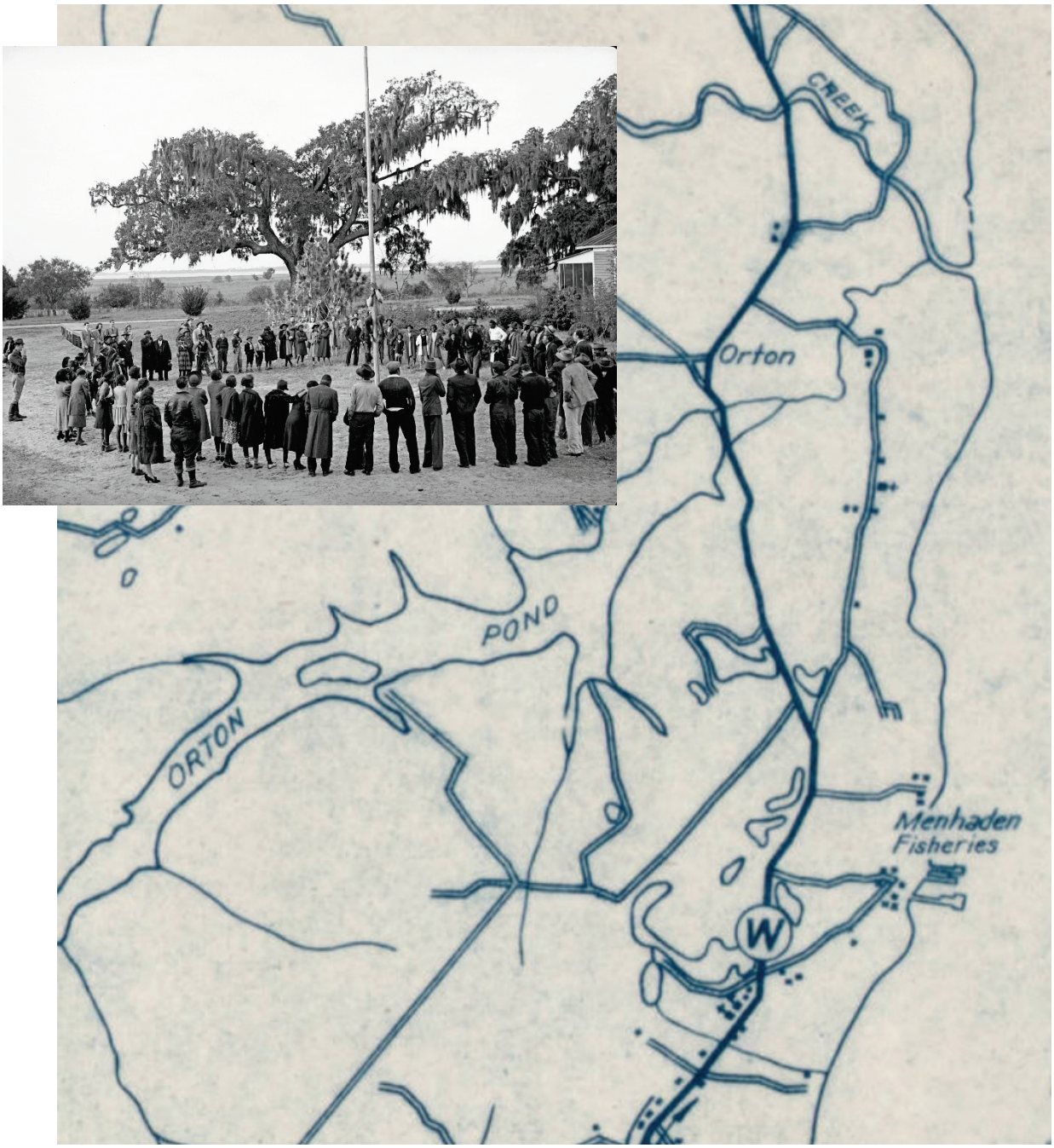
AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES ON THE LOWER CAPE FEAR RIVER IN THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES



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The map is Brunswick County, N.C., 1930-1943 rural delivery routes, courtesy the North Carolina Collection.

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES ON THE LOWER CAPE FEAR DURING THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES WITH AN EMPHAPSIS ON BRUNSWICK COUNTY AND THE ORTON VICINITY

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We all got history. Some of us just don't know it. But it's there. Just got to look for it.

-- Ellen L. Hazard, 83 years old, historian of the Hazard Family, Worcester County, Massachusetts, January 1984

There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.

-- Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Historians from James Sprunt to Lawrence Lee have been strangely reserved regarding the history and contributions of African Americans in the Lower Cape Fear region of Brunswick County. The focus has been on houses with great white columns and the associated white elite who lived in those houses. African Americans seem to play only a supporting role in the drama of the area's history.

Fortunately, there have been a variety of historians exploring North Carolina's African American population from reconstruction through the early twentieth century, often focusing on neighboring New Hanover County and Wilmington.

Brunswick, however, was different politically, demographically, and socially. The story of its people has been told only in the context of predominately white Southport at the south end and black Navassa at its north end.

This study explores the lives of African Americans on the Lower Cape Fear, helping to note their accomplishments and contributions, but primarily reconstructing the warp and weft of daily lives.

Because of the fragmentary preservation of many sources, the story is not always complete. In addition, our reliance on civil records – the census, tax scripts, marriage and death certificates, for example – robs us of some of the complexity, but we hope the compilation provides a starting point for other researchers interested in exploring the lifeways of African Americans on the Lower Cape Fear.

TO THE READER

Some of the terms in these discussions are unpleasant and racist. They are maintained for both historical accuracy and to help those unfamiliar with the Jim Crow South better understand the strength and resiliency of African Americans during this historical period. While these terms were not universal, they were nearly so.

All of the accounts discussed here have been gathered from public documents, records, wills, birth and death records, newspapers, and similar sources. We have fact checked what we could and believe the information to be accurate, but cannot be certain that all of the information is true or that we have interpreted it correctly.

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Introduction

In 1916, when local historian James Sprunt first published *Chronicles of the Cape Fear River, 1660-1916*, the index failed to include a reference for "Negro" or "Slave," much less "free person of color." Of course, they are occasionally mentioned, but they were not the story. Whites were the story of progress and courage. Creating, building, envisioning. In addition, when they are mentioned, such as on page 180, Sprunt cavalierly proclaims, ". . . those days are gone, and who would bring them back? And yet it is easier to call them wrong than to prove them so."

Some seventy years later, in 1980, when Dr. Lawrence Lee penned his 278 page *The History of Brunswick County North Carolina*, his first sentence in the Preface was "This volume is a comprehensive history of Brunswick County" (Lee 1980:vii). In spite of this claim, the index again provides no listing for "African American," "slave," "people of color," "Negro," or anything remotely similar. A reference to "Africa" (Lee 1980:42) notes only that two ships traveled from Brunswick Town to Africa in 1772, with no discussion of their intentions.

In fact, a careful reading of this more recent "comprehensive" history will provide about one page, separated into a number of sentences and paragraphs that deal with the African-American people of the county. Generally, they are referenced in the context of number of slaves owned.

Reading even this "comprehensive" history one comes away with the impression that Brunswick County must have been a very white world. Writers of local histories during this period often focused on "old white men" who represented the wonderful advancement of society through difficult times (especially during and after reconstruction). The African American population slips into the background, becoming invisible and viewed as failing to make substantive contributions.

Our goal is not to create a straw man; but we must note that several years previous to Lee's work, Fogel, Engerman, and Gutman were already nimbly debating the meaning of slavery (Fogel and Engerman 1974; Gutman 1975). About the same time Genovese wrote his seminal work, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (Genovese 1974). So it does become difficult to fully understand how Lee could have so completely overlooked the contribution of enslaved African Americans to the growth and development of Brunswick County.

Nor is it entirely clear how the November 1898 Wilmington race riot (or more correctly, a coup, orchestrated by white Democrats in order to regain political power and segregate the city), with the death of 30 (maybe as many as 100) African American citizens (McLaurin 2000), failed to make any impact on Lee's historiography.

While two decades after Lee's history of Brunswick, Burton warns that, "we are courting great danger in minimalizing the impact of racism in our society" (Burton 1991:161). Instead, Lee seems to have drawn more deeply from historians such as U.B. Phillips, who argued that "The Central Theme of Southern History" wasn't an agrarian ideal, but rather than the South "shall be and remain a white man's country" (Phillips 1928:31). Certainly the "comprehensive" history of Brunswick suggests that Phillips was correct.

In contrast, this publication is anything but comprehensive. Instead, we hope to create a context and tell a few stories of the African

Americans who lived midway between Southport in Brunswick County and Wilmington in New Hanover County from the Reconstruction through the mid-twentieth century. Because of our research interests, it will focus on the area around Orton, Kendal, and Lilliput plantations. But it is not comprehensive.

The Study

The goal is to explore the lifeways of African Americans in Brunswick County after the Civil War, with a special focus on the Lower Cape Fear area. It represents an outgrowth of our previous work in the area (Trinkley and Hacker 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016a, 2016b) and the recognition that in each of these previous works African Americans were dealt with rather peripherally, when in fact, they have really been the central players in the Lower Cape Fear history since the early eighteenth century.

How to craft the history of these relatively faceless, nameless individuals during slavery is still an unanswered question since there has been little evidence of the enslaved in our previous work in the region. During reconstruction and into the early twentieth century the story becomes clearer since there is a wealth of census and other government records. Not all of these documents, however, can be trusted and some bear the distinct marks of Jim Crow. Nevertheless, they provide a point of beginning.

Still important to consider, is how to tell the story of individuals who have left descendants in the local community. It is certainly not our story; yet with that said, we believe that it is a story worthy of being told and it seems that no one else is rushing to tell their story. In speaking with individuals in the local African American community, we found great interest in the area plantations, although memories do not seem to span more than perhaps the past 60 years.

It is equally important to acknowledge that the community itself recognized the importance of this story. In 1989, Clarence Jones and others in the area sought to create an annual reunion of those living in the Dark Branch, Neck, Marsh Branch, and Old Towne communities, all of which were predominantly African American ("Reunion Will Bring Memories of 4 River Road Communities," Susan Usher, *The Brunswick Beacon*, June 29, 1989, pg. 6A). The people living in the area explained that when the government bought the lands comprising the Marsh Branch and Neck communities "people went everywhere, from Baltimore to California" according to 70-year old resident Rosa Bell McMillion. Another explained the purpose of the reunion, "we want our children to remember where we came from and who we are." They spoke of sharecropper parents, a postmaster and church leader, large black landowners, and an herbalist.

The program was continued again in 1990 (*Brunswick Beacon*, June 28, 1990, pg. 2B), but seems to have faltered afterwards. Now, almost 30 years later, there are even fewer of the old residents still alive and able to tell their stories.

Thus, as we just explained, our story here is not comprehensive. Instead, we hope it will provide a foundation upon which can built a more meaningful, rich, and enticing story of the African American workers along the Lower Cape Fear.

The Area

Brunswick County is located on the extreme southeastern coast of North Carolina, just above the South Carolina boarder. To the south is the Atlantic Ocean where the mainland is separated from the Ocean by six islands of various sizes and a variety of beaches, including Bird Island, Sunset Beach, Ocean Isle (or Hales) Beach, Holden Beach, and Oak Island (which includes Caswell, Yaupon, and Long beaches. With the exception of Bald Head Island, the coast has an east-west orientation and is partially protected by the Cape Fear. Bald Head Island (known historically as Smith Island) exhibits the remains of a series of forested dune and beach ridges separated by troughs, some of which are marshes. The wooded ridges are oriented roughly east-west, being truncated by the north-south beach on the east side of the island (more detailed information can be found in Pilkey et al. 1980).

Figure 1. Modern features in Brunswick County, North Carolina.

Major inlets draining into the Atlantic include the Little River (which empties into the ocean in neighboring South Carolina), the Calabash River (which empties not into the ocean, but rather into Little River), the Shallotte River, Lockwoods Folly River, Dutchman Creek, and the Cape Fear River.

The east side of Brunswick County is defined by the Cape Fear River. While there are a number of islands in the river, the largest is Eagle Island; the Cape Fear flows on its east side, while on the west is the shallow Brunswick River. At Wilmington, just above Eagle Island, the Cape Fear separates into two branches – the northeast (flowing into New Hanover County) and the northwest, which continues to mark the boundary of Brunswick with New Hanover, Pender, and Bladen counties.

Between the towns of Delco and Sandy Creek a line separating Brunswick from Columbus County to the west strikes off, running through Green Swamp. The border then follows Juniper Creek to the Waccamaw River about eight miles below Lake Waccamaw. The Waccamaw then forms the border between Brunswick and Columbus County to the South Carolina line.

The County achieved its current form by

1877 with annexation of a small area of Brunswick into Columbus County.

Situated in the lower Coastal Plain, elevations range from about 75 feet to sea level. Most of the county is level with short slopes along major drainages. All of the soils in the County are formed by coastal plain sediment or by sediment deposited by streams flowing through the County.

While much of the county consists of sandy soils, many of which are droughty, about a fifth of the soils are wet, often frequently flooding. Only about 20% are identified as having few agricultural crop limitations (i.e., they possess a Land Capability classification of II or better). The U.S. Department of Agriculture classifies only 13.8% of the acreage in Brunswick County, mainly in the south-central, western, and northeastern parts of the county, as prime farmland. In contrast, about 78% of the county is covered by forests, typically pines.

Geologically, the Wicomico surface, ranging between 75 and 45 feet above mean sea level (AMSL), covers about a third of the County. The Talbot surface covers more than half of the County and ranges from 45 to 25 feet in elevation. The Pamlico surface covers a narrow strip of mainland near the ocean and Cape Fear River and also covers the floodplain of the Waccamaw River. It ranges from 25 feet AMSL to sea level.

A geological characteristic of the County is the presence of sinkholes. These are naturally occurring, roughly circular depressions in the land surface, formed most commonly in areas of limestone bedrock, which readily dissolves in the presence of slightly acidic groundwater. In areas of humid climate, rain water percolates downward through the soil cover into openings in the limestone bedrock, gradually dissolving the rock matrix. Void spaces in the subsurface will eventually form, ranging from microscopic to cavern size.

In most areas of the County, limestone bedrock is not directly exposed at the surface, but is covered by a variable thickness of sand, silt, and clay. This overburden may bridge subsurface cavities for long periods of time. Eventually a catastrophic collapse of the overburden into the subsurface cavity may occur, and a sinkhole is formed. This type of sinkhole is known as a cover collapse sinkhole. Most of these sinkholes are located in the southeastern portion of the County east of Boiling Spring Lakes.

Topographically, one of most obvious features of Brunswick County is Green Swamp, a roughly circular area of about 175,000 acres in the north central part of the County. Green Swamp accounts for the largest undissected interstream area in the County and the largest area of muck soils. The poor drainage has resulted in an accumulated organic surface layer of variable thickness. In many areas these deposits have obliterated landscape features such as Carolina bays, as well as the upper parts of many drainages. The east side is drained by the Cape Fear River, the west side by the Waccamaw River, and the south side drains to the Atlantic Ocean.

The main waterways in Brunswick County are wide and shallow and those near the ocean are affected by tides. A short distance inland, the streams become narrow with broad interstream areas.

On the east side of the County, the Cape Fear drainage contains many of the previously discussed sinkholes. Much of the southeastern part of this area is undulating sand, and the rest is smooth or has convex slopes near drainageways. Much of the Cape Fear is tidal, with a substantial inflow of fresh water from upstream. Water salinity, at various locations and various depths, ranges from a few parts per thousand to almost the concentration in the ocean.

The rising sea level and navigation improvements such as dredging have resulted in increases in salinity farther upstream, and changes in the nature of swampy areas along the river. These changes may in particular affect Town Creek and Rice's Creek, with stands of centuries-old cypress on their banks.

The Lower Cape Fear River is a nursery and habitat for several hundred species of fish. Among the most abundant are Atlantic menhaden, Atlantic croaker, spot, star drum, penaeid shrimp, mullet, weakfish, bay anchovies, killfish, silversides, blueback herring, American shad, hickory shad, striped bass, and Atlantic sturgeon.

Historical records show that the natural depth at the mouth of the Cape Fear River in colonial times was about 10 feet. Beginning in the nineteenth century, a succession of dredging projects created a channel 42 feet deep and 500 feet wide. The result is an extreme example of disturbing the natural state of equilibrium of beaches and inlet, creating an artificial situation that can only be sustained by constant dredging and beach nourishment.

On the west side of the County is the Waccamaw River. It is dissected by shallow tributary streams and has broad interstream areas of poorly drained to moderately well drained soils. Numerous Carolina bays and low parallel sand ridges are found in this area.

There are at least eleven plant communities characterizing Brunswick County's aquatic, wetland, and terrestrial areas. The aquatic communities include those found in freshwater ponds, such as Orton Pond, and those found in riverine and estuarine areas. The latter areas have been extensively degraded by development, although at one time Eagle Island possessed a wide variety of characteristic species.

The wetland habitat can be divided into five vegetative types, although the bay forest and lowland pine communities are the most common. The bay forest, found on broad, flat interfluves, is best represented by Green Swamp. There the dominant vegetation is red maple, Atlantic white cedar, loblolly pine, sweet bay, red bay, pond pine, swamp black gum, and pond cypress. The community is largely maintained by frequent fires.

The lowland pine community, often also called the flatwoods, cover a large percentage of Brunswick County and much of the surrounding region. They are typically found on low marine ridge and swale areas, Pleistocene backbarrier flats, and other broad interfluves. They were historically maintained by natural conditions, most importantly frequent, "uninterrupted" fire. The dominant canopy was historically longleaf pine, while the understory was essentially a function of fire frequency. These flatwoods have largely been converted to other forest types so that few natural areas remain today.

The terrestrial plant communities include barrier island beach communities, the maritime forest communities found as climax communities on stabilized dune areas, Pleistocene sand ridge communities often recognized by mixed pine/oak and wiregrass, and the upland hardwood communities of mixed oaks and hickories.

Brunswick County is hot and humid in summer, but sea breezes frequently cool the coast. Winter is cool with occasional brief cold spells. Rain falls throughout the year and is fairly heavy. Annual precipitation is adequate for all crops, with about 32-inches falling between April and September during the growing season. Every few years a hurricane crosses the area.

These environmental conditions affected the history of the area. Extensive drainage efforts were necessary for cotton, but naval store production was ideally suited to the region. This in turn gave rise to what has become known as industrial slavery. The fish in the Cape Fear eventually resulted in a thriving African American fishing community in Southport (earlier Smithville).

The Beginning

There is no need to detail the origins of slavery or settlement in Brunswick County; authors such as Wood (2004) have done an admirable job. Instead, it may only be necessary to briefly explore the nature of slavery in Brunswick.

To talk about slavery, it is important to explore the issue of wealth accumulation. Price

Table 1.
Wealth of North Carolina's Royal Councillors from the Cape Fear area (adopted from Price 1972:79).

Name	Dates of Active Service	Slaves	Acres Owned	Value of Estate and/or Annual Income
Allen, Eleazer	1734-1750	50	1,285	
Ashe, John Baptista	1731-1735		5,240	
DeRosset, Lewis	1754-1775	31	3,000	£10,000
Dobbs, Edward Brice	1757-1758		1,542	£5,600
Dry, William	1764-1775	104	2,085	
Forbes, William	1733, 1741-1752		1,417	
Halton, Robert	1731-1749	14	5,840	
Harnett, Cornelius	1731-1732		4,715	£7,000
Hassell, James	1752-1775	39	12,540	
Heron, Benjamin	1764-1769	56		£550 p.a.
Innes, James	1750-1759		2,000	
McCulloch, Henry	1755			£550 p.a.
McGuire, Thomas	1775	1		£3,500/£645 p.a.
Moore, Maurice II	1760-1761	64	2,000	
Moore, Roger	1734-1751	250	59,165	
Moseley, Edward	1734-1749	90	31,900	
	1740-1744, 1749-1757,			
Murray, James	1762-1765	28	1,680	£3,000
Rice, Nathaniel	1731-1752	17	6,240	
Rowan, Matthew	1734-1760	26	9,401	
Rutherfurd, John	1751-1757, 1760-1775	150	4,000	£23,633
Sampson, John	1761-1775		620	
Smith, William	1731, 1734-1743		7,000	£550 p.a.
Swann, John	1751-1761		2,130	

All monitary sums are in sterling; p.a. means per annum and represents annual income in salary and fees as a Councillor only, rather than estate value. North Carolina did not require estates to be inventoried, so estate values are not always available.

(1972) examined North Carolina's Royal Councillors. These men served as the upper house of the Royal Assembly, a higher court (the chancery), and a board of advice and consent to the Executive or Royal Governor. They were also financial and social leaders in their communities and were to be "men of good estates."

Price takes a very conservative approach, using only the documented number of slaves and acreage for which there are patents, with warrants being ignored (Price 1972:75). As a point of reference, Main has argued that 20 slaves in the pre-Revolutionary South marked a man of means, while Governor Tryon in North Carolina claimed that a "good plantation" would consist of at least 70 enslaved African Americans. In terms of income, different accounts reveal that between £100 and £450 was required for a high standard of living (Price 1972:77).

While the Councillors owned an average of about 8,200 acres and had an average of 66 slaves, clearly marking them as wealthy, some stood above the others. For example, Roger Moore owned at least 59,165 acres and Edward Mosely held 31,900 acres. Estate values topped out at John Rutherfurd's £23,633 and it seems likely that Roger Moore, with much more land and many more slaves, was perhaps one of the wealthiest individuals in the area.

Somewhat later, Wolf (1979) found during the proprietary period that while the state as a whole was a colony of small farmers, there was a very wealthy minority. She reveals that less than 1% of the households held 30% of the land grants and declared 30% of the colony's tithables.

Table 2.
Source of Slaves Entering North Carolina (per cents in parentheses)
(Minchinton 1994:Tables 1, 2, 8, and 10)

	Africa	West Indies	Other Mainland Colonies	Unknown	Total
1702-1746	-	33 (10.3)	286 (89.7)	-	319
1749-1775	301 (15.6)	1,320 (68.6)	223 (11.6)	80 (4.2)	1,924
1784-1790	231 (23.3)	212 (21.3)	550 (55.4)	-	993
Totals	532 (16.4)	1,565 (48.4)	1,059 (32.7)	80 (2.5)	3,236

	From South Carolina
1702-1746	224
1749-1775	45
1784-1790	261

Wood (2004:133) examines the planters of the Lower Cape Fear as a group, finding that the top 1% of society owned nearly 20% of the acres

Figure 2. The faces of enslaved North Carolinians. Left, Sara Gudger (1816-1938) of Buncombe County (Library of Congress, WPA Writer's Project). Right, Uncle Moreau, commonly known as Omar Ibn Said (1770-1864), of the Wilmington area (Randolph Linsly Simpson African-American Collection, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University).

patented and nearly 10% of the slaves. The top 50% owned about 90% of both the land and slaves. The Lower Cape Fear represented a very hierarchical social order.

North Carolina's population of enslaved African Americans increased rapidly, from about 1,000 in 1705 to 6,000 in 1730 (Watson 1996:6). In Brunswick, the 1769 tax list identified 1,239 enslaved African Americans. Slave ownership, however, was not common and 110 of the white males (representing 54% of those reporting) owned no slaves. The average number of slaves owned was 12, although only two owners (less than 1% of those enumerated) reported over 100 enslaved people. These two individuals were William Dry, with 128 slaves and Richard Quince with 113. By 1772, the number of reported slaves in Brunswick declined slightly to 1,150. The average holding declined to only 6 slaves. There were 102 white males (51.8% of the total) reporting no slaves. Only one individual, Richard Quince, owned more than 100 slaves (he owned 155). Dry's number had declined to 88.

Regardless of the specific numbers, Wood (2004:99) has found that 63% of the Lower Cape Fear population consisted of enslaved African Americans. In contrast, only 29% of the population were slaves in the upper reaches of the Cape Fear and in northeast North Carolina; the slave population represented only about a quarter of the total population.

In 1733, Governor Burrington noted that North Carolina planters had difficulty obtaining slaves since the state had no established slave trade with Africa (Minchinton 1994). Wood suggests that

Table 3.
Major slave owners in Smithville and Town Creek townships in 1860

	Owner	Plantation	Slaves	Slave Houses
Smithville				
	Thomas C. Miller	Orton	144	40
	Thomas D. Meares	The Bluffs	107	12
	O.D. Holmes	Kendal	58	12
	John H. Hill	Lilliput	27	15
Town Creek				
	David L. Russell	Winnabow	200	40
	Thomas McIlhenny	Aspern, The Forks, Eagle Island (?)	100	12
	John D. Bellamy	Groverly (?)	82	17
	Thomas Cowan	Old Town	80	12

slaves arrived haphazardly, in small numbers, and on ships that were engaged in other trading activities. Moreover, many of those enslaved Africans entering the Cape Fear may have been rejects from other venues (Wood 2004:38-39). This seems further confirmed by Minchinton (1994) who documents only 45 ships with 319 slaves arriving between 1702 and 1746. Most of these came from Charleston and most arrived at Brunswick. Table 2 provides an overview. With so few imports, North Carolina never developed large slave merchants and sales were generally handled by general merchants, such as Frederick Gregg, John Burgwin, and Cornelius Harnett in the Wilmington area (Minchinton 1994).

By 1850, there were 3,651 whites in Brunswick County and 3,621 African Americans, 3,302 of whom were enslaved. By 1860, the white population had increased to 4,515. The enslaved African American population increased to only 3,631 and free people of color had declined to 260. For whatever reason, white population growth was overtaking the number of enslaved individuals in the late antebellum. Lee (1980:99) indicates that there were 258 slave owners by 1860. Only one, D.L. Russell, owned as many as 200 enslaved African Americans.

In the Smithville Precinct, at the eve of the Civil War, there were 901 enslaved African Americans, living in 194 houses on about 92 properties with 83 owners. In the Town Creek area there were 1,011 slaves living in 210 houses with 43 listed owners. The largest slave owners in both areas are shown in Table 3. These data reveal that the Town Creek planters owned larger numbers of slaves than those in Smithville (an average of about 23 to 11). However, housing was very similar in both areas with 4.6 enslaved to a house in Smithville and 4.8 enslaved people to a house in the Town Creek Township.

The only ex-slave from Brunswick appearing in the Library of Congress typescript collection of narratives is Joseph Anderson, interviewed by Mrs. Edith S. Hibbs. He reported being the slave of T.C. McIlhenny on what he called "Eagles Nest" rice plantation. Anderson reported his parents dying in 1865, at which time his older sister took care of him. He married in Brunswick County, with his unnamed wife living nearly 21 years. After that he married a second time when he was 75-years-old. At some point, he moved to Wilmington, where he "was a stevedore for Mr. Alexander Sprunt for sixty years." We have found Joseph Anderson in the 1900 and 1920 census. In 1900, he had been married to Louise for two years, so this was clearly his first wife. Joseph died on January 28, 1940, being buried at the Pine Forest Cemetery.

Another notable slave was James (Alfred) Johnson, who wrote, *The Life of the Late James Johnson (Colored Evangelist), an Escaped Slave from the Southern States of America.* Johnson's is the only known first-hand account of a slave's life in Brunswick County (https://davidcecelski.com/2017 /08/24/the-life-of-the-late-james-johnson-an-american-slave-narrative-from-oldham-engl and/). The account tells of his life first as a child enslaved to Uriah Moss [Morse] in Smithville, subsequently sold to a Galloway, and then to Jesse G. Drew, a small plantation owner on the Cape Fear. There he tended the crops, protecting them from birds, and reported on crops such as sweet

potatoes, Indian corn, cotton, peas, and even sugar cane. From there he was sold to George Washington Swain, a much larger planter with a plantation at Green Swamp. Johnson tells of merciless whippings and the struggles to find adequate food after the Civil War resulted in the blockade of Wilmington. He and three colleagues stole a boat and slipped away in July 1862 to a Union vessel.

Many people assume that rice was the agricultural mainstay of Brunswick County during the antebellum. In 1840, 949,755 pounds of rice were produced. By 1860, the county produced 6,775,286 pounds. But this production was possible only along the Cape Fear River where wetlands allowed ditching and diking to make rice fields that could be periodically flooded. Four of the ten wealthiest men, including D.L. Russell, in Brunswick County produced no rice (Lee 1980:99).

For the remainder of the County the most significant crop was likely naval stores – products that could be "harvested" from the flatlands dominated by longleaf pine and wire grass. In 1840, Brunswick County produced 4,867 barrels of pitch, tar, and turpentine (Haskel 1843:480). By 1860, there were 41 producers of crude turpentine in the County, along with 13 turpentine distilleries. In contrast, there were only 15 grist mills and five saw mills (Lee 1980:100). Lee reports that the county produced $320,000 in naval stores, which were "the single largest source of income for the county" (Lee 1980:110).

Outland expresses the situation facing Brunswick County succinctly,

> In North Carolina . . . tar, pitch, turpentine, and other forest products did not face competition from other staples. Except for tobacco, which grew well in the fertile eastern river bottom lands, and rice, which could be cultivated in limited sections of the coastal region near Wilmington, North Carolina lacked any other profitable export commodity (Outland 2004:35).

Accounts of turpentine are provided by several period observers, including Olmsted (1856:337-350) and the agricultural journal *Arator* (Anonymous 1855). Olmsted also discussed the conditions of those living in the "piney woods,"

> The negroes employed in this branch of industry, seemed to me to be unusually intelligent and cheerful. Decidedly they are superior in every moral and intellectual respect to the great mass of the white people inhabiting the turpentine forest. Among the latter there is a large number, I should think a majority, of entirely uneducated, poverty-stricken vagabonds. I mean by vagabonds, simply, people without habitual, definite occupation or reliable means of livelihood. They are poor, having almost no property but their own bodies; and the use of these, that is, their labor, they are not accustomed to hire out statedly and regularly, so as to obtain capital by wages, but only occasionally by the day or job, when driven to it by necessity. A family of these people will commonly hire, or "squat" and build, a little log cabin, so made that it is only a shelter from rain, the sides not being chinked, and having no more furniture or pretension to comfort than is commonly provided a criminal in the cell of a prison. They will cultivate a little corn, and possibly a few roods of potatoes, cow-peas and coleworts. They will own a few swine, that find their living in the forest; and pretty certainly, also, a rifle and dogs; and the men,

> ostensibly, occupy most of their time in hunting (Olmsted 1856:348-349).

Scholarly examinations include Taylor (1926), who after exploring period records suggests, "in large turpentine forests a group of hands [a euphemistic term for enslaved African Americans] would be kept busy throughout most of the year" (Taylor 1926:39). He reports that a good "dipper" (the individual removing the sap from the boxes on trees) "could dip from 1800 to 3000 boxes a day, or enough turpentine to fill five or six barrels" (Taylor 1926:39). A cooper would turn out about five barrels a day. By the 1840s, an owner was able to clear $300-$400 a year per slave (Taylor 1926:40; Vollmers 2003:390).

Using a task system was usually a way for the owner to reduce resistance since it allowed free time when tasks were completed. An exception, however, appears to be in turpentining. Vollmers (2003:385) and Fraser (2007:54) both comment on the horrific nature of the work in the pine woods. Vollmers explains that the wetness of the ground and the heat, coupled with insects and poisonous snakes "made the woods an extremely unpleasant place to work, particularly in the summer months" (Vollmers 2003:385). Prizer goes forward to comment on the number of slaves engaged in turpentining that simply slipped away into the swamps to pursue either freedom or better work conditions on agricultural plantations. Complaints involved "loneliness and isolation, heavy work demands and dangerous labor conditions, ramshackle housing and threadbare clothing" with the result that such work was often "too much for slaves to bear" (Prizer 2009:58). The son of a period owner described the estate's seclusion from the "egg-sucking cur of the negro quarters" where the enslaved turpentine workers lived (quoted in Prizer 2009:58).

The Plantations and Their Enslaved Workers

The Lower Cape Fear seems divided between the very large plantations and those of more modest proportions. This seems to have been the case from the colonial period on and is likely the result of topographic differences. Beginning about halfway up the Cape Fear, coinciding with Brunswick Town, the swamps allowed diking to recover the fertile lowlands and rice thrived. The lower portion of the Cape Fear presents primarily bluffs and is subject to saltwater intrusion.

This resulted in the development of the major rice plantations, such as Orton, Kendal, Lilliput, Sand Hill, Pleasant Oaks, Old Town, Clarendon, and Mallory. It was on these plantations that very large numbers of enslaved Africans worked the colonial and antebellum rice fields previously explored. Although Table 3 lists some of the huge numbers of enslaved, tables such as this fall short of conveying the human dimension of slavery. Tables 4, 5, and 6 may help to make the African Americans of the Lower Cape Fear more human.

Table 4 lists some of the enslaved on the Lower Cape Fear that could be documented as fleeing with the British as they passed through the region in 1776. Table 5 identifies some of those identified in previous research. Table 6 lists the deeds of just two slave owners, Roger Moore during the colonial period and Benjamin Smith during the antebellum, as they bought and sold human flesh.

Table 6, in particular, may convey some of palatable uncertainty that confronted the enslaved. While we know little about Roger Moore's treatment of his slaves, we see relatively few deeds of his acquisition or disposal of the enslaved. This suggests that at least there was some stability at Orton. Of course, this was the stability brought about by the vast wealth generated by the enslaved in crops and turpentine.

Such was not the case with Benjamin Smith. Chronically cash strapped and evidencing one poor business decision after another, Smith was constantly forced to dispose of his chattel – and this is represented by the names of those faceless individuals he sold, often at bargain prices.

Table 4.
African Americans documented as fleeing to the British in the Cape Fear area
(adapted from Moss and Scoggins 2004; page numbers reference that work)

Name	Owner	Location	Date	pg.
Abberdeen	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	1a
Abraham	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	1b
Adam	William Lord	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	<1778	1d
Arthur	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	6
Ben	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	15
Bobb	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	28
Cain, Jack	William Cain	Brunswick	<1778	43
Campbell, Moses	James Campbell	Wilmington	1776	44
Cato	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	47
Ceasar	?	British Navy HMS *St. Lawrence* off Cape Fear	1776	48
Charlotte	?	British Navy HMS *St. Lawrence* off Cape Fear	1776	51
Claranda	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	53
Davids, Nancy	Robert Daniel	Cape Fear	1776	68
Deer, Tom	Joseph Eagles	Northwest Branch Cape Fear	<1778	70
Dick	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	74
Friday	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	96
George	Parker Quince	Town Creek	<1778	100
Gilbert	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	103
Grace	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	112
Jackson, Judith	John Bell	[mulato indentured servant] Cape Fear	1776	144
Jacob	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	146
James	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	148
Jeffery	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	152
John	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	159
John	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	159
Justice	Capt. Newman	Brunswick	<1778	174
Lavinia	William Hooper	Wilmington [forced to return to Hooper]	1781	183
Lesslie, Abraham	Richard Quince	Upper Town Creek	1776	186
London	Lt. Isaac DuBois	Wilmington	1776	189
London, Drury	William Lord	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	<1778	190
Londonerry	William Lord	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	<1778	191
Lord, Bob	William Lord	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	<1778	191
Maryann	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	199
Moore, Daniel	John Moore	Wilmington	1776	212
Moore, Isaac	Hunting Moore	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	<1778	213
Moore, Joseph	Hunting Moore	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	<1778	213
Moore, Samuel	Skinner Moore	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	1776	214
Moore, Sherry	Hunting Moore	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	<1778	214
Moore, Tom	Hunting Moore	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	<1778	214
Morris	?	Town Creek	<1778	215
Morris	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	215
Murphy	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	219
Patience	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	229
Patty	Robert Howe	[with child] [Kendal] Cape Fear	1779	230
Payne, Thomas	John Gerard	Wilmington	<1778	232
Peggy	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	232
Peters, Thomas	William Campbell	Wilmington	1776	240
Polly	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	244
Presence	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	248
Provey, John	?	[fpc?] off North Carolina coast	1776	253
Queen	?	British Navy HMS Scorpion off Cape Fear	1776	255
Quince, Abram	Richard Quince	Wilmington	1779	255
Quince, Jacob	Parker Quince	Town Creek	<1778	255
Quince, James	Parker Quince	Town Creek	<1778	256
Quince, Morris	Parker Quince	Town Creek	<1778	256
Quince, Quash	Parker Quince	Town Creek	<1778	256
Richard	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	262
Rose	?	British Navy HMS *Scorpion* off Cape Fear	1776	271
Sam	?	British Navy HMS *St. Lawrence* off Cape Fear	1776	275
Sampson	?	British Navy HMS *St. Lawrence* off Cape Fear	1776	278
Saris	?	British Navy HMS *St. Lawrence* off Cape Fear	1776	282
Saunders, David	?	British Navy HMS *St. Lawrence* off Cape Fear	1776	282
Scipio	?	British Navy HMS *St. Lawrence* off Cape Fear	1776	285
Snow, Dick	William Snow	Pleasant Point	<1778	300
Snow, Gosman	William Snow	Pleasant Point	<1778	300
Snow, Thomas	William Snow	Pleasant Point	<1778	300
Steele, Murphy	Stephen Daniel	Lockert's Folly, near Wilmington	1776	304
Thomas, John	Henry Long	Cape Fear	1777	317
Tom	?	British Navy HMS *St. Lawrence* off Cape Fear	1776	323
Tom	Roger Davis	Brunswick County	<1778	323
Watson, Nancy	Patt Quince	Wilmington	1776	338
Williams, Polly	Parker Quince	Cape Fear	1776	353

Table 5.
A few enslaved African Americans in the study area

Individual	Condition	Source
-, Abbey	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Andrew	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Annabella	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Ben	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Betty	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Betty	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Black Isaac	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Bob	Kendal slave - livestock tender	Brunswick County Court Minutes, July 1797
-, Bob	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Burguin	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Burris	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Caso	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Ceaser	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Clarissa	Kendal slave	Wilmington Gazette, April 27, 1815
-, Clarita	Kendal slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
-, Cuffee	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Davy	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Dennis	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Dinah	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Dolly	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Duncan	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Edenboro	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Eliza	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Eullina	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Freddrick	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, George	Kendal slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
-, Guilford	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Hannah	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Hariet	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Hercules	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Higate	Kendal and Orton slave, carpenter	Roger Moore's will
-, Horace	Orton slave	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
-, Isaac	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Ishan	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Jacob	Kendal slave	Swann Family Papers #2827, Wilson Library, UNC, Chapel Hill
-, Jenny	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Jimmy	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Job	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, John	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, John	Orton slave	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
-, Josh	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Judy	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, July	Kendal slave	Wilmington Gazette, April 27, 1815
-, Katy	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Katy	Kendal slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
-, Landy	Kendal slave	Swann Family Papers #2827, Wilson Library, UNC, Chapel Hill
-, Laura	Orton slave	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
-, Lemses	Kendal slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
-, Lewis	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Linus	Kendal slave	Wilmington Gazette, April 27, 1815
-, Lucetta	Orton slave	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
-, Lucinda	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Lucy	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Mingo	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Mingo, Jr.	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Moses	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Nat	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Nat, Jr.	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Nathan	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Nelson	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Peggy	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Penny	Kendal slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
-, Peter	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Phillis	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Phoebe	Kendal slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
-, Pompey	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Prince	Orton slave, brick mason	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Quince	Kendal slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB F, pg. 197
-, Rachael	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Rose	Kendal slave	Swann Family Papers #2827, Wilson Library, UNC, Chapel Hill
-, Sally	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Sam	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Sam	Orton slave	New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137
-, Sandy	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Solomon	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Sukey	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Thomas	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Tom	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Walker	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
-, Warren	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
Claypole, Billy	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
Claypole, Mary	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583
Fidler, John	Orton slave	Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 583

Table 6.
African Americans appearing in New Hanover deeds with Roger Moore (Orton) and Benjamin Smith (Orton, Kendal, and others) (adapted from http://libguides.cfcc.edu/deeds)

Grantor	Grantee	Name	DB	Pg	Year
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Betty	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Charles	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Diana	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Flora	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Glascow	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Robin	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Jacky	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Joe	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Josy	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Jupiter	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Laroche	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Latrouche	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Lizette	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Lucy	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	March	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Mary	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Moll	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Peggy	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Penda	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Phebe	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Jack	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Rose	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Scipio	C	69	1743
Hamilton, Archibald	Moore, Roger	Tom	C	69	1743
Moore, Roger	Moore, Ann	Unnamed	C	290	1750
Moore, Roger	Moore, George	Kigate	C	288	1750
Moore, Roger	Moore, George	Rose	C	288	1750
Moore, Roger	Moore, George and others	Bess	C	290	1750
Moore, Roger	Moore, Mary	Unnamed Multiple	C	289	1750
Moore, Roger	Moore, Mary	Unnamed	C	290	1750
Moore, Roger	Moore, William	Unnamed Multiple	C	288	1750

Table 6, cont.
African Americans appearing in New Hanover deeds with Roger Moore (Orton) and Benjamin Smith (Orton, Kendal, and others) (adapted from http://libguides.cfcc.edu/deeds)

Grantor	Grantee	Name	DB	Pg	Year
Smith, Benjamin; Dry, Virgil	Jennings, Thomas	Joe	M	528	1805
Smith, Benjamin	Love, William J.	Adam	O	223	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Murphy, Robert	Minah	O	259	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Wingate, Jesse	Tango	O	280	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Taylor, Henry	Joe	O	287	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Brown, Robert W.	Robbin	O	395	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Smith, David	Dianna	O	399	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Smith, David	Patty	O	399	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Smith, David	Hannah	O	399	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Lord, John	Charity	O	419	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Lord, John	Dicky	O	419	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Lord, John	Frank	O	419	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Lord, John	Mustapha	O	419	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Lord, John	Polydore	O	419	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Hostler, Alexander ; Meares, William B.	Charles	O	442	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Hostler, Alexander ; Meares, William B.	Virgil	O	442	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Cumba	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Cupid	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	David	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	John	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Joshua	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Lucy	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Marshall	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Menclis	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Nick	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Phillis	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Qua	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Will	O	444	1812
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Alfred	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Bess	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Cato	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Daniel	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Dianna	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Dick	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Emanuel	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Essex	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Jenny	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Jimboy	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Marcullus	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Menelaus	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Mustapha	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Neptune	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Nick	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Peggy	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Prince	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Taffy	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Tom	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Venus	O	536	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Kemp ; Geer	Mercy	O	493	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Toomer, John D.	Ben	P	55	1813
Smith, Benjamin	Cowan, John	Titus	P	159	1814
Smith, Benjamin	Wilkinson, William	Boney	P	240	1815
Smith, Benjamin	Wilkinson, William	Jack	P	240	1815
Smith, Benjamin ; Burgwin, George W. B.	Toomer, John D.	Bob	P	297	1815
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Abraham	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Arten	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Augusta	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Beck	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Billy Sr.	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Clow	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Cuffin	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Doll	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Dorsy Sr.	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Elcy	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Ginny	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Hector	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Jack Sr.	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Jacob	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	John (1)	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	John (2)	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Josh	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Judy	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Marcellas	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Marcury	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Neptune	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Paris	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Phillip	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Primes	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Quim	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Sarah (1)	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Sarah (2)	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Solomon	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Toney	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Venus	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Wimbo	P	334	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Bob Jr.	P	335	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Charles	P	335	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Clarry	P	335	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Emanuel	P	335	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	George	P	335	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Henry	P	335	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Maria	P	335	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	Mustapha	P	335	1816
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	Gautier, Joseph, R.	William	P	335	1816
Burgwin, John F. ; Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Pollydore	P	528	1817
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	London, John R.	Delia	P	508	1817
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	London, John R.	Elick	P	508	1817
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	London, John R.	Grace	P	508	1817
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	London, John R.	Hora	P	508	1817
Gause, John ; Smith, Benjamin	London, John R.	Scipio	P	508	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Dicky	P	510	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Frank	P	510	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Barbary	P	512	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	David	P	512	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Johnny	P	512	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Lucy	P	512	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Minetous	P	512	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Phillis	P	512	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Burgwin, John F.	Serena	P	512	1817
Smith, Benjamin	McGabie, John	Cato	P	499	1817
Smith, Benjamin	McGabie, John	Charley	P	499	1817
Smith, Benjamin	McGabie, John	Prince	P	499	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Achillis	P	515	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Bacchus	P	515	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Charles	P	515	1817
Smith, Benjamin	Meares, William B.	Maria	P	515	1817
Holmes, Gabriel ; Smith, Benjamin	Walker, John	Daniel	P	156	1818
Holmes, Gabriel ; Smith, Benjamin	Lazarus, Aaron	Mercellus	Q	191	1818
Smith, Benjamin	Hall, John	Aggy	Q	484	1820
Smith, Benjamin	Hall, John	Jenny	Q	484	1820
Smith, Benjamin	Hall, John	Rina	Q	484	1820
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Agnes	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Annice	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Barbara	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Ben	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Betty	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Charity	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Diana	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Dolly	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Elcy	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Fortune	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Fuffy	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Gasgow	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Harry	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Jack	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	James	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Johny	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Judy	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Nancy	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Peggy	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Pompey	O	411	1812
Walker, Carlton	Smith, Benjamin	Tilla	O	411	1812

We know that in 1800, Smith owned 199 slaves, although the only one we have the least bit of information about is Bob, who was approved to keep a gun on Orton to procure game and protect stock (Watson 2011:102; Brunswick County Court Minutes, July 1797).

In an 1812 letter, James Smith wrote John J. Swann, another area planter, he offered several slaves to Swann. Included were:

> an elderly wench, a good field hand & good plantation Nurse & spinner. A young wench about 17 – her daughter. The two I would sell together for a note of $550. . . . a prime fellow, about 26 yrs. old – stout & tall, an excellent field hand & good plowman with harness – a young wench about the same age – a good field hand – 2 girls – one of 7, the other of 5 yrs old – An old fellow – the father – a half hand – I estimate these five at $1100 Cash (Letter from James Smith, July 22, 1812 to John J. Swann, Swann Family Papers #2827, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

Smith also asked Swann "to say nothing to the bearer about my offer for sale of Negroes." It is possible that he was seeking to keep his financial situation out of public discussion, although he may also have been striving to prevent anger and resentment among his "people."

By 1820 the number of slaves had fallen precipitously to only 43, correlating with Smith's increasing financial problems. Not only were slaves being sold, but creditors began to complain that Smith was constantly moving slaves from property to property in an effort to prevent them from being seized (Watson 2011:189). A possible example of this is a June 12, 1822 letter from Smith, still at Orton, to his nephew, Thomas Grimke in Charleston. Smith had sent an enslaved bricklayer, Prince, to Charleston (Southern Historical Collection, Benjamin Smith Papers, 1793-1826).

Smith instructed that his "servants Betty, Horace, Laura, Lucetta, Sam & John may be manumitted and set free, but more especially Laura, for her affectionate & unbounded attention and services to my Dear Wife, particularly in her last illness" (New Hanover County Will Book B, pg. 137). It is unknown if these African Americans received their freedom, but considering Smith's dire financial situation, it is likely that they were no more manumitted than that Smith obtained the grand monument he directed to be placed on his grave.

While the history of Orton, Kendal, and even Lilliput are being gradually recreated (see, for example, Trinkley and Hacker (2012, 2016, in preparation), the area to south, notwithstanding authors such as South (2010) and works such as Beaman and Melomo (2011), is much less well understood. One of the few widely available accounts is that of Angley (1983). In contrast to the large plantations with hundreds of enslaved African Americans to the north, to the south were generally small farmers, with only a few rising to even the lower levels of the planter class. With them were, prior to the Civil War, few African Americans.

Skipping Brunswick, which for much of its history, was associated with Orton, was the Miliner or Milnor tract. Ten acres of the Orton tract were sold to Hiram M. Milinor in 1870 by the administrator of Frederick Hill's estate (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB U, pg. 128). Several additional small parcels were acquired by Hiram from Charles, although the descriptions are vague except for their location on the Cape Fear River. Angley identified the primary land holders as Willis and Robert Millinor. A deed dated 1839 conveys Willis's property to his son, Robert (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB M, pg. 178). A following deed then conveys chattel, including a bed and furniture, a horse, five cattle, and 12 hogs (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB M, pg. 180).

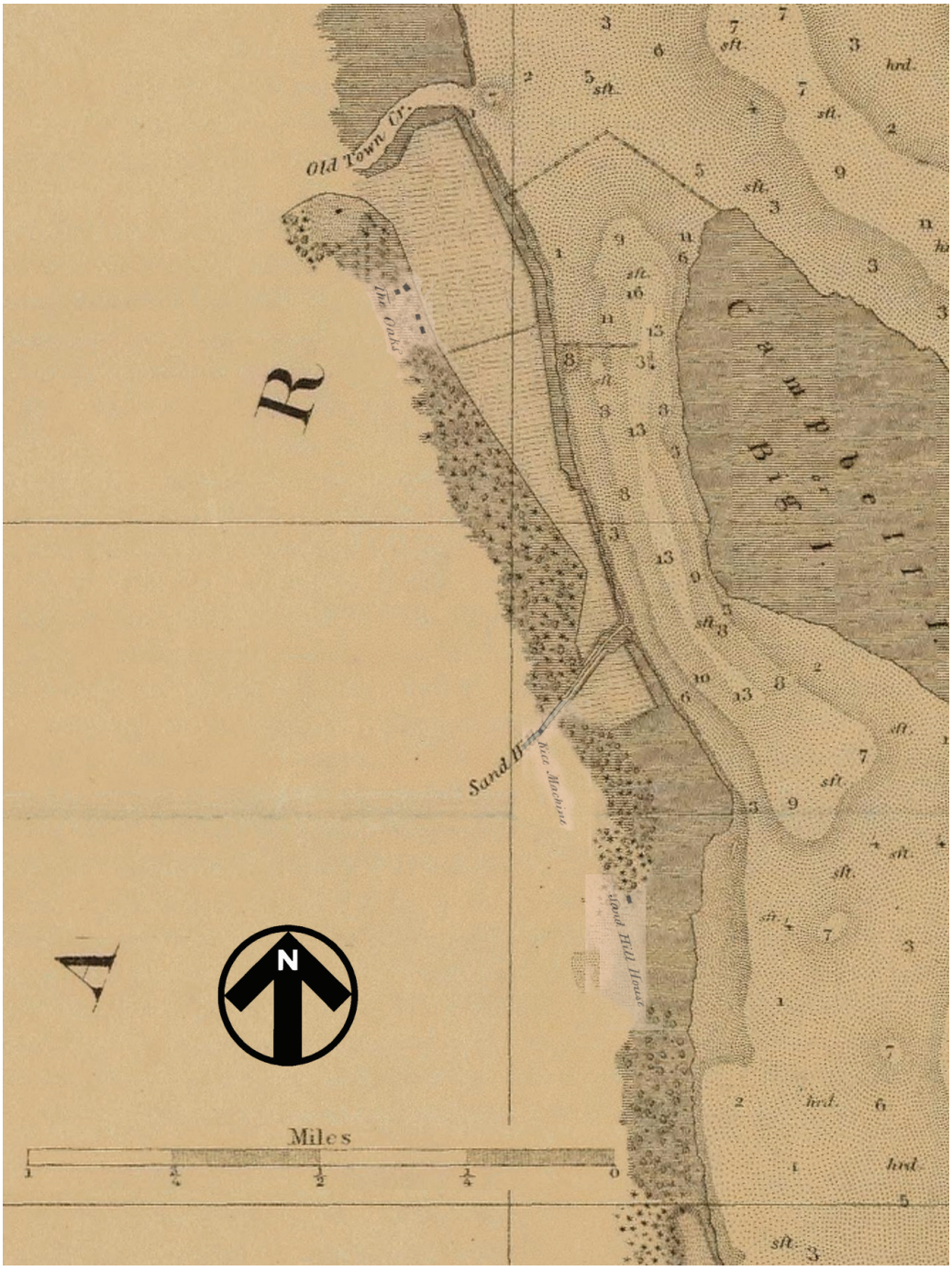


Figure 3. Plantations from Old Town Creek south to just above Lilliput, including The Oaks and Sand Hill (adapted from *Survey of the Cape Fear River*, 1823 and *Preliminary Chart of the Lower Part of the Cape Fear River*, 1856).

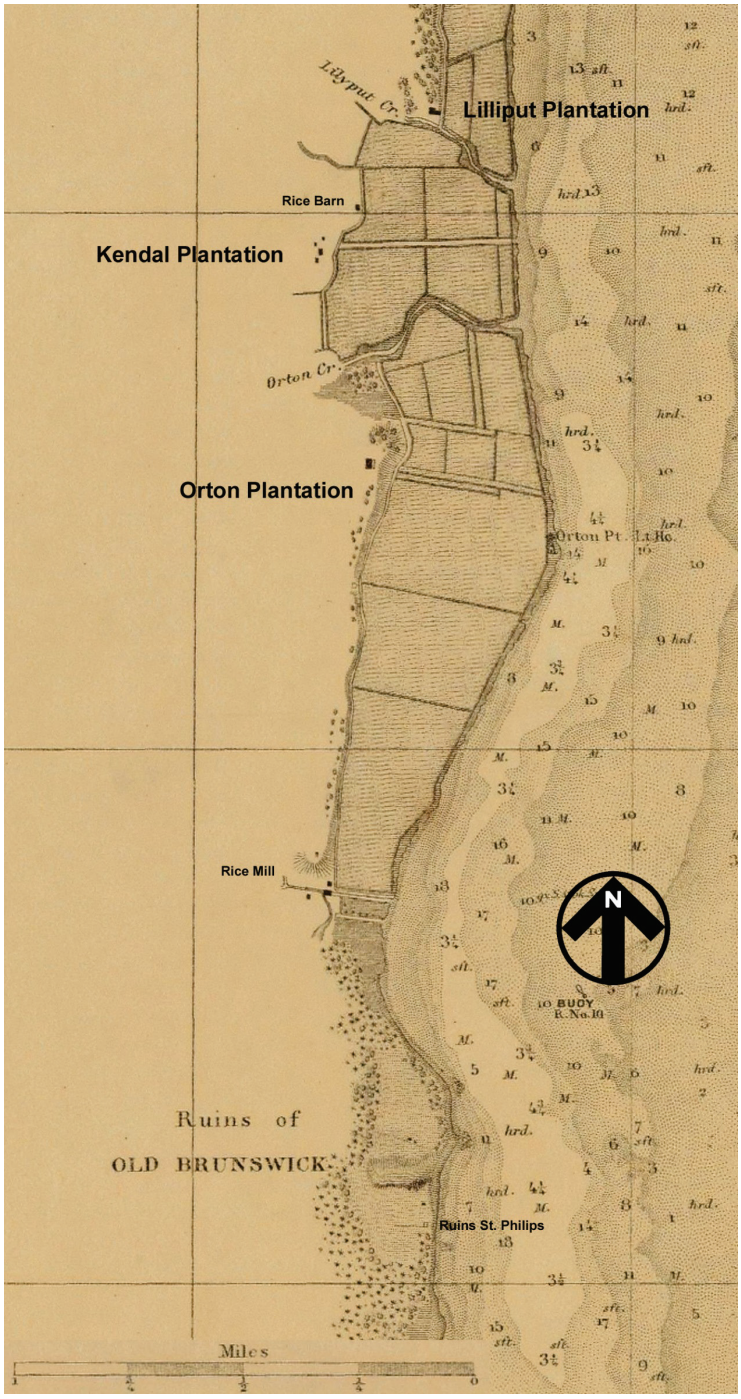


Figure 4. Plantations from Lilliput to the ruins at Old Brunswick, including Lilliput, Kendal, and Orton (adapted from *Preliminary Chart of the Lower Part of the Cape Fear River*, 1856).

Figure 5. Plantations from below the ruins at Old Brunswick to Snows Point with small farms circled in red (adapted from *Cape Fear River Below the Town of Wilmington*, 1827).

Figure 6. Plantations at the time of the Civil War from the vicinity of Walden Creek south to Price's Creek (adapted from *Map of the County Adjacent to Smithville*, ca. 1864).

Willis Millinor, in 1850, was a wheelwright, but was striving to transition to the planter class. The census indicated that he had $100 in real estate. His children included Robert, Hiram, Charles, and Lewis and this research indicates that at least three – Robert, Hiram, and Charles – were acquiring property south of Brunswick. His gift to son Robert may have been in anticipation of death and an effort to ensure that his son and wife were provided for. Neither Willis nor Robert reported any enslaved African Americans in 1850 or 1860.

Angley (1983:22) identified Jesse Drew immediately to the south of the Milinor parcels. The 1850 census indicates that he was better off than his neighbors, reporting $1,400 in real estate. Angley reports that his plantation consisted of 50 acres of improved land and 650 acres of unimproved woods, valued in the agricultural schedule as $1,000. He raised livestock, corn, and sweet potatoes, suggesting largely subsistence based cropping. At the time he owned four African Americans. The next decade his family consisted of his wife, Sophia, and children, Ann S., Mary C., Margaret J., Emma C., Henry A., and Rebecca M. Apparently he was doing very well and by that time he was identified as the County Clerk. He possessed $1,750 in real estate and $11,000 in personal estate, although this included the 12 enslaved African Americans he reported in 1860. His real estate, according to his estate papers, included two town lots, one of which included his residence, and 920 acres in five different tracts (identified as "Faulk Lands," "Buck Neck," on Town Creek, "Pinch Gut Swamp," and on Green Swamp (North Carolina Wills, 1663-1978).

To the south were the lands of Enoch Robbins, with his primary plantation on the Cape Fear River immediately below Sturgeon Creek, which he acquired from Robert Millinor in 1807. In both the 1830 and 1840 census records, Robbins owned only one African American. By 1850, when he was listed as a farmer with $2,000 in real estate, he owned 11 slaves. His plantation included cattle and pigs, corn and sweet potatoes, with a cash value of $1,285. Beginning in 1856, however, Robbins began disposing of his Brunswick County lands, all to Thomas C. Miller of Orton. This included at least 10 tracts and a turpentine distillery on Governor's Creek for $8,000 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 438). The following year, in March, he sold an additional 10 tracts to Miller for $800 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB R, pg. 9). Given the relatively low cost and the fact that at least 650 acres were included, these were likely interior pine lands used for boxing. The final transaction occurred on December 13, 1857, and included the plantation he occupied on the Cape Fear River, which he sold for $2,500 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB S, pg. 308). It was almost certainly immediately after this that Robbins left Brunswick County and moved to Columbus County, immediately west of Brunswick. Robbins died there in 1860. Legal action following his death reveals that he already owned 34 tracts in Columbus County that were valued at $8,000.

Angley (1983:22) places Joel Reeves immediately south of Robbins. As early as 1790, the census reported that he possessed 12 slaves. This dropped to one slave in 1810, increased to nine in 1820, declined again to five in 1830 and by 1840 had increased to 11. In 1850, he owned 10 slaves and Angley reported that his farm included 65 acres of improved land and 1,220 acres of forest at what has been called Reaves Point in the past, but is today known as Sunny Point (Jackson 1996:94-95). Crops included corn and sweet potatoes, and a small amount of rice. He also raised cattle, sheep, and swine. The 1850 census identified Reaves as owning $1,200 in real estate. By 1860, this had increase to $2,200 in real estate and $19,211 in personal estate, likely reflecting the 15 slaves he owned outright (but likely not including an additional eight that were his mother's, who was living with the family).

Deed records provide some evidence of Reaves acquisition of human flesh. As early as 1819, he acquired a "negro boy Jack about 13 years old" from Solomon Reaves for $400 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB H, pg. 195). In 1824, he purchased a "negro woman Williby" and her

child, Tom, for $425 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB J, pg. 72). Then in 1826, he acquired 28-year-old Ben for $600 and in 1845, purchased Betty for a mere $100 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB K, pg 16; DB N, pg. 344). One of his last investments we have identified is the 1856 purchase of the 38-year-old woman Nina and a child, Ned, only 11-years old, for $700 from James B. Smith (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Q, pg. 628).

Reaves served as a private in the Brunswick (Moore's) Regiment of the North Carolina Militia in the War of 1812. He died in 1860 and both he, and his wife, Sarah, were buried in the Old Drew Cemetery. At least their stones were transferred to the New Drew Cemetery (now called Marsh Branch Cemetery).

It is thought that immediately south of Reaves was the farm or plantation of William Hankins. Angley (1983:23) describes this location briefly and Jackson (1996:131-132) provides a more detailed discussion of the various owners, including Governor Burrington, Robert Snow, Thomas Hankins, Samuel Potter (who acquired the property about 1832 and was experimenting with sugar cane [*The Cape Fear Recorder*, Wilmington,NC, January 25, 1832, pg. 2] and later switched to grape and provision crops). After about 1850, about 700 acres of the property returned to the Hankins family, being acquired by Thomas Hankin's son William (The Cape Fear Recorder, Wilmington, NC, September 14, 1831, pg. 3). The remainder was apparently in the hands of the Wilmington shipbuilder, Samuel Berry (Jackson 1996:132).

The chain is likely far more complex than briefly presented here. For example, we have identified that in 1823, Elizabeth R. Hankins conveyed her rights to Snow Point Plantation, "the place at which he [her father] died" for $75 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB I, pg. 203). In September 1844, Potter sold four tracts of land, containing 1,175 acres to Samuel Beery for $3,000. The description places 500 acres on the west side of the Cape Fear River, north of Walden Creek and was likely the primary tract being cultivated and developed (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB N, pg. 246). This property was being advertised by Potter at least by 1842, when it was described as 1,200 acres, "200 of which are open and produce corn well." Also advertised were the plantation's orchard and vineyard, as well as suitable sites for the manufacture of bricks (Wilmington Chronicle, January 5, 1842, pg. 3).

Although this gross overview is sufficient to demonstrate the fundamental difference between the plantations to the north and the farms to the south, it does not serve particularly well to characterize the subsequent African American settlements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It does, however, suggest that the bulk of African Americans likely came from and gravitated to the large tracts with more abundant opportunities, existing housing, and a variety of fields and crops.

Free Persons of Color

Minchinton (1994) suggests these free blacks were arriving in North Carolina as early as 1788. In 1850, there were 319 free persons of color in Brunswick County, and 27,463 statewide. By the following decade, the number in Brunswick County dropped to 260, although statewide free persons of color increased to 30,463. North Carolina had the largest proportion of free persons of color compared to enslaved African Americans (8.4%) with the exception of Virginia, where free persons of color consisted of 10.6% of the African American population in 1860. Most of these individuals, by nearly 3:1, were mulattos (Johnson 2013:50).

T.R.R. Cobb's 1858 study of the law of slavery in the South, explored the nature of African Americans, concluding,

> their mental capacity renders them incapable of successful self-development, and yet adapts them for the direction of a wiser race. Their moral character renders them happy, peaceful,

> contented, and cheerful in the status that would break the spirit and destroy the energies of the Caucasian or the native Americans (Cobb 1858:46-47).

This, of course, justified enslavement. However, it also created other conflicts, among them the "free person of color" and the right of that group to own slaves themselves (although they could not live with them as spouses in most states).

The solution to the first problem was, in Cobb's words, to "place the free negro but little above the slave as to civil privileges" (Cobb 1858:314). States extended patrol laws, denied the privilege to bear arms, mandated patrons, and worked generally to "place them on the same footing with slaves as to their intercourse with white citizens" (Cobb 1858:314).

In terms of the second problem, that of African Americans owning slaves, North Carolina's law makers finally ended that practice in 1861 (Morris 1996:30).

Several authors, however, disagree with Cobb's conclusions that free persons of color were little better than slaves. For example, Rohrs, looking at antebellum Wilmington, concludes that "the free black men and women of Wilmington, aided by the humanity of some white residents, endured and even prospered through hard work" (Rohrs 2012:14).

Milteer takes a similar position, arguing that the challenges free persons of color faced "never condemned them to anything close to slave status," noting that the various laws "never took away their legal personhood or commodified their bodies (Milteer 2013:227-228).

From a purely legal perspective, Rohrs and Milteer may indeed be correct. Yet it cannot be denied that these few thousand free persons of color in North Carolina lived stress-filled lives. To

Figure 7. Map showing Brown, a "free negro." The importance of free persons of color may be inferred by this *Map of the country adjacent to Smithville*, drawn about 1864. This was almost certainly William Brown, a mulatto, who in the 1860 census owned $1,000 of real estate and $770 in personal property.

demonstrate the constant assault on them as persons, we need look no further than the various petitions submitted to the North Carolina legislature.

In 1850, Washington County residents condemned "the selling of Spirituous Liquors to free negroes," who they described as "idle, & intemperate." A similar petition was received from Hertford County in 1852.

Also in 1850, citizens of Beaufort County complained about the unfair competition of free persons of color and demanded a tax "upon free negroes."

In 1850 Duplin County residents complained that the "spirit of discontent" among their slaves was the result of free persons of color living in their communities and wanted all either transported to Liberia or sold into slavery. In 1852 Sampson County petitioners condemned free blacks as a "perfect Nuisance, to civilized Society." The citizens complained that the free persons of color caused slaves to be disobedient. They demanded legislation to force the free persons of color out of North Carolina. In 1858 Onslow County residents sought legislation to "relieve the people of the State from the evils arising from numbers of free negroes in our midst," claiming that the lazy and indolent individuals were a damaging influence on the county's slaves. A similar petition was sent to Raleigh from Currituck County in 1860, demanding that the free persons of color either be expelled or sold into slavery. They argued that this group of free blacks "furnish a ready and safe medium for the diffusion of incendiary doctrines."

In 1856, Robeson County citizens wanted the rights of free blacks to be severely curtailed. They asked that "free black people be prohibited from owning more than one dog per family; prohibited from possessing firearms unless a freeholder and then only on their own property; prohibited from filing suit in either county or superior courts; and prohibited from declaring insolvency." Should they be unable to pay their debts or fail to pay their poll tax, they should be sold into slavery.

A petition from Smithville in Brunswick County wanted to prohibit free persons of color from becoming building contractors and wanted protection "against the competition of colored persons whether free or slave."

While the demands of these and other petitions were not enacted, one can only imagine the psychological and social impact on the free black community. In fact, there are several petitions such as the one from free woman of color Kissiah Trueblood in 1861, who sought to become the slave of her employer, Dr. H.P. Ritter in Pasquotank County, as protection. She was so concerned about her safety that she was even induced to offer her future children as slaves (Schweninger and Shelton 1999).

Another "problem" was that the boundaries between white, free person of color, and slave were fluid, making social interactions difficult. For example, in 1852, William Gore and others in Columbus County petitioned to free Gore's 33-year old slave, Rachel, because she "is very white and So little distinguishable from white persons that it would Shock our feelings, that she Should be compelled to remain in bondage." It apparently didn't hurt that she was "humble and obedient and of good character" (Schweninger and Shelton 1999).

There are court records concerning another individual, William Chavers, whose racial features allowed him to pass back and forth across the racial divide. He identified himself as white whenever possible, but was willing to be identified as a free person of color when that identity was beneficial (such as obtaining discounted ferry tickets available only to blacks) (Hunter 2015:162).

In the case of Asa Jacobs, he objected to a court's request that jurors be allowed to inspect his physical characteristics in order that they "might see that he was within the prohibited degree [of African ancestry]" (Hunter 2015:164).

Table 7.
Free Persons of Color in Smithville and Town Creek Townships in 1850 and 1860

1850

Township	Name	Age	"Color"	Occupation	Real Estate
Smithville	Boyd, Hannah	52	M		
	Brown, William	45	M	Farmer	300
	Sarah	35	M		
	Mary	11	M		
	Caroline	7	M		
	Elizabeth	5	M		
	John	3	M		
	George	1	M		
	Freeman, James	61	M	Carpenter	
	Lal, John	45	M	Millwright	60
	Louiela	41	M		
	John	15	M		
	Mary	13	M		
	Dorothy	12	M		
	Louiera	10	M		
	Rebecca	8	M		
	Margaret	6	M		
	Sarah	4	M		
	Joseph	2	M		
	Smith, Laura	57	M		75
Town Creek	Chavis, Richard	42	M	Laborer	45
	Rebecca	37	M		
	Richard	17	M	Laborer	
	Davis, Thomas	74	M	Carpenter	278
	Ellen	71	M		
	Martha	38	M		
	Alexander	22	M	Carpenter	
	Thomas	20	M	Carpenter	
	Euinia	18	M		
	McQuillin, Melvina	11	M		
	Thomas	9	M		
	Harriet	7	M		
	William	6	M		
	Henry Shaw	12	M		

1860

Township	Name	Age	"Color"	Occupation	Personal Estate	Real Estate
Smithville	Bark, Calvin	32	M	Laborer		
	Bell, Neptune	80	B	Fisherman	62	
	Blount, Archy	38	M		188	
	Brown, William	57	M	Farmer	100	770
	Sarah	44	M			
	Mary I.	19	M			
	John M.	12	M			
	Franklin	9	M			
	William I.	7	M			
	Julia	5	M			
	Charles	3	M			
	Sarah	1	M			
	Riley Moore	1/12	M			
	Freeman, James	71	M	Carpenter	180	
	Hawkins, Fortine	61	B	Laborer	152	
	Smith, Laura	66	M	Washerwoman	26	
Town Creek	Comby, Icesom	58	M	Farmer	345	25
	Sarah	41				
	Benjamin W.	18				
	Catherine	16				
	Margaret	14				
	Julie	12				
	Mary	NL				
	Adaline	10				
	Kennith	5				
	John W.	4				
	Henry	1				
	Davis, Ellen	73	B		369	400
	McQuillin, Martha	46	M			
	Alexander	36	M	Carpenter		
	Thomas	33	M			
	Emily	30	M			
	Edward	19	M			
	Harriet A.	17	M			
	William	15	M			

M= mullato
NL = not legible

Table 7 identifies the free persons of color in the Smithville and Town Creek Townships. Most were identified as mulatto, rather than black. Most also reported some personal or real estate, giving them some degree of economic freedom. The wealthiest was William Brown (see Figure 3 and Table 4) a free African American farmer who managed to acquire over $700 in property by 1860. Many, but not all, had some trade or skill that placed them in competition with whites, such as carpentry or masonry.

While most of these individuals appear to be living their lives apart from the white community, three individuals, identified as mulatto, were reported living with whites. One was Icesom Comby, a 58 year old mulatto and his family, all reported as white, including his wife Sarah, 41 and their nine children. Another is Hannah Boyd, a 52-year-old mulatto reported in the same household as Nancy Finch, a mute. The third is Calvin Bark, a mulatto laborer in the household of Benjamin Morrell, a Smithville tavern keeper.

Most of these individuals disappear after 1860. The exceptions, found only in the 1870 census, are Archy Blount, reported with his wife, Eley, continues to be listed as a farmer. William Brown and his family was also still farming. They listed $600 in real estate and an additional $200 as personal estate (Brown is discussed in greater detail in a following section).

Time of Upheaval

Historians often talk of the upheaval caused by the Civil War in the context of white society and the slave-labor-based economy. This upheaval began at the state's secession convention when it approved taxation on enslaved African Americans for fear that in the upcoming war, ordinary whites "would not lift a finger to protect rich men's negroes" (Escott 1985:28-30, 34). Nevertheless, the upheaval in the lives of African Americans should not be ignored.

During the Civil War the Green Swamp in Brunswick County served as a haven for draft evaders and deserters from the Confederate Army, who presumably mingled freely with the slaves using the same swamp as their refuge. We know of no archaeological investigations that might document the lifeways of either group.

Both slaves and free persons of color were conscripted by the Confederate army to build the myriad fortifications around the Cape Fear.

On February 20, 1863 the Governor of North Carolina was told that the labor of 400 to 500 enslaved African Americans was needed at the Wilmington fortifications, yet none had been provided (OR 26, pg. 887). The call was renewed on August 10, 1863, when General J.F. Gilmer of the Engineer Bureau wrote the North Carolina Governor to "call on the patriotic citizens in the neighboring counties, and elsewhere, to send a portion of their hands, say one-fifth of the negroes (male), to the city of Wilmington, to be employed under the command of General Whiting, on the fortifications" (OR 49, pg 636).

