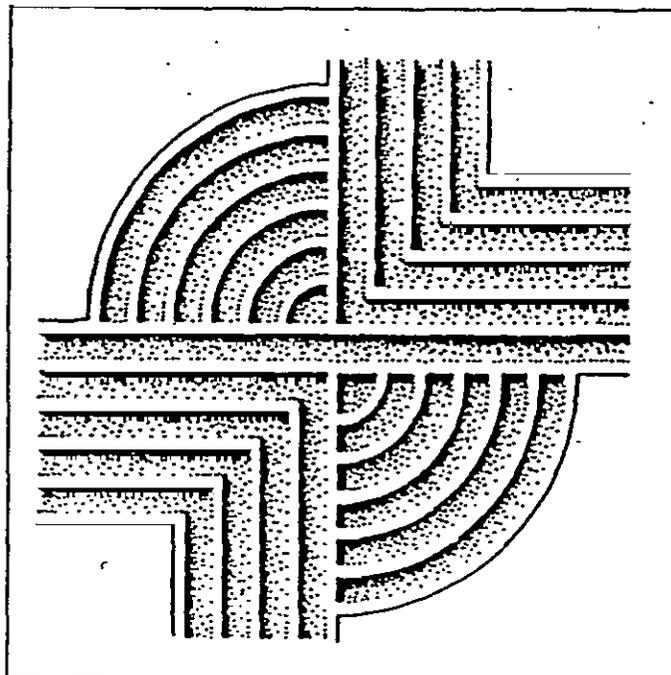


**MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MITIGATION AT 38GE292, 38GE297, AND 38GE340,  
WILLBROOK PLANTATION, GEORGETOWN COUNTY,  
SOUTH CAROLINA**



**RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 47**

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION  
AT 38GE292, 38GE297, AND 38GE340, WILLBROOK PLANTATION,  
GEORGETOWN COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

Prepared For:

Mr. Steven Goggans  
Goggans and Associates  
P.O. Drawer 1859  
Pawleys Island, South Carolina 29585

Prepared By:

Michael Trinkley

Chicora Research Contribution 47

Chicora Foundation, Inc.  
P.O. Box 8664  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

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## Introduction

As a result of archaeological investigations conducted by Chicora Foundation in 1987 (Trinkley 1987a), the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) found sites 38GE292, 38GE297, and 38GE340 to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (letter from Ms. Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer to Lt. Col. Stewart H. Bornhoft dated December 4, 1987). A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was prepared by the SHPO and distributed to the concerned parties on July 23, 1987. Chicora submitted a proposal for data recovery at four archaeological sites (38GE290, 38GE291, 38GE297, and 38GE340) to be impacted by the Willbrook development on September 11, 1989, with revisions at the request of the client made on November 13, 1989 and February 19, 1990. The revised proposal was submitted to and approved by Dr. Patricia Cridlebaugh, SHPO Archaeologist, on February 19, 1990. A contract between Chicora and The Litchfield Company to conduct the data recovery operations detailed in this proposal was signed on March 9, 1990.

This present management summary has been prepared immediately upon completion of the fieldwork at sites 38GE292, 38GE297, and 38GE340 and does not contain information on artifact and specialized analyses. It is intended solely to provide a brief descriptive statement of the work conducted by Chicora and to allow the SHPO to verify that the proposed work has actually been accomplished. According to the MOA, such a management summary is minimally necessary for The Litchfield Company to obtain approval from the SHPO to continue development activities in the area of the various sites. This construction will destroy the site remnants and, of course, created the need for archaeological mitigation activities initially. A management summary for site 38GE291 has been previously submitted and approved by the SHPO (Trinkley 1990; letter from Dr. Linda Stine, S.C. Department of Archives and History to Mr. Steve Goggans, dated June 1, 1990).

