

Button Hall



Home of Planters, Politicians and Patriots

1	Button Hall
2	In the beginning ...
3	Thomas and Rebecca Barker
4	A brave young gentleman
6	Waterree Jack
7	William and Rebecca Dry
9	Eighteen-Mile House Tavern
9	John McKenzie Jr.
10	Gov. William Bull / William L. Smith
13	Eighteen and Nineteen Mile Tracts
14	Strike at Button Hall!
15	First Flag of the Confederacy
17	Reconstruction and Beyond
18	Langdon Cheves
19	James Nelson
20	Rural Commutes
22	The City of Goose Creek
24	Shaping the Future
26	Bibliography

Button Hall

When Captain Thomas Barker Jr. and his young bride Rebecca Moore built an inland rice plantation in Goose Creek, near Charleston, South Carolina, they gave their new home a unique name. “Button Hall” was a moniker that would last until the land subdivided two centuries later.

Native Americans ambushed and killed Captain Barker in 1715, and his despondent widow married William Dry three years hence. Together, they developed Button Hall into a showcase rice plantation featuring many amenities including the most efficient rice thrashing machine of that era.

A subsequent owner, John McKenzie, used Button Hall as an elaborate retreat where he kept an extensive library and conducted agricultural experiments.

Later, Royal Governor William Bull resided there until the rising tide of American patriotism forced his departure.

After the Revolutionary War, William Laughton Smith purchased the rural manor for diversion and relaxation, but spent much of his time abroad serving President John Adams as Charge de affaires to the Court of Portugal. Button Hall shone as an important meeting place for influential leaders during the colonial and antebellum eras until subsequent owners partitioned and sold tracts of the noble estate.

The Northeastern Railroad severed the planting grounds near mid-century and a community of farm families assembled above the defunct rice fields after the Civil War. Soon after the twentieth century dawned, the new South Carolina Highway 52 paralleled the railroad tracks and brought the place into the modern era at the center of a tiny South Carolina municipality.

Today, much of the old Button Hall high ground comprises an ascending “Down Town” of commerce and business, and the City of Goose Creek Command Fire Station began rising in 2014 upon the footprint of the ancient manor house. The nearby remnants of ancient rice fields are converting to passive parks where tranquil meeting places bring residents to the commercial center of the burgeoning City of Goose Creek.



The familiar City of Goose Creek logo – cast in bronze, framed in clay brick and set in blue granite – marks the pedestrian intersection of Etiwan and Central Avenue in Goose Creek. What many residents may not realize, is that the seal is located near the center of what was Button Hall Plantation.

In the beginning ...

On Sept. 20, 1683, the Lord Proprietors of Carolina granted a 2,400-acre tract called “Boochawee” to James Moore.¹ The land spanned near the Goose Creek Bridge sixteen miles from Charleston in the Carolina Colony.

Moore built and lived at the original frontier house, led military excursions to Georgia and Florida, explored inland to the Appalachian Mountains, ascended to the office of Governor of South Carolina, and amassed great wealth through trade with Native Americans. He and his family steadily improved the living conditions at Boochawee and the sturdy household flourished until there were four girls and six boys.² The family eventually replaced the small frontier shelter with a substantial two-story brick home flanked by pleasure gardens featuring ponds, terraces, walkways and ornamental plantings.³ The Moore family carefully tended its forests and fields, and built a stand-alone brick kitchen, as well as barns, sheds, shops, stables, pens and coops. More than 60 Africans

resided in small crude cabins clustered together in the “slave village” near the main house.⁴ A few Native American hunters also sheltered nearby, including an exceptionally talented Wateree teenager.

James Moore preferred a Wateree Native American boy he plucked from a battlefield years before. He brought the boy, barely a teen, to Boochawee where Moore trained the young slave until he was a trusted hunter who dependably brought deer and turkey meat to the kitchen door. Later the young man served as interpreter when Moore ventured hundreds of miles into the wilderness, and eventually the boy fleshed into manhood and rode with Moore as a war captain, with the military title of “Jack,” and more specifically, “Wateree Jack.”

Stately “Boochawee Hall” and its demesne bespoke wealth, with hundreds of cattle and horses grazing freely, dozens of sheep and hogs fattening in pens, and wide fields of corn and rice; but it was native trade more than husbandry that brought immense fortune. ➤

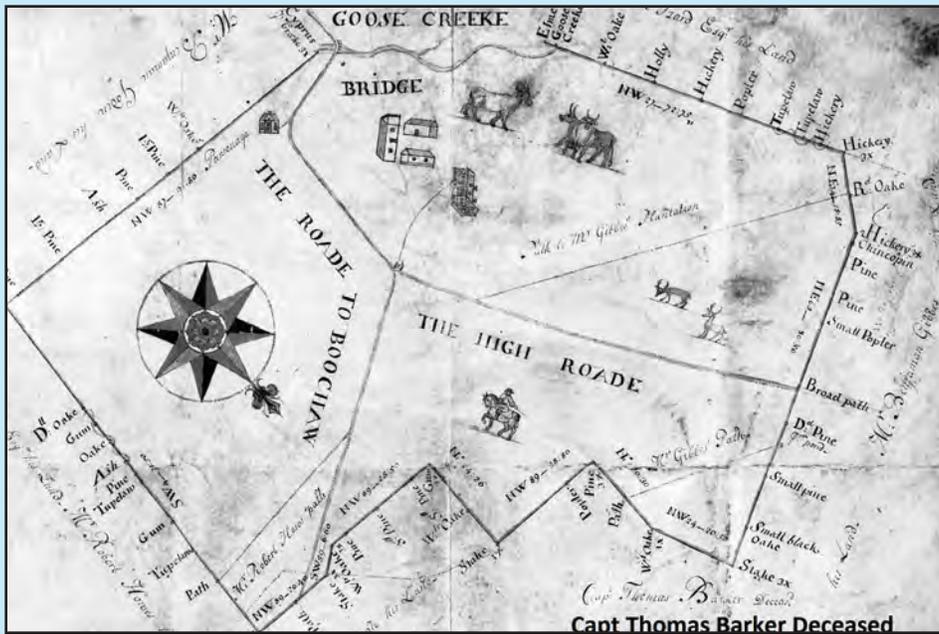


Herman Moll, drew the map entitled, A New and Exact Map of the Dominions of the King of Great Britain..., 1732, London. The map is among the collections of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. A detail of the Moll map shows the road from Charleston crossing the Goose Creek Bridge near the St. James Church and continuing to the intersection of the Road to Dorchester. “Moor” is noted on a roadway west of the intersection indicating the location of the Boochawee Plantation main house.

The main Boochawee Avenue intersected the “High Road” near the popular Eighteen-Mile Campground, where the divergence of the Road to Dorchester from the Road from Charleston⁵ provided nearby settlers a convenient land connection to the port city, as well as access to the most efficient trails into the Carolina backwoods. That convenient intersection provided a staging ground from which packhorse peddlers, adventurers, and native slave traders such as James Moore departed with his war captain, Wateree Jack,

ahead of many packhorse trains into the wilderness and returned with fortunes in peltries and Native American slaves until he rivaled the richest men in Carolina.

Upon his demise, James Moore devised sections of his expansive estate to each of his children, and Boochawee Plantation dissolved as sections of the properties melded with contiguous estates. One section, called “Button Hall,” transferred to his youngest daughter, Rebecca.



John Herbert drew the plat of the Oaks Plantation bordering Button Hall in 1716. The plat shows the 1630-acre Middleton tract, the Goose Creek Bridge, St. James, Goose Creek Parish Parsonage and the Middleton main house and out buildings. John Herbert noted “Capt Thomas Barker Deceased” in faded script at the bottom right, indicating that Button Hall Plantation sat contiguous to the north of Oaks Plantation. The author added the bold manuscript, “Capt Thomas Barker Deceased” to clarify the notation on the map.⁸

Thomas and Rebecca Barker

Governor James Moore Sr. devised a portion of his large Goose Creek estate to his youngest daughter, Rebecca, in 1706. She brought the 615-acre dowry to her union with Captain Thomas Barker Jr. when they married three years later.⁶

Barker sold his 500-acre plantation south of the Goose Creek Bridge and brought the wealth from the sale of that property to their union.⁷ Together, the fortunate couple built the Button Hall Plantation settlement above a freshwater swamp and connected their manor house via a 300-yard avenue to the Eighteen-Mile Campground on the road from Charleston.

The High Road [sic] from Charleston reached northwest over the Goose Creek Bridge and turned north along a slight ridge skirting a large “savanna.”

The prominent savanna characterized the northwest section of Button Hall Plantation between the eighteen and nineteen-mile markers. Intermittent flooding drowned the plant life in that swamp leaving the drained land fertile, damp and devoid of trees. Storm waters sheeted across the broad savanna, and slowly washed four miles further through shallow wetlands to its outfall in Foster Creek, a tributary of the Cooper River.

Thomas Barker channeled the surface drainage into manageable water reserve ponds, and diverted the flood away from the rich savanna soils, which when drained and leveled were ideal for growing rice. The reserve ponds held abundant fresh water that when released, drowned nuisance weeds and irrigated the long narrow rice fields transecting the full breadth of Button Hall Plantation.

A contemporary photograph shows Foxborough Lake in the Foxborough residential section of the City of Goose Creek. The pond is a remnant of the ancient savannah that Thomas Barker and subsequent owners channelized into a water reserve pond.



A brave young gentleman

The Barkers lived together for eight years rearing Charles, their only child, when the Yemassee Native War shattered their lives. Quickly in secession, a determined confederation of Native American tribes killed almost 100 traders in the Carolina frontier, signaling the commencement of a war that forever altered the perspectives of South Carolinians and the Barker family.⁹

The natives struck a wide ban south, west and north of Charleston, destroyed every European settlement within their reach and tightened a cordon of fear around the coastal communities.

In response, the colonists garrisoned defensive positions near the headwaters of the Ashley River, along the Cypress and Wassamasaw flow-ways, and at key crossings on the Santee River north of Moncks Corner. Panicked families retreated within that defensive arch, and hundreds on foot, horseback and with carts and wagons laden with possessions streamed past Button Hall Avenue daily in pursuit of the Goose Creek Bridge and the safety of fortified

Charleston.

The Governor feared that 1,200 colonial militia could not survive a defensive war against a tide of more than 10,000 native musketeer and bowmen. Thus, he ordered Thomas Barker to lead a contingency of cavalry from Button Hall to a rendezvous near the Santee River. Militia Captain Thomas Barker sent Rebecca and their little son, Charles, to her familial home at nearby Boochawee Hall, and mustered all available able-bodied men to the Eighteen-Mile Campground.

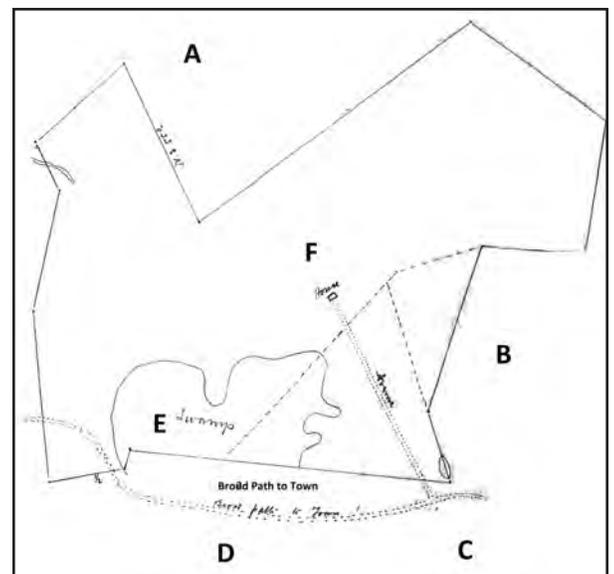
The Governor commanded Barker to lead his militia west to join one company from the perimeter under the command of General James Moore II. The well-conceived tactic allowed the converging routes to screen Goose Creek from invasion until the separate militias combined into a formidable force sufficiently large to meet individual war parties.¹⁰

Unfortunately the two militias departing within hours of each other were unaware that hundreds of hostiles lay in ambush.



Barbara McGowin drew this image of Rebecca and Thomas Barker and their son Charles at Button Hall Plantation on the morning of May 15, 1715. Riders are seen at the campground near the marker from where Captain Thomas led the Goose Creek Militia in pursuit of a large Native American war party. Today the City of Goose Creek Fire Station Headquarters can be found on the Button Hall site.

A simplified rendering of a 1734 plat of Button Hall shows the large “swamp” (savanna) that served as a reliable reserve pond for down stream rice fields. Manuscript letters added for this publication indicate: A – Boochawee Plantation; B – The Oaks Plantation; C – Bloomfield Plantation; D – “Broad Path to Town;” E – “Swamp;” F – Button Hall Main House. Button Hall Avenue is indicated connecting the main house with the “Broad Path to Charleston near the Eighteen-Mile Marker.





