

The background of the cover is a photograph of a wetland landscape. In the foreground, there is a body of water with ripples. In the middle ground, there is a grassy area with a small bird in flight. In the background, there is a line of trees under a sky with white clouds. The text is overlaid on this image.

WORMSLOE

FELLOWSHIP

RESEARCH

COMPENDIUM

2015 - 2017

SEAN DUNLAP
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE LABORATORY
COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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WORMSLOE:

FELLOWSHIP RESEARCH COMPENDIUM, 2015-2017

WORMSLOE

Chatham County,
Georgia



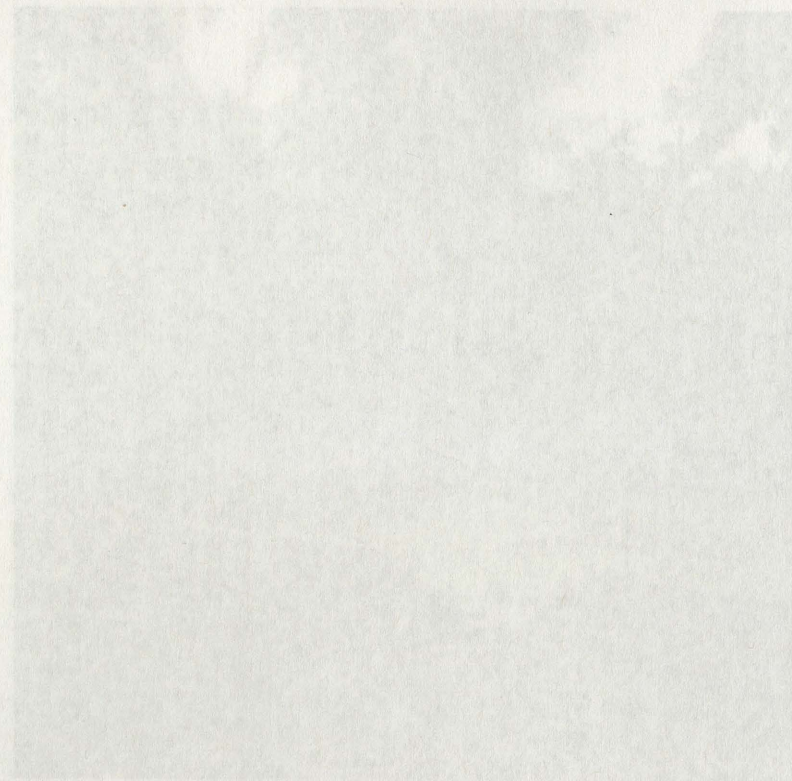
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I would also like to thank Cari Goetcheus, who designed this project, secured its funding, and tapped me to undertake it. She was key to helping me make sense of the complex and sometimes conflicting methodologies of cultural landscapes and the National Register.

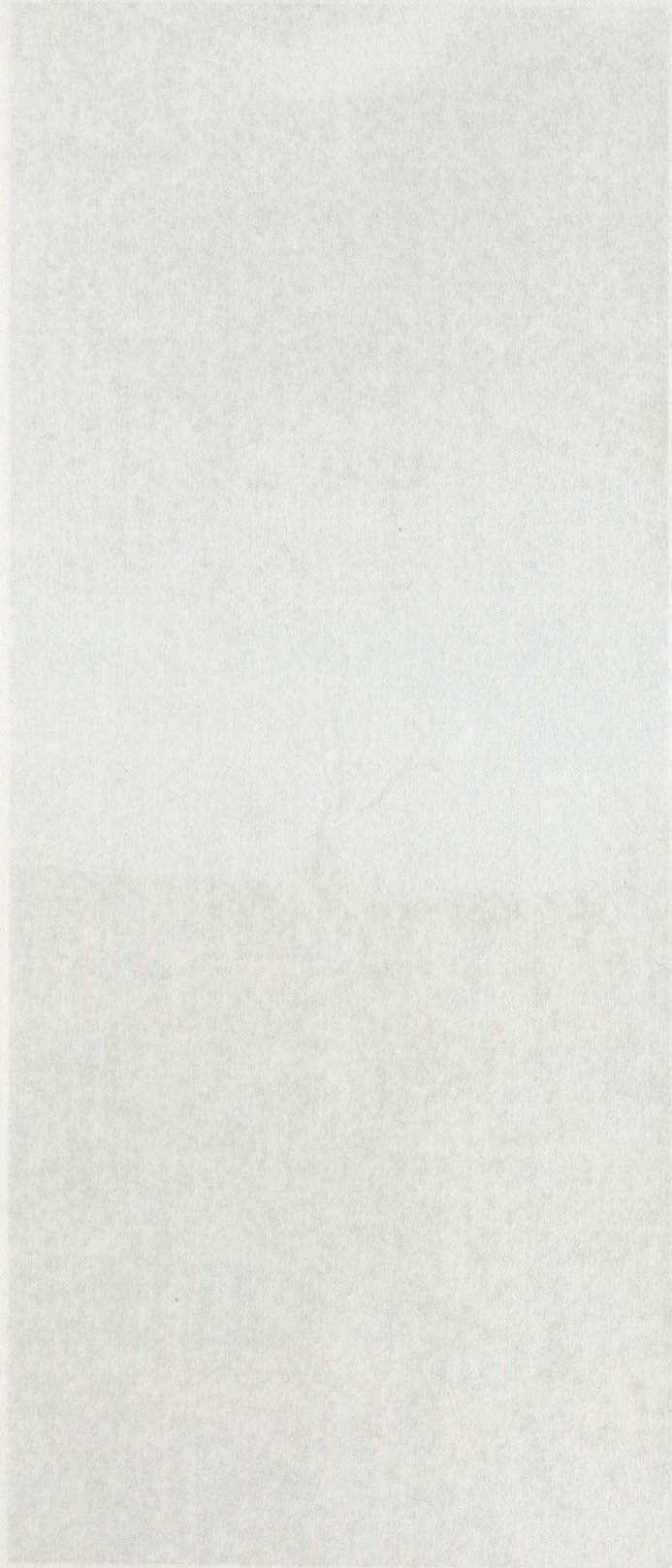
I am indebted to the many researchers who have applied their skills to Wormsloe before me. In particular, Paul Cady and Jessica Cook-Hale, former Wormsloe Fellows, and Melissa Tufts, each provided invaluable guidance, input, and solid research to build on.

Also in need of acknowledgment are Craig and Diana Barrow, Melissa Tufts, and Dr. Tommy Jordan for the continuous votes of confidence over the course of the project. Additionally, the staff at the Georgia State Preservation Office spent more than a few hours working on this project as well, and would not have been the same without their input.

My time as a Wormsloe Fellow has been an eye-opening experience in the world of historic site management, cultural landscapes, historic ecology, and educational outreach. I have gained invaluable insights that classes alone cannot convey, and which will serve me well in my future endeavors.

Sean Dunlap





REPORT SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2015, because of interest in getting Wormsloe designated as an UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS), a research project aimed at establishing the current historical significance of Wormsloe' State Historic Site was initiated.

In the United States, for a historic site to be considered for WHS nomination, the property must meet specific requirements. First, the property must be designated "nationally significant" as listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP), with robust documentation articulating a breadth of areas of significance. Second, in addition to being nationally significant, the site is typically designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) prior to consideration. And third, the site should have intact cultural and/or natural resources that represent the areas of significance for which it is designated. Thus, the process of assessing a site for potential WHS listing is research-intensive, and can take many years to complete. Thankfully however, at Wormsloe the foundation of this research has already been laid.

The 1973 NRHP nomination form for Wormsloe, which is still the current nomination, was approved while the state was in negotiation to acquire what is now Wormsloe State Historic Park. Similar to many nominations of that period, which were quickly created to meet a deadline, the document references minimal sources, and identifies only the most obvious historic features such as the Fort House Ruins, the house and gardens, the Confederate earthworks and the Live Oak allee. In early nomination forms, significance was defined in a very different way than it is today. Today we denote very specific

periods of significance with a start date and end date, while the 1973 NRHP nomination merely checks off the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries as the eras of significance. The identified areas of significance in the original nomination included agriculture, architecture, military, political, and conservation. Today, based on the findings of recent research of the site, there are additional areas of significance that would apply to Wormsloe; minimally the categories of archeology (prehistoric and historic), ethnic heritage as related to Africans and African Americans, exploration/settlement, and social history.

The Scope of Work (SOW) for the project broadly intended to address gaps in historic significance research and produce documentation that would first bolster the existing NHRP nomination form, and second, investigate the potential for NHL status based on recently produced research and an evaluation of physical integrity of cultural resources.

At the start of the project it was discovered that this was not the first time Wormsloe was evaluated for NHL potential. In 2006, steps were taken by the National Park Service – Southeast Regional Office National Historic Landmarks Program (SERO-NHLP), Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR), and the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (GASHPO) to list Wormsloe State Historic Site as a National Historic Landmark.¹ The effort focused on Noble Jones' Fort House Ruins as justification for designation, and in particular for its role as a defensive residence in the early colonial era, and its use of tabby.

¹ Roberts, John W., John W. Roberts to Dan Scheidt, May 15, 2006. Letter. From National Park Service Southeast Regional Office.

After a review of the application, the acting chief of the NHRP and NHL Programs in Washington DC determined that Wormsloe was not eligible for NHL status based on two key reasons: a lack of evidence connecting Wormsloe to a national-level historic narrative and a lack of physical integrity of the Fort House itself.

The reply letter cites NHL protocol as the reason for its decision: "A site of a building or structure no longer standing would qualify if the person or event associated with it is of transcendent importance in the nation's history and the association is consequential."² The letter concludes, that "[u]sing this guidance, an argument would need to be made that the location of Wormsloe, not the ruins of the structure that exist there today, is nationally significant."³

As such, a focus of this project's research was to determine the significance of Wormsloe's physical location in the historical development of the nation.

While the case for NHL designation centered on the Fort House Ruins, other cultural resources may also factor into the overall historical significance of the site. Therefore, the second focus of my research pertained to the archaeological resources at Wormsloe. Through discussions with staff at GASPHO, it was suggested that because of the current lack of physical integrity of Wormsloe's cultural resources, Wormsloe's historical significance may primarily relate to its archaeological resources. Indeed, sites not far from Wormsloe have been listed as NHLs for their archaeological importance. By understanding the extent of archaeological resources at Wormsloe, not only was their current significance ascertained, but directions for new research were generated.

The third focus of research was to assess the African American contributions to Wormsloe's development, and evaluate the significance of cultural resources related to this theme. In doing so, similar to the archaeological research, directions in future research and public interpretation concerning African American resources at Wormsloe were envisioned.

While the SOW for the project outlined the need for an updated NHRP nomination, after several discussions with GASPHO, it was determined to not pursue this course of action.

The NRHP update would have included an evaluation of integrity of Wormsloe's cultural resources. GASPHO's review of a draft evaluation of integrity submitted, made it clear that by the Secretary of the Interior standards, the physical integrity of Wormsloe's cultural resources, thus its ability to relate its historic significance to the public, is lacking. The NHRP nomination would have to be amended to reflect this alteration to the historic fabric, potentially resulting in a demotion of currently established historical significance.

Instead of risking delisting or demotion, the project focused on producing three reports to be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office, Wormsloe State Historic Site, and the Wormsloe Foundation to serve as cultural resource management documents. These reports, maps, and photographs are meant to help guide decision making as Wormsloe continues to evolve, and incorporate new uses, alterations, and visitors. Future research can build upon these reports, and then revisit the NHRP update and potential NHL listing.

The three reports, included in this compendium, are:

1. The Fort House Ruins at Wormsloe: Historic Context & National Significance
2. The Archaeological Landscape at Wormsloe: Precedents & Future Directions
3. The African American Legacy at Wormsloe: Directions for Research

FINDINGS

While the SOW and project structure was amended, the research still addressed the overarching goal of the project pertaining to evaluating Wormsloe's historical significance. The findings further justify the decision to not update the NRHP at this time.

To summarize, it was determined that:

1. The location of the Fort House Ruins does not warrant NHL consideration.
2. The known archaeological resources at Wormsloe do not *currently* warrant NHL consideration.
3. However, there has been limited archaeological investigations of the site. Instituting a robust archaeological program focused on Native Americans, enslaved Africans, and European colonial settlers may lead to findings that would open up the door to reconsidering NHL listing.

Without further research, the answer to the question "does Wormsloe possess historical significance to warrant UNESCO World Heritage Site designation" remains unknown.

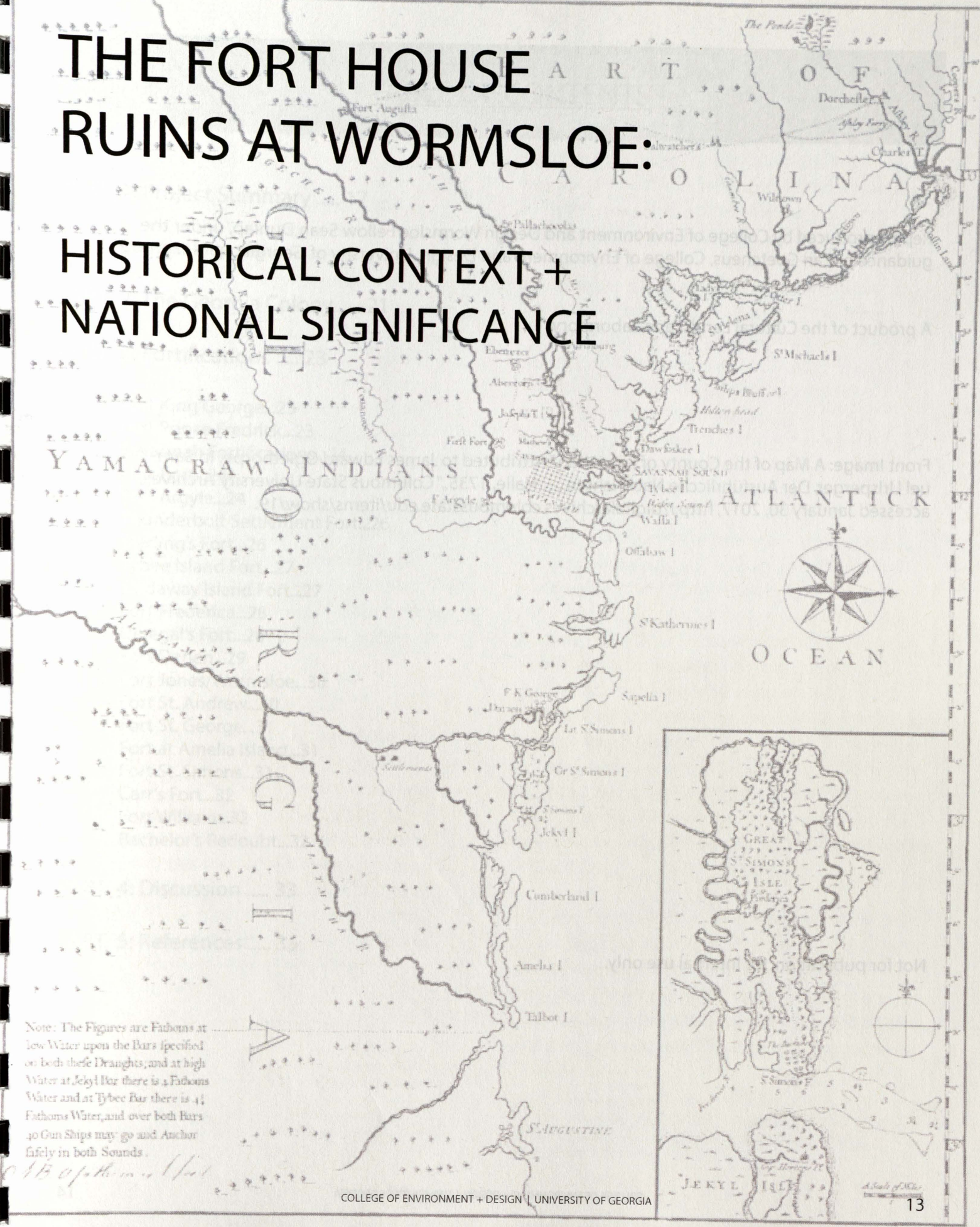
FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Because there is no definitive answer to the question of the level of Wormsloe's historic significance, it is vital that extreme effort should be taken towards safeguarding existing above and below ground cultural resources at Wormsloe, especially related to the lives of Native Americans, African Americans, and Colonial Europeans.

Specific future research directions are offered as part of each report.

2 Roberts Letter.
3 Roberts Letter.

THE FORT HOUSE RUINS AT WORMSLOE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT + NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE



Report produced by College of Environment and Design Wormsloe Fellow Sean Dunlap, under the guidance of Cari Goetcheus, College of Environment and Design, University of Georgia.

A product of the Cultural Landscape Laboratory.

Front Image: A Map of the County of Savannah." Attributed to James Edward Oglethorpe. In Samuel Urlsperger, Der Ausführliche Nachrichten . . . Halle, 1735." Columbus State University Archives, accessed January 30, 2017, <http://digitalarchives.columbusstate.edu/items/show/19>.

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PROJECT SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

As stated in the Project Summary, in 2006, steps were taken by the National Park Service – Southeast Regional Office National Historic Landmarks Program, Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR), and the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office to list Wormsloe State Historic Site as a National Historic Landmark.¹

The effort focused on Noble Jones' Fort House Ruins as justification for designation, and in particular for its role as a defensive residence in the early colonial era, and its use of tabby. It was proposed that the ruins were highly significant as Wormsloe is the "only example of a fortified plantation to survive from the colonial period in the United States," can be directly linked to Spanish architecture via the use of tabby, and was representative of a British vernacular building style known as a bawn.²

After a review of the application, the acting chief of the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Program in Washington DC determined that Wormsloe was not eligible for National Landmark status based on three reasons: a lack of evidence connecting Wormsloe to a national-level historic narrative, its lack of integrity and historical significance as compared to the related Fort Frederica National Monument site, and most importantly, a lack of physical integrity of the Fort House itself.

Regarding integrity, the reply letter cites the National Historic Landmark protocol as the reason for its decision, which states: "A site of a building or structure no longer standing would qualify if the person or event associated with it is of transcendent importance in the nation's history and the association is consequential."³ The letter concludes, that "[u]sing this guidance, an argument would need to be made that the location of Wormsloe, not the ruins of the structure that exist there today, is nationally significant."⁴ It is the purpose of this report to determine if this is indeed the case, and Wormsloe's location itself is what makes Wormsloe significant today.

Regardless of integrity or insufficient understanding of a broader context, Noble Jones' tangible legacy at Wormsloe is best represented by the ruins of his tabby Fort House. As ruins they provide a direct link to a time when tense geopolitical affairs were being played out on the southeast Atlantic coastline.⁵ It is impossible to disengage the fort house from this context of colonialism, or the lives that were engaged in the process. Therefore, the purpose of this report is to understand how the Fort House Ruins at Wormsloe relate to other settlements of the period by providing a broad context for its construction. In doing so, the lack of evidence outlined by the rejection letter will be addressed.

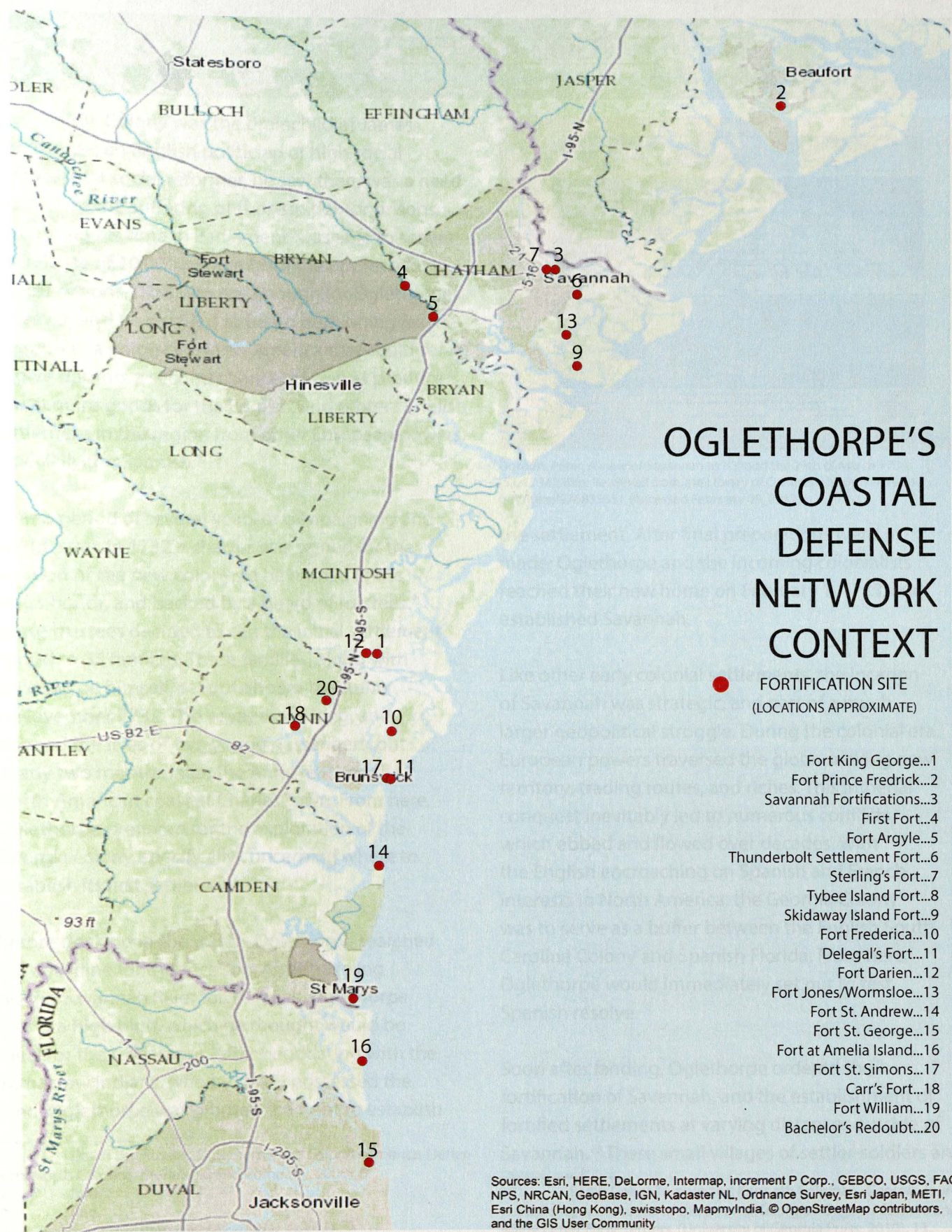
This report is based on a survey of the literature concerning colonial era Georgia broadly, and General James Oglethorpe's coastal defense network in particular. The accounts of these fortifications are often lacking in detail, if they are discussed at all. Like all history research, information is only as good as

1 Roberts, John W., John W. Roberts to Dan Scheidt, May 15, 2006. Letter. From National Park Service Southeast Regional Office.
2 Barnes, Mark R., Wormsloe Draft National Historic Landmark Nomination, USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86). May 25, 2005.