Site 38GE292 is recorded as the eighteenth through early twentieth century Willbrook Plantation settlement. It is shown on a 1798 plat of the plantation (Trinkley 1987a:Figure 6) and previous investigations have provided a mean ceramic dates of 1792 through 1832 (Trinkley 1987a:Tables 6, 7, 9, and 11). Site 38GE297 is a nineteenth century slave settlement, based on the previously recovered specimens, associated with neighboring Turkey Hill Plantation. The previous work provided a mean date of 1849 (Trinkley 1987a:Table 19). The final site investigated by Chicora is 38GE340, a second colonial slave settlement associated with Willbrook Plantation. This settlement is also shown on the 1798 plat of Willbrook (Trinkley 1987a:Figure 6) the mean date of

surface collected materials was 1815 (Trinkley 1987a:Table 30). It has been previously suggested that site 38GE340 was settled slightly later than 38GE291 and continued to be occupied after the abandonment of the 38GE291.

#### Investigations at 38GE292

Archaeological investigations were begun at 38GE292 by a crew of five on March 19 and continued until March 22, 1990, during which time the program of auger testing was conducted. Excavations were begun on May 30, 1990 and continued through June 6, 1990. A total of 187.5 person hours were devoted to work at the site, while an additional 70.5 person hours were spent off site in the field laboratory processing specimens (during rain periods). As a result of this work 500 square feet of site area have been opened and 370 cubic feet of soil have been moved in primary excavations, all screened through 1/4-inch mesh.

Investigations at this site were originally intended to be confined to the vicinity of Lepionka's Structure C, with all other site areas green spaced. During our initial investigations at the site, it became apparent that construction also had the potential to affect the area west of the main house. Lepionka had previously identified a large quantity of building rubble in this area, although he attributed it to debris from the demolition of the plantation house after it burned in 1895. Since this interpretation was based only on the excavation of two 3-foot units, we felt that some limited additional investigation was in order. Both the Litchfield Company and the State Historic Preservation Office approved expanding the research design and limited additional work was conducted in the area.

#### Auger Tests

A series of 92 auger test grid points were laid out over the site, with 54 at 50 foot intervals and an additional 38 placed at 25 foot intervals. The boundaries for this auger survey, established using Lepionka's (1986) testing data, previous work by Chicora (Trinkley 1987a), and additional surface survey, included an area 500 feet north-south by 250 to 375 feet east-west. The auger used a 10-inch bit and tests were dug to the yellow sand subsoil. All soil was screened using 1/4-inch mesh and all cultural material (including brick, shell, and mortar) was collected. For the purpose of the computer density mapping, only the count of the historic materials was used. The computer mapping was prepared by Demiurge Electronics of Beaufort, South Carolina under a subcontract with Chicora and these maps were anticipated to assist in the placement of block excavations around Structure C and the rubble piles.

The mapping revealed a dense area of artifacts (correlating with a dense concentration of brick rubble) at the west edge of the

site on the slope into the freshwater slough. Additional concentrations were recorded at the north edge of the testing block in the vicinity of the kitchen structure, and in the central site area around the main house. Elsewhere brick, mortar, and artifact densities were very low. The mapping provided no clear indication of Structure C, although Lepionka had reported fairly substantial artifact densities from two 3-foot test excavations.

The previous surveys (Lepionka 1986, Trinkley 1987a) revealed that the site area had suffered only minor damage from clearing and grubbing operations in 1985, although both the 1895 house and the antebellum kitchen structures were both demolished during the early phases of the development process. The current auger testing revealed the probable kitchen location (as well as evidence of scatter from the demolition process) and the probable antebellum main house location (which is slightly south of the 1895 structure). The failure of the auger tests to identify Structure C appears to be directly related to two factors. First, a 25 foot interval was used in the area originally thought to contain the structure. This testing process failed because the ambiguity of Lepionka's notes misled the current investigations. Second, the actual area of Structure C was not identified on the density mapping because it was in an area of 50-foot interval testing and this sampling scheme was at too gross a level to provide the necessary sensitivity.

### Excavations

The grid, established due north-south, was tied into several permanent Willbrook property markers in order to maintain long-term horizontal control. We were unable to locate any of Lepionka's previous datum points and are therefore unable to incorporate only one of his excavations (encountered within one of our 10-foot squares) into this work. Vertical control was maintained through the use of a mean sea level datum (a nail in the base of an oak tree at the northeast edge of the site, 10.58 feet MSL).

