

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW
OF THE SUNNY POINT TERMINAL AREA
ON THE LOWER CAPE FEAR RIVER

by
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FOX RIVER

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ENGLISH BOND

50% COTTON

The first appearance of white men in the lower Cape Fear region of North Carolina is thought to have occurred during the 1526 expedition of the Spanish explorer, Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon. The French-sponsored expedition of Giovanni Verrazzano two years earlier came within sight of Cape Fear itself and the adjoining coastline, but apparently did not enter the mouth of the Cape Fear River.¹ Having set sail from Hispaniola for an intended destination along the coast of present-day South Carolina, Ayllon apparently entered the mouth of Cape Fear which he referred to as the River Jordan. One of his vessels came to grief in the lower reaches of the Cape Fear, and was replaced by another craft constructed by his men on the west bank of the stream.² The building of this ship, more than four and a half centuries ago, may well be the basis of the local tradition that "a Spanish shipyard" was once located on the west bank of the Cape Fear, approximately two and a half miles upstream from what is now the town of Southport.³ This location would place the site of the supposed shipyard facility about midway between Southport and the mouth of Walden Creek, somewhat below the southern boundary of the present-day Sunny Point Terminal; however, there is at least the possibility that Ayllon's vessel was constructed farther upstream, much nearer the area of the proposed channel improvement project.

From his base on the lower Cape Fear, Ayllon dispatched parties of men to explore the interior of the region and the adjacent coastline. Soon, however, after the replacement of his lost vessel, Ayllon hastened to relocate his expedition southward, apparently on Winyaw Bay in present-day South Carolina. Here he founded the town of San Miguel de Gualdape, the first white settlement in what is now the United States. Unfortunately this settlement proved to be short-lived. During the first winter Ayllon was among the many who succumbed

to cold and disease. Also beset by internal dissensions and a shortage of supplies, the wretched survivors soon gave up the settlement attempt and returned to Hispaniola.⁴

In August of 1662, nearly a century and a half after Ayllon's departure, the New Englander William Hilton set sail for the lower Cape Fear aboard the ship Adventure. After several failures to reach his appointed destination, Hilton entered the mouth of the Cape Fear on the 4th of October. For more than three weeks Hilton and his associates explored the stream, taking the Adventure as far upstream as present-day Wilmington, and then proceeding by small boat well up the river's northeast branch. Representing a group of prospective Massachusetts Bay colonists, Hilton's primary purpose in coming to the Cape Fear was to examine the feasibility of establishing a settlement along its banks. On the map later prepared for Hilton by Nicholas Shapley, a number of prominent landmarks were identified along the lower reaches of the Cape Fear and along the northeast branch. Among the former was "P/oint/Winslow" (named for crew member Edward Winslow), which was located only a few miles upstream from the ocean bar and on the west bank, in or near the area now embraced within the boundaries of the Sunny Point Terminal. Close by "P. Winslow" on the Shapley map was "Crane Island," also near the project area. Farther upstream was Old Town Creek, which was referred to as "Indian River." All indications are that Hilton came away from his initial explorations with a favorable impression of the lower Cape Fear as an area conducive to settlement.⁵

Encouraged by Hilton's favorable report, a group of hopeful New England colonists sailed down the Atlantic coastline and entered the mouth of the Cape Fear River late in the winter of 1662-1663. These prospective colonists soon departed from the region, however, having made little concerted or effective effort to establish a permanent settlement. Behind them they left a quantity

of livestock and possibly other possessions as well. The reason for their early abandonment of the region is not entirely clear; but they are said to have left a public notice intended to discourage other prospective settlers in the future.⁶

In October of 1663 Hilton returned aboard the Adventure to conduct a more extensive exploration of the lower Cape Fear. On this occasion he had sailed from Barbados rather than New England, and primarily on behalf of prospective Barbadian colonists. For more than two months he and his men explored the lower Cape Fear, and again they were favorably impressed by their discoveries there.⁷

Enticed by the contents of Hilton's more detailed account, a group of Barbadians soon set sail for the Cape Fear under the leadership of John Vassall. Arriving in May of 1664, they began a concerted effort to establish a permanent colony. Vassall's group was subsequently joined by other colonists from Barbados, New England, and elsewhere. Their combined activities on the lower Cape Fear soon gave birth to the County of Clarendon and to the settlement called Charles Town, which is thought to have been located on the west bank of the river, just above the mouth of Town Creek. Although Charles Town was the commercial and political center of Clarendon, colonists soon took up choice lands and established homesites along a rather lengthy section of the lower Cape Fear:

Within two years the smoke curling from the chimneys of these modest and scattered homes could be seen for some sixty miles along the banks of the Charles River, which the settlers . . . called the stream. . . . While the settlement was primarily an agricultural community, there was also a lucrative trade with the Indians who came from great distances to exchange furs and skins for English goods.⁸

From what little is known of the Clarendon settlement of the mid-1660s, it seems highly probable that at least some of its widely dispersed residents established homesites along the shoreline of what is now the Sunny Point Terminal.⁹

Unfortunately, the Clarendon settlement was soon brought to an end by a combination of inadequate external support, internal dissention, and increasingly hostile relations with local Indians. Despite John Vassall's manful endeavors to hold the beleaguered colony together, even he was forced to acknowledge at length the hopelessness of the enterprise.¹⁰ The rate of colonists' departures by land and sea accelerated markedly in the spring of 1667, and by early autumn of that year the colony was completely deserted, many of its erstwhile residents having removed to Virginia, others to New England:

Weighted down by want and harassed by the Indians, the colonists were not able to carry the burden alone. Bereft of hope, they departed and left behind their homes and their fields to be engulfed by the lonely wilderness from which they had sprung.¹¹

Following the failure of the Clarendon settlement, the lower Cape Fear returned to its Indian inhabitants for more than half a century.¹²

Little is known of the Cape Fear Indians, who preceded the Clarendon settlement and reclaimed their lands from the colonists after the latter's departure. These Indians are thought, however, to have represented the wide-ranging Siouan stock or language group. It has been estimated that the Cape Fear Indians or their immediate predecessors numbered about 1,000 persons in the early seventeenth century, and that quite a number of towns must have existed at that time along the lower Cape Fear and along the northwest branch. During William Hilton's initial investigation of the Cape Fear region in 1662, he is thought to have encountered only about 100 of these Indians; but this may have been

due to the fact that much of his time was spent on the Northeast Cape Fear, where the native people were far less numerous.¹³

The Indians of the lower Cape Fear are thought to have lived in relative isolation from each other, in open towns or farm communities scattered along the banks of the river and its tributaries. The number and location of their towns at the time of the Clarendon settlement are unknown. By 1715 the Cape Fears had five towns, with their combined populations consisting of only seventy-six men and 130 women and children.¹⁴ Their numbers were still further reduced during the Yamassee War of 1715-1716, when they joined with the Waccamaws, Cheraws, and other Siouan groups against white settlers in South Carolina. Many of the Cape Fear Indians were killed and their remaining towns laid waste when Colonel Maurice Moore led his troops on a line of march which passed directly through the lower Cape Fear region. The very few Indians in the area who survived Moore's campaign soon filtered westward and southward to join the Waccamaws and Winyaws. By 1730, if not long before, the Cape Fears had completely vanished from the area of their former habitation.¹⁵

Only two years after the Yamassee War there occurred the only incident known involving the presence of pirates on the lower Cape Fear--this was the capture of Stede Bonnet, one-time associate of the notorious Edward Teach or Blackbeard. For several weeks, late in the summer of 1718, Bonnet and his men sought refuge in the lower Cape Fear while careening and repairing Bonnet's sloop, the Royal James (formerly the Revenge). In addition to the Royal James, Bonnet brought with him to the Cape Fear two vessels which he and his crew had captured, the New England sloops Fortune and Francis, together with their hapless and captive crews. Learning of Bonnet's reported presence on the lower Cape Fear, officials in Charlestown (now Charleston) dispatched two vessels northward under Colonel William Rhett to attempt his capture. On the evening

of 26 September Rhett's vessels crossed the bar at Old Inlet and soon spotted Bonnet's vessels upstream, lying at anchor "over a point of land." During the next day there occurred a bizarre running battle in the lower Cape Fear, during which the Royal James and Rhett's two sloops all ran aground on shoals along the west bank. For approximately five hours the three vessels foundered until finally floated free by the rising tide. During the engagement which followed Bonnet was soon forced to surrender; and he and his crew were subsequently taken to Charlestown and hanged.¹⁶ The capture of Bonnet is thought to have taken place a short distance upstream from present-day Southport, near a jut of land still called Bonnet's Point.¹⁷ It appears quite possible, however, that the incident occurred somewhat further upstream, near the mouth of present-day Walden Creek and Snows Point.

The final opening of the lower Cape Fear region to permanent white settlement, some seven years after Bonnet's capture, was due in large measure to the activities and actual presence of proprietary and later royal governor George Burrington. In addition to actively encouraging settlement of the area, Burrington took it upon himself to help establish arteries of transportation and commerce, liberalize the procedures for taking up lands, and blink at South Carolina's long-standing claim to the river's west bank.¹⁸ Most important of all, perhaps, Burrington established a pioneer plantation of his own on the lower Cape Fear, on the west bank of the stream just above the mouth of present-day Walden Creek. Early maps of the lower Cape Fear, dating from the 1730s and 1740s, clearly indicate that Walden Creek was previously known as Governors (or Burringtons) Creek, and that Snows Point was once known as Governors (or Burringtons) Point, due to the presence of Burrington's plantation there.¹⁹

In 1731, after returning to North Carolina from England as royal governor to the colony, Burrington could take a portion of satisfaction from the fact

that the settlement "on Cape Fear begun by me six years past" had developed into "the place of the greatest Trade in the whole Province."²⁰ Clearly, however, conditions had been vastly different when his initial efforts on the lower Cape Fear began. In writing to the Board of Trade in 1733, he gave a brief account of his personal hardships and of the conditions of the lower Cape Fear country when he first arrived there in the winter of 1724-1725:

North Carolina was little known or mentioned before I was Governor for the proprietors, when I came first, I found the Inhabitants few and poor. . . . Perfecting the Settlement on Cape Fear River cost me a great sum of money, and infinite trouble. I endured the first winter I went there, all the hardships could happen to a man destitute of a house to live in, that was above a hundred miles from a Neighbor in a pathless Country and was obliged to have all provisions brought by sea at great expense to support the number of men I carried there. . . .²¹

Few details are available concerning Burrington's plantation on present-day Snows Point, just within the southern boundary of the Sunny Point Terminal. Indications are that the house itself was constructed in 1725, and that an unspecified number of servants and slaves were employed at the house and on the plantation. Indeed, Burrington created a good deal of apprehension among the citizens of Brunswick Town and other area residents in 1731 by putting to work on his plantation seven slaves reportedly stolen from their Spanish owners at St. Augustine. His neighbors were rendered even more apprehensive by his subsequent refusal to relinquish these slaves to the Spanish agent who had come northward from Florida to reclaim them:

This proceeding of the Governor the Inhabitants upon Cape Fear River are apprehensive will be highly resented by the Spaniards, and as there is no Fort to protect the young Settlement and being open and every way easy to be invaded, they are in great fear the Spaniards will make reprizals, by taking their Negroes, as they may without difficulty.²²

Fortunately for the residents of Brunswick Town and the surrounding area, the fears of Spanish reprizals did not materialize--at least, not for many years.²³

ENGLISH BOND

In addition to his plantation on present-day Snows Point, Burrington acquired, during his two terms as governor, vast landholdings elsewhere in North Carolina. On the Northeast Cape Fear River, at Stag Park, he lay disputed claim to some 10,000 acres, where he apparently established a summer home. He also acquired considerable land in what later became Orange County. Taken altogether, Burrington's landholdings in North Carolina at the time of his death in 1759 amounted to upwards of 18,400 acres.²⁴

Closely associated with Governor Burrington's pioneer activities on the lower Cape Fear was the arrival of Maurice Moore and other prominent South Carolinians and the establishment of Brunswick Town, the excavated ruins of which lie just north of the upper boundary of the Sunny Point Terminal. From the time of its founding in the mid-1720s until the Revolutionary War, Brunswick Town was to be the political, social, and commercial center of the lower Cape Fear settlement. The town of Brunswick was laid out in 1725 on a 360 acre tract of land belonging to Maurice Moore and his brother Roger. Some 360 lots were included in the plan for Brunswick, each of which contained one-half acre of ground. It is uncertain how many lots were sold or how many houses were built during the early years of the town's existence.²⁵ In 1731 the Philadelphia traveler Hugh Meredith rendered the following account of the fledgling settlement:

The only Town they as yet have is Brunswick, seated on the River Clarendon /i.e., Cape Fear/, about 18 or 20 Miles from the mouth of it; having a commodious place for Ships to lie safe in all Weathers, and is likely to be a Place of Trade, and the Seat of Government; tho' at present but a poor, hungry, unprovided Place, consisting of not above 10 or 12 scattering mean Houses, hardly worth the name of a Village; but the Platform is good and convenient, and the Ground high, considering the Country.²⁶

Brunswick Town was destined never to be a large town. By 1754 it was said to contain only about twenty families or about 150 people. Even by the time of the Revolution it is probable that Brunswick's population did not exceed

200.²⁷ Nevertheless, the town did achieve considerable importance in the overall context of colonial North Carolina as the administrative center of one of its five ports of entry and as the place of residence and center of operations for some of North Carolina's most prominent men. Indeed, Russellborough, just above the town, served as the home of two colonial governors, Arthur Dobbs and William Tryon, the latter removing in 1770 to take up residence in the newly completed palace at Newbern.²⁸

Brunswick had been designated as a port of entry by the end of March, 1731. All vessels entering or leaving the Cape Fear were required to clear with the customs officials stationed there.²⁹ The principal exports of Port Brunswick throughout the colonial period were naval stores (tar, pitch, and turpentine), lumber and wood products, rice, corn, livestock, and other agricultural products. Imports consisted primarily of a wide variety of manufactured articles, cloth, wine, rum, molasses, and salt.³⁰ From fairly modest beginnings, the trade of Port Brunswick rose rather rapidly during the decades just prior to the Revolution. During the years 1767 to 1772, a total of more than 600 vessels entered and cleared with port officials.³¹ Increasingly with the passage of time, however, incoming vessels were bound upriver to Wilmington, rather than to the older Brunswick Town.