3 Roberts Letter.
4 Roberts Letter.
5 Swanson, Drew. *Remaking Wormsloe Plantation: The Environmental History of a Lowcountry Landscape*. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 25.

the sources. Therefore, this report utilized a handful of well-researched texts, period maps, and first-hand accounts that reference the fortifications of the early British colonial era. This report is not intended to be an in-depth analysis of all fort sites, nor the inner-workings of Oglethorpe's strategy. Instead, this report is intended to provide an overall that would provide a means of comparison for Wormsloe.

This paper identifies 20 fortifications that were built within the study area that serve as useful comparison to Wormsloe. These sites relate primarily to Oglethorpe's network of fortified settlements, settler forts, and military installations that were constructed between 1733 and 1742, though other fortifications unrelated to this singular theme are provided for context. As the strategic character of Wormsloe was based on its location along a coastal waterway, for comparison, emphasis is given to sites within the maritime zone stretching from the area north of present day St. Augustine, Florida to Savannah, Georgia. Excluded from this report are trading post forts, interior frontier forts, and earlier Spanish forts. Again, select forts outside this geographic range—and not part of Oglethorpe's network—are included for context. An understanding of the role of these fortifications allows for an understanding of Wormsloe's significance in the establishment of the Georgia Colony.

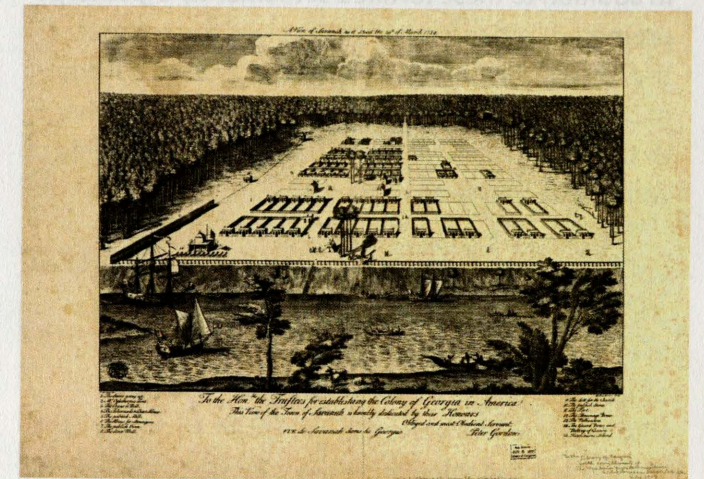


THE GEORGIA COLONY

The Georgia Colony was the brainchild of James Oglethorpe, an English politician of high social stature.⁶ As a social reformer, he saw there was a need to alleviate the suffering of those in debtor prisons, and during his time in Parliament, was able to secure the release of 10,000 people from the oppressive debtor prisons.⁷ This was not enough for Oglethorpe, however, and he decided to begin petitioning for the creation of a colony in North America that could serve to give debtors a second chance, as well as produce and acquire goods for the English, and protect English settlement in the region from other European powers, especially the Spanish.⁸

After a period of several years of campaigning and fundraising, in 1732 a charter was signed for the creation of the new colony, to be named in the king's honor, and backed by a board of trustees.⁹ These trustees decided to cap the initial settlement period to 35 families. These families, along with Oglethorpe himself, set out aboard the *Anne* in November 1732. The voyage was long, and claimed the lives of two young passengers, but nearly two months later, the *Anne* reached the North American coast at Charles Town. From here, Oglethorpe prepared for the exploration of the Georgia colony, specifically concerning where to establish its first settlement.

Before docking in the waters Oglethorpe searched the coastline for this location. After traveling up the Savannah River for 10 miles, Oglethorpe found a high bluff, which he thought would be ideal for the settlement. After negotiating with the Yamacraw Indians, who by treaty possessed the land, Oglethorpe was granted the right to establish



Gordon, Peter. A view of Savannah as it stood the 29th of March 1734. [S.l., 1734] Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/97683565/>. (Accessed February 09, 2017.)

the settlement. After final preparations were made, Oglethorpe and the incoming colonialists reached their new home on February 1, 1733, and established Savannah.

Like other early colonial settlements, the location of Savannah was strategic, and part of a much larger geopolitical struggle. During the colonial era, European powers traversed the globe seeking new territory, trading routes, and riches. This imperial conquest inevitably led to numerous conflicts, which ebbed and flowed over decades. With the English encroaching on Spanish and French interests in North America, the Georgia Colony was to serve as a buffer between the English South Carolina Colony and Spanish Florida. From here, Oglethorpe would immediately set out to test Spanish resolve.

Soon after landing, Oglethorpe ordered the fortification of Savannah, and the establishment of fortified settlements at varying distances outside of Savannah.¹⁰ These small villages of settler-soldiers and

6 David Lee Russell, *Oglethorpe and Colonial America*, (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2006), 6.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Swanson, *Remaking Wormsloe*, 14.

10 Sarah Gober Temple and Kenneth Coleman, *Georgia Journeys: Being an Account of the Lives of Georgia's Original Settlers and Many Other Early Settlers*, (University of Georgia Press, 2010), 13.

their families, variously garrisoned by British marines and rangers, would serve as an early warning system for Savannah against either Indian or Spanish attacks. In addition to these fortified settlements, Oglethorpe promoted settler-forts on plantations throughout the new colony, including at Wormsloe and outside of Darien. Over the next several years, various other forts would be built in strategic positions, including in contested Spanish territory.

In 1739, the simmering tensions between England and Spain over colonial ambitions and power in the Caribbean came to a head with the War of Jenkins' Ear. The conflict was global in scale with naval fleets involved in battles and assaults throughout the colonial holdings in the Caribbean, Atlantic, Pacific, and Far Eastern oceans.¹¹ This far-flung conflict also played out on the Georgia and Florida coasts. Seizing the opportunity to strike at the heart of Spanish Florida during this turbulent time, General Oglethorpe led an unsuccessful assault on St. Augustine in 1740.¹² With the British defeat, Oglethorpe pressed the need to bolster the coastal defenses of the Georgia Colony, leading to the creation of more fortifications. These fortifications were put to the test in 1742, when the Spanish attacked St. Simon's Island, and were repelled at the Battle of Bloody Marsh.¹³ This defeat marked the beginning of the end of Spanish influence along the east coast.

While existing for less than a decade, Oglethorpe's ultimately successful fortification network would leave behind a tangible history of these hostile times in world history. Through a discussion of these fortifications, a sense of the scope of Oglethorpe's plan is made clear, and offers a means for comparing the significance of these sites, in addition to assessing their current historic integrity.

11 N. A. M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649-1815*, Volume 2, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), 236.

12 Albert C. Manucy, *Fort Frederica Historic Site Report*, 60.

13 *Fort Frederica Historic Site Report*, 72.

FORTIFICATIONS

Fort King George (1721-1726, 1727-1732): Darien, McIntosh County

The first British fort constructed in what would become Georgia was Fort King George.¹⁴ While not built by Oglethorpe, he conceived it would become part of his defensive network. When constructed in 1721, it served as the most southerly garrison in the British colonial ambitions. Fort King George was built on a bluff beside the marshes at the mouth of the Altamaha River. The fort was commanded by Colonel John Barnwell, who oversaw a legion of around 100 soldiers from His Majesty's Independent Company of Foot.¹⁵ The conditions of the fort were deplorable, and resulted in dissent and death among the soldiers.¹⁶ In 1726 a suspicious fire burned the fort to the ground. The next year Fort King George was rebuilt and garrisoned by the colonial company until its abandonment in 1732.¹⁷ Three years later, as part of recently arrived General James Oglethorpe's coastal defense plan, the area was re fortified by Scottish militiamen, who established the town of Darien and its longstanding timber mill operation.¹⁸ The milling operations likely degraded the fort site, rendering it mostly forgotten until the 1960s. It was then that archaeological investigations uncovered the significant history of the site, and efforts for its conservation began.

Presently, Fort King George is a state historic site operated by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The site contains the reconstructed fort, the ruins of a Spanish mission, and buildings and

14 Kim Purcell, "Fort King George" *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, Georgia Humanities Council and the University of Georgia Press, December, 2005, <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/fort-king-george>

15 Larry E. Ivers, "Fort King George (Georgia)" *Colonial Wars of North America, 1512-1763: An Encyclopedia*, Edited by Alan Galloway, (New York: Routledge, 2015), 333.

16 Purcell, "Fort King George."

17 Albert C. Manucy, "Fort Frederica Historic Site Report," (Washington DC: National Park Service 1945), 37.

18 Purcell, "Fort King George."



Fort King George Diarama, <http://www.starforts.com/kinggeorge.html>

structures related to the Darien timbering history. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, with a national level of significance. Its level of significance is principally derived from it being the first English Fort in Georgia.

Fort Prince Fredrick (1731-1734): Port Royal, South Carolina

In the 1720s the South Carolina government perceived a need for a fort guarding the Port Royal and Beaufort area from both Native American and Spanish attacks.¹⁹ In 1726 money was allotted for the construction of Fort Fredrick, which was completed by 1734.²⁰

The fort is significant architecturally for the use of

19 National Register of Historic Places, Fort Frederick, Address Restricted, Beaufort County, South Carolina, National Register # S10817707021

20 Erin Moody, "Archaeological dig, tabby restoration begins at Fort Frederick," *The State*, January 12, 2015. Accessed January 2017. <http://www.thestate.com/news/local/military/article13936232.html>

tabby in its construction. Fort Frederick marks a significant moment in the British phase of tabby construction. Significantly, it is presumed that General Oglethorpe's insistence on using tabby in Georgia military fortifications stems from his visit to Fort Prince Frederick.²¹ While located at a key location on the South Carolina coast, it is reported that by the end of the 1740s, the fort was nearly in ruins. Fort Frederick was officially deserted in 1758, only to be replaced by Fort Lyttleton, which was located further upriver and also made of tabby.²² The site later became Camp Saxton, which is known for its regiment of African American soldiers during the Civil War.

Presently, the site is owned by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, though the land is part of the Naval Hospital of Beaufort. This arrangement limits public access to pre-arranged tours. The Beaufort River has eroded the site to the point of destroying portions of the fort ruins, though sections of tabby walls of the fort and other buildings are still intact. In 2015, an archaeological program was initiated at the site. The fort was listed to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 with a national level of significance.

Savannah Fortifications (1733-1756): Chatham County

The fortifications built in Savannah mark the beginning of Oglethorpe's defensive network. Oglethorpe recognized the immediate need for fortifications in the new village they were building on Yamacraw Bluff, and within a week after arrival, initial defenses were constructed. Within a few months, a 36' x 24' timber

guardhouse and two blockhouses were constructed.²³ Over the years, the whole of Savannah would become fortified, notably with the construction of Fort Halifax in 1756.

With the long history of fortifying the city as well as urban development, it is unlikely any substantial archaeological record exists from the initial settlement fortifications. There is no record of these fortifications in the National Register database.

First Fort (1733): Bryan County

First Fort, also known as the first Fort Argyle, was the first fort Oglethorpe had built outside of Savannah.²⁴ Located on the Ogeechee River, this fort was only halfway completed due to navigational issues along the river. Efforts then shifted to building another fort that year ten miles downriver closer to Savannah. Though never completed, First Fort remained part of Oglethorpe's defense network as a scouting patrol location.

It is unlikely that any remnants of this almost-fort still exist. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Fort Argyle (1733-1747): Bryan County

Once the new location was settled, Fort Argyle became one of the earliest forts in the Georgia colony, the first fully built beyond Savannah,²⁵ and one of the longest lasting. Constructed in late 1733 roughly at the new location ten miles upriver from Savannah,²⁶ the fort was likely rebuilt twice by the time of its abandonment in 1767. The fort was again constructed along the Ogeechee River, which would provide a defensive

21 Janet H. Gritzner, "Distributions of Tabby in the Southern United States A Geographical Perspective," in *The Conservation and Preservation of Tabby: A Symposium of Historic Material in the Coastal Southeast*, edited by Jane Powers Weldon, (Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division, 1998), 11.

22 Colin Brooker, "Historic American Buildings Survey Addendum to Fort Frederick HABS No. SC-858." From Library of Congress, Fort Frederick, Fort Frederick Boat Landing, Port Royal, Beaufort County, SC," <https://www.loc.gov/item/sc1116/> (Accessed December 2016).

23 Temple and Coleman, *Georgia Journeys*, 13
24 Ibid., 13
25 Ibid., xvi
26 Ibid., 42



Map of the County of Savannah." Attributed to James Edward Oglethorpe. In Samuel Urlsperger, *Der Ausführliche Nachrichten ... Halle, 1735.* Columbus State University Archives, accessed January 30, 2017, <http://digitalarchives.columbusstate.edu/items/show/19>.

cover if the Spanish or hostile Native Americans attacked Savannah from the interior, as opposed to from the coast. The first iteration of the fort was likely constructed of timber and earth, but well-fortified.²⁷

The fort was rebuilt around 1742, when conflicts between Spain and England were becoming more intense.²⁸ This iteration of the fort was larger than the previous, and incorporated brick into its design. It appears the first fort was more architecturally elaborate, however, with the original corner bastions and a centrally-located blockhouse missing from the new design. The fort was garrisoned by an elite group of Rangers, who came from Europe, as well as the new colonies of Virginia and South Carolina.²⁹ These rangers traversed the lands fighting skirmishes, running official errands, and catching runaway enslaved people. These rangers possibly constructed the third version of the fort during the 1760s, but was it decommissioned in 1767.³⁰

Like many other forts of the era, Fort Argyle fell into ruins, and was lost. In 1985 the fort was discovered by archaeologists using remote sensing technology. Subsequent archaeological investigations were conducted in 1996, which discovered more features of the fort landscape. The site is located within Fort Stewart military property, and thus access is restricted to the site. It is listed on the National Register, with a state level of significance.

Thunderbolt Settlement Fort (1733): Outside Savannah

Built concurrently with Fort Argyle, Thunderbolt was one of the first out-settlements built under

Oglethorpe's command.³¹ Closer to Savannah than Fort Argyle, and on the coastal side, the fortified settlement at Thunderbolt featured six residences and a "hexagonal fort with earthen breastwork and a battery of four cannon."³² The settlement itself proved to be unsustainable, but the fortifications remained part of the defensive network of Savannah.

It is unlikely that any remnants of this fortified out-settlement still exist. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Sterling's Fort (1734 – 1736)

Little information is known about Sterling's Fort. It was likely one of the many small, settlement fortifications built within the first decades of the Georgia colony. Northamericanforts.com has the following information for the fort: "A settlers' fort located on the west bank of the Ogeechee River about 0.5 mile north of Sterling Creek. In 1744 the town of Williamsburg was established here, or at nearby Richmond Hill."³³ It is possible that Sterling's

Fort was the name for Sterling's Bluff, so named for one of the families of land grant Scottish settlers who established farms in this area.³⁴ If this is the case, this may have been linked to First Fort and the Scottish families who were granted land there, if not First Fort itself.

It is unknown if the site remains archaeologically intact, as the area has undergone sprawling development. Additionally, the Ogeechee River has likely changed course, potentially eroding the site. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.



"A Map of the County of Savannah." Attributed to James Edward Oglethorpe. In Samuel Urlsperger, *Der Ausführliche Nachrichten ... Halle, 1735.*

Tybee Island Fort (1734): Tybee Island

Conceived as part of the fortified settlement network, Tybee Island, like the settlement at Thunderbolt, was Oglethorpe's attempt to move further southward with his defenses.³⁵ It appears, however, that this was generally a failed attempt, as the families located there mostly died, with no one left to guard the island, let alone farm it. Attempts to build a lighthouse there also failed repeatedly because of dejected and drunk settlers.³⁶ It is unknown if the fortification that Oglethorpe planned for the island was built.

There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Skidaway Island Fort (1734): Skidaway Island

Serving as another example of a fortified out-settlement, Skidaway Island Fort was a small fortification that protected a fledgling settlement on the island, as well as one of the various approaches into Savannah.³⁷ This fort was located at the southern end of the island, and a soldier guardhouse was located at the northern end. The fortifications had both swivel guns and cannon battery for armament. The settlement lasted only until 1740. A second settlement was established in the 1750s.³⁸ It is unknown for how long the defenses were utilized.

There is no record of this fortified settlement in the National Register database.

27 Ibid., 43
28 Daniel T. Elliott, "Fort Argyle: Colonial Fort on the Ogeechee, Second Edition" (United States Department of Defense, Department of the Army; prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Army's Fort Stewart, Directorate of Public Works, Environmental and Natural Resources Division, Environmental Branch and the LAMAR Institute Inc., 2012), 7.
29 Elliott, "Fort Argyle," 2.
30 Elliott, "Fort Argyle," 8.

31 Temple and Coleman, *Georgia Journeys*, 44
32 Ibid., 44
33 Pete Payette, "Sterling's Fort," American Forts Network (website), <http://www.northamericanforts.com/East/ga.html>
34 Temple and Coleman, *Georgia Journeys*, 43

35 Ibid., 46
36 Ibid., 48

37 Temple and Coleman, *Georgia Journeys*, 49
38 Richard J. Lenz, "Skidaway Island," Longstreet Highroad Guide to the Georgia Coast & Okefenokee (website), http://www.sherpaguides.com/georgia/coast/northern_coast/skidaway_island.html (Accessed December 2016).

Fort Frederica (1736-1755): St. Simons Island, Glynn County

One of the most historically significant fort sites along the Georgia coast is Fort Frederica. The fortified settlement and military compound is the crown jewel of General Oglethorpe's plan to extend defenses—and British rule—southward from Savannah.³⁹ Located 60 miles from Savannah on St. Simons Island, Fort Frederica became both Oglethorpe's military expansion command center, as well as a large settlement (around 1000 people).⁴⁰ The 40-acre site contained a small, but secure standalone fort as well as a fortified town, both enclosed within an earthen perimeter wall. The design featured a dry moat, wood-construction palisades, numerous residences, soldier barracks, and a blockhouse. Brick and tabby were used throughout the site.⁴¹

Oglethorpe selected St. Simons as the location for this outpost due to its position on the Frederica River, near the mouth of the Altamaha River. Such a location afforded views of all navigable routes in the area—upriver, downriver, and out to sea. This location would prove to be a wise choice when in 1742 the Spanish attempted to take St. Simons Island from the British, resulting in the Battle of Bloody Marsh. General Oglethorpe and his company of soldiers fought off this attack, thus marking the end of Spanish attempts of controlling the Georgia territory.⁴²

Presently, the 250-acre Fort Frederica site is managed as a National Monument by the National Park Service. The significance of the site derives from its role in securing Georgia and

39 Manucy, "Fort Frederica Historic Site Report" 48.
40 Patricia Barefoot, "Fort Frederica" New Georgia Encyclopedia, Georgia Humanities Council and the University of Georgia Press, September, 2002 <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/fort-frederica>
41 Michael W. Miller, "Tabby Resources in Georgia," in The Conservation and Preservation of Tabby: A Symposium of Historic Material in the Coastal Southeast, edited by Jane Powers Weldon, (Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division, 1998), 16.
42 Russell, Oglethorpe and Colonial America, 43.

South Carolina from Spanish control, its strong association with Gen. Oglethorpe, its example of an early colonial town, and as a valuable archaeological site.⁴³ For these reasons, the site was designated as a National Monument in 1936.

