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An Examination of an Ice House at Old Town Plantation

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AN EXAMINATION OF AN ICE HOUSE AT OLD TOWN PLANTATION

by

ELIZABETH A. GILLISPIE

(Under the Direction of Sue M. Moore)

ABSTRACT

Old Town plantation has had a long and prosperous life. The property has been occupied historically for more than 200 hundred years. Christopher Fitzsimmons' purchased the property in 1809. Fitzsimmons' created a working plantation and an elaborate homestead at Old Town. It is his occupation that this research centers around. Excavations in 1994 revealed the foundation footings of his home, the associated springhouse and his ice house. This thesis is an in depth examination of ice houses around the world comparatively and how these structures relate to the ice house at Old Town.

INDEX WORDS: Ice house, Ice, Old Town plantation, Glass bottles, Fitzsimmons, Buhrstones, Sheftall

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DEDICATION

For my Mum and Dad

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 6

LIST OF TABLES 9

LIST OF FIGURES 10

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION 14

2 LITERATURE REVIEW 17

Ice Trade 17

Ice houses and Storage 20

18th Century Storage 22

19th Century Storage 34

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND……...44

4 METHODOLOGY……....64

5 ANALYSIS…….81

The Construction…….81

The Artifacts……..86

6 CONCLUSION……..110

REFERENCES 114

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Artifact Group Distribution 89

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conical ice house 23

Figure 2: Posts of conical ice house 24

Figure 3: Octagonal ice house 25

Figure 4: The Cottage ice house, outside view 27

Figure 5: The Cottage ice house, inside wall view 28

Figure 6: The Cottage ice house, floor view 29

Figure 7: Hampton Plantation ice house, blue print 30

Figure 8: Hampton Plantation ice house, vertical view 31

Figure 9: Monticello ice house, exterior view 33

Figure 10: Cassius M. Clay's ice house, interior view 34

Figure 11: Cassius M. Clay's ice house, interior floor view 35

Figure 12: Ashland Plantation ice houses, exterior view 42

Figure 13: Map of Old Town 45

Figure 14: Map of George Galphin's Original Grant 47

Figure 15: Comer era tenant home at Old Town Plantation 60

Figure 16: Historical Marker at Old Town Plantation 63

Figure 17: Early map of ice house excavations 65

Figure 18: Picture of ice house excavatios 66

Figure 19: Bisected view of the ice house 68

Figure 20: Picture of the pulley system used to lift the debris out of the ice house 70

Figure 21: Picture of students utilizing the pulley system 71

Figure 22: Interior view of the ice house at the end of excavations 73

Figure 23: Hand drawn map of the east wall of the ice house 74

Figure 24: LiDAR scan of the ice house 76

Figure 25: LiDAR scan of the North wall 77

Figure 26: LiDAR scan of the West wall 78

Figure 27: LiDAR scan from the top of the ice house 79

Figure 28: LiDAR scan of the East wall 80

Figure 29: Profile map of the ice house 82

Figure 30: Photograph of the wall of the ice house, shows the pattern of the brick.....83

Figure 31: Photograph shows the exposed herringbone brick pattern.....84

Figure 32: Photograph shows the foundation that runs around the bottom.....85

Figure 33: American Bottle AB-connected mark, side view.....88

Figure 34: American Bottle AB-connected mark, bottom view.....89

Figure 35: W F & S bottle, side and bottom view.....91

Figure 36: ¾" round base bottle.....92

Figure 37: Torpedo bottle.....93

Figure 38: Snap case bottle.....94

Figure 39: Three piece mold bottle.....95

Figure 40: Pabst beer bottle.....96

Figure 41: Gh Mumm bottle.....97

Figure 42: Sloan's liniment bottle.....98

Figure 43: Snuff bottle.....99

Figure 44: NuGrape bottle.....100

Figure 45: Timber rings 102

Figure 46: Georgia License plate 103

Figure 47: Photograph of brick debris found in the ice house 104

Figure 48: Photograph of springhouse at Old Town 105

Figure 49: Photograph of buhrstones found in the ice house 106

Figure 50: Photograph of planed chert used as foundation stone 107

Figure 52: Photograph of chert found on the property 108

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Historically, excavations and research of plantation sites have focused on certain structures such as the main house. But recently archaeologists and historians alike have been examining and researching the main house support structures to learn more about plantation life beyond the main house. Main house support structures were essential to keeping the main house running and included buildings such as the kitchen, springhouse, ice house, well, and slave cabins just to name a few. All of these out buildings added to the larger picture of life on a plantation.

Of these main house support structures, ice houses are an often over looked structure amongst the plantation, almost an afterthought likely due to the simplicity of its function. However, some of America's most important historical figures of the past had an ice house on at least one of their properties. Thomas Jefferson went to Paris to research ice houses before bringing the technology back and constructing his own. He built one to keep his wine chilled, butter cold, and for making ice cream (Stanton, 1991, pg. 1). The ice house was not limited only to huge plantations, actually most plantations of the day had one, especially when people's diet started to change in the 1830s and 1840s. A movement towards eating more fresh fruits, fish, and vegetables made an ice house an essential mechanism for keeping perishable items preserved (Tangires, 1991, pg. 39).

Not only did ice houses lend insight into diet they also shed light on the ice trade, essentially bringing to light information from beyond the borders of the plantation, from

the journey of a tradable resource to one's front door. The ice trade began when ice was used as ballast for shipping but once ice arrived in the tropics people realized what a valuable commodity ice could be. Ice became the primary industry out of Maine due to the purity of its lakes making ice readily available to the states (Jordan, 2012).

Today all that remains of these ice storage units that held such precious cargo are often back filled cavernous holes in the ground. But with the excavations of these storage pits the story of just how widespread the ice trade was and the lengths people would go to obtain ice can be told. The ice house at Old Town Plantation is an ideal example and aids to the understanding of southern plantation life. Old Town has a long illustrious history that spans two centuries. It began in 1767 when a young Irish immigrant, George Galphin, was given the land from the Colony of Georgia. The land passed through several hands before the Fitzsimmons family gained ownership. The Fitzsimmons family owned the property from 1809-1862. Features from their tenure include portions of at least two outbuildings including the ice house and a spring house.

Old Town plantation is a cotton plantation that is still in use today. Though cotton is no longer planted; cows still graze along the fields and timber is still being cut. The present owner, Martha Black has renovated and preserved existing standing structures and has allowed for excavations to occur on her property for almost 20 years. Black has also renovated old sharecropper houses and runs a bed and breakfast on the property today. Old Town Plantation is located in Jefferson County, Georgia, along the Ogeechee River. The modern boundaries approximate the original plat granted to George Galphin in 1769. It is bounded to the West by the Ogeechee River and to the East by highway 17. The

northern boundary is a dirt road. McCroan's Bridge Road on the southern side is approximately perpendicular to the upper roundabout on the Ogeechee River. It is Fitzsimmons' Old Town ice house that is the subject of this research.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Ice Trade

Ice has been sought throughout the ages. One of the earliest mentions of ice was in the 51st aphorism of the second section of Hippocrates, about 460 B.C. It was used so often that a physician detailed a list of ills and its use saying, "But for all this, people will not take warning; and most men would rather run the hazard of their lives or health than be deprived of the pleasure of drinking out of ice" (McIntosh, 1853, pg. 497). An account was given of an entertainment by one of the Ptolemies, the beverages were served in double vessels lined with ice. During the Roman Empire, ice was regarded as essential to luxury and health (McIntosh, 1853, pg. 497). In the more recent past ice became an important economic commodity. Frederic Tudor began the ice trade in North America. In 1805, he sent his first ship to Martinique and by 1817 was shipping to Charleston, South Carolina. In 1818 he expanded his export to Savannah and a year late was shipping to New Orleans (Hall, 1888, pg. 2). In 1833, Tudor tried to extend his business to Calcutta, but found he lost half the cargo. Even though his business was unsuccessful worldwide he still had success in America and the West Indies as it was cheaper to buy from him than to purchase manufactured ice (Hall, 1888, pg. 2). Many people saw that success that Tudor found when he started his ice business and in 1837 new ice companies opened in Boston (Hall, 1888, pg. 3). In the *Prospectus for the Rockland Lake Ice Company* McIntosh

discovered that there

> "are in Boston, United States, sixteen companies engaged in transporting thousands of tons of this arctic crystal ice to the East and West Indies, to South America, and even to this country. In 1830 the quantity of ice shipped from Boston to distant parts amounted to 50,000 tons; from Charlestown it was equal to 30,000" (McIntosh, 1853, pg. 497).

Ice companies were exporting all over the world. In one case in the East Indies ice was exchanged for cotton, weight for weight (McIntosh, 1853, pg. 498). In a *Proposals Respecting Ice*, in 1806, Frederic Tudor talks about the many countries that have ice. He mentions Lima, Peru and that in Mexico, "they have ice and the monopoly is worth to the king we have been told $15,000 a year" (Cummings, 1949, pg.139).

Ice was an extremely lucrative business and one of the easiest ways to make a profit was to use ice as ballast. Ice was cut into blocks that would fill the ship and maximize the profits for the ship's owner. According to Christopher Fitzsimmons's estate inventory, he owned half of the steamboat Hamburg. The Hamburg travelled the Savannah River carrying cotton from his plantations to market in Savannah. In May of 1825 the Hamburg wrecked. The ship struck a tree and tore away one of her wheelhouses, it took two days to raise the sunken parts. Ruby A. Rahn also mentions that the Hamburg's trip to Savannah was carrying cotton" (Rahn, 1968). It is extremely likely that the Hamburg was using ice as ballast when travelling the Savannah River. If the boat became moored the crew could melt a little of the ice which would alleviate the weight. In C. Fitzsimmons's Balance of Open Accounts due the Estate in November 1825, it shows that an Ice house owes him ice. Unfortunately the entire amount owed is illegible (Edgefield County Archives).

Judy Wood, SAS for the Army Corps of Engineers, explained that when Northeastern shipbuilders came to the Georgia coast to purchase timber, they needed a marketable product to carry on the Southern leg of the journey. The product had to be something that was locally unavailable, was needed in Georgia, and was needed in bulk. The solution, most often was ice (Wood, Personal Communication).

In an article titled *Ice Introduced to Local Citizenry 116 Years Ago: Mayor Gamble reviews its History*, Gamble noted that:

> "ice was introduced in Savannah in 1819. Naturally an event of such outstanding importance called for editorial comment and I can well envisage the citizens of Savannah standing on the street corners and talking with great glee over this introduction…..make life so much more agreeable than it had heretofore been (Georgia Historical Society, 2010).

There were several notices in numerous newspapers of which ice houses being stocked and when it would be available for pick up, not only in Savannah, Georgia but also in Charleston, South Carolina. In the Savannah *Georgian* on September 28, 1826, on page three in the "Commercial" section the ad reads: "Arrived at Darien, 24th in A Brig Ice Plant from New York." Charleston, South Carolina was also importing ice. In the *Charleston Courier* March 20, 1830, on page 2 in the "Ship News": "Brig America…Boston…Ice to the Master & P.Pierce for Port of Charleston." Again on April 5, 1830, there is mention of more ice being imported, "Schooner Cyprus, Herrick, Sedgewick(Me); Ice, ha, spars & C. to Dodd & Barnard, and C. Raine. Also "Schooner Rozella, McKenzie, Sedgewick(Me)….Ice and Lumber to Dodd and Barnard and C. Ram." In the May 2, 1832 published in, *The Georgian* newspaper there is an ad for the hours of delivery: "The hours of delivery at the Ice House, until further notice will be from 5 A.M.

to 7 o'clock, from 10 till 2 and from 5 P.M. till 7. On Sundays, from 5 A.M. to 7 and from 12 till 2." The Savannah Ice Company also placed notice in the *Georgian* in 1833 for a board meeting to elect directors: "The stockholders of the Savannah Ice Company are requested to meet at the Reading Room of W. T. Williams at 12 o'clock on Monday next, the 2nd of December to elect directors." *The Daily Republican* on April 6, 1841, listed an advertisement from the Savannah Ice House noting the times it was open for business as well as the price per pound: "Three cents per pound will be charged for all Ice sold as _____. Individuals purchasing tickets for one thousand pounds will be furnished at two cents per pound." Ice was being shipped all over Georgia and South Carolina.

Ice houses and Storage

Since ice has been sought after for thousands of years, some type of storage was needed to keep the ice from melting too quickly. These storage facilities have evolved over time from caves to barns. Ice houses have been constructed all over the world to store this precious trade item. The earliest documented use of ice and the construction of an ice house dates back to Ancient Mesopotamia. Found on cuneiform texts from Mari, it describes an ice house built twice as long as deep, six meters deep and twelve meters long, and lined with tamarisk boughs (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, p 7). In Monica Ellis' *Ice and Ice Houses through the Ages* she discusses how important ice was to the wealthy and how far the desire dates back to. Storing the ice that it would not melt quickly was of concern for all who obtained the precious commodity. In the *Practical Dictionary of Mechanics* by Edward H. Knight in 1880, he wrote that Alexander the Great made several pits, which he

filled with snow and covered with twigs and leaves to preserve the snow throughout the summer (Ellis, 1982,. pg.1). There were many different factors to consider in ice storage; should it be stored aboveground, below ground; which types of straw or wheat to use for insulation; and how thick the walls need to be, among other concerns. The styles of ice houses were dependent upon the times. Ice houses have been well documented all over Britain as well as in New England and Virginia.

Numerous texts and articles have been written about the history of the ice trade but there has been a lack of excavations and publications on the archaeology of ice houses in the Southern States. Beamon and Roaf described the four types of ice houses that developed in America from an early type of ice pit, to a sophisticated ice house, and as technology advanced, huge manufacturing plants. The first type was a small domestic ice house that belonged to one estate or home and rarely measured more than 13 feet by 16 feet in size. They usually contained two levels of which the lower one was used for food storage under a slotted floor. They do not describe what the upper level is used for. The second type was similar in size and construction but was one story above ground and used primarily for the ice storage. The third type was used to store a full season's supply of ice for the villagers and townsfolk. The person responsible for the delivery of the ice was known as the "Ice man" and he delivered to home or place of business. And the last type of ice house was created when ice had begun to be commercially traded. The structure was 131 feet by 328 feet and was constructed near the ice source such as the Hudson and Kennebec rivers (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg. 36).

18th Century Storage

There has been more research on the technology of early ice storage in England than elsewhere. Monica Ellis' book focuses on ice houses in Hampshire, England and explains that they were "surprisingly varied" in construction (Ellis, 1982, pg. 44). Ecchinswell is a large ice house that is situated between the main house and the fish ponds which supplied its ice. This structure had a fifteen foot three inch arched passage and is paved with four quarter inch square tiles. The pit is fifteen feet deep from the floor to the passage (Ellis, 1982, pg. 59). Ellis documented a structure found at Pamber in Wyeford, Ramsdell as being rectangular in dimension and only four feet deep. It is brick built and the curved roof is supported by four brick pillars. There is no passage and nine double brick steps lead down to the floor which is paved with brick. There is a small window high in the end wall and a drain is in one corner (Ellis, 1982, pg. 72). Ellis located instructions on how to build an ice house; located from the Broadlands Archives. The instructions stated that a pit should be dug twelve feet deep, sixteen feet long, and sixteen feet wide (Ellis, 1982, pg.81). Ellis decided to experiment and build an ice house;

> "In January 1980 the icehouse at Levens Hall, Cumbria was filled with ice as an experiment to test the efficiency of the eighteenth century building. Because of the lack of ice in the neighbourhood a supply had to be bought from a Whitehaven fishing farm. Straw was used as insulation and proved excellent for the purpose as the ice kept for thirteen months. Salt was not mixed with the ice as there had been so many differing opinions in the nineteenth century about the advantages of do so"(Ellis, 1982, pg.83).

This showed the way in which the ice house actually worked. Despite many differing opinions about the maintenance of ice, simply keeping the ice packed and sealed kept it

frozen.

In *The Gardner's Dictionary of 1768* by Philip Miller, he states that the sides of the well should be bricked up with a wall at least two-and-a-half bricks thick. When the wall was "within 3 feet of the surface an outer arch should be begun and carried up sufficiently high to admit a doorway from the passage to the pit. A second arch should be built over this wall which would add to the success of the house" (1768). In 1768, Philip Miller wrote; "a circular building was preferable, the size and depth of the well, being left to the owner", as quoted in *The Ice Houses of Britain* (pg.62). Philip Miller also suggested in the *Gardener's Dictionary* that a raised position was best to allow for good drainage, it could be underground but would have to have silty soil for drainage (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.86).

This introduces a second type of structure circular chambers are underground wells made of brick, stone, or in some cases hewn from rock (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.71). This type of structure contains a large chamber but is not very deep and contains a drain at the bottom in the center. Charles McIntosh believed the best type of ice house was the circular ice house. He describes the perfect structure in *The Book of the Garden*;

Figure 1. Conical shaped ice house with thatched roof.

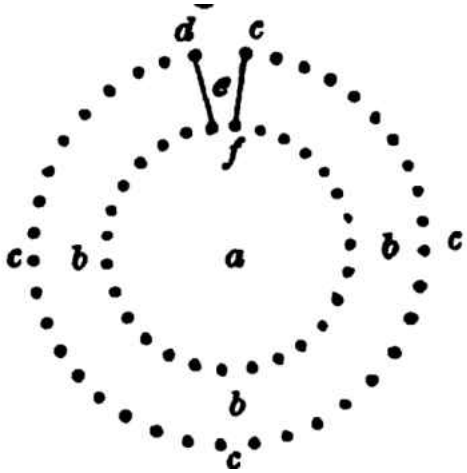


Figure 2. Where the posts would be located in the building process.