The site area had been marked out in 25 and 50 foot grid units for the auger survey, with each point numbered in succession from south to north and west to east (excepting several areas where the grid was expanded as boundaries were revised). Horizontal control was maintained through a modified Chicago 10-foot grid system with a 50R100 point established at Auger Test 1 on the southwest edge of the site. Units are designated by their southeast corner. Thus, the southeast corner of square 150R200 would be located 150 feet north and 200 feet right (or east) of the 0R0 point or 100 feet north and 100 feet right (or east) of the 50R100 point. Soil was screened through 1/4-inch mesh using mechanical sifters. Units were trowelled at the base of the plowzone, photographed in b/w and color slides, and plotted. Soil samples were retained from all units. All brick, mortar, and rubble from the excavations was

weighed prior to being discarded.

Field notes were prepared on pH neutral, alkaline buffered paper and photographic materials were processed to archival standards. All original field notes and a duplicate copy, prepared to archival standards, will be curated at The Charleston Museum, along with the collections, as Accession Number 1990.20. All specimens will be evaluated for conservation needs and will be treated prior to curation.

The first block excavation was laid in to incorporate Lepionka's Structure C excavations, at the central east edge of the site. This area was finally identified using the available field notes from Lepionka's work, the memory of Ms. Mona Grunden who had worked with Lepionka, and triangulation from several known points. These excavations opened 400 square feet and includes 55-65R275-285. The area revealed a brown sandy plowzone, about 0.5 to 0.8 foot in depth, overlying a yellow sand subsoil. The plowzone was found to contain minor quantities of shell, brick, and mortar, along with architectural and domestic remains. Small quantities of faunal remains were found preserved in the plowzone soils. These remains reflect a late eighteenth through early nineteenth century date (lead glazed slipware, creamware, and colono ware ceramics) and initial analysis suggests a middling status domestic structure. This block evidenced only minimal disturbance (primarily from plowing), and two features, both clusters of post holes, were encountered.

The excavations in this block revealed the presence of a structure measuring 11 by 14 feet and oriented N40°W. This appears to be Lepionka's Structure C and it represents a frame structure constructed above the ground level on corner posts about 0.8 foot in diameter. There is no evidence of a chimney.

The second block area, consisting of a single 10-foot unit (225R60), was placed at the western edge of the site in the vicinity of the rubble piles. The computer mapping had indicated a high density of artifacts and brick rubble in this area. Excavation revealed a thin zone of gray sand about 0.4 foot in depth overlying subsoil. Within this zone were large quantities of brick rubble, burnt artifacts, and other construction debris. The materials recovered were consistent with those previously identified by Lepionka from this area and appear to represent debris from the burnt antebellum structure. The one feature encountered appears to be an erosional gully which had been filled in with the demolition rubble.

No further excavations were conducted at this site based on the decision to green space the main house and kitchen areas. To assist in the development of the green spacing plan, we have staked an area measuring 100 feet (north-south) by 125 feet (east-west) around the main house area. This should incorporate both the 1895

and the previous antebellum structures. We have also staked an area measuring 100 feet (north-south) by 175 feet (east-west) to incorporate the kitchen area.

### 38GE297

Archaeological investigations were begun at 38GE297 by a crew of five on May 24 and continued until June 21, 1990, during which time the program of both auger testing and data recovery excavations were conducted. A total of 538.5 person hours were devoted to work at the site, while an additional 40 person hours were spent off site in the field laboratory processing specimens. As a result of this work 1125 square feet of site area have been opened and 864 cubic feet of soil have been moved in primary excavations, all screened through 1/4-inch mesh.

#### Auger Tests

A series of 155 auger test grid points were laid out over the site at 25 foot intervals. The boundaries for this auger survey, established using previous work by Chicora (Trinkley 1987a) and additional surface survey, included an area 300 feet north-south by 250 to 350 feet east-west. The auger used a 10-inch bit and tests were dug to the yellow sand subsoil. All soil was screened using 1/4-inch mesh and all cultural material (including brick, shell, and mortar) was collected. For the purpose of the computer density mapping, only the count of the historic materials and the weight of the combined brick and mortar were used. The computer mapping was prepared by Demiurge Electronics of Beaufort, South Carolina under a subcontract with Chicora and these maps were used to determine the placement of block excavations.