Delegal's Fort (1736): St. Simons Island, Glynn County

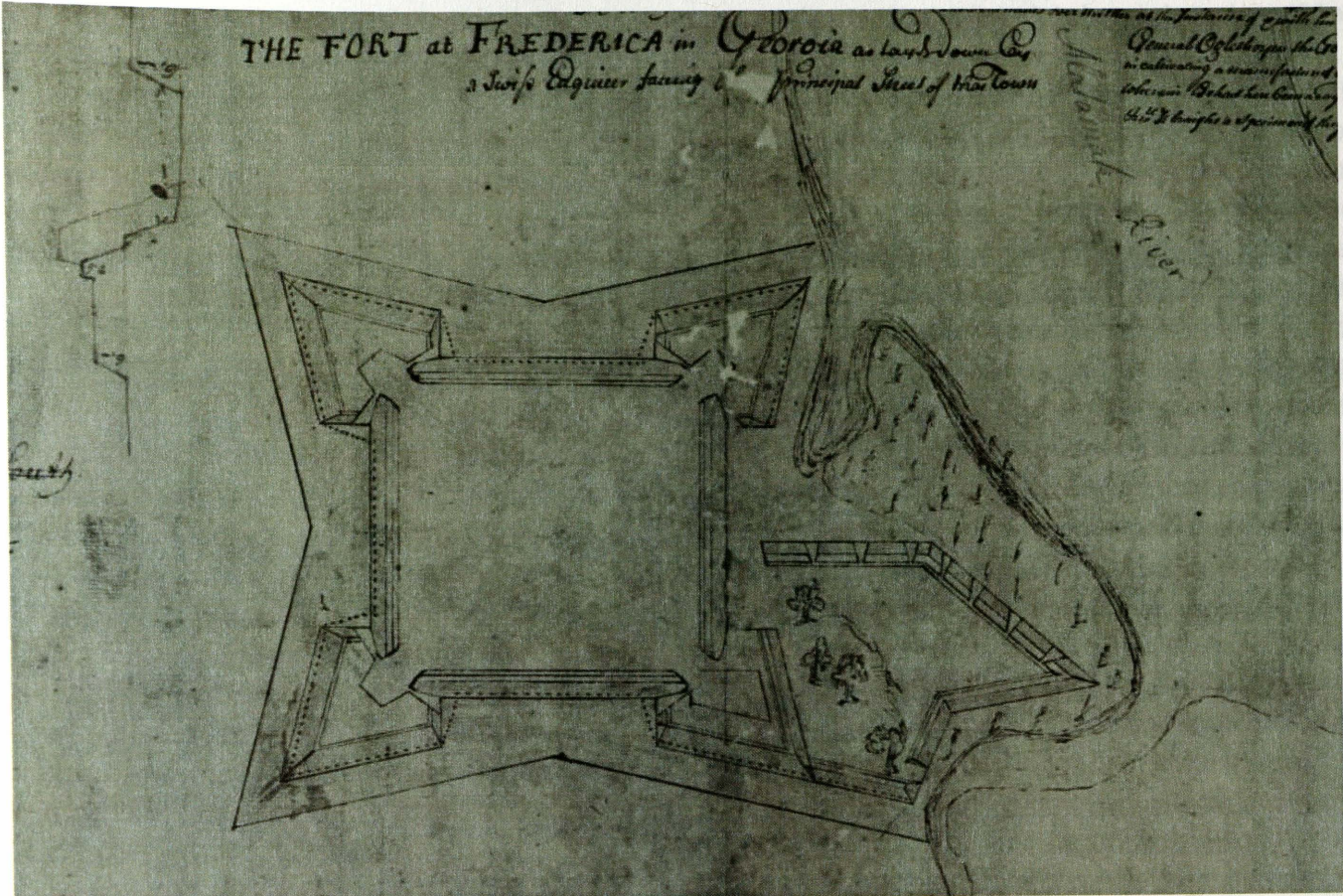
In 1736, General Oglethorpe ordered the building of an additional fort on the southern end of St. Simons Island. Built by a company of Scottish militia men, and commanded by Lt. Philip Delegal, Sr., the fort served as a watch for hostile ships sailing in from the south, and in tandem with Fort Frederica, helped to safeguard the whole of St. Simons Island.⁴⁴ The fort was likely occupied for only a few years, becoming obsolete after the construction of Fort St. Simons in 1738, and the subsequent Spanish defeat at Bloody Marsh in 1742.

Presently, remnants of Delegal's Fort are nonexistent, having likely washed away. As such, there is no record of this fortification in the National Register database. A historic marker on south end of St. Simons commemorates the fort.

Fort Darien (1736): Darien, McIntosh County

Fort Darien was another key in Gen. Oglethorpe's defensive strategy for the Georgia coast. With Fort King George having been abandoned in 1728, Gen. Oglethorpe recognized a need to protect the area. Oglethorpe initially commanded a regiment of Scottish soldiers to reoccupy Fort King George, but as the

43 "Fort Frederica National Monument Long-Range Interpretive Plan," Prepared by Department of Interior National Park Service Harpers Ferry Center Department of Interpretive Planning and Fort Frederica National Monument May 2007, 3.
44 "Delegal's Fort," Explore Georgia's Historical Markers, Georgia Historical Society, December 16, 2015 http://georgiahistory.com/ghmi_marker_updated/delegals-fort/ (Accessed January 2017).



Samuel Augspurger, "The Fort at Frederica in Georgia as layd down by a Swiss Engineer," 1736. <http://hmap.libs.uga.edu/hmap/view?docId=hmap/hmap1736a8.xml>

location remained a site of oppressive heat and obstacles, the soldiers moved operations a mile away on an elevated bluff.⁴⁵ Here the small settlement of Darien was established, occupied by the Highland soldiers and their families.⁴⁶ The highly-trained Scottish soldiers were instrumental to Gen. Oglethorpe's military plans, with the fort serving as a launching point for British incursions into Spanish-controlled Florida.⁴⁷ While the Darien-based soldiers were part of the failed 1740 attack on St. Augustine, they would be redeemed with their victory at the battle of Bloody Marsh.

45 Russell, Oglethorpe and Colonial America, 25.
46 E. Kaufmann and H. W. Kaufmann, *Fortress America: The Forts That Defended America: 1600 to the Present* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2004), 50.
47 "Fort Darien," Explore Georgia's Historical Markers, Georgia Historical Society, February 27, 2016 http://georgiahistory.com/ghmi_marker_updated/fort-darien/ (Accessed January 2017).

After this point, the tabby-built Fort Darien was abandoned. The ruined site was briefly reoccupied during the American Revolution, as well as the Civil War, only to be abandoned again after the conflicts.⁴⁸

Presently, a marker located in the City near the tabby ruins of the site interprets the history of Fort Darien. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Fort Jones/Wormsloe (1736-1750): Isle of Hope, Chatham County

In 1736, three years after arriving in the Georgia Colony aboard the Ann, Noble Jones was leased 500 acres on

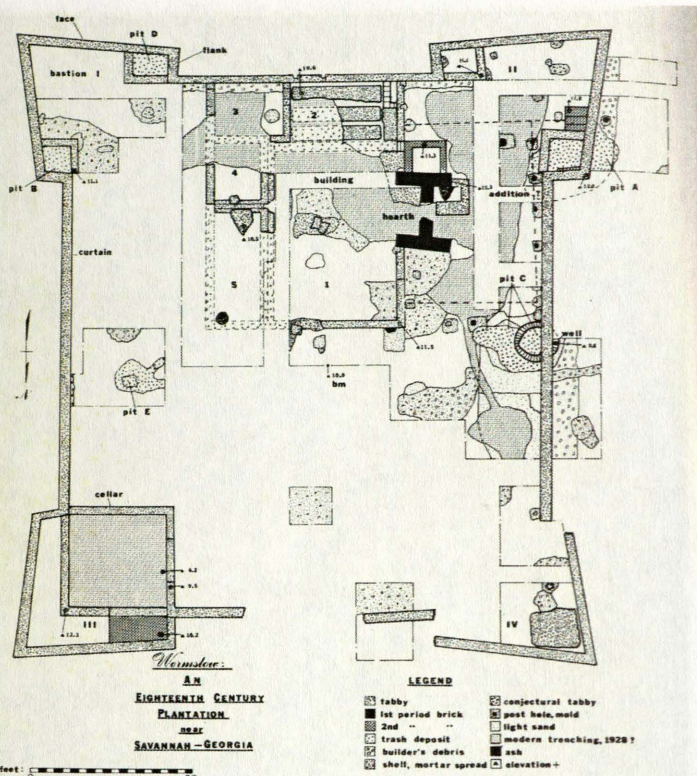
48 "Fort Darien," Explore Georgia's Historical Markers, Georgia Historical Society, February 27, 2016 http://georgiahistory.com/ghmi_marker_updated/fort-darien/ (Accessed January 2017).

the Isle of Hope, located eight miles to the south of Savannah.⁴⁹ Jones was a surveyor and military officer, and over his lifetime served various posts in the colonial government. At the Isle of Hope, Jones established Wormsloe Plantation, positioning his house along Skidaway Narrows, a small section of river that served as an alternate entryway into Savannah. From here, Jones and the marines could serve as a scout for any Spanish attempts to attack the fledgling settlement. Jones's fort house was not a lone sentinel protecting the area, as nearby, a fort structure of unknown construction was positioned on Pidgeon Island and a guard house was located on Long Island just across from Wormsloe.⁵⁰

Jones first constructed a simple waddle-and-daub house at the south end of the property. Between 1739 and 1744, as a reaction to increasing hostilities, Jones expanded his house into a fortified settler fort made of tabby, serving the dual purpose of habitation and defense.⁵¹ Along with his family, Jones lived at Wormsloe with a company of marines and enslaved Africans who lived in huts on recently cleared land surrounding the house.⁵² The fort house was occupied by Jones's decedents until the family built a new house a few hundred yards to the north in 1828. The fort house eventually fell into ruin, though the family attempted to preserve the site as early as the late 1800s.

Presently, the Fort House ground ruins, along with over 800 acres of marsh, forest, and interpretation areas, are protected as part of Wormsloe State Historic Site, and managed by Georgia Department of Natural Resources. It is listed on the National Register at the national level of significance.

49 Swanson, *Remaking Wormsloe*, 24
50 National Register of Historic Places, Wormsloe Plantation, Isle of Hope and Long Island, Chatham County, Georgia, National Register #73000615
51 Kelso, William M. *Captain Jones's Wormsloe: A Historical, Archaeological, and Architectural Study of an Eighteenth-Century Plantation Site near Savannah, Georgia*. (Wormsloe Foundation Publications, Number 13. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1979), 21.
52 Temple and Coleman, *Georgia Journeys*, 278



Plan of Fort House Ruins archaeological features found at Wormsloe during excavation by Kelso in 1969 (Kelso 1979)

Fort St. Andrew (1736): Cumberland Island

General Oglethorpe's fortification network continued to press southward towards Florida with the construction of Fort St. Andrew in 1736.⁵³ Located on the northern tip of Cumberland Island, the fort served to watch the inlet between Cumberland and Jekyll Island to the north. The fort design was typical for the era, featuring a star-shaped configuration and four bastions. Like other Georgia forts, Highland soldiers occupied the site. Fort St. Andrew was decommissioned and abandoned in 1742, and the troops stationed there moved to Fort William at the southern end of Cumberland Island.⁵⁴ The site was burned that year by the Spanish.

53 Russell, *Oglethorpe and Colonial America*, 26
54 Tim Roberts, "Destructive Dynamism: Imperiled sites on Cumberland Island National Seashore," February 29, 2016, Southeast Archeological Center (blog), <https://npsseac.wordpress.com/2016/02/29/destructive-dynamism-imperiled-site-on-cumberland-island-national-seashore>

Until recent archaeological investigations, the location of Fort St. Andrew was unknown. Now the subject of a study led by the National Park Service, the remnants of Fort St. Andrew are being investigated. However, not much is left of the site, as erosion has been detrimental to its integrity. There is currently no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Fort St. George (1736): Outside Jacksonville

In 1736, Oglethorpe made a bold move to establish a military outpost roughly 60 miles south of the generally agreed upon boundary between Spanish and British territories, essentially at the front door of Spanish possessions.⁵⁵ After formal protests were launched by Spain for the encroachment, Oglethorpe disbanded the fort.

It is unknown if any archaeological remains exist from this period. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Fort at Amelia Island (1736): Amelia Island, Florida

Also in 1736, Oglethorpe commanded defenses built on Amelia Island.⁵⁶ This location served as a scouting point, and here a fortified timber structure armed with five cannons guarded the St. Mary's Inlet.⁵⁷ The island was part of the disputed territory between the British and Spanish, and would be intermittently occupied during the colonial era. It is unknown if any archaeological remains exist from this period. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

55 Russell, *Oglethorpe and Colonial America*, 26.
56 Jonathan Bryan, *Journal of a visit to the Georgia Islands of St. Catharines, Green, Ossabaw, Sapelo, St. Simons, Jekyll, and Cumberland, with comments on the Florida islands of Amelia, Talbot, and St. George, in 1753*. Edited by Virginia Steele Wood and Mary Ricketson Bullard (Mercer University Press, 1996), 89.
57 Larry E. Ivers, *British Drums on the Southern Frontier: The Military Colonization of Georgia, 1733-1749* (North Carolina University Press, 2005), 78.

Fort St. Simons (1738-1742): St. Simons Island, Glynn County

Fort St. Simons was constructed on the south end of St. Simons Island, downriver from Fort Frederica in 1738.⁵⁸ It was positioned nearby Delegal's Fort, and the two forts combined to serve as the front line of Fort Frederica's coastal defenses.⁵⁹ The square-shaped fort featured bastioned walls with seven cannons to protect it from a land attack, while still being able to fire upon ships entering the harbor.

These defenses were employed in 1742, when a 5000-soldier strong Spanish force attacked the fort on the eve of the Battle of Bloody Marsh. While the fort inflicted some damage on the Spanish fleets, ultimately the men of Fort St. Simons could not fully repel the assault. Oglethorpe ordered a retreat, and instructed his men to destroy the fort so the Spanish could not use it. While such action occurred, the Spanish nevertheless used the site as their temporary base to launch their attack.⁶⁰ Following the battle, Fort St. Simons was left to ruin, and eventually became the site of the—now tourist attraction—St. Simons lighthouse.

No above ground remnants of the fort remain, though a marker and cannon interpret the site. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Carr's Fort (1739-1941): Glynn County

Like Wormsloe, and part of the expanding settler's fort network,⁶¹ Carr's Fort was a small military outpost located at Captain Mark Carr's Hermitage Plantation. Carr, a captain in General Oglethorpe's regiment, was granted 500 acres upon which to establish his

58 Leslie Hall, "James Edward Oglethorpe" in *Colonial Wars of North America, 1512-1763: An Encyclopedia*, Edited by Alan Galloway, (New York: Routledge, 2015), 659.
59 Ivers, *British Drums*, 86.
60 Hall, "James Edward Oglethorpe," 659.
61 Mauncy, "Fort Frederica," 48.

settlement in 1739.⁶² It was located roughly four miles north of present day Brunswick. Carr also owned other plantations in the area, where he grew tobacco and raised cattle.

There is some disagreement about which of Carr's properties fell under attack, but in 1741, while away on official military travel, one of Carr's plantations—potentially Hermitage, or potentially at Sunbury—fell under attack by a group of Spanish-aligned Yamasee Indians, killing several servants and soldiers, and leaving the property thoroughly ransacked.⁶³ When Carr returned, he erected four blockhouses for protection, thus firmly establishing Carr's Fort. Such protection was evidently needed, as Hermitage was apparently attacked again in 1744.

Presently, Hermitage Island—the site of Hermitage Plantation—is privately owned and slated for development. It is unknown what extant resources are still present at the site. A marker discussing Mark Carr is located in nearby Brunswick. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Fort William (1739): Cumberland Island

Constructed on the Southern end of Cumberland Island between 1739 and 1740, Fort William was another of Oglethorpe's military outposts near Spanish controlled Florida.⁶⁴ While initially smaller in size than Fort St. Andrew at the north end of the island, the Fort William site was situated at a more strategic position, and after a redesign of defenses, became better fortified. Therefore, in 1742, Oglethorpe ordered Fort St. Andrew be abandoned and for troops to station at Fort William.⁶⁵ Here, the British successfully repelled a Spanish attack to take the fort in the lead up to the Battle of Bloody Marsh. After the main threat of Spanish attacks diminished, the fort was not

garrisoned, but for a handful of scout troops. The site fell into disrepair, and by the early 1800s was engulfed by the ocean.⁶⁶ It is unknown if any archaeological remains are still intact at the site. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

Bachelor's Redoubt (1741)

Bachelor's Redoubt was a militia-garrisoned blockhouse fortification located four miles northwest of Fort Frederica, possibly constructed in 1741 in the months before the Battle of Bloody Marsh. It was so named for the boat that the small garrison used to communicate with Fort Frederica.⁶⁷

The current archaeological integrity of the site is unknown. Like many small forts, this one was likely left to ruin and overtaken by the growth of Brunswick. There is no record of this fortification in the National Register database.

62 Bryan, *Journal*, 79.

63 Bryan, *Journal*, 80.

64 Russell, *Oglethorpe and Colonial America*, 38.

65 Lary M. Dilsaver, *Cumberland Island National Seashore: A History of Conservation Conflict*, (University of Virginia Press, 2004), 23.

66 Roberts, "Destructive Dynamism."

67 Bryan, *Journal*, 80

DISCUSSION

With major conflicts over, and the British securely in possession of the Georgia Colony, the need for defensive fortifications waned. It is unknown exactly how many forts, small outposts, or hastily built defenses were constructed by the British during the Colonial era, let alone in Georgia. According to Wormsloe archaeologist William Kelso, "many early Georgia settlements and plantations were fortified; the buffer role of the colony made such defenses practically mandatory."⁶⁸ This assessment only included those identified in a limited survey of existing literature, historic maps, and colonial-era accounts. Many of the colonial fortifications fell into disrepair soon after construction, others were modified multiple times, before they too became obsolete. Names of these forts and settlements changed. The environment itself also changed, with expanding marshes and rising waters altering many sites. Even the now well-known preserved interpretive sites mentioned in this report at one time were mostly forgotten. Still, these forts provide a context for the construction—and purpose—of Wormsloe as a fortification.

The historical significance of the Fort House at Wormsloe is that it is part of this large network of colonial British military fortifications along the Georgia coast. In this way, the location of Wormsloe is indeed significant, and defense was integral to its purpose. Together with related sites such as Fort King George and Fort Frederica, Wormsloe today helps to illustrate this history. Along with these sites, Wormsloe is one of the last places on the Georgia coast that above-ground remains from this period of history exist. This rarity adds to Wormsloe's historical significance, but does it tip the scale in favor of National Historic Landmark status? By looking at the categories for inclusion, an answer is provided.

68 Kelso, *Wormsloe*, 90.

National Historic Landmark status requires an exceptional degree of historical significance and integrity related to a singular national theme, such as civil rights, architecture, or military history, as opposed to a collection of unrelated themes over time. While Wormsloe was determined nationally significant by the National Register in 1978, this was related to it reflecting a collection of cultural resources pertaining to various historic themes, and not a single national historic theme. For instance, if Wormsloe were to have a collection of resources all related to colonial-era fortification and settlement, a stronger case could be made for NHL consideration. Furthermore, while reflective of the colonial period, Wormsloe is not the most historically significant site in Oglethorpe's network, nor the best preserved for this period or area of significance. Without the physical link to someone of such stature as Gen. Oglethorpe (such as at Fort Frederica) or direct involvement in armed conflict (such as the sites on St. Simons Island), it is my opinion that Wormsloe does not possess the significance per this theme to warrant National Historic Landmark status.

In terms of Wormsloe's location, in which the NPS reply letter to the NHL application specifically mentioned needing more information, it can be said that the location of Wormsloe did not significantly alter the course of American history. In other words, because it cannot be determined if Wormsloe served as a significant deterrent to Spanish forces, and we know it was not part of an armed conflict, the location cannot be said to be exceptionally significant.

That said, Wormsloe is nevertheless an important place in Georgia history for additional reasons including its Native American archaeological sites, its antebellum history, its Civil War fortifications, its history of agricultural activity, its role in safeguarding important records of Georgia history, and its role in the history of conservation

and tourism. For these reasons, Wormsloe is considered by many to be a particularly significant place. The most important thing is to not lose sight of this fact, and continue to safeguard the breadth of existing cultural resources at Wormsloe.

Additionally, with further archaeological investigations, it is possible the colonial era history of the plantation can be expanded upon. If so, a reassessment of Wormsloe's National Historic Landmark potential would be warranted. By expanding upon the history of Wormsloe's colonial history via archaeology, there is opportunity for new revelations, and a new case for revised national significance related to the theme of colonial era settlement and role in Oglethorpe's defensive network.