The diorama in Ocmulgee National Monument near Macon, Georgia depicts Governor James Moore Sr. mounted left of center facing Wateree Jack, his “war captain” atop a horse near the right margin. James Moore manumitted Wateree Jack and “thoroughly trusted him.” The diorama depicts the return of James Moore, his cadre and a long line of native captives returning from Spanish Florida.

Wateree Jack

Captain Barker, with “ninety men on Horseback and 12 Negroes,”¹¹ trotted north with outriders galloping ahead. Thomas Barker’s scouts were local natives, long familiar with the Europeans who settled among them forty years earlier, and by 1715 the 34-year-old “Jack,” earned wide renown and respect as a dependable “war captain.”

To reward his exceptional bravery during conflicts with the Combahee tribesmen, James Moore I manumitted the Wateree native slave years before, and the militia hierarchy used the title “Jack” to designate leading natives in charge of other native warriors aligned with the militia.

Barker expected “Wateree Jack” to muster with others at the eighteen-mile rendezvous fields and lead them into the wilderness, as he did many times before.

Captain Thomas Barker and his men followed the Road to Moncks Corner to its destination and from there pursued the western trace. By early afternoon, Barker’s men were trotting single file along the narrow packhorse trail and Wateree Jack was cantering alone, miles ahead, rapidly closing onto his tryst.

Wateree Jack was on the mission of his life, and success depended upon his stealth tactics and knowledge of British strategy. With the awareness ➤

of the planned assault and its destination, the war party, Wateree Jack prepared an ambush of each militia as it arrived, twisting the Governor's "divide and conquer" strategy to the natives' advantage.

As the sun rose, Jack lay with his native brethren beneath felled and tousled trees near Eutaw Springs. A "great Hurricane," felled the trees merely 20 months before and Barker did not know the extent and depth of the destruction.¹² Consequently, Barker blindly led his riders deep into the tangled thicket until concealed natives, hiding among the turned up roots, twisted trunks and branches, encircled the militia.

As planned, Wateree Jack discharged his musket, knocking Barker from his mount and sparking an aimed volley.¹³ More riders were instantly hit by trained musket fire and a moment later, stunned horsemen lay pierced by arrows, knives, and hatchets from all directions and bludgeoned with war clubs until twenty-seven "very pretty

young men"¹⁴ lay crumbled and writhing on the ground. The stunned survivors dismounted in confusion to discharge their heavy muskets, but without leadership and more than one-third of their comrades dead, dying, or moaning in pain, they quickly remounted into a retreat.¹⁵

The cavalry retreated ahead of the invading natives, but soon joined a few planters with armed slaves to turn the native advance away from Goose Creek toward Wassamassaw where Captain George Chicken, commander of several Goose Creek militias, waited with three columns of cavalry.¹⁶

In a pitched battle in mid June, the Goose Creek militias roundly repulsed the invaders with grapeshot and disciplined lines of musket fire. Captain George Chicken's assault forced the natives to retreat, and by late summer the various tribes lost inertia and cohesiveness, withdrew one tribe by one, and eventually sought individual peace agreements.¹⁷

William and Rebecca Dry

Rebecca Barker's brothers, sisters and in-laws comforted and supported her, but mostly she drew upon her own sturdiness to survive the closing weeks of war without her brave husband. After the conflict, she and young Charles returned to Button Hall relying upon the overseer and the assistance of her family. She sold 201 acres to her brother, James Jr., for £300 three years after the native war to pay her debts and she found comfort in young Charles;¹⁸ but she never forgot her handsome Captain Thomas Barker. She also remembered Wateree Jack, the man who murdered her spouse. No reliable news told of the whereabouts of that native spy after the awful ambush in the twisted forest, but the Colonial Assembly confirmed that Wateree Jack was the "...author of most of ye mischief they have done us."¹⁹ Although he grew up a short walk from Button Hall, and many knew him well, no one ever identified the body of the native mole, but all hoped that recently-promoted Colonel George Chicken settled the score with his decisive charge.

Rebecca Barker's fortune improved greatly when she married William Dry (1690-unknown) on May 23, 1722. An energetic young man, Dry rebuilt the main

house, improved all of the important outbuildings and expanded the tract significantly.²⁰ He added a King's grant to the estate²¹ and purchased contiguous properties from Benjamin Gibbes of Bloomfield Plantation to the west, John Moore of the old Boochawee section to the north, and a section of Benjamin Schenckingh's land contiguous on the south to enlarge the plantation to 975 acres.

William and Rebecca Dry developed Button Hall into a well-conceived inland showcase for rice production. The settlement featured many amenities including a tiny abode near the mouth of their avenue. There upon the separated parcel near the emerging Eighteen-Mile House Tavern, they erected a small house with brick chimney, as an overseer residence and sometimes a guest house. Gardens flanked the main house near the fishpond stocked with perch, roach, pike, eels and catfish for "great diversion."²² There was also a spring within "three stone throws of the house" where the waters diverted under a shed for a "cold bath."²³ Nearby, dams created three more large ponds for water reserves, which irrigated the apple, pear and peach orchards.²⁴

The Dry family planted 400 irrigated acres, using >

Eighteen-Mile House Tavern

Many Goose Creek Plantations evolved into renowned resorts colloquially called “countryseats.” By mid-century, the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern, like a noisy foyer, welcomed travelers to some of the grandest countryseats in North America.

Elegant Broom Hall Plantation (later Bloomfield) loomed on the northern side of the road west of the tavern, after which renowned Crowfield and Fleury’s Plantations came into view.

Travelers easily accessed the Oaks and the Elms Plantations south of the tavern, and the intersection conveniently connected by way of Gibbes Path to Back River Upper and Lower Roads to the

extraordinarily well-developed Springfield and Parnassus Estates to the east.

As years vanished, elaborate townhouses with uniformed servants and imported furnishings more commonly appeared in Charleston, and fewer of the wealthiest landowners remained in the countryside during the warmer months.

More planters employed permanent overseers to supervise laborers, while the landowners enjoyed the social amenities of the port city with pleasant harbor airs.

But most sought countryseats to while away the winter months of the year hunting, fishing and riding through the rural quietude.

John McKenzie Jr.

After William Dry and Rebecca advertised their Goose Creek home for sale in 1734,³⁰ John McKenzie purchased Button Hall for £5,700.³¹ When he died from a fever four years later at the age of 45, his widow Sara McKenzie offered the estate for sale in the South Carolina Gazette.³² It did not sell but remained in the family when John McKenzie Jr., their only son, inherited the land.

A capable young man, educated at Cambridge, he added to the family fortune by amassing 6,900 acres in several parishes, working 207 slaves and acquiring an elaborately accommodated townhouse. He kept Button Hall for his country seat, renamed it “Castle Brawn,” and converted it from a working rice plantation to a personal resort with 38 servants.

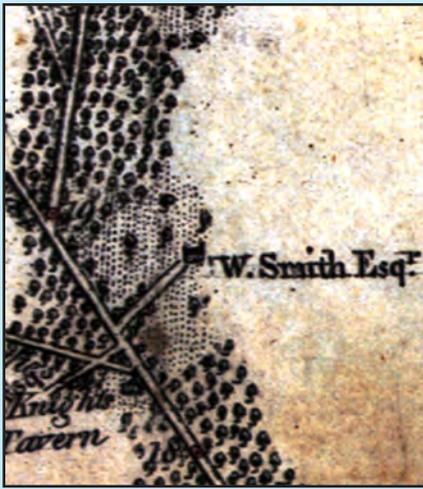
McKenzie was an attorney by training, but pursued the life of a gentleman planter as merely one of many of his varied interests. He kept an elaborate library valued at £2,100 at Castle Brawn where he also experimented with hay production.³³ He served in the Royal Assembly three terms, and sat on various commissions including as church warden of the Goose Creek Church.³⁴ McKenzie found much more than country diversion at Castle Brawn when he met the girl next door, and on an April morning married Sarah Smith, the daughter of Thomas Smith and Sarah Moore of neighboring Bloomfield (Broom Hall).³⁵ The South Carolina Gazette reported,

“Last Monday morning John Mackenzie, Esq., was married to Miss Sarah Smith, daughter of Thomas Smith, Esq. (of Broad-street), immediately after which the new married couple set out for Castle-Brawn, Mr. Mackenzie’s seat at Goose-Creek.”³⁶

This union greatly increased his fortune, along with his political and social connections as talk of war with England swirled. John McKenzie allied with Christopher Gadsden in publishing opposition arguments against Great Britain, and he and his father-in-law, like their immediate neighbors at Crowfield and the Oaks Plantations, embraced the zeal for revolution at first. Mackenzie was an ardent resistance leader and member of the “non-importation party.” He contributed greatly during the disturbing years leading to conflict, but died at his nearby father-in-law’s home at the age of 33.³⁷ Buried at Castle Brawn, the South Carolina Gazette eulogized John McKenzie as that:

“...inestimable member of the Community...that zealous, disinterested, and unshaken Patriot... that true friend to America and the English Constitution...that excellent Man in every social relation...”³⁸

He bequeathed his £12,000 estate to his widow and devised £1,000 to begin the College of Charleston. He also donated an 800-volume library on law, political science and history to that college, “whenever it was established.”³⁹



“W. Smith Esq.” appears on the detail of the Abernathy travel map published in 1784. The same year William Laughton Smith purchased Button Hall from Lewis Lestergette, Samuel Knight acquired “two small tracts of land lying to the west side of the road leading from Charleston to Moncks Corner.” He leased the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern for five years at 15£ annually from Lewis Lestergette. “Knight’s Tavern” is noted near the terminus of the Button Hall Avenue.⁴⁵

Gov. William Bull / William Laughton Smith

Governor William Bull served as South Carolina Lieutenant Governor from 1759 until 1775, and acted as Governor on five occasions. He acquired Button Hall after John McKenzie died, and resided there until he retired to England during the brooding years of revolution. When he purchased the tract, it regained the “Button Hall” label even though the borders of Castle Brawn overlay beyond the original boundaries by more than 200 acres.⁴⁰ He lived in Charleston, but occasionally rode an elegant carriage with servant outriders to his country home at Button Hall to hunt, fish and converse with neighboring gentlemen. After the Governor departed, Daniel and Elizabeth Tharin acquired the 976-acre plantation in 1778,⁴¹ but held it only a few months until Lewis Lestergette purchased all of it for £40,000.⁴²

William Laughton Smith (1758-1812) purchased Button Hall in 1785 including orchards, fishponds, a bathhouse and a two-story brick mansion from Lewis Lestergette.⁴³

Smith was the son of Benjamin Smith and Anne Laughton, who sent him to study in England. He returned to South Carolina in 1783 to pursue a career as an attorney, and gradually amassed a fortune through his skillful services. However, it was his marriage to Charlotte Izard, daughter of

Ralph Izard and Alice Delancey, that hastened his ascent to high political office.⁴⁴

With his father-in-law, Ralph Izard and brother-in-law, Gabriel Manigault, Smith became the third person in one of the most powerful political factions in the nation. Dining rooms, parlors, libraries and verandas at Button Hall, the Elms, and Steepbrook manors lay within a four-mile triangle straddling the Goose Creek Bridge. Each provided a venue for dinners and other parlays where the three influential men, Ralph Izard, William Laughton Smith and Gabriel Manigault, debated relevant issues of the new state and republic.⁴⁶

The Izards kept an elegant countryseat and a five-acre “pleasure garden” at their Elms Plantation. Their home featured an octagonal drawing room, as well as a large hall where the newest leaders of the republic communed.

The Steepbrook mansion, a large, square, two-story wooden structure, sat atop a high basement overlooking Goose Creek. The hipped roof splayed above one-story porches spanning the front and back of the house. Important conversations ensued on the verandas, as well as in the elegant wainscoted dining hall.

