

"A Horror of Farm Work":

Freedmen School Students and Benedictine Monks
on Skidaway Island, 9Ch78, Final Report



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with contributions by Kirstyn Cardwell

Digging Savannah

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Introduction	4
Archaeological and Historical Background	
Schools and Education	5
Benedictines	8
Skidaway Island	9
Site History 9Ch78	13
Research Questions	19
Methodology	20
Results	22
Interpretation and Conclusions	40
Recommendations and Future Work	55
Bibliography	57
Appendix A: St. James Beverage Company Bottle by Kirstyn Cardwell	61
Appendix B: Artifact Catalog, See separate file.	

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Introduction

Skidaway Island's Benedictine monastery and Freedmen school is truly unique and a highly significant site. Archaeological research on schoolhouses is scarce, and investigations of African American schoolhouses are even more rare. To date, little archaeological research on American Benedictine monasteries has been found, and none in Georgia, excepting Jerome Oetgen's work (1969, 1976, 1997, 2000, 2008).

The site location has long been known and was first archaeologically recorded in 1974 on a Georgia state site form. When The Landings community was initially developed, a 0.62-acre lot was set aside to preserve the core of this important archaeological site. However, this lot is a small fraction of the whole archaeological landscape. Recently, residents and staff became concerned when an adjacent lot was sold, and the landowner intended to develop the lot, likely destroying archaeological resources in the process. Fortunately, the landowner, Andy Dyer, approached The Landings staff and was eager to preserve or mitigate where possible. The Phase I shovel test survey was conducted in the spring 2016 semester. Phase II research was conducted during the fall 2016, spring 2017, and fall 2017 semesters. In the first two semesters, six 1x2 meter test units were excavated to subsoil, two in each area of interest identified during the Phase I excavations. Based on those excavations, in the final semester, four more 1x2 meter test units were excavated on the property's southern end.



Armstrong students excavate Area 3 test units in September 2017.

Archaeological and Historical Background

Schools and Education

By the 1860s, free public education was fairly standard for white students, although the Civil War would disrupt schooling. Schoolhouses were often the community focal point, hosting religious and social activities in addition to education (Rotman 2009:71-73). After the Civil War, there was an immediate demand for schools for former slaves. However, from 1860 to 1880, most southern whites did not believe in mandatory public school because it upset the societal order and “planter regime”. “The result was a postwar South that was extremely hostile to the idea of universal education” (Anderson 1988:4). Despite the pressure against them, freedmen’s schools were increasingly common in the post-Civil War South. In the five years after the Civil War, the federal government spent six million dollars on approximately 2,500 Southern schools for 150,000 children. Curriculum focused on reading, writing, and math (Bonner et al 1979:xi, xii).

John W. Alford, Inspector of Schools and later General Superintendent of Schools for the Freedmen’s Bureau, saw much “self-teaching” and described “native schools” run by African Americans outside of the support and control of the Freedmen’s Bureau. These were found throughout the South especially where there were no Freedmen’s Bureau or northern Missionary schools. One local example is Susie Baker King Taylor, who participated in the first all-black Union army regiment and was the founder and only instructor of the first school for new freedmen in post-Civil War Savannah. She later opened several more schools.

In December of 1864, Savannah’s African American leaders, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, and General William Sherman met to support the creation of black schools and developed a plan for establishing a free school system. In 1865, the Georgia Education Association was formed to supervise schools, establish policy, and raise money. On January 10, 1865, there were 1,000 African American children in Savannah’s seven new schools. One of these schools was in the former Bryan Slave Mart near Ellis Square. In 1866, there were 28 schools in Savannah, 16 of which were black schools. The Georgia Education Association quickly became an auxiliary organization as the Freedmen’s Bureau and the American Missionary Association both wanted control.

The Beach Institute is another independent school open from 1867 to 1919. The American Missionary Association founded the school, which was funded by Scientific American editor Alfred E. Beach, the Freedmen’s Bureau, and donations from citizens. The opening enrollment was 600 students, with a mostly white staff. The Beach Institute charged tuition until becoming a free public school in 1874. The American Missionary Association reopened the school in 1878 after a fire. There were also “Sabbath schools”, or church sponsored schools, which were often established before public and free schools were available. Usually meeting on weekends and evenings, these schools were established with local, black community support and taught by black teachers, although sometimes they had white churches’ support. Because many schools were independent of Freedmen’s Bureau, they are not in official histories or official accounts (Anderson 1988:4-13, Jones 2014:154-157, Bryant 2014:169).

By 1870, every southern state had constitutional requirements for public schools and state financing (Anderson 1988:19). By the late 1800s, schoolhouses were very common public buildings, as were churches. Increased state involvement made the schoolhouse a “recognizable architectural form” (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:107). The 1890s through the 1930s was a time of school consolidation, and many schools changed from one room schoolhouses to multi-room buildings with professional teachers (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:107).

“The convergence of literacy, leadership, and religion are frequently recognized as mutually reinforcing motivations for African-Americans of that era to seek educational opportunities, often against overwhelming odds” (Agbe-Davies and Martin 2013:108). Education meant full citizenship for African Americans. Education, and literacy in particular, meant that African Americans could vote, read the Bible, and read labor contracts, which meant they could fairly negotiate wages and labor. Education made land-owning more possible, which was important not just for avoiding wage labor, but owning land allows for a greater sense of belonging and security in a community (Burton 2014:29-30).

The archaeological literature review revealed the paucity of information available on schoolhouses, despite their importance and ubiquity in the American experience. The few sites excavated make for valuable comparisons, not just for similarities, but also for the differences to this site. Most schoolhouses investigated archaeologically had a low artifact density. Most artifacts were architectural, and very few educational artifacts were present: slate pencils, writing slates, and toys such as marbles were found. Domestic artifacts recovered are often from the site’s use as a social center (Rotman 2009:71-73). These findings are somewhat consistent with the monastery site research. However, we should question how much this site was used as a social center. We expect more domestic refuse as this site was not just a school, but a church and monastery. In short, it was a home. Previous archaeological investigations of schools have focused on identifying the schoolhouses and associated outbuildings, understanding their construction and remodeling, and exploring issues of lighting, heating, furnishing, and sanitary facilities (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:122-126).

Very few African American schoolhouses have been excavated. Archaeologists at New Philadelphia, Illinois, have tentatively identified the location of an African American schoolhouse. Frank McWhorter, a freedman, established New Philadelphia as a town for blacks and whites. Education was a priority, and the “schoolhouse served as an important focus of community life” as there was no public school for African American children in 1850s and 1860s Illinois (Agbe-Davies 2013:1). Documentary evidence, particularly deeds and oral histories, as well as geophysical evidence, led archaeologists to explore Lots 1 and 2 of Block 8, suspected to contain the 1848 school. While small amounts of artifacts were found (lamp chimney glass, whiteware, yellow ware, nails, brick), no features were found. It is likely the architecture was very ephemeral, and therefore little evidence remains. Several nearby features contained slate fragments, adding to the evidence that a school was in the area. However, these school artifacts are only 0.9% of the entire assemblage. (Agbe-Davies 2013:1-18, Agbe-Davies and Martin 2013:109-114).

