

TABBY TIMES

*To understand today,
you have to search yesterday.*

PEARL S. BUCK

ARTIFACT-ually *Speaking*

Historians and archeologists depend on human-made artifacts as clues to understanding and interpreting previous cultures. These historical objects give insight and lend credence to the influence of prior cultures on the present. Dataw Island is fortunate that Alcoa recognized this and employed experts to find, explain, and preserve what previous occupants left behind. Their refuse is our treasure. For ten years, archeologist Larry Lepionka and his team sifted through five main archeological sites on the island. In 1993, Eric Poplin, Colin Brooker, and six other contributors produced a remarkable scholarly and comprehensive document* on their findings. This article will examine a few of their discoveries.

ARTIFACT-ually Speaking

DATHA'S HISTORY OF HUMAN HABITATION BEGAN WITH
THE PALEO (BC 10,000 - 8,000) ERA WHEN NOMADIC HUNTERS AND GATHERERS
VISITED THE ISLAND SEASONALLY IN SEARCH OF FISH, DEER, AND OYSTERS.



The oldest artifact found on Datha is a 10,000-year-old Dalton point or arrow excavated near Mink Point, the present Gleason's Landing.

(Figure 1) Although the pointed end is missing, it is distinctive

for the aureoles, or ears, on its fluted base. The Paleo natives were followed by the Archaic and Woodland Indians, who were less nomadic, more agrarian, and left stamped pottery fragments and shell middens in their wake. These heaps of shells were subsequently used by 18th and 19th-century builders in constructing tabby walls.

Fig. 1

The Sams family era, beginning in 1783 and lasting until the mid-1860s, accounts for most of the artifacts found. Poplin and Brooker's report lists thousands of items in 75 pages of their extensive report. William Sams, who purchased Datha Island in 1783, built what is now the middle section of the tripartite B.B.Sams plantation house. Although renovations in the 1820s by B.B. Sams may have "cleaned" or disturbed the earliest construction, the artifacts found in the house included these categories: kitchen (e.g., ceramics), architecture (e.g., nails), clothing (e.g., buttons), personal (e.g., keys), and tobacco (e.g., pipe bowls). Most of the ceramics found in this part of the house were creamware. (Fig. 2) In 1762, Josiah Wedgwood introduced creamware distinguished by its creamy, yellow glaze. It was produced for the next forty years, and its shards are abundant in the Datha structures.

B.B. Sams built the East and West wings of the main house. As they were occupied from the 1820s to the 1860s, they were rife with artifacts, including bottle glass, metal pans, and an agate door knob. Pearlware or China Glaze, a white ware with a blue-tinted glaze, accounts for these two wings' abundance

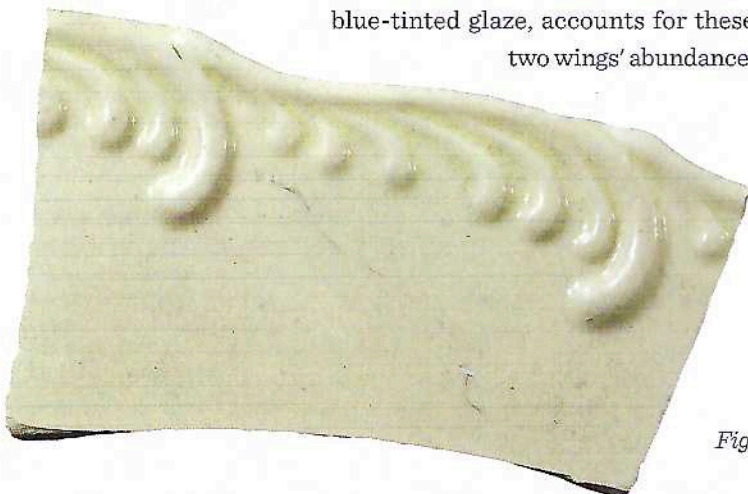


Fig. 2

of ceramic shards. These porcelains were largely flatware (plates, saucers, and serving plates). Other ceramics included Chinese porcelains, delftware, yellowware, transferware, and ironstone. This last may have been from the later period when the residence was owned by B.B. Sams's sons, Horace and Julius.