After Charlotte Izard died in 1792, William Loughton Smith singularly greeted his visitors in the parlor of his two-story brick abode, but ➤

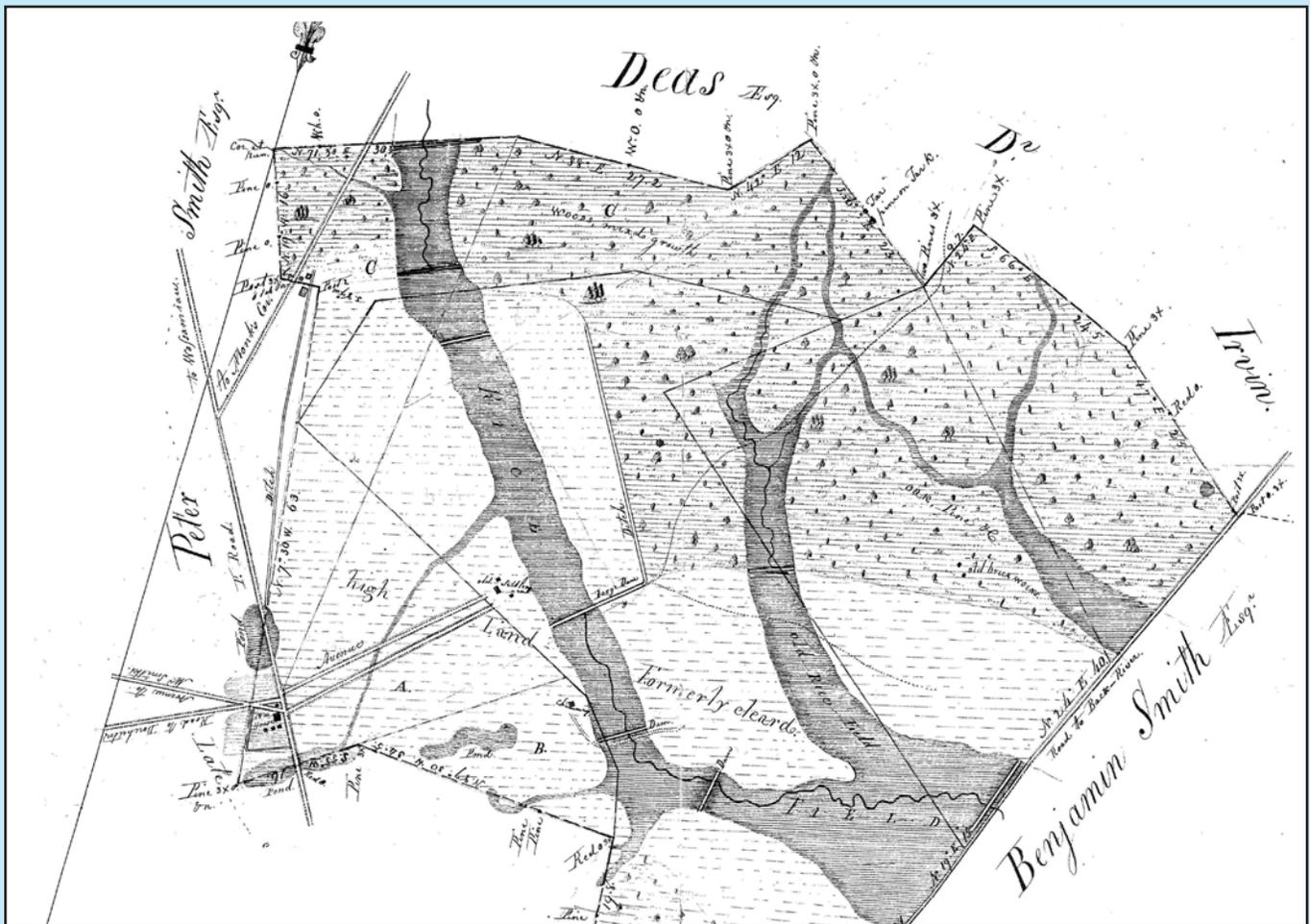
preferred meeting in his library with books valued at more than £2,100.⁴⁷

The Izard-Manigault-Smith camp provided strong support for the Federalist Party on all political levels, and the party repaid those favors while in power. William Laughton Smith was admitted to the bar in 1784 and commenced practice in Charleston, and soon served as member of the Privy-Council. He served in the State House of Representative in 1787-1788, as warden of the City of Charleston in 1786, and was elected as a pro-administration candidate to the First, Second, and Third Congress. He served as a Federalist in the Fourth and Fifth Congress from 1789 until President John Adams appointed him United States Minister (Charge d'affaires) to Portugal and Spain in 1797.

The nascent United States Government sent

money through William Laughton Smith's office in Portugal to convey tribute (bribes) to the Barbary pirates. The pirates consistently threatened the Mediterranean sea-lanes and demanded routine payments for safe passage of American merchant ships. Smith opposed the American policy of paying bribes and advocated a strong navy instead. In 1799, President John Adams appointed Smith ambassador to Turkey, but Napoleon Bonaparte's advances in Italy delayed and finally suspended his mission. The election of Thomas Jefferson pushed the Federalists out of office and terminated Smith's appointment, but Jefferson soon adopted "millions for defense, and not one penny for tribute..." and stationed United States Marines on American merchant ships to ward off the Barbary pirates.

Smith toured throughout Europe for almost two years before he returned home to a prosperous ➤

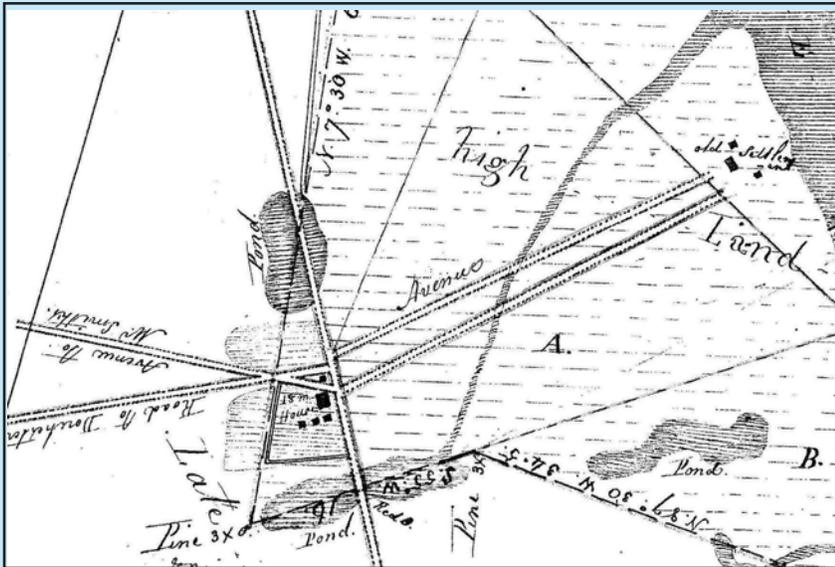


John Diamond drew the "Plan of a Plantation (Button Hall) in the Parish of Goose Creek...Belonging to William Laughton Smith Esquire...1805."

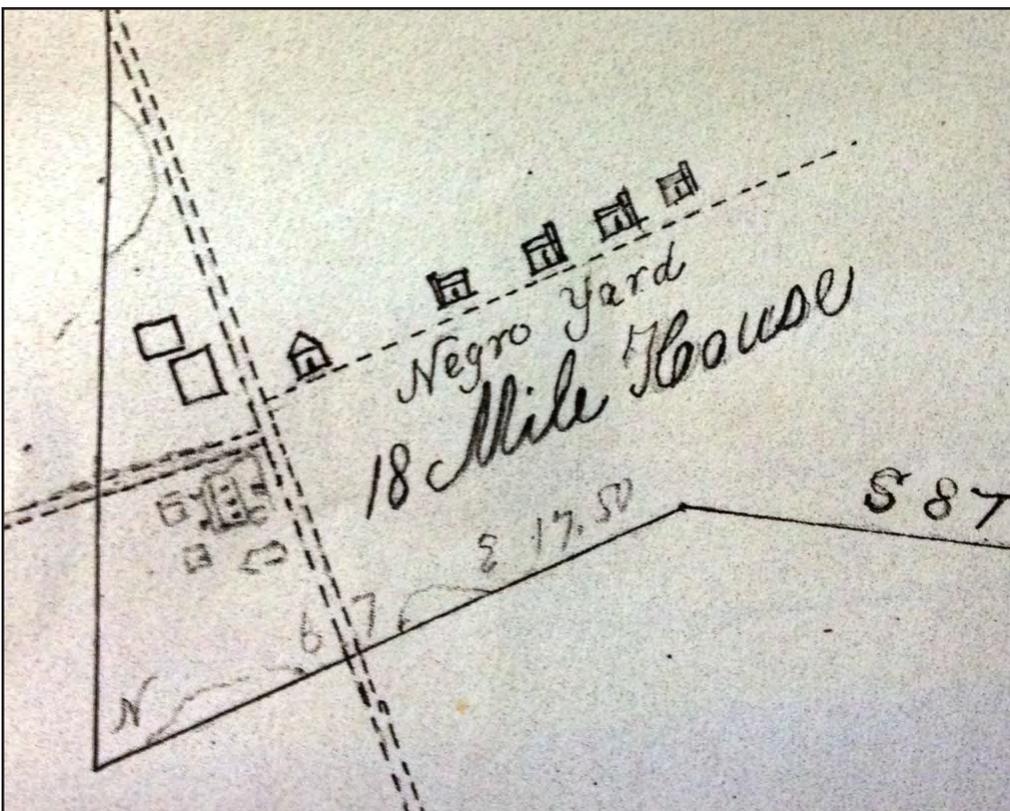
law practice, but he unsuccessfully sought office as a Federalist candidate in 1804, 1806 and 1808 to the Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Congress. Nonetheless, he entered service in the State Militia in 1808, served as a member of the State House of Representatives, sat as President of the Santee Canal Company, Vice President of the Charleston Library Society, and Vice President of the St.

Cecilia Society.⁴⁸

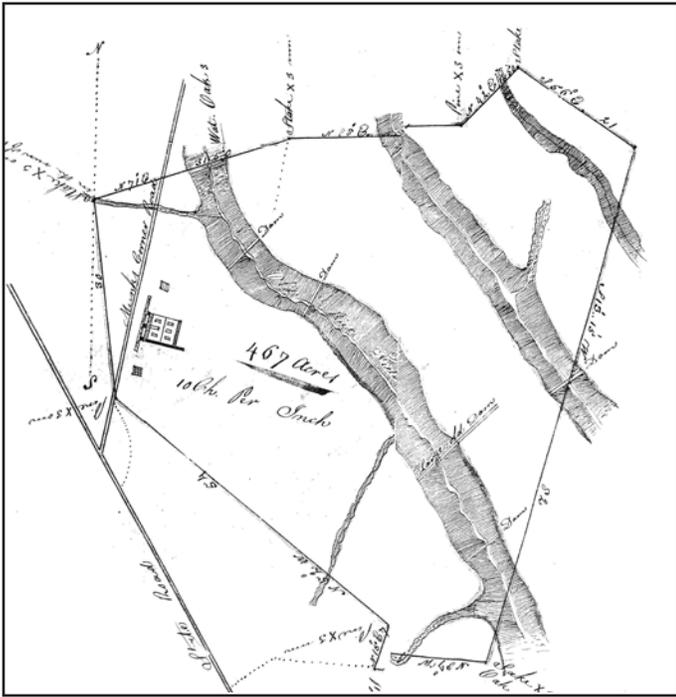
His law practice and second marriage to Charlotte Wragg leveraged a greater fortune in land, investments and business connections in Charleston.⁴⁹ He invested well and upon his death in 1812, he bequeathed his handsome estate worth \$140,000, including the Goose Creek lands, to his second wife, Charlotte Wragg.⁵⁰



A detail of the John Diamond 1805 plat presented in an east-west orientation, shows the convergence of plantation avenues at the “18 m House” (Eighteen-Mile House Tavern) intersection. Inexplicably, two parallel avenues lead to the “old settlement” at the site of the Button Hall main house. Two significant outbuildings flank the main house at the settlement. The Eighteen-Mile House Tavern is indicated with four auxiliary structures. The large pasture and ponds near the tavern attracted travelers who wished to graze and water their horses.



W.K. Mellard drew a plat describing the Eighteen-Mile House tract in the 1840s. The image shows a detail of the Mellard plat depicting a cluster of buildings at the vicinity of the Eighteen Mile House. A two-story structure with two chimneys and three second floor windows depicts the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern. Smaller structures with single chimneys are aligned near the intersection and labeled “Negro Yard.” Button Hall Avenue, once the prominent feature at that important intersection, is not indicated on this plat. Both plats are among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston.



Jacob Breaker (sometimes Braker), son of Lewis Breaker, combined several land purchases from William Laughton Smith and his descendents to create the 467-acre Nineteen-Mile Tract described here. Lewis Braker purchased 87 acres at the intersection of the State Road and the Moncks Corner Road in 1809 from William Laughton Smith. His son, Jacob Braker purchased 61 acres in 1809 and 411 acres from C.W. Smith in 1821 to create the Nineteen-Mile House Tract. A stylized rendering of the Nineteen-Mile House Tavern describes a stately two-story structure with out-buildings near the intersection of the State Road and Road to Moncks Corner one-half mile north of the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern. Daniel Sheppard drew the plat in 1834 after some acreage was annexed to the contiguous Eighteen-Mile Tract. The plat is among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston.

Eighteen and Nineteen-mile tracts

During the early decades of the 19th century, Goose Creek devolved from a collection of large prosperous estates to a community of marginally successful planters and farmers. Some investors shifted scarce capital away from the exhausted inland rice fields to wetlands along tidal influenced rivers, and some abandoned the exhausted estates of their fathers and grandfathers to seek cotton fields in the west. Additionally, persistent and mysterious malaria plagued the wetlands forcing those of means to seek healthier environments during the warmer months of the year. Only the poorer planters remained all year, and one contemporary noted that some members of the old families “call themselves gentlemen” but were bankrupt or nearly insolvent, and many heads of the best-known families struggled mightily to keep the appearance of propriety with little more than exhausted fields and worn implements.

