benefits: 8.75%  
Stanley South per diem 10 days @ $25.  
Michael Stoner per diem 10 days @ $25.  
Photographic: film, processing, and map reproduction  
Total Project Cost  

$3,600.  
315.  
250.  
250.  
100.  
$4,515.
Appendix II

Callawassie Island Tabby Point Ruin Project
Excavation Notes

Michael Stoner

Provenience

No. 1
1/24/06
Artifact: Surface find east of the ruin. A blue glass “BROMO-SELTZER
EMERSON DRUG CO. M22” bottle.

No. 2
1/26/06
This test unit (TU) is approximately mid-point along west wall of the ruin.
Dimensions: 3 x 1.5’. Location is in a heavily landscaped “garden” w/miniature
trees, palms, and various bushes.
A-Level: To approximately 1.5’ below east surface. Deep dark black loamy sand
with largely whole oyster shell in matrix: smaller fragmentary shell appearing as
though crushed, lies near bottom of this level and once removed indicates a
brighter colored sand, ie. B-level.
B-Level: Brighter colored sand turned to mottled with various colors and shades
caused by root intrusion. Continued to subsoil @ 3.4’ below surface. This
exposed tabby to 4 feet.
Artifacts: Indian pottery and 2 nails.
Notes: Note pour line/ledge on top of base block (see drawing). Also note
builders trench? in profile (edge not found). Sq. sifted, mapped, photographed,
drawn.

No. 3
1/27/06
3 x 3 near “entrance” on north side of structure, approximately 5 feet away from
the ruin.
A-Level: Dark black humus with crushed oyster shell throughout. This level also
includes approximately .1’ of light tan sand apparently deposited as fill by
landscaper. This level extended to approximately .6’ below surface. Left
approximately .5’ shelf along south profile to accommodate electrical wires
intruding into square.
B-level: Light gray brown, compact sand. Excavated to approximately 1.0’
below surface. No features observed.
Artifacts: 1 nail and Indian pottery
Notes: Absence of artifacts very surprising. I originally postulated that the
Brunswick Artifact Pattern would be found at the entrance to the building. With
so few artifacts recovered in areas of the expected Brunswick Artifact Pattern, a
domestic household interpretation should be reconsidered. Sq. sifted and drawn.
No. 4  
1/27/06  
A 2x3 near entrance on east side of ruin — approximately 2’ east of the ruin wall, and north of the hypothesized entrance.  
A-Level: Dark black sandy loam with thin layer of landscaping soil. Sand fill along north profile; oyster shell throughout the matrix, this level to 0.7’ below surface.  
B-Level: Light tan — gray compact sand excavated to approximately 1.1’ below surface before halting excavation (see below).  
Artifacts: brick-bats and flat window glass.  
Notes: While removing A/B interface @ approximately 1.0’ below surface, revealed white PVC pipe/irrigation system intruding into B-level. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 5  
1/31/06  
This unit is an expanded square shovel test (1.4/ x 1.4’) in a small clearing between interior walls amongst various types of horticulture. This TU is approximately 1.5’ west of the east wall.  
A-Level: This level consisted of approximately 0.6’ peat moss humus fill and oystershell with black sandy humus, otherwise known as “A”. Prodigious vegetation hindered excavation, but did not halt it.  
B-Level: Light grayish tan compact sand.  
Artifacts: Small, well rounded stones in lower reaches of A-level: road?  
Notes: Anticipated some trace of a floor—no such luck! Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 6  
1/31/06  
This TU was placed by locating “hits” with the metal probe. It is centered on, and approximately 30’ south of, the ruin. Three consecutive thrusts of the probe indicated a white substance on the pointed end, which we thought could be tabby, so we excavated a TU here.  
A-Level: Light tan — gray, subsoil-looking sand with some clay to approximately 0.8’ below surface.  
B-Level: Dark gray sand with granite gravel throughout to approximately 2.6’ below surface. At this depth, we realized our worst fears — a 2” white PVC water pipe for the existing residence.  
Notes: Excavation aborted at that point. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 7  
2/1/06  
A 2x2 TU approximately 16’ east of the ruin.  
A-Level: Dark tannish gray sandy loam with various root material.  
B-Level: Light tan compact sand.  
Artifacts: 2 pieces of glass and 1 piece of plaster? Sq. sifted, photo, and drawn.
No. 8  
2/1/06  
A 2x2’ approximately 10’ north of the north ruin wall.  
A-Level: Dark brown sandy loam with surprising amount of oyster shell to approximately 0.6’ deep below surface.  
B-Level: Light tan compact sand @ approximately 0.6’ to 0.8’ below surface.  
Artifacts: 1 wire nail. Sq. sifted, photo, drawn.

No 9  
3x3’ located approximately 80’ east of ruin; inside of traffic island, next to the road at the end of the cul-de-sac. Bill Behan probed this area and insisted there was indication of a structure here. Excavation halted @ approximately 0.3’ below surface.  
A-Level: Thin grassy humus layer, followed by polychrome clays and white concreted chunks.  
Artifacts: Samples of clay and white concreted chunks. Sq. sifted.

No 10  
2/1/06  
This 2x2’ TU is tangent to north wall of the ruin  
A-Level: Dark black humus removed to 0.2’ below surface to expose part of a fallen tabby block (See plan and profile views). Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 11  
2/6/06  
2x2’ on west side of ruin; to coincide with TU2. Sifted, shot, drawn.  
A-Level: Black to dark gray loamy sand with landscaping wood chips and oyster shell throughout; approximately 1’ below surface.  
B-Level: Light yellow gray compact sand; heavily mottled to 1.5’ below surface.  
Artifacts: 1 bottle glass (clear) and a plaster fragment in A-Level. Sq. sifted, shot and drawn.

No. 12  
2/1/06  
First in series of shovel tests beginning in southwest corner. Shovel tests (STs) are approximately 1’x1’ and 8 feet south of the ruin.  
A-Level: consisted of 3 distinct stratigraphic layers — 2 of which are landscaping fill. The third layer was original “A” with oyster shell throughout.  
B-Level: Light tan compact sand.  
Artifacts: None. Sq. sifted and drawn.
No. 13
2/7/06
Shovel test (2'x2'); 8 ft. south of ruin, 10 ft east of TU 12
A-Level: Normal black sandy loam is preceded by approximately 0.5’ of light brown sand fill. A-Level to 0.9’ below surface.
B-Level: Light tan compact sand to 1.1 ft.
Artifacts: PVC pipe fragment. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 14
2/7/06
TU 14—shovel test (ST) (1’x1’) approximately 8’ south of south wall.
A-Level: This is the least disturbed A-Level I’ve seen here. Black sandy loam to 0.8’ below surface.
B-Level: Light tan with some initial mottling. Excavated to 1.3’ below surface.
Artifacts: None. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 15
2/7/06
Shovel test along south ruin wall (1’x1’).
A-Level: Thick A-Level—black sandy loam—with landscaping material on top 0.3’—this level extends to approximately 0.8’ below surface and includes a thin mottled zone.
B-Level: Light tan compact sand.
Artifacts: Clear bottle glass. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 16
2/7/06
Shovel test (1’x1’)—last along the south wall of the ruin.
A-Level: Black humus landscaping fill with pine tree bark chips to approximately 0.2’ below surface; regular “A” continued under fill — a dark gray sandy loam with oyster shell throughout matrix.
B-Level: Light tan brown beginning at approximately 0.9’ below surface.
Artifacts: 1 piece of flat glass. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 17
2/7/06
First shovel test (1’x1’) along east wall.
A-Level: Thick “A” level includes landscaping humus with pine tree bark chips in top 0.3’ below surface; real “A” was a black sandy loam with oyster shell/tabby fragments throughout matrix to 0.7’ below surface.
B-Level: Light tan compact sand to approximately 0.9’ below surface
Artifacts: Whiteware. Sq. sifted and drawn.
No. 18
2/7/06
Shovel test 20’ north of ST 17, along ruin’s east wall.
A-Level: Good dark gray sandy loam with oyster shell and tabby throughout matrix, to approximately 0.6’ below surface.
B-Level: Light tan compact sand.
Artifacts: Albany-slipped stoneware. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 19
2/7/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) along east wall of ruin approximately 10’ north of ST 18
A-Level: Dark brown sandy loam to approximately 0.6’ below surface with some oyster shell and tabby fragments throughout. Included in this level was a zone of A/B mottled compact sand to approximately 1.1’ below surface.
B-Level: Light tan compact sand to approximately 1.3’ below surface.
Artifacts: Flat glass and Indian sherd. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 20
2/7/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) on NE corner of tabby ruin.
A-Level: Black sandy loam with oyster shell throughout matrix to approximately 0.6’ below surface. This level also includes mottled zone from 0.6’ to 0.9’ below surface.
B-Level: Light tan compact sand to approximately 1.1’ below surface.
Artifacts: None
Notes: Cut electrical wire to irrigation system. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 21
2/7/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) extending along east transect toward the north and the edge of the peninsula bluff.
A-Level: Dark brown sandy loam with no oyster shell or tabby fragments; extends to 0.4’ below surface; includes a zone of mottled sand to 1.0’ below surface.
B-Level: Tan compact sand to approximately 1.4’ below surface.

No. 22
2/7/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) located approximately 10’ north of ST #21 toward the bluff and marsh edge.
A-Level: Appears to be a thick humus layer of fill.
B-Level: No real B-Level. A-Level went directly to clay.
Notes: This loci appears to have original topsoil (A) and B-Levels scalped with landscaping matter on top of clay—Is this an old road? Sq. sifted and drawn.
No. 23
2/7/06
Shovel test (1‘x1’) located approximately 10’ north of ST #22.
A-Level: A level has light tan clay deposited directly on top of black sandy loam to approximately 0.6’ below surface.
B-Level: A thin layer of mottled compact sand (0.1’ deep), directly above a tan compact sand.
Artifacts: None.
Notes: Is this the road? Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 24
2/7/06
Shovel test (1‘x1’) 10 feet north of northeast wall of ruin.
A-Level: Good A-Level—dark black sandy loam with plenty oyster shell throughout matrix to approximately 0.8’ below surface.
B-Level: Light brown/dark black mottled compact sand to approximately 1.1’ below surface.
Artifacts: Whiteware, brick, tabby fragments. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 25
2/7/06
Shovel test (1‘x1’) approximately 10 west of 24 and 10’ north of north wall of the tabby ruin.
A-Level: Thick A-Level with black landscaping humus. At very top, followed by black sandy loam to approximately 0.8’ below surface.
B-Level: Mottled dark brown compact sand to subsoil approximately 1.3’ below surface. Sq. Sifted and drawn.

No. 26
2/8/06
Shovel test approximately 10’ west of 25; along (10’) north wall of ruin.
A-Level: Tan sandy fill in first 0.2’ of A-Level, followed by dark black loamy sand with oyster shell throughout matrix, to 0.8’ below surface.
B-Level: Thin light brownish/gray sand, compact to approximately 0.8’ below surface.
Artifacts: None. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 27
2/8/06
Shovel test (1‘x1’) approximately 10’ west of #26 and 10’ north of north wall of the tabby ruin; in landscaped garden.
A-Level: Tan sandy fill in first 0.1’ of A-Level, followed by approximately 0.4’ of dark gray/black sandy loam with oyster shell and tabby throughout matrix.
B-Level: Thin brownish/gray compact sand layer approximately 0.2’ thick to 1.0’ below surface. Sq. sifted and drawn.
No. 28
2/8/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) last ST 10’ north of north wall of tabby ruin.
**A-Level:** Thick layer of black sandy loam with oyster shell throughout matrix, to approximately 0.9’ below surface.
**B-Level:** Thin layer of mottled light gray compact sand to approximately 1.0’ below surface.
**Artifacts:** Indian pipe bowl (low-fired earthenware), brick fragment. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 29
2/8/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) 10’ north of ST #25.
**A-Level:** Dark black landscape fill—no oyster shell— to 0.9’ below surface.
**B-Level:** Very thin black loam and light gray sand mottled. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 30
2/8/06
Shovel Test (1’x1’) 10’ north of ST #26.
**A-Level:** Dark black sandy loam with oyster shell throughout matrix to 0.9’ below surface.
**B-Level:** Light tan compact sand mottled to approximately 1.0’ below surface. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 31
2/8/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) located approximately 10’ north of ST #27.
**A-Level:** Light tan clay fill approximately 0.3’ thick, with black sandy loam with oyster shell throughout the matrix to 1.0’ below surface.
**B-Level:** Thin black sandy loam and light tan sand mottled zone approximately 0.1’ thick. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 32
2/8/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) approximately 10 north of TU #28
**A-Level:** Like ST 31, light tan clay deposited on black sandy loam with oyster shell throughout matrix to approximately 0.8’ below surface.
**B-Level:** Dark black loam mottled with light tan sand to approximately 0.9’ below surface. Sq. sifted and drawn.

