

When A Man Starts Out To Build A World

The History of Sandy Island

**Penn Center
Sea Island Preservation Project**

Christopher H. Kouri
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Introduction

The residents occupying ancestral lands on Sandy Island exemplify a desired level of self reliance and community policing that many other American communities strive to attain. Such an enviable lifestyle on Sandy Island is achieved as a matter of daily course by the community as it adheres to a legacy of interdependence socially, politically, and economically. The foundation of this community is inspiring and illuminates the issue of how such a legacy has remained vibrant and proliferated on this special island.

This work seeks to show the unique history of Sandy Island, the special events surrounding the foundation of the permanent African American community that resides there today and the lifestyle of this community which has fused modern technologies into its timeless culture. Hopefully this work will convey some of local historian Dr. Charles Joyner's sentiment: "I have learned much from the Sandy Islanders--from their music, their stories, their oral history, their language, and especially from their dignity, a quiet sense of pride and self reliance."¹

Broadly surveying the island's early history, **Chapter One** loosely explores the first Native American inhabitants of Sandy Island and the events that followed as European and African settlers came to the island and its general vicinity. Chapter One ends with a brief description of the island's occupants since the Civil War. **Chapter Two** attempts to describe the distinct geography and fauna and flora of Sandy Island which has remained relatively unchanged by time. This chapter then touches on the hurricanes that have struck Sandy Island and its neighbors. The chapter then closes with a brief discussion of the human population that has shared this environment over the years since Reconstruction.

Chapter Three explores the role Sandy Island played in the rice industry that dominated antebellum Sandy Island and more broadly Georgetown County in which the island is located. In **Chapter Four** a special and unique part of the island's history is revealed as some of Reverend Phillip Washington's life is explored. Reverend Washington was the patriarch of the permanent African American community on Sandy Island. This chapter attempts to show how this man's wealth, mobility, and leadership not only led to the founding of a permanent settlement on Sandy Island around 1880 but empowered him to envision and plan this community. This section aims to impress that Phillip Washington could have settled anywhere, but because it was separated from the white, dominated mainland the island had an added appeal.

Finally **Chapter Five** discusses the lifestyle of Sandy Island that has revolved around the island's first community center New Bethel Baptist Church since it was established in 1880 by Reverend Phillip Washington. The dramatic changes of over a century have been met by Sandy Island's community with a constant commitment to education and a pursuit of economic opportunities. But Sandy Islanders have flourished in ways far beyond just education and economics--the communal bond linking its members is impervious to the effects of distance and time. These five chapters are further broken down into subdivisions marked in bold print throughout the text.

Inspired by Phillip Washington's initiative, I could not help but think of him when reading Langston Hughes' poem *Freedom's Plow*. This work's title is a line from the poem and excerpts from Hughes' piece seemed fitting to introduce Chapter Four, which is about Phillip Washington, and Chapter Five, which is about the community that has continued the legacy he began.

Chapter One

Sandy Island's Inhabitants

Sandy Island is located in the Waccamaw Neck region of Georgetown County, SC between the Waccamaw and Pee Dee rivers. The island and its environs are replete with multicultural influences and a distinct, noteworthy history. Before colonial settlement Native Americans inhabited Sandy Island: crafts and artifacts found on Sandy Island were reported to have been on display in the Charleston Museum in 1963. Later, Sandy Islanders of African and European descent called the horseshoe lagoon near the center of the island Indian Lake after the first residents, and it retains the name today.¹

Archaeological and ethnohistorical data "suggest that a large scale sociopolitical structure termed the Greater Chiefdom of Cofitachique...embraced most of the state's non-Cherokee people." Underneath this superstructure each small tribe, supervised by its own chief, earned its protection under the larger system by paying taxes of furs, skins, and perhaps agricultural products. The reign of the Greater Chiefdom of Cofitachique meant infrequent warfare among the tribes in the area of Sandy Island. The vicinity of Sandy Island was occupied by Native Americans of the Sewee, Winyah, Santee, Waccamaw, and Pee Dee tribes with neighbors from the Cheraw, Congaree, Wateree, Waxhaw, Kadapau, Sugaree, and Catawba tribes in the more general area. As the Waccamaw people lived along the Waccamaw River and lower Pee Dee River, they were arguably the predominant Native American occupants of Sandy Island. Legend has it that the Waccamaw, Winyah,

Sewee, and Peedee Native Americans created a method of extracting salt from evaporated sea water, a tradition long important to the Waccamaw Neck.²

The first contact between South Carolina's Native Americans and outsiders occurred in 1526 when Spanish explorer Lucas Vasquez de Allyon established a settlement that included Europeans and Africans. Named San Miguel de Guadalpe (Guadalpe was the Spanish name for the Waccamaw River), the settlement town consisted of 600 people, and historians assessed its location at the southern tip of the Waccamaw Neck less than 20 miles from Sandy Island. From there, explorations of the region were conducted by the settlers and included travel up and down the Waccamaw and Pee Dee rivers. Following Allyon's death, the settlement was seized by the enslaved Africans who revolted against the tyranny imposed upon them by burning the house of Ginez Doncel, Allyon's successor. In 1527, the settlement was abandoned as the remaining 150 of the original decimated 600 left South Carolina. There is some speculation that the revolt was a joint venture between Native Americans and the estimated 100 enslaved Africans and that several of the Africans remained in North America permanently.³

Once European colonization began in the Waccamaw Neck region, Native Americans initially suffered enforced servitude and eventually disappeared from the area. "It was only in South Carolina that the slave traffic reached commercial proportions. Many of South Carolina's Indians were exported to the West Indies and New England though some were used on coastal plantations alongside Negro slaves." In 1708 South Carolina's population was 9,580, and half was enslaved. While 3,000 Indians still lived free in the area, the slave population was comprised of 4,100 people of African heritage and 1,400 Native Americans, and the white population fearing unity of these groups "fostered distrust between them." These attempts by whites were obviously not widely successful as "a considerable amount of miscegenation occurred between Negroes and Indians during this period."

The term "mustee" came to be used in South Carolina to distinguish those who were part Indian, and the remainder of

their ancestry was often African. Even after 1720 black and red Carolinians continued to share slave quarters, though at a steadily decreasing rate.⁴

By the Revolutionary War the Waccamaw and Peedee Native Americans along with neighboring Congaree, Sewee, and Winyah had disappeared as viable tribes. "It was the trade in Indian slaves that decimated the tribes around Winyah Bay." Sandy Island is north of this vicinity, but Native Americans in such close proximity arguably suffered the same fate. Ultimately, the Waccamaw tribe, numbering six villages of 610 inhabitants in the 1715 Indian census, engaged in a war with the settlers of European descent because of trade disputes: the Native American prisoners were sold into slavery. A 1740 law acknowledged Native American slavery in Georgetown County stipulating that the burden of proof was on the person claiming a Native American was a slave, a departure from the more common experience for Americans of African descent who borne the burden to prove themselves free. Remnants of the Waccamaw tribe eventually joined larger tribes like the Catawba, thus ending Native American occupation of Sandy Island and its environs.⁵

Sandy Island would eventually come to be a critical part of the rice culture that dominated colonial, Revolutionary, and Antebellum Georgetown County. The plantation system, used in South Carolina for large scale rice cultivation more than anywhere else, exploited, skilled laborers forced to America from Africa and the Caribbean islands. Those of African heritage were first brought from the West Indies around 1700. These people already had begun a creolized culture that helped them endure the inhumanity of bondage. Later they were joined in South Carolina by an immense number from Africa's Angola region (between 1735-1740 70% of slaves brought into South Carolina came from Angola) and other large numbers from the Coast of Guinea, Gambia, the Gold Coast, Windward Coast and other undesignated parts of Africa. In this same vein of continental diversity, the Sandy Island planters were of mixed European descent. To mention a few, the Belin and LaBruce families were of French Huguenot descent; the Allston and Pyatt families were of English descent; and the Heriots were of Scotch descent.⁶

In 1865, the close of the Civil War and the end of slavery increased the citizenship of the United States by four million. The newly freed population faced immense social, political, and economic challenges. The freed people of Sandy Island were no different, and like the majority of American freed people of the day many Sandy Islanders stayed committed to agriculture. But the political, social, and economic means which alluded most other freed populations was achieved on Sandy Island near the end of Reconstruction. After the Civil War, many Sandy Islanders continued to work rice plantations of the island under labor contracts which provided some pay and some of the harvest. By the late 1870s a former slave, who served as driver on Captain Thomas Petigru's and then Robert F. W. Allston's Pipe Down plantation on Sandy Island, changed the face of Sandy Island forever. He was Phillip Washington, and he became a planter of rice on Sandy Island and eventually bought Mount Arena plantation. Upon his considerable property was established an African American community separated by the Pee Dee River and the Waccamaw River from the dominant white culture. The separation from whatever climates may have predominated on the mainland has historically allowed a high level of self reliance and autonomy to mark the Sandy Island community. Today Phillip Washington's descendants and the descendants of other freed people comprise Sandy Island's full-time population that mostly resides at Mount Arena landing, part of Washington's original property. The community remains separated by rivers from the mainland: no bridges and no ferries just as when patriarch Phillip Washington first planted and owned Mount Arena.

Professor of history and folk culture Dr. Charles Joyner has extensively studied the culture of the Waccamaw Neck and the bondspeople who commanded the area's rice production under the plantation system. His expertise has afforded him a unique understanding of the accomplishment of Sandy Island. Regarding Sandy Island's community, Joyner said:

They have grown up in a very self reliant community that has been freer of some of the mainland common problems...my sense is that [pride and ancestry] is a bit stronger there than in

most places. More than the rest of us Sandy Islanders live in two worlds.

The feeling of self reliance, independence, and safety is so prevalent that some who have temporarily left the area for periods of employment have sent their children back to be raised in Sandy Island's desirable environment.⁷ An important component of the Sandy Island community, this idea of independence and self reliance will be further discussed later in this work.

Residing on their own land, African Americans have historically been the residents of Sandy Island, and whites have historically owned most of the island. An implied relationship of temporary use and full-time occupation seems to have begun in the late 1930s when Jesse Metcalf, a principal owner of Sandy Island at the time and nephew of Rhode Island senator Jesse Metcalf, allowed residents to cultivate rice free of charge on his expansive rice lands on Sandy Island. His interests in Sandy Island were as sportsman and hunter. Recently, Davis Heniford has owned fish and game rights on parts of Sandy Island, and his grandson echoed the notion of using the land for fishing and hunting purposes on temporary stints only, respecting the privacy of full-time residents.⁸

The lifestyle and strength of community will not soon be abandoned by residents of Sandy Island. In an interview, Rose Pyatt shared some of her feelings about her home saying, "If I die, that's the only time they'll push me off this island...this is home." In a separate interview, Onethia Elliott shared similar thoughts, "Only death will move me. I am going to stay on the Sandy Island...I love it." A interesting picture of the island's serenity was captured in a brief comment made in a 1971 article about the island: "While residents listen to national news reporting social unrest, 200-plus islanders enjoy harmony, good will and a life of moral idealism."⁹

Exploring Sandy Island's past provides a framework upon which to understand the achievement of this American community that all could learn from.

Chapter Two

Sandy Island Statistics

Geography

One of the most striking aspects of Sandy Island is its location and environment. Certainly, as with all places, these have contributed to Sandy Island's personality. It is very interesting to read about Sandy Island and discover its variable descriptions of size, ownership, and population. Its uniqueness, however, persists in most descriptions.

At first glance Sandy Island is indicative of many landscapes along the South Carolina coast. "Beaches are sand...it rivals the salty, windblown seascapes just a few miles eastward.¹" In addition, the historical similarities its population shares with other African Americans of the South Carolina Lowcountry, along with its physical separation with the mainland, direct comparisons of Sandy Island with the Sea Islands more commonly found south of Charleston running to approximately the Georgia-Florida border. One primary distinction of Sandy Island, however, is that it is a fresh water community. Residents net shad instead of shrimp: the body of water that courses through their lives is the fresh water Waccamaw River and not the ocean or salt water marshes and rivers characteristic of Sea Island culture.

The significance of the Waccamaw River to the county, state, and country was noted early in an 1820s description of Georgetown County. The excerpt about the river pointed out that it ran parallel with the seashore and was contiguous with Little River in

North Carolina. The piece continues that at this point "a chain of islands skirting the whole coast of North Carolina begin with little interruption finally feeding in Chesapeake Bay," and such a layout "makes the Waccamaw River one of the most important water-courses in the southern states, connected with the national interest." Eventually becoming part of the Intercoastal Waterway, this prognostication of the Waccamaw's import was correct. The Intercoastal Waterway, built by the Army Corps of Engineers, was begun in the early 1930s and completed by the late 1930s. The result was an increase in the already bustling boat and ship traffic along the Waccamaw. Historically, the Waccamaw provided the thoroughfare for commercial and personal traffic between Conway and Georgetown. Well into the twentieth century when water passages were still the main means of transportation, Sandy Island was more connected with the towns of Conway and Georgetown as it lay on this popular route.²

It seems that the exact size of Sandy Island has not been a constant throughout its history. Recent and somewhat contradictory accounts of the island's size are confusing. For example, a 1978 newspaper article describes Sandy Island as a "24,000-acre piece of land laying just west of Brookgreen Gardens." Most contemporary descriptions, however, place Sandy Island at about 12,000 acres which are confined by Bull Creek on the north, Thoroughfare Creek on the south, the Pee Dee River on the east, and the Waccamaw River on the west which distances Sandy Island by about approximately one mile from the Waccamaw Neck mainland. The varying acreage seems the result of some tradition that extends Sandy Island on the south beyond Thoroughfare Creek. A 1913 South Carolina Historical Magazine shows the plantation of Holly Hill situated south of Thoroughfare Creek: Holly Hill was described as one of Sandy Island's rice plantation according to George Rogers' History of Georgetown County.³

North and south of the approximately three and a half by five mile Sandy Island are wetlands also set apart from the mainland by the Waccamaw and Pee Dee rivers. Sandy Island differs from these stretches in that it is inhabitable. One of the few inland islands in

South Carolina, Sandy Island is characterized by a rolling ridge and lowlands that are mostly wet and marshy. More precisely, the ridge is "one of the largest tracts of undeveloped, intact sandhills in South Carolina" and provides "a rare maritime sandhill ecosystem unknown anywhere else in the state." It also rises to a height of 76 feet, the highest point in Georgetown County, certainly a trait that distinguishes Sandy Island from the rest of the coastal region.⁴

Flora & Fauna

The fauna and flora of Sandy Island inhabit a pristine environment which is capable of providing for even endangered and threatened species. The uplands which are dry and sandy predominantly grow turkey oak and longleaf pine but also live oak and loblolly pine. "This unique ecosystem has not been formally documented in South Carolina and may be entirely restricted to Sandy Island in this state." The wetland is marsh and bald cypress-tupelo swamp, and there is an "expansive inland network of isolated wetlands." There is much that characterizes these stretches of wetland including: cypress-tupelo gum pockets, evergreen shrub, deciduous pocosins, broad-leafed deciduous swamps, freshwater depression meadows, old rice field impoundments, and pond pine woodlands. Protected plants of Sandy Island's floral community are the following: Canby's dropwort, pondberry, Colley's meadowrue, rough-leafed loose strife chaffseed, and Schweinitz' sunflower. The survival of so many endangered plants is due to isolation of the island and a lack of common, regular vehicular access. On the topic of floral environment, it should also be noted that biologists say that Sandy Island is home to the "largest unbroken stand of old-growth longleaf pine in the state and the largest remaining tract of undeveloped land in the fast-growing Waccamaw Neck area."⁵

Sandy Island supports diverse and often rare animal life. It serves as a habitat for several kind of birds including groups of migratory birds, neotropical migrants, and

migratory fowl. Some parts of the island provide birds with communally shared havens as there have been "reports of large colonial wading bird rookeries" for migratory and wintering waterfowl. Specific species of birds include osprey, egrets, turkeys, the federally protected endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers, and rare bald eagles and woodstorks. The island is also populated with various amphibians and reptiles ranging from the small and benign lizards, toads, frogs, turtles, and non-poisonous snakes to the more daunting alligators, rattlesnakes, and water moccasins. It is very rare to hear of this latter group being aggressive towards people, and apparently increased human population in the area has had little effect on this fact. Regarding alligators which can grow as large as twelve to fourteen feet, an 1820s description of Georgetown County stated "[it is] very rare to hear of their attacking men." In the hot summer, especially at night, island travelers stay alert because snakes sometimes hang from tree branches to keep themselves cool. Mammal life of Sandy Island includes white tailed deer, fox squirrel, and bobcats. A 1972 article reported that deer crossings "have marked the forest" and "tracks of wild cow herds" were visible, a reminder of Sandy Island's unique, bygone agricultural practices. Summing up the wildlife of Sandy Island, the Institute for Wetlands and Waterfowl Research wrote: "The insular nature of many floral and faunal populations on the island suggests these may be relatively isolated populations and thus represent a unique genetic component of the larger regional population that could be lost if not protected."⁶

Hurricanes

Along with the rest of Georgetown County, Sandy Island has fallen prey to many hurricanes for which it is dubiously located in its coastal proximity. Most storms were particularly devastating to the area's floundering rice economy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The 1893-1911 string of storms caused the widespread collapse of the rice economy. Still cultivating rice on a large scale in 1906, Elizabeth Allston Pringle

remarked: "I fear the storm drops a dramatic, I may say tragic, curtain on my career as a rice planter." Besides demolishing the infrastructure of many rice plantations, hurricane season and harvest season coincided in the fall, and pregnant crops were often destroyed. In this regard, the Sandy Island residents displayed amazing resilience. At various levels of production, rice was cultivated on Sandy Island until well into the 1940s, which means on-going repairs were administered to the industry's infrastructure on the island. (Rice and its relationship to Sandy Island will be further explored later in this piece.) Some of the more devastating hurricanes--to the rice industry in particular--follow: 27 August and 13 October 1893; 26 September 1894; 28 September 1898; 20 September 1906; 19 October 1910; and 27 August 1911. The October 1893 hurricane was so fierce that nearly the entire Arthur Belin Flagg family of Waccamaw Neck was lost. Their bodies were strewn along the coast from Debordieu to Murrel's Inlet. Only two escaped drowning.⁷

On October 15, 1954, Hurricane Hazel wrought the next greatest damage. While the old homes of Pawley's Island withstood the pounding, most of the post World War II vacation houses and their surrounding sand dunes were destroyed. On Sandy Island Angelis Washington clearly remembers the shock of seeing the entire roof of her aunt's home removed and lying on the ground. According to Mrs. Washington, the roof destruction was the greatest problem, and the island was not damaged as severely as their Pawley's Island neighbors. In the 1970s and 1980s, there were a rash of small, damaging storms that culminated with the September 1989 strike of Hurricane Hugo. Once again, Sandy Island sustained serious damage mostly to its rooftops, and a few homes, especially mobile homes, were incapacitated. While considerable forest damage was incurred and a week-long loss of power was endured, Mrs. Washington does not remember Hugo hitting Sandy Island as violently as Hazel.⁸