Some land owners subdivided their colonial-era plantations, sold tracts and parcels and retreated to townhouses in Charleston or elsewhere. Two years prior to his demise, William Laughton Smith sold 109 acres of Button Hall to Lewis Breaker, the proprietor of the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern. His heirs further subdivided old Button Hall Plantation by selling another section, named the Nineteen-Mile tract, to Lewis Breaker and his son, Jacob.

The Nineteen-Mile House Tavern at the intersection

of the old Moncks Corner Road with the new State Road anchored this tract.⁵¹ Button Hall contained only 387 acres when Smith’s widow sold the settlement buildings and remaining acreage in 1821 for \$2,710.⁵² Subsequent to those sales, the heirs later sold the remnant of the colonial era rice lands to J.J. Screven Smith and Thomas Smith, two grandsons of Charlotte Wragg and William Laughton Smith. These two grandsons held most of what remained through the middle years of the nineteenth century (1855),⁵³ but conveyed the last of it out of the family to Charles P. Shier in 1858.⁵⁴ The Button Hall manor and boundaries dissolved and never reconstituted and consequently, the ancient settlement and its long avenue fell into disuse, overgrew and vanished.

As the old avenue faded, slave families clustered in small homes near its intersection with the State Road. Remnant workers of the obsolete plantation system eked meager existence from nearby fields carved from the overgrown and defunct rice lands, but Button Hall no longer produced rice or any other commodity for the market, and landowners sought opportunities to “hire out” slaves to work the public roads and bridges and earn a few dollars for the landowners. Nonetheless, no slave labored on the new North Eastern Railroad when that company laid rails across the obsolete avenue and through the Button Hall wetlands.

The 2013 photograph shows the SCX Railroad transecting the ancient lands of Button Hall Plantation near the site of the manor and settlement. The overhead power lines visible near the water tank trace the avenue to the manor house. After a brief labor stoppage in March 1855, workers constructed a 500-yard trestle across the Button Hall wetlands for the Northeast Railroad Company. Subsequent redesign channelized the water and embanked the rail line relegating the trestle unnecessary.



Strike at Button Hall!

Paid labor steadily replaced the anemic slave system in Goose Creek that long migrated away from the failed inland rice fields to western cotton plantations.

Most slave owners “hired out” (leased) their slaves to work on public projects such as the nearby covered Goose Creek Bridge that spanned 220 feet across the creek and featured the “finest cypress shingles.”⁵⁵

Other slaves worked on the State Road that intersected the Button Hall Avenue. However, the Northeastern railroad construction bosses paid daily wages to work crews consisting largely of young Irish immigrants to drive piles, secure wooden ties and lay miles of steel rails for the new line. The crews labored in ten-hour shifts, six days a week, and boarded in company quarters. The wet, soft ground of the long idle Button Hall Plantation rice >

fields lay overgrown with water oaks, tupelos, elms and willows, and washed in a soft, shallow and wide flow-way sprawling menacingly before the intended route near the Eighteen-Mile rail marker.

The route depended upon 400 yards of piling and trestlework to traverse the wetlands, and in 1855, near the old Button Hall settlement and within one mile of the unfinished Mount Holly Railroad Depot, the laborers stopped work in the first railroad strike in South Carolina.

The workers protested low wages and poor living conditions, but the company countered by rushing replacements to the scene. A melee erupted when the replaced workers refused to give way, prompting company officials to appeal to civil authorities for help. In response, the South Carolina Attorney General issued a special endorsement that authorized the local sheriff to execute warrants for the arrests of 33 identified workers. When the sheriff, accompanied by Northeastern railroad officials, attempted to incarcerate the Irishmen, workers opposed them with bludgeons and one pistol. One laborer announced that he would not be “taken alive,” but mercifully, cooler heads prevailed that day and the sheriff retreated from the scene.⁵⁶

Angry workers followed the retreating sheriff on foot. They walked eleven miles toward Charleston brandishing their weapons and alarming the general population, until the sheriff met them the following day at the seven-mile-pump house station.

There, the lawman confronted the strikers with overwhelming re-enforcements, including the Washington Artillery, Washington Light Infantry, Charleston Riflemen, and the Charleston Light Dragoons.⁵⁷

The sheriff arrested thirty-three workers and housed them in the Charleston jail to await trial, and with little public support for the outnumbered strikers, work soon commenced through the wetlands.

The rail line traversed the Button Hall rice fields, crossed the Mount Holly Plantation Avenue, and continued slightly more than one-tenth of a mile to the new depot. Predictably, the company named the rail stop, “Mount Holly” after the nearby plantation, and as families settled near the convenient station, the Mount Holly name attached to the broader neighborhood. The Northeastern Railroad Company completed its full length without further labor strife and commenced its maiden run in 1857.

First Flag of the Confederacy

When late in 1860, the “Black Republican Party,” as labeled in the south, nominated Abraham Lincoln for president, South Carolina threatened to withdraw from the United States of America.

Upon arrival of the news of the Republican victory, the South Carolina General Assembly called a convention of the people of South Carolina to write an Ordinance of Secession. The delegates assembled in the State Capital on December 17, 1860, but due to rumors of smallpox in Columbia, the convention adjourned to reconvene three days later in St. Andrews Hall on Broad Street in Charleston. There, “precisely at seven minutes after one o’clock [afternoon],” on December 20, a roll call vote commenced during which the delegates unanimously approved the Ordinance of Secession fifteen minutes later.⁵⁸

The conventioners voted behind closed doors, but adjourned immediately after the roll call, allowing news of secession to erupt with shouts of joy, cannon fire and runners plastering the Mercury Newspaper broadside “The Union is dissolved” along the streets of Charleston. Immediately, telegraph messengers clicked the news beyond the State boundaries, outward bound trains delivered hurriedly-penned mail to post offices throughout the State, and couriers on horseback galloped into the countryside with the exciting news.

At nine o’clock that evening, 16-year-old John George Vose returned from Furman College to his home at the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern. His family greeted him with excitement. He recalled, “I...found the whole family making a flag with a Palmetto tree and the words ‘Southern Republic’ sewed on under the tree.”⁵⁹

The next morning "...someone hung it from a pole across the road from Pa's store." John George Vose suspected that it was "...one of the first flags of the Confederate States."⁶⁰

When all able-bodied white males rushed to volunteer for Confederate service, Carsten Vose, father of John George and Captain of the Goose Creek Company attached to the 18th Regiment was no exception.

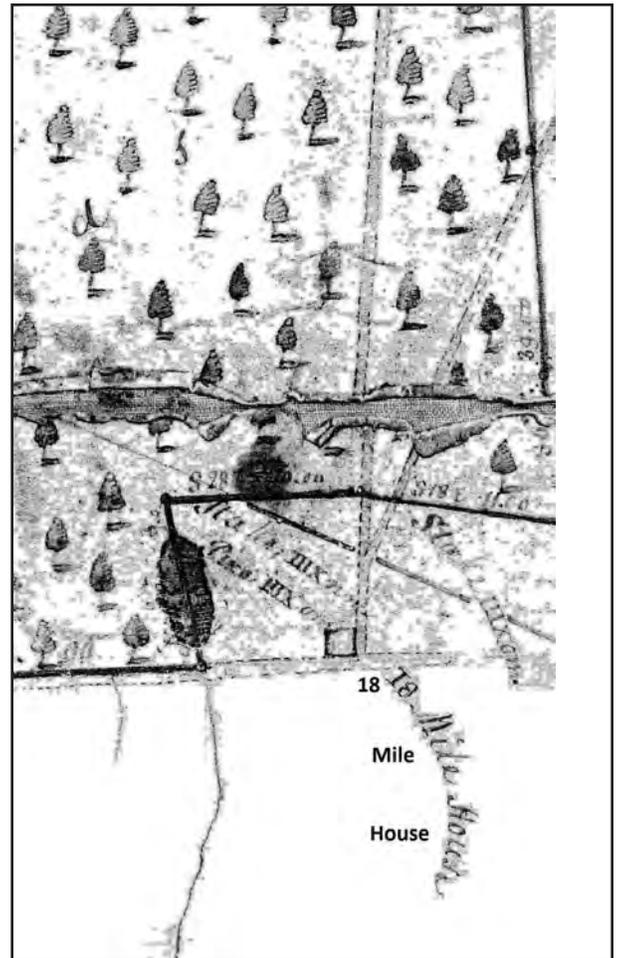
As a popular proprietor, Vose heard all of the prevailing political arguments and intended to enlist in the Confederate army, until he learned that his advanced age disqualified him. Not deterred, the 59-year-old warrior patrolled with the home guard for the duration of the war, while his son, John George Vose, and his son's slave companion, Alex, marched off with the "Rebs."⁶¹

Road traffic along the State Road increased significantly during the war years (1861-1865) as the declining Confederacy consumed more of the resources of the countryside, and as warring fronts on land and sea shifted closer to Charleston. Authorities diverted locomotives and train cars to support the resistance, requiring more military suppliers and private entrepreneurs to use transport wagons and the State Road to deliver products to Charleston. Daily train service stopped temporarily in early December 1864, as the shifting fronts in Georgia required more railcars, and regular service ceased entirely near Christmas when the Confederate forces turned away from Savannah.

As the southern cause faded precipitously during the waning days of 1864, Confederate General William Joseph Hardee ordered retreat from the southern regions of South Carolina.

Within thirty days of that fateful order, the Massachusetts Fifty-fifth Volunteers, a proud group of young African-American men with European-American commanders, arrived at the Eighteen-Mile House to impart the laws of the United States of America upon that section of the south. John Poppenheim met the invaders at the abandoned Eighteen-Mile House to surrender the St. James, Goose Creek Parish.

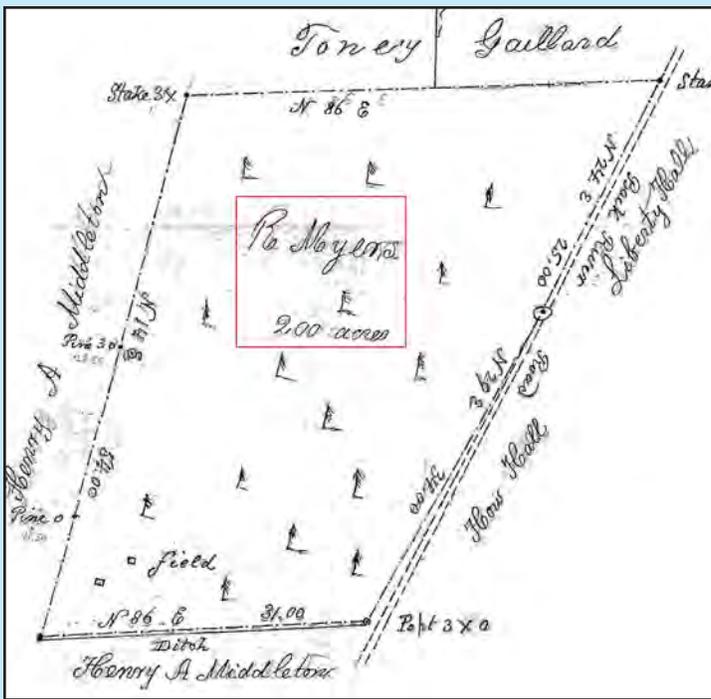
Too old for the front lines, Poppenheim served in the home guard under the command of Confederate Captain Philip Porcher, but he did not retreat with his unit when the Union army arrived in Goose Creek. Instead, as Chairman of the St. James, Goose Creek Parish Road Commission, he stood as the lone civilian



A detail of a plat drawn by C.S. Dwight places the "18 Mile House" site at the intersection of the State Road and the Road to Dorchester. Carsten Vose owned and resided with his family at the Eighteen-Mile House in the years leading to Civil War. The obsolete Button Hall Avenue is not indicated on this 1859 plat but shows the house contiguous to the State Road and the Road to Dorchester. The bold manuscript "18 Mile House" was added to this publication for clarity.

authority in Goose Creek to meet Union General Edward E. Potter at the Eighteen-Mile House.⁶²

Within that stunning context, on February 28, 1865 and during the days that followed, black soldiers liberated the "Negro Yard" slaves at the Eighteen-Mile House and followed the several diverging pathways to slave rows of all of the nearby plantations. During the first week of March, 1865, young black soldiers pitched field tents and hunkered around feeble campfires at the old packhorse camp, while others slept on the floor of the obsolete tavern near the roaring hearth, as a cold bitter rain chilled that section of the fallen Confederacy.⁶³



Freedman Richard Myers owned the 200-acre farm described in the above plat.