No. 33
2/8/06
Shovel test (1’x1’) 21’ north of ST #24 (offset to avoid small tree).
**A-Level:** This locus appears to be without traditional A-Level. 0 – 0.2’ below surface is black humus followed by 0.1’ of tan clay.
**B-Level:** Mottled black sand with light tan compact sand to 0.7’ below surface.
Nos. 34-36 No notes.

No. 37
2/8/06
This ST not dug due to close proximity of oyster shell path.

No. 38-48 No notes.

No. 49
2/9/06
Shovel test unit inside interior of ruin, approximately 7.0' east of west exterior wall (measured from inside) and 1.0' from south wall.

A-Level: As excavated, A-Level consisted of layer of greasy black humus and a layer of tan coarse sand. The actual A-Level was a black sandy loam with oyster shell throughout matrix, to approximately 1.1' below surface.

B-Level: Dark tan compact sand with some mottling to 1.9' below surface.

Artifacts: 1 complicated stamped Irene sherd found in black sandy loam of A-Level. Sq. sifted, shot, and drawn.

No. 50
2/9/06
This is not a shovel test — only the location of three surface artifacts: large piece of iron, an eroded Indian sherd (a volunteer put in his pocket), and a whole brick. See site map.

No. 51
6/26/06
This is a 1.2' shovel test.

A-Level: Dark gray sandy loam in eastern half — mottled light gray sand in west half; soil is clearly disturbed.

B-Level: Light gray to tan sand.

Artifacts: White Albany-slip stoneware in west half of shovel test.

Note: White PVC pipe @ 1.2' below surface from North to South.

No. 52
6/26/06
A 1.5' square shovel test.

A-Level: A dark gray sandy loam under root mat to .5 below surface.

B-Level: Light gray transitioning to tan sand.

Artifacts: None.

Note: Moved shovel test slightly to west to avoid big tree root.
No. 53  
6/26/96  
A 1.2’ square shovel test.  
**A-Level:** Dark gray loamy sand to approximately .3’ below surface.  
**B-Level:** Light gray transitional to compact sand.  
**C-Level:** Tan compact sand.  
**Artifacts:** None.

No. 54  
6/26/06  
A 1.1’ square shovel test.  
**A-Level:** Dark gray loamy sand to approximately .4 below surface.  
**B-Level:** Transition, light gray to tan compact sand.  
**C-Level:** Tan compact sand.  
**Artifacts:** None.  
**Note:** Soil here seems less impacted by development.

No. 55  
6/26/06  
A 1.0 square shovel test.  
**A-Level:** Light gray, very compact sand to approximately 1.1 below surface.  
**B-Level:** Tan compact sand.  
**Artifacts:** None.  
**Note:** This appears to be part of a road as seen in shovel tests directly north of the tabby ruin.

No. 56  
6/26/06  
A 1.2’ square shovel test.  
**A-Level:** Dark gray sandy loam with thick root mat; approximately .5’ below surface.  
**B-Level:** Light tan compact sand to 1.2’ below surface.  
**Artifacts:** None.

No. 57  
6/26/06  
A 1.2’ square shovel test.  
**A-Level:** Dark gray loamy sand to approximately .7’ below surface.  
**B-Level:** Light gray transition to compact sand.  
**C-Level:** Tan compact sand.  
**Artifacts:** None.
No. 58
6/26/06
A 1.2’ square shovel test.
A-Level: Light gray loamy sand to .8’ below surface.
B-Level: Light tan sand.
Artifacts: None.

No. 59
6/26/06
A 1.0’ square shovel test.
A-Level: Dark brown loamy clay to .4’ below surface.
B-Level: Dark gray loamy sand to .7’ below surface.
C-Level: Light tan compact sand.
Artifacts: None.

No. 60
6/26/06
A 1.2’ square shovel test.
A-Level: Dark brown clay to .3’ below surface.
B-Level: Dark gray loamy sand to .6’ below surface.
C-Level: Light tan compact sand.
Artifacts: None.
Note: This shovel test, and ST59, appears like the original A-level was scraped clean during development.

No. 61
6/26/06
A square 1.2’ shovel test along the north edge of the bluff.
A-Level: Dark gray loamy sand with oystershell mixed throughout to .4’ below surface. The shell does not appear to be from tabby.
B-Level: Light gray compact sand transitioning to light tan compact sand to 1.0’ below surface.
Artifacts: None.
Note: Heaviest concentration of oystershell outside the tabby ruin.

No. 62
6/26/06
A 1.2’ square shovel test.
A-Level: Dark gray loamy sand to .6’ below surface.
B-Level: Mottled transition from dark gray.
Artifacts: None.
No. 63
6/26/06
A 1.1’ shovel test — easternmost shovel test along the bluff.
A-Level: Dark gray loamy sand to .4’ below surface.
B-Level: Transition from dark brown to light tan compact sand to .7’ below surface.
C-Level: Light tan compact sand.
Artifacts: None.
38BU70
Shovel Test Profiles

ST 51
HUMAS
A
B

ST 52
HUMAS
A
B

ST 53
HUMAS
A
B

ST 54
HUMAS
A
B

ST 55
A
B

ST 57
HUMAS
A
B

ST 58
A
B

ST 59
HUMAS
A
B

ST 60
A
B

ST 61
HUMAS
A
B

ST 62
HUMAS
A
B

ST 63
HUMAS
A
B

PVC
TREE ROOT
Appendix III

The Daily Log for the Sullivan Tabby Point Ruin Project
Callawassie Island, South Carolina
38BU70

Stan South

January 23, 2006

Our scheduled project had to be postponed today because animal cages for the circus in Columbia had blocked our access to the storage facility until late in the afternoon. Mike Stoner packed for the expedition after access was available, while I took leave after lunch, after working in the office in the morning.

The Coe Foundation notified me, that to honor me, an annual award has been created. It is called the Stanley A. South Award for Historical Archaeology. What a nice honor that is! I will be the keynote speaker for an event in October, 2006, that announces the creation of the Joffre L. Coe Lecture Series.

January 24, 2006

Mike Stoner and I met at 7 A. M. and completed packing the carryall. At 11 A. M., we arrived at project sponsor, Bill Sullivan’s home on Callawassie Island. After a short briefing tour of the grounds, Mike and I prepared a quick lunch in Bill’s kitchen, and began shooting transit points to map the tabby ruin in his yard. We completed this about 5 P. M., when Bill Behan, historian for Callawassie Island, arrived. I began plotting the map of the ruin until 6:30. During the afternoon I took photographs of the ruin.

Bill Sullivan invited Bill Behan and his wife, Kathy, to join us for a nice dinner, for which he had cooked a tenderloin roast. With good conversation and red wine, a good time was had by all. Bill Behan provided me with a number of historical map copies he had found during his island research. I urged him to write a summary of the island history, which I could use in my report. He is an impressive researcher who has published a book on Callawassie Island history.

January 25, 2006

Up at 6:30 to work on the log and to organize the mug-board letters that had become dumped together in our move. Mike was up at 7:30 to fix breakfast for us, with Bill Sullivan having left at 4:30 A. M. to go duck hunting. The day promises to be another perfectly gorgeous one, like yesterday—flowers blooming—perfect temperature in the 60s, a typical Southern winter day. What a paradise of a place Bill has here in which to enjoy life! He returned with some mallards he had shot dead.

Mike and I transit-plotted the tabby ruin after we set reference points 1 and 2; one inside the ruin, and the other one (RP2) outside near the NW corner of the ruin. We also plotted the elevation of the ruin to map the profile of the four walls, some sections much higher than others. I spent the afternoon plotting our transit-
mapped shots onto a master map of the site. At 5:15 we left with Bill Behan, for
the Old House Restaurant, where Bill Sullivan treated us to a great dinner (the
best flounder I have ever eaten). Behan provided me with maps and references on
Callawassie and tabby construction.

January 26

I continued mapping the plan and profile data on the ruin. A volunteer,
Richard Schwarz, helped Mike screen the contents of Sq. 2 (Provenience #1 is
surface finds), which took much longer to get to the bottom than we had expected.
The wall extends three feet below surface, with one foot of the wall above that. A
cut nail with wrought head was found near the bottom of the A-level. If this
proves to be the case after it is cleaned, it suggests a construction date ca. 1790-
1820 or so, consistent with the 1815 date for the sale of the land to Thomas
Hayward, but we will see what else turns up besides a dozen or so Indian pottery
sherd found in Sq. 2.

Bill Behan came by again and brought me more documents to help fill me in
on the complex history of the island generally. He has told Bill Sullivan he will
provide a short (10 or more pages) of the ownership of the specific ruin on
"Tabby Point" where we are digging [Appendix VI]. At 4:30 Behan, Mike,
Sullivan, and Dick Schwarz and I, visited tabby ruins of the sugar mill and
another site where a brick chimney stands. Also we saw a complex of tabby ruins
from the plantation of George Edwards on Spring Island, which date to the period
shortly after 1800. Bill Sullivan cooked spaghetti and meat sauce with a cheese
made of buffalo milk—my first—a delicious meal! Behan says Colin Brooker
recognizes two types of tabby. I must get into much reading before I write my
report!

January 27, 2006

It is so beautiful here in the morning! I took photographs from the upstairs
windows. This is "The Sullivan's Love Nest," shown on the cover of Coastal
Living, Vol. 4, No. 6, Nov.-Dec. 2001. [I later learned this was a mock-up
presented to Bill by friends of the magazine upon his retirement.]

I photographed the excavated wall in Sq. 2, and Mike excavated Sq. 3, north
of the north entrance to the ruin. Indian pottery and one cut nail were recovered,
along with electric lines along the south end of the square, which, luckily, Mike
did not cut. He began Sq. 4, near the east door of the ruin in the expectation that
if the structure was a house, the Carolina Pattern of Refuse Disposal would reveal
discarded ceramics. Sq. 3 was placed with the same theoretical premise. The
absence of the domestic household refuse pattern artifacts suggests a function
other than a domestic household is involved—but we will see what other squares
reveal. I photographed Sq. 2. Mike will draw the profile next week.

It appears we may well not be able to complete all our plans for excavation
here, and are planning to return after next week if we need to. Today we are
leaving at 2:30 for the three and a half hour drive to Columbia for the weekend. I
have completed most of the map of the ruin, except the interior partition walls.
January 30, 2006

Unfortunately, I became involved on Saturday (5.5 hrs.) and Sunday (5.0 hrs.) in drafting comments for Chester on a list of topics outlined by Thorne Compton (the Director of SCIAA), for the SCIAA retreat on Friday, February 3rd, and I forgot to pick up my heart pills. So, I had to delay leaving Columbia to do that at Long’s Drugs.

Met with Chester regarding the 6-page statement I gave him, which I e-mailed to Thorne. I received a nice comment on it from Thorne.

Mike and I arrived at the tabby ruin at 12:50, and met Bill Behan, who gave me photographs of some of those people he thinks were connected with it in the past.

Mike finished Sq. 4, and dug Sq. 5. Still no artifacts! What was the function of the structure? Stay tuned—perhaps we will eventually find some artifacts that will help to answer that. So far, from the excavated squares, we are clueless!

Bill Sullivan and Shanna arrived in late afternoon, and she talked with volunteers Dick Schwarz and James Scott, who had helped Mike screen the dirt. When we began to photograph Sq. 5, we discovered the cameras and transit had not been loaded in the carryall, so Mike went back to Columbia after work to get them. We each thought the other had loaded them. I worked on research, reading the reports by Trinkley, Bill Sullivan, etc., on the history and archaeology in this area. Bill and Shanna prepared dinner for us in the evening.

