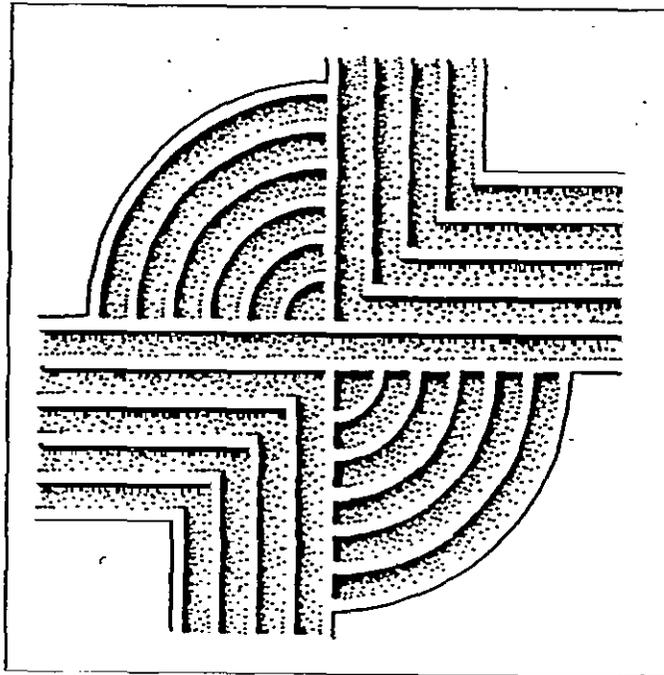


# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PARCELS 4 AND 9, HILTON HEAD PLANTATION, HILTON HEAD ISLAND, BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA



## RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 74

© 2001 by Chicora Foundation, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or transcribed in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without prior permission of Chicora Foundation, Inc. except for brief quotations used in reviews. Full credit must be given to the authors, publisher, and project sponsor.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PARCELS 4 AND 9, HILTON HEAD PLANTATION,  
HILTON HEAD ISLAND, BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

Prepared For:

Mr. Marty Colleran  
The Melrose Company  
P.O. Drawer 21307  
Hilton Head Island, S.C. 29925

Prepared By:

Natalie Adams

Chicora Research Contribution 74

---



CHICORA FOUNDATION, INC.  
P.O. BOX 8664 ◊ 861 ARBUTUS DRIVE  
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29202  
(803) 787-6910

December 18, 1991

## Background

This investigation was conducted by Ms. Natalie Adams of Chicora Foundation, Inc. for Mr. Marty Collieran, developer of the 5.9 acre Parcels 4 and 9. These tracts are situated on Hilton Head Plantation, adjacent to Skull Creek, on Hilton Head Island in Beaufort County (Figure 1). The tract is bounded to the west by Skull Creek, to the north by development property, to the east Seabrook Drive, and to the south by Parcel 10.

Parcels 4 and 9 are expected to be developed for single family dwellings, with accompanying water, sewer, power, and road construction activities. This development activity has the potential for damaging or destroying archaeological sites and this intensive archaeological survey was conducted in order to allow the developer to obtain S.C. Coastal Council certification. This summary is intended to provide a synopsis of the preliminary archival research and the archaeological survey of the tract sufficient to allow the S.C. State Historic Preservation Office to determine the eligibility of sites for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition, this study will provide a detailed explanation of the archaeological survey of Parcels 4 and 9, and the findings. The statewide archaeological site files held by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology were examined for information pertinent to the project area. Chicora Foundation has initiated consultation with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office concerning any National Register buildings, districts, structures, sites, or objects in the project area, as well as the results of any structures surveys on file with that office. This project was coordinated with Ms. Jill Foster, Long-Range Planner with the Town of Hilton Head Island and is permitted by Archaeological Approval 91-7, dated November 12, 1991.

The historic research was previously conducted at the South Carolina Historical Society, the Charleston RMC, the South Caroliniana Library, and the Beaufort RMC by Ms. Ramona Grunden and Michael Trinkley during preparation for archaeological work at adjacent Cotton Hope Plantation (Trinkley 1990).

The archaeological survey was conducted by Natalie Adams on November 14 and December 18, 1991. Field work conditions were good and a total of 10 person hours were devoted to the study. The report preparation (including laboratory studies) was conducted on December 19, 1991. The artifacts from this project will be curated at The Environmental and Historical Museum of Hilton Head Island.

## Goals

The primary goals of this study were, first, to identify the archaeological resources of Parcels 4 and 9 and, second to assess the ability of these sites to contribute significant archaeological, historical or anthropological data. The second aspect essentially involves the sites' eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, although Chicora Foundation only provides an opinion of National Register eligibility and the final determination is made by the lead compliance agency in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

The secondary goals were to examine the relationship between site location, soil type, and topography, expanding the previous work by Brooks and Scurry (1978) and Scurry and Brooks (1980) in the Charleston area, and Trinkley (1987, 1989) on Hilton Head and Daufuskie Islands for prehistoric site location, and South and Hartley (1980) for lowcountry historic site location.