From its establishment in the mid-1730s, Wilmington began a slow but inexorable ascendancy over Brunswick as a center of trade and commerce. With Wilmington's rise came a steady decline in the importance and prosperity of Brunswick.³² By the mid-1760s Wilmington had grown to roughly twice the size of Brunswick; and by the coming of the Revolution, Wilmington was approximately three times the size of the older town.³³

Throughout the 1740s there was a recurring and not unrealistic fear of a Spanish attack among the residents of Brunswick Town and the surrounding country-

side. As early as 1731 this fear had been expressed in connection with Governor Burrington's seizure of the seven slaves reportedly stolen at St. Augustine. In November of 1740, during the War of Jenkins Ear, a company of Cape Fear men sailed southward to take part eventually in the ill-fated attack on the Spanish fortress of Cartagena, on the coast of South America. Two years later only twenty-five survivors of the debacle returned to their Cape Fear homes. The English failure at Cartagena greatly increased the gnawing fears of a Spanish attack among the residents of the Brunswick area.³⁴

In May of 1741, even before the return of the Cartagena survivors, a Spanish man-of-war lay at anchor off the mouth of the Cape Fear, preying with impunity upon hapless merchant vessels as they entered and cleared through Port Brunswick. Two crew members of this Spanish vessel were said to be familiar with the lower Cape Fear region and to have urged their comrades to launch an attack on Orton, the plantation home of Roger Moore, just above Brunswick Town. For some reason, however, this projected upriver raid did not materialize.³⁵

Tensions were further increased in 1743 when North Carolina furnished 1,000 men under Maurice Moore to help defend South Carolina against an anticipated Spanish attack from Cuba. By August of that year two English men-of-war were stationed at Brunswick to guard against possible attack and further Spanish seizures of goods and vessels. By this and related measures, Spanish depredations in the Cape Fear area were temporarily reduced, but not entirely eliminated.³⁶

In 1745 continuing fears of a Spanish attack on the lower Cape Fear at last prompted Governor Gabriel Johnston and the colonial assembly to begin construction on Fort Johnston at present-day Southport, some twelve miles downstream from Brunswick Town. This urgently needed facility was supposedly

completed in 1749; but throughout the 1750s and early 1760s, it was reported from time to time to be woefully inadequate or in a state of neglect and disrepair. Moreover, the defensive value of Fort Johnston was considerably reduced in 1761, when a violent storm opened New Inlet several miles upstream. Following the creation of New Inlet, it was possible for small, shallow-draft vessels to enter the Cape Fear River without venturing past Fort Johnston to the south.³⁷

Late in the summer of 1748, when Fort Johnston was still under construction, the long-feared Spanish incursion into the lower Cape Fear became a reality. On the morning of 4 September two Spanish privateers and a captive sloop crossed over the Cape Fear bar and sailed upriver, with the immediate objective of seizing the slaves at work on Fort Johnston. Thwarted in this initial aim, the Spaniards continued upstream and attacked the nearly defenseless Brunswick Town. While the main body of Spanish invaders arrived at Brunswick aboard their three vessels, others attacked the town by land, having disembarked a short distance downstream, quite probably along the shoreline of what is now the Sunny Point Terminal. For two days the invading Spaniards occupied the nearly deserted town, looting its shops and homes, taking some hostages, and plundering the merchant vessels at its docks. Driven aboard their ships by local militia forces on the third day, the Spaniards continued to shell Brunswick Town from the river, despite the fortuitous explosion and loss of one of their vessels, the Fortuna. Finally, on the morning of September 8th, the remaining Spanish vessels fell down the Cape Fear and sailed away.³⁸

Any involvement of the Sunny Point Terminal area with the Spanish attack on Brunswick Town would most likely have occurred just prior to the actual seizure of the town. However, it is entirely possible that the area might also have been involved in the looting of abandoned homes in the vicinity and

in the maneuvers of local militia forces prior to their successful counter-attack against the Spaniards on the third day of occupation.

Although the evidence is rather meager, it is apparent that several plantations were established below Brunswick Town during the half century preceding the American Revolution. It is also apparent, however, that most of the plantations established during this early period were situated between Brunswick Town and Wilmington, and along the northeast and northwest branches of the Cape Fear. Indeed, this continued to be the case after the Revolution and throughout the antebellum period as well.

Governor George Burrington's plantation at present-day Snows Point was apparently the earliest to be established within the area now encompassed by the Sunny Point Terminal. Moreover, the site of Burrington's plantation was the same or nearly the same as that subsequently occupied by the prominent rice planter, Robert Snow. Snow was a member of the vestry of St. Philips Church in Brunswick Town, a grandjurymen, and a justice of the peace for Brunswick County, which was formed out of New Hanover in 1764. With the approach of the Revolution, he also became an active promoter of the Patriot cause.³⁹

Robert Snow apparently established his Snows Point plantation in the 1750s or very early 1760s, having previously been a road commissioner in the northwestern portion of New Hanover County.⁴⁰ There is no indication as to whether Governor Burrington's former residence was still standing when Snow acquired the property. In 1768 Snow and his estranged wife, Mary, arranged a legal separation and division of property which indicates that their home on Snows Point was well if not lavishly furnished. Provisions regarding slaves would also seem to indicate considerable agricultural production.⁴¹

The presence of Snow's plantation was duly recorded on the Collet Map of 1770, which shows the former Governors Point (or Burringtons Point) as "Snow Pt." Five years after the Collet Map was drawn, the presence of Snow's plantation was also noted by the Scottish "Lady of Quality," Janet Schaw, who was just beginning her visit to the Cape Fear region. Indeed, Snow's plantation house seems to have been the first dwelling seen by Miss Schaw in America.⁴²

Regrettably, the sources are extremely confusing and contradictory with regard to another lower Cape Fear plantation--that of Major General Robert Howe, North Carolina's highest ranking officer during the Revolutionary War. At least three modern writers, without dealing with the question in detail, state that General Howe's principal place of residence was Kendall (or Kendal), located just above the mouth of Orton Creek.⁴³ Numerous older writers, however, have stated with confidence that the Howe plantation was located on an elusive jut of land below Brunswick Town, which in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was known as Howes Point. Unfortunately, these writers failed to describe the location of Howes Point precisely, and the feature does not appear to have been designated by name on any of the maps of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. In general, the older authorities also assert that the plantation owned and occupied by General Howe had been established somewhat earlier by his father, Job Howe, who had come very early to the lower Cape Fear area from South Carolina with Roger, Maurice, and Nathaniel Moore.⁴⁴

The question is further complicated by the fact that both Job Howe and his son Robert owned a good deal of land throughout the Cape Fear area. The elder Howe is known to have had a plantation on Topsail Sound, where he resided at least during the summer months, as well as lands along the north-

west branch of the Cape Fear.⁴⁵ For his part, Robert Howe acquired several tracts of land long before the outbreak of the American Revolution. He is known to have owned at least one plantation in Bladen County, where he apparently resided in the late 1750s and very early 1760s; and in 1763-1764 he purchased no fewer than four separate plantations on Old Town Creek, between Brunswick Town and Wilmington.⁴⁶

Even though General Howe's principal place of residence on the lower Cape Fear may well have been Kendall, the old and very strong tradition of a Howe plantation below Brunswick Town should not be dismissed out of hand. Moreover, even if local tradition erred in identifying the house on "Howes Point" as that of General Howe, the apparent fact remains that an impressive plantation house once did exist at this location. In addition, the ruins of this house were evidently located just to the rear of unidentified earthworks near the river, which were thought to date from the colonial period. The area of these ruins was personally examined by the patriarch of Cape Fear historians, James Sprunt, who recorded the following description in 1896. It is interesting to note that Sprunt was aware of the conflicting claims as to Howe's place of residence:

A short distance below Fort Anderson, on a bluff called Howe's Point, are the remains of a Colonial fort, and behind it the ruins of a residence, in which, tradition says, was born in 1730 /Howe was actually born in 1732/ one of the greatest heroes of the Revolutionary War (General Robert Howe).

It is said that Robert's estate was on Old Town Creek, and that he resided there. It is also stated that he lived, for a time at Kendal. . . . Mr. Reynolds, the present intelligent owner and occupant of the Howe place /i.e., land/ behind the Colonial fort, who took part in the building of Fort Anderson, says that his father and his grandfather informed him forty years ago that this fort was erected long before the War of the Revolution as a protection against buccaneers and pirates; that his great-grandfather lived with General Howe on this place during the war and took part in a defence of this fort against the British.

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Since the foregoing was written, Mr. Reynold's statement with reference to General Howe's residence has been fully corroborated by the well-known Cape Fear skipper, Captain Sam Price, now eighty-six-years old. He remembers distinctly and has often visited the house known as General Howe's residence, which he says was a large three-story frame building on a stone or brick foundation, on the spot already described just below Old Brunswick, long and still known as Howes Point.⁴⁷

The explanation of the "colonial fort" site examined and described by Sprunt must largely be left to speculation. These ruins probably did not, however, represent an effort by colonial settlers to protect themselves "against buccaneers and pirates," as Stede Bonnet is the only pirate known to have ever entered the Cape Fear River. It is much more likely that these ruins, if of colonial origin, were those of a makeshift fortification thrown up in the 1740s to guard against the Spanish threat; during the late 1750s during the French and Indian War; or, most likely, during the Revolution, to help protect against the movement of British troops and vessels on the lower Cape Fear.

Little can be learned of other colonial plantations which might have been situated between Brunswick Town and the mouth of Walden Creek. However, at least two plantations existed along the shoreline of what is now the upper portion of the Sunny Point Terminal--these, in addition to the possible location there of General Robert Howe's plantation. Just south of Brunswick Town was located York plantation, belonging to Nathaniel Moore; but Moore owned several plantations farther upriver, and it appears doubtful that he actually resided at York.⁴⁸ An even more prominent figure in colonial North Carolina, Edward Moseley, is known to have owned a plantation which his will referred to as the "plantation below Brunswick commonly called Mac Knight's. . . ."⁴⁹ Moseley had owned this plantation for only one year at the time his will was drawn in 1745 (he died in 1749). He had acquired it from Anna MacKnight of New York, widow of the New York merchant Patrick MacKnight. Conveyed to Moseley in 1744 was one half of Patrick MacKnight's original 640 acre tract, the location of which was described

as being "half a mile below a Plot of Land laid out for the Town Called Brunswick."⁵⁰ The approximate location of MacKnight's plantation is shown on the Edward Moseley Map of 1733; and as late as 1807 the shallows along the upper shoreline of the present Sunny Point Terminal area were referred to as "McKnight's Shoal."⁵¹

Nearly a decade before the beginning of the American Revolution, during the Stamp Act crisis, the Brunswick Town area was the scene of a potentially explosive clash of wills between residents of the lower Cape Fear region and their colonial officials. For several months the commerce of Port Brunswick was paralyzed, and two British warships lay at anchor off the Brunswick Town waterfront. In February of 1766 an angry and resolute mob of about 1,000 citizens marched on Brunswick, confronting Governor William Tryon at his home and then proceeding southward to seize Fort Johnston. In the end, however, actual violence was averted, and the crisis at length subsided.⁵²

On 24 May 1775, with the Revolution fast approaching, Governor Josiah Martin was forced to flee from the palace at New Bern and to journey southward to take up temporary residence at Fort Johnston. There he found no safe haven, however. Since the end of 1774 the commander of Fort Johnston, Captain John Collet, had been harassed "in every way the Americans could devise," the latter having been made increasingly anxious that the fort was to become the staging area for attempts to seize private property and to incite slaves against their masters in the lower Cape Fear region. Finally, on 15 July 1775, then Colonel Robert Howe and Colonel John Ashe led a force of about 500 armed men in an attack against Fort Johnston, where Governor Martin had been hole up for nearly two months. Gathering first at Brunswick Town, the troops under Howe and Ashe then proceeded southward to lay seige to the fort; but Collet and Martin, realizing the futility of attempting its defense, removed or destroyed all arms

and supplies before taking refuge in the harbor aboard the British man-of-war Cruizer. On the 19th of July the two men looked on in impotent rage from the deck of the Cruizer, as Fort Johnston and its ancillary structures (including Collet's home) were laid waste.⁵³