Agbe-Davies also excavated the Old Elliot School, which was established by and for black Bermudians

after emancipation. This symbolically powerful school, established in 1848, is still standing. The original trustees were twelve men who bought the land, raised funds, and built the school themselves, as many were craftsmen. Bermuda's government contributed money for annual expenses. The first class of students were 34 boys and girls who learned the basics: spelling, reading, writing, grammar, math, geography, catechism, and sewing. Two trenches were excavated under the floors in order to understand the building's construction and use. While Trench 2 proved to be modern and mixed, Trench 1 contained intact strata and features with fragments of writing slates, slate pencils, pen nibs, shoe fragments, buttons, a glass marble, a scissor fragment, graphite pencil leads, and metal ferrules. The artifact findings conform to the expectations of a school. There are few ceramics or animal bones, and interestingly, more educational artifacts from the older layers. A "non-domestic artefact pattern" was found. Major repairs, including a new roof and raised walls were identified. The entrance door was moved. The original door on the north wall was Gothic Revival (Agbe-Davies 2002:129-150). "In addition to being popular, the Gothic style was thought to be suitable for settings where instruction (spiritual or intellectual) and contemplation were the primary activities" (Agbe-Davies 2002:144-145).

While not archaeologically explored, The Penn School (now Penn Center) on St. Helena's Island offers the closest available contrast to Skidaway's school. St. Helena's Island, South Carolina, had a mostly African American population when the United States Navy arrived in 1862, and many landowners left at this time. Laura Towne and Ellen Murray founded the Penn School in the same year. Ms. Towne and Ms. Murray came to St. Helena's as young women and spent the rest of their lives dedicated to the school, which still lasts today as the Penn Center, a community center and museum. Laura Matilda Towne graduated from the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania, and the Port Royal Relief Committee of Philadelphia appointed her to the Penn School. In addition to teaching, Towne continued her medical practice, as the only qualified person on the island (Burton 2014: 1-16, 20)

Classes started in June of 1862, and on September 22, the brick church was offered as a building for the school. At this point, the school had 80 students. By October, the school had grown to 110 students, and Charlotte Forten, an African American teacher was hired. By December 15, 1862, the school had 147 students registered, but daily attendance varied widely. The school was open seven days a week, including Sunday school. The curriculum was a New England model with rigorous reading, writing, spelling, grammar, diction, history, geography, math, and music. However, there was no "school culture" on the island, and there was a language or dialect barrier between the northern teachers and Gullah-speaking students (Burton 2014: 16-21).

During the Civil War, the island's residents faced many hardships including violence, illness, heat, and lack of food. Many displaced people arrived on St. Helena's during the Civil War. The Union Army sometimes kidnapped freedmen for unpaid labor. But the students persisted. In 1864, the school had 194 students. General Saxton offered to have a new schoolhouse built, which was ready in January 1865 and was a "gift of the Freedman's Aid Society of Pennsylvania" (Burton 2014:25). The frame building had three rooms and was one of the first prefabricated buildings in America. It was "put into service as the first real schoolhouse in the South designed for the instruction of former slaves" (Burton 2014:25). In December of

1868, the school began “normal practice”, or training teachers. As there were no clocks on the island, Towne’s family donated a school bell that could be heard three miles away, although some students walked as far as five or six miles to school (Burton 2014:24-25).

During Reconstruction, the American Missionary Association supplied volunteer teachers. Charities also funded the school, which meant constantly searching for support, but this also allowed for independence. For example, public schools did not have African American teachers, but the Penn School did. The 1870s had the island residents dealing with poverty and lack of food, but there was a brief interracial democracy. By Reconstruction’s end in 1877, African American rights were no longer enforced and political violence was common. In the 1890s, disenfranchisement took hold, but unlike most areas, St. Helena’s Island had a relatively high level of African American land ownership. Laura Towne died February 22, 1901, and she saw the school passed to a new leadership (Burton 2014:26-43). The Penn School was wildly successful despite many challenges.

Mitchelville, on South Carolina’s Hilton Head Island, was a town founded by the Union Army for freed African Americans. Several archaeological investigations have examined Mitchelville (Trinkley 1986, Espenshade and Grunden 1991, Butler et al 2013). In 1866, Hilton Head Island had five school districts, including Mitchelville. The town had primary, intermediate, and a high schools taught at three different churches. The primary school met four and one half hours per day with attendance ranging from 52 to 108 students. The intermediate school had 15 to 40 students, and the high school, which met five hours per day, had 62 to 90 students. There was no dedicated schoolhouse, and the churches which hosted the schools were unheated in the winter, small, and not equipped for schooling (Trinkley 1986: 96-97). However, the numbers of students speak to the need and desire for education.

Benedictines

Benedictine monks take three vows: stability, *conversatio morum suorum*, and obedience. Stability means that becoming a monk is a life-long occupation, and a monk stays in the same monastic community for life. In 1907 the Congress of Presidents of the Black Monk Congregation determined, “By the vow of stability, the monk attaches himself to the monastery of his profession, he associates himself to the monastic family there existing, and promises he will never withdraw his neck from the yoke of regular observance according to the Rule of St. Benedict” (Butler 1924:124). *Conversatio morum suorum* is generally translated “conversion of manner or habits”, meaning the individual adopts the life of a monk including the Rule of St. Benedict (often simply called “the Rule”). This vow includes the vows of poverty and chastity. St. Benedict defined poverty as having no personal possessions. All property was held in common, and when a monk joined a monastery, he turned over everything to the monastery. Nineteenth century Benedictine monks lived lives of material simplicity and frugality. They were not in need but had reasonable accommodation. Monks even gave away unnecessary things to the poor, including used clothes. No wastefulness was permitted, but they did not live in

extreme poverty. The third vow, obedience, means obedience to God, obedience to superiors, obedience to self (discipline), and obedience to one another, essentially respect for others (Butler 1924:123-146).

Monasteries were governed as a family, with the abbot as the father. While the abbot has full authority over the monastery, it is also his responsibility to take care of everyone like a father. The abbot holds his position for life and has very wide power, however, on some issues, the monks will vote. Each monastery is also operated as a separate entity in which the monks stay within the community for life, according to the vows (Butler 1924:184, 200, 226-227). In the early twentieth century, smoking was “allowed at discretion” (Butler 1924:307). While the Rule says monks may not eat meat and may not drink wine, since Reformation, moderation has been the rule. External schools attached to Benedictine monasteries also became common in the last few centuries. Most were secondary education schools. In American monasteries, Benedictine schools had 3,000 students in the 1920s (Butler 1924:307, 326).