The researchers also examined the structures that were residences for the enslaved within the fenced main house complex. Surprisingly, the artifacts were similar in quality and cost to those used in the main house. There was a greater frequency of hollow ware (cups, bowls) than of flatware, reflecting the soup and stew diet of these residents. Ceramic shards in these homes included the less expensive creamware and the most expensive transferware. There were few examples of colonoware, a type of earthenware created by African-Americans along the Atlantic Coast. This was true for even residences of the enslaved in compounds outside of the plantation yard. This contrasts with a Waccamaw Neck rice plantation, where the former Africans developed a more creole culture with more earthenware objects and fewer European-style artifacts.

The ceramics found in the residences of the enslaved people on Louis R. Sams' plantation in the northern part of the island were less costly than those found on his brother's plantation. This may reflect the relative wealth of the two brothers. Although B.B. Sams was considered a mid-sized planter, the investigators suggest "that Sams was willing to invest portions of his income in the material culture of his laborers" (p. 389). Alternatively, they may have adjusted to more European lifeways than the previously mentioned enslaved on the rice plantation. This is no apology for the fact that these workers were considered Mr. Sams' property, were not free, and his income depended on their skills and labor.

It is possible to view many of the mentioned objects daily in the History and Learning Center. If you find any artifacts while digging in your garden or replacing a driveway, please contact a DHF board member. —Ginny Hall-Apicella

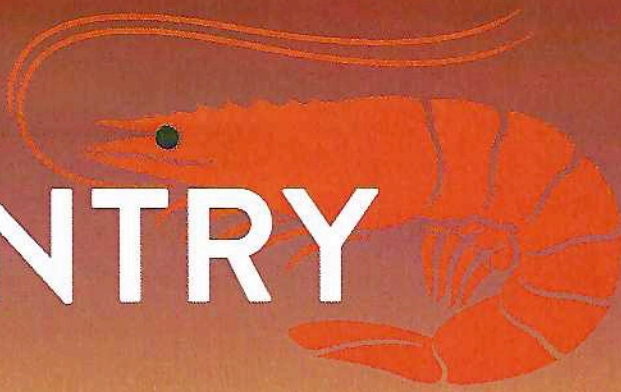
*The Historical Development of Dataw Island, Prepared for Alcoa South Carolina Inc. by Eric Poplin, Ph.D., Principal Investigator, and Colin Brooker, Historical Architect. 1993

www.datawhistory.org/dataw-island-history/historic-artifacts/

Special thanks to Bill Riski for his photos.

DATAW HISTORIC FOUNDATION

LOWCOUNTRY BOIL 2022



Photos by Rosemary Patterson

LUMINARY NIGHT

SAVE THE DATE

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12 *from 5:30 to 8:00 PM*

An island-wide celebration of a 30 year Dataw tradition with beautiful sights to see on every street around the island! Come and celebrate the season!

The historic ruins of the Sams plantation house and outbuildings will be illuminated by hundreds of luminaries.

A Spectacular Display



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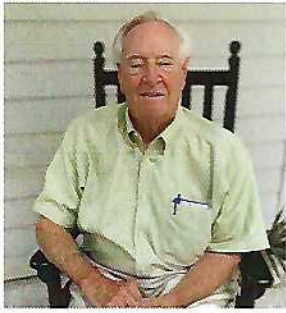
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Your DHF membership assures the preservation of our historic tabby structures, plantation site, artifacts found, and all related archives—100% of our funding is dependent on membership.

We are grateful to all who have generously supported DHF in the past, and hope you will continue. Thank you!



Larry Rowland: *Scholar and Neighbor*

By Ginny Hall-Apicella

Larry Rowland, professor emeritus of history at USCB, and a former owner with his brother of Dataw Island, is both an engaging raconteur and a font of knowledge about the island. Not only was Dataw (then spelled Datha) his childhood playground, he and his wife, Margo, have lived here for almost twenty years.