The mapping revealed a dense area of brick rubble and artifacts at the northeastern edge of the site on a slight sand ridge overlooking a low slough. Additional, although smaller, concentrations were recorded in the central area of the testing block. Elsewhere brick, mortar, and artifact densities were very low.

The previous surveys (Lepionka 1986, Trinkley 1987a) revealed that the site area had suffered extensive damage from clearing and grubbing operations in 1985, with additional damage caused in the late 1980s by the construction of the paved road and associated utilities. The current auger testing indicated that this damage had been compounded by the nearby golf course construction and landscaping. This extensive disturbance appears to be responsible for the low density of artifacts and poorly defined site area.

#### Excavations

The grid, established northwest-southeast to approximate the orientation of the suspected slave settlement (with grid north

being due northwest), was tied into several permanent Willbrook property markers in order to maintain long-term horizontal control. A nail was also placed in the pavement and a rebar set at another location. We were unable to locate any of Lepionka's previous datum points and are therefore unable to incorporate any of his excavations into this work. Vertical control was maintained through the use of a mean sea level datum (a nail in the base of an oak tree in the central portion of the site, 11.65 feet MSL).

The site area had been marked out in 25 foot grid units for the auger survey, with each point numbered in succession from south to north and west to east (excepting one area at the east edge of the site where the grid was expanded as boundaries were revised). Horizontal control was maintained through a modified Chicago 10-foot grid system with the ORO point established off the site. The 50R100 point was established at Auger Test 16 within the paved road at the southern edge of the site. Units are designated by their southeast corner. Thus, the southeast corner of square 100R150 would be located 100 feet north and 150 feet right (or east) of the ORO point. Soil was screened through 1/4-inch mesh using mechanical sifters. Units were trowelled at the base of the plowzone, photographed in b/w and color slides, and plotted. Soil samples were retained from all units. All brick, mortar, and rubble from the excavations was weighed prior to being discarded.

Field notes were prepared on pH neutral, alkaline buffered paper and photographic materials were processed to archival standards. All original field notes and a duplicate copy, prepared to archival standards, will be curated at The Charleston Museum, along with the collections, as Accession Number 1990.20. All specimens will be evaluated for conservation needs and will be treated prior to curation.

The first block excavation, at the northeast edge of the site, opened 975 square feet and includes 250R300-310, 250-280R320-330. The area revealed a brown sandy plowzone, about 0.7 to 1.0 foot in depth, overlying a yellow sand subsoil. The plowzone was found to contain variable quantities of shell and brick, along with architectural and domestic remains. Moderate quantities of faunal remains were found preserved in the plowzone soils. These remains reflect amid-nineteenth century date (pearlware, whiteware, and colono ware ceramics) and initial analysis suggests a low status domestic structure. The material collected, however, does not appear to represent a "typical" slave assemblage. Excavations at this block recovered an unusually large number of glass beads, iron hoes, brass buttons, scissors, and similar items.

This block evidenced only minimal disturbance (primarily from plowing) and a structure was identified based on the post hole pattern and disassociated chimney remains. The frame structure, oriented N27°W, measured 12 by 18 feet with a wattle and daub chimney constructed on the southern gable end. The structure was

resting on four posts, each measuring about 0.8 to 1.0 foot in diameter. One additional post had been placed under the east and west sills, perhaps to correct sagging. Window glass was uncommon, although the presence of shutter pintels indicates wooden closures. The vicinity of the chimney could not be effectively investigated because a large tree appeared to be growing in the hearth area. The wattle and daub construction is inferred from the large quantity of daub found in the posited chimney area and the presence of burning on the ground.

A total of four features were encountered. Feature 1 consisted of a shallow linear trench about five feet from the south end of the structure and filled with yard trash. This feature is tentatively interpreted as representing a trench dug to support posts used to "prop" up the wattle and daub chimney. Features 2, 3, and 4 each appear to represent outdoor hearths and are clustered around the rear (east) and north sides of the structure. These features are of particular importance because of the well-preserved faunal remains recovered.

The second block area, consisting of a single 5 by 10 foot unit (230R185), was placed in the north central area of the site. The computer mapping had indicated a moderate density of artifacts and brick rubble in this area. Excavation, however, revealed a zone of recent bulldozed fill up to 1.0 foot in depth, as well as portions of the old plowzone about 0.4 foot in depth. At the base of the plowzone extensive areas of bulldozer disturbance were encountered. Materials in this area included the similar mid-nineteenth century architectural and domestic remains. No features were encountered.

