
the
oaks plantation



mansions and
moonshine

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son of Edward, the immigrant, created a prosperous rice plantation that flourished during the colonial era, and his son, Henry (1717-1784), the third patriarch of The Oaks estate, projected the Middleton tutelage to include a vast portfolio of 800 slaves and 50,000 acres across Carolina.

Henry skillfully survived the trials of the American Revolution and passed the land to his son, Thomas, the last Middleton patriarch of The Oaks. Thomas ended four generations of family ownership when he and Ann, his bride, conveyed The Oaks estate to James Gairdner in 1796.²

Three years later Gairdner sold The Oaks to Adam Tunno, a Charleston merchant who sectioned the track into two parcels. He sold the tract east of the main road referred to as the "Seventeen Mile Tract" to Stephen Mazyck in 1805. Today, the Seventeen Mile Tract is used as mixed commercial and residential areas east of Red Bank Road. Adam Tunno sold The Oaks west of the State Road to Isaiah Moses.

Money problems challenged Isaiah Moses throughout his tenure and his misfortunes peaked in 1840, when flames destroyed the ancient mansion and severely damaged the extensive gardens.³ The following year, Beth Elohim, the Charleston Jewish Congregation, obtained the property in a foreclosure action, and transferred all of it to Charles P. Shier.⁴ The State Road skirted the original Oaks Plantation lands on the south and east and the boundaries of Otranto. The Elms and Bloomfield Plantations lay to the west and north, but the Northeastern Railroad blurred the continuity of the original tract when the company laid tracks in 1855 through the center of the proprietary land grant. Subsequent owners, such as Carsten Vose, proprietor of the "Eighteen-mile House Tavern," sold more sections of the colonial era estate, shrank the boundaries and forever altered the original footprint during the second half of the 19th century.⁵

Edward R. Miles farmed the fields during the troubled years of civil war, and although the sturdy old farmhouse survived the indignance of Union soldiers, it tumbled when the 1886 earthquake plummeted the farmstead structures and substantially damaged the home.

The house tottered in poor repair until Edwin Parsons purchased the ancient plantation near the turn

of the 20th century. He built an elegant manor-house featuring six two-story Corinthian columns upon the original Middleton mansion outline and resided there with his wife and three children until his demise in 1921.

The Berkeley County Highway Commission acquired an easement parallel to the railroad track as a route for the new "Coastal Highway," later tagged "Highway 52/Goose Creek Boulevard." That new roadway channeled motoring traffic through the center of the original estate, severing the thick forests spanning the northern banks of the Goose Creek wetlands. There, fledgling moonshine production emerged during the first decade of the 20th century, and expanded steadily along the banks of the Goose Creek waterway. Arguably, that reliable, albeit illegal, business emerged the most lucrative enterprise on the plantation lands during the first half of the 20th century.

Charles Sabin purchased the remnants of the proud estate between the new highway and the State Road in 1930, after which he stripped the elaborate Georgian woodwork from the home and removed the six two-story Corinthian columns presenting the stately but less audacious structure that stands today.

Four Charleston businessmen formed The Oaks and Company, Incorporated in 1956.⁶ They sold residential lots under the spreading tree-lined avenue and conveyed the remaining properties three years later (1959) to North Charleston Country Club. Other owners conveyed and devised properties during the 20th century until Pineview, Ryan Creek, Camelot residential subdivisions and numerous commercial frontages encompassed all of the original proprietary grant west of the railroad. Greenview, West Greenview, Forest Lawn and Bushy Park Terrace residential subdivisions comprise the section of The Oaks east of the Old State Road.

The Oaks Estates and Goose Creek Highland residential subdivisions comprise the section at the center of the original proprietary grant, but only the properties identified with the grand avenue of oaks and 39 acres of the original land grant keeps "The Oaks" moniker to this day. Thirty-nine acres transferred in 1964 to the Oaks Golf and Country Club and operated as a popular sports retreat until an early

morning fire severely damaged the mansion house on February 6, 2008.

Today, the mansion is uninhabitable and the pending uses of the surrounding fallow fields remain uncertain, but the ancient avenue of oaks remains. The grand avenue channels motorists to shaded homes in The

Oaks Estates residential subdivision in the modern City of Goose Creek. The stalwart sylvan sentinels, planted three centuries before, continue to bespeak the Middleton story. Those grand oaks recall the wealth and influence of Carolina gentry and evoke the litany of owners of that ancient land unto the modern era.

The Middleton Brothers

During the first decade of English settlement in Carolina, the brothers Edward and Arthur Middleton debarked in Charleston in pursuit of fortunes. Steeped in experience as trans-Atlantic businessmen, the Middleton brothers sought fertile planting grounds in pursuit of their agricultural and mercantile dreams.⁷

Prosperous Arthur Middleton (1647-1685) owned shares in two sailing ships that carried merchandise and slaves to the British West Indies, and he and his brother, Edward (1641-1685) increased their prospects in Barbados and elsewhere in the Caribbean until more opportunities availed in British North America. They relocated to Carolina to claim new-world tracts of land that rivaled the size of ancestral estates of the noblest families of Europe.⁸

Arthur arrived at Oyster Point in Charleston on the vessel “Plantacon” in 1679 and successfully applied to Colonial Governor Joseph West for 1,780 acres of land on the western bank of Goose Creek, later named “Otranto Plantation.” That

same year, his brother Edward led a menagerie of burden men, packhorses and animals inland to ford Goose Creek, and clear a swath of forest on his 1,630-acre tract on the eastern side of the waterway.

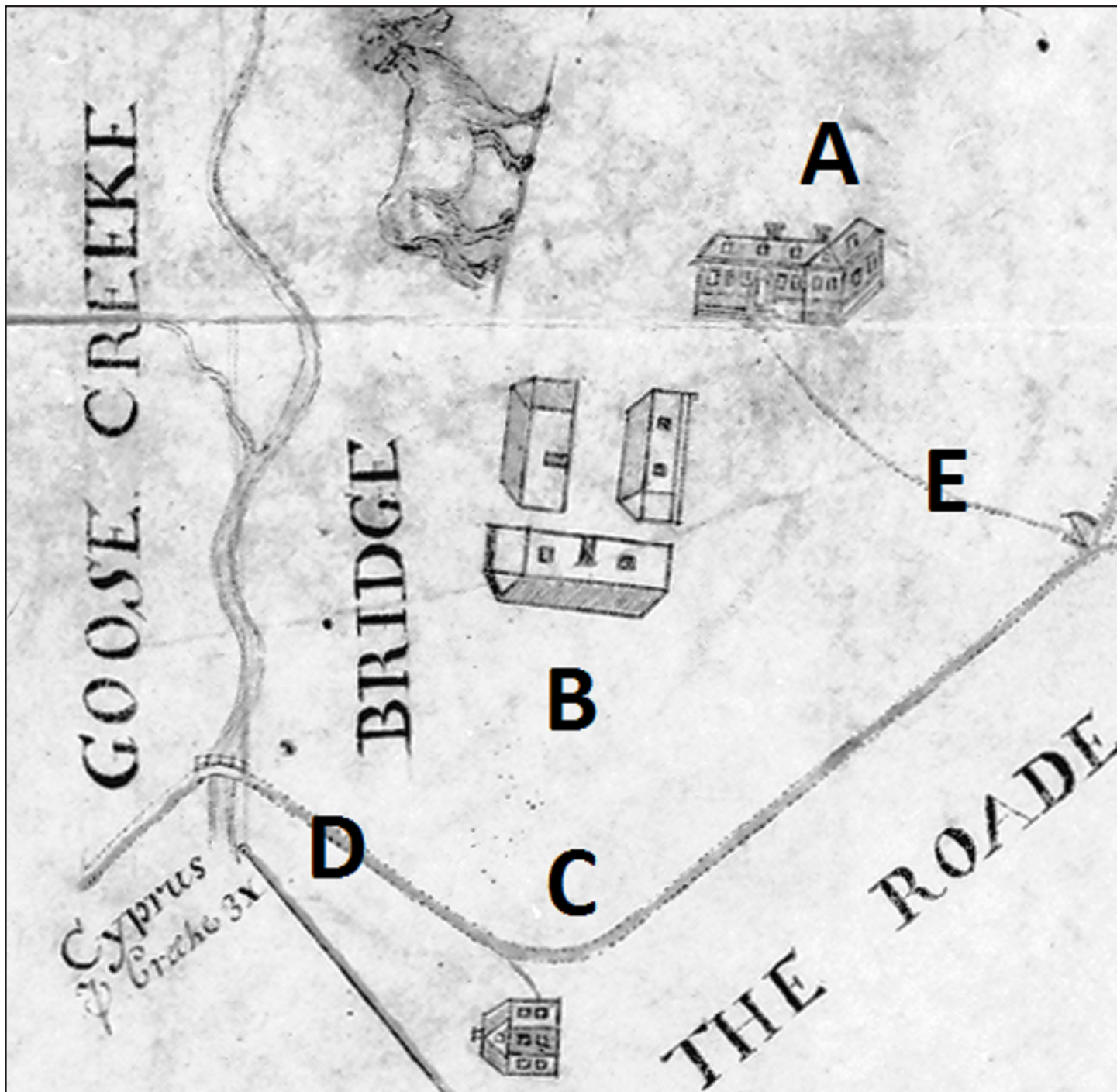
When the governor issued a warrant for Edward Middleton’s land, he ordered that if the tract was “upon any navigable river or river capable to be made navigable ...only the fifth part of the depth thereof, be by the water side.” Edward Middleton, a member of the ruling council, moved that all of his land be awarded to him along the creek, because the stream was too shallow to navigate and the upstream lowland could not be made sufficiently deep for water transfer. Consequently, the boundaries were drawn along more than two miles of wetlands.

The property was especially facilitating because it reached along the wide shallows to the navigable creek where a road bridge and boat landing later channeled wagons and flat-bottomed crafts with frontier treasures to Charleston and beyond.

Edward of The Oaks

Edward Middleton sent for his wife, Sara Dewes Fowell in Barbados,⁹ planted an avenue of stripling oak trees tying his settlement to the public road and named his plantation The Oaks.¹⁰ His new-world land lay along the public

road that was a well-worn “Indian trail” at the portal to the Carolina frontier where packhorse traders and cattlemen of many cloaks passed by all hours of the day in pursuit of the riches of the wilderness. Traders returned with skins, furs and Native American



This detail of a plat drawn by John Herbert on November 10, 1716, shows the one-and-one-half story mansion at The Oaks Plantation. Inexplicably, the avenue of the oaks that led from the front door of the main house to the road near the parsonage is misdirected. The main avenue is shown reaching from the L-shaped main house to THE ROAD TO BOOCHAW (Old State Road). Manuscript letters are added for this publication: “A” indicates The Oaks Mansion, “B” indicates utility buildings, “C” indicates the parsonage, “D” indicates the Goose Creek Bridge, and “E” indicates the main avenue. The plat is among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston, South Carolina.

slaves, while cattlemen drove herds from as far away as the Santee River to wade across the shallows near Edward’s front door and on to the butchers in

Charleston.

The advantageous setting on Goose Creek afforded opportunities for navigation by way of the water-

way south to Charleston, and the upstream shallows provided reliable irrigation, which accommodated agriculture. Additionally, Native-Americans long traversed that wetland toward drier ground, and the earliest settlers shaped a roadway that traced the native ford across the creek. Eventually, the Middleton family erected an earthen causeway through the soggy wetland, a corduroy road through the shallows, and a sturdy wooden bridge to facilitate ground traffic. Consequently, a commercial community resembling a small town appeared where avenues from several plantation settlements, including the stately avenue of The Oaks, converged near the bridge. There, a log church, parsonage, school, and a tavern arose.

In the Caribbean, the Middleton brothers acquired a keen awareness of the immense wealth that they could create from proper management of forced labor. Soon, after settling upon their forested lands, they committed bound servants to clearing and cultivating the high ground for corn and cattle, and commenced an earnest search for a staple crop for reliable profit. Arthur experimented at Otranto with various products including cotton oil, while Edward marketed free ranging cattle and floated timber downstream. Through wise investments of family wealth and connections, he garnered considerable political influence in the infant colony.¹¹

Edward Middleton was generally known as “Edward of The Oaks,” while he served as a Justice of the Peace, a Deputy to the Lord Proprietors, a member of the Grand Council, and an Assistant Justice. He improved his Goose Creek plantation during the last decade of the 17th century, building the one-and-a-half story manor on a six-foot high raised cellar.¹² It was a sizeable eight-bay structure with one story on a

high basement and dormers illuminating upper story rooms.¹³ Two chimneys warmed the original abode that sheltered the first Middleton family at The Oaks. Massive brick foundation walls supported the original structure and shored up the superstructures of all of the abodes subsequently erected on the original outline. Edward employed a French landscape horticulturist to design ornamental gardens, terraces and water features near the main house, some of which continue to grace the grounds today.

Edward’s brother, Arthur Middleton of Otranto, died without heirs, but Edward’s descendants persevered as prominent leaders for more than 200 years while developing the Middleton family plantation network until they collectively amassed 63,000 acres with 3,500 slaves (see appendix one for a complete listing of Middleton plantations in South Carolina, number of acres and slaves).

Upon Edward’s demise in 1685, the property devised to his widow. Out of consideration for Sarah and the services of her deceased husband, the Lord Proprietors omitted The Oaks acreage from the one-penny per acre annual quit rent proprietary tax. Thus, she was a wealthy widow when Job Howe, an influential neighbor, asked for her hand in marriage. At that juncture, Sarah and Job’s combined lands spanned from the waters of Goose Creek on the west to Foster Creek on the east, and their combined slave labor force afforded huge potential for agricultural expansions.

After Sarah buried her second husband, Job,¹⁴ she conveyed The Oaks properties, in consideration of “love and affection,” to her oldest son Arthur who emerged as the second Middleton patriarch in Carolina.¹⁵

Arthur Middleton

After Arthur Middleton (1681-1737) assumed ownership of The Oaks, the plantation transcended to a showcase country estate with 60 slaves supported by 55 more bound workers at other rural sites such as

Wassamassaw and Wampee. He added a cross wing onto The Oaks mansion before 1716, creating an L-footprint,¹⁶ and wisely put his Africans to work shaping the freshwater shallows into embanked and irrigated parcels upstream

from the Goose Creek Bridge. There he planted rice and waited for the experimental undertaking to bear fruit from the fertile and irrigated soils.¹⁷

After its introduction in South Carolina in 1694, rice production advanced rapidly as an immensely profitable staple sought by consumers in the burgeoning British Empire and beyond. Typically, slaves sowed rice in late spring and work gangs hoed and hand-weeded the fields two or more times before harvest in the fall. In September, workers with hand sickles cut the stalks, bundled them, and stacked the sheaves on loose piles for air curing. When dry, slaves thrashed the stalks by placing handfuls in a dug-out stump and beating the husks with wooden mallets to loosen the husks from the grains. After women winnowed the loose grain, employing the breeze to blow away the chaff, they collected the clean rice and sifted the grains again to separate the whole kernels from the broken pieces. Finally, workers poured the bounty of clean whole kernels into wooden barrels, and sealed them for transport. Men rolled the barrels along inclined boards into flat bottomed boats or barges and rowed along Goose Creek to markets in Charleston.

The broken grain was stored to feed the workers and slave children, and the husks and dust were mixed with feed to supplement the fodder for various livestock.

