

Ricefields

Our Historical Legacy

compiled by Susan A. Scheno



LAND GRANTS

Most local historical researchers agree that Thomas Hepworth, in 1711, received three land grants of 500 acres each that became the basis for Litchfield, Waverly and Woodville. These grants rival Robert Daniell's patent for lands as the earliest division of the Waccamaw Neck into individual plantations. Hepworth was a wealthy lawyer in the colony who prosecuted and won conviction of the notorious gentleman pirate Stede Bonnet, (an interesting side story). Hepworth also served as clerk of court and member of the Common House of Assembly, chief justice and deputy secretary of the province. He did not however develop his Waccamaw Neck property.

A later deed read as follows:

18 May 1733- 500 acres in Craven County granted to John Hutchinson the year 1711 on the 25th day of August at one shilling per one hundred acres, butting and bounding to the west on Waccamaw River, to the north on Thomas Hepworth to the south on Colonel Brewton's land which lands the Pawleys hath bought as will appear by a lease, the 6th day of August 1731 of the executors of the said Hutchinson.

Thomas Hepworth died in 1728, and his lands passed to his son, Thomas. The younger Hepworth recorded a memorial, detailing the original grants to his father, and then began selling his lands. In 1737, Hepworth divided one of the tracts and sold a portion to Percival Pawley.

Remember that during this period of history, choices for marriage partners on the Waccamaw Neck did not emanate from a wide base, so many of the original families intermarried, with the land being thrown about like confetti. Needless to say, there was a strong bond between the Pawleys and the Allstons.

In 1745, Percival Pawley conveyed fifty acres of his land to All Saints Parish for the sole purpose of building a church. The very next week he sold the rest of his property to George Pawley, Percival's oldest brother. George aligned himself with Mary Allston, a sister of John and William Allston. She was the mother of nine of Pawley's ten children. Before George died, he bequeathed over 5,000 acres to his children, with the Waverly land going to his son, William Pawley. William was forty-one at the time, the year was 1769.

CAROLINA GOLD

Most of these original land grants extended from the Waccamaw River to the sea marshes, thus establishing the pattern for long, narrow plantations. This configuration provided access to the river marshes along the Waccamaw, the interior uplands of the peninsula, and the salt marshes and sea islands of the Atlantic. Main plantation residences and facilities were established on the low bluffs of the river, with summer houses often placed on Pawleys Island, near the Atlantic shore. Rice fields were constructed in the river marshes.

RICEFIELDS: OUR HISTORICAL LEGACY

compiled by Susan A. Scheno

The historical legacy of Ricefields is garnished to each and every signed purchase contract. Only the top layer is found in the documents you keep on file. The heart of the legacy is deep in the soil and in the tides. Its voice can be heard rustling in the marsh grasses and in the tall branches of the pinelands. It is here, in the air we breathe. This place we know as home, just off of Kings River Road, carries with it names like Thomas Hepworth, Percival, George and William Pawley, Robert F.W. Allston, William Allan Allston, Washington's Valley, Woodville Plantation, Helen Thummel, and Ben, Prince, Sancho, Venus, Isabel, Molly and Peter. This compilation is dedicated to those whose names are lost.

OUR EARLIEST RESIDENTS

There is archeological evidence that from 200 BC to approximately 500AD nomadic Native American settlements were established in what is currently Mills Creek. The Waccamaws, who were listed as most numerous in the 1715 Indian census, had six villages with 610 inhabitants on the Waccamaw Neck. It was all destroyed in 1720 when one hundred warriors rendered war on the settlers. At least sixty of those warriors were captured and sent into slavery in the West Indies. The most lasting evidence of their presence however, remains in the name of the river along which they lived. The Spaniards probed the region at times, but the English finally dominated.

The first white settlers were drawn to the area around Winyah Bay by the lure of lucrative Indian trade. The English, Scots and French acquired land through proprietary and royal land grants beginning as early as 1705. Access to water was a paramount factor in land development. Indigo was one of the area's first major crops, but it had a relatively short life span of less than fifty years. Another crop was to have a more enduring and extensive effect on the economic and cultural life of the Waccamaw Neck. The tidal rice culture began here in the 1730's and became its lifeblood. (Refer to Appendix 1).

According to Charles Joyner, "By the mid-eighteenth century the labor of rice plantation slaves in the South Carolina low country, afforded their masters the highest per capita income in the American colonies. The slaves of Georgetown District were the leading producers of rice in antebellum America. The Waccamaw Plantations were the most productive in Georgetown District."

The rice culture after the Civil War was no longer viable. Worldwide competition, hurricanes, increased freshets as land upstream was cleared and the loss of forced labor all contributed to the demise of rice as a money crop. But the land endured. Northern millionaires saw possibilities for hunting and fishing. Because of this, many of the plantations were retained intact. Many others were sold and subdivided.

WASHINGTON'S VALLEY

William Pawley married twice. He had two daughters who would marry Allston brothers. It is said that he and his small family enjoyed a prosperous lifestyle at the Waverly property.

When William Pawley died in 1776, there was a legal need to separate his vast estate. An early plat in the South Carolina Historical Society's collection showed land on the Waccamaw River divided into two plantations. The two neighboring properties show the names Montpelier (Waverly) and Washington's Valley, (Woodville). The earliest plat map of our current Ricefields is one dated May of 1798. It is labeled "Plan of Washington's Valley, a plantation belonging to Josias William Allston." Josias' mother was a daughter of William Pawley. She had married John Allston Jr. Therefore it was an entitlement issue, and Josias became the owner of Washington's Valley. Dr. William Allston, son of Francis and Eliza Allston, appeared on the north border at Montpelier (Waverly) on the plat map.

Josias William Allston was named for his grandfathers, Josias Allston and William Pawley. He married Lydia Murrell and had three children. He grew rice at his plantation in 1800 with eighty-four slaves who lived at the settlement. In 1801 Allston sold Washington's Valley to Anthony Pawley and moved to St. Luke's parish where he became that parish's representative in the General Assembly. (Refer to Appendix 2 & 3).