Founded in 1846 by Boniface Wimmer, St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, was the first Benedictine outpost in America. The Skidaway monastery was one of many missions Wimmer started under the St. Vincent Archabbey’s umbrella. These early monks “were little more than transplanted replicas of European monastic ideals (Rippinger 1984:295). The religious horarium, or daily schedule, was the same, and many monastic traditions such as beer with meals and the liturgical ceremony and rubrics were preserved. However, soon these now American monks began to change and adapt to their new homes. The American monks became more missionary, more pastoral, more practical, and more individual. In a word, they became more American, a change that was criticized by their tradition-bound European counterparts. The American Benedictines identified as European immigrants, which was a very American experience in the nineteenth century and often had close connections with immigrant aid societies. “The principle means by which the Benedictines came into contact with the immigrant were their education institutions” (Rippinger 1984:302). While the Benedictines tried to introduce their European classical education tradition, often this did not work, especially on the frontier. Schools set up as seminaries and liberal arts schools had to be transformed to teach science, agriculture, and crafts (Rippinger 1984:294-302).

Skidaway Island

Skidaway Island began to emerge around 50,000 years ago, and by 35,000 years ago was a stable island with sea levels 2-5 feet above current levels. During this period, the Silver Bluff Stabilization, glaciation peaked around 25,000 years ago, leaving sea levels 300 feet below current levels, and Skidaway Island was stranded 70 to 80 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. Skidaway Island was characterized by very different flora and fauna than today, including mega fauna like the giant ground sloths. At 18,000 years ago, sea levels began to rise again and by 5,000 years BP, Skidaway was again an island with tidal marshes and a second set of islands forming to the east including Tybee, Wassaw, and Ossabaw (DePratter 1975: 1-5, Elliott and Holland 2006:4).

The Benedictine monastery and Freedmen school site is on Lakeland sand, which is described in the USDA Soil Survey as “excessively drained” (USDA 1974:23). Typically found on level to very gently sloping ridges, the Lakeland series is not very fertile due to its acidity, small amount of organic material present, and its inability to hold water well. Lakeland series soils are common in Chatham County and are typically forested environments with pines and oaks.

Cultural forces that changed Skidaway Island’s ecology include a lowering water table, historic fresh water ponds drying up, land clearing for agriculture, livestock grazing, low areas drained for agriculture, roads, sawmills and logging, and pollution causing food resources contamination. Hurricanes with their accompanying high tides and winds plus erosion are natural forces that have shaped the island (DePratter 1975:5).

Chester DePratter did some of the pre-development surveys of the island, establishing the basic settlement and occupation description. The island has been occupied for approximately 4,000 years with relatively low population density and excellent archaeological preservation until the 1970s development. Fortunately, there has also been frequent archaeological surveys and excavations prior to continued development (DePratter 1975:5).

Skidaway Island was first occupied during the St. Simons Phase of the Late Archaic Period. DePratter found 10 St. Simons site, including several shell middens, located along the island’s eastern shore in three clusters. DePratter’s limited subsurface testing suggested the possibility for older, inundated sites in the marsh. At 9Ch113, test unit excavators found St. Simons and Refuge ceramics and lithic debris below more modern marsh. Refuge Phase sites were also located along the eastern shore largely in the same areas as the St. Simons sites. Refuge sites are characterized by punctate and simple stamped pottery. During the Deptford period, there is a return to marsh subsistence. There were more Deptford sites, and more areas were occupied but still only along the eastern shore. Wilmington sites were most numerous in DePratter’s survey, and the interior was occupied for the first time, probably indicating a mixed subsistence including horticulture. The only burial mound that was found dates to this period. Wilmington ceramics are distinctive because they are grog tempered. St. Catherine’s sites from the late Woodland-early Mississippian Period interface were not numerous, but the phase is short in duration. Mississippian Period Savannah phase sites were not “intensive or extensive” and did not contain much cultural material. The Irene phase in the Late Mississippian Period showed the western shore was occupied for the first time as well as continued eastern shore and interior occupation. Native American occupation ended during the Irene period, around the mid-1400s or early 1500s AD. While the Guale may have used the area, there is no evidence of Native American occupation on Skidaway Island during the contact period, or the Altamaha phase (DePratter 1975:85-97, Elliott and Holland 2006:9-11). Figure 1 summarizes Native American periods, phases, and corresponding dates.

Despite unconfirmed reports of a Spanish mission on the northeastern edge of Skidaway Island (Kelly 1980:12), no archaeological evidence has been located so far (Smith and Elliott 1985:40). Colonial settlement

PERIOD	PHASE	DATE
Historic	Altamaha	AD 1550-1700
Mississippian	Irene	AD 1300-1550
Mississippian	Savannah II	AD 1200-1300
Mississippian	Savannah I	AD 1150-1200
Mississippian/late Woodland	St. Catherines	AD 1000-1150
Woodland	Wilmington	AD 600-1000
Woodland	Deptford III	AD 500-600
Woodland	Deptford II	AD 100-500
Woodland	Deptford I	400 BC- AD 100
Woodland	Oemler	700-400 BC
Woodland	Refuge	1100-700 BC
Archaic	St. Simons II	1700-1100 BC
Archaic	St. Simons I	2200-1700 BC

Figure 1. Native American periods and phases.

of Skidaway Island began in 1734, the year after James Oglethorpe established Savannah. The purpose of settling the island was to guard the water passage to Savannah from Spanish incursion. Lotter's 1740 map indicates two small forts placed at the north and south ends of the island (Smith and Elliott 1985:40). The early settlement consisted of five families and six single men, each given 50 acre land grants. None of the settlers were farmers or

soldiers, but they were expected to farm the island and do guard shifts. Settlers all left or died by 1740 (Piechocinski 2003:105, Kelly 1980, Elliott and Holland 2006:15-16).

The next decade brought changes to Georgia that resulted in more permanent colonial settlement, such as allowing landowners to live off island and the legalization of slavery in 1749. Between 1745 and 1752, eighteen individuals received land grants totaling 4,500 acres (Smith and Elliott 1985:40). From 1754 and 1771 approximately 22 people received 29 additional Skidaway Island land grants. In 1755, a 453-acre tract, called Orangedale, was given to Henry Yonge Sr., an occasional island resident. This tract was adjacent to the monastery land. By 1762, Yonge owned over 1,000 acres and was the only one to continue growing indigo and silk, while other were growing agricultural staples. Orangedale, later called Cedar Grove, stayed in the Yonge family until 1785, when it was sold to Hampton Lillibridge and became part of his Hampton Place plantation (Elliott and Holland 2006:16-17).