As early as March of 1775, Governor Martin had actively promoted a plan to regain control of North Carolina through the combined use of British troops and Scottish Highlanders and other Loyalists in the Cape Fear region. On the other hand, however, his subsequent presence at Fort Johnston and aboard the Cruizer had the effect of attracting men and supplies to the area in support of the Patriot cause. As a result, some 1,000 Patriot troops were soon placed on station in the Cape Fear region, 100 of whom were positioned about four miles above Fort Johnston, just downstream from the lower portions of the present Sunny Point Terminal.⁵⁴ The prevailing situation along the lower Cape Fear following the destruction of Fort Johnston was one of extreme tension and uncertainty:

After its destruction the British war vessels still controlled the mouth of the river, and the people of the Lower Cape Fear lived under the constant fear of what they might do. On the one hand, it was rumored that upon the arrival of reinforcements the Governor would occupy Brunswick as a base in lieu of Fort Johnston. On the other hand it was said that Brunswick as well as Wilmington would be burned. Defensive installations were hurriedly thrown up /including one on Howes Point?/ to protect both towns and steps taken to block the river channel as added security. Calls for help went out to other sections for both troops and arms. Every attempt was made to isolate Martin and his followers from contacts with the people. Month after month went by and nothing of consequence happened, but the ever-present cloud of danger hung heavy over the Lower Cape Fear.⁵⁵

In January of 1776 concrete steps began to be taken to implement Governor Martin's plan to reassert British authority over North Carolina through the coordinated use of British forces and Cape Fear Loyalists. Men and supplies were hastily gathered on both sides, and events marched inexorably toward a decisive clash of arms. This came at length on 27 February, when the proposed

Cape Fear strategy was aborted by the Patriot victory at Moores Creek Bridge.⁵⁶

Even after this victory, however, British warships, in varying numbers, remained firmly in control of the lower Cape Fear. By the end of March some twenty of these vessels were present in the area, along with several hundred British troops and considerable quantities of arms and ammunition. Aboard one of these vessels was General Henry Clinton; and on the 3rd of May General Charles Cornwallis sailed into the Cape Fear with an additional four to five thousand men.⁵⁷

From the decks of their warships, the British apparently carried out numerous sporadic raids along the river's banks--raids which very likely involved homes and property within the present Sunny Point Terminal. One of the largest of these raids occurred on the morning of 11 May 1776, when generals Clinton and Cornwallis led a force of about 900 men against the home of General Robert Howe. From the previous discussion of General Howe's place of residence, it seems probable that this raid was carried out at Kendall, just above Brunswick; however, the possibility remains (though, perhaps, slim) that it was carried out below Brunswick, against the reputed home of General Howe on Howes Point. The Virginia Gazette of 29 June carried the following account of the incident:

The enemy having landed at General Howe's plantation, . . . /with/ about 900 troops, under the command of Generals Clinton and Cornwallis, the sentry posted on the river bank immediately gave the alarm to the guard who had only time to collect their horses, and throw down the fences to let a few cattle out, which they drove off before the enemy surrounded the house. On their march up the causeway from the river, part of the guard kept up a fire on them, which the enemy returned. A few women who lived in the house, were treated with great barbarity; one of whom was shot through the hips, another stabbed with a bayonet, and a third knocked down with the butt of a musket. The enemy had two men killed, several wounded, and a sargeant of the 33rd regiment taken prisoner. They proceeded on their march to Orton mill, with a design to surprise Major Davis, who commanded a detachment of about 90 men, stationed at that place. . . . They have burned the mill and retreated to their vessels at the fort. Upon the whole, the Generals have very little to boast of, they having got, by this descent, three horses and three cows. We had not a man killed or wounded.⁵⁸

Shortly after the raid on General Howe's plantation, generals Clinton and Cornwallis departed from the Cape Fear, leaving behind several warships to keep Port Brunswick closed. These vessels finally departed during the following October, and for several years the Cape Fear region was relatively free of hostilities.

British troops returned to the lower Cape Fear in late January of 1781, at which time Major James Craig's troops sailed up the river aboard three vessels and easily occupied the nearly defenseless city of Wilmington. Little more than two months later, on 7 April, Craig was joined in Wilmington by General Cornwallis, in command of about 2,000 additional troops. Cornwallis and his men lingered for only eighteen days, however, before commencing their long march to the north; and on 18 November 1781, upon hearing of Cornwallis's defeat at Yorktown, Craig and his troops also evacuated the city, sailing downriver as the Patriot forces of General Griffith Rutherford looked on. So far as military action was concerned, the Revolution had ended in the lower Cape Fear region.⁵⁹

The Revolution had dealt a devastating, indeed mortal, blow to Brunswick Town. Even in 1775 it had been described as a mere "stragglng village," largely abandoned because of the British presence on the Cape Fear.⁶⁰ Trade had virtually ceased to flow through Port Brunswick and agricultural activity had been forced to a near standstill. The town had, moreover, been subjected to sporadic British raids; and in 1779 it was thought necessary to move the seat of Brunswick County government to the vicinity of Lockwood Folly Bridge.⁶¹ By the close of the Revolution Brunswick Town had been at least partially burned and destroyed by British troops; in 1783 the once thriving port town was said to be "almost wholly demolished and deserted."⁶²

General Robert Howe, one of the most prominent men ever to reside on the lower Cape Fear, returned to his despoiled plantation in a state of acute

financial embarrassment. Moreover, his family life, never an edifying or congenial one, had now fallen into even greater disarray. After three years of renewed activity as a planter and political leader, Howe passed away in 1786, at the age of fifty-four.⁶³ Howe's widow, the former Sarah Grange, survived her husband by eighteen years, dying as still a resident of Brunswick County in 1804.⁶⁴

Beginning in the early 1790s, the town of Smithville (present-day Southport) began to develop around the ruins of Fort Johnston. An abortive attempt was also made to establish a town called Walkersburg, just upstream from Smithville on Deep Water Point. Walkersburg, however, was destined to be no more than a town on paper.⁶⁵ Smithville was formally established by the state legislature in 1792. For nearly a century thereafter (until 1887), it retained its original name until the present name of Southport was adopted. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, this small community near the mouth of the Cape Fear was a local port of relatively minor importance; and it also contained the summer homes of some of Wilmington's wealthier residents.⁶⁶

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, many of the names and families formerly associated with the shoreline of what is now the Sunny Point Terminal disappeared, with new names and families taking their places. For some reason a map of the lower Cape Fear drawn in 1807 fails to show any places of residence within the present Sunny Point Terminal area; but this map was apparently not intended to be all-inclusive or precisely detailed.⁶⁷

One of the more notable changes in the residents of the shoreline between Walden Creek and the former site of Brunswick Town is the apparent disappearance of the Snow family from the area still known as Snows Point. The census records for Brunswick County from 1790 through 1820 all fail to indicate the presence of any members of this family, not only in the area of their former habitation,

but in the county as a whole.⁶⁸ By the early years of the nineteenth century, the former plantation of Robert Snow had apparently passed into the hands of the Hankins family, which would retain it throughout the antebellum period.

Already in 1800 a Thomas Hankins was residing in Brunswick County, apparently at Snows Point. Moreover, Thomas Hankins was one of the two legal heirs of a Dennis Hankins, who died in 1802 and may have been residing at Snows Point for quite some time.⁶⁹ By 1820 Thomas Hankins, aged 40, was the head of a household which included his wife and several children. When he passed away at his Snows Point plantation eleven years later, in 1831, the Cape Fear Recorder of Wilmington carried a curious and affecting obituary for both Hankins and his young son:

Died at 'Snows Point,' Brunswick County, on the 30th ultimo, much regretted, Mr. Thomas Hankins, age 51. His son, Thomas Griffith, age 13, on 2nd inst. The child was, at the time of his father's death, at his grandfather's, which is a distance about 18 miles from 'Snow's Point.' When information of the melancholy event was communicated the next day to the family (31 ultimo), he uttered a scream and fell into a spasm which deprived him of reason and terminated his life on the 2nd inst., as above stated. Such an instance of affection and sensibility in one so young is worthy of being noted.⁷⁰

Although it is by no means certain, it is reasonable to speculate that the location of Thomas Hankins's house on Snows Point was very close to the homesites earlier chosen by Robert Snow and Governor Burrington. Indeed, it is quite possible that the same site served all three men.

Another prominent resident of the present Sunny Point Terminal area in the early nineteenth century was Joel Reaves, from whom Reaves Point evidently took its name. "J. Reaves" appeared in the Brunswick County census for the first time in 1810. By 1820 his household included eight members.⁷¹

From contemporary maps and census information, it is possible to identify and roughly locate at least some of the individuals who resided along the shoreline of the present-day Sunny Point Terminal during the decade preceding the

Civil War. Farthest north in 1850, just below the ruins of Brunswick Town, lived Willis Miliner (or Milnor), a wheelwright, and Robert Miliner (or Milnor), a laborer. Neither man owned slaves nor a substantial amount of real estate.⁷²

Next below the Miliners in 1850 was apparently Jesse Drew, a thirty-two-year-old farmer with a wife and four children. Drew owned three slaves. His farm consisted of fifty acres of improved land and 650 acres unimproved. On this farm, valued at \$1,000, he kept some livestock and raised primarily corn and sweet potatoes.⁷³

Just downstream from the Jesse Drew farm in 1850 was the slightly larger farm of Enoch Robbins, aged forty-seven. Robbins's household was comprised of eight members. He held forty acres of improved land, 1,327 acres of unimproved land, and was the owner of eleven slaves. Robbins tended a small number of cattle and swine; and his crops consisted mainly of corn and sweet potatoes. The cash value of his farm was placed at \$1,285.⁷⁴ Maps of the Civil War period indicate that the Robbins homeplace was located on what is now called Reaves Point. Indeed, they reveal that, for a brief period at least, this jut of land was referred to as Robbins (or Robins) Point.⁷⁵

Next below the Enoch Robbins place was that of Joel Reaves, aged sixty-seven, whose household now consisted of five members. Reaves's farm was located at what was then known as Reaves Point, but which is now known as Sunny Point. Contemporary maps indicate that the two points of land unaccountably exchanged their names in the late nineteenth or very early twentieth centuries. The transposition had certainly been accomplished by 1910.⁷⁶ Reaves was the owner of ten slaves in 1850. His farm was comprised of sixty-five acres of improved land and 1,220 acres of land which was unimproved. He raised cattle, sheep, and swine, while cultivating fields of corn, sweet potatoes, and a small amount of rice.⁷⁷ Reaves was to pass away in 1860, only one year prior to the Civil War.⁷⁸

Just below the Joel Reaves farm in 1850 was the Snows Point plantation of William Hankins. Hankins was forty-two years old at this time and was the head of a household comprised of six members. His plantation consisted of 100 acres of improved land and 600 acres of unimproved land. He was the owner of twenty-four slaves. The cash value of his farm was a very impressive \$4,200; and the value of his real estate (including his dwelling house) was an even more impressive \$8,000. The latter figure strongly suggests that Hankins's plantation home on Snows Point was far and away the finest and largest residence then standing within the confines of what is today the Sunny Point Terminal. On his plantation Hankins raised cattle and swine, and cultivated small amounts of corn and sweet potatoes. The most important of his crops by far, however, was rice. During the year preceding the census, his plantation had produced no less than 6,500 lbs. of this grain.⁷⁹ A detailed map of the lower Cape Fear dating from 1855 clearly indicates the presence of what appears to be a house and outbuilding on Snows Point--undoubtedly those belonging to William Hankins. The same two structures are apparently shown on an even more detailed map done nearly half a century later, in 1901.⁸⁰ An archaeological investigation of the Snows Point area may well uncover evidence of the Hankins plantation house and perhaps evidence, as well, of the rice cultivation which had been carried out there since before the Revolution.

Events anticipating the approach of the Civil War came early to the lower Cape Fear area. On 10 January 1861 a group of well-armed men from Wilmington took it upon themselves to seize and occupy forts Johnston and Caswell, though only for a short time. On 16 April these two forts were again seized and held, even though secession did not formally occur until the 20th of May.⁸¹

After the Civil War actually began, it became increasingly apparent that an elaborate defense system was essential on the Cape Fear if the river was to

remain open as a vital artery of supply for the Confederate cause. As a result, several fortifications were improved or constructed anew along both the eastern and western banks of the river, from its mouth northward to Wilmington--all designed to strengthen and complement Fort Fisher, the massive and seemingly impregnable fortress located just above New Inlet on Federal Point.⁸²

It was apparently in 1863 that Fort Lamb or Battery Lamb was constructed as part of the overall Cape Fear defense system. This facility was located nearly opposite Fort Fisher, on what was then Reaves Point and is now Sunny Point. This location placed it midway between Fort Johnston (or Fort Pender) at Smithville and Fort Anderson just north of the Brunswick Town ruins. The name Fort Lamb was evidently taken from the commander of Fort Fisher, Colonel William Lamb. Little can be learned of Fort Lamb's armaments or personnel; however, its location and approximate configuration are shown on at least two contemporary maps of the Civil War period.⁸³

It is uncertain whether Fort Lamb was ever called upon to play a role of any real significance during the period of its existence. Apparently, this small, ancillary facility was not threatened by military action until after the fall of Fort Fisher, and even then its involvement was very minor.