WAVERLY

In 1807 Benjamin Allston, Jr. bought Montpelier and changed its name to Waverly, but he died in 1809. His son Joseph Waites Allston assumed control in 1818. By 1833, Joseph Waites had remarried for a third time to Mary Kerr Allan. She became the mother of his only surviving children- two infant sons named Joseph Blyth Allston and William Allan Allston. Both boys were infants when their father died in 1834, more than likely from malaria. Joseph was eight and William was seven when their mother died. Although they inherited Waverly jointly, it

would be their uncle, Robert Francis Withers Allston, future governor of South Carolina, who would prudently manage the estate, and be guardian to his nephews. The boys were left to the care of Adele Petigru Allston, Robert's wife, with Chicora Wood becoming their home until 1842.

...the little boys were left to the guardianship of my father and the care of my mother, and Chicora Wood was their home until they grew up.

Chronicles of Chicora Wood
Elizabeth Waties Allston Pringle

Robert then boarded the boys with Rev. Alexander Glennie and his wife, Harriett Bell Glennie, (All Saints Church) for three years. In 1845, Glennie wrote to Allston reminding him his time with the boys had expired. He was transferring them back into Allston's hands. Robert wrote from Matanza (Chicora), recognizing the end to the "residence of his nephews" with Glennie and asked the Reverend to "send the boys over to Mr. Jones to board at the Academy." (Reference to Woodville Academy). Robert managed his brother's estate for twenty-three years. When he assumed charge in 1834, the liabilities were somewhat in excess of \$50,000. To help lessen the burden, he sold slaves to the value of \$43,000. He was able to free the estate from debt by 1846. In 1871, Philip Rossignol Lachicotte purchased Waverly from Joseph Blyth Allston.

WOODVILLE

In 1857 Waverly Plantation was split into two parts. Joseph Blyth Allston received the plantation house, rice fields and rice mill. William Allan Allston inherited the lower portion of Waverly known as the 'pinelands.' This became known as Woodville (Ricefields). According to archeologist Michael Trinkley, "the bulk of improvements made at Woodville, totaling about 2105 acres, occurred during the last decade before the Civil War. Later historic references indicate that there was a main plantation settlement on Woodville." Although described as pinelands, the 1860 agricultural census proves Woodville, "with its 105 cultivated acres, and 2,000 acres of unimproved land, the smallest plantation in All Saints Parish, had the highest yield of rice per acre. (Appendix 4) Its 151 slaves raised over half a million pounds of rice each year. The 184 slaves at Waverly raised 450,000 pounds." Putting it another way, each Woodville slave produced 3,728 pounds of rice. William Allan Allston, with his forced labor, was able to retain Woodville Plantation through the Civil War. He married his cousin Williame (Willie) Haig on November 15, 1864 in his home in Plantersville. Will was thirty years old, Willie was nineteen. Both brothers also became heir to a home in Georgetown at 422

Prince Street. It was inherited upon the death of their Aunt Charlotte. In 1866, Joseph bought out William's half-interest.

According to his cousin Elizabeth Allston Pringle, Joseph Blyth was a gifted man, a clever lawyer and an eloquent pleader. He married his aunt's niece, Mary Charlotte North in 1858 and settled at Waverly. His literary talent was above the ordinary, and in fact, his poems were published after the Civil War. He did however suffer from manic-depressive tendencies, the loss of many young children and the mental illness of his oldest daughter Jane, who was forced to spend several years in an asylum.

Of William Allan, Elizabeth made few references. We know that he disliked his uncle tremendously, thinking him a tyrant, too strict and a disciplinarian. He hated the fact that Robert Allston made him do things which he disliked doing. We know that he caused his aunt and uncle some grave concerns, his financial situation was weak and that he received a medical exemption during the Civil War. From his uncle's letter (November 2, 1863): *William got his exemption from the Medical on their opinion that he has permanent cataract threatening blindness. They are to occupy Mrs. Guerrard's house without locks!*

I could find no record indicating that William lived at Woodville. I know that he traveled a great deal to Europe, went to Waverly occasionally, (letter, 1856) "saw Nesbit for a hunt, a fishing (they were getting up a shad-net betwixt them), stayed a night or two and then returned to Chicora. He has no establishment there yet, (Woodville)." William died on November 14, 1878, in Charleston without any children from the marriage and is buried in Lower All Saints' Parish, Georgetown. He was forty-four years old. His wife died in Columbia, S.C., at the age of sixty. She is buried at All Saints. William's only brother, Joseph Blyth Allston lived until the age of 71, died January 29, 1904, and is buried in Lower All Saints Parish.

After the Civil War, in January 1873, Woodville was sold in a Sheriff's sale as the result of a Pleas Judgment against William. Based on later deeds, William Allan Allston had already sold off a large portion of Woodville, probably in efforts to prevent the financial ruin, which eventually occurred. In fact, several plantation owners began selling tracts of land to freemen, with the most obvious evidence of this practice being the creation of Parkersville, a Black Community. How many of the current residents are direct descendents of former slaves who worked the rice fields of Woodville, one can only speculate.

The plat map of Woodville, dated 1827, indicates a settlement known as the "Homestead." This presumably was the main house and outbuildings, the slave quarters and the glebe lands for All Saints Parish Church. All Saints Academy was situated on River Road about a quarter of a mile south of the church and rectory. It stood on the site of the former residence of Mr. B.A. Woodruff, at the corner of the road leading to Waverly. Washington's Valley, later known as Woodville, became the home for the tutor of All Saints Academy.

If you haven't done so, take a walk down towards the river. As you begin the Riverwalk look to your left. Up against the bank you will see the remains of a bulkhead, constructed from railroad ties. A public boat landing used to be located there, where a canal met the upland. It is believed that this landing was the first public boat landing in the area. The landing and associated boat house stopped

being used by the public after Hurricane Hazel destroyed the boat house in 1954. In a telephone conversation with Cora Nesbit Davis, she stated, "As I recall there was an old grist mill down by what is now the Riverwalk." Archeologists have discovered a large amount of old brick in the same location.

REV. C.B. THUMMEL AND HIS DAUGHTER HELEN

In 1838, Robert F.W. Allston took on the duty of hiring the Reverend C.B. Thummel, from Clinton, New York. He would have the winter home at Woodville, a seashore home and receive a salary of \$2,000 per year. The enrollment consisted of twelve to fifteen children of both sexes and of ages from four to thirteen. The curriculum comprised of English, French, Latin, Greek, music and dancing.