The only notable Revolutionary War conflict was a 1782 skirmish on the island's south side. Some island landowners were loyalists whose land was confiscated after the war. At the height of the plantation era, 2,000 residents, mostly slaves, inhabited the island, but by the Civil War about 1,000 people remained. These plantations frequently passed through generations and plantation names stayed relatively stable (Elliott and Holland 2006:17-22).

There was also little action during the Civil War. The Confederates constructed three batteries on the Wilmington River at Priest's Landing, which is very near the monastery site. In March of 1862, the Confederate military decided their positions were too spread out and could not be successfully defended. Tybee, Wassaw, Green, and Skidaway islands were abandoned and the troops were pulled back to Savannah. On March 24, the Union army took the island (Elliott and Holland 2006:17-22).

After the war, Skidaway Island land was confiscated and given to Freedmen under Sherman's Field

Order Number 15, the famous “forty acres and a mule”. The Savannah Daily Republican in June 1865 reported, “upwards of one thousand colored people [are] living on Skidaway Island, nearly all of whom have been transported there since the middle of February by the government... several hundred acres of land are in an advanced state of cultivation, on which there is a large quantity of fine corn, a small lot of cotton, an abundance of snapbeans, cucumbers, potatoes, watermelons, and cantaloupes.” The author noted “a degree of prosperity that was highly satisfactory, surpassing the expectations of the most sanguine friends of the Freedmen” (quoted in Kelly 1980:60, Elliott and Holland 2006:22-23). Jonathan Bryant writes that Ulysses Houston and “several hundred freedpeople” moved to Skidaway Island after Sherman’s Field Order Number 15, however, they moved back to Savannah within one year when President Andrew Johnson rescinded the order (2014:161).

By 1868, the previous owners successfully petitioned for the return of their land (Elliott and Holland 2006:23). Despite this, an African American population persisted on the island. Newspaper reports from 1868 detail conflicts between the island residents and local fishermen. The December 21, 1868, edition of the Savannah Morning News printed an affidavit from two white fishermen, Charles Ross and Archibald Griffin. The newspaper introduced the affidavit using colorful language,

“two well-known fishermen, who, while in pursuit of their avocation, were fired upon from Skidaway Island by a mob of riotous negroes, who also announced their purpose to allow no white man to fish in those waters. The affidavit clearly shows the murderous intentions of the vagabonds, who live upon the islands below the city and their conduct is such as to call for immediate interference by the authorities.”

The fishermen swore they were en route to Little Tybee Creek, passing by Skidaway Island, when a large group of Freedmen fired on them from the old Confederate batteries with intent to kill. Further, the fishermen were told the Freedmen “ruled” the water and would not allow fishing and oystering in these waters. The fishermen stated the attack was unprovoked (Savannah Morning News 1868:3). A second affidavit was taken and printed the following day. Interestingly, this statement was from two African Americans, Henry Miller and Benjamin Rivers, who had the same experience of being fired upon from the island. But four Skidaway residents boarded their boat and brought the men to shore. Miller and Rivers were held and questioned about an arrest on Wilmington Island earlier in December. They were finally set free and reported their experience, saying they saw about 27 armed Freedmen on the island (Savannah Morning News 1868:3). The resolution of these incidents is unclear. A detailed search of the following week’s daily Savannah Morning News found no more reports.

The mostly African American population continued to live as tenants and sharecroppers until the 1900s when Prohibition-era illegal distilling operations made the island more dangerous and dredging the Skidaway Narrows in 1905 and 1916 made the island more isolated. The Floyd and Guerard lands were foreclosed in the late 1920s (including the monastery land), which began to return to forest. In 1941, Union Bag and Paper Company bought Hampton Place plantation along with most of the southern half of the island and logged the land for paper until the mid-1950s. Concurrently, the Roebling family operated Modena Plantation on the north end. In the 1950s and 1960s, the island was used for hunting and fishing until the late 1960s when plans

were laid for Skidaway Island State Park, Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, and The Landings residential community. Development for these three institutions began in the early 1970s (Elliott and Holland 2006:23-25).

Site History (9Ch78)

Hampton Place Plantation got its name from Hampton Lillibridge. In 1800, Thomas Gibbons sold the monastery tract, which was adjacent to Lillibridge's current holdings, for \$1,500. Hampton Place plantation remained in the family for several generations, passing to his daughter Henrietta Lillibridge, who married James Bilbo in 1812. Their eight surviving children inherited the property, selling it to Alvin N. Miller in 1855 for \$3,000 in order to settle their parents' estate and split the inheritance. Alvin Miller sold the property to William Wade four years later, apparently swapping the plantation for a lot in Savannah "known as lot number five (No5)" (Folder 184, MS 1355). At this time, the plantation was extensively improved, and the sale included all improvements and contents such as buildings, a stable, yards, gardens, stock, hogs, cows, carts, wagons, boats, "plantation utensils, household and kitchen furniture, corn, fodder, and provisions" (Folder 184, MS 1355). "Three negro slaves named Harry, Hetty, and Maria" were also included in the sale dated 28 May 1859 (Folder 184, MS 1355). William Wade then sold the property to Reverend John Barry on 31 May 1859 for \$9,000. But a second document dated 6 June 1859 records Rev. Barry paying \$1 now, and \$2,500 in 12 months for Hampton Place plantation (Folder 182-186, MS 1355).

Cornelius Redding Hanleiter, Georgia Light Artillery, was stationed on Skidaway Island during the Civil War. Hanleiter was a Savannah native and a prominent Atlanta businessman in the printing, telegraph, and publishing industries. He served nearly the whole course of the war, volunteering for Skidaway Island duty on December 15, 1861. His diary has several insights into the state of Hampton Place Plantation. He writes on Tuesday, January 21, 1862:

"I visited the points of interest near the Forts. From the cupalo [sic] of the old mansion- which is in an unfinished condition except for the first story, and that in a very dilapidated state- I had the finest and widest view since my arrival on the Island... This 'Place' is one of the most desirable imaginable for a permanent residence, and I would very much like to occupy it as such were I able to own and improve it properly. The old unfinished Mansion, I learn, has a sad history, however. Two owners, in turn, were broken in their efforts to complete it, and several years ago it was purchased by the Catholic Bishop of Savannah, with a view to establish here, and convert the Mansion into, a Female Asylum (or, I suppose, a Monastery). The death of the good Bishop prevented the carrying into effect his object. The 'Place,' which embraces some seven or eight hundred acres, is still owned by the Bishop's successor, or the Church, but was rented and occupied during the last year by Mr. George Schley, of Augusta. The Mansion, for some time past, has been occupied as a Hospital for our troops" (Kurtz 1969a:44-45).

