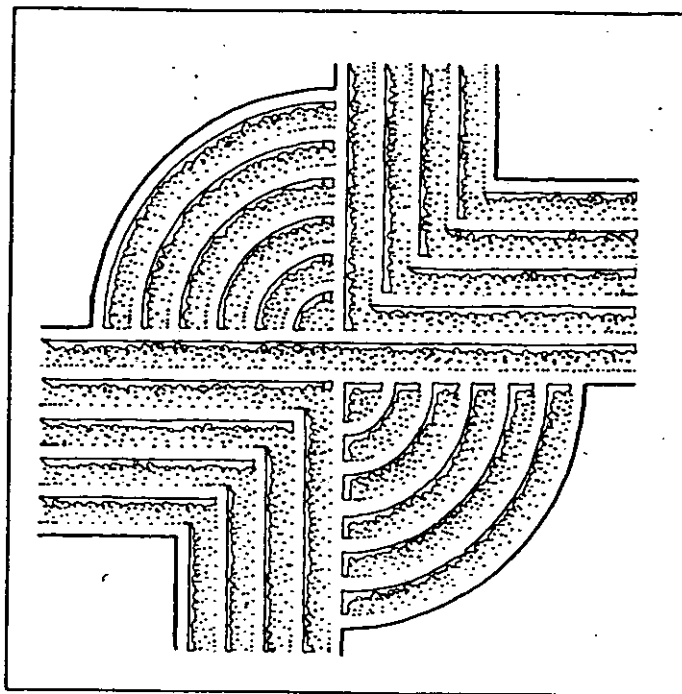


MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL
DATA RECOVERY AT 38BU153, 38BU591, AND
38BU961, HAIG POINT, DAUFUSKIE ISLAND
[BEAUFORT COUNTY], SOUTH CAROLINA



RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 39

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AT 38BU153, 38BU591, AND 38BU961,
HAIG POINT, DAUFUSKIE ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Chicora Research Contribution 39

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Introduction

As part of the continuing compliance with the Haig Point Memorandum of Agreement, Chicora Foundation entered into an agreement with International Paper Realty Corporation of South Carolina in August 1989 to conduct archaeological data recovery at three sites, 38BU153, 38BU591, and 38BU961, based on our July 6, 1989 proposal. This research design was reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office. The research involves work at three slave structures forming the western end of site 38BU153, five areas at site 38BU591, and at one structure at a posited Colonial occupation recently identified as site 38BU961.

This present management summary has been prepared immediately upon completion of the field work and does not contain information on artifact analyses. It is intended solely to provide a brief descriptive statement of the work conducted by Chicora and to allow the State Historic Preservation Office to verify that the proposed work has actually been accomplished.

Archaeological investigations were begun at 38BU153 on August 24, 1989 and continued through September 18 with a crew of four individuals (including the principal investigator, Dr. Michael Trinkley). A total of 625 person hours were devoted to this work, although 37.5 person hours were spent in the field laboratory or were lost due to rain. Research at 38BU153 began on September 18 and continued through October 7, for a total of 375.5 person hours. Only 3 person hours were lost at this site because of rain. Investigations at 38BU961 were conducted from October 8 through October 12 for a total of 160 person hours.

Chicora proposed to excavate a total of 600 square feet at 38BU153; a total of 875 square feet were exposed. A total excavation of 1700 square feet was proposed at 38BU153, while a total of 1730 square feet were investigated. This work was accomplished in spite of the time lost to hurricane Hugo. At 38BU961 Chicora anticipated exposure of 500 square feet and a total of 600 square feet were actually excavated. A total of 648 cubic feet of soil at 38BU153, 1051.5 cubic feet at 38BU591, and 522 cubic feet at 38BU961 were excavated and sifted through 1/4-inch mesh in primary excavations.

At the request of Mr. Ray Pantlik, the sites were left open for the upcoming visit by Dr. George Vogt, although all units were covered with plastic and are surrounded by barricade tape. Chicora Foundation has verbally informed International Paper of the hazards associated with these units and we understand that they will be backfilled by Haig Point later in October.