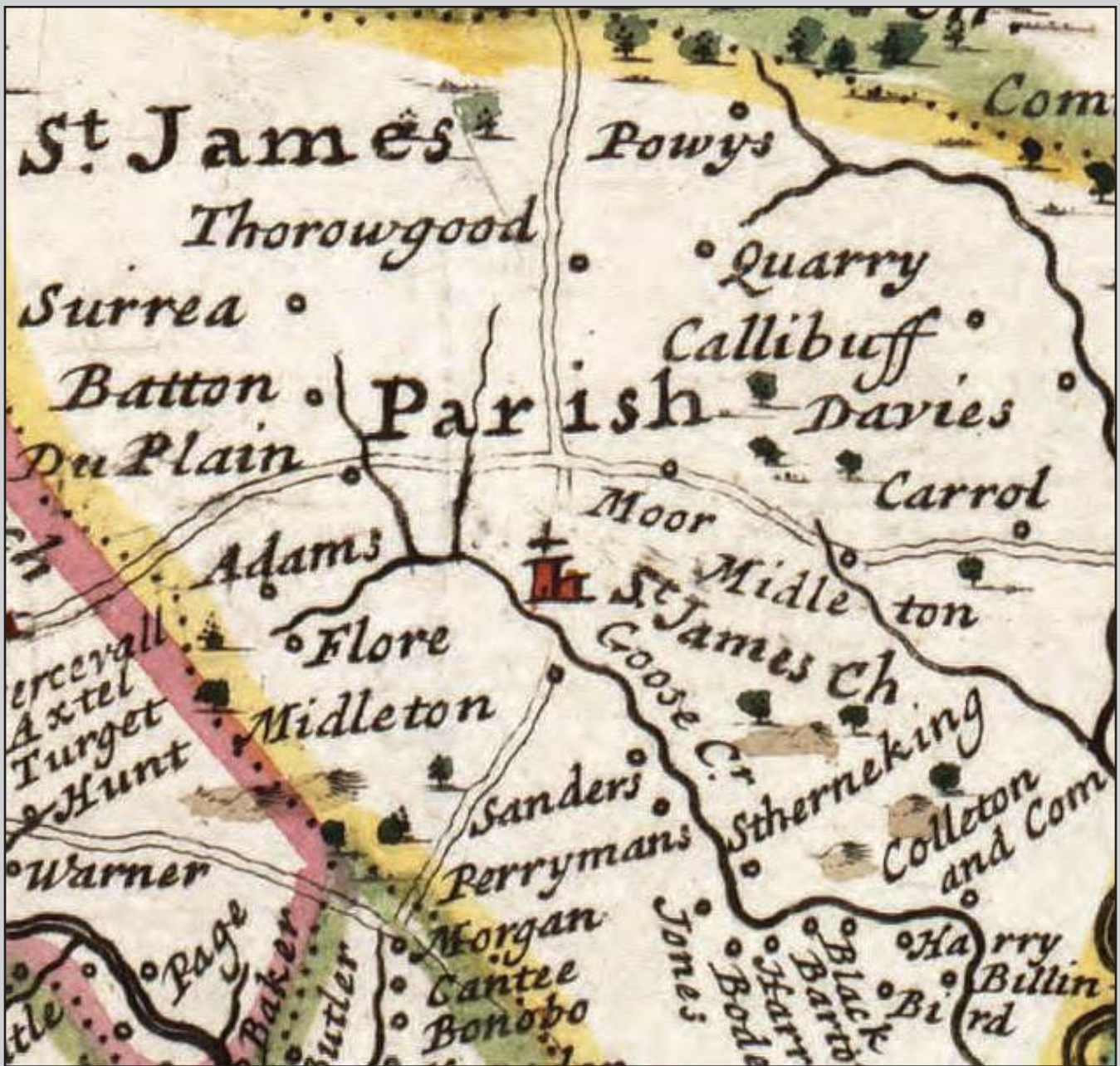
Low fields held many advantages for the rice planters in Carolina. When strategically dammed, drained and banked, a reliable water supply irrigated the plants and deep flooding at proper intervals eradicated the weeds; greatly reducing the need for time consuming hoe and hand work. The waters of Goose Creek flowed southeast onto The Oaks property and slowly turned south to bisect The Oaks original granted property as the flow sheeted from its headwaters toward the sea. At The Oaks, the gentle bend in the course of the creek washed a two-mile-long bank that rose almost 40 feet above the waterline. From the perspective atop that venue, and under embowering live oaks, a wide vista spanned more than a mile west toward the distant headwaters

and more than a mile downstream toward Charleston. Within view were wide expanses of rice lands fringing both banks as brilliant green fields in the spring, deep gold fields in the fall, and every shade of both colors according to the season, the angle of the sun and the shimmer of the rice meadow when stirred by the Carolina breezes.

Twenty-six-year-old Arthur Middleton married Sarah Amory, daughter of Jonathan Amory, Speaker of the House of Commons, and with her reared four children. After her death, he married Sarah Wilkinson, widow of Joseph Morton, Landgrave of Carolina. By these marriages Arthur formed connections with prominent families throughout Carolina. Like his father, he entered public service, sitting on several local offices and commissions, and serving in the Assembly five times. He ascended as President of the Convention that overthrew the Lords Proprietors in 1719 in favor of the rule by the king of England and served as Governor of South Carolina from 1725 to 1730.

Arthur Middleton remained a ranking member of the Carolina gentry, greatly esteemed as a prosperous planter and for many accomplishments including his assistance in building the St. James, Goose Creek Church. In appreciation, the vestry presented him an enclosed pew. Notwithstanding his many contributions, his public image suffered during the last decade of his life and he struggled to safeguard his public image during turbulent political times.

As President of the Royal Council, Arthur Middleton bore great responsibility with much promise for him. Unfortunately, the heated political arena was not entirely doused by the mere transition from Proprietary to Royal rule. Challenges remained and Arthur Middleton failed to adequately meliorate them. He was accused of selling public offices for his own benefit, delaying orders from England to advance his own objectives, and refusing to follow some of the council's urgent directives during the first years of his authority (1724-1729). Regardless



“Middleton” is indicated right of center on the detail of the map drawn by cartographer Herman Moll and published in 1717.

remained on council past his tenured presidency. South Carolina avoided civil war, not as a result of Middleton’s leadership, but because of a calming sense that prevailed among the general population.

Arthur Middleton sought a showcase for his wealth and prominence and toward that end he purchased 1,440 acres of neighboring land

for £4,000 in 1722 that he named “Crowfield.”¹⁸ Arthur invested huge sums into the Crowfield Plantation house and gardens and became known on both sides of the Atlantic as “the Honorable Arthur Middleton of The Oaks, and Crowfield in Carolina and Crowfield Hall, County of Suffolk, England.” Arthur conveyed Crowfield to his eldest son, William in 1727,¹⁹ who married,

resided at Crowfield, and perfected the Crowfield main house that he described as his, “Capital Mansion...with twelve good rooms with fire places in each, besides four in the basement with fire places.”²⁰ No one traveled in as much style as William when he mounted atop his four-wheeled chaise, “neatly carved and gilt, lined with crimson coffroy [?] [and] iron axletrees,” pulled by four thoroughbred steeds.²¹

When Robert Johnson was appointed royal governor, Middleton ceded power peacefully in December 1730 and died seven years later at the age of 56. Arthur and Sarah Amory reared three sons to adulthood: William, Henry and Thomas. Upon the death of Arthur, William continued his ownership of Crowfield, Henry inherited The Oaks along with other properties, and Thomas acquired grand estates in Beaufort.

Sarah Middleton, widow of Arthur and matriarch of The Oaks Plantation, purchased a large section of neighboring Boochawee Plantation, laying to the east in 1739.²² That section, once owned by the irascible Governor James Moore, included the Boochawee mansion as well as all of the outbuildings and 15 “choice” slaves. The bound servants were absorbed into the larger work crew of The Oaks Plantation, and the boundaries of The Oaks extended to include the remnant of Boochawee.²³ That transaction marked the passage of Boochawee out of the famous James Moore family, and it marked the end of an unparalleled era.

Eventually, old Boochawee Hall crumbled, The Oaks Plantation flourished, and the dominant Middleton name obscured the Moore title in Goose Creek.



“Middleton” is indicated right of center of this detail of “An Accurate Map of North and South Carolina With Their Indian Frontiers, Shewing in a distinct manner all the Mountains, Rivers, Swamps, Marshes, Bays, Creeks, Harbours, Sandbanks and Soundings on the Coasts, with The Roads and Indian Paths; as well as The Boundary or Provincial Lines, The Several Townships and other divisions of the Land in Both the Provinces,” the whole from “Actual Surveys by Henry Mouzon and Others,” 1775, London.

Henry Middleton

When Arthur Middleton died in 1737, he devised The Oaks Plantation to his second son, Henry.²⁴ Third patriarch, Henry Middleton (1717-1784), was born at The Oaks, and educated at home and in England. He acquired 1,630 acres of the plantation from his father as well as a vast portfolio of 50,000 acres and 800 slaves. He added more than 2,000 acres to his holdings when he wed Mary Williams, an heiress with property on the Ashley River. Henry was fascinated by the Ashley River properties and applied his talents to convert the waterfront lands into a colonial showplace. He named it “Middleton Place,” and there he showcased his great wealth in gardens, water features, sculptures and a handsome mansion. In 1762, shortly after the

death of his first wife, he married Mary Henrietta Bull, daughter of the Lieutenant Governor and resettled at The Oaks, his boyhood home. He added a second cross-wing to The Oaks manor house creating a U-shaped footprint. Four years later, when his second wife died, he wed Lady Mary Mackenzie, daughter of royalty.

As the winds of revolution stirred, Middleton Place devolved to Henry Middleton’s son Arthur,²⁵ and Henry remained at his Goose Creek manor house. Both men bristled at the arrogance of British government taxation and intrusion, but Henry’s last two marriages connected him to the royal government and British aristocracy, making it difficult for him to remain committed to the patriotic cause.

At the Center of the Revolution

Henry Middleton was elected eight times to the General Assembly to represent various parishes including St. James, Goose Creek. He served as Speaker of the Assembly twice, and sat on the Royal Council. However, he resigned from the Royal Council in 1770 to more closely align with the revolutionary cause. Four years later, as the drum beat of war quickened, he was elected to represent South Carolina in the First Continental Congress, where he briefly served as President. In 1776 he returned to serve in the Second Continental Congress, but when it organized the Continental army and prepared for military action, he resigned and returned home to work toward moderation. In spite of his honorable intent, hostilities drew him into the fracas, where he served on the Council of Safety and as a Lieutenant in the Charleston militia in 1775 and 1776.²⁶

The strategic location of the Oaks near the

Goose Creek Bridge placed it squarely in the sights of the invading British force. After failing to capture Charleston in 1778, the British sent Sir Henry Clinton in command of 11,000 well-supplied British soldiers to occupy the heartland of Charleston, starve out the patriot defenders and retry to enter the city. Sir Henry Clinton’s army landed 30 miles south of Charleston and marched north through the sea islands to set siege to the city at its narrow neck. This maneuver trapped the American commander Benjamin Lincoln with his 5,500 Continentals behind bulwarks on the Charleston Peninsula 17 road miles south of The Oaks.

During those daunting days, warring parties damaged plantations, and exposed the principal inhabitants to the ravages of the invaders. When Arthur Middleton’s family abandoned their Middleton Place Plantation on the Ashley River and sought the relative safety of The Oaks, the



Benjamin West likely painted this portrait of Henry Middleton around 1771. Henry Middleton, third patriarch of the Oaks, briefly served as the second President of the Continental Congress.

British rifled and pillaged their beloved home on the Ashley.

As the siege mounted, the British marched inland along the Goose Creek Road, in an effort to control the heartland and stem the flow of supplies to the trapped American army. Within weeks, the larger invasion force overcame the peninsular defenses, but the British command committed further to thwart the guerilla success of Francis Marion's partisan cavalry and guarantee the essential flow of country produce to the British occupied city. Toward those goals, Britain's Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton and Major Thomas Ferguson established a base of operations on The Oaks Plantation grounds, unfurling white tents and lighting cooking fires under the spreading oak trees that led to the front door of the main house.²⁷ At The Oaks they commanded the Goose Creek Bridge and waited poised to strike

north to Moncks Corner or south to Charleston.

Henry Middleton accepted the protection of the King and in deference; the invading commanders refrained from pillaging his property and grounds, keeping them a family refuge during the waning years of war. Nonetheless, British soldiers and colonial volunteers (loyalists) lived well off the land during their brief stay, roasting pork and chickens and packing their greasy haversacks with rice and meat when embarking upon the 15-mile march to Moncks Corner. There they met and defeated the patriots at Wadboo Bridge on the upper reaches of the western branch of the Cooper River.

With the protection of the prevailing British army, Henry Middleton remained at Goose Creek to sit out the war with his extended family and loyalist friends and to protect his vulnerable plantation from both warring sides and the disdain

Joshua Reynolds painted this portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton. He was hailed by the Loyalists and British as an outstanding leader of light cavalry and was praised for his tactical prowess and resolve, even against superior numbers. His green uniform was the standard of the British Legion, a provincial unit organized in New York in 1778. Tarleton was later elected a Member of Parliament for Liverpool and became a prominent Whig politician.



of American partisans who intermittently raided the plantations in Goose Creek. “Plundering of civilian households was one of the tragic consequences of the defeat of the American cavalry,”²⁸ and the patriot retreat behind the

ramparts of the city. The marshal vacuum left the countryside at the mercy of renegades and thieves from both sides. As the hostilities waned in 1782, Edward Rutledge sent a letter to Arthur Middleton and mulled,

*I have not seen your Father ...he keeps constantly at Goosecreek [sic]. I wrote him on my arrival at this place, but whether he never rec'd my Letter or is afraid to answer it (tho it contained no Politics) I cannot say. Drayton and his family are with him; as inactive as ever...*²⁹

Henry Middleton survived the struggle and died at The Oaks in 1784, one year after the Peace of Paris formally ended the conflict. The family buried him at the St. James, Goose Creek Church within walking distance of his beloved manor house.

Interestingly, the prevailing American patriots never penalized Henry Middleton, as they did many others, by confiscating or amercing his property. His immunity from punishment probably resulted because his contemporaries recalled his long service to the patriot struggle. Furthermore, he loaned over £100,000 during and after the war to the patriot government, and his son Arthur was an ardent patriot throughout the entire struggle.³⁰

Arthur Middleton (1742-1787), son of Henry and grandson of Arthur, was indirectly connected to The Oaks. He did not reside in the Goose Creek home, but lived at Middleton Place. There he was born but departed at an early age to attend school in England. During the heady days prior to the British invasion of Charleston, the American Provincial Congress elected Arthur Middleton to the Continental Congress, where he signed the Declaration of Independence.

Two years later in the spring of 1778, the assembly of South Carolina wrote a new constitution, that many believed veered far from the previous. Governor John Rutledge, refused to assent to it, as did Middleton, who was elected to replace him.

When Middleton refused the appointment, the assembly proceeded to a third choice, and elected Rawlins Lowndes to fill the vacancy.³¹ Arthur served the patriot cause with distinction during the Revolution and was imprisoned with

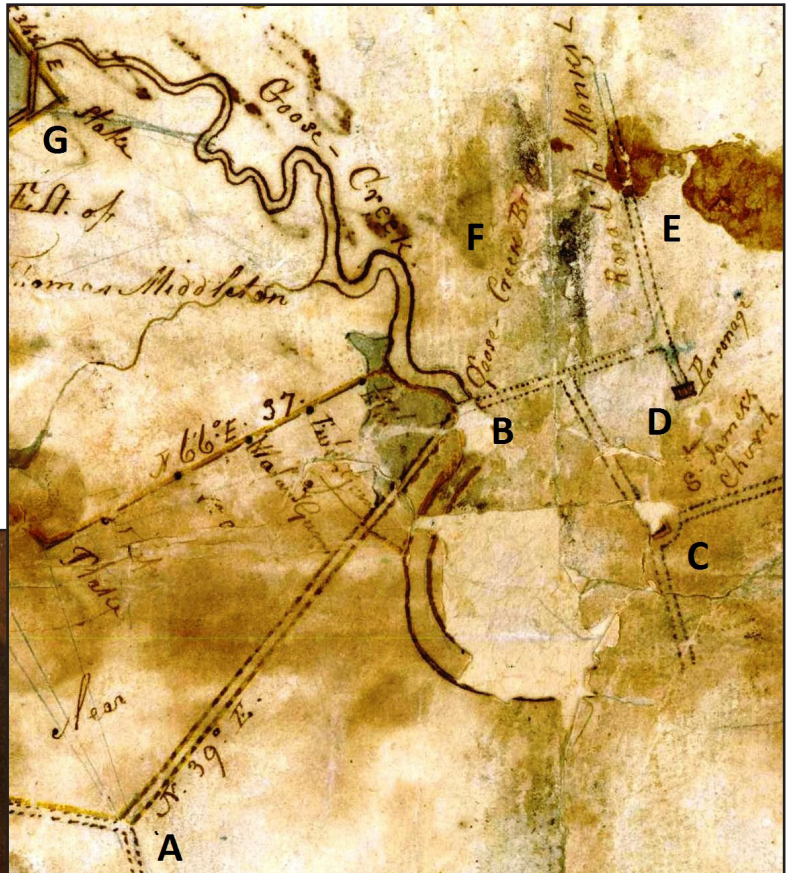


The Hanover Coat of Arms is displayed over the pulpit in the St. James, Goose Creek Church near The Oaks. King George III of the House of Hanover ruled England during the American Revolution. It is probable that when Henry Middleton acquiesced and accepted the “protection of the King” he by consequence protected the church from vandalism by British soldiers.

other rebels when, unlike his father, he refused the King’s protection and was exiled to a British prison in St. Augustine.

Arthur eventually retired to his father’s Oaks estate to be near his family during the last days of struggle and remained safe in a refuge of mixed loyalties, but unparalleled service. He was a patriot through it all, and after the struggle, worked to revive his Middleton Place home on the Ashley until he succumbed to fever in 1787.