The Confederate occupation of Skidaway was short and fairly uneventful. Hanleiter also reports on the Hampton Place mansion's fate when the Confederates abandon the island after several months' occupation.

"I learned afterward, however, that the cannonading was the work of a party of Yankees, who threw a few shells on Skidaway about our Batteries, and, finding that point unoccupied, landed and raised a

Federal Flag on the Red-top House formerly occupied by us as a Hospital and Observatory. This done, they took to their boats and hastened to their ships. A Officer of the Georgia Huzzas, being on duty on the Island at the time, had observed their movements- and as soon as the Vandals had got fairly on their way to their ships, entered the house, hauled down their Flag (which he brought away with him) and set fire to the house!" (Kurtz 1969b:57)

After the Civil War, Savannah's Catholic diocese invited French Benedictines to start schools for African American children. St. Benedict's Parish was created, and the monks built a school on Perry Street and a church on Harris and East Broad streets in Savannah. They expanded to a school on Isle of Hope. Unfortunately, several of the monks and students succumbed to a yellow fever outbreak. This church, Our Lady of Good Hope Chapel, was later revived and is an active congregation.

Bishop William Gross requested more Benedictines from St. Vincent Archabbey in Pennsylvania. Abbot Boniface Wimmer, St. Vincent founder, sent Father Oswald Moosmüller and Father Maurice Kaeder. They arrived at Isle of Hope in March of 1877 but found the site in very bad shape and still contagious. The Benedictines turned to 717-acre Hampton Place, the plantation that the Catholic diocese originally purchased to start an orphanage. Those plans were halted when the plantation's main house was lost to fire. Since this property could no longer fulfill its intended purpose, Bishop Gross petitioned the court to transfer the property to the Benedictine Order, and the deed was recorded on July 9, 1877 (Georgia Historical Society, MS 1355).

As Father Oswald began his work on Skidaway Island, he found several African American families already living on the property. Three African American monks also joined the Skidaway mission. Father Oswald wrote that two "would be able to teach ordinary branches in school, the third [would] do housework" (Oetgen 1969:3). First, the monks had trees cut down to build the "monastery, a dormitory for the students, and a storehouse... Our support must come from the farm of 713 acres of which 300 acres are cleared land. This year we expect to plant 40-50 acres of rice, corn, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, and sea-island cotton" (Oetgen 1969:4). Oetgen's 1976 article further explains, Father Oswald "arranged to have the necessary buildings constructed at Skidaway, and in June of 1878 he moved to the island with the small band of monastic candidates who had gathered around him since his arrival" (1976:14). A 1938 letter from Joseph D. Mitchell to Thomas Gamble also mentions an "old cemetery at Skidaway alongside the ruins of the old monastery" (Gamble 80).

The buildings took longer than expected and it was not until June of 1878 that the blessing of the new buildings ceremony took place with great fanfare. When classes began, there were approximately 500 people, mostly African American, living on Skidaway Island, none Catholic. However, Father Oswald received more help in Siricius Palmer, an African American student priest, who would do much of the teaching. (Oetgen 1969:3-4). Additionally, Brother Rhabanus Cononge, a black monk from New Orleans and the first African American Benedictine in the United States, and Brother Philip Cassidy joined the Skidaway mission (Oetgen 1997:348, Oetgen 2000:163-164). The school started with 12 students, and Wimmer had to buy more beds, because some of the boys were sleeping on the floor. But by November, they were down to seven boys. "Four

‘had to be dismissed,’ and one left of his own accord” (Oetgen 1969:5). The students and monks experienced serious cultural differences and some misunderstanding. Students were expected to be up at 5:00 am for Mass and meditation, had to work for four hours, and then attended school for two hours. Jerome Oetgen, OSB, observed, “A stern disciplinarian and a Teuton, Fr. Oswald had not taken into consideration the temperament of a naturally easygoing and demure people who lived in a climate which demanded slow motion and ease” (1969:6). In addition to the school, Father Oswald also began a program to drain the marsh to improve living conditions for everyone on the island. He also planted eucalyptus in an effort to control malaria (Oetgen 1976:17).

The Skidaway school began as a manual labor school, meaning that the students would spend part of their day in school and the rest working in the fields. The students would not pay tuition, but instead the crops produced would be sold to support the school. Oswald intended to make the community self-sufficient, however, the agricultural work was never very successful. Abbot Wimmer regularly visited many of the missions he started throughout the United States, including the “Georgia mission”, which he described in a December 1882 letter as an “agricultural school for Negro boys where they are now receiving instruction in all regular school subjects”. He added, “The Negro mission is very close to my heart” (Oetgen 2008:486-487).

Father Oswald wrote in an 1878 letter, “Though they are poor and can pay nothing at all, nevertheless I think they [the students] bring the blessing of God into the house... You ought to animate some good novices for this mission, but you must not forget to tell them that here on Skidaway we have no beer, no wine, no fresh beef, nor many other luxuries of that kind; nevertheless we enjoy good health and like the place very well” (Oetgen 1976:16). Not all of the monks who worked at Skidaway were as enthusiastic or dedicated as Father Oswald. In 1880, Brother Fridolin Stehle wrote a letter back to St. Vincent Archabbey complaining of the conditions and speaking ill of African Americans. Abbott Wimmer responded,

“You did not go to Skidaway to do *your will* (otherwise you would not be a religious with the sacred vow of obedience), but to do *my will* or that of your immediate superior who rules in my name; whereas *I* also many not follow *my own will*, but do command that which I recognize as the will of God, namely, to found an institution for Negroes whereby many Negroes will retain their Catholic faith or be converted... Even if all were true what you have written, we should make even greater efforts to help these unfortunate Negroes. They are also people and God’s children” (Oetgen 1997:372-373).

Wimmer continued in this manner for some paragraphs.

During a visit from Abbott Wimmer in 1879, the Benedictines decided to create a new black parish in Savannah, Sacred Heart, on Habersham Street. Father Oswald started the new parish, while Rev. Melchior Reichert took over on Skidaway Island. Father Melchior wrote in a 1938 letter to Thomas Gamble, “I found Father Oswald, several brothers, and some boys there, all living in a log house.” (Gamble 84). Under Father Melchior’s leadership, there were eight monks and 12 students in April 1881 and 20 students by 1883 (Kelly 1980:85).

The 1880 United States Census records three Catholic priests, O. Moosmiller (age 47), M. Reichart

(age 28), and S. Palmer (age 27). Interestingly, the census lists Palmer as white, while every other source consulted describes him as African American. Also listed in the household are: F. Rosenfelder, A. Sochnle, B. Cannong, and A. Mason. Eight students are listed as living in the household: C L Franklin, James L Franklin, Robert Burksteiner, Henry Cook, Robert Davis, Henry Clending, John Hayes, and Richard Allen. All are male, and all are single. Figure 2 enumerates the data available, and Figure 3 is an image of the original census (United States Census 1880). None of these men appear in the 1900 United States Census for the Sea Islands around Savannah (United States Census 1900). Unfortunately, the vast majority of the critical 1890 U.S. Census was lost in a fire (United States Census 1890, census.gov).