As late as September 1864, North Carolina was still balking at sending slave labor, with the Governor explaining to Confederate General William Whiting, "You have already the power, under act of Congress, to impress slave labor, and for various reasons I prefer you should do it, unless I have the power of returning them when I thought proper" (OR 88, pg. 1300).

This issue continued into January 1865, when Whiting explained to Governor Vance that the Congressional act, "provides for the conscription of free negroes before impressing the slaves" and called on the State of North Carolina to obtain as large a force of "free negroes as possible." In return for a force of 1,500 free blacks Whiting guaranteed "the exemption of the slave labor, as far as we are concerned here [in Wilmington] (OR 96, pg. 1014-1015).

At least one problem that surfaced in efforts to obtain the labor of North Carolina's enslaved population was their treatment. In 1865 General Whiting acknowledges complaints on how the enslaved were being clothed. He went on to insist the issue was not his fault since he had done everything possible "within the limits of his authority." Instead, he voiced his opinion that the issue lay at the feet of the owners with "many negroes have been sent here totally unprovided [for]" (OR 96, pg. 1014).

But not all enslaved were pawns of the Confederate forces. With the introduction of yellow fever into Wilmington in August 1862, at least 22 African Americans slipped through the Confederate defenses, making it to the safety of the Union blockaders at the mouth of the Cape Fear River (Brisson 2010a:9). This not only meant freedom for the enslaved blacks, but it also presented a loss of labor and a growing intelligence gathering network to assist the Federal forces.

In this category perhaps the best known black man is Abraham Galloway, a former slave who worked as an intelligence agent for General Benjamin Butler and other Union officers. Cecelski suggests that in addition to his postwar leadership, Galloway was likely the "chief African American spy in North Carolina," identifying coastal landing sites and supplying information on enemy strength and locations (Cecelski 2012).

Reconstruction, 1865-1877

Just as it was unnecessary in the last section to discuss the rise of slavery because of previous research, so too is it unnecessary to belabor the fall of the Cape Fear. Those interested in the military events can readily consult authors such as Fonvielle (1997, 1999) or Moore (1999).

We can note, however, even prior to the fall of Fort Anderson, Confederate General Archer Anderson instructed his field commanders to "secure all able-bodied male negroes, cattle, stock, provisions, &c." and to "invite" area planters to do the same. Should they not, their property was to be turned into the quartermaster and commissary departments (OR 96, pg. 1097).

Calvin Wiley, a writer and North Carolina's first superintendent of common schools, warned that with the collapse of the South and the end of slavery, "the negroes [and] the meanest class of white people would constitute a majority [and those] who were once socially & politically degraded" would rise up in rebellion together (Escott 1985:89).

Until the very end, the Confederate mentalité was unable to grasp that their world was about to change forever. On February 16, 1865 a local paper advertised that a "woman named Betsy and her son Elias, belonging to Owen D. Holmes" at Kendal, had been captured. Also advertised as captured in the New Hanover area was Edmond, belonging to Daniel L. Russell of Brunswick County (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, February 16, 1865, pg. 2). A week before, Molly and a child, Sam, were similarly captured attempting to escape from Brunswick (*The Wilmington Journal*, February 9, 1865, pg. 3). On February 20, 1865, there was an announcement for the sale of 26 enslaved African Americans on "six-month credit," even as Union forces were only 8 miles below Wilmington (*The Daily Journal,* Wilmington, NC, February 20, 1865, pg. 2).

Even after North Carolina fell, a Union officer in Danville, North Carolina remarked, "The belief is by no means general here that slavery is dead, and a hope that, in some undefined way, they will yet control the slaves, is in many minds, amounting with some to a conviction" (Reid 1866:45).

Political Events

African Americans took very seriously their responsibility to vote. One newspaper reported, "an old colored man 102 years of age, walked between four and five miles to register this morning, the colored people all seem to enjoy the privilege" (*The Wilmington Post*, August 24, 1867, pg. 4).

In September 1865, freedmen took their first political steps, sending 106 representatives to a Raleigh convention "to express the sentiments of the Freedmen" (Fullwood 2008:85). The timing of the conference, just a few days before the North Carolina Constitutional Convention of 1865, was significant (*Christian Recorder*, October 28, 1865, pg. 1; *Journal of Freedom*, October 7, 1865, pg. 1).

North Carolina's white politicians held a State Constitutional Convention Oct. 2-19, which made no provision for black participation. It did, however, cast a tortured vote for the repeal the Ordinance of Secession. The vote to abolish and end slavery passed unanimously, ratifying the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Various internal ordinances were also dealt with, including a provision for taxation. An item of considerable consequence was the decision to repudiate the debt of the Confederate Government

in North Carolina. The Convention also passed a resolution asking President Johnson to withdraw the "colored troops," identifying them as "unnecessary and dangerous" (Hamilton 1906: 118-121).

On November 8, 1865, conservative Jonathan Worth was elected Governor in all-white election, defeating Provisional Governor William W. Holden.

A common view held by Wilmington whites was expressed simply, "[the legislature] ought to provide against vagrancy; adopt measures to require them [freedmen] to fulfill their contracts for labor, and authorize their sale, for a term of years, for breaches of order. Either do that, and so protect us against an intolerable nuisance, or colonize them out of the country" (Reid 1866:44-45). Another North Carolina planter advocated enactment of apprenticeship laws that would bind younger Negroes to their former masters (Royce 1993:63). In fact, something approaching these ideas was about to happen.

In January 1866, the North Carolina legislature enacted a "Black Code" or "Freedmen's Code" entitled, "Act Concerning Negroes and Persons of Color or Mixed Blood," which outlined a Conservative view of black-white relations for the "New" South (Evans 1967:66-67). The law was deemed so important that it was published in its entirety (*The Wilmington Daily Dispatch*, March 27, 1866, pg. 1).

The law specified that freedmen "shall be entitled to the same privileges and subject to the same . . . disabilities as . . . were conferred on . . . free persons of color prior to the ordinance of emancipation," and no more. African American marriages were made legal and rights to make contracts were safeguarded. Freedmen could not serve on juries and could not testify against whites. Unemployment was criminalized with harsh vagrancy laws ("An Act to Punish Vagrancy," March 2, 1866, *Public Laws of the State of North Carolina*). African Americans did not have the right to vote and were prohibited from using "seditious" language. Overall, the resulting laws were oppressive and were designed to control and intimidate the political participation of African Americans (Evans 1967; Fullwood 2008:86-87).

In May 1866, the Steedman-Fullerton Report was delivered to Congress. The two generals sought to determine, "by a thorough and impartial investigation, the manner in which the [Freedmen's] Bureau has been administered and conducted . . . and to observe the effect produced by it upon the relations between the white and black races." The report provided mixed reviews. In some areas, where agents were impartial, they found harmony. Elsewhere they found corruption and mismanagement.

Visiting piedmont North Carolina locations, they found Bureau agents were running plantations, sawmills, and turpentine operations, "bringing them into competition with citizens who employ Freedmen." They found Bureau agents with financial interests in various plantations, the misappropriation of rations, and one agent who exercised "arbitrary and despotic power."

Identical problems were found in the Wilmington area, causing the Generals to conclude,

> Without attempting to discuss the propriety of officers of the Bureau in the military service of the United States, who are paid by the Government for the performance of their duties, engaging in private business, and employing freemen for such purposes, while controlling through their official positions that class of labor, we deed it our duty to state some of the effects produced, both upon the officers themselves and upon the planters with whom they come in competition, by such conduct. Major Wickersham, in contracting to furnish forty laborers to work on a rice plantation, becomes at once

> interested against the laborers, who he compels to labor, perhaps unjustly, when unfairly dealt with by the person working them on the plantation; and, on their refusing to work, he inflicts upon them unlawful, and, for a breach of contract, unheard of punishment, putting them in chain-gangs, as if they were convicted criminals. Colonel Whittlesey, or any other officer of less rank and influence in the Bureau, who is engaged in working plantations rented for cash or on shares, becomes interested in securing a low rate of wages and in making the most stringent labor regulations, to the great detriment of the freedmen. They thereby give the sanction of the Government to the establishment of wages far below what the labor is really worth. Officers of the Quartermaster's and Commissary Departments who are thus engaged are subjected to the temptation of appropriating to their own use Quartermaster's stores supply and pay their own laborers. Complaints have been made to me by the planters that these Agents of the Bureau use the power of their positions to obtain and control the best labor in the State. There is no doubt that some of the ill-feeling manifested toward the Bureau on the part of the planters is attributable to this fact (The Freedmen's Bureau: reports of Generals Steedman and Fullerton on the condition of the Freedmen's Bureau in the Southern States, May 8, 1866, pg. 8).

Their study may have been spurred on by two events in North Carolina, including the September 1865 mutiny by black troops in Wilmington, who claimed that white officers were indifferent to the interests of the Freedmen and the February 1866 occupation of the Wilmington jail by black troops to block the public whipping of black prisoners.

Another Freedmen's Convention took place on October 2, 1866, at the exact location it had met the year before. This time, however, there were no attendees from Brunswick County.

Governor Jonathan Worth, elected in the fall of 1865 and reelected in a regular ballot in 1866, fought against Washington's Reconstruction Acts. These were passed in 1867 and provided for military rule, a new state constitution, Negro suffrage, and elections to replace the existing government. Encouraged by Worth's disdain for the Fourteenth Amendment (which granted citizenship to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States," including former slaves and struck down the Black Code by guaranteeing all citizens equal protection under the law and forbidding states to deprive any citizen of life, liberty, or property without due process), the North Carolina Legislature rejected the amendment on December 14, 1866. They viewed the Amendment as turning "the slave master, and the master, slave" (Escott 1985:135).

Before Congress would re-admit North Carolina to the Union, a more liberal constitution was required. In 1868, a second state constitutional convention convened. With Radical Republicans in control of Congress, North Carolina's first time black voters gave control of the January 1868 Constitutional Convention to the Republican Party. Of 120 state representatives elected, Republicans took 107 and Conservatives just 13 seats. Fifteen of the Republicans were African Americans, including religious and political leader James W. Hood, who had presided over the first African American political convention in 1865.

The Republicans were not always allies of the African Americans. Logan documents that "many white Republicans were made unhappy by

the 'over-presence' of Negroes in the state conventions of that party" and one Republican stated, "although I have been a Republican, I am a white man and believe in white men ruling North Carolina" (Logan 1964:15). Moreover, he observes that while he was unable to find a situation where North Carolina Democrats elected or appointed African Americans to public office, "there are numerous examples of Negro participation in Democratic politics" (Logan 1964:21). It appears that African Americans joined the party of white supremacy "merely to procure a job or to attempt to gain favor with the white community" (Logan 1964:22).

In early 1868, a Wilmington newspaper railed at the freedmen and sowed fear among poor whites, exclaiming, "IT IS IN THE POOR MAN'S HOUSE THAT THE NEGRO WILL ATTEMPT TO ENFORCE HIS EQUALITY" (emphasis in original, *The Wilmington Journal*, March 27, 1868, pg. 2).

By April 1868, a new state constitution was approved, guaranteeing formal equality before the law and a number of progressive measures, including commitment to free public schooling for all. The governor would be elected for a four-year term, rather than for two years, and his authority was increased. State and county officials were to be elected by popular vote, and all men, regardless of race or property qualifications, were eligible to vote and to hold office. Population, not wealth, would now decide representation in the state senate. The number of capital crimes was reduced to four — murder, arson, burglary, and rape.

North Carolina Conservatives despised the new constitution, not simply because it gave the vote to African Americans, but also because it reduced the power of the wealthy elite and increased the role of poor whites. Ironically, even though these poor whites were often Confederate veterans, the Conservatives felt they were no more capable of voting wisely than the freedmen.

With the tide clearly turning, Worth was removed from office. North Carolina went on to ratify the 14th Amendment and North Carolina rejoined the United States on June 25, 1868, along with Louisiana and South Carolina. Just over a month later, sufficient states had approved the Fourteenth Amendment so that it was ratified. North Carolina, however, would not approve the Fifteenth Amendment, giving all men the right to vote, until the following year, on March 5, 1869.

Figure 8. James' Plantation Freedmen's School in North Carolina, probably in October 1868 (https://cwnc.omeka.chass.ncsu.edu/items/show/180).

With political progress being seen in North Carolina, the Freedman's Bureau ceased its operations in the state, excepting educational efforts, by the end of May 1869 as mandated by Congress. The head of the Bureau's educational program, Rev. H.C. Vogal, pleaded for an additional year. Vogal did not believe that the Southern white man could be trusted, based on the "prejudices of the people." As Goldhaber explains, "The average southerner was not necessarily a wicked ruffian, but a moral coward,

certainly. And only a fool gives responsibility to moral cowards" (Goldhaber 1992:203). Vogal also felt that it would take years for the state to be able to implement meaningful educational programs, even if the best African Americans could do was to arrive at their "self-culture." His goal, Goldhaber argues, was to make the African Americans a "more content and responsible plantation labor force" (Goldhaber 1992:204).

Congress finally denied the perennial requests for a year's extension of the education program and the program was closed on July 15, 1870. While the education of freedmen has been heralded as a success, Goldhaber emphasizes that at the end of the five-year program, the Bureau taught only 50,000 children to read, in a state with 136,000 school-aged blacks. Although this compares favorably with the 10% average of school-aged blacks who attended Bureau schools nation-wide, it can hardly be viewed as a success (Goldhaber 1992:199).

A variety of white supremacy organizations were founded as early as 1867. Their goal was to intimidate African Americans in order to prevent them from voting, holding office, or establishing businesses. This intimidation included whippings, beatings, murder, and the destruction of property. While membership was low, the number of southerners sympathetic to the organization and its goals was quite high.

Figure 9. North Carolina Klan robes worn in the late nineteenth century (from Raum 1884:157).

The Ku-Klux-Klan was organized in Tennessee in late 1865 or early 1868 by former Confederate soldiers and perhaps one of the earliest accounts in a Wilmington newspaper identified the organization as "Knux-lux Klan" (*The Wilmington Daily Journal*, March 18, 1868, pg. 2). It was only a matter of a few days, however, before "mysterious looking written posters [were] placed in various public localities" around Wilmington (*The Wilmington Daily Journal*, March 24, 1868, pg. 3). There is evidence the Klan was established in Raleigh and Newbern by April (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, April 2, 1868, pg. 2, April 10, 1868, pg. 2). Also in April a strange ad appeared in the *Wilmington Morning Star*,

> Mr. Z.G. Hcnerf [sic], the Great Grand Centaur of the Ku Klux Klan, Front Street Division, will accept our profoundest obligations for "documents" pertaining to the order. The dismal hour draweth nigh! K.-K.-K. Z.-Z.-Z. (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, April 18, 1868, pg. 3).

Many of white society's "best" citizens participated. William L. Saunders, a former Confederate colonel and later a trustee at the University of North Carolina and Secretary of State, was the leader in North Carolina (Leloudis 2015:7; Olsen 1962). In the Wilmington area, Roger Moore (the great-great-great-grandson of "King" Roger Moore) commanded the Ku-Klux-Klan at Wilmington after "taking the secret oath . . . in Raleigh, in 1868" (Meares 1917:383; see also Evans 1967:99

and Cecelski 2006:20). Roger Moore was also photographed holding the Confederate "Stars and Bars" (New Hanover County Public Library, 00.131).

Tourgée further explained to his readers that the Klan,

> originated with the best classes of the South, was managed and controlled by them, and was at all times under their direction. It was their creature and their agent to work out their purposes and ends. It was just as much their movement as was the war of the rebellion, and animated by similar motives (Tourgée 1902:515-516).

One Klan leader explained that the organization sought not simply to restore, "a white man's government only, but – mark the phrase – an *intelligent* white man's government" (quoted in Leloudis 2015:7). Using murder and intimidation, the Klan suppressed the Republican vote in 1870. As a result, Conservative Democrats took control of the North Carolina General Assembly in August 1870.

Controlling the 1871 legislature, Democrats turned their attention to Governor William W. Holden, who had formed a coalition of freedmen, carpetbaggers, and native whites. Many of Holden's actions angered Democrats, such as his commissioning of Bureau agents as regular magistrates (Pierce 1904:147). The legislature impeached Holden and removed him from office – the first governor in America to be successfully impeached.

On a national level, however, Congress was repulsed by the actions of the Klan. An investigation was launched in 1870 and in 1872 Congress passed the "Klan Act," which gave the Federal government the authority to try Klansmen in federal court. The president was authorized to declare martial law and suspend the writ of habeas corpus. Nightriding and the wearing of masks were expressly prohibited (Baudouin 2011:15). While hundreds of Klan members were arrested, few went to prison and Klan violence continued nearly unabated into the early twentieth century (for additional information on the so-called Kirk-Holden War of 1870, see Brisson 2010b).

The African American senator, A.H. Galloway of New Hanover, was re-elected in 1870, but died before the General Assembly began its session. George W. Price, another black lawmaker, who served in the House, was elected to replace him. In Brunswick County, Price easily took the Northwest Township (231 to 102 for his Democratic opponent, M. Bellamy) and the Town Creek Township (182 to 115). In spite of receiving no votes in Lockwood's Folly, Shallotte, and Waccamaw, and only half of the votes in Smithville, he still managed to win in New Hanover (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, November 16, 1870, pg. 3; see also Balanoff 1972).

The Republican Party won the governorship in 1872 but in November 1874 was soundly defeated throughout the state. In September 1875, Democrats held elections for a State Constitutional Convention, nearly controlling the meeting. There were 58 Democrats elected, 58 Republicans, and three independents. The constitution was revised for a Democratic advantage and the party began to rule the state using fraud and white supremacy to remain in power. While the new constitution banned secret political societies, it also re-established much of the General Assembly's power, taking it away from the governor. An 1875 amendment to the constitution established separate public schools for black and white children and forbade marriage between blacks and whites.

In 1876, former Confederate Zebulon Vance ran against Republican Thomas Settle, Jr. During this campaign, Vance argued that both he and North Carolina had made major contributions to the Confederacy, without bearing any of the responsibility for its failure (McKinney 1998:75). In his legal work after the war, the often appealed

to jurors to act upon "a spark of love for the Lost Cause." During his 1876 campaign, Vance announced that "he was the candidate of the white people of the state," stressing racial issues. Vance went to campaign stops accompanied by hundreds of mounted white men – clearly modeled after Wade Hampton's legion of intimidation in neighboring South Carolina.

In spite of clear evidence of voter fraud, such as receiving 1,000 votes more in Mecklenburg County than there were registered voters, Vance managed to win the election (McKinney 1998:83). He served two years before being elected once again to the U.S. Senate in 1879. Regardless, Conservative Democrats would dominate North Carolina's politics for the next 20 years.

The end of Reconstruction arrived in 1877 because of the disputed presidential election between Republican Rutherford B. Hayes and Democrat Samuel J. Tilden. An agreement, the "Compromise of 1877," was reached behind closed doors in which Tilden and the Democratic Party accepted a Republican victory, while Hayes pledged to withdraw federal troops from the states of the former Confederacy, effectively ending Reconstruction.

A less discussed aspect of this compromise was the agreement to allow "home rule." Republicans would refrain from "interfering" in the South's affairs. For their part, the Democrats, many of whom were racists, promised to "recognize the civil and political equality of blacks" (Foner 1988:580).

One of the last legislative acts before the end of Reconstruction was the 1877 Landlord and Tenant Act (Anonymous 1877:551-554). Eventually codified, this law would regulate agricultural landlords and tenants for decades to come. As Harper described, the legislation gave the landlord "the right to be the court, sheriff, and jury" (Harper 2016:77). The law gave privilege to landlords over tenants, granting possession of the crops to the landlord until rents and other stipulations in the lease or agreement were fulfilled. It made the removal of the crop by the tenant (not the tenant himself, as has sometimes been erroneously referenced) a misdemeanor.

An earlier law, enacted in the 1868-1869 legislative session, also established the right of the owner to sue should the tenant desert the property (*The Code of North Carolina*, 1883, Chapter 40, Section 1777).

The law proved such a detriment to African American farm labor, that it has been cited as one of the major factors encouraging out-migration (Harper 2016:77). It also established the relationship between lessor and lessee into the depression, providing defining legal differences between the "share-tenant" and "share-cropper" (Book 1937).

With the withdrawal of federal troops from North Carolina, African Americans were essentially left to their own devices, facing an incredibly hostile political, social, and economic environment. Historians have noted that it would be 80 years before the legacy created by this compromise was redressed.

Local Events

The Union Navy took control of Smithfield on January 24, 1865; later that evening the One Hundred and Forty-second New York and a detachment of the Third New York, crossed the Cape Fear and assumed control of the sleepy little town. The *New York Herald* reporter explained that the community consisted of "about 800 hundred inhabitants, mostly women and children." Also present were large amounts of commissary stores, including tobacco, and about 30 deserters "who had secreted themselves on the evacuation of the town" (*New York Herald*, February 2, 1865, pg. 8). A subsequent dispatch explained that, "officers of the colored regiments are now recruiting for their commands, and are meeting with great success" (*New York Herald*, February 13, 1865, pg. 8). Reaves (1978:47) describes a brief celebration by the African Americans when they were declared free.

As early as February 1865 a school had begun at St. Phillips Chapel in Southport. Seized by the Union army, the building was first used as a hospital and then turned over for educational activities (Reaves1998).

Shortly after Wilmington fell, General John A. Campbell, by order of General Schofield, instructed provost marshals to begin administering the oath of allegiance to individuals eligible under President Lincoln's proclamation (OR 99, pg. 605-606). Trade was limited to that necessary "to supply the wants of the loyal people residing within the lines of military occupation, and persons in the employ of the Government" and was to be conducted only by those "of undoubted loyalty and good character."

By early March, General William T. Sherman was becoming overwhelmed by freedmen associated with his march. In Fayetteville, he intended to secure boats and send the refugees, both white and black, downriver to Wilmington (OR 99, pg. 704). This movement was clearly successful, since by March 15, two steamers filled with refugees arrived in Wilmington, while it was reported that others were marching from Fayetteville (*New York Herald*, March 15, 1865, pg. 1). Only a few days later, on March 22, it was reported that, "Thousands of refugees are on their way to Wilmington" (*New York Herald*, March 23, 1865, pg. 1).

A report of the mass exodus by Surgeon-in-Chief Hogan reported that in March 1865 alone, about 10,000 African Americans were sent down the Cape Fear to Wilmington, although "the town being already badly overcrowded by Negroes and Refugees" (U.S. Freedmen's Bureau Records of Field Offices, Hospital Records, 1865). The Surgeon-in-Chief reported that they were placed at Fort Anderson, where "sickness prevailed to an alarming extent" with "very little attention" given to the sick.

The events in Brunswick County are not clearly known, but not all of these freedmen found the new lives they hoped for. In December 1865, it was announced that during the two and a half months from March 17 through May 31, at least 2,000 of these individuals died "for the want of medical attention, which . . . was impossible to afford them at the time" (*The*

Table 8.
Rations issued by the Freedmen's Bureau

Date	Location	Type of Record	Men	Women	Children	Total
April 13,1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	800	1200	1400	3400
April 24, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	800	1200	1300	3300
May 5, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	800	1200	1300	3300
May 15, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	850	1250	1400	3500
May 19, 1865	Kendal	Special Orders Book	20	22	39	81
June 1, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	600	900	1000	2500
June 10, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	500	800	900	2200
June 20, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	800	1000	1200	3000
August 8, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	100	100	100	300
August 11, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	20	31	0	51
Sept 5, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book				375
Sept 13, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book				350
Sept 23, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book				350
Sept 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	70	95	71	236
Sept 1865	Orton, Kendal, Lilliput, Oaks	Special Orders Book	26	24	37	87
Oct 11, 1865	Fort Anderson	Special Orders Book	70	95	71	236
Nov 9, 1865	Fort Anderson	Provisions		75	60	135
Jan 17, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions		75	42	117
Jan 25, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions		75	42	117
Feb 1, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions		75	42	117
Feb 12, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions	2	96		98
Feb 12, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions	8	245		253
Feb 20, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions	2	96		98
April 21, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions		40	30	70
April 23, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions		40	30	70
May 10, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions		40	30	70
May 14, 1866	Fort Anderson	Semi-Monthly Report		40	30	70
May 21, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions		40	30	70
May 28, 1866	Fort Anderson	Semi-Monthly Report		40	30	70
June 2, 1866	Fort Anderson	Provisions	10	70	80	160
Dec 1, 1866	Brunswick Co.	Provisions				180
Dec 28, 1866	Brunswick Co.	Monthly Report				180
Jan 4, 1867	Brunswick Co.	Provisions				180
Feb 1, 1867	Brunswick Co.	Provisions	12	69	84	165
March 1, 1867	Brunswick Co.	Provisions	12	65	85	162

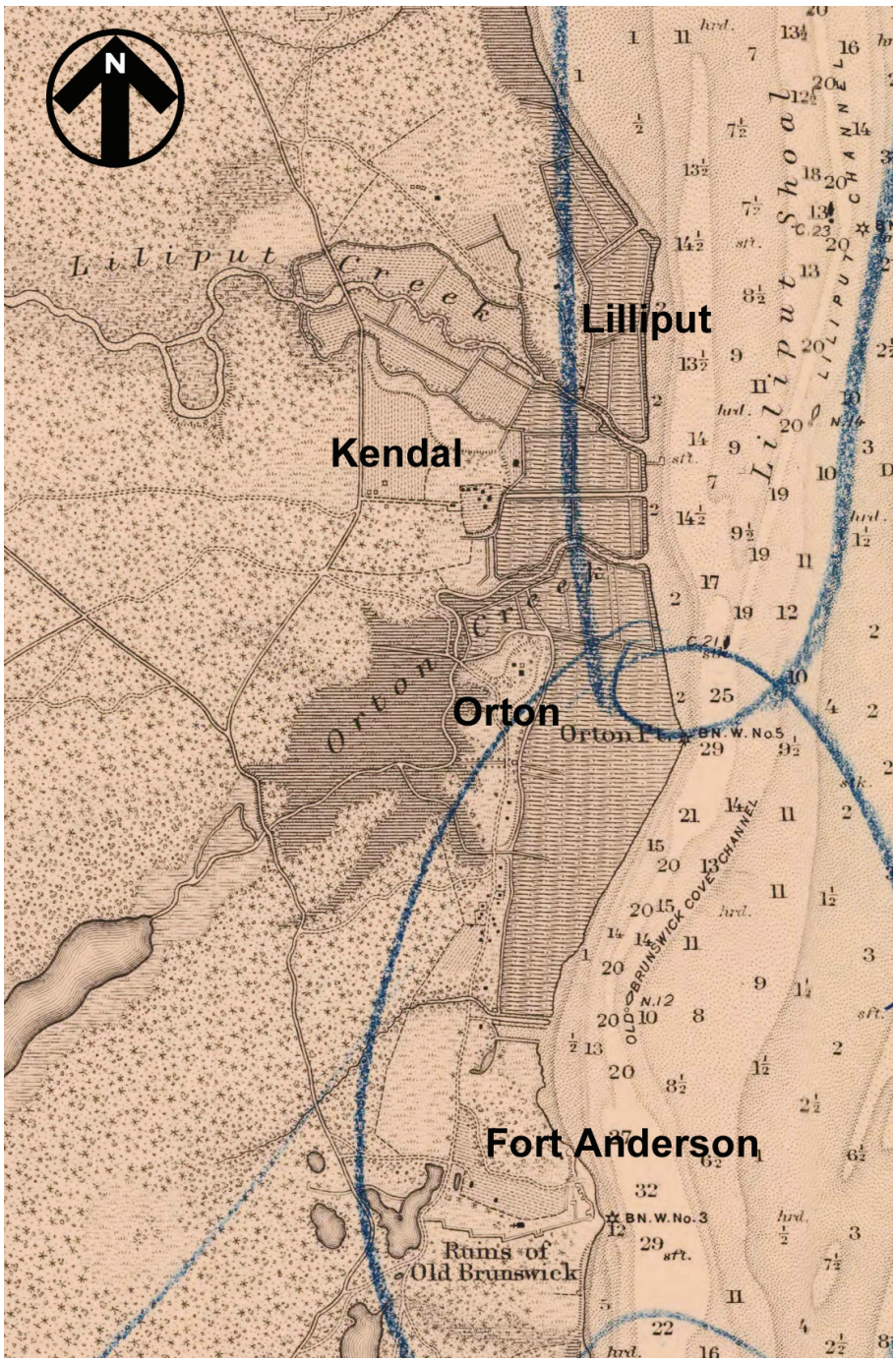


Figure 10. A portion of the 1856-1899 map, Cape Fear River from Reeves Point to Wilmington North Carolina, showing the vicinity of Orton, Kendal, Lilliput, and Oaks plantations seized for freedmen in April 1865 (portion of *Cape Fear River from Reaves Point to Wilmington*, 1856).

Wilmington Herald, December 5, 1865, pg. 1). This equates to about 27 deaths a day. The Surgeon-in-Chief reported, "it is impossible to account for the cause or causes of this terrible mortality, as no record was ever kept of the camp, nor any report made of the sickness or deaths. There was no hospital accommodation of any account furnished at this Camp" (U.S. Freedmen's Bureau Records of Field Offices, Hospital Records, 1865). It ws estimated that about 3,000 left for their former plantations in May 1865, leaving still upwards of 7,000 freedmen at Fort Anderson.

In spite of the horrific death counts, we have found no information on how, or where, these freedmen were buried. There are several African American burial grounds in Wilmington; the most likely may be Pine Forest. Although its origin is usually thought to be about 1860, at least one newspaper notice suggests it was well established ("the negro graveyard") as early as 1858 (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, June 15, 1858, pg. 3). Another option may be at Fort Anderson, where many of the freedmen congregated. Although archaeology has not been able to identify burials at the site (see Beaman and Melomo 2011), there is at least one newspaper account that reported human remains were found shortly after the war. Although thought to be either Confederate or Union, the finds were limited to "feet" and "a head" (*The Daily Review*, Wilmington, NC, June 29, 1878, pg. 1).

As for the "want" of medical attention, Pearson (2002) details the "reluctance" of the Army to treat African Americans. The Freedman's Bureau attempted to circumvent this opposition by hiring civilian doctors, but "the condescending attitude of citizen doctors, their limited interest in medical care for blacks, and their discriminatory actions made relying on them a risky proposition" (Pearson 2002:150). One such doctor described his black patients as, "unfaithful, profligate, unprincipled, thievish, tyrannical, usurping, overbearing, and insulting" (Pearson 2002:150-151) and one Bureau agent wrote that there was "a secret understanding if not a combination among citizen physicians that they will not visit nor prescribe for sick niggers" (quoted in Pearson 2002:152). Elsewhere, Pearson notes that some refused to cooperate with the Bureau because of their dislike for federal authority, but they also believed the suffering was the "price" paid by blacks for their freedom (Pearson 2002:155).

It may be that some of these deaths were the result of inadequate food, since we have found no evidence of the Freedmen's Bureau providing rations prior to the middle of April 1865 (Table 8). At the time, there were about 3,400 African American refugees at Fort Anderson (although this number is far less than reported by the Surgeon-in-Chief). This number fluctuated for the next two years, but the number was never less than about 70, indicating that the African American presence at Fort Anderson was large and significant between at least 1865 and 1867.

The ration accounts also list a number of plantations, with a large number of refugees also apparently on Smith's Island. However, Orton, Kendal, Lilliput and The Oaks appear only once, in September 1865, when the four plantations contained 87 individuals. Earlier in May, Kendal was listed, alone, with 81 individuals.

In May 1865, Union authorities in Wilmington issued Special Order 42, prohibiting communication between Wilmington and "the settlements of negroes at Fort Anderson, and its vicinity" without special permission. The reason for this order is not entirely clear, but we suspect that Union authorities were well aware of the horrific conditions and sought to prevent either the knowledge or the associated diseases from spreading.

In November 1865, the Freedmen's Bureau issued a directive that "freedmen now living in camps, colonies and towns, are directed to find employment at once, by which they may support themselves" and that the Bureau "will issue no rations to refugees or freedmen who refuse situations where they might earn their support." Even those in dire conditions were to be turned over to the "wardens of the poor." However,

the order went on to explain, "until ample provision is made by the civil authorities, such persons will not be forcibly removed from the plantations where they were living before the close of the war" (*The Wilmington Herald*, November 18, 1865, pg. 1). Nevertheless, rations continued to be issued for another year and a quarter.

By mid-April 1865 Orton, Kendal, Lilliput, and The Oaks (or Pleasant Oaks), apparently with no white occupation since at least February, were confiscated as abandoned by General Joseph R. Hawley, commander of the eight-county Military District of Wilmington. General Order No. 7 specified that the property was to be "set apart for the use of the freedmen, and the destitute refugee colored people" (*The Wilmington Herald*, April 15, 1865, pg. 2). This order also specified that the lands, as well as educational efforts, were to be in the hands of Rev. Samuel S. Ashley, a Radical, originally from Providence, Rhode Island.

Ashley was born in 1819, attended Oberlin College, graduating in 1849. In 1860, he was a minister in Northborough, Worcester, Massachusetts where he declared a personal estate of $1,200. He served as a missionary to the freedmen from 1865 through 1868, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1868 through 1871, at which time he was living in Raleigh, North Carolina. He next served as a minister in Georgia and Louisiana with the American Missionary Association between 1871 and 1879 (Anonymous 1883:25). After that, he returned to Massachusetts, where he died in 1887. In many respects, he was a "typical" white missionary.

The four contiguous plantations of Orton, Kendal, Lilliput, and The Oaks stretched about five miles along the Cape Fear (Figure 10), but there is almost no information about how the lands were used, either by the Federal Government or the freedmen. Evans (1967:58) suggests that the lands were held by African Americans until September 1865, "when President Johnson issued a decree returning such property to the original owners." The process was not, however, that simple. No application for restoration for Orton was submitted until March 7, 1866. At that time, the response was that "Mr. Miller [the owner prior to the Civil War] was of great aid to our troops upon their arrival here but has since died. The property is not rented by us" (North Carolina Freedmen's Office Records, 1863-1872, Wilmington, Roll 78, Applications for Property, September 1865-May 1866, pg. 147). This note leaves unaddressed the assistance provided by Miller. It is also curious, since Miller did not fall under Johnson's general amnesty, but rather falls into one of the exceptions, requiring that his wife obtain a special pardon (North Carolina Freedmen's Office Records, 1863-1872, Wilmington, Roll 78, Applications for Property, September 1865-May 1866, pg. 157). Nevertheless, it does let us know that at least by March 1866 the property was not being rented to African Americans.

A newspaper article reveals that African Americans were still being registered to vote, with Brunswick divided into two registration precincts. Smithville, Shallotte, and Waccamaw were in one and the other was composed of Lockwood's Folly, Town Creek, and Northwest (*The Wilmington Post*, September 13, 1867, pg. 4). All of the registrars, as far as we can determine, were white and many represented ex-Union military officers or other federal employees. Town Creek registered 189 white voters, but 216 African Americans (and only one black was rejected). The Northwest Township yielded 156 white registrants and 299 blacks. The Smithville was closer (168 whites, 146 blacks). The Shallotte, Waccamaw, and Lockwood's Folly Townships were heavily weighted toward the white vote (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, October 4, 1867, pg. 2).

Fort Anderson was situated on the Orton tract, and we can learn that African Americans were living on Fort Anderson at least through 1870. In January 1870, the news reported that a mulatto, Arnold Hooper, "from the vicinity of Fort Anderson" had been blown out to sea in a small boat (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, January 4, 1870, pg. 3).

Table 9.
Freedmen known to be associated with Lower Cape Fear plantations

Individual	Condition	Source
-, Bob	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
-, Charles	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
-, Dick	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
-, Elias	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
-, Gilbert	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
-, Jam	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
-, Kali	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
-, Marcus	laborer for C.D. Myers	*Wilmington Journal* , January 21, 1870
-, Scipio	Kendal laborer, 1871-1872	Curtis Account Book
Brown, Edgar	Fort Anderson resident	*Daily Journal* , April 1, 1870
Burgwin, Frederick	Fort Anderson resident	*Wilmington Morning Star* , December 3, 1870
Clark, Tom	Kendal laborer, 1871-1880	Curtis Account Book
Fledger, John	Orton resident	*Daily Journal* , March 6, 1870
Hewett, Henry	Schooner *William*	*Weekly Star* , November 2, 1877
Hooper, Arnold	Fort Anderson resident	*Daily Journal* , January 4, 1870
Hooper, Robert	Kendal laborer, 1871-1880	Curtis Account Book
Patrick, Siss	Belvedier laborer, 1875	*Daily Journal* , September 7, 1875
Pickett, Benjamin	Schooner *William*	*Weekly Star* , November 2, 1877
Pierce, Elias	Orton resident	*Daily Journal* , March 6, 1870
Sauls, Rev, Scipio	preacher at Orton, 1870-1890	Trinkley and Hacker 2012:90
Smith, Greenville	fishing in Town Creek	*Evening Post,* April 28, 1873

Then, in early March, there was the story of three African Americans "from Orton" bringing a load of unexploded shells to Wilmington to sell as scrap. One of these individuals, the 45 or 50 year-old Edgar Brown, was severely injured while trying to disarm one of the shells. He eventually died, and "his remains will be taken to his home at Fort Anderson for interment" (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, March 6, 1870, pg. 3 and April 1, 1870, pg. 3).

In December, a coroner's jury convened to consider the case of an African American found dead in a canoe in the Brunswick River. The article reported that the individual was Frederick Burgwin, "who resided at Fort Anderson" (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, December 3, 1870, pg. 1).

The restoration of Kendal and Lilliput was more straightforward. These tracts were apparently "occupied by freedmen as a home," although no mention was made of a lease or agricultural activities. Special Order No. 56, dated September 29, 1865 (North Carolina Freedmen's Office Records, 1863-1872, Wilmington, Roll 78, Applications for Property, September 1865-May 1866, pg. 217-218), restored the plantations. The Lilliput house, however, was destroyed by fire in mid-November 1874 (Reaves 1978:63). Curtis, still owner of Lilliput, had been living in Smithville for some time.

Whether those living on Kendal were the same African Americans who tended the plantation during slavery is not certain since we are told that Holmes moved his slaves to Sampson County at the beginning of the war (Curtis 1900:31). Of course, these individuals may have found their way back to Kendal and once again taken up residence.

Evans (1967:59) suggests that the Freedmen's Bureau policies helped revive naval stores activities. This may be correct, but at least one document reveals that whites and freedmen were not always concerned with whose trees were being harvested: "Dudley (white), Titus Hurrick, and Charles Harden (Freedmen) did in the months [sic] of August 1865 cut and hew timber on the Hill [Orton] and Holmes [Kendal] plantations without any authority" (North Carolina Freedmen's Bureau, Field Office Records, 1863-1872, Wilmington, Treasury Department Agent and War Department Financial Agent, NARA Roll 78, Applications for Restoration). Apparently at least Harden had been receiving rations, but was "told that as he was able bodied he must support himself." Titus Hurrick cut 2,935 feet of timber from Kendal. The logs were sent to Wilmington for sale where they were seized by the Freedmen's Bureau and sold to Northop Saw Mill Company.

Local white attitudes were likely similar to those elsewhere. Local planter and resident of Smithville described the immediate impacts:

> There was a detachment of Yankee "school marms" who sat down here, and instructed the young colored "idea how to

> shoot." The army stragglers and carpet baggers and bummers and "school marms" continued the work of instructing the colored voter. Many important ideas had to be instilled into the vacant minds of the colored man who was to be a voter, a legislator, a judge, a member of Congress and makers of laws to govern the white race who were mostly disqualified from exercising any function. What the colored man had to learn was important. He had to learn that he was free and the equal of the white man; he had to learn that he must not take off his hat while speaking to a white man or woman and that above all things they must not address them as master or mistress . . . (Curtis 1900:38).

Later, in the same vein, Curtis remarked:

> the intellect of the negro was not sufficient to originate liberty nor did they know what to do with it after they got it; therefore they fell into the hands of designing men, politicians, carpet-baggers, scala-wags and school "marms" who emigrated to the south in great numbers all assisting to make true their contention that the negro was equal to the white man (Curtis 1900:42).

Curtis' wife held no more moderate a view, commenting, "God help us if the Negroes get control; but they never will while a Southern white man lives to help prevent it" (Diary of Margaret Coit Curtis, October 1896).

Local papers continued to represent conservative, white supremacy views. They relished the reporting of stories of "outrage" upon local whites, most especially women, furthering the fear among local whites (for example, *Wilmington Journal*, April 22, 1870, pg. 4). When not directly reporting the offenses of African Americans, they reported the fiscal irresponsibility of blacks, contrasting it with the care and diligence of whites. For example is the article reporting that Brunswick County was repaying its bond debt, which was attributed solely to whites with the comment, "well done white men of Brunswick!" (*Wilmington Journal*, November 26, 1875, pg. 1).

In something of a travelogue, a local observer commented, "nothing will ever be made of this section until a thrifty emigration sets in, and the larger proportion of its inhabitants either die or migrate . . . . the country in the hands of energetic people may yet be made productive" (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, April 14, 1870, pg. 1).

The area was far from safe for the freedmen. For example, on July 10, 1868, the freedman Owen Roe complained to the Freedmen's Bureau that his wife, Nancy, had been beaten by James B. Moore of Moore's Creek in New Hanover. Moore would do this, it seems, whenever "he felt disrespected, that he had money and could pay for what he did." Summoned to Wilmington, Moore was unrepentant, complaining of all the trouble this family caused him, that they stole from him constantly, and they had not complied with their contract. There is no record of Moore being punished for his behavior – so perhaps the Moore name or money was as powerful has he claimed (Freedmen's Bureau Records of Field Officers, Labor Contract Documents).

In another case, on July 24, 1868, a Fred Smith in Brunswick County complained that Deputy Sheriff Bruce King had taken his ox and was going to auction it off within just a few days. King's attention was called to "Article 10 of the Constitution and warning him of the consequences if he sold this Property" (Freedmen's Bureau Records of Field Officers, Labor Contract Documents).

Smithville continued to be what can only be described as "sleepy." An 1867 business

directory lists four boarding houses, two attorneys, two physicians, six businesses, and, likely on the outskirts, two saw mills (Reaves 1978:49-50).

The first reported conflict between African Americans and whites in the Smithville area occurred in November 1867. The prevailing white account explained that free liquor was passed around during a Radical Party rally. After a while, rocks were thrown at the Conservative Party candidate, but it does not seem that the events were sufficient to classify the actions as a "riot" (Reaves 1978:50).

In this context it is interesting that in the 1873-1874 session of the General Assembly, laws were passed prohibiting the sale or distribution of "intoxicating liquors" within four miles of the Zion Methodist Church in Brunswick County; within three miles of any school being taught in Shallotte Township; or within 2½ miles of the Zion Church in the Town Creek Township (Anonymous 1874:217-218).

In 1871, Smithville acquired its first African American church, St. James A.M.E. Zion. John Davis and Frank Dosher acquired the property and the first pastor was Julius Robinson. The church founders were Julia McDonald, Sarah Cotton, Eliza Freeman, Peter Rutland, John "Bug," Gibb Davis, and Lem Freeman (Reaves 1978:58).

One of the earliest accounts of seafood processing in the area was the opening of an oyster cannery at Smithville begun in February 1876 by the firm of Price & Weeks (Reaves 1978:67).

Toward the end of Reconstruction, there is an account that reveals paternalistic behavior on the part of whites was still present, as long as the African American "knew his place." Reaves (1998:184) describes white citizens purchasing a gravestone for Daniel Roswell. The stone read,

> SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF/DANIEL ROWELL/Born Feb. 19th, 1816,/Died Feb. 19th, 1876/An affectionate Husband, an indulgent/Parent, a kind Neighbor, and a useful patriotic/citizen. He was a consistent Member of the/Baptist Church. In politics, unlike the majority/ of Freedmen, he refused to follow corrupt lead-/ers, but took a strong stand for honest govern-/ment. This tablet is erected by his white friends to commemorate his many virtues (Reaves 1998:184).

The location of the graveyard, "about a quarter of a mile from the Phoenix, N.C. post office" has not been identified. Although a Charlotte Rowell was a small slaveholder in the Northwest of Brunswick County, perhaps resulting in the last name, no Rowell was found as a freedman in the 1870 census.

Table 9 lists a few individuals specifically associated with the Lower Cape Fear.

Tom Clark is found in the 1870 census for Smithville as an 18-year-old black farmer married to Eliza, then 21 years old. Curiously, the following decade, Tom Clark is identified as 40 years old, married to 38-year-old Eliza. He is shown as a laborer and their family includes four children ranging in age from 18 to 14. Thereafter, he and his wife disappear from the census.

In the 1870 census records, there are two Robert Hoopers. In Smithfield there is a 40-year-old individual identified as a farmer, living with 60 year old Hester, and two children, William and Mary. In the Town Creek area, there is a 39-year-old farmer, living with a 20-year-old Hester and two children, Julia and Benjamin. We believe these, in spite of their similarities, may be father and son. We have identified a 1963 death certificate for a Robert Hooper, married to Elsie Brewington, living on Orton Plantation. His father was Robert and mother was Hester, suggesting he may have been the third generation (and was born in 1899) (Brunswick County Death Certificate, 1963, 174). He was buried in the Lilliput Cemetery.

In 1870, a newspaper reproduced some social data for Brunswick. The County was carrying a debt of only $3,000, on a tax base of about $14,000.

There were 21 paupers in the county, only four of whom were African American. There were 20 African Americans convicted of crimes, but only 12 whites. Nevertheless, there were two whites sent to prison from Brunswick, but no African Americans.

Table 10.
Agricultural production in Brunswick County, 1850-1880

	1850	1860	1870	1880
Farms	385			1002
Average Size	691			
Improved Acres	18419	21511	21019	19399
Unimproved Acres	247622	303553	261816	307680
Value ($)	521059	755766	376432	558035
Value of Implements ($)	28471	43406	22872	23266
Horses	501	649	372	300
Asses and Mules	152	345	108	168
Milk Cows	3030	2852	2777	2177
Other Cattle	4571	5087	3403	5310
Oxen	785	829	802	853
Sheep	3457	3017	3555	4745
Swine	12227	19299	10485	16394
Value of Livestock ($)		256792	161030	113631
Value of Animals Slaughtered ($)	29873	76497	32466	5452
Wheat (bu)	6	35	12	70
Rye and Oats (bu)	722	540	75	2878
Corn (bu)	63229	99118	56211	46320
Irish Potatoes (bu)	1104	47	1890	715
Sweet Potatoes (bu)	101017	131669	129168	111779
Pease and Beans (bu)	4533	12023	6482	5452
Rice (lbs)	2687415	6775286	748418	1163852
Tobacco (lbs)	50	-	528	2582
Ginned Cotton (400 lbs bales)	7	1	119	244
Butter (lbs)	11109	13276	9815	3540
Hay (tons)	77	533	-	15
Wool (lbs)	24957	5639	3775	10880
Value of Market Garden ($)	135	-	3288	20
Value of Orchard Produce ($)	29	159	100	623
Forest Products ($)			62601	94074
Poultry on hand				13606

The average wage of farm hands, per month and with board, was reported to be $12.00. The day labor, without board, received $1.00 and with board, .75¢. The average female domestic in Brunswick County was being paid $6.00 a month, with board.

There were 11 Baptist churches with 788 members, eight Methodist churches with 400 members, and only one Episcopal Church with but 20 members (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, October 29, 1870, pg. 1).

Agriculture

The value of Brunswick County's agricultural lands, nearly $755,800 prior to the Civil War, fell by over 50% to $376,432 in 1870. This decline in value was not the result of a decline in improved acreage, which remained nearly stable from 1860 to 1870. Improved acreage, however, did drop about 8% by 1880. We should not paint too rosy a picture. The value of farm implements plummeted between 1860 and 1870, as did the number of horses, mules, cattle, and pigs. Oxen remained steady and the number of sheep actually increased by about 17%.

Nearly every agricultural product except Irish potatoes, tobacco, and cotton declined. Most significantly rice production feel from nearly 6.8 million pounds to only 748,000 pounds – a decline of about 89%. Even by the end of reconstruction only about 7% of these rice losses had been recovered.

Irish potato production tended to fluctuate and so can be discounted; cotton production, however, increased from a single bale in 1860 to 119 bales in 1870 and 224 in 1880. Similarly,

Table 11.
Occupations in Smithville and Town Creek Townships, 1870 and 1880

	1870			1880		
	Town of Smithville	Smithville	Town Creek	Town of Smithville	Smithville	Town Creek
Blacks	216	350	991	253	573	1307
Mulattoes	21	27	0	115	49	55
	237	377	991	368	622	1362
Farmers		65	112	4	76	165
Farm Laborers - Family		7	36	1	12	50
Farm Laborers		40	93	11	64	161
Female Servants	23	17	18	34	13	9
Male Servants	9	4				7
Laundress	1			7	3	1
Seamstress	1					
Wood Chopper				1		
Day Labor	30		88	5	27	37
Turpentine Worker		1	1		2	39
Guano Factory Worker						1
Grist Mill Operator						1
Oystermen				2		
Fishermen				2		1
Watermen/Boatman	2			8	8	6
Seamen/Sailor	1	2		11	1	
Steward, Ship	1			1		
Cook, Ship				6		
Engineer, Ship						
Fireman, Ship	1			1		
Carpenter, Ship			1			
Drayman/Wagon Driver				1		
Merchant				2		2
Store Clerk				1		
Cook, Commercial				1		
Housekeeper, Hotel				1		
Minister/Preacher				2	1	1
Government Worker				12	1	
Ferry/Bridge Tender						1
House Carpenter			2	1		4
Cooper						4
Blacksmith						1
Gardener				4		
Cobbler	1					
Jail Keeper	1					
Lawyer						1
School Teacher	1			1		
Apprentice				1		
No Occupation	7		4	8	4	1
Totals	79	136	355	129	212	493
Literacy				33.70%	21.50%	8.80%

tobacco, which was never an especially abundant crop in Brunswick County, began being planted more commonly, so production increased from 528 pounds in 1870 to nearly four times that amount, 2,582 pounds, in 1880. Both blacks and whites sought commodities that would create ready cash with minimal investment – and cotton and tobacco were far more profitable choices than rice (Alston 1990). Moreover, many African Americans resisted efforts to return them to "mud-work" (Strickland 1983). Plantations such as Orton, with "Houses for two hundred Farm Hands" remained largely empty (*The Wilmington Daily Journal*, March 3, 1877, pg. 3).

The number of farms also nearly tripled from 385 in 1850 to over a thousand in 1880.

During this period the Census Bureau defined a farm as being owned or leased by one man and cultivated under his care - a definition that had been relatively stable since at least the decade before and was likely consistent with the censuses of 1850 and 1860.

Some additional impressions may be obtained by reading local advertisements for farms and plantations being sold during the period. In 1865, a "valuable plantation" was advertised as "well adapted" to corn, cotton, wheat, potatoes, and ground-peas (peanuts). Also present was a large orchard of fruit trees, already bearing. There were "seventeen framed houses for laborers, now occupied by freedmen, most of whom may probably be hired to work on the place" (*The Wilmington Herald*, December 5, 1865, pg. 2). In 1873, there is an advertisement of 750 acres of farming and woodlands. The cultivated fields were good for cotton, corn, peas, potatoes, and wheat. Also present were 500 grape vines, ready to bear that year, along with 600 apple trees and 600 peach trees. One of the new buildings was a store, presumably offering another source of revenue for the owner (*The Evening Post*, Wilmington, NC, April 26, 1873, pg. 1).

Orton advertised that there were houses for "two hundred Farm Hands" (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, February 27, 1877, pg. 3).

Not all properties were intended for agriculture. One advertised, "Turpentine Lands for Sale," announcing that the property currently had "now out eight crops of boxes and will cut six crops of new boxes" (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, February 10, 1876, pg. 3). Near Kendal and Lilliput, this tract would have represented one of the many vast interior pinelands.

The 1873 tax scrolls for Brunswick County can help in our understanding of African American agricultural activity. In the Smithville Township, 83 individuals paid the "colored poll tax" compared to 228 in the Town Creek Township. In Smithville, of the 83 individuals paying the poll, only 10 (12%) owned property. In the Town Creek area, only 27 individuals reported property (11.8%). The largest black landowner in the Town Creek area was James Hall, reporting 650 acres valued at $2,500. In contrast, the smallest was Benjamin Starkey, with 2 acres valued at $30.

In both cases, the data suggest that whether owning property or not, African Americans in the Lower Cape Fear were clearly interested in voting. Nevertheless, not all African American property owners paid the poll tax. One example in Smithville is Robert Hooper, who owned 19 acres.

In Smithville, African Americans reported about 1160 acres total, averaging about 116 acres. This represented a total value of $1,683, or an average value of $168. The largest landowner was Primus Rutland, owning 400 acres.

Curiously, of these four individuals (Hall, Starkey, Hooper, and Rutland), the only one making an appearance in the 1870 agricultural census is Robert Hooper, claiming only four acres of improved land and one acre of unimproved, a horse, and $5 in farm produce.

In the Town Creek Township the total acreage owned in 1873 by African Americans (who also paid the poll tax) was 2,680.75 acres (with a

per holding average of just under 100 acres), valued at $5,625 (with a per holding value of $208).

African Americans owned no watercraft, in either Town Creek or Smithville, although there were two flats owned by whites in Town Creek. This suggests that, at least at this early date, there were few African American watermen.

In the Town Creek Township, 27 of the 83 black land owners also possessed stock of some description. Horses were the least common, being found with only four of the 27. Hogs were the most common, being reported by 19, in numbers varying from as few as two, to as many as 45. Cows were generally kept as single animals, likely to provide milk, with 10 land owners also reporting at least one. There were, however, several with as many as 5 to 7. None of the African Americans reported owned a mule or ox. There were also three land owners who did not report owning any stock.

But stock was not limited to property owners, with 29 not having land, reporting a horse (in four cases), cow (in 14 cases), or hogs (in 29 cases). The largest number of hogs maintained by a non-land owner was 30.

Clearly, the absence of owned land did not preclude the keeping of stock, just as it had not during enslavement. We assume that these animals were maintained on the property of the person for whom the African American worked or perhaps the land of a relative.

In contrast, Holmes and Curtis, owners of Kendal and Lilliput (totaling 5,660 acres) reported a horse, four mules, 35 cattle, 36 hogs, and 32 sheep – a large larger and more diverse assemblage.

Population

The census records from 1870 and 1880 provide insight into African American life along the Cape Fear in Brunswick County. Table 11 tabulates the Smithville (divided into the Town of Smithville and the rural outlying areas) and Town Creek Townships.

Hochschild and Powell (2008) provide an interesting history of racial terms used by the Census Bureau, including the changing rationale – and motives – for the collection of this information. One conclusion is that the validity of these observations must be questioned. For the period up to 1890, the Bureau offered no real definitions and the terms were likely applied by the census taker based on his own life experiences, biases, and viewpoints.

In any event, in 1870 there were no mulattoes reported from the Town Creek Township, although in 1860 there were 11 members of the Icecom Comby family, and eight members of the Martha McQuillen family, including her grandmother, Ellen Davis. Both families had sizeable real estate value, as well as personal estates. Comby was a farmer and several members of the McQuillen family were carpenters. Most of these individuals were born in North Carolina, although both Ellen Davis, then 73-years-old, and Martha McQuillen, 46-years old, were originally from South Carolina.

Smithville had 48 mulattos in the 1870 census. The decade before there were only 13, including a carpenter, a washerwoman, and several without listed occupations. Many of these, however, had either real estate or personal estate values recorded. To this we can add Fortune Hawkins, a free black man with $150 in personal estate, although his occupation was listed simply as laborer. All of these were born in North Carolina.

By 1880, mulattoes had somehow found their way into the Town Creek Township. On the other hand, in 1880 there seems to be a significant cluster of mulattoes within the Town of Smithville where they represent about 31% of the African American population. In contrast, outside the town limits, mulattoes comprise just under 8% of the African Americans enumerated. This suggests that lighter skinned blacks gravitated to the town, perhaps because they were more accepted and/or could obtain better opportunities.

Mack (1999) did explore the topic in

Orangeburg, South Carolina. She found little or no cohesion because of interclass differences. While there was a "constellation of factors" that determined status, including property, income, and education, "'skin color, white blood, or mixed ancestry' were seen as significant in enhancing status" (Mack 1999:17). She observes that color prejudices among lighter-skinned African Americans toward darker-skinner African Americans occurred throughout South Carolina, especially Charleston. However, this issue was not limited to South Carolina. There were several elite mulatto societies, such as the Bon Ton Society in Washington, D.C. and the Blue Vein Society of Nashville, Tennessee (Lake 2003; Tharps 2016). Tharps explains that into the twentieth century, upwards of 80% of those attending historically black colleges were lighter-skinned. In contrast, darker-skinned students were funneled to technical schools. Even churches often offered no refuge. The split in the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) in 1880 had at its roots, with those forming the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church (CME) wanting a "more refined" place of worship (Tharps 2016:26).

It is not easy with the limited data from Smithville to determine if mulattoes held higher status. However, in 1880, looking at those with listed occupations (representing 27% of those enumerated), 68% were literate – nearly double the town-wide average. Slightly fewer were laborers than were found town-wide. Clearly many of the jobs held had some status, including eight in government service, including working with the Internal Revenue Service and the Customs Department. Mulatto females may also have been preferred by white families as nurses for their children, as five fulfilled that role. The town jailer was a mulatto. The steward and cook on a steamer were mulattoes.

Occupations for all African Americans, regardless of perceived skin tone, were limited. In the rural areas of Smithville and Town Creek, for example, five occupations comprised virtually all of the available jobs: agriculture, turpentine, day labor, work on the water, and servants to whites.

Only in the Town of Smithville were higher status or professional jobs available, such as practicing law, teaching, blacksmithing, being a merchant, or being a cobbler.

We see the beginning of various jobs associated with the Cape Fear in 1880. While there were only eight individuals employed on or associated with the water in 1870 (representing 1.4% of the jobs), by the following decade, this number had increased to 47 (representing 5.7% of the total).

Another field that saw a significant increase was work in turpentine on the long leaf pine forests. In 1870, only two individuals were identified in that activity. By 1880, the number increased to 41, representing the largest number employed in the trade through 1940.

The number of domestic workers (both male and female servants, including household cooks) remained essentially steady. Nevertheless, the percentage of those performing this work dropped from 13.1% in 1870 to 9% in 1880. This percentage would increase as economic conditions worsened in the twentieth century, but it suggests that African Americans were not inclined to choose this work if other options were available.

Not all occupations, however, were reported. For example, in 1873 Caesar White, who "established" himself on the plantation of Judge Russell, "embarked in the business of retailing spirituous liquors without a license to the colored people employed on the plantation" (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, January 28, 1873, pg. 1). Caesar White slipped through both the 1870 and 1880 censuses, so this news account is the only record we have of his activity in Brunswick.

The value of education is a difficult topic to examine through census records. Mack, for example, argues that "African American parents did not go out of their way to educate their son or daughter, as before 1940 educating children tended not to be a priority" (Mack 1999:xxii). We see in the 1870 census for the Town of Smithville

that there was a mulatto teacher, Maggie Franklin, from New York and only 18 years old at the time. That same census reported 32 children "at school," likely under Maggie Franklin's tutorage. She disappears from the census after 1870, although she was still receiving letters in Wilmington as late as 1880 (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, July 28, 1880, pg. 1).

By 1880, Frank Gardner, a 22-year-old black male, is identified as a teacher in the Town of Smithville. This may be the same Frank Gardner who, in 1870, was living in Charleston, South Carolina and who was able to both read and write. Regardless, he also disappears after 1880. Only six children are identified as "at school" in the 1880 Smithville census, suggesting a significant decline in attendance from a decade earlier.

Some idea of literacy can be obtained from the census records beginning in 1870 and we can see that in the Town of Smithville, where there was a teacher, literacy was better than outside the town or in the Town Creek Township. In the town, about a third of African Americans were considered literate (i.e., were able to both read and write).

What certainly must have been viewed as miscegenation is documented by several census records in 1880, all from the Town Creek Township. In one case Isham Cumbe, a mulatto, is identified as married to Sarah, a white woman, with their three children, all mulattoes. He was first found in the 1860 census as a free person of color and was married to Sarah at that time. Samuel Jordan, a white farmer, is shown married to Julia, a mulatto. Their two children are also identified as mulattoes. The third case is 40-year-old Mary Burney who is listed without a husband. Two of her three children are white, the youngest, however, is listed as mulatto. Thus, in spite of laws from as early as 1715 in North Carolina banning black and white marriages (with Croatan Indians added to the ban in 1887), it seems that interracial unions were taking place, at least in the more rural areas of Brunswick County.

A local paper documented another case, telling of a white woman, Mrs. Williams, "eloping" with a "young negro boy named Siss Patrick, about fifteen years of age" who worked at Belvedere Plantation. The article's analysis was simple, "They have not been heard from since. We hope they never will" (*The Daily Journal*, Wilmington, NC, September 7, 1875, pg. 4).

It is no surprise that in rural Brunswick County, most African Americans were agricultural workers. What may be surprising is that nearly half of these workers – in both 1870 and 1880 – were "farmers," not farm laborers. This means that they were working largely for themselves (even if a lien was held by others or they were working on another's property). This percentage increases if we add those who were laboring on a family farm, rather than working for others.

Surprisingly few African Americas were reported as working as rice hands (although one indicated that he was a "rice farmer" in 1880 Smithville Township). It is likely that a significant number of those identified as farm laborers worked in rice fields as well, but were not so tabulated by the census takers.

Of all the occupations and individuals, several stand out. For example, in the 1880 census of the Town Creek Township, a 22-year-old mulatto, Andrew Laspel, listed his occupation as "Tramp." What this meant, precisely, in 1880, is not certain, but in spite of his lack of productive employment, he was able to both read and write.

Another interesting individual in the 1880 Town Creek area was 60-year-old Leah Starky, wife of William Starky, a farmer. Leah was not enumerated as either keeping house or working in the fields. Instead, defying sex roles, she was listed as a "fisher" – the only female we found associated with water activities.

During Reconstruction, in spite of oppressive racism and astonishing obstacles, an impressive number of African Americans were working on their own. Some were even able to accumulate both real and personal property as

early as 1870 (sadly this data was not collected in 1880). The 29 identified in the census records are listed in Table 12. Twenty-eight of these individuals have real property. Only one lists personal property, but no real property. None of these individuals, except for William Brown, were found in the 1860 census.

Real property values range from $10 to $15,000, while personal property values range from $25 to $800 (ignoring zero valuations in both cases). To help place these numbers in better perspective, $10 dollars in 1870 is the equivalent of about $175 today.

searched for a sample of 15 individuals, and found deeds for 11. Some of the deeds postdate the census. Either earlier deeds were never registered or the African Americans were engaged in "renting to own" and considered themselves "owners." Most of the tracts were small, with an average of 80 acres, but several tracts were 5 acres or less. The average cost was less than $69 and property was acquired for about $1 and acre or less (the average was 86¢). In several cases these were far from ideal agricultural lands; in one case the tract was known as "Meares Swamp Garden," a rather foreboding name. In any event, the acquisitions propelled them into the land owning class.

Table 12.
African Americans holding real or personal property in the Smithville or Town Creek Townships in 1870

Name	Location	Occupation	"Color"	Literate	Real Property ($)	Personal Property ($)	Grantor of Property	Date of Deed	Deed Book/page	Payment ($)	Acres	General Location
Bay, Cezar, agt.	Town Creek	Farmer	B	no	1000	125			Not Found			
Beasley, Isaac	Town Creek	Farmer	B	yes	100	0			Not Found			
Breson, John	Smithville	Farmer	B	no	25	0			Not Found			
Brown, William	Smithville	Farmer	Mu	partial	600	200	Nathaniel Galloway	1852	P/599	350.00	500	Cape Fear
Davis, Samuel	Smithville	Farmer	Mu	no	10	0	Francis Morse	1835	L/296	10.00	-	where Davis now lives
Frink, Hector	Smithville	Farmer	B	no	25	25	Ino T. Harper	1875	JJ/366	25.00	50	Burk Neck
Galloway, Abram	Smithville	Farmer	B	no	25	0	Robert W. Davis	1880	Z/269	22.50	5	near Smithville
Galloway, Ann	Smithville	Keeping House	Mu	no	100	0	James Bowen & Fuller Price	1879	-	1.00	1	adjcent to Brown Chapel Tract
Galloway, Samuel	Smithville	Farmer	B	no	20	0	William Brown	1870	U/219	47.47	10	adjacent to Brown
Gardner, Dred	Smithville	Farmer	B	no	300	50			Not Found			
Hankins, Fortune, agt.	Town Creek	Farmer	B	no	200	0	Heirs William Coleman	1876	X/19	150.00	100	Middle Swamp
Hill, Richard	Town Creek	Farmer	B	no	40	0	William Boudinot	1867	W/5	50.00	-	-
Hooper, Robert, agt.	Town Creek	Farmer	B	yes	15,000	0	W.G. Curtis	1873	V/129	57.00	19	-
Jenkins, Cain	Town Creek	Farmer	B	yes	450	50	J.L. Tharp	1877	AA/415	38.75	31	Grass Branch
McDonald, John	Smithville Town	Boatman	Mu	no	600	800	Sheriff	1869	T/637	6.00	4	
Mills, Fred	Smithville	Farmer	B	partial	200	100						
Moore, Peter	Smithville Town	Day Labor	B	no	500	0						
Mosley, Peter	Smithville	Farmer	B	no	200	100						
Patrick, Samuel	Town Creek	Farmer	B	yes	40	110						
Reans, Ben	Smithville	Farmer	B	no	50	25						
Reans, Isaac	Smithville	Sailor	B	no	100	100						
Sheppard, May	Smithville Town	Day Labor	B	no	40	0						
Smith, John	Smithville	Farmer	B	yes	20	0						
Smith, Solomon	Smithville Town	Jail Keeper	Mu	yes	100	0						
Swain, Anthony	Smithville	Farmer	B	no	20	0						
Waddell, Robert	Town Creek	Farmer	B	no	0	150						
Willis, Burton	Town Creek	Farmer	B	partial	75	103						
Wilson, Isaac	Smithville	Farmer	B	partial	50	25						
Wright, Wilson	Town Creek	Farmer	B	partial	40	0						

The real property values listed are suggestive of tracts containing only a few acres – small subsistence farms. There are two individuals, however, listed as "agents" who claimed values that are more substantial. It seems likely that these individuals were operating communal or joint ventures with other African Americans. Alternatively, they may have been overseers and the property value reflected that of the absentee white property owner.

To explore the nature of the property owned, we

In addition, with only one exception (James Bowen and Fuller Price), all of the grantors were whites. This suggests that whatever the rhetortic may have been, whites in Brunswick at least were willing to sell land to African Americans. Of course, this may have been that they saw no other choice, or that they were disposing of relatively worthless (in their eyes) parcels. But it may simply be that in a cash strapped society, anyone's money would be accepted. Nevertheless, we will see later that there were many blacks

Table 13.
Freedmen's Bureau Contracts with African Americans in the Lower Cape Fear Area

Date	Land Owner	Plantation	Location	Freedmen	Owner Provides	In Exchange for
May 8, 1865	Daniel L. Russell		Town Creek	-, Adam -, Bob -, Cesar -, Edmund -, Harriet -, Ivey -, Lewis -, Spencer -, Villis -, Weston -, Will Beatty, Frank Cott, Charles, Frost, Jack Hines, Frank James, Bill Jones, Saul Redd, Kitty Sanders, Charles Williams, Isaac	land seed tools	three-fifths of crops
May 13, 1865	Thomas C. McIlhenny	The Forks	Brunswick Co.	Davis, Henry Davis, Sabrina Mallett, John Simmons, Charles Green, Sam Anderson, Stephen Anderson, Aggie Davis, Larry Simmons, Amos Eagles, Miles Anderson, Joseph Burguin, Fred Davis, Grace Davis, Charlotte Risten, Sam Davis, Sandy Heywood, Rose Loumer, Billy Dudley, Zane Davis, James H. Anderson, William Davis, Phillis Billups, Iversen Billups, Lucy Williams, Andrew Lanet, Dublin Malsby, William	land seed tools	one-half of crops
May 13, 1865	William Watters	Clarendon	Brunswick Co.	-, John Allston, John Bryan, Heady Bryan, John Cole, Frank Davis, Ben Davis, George Green, June Hall, Charles Hall, James Hill, Edmund Hooper, Schuyler McGuire, Rachel McRae, Monroe Neale, Joseph Neil, Junis Swan, Landy Waddell, John Waddell, Lewis Waddell, Richard Waddell, Robert Waddell, William Walker, Isreal Waters, Peggy Williams, Robert	land seed tools	one-half of crops
May 23, 1865	William E. Boudinot	Woodburn	Brunswick Co.	-, Joe Ash, John Ash, Oelia Coleman, Margaret Colman, Reuban Culbury, Nancy Culbury, Sophia Dickson, Marcus	land seed tools	one-half of crops
August 28, 1865	Thomas C. McIlhenny	saw mill	Brunswick Co.	Gillespie, John Lomax, Alexander Nix, James Robinson, Thomas Robinson, Wesley Robinson, Willington Stoke, Jacob Thomas, Limpy Vandross, Paul	comfortable quarters sufficient rations kind treatment encourage schools for their children	$10/month
September 8, 1865	William Watters	saw mill	Brunswick Co.	Duncan, Edward Edwards, Abraham Jones, William Moore, John Strain, Cato	comfortable quarters sufficient rations kind treatment encourage shcools for their children	$10/month
February 17, 1866	Francis M. Moore	Fair Oaks	Brunswick Co.	Moore, Charles Moore, James Moore, R- Moore, Robert Moore, Simon Moore, William	-	one-third of crop [lease]
March 6, 1866	William E. Boudinot		Brunswick Co.	[illegible] [name marked through] Bryant, John Davis, Benjamin Davis, Jesse Davis, Moses Grange, James Green, June Green, Margaret Hall, Frankey Harper, Celia Howe, Nancy [name marked through] Sneed, John Swain, Sandy [name marked through] Swan, Charlotte [name marked through] Swan, Hoopy Swan, Sucky Waddell, Rachel [name marked through] Waddell, Richard [marked dead] Walker, Isreal Williams, Jeffry	farming utensils requsite team	one-half of crop
January 4, 1867	Thomas C. McIlhenny		Brunswick Co.	Davis, John Tillyaw, Mack Johnson, Joe Higgins, Charles Howard, Joe Barnes, Joe Bryant, Richard Monigam, Robert	comfortable quarters 4 lbs meat 1 peck meal 1 qt mollasses kind treatment	$7/month to be paid to authorities for their labor
February 5, 1867	Bryan and Gay		Brunswick Co.	Ware, Henry Clark	comfortable quarters sufficient rations kind treatment	$6/month to be paid to his mother [he is 14]

willing to sell property to other blacks, helping to spread and establish the property owner class.

It is also worth noting that several of these examined early property owners were engaged in the acquisition of multiple tracts. One example is Cain Jenkins, who purchased at least three parcels between 1877 and 1882 totaling 563 acres and costing $334. The largest tract, that of 500 acres, was mortgaged to assist in the payment. This mortgage was never satisfied, so it is likely that Cain lost this largest parcel within a year of its acquisition in 1882.

Earlier, in 1869, prior to any land purchases, Cain was working at the plantation of John L. Wescott that he rented for $150. To secure this a chattel mortgage was issued for 17 hogs, a horse and buggy, and part of the crop. This mortgage was never satisfied, so it is likely that Cain lost this initial effort. Three additional chattel mortgages were issued between 1881 and 1884, all after the acquisition of at least his two smaller parcels. In each case the bond was about $50 and each time a sizeable quantity of goods were placed for security. Unfortunately, only one of these mortgages was satisfied, suggesting that Cain ran into a significant period of very poor fortune.

He drops out of the census after 1880, although at least one son, his namesake Cain, is found in the 1900 census in Pierce County, Georgia as a turpentine chipper.