"the diameter of which is 10 feet, and at this centre you put up a post, to stand 15 feet above the level of the ground, which post ought to be about 9 inches through at the bottom, and not a great deal smaller at the top. Great care must be taken that this post be perfectly perpendicular, for if it be not, the whole building will be awry *bbb* are 28 posts, 9 feet high, and 6 inches through at the bottom, without much tapering towards the top. These posts stand about 2 feet apart, reckoning from centre to centre-which leaves between each two a space of 18 inches; *cccc* are 38 posts, 5 feet high and 5 inches through at the bottom, without much tapering towards the top. These posts stand about 2 feet apart, from centre to centre, which leaves between each two a space of 19 inches. The space between these two rows of posts is 4 feet in width, and, as will be presently seen, is to contain a wall of straw; *e* is a passage through this wall; *d* is the outside door of the passage; *f* is the inside door; and the inner circle, of which a is the centre, is

the place in which the ice is to be deposited" (McIntosh, 1853, pg.506).

The roof is thatched and should be four feet thick and no lower than 45˚. McIntosh (1853) recommended laying the ice on logs with a couple inches of twigs and branches and then beat the ice down and closed it up normally (pg.506).

The ice house varied all over the world but in America while the shapes were different the way it drained was the same. Beamon and Roaf describe the structures in America as ice pits (Beamon & Roaf, 1980, pg. 36). The ice houses did not appear to ever have an elaborate structure built over it to disguise the building. They tended to have a simple roof with a trap door that set over the opening. Inside the ice houses they tended to have a dirt floor and logs that were laid down and then the ice set on top of the logs to allow for drainage.

Figure 3. Octogonal ice house at the President's House in Philadelphia, Pennslyvania. Photo courtesy ushistory.org.

The icehouse found at the Robert Morris house in Philadelphia is an octagonal structure 13 feet in diameter and 18 feet deep. This icehouse was built in 1781 and based on European design but like most American style ice houses has a dirt floor. George Washington used this design to model his own icehouse. Morris wrote a detailed letter to Washington June 15, 1784 the way in which the icehouse was constructed and functioned:

> "My Ice House is about 18 feet deep and 16 square, the bottom is a Coarse Gravell & the water which drains from the ice soaks into it as fast as the Ice melts, this prevents the necessity of a Drain….the Walls of my Ice House are built of stone without Mortar (which is called Dry Wall) until

within a foot and a half of the Surface of the Earth when Mortar was used from thence to the Surface to make the top more binding and Solid. When this Wall was brought up even with the Surface of the Earth, I stopped there and then dug the foundation for another Wall, two foot back from the first and about two foot deep, this done the foundation was laid so as to enclose the whole of the Walls built on the inside of the Hole where the Ice is put and on this foundation is built the Walls which appear above ground and in mine they are ten foot high. On these the Roof is fixed, and these walls are very thick, built of Stone and Mortar, afterwards rough Cast {stuccoed} on the outside. I nailed a Ceiling of Boards under the Roof flat from Wall to Wall, and filled the Space between the Ceiling and the Shingling of the Roof with Straw so that the heat of the Sun Cannot possibly have any Effect. In the Bottom of the Ice House I placed some Blocks of Wood about two foot long and on these I laid a Plat form of Common Fence Rails close enough to hold the Ice open enough to let the Water pass through, thus the Ice lays two foot from [above] the Gravel and of Course gives room for the Water to soak away gradually without being in contact with the Ice, which if it was for any time would waste it amazingly. The upper Floor [the floor of the icehouse] is laid on joists placed across the top of the Inner well and for greater security I nailed a Ceiling under those Joists and filled the Space between the Ceiling and Floor with Straw. The Door for entering this Ice house faces the north a Trap Door is made in the middle of the Floor through which the Ice is put in and taken out. I find it best to fill with Ice which as it is put in should be broke into small pieces and pounded down with heavy Clubs or Battons such as Pavers use, if well beat it will after a while consolidate into one solid mass and require to be cut out with a Chizell or Axe. I tried Snow one year and lost it in June. The Ice keeps until October or November and I believe if the Hole was larger so as to hold more it would keep until Christmas" (ushistory.org, 2010, pg. 2-3).

Figure 4. The Cottage, Ice House, Upper Marlboro, Prince George's Maryland. Perspective view looking Northwest. HABS MD, 17-MARBU,13A-1 Photographer Jack E. Boucher, 1990.

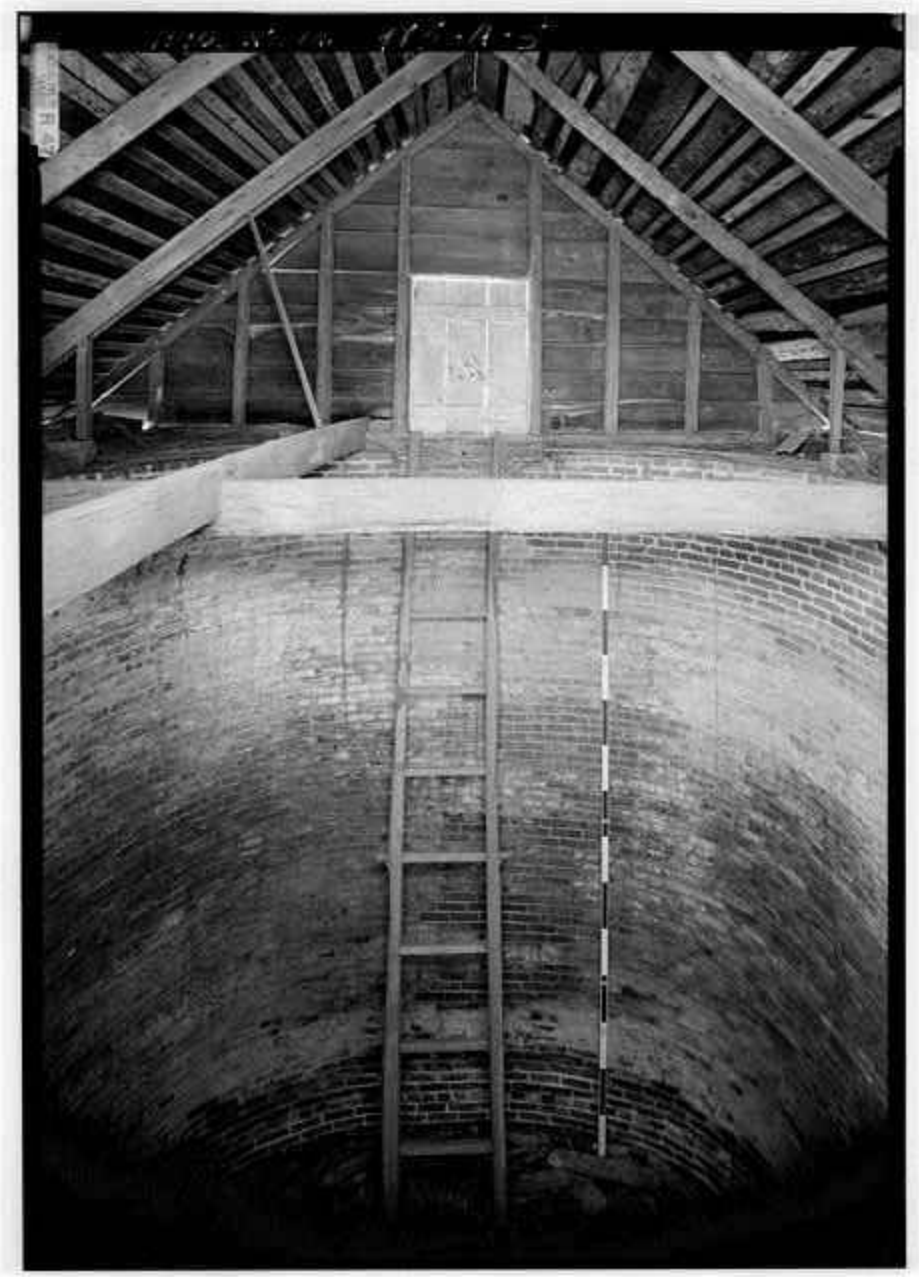


Figure 5. The Cottage, Ice House, Upper Marlboro, Prince George's, Maryland. Interior view looking West showing roof structure, walls, and built in ladder into pit. HABS MD, 17-MARBU, 13A-5. Photographer Jack E. Boucher, 1990.

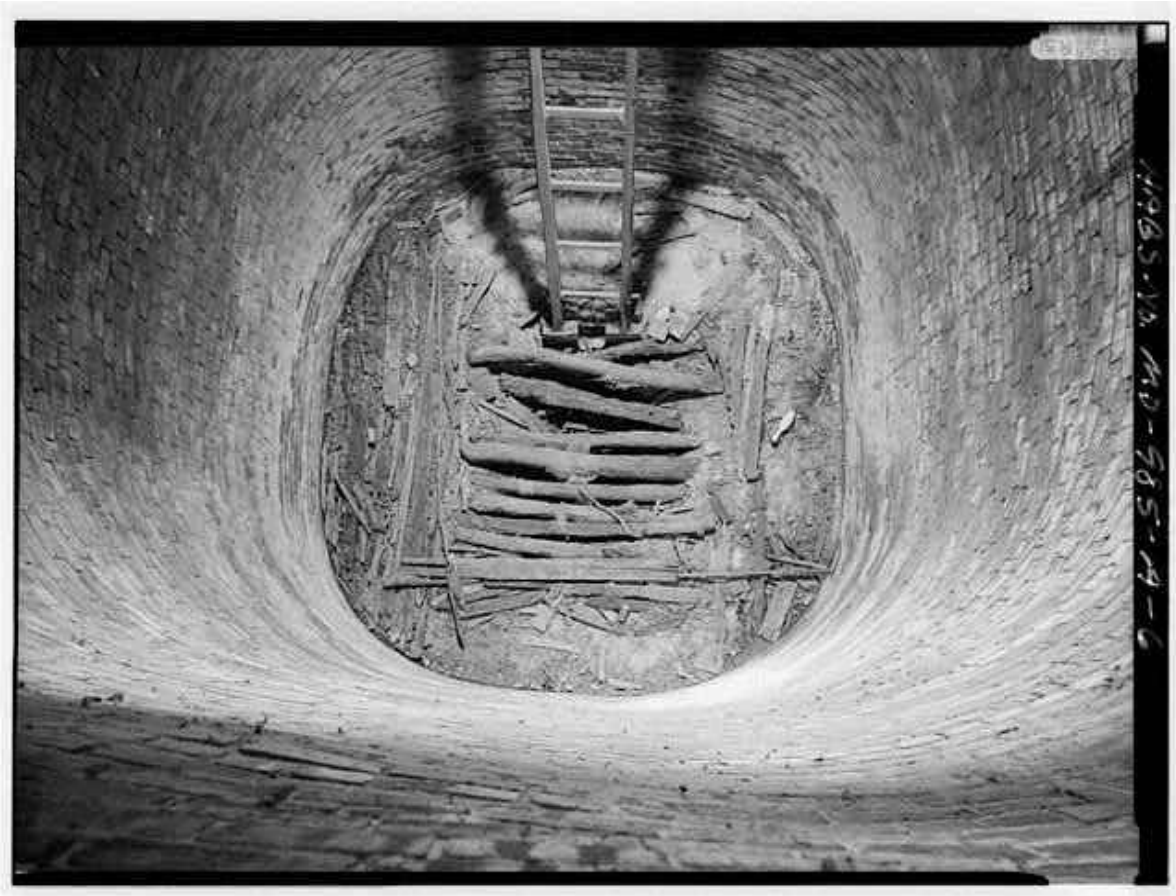


Figure 6. The Cottage, Ice House, Upper Marlboro, Prince George's Maryland. Interior view looking down into the pit. Note the log drain at the bottom. HABS MD, 17-MARBU, 13 A-6. Photographer Jack E. Boucher, 1990.

The icehouse at the Cottage in Upper Marlboro, Prince George's, Maryland, is a circular brick lined structure with a wood drain. The ice sits upon the wood and this allows for drainage. The covering is a simple square roof structure with a trap door for access.

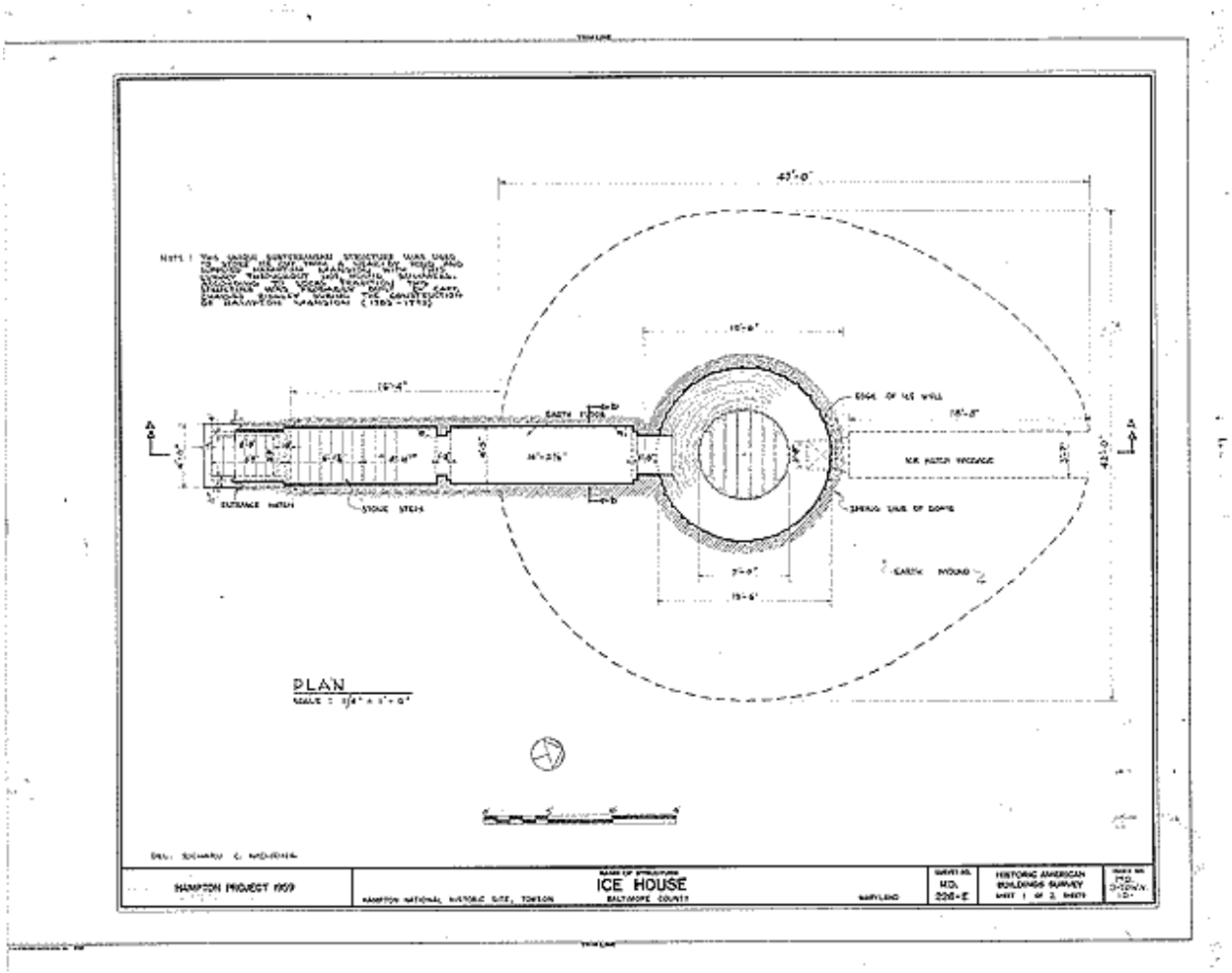


Figure 7. Hampton Plantation Ice House, view from the top looking down. Baltimore, Maryland courtesy of HABS.

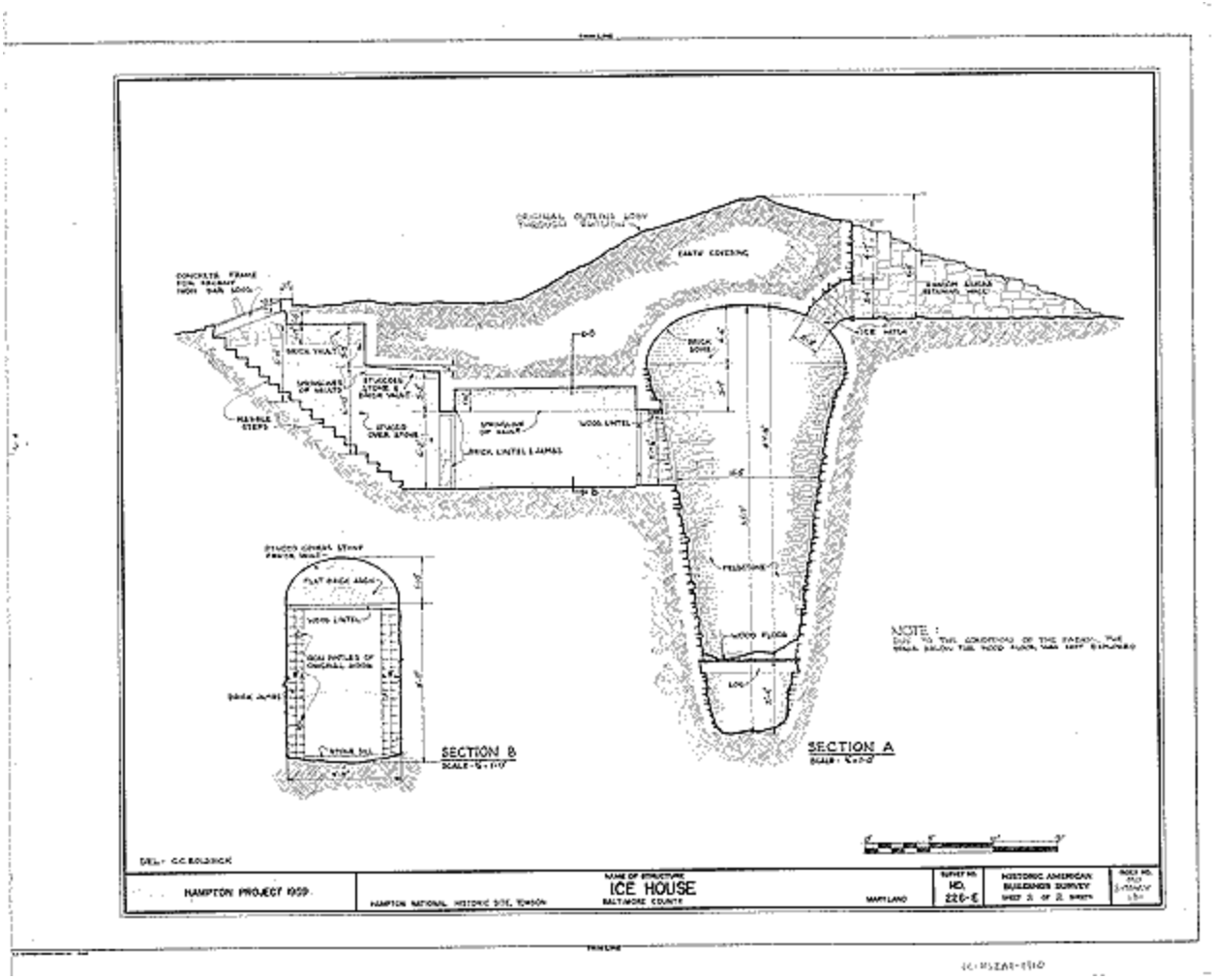


Figure 8. Hampton Plantation Ice House. Baltimore, Maryland. Blueprint of the ice house built between 1783 and 1790, courtesy of HABS.