Population & Ownership

Tracing the population of Sandy Island's permanent African American community can be misleading: these figures do not reflect the number actually included in the community regardless of full time residency. A 1991 newspaper article reported that 32 former slaves joined Phillip Washington upon his foundation of the African American community. This figure was not found in any other research compiled for this project, but certainly represents an interesting piece in the history of Sandy Island's African American community. The next figure was suggested in 1965 by Prince Washington, then *de facto* leader of the island's community. Mr. Washington stated that the population was 400-500 in the 1930s, indicating a tremendous increase from its apparent original population. Genevieve Peterkin, who grew up at nearby Wachesaw landing and visited Sandy Island often throughout her life, estimated the 1950s population around 300. However suspect, figures of the island's periodic population are provided by newspaper articles for the following years: 200 in 1965, 250 in 1972* (The increase from 1965 to 1972 is undoubtedly a result of electricity's introduction to the island in 1965, a topic later addressed. In 1965, Prince Washington noted, "People starting to move back now that we got electricity."), 200 in 1976, 200 in 1978, 125 in 1984, and both 120 and 110 in 1993. Suffice it to say that today there are over 150 members of the permanent community. This figure indicates an approximation and includes those who regularly join in social, religious, and educational events on Sandy Island.⁹

The African American community resides upon the best of the inhabitable land of Sandy Island. Most still live in the Mount Arena settlement, land that has passed down from the island's patriarch Phillip Washington to his descendants. This settlement is located in the southeastern end of Sandy Island. A handful of residents live within several miles of Mount Arena in other areas such as Georgie Hill where Angelis Washington's father Sam Pyatt makes his home. The land owned by the African American population

has been held since the last half of the nineteenth century. Traditionally the other landowners of Sandy Island have been Brookgreen Gardens and a very few white hunters and other sportsmen who have owned the majority of the island. The latter group has recently been replaced by investor's like Canal Industries, that later formed a land holding partnership called Sandy Island Associates, which purchased considerable acreage on Sandy Island in 1982. A July 1994 article placed Sandy Island Associates' ownership at 7,900 acres and Brookgreen Gardens' portion at 3,900 acres--up from its 1978 holdings of 1600 acres (Brookgreen Gardens is bound to strict guidelines that prevent it from selling or developing its Sandy Island holdings.). African American residents collectively own less than 200 acres today.¹⁰

Chapter Three

Island Rice

First Owners of European Descent

A 1963 newspaper article stated that Sandy Island was originally settled by the Belin, Petigru, Heriot, LaBruce, Ward, and Flagg families, and it further states Sandy Island was part of a grant given to John Allston in 1735. This may be referring to a purchase made by John Allston of Waverly, a plantation belonging to the Pawley estate, or perhaps a grant that occurred through a line of inheritance. In 1682, John Allston (not the same person mentioned above) was the first of his family to arrive in South Carolina, and his daughter married Thomas George Pawley in 1719. This was merely one of many matrimones linking powerful lowcountry families. The Allston family would certainly play a key role in the history and ownership of parts of Sandy Island, but it appears most acquisition of Sandy Island occurred through inheritance from the Pawley family. The line of European ownership seems to begin with Percival Pawley I, a mariner by trade, who acquired thirteen grants to 2500 acres on the Pee Dee, Sampit, and Waccamaw rivers between June 18 and August 4, 1711. The Pawley family had first become involved in the area when on January 22, 1689 George Pawley I, father of Percival Pawley I, took an oath of allegiance pledging "fidelity to Lord Proprietors of Carol[ina]." When Percival Pawley I died 14 November 1723, his son George "by two grants and three successive

surveys...obtained about five hundred acres of swamp west of Waccamaw River around Thoroughfare Creek" which would be in the Sandy Island area in 1732 and 1734.¹

Some of the more recognizable family names in Waccamaw Neck rice plantation history married into the Pawley family. Thus it was through the line of Percival Pawley that most of Sandy Island was acquired. George Pawley Jr. marrying into John Allston's family is an example of the powerful marriage alliances. Another was Martha Pawley's marriage to John LaBruce. Their children Joseph Pawley LaBruce and Mary Ann LaBruce inherited Sandy Island plantations: Mary Ann LaBruce would eventually marry Captain Thomas Petigru who, in his will, granted Phillip Washington (founder of Sandy Island's present day African American community) his freedom. Another descendent of the Pawley family was Anthony Pawley who, along with his wife, sold to William Alston "Great part of Hagley" (the name of an early plantation of the area) in April of 1801. The plat which accompanied the deed appears to include southern portions of Sandy Island. Captain William Percival Vaux who planted rice on Sandy Island at Oak Hampton was the grandson of William Vaux and Ann Pawley, the daughter of Captain Percival Pawley. Clear links with the Pawley family seem to have marked antebellum white ownership of Sandy Island.²

African Expertise

Cultivation of rice on a large scale became the dominant economy of the Waccamaw Neck region after the crop's introduction to South Carolina in the 1690s. Sandy Island's first landowners, those early settlers of European descent discussed above, were no different, utilizing the island's abundant wetlands conducive to planting the profitable grain.

No development had greater impact upon the course of South Carolina history than the successful introduction of rice. The plant itself, shallow-rooted and delicate, is now

rare on the landscape it once dominated, but its historical place in the expansion of the colony and state is deep-seated and secure, hedged round by a tangle of tradition and lore almost as impenetrable as the wilderness swamps near which it was first grown for profit.³

In the South Carolina Lowcountry, rice cultivation created a landscape dominated by our country's African heritage. By 1708, the majority of South Carolina was of African descent because landowning rice planters used massive labor forces comprised of enslaved Africans and African Americans: the Waccamaw Neck world was defined by them.

Daniel Littlefield's extensive study Rice and Slaves explores the relationship involved in the joint venture of rice plantations between slave laborer and landowning planter, between African and European. He states in his conclusion, "Africans were able to give technical advice and skill, which Europeans not only accepted but sought." While the system of slavery was an ultimate violation of human rights, Littlefield points out that trends in this system reflected a high regard among Europeans for the skills of their African work force. "Despite its eventual prominence, the mastery of this grain took more than a generation, for rice was a crop about which Englishmen, even those who had lived in the Caribbean, knew nothing at all." Not all Africans knew rice, but influence from particular nationalities and ethnicities that did was desired and to some extent marks the area's history and culture. Twenty percent of the bondspeople brought into South Carolina were from the Senegal-Gambia region where rice was widely cultivated. Littlefield writes, "The evidence ...leads to the suggestion that the early connection between South Carolina and Gambia was a purposeful one, related to the production of rice." He writes further that South Carolina rice planters "may well have gone to Gambia as students and brought Africans back as teachers, making the African influence on the development of rice cultivation in Carolina a decisive one."⁴ As a primary seat of the Georgetown rice economy, it's difficult to imagine Sandy Island unaffected by these distinct cultural influences.

Rice Endures Demise of Plantations on Sandy Island

In 1850 the rice plantations of Sandy Island were Oak Hampton, Ruinsville, Mount Arena, Sandy Knowe, Oak Lawn, Holly Hill, Pipe Down, Grove Hill, and Hassell Hill. Mount Arena and Pipe Down would play particular roles in the history of Sandy Island's African American community. (The exact locations of these plantations have not been recreated yet, but some are seen on maps IV. and V. included in this work.) Harvests from Sandy Island's Antebellum plantations were recognized as some of the world's greatest. At the 1851 London World's Fair "Dr. Thomas Heriot of Sandy Island (owner of Mount Arena) was awarded a medal for the prize-winning rice produced by his slaves," and in 1855 at the Paris Exhibition Robert F. W.. Allston was awarded a silver medal "for the rice produced by his slaves on the Waccamaw, on Sandy Island, and on the Pee Dee."⁵

Another frequently mentioned plantation was Brickwell. This location was included in recollections of Sandy Islanders into the early twentieth century. The name came from its well which was made of bricks. In 1937, Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, a field writer for the WPA Writer's Project, spent time with a resident of Sandy Island named Laban. He told Mrs. Chandler his father had lived at Brickwell and "reckoned it got its name from that bricks well" which was still being used then. A 1963 newspaper article seems to indicate Ruinsville and Brickwell were the same plantation. It was on these plantations of Sandy Island that "striking continuities between African and Afro-Carolinian methods of planting, hoeing, winnowing, and pounding (dehusking) the rice persisted through slavery and on into recent years."⁶

Rice was essential to the entire Waccamaw Neck region. In 1825, it was written about Georgetown County, "Everything is fed on rice; horses and cattle eat the straw and bran; hogs, fowls, etc. are sustained by the refuse, and man subsists upon the marrow of the grain." The crops would be planted in June and finally harvested in October, and all life in the Waccamaw seemed to play a role. Rice birds that tried to eat the crops had to be

driven away while crows that ate the devastating caterpillars and ducks that ate the sprawling, unwanted wild rice were welcome. The Civil War brought the emancipation of slaves and the end of the massive plantation system that had relied on enslaved labor. The Waccamaw Neck region intermittently and with varied success attempted to continue large scale rice production, but ultimately it died by 1911 after hurricanes devastated the industry tentatively held together by inadequate labor contracts, burgeoning competition in the west, and limited financial resources. But Sandy Island was the exception. "Long after rice ceased to be a major factor of the county's economy, it was still cultivated on [Sandy Island] for the consumption of its inhabitants, with some surplus sold for cash." Thus, rice continued to define the island well into the 1900s, and its reign ended by the mid-1940s when easy access to motorized transportation eliminated a dependence on the crop. The *coup de grace* to rice on Sandy Island was levied by three successive years of floods in the 1940s.⁷

Much can be gleaned about the rice planting on Sandy Island during the 1900s from Chandler's 1937 tour with her guide and host Laban. Overlooking the rice fields, Laban described the necessary flooding of fields performed during the crop's growth. Three floods were used. He explained that the first was the sprout flow which served to sprout the rice. Next was the stretch flow that would "stretch" the rice, let it grow. The final flood was the harvest flow that filled out the rice, almost like fattening it up for the harvest. The floods were controlled by trunks which were essentially fluctuating dams that could hold in or keep out water regardless of the tides. Trunks on Sandy Island were pointed out to Chandler during her 1937 visit.⁸

Laban, Chandler's guide, then explained the steps that led from the harvest to the finished product. Flat boats would bring the crop to the mainland where ox-carts would carry the product to the rice holds which were barn-like enclosures. Along with trunks, flat boats seemed always in need of attention from planters; for example, the estate of Phillip Washington (Sandy Island's patriarch to be covered in the next section) had to cover

repairs to four trunks and two flats. Chandler also saw the iron spikes and rings called "dawgs" made by the plantation blacksmiths on Sandy Island that were used to propel flat boats. These were nailed into cypress trees along the edge of the fields and threaded with rope. Laban repeated that no locks were placed on the rice barns of Sandy Island because nobody would steal the grains. He said, "Now, you know the barn [on] Sandy Island [doesn't have] lock on 'em." The harvest was everyone's.⁹

Refining the rice started with flailing the plant and then sieving the remains. The process of winnowing, performed with a sieve or a winnowing tower, extracted the grain, still in its husks, from the rest of the plant. Next came removing the husk from the grain which required a mortar and pestle. These chaffs and remains made "sweet-smellin' mattresses. Good for pillow. Good for critter bed in the stable. Make fine bedding down for hog." According to Laban, every house on Sandy Island had a mortar and two or three pestles used to remove the husks. The rice would be placed in the mortar and pounded with the pestles until the husks were removed. Mortars were made the following way: first, the heart of long-leaf pine tree was acquired; the inside was burned and then scraped out; then wet clay was laid on the sides that remained after the burn was scraped out. "Our rice sure is sweeter than mill rice," Laban said about the finished Sandy Island product in 1937. Skilled at the refining process, Laban could beat out a gallon of rice in 30 minutes.¹⁰

Laban explained that the Sandy Island residents were the only ones cultivating the island rice fields, some of which they did not even own. As mentioned previously, Jesse Metcalf, a white sportsman from Rhode Island, owned much of the island but let the residential community use his land and plant the rice fields. Laban elaborated:

Mr. Metcalf owns all this island. The rice field belongs to him. We can plant it. He doesn't trouble us at all. He doesn't help us at all. We can use the land. He isn't going to fix the trunk. They were built during Confederate war time. He doesn't assist us too much, but he says, "there's the land, help yourself."

Sandy Island had enjoyed an excellent crop in 1936, the year before Chandler and Laban visited together. Rice continued to be cultivated on Sandy Island until the mid-1940s. The close of World War II brought about the widespread use of motorboats and thus improved access to mainland grocery stores for Sandy Islanders. Until then rice was essential to Sandy Island economy as residents would "trade sacks of hand-threshed rice for potatoes and groceries."¹¹

In 1976 Patricia Nichols wrote the rice cultivation on Sandy Island of the 1930s and 1940s was supervised by one man. During these years the island was experiencing an economic transition, and Nichols explained that everyone else helped this one planter execute large tasks needing heavy labor like harvesting but did not base their economy nor their work priorities around the rice crops. Even those members of the community who had moved off Sandy Island would return from their mainland jobs to help with the harvest. It is interesting to consider this suggestion of one older man directing Sandy Island rice cultivation in light of Genevieve Wilcox Chandler's 1937 visit. Laban, her host, seemed completely devoted to the rice cultivation on Sandy Island, and describing him as the one who tended rice, she presented him as a likely candidate for the position of rice supervisor. But Rebecca Carr, born and raised on Sandy Island, recalls Abraham Herriot as having been this rice czar. After her marriage in 1939 to Peter Carr of the Waccamaw Neck mainland and leaving the island to make her permanent residence across the Waccamaw River, Rebecca Carr would return by rowboat to Sandy Island to help with the rice harvests until the crop was no longer grown.¹²

Chapter Four

Phillip Washington: Reconstruction and Vision

When a man starts out to build a world,
He starts first with himself
And the faith that is in his heart--
The strength there,
The will there to build.

First in the heart is the dream.
Then the mind starts seeking a way.
His eyes look out on the world, On the great wooded world,
On the rich soil of the world,
On the rivers of the world.

Freedom's Plow, Langston Hughes

Driver at Pipe Down

Sandy Island's antebellum plantation of Pipe Down plays an important part of the history of the African American community on Sandy Island. At least as early as the 1850s Phillip Washington was the driver on the Pipe Down Plantation. Driver was "the Highest rank" among the laborers; he was a "foreman who worked in close cooperation with the overseer who managed the plantation." According to Plowden Weston, a wealthy antebellum planter on Waccamaw Neck, drivers were to keep the quarters of the bondspeople quiet at night and have the laborers up early in the morning. In consultation with the overseer, drivers decided the daily tasks for each person, assigned the work, and determined if it was adequately completed and hence awarded or denied laborers the right to go home. Often drivers were the most outstanding males on the plantations, many were elderly, and many derived their authority from their role as patriarch of a large family. Charles Joyner wrote that with drivers like Phillip Washington, "[slavery] was perhaps a bit more humane than it otherwise would or could have been."¹ As a driver, Phillip Washington was held as a leader of his community by black and whites alike, but in this role his leadership qualities were only beginning to make themselves manifest.

The planter of Pipe Down--thus named because its rice tower was topped by a huge inverted pipe, "nipple turned up...pipe down," as caused by a hurricane--was Captain Thomas Petigru. Petigru admired his driver Phillip Washington immensely: his will granted Washington his freedom. Captain Petigru's Pipe Down had 100 bondspeople, and their destiny became an issue of much deliberation upon the death of Captain Petigru on 6 March 1857. The captain's widow did not want the responsibility of managing the plantation, and she implored her brother-in-law Governor Robert F. W. Allston to buy the plantation from her. Mrs. Petigru was unconcerned with money--she plainly and emphatically did not want the responsibility. Allston insisted his holdings were already so large that proper management was difficult. After pressure from his brother-in-law James

Petigru, Allston gave in, and in 1859 Pipe Down was his. Some historians describe Allston's acquisition of Pipe Down, an "unforeseen incident that involved him against his will and judgment," as a major factor in his financial burden and demise; otherwise, he would have been wealthy and left a large estate to his family. Instead, Pipe Down accrued "debt that rendered Governor Allston's estate insolvent at the close of the war."²

Allston had mortgaged other plantations to afford the added responsibilities, and when he died in 1864 they were sold. One reason Allston finally purchased Pipe Down (comprised of 294 acres and 100 slaves) was to get his son Benjamin established as a planter, but this strategy fell through when Benjamin entered the Confederate Army two years after the purchase. What makes the transaction of Pipe Down important to the history of Sandy Island today is the role Pipe Down's driver Phillip Washington played. His diplomacy, courage, and vision reflect commitment to his community and helped keep it intact.³

After the death of Captain Thomas Petigru in 1857, the bondspeople on Pipe Down most certainly felt concern about their future. Mary Ann LaBruce Petigru, Captain Tom's widow and proprietor of Pipe Down, desperately wanted to sell this Sandy Island plantation. As there were no buyers initially, the Pipe Down laborers must have had fears that the plantation would be dissolved and they would be sold to other plantations, a fate separating them from home and, worse, family and friends--a complete disruption of their community. Another concern, hinging on the more hopeful scenario that the plantation remained intact, was over whether or not the potential buyer of Pipe Down would be a good and fair man.

Taking initiative to influence their future as much as possible, the Pipe Down slaves selected Phillip Washington, age 53 in 1860, to be their spokesman and approach the deliberating Robert F.W. Allston, who had emerged as the most likely buyer of Pipe Down and one the plantation's residents must have deemed as fair. In 1857 Washington had been denied the freedom granted to him in his former master's will: Joyner notes that

manumission was prohibited by South Carolina law. Allston's daughter Elizabeth W. Allston Pringle recounts the feelings of her uncle Captain Thomas Petigru for his driver and reflects the powerful impression Phillip Washington made on those visits to her father:

Then the [blacks] from Pipe Down began to send deputations over to beg my father to buy them. Phillip Washington, a very tall, very black man, a splendid specimen of his race, after two generations of slavery, was their spokesman. My uncle (Captain Thomas Petigru) had been very devoted to Phillip, and considered him far above [his peers] in every way, and in his will had given him his freedom, along with two or three others; he pleaded the cause of his friends with much eloquence, saying they had fixed on him as the owner they desired.

