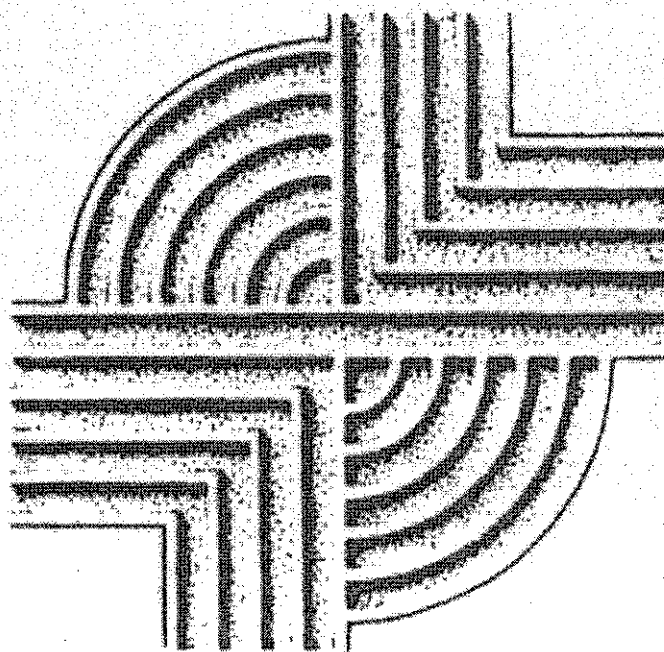


MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA RECOVERY
EXCAVATIONS AT 38CH927,
JERVEY PLANTATION,
CHARLESTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA



CHICORA RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 302

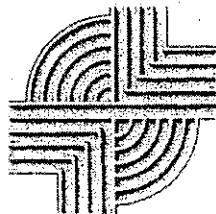
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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA RECOVERY
EXCAVATIONS AT 38CH927,
JERVEY PLANTATION,
CHARLESTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

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ABSTRACT

This report provides preliminary data on excavations at 38CH92Z, the remains of an eighteenth and nineteenth century plantation main settlement. The site is situated at the northern edge of the existing Charleston National Golf Course. A portion of the site is within a greenspaced area on that property, while the remainder is on an undeveloped parcel which is slated for residential development by Charleston National. The investigations were conducted by Chicora Foundation during July and August, 2000 for Mr. Walter Mueller of Charleston National Properties. This work was proposed, and approved, under a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resources Management (OCRM).

This site was initially recorded by a Brockington and Associates survey conducted in 1987, at which time the portion of the site on the proposed golf course tract was greenspaced under the OCRM MOA. A subsequent survey by Chicora Foundation for Centex Homes identified a westward extension of this site, not previously covered by the MOA. Again assessed by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the site was found to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register. With the acquisition of the property by Charleston National it was subsumed under their pre-existing MOA.

A data recovery plan was submitted to the SHPO on April 17, 2000 and approved on May 5, 2000. This plan called for an initial phase of close interval auger testing to determine artifact concentrations which might guide the following block excavations. Afterwards, and depending on what had been identified, the plan called for limited stripping. Prior to the field investigations the site was bush hogged, a survey grid was established, and a site topographic map at 1-foot contours was created.

An auger survey was then conducted, with 10-inch auger tests at 25-foot intervals over an area measuring 275 feet north-south by 575 feet east-west.

This yielded a total of 264 test points. The artifacts resulting from these tests identified a very large, but dense concentration at the western edge of the site, which appeared to consist of two discrete structures. A third concentration, thought to represent a third structure, was found further to the west.

The subsequent hand excavation included 550 square feet at what was identified as the main house at the center of the site, 400 square feet at what was identified as the kitchen area on the west edge of the site, and 200 square feet at what was identified as a slave structure at the east edge of the site. An additional 100 square feet of excavation was conducted at another artifact concentration, but this area was found to be heavily disturbed and no additional excavations were conducted in that area. At the conclusion of the block excavations, an additional 410 square feet were stripped in the vicinity of the slave structure, using a backhoe. As a result, the total excavation consisted of 1,660 square feet (1,250 square feet of hand excavation and 410 square feet of mechanized excavation).

This work revealed a main house measuring approximately 20 feet north-south by 40 feet east-west. The eastern two-thirds of the structure had been robbed out prior to that portion of the site going into cultivation, probably in the early twentieth century. The western third of the foundation, however, was in excellent condition. The structure appears to represent a through-hall plan with one room either side of the central hall. The structure was likely frame, two-stories, and had interior chimneys on the gable ends. The roof was wood shingle. Interior finishes included two-coat plaster, some painted specimens of which were recovered. This structure burned, and as previously mentioned, was later removed so as not to hinder cultivation. The artifact assemblage from this area is dominated by architectural remains, primarily nails and melted window glass.

To the west is the posited kitchen area.

Although no coherent structural remains were encountered (post holes were common), the artifact assemblage includes dense bone and other kitchen trash.

To the east was identified a ground-fast structure measuring 24 feet north-south by 18 feet east-west. The structure lacks any recognizable hearth area or doorways, but appears very similar to other eighteenth century slave structures typically described as wall-trench. In the case of this structure no wall trench survives, perhaps because of extensive plowing. Nevertheless, the building is outlined by a series of 29 recognizable post holes. The artifact assemblage from this area, while sparse, is consistent with a slave dwelling.

At the conclusion of the work the excavations were covered with plastic and the side walls bailed. This management summary is provided as an initial phase of report production, in order to allow Charleston National Properties to acquire necessary land disturbance permits and proceed with development activities. A professional monograph is currently in preparation.

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INTRODUCTION

Project Background

During the initial survey in 1987, site 38CH927 was found to represent a historic eighteenth and nineteenth century plantation complex. The site area, at that time measuring about 200 feet north-south by 100 feet east-west, was centered at 615900E and 3637410N. Its primary surface feature appears to have been a brick chimney fall, although a series of 73 shovel tests and three judgementally placed units produced an sizable collection of ceramics, glass, and nails (38CH927 site file, SCIAA). The mean date for the recovered ceramics was 1803, although dates as early as 1799 and as late as 1814 were reported (Brockington et al. 1987:63).

Brockington's study suggested that the encountered portion of the site might represent a slave settlement — based on an artifact pattern heavy in kitchen remains and containing a relatively low proportion of architectural artifacts. In addition, the presence of Colono ware ceramics suggested to the authors a slave component. The authors observe that other portions of the plantation, including perhaps the main house "may lie to the east, outside the tract" (Brockington et al. 1987:70).

The original Charleston National study also collected oral history concerning the site, a portion of which is worthy of repeating:

One informant, Mrs. Porcher Leopold of the nearby Stratton Place house, was familiar with the site. She reported that, when she was a child, the house, although empty, was still standing. She also recalled other structures, including slave houses, in the plantation . . . Mrs. Leopold surface collected the area years ago

when it was a plowed field, and she has an extensive collection, including French and English gunflints, Prosser buttons, and Chinese export porcelain (Brockington et al. 1987:70).

Site 38CH927 was recommended as eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and this opinion was concurred with by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). As a result a Memorandum of Agreement was prepared specifying that the site (or that portion on the Charleston National tract) could either be avoided or, if not possible, excavated (the signed agreement was transmitted to the S.C. Coastal Council (today the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management or OCRM) on April 11, 1988 (letter from Dr. Patricia Criddlebaugh to Mr. Fritz Aichele). Although a preservation plan was to be submitted to the SHPO, none has been identified. Nevertheless, the site was allowed to remain wooded.

In March 1996 Chicora Foundation was requested to conduct an archaeological survey of the tract adjacent to 38CH927 for possible development by Centex Homes (Trinkley 1996). This survey significantly increased the size of the site, so that its central UTM coordinates were set at E615940 N3637400 and the site was estimated to encompass an area measuring 450 feet east-west by at least 250 feet north-south. Although the southern boundary, which extends off the survey tract, has not been established, the site as it was recorded by this subsequent survey included about 2.6 acres.¹

¹ The Charleston National Golf Course survey found that materials associated with the plantation extended at least 100 feet south of the transmission line (Brockington et al. 1987:Figure 34).