Name	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Race	Occupation	Birth Year (Estimate)	Birthplace
O Moosmiller	Male	47	Single	White	Catholic Priest	1833	Germany
M Reichart	Male	28	Single	White	Catholic Priest	1852	Pennsylvania, United States
S Palmer	Male	27	Single	White	Catholic Priest	1853	District of Columbia, United
F Rosenfelder	Male	50	Single	White	Farmer	1830	Germany
A Sochnle	Male	30	Single	White	Boat Man	1850	Germany
C L Franklin	Male	13	Single	Black	At School	1867	Georgia, United States
James L Franklin	Male	12	Single	Black	At School	1868	Georgia, United States
Robert Burksteiner	Male	13	Single	Black	At School	1867	Georgia, United States
Henry Cook	Male	14	Single	Black	At School	1866	Maryland, United States
Robert Davis	Male	15	Single	Black	At School	1865	Maryland, United States
Henry Clending	Male	17	Single	Black	At School	1863	Caribbean
John Hayes	Male	14	Single	White	At School	1866	New Jersey, United States
Richard Allen	Male	8	Single	Black	At School	1872	Georgia, United States
B Cannong	Male	32	Single	Black	Cook	1848	Louisiana, United States
A Mason	Male	23	Single	Black	Servant	1857	Maryland, United States

Figure 2. 1880 United States Census, the Islands, Chatham County, Georgia

Abbot Wimmer described the school in 1886, “We have 700 acres of land with an industrial school for Negroes... On Skidaway, the young Negroes are instructed in domestic work and farm work and learn the habit of work. They also learn fishery, which is the main work of this island and their livelihood... The fathers have already entered 114 Catholic baptisms in their sacramental registry” (Oetgen 2008:534). However, the school never succeeded financially even though Father Melchior tried to raise money throughout Georgia. The mission’s greatest supporter, Abbot Wimmer, died in 1887. Also in 1887, Father Melchior went to Sacred Heart in Savannah, and Father George Lester took over the Skidaway mission (Oetgen 1976:21).

Sources disagree on when the school closed. Oetgen (1969:9) writes, “a tidal wave in 1889, which ruined the fresh water on the island, as well as a fire in the same year which destroyed several of the monastery’s buildings, determined the end of the monastery and school for Negroes on the island. The Benedictines withdrew from Skidaway in 1889.” A much later source by the same author states that the school

Page No. 26
 Supervisor's Dist. No. 3
 Enumeration Dist. No. 31

Note A.—The Census Year begins June 1, 1879, and ends May 31, 1880.
 Note B.—All persons will be included in the Enumeration who were living on the 1st day of June, 1880. No others will. Children BORN SINCE June 1, 1880, will be OMITTED. Members of Families who have DIED SINCE June 1, 1880, will be INCLUDED.
 Note C.—Questions Nos. 13, 14, 22 and 23 are not to be asked in respect to persons under 10 years of age.

SCHEDULE 1.—Inhabitants in the Islands, in the County of Chatham, State of Georgia, enumerated by me on the 17th & 21st day of June, 1880.
Thomas W. McKee Enumerator

In Order	Name of Person	Sex	Color	Age	Married	Single	Widowed	Divorced	Relationship to head of family	Profession, Occupation or Trade of each person, male or female	Health	Education	Place of Birth of this person	Place of Birth of the father of this person	Place of Birth of the mother of this person
1	Bacon, Elijah	B	M	22					Wife	Farmer			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
2	Catharine	B	F	20					Daughter	Housewife			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
3	Ely, Ann	B	F	1									Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
4	Johnson, Leza	B	M	43					Wife	Farmer	Married		Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
5	Georgia	B	F	41					Daughter	Housewife			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
6	Ann	B	M	13						At School			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
7	Edwin	B	M	13						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
8	Edwin	B	M	12						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
9	Isaac	B	M	21						Farmer			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
10	McArthur, Rev. C.	B	M	47						Catholic Priest			Germany	Germany	Germany
11	Richard, Rev. M.	B	M	38						"			Germany	Germany	Germany
12	Palmer, Rev. A.	B	M	37						"			Germany	Germany	Germany
13	Josephine	B	F	32						Farmer			Germany	Germany	Germany
14	Josephine	B	F	31						Farmer			Germany	Germany	Germany
15	Josephine	B	F	13						At School			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
16	James L.	B	M	13						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
17	Elizabeth	B	M	13						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
18	Robert	B	M	14						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
19	Davis, Rev.	B	M	16						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
20	Clarence	B	M	17						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
21	Davis, John	B	M	14						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
22	Allen, Richard	B	M	8						"			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia
23	Cunning	B	M	32					Leeward	Cook			Louisiana	Louisiana	Louisiana
24	Allen	B	M	34						Farmer			Georgia	Georgia	Georgia

Figure 3. Image of the 1880 United States Census, showing the monastery household.

closed in the 1890s (Oetgen 2000:164). No other references have been found for an 1889 tidal wave. There were no strong hurricanes that year (Fraser 2006). A non-contemporary newspaper article said isolation “made the plan impractical” but gives no date for the closure (Gamble 34). Father Melchior wrote, “It was not easy to get men to go to the Island which was then given up” (Gamble 84), but he also does not give a specific year. Melchior continued his work in Savannah before moving to Belmont, where he served for several decades (Oetgen 1969:9-10, Gamble 84).

Oetgen (1969:9) reports that Abbott Leo Haid sold the land in 1917. However, Kelly (1980:86) writes that the Floyd family bought the property in 1906 and remodeled the 17-room monastery as a vacation home. Original deed research confirms that the Benedictine Order sold monastery tract in 1906 to A.G. Guerard, Junior for \$2,500. Guerard then sold the property to the Floyd family (JC Jones, pers. comm.). In 1941 Union Camp bought the property and only the wooden monastery was standing, although uncertainly. In 1949 the remaining island buildings were dismantled by Union Camp staff (Kelly 1980:86).

There were many challenges facing the monks. First, the concept of a manual school was incompatible with many ex-slaves’ desires for their children. They wanted students to get an education so they could leave the fields for better jobs and opportunities. Oswald wrote, “I was told in Savannah, that my plan of having a Manual Labor School for colored boys does not please the majority of the Negroes. The first reason is that most of them have a horror of farm work. The second cause seems to be that they want their boys to get an

education which fits them for positions of clerks, bookkeepers, anything else but farmers” (Oetgen 1976: 14-15). In response to the local’s needs, Father Oswald modified his plans to have an agricultural school. The school was then “‘designed to benefit two classes of students... those who wish to get a business education qualifying them for such positions’ and those ‘whose circumstances or wishes incline them to seek a more limited and practical course of instruction in farming as a profession’” (Oetgen 2000:163-164).