On the fateful evening of 15 January 1865, following a massive assault by land and sea, Fort Fisher finally fell to Union forces, despite a valiant defense. With its fall, the Confederate forces at Fort Caswell, Fort Johnston, and other installations near the mouth of the Cape Fear had little choice but to retreat upriver and attempt a stand at Fort Anderson. Flushed with their victory at Fort Fisher, Union forces were quick to seize and occupy these freshly abandoned forts, and then move northward along the west side of the Cape Fear toward Fort Anderson and, ultimately, beyond to Wilmington. It

was during this march northward from Smithville by some 5,000 Union troops that Fort Lamb's involvement, or near involvement, occurred. It was also at this time that significant troop movements and minor skirmishes took place within the general area now embraced within the Sunny Point Terminal. It was in the report of Union General Jacob D. Cox that the movement of troops through the present terminal area was best described. Indeed, his account was one of the very few to mention Reaves Point and other natural and man-made features specifically:

On the 17th /of January/ at 8 a.m. I moved with four brigades and battery upon the Wilmington road under orders to advance toward Fort Anderson, with a view to develop the nature of the approaches to that work and the force holding it, also at or near Reeves' Point, to communicate with the general commanding department, who was upon a vessel in the river, and to receive some new orders according to circumstances. About three miles from Smithville we encountered the enemy's cavalry outposts, which retired skirmishing. The country being an almost continuous swamp the march was slow. It was found also that the road did not approach the river near Reeves' Point; difficult swamps and morasses intervening until the Wilmington road crosses Governor's Creek, where it forked, the right fork turning toward the river and the left keeping on to Orton Pond, the two roads meeting at Fort Anderson and then crossing Orton Creek. At the crossing of Governor's Creek some stand was made by a battalion of the enemy's cavalry, but they retreated upon the advance of the column after a slight skirmish. . . . I advanced on the right fork /of the road/ until we approached the river about two miles below Fort Anderson and three miles above Reeves' Point. Here I opened signal communication with the fleet under Admiral Porter. . . . Distance marched during the day, ten miles.⁸⁴

It need hardly be said that the Union troops, moving northward, easily overcame the futile Confederate resistance at Fort Anderson. On 21 February 1865 Confederate troops were compelled to evacuate Wilmington itself, in the face of overwhelming Union forces. Within a few months, the fall of Wilmington was followed by the fall of the Confederacy itself.

The only known shipwreck which can be associated with Civil War action in or near the Sunny Point Terminal area is that of the Thorn, a 400 ton federal

transport vessel sunk by a Confederate torpedo on 4 March 1865, just below Fort Anderson. This wreck occurred well above the proposed dredging area at Sunny Point. Moreover, the Thorn was raised and repaired in September of 1870.⁸⁵

In addition to the Fort Lamb facility on present-day Sunny Point, the area now encompassed within the Sunny Point Terminal also contained a salt works during the Civil War. By far the largest salt works facility in the general Wilmington area was that maintained by the State of North Carolina at the mouth of Purviance Creek /now Whiskey Creek/, near the point of meeting between Myrtle Grove Sound and Masonboro Sound. This salt works was raided and partially destroyed in April of 1864. In December of the same year the destruction was completed, and the facility did not resume operations. In addition to this facility, however, there were numerous smaller and private salt works in the Wilmington area which helped to supply the needs of the Confederacy. Indeed, by 1863 there may have been as many as 100 salt works in Brunswick and New Hanover counties, producing no less than 2,000 bushels of the vital substance each day.⁸⁶

One of these facilities, apparently operated by one or more members of the Drew family, was located in the south-central portion of the present-day Sunny Point Terminal, or near the shores of Walden Creek. The facility is shown on two contemporary maps of the area, although the two maps differ slightly as to its exact location. One map of 1863 (unavailable for copying) indicates that this salt works was located on the point of land at the confluence of Fishing Creek and Governors Creek, just above the point where their combined waters empty into Walden Creek to the south. According to this map, the salt works location was about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles west of the mouth of Walden Creek.⁸⁷ The second map referred to above indicates that this salt works was not located on

the site just described, but approximately one third of the distance in a straight line between this site and Fort Lamb to the east.⁸⁸

Unfortunately, the sources disclose little or no information regarding the size of this salt works facility or the methods of production employed there. However, it seems safe to assume that this facility, like most others by the Civil War, employed a combination of solar evaporation and boiling. This method consisted of greatly increasing the salinity of sea water by allowing it to evaporate for a time in shallow reservoirs with clay bottoms and often with wooden sides; then boiling the concentrated brine in rectangular cast iron pans placed in a large brick furnace.⁸⁹ An archaeological examination of the two sites described above may well reveal vestiges of this salt works facility. It should also be noted that maps of the Civil War period, in addition to showing the salt works, also provide additional documentation for the presence of several places of residence along the shoreline of what is now the Sunny Point Terminal.⁹⁰

By far the most detailed and potentially useful map for archaeological purposes is that produced of the lower Cape Fear by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1901. This map (reproduced in the Appendixes in two sections) apparently shows virtually every structure, cultivated field, and farm road then extant in the entire eastern half of what is now the Sunny Point Terminal. Located on Snows Point, just above the mouth of Walden Creek, was apparently the same house formerly occupied by the prominent antebellum rice planter William Hankins, and possibly by Thomas Hankins or even Robert Snow before him. A large outbuilding is shown just to the rear of this house, and four other structures (presumably farm buildings) are shown in the same general vicinity. Indicated on present-day Sunny Point to the north is another structure (possibly a residence) within what appears to be the earthworks of Fort Lamb.

Several other structures and a cultivated field are shown between Sunny Point and Reaves Point, with still other structures and another cultivated field shown above Reaves Point. After an intervening stretch of undeveloped shoreline, numerous buildings and other cultivated fields lie northward to the "Ruins of Old Brunswick." Despite its excellent detail, this 1901 map does not, of course, indicate the relative ages of any of the structures shown. The possibility should certainly be entertained, however, that some of the buildings shown dated from the antebellum or even the colonial period.⁹¹

More recent maps of the present-day Sunny Point Terminal area are not nearly as detailed and informative as the 1901 map with regard to structures and the patterns of land use. A soil survey map of 1932 (published in 1937) indicates that all but one of the structures standing along the shoreline had vanished during the past three decades, the sole survivor being situated well upriver, just below the unmarked ruins of Brunswick Town. Two other structures are shown slightly north of present-day Reaves Point, but they are a considerable distance back from the water's edge. Numerous other buildings are shown even farther from the river, along both sides of the River Road between Southport and Wilmington--a road which formerly ran through the entire length of what is now the Sunny Point Terminal.⁹²

A somewhat later map of 1946 (which extends northward only to Reaves Point) records the presence of two structures near the river and just above Sunny Point, with no structures shown between that point and the mouth of Walden Creek to the south. Two other structures stood well back from the river, near Reaves Point; and, as before, other buildings stood along both sides of the River Road.⁹³ Unfortunately, available maps published since 1946 show merely the boundaries of the Sunny Point Terminal, with no interior detail whatsoever; or, show the massive terminal facility in such a way as to render the identification of previously existing structures virtually impossible.⁹⁴

Development of the Sunny Point Terminal facility began in the early 1950s, while the nation was still at war in Korea. From the outset it was envisioned that the completed project would encompass some 14,000 acres of land, with its eastern boundary stretching along the entire seven miles of shoreline between the mouth of Walden Creek and a point just below the ruins of Brunswick Town. Three large docks were to be constructed, with access channels thirty-four feet deep and 300 feet wide, broadening still farther to 800 feet opposite each wharf to provide separate turning basins. Planned as a connecting link between the Sunny Point facility and the interior was a railroad to Leland, with thirty-eight to forty-five miles of spurs, sidings, and yards within the reservation itself.

The three huge docks, situated one-half mile apart, were built by the Diamond Construction Company of Savannah, Georgia, each being 2,400 feet long and eighty-seven feet wide. The eighteen-mile railroad to Leland was constructed by the William A. Smith Construction Company of Houston, Texas. And the extensive railroad connections and yard facilities inside the terminal's boundaries were built by T. F. Scholes Inc. of Reading, Pennsylvania.⁹⁵

Of prime importance with regard to both submerged and terrestrial archaeological resources is the tremendous amount of dredging which occurred during the construction of the Sunny Point Terminal. This dredging not only involved the carving out of channels in the river bottom, but also the creation on land of massive diked spoil deposit areas. The actual dredging along the shoreline began in January of 1953, and was carried out by the McWilliams Dredging Corporation of New Orleans, Louisiana. In January of the following year the State magazine carried the following description of the work in progress:

Already Brunswick's physical features are changing fast. Huge dredges are chewing at the bottom of the Cape Fear River, and spewing muck across the landscape on a scale that staggers the imagination of the uninitiated. Dredging for the dock area alone will heave up 18 million cubic yards of spoil. . . .

Four slots from 60 to 1,100 acres in size were cribbed with dikes averaging 15 feet high to form pockets for dumping the dredgings.

Into these areas, the dredges last January began pouring their muck--1,000 cubic yards per hour around the clock. As the water drained away, layer after layer built up until the deposits were as much as 35 feet deep, extending over hundreds of acres.⁹⁶

The Sunny Point Terminal was finally completed in the mid to late 1950s, at a cost of approximately \$23,000,000.⁹⁷ By the mid-1970s the installation employed some six hundred civilian workers. It remains to this day a facility of considerable importance in the development and economy of eastern Brunswick County.⁹⁸

The vast area comprising the Sunny Point Terminal is one extremely rich in terms of its history. European contact may have been made as early as the 1520s; and for more than two and a half centuries the area has been continuously, though sparsely, inhabited. Large plantations and small farms have been laid out across the terrain; and the events of the Revolution and Civil War have also made their imprint upon the land. It is hoped that this report will be of at least some assistance in locating and preserving the cultural resources which lie hidden within the terminal's boundaries.

FOOTNOTES

¹Lawrence Lee, The Lower Cape Fear in Colonial Days (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 12-14.

²Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 11.

³See Bill Reaves, Southport (Smithville) and Environs: A Chronology, Volume I (Southport: Southport Historical Society, 1978), 1.

⁴Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 11.

⁵Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 27-32.

⁶Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 33-34.

⁷Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 37-40.

⁸Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 41-42.

⁹The population of the Clarendon settlement is not known with any degree of accuracy. A promotional pamphlet published in London in 1666 stated that the settlement contained nearly 800 people, but this was probably a gross exaggeration. See Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 42.

¹⁰Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 45-53.

¹¹Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 53.

¹²Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 54.

¹³Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 61 and 69-70.

¹⁴Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 73-74.

¹⁵Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 73-74 and 80-83.

¹⁶Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 86-88; and Charles Johnson /pseudonym for Daniel Defoe/, A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates. . . . Edited by Arthur L. Hayward (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1925. First published in 1724), 71-84.

¹⁷Reaves, Southport, 2. For location of Bonnet's Point, see maps in Appendixes.

¹⁸For general accounts of Burrington's activities with regard to settlement of the Cape Fear, see Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 92-95; and William S. Powell, editor, Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, volume I (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 283-284. South Carolina's claim to the Cape Fear's west bank was not finally settled until 1735.

¹⁹For the presence and location of Burrington's plantation, see early maps in Appendixes. See also Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 94; Alfred Moore Waddell, A History of New Hanover County and the Lower Cape Fear Region, 1723-1800, volume I (N.p.: n.d.), 39; and James Sprunt, Chronicles of the Cape Fear River, 1660-1916, 2nd edition (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1916), 57-58.

²⁰William L. Saunders, editor, Colonial Records of North Carolina, 10 volumes (Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 1886-1890), III, 259.

²¹Saunders, Colonial Records, III, 436.

²²Saunders, Colonial Records, III, 362-363.

²³Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 228.

²⁴Powell, Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, 283-284; Samuel A'Court Ashe, editor, Biographical History of North Carolina, 8 volumes (Greensboro: Van Noppen, 1905-1917), I, 205; and Saunders, Colonial Records, III, 618-619.

²⁵Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 117-118; and Janet Schaw, Journal of a Lady of Quality, edited by Evangeline W. Andrews and Charles M. Andrews (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 277-278.

²⁶Hugh Meredith, An Account of the Cape Fear Country, 1731, edited by Earl G. Swem (Perth Amboy, New Jersey: Charles F. Heartman, 1922), 14-15.

²⁷Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 140.

²⁸Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 188-190.

²⁹Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 188-190.

³⁰Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 138, 149, and 163.

³¹Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 171.

³²Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 166; and Lawrence Lee, The History of Brunswick County, North Carolina (N.p.: Brunswick County American Revolution Bicentennial Committee, 1978), 33-35.

³³Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 33.

³⁴Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 229-230; and Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 21-22.

³⁵Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 229-230; and Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 22.

³⁶Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 229-230; and Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 22.

³⁷Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 5, 230-231, and 238-240.

³⁸ Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 232-234.

³⁹ Saunders, Colonial Records, VI, 232-233; Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 14; Lee, History of Brunswick County, 76; and Ida Brooks Kellam, "Members of Safety Committee, 1774-1776" (Typescript prepared in Wilmington, North Carolina in 1959), 37.

⁴⁰ Kellam, "Members of Safety Committee," 46.

⁴¹ See Brunswick County Deeds, Book A, pp. 67-70. Microfilm copy in the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

⁴² See Schaw, Journal of a Lady, 141-142.

