

The Proprietary Period

The Lords Proprietors of Carolina granted Dataw Island to Caleb Westbrook in 1682. Like many of the first Europeans in the region, Westbrook was actively involved with the Indians and the deerskin trade—the southern version of the fur trade. Caleb Westbrook established a trading post on Dataw. However, he was killed in 1693 and his holdings reverted to the Lords Proprietors. “Westbrook’s Island” then was granted to Charles Odingsell in 1698. The first reference to the island as Datha occurred in the sale of the property to Joseph Boone in 1702. Joseph Boone and his nephews Charles and Thomas, who inherited the land in 1751, were London merchants. It is unlikely the Boones resided on or even visited their island.

“On this Thirteenth day of Novemr, Anno. 1702... Came Mr. Charles Odingsells and Acknowledged That he had assigned over his right & Title mentioned in a Certain Warrt. Bearing date March ye 21st. 1698/99 to Admeasure unto him ye said Odingsells a Certain Island called Westbrook or Datha, to Mr. Joseph Boone.”

In 1755, the Boones sold the island, described as a plantation of 1,170 acres, to Anne Wigg. She left it to her son Lewis Reeve in 1770. We are not certain what was produced on Dataw at that time. Typically colonial planters raised cattle, grew indigo, and harvested timber. It is possible Lewis Reeve built the first home on Dataw Island. Recent archaeological evidence suggests he constructed the central portion of the B. B. Sams house.

A 1590 engraving of Port Royal Sound.