Phillip Washington's visits influenced Allston who in 1859 purchased Pipe Down and made efforts to keep its community intact. Allston proved this by providing for "old July" and "old Ned," both terminally ill, quite aged, and incapable of contributing to the plantation's economy. Although Allston refused to pay for these slaves, he promised to allow them to reside on the plantation as long as they lived. "The Pipe Down people were overjoyed, and the debt assumed," Allston's daughter recalled. Certainly, keeping their community together was a major victory for Pipe Down's work force. Phillip Washington remained a driver at Pipe Down with Allston, but Mary Ann LaBruce Petigru still coveted Phillip Washington's services. She offered Allston \$100 to hire out Washington for some winter work, but Allston refused the pay and let her receive Washington's services for free. Allston did have concerns that Washington would have a better living if he was not so disposed. Allston provided Washington a monthly supply of meat, sugar, coffee, and gave him Christmas money while working for Petigru.⁴

Reconstruction in South Carolina

The close of the Civil War brought the end of slavery, and emancipation brought many changes to the Waccamaw Neck region. Union ships traveled up the Pee Dee and Waccamaw rivers and spread the joyous news of freedom to the plantations. In 1937, Ben Horry recalled some of the events to Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, "Two Yankee gunboats come up Waccamaw River...one stop to Sandy Island, Montarena Landing...They say the Yankee broke in all the rice barn on Sandy Island and share the rice out to colored people." The celebrations were both euphoric and occasionally destructive to plantation homes. These bore the brunt of the freed people's jubilation and simultaneous resentment released after hundreds of years of slavery. Houses of plantation owners were stripped: even "doors [were] removed from their hinges." The home of Robert F. W. Allston's widow had been plundered by freed people and Union soldiers. She appealed to the Union military for support to resume work on her plantations (one of which would have been Pipe Down).⁵

Although newly freed bonds people received land elsewhere in South Carolina, this was not the case on Sandy Island. Sandy Island's neighbors to the south had a unique and frustrating experience. On January 16, 1865, General Sherman of the Union Army issued the famous Field Order 15 that set aside "the Sea Islands and a portion of the lowcountry rice coast south of Charleston, extending 30 miles inland for exclusive settlement of blacks." By June 1865, 40,000 freed people had settled 400,000 acres of "Sherman Land." Some freed people believed that finally owning land they had earned with their toil would complete their freedom. While Sandy Island lay north of Charleston approximately 80 miles, it was unaffected by the policy, but Field Order 15 could have set a trend for the entire state. Instead, Sherman's order was rescinded in the summer of 1865, just months after 40 acre segments had been given out. By the end of this promise filled episode of South Carolina Reconstruction, only 2,000 freed people from South Carolina and Georgia

received land. Considerable land was acquired by freed people through prior confiscation acts and delinquent taxes in other parts of the state, but Sandy Island does not appear to have been one of these locations. This was because abandoned land, common in other parts of South Carolina, was re-occupied quickly by the original white owners on the Waccamaw Neck. As Waccamaw Neck plantation owners returned to their abandoned land, freed people were not eager to relinquish what increasingly--and understandably--appeared to be their own property. Mrs. Pringle warned Mrs. Allston not to attempt to reclaim her land writing, "the blacks are masters of the situation, this is a conquered country." Throughout the South Carolina Lowcountry freed people shared "a belief in an imminent division of land" and probably anticipated this when they held for their own the Waccamaw Neck property their exploited labor had tamed.⁶

The immediate replacement in terms of a labor system on the Waccamaw Neck plantations was the implementation of labor contracts. General John P. Hatch ordered planters in the area to take an oath of allegiance to the United States, inform all former bondspeople of their freedom, and make equitable contracts with the freed people. The freed people would receive subsistence provisions and half of the crop after harvest in return for their labor. Union ships sailed up the Waccamaw all the way to Conway encouraging freedman to cultivate enough crops to start their own trade in Georgetown. Unfortunately, by the end of 1865 President Johnson had pardoned most of Georgetown County's pre-war planters, and all of their former land--and influence for that matter--was quickly restored. Planters borrowed enormous amounts of money to reestablish their economic sovereignty. When pardoned by President Johnson they were permitted to "participate once again in the politics of their state." Freed people were confronted with the harsh reality that "the old planting aristocracy was being revitalized."⁷

The U.S. Army remained ever present and supervised the contract arrangements between the freed people and the planters. But the freed people of the Waccamaw Neck had seized the momentum of their emancipation and resisted inadequate contracts and

unacceptable work conditions. The resistance to unfair treatment was evident on Sandy Island where freedmen's efforts unnerved planters. In 1866 planter Francis Withers Heriot wrote that he wanted the private from the army assigned to his Mount Arena plantation to stay on a while longer. A supervisor on Dr. Allard B. Flagg's Sandy Island plantations of Sandy Knowe and Oak Lawn wanted a "detail of two soldiers for eight to ten days to straighten" out the situation of striking workers there.⁸

In 1866 the military had an extremely active role in the Waccamaw Neck as they supervised the labor contracts, voided the black codes, and ordered freed people who did not make contracts to leave. Contracts were refused by some freed people for many justifiable reasons including insistence that the land belonged to them. To the recently emancipated slaves throughout the South, freedom was more than shorter hours and payment of wages; in the words of historian Eric Foner, "Freedmen sought to control the conditions under which they labored, end their subordination to white authority, and carve out the greatest measure of economic autonomy." They believed owning land would complete their independence.⁹

The rice cultivation was failing for many reasons throughout the latter half of the 1860s: 1865, 1866, 1867 were successive failed crops in Georgetown County that nearly killed the industry all together. In 1867, President Johnson's Reconstruction policies were reversed by Congress, and more progressive and actively administered laws ensued. By November 1867 African Americans were using the vote to empower themselves locally. The economy, however, was still affected by rice which despite all the previous failures and burdensome interest rate loans was attempted. Permanent laborers of the Waccamaw Neck were making about \$11 a month, some in food, and transient workers made about 50 cents a day.¹⁰ These trends associated with the Waccamaw Neck labor contracts--military presence, struggling attempts to preserve large scale rice cultivation, and gradual empowerment of the freedmen population--probably give a fairly good indication of Sandy Island during Reconstruction.

In 1870 the South Carolina Land Commission was established to purchase and redistribute land among African Americans. Mismanaged until 1872 when Secretary of State Francis L. Cardozo reorganized the program, the commission enabled one-seventh of South Carolina's black population, plus a handful of whites, to acquire homesteads. By 1910 there were 519 African American owned farms in Georgetown County; however, this was the smallest number of African American-owned farms for a county in South Carolina. The South Carolina Land Commission, "a pathbreaking program," does not appear to have provided land for purchase on Sandy Island.¹¹

Phillip Washington During Reconstruction

Oral tradition has established quite clearly that today's African American community on Sandy Island is descended from the settlements of freedmen at the Mount Arena, Brickwell, Ruinsville, and Pipe Down communities that replaced plantations of the same names on Sandy Island following the Civil War. In addition, it is clearly established that "after emancipation...Phillip Washington managed to purchase land on Sandy Island and to establish a settlement of ex-slaves." It is not a simple and direct tale, however, of a former slave remaining on land he once worked and then purchasing it through some means. Phillip Washington's tale is intricate, and his mobility, influence, and eventual wealth mark the exceptional life of a sophisticated man.¹²

According to the 1870 census records of Georgetown County, Waccamaw District Number 7, Phillip Washington was born in Waccamaw, South Carolina (any part of the Waccamaw Neck not in a specific place like Sandy Island). We know that Washington was not born on Sandy Island, as many of the other residents of district # 7 were so classified. Phillip Washington was born about 1807 based on his 1870 age of 63. Listed in 1870 as the head of household with members of his family listed below him, Phillip had a family that included his wife Minder (most likely his second wife) age 40 also born in

Waccamaw, South Carolina; son Esaw age 19, born in Waccamaw, South Carolina; and son Dunkin age 27, born in Waccamaw, South Carolina. Phillip and these three members of his household were all listed as laborers. Based on the knowledge that rice cultivation was continued on many of the plantations on Sandy Island through the implementation of labor contracts, these occupation designations probably mean Phillip Washington's family members were working rice fields on or near Sandy Island. Because Washington served as a driver before Emancipation, he was probably a valued worker, and he most likely would have been pursued by planters to help in the struggling industry. Washington appears to have been patriarch of a fairly large family, and he seems to have married at least twice. He was married to Nancy when both were slaves during Petigru's ownership of Pipe Down, and they had a crippled son Hammond. Nancy's fate is unknown, but Washington later married Minder, a younger woman. Their age discrepancy varies depending on the source consulted. The 1880 census lists Phillip Washington at age 74 and Minder at age 60, but the 1870 census had them 23 years apart. It is also unclear which children were Nancy's and which, if any, were Minder's. At his death, Phillip Washington's will mentioned his five sons, Francis, Esaw, Will, Dunkin, and Alexander, several of whom gave Washington grandchildren.¹³

In 1870 Phillip Washington owned no real estate but had acquired \$111 worth of taxable property, most of which was invested in one extremely valuable horse (\$100) and 2 hogs. He also owned \$5 in furniture and did not pay the Georgetown County poll tax of \$1. In 1871, Phillip Washington is oddly absent from tax records in both Waccamaw District 7 and City of Georgetown District 3. By 1872 Phillip Washington must have rid himself of the \$100 horse: his taxable personal property totaled only \$38. He still owned no real estate and again did not pay his poll tax of \$1. In 1874 Phillip Washington, still listed as living in the Waccamaw District of Georgetown County--potentially placing him on Sandy Island--had property that nearly equaled the value of his 1870 property, but by this time he showed an important pattern of diversifying his holdings. His personal

property totaled \$105 and included: five cattle worth \$75, an item of silver worth \$15 (probably a watch, an item listed in his will of 1890), one pleasure carriage worth \$5, and other property including furniture that was valued at \$10. Phillip Washington did pay his poll tax in 1874.¹⁴

In 1875 and 1876 Phillip Washington must not have paid taxes in Georgetown County. He was not listed in the tax records of the county's Waccamaw District 7 or even City of Georgetown District 3, but he resurfaced in 1877 a much wealthier man. That year Phillip Washington was residing and paying taxes in the city of Georgetown, not Sandy Island or anywhere else on the Waccamaw Neck. His personal property was evaluated at \$88, and now he possessed \$700 worth of real estate. In addition he had to pay back taxes totaling \$7.88 which indicates he had been somewhere in Georgetown County the years of 1875 and 1876 when he had not paid taxes. Phillip Washington's property included 4 cattle worth \$50, 2 hogs worth \$8, and he still possessed some sort of silver item valued at \$5. (It is unclear if this is the same piece of silver that other times valued at \$10 and \$15: they could have been different items.) All of his other property including furniture was valued at \$20. The real estate, valued at \$700, reveals a new dimension of Phillip Washington. The 1877 tax records for Georgetown County, City of Georgetown District 3 describes his property as one town lot valued at \$200 with two buildings having a total value of \$500. Its location was listed as Lot 3 Front Street.¹⁵

This house that belonged to Phillip Washington is linked with other aspects of Georgetown history, and still stands today as one of the more stately homes on Front Street in historic Georgetown. Its current owner is Mrs. Mabel Callison, and she received the house as a gift from her mother. Mrs. Callison owns deeds to the house dating back to December 5, 1856 when the house belonged to William Heyward Trapier (1805-1872), an accomplished planter of the Waccamaw Neck. Trapier sold the home to C. J. Coe who lost the home for what appears to be delinquent taxes. The next owner Robert E. Fraser, Mrs. Callison's great uncle, bought the house from the sheriff; Fraser's deed stated he procured

the property of C.J. Coe "under and by virtue of an execution for debt and bid of by me." On December 4, 1876 Phillip Washington purchased the home on Lot 3 Front Street for \$750.00 from Robert E. Fraser. Washington and Fraser apparently had interactions, the depth and nature of which are not known, for not only did Fraser sell Washington a house, but he also had deposited money for Washington as revealed in Washington's will. Robert Ellison Fraser's family was from Darlington and Sumter counties, and he served as the cashier for Georgetown Bank before the Civil War. Fraser, who had been a member of the Whig party in the late 1840s, seems to have always been an active member in his Methodist church, and was elected to public office five times beginning in 1879.¹⁶

Phillip Washington's house was included in an historic preservation drive that kicked off in the 1960s in Georgetown. Architect Russell White came to Georgetown to date the houses since so many records had been lost over the years. When he came to Washington's former property, White observed to Mrs. Callison that her house was obviously designed by an architect because of its timeless simplicity of form. The architect further noted that the home had once had a detached kitchen room in the backyard, and additions had been made over the years. Dated circa 1770 the house remains today as always (#1024 Front Street) on its original lot in a row of three other pre-Revolution homes and one antebellum house making "a unique string of homes even in Georgetown."¹⁷

Two years later Phillip Washington relinquished his house. It was sold on June 15, 1878 for \$800 to P. E. Braswell who was part of the new economic leadership in Georgetown. Braswell would serve as superintendent of Georgetown and Lanes Railroad: railroads were a growing new industry in Georgetown in the late 1870s and 1880s. He seemed to have experience in Georgetown real estate owning \$1000 worth in 1874 and 1875, \$2200 in 1877, and \$1200 in 1878 before purchasing Phillip Washington's property. That same year of 1878 Phillip Washington had returned to the Waccamaw Neck region, possibly to Sandy Island. According to the 1878 tax records, his possessions were relatively similar to before except he was now minus the real estate...and plus a dog.

Records indicate he did not make any real estate or other large investments for a couple years.¹⁸ Perhaps Washington's \$800 remained liquid.

Phillip Washington Looks To Sandy Island

Phillip Washington's departure from Georgetown in 1878 may have been related to the social and political climate of the time. In 1877 Reconstruction, for all intents and purposes, had ended with the withdrawal of Union troops. While his Georgetown occupation remains uncertain, Phillip Washington was definitely a man of means residing in an impressive home on the city's main business thoroughfare; perhaps, as an African American male during a period historically noted as racially charged and transitional, he felt his position was in jeopardy without the presence of federal troops. It is worth noting that by the mid-1870s signs of white militancy were surfacing in the city of Georgetown when, for example, "a club for self defense" was organized and its white male members wore uniforms resembling those of the Confederate Army.¹⁹

Historian Theodore Rosengarten believes that explaining Phillip Washington's departure from Georgetown necessitates deeper examination. Dr. Rosengarten points out that, although historic watersheds like the end of Reconstruction in this case may seem earth shaking to us today, people living at the time probably did not appreciate the magnitude of the shift. Phillip Washington may not have felt as much of a risk to his person, family, and property as he did to his loss of power when the federal troops were removed. Dr. Rosengarten points out this sensation would have been exclusive to Phillip Washington's "class of powerful intermediaries," to which his former position as driver would have garnered him initial membership. African Americans sought more control over their lives during the 1870s, and, as the system resisted, revolts arose throughout the South Carolina Lowcountry. "Whites reacted by electing white redemption governments...white control was being asserted directly," says Rosengarten. He explains that control was no

longer exerted from "white to black to black," the hierarchical pattern from which Phillip Washington had benefited." These circumstances "imprinted" different peoples' lives in various ways; to Phillip Washington they posed a great threat that his position was being phased out.²⁰

Having sold his house in Georgetown and returned to the Waccamaw District by 1878, Phillip Washington focused on permanent settlement of Sandy Island. Indicating that he was consciously trying to found a new community, Washington made his initial purchase of land on Sandy Island for a church. On April 9, 1880 Phillip Washington, since ordained Reverend Phillip Washington, gave Mrs. Eliza S. Heriot \$10 for two acres "situated on Sandy Island the same being a portion of Mount Arena Plantation...for the use, benefit, and control of a colored congregation known by the name of New Bethel Church." Of course, as buyer and first reverend of New Bethel Church, Phillip Washington's name was signed to the deed. In addition there were two lists of signatures at the bottom headed as follows: (*Deacons*) and (*Committee*). Most Baptist churches have a Board of Deacons, and Sandy Island's has historically held an important station in the social and political framework of the island. These signatures may mark that first Board of Deacons; they were Ned Huger, Francis Washington (Phillip's son), July Heriot, Tom Keith, and Andrew Rhode. The other list included another of Phillip Washington's sons and probably listed other male community leaders or patriarchs. That list follows: Esau Washington, Virgil Clinton, Ken Serivson (spelling?), Joe Keith, Stepany Heriot, Washington Gary, Moses Stewart, George Ford, Nathan Lance, and John Neumann.²¹ With a church established, Phillip Washington had provided a nucleus around which an African American community on Sandy Island could be built: one that--because of location--would be separated from outside influences and beholden only to itself.

Phillip Washington: Planter

Land was held up as the real means to economic equality by African Americans in the decades after the Civil War and beyond. To acquire a significant amount would cost a great deal. Prime rice land in Georgetown County could garner as much as \$50 an acre, and Sandy Island's award-winning antebellum crops indicates that land there was quite desirable. Phillip Washington most likely still had money from the sale of his Georgetown home. Judging by his tax information for 1880 and 1881 he had made no significant investments. He had bought no real estate beyond the church's two acres, and his property was basically unchanged: there was his dog, some silver valued at \$10, and no more than 4 head of cattle valued at \$80. But Phillip Washington financially added to whatever he had by planting rice. At age 75 his occupation was designated as *planter* in the 1880 census (unlike his 1870 listing as *laborer*), and his household included the following: Minder (spelled Minda) age 60, *wife* was her relation to the head of household; Ellis Annie age 10, *servant* was her relation to the head of household and her occupation; and Kine Edward age 9, *servant* was his relation to the head of household and his occupation.²²

By at least 1879 Phillip Washington was planting according to the 1880 agricultural census for Upper Waccamaw District in Georgetown County. He rented 160 acres of improved, tilled land and 40 acres of unimproved woodland all for a share of his crop. The land he worked along with the buildings and fences were valued at \$1500. The livestock on the farm he rented included 10 oxen, 5 milch cows, 25 barnyard poultry, and 75 other poultry. Washington's farm productions for 1879 were valued at \$2000 gross. This was from the 95,000 lbs. of rice yielded by the 160 acres he farmed. Although they are antebellum figures, Charles Joyner's Down By The Riverside shows that 3,333 lbs was the median amount of rice harvested per worker: using such a figure, Phillip Washington may have employed as many as 28 to 30 farmers. Phillip Washington proved an accomplished planter. His output of 95,000 lbs. of rice for 160 acres is better than average productions in Georgetown County from 1870, 1871, 1872, and 1873. (These are the only years for which figures are provided in George Rogers' History of Georgetown County.)