Contracts

We have been able to find only 10 contracts in the Freemen's Bureau records that pertain to the Lower Cape Fear and all date from 1865 to 1867. They are useful since they provide names of those signing the agreements and they detail what each party was to provide and receive. These contracts are itemized in Table 13 and include work in fields, in a sawmill, and for one individual as an apprentice.

It is interesting that almost immediately after freedom, these individuals had already adopted surnames, with only 8.4% still using only a first name. While these adopted names include some recognizable area planters, such as Howe, Swain, and Moore, in only one case, that of Francis Moore at Fair Oaks, did the freedmen adopt the owner's name.

The first three contracts, with 60 named individuals, were compared to local census records. Of these less than half, or 29, could be identified with some degree of probability. Twenty-four appear as early as 1870, with the remainder not being found until 1880. By 1870, 13 of the individuals were living in Wilmington and 10 were found in Town Creek. One was likely from Masonboro in New Hanover County. Most tended to stay in one location and most were not found by the 1900 census (only three were present that late), likely because they had died.

When straight tenancy was proposed the contracts consistently stipulated that the owner of the land would provide the land, the seed, and the tools, although in one case the land owner agreed to provide only the team (i.e., probably mules) and "farming utensils." It appears that it was up to the laborers to also provide the seed. The African American tenants, upon harvest, would provide the owner of the property with between 40% and 50% of the crops. The remainder of the crops would be divided among those individuals who signed the agreement.

In a single case, we found an agreement in which a consortium of African Americans agreed to lease the land, with the owner obtaining a third of the crop. While the laborers received the bulk of the return, they also took on all the risk, providing seed, tools, and animals, with no guarantee of success.

While we found no documents specific to Brunswick, there survives at least on petition by a group of freedmen in Kinston, North Carolina, seeking approval to "form ourselves into a *society* to purchase *homes* for ourselves by *joint stock*, and for other purpose." Apparently 250 men were to each contribute $48 a year in monthly installments of $4, in order to reach the goal of $10,000

(Anthony Blunt et al. to the Commissioners of Freedmen, Bureau at Raleigh, August 7, 1865, B-15 1865, letters Received, Series 2452, NC Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, RG 105, National Archives).

There were several contracts where the African Americans were simply providing their labor for a set wage - $7 to $10 a month. The owner of the land also agreed to provide housing and rations – something which the other agreements left entirely up to the African Americans themselves. In only one case were the rations specified: a peck of meal, four pounds of meat, and a quart of molasses. It wasn't specified if this was weekly or monthly, nor was it specified if it was per person or family. In addition, the Freemen's Bureau also required language regarding "kind treatment," and that the white landowner would "encourage schools" for the African American children. The degree to which these promises were fulfilled is uncertain, especially given the previous information regarding how few rural children were attending school in 1870.

After the Freedmen's Bureau had stopped monitoring contracts and land restoration was complete, it seems that most agreements were for laborers. In fact, one period news account explained, "there is a prevailing disposition on the past of farm hands, who have heretofore been running the crop on shares, to hire themselves out for wages" (*The Wilmington Sun*, January 15, 1879, pg. 4). The article went on to note that this was not favored by the whites, finding that such labor "cannot satisfactorily be controlled."

At least one Freedmen's Bureau agent also distrusted "shares," advising freedmen against it and urging African Americans instead to take money wages (Royce 1993:197).

It appears that early on African Americans learned the power of their feet, moving on to other locations in hopes of better jobs and higher pay. For example, in 1870 whites were remarking that "hundreds of colored farm hands" were leaving other areas and venturing into Edgecombe County (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, February 5, 1870, pg. 1). In 1873, Wilmington area cotton plantations were luring away farm workers from Craven and adjoining counties (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, January 5, 1873, pg. 1). About the same time, papers were complaining that the Rocky Mount farmers (in Edgecombe and Nash counties) were finding it hard to obtain farm hands (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, January 29, 1873).

There is little evidence, outside the Freedmen's Bureau agreements, for wages during this period. At least one account suggests pay of between $6.25 to $10 a month (*The Wilmington Daily Journal*, January 15, 1871, pg. 3). Reid reports that contracts were variable, "Some of them have been promised their board, and a quarter of the corn crop; others three dollars for a season's work; others a dollar and a-half or two dollars a month" (Reid 1866:52-53).

Families

The 1870 census also helps us understand the families formed immediately after freedom. In spite of decades of enslavement, only five years into freedom, over 84% of the households enumerated represent nuclear families. Of these only 5% are represented only by a female head of household. Less than 1% include a family with only an older male present. Curiously, very few nuclear families with older parents also present are represented (only about 5%). This may indicate that everyone sought privacy or that housing was readily available. What we term "Irregular" arrangements exist in 13.7% of the cases. These include people living alone, one or more blacks in a white household (accounting for 15.6% of the group), and groups of young men living together.

The 1870 census reveals only a few freedmen who originated in South Carolina or Virginia, and only one from Mississippi.

We have previously mentioned the very rapid adoption of surnames in our discussions of contracts. Few planters' names occur, which seems to be a telling comment regarding the freedmen's attitude toward their old owners. One notable

surname is Sicles. This was likely a tribute to General Daniel Sickles, who from 1865 to 1867 commanded the Department of South Carolina, the Department of the Carolinas, the Department of the South, and the Second Military District.

We also noted that traditional slave first names, such as the names of days or months, or names such as Primus, Cumbo, and Mingo seem to have been quickly replaced with more conventional "European" names. Many of these have Biblical origins, such as Rachel, Noah, Lot, and Solomon. Some still harken to classical roots, such as Virgil or Romeo. Others were likely adopted from historical figures, such as Abraham and Washington.

Summary

Because of the way the census records were compiled, there is very little evidence regarding what was happening on plantations such as Orton, Kendal, Lilliput, or Pleasant Oaks during Reconstruction. We know that there were a large number of houses on the plantations – 200 at Orton alone. It is unlikely that the properties were without occupants. But newspaper records pretty clearly reveal that African Americans during this period were moving from one location to another, often looking for better opportunities. Thus, it becomes difficult to gauge stability of populations.

We do know, without question, that, as Charles Dickens penned, "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times. . . ." Census records indicate that a large proportion of freedmen were farming on their own and some were even accumulating both property and small sums. Educational efforts, while focused primarily on urban areas, were having some impact on the quality of life. The African American population grew and there were at least some signs of agricultural recovery. Initial laws and efforts in North Carolina created a relatively robust African American electorate.

And yet, as one newspaper explained Brunswick's judicial system in 1875,

> a colored jury will bring in a colored man guilty while a white jury of Brunswick county will not do so in the case of a white man. A colored jury believes in punishing a colored man for the murdering of a white man . . . . But a white jury of Brunswick county don't [sic] believe in punishing a white man for the killing of a negro. In other words, they believe it is their bounden duty to promote the killing of negroes, and they encourage it as far as possible; while the colored people believe – as all true Republicans and Christians do – that *all* violations of law should be properly and summarily punished (*The Wilmington Post*, April 30, 1875, pg. 1).

With the Compromise of 1877, the stage was set for far worse times to befall the African Americans along the Lower Cape Fear.

Jim Crow, 1878-1944

As Kousser comments, "the bankruptcy of the Compromise of 1877 had been made clear to Republicans by their 1878 congressional defeats in South and by the 1879 Senate investigation of Southern elections" (Kousser 1974:24). Throughout the South the ruling bourbon Democrats, forming what can be called an oligarchy, stressed the ever-present threat of Negro domination and a return of Reconstruction. This was enough to ensure the support of the "white man's party." Yet in North Carolina, there existed a "twilight zone" of nearly 20 years between the return of "home rule" and the large-scale suppression of African Americans.

Political Events

North Carolina was the only Southern state that did not enact severe restrictions on suffrage, allowing black men to continue voting in large numbers (in spite of Democrats gerrymandering districts) and the Republican party to hold on to control (Kousser 1974:182-1833; Logan 1964:49-63). In the 1884 North Carolina gubernatorial elections, only an estimated 2% of the African Americans males failed to vote. Seventy-four percent of them voted Republican.

A significant factor in African American well-being, however, was the Landlord and Tenant Act, enacted just before the end of Reconstruction. This one piece of legislation, and other factors, encouraged the outmigration between 1870 and 1880 of 19,116 African Americans from former slave states (Taylor 1954:18-19). Blacks often went by way of St. Louis and from there to some state west of the Mississippi "where they expected to enjoy a Canaan" (Taylor 1954:19). Of course, this phenomenon was not limited to blacks, over 59,000 whites also made this migratory journey. At the time, the issue was so perplexing that the U.S. Congress formed a committee to explore the causes and the first volume of the resulting report was devoted entirely to North Carolina.

O.S.B. Wall, the president of the Emigrant Aid Society thought the exodus was the result of a return to power by the ex-Confederates, with the result that "things relapsed into pretty much their old condition . . . we have got into a state of things so dark and oppressive that there must be some ventilation" (quoted in Taylor 1954:22). A former slave, Samuel L. Perry from North Carolina, focused on the dissatisfaction with the Landlord and Tenant law, which forbade "a man moving any part of the crop till his rent is paid, and leaves that to the landlord to settle himself; he is the man to say about that as whether advances are made" (quoted in Taylor 1954:26-27). But he also described the horrendous conditions that prevailed in North Carolina, including an account of a white justice of the peace who declared that a "nigger is no more a human being than a horse is a mule" (quoted in Taylor 1954:27).

Landlords, however, were quick to blame the merchants for any problems resulting from the Act. Logan quotes one Brunswick landlord, who insisted the problem was "merchants who furnish them with supplies [and] charge such enormous prices that it is impossible for them [tenants and farmers] to pay it and live decently, or even above want" (Logan 1964:81).

Tourgée explained that, "still further evidence of how hard it is for a 'nigger' to get a 'white man's chance' in the South may be found in the remarkable emigration of colored men to the Northwest which has become so striking as to be termed an 'Exodus'" (Tourgée 1902:518). Logan notes that there were a number of out migrations, commenting, "during the long, uninterrupted rule

of the Democratic party in North Carolina from 1876 to 1894, the movement of Negroes from the state was a constantly recurring phenomenon" (Logan 1964:135).

Local African Americans were learning their power as evidenced by the 1887 Southport elections. The local blacks maneuvered to ensure the election of African Americans over white candidates, with the result that "the white factions were dumbfounded and the community disgusted at the result" (quoted in Reaves 1990:2).

By 1894, North Carolina's Republicans and Populists combined forces, dividing a statewide ticket instead of competing against one another. Known as "Fusion," it helped defeat Democrats throughout state and won a majority in the North Carolina legislature. The Fusionists attacked upper class white privilege and sought to make local government more responsive to the people.

The voice of the Populists was helped by economic conditions, including currency deflation and an economic depression that started under Democratic President Grover Cleveland. By his second term in 1894, nearly 18% of the country's workers were unemployed; one in ten banks had closed their doors; railroad construction fell by 50% forcing many steel companies into bankruptcy. The nation's charities were poorly prepared for the overwhelming demand for public assistance. On the agricultural front, growers watched as staple prices fell by as much as 66% and all farm prices declined by 40%. The terms of trade for farmers had grown more overwhelming, creating huge burdens. Agrarian purchasing power declined. There was an increase in the foreclosure of farm mortgages, putting additional pressures on banks (Faulkner 1982; Hoffmann 1970).

The 1894 Fusion ticket swept Brunswick County, with overwhelming victories in the predominately African American Town Creek Township. Only in Smithville were there sufficient whites to provide majority votes for most Democrats (*The Southport Leader*, November 8, 1894, pg. 4; *The Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, November 16, 1894, pg. 1).

With the victory of the Fusionists in 1894, a variety of reforms were enacted, one of which was to replace the 1889 Democratic registration law with what Kousser (1974:187) has described as "probably the fairest and most democratic election law in the post-Reconstruction South." To ensure a fair count, the county clerks were required to appoint election judges from each party and to have these judges present during the counting of votes. To ensure further that the judges were competent, local party chairs were responsible for nominating their judges. Clerks were forced to set up polling places for every 350 voters, eliminating long waits for voting, and the powers of the clerks were strictly limited by the Fusionists, to ensure that registrars didn't capriciously disqualify voters.

In addition, the Fusionists restored "home rule," allowing election of local officials in the heavily black eastern North Carolina counties where local officials had previously been appointed by the state – and the ruling Democratic Party.

Those challenging votes had the burden of proof placed on them to prove that the vote was illegal. To make voting easier for illiterates (estimated at as many as 22% of the whites and 70% of the African Americans), North Carolina also allowed the use of colored paper ballots and the use of party emblems on the ballots.

The law criminalized various forms of physical and economic intimidation, prohibiting militaristic displays on the day of elections. It even mandated public disclosure of campaign financing.

The Fusionists also increased educational spending in North Carolina and the charter for the Farmers' Alliance (which had been retributively repealed by the Democrats in 1893) was reinstated (Faulkner 2007). Over 1,000 blacks served in both elective and appointive offices at all levels of government in the state.

Because of these laws, there was an

upswing in registration, with Republican registration increasing by 25% and the turnout by African American voters rose from about 60% to nearly 87% in 1896. Most voted Republican (59%; compared to whites with 48% voting Democratic and 34% voting Republican) (Kousser 1974:42). Fusionists won more than 75% of the seats in the legislature and elected a white Republican, Daniel L. Russell, Jr., as governor.

With control of the legislature, the Fusionists began to address two decades of Democratic parsimony toward education. The "Act to Encourage Local Taxation for Public Schools" instructed local county commissioners to hold elections in every school district on the issue of "levying a special district tax" for public education. Those districts that approved such a tax were entitled to apply for matching funds from the state. Moreover, to pressure those that refused, legislators ordered the vote to be taken every two years until a special tax was approved (Anonymous 1897:605).

This is not, however, to imply that the lives of African Americans were carefree. The veil was occasionally drawn back to reveal astonishing – and frightening – racism. One such case occurred in late 1897 when a Raleigh newspaper reported that Nathan Willis, "a colored man living near Town Creek, Brunswick county" was taken from the sheriff, who was holding him as the alleged perpetrator of the murder of a white man. Willis was,

> Carried into the woods and chained between two pine trees. Lightwood was then piled around him and he was burned to death, thus suffering death to pay the penalty for his crime (*The Raleigh Gazette*, December 4, 1897).

The account, however, was subsequently denied by *The Wilmington Morning Star* (March 18, 1898, pg.1). Regardless of the veracity of this one event, 21 lynchings in New Hanover County have been documented between 1877 and 1950. It therefore is tied in 16th place with Kemper, Mississippi, as having the most lynching victims (Equal Justice Initiative 2015:15). While this report identifies 102 victims in North Carolina, Newkirk places the number at 168 (Newkirk 2009; cf. http://lynching.web.unc.edu/documentation/).

While both whites and blacks were lynched, Burke (2015) observes that between 1880 and 1900, 58 lynched individuals were African Americans and only 13 were white. In addition, whites were lynched only for alleged murder. All were males. In contrast, the lynching of African Americans "recognized no gender restrictions and no crime requirements (Burke 2015:4). In fact, blacks were lynched for minor infractions such as political activity and breaking unspoken social codes.

Perhaps the last legal hanging to occur in the area was of the African American John Brooks, convicted of rape. Brooks confessed prior to the hanging and again once on the gallows. He was even denied burial in Southport's black cemetery (*Wilmington Morning Star*, April 28, 1898, pg. 1; *Wilmington Semi-Weekly Messenger*, November 29, 1898, pg. 5; Reaves 1990:110). While the event was tragic enough, a conservative paper used the event as evidence that whites in Eastern North Carolina required the protection of the state's military forces (*News and Observer,* April 30, 1898, pg. 4).

After winning in 1894 and 1896, the Populists became increasingly uncomfortable supporting African American candidates and voting. Democrats again made white supremacy their focus with fears of Negro domination. Stump speeches and political cartons assaulted the sensibilities, but played into the hands of white fear. This time they were effective at driving a wedge between the whites and blacks in the Fusionist Party.

The Republicans combined words with actions. As early as 1892, North Carolina had "borrowed" the red shirt campaign of fear and intimidation from South Carolina. At a "Grand Demonstration" by New Hanover Democrats in

1892, "the Red Shirt boys of the First ward were last, but not least of those on foot, and received applause at every street crossing" (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, September 22, 1892, pg. 1).

By 1898, the use of red shirts had spread throughout the South and Prather suggests they made a reappearance at a rally held in Fayetteville on October 21, 1898 (Prather 1977:175). He explains, "unlike the hooded Klansmen, the Red Shirts wanted Republicans, Populists, blacks, and the entire white population to know who they were and what they stood for – rule by the Democratic party and white supremacy" (Prather 1977:175). At the Wilmington rally an ex-confederate colonel, Alfred Waddell, announced to the crowd, "we will not live in these intolerable conditions. No society can stand it. We are resolved to change them if we have to choke the current of the Cape Fear River with carcasses" (quoted in Hossfeld 2005:32).

Red Shirt rallies were held in Weaverville, Tarboro, Laurinburg, Hamlet, Sanford, Burlington, New Bern, Concord, Roxboro, Reidsville, Tuckahoe, and elsewhere across North Carolina.

While we have not found evidence of Red Shirt activity in Brunswick County, an allied organization, the White Government Union, did hold a well-attended rally at Farmer's Turnout in Brunswick County (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, October 6, 1898, pg. 1). In addition, the newspapers stirred the pot, reporting an "attempted assault by black brutes" on several children in the Town Creek Township. The paper reported that, "the outrage is such as may happen in any of the eastern counties of the state, owing to the Republic-Populist combine (*The Wilmington Semi-Weekly Messenger*, October 18, 1898, pg. 2). In another article a letter was published from S.P. Simmons of Brunswick County, renouncing his membership in the Populist Party, explaining that he had been "misled and fooled into the fusion party" but was henceforth voting only Democratic and "for white supremacy" (*The Wilmington Weekly Star*, November 4, 1898, pg. 2).

On November 3rd a march of "true white men" of Wilmington was held "in behalf of white supremacy" which included a large contingent of Red Shirts. It appears that at least some members of the Klan migrated into the Red Shirts. This article notes the prominent position of Col. Roger Moore (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, November 4, 1898, pg. 1), while a subsequent article seems to link Col. Moore to the "Wilmington Rough Riders in red shirts and men on horseback" during a "White Man's Rally" (*The Wilmington Semi Weekly Messenger*, November 8, 1898, pg. 6).

Fearing violence, the Republican committee withdrew its ticket in some counties, including New Hanover (Prather 1977:179) – although this accomplished little in the end. In 1895 and 1897 changes at the state level, including the elimination of gerrymandering, left Wilmington with a Republican and three African Americans on the board of aldermen. Local Democrats were incensed that they would be unable to undo this until the next municipal election in 1899, regardless of the 1898 election (Hossfeld 2005:33-34; Leloudis 2015:15). In fact, the African American presence was all around the white citizens – as justice of the peace, coroner, police officers, two black fire departments, mail clerks, and carriers.

Their fury was further fanned by an August editorial in the African American *Wilmington Daily Record* newspaper, owned and operated by Alex Manley. Manley responded to an earlier *Wilmington Morning Star* editorial that advocated the lynching of a thousand African Americans a day to deter black men from making sexual advances toward white women. He denounced the concept, arguing that white men should keep better watch over their property and that black men were "sufficiently attractive for white girls of culture and refinement to fall in love with them as is very well known to all" (quoted in Hossfeld 2005:35). Manly also argued that consensual relationships were common and rape was alleged only after the affair was discovered. White newspapers responded with headlines such as "Vile and Villainous" and "A Horrid Slander." It has subsequently been revealed that the author

was not Manly, but an employee, William L. Jeffries (Reaves 1998:255-256).

Shortly before the November election, a newspaper announced, "More Negro Scoundralism" had taken place "in a township where the negroes outnumber the whites more than three to one." This, in addition to "Republican-Fusion rule" resulted in two "beastly negroes" attacking a white girl, the daughter of Joseph Gore, a white farmer. Whether the event occurred or not, the paper argued for the "white men of Brunswick" to "assert your manhood. Go to the polls and help stamp out the last vestige of Republican-Populist-Negro Fusion" (*The Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, September 23, 1898, pg. 2). This was viewed as so powerful by the white Democrats, it was repeated several times (see, for example *The Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, November 4, 1898, pg. 4). Of equal importance were the periodically reported whites "recanting" their previous serious error in judgement by supporting the fusionists. One, presumably shame-faced, reported, "I now see that I, as well as other good meaning men, have been working against good government, and for the single gold standard and negro supremacy" (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, October 4, 1898, pg. 4).

Table 14.
African Americans known dead or wounded (w) because of the Wilmington Coup
(adopted from Umfleet 2005)

Bizzell, Gray	Lindsay, William (w)
Brown, John (w)	McFallon, Sam
Davis, George Henry (w)	McFarland, Sam
Davis, J.R. (w)	Miller, George
Daw/Dow, John (w)	Mouzon, William
Gregory, George (w)	Peamon, Carter
Gregory, John L.	Rowan, Tom
Gregory, Sam	Townsend, John
Hasley, Josh	White, Alfred (w)
Lindsay, Charles	Wright, Daniel

Nevertheless, in Brunswick County, the populist Senate candidate, R.B. Davis, won over the Democrat by 29 votes (*The Semi-Weekly Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, November 22, 1898, pg. 1). One of three Commissioners elected was a Democrat; otherwise, the "Fusion candidates [were] all elected (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, November 10, 1898, pg. 1).

Statewide, the Democrats won elections by a narrow margin, claiming only 52.8% of the vote. This, however, was enough to remove most Fusionists from the legislature. In Wilmington, African Americans stayed away from the polls, hoping to avoid violence, and this allowed Democrats to win by 6,000 votes.

The election results were insufficient for whites in Wilmington. White Democrats drafted what they called a "declaration of independence," calling for the restoration of white rule. The following day armed whites staged what has been described as the "only municipal coup d'état in the nation's history" (Leloudis 2015:15). Extensive coverage the events are provided by Hodgson (2010) and Umfleet (2005). While even Umfleet places the murdered African Americans at no more than 60, other historians are less certain. One of the instigators, Alfred Moore Waddell, was installed as mayor of the city.

The coup had significant impacts on Wilmington. Prior to the events, blacks comprised 56% of Wilmington's 20,055 population. In the days and months that followed the riot, many black citizens left the city—approximately 14% of the black citizens permanently left Wilmington. By 1900, and for the first time since before the Civil War, blacks were no longer the majority in the city.

Hamilton and Darity (2005), in their economic analysis, suggest that not only was there a decrease in the black population, but there was also a significant decrease in the number of blacks employed and black business ownership.

In order to make good their promise to never again be subjugated to African American rule, the newly elected legislature quickly began work on legislation that would effectively disfranchise African American voters for decades to come. Afraid to call a constitutional convention given their slim victory, the Democrats opted instead for a constitutional amendment (Kousser 1974:189). The disfranchisement amendment passed the legislature with all but two Democrats in favor. The law removed the appointment of election officials from local boards and placed it in the hands of a state board selected by the Democratic legislature. The election date was moved from November to August, to limit Federal involvement. All voters were required to register anew and gave registrars the ability to exclude virtually anyone. There were residency requirements, as well as a poll tax and a literacy test that required the individual "be able to read and write any section of the Constitution in the English language" (Anonymous 1900:55). To ensure support of poor (and illiterate) whites, there was a grandfather clause that exempted anyone who could vote or whose ancestor could vote on January 1, 1867. Since the Reconstruction Acts were not passed until March of that year, this ensured white participation, but avoided African American voting. Finally, the new law also established multiple ballot boxes and provided that any ballot found in the wrong box would be disqualified (Kousser 1974:190).

This amendment was voted on in the August 2, 1900 election for governor and legislative seats. The campaign was less brutal than that of 1898, but the Red Shirts again turned out in mass. Alfred Moore Waddell told white Democrats, "you are Anglo-Saxons. You are armed and prepared and you will do your duty…Go to the polls tomorrow, and if you find the negro out voting, tell him to leave the polls and if he refuses, kill him, shoot him down in his tracks. We shall win tomorrow if we have to do it with guns" (quoted in Bishir (2008:66). Republican governor Daniel Russell called on all non-Democrats to oppose the amendment, but Populists refused to condemn the amendment. Moreover, Republicans actively discouraged African Americans from running for office, fearing that blacks actively campaigning would only further engender support for the amendment (Heersink and Jenkins 2016:29).

Brunswick County defeated the amendment and elected an entirely Fusion ticket (*The Wilmington Morning Star,* August 5, 1900, pg. 1; *The Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, August 10, 1900, pg. 1). The Democratic candidate for the Brunswick and New Hanover senatorial district won by 2,898 votes, although Brunswick County decisively voted for the Fusion candidate (*The Wilmington Messenger*, August 12, 1900, pg. 4).

With little surprise, the amendment was approved statewide by a vote of 182,217 to 128,285 and a record turnout of 74.6% (Kousser 1974:193). There were few African Americans voting, although in some precincts, because of the fraud, the returns were so high that it appeared blacks voted for their own disfranchisement (Kousser 1974:194). Even Governor Russell failed to vote, since to do so would have required that he travel to Wilmington (Heersink and Jenkins 2016).

The effects of the election were nearly permanent. After Democratic Governor Daniel Russell left office in 1900, North Carolina would not elect another Republican governor until 1972. George White, an African American who was elected to Congress from a predominantly African American district in 1898, was the last African American elected to that body until 1928. North Carolina would not send another African American to Washington until 1992.

However, there were other effects. Whites in regions of high African American population generally failed to turn out again in such large proportions. Nor was it found necessary to use fraud. The Republican Party quickly abandoned African Americans as a "lost and damaged cause" (Kousser 1974:195). After disfranchisement, there were only 6,145 African Americans statewide still capable of voting (Faulkner 2007:6). From 1900 to 1956, the average Republican vote for governor was only 33.8%. The GOP spent the next several

decades trying to paint the Democrats as pro-negro and anti-business.

Both Democrats and Republicans shifted noticeably to the right with suffrage restricted (by 1902 only 4.6% of the state's African American population was registered to vote) (Kousser 1974:60, 195). Overall voter turnout was reduced from 75% in the 1900 elections to less than 50% in 1904. Of that electorate, less than 30% was turning out for elections by 1912 (Leloudis 2015:19).

Campbell notes that the election of Charles Aycock in 1900 "marked the beginning of the Progressive Era in Tar Heel politics (Campbell 2010:8). Aycock did, in fact, champion issues such as pro-business government, prohibition, paternalistic benevolence, developing infra-structure for growth, and public education. In his inaugural address, Aycock proclaimed a bright new age; but he also compared those who waged war in 1898 with the heroes of the American Revolution (Bishir 2005:67). As Campbell observes, Aycock was capable of infusing racist rhetoric into the concept of reform and saving American civilization (Campbell 2010:8). North Carolina then proceeded to memorialize its white, Anglo-Saxon heritage in every way imaginable, erecting monuments across the state to a variety of white, aristocratic "heroes" and, of course, the "Lost Cause" (Bishir 2005:67-74). It was an era of Progressive Plutocracy.

There is a paradox inherent in this "progressive" movement – it was also the era of Jim Crow laws. North Carolina followed the lead of other southern states in passing a series of laws that segregated African Americans from whites. The 1896 United States Supreme Court case *Plessy v. Ferguson*, had set the stage for the passage of segregation laws by making "separate, but equal" legal under the Constitution.

The term "Jim Crow" is usually attributed to the song-and-dance or minstrel caricature of blacks, "Jump Jim Crow", performed by white actor Thomas D. Rice in blackface. It morphed into a pejorative expression meaning "Negro" and by 1890 the term was used to describe the "subordination and separation of black people in the South, much of it codified and much of it still enforced by custom, habit, and violence (Litwack 2004:7).

Leloudis identifies the first Jim Crow law in North Carolina as the 1899 law that required separate seating on all trains and steamboats. He suggests that the underlying reason for such legislation was to "mark blacks as a people apart and, in doing so, to make it psychologically difficult for whites to imagine interracial cooperation (Leloudis 2015:19). A variety of laws followed that initial 1899 effort, including segregation of streetcars in 1907 and legislation in 1921 that made miscegenation a felony.

Brunswick County, because of its large African American population, remained something of a stronghold for what lingered of the Fusionist Party. As mentioned, the County elected the entire Fusion ticket in 1900 (*The Wilmington Weekly Star*, August 10, 1900, pg. 1) and another newspaper complained that, "Sampson and Brunswick are the only counties in the negro-ridden east that went against the white folks and good government" (*The Wilmington Semi-Weekly Messenger*, August 10, 1900, pg. 2).

In fact, between 1900 and 1924, Brunswick County voted for only two Democrats running for governor, Robert B. Glenn in 1904 (631 to 415) and Locke Craig in 1912 (827 to 581). Otherwise, Republicans took the contests, albeit by relatively slim margins. The citizens of Brunswick were more than likely to vote for Republican state legislators, although that hold was broken by the 1930s.

With disenfranchisement and Jim Crow laws, a certain stability was established in North Carolina – as elsewhere in the South. However, World War I set into motion a series of developments that began to form cracks in white supremacy.

With the coming of the war to the United States, there was the "Great Migration" with more

than 1.5 million African Americans moving north to take war-related industrial jobs. While racism was perhaps just as common in the north, African Americans found that there, they gained the right to vote.

Curiously, it was the Democrats, not Republicans, who gained the most from this new voting right. With the onset of the Great Depression, blacks abandoned the Republican Party and voted instead for Franklin D. Roosevelt and his New Deal. In fact, African Americans outside the South rewarded Roosevelt by helping give him one of the largest reelection landslides in American history (Leloudis 2015:21). Brunswick County had voted consistently for the Republican candidate since 1908. In 1932, however, Roosevelt took Brunswick by 2,215 to 1,798. In 1936, Roosevelt again won Brunswick, 2,710 to 1,625.

In North Carolina, groups such as the Negro Voters' League and League of Independent Voters began a statewide voter registration drive that succeeded in registering nearly 40,000 African Americans who had managed to pass the state's literacy test and register as Democrats.

North Carolina Democrats responded by clutching hold of their tried and true rally cry of "Negro Rule." An effort, led by North Carolina Senator Josiah Bailey, was made to form a coalition between conservative Republicans and Democrats to gut New Deal programs, including the Federal Government's capacity to challenge Jim Crow.

Initially they had some success. For example, Southern Democrats managed to blunt the Social Security Act of 1935 and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, excluding African American domestic and agricultural workers from protection. Their efforts, however, were stymied by World War II and an on-rush of black activism (Leloudis 2015:21).

The CIO union of Food, Tobacco, Agricultural, and Allied Workers organized more than 20,000 black laborers in the tobacco factories of Winston-Salem and the leaf processing plants in the eastern Coastal Plain. Across North Carolina African Americans also joined the national Double-V Campaign for the victory of democracy over fascism abroad and Jim Crow at home. In particular, the black press hammered at the hypocrisy in America's supposed "war for democracy" considering the white supremacy here at home. African American Louis Austin, editor of Durham's *Carolina Times*, was a leading proponent of the Double V strategy in North Carolina, demanding the end of racial segregation (Eagles 1982; Gershenhorn 2006).

Brunswick County certainly benefited from emergency relief efforts. While only 2,572 individuals were on relief (only 16% of the population), there were a variety of projects. Over 37,000 bushels of oysters were planted in the county's waters, mosquito control efforts including draining areas of standing water were undertaken, and there were multiple CCC camps in the county. At least 182 African Americans were assisted with Social Security funding, over 800 were being assisted by the farm and garden program, and a new community house and gymnasium was constructed in the Waccamaw Township (Kirk et al. 1936: 54, 85, 95, 120, 361, 381, 439).

Returning black veterans began establishing local NAACP voter movements in urban centers and in the eastern counties that had sent black representatives to Congress in the latter half of the 19th century. The first success came in 1947 in Winston-Salem, where unionized black tobacco workers helped elect Reverend Kenneth R. Williams to the board of aldermen. Williams was the first black politician in the South to defeat a white opponent at the state or local level since the turn of the century.

Local Events

Smithville remained a small village. In 1881, the Superintendent of Health for Brunswick County reported that no work had been done to improve drainage along the primarily dirt roads of the community; that open privies still dominated the landscape and there were few sanitary regulations. It was reported that the county's

health was generally good, "except upon the River." There, malaria was still common (North Carolina Department of Archives, Dr. Thomas Wood, Board of Health, PC-1346-3).

In 1899, Brunswick was being more effectively linked with the outside world. In May, the Inter State Telephone and Telegraph Company established lines between Wilmington and Goldsboro, linking cities such as Faison, Warsaw, Wrightsville Beach, and Carolina Beach. Even Murchison's Orton Plantation and Kidder's Kendal plantations had wires and phones installed (*The Wilmington Messenger*, May 17, 1899, pg. 4).

Although still a small village, Smithville seems to have been seeing more racial conflicts. In September 1879, a heated street conflict arose between four soldiers from Fort Johnson and local blacks. It dissipated only with the troops firing at the black crowd (*The Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, September 26, 1879, pg. 2). In April 1880, William Howe, a black cook on the Steamer *Woodbury*, was in an argument with Bryan Morse, proprietor the Ocean House saloon. Afterward, Howe was reported to have threatened Morse, who pulled a gun and shot Howe dead in the street (Reaves 1978:74, 76; *The Wilmington Morning Star*, April 13, 1880, pg. 1). Finally, in August 1882, Reaves describes a "black riot" being quelled by Marines from the revenue cutter *Colfax* (Reaves 1978:81).

Only one apprentice, from 1880, is identified in the census schedules. Earlier, however, forced apprenticeship was feared by Brunswick African-Americans. White legislators observed that, as a result of emancipation, "the industry of the negro race had become greatly relaxed and demoralized, the natural consequence of which is an unsettled and roving disposition, a desire to avoid steady work, and a disposition to pick up a precarious existence by pretended hunting of wild game" (quoted in Jackson 2016:136-137).

In March 1866, the legislature approved "An Act Concerning Negroes and Persons of Color or of Mixed Blood." While covering a variety of topics, the new law ratified provisions of the antebellum code that require black children be bound into forced apprenticeship when a county court determined that "the parents with whom such children may live do not habitually employ their time in some honest, industrious occupation" or when the parents were not married. This provision was especially significant since, in 1865, whites argued that anyone born a slave had been born outside marriage (Zipf 2005:89). Moreover, it gave former masters priority in apprenticing black children. To further ensure that African American parents would be powerless to resist these practices, in February 1867 a law was amended to make the effort by parents to reclaim their children a criminal offense, punishable by a $100 fine and up to six months' imprisonment. It also left standing the ability of former masters to also file civil suits by those who held the children under apprenticeship bonds (Jackson 2016:139-140, 149). Jackson observes that, "criminalizing such actions was a blatant means of controlling the lives of black families" (Jackson 2016:150).

The law was so vague that it was used to bind wage-earning men old enough to have children of their own into forced apprenticeship in Brunswick County (Jackson 2016:215). Jackson reveals that, "the Wilmington office of the Freedmen's Bureau was receiving almost daily complaints about the forcible apprenticeship of black children" (Jackson 2016:159).

Very shortly after the law was enacted, a North Carolina Supreme Court case (the Ambrose case) found that apprenticeships, to be valid, must have had the prospective apprentice in court at the time. While decided on narrow grounds, the decision effectively nullified thousands of apprenticeships. Providing further weight, the Freedmen's Bureau began insisting on parental permission (Zipf 2005:99-102). By 1869, the hold of white judges on apprenticeship was broken and instead passed to elected county clerks, many of whom were, at least initially, black (Jackson 2016:251). The enactment of the Child Welfare Act in 1919 created a statutory elimination of apprenticeship (Zipf 2005:3).

The seafood industry, beginning with an oyster cannery, expanded in 1900 to include mullets, with factories established at the Oak Island fishery, near Fort Caswell, and a fishery at Zeke's Island operated by W.E. Davis (Reaves 1978:77). About 1901, the Atlantic Fisheries Company acquired 60 acres of the Millner tract adjacent to Orton at Fort Anderson and the Old Brunswick Town to erect "an extensive oil and fish scrap manufactory" (*The Semi-Weekly Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, February 8, 1901, pg. 8). The factory was anticipated to handle 800 tons of fish a day and a warehouse, machinery building, boiler, storehouses, a mess hall for the black workers, and other facilities were already constructed. In general, the season lasted from March to June. A second factory site was acquired with a year on Howe's Point, 300 yards from the first, in order to expand operations (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, October 1, 1901, pg. 1; *The Semi-Weekly Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, October 4, 1901, pg. 8). This company was soon bought out and rechartered as Cape Fear Fisheries Company (*The Semi-Weekly Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, October 29, 1901, pg. 3). The company apparently employed "between 300 and 400 hands," presumably mostly African Americans.

Acquired by a Philadelphia concern, the fisheries at Brunswick were forced into receivership by 1907 (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, October 25, 1907, pg. 1). The catch of menhaden had apparently been declining and by this time, only about 100 hands were employed at the factory. Greer noted that, "the men . . . usually live adjacent to the factory for which they are fishing and go home as frequently as their will permit" (Greer 1915:26). Those in the factories favored the seasonal nature of the work that allowed them to also farm.

By 1914, the factory was still operating and was in competition with a new company, Carolina Coast Products. Yet another company was in operation by 1915, known as the Southport Fish Scrap and Oil Company, apparently on the Elizabeth River. Nevertheless, the Brunswick concern was still in operation in 1917 (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, June 4, 1917, pg. 3). In 1919 a new, longer dock was being built (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, July 20, 1919, pg. 5), although there were by that time at least three additional factories in the vicinity, the Fisheries Products Company, Neptune Fisheries, and Taylor Fisheries (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, February 1, 1920, pg. 13).

When the industry collapsed is uncertain since none of more notable authors have provided any detailed accounts of the Southport industry (e.g., Whitehurst 1970, Garrity-Blake 1994). Regardless, it was apparently still present in the 1930s (this fishery is seen on the map appearing on the front cover this report).

Reaves suggests one of the earliest reports of an African American revival meeting is in 1892, when the Rev. George H. Wilson, described as a "black evangelist from Charleston" conducted revivals at various local African American churches (Reaves 1990:43). The African Methodist Episcopal Church, however, was holding a revival in Southport as early as May 1890 (*The Southport Leader*, May 8, 1890, pg. 4). Curiously, Logan notes that whites were opposed to such meetings for economic reasons, complaining that their workers were drawn away. The "educated and cultured" African Americans supposedly opposed the meetings also, "because they considered [the meetings] coarse, vulgar, and lowered people's opinion of their race" (Logan 1964:171).

In 1894, there was a report of conjuring or voodoo at Kendal,

> Several colored men living near Kendal Plantation were brought up before Squire Williams last Monday and paid small fines. A disturbance had taken place at Kendal last Saturday night and some threats made by those arrested against other parties who were said to have "conjured" them, hence the disturbance and effort to break the "charm" (*The*

Southport Leader, March 15, 1894, pg. 4).

Such events rarely made it into period newspapers, although Reaves (1998:32-34) identifies a several root doctors and conjurers in Wilmington, including Jim Dickson, John Howard, and Doctor Coghill.

In April 1902, it was announced that Thomas J. Gore, then a grocer in Wilmington, was preparing to open a distillery for corn whiskey "on Marsh Branch, about a mile and a half from the plants of Atlantic Fisheries Company and of the Cape Fear Fisheries Company, at Old Brunswick (*The Wilmington Messenger*, April 23, 1902). The location, in the heart of a working African American community, may have guaranteed clients, but the activity was short-lived. In 1903 the North Carolina assembly passed the Watts Act that prohibited the manufacture or sale of alcohol except in incorporated towns. This was further modified in 1905 by the Ward law, limiting manufacture and sale to incorporated towns with less than 1,000 inhabitants. This effectively made 68 of North Carolina's 98 counties dry, including Brunswick.

Figure 11. The naval stores industry began to die out by the 1920s (Library of Congress, LOT 9930).

In May 1908 North Carolina created prohibition state-wide. The vote in Brunswick County was in favor by 200 votes. In Southport, the vote was 110 for prohibition and 41 votes cast against. Even the rural Town Creek Township voted for prohibition by 34 votes (*News and Courier*, Raleigh, NC, May 28, 1908, pg. 2).

Nevertheless, illegal stills continued to be operated and it appears that a "hotbed" of this activity was in the Marsh Branch area. Several late articles describe the destruction of a 50-gallon and 100-gallon stills (*State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, August 2, 1944, pg. 6, August 30, 1944, pg. 1).

The decline of the naval stores industry began in the 1880s (Reaves 1978:86) and in North Carolina was nearly complete by the 1920s. Thomas Gamble, editor of the *Naval Stores Review* commented, "One cannot but breathe a sigh of regret for the millions of acres of noble trees that have disappeared, bringing back many claim but a minor stream of gold in replacement, for the industry passed through many years when the returns were in nowise commensurate with the efforts put forth and the great raw wealth that was swept away" (quoted in Earley 2004:146). Ashe, reporting on the forest products of eastern North Carolina, commented that the Brunswick County forests were in "a deplorable state, which is a presage of the final destruction of the long-leaf pine" (Ashe 1894:49).

Replacing turpentine as the economic lifeline of African Americans in the Brunswick and New Hanover area was the production of fertilizer. By 1925, it was Wilmington's largest source of employment (Godwin 2000:25). Navassa, in Brunswick County, was the home to three fertilizer plants in 1936, including Armour, Royster, and V-C (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, March 4, 1936, pg. 1). The earliest, situated on

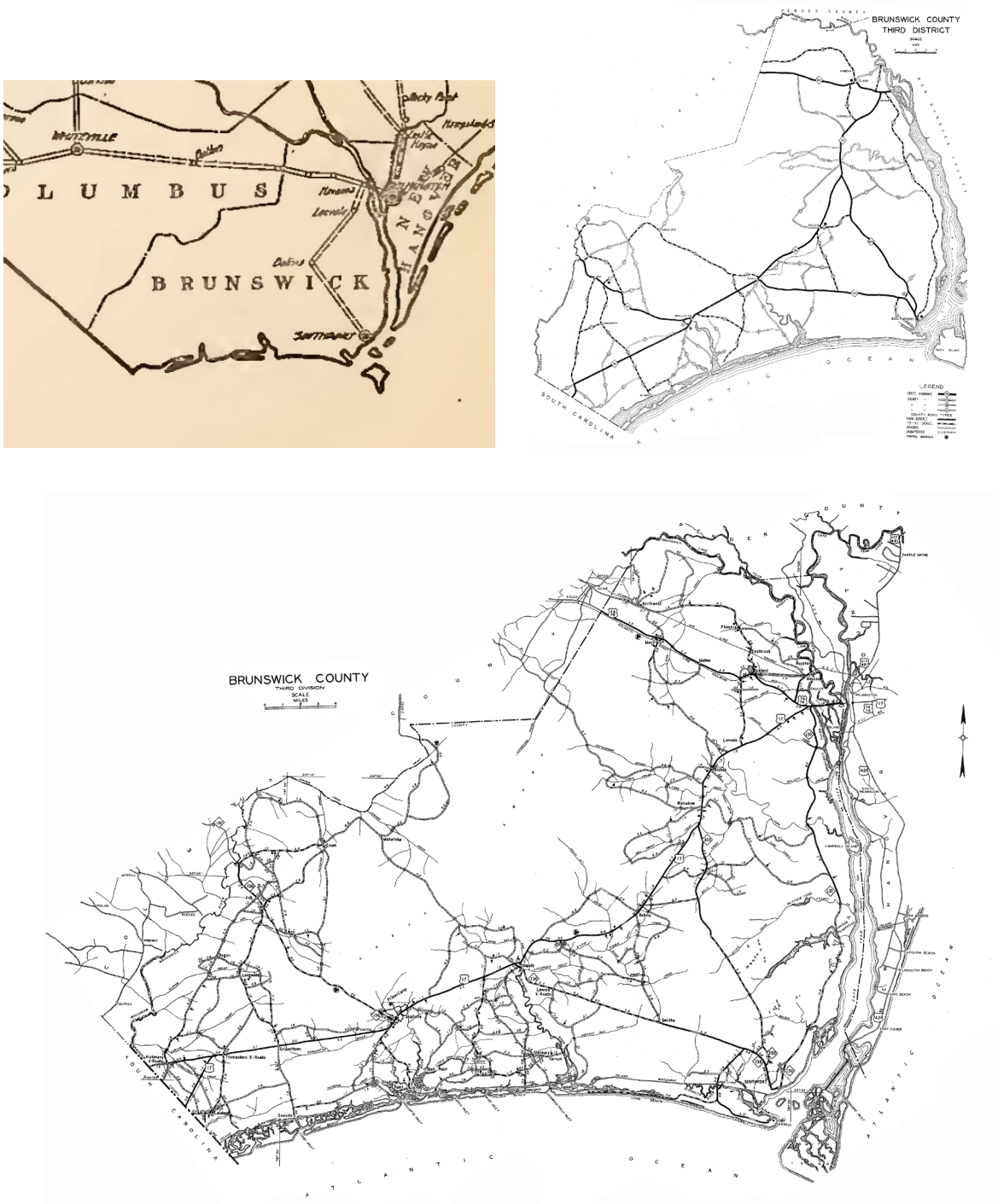


Figure 12. Brunswick County road network changes over time. Upper left, 1917; upper right, 1930; lower, 1949.

Mears Plantation, was the Navassa Guano Company, chartered in 1869 (*Star News*, February 29, 1984, pg. 1C; Willis 1993). The industry relied on African American laborers from January to May, after which the local blacks turned to agricultural activities. Pay was 30¢ an hour for a 57-hour week (Anonymous 1927:31). By 1946, one of the largest, Smith-Douglas, was completed (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, August 21, 1946, pg. 6). Navassa also become the home of a major meat packing plant between about 1919 and 1923 (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, June 17, 1917, pg. 5).

A modest economic boom may have encouraged Brunswick voters to approve a $10,000 bond for road improvement in 1914. The majority, however, was only by 21 votes (*The Wilmington Dispatch*, August 19, 1914, pg. 6). In 1920 there were only two state roads in Brunswick. A road from Whiteville in neighboring Columbus County to Wilmington was surface treated macadam, while the highway from Navassa to Bolivia and then to Southport was only a sand clay road. The county commissioners had contracted with the state highway department to maintain the approximately 107 additional miles of county roads. This work was being performed with only one truck and using promarily "teams and carts." Some of the wooden bridges were being replaced by metal culverts (Anonymous 1920:53). By 1924, there were two state projects underway with an additional seven completed (Witherspoon 1924:98-99). By 1930, the concrete and steel bridge over the Cape Fear River made the ferry obsolete (Witherspoon 1930:12). Even as late as 1949, the road between Lilliput and Walden creeks in the Lower Cape Fear was still "soil surfaced" (Figure 12).

While African Americans made many gains in the area during the Progressive era, the overwhelming coercion of Jim Crow remained visible. Wilmington had an all-white police force, juries on which blacks were unable to serve, and white judges who routinely enforced Jim Crow laws (Godwin 2000:35). In Brunswick County, the court system required separate Bibles to be used to swear in blacks and whites as late as 1961 and African Americans were excluded from both the Republican and Democratic parties (Fullwood 2008:163). There was only one African American high school for the entire county and it was inferior to those for whites. The unemployment figures for African Americans ranged from 15% to 20% (Fullwood 2008:165).

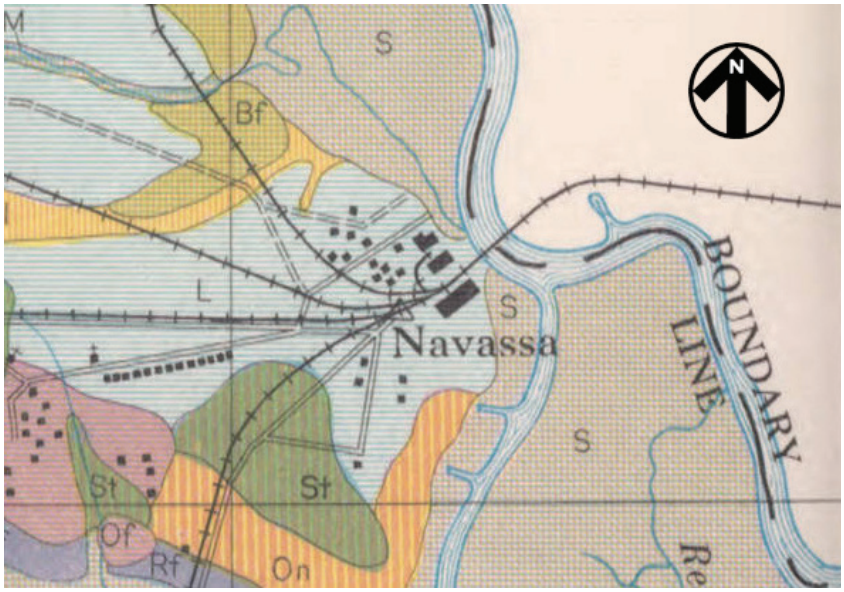


Figure 13. Navassa area in 1932 (Soil Survey of Brunswick County).

The Klan was once again active, having taken the baton from the Red Shirts. Godwin claims that it was populated by the "gentlemen" of Wilmington and even proclaimed itself an arm of local law enforcement. During the 1920s, Klan marches in the city included as many as 2,000 white-robed marchers. Reaves (1998:262-267) provides a summary of various white supremacy groups in the Wilmington area.

In 1920 one paper claimed, "The Ku-Klux-Klan rides abroad once more" (*Wilmington Morning Star*, October 20, 1920, pg. 4) and by 1921, some effort had been made to recruit in Wilmington (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, February 8, 1921, pg. 12). On that same day, Governor Cameron A. Morrison announced that recruiters in North Carolina would face no restrictions, essentially providing the organization with his tacit approval (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, February 8, 1921, pg. 1). By September, the Klan boasted a Wilmington membership of 567 (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, September 2, 1921, pg. 4). In July 1922, it was thought that the Klan might have a membership of a thousand or more in Wilmington (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, July 2, 1922, pg. 7). On several occasions, the Klan held initiations in the Winter Park area of Wilmington, each time associated with their "flaming cross."

In 1922, the largest Klan rally to that time occurred in New Bern, where 300 to 400 Klansmen marched around the city, including the African American business district, late one evening before heading out of the city and "disappearing." They left behind flyers exclaiming, "Take Heed! Immorality must stop! The home shall be protected! The law must be observed! A Thousand eyes are watching YOU. Signed K.K.K." (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, January 14, 1922, pg. 1).

After this brief resurgence, little more was heard about the Klan in the local newspapers and Godwin suggests that as members of the "gentry" withdrew support and "white Wilmington gained greater distance from the distorted perspectives on which the Klan's racism thrived" (Godwin 2000:26). While racism may have been less obvious, African American institutions continued to be of lesser quality than similar white institutions, receiving only a fraction of public support. Just as importantly, there was still great violence and anger directed toward African Americans. The Editor of the Raleigh *News and Observer* threatened in 1942 that should African American activism continue, "all of [the blacks] that can read and write are going to be eliminated in the Hitler style" (quoted in Leuchtenburg 2005:132).

Klan sentiments continued to exist in Brunswick County. In 1936, two black men in the county were seized from their homes by "a band of hooded, masked men," and taken to neighboring Columbus County where they were beaten. Two whites were charged, but acquitted by a white jury (*State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, February 24, 1937, pg. 1). Even as late as 1985, the Brunswick County Sheriff transferred a black prisoner after threats of lynching by the White Patriots Party, previously known as the Confederate Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (*The Brunswick Beacon*, Shallotte, NC, May 30, 1985, pg. 1).

Fullwood reports there was a "huge migration of African Americans from poverty in the agricultural depths of the Cape Fear region to much greater affluence in the industrial Midwest and West" (Fullwood 2008:174). While this was certainly true for the Wilmington area, there is little indication for much movement in Brunswick County (Figure 9), although black population figures remains relatively stagnant. Nevertheless, newspapers did reveal that many blacks were being lured away from the farms to work in defense plants, such as the shipyards at Newport News,

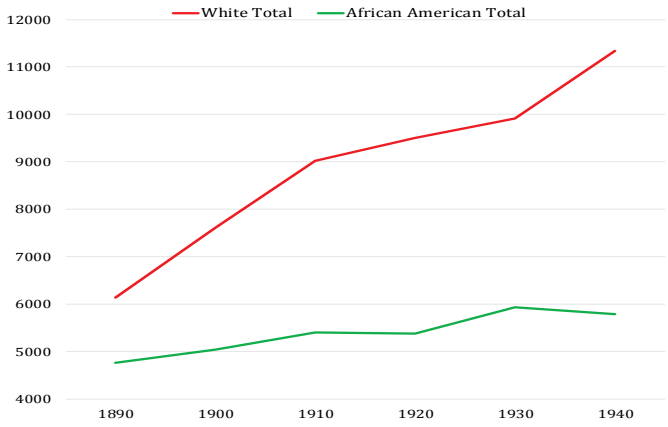


Figure 14. White and African American population growth in Brunswick County, 1890-1940.

Table 15.
African American occupations in Smithville and Town Creek Townships (including Smithville, later Southport)

	1870		1880		1900		1910		1920		1930		1940	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Agricultural Workers	353	63.1	544	65.9	749	71.3	441	44.9	283	35.8	279	34.0	247	32.0
Water Workers	8	1.4	47	5.7	38	3.6	49	5.0	87	11.0	120	14.6	121	15.7
Domestic Workers	73	13.1	74	9.0	83	7.9	150	15.3	73	9.2	134	16.3	148	19.2
Unskilled Workers	119	21.3	88	10.7	152	14.5	212	21.6	195	24.7	60	7.3	86	11.1
Turpentine Workers	2	0.4	41	5.0	3	0.3	15	1.5	1	0.1	43	5.2	0	
Saw Mill Workers	0		0		0		0		2	0.3	65	7.9	48	6.2
Fish Factory Workers	0		0		0		17	1.7	53	6.7	7	0.9	3	0.4
Guano Factory Workers	0		1	0.1	1	0.1	44	4.5	51	6.4	55	6.7	57	7.4
Other Industrial Workers	0		1	0.1	0		0		7	0.9	3	0.4	4	0.5
Skilled Workers	4	0.7	20	2.4	16	1.5	30	3.1	30	3.8	40	4.9	42	5.4
Professional Workers	0		9	1.1	8	0.8	24	2.4	9	1.1	15	1.8	16	2.1
Total	559		825		1050		982		791		821		772	

Virginia (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, April 1, 1942, pg. 2).

The study period ends with the "Great Depression." Depression, however, hit North Carolina's rural farmers in the 1920s, just as it did in other rural southern farming states. Farmers' income had declined steadily, largely as a result of over production of cotton and tobacco, falling crop prices, and poor conservation practices that ruined land.

Problems only got worse with the financial crisis of October 29, 1929. The banking system collapsed and there was a contraction in the nation's money stock. This caused a decline in output and prices. Spending on goods and services declined, causing firms to lay off workers. The resulting decline in incomes made it harder for borrowers to repay loans, causing defaults and bankruptcies. This, in turn, created a spiral of bank failures, further contraction in money stock, and output, prices, and employment continued to decline.

By 1933, gross farm income was only 46% of its 1929 level. Tobacco prices fell from about 20¢ a pound at the end of the 1920s to only 8.4¢ in 1931. Cotton prices fell from 35¢ a pound in 1919 and 22¢ in 1925 to only 6¢ in 1931. However, it was not only agriculture that suffered. Manufacturing value fell by 50%, from $1.3 billion in 1930 to $878 million in 1933. North Carolina's cotton and textile industries saw wages decline by 25% during this period. By 1933, 27% of the state was on some sort of relief.

Agriculture, however, was also affected by a series of droughts that hit Brunswick County between 1928 and 1934, when the area was in an extreme drought about 10% of the time.

Varieties of programs were initiated by President Franklin Roosevelt to help relieve the resulting suffering. One of the most important was the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), essentially paying farmers not to plant crops such as cotton and tobacco and establishing quotas and allotments.

Orton's AAA "Farm Plan" for 1939 (the year for which one has survived), reveals that while the property contained 15,000 acres, 14,960.5 acres were forested. There were no special crops, such as cotton or tobacco, and the plan called for the planting of primarily rye and field peas, likely for soil improvement. If carried out, the plantation was eligible for only $27.65 in payments. The next documentation specific for Orton was its 1.2-acre allotment in 1940 for tobacco. Some tobacco was planted at least in 1942 and 1943 (Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:53-54).

Providing direct cash assistance to the impoverished was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). Under the program, states applied for block grants from FERA that required matching funds. North Carolina, however, refused to provide the full match. Governor John Eringhaus was unwilling to request the necessary funding from the General Assembly. Eventually FERA funded $40 million to North Carolina's paltry $1.5 million. FERA supported about 300,000 North Carolinians per month, nearly 10% of the total state population (Blackwell 1934).

Reaves notes that in October 1932 a "third carload of Relief flour" was distributed in Southport, primarily to African Americans who were especially hard hit by the Depression (Reaves 1996:140).

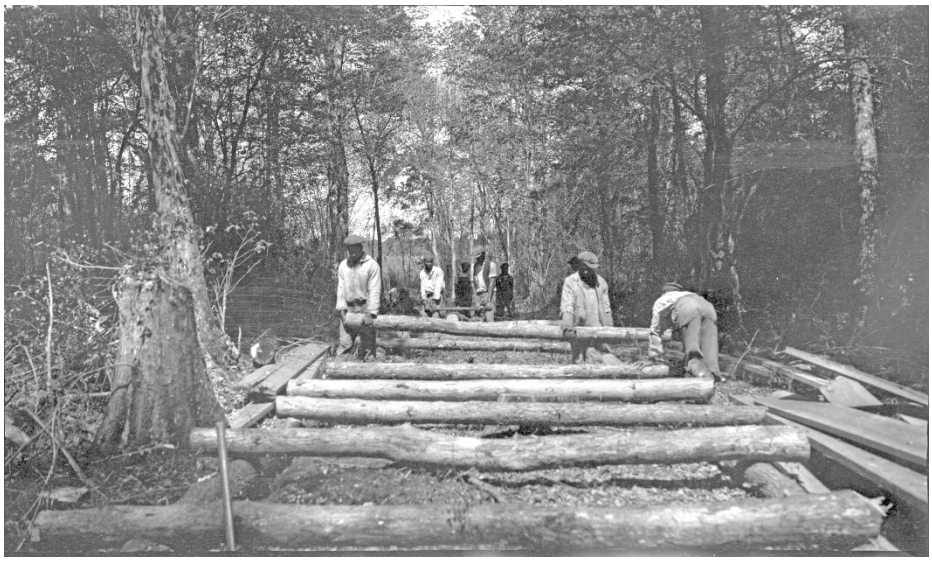


Figure 15. African Americans building a bridge at Orton Plantation (Forest History Society, April 17, 1931).

It is likely that others in Brunswick County were employed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), mostly on road projects. However, the state's conservative politicians vehemently opposed the program, so it was never particularly active. However, a WPA group involved in Community Sanitation in New Hanover, was likely involved in the construction of privies on Orton (Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:55).

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was an innovative effort to employ young men on conservation-oriented projects with emphasis on reforestation and erosion control.

In 1932, a branch Civilian Conservation Corp camp was established near Orton. The men were under the control of C.H. Hearn, and the work on the 43,000 acres of land on and around Orton included construction of fire lanes, roads, and telephone lines ("Branch CCC Camp Planned Near Orton," Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, November 11, 1933).

The CCC occasionally found itself mired in racial politics, such as in January 1938 when the Southport City Council went on record opposing the creation of an African American CCC camp at Sapona, on the edge of Southport. The camp opened in October 1934 with white occupants, but closed in December 1937. The town's mayor complained,

> I am against a negro camp here from a standpoint of law enforcement. And I think it would not be treating either the white or negro citizens right. The city board would like to do everything in its power to further the reforestation program. But, for certain and well defined reasons, the city is 100 per cent against a negro camp starting here (quoted in Reaves 1996:214).

Those "well defined reasons" were articulate in a news article,

> We have an unusual type of colored resident in Southport and I fear that trouble will result if strange, nondescript Negroes are brought in. It was with the best interest of Southport Negroes at heart that we oppose the establishment of the camp here (*State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, January 26, 1938, pg. 1).

The protest was sufficient to prevent reuse of Camp Sapona by African American CCC members.

Even agricultural extension (or "home") agents were segregated. While there were 100 agents for whites, there were only 41 for blacks (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, May 8, 1946, pg. 1).

While most of the violence seems directed toward African Americans, there were still reports of black action against whites, such as the 1937 report of black farm hand Leroy Williams poisoning the biscuit flour of his white farm owner, Andrew Cox (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, February 17, 1937, pg. 1). Stories such as this are reminiscent of black resistance during slavery and the associated fears of conjuring.

Population

Logan (1964:87) explains that African Americans were confined to primarily six occupations: barbers, laborers, laundresses, nurses and mid-wives, restaurant keepers, and servants. In fact, because so many African Americans filled these positions they became known as "Negro jobs" that few whites would accept. For example, in Raleigh in 1876,

> Negroes engaged in domestic and personal service comprised 56.6 per cent of the total Negro labor force of that city. Twelve years later, the percentage had risen to 68.9. An examination of the New Bern directory of 1881, as well as those of Asheville (1887), Wilmington (1889), and Charlotte (1893) reveals a like situation" (Logan 1958:449-450).

Logan (1964:88) notes that in spite of this, there was an undercurrent of white objections, insisting, for example, that African American servants were dishonest, unreliable, and inefficient. Why then were they in demand? Apparently because they worked cheaply. Further, they could be forced to take part of their pay in orders from local stores, reducing the actual money paid to them. Moreover, whites viewed it as in their best interests to ensure that African Americans remained in menial jobs.

A slightly different trend is seen in Brunswick County, likely because of its rural character. Agricultural workers dominate the occupations through 1900, after which the proportion begins to drop, being replaced by water workers (including those employed either in fishing or in the processing facilities) and to some degree, factory workers. Table 14 also allows us to see the rise of some occupations, such as those working in saw mills (increasing from only 0.3% in 1920 to 6.2% in 1940) or the fertilizer factories (increasing from 0.1% in 1880 to 7.4% in 1940).

Other professions rose and collapsed, such as the turpentine workers and even general, unskilled laborers. Professional workers, including lawyers, teachers, and insurance salesmen, gradually increased over time.

Census records also allow some indication of improving literacy. In 1880, 34% of the blacks in Smithville were literate, compared to 21% in Smithville Township and only 9% in more rural Town Creek Township. By 1930, nearly two-thirds of all blacks in all three areas were literate.

Agriculture

During this period, the number of Brunswick farms increased, while the average size

Table 16.
Agricultural production in Brunswick County, 1890-1940

	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940
Farms	1080	1373	1666	1417	1519	1721
Average Size	235	184	161	148	87	95
Improved Acres	23700	31243	32569	28554	24074	34610
Unimproved Acres	229953	220874	235506	175405	107962	129178
Value ($)	56910	753400	1730090	2934942	2421602	2594239
Value of Implements ($)	29440	45400	93808	124086	158032	238847
Horses	327	557	577	364	252	124
Asses and Mules	108	414	748	1180	1215	1598
Milk Cows	2127	1642	1664	741	502	662
Other Cattle	4590	5234	5626	3937	895	1922
Oxen	939					
Sheep	3385	4797	5795	2887	482	248
Swine	4793	16727	23217	15836	8837	9097
Value of Livestock ($)	107440	160076	345353	524510		413598
Value of Animals Slaughtered ($)		57181	111636			80216
Wheat (bu)	10	-	-	161	-	-
Rye and Oats (bu)	1315	2960	6016	3716	80	310
Corn (bu)	81519	118140	123633	144429	173346	248287
Irish Potatoes (bu)	385	1460	4384	8011	5284	9179
Sweet Potatoes (bu)	128659	208256	206212	181165	205479	158668
Pease and Beans (bu)	814	5098	4483	2866	44607	3798
Rice (lbs)	1251497	1215814	7803	-	-	-
Tobacco (lbs)	110	10410	-	505567	1059096	4009299
Ginned Cotton (400 lbs bales)	382	537	884	1456	384	80
Butter (lbs)	8847	12208	10708	3997	9308	19213
Hay (tons)	50	122		2465	2245	3682
Wool (lbs)	4920	8186		3700	806	-
Value of Market Garden ($)	63	1991	161983	401784	62369	18064
Value of Orchard Produce ($)		4283	23079	43900	19662	38267
Forest Products ($)		67756	227310	577046	40694	21464
Poultry on hand	26529	20730	26307	33608	36011	42573
Cost of Fertilizers ($)	1786	26120	32786	154784	90382	142314
Value of Farm Products ($)	222790	430861	647902	1469639	1128956	1077403

declined. More and more acreage was improved, a necessity given the increase in farms. The value of both the farms and the farm implements increased (Table 14). Nevertheless, the value of both the animals on the plantations and the value of those slaughtered declined. Even swine declined from a high of 23,217 in 1910 to just over 9,000 in 1940.

Rice production in Brunswick ceased in 1910. Replacing it was tobacco, which increased from 110 pounds in 1890 to 4,009,299 pounds in 1940. Cotton, which looked promising through the 1920 production of 1,456 bales, was dramatically reduced by government programs to only 80 bales by 1940. Forest production likewise fell from a 1920 high of $577,046 to only $21,464 in 1940. Perhaps providing a good summary of conditions was the value of farm products, which peaked in 1920, fell dramatically in 1930 and then began to stabilize in 1940 as a result of government programs.

Tenancy

If we ignore rice, then corn and sweet potatoes were the main Brunswick County crops during the antebellum. With the end of the Civil War, cotton suddenly surged, increasing from one bale in 1860 to 119 bales in 1870. Similarly, tobacco increased from no production to 528 pounds over the same period. These two crops gradually came to dominate agricultural production, not only in Brunswick County, but also throughout the south, typically at the expense of feed crops. The push for cotton and tobacco was predicated on these crops maximizing profits (Alston 1990:208). Since agriculture relied on credit provided by owners or merchants, it makes sense that the lenders would demand a crop that could be converted into ready cash.

While tenancy was common in Brunswick County, it is important to emphasize that it was peripheral to those states where tenancy dominated agricultural life, and Brunswick was not typically considered part of the "plantation south." While county level data are no longer available from the 1910 agricultural census, the data were extensively used by Brannen (1924) and some data survive in the maps he used. None of the coastal tier counties was included in the Plantation South. The coastal tier counties were also left out of Woofter's (1936) discussions regarding cotton tenancy a decade later.

By the late 1870s, the system gave rise to three primary forms of contracts. The first was the fixed wage, usually daily or monthly (discussed in a following section). While such a system allowed something akin to slavery to continue under freedom, with African Americans working in gangs, the system had several flaws. There was little free money with which to pay labor and the system worked during slavery because of the ability of planters to induce work through physical punishment – something that was limited in the postbellum (Alston 1990:209-210). In addition, many freedmen chafed against close supervision and some demanded a premium to work under a fixed wage (Wayne 2002).

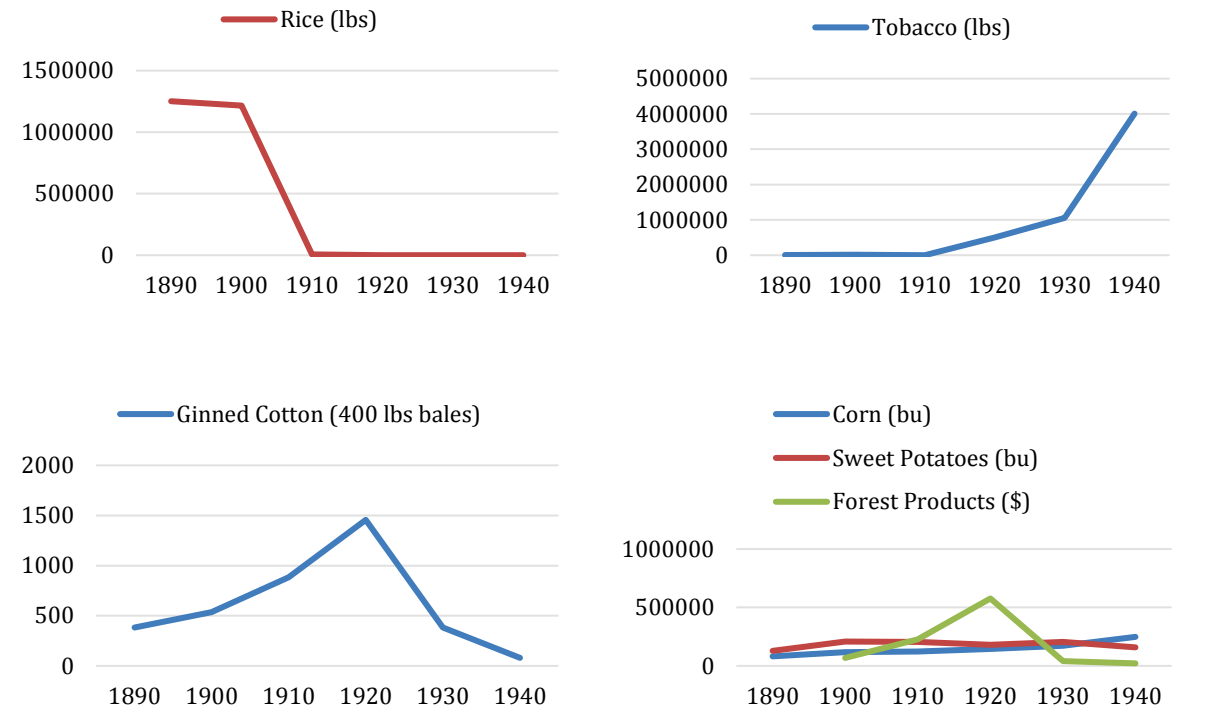


Figure 16. Graphs of agricultural production for Brunswick County, 1890-1940.

The second form of labor was known as shares or sharecropping, that is dividing the crop upon harvest between the tenant and the owner. Simply put, it involved the cultivation of the land of one person by another, on a share-of-the-crop basis. This solved the issue of free money, paying workers out of future crop payments. Workers on a share had a natural motive to work without supervision since they would benefit from good production. It also helped ensure that workers would stay through harvest, since early abandonment of the agreement meant the worker would receive no compensation for past labor. However, unlike a true tenant, the sharecropper was usually closely supervised, with the owner making all major decisions. The sharecropper had no legal possession of the land, but was only allowed access at the landowners' pleasure (Alston and Kauffman 1997:464-465; Book 1937). The agreement for this practice sometimes provided that the cropper not drink alcoholic beverages, use profane language, or allow any idleness or loafing on the premises (Book 1937:540).

Table 17.
Census Bureau tabulations of tenancy in Brunswick County, 1920-1940

	Share	Cropper	Share-Cash	Cash	Standing Rent	Other
1920	97	76	2	10	-	21
1930		208		19	-	-
1940		304	1	30	-	13

Under the third form of labor, fixed-rent (or standing rent), the individual is actually a legal tenant, paying a fixed amount of money for the land on which he or she would farm (although often both sharecroppers and fix-renters were considered tenants). Such agreements placed a large risk on the worker if the value of the crop, upon harvest, was insufficient to pay the rent and any advances. Of course, owners faced some risk since they may receive little or nothing in the event of a crop failure (tenants rarely had any collateral to cover such costs).

Unfortunately, however helpful census records may be for many issues, they serve only to confuse agricultural tenancy. For example, in 1900 and 1910 the Census Bureau incorrectly classified sharecroppers, or croppers, as tenants. This placed too many workers on a higher, and more affluent, rung of the agricultural ladder than should have been. Beginning in 1920, the Bureau changed its "share tenant" category to exclude "sharecroppers." From then on, the two groups were recognized as different. Nonetheless, the census records still tended to combine groups, as can be seen in Table 15.

On average, tenants made more than sharecroppers did, and sharecroppers made more than wageworkers (Alston 1990:211). In this case risk equaled reward, although many have argued that the system (both landowners and merchants), keep tenants in debt peonage. The harsh view is that tenants were never able to escape since the pay-off never equaled the amount borrowed. This seems to ignore that merchants, at least, attempted to limit credit to what the cropper was able to pay back. Authors such as Ransom and Sutch (1977) have argued that merchants charged an annual percentage rate of about 60%. Temin (1979), however, suggests the gross return was much closer to 35% and from this return must be deducted the bad loans or advances. Perhaps a more moderate view was that while existing debts might be paid-off, the tenant was not left with sufficient funds to allow them to avoid using credit the following year (Alston 1990:216). Regardless, there can be no dispute that agricultural workers, especially African Americans, were mired in seemingly inescapable poverty.