Work at prehistoric sites in the area has revealed relatively small, shell and nonshell middens found almost exclusively adjacent to tidal creeks or sloughs. Few sites have been found in the interior, away from both present marsh habitats and relic sloughs. Most sites, based on previous studies, are found on excessive to moderately well drained, although a few are consistently found in areas which are poorly drained (which suggests that factors other than drainage may occasionally have determined aboriginal settlement location).

Research by South and Hartley (1980) suggests that major historic site complexes will be found on high ground adjacent to a deep water access. Plantation main houses tend to be located on the highest and best drained soils for both health and status reasons. Slave settlements tend to be located for easy access to the fields, although clearly other considerations were involved, and slave rows are often found on low, poorly drained soils.

Previous archaeological research in the area has located two sites near or on Parcels 4 and 9 (Trinkley 1987). Site 38BU96 represents an outlying slave settlement associated with the Scull [Skull] Creek Plantation during the late colonial period and the Cotton Hope Plantation during the antebellum period. This site is located southwest of Parcel 9. Site 38BU833 represents a shell midden of unknown association eroding from the creek bank, on and north of Parcel 4.

Based on these previous findings and the presence of excessively drained soils on Parcels 4 and 9, the area was thought to represent high archaeological potential, both along the marsh edge as well as further inland.

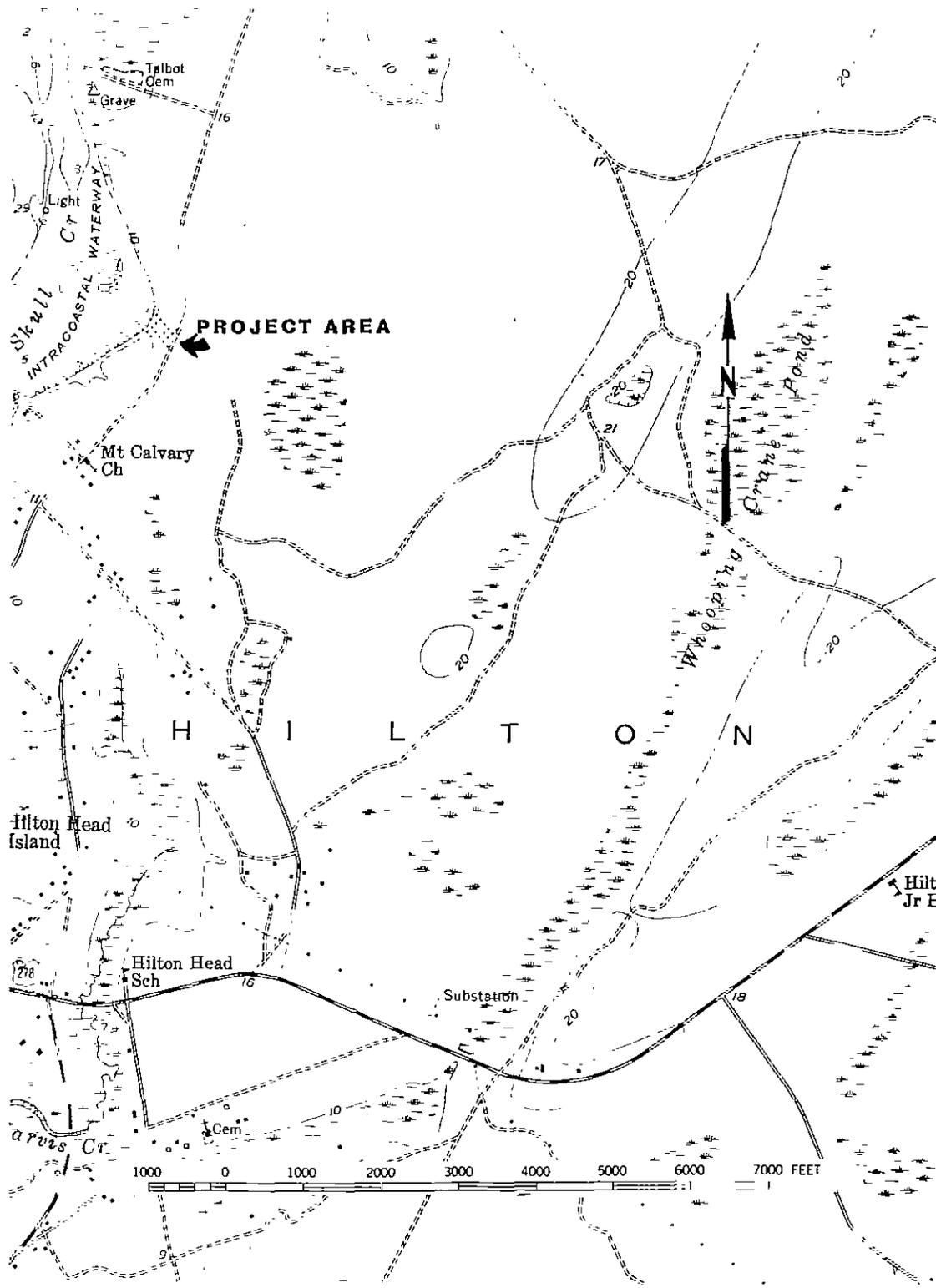


Figure 1. Location of project area, Hilton Head Island Quadrangle.