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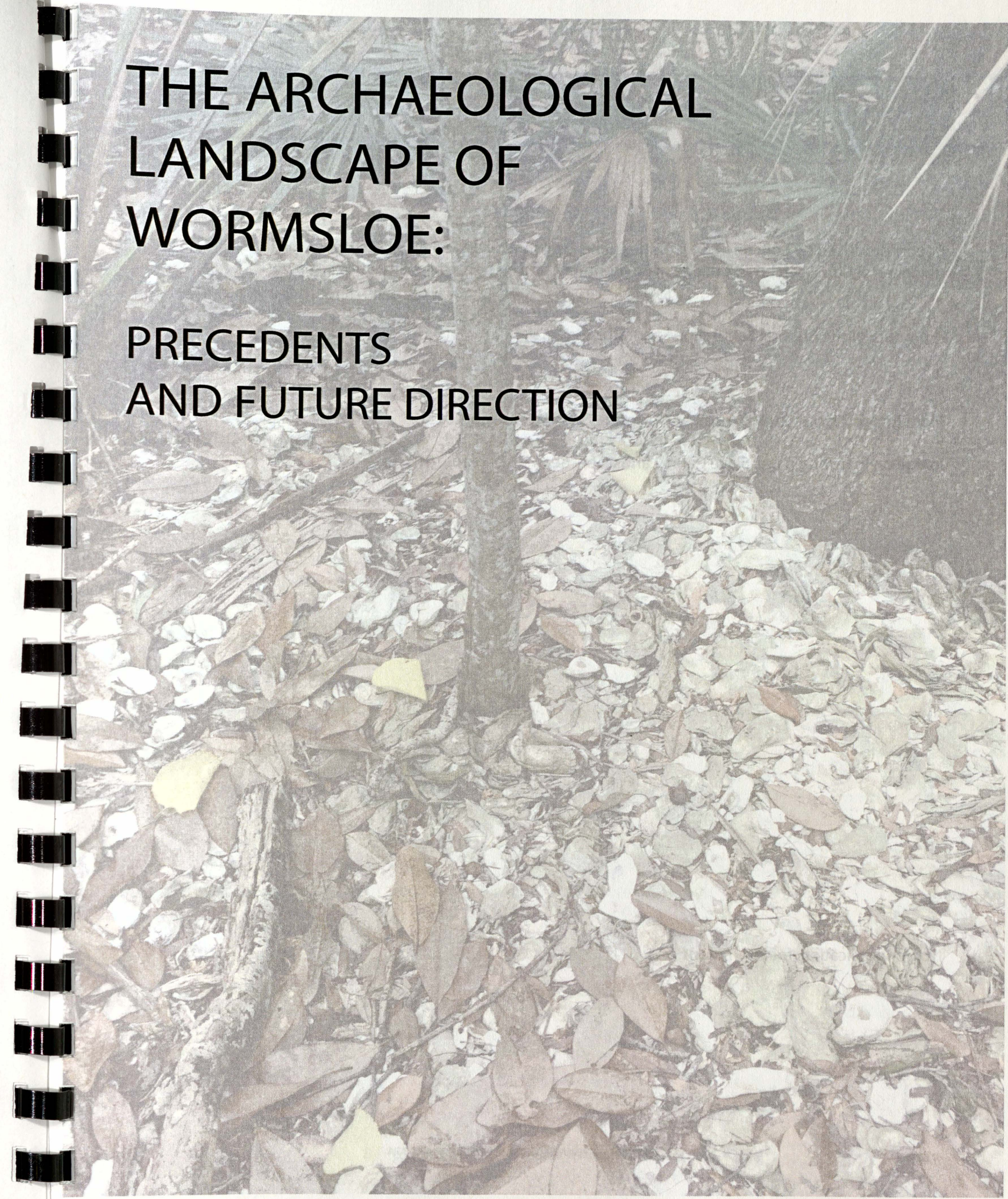
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THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE OF WORMSLOE:

PRECEDENTS AND FUTURE DIRECTION



Report produced by College of Environment and Design Wormsloe Fellow Sean Dunlap, under the guidance of Cari Goetcheus, College of Environment and Design, University of Georgia.

A product of the Cultural Landscape Laboratory.

Front Image: Oyster Shell Deposit at Wormsloe, Sean W. Dunlap, 2015

Image on following page: Slave Cabin Landscape, Sean W. Dunlap, 2016

Not for publication; for internal use only.

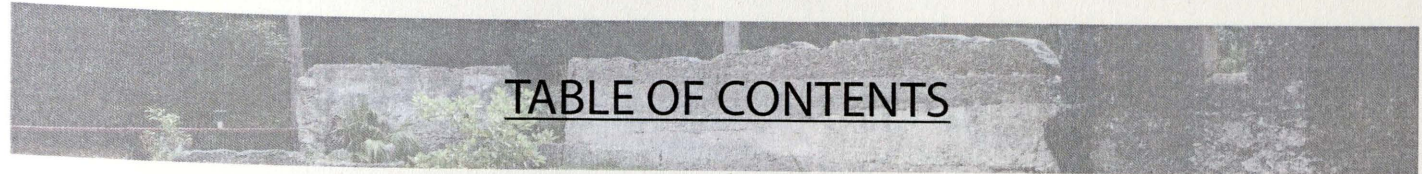


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 - b. To provide a list of all known archaeological investigations conducted at Wormsloe State Park
4. Fort House Landscape, Mark Palmer (1952)
5. Battery Wimberley, L.E. Babbitts (1990)
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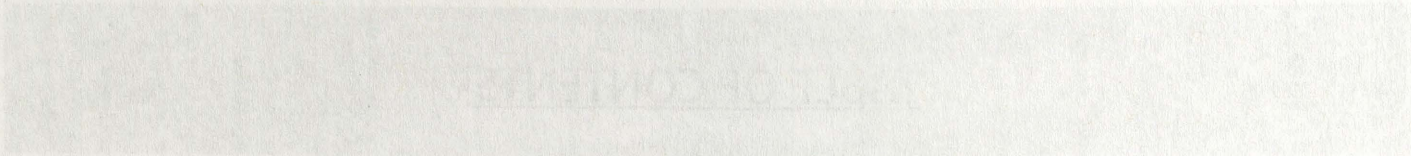
Recommendations

Based on a survey of these projects, and the input of professionals in the field, a series of recommendations generated for a revived archaeological program at Wormsloe. These recommendations are reproduced within their respective sections, but are included here for quick reference.

Prehistoric Archaeology

1. This report has identified the shell middens as the first priority in a renewed archaeological program at Wormsloe.

Conduct a study focused on the seasonality of the shell midden oysters to understand



Introduction

This report offers an examination of the history of archaeological investigations at Wormsloe State Historic Site. The purpose of this report is twofold:

(1) to orient research by cataloging all known archaeological investigations conducted at Wormsloe to date. For non-archaeologists who are not familiar with the restricted access to archaeological studies, useful information is often overlooked. This report can thus serve to familiarize researchers with previous work, while offering targeted areas for further research.

(2) to serve as a historical context for a revised and expanded National Register of Historic Places nomination (Section D: Archaeology).

Archaeological Projects

The following is a list of all known archaeological projects at Wormsloe, in chronological order and naming the Principal Investigator. These projects include early amateur digs, university field schools, dissertation research, and mitigation work. Most of these projects have focused on historic-era resources. Such investigations have pertained to the Fort House ruins, the former rice mill, and the slave cabin landscape. There have been no substantial investigations of prehistoric Native American lifeways on the Isle of Hope. However, there is ample suggestion that the Native American archaeological record at Wormsloe is potentially quite significant.

- 1. Fort House Ruins, Marmaduke Floyd (1928)
- 2. Fort House Ruins, William Kelso (1968-1969)

- 3. Museum and Curator's Residence, John Martin (1978)
- 4. Fort House Landscape, Mark Palmer (1982)
- 5. Battery Wimberley, L.E. Babbits (1990)
- 6. Fort House Landscape, Kimberley Brigance (1992)
- 7. Southern End Isle of Hope and Marsh, Chad Braley (2001)
- 8. Old Avenue, Agricultural Complex, Slave Cabin Area, Jessica Cook Hale (2008-2009)
- 9. Slave Cabin Area, Nicole Isenbarger and Andrew Agha (2013)
- 10. Subsistence Rice Pond, Alessandro Pasqua (2015)

Recommendations

Based on a survey of these projects, and the input of professionals in the field, a series of recommendations generated for a revived archaeological program at Wormsloe. These recommendations are reproduced within their respective sections, but are included here for quick reference.

Prehistoric Archaeology

- 1. This report has identified the shell middens as the first priority in a renewed archaeological program at Wormsloe.

Conduct a study focused on the seasonality of the shell midden oysters to understand

if “the middens accumulated over a single season or multiple. It could also tell if the people were living there during the whole year, or just traveling back during a specific season.”¹

2. Investigate prehistoric environmental conditions:

Conduct coring studies (possibly in conjunction with UGA Geology faculty/ students) in order to establish a stratigraphic record for Wormsloe. 14C and OSL/TL dates on the stratigraphic record (focusing on the Late Pleistocene through the Late Holocene) would help explain human-environment interactions for the prehistoric timeframe.² This understanding allows researchers to target in on specific areas and locations for research, especially pertaining to Archaic-era studies. It is important to note that depending on this geological history, cultural resources may be preserved or destroyed. As Cook Hale relates, “Getting a handle on the depositional history of Wormsloe itself might offer some context for work on the earliest prehistoric periods.”

- Explore grant opportunities for bathymetric LiDAR imaging over Wormsloe’s drainage networks and waterways.
- Conduct prehistoric pollen analysis in order to understand environmental change at Wormsloe.

Recommendations: Historic Era Archaeology

1. It is important to continue investigation of slave cabin landscape, especially as development of the site continues.

- Identify specific locations of remaining

1 Bouzigard, Email with Author, February 2017.

2 Cook Hale, Jessica. Email Communication with Author, September 2016.

cabins, kitchen, overseer’s house, and any landscape elements such as the slave cemetery, potential garden spaces, and additional uses of the space.

- Explore opportunity for graphic representation (Sketch Up) of site for interpretive purposes.
- Conduct mitigation work, and publicly discuss findings prior to construction of educational building.

2. Conduct investigations on Long Island

- Determine locations for Reconstruction-era land use related to Special Field Order 15 property redistribution.

3. In conjunction with Georgia Department of Natural Resources, investigate colonial era occupation of Wormsloe

- Determine location of enslaved workers’ and marines’ huts.
- Determine location of agricultural outbuildings, fields, and experimental agriculture.

4. Conduct further investigations of agricultural complex

- Focus on postbellum agricultural activity.

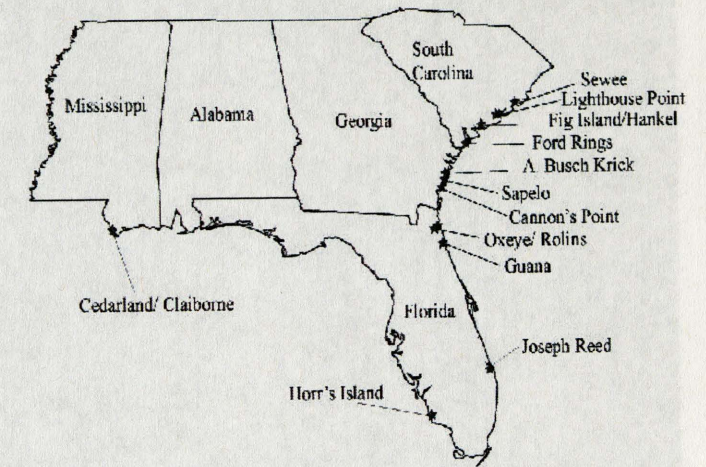
ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Prehistoric Archaeology

It has been assumed that only incidental evidence pertaining to Native American presence at Wormsloe has been produced through archaeological investigations. This evidence comes mainly from pottery sherds and lithics that were found by various archaeologists, and were not the subject of in-depth research. However, a 2001 report, the findings of which is missing from various subsequent archaeological reports on Wormsloe, begins to pinpoint Native American use of the Isle of Hope. Still, due to an overall lack of prehistoric archaeology done at Wormsloe, detailed Native American use of Isle of Hope can only be speculated about based on regional context, and this handful of findings. These findings are outlined below.

Shell middens are representative of Native American lifeways that adapted to the southeastern coastal environment over hundreds of years, and are widespread along the southeastern coastal region. They can range in size from a couple feet wide and high, to massive piles tens of feet wide and high. The most significant midden sites—largely based on their age, monumentality and rarity—are those that date back 3,000-4,500 years ago, and referred to as “shell rings.” These large oyster mounds which are “circular and semi-circular piles ranging in size from 30 to 250 meters in diameter and 1 to 6 meters in height.”³ These generally donut-shaped mounds of oyster shell are recognized as nationally significant by the National Register of Historic Places. Part of the reason for this level of significance is due to the relatively small number of extant rings; approximately 20 are known to exist along the entire southeastern coastline. Of these twenty, several are located close to Wormsloe.

3 Russo, Michael, “Archaic Shell Rings of the Southeast U.S.: National Historic Landmarks Historic Context,” (Southeast Archaeological Center, National Park Service, April 2006), 10.



Shell Ring Sites of the Southeast. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/coastal-shell-rings>. Courtesy of Victor D. Thompson

However, there is currently no evidence of any Archaic-era shell rings existing at Wormsloe.

While the larger shell rings are without a doubt highly significant, the importance of the numerous smaller middens at Wormsloe, as well as other nearby locations, cannot be ignored. The middens can provide valuable information on subsistence activities, environmental conditions, and pinpoint the date of Native American presence at the site. Furthermore, the middens can be linked to arguably the most significant singular cultural resource at Wormsloe: the tabby Fort House Ruins. Clearly, Noble Jones viewed the large mounds of shell as his to use and easily gathered building material for his tabby fort house. It is presumed that he used the middens for construction purposes. The significance of the shell middens at Wormsloe beyond their role in the construction of the Fort House cannot be determined until thorough archaeological investigations are completed on the middens.

It is possible that the middens at Wormsloe date from the Late Archaic all the way to the antebellum



Shell midden at Wormsloe along interpretive trail. (Dunlap, 2016).

era.⁴ Thus, as no substantial archaeology has been conducted on the middens at Wormsloe, it is not possible to fully understand the place of the Wormsloe middens in the historic context of southeastern Native American archaeology.

In terms of definitive findings, various researchers beginning in the 1960s have identified Native American presence on the Isle of Hope. William Kelso reported findings of prehistoric pottery material during his investigation of the Fort House ruins in the 1968, with the sherds dating to the Late Archaic Period.⁵ In 1990, Civil War earthworks researcher L.E. Babbitt found evidence of prehistoric occupation. The 1992 project report states “the two prehistoric occupations lie underneath Civil War fortifications. No collecting was attempted during the survey but Savannah and Irene ceramics were noted”⁶ which date to the Mississippian

Period. Similarly, as the prehistoric period was not the subject of the field school, these features were not thoroughly investigated. In 2001, Chad Braley and his crew from Southeastern Archaeology, Inc. conducted mitigation work on the south end of the Isle of Hope and identified evidence of both Late Archaic (circa 3000 BCE) land use as well as small Woodland Period camp site (500 BCE - 500 CE). In 2008, an auger test of a shell midden in the slave cabin area by UGA student researcher Jessica Cook Hale revealed a piece of Savannah-phase pottery (c. 1000-1200 CE).⁷ These pottery sherds hint at the possible archaeological potential at Wormsloe buried within the series of shell middens lining the southern and eastern edges of Wormsloe.

4 Bouzigard, Aimee, Email with Author, February 2017.

5 Kelso, William M., Captain Jones’s Wormsloe: A Historical, Archaeological, and Architectural Study of an Eighteenth-Century Plantation Site near Savannah, Georgia (Wormsloe Foundation Publications, Number 13, University of Georgia Press, 1979), 91.

6 Kelso, 4.

7 Cook Hale, Jessica, “Archaeological Survey at the Wormsloe Plantation: 2008 to 2009: Geophysics, Geoarchaeology, and Traditional Archaeological Techniques within an Interdisciplinary Study” (Unpublished Paper, 2009), 40.

Recommendations

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- Conduct prehistoric pollen analysis in order to understand environmental change at Wormsloe.

8 Bouzigard, Email with Author, February 2017.

9 Cook Hale, Jessica. Email Communication with Author, September 2016.

Historic-Era Archaeology

Historic-era archaeology at Wormsloe pertains to a series of archaeological investigations dating back to the early 1900s. In contrast to prehistoric archaeology, the historic archaeology at Wormsloe has produced a sizable amount of information concerning the site’s past, which helps to construct an understanding of the site from multiple vantage points. Archaeological surveys focused on historic-era resources, and in particular plantation-specific archaeology, has grown in activity over the last several decades.¹⁰ At Wormsloe, historic-focused investigations began in the 1920s, at the beginning of Wormsloe’s transition into a historic site and tourism destination.

In 1928, Augusta De Renne’s brother and amateur archaeologist Marmaduke Floyd conducted archaeological work at the Fort House ruins.¹¹ Here he dug a series of trenches across the Fort House Ruins area seemingly in an attempt to extract any cultural artifacts existing underground. It is unknown what or how many artifacts were identified, or what information was gleaned from this work. Archaeologist William Kelso described this trenching as “considerably disturbing,”¹² and that the “excavators had made a concerted effort to salvage cultural material,” leaving behind a lack of artifacts in these three trenches.¹³

In 1968 Kelso began a thorough, and more professional, investigation of the fort house ruins in the southern part of the Isle of Hope, marking the first scientific study of the site.¹⁴ Kelso subsequently published his findings in the book, Captain Jones’s Wormsloe. The report places the ruins in a historical context, outlining the evolution and instances of

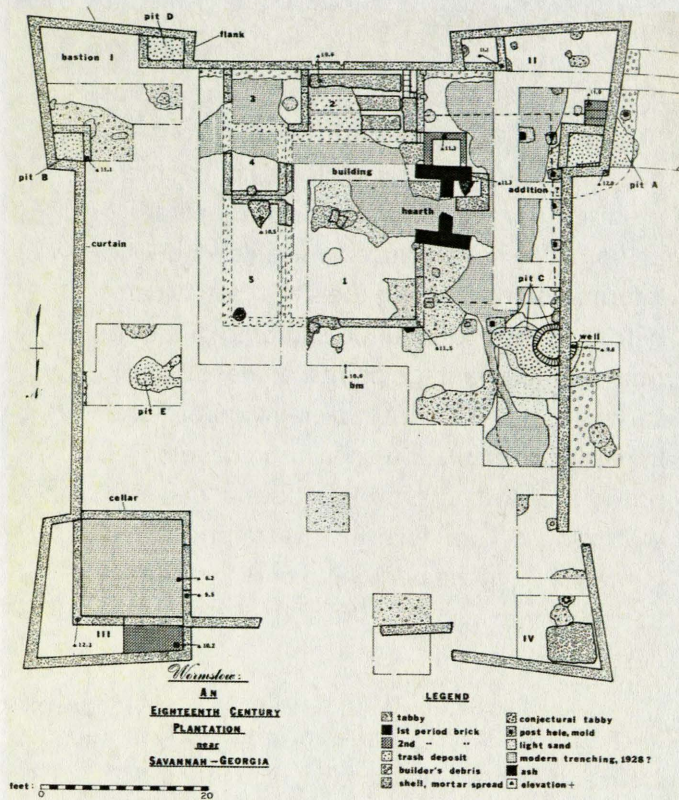
10 Cook Hale, “Archaeological Survey,” 40.

11 Cady, Paul. “Wormsloe Cultural Landscape Report: Part I: History, Existing Conditions, Analysis and Evaluation” (Cultural Landscape Laboratory, College of Environment and Design, University of Georgia, 2015), 92.

12 Kelso, 21.

13 Kelso, 52.

14 Kelso, 1.



Excavation Plan of Fort House Ruins archaeological features found at Wormsloe during excavation by Kelso in 1969 (Kelso 1979)

similar construction in the early colonial era. In this way, the fort house ruins were linked to other examples of tabby structures and military fortifications, as well to the daily life of early British colonists. Kelso's archaeological findings confirmed the existing documentary evidence, and showed that there was a period of occupancy at the site prior to the construction of the fortified tabby house from roughly 1737 to 1740.¹⁵ Additionally, he concluded that the tabby renovation of the house occurred between 1739 and 1744, a secondary expansion of the house occurred between 1750-1770, and a two phase "final occupation" period spanned from 1770-1820.¹⁶ Kelso's work stands as the most extensive archaeological project at Wormsloe, and surely gave strong reason for the preservation of the site through the establishment of Wormsloe State Historic Site. Subsequent archaeology projects would expand beyond the fort

15 Ibid., 21
16 Ibid.

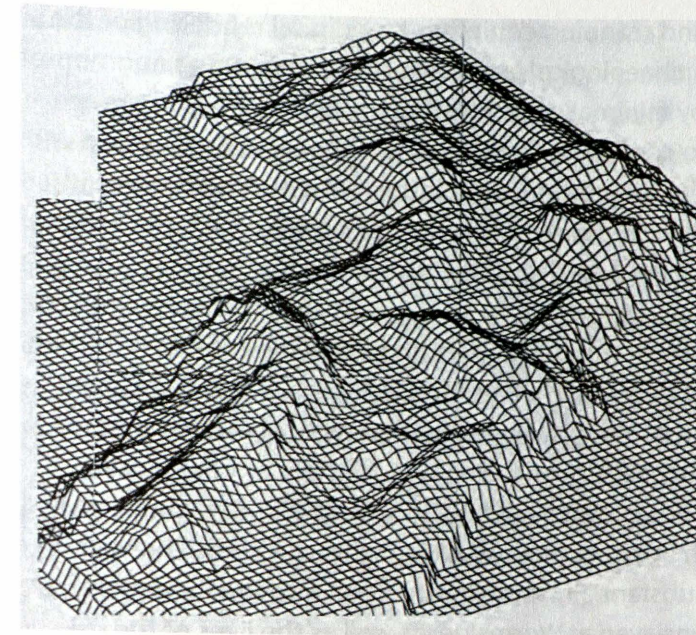
house ruins, and offer a broader view of the site's environmental and cultural history.