⁴³ See Donald R. Lennon's sketch of Robert Howe in Alan D. Watson, Dennis R. Lawson, and Donald R. Lennon, Harnett, Hooper, and Howe: Revolutionary Leaders of the Lower Cape Fear (Wilmington: Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, 1979), 72 and 95; James M. Clifton, "Golden Grains of White: Rice Planting on the Lower Cape Fear," North Carolina Historical Review (1973), 370, 374, 376, 388; and Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 272.

⁴⁴ See, for example, J. G. de R. Hamilton's sketch of Robert Howe in Allan Johnson and Dumas Malone, editors, Dictionary of American Biography, 20 volumes (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1936), IX, 294-295; Schaw, Journal of a Lady, 318; Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 40-41; Sprunt, Chronicles of the Cape Fear River, 57-58 and 60; and James Sprunt, Tales and Traditions of the Lower Cape Fear, 1661-1896 (Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Co., 1973. First published in 1896), 80-82.

⁴⁵ See Schaw, Journal of a Lady, 318; and Watson, Lawson, and Lennon, Harnett, Hooper, and Howe, 71 and 95. In a footnote to his sketch of General Howe, Donald Lennon makes the following observation with regard to the location of Howes Point:

Although numerous local writers have placed Howe's residence at Howe's Point below Brunswick Town on the Cape Fear, there is no documentation to indicate that a Howes Point ever existed on the Cape Fear. Apparently Job Howe's plantation on Topsail Sound is the only location to bear that appellation.

⁴⁶ See Elizabeth F. McKoy, compiler and editor, Early New Hanover County Records (Wilmington: Published by the author, 1973), 132-133 and 138-139; Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 175; and Watson, Lawson, and Lennon, Harnett, Hooper, and Howe, 72.

⁴⁷ Sprunt, Tales and Traditions of the Lower Cape Fear, 81-82; Sprunt, Chronicles of the Cape Fear, 60; and Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 40-41.

⁴⁸ Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 4; and Schaw, Journal of a Lady, 278.

⁴⁹ Mae Blake Graves, compiler, New Hanover County Abstracts of Wills (Wilmington: Published by the author, 1981), 12.

⁵⁰ McKoy, Early New Hanover County Records, 8.

- ⁵¹ See maps of 1733 and 1807 in Appendixes.
- ⁵² For detailed discussions of the Stamp Act crisis, see Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 243-250; and Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 26-31.
- ⁵³ See Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 265; and Schaw, Journal of a Lady, 187, 205, 207, and 232.
- ⁵⁴ See Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 264-265.
- ⁵⁵ Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 266.
- ⁵⁶ Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 266-271.
- ⁵⁷ Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 271.
- ⁵⁸ Virginia Gazette, 29 June 1776. See also Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 272; Lee, History of Brunswick County, 74; Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 179; and Andrew J. Howell, The Book of Wilmington (Wilmington: Published by the author /1927?/), 56-57.
- ⁵⁹ Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 277-280.
- ⁶⁰ Schaw, Journal of a Lady, 281.
- ⁶¹ Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 275.
- ⁶² Lee, Lower Cape Fear, 282.
- ⁶³ See Curtis C. Davis, Revolution's Godchild (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 18-19; Johnson and Malone, Dictionary of American Biography, IX, 294-295; and Watson, Lawson, and Lennon, Harnett, Hooper, and Howe, 92.
- ⁶⁴ Kellam, "Members of Safety Committee," 11-13; and will of Sarah Howe in Brunswick County Wills, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. The will of General Howe has not survived; and, unfortunately, Sarah Howe's will makes no specific mention of either Kendall or a plantation on Howes Point.
- ⁶⁵ Lee, History of Brunswick County, 89.
- ⁶⁶ Lee, History of Brunswick County, 90; and Waddell, History of New Hanover County, 212.
- ⁶⁷ See map of 1807 in Appendixes. This map does indicate the presence of some of the larger plantations along the west bank of the Cape Fear between Brunswick Town and Wilmington.
- ⁶⁸ See Brunswick County Censuses for 1790, 1800, 1810, and 1820.
- ⁶⁹ See Brunswick County Census for 1800; and Brunswick County Estates Papers, Dennis Hankins folder.

⁷⁰Quoted in Lewis P. Hall, editor and compiler, Marriage Notices, Obituaries, and Items of Genealogical Interest in the "Cape Fear Recorder," the "Peoples Press," and the "Wilmington Advertiser" from Aug. 26, 1829 to Dec. 24, 1833 (Wilmington: Published by the Author, 1958), 14.

⁷¹Brunswick County censuses for 1810 and 1820.

⁷²Brunswick County Census for 1850, population and slave schedules.

⁷³Brunswick County Census for 1850, population, slave, and agricultural schedules. The order of visitation in the census records seems to indicate clearly that Jesse Drew's farm was located along the upper shoreline of what is now the Sunny Point Terminal. However, a map of the Civil War period indicates that the residence of a "J. Drew" was located somewhat south and west, along a tributary of Walden Creek. On the other hand, this map also places the residence of an unidentified "Drew" in the location described above in the text. See map in Appendixes.

⁷⁴Brunswick County Census for 1850, population, slave, and agricultural schedules.

⁷⁵See Civil War period maps in Appendixes.

⁷⁶See Brunswick County Map of 1910 in North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. This map is not reproduced in the Appendixes.

⁷⁷Brunswick County Census for 1850, population, slave, and agricultural schedules.

⁷⁸Reaves, Southport, 58.

⁷⁹Brunswick County Census, 1850, population, slave, and agricultural schedules.

⁸⁰See maps of 1855 and 1901 in Appendixes.

⁸¹Lee, History of Brunswick County, 98.

⁸²For locations and names of the forts in the Cape Fear defense system, see maps in Appendixes.

⁸³See Civil War maps in Appendixes.

⁸⁴The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1900), series I, volume XLVII, part 1, 960-961. For general discussions of the fall of Fort Fisher and its aftermath, see John G. Barrett, The Civil War in North Carolina (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 280-284; and Lee, History of Brunswick County, 161-164.

⁸⁵See Charles H. Foard, "A Chart of Wrecks of Vessels Sunk or Captured Near Wilmington, N.C., Circa 1861-1865," revised (Wilmington: Published by the author, 1968).

⁸⁶Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Bulletin, vol. 14, number 1, N.p., and volume 14, number 3, N.p.

⁸⁷Map of 1863 in North Carolina State Archives. See also "Map of the Cape Fear and the Approaches to Wilmington, N.C." in Appendixes.

⁸⁸See untitled Civil War map in Appendixes.

⁸⁹For a description of this process, see Lower Cape Fear Historical Society Bulletin, volume 15, number 3, N.p.

⁹⁰See Civil War maps in Appendixes.

⁹¹See map of 1901, reproduced in two sections in the Appendixes.

⁹²See 1932 map in Appendixes.

⁹³See 1946 map in Appendixes.

⁹⁴See maps of 1970 and 1980 in Appendixes.

⁹⁵State magazine (16 January 1954), 3-4.

⁹⁶State magazine (16 January 1954), 3.

⁹⁷Bill Sharpe, A New Geography of North Carolina, volume 2 (Raleigh: Sharpe Publishing Company, 1958), 603-604.

⁹⁸Lee, History of Brunswick County, 229. For the boundaries and interior layout of the Sunny Point Terminal, see maps of 1970 and 1980 in Appendixes.

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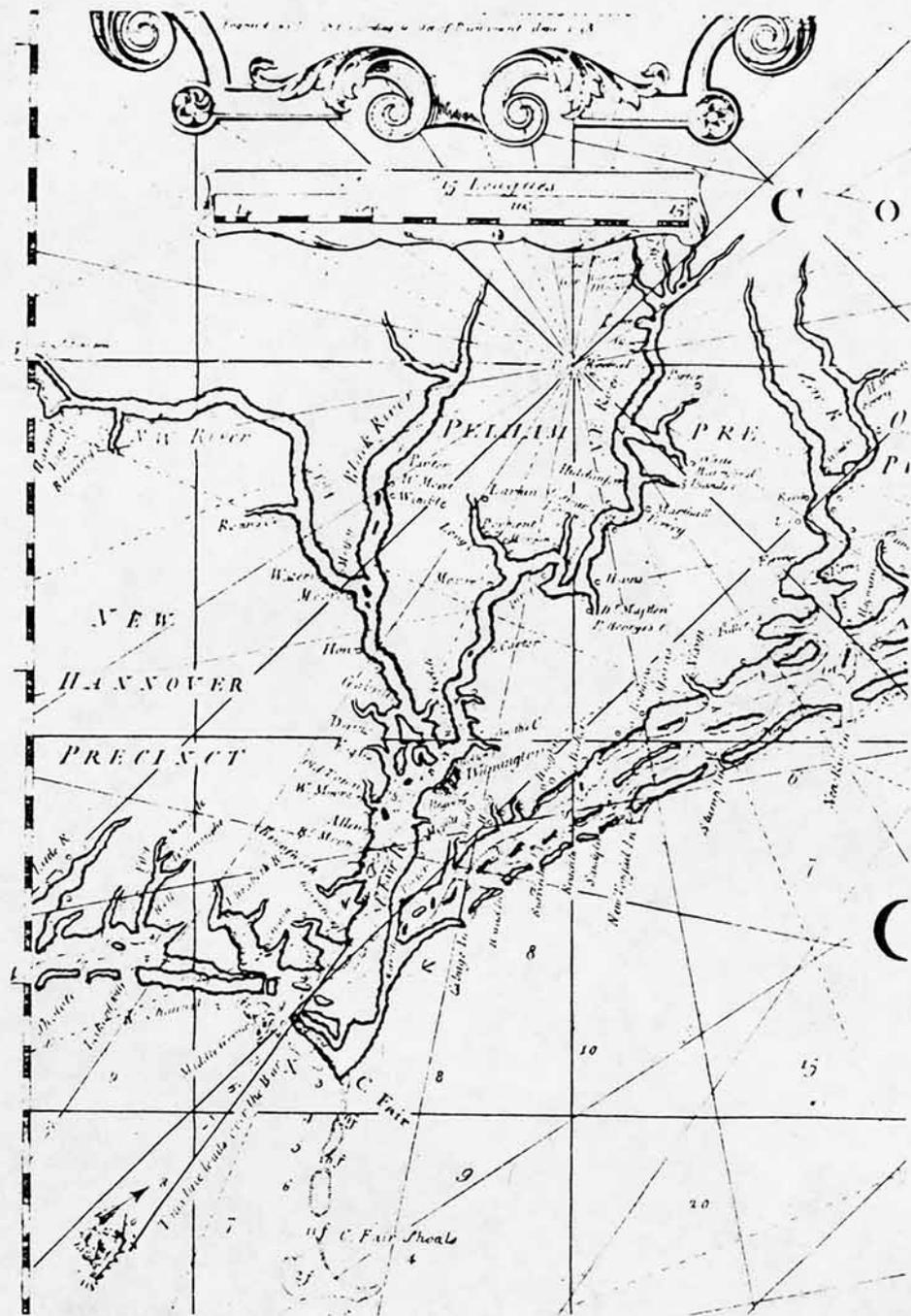
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Moseley (1733)



Moseley Map of 1733
from the State Department of Archives and History, of Raleigh, N. C.



*Early
New Hanover County
Records*

Wimble (1738)

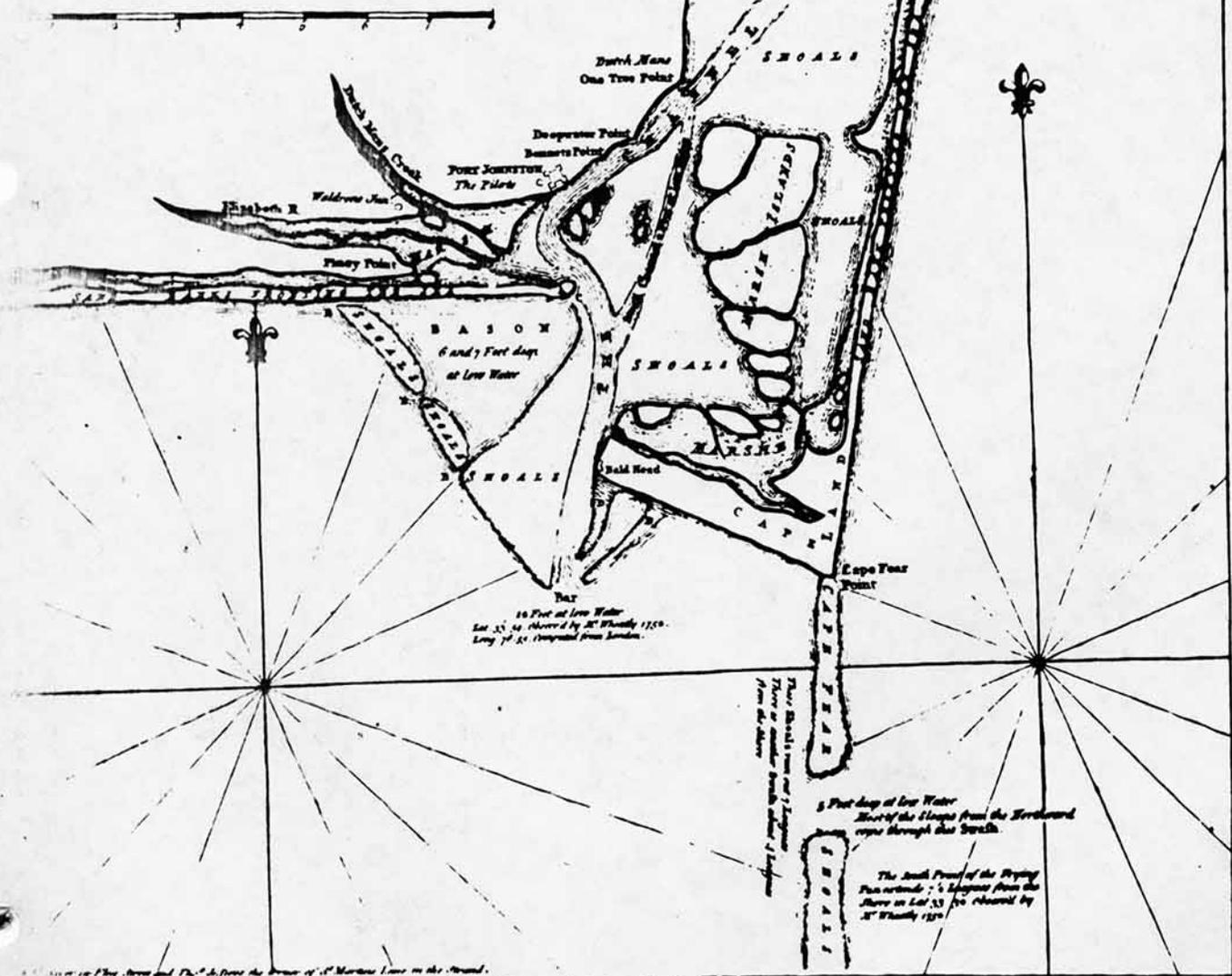
Wimble Map of 1738
from the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N. C.