The best average over those years was 562 lbs. per acre in 1872; this comes to 89,920 lbs. for Phillip Washington's 160 acres, compared to the 95,000 lbs. he actually produced. In addition, antebellum standards placed the desired minimum yield for planters of rice at 100,000 lbs., making Washington's 95,000 lbs. in 1879 arguably successful, especially considering the challenges of the 1870s rice industry.²³

In 1882 Phillip Washington made a large purchase of land. It provided the needed resources to complete a permanent and autonomous community that could revolve around the New Bethel Church established in 1880. Paying the lofty sum of \$2500, Phillip Washington acquired 320 acres of "land on the Waccamaw, community known by the name of Mount Arena" of Sandy Island. The land was for private ownership and use, and it was purchased from Eliza S. Heriot who had also sold Washington the two acres for New Bethel Church. About 200 acres of his 320 acre domain were described as rice lands, and based on the going rate for rice land in Georgetown County in 1883 which ranged from \$3 to \$50 per acre, Washington paid a fairly competitive price. Washington's land was described as bordering the land of J. W. LaBruce on the north, the Waccamaw River on the east, land of Flagg and Passerby Creek on the south, and A. H. Belin on the west. It is interesting to conjecture if this is the same land Washington was planting in 1879, but it is fairly certain that he continued planting rice.²⁴

In 1883, Reverend Phillip Washington was recorded as having real estate valued at only \$965. Oddly, it was also noted as *uncultivated wood, marsh land* and the land itself was valued at about \$1 an acre. The twelve buildings on his property were valued at \$650. He still owned his dog, four head of cattle, and a \$10 pleasure carriage. The Georgetown County Tax Assessor's Office explained that it has only been since 1960 that assessments of property needed to be within 80% of the actual retail value. The 1883 figures of Washington's land are conspicuously unreflective of its real value. The next year, Washington was held responsible for higher taxes. Suddenly his land--same acreage--was listed at a value of \$2,100: the same number of buildings, twelve, was now valued at \$800,

and the land itself stood at \$1300. Not much else on his estate had changed except the addition of 2 head of cattle.²⁵

Dr. Rosengarten made some enlightening observations about Phillip Washington's planting experience. He said chances were Phillip Washington had been renting and planting the same land before he purchased it. Washington's pattern showed his great potential for upward mobility. Rosengarten says there are indications that Washington had been renting the land with an agreement to buy. As a planter, he certainly had hired a work force, and he may have paid workers in cash or agricultural products. While there is evidence that Washington was a man of means who perhaps paid Mrs. Heriot in cash for her land, Dr. Rosengarten emphasizes that South Carolina had an accessible long-term credit system, described by Foner's Reconstruction as "pathbreaking," which greatly facilitated land purchases, and Washington may have used this program. Regardless, Rosengarten points out that rice planting in the late 1870s was profitable again, and Washington was in the midst of this economic trend.²⁶

Phillip Washington's Estate & Investments

Phillip Washington died in December 1890 at age 83. He had amassed a considerable estate that, judging by its possessions, grew out of his rice planting. Valued at \$5889.58, this freedman's wealth, which flourished at Mount Arena, was larger than Eliza S. Heriot's estate worth \$5501.47 at her death. She was the former proprietor of Mount Arena: her wealth had at least somewhat derived from exploited, slave labor. Washington's will stipulated the distribution of his land to his sons and grandchildren. His wife, written as Mrs. M. Washington, was to be taken care of by Francis, his oldest son, and she would keep residence in their home as long as she remained his widow. (To remain a beneficiary of his will, she was not allowed to remarry.) Enumerations of his belongings ranged from flats (boats used in the rice fields) and plows to oxen and cattle to a

gun and silver. Most striking are perhaps some investments made by Washington. He had purchased 3 City of Charleston Bonds, numbers 150, 449, and 450 at \$82.50 each for a total worth of \$247.50. In addition he had \$319.51 deposited at South Carolina Loan and Trust, and he had \$54.25 deposited with Robert Ellison Fraser, the man from whom he had bought his Georgetown home fourteen years earlier. Maybe Fraser, having once served as cashier to the Georgetown Bank, administered investments for Washington.²⁷

It is these investments that, to Dr. Rosengarten, most strongly suggest that Washington was an exceptional man. During that era, it was rather unusual for African Americans to own silver or invest in municipal bonds. To Rosengarten these investments illuminate three things about Sandy Island's patriarch: 1) he was a person with a clear view of currency and economics; 2) he probably had strong ties with people in banking or currency work; and 3) he was a person who made alliances with whites. Dr. Rosengarten emphasized that Washington was a person who thought of the economy, an especially rare quality during Washington's day and age--even today, most people do not think about the economy.²⁸

Unquestionably, Phillip Washington was a sophisticated man. The rich legacy of independence intact today in the community he started serves as testament to his accomplishment. His life was marked by mobility, wealth, and positions of leadership. Arguably, he could choose where he wanted to live. He chose Sandy Island. Separated from the mainland, which was largely and increasingly controlled by whites, the island provided Washington a place where his family and friends could have control over their own lives. Establishing New Bethel Baptist Church before purchasing his own private land indicates that Washington had a vision of a permanent settlement and reflects his commitment to serve his community.

Chapter Five

The Legacy of Sandy Island: Lifestyle and Culture

Into that furrow the freedom seed was dropped.
From that seed a tree grew, is growing, will ever grow.
That tree is for everybody,
For all America, for all the world.

Freedom's Plow, by Langston Hughes

Self Reliance: Land and Government

The permanent African American community on Sandy Island acquired great economic stability with Phillip Washington's 320 acres of land upon which the community first thrived independently. Within fifteen years, James Pyatt, another permanent Sandy Island resident, made two land purchases totaling 634 acres. The entire sum paid by Pyatt was \$500 for these considerable blocks of Sandy Island. These two bargain purchases reflect the declining value of rice land in Georgetown County during the 1890s. Both purchases were arranged with the Flagg family. Pyatt's first acquisition was described:

lands on west side of Waccamaw...about 325 acres of high land and about 84 acres of rice land...bound north by lands of the estate of Joshua LaBruce, south by lands of Dr. Allard B. Flagg and estate of Phillip Washington, west by land formerly of the estate of Weston and east by Southern Creek.

By the turn of the century, Sandy Island's permanent community possessed nearly 1,000 acres between the estates of Phillip Washington and James Pyatt alone. Phillip Washington's will demonstrates the beginning of a long tradition of land inheritance on Sandy Island. This tradition has certainly not been free of conflict, however. In 1933, James Pyatt's wife Josephine, age 45, and daughter of an earlier marriage Georgie Brown, age 53, went to court over who was the rightful administratrix of the deceased James Pyatt's estate. An 1897 deed shows a technique that easily kept land within the community. R. A. Washington bought 33 acres of rice land in an area called Creekfield on Sandy Island. R. A. Washington purchased the land from Phillip Washington's grandson William for \$1--a token.¹

Sandy Island has always provided its permanent residents geographic isolation from the mainland. This has enabled a structure of political and governmental self reliance to proliferate. To this day, the community's adults meet one evening a month--usually the first Sunday--to discuss issues, events, needs and problems of the community. Since

Reverend Phillip Washington first headed the community, Sandy Island's community leader has traditionally been a senior male strongly linked with New Bethel Baptist Church. The "town meetings" in conjunction with the senior male leader has genuinely likened Sandy Island to an independent democratic republic. While reverends of Sandy Island have held the position of *de facto* leader, from the late 1950s to the 1970s Sandy Island did not have any residing reverends. Once a month a visiting reverend from Georgetown would give a sermon, and other services were led by residents. During this stretch, Prince Washington, widely referred to as "the mayor of Sandy Island," was leader of the community. Prince Washington was Phillip Washington's grandson, and he served as chairman of the Board of Deacons, therefore keeping the island's leadership role tied to the church even without a reverend leader.²

Prince Washington: The Mayor

Prince Washington's tenure as Sandy Island's "indisputable leader" is one of the more storied parts of island history. He was born on Sandy Island in a house next to the home where he lived with his wife Rebecca until his death at age 80. Prince Washington's life is very indicative of the mobility shared by so many of the island's men. In his youth he worked Sandy Island's rice fields, and later he went to New York City and worked in factories during his brief stay. Described as a "former sailor," the six feet and five inches tall Washington spent time working as a fireman for the Baltimore and Carolina Steamship Company. Washington's legendary career began when he returned to Sandy Island where his parents needed him. Back on Sandy Island his work revolved around the Waccamaw River which he mastered as shad fisherman and ferryman.³

Prince Washington and his wife Rebecca, who was one of only four midwives years ago on Sandy Island, lost two children, but devoted much of themselves to the rearing of several foster children. As Sandy Island's "mayor" and "veteran public relations

man," Prince Washington served his community dutifully and pressed government officials for improved services for the island community. In 1972, making his first flight, he accompanied state and local officials from Columbia to Atlanta to meet with HUD (Housing and Urban Development) officials about necessary improvements to assist the Sandy Island community. Prince Washington later returned to Atlanta and met with officials from the Office of Economic Opportunity to present a case for a ferry for Sandy Island. After a long struggle to bring electricity to the island, it was Prince Washington who finally threw the ceremonial switch to initiate service in 1965.⁴

Prince Washington was proud of "cooperation for common good" exercised by his fellow residents. The community's affection and admiration for him ran equally deep. His name still brings fond smiles and flowing compliments from residents, especially the seniors. Rebecca Carr drifted into thought when asked about his leadership qualities and simply said, "Oh, Prince--mayor of Sandy Island. Big Prince. He was my leader." Prince and Rebecca Washington were married for over sixty years. Before Prince died his wife Rebecca promised him she would never leave Sandy Island. In early January 1975, he passed away and left his wife the over 50 acres of Sandy Island that he owned upon which she remained until her own death. The day before his fatal illness struck, Prince Washington was busy arranging to purchase new pews for New Bethel Baptist Church and finding Christmas shrimp for friends and family. He lived a life devoted to the mutually shared love affair he had with the island and its community.⁵

Civic-Mindedness

The lack of crime makes an excellent representation of Sandy Island's organizational success. Historian Dr. Charles Joyner explains, "Sandy Island had its own law. Key is they were self-governing--no contact with the law. They did it themselves...Sandy Island started as a black republic." Of course police protection is available on request as Sandy Island is officially part of the township of Pawley's Island, but a 1978 newspaper article conveyed that no one remembered a police officer setting foot on Sandy Island. There have been none since. In an interview Prince Washington said "I have never known of a crime committed on this island during my lifetime." Resident M. T. Tucker once said, "As far as police are concerned, we don't need any down here. Everybody tends to their business, and the children are very obedient." In 1984, Sandy Islander Sebrina Pyatt, then a seventh grader at Pawley's Island, captured a simple and powerful quality of her home that much of America unfortunately cannot claim saying, "People don't get killed on Sandy Island." The legacy of security on Sandy Island remains as fixed in the 1990s as ever. A 1993 newspaper article observed, "No law enforcement on the island and apparently no need for any." In recent years residents have begun taking some precautions, like locking their doors, because non-resident boaters are increasingly parking their boats and wandering the island.⁶

Genevieve Peterkin of Murrel's Inlet has been a close friend of Sandy Island since her youth in the 1930s when she accompanied her mother Genevieve Wilcox Chandler on her frequent trips to the island as she worked for the WPA Writer's Project. Peterkin works closely with her entire community in Georgetown County and has a unique perspective upon the civic awareness of Sandy Islanders that translates itself into the broader community. Describing the island's work force as "model citizens" working as sheriff's deputies, electricians, clergy, and government clerks, Peterkin is overwhelmed by

the display at election time: she has volunteered at her local precinct since 1972. "The most civic-minded people," Sandy Islanders have nearly 100% turn out. She points out that it is a demanding trip that must be made over the cold, November river especially for seniors up in their years. Peterkin would like to see a precinct placed at Mount Arena landing. She also explains how candidates will noticeably appeal to Sandy Island's male leader when elections approach. Winning his influential endorsement would help a candidate garner much of the Sandy Island vote.⁷

The Church

A Sandy Island resident once said, "We handle our own law through the church." This sentiment that Sandy Island's community is governed through the church was echoed by many. One organizational branch of New Bethel Baptist Church is "the most prestigious social group on the island," the Board of Deacons which is comprised of six or seven senior island patriarchs. Similar to the same Board of Deacons in most Baptist churches, New Bethel's group directs the church administration. Traditionally they "conduct the major business of the island." Rebecca Carr remembers from her youth how the Board of Deacons would reprimand what they judged to be inappropriate behavior of church members and carry an influence into their daily lives.⁸

Built in 1880, New Bethel Baptist Church was constructed by the cooperative effort of the island's men. Cement blocks and other materials were floated to the island in boats and on barges and then hauled from the landing to the church location by the resident men using ox-drawn carts. The church has changed in recent years, but this brief 1963 description probably captures the original look of the building: "A sturdy stone structure...It's hand-carved pews, oil lamps, antique bellows organ, and other furniture date back to early nineteenth century churches." It is located equidistant from the "four corners" of residency that were populated in 1880 when the church was constructed and

Phillip Washington served as first reverend. By 1937, Butler A.M.E. Church had become Sandy Island's second church, and today these are still the only two. Permanent island residents belong to one of the two churches, and many members live off the island making Sunday a great day of gathering. New Bethel Baptist, the larger church, has over 30 members who reside off the island but attend regularly. The church's influence has gone beyond the river for years; in 1965 Prince Washington said, "Today many members are scattered, but they still send their support."⁹

Before the church service, separate Sunday school classes are held simultaneously in the church sanctuary. A printed lesson is used in which oral readings and discussion are a major part. Now run by the church, Sunday school used to be run by women's clubs or "lodges." The subjects were good according to Rebecca Carr, and classes were operated then in much the same way they are now. Today these women's clubs or "lodges" gather privately in the old schoolhouse building usually on Sunday afternoons to conduct their business. These groups have been a permanent fixture of Sandy Island for years. Rebecca Carr remembers from her youth in the 1920s and 1930s the celebrations these clubs would put on.¹⁰

Education

Education has always been highly valued in the Sandy Island community--no one on the island is illiterate. The earliest school that served the island was held in the church building and paid for by the island residents themselves. Rebecca Carr remembers attending this school in the church. They called the teacher "Prof" and only attended the school for four months, because, as Carr explained, costs absorbed by their parents would have been too high if it lasted longer. In 1930 Archer M. Huntington came to Georgetown County and purchased several old plantation estates that he combined into one and called it Brookgreen. Described as one of the wealthy northerners who helped save a declining

Georgetown County by bringing it "a little new deal," Huntington donated the Sandy Island community the funds for a concrete, two-room school building and the salaries for two teachers.¹¹

Built in 1932 and providing an elementary education, this school became a very important part of the community. This school operated until 1966 when the county consolidated its smaller schools. In 1963 the school, which had no electricity or running water, was directed by its principal Mrs. Janie W. Lee. With 23 years experience, she taught 16 Sandy Island students in the primary grades math, English, art, science, health, and social studies in one of the school's two high-ceiling rooms. In the other room, Augustus N. Herriott, who grew up on Sandy Island but lived in Conway in 1963 and commuted to Sandy Island every schoolday, taught 15 students in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades the same subjects in more advanced forms than Mrs. Lee's younger students. With limited resources, the school managed to give an effective and memorable education of which its graduates remain fond. The science equipment was a display of native shells; the school library was three bookshelves and was comprised of a new World Book set and a two volume encyclopedia; the school's audio-visual equipment included a transistor radio, a battery operated phonograph with one record, and a world globe; and the sports equipment included two balls: a softball and basketball that doubled as a volleyball. PE classes were held in the courtyard as the girls went with Mrs. Lee and the boys went with Mr. Herriott. The water fountain was a bucket with a dipper in the school-yard well.¹²

Children would bring their own packed lunches and were served milk by the school. With the advent of electricity on the island to operate refrigerators, a school lunch program was expected in 1965. Until then, the milk program was maintained by the devoted efforts of community leader Prince Washington who daily would meet the milk delivery man at the Brookgreen landing and return to the school with the ice-packed carton of milk. On dark days kerosene lamps provided light. These lamps were used for the evening PTA meetings and as footlights for the annual Christmas play, a major event each

year. By 1965, the year before the school was to discontinue, it had an enrollment of 34 students from first to seventh grade, and at this time Mrs. Mattie Keith had replaced Augustus Herriott as the second teacher. Pride and legacy surrounded the school's place in the community, and its closure was disappointing to many residents like M. T. Tucker whose eight children attended the school. The school and its operation were the focus of activity on the island. Since closing, the school building houses all sorts of meetings and events and remains important to the community.¹³

Acquiring a high school education has historically proven the tenacity of Sandy Islanders. Early in the twentieth century, residents who wanted a high school education would live with friends and relatives nearby across the river and attend the mainland schools. Later, the school district provided a boat to take students to the mainland to catch a bus. In 1963 students were attending Howard High School in Georgetown which was 20 miles away. Students would meet no later than 7:15 a.m. at the landing and Prince Washington, who "seldom [had] to blow the boat whistle to speed tardy students," would pilot the 50 foot boat through its 10 to 15 minute trip across the Waccamaw River. Before electricity came to the island, students had returned to the island by 4 p.m. and would study by kerosene lamps in the evening. Since the island's elementary school closed in 1966 all of the school age residents take the school boat in the morning to the landing where buses then take them to school. After being served by various schools, today the island's students attend Waccamaw Elementary and Waccamaw High School. Waccamaw High School is the third to educate Sandy Islanders. Howard High School was the first followed by a choice of either Howard High School for vocational studies or Wynah High School for academic studies. Sandy Island students later went to Georgetown High School which was a consolidation of the two prior high schools.¹⁴

College & Employment Opportunities

The women's experience on Sandy Island reflects a particular emphasis on higher education. Since the 1940s women from the community have been going to college regularly, and in many families four generations of women have graduated from college. Men on the other hand have traditionally been oriented toward developing a skilled trade at which they have flourished. Angelis Washington explains that Sandy Island residents always wanted to make sure women were empowered with education. This heightened concern for females derived somewhat from the inequalities women everywhere encountered in the work force. For years in the Waccamaw Neck, women were paid less than half the median salary of men. While men from Sandy Island find good paying jobs as, for example, craftsmen, there has been more incentive for women to pursue college degrees. The preponderance of college educations among Sandy Island women increases their career choices, distinguishing them from the majority of their neighbors on the Waccamaw Neck. In her dissertation about language, Patricia Nichols found that:

Mainland and island women, however, have had strikingly different employment patterns and educational opportunities. Mainland women in the group studied have been confined to domestic service or field labor with a limited number of employers.