Two studies conducted by GDNr archaeologist John R. Morgan occurred in 1974 and 1978. The 1974 research cataloged the cultural resources on the state park land, and to presented recommendations for conservation of these resources. The 1978 research initiated by recently enacted State Stewardship laws that required state agencies to consider how new projects, such as the construction of roadways or new buildings, would impact cultural resources. The 1978 focused on the location chosen for the new museum and curator's residence to identify any potential archaeological impacts. No significant findings were reported in this area.

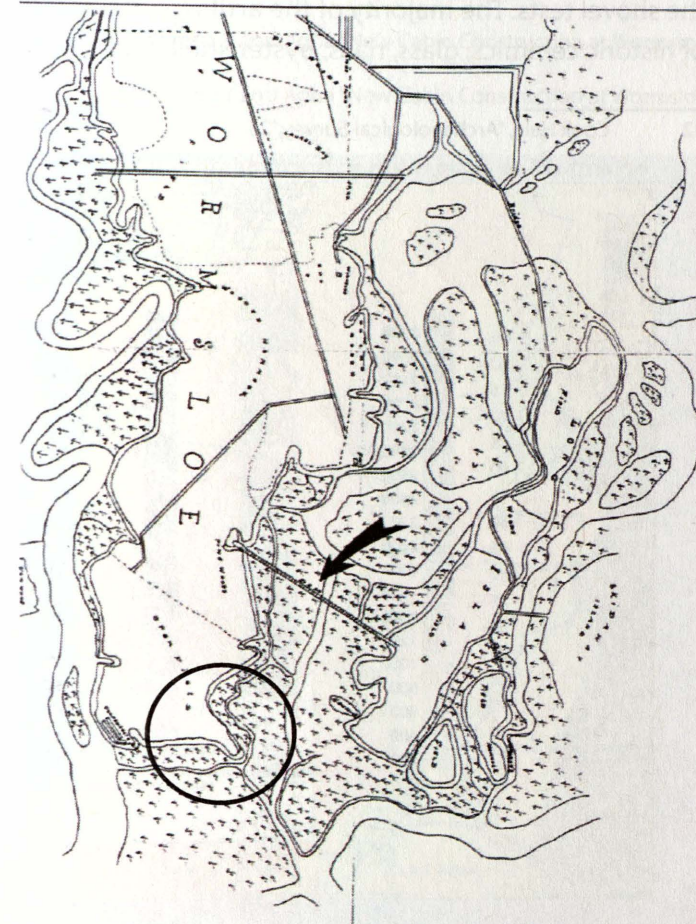
In 1982, researcher Mark Palmer, investigated the Fort House Ruins landscape. Beyond the cleared Fort House area, Palmer identified two shell middens. One of which contained four tabby blocks. He also "identified a line of live oaks considerably older and larger than those planted in 1890 by the Jones family to line Live Oak Drive. He believed that these trees might correspond to the original eighteenth century occupation."¹⁷

This area was clearly important enough to warrant further research, so in 1992, Wormsloe intern Kimberley Brigance conducted a more thorough investigation of the Fort House Ruins landscape. Over the summer, Brigance conducted archaeological testing in the Fort House ruins vicinity, and issued a brief report of the findings. The work consisted of surveying the ground surface for any abnormalities or visible artifacts, with no shovel testing. Because of such limited methods, in the report Brigance stated she was reluctant to include any interpretation of the artifacts and features. However, under encouragement from the state archaeologist at the time, Dr. Larson,

17 Barnes, Mark R., Wormsloe Draft National Historic Landmark Nomination, USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86). May 25, 2005.



3-D model of Battery Wimberley (Babits, 1990).



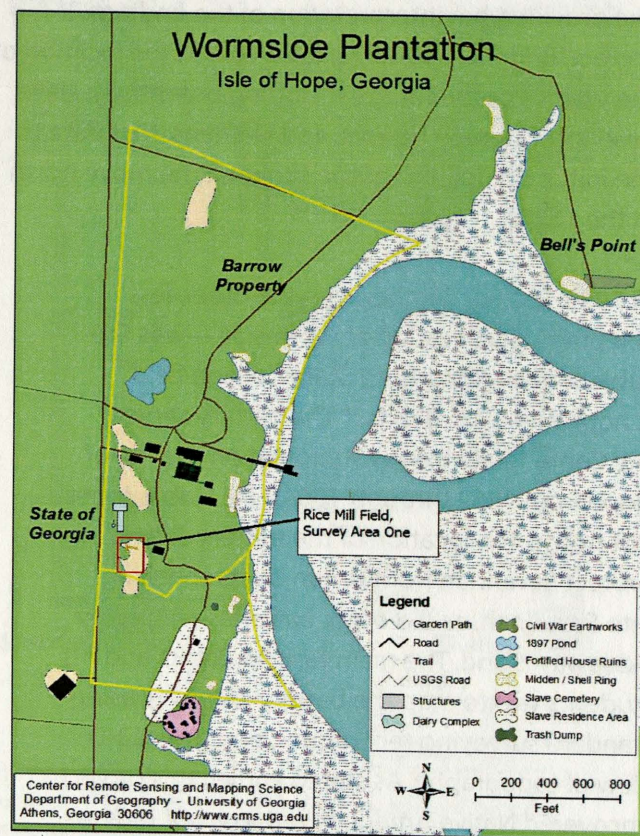
Reproduction of 1870 Plat indicating Causeway and Braley study area (Braley, 2002).

she provided her interpretation of the findings. If correct, Brigance would have identified the location of the various outbuildings, including potentially, slave dwellings, storage houses, and kitchens, that date to the initial occupation of the site until the move north in the 1820s.

In 1990, Battery Wimberley—the other, less celebrated fortification at Wormsloe—was the subject of an Armstrong State College field school led by L.E. Babits.¹⁸ The battery served the Confederate troops stationed on the Isle of Hope from 1862 through 1864. Like Noble Jones's fort house, the location of the battery served to protect Savannah from Union boats sneaking into Savannah, as did other batteries on nearby Skidaway Island. The main task for Babits and his students was to map the battery parapets using standard surveying techniques, and give a 3-D view of topography. As stated earlier, this project uncovered Native American pottery, but did not analyze these features.

In 2001, Chad Braley of Southeastern Archaeology, Inc. was the principal investigator in a Georgia Department of Transportation mitigation project focused on the southern tip of the Isle of Hope.¹⁹ The project area spanned 90 acres of marsh and dredge resulting from the construction of the Diamond Causeway. The dredge material was to be relocated in order to restore the marsh in that area. Five distinct sites were identified in the survey, four of which were recommended as eligible or potentially eligible for National Register listing. The sites included a Civil War-era causeway, a Civil-War era trench, and two sites with prehistoric features. This study has not appeared in any recent literature concerning Wormsloe's cultural landscape.

18 Babits, L.E. Battery Wimberley; A Preliminary Topographical and Documentary Survey. Armstrong State College 1992).
19 Braley, Chad O., "An Archeological Survey of Approximately 90 Acres of Salt Marsh, Isle of Hope, Chatham County, Georgia." (Atlanta: Southeastern Archeological Services, Inc., 2002), i.



Cook-Hale's Rice Mill study area map (Cook-Hale, 2009)

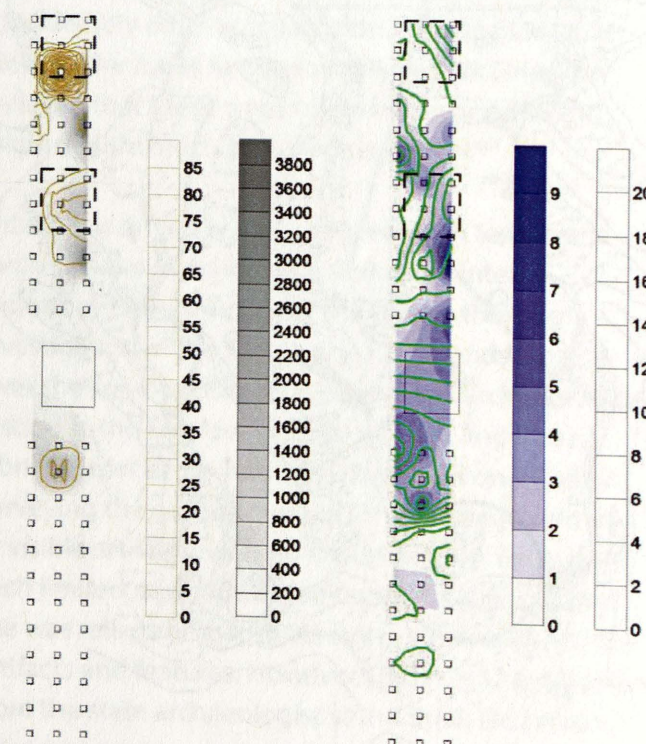
Between 2008 and 2009, a "panoply of geoaerchaeological, geophysical, historical, and archaeological techniques were employed at Wormsloe" by Jessica Cook Hale while she was a Wormsloe Fellow.²⁰ Cook Hale's investigations focused on three locations within the Barrow property: The Agricultural Complex, the Slave Cabin Landscape, and the Old Avenue north of the Main Residence. The most significant finding of Cook Hale's work was determining the location of the historic rice mill. Working with another Wormsloe Fellow, historian Drew Swanson, they were able to locate the presumed rice mill in the Agricultural Complex east of the Oak Avenue by the dairy ruins. It was determined, based on its size, the rice mill "may have served to process the grain from all of the family plantations, as well as that from other landowners."²¹ This archaeological work at the rice mill site was mostly unobtrusive, relying mainly on geoaerchaeological computer modeling

20 Cook Hale, "Archaeological Survey," 4.
21 Cook Hale, "Archaeological Survey," 37.

and scanning equipment for digital rendering of the archaeological landscape. This process was augmented by minimal shovel testing of specific areas in order to confirm assumptions. The shovel tests revealed the brick foundation of the mill. The findings would give credence to the work of later Wormsloe research focused on rice cultivation at the site.

In the summer of 2013, in preparation for the addition of new research facilities in the slave cabin area, an archaeological investigation was conducted by the Archaeological Research Collective of Charleston, South Carolina. While Cook-Hale's limited auger tests in this area proved sterile,²² this work would reveal substantially more information into the lives of those enslaved at Wormsloe, as well as the lives of the tenants after emancipation. The report details that a "total of 948 countable artifacts were recovered from the shovel tests. The majority of the artifacts consisted of historic ceramics, glass, nails, oyster shell, and

22 Cook Hale, "Archaeological Survey," 25.



Slave Cabin Landscape scatter map (Isenbarger and Agha, 2013).

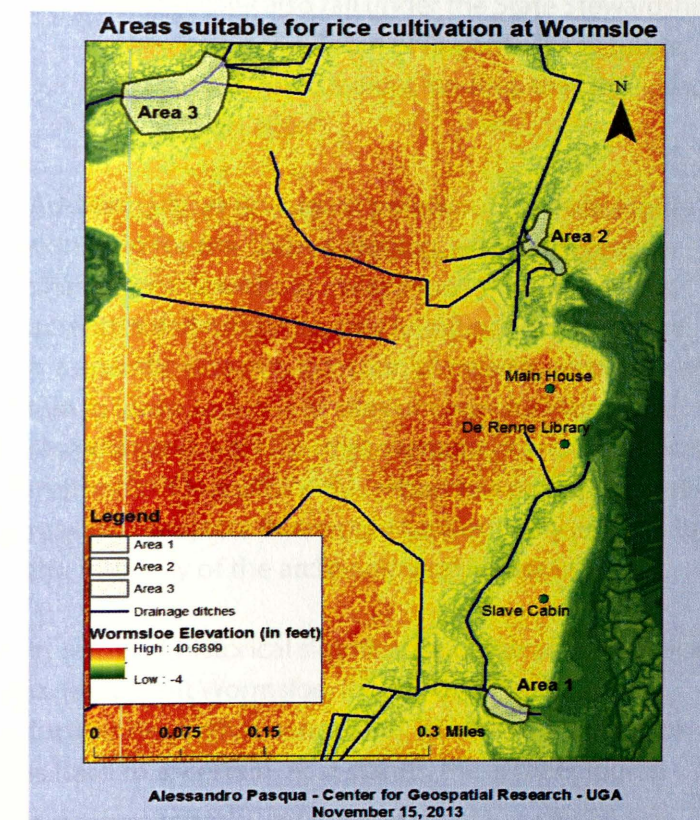
architectural brick and mortar rubble."²³ Additional items include parts of play-dolls, smoking pipes, and eyeglasses. The report also proposed that it is likely "there were two cabins in the area north of the existing cabin with a less formal work yard or outbuildings to the south" in the location of the new cabins.²⁴ Subsistence-related findings include egg shell, various animal bones, and crab claws, all of which were finely chopped. The report notes that the preservation rate of these materials is remarkable, and "the possibility for research into the diets of the enslaved is high."²⁵

In 2015, more research in subsistence activities was conducted by Wormsloe Fellow Alessandro Pasqua. This project located a subsistence-scale ice pond

23 Nicole Isenbarger and Andrew Agha, "Archaeological Survey and Testing of Proposed New Cabin Construction at Wormsloe Plantation," (2013) page 6

24 Isenbarger and Agha "New Cabin Construction at Wormsloe," 7.

25 Isenbarger and Agha "New Cabin Construction at Wormsloe," 13



Pasqua's rice study map (Pasqua, 2013).

south of the slave cabin area.²⁶ His research utilized geomodeling techniques and an analysis of rice seed found in the area. This is the first time rice production has been directly associated with Wormsloe, and helps to place the rice mill uncovered by Cook Hale in context.

Given the size of the pond and presumed date of use (1890s), it appears that rice was grown in this location by tenant farmers still living in the cabin area after emancipation, and was for personal use, and not reflective of a large-scale rice plantation. While the recent findings in the slave cabin area are significant in giving tangibility to the enslaved people and tenant farmers at Wormsloe, there is still much to be learned from future investigations. For example, structures from the late 19th century have yet to be located, including the privies, overseer's house, and kitchen. Furthermore, additional archaeology in the agricultural complex begun by Cook Hale can provide more thorough understanding of postbellum plantation activities at Wormsloe.

Recommendations

1. It is important to continue investigation of the slave cabin landscape, especially as development of the site continues.

- Identify specific locations of remaining cabins, kitchen, overseer's house, and any landscape elements such as the slave cemetery, potential garden spaces, and additional uses of the space.
- Explore opportunity for graphic representation (Sketch Up) of site for interpretive purposes.
- Conduct mitigation work, and publicly discuss findings, prior to construction of educational building.

26 Pasqua, Alessandro. "Use of Terrestrial Laser Scanning (TLS) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) to Investigate Rice Cultivation on the Isle of Hope, Georgia (END OF THE YEAR REPORT)" (Center for Geospatial Research Department of Geography The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, USA, 2013).

2. Conduct investigations on Long Island.

- Determine locations for Reconstruction-era land use related to Special Field Order 15 property redistribution.

3. In conjunction with Georgia Department of Natural Resources, investigate colonial era occupation of Wormsloe.

- Determine location of enslaved workers' and marines' huts.
- Determine location of agricultural outbuildings, fields, and experimental agriculture.

4. Conduct further investigations of agricultural complex.

- Focus on postbellum agricultural activity.

DISCUSSION

The archaeological work conducted at Wormsloe over the years has provided an extremely valuable understanding of the historic Isle of Hope landscape. Few sites have been as fortunate as Wormsloe in terms of being the beneficiary of such long-term research. This is not to say that the process is straightforward. As Georgia Department of Natural Resources Staff Archaeologist Aimee C. Bouzigard elaborates:

One thing to note is the access to working at Wormsloe given the 3 landowners. On the private property, the family can fund and coordinate with UGA and through their Fellow program to conduct research. Research on the park/DNR side would require a research design and permit from our office for a non-DNR archaeologist to conduct survey. UGA can conduct research on their parcel; and they technically also fall under the State Stewardship laws being the Board of Regents. If any future projects involve federal funding, that would kick in Section 106.²⁷

Additionally, as Bouzigard points out, "archaeologists don't dig for the sake of digging, and like to retain a site's integrity without excavation unless a project's activities will totally destroy it (mitigation) or if there is a specific research question to be answered. We also like to leave sections of sites unexcavated for future research and with the improvement of archaeological methods."²⁸ Hopefully, this report has provided specific research projects that would be worth any impacts to the integrity of the archaeological landscape.

In terms of historical significance of the archaeological landscape at Wormsloe, it is my opinion that until further research is conducted, its overall significance is hard to ascertain. As it stands, the archaeological

resources, if evaluated separately from the site, would be listed at the state level of significance. This could change however. Clearly, the colonial and prehistoric era features of the Fort House Ruins landscape have the potential to be quite significant to our understanding of prehistoric land use, and the daily life pertaining to colonial era settlers. The mitigation work that would accompany the expansion of the new CREW site on UGA property will likely reveal further insights into the lives of the enslaved and those who sharecropped the property after emancipation. The shell middens have the potential to provide valuable information about the Guale and prior indigenous land use on the Isle of Hope, in addition to environmental conditions that can help current research on climate change.

It has been suggested that based on a lack of physical integrity (per typical National Register of Historic Places standards) of above-ground cultural resources, that the significance of Wormsloe is currently related to its archaeological potential.²⁹ If this is indeed the case, then there is all the more reason to institute a rigorous archaeological program at Wormsloe. With the expanding set of non-invasive technological tools available to archaeologists, concerns over disrupting the archaeological integrity of Wormsloe are minimized. Using these tools can not only bring forth new historical understandings, but also serve as an example of cutting-edge archaeology in the 21st century that could garner accolades and inspire similar research elsewhere. Lastly, it can be argued that there is a great opportunity on the part of contemporary researchers to expand upon the historical understandings of marginalized people, specifically African Americans and Native Americans of the Southeast. At Wormsloe, there is a chance to help tell stories of these people who left little above-ground

27 Bouzigard, email
28 Bouzigard, email

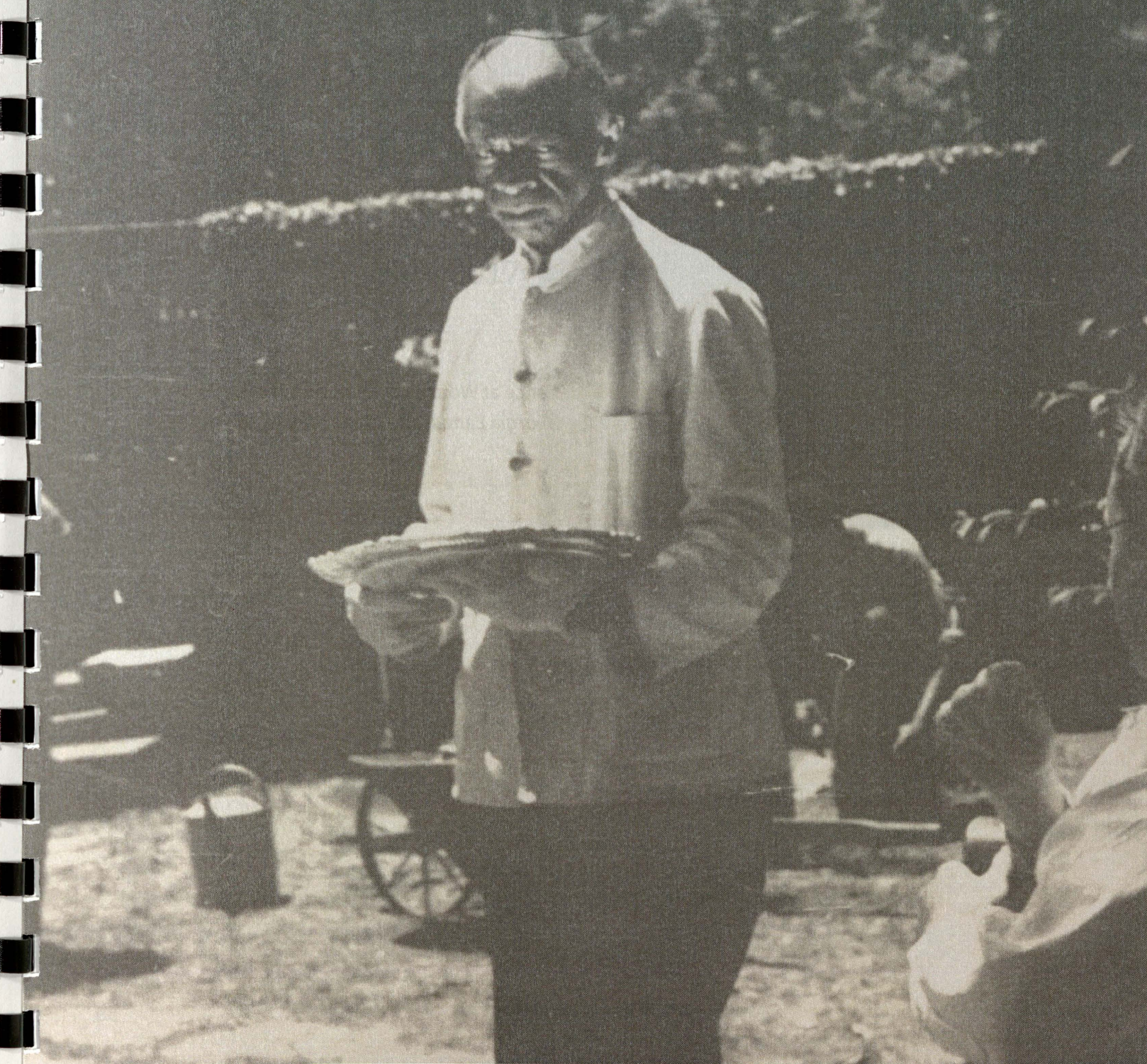
29 Georgia State Historic Preservation Office. Phone Call with Author. December 2016.

records, but below ground, the evidence of their lives is preserved, and waiting to be shared with the world.