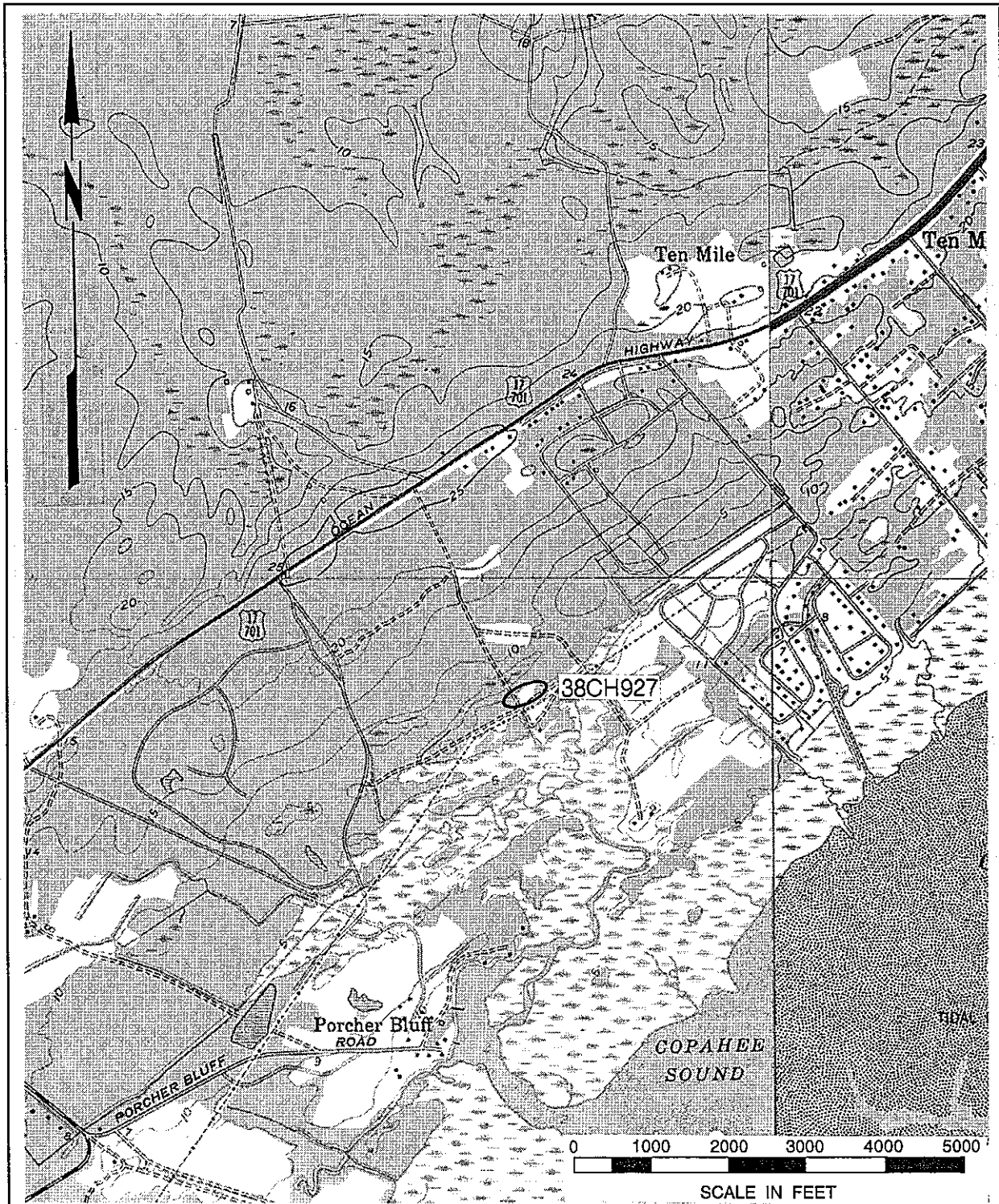


Figure 1. Portion of the Cainhoy and Fort Moultrie USGS topographic maps showing the location of 38CH927. The vicinity is far more developed today than is suggested by these maps, which haven't been updated since 1979.

INTRODUCTION

Surface visibility to the west of Stratton Place road was good and a dense scatter of brick remains was found covering an area measuring about 100 feet in diameter. Surrounding this, however, brick rubble was still common and even extended north an additional 100 feet. To the west, at the edge of the golf course, was an area of shell, heavily obscured by vegetation.

Recovered from the Chicora survey were 57 historic specimens, primarily materials from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Although the collection is small, there were 20 ceramics suitable for mean ceramic dating. These yield a date of 1800.5 which very nicely replicates the mean dating previously suggested for the site (Trinkley 1996:Table 3).

After the Chicora survey Centex Homes declined to develop the area of 38CH927 and development activities were initiated by Charleston National Properties. The survey report was submitted to the SHPO, who concurred that 38CH927 was eligible and that data recovery could be conducted under the existing MOA (letter from Ms. Valerie Marcil, SHPO, to Ms. Barbara Neale, OCRM, dated March 7, 2000. Chicora Foundation was requested by Charleston National to prepare a data recovery plan, which they approved on April 5, 2000. This plan was subsequently submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office for review on April 17, 2000. The plan was approved on May 5, 2000.

Investigations began at the site on July 10 and continued through August 1, 2000. A total of 851 person hours were devoted to field investigations over the three and a half week period with a crew of from five to seven individuals (including the PI, Dr. Michael Trinkley, and crew of Mr. Tom Covington, Ms. Jill Langenberg, Ms. Donna Rogers, Ms. Heather Sinnott, Ms. Angela Vincent, and Ms. Amy Weaver). An additional 14 hours of field lab time was devoted to the project during rain periods.

Research Orientation

One of the best sources available to understand the historic context of 38CH927 is the economic history of the region prepared by Dr. Michael Scardaville in Brockington et al. (1985:24-78). In

particular, Scardaville suggests that Christ Church Parish, during the late antebellum, was suffering a severe economic recession. Rice, largely focused on the Wando River, was being abandoned as it became clear that the area's high salinities and unpredictable flow made rice cultivation economically unpredictable.² Cotton, which contributed greatly to the economic well-being of the sea island planters, was never a significant crop on Christ Church plantations.³ Truck farming, while very important in the postbellum, was of only limited importance during the antebellum.

Scardaville found, however, that planters turned increasingly to ranching as a economic alternative to cash crops. While output decreased for such products as oats, Irish and sweet potatoes, and butter, the value of livestock between 1850 and 1860 increased by 120%, corn production (used as feed) increased by nearly 45%, wool production increased by 126% and the value of animals slaughtered increased from \$0 in 1850 to \$5,270 in 1860. Scardaville notes that, "with a readily available market across the Cooper River, ranching, combined with some truck farming, provided the parish with a modest means of support" (Brockington et al. 1985:41).

This means of support, however, was coupled with a gradual decline in slave population. In Christ Church Parish the number of slaves fell from 3,585 in 1850 to 2,546 in 1860, a 29% decrease. While slave holding was still an essential ingredient in the economy of Christ Church, the face of the plantation was changing on the eve of the Civil War.

These economic and social changes — their

² Peter A. Coclanis (1989:141) also points out that profits from rice everywhere in South Carolina were declining precipitously, frequently dipping into negative returns and rarely providing more than a 1% return on investment.

³ Moreover, cotton prices plummeted in the second half of the 1820s and didn't recover until 1832. Even then the upturn was short-lived and cotton planters saw prices drop to as low as 8¢ a pound at the end of the 1830s. Low prices, coupled with bad weather, resulted in cotton becoming increasingly unproductive until the improvement of the 1840s (Edgar 1999:274; Wallace 1951:385).

impact on both slaves and masters alike — offer a range of significant research questions. Whereas much previous work has been focused on the wealthy plantations, those focused on rice cultivation during the

eighteenth century, or sea island cotton plantation during the nineteenth century, the exploration of what might be called the "small" planter has received relatively little attention. Likewise, the impact of declining fortunes on the planter and slave have been rarely explored. Clearly slavery did not exist in an economic vacuum. The treatment of slaves, their view of the world, and their understanding of their place in that world, had to be colored by the economic well-being of the plantation owner. Plantation settings such as 38CH927 offer the potential to study these issues.