Nichols explains: "Land ownership patterns on the island provided a measure of economic security which enabled islanders to help educate their daughters." Therefore island women have been able to enter the professional work force and have had more choices for domestic jobs.¹⁵

Historically, the typical experience of the island's men had them living some part of their lives in nearby towns and sometimes even in far away cities like New York. For stretches of two weeks to periods of several years, the men would work in lumber mills, shipyards, factories, and aboard ships. Other men and women took jobs closer to the

island, working in the fields. Eventually most would return to take care of their parents, raise their children, or just rejoin the community they love and missed. Today some elements of these trends remain. Men, in particular, may leave for a while for employment opportunities, and then many will return later. Most of the college educated women, many of whom have become teachers, have moved to adjacent communities to be close to their schools. The men more often settle on the island with wives who were not raised on Sandy Island. The men, predominantly, work as skilled bricklayers, electricians, boat operators, carpenters, and construction workers, and for four or five decades both men and women have commuted over the river to the mainland for their jobs. Some men serve in the army and work for the sheriff's department. Such work requires weekly commuting or taking up residence off the island. But regardless of the male or female experience, if one happens to live off the island in the general vicinity they are still a part of the community on Sandy Island and partake in its important weekend activities, particularly church services.¹⁶

Distinct Economic & Agricultural Practices

Like anywhere else, Sandy Island's economy has evolved. Historically it was based on rice which was not only sold but widely used for barter. In 1937 for example the WPA's guide to South Carolina describes how Sandy Islanders would trade their rice for potatoes and other groceries at the landing on the mainland. WPA employee and Sandy Island neighbor Genevieve Wilcox Chandler would trade shotgun shells for the Sandy Island rice: island rice planters used the shells to drive off the pesky rice birds. By 1937 a change in their economy could already be seen. Chandler wrote, "Sandy Islanders paddle across the river in early morning and late afternoon in homemade boats, going to and from their work at Brookgreen Gardens." This is a good example of a transition from a farming based economy contained on the island to a labor based economy on the mainland. It was during these transition years, according to Patricia Nichols' dissertation, that one older

permanent island resident supervised the rice cultivation as it was no longer the only economic means for residents.¹⁷

As mentioned before it was the wide use of motor boats after World War II, bringing easy access to grocery stores, that proved the fatal blow to Sandy Island's rice cultivation. Diverse forms of agriculture did remain a part of the island until as recently as the 1970s. The face of Sandy Island agriculture has always been distinct. Genevieve Peterkin vividly remembers the fences on Sandy Island that she saw in her youth in the 1930s. Wood fences were slatted vertically and enclosed houses, not the animals. The animals had free reign on the island. The cows, hogs, and chickens did not wander too far because they knew where to get fed. Small vegetable gardens were kept by most families within their fences next to their houses and away from the animals. This style of maintaining their livestock is an excellent, historic example of how communal and interdependent the Sandy Island community is. In 1937 Laban, Genevieve Chandler's Sandy Island host, pointed out a pasture where a bull, cows, oxen, and hogs were all cohabiting. When a hog was butchered, everyone shared and there was not a concern over ownership. The hogs and chickens raised on the island provided for the community into the 1960s, while the rest of their food came from the mainland. In 1978 a newspaper article described M. T. Tucker, 66 years of age then, as still cultivating his vegetable garden and raising hogs and chickens. Wild cows, remnants of the free range patterns, could be seen in isolated pockets in the 1970s. Non-resident hunters ultimately eliminated the last of these animals in the 1970s.¹⁸

From mid-January to mid-March the entire Waccamaw Neck enjoys the shad season as the river teems with these fish swimming up river to spawn. This fresh water experience certainly distinguishes Sandy Island from other South Carolina Sea Island communities. Sandy Island men in particular welcome the season and are occasionally joined by some of the women as they "drift" in small boats with bow nets. "Hanging shad net" is an old tradition for island fishermen and their Waccamaw Neck neighbors. In 1888,

when most of the fish shipped to the north from Georgetown County were shad, there was a law that permitted fishermen to shad from Tuesday morning to Thursday evening only, giving the fish free access the rest of the week.¹⁹

Transportation

Travel on Sandy Island has been characterized by three means: foot, oxen, and four wheel drives. A heavy rain has always facilitated island travel as it packs down the loose sand of the island's roads. Ox-drawn carts have historically played the most significant role in transportation and were still used into the early 1960s for hauling firewood, lumber, tin roofing and other supplies. Besides towing, oxen provided the power to plow the rice fields. The ox-carts were also the first means by which the island's seniors traveled to church on Sundays. In a brief piece about Sandy Island, Genevieve Chandler implied traveling by ox-carts reflected one's affluence. By the 1950s, automobiles came to Sandy Island as then "mayor" Prince Washington bought a four-wheel-drive jeep and had it barged to the island where it helped the entire community. Today mostly four-wheel-drive trucks are used on the island for towing supplies and transportation to church and the Mount Arena boat landing. Many residents own two cars: a vehicle on the island that can stay out of trouble on the unpaved roads of the island and another that they leave on the mainland.²⁰

Most Sandy Island families own a small motor boat that is used by individuals or small groups for the four to five minute trip over the Waccamaw River to the landing at the end of a long canal running alongside Brookgreen Garden. The trip can be slowed by low tide: "Islanders accept such inconveniences as city dwellers accept traffic and late night sirens," wrote Elizabeth Leland in her piece about Sandy Island. Large group or mass transportation over the river has been provided only by the school boat, but extensive efforts have been made by residents to improve mass cross-river transportation. Before the

school boat was provided, high school students crossed the river in small boats and walked several miles to the nearest bus stop. In 1941 the Georgetown County Board of Education provided a boat giving students easier access to their high school. In 1968 this boat was replaced with a \$10,500, 85 horsepower boat that consumes only \$50 to \$60 dollars of gas every three months and requires little maintenance. According to the State Department of Highway and Public Transportation, Sandy Island is the only place in the state where a boat is used for public transportation. The school boat also is used for emergencies. It carries the sick and injured and even pregnant women who must go to the hospital. Some midwives still practiced their trade on Sandy Island in the early 1960s. The boat is also a hearse that carries bodies of the deceased to mainland mortuaries in accordance with state law. Then most bodies return to the island for funeral and burial.²¹

The original school boat pilot was Prince Washington. When he gave up his pilotship the community named the boat after their leader, and it still bears the name Prince Washington today. Under Washington's tutelage T. T. Tucker learned the river and how to handle the boat; he became Prince Washington's replacement. In the early 1980s Tucker's day was described as beginning before 6:00 a.m. when he would drive his jeep to pick up children at the far end of the island and bring them to the boat. While the bus boat provides large scale transportation it has limitations. For example islanders must employ a local barge service to bring vehicles to the island.²²

Electricity

Before electricity came to Sandy Island in 1965, there were some special ways of doing things by the community. For example, irons were heated by open fires and then run over pine needles or sprays of pine and cedar to keep clothes pressed. "Scorched needles made a wonderful smell" remembers Sandy Island friend Genevieve Peterkin. To clean them, clothes were boiled in large wash pots, and later gasoline powered washing machines were sometimes used. For light, kerosene lamps were used, and for heating and cooking wood stoves were being replaced by gas powered appliances by the late 1950s. Large three-legged iron pots were used to cook rice, fish, and game, a "typical sandy Island supper." The greatest need was always for refrigerators and freezers--without them, meat could only be kept two days without spoiling. From 1958-1965, bottled gas was floated over the river and used for refrigerators and stoves. Before this, items like butter were kept cool in wells, which supplied all the island's water and were worked by hand-operated water pumps. Sewing machines were pedal powered, and batteries operated radios and an occasional television. In the 1930s, Archer M. Huntington provided outdoor bathroom facilities when he donated the school.²³

While electricity was not linked to Sandy Island until 1965, the community enjoyed some electric-powered amenities before then. New Bethel Baptist Church was hooked to a Delco generator in the 1950s that provided heat and light during services and church events. Since 1940 the Sandy Island community tried to get electric lines run to the island. Prince Washington spearheaded an active ten year struggle that had him travel to Columbia and speak personally with then South Carolina governor James F. Byrnes. After enlisting the support of their state senator, the efforts of Washington and his fellow residents were finally realized when Senator C.C. Grimes Jr. requested the directors of Santee Cooper Public Service Authority to extend electric service to Sandy Island. The project cost \$35,000 as submarine lines were run across Waccamaw River and a five-mile passage was

clipped out of the island's scrub-oak thickets for the stretch of power lines. When Prince Washington threw the ceremonial switch--a celebratory 26 foot fiberglass pole--to inaugurate electricity on Sandy Island authorities were present but not many island residents because adults were at work and the students were in school. But Washington spoke eloquently the words shared by his friends and neighbors: "This is the greatest day in the history of Sandy Island...Electricity won't bring new life, but it will renew life."²⁴

Another convenience enabled by the dawning of electricity on Sandy Island was an improved boat landing on the mainland--the one that is currently used. A new landing was necessary to allow the electric cables to run across the river and connect the island with the mainland, and it was provided in 1960 by Brookgreen Gardens which owns this land on the Waccamaw Neck side. By 1972, telephone service was installed on Sandy Island bringing obvious benefits for the residents.²⁵

Folk Culture

Historically the Sandy Island community has been replete with a rich folk culture. The close-knit nature of the Sandy Island community has kept many folk ways intact; mostly they are subtle, yet permanent, parts of daily life on the island. Similarities between Sandy Island residents and other African Americans of the South Carolina Lowcountry have, however, perhaps been exaggerated over the years. Patricia Nichols in her study of language patterns--specifically the Gullah language spoken in many African American communities of the South Carolina Lowcountry--studied three African American groups in the Waccamaw Neck area: 1) the educated elite of the mainland with land ownership for several generations since the Civil War, the leaders in church, school, and government; 2) the majority of the mainland population which is poorly educated, landless, and little traveled; and 3) the final group were the Sandy Islanders who occupied a higher social and economic status than the mainland majority. Nichols found that Sandy Island residents

displayed less use of creole language than did the majority population. Her study set up a direct correlation with language use and level of education and mobility. She explained that the limited use of Gullah language on Sandy Island, especially among the college educated women, was largely due to the high levels of education and mobility traditionally displayed in the community.²⁶

In 1985 several South Carolina museums including Georgetown's Rice Museum initiated a project to record quilters' works of South Carolina. Gatherings were held in certain locations, and in Pawley's Island the skill of Sandy Island quilters was noted by many participants. "The ladies over on Sandy Island are good on quilts," said Virginia Grate of Pawley's Island. Visiting Sandy Island with her grandmother while growing up, Grate says she learned quilting by watching the Sandy Island women. During Genevieve Wilcox Chandler's 1937 visit to Sandy Island she recorded seeing about 12 patchwork quilts that had been laundered and were spread drying in the summer sun. Chandler noted that alongside the drying quilts were "the opened up mattresses of stripped corn shuck and fresh rice-straw [that] roast in the germ destroying heat of the July sun."²⁷

Music is highly valued on Sandy Island. It is a very important part of the Sunday Church services. Congregational singing in church is often accompanied by dance movements and clapping. Spirituals, marked by their improvisational lyrics, were once the musical order in Sandy Island's church services. Today, gospels with set lyrics are more popularly sung. Parties, too, are witness to the importance of music in the community as there is often dancing. Oral history is highly valued as seniors, fulfilling their inherited responsibility, teach and entertain, and the young store up these treasures to someday share themselves. Storytelling is also important and males of all ages mostly engage in this skill. Some of these stories are about plat-eyes, spirits that take the form of an animal and try to get you lost in a swamp; and hags: female-type spirits that try to climb on top of you in your sleep and suck the wind out of your chest. Such tales provide a cultural link in the African American experience throughout the lowcountry of South Carolina and Georgia.²⁸

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Chapter Three: Island Rice

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8. Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7.
9. Georgetown County Courthouse Probate Office, Phillip Washington's will, record # 460; Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7; *Ibid*, p. 17; *Ibid.*, p. 18.
10. Interview with Rebecca Carr, Peter Carr, and Genevieve Peterkin, July 1994; Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7.

11. *Ibid*, p. 5; Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 24; interview with Rebecca Carr, Peter Carr, and Genevieve Peterkin, July 1994; Walter B. Edgar, South Carolina: the WPA Guide to the Palmetto State (Columbia, SC: USC Press, 1988), p. 276.
12. Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 24; Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 5; interview Rebecca and Peter Carr, July 1994.

Chapter Four: Phillip Washington

1. Dennis T. Lawson, No Heir To Take Its Place (Georgetown, SC: Rice Museum, 1972), p. 13; Charles Joyner, *op. cit.*, p. 66; *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.
2. Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 16; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 276; Elizabeth W. Allston Pringle, Chronicles of Chicora Wood (Cherokee Publishing Company, 1976), pp. 9-10; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 255n.; J.H. Easterby, South Carolina Rice Planters As Revealed in the Papers of Robert F.W. Allston (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1945), pp. 22-23.
3. *Ibid*; James Henry Rice Jr., The Aftermath of Glory (Charleston, SC: Evans and Cogswell Company, 1935), p. 129.
4. Elizabeth W. Allston Pringle, Chronicles of Chicora Wood (Cherokee Publishing Company, 1976), pp. 9-10; Charles Joyner, Down By The Riverside (Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1984), pp. 31-32; James Henry Rice Jr., The Aftermath of Glory (Charleston, SC: Evans and Cogswell Company, 1935), p. 129; Thomas Petigru died 6 March 1857 according to George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 255; Elizabeth W. Allston Pringle, *op. cit.*, p. 10; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 329; J.H. Easterby, *op. cit.*, p. 456.
5. George Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 416-417; Belinda Hurmence, "Ben Horry age 87, Interviewed by Genevieve Wilcox Chandler in Murrell's Inlet, SC, August 1937," Before Freedom When I Can Just Remember (Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 1992), p. 23; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 419-420.
6. Eric Foner, A Short History of Reconstruction (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers: 1990), p. 32; *Ibid*, p. 46; *Ibid*, pp. 73-74; *Ibid*, pp. 23-24; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 423.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 423; Eric Foner, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
8. George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 424; *Ibid*, p. 422; *Ibid*, p. 428; *Ibid*, p. 434.
9. *Ibid*, pp. 431-432; Eric Foner, *op. cit.*, p. 46; *Ibid*.
10. George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 452; *Ibid*, p. 436; *Ibid*, p. 437.
11. Eric Foner, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p.460; *Ibid*, p. 446; also interview with Angelis Washington that revealed the tradition of how land first purchased by Reverend Phillip Washington; see also deeds from Georgetown

- County Courthouse Clerk of Courts Office that document the major post Civil War purchases of Sandy Island by African Americans: Phillip Washington Deed Book F pp. 420-421 and Deed Book H p. 122; and James Pyatt Deed Book P p. 411 and Deed Book Q p. 602 (These were direct purchases from prior owners who came from prominent rice cultivating families of the Waccamaw Neck and not a government agency.); Charles Joyner, *op. cit.*, p. 32. (The evidence discredits recent explanations of Sandy Island's community beginning with a purchase of land by Phillip Washington from his former owner Captain Thomas Petigru or that Washington's propriety began when the Civil War closed.)
12. Interview with Dr. Charles Joyner, February 1994; interview with Angelis Washington, February 1994; Charles Joyner, *op. cit.*, p. 32; Melissa Huff, "Sandy Island," The Sun News, 17 February 1991: this article states that today's community was started when Phillip Washington purchased land from his former owner, and this is inaccurate.
 13. 1870 Census Records, Waccamaw Township #167, Phillip Washington and household, Georgetown County Library; Charles Joyner, *op. cit.*, p. 31; 1870 Census Records; J.H. Easterby, *op. cit.*, p. 456; *Ibid*, p. 148. The assertion that Minder Washington was Phillip Washington's wife--most likely his second wife--contradicts Joyner who believes her to be Phillip Washington's daughter. This work finds Minder to be Phillip Washington's wife based on J.H. Easterby's book that mentions a woman Nancy as Phillip's wife and mother of his children; 1870 Census Record Georgetown County, Waccamaw District, "Minder" is listed as a laborer in Phillip Washington's household, age 40 or 46; 1880 Census Record Georgetown County, Waccamaw District, "Minda" is listed as Phillip Washington's wife, age 60 (ages were commonly recorded inaccurately according to historian Theodore Rosengarten therefore explaining the discrepancy between Minder Washington's age at different stages); and Phillip Washington's will--Georgetown County Courthouse Probate Office, Record #460--in which Phillip Washington speaks of his wife "Mrs. M. Washington."
 14. Phillip Washington Georgetown County Tax Records 1870, 1871, 1872, 1874, Georgetown County Courthouse Office of the Treasurer (The values provided here are government assessed, and according to today's assessor's office they had a higher retail value.); Phillip Washington's will, Georgetown County Courthouse Probate Office Record #460.
 15. Phillip Washington Georgetown County Tax Records 1875, 1876 and 1877 (p. 83).
 16. Phillip Washington Georgetown County Tax Records Office of the Treasurer, 1877; interviews with Mabel Callison, June and July 1994; mail correspondence with Mabel Callison: Mabel Callison owns 150 years of her home's deeds; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 324-355, *Ibid*, p. 368; *Ibid*, p. 468; *Ibid*, p. 470; *Ibid*, pp. 528-529.
 17. Interview with Mabel Callison, June 1994.
 18. Georgetown County Courthouse Clerk of Courts Office Deed Book F p. 157; interview with Mabel Callison, June 1994; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 463-466; P.E. Braswell Georgetown County Tax Records Office of the Treasurer, City of Georgetown District 1874, 1875, 1877, 1878.

19. George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 463; John Hammond Moore, South Carolina in the 1880s: A Gazetteer (Orangeburg, SC: Sandlapper Publishing, Inc.), p. 128; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 460.
20. Interview with Theodore Rosengarten, July 1994.
21. Georgetown County Courthouse Clerk of Courts Office Deed Book F p. 420.
22. George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 446; Phillip Washington Tax Records Waccamaw District Georgetown County Courthouse Office of the Treasurer; 1880 Georgetown Census Record, Georgetown County Library.
23. 1880 Agricultural Census Georgetown County, College of Charleston Agricultural Files; Charles Joyner, *op. cit.*, p. 20; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 453; *Ibid*, p. 253.
24. Georgetown County Courthouse Clerk of Courts Office Deed Book H pp. 122-123; George Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 446; Georgetown County Courthouse Probate Office Phillip Washington's will Record #460 (lists abundant planting apparati); 1880 Georgetown Census Records Waccamaw District, Georgetown County Library.
25. Georgetown County Courthouse Clerk of Court Office Deed Book H p. 122; Phillip Washington Tax Records Waccamaw District 1883, Georgetown County Office of the Treasurer; Tax Assessors Office Georgetown County Courthouse; Phillip Washington Tax Records Waccamaw District 1884, Georgetown County Courthouse Office of the Treasurer.
26. Interview with Theodore Rosengarten, July 1994; Eric Foner, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.
27. Phillip Washington's will Record #460 and Eliza S. Heriot's will Record #203, Georgetown County Courthouse Probate Office.
28. Interview with Theodore Rosengarten, July 1994.