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THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LEGACY AT WORMSLOE: DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH



Report produced by College of Environment and Design Wormsloe Fellow Sean Dunlap, under the guidance of Cari Goetcheus, College of Environment and Design, University of Georgia

A product of the Cultural Landscape Laboratory

Front Image: Photo courtesy of the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library

Image on following page: Sean W. Dunlap, 2016

Portions of this report were adapted from "The Slave Experience at Wormsloe: Directions for Research" by Melissa Tufts and Sean Dunlap, published in *Georgia Landscape Magazine*, April 2017.

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THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LEGACY AT WORMSLOE

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WORMSLOE

African American Resources

Chatham County,
Georgia

May 2017



Prepared by:

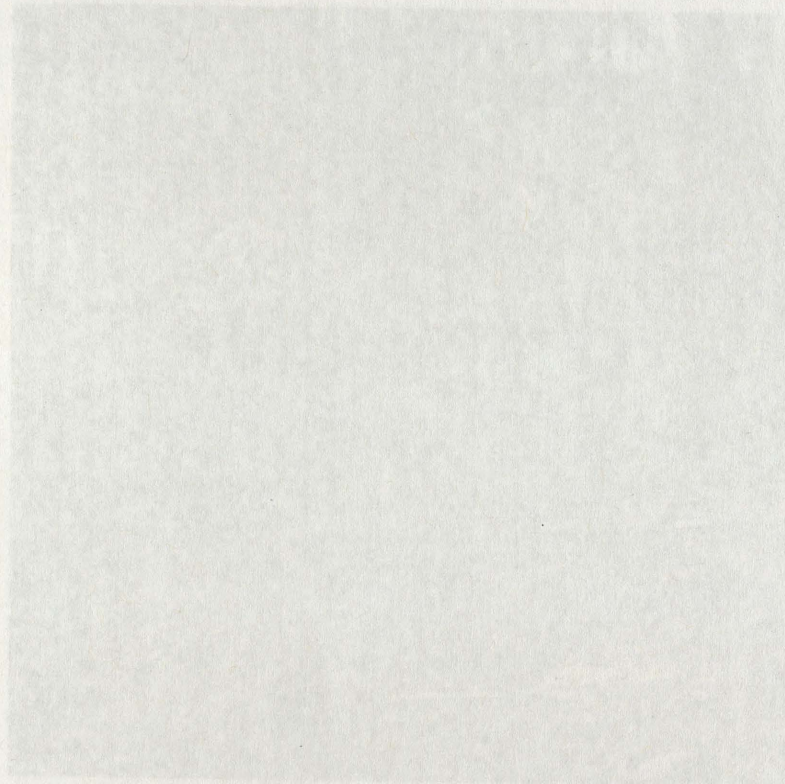
Sean W. Dunlap

under the guidance of

Cari Goetcheus,
Associate Professor in the College of Environment + Design
Cultural Landscape Laboratory

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LEGACY AT WORMSLOE

Prepared by the College of Environment and Design Wormsloe Plantation
College of Environment and Design, University of Georgia



WORMSLOE

Chatham County,
Georgia

MAY 2017

Prepared by:
Sean W. Dunlap

Associate Professor in the College of Environment + Design
Cultural Landscape Laboratory

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African American worms during library construction. Photo
courtesy of the Margaret K. Lawrence Manuscript Library.

African Americans, while their story is embedded in a
handful of significant buildings and landscape
fragments still present at Wormsloe, much of what
remains that connects African Americans to the
Wormsloe landscape has been largely overlooked.
Early recognition of roles on human memory
and lore. Without understanding the role African
Americans played at Wormsloe, we
lose a significant part of the landscape's history.
This involves a re-examination of the role of African
Americans in the landscape and the role of the
landscape in the history of the site.

Wormsloe historian Drew Swanson notes, "the histories
of Wormsloe's slave workforce are all but impossible to
reconstruct." These histories were relegated to sparse
notes written in farm journals, purchase receipts, and

Swanson, Drew A. *Reclaiming Wormsloe Plantation:
the environmental history of a lowcountry landscape*. Athens,
University of Georgia Press, 2012, 64.

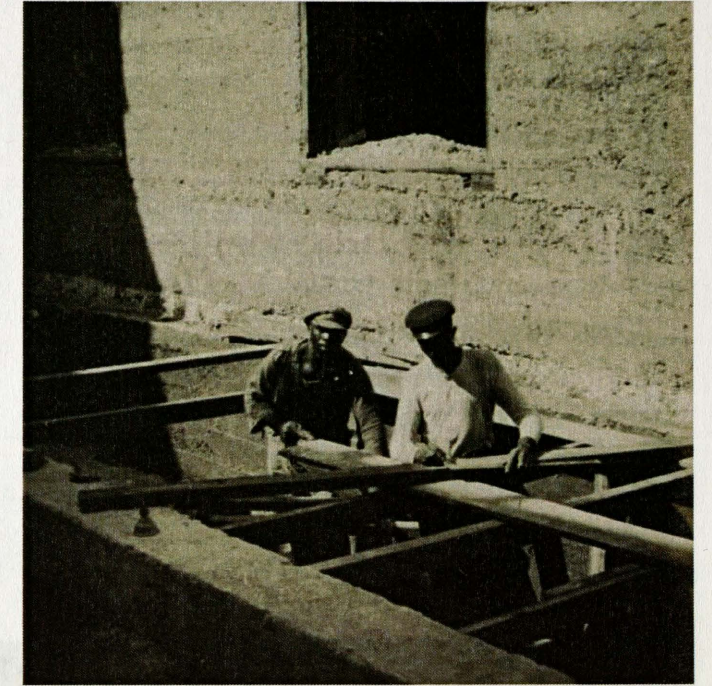
PROJECT SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Africans and African Americans have been a part of the long environmental history of Wormsloe Plantation, since shortly after its founding in the early eighteenth century. As such, we cannot fully understand European colonization of the Americas, let alone Wormsloe itself, without an understanding of the African and African American contributions made to the site.

Wormsloe's enslaved African Americans—reaching over 60 in number prior to the Civil War—toiled for generations in the fields, forests, kitchens, and marsh. They lived in a clustered community in close proximity to the landowning family, growing crops for their own subsistence and developing a culture rooted in the local landscape. Slaves remained at the plantation during the Civil War and, after Emancipation, some stayed at Wormsloe as sharecroppers where they continued to work the land. Others left the site for nearby islands and the surrounding area on the mainland. A handful remained employed by the family and one family, the Frank Jenkins family, continued to reside on site. Throughout the years of Reconstruction and the early decades of the twentieth century, many skilled laborers trained in carpentry, landscape construction and gardening, and brick-laying helped to construct some of Wormsloe's iconic buildings and formal surroundings. In the early 20th century, farmhands also helped to diversify Wormsloe's farm output. During the plantation's tourism period, visitors were guided by Aunt Liza, an African American costumed interpreter of the antebellum period.

Yet today, there is little public interpretation of the many contributions made by African



African American workers during library construction (Photos courtesy of the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library)

Americans. While their story is embedded in a handful of significant buildings and landscape fragments still present at Wormsloe, much of what remains that connects African Americans to the Wormsloe landscape has been altered beyond easy recognition or relies on human memory and lore. Without understanding the role Africans and African Americans played at Wormsloe, we limit our discernment of this significant cultural landscape and risk losing a broader understanding of the rich culture that continues to evolve in this historic coastal environment.

Wormsloe historian Drew Swanson notes, "the histories of Wormsloe's slave workforce are all but impossible to reconstruct."¹ These histories were relegated to sparse notes written in farm journals, purchase receipts, and

¹ Swanson, Drew A., *Remaking Wormsloe Plantation: the environmental history of a Lowcountry landscape* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 64.

a few inventories that cataloged the names of the enslaved. The records of their lives are few and far between. With such a lack of information, researchers must become creative in order to tell these tales. In doing so, they look to other plantations of the region to draw parallels and gain insights into the daily lives of African Americans at Wormsloe. Archaeology has emerged over the last few decades as a principal means of reconstructing these histories. Lastly, local African American communities are the bearers of passed down stories and accounts, and their role as stakeholders in reconstructing African American history is paramount.

In literal and figurative terms, African Americans are currently separated from the physical landscape that holds this history. A few years back when students and faculty from CED were first trying to define the cultural characteristics of Wormsloe Plantation, we were struck by how inaccessible the African American story was for the visiting public. At the visitors' center, African American families on tour were disappointed to learn that they could not explore areas that were a part of the daily slave experience. The only remaining slave structure was still part of the Barrow family's private property and there were no other existing structures or sites defined on the state historic site that were specifically a part of the slave experience.

It is important that access to the African American experience of Wormsloe is provided to the visiting public.

REPORT GOALS

The goals of this report are as follows:

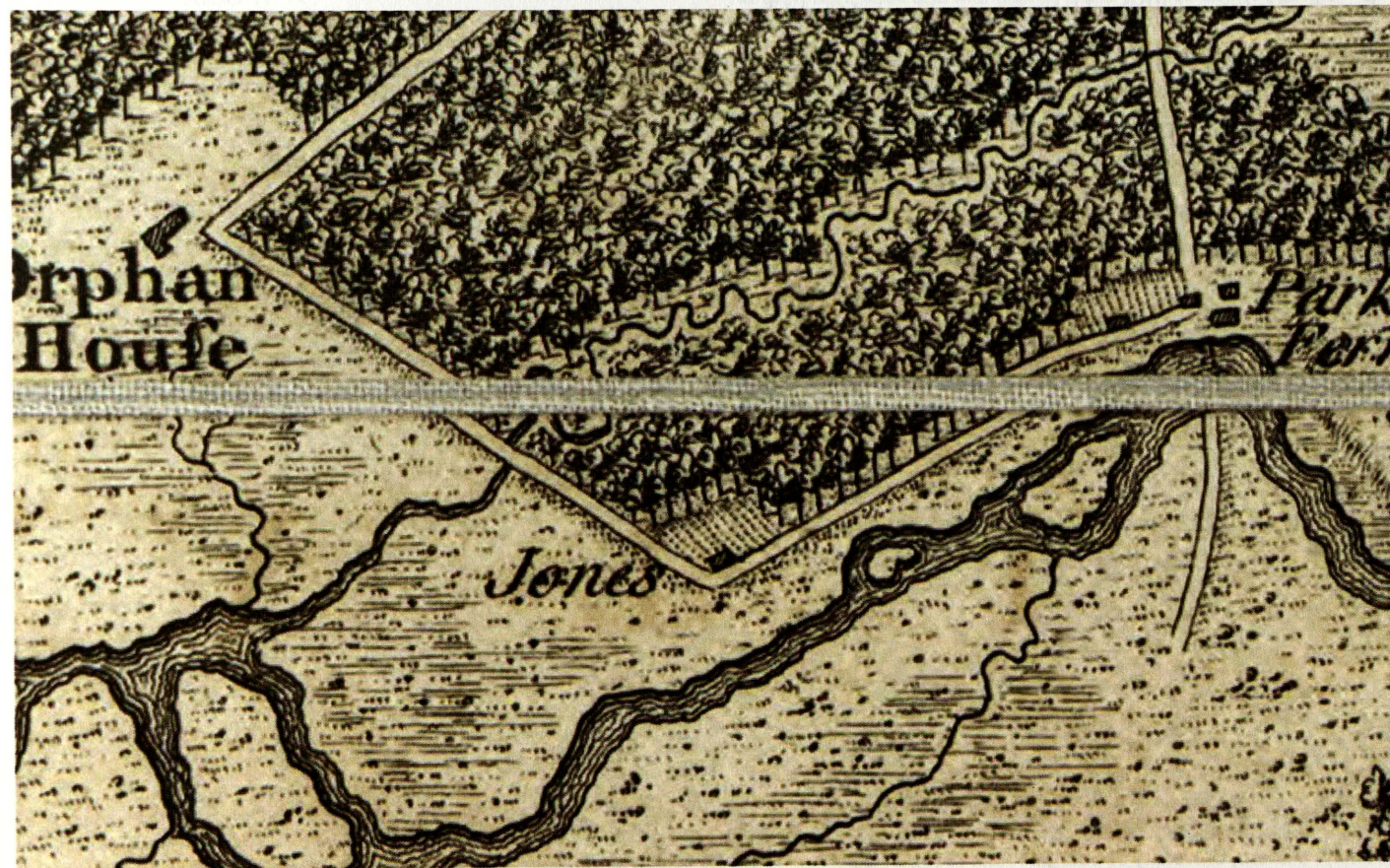
- 1. Provide a historical context for the African American history at Wormsloe.
- 2. Provide an overview of historic resources associated with African Americans at Wormsloe.
- 3. Provide directions for future research, and future actions that should be taken to safeguard and interpret their history.

This report represents an entry point into the history of African Americans at Wormsloe. It is hoped that this work will provide a point of departure for a more robust research program to occur at Wormsloe.

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AT WORMSLOE

The Georgia Colony was founded upon moral principles, which its founder, General James Oglethorpe hoped would guide the social reforms he envisioned for the colony. Setting it apart from the South Carolina colony, the Georgia colony forbade the institution of slavery. For General James Oglethorpe, slavery was morally unjust, and went against the sorts of reforms he hoped the colonists would embrace. Almost immediately, however, this goal would be undermined by the colonists and the demands of the market economy so dependent on international trade. Soon after the founding of the colony in 1733, the colonists began clamoring for the legalization of slavery. Pointing to the agricultural success in South

Carolina, advocates for slavery's repeal argued that enslaved Africans were more naturally fit for agricultural work, and were needed for efficiency of plantation operations. Many of the European colonists and indentured servants did not possess extensive agricultural knowledge; many did not have a resistance to tropical disease, or were simply unwilling to perform the hard labor themselves. Within a culture of white supremacy and its system of slavery, the colonists could get around this problem. The sentiment was shared by many, so much so that records indicate that before the passage of the repeal of the slavery prohibition in 1751, Georgia colonists illegally enslaved Africans and put them to work in their fields. Like his fellow colonists, at Wormsloe,



Sketch of Northern Frontiers: Map shows Noble Jones's landholding on the Isle of Hope (Campbell 1780)

Noble Jones also illegally enslaved Africans prior to the repeal.² This marks the beginning of African and African American life at Wormsloe; a history that would span roughly 200 years.

Jones, like many of the other colonial landowners, was struggling to establish a successful plantation on the Isle of Hope, and at his other lands in the region. Jones turned to slavery to reverse his fortunes. After the passage of the repeal in 1751, Jones purchased seven enslaved people that he hoped would help with his fledgling agricultural venture. Here at the southern tip of the plantation, within the complex of the Fort House, marine huts, and outbuildings, a few simple dwellings were constructed to house the enslaved laborers. They cleared the land for cash crops, and experimental crops such as mulberry, indigo, and grapes.

Even with the additional labor, Jones “found that he could hardly raise enough food” to provide for them,³ thus characterizing a harsh life at Wormsloe. No records exist concerning the lives of these workers, or whether they were related, spoke the same language, practiced the same religion, possessed similar agricultural knowledge, experienced bonds of friendship, or came from plantations outside the southeast. We know that slaves coming into the new colonies possessed a diverse background and a wide skill-set related to their lives prior to enslavement and during their time spent crossing the Atlantic and working on Caribbean plantations. Some were Muslim, some were well-educated, some were skilled craftspeople, farmers, and ranchers. Such knowledge is well established as the role in the creation of the South Carolina rice and cattle industries, as well as cotton production.⁴ Their knowledge paved the way for the rise of the antebellum plantation society.

2 Swanson, *Remaking Wormsloe*, 35
3 Coulter, E. Merton. *Wormsloe: Two Centuries of a Georgia Family*. (Athens, University of Georgia Press: 1955), 21-22
4 Swanson, *Remaking Wormsloe*, 64



Marsh at the Slave Cabin Landscape (Dunlap, 2016)

Upon the death of Noble Jones in 1775, the estate included 53 enslaved people, and another 20 who were leased from the colonial governor. These people would have worked his various land holdings.⁵ The number of enslaved people working at Wormsloe grew in the decades after his death, corresponding with the expansion of agricultural production, principally cotton, ushered in by Noble Jones’ descendants. As Drew Swanson writes, “[i]t is unclear exactly how many slaves lived on Wormsloe any given time, but it was probably a significant number throughout the nineteenth century.”⁶ An 1807 inventory of the plantation listed 60 slaves,⁷ and by 1812, “George Jones owned 102 slaves spread out over plantations in five counties, with the bulk working at Poplar Grove and Wormsloe.”⁸ To manage the enslaved workforce, in 1810, John Rawls was hired by George Jones as

5 Coulter, *Wormsloe*, 35
6 Swanson, *Remaking Wormsloe*, 66
7 Kelso, William M., *Captain Jones’s Wormsloe: A Historical, Archaeological, and Architectural Study of an Eighteenth-Century Plantation Site near Savannah, Georgia* (Wormsloe Foundation Publications, Number 13, University of Georgia Press, 1979), 161-163.
8 Swanson, *Remaking Wormsloe*, 66

overseer of Wormsloe.⁹ The growth in production and number of slaves did not immediately correspond to many changes on the landscape. In an “1815 inventory of the plantation, George Jones revealed how little had changed since the colonial period. There were a few new wooden structures - a cotton house, corn building, pea shed, and fodder barn- but the old fort remained the dwelling house, and the slaves resided in huts that probably hailed back to the original rude structures erected for Noble Jones’ marines.”¹⁰ However, with the construction of the new Jones residence in 1828, the plantation landscape began to take on the form we see today at Wormsloe. This landscape would express and reinforce the paternalistic nature of slave ownership as well as the system of oppression that created it.