The drawings of the Hampton Plantation ice house shows in detail how the ice would be packed into the pit and how it would drain without the pipe in the center to carry the water out to a pond. This particular ice house is located in the garden and next to the pond. Having the ice house next to the pond made it easier to fill (Tangires, 1991, pg. 33). The Hampton plantation was bought by Colonel Charles Ridgley in 1745 and remained in the Ridgley family until 1946 when it was sold to the Avalon Foundation. The ice house was

constructed between 1783 and 1790, the walls are stuccoed and the floor of the lower vaulted space is earth (HABS, 1958). The ice house had a brick and stone lined vault measuring 12 feet in diameter and 34 feet in depth (Vlach, 1993, pg. 81).

Beamon considered George Washington the pioneer of ice house construction in America. Washington's first tried using his basement as an ice storage unit but was unable to keep the ice insulated and eventually the ice flooded his basement. In his 1785 diary Washington mentions his troubles with building an ice house that will keep ice: "Opened the well in my cellar in which I laid up a store of ice but there was not the smallest particle remaining (as citied in Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg. 36). Instead of digging another pit Washington's solution was a dry well. He found they preserved the ice efficiently. He lined and roofed the well to form the main ice house on his Mount Vernon estate (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.36). This ice house was "sixteen-foot deep pit that held sixty wagonloads of ice" (Cummings, R., 1949).

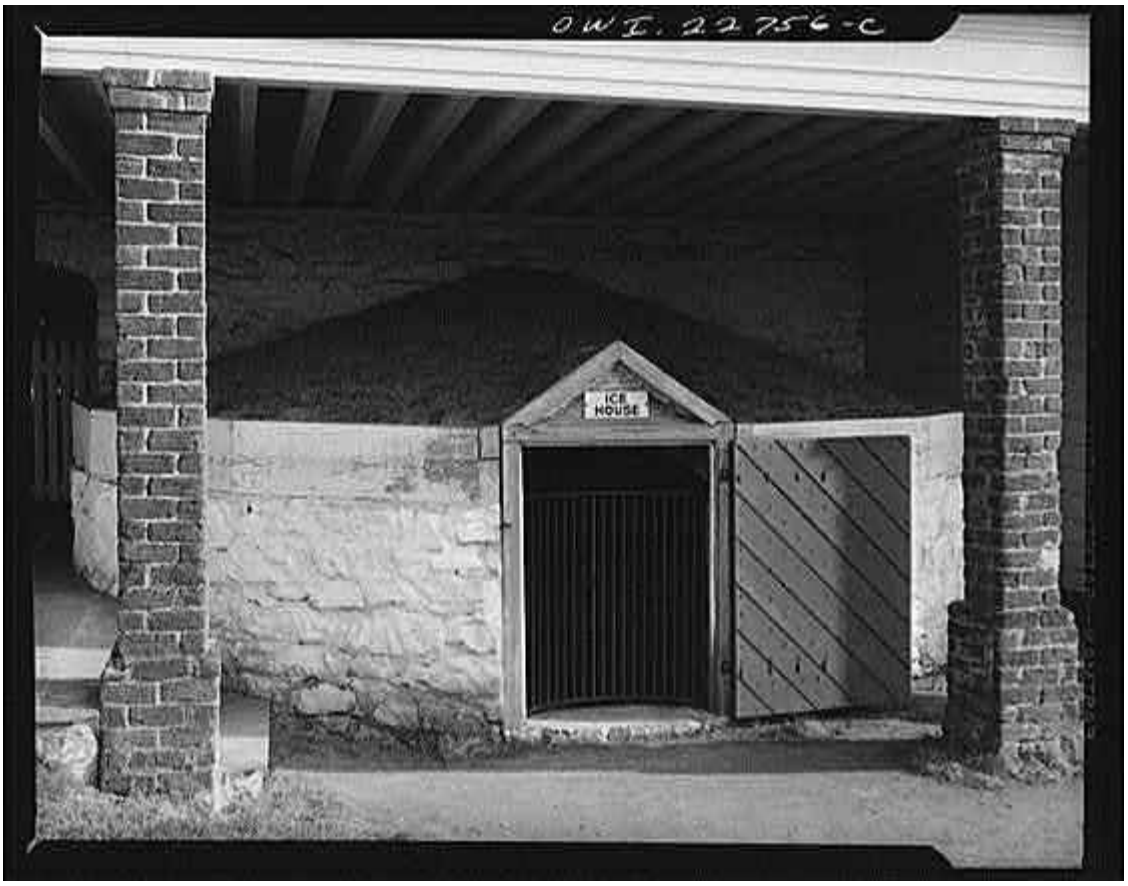


Figure 9. Charlottesville, VA. Ice house at Monticello home of Thomas Jefferson. Photograph by John Collier, 1943. Picture courtesy of HABS.

Thomas Jefferson not only built ice houses at his homes but he also designed the ice house at Montpelier, home of James Madison. He extended his designs to ice houses on several other plantations in the Charlottesville area (Tangires, 1991, pg. 35). Before he had the ice house built at the Monticello, he built one at his home in Philadelphia. He subscribed to a summer ice service run from to James Oeller's Chestnut Street hotel to which he paid a shilling a day. Jefferson observed the construction of ice houses in Virginia and Italy before building his own. By basing his ice house on what he viewed in Virginia, Italy, and Oeller's ice house, he built a structure that held more than just ice.

He constructed Monticello's ice house on the coldest side of the house and per his drawings it was a "cylinder sixteen feet below ground level and six feet above it" icehouse. The specifications indicate that more than ice was stored. Items such as butter, cold dressed provisions, and salad as kept in Oeller's icehouse were kept. Jefferson was also using his ice house for making ice cream and chilling wine (Stanton, 1991, pg. 1).

19th Century Storage

Figure 10. Ice house at Cassius M. Clay's plantation in Kentucky. View looking down into the pit. Picture courtesy Misty Y. Dunn.

Figure 11. Ice house at Cassius M. Clay's plantation in Kentucky. Note the dirt floor. It is a circular ice house. Picture courtesy Misty Dunn.

Cassius M. Clay's ice house in Kentucky is similar to Jefferson's ice house at Monticello. Both are circular with a dirt bottom. Logs would be laid down for the ice to sit. The roof is a simple square construction just big enough to cover the opening of the pit. Clay was born in 1810 to one of the wealthiest landowners and largest slaveholders in Kentucky. He became an emancipationist in 1844 and freed all his legally owned slaves. He went on to lead a productive and illustrious life as a military man, politician, and newspaper owner (Madison County Historical Society, 2012, pg.1).

In his book, Back of the Big House, John M. Vlach found that ice houses varied considerably in form and appearance. He found that at Marmion where the ice house looked like nothing more than a roof resting close to the ground, whereas the Folly plantation ice house in Augusta County, Virginia was a small, square building with brick walls that stood around five feet high. Both structures had an underground vault that extended about 30 feet Hilliard states that with the "interstate ice trade" that developed in 1799 it was relatively easy to procure ice throughout the South and that even the estates of the "semitropical rice plantations of South Carolina were able to obtain ice" (Vlach, 1993, pg. 81).

Nineteenth century ice house design appears to have no be a standard for the depth or location. The important part was that the structure drained well and was deep enough to help preserve the ice. Beamon and Roaf (1990) affirmed there are "many practical reasons for the removal of the ice house from the proximity of the house, such as soil, slope and aspect, but the most influential factor in the construction of an ice house was the location of the ice source" (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg. 85). The majority of ice houses

were situated closer to their ice sources than to the house they served. This made the work easier on all involved in filling the ice house. The work was so intense that many factors influenced even the way in which an ice house faced. At Abbey Manor the ice house was situated with the entrance facing the road so that ice carted off the train could be dropped right in (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.85).

Insulation of an ice house was also important to keeping the supply of ice for more than season. Straw was commonly used in ice houses all over the world. The straw absorbed moisture that melted from the top of the ice block. Using clean straw and tying them into bundles to line the walls made the well air tight so the ice remained frozen. The bundling made it easier to remove old straw and replace it with new (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.111). Straw was not the only insulation used; reeds, sawdust, timber, and mineral wool were also absorbent.

The nineteenth century saw a change in ice houses. With the advancement in technology ice could be stored anywhere. Because of the economy many people used what was available. Bowen and Lambert said that it depended on the cost of ice as to whether one needed to construct an ice house. Many farmers would store the ice in barns close to the milk barn though occasionally some found it cheaper to have both in one building (Bowen & Lambert , 1915, pg.8-10). Though people began combining the ice house with other buildings it still had to drain well and be well insulated to be successful.

Ice houses constructed in Britain were underground and had masonry chambers with drains at the base and a door at the side. The walls and earth were sufficient to preserve the ice all year round (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.3). Ice houses constructed in

Britain tried to hide the structure by making it look like a Greek or Egyptian temple; "In the nineteenth century ice-houses were caught up in the main stream of the social, scientific, and artistic developments that swept through the century. On the one hand, ice-houses were disguised as Greek or Egyptian temples and, on the other hand, they were built using the most modern technologies. "Improved methods of insulation enabled smaller timber ice-houses to be built above ground at a cost that the middle classes could afford" (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.3). Beamon and Roaf's *The Ice Houses of Britain* has a set classification, which they took from a guide book written by A. Niven Robertson. Robertson's has ten different types of structures. The first type of structure is the cup and dome which included the egg and globe shaped wells that were the most common. This type had a dome top and tapered down the well to a drain. This structure was also the most expensive to construct and generally something only the wealthy could afford. MacIntosh stated in *The Book of the Garden* the advantages "of the egg-shaped ice-house is that as it melts ice slides down the sides of the ice well and compacts and consolidates under the weight of the ice above, so maintaining a minimal surface area and facilitating its continued freezing," *(*as citied in Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.59). Beamon & Roaf (1990), believed the two advantages of this structure were that it "encouraged consolidation of the ice and drainage of the meltwater" (pg.61). Beamon's (1990) drawings of the egg and cup shaped ice houses are all domed at the top and taper to the bottom. There has been some debate as to whether the walls needed to be sloped. Most agreed that a cup shaped ice house should hold about a two year supply of ice.

Type two, square and rectangular were the most popular in the nineteenth century

(Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg. 71). The square and rectangular type of ice house was much more economical. "Ice-houses, we are persuaded, would become much more general, were country gentlemen fully aware of the fact, that they might be built square just as well as round, and be equally effective at less expense, above the surface than under it" (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.71). They were more economical as the stone was readily available. An anonymous contributor to *The Gardeners' Chronicle* offers a plan for a cheap ice house. Building the ice house in porous gravel means it does not have to have a drain since it will naturally drain (McIntosh, 1853, pg.506).

A third structural type, tunnel shaped chambers are fairly uncommon and often spectacular however, there are few examples of this type. The Drum House located in Scotland has an icehouse that is hewn from a quarry fissure in the rocks and is 80 ft long, 12 ft wide, and 24 feet high (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.73).

Some of the ice house types were cost effective and temporary. The timber and thatched ice houses were common and used well into the nineteenth century. They were a simple design, a timber and thatched roof built over an underground ice well. The temporary ice stores were cheap to build. They lasted for two seasons and made from available materials (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg. 21). Erskine House used an economical ice house. It was essentially a pit that consisted of a

> "pit sunk in a gravel hill, 16 feet in diameter at the top, 10 feet at the bottom, and 8 feet deep. No drain is here used, as the melted ice finds free percolation through the gravelly soil. Prior to putting in the ice, branches of trees are laid across the bottom, and over them some smaller spray, which acts as a filter for the melted ice escaping. When this pit is filled to about 3 feet above the surface-level, the ice is covered with from a foot to 15 inches of peat earth, over which a temporary roofing of spars is put, and slightly

> thatched. When the ice is wanted for use, an opening is made in the peat earth covering" (McIntosh, 1853, pg. 510).

Unfortunately the peat leaves the ice discolored; it lost its value as a commodity to be sold to the public, and was used for private consumption only.

Ice house decorating styles were influenced by the times. Neoclassical facades were the style in the Nineteenth century and many architects followed the design. Joseph Paxton designed the ice house at Chatsworth Derbyshire in 1841, Paxton implemented the egg-shaped design with double walls but he "covered the whole structure with a growing heath so that strangers would not know it was there, and hid the tunnel to the ice house in a bank of evergreens" (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.86). This seems to be polar opposite from the most elaborate construction Beamon and Roaf located. In the 1842 edition of Gardener's Chronicle that Beamon and Roaf found this ice house was extreme;

> "Here the rooms by the entrance doubled as fruit stores and as areas for recreation, and the ice chamber itself was loaded by a conveyor belt. The ice-collection pans, it was argued, could be used for skating in the winter and bowling in the summer, while the bank of earth covering the ice-house formed a rock garden" (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.86).

Beamon and Roaf also stressed the importance of the quality of soil and the slope of the structures for the best insulation. If the ice house did not drain well the ice would melt. If the ice well was not keeping ice it was usually due to the damp.

Beamon noted that many of Britain's best architects tried their

hand at ice house design. The designs were influenced by fashion and became so popular people were able to purchase blueprints (Beamon & Roaf, 1990, pg.73). These structures were very popular all over Europe but as technology changed so too did the ice house. McIntosh believed that it was possible to build an ice house above ground and ice would, in fact, stay longer if properly built and insulated.

> "The ice house at the Hirsel is constructed as follows;-it has been found by Mr. Smith to answer the purpose completely. A high, dry, airy situation, having a northern exposure, and partially shaded with large trees, has been selected. A pit, 14 feet square and the same in depth, was excavated and lined round with coarse boarding; a well, 5 or 6 feet deep, dug under this for the melted ice to drain into; and from this well a leaden pipe is carried up to a convenient part, to which a pump is attached, so that any water accumulation in the well may be pumped up….This well is covered by laying some strong planks across it; and these, covered with faggots, form the base for the ice to rest on, and, as will be seen, act as a drain to keep the bottom always dry. In each corner of the pit a strong post is fixed, upon which a roof is placed 4 feet above the surface of the ground. The space from the ground to the springing of the roof is boarded with slabs, having a door in the north side, in which a sliding ventilator is fixed, and another ventilator is placed in the opposite side-Mr. Smith having found this ventilation useful, a subject which of late years has occupied the attention of several, and a result which is curious as being directly at variance with former practices" (McIntosh, 1853, pg. 509).

Mr. Smith felt the ventilation helped to refreeze the ice that melted and thought that an underground ice house was the best way to keep the ice.

McIntosh described not only ice houses in Britain but in China as well. He found in *The Chinese Repository* that the ice houses around Ning-po are numerous, and in general on the banks of the river. They were not underground instead they are surrounded with bamboo and paddy straw for insulation. In the Gardeners' Chronicle is 1845, a Mr. Fortune described a Chinese ice house;

> "The bottom of the ice-house is nearly on a level with the surrounding fields, and is generally about 20 yards long by 14 broad, The walls, which are built of mud and stone, are very thick, 12 feet in height, and are, in fact, a kind of embankment rather than walls, having a door through them on one side, and a kind of sloping terrace on the other, by which the ice can be thrown into the house. On the top of the walls or embankment a tall span-roof is raised, constructed of bamboos, thickly thatched with straw, giving the whole an appearance exactly like an English haystack" (McIntosh, 1853, pg. 504).

Ice houses built in America in the early nineteenth century did not differ much from the ice houses in the eighteenth century. They were still brick or stone lined with a dirt floor and the ice placed on logs. One example of this type of ice houses is at Ashland plantation.

Figure 12. Ashland Plantation, Henry Clay, Fayette County, Kentucky. Southeast view of two conical shaped ice houses. HABS KY 34-LEX.V.3D-1. Photographer William Gus Johnson, 1967.

Henry Clay built two ice houses at his Ashland plantation in Kentucky. In a letter to his son in 1830, he mentions constructing "a new conical ice house". The structures are on the south side of the house and sixteen feet in the ground (Henry Clay Memorial Foundation, 2012). The ice house of Long Grass Plantation in Mecklenburg County, Virginia, constructed in 1829, was a large pit, measuring 18 feet in diameter and in excess of 14 feet deep (Kimmel, 1993, pg.2). Kimmel compiled research by Hume, Hargrove, Geier, and Cranes-McNaughton and found that the general consensus was the postbellum ice pits were 10 to 15 feet in depth while antebellum were deeper at about 15 to 25 feet in depth (Kimmel, 1993, pg. 2-3).