Although the initial Brockington study suggests that 38CH927 may represent a slave settlement, this stands in contrast to the oral informant interview, which would suggest that the site was dominated by the main plantation house. Moreover, given our previous work at the Whitesides Plantation (Trinkley and Hacker 1996) we recognize that owner sites may take on a variety of appearances. While Colono wares accounted for 22% of the ceramics recovered by the original Brockington survey, Whitesides' main house exhibited a ceramic collection containing nearly 16% Colono wares, while at the very high status Broom Hall plantation (Trinkley et al. 1995) Colono wares accounted for 25% of the main plantation assemblage. In contrast, Colono wares typically account for 60% or more of the ceramics from Charleston area slaves sites (Trinkley and Hacker

Table 1.
Owners of the Study Tract during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

? - 1801	Thomas Player	Charleston Co. Wills, v. 28, pg. 41
1801 - 1807	Joshua Player	Conveyed as part of marriage settlement
1807 - 1813	Edward Mortimer	Charleston Co. RMC, DB S7, pg. 463
1813 - ?	Daniel Legare	Charleston Co. RMC, DB X13, pg. 113
? - 1818	Nathan Legare	
1818 - 1836	Richard T. Morrison	Charleston Co. RMC, DB Y8, pg. 47
1836 - 1838	Mary Legare	
1838 - 1839	Robert M. Venning	Charleston Co. RMC, DB U10, pg. 498
1839 - 1872	Thomas Hall Jervey	Charleston Co. RMC, DB H11, pg. 236
1872 - 1896	wife/heirs Thomas Hall Jervey	Charleston Co. Wills, v. 44, pg. 30
1896 - ?	Joseph Dill	
? - 1898	Fanny A. Dill	Conveyed by will
1898 -	Phillip G. Porcher	Charleston Co. RMC, DB H23, pg. 74

1996:71). Even pattern studies may be misleading. The assemblage reported by the initial survey from 38CH927 is almost identical to that found at Whitesides' main settlement (Trinkley and Hacker 1996:62). While the only plat found for the site is vague, it seems to also indicate that the 38CH927 represents a main settlement.

The Jervey plantation was apparently owned by a succession of planters and merchants in the first half of the nineteenth century (see Table 1). It wasn't until the Morrison tenure that ownership seems to have stabilized. The Jervey family held the tract during the period of economic decline in Christ Church. Consequently, it is possible to control for changes in ownership and, to some extent, changes in managerial style, since the tract was owned by one individual during the period in question.

Examining the archaeological remains, there is certainly evidence of plowing. Yet there is also evidence of considerable site integrity. Several of the shovel tests reveal artifact bearing strata to depths in excess of 1.2 feet, suggesting the possibility of buried features. The artifacts recovered represent an array of nineteenth century artifacts, including large ceramics, nails, window glass, and table glass. This diverse assemblage was also found to include well preserved animal bone and carbonized floral material. Brick and

mortar are present as broadly defined surface scatters. These, with additional research, may be identified as structural locations. The presence of dense surface remains suggests that intact subsurface architectural features may be present.

These are, of course, the types of data sets which are essential in the exploration of the research questions proposed for 38CH927. The presence of the main plantation complex will help us understand the status and well-being of the plantation owner. In other words, these resources will help us address how the owner adjusted to these economic down-turns through material culture remains and foodways. The assemblage associated with the slave settlement will help us gauge the affect of the plantation's economic well-being on its African-American population. Again, material culture remains such as ceramics and personal goods, when combined with food remains, may help us better understand the lives of the African-Americans caught in an economic web not of their own creation.

Curation

An updated archaeological site form for 38CH927 has been filed with the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA). We had contacted The Charleston Museum to determine if they would curate the collections from this site in order to retain them in the area. The Museum, however, declined because of severe space restrictions. As a result, the collections will be curated at SCIAA, along with the field notes and photographic materials resulting from these investigations. The process of cleaning the collections, begun in field, is continuing in Chicora's labs and is expected to be completed by the end of September. Cataloguing, using the SCIAA system, is underway and should be completed by the end of October. During cataloging specimens will be evaluated for their conservation needs. Actual treatments are expected to require up to a year. As cataloging continues materials, such as the Colono wares, the small quantity of ethnobotanical remains, and the faunal materials, will be pulled for more specialized analysis.

EXCAVATIONS

Methodology

Field Methods

The initial survey of the site included only shovel testing. Although the intervals were typically about 25 feet, the number of tests were limited (the original Brockington survey excavated 30 shovel tests and three small units, while the Chicora survey opened an additional 26 shovel tests). As a result, we felt that bush hogging the site, establishing a uniform site grid, and conducting close interval testing would provide expedient information on artifact density and the distribution of the site's components.

Bush hogging of the site was necessary since the vegetation over much of the tract was very thick. This was especially the case in the area east of the north-south access road, representing the portion of the site which had been under cultivation. This portion of the site had been allowed to go into a second growth of immature pine and hardwoods with a dense understory of vines. In many areas bush hogging was not possible and a hydro-ax was used. Once opened, the area was mapped (using a contour interval of one-foot) and a 25-foot grid was established by Trico Engineering Consultants (Figure 2). This grid extended 325 feet north-south and 525 feet east-west, exceeding what we thought were the site limits.

In order to possibly identify structures and activity areas, we proposed an auger survey of the study tract at the gridded 25 foot intervals. This interval was based not only on our own experience in attempting to identify specific structures at low country plantations, but has recently also been duplicated by Dr. Bennie Keel from work at Magnolia Plantation in Louisiana (Keel 1999).

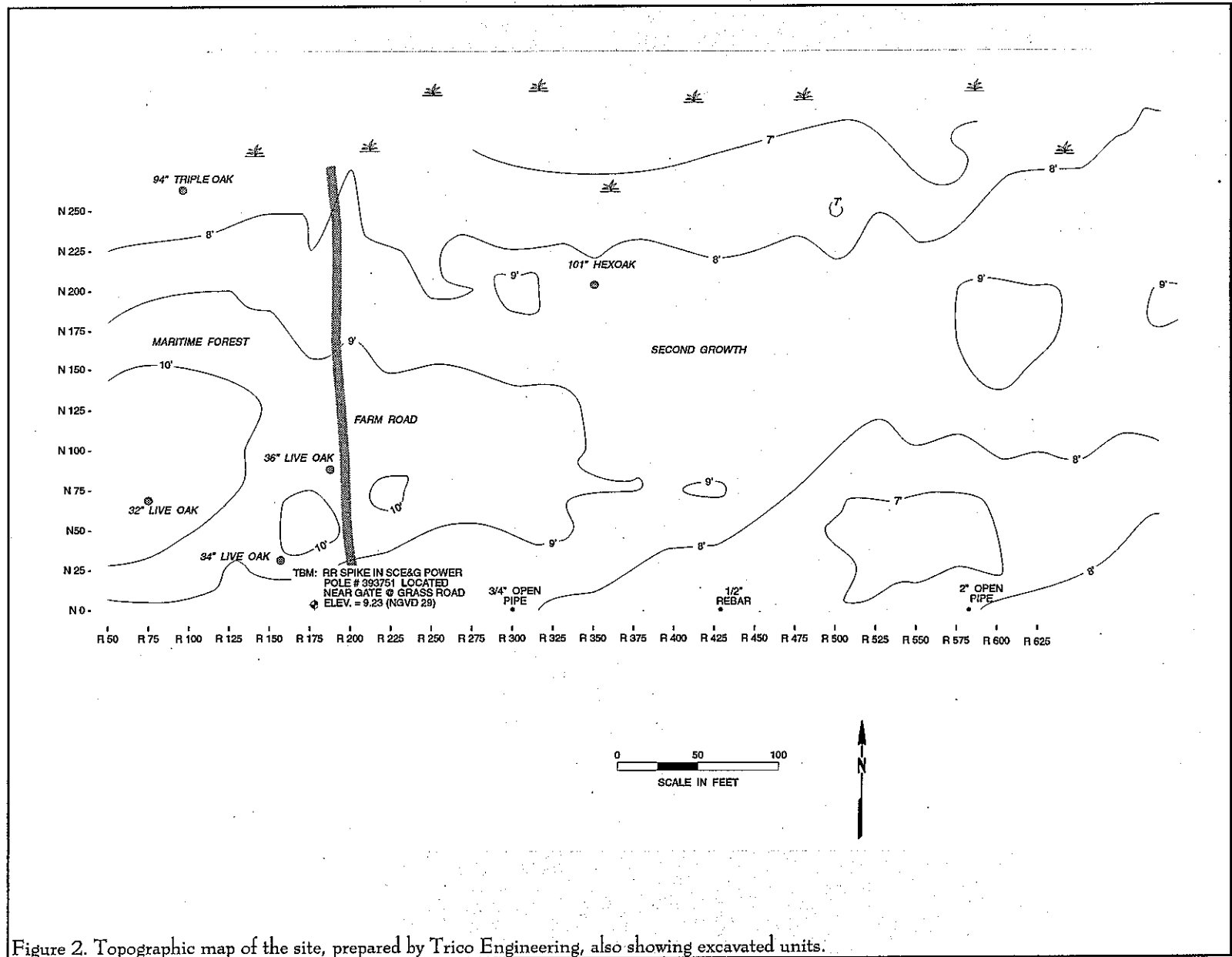
Upon our arrival at the site, we determined

that the site grid should be extended an additional 50 feet (two grid points) to the west, in order to encompass the edge of the golf course. This would help us evaluate how much, if any, of the site might be under the golf course and thus unavailable for research. It would also help us establish clear limits for the site's western boundary. We also discovered that extending the site grid 325 feet north-south placed the northern 50 feet in the protected wetlands. As a result this portion of the site grid was eliminated from consideration. As a result of these modifications, the final site grid encompassed an area measuring 250 feet north-south by 575 feet east-west, or 3.3 acres.