At right, "Thomas Middleton" is noted on the western section of The Oaks. The plat shows the busy confluence near the Goose Creek Bridge. "A" indicates the divergence of the Road to Ladson and the Goose Creek Roads; "B" the Goose Creek Bridge; "C" the location of the St. James, Goose Creek Church; "D" the parsonage; "E" the Road to Moncks Corner; "F" the location of The Oaks mansion; and "G" a corner of the rice field dikes at the Elms. No rice fields are indicated on The Oaks at this time.



At left, Benjamin West painted this portrait of Thomas Middleton, the son of Henry Middleton of Middleton Place and younger brother of Arthur Middleton, signer of the Declaration of Independence. Thomas was the last Middleton patriarch of The Oaks.



“Thomas Middleton Esqr.” is indicated near the Oaks Main house and avenue on this detail of the Abernathy Map.

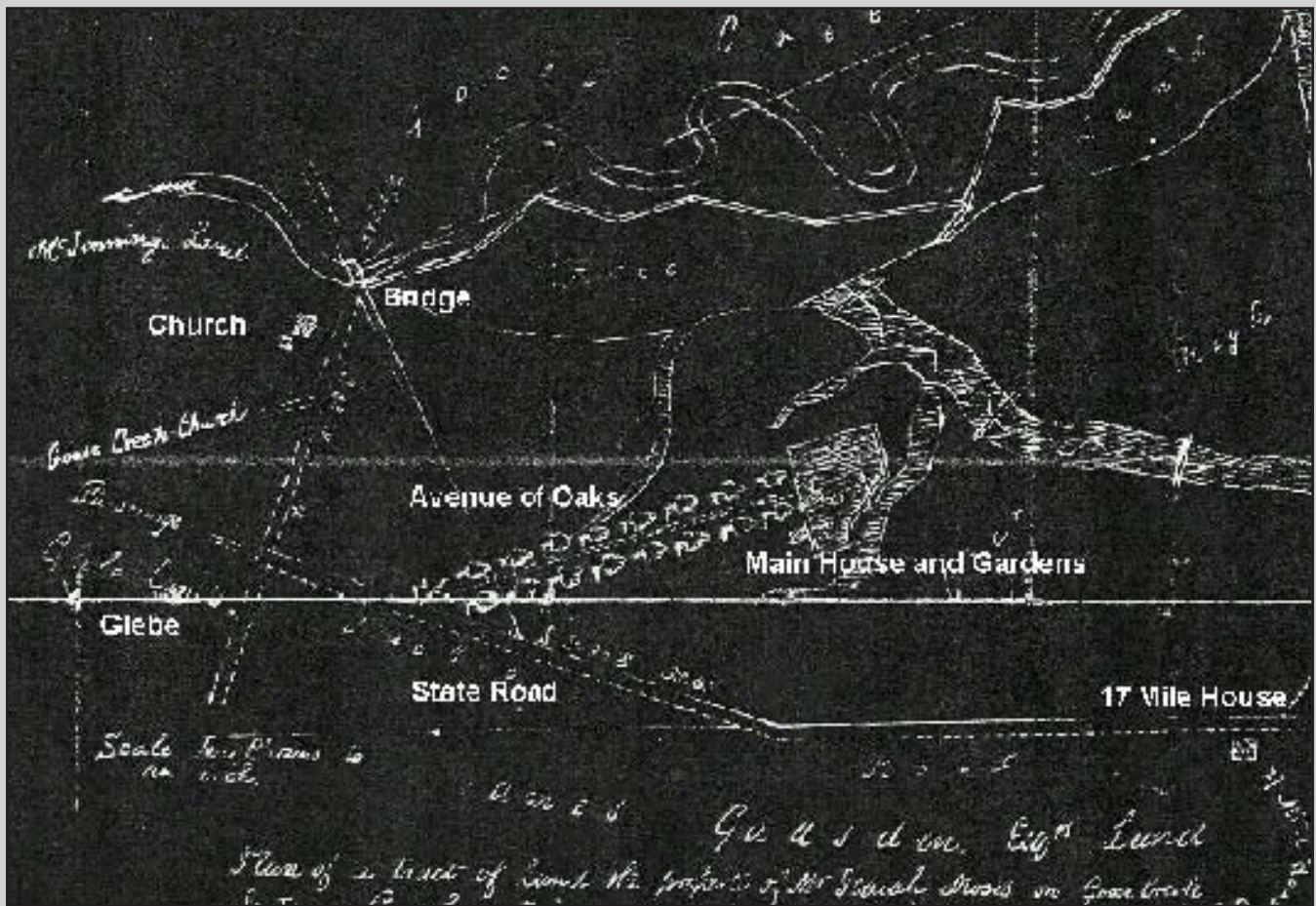
Thomas Middleton

Upon the demise of Henry Middleton, a large family remained from three marriages and The Oaks properties descended to his second son, Thomas Middleton, who also held offices of importance, and aided the American cause.

Thomas, son of Henry Middleton and Mary Williams, was born in 1753 in Charleston. Thomas traveled to England to continue his education, but returned in January 1774 at the approach of British hostilities. He inherited The Oaks Plantation and a house in Charleston, and by 1787 he owned 441 slaves and almost 8,000 acres of land in four parishes. The St. James, Goose Creek Parish elected him to the Second Provincial Congress and the First General Assembly. He represented Goose Creek in the Fifth General Assembly of the State of South Carolina and Prince William in the Sixth General

Assembly. He married Ann Manigault, daughter of Peter Manigault and Elizabeth Wragg, and with her reared nine children.

For more than 116 years, The Oaks Plantation remained in the Middleton family, but in 1796 Thomas Middleton and Ann, his wife, conveyed “All that plantation... containing 1,800 acres... in St. James Goose Creek...” to James Gairdner.³² That sale of The Oaks ended four generations of Middleton family ownership, and after Thomas, the fourth patriarch of The Oaks, died in 1797, and was buried at the St. James, Goose Creek Church, the vestry hung a marble tablet on the wall of the church as testimony to the four Middleton generations. Arthur, the eldest son of the Honorable Henry Middleton, and signer of the Declaration of Independence, is buried at Middleton Place, and is not listed on the tablet.



William Brailsford drew this plat describing The Oaks Plantation in 1817. The plat of “328 + 389 acres (cleared and wooded) of property of Isiah Moses, on Goose Creek...” is recorded, and a note on the plat (1859) by C.S. Dwight indicates a division of the property. Notations with manuscript labels for this publication show the location of the Bridge, Church, the Avenue of Oaks, The Oaks Main House and Gardens, Glebe, State Road and 17 Mile House. This reproduction is courtesy of John L. Loeb; the original is with the Langdon Cheves Papers among the collections of The South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston, South Carolina.³⁸

Gairdner, Tunno and Moses

James Gairdner lived at The Oaks until he sold it to Adam Tunno, a Charleston merchant. Tunno divided the estate along the State Road into two parcels, and sold the eastern tract to Stephen Mazyck in 1805.³³ That parcel on the east sides called “The Seventeen-Mile Tract” consisted of 392 acres until Mazyck added to it. Tunno conveyed the remaining section of The Oaks estate to Isaiah Moses.³⁴

Isaiah Moses, a Charleston grocer, emerged a

country gentleman when he purchased The Oaks after marrying Rebecca Phillipps, a lady of some means. He and Rebecca kept a home and dry goods store at 248 King Street in Charleston,³⁵ but purchased 794 acres of the original Oaks track for \$6,000 in 1813 and worked as many as 50 slaves growing Carolina Gold Rice. The Oaks included cleared lands, woods, and about 60 acres of rice fields, but it harkened to the grandeur days of colonial wealth and prestige and represented

a step up in society and possibility of greater esteem. Many merchant planters, however, lived financially precarious lives after the American Revolution. If the plantation sank into debt, the owner often relied upon his urban business to pay debts but instead Isiah Moses sold his country assets to pay his debts in the city.

The 1824 tax return revealed that Moses owned 790 acres and 19 slaves, indicating that he was relatively well-to-do, but financial troubles persisted during his ownership and he persistently fell farther into debt and never overcame his mounting losses.³⁶ Edmund Ruffin visited The Oaks during the tenure of Isaiah Moses and left a mixed review. Ruffin wrote in his diary:

*As much a scene of desolation as any....we passed two abodes of former magnificence as well as wealth, as appears from the still beautiful remains, in avenues of noble & venerable live-oaks.....now owned by a Jew, who does not cultivate at all, or to a very little extent. The avenue of large live oaks leading to the mansion appears to be about a third of a mile in length, is 60 feet in width, across which the branches of the trees interlock, so as to present to the eye an unbroken irregular arch - every vacancy between the crooked and irregular limbs of the trees being filled by the upper covering of evergreen leaves, & of the long & pendant masses of the dark gray moss...*³⁷

Moses sold western parcels of the large estate (today Camelot and Pineview Residential Subdivisions), and later used the remaining lands for security on several occasions. Notably during the financial “Panic of 1837” he borrowed money from the Jewish Beth Elohim’s charity fund, “Karen Kayemet.”³⁹ He also attempted other schemes including a failed plan to sell the avenue of oaks for shipbuilding timber to pay his mortgage and retain ownership. Fortunately, the selling price remained too high and the trees survived.

One chronicler noted, “We stopped a few moments to gaze down the avenue of live oaks belonging to Mr. Moses, a son of Abraham, who

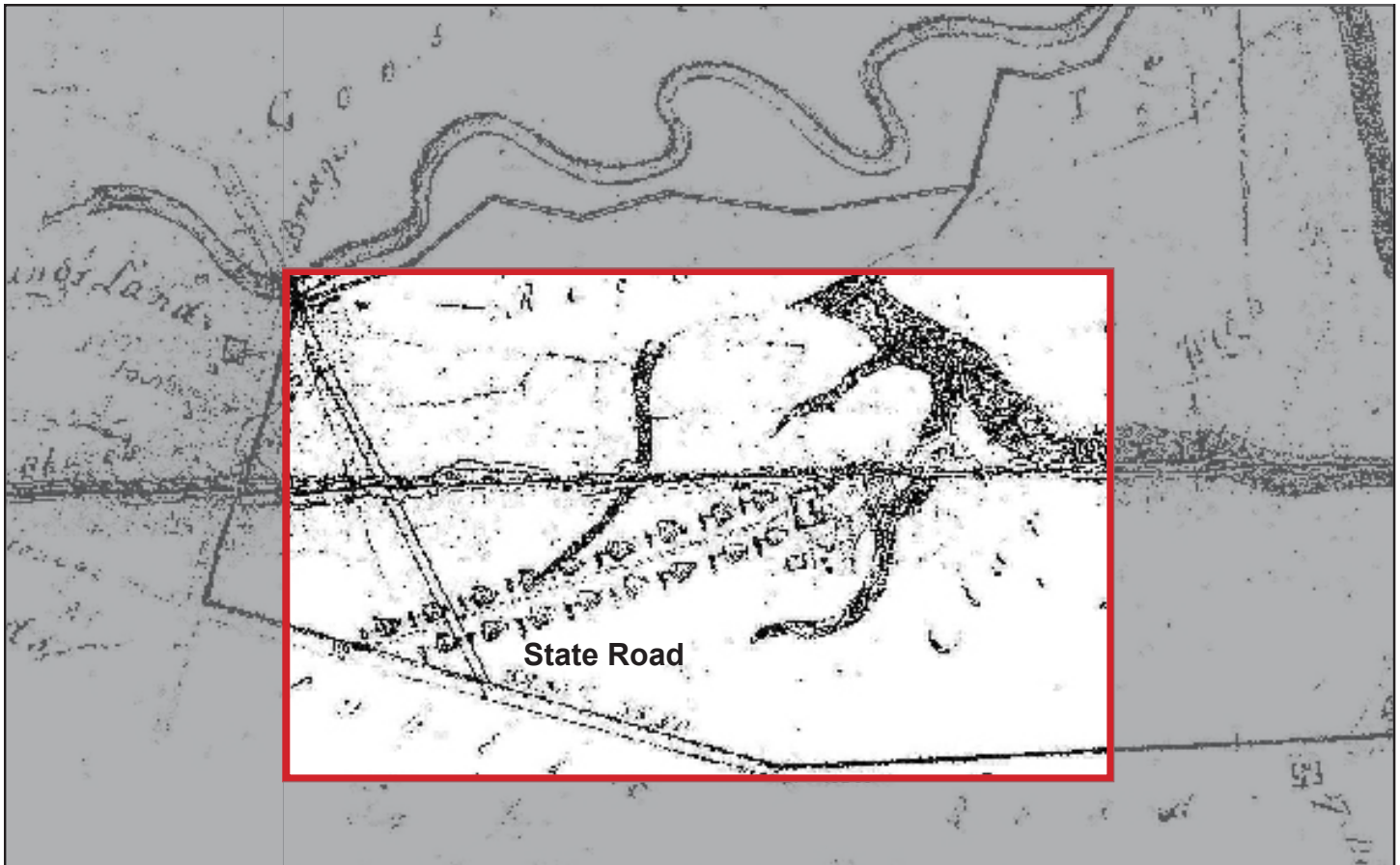
in the true style of his nation offered it to the ship carpenters...”⁴⁰

Bad luck persistently plagued Isaiah Moses when in 1840, the old two-story brick house burned beyond repair and the flames damaged the gardens to some extent but spared the grand avenue of oaks.⁴¹ The following year, the Charleston Jewish Congregation of Beth Elohim obtained the property in a foreclosure action, and soon after sold the old plantation and “negroes” on May 29, 1841 to Charles P. Shier for \$3,750. The selling price was \$2,000 less than Moses’ purchase price.⁴²

In 1840, a year prior, the sales advertisement boasted, “A prime gang of fifty Negroes, accustomed to the culture of rice, and provisions as well as the making of bricks.” The advertisement stated that the sale included horses, mules, cows, oxen and plantation utensils, as well as a “Charleston built sloop capable of carrying 20,000 bricks or 20 cords of wood.”⁴³

Charles P. Shier held the land briefly, conveying it in 1841 to George M. Cannon,⁴⁴ and John Willson bought the estate nine years later for \$1,650.⁴⁵ At the time of that purchase in 1850, the estate included 750 acres of land of which 250 were fenced and “in high state” of cultivation. Sixty acres remained free from salt intrusion and thus were suitable for rice production. The balance of the property supported “the best of yellow pine, oak and hickory” forest. The estate included a brickyard with sufficient depths to float boats drawing six feet of water.

A one-story brick house with “walls of enormous thickness”⁴⁶ arose on the site of the ancestral Middleton mansion and the sales advertisement in the South Carolina Gazette touted “Mansion, kitchens and barns are extensive brick buildings and are in good order as were the Negro houses, stables and carriage house.” The owner boasted a “valuable avenue of live oaks, leading from the road to the mansion, one third of a mile in length, and a fine spring of water, a convenient distance from the house, which has never been known to fail.”



A detail of a plat C.S. Dwight drew on December 5, 1859 for Carsten Vose to describe the conveyance of 353 acres to Edward Miles. The plat describes the Avenue of Oaks diverging from State Road and terminating at the main house. One large and two smaller out buildings and gardens are indicated near the main house. The Middleton mansion with two wings burned in 1840 and was replaced by a large farmhouse on the Middleton Mansion footprint. The “State Road” manuscript label was added to this publication by the author for orientation.⁵¹

Carsten William Vose

Carsten William Vose bought The Oaks land and farmhouse and joined it with other contiguous tracts he held including all or parts of the Seventeen, Eighteen and Nineteen–Mile House Tracts.⁴⁷ A German immigrant, Carsten Vose (born 1806 in Wolsdorf, Hannover, Germany) served as Captain in the Goose Creek Company of the 18th Regiment. In 1837 he wed Jane Hester Dorem Brickman, widow of Adolf Brinkman, proprietor of the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern and owner of eight valuable slaves.⁴⁸

Their marriage combined the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern with his large farm at The Oaks. The Vose household flourished with four children: Margaret Ann, Catherine Evelyn, Frederica Oliver (Olivia) and John George. The Vose enterprise

also included two free workers, a mechanic and 22 slaves who together raised hundreds of cows and great harvests of corn, but no cotton or rice, on 1,350 acres of land. In total, the Vose estate was worth \$6,000.⁴⁹

After mid-century, the robust Vose family purchased property in Summerville and resided there during the unhealthy summer months. They kept slaves and an overseer in Goose Creek during all seasons, and the family returned to work the Goose Creek farm and tavern after the first frost. As the war years approached, and the value of his Goose Creek land slipped to \$2,080, Carsten Vose downsized his Goose Creek estate in 1859 by selling 353 acres with the avenue of the oaks and the farmhouse to Edward R. Miles for \$2,450.⁵⁰



Barbara McGowin drew the image depicting John George Vose returning from Furman College to his home at the Eighteen-Mile House. Holding a Christmas wreath, he found his family staying up late on December 20, 1860 making a first flag of the confederacy. A flaming hearth illuminates the family room where patriarch Carsten Vose holds his rifle while his wife and daughters finish the flag of the Southern Republic.