Chapter Five: The Legacy of Sandy Island

1. Georgetown County Courthouse Clerk of Courts Office Deed Book Q p. 602, Deed Book P p. 411; James Pyatt's will, Georgetown County Courthouse Probate Office Record #1615; Georgetown County Clerk of Courts Office Deed Book U p. 280.
2. Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 28; interview with Angelis Washington, April 1994; interview with Charles Joyner, February 1994; "Remote Sandy Island Emerging From Seclusion," Georgetown Times, 9 March 1972; Pat Nichols, "Sandy Island Patriarch: A Fine Man," Georgetown Times, 6 February 1975.
3. Coy Bayne, "Harmony Rules Sandy Island," The State, 1971; Pat Nichols, *op. cit.*; Robert D. Cathcart, *op. cit.*; Mike Compton, *op. cit.*; Toni Childs, *op. cit.*

4. Pat Nichols, *op. cit.*; "Remote Sandy Island Emerging From Seclusion," Georgetown Times, 9 March 1972.
5. Pat Nichols, *op. cit.*; interview with Rebecca Carr, July 1994; Robert D. Cathcart, *op. cit.*; Mike Compton, *op. cit.*; Prince Washington's will Record #5661 Georgetown County Courthouse Probate Office.
6. Interview with Dr. Charles Joyner, February 1994; Mike Compton, *op. cit.*; interview with Angelis Washington, February 1994; Coy Bayne, *op. cit.*; Mike Compton, *op. cit.*; Jim Parker, *op. cit.*; Jeff Miller, *op. cit.*; interview with Genevieve Peterkin, March 1994; interview with Angelis Washington, February 1994.
7. Interviews with Genevieve Peterkin, April, June, and July 1994.
8. Interview with Genevieve Peterkin, April 1994; Robert D. Cathcart, *op. cit.*; interview with Rebecca and Peter Carr, July 1994; interview with Angelis Washington, July 1994; Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
9. Pat Nichols, *op. cit.*; Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 28; "Fabled Island To Get Electricity," Georgetown Times, 13 August 1964; Toni Child, *op. cit.*; Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 19; interview with Angelis Washington, February 1994; "There's Change A-Foot," *op. cit.*; Jeff Miller, *op. cit.*
10. Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 28; interview with Rebecca Carr, July 1994; interview with Angelis Washington, July 1994
11. Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 25; interview with Rebecca Carr, July 1994; Dennis T. Lawson, No Heir To Take Its Place (Georgetown, SC: Rice Museum, 1972), p. 28.
12. Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 25; interview with Angelis Washington, July 1994; Toni Child, *op. cit.*
13. Toni Childs, *op. cit.*; "There's Change A-Foot," *op. cit.*; Robert D. Cathcart, *op. cit.*; Mike Compton, *op. cit.*
14. Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Toni Childs, *op. cit.*; Jim Parker, *op. cit.*; "There's Change A-Foot," *op. cit.*; interview with Angelis Washington, May 1994.
15. Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-123; *Ibid*, p. 25; *Ibid*, p. 26; *Ibid.*, p. 123.
16. *Ibid*, p. 24; *Ibid*, p. 25; *Ibid*, p. 29; Interview with Isaac Pyatt, Angelis Washington, Charles Pyatt, and Sam Pyatt, siblings all born and raised on Sandy Island--Charles and Sam reside on Sandy Island today--May 1994.
17. Walter B. Edgar, South Carolina: The WPA Guide to the Palmetto State (Columbia, SC: USC Press, 1988), p. 388; *Ibid*, p. 276; interview with Genevieve Peterkin, June 1994; Patricia Causey Nichol, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
18. Interview with Genevieve Peterkin, April 1994; Coy Bayne, *op. cit.*; Toni Child, *op. cit.*; Mike Compton, *op. cit.*; "There's Change A-Foot," *op. cit.*; Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

19. "There's Change A-Foot," *op. cit.*; John Hammond Moore, South Carolina in the 1880s: A Gazetteer (Orangeburg, SC: Sandlapper Publishing, Inc.), p. 131; interview with Genevieve Peterkin, April 1994.
20. Jim Parker, *op. cit.*; Toni Child, *op. cit.*; Jeff Miller, *op. cit.*; Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 22; *Ibid*, p. 24.
21. Toni Child, *op. cit.*; Elizabeth Leland, "A Place Apart," Vanishing Coast; Jeff Miller, *op. cit.*; Lynne Langley, "A Bridge to Change," *op. cit.*; Jim Parker, *op. cit.*
22. Jeff Miller, *op. cit.*; Jim Parker, *op. cit.*
23. Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, pp.14-15; interview with Genevieve Peterkin April 1994; "There's Change A-Foot," *op. cit.*; Toni Child, *op. cit.*; Robert D. Cathcart, *op. cit.*
24. Toni Child, *op. cit.*; Robert D. Cathcart, *op. cit.*; Robert D. Cathcart, "Islanders Leave Dark Ages As Prince Flips Switch," The State, 1965; Pat Nichols, *op. cit.*; "Fabled Island To Get Electricity," Georgetown Times, 13 August 1964; "There's Change A-Foot," *op. cit.*
25. Pat Nichols, *op. cit.*; Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
26. *Ibid*, p. 30; *Ibid*, p. 121; *Ibid*, p. 126
27. "Folk Art Project Invites Quilters to Register Work," News and Courier, 18 July 1985; Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 13
28. Patricia Causey Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 28; Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 27; interview with Genevieve Peterkin, April 1994; see also "Hags" and "Plateyes" in the indexes of Drums and Shadows (Brown Thrasher editor; Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986.) and Down By The Riverside.
29. Interview with Rebecca and Peter Carr, July 1994; interview with Genevieve Peterkin, March 1994; Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 26; Robert Farris Thompson, Flash of the Spirit (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1983), p. 129; interview with Genevieve Peterkin, April 1994.
30. Genevieve Wilcox Chandler, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11; interview with Genevieve Peterkin, June 1994; Dr. Robert Farris Thompson lecture at Yale University, Spring 1992; Robert Farris Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 12; *Ibid*, p. 144.

Conclusion

1. Interview with Dr. John Rashford, June 1994.

Life on Sandy Island: 1937
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Wouten-Moulton Collection
Photographs Commissioned by the 1937 WPA Writer's Project
Identified as Sandy Island by Genevieve Peterkin with
Consultation from Lifetime Residents of Sandy Island
Provided By Genevieve Wilcox Chandler



AGRA MUSEUM, INDIA

S

1-11-19

I. Breaking Ground for Rice. Note the ox-drawn plows of Sandy Island used in the rice fields.



AGRA MUSEUM, INDIA

S

1-11-19

II. Breaking Ground for Rice. Flooding the fields three times was necessary for rice cultivation. Note the proximity of waterways



AREA MUSEUM LITH

187-3

III. Breaking ground for rice.



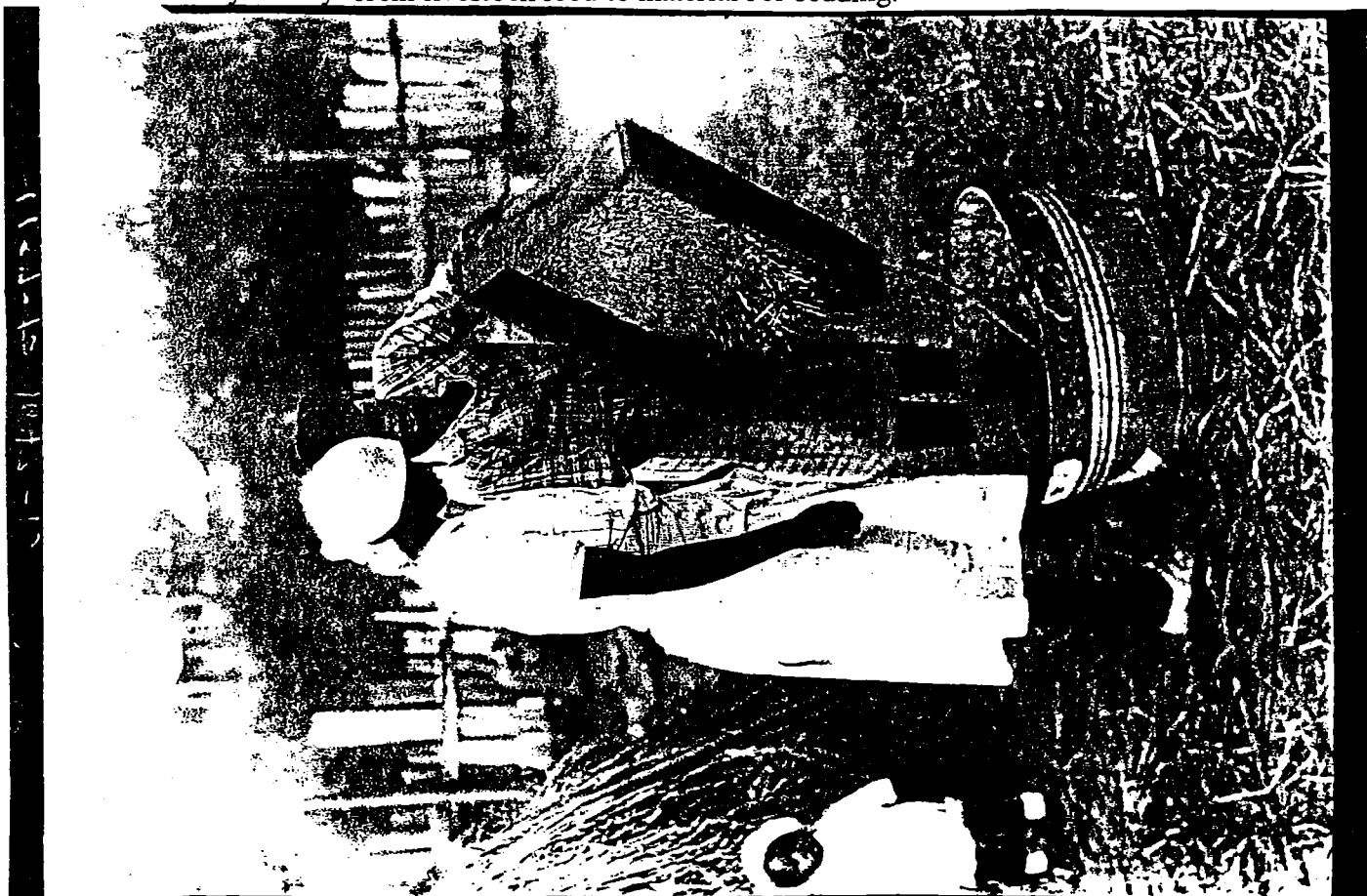
AREA MUSEUM LITH

187-5

IV. Breaking ground for rice. This angle provides a good view of a rice field canal and the use of oxen.



VII. Flailing rice--beating it to get heads of seeds off stalks. In the process of refining the rice this was the first stage. The refuse was used in a variety of ways from livestock feed to material for bedding.



VIII. Winnowing rice with a sifter. This allows the seeds to be separated from the refuse after flailing the raw stalks from the harvest. Note the vertically slatted fences in the background that were characteristic of Sandy Island.



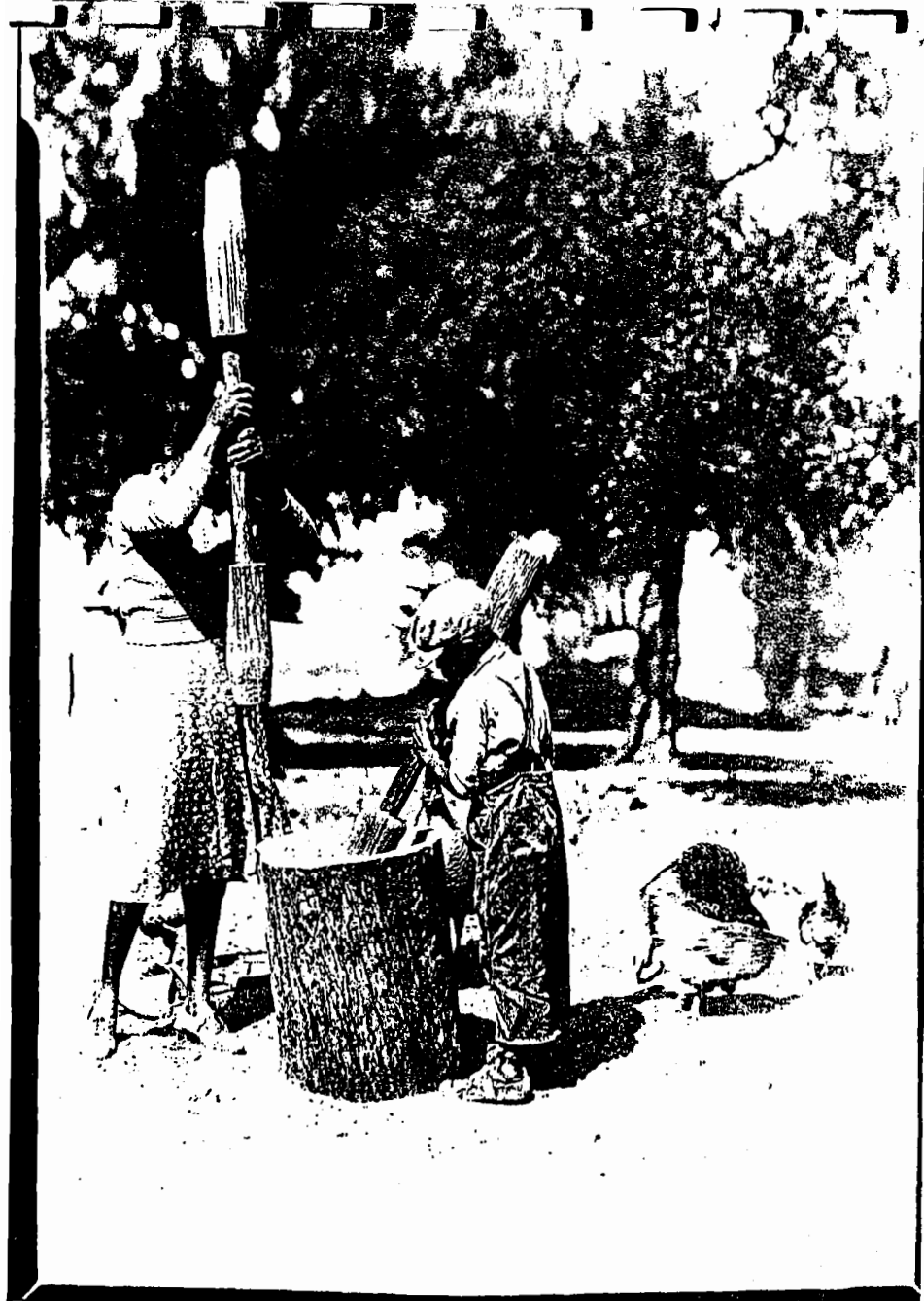
V. Sandy Island children sit next to a stack of gathered rice waiting to be winnowed and husked. After harvest, piles of rice like these dotted the property of the permanent community or were placed in holds.



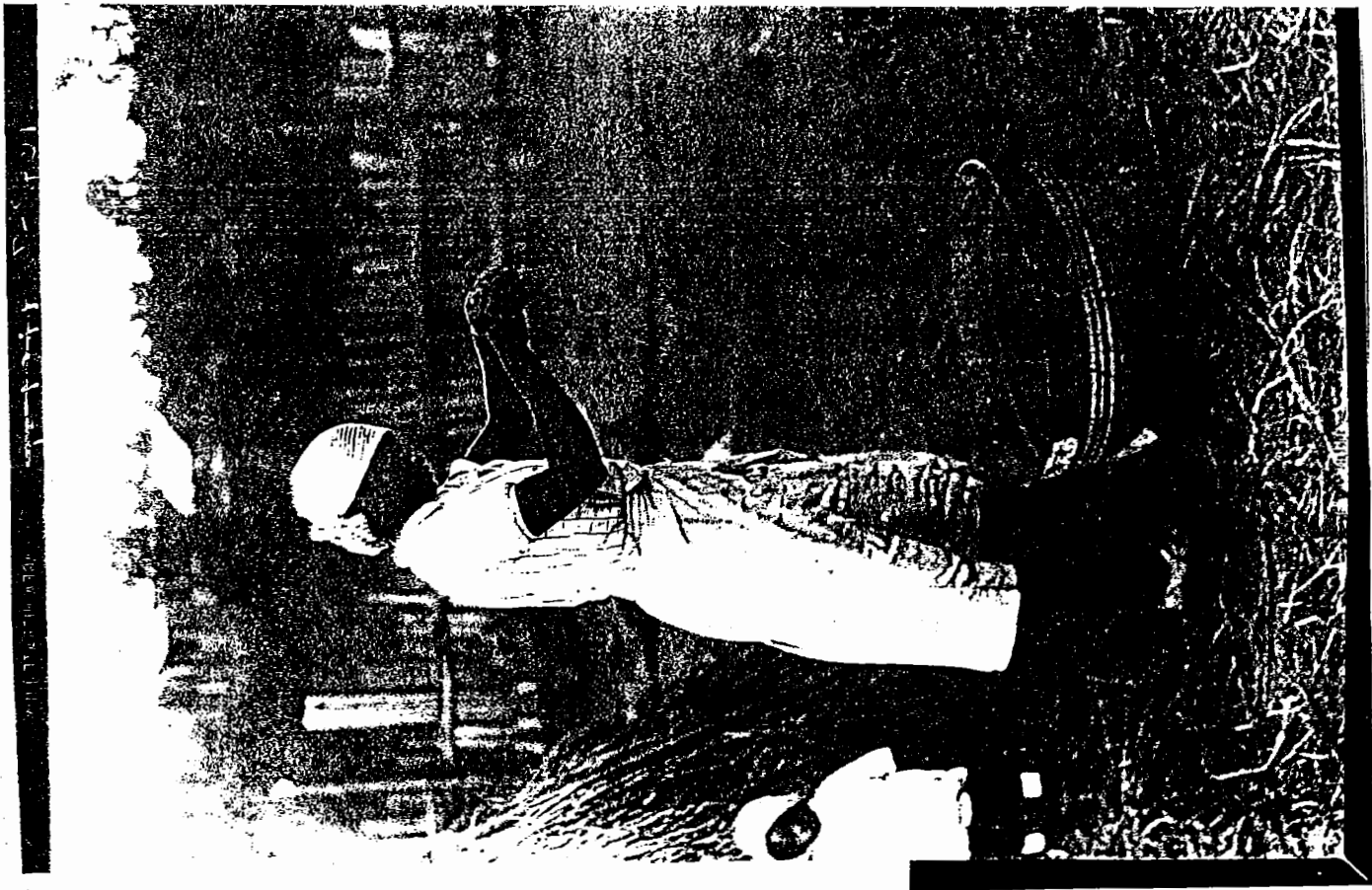
VI. Two sons of Sandy Island sit against stack of gathered rice waiting to be winnowed and husked