In order to establish uniform horizontal control (both for the auger survey as well as the following block excavations), a modified Chicago grid designation system was established over the site area. The initial southwest corner established by the Trico survey team was designed OR100 (the westward extension resulted in the grid being extended to OR50). With this system the first number indicates feet north of a datum (OR0), while the second number indicates feet right (or east) of the data. Therefore, 100R200 would be located 100 feet north and 200 feet east (or right) of the datum. Individual squares are designed by their southeast corner.

The established grid covered the area from N0 to N250 and bordering the golf course from R50 to R625. The site datum was established just south of OR175 and consisted of a railroad spike in South Carolina Electric and Gas power pole 393751 with an elevation of 9.22 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). Grid point OR300 is a 3/4-inch open pipe property marker. Grid point OR582 is a 2-inch open pipe property marker. This allows the grid to be re-established in the future should that be necessary.

The topographic mapping reveals little about



MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF EXCAVATIONS AT 38CH927

Figure 2. Topographic map of the site, prepared by Trico Engineering, also showing excavated units.

the site, except that it does appear to be situated on an east-west sand ridge. Elevations fall off to the north, toward the wetland, and to the south, toward the marsh. Other landscape features noted by the mapping include the number of old live oaks which are associated with the roadway south of the site area, toward the marsh. Although not well defined, these appear to represent an avenue beginning about mid-site and extending southward to the marsh edge.

Each of the identified 264 grid points were auger tested using a small bobcat with mounted 10-inch auger. We selected auger testing over shovel testing since augering tends to be both faster in open areas and to do less damage to artifacts. The use of a powered auger allowed all of the tests to be excavated in a single day. All tests were screened using ¼-inch mesh. While all artifacts were collected, shell, mortar, and brick were weighed in the field, noted, and discarded. The resulting artifact, shell, and brick/mortar weight data was used to produce density maps used to help guide additional research at the site.

Most revealing is the map for the overall artifact density (Figure 3). This map reveals two very dense and well defined concentrations. Although these seem to merge together in the south, they appear to be represent north-south smears or spreads of artifacts at the western site edge and to the east about 75 feet. The general spread of artifacts continues eastward, with a small concentration at the far eastern edge of the site. Although artifacts are spread over the entire site grid, this is the result of agricultural activity. The site core appears to be confined to an area measuring about 450 feet east-west. The north-south dimensions of the site, however, cannot be determined, since the testing did not establish a southern edge. The northern edge, however, seems to be situated about 50 to 100 feet south of the wetlands.

Excavation proceeded by hand with all soil mechanically screened through ¼-inch mesh. Screen loads were sorted in the field, with all materials from a single provenience bagged together. Shell and brick were quantified by weight in the field and discarded. Munsell soil color notations were made during the course of excavations, typically on moist freshly exposed soils.

A one-quart soil samples were retained from each provenience. Some colleagues retain much smaller samples (often no larger than an ounce), in order to minimize the size of the collection for curation. Such small samples severely restrict the types of future analyses possible. Since we anticipated that some of the samples would be used in the pollen and phytolith studies, larger samples were clearly necessary.

Units were troweled and photographed using black and white negative and color transparency film, typically at the base of the plowzone and the base of the excavations. Each unit was drawn at a scale of 1 inch to 2 feet. Features were designed by consecutive numbers. Post holes were consecutively numbered by specific unit.

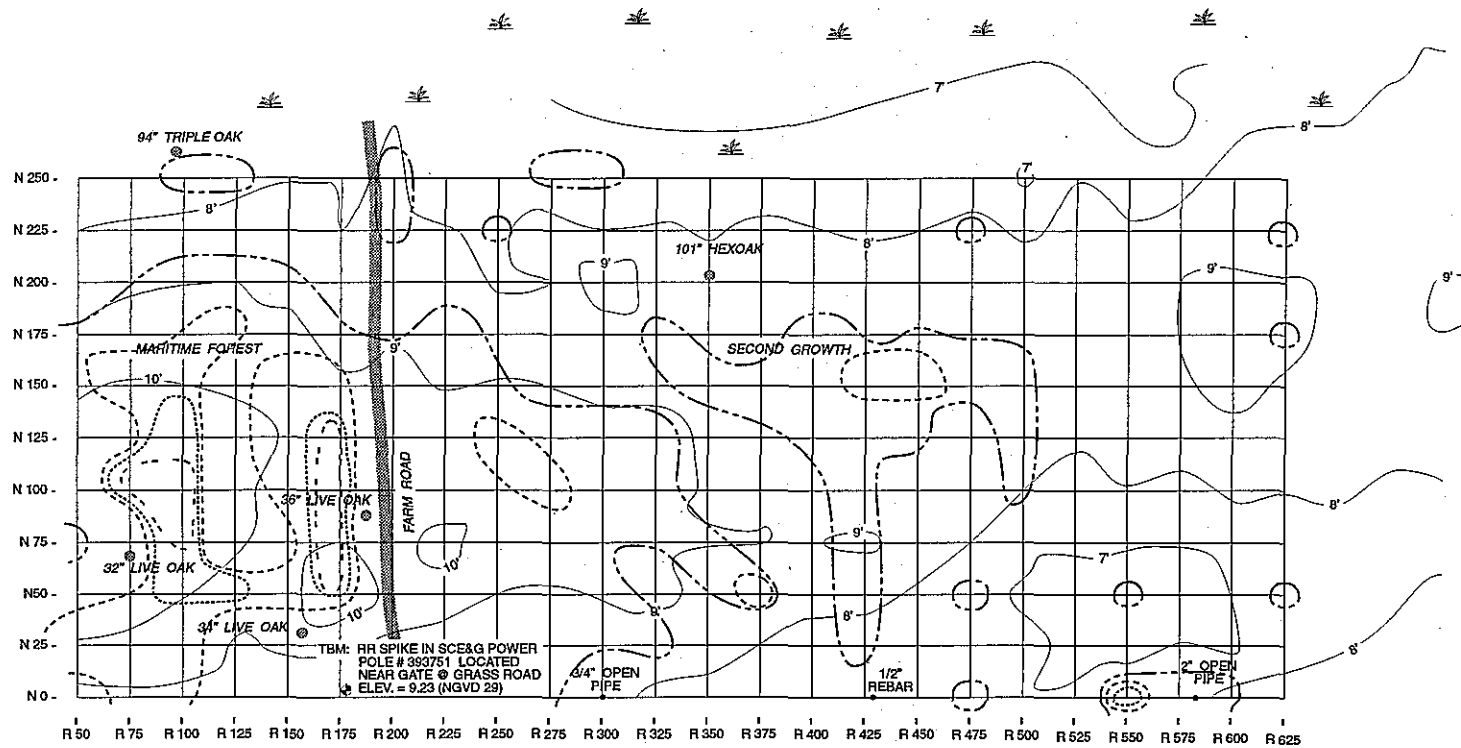
Feature fill was water screened through ¼-inch mesh and features, upon completion of their excavation, were also photographed using black and white negative film and color transparencies. One quart soil samples were obtained from all features. In addition, approximately 5 to 10 gallons of soil from each feature which exhibited dark, humic soil was retained for off-site water flotation (light colored soil, where experience has taught us the chance for good flotation recovery is unlikely, was not retained).

At the conclusion of the block excavations, a backhoe was used to mechanically strip one area in an effort to complete the recovery of the post hole pattern for a structure identified initially from block excavations. Although the only backhoe available had teeth on the bucket, by very carefully directing the operator, it was possible to ensure that a relatively level floor, requiring a minimal amount of shovel cleaning, was left. The backhoe was used to open about 410 square feet of excavation.

At the conclusion of the work the excavations were covered in plastic, the profiles backfilled and Charleston National Properties was notified that backfilling could be conducted at their convenience.

Laboratory Processing and Analysis

Processing was begun in the field, but is being completed at Chicora's labs in Columbia. During this washing artifacts were sorted by broad categories —



ARTIFACT DENSITY	
— — — —	1 - 4 ARTIFACTS
- - - - -	5 - 9 ARTIFACTS
.....	10 - 14 ARTIFACTS
- - - - -	+15 ARTIFACTS

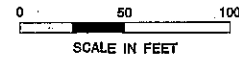


Figure 3. Density of artifacts recovered from the auger testing.

pottery, lithics, bone, ceramics, glass, iron, and other materials. Upon drying the artifacts were temporarily bagged by these categories, pending cataloging.