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 promised 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 convened in Columbia on December 17, but due to a smallpox scare in the State Capital, the convention reconvened three days later in St. Andrews Hall on Broad Street in Charleston and unanimously adopted the ordinance of secession.



Entitled "The Oaks, Near Goose Creek Church" this woodcut rendering of the Avenue of Oaks appeared in "Up the Ashley and the Cooper," an article found in the Harper's New Monthly Magazine, CCCVII, December, 1875, Vol. LII.

That evening at seven o'clock, the delegates reassembled to sign the ordinance. Consequently, on December 20, 1860 the state officially became the Commonwealth of South Carolina, with no allegiance to the United States.⁵²

The news immediately radiated from Charleston as couriers shouted and plastered the words "The Union is Dissolved" along every street in Charleston and out into the countryside. John George Vose, son of Carsten William Vose, proprietor of the Eighteen-Mile House Tavern and previous owner of The Oaks, recalled the excitement when someone announced the verdict at his father's door. He and his "entire family stayed awake all night" making a flag with a "Palmetto tree and the words 'Southern Republic' sewed on under the tree."⁵³ Vose recalled the next morning that "...someone hung it from a pole across the road from Pa's store," and he "expected it was one of the first flags of the Confederate States."⁵⁴

Four years later, retreating Confederate soldiers burned the Goose Creek Bridge within sight of the grand avenue of oaks. They also tore up the railroad trestle that bisected the properties, but the plantation buildings remained unharmed. The Oaks survived the onslaught of the marauding Union Army when officers of the Massachusetts Fifty-fifth used the farmhouse as a temporary quarter in February and March of 1865. Union General E.E. Potter and his entourage settled into the nearby Otranto Plantation House,⁵⁵ while young officers slept inside the farmhouse at The Oaks. The young officers enjoyed piano music in the parlor, while the African-American foot soldiers camped under the spreading oaks.

The winter of 1865 was wet and icy in Goose Creek, and the cold young men huddled in their tents on the wide lawns and feasted on roasted pork, as did the young British soldiers 80 years prior. During the third evening at The Oaks farmhouse the officers enjoyed the warmth of the fireplace, but did not appreciate their pork dinner.⁵⁶

Goose Creek South Carolina Monday, February

27- moved across the creek and took up quarters of a plantation nearby... Tuesday, February 28- We quarter in the house and...the Colonel furnishes music from the tee ...we are quite happy... Wednesday, March 1, 1865- The chief dish was a young pig well roasted. I had eaten of the well browned parts and noticed nothing peculiar, until accidentally cutting into the rare portion I noticed that it was filled with the egg of the tapeworm ... "measly pork." Examination showed that every part of the animal was in the same condition. This finished the dinner to the disgust of the whole party. Col. Beecher took an emetic. Col. Willard vomited his dinner without ipecac and the Adj. and myself made the best of it. I am willing to confess that I was more amused than sickened.⁵⁷

The federal entourage used the next few days to liberate slaves at nearby plantations, but soon departed The Oaks farmhouse in pursuit of retreating Confederate forces. Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered that spring and the war ended soon after.

The Union Army did not intentionally damage The Oaks farmhouse or structures, but the months and years that followed witnessed transitional struggles that traumatized The Oaks community and resonates to this day. During the trying post-war era, Carsten Vose conveyed more of his acreage to Edward R. Miles, and after Vose's demise, his heirs conveyed another section west of the railroad to Henry Augustus Middleton in 1871.⁵⁸ Henry Augustus Middleton, a direct descendant of the founding Middleton brothers, consolidated these tracts with many contiguous parcels to rent to freedmen.

When Henry Augustus Middleton died he owned almost 4,000 acres, including Crowfield, Bloomfield, Fredericks, Magnolia, the Seventeen, Eighteen and Nineteen Mile House Tracts, as well as the western section of The Oaks. The Oaks section descended to his daughter Isabella Cheves,⁵⁹ but Edward Miles devised his part of The Oaks to his widow, Mary Peronneau Miles, who sold the track of 400 acres to Edwin Parsons in 1892.



The photograph labeled “Mail boat on State Road, 1904” shows a man standing on a boat beyond the Goose Creek Bridge. The wooden floor of the bridge is shown in the foreground. The Avenue of Oaks leading to Edwin Parson’s mansion intersected the public road approximately 100 yards beyond the boatman. The photograph reveals the poor road conditions near the turn of the 20th century. The image is courtesy of the SCHS.

Edwin Parsons

Edwin Parsons arrived from Kennebec, Maine when he and his brother Robert Parsons traveled south to build winter homes. Robert built the “Woodlands” on Parson’s Lane in Summerville and Edwin reconstructed The Oaks overlooking Goose Creek. They followed their father, Charles Parsons, who arrived in Charleston to be president of the South Carolina and Georgia Railroad Company in May of 1894.⁶⁰ Edwin assisted his father, president of the Carolina and Georgia Railroad, until he succeeded him. Soon after Edwin retired, he wed Mary Battle Whitehead from Savannah, Georgia in

1899.⁶¹ The brothers were two of many northern entrepreneurs who invested in greatly undervalued property in Carolina and lived the southern lifestyle after retirement.⁶²

Scant description of the settlement is available during the last decades of the 19th century prior to Edwin Parson’s tenure, but one observer noted in 1875 that the entire region was:

...run to seed; the plantations unplanted, the houses literal ruins, some of them burned by accident...and ...since the Federal Army left this particular place unscathed; many of the wooden galleries and porticos

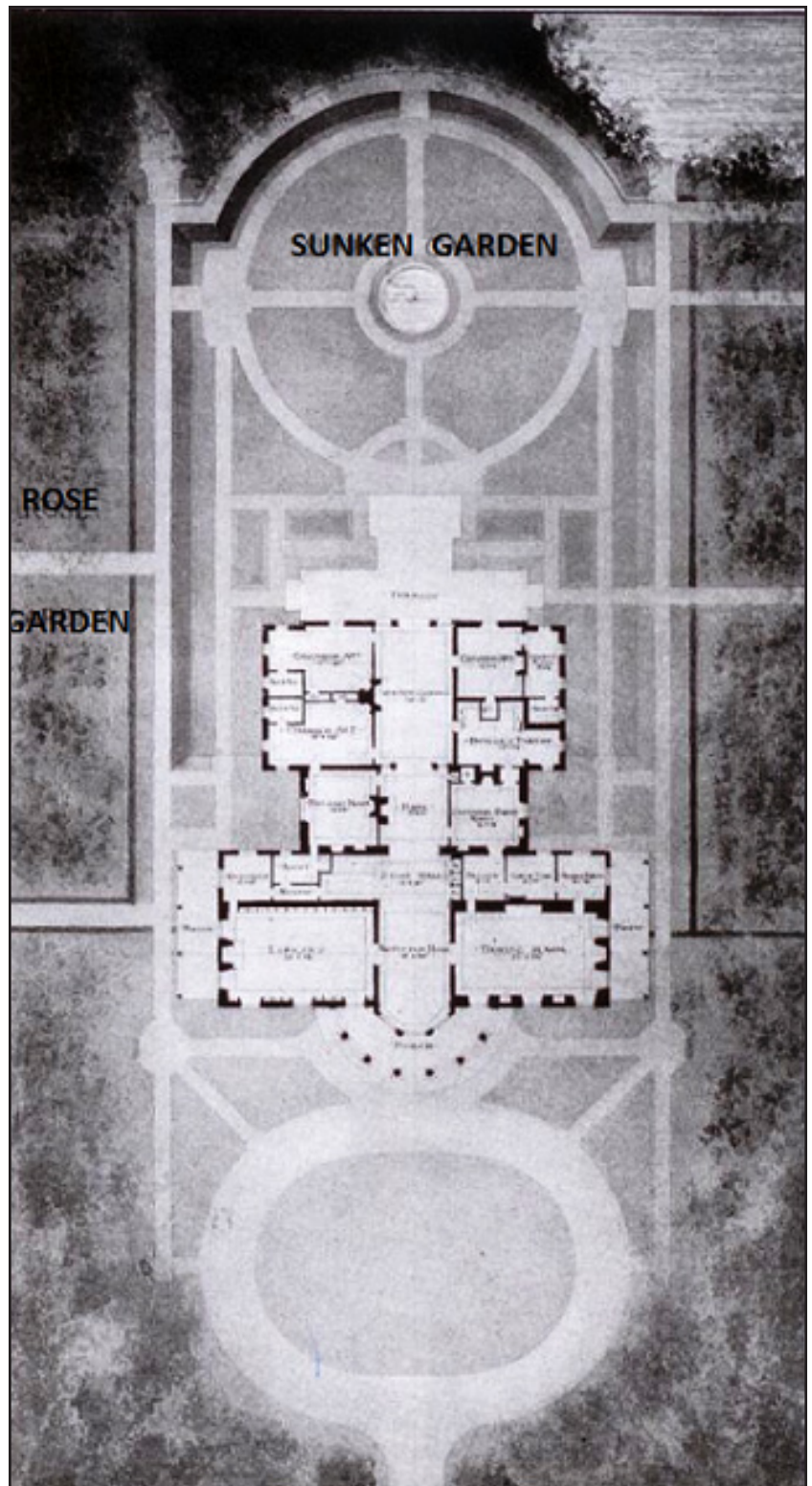
*pulled down for the fire wood; and the superb avenues of live oaks choked with undergrowth. One magnificent vista, however remains unharmed-the Avenue planted by Edward Middleton, Esqre, in 1683.*⁶³

A decade following this report, an intriguing damage assessment of the 1886 earthquake reported that The Oaks farmhouse was “a massive one story building with three gables all of wch [sic] were destroyed...” and a “brick stable destroyed – all chimneys injured...”

The report mentions the brick farmhouse and hints that the ancillary buildings were of similar brick construction.⁶⁴

Six years after the damaging tremors, Edwin Parsons arrived and rehabilitated the gardens and avenue, but the one-story brick farmhouse was “so shaken by the earthquake that it was found necessary to pull it down.”⁶⁵ In 1892 Parsons built upon the original Middleton home site at the terminus of the grand avenue.

Walter B. Chambers, a New York architect, formed a partnership with Ernest Flagg with the firm of Flagg & Chambers in 1894. Ernest Flagg is often credited with some of the work that emerged from their partnership, including the Singer Building (the world’s tallest building in 1909), the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., the Washington State Capitol and the Sheldon Library at St. Paul’s School (Concord, New Hampshire). Walter B. Chambers is singularly credited with dozens of splendid projects including The Oaks Plantation in 1897. Chambers retained the farmhouse “walls of enormous thickness” as a matter of curiosity and sentiment, resulting in one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in America. The mansion stood above the sunken gardens as splendid rose-beds graced the lawn to the side and rear of the house. Azaleas border the paths approaching the lake



“The Oaks – A Restored Mansion of the South, The Home of Edwin Parsons At Goose Creek, S.C.,” Country Life In America, A Magazine for the Home-maker in the Country, Vol. XXIX, November 1915 to April 1916, Garden City and New York Doubleday, Page and Company, 1916, p. 53. Walter B. Chambers, F.A.I.A. Architect. The drawing shows the “Layout of the gardens and grounds, with the first floor plan.”



Above, Edwin Parsons is shown at center playing cards with guests at The Oaks. The image is courtesy of Harriott Pinckney Means Johnson, via telephone conversation with the author on April 8, 2015.

At top right, the Parson children: Edwin Parsons (1899 - 1939), Sarah Whitehead Parsons Prioleau (1900 - 1984), and Mary Battle Parsons Means (1903 - 1980) pose with their "Nanny." The nanny, who remained with the baby, Mary Battle Parsons, all of her life, is shrouded with a carpet to conceal her presence.⁶⁹ The image is courtesy of Harriott Pinckney Means Johnson, daughter of the youngest in the photograph, who spoke with the author via telephone on April 8, 2015.

At bottom right, a bold iron eagle graces the double main gate at The Oaks. The image taken in 2015 is among the collections of the author.





The image appears in "The Oaks-A Restored Mansion of the South, The Home of Edwin Parsons at Goose Creek, S.C. Country Life In America, A Magazine for the Home-maker in the Country, Walter B. Chambers, FAIA Architect, Vol. XXIX, November 1915 to April 1916, Garden City and New York Doubleday, Page and Company, 1916, p. 53.

that reflected amidst a grove of ancient live oaks. One observer recorded:

*The avenue is one of the finest in the country and at the present writing almost intact only one of the trees having died and so broken the uniformity throughout the third of a mile of its length. It is always carefully tended by Negro women who continually sweep the white oyster shell roadway with long brush brooms. Their swaying figures, each capped by a bandana of true African brilliance, add not a little to the play of color and movement afforded by the long swinging festoons of Spanish moss and the brilliant shafts of Southern sunlight.*⁶⁶

The new two-story white-brick mansion featured six

Corinthian columns and two pilasters supporting an extravagant entry to a bold entry hall.⁶⁷ Chandeliers lit the tall ceilings from the front door, past the gracefully winding stairway, to the winter garden lounge featuring black lacquered wicker furniture. The first floor opened to a billiard room, a library, two drawing rooms, a living room, servant quarters, kitchen, pantry, a powder room, and bath. Candelabras, silver utensils and serving sets accessorized the formal dining room and framed art work, window curtains and sashes highlighted the exterior walls of the first floor.⁶⁸ The second floor featured a master bedroom, four bathrooms, two servants' bedrooms and a servant bath. The house overlooked a small circular lake lined with



The viewer slide photograph by Underwood and Underwood Publishers circa 1908, shows two girls peering through The Oaks gate. The spreading lawn and oak trees in the background show the conditions of the property during the tenure of Edwin Parsons. The photograph is among the collections of the Library of Congress. During this era, an iron fence traversed the entrance way on each side of the gate.⁷⁶

azaleas and a path to the “Acorn,” a tiny house where the children played.

The Parsons used the 400-acre estate as a winter home, returning to New York in summer where they educated their children and Parsons motored about in his Cadillac sedan.⁷⁰ On cool and cold days, Edwin Parsons invited guests to hunts at the Goose Creek Club for Preserving Game.⁷¹ On warm days, he and his wife enjoyed entertaining guests in the “big Colonial living room proper, and rear, front, and side verandas,

where sometimes the Negro farm-hands come on moonlight nights and regale the ‘company’ with ‘shouts’ and ‘singing games’ and ‘buck and wings’ (dance) quite in antebellum fashion.”⁷²

In 1909 President Taft visited Charleston and enjoyed a journey into the countryside where he visited Edwin Parsons, his Yale classmate, and enjoyed lunch at The Oaks.⁷³ By the time their youngest of the four children, Mary Battle Parsons, was five, the family began traveling to Europe.⁷⁴ In the spring of



The image of The Oaks during the tenure of Edwin Parsons shows the six two-story Corinthian columns protecting the front door of the mansion. No gate is visible but an open unpaved drive approaches the mansion. Edwin and Mary Battle Whitehead reared three children, Edwin, Sara and Mary. After residing 15 years at the Oaks he perished after a long illness and was buried in Magnolia Cemetery, Charleston.⁷⁹



An unidentified couple stands near the well at The Oaks. "Spring at the Oaks" is written on the back of the photograph, circa 1920. The image is among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society.



The blurred photograph circa 1920 shows the Oaks main house viewed from the distant Goose Creek shore. Edwin Parsons erected the structure circa 1892. The image is among the Johnson Scrapbook collections at the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston, South Carolina.

Dorothy Gish starred in *Little Miss Rebellion*, a 1920 silent drama film directed by George Fawcett and written by Harry Carr and Wells Hastings. Paramount Pictures released the film on September 19, 1920. Its survival status is classified as unknown, suggesting that it is a lost film.



1925, daughter Mary Battle Parsons wed William Martin Means (1894-1957) in the St. James, Goose Creek Church, where Edwin served as a vestryman. An elaborate ceremony with many Charleston and Summerville guests enjoyed the reception at the house and gardens.⁷⁵

Edwin Parsons granted a width of 37.5 feet of right of way to Berkeley County Highway Commission for the new “Coastal Highway,” later tagged South Carolina Highway 52.⁷⁷ That same year, 1922, his heirs permitted the Goose Creek dam and flow way to flood more than 62 acres of his property.⁷⁸ After his demise in 1921, his wife, Mary kept The Oaks for eight more years while she resided at 51 East Bay Street, Charleston.