## Curation

Artifacts recovered from this study will be curated with The Environmental and Historical Museum of Hilton Head Island as Accession Number 1991.5, catalog numbers ARCH 3176 through 3182. All original field notes (including photographic materials) and archival copies will also be curated at this facility. Site numbers have been assigned by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. Additional information on the conservation of the recovered materials can be found in the section on laboratory methods.

## Effective Environment

Hilton Head Island is a sea island located between Port Royal Sound to the north and Daufuskie Island to the south. The island is separated from Daufuskie by Calibogue Sound and from the mainland by Skull Creek (Figure 2).

Hilton Head is situated in the Sea Island section of South Carolina's Coastal Plain province. The coastal plain consists of unconsolidated sands, clays and soft limestones found from the Fall Line eastward to the Atlantic Ocean, an area representing about two-thirds of the state (Cooke 1936:1-3). Elevations on Hilton Head range from sea level to about 20 feet above mean sea level (MSL). Additional environmental information on Hilton Head is available from Trinkley (1986, 1987).

Parcels 4 and 9 are situated on Skull Creek, about 1.5 miles north of U.S. 278 on the Hilton Head Plantation. Vegetation consists of maritime forest along the creek edge, pockets of planted pine and live oak inland intermixed with grass land. All of the vegetation appears to have been established within the last 100 years. Historic maps of the area suggest that this area has been extensively cultivated during at least the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Elevations on Parcels 4 and 9 vary from about 5 feet MSL adjacent to the marsh to about 10 feet inland. There is a pronounced bluff overlooking Skull Creek.

Soils in the project area are excessively drained Wando fine sand. Typically the Ap zone consists of dark brown fine sand about nine inches thick. The underlying material to a depth of 85 inches is fine sand (Stuck 1980:42).

There is considerable erosion along the Skull Creek face and a number of archaeological sites have been identified through sightings of remains on the beach. Michael Taylor (personal communication 1988) indicates that erosion in this area of the island is unpredictable, being associated with both boat traffic on