Cataloging has begun, and is following the system employed by the S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, where we anticipate that the collection and the associated field records will be curated. All original field records will be provided on pH neutral, alkaline buffered paper. Black and white photographic materials have been processed to archival permanence. Color slides, while not considered archivally stable, consist of Fujichrome material, which has the highest degree of permanence next to Kodachrome (which is increasingly difficult to have appropriately processed).

Zooarchaeological materials will be sorted out for analysis. As discussed below, we have identified very little ethnobotanical material with good contexts for study. We do, however, anticipate attempting to recover both pollen and phytolith samples from one area of the excavations.

Results of the Excavations

Auger Testing

As previously mentioned, Figure 3 reveals the artifact density map for the site area. There is clearly a broad smear of artifacts extending east-west, from the edge of the golf course for about 450 feet. This "smear" seems to extend from the southwestern corner of the site northward for about 220 feet. It tends to taper in north-south size toward the east.

Within this broad smear of artifacts we identified two core areas. One is immediately adjacent to the golf course, at the west edge of the site. This concentration seems centered in the area of 50-125R100. The second one is about 75 feet to the east of the first. It is focused in the area of 75-125R175. Both are similar in size and density. Perhaps the most noticeable difference is that the eastern concentration is associated with dense brick rubble, while the western concentration is more clearly associated with dense shell deposits.

A third, albeit much less dense, concentration was found at the eastern edge of the site — around 150R450. Additional testing at 10-foot intervals in this area revealed that the concentration, while not great, was real and extended from about 130 to 170R420-460.

There are additional small concentrations in the site area. Some may reflect actual activity areas or structures, others are likely inconsequential or even misleading. For example, the seemingly dense concentration at 50R175 resulted from an auger test which could not be relocated away from a large spoil pile. Although artifacts are common, they are from a disturbed context. In another area which seemed to have promise, 50R150, a single 10-foot unit was excavated, but found that the area had been extensively disturbed by construction. Other concentrations, such as those at 150R150 and 125R250, were unavailable because of extensive tree growth.

Although the available time did not allow examination of all concentrations revealed by the auger study, we believe that the clear definition of those investigated more than demonstrates the value of the approach.

The auger study also provided information on the vertical distribution of materials. Historic remains tended to be found within the upper 1-foot of the site. Prehistoric pottery, when found, tended to be recovered from the interface of the A and C horizons. Although prehistoric sherds (primarily Deptford) are denser in a few site areas, no clear core area was identified. Nor were any prehistoric features identified in the excavations. Moreover the dense shell area found at the western edge of the site is exclusively associated with historic remains. While prehistoric occupation was present at the site, it appears to have left little evidence beyond the pottery and a small amount of lithics.

Excavations

As stipulated by the research plan, a series of block excavations were opened, based on the concentrations identified in the auger testing. As a result, three block areas were examined.

65R100, 100R100, 75-85R110, Kitchen Area

This block area consists of the three adjacent 10-foot units, 65R100 and 75-85R110, as well as one additional 10-foot unit, 100R100, situated slightly to the north (Figure 4). These units were placed to examine what appeared to be a dense concentration of artifacts in the immediate area (26 specimens at 75R100 and 100R100).

These excavations revealed two distinct profiles. To the east there is about a foot of black (10YR2/1) loamy sand with some mixed shell overlying a dark brown (10YR3/3) sand about 0.4 foot in depth. The upper soil zone was removed as Level 1 and represents midden accumulation, while the lower zone, removed as Level 2, appears to represent the remains of the original A horizon at the site. Moving to the west the quantity of shell increases, so the profile reveals about 0.4 foot of black (10YR2/1) loamy sand overlying a distinct oyster shell zone, about 0.5 foot in depth. The separation between these was often indistinct and the two were removed as Level 1. Below there remains a dark brown (10YR3/3) to dark yellowish brown (10YR3/4) sand that represents the original site humus. To the north there are some intrusions or possible features, represented by burned shell, sand, and lime, revealed in 100R100 profile. The shell density, in spite of these features, declines to the north. Throughout the subsoil consists of a mottled to heavily mottled yellowish-brown (10YR5/6) sand subsoil.

The combined weight of shell from these four units was 1,901 pounds, while brick 1,127 pounds. In general Level 1 produced significantly greater amounts of brick and shell than Level 2. The one exception to this was 100R100 where it appears that the features bisected by the north profile and the difficulty in distinguishing Level 2 in this unit resulted in considerable densities of shell being attributed to the lower level.

While the shell midden was clearly dominated by oyster, very small quantities of highly fragmented ribbed mussel, as well as an occasional whelk, were also identified. Conspicuously absent were clams — which were not identified in the midden.

The excavations produced a number of relatively large historic ceramics. This suggests that the shell midden may represent a discard area associated with a nearby structure. Also present are a range of other specimens, including a single bead, a number of lead fishing weights, and a range of utensils, including both bone handle examples and also several pewter specimens. Animal bone is also plentiful this area, being far more common here than elsewhere on the site. Based on field observations it appears that kitchen artifacts decrease toward the north, while architectural remains (principally nails) increase. It was the bone material, in combination with the range of artifacts, shell, and dark organic soil, that suggested this might be the kitchen area.

At the base of these four units nine post holes were identified (two in 100R100, one in 65R110, one in 75R100, and five in 85R110). Although no patterns are recognizable, all of the posts are substantial, ranging from 1.1 to 2.2 feet. The posts are generally square, or at least "squared," although several suggestive of round posts are also present. Depths range from 0.3 foot to 1.1 feet below the base of the units. While there seems to be considerable variation in posts, they seem to be generally more massive than found at structures such as slave cabins. This may suggest a more substantial structure, such as a kitchen building.

100-115R175, 110-115R185, 75R185, 120R195, 100-120R210, 100R215-225, Main House Area

This noncontiguous block consists of 10 units encompassing 550 square feet (Figure 5). The first unit, 75R185 was excavated to examine what appeared to be a brick column exposed by the site clearing. While it was possible that the house had columns, this seemed unlikely based on what we knew about the owners and economic status. Nevertheless, this column seemed unusual and worthy of investigation. This initial unit revealed a very dark brown (10YR2/2) sandy loam overlying a dark yellowish brown (10YR4/4) transition zone overlying a mottled yellowish brown (10YR5/6) sand subsoil. The upper two soil zones had no recognizable difference in artifacts and were removed together as Level 1.

The excavation in this unit revealed that the

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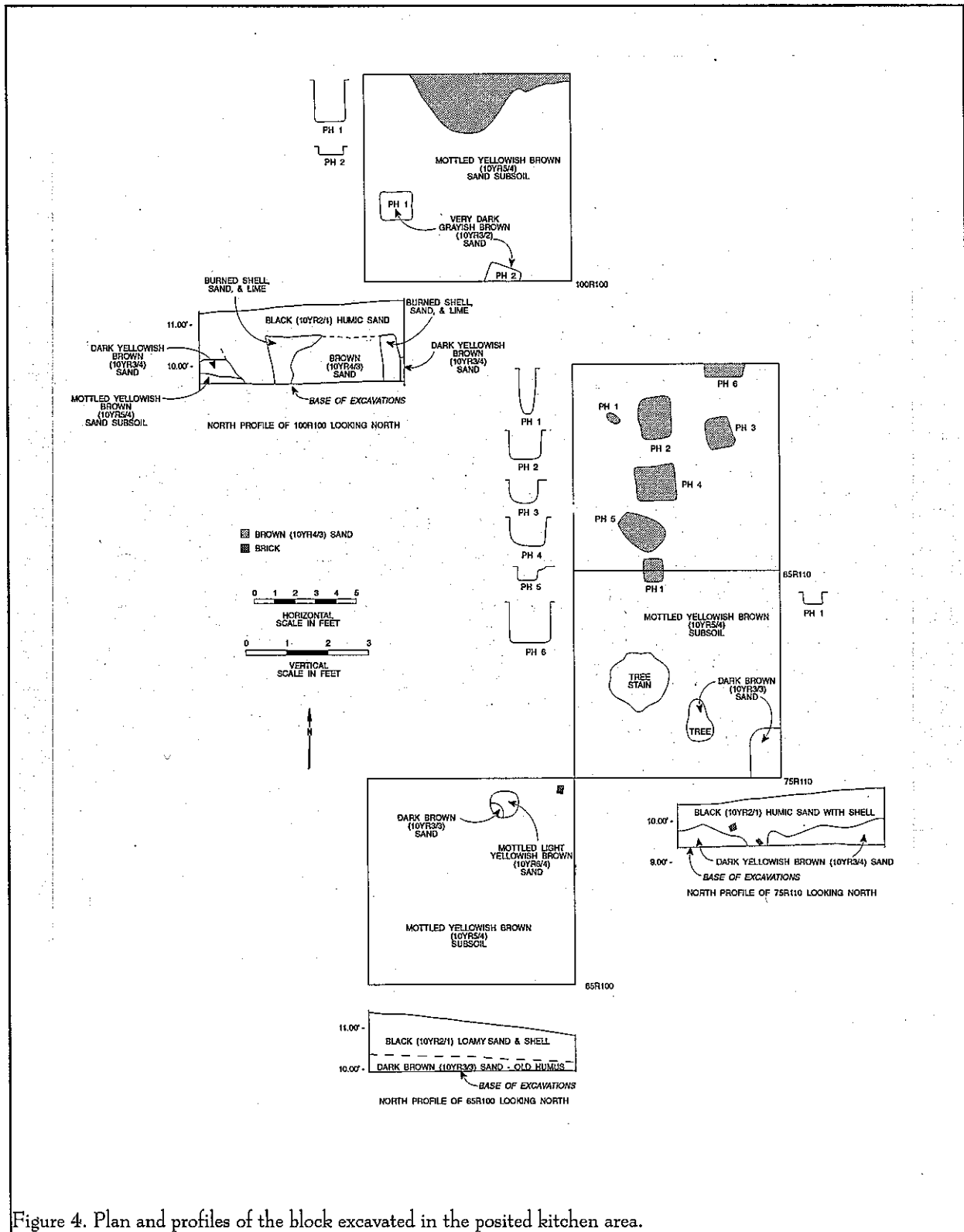