Alston observes that in an effort to increase productivity and reduce the mobility of croppers and tenants, white landowners began a campaign to "compensate" workers with paternalism, hoping to instill a "longer time horizon" in workers (Alston and Ferrie 1985:101). Examples of such paternalism include old-age insurance (taking care of those loyal laborers who were unable to work), quasi-unemployment insurance (carrying a good worker over during hard times), emergency medical care, and interceding with law enforcement. Of course, these benefits were provided to only "loyal" workers.

In 1922, Taylor and Zimmerman published the results of their study of North Carolina tenancy. While not county specific, it still provides an interesting overview of the situation in the first quarter of the twentieth century. They were not especially interested is exploring causes as much as results, commenting, "no matter how much disagreement there may be among persons as to the cause of tenancy, the effects are too clear to dispute" (Taylor and Zimmerman 1922:6). They nevertheless laid much of the problem at the feet of North Carolina's lien law, calling it a curse and observing that the law affected three times as many landless tenants as those owning land. Moreover, they explained that the credit of the landless was being used for living, not as an investment. Significantly, more African Americans in the coastal area were croppers, at the bottom of the agricultural ladder, than tenants.

The average African American cropper

made only $640 per family (the equivalent of .34¢ per family member per day), compared to the owner-operator, who made in excess of $2,300. They found that about 94% of coastal African American croppers annually used about $314 in credit, with two-thirds going toward living expenses and one-third toward agricultural needs (Taylor and Zimmerman 1922:27-28). While only about 79% of tenants used credit, the amount was noticeably higher – about $400, although its distribution between living needs and agricultural needs was very similar. Nearly all of both tenants (96.6%) and croppers (98.4%) lived under a crop lien, although the bulk of coastal credit was provided by owners, not merchants (Taylor and Zimmerman 1922:28).

The wealth and equity disparity between tenants and croppers in the coastal plain was also well documented. A black tenant had about $440 in wealth (compared to $1,110 by a white tenant and over $16,000 by a landowner). A black cropper, however, had wealth estimated at only $219 per family. Nevertheless, nearly 30% of the African American tenants were considered insolvent, compared to about 19% of the African American croppers.

Taylor and Zimmerman also provide an overview of what tenant and cropper houses were like in the early 1920s. Only 14-20% had separate dining rooms, 3-7% had separate sitting rooms, and none had indoor toilets or water. In fact, most lacked even closets (Taylor and Zimmerman 1922:42-43). Only 7% had heat other than a fireplace and none had electric service. In fact, between 85% and 95% had no screened windows. In contrast, over two-thirds of the white owners already had screened windows by 1922. Window frames were uncommon and, where present, often exhibit broken glass (Taylor and Zimmerman 1922:47).

While medical care was not absent, African American tenants and croppers had just over one call per year (see additional discussions in a following section). In contrast, white owners averaged about seven yearly visits. In spite of this difference, African Americans, on average, spent about $19 per family on physician's care, compared to $75 by white landowners. So, while tenants and croppers received health care less frequently, it cost them appreciably more (Taylor and Zimmerman 1922:51-53). African Americans, regardless of ownership class (except for owner-operators) tended to spend more on patent medicines than whites did.

Sanitation conditions were generally poor. For example, most wells were open at the top, allowing filth and animals to fall or run into the water supply. Most wells for tenants and croppers were 20 feet or less in depth, allowing contamination. The study found that 10% or fewer of the privies were considered sanitary. Curiously, white owners, owner-operators, and tenants, tended to throw garbage into the yard, unlike African Americans (except for the croppers; what most African American families did with their garbage was not specified).

Education levels of African American tenants and croppers tended to be poorly educated, having achieved only 1.55 and 0.98 years of education respectively (Taylor and Zimmerman 1922:67). Most took no papers or magazines (including church papers); although considering their financial conditions, this should come as no surprise.

Although the bulk of African Americans went to church, relatively few (between one-fifth and one-third) were church members. Regardless of literacy, Taylor and Zimmerman (1922:73-74) found that between two-thirds and three-quarters of the black croppers and tenants owned a Bible.

Contracts

The problem of "negro labor" was always forefront in the minds of white southerners. Even in the coastal fishing industry, owners complained, "the negro labor is unreliable, many negores preferring to fish" than to work (*The Wilmington Messenger*, December 13, 1890, pg. 1). In 1875, Governor Z.B. Vance explained that African Americans simply had to be "compelled" to work.

While "formerly" this was done by whites "being his master," it now had to be done by enforcing "the laws against vagabondage" (*The Wilmington Post*, September 10, 1875, pg. 2).

As early as 1887 North Carolina's Bureau of Labor Statistics recognized that, "the cotton belt of North Carolina . . . is worse off financially than any other part of the State," a condition that was attributed to the raising of a cash crop. Yet, the Bureau clearly recognized that there was little to be done since "the merchant insists upon a cotton crop" in exchange for supplies. Even landlords, the report explains, demand rent in lint cotton (Jones 1887:76).

The report goes on to complain about farm labor,

> Farm laborers make contracts which are faithfully complied with by the employers, and yet it very frequently happens that at the very time that the services of the laborer is most needed, he becomes tired of work, or sees a chance where he can get perhaps a slight increase upon wages, generally for a short time, and he abandons his contract and deserts his employers and his fields in utter disregard of what right and just (Jones 1887:77).

In addition, while the Bureau of Labor admits that farm laborers "are very poorly paid," they found that no excuse for the poor performance of labor.

One planter suggested a system in which only half of the wages were paid up-front, with the remaining 50% being carried to the end of term. Thus, "when harvest comes, and the risky time is at hand to lose him [the laborer], from the offer of larger temporary wages, he is tied fast, because if he leaves, he under the contract, forfeits his accumulated and growing half of his earned and earnable wages" (*The Wilmington Star*, November 20, 1890, pg. 2).

The Bureau of Labor also sought to discourage payment of wages in supplies, noting that, "when paid in supplies he soon runs ahead or at least consumes his earnings, gets no money, becomes dissatisfied, even though the transactions with him are fair and just, and when the labor he is doing becomes hard, he quits" (Jones 1887:78).

In 1880, a Senate committee investigating the black migration out of North Carolina obtained testimony from a variety of whites and blacks alike. While none of these individuals were from either Brunswick or New Hanover counties, there was general agreement that day labor might expect anywhere from $6 to $12 a month, typically with a house, firewood, a garden plot, and often, but not always, monthly rations of meat and corn meal. Women made considerably less, often $5-$6 a month. Day laborers could expect to make .50¢ to .75¢ a day. There was considerably variability when sharecropping was conducted, with splits of as little as ¼ and as much as ⅓ of the cotton and corn crops (Anonymous 1880:219, 244, 246, 253, 255, 259, 261-262,305, 311, 396).

In 1882, an advertisement for rice workers at Orton were being offered 75¢ a day (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, September 3, 1882). Elsewhere pay was cited at between 50¢ and 75¢ a day (Alexander 1893:371). Those working flats were typically paid $1.00 a day. At least one period source claimed that farm labor, without board, was being paid an average of 55¢ a day (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, February 11, 1888, pg. 1).

There is also evidence that planters sought to form cartels limiting pay. One report explains, "we understand that the Brunswick rice planters have had a consultation and agreed upon a uniform price for harvesting rice, viz: Two (2) dollars per acre for cutting, binding and hacking" (*The Wilmington Weekly Star*, September 8, 1882, pg. 1). Alston (1990:219), however, suggests these efforts were largely unsuccessful, as evidenced by both rising wages and the repeated need to make such efforts.

The 1887 Bureau of Labor report found

Table 18.
Farm labor wages during the early twentieth century in Brunswick County

	Day Labor		Monthly Labor	
Year	Male	Female	Male	Female
1887	0.45-0.50	0.40-0.25	8.60-9.00	4.00
1900			10.75-16.25	5.63-9.42
1903			10.40-15.15	6.50-9.90
1907			14.08-23.50	9.57-14.25
1910			16.25-26.00	11.70-16.25
1915	.48-.75	.34-.53		
1920	2.00-2.50	.85-1.40		
1925	1.25-1.38		27.00	

Sources: Jones 1887; Lacy 1901; Varner 1904, 1908; Shipman 1910, 1915, 1921; Grist 1926

the average day labor wage for Brunswick County was a mere .45¢ for males and .25¢ for females. Monthly wages averaged $8.60 for males and $4 for females. Only 15% of these wages, however, were paid in cash – the remainder was paid in trade or store orders (Jones 1887:84). When sharecropping was undertaken, tenants received half of the crop when they provided only labor and the landowner provided the team and implements. When the cropper provided his own team, he could typically expect to obtain two-thirds of the crop (Jones 1887:83).

Logan explains that low wages were the norm because whites "were convinced that the Negroes would 'live on less'" and, besides, they didn't demand more (Logan 1964:77). Collins summarized the situation,

> The negro will always consider himself inferior to the white race, however much he may endeavor to disguise this fact, and he will by training and intuition more readily serve us. The negro is stronger and is accustomed to the peculiar character of the labor in the South . . . . Besides, the negro is a cheaper liver and demands less wages. He can live on less, can dress well in our old clothes (Collins 1890:147).

Clearly low wages were a result of the Southern racist attitude directed toward African Americans.

Work on the river was attractive, if the individual had skills, since those jobs paid $15 to $20 a month (Jones 1887:35). Likewise, skilled labor also offered better wages, ranging from $1.50 a day for blacksmiths and carpenters to $2.50 for millwrights and $2.00 for masons. Yet, as one carpenter complained, he was able to find work for only about 8 months, little different that farm labor, and they, too, were often paid in supplies (Jones 1887:11, 34, 1888:61).

The report documents that between 15% and 0% of farm labor was paid in cash. The former by the accounts of owners and the latter as told by the tenants. Fully 90% of the tenants were forced to "buy on time," having to pay between 28% and 39% over cash prices. Considering these details, it is surprising that as many as 75% were able to "pay out" by the end of the year.

Table 18 shows the variation in wages documented by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (later the Department of Labor and Printing).

Alston also notes that labor tended to move from the area of low-wages in the southeast to areas of higher wages, usually in the southwest, an issue previously discussed in this section (see also Alston 1990:221). There were numerous articles in local papers regarding the exodus of African American farm labor for locations in Arkansas and California, where much higher wages were promised (see, for example, *The Wilmington Morning Star*, December 8, 1885, pg. 1; *The Wilmington Weekly Star*, April 5, 1889, pg. 2; *The Wilmington Messenger*, September 4, 1889; page 5; *The Wilmington Messenger*, April 10, 1890, pg. 2; *The Wilmington Messenger*, August 19, 1890, pg. 4).

In contrast, turpentine workers were being paid about $18 a month, siphoning labor away from the rice fields (The Wilmington Morning Star, January 18, 1872, pg. 1). Much of this labor, by the late 1880s, was beginning to migrate to South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida (*The Wilmington*

Weekly Star, January 7, 1887, pg. 2; *The Wilmington Messenger*, January 26, 1889, pg. 1).

Education

The 1870 census, barely five years after African Americans were granted freedom, reveals that 54 of the native males were able to read and 10 were able to read and write. Thirty-two of the female natives were able to read, although only four could read and write. Since it seems improbable that one could learn to read and write with the limited opportunities immediately after slavery, this implies that literacy was perhaps more common among blacks than previously suspected.

At the opening of the Jim Crow era, Brunswick County was reported to have 12 white schools and 10 black schools (Polk 1878:5). In numbers, at least, this represented approximate parity, with one white school for every 444 white citizens and one African American school for every 405 black citizens. Logan (1964:140) also notes early efforts to minimize inequalities between white and African American schools, although period observers were not so kind. North Carolina's Superintendent of Education in 1888, Sidney M. Finger, explained that, "there is more or less prevalent among the white people of North Carolina the feeling that education spoils the colored people as laborers, to their own damage, and the damage of white people, who own also all the lands" (quoted in Logan 1964:140). In 1881, it was reported that the county still maintained log schoolhouses and that in general the schools were poorly heated and lacked adequate privies (N.C. Department of Archives, Dr. Thomas Wood, NC Board of Health, PC-1346-3).

By 1885, North Carolina's Democrats succeeded in passing a law that would allow the apportionment of school funding along racial lines, on the bases paid by each race. Only decisions handed down by the state's Supreme Court tempered the law and allowed African Americans to retain at least some of the educational privileges and rights they enjoyed during Reconstruction (Logan 1964:159). It was not until 1897 that state monies would be made available to help finance public schools. It wasn't, however, until 1910 that public elementary schools for blacks were able to receive state funding (Crow et al. 2011:156-157).

Reaves provides some local context, noting that in January 1922, the African American schoolhouse in Southport, recently built by local blacks at a cost of $8,000, was destroyed by fire (Reaves 1996:28). Two years later an "educational rally was held in Southport to discuss consolidation and plans to "build seven or eight Rosenwald schoolhouses for the blacks" (Reaves 1996:53).

In a 1923 letter from W.F. Credle of the Rosenwald Program in North Carolina, he remarked on the "the deplorable condition of Brunswick County with regard to school finances." This may, in part at least, account for the limited construction in Brunswick County (Anonymous 2010:1-40).

We have been able to identify only two years of correspondence between Brunswick County and the Rosenwald officials, but this limited documentation provides a rich source. These document the process for the building of the Longwood, Navassa, Seaside, Lower Bridge, Phoenix, and Leland schools, the County Training School, and the Marsh Branch school.

Although we will focus on this later, it is worth noting that the correspondence clearly documents how difficult Rosenwald found it working with so many difference school boards and county officials, considering both their needs, prejudices, and egos. In a July 1, 1927 letter, W.F. Credle, the Supervisor for the Rosenwald Fund wrote the Brunswick County Superintendent, observing, "I hope this concession of the part of the Rosenwald Fund will make it easier for you to get good equipment for both this building [Long Reach] and the Navassa building" (North Carolina Department of Archives, Correspondence, Rosenwald Fund, Box 4, Folder P, 1927-1928). A January 28, 1928 letter from S.L. Smith at the Rosenwald Fund headquarters in Nashville to Credle, offered encouragement,

> I feel confident that the future of this fine work being done by the Fund will depend in a measure on how well we who are in charge of it in the South live up to the expectations, particularly in stimulating efforts for consolidation and larger types of buildings. I am counting on North Carolina take the lead in this as it has done in everything else pertaining to our work in the South. No one doubts that good may be done in building some one-teacher schools, but since the Fund prefers to spend its money in larger types, I hope that we may be able to stimulate this part of the work (North Carolina Department of Archives, Correspondence, S.L. Smith, Field Agent, 1927-1928).

In another letter, Credle documented the extraordinary changes the Fund was accomplishing, providing photographs contrasting two schools and remarking, "the Navassa building, it is true, cost about $2400 more than the Seaside building, but it is nicely finished inside and out, has standard chimneys, and is equipped with patent desks; whereas the Seaside school has the crudest kind of benches, and the chimneys speak for themselves." Smith responded, "it was interesting to note the contrast in the schools of two communities of Brunswick County, showing the type of building stimulated by aid of the Fund and State aid and the type erected without aid. This certainly is a fine example of [illegible] of State subsidy. I am sending it to Mr. Stern and Mr. Enbree because they will be interested in what you say and show" (North Carolina Department of Archives, Correspondence, S.L. Smith, Field Agent, 1927-1928).

By February 1928, discussions began about building a new Marsh Branch School. We believe that the existing school was likely built around 1916 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 27, pg. 365), so it was almost certainly in poor condition. In 1928, Superintendent Page wrote A.T. Allen in Raleigh that there were about 60 African American children living in the area and about half had been routinely transported to Southport. Instead, they desired to build a two-room school at Marsh Branch. This was followed up a few days later, on February 18, 1928 by a second letter explaining,

> The transportation has been very unsatisfactory. Due partly to the fact that the people were opposed to the transportation and also due to the fact that we have had to use a truck driver at Southport and thus double the driving every day. This year we have hired a man to transport the children and from our side of it the transportation has been a little more satisfactory. The people, however, are strongly opposed to the consolidation and very much desire that the building be placed in their community (North Carolina Department of Archives, Correspondence, Rosenwald Fund, Box 4, Folder P, 1927-1928).

Later that same month an application for the Marsh Branch School was forwarded to the Rosenwald Fund and on May 17, 1928, a check for $500 was sent out (North Carolina Department of Archives, Correspondence, Rosenwald Fund, Box 4, Folder P, 1927-1928). Information in the Fisk University Rosenwald Collection reveals that this school, siting on 2 acres, cost a total of $2,600, with $1,950 coming from the state, $150 coming from the African American community, and $500 support from Rosenwald.

While schools were built, white attitudes toward the education of blacks were largely unrepentant. In the 1933 study of African American children in North Carolina, Sanders and his colleagues interviewed a wide range of local officials (Sanders 1933). Although these interviews

did not appear in the final publication as they were felt to be too prejudicial, Crow and his colleagues identified the preserved files and quote a few examples. In Camden County, the clerk asserted that education "makes them [African Americans] too biggity," while in Burke County an official responded, "educate a negro and you ruin a good servant." The Superintendent of Burke County Schools contended that education of blacks beyond the seventh grade "was a waste of time and money." In particular, he fumed that college educated blacks were "more immoral" and had a "bad influence on the other negroes in the community" (Crow et al. 2011:139-140).

An examination of Brunswick's "separate but equal" schools shows that they were anything but equal (Table 19). White schools received a disproportion amount of funding, even though attendance by African Americans was nearly equal to and at times greater than that for whites. In 1916, one newspaper justified the disparity,

> the patrons and friends of white schools contribute liberally, that is, one-half being given to secure State aid on the other half, while it is found that the leaders of the colored race have a tendency to give first attention to the building of lodges and churches rather than to schools (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, June 23, 1916, pg. 6).

Figure 17. View of the Marsh Branch School about 1929 (courtesy of the Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database).

In 1936, the old Southport High School building was to be torn down and the lumber used to "construct two small buildings to be used as black schools in the county" (Reaves 1996:185). Apparently, the local white residents wanted the building to be remodeled using WPA funds for a "community structure" instead.

The 1939 inspection of the Marsh Branch School found that "one of the outside toilets [i.e., a privy] has been turned over and is of no use. Building needs new transom light" (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, April 19, 1939, pg. 1). This was generally consistent with the condition of all African American schools,

> Town Creek colored needs steps repaired. Northwest colored has leaking roof; Phoenix colored has cracked crock in flue; Chapel Road colored needs one window sash; Pine Level colored also needs window sash . . . At Piney Grove colored school, we found the locks gone from five doors, and one door is a makeshift affair . . . . We found the sanitary conditions at this school very unsatisfactory, and recommend two new toilets. Two crocks are needed, a bridge across a deep ditch over which children have to pass to get to the building is a week [sic] and flimsy affair and in our opinion, is a menace to

Table 19.
"Separate but Equal" Brunswick County Schools

	1885		1901		1910		1919		1929		1935		1942	
	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black
Value School Property	$2,450	$925	$2,390	$1,412	$17,260	$2,655	$29,350	$4,000	$254,191	$37,743	$228,432	$21,249	$255,300	$65,680
Number of School Houses	37	20	45	22	40	26	45	26	5	24	6	22	5	14
Number of Teachers	35	10	45	12	46	25	55	24	65	47	69	45	85	50
Salaries	$1,414	$1,141	$5,279	$1,994	$6,376	$2,757	$13,442	$4,195	$45,508	$22,604	$40,300	$21,993	$54,546	$35,160
Students, 6-21 years	1,893	1,762	2,604	1,873	2,968	1,791	3,358	2,218	3,280	2,263	3,671	2,073	3,390	2,249
Average Attendance	47.50%	33.50%	36.60%	31.80%	43.70%	47.20%	36.40%	31.90%	63.30%	68.40%	64.10%	73.30%	77.00%	67.30%

> the safety of those who cross it. . . . Walden colored school need repair to weather boarding, windows, steps and pumps . . . . Longwood colored, building should be generally repaired or replaced with a new one. We found twenty-four desks to accommodate one hundred and five children (The State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, April 19, 1939, pg. 1, 4).

In 1953, the Marsh Branch school property was taken by the U.S. Government (Civil Action 516, United States District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina, Wilmington Division; Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 113, pg. 279, tract B-240), although it is not entirely clear if it was still in use at that time.

Even as late as 1949, it seems that the African American schools in Brunswick County were poorly maintained. The Phoenix, Chapel Road, and Leland schools all needed blackboards and desks; the Leland school still lacked electricity; the Piney Grove school needed a new roof and window frames; and the Chapel Road school yard required drainage (*State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, February 2, 1949, pg. 6).

Crime and Punishment

Larkins, a "Consultant on Negro Work," gave the NC State Board of Charities and Public Welfare an overview of African American crime and punishment immediately before the end of WWII. He observed that many whites asked blacks "to be virtuous without the chief reward of virtue, which is the granting of social status" (Larkins 1944:49) and then went on to convincingly demonstrate that African Americans were often harshly treated by the courts. He observed that while African Americans comprised only 27% of the North Carolina population, more than 50% of those working on chain gangs were black. Most of these blacks (74%) were laborers. More than 56% of the prisoners at the Central Prison were black and over a third were laborers. And 82.5% of those executed by the prison system were African Americans. The black population was most often arrested for drunkenness, although assault arrests were twice as common among blacks as whites.

Although we don't have particularly detailed accounts for Brunswick arrests and convictions, a brief survey of newspapers between 1890 and 1900, suggests that most of the local crimes were fairly petty. For example, one arrested individual, Gilbert Hollins was charged (and acquitted) of disturbing a church congregation. Willis Mills, Scott Pigott, and others were charged with assault and pled guilty, receiving suspended sentences with court costs and a $50 bond for their good behavior. Daniel Lee was charged with larceny, but the trial was continued with the payment of $200 bond furnished by S.W. Lehew (a white carpenter and boat builder, later a member of City Council). Even some seemingly violent crimes received little attention.

For example, George Bowen was charged with assault with a pistol, convicted, and sentenced to pay a $5 fine and costs. Charges were also brought against William Edge and Robert Hooper for assault with a pistol, but they were found not guilty. In another matter, the individual was also charged with disturbing a religious congregation. Because he was drunk at the time, he was fined $25 (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, April 9,

1891, pg. 1). In another case, a defendant was sentenced to 3 months in the county jail, "with leave to hire-out" (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, April 9, 1891, pg. 1). Duke Davis and Rhody Wetham were brought before the local court for fighting, but since both were thought to be equally to blame, both were fined $2.50 and $1.50 in costs. In a more clear-cut case, Walter May, charged with assault and battery on Allen Davis, was fined $1.00 and $1.00 in costs (*The Southport Leader,* Southport, NC, February 18, 1892, pg. 4). Another crime seen occasionally was that of stealing chickens (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, August 13, 1896, pg. 8).

Some were dealt with far more harshly. For example, Bryant Gaston was convicted of stealing a gun, umbrella, and other articles and was given a sentence of 7 years in the state penitentiary. While admittedly a more serious charge of assault with intent to rape, Sherman Hazard, identified as "little more than half-witted," was still sentenced to 5 years in the penitentiary. The sentence was not necessarily because of the crime, but rather the presiding judge said the "county jail was in such a condition that prisoners merely stayed only just as long as they found it convenient or pleasant" (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, April 9, 1891, pg. 1).

Some seemingly minor charges, such as those against Sergeant Smith for stealing chickens, could be dealt with very harshly because of "former bad character." Smith was sentenced to 18 months in the penitentiary.

There were occasional cases of a more salacious nature. For example, the State brought charges against Joseph Vaught, Nancy Hardy, and "F. and A.", of bigamy. Vaught was convicted and sentenced to a year in the penitentiary (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, April 12, 1894, pg. 4), while the charges were dropped against Nancy (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, September 13, 1894, pg. 1). While we have found three marriages for Joseph Vaught (Nancy Hardy in January 1894, Eliza E. Clark in September 1918, and Elsie Merrick in September 1922), we have not been able to identify any overlapping marriage, so it may be that he was caught up in a "common-law" union.

In a civil mater, Scipio Galloway was granted a divorce against his wife on the grounds of adultery (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, September 14, 1893, pg. 4). Although not named, his wife may have been Mary E. Freeman, who he married in October 1889. In November 1900, Scipio married a second time, to Marinda Hawkins, to whom he was married at the time of his death in 1936.

It is noticeable that relatively few defendants were sent to the Brunswick jail, likely because of its poor condition. In March 1890, it was reported that the jail had been "refitted" and "repaired," with the addition of "two strong iron cells" (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, March 27, 1890, pg. 4). But only nine months later this same paper reported that there was "not a single redeeming feature" at the jail. The editors further fumed, "what sense is there in taxing the people to repair such an infamous fire-trap," and complained that the $175 spent on the iron cells was "wasted" since the entire building was not worth the amount spent (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, December 18, 1890, pg. 4). Just a few days later, this was apparently proven, when a convict escaped by simply pulling out one of the bars. Again, the editors complained, "how long do tax payers want to be taxed for the maintenance of such an outrageous, worthless structure" (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, December 25, 1890, pg. 4).

The complaints continued into 1891, although there were apparently no improvements, so on August 16, 1893, three African American prisoners essentially destroyed the jail in an effort to escape. The paper reported that, "both iron cages being broken open, the brick chimney partially dug away, window sills broken, and even a four inch plank pulled out of the wall." The prisoners were transferred to New Hanover County, where presumably the jail was more secure (*The Southport Leader*, Southport, NC, August 23, 1893, pg. 4; September 6, 1893, pg. 4). There was yet

another escape from the unimproved jail in January 1903, as a prisoner simply walked away while dumping some ashes from the upstairs stove (*Southport Standard*, Southport, NC, January 15, 1903, pg. 6). No improvements were made until 1904 (*Southport Standard*, Southport, NC, September 8, 1904, pg. 4).

The North Carolina chain gang, briefly mentioned by Larkins in 1944, was notorious. Yet there are only two detailed examinations of the system, including the work by Steiner and Brown (1927) and the recent reassessment by Thomas (2011). The ground was set for convict labor when, after the Civil War, North Carolina established a state prison for felons (those charged with lesser crimes would remain in local jails), but provided no funding. This resulted in the prison being operated like a business. Prison superintendents leased state prisoners, by the hundreds, to a variety of business concerns, including timber companies, quarries, and especially railroads (Thomas 2011:10-11). But this was viewed as wasting a critical resource by the North Carolina Good Roads Associated (created in 1902). These civic leaders wanted to see convicts put to work not for private business, but for local communities, building the roads critically needed for progress. Thus, it is a curious twist of fate that the horrors of convict labor were best promoted by those masking as progressives.

In 1887, the NC General Assembly passed laws authorizing individual counties to establish their own "chain gangs." While all of the counties were given this option, only about 40 to 60 of the state's 100 counties actually created their own work crews.

The progress appears to have followed a predictable path in New Hanover County. In 1899, we see that local judges were furnishing the County Road Superintendent "with some excellent material for the chain gang and the establishment of this institution by the county commissioners upon the instance of Judge Battle is a long felt want supplied" (*The Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, November 24, 1899, pg. 2). The justification was entirely economic, "instead of merely committing offenders to jail, where they are fed at a dead expense to the county . . . they sentence them to terms on the county roads so that can be worked in the prosecution of the county road improvement scheme and be a source of revenue instead of a burden to the tax payers" (*The Semi-Weekly Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, May 11, 1900, pg. 3).

Brunswick County, however, presented a different situation. By at least 1902, local judges were sentencing men (and women) to the New Hanover chain gang (*The Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, October 3, 1902, pg. 1). By 1905, Brunswick was giving time on the Columbus County chain gang (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, March 25, 1905, pg. 1). Thomas notes that counties not desiring to set up their own chain gang were authorized to lease their prisoners to neighboring counties. This, however, "complicated jurisdictional oversight and was by nature prone to abuse and difficult to monitor (Thomas 2011:19).

By 1916, however, Columbus County no longer wished to take Brunswick prisoners and the Brunswick Commissioners were having to make other arrangements. As the press pointed out, with only three or four prisoners, it was not worth keeping up the expense of chain gang in Brunswick County (*The Wilmington Morning Star*, January 221, 1916, pg. 3). By the time of the 1927 Steiner and Brown study, Brunswick had established its own chain gang crew, although it does not seem to ever have been very large (Steiner and Brown 1927:194). Eventually the road gangs were taken over by the State and we can document that there was at least one of these camps in Brunswick County as late as 1939 in the Shallotte area (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB FF, pg. 246).

Those serving on these gangs were studied by Steiner and Brown and we can create a fairly detailed understanding of who was most likely to be exposed to the horrors of this punishment. Most were African Americans. In 1928 and again in 1929, blacks accounted for nearly two-thirds of those serving time. They ranged in age from as

young as 14-years-old up to 70-years-old. Most of the blacks, over half, came from cities. Rural areas contributed only about 26%. African Americans were largely unskilled laborers (47%), with about 22% being farmers. Most (49%) were single. Just over two-fifths (43%) attended church. Although only a third of the African Americans were characterized as "totally illiterate," 74% were unable to read a newspaper. Most were convicted of larceny (theft of property) and violation of prohibition laws (combined accounting for over half) (Johnson 1926:44-47; Steiner and Brown 1927:125-142).

Steiner and Brown offer three case histories, which they assert, "may be accepted as typical pictures of chain gang habitues, men who are perhaps the inevitable wreckage of our social and economic system." All three were African Americans. Their IQs ranged from 43 to 71 and their mental ages ranged from 6 to 11 (their physical ages ranged from 29 to 33). One was a firm believer in hoodoo. All of them were syphilitic (Steiner and Brown 1927:143-172). How representative they were of the whole is difficult to assess.

Health and Disease

This is another topic on which Larkins (1944) provides insight, beginning his discussion with the simple observation that, "the North Carolina Negro has a higher birth rate, sickness rate, and death rate than found amount the white population" (Larkins 1944:29). In particular, the sickness and death rates from tuberculosis, malarial fevers, syphilis, nephritis, and pneumonia were high when compared to those of the whites in the state. For example, the syphilis death rate accounted for 2.8% of black deaths, compared to only 0.4% for whites. Tuberculosis was responsible for 8.8% of the deaths in the African American community, but only 2.2% in the white community. Pneumonia accounted for 7% of the deaths among African Americans, but only 4.6% of the deaths among whites. Nevertheless, the chief cause of the death among both blacks and whites was heat disease (15.5% for whites, 13.1% for blacks).

While there was one white physician for every 1,127 whites in the state, there was only one African American physician for every 6,499 persons. Black dentists were even more scarce. There were no black optometrists, chiropractors, or even veterinarians (Larkins 1944:32).

Looking at the expectation of life at birth for whites and non-whites (predominantly African Americans), it is clear that there was at least a decade of difference between the two throughout the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century (Figure 18). Even by the end of the twentieth century, whites are expected to outlive African Americans, at birth, 75.1 to 71.5 years in Brunswick County (https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/lifexpectancy/1990-1992/Brunswick%20County%201990-992%20Life%20Expectancies.html).

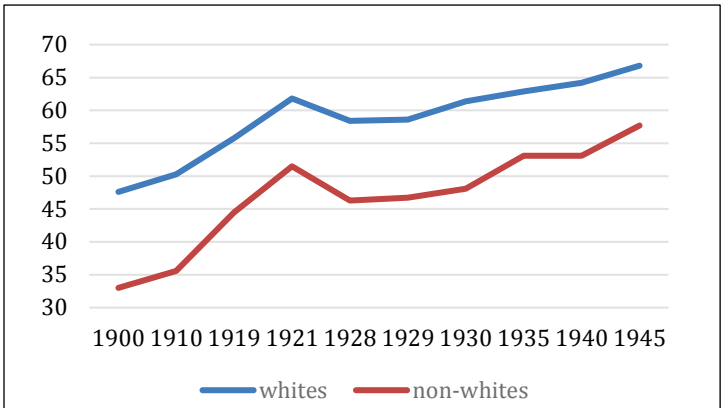


Figure 18. Expectation of life at birth by color (Bureau of Census 1957:B92-100).

Although there were no doubt many reasons for this disparity, racism was by far the largest cause. Patterson convincingly argues that not only did the white medical profession view disease control among blacks as "futile," but can further be attributed to the "medicalization of racism" (Patterson 2009:531-532). Some diseases were considered almost exclusively racial. For example, African Americans were viewed as members of a "notoriously syphilis-soaked race" that lacked "stamina and resisting power" (Patterson 2009:534). Relying on biological determinism, white supremacists pointed to

disease as "proof" of the natural inferiority of blacks and announced it was only a matter of time before the "disease-ridden Negro" would become extinct. *Crisis*, the organ of the NAACP, published a discussion in which the ill-health of blacks was seen as a blessing, since the "Negro problem" was "working itself out in a satisfactory way without further legislation" (quoted in Patterson 2009:534).

Table 20.
Major causes of death, Brunswick County, black and white

	1922		1932		1940	
	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White
Malaria	0	1	1	1	0	0
Tuberculosis	3	1	9	3	3	2
Diabetes	2	1	0	1	0	0
Cerebral Hemorrhage	8	14	15	7	0	0
Heart Disease	7	8	5	9	2	0
Pneumonia	7	8	9	7	0	0
Nephritis	4	7	7	16	2	2
Syphilis	0	0	2	0	1	3
Influenza	0	0	1	6	3	0
Pellagra	0	0	3	2	1	1

In a recent study, it was found there were some attitudes regarding tuberculosis that followed racial lines. For example, whites were more likely than blacks to agree that doctors were correct when diagnosing TB. Blacks were more likely than whites to agree that they would stop taking TB medications if the medications made them feel sick and that they knew better than the doctor when it's time to stop taking medicine (Howley et al. 2015). Nevertheless, it was "the poor working and living conditions at the root of African American tuberculosis" (Roberts 2009:5).

In the case of syphilis, Orton's Horticulturist, Churchill Bragaw wrote the North Carolina State Board of Health in Raleigh concerning treatment programs for his African American employees, learning that treatments were available in Southport. He was copied on a letter from the county nurse to the Board of Health in which she explained that "our Venereal Clinic . . . is now operating nicely. Last Saturday we had 29 patients at the clinic – two paid 25¢ each; the others received free treatments." It is also interesting that there was some public distrust, The nurse explained, "the parties that were instrumental in tearing up our clinic soon saw their mistake and came to me and confessed that they did it, but they were sorry and would not do it again, if I would get it back together" (letter from Lou H. Smith, County Nurse, Brunswick County Health Department, Southport to Dr. D.C. Knox, Director, Division of Epidemiology and Venereal Disease Control, NC State Board of Health, Raleigh with copy to Bragaw, dated October 5, 1938). The motivation prompting Bragaw to become involved is uncertain, but was likely spurred by something he observed at Orton among his workers.

We have selected county specific data for three years (Table 20). These show that African Americans in Brunswick County were more likely to die of tuberculosis than whites, but otherwise, in the sample examined blacks and whites seem to have suffered similar problems on the Lower Cape Fear.

Another aspect of health, or at least psychological health, is that of illegitimate births, which appear to have occurred occasionally in the Lower Cape Fear. In this context, it is interesting to note the comments by Sanders, who noted that while illegitimacy was "far greater among the Negroes than among the whites, the stigma was far less serious." His research found that almost without exception, the women kept their children and while they might well marry in time, it was almost never to the father. In addition, while the girl might lose her place in the community (such as her church membership), it was for but a short period and then "she is readmitted in about a year's time, and is soon in good community standing" (Sanders 1933:296). He viewed this acceptance as critically important, since the women is never made to feel her life is ruined. In fact, her family will accept her and embrace the child.

The People and the Community

Table 21 identifies a wide range of individuals we have found in during our research at Orton, Kendal, and Lilliput. There are about 346 individuals listed (we say about since there may be some duplicates), representing 90 sir names or broadly, families. Of these 90, 55 occur only once or twice, while 35 are found three or more times. Some families, such as Brewington, Brown, Clark, Delk/Delt/Delts, Reaves, Smith, and Vaught are especially numerous.

We will focus on the most numerous families since they have left us with the most information. Please understand that our observations are limited by the available data, not the longevity or contributions of the individuals.

The dates associated with these individuals are, more often than not, based on census records and must therefore be considered approximate. Ages as reported to the census takers could vary from decade to decade, in some cases by a decade or more.

Kendal Workers in 1900

The 1900 census appears to frame the workers at that place between the property's owner, Frederick Kidder, and the "Farm Overseer," Wesley Corbelt. Both men were white, reminiscent of the antebellum, when tracts were identified by owners, overseers, and enslaved African Americans.

The 130 African Americans enumerated included 29 households. This is over double the number of enslaved reported on the plantation in 1860. In 1865, 87 individuals were living on the property. We have previously identified two individuals associated with Kendal during this very early period, Tom Clark and Robert Hooper. Both are names that are found even today. Tom Clark was likely a 22-year-old black man in the Town Creek Township in 1870 with his wife, Eliza. Virtually nothing is known about these individuals and they disappear by 1900. Robert Hooper is almost certainly the 39-year old farmer in the same township in 1870, married to Hester Wallace on February 9, 1867.

Table 22 itemizes the families and individuals we believe are associated with Kendal. The table provides us with an interesting cross section of life in the area at the turn of the century.

With a sample of 29 households, the average number of individuals comprising the household was 4.9, thus in general two parents and three children. The heads of four families were widows and widowers headed another two. Over a fifth of the households had death strike down one of the two primary workers and this speaks to the disease and lack of health care that was so prevalent in the area. While we do not know what killed these individuals, we do known that the overseer at Orton, Samuel R. Chinnis, contracted malaria in 1891, dying only days later. Within the next two years, two of his children succumbed to pneumonia, suggesting to the local media that the family was "afflicted," although such events were common (*Wilmington Morning Star*, August 21, 1891, *Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, February 10, 1893). Another newspaper article reported the death of 63 year-old Henry Wiggens, an Orton worker, who was thought to have died of "heart disease" (*Wilmington Morning Star*, January 1, 1893).

Health conditions are also hinted at the data on the number of children born and number living associated with each mother. The average number of children born was six, and the average number still alive was four. The best case involved one individual who gave birth to 11 children and all were still alive. The worst was another individual whose only child had died, although more commonly the death rate seems to have been around 20%.

One individual was identified as divorced. The meaning of this in the census is not defined and we suspect that it was most likely informal and did not include a judicial ruling.

Table 21.
African American individuals known to be in the Lower Cape Fear

Individual	Position/job	Source
-,Jenkins	Orton	Sprunt Personal Accounts 1924
-,Priscilla	Orton cook	Sprunt Personal Accounts 1923
Aldridge, Emma	Orton, wife of Lewis/Louis; Orton worker, 1940; daughter of Miles Brewington and Mariah Bowden	1940 census; Lilliput Cemetery (1898-1949)
Aldridge, Lewis/Louis	Orton, farm labor	1940 census
Aldridge, Lillian	Orton, daughter of Lewis	1940 census
Allen, Charles	Kendal Laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Allen, Thomas	Orton, caretaker	Sprunt Personal Accounts 1918, 1924
Allen, Thomas	Kendal, overseer 1904	Clarence Jones interview, December 1999, pg. 2; Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:114
Allen, Thomas	Orton, caretaker 1918-1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Allen, Tom	Kendal, servant	Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235
Ball, O.	Kendal carpenter, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Bennett, Daniel	Orton cake walk judge	Wilmington Morning Star, December 27, 1894, pg. 1
Bennett, Daniel	Orton, laborer c 1894	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Berry, Lewn	Kendal laborer, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Betts, Ester/Essie	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Betts, Sam	Orton	Sprunt Personal Accounts 1919, 1920, 1924, 1925
Betts, Sam (uncle of Clarence Jones)	operated dredge that kept canal open & operated Orton dynamo	Clarence Jones interview, October 22, 1999, pg. 4, December 1999, pg.1
Boneham/Bonham, Peyton	Kendal, servant	Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235
Brewington, Annie	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, B.L.	Orton, nephew of Duncan McCoy	1940 census
Brewington, Burnette	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Cinda	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Dorethy	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Ellen	Orton, 1938	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Brewington, Emma Jane	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Essie Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Gus	Orton, 1938	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Brewington, Harry		Orton Cemetery (1936-1937)
Brewington, Harry Lee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Irene	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Isiah, Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Jenkins	Orton 1924, 1925; Orton Christmas ca. 1940; occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Trinkley andHacker 2016b:41
Brewington, John Henry	Orton Christmas ca. 1940; Orton 1949; Occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41, 82; State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Brewington, Mariah		Lilliput Cemetery (d. 1925)
Brewington, Mary Ellen	Orton 1949	State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, DEcember 28, 1949
Brewington, Miles	Kendal labor	Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:115
Brewington, N.B.	wife of Mariah Brewington	Lilliput Cemetery
Brewington, Rosa Lee	Orton 1949	State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Brewington, Roy	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Rudolph Sinclair	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Sarah	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Sarah Jane	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, Theadora	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brewington, William	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Alexander	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; Orton Cemetery (no dates)
Brown, Bennie	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Cinda	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Clyde Clinton	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Eliza		Orrton Cemetery (1863-1957)
Brown, Ernest	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; Drew Cemetery (d. 1933)
Brown, Frank	Kendal labor, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Brown, James	Kendal labor; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:115, 2016b:41
Brown, Jimmy	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Laney	Orton laborer 1919	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Brown, Lawrence	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Lilly Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Mary Ann		Orton Cemetery (1818-1919)
Brown, Mary Ann Davis		Orton Cemetery (1918-1918)
Brown, Mary Eliza	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Mary L. [Mary Liza]	Orton, lodger in house of Duncan McCoy; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Sammy, Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41

Table 21.
African American individuals known to be in the Lower Cape Fear, cont.

Individual	Position/job	Source
Brown, Sarah Jane	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, William	Kendal laborer, 1879; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Curtis Account Book; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, William A.		Orton Cemetery (1872-1950)
Brown, Wilma	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Brown, Wilmer	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Bryant, Lucy [Clark]	Kendal labor	Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:115: lilliput Cemetery (1867-)
Bunting, Miles	Orton, 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Chisolm, Moses	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Clark, Charlie, Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Clark, Edward	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Clark, Foster	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Clark, Franklin	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Clark, George	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Clark, Gerthel	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Clark, Lee Andrew/Leander	Orton Christmas ca. 1940, 1949	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Clark, Lee Bertha	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Clark, Marion	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Clark, Ned	Kendal Laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Clark, Nick	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Clark, Rosa Bell	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Clark, Scip/Scipio	Kendal, servant	Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235
Clark, Tom	Kendal laborer, 1871-1880	Curtis Account Book
Dasher, Batrice	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Davis, Alex	Orton Christmas ca. 1940, 1949	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Davis, Amy		Orton Cemetery (1842-1892)
Davis, Billy	Orton, "colored hunter . . . 40 years"	Wilmington Morning Star, December 23, 1894, pg. 1, d. 10/24/1895
Davis, Eli		Orton Cemetery (1854-1881)
Davis, Harris	Trustee of New Drew Cemetery, 1952	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2012:112
Davis, Henry [O.]	Orton, 1920	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Pleasant Oaks [Sand Hill] Cemetery (1875-1936)
Davis, Jessie	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Davis, Jo	Kendal laborer, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Davis, Loa Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; Drew Cemetery (d. 1942)
Davis, Lorraine	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Davis, Minnie Lee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Davis, Richard	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Davis, Tom	Kendal laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Davis, Veners		Pleasant Oak [Sand Hill] Cemetery (no dates)
Davis, Vivian	Orton Christmas ca. 1940, 1949	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Delk, Charlie	Orton, 1920	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Delt, Carrie [Ann]	child of Henry and Sarah Delt	Ortron Cemetery (1904-1917)
Delt, Henry	husband of Sarah Delt	Orton Cemetery (1849-1919)
Delt, Sarah [Garrison]	wife of Henry Delt	Orton Cemetery (1863-1918)
Delts, A[ ]	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Abraham	Orton, farm labor, son of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Abraham, Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Catherine	Orton, daughter of Christana	1940 census
Delts, Charles/Charlie	Orton, farm labor; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1930 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Christa Bell/Christabelle	Orton, daughter of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Christana/Christiana	Orton, farm labor; paid $150 in 1940; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Costelia	Orton, farm labor, daughter Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Dillard	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Elneda	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Estelle	Orton, wife of Charles	1930 census
Delts, Georgia Anna	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Georgiana	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Harlee	Orton, daughter of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Hazel/ Hazel Inez	Orton, daughter of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Henry	Orton, farm labor, son of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Irene	Orton, daughter of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Kaine		Orton Cemetery (1933-1934)
Delts, Katherine	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Katie L.	Orton, daughter of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, L[ ]	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41

Table 21.
African American individuals known to be in the Lower Cape Fear, cont.

Delts, Lula Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Margaret	Orton, daughter of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Marie I.	Orton, daughter of Christana	1940 census
Delts, Mary/Mary Nick	Orton, daughter of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Mathew		Orton Cemetery (1894-1936)
Delts, Mearleia	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Orine	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Pearl	Orton, daughter of Christana; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Queen	Orton worker, 1941; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Delts, Rellia	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Dickson/Dixon, Kate	Orton	1930 census; Orton Cemetery (1857-1936)
Edge, Johnny	Orton Christmas ca. 1940; Occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41, 82
Edge, Mary Jane	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Edge, William	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Ellis, Ammabel	Orton labor, 1938-1939	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Ellis, Frank Herman	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Ellis, Herman	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Ellis, Herman Franklin	Orton, farm labor; Orton 1938-1939; grandson of John Ed Pearson; paid $280 in 1940; occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	1930 census; 1940 census; Orton Cemetery (1915-1969); Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:82
Ellis, Ida	Occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:82
Ellis, John E.	Orton, grandson of John Ed. Pearson	1930 census
Fulwood, William	Kendal carpenter, 1880	Curtis Account Book
G[ ], B[ ]		Orton Cemetery (1810-1883)
Green, George	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Green, Mary	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Grimes, J. Bryan	Orton, 1919	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Harrison, Pug	Orton, nursery worker	post-1940; Clarence Jones interview, October 22, 1999, pg. 3
Henry, John	Orton renter, 1924; Kendal labor	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:115
Hill, Link	Orton, labor 1919-1923	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Hodge, Mary A	Orton	1860 census
Hodge, Wesley	Orton, overseer	1860 census
Hollins, Annie		Orton Cemetery (1865-1918)
Hooper, Joseph	Kendal labor	Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:115
Hooper, Robert	Orton, worker 1920, son of Robert and Hester Hooper; married to Elsie Brewington Hooper	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Lilliput Cemetery (1899-1963)
Hooper, Robert	Kendal laborer, 1871-1880	Curtis Account Book
Hooper, Sarah		Orton Cemetery (1848-1923)
Hooper, Schuyler		Orton Cemetery (1840-1876)
Horn, J.B.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Hoskins, Jos.	Orton, 1922	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Howard, Eliza		Orton Cemetery (1863-1957)
James, A.J.	Orton 1938	Sprunt Personal Accounts
James, Lewis	Kendal carpenter, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Jenkins, -	Orton, labor 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Johnson, William	Kendal labor	Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:115
Jones, Clarence	Orton Christmas ca. 1940; Orton, gardener; occupied Lillilput dwelling, 1960	Susan Taylor Block interview; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41, 82
Jones, Clarence, Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Jones, Evelyn	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Jones, Josie Lee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Jones, Julia Anna	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Jones, Lewis	Kendal, built chimneys 1879	Curtis Account Book
Jones, Lillian	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Jones, Susan Isabella	Orton	1880 Pender County Census; Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, June 2, 1882, pg. 1
Joyner, Doris	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Joyner, Evelyn [Evelyna/Elevenia B.]	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; Marsh Branch/Drew Cemetery, grave A001 (d, 1943)
Joyner, William	Trustee of New Drew Cemetery, 1952	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2012:112
Joyner, Willie Lee, Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Kelly, Cornelius	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Kelly, Eddison	Orton	State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, DEecember 28, 1949
Kelly, Erma V.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Kelly, Jake, Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Kelly, Marie	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Kelly, Pearl	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
King, Josephine	Orton Christmas ca. 1940; Occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41, 82
King, Solomon [sometimes Solomon, King]	Orton, 1919, 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:115

Table 21.
African American individuals known to be in the Lower Cape Fear, cont.

Individual	Position/job	Source
Lance, Eddie	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Lance, Elizabeth	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Lance, Queen Anne	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Larence, Mary		Orton Cemetery (1882-1917)
Lassiter, E.B.	Orton, labor	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Lauritta, Francis	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Lawrence, Jeffry	Orton, Civil War refugee, 1870-1910	Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, April 9, 1911; Sprunt Personal Accounts
Lawrence, Marion		Orton Cemetery (1897-1917)
Lawrence, Mary		Orton Cemetery (1879-1917)
Leake, Robert	Kendal Laborer, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Lewis, James	Kendal carpenter, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Martin, Robert	Orton, domestic servant	1870 census
McCay, Jacob		Orton Cemetery (1882-1912)
McClammy, Charles W	Orton, brick mason and contractor	1870 census
McClammy, James Franklin		Orton Cemetery (1918-1919)
McClammy, Lucy [A.]	Orton, cook, 1919-1920; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Clarence Jones interview, December 1999, pg. 5; Sprunt Personal Accounts; Orton Cemetery (1870-1945); Trinkley and Hacker 2016
McClammy, Margaret	Orton, housewife	1870 census
McClammy, Minnie L.		Orton Cemetery (1903-1910)
McClammy, R	Orton, worker 1910	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McClammy, R.K., Jr.		Orton Cemetery (1902-1940)
McClammy, Richard C.		Orton Cemetery (1865-1937)
McClammy, Thomas Franklin		Orton Cemetery (1918-1919)
McClammy, William A.		Orton Cemetery (1891-1934)
McCoy, Annie May/Mae	Orton, daughter of Duncan, farm labor;Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McCoy, Betsy Ann		Orton Cemetery (1867-1883)
McCoy, Clara Lee	Orton, wife of Duncan	1940 census
McCoy, Cora/Cora Lee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940; Occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41, 82
McCoy, Dillard	Orton, nephew of Duncan; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McCoy, Duncan	Orton, gardener, farm labor; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Debi Hacker interview, May 23,2012; 1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McCoy, George	Orton labor, 1938-1939	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McCoy, Maggie	Orton labor, 1938-1939	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McCoy, Jacob		Orton Cemetery (1882-1912)
McCoy, John	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McCoy, Lethia Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McCoy, Odell	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McCoy, Willie Jane	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McMillan, Andrew	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McMillan, Charles	Orton, 1918	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McMillan, Jim	Orton, caretaker 1927	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McMillan, John West	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McMillan, Nora	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McMillian, Andrew	Occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:82
McQueen, H.C	renter, 1922	Sprunt Personal Accounts
McRant, Evangalee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McRant, George	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
McRant, Pearl	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Merrick, Violet	Orton, domestic servant	1870 census
Mickins, Mary		Orton Cemetery (1876-1899)
Miller, Mary		Lilliput Cemetery (1891-)
Mills, Phoebe	Orton, laborer	The Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893
Monroe, Clara Belle	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Monroe, James H., Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Monroe, James Hadley	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Moore, Lester	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Moore, Louis	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Moore, Maggie Delts		Orton Cemetery (1897-1977)
Morant, Evanglee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Morant, Frazier/Fraser	Kendal labor	Trinkley and Hacker 2016a:115
Morant, George W., Jr.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Morant, Jess Lee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Morant, Pearl L.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Murray, Abel	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Murray, Adell	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41

Table 21.
African American individuals known to be in the Lower Cape Fear, cont.

Individual	Position/job	Source
Murray, Chancy L.	Orton, nephew of Duncan McCoy	1940 census
Murray, Lassie	Orton, niece of Duncan McCoy, farm labor	1940 census
Murray, Leroy C.	Orton, nephew of Duncan McCoy	1940 census
Murray, Vernice	Orton, niece of Duncan McCoy	1940 census
Ornell, Louis	Orton, 1924-1925	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Orris, Emma	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Orris, Lillian	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Orris, Louis/Lewis	Orton Christmas ca. 1940, Orton cook 1949	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Parker, "Boo"	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Parker, Annette	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Parker, Christa Belle	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Parker, Herburt	Orton, 1942	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Parker, Mary Lilly	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Patterson, Charles	Orton, laborer	Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893
Pearsal, Aunt Lucy	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Pearsall, LeRoy	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Pearsall, Lucile	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Pearson (Pearsall), John Edward (Ed)	Orton, laborer and foreman, 1919-1930	Sprunt Personal Accounts 1919, 1920; The Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893 & Census of 1930 & Clarence Jones intervie
Pearson, Ella	Orton, grandmother Herman Ellis	1940 census
Pearson, Hannah	Orton, wife of John E.; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Orton Cemetery (1875-1958); 1930 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Pickett, Elijah		Orton Cemetery (1886-1889)
Pickett, Friday	Orton, laborer	The Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, December 28, 1894; Orton Cemetery (1859-1919)
Pickett, Teana		Orton Cemetery (1872-1908)
Pierce, Belle	Orton, worker 1916	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Powers, J.O.	Orton, labor 1919	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Price, Martha	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, Alnettia	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, Barbara	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, James	Orton Christmas ca. 1940, 1949	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Reaves, Jennette	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, Jim	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, Josie Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, Kelly	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; Marsh Branch/Drew Cemetery, grave A023 (d. 1948)
Reaves, Loa Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, Mary Virginia	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, Rosa Bell	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Reaves, William	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Robbins, John	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Roberts, [ ]	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Roberts, Avon	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Roberts, Frank	Orton, employee 1938; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Robins, Christina	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Rose, Mary Lilly	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Rose, Shirley Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Russ, Mary A	Orton, domestic servant	1870 census
Rutledge, Hill	Orton, 1924-1925	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Ryles, John	Orton, domestic servant	1870 census
Sauls, Scipo	Orton, Pastor	Wilmington Morning Star, April 6, 1893, pg.1
Shannon, Dan	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Shannon, Davis	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Shannon, Inez	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Smith, Aleck	Kendal Laborer, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Smith, Archie	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Smith, Christerbell	Orton, worker 1935	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Smith, Fred	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Smith, Joe	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Smith, Lee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Smith, Liza/Lizzy/Eliza J.	Kendal, servant	Brunswick County Record of Wills, WB A, pg. 235; Lilliput Cemetery (1854-1909)
Smith, Mary Ellen McClammy		Orton Cemetery (1908-1937)
Smith, Sammie	Orton 1949	State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Smith, Shirlie Mae	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Smith, Susan	Orton Christmas ca. 1940; occupied Lilliput dwelling, 1960	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41, 82
Smith, Thomas	Orton, labor 1919	Sprunt Personal Accounts

Table 21.
African American individuals known to be in the Lower Cape Fear, cont.

Individual	Position/job	Source
Smith, Virgil	Kendal Laborer, 1879	Curtis Account Book
Smith, Willie Lee	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Spencer, William	Kendal carpenter, 1880	Curtis Account Book
Statue/Statcher, Dave	Kendal worker	Wilmington Morning Star, June 28, 1882
Swann, Ed	Orton, labor 1913	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Sykes, Pharaoh	Orton	Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, June 2, 1882, pg. 1
Tarlton, Robert	Orton, worker 1913	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Vaught, Alfred	Orton 1949	State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, DEecember 28, 1949
Vaught, Annie R./Ree	Orton, daughter of Joseph; Orton Chrstmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Vaught, Betsy	Orton Christmas ca. 1940; Occupied Kendal dwelling, 1960	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41, 82
Vaught, Clara Bell	Orton, daughter of Joseph; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Vaught, Clayton A. [Alfred]	Orton, son of Joseph; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Vaught, Eugene	Kendal and Orton, laborer; son of Joseph; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Debi Hacker interview, May 23,2012; 1940 census: Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Vaught, Jessie Ann	Orton, wife of Joseph	1940 census
Vaught, Joe	Orton 1941; Orton Christmas ca. 1940, 1949	Sprunt Personal Accounts; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41; State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949
Vaught, John B.	Orton Christmas ca. 1940	Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Vaught, Joseph	Orton, farm labor; paid $260 in 1940	1940 census
Vaught, Joseph Jr.	Orton, son of Joseph; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Vaught, Lottie May	Orton, daughter of Joseph; Orton Christmas ca. 1940	1940 census; Trinkley and Hacker 2016b:41
Voight, J	Orton, 1923	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Walker, Arthur	Orton, son of Sara Jane Walker	1930 census
Walker, Isaiah	Orton, son of Sara Jane Walker, farm labor	1930 census
Walker, John W.	Orton, son of Sara Jane Walker	1930 census
Walker, Maggie		Orton Cemetery (d. 1956)
Walker, Sara Jane	Orton, farm labor, 1924	Sprunt Personal Accounts; 1930 census
Walker, Sarah J.	Orton, daughter of Sara Jane Walker	1930 census
Walker, Walter	Orton, son of Sara Jane Walker	1930 census
Wallace, Gus	Orton, laborer 1937	Sprunt Personal Accounts
Ward, Joe		Lilliput Cemetery (1891-1958)
Ward, Joe Vaught		Lilliput Cemetery (1891-1958)
Watters, Josephine	Orton	Weekly Star, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893
Wiggins, Henry	Orton, laborer	Morning Star, Wilmington, NC, January 1, 1893; Orton Cemetery (d. 1892)
Windley, Pricilla	Orton, cook 1920s	Sprunt Personal Accounts

The average age of the head of the household was 46, suggesting that the Town Creek population was, at best, middle-aged, likely representing individuals who had been in the area for a number of years. This is further supported by the data collected on where adults and children were born. Although there are several who moved into the area from South Carolina, the vast majority of both adults and children were born in North Carolina, suggesting relatively little movement, at least from out of state.

The average number of years married was 12, although there was a range from zero to 30 years.

Another topic of some interest is that of adult literacy (which we identify as the ability to both read and write; we define partial literacy as being able to only read or write). While 20 were identified as literate, with another partially literate, fully 40 individuals could neither read nor write. Literacy does not seem to have been a major goal at this early period among African Americans in the Town Creek area, echoing the opinion of Mack (1999:xxii). We found that while eight children were attending school, and additional 22 were not.

In terms of economic status, only one of the individuals listed was renting a farm – likely meaning that they were engaged in some form of tenancy. The remaining 28 families were all renting houses – implying that they were wageworkers in the Kendal rice fields.

One individual, rather than being engaged in farming, identified their occupation as a "teamster," while another engaged in "fishing," and a third was a "laborer," implying manual odd jobs. There was very little diversity and few options other than working the land – or rice fields.

One of the more prominent individuals was the 88-year-old Jeffery Lawrence. This African American took up residence in the area after the Civil War. He claimed to be the butler of the Porcher family in Charleston and he said that he followed Union troops through North Carolina (Sprunt 1958:30). While Sprunt claims he lived in their Wilmington basement, it is more likely that he always resided on or adjacent to Orton. In 1911, "Uncle Jeffry Lawrence died in his "cabin at Fort Anderson" where he was reported to have lived for the past 45 years after drifting to the area "with many others of his misguided race in the rear of Sherman's army." The news article reports that for the last 20 years he had been "dependent . . . upon the bounty of Mr. and Mrs. Sprunt, who provided for all his needs" ("Old Jeffrey Lawrence," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 9, 1911). It is true that

Figure 19. Jeffrey Lawrence at St. Philips near his home (adapted from Block 1998:94).

Table 22.
Individuals thought to be associated with Kendal in 1900

Family Name	First Name	Relationship	Age	Years Married	Children born/living	Birthplace	Birthplace father/mother	Occupation	Literate	Rent farm/house	1900 Tax Scroll
Delt	Henry	H	51	17		SC	SC/SC	Farm Laborer	N	H	1 cow, 4 hogs
	Sarah	W	38	17	5/8	NC	NC/NC		N		
	Maggie H.	D	11			NC			attending school		
	William C.	S	9			NC					
	John	S	7			NC					
	Mathew	S	5			NC					
	Charley	S	1			NC					
Reaves	William	H	48	17		NC	NC/NC	Farmer	N	F	poll
	Charity	W	35	17	12/5	NC	SC/SC		Y		
	Frederick	S	36			NC			N		
	Christopher	S	12			NC			N		
	Leiolla	D	10			NC					
	Maggie	D	8			NC					
	Cathalene	D	5			NC					
Bryant	John	H	39	17		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	Y	H	
	Emmaline	W	35	17	8/7	NC	NC/NC		P		
	Annabell	D	16			NC			attending school		
	Sarah James	D	14			NC			attending school		
	Arthur	S	11			NC			attending school		
	Jaramin	S	9			NC					
	Carrie	D	7			NC					
	Mary E.	D	5			NC					
	Joseph	S	5/12			NC					
Pickitt	J[ ]	H	37	19		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	Y	H	
	Maggie	W	37	19	10/8	NC	NC/NC		N		
	Willie	S	18			NC					
	Ida	D	15			NC			attending school		
	Dolly A.	D	13			NC			attending school		
	Janico T.	S	11			NC					
	Abraham	S	9			NC					
	Colland	S	7			NC					
	Siouberta	D	5			NC					
	Enouch	S	3			NC					
Lawrence	Joseph	H	26	3		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	Y	H	poll
	Mary	W	21	3	1/1	NC	NC/NC		P		
	Kalie	D	10			NC					
Pickett	Friday	H	41	15		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	P	H	
	Peggie	W	24	15	5/2	NC	NC/NC				
	Dorra	D	10			NC			attending school		
Clark	Sip	H	60	30		NC	NC/NC	Teamster	N	H	1 horse
	Nancy	W	53	30	6/6	NC	NC/NC		N		
McCray	Ben	H	38	6		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	P	H	
	Elizabeth	W	28	6	3/3	NC	NC/NC		N		
	Hurbert	S	18			NC					
Everett	William	H	37	WD		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	Y	H	
	Frederick	S	3			NC					
	McKinday	S	3/12			NC					
Jenkins	James	Lodger	16			NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	N		
McCary	Mac	H	51	4		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	N	H	
	Eliza	W	35	4	0/0	NC	NC/NC		Y		
	Eliza	GD	6			NC			Y		
Underwood	S[ ]	H	41	14		SC	SC/SC	Farm Laborer	Y	H	
	Nancy	W	39	14	7/5	NC	NC/NC		Y		
	Frederick	S	13			NC			N		
	Georganna	D	9			NC					
	James L.	S	5			NC					
	Addie S.	D	1			NC					
	Mary S.	D	4/12			NC					
Lawrance	Peter	H	65	17		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	N	H	
	Dianna	W	46	17	11/11	NC	NC/NC		N		
	Mary J.	D	18			NC			N		
	Oscar	S	15			NC		Farm Laborer	Y		
	Hattie	D	14			NC			N		
	Alice	D	11			NC			N		
	Jennie	D	10			NC			N		
	Edward	S	8			NC					
	Isadora	D	6			NC					
	Addie S.	D	4			NC					
	Marian	D	2			NC					
Rutland	Andrew	H	39	7		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	Y	H	poll
	Hulda	W	27	7	4/3	NC	NC/NC		P		
	Frederick	S	7			NC					
	Elizabeth	D	4			NC					
	Martha H.	D	1			NC					
Brown	William	H	31	9		NC	NC/NC	Farm Foreman	Y	H	½ Smithville town lot
	Josephine	W	26	9	5/4	NC	NC/NC		N		
	James	S	8			NC					
	George A.	S	7			NC					
	Isabella	D	1			NC					
Dixon	Kalie	H	32	D	1/1	NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	N	H	
	Elizabeth	D	16			NC		Farm Laborer	N		
Brown	Mary	H	70	WD		NC	NC/NC		N	H	
Beck	William	Lodger	30	S		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	Y		
	Cinty	W	23	S	5/1	NC	NC/NC		Y		
	Lucy	D	3			NC					
Pearson	John	H	32	10		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	Y	H	poll, 1 cow
	Hannah	W	26	10	1/1	NC	NC/NC				
	Ida	D	9			NC					
Graham	A[ ]	H	35	3		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	P	H	
	Idella	W	20	3	1/1	NC	NC/NC				
	Jennie	D	8/12			NC					
McCary	Buck	Lodger	35	0		NC	NC/NC				
	Swey	W	28	0	0/0	NC	NC/NC				
Green	James	H	30	15		NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	Y	H	poll, 1 cow
	Ellen	W	29	15	8/6	NC	NC/NC		Y		
	Julia	D	12			NC			attending school		
	Mary B.	D	10			NC			N		
	Estella	D	8			NC					
	Hannah	D	6			NC					
	George W.	S	3			NC					
	Paully Lee	D	9/12			NC					
Mae	Francis	H	40	WD	15/5	NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	N		
	Martha	D	18			NC		Farm Laborer	N		
	Minnie	D	16			NC		Farm Laborer	N		
	Arthur	S	14			NC		Farm Laborer	N		
	John W.	S	12			NC			N		
	Hanna May	D	7			NC					
Miller	Francis	H	39	WD	7/7	NC	NC/NC	Farm Laborer	P	H	
	Marthia	D	18			NC		Farm Laborer	N		
	Minnie Ann	D	16			NC		Farm Laborer	N		
	John	S	14			NC		Farm Laborer	N		
	Arthur	S	11			NC					
	Hardie	S	9			NC					
	Ann	D	5			NC					
	Edward	S	2			NC					
	Quears	GD	3/12			NC					
Smith	Amelia	Lodger	70	WD	1/1	VA	VA/VA		N		
Bennett	David	H	58	25		SC	SC/SC	Farm Laborer	N	H	
	Marthia	W	55	25	16/4	SC	SC/SC		N		
	Alice	D	19			NC			Y		
	Robert	S	13			NC			P		
	Elthia	M-I-L	90	?	?/1	SC	SC/SC		N		
Lawrence Taylor	Jeff	H	88	WD		SC	SC/SC		P	H	
	Charley	Lodger	28			SC	SC/SC		Y		
Wingates	William	H	33	8		NC	NC/NC	Fisherman	Y	H	poll
	Irena	W	33	8	1/0	NC	NC/NC		N		
Alford	James	H	40	20		NC	NC/NC		N	H	
	Alice	W	32	20		NC	NC/NC		N		
Parker	William	H	23	2		NC	NC/NC	Laborer	N	H	poll, 37a, 1 horse, 1 cow
	Joullann	W	22	2		NC	NC/NC		N		

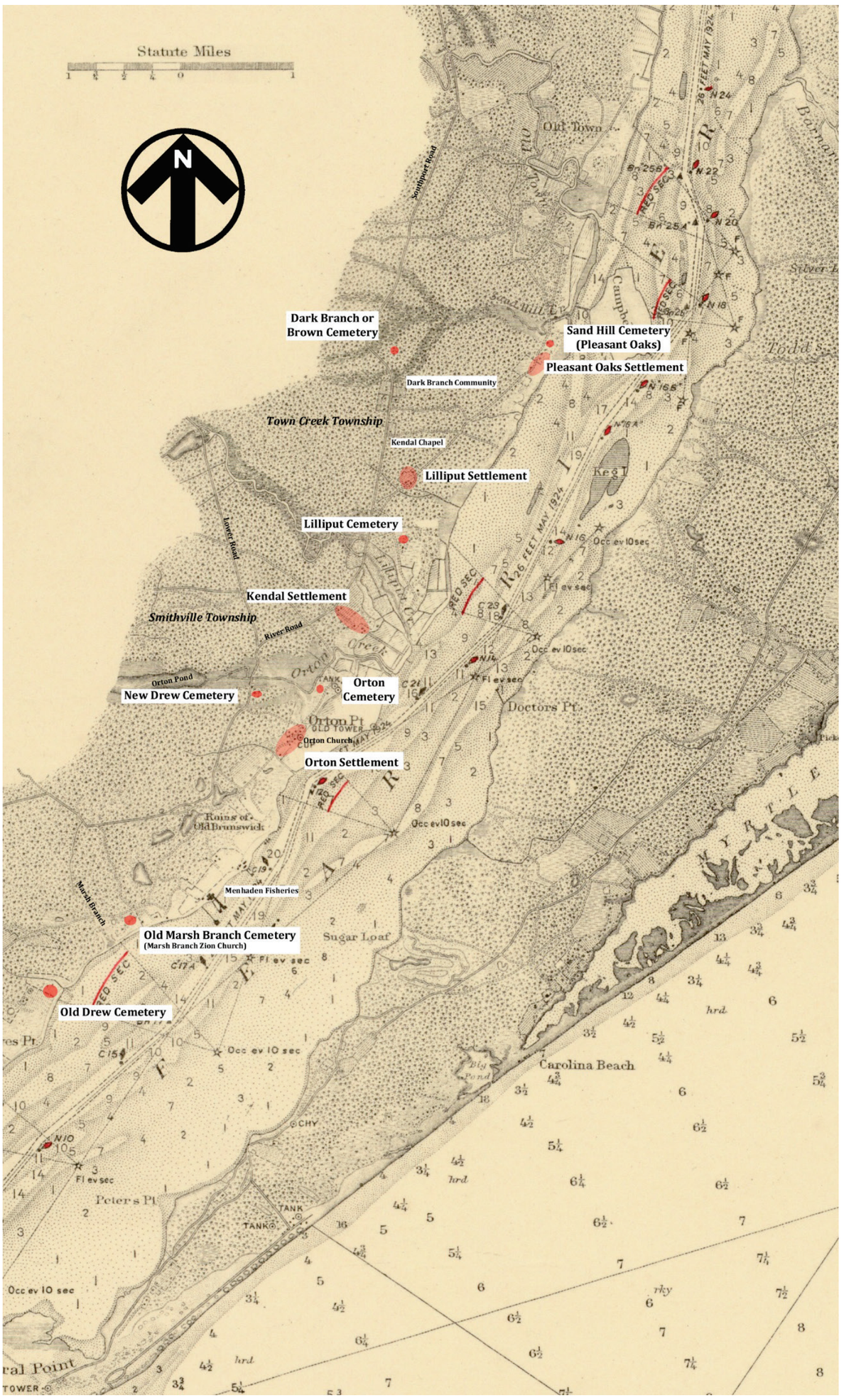


Figure 20. Portion of the 1924 "Old Topsail Inlet to Cape Fear," Chart 149 showing settlements and cemeteries on the Lower Cape Fear River.

he did not list any occupation in 1900, but he did have a "lodger," Charlie Taylor, also from South Carolina, who likely helped support Lawrence.

A conclusion that might be drawn from the 1900 census is that little on the lower Cape Fear had changed during the first several decades of Jim Crow life. The Kendal workers were free in name, but continued to live in a structured plantation society, taking orders from a white overseer, and doing the same "mud work" typical of slavery.

This is consistent with the comparison of this list with the 1900 tax scrolls for Brunswick County. None of the individuals are listed in the Town Creek Township and only 10 are found in the Smithville Township. Of the entire list, only seven paid the poll tax. Two actually reported owning some property. In one case, William Brown reported owning half of a Smithville town lot, while William Parker owned a homestead of 37 acres. Five individuals reported taxes on stock, including two horses, four cows, and four hogs. The cows, we believe, are of special interest, since they might provide milk and butter, supplementing an otherwise likely bleak diet.

Religion

A number of authors have documented the significance of religion and churches in the lives of African Americans. For example, Weisenfeld remarks that,

> churches and denominations [such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the National Baptist Convention] became significant arenas for spiritual support, educational opportunity, economic development, and political activism. Black religious institutions served as contexts in which African Americans made meaning of the experience of enslavement, interpreted their relationship to Africa, and charted a vision for a collective future (Weisenfeld 2015:1).