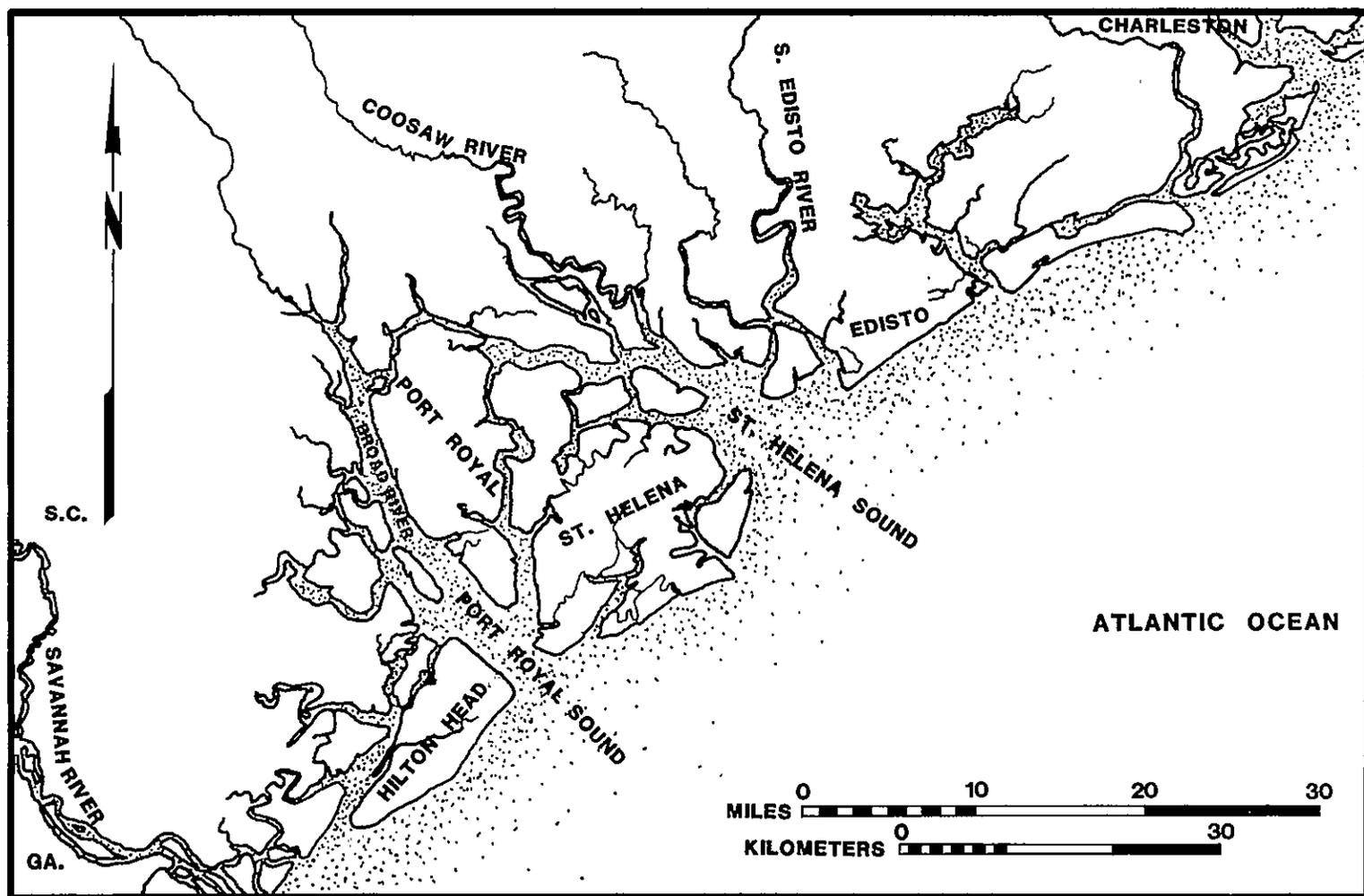


Figure 2. Location of Hilton Head Island in the Beaufort region.

the Atlantic Intra-coastal Waterway and the various winter storm tides.