The plantation was the scene of William Gilmore Simms’ novel, entitled *Katherine Walton*.⁸⁰ In 1920, the old plantation was again the setting of several scenes of the movie *Little Miss Rebellion*, starring Dorothy Gish.⁸¹ The house and the avenue of giant oaks were used to depict scenes of juvenile royalty, and revived all of the colorful and stirring life of an earlier era. However, beyond the Edwin Parson’s grand avenue, mansion and gardens, the plantation forests of yesteryear lay mostly dormant except where subdivided and managed as tenant farms. After the turn of the century, Langdon Cheves managed The Oaks property spanning west of the railroad track.⁸² He partitioned all of that section and rented parcels to farmers for an annual fee.⁸³

Moonshine and Bootleggers

Some farmers supplemented their meager incomes by converting portions of their corn crops into consumable alcohol. This common

practice persisted into the 20th century, and by 1912, Berkeley County achieved the distinction as the “moonshine capital” of the State.⁸⁴ Such a reputation relied



A notation on the photograph (not shown in this image) identifies Ernest Pinkney Huff with his daughter Annie Rudell, circa 1922. The notation also identifies “Hufs [Huff’s] Touring Car.” Federal Agent Adolf Nimitz cited this automobile as a transport vehicle for illegal alcohol. The photograph is courtesy of Miles and Laura Huff, Berkeley County, South Carolina.

greatly upon the recipes and skills of the brewer, but success depended mostly upon predictable demand and reliable delivery of the palatable beverage; a business model that paid dividends into the third quarter of the 20th century.

Soon after the dawn of the 20th century, demand for moonshine increased steadily as the Charleston Navy Yard on the Cooper River expanded from a single dry dock in 1901 with a few dozen workers to more than 1,700 employees at the advent of war in Europe. After President Woodrow Wilson signed the War Declaration in April 1917 casting the United States into World War I⁸⁵ skilled craftsmen and laborers rushed to Charleston to build warships. Six weeks into the intensifying conflict, ship builders laid the keel for the USS Ashville, the first major warship built in Charleston in more than a century.⁸⁶ More ships followed, and within a year shipyard manpower nearly tripled, a naval training camp adjoining the ship yard housed 5,000 recruits at a time, and a new thousand-bed hospital coped tenuously with the rapidly expanding population. Predictably, the demand for alcohol surged.

To supply that growing demand, more Berkeley County farmers experimented with home-brewing until a busy moonshine center emerged near Carnes Cross Roads, six miles west of The Oaks. There, entrepreneurs such as W.R. Varner, Herbert Varner, Hamp Clark, L.H. Nathans, B.D. Driggers and others developed a multi-still production center along a reliable “run,” approximately one-half mile north of the intersection.⁸⁷ They transported the finished spirited product along the State Road from Carnes Crossroads to the northern boundary of The Oaks. They skirted the eastern boundary of the fabled plantation, traversed the wooden Goose Creek Bridge and continued 15 additional miles to busy Charleston. There, ship yard workers, sailors, Citadel cadets and many other customers of varied cloaks sought the stimulating brew that returned reliable profits. But those profitable wartime pay-days waned when World War I ended and the temperance movement captured the attention of pliable politicians, who

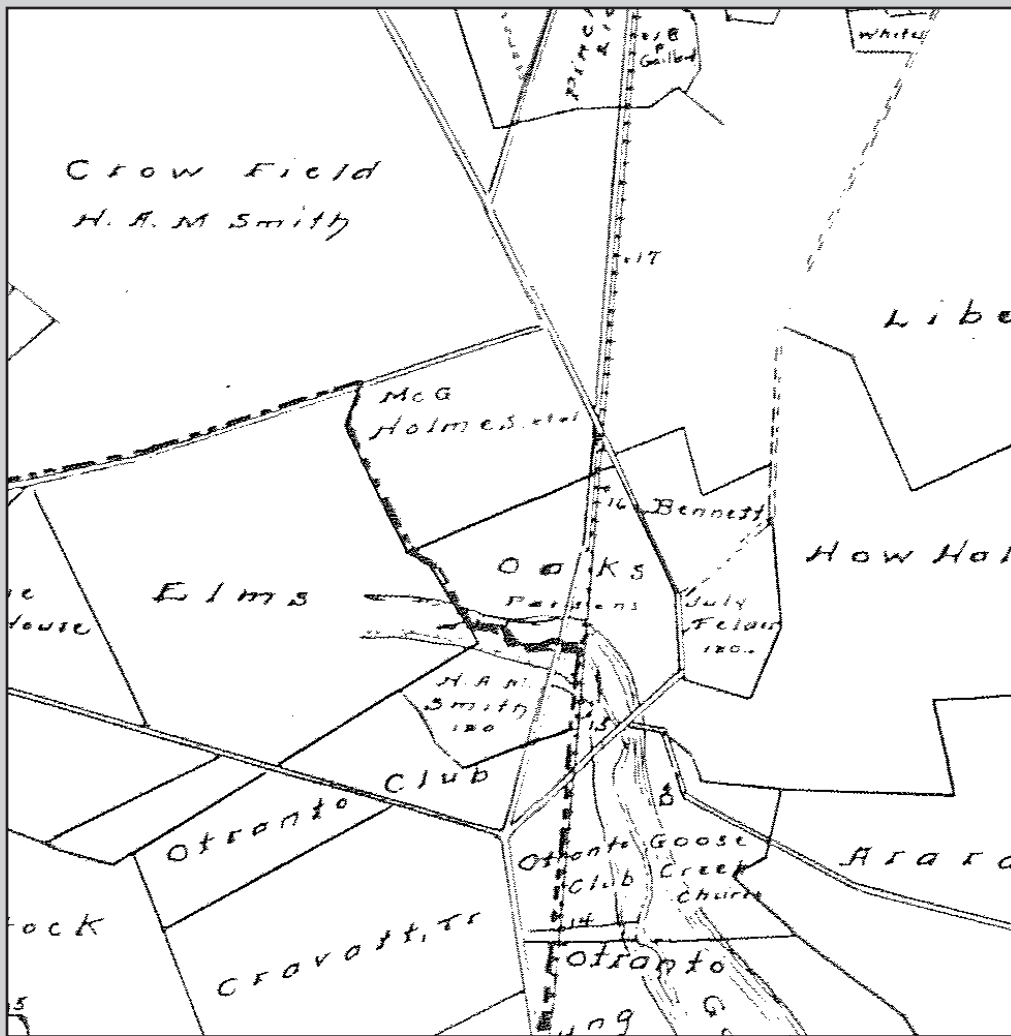
enacted laws to control that “sinful” indulgence.

The so-called “Volstead Act” of 1919 outlawed the manufacture and sale of alcohol and commenced the national era of prohibition (1920 to 1933) that disallowed the consumption of alcohol nationwide. During that same era, the “Wall Street Crash” of 1929 signaled the beginning of the 10-year “Great Depression.” That disaster amplified financial hardships for most, and forced many to risk arrest by violating the national prohibition laws.

Many times, Ernest Pinkney Huff’s touring car – heavy with wooden crates lined with sealed mason jars – raced from Carnes Cross Roads along the State Road to distribution points in Charleston. The lengthy trip always posed risks of arrest, expensive fines or imprisonment; the journey was arguably the most dangerous part of the enterprise. Predictably, on May 4, 1928, Federal Agent Nimitz “Arrested L.H. Nathans and B.D. Driggers in Hufs [Huff’s] Touring Car with 2 sacks sugar, 3 sacks meal, and 6 cartons of jars at a point about...200 yards east of highway leading from Carnes Crossroads...”

Understandably, to reduce the risks of arrest while transporting the illicit brew, the Carnes Cross Roads distillery operators moved to The Oaks properties on the banks of Goose Creek. There, Horace Driggers, Joe Clark and Walter Speisseggar, all residences of Carnes Cross Roads, set up illicit distilleries in the thick subtropical forests along the banks of Goose Creek on the western section of The Oaks Plantation. There they produced a marketable corn whiskey for many years, and widely expanded the reputation of Berkeley County “moon,” even as more people moved into southern Berkeley County and new paved roads reached into the countryside to facilitate the commute of increasing numbers of ship yard and navy base employees.⁸⁹

The Berkeley County Highway Commissioners began negotiating for a right-of-way for a new highway in 1922.⁹⁰ By 1930 most of the new Coastal Highway (South Carolina Highway 52/ Goose Creek Boulevard) in Berkeley County



A partial map of Berkeley County shows the boundaries of farms from 1850 to 1930. The Oaks is shown bisected by the Atlantic Coastline Rail Road (previously Northeastern RR) and owned by "Parsons." The map indicates that "H.A.M. Smith" owned the western section of the original grant and the northernmost section of the original grant is indicated under the ownership of "Mr. G. Holmes et. al." The original map entitled, "John Palmer Gaillard, Map of Berkeley and Parts of Charleston and Dorchester Counties, S.C. 1900-1962" is among the collections of the Berkeley County Museum. Copies are available at the Berkeley County Office Building.

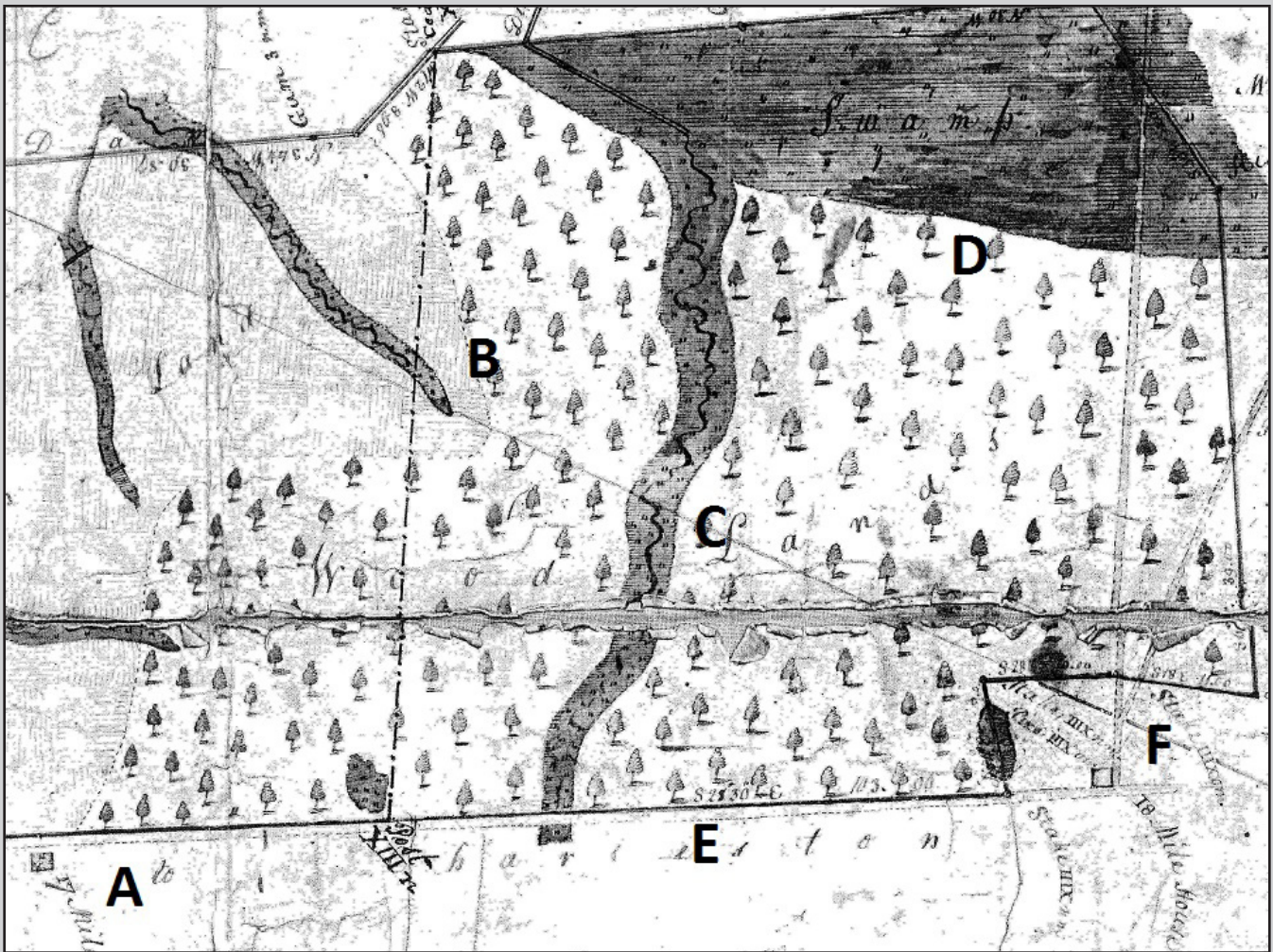
opened to traffic even before it was paved. Motorists noted the unusual coincidence of seeing deputy sheriff's vehicles parked aside the new road, above Goose Creek near the Berkeley County line.

Consequently, by 1932, the place called "Goose Creek" not only carried the reputation as a moonshine supplier, but was noted as a "speed trap." Motorists suspected a "speed zone" because law enforcement vehicles routinely parked near the county line above the Goose Creek waterway. According to witnesses, those deputies were likely protecting the moonshine production zone and preparing another "run to town."⁹¹

During the prohibition era, "Berkeley County moonshine found its way as far as Chicago, and

the fabled racketeer, Al Capone, is believed to have directly participated."⁹² It was rumored that Al Capone personally arrived to make deals with locals in a road house on the new Highway 52. During that era, a "shoot-out" between moonshine gangs in Moncks Corner left no dead, but badly damaged bullet-riddled automobiles and greatly shaken law enforcement officers. Distilleries and breweries in Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean flourished as they exported illegal alcohol into the United States. Chicago became a noted haven for prohibition evaders during the "roaring twenties," but within a few more years, prohibition sputtered to its end.

After the repeal of prohibition in 1933, more entrepreneurs built illegal distilleries along the



The plat describes the dense subtropical forest spanning the western section of The Oaks Estate. The author added manuscript letters to this image for clarity. “A” indicates the location of the “17 Mile House Tavern” on State Road near the service road to The Oaks Mansion. “B” indicates a principal creek draining a western section of the Oaks. Moonshiners sought such hidden creeks to provide a reliable source of water for their operations. Today that creek drains Camelot Residential Subdivision. “C” indicates the principal creek draining a larger section of the western track of The Oaks Plantation. Today that section is Pineview residential subdivision. “D” indicates Goose Creek wetlands draining to the northern bank of Goose Creek. “E” indicates the State Road tracing the eastern boundary of the Oaks. “F” indicates a section severed from the Oaks estate that was the Eighteen Mile House Tavern, located at the intersection of the defunct Road to Dorchester (today Westview Boulevard).

banks of the Goose Creek waterway, as well as along steep creeks that drained the western section of The Oaks to its outfall in Goose Creek. Local law enforcement agencies did not strictly enforce the regulations, seldom interfered, and were often complicit with the lucrative enterprise. Fathers sometimes brought their children to the stills, as if on a rural excursion, to distract law men.

Nevertheless, suspicious sheriffs and deputies sometimes tracked sugar sales records kept at the general stores to the owners of hidden stills, and occasionally arrests were made.⁹³

Once, the Berkeley County Sheriff brought charges and the magistrate recorded the lyrics of a song sung by a Goose Creek “moonshiner.”

Berkeley County.
 Friday May 4th 1928.

1- 100 gal. copper still	75 00
1- 40 " doubler, copper	
1- 40' coil "	
6- 60 gal. bbls mash.	
1- 100 " bbl " 460 gals.	69 00
2- doz empty jars	2 40
	<u>\$146 40</u>

In May 1928 Federal Agent Adolf B. Nimitz recorded items he uncovered at a moonshine distillery "still" operated by Hampton Varner near Carnes Crossroads. He submitted the listed items as evidence in court to convict Varner of producing illegal brews and send him to prison. A large copper still (boiler), copper coil and tubing, gallons of corn mash, and empty jars were essential items at all moonshine stills.⁸⁸



From left to right, E. Capers Johnson, Dr. W. H. Johnson and J. Reid Johnson Jr. stand along the unpaved State Road near the intersection of the defunct Road to Dorchester (today Westview Boulevard) at the northernmost reach of The Oaks Plantation. The State Road (today St. James Avenue and Redbank Road) traced the eastern boundary of the original proprietary grant for The Oaks Plantation. Henry Johnson took this photograph in the spring of 1928, the same year Federal Agent Adolf B. Nimitz commenced his enforcement assignment in Berkeley County.