When the first African American church was constructed in the immediate area is unknown. However, in November 1892, the African American church at Orton was burned. The community was not able to rebuild until assistance was provided by local whites ("The Colored Church at Orton," *Messenger*, March 12, 1893). Within a month the replacement church had been completed,

> The new A.M.E. Church at Orton has been dedicated and Rev. Scipio Sauls duly installed as pastor. The church has thirty-four members and an average attendance of about fifty persons. It is a neat frame structure and the colored people on the plantation and in the neighborhood are very proud of the it and speak in glowing terms of the kindly aid received in its construction and furnishing from Col. K.M. Murchison and wife, Mr. James Sprunt and wife, and Mr. A.B. Gwathmey of New York, who has been visiting Col. Murchison at Orton this winter. Mr. Gwathmey also gave the church an organ, Mr. Sprunt a large Bible, a dozen hymn books, and three lamps for lighting the edifice ("New Colored Church at Orton," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, April 6, 1893).

We also know that this new church seated "100 persons" (Wilson 1916:22).

Scipio Sauls appears in the 1870 federal census as a 39-year-old African American preacher reporting $800 in real estate and $250 in personal estate. His family consisted of his wife, Celia, and their 12-year-old daughter, Sylvia. He is also found in the 1880 census, although his name is misreported as Scipio Saultz. An 1889 city directory lists him as living at 713 N. 6th Street in

Wilmington (Bonitz 1889:123). Since he is not found in the 1897 city directory, he may have died by that time.

A second chapel "planned and erected by the late Mrs. James Sprunt for the colored people living on the plantation" was opened in April 1916 and dedicated by Dr. Wilbur Chapman. "Many of the colored persons at the services accepted Dr. Chapman's invitation to become Christians" ("Dedicated Church," *Evening Dispatch*, Wilmington, NC, April 24, 1916). This new chapel was located on the north side of Cow Bridge Branch, probably on the wooded slope into the drainage

A photograph of the new chapel (Figure 21) shows board-and-batten siding, common for Gothic Revival buildings during the period. Yet the Orton chapel is clearly not Gothic; it is instead best described as Greek Revival with a mid- to late-nineteenth century cliché – the semicircular opening at the gable end.

While glazed and sashed double windows might seem elaborate for a period black structure, we suspect there was a certain vanity in funding such fine accommodations for the plantation workers. The panel doors and beveled posts are interesting, but difficult to interpret.

Figure 21. Orton's African American chapel, built in 1916 and lost in the late 1940s or early 1950s (courtesy Nick Dawson, Belvidere Property Management, New York).

The chapel held services and Sunday school teachers were brought in by James Sprunt. The structure remained until sometime in mid-century when it was moved by ox-cart to Salem Hill (a location we have not identified). The bell from the Orton Chapel is still in front of the Kendall Chapel (Eugene Vaught interview by Debi Hacker, May 23, 2012). The Kendall Chapel AME Church is a relatively late introduction, not found on the 1948 Wilmington, NC topographic map (the Orton Chapel was still extant at that time). One source indicates that the church was "relocated from the Kendall/Lilliput Plantations area" (Anonymous 2010:2-48). We know of no church ever located at either location, so Kendall Chapel, regardless of its name, likely derived from the Orton church.

Another local church of considerable importance was the Marsh Branch Church, also called the Marsh Branch Colored Zion Methodist Church. Although we haven't been able to identify much about it, we know that it was already standing in February 1907 when its half-acre lot was sold to the church trustees by Sarah Hooper and her family for $5 (Brunswick County Register

of Deeds, DB 2, pg. 310).

There is relatively little information about this church other than the 1895 article concerning the "colored preacher Lomax" who "left here, accompanied by a young sister of his flock, at the same time taking $300 belonging to a widow of his congregation." It was reported that he also stole loans from several people in the community, as well as church monies "entrusted to him to buy some things for that church" (*The Southport Leader*, May 2, 1895, pg. 4). Although there were ministers in 1900 with the same last name in both Virginia and Georgia, neither seems to be correct in other features, so his name and eventual life remain unknown.

In 1952, the approximately 1 acre church was sold by its trustees, identified as William H. Joyner, Andrew W. McMillan, Robert Parker, Mary Brown, and John McMillan to the U.S. Government for $7,200 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 110, pg. 72). Rosie B. McMillan was the secretary.

Burials in the area were typically conducted at Orton or Lilliput, each of which had burial grounds that likely extended into slavery. Both of these still exist.

There was also a burial ground known as Drew Cemetery situated on what would become Sunny Point. This cemetery was located on the 2.06-acre Hector Smith Estate parcel (Tract B-229) and the government documents indicated that the cemetery was originally used by whites, abandoned, and then began being used by local blacks (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 189, pg. 514). This cemetery was in use by at least 1904, when the African American Charlie Reaves was buried there.

There was also a cemetery located at Marsh Branch Zion Methodist Church, also on tract B-229, although the identified, marked graves here all dated from the 1940s. There were, however, numerous earlier graves that went unmarked and that are likely still present at this location, if not destroyed. Examples are found in death certificates listing Marsh Branch as the place of interment, for example, the 1918 certificates for Friday Pickett and Luausa Hall, and the 1921 certificates for Abram Haukins and child Brown. Whether this is the same as Zion Hill Cemetery is uncertain, but burials were identified from this location from equally early times, including Rebecca Price in 1917 and Catherine Price in 1921.

It is likely that not all graves were identified, or removed, based on the nature of commercial grave removals in mid-twentieth century.

Both cemeteries were, however, officially removed to what was known as the New Drew Cemetery, with the Sprunts deeding 2.6 acres to Kenneth M. Sprunt, Jr., James A. Bogie, William H. Joyner, and Harris Davis, as Trustees of the New Drew Cemetery (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB110, pg. 379). The black and white graves were mingled together and the cemetery continues to be used as a primarily African American cemetery.

In 2015, the cemetery was deeded to a new set of trustees, Carl L. Parker, James Davis, and Lola Reaves (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB B3604, pg. 636, 649), at which time the name of the cemetery was changed to Marsh Branch Cemetery (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, July 15, 2015, pg. 3A).

The Dark Branch or Brown Cemetery is situated northeast of Kendall Chapel. The earliest marked grave there is from 1916. Burials are also located at Kendall Chapel. Examination of death certificates reveals cemeteries at a range of other Cape Fear locations, including Old Town, Skipper Hill, Navassa, Graverly [Grovely] Plantation (more recently called Bellamy), and Oaks or Pleasant Oaks Plantation (which we believe was also sometimes called Sand Hill and is today located on the Oaks Plantation adjacent to the Cape Fear River).

African Americans, however, were also buried at their homes, as evidenced by the death certificate for Riley Johnson, from Bolivia, who was

Figure 22. Area plantation cemeteries. Orton, top; Pleasant Oaks or Sand Hill, middle; Lilliput, bottom.

buried "at home" in 1921. The 1932 death certificate for John Davis Bernard, also from the Bolivia area, identified the burial location as "near Ward Place," presumably the white owner for whom the Barnard family was working at the time. On rare occasions, the burial location was very close to the location where the body was found. For example, in 1928 an unknown African American who died of drowning was buried on "Battery Island above high water mark."

Examination of these death certificates reveals that while John Shaw or John H. Shaw's Sons were frequently the funeral home identified after about 1895, there were a variety of local community members listed. These included Sam Betts (for the burial of Maria Brewington), Price Stephens (for the burial of Robert Edward Clark), Myles Brewington (for the burial of Silla McKoy), and James Brown (for the burial of Duncan McCoy). All of these individuals were males, never females, even when the burial was of a female. We believe that this name was a senior member of the community responsible for the preparation of the grave and the associated services, while other members of the community prepared the body. In some cases the death certificate specifically identified "home made casket." And in more than a few cases, no undertaker was identified, likely an indication of a family burial.

Entertainment

We have almost no information regarding the lives of the African Americans when not working. Even Larkins (1944:45-46) admitted that while there were movies, beer parlors, poolrooms, and juke joints for urban blacks, there were very few outlets for the rural community.

DeCorse, although exploring the urban environment of Charlottesville (and taking a decidedly white perspective), does note,

> the local moving picture shows which have balconies set aside for Negroes and charge them cheaper rates than the white patrons. They attend in greater numbers on Saturdays than other days; for on that day the children are out of school and weekly wages are paid. There are nine Negro lodges, among them the insurance companies, which are responsible for about two social events weekly--dances and parties (De Corse 1933:28).

Drake is less judgmental and suggests that secular entertainment included lodges and social clubs, offering cards and dances, while the African American churches offered sacred entertainment, although she, too, focused on the urban environment (Drake 1940).

There are a variety of studies looking at African American lodges, including Davis (1940) and Palmer (1944). In examining the benefits of lodges, Davis suggests that there were five dominant in the minds of most period blacks. These included the lodge's focus on helping ill members (including death benefits), integrating new community members into the existing social network, helping to consolidate social standing, permitting social mobility, but most importantly, assuring a "decent attendance at one's funeral (Davis 1940:177). She admits, however, that her study was made during a period of significant unemployment that resulted in lodges sustaining heavy loss of membership. As a result, lodges assumed a primarily economic importance and could no longer afford to sponsor the dances and parades that were common earlier in the century (Davis 1940:194).

Palmer (1944) explored the lodges and benefit societies in considerable detail and he also commented on the heavy losses during the Depression,

> A trip through the South will show hundreds of tumble-down buildings which once served as meeting places for Negro lodges. A casual reading of Negro lodge activities will show that their

> present efforts usually concentrate on saving their mortgaged property (Palmer 1944:211).

In better times, Palmer described the number of lodges and fraternal organizations that were almost entirely ceremonial, "caring for the sick and burying the dead." Included are the Grand Order of Odd Fellows, the United Order of True Reformers, the Independent Order of St. Luke, and the Mosaic Templars. Earlier, in 1909, Washington identified about 20 such organizations; in addition to True Reformers, he listed the better known such as the Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, United Brothers of Friendship and Sisters of the Mysterious Ten, Elks, Knights of Tabor, Buffaloes, Foresters, Galilean Fishermen, Samaritans, Nazarites, Sons and Daughters of Jacob, Seven Wise Men, Knights of Honor, and the Mosaic Templars (Washington 1909:153).

In 1885 a Wilmington newspaper printed, "through the courtesy of one of the most Intelligent and influential colored men of this city" a list of African American organizations operating in the city. These are reproduced in Table 23 (*The Daily Review*, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1885, pg. 1).

At least a few of these were operating in neighboring Brunswick County. By at least 1892 there was a "colored Odd Fellows Hall (*The Southport Leader*, June 9, 1892, pg. 4, October 11, 1894, pg. 4). The earlier importance of regalia and burial attendance is documented in a brief article that mentioned,

> Moses Walker, a well-known colored citizen of this city who died last week in Wilmington, was buried by the colored lodge of Southport, Sunday, the members attending the burial wearing their regalia (*The Southport Leader*, June 14, 1894, pg. 4).

There was also a meeting hall for the Evening Star Lodge (Independent Order of Good Samaritans and Daughters of Samaria) next to Kendal Chapel, on the land of William Edge at least as late as 1946 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 81, pg. 282).

One early account we have of more local entertainment is from an 1893 "cake walk" on the plantation held for the African American workers. Kislan describes the history of this uniquely African American event that was eventually adopted by whites,

> Minstrelsy popularized the cakewalk, a dance that was adapted to the stage from a custom of American Negroes on southern plantations before the Civil War. Originally, the cakewalk was a contest in which dancing couples executed walking steps and figures in precise formations as if in mimicry of the white man's attitudes and manners. Since the couples were eliminated by consensus until the best couple remained to accept a festively adorned cake, the dance originated the expression "to take the cake" and came to be known as the cakewalk (Kislan 1995:32).

Orton's owner, Col. K.M. Murchison arranged the event, described as an "old time festivity" for entertainment. The "master of ceremonies" was Daniel Robinson, Murchison's New York butler and the events were described at length in the local papers:

> The plantation hands at Orton had a grand "cake-walk" last Saturday night, and from all accounts it surpassed anything of the kind witnessed in Brunswick county "sence befo' de wah."
>
> The "walk" took place on the broad court-yard in front of the mansion, by the weird light of

Table 23.
African American lodges and societies in Wilmington

Masonic
- Zeruhbabel Chapter 14, Royal Arch Masons
- Giblem Lodge No. 2, F.&A.M.
- Mt. Nebo Lodge No. 14, F.&A.M.
- Order of Eastern Jepthah Chapter No. 4

Grand United Order of Odd Fellows
- Free Love Lodge No. 1469
- Golden Lyre Lodge No. 1008

Grand Army of the Republic
- Joseph C. Abbott Post No. 15

Independent Order Good Samaritans and Daughters of Samaria
- Queen Ester Lodge No. 1
- Fidelity Lodge No. 19
- Union Lodge No. 25
- Star of Liberty Lodge No. 28
- Ingenius Lodge No. 30
- Damon and Pythias Lodge No. 31
- Loving Union Lodge No. 40
- Stone Ezal Lodge No. 96
- Queen Candice Lodge No. 115
- Arimathea Lodge No. 151
- Paradise Lodge No. 144
- Jerusalem Lodge No. 154
- Evening Star Lodge No. 91
- True Vine Lodge No. 1
- Mt. Airy Lodge No. 2
- Mt. Zoar Lodge No. 5
- Mt. Zion Lodge No. 9
- Friendship Lodge No. 12
- Brilliant Star Lodge 93
- Sons and Daughters of Zion Lodge No. 96
- Estelle Lodge No. 32
- Venus Lodge No. 48
- Mary Magdalene Lodge No. 49
- Union Isabella Lodge No. 63
- Rosa Lee Lodge No, 90
- Mt. Horeb Lodge No. 118

Immaculate Mutual Benefit Association of N.C.

Grand United Order of Sons and Daughters of Jacob
- Mt. Homer Lodge No. --

Grand United Order of Love and Charity
- Evergreen Tabernacle No. 9
- Rising Star Tabernacle No. 22
- Shiloh Tabernacle No. 43
- Rose of Summer Tabernacle No. --

Grand United Order of Sons and Daughters of Liberty
- King Solomon Lodge No. 1
- King David Lodge No. 2
- Liberty Tribe Lodge No. 3

> blazing tar barrels . . . . Some twenty or more couples – all young colored people employed on the plantation – participated in the walk and contested for the prizes – two large and handsome cakes presented by Mr. A.B. Gwathmey, one of the guests, to be awarded to the most graceful walkers.
>
> The colored belles and their beaus, "all dressed in their Sunday cloes'," engaged in the contest with great glee, but were "retired" gradually by the judges until only two couples were left – Chas. Patterson with Josephine Watters, and John Pearson with Phoebe Mills ("Cake Walk at Orton," *Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, March 24, 1893).

Murchison held another "cake walk" the Christmas of 1894, with the local papers describing it as both of "great delight of the darkies" and also a usual Christmas custom at the plantation ("Cake Walk and Christmas Festivities at Orton," *The Wilmington Messenger*, December 27, 1894; "Christmas at Orton," Weekly Star, December 28, 1894).

This time 35 couples from the plantation participated. The prize for "most graceful" was won by Friday Pickett and partner – and the "most awkward" was awarded to John E. Pearson and partner.

Little other information is available until the 1940s, when in an effort to generate publicity for Orton, *Life Magazine* was encouraged to visit for the Christmas party given for the "local darkies," an "annual celebration of local fame, considerable in its proportions, and unique in character" (letter to Henry Luce, *Life Magazine*, from Robert K. Godfrey, no date). This initial enticement was followed-up by Henry C. Bragaw, the plantation's horticulturist,

> The party is held each Christmas Eve at Orton Plantation . . . . The party usually starts in the early afternoon with such sports as chasing a greased pig and climbing slick poles, singing, and other impromptu sports, which the darkies originate. Earlier in the day, pigs are barbequed for the barbeque later on in the evening. We never know just exactly how many guests we will have, but it will run around 200 or better, the guests being from two weeks old on up to the middle nineties. . . . About dark, the huge bonfire is lit and all the darkies gather around and sing Christmas carols and other negro spirituals and then come up one by one to get their Christmas gift. All in all, it is a very delightful affair and our friends who have attended in the past have all had a very enjoyable time (letter to Miss Charlotte Case, *Life Magazine*, from Bragaw, dated November 23, 1940).

A few weeks later, Bragaw added more detail,

> Since I have been at Orton, we have given the colored people a Christmas party each year, usually on Christmas Eve. We have a large Christmas tree and presents for all the colored people who work on the plantation. We also give them at that time the usual Christmas confectioneries, such as fruit, hard candy, nuts, etc. The colored people enjoy this part a great deal, because, as you know, any opportunity which offers itself for celebration is immediately seized upon by this happy-go-lucky people. The party is really in two parts, for we usually have guests down for the day and have a deer hunt on the plantation. There are a great many deer roaming through the woods and the hunt is usually very successful. Then again, after the Christmas tree at night, quite often there are many who like a good old-fashioned coon hunt, so this is always staged and with certain results, for the place abounds with coons and opossums. The colored folks are always ready to go on a coon or opossum hunt, because "possums" and "tatoes" are as dear to the heart of a Negro as tea is to an Englishman. This year, we plan to start early in the morning with a deer hunt on the plantation, then in the afternoon, we will have various rural sports colored folks go to the plantation for the colored people, such as chasing a greased pig, climbing a slick pole and wrestling and scrambling for pennies, and probably riding a yearling bull. Also early in the day, one of the darkies, who has quite a reputation for the best barbeque in this part of the country, will begin to barbeque several pigs to be eaten by the colored people and other guests. The colored folks will all gather at the Christmas tree at about dusk and will spend some time singing Christmas hymns and Negro spirituals and probably engage in a few impromptu acts, which they get up themselves. After this, they have a church service and a good old-fashioned "preaching". After having cleansed their souls, they are then ready for a big coon hunt. . . . . (Letter to Miss Charlotte Case, *Life*, from Bragaw, dated December 13, 1940).

Figure 23. *Life Magazine* photos of Christmas at Orton (Courtesy of the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin).

We know that a *Life* photographer, Eliot Elisofon did visit Orton with the anticipation that an article would appear (see, for example, a report of the visit, "*Life* Cameraman Takes Pictures of Party at Orton – Scenes at Plantation Christmas Party to Appear in Magazine," *The Robesonian*, December 31, 1940, pg. 6). Nevertheless, the article was never published. Elisofon took only 24 photographs of the event and today they are curated at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin.

Two of these photos are reproduced here. One is of the African American community gathered around the greased pole, showing one young man climbing. Present are blacks and whites, although the whites tend to be on the outer limits of crowd. In the crowd is one young boy wearing a toy aviator cap with goggles. The other photo is of the African Americans at night, in front of the same background live oak. At the left is one of the gift boxes and each child appears to be holding their own bag of Christmas candy and fruit.

Among the photographs not reproduced here are several very evocative photographs of the people at Orton. One is of a small girl having her hair brushed by her mother. The background is the wall of their cabin, plastered with pages from *Life* for insulation and a December 1940 calendar hanging to one side, advertising the Atlantic Life Insurance Company. In another, a small boy had his portrait taken. Wearing suspenders and a cotton work short buttoned to the neck, he appears frightened by the sudden attention. The backdrop is the exterior of a cabin and its weather-beaten boards. Another is of an elderly black man with a floppy felt hat. His face is as weather-beaten as the cabins, but he is smiling and in his face you see the years of extraordinary hard work.

The last account of this festivity we have identified is 1949, although Mollycheck (2015:15) believes they may have continued even longer. The 1949 celebration included the gifting of 450 bags of fruit and candy and 150 package gifts. Contests included the greased pole climb (won by Eddison Kelly), foot races (the boy's contest was won by Joe Vaught and Alex Davis, James Reaves, while the girl's contest was won by Vivian Davis and Rosa Lee Brewington), a sack race (winners were Alfred Vaught, Leander Clark, Mary Ellen Brewington, and Bernice Moore), and a wheelbarrow race (won by Alex Davis). A tug-of-war pitted those from Dark Branch against those of Marsh Branch (with the former winning).

The female children of Sammie Smith sang Christmas carols, while the five Brewington boys ("all grandsons of John Henry Brewington, oldest man on Orton Plantation") sang spirituals.

Food, including stewed chicken, stewed beef, black eyed peas, and rice, was prepared by the Orton cook, Lewis Orris (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949, pg. 1-2).

Beginning perhaps 1938, these were an extenuation of the Murchison cakewalks. The Orton celebrations continued until at least 1950 (Mollycheck 2015:15).

Work

Looking at the census records, it is clear that most African Americans during this period worked on farms (owned, rented, or as farm labor). Plantation life on the lower Cape Fear continued to revolve around "mud work" in the rice fields well into the twentieth century. The photographs in Figure 24 illustrate that the work had changed little – if at all – from the times of slavery.

By 1943, there were about 170 people living on Orton alone and the birth of James Ferger's (he was the manager of the plantation at the time) child on the property was the first white child born at Orton in 15 years ("First White Child," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, January 31, 1943).

We have no real information regarding living conditions on the plantations (except for the few interior shots by Elisofon in 1940). Figure 25 provides a view of a house in the area that is likely representative. As one white oral informant in South Carolina explained in 1983, "there is no need to repair the houses; the Negroes will just tear them up."

Figure 24. Mud work in the Orton rice fields at the turn of the century (courtesy North Carolina Department of Archives, N.78.7.68 and N.78.7.69).

If we look at the 1881 tax scrolls for the Smithville and Town Creek townships, we may be able to obtain a little better idea about lifeways at the beginning of the Jim Crow era. In the Smithville Township, 129 African Americans paid the poll tax and 80% of these individuals owned no property. Of the 26 property owners, 15 owned farm acreage, averaging 63 acres each, with a total value of $1,845 and an average of $115. The value per acre ranged from $1 to over $6. Town lots ranged from a full lot to a quarter of a lot, with values ranging from$8 to $300.

Twenty-eight of these African Americans also owned stock. Most of these, 16, owned property, including two house lots. Nevertheless, there were still 12 individuals owning stock, keeping the animals on property belonging to someone else. None of the Smithville Township blacks owned horses, and only 14 owned a total of 60 hogs. Nearly as many cattle, 55 total, were owned by the Smithville blacks, but they were spread over 25 households. The greater number owning cows may reflect the usefulness of the cow in providing long-term dietary supplements such as milk and butter.

There were a greater number of individuals in the Town Creek Township, 219, paying the poll tax, but the percentage of non-property owners was almost identical at 83% (n=133). The 36 property holders own a combined 2,179 acres with a value of $5,389. Thus, the average farm holding was 60.5 acres, slightly smaller than the average from Smithville, but the average value was $150, considerably more than for Smithville. Because of this, the range in per acre value is considerable, from as low as $1/acre to as much as $10/acre.

A lower proportion of Town Creek property owners also owned stock – only 43% compared to the 57% in Smithville. This may suggest that rather than diversifying, the Town Creek farmers were focusing on agriculture. There were only two horses reported, no mules or oxen, but 202 hogs held by 39 families. The larger numbers were consistently held by property owners, while those not owning property typically held only one or two hogs. There were 126 cows, held by 44 families, most of whom owned property (54%). Although the largest number of cattle in a single holding were generally on owned land, it was not uncommon for non-land owners to have as many as four cows.

It appears that the still intact, large plantations, such as Orton, Kendal, and the Oakes, were more likely to possess not only farming equipment ($75 at Kendal and $100 at Orton), but also more likely to own mules (six mules at Kendal, nine mules at Orton, and three mules at the Oakes).

Figure 25. A typical house for an African American in the Southport area about 1910 (*The Southport Times*, postcards).

Table 24 reveals that there were other minor activities. We should caution that the census records are not always as precise as they might be. For example, we have had to combine those working on menhaden boats and those working at the menhaden factories for Smithville in 1930. Nevertheless, divided between Smithville and Town Creek townships, these activities are definitely associated with local opportunities. Smithville was closer to the menhaden factories and consequently a larger number chose to work there. Town Creek, however, was closer to the fertilizer plant at Navassa, so we see more African Americans working there.

It is little wonder that when the fish industry arrived, it was welcomed by the local community as an alternative. African Americans adopted a mixed economy, farming during the growing season, working in the fish factories or on boats during the menhaden season, and doing odd jobs at other times. Some left to work in Wilmington (at either the railroad or shipyards), but most it seems stayed in the Smithville and Town Creek townships as their parents did.

Table 24.
Activities other than farming on the Lower Cape Fear, 1910-1930

	1910		1920		1930	
	Smithville	Town Creek	Smithville	Town Creek	Smithville	Town Creek
Saw Mill/Logging	4	57	4	85	7	54
Turpentine	3	9	0	1	46	1
Fishing	10	1	10	0	10	0
Fishing Boat	4	7	0	0	93	9
Fish Factory	20	0	18	24		2
Fertilizer Factory	0	41	0	50	0	56

There were always African American watermen in Brunswick County, but they don't appear common based on the census records. In fact, the number stays remarkably consistent and limited to the Smithville Township. Those engaged in this activity during the antebellum and Civil War are described by Cecelski (2001), while Garrity-Blake (1994) focuses on a more modern period.

The research by Goode and Clark (1887), Greer (1915), Taylor (1992), and Whitehurst (1970) focus on the menhaden industry. There is not, however, a good corporate history, tracking all of the various attempts in Brunswick County.

Based on Earll it is generally held that the menhaden industry was established as early as 1871 when "the Nevassa [almost certainly Navassa] Guano Company . . . established a menhaden fishery at the mouth of the Cape Fear River, for the purpose of supplying their factory with fish scrap, to be used in the manufacture of fertilizers" (Earll 1887:496). After just a few years, it failed with losses of up to $10,000. While this may be true, we have been unable to find a deed for that company this early. We have, however, identified the Southport Fish Scrap and Oil Company acquiring land in 1914 at the confluence of the Elizabeth River and Dutchman Creek, which is essentially at the mouth of the Cape Fear (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 25, pg. 62). This company was still in business as late as 1936, offering seasonal employment to about 100 men (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, June 3, 1936, pg. 2). A deed just a few years later, in 1922, places the Portsmouth Fisheries Company on an adjacent tract (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 37, pg. 167).

Our concern, however, is focused on those fisheries established in the area immediately south of Old Brunswick Town. One of these was the Neptune Fishery Company, which acquired its property (Lot 3 of the Isaac Reynolds Lands) from C.T. Millinor in 1916 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 28, pg. 261). They in turn sold their holdings to the Menhaden Company in 1923 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 37, pg. 564). This company held the property until 1953, when it sold the 23 acres to the U.S. Government (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 113, pg. 281; this was known as Tract B-254). There were, however, periods of inactivity. For example, a 1938 news article reported that the plant had closed about 1931, but "the buildings, dock, and

machinery have been kept up and in good condition," allowing the plant to reopen that year (*State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, February 2, 1938, pg. 1).

The other tract (lots 4 and 5 of the Isaac Reynolds Lands) was first acquired by the Carolina Fish and Oil Company, who in 1918 sold the land to Fisheries Products Company (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 29, pg. 141). This firm went into receivership and the property was sold to the St. Philips Fisheries (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 46, pg. 109) in 1927. This company held the property until 1953, when it was acquired by the U.S. Government (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 113, pg. 282; known as Tract B-255).

There are numerous generic descriptions of menhaden factories. They identify the generally substantial, but wooden structures (the largest of which was the processing factory, but also offices, "scrap room," often a mess house, and sometimes a commissary). The industrial processes are also described, including the process of off-loading from ships to the raw box, the use of cookers to begin the rendering process, the presses to remove the rest of the oil, the drier to remove moisture from the resulting scrap, and the oil tanks for storage. Some authors, such as Greer, also provide some details regarding wages, suggesting most workers made $15 to $40 a month (Greer 1915:26). Early on, Goode and Clark explained that "the men engaged in this fishery are, as a rule, employed in agricultural or other pursuits after the fishing season is over" (Goode and Clark 1887:332) and Cecelski notes that African Americans, "dominated the menhaden fishery" (Cecelski 2001:205).

Unfortunately, there is virtually nothing regarding the fisheries south of Orton (or others in Brunswick County). There are no photographs, no drawings, no first-hand accounts. Surprisingly, our best information comes from a deed in which the Carolina Fish and Oil Company details what they were selling to the Fisheries Products Company in 1916. In addition to "all of the machinery, tools, appliances, furniture, fixtures, seines, nets, boats, and equipment," the deed also covered "the stock of goods on hand in the commissary at the plant" that included "the supplies . . . purchases for the purpose of sale to the employees of such articles as shoes, provisions, clothing, etc." (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 27, pg. 496). This indicates that the fish factories operated the same as "agricultural factories" wherein the owner sought to retain as much employee pay as possible by keeping employees purchasing basic needs from the company.

We also see in the deed that Carolina Fish and Oil Company conveyed all of the "gurry grease" present. The gurry was the sediment of fine flesh particles that would settle out of the pressed oil in tanks. This was typically moved to the "gurry-press" that would separate the last bit of oil from the sludge (Greer 1915:22). Also being sold was all of the coal stocked on the premises, which would have been used to fire the boilers, as well as the coal waiting to be delivered from the Consumers Coal Company in Charleston, SC. Also acquired were two purse seins, recently purchased from the Linen Thread Company of New York. Also covered was "lumber, barrels, ropes, mending twine, and machinery parts, and supplies." The deed covered the oil and scrap on the premises. The associated plat also shows the factory sites, covering an area of about 7 acres along the shore (Figure 26).

The timber industry never really left the Lower Cape Fear. Table 24 reveals a considerable number of African Americans chose the wages of saw and lumber mills over farming or to supplement farming. There even continued to be a small turpentine industry in the area, in spite of the movement west into the Georgia forests.

At Orton, Bragaw found himself in a dispute with the Roosevelt's Wage and Hour law, which required that workers be paid 25¢ an hour in 1938, increasing to 30¢ in 1939. Bragaw complained to the government that, "we have a great many colored people, who are hangers-on of the slave days" and few have any meaningful employment. Rather than paying by the hour, he was paying on a piece basis, stating that, "by doing this, I am able to give the aged and infirm, as well as the able-bodied, darkies something to do" and

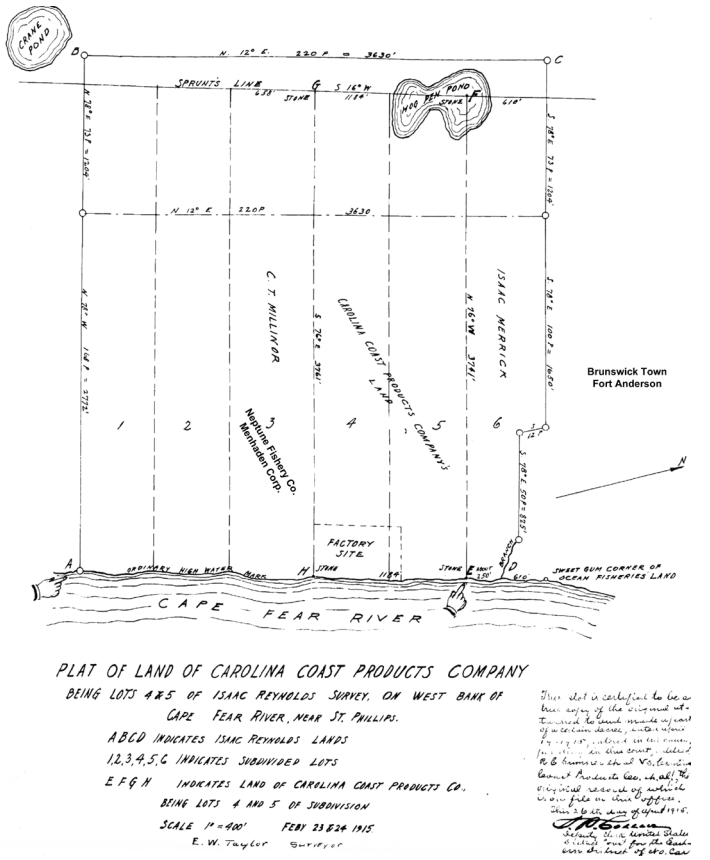


Figure 26. Plat showing the location of the fisheries south of Brunswick Town and Fort Anderson (Brunswick County Plat Book 1, pg. 1).

claiming he was paying anywhere from $3 to $15 a week, depending on the industriousness of the worker. The government was not convinced, but we do not know the outcome of the issue.

Work at the Navassa fertilizer factories was another significant off-farm employment for the Town Creek African Americans. While Navassa was in the North West Township, it was just across the Sturgeon Creek boundary, so it is not surprising that it drew from Town Creek.

Willis (1993:85) documents the presence of at least four fertilizer factories around Navassa that employed over 3,000 families. Cecelski reports that as early as 1912, Navassa Guano Company employed 300 workers (https://davidcecelski.com/2018/03/14/the-navassa-guano-company/). Brief articles such as this and others provide a limited view of factory conditions (https://www.coastalreview.org/2016/07/15413/). Other accounts describe conditions not dissimilar to textile mill villages, with operative houses along streets. An account of one at Cronly in Columbus County was provided in 1890,

> neat cottages built by the company on the various streets . . . . church . . . school house . . . . community of happy souls (*The Wilmington Messenger*, March 18, 1890, pg. 8).

In spite of this praise, the factories were dangerous places to work and more than a few African Americans died as a result of accidents (*The Wilmington Messenger*, February 8, 1902, pg. 4). Although little was said about the health of the workers, as early as 1900, F.M. Moore was suing Navassa, claiming that their acid emissions were destroying his rice and forests (*Southport Standard*, March 1, 1900, pg. 1).

Not all employees lived at the fertilizer plants year-round. W.B. Keziah reported that "many of the colored farmers . . . work at the fertilizer factories or something else during the winter" in a system identical to that seen at the menhaden factory (*State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, January 26, 1949, pg. 1).

The demand for labor at the factories was also uncertain. For example, in 1892 so little fertilizer was being purchased that virtually all of the factories shut down, throwing a large number of blacks out of work (*Semi-Weekly Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, January 28, 1892, pg. 2). By 1918, some companies were so desperate for workers that

they were advertising pay of $2.75 a day (*Wilmington Morning Star*, February 6, 1918, pg. 2). Even as late as 1922, the factories were often unable to hire as many common laborers as they desired (*Wilmington Morning Star*, March 29, 1922, pg. 12).

The People Later in the Century

We have a few accounts of those working in the area that are worth recording. Most involve Bragaw, a young white man whose education hardly prepared him for his interactions at Orton. Although it appears that he was respected and even liked by the African American community, readers must remember that these were still Jim Crow interactions.

For example, in 1940, a worker on the plantation, George McCoy, died (March 2, 1940) and his wife, Maggie was filing for social security, but needed proof of her marriage. Bragaw responded,

> When your husband was buried, I stood the bill for his funeral expenses [George is buried at the Orton Cemetery with George A. Shaw's Sons the attending funeral home], which amounted to $90.00. If you will have a paper drawn up agreeing to pay the $90.00, so I will not take a loss, I will see that the affidavits are properly signed and mailed down to you at once (letter to Mrs. George McCoy from Bragaw, dated October 22, 1940).

The outcome of this exchange is uncertain, but we have been unable to find any evidence that a claim was filed with Social Security.

There are also a few surviving notes that provide some flavor:

> This is from Guss Brewington. Mr. Bragaw please Sir call up the Doctor for My Brother. He is Bad Off Sick. Please Sir Do that for me.
>
> Mr. Church, Please sir, Give me a few doll[ar]s. Work it, [if] you can me are one at my Daughter[.] Please sir if you can just give me two doll[ar]s to help me out send word By Guss my son. From Ellen Brewington To Mr Church please sir
>
> February 15, 1938 Orton Plantation Dear Mr. Sprunt, will you please Let me have an extry $5.00 in my pay roll and take out a $1.00 per week until I get through paying it back I would not ask you to do that But I am very much in need and I will highly appreciate if you will. Thank you so much from Joe Vort [Vaught].

One of the more delicate situations includes the problem between Annabel and Herman Ellis, a married African American couple at Orton. In the summer of 1938, Annabelle took their child and left her husband, claiming that her husband's family was making life impossible. Going to a local attorney and asking for relief, she was told,

> It may be that you are expecting more of your husband than you should. I am not so sure that the law would require him to support you at a home of your selection, unless you had to select a home because of cruelty or gross mistreatment on the part of your husband or the person with who he put you to live. . . . I am inclined to suggest to you that you send for Herman, your husband, and have a talk with him. It is better for you and him to forget your people, and his people and make up your minds to live together, and get along. If you don't do that it will probably be very much worse for you, for your child, and for the

Figure 27. Late nineteenth century African Americans associated with Kendal Plantation. Upper left is the Kendal cook, perhaps Priscilla mentioned in the 1923 Sprunt Personal Accounts; upper center is identified only as a former slave living at Kendal; upper right is likely Frederic Kidder's butler, lower left are a married couple at Kendal; and lower right is an unknown man from Kendal. These are likely his "old servants" Tom Allen, Peyton Bonerham, Liza Smith, and Scip Clark remembered in Frederic Kidder's will. Photographs are courtesy of Susan Taylor Block.

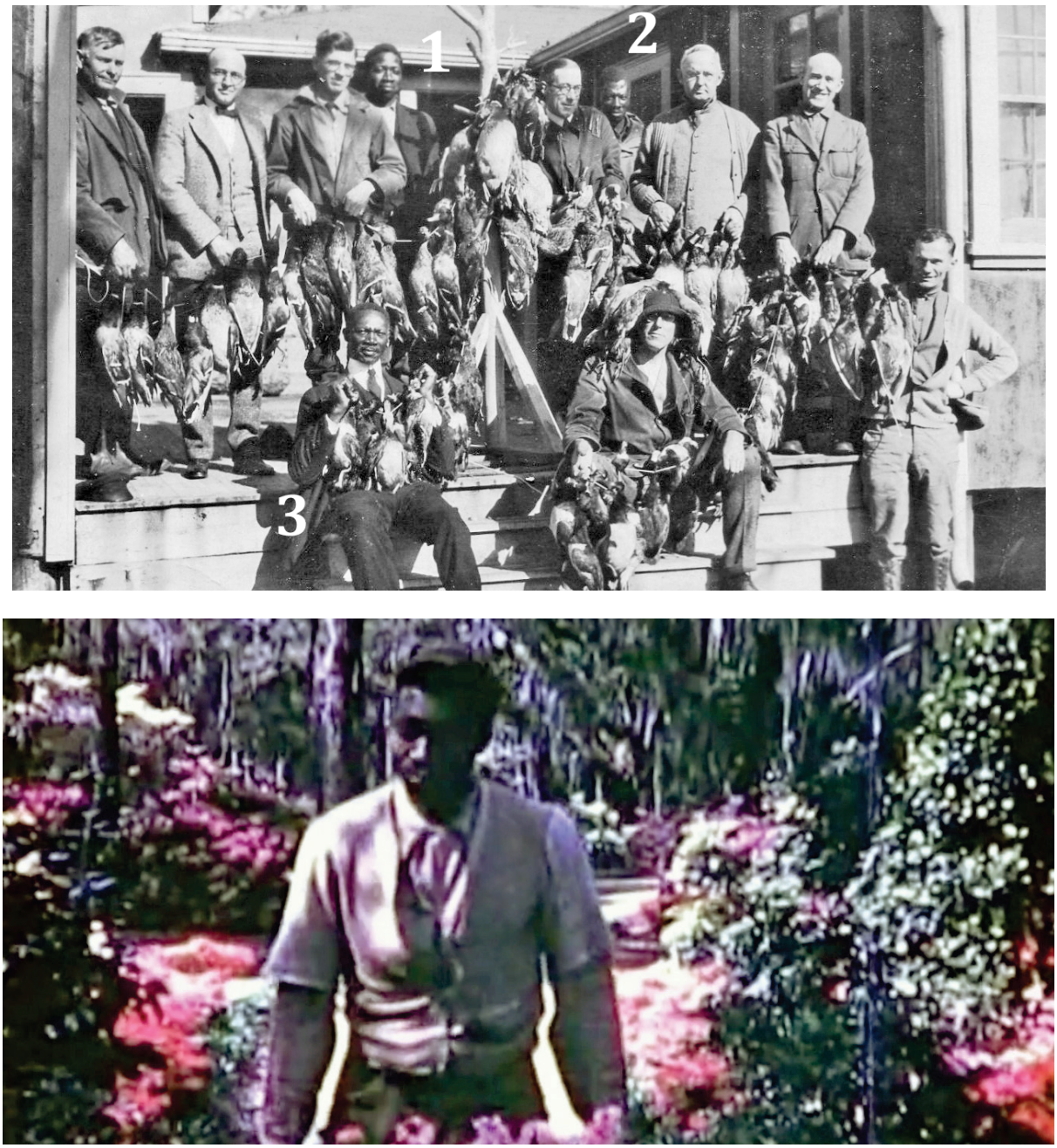


Figure 28. Orton workers in the twentieth century. At the top is a ca. 1925 hunting party at Orton's "hunting lodge." Labeled 1 is Charlie Delts, identified in the caption as a hunting guide; labeled 2 is Joe Voight, another hunting guide; labeled 3 is Lincoln Hill, identified as a chauffeur. Courtesy Nick Dawson, Belvedere Property Management, LLC. At the bottom is an African American worker appearing in the 1947 "Orton Plantation Under Spring Skies" publicity film.

> county (letter from C. E. Taylor, attorney, Southport to Annabelle Ellis c/o Bragaw, dated July 22, 1938).

The situation apparently was resolved to some degree, but only for a short time since in the summer of 1939, Taylor next wrote Annabelle's husband, Herman Ellis,

> At the present time she is now confronted with the matter of living, she expects you to do your part toward the support of she and the child, that you have sent a very small amount of money, only $2.50, since the 25th of May when she had to leave and go to her sister. This, of course, is not your part, since you are employed in a regular way. The law requires more support from you than that. The question arises whether you are willing to do the part of a husband and provide a home for her and the child or not. If you are willing to try and provide a home for her she probably would do her part. You know best about whether you want to do this or not. . . . I am therefore, writing this letter to inform that if you fail to support your child, and also your wife, she being without fault, to the extent that you are able, then it will seem the way is open for the law to come in and having something to say about it. . . . (Letter from C. E. Taylor, attorney, Southport, to Herman Ellis, dated July 18, 1939).

The Communities and a Few Families

In this final section, we will briefly discuss the two primary communities that developed along the Lower Cape Fear and then provide some brief historical comments regarding a few of the families. These families have been chosen primarily because they could, with but a few exceptions, be traced back to Orton, Kendal, or Lilliput. The failure to discuss a family does not imply that they played no role, or even an insignificant role, in the region's history – only that we lacked enough information to include them.

Marsh Branch

The 2010 report on unincorporated communities mentions Marsh Branch only in the context of people relocating from there and the name doesn't appear on the associated map (Anonymous 2010). Yet, this community was a major center of African American life during the Jim Crow era, developing out of property sold by Sarah Hooper.

In the previous section, we have mentioned the development of the Marsh Branch School, possibly by 1878. Although we have not identified the deed for the school lot, we do know it was located on lands of Sarah Hooper. We also described in some detail the construction of the new Rosenwald school at Marsh Branch and provided a photograph of the newly completed School fronting what was then NC Highway 130, linking Wilmington and Southport.

Immediately to the north of the school sat the Salem Lodge. The property was deeded to the Lodge's trustees, Abram Hankins and James Reaves, by Sarah Hooper in October 1886 for $2 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB FF, pg. 70). The deed mentions that the lot was adjacent to "School House Land," suggesting that a school may already have been present. When the property was sold to the U.S. Government in 1952 (Tract B-241), the trustees were all women – Cora Clark, Malisha P. Parker, and Mary Brown.

On the lot immediately south of the school sat the Marsh Branch Colored Zion Methodist Church. The property was deeded to unspecified church trustees by Sarah Hooper in 1907 for $5. The deed specified it was "one-half acre of land . . . where the church now stands," indicating that the church had already been built (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 2, pg. 310). The church received $7,200 when the land was acquired by the

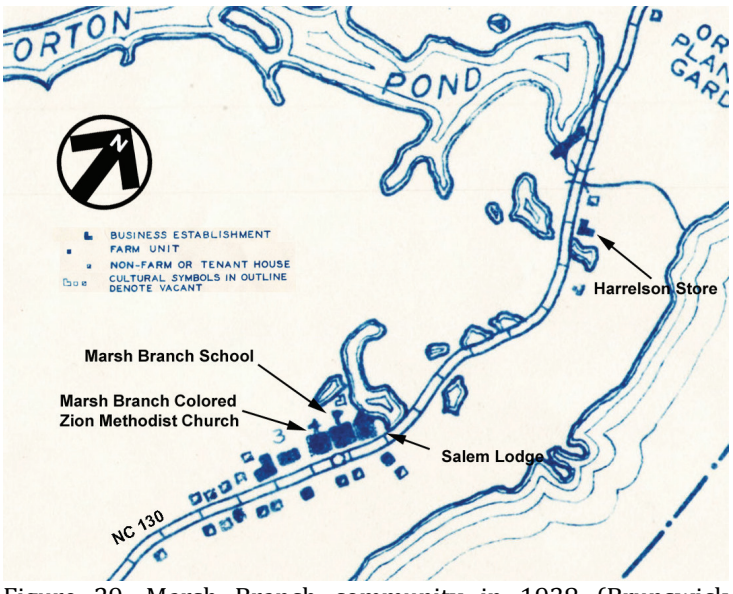


Figure 29. Marsh Branch community in 1938 (Brunswick County, North Carolina, State Highway and Public Works Commission).

U.S. Government in 1952. The trustees at that time were William H. Joyner, Andrew W. McMillan, Robert Parker, Mary Brown, and John McMillan (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 110, pg. 71).

These three buildings formed the civic core of Marsh Branch – representing religion, education, and fraternal bonding to the African American community. A 1938 map shows the development around these three structures, arranged along NC 130, south of the Marsh Branch slough running to the Cape Fear River. These other structures include one business, likely a general store, four private dwellings, ten structures the map makers identified as tenant dwellings, and at least two non-occupied dwellings.

To the north, just south of the Orton Creek crossing, was the store of Isham Dan Harrelson, Sr., remembered by many Orton workers. His daughter, Emma Lou, was a manager at the Orton gardens.

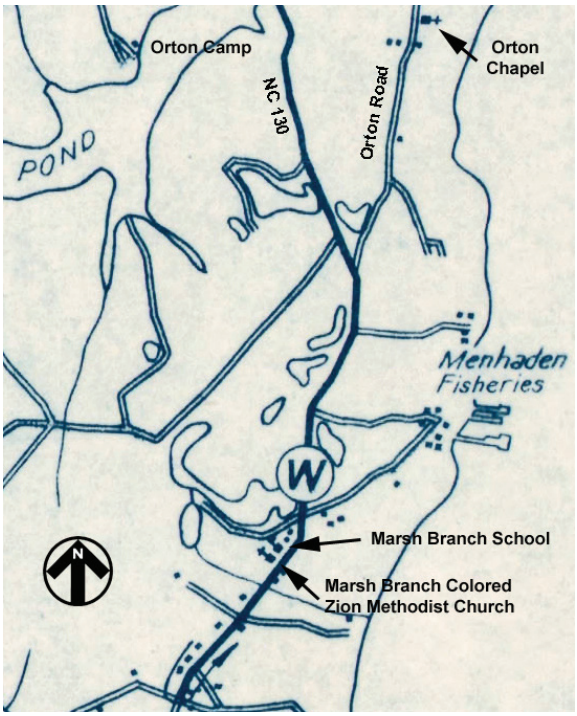


Figure 30. Marsh Branch community shown on the Rural Delivery Postal Route Map for Brunswick County.

Another map from around the same time, from the Postal Service, suggests the community might have been a little more spread out and might even have taken in the houses lining the side road leading to the menhaden factories along the river.

There is no doubt that the demise of this community can be solely attributed to the development of what is usually called Sunny Point. Virtually all of the community lay in the exclusion zone. One former resident, Rosa Bell McMillian, recalled that after being forced to leave, "people went everywhere, from Baltimore to California" (Usher 1989).

Dark Branch

Dark Branch is briefly mentioned in the unincorporated community report by Brunswick County, but it seems to have been interchangeable with Kendal Chapel, which we believe developed after the loss of Marsh Branch and the resulting movement of people. Likewise, the report notes that Dark Branch is at least partially the result of this movement out of Marsh Branch. However, news accounts reveal that Dark Branch existed at least by the time there was a friendly rivalry between the two communities in Sprunt's 1949 tug-of-war contest. Indeed, the community was recognized by the post office at least by 1906 and was recognized by the county tax officials by the 1890s.

This community may have gotten its name from Dark Bay Branch running off Sand Hill Mill Pond. Originally part of Sand Hill Plantation, it was the location for the lands of Frank Brown, who will be discussed in more detail in the section on families. It is located north of Lilliput Creek and although it may have shifted slightly overtime, was in the area of Kendal Chapel ranging northward to Brown's lands. The area is shown in Figures 31 and 32 below.

Just as Marsh Branch was bound together by the school, lodge, and church, Dark Branch was similarly focused on Kendal Chapel AME Zion Church.

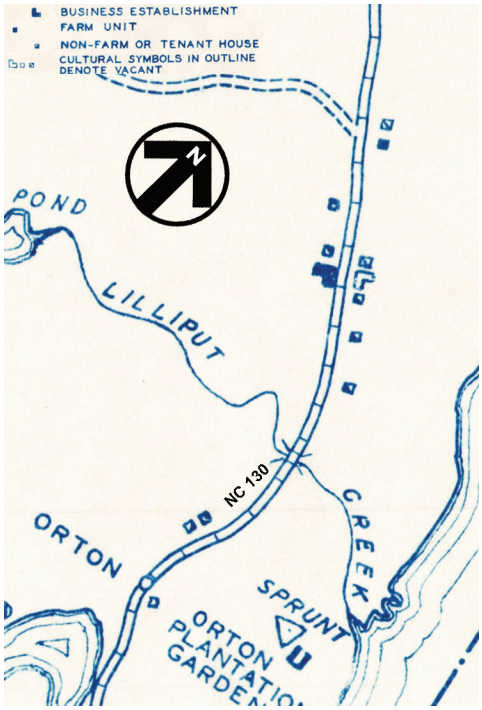


Figure 31. Dark Branch community about 1938 (Brunswick County, North Carolina, State Highway and Public Works Commission).

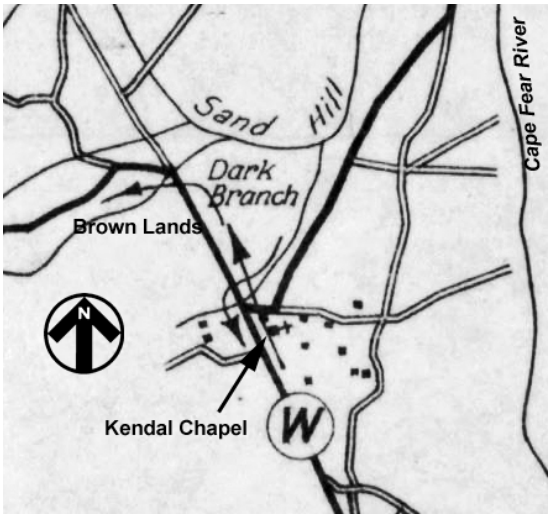


Figure 32. Dark Branch community shown on the Rural Delivery Postal Route Map for Brunswick County.

Unfortunately, almost nothing is known of the origin of this church. Although the 2010 report on unincorporated communities states that the chapel was "relocated from the the Kendal/Lilliput" area this seems improbable. In spite of considerable research, the only chapel for African Americans we have identified is the one on Orton. Several maps, including the 1930-1942 Postal Route Map and the 1932 Soil Map show both chapels in place at the same time.

It seems more likely to us that sometime prior to 1932, the Dark Branch community sought out their own place of worship. Perhaps the 1916 Orton Chapel was falling into disrepair or was too small. Perhaps with the 1924 death of James Sprunt and James Laurence Sprunt assuming ownership, the black community felt less welcome, or perhaps the Dark Branch simply wanted an expression of their own religious independence. At this point we can only speculate that sometime before 1932, the Kendal Chapel was constructed. The Orton church was still standing at least as late as 1942, based on the War Department Wilmington topographic map of that date. Since the map was compiled using primarily aerial imagery, this doesn't mean that it was still in use.

The associated Figures 31 and 32, show a somewhat more diffuse series of structures and one of the maps omits Kendal Chapel. Nevertheless, we see a range of primarily tenant structures, at least one business, ad one vacant business.

Also lacking was a school. Dark Branch was five miles from the Marsh Branch School, but only three miles from the Pine Level School (also sometimes called Lower Bridge; Upper Bridge was over Town Creek). The Pine Level School was also a Rosenwald school, built in 1927-1928 at a cost of $3,775. It was a three-teacher school, so it was capable of handling larger classes and more grades. Figure 33 shows this school and in the foreground there is another structure – likely an earlier school that it replaced.

The Pine Level Colored School remained through at least 1942, when a report on its

Figure 33. Pine Level School about 1928 (courtesy of the Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database).

condition inspection reported that it needed door locks, chimney crocks, steps, window lights, front porch repairs, and heaters (*State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, January 28, 1942, pg. 4).

1940 Census

The 1940 census is the only one that identifies the roads on which people were located. In theory, this offers exceptional precision in delineating neighborhoods such as Marsh Branch and Dark Branch, bud sadly this is not the case.

The only three roads itemized in our study area are Orton, Marsh Branch, and River. River Road is that main connector between Belleville and Southport, running through a variety of communities, including Dark Branch. Orton Road is that loop running off River Road and then reconnecting to the south. Marsh Branch Road, however, is problematical. We have not found it identified on any of the period maps (even the Census Bureau map fails to show *any* road names). We wonder if that may be the road looping off River Road to the fish factories? More likely, it is the road immediately south of Marsh Branch itself, and if so, it is largely out of the Marsh Branch community.

This may be why the 1940 census identified nine people living on it and only two were African Americans (James Reaves and Chris C. Reaves). Nevertheless, several whites playing major roles at Orton lived on this road, including H. Churchill Bragaw, the manager, and Isham Harrelson, the store owner. Also on the road was James Bogie, a carpenter at the fish factory, William J. Hayes, the caretaker, and Arthur D. Meadows, a worker (although he was being paid $600, so it is likely he was in some supervisory position).

This leaves both the Dark Branch and Marsh communities more or less mingled together on River Road. The census identified 43 family heads, only 12 of whom were white. Over three-quarters of the African Americans owned their houses along River Road, while only 58% of the whites were owners. Whether working at the fish factory, working as farm labor, or fishing, blacks succeeded in acquiring their own house. This indicates the strength of the African American communities and their deep roots.

The final road, Orton, included two whites and five African Americans. One of the whites was Alex Bogie, the Orton Assistant Manager who was renting his house for $7 a month and was being paid $750 a year. The blacks included Joseph Vaught (renting for $3 and paid $250), Lewis Aldridge (renting for $7 and being paid $260), Herman Ellis (renting for $5 and being paid $266), Christine Delts (renting for $3 and being paid $150), and Duncan McCoy (renting for $5 and being paid $120). All of these are individuals we know were associated with Orton. The one anomaly is F. Dillard Price, identified as a farmer, owning his own home. We have not been able to identify any property owned by Price abutting Orton, so we are unsure why he was listed on this road.

The 1940 census leads us into what must be identified as the most traumatic event in the local black community – the development of Sunny Point and the loss of their homes and property.

Sunny Point

Pre-1950 maps belie the importance of this area to African Americans. Not only did the Marsh Branch community lie within its borders, but so did a huge amount of farm and timber land that the community relied on for its income and sense of purpose.

From a purely factual position, the Sunny Point Army Terminal, known officially as the Military Ocean Terminal at Sunny Point, or MOTSU, sits on roughly 16,000 acres (the size varies depending on whether you speak of fee-simple ownership or the surrounding area for which the government holds an easement. There are almost 45-miles of dedicated rail lines and spurs associated with the facility. Three docks, 2,400 feet long and 87 feet in width were constructed and dredging involved at least 18 million cubic yards of spoil, placed on disposal areas up to 1,100 acres in size with deposits 15 feet in height. It was begun in 1952 and dedicated in 1955 at a cost of over $23,000,000 (Angley 1983:29-30).

When the facility is discussed, it is almost always in terms of its economic benefits. For example, "as the principal employer in the southeastern part of the County, it has benefited the economies of Southport and nearby communities" (Anonymous 2010:1-47) and "it remains to this day a facility of considerable importance in the development and economy of eastern Brunswick County" (Angley 1983:30). Nevertheless, the "some six hundred civilian employees in the 1970s" is down to less than 300 today.

When the development occurred, there was no consideration of the environmental impacts to the natural environment (air quality, endangered or protected species, water quality) or cultural environment (archaeological resources or social conditions).

The African American community was disrupted, removed from land and hopes they had possessed since the Civil War and dispersed with little or no long-term consideration. Even where there was not fee-simple acquisition, the easement acquired by the government prohibited "habitation," the erection of buildings, or groups of 25 or more meeting without permission of the military.

We know that developments such as Sunny Point cause irreparable damage to people's way of life (how they work, play, interact), their culture (shared beliefs, customs, values), community (cohesion, stability, character), political system (participation and democratization), environment (especially affecting quality of life, control over resources), health and wellbeing (physical, mental, social, spiritual), personal and property rights (economic and violation of civil liberties), and even fears and aspirations (perceptions of safety, fears about the future of their community and the future of their children).

A good example of the loss is the requirement that two cemeteries, at Old Drew and at Marsh Branch, be displaced.

White society tends to dismiss all of these issues with the statements previously reported of "economic benefit," but this entirely dismisses the social and cultural impacts for short-term financial gain.

Table 25 lists the individuals displaced by Sunny Point or which lost use of their property as a result of an easement. In terms solely of acreage, whites and corporations were the "big losers" and their property accounts for 79.7% of the total (6,653.74 acres). African Americans lost "only" 1,690.57, but this is not a realistic appraisal since whites and corporations were large landowners and blacks generally had some farms, house lots, and heirs' property. African Americans account for 55 of the parcels, compared to whites who controlled only 46. Corporations controlled an additional six parcels.

Following this table are two maps showing the locations of these various tracts. Tracts owned by African Americans are shaded, showing one

Table 25.
Property owners displaced by Sunny Point
(E after the tract number indicates easement)

Tract No.	Owner	Acreage	White/Black /Corporate/ Unknown
A-100E	Claude Moore & Ruby L. Moore	123.20	W
A-101	Herman H. Smith & Margaret H. Smith	1.30	W
A-102	Nanie Sue Blaylock	1,118.80	W
A-103	Morris T. McRacken & Margaret C. McRacken	21.70	W
A-104	Henry D. Smith & Jessie Smith	84.20	W
A-105	Herman H. Smith & Margaret Howie Smith	34.00	W
A-106	Hildur Sorensen	39.50	W
A-107	Louise Bragaw Mallison	132.91	W
A-108	Dr. R.K. Godfrey	10.11	W
A-109	Everett H. Sheppard	202.34	W?
A-110	Henry Smith & Heirs of Nancy Gore	11.12	B
A-111	Alford Jones Estate & Brunswick County	17.40	B/C
A-112	Mary Jane McMillan	8.32	B
A-113	Mary Brown	8.97	B
A-114	Joel L. Moore	9.30	?
A-115	Nancy Gore Estate	7.02	B
A-116	S.B. Frink	3.71	W
A-117	Herbert Parker, Sr.	110.65	B
A-118	Herbert Parker & Malisha Parker	4.95	B
A-119	A.B. Mercer, Olivia J. Mercer & Annie Beck Lucas, et al.	74.75	W
A-120	Jane B. Mercer, Annie Beck Lucus & Alvin B. Mercer	41.95	W
A-121	Woodus D. Mercer	38.12	W
A-122	Annie Bula Barber, Amanda C. Barber & Vina Barber	12.43	W
A-123	June Smith	136.03	B
A-124	George Green Estate	7.38	B
A-125	Joe Frank Green	8.65	B
A-126	Oliver Parker	1.22	B
A-127	Herbert Parker, Sr. & Violet Parker	38.70	B
A-128	Herbert P. Parker	26.85	B
A-129	William Parker Estate	89.00	B
A-130	International Paper Company	181.00	C
A-131	B.F. Parsall Estate	68.30	W
A-132	William Parker Estate	66.40	B
A-133	James Edgar Jones & Fairlee Jones	110.00	?
A-134	James Edgar Jones	537.50	?
A-134E	James Edgar Jones	199.00	?
A-135	A.N. Manucy	144.00	W
A-135E	A.N. Manucy	372.00	W
A-136	F.H. Swain et al	63.60	W
A-136E-1	F.H. Swain et al	154.70	W
A-136E-2	F.H. Swain et al	10.61	W
A-137 E-1	Dr. Hunter Heath	55.56	W
A-137E-2	Dr. Hunter Heath	8.72	W
A-138E	J.B. Ward & Linnie M. Ward	4.00	W
A-139	A.T. McKeithan Estate	46.00	W
A-140	Robert Willing	23.62	W
A-141	Richard Dosher & I.B. Bussel Estate	8.26	W
A-142	F. Dillard Price	23.40	W
A-142E	F. Dillard Price	423.00	W
A-143E	B.H. Price	43.35	W
A-144E-1	E.J. Prevatte	1.81	W
A-144E-2	E.J. Prevatte	3.47	W
A-145E	F. Dillard Price & Erie Ann Price	26.65	W
A-146E-1	D.L. White & Mary E. White	11.45	W
A-146E-2	D.L. White & Mary E. White	20.10	W
A-147E	F.H. Greet & Margaret Greer	16.80	W

Tract No.	Owner	Acreage	White/Black /Corporate/ Unknown
B-201	Mary Emma Hankins	16.45	B
B-202	Heirs of Julia Reaves	21.00	B
B-203	David Gallway & Beatrice Galloway	27.10	B
B-204	Heirs of Henry Hill	17.50	B
B-205	Mary E. Kenigh Smith & James Elmore Smith	5.60	W
B-206	John Parker	20.00	?
B-207	Brunswick County, et al.	13.50	C
B-208	David Gallway & Beatrice Galloway	20.90	B
B-209	Walter Reynolds Estate	20.15	?
B-210	Andrew McMillian Estate	22.15	B
B-211	Herbert P. Parker	111.00	B
B-212	Mable Mumford	94.50	B
B-213	Herbert Parker, Jr.	2.13	B
B-214	Herbert Parker, Sr. et al.	54.00	B
B-215	Robert Parker & Rosella J. Parker	12.00	B
B-216	Leroy Parker	15.00	B
B-217	William Jones Estate	45.90	B
B-218	Belton Matthews & Lula Matthews	237.50	B
B-219	Hampton Weary Estate	9.76	B
B-220	William Brown Estate	13.20	B
B-221	Cleveland Brown & Effie Lee Brown	8.80	B
B-222	David Galloway	3.10	B
B-223	Trustees, Brunswick Advent Church of A.C. Conference	1.00	?
B-224	James Clemmons	9.50	?
B-225	Alvin B. Mercer & Annie Beck Lucus, et al.	38.50	W
B-226	S.J. Howie	4.88	B
B-227	William Henry Joyner & Evelyn B. Joyner	4.18	B
B-228	Hector Smith Estate	71.40	B
B-229	Old Drew Cemetery	2.07	B & W
B-230	Lynn T. Garner	49.90	W
B-231	William Asbury McMillan	12.96	?
B-232	Henry Hill Estate	5.21	B
B-233	Alfred Betts Estate	7.20	B
B-234	Heirs of Charity Reaves	12.18	B
B-235	W.M. Reaves Estate	8.44	B
B-236	William H. Green Estate	2.21	B
B-237	Clara P. McMillan	25.65	B
B-238	Estate of Sarah Hooper et al.	12.77	B
B-239	Trustees, Marsh Branch Colored Zion Methodist Church	1.01	B
B-240	Trustees, Marsh Branch School	2.16	B
B-241	Trustees, Salem Lodge	0.56	B
B-242	Brunswick County	3.07	C
B-243	Israel P. Clemmons Estate	2.06	B
B-244	Estate of Sarah Hooper et al.	24.25	B
B-245	S.J. Howie	14.06	B
B-246	Estate of Sarah Hooper et al.	5.51	B
B-247	William Davis Estate	59.20	B
B-248	Emma Jane Merrick Esstate	39.40	B
B-249	Christopher Reaves	50.53	?
B-250	Mary E. Hitch	3.74	B
B-251	J. Laurence Sprunt	51.56	W
B-252	James Bogie	2.05	W
B-253	Milton W. Linder	25.00	W
B-254	Menhaden Corporation	23.00	C
B-255	St. Philips Fisheries, Inc.	106.30	C
B-256	Claura Jones	12.70	?
B-257	John McMillan & Lillion McMillan	12.50	B
B-258	Davis C. Herring	3.65	B
B-259	Isaac Merrick Estate	21.35	B
B-260	J. Laurence Sprunt	3.80	W
B-261	W.G. Collins	6.80	W
B-262	J. Laurence Sprunt	74.00	W
B-263	James F. Clemmons	113.00	?
B-264	International Paper Company	374.50	C
B-265	J. Laurence Sprunt et al.	3,130.45	W

large area of African American ownership running from Orton, crossing Marsh Branch and continuing south crossing Sturgeon Creek.

These maps pretty clearly show the displacement of the African American community on the Lower Cape Fear as a result of this forced development.

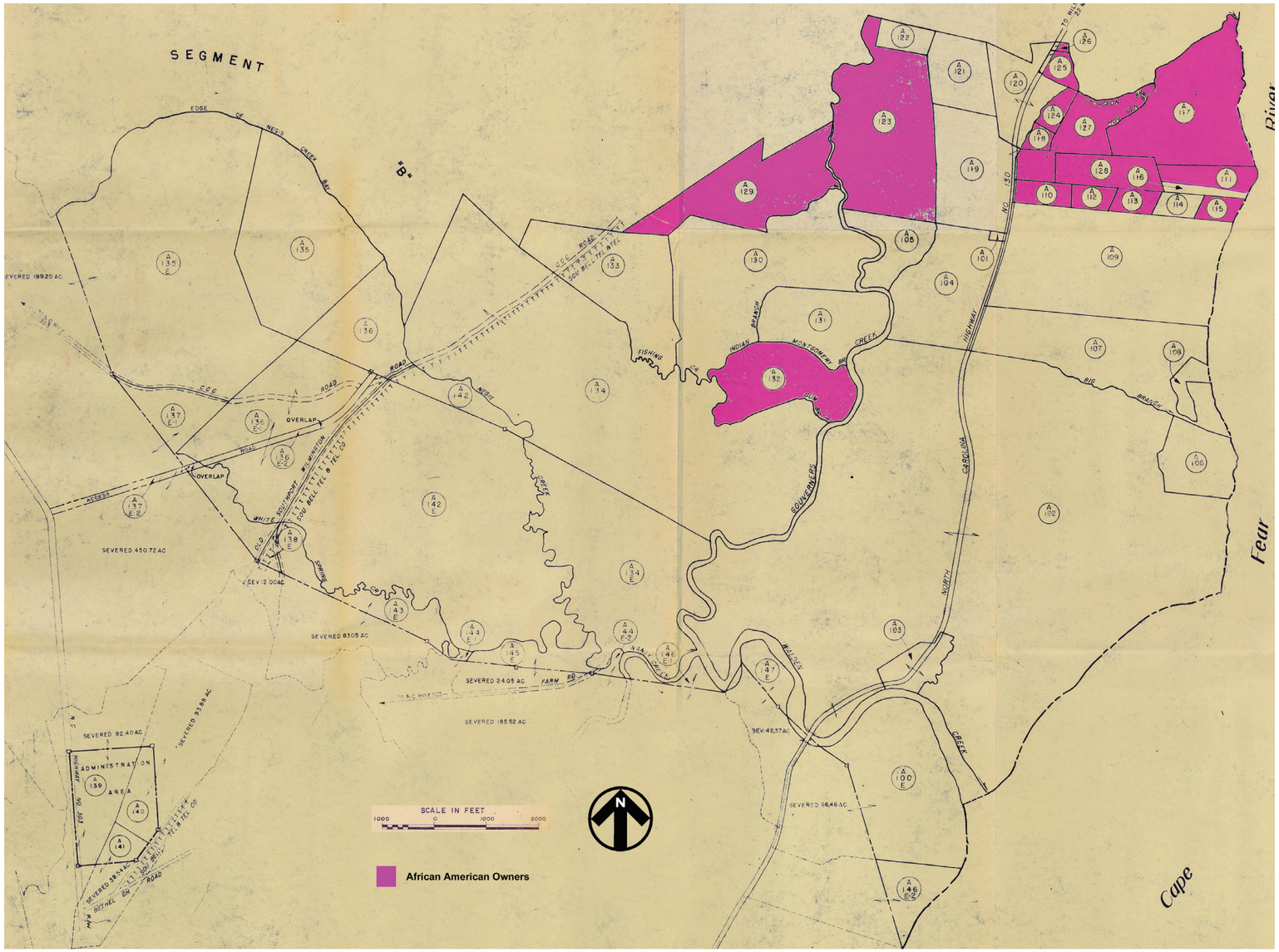


Figure 34. Parcels in the "A" (southern) section of Sunny Point (United States of America v. 7636.25 acres more or less, situate in Brunswick County, State of North Carolina, and A.N. Manucy et al., and Unknown Owners, Case #547; Civil Case Files; U.S. District Court of North Carolina, Wilmington Division; Records of District Courts of the United States, Record Group 21, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta).

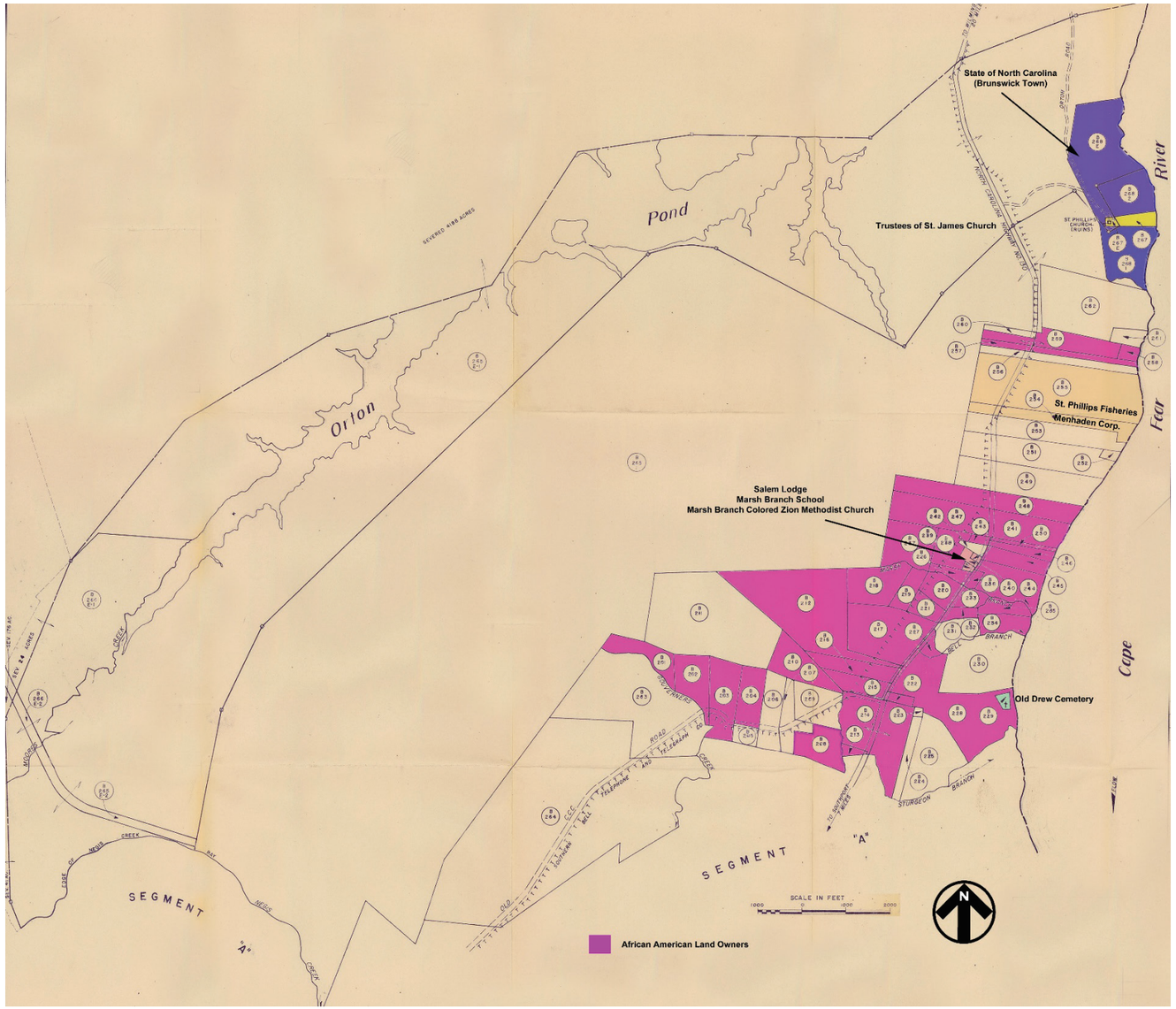


Figure 35. Parcels in the "B" (northern) section of Sunny Point (United States of America v. 7636.25 acres more or less, situate in Brunswick County, State of North Carolina, and A.N. Manucy et al., and Unknown Owners, Case #547; Civil Case Files; U.S. District Court of North Carolina, Wilmington Division; Records of District Courts of the United States, Record Group 21, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta).