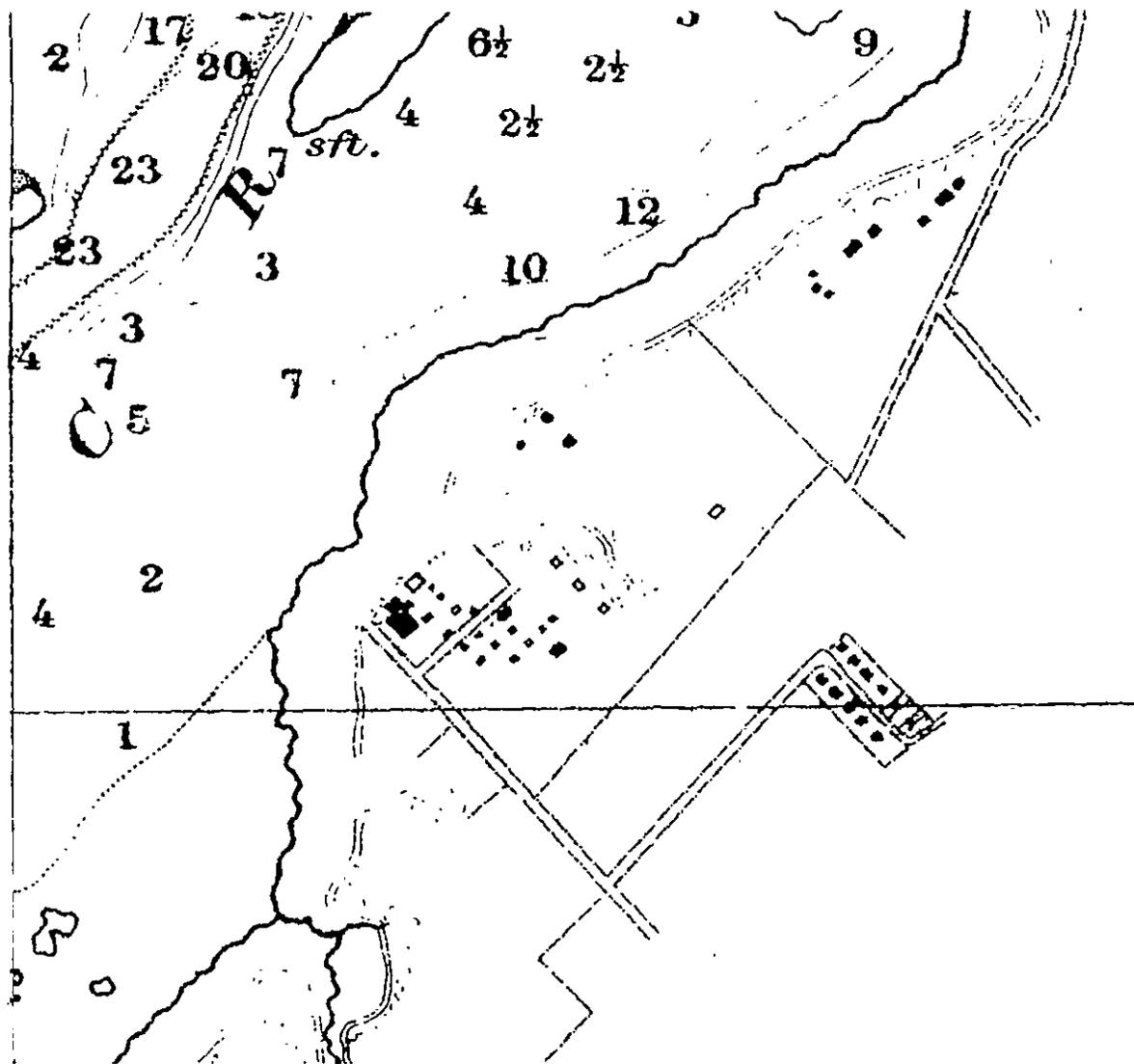
### Background Research

Several previously published archaeological studies are available for the Hilton Head area to provide background, including the Fish Haul excavation study (Trinkley 1986), Cotton Hope Plantation, located just southwest of the project area (Trinkley 1990), testing at Stoney/Baynard Plantation (Adams and Trinkley 1991), and the reconnaissance level survey of Hilton Head Island for the Town of Hilton Head (Trinkley 1987). In addition, considerable survey and excavation work has been conducted on nearby Pinckney Island (Drucker and Anthony 1980; Trinkley 1981), Spring and Callawassie Islands (Trinkley 1989b and 1991); and Daufuskie Island (Trinkley 1989a). These sources should be consulted for additional details.

Previous archaeological work located the remains of Scull [Skull] Creek or Cotton Hope Plantation to the southwest of the survey area. Details of the findings can be found in Trinkley (1990). The historical record for Cotton Hope is sparse and offers few clear statements. It is possible that a colonial plantation was established as early as the mid-eighteenth century, and Thomas Henry Barksdale had certainly established a working farm in the Cotton Hope area, known as Scull Creek Plantation, by the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Although there is no record of Barksdale's activities at this plantation, his inventory suggests a man of wealth. Holmgren quotes a period account describing the property of Benjamin Guerard, "those famed, healthy and pleasantly located indigo lands on Scull Creek" (Holmgren 1959:59). It is therefore likely that Barksdale also relied on indigo as the cash crop.

Sometime in the 1830s William Pope acquired the tract and named the plantation Cotton Hope. It appears, however, that Pope's dream of wealth from cotton monoculture was just that -- an unfulfilled hope. Pope was relatively unsuccessful at agriculture, although his inventory indicates that he was a wealthy, if not successful, Hilton Head planter. When Hilton Head Island fell to Union troops in 1861, Cotton Hope was abandoned and eventually purchased by the United States Government. An 1862 plat (Figure 3) shows in detail the layout and locations of buildings, roads and fences. From about 1861 through 1874 the property was leased, both to overseers and eventually to tenants, for cotton farming.

Shortly after the property was redeemed by the Pope heirs, the plantation was subdivided and sold to freedmen. A portion of Cotton Hope (containing nearby 38BU96) was maintained intact and eventually found its way into the major development of Hilton Head Island. The remainder of the plantation, however, is still divided into small parcels owned by primarily the island's Black residents.



7

Figure 3. Cotton Hope Plantation in 1862.

## Field Methods

The initially proposed field techniques (detailed in Chicora's proposal submitted to and reviewed by the Town of Hilton Head Island) involved the placement of shovel tests at 50 foot intervals in the vicinity of Skull Creek and 100 foot intervals further inland. All soil would be screened through 1/4-inch mesh. Notes would be retained on stratigraphy and the tests would be immediately backfilled. If archaeological remains were encountered, the spacing of the tests would be decreased to no greater than 25 feet in order to determine site boundaries, site integrity, and temporal periods represented.

All shovel tests would measure 1-foot square and would be excavated to sterile yellow B horizon sand. On positive shovel tests, soil profiles would be drawn and soil coloration would be described using Munsell soil color charts. All cultural remains, except brick, shell, mortar, and charcoal, would be retained. Samples of the other material would be retained. The information required for S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology site forms would be collected in the field and photographs would be taken that were deemed warranted by the field investigator.

These plans were put into effect, with no significant deviations. In addition to the shovel testing, the creek bank was thoroughly examined for any cultural remains eroding out of the bank. Also, areas of good surface visibility, such as bare spots and an old road bed, were examined for remains (and were surface collected).

At the identified sites, shovel test and transect intervals were reduced to 25 feet. A total of 86 shovel tests in 15 transects were excavated throughout the survey tract, including 55 in the creek area and 31 in the inland portion of the tract.

## Laboratory Analysis

The cataloging and analysis of the specimens was conducted at the Chicora laboratories in Columbia on November 15 and December 19, 1991. The collections have been accepted for permanent curation by The Environmental and Historical Museum of Hilton Head Island as Accession Number 1991.5. In addition, all original field notes and archival copies of the field notes will be curated with the collections. All photographic materials have been processed to archival standards.

Analysis of the collections followed professionally accepted standards with a level of intensity suitable to the quantity and quality of the remains. Prehistoric ceramics were classified using common south coastal types (DePratter 1979; Trinkley 1983). The temporal, cultural, and typological classifications of the historic remains follow Noel Hume (1970), Miller (1980), Price (1979), and

South (1977).