Previous Site Investigations

Site 38BU153, known as the North Tabby Slave Row, forms an arc running about 1200 feet from the Lighthouse to just west of the Strachen Mansion. The site was first recorded by Lepionka in 1978, although the first investigations were those conducted during Michie's (1983) reconnaissance survey of Daufuskie Island. The site is situated on a low bluff adjacent to Calibogue Sound. The soils are excessively drained Wando sands and the site elevation ranges from about 10 to 15 feet mean sea level (MSL).

Lepionka's 1978 survey reported only four structures, although this number increased to 13 as a result of Michie's (1983) survey. Recent investigations by Chicora have increased this number to 14 (Trinkley 1989a). Lepionka conducted extensive excavations at two structures in 1986 (Lepionka 1988), although this work has not been thoroughly reported and the artifacts have yet to be curated. Additional information on the architectural remains is provided by Brooker in Trinkley (1989b).

As International Paper advanced plans to develop a portion of 38BU153, Chicora Foundation conducted tests in the site area west of the Strachen Mansion (Trinkley 1989a) and proposed further investigations. This management summary details the work conducted at 38BU153.

Site 38BU591, also known as the Haig Point Lighthouse or the Haig Point Plantation, is situated on a moderately high bluff overlooking Calibogue Sound. The site is on excessively drained Wando soils and the elevation ranges from 15 to 20 feet MSL. Portions of the site were first examined by Michie (1983). Brown conducted additional work at the site in 1985 (Lepionka 1988), identifying the various archaeological components of the main Haig Point plantation house. At the same time, Lepionka (1988) apparently conducted some limited testing south the main house site, concentrating on an area he refers to as 38BU591 South. This locus was situated approximately 210 feet south of the Lighthouse and Lepionka reports finding a thin scatter of artifacts and brick rubble (including a possible brick chimney section), although no in situ architectural remains were reported. Curiously, Lepionka's work was approximately 10 feet north of recently investigated Structure 2.

Chicora has conducted survey testing in this area and began data recovery excavations in January and February 1989 (Trinkley 1989c). This work revealed much more extensive deposits than originally anticipated, with three structures identified which were determined to require more intensive investigations. Structure 1 was found to represent a 16-foot square structure with a wattle and mortar daub chimney. While originally thought to represent a slave structure, more thorough analyses of the associated artifacts suggests that this was a middle status

dwelling occupied in the last half of the eighteenth century. Structure 2 was found to be 30 by 32 feet in size and to date from the early nineteenth century. Structure 3 was exposed during backfilling and was recognized only on the basis of a brick chimney (Trinkley 1989a, 1989c). Additional work was recommended at each of these structures, as well as at two midden areas.

Site 38BU961 was identified by Chicora during survey testing in March 1989 (Trinkley 1989a). The site was thought to represent a colonial period structure similar to Structure 1 at 38BU591 and was recommended for more intensive investigations.

Excavations

The grid previously established for 38BU153 (Trinkley 1989a) was used to the excavation of this site and vertical control was maintained through the use of a mean sea level datum at 300R1000 with an elevation of 12.32 feet. Likewise, the grid previously established for 38BU591 (Trinkley 1989c) was used and vertical control was maintained through the previously established datum at 50R100 with an elevation of 15.72 feet. The 38BU153 grid was extended west in order to encompass 38BU961, although a secondary datum, with an elevation of 13.31 feet, at 240R300 was used to maintain vertical control. A modified Chicago 10-foot grid was established at each site, with the squares designated by their southeast corner, form a 0R0 point to the southwest of the sites. Thus, the southeast corner of square 10R10 would be north 10 feet and right (or east) 10 feet from the 0R0 point.

Soil from the non-shell midden excavations was screened through 1/4-inch mesh using mechanical sifters. Soil from the shell middens was screened through 1/8-inch mesh to improve the recovery of small animal bones. In addition, a 1.2 foot square sample of midden was weighted prior to sifting and the shell, collected for specialized analyses, was weighed after screening. This provides a quantified statement of shell density for each of the middens. Shellfish analyses, by Dr. David Lawrence, will include species diversity, habitat information, and season of collection. Faunal analyses are to be conducted by Dr. Jack Wilson, and will build upon previous investigations at Haig Point (Wilson in Trinkley 1989b). Ethnobotanical investigations will be conducted by the Principal Investigator of both hand picked and flotation samples. Colin Brooker has been involved in this project as the architectural historian and has visited each of the sites under study. He will more thoroughly discuss and evaluate the architectural remains.