A Few Families

Aldridge

We have identified only three Aldridge family members in the plantation accounts and our research reveals that they are all in one family.

Louis Aldridge first appears in the 1930 census for the Town Creek Township. He is identified as a 47-year-old farm laborer married to R. Emma, then 49. They have one child, Roosevelt, 12 years old. The marriage certificate for the two, issued on August 21, 1920 indicates that both Louis and Emma lived in Winnabow. We can't find Louis in the 1910 or 1920 census records. Emma is identified in the 1900 Census as 20 years old and was married to Abram McKoy (or McKay) the previous year. It may be that Roosevelt was a child from Emma's previous marriage. Regardless, the certificate reveals that the father of Louis was Eugene. It also provides evidence that this was Emma's second marriage, since her parents were Miles and Maria Brewington.

In the 1940 census they are enumerated in the Smithville Township, living in a rented house valued at $7 on Orton Road. Louis was still working as farm labor and the family income was listed at $260/year.

Emma died in 1949 and was buried in Lilliput Cemetery. Louis died a number of years later, in 1963, and was buried in the New Drew Cemetery.

Allen

We have identified three Allens in the plantation records, although we suspect that one is a duplicate. The Charles Allen family first appears in the 1880 census with Charles Allen, then 37 years old, married to Mary F., then 36 years old. He identifies himself as a farmer and he and his wife have five children, the eldest being Thomas Allen, born about 1871. We know that Charles Allen worked at Kendal in 1879.

On June 11, 1891, Thomas Allen married Sophia Bryant. Both listed their age as 22. This is the last record we have been able to identify for Sophia. On February 19, 1895, Thomas Allen was married to Harriet Hooper. The 1900 census identified Thomas and Harriet E. living in the Smithville Township and Thomas was apparently the foreman on a farm, probably Orton or Kendal, where they rented a house. In the 1910 census, Thomas is identified as a farmer on a rice plantation, which is still likely a reference to Kendal or Orton. He and Harriet have one child, Elizabeth, born about 1900. By the 1920 census, Thomas' family included not only his wife, Harriet, but also a son, C.A., born about 1910. But also included under his roof were W. Bryant, a step-son 27 years old; A. Bryant, a step daughter, 15 years old; E.E. Bryant, a step-daughter, 14 years old; E.S. Bryant, a step-daughter 12 years old, and L. Bryant, a step-daughter 9 years old. All were apparently children of Sophia Bryant, although we have no information regarding the father. Between 1918 and 1924, we identified several times where Thomas Allen was being paid $7 for work between January and July, the equivalent of $1 a month. In 1930, the family includes Thomas, his wife Harriet, and a 20-year-old son, Sippe. Both males listed their occupation as farm labor. Also in the family was Hester Allen, a 6-year old niece, and Sarah, a 20-year old niece.

Thomas Allen died on June 12, 1930 and was buried at "Old Town." The death certificate identifies his profession as "farming," and indicates that he was still working for J.L. Sprunt, Jr.

Betts

We have found only two Betts in the plantation records. One is Essie or Effie Betts. She was the daughter of Alfred Betts and Dora Everett. First appearing in the 1910 census, Alfred was 29 and was identified as the foreman of a lumber mill. Dora was also 29 and the couple had been married on April 12, 1904. The census reveals that Dora had two children, although only one, Effie or Essie, was still living. In 1910, she was reported to be 6 years old.

In 1907 Alfred Betts purchased 6 acres on

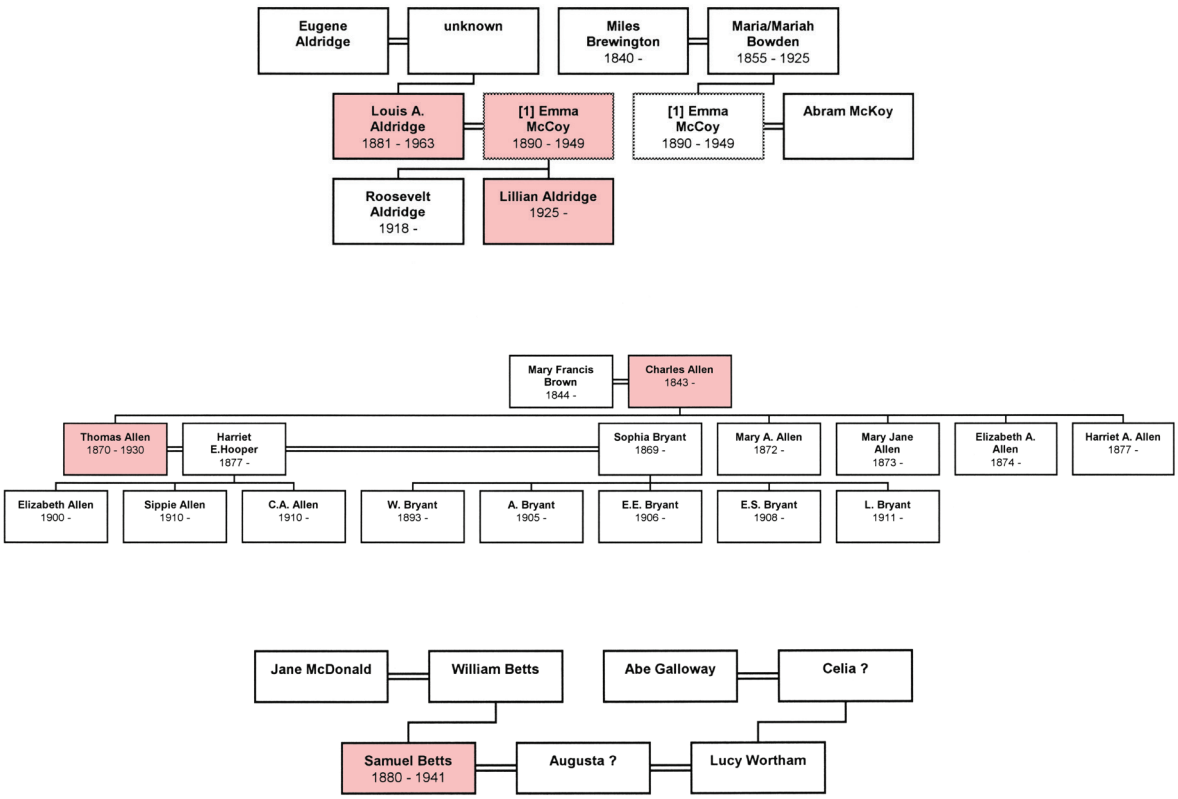


Figure 36. Family charts for the Aldridge, Allen, and Betts families. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

Marsh Branch from W.H. Corbett, a Wilmington farmer. By 1918, Alfred was a presser at a fish factory, according to his draft registration card. The 1920 census still has Alfred working at the fish factory, although it also indicates that they owned a small farm. A son, Thomas P., was born about 1905. In 1930, Alfred was a cook on a fishing boat and their farm was valued at $150. Both Essie, then 26, and Thomas P., then 15, were still at home. By 1940, Thomas must have moved out, but a 2-year-old granddaughter, Venera, is present. Essie, now 36, is identified as a cook in a private home.

Alfred Betts died on April 23, 1945 and was buried at Drew Cemetery. In 1952 his widow, Dora, sold the U.S. Government her Marsh Branch lands (Tract B-233) for $2,700. In 2017 dollars, this amounts to about $25,000 or about $3,300 an acre. Dora died on December 4, 1961 and was buried in the New Drew Cemetery. Essie and her husband Theodore Bunn apparently moved to Wilmington, where in 1956 he was listed in the City Directory as a music teacher. The 1960 City Directory identifies him as a piano tuner and the couple were living at 702 South 13th Street. Essie died on March 29, 1960 and was buried where she grew up, on Orton Plantation.

The second individual is a Sam Betts. Some information concerning this individual is found in the Galloway Family Tree (donnie454) on Ancestry.com. The 1915 tax record reveals that he was living on Orton, paid his poll tax, and claimed the ownership of one horse and $6 in tack (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1915). In 1919, the Sprunt Personal Accounts reveal that $31.60 was paid for “cotton in seed.” From 1919 through 1924, Sam Betts was being paid a fairly constant

$14/week pay, with $22.86 paid on April 4, 1925 for two weeks. His 1918 draft registration shows his birth as November 28, 1880 and his age being 38 years. He was working as a fisherman for the menhaden industry. The first appearance we can find in the census is for 1920, when Sam, then 35, is shown with 34-year old Augusta in the Smithville Township. At that time, he was reported to be a fireman on a boat, although they owned their own farm. This was likely the 7½ acres that Betts acquired from Thomas Allen in 1917 for $35. This represented half of the tract acquired by Allen from George H. Bellamy for $40 in 1905 when the land was being sold for taxes (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 27, pg. 580; DB 29, pg. 104). In 1925 Sam Betts paid taxes on his 7½ acres, a horse, and two cows (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1925).

A decade later, we find him marrying Lucy Wartham on October 13, 1930. The records suggest this was a second marriage for them both. The 1940 census shows Sam, still listing his occupation as fishing, and Lucy. Sam died on June 14, 1941of acute glomerulonephritis and tertian malaria, and was buried at an African American cemetery in Wilmington. No information can be located regarding either Augusta or Lucy.

Brewington

We have identified at least 26 individuals with the Brewington name. Our research suggests these represent essentially one male ancestor and his two wives: Mariah and later Lucinda. Because of the size of the families, the Brewingtons intermarried with a great many of the other African Americans in the immediate area.

The family of Lee Miles Brewington, Sr. (1840-post 1930) and Mariah Bowden (1855-1925) is the first to appear, in the 1880 census for Pender County, northeast of Brunswick and north of New Hanover counties. Miles was identified as a laborer and his family already consisted of Josephine, John, and Emma. By 1900 Miles and Mariah had moved to the Town Creek Township in Brunswick County and the census reveals that Mariah had seven children, only four of whom were still living. These were Josephine, Margaret or Maggie, Miles, Jr., and Susan. Miles was still listed as a farm laborer. In 1910, the family, still in the Town Creek Township, was renting a house. In this census, the entire family was identified as mulatto. Both Miles and his son, Miles, Jr. were identified as farm laborers. By 1920, the family consisted of only Miles and Mariah, as well as the 7-year old Julia Smith, identified as a grandchild, perhaps the child of Susan.

John Henry Brewington established his own household by the 1900 census, consisting of his 20-year-old wife, Amy, who he married about 1895. He identified himself as farm labor. Still in the Town Creek Township in 1910, the household had not changed, although his wife was listed as Anna, who reported having three children, only one of which was still living. They were living in a rented house. By 1920, John Henry's wife was listed as Emma and there was one child listed, Evelina, then 9 years old. John Henry listed his occupation as an oil tender at the fish factory and they were still renting. The 1930 census shows the same household, with Evelina now 18. They were living in a house valued at $1 and he doing farm labor. In 1949, John Henry was already reported to be "one of the oldest colored men in Brunswick County," living in the "Dark Branch section on the River Road" (The State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, December 28, 1949, pg. 4). John Henry was living at Lilliput as late as about 1960.

When John Henry Brewington died in 1965, his wife was identified as Sarah [Jane Walker] Brewington. There is evidence that John Henry had at least three children with Sarah, including Etta (b. 1907), Isiah (b. 194), and Walter (b. 1921). Isiah Brewington's death certificate listed Sarah Jane Walker as his mother and John Henry Brewington as his father.

Josephine Brewington married Solomon King on June 16, 1900, with the marriage witnessed by Samuel Betts, Abram Jones, and Robert Hooper – all individuals we have identified in this research. They had one child, Louis King. Josephine was living at Lilliput as late as 1960.

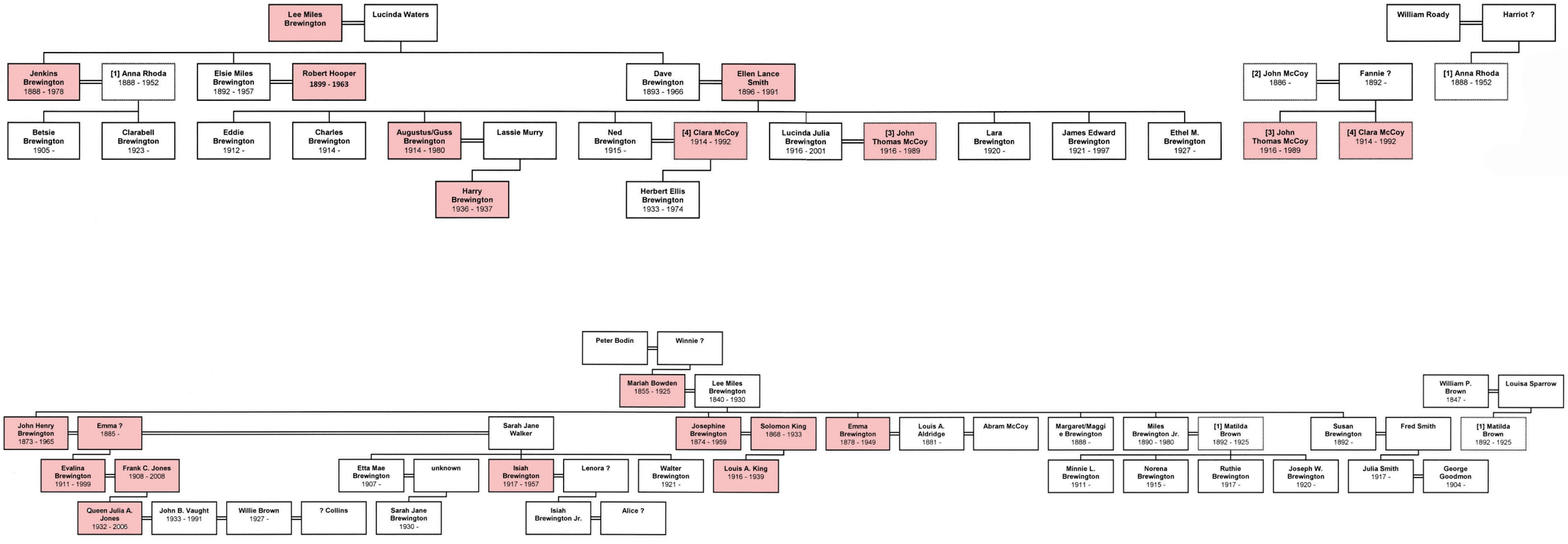


Figure 37. The Brewington family. At the top is the union of Lee Miles Brewington and Lucinda Waters. At the bottom is the chart for the union of Lee Miles Brewington and Mariah Bowden. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

Emma Brewington married at least twice, to Abram McCoy and, subsequently, Louis Aldridge. At her death in 1949, she was buried in the Lilliput Cemetery.

In 1920, we find the household of Miles, Jr., the son of Lee Miles and Mariah. He married Matilda and they are listed with four children: Minnie L., Norena, Ruthie, and Joseph W., the youngest, being just born. Miles, Jr. was working as a laborer in the fish factory, but the census reports that the family owned their home mortgage-free. In October 1924, we have a record of Miles being paid $7 by Sprunt. The economy may have declined, since in 1930 Miles, Jr., by this time listed as a widower, was renting his home, valued at $5. Still present were Norena, Ruthie, and Joseph. His father, Miles, Sr. had moved in with his son. This may be the result of Mariah dying in May 1925 (she was buried in the Lilliput Cemetery).

Miles Sr., however, appears to have also had at least three children with Lucinda Waters or Watters: Jenkins, born in 1888, Elsie, born in 1892, and Dave, born in 1893. The attribution of these children to Lucinda is based on the 1900 and 1910 census records, where they are listed in Lucinda Waters's household, with Waters as their last name. In addition, the death certificate for Elsie indicates that her parents were Lee Miles and Lucinda. Both the Social Security filing and death certificate of Dave Brewington also list Lee Miles and Lucinda. Dave Brewington had a brush with the law in 1935 when he was found guilty of assault, but the sentence was suspended with payment of costs and a $5 fine (The State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, July 3, 1935, pg. 1).

Jenkins is found in the Sprunt Account Books on multiple occasions between 1924 and 1925. We find him paying $2 a month rent (in January 1925), and getting payments of $2, likely for work. Jenkins continued to live at Lilliput into at least the 1960s.

For reasons that are not clear, each of the children, Jenkins, Elsie, and Dave, at some point after 1920 chose to assume their father's name, Brewington, rather than retain that of their mother. It may be with the very large Brewington family; this decision was pragmatic, ensuring the maximum number of social relations. By 1930, Lucinda had moved into the household of her son, Jenkins Brewington.

In 1927, we find Dave and Jenkins Brewington paying their poll tax. Dave also claimed $5 of either real or personal estate (more likely the latter, given the low value). John Henry and Miles were also paying poll taxes. (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1927).

Brown

We have identified at least 21 Browns associated with the study area and have been able to discern at least two, seemingly unrelated, families. We suppose this should not be surprising considering how common the family name is.

The first we will consider began with William P. Brown. In the 1870 census William, then 18, is living with his older brother, 20-year old Tom, a younger sister, Lizzie, 4, and Stephen, only 1 year old. This suggests that his family had been separated only a year earlier. In 1896, William Brown married Lucy Reaves. This was likely transcribed as Leah in the 1880 census, when the couple was identified with three children: John W., 6 years old, Anna M. 3 years old, and William W., 1 year old. If correct, it appears that William and Lucy already had at least one child prior to their marriage. In 1892, William Brown married his second wife, Lucy Watters. The 1900 census identifies William as a fisherman. In the household is Lucy, his wife. She indicated that she had seven children and all were living. With a marriage only seven years earlier, this would suggest that the children would be equally spaced with essentially one per year of marriage. This is not the case, suggesting that at least some were from William's previous marriage. The children include James, 23 and also a fisherman, Edward, 20, William, 17, Maggie K., 14, John T., 11, Julia A., 7, and Emma F., 2 years old. Although the names between 1880 and 1900 do not correspond particularly well, we suspect this is the result of the missing 1890

census.

In any event, William P. Brown entered into his third marriage on December 12, 1901, to Louise Briscin, then 34 years old. One of the witnesses to the marriage was Solomon King. The 1910 census in fact confirms that this was the third marriage for William and the second marriage for Louise. By this point, William was farming. The children listed include Matilda, 18, Queen Ann, 16, Loula M., 7, Nathaniel, 5, Henry, 3, Rosabelle, 2, and the new born, Alexander. Also in the household was a stepdaughter, Carrie Bryson, identified as a mulatto. It doesn't appear that any of the children identified in 1900 carried over. Perhaps the couple simply split up, with the children continuing to live with their mother, Lucy. Alternatively, the children went to live with various other relatives.

By 1920, William P. Brown is identified as 70 years old, but still working in fishing. His wife, Louise, was still alive. Still in the household were Queen Ann Delts, who had married and been widowed, and her 8 year old child, Pearl. Also in the family were two grandsons, Roosevelt McCoy, 10 years old, and Nathaniel McCoy, 14 years old. Sometime between 1920 and 1926, Louise died and William P. Brown died on February 24, 1926. His age was listed as 85, remarkably close to his actual age of 83. He was buried at the Dark Branch Cemetery, where his stone, while broken, is still present.

Queen Ann Brown was married three times. The first union was with a McCoy and that produced two sons, Nathaniel McCoy and Roosevelt McCoy. She next married Johnnie Delts and had one child, Pearl Delts. Pearl married George Merant and the couple had at least one child, Franceline. Queen Ann's last marriage was with Harry Lance, with Queen Ann listed on his 1965 death certificate as the wife. Curiously, the 1940 census lists Harry in Queen Ann's household, but identifies him as a cousin, so clearly they were not married at the time. Tragically, both Queen Ann and her daughter, Pearl Morant, died in an automobile accident on March 27, 1966. Both were buried at Dark Branch or Brown Cemetery.

The second family is at least partially identified in the Morrant Family Tree (AnthonyMcMillian1956) on Ancestry.com. It begins with the marriage of 23-year old Frank Brown and 17-year old Fannie Underwood on February 26, 1874. Fannie was characterized as a "natural doctor and midwife" (Susan Usher, "Reunion will bring memories of 4 River Road communities, *The Brunswick Beacon*, June 29, 1989, pg. 6A). Fannie was the daughter of Primous Underwood and his wife, Doffney. While Frank acquired several small tracts, in 1873 he purchased 128 acres from W.G. Curtis for $371 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Y, pg. 213). A part of Sand Hill Plantation, it was situated south of Oaks Plantation and bordered Orton to the south and west. He held this parcel throughout his life, dividing it into a series of 15 different tracts and distributing to a variety of individuals mentioned in these discussions, including Rhody, Brown, Betts, Jones, Queen Brown, Vaught, Miles Brewington, and others. Also on this property is what was known as Dark Branch or Brown Cemetery, shown in Figure 38 as Tract 9. This figure shows that Dark Bay Branch runs through the original tract, likely the source for the Dark Branch name. At the time the plat was created in 1961, there were also pre-existing tracts for Allen and Leroy Vaught. Figure 38 shows the same area today. While parcels have changed hands, in most cases the original parcel lines have been maintained. They have disappeared only where Orton Plantation holdings has acquired parcels and combined them with larger holdings.

While Frank became a very substantial property owner, he still suffered the same problems as all African American farmers. In 1906, for example, we have a record of him entering into an agreement with Brooks and Taylor (John W. Brooks and Edgar Taylor formed the Wilmington commission merchants and wholesale grocers on Water Street) to provide up to $60 in supplies for the coming planting season. To secure this advance, he put up all of his anticipated crops, including "5 acres in cotton, 2½ acres in peanuts, 2 potatoes, [and] 2 field peas" (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 22, pg. 293). We don't know if this

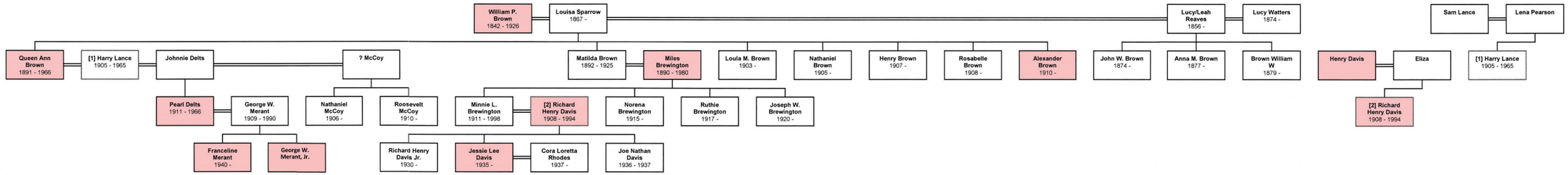
chattel mortgage was satisfied, but Brown did go on to live a long farming career.

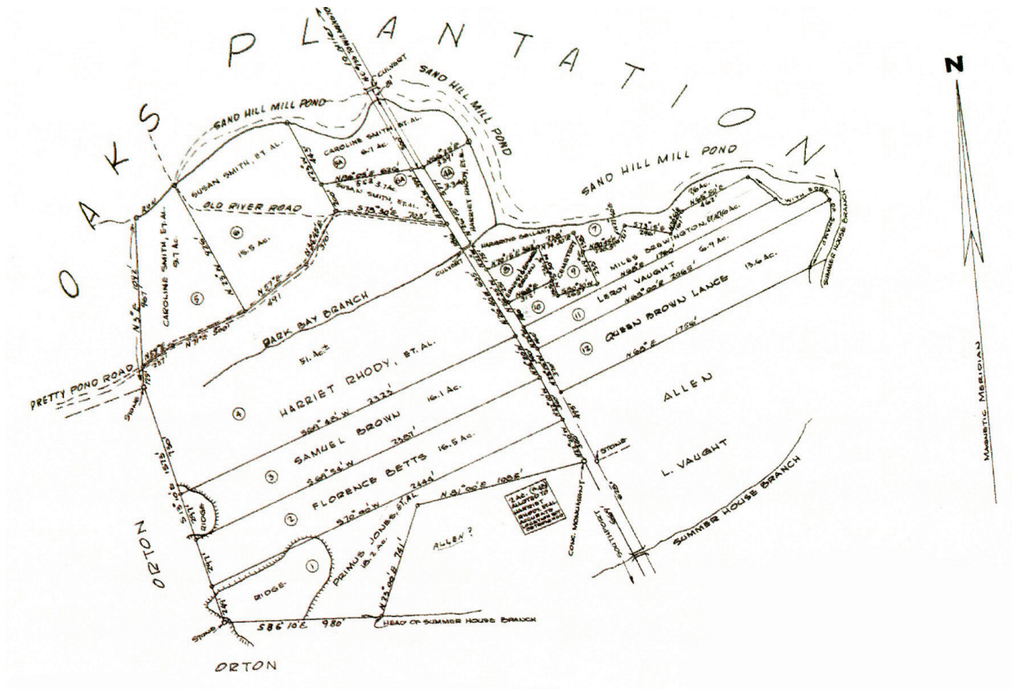
Returning to Frank and Fannie Brown, one of their children was James William Brown, born on May 4, 1874. On January 10, 1902, James William married Sarah Hoskins. The first census we have identified is 1910, when he was married to 40-year old Sarah and they were living on a farm they owned in the Town Creek Township. They already had two children, William, then 19, and Sarah B., then 17. The following decade, both William and Sarah are no longer listed in the household, but two additional children are reported, Samuel, 12, and Eddie W., 6. While still owning their farm, James was working in the fish industry as labor. In 1930, Samuel is no longer listed, although Eddie is still in the house. Also present is Alice M., identified as an adopted daughter. The census reveals that James William is now working in a sawmill, but the family owns their house, valued at $500. In 1940, James, now 66 years old, is listing his occupation as farm labor. Sarah, now about 70 years old, was alive and keeping house. Also present in the household was Eddie Lance, Jr. identified as a grandson, 28 years old, who was unable to work. We have been unable to learn about his disability or injury, but we do know that he was the son of Eddie Lance, Sr. and Carrie Bell Hoskin, born in 1912. Eddie Jr. married Elizabeth Green in 1937. Carrie Bell was the younger sibling of Sarah Hoskins, making Eddie a brother in law, not a grandson. In any event, sometime in September 1948 James William Brown was committed to the State Hospital in Goldsboro, North Carolina, where he died of "exhaustion from senile dementia" on January 5, 1949. His body was shipped back to Brunswick County, but a cemetery is not listed. Eddie, Jr. lived until his death from carcinoma in 1974.

The two children of James William and Sarah Brown for whom we have information are Samuel and William. William, the oldest, lived with James and Sarah through the 1910 census and is absent in the 1920 census. By 1930, he had married Rosa, and had four children listed. The eldest, Ella, was born about 1912, suggesting the marriage of William and Rosa occurred around 1911. Also present were Rosa L., then 13, Charlie, 10 years old, and Narine, then 7 years old. William, 40 years old was renting a house and working as a foreman with a lumber company. He may have stayed since in 1940, the family was still living in the Shallotte Township. William was working in the lumber mill and was being paid $500 a year with this job. The house they were living in was valued at $60. Present, in addition to William and Rosa, were Ella, Narine, and an 8-year-old, Dora May. Ella by this time was a cook in a private house, earning $120 a year. We have identified a death certificate that we believe is for William, in the Shallotte Township. Curiously, his father is listed as July Brown, not James William Brown. The wife, however, is correctly listed as Rosa. The death certificate lists his birth as July 26, 1894, which is in general agreement with the various census records. Willie died of a heart attack on June 6, 1956 and was buried at the Mount Zion Cemetery in Longwood, North Carolina. In another odd situation, his Social Security application lists his death as May 27, 1980, although it lists his correct date of birth. Rosa stayed in the Longswood area, dying in 1967. She, too, was buried at Mount Zion.

The other child is Samuel Brown, for whom consistent birth dates of August 2, 1907 have been identified. However, the birth index indicates that the mother was Classie Brown. Perhaps this was a nickname for Sarah; otherwise, we cannot explain this record. Samuel had already married Evangeline by the time he was recorded for the WWII draft. At that time, he was working for Tidewater Power Company, in Wilmington.

We have not found a marriage license for Samuel and Evangeline, but we have identified her birth record, dated March 13, 1912 in the name of Evangeline Marant. Her parents were listed as Fredgee (likely Freddie) Marant and Maggie Walker. In the 1930 census, Evangeline was identified as Evangeline Walker in Maggie Walker's household. Her 1991 death certificate identifies her as Evangeline Merant Brown, as do at least some social security records. Thus, at some point, she chose to drop the Walker name and resume the use of Morant/Merant.





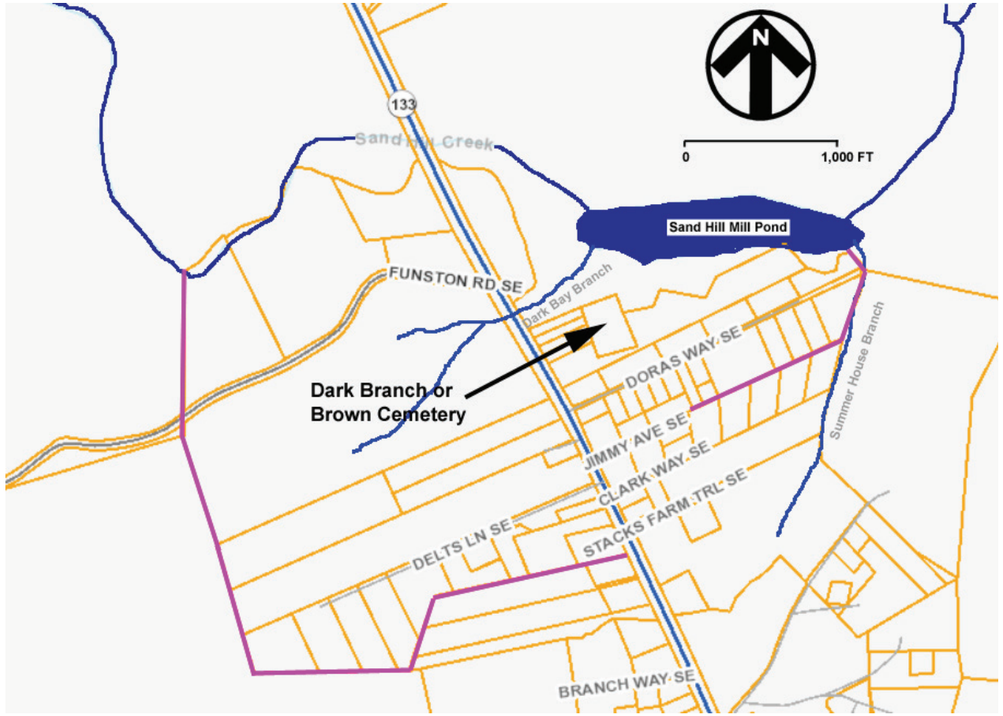


Figure 38. The Brown family. At the top is the family chart. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions. Below on the left is a plat showing the lands of Frank Brown in 1961 (Brunswick County Plat Book 6, pg. 69), while to the right is the area from the county's GIS showing property lines today.

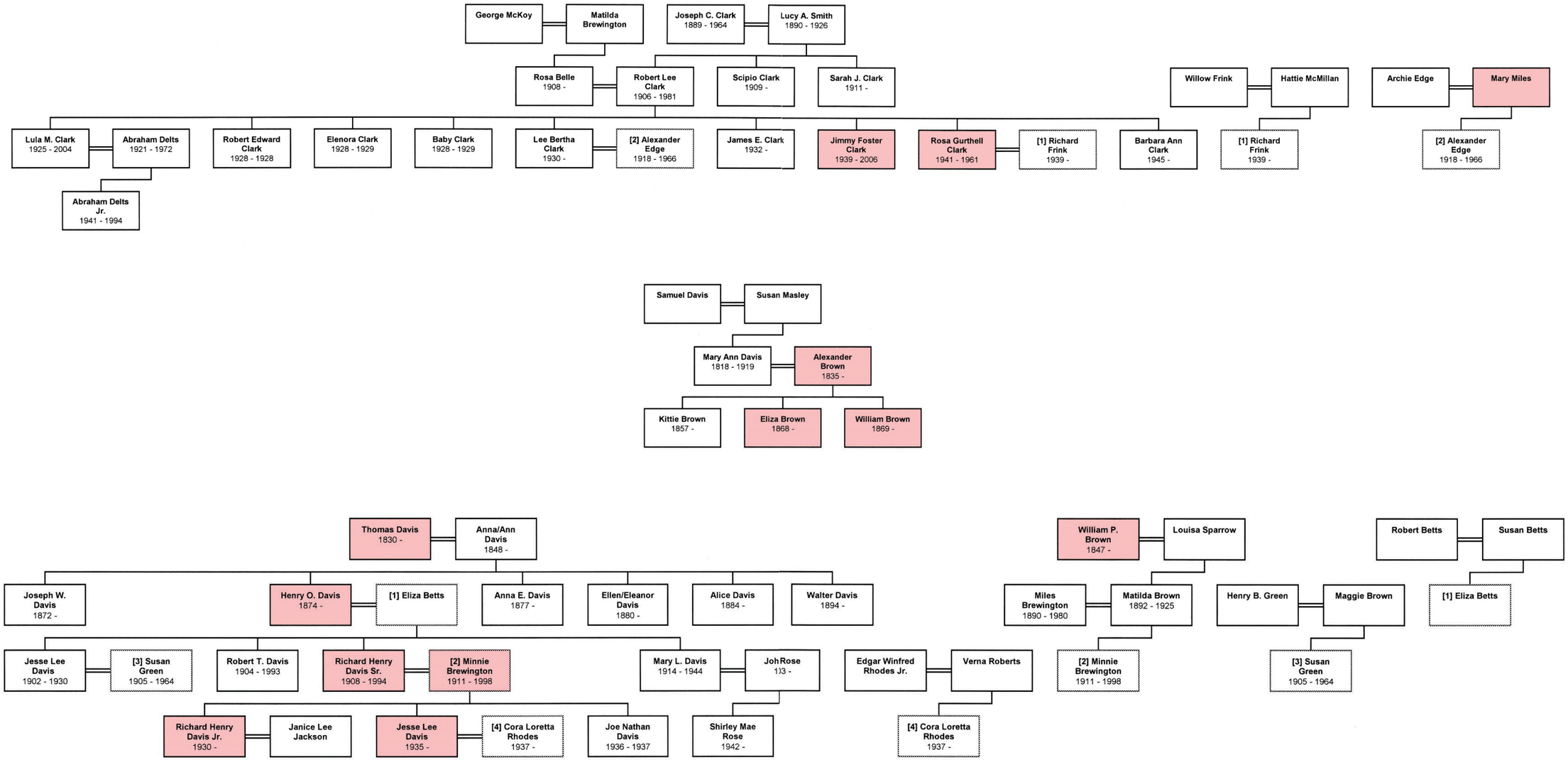


Figure 39. Family charts for the Clark and Davis families (Samuel Davis in the middle and Thomas Davis below). Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

The 1940 census misrecorded Evangeline as Franchine, but they already had five children, Lawrence W., then 8 years old, Walter, 6, Samuel, Jr., 4, Alexander, 2 years old, and Clyde C., less than a year. They owned their house, valued at $100, and Samuel's income was listed at $120 a year. Samuel, Sr. died in 1988 and was buried in the Dark Branch Cemetery. Dying in 1991, Evangeline was buried in the same cemetery.

Lawrence William Brown, born in 1931, married Gloria Cuetez Fou in 1958. He served as a private during the Korean War. After the war, he resume his occupation as a longshoreman and they moved to Newport News, Virginia. However, Gloria filed for divorce in July 1969 for cruelty and constructive desertion. The divorce was granted on September 3, 1970. Returning to the Wilmington area to work on the docks there, Lawrence died on May 26, 1998 of a lung disease and was buried at Dark Branch Cemetery.

Brother Walter James Brown also entered the military, serving from April 1954 to February 1956. Although his death certificate indicates that he was married, we have not been able to locate additional information. He died in 1996 and is buried in Dark Branch Cemetery.

Not much more is known about Samuel Brown, Jr. Born in 1935, his death certificate noted he was married, although we have no record. He had two years of college and worked as a stevedore, dying in 1998 of renal failure. Like others in his family, he is buried at Dark Branch.

Alexander Brown, Sr., was born on January 3, 1938, obtained a high school education and was apparently married. At some point he moved to Bolivia, North Carolina, but when he died in 2001, he was returned to Dark Branch Cemetery for burial.

Clyde Clinton Brown was born on November 28, 1939.

In addition, we have two monuments in Orton Cemetery for individuals that we have not been able to identify well. One is for Alexander Brown and the only information is that he died at the age of 45. The one Alexander we have identified lived to be 63 and is buried in Dark Branch.

The second is William A. Brown (February 29, 1872 – September 16, 1950). The closest match we can find is the widower William Brown who died on February 20, 1949 and was born about 1879. The inaccuracy regarding the dates isn't too troubling since often monuments were erected after, sometimes long after, a death and details can sometimes become clouded. The only other record of a William Brown we can find is the July 13, 1919 marriage to Clara McKoy. She was listed as 38 years old and he was identified as 44 years old (born about 1875).

Although we cannot fit these individuals into well-established Lower Cape Fear families, they help us better understand the complexity of social interactions in a fluid African American community.

There are also several land transactions for William Brown, but it has been impossible to discern the individuals involved. For example, in 1904, W.H. Corbett sold a 10 acre tract on Marsh Branch Road to William Brown for $30 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 50, pg. 87). In another, a William Brown, then a widower, sells three tracts, totaling 80 acres to F.B. Adams for $100 in 1935. These three tracts were in the Town Creek Township in the vicinity of Dark Branch (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 59, pg. 391).

Clark

Of the 14 Clarks identified, five are associated with Kendal in the nineteenth century and the remaining nine are all associated with Orton during the twentieth century.

The Kendal workers include George, Ned, Nick, and Tom, all laborers, and Scip or Scipio, a servant of Frederic Kidder. Nick Clark is identified in the 1880 Town Creek Township census as Nicholas, 22 years old, who lists his occupation as

"farm laborer." He is married to Jane, 18 years old. He disappears from the census after 1880.

A Ned Clark is found in the 1900 census of the Town Creek Township. Born about 1835, he listed his age as 65 and had been married for 33 years to Kate, born in 1840. During her life, she had three children, two of whom were still living. Ned listed his occupation as "farm laborer." Living with them was a 30-year-old daughter, Della, and her son, 2-year-old James. Also in the family was 4-year-old Hester.

A Sep Clark found in the Smithville 1900 census may be Scip or Scipio Clark. He was born in December 1830 and had been married for the past 30 years to his wife, Nancy, who was 53 year old. He reported his occupation, however, as Teamster.

In the twentieth century, we found two families. On September 4, 1932, Charlie and Sarah Clark gave birth to Charlie Clark, Jr., noted on the Orton Christmas Party list. Five years later, on January 31, 1937, William Clark was born to Jenkins Brewington and Sarah Clark. By the 1940 census, we find Sarah Clark, identified as a 28-year-old single individual with no listed occupation. Living with her were five sons, Charlie H. (Charlie), then 7-years-old, Theodore, 5, William Mc., 3, Ray Rex Sinclair, 2, and Rudolph, 5 months old. No further information is available regarding Charles. Sarah and her family were living in a rental house, valued at $2.

The second family includes three individuals known to be associated with Orton, including James Edward Clark, Jimmy Foster Clark, and Rosa Gurthell Clark. The Clark Family Tree (bigric1220) on Ancestry.com assisted us in this genealogical work. This family line begins with Joseph C. Clark and Lucy A. Smith, found in the 1910 census for the Town Creek Township. At the time, Joseph Clark was 25 years old and had been married to Lucy, then 21 years old, for four years. The couple had two children and both were living: Robert, then 3 years old and Scipeo, nearly 2 years old. The family owned its farm that was free of a mortgage. By 1920, although the family still owned its farm, Joseph was supplementing his income during the off-season by working as a laborer at the fish factory (probably at Old Brunswick Town). The family had an additional child, a daughter, Sarah J., then 9 years old.

Son Robert, when 21 years old, married Rosa Bell McCoy, 19 years old, on September 1, 1926. Their marriage certificate confirms that Robert was the son of J.C. Clark and Lucy Clark; Rosa Belle McCoy was the daughter of George McCoy and Matilda Brewington. Figure 39 (Robert Lee Clark Tree) identifies the various children of Robert and Rosa Bell. The 1930 census from the Town Creek Township identifies the family and their two children, a daughter Lula M., and a son Lee Bertha. Their daughter, based on the census, was born in 1925. The census indicates that they owned their house, valued at $600. Robert was working as a laborer at the fish factory.

Robert died in 1981 at 74 years old and was buried in Dark Branch or Brown Cemetery. The family had nine known children. The eldest, Lula M. married Abraham Delts and had one child, Abraham Delts, Jr. Two were twins, one of whom was stillborn and the other died after only six months. Both were buried at Dark Branch/Brown Cemetery. A year earlier, their child Robert Edward Clark, died at only 6 months from bronchial pneumonia.

Their daughter Rosa Gurthell Clark married Richard Frink, the son of Willow Frink and Hattie McMillian Frink on December 29, 1959. The bride was 18 years old and the groom was listed as 20 years old. How happy the marriage was is uncertain since on March 12, 1961 – only a little over a year later – Rosa Gurthell died of axe wounds inflicted by her mother-in-law, consisting of a compound fracture of the neck and right arm resulting in "massive hemorrhage" and spinal cord damage. She was buried at Dark Branch/Brown Cemetery and we have been unable to learn more about the event.

Davis

We have evidence of at least two Davis

families. The first is that of Samuel Davis and Susan Masley. Their daughter, Mary Ann, married a Brown, possibly Alex Brown, and was buried in the Orton Cemetery with a marble monument. This marker lists her life as January 1818 – September 16, 1919 and also identifies her as the daughter of Samuel and Susan Davis. We identified a death certificate for Mary A. Brown with the correct death date; her age was simply estimated at 75 years, a far cry from the nearly 102 years suggested by her monument.

Samuel Davis apparently managed to escape slavery and enlisted in the U.S. Navy, "off Wilmington, N.C." on September 1, 1862. He was identified as 42 years old at the time, suggesting a birth of about 1820 and was described as 5 feet 8 inches. By September 1861, Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles, a Connecticut native of antislavery bent, permitted the enlistment of former slaves whose "services can be useful," stipulating that the "contrabands" be classified as "Boys," the lowest rung on the rating and pay scales and one traditionally reserved for young men under the age of eighteen. Eventually, black sailors constituted 20% of the navy's total enlisted force. Samuel Davis served on three ships, the U.S.S. T.A. Ward, 284-ton schooner, the U.S.S. Cambridge, a heavy (882 ton) steamship, and the U.S.S. William Bacon, a wooden-hulled schooner. We have not been able to confidently identify Samuel and Susan in either the 1870 or 1880 census records.

It has proven equally difficult to identify Mary Brown in the census. The best candidate we have identified is the 1870 census where Mary Brown is the 40-year-old wife of 35-year-old Alexander Brown, a farmer in the Smithville Township. They had three children, Kittie, 13, Eliza, 3, and William, 1. We have not been able to identify them in later records.

While the identity is not certain, we do know that "Mary Brown" was a renowned "healer" in the community, having cured several individuals other doctors were unable to help (Susan Usher, "Reunion will bring memories of 4 River Road Communities," *The Brunswick Beacon*, June 28, 1989, pg. 6A).

A second Davis family documents the intermarriage of the family with the William P. Brown, Miles Brewington, and Sam Lance families. Much of the family has been identified by the Jackson Family Tree (donnie454) on Ancestry.com. We find the first mention in the Sprunt Personal Accounts, with the payment of $3.00 to Henry Davis in 1920. The family first appears in the 1880 census, with Thomas Davis, a 54 year old farmer, and his wife, Anna (or Ann). At the time they reported four children, Joseph W., 8, Henry O., 5, Anna E., 3, and Ellen, born in May of 1880. The census indicates that while Anna was from North Carolina, Thomas had moved into the region from South Carolina. One possibly is a Thomas Davis of the correct age, identified in the 1870 census as living in St. Johns Berkeley, Charleston. This individual, however, is reported with a family.

In any event, we find Thomas and Anna in the 1900 census, still in the Town Creek Township of Brunswick County. This census indicates that Thomas, born in January 1830, was by then 70 years old, but still farming. He and Anna had been married 30 years, indicating the union dates to about 1870. Three children are listed, Henry, born in 1874, Eleanor, born in 1880, and Alice, born in 1884. Henry, by this time, was a farm laborer. Thomas died between 1900 and 1910, when Ann is identified as a widow and now head of the farm. She had given birth to 8 children, only four of which were still living, including Henry O., 36, who is listed as married, although apparently not living with his wife. Also in the household were Ann's grandchildren (Henry's children), Jessie, 7, Robert, 5, and Richard, about 1½ years old. Also present was Ann's own son, Walter, who was working his mother's farm. Henry listed his occupation as a fisherman using a drift net.

Richard Henry Davis married Minnie Brewington, the daughter of Miles Brewington and Matilda Brown, on April 27, 1930. They had at least three children, Richard Henry, Jr., Jessie L., and Joe Nathan (who lived only a year and a half). We also can document that when he completed his WWII

draft registration, he was employed by Lawrence Sprunt at Orton. When he died in 1994, he was buried at Dark Branch Cemetery. When Minnie died in 1998, she was also buried at Dark Branch.

We also know that Jessie L., who entered the Navy, married Cora L. Rhodes in Princess Anne County, Virginia while he was in Virginia Beach. We also discover from the marriage license that his father, Richard Henry Davis, and mother, Minnie Brewington, must at some point in their lives lived in Baltimore, since that is where Jesse Lee was born.

Son Richard Davis, Jr., married Janice Jackson in 1994. Finally, Joe Nathan Davis, died in 1937 from gastroenteritis and rickets. The former is often associated with poor hygiene and/or contaminated water. The latter is most often associated with a vitamin D deficiency, especially in exclusively breast-fed children. The late occurrence of these issues starkly documents the limited health care provided to African Americans even in the middle of the twentieth century, especially in rural areas. Joe Nathan was buried at Dark Branch.

A daughter of Henry O. and Eliza Betts was Mary Lillie Davis. She married John Rose and they had at least one child, Shirley Mae Rose. At least Mary Lillie and Shirley Mae were living at Orton during the 1940s, when they were included in the Christmas festivities.

Delts

The Delts family is very large, originating with the ca. 1883 union of Henry Delts and Susan Garrison. Henry Delts is first identified in the 1870 Smithville Township census at 18 years old, suggesting a birth of about 1852. At the time, he was working as farm labor. Sarah, according to her death certificate, was the child of Quaker and Harriett Garrison in Pender County, North Carolina, although it appears that Quaker married multiple times. In any event, Sarah was not listed with her parents in 1880 and by 1900 had been married to Henry Delts for 17 years, suggesting a marriage date of about 1883. We believe that is was more likely 1880 or a few years before. The 1890 tax list identified Henry as paying his poll tax and owning one cow, two hogs, for a total value of $9. This changes little in the 1895, 1898, and 1900 lists, with only the number of hogs varying from year to year. His personal estate varies between $8 and $10. Even in 1905, the only major difference is that he declares a $5 firearm (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1890, 1895, 1898, 1900, and 1905).

The 1900 census reveals that Sarah had given birth to eight children, five of whom were still alive. Ultimately, we have identified six children, Mathew, Maggie, William, John, Charlie, and Carrie (the 1910 census reveals that Sarah had 12 children, only six of whom were still living). Throughout this time, Henry listed his occupation as labor or farm labor. In 1915, his situation in life had not dramatically changed. He owned two hogs and claimed a very modest $4 in personal estate (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1915). That is the first time we also pick up John Delts, a son of Henry's, although he only paid his poll tax and owned no other property. We know that 1920 the Sprunt Accounts reveal Charlie was already working at Orton and was paid $11.50 for unspecified work. When Sarah died on March 6, 1918, she was living at Orton and was buried at the Orton Cemetery by James H. Shaw. When Henry died the following year in April 1919, he was still farming on Orton, working for James Sprunt. He was also buried at the Orton Cemetery.

Carrie Ann Delts, born and living at Orton, died in July 1917 and was buried at the Orton Cemetery with John Ed Pearson, the plantation foreman, serving as undertaker.

In 1927, Mathew is shown owning only $4 in both real and personal estate. His son, Charles, is identified as only paying a poll tax.

The only other child we have been able to identify with any precision is Mathew Delts (perhaps the same individual), born in February 1885. We know that in 1916, Mathew purchased 2 acres of land, situated on the Southport Road, from Sarah Hooper for $8 (Brunswick County Register of

Deeds, DB 28, pg. 183). He married Christina B. Jones at least by February 1925, when he and his wife sold these 2 acres to John Wilson for $30 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 42, pg. 429). We can find Wilson only in the 1910 census, at which time he was working as a cook at the Fish Factory. A few years earlier, about 1920, Mathew and his wife Christina, purchased 10 acres of land from A.M. Beck. This is the property on which they built a house and lived (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 100, pg. 129).

Mathew first appears as head of a household in 1930. He was working as farm labor, but he and Christina owned a house valued at $400. The 1935 tax ledger, however, indicates real estate valued at only $290 (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1935). They had seven children, Costelia, 10, Abraham, 9, Henry M., 8, Hazel L., 6, Katie L., 5, Maggie M. 3, and Christabel, born in 1930. The 1940 census suggests that Mathew had died and Christina was now the head of the household with 12 children. Mathew's estate was valued at $362 (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1945). The seven from 1930 are still listed and with them are Pearl, 6, Harlee, 5, Mary, 3, Irene, 2, and Marie, born that year. They were now living in a rental house with a rental of $3.00. Christina, Costelia, Abraham, and Henry were all working as farm laborers and the family had a combined income of $670. In 1944, Irene Delts died of toxemia and nephritis at the age of only 7 years. She was not buried at Orton, but rather at Dark Branch. Her death certificate, however, reveals that by 1937, Christina had married Jenkins Brewington, although the Delts name was retained.

One of the Delts boys, likely either John or William, produced a child with Queen Ann Brown in 1911. This child, Pearl, took her father's last name. Queen Ann was also referred to as Queen Delts in the Sprunt Account books. We have a record that between December 12, 1940 and January 30, 1941, Sprunt paid Dr. William Dosher in Southport $50.00 and the James Walker Hospital an additional $66.25 for her treatment. This hospital opened in 1901 and by 1904 had a separate ward for African Americans. In 1927, Queen Ann claimed real and personal property valued at $23.25. In 1935, Queen Anne Delts is shown owning $250 in real estate and $10 in personal estate and in 1945, she claimed $381 in real estate (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1927, 1935, 1945). We haven't tracked down Queen Ann's property, but it was located south of Sprunt's plantation (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 81, pg. 275) and it may still be in the family as heirs' property.

In 1972, Abraham Delts, a son of Mathew and Christina, died of extensive third degree burns in an accidental fire at his home in Wilmington. He had been married, but was apparently a widower at the time of his death.

Edge

We have been able to trace the Edge family back to Henry and Laura Edge, who first appear in the 1870 census for the Town Creek Township. At that time, the two had one son, James, 4 years old, and one daughter, Phoebe, 2. Henry identified himself as a farmer. Also in the family was 29-year old Daniel Edge, whose relationship was not specified, but who was doing day labor. We speculate that he may have been a brother.

By 1880, Henry and Laura had seven children. These included, in addition to James and Phoebe, Benjamin, 11 (who should have been picked up in the previous census, but was not), William, 5, John, 4, Fannie, 2, and Julia A., born February of that year. By this time, Henry was working turpentine in the Town Creek area. The 1890 tax list identifies Henry in the Smithville Township. Although owning no property, he did report eight hogs (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1890).

John Edge, born about 1876 is not found in census records after 1880. However, we know that in 1915, he was living at Kendal and paid his poll tax (Brunswick County Scroll Tax, 1915).

We pick up William in the 1900 census, when he was engaged in farm labor. He had married Mary and their family consisted of Anna, 5,

Oscar, 3, and Archie, only 1 year old. They were renting a house in the Town Creek Township. Several years even before this, however, we see William Edge using a cow to secure a $6 loan (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB PP, pg. 205). The 1910 census reveals that William and Mary had been married for 13 years, suggesting a marriage date of about 1897; however, at least Belle (not listed in the previous census) and Anna were born prior to posited marriage date. We suggest the union likely occurred about 1892 or 1893. A new addition is Maggie, then 6 years old.

In 1911, Edge used three cows, three bulls, and three hogs as collateral for a loan from James J. Darby, a wealthy Ireland native living in Wilmington. This was eventually satisfied (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 15, pg. 236).

William Edge had acquired a 10 acre tract of the Lilliput lands from Thomas Clark (who in turn had obtained the lands from W.G. Curtis in 1873) which he used as collateral on a note to W.H Robbins in 1915 for $129.20 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 25, pg. 232; see also DB V, pg. 126). This mortgage was satisfied that same year.

By 1920, William was identified as working in the area fish factory, although they continued to own their farm, free of a mortgage. William was about 49 years old and Mary was reported to be 43. The only child still at home was Maggie M., who was at the time 16 years old. However, the household also included William H. Lofton, 9 years old, and identified as a nephew, as well as John T. Haskins, 8 years old and also a nephew.

The marriage date for William and Mary gets even foggier by the 1930 census, when it was reported to be about 1906. William was still farming and the census reports that they owned their house. Maggie is still living at home. William H., previously identified as a nephew, was reported as a 20-year-old son in this record. In addition, in the house were Johnnie, 14 years old and identified as a grandson, Mary, 8, a granddaughter, and Willie E., 5, a grandson. The 1935 tax record identifies both Mary and William in the Town Creek Township, with Mary claiming $535 of real estate and $20 of personal estate, while William claimed $80 in real estate (Brunswick County Tax Scroll, 1935).

By 1940, Mary may have died, since William is listed alone. Also in the house was Maggie M. Swinson, now 35, and William, her 14-year old son. Maggie died in 1941 and was buried in the Lilliput Cemetery. We find William selling his Lilliput lands in 1942 for $100 to J. Lawrence Sprunt, who was diligently working to consolidate his properties (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 75, pg. 122).

We continue the line, however, by focusing on Archie Edge, son of William and Mary, who married Mary Mills. These two are known to have had at least two sons, Johnnie Edge, born in 1915, and Alexander Edge, born in 1918. Johnnie Edge married Mary Jane Green, the daughter of Benjamin Green and Tensie Green, on September 18, 1937. Benjamin Green was farming on his own account in the Smithville Township. Johnnie was identified as 22 years old at the time, while Mary Jane listed her age as 20.

When Johnnie (or Johnny) registered for the WWII draft, he was living at Orton and working for Churchill Burgaw. As late as about 1960, he was renting a house on Lilliput. Johnnie, hit by a car as he was crossing Highway 133 in the Orton area during the early evening hours, sustained multiple injuries and died on August 15, 1969. He was buried in Dark Branch. His wife, Mary Jane, died in 1985 and was also buried at Dark Branch.

Brother Alexander indicated on his WWII draft registration that he was working in Supply, North Carolina. He married Lee Bertha and died in 1966, being buried in the Lilliput Cemetery.

Ellis

This seems to be a small family, accounting for at most six individuals in the plantation records. They, like others in the region, married into several

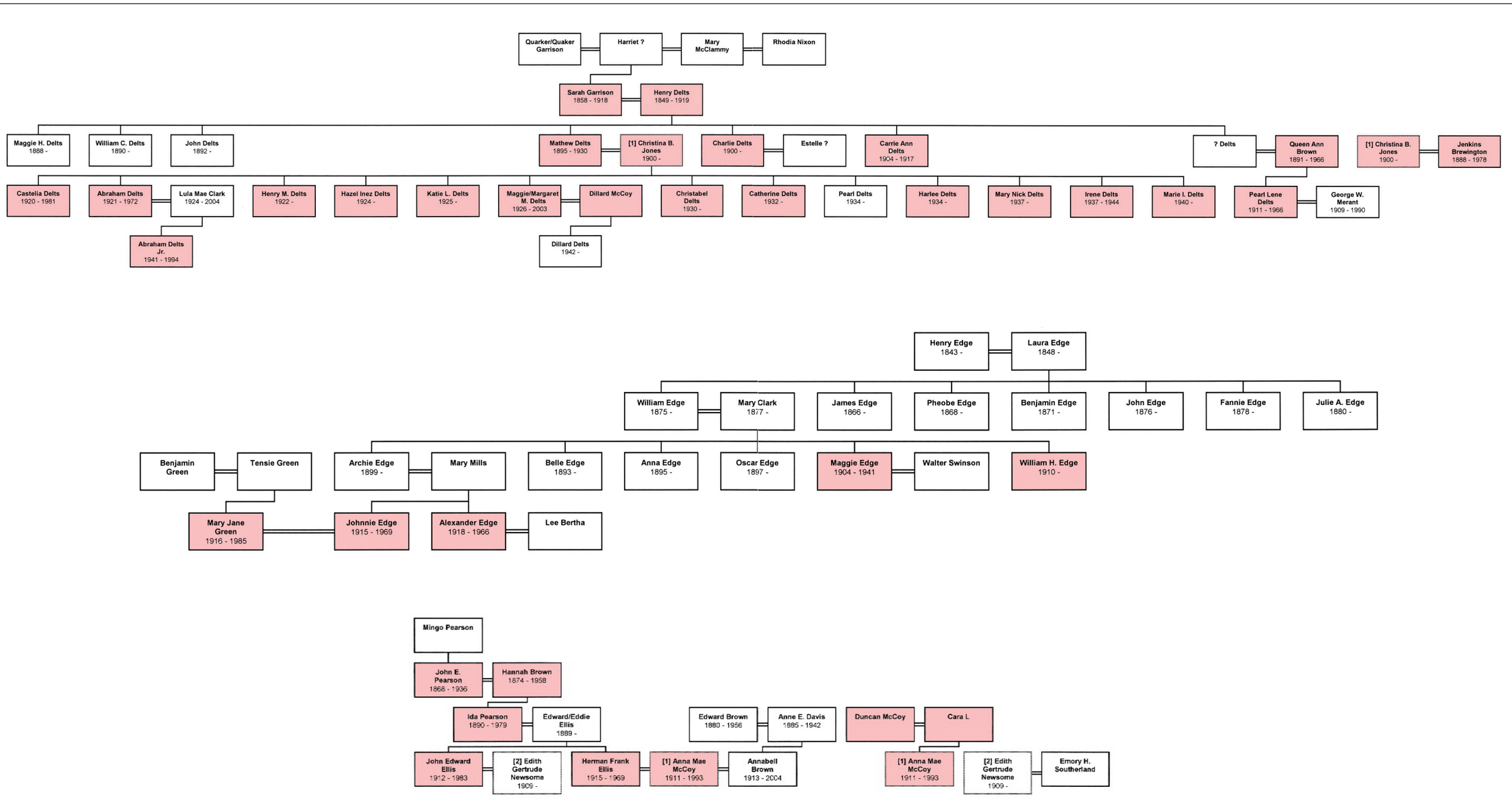


Figure 40. Family charts of the Delts, Edge, and Ellis families. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

other families, including the Pearsons and McCoys. Some parts of the family have been reconstructed in the McMillian Family Tree (Anthony McMillian 1956) on Ancestry.com.

We can trace the family back to the 1930 census when John E. Ellis and Herman Ellis, identified as grandsons, are living with John E. Pearson and his wife, Hannah in the Smithville Township. Pearson was the foreman of Orton and was 64 at the time, suggesting a birth of around 1866.

John E. and Herman were likely the sons of Ida Pearson and Eddie Ellis. A marriage certificate was issued on June 14, 1911, applied for by John E. Pearson, the father of the bride and the form indicates both of Eddie's parents were dead at the time. Ida was reported to be 21 and Eddie was 22 years old. John E. was born in 1912 and Herman was born in 1915. Eddie died prior to 1920 and Ida apparently went on to marry a Keel, spending some time in New Jersey, before returning to the Winnabow area. However, she was living at Lilliput in the 1960s, using the name Ida Ellis.

His WWII draft registration reveals that John Edward was working at the ACL freight warehouse and living in Wilmington. At the age of 25, he married 28-year old Edith Gertrude Newsome Southerland in 1937. Ethel had previously married Emory Southerland in 1928. By 1942, John Edward Ellis had moved to Orton and was serving, along with Clarence Jones, as an Air Raid Observer. These individuals, over half of whom were African Americans, served from two to four 24-hours every month, looking out for enemy aircraft along the shoreline (The State Port Authority, Southport, NC, September 9, 1942, pg. 1). John Edward's wife, Ethel, died in 2001. We have not identified any children at this time. In addition, the death certificate for John Edward indicates that he was divorced at the time of his death in 1983.

Herman Frank Ellis, born in 1915, married twice. The first marriage was to Anna May McCoy, who died in 1993 and was buried in Dark Branch Cemetery. His next marriage was to Anna Bell Brown, daughter of Edward and Anne Brown. Herman Frank died in 1969 and was buried in the Orton Cemetery. Anna Bell went on to marry a Williams, not dying until 2004, when she was buried in Drew Cemetery.

Gore

Nancy Gore is briefly discussed here since her property distribution is an example of the subdivision of a tract as heirs' property. She was born about 1850 in South Carolina but was in the Brunswick area by at least 1886, when at the age of 35, she married 55-year old John Gore. The wedding took place at Orton Plantation and was witnessed by Preston Green and Moses Chisone (sometimes spelled Chism or Chisum). By 1900, John had died and Nancy is found in the census for that year as a farmer in the Smithville Township. The family was large and the ages indicate that many of the children came from a previous marriage but nevertheless chose to adopt the Gore name. Included were Lucy, 18, John K., 14, Francis, 10, Mary Elizabeth, 9, Rachel A., 7, James W., 5, Liddie or Lydia, 4, and Nellie, only 11 months.

By the 1910 census, Nancy identified her occupation as midwife and she owned her farm free of a mortgage. Mary Elizabeth had married John Brown and they were living with Nancy. John Brown was listed as a farmer and Francis, James, and Lydia were all identified as working on this home farm. As a midwife, we wonder if she might also have been a neighborhood healer or "doctor." Nancy died in 1918 and was buried at the Marsh Branch cemetery. While this death certificate lists both mother and father as unknown, we have the death certificates for three of her children and two of these identify Nancy's maiden name as Demings or Demry.

Nancy acquired 50 acres from the will of James Reaves in 1892. This consisted of a strip of land fronting on the Cape Fear River and shown in several plats (Figure 41). The 1940 plat reveals that her property was divided into six tracts, all of which were eventually taken by the federal government. These were devised to Henry Smith

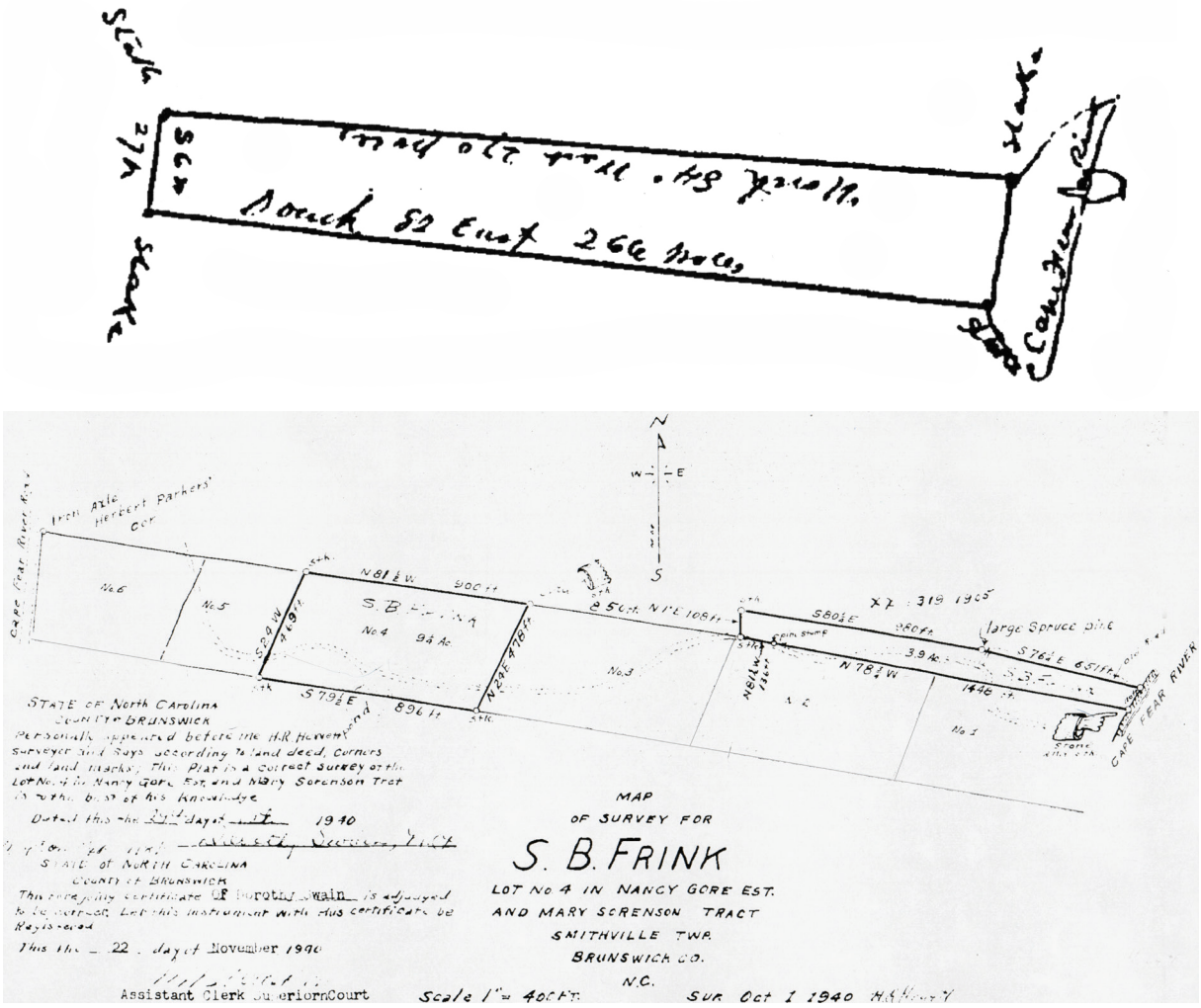


Figure 41. Plats of the Gore property. At the top is the 1892 plat (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB JJ, pg. 326) and below is the division plat for the estate from 1940 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 108, pg. 554).

(No. 5 and 6, A-110, 11.12 acres), Mary Janes McMillan (No. 4, A-112, 8.32 acres), Mary Brown (No. 3, A-113, 8.97 acres), Joel L. Moore (No. 2, A-114, 9.30 acres), while No. 1 on the water front was retained by the Nancy Gore Estate (A-115, 7.02 acres). In the case of the McMillan tract, the government paid $855 or about $102/acre. This was about the midrange, with parcels of the Gore estate being bought for as low as $50/acre up to as much as $215/acre.

Henry

John Henry is first seen as a 12-year-old child of James Henry and his wife, Phyllis, in the 1870 census. He next appears in the 1900 census, as the son-in-law of Jane McDonald in the Smithville area. He was apparently widowed, listing his occupation as day labor. We find Jane (or June) McDonald in the 1880 Smithville census with a son, Charles, and two daughters. One is Rose, to

whom John Henry may have been briefly married. We see him in the 1924 Sprunt Accounts, being paid $10 for work between January and July of that year, although he does not again appear in any census records.

Hill

We have identified two Hills in the various accounts and we assumed they were related. We have various accounts of Link or Lincoln Hill. We know that he served as James Sprunt's butler and driver in Wilmington and often came out to Orton with him. He may also have done other work on the plantation. In August 1923, we have a notation in the Sprunt Personal Accounts paying "Link Hill – labor – Orton" $17.45. He is also shown at an Orton hunting party (Figure 28).

Lincoln Hill was born in 1866, the son of Henry and Harriet Hill in the Northwest Township of Brunswick County. Much of the family has already been researched in the Joshua Freeman family tree (jofreeman14) on Ancestry.com. Henry was a farmer of some standing, reporting $100 in real property and $200 in personal property in 1870. His agricultural census reveals that the 35 acre farm (25 acres improved) produced $500 in farm produce, including corn, peas, sweet potatoes, and even 50 pounds of rice. He owned a mule, milk cow, and 10 pigs.

A license for Lincoln's marriage to Jessie Taylor was issued in New Hanover County on November 18, 1896. They had eight children, although Marion was born prior to their marriage. His wife, Jessie, died of heart issues in 1947 and her death certificate specified that her husband, 75 years old, was still alive.

In October 1924, the Sprunt Accounts list a payment of $16.00 to Rutledge Hill. We have been unable to identify this individual in the area.

Hooper

We have records of only five Hoopers in the Orton-Kendal-Lilliput area and assume that they represent one family, but identifying them has been very difficult. Examination of census records reveals that most individuals with this family name were located in the Northwest Township. In addition, there was a family burial location in that vicinity called Hooper Field, Hooper Hill, or Hooper Cemetery in various records (probably near Leland, North Carolina). Those Hoopers living in Wilmington were almost invariably buried in the Pine Forest Cemetery.

In the 1873 tax scrolls, Robert Hooper (we believe the senior) is identified as owning 19 acres with a value of $20. In 1884, this is listed as his home tract, 18 acres, valued at $50. It is unchanged in 1895, although by that time he also reported owning one cow. His estate is listed in the 1900 records for Town Creek Township, identified as being in Dark Branch and consisting of 17 acres with a value of $70. Robert, Jr. is listed in 1905, but he owns no property, it having passed to his mother.

We have been able to reconstruct a small portion of the Robert Hooper family and even identify a few birth and death dates, but the family appears only in the 1870 census when Robert was identified as a farmer. We have several records of Robert Hooper being paid $9 to $10 in the Sprunt Accounts during the 1920s. We assume this is Robert Hooper, Jr., but cannot be certain.

For two of the individuals, Schuyler and Sarah, we even have rudimentary birth and dates since their gravestones are located in the Orton Cemetery. Schuyler lived between about 1840 and November 24, 1876 and Sarah lived between 1848 and April 10, 1923. Nevertheless, we were unable to identify either individual in the census or associated records. Given the dates, it is tempting to suggest that these were the parents of the elder Robert Hooper. The final individual, Joseph Hooper, may be the individual found in the 1900 census for the Northwest Township. Born about 1867, he married Mariah about 1893 and they had one child, 7-year old Jessie. Joseph reported that he did day labor.