Although Larry was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, he spent most of his young life shuttling between East Aurora, NY, not far from Buffalo, and Beaufort, South Carolina. Since his mother, Libby Rowland (née Saunders), had ties to Beaufort, and had inherited Datha Island from Kate Gleason, the family moved south for part of the year. He recalls the canoe attached to the top of the car in their travels back and forth.

In 1955, his parents bought Tidalholm, the iconic house built by Edgar Fripp in 1856. The house was seized by the Union Army during their occupation of Beaufort to be used as Hospital #7; still later, the home was the settings for *The Great Santini* and *The Big Chill*. The house was already an inn in the 1950s but his mother gave it the spark that turned it into a destination. "My mother should have been a fisherman, since she could catch any fish," Larry reminisced. Not only did his mother bring guests to Beaufort, she transported them to the small cottage and dock the family had built on Pee Dee Point to celebrate a renowned lowcountry experience, an oyster roast. Larry recalls fetching armloads of wood with his brother, Dick, to feed the fire for the roast. Earlier in the day, the brothers had boated to Lumpkin Oyster Company across the river to purchase bushels of fresh oysters for the feast.

It wasn't all work for a young boy on Dataw. Larry describes the island as "an unbelievable playground." When he and Dick roamed through the woods, climbed trees, and explored the Ruins, it stimulated their imagination for other childhood games and for adventures. He and a gang of local boys would fish and hunt for deer, raccoons, squirrels, and rattlesnakes. They would also boat to Morgan Island to camp over night in a time when the island was over-grazed by goats, not monkeys.

As he grew older and the contract with the Bishops to grow tomatoes on Datha ended, his father, Richard, an engineer and a retired executive of a battery manufacturing company, decided to try cattle-raising. The cattle were left to graze and wander at their leisure through the abundant growth of brush and woods. Larry recalls that he and Dick would pull the Spanish moss from the trees and feed it to the cattle for additional fodder. Larry was also the designated "surgeon" castrating the male calves before they became aggressive bulls. Another physical labor the brothers accomplished was chain sawing their way through

downed trees on the dirt roads following the wrath of Hurricane Gracie in 1959. That task took three years to complete.

Larry admits that he was a "misbehaving child." That behavior turned out to be a blessing when he was sent to the principal who sent him to the library.

The librarian said, "You have to review the books for me." That opened up a new world to Larry. Together with his mother's encouragement and her reading him stories of the past, he discovered his passion and affinity with history. He gravitated to figures like Francis Marion, the reputed "Swamp Fox," who pestered and out-foxed the British during the Revolutionary War.

"I got immersed in the histories of South Carolina and upstate New York," Larry said. The stories of both his geographical homes intrigued him. This fascination for the past continued through his time at Beaufort High School, Tabor Academy, Hamilton College, the Navy, and an eventual doctorate from the University of South Carolina. It culminated in his years of teaching and

research and the publication of his magnum opus, *The History of Beaufort County, South Carolina, Volumes 1 - 3*. Some of these books were written in collaboration with other scholars but Larry was the anchoring force. These volumes catalogue Beaufort County from its original native inhabitants through colonization, the Revolutionary War, the ante-bellum prosperity, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and up to the post World War II boom. He has a particular interest in Spanish colonization era.

When not being involved in history, Larry enjoys sailing his boats on the nearby rivers. Racing sail boats was a passion he developed in his youth in both the north and south.

Larry concluded that he is especially heartened by the way his Dataw neighbors have embraced and adopted the Ruins and the history of the island as if they were their own.

**"They've made it spectacular—
this Dataw community is really exceptional."**

Larry Rowland





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Marilyn Peck

DHF was very fortunate this year to receive a monetary gift from the estate of Joanne Moses who passed away in December 2021. Both Joanne and her husband Alan were long time supporters of the DHF. The DHF Board has decided to use these funds for scholarships for college students who intend to study history and preservation. We are in the process of researching such programs and establishing criteria for the scholarship. Joanne and Alan may go down in history as some of the most generous philanthropists to South Carolina history and we are honored that we were chosen as one of their many recipients.