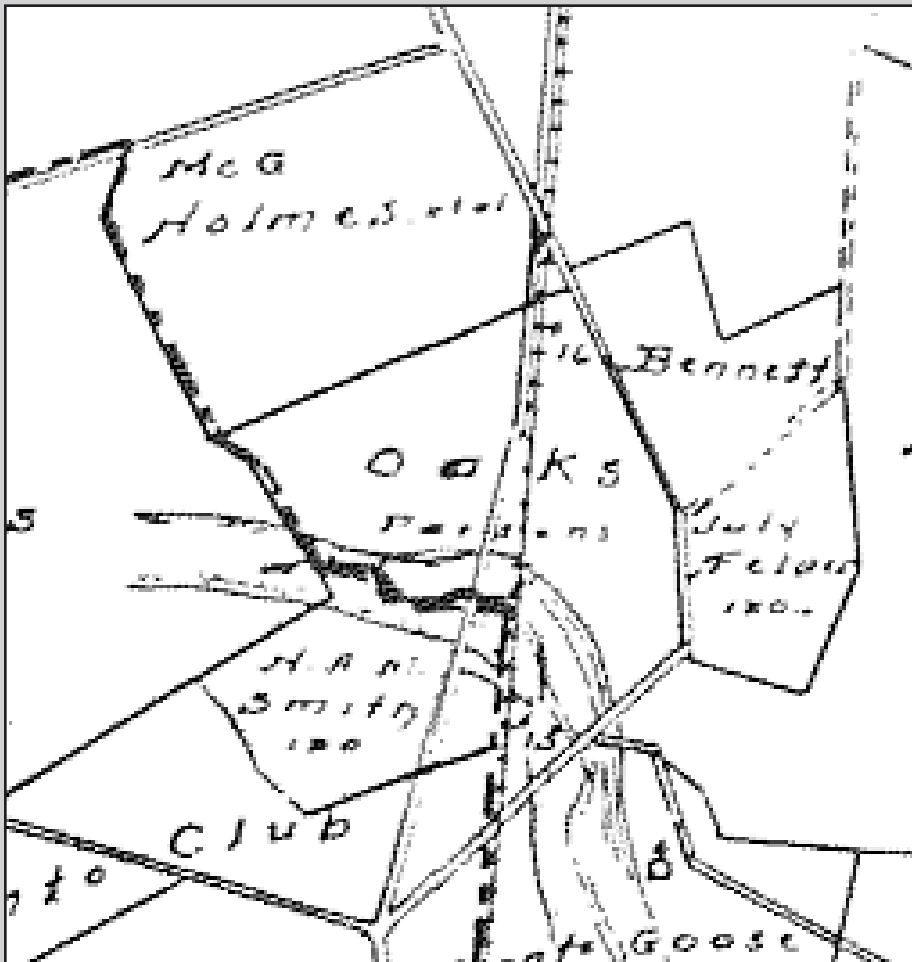
*Hurray for Charleston/ The Place where I been down/ Da tell me don't cry (expletive) Mr. Roosevelt coming round /Da fed me Goose Creek Taters and a slice o de Maybank pie/ I'm going back to Charleston and stay till I die.*⁹⁴

The lyrics explain the political mood during the third decade of the 20th century. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt enacted the New Deal to create jobs and lighten the burden of the economic depression, and Charleston Mayor Bernard R. Maybank touted the New Deal programs. "Goose Creek taters" and a "slice o de Maybank pie" were optimistic news reports to all within hearing range.

Notwithstanding occasional arrests, the western section of The Oaks remained a popular moonshine production center because the thick forests spanned north of the Charleston County

boundary, and beyond local law enforcement from the County or City of Charleston. Some residents, such as John Poppenheim, whose family long owned properties including Marrington and Persimmon Hill Plantations in southern Berkeley County, worked as revenueurs⁹⁵ but after the demise of prohibition and without popular and political support, many violated the South Carolina Alcohol Beverage Commission laws.⁹⁶

Reportedly, the Berkeley County Sheriff's Office and the Charleston County Police Department (Charleston County did not have a sheriff's office at that time) ignored most of the illicit business including the deputies who typically provided reliable transport of the finished product to Charleston markets. Goose Creek resident Fred Mosely, "a moonshiner all my life," relied entirely on the deputy sheriff to purchase his recipe and deliver it to Charleston drinking establishments.⁹⁷



A detail of the map of Berkeley County shows The Oaks bisected by the Atlantic Coastline Rail Road (previously Northeastern RR) and owned by "Parsons." Men built moonshine distilleries above the Goose Creek flow-way on the western section of Parsons' Oaks properties. Most of that section later became Camelot residential subdivision. The northernmost section of the original Oaks grant is indicated under the ownership of "Mr. G. Holmes et. al." and was not part of the Parson estate. Most of that section became Pineview residential subdivision. John Palmer Gaillard drew the "Map of Berkeley and Parts of Dorchester and Charleston Counties, South Carolina" in 1936; it is among the collections of the Berkeley County Museum and copies are available at the Berkeley County Office Building.

Post Parsons Era

Mary Battle Whitehead Parsons (widow of Edwin Parsons) sold all of the estate to Charles H. Sabin in 1930.⁹⁸ Charles H. Sabin, former President of the Guarantee Trust Company of New York, purchased land of The Oaks east of the railroad track and the new State Highway 52, for \$58,500.⁹⁹ This lofty sum purchased property that the Berkeley County assessor valued at merely \$9,500, and Parsons paid only \$475 taxes for the 55 mills on the property plus two mills for the road tax.¹⁰⁰

Sabin further invested more than \$100,000 (some report \$300,000) to return the 419-acre estate into one of the finest plantations in the South.¹⁰¹ His renovation removed the elaborate Georgian woodwork and the six Corinthian columns that supported the two-story portico in 1931.¹⁰² Changing the exterior of the house caused enough interest for the “News and Courier” newspaper to present an article on July 12, 1931, concerning the removal of the stately columns. Unfortunately, two years earlier, the newspaper caused great confusion when it incorrectly published a photograph of “Woodland” in Summerville and reported it as “The Oaks before the columns were

removed.”¹⁰³

During the 1940s and 1950s, the property went through a series of owners, two of whom were somewhat non-typical. Hurst Waterman Conant attempted to raise 300 head of white-faced hereford cattle on the 680-acre tract, and later Sun Oil Company purchased the tract to drill for oil. Neither venture materialized and Charles A. Jones sold The Oaks to Max A. Behrens for \$92,500 in 1947. At that time, the estate included 425 acres with the house, 117.5 acres of woods, and 1,910.4 acres of neighboring Woodstock and sections of Ingleside and Blue House Plantations.

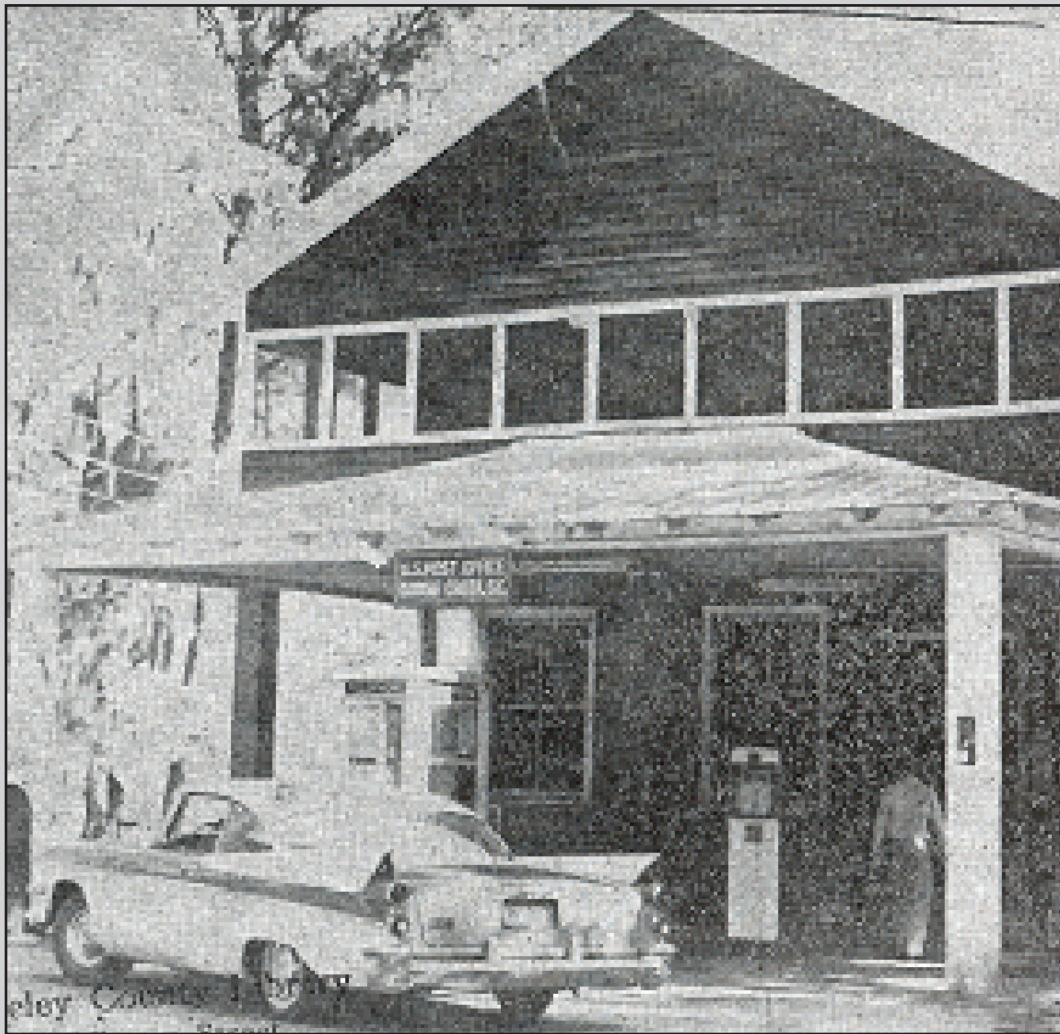
Charles A. Jones kept the royalty rights to any oil finds,¹⁰⁴ but in 1956, four local businessmen formed The Oaks Company Incorporated, when they paid \$125,000 for the house and 140 acres, and began constructing an exclusive residential development named “The Oaks Estate.”¹⁰⁵ Restrictive covenants, unheard of in Berkeley County at that time, were applied to protect the architectural and structural integrity of the emerging residences, and residential sales soared.

Pineview and Camelot

Near mid-century the Eighteen-Mile House section spanning west of South Carolina Highway 52 that once comprised the northwestern half of the Oaks Plantation, sold in sections to Jack Etling (Pineview) and Dr. Clay Evatt (Camelot). Jack Etling began constructing Pineview Terrace, Pineview Farms and Pineview Hills residential subdivisions relying upon backyard wells, outhouses and septic tanks.¹⁰⁶ As the new Oaks Estates Residential Subdivision emerged east of the railroad and Highway 52, the dense forests west of the rail and roadway remained a favored moonshine production site

with individuals such as David Crawford working a distillery near his new home.¹⁰⁷ Moonshine production persisted throughout that western parcel for 20 more years with the support of complicit law enforcement agencies.¹⁰⁸

J.A. (James Alton) Johnson, who worked as the “door man” at the Cocomat Lounge in Charleston in the 1950s, testified that both Charleston and Berkeley County law enforcement officers cooperated in transporting and distributing the “moon.” Johnson recalled that the moonshine at the Cocomat Lounge came from Goose Creek and the proprietor of the lounge hid the illegal alcohol



The image shows Cannon Store and U.S. Post Office in 1961. The Cannon family property sat at the mouth of the Avenue of Oaks, within sight of the Goose Creek Bridge. Land for a magistrate office near the store was conveyed in 1964. M.C. Cannon served as magistrate in the Goose Creek area and “looked out for the bootleggers...”¹¹⁶ M.C. Cannon purchased large amounts of sugar and mason jars, items used for distilling alcohol, from the Rosier General store in Strawberry.¹¹⁷ Image is courtesy Berkeley Library.

in a “secret” cache under floorboards of the night club, covered with a carpet, table and customers. A telephone alert from “(Police) Chief (no first name) Williams” warned of pending police raids, and always preceded the arrival of state law enforcement with sufficient time to secure the contraband.¹⁰⁹ A few years hence J.A. Johnson and his older brother Fred used their cabinet crafting and house construction experience to build houses upon lots purchased from St. Elmo (Speedy) Felkel, a property speculator and owner of Coastal Water and Sewer Company in Goose Creek. Felkel commenced laying water and sewer lines to some rising businesses along the state highway and homes in Pineview.¹¹⁰ The building experience with Felkel allowed the Johnson men to secure

appropriate licenses and capital to venture unto grander projects.¹¹¹

The Johnson brothers formed J. and J. Builders Incorporated and purchased from Dr. Clay Evatt, more than 100 acres of high ground of the western range of the ancient Oaks Plantation. There they commenced to develop Camelot residential subdivision, so named to reference the 1960 debut of the award winning “Camelot” Broadway show, and the popular moniker gracing the White House during the tenure of President John Fitzgerald and Jacqueline Kennedy (1961-1963).¹¹²

When the Johnson brothers cleared 100 acres of The Oaks to develop Camelot, they discovered an active moonshine distillery production zone.¹¹³ The ancient forests ranged almost 50 feet above sea



A small black dog stands guard over a freshly painted home at the intersection of St. James Avenue and Goose Creek Boulevard in the City of Goose Creek. David Crawford built this house and resided there during the 1950s. He managed a moonshine still located approximately 200 yards behind this house (today Pineview residential subdivision) until agents destroyed his distillery boiler and tubing.

level contiguous to South Carolina Highway 52 on the east, and Jack Etling's Pineview subdivisions on the north.

As the Johnson brothers cleared the dense subtropical forests where cattle free-grazed since the frontier era, and tenant farmers tilled for a century, they uncovered 27 operable "moon shine stills."¹¹⁴ They suspected that James Harry Wigfall closed a lucrative arrangement with the local magistrate and sheriff allowing him to produce illegal alcohol and distribute it by way of deputy transport to drinking establishments such as Cocanut Grove Night Club on Meeting Street in Charleston.¹¹⁵ Consequently, Goose Creek moonshine earned a "world-wide" reputation due to Navy Base customers and sailors circling the globe. The Johnson brothers destroyed the stills, cleared the ancient forests, and laid out the first paved and curbed residential streets in Camelot in 1961.

J and J Builders sold their first house to E.J. Wright in 1962, sold commercial frontage to Parker Brothers Incorporated for a Texaco Station two years hence, and conveyed land at a greatly reduced rate for a Christian establishment that is St. Timothy Church today. After two years

of incorporation, Town Council successfully conducted its second election to place a Mayor and four Council members into duly contested seats.

Mayor Hilton Waring Bunch returned for a second two-year term to work with a four-member Council. At the inaugural session, Councilman Jack Etling exclaimed, "I've seen this place grow from woods to a town and I want it to continue to grow."¹¹⁸ Ominously, the growth that Mr. Etling sought was soon threatened by a sorely inadequate water supply. Also, a severely substandard wastewater collection and treatment system threatened the health and safety of all residents until it shuttered the Pineview and Camelot developments. Notwithstanding many frustrating challenges, Camelot residential subdivision ascended with new houses and a reputation of a safe, attractive, convenient and comfortable community in the burgeoning City of Goose Creek.

Poor water and wastewater services persisted as the most serious issue throughout Goose Creek for decades. As the number of houses and businesses increased, the need for a solution to the water supply and sewer collection and treatment



The first house constructed in Camelot Subdivision sold in 1962 to E.J. Wright. Today, the cozy home stands at 110 Evatt Dr. The image taken in 2013 is among the collections of the author.

problem intensified. Predictably, all Federal loan assistance programs, including the Veteran Administration and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, refused to grant loans in Goose Creek. When the State of South Carolina placed a moratorium on new construction because of “urgent health problems” resulting from sewer spillage, progress in the new Town of Goose Creek stuttered to a halt.

Mayor Hilton Waring Bunch did not offer for reelection in 1964, and incumbent Councilman Smith E. Hinnant was chosen in his stead. All looked to the new Mayor to find solutions,¹¹⁹ but good answers remained elusive.

The demand of larger establishments, such as new schools and churches, for reliable water and sewer systems of greater capacities, forced

the little town to grant a five-year exclusive franchise to St. Elmo (Speedy) Felkel. Felkel was contracted to operate and expand his privately owned water and sewer system throughout the incorporated area.¹²⁰ Many disapproved of this option, but Mr. Felkel’s substandard system was the only one available. His potable water source, as well as adequately designed sewer collection system, undergirded a period of new construction in Camelot. Notwithstanding the diligence of the Johnson brothers and their belief that the “one up above always guided,”¹²¹ their progressive enterprise sputtered to a halt when the tiny municipality tied the Pineview sewer system to the Camelot collection lines. As a result, the system overloaded until it dumped into and polluted the Goose Creek Reservoir.



The photograph taken in November 2003 before the destructive fire shows the structure without the large front portico nor the six two-story columns. The photograph is in the possession of the author.

