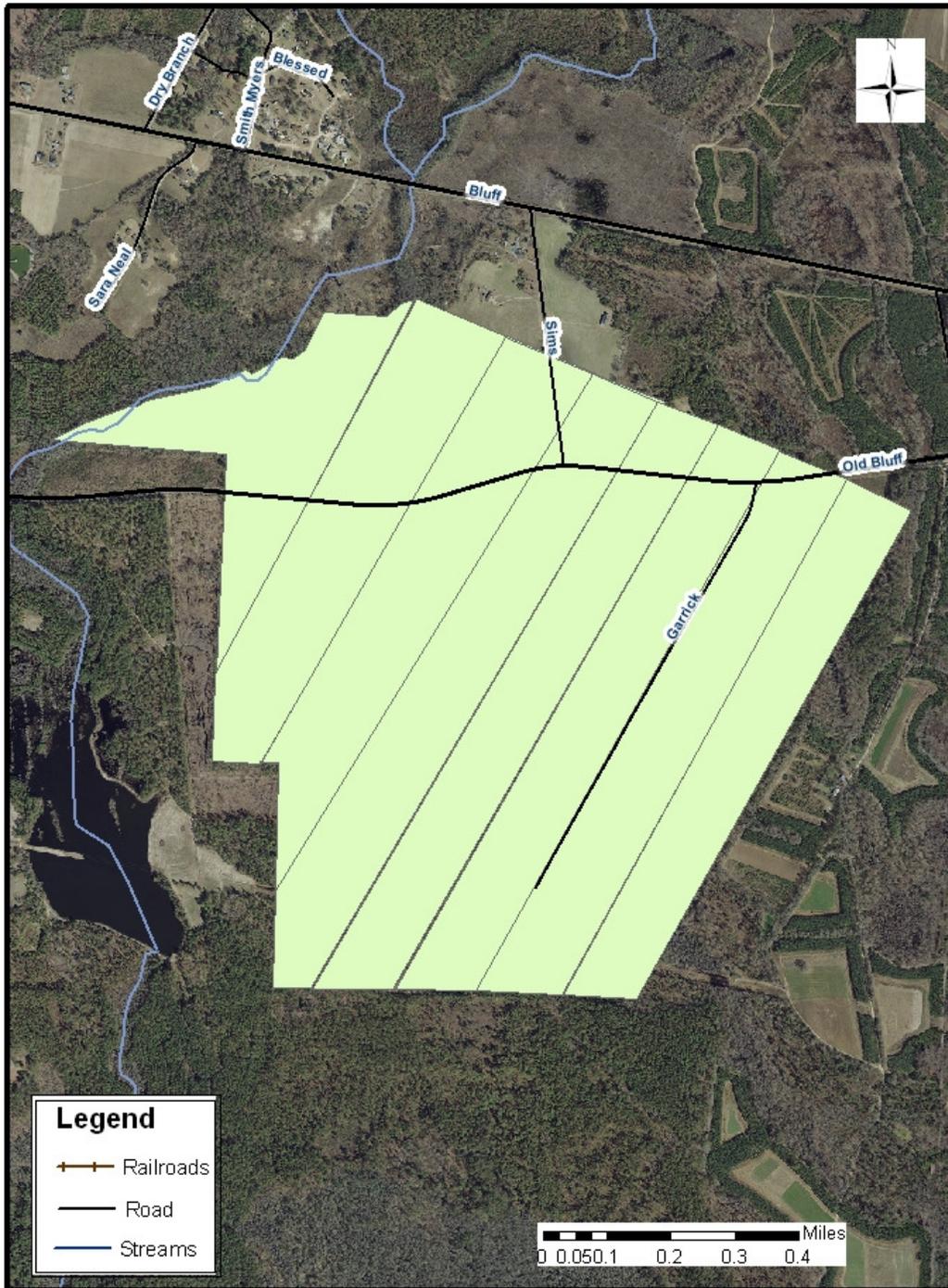


## **A. The Adams Tract**

# Adams Tract, Richland County, South Carolina



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## Historic Appearance

The Adams tract comprised roughly 482 acres located southwest of the township of Gadsden. This tract had belonged to the plantation of J. P. Adams, and, according to the original survey plats of the South Carolina Land Commission, the land was largely uncultivated and forested with mostly old growth pine. The tract was bordered on the northwest by Cedar Creek, one of the four main tributaries of the Congaree River in Lower Richland County. The Indigo Branch flowed into Cedar Creek and ran through the original seven parcels of the Adams tract from east to west. Both early settlers and the large-scale planters that arrived in the area in the late eighteenth century experimented with indigo in the low-lying swamp region along the Congaree, lending this waterway its name.<sup>72</sup>

The tract was bounded on the west and south by the plantation of J. Weston and on the north and east by the remainder of the J.P. Adams plantation. The original survey plat maps include plans for the undeveloped “road to Gadsden,” the present day Old Bluff Road. Located two miles east of the Adams tract, the town of Gadsden rose following the completion of the South Carolina Railroad in 1842 which connected Charleston with the capital of Columbia. Gadsden, little more than a rail depot, had established a post office by 1851.<sup>73</sup>

## Parcels Purchased by African Americans

The Adams tract comprised 482 acres and was originally divided into seven parcels. These parcels were purchased from the South Carolina Land Commission between June 1870 and December 1874. Of the seven original purchasers, only three were able to secure a deed. The size of the parcels ranged from 44 to 67 acres. None of these original purchasers could be traced to modern descendents. The Adams tract has been subdivided to such an extent over time that no current parcel maintained a significant portion of the original Land Commission parcel.

## Current Appearance

The land that was once the Adams tract is bound on the north by Old Bluff Road, just east of the entrance to Congaree National Park. Garrick Road is the only modern day street to enter the historical tract, running north-south along the eastern boundary.

The South Carolina Land Commission parcels of the Adams tract have been subdivided into numerous small properties, though the original parcel boundaries remain basically extant. The land, though privately owned, is mostly uninhabited and undeveloped. Dense pine forest along the border of Congaree National Park covers this land. Despite its location along the swamp boundary, the soil is characteristic of the Sandhills region, which would explain the predominance of pine. The Indigo Branch is no longer extant, and the land of the current tract is devoid of the numerous ponds and pools that characterize Congaree swampland. Compared to

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<sup>72</sup> Jaeger Company, *Lower Richland County Historical and Architectural Inventory: Survey Report*. Prepared for the Historic Columbia Foundation and the Sunrise Foundation, September 1993.

<sup>73</sup> Jaeger Company, *Survey Report*.

much of the surrounding region, the Adams tract does not appear fertile, and one wonders whether the “Indigo Branch” was in fact a misnomer.