We were able to find Schuyler, however, in

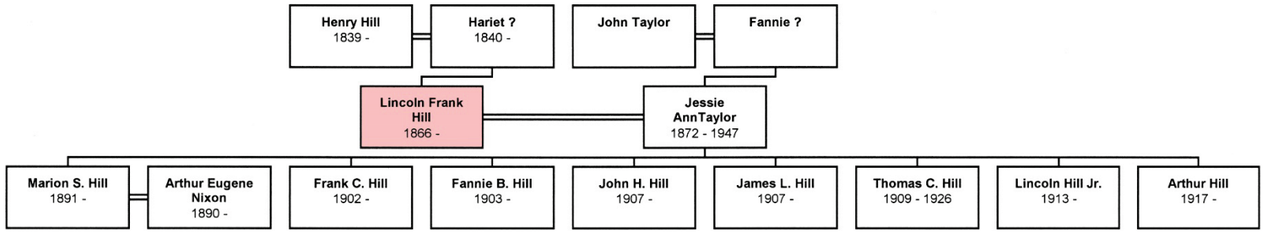


Figure 42. Family charts of the Hill, Hooper, and Jones families. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

the 1875 taxes for Smithville, at which time he paid only his poll tax and the tax on four cows (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1875). On the 1876 tax list for Smithville Township he still owns no land outright, but is listed as the agent for three white property owners, including Currier R. Roundell of Orton. The others include Isaac B. Grainger and Jeffrey Long. It appears that Schuyler was an overseer, manager, or caretaker for these three owners in their absence.

We also know that at some point prior to 1880, Isaac B. Grainger contracted with "one Hooper Colored" to sell what was known as the Devant Tract, consisting of 180 acres. Before this was consummated or at least before a deed was registered, Grainger died (1876). Prior even to this, the property had passed to Currier R. Roundell, eventually being acquired by Kenneth Murchison. Murchison, apparently convinced of the legitimacy of the claim to the Durant tract, issued a quit claim in the name of Sarah Hooper ("widow of _____ Hooper, deceased"), Titus Meritt (or Merrick), Jack Green, and William Davis (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB Z, pg. 370).

For whatever reason, Murchison appears not have known the name of Sarah's husband. The others listed in the deed, we believe, are likely the heirs at law of this individual. We know that in 1900, Sarah Hooper was living with Arman Green, her brother, in Smithville. We can't identify a Jack Green, but the 1880 Smithville census does list a John Green, 60 years old and a farmer. Likewise, the 1880 census also lists a Titus Merrick as the 20-year-old stepson of William Green. Living in the Town Creek Township, Titus was working in the fields. William Davis is listed immediately below John Green in the 1880 Smithville census. He was a 35-year-old farmer.

While we can't positively identify the relationship of the various parties, we can very clearly identify the Durant Tract, shown in Figure 42. To the north of this tract was the Reynold Tract, much of which eventually came into the hands of the various fisheries below Old Brunswick Town.

This land and its owner, Sarah Hooper, is of special importance to the story of the African Americans in the Marsh Branch area since many of the eventual owners acquired their property from Sarah Hooper. We have not sought to identify all of the deeds, but a few include the 1886 sale of a half acre to the Marsh Branch Colored Zion Methodist Church (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB FF, pg. 70 and DB Z, pg. 310), the 1916 sale of 2 acres by Arman Green and Sarah Hooper to Mathew Delts (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 28, pg. 183), the 1919 sale of 3 acres by Sarah Hooper to Fred Rutland (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 32, pg. 103), and the 1921 sale of 17 acres to Alfred Betts (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 34, pg. 334). None of these sales involved more than $10, so in each case the cost of the land was nominal. In 1953, the U.S. Government took the remaining three tracts of Hooper's lands (Tracts B-238, B-244, and B-246). In fact, many of the surrounding parcels can be traced back to the 1880 quit claim by Murchison (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 189, pg. 513).

Jones

This family is best known for Frank Clarence Jones, described by one source as "a gardener and factotum," but there are at least seven members of the family that appear in various sources for primarily Orton.

There was, however, another Jones family that is worth mentioning. In 1882, the Wilmington papers reported a sensational murder at Orton Plantation. An African American, Pharaoh Sykes, killed a woman, Isabella Jones, using an ax to "split open" her head and crush her skull on Wednesday, May 24, 1882. The murder was committed in front of two children and was apparently the result of jealousy (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, May 25, 1882, May 26, 1882, May 27, 1882). By June 9, the newspaper was complaining that there had been "no action taken looking to the arrest of Pharaoh Sykes . . . . although we have heard of his having been frequently seen in the neighborhood" (*Morning Star*, Wilmington, NC, June 9, 1882). There was apparently never any effort to capture

Sykes.

The parents of Isabella, then about 19 years old, were James Nathaniel and Caroline Jones. We have been unable to find the alleged murderer, or his competitor, Fred Robinson, in the federal census.

While the gore attracts attention and reminds us that the plantations were the scene of daily drama, the family of W.M. and Millie Jones had a far greater impact on the region's history. Much of this family has been researched and is presented in the Clark Family Tree (bigric1220) and the James-Medlin Family Tree (Brandy Brooks), both on Ancestry.com. William and Millie had at least one child, Abraham Jones, born about 1873 (they had four children according to the Clark Family Tree). Abraham married 19-year old Annie Brown on April 18, 1894 when both families were living on Orton Plantation. She was the daughter of Franklin Brown and Annie (or Fannie) Underwood.

Frank Brown had at least four children, counting Annie and they farmed in the Town Creek Township. Susan Taylor Block contends that William and Andrew Jones ran the Durant family's ferry business between Brunswick and New Hanover counties. While we haven't been able to find William in the census, Andrew is identified in the 1910 census as a ferryman. At the time, he and Annie had four children, William, 9, Ann 11, Abraham [Jr.], 7, and James, 5. By the 1930 census, Annie was a widow with five children, including 23 year old Alice, 17 year old Lucy M. and John O., 14 year old Frank [Clarence], and 12 year old Henry. They owned their farm, valued at $1,800, and Annie had taken over the farming operations.

Annie Jones died in 1938 and was buried by John H. Shaw's Sons. The only burial information is that she was buried in Winnabow.

Two of their children are of special interest. The first is Clarance Frank Jones, born on September 14, 1908 (his Social Security information identifies his birth as September 9, 1911, while his grave lists the date as August 8, 1908). In a news article, he identified himself as a "globetrotter. I'd go from town to town and city to city" (*StarNews Online*, August 1, 2007). It may have been during this period that he was caught transporting alcohol during prohibition. Appearing in court, judgement was suspended upon payment of court costs (*The State Port Pilot*, Southport, NC, December 25, 1928, pg. 4).

His WWII draft registration identifies that he was already working for James L. Sprunt and had married Everlena Brewington. During the war, he and Herman Ellis served as Air-Raid Warning Service Observers at Orton Plantation, working two to four 24-hour shifts every month (State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, September 9, 1942, pg. 1). While he owned no property in 1945, he did report personal estate items valued at $1,230 (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1945).

The *StarNews Online* article cited above claims the engagement occurred in 1927, with the marriage only a few days later. Everlena died in January 1999 and was buried in the Dark Branch Cemetery. Clarence Frank died on November 7, 2008 and was also buried at the Dark Branch Cemetery. During their lives together they had at least two children, Julia Anna Jones (identified in some records as Queen Julia A. Jones), who married William Brown and subsequently John B. Vaught and, Clarence Jones, Jr.

As late as 1960, Clarence and his wife were living in a house at Lilliput. There are multiple news articles recounting the impact of Clarence Jones on the Orton gardens, including one in *Southern Living*. He continuing to work well into his 80s.

Julia Anna Jones, born on February 9, 1932 appears to have married three times. The first may have been to John Betty Vaught, born on May 1, 1932 and dying in 1991. The second marriage was apparently to Willie Brown, the son of Edward and Anna Brown, on January 22, 1955. Social Security records suggest a third marriage, since she filed paperwork under the name Julia Ann Collins and Julia Collins (with correct birth date and parents). Regardless, she died on September 15, 2006.

Joyner

The Joyner family does not occur often in the plantation records, but we have been able to reconstruct three generations that include three of the four documented individuals. As the case with so many other families, the one child not found in census records probably missed census collection.

We begin the family in the 1920 census when we find John Joyner, 45 years old, and his 40-year old wife, Annie. John reported that he was a fisherman and they owned their house free of a mortgage. He and his wife had seven children, although in this census most are indicated only by an initial. Included are Anne, 17, a daughter M., 15, a daughter S.M., 13, a son Willie Lee, 11, a daughter L., 8, and son S.L., 4, and the newest born son, J.L., 2 years old. A few years prior, in 1915, John Joyner paid his poll tax and claimed one horse and $10 worth of tack (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1915). In 1921, however, Joyner sold this "bay mare pony age 4" for $100 to J.D. Spencer (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 36, pg. 28). By 1927, he claimed $300 worth of real and personal estate, while his son Willie Lee Joyner is identified as paying only his poll tax and owning no real or personal property (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1927).

On April 14, 1929, Willie Lee Joyner married Evalena Brown, the 18-year old daughter of John T. and Mary E. Brown. The 1930 census shows that Willie Lee and his new wife were living with her parents, who owned their house, valued at $300. John T. Brown was a fireman on a government boat and the family consisted of his wife and him, their six children, his daughter Evalena and son-in-law, William. They also had their first child, Doris L. only six months old. William listed his occupation as a menhaden fisherman.

Willie Lee's WWII draft registration lists his wife and indicates that he was working on a fishing boat, employed by Cicero Guthrie, a white man who lived in Carteret County to the north, but apparently operated out of Southport during the menhaden season. By the 1940 census, Willie Lee owned a house valued at $400 on River Road. He was still engaged in fishing, with an annual salary of $130. His family included Doris, now 10 years old, and Willie Lee, Jr., 8 years old, as well as his wife, Evalena. The 1945 valuation on his house was more modest, only $150 (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1945).

Since they were associated with Orton, it may be that one or more of the family members worked at the plantation.

We have identified a death certificate for Evalena from 1943 when she died at the age of 31 from chronic myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart muscle sometimes caused by bacterial or viral infection. The death certificate indicates she was buried at Marsh Branch. Their son, Willie Lee, Jr. joined the Air Force and was stationed at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, where he was diagnosed with an extensive brain tumor and died of respiratory failure during an operation to determine if it could be removed. He was married at the time, likely to an individual living in Akron, Ohio since his body was shipped there for burial. His father died of kidney disease in 1960 and was buried at Dark Branch.

King

We have only three Kings documented for the area and these are all members of one family. A portion of this family has been presented in the Richard L. Freeman tree (Richardlfreeman60) on Ancestry.com.

The most prominent member of the family is Solomon King, the son of John King and either Francis Allen (listed on a 1900 marriage certificate) or Sarah (listed on Solomon's death certificate in 1932). We are included for multiple reasons to trust the former, but this cannot be verified at present. Regardless, it appears that John King had died by 1870, when we find Francis, 20-years-old, working as a servant for a white family in the Northwest Township. At that time, the only child identified is 1-year-old Thomas. Solomon is

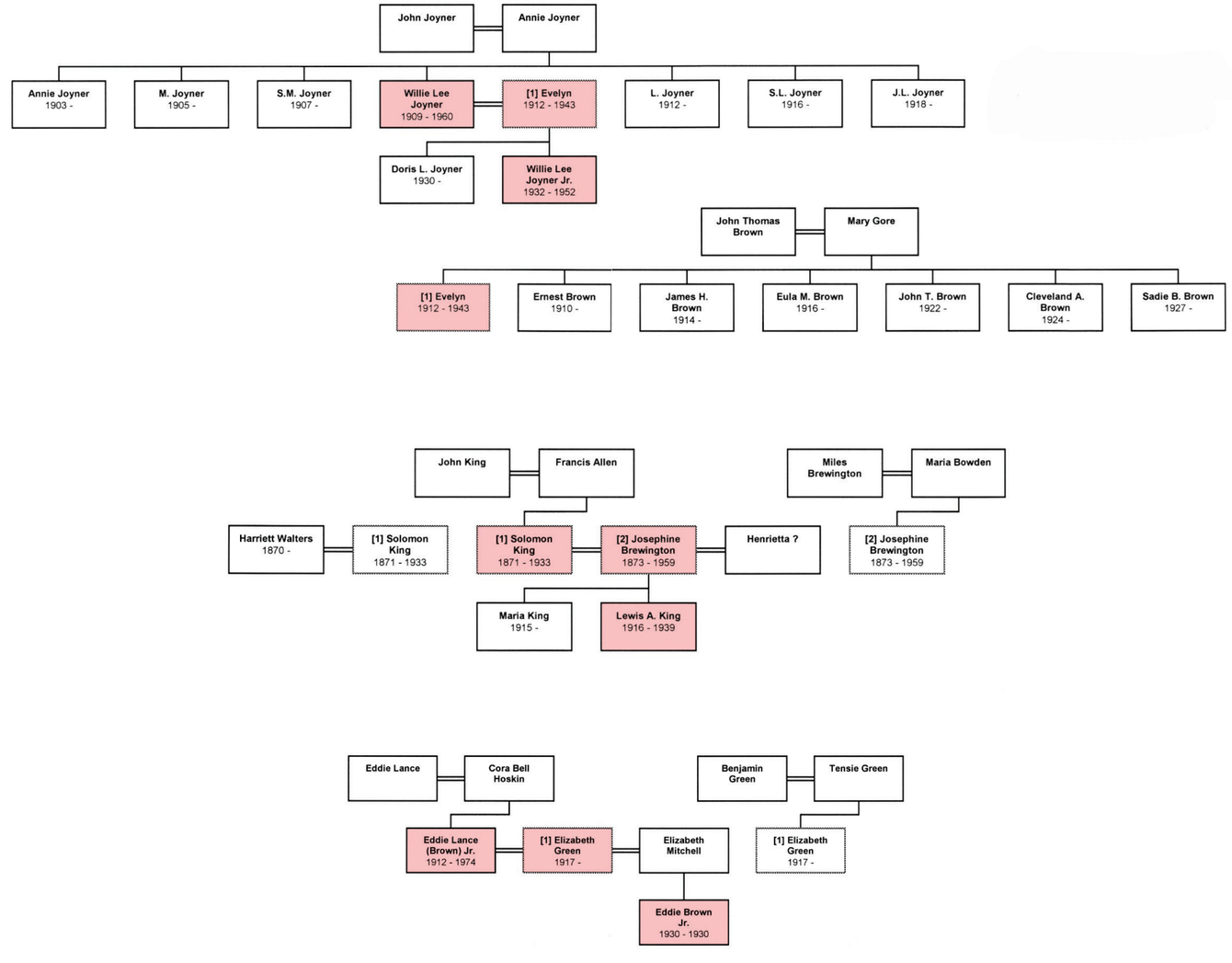


Figure 43. Family charts of the Joyner, King, and Lance families. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

found in the Town Creek Township, living with Caesar and Hager Gallway, a farmer. Solomon is identified as a nephew, along with Simpronius Pearce, DeRosset Pearce. Also present is a niece, Ellen Brown.

In his youth, Solomon crossed paths with the law at least once. A local paper reported that he was found hiding, late at night, in the Wilmington area with a bag filled with freshly butchered cow and a gun. He said that he was "hungry and had gone out in search of some meat." He was arrested and we presume eventually tried (The Daily Journal, Wilmington, NC, April 8, 1870, pg. 3).

On October 30, 1890, Solomon was married to Harriett Walters, 20 years old. The marriage took place at Kendal and was witnessed by V. Smith and Frank Brown. By 1900, Solomon King filed for divorce in the Brunswick Courts and as a result of the jury case, the divorce was granted (*The Semi-Weekly Messenger*, Wilmington, NC, April 20, 1900, pg. 6).

About 1895, Solomon married Henrietta according to the June 7th census. They were identified in that census as without children. He is listed as working farm labor and they are living in a rented house. In 1895 he only paid his poll tax. While we show this as a second marriage, this may be Harriett Walters and there was simply a misstatement of the time married. Regardless, in 1898 King claimed owning a watch or jewelry valued at $2 (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1898).

Regardless, only a few days after the census on June 16, 1900, Solomon married Josephine Brewington, then 26 years old and the daughter of Miles and Maria Brewington. The marriage was witnessed by individuals whose names occur throughout these discussions: Samuel Betts, Abraham Jones, and Robert Hooper. We can't determine whether he and Henrietta went different ways or if she suddenly died.

Solomon and Josephine had at least two children, Maria, born September 1, 1915 and Lewis A., born on December 24, 1916. By the 1930 census, Maria was no longer identified in the household, although Lewis was still present. The family was renting a house valued at $5 and Solomon was performing farm labor. The Sprunt Accounts list Solomon being paid $7 for work performed between January and August 1924. In 1925, Solomon, while owning no land, reported one goat, one cow, and one dog (Brunswick County Tax Scroll, 1925).

Solomon, however, is remembered by the community as a postmaster and church leader in the Dark Branch area (Susan Usher, "Reunion will bring memories of 4 River Road communities, *The Brunswick Beacon*, June 29, 1989, pg. 6A).

Solomon died on July 8, 1935 of senile dementia and was buried at the Orton Cemetery. Only a few years later, in 1939, his son Lewis fell off the side of a boat in the Cape Fear River and drowned. He was buried at Oak Grove, also known as Sand Hill Cemetery. Josephine lived as a widow until her death in 1959 of a probable cerebral thrombosis. She was buried at Lilliput where she was renting a house until her death.

Lance

We have previously discussed Harry Lance in the William P. Brown family, noting that he was the son of Sam Lance and Lena Pearson, and that he married Queen Ann Brown (taking on the name Queen Ann Lance). As far as we can determine Eddie represents a different family, although the two may be tied together in some undiscovered generation.

We likewise previously discussed Eddie Lance, Jr., the son of Eddie and his wife, Cora Bell Hoskins. We believe he may be listed as early as 1920 in the household of William Brown and Sarah Hoskins (married in 1902) where an Eddie W. shows up as a "son." In 1940, James, now 66 years old, is listing his occupation as farm labor. Sarah, now about 70 years old, was alive and keeping house. Also present in the household was Eddie Lance, Jr. identified as a grandson, 28 years old, who was unable to work. We have been unable to learn about his disability or injury, but we do know

that he was the son of Eddie Lance, Sr. and Carrie Bell Hoskin, born in 1912.

It appears that Eddie, Jr. may have had a child with Elizabeth Mitchell in 1930, although the child lived only three months, dying from acute nephritis. This infant was buried in the Oak Grove or Sand Hill Cemetery.

For reasons that aren't clear, Eddie, Jr. chose to take the last name of his mother, not his father. Eddie Jr. married Elizabeth Green in 1937. The marriage was witnessed by Isiah Brewington. Carrie Bell was the younger sibling of Sarah Hoskins, making Eddie a brother-in-law, not a grandson.

Eddie, Jr. died in 1974, after suffering stomach cancer for three months. His death certificate indicates that Elizabeth had predeceased him. He was buried in the Dark Branch Cemetery.

McClammy

We can confidently identify only one McClammy family at the Orton, Kendal, and Lilliput plantations, that of Richard and Lucy Anna. Richard's parents were David McClammy and Ritta Nixon, although we have been unable to find them in the census. Nevertheless, on May 20, 1890 S. R. Chinnis, a Justice of the Peace and Superintendent of Orton filed for a marriage license, listing Richard McClammy, son of David and Ritta, and Lucy Ann Brown, 10-year old daughter of Alexander and Mary Ann Brown. Two days later, they were married at Orton Plantation, with the celebration witnessed by E.H. McClammy and Scott Pickett, both of Orton and J.J. McClammy of Rocky Point.

The first census we have of the family is in the 1910 Smithville Township. Correctly identifying their marriage as 20 years previously, Lucy indicated that she had given birth to six children and five were still living. Those identified in the census include 19-year-old William, 10-year-old Leah, 7-year-old Richard, Jr., 5-year-old Mary, and 3-year-old Catherine. Richard identified his occupation as farming, his wife was working for a private family, and 19-year-old William was a laborer. In this census, the entire family was identified as mulatto. In 1910, the year that Richard's daughter Minnie died, we find that Sprunt paid $10 to Dr. Ackerman for "attending R. McClammy's daughter." His wife, Lucy, was also working as the cook at Orton for at least 1919-1921 during which time we find fairly regular payments of between $2 and $6 from Sprunt to Lucy. The McClammy family apparently did well since the 1930 census reveals that they were living in Wilmington and owned a home valued at $3,000. He was at that time a trucker, working for a cotton press in the city. Lucy was also working, cooking for a private family. Still present at home were Catherine, then 21, and Lucy, 17 years old. In the household was Elizabeth Howell, 63, reported to be Richard's sister-in-law.

Richard died in 1937 and was returned to Orton for burial. The family had previously buried at least four of their children at Orton, including William A. in 1934, Minnie L. in 1910, and Thomas and James, twins, in 1919. The 1940 census lists Lucy as a widow, but continuing to live on Ann Street in Wilmington, where she was doing private housework, earning $120 a year. Her house at the time had declined in value to $1,000. Lucy died of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1945 and was also buried in the Orton Cemetery.

We have not been able to trace the remainder of the family.

McCoy

We have identified 13 individuals at Orton, Kendal, or Lilliput with McCoy as their last name. Most of these seem to be associated with a single family descending from Jacob McCoy and Silla, both born during slavery. This family is first encountered in the 1900 census, living on their mortgage-free Town Creek area farm. Jacob, then 60 years old, was identified as a farmer who had been married to Silla, 50 years old, for the past 25 years, indicating a marriage about 1875. The census indicated that Silla had 10 children, only eight of whom were still living. Seven of these were identified in the census, ranging in age from Mary E., who was 31 to Louisa G., who was 6. Also in the

household was 4-year-old Florence, identified as a granddaughter. The eldest six children, ranging in age from 31 to 12 years were all farm labor on the family farm. In the Orton cemetery there is a concrete monument inscribed, "JACOB MCCAY/WAS /BORN MARch/The 11/OF 1882, died/July The 13 of 1912." The death date seems about correct, although either the birth date is in error, or this is not the Jacob McCoy we are discussing. Another grave in the Orton Cemetery is that of Betsy Ann McCoy, the daughter of Jacob and Silla (identified as Clara on the monument), who was born in 1867 and died in 1883.

By 1910, it appears that both Jacob and Silla had died and we imagine that the family had been divided among other community members. John McCoy, 28 years old, was found living in Wilmington with the Mary L. Smith family. Mary was a 38-year-old widow who listed herself as a laundress. Also in the household was her 17-year-old son, Willie, who was identified as a laborer. In this census, McCoy identified himself as a butler for a private family. In addition, all of the individuals were recognized as mulattoes.

Shortly after this, on February 19, 1913, then 21-year-old John McCoy was married to 21-year-old Fannie Brewington in Brunswick County. The 1920 census found John back in the Town Creek Township, living in a rented house, and working in the fish factory – likely the one at Old Brunswick Town. In addition to Fannie, the family consisted on Emma L., 7 year old, Clarah L., 5 years old, and John L., almost 2 years old. By 1930, John was doing farm labor. Present in the family were his wife, Fannie, Emma L., Clara, John, and four additional children Anna B., then 7, Dillard, 4 years old, Odell, 2 years old, and Willie T., then just a month old. By this time, John and Fannie had purchased a house, valued at $200.

There is a Silla McCoy, only 11 days old, buried in the Orton Cemetery on June 28, 1919. We believe this was likely a child of John and Fannie.

John's older brother, Duncan McCoy, married Cora Lee Miller on May 22, 1910. Duncan identified himself as 22 years old and Cora said she was 20. In the 1920 Town Creek census, Duncan is now listed as 40 and was working as a fireman at the fish factory. Cora was identified as 25 and they had two children: Anna M., then 8, and Jack, 2 years old. Also in their household was Mary Hooper, identified as a sister, perhaps Mary E. McCoy, who was 45 years old and a widow. They were living in a rental house. In 1930, family of Duncan and Cora was still living in a rental house, valued at $5. Annie M. is still listed, but replacing Jack is Alexander. Since they are of an appropriate age (2 in the first census and 12 in the second), we imagine they represent the same person. Mary L. Hooper was still alive and in the McCoy household.

In 1940, Duncan and Cora Lee are found in the Smithfield Township, living in a rental house with a value of $5. Duncan lists himself as farm labor. Also present is Annie May, then 28, who is also working as farm labor. While Mary Hooper is no longer present, the McCoys have taken in Lessie Murray, a 29-year-old niece, working as farm labor, Vernice Murray, 9 years old, also a niece, Chancy L. Murray, a 4-year-old nephew, and LeRoy C. Murray, a one-year-old nephew. Dilliard McCoy and B.L. Brewington, nephews, are also living with them. In addition, they have taken in Mary L. Brown, 9 years old, identified as a lodger. In this census, earnings are also listed, allowing us to know that the family was surviving on $520/year.

All we know about Dillard is that he registered for the WWI draft, identifying his employer as N.C. Shipbuilding Company in Wilmington. We also believe that Duncan and Cora Lee may have had the child, Duncan, who was buried in the Orton Cemetery on October 28, 1916, at the age of two. Curiously, this child is listed in the death certificates as white.

The death certificates reveal that both Duncan (who died in 1954) and his wife, Cora (who died in 1975) are buried in the Orton cemetery. Cora continued living at Lilliput through at least 1960.

In the attached family chart, we suspect

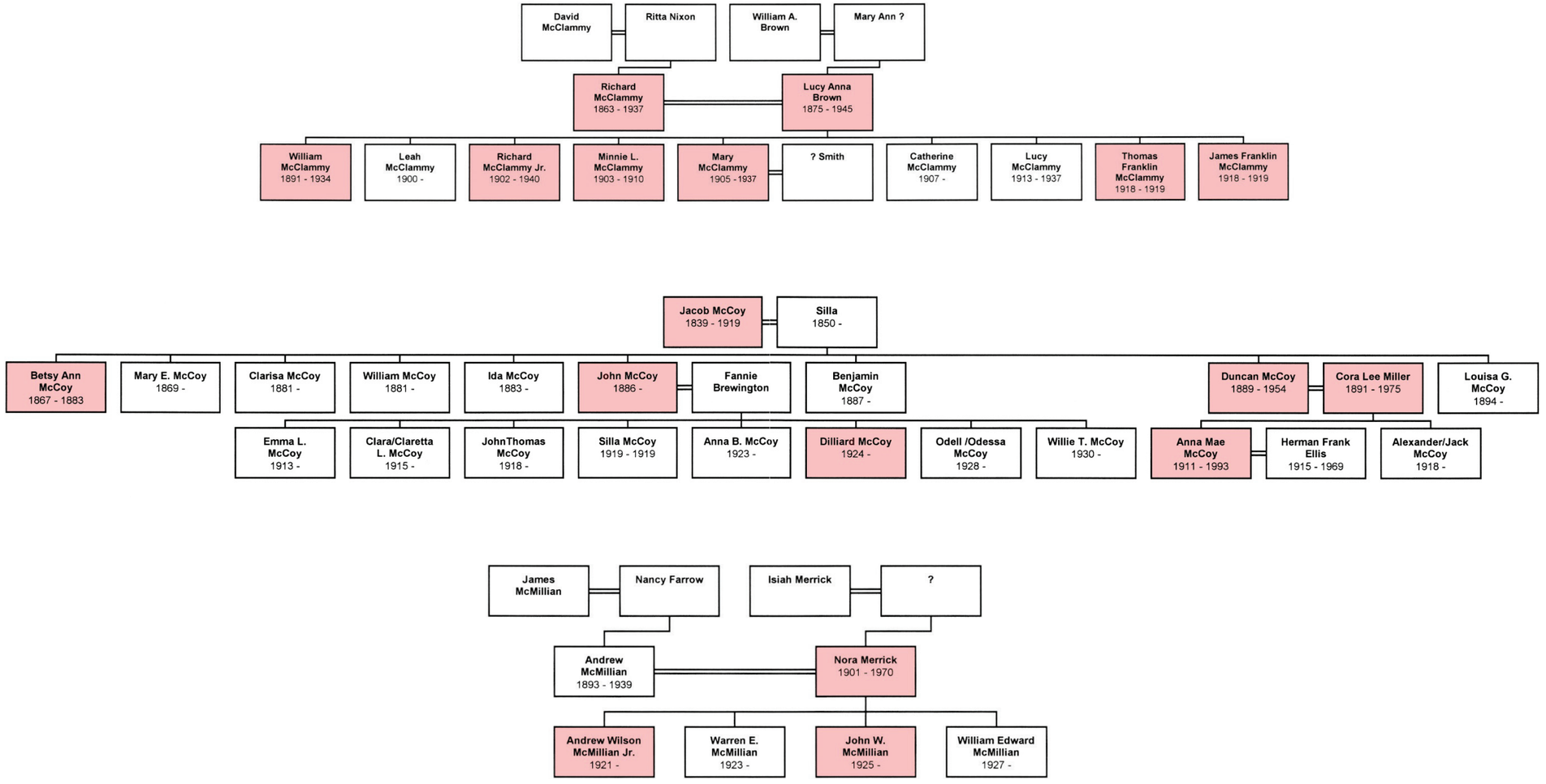


Figure 44. Family charts of the McClammy, McCoy, and McMillian families. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

that Willie T. may be the Willie Jane on the Orton Christmas list.

McMillian

We have members of the Andrew and Nora McMillian families at Orton. In addition, we have found evidence of a Charles McMillian working at Orton in 1918 and a Jim McMillian working as the Orton caretaker in 1927. Thus far, we have not been able to tie these individuals to a common ancestor. In fact, we have been unsuccessful discovering anything about either Charles or Jim.

We know that Andrew McMillian was the son of James (perhaps Jim?) McMillian and Nancy Farrow. James McMillian was born about 1849 and in 1890 owned one cow and one hog. By 1895, however, he had managed to acquire 81 acres identified as his home, valued at $150. He also paid taxes on two cows and two hogs, $2 in food provisions, and $15 in personal property (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1890 and 1895). In 1900, we find James reporting 70 acres valued at $250. Although the acreage is slightly different, it is likely this represents the same tract as reported five years earlier. By that time, however, he also owned two horses, four goats, four head of cattle, eight hogs, a firearm valued at $1, $1 worth of jewelry or watches, and $20 in personal property (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1900). It appears that he was very successful for an African American at this period.

Andrew was born in 1893 and first appears in the 1930 census, at the age of 37. He acquired a 22 acre parcel in 1924 (known as B-210) (Brunswick Count Register of Deeds, DB 38, pg. 59). A menhaden fisherman, he had married 29-year-old Nora, the daughter of Isiah Merrick. The 1930 census reports four children, Andrew, Jr., 9, Warrant E., 7, John W., 5, and William E., 3. They owned their house, valued at $100. The 1927 tax list reported that Andrew claimed $455 in real and personal property (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1927). In 1935, he reported real estate valued at $447 and personal property worth $3. Nora herself reported an additional $249 in real estate (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1935). Andrew Wilson McMillian registered for the WWII draft, listing his employer at the time as Consolidated Fisheries, but noting that he was not certain of his age.

In 1935, Andrew, Jr., a "young negro boy" was in court, charged with using "profane language on the public highway." Apparently, cursing was criminal when it was done by a black and was directed "at a prominent white citizen." He was paroled into the custody of his father for a year and Andrew, Sr. was required to pay court costs (State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, May 29, 1935, pg. 6). Things took a decidedly dark turn in 1939, when Andrew McMillian, Jr. was arrested for the "fatal shooting of his father the week before during a family argument," although both Andrew and his mother explained that it was self-defense (The State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, November 8, 1939). The death certificate for Andrew McMillian, Sr. lists his death as a homicide due to "shot-gun wad in left chest." The certificate lists burial at Marsh Branch by E.E. McCoy of Southport.

A subsequent article reported that Andrew pled guilty to manslaughter and was given 4 to 6 years on the road gang, with the sentence being suspended and Andrew being placed on probation for 5 years (The State Port Pilot, Southport, NC, April 10, 1940).

The 1940 census does, in fact, list Andrew, then 21, as back home, living with his mother and working as a hotel dishwasher, making $168 a year. Brother Warren, 18, was working as a laborer in a sawmill and earning $182 a year. John, 16, and William, 13, were also living with their mother on River Road in the Smithville Township.

The 1945 tax list reveals that the estate of James McMillan was still being taxed for $540 worth of property. The estate of Andrew McMillan was taxed for $281 in property and Nora reported $300 in property.

Nora McMillan lost their family property (Tract B-242), part of the Sarah Hooper property, to the U.S. Government in 1953 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 113, pg. 279). It was likely

this loss that prompted her and her son, William E., to move to Wilmington where the City Directory reveals she was working as a maid and he was a student in 1957. They were living at 1307 Ann Street. By 1960, Nora was still a maid, but William E. was working as an employee of Brooklyn Trading, a bottled gas and appliance dealer in the city. Nora lived a long life, dying in 1970 of a cerebral thrombosis and being buried in Drew Cemetery. William Edward McMillian provided information on the death certificate, still living in Wilmington. Andrew McMillian does not seem to have left the Orton area, still living in a house at Lilliput into the 1960s. We have been unable to find further information regarding the other children.

Parker

We have identified five Parkers in plantation records, but can identify only two, Mary Lily and Herbert, thus far. Parts of this family have been researched in the Parker Family Tree and the Carrie Parker Tree #2 (parkerp01) on Ancestry.com. This is a complex family with multiple branches, so we suspect that those left unidentified are likely children who missed the census.

The family originates with the union of Bowden Parker, born about 1840 and Patsy Brown, born about 1849. They had at least four children, John, born about 1858, William, born about 1869, Carrie, born about 1889, and Thomas, born about 1870. We have been able to track William and John, although William's branch is not well developed. Their father, Bowden, appears in the 1881 tax list. At that time he paid his poll tax and reported owning one cow, valued at $15 (Brunswick County Tax Scroll, 1881). He is listed again in 1895 and 1905, each time claiming his 7 acres homestead, with a value that ranged from $20 in 1895 to $100 in 1905. His personal property declined from $6 to $4, and he owned little livestock (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1895, 1905).

William first appears in official records in 1895, when he paid a poll tax but owned no property or personal goods (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1895). By 1900, however, he had acquired a 37 acre tract in an area known as Horse Pen, but it was valued at only $25. Livestock included only a horse and cow. It appears that William married Nora Edwards in 1907. Both were living in Southport at the time, but William's age of 38 (Nora was only 22), suggests this was his second marriage. We can document only one child, Eddie Parker, born in 1921. In 1919, however, William Parker acquired two tracts of land from John Brogan, both on Governors Creek (these were subsequently acquired by the U.S. Government in 1953 as Tracts A-129 and A-132) (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 189, pg. 513). Even earlier, in 1915, he reported owning two tracts, one was 37 acres and identified as "old home," valued at $250, while the other tract, only 1 acres, was his current home and was valued at $200. The only livestock reported was a mule and $5 worth of tack (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1915). William is found in the 1930 census when he was reported to be 68 years old, married to Nora, then 66. They owned their house, valued at $150 and he was reported farming with his 19-year old-son, Eddie. Also present were two grandchildren, Eran, 10, and Louise V., 9-years old. In 1947, William and Nora acquired a 13 acre parcel on Sturgeon Branch, immediately south of Marsh Branch, from Cash and Mary Riggins for $250 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 89, pg. 373).

We find John Parker first in the 1880 census where he was farm labor, enumerated in the household of Benjamin and Margaret Westcott, a white couple in the Smithville Township. We know that he married Violet Hill on October 28, 1889 at the Marsh Branch Church and they settled in the area. The 1890 tax list identified that he paid his poll tax and claimed $50 in unspecified personal property. By 1895, however, he had acquired 8 acres valued at $15 as his home, one horse, two cows, four hogs, and $1 in farming utensils (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1890 and 1895). In the 1900 Smithville census he was married to Violet and renting a house. Violet reported that she had given birth to four children, but only two, Sarah L., 6, and Herbert S., 2, were still living. His 1900 tax report, however, reveals that he owned 8 acres, valued at $15, so why he was renting is uncertain.

Livestock included a horse, five cows, and nine hogs. He also reported $6 in personal property (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1900).

The following census, in 1910, John's family include Sarah, Herbert, Beatrice, 8, Oliver, 6, and John L., 2-years-old. The census correctly reported that they had been married 20 years. In 1920, the family had declined to just John and Violet, and their sons, Oliver and John. By this point, however, they owned their farm. In fact, as early as 1915, the tax list identified John as paying his poll tax, as well as reporting a 148 acre home tract, valued at $700 (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1915). John died in 1928 of heart disease and was buried at an unspecified location in Brunswick County. Violet Parker, even before her husband's death, acquired a 20 acre tract on Sturgeon Creek for $100 in her own name (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 54, pg. 429). After her husband's death, Violet moved in with her younger son, Oliver, but was still actively farming. With her were four grandchildren, Mary E. Galloway, 8, Annie M. Galloway, 6, Edward Galloway, 4, and Linburg Galloway, 2-years old.

When Oliver Parker completed his WWII registration card, he listed his mother as a contact person and at the time was working at the North Carolina Ship Building Company, in Wilmington. He left his parents by at least the age of 21, marrying Christabell Reaves, the 18-year-old daughter of William and Charity Reaves on April 5, 1924. The 1930 census reveals that he was a menhaden fisherman in the Smithville Township. In 1934, he and Christabell purchased one acre of land between Sturgeon and Marsh Creek for $10 from George and Willie Green (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 57, pg. 325). The grantors of the property, likely the trustees of a church, since the deed specifically noted, "it is understood that the old church building on the said parcel is not conveyed, but is to be moved by the parties of the first part). This small holding was eventually lost to the U.S. Government in 1953 (Tract A-126) for the Sunny Point development (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 189, pg. 513). Christabell had three children, Oliver Wendell, 5, Christabell, 4, and Francis Agatha, only two months old in 1930. By 1940, his wife Christabell had died and the census reported that he was a widow. At that time he was no longer fishing, but had returned to farming. He owned his house on River Road, which was valued at $275. Still in the household were Oliver W., Christabell, William S., Agatha, Helen Vereen, and a son, Winbird, 5-years old.

The last son of John and Violet Parker to be considered is Herbert. There is considerable confusion regarding who Herbert married. Herbert's 1962 death certificate clearly indicates he was married at the time of his death to Cairleen Parker, as does her request for a military marker. Nevertheless, there is equally conclusive evidence that he was married to Malisha Parker, the daughter of Willie Parker and Rosa Battle. Herbert enlisted in the Army in August 1918 and served through July 16, 1919, receiving an honorable discharge. He served as a private with Co. A, 546th Service Battalion (his military stone indicates service with the 345th Service Battalion), Quarter Master's Corps. While we don't know a great deal about his life, we do know that he had at least one son, Herbert Jr., and the two of them were involved in multiple real estate transactions. Herbert Parker, Sr. appears to have consolidated his father's estate (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 54, pg. 537 and DB 63, pg. 269). In addition, senior acquired several additional parcels, including one from his son (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 94, pg. 63 and DB 79, pg. 270).

Pearson

Like many of these families, considerable research has already been conducted and is available at Ancestry.com (Brian H. Jackson Family Tree, bhenryjackson and also McMillian Family Tree, AnthonyMcMillian1956). We focus on the three generations beginning with the marriage of John Ed Pearson and Hannah Brown on May 28, 1890 at Orton Plantation. The license was granted by S.R. Chinnis, a Justice of the Peace and also the Superintendent of Orton. The marriage certificate indicates that the parents of both John Ed and Hannah were dead.

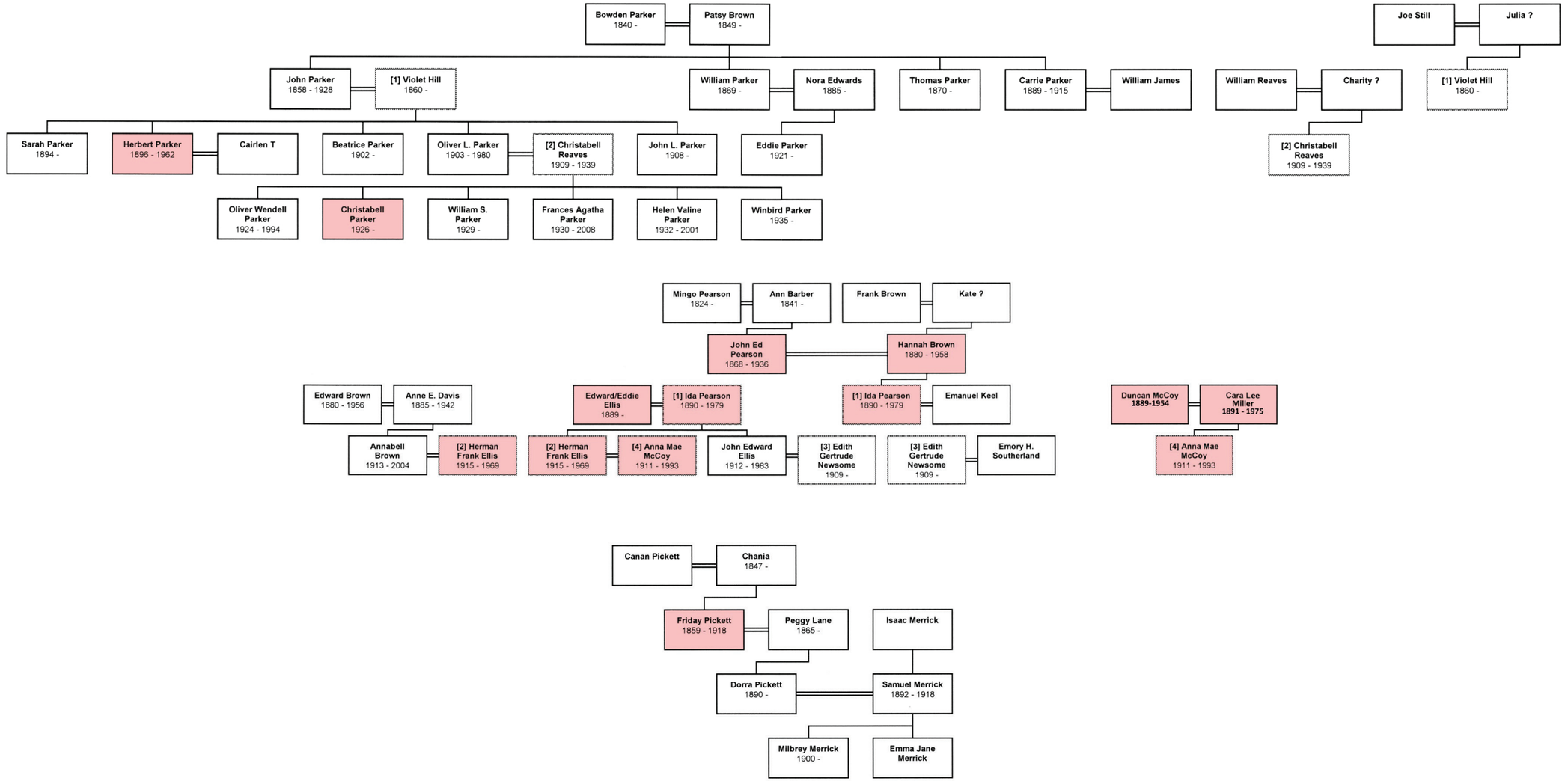


Figure 45. Family charts of the Parker, Pearson, and Pickett families. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

The next time we have a record of John Ed Pearson is in 1895, when he signed a chattel mortgage to J.W. Murchison for $25. As collateral, he put up "1 black ox named Bued" (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB MM, pg. 127). We don't know if the mortgage was satisfied, but in 1898, he claimed two cows, a single hog, and a firearm valued at only $1 (a very low value). By 1900, he claimed no property and paid only his poll tax (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1905). In 1927, however, he claimed $125 value of real and personal estate (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1927).

The 1900 census reveals that John Ed was working as farm labor and renting a house. He also paid taxes on a single cow (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1900). A daughter, Ida, had already been born in 1892. In 1910, the family composition had not changed, although John Ed was working as a laborer at a cotton compress and Ida was a "waiter" for a private family. By 1920, however, John Ed was working at Orton and the Sprunt Accounts indicate small payments in August 1919, a much larger payment in September 1919 ($100) and additional small payments in October 1919 and November 1920. It is likely that he was splitting his time between farming and working in the fish factory (the occupation he listed in the 1920 census). Ida is no longer shown in the household, having married Eddie Ellis on June 15, 1911 at the Orton Church. The household included sons, J.A., 7 years old, and H.E., 4. By the 1930 census, John Ed had assumed a position of some importance at Orton and the census that year identified his occupation as "Orton Plnt. Foreman." Two children are present, John E., 16, Herman, 14. These may be the same children from 1920, but in this census they are identified as grandsons. We believe that they are the sons of Eddie Ellis and Ida Pearson and were simply recorded incorrectly in the 1920 census.

The only Eddie Ellis we can identify is found in the 1900 census for Lower Richland County, South Carolina. At 11-years-old, he is the correct age, but we have been unable to link him conclusively.

John Ed, residing on Orton, died in December 1936 of prostate cancer. We learn from the death certificate that his father was Mingo Pearson of Onslow County. We believe that his mother may have been Ann or Annie. The death certificate was completed by his daughter, Ida, now living in Wilmington. The burial took place at Orton Plantation. His widow appears to have continued living at Orton, dying in 1958 of heart disease. She, too, was buried at Orton. Prior to her death, Ida was renting a house at Lilliput.

At some point, Ida appears to have married a Keel, perhaps in New Jersey. However, she and Eddie Ellis had at least two children, John Edward and Herman – the two children listed with John Ed and Hannah first as children and subsequently as grandchildren. John Edward Ellis, a resident of Wilmington at the time, married Edith Gertrude Southerland, living in Brunswick County, in 1937. His 1940 WWII registration card, however, still listed his mother, Ida Mae Ellis, as a contact person. At the time he was working at the ACL Freight Warehouse in Wilmington. He died in August 1983. Brother Herman married Annabell Brown, daughter of Edward and Anna Brown, on January 2, 1937. Both were living in Wilmington. How long this marriage lasted we don't know, but we do know that Herman Ellis, sometime afterwards, married Anna May McCoy (listed on his death certificate) and Annabell Brown Ellis went on to marry Andrew Jackson Williams, Sr. of Pender County. The couple resided in Brunswick County, with Annabell dying in 2004 and being buried at Greenlawn Memorial Park in Wilmington. Herman Frank Ellis died on heart disease in 1969, while married to Anna Mae McCoy, and was buried at Orton. At that time he was living at Lilliput Plantation. Annie May (or Mae) McCoy Ellis died in 1993 and was buried at Dark Branch Cemetery.

Pickett

There were several Pickett families in the Lower Cape Fear and thus far, we have been unable to link them all together. One of the smallest families is evidenced by a monument in the Orton Cemetery for Teana Pickett (1872-1908). We have found Teana (or Tina) in only one census, in 1900

where we find Tina, 27 years old, married to Scott Pickett, a brick mason then 29 in New Hampshire. The census, however, indicates that both were both in North Carolina, although their twin sons, Alphonzo and Clarence were born in New Hampshire. We believe these are the correct individuals since the 1910 census reveals that Scott is a widower, now living in Boston, Massachusetts, where he was a railroad engineer. We believe that with strong ties to Orton, Tina's body was shipped home for burial.

The next family is that of Friday Pickett, who is also buried in the Orton Cemetery with a stone indicating birth and death dates of 1859 and 1919. This is the same Friday Pickett who took first place in Murchison's 1894 cakewalk at Orton (*The Weekly Star*, Wilmington, NC, December 28, 1894, pg. 2). This family is briefly recounted in the KirkseyPickett Family (Arlett Bell Wright) on Ancestry.com, although they propose a very different reconstruction.

The 1918 death certificate for Friday Pickett indicates that his father was Canan (sometimes Friday Canan) and mother was Checey. He was married to Peggy Lane and the death certificate claims he was buried at Marsh Branch (although the stone is at Orton) by J.L. Pickett, who we believe was a member of the family. Friday first appears in the 1880 census for Smithville Township. He is 21 years old and living with half-brother Island Pickett (it is reported that Checey married three times). He was identified as a farm hand, likely at Orton or one of the adjacent plantations. In 1885, he married Peggy Lane at Orton Plantation. Another tie with Orton is his 1895 chattel mortgage to J.W. Murchison for $40. Murchison held as collateral "one white mule named Joe." In 1900, he reported being married 15 years – correct for the marriage certificate found and they now had one child, Dorra, born about January 1890. At this time, he was likely working for Frederic Kidder at Kendal Plantation. Friday died on July 30, 1918 of Bright's disease, today called nephritis or kidney disease.

Samuel or Sam Merrick was the son of Isaac Merrick and he married Dora Pickett on December 17, 1909. In 1910, Friday is still working as farm labor. Dora and her husband Samuel Merrick are living with Friday and Peggy. Also present in the household is Milbrey Pickett, identified as a granddaughter. Reported to be about 10 years old, this may be a child of Dora's previous marriage. For the WWI registration, Samuel Merrick was living at 811 Campbell Street in Wilmington and driving a wagon for the Independent Ice Company. He died of pneumonia in 1918 at the age of 25. Upon his death, Sam apparently had money in the American Bank and Trust Company. Leaving no will, the bank determined that a final sum of $69 was owed from the estate to Emma Jane Merrick. We have not been able to determine the relationship, although the simple explanation is that this was a daughter.

We should briefly mention that a member of the Merrick family, 35-year old Violet Merrick, is found in the 1870 census in the Wilmington household of Isaac B. Grainer. Grainger purchased Orton in 1874 and selling it again in 1876. By 1880, she had married Albert Bloodworth was was living in nearby Pender County.

The last individual we have documented is Elijah Pickett, buried in the Orton Cemetery with dates of 1886-1889. Dying as a young child and between census years, we have not been able to identify him in any of the records.

Reaves

We have identified 11 Reaves in the immediate area and they seem to represent two distinct families. The first originates with Isaac and Maggie Reaves (based on Social Security records). They had at least one son, Kelly T. Reaves, who we found marrying Maggie J. Hill on February 15, 1900. In the census for that year, the couple had moved into the household of Julia Hill, then 58, and her two children, John, 23, and Swasia, 25. Julia was doing farm labor, as was her son, John. No occupation was listed for either Maggie or Kelly. This marriage does not seem to have lasted since in by 1910, Kelly had married a woman named Mary in Virginia and they had a child together, Claretta.

The 1910 census reports him back in the Smithville Township. He is now reported to be 41 years old and Mary, his wife, 26. They reported being married for 10 years and Mary had given birth to two children, both still living: Viola, 8 years old and Claretta, 6 years old (perhaps Viola was a child of the union between Kelly and Maggie). The family was identified as mulattos and they owned their house with no mortgage. Kelly was engaged in menhaden fishing. Also present in the household were two Hills, suggesting that perhaps they had maintained ties to the family.

In 1915, Kelly Reaves paid taxes on 8 acres in the Marsh Branch area, although we have not identified a deed. We also know that he owned at least one cow and four hogs (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1915). He also paid his poll tax that year.

In 1918 we find the third marriage of Kelly Reaves, this time to 23-year-old Luberta Pigott. Not found in the 1920 census, we find Kelly again in 1930. He is still fishing menhaden, but is now identified as a widower and no children are in the house, then valued at $300. In 1940 he is shown living on River Road, still owning his house, although it is now valued at only $70. He listed no occupation. His age and proximity may explain his inclusion in Orton's Christmas festivities and may suggest the tightness of the bonds in the black community.

In 1926, Kelly Reaves acquired 7⅓ acres from W.H. Corbett, a white farmer in Wilmington, for $22. The property was situated on the north side of Marsh Branch Road (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 42, pg. 322). In 1935, Kelly's property was valued at $220 and he paid $4.58 in taxes (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls 1935). As late as 1945, Brunswick County has Kelly's property listed, although he had moved to Norfolk, Virginia (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1945).

Although we have not determined when Kelly died, we did find a death certificate for his daughter, Claretta. Maggie was listed as her mother, rather than Mary. In any event, Claretta was buried in Wilmington.

The other family, with closer ties to the Lower Cape Fear plantations, begins with the union of Major Daniel Reaves and Margaret or Maggie Miles. This family is documented by several family trees, including Reaves Family Tree (SharonReaves55) on Ancestry.com. Major Daniel and Margaret were living in Pitt County in 1880. Both were 28-years-old and he was engaged in farming. They had three children, 4-year-old Sarah, 2-year-old Daniel, and a newly born infant.

By 1900, the family was living in the Lockwoods Folly Township where they owned their farm, mortgage free. The census reveals that Major Daniel and Margaret had been married for 26 years, or since about 1874. Margaret had given birth to 11 children, nine of whom were still living. At the time the family included all nine: Sarah, 24, James Daniel, 22, William A., 18, Mary M., 16, Mattie D., 14, Samuel T., 13, Alice, 10, Lewis E., 8, and Marion D., 5. In 1910 and 1920, they were still living in the Lockwoods Folly area. Major Daniel was still farming; his wife listed her occupation as neighborhood nurse. This likely meant that she was a midwife or engaged in healing practices. Sarah, James Daniel, William A., and Samuel T. had all left the home. Mary M., the oldest remaining child, now 26-years-old, indicated that she was single, but had been married for 26 years. This is an unlikely scenario, but it may indicate that she had been married since also present in the household were two individuals identified as granddaughters, Roma Faulk, 2-years old, and Sarah Faulk, not yet a year old. There were Faulks in the area, but we haven't been able to determine any marriages.

In November 1918, Major Daniel Reaves died of a stroke at the approximate age of 70. He was buried in the Family Cemetery in Bolivia area, known locally as the Reaves-Bellamy Cemetery. His concrete stone, still present, indicates that he was a deacon in the St. John Christian Church. This Baptist church is still extant on the Old Ocean Highway southwest of Bolivia. The 1920 census shows Maggie as a widow, still living in Lockwoods Folly Township, with her son Marion and her daughter, Alice. Still present were Roma and Sarah, now described as nieces. Maggie died in March

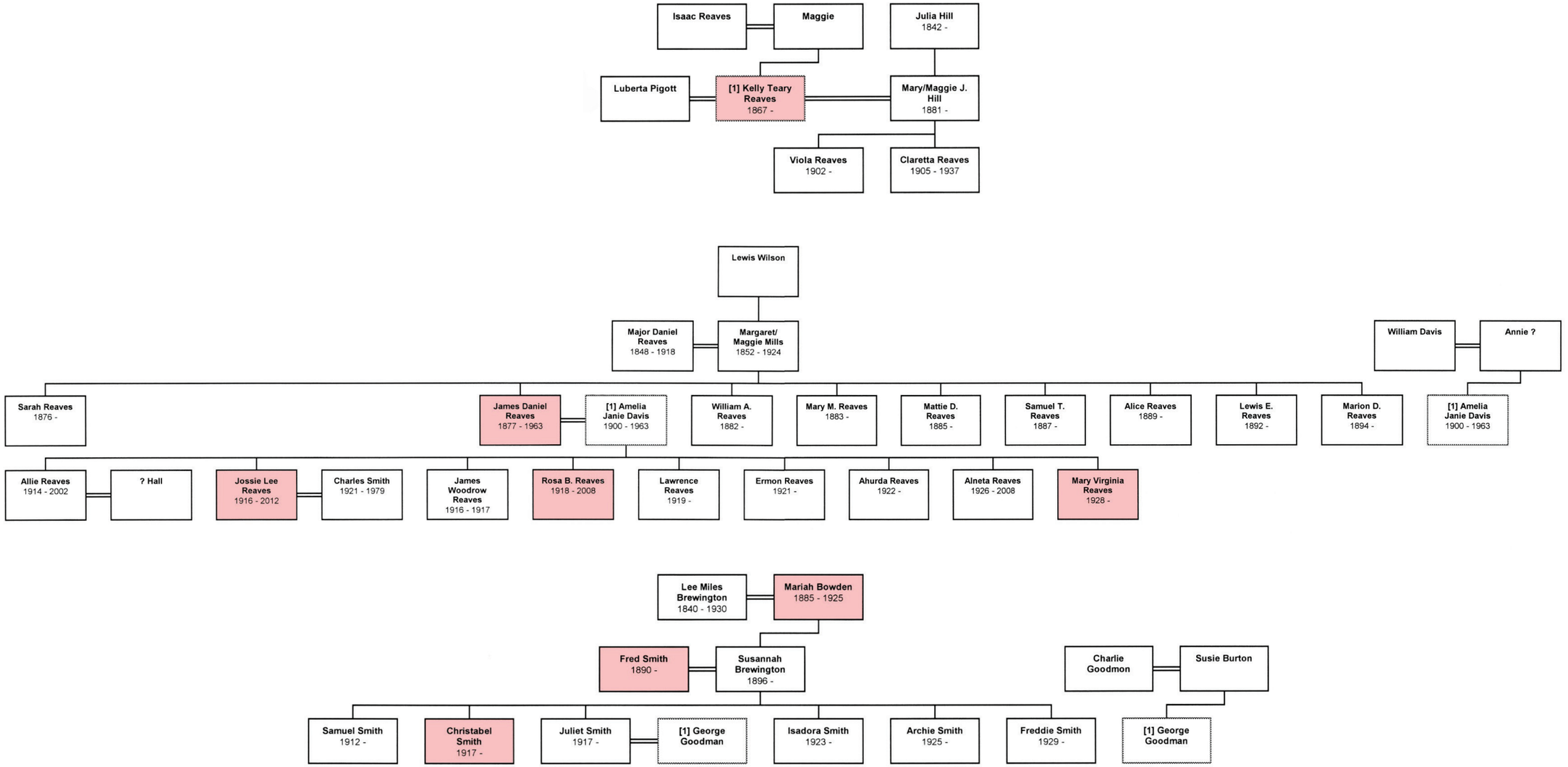


Figure 46. Family charts of the Reaves and Smith families. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

1924 and her death certificate is specific that her burial occurred at the "Reaves Cemetery."

James Daniel Reaves and Amelia Janie Davis married about 1900, but the first census we have found them in is 1930. At that time they were living in the Smithville Township; James was 52 years old and Amelia was about 41 years old. Their family already consisted of seven children, including Allie, 16, Jossie Lee, 14, Rosa Bell, 12, Lawrence, 11, Ermon, 9, Ahurda or Alnida, 8, and Mary V., 2. The family owned their home on Marsh Branch Road, valued at $150 and James was engaged in menhaden fishing. In 1940, James, about 63, was now working on the W.P.A. highway crew and earning about $360 a year. He is one of the few area residents we have found engaged in W.P.A. work. The family still owned their house, now valued at $400 and the household consisted on Amelia, Allie, Jossie Lee, Rosa Bell, Lawrence, Ermon, Elneta (who was recorded as Ahurda or Alnida a decade earlier), and Mary Virginia. Their daughterAllie was working as a nurse in a private home and was paid $85/year. Jossie Lee, Lawrence, and Ermon were all working as farm labor and had combined earnings of $170 a year. At some point, the Social Security records reveal that Allie Reaves married into the Hall family. Josey married into the Charles Smith family (son of Junior and Maggie Smith, who eventually purchased the Swain Place), and Rosa married Andrew McMillan. We know that both Josey and Rosa were working at Orton as late as 1989 (Susan Usher, "Reunion will bring memories of 4 River Road communities," The Brunswick Beacon, June 29, 1989, pg. 6A).

In 1953 James and Amelia lost their 3 acres (identified as B-242) to the U.S. Government for Sunny Point (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 113, pg. 279). This deed specifies that it was the same parcel that Fred Rutland lost to Brunswick County for taxes in September 1949 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, Deed Book 97, pg. 629). That deed specified that the property was originally sold to Rutland in 1919 by Sarah Hooper. We presume that the County, after acquiring the parcel, sold it to the Reaves, but the deed was never recorded. We have determined that in 1935, the property was valued at $270 and $4.58 in taxes were paid. In 1945, Rutland paid his $3.52 tax on the land, still valued at $220 (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1935 and 1945).

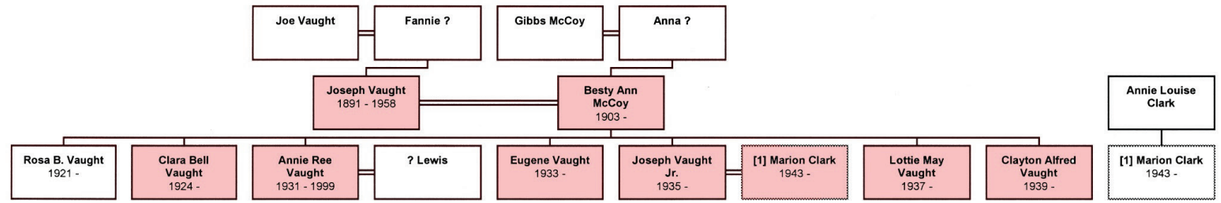
James died on February 18, 1963 of heart disease and his wife, Amelia, died only seven days later, on February 25, 1963 of influenza. He was buried at the Kendal Chapel Cemetery, while she was buried at Drew Cemetery.

Smith

Several records make reference to Fred Smith and initially we had difficulty identifying the individual based on how common the name was. We were finally able, however, to determine that this was the 29-year-old Fred Smith, who on June 1, 1911 married the 18-year-old Susan (or Susanna) Brewington. The marriage took place at Kendal and was witness by Solomon King, James Brown, and W.M. Case.

The 1920 census identified Fred not as 38, but rather 46-years-old and Susanna was identified as 24, not 27. This is just another example of how undependable either the census takers or respondents were in regard to ages. Regardless, Fred and Susan's family already consisted of 8-year-old Samuel and 3-year old Christabel. He identified his occupation as a laborer in the nearby fish factory. We have accounts throughout 1918 of Sprunt providing payments to Fred Smith. The three payments in August 1918 amounted to 48.72. While this may represent wages, it may also represent early cotton being sold to Sprunt.

In 1930 the census reveals that their family had grown to include Samuel, now 17, Julietta, 14, Christabel, 12, Isadora, 7, Archie, 5, and Freddie, about 1½-years old. The census indicates that Fred had been married at 21 years (not the 29 claimed on the license) and Susan had been married at 16 (not 18 as claimed). Both Fred and Samuel identified themselves as working on farms. They were living in a rental house valued at $5. It is worth noting that in 1920 they were living in a house they owned, without a mortgage. In 1936, the Sprunt Accounts list a payment to Dr. William



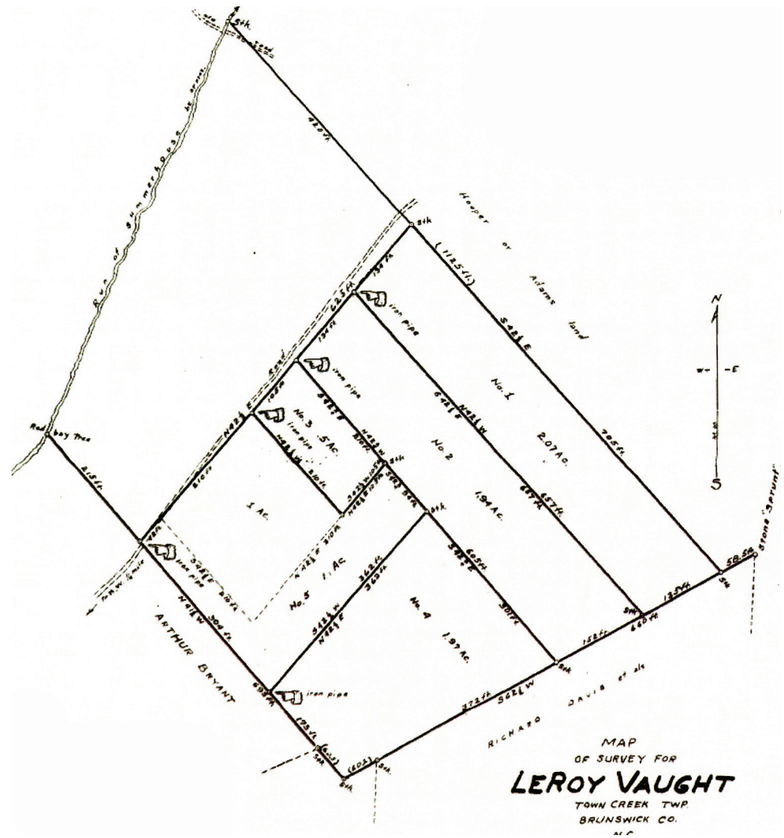


Figure 47. Family charts of the Vaught family. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions. Also shown is a 1954 plat of lands belong to Leroy Vaught in the Dark Branch area (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, PB 4, pg. 8.

S. Dasher, the physician in Southport, $8.00 for the treatment of Christabel Smith, who would have been 18.

By 1940, Julietta, not calling herself Julia, married George Goodman in Richmond, Virginia. We have not been able to identify anyone else from the family in 1940.

There are two additional Smiths that we have been unable to identify. One is Thomas Smith, who appears in the Sprunt Accounts being paid $1.50 on October 11, 1919. The other is Mary Ellen McClammy Smith, buried at Orton with a birth date of July 10, 1908 and a death date of July 26, 1930. We believe that this may be Lucy McClammy, born in about 1913 according to records, who was the daughter of Richard McClammy and Lucy Anna Brown.

Vaught

Although spelled several ways, we have identified 14 individuals in the plantation area belonging to the Vaught clan. This family is seen in the James-Medlin Family on Ancestry.com, but only in a relatively minor way. The Vaughts appear to be members of two families that we have not yet been able to join together. The first family is descended from Richard Vaught and his wife, Lucy. They had at least one son, born during slavery, Joe. Joe Vaught married Eliza or Elsie Clark on September 39, 1918. Since the marriage license identifies him as 68 years old, it is likely that this was at least his second marriage. This license lists his parents as Peter and Lucy; his death certificate lists his parents as Richard and Lucy. Eliza's parents were both dead at the time of the marriage and she was identified as 45 years old, suggesting that she, too, had a previous marriage.

The 1920 census, taken just a few years after their marriage, reveals that Joe was still working for wages and two children are listed. One is L., then 20 years old and identified as a widow. In addition, present in the family is LeRoy Vaught, then six years old. At that time, they were living in a rented house. Elsie Vaught died on November 7, 1924 and was buried at "Old Town." Only seven days later, her husband died and was buried in the Lilliput Cemetery. The informant for his death certificate was listed as Joe Vaught, Jr., perhaps a son from a previous marriage.

We know that their son, LeRoy, had at least one son, John Betty Vaught, born on May 1, 1933 to Lucille or Lucy M. Walker. Although the child was given Vaught as his last name, no father was listed in the birth records. The next month, LeRoy married Dora Alvis Taylor and had one daughter, Eleanor Vaught in 1936. John Betty married Queen Julia A. Jones, the daughter of Frank Clarence Jones and Evelena Brewington.

In 1945 Leroy listed $853 in personal property and $989 in real estate (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1945). We know that in 1943 he purchased two tracts, totaling 27 acres for $10 from Lucy McClammy, Elizabeth Howard, and Hannah Pearson as the surviving heirs of Alec Brown (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 76, pg. 234). The parcels were on River Road and were originally part of the Lilliput lands sold to Alec Brown in 1873.

The second family begins with the union of a Joe Vaught and Fannie, who have at least one child, Joseph, born in 1891. On March 12, 1923, Joseph married Betsy Ann McCoy, the daughter of Gibbs McCoy and his wife, Anna. Parts of this tree have been compiled under Hunter/Watkins on Ancestry.com. The 1930 census identifies Joe and Betsy Ann living in Wilmington where they were paying $8 a month in rent. Their household consisted of one child, 9-year-old Rosa B. Also in the household is a boarder, Ruth White, a 21-year-old cook. It may be that in 1920, Joe Vaught was living in Horry County, South Carolina, although his parents are listed as Peter and Margaret. He must have returned to Brunswick County by 1927, when we find him declaring a very modest $5 in personal property (Brunswick County Tax Scrolls, 1927). In 1935, he paid only for his poll tax.

By 1940, the Joseph Vaught family was living in a rental house with a value of $3 on Orton Road. The family income was listed as $250/year.

The family included Clara Belle, 16; Annie Ree, 7; Eugene, 6; Joseph, Jr., 4 years old; Lottie May, 3; and Clayton A., 1 year old. Betsy Ann Vaught purchased in her own name a 3.8 acre tract of land adjacent to the Sprunt property from Sam Betts in 1952 (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 110, pg. 483). This property was subsequently conveyed by Joseph and Betsy Ann to their son, Joseph Vaught, Jr. (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 136, pg. 392).

At some point Joe and his wife, Betsy Ann, moved back to Horry County, where Joe died in 1958. His body was returned to North Carolina for burial at Orton. It appears that his wife returned also, since she is identified living in a Kendal house about 1960 (she died in 1995, although we have not identified the location of her burial).

In 1962, Joseph Vaught, Jr., married Marion Clark and at some point, Annie Ree married a Lewis.

The Sprunt account books identify $5 being paid to J. Voight [sic] on December 24, 1923. This was likely the Joe or Joseph Vaught married to Betsy Ann McCoy and it may represent a Christmas gift. Joe Vaught appears again in a February 21, 1941 entry, when Sprunt loaned Vaught $7.00.

Walker

There are (at least) two Walker families in the study area. One consists solely of Maggie Walker, as revealed by her monument in the Orton Cemetery. We can identify her as early as the 1910 census when she indicated that at age 33 she was a widow. She bore six children and all six were still living, including Mary, 22, Jessie, 11, Rebecca, 9, Lizzie, 7, Katherine, 5, and George, 5. Also present in the household was her 25-year-old sister-in-law, Betsy Ann Walker. Margaret, Mary, and Betsy Ann were all working as farm labor. The census reveals that she owned her house, free of a mortgage.

In 1930 she again appears in the census, listing her age as 51, but still widowed. She also indicates that she married at age 24. Still present in the house were George, working at the local fish factory, and Katherine. Added since 1910 are Evangeline, 16 years old, and Lucy Lee, 14. She still owned her house and it was valued at $400. We identified Maggie on both the 1935 and 1945 tax lists. These only itemize real estate value, which was listed as $565 in 1935 and $625 in 1945.

Maggie Walker died on September 26, 1956 of chronic renal inflammation and fibrosis with kidney disease and was buried in the Orton Cemetery. Her death certificate claims a birth of May 1, 1881, but also states that she never married. The information was provided by her daughter, Evangelene, who by this time had married into the Brown family.

The other Walker is Sarah Jane. She is first identified in the 1910 census for the Burgaw area of Pender County. She had been married to John Henry Walker for 11 years, suggesting a marriage date of about 1899, which is consistent with the age of their children at the time, John Jr., 10, George, 9, and Melvin 7. John Henry was performing odd jobs, but nevertheless, they owned their farm and all of Sarah's children were living.

Still in Pender County in 1920, John Henry was now a brick mason and 39 years old, Sarah Jane was 32. The household consisted of Daisy, 17, John Jr., 16, George G., 14, Melvin, 12, and Annabelle, 7. The 1930 census found the family in the Smithville Township of Brunswick County, about 60 miles to the south-southwest of their earlier home. At age 45, Sarah Jane first married at 18, but now identified herself as a widow. The household consisted of a daughter, Sarah Jane, 19-years-old, who is identified as a "Jr." in the census. Also present are Isiah, 17, John W., 13, Arthur, 12, and Walter, 9. Sarah Jane was engaged in farm labor, as was son Isiah. Her daughter Sarah Jane, was a maid with a private family. They were renting their house.

Sometime shortly after the 1930 census Sarah Jane left the Lower Cape Fear, moving to Wilmington where she died at the age of 60 in 1940 from mitral regurgitation coupled with an infection. She was buried in the Lilliput Cemetery.