A New and Exact PLAN
OF
CAPE FEAR RIVER.
from the
BAR to BRUNSWICK.
'By Edward Hyrne 1749.

A. Shoals
B. Shoals, through which small
rivers run into the Bay, 5 Feet deep
at Low Water
C. Passage out of the Bay
into the River.
D.D. The Dangers.

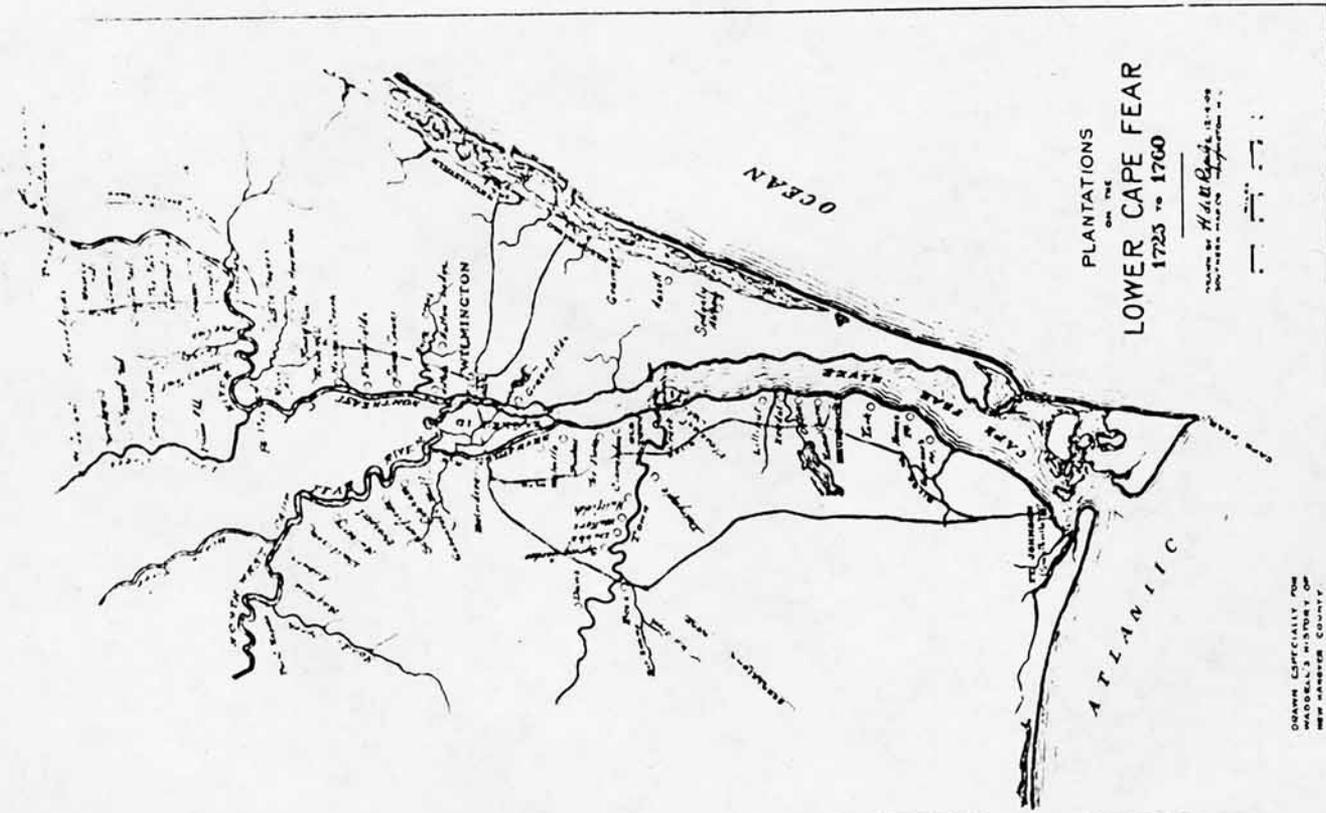
The Shoals are very uneven and full of Oyster Banks within
two miles near the mouth, and higher up. Sandy and uneven the
rest, and Oyster Banks in many places dry.

The Water runs at the Bar 6 feet at a common Tide, within
two miles there is from 4 to 7 fathom Water for six or seven
miles. Then the Shoals for 3 or 4 Miles where there is but
one or two feet at high Water.



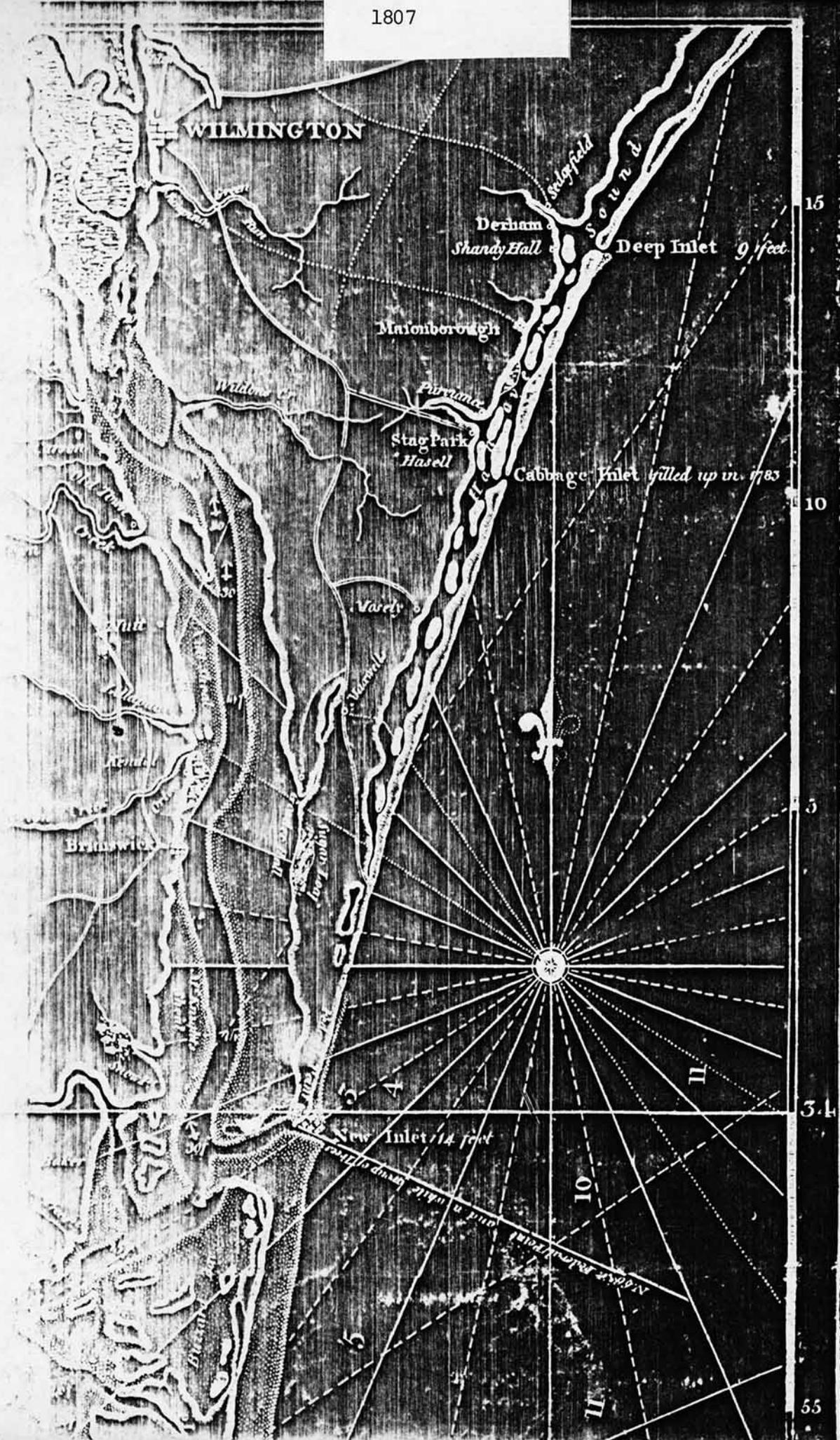
The South Point of the Flying Point is 1/2 League from the Bar in Lat 33 1/2 observed by M. Huddy 1750. Long 76 54 computed from London.

Plantation Map Taken from Waddell's
History of New Hanover County



1807

(1807)



WILMINGTON

Derham
Shandy Hall
Deep Inlet 9 feet

Marionborough

Stag Park
Hasell

Cabbage Inlet filled up in 1783

Vaseley

Bramswick

Inlet 14 feet

Nose of point and a white buoy off the

15

10

5

3.4

55

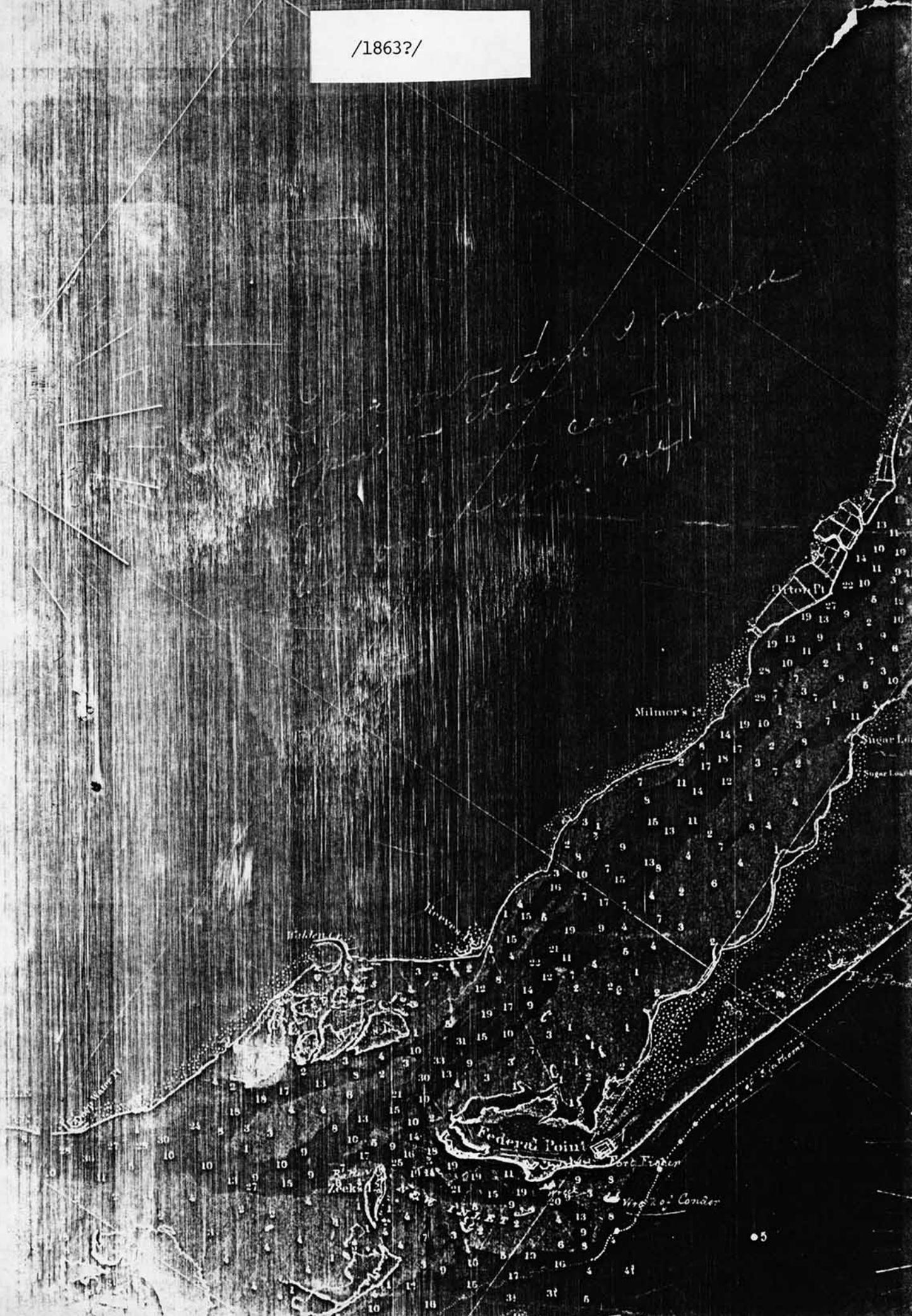
(1855)
1855

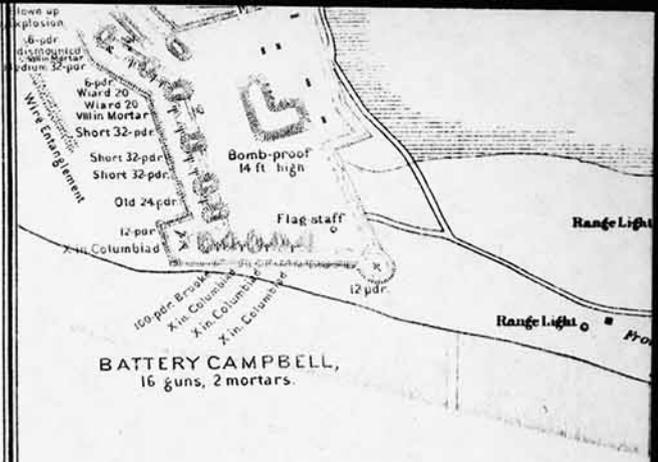


[1863?]