Reconstruction and Beyond

Within a few years after the Civil War ended, J.J. Screven Smith and Thomas Smith, two grandsons of Charlotte Wragg and William Laughton Smith⁶⁴ reconstituted much of old Button Hall and consolidated it with old Boochawee lands along the headwaters of Foster Creek. It spanned to the State Road by way of the old Boochawee Avenue (Liberty Hall Road today) and combined several adjoining sections including “part of the 17-Mile House containing about 210 acres, the 18-mile parcel with about 70 acres, the 19-Mile House land of 467 acres and a part of the Oaks plantation...” The combined tract encompassed 1,111 acres in 1868⁶⁵ and conveyed to Henry A. Middleton three years hence (1871).⁶⁶

The difficult economies of the post war era required many old estates to be subdivided and each parcel rented as small farms to white farm families, as well as recently emancipated African-American farmers. A few freedmen in Goose Creek purchased farmland, such as Richard and Margaret Myers, who bought a section of old Button Hall.

White farmers Robert and Mary Austin purchased a section of Button Hall from the Smith family and farmed it until Robert’s demise. After widow Mary relocated to Charleston, she sold the 200 acre tract to Richard Myers in 1875. A

freedman since the age of 40, Richard was a self-made man, who at the age of 49 purchased the Austin tract for \$750.⁶⁷ There, he worked 200 acres of fertile fields and successfully supported his wife Margaret, a nephew, Washington, his granddaughter, Comida, and a young girl named Rhail.⁶⁸ He worked two horses, plowed 26 acres of corn and cotton, and raised chickens, cows, and pigs.

He annually gathered more than 125 bushels of potatoes, 38 bags of rice and most kinds of produce.⁶⁹ Myers farmed that section of old Button Hall for more than 40 years, eventually selling parcels of 50 and 25-acres to freedmen Josiah Green and Jonas Stephens.

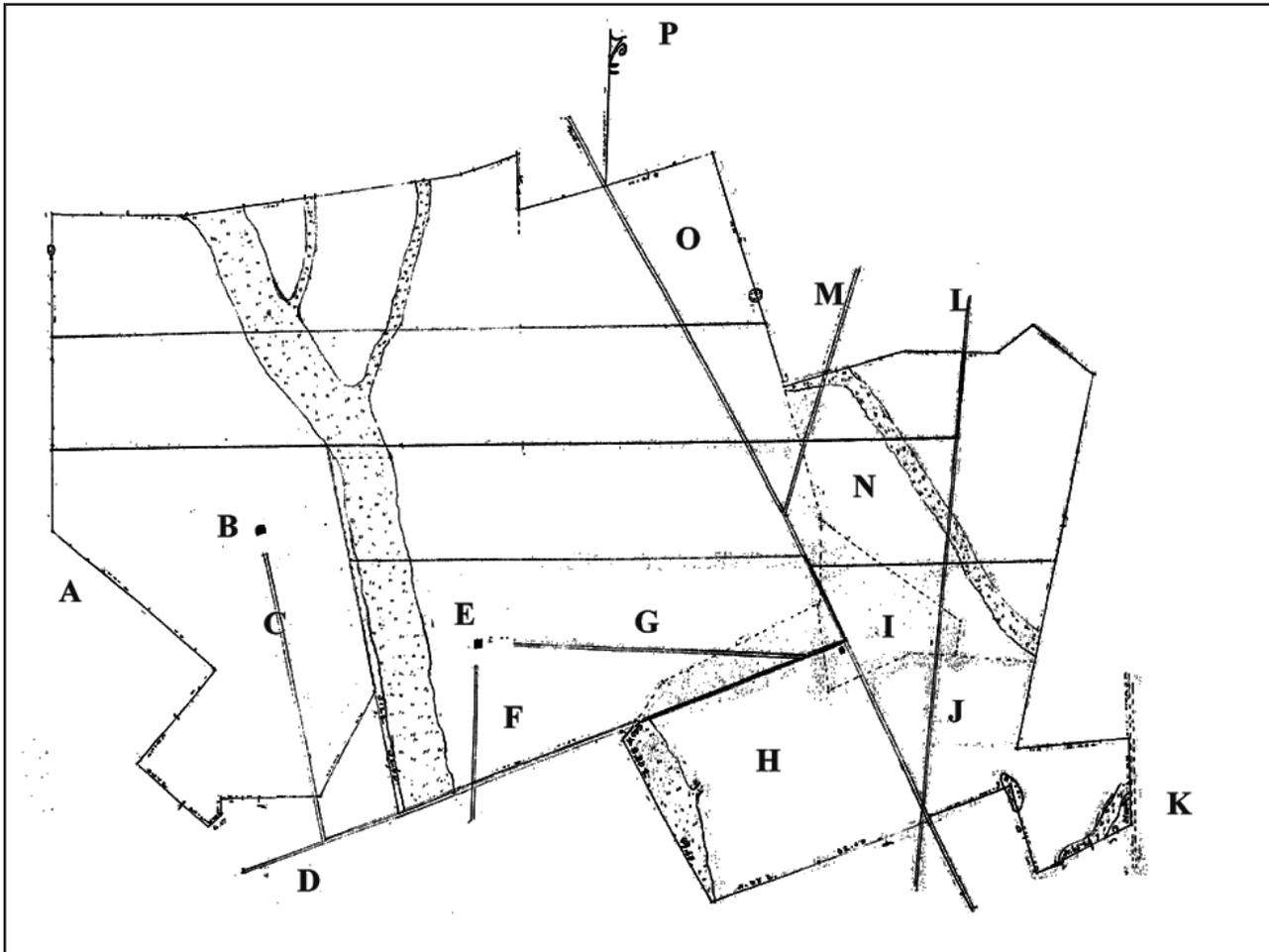
After Richard died in 1899, “the year of the great snow,”⁷⁰ his heirs subdivided and sold tracts, his and Margaret’s “little house” and a tiny slice of the once 200-acre tract remained. Langdon Cheves purchased the last of it in 1914 including Myers’ small home located near today’s intersection of Liberty Hall and Lindy Creek Roads.⁷¹ Langdon Cheves avoided purchasing land from most minority land owners because of missing, unfiled or incomplete titles, but the Myers property featured a clear title among the registered land papers.

Langdon Cheves

Charleston attorney and businessman Langdon Cheves reigned as the most influential landowner in Goose Creek during the first three decades of the 20th century.⁷²

He managed singularly or in partnership more than 4,000 acres of land sprawling between the Otranto and Mount Holly Railroad Stations and eastwardly

to Ladson. Tracts named Crowfield, Bloomfield, Fredericks, Greenfield, Magnolia, and Seventeen, Eighteen and Nineteen-Mile-House composed his demesne, as well as large sections of the Oaks, Mount Holly and Springfield Plantations.⁷³ He rented parcels to farmers during the time when automobiles and trucks increasingly displaced reliance on rail travel, >



The above plat shows lands Henry A. Middleton owned and recorded May, 1872 in Book C, p. 550 at the Charleston County Office Building. T.J. Mellard surveyed and drew the plat describing 3971 acres in 1872. Langdon Cheves inherited and managed these properties for more than forty years in partnership with others. The Crowfield tract consisting of 1,464 acres was purchased from John Middleton on February 5, 1840. The Bloomfield tract consisting of 1,364 acres was purchased from Arthur Gibbes in 1855. The northwestern section of the Oaks and all of the 17, 18 and 19-mile tracts consisting of 1,143 acres were purchased from Captain Carsten Vose on May 18, 1871. The original plat was recorded April 1873 in plat book B, p. 40. Manuscript letters were added for this publication to illuminate the description: A – De La Plaine’s Main House; B – Crowfield Main House; C – Crowfield Avenue; D – Road to Dorchester; E – Bloomfield Main House; F – Bloomfield Main Avenue; G – Bloomfield Second Avenue; H – The Oakes Plantation; I – Eighteen-Mile House Tract; J – Seventeen-Mile House Tract; K – Back River Upper Road; L – Northeastern Railroad; M – Road to Moncks Corner; N – Nineteen –Mile House Tract; O – State Road (Road to Wassamassaw); P – Compass Rose, indicating north. Henry A.M. Smith traced the plat. The tracing is among the Smith papers with the collections of the South Carolina Historical Association in Charleston.

and roads extended farther into the obsolete St. James, Goose Creek Parish.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, motor vehicles and improved roadways enabled more workers to commute to jobs in Charleston County, but farming continued as the sole livelihood for many, and an important supplemental source of income for most.⁷⁴

Cheves appreciated the potential profitability of fertile land, and he traveled to Goose Creek regularly to manage his properties. He seldom traded the convenience of automobile for train travel, and often rode a rail coach from the city station near his Bull Street home in Charleston. The Otranto and Mount Holly Depots were his favored doorways to his rural domain that included all of old Button Hall.

Born in 1848 to Isabella, daughter of wealthy landowner Henry Augustus Smith, and Dr. Charles Manly Cheves, son of a president of the United States Bank, Langdon Cheves grew up among the landed and privileged class. As a youth, he was an avid naturalist and an accomplished wildlife artist. After graduating from the College of Charleston with advanced mathematic skills, he worked briefly outdoors as an engineer.

Unhappy applying his engineering skills to

surveying, he successfully apprenticed with General James Conner (1829-1883) at a Broad Street Law practice, where he eventually assumed partnership status.

In that capacity, he combined his math, surveying, art and legal skills with his penchant for the flora and fauna of the countryside to become an astute land litigator and property manager.⁷⁵

When Langdon Cheves acquired what remained of Button Hall, the Northeastern Railroad track with a 400-yard railroad trestle transected the central wetlands of the defunct plantation. Those wet grounds once produced a fortune in rice, but by the turn of the twentieth century the shallow waters sheeted uselessly across its expanse from the State Road toward Foster Creek until Cheves carved parcels of the higher ground along the floodway into farms. Tenants built clapboard homes and lesser shacks and diverted the floodway for irrigation. In partnership with his brother-in-law Henry A.M. Smith, he employed J.H. Knight to oversee and collect rents on his Crowfield and Springfield properties.⁷⁶

Cheves employed J.P. Clarke to collect \$10 annual rents from 31 tenants residing at Button Hall, including a small farm leased to James Nelson at the terminus of the obsolete Button Hall Avenue.⁷⁷

James Nelson

Langdon Cheves rented the Eighteen-Mile farmhouse and eight acres to James Nelson, farmer and family man.

The Nelson house stood on the site of the razed Eighteen-Mile House Tavern near the western shoulder of State Road, one-half mile from where the railroad crossed the State Road and a semblance of a rural center appeared.⁷⁸

Nelson enjoyed the convenience of the small ponds near his house that once refreshed ponies loaded with frontier trade essentials, but now the reliable ponds and puddles watered his plow mules and milk cows.

His homestead lay within a short walk to the rail crossing where a steam-powered saw and gristmill operated in a barn.

By way of his rental agreement with Langdon Cheves, Nelson promised to pay eight dollars a year for the right to occupy and farm the land. The lease agreement also obliged Nelson to pay Cheves by way of a lien on all crops he grew on the property. The agreement also directed any ginner or factor who received his crops to deliver sufficient money to Cheves. Thus, a tight network of renter, landlord and merchant intermediary protected Cheves from default.



The State Road at the Eighteen-Mile Marker near the home James Nelson rented in the early twentieth century. William Henry Johnson (1871-1934) produced the photograph. The image is in the William Henry Johnson Scrapbook, circa 1920-1923, among the photographic collections of the South Carolina Historical Society (34/293) in Charleston.

Rural commutes

Commuters usually rode the train to work, but motor transport, including carpooling to the naval and industrial facilities, increased in popularity during the first decades of the twentieth century, prompting State and local officials to undertake ambitious road projects.