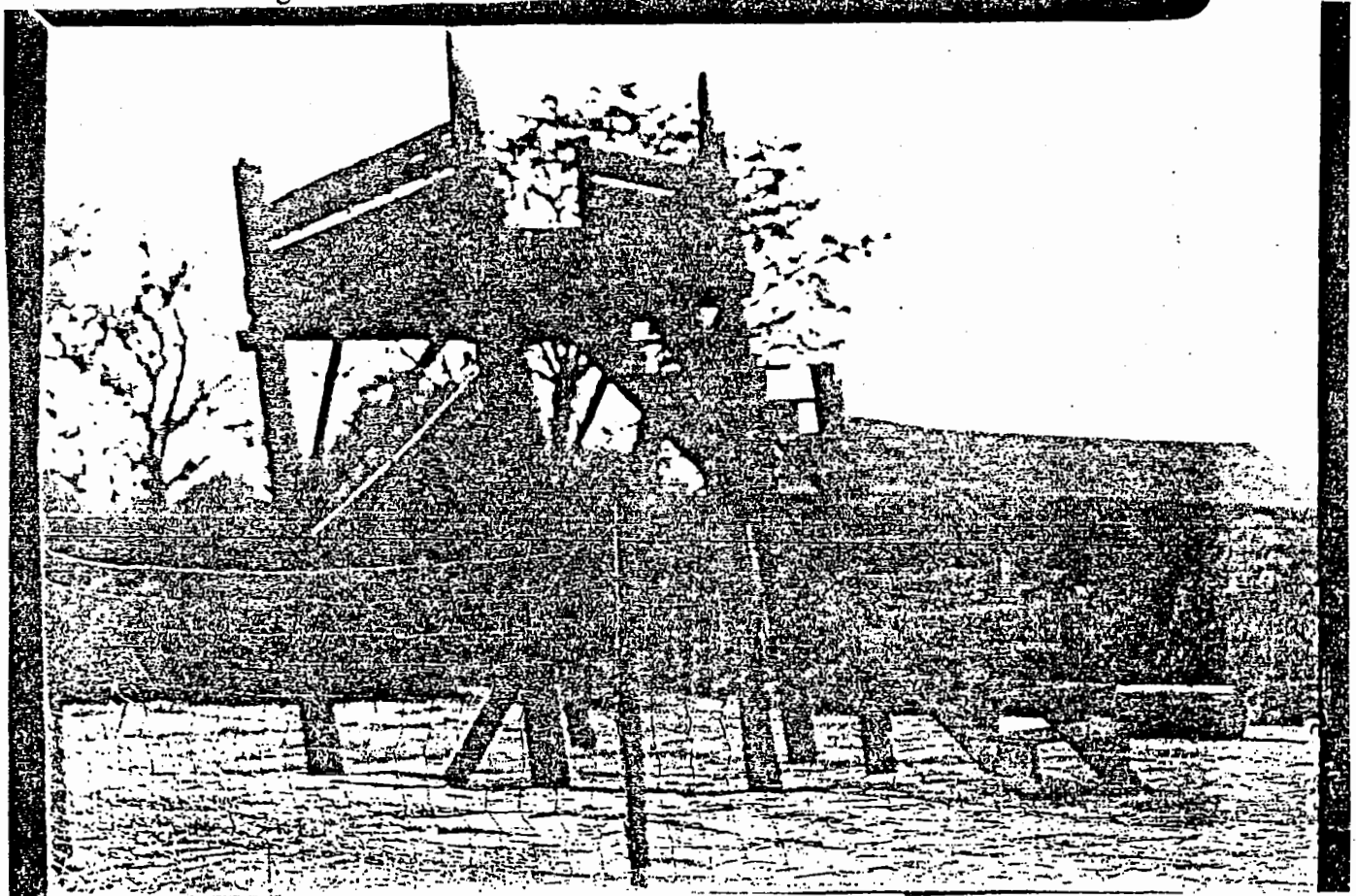
XI. Once separated the seeds were placed in a mortar, and the husks were pounded off leaving polished, white rice.



XII. Two Sandy Islanders pound rice in a mortar with pestles.



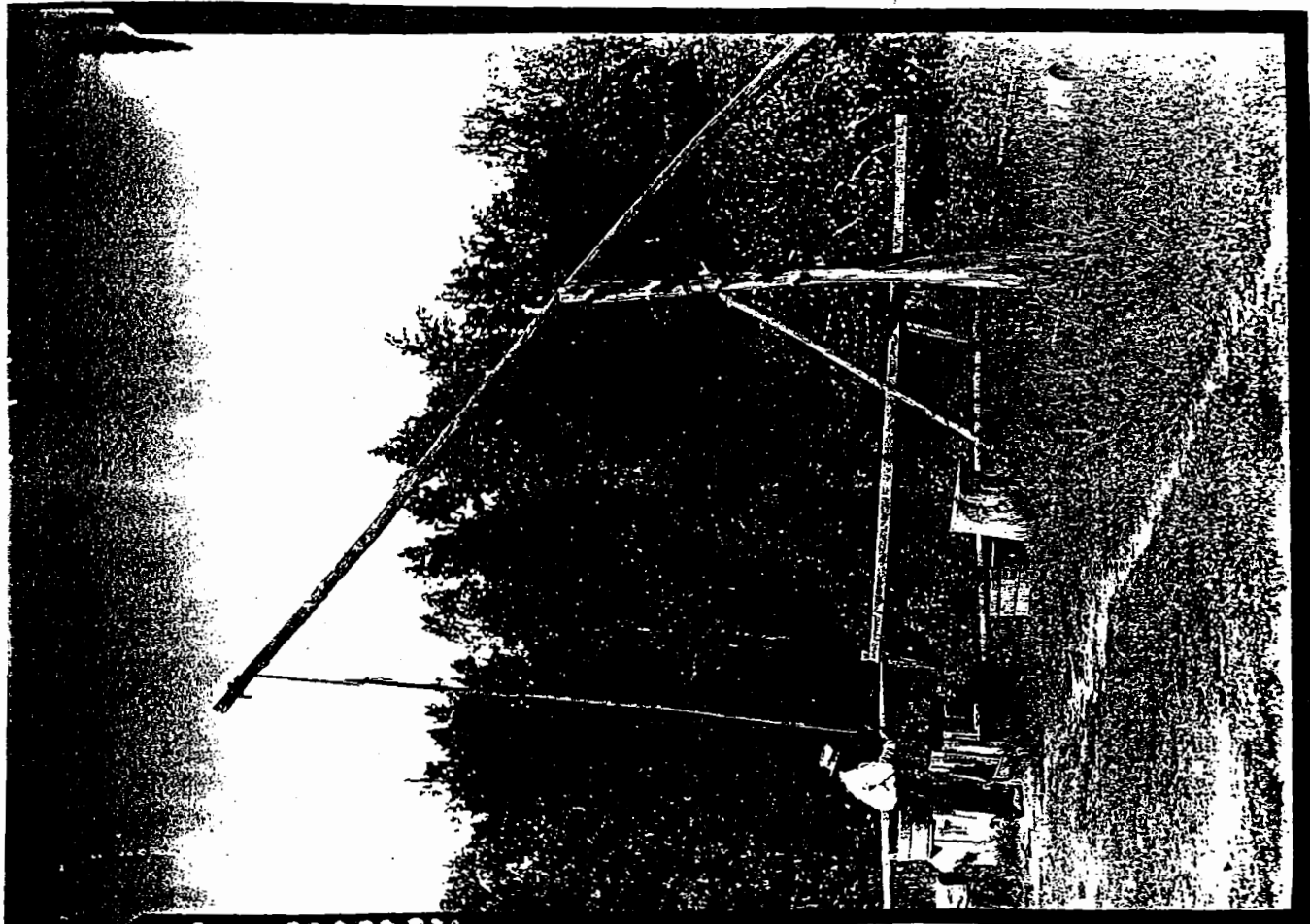
IX. Winnowing rice. This is another style of winnowing rice that lets the wind separate the refuse as the heavier seeds fall into the bucket or basket straight down.



X. Tower used for winnowing rice. It is doubtful that this photograph was taken on Sandy Island, but towers like this one were used on Sandy Island. Another method of winnowing rice, using a tower simply handled a larger volume of rice.



XV. Joe Heyward of Plantersville arriving to work at Brookgreen displays the routine of rowing from across the river to work practiced by so many from Sandy Island until the late 1940s.



XVI. Well sweep at Brookgreen across the Waccamaw River. Similar well said to have been in use at Ruinsville on Sandy Island.

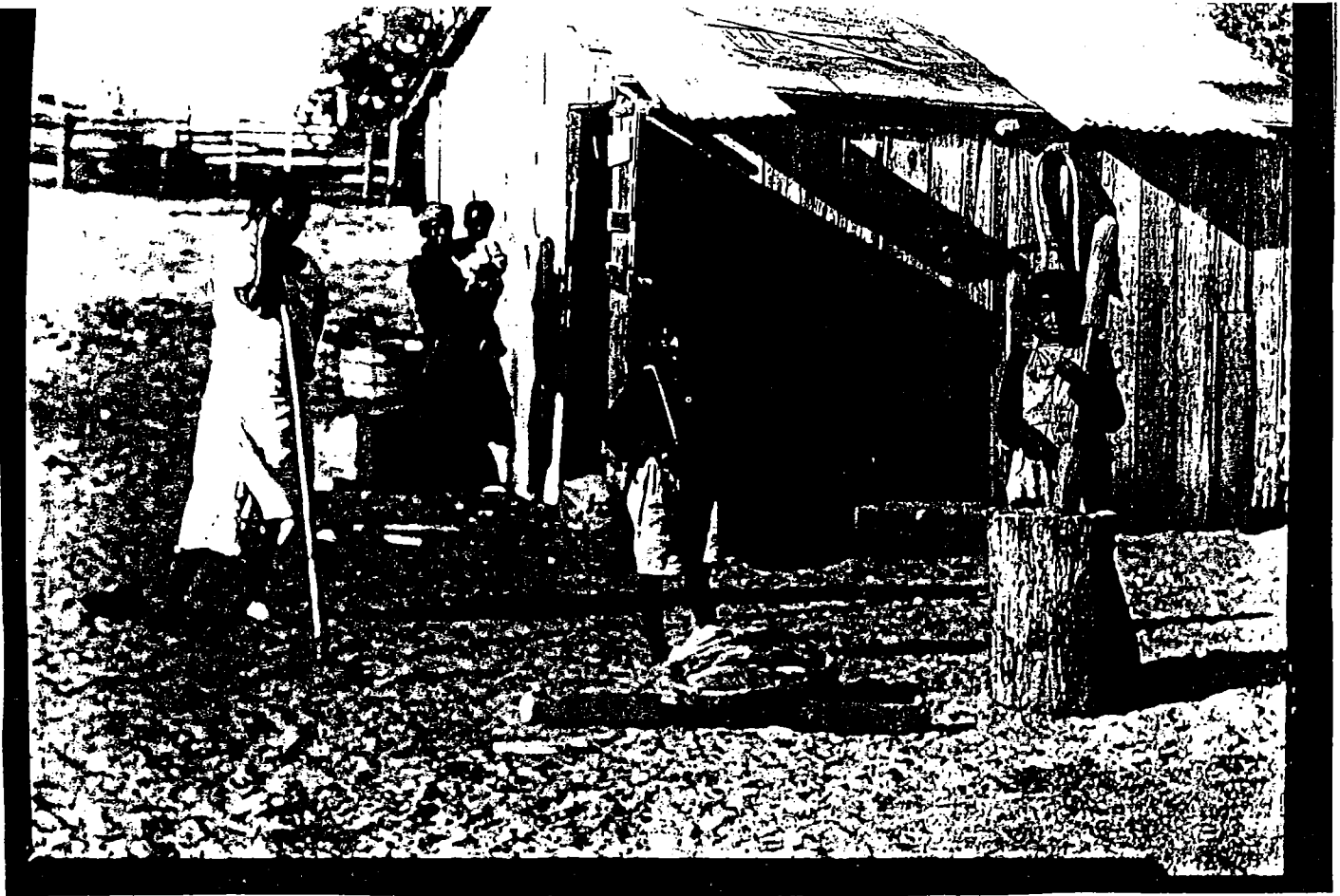


XIII. Rice pestle and mortar. This picture was probably staged to make an illustrative photograph. Raw stalks of rice were not placed in mortars. They were flailed first, and then the extracted seeds were later placed in the mortars.



XIV. An apparently staged photograph showing the use of the mortar and pestle. Many Sandy Islanders identify the woman on the right as very familiar.





XIX. Bet Robinson in the background with her child. Some have identified the woman on the left holding the tool as Bet Robinson's mother.



XX. Woman at a wash pot boiling clothes clean before electricity.



XVII. Irvin Weathers at his home on Sandy Island sitting on an ox cart.



XVIII. Bet Robinson with her child.



XXIII. This boy was identified by some as possibly being James Tucker in his youth.



XXIV. Woman and children on Sandy Island showing vertically slatted fence and rice sacks.



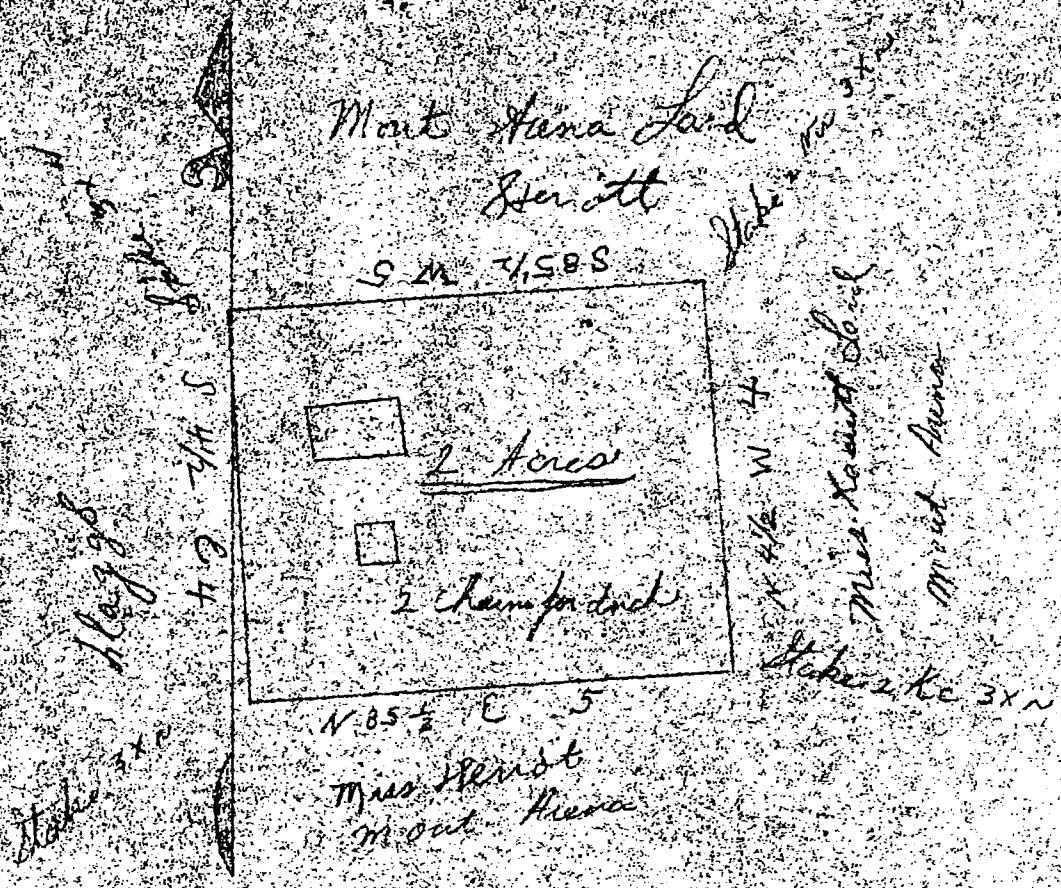
XXI. Woman at a wash pot next to her basket of laundry.