In a letter from Joshua John Ward (Brook Green, Sept. 28, 1838) to Governor Robert F.W. Allston, (in reference to Thummel)...*get the house at Woodville for his winter residence which we have to make habitable for him and build a house somewhere on the Beach for the Summer; Give him to understand that he will have to take Borders....* Thummel accepted the position as schoolmaster, the family left New York State and came to Woodville. "But he and his wife were not happy with the house nor the situation and they soon gave up their positions at the parish school and moved elsewhere."

While exploring All Saints Cemetery, I discovered that the Rosa plot contained a grave and headstone for Helen Thummel, September 17, 1840, age 2yrs. 4 months, 5 days. This perhaps, is the reason why the Thummels left. Interestingly enough, it was a Mr. D.D. Rosa, of New York who conducted the school for many years after the Thummels departed.

WOODVILLE ACADEMY

On May 16, 1818, in a letter from Charles Kershaw (Charleston rice factor) to Charlotte Ann Allston; *I am glad you have determined on placing your son William (William Washington Allston) at Woodville Academy. I know Mr. Wood Furman very well and shall write to him to pay some attention to him so as to bring him forward. He is too young to send to Charleston.* In one of Robert Allston's letters to his wife, he *"requests that William (William Allan) be summoned to pay a visit to Mr. Coates, apparently for the purpose of being entered in his school also."* It appears that William, his brother Joseph and their cousin Ben were enrolled, or about to be, in Mr. Coates' school. Christopher Coates, native of England, was conducting an excellent private school for boys in Charleston at the time. William Allan Allston was twelve.

Charles Joyner's book, *Down By the Riverside*, indicates that by 1860, William Allan Allston owned 151 slaves, living in 30 dwellings, with an average of 5.0 slaves per house. When Joseph Blyth Allston purchased sixty-one slaves from Harrietta plantation, he decided to house them "in the academy outbuildings at Woodville." Eventually the old Academy buildings were taken down, having fallen into decay through disuse. (Refer to Appendix 5 – Woodville Map Sept. 1939; the Academy was located on the section designated "5 ½ Ac. Mrs. Woodruff," just southeast of "Capt. Ancrom.").

WOODVILLE CEMETERY

In 1990, the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology reported that Ricefields contains Woodville Cemetery; "a large intact example of a Black cemetery which probably began in the antebellum period." They identified 78 graves, with the distinct possibility of many more being present. Six of the graves have markers, with several grave goods observed on the surface. Specifically the fragments were pieces of a whiteware bowl, two metal buckets and fragments of a Great Heart Cockle shell. They also found a domesticated houseplant used as a grave marker. Other markers included two by marble stones, one by a sandstone marker, one by a heartwood pine post and two by iron posts (one of which appeared to be a bedstead post). One stone, grave 28, reads "CHARLIE YOUNG/FEB 9 1843/SEPT 26 1913/AT REST," while the other, grave 30, reads "NORAH YOUNG/SEPT. 20, 1851/ AUG. 19, 1919/GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN." The other markers provided no additional information. The cemetery is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Very specific guidelines were issued for its preservation. Archeologists I have contacted expressed a need to preserve and protect this cemetery. They have stated the clearing must be done by hand. I envision it with a wrought iron fence around it, the post markers replaced, the gate restored and a simple marker placed in recognition of the nameless.

About a year ago, I drove to St. John's AME Church, got out of the car and walked to the building. There on the cornerstone of the church was Charlie Young's name. The dates fit. He had been one of the original trustees of the church.

AND THEN...

In 1877 Charles Petigru Allston sold what remained of Woodville to Ralph Nesbit, who also owned Caledonia to the south. Nesbit held the property until September 1923, when it was sold to Harry Marlow. Marlow held the property for a little more than a year before selling it to Aline Lloyd Lachicotte. In a lovely book entitled *Pawley's As It Was*, by Celina McGregor Vaughn, she writes - *My uncle's* (Philip Rossignol Lachicotte II) *Woodville Plantation was at the intersection of the River Road and the road to Waverly. Lachicotte and his wife lived at "Woodville"*(on the east corner of Waverly and Kings River, right at the four way stop sign)...*the barns, the shed where the cattle were dipped, were across the street. The intersection at Woodville was only a few hundred feet southward from two of the Waccamaw Neck stores. The oldest, known as "Grab All," was the one Julia Peterkin made famous in her "Scarlet Sister Mary." I first knew Mr. Harry Marlow as the manager there, (another connection). It was a warehouse type of building-dark and dingy, with a high ceiling and long counters down each side with shelves sparsely filled with merchandise...Directly eastward across the road was a much smaller building, called "Take Some," owned by my uncle and operated for him by Mr. John Causey. When "Grab All" went out of business, Mr. Marlowe assisted at "Take Some" and became the magistrate for this part of Georgetown County. He continued to serve in this capacity until his death on May 23, 1947. (Refer to Appendix 6).*

In 1939 Lachicotte sold the Woodville tract to George Trask. A plat of the tract, dated September 1939, shows a number of tenant houses clustered in the northeast quadrant. People I have spoken to remember the land being used as a truck farm. In 1955 George Trask sold the tract to Thomas King Martin. In 1975 the land went to Michael Hinds. And in 1983, from Michael Hinds and Kings Road Associates to Loblolly Partners. The rest, as they say, is history.

MODERN REFERENCE POINTS

Using geographical and political points as reference – determined by a set of overlaid transparencies to scale- Woodville Plantation covered the land from Woodville Island on the western bank of the Waccamaw near Butler's Creek, to what is now Parkerville Road. Rossdhu Avenue and Kinard Lane would be the northern border with Martin Luther King Road running through the plantation. Anson Avenue, which runs perpendicular to Petigru Drive, would be the southeastern most point. (Refer to Appendix 7 & 8).

It has been a complicated research project. The land over-lapped, acres and boundaries were tentative, records were lost, and people never called back. I still have some investigating to do. Questions that need answering. Nevertheless, I have thoroughly enjoyed the view. So, the next time you're out walking the dog, boating the river, pausing on our riverwalk, sitting on your porch, or driving to the corner of Waverly Road and Kings River Road, remember them please, the known and the unknown, the ones who came down that road before us. Our legacy in this place, in this time, is truly rich and good.