January 31, 2006

Mike returned at 7:30 A. M., and began drawing profiles of the excavated squares. I continued research on the background of the site (Glenn and Tinkler books). When the sun was right, I photographed the profiles of some of our squares. Volunteer, Dick Schwarz and Jim Scott, came to help screen, along with Bill Behan, who did some probing for us. I probed on the south side of the ruin and hit something. Mike dug Square 6, and found a plastic sewer line—drew the profile, and backfilled the hole. Dick and Jim back-filled some of the squares. Jim helped me measure some of the tabby pouring-frame holes resulting from the construction of the walls. The scale for the plan is too small, so I drew profiles to a 1” = 1’ scale and Mike and I will continue measuring the holes tomorrow. There are two hole-sizes involved 1” x 2” and 1 x 7/8” peg holes. They go through the tabby wall.

Colin Brooker came with his wife and we discussed the architecture of the ruin. We agree that what we see is likely a first floor underpinning for a second floor, probably wood, and we might find footings for a porch on one or two sides if the structure was a domestic household. The upper floor likely had three rooms—a large one on the west side, and two smaller ones on the east side. Shanna Sullivan fixed shrimp and grits for supper. She bought sandwiches for the Brookers—Mike and me, and a friend of theirs, a Mr. Parker. The Brookers have a darling Dachshund dog. I read some of my poems to the group after dinner and the dog seemed to enjoy them.
February 1, 2006

Shanna Sullivan cooked breakfast omelets for us at 7:30, and I told stories. Mike dug Sq. 7. Still no artifacts discarded to be found by us. Photographed the square. Jim Scott operated the screen for Mike. I probed all around the ruin trying to find footings for a porch, steps, or chimney—none were found outside or inside the ruin. No artifact refuse—no chimney—no porch! What is it with this ruin? I quit probing and worked on researching the history from a number of publications supplied by Bill Sullivan and Bill Behan.

Mike dug Sq. 8 on the east side of the ruin in the yard. Then, Bill Behan was probing 75 + 20 feet east of the ruin in the area said by Tommy Ryan to be the location of another tabby ruin, and he hit something beside the asphalt road we thought might be it. Mike dug Sq. 9 there and found lumps of concrete, probably associated with the asphalt road construction. Then Mike dug Sq. 10, outside the north wall—against it, and found a section of fallen tabby wall. I took photos and Mike drew a plan of it.

What happened to all the other missing blocks of tabby from the ruin? None are found around it, so someone salvaged them to be used elsewhere, it seems.

I Xeroxed a number of pages of documents, books, etc., to be used in my report. Bill contacted a Mr. Padgett, who lived on the island until he was 18, to see what he remembers. He said there were two roads, one on each side of the tabby ruin. The road to the north of it was likely the older one, and may have been the reason the central door to the structure was on the north side. I probed, but found no porch, step footings, or chimney base yet. We go for Sq. 11, on the west side later. We shoot transit-mapping points tomorrow, then to Columbia for SCIAA retreat with Thorne Compton on Friday.

February 2, 2006 (my 78th)

Mike and I measured and drew the tabby pour-frame holes through the wall at the NE corner of the ruin. We also photographed the holes. We measured and photographed the window framed holes on the south wall of the ruin and found that the height of the window frame was 5.5’ feet. The horizontal distance between pour-frame peg holes is 2.7 feet.

Bill Behan came, and probed to try to find the ruin Tommy Ryan saw in 1971, which he said was located 75 feet east of the tabby ruin, but no luck there. Jim Parker helped in this probing. Mike and Dick Schwarz began Sq. 11 in the afternoon. I did research into a number of reports and Bill Behan’s book on Callawassie, and Xeroxed pages from which I will quote in my report. It was a gorgeous day! We left for Columbia at 2 p.m.

February 3, 2006

Worked on e-mail at SCIAA, and attended the all-day retreat led by Associate Dean and SCIAA’s Director, Thorne Compton. It went well, with many problems aired by division heads and others. I was put on the New Building Committee to inform the architects regarding our space needs. Others were put on the Search Committee for a new director of SCIAA, to be chosen sometime later this year.
February 6, 2006

Monday

Mike Stoner and I transferred the equipment for Callawassie to his pickup truck, because Jon Leader needed the carryall vehicle this week. We arrived on site at 11 A.M. and shot elevations on the inner partition walls and transit-shot all excavated squares. In the P.M., Mike and Dick Schwarz dug on Sq. 11, which was as deep as Sq. 2 was. Still no domestic household garbage! I continued working on the map and research volumes.

Bill Behan came and probed extensively in an attempt to locate footings for a porch, but none were found. He brought Colin Brooker’s sketch of the ruin made 15 years ago, before the landscape planting and boardwalk construction were done. Bill, and his wife, Kathy, took Mike and me out to dinner at the Old House Restaurant.

February 7, 2006

Tuesday

Mike drew the profile of Sq. 11, and he and Dick Schwarz backfilled it, and began digging shovel tests, which Mike suggested would provide backup for the larger 2’ x 2’ squares, and perhaps locate where refuse was thrown if the ruin represents a domestic household. I worked on drafting the transit data onto drawings. My dog, Kitty, is keeping me company inside until my wife, Janet Reddy, comes for a visit. Bill Sullivan’s mother (98 years old) broke her hip, so he is not here this week. I expect Janet to arrive around 5 P.M., which she did, and is impressed with the accommodations.

February 8, 2006

Wednesday

It is a clear, chilly day. Mike and I worked on our data in the office until 9:30. Bill Behan came and loaned me a book by 96-year old Mary Pinckney Easterling Powell, having a chapter on “Allen Mitchell and Sheep Shearing on Callawassie Island.” Mike continued work on shovel tests on the north side of the ruin. He found a sherd of Albany-slip Stoneware yesterday, some plastic sherds, etc., from the 20th century.

Jim Scott came to volunteer, and repaired the cut wire used to control the sprinkler system in Sq. 19. He was an electrician, so we know he did an excellent job. I probed around the guesthouse to try to locate the ruin seen by Henry Padgent Jr., reported to Bill Behan (p. 161 in Behan’s book). Henry lived on Callawassie until he was about 18 years old. I found no ruin with the probe.

Jim and Bill helped Mike with shovel tests and probing, finding a few sherds to the east of the ruin. With so little refuse around the ruin, it appears that there was little long-term occupation of the site as a domestic household, or all refuse was disposed of elsewhere. We asked that our helpful volunteers not show up tomorrow so we can focus on the needed transit mapping.
February 9, 2006

Mike and I shot transit-mapping points, and I took photographs of the ruin. Dick Schwarz came and helped Mike dig shovel tests, while I worked on the master map of the ruin site. Still there is no concentration of refuse of the quantity usually found on 18th and 19th century sites. Yesterday, I talked with Colin Brooker by phone, and he promised to mail me a good copy of the ruin he drew in the 1980s.

Bill Behan came and talked about his knowledge of the history of Callawassie Island and helped Mike and Dick dig shovel tests. Mike dug test hole #49 inside the west room of the ruin and found no artifacts. I continued working on the site map. I probed around the guesthouse, but found no ruin in that area. No chimney base, or porch, or step footings were found around the ruin.

Janet, Mike and I left at 2 P.M., leaving the house to the cleaning lady, who came just before we left. Bill Sullivan will return tomorrow. The fieldwork ended today. Now I turn to the report at SCIAA.

The “Kitchen” Ruin Search

June 26, 2006

Mike and I left SCIAA at 7:30 a.m. — arrived at the Tabby Point ruin at 11 A.M. We laid out 18 shovel test flags from the southeast of the Tabby Point ruin—from 40 to 100 feet, but a maze of irrigation and buried power and telephone wires from the east from the northeast corner of the ruin, made digging there a risky proposition, as Mike discovered when he cut a telephone line in shovel test unit 58.

A mass of thick bushes from 60 to 100 feet east center of the tabby point ruin restricted our test units to the area east of the southeast corner. Mike began excavating at 1 p.m. and by 3 p.m. he had dug six shovel-test units, and recorded the details and profiles, etc. Only one sherd of white and brown Albany slipped stoneware was found in TU 51.

I set R.P. 2A, after Mike located R.P. 2. This R.P. will be used to plot details of the entrance walk, etc. located east of the southeast corner of the ruin. Some slight rain, but mostly cloudy, with hot sun at times.

In the previous project we probed extensively in the area 60 to 100 feet east from the ruin, but found nothing solid. The goal of this project is to see if ceramics were discarded in the area enough to warrant an interpretation that a kitchen once stood 75 feet east of the ruin, as Tommy Ryan suggested as an function of the ruin he saw there.

Mike dug several shovel tests on the east of the southeast corner of the ruin, but no artifacts were found. At 5 P.m. Bill Behan came and showed us where Mr. Padgett (who lived here as a boy until he went in the service in 1941), showed him where he remembered seeing a tabby ruin that may have been the one Tommy Ryan saw. Mike then began excavating shovel tests in that area, beginning with TU 61, which is near Area 50, where things were found on the surface in our previous dig. Perhaps this is where Ryan saw a ruin? We will see if ceramics and other refuse can still be found here. The area has been scraped to
several inches depth, as seen by the fact that the palm trees here are standing on mounds because the surrounding soil has been graded away. Nothing was found in shovel test #61.

After we dig a couple more shovel tests here, if we don’t find anything, we will transit-map these units tomorrow, and close out this project and return to Columbia.

When Bill Behan came at 5 p.m., he showed me his latest manuscript of his book on Callawassie Island, which I had offered to edit and publish via my office. It is single-spaced, and he says he has talked to Jonathan Leader about publishing it. Bill has an editor who is going to index the book. Of course this will lock in the book to its present format and no editing changes can be made after that. This takes me pretty much out of the picture from what I had proposed to him regarding editing and publishing via my office at SCIAA.

June 27, 2006

We transit-mapped walks and driveway and shovel-test units 61, 62, 63. Rain during the night, but hot and humid today. Told Bill Sullivan goodbye and thanks, and left for Columbia 9 a.m. So, we found no evidence for a “kitchen,” and no evidence that the Tabby Point ruin ever functioned as a domestic household dwelling. I believe it was a storage facility for the products of the island awaiting shipment by boat — sugar and cotton.
APPENDIX IV

Tabby Building in Beaufort County, South Carolina*

Colin Brooker

Plantation Residences

In the late 1780’s and early 1790’s, structures located along the Broad River damaged during the Revolution were repaired or replaced. Additionally, plantation houses which had either been neglected during the lawless period following the war or had become too small for owners now spending more time and money on their coastal estates were reconfigured, old work being absorbed into expanded building programs. The forced departure of loyalists and subsequent sales of their lands, along with an influx of speculators and other new settlers into the District, also stimulated plantation building on a scale more extensive than previously seen. Plantation houses became larger, better appointed and occasionally grander than their pre-Revolutionary predecessors. The unprecedented growth in slave holdings fueled establishment of new slave settlements and extension of pre-existing slave rows.

Detailed documentation for such development is mostly missing, a notable exception being day books kept by the owner of Coffin Point Plantation (located at the northern tip of St. Helena Island) which, over the first half of the nineteenth century, became one of the largest and best regarded cotton producers in Beaufort District. Rowland et al 281-282, observe:

Coffin Point Plantation was settled by Ebenezer Coffin, a New Englander who moved to St. Helena Island during the 1790’s at the beginning of the sea island cotton boom..... ... Coffin began clearing the fields for cotton and erecting the structures for the plantation settlement in the spring of 1800. The plantation house (which stands today), the cotton house, and the kitchen house were all built that year. ... The house was forty feet by twenty feet raised well off the ground. When the structure was complete, Coffin ordered boards, rafters, scantling, and six “columns” to complete the “piazza” overlooking St. Helena Sound. The cotton house, forty-eight feet by sixteen feet, and the Kitchen were also completed in 1800.

The next year, Coffin erected a number of “Negro houses” that formed the slave street at Coffin Point. By 1803, the whole plantation community was complete.

Over the next decade, Coffin continued to clear and plant the cotton ground. By 1813, Coffin Point Plantation was already a large plantation with ninety-six slaves, fifty-two of whom were “working” hands.268

Additions made during and after the Civil War have obscured the character of Coffin’s residence, which, although large and imposing, was still a relatively conventional house executed in chaste, almost unadorned Federal style. Incorporating two timber-framed stories raised over an elevated tabby basement, the building featured a hipped roof, pair of rear chimneys and pedimented river front. Originally, the plan was only one room deep with living spaces organized around a central stair hall, which opened towards the “piazza” and St. Helena Sound.