Oetgen estimated 80 school-age children lived on Skidaway Island during the monastery era (Oetgen 1976:15), but there were only 20 students at the height of the school. There were several reasons for the low enrollment, in addition to the type of education offered. All Skidaway Island families were Protestant, and their preachers were not supportive of the Catholic school. Several men told Father Oswald they had promised their Baptist preachers not to send their children to Catholic school. Moosmüller wrote to a fellow priest, Father Zilliox, that he gathered

“a dozen black *patres familias* of the island and informed them that we keep School here in this house every day, and that I invited them to send their children, the School being free, no charges. One of them answered that they had to give their word to their preacher (a Baptist) not to send their children to any School except a Baptist school; afterwards I learned that there was one amongst them here (but who did not utter a word in this house) who is a Deacon and who told them at church that he would excommunicate any one who would send his children to the “Fathers” School; at the same time he always flattered me, pretending to be my best friend; he is also the foreman of our place, collects the rents, etc., etc., and has his land free of rent from us.” (Oetgen 1976:15).

Abbot Wimmer wrote in an 1877 letter: “Father Oswald and his companion, Father Maurice Kaeder, do not have an easy job in Georgia. Their efforts to convert the Negroes, a difficult task in itself, are made even more difficult by the opposition of different Protestant sects. Father Maurice is an excellent preacher and lecturer in English. He tends not to neglect the white people. Fathers Oswald and Maurice have no income and depend entirely on St. Vincent. This is not a profitable business for me, but we do the work on the one hand because of pity for these entirely neglected Negroes and on the other hand because of the need to find new fields of activity for my young people...Already we have one Negro brother” (Oetgen 2008:420-421).

White protestants were “also anxious to thwart the Catholic influence on the black population” (Oetgen 1976: 15). Lobbying from Savannah’s white Protestants encouraged Chatham County to open a Skidaway Island public school soon after, and many students attended that school. Father Oswald countered this move by having Siricius Palmer, the young black cleric, apply for and, as the most qualified applicant, get the position of schoolmaster at the public school (Oetgen 1976:16). Abbot Wimmer noted in 1883, “In the South, the Catholic element is insignificant and the population in general opposed to the growth of such institutions” (Oetgen 2008:496).

It needs to be noted that the majority of this site history comes from the written documents of the monks. To this date, the only historical records from the African American students and workers is the 1880 United States Census. While there has been numerous archaeological investigations on Skidaway Island, the

monastery and Freedmen school (as well as African American history on the island in general) has received very little attention.

Research Questions

Our basic Phase I survey research questions will continue to apply:

- Is this definitely the site of the Benedictine monastery and Freedman school?
- How can we identify the site of the Benedictine monastery and Freedman school?
- How much of the site is preserved? Which portions of the site have been preserved?
- What is the layout of the buildings and other living spaces?
- Can we identify outbuildings?
- Is there evidence of earlier or later occupations on the site?

Phase II research questions fall under several categories: lives of Freedmen, the architecture and institutions of schools, the lives of the Benedictines, and the architecture and institutions of monasteries and churches. The research questions discussed below are wide-ranging and ambitious.

What was the quality of education? Were the students learning reading, writing, and mathematics? Or were they learning technical trades? Both? Artifacts may lead us to understanding the type of education the boys received. Few education-related artifacts will indicate a primarily book-based education focused on reading, writing, and mathematics. However, tools, waste materials, hardware, pins and needles, science equipment, measuring devices, and musical instruments can indicate a technical education as well (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:125-126). Were the students given a religious education?

Education was important for more than simply obtaining a better job. Literacy meant the possibility of voting. Competence in mathematics meant the ability to fight economic exploitation. Education was empowerment (Agbe-Davies and Martin 2013:108). Contemporary educational theory stated that the goals of universal education were to create better citizen voters, both for political and economic reasons. Only an educated citizenship could be expected to make competent decisions (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:126). But did these European Benedictine monks subscribe to these values? Were they concerned with religious education or conversion? Were they motivated to educate those disadvantaged in society?

How are the Benedictine values and concepts represented on this site? Can we see Benedictine concepts in the architecture, spatial arrangements, or diet? Do we find any religious objects? Finding religious objects is unlikely as they would be highly valued and curated. Are any personal property items present, and can we see evidence of monastic life? Are there market products present? How much contact did the site's inhabitants have with Savannah and the larger region?

Non-architectural artifacts were sparse, which follows with other excavated school sites. In lamenting the lack of schoolhouse scholarship, Gibb and Beisaw suggest several approaches for further, rigorous study. First, archaeologists should look closer at the architecture and outbuildings to see how the landscape was used. All extant ruins should be thoroughly documented. Archaeologists should look for evidence of the initial construction, modification, repair, and expansion. What upgrades were made to the lighting, heating, and sanitary facilities over time? While it initially seems this suggestion would not apply to our very short-lived monastery site, we need to look at how buildings or building materials from the plantation era may have been modified or reused by the Benedictines. Gibb and Beisaw suggest we can look at gender by identifying male and female privies (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:125-126). Again, this will probably not be relevant at a boy's school run by monks. However, evidence of women on site should not be dismissed.

Methodology

Students taking Seifert's archaeology classes as well as Anthropology Club members at Armstrong State University were the field and lab crew for this project. Savannah State University students and Benedictine Military School students also volunteered in the field. Seifert conducted lab work and analysis in the Armstrong State University Anthropology Lab with the help of Research Assistants Chase Freeman and Kaylee Maricle and many Armstrong student volunteers. Field and lab work was during the spring and fall 2016 semesters and spring and fall 2017 semesters.

Several aboveground, architectural features are obvious on the landscape: Three brick piers to the north (Area 1), an intact portion of a brick pier (or wall) on the western edge of the property (Area 2), and the brick and tabby rubble pile at the property's southern end (Area 3). Figure 4 is a map of the property showing these three areas. Phase I architectural artifact clustering and distance between the features suggested each area indicates a distinct building, so Phase II work focused on discovering more about each structure. Each unit was judgmentally placed based on the aboveground architectural debris, as no subsurface features were found to guide unit placement. Each unit was excavated in arbitrary 10 cm levels, unless natural levels or features were encountered. Maintaining arbitrary stratigraphic levels was critical in understanding the development of the site over time. Additionally, since the site will be developed, each unit was excavated to subsoil.