Units were troweled at the top of subsoil, photographed in b/w and color slides, and plotted. Excavation was by natural zones and soil samples were routinely collected. Features were routinely bisected, with both soil samples and 2 to 5 gallon flotation samples collected. Features were excavated by natural

soil zones where possible and were separately photographed, plotted, and profiled during their removal. The feature fill was screened through 1/8-inch mesh to improve the recovery rate of faunal remains.

Field notes were prepared on pH neutral and alkaline buffered paper and photographic materials were processed to archival standards. All original field notes, with archival copies, will be curated at The Environmental and Historical Museum of Hilton Head Island, as Accession Number 1989.1. All specimens will be evaluated for conservation needs and will be treated prior to curation.

38BU153

Investigations at this site were conducted in three distinct areas. Units 275R1000 and 285R995 represent two 10-foot units placed to study Structure 3 (represented by an above grade tabby chimney rubble pile) and an adjacent shell midden pile. Zone 1a represented humic soil, while Zone 1b represented shell midden, only the toe of which was found in the northern unit, 285R995. Zone 2 represented a transitional humic lens overlying subsoil. This humic zone was primarily found in the southern unit, 275R1000, where it had been protected by the overlying shell midden. Artifacts from the shell midden were found to date from the postbellum, about 1880 to 1900. Since this midden overlays the southeast corner of the slave structure, the midden was deposited after the abandonment of the slave row and it is probable that a postbellum structure occurs somewhere in the immediate vicinity. Zone 2 represents relic humus from the antebellum period and contains artifacts dating from about 1830 to 1840. Unit 285R995 revealed three massive post holes, which based on comparisons with Structure 1 (discussed below) formed a portion of Structure 3's south wall.

Unit 290R920 was excavated adjacent to the tabby fire box of Structure 2 and revealed a Zone 1 of brown humic sand with shell and mortar rubble overlying a Zone 2 of light brown sand which graded into subsoil. This unit also revealed two large post holes, which again based on the more intensive investigations at Structure 1, are realized to form a portion of Structure 2's northeast wall. No postbellum artifacts were recovered and this structure also suggests a date range of about 1830 to 1840.

Structure 3 was investigated through the excavation of five 10-foot units, one 5 by 10-foot unit, and one 5-foot square (270R820-830, 280R830, 290R815, 290R820-840) which exposed about 80% of the structure. Again, Zone 1 represents brown humic sand with shell and tabby rubble (found around the chimney), while Zone 2 represents a gradual transition to subsoil and is remnant humus. The near complete exposure of this structure provided invaluable architectural information on the slave row.

The structure, which measured about 13 by 20 feet was constructed off the ground with a series of six massive posts on each side bearing the sill. These posts, of pine heartwood, probably measured 8 to 10 inches in diameter and were set into the ground about 2 feet. The post holes ranged from 1.5 to 2.0 feet square and were typically slightly deeper than 2 feet. At the base of each post hole, rubble had been added to seat the post and to promote drainage. Six of the posts were found in situ. The placement of the posts had been assisted by the excavation of a shallow trench, about 0.1 to 0.2 foot in depth, which outlined the structure. Posts were set at 4-foot centers, except at the posited doorways, where the posts were 3 feet apart. The primary doorway, based on door and yard smear, faced north, toward the marsh. Oral accounts reveal that there was a road running parallel to the site in this area in the early twentieth century. Other architectural artifacts were sparse and nails seem to be found in an insufficient quantity to support frame construction. While salvaging of construction materials is a possible explanation, nails are typically salvaged through burning of the structure and very little evidence of such an occurrence was found. The massive posts supporting the sill suggest the possibility of a log structure, which would have required fewer nails.