Ice has been in demand for thousands of years and that demand has never wavered. Ice houses generally followed the styles of time and while often elaborate, they also remained functional. With the invention of electricity and refrigeration the need for ice houses disappeared. The old structures have been filled with trash. However, the amount of time and money people spent to construct and transport ice showed how important it was to them. Throughout history ice has been important. It was traded all over the world. It was used for medicinal purposes, domestic purposes, and as a status symbol for the wealthy.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

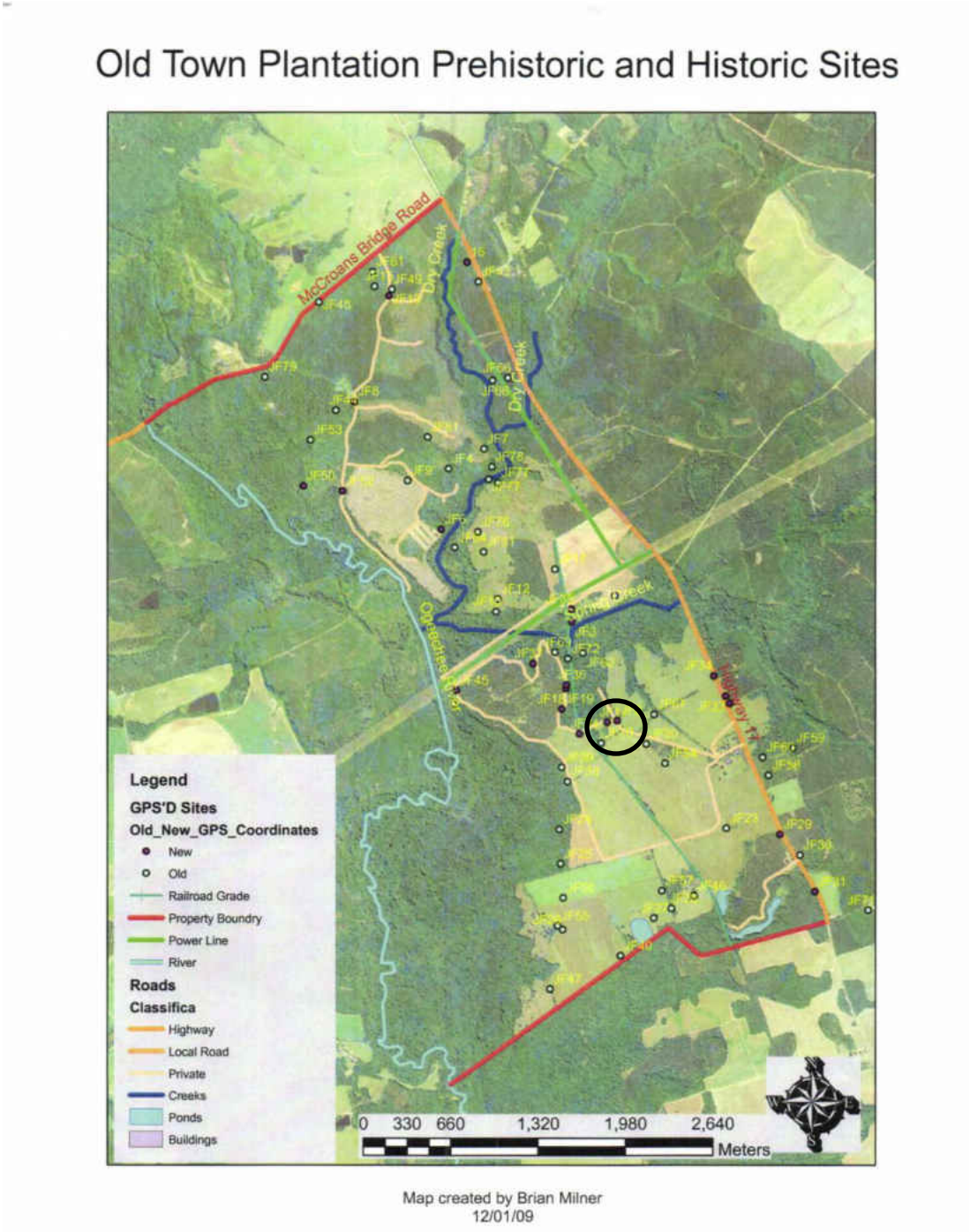


Figure 13: Map of Old Town

Old Town plantation is one of the few British Crown Grants that has never been broken up. The original grant of 1400 acres was given to George Galphin in the 1760's and gradually added to, to make it the plantation of 3600 acres it is today. Old Town has had a long and illustrious life. People have occupied the land surrounding Old Town for approximately 8000 years. Since, 1994, Georgia Southern archeology students, led by Dr. Sue Moore, have been investigating the plantation. They have found evidence of Native American occupation and possibly identified a Native American village known as Ogeechee Old Town established by Yuchi Indians in the mid to late 1600's. The Creek village was probably one reason that George Galphin, Old Town Plantation's first owner, was attracted to the area. Galphin, came to America from Ireland in 1737 to make a better life for himself and the wife he left behind in Ireland (Sheftall, 1980, pg.13). He entered the colonies in Charleston, South Carolina and set out to trade with the Creek Indians who lived along the Chattahoochee River (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 18). Galphin did not appear to lack for female companionship and on July 1, 1741, he married Bridget Shaw in Charleston, South Carolina bigamously (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 13). But Galphin also had children by a number of other women; including an Indian princess named Metawney, a black slave named Rose, a mulatto slave called Sapho, an Indian slave titled Nitehuckey, and a French girl named Rachel Dupee (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 16). Galphin soon moved his business from Charleston, South Carolina to Augusta, Georgia as Augusta was quickly supplanting Charleston as the core of Indian trading (Sheftall, 1980, pg.14). Galphin was an extremely successful trader and began accumulating property in 1747 along the South Carolina side of the Savannah River at a place called Silver Bluff. This positioned

Galphin with a trade trail from his Silver Bluff plantation to the Indian nation (Sheftall, 1980, pg.15). He expanded his business into Georgia in 1750 when he petitioned the Georgia authority for 500 acres on the shore across from Silver Bluff (Sheftall, 1980, pg.16).

Figure 14. Map of Old Town when George Galphin bought it . This shows the original Crown Grant (unpublished map on file from Jefferson County public library).

As Galphin's wealth increased he obtained a warrant in 1763 for "1400 acres lying at the Great Ogeechee to include a creek called Spring Creek above the Euchee Ford at the Old Settlement and to run down the River to include the four hundred acres ordered Andrew Lambert" (unpublished map on file from Jefferson County library). Galphin obtained the final grant on March 3, 1767, signed by Governor James Wright (Sheftall, 1980, pg.23). Before Galphin received official documentation that Old Town was his property, he was already trading with the Creeks. "He enlarged the settlement and expanded his commercial activities at the same time by establishing a trading store near the bluff of the Old Town, a mill on Spring Creek, and a large cowpen on the southwest side to this small but continuously flowing stream" (Sheftall, 1980, pg.23). Galphin's mill and store at Old Town served the Ogeechee area and was extremely successful (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 24). Galphin like many colonists supplemented his income from trading with cattle ranching. As was typical for the period, Galphin's cattle were not penned; they roamed freely and the cowpens were used for roundup only. If the herd was small and local generally a frontiersman and his sons could take care of the cows (Goff, 1950). But when the herds became larger slaves of the landowners were used. Galphin's cowpen at Old Town was considerably larger than most in the area. He owned immense herds of black cattle that grazed on both sides of the Ogeechee around his property (Sheftall, 1980, pg.26). Galphin likely kept slaves at Old Town to tend the pens. Galphin's head stock minder, Ketch, helped him erect the first cabins at Old Town for storing trading goods and cattle supplies (Sheftall, 1980, pg.26). John Bartram, a Philadelphia botanist touring Georgia in 1765, described Old Town as "a little settlement surrounded with piney poorish

ground, which affords, by its extent of 6 miles round, more or less tolerable pasture both winter & summer, having in that space different soils as swamps: low and dry" (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 26-27). Galphin continued to raise cattle at Old Town until the time of his death in 1780 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 27).

To bring more people into the colony, the Georgia Assembly passed a bill in Februray 1764 to provide aid, tax exemption, and free townships for any groups migrating to Georgia (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 28). Irish immigrants poured into the colony to escape "the heavy tax burdens and exorbitant rents which the British authorities imposed upon the lower classes" (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 28). Being a fellow immigrant, Galphin understood the problems these people faced. As a savvy businessman, he saw the need for more settlers along the Ogeechee, and decided to ask Governor James Wright and the Georgia Council in January 1765 for 50,000 acres along the Ogeechee for prospective settlers (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 29). The proposed township was located at Big Creek, which flowed into the Ogeechee about five miles North of Old Town. Queensborough was a mostly Irish and generally referred to as the Irish settlement (Jones, 1878, pg. 245). The council set aside these lands, already partially settled, for a period of three years and exempted any Irish family who chose to move into the township, known as Queensborough, from paying taxes for ten years (Sheftall, 1980).

Old Town remained a central trading center for the colony. When settlers such as Thomas Balsh, Joseph Turner, or John Sellers asked the Georgia Council for land, they cited the distance from their desired tracts to Old Town (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 33). In 1769 as land prices began to rise, Galphin obtained grants for several tracts along Big Creek,

right in the heart of Queensborough Township (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 33). Two years later he received a grant for 100 acres adjoining Old Town to the North and was able to purchase 350 acres from Patrick Denision close to the headwaters of Spring Creek (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 33).

In 1773, Galphin retired and signed his businesses over to his children. He notified Greenwood & Higginson, their London supply house, of new arrangements at Silver Bluff (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 40). The letter stated that the old man had "declined all his mercantile business" in favor of George Galphin, John Galphin, Thomas Galphin, David Holmes, and John Parkinson. David Holmes was Galphin's nephew and John Parkinson, a Savannah businessman who had entered into an agreement with Galphin's sons (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 41).

> "Two years after Galphin's retirement he felt moved to turn over his remaining possessions to his descendants. Galphin also had daughters of marriageable age. In order to insure their inheritance and help prospective beaux overlook their questionable background, he needed to provide them with dowries. Hence, Galphin divided his property into five portions and executed deeds on February 2, 1775, to each of his children: Metawney's George, John, and Judith; Rachel's Thomas and Martha, and Rose's Barbara" (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 41).

By February 1774, hostilities had increased with the Creeks to the point that Govenor Wright feared traders might be killed (Haldimand Collection, 1774). Governor Wright shut down trade with the Indians. Galphin held several conferences with Creek delegates at Old Town in an effort to keep the Indians subdued (Sheftall, 1980, pr. 44-45). In December 1774, David Taitt, acting as John Stuart's, official British Indian superintendent,

emissary to the Creeks, wrote his superior that Galphin and his affiliates were violating the rigid boycott and proceeding to trade with the Creeks (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 45). A year later when Wright reopened trade, Galphin and an Augusta trader named Robert Rae notified the forces in Charleston of their intentions to aid the American cause and became the intermediary for the Indian nations (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 45).

Galphin wrote his last will and testament in 1776, shortly after giving each of his children a deed of gift to part of his property. The will served to echo his wishes that his estate be divided among his all children (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 78). At George's death in 1780, John Galphin became owner of 1500 acres of Old Town, which Galphin described as lying "upon the River Ogeechee opposite the land given by the Indians to him the said John, his sister Judith, and brother George" (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 41-42). John's mother was given the right to live there and be clothed and maintained by her children (Sheftall, 1980, pg.78). By 1782, after Galphin's death in 1780, his Georgia estate was a mere skeleton of its former prosperity. Raiding parties had carried off all but 29 slaves and most of his cattle and horses (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 79).

Numerous problems developed with the execution of Galphin's will. His heirs spent generations battling in court to keep what was rightfully theirs. The first claim involving Galphin's property came from his first wife Catherine in Ireland. Galphin left her 150£, but under the laws of South Carolina a wife was entitled to at least one third of her spouse's property (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 80). In 1786, Catherine hired George Reed of Philadelphia as her attorney and proceeded to sue the executors of George Galphin. Unfortunately Catherine passed away in 1788. The second dispute, instigated by the

children of Galphin, began in the early 1790s. This struggle became known historically as the "Galphin Claim" (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 80). The claim stemmed from the Treaty of Augusta in 1773, when the Creek and Cherokee Indians, indebted to Galphin and other Indian traders, ceded the Northeast area of Georgia to Governor James Wright. Wright intended to sell this land off in small parcels to prospective settlers and use the proceeds to repay the indebted traders.

After the war the Galphin heirs tried desperately to recover the money from the British government and the state of Georgia; neither of which accepted responsibility. Finally in 1835, the federal government agreed to hear the claim. The money amounted to $191,352.89 and was eventually appropriated by Congress and given to them on January 21, 1848 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 81).

A third dispute involved Old Town, specifically John, who inherited Old Town with the stipulation that if no heir was produced, the land would pass to his brothers and sisters as stipulated in Galphin's will. John incurred some debt and decided to sell Old Town (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 90). Robert Forsyth bought the property but let it fall into disrepair for the eight years he owned it (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 90). Forsyth let squatters move in and take possession of the still fertile tract (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 91). Forsyth was murdered in 1794 leaving Old Town to his two young sons, Robert and John Forsyth (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 92). John Forsyth decided to move his family to Old Town due to the proximity to the then state capital Louisville, Georgia. Prior to his move, Forsyth employed George Micklejohn to build him an entire plantation (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 96). The contract the two men drew up detailed the buildings to be constructed:

> "One framed House twenty-eight feet long and eighteen broad, with covered piazzas on each side, eight feet wide to be rough lined for papering & finished in a workmanlike manner, all the materials but the Glass and the Brickwork to be furnished by the said Micklejohn; One stable, carriage house and barn under one roof, covered with board thirty-six feet long and sixteen wide, of hewed down logs; One kitchen twenty-four feet long and fourteen wide, made of hewed down logs,and covered with boards, two small houses twelve feet by fourteen each, for a smoke House and dairy, the latter floored, and both covered with shingles, the materials for all the above buildings….to be furnished by the aforesaid George Mickeljohn" (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 96).

Forsyth was the first to make Old Town a family plantation instead of a trading center. Dispute over ownership of Old Town was renewed in 1801 upon the death of John Galphin (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 96). With the execution of Galphin's will, the right of ownership passed to Thomas Galphin as John Galphin had no heirs. When John Forsyth tried to sell Old Town in 1807, Thomas Galphin responded by publishing a warning to prospective purchasers in the Augusta Chronicle that J. Forsyth's claim was invalid and Galphin's own claim was pending in Federal Court (Augusta Chronicle, 1807, pg. 2). The squatters that had lived on the property announced they too had a claim to Old Town; however, one of the squatters a man named Burke, announced publicly that he had equitable claims to the property (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 98). Again the suit went back to court where a judge found in favor of Thomas Galphin. Unfortunately, Thomas Galphin was in severe debt, and the property had to be auctioned off to the highest bidder in 1809. Galphin posted an advertisement in the Augusta Chronicle on October 7, 1809 for the sale of "fifteen hundred acres of land, lying on the Ogeechee, in the county of Jefferson, granted

to George Galphin" (Augusta Chronicle, 1807 pg. 3).

That highest bidder was Christopher Fitzsimmons. His goal was to establish the most prosperous cotton plantation in the entire South (Seftall, 1980, pg 100). His life paralleled George Galphin's, they were both natives of Ireland and wanted to make something more of themselves in the New World. In 1785 with the death of his uncle, Fitzsimmons inherited 4000£, giving him the money he needed to open his own business (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 103). Fitzsimmons invested his profits in a distillery, which proved to be very successful and remained a major source of income (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 103). He married Catherine Pritchard in 1788, and when his father-in-law passed away, he added a considerable amount of money to the estate (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 103-105).

Fitzsimmons also traded a good deal. He had several brigs that traveled to England to trade cotton, and one that went to Cuba for molasses (Sheftall,, 1980, pg. 109). After the embargo of 1808 and the War of 1812, international shipping was not as lucrative as it once was, so Fitzsimmons turned inland to make his money. He turned Old Town into one of the largest short-staple cotton plantations in Georgia.

Christopher Fitzsimmons did not live at Old Town but kept in constant touch with his overseer, Samuel Martin, checking to make sure the lands were burned and limed, as well as deciding which fields were to be planted with corn and cotton. He also had his overseer begin construction on a saw mill so he could make a profit on the copious amounts timber on the property (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 110). C. Fitzsimmons unearthed a quarry of buhrstones and believed that they could be used as millstones for grinding. Prior to this, mill owners imported their stones from France. C. Fitzsimmons attained success selling

the buhrstones to local mills and by 1811 was exporting the buhrstones to England, Ireland, and the northern states for sale (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 111).

By 1811, C. Fitzsimmons made Old Town his summer home. And he accented the house and grounds with the buhrstones (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 112). The C. Fitzsimmons residence was located in a grove of trees on the south side of Spring Creek. C. Fitzsimmons expanded his land and slave holdings over the next few years. According to the Jefferson County tax digests between 1811 and 1825, Old Town was now 3000 acres (Jefferson County tax digest 1800-1895). C. Fitzsimmons passed away in 1825, leaving Old Town to his son Paul Fitzsimmons (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 117). According to P. Fitzsimmons equity papers when he inherited the Old Town property it contained 2982 acres, as well as all the provisions, tools, stock, and slaves that came with the property. Along with the aforementioned he also received another parcel of land (Edgefield Archives, 1826). Prior to P. Fitzsimmons death in 1840, he expanded the property by 800 more acres, bringing this large plantation to 4300 acres. P. Fitzsimmons was not as lucrative as his father but managed to still be very successful. P. Fitzsimmons was colonel of the local militia, commissioner for the sale of stock in the South Carolina Railroad, and manager of the Windsor Springs plantation just south of Augusta (Sheftall, 1980, pg 117-118). P. Fitzsimmons died on September 28, 1840, leaving behind five children, all minors (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 118).