### Identified Sites

As a result of the archaeological survey of Parcels 4 and 9, two sites (38BU833 and 38BU1290) were identified.

Site 38BU833 was originally identified in 1986 by Michael Trinkley (1987). It is situated along the bank of Skull Creek in the northwestern portion of the survey area. Thirty-two shovel tests were placed at 25 foot intervals in the site area. Fifteen (46.9%) evidenced moderate to heavy shell midden or artifacts, while 10 (31.3%) contained light shell. The remaining 21.8% of the shovel tests were negative. Shell was also found eroding from the creek bank. While the structure and parking lot on Parcel 4 have destroyed portions of the site, the area between the creek and the building, as well as the area east of the parking lot near the large live oaks evidences buried intact shell middens. The boundaries of the site are unknown due to the confines of the survey area. However the site does continued at least 300 feet inland, east of the creek edge. The central UTM coordinates are E524140 N3566850 and the soils are classified as excessively drained Wando fine sands. Soil profiles indicated that the top horizon was generally 0.5 feet in depth (Munsell Color 10YR4/3), the second zone was generally 0.4 feet thick consisting of shell midden and the same brown sands. Subsoil exhibited a Munsell Color of 10YR6/4. Areas immediately around the structure were disturbed. Recovered artifacts consist of two thin curved clear glass fragments, three unidentifiable prehistoric sherds, and one Caraway coastal plain chert projectile point.

38BU833 has been heavily disturbed by construction activities as well as erosion. However, significant portions of the site within Parcel 4 contain buried intact shell middens both along the bank and further inland. The condition of the site under the extant building and parking lot was not determined during this survey, although shell was observed scattered under the building and areas of bulldozer disturbance were noted in the vicinity of the structure. Although damaged, the site is recommended as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places based on the presence of intact features.

Site 38BU1290 is situated along the bank of Skull Creek in the western portion of Parcel 9. Thirty-eight shovel tests were placed at 25 foot intervals in the site area. Six (16%) evidenced moderate to heavy shell or artifacts, while 14 (39%) contained very sparse or light shell. The remaining 45% of the tests were negative. No artifacts or significant amounts of shell were found eroding out from the creek bank. The surface scatter of shell and artifacts (n=2) indicated that the site is 200 feet north-south and 250 feet east-west, while the shovel tests suggest that the core area is approximately 100 by 50 feet. The central UTM coordinates