How representative Coffin Point House may have been of early nineteenth century elite building on the Beaufort sea islands, is now impossible to assess. Fifty-five separate plantations existed on St. Helena Island before 1862, the majority (if not all) of which must have once boasted an owner’s or tenant house, various dependencies, outbuildings and slave settlements. (Rosengarten...) In 2003, only four pre-Civil War plantation houses still stood occupied on St. Helena, the rest having entirely disappeared or fallen into ruin. Similar figures could be cited for Beaufort District’s other islands, both large (Port Royal, Hilton Head and Lady’s Island) and small (Callawassie, Coosaw; Spring Island, Palm Island and many others), such wholesale destruction being matched along the May River and Combahee.

Nevertheless, the few extant houses, and lost houses known from photographs or archaeological investigation, exhibit considerable architectural variety. Indeed, a dynamic picture emerges over the opening years of the nineteenth century as planters came to terms with the area’s unique environmental and geographical regimes. Some chose traditional solutions for their houses, Coffin Point and timber framed structures such as Seaside (Fripp Plantation), St Helena Island or

268 Fragments of what was almost certainly a slave row stand adjacent to Coffin’s Creek some distance west of the main house. The badly damaged and eroded remains include a series of tabby chimney bases arranged in two opposite but not quite parallel rows which followed the shoreline. One of the better preserved bases measures 7’-11/2” x 2’-9” overall and takes the form of a rectilinear “U” opening (originally into a hearth) toward the southwest. Tabby is cast to a width of 9” and retains its original exterior finish of lime stucco. Scattered remnants indicate chimney stacks were made of tabby brick. While most bases probably represent single slave houses there are indications that a larger structure (measuring 30’-8” in length x an undetermined width) stood near what is now the north end of one row. This framed building apparently had an external chimney at both extremities (now represented by tabby bases measuring 7’-5” x 2’-0” in
plan). Size, location and typology suggest a double plan designed to accommodate two slave families.

*Woodwood* Plantation, Port Royal Island, being characteristic products of vernacular builders who, with considerable skill integrated fashionable stylistic elements (whether those elements were of Federal, Greek Revival or emergent Classical Revival type) into building forms with long historic antecedents. Symmetry was prized, central hallways favored and porches considered essential no matter what stylistic pattern the owner may have imposed upon his or her domestic surroundings. 269

Working within similar parameters, other planters created far less orthodox buildings, a series of closely related tabby houses demonstrating processes by which traditional architectural vocabularies were adapted to mitigate living conditions made oppressive by long, hot and humid summers. While still familiar, these innovative dwellings with their exaggerated linear proportions, broken silhouettes, external circulation paths and fragmented floor plans, set new standards of domestic comfort while adding a sometimes dramatic or scenographic note to the Low Country landscape.

### Double Pile House Plans

Judging by known examples, double pile house plans were rarely selected by plantation owners who built in tabby. However, “T” shaped forms of a kind already described from Beaufort Town (which became popular after 1800) were occasionally executed. More often, plantation residences of this type were timber framed, although tabby might be used for piers or basement walls, which raised principle living spaces well above ground level to improve ventilation and prevent flood or tidal damage. Among such structures, the best preserved is the “big house” at Tombee Plantation, located off Seaside Road near the southeast end of St. Helena Island. Occupying a transitional position between rectilinear through-hall schemes typified by Coffin Point and linearly organized plans such as the Sams House, Dataw Island after its enlargement during the early 19 century, Tombee was probably built for Thomas B. Chaplin Senior to supercede a smaller, two- storey tabby house located northwards at what became known as Riverside plantation. Erected circa 1800, with profits derived from sea island cotton, the

269 Although not always achieved, as close study of Fripp plantation’s main facade will reveal.

270 Tombee and Riverside were apparently parts of the same property at the beginning of the nineteenth century (see Rosengarten, 1986: 96). Only fragments of Riverside’s main house survive, (notably part of the south facade) showing that the building was a single pile structure measuring 20-2” in width. Living accommodation was entered more or less at ground level, the lower south facade featuring two symmetrically positioned windows, each with an opening measuring 4’-7” high x 3-0” wide. Exterior tabby walls were 12” thick (there being no evidence that wall thickness was reduced at the second floor) and stuccoed on outer faces. Pour lines show tabby to have been cast in vertical increments measuring 1’- 9” in height. Evidence for the principal facades is wanting. The date of the house is not known, but it was repaired during the 1790’s.
Federal style house at Tombee incorporates two timber framed main floors raised eight feet or more above ground on tabby piers. Describing the building at it now appears Rosengarten (1986: 65) notes:

*All six rooms had windows on three sides, to catch as much breeze as possible. The house had high ceilings, tall sashes, narrow halls and two exterior chimneys venting four fireplaces, two on each floor. In winter the rooms were hard to heat, but in summer they stayed cool. A two-story porch, with six square columns on each story, faced Station Creek. On the landside, or back, was a single story portico. The house was not luxurious. Its floors were heart pine and lower portions of the walls were covered in wainscoting, but this was customary even in modest dwellings.*

Another “T” shaped plan is known from a site located near the northern tip of Daufuskie Island. Excavation of what little now remains of the main house at Haig Point attests a far larger, more grandiose residence than Tombee. Wall falls indicate this building’s exterior skin was almost entirely fabricated of tabby reinforced at its corners with brick and rose 2 1/2 storeys, each storey having an area of about 3,203 square feet excluding porches. An elevated basement at the lower level (enclosed by walls measuring feet in width) was, unlike most local basements, subdivided by tabby partitions into eight, apparently separate spaces, organized symmetrically about a relatively narrow hall-way. Unfortunately, it is not clear how higher levels of this house were planned although it can be conjectured that at the first floor, any central hall was wider and opened into a stairwell, basement partitions possibly supporting heavy loads generated by large sliding doors linking various rooms above.

The building’s main block (which formed the stem of the “T” as seen in plan) was probably surrounded by porches on three sides, a massive tabby foundation to the east suggesting double height supporting columns of exceptional scale may have faced out toward Calibogue Sound, a wide and often treacherous channel separating Daufuskie and Hilton Head islands.

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271 Rosengarten attributes the dwelling’s survival to its “magnificent foundation” describing “broad tabby piers rising eight feet out of a subterranean slab that prevented the house from settling unevenly.” I can attest that, although slightly eroded, the tabby piers survive intact but have not seen the slab on which they are said to rest. If not a concrete slab introduced during twentieth century restorations (by James Williams of Savannah, Ga.), but fabricated of tabby, such a foundation would be highly unusual if not a unique constructional feature.

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273 If so they have now disappeared without trace, victims perhaps of the extensive looting documented to have occurred during the Civil War or work during the 1880’s which involved cutting down part of the old building’s exterior tabby walls to make foundations for a new lighthouse. Sections of the old tabby not re-used were subsequently torn down.
Insofar as understood, exterior wall openings were relatively small and sparsely distributed, the building’s long landward (west) elevation (measuring over 75 in width) being divided into just five bays. The east elevation (overlooking Calibogue Sound) featured a three bay arrangement which suggests links with other houses in Beaufort and Savannah inspired by rationalist architectural trends current during the 1820’s. If a professional architect had any hand in the work cannot be said, however the influence of William Jay (an English architect who introduced an austere, Greek Revival style to Savannah with his design for William Scarbrough’s house in 1819) seems possible, Jay’s penchant for the monumental perhaps being reflected by over scaled porch construction at Haig Point.

Built on a high. open bluff, Haig Point house must have been a conspicuous landmark for travelers or resident planters approaching and leaving Hilton Head Island. On Hilton Head itself, the tabby built Stoney- Baynard House also served as a landmark for mariners before it fell into ruin, since it was erected upon an unusually high prehistoric dune ridge rising about 24’ above Calibogue Sound’s southwestern shore.

Too little is preserved of the architecture to draw definite conclusions regarding influences which inspired its design. This is unfortunate since the house seems to have been uniquely expressive, occupying an ill-understood position somewhere between the orthodox and innovative. Almost square in plan (measuring 40 feet 6 inches north/south x 46 feet 6 inches (east/west) it probably incorporated one main storey raised over an elevated basement, porches apparently enclosing upper and lower floors on all four sides. Main living spaces were lighted by generously proportioned double sash windows, basement fenestration featuring small, rectangular openings. Patches of the original external finishes indicate a carefully detailed scheme, facades being stuccoed and scored in imitation of regularly coursed stonework.

If correctly interpreted, the overall massing finds few local parallels, double height porches completely surrounding living and storage accommodation being more reminiscent of West Indian models or models dependent on West Indian prototypes such as the galleried houses of Louisiana. (Cf Homeplace [c. 1801] in Hahnville). Regrettably, little is known of the ruin’s original roof frame which if still extant might provide crucial information about the designer’s intentions. Still standing to something near its probably original height, fragments of the northwest exterior corner suggest the main roof was hipped rather than gabled, however, questions regarding junctions and details remain open. For example, was the main roof carried over the porches and supported on a colonnade as often the case in Louisiana? Or, alternatively, were roofs enclosing the porches treated as elements separate from the principal roof frame, a condition far more common in South Carolina?

These apparent chimneys were probably robbed for the sake of their materials before the end of the nineteenth century, the house having fallen victim to fire some time after 1870.
Tantalizing as these architectural puzzles may be, excavation has failed to provide answers, although archaeological analysis does suggest that the house was erected some time between 1800 and 1815 for James Stoney and or John Stoney, two Charleston merchants who were buying prime cotton lands on Hilton Head Island (probably as a speculative venture) at this time. It is also likely that living accommodation was organized in some kind of deep, double pile configuration, tumbles of fallen brick, depressions and other features suggesting a cross partition dividing front and rear spaces ordered about a pair of internal chimneys, the spaces probably accessed via a central hallway. This conjectured arrangement distinguishes the Stoney-Baynard House from most contemporary tabby houses built on the South Carolina sea-islands where the search for comfort during sultry summer months drove owners to adopt plans which ordered rooms or groups of rooms (usually linked by porches) in narrowly linear fashion. Nevertheless, construction on a high dune ridge left the Stoney-Baynard house open to breezes and the conjectured porches would have given views out toward the Atlantic Ocean.

**Tripartite and Linear Plan**

The trend toward linear planning is exemplified by three late eighteenth century tabby dwellings already mentioned, the Sams House, Dataw Island; Edwards House, Spring Island and Thomas Heyward’s Whitehall Plantation near Grahamville. Through enlargement and addition during the early nineteenth century, each of these dwellings became the centerpiece of a new tripartite building form evolved in response to both its own locale and prevailing climatic conditions.

The most fully understood structure of this group is the Dr. B.B. Sams House on Dataw Island where archaeological and architectural investigations have revealed a complex succession of building episodes by which it was determined that the original tabby house was erected here sometime before the American Revolution.

Editor’s note: Around 1990, Colin Brooker visited the Tabby Point ruin and made a plan, and an elevation and plan at the windows on the south wall. He has sent me a copy for reproduction here of pages 114 through 119, of his forthcoming book, “Tabby Architecture of Beaufort County, South Carolina.” He has provided this information to allow the reader the opportunity to view the tabby ruins in Beaufort County from a broader perspective than the single puzzling Tabby Point ruin discussed in this report, for which I am grateful. Colin Brooker also reports on the Stoney-Baynard House, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina in the Historic American Building Survey (HABS SC-863). (The University of South Carolina, South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, Columbia., March 2006).

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275 seen among many early nineteenth century Louisiana plantations
Editor's Note: The foregoing pages were furnished by Colin Brooker in response to my request for specific information relating to the Tabby Point ruin. He sent me a drawing (below) he had made of the floor plan of the ruin.
Appendix V

Spring Island: The Antebellum Years*

William Sullivan

For the hundred years preceding the Civil War, Spring Island was owned by two interrelated families — the Barksdales and the Edwards, all descendents of the Cochran and Ash families. Today as we walk down the ninth fairway of the Old Tabby Links we see the preserved ruins of the plantation house that was built by George Edwards sometime around the early 1800’s. Dr. Lawrence Rowland in his fine history of Beaufort County lists the date as ca. 1812. (Row following page 386) (and SC Histor. Mag. XXI -81)

George Edwards was born in 1775, the son of Mary Cochran Barksdale and John Edwards, Jr. Mary Barksdale was the fifth owner of Spring Island which she inherited from her mother, Mary Ash Barksdale. George’s mother died at Spring Island in 1791, suggesting that there existed at least one plantation home on the island prior to 1800, perhaps a predecessor of the large structure near the Golf House. From the 1789 tax records we learn that young George Edwards was, at the age of twenty-three, living on Spring Island, having inherited one third of the island, shared equally, with his two sisters. One sister predeceased George, and the other sister apparently subsequently sold her share to him, thus giving him full ownership. It is very possible that at some time each of the siblings might have had a house on Spring Island.