Robert Poe, P. Fitzsimmons executor of the will, managed the properties until the children came of age. These properties not only included Old Town but also a plantation known as Pineview. It lay just across the river from Old Town and encompassed 2500

acres (Sheftall, 1980, pg 118). Shortly after Paul Fitzsimmons passed away, Poe inventoried the properties and in the 1840-1841 Estate Sales and Returns, noted Old Town's estimated worth was $88,354. A majority of this income came from cotton sales (Estate papers of Paul Fitzsimons, 1840). In 1849, Paul Fitzsimmons' son Owen P. Fitzsimmons bought 4000 acres of Old Town plantation, along with 100 slaves and most of the livestock, household goods, and farm implements (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 121). O. P. Fitzsimmons built a large house at Old Town and grew cotton to support his lifestyle (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 122). In 1857, O.P. Fitzsimmons decided to move from Georgia; his ad ran in the Savannah newspaper:

> "For Sale: Old Town, that valuable plantation(cotton) situated in Jefferson county, 8 miles from Louisville the county town, and 6 from station No. 10 Central Railroad, the Ogeechee river forming the western boundary; and contains 4192 acres, about 1700 acres cleared and in a good state of cultivation. The balance is heavily timbered, oak and hickory land, except a portion of swamp which may be reclaimed, at trifling expense and would be very productive. The place is well watered being intersected by Dry and Spring Creeks, the latter affording an abundant supply of water for ginning, grinding, and sawing. The improvements are substantial and well built and consist of a comfortable dwelling with eight rooms and necessary out buildings, an overseer's house, sixteen double framed negro houses with brick chimneys, commodious stables and barns, gin house (ginning by water), grist and sawmills. This is one of the best improved and most desirable plantations in Middle Georgia, both on account of the convenient location and quality of the land. Terms liberal and accommodating……O.P. Fitzsimmons (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 125).

According to the Jefferson tax digest in 1860, the lands of Old Town were valued at $33,000(Jefferson County tax digest, 1809-1895). O.P. Fitzsimmons, found a buyer in 1860, William Wingfield Simpson and Linton Stephens, who jointly purchased the property as an investment (Sheftall, 1980, pg 125). O.P. Fitzsimmons did not sign the

deed transferring the property to Simpson and Stephens until 1862 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 130). Simpson and Stephens tried to keep a labor force on hand to continue harvesting the fields, but by 1864 the Union soldiers were getting too close. Sherman did not visit this plantation on his march to Savannah but Sheftall believes that many of the unoccupied plantations were looted by Union soldiers. Sheftall (1980) says a "legend persists in the Stephens family that most of the buildings at Old Town were burned by Union soldiers during Sherman's march to the Sea" (pg. 131). Sheftall (1980) interviewed Robert Stevens of Athens, Georgia, who relayed one soldier supposedly heaved the sorghum mill into the well (pg. 131). The destruction as a result of the Civil War left Simpson and Stephens almost in total ruin. Old Town had no major buildings standing and rebuilding would be too expensive (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 132). Simpson and Stephens leased the property to William T. Williams in 1866, who wanted to try sharecropping (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 132). Sharecropping was used as an alternative to slavery to keep the huge plantations from ruin. Sharecropping was not a successful venture and most plantations had problems with it. Williams was never able to get the sharecropping up and running and left Old Town in 1870 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 134). The property then reverted back to Stephens and Simpson (1980, pg. 134). Subsequently, William D. Grant of Atlanta purchased the land in 1878 (1980, pg. 134). Grant's plan was to lease convicts for use as laborers (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 135). Grant's idea to make a profit from the plantation did not receive sanction until 1876, when the governor leased all the prisoners for twenty years (Georgia Penitentiary Co #3 and Annual Report, 1879-1881). The convict lease system allowed plantation owners cheap labor to plant and harvest their crops. When visiting in 1880, the

inspectors found that Old Town, known as Penitentiary number 3, had better accommodations than most:

> "erected one large building known and designated as a cell building, 120x24 feet, well ventilated, made comfortable with stoves for fire, free from all offensive matter, with bunks well supplied with good and sufficient bedding. This building is for, the less trusty convicts and is not only secure in itself against escapes but is inclosed by a substantial stockade. Within this stockade is also a building for the more trusty convicts and a separate apartment for the females, and into which building no males are allowed at any time to enter. The hospital for the sick is a model of neatness, provided with clean, comfortable bedding-reflecting credit upon the company for their humane provision for the unfortunate convicts when sick" (Georiga State Penitentiary, 1880, pg. 4).

Grant's company promised to treat the convicts humanely, working them not more than ten hours per day in winter and twelve hours per day in summer. The State required no reimbursement for the use of the laborers; it was considered a relief from the state's expense (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 136). Georgia finally abolished the convict lease system in 1908 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 141).

Old Town was a very successful plantation with the use of the convict lease system. The Louisville paper spent the day there in October 1879 to get a picture of how the plantation operated and what made it so successful. The reporter found that Old Town had a "spring house in which to keep milk and butter. Most of the milk is consumed by the laborers." (News and Farmer, 1879). Captain Thomas Jefferson James, was the director that Grant brought to Old Town to make it a success. James began to buy interest in the plantation and in 1880, he cleared almost 3000 acres in order to plant cotton, corn, oats, and wheat (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 142). James constructed new houses and outbuildings, and a dairyhouse down by the old spring which Christopher Fitzsimons has

surrounded with his buhrstones. He also installed a fish pond, hydraulic ram, which supplied water to his residence and the prison barracks from the artesian well near Spring Creek (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 143). He continued to harvest cotton while he beautified the plantation. In 1880 he harvested 800 bales of cotton valued more than $45,875 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 143). James bought out Grant in 1888 and kept enough convicts at Old Town to continue the expanded farming operations that had begun in 1876 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 144). While James worked Old Town, he also purchased property, Pinetuckey, in Emanuel County (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 144). James invested most of his time and money into this property and in 1891 sold Old Town to an Atlanta businessman James L. Dickey (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 146).

Dickey was not as successful as James with the convict labor and replaced them with tenant farmers. While tenant farming was more humane, the profits were not as impressive. Dickey sold off about 700 acres to recoup some of his losses (Sheftall, 1980, pg 147). In 1896, Dickey sold Old Town to Hugh Moss Comer of Savannah, president of the Central of Georgia Railroad (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 147). While Comer was interested in making money from the cotton grown at Old Town, he was more interested in turning the plantation into a hunting preserve and family retreat (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 150). Comer was a highly successful man, organizing the Bibb Manufacturing Company in Macon, Georgia, and directing the Central Railroad and Banking Company of Georgia. He also entered into the cattle business with his brother, served as president of the Ocean Steamship Company in Savannah, became director of the Eagle and Phenix Mills of Columbus, served as president of the Savannah Cotton Exchange, and partnered in the fertilizer firm of

Comer, Hull &Co. (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 151). Comer decided to relinquish control of Old Town to his eldest son Hugh Comer Jr., who utilized his father's capital for developing the plantation and retained all profits (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 152). Comer, referring to Old Town as the Grove, let all the existing buildings fall into disrepair and decided to instead build a new home close to the road that was cut from Savannah to Louisville (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 152).

Figure 15. Comer-era tenant home at Old Town Plantation.

He had plans to build numerous new buildings: an overseer's house, carriage house, smokehouse, laundry, blacksmith shop, hay barn, tool shed, mule barn, and almost sixty tenant houses (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 154). Comer hired an overseer named Captain J. F.

Stonebreaker and with higher wages and better living quarters enticed families to move to Old Town from Alabama (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 154). Comer Jr. ultimately bought the property from his father and held the title until 1908 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 155). Comer even built a new four-floor corn and flour mill on Spring Creek and a beautiful three-room library next to his new residence (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 155). While Comer Jr.'s dreams were realized, problems still arose. Comer Jr. had no real experience operating a farm, and he quickly became disillusioned with rural life, deciding to sell his sprawling plantation (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 158). His brother, John Drewry Comer and cousin Fletcher Comer took over the day to day operations of farming (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 159). Consequently, When H. Comer Jr. sold Old Town to Fletcher Comer and John D. Comer, the deed covered 4386 acres and included;

> "all the equipment on Old Town plantation, consisting of mules, horses, cattle, hogs, sheep, goats, poultry, farming implements of every kind and character, vehicles of every kind and character, including buggies, carriages and carts, rents and profits and all contracts and all notes appertaining to the place, all furniture, both household and kitchen, book cases, and everything upon said place, moveable and immoveable, save and except the library" (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 159-161).

Fletcher Comer lived at Old Town with his family and ran the plantation, while John D. Comer continued to reside in Savannah (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 163). F. Comer's black tenant families came along to replace the families who left in 1908 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 163). The tenant farmers life was difficult, but Old Town paid a higher wage than most other southern plantation. He also provided them with a school, church, and commissary, so no one would have to leave. (Sheftall, 1980, pgs. 165-166). John on the other hand rarely visited the property, and when he did he often went into Louisville to

meet local businessmen. J. Comer married in 1909 and he and his wife decided to build a cinder-block house at Old Town, and they moved into their new home in 1910 (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 166). Staying less than a year, J. Comer and his wife moved to Macon and worked for the Bibb Manufacturing Company (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 168). With this turn of events, F. Comer bought John Comer's share of Old Town; however, he was unable to pay his bills, and in 1915, his father Braxton Bragg (B.B.) Comer, Alabama's Governor, paid off all his debt and bought Old Town (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 169). F. Comer was allowed to stay on but his father made all decisions. B.B. Comer held the title to Old Town until 1918 and in that time kept in constant contact with F. Comer, constantly critiquing the situation at Old Town (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 173). The struggle to keep the plantation running was a long, difficult one, and in the end F. Comer and his family left the plantation for urban life.

Many southern plantations, if not all, struggled to survive when the boll weevil hit. In 1917, B.B. Comer sent a letter to his son to plant beans, corn, and cotton as the boll weevil was coming (Comer, 1917). B.B. Comer leased the land to the Carolina Land and Tobacco Company (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 183). The company eventually abandoned the property, and B.B. Comer passed away in 1927. His estate sold Old Town to Lewis W. Dye (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 183). As a result of the Depression, Dye was forced to scale back the farming to subsistence-only farming, and the tenant farmers rented the land (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 183). Most of the homes remained vacant and fell into total disrepair. The mill was abandoned in 1935 after a freshest blew the dam (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 183).

In 1953, George Crouch Sr. and George Crouch Jr., purchased the property and

began to repair the damage time had done. Crouch Jr. made the plantation his home and turned it back into a working plantation. His wife Martha is the current owner and was instrumental in the placement of the property on the National Historic Preservation Register. After G. Crouch Jr.'s death Mrs. Martha Black remarried and has preserved numerous buildings on the property.

Figure 16. Historical Marker off highway 17 across from the still existent home.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Dr. Sue Moore began excavations at Old Town on a brisk morning in January 1993. The cellar/ice house was just one of the many sites the students worked on. The initial work began on an antebellum house, situated on a substantial rise just south of the ruins of the spring house. Dr. Moore split the students into different groups and had some working on locating the house and others on what was originally called the "cellar".

On April 17, 1993, the students put a 1' x 1' test unit in the Northeast corner of the cellar. The icehouse was bisected and taken down on one side to the bottom. The students excavated using trowels, quarter inch screen, and bagged all materials by level. To find the edges of the cellar site, shovel testing was done west of the cellar at two meter intervals. These tests were negative so excavation focus remained in the icehouse. As the crew continued to excavate nothing diagnostic was found, only massive quantities of glass. The crew then began to make deeper cuts and on the East side ran into extremely hard clay.

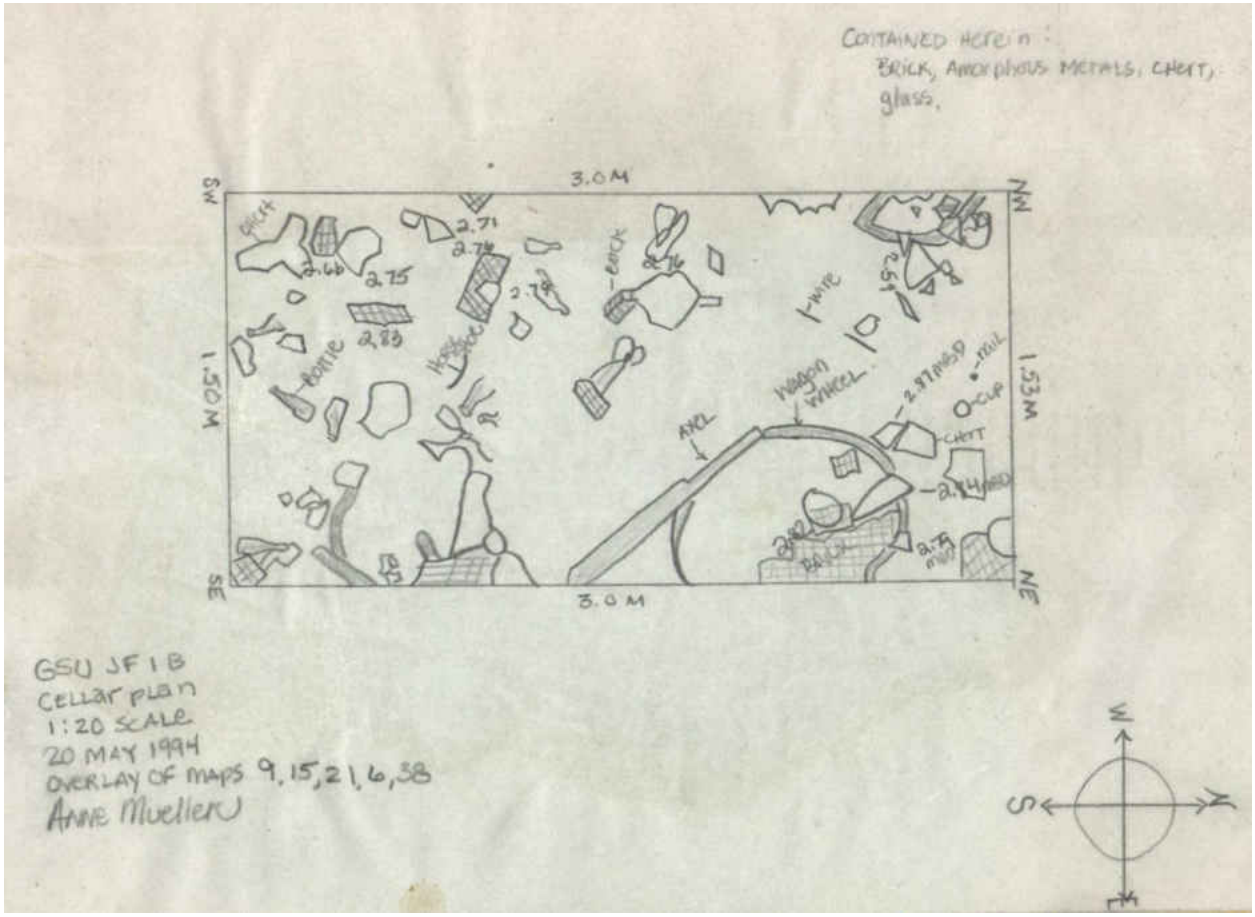


Figure 17: Early map of ice house drawn by Anne Muller. Shows the bottle cemetery and wagon axle.

On April 4, 1994, Dr. Moore's 1994 field crew opened the site by clearing off the winter's remains and lay in a new grid. They only spent the one day at the cellar cleaning and did not make it back until May 9, 1994 when one student located a "bottle cemetery". Unearthed were 16 bottles on the Northwest side of the cellar.

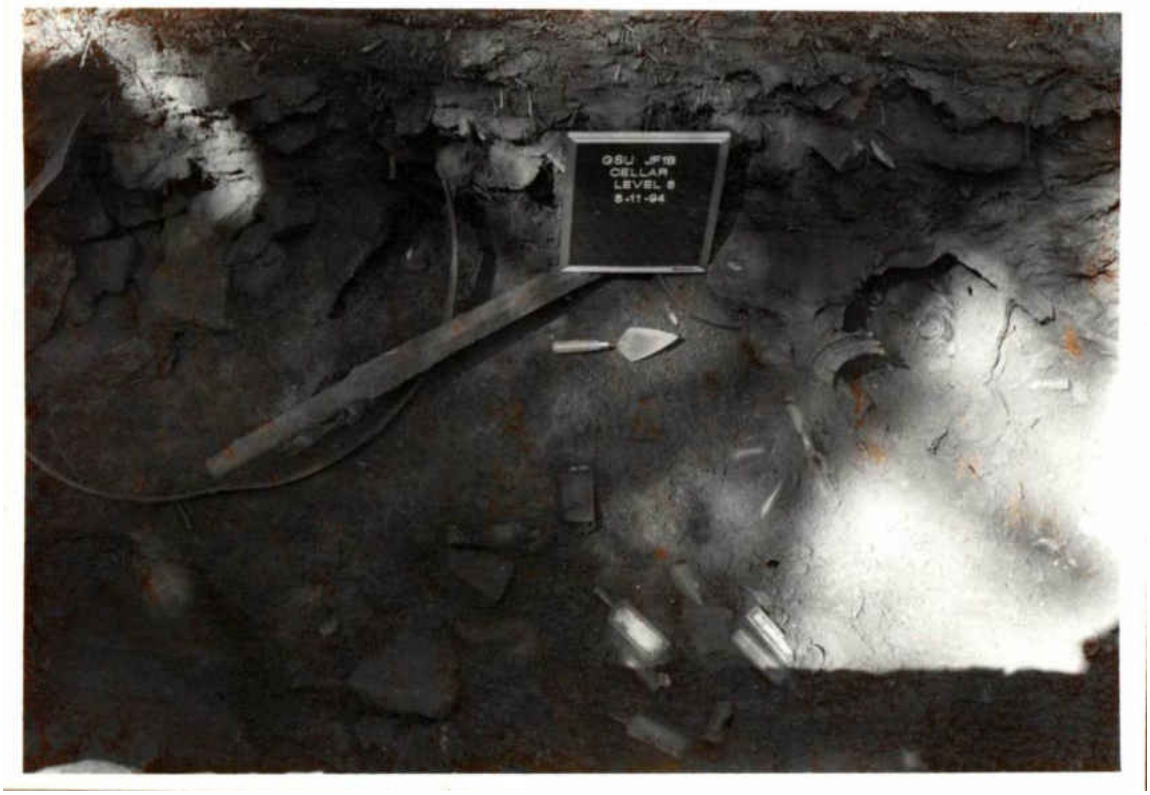


Figure 18. Picture of the wagon axle taken during the 1994 field season. The trowel is pointing to the North.