9 George Wymberley Jones De Renne family papers. MS 1064. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries. Box 29, Folder 1
10 Swanson, *Remaking Wormsloe*, 70

The plantation system appears to have peaked at Wormsloe in the years leading up to the Civil War. After inheriting the property in 1848, George Wymberley Jones set out to increase agricultural output at Wormsloe, and in doing so greatly expanded the slave system. In 1849, he acquired thirty-five additional enslaved people to provide the labor for this agricultural expansion.¹¹ This necessitated the construction of new quarters. In quick succession, he ordered the construction of five double-pen cabins (at a cost of \$50 each),¹² a servant’s hall, mill house, pea barn, stable, and various other structures.¹³ Not long after this flurry of construction activity, six additional cabins were built; “two single family and four double family

11 Bragg, William Harris. *De Renne: three generations of a Georgia family* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1999), 89.
12 George Wymberley Jones De Renne family papers. MS 1064. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries. Box 12, folder 27
13 George Wymberley Jones De Renne family papers. MS 1064. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries. Box 12, folder 27



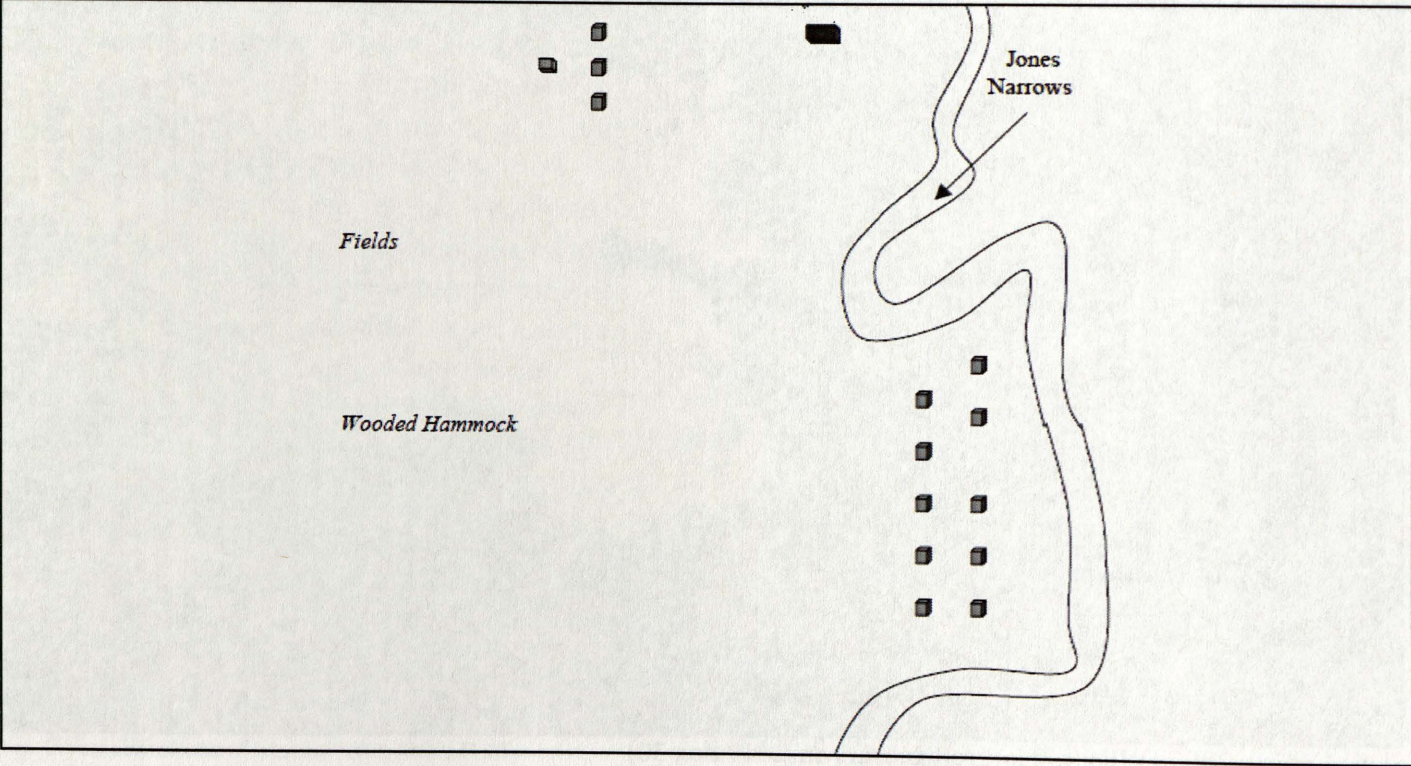
Slave Cabins, 1899 (Wilson, Hargrett Library ms2819 box 30)

dwellings.”¹⁴

The cabins are described by Swanson as “double frame cabins with central fireplaces, raised plank floors, and entrances on each end to accommodate two families. This housing design, with variations in brick stone and tabby, was typical on large Georgia and South Carolina coastal cotton plantations of the period and must have been an improvement over the colonial era huts.”¹⁵ The cabins features a central chimney that served to heat both sides of the dwelling, and “which was also used for cooking.”¹⁶

The spatial arrangement of a plantation lanscape’s features such as buildings, structures, fields, and fence lines, are often telling of the function of the landscape, as well as underlying systems of power and control. The cabins were symmetrically situated flanking an extension of the Old Avenue to the Fort House

14 Bragg, De Renne, 91
15 Swanson, Remaking Wormsloe, 87
16 Jenkins, Frank Allen., “Impressions of a Servant During Fifty Years of Service” February 16, 1991. Talk given at the Wormsloe Historic Site Visitor Center. Stored in the vertical files of the CLL.



Depiction of spatial arrangement. Drawing not to scale (Joyner 2003, adapted from WPA 1941: 36).

along the edge of the Isle of Hope, running north to south along the marsh, and located “several hundred yards south of the main plantation house.”¹⁷ This arrangement resulted in the creation of “a nucleated slave village that was a distinctly separate entity from the house grounds and the farmyard.”¹⁸ A line of trees obscured the view from the 1828 residence to this village, and with the addition of formal ornamental plantings surrounding the Big House,¹⁹ a physically as well as social and psychological distance between the two spheres of daily life was established.

The daily life of Wormsloe’s enslaved people is not known in any real detail. Records describing the arrangement and agricultural output of fields, ledgers with receipts for seed and building supplies and enslaved people, and notes describing repairs to be done all provide hints of the African American experience at Wormsloe. We know that Wormsloe’s enslaved people labored under the task-system, which

17 Swanson, Remaking Wormsloe, 88
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.

was “a form of management that divided both land and labor into agricultural unit and on most days provided slaves with some personal time (and along with it the master’s expectation that black workers would provide a portion of their own subsistence).”²⁰ The personal time allowed for cultural traditions to become established, such as hunting, fishing, cooking, storytelling, and music. Religious practices also found space during this down time. A cemetery “just down the road from the cabin contained broken pottery and crude wooden crosses presumably used as grave markers” indicating religious life of the enslaved.²¹ These outlets were not only functional in terms of diet or stress relief, but acted as forms of resistance to the system of oppression by their white owners.

In terms of agricultural laboring, from the records we know cotton, corn, cowpeas, sweet potatoes and groundnuts were all being grown, tended, harvested, and processed by enslaved people.²² These fields were scattered throughout the plantation landscape, from north of the Big House, to the fields originally worked by Noble Jones’s slaves surrounding the Fort House. Photographs show agricultural fields running right up to the slave cabin village. One can imagine that the workers, upon waking up, would immediately be forced to stare out at the fields they were forced to toil in. From this vantage, they would also see the house of the Overseer, which further reinforced that for the enslaved at Wormsloe, unlike the Jones family, there was no psychological break from their reality of white supremacy, systematic oppression and daily hardship.²³

By the onset of the Civil War, over 60 enslaved people lived at Wormsloe. During the conflict, it appears these people remained at Wormsloe, while Wymberley Jones left the plantation but stayed in the vicinity managing his proprieties from afar.²⁴ Also at the plantation

20 Ibid., 55.
21 Jenkins, Jr. “Impressions.”
22 Bragg, De Renne, 95
23 Swanson, Remaking Wormsloe, 88
24 Bragg, De Renne, 103

was a regiment of Confederate soldiers, who likely were given part of the agricultural products being grown by the enslaved. Paul Cady writes that “it is not known if there was an overseer on the property during the early years of the war, but Edward Nelson was paid for his duties as overseer from January 10, 1864 to January 1, 1865. The agreement also notes the presence of cattle, horses, mules, and poultry. It seems that the Emancipation Proclamation was not adhered to on Wormsloe, and slave life continued as usual throughout the Civil War.”²⁵ But with the defeat of the Confederates, the system of slavery that sustained Wormsloe, as well as the American economy and the fortunes of many, came to an end.

At the close of the war, Southern plantations were confiscated by Federal troops, some of which were redistributed to freed people. Wormsloe, along with his other properties, was seized by the Federal government, though Jones, unlike some other planters, was allowed to continue to own the land itself except for Long Island. In 1865, Long Island—a small strip of land just beyond the marsh to the east of the Isle of Hope—was given to four freedmen to own, three of whom were potentially formerly enslaved at Wormsloe. They were: Simus Howell, Bristol Drayton, Prince Jackson, and Charles Steele. Howell had already begun living on the island by the end of the war, claiming a piece of land and building a house. Unfortunately for these men, Jones applied for and received a pardon, and by 1867, regained control of all his former properties, including Long Island. Only Steele remained in the county after this blow to the new start in life; at this point we do not know what the other three men did with their lives, though it appears in general that many former slaves settled in the Sandfly and Pin Point communities.

25 Cady, Paul. “Wormsloe Cultural Landscape Report Part I: History, Existing Conditions, Analysis and Evaluation” (Athens: University of Georgia, College of Environment and Design, Cultural Landscape Laboratory).



Agricultural field with overseer house and cabins in distance. (Photo courtesy of the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library).

It was at this time that Jones made a symbolic break from the last few decades of his life by changing his name to George Wimberley Jones De Renne, assuming another family name. Unsure of how to move forward in the new era, in 1865, De Renne rented Wormsloe to John W. Teeple and Robert T. Smillie—a group of “northern opportunists who intended to prove that sea island cotton could be profitably cultivated with free labor.”²⁶ By 1869 it appears the efforts proved unsuccessful, and the rental agreement was not extended. De Renne then began to look at other means of capitalizing on the land.

In 1869, De Renne “entered a share agreement with one of his former slaves Brutus Butler to

cultivate Long Island.”²⁷ The next year, seemingly based on the initial success of the agreement, De Renne signed a similar contract with James W. Jones, who may have been formerly enslaved at Wormsloe. Both men grew cotton, and were to give De Renne half of the cultivated product as payment. Eventually, however, it seems De Renne wanted to separate himself from the agricultural management of his property. In the early 1870s, De Renne began using a new system of labor: tenant farming. In this arrangement, De Renne rented out Wormsloe’s fields and quarters to a “group of black tenants, each of whom promised to pay him three dollars a month.”²⁸ Unfortunately, few details are known about this arrangement. It was recorded that eight tenants initially worked and lived at Wormsloe, with that

²⁷ Ibid., 108.
²⁸ Ibid., 108.

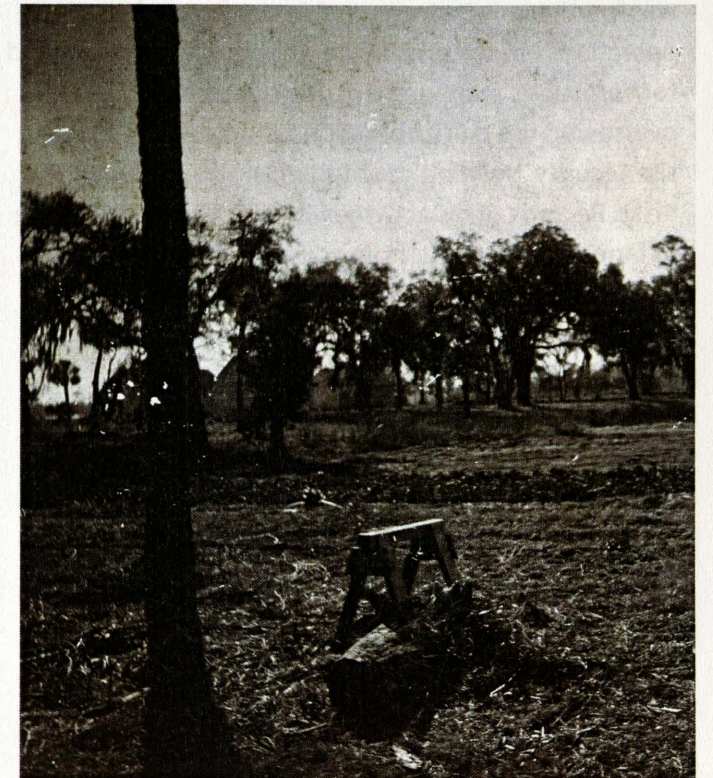
²⁶ Swanson, *Remaking*, 105.

number increasing to eleven in 1875.²⁹ That year, “the tenants worked five acres each and grew a variety of crops like corn and sweet potatoes. One tenant grew rice and two of the tenants had cows.”³⁰ It is assumed that the tenants lived in the former slave quarters, and that the tenant fields were those nearest the village complex, including the Old Fort field to the south the Old Quarters field to the west.³¹ By 1879, the number of tenants decreased back to eight persons, which “corresponded exactly to the number of standing slave cabins.”³²

Upon distancing himself from cotton production, De Renne began to take interest in other aspects of the plantation operations, and in doing so, hoped to transform Wormsloe into a beautiful country retreat where he could entertain visitors, while still maintaining agricultural productivity. In order to do this, he instated visual and functional changes at Wormsloe, shifting the core of the property from a productive plantation landscape to more of a country retreat that “actively sought to preserve, refashion, and celebrate elements of the property’s colonial and antebellum past.”³³ It was at this time that the formal gardens were expanded, and new plantings such as camellias, roses, and azaleas installed by the thousands throughout the landscape.³⁴ New plantings of botanical and horticultural interest were added in keeping with the traditions set by Noble Jones’s experiments with various crops, though in De Renne’s case, the aesthetics of the plants were more important than their economic potential.

After De Renne died, his son Wymberley and daughter-in-law Augusta continued this activity. They let some areas of the plantation landscape undergo natural succession,³⁵ while other areas were continuously and intensely managed. Wymberley’s

²⁹ Cady, “Wormsloe” 65–66.
³⁰ Ibid., 66.
³¹ Swanson, *Remaking*, 108–110
³² Ibid., 109
³³ Ibid., 131
³⁴ Ibid.
³⁵ Ibid.



Agricultural field with cabins in distance. (Photo courtesy of the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library).

efforts to transform the landscape surpassed that of his father’s. He oversaw the creation of the new oak-lined entrance drive, the expansion of the 1828 residence, the construction of a farm supervisor house and farm-dairy complex, the demolition of all but one of the former slave/tenant dwellings, the construction of the library, and the continued expansion of the formal gardens. All this work was performed by African Americans, who for the most part, go unnamed. In this way, while “this building campaign erased some physical features of the antebellum landscape, many of the plantation’s social structures remained intact in a modified form.”³⁶ One of the African American men known to have worked at Wormsloe at this time was Jesse Beach.

Jesse Beach, who was one of the former tenants during the Reconstruction era, was employed by Wymberley De Renne as the property manager. Beach

³⁶ Ibid., 133

was “particularly instrumental in the farm’s daily operations;” managing 17 workers, and all tasks related to Wormsloe’s management. His duties included overseeing the dairy operations, crop production, site security, building maintenance, and other related tasks. Records of his activities show a deep knowledge of farm management, from soil fertility to livestock care. Beach also directed the garden manager and his workers. Beach lived in the farm supervisor’s house located just to the west of the De Renne residence. Many of the other workers lived in the newly constructed servant’s hall adjacent to the De Renne house, or in the surrounding African American communities such as Sandfly. Beach and his workers worked to produce an ideal and idyllic plantation for the white owners.³⁷ As Drew Swanson points out, it is unknown Beach’s or his workers’ feelings about this arrangement, but it is clear that their work during this

37 Bragg, De Renne.

era “reinforce[s] the continued importance of African Americans in the shaping of the Isle of Hope landscape long after slavery’s demise.”³⁸

The lives of the African Americans took on a new significance with the beginning of the tourism era at Wormsloe in the late 1920s. With historic tourism on the rise due in part by the growth in automobile transportation, Wymberley and Augusta saw a means of producing revenue, while continuing to curate a particular vision of what Wormsloe should be and should represent. The landscape, so extensively transformed by the skilled work of African Americans, would be the focus of the public tours. Visitors were shown around the formal grounds, through the impressive gardens, down to the remodeled slave cabin and slave cemetery to the Old Fort ruins.

38 Swanson, Remaking, 141



Caretaker House in farm complex, 1899 (Photo courtesy of the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library).

The tour reinforced the social structure of the time, and conveyed the idea that the grandeur of Wormsloe was in direct relation to the white ownership of the property.

In terms of the interpretation of African American lives during the antebellum era, the presentation was fictionalized, romanticized, and sanitized, thus reinforcing Jim Crow stereotypes about African Americans as both subordinate and happy on one hand, and dangerous and uncivil on the other. In general these stereotypes perpetuated by various entertainment and media outlets fueled the growing legally-sanctioned disenfranchisement, discrimination and segregation of African Americans in the beginning of the 20th century. Wormsloe fed into and profited off of such portrayals and posturing. In order to do so, the remaining cabin was restored in 1928, with its interior decorated with period rustic and homey furnishings. The cabin landscape was spruced up by the addition of a white fence and flowering shrubs that surrounded the cabin.³⁹ Representing the “mammy” stereotype that was popular during the Jim Crow era, “Aunt Liza” (who may have also gone by Miss Phoebe)⁴⁰ greeted visitors and served refreshments. Part of the presentation included a story that she was born into slavery at Wormsloe, in the very cabin she was interpreting. Whether this is true or not, it appears Liza was a draw for the tourists. Her warm demeanor likely lessened the intensity of the slave experience for the visitors, and transformed the African American experience in the South into a more palatable version of reality. Furthermore, it reinforced the white power structures that were extending into the northern states through Jim Crow laws. This version of the enslaved experience might have been appealing to tourists, as it conformed to cultural notions concerning the proper social order in the modern era.

In the background, the laborers of Wormsloe took meticulous care of the landscape, and their

39 Swanson, Remaking, 141
40 Jenkins Jr., “Impressions”

knowledge of gardening was on full display. So much so that some served as guides for white visitors, explaining and describing garden management. Others served as guides for hunting and fishing trips. This knowledge of the landscape was created through years of direct interaction, care, and exploration of the local environment, especially at Wormsloe. According to Frank Jenkins who was Wormsloe’s butler, “This was the time of...the Great Depression...the revenue from tips often exceeded the wages of some of the hired help. Any Black person who worked for Mr. DeRenne at that time was required to serve as a tourist guide in a set order of rotation. On Saturdays, certain of the men were drafted as guides, but on Sundays it was strictly voluntary.”⁴¹ The display of intellectual knowledge would typically be seen as a threat to the existing social hierarchy, but as Swanson notes, in the service of whites, serving as guides reinforced the status quo.

These workers were not the only African Americans involved with Wormsloe during this time. For decades after emancipation, thanks in part to Georgia’s open grazing laws, cattlemen had access to Wormsloe’s woods and marshes. It is likely that these workers would hunt and fish Wormsloe’s lands. But with the fence laws passed at the end of the 19th century, those who hunted, harvested, and fished on Wormsloe without permission were vigorously persecuted by De Renne. Such trespassers began to annoy De Renne post-Civil War when freedmen would use Wormsloe’s roads to reach their properties on Skidaway Island. De Renne was also perturbed by locals who viewed the marshes and rivers as commons, and freely fished and oystered in the marshes off the Isle of Hope.

Because of shifting ownership of the land after the Civil War it was not clear to everyone who owned what piece of land, and thus locals viewed the marshes as open territory. De Renne was known for taking local African American men to court for harvesting oysters

41 Ibid.



Aunt Liza at the historic slave cabin (Photo courtesy of the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library).

illegally.⁴² However, if De Renne knew the trespasser he was more lenient. There is no way of knowing how many people are connected to Wormsloe through such activities, but it must have been numerous. African Americans continued to make contributions to Wormsloe over the course of the tourism era. In addition to the service jobs related to the De Renne house hold and tourism endeavor, they “sweated in the Lowcountry sun, digging and cleaning the thousands of yards of drainage ditching that kept the farm fields arable; they planted thousands of shrubs, trees, and flowers; and they worked as carpenters and masons.”⁴³ This activity is not interpreted today at Wormsloe, nor is there mention of their role in the agricultural history of the site.

The lack of knowledge of African American involvement with Wormsloe began with the closing of Wormsloe as a public tourism destination in 1938.

42 Swanson, *Remaking*, 119
43 *Ibid.*, 141

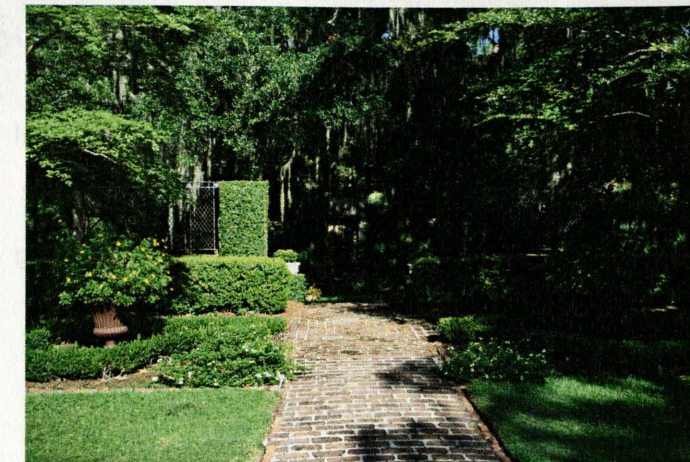
This is when the Barrow Family moved to Wormsloe, taking over the site from Wemberley De Renne (Elfrida Barrow was De Renne’s sister). With the site closed to tourists, except on special occasions, the need for guides and support staff was gone. At this time, the diversified farming that characterized De Renne’s tenure at Wormsloe slowly came to an end. Surely the Barrows needed hired labor to perform maintenance tasks, but it is clear that the scale of African American involvement with Wormsloe was greatly reduced on account of these changes.

Over the next several decades, Wormsloe’s financial health was in jeopardy, forcing the transfer of 750 acres of Wormsloe over to the State of Georgia for the creation of a state historic park in 1973. All but the areas surrounding the main residence and remaining slave cabin were transferred. The focus of public interpretation would be on the colonial era of Wormsloe’s past, all but ignoring the agricultural and social history of the site. By focusing on this one aspect

of Wormsloe’s history (albeit an important one) the lives of the enslaved were forgotten, as Noble Jones’s story was told without focusing on his owning of slaves, but rather Wormsloe’s military significance.