Susan A. Scheno

This beautiful and bountiful country, watered by the noble Waccamaw...and washed by the waves of the Atlantic Ocean.

Joseph Blyth Allston

The ricefields are surrounded by dams high enough and strong enough to resist the highest spring tides. The entire area is divided into squares or fields, containing twelve to twenty acres each, by a series of check-banks.

Robert F.W. Allston

All dem rice field been nothing but swamp. Slavery people cut kennel (canal) and cut down woods and dig ditch through raw woods. All been clear up for plant rice by slavery people.

Gabe Lance- 1936 Slave Narrative

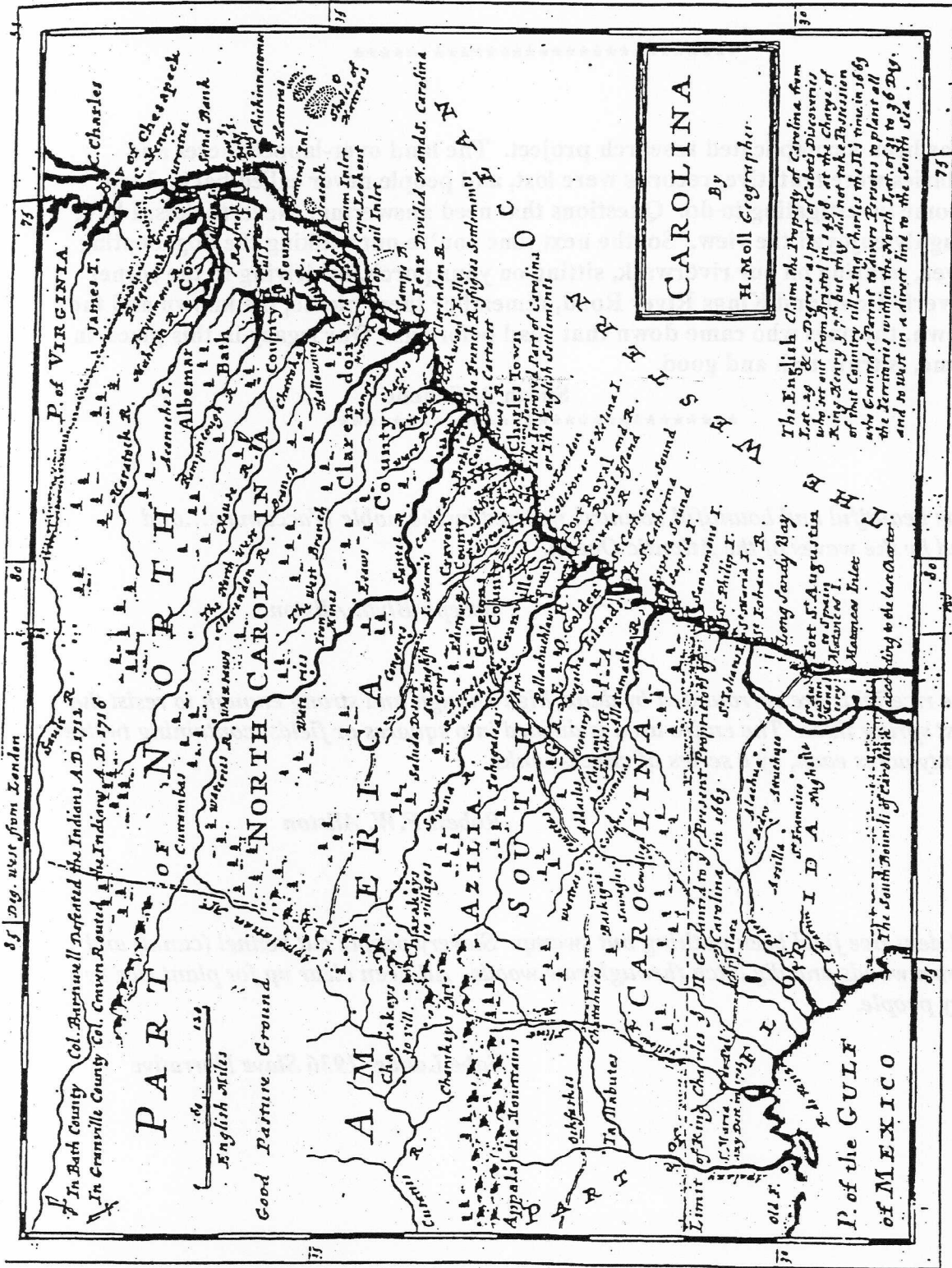
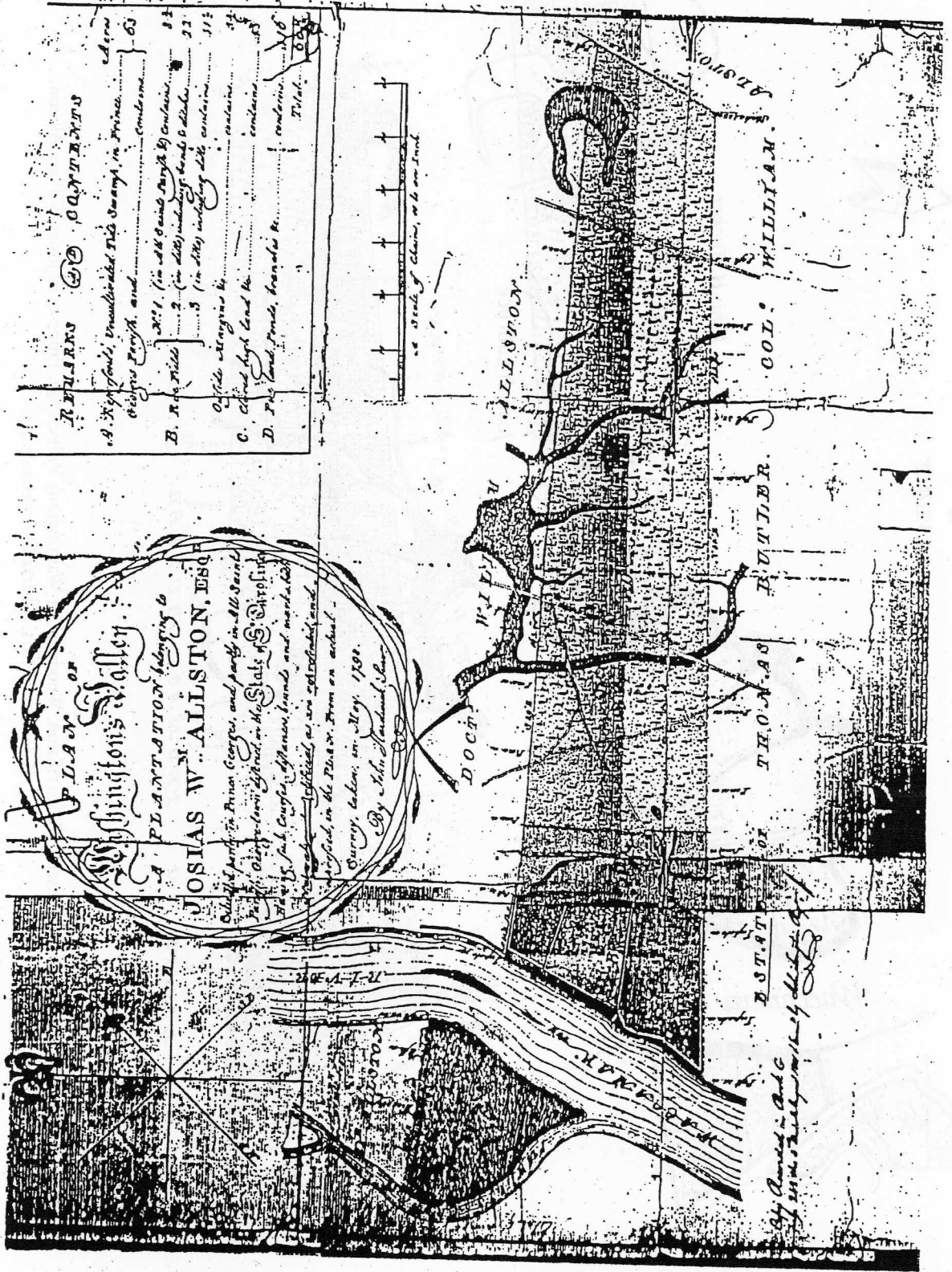