Figure 4. Plan and profiles of the block excavated in the posited kitchen area.

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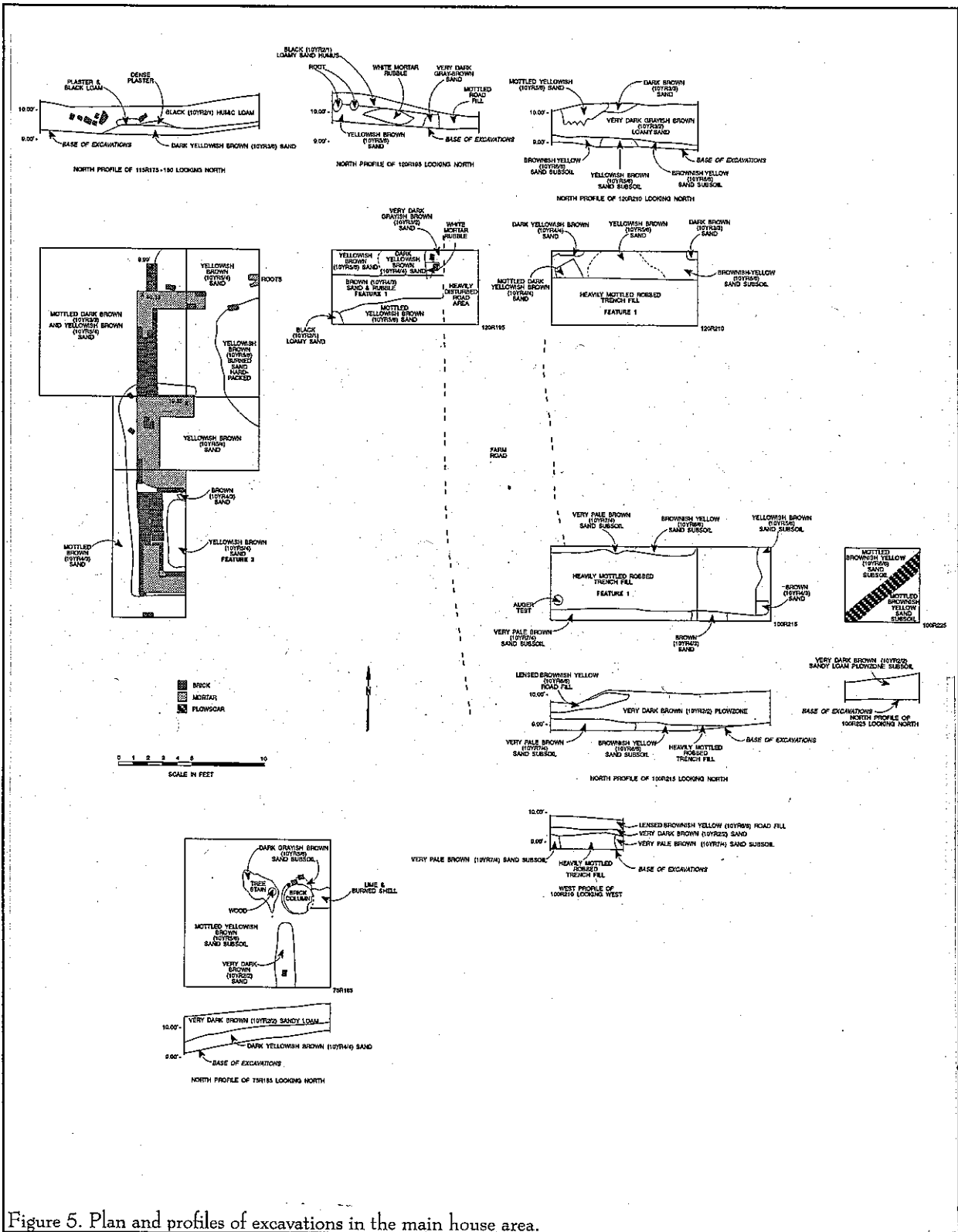


Figure 5. Plan and profiles of excavations in the main house area.

brick column was relatively poorly laid up using brick fragments rather than specially prepared column bricks. The uneven surface was smoothed using a thick coat of what appears to be a low lime cement. The column is 2 feet in diameter. The column is truncated at an elevation of 10.95 feet and extends to a depth of 9.95 feet. Compared to the structure foundations (discussed below), this column is not deeply seated — suggesting it was not structural or load bearing. It may have served as a gate column to the main house yard or even as a support for a plantation bell. Since the feature was situated at the edge of the north-south road running through the area it was not possible to search for a matching column to the east.

The remaining excavations all served to outline (or sought to outline) the main house foundations. The stratigraphy in this part of the site consists of a black (10YR2/1) loamy sand with locally dense brick rubble overlying a dark yellowish brown (10YR3/6) sand that grades into the mottled yellowish-brown (10YR5/4) sand subsoil. The depth to the subsoil was about a foot. In very localized areas there were also dense concentrations of plaster rubble or burned debris, while in the base of the units there might be patches of yellowish-brown (10YR5/8), hard-packed burned sand.

To the east this profile is replaced by the extensive disturbance caused by the dirt road which runs north-south through the site area. This road has created disturbance to depths ranging from 0.5 to 1.0 foot, completely obliterating the original profile and replacing it with lenses yellow and black soils. Further east, on the opposite side of the road, the profile again changes. In this area we find a clearly defined plowzone from 0.8 to 1.1 feet in depth consisting of dark brown (10YR2/2) sand over a subsoil of very pale brown (10YR7/4) sand. Plowscars, while not abundant, are present and well defined, running northeast-southwest.

The foundation of the main house was found intact only west of the north-south bisecting road. In the road area and to the east the foundation had been completely robbed out, ostensibly to permit cultivation. The effort to remove the foundation was very aggressive, with complete removal rather than simply lowering it to below the cultivation level. In other words, the effort was made to not only remove the foundation, but also

the footer. Moreover, the resulting trench is far deeper than the footer and straight sided. This suggests that it was dug out by hand. The brick and mortar rubble in the fill is also less than would be expected if the bricks were being broken apart on site and cleaned for reuse elsewhere. We suspect that the foundation was being fully exposed by digging, broken into sections, and then the individual sections were dug out and hauled elsewhere for disposal. They might, for example, have been used as fill for a marsh causeway. In any event, it doesn't appear that they were removed with the intent of being reused.

Where the foundation is intact it consisted of a footer two bricks in width (1.6 feet or 18 inch) laid in English common bond four courses in depth (the top ranging from 8.89 to 8.90 and the base from 7.73 to 7.82 feet). This appears to have been a continuous footer, running the perimeter of the entire structure. On it were then laid up corner foundations and the one identified chimney.

The corners were less substantial, 1.1 feet in width (what is commonly called a 9-inch wall), but were continued up in English common bond. They were all truncated immediately below the extant ground surface. The northwest corner measured 4.7 feet east-west by 3.1 feet north-south. The southwest corner repeated the 3.1 feet north-south dimension, although the east-west length was not fully exposed.