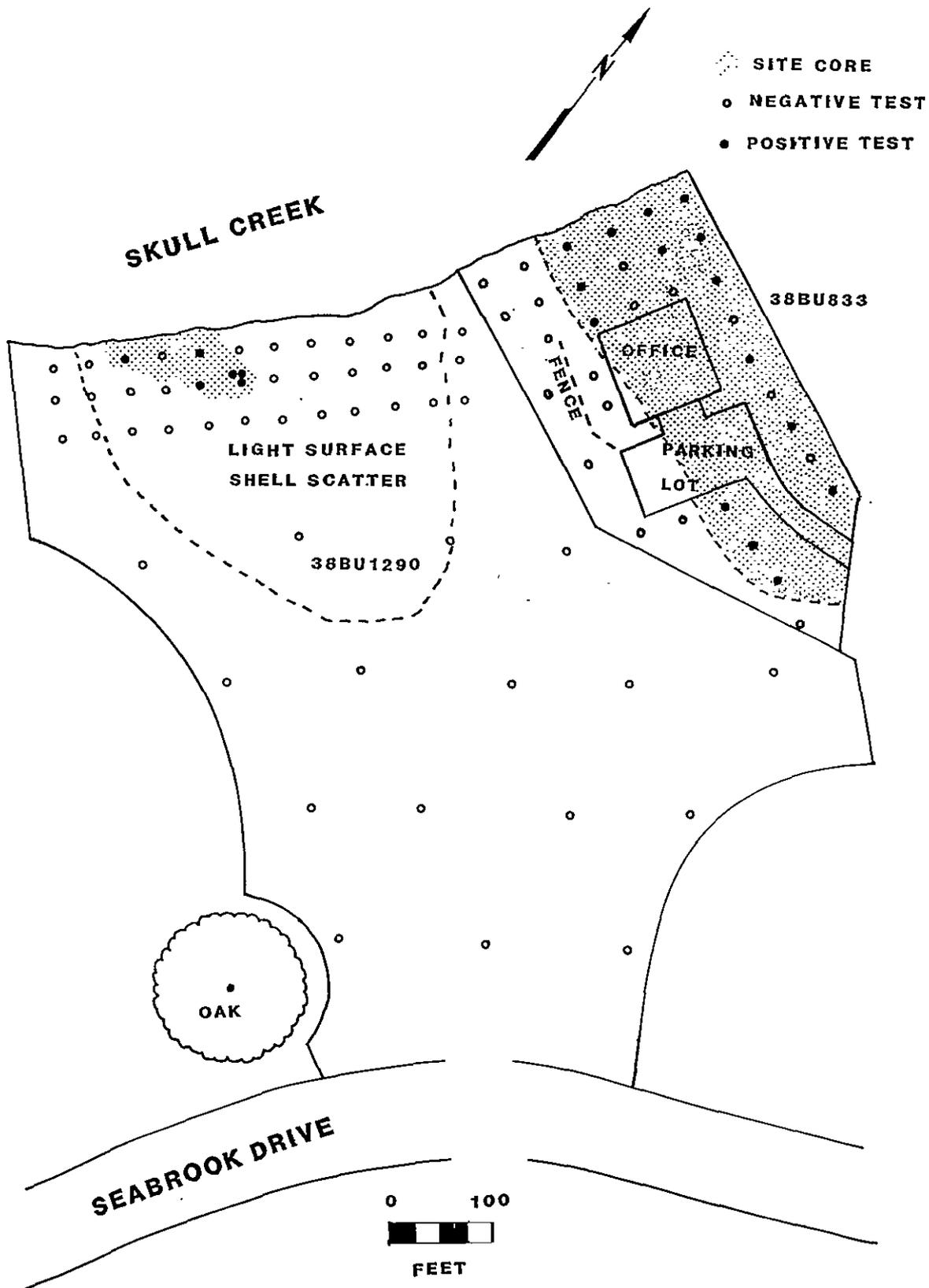


Figure 4. Location of 38BU833 and 38BU1290 on Parcels 4 and 9 of Hilton Head Plantation.

are E524140 N3566720 and the soils are classified as excessively drained Wando fine sands. Soil profiles indicated that the Ap horizon was typically 1.0 feet in depth (Munsell Color 10YR4/3). Subsoil exhibited a Munsell Color of 10YR6/4. Artifacts recovered consist of three Savannah Check Stamped sherds, three Colono ware sherds, and one delft sherd.

38BU1290 has been heavily disturbed by previous grubbing activities. However, a narrow strip of maritime forest along the shore line has protected small middens in a 25 by 50 foot area. Otherwise, there is no evidence of intact features. The artifacts associated with both the prehistoric and historic components are sparse. Because of the heavy disturbance the site has received and the sparsity of artifacts, this site is recommended as not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

### Summary and Recommendations

The goals of this project were, first, to locate sites and determine their eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The archaeological survey of Parcels 4 and 9 located two sites (38BU833 and 38BU1290).

38BU833 is recommended as eligible for inclusion in the National Register based on the presence of intact features. It is likely that development activities will adversely affect the site. There are two options, either site preservation through green spacing, or data recovery.

Green spacing is recognized as an appropriate, and often cost-effective, mitigation measure for archaeological site conservation. Such green spacing, however, must ensure the permanent protection and integrity of the archaeological data. The following recommendations are offered if green spacing is the chosen alternative. These provisions are subject to the review and approval of the State Historic Preservation Office.

1. The site is to be blocked out in the field with a buffer sufficient to ensure complete protection of the remains.
2. The area should be cleared of understory by hand. No heavy equipment should be used and all cut vegetation should be removed from the site area.
3. The area should continue to be clearly defined during all phases of construction. No equipment should be allowed in these areas, or be allowed to use the area as a turn around. The area should not be used to stockpile supplies, or be otherwise disturbed. All personnel, including contractor's personnel, should be strictly prohibited from entering the area. This is particularly

important to prevent looting of the site.

4. Any landscaping in the area should be conducted by hand, and ground disturbance should be limited to the upper 0.2 foot of soil. No utilities, including sprinkler lines, should be placed through the area.

5. If more intensive landscaping is desired, then the sites should be protected by placing an isolating layer of clean builder's sand over the area. This layer should be at least 0.5 foot thick and it may be appropriate to also use filter cloth between the site and the sand zone. Additional topsoil then may be placed on top of the sand. Landscaping or sprinkler lines should not exceed the depth of the isolating level of top soil and sand.

6. An historic easement or protective covenant protecting the site set aside in green spacing and this protection should be in perpetuity.

7. Appropriate security should be provided to ensure that no one digs or otherwise disturbs the site.

If green spacing is not the preferred alternative, data recovery is recommended.

The two major areas of intact remains include the region northwest of the structure, adjacent to Skull Creek and the vicinity southeast of the parking lot. It is estimated that approximately 20,000 square feet of intact site area may still be found on Tract 4.

The Town of Hilton Head Island opposes archaeological data recovery which used large scale stripping of soil, since such operations have the strong potential to damage the live oak vegetation. In addition, this mitigation technique is likely to cause unnecessary damage to the site.