In 1922, the Berkeley County Highway Commissioners negotiated with Langdon Cheves to chart a route through his old Button Hall properties. Cheves objected to the plan and protested formally. He wrote to the commissioners:

...the new road would take near 100 acres of land...require extra fences for over three

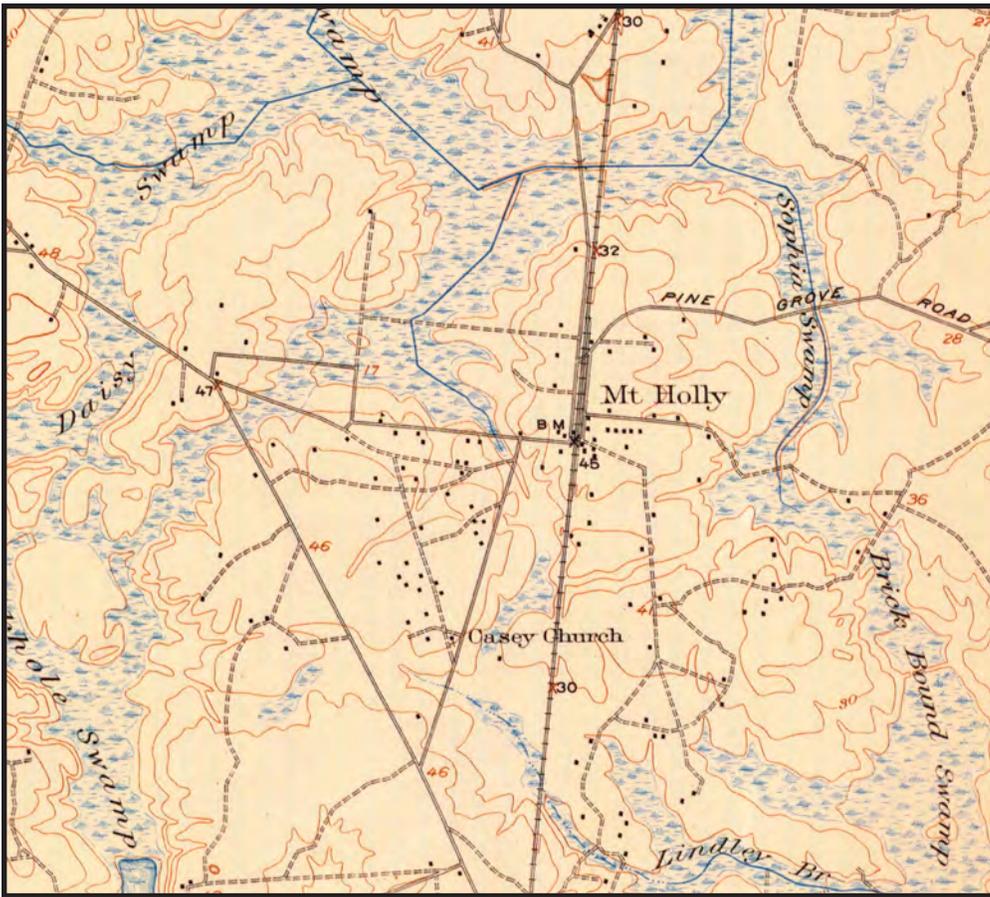
miles...cut lands in two by difficult obstructions some 180 feet wide....cut off lands from rail road [access]...increase trespassing and injury to trees...increase [his] taxes.⁷⁹

Cheves stubbornly resisted, but eventually consented to a 75-foot highway right-of-way contiguous to the railroad track from “Goose Creek [the waterway] to Mount Holly Depot.”⁸⁰

The road right-of-way allowed enough width for a two-lane highway (today South Carolina Highway 52) to run parallel to the railroad tracks across the original boundaries of Button Hall.⁸¹

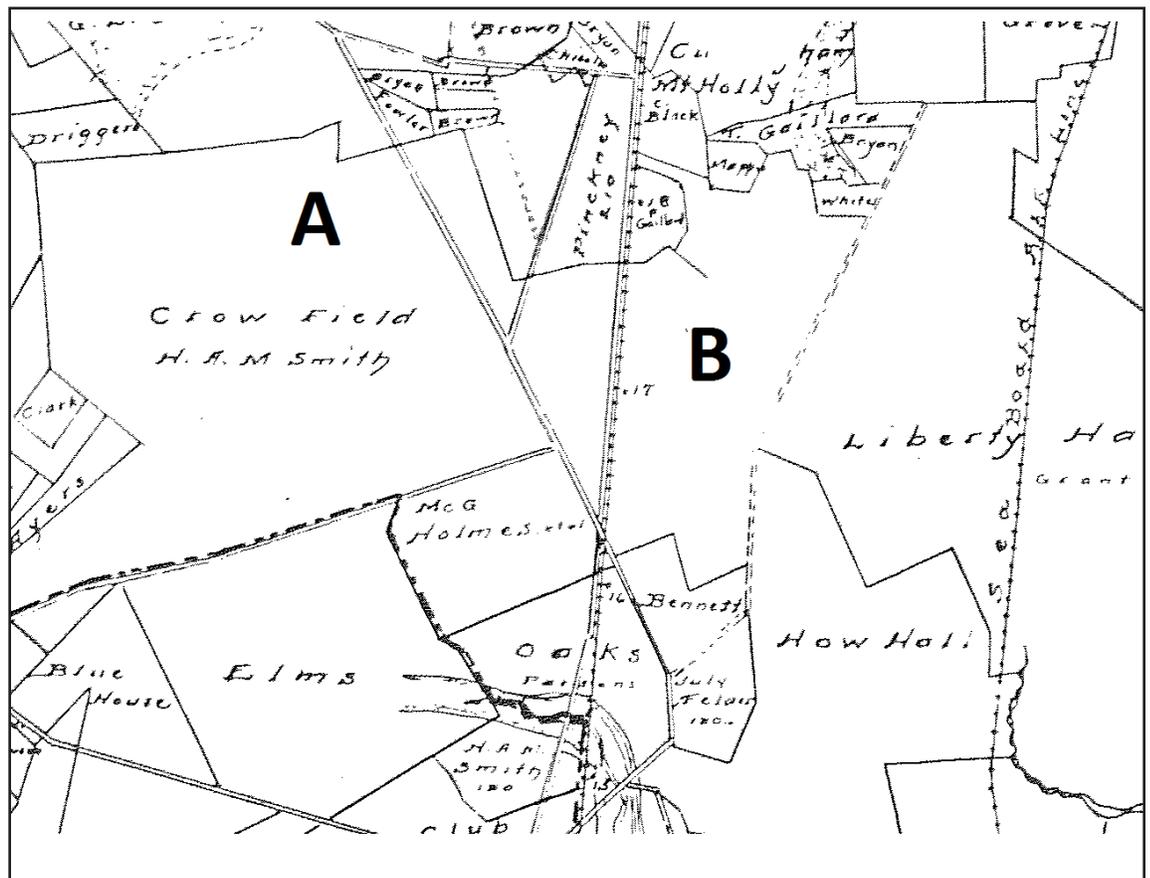
A Ford automobile owned by William Henry Johnson on the State Road near the eighteen-mile marker circa 1923. The image is in the William Henry Johnson Scrapbook, volume I, circa 1920-1923, among the photographic collections of the South Carolina Historical Society (34/293) in Charleston.





John Barton Payne, Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, directed the Geological Survey in cooperation with the Corps of Engineers to produce the Summerville, quadrant topographical map in 1920. This detail of the map shows the Northeastern Railroad bisecting the image. "Casey Church" is indicated on The Road to Moncks Corner that diverges from the State Road. The defunct Button Hall Rice fields reaching from the Road to Moncks Corner, flowing under the Railroad Track and into Lindley Branch [Creek] drained the Button Hall lands.

A detail of the Gaillard Map describes tracts of land Henry A.M. Smith and Langdon Cheves owned and managed during the early decades of the twentieth century. The manuscript letters A and B were added for this publication. Manuscript letter A indicates Crowfield Plantation properties Henry A. M. Smith owned and managed. Manuscript letter B indicates Button Hall Plantation properties Cheves owned and managed.





Thomason's Store and Gulf Station circa 1960 across the road from Pineview Residential Subdivision. Today this land is at the busy intersection of St. James Avenue (State Road) and Thomason Boulevard one block south of Button Hall Avenue. The image is in the possession of the author.

The City of Goose Creek

The highway commissioners paved the entire new state highway by the advent of the middle decades (1940-1960), bringing wealthy investors to the rural lands and causing the agricultural interests of the old southern families, such as the Smiths and Cheves, to give way to large investment conglomerates.

Timber companies in pursuit of the ancient pine trees arrived first, but soon government agencies sought deep-water frontage tracts for military applications. The infusion of federal money piqued the interests of industrial leaders who coveted the great expanses of inexpensive land and abundant fresh water.

World War II brought more employment opportunities to Greater Charleston when defense-related industries employed workers. By 1950, the population of the greater Charleston Area, including southern Berkeley County, exploded to 225,000 people.⁸²

As more civil servants found employment at the Naval Ammunition Depot in southern Berkeley County and the naval facilities in the northern section of Charleston County, newly arrived families sought homes within easy commutes.

In response, Jack Etling began building two-

and three-bedroom block, brick, or wood-sided houses on his family chicken farm carved from lands west of the Eighteen-Mile House Tract. "I laid out the first lots in October 1953," Etling recalled. His modest, well-constructed homes sold quickly.⁸³ Residential and commercial development continued until the old parish began to transform into a modest suburbia, placing increasing pressures upon fragile or non-existent infrastructures.

Leading men of the new subdivisions pooled their dollars to advertise in the Charleston newspaper for an incorporation election. The Goose Creek municipal incorporation election occurred Tuesday, March 14, 1961 when almost 500 citizens joined the municipality. Voters elected Hilton Waring Bunch mayor and selected "Goose Creek" as the name of the newest town in South Carolina.⁸⁴

Three weeks later, at 7 p.m., April 6, 1961, Mayor Hilton Waring Bunch sounded a wooden gavel, calling the first meeting of Council for the "Town of Goose Creek" to order, in Turner Barber Shop at the corner of St. James Avenue (State Road) and Marilyn Street, 200 yards south of the ancient intersection of Button Hall Avenue and the ➤

State Road (St. James Avenue).

Soon after incorporation, the municipal leaders experienced an unprecedented 58% population surge, and prudent speculators invested in the future of the old Button Hall lands that now were the center of the new town. Orvin Thomason purchased ten acres in 1965 at the intersection of the State Road and Liberty Hall (Thomason Boulevard) for a small store and gasoline filling station and a much-needed mobile home park.

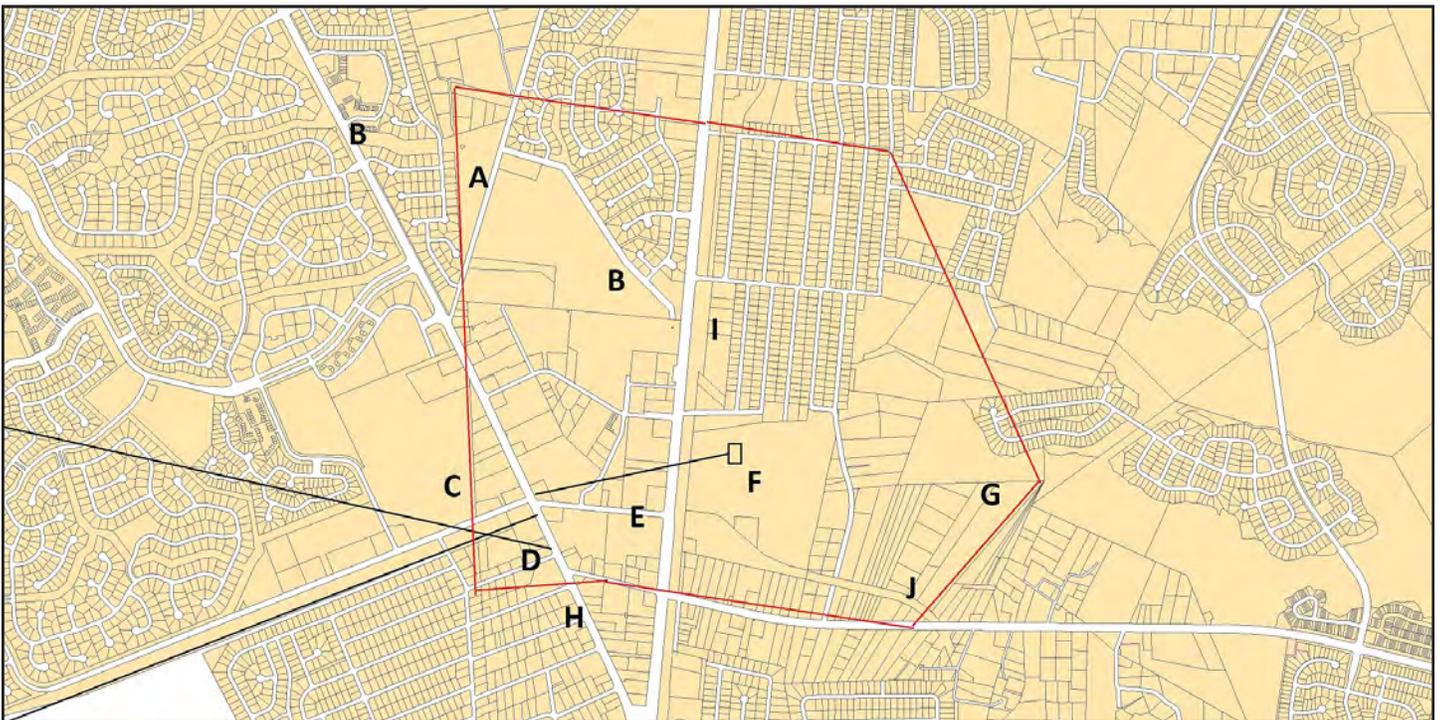
Entrepreneur and investor X.O. Bunch purchased more than 66 acres including the old Button Hall settlement site in 1968 for \$88,000.⁸⁵ Bunch bought part of the old “Cheves farms” when he acquired it from James Myers, descendent of Richard and Margaret Myers, freedmen and successful post-war farmers.⁸⁶

When John White bought 150 acres of the “old nursery lands” above the Button Hall rice fields

from Jack Aichel in 1966, his wife demurred. John White recalled, “I drove my wife by there and she said, ‘You must be crazy to buy that land.’ I told her it would be the fastest growing area in the next 20 years.”