An axle and wagon wheel was found amongst all the bottle glass. Though glass dominated the debitage, broken metal tools were excavated; the fork portion of a pitchfork, also a lot of wood in the center and southeastern corner of the cellar was found. By, May 19, 1994, the crews had closed level 10, FS# 51, and were no closer to finding the bottom of the icehouse. This was the last work done in the cellar until the new field season in July 1995.

Even though this trip out was just a couple of days, opening levels were taken on the cellar. Nothing new was found just more wood fragments along with iron pieces. The wood fragments were found throughout the cellar but the quantity was not enough to

allow for a determination of function. The ice house was opened again the following spring semester. In February 1996, a UTM was taken for each site; the cellars UTM, E:0376580, N:3642745 with an altitude of 274 feet +,-492 feet. In April the crew continued to excavate the cellar, the clay they pulled out had to be washed in the lab as it was too thick to screen. At this time the crew was to level 17 and was finding remnants of screen, square bricks, and a few square nails. They closed level 17 on April 4, 1996. The same day they stopped at the end of level 18, at this time they had to use a ladder to get in and out. On April 9, 1996, they reached the bottom, forever known as B-Day.

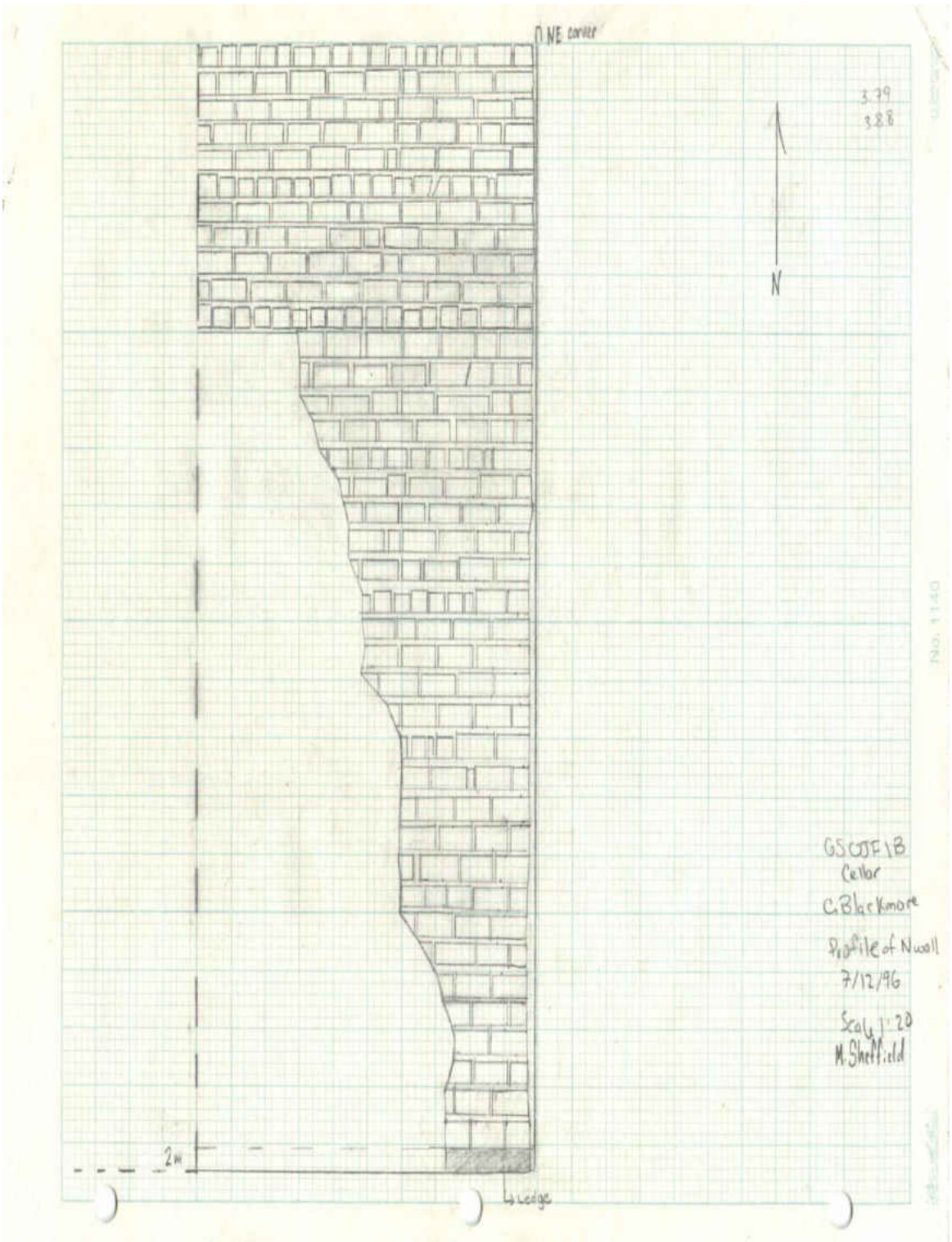


Figure 19. Ice house is bisected and in profile. Drawn in 1996 by C. Blackmore and N. Sheffield**.**

Profile maps were drawn and new elevations were taken. The closing elevation was 6.10mbd. They set up a pulley to excavate the Southwest corner of the bisected half of the cellar. They continued to remove the high dirt on the opposite side of the icehouse. They found a large amount of metal that needed to be weighed and temporarily had to close the cellar. July 1996, the crew began to reference the "cellar" as the "ice house". By the time they reached the bottom they had filled approximately 30 boxes with mainly beer bottles from the early 1900s. After this 1996 field season Dr. Moore did not excavate further at the ice house until spring 2007.

The spring 2007 field season began with surface collecting from different areas of Old Town plantation. When the icehouse was opened again the decision was made to not collect anymore of the stone and brick debitage but to just empty the structure. Approximately six feet of debris was discarded as the structural walls and floor layout was deemed more crucial to the research. Due to limited resources and time the structure itself was deemed critical for diagnostic purposes.

Figure 20. Picture shows the pulley system that was used to bring the buckets up from the bottom.

As the icehouse became so deep the crew was unable to hand up buckets, one of the students constructed a pulley that straddled the opening allowing for five gallon buckets to be lifted.

Figure 21. Picture shows students working in the ice house and pulling up buckets for the students at the top to empty.

A system was created; three students in the ice house filling buckets and pulling them up. One student was at the top to grab and empty the buckets. As excavations deepened the debris became larger and became more difficult to get out of the icehouse.

Below the layer of bottles was a layer of bricks, approximately one and a half meters deep and mixed with clay and bits of a wood burning stove. The stove bits were collected and brought back to the lab, the brick was discarded.

The season ended in April and the crew did not get back to the ice house until October 2008. The pulley was destroyed by carpenter bees, so the new crew had to slide the buckets up the side of the ice house. Before the crew could do anything they had to break up the large blocks of buhrstones that filled the remaining meter of the ice house. A sledgehammer was used to break them into moveable pieces. Some of the larger pieces were roped and pulled up the side, it was very tedious and labor intensive but worked. Slowly but surely the ice house was being emptied. As much as possible was removed before the crew had to clean up and close for the season. A small team of Dr. Moore and her graduate students came back in January 2009 to finally unearth more of the bottom of the ice house. On the ride out to Old Town the excavation plan changed again and it was decided that the crew would put a trench through the debris remaining in the ice house as what was left in the ice house was too heavy and large to pull up in a bucket.

Figure 22. Picture shows the trench that was cut to reveal the brick lined floor.

The crew trenched diagonally through the ice house revealing a brick herringbone pattern floor. Excavations at the ice house were sporadic and the crew went back in February 2009 to clean and photograph the bottom and create a profile map of the east wall.

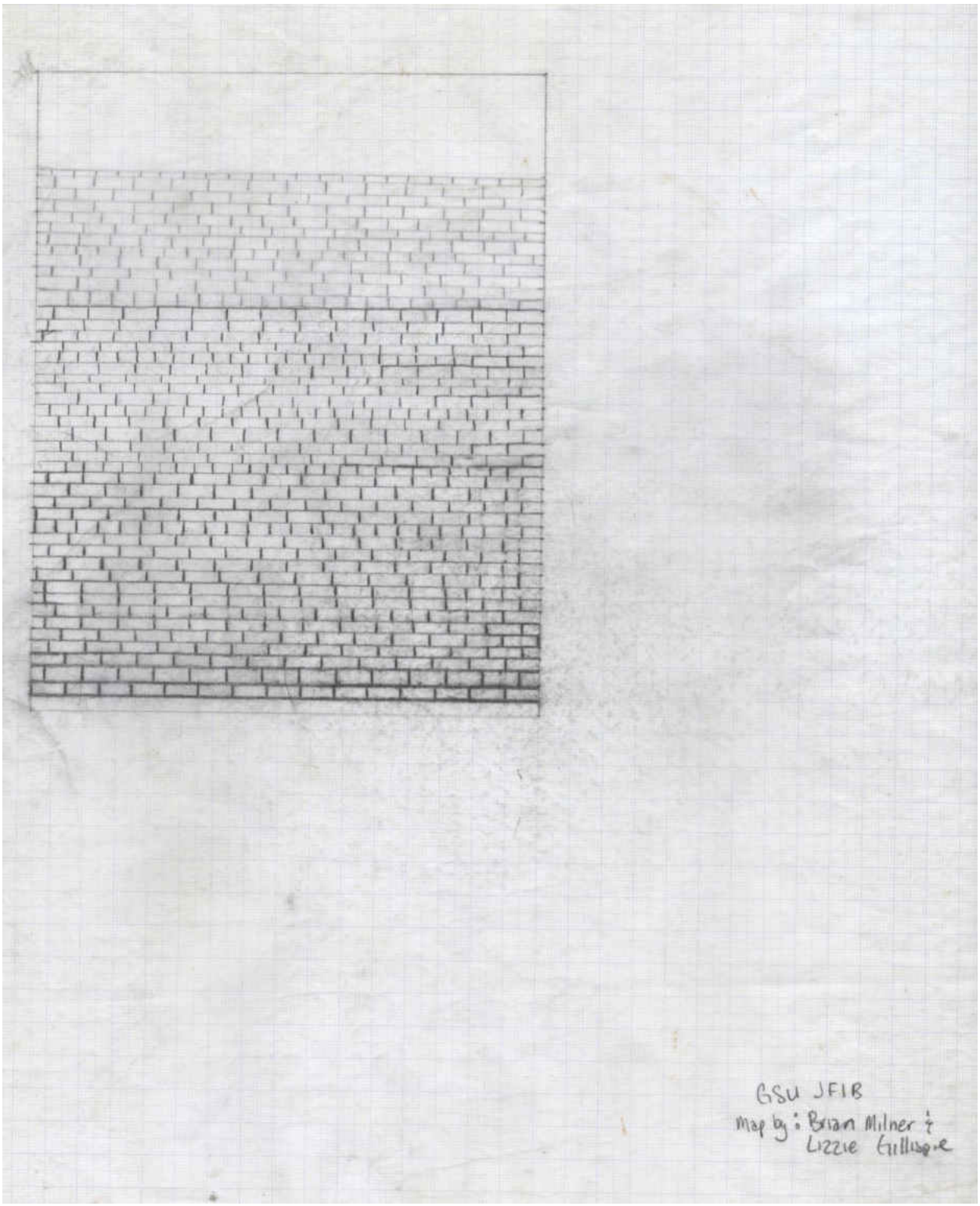


Figure 23. Profile map depicting the east wall.

Nothing more was done until Dr. Moore and students were able to get back to the ice house in November 2010. A small crew of graduate students went to clear the area and 3D map the ice house. For this the LiDAR was used. LiDAR stands for Light detection and ranging. It shoots a laser to pre-determined targets and takes millions of points. In the post-processing the points are meshed together to form an extremely detailed map. This provided accurate measurements and depths for the ice house. The maps created by the LiDAR give an accurate measurement and show that all four walls are the same in width plus or minus a few centimeters. The depths are different, as expected, because of the fill that was pushed to the side to reveal the floor. Since this mapping was done no more excavations have taken place at the ice house. Every once in a while students head out to check the status of the ice house.

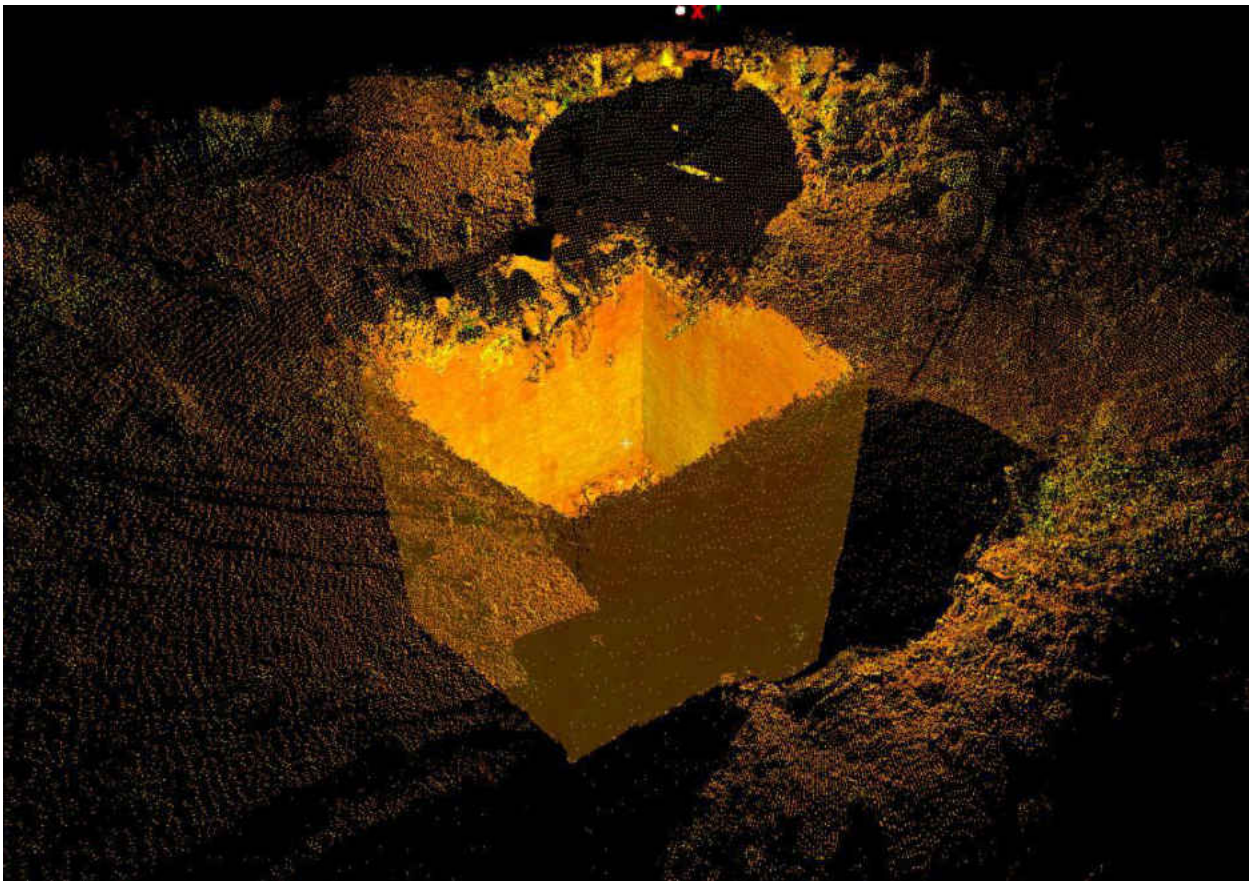


Figure 24. LiDAR scan of the ice house. Scanned from the top of the icehouse. Scan courtesy of Matt Luke.

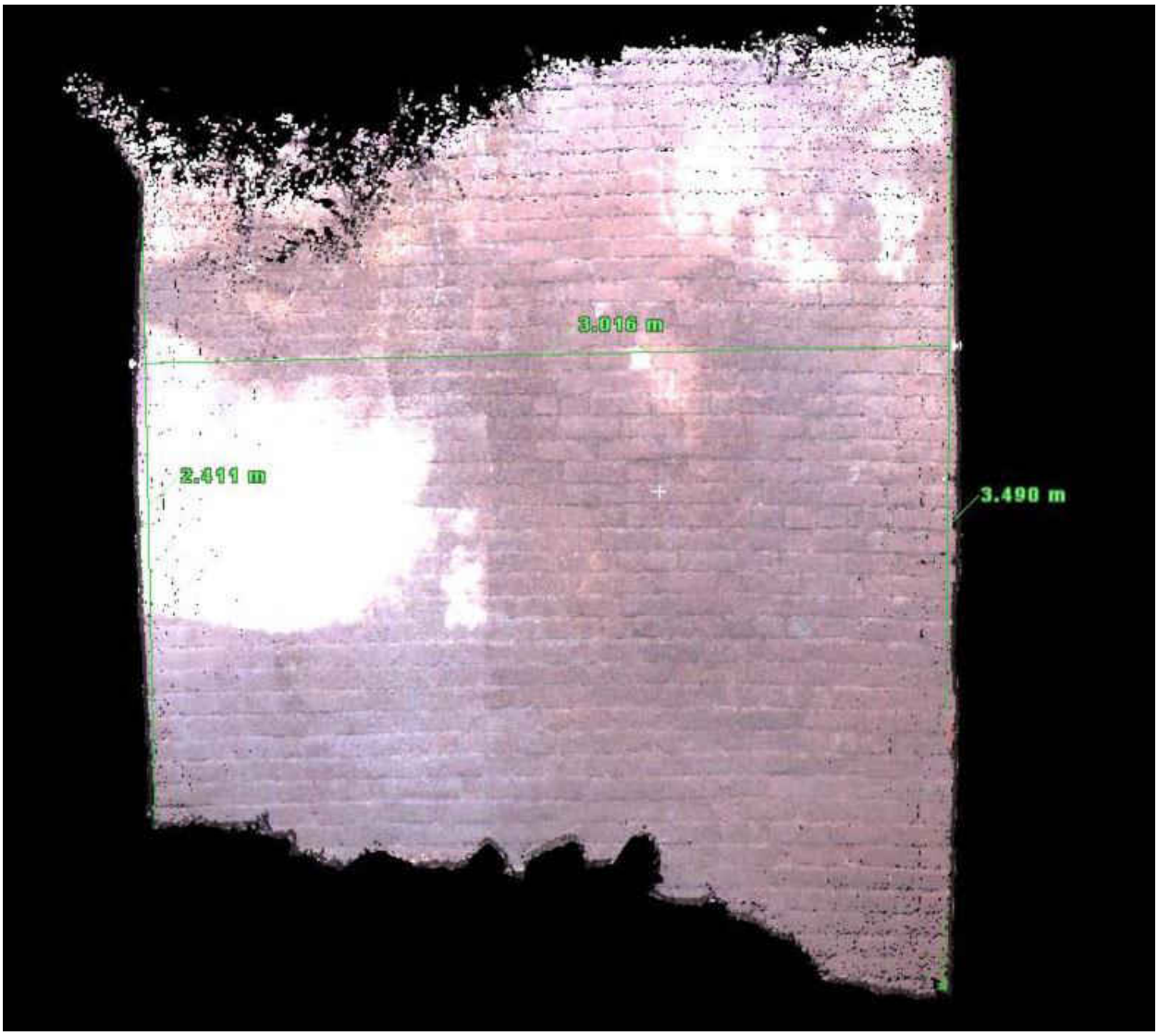


Figure 25. LiDAR scan of the North wall. Scanned within the ice house. Depicts the bricks in detail. Gives the correct measurement for the wall. Scans courtesy Matt Luke.