Figure 3. Herman Moll's map of Carolina in 1729.



REMARKS

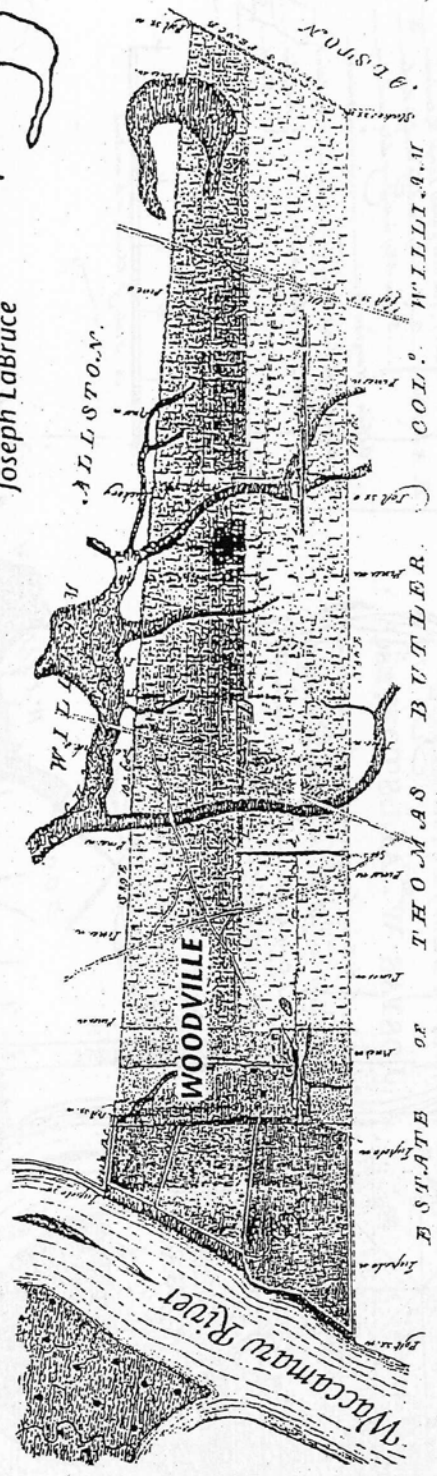
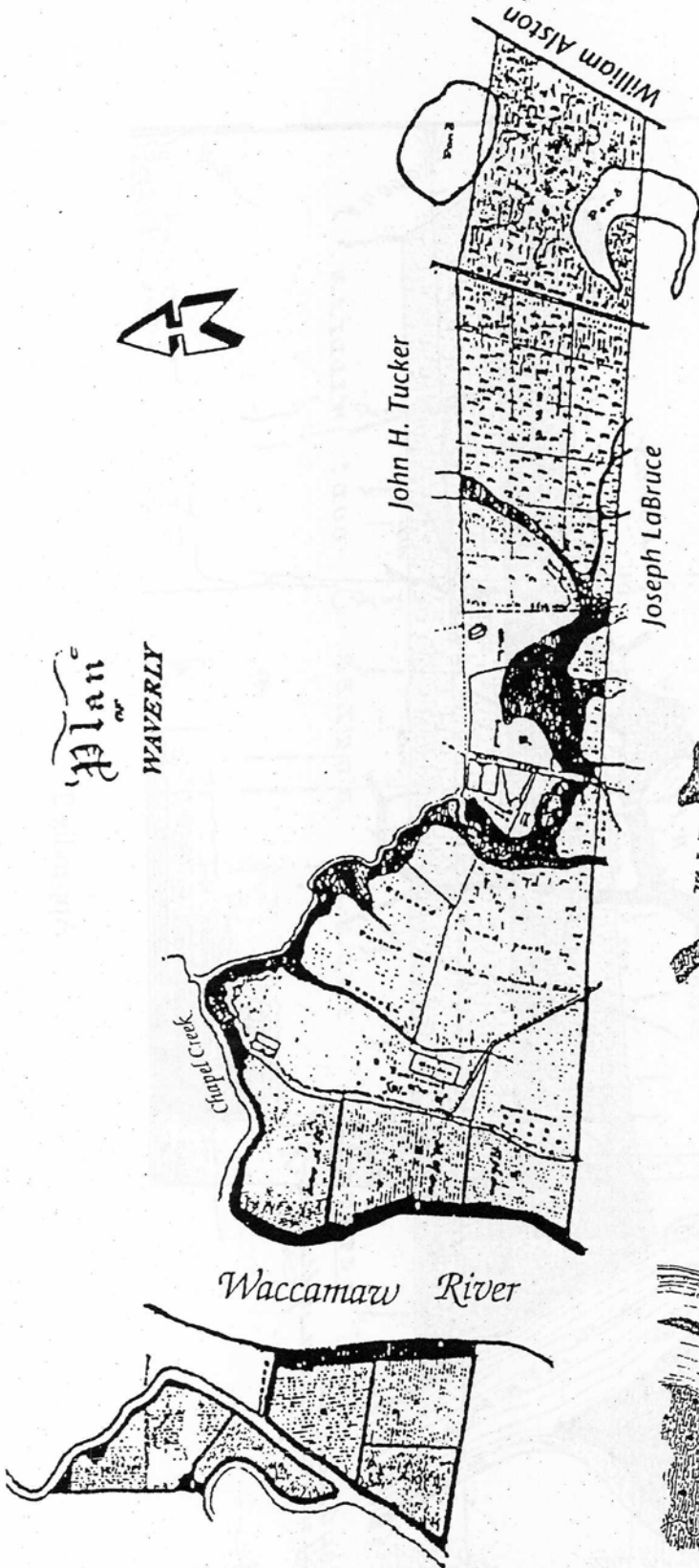
- A. 300 rods, including the swamp, in price, also
 100 rods, and contains 60
- B. 100 rods (in all 3 rods north to contain 80
 2 (in all) including road & ditch 22
 3 (in all) including ditch contain 112
- C. 100 rods to contain 94
- D. The land, ponds, branches &c. contains 108
 Total 600