The Oaks Estates

In 1956, four local businessmen formed The Oaks Company Incorporated, when they paid \$125,000 for the Parson House with 140 surrounding acres, and began constructing an exclusive residential development called “The Oaks Estate.”¹²² Restrictive covenants, unheard of in Berkeley County at that time, were applied to protect the architectural and structural appearance and integrity of the emerging residences. The North Charleston Country Club purchased most of The Oaks Plantation lands east of Highway 52 in 1959, and Harold L. Mims purchased 40 acres from the country club five years later (1964). He revitalized the golf course, added a ballroom to the two-story structure, and successfully managed the property as a golf and social center until a fire destroyed the 17,462 square foot mansion on Feb. 8, 2008.¹²³ After that catastrophe, Harold Mims struggled unsuccessfully to restore the house until his demise in 2013.

Today, descendants of the 20th century Johnson,

Etling, and Bunch families reside in the western and northern sections of the original Oaks Plantation that is Pineview and Camelot residential subdivisions. Descendants of antebellum confederate enthusiasts, such as the Vose and Cannon families, reside near the ancient venue.

But direct genetic connections to the ancient Middletons of the colonial era dissolved long ago. Nonetheless, the Middleton name persists in Goose Creek among African American families, whose ancestors lived, labored, and loved for centuries on the ancient land. Today, the land of mansions and moonshine remains a Carolina showplace, where visitors marvel at Edwin Parson’s mansion and the 300-year-old alee of grand oaks. The avenue of oaks remains a place of introspection where traders conspired, armies strategized, builders contrived, families dreamed and children of every era imagined their possibilities!¹²⁴



Smoke smoldered on the roof of the main house when this photograph was taken before noon on February 8, 2008. The early morning flames destroyed the ball room and did great damage to both floors of the central structure.



An aerial photograph circa 1970 shows the Oaks Country Club House after Harold Mims affected significant improvements including the addition of the Star Light Ball Room and swimming pool.



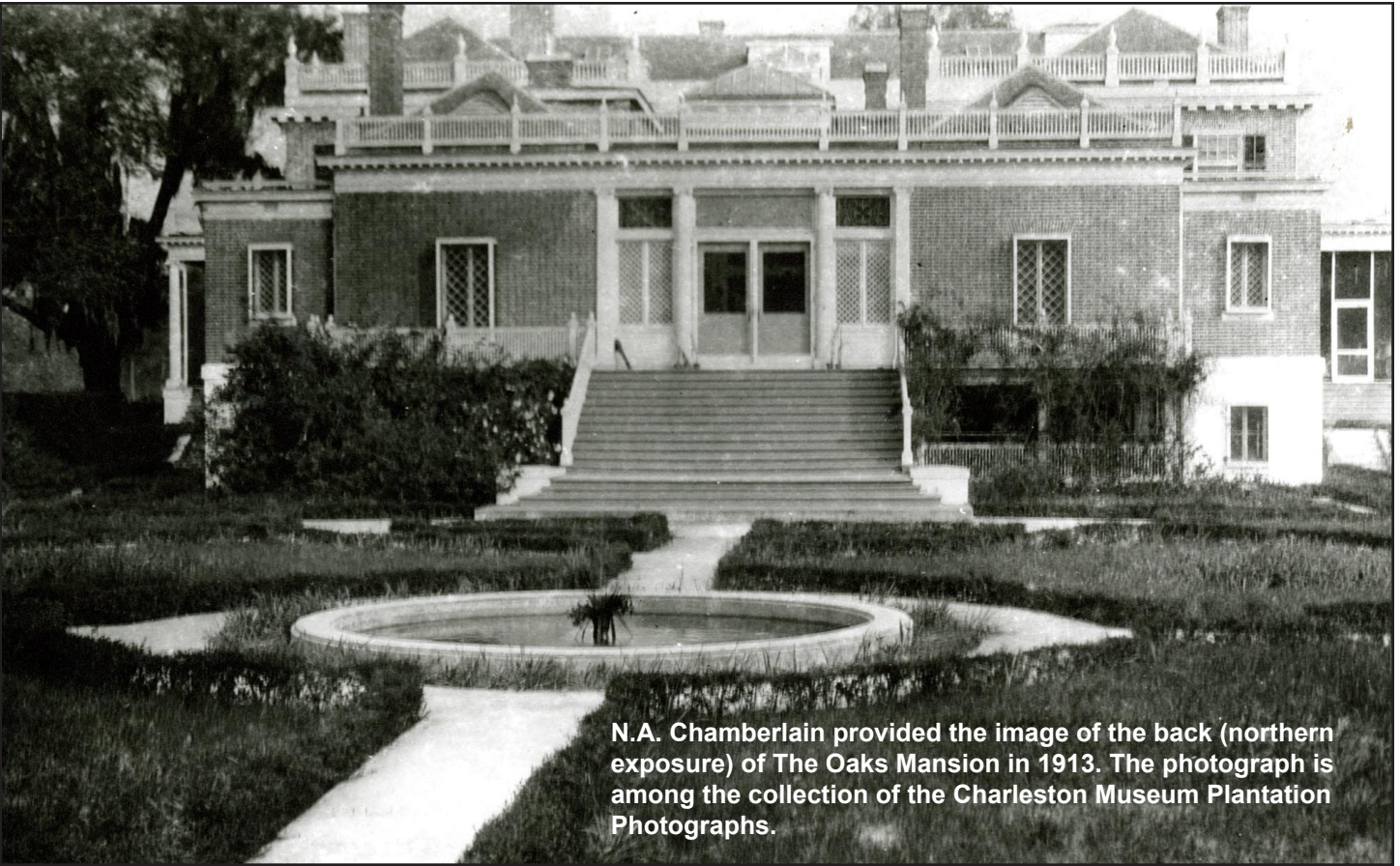
The photograph shows 19 energetic residents of The Oaks Estate in 2004 in preparation for a community clean-up. A strong kindred spirit brings the neighbors together often to safeguard the integrity of their homes. Pictured are (back row, l-r) Earl "Flash" Gordon, William Huggins, Melvin Whack, (second row) Jim Lyda, Bill Crosby, Ray Heatley, Tony Luker, Mary Luker, Kitsy Gordon, Elizabeth Tammenga, Dorothy Whack, Laura Huggins, (first row) Helen Conner, Doris Lyda, Jean Crosby and grandson, Laura Barrow and Susan Wuehrmann.



The 2007 photograph shows The Oaks volunteers caring for the ancient estate. They come home via a 300-year-old grand ale. Pictured are (front row, l-r) Hayes Groves, Jim Conner, Mary Ann Groves (granddaughter), Jean Crosby, Judy McBride, Larry Wyndham, Willie Huggins, Laura Huggins, (back row) Barbara Scott, Carl Scott, Charlene Sena, Melvin Whack and Skip McBride.



The ancient oaks planted by Henry Middleton bespeak of a 300-year legacy of a country home for Carolina gentry, warring armies, and fortunes won and lost.



N.A. Chamberlain provided the image of the back (northern exposure) of The Oaks Mansion in 1913. The photograph is among the collection of the Charleston Museum Plantation Photographs.

Appendix 1

The following chart summarizes the Middleton family land and slave assets in Carolina:

Name	Location	Acres	Number of Slaves	Year of Slave Count
The Oaks	Goose Creek	1,981	115	1738
Wassamassaw	Goose Creek	1,300	26	1738
Wampee	Dorchester	1,700	23	1738
Crowfield	Goose Creek	1,503	183	1729
Middleton Place	Dorchester	6,500	93	1863
Bonny Hall	Beaufort	3,670	227	1777
Richfield	Beaufort	2,897	100+	1778
Argyle Island	Beaufort	538	Unknown	Unknown
Cook's Mount	Camden	1,100	Unknown	Unknown
Cedar Grove	Dorchester	1,700	52	1793
Hobonny	Beaufort	1,300	495	1860
PonPon	Colleton	Unknown	21	1793
Washoe	Santee	9,000	398	1826
Whitehall	Greenville	800	26	1820
Weehaw	Georgetown	928	290	1860
The Launch	Colleton	2,700	Unknown	Unknown
Bannockburn	Georgetown	Unknown	318	1860
Ashley Hill	St. Andrew's	737	Unknown	Unknown
Old Brass	Beaufort	700	Unknown	Unknown

Barbara Doyle, Mary Edna Sullivan and Tracey Todd, Beyond the Fields, Slavery at Middleton Place, 2000, Middleton Place Foundation, p.13.

Appendix 2

The following chart list the names and values of 31 enslaved women residing at the Oaks Plantation in 1738.

Name of slave / Slave's worth (in pounds)		Name of slave / Slave's worth (in pounds)	
Booba	Not available	Hannah	100
Morris	Not available	Amey	200
Bristol	80	Bella	180
Maria	200	Betty	80
Satira and Two Children	350	Diana	100
Gritta and Two Children	300	Sarah	50
Old Jenny	100	Phillis	80
Tumma and Child	200	Mary	50
Toola and Child	200	Sahra	180
Judy	160	Cloe	150
Younger Judy	200	Dido	150
Daphney	200	Hager	160
Antem	200	Old Brass	Unknown
		Beaufort	700

Bibliography

1 Charles Duell, Middleton Place, A Phoenix Still Rising, Middleton Place Foundation, 2011, p. 11. Richard Middleton of London, who died in 1653, owned a number of properties in and near the city and his wealth, as well as the arranged marriages and dowries of his daughters and granddaughters, indicate a lofty social status. Richard's son Henry served as a government official for King Charles I, as well as "Lord Protector" Oliver Cromwell. Henry was the father of Edward (1641-1685) and Arthur (1647-1685), the brothers who settled in Carolina.

2 S.C. Archives, Renunciation, Series L10044, V.1792, p. 442.

3 H.A.M. Smith papers. Eye-witness accounts by HAM Smith are among the papers of the South Carolina Historical Society (SCHS).

4 The Charleston Jewish Congregation of Beth Elohim or House of God against Isaiah Moses, et. al. Charleston County Bill in Equity filed May 29, 1841.

5 Cheves Papers, The plantation conveyed to George M. Cannon in 1841, after which it conveyed to John Willson 10 years later (1850) and soon after to Carsten Vose.

6 Four men: Nathaniel W. Cabell, Timothy Street, Louis H. McClain and William M. Schram merged their dollars and purchased The Oaks in 1956.

7 Sir John Colleton, one of the Lords Proprietors of Carolina, instructed the Council to entice brothers Arthur and Edward Middleton to move to Carolina. On September 7, 1678 the Council

issued orders for land of their choice.

8 Benjamin Middleton, one of the most successful sugar planters in Barbados, conveyed his land to his oldest son Benjamin. When younger brothers Edward and Arthur failed to establish new plantations in Antigua, they sailed to Carolina. On June 28, 1680 a Warrant for Carolina land for Arthur & Edward Middleton was issued. The English Sugar Islands and the Founding of S.C., SCHS, South Carolina Historical Magazine (SCHM), Chapter 72, pp. 84,85.

9 Sarah Dew married Richard Fowell, mariner, in Barbados. Richard Fowell's relict, Sarah, and her second husband, Edward Middleton, leased Richard's ship, the 30-ton "Mary of Carolina" to Maurice and James Moore of Goose Creek on June 19, 1679. When she was widowed in 1678, Sarah married Edward Middleton Sr. a friend and business associate in Barbados and Charleston of Richard Fowell. Widow Sarah, Edward Middleton, and brother John Fowel executed the will of said Richard Fowell, an estate worth considerably more than 496 pounds, because it included a 30-ton sloop. They appear to be living on St. George's Island, Bermuda in 1680, but got Warrants for land in Carolina in 1679 and on 28 June 1680.

10 Henry A. Middleton, who died in 1887 at the age of 93, testified that he saw a plat dated 1684 that indicated an avenue of oaks where the present row now exists. If his memory was accurate the trees that line the avenue are more than 320 years old. The testimony appears

in the chain of title for the Oaks Estate, April 18, 1930, among the Cheves Papers, in the collections of the SCHS.

11 Arthur Middleton was part owner of at least two ships engaged in importing African slaves into Barbados in defiance of the trade monopoly the king granted to the Royal African Company.

12 Shelley E. Smith, "The Plantations of Colonial South Carolina: Transmission and Transformation in Provincial Culture," a dissertation submitted in partial requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of Art and Sciences, Columbia University, 1999, p. 79 and Table 6, p.148.

13 John Herbert plat of The Oaks November 10, 1716 among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

14 Job Howe died of yellow fever in 1707. He and Sarah Dew, Fowell, Middleton, Howe reared a son named Robert Howe, who married Mary Moore, a daughter of Governor James Moore. Sarah's son, Arthur Middleton became the guardian of his half-brother Robert Howe, when Robert's father, Job Howe, perished. Sarah Dew, Fowell, Middleton, Howe perished after 1720 in excess of 60 years of age.

15 Cheves Papers, 34/320.

16 George Winston Lane Jr., "The Middleton's of Eighteenth Century South Carolina: A Colonial Dynasty 1678-1787," a dissertation submitted in partial requirement for

the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Emory University, 1990, p. 411.

17 Edgar.1974, V.2: p. 454.

18 Langley, Lease and Release Book E, pp. 277-80.

19 William Middleton developed Crowfield's large, formal gardens between 1729 and 1742. Evidence shows the gardens included "reflecting pools, parterres, a bosquet or small compartment of trees and shrubs, bowling green, garden structures, several mounts, and various water works." Trinkley and Hacker, p. 27.

20 The South Carolina Gazette, September 23, 1783.

21 South Carolina Gazette, August 4, 1733.

22 Charleston County RMC Book T, p. 433.

23 Land Sales Advertisement, South Carolina Gazette, January 25, 1739.

24 Arthur died in 1737. Though he fathered eight children, only three survived to adulthood. His widow Sarah Middleton died on September 24, 1765. His grandson, also named Arthur, signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776, played an active role in the American Revolution, and served as a delegate to the Continental Congress.

25 SCHM, volume 92, p. 156.

26 Father of Arthur Middleton and grandfather of Henry Middleton (1770-1846), Henry was a delegate from South Carolina; justice of the peace and quorum, 1742-1780; member of the provincial house of commons, 1742-1755, and speaker

1745-1747, 1754 and 1755; officer of horse of the provincial forces in 1743; commissioner of Indian affairs in 1755; member of the King's Provincial Council from 1755 until his resignation in September 1770; member of the provincial convention in 1774; member of the Continental Congress 1774-1775 and president of that body from October 22, 1774, to May 10, 1775; member of the council of safety in 1775 and 1776; member of the Provincial Congress of South Carolina in 1775 and 1776; member of the committee to prepare a form of government in 1776; member of the legislative council under the transition government 1776-1778; member of the state senate 1778-1780.

27 Carl P. Borick, A Gallant Defense, The Seige of Charleston, 1780, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, South Carolina, p. 147.

28 Borick, p. 154.

29 SCHGM, v. 27, p. 5.

30 Edgar, 1974, v.2: p. 459.

31 Charles A. Goodrich, Lives of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence. New York: William Reed & Co., 1856, pp. 447-451.

32 S.C. Archives, Renunciation, Series L10044, V.1792, p. 442.

33 Sarah Middleton purchased a large section of neighboring Boochawee Plantation in 1739. This is the portion that Stephen Mazyck bought in 1805.

34 Adam Tunno to Isiah Moses, Charleston County Book H 8, p.13, Deed dated February 5, 1813. Consideration of \$6,000.00.

35 A Portion of the People, Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life, Theodore Rosengarten and Dale Rosengarten, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, South Carolina, 2002, p. 103.

36 S.C. Archives Series S126061 Year 1824, Item 2305.

37 The Private Diary of Edmund Ruffin, 1843, p. 61.

38 Plat of The Oaks showing 328 + 389 acres (cleared and wooded) belonging to [Josiah] Moses, on Goose Creek, in St. James, Goose Creek Parish, surveyed in 1817, among the collections of the SCHS, Charleston, South Carolina.

39 Isiah Moses to the Charleston Jewish Congregation of Beth Elohem, Charleston Deed Book C 9, p. 264. Date of mortgage January 15, 1818 to secure bond of \$2000.00, mortgage April 20, 1826 to secure bond of \$578.53.

40 SCHGM V.68: p. 244.

41 H.A.M. Smith papers, 12/182/9. Eyewitness accounts by HAM Smith are among the papers of the South Carolina Historical Society.

42 The Charleston Jewish Congregation of Beth Elohim or House of God against Isiah Moses, et. al. Charleston County Bill in Equity filed May 29, 1841.

43 "Plantation and 50 Negroes for Sale..." sales advertisement appearing in the Charleston Courier, February 26, 1840.