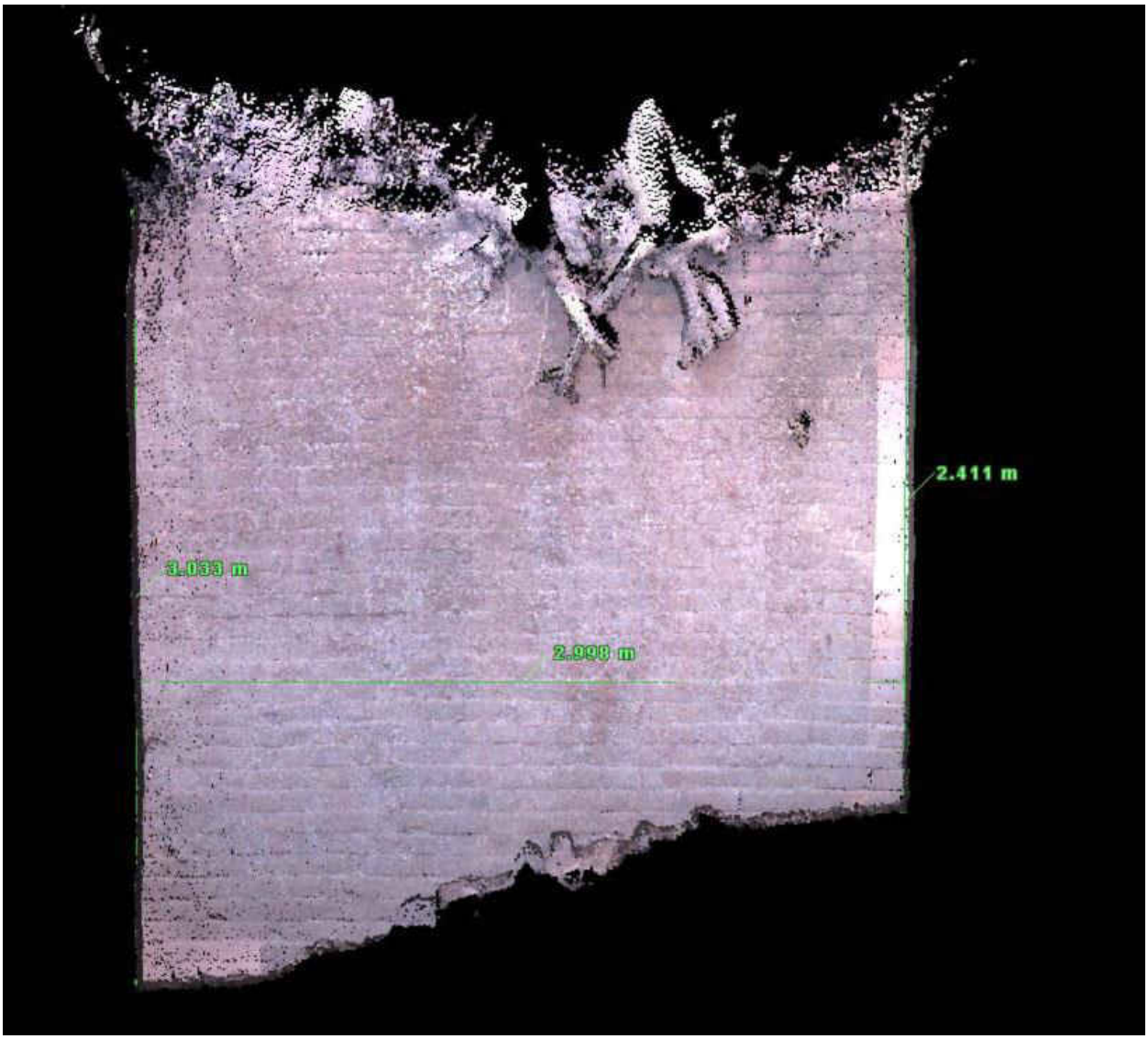


Figure 26. LiDAR scan of the West wall. Scanned within the ice house. Depicts the brick in detail and gives the correct measurements. Scans courtesy Matt Luke

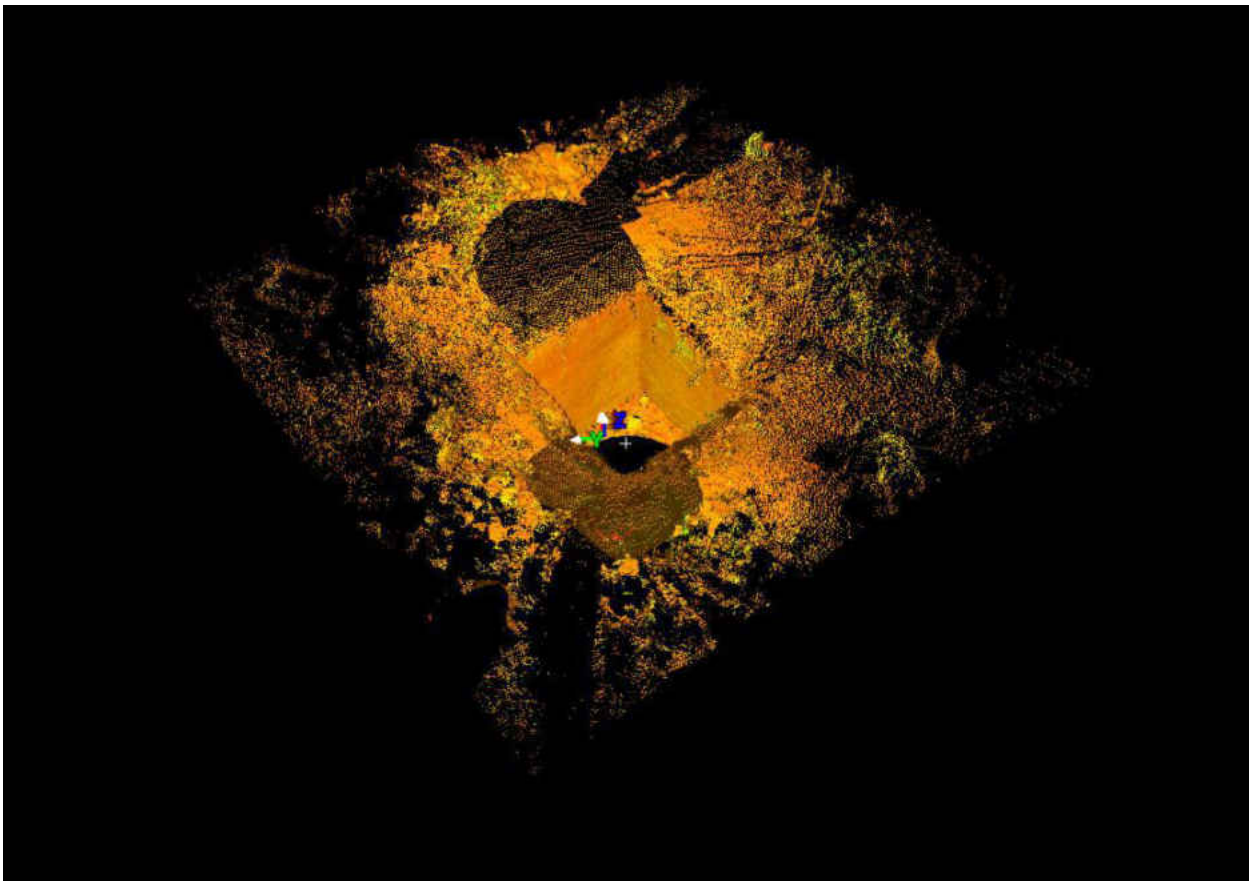


Figure 27. LiDAR scan of ice house. Scanned from the top of the ice house. This angle shows some of the debris outside the icehouse. Scans courtesy Matt Luke

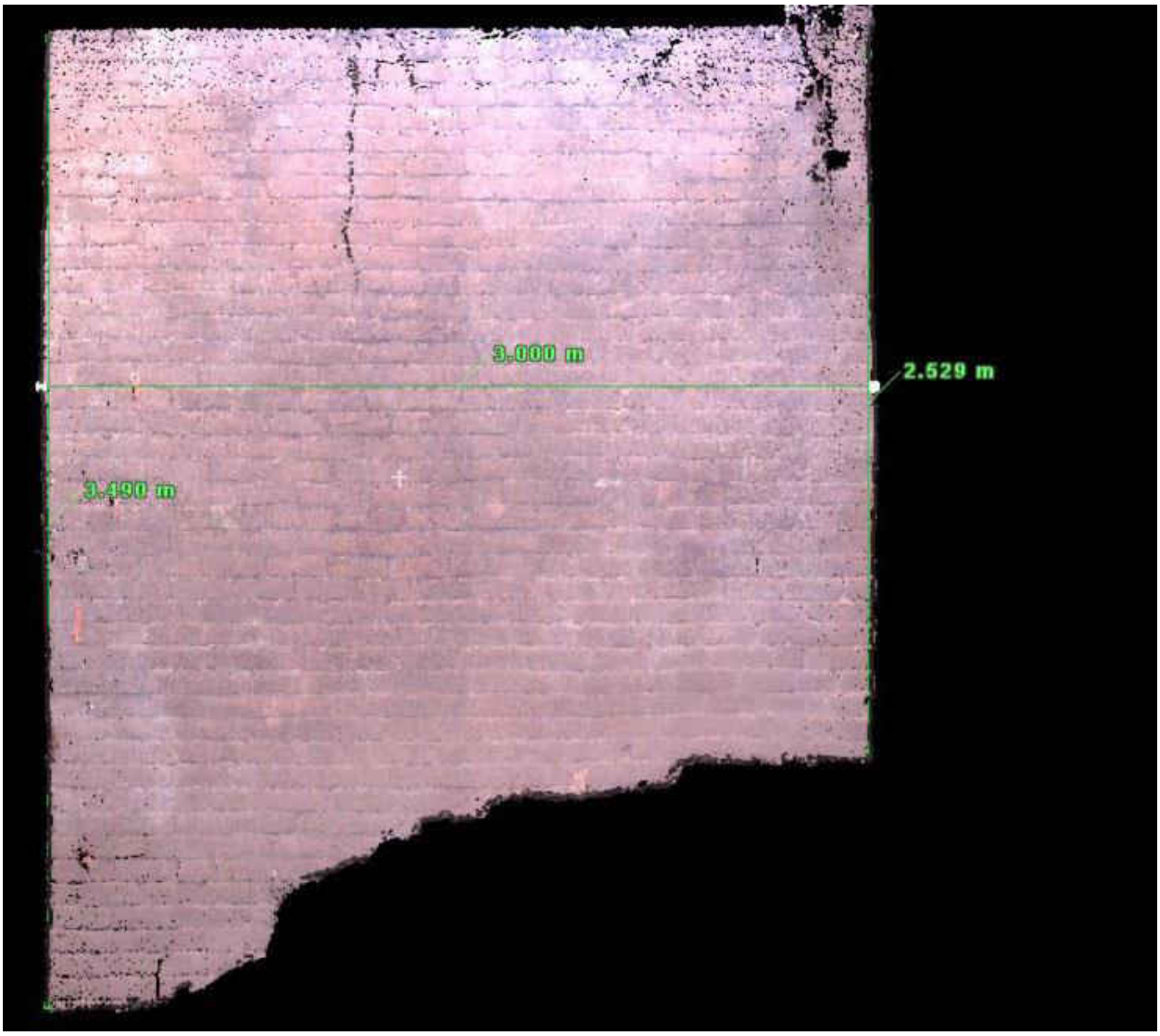


Figure 28. LiDAR scan of the East wall. Scanned within the ice house. Shows the brick in detail and correct measurements. Courtesy Matt Luke.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS

The Construction

At the closing of excavations in November 2010 the icehouse was empty except for a few feet of debris that was too awkward and large to remove without heavy equipment.

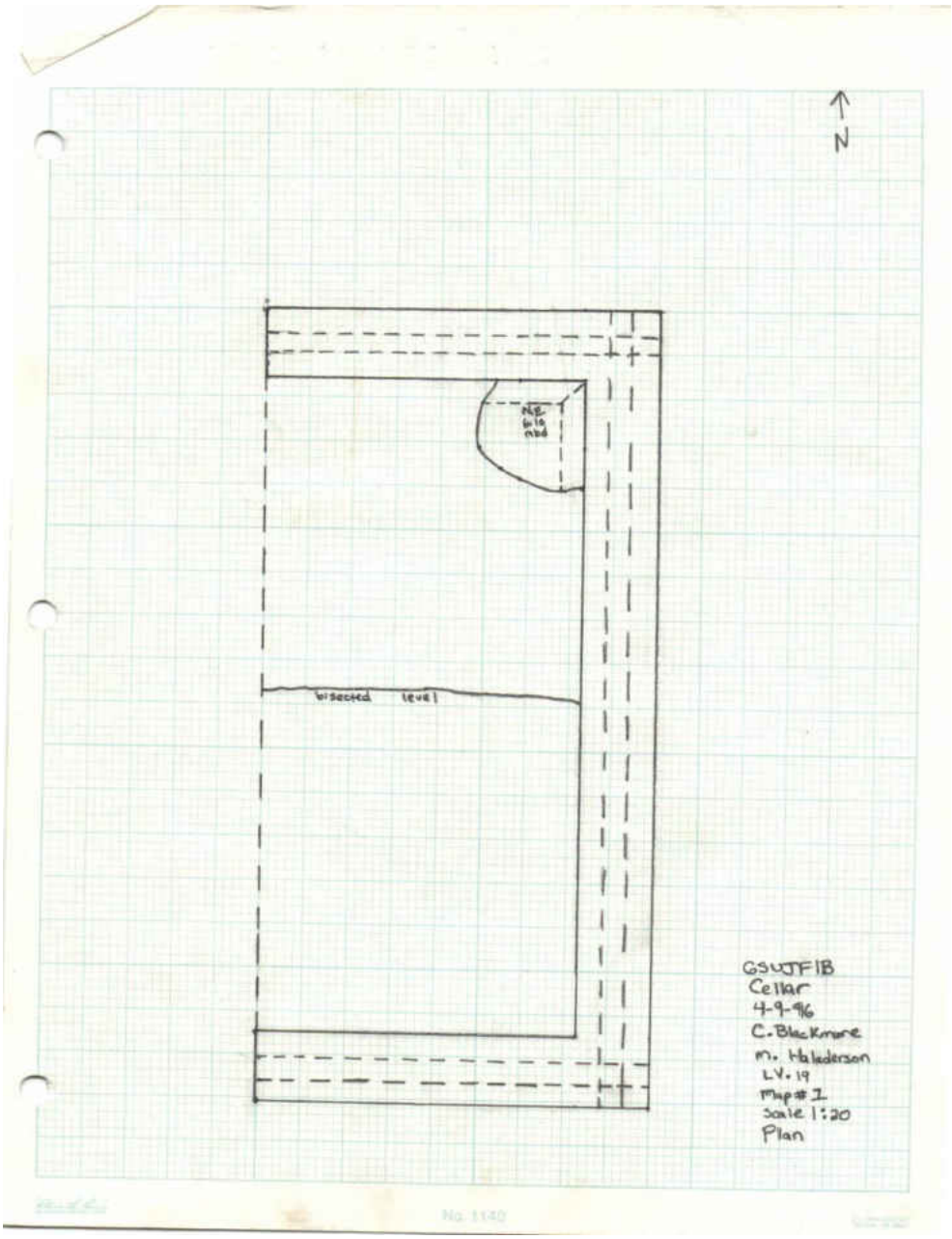


Figure 29. Profile map shows the three thick ice house walls.

The ice house is brick lined -- three bricks layers thick. The thick walls help to insulate the ice. The bricks are the same color and dimensions as the brick located in the

springhouse thought to be constructed by C. Fitzsimmons constructed at Old Town plantation.

Figure 30. Photograph shows the design of the walls.

The brick is laid out in a design of four rows of stretchers and one row of headers. This is the layout for all four walls. We trenched the ice house diagonally in order to see the floor.

Figure 31. Photograph shows the design of the herringbone brick pattern of the floor.

The trench revealed an unmortared brick herringbone pattern. The ice would be placed on the floor where the unmortared brick would allow for drainage, as opposed to the ice houses previously discussed that would need the ice to sit on logs to drain into the dirt.

Figure 32. Photograph shows the ledge that runs around the bottom.

Excavations also revealed a ledge that appears to be a type of mortar, which runs along the edge of the bottom. It could have provided support for wood planks or been space for insulation. Fitzsimmons' ice house is constructed similarly to previously discussed structures such as the Monticello's, Robert Morris's, and the Cottage. All are built with brick or stone and those previously discussed have a dirt floor for drainage. Logs are then laid down for the ice to sit on and drain and still be usable. Fitzsimmons has brick lined the floor but the way in which it was done allows for drainage.