Young George, whose family had lived part of the year in a home in Charleston on the Battery, must have visited that cosmopolitan city often, and presumably took part in the active social whirl that was available there to the aristocratic class. It can be assumed that on one of his visits he paid his respects to another line of the Barksdale family which owned a plantation called Youghall (subsequently Oakland Plantation) which is just north of Charleston. Here he met a young woman, Elizabeth Barksdale, his cousin, and subsequently asked for her hand in marriage. In 1801 when he was twenty six and she was eighteen they were wed, and she joined him at Spring Island. The same year old records tell us that he bought two contiguous pieces of land in Beaufort between Church Street and New Castle Street, but it not known if he ever built an “in town” residence. ("Journal of the Proceedings of the Trustees of the College of Beaufort").

Some of the plantation owners in the 1800’s kept diaries that tell us about southern life during a period of prosperity that placed the Low Country gentry among the richest families in the United States. No such journal has been found specifically relating to the Edwards, but we can assume the young couple dreamed that they would develop Spring Island, with its recognized natural

* Editor’s Note: Although this study of the antebellum years on Spring Island is not specifically focused on Callawassie Island, world events at the time affected both islands in much the same way, providing a broader historical perspective than that afforded by our archaeological study of the Tabby Point ruin. Bill’s study is printed here by his permission.
resources, into one of the area’s most productive plantations. And for nearly sixty years that is exactly what George Edwards did, building his inheritance into a large and successful venture, which ended only at his death in 1859. His success was due to the ascendancy of long staple cotton, also called sea island cotton, which commanded as much as four times the going price of short staple cotton. Spring Island possessed the ideal soil and climate to grow this highly sought after product. Prior to the advent of long staple cotton Spring Island’s primary crop had been indigo which was exported to England for dyeing fabric. By 1800 the market for South Carolina indigo had dried up because England had found other, cheaper sources of supply. But fortunately for George Edwards, the loss of the indigo trade coincided with the onset of King Cotton.

The success of this agricultural bonanza rested importantly on the institution of slavery, a practice that had been operative in South Carolina for more than a hundred years preceding George Edwards’ ownership of Spring Island. The practice of slavery was codified by law; in 1696 South Carolina passed a slave code defining slaves as chattel and permitting the master to discipline his property in any way he saw fit (Edgar 68).

Based on Beaufort District data most of the slaves in the Low Country were from the African regions of Congo/Angola (Rowland 350). While many South Carolina plantations preferred to have a mix of Africans from different regions with their unique cultures and languages, in order to minimize fraternization among the slaves, Spring Island had one cohesive slave community which in 1800 numbered 40 individuals. (Row 360 and Census Data Beaufort District 1800.)

The Spring Island slave population was therefore Gullah — people from the Congo and Angola regions of Africa, from which the word “Gullah” derived. They shared a common culture, including religious beliefs, language, and cuisine. The Gullah language, which is kept alive today in the Low Country, uses English words in a fast patter and when it is heard today is hard for the uninitiated to understand without translation. Undoubtedly it served the slave community well since they could communicate among themselves without being understood by the white owners. (Edgar 71).

As one measure of the economic success of the Spring Island plantation, its slave population as reported by census data had increased by 1810 to 170; by 1820 to 230; and by 1830 to 345. As such, George Edwards, became the second largest slaveholder in what was then known as St. Luke’s Parish. (Edgar 373) (St. Luke’s Parish was one of four parishes within what was known in the first half of the 1800’s as the Beaufort District). (John Hammond Moore) St. Luke’s Parish contained 188 plantations and had an inordinately high percentage of slaves; in 1850 there were approximately 1,300 white inhabitants and 7,400 slaves in the parish (85% black vs. 58% for the state of South Carolina as a whole). (Edgar 327).

Slave ownership appeared to require a balance of authority and compassion, since harsh treatment would engender recalcitrance that could risk impeding the plantation’s productivity. The owner of the Tombee plantation on St. Helena Island, Thomas Chaplin, reports in his diary that slaves had several
ways of getting around a master’s wishes without being overly rebellious. A person who felt too ill to work or who had another motive for “laying up” might report to the sickhouse, which one can presume Spring Island also had, since George Edwards owned many more slaves than Chaplin. The sickhouse was sometimes a refuge from the daily grind, and the owner had to determine the legitimacy of the ailment. Chaplin reported raiding the sickhouse and forcing people out, but his determination would slacken and things would go back to normal (Tombee 157).

Work in the slave community was defined by “tasks” which had to be completed under the ever present threat of punishment. On the typical sea island cotton plantation the basic task unit was one quarter of an acre per worker, which encompassed the planting, care and picking of the crop. Tasks also took the form of such chores as cutting timber and making fence poles (Edgar 313). Efficient workers could complete their tasks earlier than the slower workers thus giving them free time to plant their own crops and raise animals for their own use. Seventy five years ago a former slave named Sam Polite was interviewed and recalled his work on St. Helena’s Island:

> When you knock off work you can work on your own land... You can have chicken, maybe hog. You can sell egg and chicken to store and master [sic] will buy your hog. In that way slave can save money for buy thing like fish and whatever he want., sometime you can throw out net and catch shrimp. You can also catch possum and raccoon with your dog. (Before Freedom 78 Hermance).

Largely because of the slave labor system, Spring Island, like all the other plantations, was to a great extent a self sufficient community which enabled each island to provide the basics needed to sustain a large population. From the census of 1850 we learn that Spring Island had 12 horses, 16 asses and mules, 200 cattle, 75 dairy cows, 70 sheep, and 105 hogs, as well as numbers of geese, turkeys, and chickens. There were also 40 working oxen for plowing the field and for handling other jobs that tractors do today. In the fields they grew hay, Indian corn, rice, peas, beans, sweet potatoes, and of course cotton.

While no written documentation exists concerning the day to day life at Spring Island in the early to mid 1800’s, much other evidence from life at other plantations suggests that the Edwards, when present at Spring Island, were kept busy with overseeing the many details of running a large and complex household. However, like most large plantation owners, the Edwards had employees as manager/overseers who handled the day to day activities, and ran the plantation when the Edwards family was not present. An individual by the name of Frederick Etarrcharr was the overseer until his death in 1817. He came from Germany in 1804, and it is interesting to wonder how he found his way to Spring Island to take on a radically different lifestyle than he must have had in his native country. The next known overseer was a Mr. Jacob W. Oestervicker who was employed up to and during the Civil War.
Their own domestic responsibilities did not prevent the owners of the Low Country plantations from enjoying an active social and sporting life. The Edwards presumably enjoyed spending time with other plantation owners either at Spring Island or at another owner's home. There they could exchange knowledge on the goings on of the day. For the women it afforded an opportunity to talk about the latest fashions from Europe which were found in great favor by the aristocratic southern women. We also know from contemporary accounts that the Edwards home had an extensive library, and we can imagine that he and his family spent time here expanding their knowledge of the world.

Children were educated during their early years at home, and we can imagine that the Edwards took pains to teach their own children the basics of reading and writing.

We can assume that George Edwards and his son, George B. Edwards were members of the local militia. One or both may have seen duty in the War of 1812, as many local men and boys were called to serve in the conflict against England. During the war, British ships actually shelled Beaufort. They also made landings and managed to steal a number of slaves. Their ships blockaded Beaufort, cutting off the shipments of sugar, and they were also threatening to invade Savannah and Charleston when hostilities ended in 1815.

In 1832, Elizabeth Edwards died at age 49 from unknown causes, and was buried in a Barksdale family cemetery at the Oakland plantation. A year later, George Edwards married Mrs. Henrietta Aiken who remained his wife until her death (in Paris) in 1848. So for the last ten years of his life George Edwards lived as a widower.

The Edwards also owned property at 14 Legare St. in Charleston which provided a pied a terre from which they could enjoy Charleston's social life. Undoubtedly both George and his wife rode horses and drove carriages for recreation as well as for transportation. Most plantations had hunting dogs, and one can easily imagine that George Edwards and his male friends often enjoyed a day in the field pursuing the many furred and feathered creatures that populated the island, all done without today's regard for seasonal restrictions or game limits.

We can be sure that George, as one of the leading and most affluent planters in the District, was often invited to dinners in both Beaufort and Charleston. In 1819 President James Monroe came to Beaufort. He had just negotiated the U.S. purchase of Florida, and after riding into Beaufort on horseback he gave a speech in front of the William Elliott house. It can be assumed that Mr. and Mrs. Edwards were in attendance. And in 1825, the aging Marquis de Lafayette, who had played an important role in both the American and the French Revolutions, came to Charleston where he had an emotional reunion with Major James Hamilton of Charleston who served under Lafayette during our revolution. Major Hamilton's son, James Jr., a lawyer and friend of George Edwards and who at one time had owned Callawassie Island, was chosen to accompany Lafayette through the Low Country from Charleston to Savannah. We can assume that George Edwards was able to spend time with the French hero.

The affluence afforded by the success of the cotton income enabled the Edwards to absent themselves from Spring Island in the summer months, a
practice followed by many of the more successful owners. The entire Edwards family, which included three children and house servants, summered in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., which must have provided a highly desirable respite from the hot summers in the Low Country. Traditionally the planter families would leave in April and not return until after the first northern frosts in November. In a newspaper account written by the then Beaufort librarian in 1931, Miss Chlotilde Martin, in 1931, she reports that George Edwards kept a racing stable in Saratoga. The article goes on to say: “he had two barges on Spring Island, one named the General Washington and the other the General Jackson, each manned by ten oars, which he used to make trips to Savannah.” (Agnes Baldwin). The probable route taken by the family to go to Saratoga would have been to be rowed by their slaves to Beaufort with their luggage, from whence they would take a steamership to New York City. By 1832 the Delaware and Hudson Railroad was running passenger service to the center of Saratoga Springs. Many of the Edwards’ owner peers also spent their summers in Saratoga Springs, and one can assume that the genteel life enjoyed at Spring Island continued unabated in their northern locale.

**Nullification and Secession**

After experiencing the bounties of a cotton-induced economy for the first half of the nineteenth century, things were about to take a radical turn for the Edwards. In the 1830’s outspoken Low Country planters began to question the federal government’s right to levy tariffs on imports which in effect served to penalize the south because of its need to import much of its manufactured goods.

There is no question that George Edwards must have been worried about the schism that was developing between North and South, because agitation of any sort threatened the tranquil life that the plantation owners had come to enjoy. The main catalyst for this agitation was a young congressman who represented the Beaufort and Colleton Districts in the U.S. House of Representatives, James Hamilton, Jr. (Row 334). Hamilton was married to Elizabeth Heyward, the great granddaughter of Daniel Heyward, through which marriage he had owned Callawassie Island. [Heyward burial ground can be visited today near Old House where Daniel’s plantation home once stood]. Thus it was probable that the Edwards and the Hamiltons often discussed not only the problems of the day to day running of a plantation, but also the tariff situation. Certainly George Edwards had much to lose from the federal tariffs, as did all of the plantation owners in the Beaufort District.