Consequently, Chicora Foundation recommends that data recovery excavations consist of carefully placed 10-foot unit hand excavated to sterile subsoil. This will achieve the goal of obtaining a sample of the artifacts present at the site, while ensuring minimal impact to the vegetation and a carefully controlled excavation methodology not possible with large scale stripping. The hand excavation of 900 square feet will provide a sample of approximately 4% of the site area. This should provide an adequate and representative sample of that portion of 38BU833 situated on Tract 4. It is not, of course, possible to state whether this will be representative of the remainder of the site situated outside the survey limits.

38BU1290 is recommended as not eligible. The site is heavily

disturbed, contained only a sparse amount of artifacts, and does not exhibit evidence that significant areas of the site are left intact. No further work is recommended by Chicora Foundation.

The previously stated secondary goal of this study was to examine the relationship between site location, soil type, and topography. It was anticipated that the prehistoric sites would be found in areas of well drained soils adjacent to Skull Creek. The two prehistoric sites identified were located along the bank of Skull Creek on excessively drained soils.

The historic component of 38BU1290 is probably associated with the eighteenth century occupation of Skull Creek (or Cotton Hope) plantation, although the nineteenth century historic plat shows no structures in this vicinity of the plantation.

It is possible that other archaeological remains may be encountered in the survey tract during construction. Construction crews should be advised to report any discoveries of concentrations of artifacts (such as bottles, ceramics, or projectile points) or brick rubble to the project engineer, who should in turn report the material to the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office or to Chicora Foundation, Inc. No construction should take place in the vicinity of these late discoveries until they have been examined by an archaeologist.

#### Sources Cited

- Adams, Natalie and Michael Trinkley  
1991 Archaeological Testing at the Stoney/Baynard Plantation, Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County, South Carolina. Research Series 28. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.
- Brooks, Mark J. and James D. Scurry  
1978 An Intensive Archaeological Survey of Amoco Realty Property in Berkeley County, South Carolina with a Test of Two Subsistence-Settlement Hypotheses for the Prehistoric Period. Research Manuscript Series 147. S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina.
- Cooke, C. Wythe  
1936 Geology of the Coastal Plain of South Carolina. U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 867.
- DePratter, Chester  
1979 Ceramics. In The Anthropology of St. Catherines Island 2. The Refuge-Deptford Mortuary Complex, edited by David H. Thomas and Clark Spencer Larsen, pp. 109-132. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 56(1).

- Drucker, Lesley and Ronald Anthony  
1980 A Cultural Resources Inventory of Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Carolina Archaeological Services, Columbia, S.C.
- Holgren, Virginia C.  
1959 Hilton Head: A Sea Island Chronicle. Hilton Head Island Publishing, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.
- Miller, George C.  
1980 Classification and Economic Scaling of 19th Century Ceramics. Historical Archaeology 14:1-40.  
  
1991 A Revised Set of CC Index Values for Classification and Economic Scaling of English Ceramics from 1787 to 1880. Historical Archaeology 25:1-25.
- Noel Hume, Ivor  
1970 A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
- Price, Cynthia R.  
1979 19th Century Ceramics in the Eastern Ozark Border Region. Monograph Series 1. Center for Archaeological Research, Southwest Missouri University, Springfield.
- Scurry, James D. and Mark J. Brooks  
1980 An Intensive Archaeological Survey of the South Carolina State Ports Authority's Belleview Plantation, Charleston, South Carolina. Research Manuscript Series 158. S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina.
- South, Stanley  
1977 Method and Theory in Historical Archaeology. Academic Press, New York.
- South, Stanley and Michael Hartley  
1980 Deep Water and High Ground: Seventeenth Century Low Country Settlement. Research Manuscript Series 166, S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia.
- Stuck, W.M.  
1980 Soil Survey of Beaufort and Jasper Counties, South Carolina. Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

Trinkley, Michael

- 1981 Studies of Three Woodland Period Sites in Beaufort County, South Carolina. South Carolina Department of Highways and Public Transportation, Columbia.
- 1983 Additional Archaeological, Historical, and Architectural Evaluation of 38HR127 and 38HR131, Horry County, South Carolina. S.C. Dept. of Highways and Public Transportation, Columbia.
- 1987 Archaeological Survey of Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County, South Carolina. Research Series 9. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.
- 1988 Archaeological Testing of Six Sites on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County, South Carolina. Research Series 13. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.
- 1989b An Archaeological Survey of the Phase I Spring Island Development, Beaufort County, South Carolina. Research Series 18. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.

Trinkley, Michael, editor

- 1986 Indian and Freedman Occupation at the Fish Haul Site (38BU805), Beaufort County, South Carolina. Research Series 7. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.
- 1989a Archaeological Investigations at Haig Point, Webb, and Oak Ridge, Daufuskie island, Beaufort County, South Carolina. Research Series 15. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.
- 1990 Archaeological Excavations at 38BU96, A Portion of Cotton Hope Plantation, Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County, South Carolina. Research Series 21. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.
- 1991 Further Investigations of Prehistoric and Historic Lifeways on Callawassie and Spring Islands, Beaufort county, South Carolina. Research Series 23. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.