/1863?/

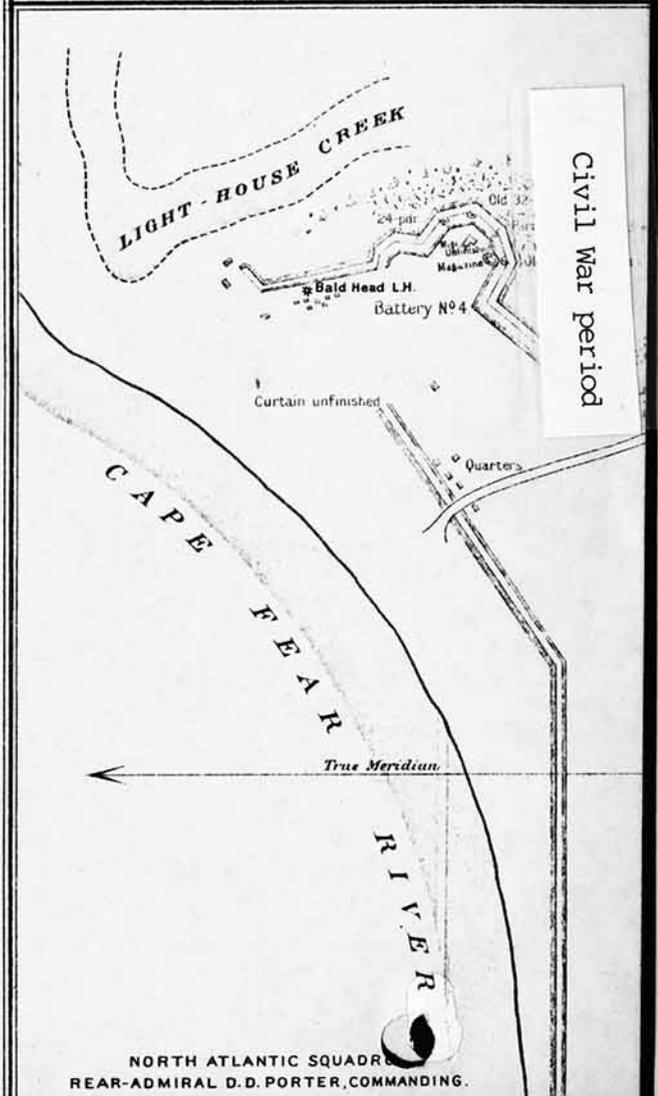
Handwritten notes:
... ..
... ..
... ..
... ..





BATTERY CAMPBELL,
16 guns, 2 mortars.

From original on file in the Office of the Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army
SERIES 1, VOL XLVI



NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON
REAR-ADMIRAL D. D. PORTER, COMMANDING.

Civil War Period

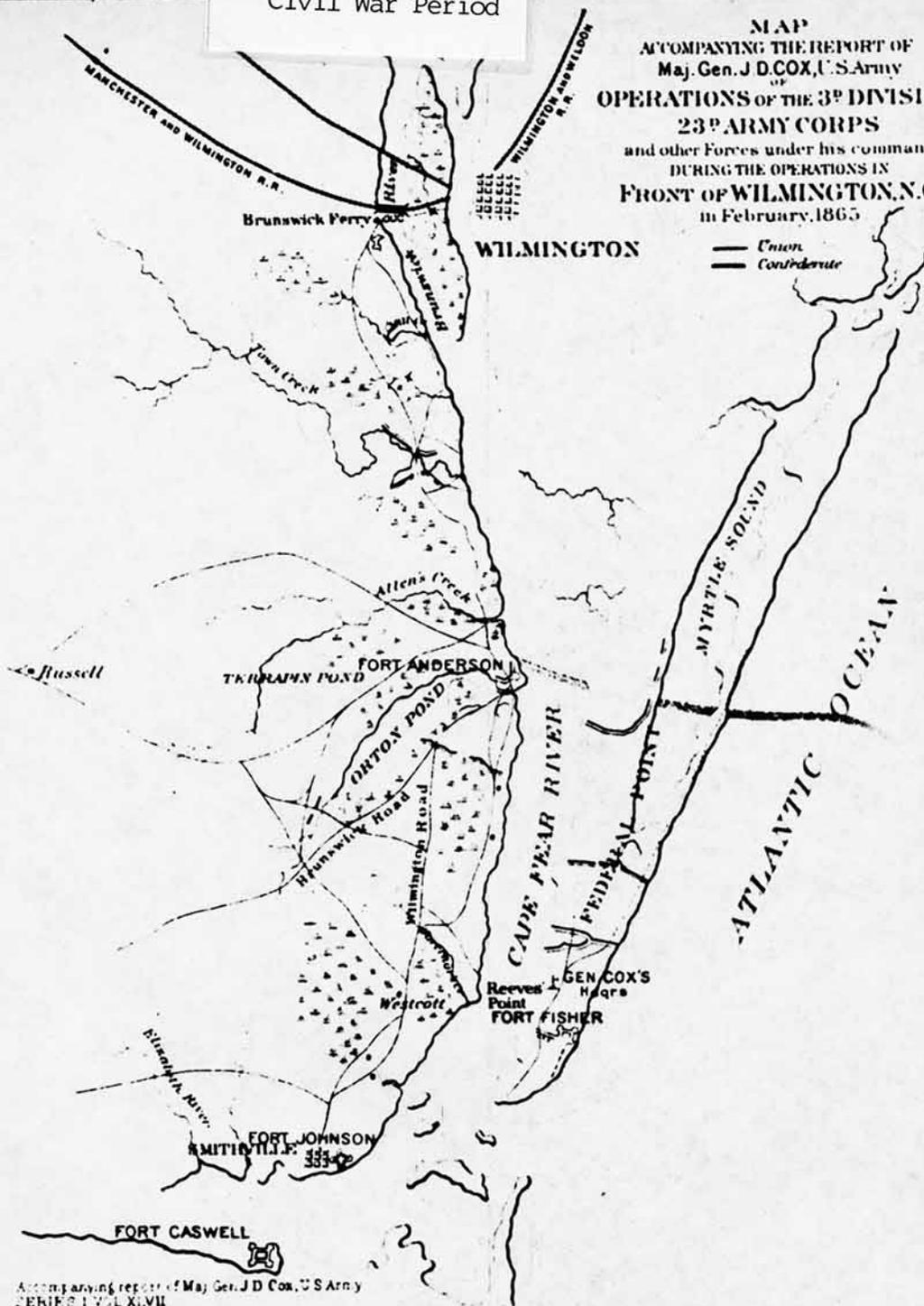


MAP OF THE
CAPE FEAR RIVER
AND THE
APPROACHES
TO
WILMINGTON, N.C.

From C.S.A. E. ...
Scale of Miles
Control ...

Cape Fear

MAP
 ACCOMPANYING THE REPORT OF
 Maj. Gen. J. D. COX, U.S. Army
 OF
 OPERATIONS OF THE 3^d DIVISION,
 23^d ARMY CORPS
 and other Forces under his command,
 DURING THE OPERATIONS IN
 FRONT OF WILMINGTON, N.C.,
 in February, 1865



— Union
 — Confederate

Accompanying report of Maj. Gen. J. D. Cox, U.S. Army
 SERIES I VOL. XVII

Ac
 Ev
 SE

1946

57 30



BRUNSWICK CO
NEW HANOVER CO

UPPER

REAVES PT CHANNEL RANGE
FRONT LT

BM K237

RIVER

The

REAVES POINT CHANNEL RANGE
REAR LT

BM MAGNETIC
STATION

Zeles
Island

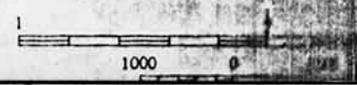
1970



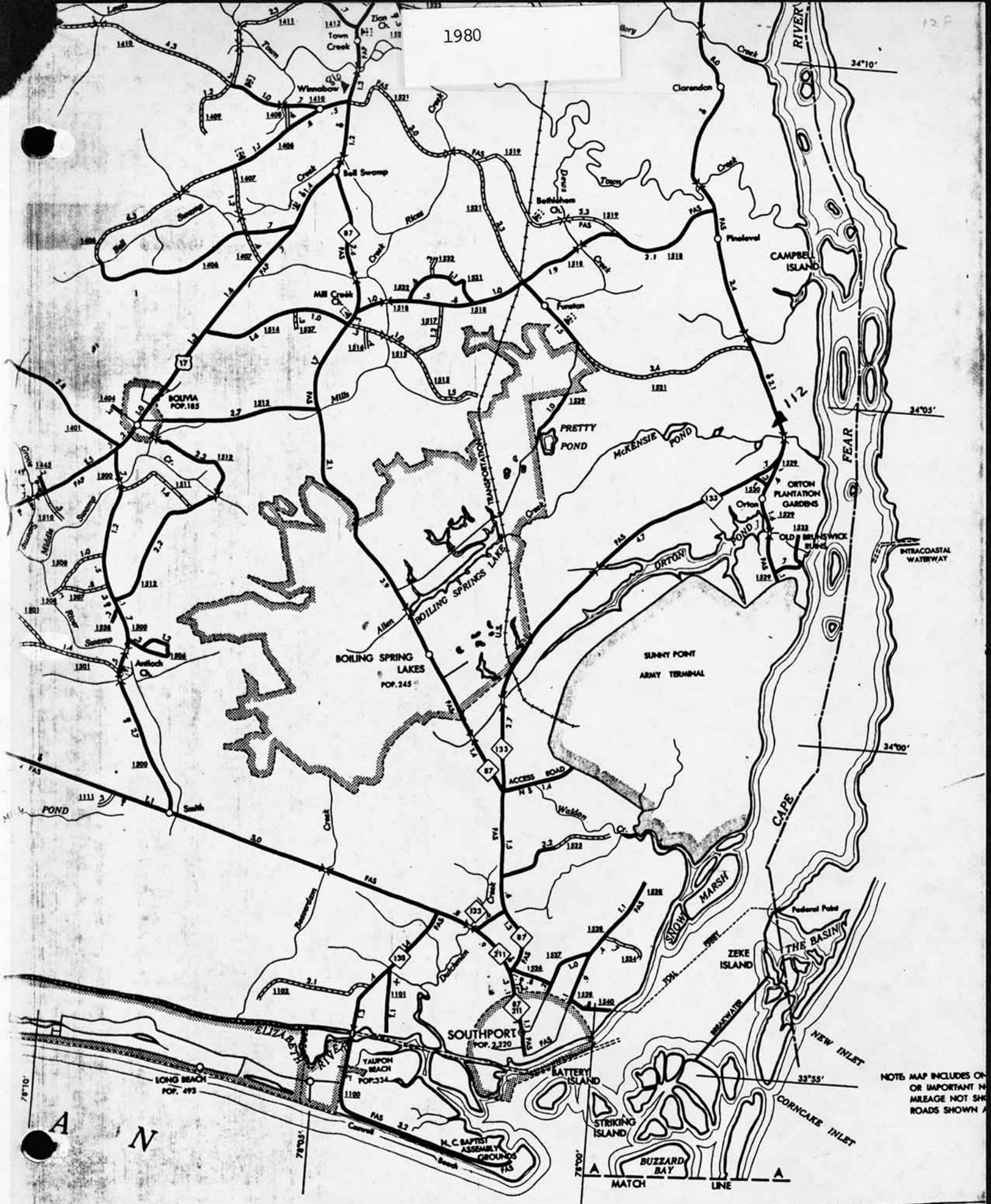
224 2 310 000 FEET 225 226 57'30" 227 228

edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 USGS, USC&GS, and North Carolina Geodetic Survey
 and orthophotomosaic by photogrammetric methods