D. A. N. OF
WASHINGTON'S Valley
P. L. A. N. OF WASHINGTON'S Valley
JOSIAS W. ALLSTON, ESQ.
 Surveyed in Prince Georges, and partly in all Virginia
 By John Smith, Surveyor in the State of S. Carolina
 and by John Cooper, Surveyor, and made by
 Joseph Smith, as an introduction and
 copied in the year 1790. From an actual
 Survey, taken in May, 1790.
 By John Landrum, Senr.

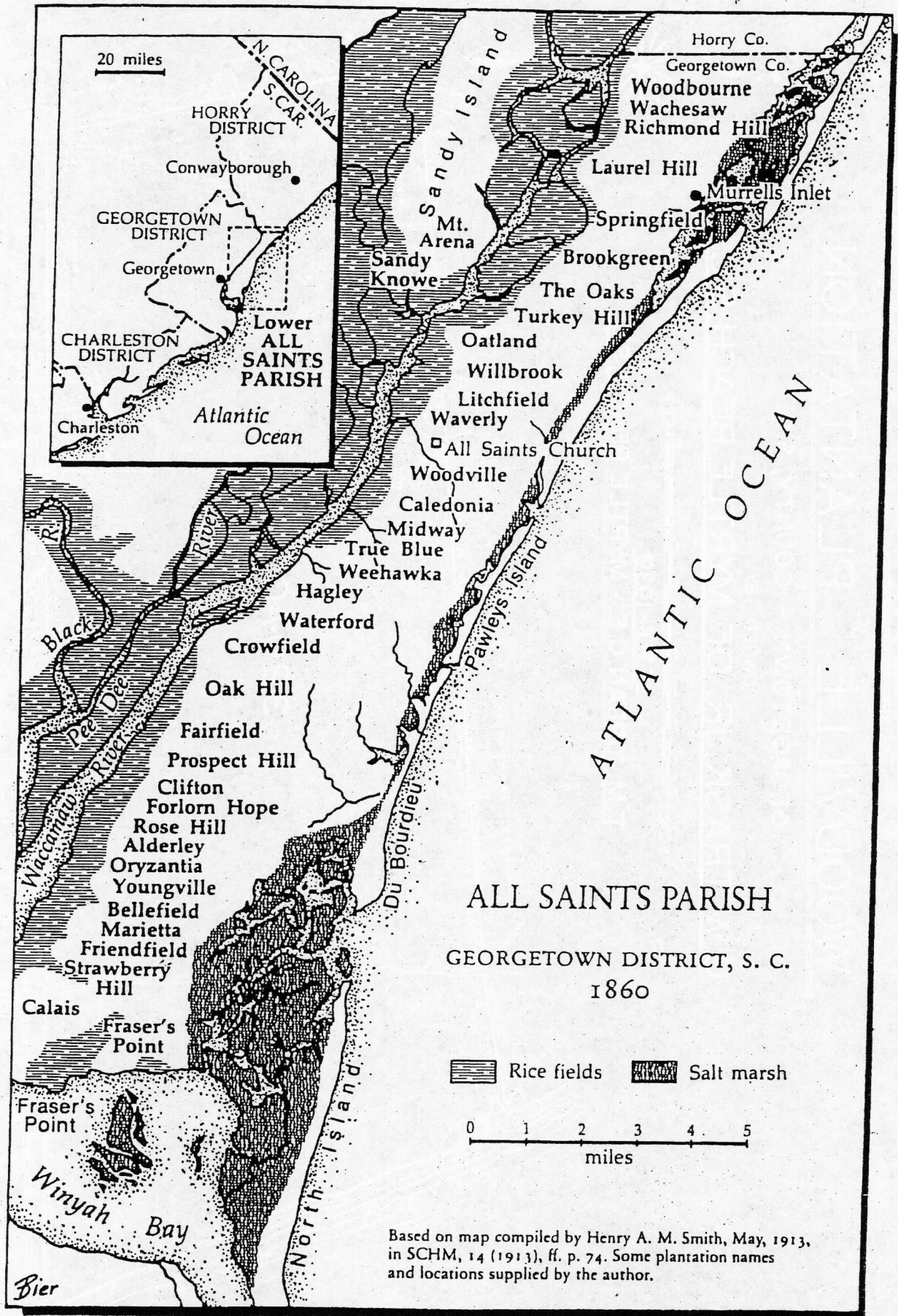


By James A. and C.
 Surveyors, in the year 1800.