In December of 1830 James Hamilton, Jr., was elected governor of South Carolina, on a platform that pressed for nullification of tariff laws that had been enacted by the federal government in 1828. Strong support was given to Hamilton by his acquaintances in the Beaufort District. The official position of these agitators — known as the Fire Eaters — was called the Nullification Doctrine. Three young leaders from Beaufort, men in their twenties, who were derogatorily referred to as the Beaufort boys (an appellation they were proud of) were at the forefront of this movement, determined to have a showdown with the federal government.
Robert Barnwell Rhett was born in 1800, and in 1828 delivered a forceful speech threatening that South Carolina would leave the union if the federal government did not abandon its tariff policies (Row — 337). Rhett continued this strong rhetoric for the next thirty years, leading to his moniker, "the father of secession." (Row 337)

Another mobilizer from Beaufort was William J. Grayson, born two years before Rhett. Grayson was a teacher at what was then Beaufort College. He strongly opposed the tariff, and in 1830 he proclaimed that the tariff was not only oppressive, it was unconstitutional. A contemporary of Rhett and Grayson was Robert Woodward Barnwell, who was also born in Beaufort. He lived as a youth in the Barnwell Castle at the top of Bay St. He started his upper level studies at Beaufort College and finished at Harvard where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and was the valedictorian of the class of 1821. (Row 334). One of Barnwell’s closest friends and admirers was classmate Ralph Waldo Emerson who maintained a friendship and correspondence throughout the vicissitudes of the Civil War. (Row 334) In 1828 Barnwell was elected to represent the Beaufort/Colleton Districts in the U.S. Congress where he was vocally supportive of states’ rights.

In an 1832 election the Beaufort District voted 84 per cent in favor of the Nullification Doctrine. This election served to throw down the gauntlet to the federal government. The U.S. government blinked first, and the U.S. Congress agreed to a compromise that reduced the tariffs.

At the same time that these activities were churning up sentiments both north and south, a French lawyer, Alexis de Tocquevile visited the United States with the ostensible intention of looking at our country’s democracy, and in particular our judicial and penal system. The result of this visit was the seminal book, Democracy in America which was an in depth look at the psyche of our nation, which at that time was only slightly more than forty years in existence. He could clearly see the storm signals flying, and of particular interest to us were his observations on the American South. He could see no peaceful resolution to the problem of slavery. He lamented that the South is unwilling to think about the inevitable question of the termination of slavery. He observes that “in the southern states people are silent. No one talks with strangers [a European] about the future. People avoid delving into the question with their friends. In a sense, they hide it from themselves.” He foresaw a time when the South would either have to free its slaves or act more forcibly in the face of Northern and international pressure, i.e., to push the slave population further into servitude. He portended that any intermediate measure would lead imminently to “the most horrible of all civil wars . . . “ The war he foresaw was between the races in the South. He incorrectly conjectured that the North did not have the will to actually go to war over this matter.

We don’t have any evidence that George Edwards played an active role in the growing altercation, although significantly he was among the attendees at a dinner of the Fire Eaters in Bluffton honoring Robert Barnwell Rhett on July 31, 1844. This dinner marked the beginning of a South Carolina effort to set up a state convention that would oppose yet another tariff increase enacted by the federal
government in 1842 in apparent violation of the compromise that had been reached in 1833. Most of the great planters of St. Luke's Parish were there as Rhett (Row 421) eloquently exhorted the planters to stand by their principles and protect their mutual interests. "If you value your rights you must resist," he declared. "Submit not, discharge your duties faithfully to yourselves, your children, your country and your God, and we will ensure a glorious triumph." (Row 421) Either the North could have appropriately voiced these sentiments or the South sixteen years later, as the nation braced for all-out war.

The period of the 1850's was one of great prosperity in the history of the Beaufort District. Cotton was enjoying high demand and prices reflected this situation. Much building was being undertaken in Beaufort and Bluffton, as well as other communities where planters moved in the summer months to escape. The towns of Coosawhatchie and Gillisonville located on the new Savannah to Charleston railroad line were benefiting from the rail line. (Row 420). But against these positive economic signals, during this decade the North/South chasm continued to widen. Again the Beaufort District was leading the charge. By 1850 the District had formed a group called the Southern Rights Association which had as its positioning statement the following inflammatory words:

We the people of Beaufort District, in this our primary assembly, do declare: That we believe Abolitionism, in common with Socialism, Communism, and Agrarianism, is the natural fruit of a spirit of infidelity, rejecting the order of God's providence and the teachings of Revelation... We regard domestic slavery as the great safeguard of political freedom.

Not all white South Carolinians were in sympathy with this strident pronouncement, but the Fire Eaters' position was beginning to drown out that of the moderates.

By 1860, plans for South Carolina's secession were gaining momentum. In April the National Democratic Party met in Charleston to nominate their presidential candidate. In a most symbolic hint of things to come, Northern and Southern Democrats agreed to disagree: Northern Democrats backed Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois as their nominee and the Southern Democrats nominated John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky (Row438). It was recognized, even by Democrats, that this split would greatly weaken the party's chances against the Republican candidate, Abraham Lincoln.

As expected Lincoln was victorious, and shortly thereafter, a special session of the South Carolina House and Senate called for a (Secession) Convention of the People of South Carolina. This convention, with 169 delegates from all parts of the state, took place in Charleston, and on December 20 the delegates voted unanimously to secede from the Union. This certainly was an inflammatory act, but instead of a Northern response, the sitting president, James Buchanan, did nothing to react to the challenge laid down by South Carolina.

The day after Christmas, Major Robert Anderson the commander of the federal militia in Charleston moved his troops from Fort Moultrie where they had
been stationed to Fort Sumter, which was felt to be more secure. The governor of South Carolina claimed that Anderson’s action was hostile and ordered the seizure of Fort Moultrie and several other federal installations. The Charleston Daily Courier said that Anderson’s move “had achieved the unenviable distinction of opening civil war between American citizens by an act of gross breach of faith.” President Buchanan, forced to take some action by now, ordered Fort Sumter to be re-supplied by sea, but the South Carolinians drove off the supply ship with cannon fire. Buchanan did nothing further. In February six other southern states joined South Carolina in secession. Lincoln was inaugurated in March and on April 14 Fort Sumter was shelled and forced to surrender, giving both sides the “justification” needed to mobilize for war. So the aims of the Firebrands would now be universally embraced by all of the southern states for better or for worse.

The End of an Era

Neither George Edwards nor his son, George Barksdale Edwards, who inherited Spring Island from his father, would live to see the outbreak of war. After six decades of ownership of Spring Island George the father died in April of 1859. He was buried next to his first wife in the Barksdale Burial Ground at the Oakland Plantation. The son inherited the plantation and all of his father’s tangible assets (which included the slaves); and the interest on the sum of $15,000 was bequeathed to his grand Elizabeth Hammond and her father, Ogden Hammond, for their maintenance and support during their lives. As was often the case with Low Country plantations during the administration of a will, cash had to be raised to settle any debts. One of the easiest sources of quick cash was the sale of slaves, and the son ran the following ad in the Charleston Daily Courier:

Gang of 100 negroes accustomed to the culture of Sea Island Cotton and will sell on Wednesday [Fifteenth] at the Provision Mart in Chalmers Street. 100 negroes singly and in families, provisions of whom further particulars by list will be furnished by reference thereto, to be had at one Office South side Adgers Wharf.

The sale raised $31,000 for the estate. While it is possible that raising cash to pay the cotton factors either in Charleston might have been necessary (the owners used these firms as banks, and customarily purchased goods from them for which they built up debts), this sale may have also reflected a prescience on the part of the son that times were going to be much more difficult, and cash might be needed. Whatever the reason, the effect was to reduce the labor force at Spring Island by approximately one third, a move that the father just might not have agreed with, especially given the continuing vitality of the sea island cotton market.

Only six months after the above sale, George B. Edwards himself died at age 51, from causes unknown to us today. His wife and a son, George B.
Edwards, Jr., survived him. He left no will, and a legal battle ensued between his widow, Emma Julia Barksdale Edwards, and Elizabeth Hammond.

The manager/overseer Jacob Oestervicker was the person in charge of Spring Island on a day-to-day basis, and there is no indication that either of the warring heiresses took up residence on the island. The 1860 census tells us that only Mr. Oestervicker was living there with his wife, Catherine, and their two children. His duties would have included overseeing the ongoing activities, which involved being responsible for the supervision of the 276 slaves reported to be on the island, indication that at least pre-war the intention was to continue with the lucrative business of cotton growing. George B. Edwards very likely had hoped to carry on the operation even though he could not have been oblivious to the ominous threat of war. As was the sentiment among other Beaufort District owners, George B. hoped that if war came it might never reach the Low Country. Regardless there was nothing much that he could do about it, and so Mr. Oestervicker's charge from the executors was presumably to keep things as they were until the estate was settled.

**Port Royal Expedition**

In the summer of 1861, the Confederate government, fearing an invasion of Port Royal Sound, constructed two forts that were meant to cover the entrance to the sound. Fort Walker was on the southeast tip of Hilton Head Island and Fort Beauregard was at Bay Point on St. Helena Island. The two forts faced each other, and therefore theoretically would be able to direct fire on any ships passing between. The force manning the forts was comprised of local militia, young and old, who had been diligently training since the outbreak of hostilities. However, the Confederate government did not have the wherewithal to properly fortify these installations. They lacked the heavy rifled cannons that would be necessary to effectively and accurately propel shells at ships attempting to infiltrate the mile long opening between the forts. Despite repeated requests from the local militia, the government in Richmond was unable to provide sufficient gunpowder to meet the expected artillery needs.

Throughout the summer and fall, the residents of Beaufort and Port Royal were increasingly receiving rumors that a federal naval invasion at Port Royal Sound might indeed be imminent. We get a good sense as to what these residents were going through during this time from a series of letters that were written by members of the Ellis family who lived less than a mile from Spring Island. Their home was at Cedar Point, a 650 acre plantation that encompassed the area now occupied by the Chechessie Creek Club today. Its owner was Dr. Edmund E. Ellis, a medical doctor, who most likely provided medical services to the Edwards family and the black families on Spring Island. In addition to being close neighbors, George Edwards and Dr. Ellis were also close personal friends. In George Edwards’ will, Dr. Ellis, who is referred as “my friend” in the will, is left a sum of money, the only non-family member to be so recognized.

A surviving collection of Ellis family letters reflects the sentiments that must have been shared by all the local planters, including their neighbor, Jacob
Oestervicker. One month after the capture of Ft. Sumter, seventeen-year-old Edmund Ellis, Jr., writes from boarding school in Lawtonville, South Carolina, that he has joined a cavalry troop that drills every afternoon. He tells his father that he is willing to defend his country if needed. In August, 1861, he expresses pleasure that Forts Beauregard and Walker are being built and that "if the Yankees do pass Bay Point, they will have to give [bull] fight before our brave soldiers will allow any of the cowards to land; it would take 8 Yankees to whip one Southerner..." Mrs. Sarah Ellis, Edmund Jr.'s mother, writing to her son in September, says that if the invasion comes, she and the family would leave Cedar Point and go north to a home they owned twelve miles north in Grahamville which they had traditionally used to escape the much feared fever during the summer months. Throughout the war this town would indeed be a safe haven, because General Robert E. Lee with a force of twelve thousand men, was stationed nearby in Coosawhatchie. It was not until Sherman's march late in the war that military activities would reach these communities.

Nineteen-year-old daughter, Eugenia does not share her brother's bullish sentiments about the state of Low Country preparedness. In September she writes to her brother:

- It is certain that our coast will be attacked, and you know it is very far from being ready. Of course they are doing all they can for its defense, but it is now Sept., and things are not nearly completed. People are already leaving Beaufort. Indeed, they were completely panic-stricken a few weeks ago. One night a bright light was seen out on the Atlantic, and they took it for granted that the town was about to be attacked, which of course created quite a sensation!

Mrs. Ellis writes that nervousness is causing some people to abandon Beaufort. Young Edward, still in school in September, and increasingly motivated by the patriotic fervor that was sweeping the south, writes his father: "Three boys [school] are gone to Virginia, one to Bay Point, and a good many others are going very soon to fight for the liberty of their country. Dear Father, Boys and Men are called upon for the defense of their country. I am old enough to go, and therefore feel it my duty to go, I am perfectly willing to go. I know you are unable to go, as your constitution is not strong enough to stand what a soldier has to stand... So, Dear Father I am willing to go in your stead." Several weeks later Dr. Ellis, certainly filled with mixed emotions, rejected his son's entreaty: "However gratifying to me such a patriotic spirit may be, I think it highly improper and inexpedient for you to make the move at present... Study hard and make the best of your time." Some weeks later, and presumably following some emotional interchanges between father and son, Dr. Ellis finally consents to his son's request, and the boy returned home to Cedar Point to prepare to enter the army. Tragically, he was never to realize his military obligation because, while riding on his horse herding cows on the plantation, his horse stepped into a hole, the boy was thrown, and sometime later he succumbed to his injuries. This
unfortunate event must have devastated the Ellis family, particularly in the face of what more was about to happen to their lives. At 9:26 A.M. on November 7, 1861, the Oestervicker and the Ellis families heard an eruption of noise caused by thunderous cannonading emanating from the direction of the forts. It was a sound that witnesses reported could be heard seventy five miles away, and Spring Island and Cedar Point were but a mere fifteen miles distant. The concussions rattled the windows and shook the walls in St. Helena’s Church in Beaufort. All the local residents knew exactly what this was — a federal naval fleet had arrived and was attacking Forts Walker and Beauregard.