Thank you to all who contributed their time and energy for another successful Low Country Boil at the Gazebo on October 24. We hope that whetted your appetite for more DHF activities to come. Save the date for the Fireside Chat with John Worley on January 26, 2023. His topic is "Tuscarora Jack" Barnwell.

Our goal is have every resident become a DHF member since the Ruins and the history of the island is a vital part of the story of Dataw, Beaufort County and South Carolina. I want to thank all present DHF members for their continued financial and volunteer support. If you are not yet a member, I encourage you to join us in our ongoing effort to ensure that Dataw's historic structures and artifacts are always preserved. Dataw Island is a unique and beautiful place to live and I feel lucky to be part of it.

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TABBY TIMES

Tabby Times is a publication of the *Dataw Historic Foundation, Dataw Island, SC*
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On the Street Where You Live

As mentioned previously in this series, an Alcoa marketing firm selected Dataw street names based on the names of previous island owners. They stuck to this formula for Odingsell and North and South Boone Roads. Caleb Westbrook (profiled in *Tabby Times*, Spring 2022) was the first colonial era owner. Following Westbrook's death, the island reverted to the Lord Proprietors and a warrant was given to Charles Odingsell in 1698. Four years later, Odingsell may have abandoned his claim or sold the island to Joseph Boone (1678 - 1733).

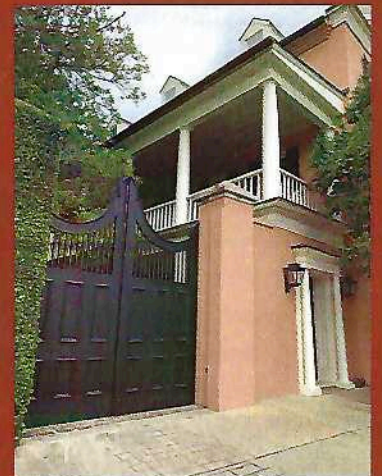
Who is this Joseph Boone?

The records suggest that Joseph is the great grandson of Henry Boone, a barber and a butcher, who died in Devonshire, England in 1637. Henry had two grandsons, Thomas (1638 - 1693) and John (1632 - 1711). John sailed across the Atlantic as a servant aboard one of three ships bound for the Carolina Colony. John's fortunes turned quickly and he became a successful merchant and a member of the colonial council. According to records, he was expelled from the council for "conspiring with pirates," and he was an "Indian Interpreter" for the colonial government. John's father-in-law gave him the property the present day Boone Hall Plantation in Mount Pleasant, that is still open to the public.

John Boone's brother, Thomas, remained in England prospering as a wealthy merchant, member of Parliament, and a director of the East India Company. Eventually, Thomas brought his wife and children to the Americas yet after his death, his wife and most of his children returned to England. His adolescent son, Joseph, remained in Charleston with his Uncle John. Both flourished as merchants. This is the Joseph Boone who purchased Datha Island in 1702. He also owned other large plantations north of Charleston. Records indicate that he had a house in Charleston near Trad and Church streets. In 1720, Joseph visited London to implore Parliament to revoke the Proprietary Laws which controlled colonial religion and politics.

Following his death in 1733, Joseph left Datha to his wife Anne Axtell "for her use and profit during her natural life." Anne died in 1751 bequeathing the Datha property to her nephews, Charles and Thomas Boone who were London merchants. The two brothers retained Datha for four years before selling it to Anne Wigg for £3.51 in colonial currency. Anne Wigg was the mother of Louis Reeve, who may have built an early version of the middle house in the present Ruins.

Which one of the four Boones who owned Datha was the present street named after? We will never know. All these Boones were absentee landlords. There is no indication that they engaged in indigo planting or cattle herding present on other sea islands at the time. The Boone presence on the island is reflected only in their name.



Home of Anne Axtell Boone, Joseph's widow, 47 East Bay Street, Charleston, c. 1640