The single chimney continued the use of an 18-inch wall and the footer was found continuing under the chimney arms. The interior dimensions of this chimney are 3.7 by 2.3 feet.

All of the mortar used in the foundation contains numerous fragments of oyster shell. Individual bricks were well made and well fired. They measure, on average, $9\frac{5}{8}$ by 4 by $2\frac{3}{8}$ -inches. The examined bricks were all soft-mud varieties which were sand-struck. One evidenced a slight lip, or excess clay, found adjacent to the struck surface. Gurke (1987:108) suggests that this is caused when the brick is struck and clay is moved downward and outward as the strike moves across the face of the brick. That the bricks are handmade, however, is expected, given the probable age of the house.

While not common, the excavations also yielded examples of red clay paver tiles, about $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch in thickness. No specimens of stone (such as either paving stone or marble fireplace surrounds) were identified and were likely not present.

The plaster recovered from the excavations all indicates a base coat applied to wood lath, with an overlying finish coat. There is no evidence of hair in the basecoat. Several samples exhibit a dark bluish coating, thought to represent oxidized paint. Similar material was found at Broom Hall and identified as distemper paint and sizing (Trinkley et al. 1995:85). The recovered samples from this site will also be examined as part of the analysis.

The structure measures 20.2 feet north-south by approximately 40.3 feet east-west, resulting in a first floor plan of 800 square feet. The one identified chimney is centered on the west wall and, we presume, there was a mate on the east wall, typical of a through-hall plan. It is likely that this structure contained a room on either side of a central hallway on at least two floors, based on the nature of the footer. While the first floor was likely raised two or three feet above the ground, the use of distinct foundation piers, rather than a continuous foundation, suggests that there was no use of this lower space. The roof was wood shingled (there was no evidence of slate or tile roofing, nor was there any evidence of late nineteenth-early twentieth century modifications, such as tin or roll asphalt) and the building, above the foundation, was likely frame, based on the sparse brick and abundance of nails. Glazed windows were common, with abundant melted glass recovered from several units (which may assist in reconstructing approximate window locations).

Evidence of some sort of portico or porch is present for both the north and south elevations, where small brick piers are found adjacent to the main foundation. Only one of these piers, at the northwest corner, was still partially in situ. There is was represented by a 9-inch wall two courses in depth extending north from the foundation for 1.8 feet. This foundation exhibited a cold joint with the footer and corner pier. It was also far shallower than the main structure foundation.

This structure resembles those reported by Shelby Smith (1999) being built in the last half of the eighteenth century. This was a period, she notes, when planters' houses became less elaborate and more "vernacular," reflecting "the new dominance of urban life" where the townhouse became the focal point of the planter's display of wealth (Smith 1999:140). She observes that plantation houses tend to become larger — leaving the Jervey house at the low end of the spectrum. Moreover, houses tended to include higher basements — again in contrast to this structure. We suspect that these anomalies are associated with the modest wealth of the owner. The economic situation in Christ Church probably prevented subsequent owners from making any major modifications to the house — so its early appearance is passed down in the archaeological record relatively unaltered.

Features in this block area are limited to those associated with the foundation. Feature 1 represents the robbed trench and was removed in three units, 100R210-215 and 120R195. The former provides information on the southeast corner location and includes a robbed trench 14 feet in length east-west and 3.8 feet north-south. The depth of the feature varies from 0.98 to 1.40 feet and the fill consisted of heavily mottled and lenses brown (10YR4/3) sand fill with both brick and mortar rubble. Feature 1 from 120R195 exposed a portion 7.5 feet in length and the trench had a maximum width of 3.4 feet — very similar to that found in the other portion of the feature excavated. In this area the feature had a depth of 1.31 feet. In both areas artifacts were present, but not abundant. Those recovered are consistent with those found from Level 1 and include a small number of ceramics, much melted flat glass, and many nails.

Feature 2 is the builder's trench associated with the exterior wall of the fireplace and footer found in 110R180. The trench varied in width from 0.8 to 1.6 feet and the depth was 1.8 feet, terminating about 0.05 foot below the foundation footer, which was laid up on a mortar bed. The fill of this trench consisted of a very dark grayish-brown (10YR3/2) sand with occasional brick bats and lumps of mortar. The exposed mortar joints of the wall were not struck within the trench. Artifacts include a small assortment of nails, ceramics, and bone. The generally low density of

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remains suggests that this was the initial structure at the site.

Feature 3 is the builder's trench in the space between the southern fireplace arm and the southwest building corner in 100R175. This represents the interior trench and, at least in this area, it was far wider, suggesting that the footer was laid up from the building interior (in addition, the mortar joints in this area are also far neater than those found with the opening of Feature 2. The trench was again slightly deeper than the brick footer, the difference being made up by the mortar pad. The fill was a yellowish-brown (10YR5/6) sand with rubble inclusions. Artifacts were very similar to those found in Feature 2.

The only other stains found in these excavations were two probable post holes in 120R210, perhaps representing scaffolding associated with the construction of the house.

124-134R445, 144R450 and 149R460, Slave Structure

This block was initially opened because the auger testing (followed by shovel testing at 10-foot intervals) revealed a light, but clearly defined concentration of artifacts. The units in this area were offset from the normal north-south grid points to avoid large stumps (hence 124R445 rather than 125R445). The initial 200 square feet of hand excavation was followed by an additional 410 square feet of mechanical stripping (Figure 6).

The stratigraphy in this part of the site consists of about a foot of dark grayish brown (10YR4/2) plowzone overlying a mottled yellowish-brown (10YR5/4) sand subsoil. Here, like closer to the main house, plowscars were not numerous, but were always distinct and ran from the northeast to the southwest.

Artifact density in this area was not great, but it was consistent. The specimens include a broad range of ceramics, architectural material (primarily nails), and other remains. Brick is present in all of the excavation, although the total weight was only 45 pounds. Shell, consisting of only 2 pounds, was limited to 124R445.

The most notable aspect of these excavations was the identification of two lines of post holes — one tracking east-west across units 144R450 and 149R460 and another seemingly turning south in 144R450 and continuing through 124R445. Upon excavation these post holes were found to range in width from about 0.6 to 1.5 feet. Depths likewise exhibited some variation, ranging from 0.4 foot to 1.5 feet. Most were square, although a few round posts were also present. Several of the post holes have a ledge, typically suggesting that the posts were initially placed on the ledge and then slipped into position. The fill of these post holes contained few artifacts, but occasional nails or ceramics were recovered, clearly indicating that they were associated with a historic structure.

The mechanical stripping revealed the southwest, southeast, and northeast corners, revealing a structure measuring 18 feet east-west by 24 feet north-south, representing a floor area of 432 square feet. No doorway or chimney were revealed by the stripping, although a second partial line of post holes was encountered to the south of the structure's southwest corner. The post holes are spaced from 1 to 6.5 feet apart (assuming that none were missed or destroyed by plowing). The posts on the north and south sides of the structure have mean distances of 3.0 and 3.6 feet respectively, while those on the east and west sides have mean distances of 2.95 and 2.36 feet. Although not a great difference, it may be that additional supports were necessary on the long walls to carry the roof system.

45R155, Yard Area

This excavation represents a single 10-foot unit (Figure 7) originally excavated in effort to see if the artifact smear from the west site edge continued to the east. The excavation here revealed a very dark brown (10YR3/2) about 0.3 to 0.6 foot in depth grading into a dark brown (10YR3/3) sand. This was about 0.3 foot in depth and rested on a mottled yellowish-brown (10YR5/6) sand subsoil.