No further excavations were conducted at this site based on the extensive disturbance evidenced on the surface and from the excavation of 230R185.

#### 38GE340

Archaeological investigations were begun at 38GE340 by a crew of five on March 19 and continued until March 20, 1990, during which time the program of auger testing was conducted. Excavations were begun on May 3, 1990 and continued through May 23, 1990. A total of 502.5 person hours were devoted to work at the site, while an additional 60 person hours were spent off site in the field laboratory processing specimens. As a result of this work 1650 square feet of site area have been opened and 1473 cubic feet of soil have been moved in primary excavations, all screened through 1/4-inch mesh.

#### Auger Tests

A series of 97 auger test grid points were laid out over the site at 25 foot intervals. The boundaries for this auger survey,

established using Lepionka's (1986) testing data, previous work by Chicora (Trinkley 1987a), and additional surface survey, included an area 250 feet north-south by 150 to 200 feet east-west. The auger used a 10-inch bit and tests were dug to the yellow sand subsoil. All soil was screened using 1/4-inch mesh and all cultural material (including brick, shell, and mortar) was collected. For the purpose of the computer density mapping, only the count of the historic materials and the weight of the combined brick and mortar were used. The computer mapping was prepared by Demiurge Electronics of Beaufort, South Carolina under a subcontract with Chicora and these maps were used to determine the placement of block excavations.

The mapping revealed four areas of dense brick rubble and one linear area of artifact, all on a slight sand ridge. Elsewhere brick, mortar, and artifact densities were very low. Examination of the auger test data revealed that two of the brick rubble densities were inflated by the presence of dense remains in a single auger test; these two areas were identified as "burn piles."

The previous survey (Trinkley 1987a) revealed that the site area had suffered extensive damage from clearing and grubbing operations in 1986. The current auger testing indicated that this damage had been compounded by tree removal necessitated by hurricane Hugo cleanup operations. This extensive disturbance appears to be responsible for the low density of artifacts and poorly defined site area.

#### Excavations

The grid, established due north-south, was tied into several permanent Willbrook property markers in order to maintain long-term horizontal control. Vertical control was maintained through the use of a mean sea level datum (a nail in the base of an oak tree at the southwest edge of the site, 8.82 feet MSL).

The site area had been marked out in 25 foot grid units for the auger survey, with each point numbered in succession from south to north and west to east. Horizontal control was maintained through a modified Chicago 10-foot grid system with the 0R0 point established off the site and a 100R100 point established at Auger Test 1 on the southwest edge of the site. Units are designated by their southeast corner. Thus, the southeast corner of square 250R200 would be located 250 feet north and 200 feet right (or east) of the 0R0 point. Soil was screened through 1/4-inch mesh using mechanical sifters. Units were trowelled at the base of the plowzone, photographed in b/w and color slides, and plotted. Soil samples were retained from all units. All brick, mortar, and rubble from the excavations was weighed prior to being discarded. In addition, several units were selected for detailed sampling using a 2.25 by 2.25 foot block. All shell from these blocks was quantified and collected for additional analysis.

Field notes were prepared on pH neutral, alkaline buffered paper and photographic materials were processed to archival standards. All original field notes and a duplicate copy, prepared to archival standards, will be curated at The Charleston Museum, along with the collections, as Accession Number 1990.20. All specimens will be evaluated for conservation needs and will be treated prior to curation.

The first block excavation, in the central portion of the site, opened 1000 square feet and includes 150-160R180, 170R180-200, 180R180-190, 190R190, and 200R190-200. The area revealed a brown sandy plowzone, about 0.7 to 1.0 foot in depth, overlying a yellow sand subsoil. The plowzone was found to contain abundant shell with minor amounts of brick, along with architectural and domestic remains. Small quantities of faunal remains were found preserved in the plowzone soils. These remains reflect a late eighteenth through early nineteenth century date (lead glazed slipware, creamware, pearlware, and colono ware ceramics) and initial analysis suggests a low status domestic occupation. Although this block evidenced only minimal disturbance (primarily from plowing), no features were encountered.