XXII. Identified by some as Bet Robinson's mother. Note the vertically slatted fences in the background.

The plat accompanying the deed of Reverend Phillip Washington's first purchase on Sandy Island in 1880. These two acres were for New Bethel Church and remain central to Sandy Island's permanent community today. (Provided by Powell Surveyors of Georgetown,

DEED BOOK
 F-421,
 C. Ferris
 March 1880

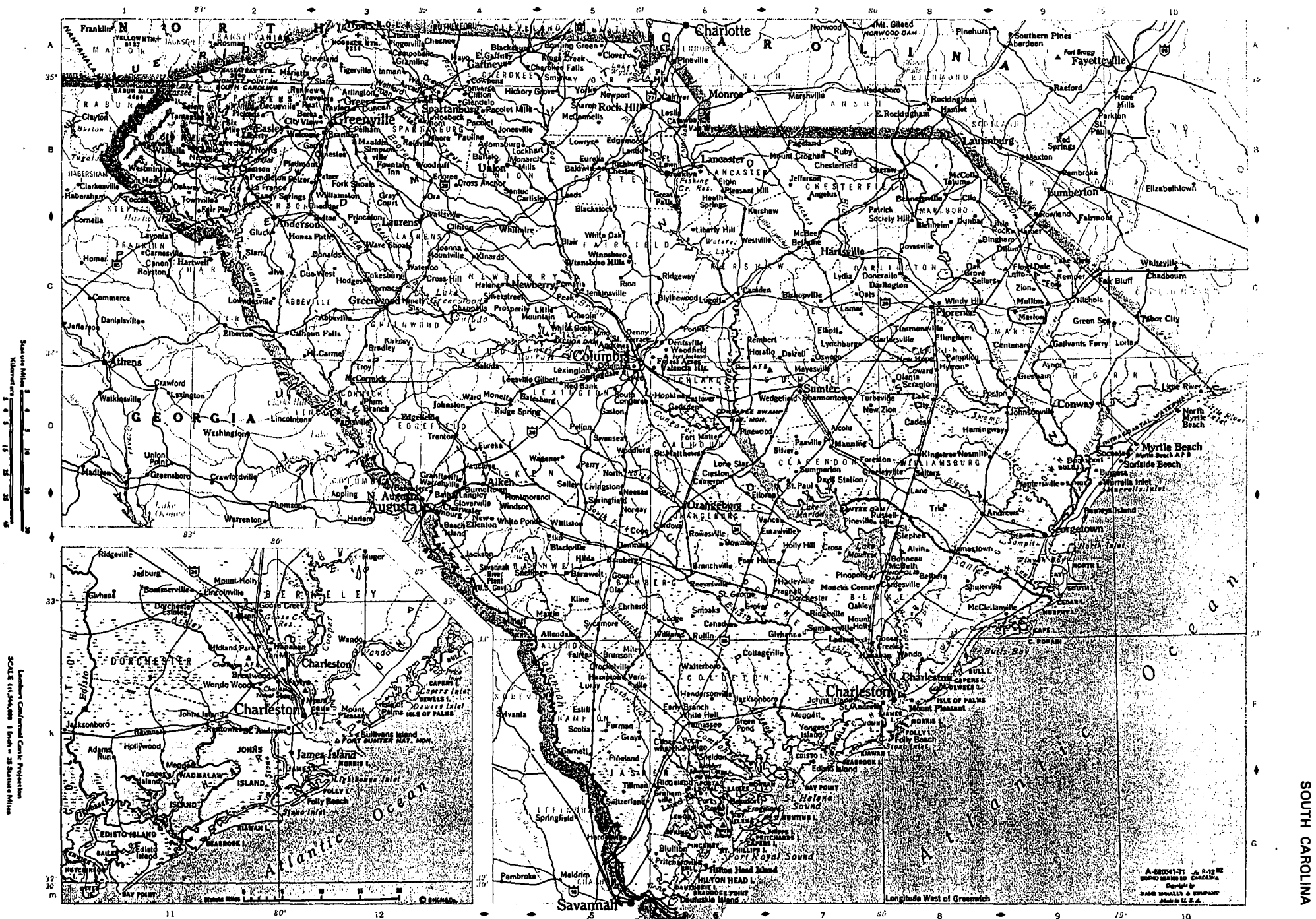


at the request of Phillip Washington & with consent
 of D. Sparkman, agent for Miss Eliza West, have laid out the above
 lots of 2 acres to be conveyed to the congregation (colored) of
 Bethel Church
 C. Ferris, J.S.
 March, 1880



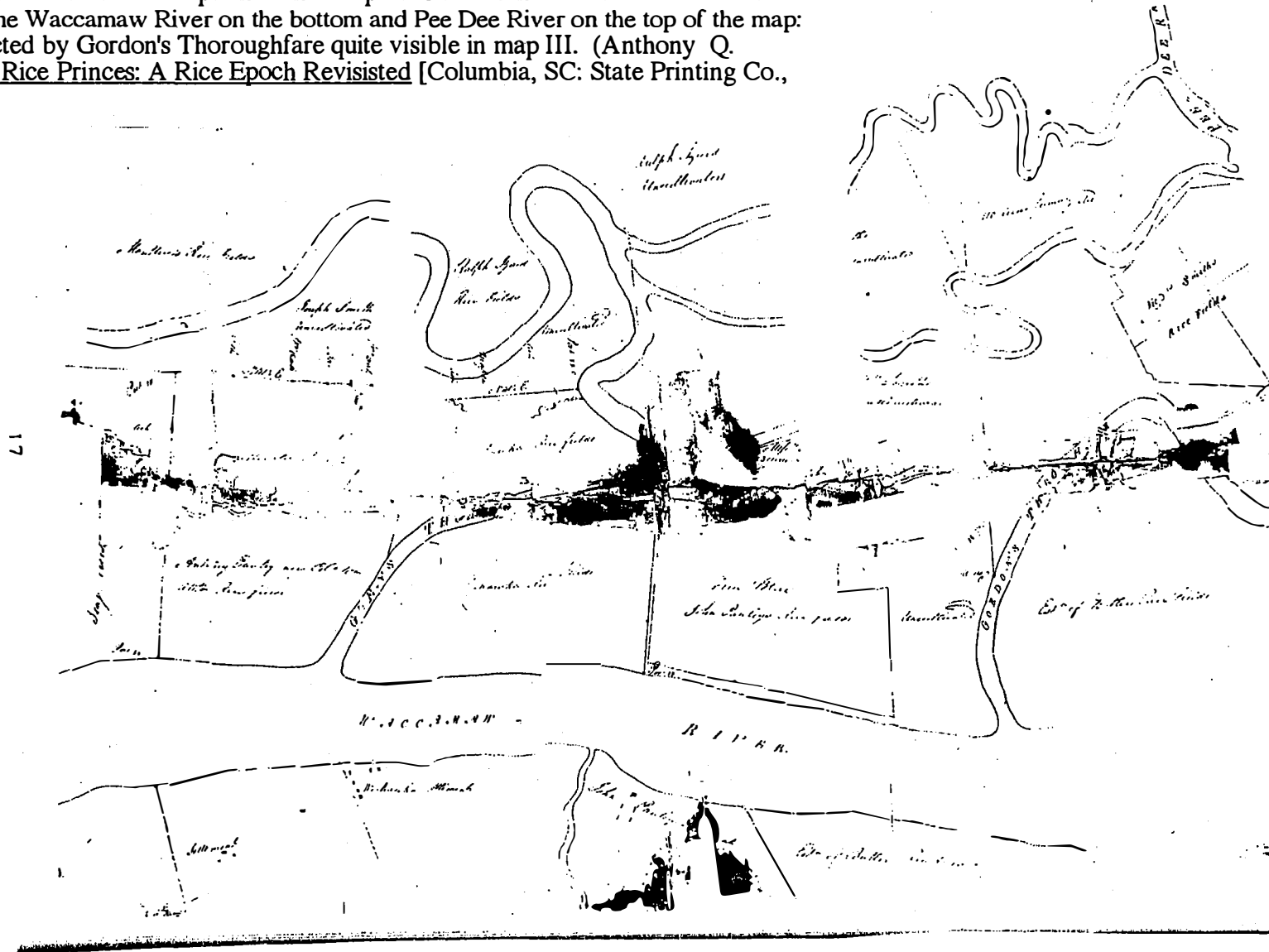
XXV. Children at play at Mount Arena Landing.

These are maps showing Sandy Island's location and surroundings at different points of the island's history. The sources and time period are noted with each map.

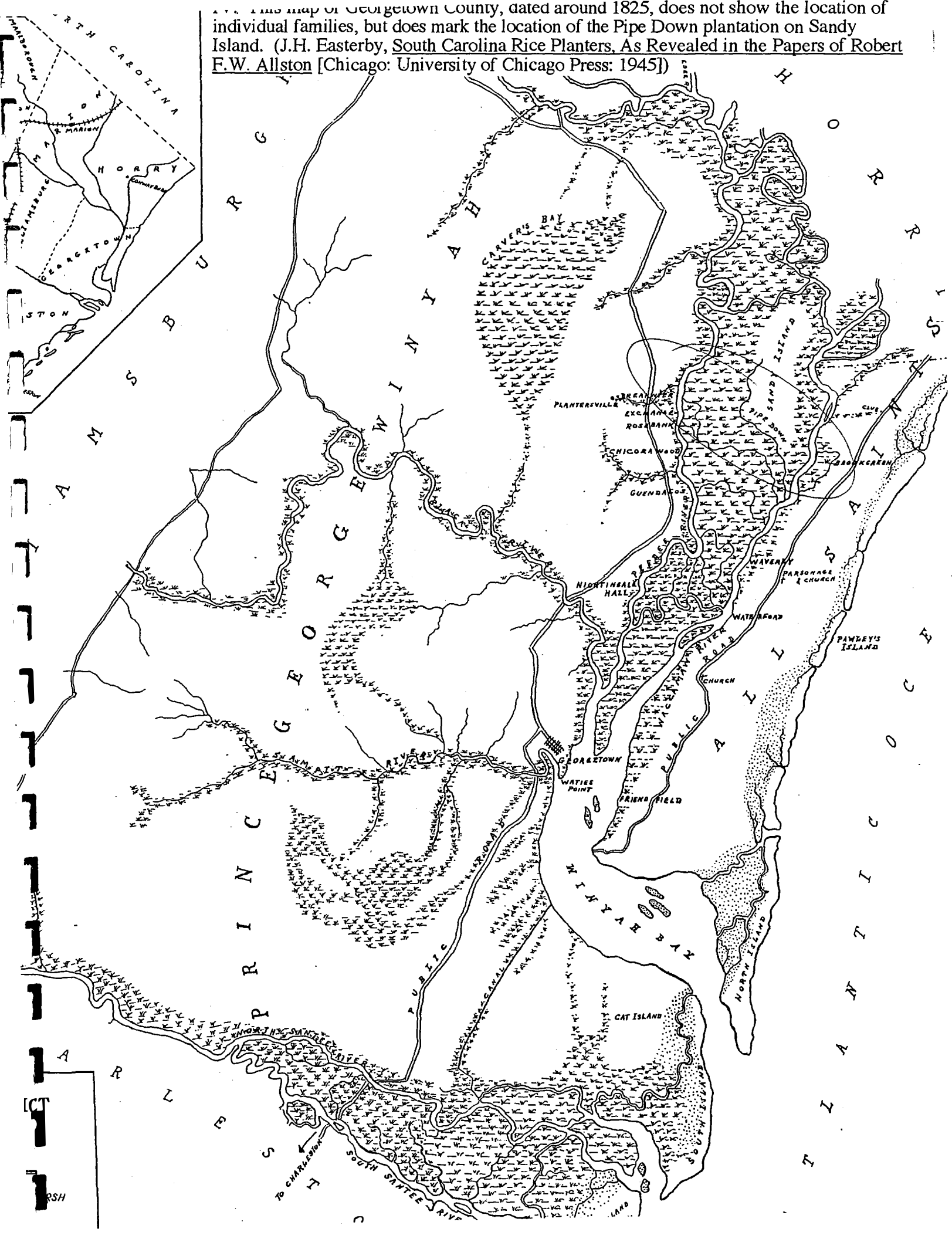


I. Map of South Carolina. Sandy Island is located in the eastern part of the state almost at the coast. It can be found in section D-9 of this map. (Rand McNally & Company)

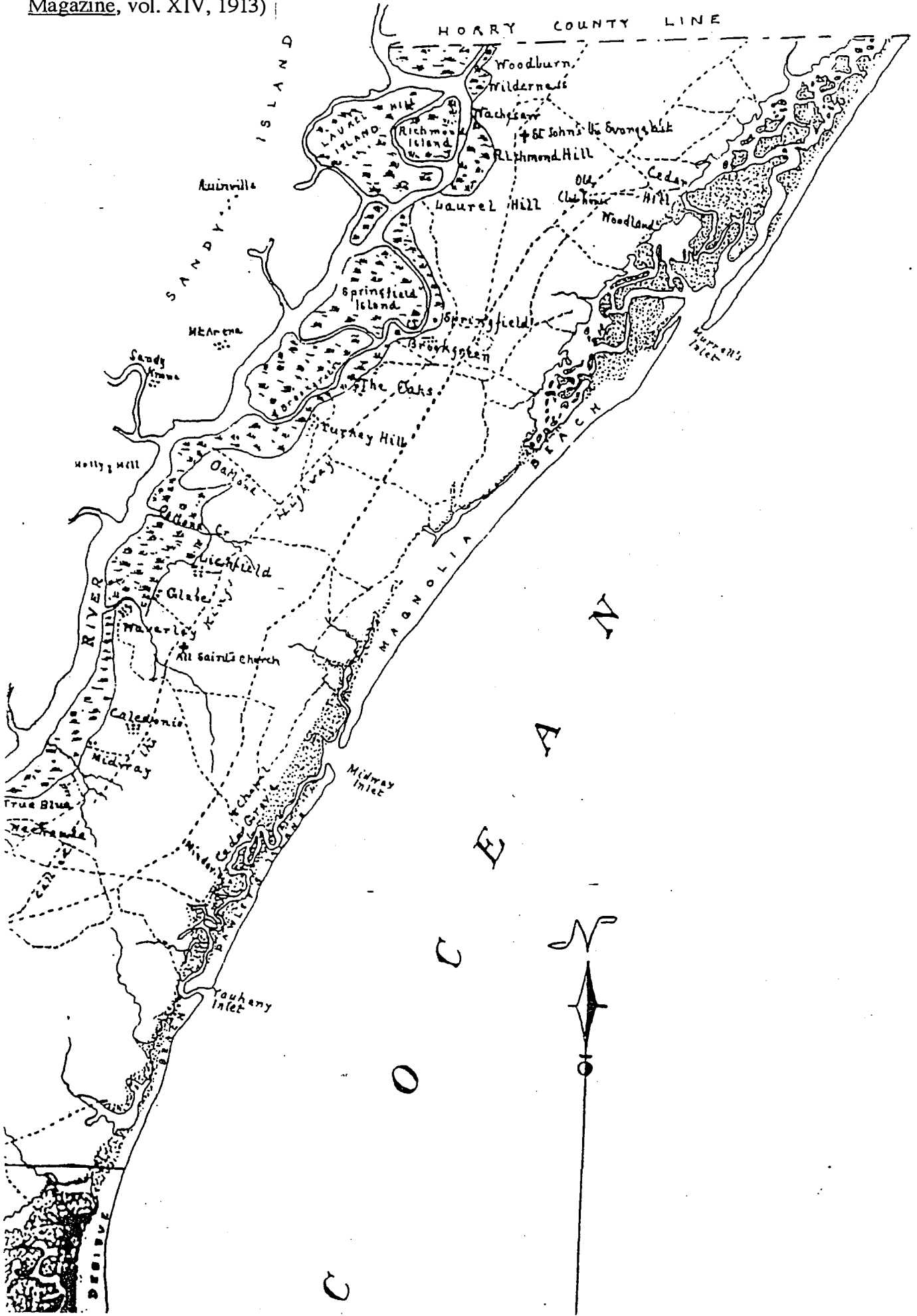
II. A plat that accompanied the deed from Anthony and Susannah Pawley to William Alston dated 10 April 1801. Sandy Island is not mentioned, but the bottom-right corner of the map displays what later descriptions consider part of the island's southern end. Note the bounds of the Waccamaw River on the bottom and Pee Dee River on the top of the map: they are connected by Gordon's Thoroughfare quite visible in map III. (Anthony Q. Devereux, The Rice Princes: A Rice Epoch Revisited [Columbia, SC: State Printing Co., 1973], p. 17)

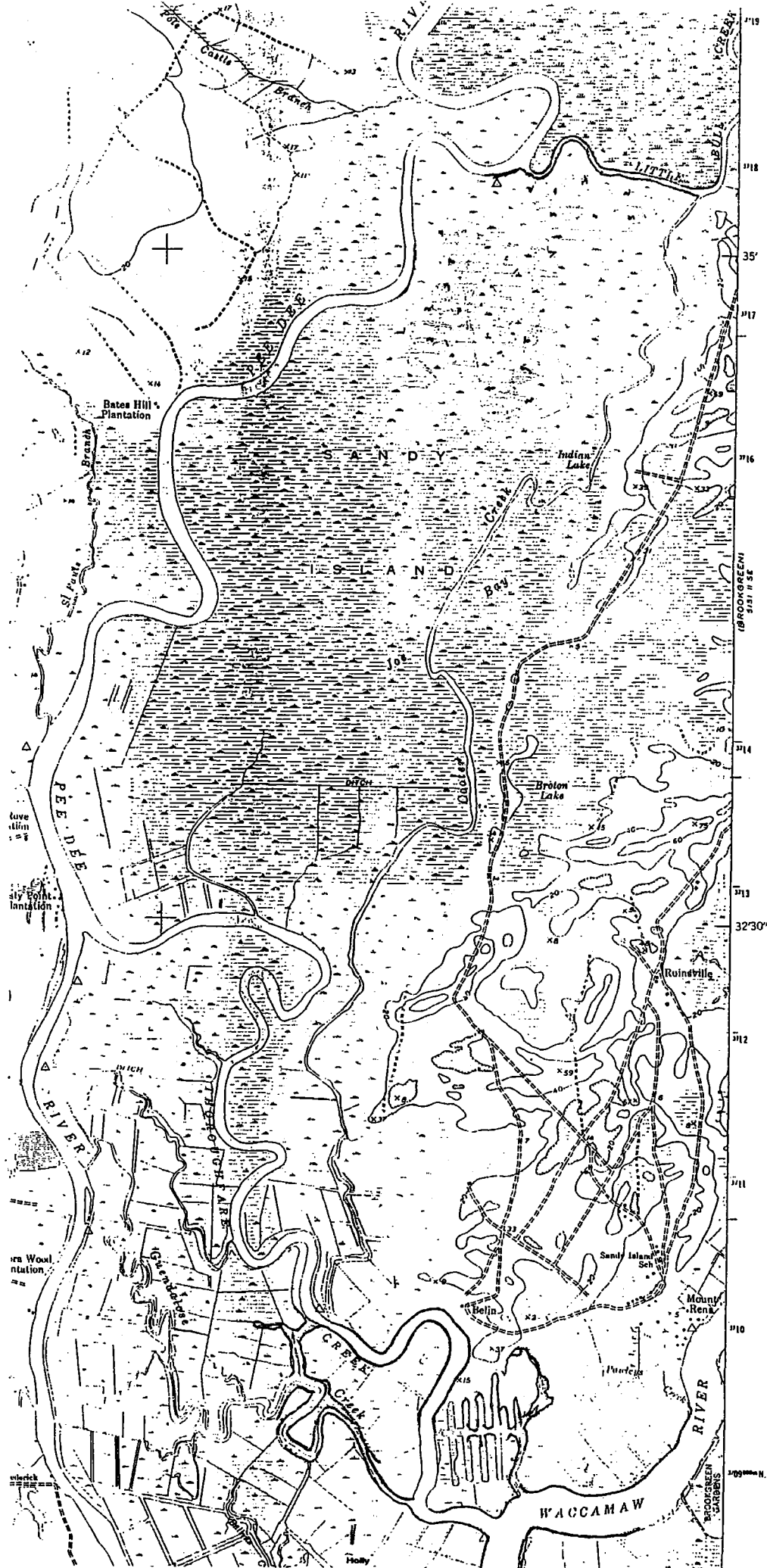


This map of Georgetown County, dated around 1825, does not show the location of individual families, but does mark the location of the Pipe Down plantation on Sandy Island. (J.H. Easterby, South Carolina Rice Planters, As Revealed in the Papers of Robert F.W. Allston [Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1945])



V. This mid-nineteenth century map of the Waccamaaw Neck shows the locations of Ruinsville, Mount Arena, Sandy Knowe, and Holly Hill on Sandy Island in the top left portion of the map. (Henry A.M. Smith, "Hobcaw Barony," South Carolina Historical Magazine, vol. XIV, 1913)





VI. A detailed map of Sandy Island, this is a contemporary view. Note the spelling of Mount Arena in the bottom right corner where the majority of the permanent residential community is located. Indian Lake also appears near the top right part of the map. (U.S. Geological Survey, Reston, Virginia, 1973)