He was correct.

The City of Goose Creek experienced a 54% population increase in 1969, a 365% increase during the 1970s,⁸⁷ and a comfortable 3% average expansion of population in subsequent decades. Orvin Thomason’s store and Mobile Home Park, X.O. Bunch’s settlement lands, and John White’s old rice fields anchored the ancient Button Hall lands around Central Avenue, Button Hall Avenue and Thomason Boulevard. This emerging commercial center burgeoned with town houses (Brandywine Townhouses), shopping centers and dozens of smaller enterprises during the 1970s and 1980s.



Red lines indicate the approximate furthest extent of Button Hall Plantation and black lines trace vanished roadways of the colonial era on a contemporary map of the central section of the City of Goose Creek. Manuscript letters indicate significant locations: A – Casey Community Center on Old Moncks Corner Road. B – Foxborough Lake and outflow canal is a channelized remnant of the ancient swamp that provided reserve water for the colonial era rice fields. C/D – The obsolete Main Avenue to Bloomfield Plantation and the obsolete Road to Dorchester is indicated where they intersect near the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern. E – The main avenue accessing the Button Hall Main House. F – Indicates the location of Button Hall main house. The City of Goose Creek changed the name “Brandywine Boulevard” to “Button Hall Boulevard” in 2013. G – The section of the route followed by Old Back River Upper Road. H – St. James Avenue (Highway 176). I – Beverly Hills Residential Subdivision. J – The site of the home of Richard and Margaret Myers.



Goose Creek City Council directed the improvement of Button Hall Avenue in 2013. The roadway approximates the route of the colonial era avenue to the Button Hall Main House. A power line easement parallels the current Button Hall Avenue and traces the footprint of the original avenue to the colonial era settlement to the east. It traces the footprint of the Road to Dorchester to the west.

Shaping the future

In November 1987, the City of Goose Creek purchased more than 100 acres of ancient Button Hall lands from X. O. Bunch and other landowners to house a new public works facility and preserve swathes of forest for future parks.

Twelve years later, in February 1999, the City conducted a three-day planning exercise, whereby more than 150 people provided input and recommendations for the core commercial area between U.S. Highways 52 and 176.

The ancient Button Hall Plantation tract that once stood at the vortex of the most dynamic political and economic movements of the day, once again anchored the center of the focus area where the planners identified three objectives: “The Creation of Places,

the Connectivity of Places, and the Continuity of Existing and Future Places.”

Pursuant to South Carolina law, the City adopted a redevelopment plan in 1996 to create an improved “downtown” delineated as a pie-shaped area between the two thoroughfares U.S. Highways 52 and 176. That large triangle included the old Button Hall lands, as well as a large vacant tract north of Button Hall that eventually featured the Marguerite H. Brown Municipal and Goose Creek Community Centers.

The issuance of tax increment bonds funded all of the public improvements in the defined area and because the reserves in the tax increment fund paid for all of the downtown improvements, the City of Goose Creek incurred no debt. ➤

Within that context, City Council initiated an immense improvement process with the installation of decorative traffic signal lights at strategic intersections.

After the light fittings, the renovation effort continued with the installation of curbs, gutters, sidewalks, subsurface drainage, street trees, and mast arms. Additionally, the extensive project buried overhead utility lines, installed decorative street lighting, milled and resurfaced each street, and built

decorative brick columns on driveways.

Specifically, the City renovated Central Avenue (\$1.4 million), Button Hall Avenue/Etiwan (\$1.3 million), Thomason Boulevard (\$785,535), and improved the green sward spanning between the highway and the railroad track (\$719,000).

The process ended on Dec. 31, 2012 with enough money remaining to build a new command fire station at the Button Hall manor site denoting the highest ground of the noble old plantation.



The City of Goose Creek defined a “Downtown Business District” as a commercial center to create jobs, thicken the tax base, and provide greater shopping and service conveniences. The City employed the Tax Increment Financing strategy to fund many improvements in the downtown, as well as the Municipal and Community Centers to the north. The downtown section of the project area includes the old Button Hall Plantation lands.

A unique history ... an exciting future



Today, almost 40,000 residents come home to the City of Goose Creek, the 12th most populated municipality in South Carolina. A reliable municipal foundation underpins the community by protecting the unique historic context where families thrive in the best place to raise children in South Carolina.⁸⁸ Today old Button Hall lands hold important residential properties in the City of Goose Creek, as well as the commercial center of that fast growing municipality.

The Headquarters for the City of Goose Creek Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services stands upon the footprint of the ancient mansion house to remind us of the historical importance of this place where industrious planters, courageous warriors, innovative inventors, persistent political scientists, inquisitive scholars and stalwart national leaders came home.

Bibliography

Secondary Sources

Abernathie and Walker, A Specimen of the Intended Traveling Map of the Roads of the State of South Carolina, From Actual Survey by Walker and Abernathie, Protracted from a scale of one inch per Mile, 1st. Sept. 1787. This map is among the collections of the United States Library of Congress.

Crane, Verner W. The Southern Frontier, 1670-1752. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1928.

Cuthbert, Robert B., The Picture Man, A Biographical Sketch of Langdon Cheves, and Karen D. Stokes, Langdon Cheves Goes to War, Carologue, Fall, 2009.

Designing Goose Creek, A Public Input Process and Design Charette for the City of Goose Creek, South Carolina, Prepared by The South Carolina Downtown Development Association, Columbia, South Carolina, February 1999.

Edgar, Walter B. and N. Louise Bailey. Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives: Volume I: 1692-1973 and Volumes II, III 1692-1775. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1974.

Fraser, Walter J. Lowcountry Hurricanes (Athens, Georgia, The University of Georgia Press, 2006.

Gaillard, J. P. Map of Berkeley and Parts of Charleston and Dorchester Counties, South Carolina, 1900-1962. The map is available at the Berkeley County Office Building, Moncks Corner.

Headlam, Cecil ed. Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, American and the West Indies, 1716-1717 (London, 1922.

Hirsch, Arthur Henry. The Huguenots of Colonial South Carolina. London: Archon Books, 1962.

Milling, Chaplin. J. Red Carolinians. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1940.

Poyas, E. A. The Olden Times of South Carolina. Charleston: S. G. Courtenay & Co. 1855.

Rogers, George C. Evolution of a Federalist: William Loughton Smith of Charleston 1758-1812. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1962.

Smith, Shelley E., The Plantations of South Carolina: Transmission and Transformation in Provincial Culture, UMI Dissertation Services, A Bell and Howell Company, Ann Arbor Michigan, 1999.

Smith, William Loughton. Journal of William Loughton Smith, 1790-1791. Edited by Albert Matthews. Cambridge: The University Press, 1917.

South Carolina Gazette on microfilm at the Charleston County Library, Charleston, South Carolina.

South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine published by the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

Primary Sources

Dordal, Roland, Dordal Family Papers, among the private collection of the Dordal family, 204 Easy Street, Goose Creek, South Carolina.

Porcher family Papers, 1793-1960, Charleston, South Carolina: South Carolina Historical Society.

United States Census, St. James, Goose Creek Parish, United States Enumeration Census and Census of Agriculture, 1870, 1880, 1890.

Langdon Cheves Papers are among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina. Cheves, Langdon, 1848-1939.

Lynes Family Papers.

Poppenheim, John, Poppenheim Family Legal Papers, 1854-1876.

Miscellaneous land papers and personal records:

Records on deposit at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia South Carolina.

Register of Mesne Conveyance at the Charleston County Office Building, Charleston, South Carolina.

Wragg Family Papers, 1708-1860. The papers are deposited with The South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

Will Book, among the collections of the Charleston County Library, Charleston, South Carolina.

End Notes

1 Henry A.M. Smith, "Goose Creek," South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine. v. 29, no. 4 (October, 1928): 279. An Etiwan Native American word, spelling variations for "Boochawee," include the two-word title "Boochaw and Wapensaw."

2 Mabel L. Webber, contributor. "The First Governor Moore and His Children," South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine. v. 37, no.1 (January, 1936): 5.

3 Cheves Papers, Land papers of Langdon Cheves, 1735-1932, 2/182/9, among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina. Langdon Cheves recorded, "extensive ruins of terraces, walks, ponds and signs of gardens." John Diamond indicated an "old brick work" near the Boochawee settlement on the 1805 plat of Button Hall.

4 Webber, 4. Also, the slaves are categorized in the Charleston County Inventory Book, Works Project Administration (WPA).

- 5** The Road from Charleston became the “High Road” in Goose Creek and later the State Road/St. James Avenue.
- 6** Indenture among the collections of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, S111001, Volume 0003, p. 0235, item 03.
- 7** Thomas Barker, d. 1715, Thomas Barker land grant and associated plat describing 500 acres in Goose Creek, South Carolina, 1702, among the collections (43-1079) of the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina (hereinafter SCHS).
- 8** John Herbert d. 1739, Surveyor, Plat of Goose Creek Plantation, 1716, among the collections of SCHS, 47-07-05.
- 9** Verner W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier, 1670-1732*, University of Michigan, 1959, p. 168.
- 10** Poyas, 111, Klingberg, 160. Francis LeJau wrote that his “Onely [sic] Son is in our Camp 22 Miles from this Town.
- 11** Crane, 172.
- 12** Walter J. Fraser, *Lowcountry Hurricanes* (Athens, Georgia, University of Georgia Press, 2006), 11. A hurricane felled trees across the trail in September 1713, twenty months before the ambush. Natives ambushed Barker on May 17, Klingberg, 159, Francis LeJau to Secretary, 5-21-1715.
- 13** William Treadwell Bull letter cited in, “The Mystery of the Lost Prince,” SCHM, 63: 25. Klingberg, 137, 163, Francis LeJau to the Secretary, 1-22-1714. A hurricane lasting twelve hours struck the South Carolina coast on Sept. 5, 1713.
- 14** Klingberg, 161, Francis Le Jau to John Chamberlain, 8-22-1715.
- 15** Klingberg, 159, Francis Le Jau to Secretary 5-21-1715. Francis LeJau received word of Barker’s death at mid-night on Tuesday May 17, the same day of the attack. He departed immediately with his wife and two daughters for Charleston. Post-war testimony contended that Wateree Jack was an abused slave who resented the English and LeJau reported 8-23-1715, that Captain Chicken defeated the war party that included Wateree natives on 6-13-1715.
- 16** Klingberg.
- 17** Milling, p. 145.
- 18** Register of Mesne Conveyance Office (MCO) Book, C, p.1.
- 19** Cecil Headlam, ed. *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, American and the West Indies, 1716-1717* (London, 1922), 221. Committee of the Common House of Assembly, report to Boone and Beresford, 8- 6-1716.
- 20** The South Carolina Gazette sales advertisement states that no building was older than 13 years. South Carolina Gazette, February 9, 1733 and February, 23, 1734. The Gazette is available on microfilm at the Charleston County Library, Charleston, South Carolina.
- 21** Thomas Clifford released his claim to Button Hall and transferred the right of ownership to William Dry in 1728, MCO Book H, p. 41, March 23, 1728, Quit Claim.
- 22** South Carolina Gazette, August 4, 1733.
- 23** South Carolina Gazette, August 4, 1733.
- 24** South Carolina Gazette, August 4, 1733.
- 25** Cheves Papers, 12-182-9.
- 26** Arthur Henry Hirsch, *The Huguenots of Colonial South Carolina*. London: Archon Books, 1962, p.212.
- 27** MCO Book M-5, pp. 330, 331.
- 28** S.C. Archives, S165015 Year 1788 Item 29 and the South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine (SCHGM) V. 70: p. 221. Samuel Knight plat for 56 acres in St. James, Goose Creek, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Series, S213190, Volume: 13, page: 280, Item: 2, Date: 12/12/1788. Petition asking the House to grant a patent, S165015, Year: 1788, Item: 29, Date: 1/19/1788. Committee Report on the Petition, Series: S165005, Year 1788, Item: 149, Date: 1/31/1788.
- 29** SCHM, 1, 1900, 154 n, xix 1918, 61, xxxvii, 1936, 21-22. Also see SCHGM V. 37, p. 21, “ On March 2, 1733/4 William Dry advertised that he “designs to remove out of the Province with his family and offers both his plantations for sale; that at the Quarter House, 827 acres; the other above Goose Creek, 975 acres...”
- 30** South Carolina Gazette, March 2, 1734.
- 31** Wragg Family Papers, 1708-1860. The papers are deposited with The South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina, 1118.00 and S.C. Archives Series S372001, V.V0, p. 178.
- 32** South Carolina Gazette 9-28-1738 (death notice). South Carolina Gazette, 3-27-1739 (sales advertisement).
- 33** “Notable Libraries of Colonial South Carolina,” South Carolina Historical Magazine, v. 72, p. 109, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina 1971.
- 34** Walter B. Edgar and N. Louise Bailey, *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives*: Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1974. V. II, p.425.
- 35** SCHGM, volume 4, p. 41.
- 36** Charleston Gazette, Thursday, April 6, 1769.
- 37** SCHGM, volume 34, p. 149.
- 38** South Carolina Gazette, 5-30-1771 and SCHGM volume 34, p.149.
- 39** Edgar, 1974, V.2: p. 426.
- 40** Wragg Papers, 11/467/10 and L. Lewis Simons, Lease Plats number 90, March 29, 1910, among the Langdon Cheves Papers, 33-04-90.
- 41** “Hon. William Bull to Daniel Tharin, “An elaborate original plat of this plantation certified 9 March, 1778 by John