The transfer of land may have protected the clearest example of African American life at Wormsloe: the slave cabin. The slave cabin remained outside of control of the state, which potentially could have been left to decay away as it did not fit the colonial era interpretive theme. In fact, it appears that even with the landscape no longer serving tourists, it was still appreciated by the Barrows; sometime in the 1950s it was rehabilitated to “converted from a two-family dwelling into a single family unit. The front stoop was added, as well as the back porch, and the northern door was closed off. Additionally, some brush clearing was completed around the cabin and down to the outhouse, situated near the river.”⁴⁴ Obviously, this signals that, at least to the Barrows, the slave cabin was worthy of saving. At some point in the 1970s, Craig Barrow Jr. gave the Slave Cabin area to the Wormsloe Foundation, which was not protected by a conservation easement like the rest of the landscape; this might imply that the cabin was not as valued at this time as the rest of Wormsloe’s historic features. Then in 2000, the cabin was renovated again, likely updating the interiors at this time.

44 Cady, “Wormsloe,” 102.



Wormsloe Gardens (Dunlap, 2016).

In 2014 the Wormsloe Foundation donated the slave cabin landscape to the University of Georgia, thus placing the center of African American life at Wormsloe in the hands of a public institution of learning. The area is now a growing hub of education called The Center for Research and Education at Wormsloe (CREW). Two new cabins have been added to the site, reflecting the historic arrangement of cabins along the road. A large maintenance building was also constructed. The next phase of construction calls for an educational center to be located across the road from the cabins. Archaeological mitigation work performed in preparation for the construction found rich evidence of the lives of those who lived and worked in this locale. The archaeological report details



Historic cabin on the right, the two new cabins on the left (Sean Dunlap, 2016)

that a "total of 948 countable artifacts were recovered from the shovel tests. The majority of the artifacts consisted of historic ceramics, glass, nails, oyster shell, and architectural brick and mortar rubble."⁴⁵ Additional items include parts of play-dolls, smoking pipes, and eyeglasses. The report also proposed that it is likely "there were two cabins in the area north of the existing cabin with a less formal work yard or outbuildings to the south" in the location of the new cabins. Subsistence-related findings include egg shell, various animal bones, and crab claws, all of which were finely chopped. The report notes that the preservation rate of these materials is remarkable, and "the possibility for research into the diets of the enslaved is high."⁴⁶

As yet there has been no public interpretation of African American life at Wormsloe. In fact, it can be argued that such a history has been actively avoided, built over, and forgotten. During the dedication for the new cabins, not one of the dignitaries speaking at the event mentioned the enslaved people who lived there, even though the cabins themselves are striking in their emulation of the historic cabin. However, interpretation of their lives is planned for the near future, including an interpretive panel in the new education building and a new restoration of the historic cabin. No timeline has been set for these projects. Meanwhile, the cabin and landscape remain off-limits to the visiting public, and new alterations to the site further reduce the area's historic integrity.

⁴⁵ Nicole Isenbarger and Andrew Agha, "Archaeological Survey and Testing of Proposed New Cabin Construction at Wormsloe Plantation," (2013), 6

⁴⁶ Isenbarger and Agha, "Archaeological Survey," 6.

AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCES AT WORMSLOE

Below is a collection of easy-to-recognize landscape features that reflect significant examples of African American contributions to Wormsloe's historical development. Through various means of interpretation, these resources can inform the visiting public about the lives of those once lived at worked at the site.

Entrance Gate: According to Frank Jenkins Jr., "Mr. DeRenne had the gates to the entrance put up," and that his father told him "that a Black man who was semi-literate, had charge of installing the iron gate - proving his genius as a builder. His name was Baker."⁴⁷



Entrance Gate (Dunlap, 2016)

Slave Cabin: Beginning in 1849, a new push in cotton agriculture at Wormsloe necessitated more enslaved laborers, and thus new quarters had to be built. That year, three were constructed; then in 1854 they were underpinned with brick. In 1856, four additional cabins were constructed. The remaining cabin is one of these structures. The cabin has been renovated several times over the span of the last two centuries, but its ability to tell the story of the African American experience at Wormsloe is unrivaled.



Historic Slave Cabin (Dunlap, 2016)

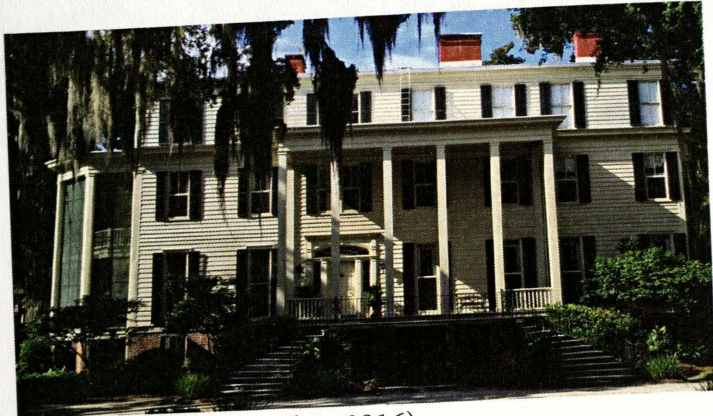
Slave Cabin Landscape: Also altered dramatically (especially over recent years) the slave cabin landscape still has the ability to "set the scene" for interpretive activities. It was part of the nucleated slave village, which reflects the history of community interaction amongst the enslaved workers that often gets overlooked. It is from here stories were shared, traditions formed and preserved, religious life practiced, and leisure time enjoyed.



Slave Cabin Landscape (Dunlap, 2016)

⁴⁷ Jenkins, Jr. "Impressions." 5.

Main Residence: Built in 1828, and altered on several occasions since then, the Main Residence reflects the “Big House” history of the African American life at Wormsloe. Surely initially constructed by black laborers, the house is symbolic of the system of oppression that existed at Wormsloe for nearly 300 years. Still, the craftsmanship on display in the architectural details of the house also tells of the great skill African American laborers possessed, and should be credited.



Main Residence (Dunlap, 2016)

Drainage Ditches: Throughout the site, drainage ditches dug by farm workers crisscross the landscape. While much of Wormsloe is undergoing ecological succession, hiding its agricultural past, the drainage ditches help to show the extent of agricultural practices at Wormsloe, and the massive amount of labor required to farm on the Isle of Hope.



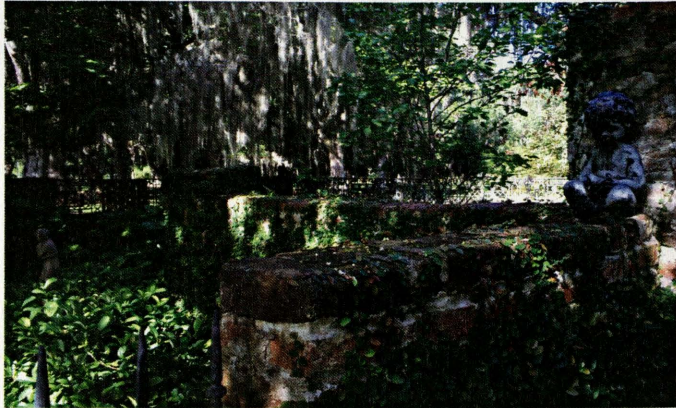
Drainage Ditches (CLL, 2009)

Library: W.J. De Renne commissioned Wallin & Young to design and construct the library. Started in summer of 1907, it was completed in the spring of 1908. The handsome building was constructed to be fireproof, and has served as a library as well as an events and meeting space since being built. Photographs taken during its construction show African American workers constructing the library.



Library (Sean Dunlap, 2016)

Garden Walls: The walls of the formal garden at Wormsloe were constructed in part from the bricks of the demolished slave quarters. Furthermore, here during the early tourism period of Wormsloe, the extent of African American horticultural knowledge was on display for the visiting public.



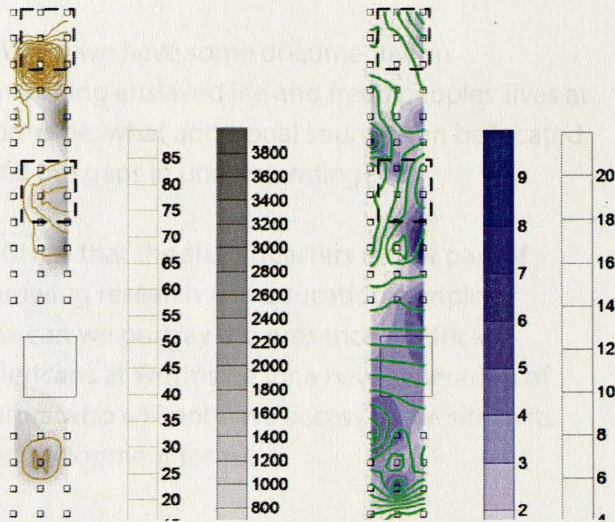
Garden Walls (Dunlap, 2016)

Caretaker Cottage: The caretaker cottage reflects the changing times at Wormsloe as it was here that the first African American farm supervisor, Jesse Beach, lived. The nicely constructed house would have been a great improvement over the tenant house Beach used to live in.



Caretaker Cottage (Dunlap, 2016)

Archaeological Landscape: Throughout Wormsloe’s landscape are numerous areas of archaeological importance. Significant findings on the lives of African Americans have been found at the slave cabin village landscape, with further opportunities identified at the Fort House ruins landscape.



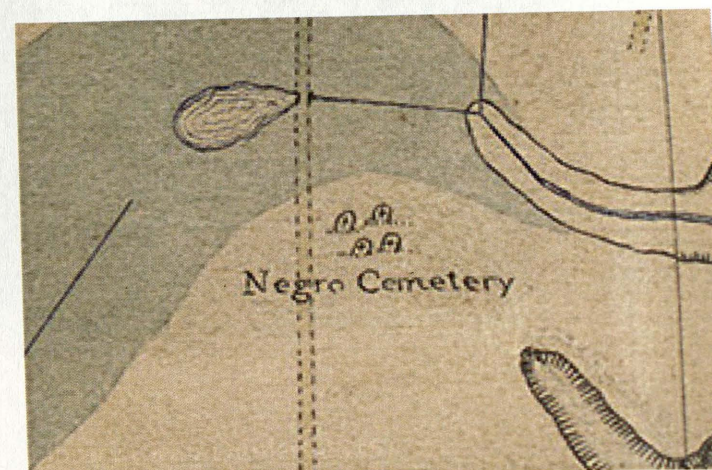
Part of the Slave Cabin Landscape scatter map. Dashed-boxes indicate cabin footprints (Isenbarger and Agha, 2013).

Old Rice Pond: Identified only in 2015, a subsistence rice pond existed just south of the slave cabin village during the tenant farming era at Wormsloe. Not sized large enough to produce a cash crop, the pond was likely used by the tenants who could supplement their diet, and potentially their income, with rice.



Old Rice Pond (Sean Dunlap, 2016)

The Slave Cemetery: Also located south of the village site, the cemetery is noted on many historic maps and was featured as part of the early tours of Wormsloe. Graves were marked with wooden crosses, and until recently the cemetery was visible. It is currently in a state of disrepair and grown over by ecological succession.



Chatham County, 1890. Part of a much larger map created by Robert Blanford, now stored digitally in the City Engineer's office in Savannah (Blanford 1890).

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

As previously stated, details concerning the lives of African Americans at Wormsloe are not known in any great extent. Based on a lack of written records on the subject, it appears their lives were not deemed important enough to record for economic reasons, and thus any idea about African Americans' experience is usually discerned through financial records and the landscape itself. Therefore it is vital that the landscape be preserved in a way that not only safeguards this history but also celebrates the accomplishments of these people's time at Wormsloe.

In our opinion, this job is not for UGA researchers alone. Academics should also provide access and resources to the local African American community so that they can employ their knowledge, skills and artistic vision to tell their story in their own way at Wormsloe. Outlets for expression might include artworks, memorial ceremonies, and family gatherings.

As landscape designers, planners, and historic preservationists, the CED can make important contributions to the discovery and presentation of the African American experience at Wormsloe. Trained in research, inventory and analysis, and with a strong understanding of context, the tenets and roles of design, and an ability to envision a multitude of different scenarios, there is a unique opportunity here for CED students and faculty. We can assist in facilitating access to inaccessible resources and information, as well as use site visits and design charrettes to further deepen our understanding of the site.

The challenges faced by researchers are numerous, but not impossible to overcome. Below are a list of specific research questions that provide deeper explorations to

assist in an interpretive program of African American life at Wormsloe.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Can records pertaining to the companies hired to construct Wormsloe's built resources be located in order to identify employees, wages, working conditions, and other information?
2. How did slavery and later emancipation and the years of Reconstruction shape what we now experience at Wormsloe?
3. What are some new threats to the cultural and environmental history at Wormsloe and are there people still alive in the area who can help us address these challenges?
4. Do we have to be literal in our interpretation or, given the ever-changing nature of the site, might we turn to artists and artisans to help us subtly convey an "invisible" landscape?
5. While we have some documentation concerning enslaved life and freed peoples' lives at Wormsloe, what additional sources can be located to fill the gaps in understanding?
6. Given that the slave quarters is now part of a growing research and education complex, how can we portray the presence of African Americans at Wormsloe for a new generation of visitors who will not have access to the site in its predevelopment form?
7. How can the African American experience be conveyed to the visiting public in accurate and

inspiring ways as Wormsloe evolves over time?

8. How can we place African American life at Wormsloe in a broader context, especially related to the physical remnant of African American presence, such as the current distribution of slave cabins along the coast? As Melissa Jest with the State Historic Preservation Office points out, "the challenge is finding these hidden places" for a couple of reasons: "owners are reluctant to report them for fear of being made to invest in saving them," and "neighbors are hesitant to report due to lack of knowing what to look for/who to call." CED research could play a major role in the creation of a project focused on such documentation.

POTENTIAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

In addition to these questions, this report has identified two large projects concerning African--American life at Wormsloe that should take priority: an African American Archaeology Program, and an African Americans at Wormsloe Oral History Project (AAWOHP).

AFRICAN AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM (AAAP)

The AAAP can be broken into three distinct parts, ranked in order of priority.

1. Continue professional investigation of slave cabin landscape.

- Identify specific locations of remaining cabins, kitchen, overseer's house, and any landscape elements such as the slave cemetery, potential garden spaces, and additional uses of the space.
- Explore opportunity for graphic representation (Sketch Up) of site for

interpretive purposes.

- Conduct mitigation work, and publicly discuss findings, prior to construction of educational building.

2. Conduct investigations on Long Island.

- Determine locations for Reconstruction era land use related to Special Field Order 15 property redistribution.
- Identify actual colonial-era uses of the island.

3. Conduct further investigations of the agricultural complex.

- Explore postbellum agricultural activity.

These projects are key to expanding our understanding of African American life at Wormsloe. There is a great opportunity on the part of contemporary researchers to expand upon the historical understandings of marginalized people, such as African Americans. At Wormsloe, there is a chance to help tell stories of these people who left little above-ground records; below ground, the evidence of their lives is preserved, and waiting to be shared with the world.

AFRICAN AMERICANS AT WORMSLOE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT (AAWOHP)

Because no African Americans have lived at Wormsloe for several decades, it is necessary to go outside its gates and look in from the perspective of people who consider it part of their heritage in order to place African American legacy at Wormsloe in a modern context.

Over the course of several years, CED students and faculty have done just that by exploring on

foot the surrounding community of Sandfly, where many descendants of area plantations settled after Emancipation.

This work was performed in the spirit of exploration and curiosity rather than in methodical, systematic steps. Researchers encountered people cleaning the gravestones and sites of their ancestors in the small cemetery; they knocked on doors and spoke with strangers; they attended church; and they talked to anyone who was willing to have a conversation on the sidewalk or in local restaurants and markets.

The researchers found a community surrounding Wormsloe that is experiencing significant and rapid change, both for the local white residents and the African American residents. Specifically, the neighborhood of African Americans that until recently was connected by well-known footpaths that wove along the old shell road, the marsh, and through the woods, is being developed at a dramatic pace and scale.

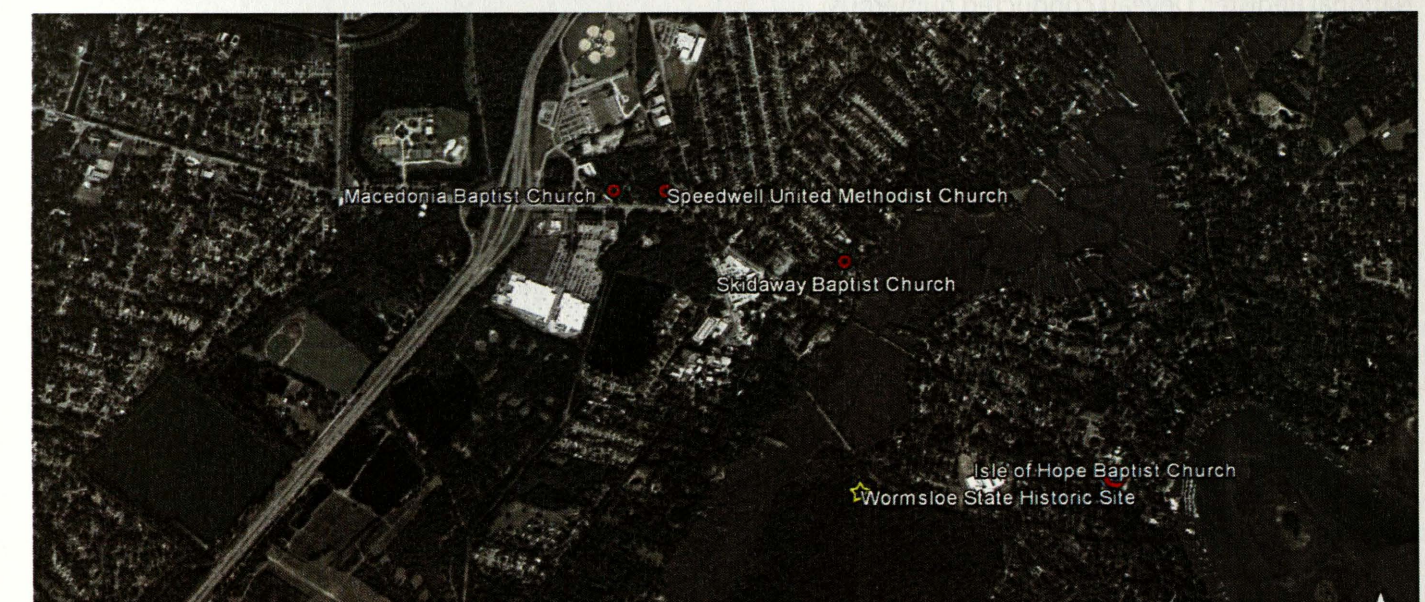
Melissa Tufts documented some of the story of

Herbert Kemp, whose great-great grandparents were enslaved at Wormsloe. Through interviews that have blossomed into friendship, Tufts laid the groundwork for a more extensive and systematic oral history project to commence.

In 2011, Tufts compiled a list of possible contacts in the area that would serve as launching point for the work to begin in earnest.

Family Names

Alexander Luten
Gregory Martin
John Stiles
Kitty West
Catherine Dreason (Driessen)
Big Effie and Little Effie Griffen
Frank Jenkins and Decendants
LaVersa Kemp O'Neal
Herbert Kemp
Gus Grant
*Griffen Family
*Beach Family
*Maxwell Family



Maps showing African American churches in proximity to Wormsloe (Google Earth)

*Godfrey Family
*Sams Family
*Williams Family

Churches

Speedwell Methodist
Macedonia Baptist
Skidaway Baptist
Isle of Hope Baptist

Contacting the people and church congregations on the list (contact information kept on file in the Cultural Landscape Laboratory) will surely provide new insights into the cultural and environmental history of Wormsloe.

Additional professional assistance can also be provided from the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, community leaders in Sandfly and Pinpoint such as Herbert Kemp, Wormsloe State Historic Site employees, Craig Barrow, and others.

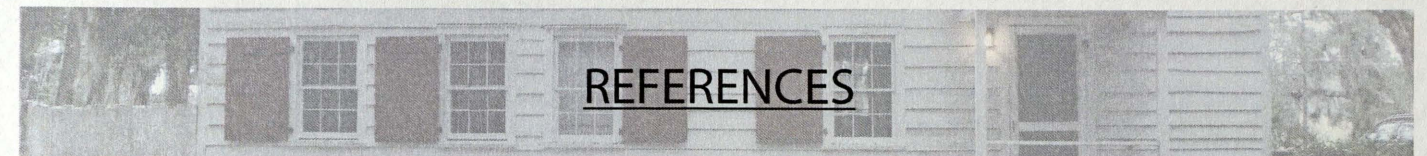
Of special note is the work Patty Deveau did as part of her efforts in getting Sandfly listed on the National Register. Deveau conducted numerous oral history interviews, which are now housed at the University of Georgia.

In 2004, the Georgia Conservancy published "Sandfly: At The Crossroads" as part of their Blueprint initiative. The project aimed to "help communities chart their future in ways that preserve community character and protect valued resources." The document contains valuable background information, as well as names of people that would be important to contact.

The descendants of Wormsloe's laborers must have a seat at the table concerning the interpretation of their heritage. The AAWOHP can not only help shed light on African American life at Wormsloe, but can rally the

community for possible charrettes and community engagement activities to come.

This work is timely, important, and can potentially impact the case for National Historic Landscape status. Expanding upon and safeguarding the remains that are linked to the stories and understandings gleaned from these interviews will bolster the significance of Wormsloe and broaden the scope of the site's contribution to the human story on the Georgia coast.



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