Plan
of
WAVERLY



Waverly, 1827. Property of Joseph Waties Allston. Woodville, or Washington's Valley, 1797. Property of Josias William Allston.
(Courtesy of Mrs. Alberta Quattlebaum.)



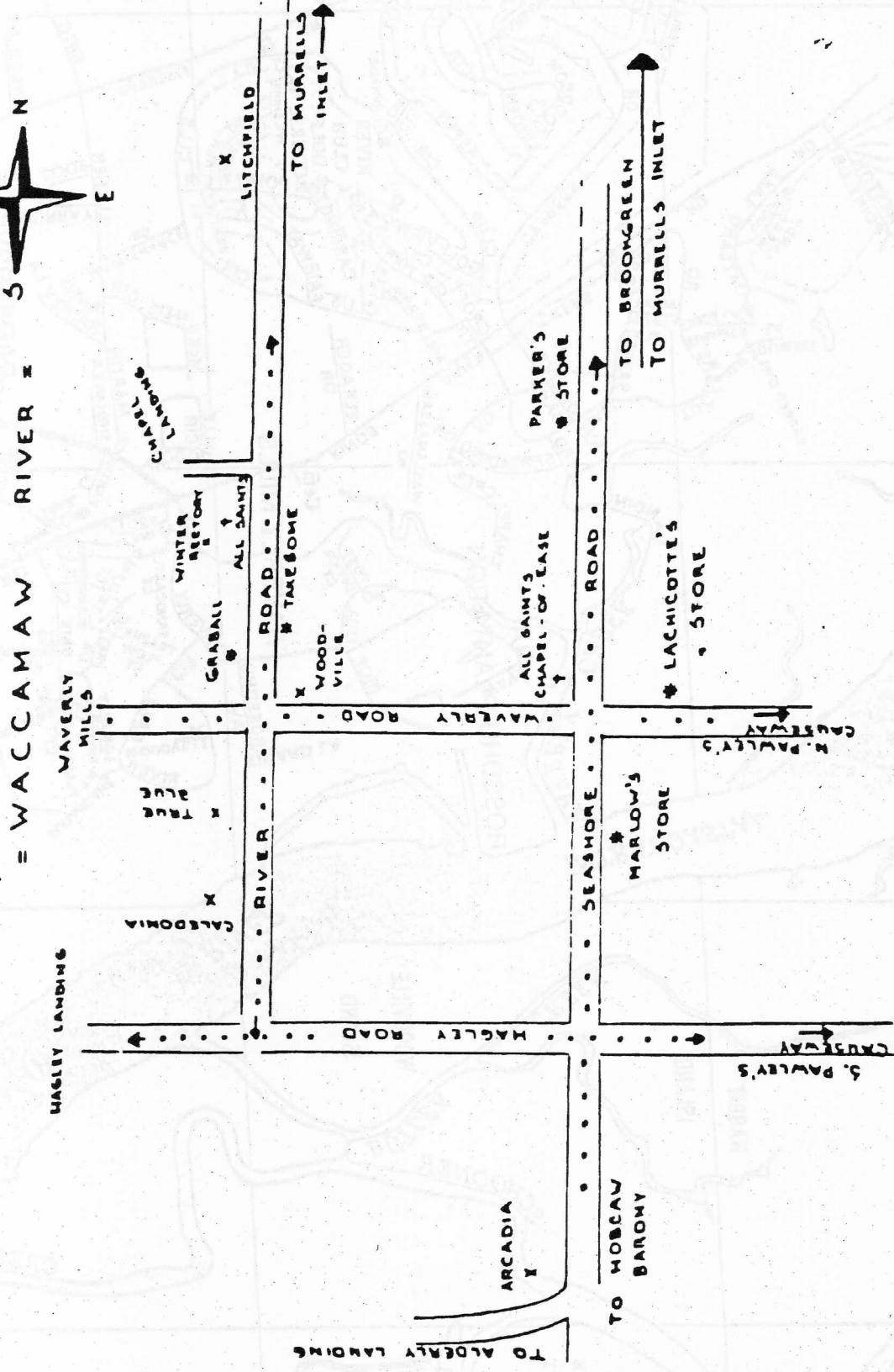
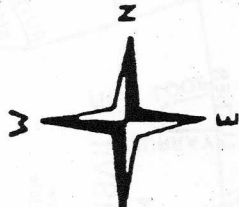
MAP
WOODVILLE PLANTATION
 GEORGETOWN - COUNTY, S.C.
 OWNED BY
G.W. TRASK, JR. OF MYRTLE BEACH, S.C.