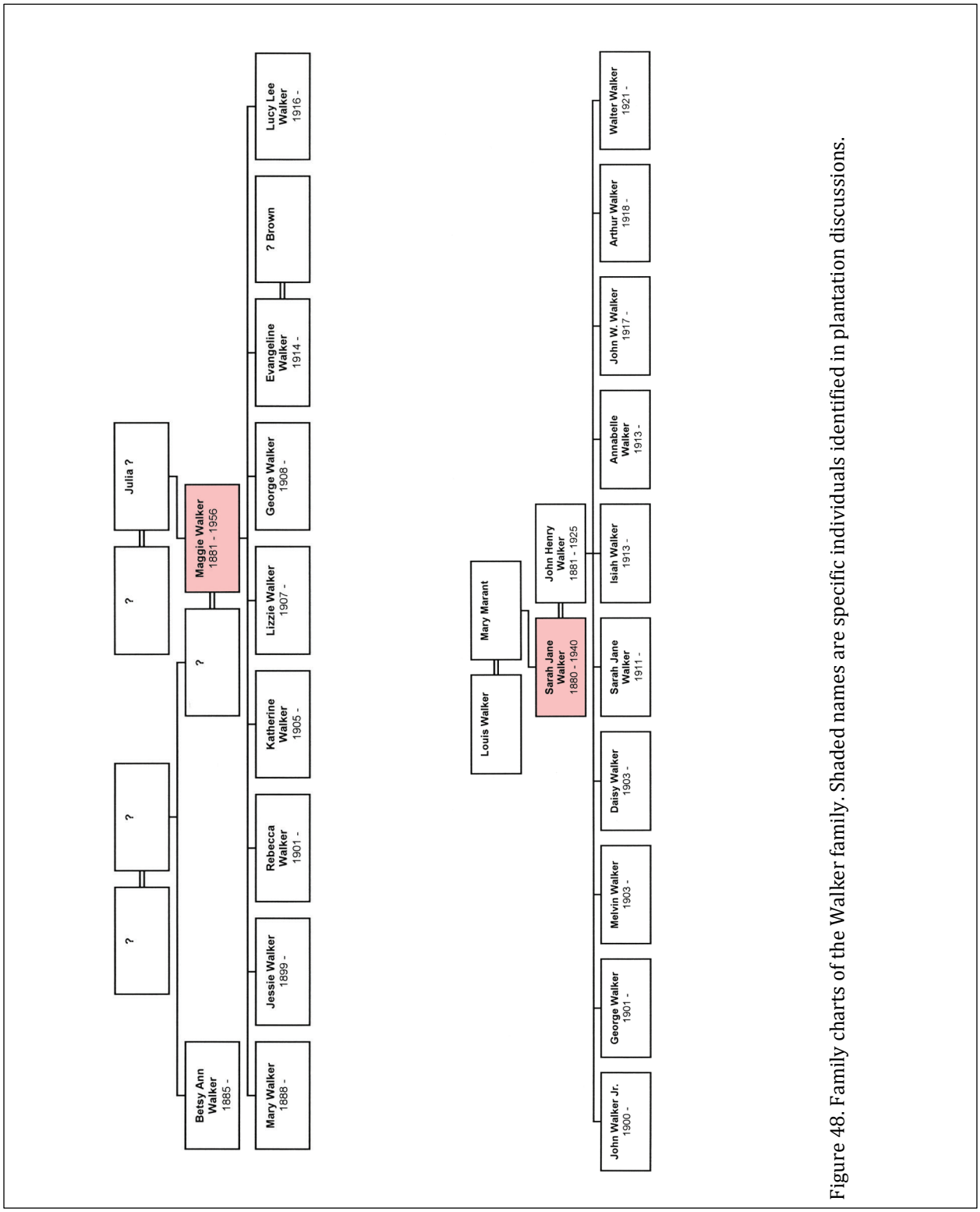


Figure 48. Family charts of the Walker family. Shaded names are specific individuals identified in plantation discussions.

This death certificate indicates that her husband was John Henry Walker.

Conclusions

We began with the goal of telling the story of the African Americans living along the Lower Cape Fear. We noticed that their lives have been largely ignored by historians who focus on the region's rich colonial history, antebellum rice plantations, and extensive Civil War battles, but seemingly forgetting how intimately all of these historical events are intertwined with the African American presence. This presence began as enslaved workers, transformed to freedmen creating a new order, and eventually is seen as African Americans struggling to survive the effects of Jim Crow, agricultural depression, and the disruption caused by the Sunny Point relocations. During all of these "phases," these people were creating new social relations and social order. They created neighborhoods and developed an extensive pattern of intermarriage and community.

We warned that our history would not be comprehensive and we are certain that both black and white readers will find details missing that they wish we had included. Nevertheless, we believe this does create a foundation on which additional research – more intensive research – can build. More importantly, it begins the process of ensuring the story of these African American communities is remembered.

While this is not, strictly speaking, an anthropological examination, it does offer considerable insight into major issues of social structure, social life, and economics.

An Overview

The records available to us are imperfect. Families, for whatever reason, were often left out of the census. The information was that provided was also affected by the census taker, in spite of detailed instructions. For example, some recorded only initials for the first name. Other issues, such as race, were subjective, regardless of the level of detail provided enumerators. It is clear from spellings that often enumerators were not familiar with the dialect of local blacks. Although there were very detailed instructions regarding issues such as age, including not to estimate, there is tremendous disparity in ages from decade to decade. This may be reluctance to reveal ages, inability to remember birthdates, or simply the failure of the white enumerators to care enough to take sufficient effort. Finally, while census instructions called for enumerators listing individuals as mulatto in 1870, 1890, 1910, and 1920, this does not seem to have been consistently followed and families identified as mulatto one year would next year be classified as black. We also aren't sure how the instructions were to be operationalized.

There are issues using local records, as well. Our anecdotal observation is that individuals requesting marriage licenses rarely provided an age for the bride and groom that corresponded with ages identified on census records. Perhaps more importantly, relatively few marriages or births were recorded, and while death certificates in North Carolina date as early as 1909, very few African Americans appear in these records until about 1920, perhaps because so few deaths were attended by a physician.

In spite of these issues, the records do provide an insight that would not otherwise be available. Reading these brief family histories gives us a sense of African American life on the Lower Cape Fear that is worth exploring and understanding, if only imperfectly. There was very clearly a community. Most of those we have identified were born in North Carolina and most lived their entire lives in Brunswick County. Influx

came primarily from coastal counties to the north, such as Pender. When individuals or families could clearly be identified from outside North Carolina, they were most likely to come from coastal South Carolina, especially Horry County. If families or individuals left the Town Creek or Smithville Townships, they were most likely to shift to adjacent New Hanover County, to take advantage of the economic opportunities offered by Wilmington. There, favored jobs (or at least available options) were with the ship industry and the railroad freight yards. Even then, however, death often brought individuals back to home. It was only in the 1930s and 1940s that we begin to see consistent out-migration. Whether this is the result of economic pressure, racial injustice, or new opportunities is difficult to say and we suspect the reason varied from individual to individual. Regardless, there was increasing movement.

Education came very slowly to the Lower Cape Fear. A great many of the families, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were functionally illiterate. Many children were attending school, but as soon as they were old enough to be productive farm workers they almost universally left school for local jobs. We suspect that with limited economic opportunities, primarily in the fields, education was not seen as a particularly high priority. Nevertheless, there were exceptions, often among females, some of whom were college educated.

A remarkable number of African Americans in the Lower Cape Fear owned their homes and often even farms, free of mortgage in the late nineteenth century and into the early twentieth. Of course, we don't always know how large these farm holdings were or how productive they were. Based on a few likely purchases of cotton from local farms, we suspect the earning were not great. This seems to begin breaking down about 1920 and into 1930, presumably because of the economic depression that hit farmers during this time. Nevertheless, it is surprising that blacks came out of reconstruction owning property in relatively great numbers.

Houses owned by African Americans at first glance seem rather expensive, at times $300, $400, or even $500. This should be tempered by the understanding that these values reflect not only the structure, but also the land. Rental for houses could be as low as $1 a month and never higher than $5 a month, likely reflecting the relatively poor conditions (those prices equate to from $15 to $75 a month in 2018 dollars).

Families tended to be very large, indicating little effort to limit conception. In many cases, the next child was born about a year after the last child. While we can't, with these data, determine sexual preferences for children, we imagine that boys were welcome since they could more quickly become prime economic earners. This, however, certainly didn't exclude young women from farm labor. There was virtually no other job opportunity on the Lower Cape Fear. By the middle teens, children had left school and were beginning to do farm work at home. By the late teens, African American children were "working out" on the farms of presumably large owners, such as those at Orton, Kendal, and Lilliput.

While a few African Americans in the Lower Cape Fear were working as domestics or cooks in the late nineteenth century (and many of these were mulattos), the practice became less common as more were funneled into agriculture. The records also report menhaden fishing and the associated factories between 1910 and 1930 in the Smithville Township. Often, however, the families working in the factory were also identified as owning farms – clearly documenting the seasonal nature of the business and its interaction with routine farming schedules. A similar situation is seen of Town Creek Township African Americans working in the fertilizer factories around Navassa during some parts of the year and returning home to pursue agricultural activities during planting and harvesting seasons.

Some occupations are noticeable by their absence. For example, we did not identify a single women as a midwife in any of the census records, in spite of the prevalence of home births. This is

likely because the African American community did not view the activity as a specialized occupation, but rather as an activity commonly assumed by the elder females. There was, however, one black woman identified as a "neighborhood nurse." What this meant in the context of the census is difficult to ascertain. It is interesting to speculate that she might have been a practitioner of herbal medicine or root work. In addition, we found several such caregivers mentioned by local community members, even though this was not recorded in official records. We wonder if this may reflect a prejudice among census takers?

While there were African American professionals, they chose not to live in the rural areas of the county, but were exclusively found in the Smithville (later Southport).

In many respects, rural Brunswick was likely reminiscent to before the Civil War. There were very few whites and agricultural gangs were supervised by black foremen. By all accounts, it was a very black world. White doctors were called only for extreme cases of illness and it seems that plantation owners still paid the accounts (although they may have been deducted from wages). None of the families we examined owned a radio, or had a motor vehicle. Agriculture was a single-minded pursuit. Even Orton's Christmas parties harken back to plantation slavery, when Christmas was special day among the enslaved. Based on the weddings occurring on Orton or Kendal, how often Chinnis (the white Orton supervisor) oversaw the paperwork, it seems that the plantations remained the center of most resident's world.

African American lodges were established, both in Smithville (later Southport) and in the rural sections. But they were relatively uncommon and we have been unable to document any specific activities, such as fraternal insurance or death benefits.

Death was always at hand. There were a number of stillbirths, likely from a lack of prenatal care or medical attention. Children tended to die young, from issues such as colitis, whooping cough, diphtheria, fevers (perhaps malarial), and even worms. Accidental death from scalding was also indicated. In some cases, the cause cannot reasonably be determined, such as in the case of a four month who died of "teething." In another sad case, the cause was "for want of attention."

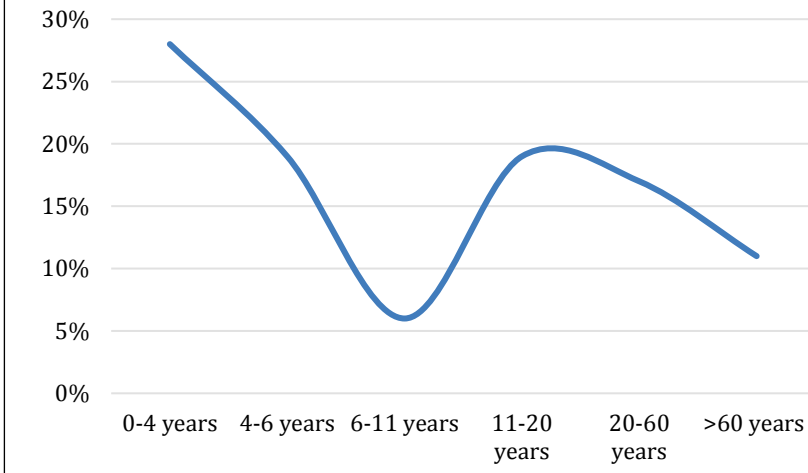


Figure 49. Portion of African American death by age class in 1870 and 1890 using the Federal Mortality Census for Smithville and Town Creek Townships.

Among causes of death for teenagers in the 1870 and 1880 mortality schedules was intermittent fever (almost certainly malaria) and drowning.

Adults in the mortality schedules died of intermittent fever, chronic diarrhea, consumption (tuberculosis), cancers, smallpox, and pneumonia.

For the 1870 and 1880 Smithville and Town Creek townships (exclusive of Smithville itself) mortality schedules reveal about an equal proportion of blacks and whites dying. Figure 49

shows the proportion of deaths by age class among Smithville and Town Creek African Americans in 1870 and 1890, reveling that most children were likely to die between birth and 4 years, with the proportion declining to the lowest point during the period from 6 to 11 years. With the introduction of work during the teen years, the death rate climbed again, gradually decreasing into old age.

The death certificates specific for the region show similar results, with adults tending to die from problems commonly associated with the African American community today, including high blood pressure leading to strokes, heart disease, and diabetes leading to kidney disease. There were surprisingly no "industrial" accidents, although we did find several deaths due to falling off wagons or trucks, or drowning.

The various accounts also suggest that the Lower Cape Fear was a relatively peaceful community, with homicides being so unusual as to attract considerable attention. Assault and battery cases tended to be heard at the local level, fines were modest and often waived for future good behavior or payment of court costs.

There were, however, family issues, including families separating, either permanently or temporarily. We reported one exchange between a woman's attorney and her husband. We have oral history of one family remaining together, but the husband living in a separate house only a few yards from his wife. And we have several accounts of individuals leaving one wife and taking another. While we find marriage and death certificates, we have found few divorce papers for African Americans on the Lower Cape Fear. The arrangement seems to have been more informal, and doesn't seem to have been questioned by the community.

Men seem to have married older than women, with women often bearing children in their mid-teens, perhaps earlier. There are several cases of children preceding the formal marriage. Whether there was an informal union earlier or an unexpected pregnancy, we can't determine from the available records. But there is no indication have women having children out of wedlock suffered any long-term consequences in their status in society. As was suggested, it seems that past transgressions were quickly forgotten or overlooked.

There are also cases of children of one father taking the name of their mother's second husband, abandoning the name of their blood relative. Whether this was widely practiced or accepted we can't tell from the available records. Although we don't discount love or passion, we suspect that arrangements were often loose and might be predicated on immediate needs and opportunities. Names may have been adopted because of wider or more viable kinship assistance.

When death occurred, physicians were rarely called or in attendance. Although funeral homes, especially John H. Shaw, were increasingly used, early burials were handled by family and friends, such as Solomon King, John Ed Pearson, or another senior community member. We have several accounts of black individuals on the plantation being identified as the undertaker. We suspect this means that men or women of the family would wash and cloth the body and the individual listed would arrange to procure or build a coffin, dig the grave, and ensure a decent burial. Evidence from elsewhere suggests that both blacks and whites in the rural South adopted the practice of embalming very late; there is evidence that regardless of when an individual died, they were buried that day or at the latest, the next.

Topics Not So Clear

Our research left largely unaddressed some very important issues, such as social stratification (as related to sex, wealth, property ownership, and age), issues of gifting and distribution (for example, of property, including distribution of heirs property), virtually all aspects of ritual and belief (in particular ritual and beliefs as well as hoodoo), and most of material culture. These are the areas where informant interviews and archaeology are required.

Use of interviews will be difficult as the community has changed and so many elders have died. For example, in the 1989 newspaper article (Susan Usher, "Reunion will bring memories of 4 River Road communities," *The Brunswick Beacon*, June 29, 1989, pg. 6A), specially mentions five individuals. Clarence Jones died in 2008, Rosa Bell McMillian died in 2008, Josey Smith died in 2011, Robert Earl Parker died in 2012, and Clayton Alfred Vaught died in 2007. The community's ties to the past are rapidly diminishing and memories are fading.

Archaeology will only be successful if what is being excavated can be successfully integrated into the historical record. Only this will allow a complete and meaningful picture.

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Appendix: Relocation of Drew and Zion Cemeteries

With the acquisition of property for what was then called the "Sunny Point Army Terminal," today known as Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point (MOTSU), two cemeteries were identified and moved. One was the large Drew Cemetery, the other was a presumably smaller cemetery associated with the Marsh Branch Colored Zion Methodist Church.

We should not, however, assume these were the only cemeteries lost to this facility. Review of the Tract Acquisition Data, acquired from the Savannah District Army Corps of Engineers through a Freedom of Information inquiry, reveals that many of the interim binders for title insurance issued by the Commercial Standard Insurance Company, included waivers for title defects, including, "any cemeteries included in the hereinabove described land not of record." This was found on a small sample, including parcels A-102, A-103, 1-104, 1-105, A-106, A-107, A-108, and A-109.

This could, of course, be interpreted as a standard legal caution. Nevertheless, review of the data reveals that in some, but not all, cases, this deficiency was identified by the reviewing Attorney General with the Lands Division of the Department of Justice as requiring attention. In most cases, there is no evidence that any attention was devoted to the issue and the purchase of the property was pushed forward.

In the above sample, the Corps relied on a single affidavit from an individual claiming familiarity with the property and stating that, "I know to my certain knowledge that there are no graves, cemeteries or cemetery rights on this tract of land." In one case, however, this individual was only 36 years old and claiming knowledge of the property for only "the past two years." Moreover, the individual was white. In another case, the individual, again white, claimed 20 years of knowledge, but was only 38, taking his claim back to his teenage years.

It is incredulous that a white person, with only two (or even 20) years familiarity, would claim with any certainty that no African American cemeteries existed.

Lacking any detailed oral history from the African American community, the Corp pushed forward land acquisition, removing only the two cemeteries that were readily identifiable in the community. While it seems unlikely that the facility will ever be given the archaeological or historical investigation it deserves, we should not "assume" no additional cemeteries are present.

Marsh Branch Colored Zion Methodist Church Cemetery

This parcel, identified as Tract B-239, was 1.01 acres and including both the church building and a cemetery.

A meeting of the church on July 13, 1952 voted for a resolution giving the government fee-simple title to their property. The sell price was based on the government's own appraisal of $7,200. Trustees of the church were identified as William H. Joyner, Andrew W. McMillan, Robert Parker, Mary Brown, and John McMillian. The resolution was signed by the church secretary, Rosie B. McMillan on September 25, 1952 and was

subsequently approved by the "Annual Conference and by the Bishop." The Trustees signed an option for the purchase of the property on July 17, 1952. A check for the property was issued on September 25, 1952, the same date a deed for the property was provided to the government and recorded in Brunswick County (DB 110, pg. 71). A final title insurance binder was issued on September 25, 1953 and the process was approved by the Attorney General on November 25, 1953. Nowhere in the Title Acquisition Data is there a mention of the associated cemetery.

Consequently, we have no specific information regarding at what point the presence of this cemetery was identified. Corps documents reveal that contract DA-090133-ENG-1816 was issued to Swett and Roberts in Wake Forest, North Carolina for the removal of both the Marsh Branch and the Drew cemeteries in March 1954. Identified only as "contractors," we have been unable to determine any qualifications for cemetery removals other than perhaps low bid. The subsequent report stated that, "in no instance did the cost exceed the unit cost of the grave removal being paid the Contractor" (Anonymous 1954:11).

The cemetery received little verbal description,

> The Three (3) graves in this cemetery were relocated in the New Drew Cemetery. No interest was shown during relocating operations by living relatives. There were no monuments in this cemetery (Anonymous 1954:10).

Figure 50 shows the drawing of the lot and location of the three graves. The Corps failed to show the location of the church building, which is unfortunate since its placement in relationship to the burials might prove enlightening. What we do see is that the burials appear scattered in the northwest portion of the property, significantly removed from the road.

Equally unfortunate is that only two photographs of the cemetery were taken. Reproduced here as Figure 51, they reveal little difference except that one shows a privy at the upper right corner, which we assume to be the northern edge, immediately south of the access road. If this is correct, the two burials shown in these photographs are numbered 1 (Kitty Reaves, 8/31/1873 – 4/19/1947) and 2 (Robert Lee Galloway, 9/18/1928 – 7/30/1948). The grave of the Brown twins (3) is not shown.

The cemetery resembles almost all rural African American burial grounds with knee-high weedy grass. The one grave that is clear has been mounded and there is a funeral home marker. A similar marker is shown in the background. Without any additional information, we are left to presume that the three graves were visible and recognizable to the white staff.

Death certificates were identified for two of the three graves. Kitty Reaves was the 73-year-old widow of Perry Reaves; she died of "carcinoma of uterus" and was buried by John H. Shaw's Sons on April 21, 1947. She had lived in the Southport area, "all of her life." The death certificate identified the cemetery as "John Smith."

Robert Lee Galloway was a 20-year-old single man, the son of David Galloway and Beatrice Parker, who was born in the Marsh Branch Community. He died of malnutrition, perhaps associated with polio paralysis. His death certificate reveals burial at "Marshbranch."

Thus, for the two burials, we have two different cemetery names – and neither is Zion or Zion Methodist.

If we search for these two names and limit that search to only 1941 and 1948 – the same decade as these two identified burials, *we identify eleven additional burials*, shown in Table 26. One of these uses the term "Marsh Branch" and the remainder use either "Smith," "John Smith," or "Smith's." What is to be made of this?

We believe that had the Corps either reached

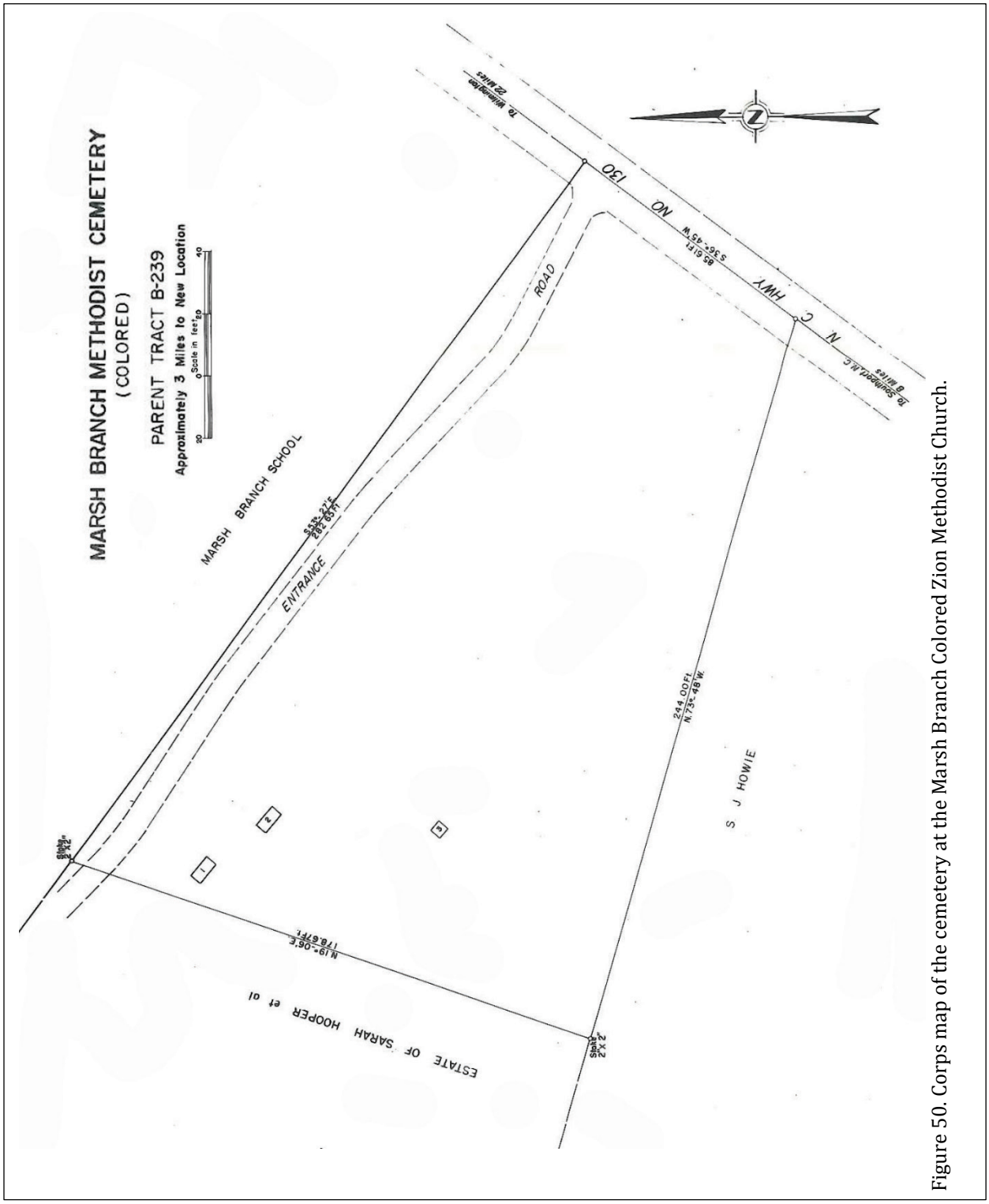

Figure 50. Corps map of the cemetery at the Marsh Branch Colored Zion Methodist Church.

Figure 51. Photographs of the Marsh Branch cemetery taken in 1953 before removal (both views are approximately to the southwest).

Table 26.
Additional possible burials at Marsh Branch in 1941 and 1948

Name	Death Date	Funeral Home	Listed Cemetery Name
Betts, Samuel	6/14/1941	Shaw's	John Smith
Brown, Mary	12/25/1941	McCoy	Smith
Jackson, John W.	12/11/1941	Shaw's	John Smith's
Jackson, Mammie Green	12/13/1941	McCoy	Smith
Parker, Lauvenia	6/3/1941	McCoy	John Smith
Gore, Francis	5/6/1948	Shaw's	Marsh Branch
Green, Joseph	10/30/1948	McCoy	Smith
Jackson, B. Jane	11/29/1948	McCoy	Smith
Lewis, James	6/24/1948	McCoy	John Smith
Parker, Clinton	8/12/1948	McCoy	Smith's
Wortham, John William	8/24/1948	McCoy	Smith

out to the African American community or even conducted a reasonable search of death certificates, they might have directed additional attention to this burial ground. However, in the age of Jim Crow, the former was likely never done and the latter would have slowed down the acquisition and increased costs – two issues that virtually no government entity is inclined to do.

The situation is further complicated by the presence of another "John Smith" cemetery with about 600 burials on Leonard Street in Southport. This cemetery is thought to date to about 1874. As a result, it is likely impossible to determine to which cemetery a death certificate refers.

Nevertheless, our conclusion is that there may be, or at least were, a significant number of additional burials on Tract B-239. Any future development activities in this particular area would do well to engage a professional forensic archaeological investigation. Failure to do so seems to guarantee the destruction of African American burials not initially recognized or recovered.

Drew Cemetery

The same contract covered the removal and reinterment of burials from what the Corp called the Drew Cemetery, accounting for about 2.07 acres, and given the parcel number B-229. It was situated within Tract B-228, a 71.4-acre parcel attributed to the estate of Hector Smith (Figure 52).

The cemetery itself was valued at $1.00 and the tract surrounding it was valued at $3,300. The government apparently had difficulty identifying all of the heirs and of the allotted amount, $1,223.18 was eventually returned to the treasury.

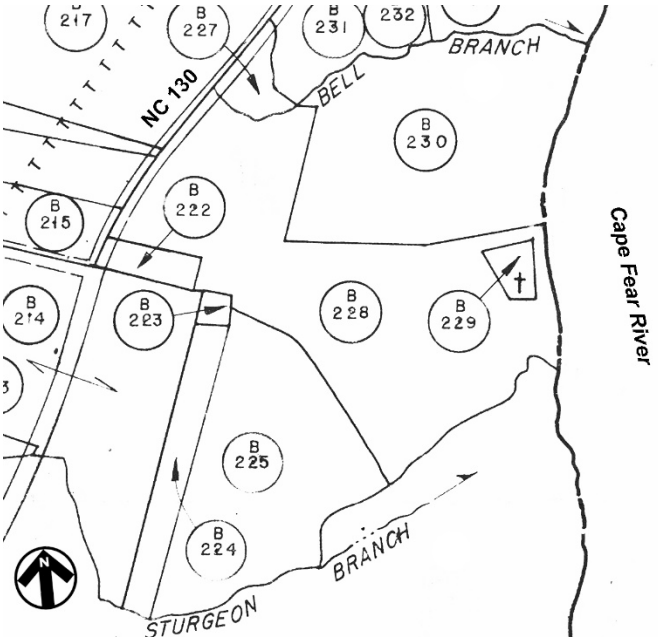

Figure 52. Portion of the Segment B map showing the location of the Drew Cemetery (United States of America v. 7636.25 acres more or less, situate in Brunswick County, State of North Carolina, and A.N. Manucy et al., and Unknown Owners, Case #547; Civil Case Files; U.S. District Court of North Carolina, Wilmington Division; Records of District Courts of the United States, Record Group 21, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta).

The cemetery was described by the Corps as,

> Originally a white cemetery abandoned years ago, then used as a burial ground for Marsh Branch Colored Zion Church. No maintenance has been done on this cemetery in recent years, trees and thick undergrowth had grown over graves. Although relatives were notified by letter as to date and time of removal, very little interest was shown.
>
> One hundred and fifty (150) additional graves [in addition to originally identified 213 graves] were located during disinterment operations. A diligent effort was made to locate all of the additional graves, however, it is possible that a few of the very old ones were not found (Anonymous 1954:10).

Sadly, the report does not specify how graves were identified and careful examination of the accompanying data reveals that while many were marked with "stakes," mounds, or evidenced by sinks, many more had no apparently outward evidence. Therefore, we do not know if the additional graves were found through random digging or if perhaps the site was mechanically stripped.

The report only indicates rather vaguely, "a diligent and exhaustive search was made to locate all next of kin" (Anonymous 1954:11). A news account is similarly vague, stating only that, "since most of the graves were unmarked, identification was a major problem" (*Wilmington Morning Star*, May 1, 1954).

At least some of the white descendants were contacted since two graves were relocated to Wilmington's Oakdale Cemetery, one was reinterred at the New Norwood Cemetery, midway between River Road and NC 130, and another was relocated to the Bellvue Cemetery in Wilmington.

The report is also silent on how burials were identified as either black or white. Nor is there any indication of how names were attributed to some of the otherwise unmarked graves, especially in light of the comments concerning the lack of interest on the part of descendants.

It is interesting that the Corps claimed the cemetery was originally used by the Marsh Branch Colored Zion Methodist Church – an interpretation that we had not previously heard. In fact, since the cemetery was clearly not filled to capacity, it is difficult to reconcile this with the use of the church property. Moreover, while white use of the cemetery began by at least 1860, white use continued through at least 1940 – so we would not characterize the cemetery as "abandoned" by the

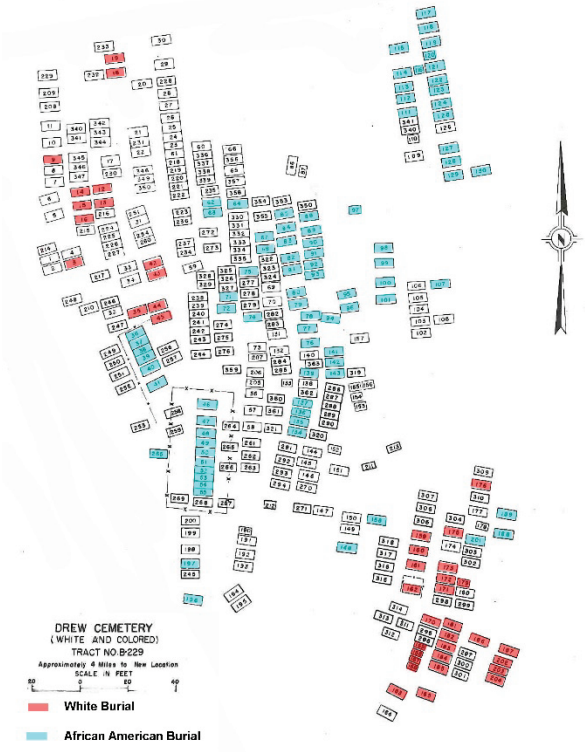

Figure 53. Distribution of known white and black burials from Drew Cemetery.

Table 27.
List of graves removed from Drew Cemetery

			Marker Description			Death Certificate Information		
Original Grave Number	Name	Death Date	Head	Foot	New Grave Number	Burial Location	Funeral Home	Other
1	Unknown		Sink		B-111			
2	Unknown		Sink		B-112			
3	Reynolds, Stearling B. (w)	10/31/1880	Marble	Marble	B-137			
4	Unknown		Sink		B-136			
5	Unknown		Sink		B-109			
6	Unknown		Sink		B-108			
7	Unknown		Sink		B-107			
8	Unknown		Sink		B-106			
9	Randall, Joseph (w)	12/9/1840	Slate	Slate	B-105			
10	Unknown		Sink		B-104			
11	Unknown		Sink		B-103			
12	Millinor, Martin (w)		Sink		B-27			
13	Millinor, Daisy (w)		Sink		B-28			
14	Millinor, Flora Lindsay (w)		Sink		B-29			
15	Millinor, C.T. (w)	10/25/1924	Stake		B-30	Family Burying Ground	W.A. Millinor	Chas. Thomas Millinor
16	Millinor, Willie Winfield (w)	8/22/1926	Stake	Mound	B-31	Drew	Calvin Millinor	
17	Unknown			Stake	B-130			
18	Reaves, Sarah (w)	10/18/1874	Marble	Marble	B-127			
19	Reaves, Joel (w)	7/13/1860	Marble	Marble	B-126			
20	Unknown		Stake		B-151			
21	Unknown		Sink		B-128			
22	Unknown		Sink		B-129			
23	Unknown			Stake	B-159			
24	Unknown		Stake		B-158			
25	Unknown		Stake	Stake	B-157			
26	Unknown		Stake	Stake	B-156			
27	Unknown		Stake	Stake	B-155			
28	Unknown		Stake	Stake	B-154			
29	Unknown		Stake	Stake	B-153			
30	Unknown		Stake	Stake	B-152			
31	Unknown		Stake		A-87			
32	Unknown		Stake		A-90			
33	Unknown		Stake		A-88			
34	Unknown		Stake		A-89			
35	Millinor, William (w)		Stake		B-180			
36	Joyner, Evelyna B.	11/6/1943	Metal	Shells	A-1	Marsh Branch	McCoy	Elevenia B. Joyner
37	Gore, Nancy	2/4/1918	Marble	Marble	A-2	Marsh Branch	Paul Reaves	
38	McMillan, Bessie	6/11/1935	Shells		A-3	Marsh Branch	Frederick MacMillan	Bessie MacMillan
39	Dimrey, James		Stake	Stake	A-4			
40	Gore, John	4/11/1920	Stake	Stake	A-5	not listed	not listed	John Ed Gore (w)
41	Gore, Francis	5/7/1948	Metal	Shells	A-6	Marsh Branch	Shaw's	
42	Drew, William H. (w)	7/20/1900	Marble	Marble	B-176			
43	Drew, Caroline A. (w)	5/21/1887	Marble	Marble	B-177			
44	Millinor, Lindy (w)		Stake	Stake	B-178	Smithville Township	W.E. Yopp	Lindsay Millinor, d. 12/18/1922
45	Millinoir, Charles C. (w)	10/25/1924	Metal	Metal	B-179			
46	Parker, Christabel	1935	Mound		A-41			
47	Reaves, Charity C.	1/12/1932	Marble		A-42	Marsh Branch	R. McLoughlin	d. 1/13/1932
48	Reaves, William J.	4/13/1927			A-43			
49	Jones, Upshaw Reaves	4/30/1927	Marble		A-44	Marsh Branch	Kelly Reaves	Elijah Upshire Jones
50	Reaves, Fred	5/24/1924			A-45			
51	Swain, Catherina	8/16/1911			A-46			
52	Hudson, Ernest	9/1/1918	Mound	Shells	A-47	Drew	not listed	
53	Johnson, Ben		Mound	Shells	A-48			
54	Johnson, Elinore		Mound	Shells	A-49			
55	Johnson, Ned			Stake	A-50			
56	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-115			
57	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-116			
58	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-117			
59	Unknown		Sink		A-86			
60	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-85			
61	Unknown		Marble	Stake	B-160			
62	McMillan, Ella		Stake	Stake	A-51	Family Burying Ground	Northrop	Mary Ella McMillan, d. 8/11/1923
63	McMillan, Andrew	9/27/1939	Tin		A-52	Marsh Branch	McCoy	d. 10/27/1939
64	McMillan, Warren E.	12/8/1951	Tin		A-76	Marsh Branch	McCoy	Warren Edward McMillian
65	Unknown		Stake		A-83			
66	Unknown			Stake	A-84			
67	Hill, Archie	4/10/1947	Tin		A-7			
68	Hill, Delia	4/1/1948	Tin		A-6			
69	Unknown		Stake		A-126			
70	Unknown		Stake		A-127			

Table 27.
List of graves removed from Drew Cemetery, cont.

			Marker Description			Death Certificate Information		
Original Grave Number	Name	Death Date	Head	Foot	New Grave Number	Burial Location	Funeral Home	Other
71	Green, Norman		Sink	Stake	A-81			
72	Hankins, Ed		Stake		A-82			
73	Unknown		Sink		A-111			
74	Stevenson, John T. , Jr.		Stake	Mound	A-10			
75	Stevenson, John T. ,Sr.		Sink		A-9			
76	Brown, James H.		Stake	Stake	A-37			
77	Brown, Ernest	8/27/1933	Stake	Mound	A-36			
78	Brown, John T.		Stake		A-33			
79	Johnson, Willie		Stake	Stake	A-34			
80	Green, Susie	3/16/1946	Stake		A-59	Marsh Branch	McCoy	Susie Lee Green
81	Davis, Sammuel		Sink	Stake	A-32	Marsh Branch	Shaw's	Sam Davis, d. 12/8/1935, husband of #89
82	Brown, Anna E.	1/5/1942	Marble	Marble	A-31			
83	Bratten, Lula Ann Brown	6/3/1944	Marble	Marble	A-30	Marsh Branch	Shaw's	Lula Bratton
84	Bratten, Paul	2/24/1949	Tin		A-29			husband of #83
85	Daughty, Emma Brown	1949	Tin		A-28			
86	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-128			
87	Unknown		Stake		A-129			
88	Davis, Celia	11/25/1945	Tin		A-14			
89	Davis, Lola M.	9/14/1943	Tin		A-15			
90	Ennett, Ernestine	2/22/1943	Tin		A-26	Winabow	McCoy	Ernestine Brown Ennett, d. 2/23/1943
91	Ennett, Angie L.	4/28/1945	Tin		A-27			
92	Bellamy, Alice		Stake		A-53			
93	Bellamy, Esther May	8/24/1932	Stake		A-54			
94	Bellamy, Luther	8/27/1932	Stake	Stake	A-55	Marsh Branch	not listed	
95	Green, Iomie		Sink		A-56	not listed	illegible	Ioma Green, d. 2/17/1930, wife of #96
96	Green, George	11/6/1937	Stake	Stake	A-57			husband of #95
97	Bellamy, Alfred		Stake		A-58			
98	Davis, Luberta	10/28/1941	Tin		A-63			
99	Williamson, Annie	11/16/1933	Marble	Marble	A-64			
100	Wearon, Frances	1/13/1930	Marble	Marble	A-65	Marsh Branch	not listed	Frances Wearren
101	Reaves, Paul	11/25/1924	Concrete	Concrete	A-66			
102	Unknown		Sink		A-161			
103	Unknown		Stake	Concrete	A-160			
104	Unknown		Stake		A-159			
105	Unknown	1945	Stake	Stake	A-68			
106	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-157			
107	McMillan, Fred	7/5/----	Tin		A-156			
108	Unknown		Sink		A-158			
109	Unknown		Sink		A-100			
110	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-99			
111	Smith, Arthur	12/19/1926	Concrete	Concrete	A-98	Marsh Branch	Robert Evans	brother of #112
112	Smith, Mary C.	6/14/1925	Concrete	Concrete	A-97	Marsh Branch	William Jones	d. 6/10/1925, sister of #111
113	Smith, Rev. Hector	11/26/1925	Concrete		A-96			
114	Smith, Mary Jane	1/29/1929	Tin		A-95	Marsh Branch	Northrop	wife of #113
115	Smith, Fletcher	11/6/1944	Tin		A-94	Marsh Branch	McCoy	James F. Smith, d. 11/7/1944
116	Green, Lundie		Stake	Stake	A-119			
117	Green, Willie	5/9/1941	Tin		A-143			
118	Green, Mary B.	11/6/1940	Marble	Marble	A-144	Marsh Branch	McCoy	
119	Green, Harry L.	3/2/1936	Stake	Stake	A-145	Marsh Branch	Shaw's	Harry Lee Green, son of #117
120	Jones, Mamie	5/20/1930	Stake	Stake	A-146	Marsh Branch	none	d. 5/26/1930
121	Jones, Percy	1/15/1936		Stake	A-147	Marsh Branch	McCoy	
122	Jones, William	11/23/1936	Stake	Stake	A-148	not listed	McCoy	husband of #123
123	Jones, Millie		Tin	Tin	A-149			wife of #122
124	Jones, Willie	12/31/1927	Tin	Tin	A-150	Marsh Branch	McCoy	d. 8/20/1936
125	Barber, Fannie		Tin	Tin	A-120			
126	Unknown		Sink		A-121			
127	Rutland, Hilderd	11/20/1934	Stake	Stake	A-122	Marsh Branch	Ned Jones	Hilliard Rutland, husband of #128
128	Rutland, Lucy	5/31/1938	Tin	Tin	A-123	Marsh Branch	McCoy	wife of #127
129	Joyner, Annie	7/10/1945	Tin	Tin	A-124	Winnabow	McCoy	d. 7/7/1945
130	Joyner, Luvenia		Tin		A-125			
131	Unknown		Sink		A-101			
132	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-102			
133	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-103			
134	Reaves, Claraita		Mound	Shells	A-75			possibly Carrie Reaves, wife of #135
135	Reaves, Dunking		Concrete	Concrete	A-74	Marsh Branch	Ned James	d. 10/16/1922
136	Reaves, Mamie J.	1912	Concrete	Concrete	A-73			
137	Reaves, Charlie	1904	Concrete	Concrete	A-72			
138	Unknown		Stake		A-71			
139	Johnson, Betsy		Stake		A-70			
140	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-130			
141	Reaves, Woodrow		Stake	Stake	A-11	Drew Cemetery	Kelly Reaves	James Woodrow Reaves, d. 1/1/1917

Table 27.
List of graves removed from Drew Cemetery, cont.

			Marker Description			Death Certificate Information		
Original Grave Number	Name	Death Date	Head	Foot	New Grave Number	Burial Location	Funeral Home	Other
142	Reaves, Supora		Stake	Stake	A-12			
143	Hill, Luanio		Mound		A-13			
144	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-135			
145	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-136			
146	Unknown		Stake		A-137			
147	Unknown			Stake	A-139			
148	Rutland, Duclia	6/17/1918	Concrete	Stake	A-142			
149	Unknown		Stake		A-141			
150	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-140			
151	Unknown		Stake		A-134			
152	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-133			
153	Hall, Baby Catherine	5/16/1945	Tin		A-154			
154	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-153			
155	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-152			
156	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-151			
157	Unknown		Stake		A-155			
158	Unknown		Stake		A-138			
159	Unknown (w)		Sink		B-114			
160	Harker, Dora (w)		Stake		B-115			wife of #161
161	Harker, Eben (w)	10/1/1940	Stake	Stake	B-116	Drew Cemetery	Northrop	widower of #160
162	Harker, Collins (w)	4/25/1913	Marble	Marble	B-118			
163	Smith, Nancy		Stake	Stake	B-166	Drew Cemetery	Sorensen	d. 12/1/1928, white
164	Unknown		Stake	Stake	B-167			
165	Corbett, Theresa A. (w)	11/9/1887	Marble	Marble	B-168			
166	Brehmer, unknown (w)		Stake	Stake	B-125			
167	Brehmer, unknown (w)		Stake	Stake	B-124			
168	Clover, unknown (w)		Stake		B-122			
169	Clover, unknown (w)		Stake		B-121			
170	Brehmer, Annie (w)		Sink		B-120			
171	Bogie, Ella M. (w)	7/12/1906	Marble	Marble	B-26			
172	Martin, Lydia A. (w)	12/9/1900	Marble	Marble	B-1			wife of #173
173	Martin, William (w)		Mound		B-2			husband of #172
174	Carter, John J., Jr. (w)		Stake	Mound	Oakdale			
175	Martin, John A. (w)	1917	Stake		B-141	Brunswick	Yopp	d. 2/20/1917, son of #173 and #172
176	Nye, Edna Carter (w)	8/3/1917	Stake		Oakdale			
177	Unknown		Sink		B-139			
178	Unknown		Stake	Stake	B-140			
179	Barnhill, Alberton (w)	9/2/1914	Marble	Marble	Northwood			
180	Unknown		Sink		B-143			
181	Holder, Mary (w)		Stake	Stake	B-146			
182	Holder, Mary Elizabeth (w)		Stake	Stake	B-147			
183	Holder, Willie (w)		Stake	Stake	B-148			
184	Holder, Joseph Silas (w)		Stake	Stake	B-149			
185	Holder, George L. (w)		Stake		B-150			
186	Holder, John (w)		Sink		Bellevue			
187	Clover, Edward (w)		Stake		B-172			
188	Sorensen, Mary		Brick		B-165			
189	Sones, Henry		Stake	Stake	B-164			
190	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-105			
191	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-106			
192	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-107			
193	Unknown		Metal		A-108			
194	Unknown		Mound		A-109			
195	Unknown		Mound		A-110			
196	Jones, Walter	1952	Metal		A-60	Marsh Branch	McCoy	d. 3/22/1952
197	Reynolds, Rebecca J.		Stake	Stake	A-61			
198	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-80			
199	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-79			
200	Unknown		Stake		A-78			
201	Meadows, Paul D.		Stake		B-142			
202	Brehmer, unknown (w)				B-173			
203	Brehmer, unknown (w)				B-174			
204	Brehmer, unknown (w)				B-175			
205	Unknown		Sink		A-114			
206	Unknown		Sink		A-113			
207	Unknown		Sink		A-112			
208	Unknown		Sink		B-102			
209	Unknown		Sink		B-101			
210	Unknown		Stake		A-91			
211	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-132			
212	Unknown			Stake	A-104			

Table 27.
List of graves removed from Drew Cemetery, cont.

			Marker Description			Death Certificate Information		
Original Grave Number	Name	Death Date	Head	Foot	New Grave Number	Burial Location	Funeral Home	Other
213	Unknown		Stake	Stake	A-131			
214	Unknown				B-200			
215	Unknown				B-199			
216	Unknown				B-198			
217	Unknown				B-197			
218	Unknown				B-196			
219	Unknown				B-195			
220	Unknown				B-194			
221	Unknown				B-193			
222	Unknown				B-192			
223	Unknown				B-191			
224	Unknown				B-190			
225	Unknown				B-189			
226	Unknown				B-188			
227	Unknown				B-187			
228	Unknown				B-186			
229	Unknown				B-185			
230	Unknown				B-184			
231	Unknown				B-183			
232	Unknown				B-182			
233	Unknown				B-181			
234	Unknown				A-175			
235	Unknown				B-162			
236	Unknown				A-174			
237	Unknown				A-173			
238	Unknown				A-172			
239	Unknown				A-171			
240	Unknown				A-170			
241	Unknown				A-169			
242	Unknown				A-168			
243	Unknown				A-167			
244	Unknown				A-166			
245	Unknown				A-165			
246	Unknown				A-164			
247	Unknown				A-163			
248	Unknown				A-162			
249	Unknown				A-200			
250	Unknown				A-199			
251	Unknown				A-198			
252	Unknown				A-197			
253	Unknown				A196			
254	Unknown				A-195			
255	Betts, Alfred				A-67			
256	Unknown				A-194			
257	Unknown				A-193			
258	Unknown				A-192			
259	Unknown				A-191			
260	Unknown				A-190			
261	Unknown				A-189			
262	Unknown				A-188			
263	Unknown				A-187			
264	Unknown				A-186			
265	Unknown				A-185			
266	Unknown				A-184			
267	Unknown				A-183			
268	Unknown				A-182			
269	Unknown				A-181			
270	Unknown				A-180			
271	Unknown				A-179			
272	Unknown				A-178			
273	Unknown				A-177			
274	Unknown				A-176			
275	Unknown				B-76			
276	Unknown				B-77			
277	Unknown				B-78			
278	Unknown				B-79			
279	Unknown				B-80			
280	Unknown				B-81			
281	Unknown				B-82			
282	Unknown				B-83			
283	Unknown				B-84			
284	Unknown				B-85			
285	Unknown				B-86			
286	Unknown				B-87			
287	Unknown				B-88			
288	Unknown				B-89			
289	Unknown				B-90			
290	Unknown				B-91			
291	Unknown				B-92			
292	Unknown				B-93			
293	Unknown				B-51			

Figure 54. Drew Cemetery, prior to its relocation (Anonymous 1954:Exhibit i) .

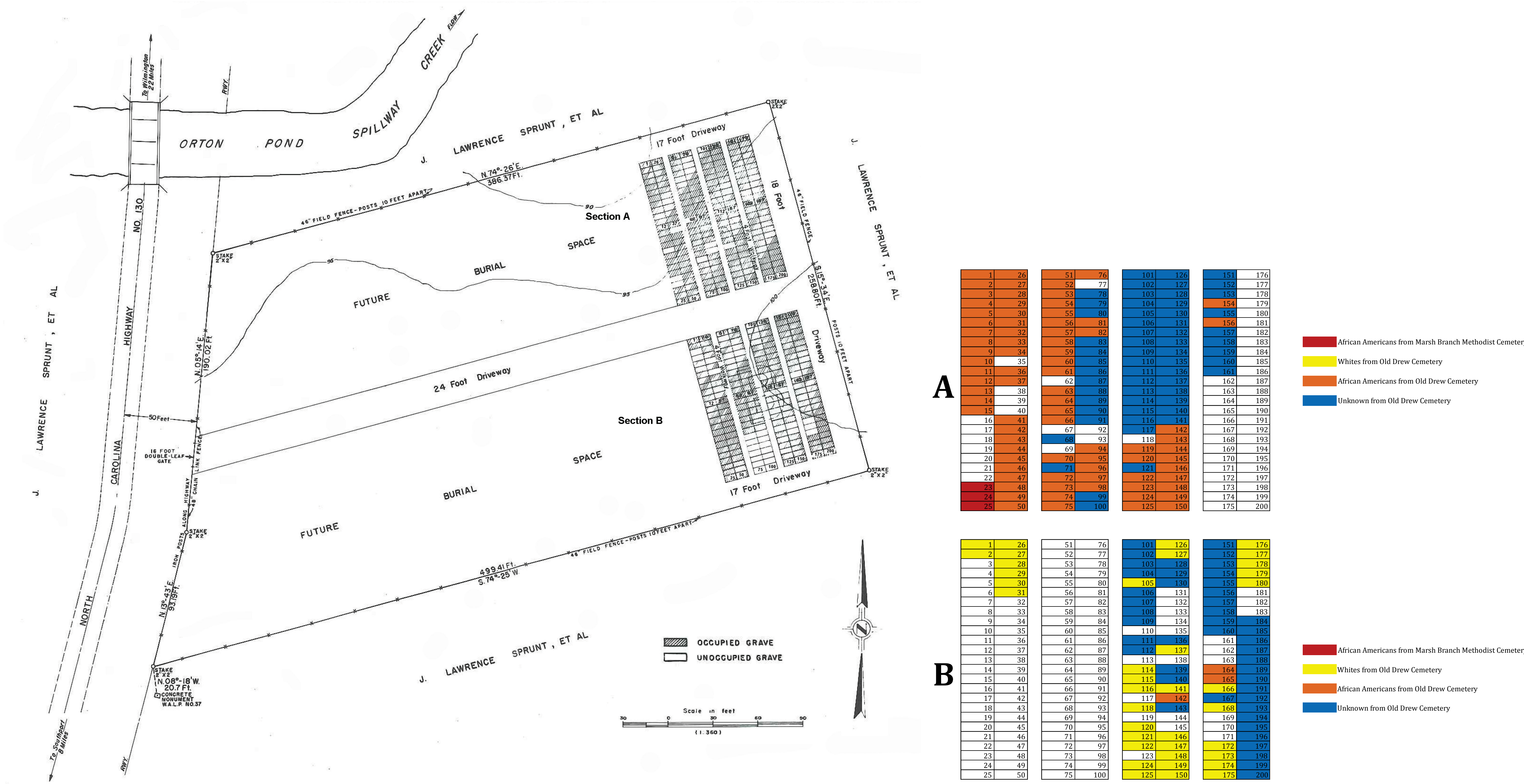

Figure 55. Drew Cemetery, relocated (Anonymous 1954:Exhibit H). On the left is the Corps plan. On the right is the arrangement of burials according to the list.

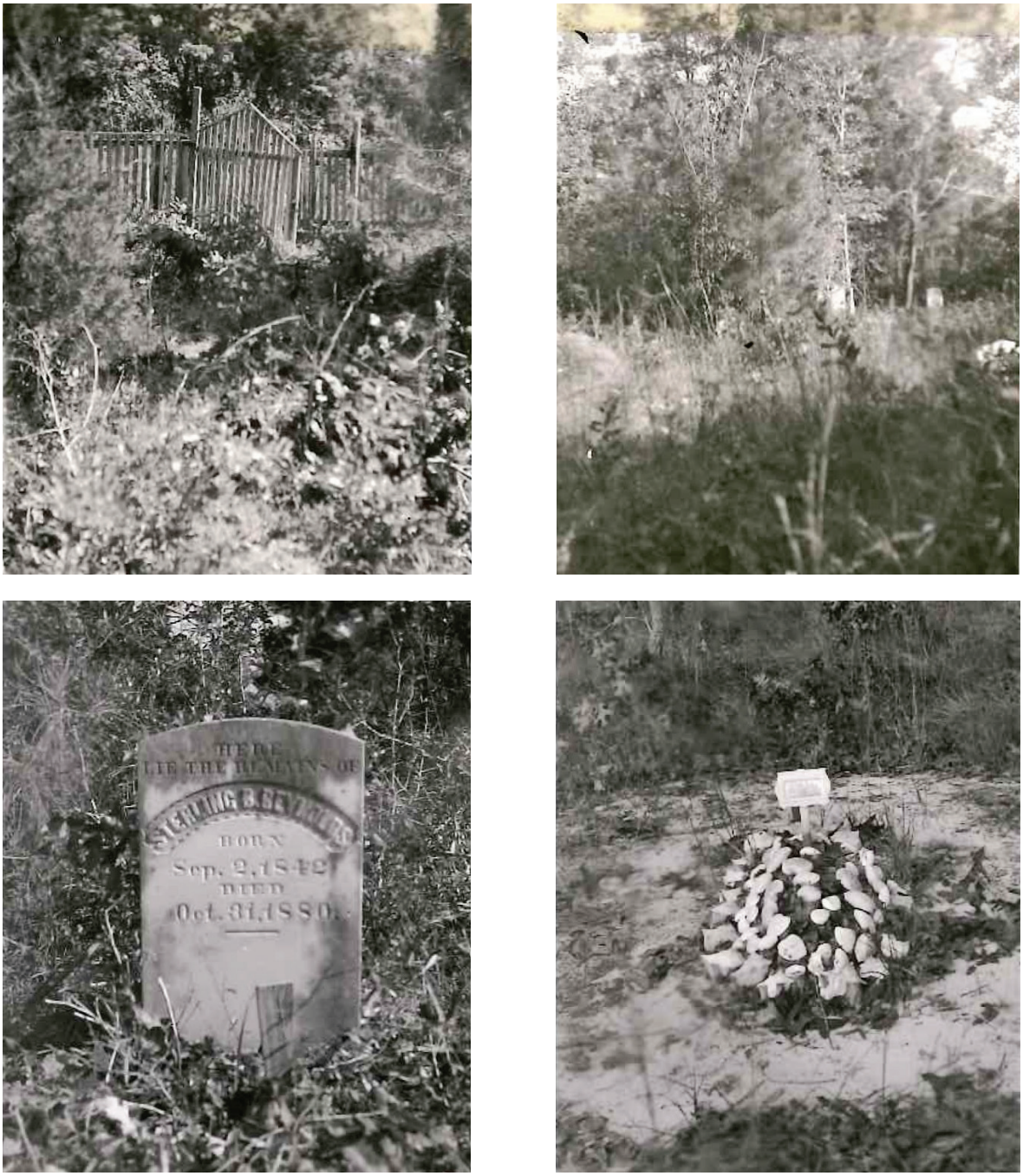

Figure 56. Burials in the Drew Cemetery before relocation. Top left is one of the plot fences. Top right shows vegetation. Lower left is the monument for Sterling B. Reynolds. Lower left is one of the six mounded graves with shells.

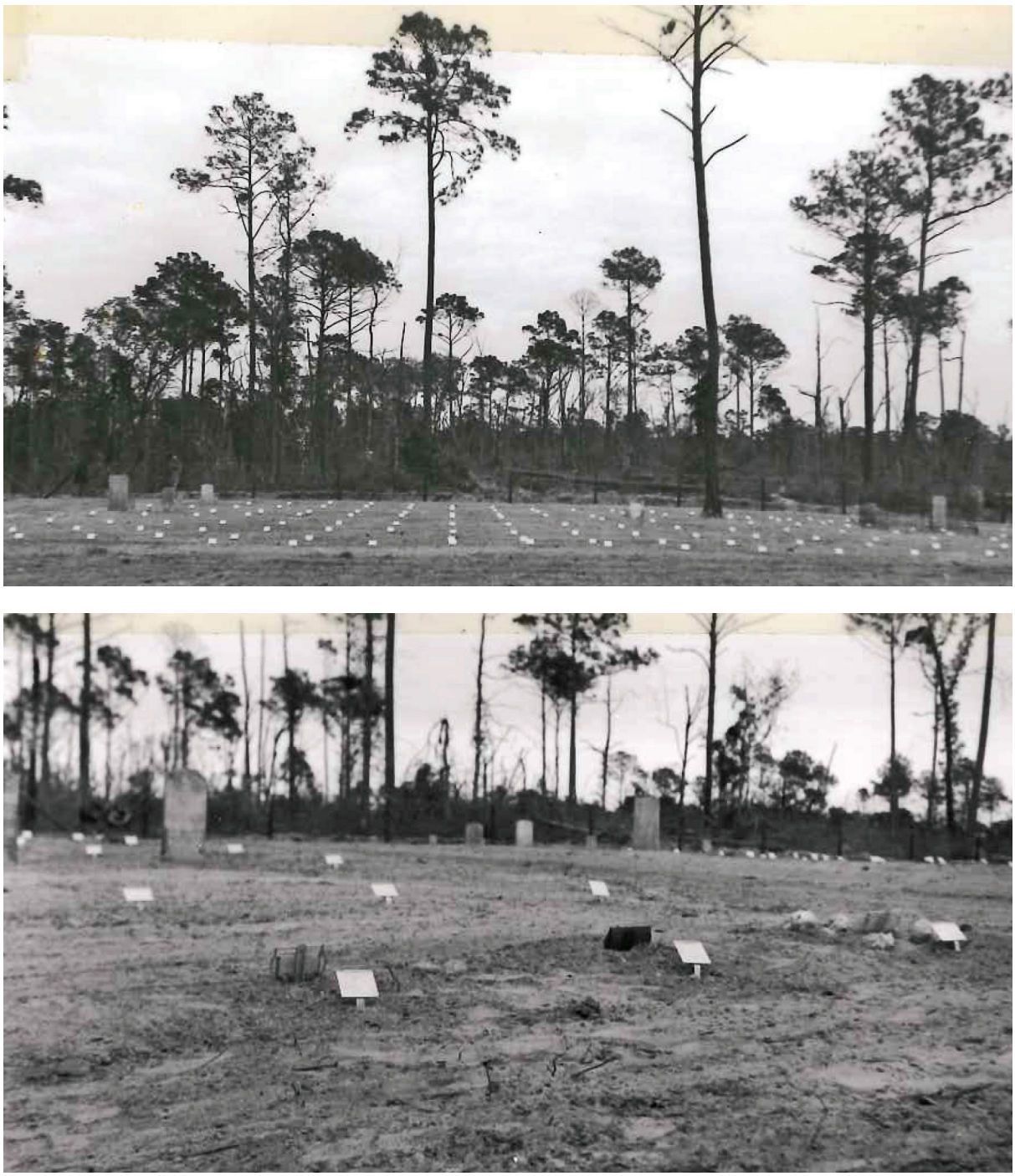

Figure 57. New Drew Cemetery immediately after relocation.

white community. African Americans began using the cemetery by at least 1900 – so there was a considerable period of joint use.

Figure 53 shows the distribution of known white and African American burials at the cemetery. While a great many burials cannot be attributed to a specific ethnicity, the drawing provides some clues that white burials were clustered on the northwest and southeast edges, while African American burials were found in the center. This suggests to us that the history of this burial ground is far more complex than has been previously assumed. Even the name is uncertain. For example, while the majority of African American death certificates call the cemetery "Marsh Branch" (implying, we believe, that it was a community cemetery), there are two African American death certificates, from 1917 and 1918 that identify the property as "Drew." We have only three death certificates for whites that use the term and these date from 1926, 1928, and 1940. This suggests that the Drew designation may have lasted longer in the white community. Since the two members of the Drew family identified as buried at the cemetery date from the late 1880s and 1900, this may help date when the burial ground was actually begun (or at least was "designated").

We also reject any notion that the cemetery lacked maintenance by the African American community. This is a common white misunderstanding of how African American graveyards have historically been maintained. It is based not only on the mistaken view that maintenance seen at white church burial grounds should be taken as the "norm," but it also makes the removal of African American burial grounds more "reasonable," "legal," and even palatable.

Regardless, the contractors managed to remove and rebury 366 graves from the two cemeteries in 27 business days. This would require the identification, removal, boxing, and reinterment of a grave in 35 minutes. This strongly suggests that the level of care was, at best, minimal.

What this means in a pragmatic sense is that any activities at Tract 229 should anticipate the discovery of additional human remains. It is unlikely that a particularly thorough job was done during this contract.

Figure 54 shows a more detailed map of the old Drew Cemetery, prior to its removal. The location, adjacent to the river, is consistent with an African American burial ground. Whether it is consistent with a cemetery being established by the Drew family would depend on additional historical and archaeological research to determine where the Drew residence was situated.

The presence of several fences within the cemetery, in both cases enclosing African American burials, is also consistent with a rural setting.

The Corps arranged to acquire a tract of land from James Sprunt, about 4 miles from the Drew Cemetery, for the relocation site (Brunswick County Register of Deeds, DB 110, pg. 379). This deed arranged for the cemetery to have two African Americans, William Joyner and Harris Davis, and one white, James A. Bogie, as trustees of the cemetery. These surnames are present in the list of individuals being removed, so it is clear that Sprunt desired to maintain some continuity with both white and black representatives placed in charge of the new burial ground.

Since the relocation, the cemetery had received minimal maintenance, but was again found in the news in 2008, when several local individuals began caring for the property, assuming it was "forgotten." This disturbed local African Americans who, in turn, "formed a committee to improve and regularly maintain" the cemetery (*The Pilot*, Southport, NC, October 29, 2008, pg. 19B and November 12, 2008, pg. 3B). In 2015, Orton Plantation assisted a local group of African Americans to rename the cemetery, "Marsh Branch Cemetery" and erect a fence around a portion of the property, replacing the earlier chain link fence (Figure 58).

Figure 58. New fence and name at the relocated Drew Cemetery (courtesy Jason Tyson, *The State Port Pilot*, Southport, North Carolina).

Appendix: Burials at Local Plantation Cemeteries

The table on the following page represents identifiable burials at a few of the Lower Cape Fear Plantations. Because of our work, it focuses on Orton, Lilliput, and the Oaks. The table includes both legible monuments in the cemeteries and an examination of North Carolina death certificates through about 1940. Consequently, this list is in no way exhaustive. However, it may be of use to families looking for ancestors and to future researchers exploring African American roots in the Lower Cape Fear.

There are more often than might be expected, discrepancies between death certificates and the monument. Sometimes these involve differences in the completeness of name, although it also often involves the spelling of the name. Usually, however, the name is sufficiently clear to allow no confusion. More troubling are differences in birth and death dates. We suspect birth dates are very subject to error in the African American population; especially early when so few were allowed to learn reading or writing. Differences in the death dates between death certificates and the monument, on the other hand, most likely represent delayed acquisition of a memorial and the resulting loss of memory. In such cases, we have used the death date given by the official record, primarily because it was closer to the event.

One is struck by the fragility of life during the period of study. The average age at death for this very small assemblage was only 46 years. Among this group were eight children under a year and often only a few days or weeks oldwhen they died. It is also sobering to examine the identified causes of death, including four cases of tuberculosis, a case of malarial fever, and at least three cases of cancer. The most common killers, however, were diabetes and heart disease - still prevalent among the African American community today.

These cemeteries play an important role in the African American community, documenting previous generations and ensuring that there is a continuity from the past to the present. Each is, without question, eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and should be guarded as such.

There are additional plantations on the Lower Cape Fear, such as Old Town, Skipper Hill, Navassa, Graverly [Grovely] Plantation (more recently called Bellamy), and many of these likely have burial grounds. Depending on their histories, some may even have more than one cemetery within their boundaries.

Table 28.
Compilation of burial information from a few Lower Cape Fear graveyards.

Last Name	First Name	Residence	Death Date	Age	Cause of Death	Burial Location	Undertaker
Aldridge	Emma Brewington	Orton	8/4/1949	51 years	Renal failure - diabetes	Lilliput	John H. Shaw's Sons
Bland	Ada Katie	Smithville	12/10/1917	16 years	tuberculosis	near Orton Pond	James McMillan
Brewington	Annie Roady	Winnabow	2/9/1952	63 years	"subacute nephritis"	Lilliput	John H. Shaw's Sons
Brewington	Guss						
Brewington	Henry	-	1/5/1937	5 days	unknown	Orton	None
Brewington	Maria Boden	Winnabow	5/30/1935	70 years	paralysis	Lilliput	Sam Betts
Brown	Alexander			45 years		Orton	
Brown	Mary A[nn].	-	9/16/1919	75 years	unknown	unknown	-
Brown (Lance)	Eddie, Jr.	Wilmington	10/5/1930	1 month	acute nephritis	Sand Hill - Oaks	Green and Sadgwar
Brown	William A.		9/16/1950	78 years		Orton	
Bryant	Lucy [Clark]	Winnabow	12/24/1924	56 years	unknown	Kendall	John Ed Pearson
Bryant	Martha	Orton	8/13/1920	25 years	tuberculosis	Orton	Robert McLaughlin
Bunn	Essie Betts	Wilmington	3/29/1960	49 years	carcinoma of ovary	Orton	John H. Shaw's Sons
Clark	Robert Edward	Town Creek	2/18/1928	10 days	unknown	Lilliput	Price Stephens
Davis	Amy		1/26/1892	50 years		Orton	
Davis	Eli		4/30/1881	27 years		Orton	
Delt	Carrie Ann	Orton	7/27/1917	12 years	malarial fever	Orton	John Ed Pearson
Delt	Henry	Orton	4/19/1919	70 years	influenza pneumonia	Orton	Friends
Delt	Sarah	Orton	3/6/1918	60 years	unknown	Orton	J.H. Shaw
Delts	K.	-	2/28/1934	8 months	bronchial pneumonia	Orton	Duncan McCay
Delts	Mathew	Orton	4/5/1936	42 years	falling from truck	Orton	John H. Shaw's Sons
Dixon	Kate	Orton	2/4/1936	70 years	heart disease	Orton	[illegible, Wilmington]
Edge	Alexander	Winnabow	9/15/1966	48 years	renal failure	Lilliput	Greene Funeral Home
Edge	Mary Ann		11/18/1936	21 years		Lilliput	
Ellis	Herman Frank[land]	Winnabow	12/29/1969	54 years	hypertensive cardio-vascular renal disease	Orton	Greene Funeral Home
Green	Ormand	Marsh Branch	6/3/1919	70 years	Paresis	Orton	J.H. Shaw
Hayes	Rosa		10/21/1955	41 years		Lilliput	
Hollis	Annie	Smithville	11/26/1918	41 years	tuberculosis	Orton	J.H. Shaw
Hooper	Robert	Orton	1/15/1963	63 years	cerebral hemorrhage	Lilliput	Smith's Funeral Home
Hooper	Sarah		4/10/1923	75 years		Orton	
Hooper	Schuyler		11/24/1876	36 years		Orton	
Howard	Eliza	Wilmington	5/13/1957	94 years	cerebral thrombosis	Orton	Jordan Funeral Home
King	Josephine Brewington	Winnabow	4/4/1959	85 years	cerebral thrombosis	Lilliput	Jordan Funeral Home
King	Lewis A.	Wilmington	6/17/1939	22 years	accidental drowning Cape Fear River	Oak Grove	Green & Sadgwas
Lawrence	Joseph	Marsh Branch	7/11/1941	72 years	atherosclerosis, infection of left knee	Orton	J.H. Shaw
Lawrence	Marion	Orton	7/16/1917	20 years	cerebral embolism due to heart lesions	Orton	Joseph Galloway
Lawrence/Larence	Mary	Smithville	5/11/1917	38 years	tuberculosis	Orton	John Ed Pearson
Long	Olivia	Town Creek	1/31/1915	10 months	cerebral meningitis	Oaks Plantation	John Long (father)
McClammy	Lucy Anna	Wilmington	5/6/1945	75 years	cerebral hemorrhage	Orton	John H. Shaw's Sons
McClammy	Minnie L.		1/30/1910	7 years		Orton	
McClammy	Richard [C.], Sr.	Wilmington	1/24/1937	61 years	heart trouble	Orton	John H. Shaw's Sons
McClammy	R.K., Jr.		9/25/1940	38 years		Orton	
McClammy	Thomas Franklin	Orton	1/30/1919	3 months	unknown	Orton	John Ed Pearson
McClammy	William A.		11/11/1934	43 years		Orton	
McCoy	Betsy Ann		10/8/1883	16 years		Orton	
McCoy	Cora Lee	Southport	2/13/1975	83 years	post influenza bronchitis	Orton	Johnson-Drain
McCoy	Duncan	Southport	5/30/1954	64 years	cerebral vascular accident	Orton	French I. Davis
McCoy [white]	Duncan	-	10/28/1916	2 years	bronchitis	Lilliput	James Brown
McCoy/McCay	Jacob		7/13/1912	30 years		Orton	
McKoy	Silla	Town Creek	6/28/1919	11 days	unknown	Lilliput	Miles Brewington
McMillan	Addie May	Smithville	10/19/1917	1 year	bronchitis	Orton	James McMillan
Mickins	Mary		3/16/1899	23 years		Orton	
Miller	Mary		10/11/1924	33 years		Lilliput	
Moore	Maggie Delts		1977	80 years		Orton	Jordon's
Murry	Archie	Smithville	7/5/1921	60 years	Bright disease	Orton	Sam Non[ ]
Murry	Percile C[ ]	Smithville	10/12/1916	5 days	stomach trouble	Lilliput	-
Pearson	John Ed	Orton	12/20/1936	66 years	prostate cancer	Orton	John H. Shaw's Sons
Pearson	Hannah		1958	83 years		Orton	John H. Shaw's Sons
Pickett	Elijah		8/12/1889	3 years		Orton	
Pickett	Friday		7/30/1918	59 years		Orton	
Pickett	Teana		1/20/1908	36 years		Orton	
Rose	Mary L.	Wilmington	5/23/1944	41 years	bronchial pneumonia	Sand Hill - Oaks	John H. Shaw's Sons
Smith	Eliza J.		2/14/1909	55 years		Lilliput	
Smith	Mary Ellen McClammy		7/26/1937	29 years		Orton	
Swinson	Ben	Winnabow	10/25/1927	7 days	unknown	Lilliput	-
Swinson	Maggie M. Edge	Winnabow	2/22/1941	56 years	heart	Lilliput	John H. Shaw's Sons
Vaught	Joe	Orton	11/14/1924	74 years	unknown	Lilliput	-
Vaught	Joseph	Horry Co., SC	11/30/1958	67 years	Hemorrhage of the bladder	Orton	Brown-Rhue-Rucker, SC
Vaught	Elsie	Haw Hill	11/7/1924	63 years	Dead in bed	Old Town	John Smith
Walker	Sarah Jane	Wilmington	5/16/1940	60 years	mitral regurgitation	Lilliput	John H. Shaw's Sons
Walker	Maggie	Winnabow	9/26/1956	75 years	kidney disease	Orton	John H. Shaw's Sons
Ward	Joe Vaughn		11/30/1958	67 years		Lilliput	French I. Davis

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