The excavation of Structure 1 also revealed the likelihood that this slave row replaced an earlier row. This is based on the presence of a few artifacts clearly earlier than the primary 1830-1840 date range and the discovery of noticeable amounts of tabby mortar ground flooring. While not clear archaeological "foot print" of these earlier structures was found, we speculate that they dated from about 1800 and were built at grade with poured mortar floors. Such structures typically leave little architectural evidence.

38BU591

Investigations at this site included the excavation of a single 10-foot unit (150R100) to expose the southeast corner of Structure 1, previously investigated (Trinkley 1989c). This work identified the drip line and corner post for the structure. Further excavations, to completely expose the structure, were not undertaken because of the heavy tree disturbance to the north. This study, however, did not reveal evidence of the heavy doorway smear found to the west. Two additional units, 100-100R100, were excavated to the south of the structure in a posited midden area. Abundant colonial artifacts were found, dating to the 1770-1780 occupation of Structure 1.

A series of five 10-foot units (170-180R30-40, 190R30) were excavated to explore Structure 3, evidenced by the at grade fired brick chimney. These investigations revealed that there were three distinct building episodes associated with this structure.

The first, perhaps around 1850-1860, is evidenced by a poured mortar hearth level, which indicates the structure was not raised off the ground. No other information about this construction phase was recovered. The second phase, using the same chimney, occurred about 1870, and the 12-foot square structure was raised off the ground on corner posts. A faint drip line, indicating a gabled roof construction, was recovered. The third and final phase is thought to date from about 1880. At this time the chimney arms were lengthened and the structure was increased to a size of 14 by 16 feet.

The identification of these structures confirms the oral history collected by Mrs. William Scouten in the 1930s that freedmen were living south the Lighthouse in the 1880s. This structure is thought to be the source of the postbellum midden investigated by unit 160R60 in January and February (Trinkley 1989c). Further analyses of the collection will contribute to our understanding of postbellum black lifestyles on Daufuskie.

A single 10-foot unit, 220R70, was excavated on a small rise south of Structure 2 and was originally thought to be in an area of shell midden deposits. Investigations revealed that this area is a natural sand rise with a cap of rubble associated with Structure 2. Below this thin veneer of rubble were artifacts tentatively attributed to the Civil War occupation of Haig Point.

Structure 2, situated about 230 feet south of the Lighthouse, was originally identified during the January and February investigations (Trinkley 1989c). The structure was more fully investigated during this project through the excavation of units exposing the foundation walls (260R45, 262R555-65, 260R75, 270R45, 270R75, 280R45, 280R75, 290R45, 293R55, 290R65-75). The complexity of the structure prevented complete exposure of the interior area (designated Feature 11).

This is an exceedingly significant structure, measuring 30 by 32 feet with a foundation constructed of both poured tabby (at the corners and along the centers of each wall) and tabby brick (used as in-fill between the tabby pours). Archaeological remains indicate an initial date of about 1825-1830, with the structure standing though the Civil War (at which time it was occupied by Union troops). Architectural and archaeological data suggest that the structure faced the sound and had a porch across this east facade. The structure was at least 2-1/2 stories high at the front or east and 1-1/2 stories at the rear or west. The half story represents a semi-subterranean basement used for ventilation and it is likely that the tabby foundations continued up to the first full floor level. Above this the structure was probably of frame construction with a three bay organization, identical to the large tabby plantation house now under the Lighthouse. There is clear evidence of very fine finishing plaster on the interior and some of these plaster fragments

suggest finishing molding details.

One plausible explanation for this structure is that it represents the first Haig Point Plantation house built by Hiram and Sarah Blodgett, perhaps to live in while the larger tabby house was under construction. Structure 3 could have been erected in about six months, while the larger tabby house probably required two years (Colin Brooker, personal communication 1989). A significant key to this question is a letter in the possession of Mrs. Billie Burns, which is reported to be from Sarah Blodgett, complaining that the current house was too small for proper entertaining. Chicora is currently attempting to obtain a copy of this correspondence.

Important architectural questions remain concerning this structure, including the location of chimneys, and the purpose of a tabby brick addition to the south facade of the structure.