The second block area, consisting of a single 10-foot square unit (215R150), was placed in the central west edge of the site. The computer mapping had indicated a moderate density of artifacts and brick rubble in this area. Excavation, however, revealed a zone a plowzone up to 1.0 foot in depth. At the base of the plowzone extensive areas of bulldozer disturbance were encountered. Materials in this area included the similar late eighteenth and early nineteenth century architectural and domestic remains. No features were encountered.

The third block area consists of a single 10-foot unit (100R200) situated at the south central edge of the site in an area shown by the computer mapping to have brick densities. Unfortunately, this unit revealed even greater disturbance than the previous block. Unit 100R200 consisted of up to 2.2 feet of bulldozed fill over occasional patches of plowzone about 0.4 foot thick. Artifacts from this block are consistent with those from in the previous blocks. No features were encountered.

Toward the end of the work at this site additional surface survey was undertaken in the hopes of finding areas with minimal disturbance. Particular attention was paid to the relatively undisturbed field edges to the west and south of the site core. During these investigations a brick rubble pile was identified just inside the Willbrook property line adjacent to The Litchfield Plantation. The initial interpretation of these remains suggested that they represented an intact slave structure. Excavation opened an area of 450 square feet (-80R245, -70R215-235, and -60R235) in the vicinity of the rubble pile. These excavations revealed the presence of a small frame structure with the sill raised on poorly

constructed brick piers. This structure is estimated to have measured 12 to 13 feet in width by 16 feet in length. No chimney footing was encountered, although there is some evidence that the chimney may have been robbed. Three features were encountered. Feature 1 is an intact corner pier, Feature 2 is a robbed corner pier, and Feature 3 is a shallow trench situated along the exposed side wall and gable end where the chimney is thought to have been located. This trench appears to have been originally dug to aid in the placement of the piers.

This structure evidences frame construction, but was finely plastered on the interior. Artifacts include a mixture of late antebellum and early postbellum remains.

No further excavations were conducted at this site based on the extensive disturbance and our inability to locate features in the main slave settlement area.

### Interpretations

While it is clear that each site has suffered heavy damage, primarily as a result of cleanup from Hugo, this is not to imply that the site areas had lost all elements of its original significance. The materials recovered from 38GE291 (Trinkley 1990) and 38GE340 represents two very similar assemblages (although there is evidence that at least a portion of the collection from 38GE291 represents a colonial overseer). The material from 38GE340 represents an early phase of slavery at Willbrook Plantation and is a significant collection of eighteenth and early nineteenth century slave remains from the Waccamaw Neck. The probable postbellum structure at 38GE340 also provides information on the early days of freedom in the Waccamaw area.

Investigations at 38GE297 have revealed a probable slave structure at the northern end of the row. The materials recovered from this site not only provide information on the architecture of nineteenth century slave housing, but also suggest that the occupant may have had a slightly higher social status than the typical "field hand." While it tempting to suggest that this structure may have been the house of a slave driver, the recovered materials will require further analysis prior to any conclusive statement.

Research at 38GE292 has identified Structure C and provided some additional information on early colonial occupation at Willbrook. The assemblage from this structure will provide a useful comparison to materials from 38GE291 and 38GE340. The excavations and more careful survey of the main house area have also revealed that at least three construction phases are represented at Willbrook: the initial colonial occupation, the antebellum plantation development and elaboration, and the postbellum reconstruction episode.

These excavations have revealed the presence of three structures -- a possible colonial or antebellum building associated with the main Willbrook Plantation (Structure C at 38GE292), a mid-nineteenth century slave structure associated with the Turkey Hill Plantation slave row (38GE297), and a postbellum structure (at site 38GE340). Even the absence of clear structural remains at 38GE291 and 38GE340, however, provide some information on colonial slave structures at Willbrook. The recovered remains suggest rather ephemeral frame structures raised off the ground on shallow laid brick piers, either without chimneys or (more probably) with very unsubstantial wattle and plastered chimneys.

These studies, when combined with the excavations at 38GE294 (Trinkley 1987b), have the potential for providing a clearer understanding of plantation life in the Waccamaw region with considerable temporal depth.

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