Artifacts were numerous — more than found to the north in the main house area, but far less than found to the west in the kitchen area. More significantly, the unit revealed evidence of considerable

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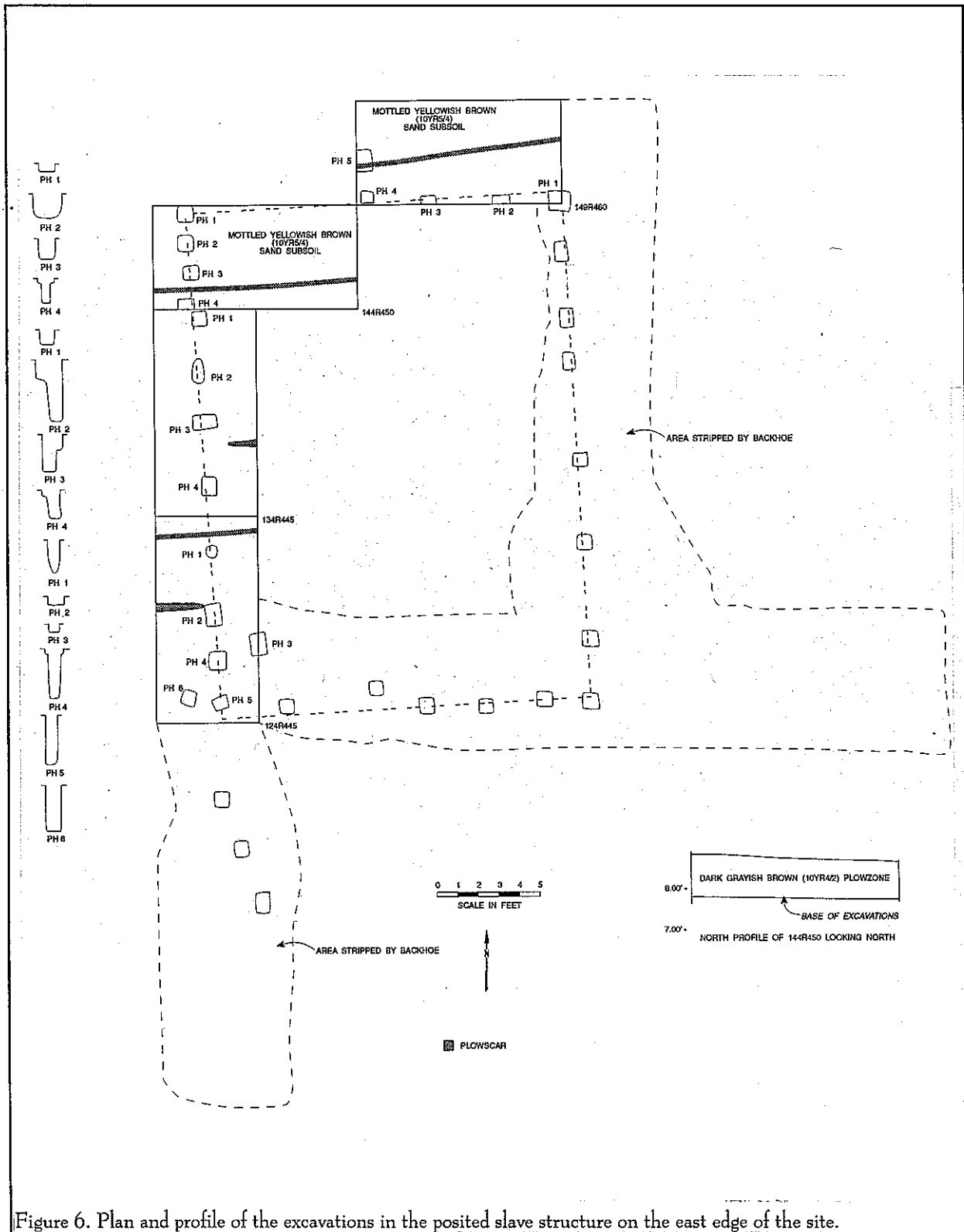



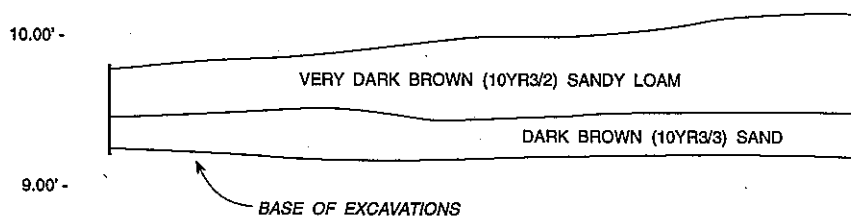
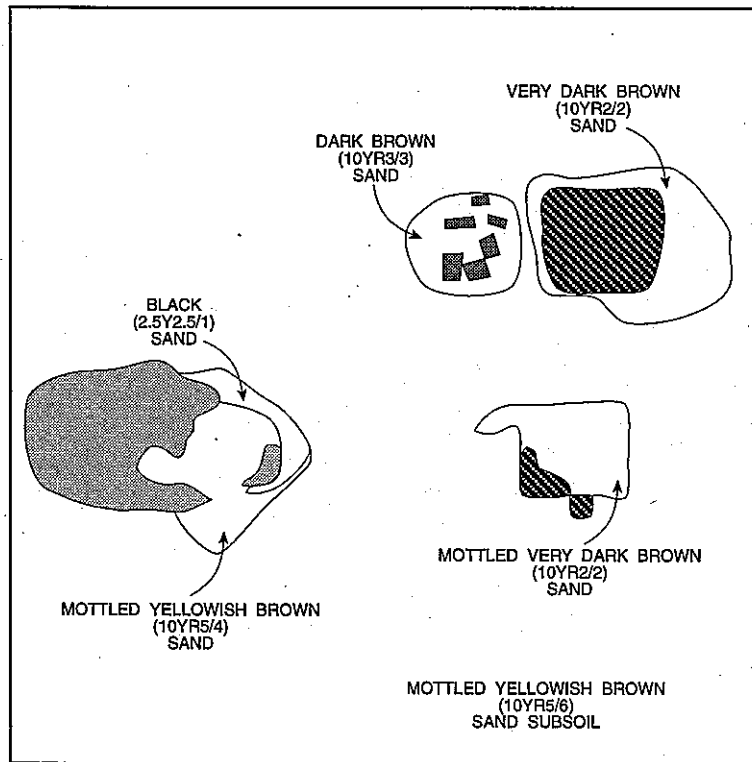


Figure 6. Plan and profile of the excavations in the posited slave structure on the east edge of the site.

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-  BEACH SHELLS & GRAYISH BROWN (10YR5/2) SAND
-  BROWNISH YELLOW (10YR5/6) SAND
-  BRICK



NORTH PROFILE LOOKING NORTH

Figure 7. Plan and profile of 45R155.

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disturbance. At the base of the unit we identified several "features" containing modern fill material, such as beach sand with pulverized shells. Given the disturbance here we decided that no additional units would be opened.

SUMMARY

Research Questions

While the failure to recover architectural remains associated with the kitchen building is a disappointment, the area produced a very substantial collection of artifacts associated with the plantation, primarily from the context of trash middens. Such middens have been found at other low country settlements and seems to be an alternative means of trash disposal to either marsh deposits or the use of abandoned wells. In this case we were able to acquire a good collection of materials for both dating and analysis of status. While the remains likely reflect a mixture of both slave and owner materials, we believe that the bulk of the remains are likely from the owner's house, which seems to be in close proximity.

These remains will be of particular importance in helping to compare the status of the owners of this plantation with others in Christ Church Parish, such as Whitesides to the south. We hope they will also help us to better understand the origin of the plantation, perhaps more conclusively associating its earliest occupation with Thomas Player.

The identification of what appears to be a slave dwelling at the eastern edge of the site provides not only information on the African Americans who worked at this plantation. This allows a comparison of both owner and slave status at the same plantation (which we were not able to do at Whitesides). It also provides information on the use and arrangement of the plantation landscape. It appears that the kitchen, main house, and slave dwelling were all arranged on a long east-west line, expanding the vista of the plantation. The discovery of this structure also expands our information on slave dwellings, revealing a relatively large slave earth-fast structure lacking evidence of a hearth.

Perhaps the most significant result of this excavation is the identification of architectural remains associated with the main dwelling. Here we were able to determine not only the size of the main house, but also a fair amount concerning its construction methods and final appearance. The artifact assemblage, however, is sparse, consisting primarily of architectural remains. It is clear that the house was empty — and likely long abandoned — before it burned. The relative scarcity of major architectural hardware also suggests that the structure was at least partially salvaged either before or after the fire.

One of the most disappointing aspects of the research thus far has been our inability to identify anyone still alive who remembers this dwelling. The one individual previously reported discussing the site has since died. We are currently attempting to locate the individual who conducted the interview, in the hopes that additional details may have been discussed which were not included in the report. We are also seeking calendars or indices for the voluminous Dill Family papers, in the hope that there may be some information on this tract in those records.

It seems likely, however, that the Jervey Plantation is likely to be one of those plantations for which little historic documentation will be identified. As a result, our interpretations must be focused on the archaeological records. Complicating this approach, however, are the numerous owners and the failure to recover (or at least thus far to recognize) distinct assemblages associated with specific owners.

Status of Processing

The collections are being washed, with about 60% of the work completed. Once washed, collections are rough sorted and this, too, is about 60% completed. Within the next month we anticipate finishing the

washing and sorting. Cataloging and analysis has also begun, although less than 5% is currently completed.

There were no feature flotation samples, although there are several samples from the kitchen area suitable for pollen and phytolith study. These will be processed and submitted within the next month. Animal bone is especially abundant from the kitchen area and will be pulled as the materials are cataloged.

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