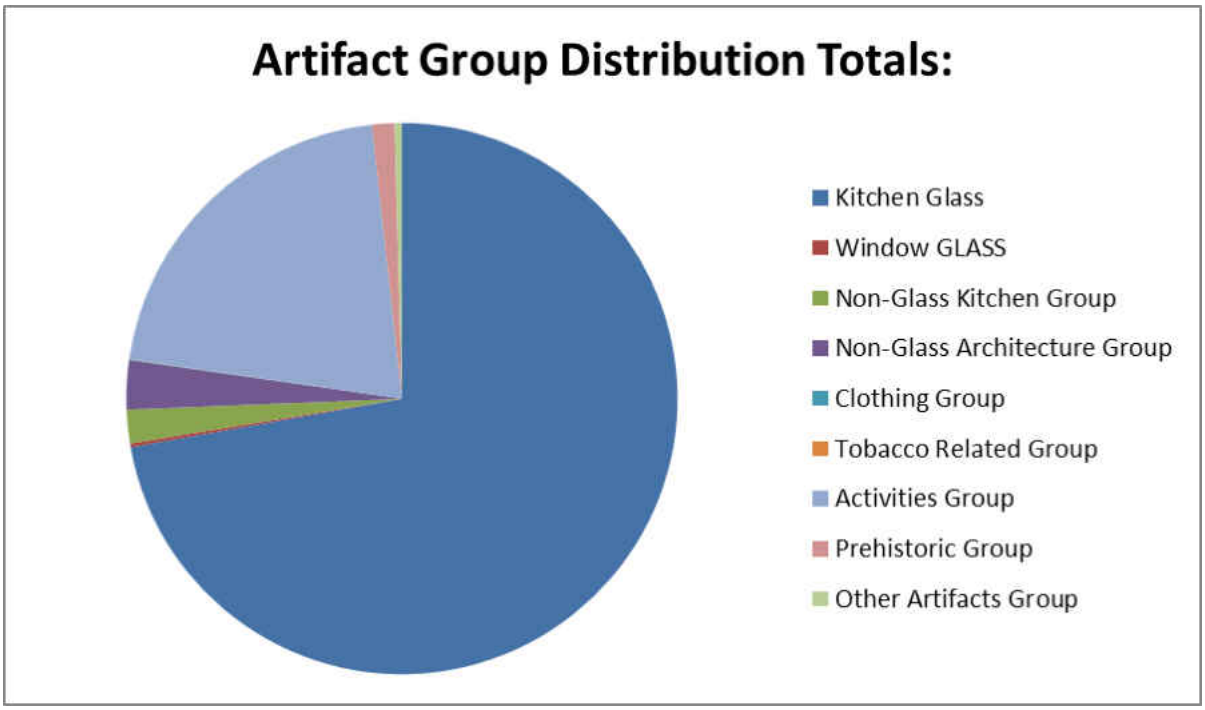
When the icehouse was discovered it was full of trash. The use of the structure clearly changed at some point in time from an ice house to a refuse pit. At that point there

was no existing structure covering the brick lined pit and from all appearances, it would have presented a peril if it had not been filled. As the ice house was being excavated several distinct layers of debris were noted. At the lowest point fill was primarily comprised of four to five feet of boulders. The next layer is brick with small amounts of mortar, again about four or five feet of brick. Mixed within these two layers was a wood burning two burner stove. The top layer of trash was about six feet of mainly glass bottles and scrap metal pieces. After the initial excavation none of the debris was collected because the sheer amount of fill was unmanageable.

The Artifacts

The artifacts are not evidence of what the structure was originally used for but they do give a timeline of when the structure was no longer used. The artifacts were catalogued using Stan South's methodology for type collection (South, 1977, pg. 95). The cataloguing for the Old Town icehouse did not utilize every category that South identified. To catalog the artifacts according to South's system it had to be tweaked to fit the materials that were excavated. The cataloguing was done by students in the archaeology lab. The quantity of material coming into the lab quickly became unmanageable and as a result data was missing: such as the weights and counts of glass and metal for some levels. The total count of artifacts was 3,329 with a weight of 88,080.3 grams, though some weights and counts are missing.

Table 1. Shows the artifact distribution totals.



The kitchen group contained small amounts of porcelain, stoneware, earthenware, and bone, and small amounts of metal such as bottle caps and spoons. The largest collection within the kitchen group, by far, is bottles. From archival correspondence between the son/overseer and his father/plantation owner, it is known that F. Comer had a drinking problem and it would appear that he may have had a habit of tossing his empties into the ice house. A letter to his father in December 1917 in the post script, informs his father that he has "quit the Tiger Booze and the other kinds long ago and will stay quit. Please have no further worries along this line" (Comer, 1917, pg. 1). Dating of the bottles corresponds to the period when F. Comer was on site. Although F. Comer may have had a drinking problem, markings on the bottles do not necessarily confirm this hypothesis given

that the bottling companies bottled soda, beer, mineral water, and bitters. Most of the bottles found were unmarked. The bottles were able to be dated from T. Stell Newman's *A Dating Key for Post-Eighteenth Century Bottles*. The majority of what was collected from the 1994 field season was boxes and boxes of tiny sherds of glass. The color and shape suggest they are a type of bottle glass. All the complete or nearly complete bottles were dated, and a few types were identified by the mark on the bottom or the embossed name across the top. The most prevalent bottle type found was a bottle that dated from 1880-1913 made from a semi-automatic bottle machine (Newman, pg. 72). Some of this type of bottle also have a makers mark on the bottom that identifies the bottling company, distribution center, and year it was made.

Figure 33. American Bottle Company

Figure 34. Photograph of AB-connected bottle, the American Bottle company 1904-1907.

The American Bottling company operated from 1886-1907. It was three glass companies that merged; Belleville glass, Streator glass, and the Ohio Bottle company (Toulouse, 1971, pg. 26). There bottles are embossed on the bottom with an AB-connected mark. Toulouse said the AB-connected mark was only used from about 1904-1907 by the American Bottling company (Lockhart, 2004, pg.16). There were 84 AB-connected mark bottles in the sampling. These bottles fit into a semi-automatic machine made bottle category. Below the AB mark is a letter and number. This is thought to be the plant it came from and the year it was made (Lockhart, 2004, pg. 16). For example: the 6-B would be from the Belleville plant in 1906, S-7 would be the Streator plant in 1907, etc.

Julian Toulouse, who put together a descriptive book about bottle marks in 1971, believed that the AB-connected mark was used by Adolphus Busch Glass manufacturing

Co. This company operated out of Belleville, Illinois and was open from 1886-1907. One bottle was recovered that was marked ABGMCo, associated with the Adolphus Busch Glass Manufacturing Company (Newman, pg. 72). In 1905, the Belleville site merged with Streator glass, and Ohio Bottle Company to become American Bottle Company. With this merger, Belleville was closed because it was a hand blown manufacturing plant (Toulouse, 1971, pg. 26). Bill Lockhart in 2004 found that the AB-connected mark was part of the American Bottle Company but the mark was possibly only used at the Newark plant (Lockhart, 2004, pg. 16-17). When the three companies merged to form the American Bottle Company, they began to use the mark a b co.

There were 24 bottles found with the, a b co mark. This bottle type is also manufactured using a semi-automatic bottle machine dating from 1880-1913 (Newman, pg. 72). As mentioned above the American Bottle Company was formed as a merger of three other companies in 1905. This company remained active until 1916. When the three companies merged it allowed the Ohio Bottle company to extend its licensing to bottle beers, porters, ales, and sodas to the other two factories (Toulouse, 1971, pg. 30). It can be inferred that the unmarked bottles found in the ice house contained alcohol.

Figure 35. Photograph of W F & S marked bottle. Made from 1920 to the present.

Four bottles had the, W F & S mark. The bottles date from 1920 to the present and are made on an automatic bottle machine (Newman, pg. 72). Under the company mark is a "MIL" this meant it came from the Milwaukee, Wisconsin plant. This mark was used by William Franzen and Sons. The company produced bottles from 1900-1929 (Whitten, 2012).

Figure 36. ¾" round base bottle manufactured from 1900-1913. Generally held soda.

John Lumb &Co. bottled out of Castleford, Yorks, England from 1870-1905. The one J L &C L bottle found was a 3/4" round bottom bottle. These generally held a carbonated beverage. The design of the bottle prevented the bottle from being stood upright. Lying on its side allowed for the cork to remain wet, if the cork dried it would explode out of the bottle (Society for Historical Archaeology, 2012, pg. 11).

Figure 37. Torpedo bottle. This bottle was manufactured from 1860-1913. Generally held soda.

Some bottles could only be identified by style. The most unique intact bottle found was the torpedo bottle. This design was used from 1860 until 1913 and called a round base soda bottle by Newman (pg. 73). These are also called torpedo bottles due to their shape. According to the Society for Historical Archaeology, "They were advertised in the catalogs of U.S. bottle makers during the early 20th Century as 'Round Bottom Ginger Ale' bottles" (SHA, 2012, pg.11). Both the torpedo and ¾" round base bottle were constructed this way so the cork would not dry out in transit.

Figure 38. Snap case bottle manufactured from 1855-1913.

Another intact bottle appears to be a type of wine bottle that has a smooth flat bottom is what is referred to as an 'apollinaris' style bottle that was used between the 1880s and 1910s (Lindsey, 2012, pg. 28). After 1910 these bottles were most likely machine made. They were used primarily for mineral water (Lindsey, 2012, pg. 28). Newman's dating key dates this bottle from 1855-1913 and is called a snap case (Newman, pg. 73).

Figure 39. Three Piece Mold bottle. Manufactured from 1810-1890.

The three piece mold brown bottle dates from 1810-1890 and is one of the oldest bottles found intact in the icehouse. It is smooth and has a B embossed on the bottom.

There are a few brand name bottles found. While the content company is marked

on the bottle the bottling company is unknown. Pabst beer was one of the bottle brands found.

Figure 40. Pabst beer bottle, this style was manufactured from 1880-1913.

The Pabst bottles date from 1880-1913 (Newman, pg. 72). Pabst began brewing in 1848 and was known as Bests' brewery, by 1872 Captain Pabst had married into the Best family

and became President of the Company. In 1899, Pabst Blue Ribbon was added to the company (Pabst Brewing Company, 2008, pg. 2). The bottles found in the icehouse are clear in color with PABST embossed on the side. There is no mark of bottling company or year they were bottled. This bottle type was produced on a semi-automatic bottle machine.

Figure 41. Gh Mumm champagne bottle, manufactured from 1880-1920.

The Gh Mumm bottle found is a champagne bottle. Shipped from France, it is

dark green with a high kickup and dates from 1880-1920 (Newman, pg. 73). The label is now faded but looks like it was once silver. Gh Mumm is still available today.

Figure 42. Sloan's liniment bottle

There were other types of bottles found in the icehouse. Pharmaceutical bottles were found mixed in with all the beverage bottles. One in particular is a Sloan's Liniment bottle. Sloan's started out as an ointment for horses, to help relax the muscles. Dr. Earl Sloan claimed the liniment was "good for man and beast" and was used for the treatment of a stiff neck to bruises, sprains, strains, and mosquito bites (Toms, 2011, pg. 1). Newman's

dating key dates the bottle from 1920 to the present as it was made on an automatic bottle machine.

Figure 43. Snuff bottle. The style type is called Turn Paste Mold and manufactured from 1880-1920.

The snuff bottle is a small square brown bottle. Newman's key shows this type of bottle which date from 1880-1920, as a turn paste mold. This bottle is one of the few

found intact but there was quite a bit of brown bottle glass found which probably represents more of this type of bottle.

Figure 44. NuGrape soda bottle

There was one anomaly in the bottles and that is a NuGrape soda bottle. This type of bottle began manufacturing in 1920 and is still made today; it is made on an automatic bottle machine. NuGrape is a company out of Wadley, Georgia and did not begin mass production until 1921 but was invented in 1906 (NuGrape, 2008). The 1921 date is late but still within the Comer era.

In the kitchen category, glass was not all that was found. Several bottle caps were found as well as a couple spoons. Bottle caps were invented in 1891 by William Painter from Maryland. The caps were originally called “crown corks” and they were designed to be leak proof. He patented the cap and started the Bottle Seal Company. The crowns caps were for one time use and cost effective (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2007). A few pieces of alkaline glaze stoneware were also found. They appear to be from the same jug. Small amounts of plain porcelain were mixed throughout the top layers of debris.

The Activities group contains most of the metals found in the icehouse. A lot of this group was found mixed in with the large layer of broken bricks. Most of the metal that was found was so corroded it was unidentifiable.

Figure 45. Timber rings

The iron timber rings pictured above were used for dragging the timber to the mill. Large chain link for pulling the timber is still intact.

Figure 46. Georgia License plate from 1917.

The 1917 Georgia license tag was found near the top layers during the initial excavations that helped to date when the icehouse was last used. Not much metal remains and the lettering is almost unreadable.

When the first crew began excavations on the icehouse they collected everything including some brick and mortar along with window glass and bit of wood. Also collected were pieces of a stove and buggy axle which you can see in figure 18. A couple of buttons were found along with one pipestem and both were classified in the clothing group and tobacco groups respectively. In the prehistoric group pieces were collected such as an axe

head and bits of pottery. Artifacts found scattered included six quartz pieces, some coal, and charcoal. The randomness of all the artifacts suggests that the icehouse at some point was relegated to a trash pit.

Figure 47. This picture shows some of the brick that was tossed into the ice house.

The majority of the debris in the ice house was bricks. A few of the bricks were intact and there was mortar attached to a few. Most have been broken and are no longer useful to any structure.

Figure 48. The springhouse at Old Town.

The color, shape, and size match the brick used in the construction of C. Fitzsimmons springhouse shown above and the footings of the structures found all over the property dating from the Fitzsimmons' era.

Figure 49. This picture shows the buhrstones at the bottom of the ice house.

C. Fitzsimmons discovered a large outcropping of a rough porous stone, "burrstones" on his property. He used the buhrstones for decorations to spruce up his buildings. C. Fitzsimmons accented the grounds with walls and terraces, and lined the paths from the main house to his springhouse with buhrstones (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 112). He also recognized that the buhrstones would be useable as millstones, prior to this mill, owners imported their grinding stones from France (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 111). By 1811, C. Fitzsimmons had a fulltime quarry running at Old Town (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 111). He

didn't just export the stones for profit he also used the stones to enhance his property.

Figure 50. More of the chert that was found on the property and used for the foundation of the saw mill.

The buhrstone is the same chert used to make the foundation of the saw mill. The above picture shows the corner of the saw mill. The chert was planed down into large rectangular blocks and mortared to build the foundation. All of the chert came from the same quarry C. Fitzsimmons used to export millstones. Captain James, mentioned in previous chapters, cleaned up Old Town and rebuilt the plantation. He used the buhrstones to dam Spring Creek so there was sufficient water power for his grist and

sawmills (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 143). In the process of rebuilding James also built a dairyhouse near the old spring which C. Fitzsimmons had previously decorated with his buhrstones (Sheftall, 1980, pg. 143).

Figure 52. Chert found on the property and used to shore up the banks of the creek running to the saw mill.

The chert was also used to construct the mill races along Spring Creek, that run to the saw mill. These blocks are natural and set together to build the wall. The above picture shows the creek with the culvert pipe that runs to the mill. These blocks are shaped and interlock to create a wall. The chert and rest of the debris found in the ice house help to reiterate the evolution of functionality of the structure. It can be inferred

that large objects such as foundation blocks in close proximity to the ice house would be used as trash in filling the depth. It is likely that the ice house due to its depth and size became a hindrance and backfilling was necessary. It can be inferred that its new purpose became a privy.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

When exploratory excavations began on the ice house, it was not known what the structure was. As the excavations unfolded and the depth of the structure increased continued the possibilities of what the structure could have been became limited. Upon the closing of excavations a square brick lined structure that yielded over three meters of debris and a herringbone patterned floor emerged. Possibilities such as a water cistern and solitary confinement for convicts were quickly ruled out. The notion of a water cistern was easily ruled out once the floor emerged since the very strategic pattern of the ice house floor allows for drainage whereas drainage would not be ideal in a water cistern. The notion of the ice house structure being constructed as solitary confinement during the convict lease system occupation was ruled out as well once the floor emerged. The depth is too impressive and most importantly there was no alterations to the brick as one would expect to find. The depth would be too impressive to be used exclusively as a cellar.

The most appropriate designation is that the ice house at Old Town is in fact an ice house. After consulting the data available in the United States and the more lucrative data available in Britain solid comparisons were found. Although styles of ice houses vary due to location and the era in which the structures were built, a pattern of similarities emerged. The ice house at Old Town is unique in design, comparatively, yet it encompasses aspects of the structured styles from other sites that can be drawn upon. The most noticeable difference between the ice house at Old Town and other American ice house structure is the shape. The most common shape of American ice house structures is circular. The ice

house at the President's house in Philadelphia was octagonal in shape which was a unique design. The ice house at Old Town is square and more commonly fits the stylistic structural designs found in Europe. Christopher Fitzsimmons is the most likely builder of the ice house. It is known that C. Fitzsimmons was born in Ireland and this may have an effect on his stylistic choices at Old Town (i.e. buhrstones). It can be inferred that this same stylistic influence may have affected the design of the ice house at Old Town.

Future research regarding the ice house at Old Town is not necessary. Reasonable excavations are complete and an understanding of the structural function and the occupation associated with it has been obtained. At this point the most pressing issue is how to curate the structure. Safely backfilling the ice house has been discussed however leaving the structure open for viewing is now a more likely curation option. If the structure remains open for viewing safety fencing is needed around the opening and some of the debris around the ice house needs to be pushed back to allow for secure footing. While conducting comparative research for the ice house at Old Town it became obvious that more published research regarding ice houses in America is desperately needed. It is likely that ice houses are more common on American plantations than realized but maybe overlooked or mistaken for more obvious structural purposes such as cellars or privies.

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