- Fenwich, Surveyor represents 950 acres of land held by William Bull Esq., "The plat is among the Cheves Papers. 42 MCO Book C 5, pp.159-161, November 1778.
- 43 "Lewis Lestergette and wife to William Smith," in the Wragg Family Papers 1722- 1859, SCHS 11/467/11 and MCO Book N -5 pp. 544-545.
- 44 Edgar, 1974, V. 3: p. 675. "Married last Monday in Goose Creek..." The Charleston Morning Post and Daily Advertiser, May 5, 1786.
- 45 South Carolina Deed Abstracts 1783-1788, p. 76. Lestergette to Samuel Knight, Five-year lease, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Series: S363001, Volume: 05M0, page: 00330, Date: 1/21/1785.
- 46 Walter B. Edgar and N. Louise Bailey, Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1974), 3: 471, 472.
- 47 Shelley E. Smith, The Plantations of South Carolina: Transmission and Transformation in Provincial Culture, UMI Dissertation Services, A Bell and Howell Company, Ann Arbor Michigan, 1999, 154, 177. Also see "Notable Libraries of Colonial South Carolina," South Carolina Historical Magazine, v. 72, p. 109, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina 1971.
- 48 Rogers, George C. Evolution of a Federalist: William Loughton Smith of Charleston 1758-1812. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1962; Smith, William Loughton. Journal of William Loughton Smith, 1790-1791. Edited by Albert Matthews. Cambridge: The University Press, 1917.
- 49 SCHGM, volume 4, pp. 252-255.
- 50 SCHGM, volume 4, p. 256, note 68. Will Book E, p. 299. "William Laughton Smith to Charlotte Wragg Smith, all my estate real and personal..." proved 31 December, 1812.
- 51 "...a bill for erecting and establishing a turnpike across the road leading from Charleston...to keep in good repair to the 23 Mile House on the Goose Creek Road..." Journals of the House of Representatives 1785-1786, Lark Emerson Adams editor, Rosa Stoney Lumpkin, Assistant Editor, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, South Carolina Press, Columbia, South Carolina, March 2, 1786, p. 481.
- 52 Charlotte Wragg Smith to Thomas J. Smith, MCO Book G. #9 p. 335.
- 53 J.J. Screven Smith and Landgrave Thomas Smith to David Traxler and C.P. Shier, MCO Book R. #13, p. 24.
- 54 H.J. Abbott and Elizabeth Abbott, formally wife of Thomas J. Smith to Charles P. Shier, MCO Book E, # 14, p. 300.
- 55 SCHM, 68: 244. Also, see the work contract between Mary Blackman and Thomas Mallard, Road Commissioner, March 31, 1840, among the Lynes Family Papers. Masters "hired out" slaves for approximately \$7.00 a month. A letter dated 4-11-1856 from J.S. Drayton to John F. Poppenheim promised to "lease" a slave and her two children for \$7.00 a month. The SCHM, 68: 244. Also, see the work contract between Mary Blackman and Thomas Mallard, Road Commissioner, March 31, 1840, among the Lynes Family Papers. Masters "hired out" slaves for approximately \$7.00 a month. Such arrangements persisted into the Civil War years. The relevant letters are with the Simons and Simons, Poppenheim Family Legal Papers, 1854-1876, 0431.02 (P) 10-02, SCHS.
- 56 Charleston Courier, 3- 9-1855, 3-10-1855, and 3-12-1855. The newspaper expressed no sympathy for the workers, touting the long experience of the railroad managers and listing the "liberal supply," of beef, pork, fish, flour, coffee, tea and molasses as well as "cooks and assistants," available for the laborers at their barracks.
- 57 The legislature of South Carolina, allowed the incorporation of the Northeastern Railroad Company in 1851 and four years later granted tax exemption status to it.
- 58 Charleston Mercury, December 20, 1860. Walter Edgar, South Carolina, A History, University of South Carolina Press, 1998, p. 352.
- 59 Roland, Dordal, Dordal Family Papers, among the private collection of the Dordal family, 204 Easy Street, Goose Creek, South Carolina, p.5.
- 60 Roland Dordal Family Papers, among the private collection of the Dordal family, 204 Easy Street, Goose Creek, South Carolina.
- 61 Dorton Family Papers, p. 9.
- 62 Porcher family Papers, 1793-1960, Charleston, South Carolina: South Carolina Historical Society.
- 63 Henry Orlando Marcy, Diary of a Surgeon, US Army, 1864-1892, November 25, 1864 to March 3, 1865. The Diary is among the collections of the SCHS.
- 64 MCO Book G. #9 p. 335.
- 65 Cheves Papers, 34/320, also MCO Book A. #14. p. 103, and Book O. #15, p. 143.
- 66 Carsten Vose, J. Hamilton Freer and George Vose to Henry A. Middleton Esq. Mco Book X, # 15, p. 216.
- 67 Cheves Papers, 34/320, SCHS. Richard Myers born in 1827 was classified as a mulatto farmer on the 1880 United States Census, St. James, Goose Creek, Charleston, South Carolina.
- 68 Richard Myers appears as 43/44-year-old "Dick Myers" with his 40-year-old wife, "Peggy," in the 1870 census. The records more formally title them, "Richard" and "Margaret" Myers on subsequent public records. He claimed \$100 value of personal estate, but owned no property nor could he read or write in 1870. Five years hence, he was a landowner and 20 years later, he was literate. See US Enumeration Census, St. James, Goose Creek Parish, 1870, 1880, 1890.
- 69 St. James, Goose Creek Parish, United States Enumeration Census and Census of Agriculture, 1870. 1880, 1890.

70 The Great Blizzard of 1899 was an unprecedented winter weather event that affected the southern United States. Langdon Cheves interview with Washington Myers among the Cheves Papers. Cheves surveyed the Myers property in 1911, three years prior to his purchase of the house and remaining land. Langdon Cheves letter to Julius Myers, 34 Percy Street, Charleston, SC, May 1, 1911 requests a joint survey of the Myers tract.

71 Cheves Papers, 1914, 2/182/2.

72 Langdon Cheves, Berkeley County Tax Records for the years, 1927, 1928, 1929 etc, Berkeley County Office Building, Moncks Corner, South Carolina and Cheves Papers, among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina, SCHS.

73 Langdon Cheves inherited property and managed family lands. See Isabella Cheves et.al. Berkeley County, Book C.2, 550-553, Deed dated 10-7-1889, Recorded January 1-30-1890 and Isabella Cheves will, Charleston County Will Book K. 363, Will dated 6-11-1909, Probated December 1912.

74 Langdon Cheves, 1848-1939, Cheves property papers, 1844-1935. The Cheves papers, 1167.01.07.02 are among the collections of SCHS. Hereinafter this work cites it as Cheves Papers.

75 Robert B. Cuthbert, The Picture Man, A Biographical Sketch of Langdon Cheves, and Karen D. Stokes, Langdon Cheves Goes to War, Carologue, Fall, 2009, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp.14-21 and 22, 23, SCHS.

76 Letter from J.H. Knight to Henry A.M. Smith and Langdon Cheves, March 2, 1910, regarding tenant farmers on Crowfield and Springfield lands. Henry A. Middleton rented the old Crowfield properties for \$6.00 annually after the Civil War but Henry A.M. Smith assumed that family responsibility by the advent of the new century.

77 Charleston, S.C. 4-10-1905, Statement of rents collected by J.P. Clarke for the year 1903-1904 for Langdon Cheves, Charleston, S.C. among the Cheves Papers.

78 Memorandum of Agreement (lease), 1-1-1913 between Langdon Cheves and James Nelson. See Michael J. Heitzler, Goose Creek, A Definitive History, Volume Two Rebellion, Reconstruction and Beyond, the History Press, 2006, Appendix XVI, Tenant Farmers, 256, 257.

79 Langdon Cheves letter to W.H. Dennis, Chairman, Berkeley County Highway Commissioners, Moncks Corner, February 16, 1922, Cheves Papers.

80 Langdon Cheves, letter to Berkeley County Highway Commissioners, Moncks Corner, South Carolina, February 15, 16, 1922, and letter from unknown author to William H. Dennis, 2-21-1922, 1167.01.07.03 among the Miscellaneous land papers, 1735-1932 with the Cheves Papers, SCHS.

81 State of South Carolina, County of Berkeley, "Take Notice that the County Board of Commissioners in and for Berkeley County require a right-of-way for a public road over the lands hereinafter described." Order of the Board, Louise Parker, Clerk, R.A. Thornly, Chairman. Also see letters February 15, 1922 and February 21, 1922 from W.N. Dennis to Langdon Cheves, among the private papers of Langdon Cheves among the collections of the SCHS.

82 Edgar, 1998, 57.

83 Jack Etling interview with the author at the Etling residence in Pineview Subdivision, 10-12-1982 and Goose Creek Gazette, 8-29-84.

84 Berkeley Democrat, 3-22-61.

85 Berkeley County Assessment File TMS 244-00-00-049.

86 Book A-183, page 101, May 8, 1968, Berkeley County Office Building, Moncks Corner, South Carolina.

87 Berkeley Democrat, August 18, 1971, Moncks Corner, South Carolina and "John White, land developer, is crazy as a fox," The News and Courier/The Evening Post, Charleston, South Carolina, November 20, 1983.

88 Bloomberg Business Week Magazine, is a weekly magazine published by Bloomberg L.P. Founded in 1929, and headquartered in New York. The magazine provides business information and interpretation of emerging investment data.

*For more information on Mayor Heitzler's
historical books, booklets and annual history
lectures at the Goose Creek Municipal Center, call
(843) 797-6220 ext. 1117*

Author

Michael J. Heitzler, Ed. D.

Consultant

Lin Sineath

Editor

Nancy Kirchner

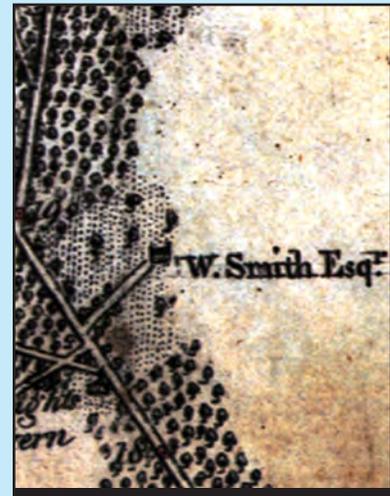
Designer

Frank Johnson

Button Hall: Home of Planters,
Politicians and Patriots
Published Aug. 2015 by the City of
Goose Creek
All rights reserved by the author.

On the Cover

The cover features a detail of the Abernathie and Walker Map, A Specimen of the Intended Traveling Map of the Roads of the State of South Carolina, 1787, which suggests that Button Hall is a cultivated settlement surrounded by forested properties. The map cites "W. Smith, Esq." at the end of the avenue connecting the Button Hall Settlement to the intersection near



"Knight's Tavern." The map indicates the eighteen and nineteen mile markers on the main road.

About the Author

Michael James Heitzler has served as Mayor of Goose Creek, SC, since 1978. He earned a Doctor of Education Degree from the University of South Carolina, and is a Fulbright Scholar and a retired school administrator of the Berkeley (SC) School District. Heitzler is the author of *Historic Goose Creek, South Carolina, 1670-1980*, published in 1983 by Southern Historical Press, Easley, SC; *Goose Creek, a Definitive History*, Volume I published in 2005 and Volume II published in 2006, by the History Press, Charleston, SC; and *The Goose Creek Bridge, Gateway to Sacred Places*, published by Author House in 2013. The Berkeley Chamber of Commerce published his work, *George Chicken, Carolina Man of the Ages* in 2011, and the City of Goose Creek and the South Carolina Historical Society published many of his articles and booklets featuring the St. James Goose Creek Parish and the City of Goose Creek.