Even although anticipated, the force of the fusillade must have struck total fear in the hearts of all Low Country residents, black and white alike. Indeed, it was unlike anything Americans had ever heard before. It was the largest fleet ever assembled in U.S. naval history — seventeen warships (steam); twenty five colliers (to provide coal for the fleet); thirty three transports; twelve thousand infantry personnel; and six hundred marines. The operation, called the Port Royal Expedition, under the command of Commodore Samuel Francis DuPont, was a highly secret mission, with definitive orders being issued only after the ships had embarked. The objective was to capture this important deepwater port for Union blockade ships to use for re-supplying.

Despite the secrecy of the armada’s mission, on November 2nd the residents of Beaufort received a communique from President Jefferson Davis that they could expect an invasion. On November 3rd the rector of St. Helena’s church advised the congregation to begin packing their valuables and to hold family prayers. We can assume that the Oestervicker and the Ellis families must have done just that, although we believe that some of the male members of families like Ellis and their neighbor the Fripps might have joined the militia and were helping to man the forts.

It was the shared belief that the white populace, both rich and poor, would have no choice but to flee from the invaders, because there had been ominous stories circulating about how the Yankees might exact revenge on South Carolina secessionists. Both owners and slaves helped with the evacuation preparations, which meant the heart wrenching process of deciding what goes and what must remain. And then came the feverish loading of trunks and portable valuables on wagons.

A number of Beaufort District citizens departed on the steamer, Cecilia which was conveniently docked in Beaufort. The Cecilia normally plied between Bluffton, Beaufort, and Charleston. On November 7 the boat, undoubtedly loaded with aristocratic refugees accompanied by their household servants, left Beaufort for the last time. It appears that Mr. Oestervicker had also made his way to Charleston, because in 1863 he resurfaced in that city testifying to a Confederate magistrate on behalf of the estate of George Edwards for possible restitution of lost goods from the Confederate government. The existing document, the original of which has survived and currently resides at the state archives building in Columbia, is entitled, “Statement of Property Lost on Spring Island (Estate of George Edwards) in consequence of the Yankee Invasion.” This is a reckoning as
of November 6, 1861, the day before the attack on Port Royal. Mr. Ostervicker states that he was present at Spring Island on that day, indicating that he stayed until the actual cannonading began. He testified that the estate’s loss was $164,319 in goods and chattels, which in today’s equivalent might be $5,000,000, a considerable amount of money in an agrarian economy. The tally included 276 slaves who fled (40 were recovered briefly), as well as 202 cattle, 195 sheep, and an enumerated amounts of hogs, mules, horses, geese, turkeys, goats, various household furniture, as well as cotton, corn, peas, and potatoes. If the estate were in fact to be remunerated, it would have been in Confederate currency, which of course was valueless at war’s end.

Following the total exodus of the white residents, the Low Country blacks, not surprisingly, plundered the plantations of their contents and wreaked havoc on their absent owners’ remaining possessions. Based on Union records many of the Spring Island slaves headed for Hilton Head, where the Union army was setting up its base of operations and where the slaves hoped to be welcomed by Mr. Lincoln’s soldiers. This influx of slaves naturally created both a problem and an opportunity for the occupiers. These people needed to be fed and housed, but they also were useful to perform much needed work for the forces that were stationed on that island. U.S. military records from Hilton Head in February, 1862 contain a list of 130 escaped slaves who had been hired to work on the vessels or at a large coalyard that had been built to service the fleet. These workers were paid a monthly salary of $8.00, and on the list (the full list of 130 individuals did not survive) are the names of five escaped slaves from the Edwards Plantation.

On November 8, the day after the successful Union invasion which resulted in the flight of the Confederate militia that had been manning the forts, a Union lieutenant visited Beaufort, and reported that the town was totally deserted. He did not see “a single living creature, human or other” the length of Bay St. He walked as far as the Arsenal, turned down Craven to East St. and when he reached “the bridge on Federal Alley” be met two German citizens who described the scene of the citizens’ departure. They told the lieutenant that they were also on their way out. (Eve of Emancipation: Kozak 35)

Many of the plantations destroyed crops before departing, lest they aid the enemy. A witness reports taking a boat along the riverways surrounding Beaufort, where one could see white smoke from cotton fields that had been set ablaze by the former residents who did not want their crops to fall into the hands of the occupiers.

Vandalism was not only perpetrated by blacks. As in most wars, an occupying power feels free to desecrate the sacred places of the vanquished. Union troops immediately busied themselves looting the elegant homes in Beaufort and the outlying plantations. (Kozak 43) A physician from New Hampshire in 1862 wrote that “Beaufort must have been a very beautiful place previous to its occupancy by our soldiers... but our crazy soldiers made sad havoc with its beauty and its wealth.” St Helena’s church was also vandalized; a Northern journalist reported that “an old English organ was disemboweled, and the ivory of its keys has been forced off... It is a mute but eloquent witness of
the ruthlessness of the soldiers who first landed on this spot.” These are certainly credible observations by two objective witnesses.

At Hilton Head, an entire naval and army encampment was being established, and at its peak an estimated fifty thousand Union soldiers, sailors, and employees were stationed there. Among them was the Forty Fifth Pennsylvania Regiment which arrived at Port Royal Sound on December 8, 1861, one month after the naval engagement. Fortunately for us today one of its members, Sgt. John Frederic Holahan, kept a diary which has never been published, but which was transcribed and copyrighted in 1972. Holahan was a high school principal who possessed an incredibly sensitive eye and ear for the activities that his regiment would experience in their approximately six month posting at Hilton Head.

He possessed a mordant wit as evidenced by the following account of some menial duties he performed while stationed briefly in Washington:

Snow and rain by turns during the day. Was detailed to help unload provisions for the 7th N.Y. (Kid-Glove) Regiment. They could not do such work in their nice new clothes. I unloaded one hour, a small bag of white sugar, a keg of good syrup and other small articles, which my mess helped carry to our mess room. Somehow nobody ever called for them and we used them ourselves to keep them from spoiling.

And with admirable poetic flair he summed up much of the issue that brought men into conflict:

Tramp! tramp! tramp! The lights die out from the road-side, master and slave are equal now in sleep — unless perchance they dream! Oh! What wild dreams. Freedom haunts this chattel now, and long hoped for Liberty is his! The Goddess strikes the shackles from his hands and bids him stand up and be free! Alas! ‘twas but a dream! But now he thinks [‘Lin-kum’s sogers and of Lin-kum’s Flag’ and sleeps and dreams all o’er again! The Master dreams! He sees the fetters he has forged rust off, corroded by the blood his cruel lash has drawn! He sees his hundred victims rise as men — no longer slaves — and crush his power, and break his whips, and make their rags a rope that tightens round his throat! He wakes, and thinks of ‘Lin kum’s Flag’ and thinks that it was a dream!

A month after their arrival on Hilton Head, Sgt. Holahan visited Spring Island which George Ostervicker had left just two months prior. Holahan’s description of this foray is most interesting, as it is our only contemporaneous look at the abandoned island as it was during the war, and the passage is therefore worth quoting in its entirety:
A large foraging party under Capts. John I. and Austin Curtin went
today to Spring Island, about 15 miles up Broad River and
adjoining the main land. We were about 40 strong, and went well
armed, as the rebels are often the Island and might give us trouble.
About 20 negroes went as guides and rowers making our party
number 60 in all. We looked like a small fleet and formed a merry
party. Many a joke was cracked and song sung as we went gliding
along the smooth surface of the water that presented scarcely a
ripple on its glassy surface! Everybody who could sing sang, and
the rest applauded. Finally we rounded the Devil’s Elbow [Neck],
entered Callawashee [Sound, followed an armiet in by Buzzard
Island and landed on Spring Island at the mansion of Dr. [Edwards,
who is away with his rebel brethren. [appears to confirm
the current feeling that there had been a creek which accessed the
Edwards Plantation which has since been naturally diverted].
Sending our boats around to Barnashore [Shore] landing we
scouted across the Island on foot. The Island is about 3 miles long
and at least one in width, rich and fertile. It is covered with
unplucked corn and unpicked cotton. Ostervicker did not order that
this be burned]. Herds of cattle, half wild, roam about at will and
we had much difficulty in hunting down one or two for our use. It
is almost as exciting as a buffalo chase, and fully as dangerous, as
we came near shooting our companions half a mile off on the level
plain [the open cotton fields] when we made a miss shot. Dwelling
houses for overseers and larger buildings for the storage of cotton
were at intervals along the shore where landings were made. Giant
mules, larger than any horses I had ever seen, went galloping about
at safe distances. And the prairie scene was complete.

The usual made roads were present, and if we tried to leave
them we had to return to them to get across a causeway which last
is a road across a swamp. Hogs ran in droves, fattening on the
corn, and were very fierce. We killed what we could carry, and
drove others ahead of us to Barnashore where we succeeded in
penning them.

A long row of bee hives attracted our attention, and we quickly
smashed them up and despite the angry bees, we got an abundance
of their treasured sweets. Some of the boats finally arrived, but
others could not reach us as they drew so much water that they
would have been compelled to approach too close to the mainland,
and the rebels [begin] firing on them. Killing cattle and hogs
began in earnest and the boats were soon laden. Capt. Austin
Curtin, being advised of certain treasures on Callawashee Island,
took Sergeant VanVallin, Sergeant Muffley, myself, and some
others and started for them. Muffley and I found a small skiff, and
thinking it might prove useful we got into it and paddled it [some
strips of board. We got behind, and did not get to the landing until
after dark. [likely this was Tabby Point on Callawassie where Clarence Kirk, the owner, had a residence]. Curtin had left a man to tell us to wait for him and we could do no better. After waiting a long time, our party returned and brought a cart-load of boxes which they had dug up from concealment. [blacks provided the locations of valuables hidden by the owners].

Loaded our plunder into the boats and set out for home. At Barnashore, Muffley and I got out and walked across the island, so that our laden boats could get over the bar without capture by the rebels. We were thoroughly exhausted by the time we reached Dr. Edwards' landing, and we sat down and waited for Capt. Curtin and the boats, but waited in vain. (He told us afterward that he could not get up to us, but our private was, and still is, that he purposely left us lest we might lay claim to some of the valuables in the boxes before he could get an opportunity to dispose of them. We got nothing of value, but some silver plate suddenly appeared at his home up North.)

As the tide went out, we began to feel the gnawings of hunger, and going to a negro hut, got an old woman to cook us some hominy... About 2 o'clock we lay down to sleep, with Josh's pants and Dinah's petticoat for a bed, and Sam's coat for a pillow. We slept some, knowing that our colored friends would keep faithful watch...

In the morning we crawled forth carefully, but seeing no enemy, we set about inspecting the Edward's mansion.

Wednesday 5th

The building was large, roomy and imposing externally, and had been furnished with elegance and taste by the opulent proprietor of the Island. But vandals had smashed the grand piano, cut and mutilated the costly paintings and furniture and carried off the best carpets and other articles capable of removal. It made one sick to witness what utter want of decency and taste some of our bummers had displayed — I say bummers for no true soldier would so far forget himself as to thus destroy ruthlessly, what could not harm us. Magnificent avenues of live oaks led away in three directions at least for half a mile, and the immediate grounds were enclosed by a fence of ossage orange, trimmed as rectangular as a stone wall and ornamental shrubbery adorned the grounds. Flowers grew every-where in profusion and everything about us was calculated to delight the eye and overpower the senses with beauty and fragrance. Buried near a cotton warehouse we found a lot of articles useless to us, except for some old Georgia and Carolina bank bills and a few dollars in silver coin. We confiscated the money, and reburied the rest. Some of the bills were of the odd denomination of four and three dollars; new to us.
I forgot to say that I propriated some books from the extensive library and a "love of a writing stand". I knew they would only be destroyed if left behind.