38BU961

Research at this site included the excavation of an "L"-shaped block (units 140R300, 150R280-300) in the area previously identified as evidencing dense architectural debris (Trinkley 1989a). These excavations revealed a relatively low density of colonial artifacts, and a dense deposit of mortar rubble. Close examination of the rubble revealed a number of chinking fragments showing clear log impressions. The excavations, however, failed to immediately identify any in situ architectural remains. This site was found to have been plowed, with Zone 1 being about 0.8 foot in depth. Underlying this plowzone were several features with minimal plowscar damage. One feature represents the base of what appears to be an outdoor hearth, while the other is a large, deep pit with very light domestic refuse. Faunal and ethnobotanical preservation is excellent at the site, in spite of the light cultivation.

When no architectural remains could be found in the area originally surveyed, additional survey was conducted. While the original work was based on the assumption that there was a single colonial structure present, the additional work was grounded in the possibility that additional structures might be present, and that, in fact, the site might represent a very early Haig Point slave row. A light scatter of shell was found continuing to the southeast for about 300 feet and to the northwest (into the area of the Savannah Walk development) for an additional 200 feet.

A second excavation area was established at 230R190-200, at the woods edge of Savannah Walk. These excavations continued to reveal evidence of plowing, but again intact features were found at the base of the plowzone, including two outdoor hearths and a shell pit. Examples of the mortar chinking continued to be found, although in lesser quantities, while the artifact density

was greater in this area.

While relatively little of this site has been examined, it appears likely that 38BU961 represents a slave row dating from about 1770 to 1820, perhaps overlapping the ownership of the plantation by George Haig III and David John Mongin. The slave structures were of log construction and rested on the ground. These remains have been examined by Brooker and it is possible that at this date the slave houses may have measured only 10 by 12 feet and lacked interior hearths. It seems probable that the first excavation area is in the immediate vicinity of such a structure, while the second excavation area is situated between two houses. Clearly this is an exceedingly important site since it has not only the potential to document the usage of the plantation prior to any known historical accounts, but also because of the limited comparative archaeological data on eighteenth century slave lifeways in South Carolina.

Interpretations

This current research at Haig Point continues to clarify both the archaeological and historical record surrounding Haig Point. At the same time, it presents a number of unanswered questions.

There continues to be amassed evidence that the Haig Point Plantation began to be an economic entity well before it was purchased by John David Mongin for his son David John in 1810. Both the higher status colonial dwelling at 38BU591 (Structure 1) and the probable slave row at 38BU961 indicate an occupation beginning perhaps as early the 1760s and certainly by the 1780s. While 38BU961 has been plowed, and the architectural remains expected from the slave row are ephemeral, the site has the potential to explain life at Haig Point during a time period represented by no other known sites. The only other comparable sites in South Carolina are the Vaughan and Curriboo Plantations (Wheaton et al. 1983) in Berkeley County.

The presence of log architecture from this early colonial period continues to be observed on the plantation in the structures at 38BU153 (dating ca. 1830-1840) built by Hiram Blodgett and the structures at 38BU634 (dating ca. 1850-1860) built by William Pope. This continuum has important implications to the understanding of "frontier" plantations on the isolated sea islands.

Excavations at the west end of the 38BU153 slave row indicate a new, and previously undetected building episode. This is very significant data in more completely understanding the process of expansion of the Haig Point property during the early antebellum period.

Finally, the identification of a previously unsuspected earlier plantation house reveals further information on the growth and patterning of the plantation. If historical documentation in the possession of Mrs. Billie Burns can be incorporated into our analysis of the structure at 38BU591, it may be possible to more accurately determine its construction and reconstruct some degree of social history surrounding Haig Point.

These investigations have provided limited data on plantation slaves from the last third of the eighteenth century and the first two decades of the nineteenth century (during the tenure of Haig and Mongin), and the first half of the nineteenth century (during the period of Blodgett's ownership). Previous work at 38BU634 has produced data from the very late antebellum period (during the waning days of the plantation under the ownership of Pope). Comparison of these three periods will assist in a better diachronic understanding of the plantation and the lifestyle of the black slaves.

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