SCALE: 1" = 100 FEET

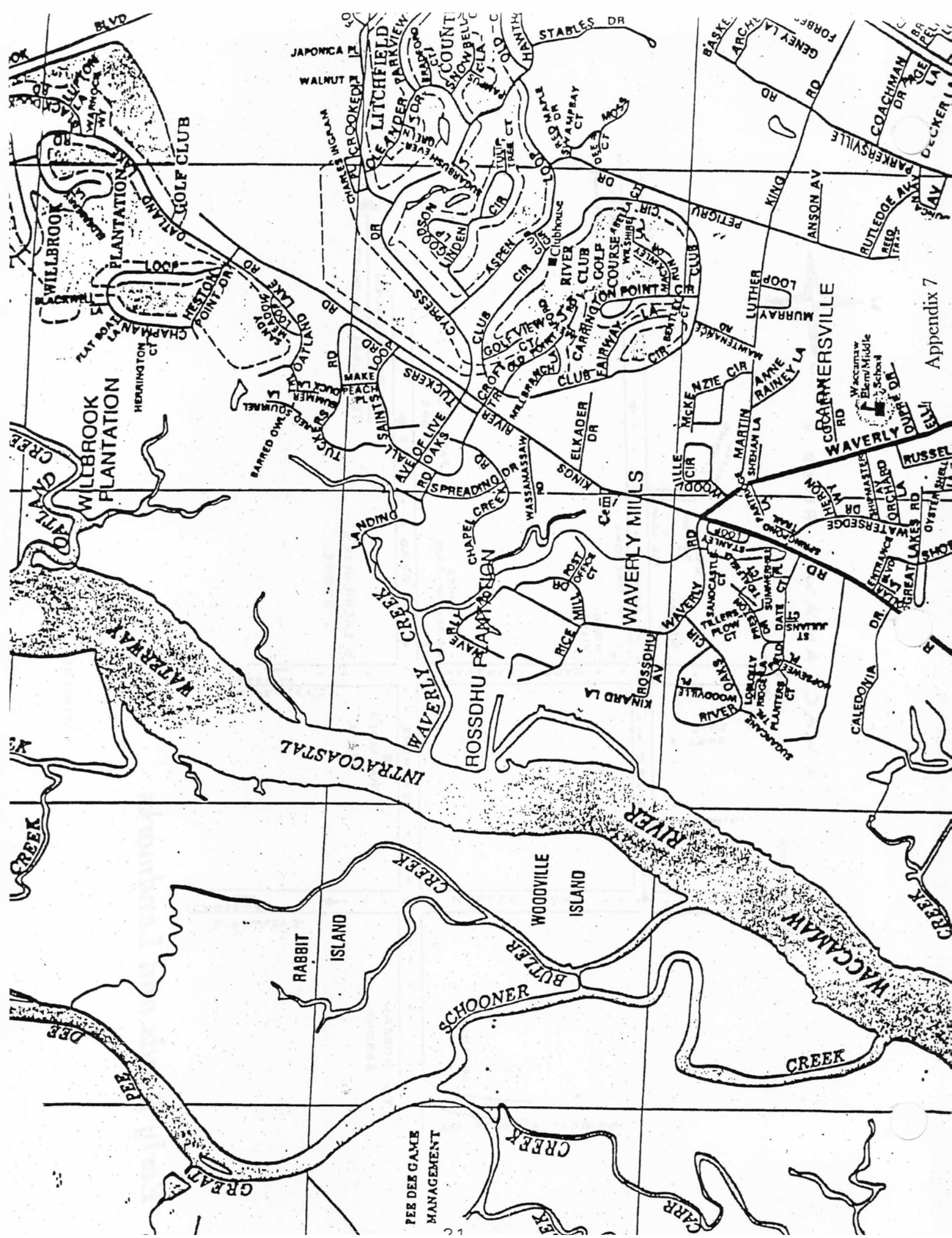
SEPT-1939
 T.M. JORDAN, C.E. - MYRTLE BEACH, S.C.



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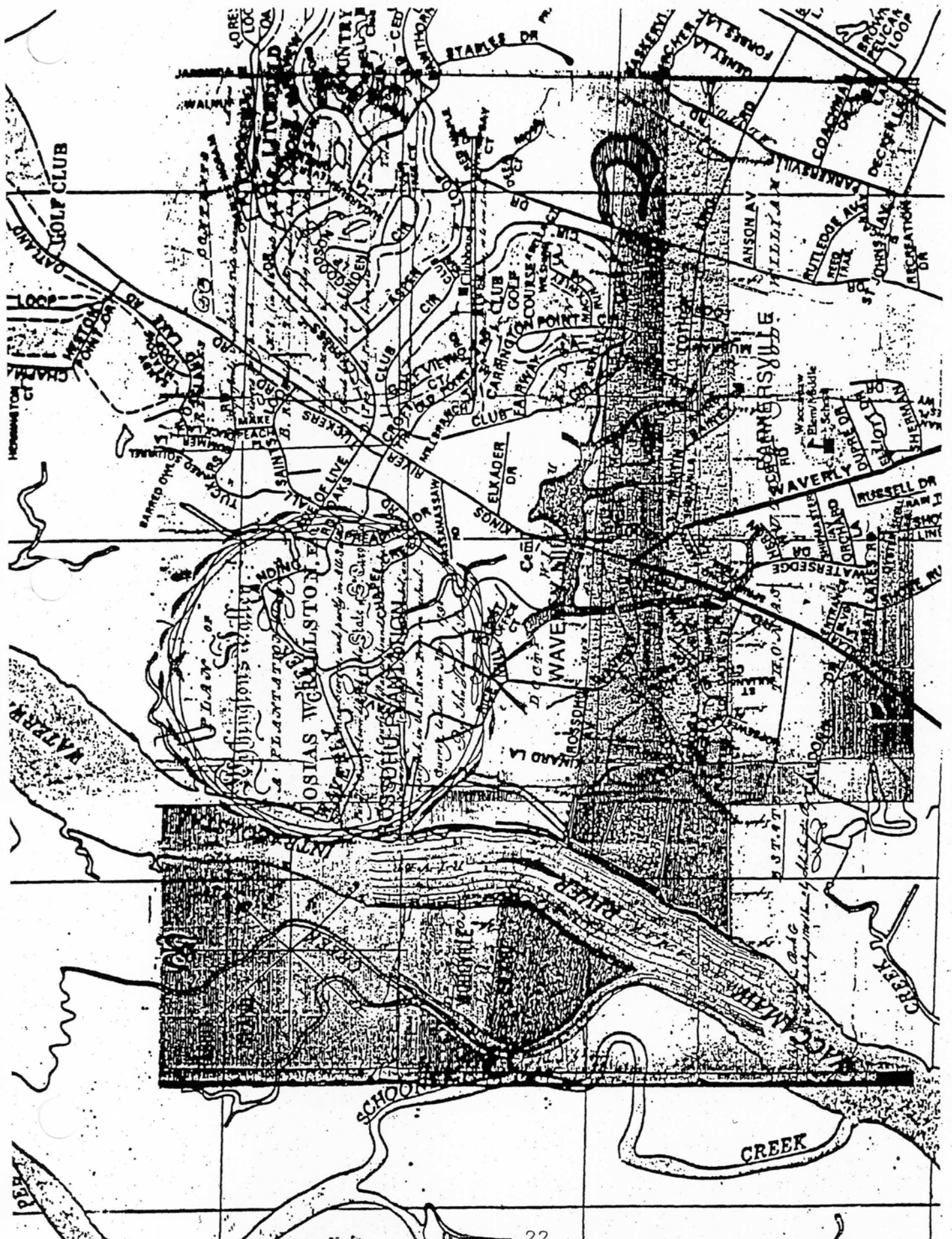


Early Roads and Landmarks



PER DEE GAME
MANAGEMENT

Waccamaw
Elem/Middle
School
School #



OVERLAYED MAP by Susan A. Scheno