During the war, the federal occupation force in Hilton Head oversaw the cultivation of crops and livestock on Spring Island, as well as a number of other sea islands. They needed these resources to provide food for the large contingent of military personnel on Hilton Head. In August of 1862, less than a year after their arrival, Washington ordered the commander of the Headquarters of the South at Hilton Head, Major General David Hunter, to transfer his one remaining cavalry unit to Fort Monroe in Virginia. General Hunter forcefully appealed this directive. He wrote to the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, that without mounted men, he could not provide protection to the sea islands, and that "abandoning these fine islands [specifically mentions Spring Island, among others] to the enemy after having them planted and promising the negroes protection is a very sad termination to our exertions in this department." It does not appear that Washington reversed its position, as they were greatly in need of reinforcements for the Army of the Potomac. The upshot of this decision was that Confederate forces could now visit these sea islands with impunity. Indeed, one later entry in Holahan's account concerns a report by some black refugees that Confederates had gone in force to Spring Island and carried off into slavery all the blacks they could capture, killing and wounding many who tried to escape. One unfortunate man who avoided capture and who had made it to Hilton Head had had his arm severely shattered by a musket ball.

As for the former residents, during the war, the Low Country planter families were widely dispersed, forced to live with relatives who were also suffering the deprivations of the long war. Even during this trying time, the Ellis family who were spread out between Grahamville and Orangeburg, continued their written correspondence. From these exchanges we read of the family's attempts to stay close, always with the wistful hope that they could return to their former homes. Mrs. Ellis' mother in Orangeburg writes her daughter in Grahamville in 1863: "All our home comforts are gone to waste and ruin — but still if we could only get Home — I think it would benefit us all, to see you there — [ if we have only Hominy, Corn Bread, and Oysters, we could make out to be happy."

At war's end it appears that Jacob Oestervicker had returned to Spring Island, because an 1867 letter to Dr. Ellis from a lawyer in Charleston treats a matter that "perhaps Oestervicker might remember," seeming to suggest that he was again living on Spring Island. The ownership issue of the island, which the war had put in limbo for five years, was again joined, and the next recorded mention is from the 1870 census, which still lists the estate of George Edwards as the owner of record. Two years later, the estate was finally settled, twelve years after the death of George B. Edwards. Spring Island was advertised for sale in the Charleston Daily Courier on January 9, 1872. Of significance is the apparent survival of the Edwards plantation home because Sherman's march had somehow by-passed Spring Island even though there is mention in the Ellis letters that
Sherman's men burned a cotton gin that was on Cedar Point. The text of the advertisement describes the property as it existed in 1872:

All that valuable Plantation called Spring Island in Beaufort County, S.C. situated at the juncture of the Chechessee and Colleton Rivers, directly opposite Foot Point, containing about 3,000 acres high land, about 2,000 of which are cleared and very fertile for Sea Island or Short Cotton and provisions. It is abundantly supplied with springs of good water and affords a fine pasture for all kinds of stock together with several small Islands adjacent, forming part of and being appurtenant thereto...
On the Plantation is a large Dwelling House and ample outbuildings. There are several settlements, which render this property easy to be divided into different plantations. Being an island it requires no fencing.
It commands a fine view of the Harbor of Port Royal 10 miles distant from the entrance. Considered healthy to live at all the year, and well known as one of the best Sea Island Cotton Plantations on the coast..."

The purchaser was Elizabeth Hammond Inwood (she had married Henry Inwood just after the war) who bought the island for $8,600, and who retained title to Spring Island until her death in 1885. In 1874, when she had owned the island for only several years, it was reported that she attempted to sell the island to two individuals, but that the sale fell through.

Coincidentally, in the same year, 1874, by way of illustrating the incredibly long lasting effects of the war on the south, Dr. Ellis who was living at Cedar Point, and obviously enduring extreme financial hardship, sent a letter to a Mrs. Martha Reid in New York, a woman he had met in Philadelphia and whom he apparently had not seen for thirty years, presumably when he was there at medical school. The letter candidly describes his dire financial plight — he needed $41.50 to pay his taxes, or suffer forfeiture of his property. He blames the "negro legislature" for his situation, and offers Mrs. Reid in exchange for the money, "... [original autograph letter of Gen. Horatio Gates announcing to his 'Excellency John Hancock' his capture of Gen. Burgoyne & the British army at Saratoga — all camp equipment etc. — the letter — about a page — is legible and shows unmistakable evidence of its authenticity. Perhaps the U.S. Gov., or some private individual or historical society — would purchase it... If even 30 or 20$ can be obtained for it this would be of material service in raising my tax money.”
One can imagine the desperation that led to this request. Before resorting to the letter to Mrs. Reid, Dr. Ellis must have done everything possible to satisfy his debt locally. He may have tried to sell the letter in Charleston or Savannah, but he probably could not find a buyer in the south where many were suffering the same exigencies. Mrs. Reid apparently never responded, although it appears that Dr. Ellis did “sell” the letter to a Mr. John H. Screven, of Westchester, N.Y.
The next known reference to Spring Island appears in a prospectus dated 1877 for a group called the Spring Island Land and Improvement Company, which proposes the establishment of "a great commercial city" that would be located on Victoria Bluff directly across the Colleton River from Spring Island. The prospectus reports, as a fait accompli, their ownership of Spring Island. Their plan called for building a large port for steam vessels located at Victoria Bluff, a property which they also purportedly owned, with docks also on Spring Island, all of which would be linked by a railway that would have connected sixteen miles north with the Savannah/Charleston Railroad.

While not mentioned in the prospectus, it is entirely possible that this project might have been part of a larger scheme to provide the Southern Pacific Railroad with a southern port, which would greatly facilitate trans-continental shipments twelve months a year. (During the winter months the tracks of the Central Pacific Railroad, which crossed the Rocky Mountains were closed). Certainly if this were a motivation, it would have greatly enriched the backers of the Spring Island Land and Improvement Company.

The board of directors of the company reads like a "who's who" of southern finance and industry, including bank and railroad presidents and officers. Most interestingly, two of the members of this company were the same two individuals who in 1874 had supposedly purchased the island from Mrs. Inwood, but in fact never satisfied the terms of the mortgage. We have no way of knowing whether Mrs. Inwood knew of their plans for the island when she initially dealt with these men, which of course would have served to significantly escalate the asking price.

The prospectus provides extensive expert opinion that describes Victoria Bluff/Spring Island as having many advantages over the Port Royal location, and would in fact be the deepest port south of Norfolk, Va., including Jacksonville, Florida. The document waxes eloquent on the physical and psychic attributes of Spring Island, and describes it as:

one of the loveliest of the great plantations to be found on the coast. It is so called from the large number of springs of pure water which burst from its bosom, but derives its chief charm from the purity and health of its atmosphere. For boating, yachting, fishing, hunting of every kind, to say nothing of the productive capacity of its soil, there is no place in the country, which is its superior. It requires only to be known to be appreciated at its full value, and when once known the seeker for health and pleasure who now makes his way to the sands, heat and pine woods of Florida will linger here and be a thousand times more content in the enjoyment of a climate that invigorates, sports that give zest to life, and a soil in which there is health and strength. All the elements exist here, in fact, which the capitalist and settler would seek in establishing a new and great city.
To our good fortune, these laudatory words may have struck people in 1877 as describing a place too beautiful to serve as a shipping depot. We don’t know for sure why the project failed, but the strong possibility exists that it might have received initial support from the South Carolina legislature appointed during the Reconstruction period, but that the new governor of the state, Wade Hampton, who opposed everything that the legislature stood for, might have blocked it. For whatever reason, happily the industrialization of our island and its surroundings never took place.

In 1885 the ownership of Spring Island transferred to Henry Inwood, Elizabeth’s only son, upon her death that year. Ten years later he sold the island to a Mr. Thomas Martin, making him the first non-Cochran family heir to own Spring Island. A new era was beginning, and there followed many years of use of the island as an agricultural venture and eventually as a hunting preserve.
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Callawassie Island Boasts Rich History
William Behan

Callawassie Island is an 880 acre subtropical sea island with a long and rich history. The island is located in Beaufort County, South Carolina, along the headwaters of the pristine Colleton River midway between the town of Beaufort and Hilton Head Island.

Throughout the 5,000 years preceding the seventeenth century, Callawassie Island was occupied by numerous Indian cultures, which left a rich prehistoric archaeological legacy, but, unfortunately, no tribal histories. This legacy is evident in the presence on Callawassie of over 100 Indian shell middens and an Indian burial mound dating back over one thousand years. It is also manifested in the numerous artifacts found on Callawassie, which are presently housed at the University of South Carolina’s Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology in Columbia.

The Yemassee Indians, who inhabited the Carolina Lowcountry in the early 17th century, gave Callawassie Island its name. Their capitol, Altamaha, was located just across Chechessee Creek from Callawassie. At that time the Yemassee people were used by the English as a buffer from the Spanish, who also claimed this area of North America as a part of Florida. It was the English who expelled the Yemassee from the Lowcountry in the early 1700’s after a rebellion in which hundreds of English settlers were killed.

In the years that followed the domination of Callawassie by the Yemassee Nation, the island underwent many changes. A careful study of the island’s owners and principal residents from this era clearly indicates that they all shared one trait in common. They were consummate risk takers. This risk taking took many different forms. Some sought money and power; others were motivated by patriotism; and others sought personal safety or simple survival.

Since the earliest colonial times, Callawassie Island has passed through the hands of many noteworthy owners. The first was James Cochran, an Englishman, who was expelled from England in 1685 for his participation in the Monmouth Rebellion to remove Catholic King James II from the throne. His brother, John, also a rebel, later became the owner of Spring Island. Following the rebellion the Cochran brothers were condemned to slavery in the West Indian Plantations, today known as Barbados. In 1690 all rebellion participants were pardoned, and the Cochran brothers made their way to South Carolina, obtaining Callawassie and Spring Islands as trading posts for the Indians. Both brothers were very active in the South Carolina colony.

Historically, the most notable owner of Callawassie after 1756 was the Heyward family. During the Heyward years, indigo was probably first planted on the island as a profitable cash crop. Daniel, possibly the richest colonial of his
time, was the original Heyward owner. His son, Thomas Heyward, Jr., signed the Declaration of Independence. His granddaughter Elizabeth, to whom he willed Callawassie, married James Hamilton, Jr., in 1813, thus turning over control and ownership of the island to the state’s future governor.

Hamilton was a powerful man, who also served as a senator and general. Known as the great “Nullifier,” James Hamilton almost started a civil war in 1832 when President Andrew Jackson was in the White House. It was Hamilton who very likely built the rare Sugar Mill and the tabby structures that are now ruins on Callawassie. These structures were constructed during the plantation era on the island when sea island cotton was so successful as a crop here. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for sugar cane, which did not prosper in this area of the South as Hamilton had hoped. In 1819 Hamilton sold Callawassie Island to General John A. Cuthbert, a hero of the Revolutionary War and a founding trustee of Beaufort College, which is known today as the University of South Carolina at Beaufort.

Ownership of the island later passed to the Kirk family, a prominent Lowcountry landowner of the period. Clarence Kirk owned the island until after the Civil War. He was an officer in the Confederate Army, a Representative to the State Legislature, and a prominent educator in Beaufort County. It was Clarence Kirk who reportedly flew the very first Confederate Flag on Callawassie Island in December, 1860, after secession. The flag flew over Callawassie for a year until the Union Army invaded the island and took it down.

After the Civil War, Clarence Kirk sold Callawassie Island to William Wallace Burns, who was Union General and Military Mayor of Charleston. Burns was a member of a group of Union generals who planned to develop Port Royal as the largest port in the southeast. They also intended to make Callawassie a rail terminal and storage area, but these plans never came to fruition.

From the late nineteenth century through the 1950’s, owners of the island used it for agriculture, timbering, and hunting. Callawassie Island became a playground for the rich and famous of Philadelphia, New Jersey and New York. Development of the island as we know it now began in 1981. Today, Callawassie Island is a gated residential community connected to the mainland by a man-made causeway. Those of us who live here enjoy the natural beauty and serenity of our island every day, in no small part due to all of those owners and residents who came before us and preserved its essence.
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