44 Charles P. Shier to George M. Cannon Charleston County H 11, p. 339, deed dated January 12, 1842.

45 George Cannon died intestate and a Bill of Equity forced the

sale of his land January 26, 1850. Carsten Vose acquired the property Charleston Deed Book R 13, p. 209, January 1, 1852. Deed recorded April 30, 1856.

46 The Oaks-A Restored Mansion of the South, The Home of Edwin Parsons at Goose Creek, S.C. Country Life In America, A Magazine for the Home-maker in the Country, Walter B. Chambers, FAIA Architect, Vol. XXIX, November 1915 to April 1916, Garden City and New York Doubleday, Page and Company, 1916, p. 53. The new farmhouse structure included the "walls of enormous thickness" of the original Middleton estate.

47 Carsten Vose to J. Hamilton Freer Trustee, MCO Book O, #15, p. 144. Carsten Vose to C. Vose Trustee, MCO Book H, #15, p. 605.

48 United States Census, Charleston District, St. James, Goose Creek Parish, 1830.

49 United States Census, St. James, Goose Creek Enumeration Census 1840 and 1850, Slave Schedule 1850 and Agricultural Census, St. James, Goose Creek Parish, 1860.

50 "At the request of C. Vose, I have this day cut by the black dotted line on this plat, three hundred and fifty three acres (353) more or less which are to be conveyed to Edward Miles Esq." This D.S Dwight plat is among the collections of the SCHS. Vose to Miles, Charleston County Deed Book L 14, p. 154. Deed recorded December 17, 1859, for consideration of \$2,450.

51 Plan of a tract of land the property lying and being on Goose Creek in the Parish of St. James,

District of Charleston and State of South Carolina. Containing 328 acres of cleared land and 389 acres in the whole including (not decipherable) 717 acres..., among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society. C.S. Dwight drew a plat with accompanying notations explaining the conveyance of Vose Property in 1859, "At the request of C. Vose, I have this day cut off...353 acres ...conveyed to Edward Miles Esq. (Oaks)...December 5, 1859." The plat is among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina. Carsten Vose appeared to reduce his holdings in the Eighteen-Mile tract in consideration for relocating. He moved to a house in Summerville in 1864 shortly before the invading Union Army occupied his house and store at the Eighteen-Mile Marker in late February 1865.

52 This was the second Republic of South Carolina, since South Carolina declared its independence (from Britain) the first time on March 26, 1776, more than three months prior to the United States Declaration of Independence.

53 Roland Dordal Family Papers, among the private collection of the Dordal family, 204 Easy Street, Goose Creek, South Carolina. Carsten's mother, Jane H. R. Vose was born in Goose Creek in 1813 and died at the Eighteen-Mile-House at the age of 38. Though the South Carolina state flag harkens back to the crescent worn by troops in the American Revolution, and the palmetto tree is a reminder of the palmetto logs that stopped British cannon balls in the bombardment of Ft. Moultrie during the same war, it is still very much a Confederate flag for its current incarnation. While the flag in some variation was adopted

under the South Carolina Militia Act of 1838, the flag as shown today was not officially adopted as the state flag until January, 1861. Then it was the flag of the seceded Republic of South Carolina - the first of the states to leave the Union.

54 Dordal Family Papers, p. 5. The Vose family resided in Summerville in the summer to avoid the "fevers" associated with the plantation. The family relocated to Summerville in 1852 but continued to own the eighteen-mile tract and tavern where they resided during the winter months. The secession convention of December 20, 1860 occurred while the family was residing on the plantation at the Eighteen-mile house.

55 Frederic A. Porcher papers, 1826-1922, Letter from Marion Porcher at Otranto to Clelia, May 25, 1865, among the collection of the South Carolina Historical Society.

56 Henry O. Marcy, Diary of a Surgeon, US Army, 1864-1892, February 26 - March 1 1865. The diary is among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina, 34/0496.

57 Marcy Diary February 27-March 1, 1865.

58 "A Tract of land Situate in St. James, Goose Creek formerly the property of Mr. Beiling now C. Vose and to be conveyed to Mr. Henry A. Middleton containing two hundred acres...Resurveyed April 25, 1871 at the request of Mr. Vose..." A plat among the collections of the SCHS, Charleston, South Carolina, 33-40-58.

59 Berkeley County Deed Book C.2, pp. 550-553. Deed dated

October 7, 1889 and recorded January 30, 1890.

60 News and Courier May 18, 1894.

61 Margaret Middleton Rivers Eastman, Old Charleston Originals: From Celebrities to Scoundrels, The History Press, Charleston, 2011, p. 91.

62 Edwin Parsons was a charter member of the Goose Creek Club for Preserving Game, a hunting club that met near the Otranto Station. The hunt club records are with the Conner Family Papers, 28-235-3 among the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society.

63 "Up the Ashley and the Cooper," Harper's Magazine, 1875.

64 Michael Trinkley, Debi Hacker and Natalie Adama, Broom Hall: "A Good One and in a Pleasant Neighborhood," 1995, The Chicora Foundation, Inc. 861 Arbutus Drive, Columbia, South Carolina, p. 68.

65 "The Oaks - A Restored Mansion of the South, The Home of Edwin Parsons at Goose Creek, S.C. Country Life In America, A Magazine for the Home-maker in the Country, Walter B. Chambers, FAIA Architect, Vol. XXIX, November 1915 to April 1916, Garden City and New York Doubleday, Page and Company, 1916, p. 53.

66 The Oaks - A Restored Mansion of the South, The Home of Edwin Parsons at Goose Creek, S.C.

67 The two pilasters were architectural elements used to give the appearance of a supporting column to articulate an extent of support but with merely an

ornamental function. There were six columns and two pilasters.

68 Arthur Frost listed interior items removed from the premises on April 1, 1930, among the business papers of Mitchell and Horlbeck, The Oaks Plantation, 1928-1930, SCHS.

69 Author telephone interview with Harriott Pinckney Means Johnson, daughter of Mary Battle Parsons Means, April 8, 2015.

70 Official Automobile Directory of the State of New York, 1914, J.K. Burton and Company, New York, register number 53072. Also see, New York Social Register, 1920.

71 The Goose Creek Club for Preserving Game was once called the Otranto Hunting Club and nicknamed "Gosling" Club and later the Oaks Hunting Club. The Stoney Family papers, 1775-1949, South Carolina Historical Society. The records contain a bound volume of club rules, constitution, bylaws and a journal of hunts and activities at The Oaks Hunting Club. Also see Conner, Henry Workman 1890-1948. Papers deposited with the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

72 "The Oaks - A Restored Mansion of the South," p. 54.

73 Eastman, p. 92. Also see, Alumni Directory, Yale University, 1920, New Haven, Connecticut, p.52.

74 Margaret Middleton Rivers Eastman, Old Charleston Originals: From Celebrities to Scoundrels, The History Press, Charleston, S.C. 2011.

75 Parsons Means Wedding, film 116mm reel, at the South Carolina

Historical Society, Addlestone Library, College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina.

76 An image of the gate and fence appears in Joseph Ioor Waring article Homes of Long Ago in The Exposition. See Waring Private Papers on deposit at the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

77 Edwin Parsons to Berkeley County Highway Commissioners 37-and-one-half feet of right of way for Route 41, "Coastal Highway" Charleston County Deed Book C 23, p. 739.

78 Correspondence (1901-1910) of Edwin Parsons, owner of The Oaks Plantation, concerns water and property matters. Records (1911-1921) Hagood, Rivers and Young miscellaneous records, 1832-1950. Correspondence (1901-1910) of Edwin Parsons, owner of The Oaks Plantation, concerning water and property matters. South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

79 The State Newspaper, Columbia, South Carolina, January 15, 1921.

80 Henry Ravenel Dwight, Some Historic Spots in Berkeley County, p. 21. William Gilmore Simms (April 17, 1806 – June 11, 1870) was a poet, novelist and historian from Charleston. His writings achieved great prominence during the 19th century.

81 Leiding, p. 23. Charleston Magazine in May of 2003 that talked about Dorothy Gish in Charleston, SC in 1920 to film Little Miss Rebellion. There was also a photo of her on the set.

82 Langdon Cheves, 1848-

1939, Miscellaneous land papers, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina. A road right-of-way, 50 (later 75) feet wide was granted by Mrs. Mary W. Parsons to Berkeley County for the "National Highway" (South Carolina Highway 52) in 1921. Also see: Plat of The Oaks Plantation 1913. S.C. Historical Society maps/plats of part of "The Oaks Plantation" owned by Langdon Cheves, 1913.

83 Memorandum of Agreement, Berkeley County, 2nd St. James, Township, January 1, 1915, "Between Langdon Cheves and James Nelson." The rental contract is with the Langdon Cheves Papers among the collections of the SCHS.

84 "Berkeley County Moonshine," Jack Leland, Charleston News and Courier, October 19, 1984, Charleston, South Carolina.

85 "President Wilson Signs War Declaration..." Charleston News and Courier, April 7, 1917, Charleston, South Carolina.

86 Jim McNeil, Charleston's Navy Yard, A Picture History, Coker Craft Press, Charleston, South Carolina, 1985, p.62.

87 Author interview with Martha Dangerfield Varner, wife of Hamp Varner at Westview Elementary School, April 25, 2005. She testified that agents arrested her husband for making moonshine. The Capt. Cuttle Memorandum Book, "Prohibition," Federal Agent, Adolf B. Nimitz Field Notes, among the private papers of Jack Lynes, Aiken, South Carolina. Nimitz commenced work as a Federal Prohibition Agent March 25, 1928. The field notes list the names of individuals engaged in producing and transporting moonshine in the Carnes Crossroads area. A "run"

drainage ditch with intermittent flow provided the most reliable source of water near Carnes Crossroads. The process was sometimes beyond description for unsanitary practices according to Nimitz letter to Art Linkletter April 8, 1967, Moncks Corner, South Carolina.

88 Adolph (A.B.) Nimitz married Emily Lynes Villepontaux and was the owner, among other things, of Bonneau Ferry Plantation. He was a Federal Prohibition Agent from 1928 to 1930. His field notebook is in the possession of Jack Lynes, Aiken, South Carolina.

89 Adolf B. Nimitz field book, November 6, 1928, "...arrested Horace Driggers, Joe Clark and Walter Speisseggar, 17 miles from Charleston, ¼ mile north of Blue House Road." This description places the site north of the Goose Creek flow way on the western track of The Oaks Plantation that is today the Camelot Residential Subdivision.

90 Langston Cheves letter to W.H. Dennis, Berkeley Highway Commissioner, February 16, 1922, regarding acquiring right-of-way for the new highway. The letter is among the Langdon Cheves Business Papers, SCHS.

91 Author interview of Kenneth Koester, May 12, 2002, Casey Community Center. "My father carried me fishing in Berkeley County. I remember that when we crossed over Goose Creek and came up, we looked for the sheriff's car and my father always said it was a speed trap."

92 Jack Leland.

93 Author interview with Fred Mosely, at his residence on Liberty Hall Road, October 15, 1978.

Mosely explained that the Berkeley County Deputy transported his illicit brew to markets. Mosely testified, "He [deputy sheriff] pulled up, opened up his trunk...I loaded the crate of jars, he gave me money and left...I don't know where he took it."

94 Berkeley Democrat, 3-13-1932.

95 "Berkeley County Moonshine," Jack Leland, October 19, 1984, Charleston News and Courier Newspaper, Charleston, South Carolina.

96 Author interview with Fred Moseley, at his residence at his granddaughter's home on Liberty Hall Road, Goose Creek, South Carolina, October 15, 1978. Moseley testified that the sheriff deputies transported the local moonshine to distribution points.

97 Moseley interview.

98 Mitchell and Horlbeck, The Oaks Plantation, 1928-1930, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina. Cheves, Miscellaneous land papers, 34/320 SCHS. Charleston News and Courier, July 12, 1931.

99 Charles H. Sabin, Esq. Guaranty Trust Company, 140 Broadway, New York, New York, Chain of Title of the Estate of Edwin Parsons, "The Oaks." The title search findings are among the Cheves Papers, 34/320, at the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina. The Carolina Historical Society, 0153.02.01.03. Records consist of property records and correspondence related to the sale of a plantation called the Oaks in Berkeley County (S.C.), sold by Mary Battle Whitehead Parsons (widow of Edwin Parsons) to

Charles H. Sabin. Property records include settlement statements, a conveyance, abstract of title, estate records, a copy of the will of Edwin Parsons (d. 1921), and other items. Correspondents include Charles H. Sabin (N.Y.) and Mitchell & Horlbeck. In addition, there is an oversized blueprint plat (1930?) of the Oaks. Cite as Mitchell and Horlbeck, Oaks Plantation Records, 1928-1930 (153.02.01.03), South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

100 Berkeley County Auditor Report 1929, among the Mitchell and Horlbeck papers.

101 Three tracks composed The Oaks conveyed: Main section, 349 acres, East of the Old State Road composed of 62 acres, and a third parcel of 7.53 acres totaled 418.53 acres. Edwin Parsons agreed to permit the Goose Creek dam and flow way to raise water levels over of The Oaks 62 acres of water front property.

102 Charleston News and Courier, 7-12-1931 and The Post and Courier, 'The Oaks' was a stately mansion, February 21, 2004.

103 Brad Battle (Edwin Parsons Grandson), The Oaks Plantation Golf and Country Club in Goose Creek damaged by fire February 5, The Post and Courier.

104 The News and Courier, Charleston, South Carolina, Vol. 145, no. 52, February 22, 1947.

105 A plat of the Oaks Estate, Berkeley County, South Carolina, November 23, 1956, surveyed by William R. Zerbst, reg. L.S. No. 1843, in the Clerk of Court Office, for Berkeley County, South Carolina, Plat book L, page 129. Modifications to the covenants

were applied to section B of The Oaks in January 1959. Subsequent modifications to the covenants applied as late as 1967, book 1614, page 204, Berkeley County Office Building, Moncks Corner, South Carolina.

106 Author interview with Irma Crawford Telling Pratt at United Methodist Church October, Goose Creek, South Carolina October 31, 2014. Ms. Pratt testified that they used an "out house" during the 1950s and "well into the 1960s."

107 Author interview with Irma Crawford Telling Pratt at United Methodist Church, Goose Creek, South Carolina, October 31, 2014. Ms. Pratt testified that her father produced moonshine in the Camelot area at his still during the 1950s and once government agents destroyed his still.

108 Author interview with J.A. Johnson, et.al. at St. James Restaurant in Goose Creek, November 12, 2013. "(Magistrate M.C.) Cannon controlled the area... it was a bootlegger's heaven."

109 Author interview with J.A. Johnson, et.al. at St. James Restaurant in Goose Creek, November 12, 2013.

110 Author interview with St. Elmo (Speedy) Felkel at Goose Creek City Hall, October 14, 2009.

111 Author interview with St. Elmo (Speedy) Felkel via telephone, Saturday, April 4, 2015. Felkel testified that he discovered illegal distilleries when he purchased and cleared 363 lots of Forest Lawn Subdivision in 1952.

112 Author interview with J. A. (James) Johnson, November 1, 2013, St. James, Restaurant,

Goose Creek, South Carolina.

113 J.A. Johnson interview.

114 J.A. Johnson interview.

115 Goose Creek was a "bootlegger's heaven... (Magistrate) Cannon controlled the production and employed James Harry Wigfall - a black guy - to run the stills." J.A. Johnson interview.

116 Author interview with Barbara Mann, spouse of Goose Creek Mayor Malvin Mann, United Methodist Church April 1, 2015.

117 Author interview with James Rosier at Wappolah Plantation lodge May 7, 2015.

118 Town Council Minutes, 7-9-64.

119 Town Council Minutes, 3-1-66.

120 Town Council Minutes, 3-7-68.

121 Author interview with Johnson.

122 A plat of the Oaks Estate, Berkeley County, South Carolina, November 23, 1956, surveyed by William R. Zerbst, reg. L.S. No. 1843, in the Clerk of Court Office, for Berkeley County, South Carolina, Plat book L, page 129. Modifications to the covenants were applied to section B of the Oaks in January 1959. Subsequent modifications to the covenants applied as late as 1967, book 1614, page 204, Berkeley County Office Building, Moncks Corner, SC.

123 "The Oaks' fire evokes memories," February 19, 2008. The estate was previously listed for sale for \$12,000,000.

124 See Appendix 2 for a listing of slave women residing at The Oaks.

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On the Cover

Unidentified people stand beside a 1910 Ford Model T Touring Car on the circular drive at The Oaks Manor House in Goose Creek, South Carolina. In 1914, Edwin Parsons, owner of The Oaks, drove a Cadillac Touring Car in New York. The photograph is courtesy of the Low Country Digital Library.

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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.



“we must
p preserve the p past
p protect the p present
and p lan for
p progress”

Michael James Heitzler

3/1/2016