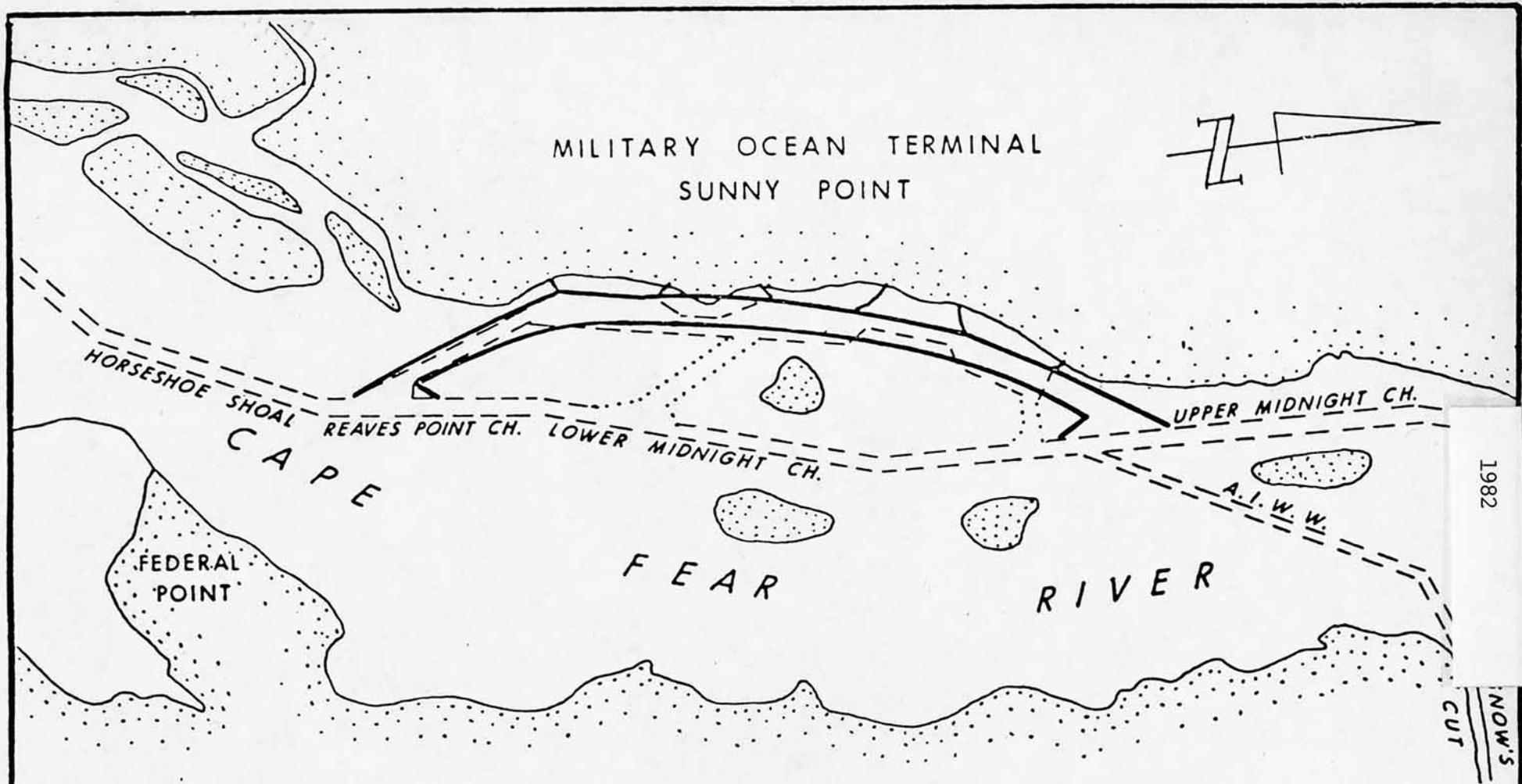
MN *



1980



NOTE MAP INCLUDES OR
OR IMPORTANT MILEAGE NOT SHOWN
ROADS SHOWN



1982

(1982)

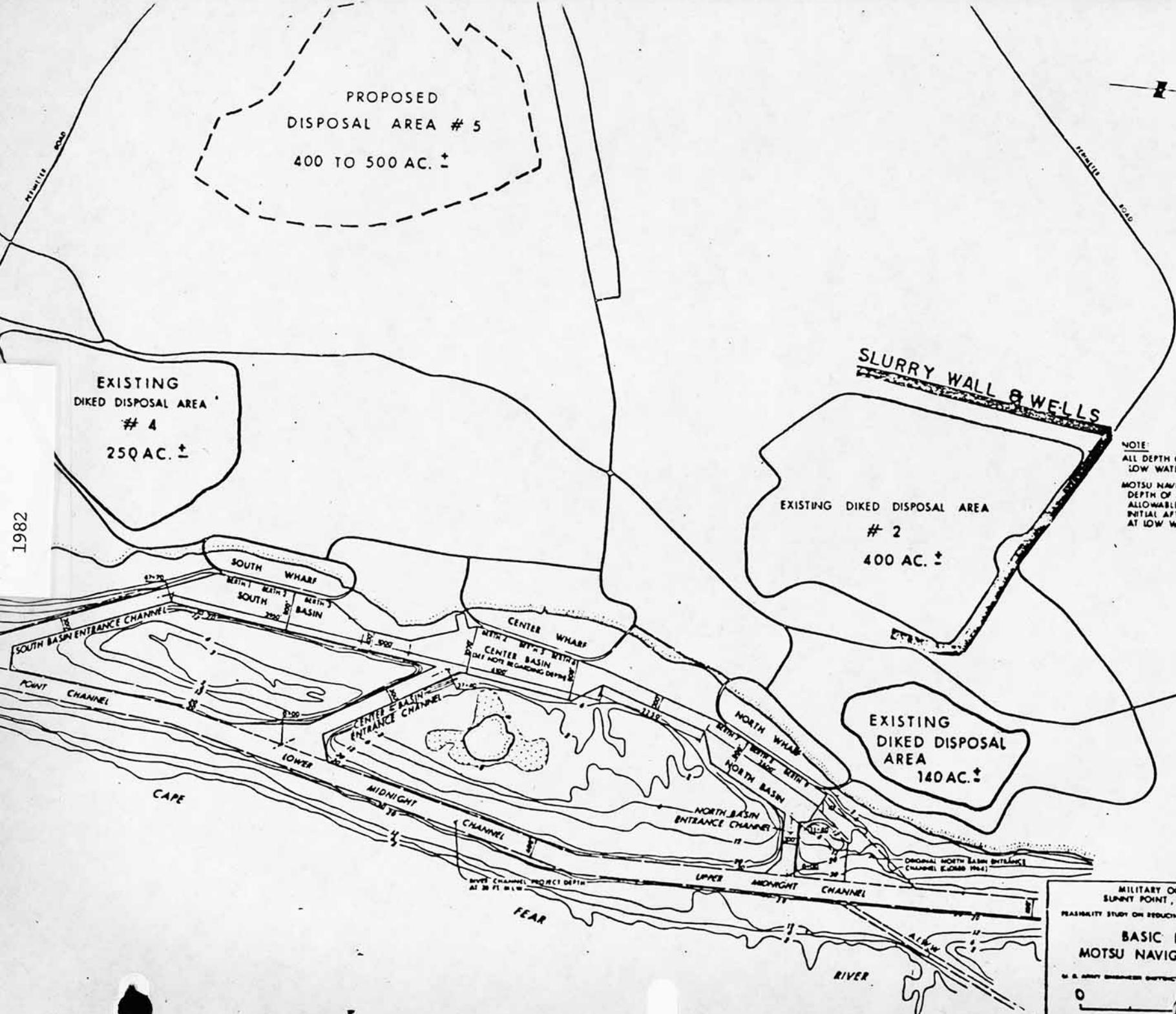
CUT
NOW'S

SCHEMATIC OF PROPOSED CHANNEL REALIGNMENT (FLOW-THROUGH SYSTEM)

- EXISTING CHANNELS
- REALIGNED CHANNEL
- EXISTING CHANNELS TO BE FILLED

FIGURE 1 (NOT TO SCALE)

1982



PROPOSED
DISPOSAL AREA # 5
400 TO 500 AC. †

EXISTING
DIKED DISPOSAL AREA
4
250 AC. †

EXISTING DIKED DISPOSAL AREA
2
400 AC. †

SLURRY WALL & WELLS

EXISTING
DIKED DISPOSAL
AREA
140 AC. †

NOTE:
ALL DEPTH CONTOURS IN FEET BELOW MEAN
LOW WATER.
MOTSU NAVIGATION FACILITIES HAVE PROJECT
DEPTH OF 34 FT. M.L.W. DATUM WITH 2 FT.
ALLOWABLE DREDGING OVERDEPTH GIVING
INITIAL AFTER DREDGING DEPTHS OF 36 FT.
AT LOW WATER.

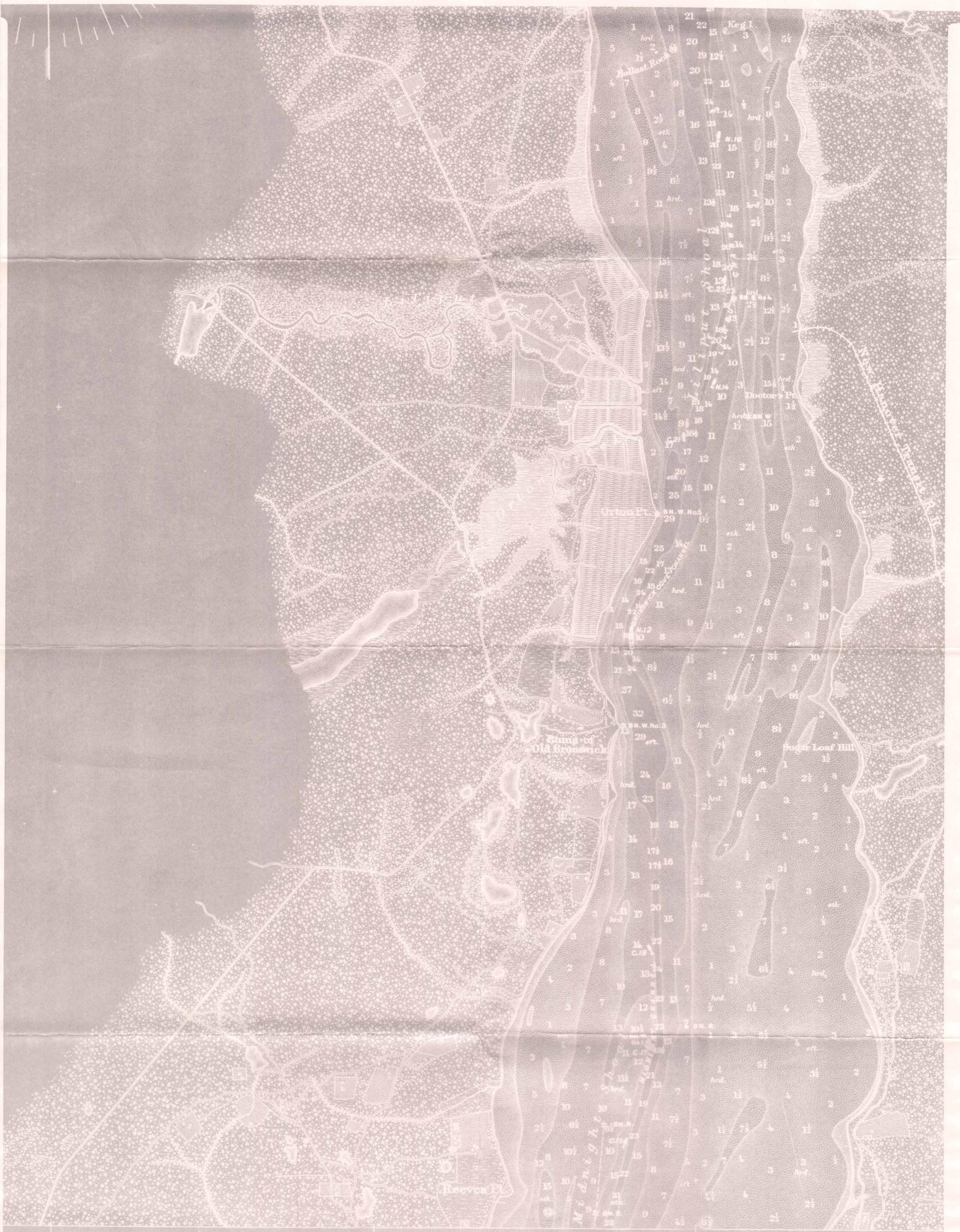
MILITARY OCEAN TERMINAL
SUNNYS POINT, NORTH CAROLINA
FEASIBILITY STUDY ON REDUCING MAINTENANCE BUDGETS CD13

BASIC LAYOUT OF
MOTSU NAVIGATION FACILITIES

U. S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT WASHINGTON, D. C.
0 3000'

FIGURE 3

1901



78°00'

58'

56'