Phase I excavations showed Area 1 had few non-architectural artifacts but a large amount of architectural debris and large piers, which indicate that a building of substantial size sat here. While this Area held the least archaeological potential, a downed tree prevented work on Area 3 and made it more difficult to excavate Area 2. Therefore, the 2016-2017 academic year excavations started at Area 1. Three visible brick piers suggest a building's corner but are not truly perpendicular nor do they form an exact right angle. The area between the piers was probed for additional underground piers or foundation. Some hard material was encountered, and this information helped guide the placement of the units. Rectangular (1x2 meter) test units were placed to test the hypothesis that this is a building (Test Units 1 and 2). Test unit locations were

attempting to span the walls of the building. Figure 5 shows all test unit locations.

Area 2 was hypothesized to be the church and monastery. The brick pier may indicate the clapboard end of the building seen in an early photograph. Therefore, the opposite, white end of building is the intact tabby basement on The Landings' property. Two 1x2 meter test units (3 and 4) were placed into the hillside using the tabby basement foundation as a guide. Placement attempted to span the north wall of the building's foundation.

Area 3, hypothesized to be the schoolhouse, held great potential. Most of the monastery-era artifacts were found here. Additionally, the only potential school items from the Phase I survey, four tiny slate fragments, were clustered here. Alternatively, slate could also be an architectural element, such as slate roofing tiles. Window glass strongly clustered around the rubble pile. Chimney lamp glass also clustered in the southern half of the property. Properly lighting a school was of concern to nineteenth century teachers (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:122, Rotman 2009:72). Gibb and Beisaw's article focused on sites in the northeastern United States, so stove pieces and heating-related artifacts were discussed. At the monastery site, we should also question how the building was cooled. Area 3's window glass concentration may answer some questions of both building cooling and lighting. Rectangular units were initially placed on the north and east sides of the brick and rubble pile (Test Units 5 and 6). In the final semester, the landowner informed us that construction would start in the late fall. Four more excavation units were placed to the south of the rubble pile, attempting to get as much coverage as possible.

Finally, Gibb and Beisaw state that a large excavation sample size will be needed to get enough information to draw conclusions. These sites "certainly require a more intensive sampling than a few systematically excavated shovel tests and a handful of judgmentally placed excavation units" (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:125-126). We excavated as much as possible in our limited time with an entirely volunteer, inexperienced crew.

Armstrong students completed laboratory work including washing and dry brushing artifacts and re-bagging the artifacts in archivally sound bags and boxes. Seifert analyzed all artifacts in Microsoft Access (Appendix B). The collection along with all associated documentation will be curated at Georgia Southern University's RM Bogan Archaeological Repository, pending final deed transfer.

Results

Test Unit 1

Test Unit one had simple stratigraphy. Level 1 was topsoil, 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand. This level was excavated in a 10 cm natural level. This level contained few artifacts: brick, a cut nail, mortar, alkaline glazed ceramic, whiteware, redware, oyster shell, and bottle glass, including manganese dioxide decolorized glass, which gives this layer an 1880 TPQ.

Level 2 was also 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand and a 10 cm arbitrary level. Levels 1 and 2 had very heavy root bioturbation. This level contained more artifacts including architectural debris (brick, window glass, cut and wire nails, a staple, unidentified hardware, a metal pipe, plaster, and large amounts of mortar), kitchen artifacts (gray salt-glazed stoneware, coarse earthenware, redware, animal bone and teeth, oyster shell, and bottle glass), and four .22 cartridges. Also notable is a piece of hardware that is likely an electrical element, possibly a knife switch or fuse box part. This indicates the layer is relatively modern.

Level 3 begins a new stratigraphic layer that is 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown loamy sand mottled with 10YR2/2 very dark brown loamy sand and very small amounts of gray clay. This layer is a 10 cm arbitrary level. Artifacts include brick, mortar, wire nails, pearlware, coarse earthenware, bone, shell, bottle glass, table glass, metal lids, an unidentified finial, and another knife switch or fuse box piece.

Level 4 was 10YR5/3 brown loamy sand and was a 10 cm arbitrary level. This level contained few artifacts such as nail fragments, mortar, oyster shell, bottle glass, and a white clay pipe bowl.

Level 5 was another 10 cm arbitrary level with 10YR4/3 brown sand. The level contained brick, one



Figure 6. Test Unit 1 completed. Note many large tree roots and brick piers in the background.

cut nail, three wire nails, unidentified hardware, mortar, Native American ceramic, and rubber hose fragments that may be from garden hose. These hose fragments cross mend.

Level 6 was 10YR4/6 yellowish brown sand with small amounts of clay. This level is 15 cm deep. The layer is subsoil and did not contain artifacts.

Test Unit 2

Test Unit two had simple stratigraphy and was very similar to Test Unit 1. Levels 1 and 2 were the darkest, topsoil levels. Levels 3, 4, and 5 are the same stratigraphic level, which dates to the monastery era. Feature 1 was older, probably dating to the plantation era, but was shallow and unimpressive.

Level 1 was an arbitrary 10 cm level that was 10YR2/2 very dark brown loamy sand. Artifacts found include brick, window glass, lots of mortar, plain pearlware, oyster shell, bottle glass, table glass, and a .22 cartridge.

Level 2 was also an arbitrary 10 cm level that was 10YR2/2 very dark brown loamy sand. Artifacts include brick, wire nails, a metal pipe, lots of mortar, bone china, coarse earthenware, transfer print ware, oyster shell, bottle glass, table glass, a .22 cartridge, chimney lamp glass, and a metal “1”. A bottle neck with a fine lipping tool finish gives this level an 1880 TPQ.

Level 3 was 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown loamy sand mottled with 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand. This is a 10 cm arbitrary level. This level had much architectural debris including brick, window glass, equal amounts of cut and wire nails, and mortar. Notable artifacts include a brass button and a lead alloy caster wheel. Kitchen artifacts include plain pearlware, underglaze blue painted ware, dipped ware, bone, oyster shell, bottle glass, and cut glass. One bottle glass sherd is embossed with “T WHISKEY”. Unfortunately, the letters before T were missing, making it very difficult to more accurately identify this company or brand. This level also has an iron pipe protruding from the south wall. The pipe is terminated to the north, with a junction that points upward, but there is no attached pipe, so the pipe is open.



Figure 7. Test Unit 2 during excavation, showing two iron pipes and two large tree roots.

Level 4 was a 10 cm arbitrary level with 10YR3/3 dark brown loamy sand. Level 4 contained fewer artifacts including brick, cut and wire nails, mortar, mocha ware, Native American ceramic, oyster shell, and bottle glass. Colorless bottle glass gives this level a circa 1870 TPQ. Several large, decaying roots were found. Initially, they were pedestalled and treated as if they were architectural beams. However, the presence of bark and the shape of the wood strongly suggests these were roots, not architectural. A second, smaller iron pipe was found in this level. This pipe spans the unit north to south.

Level 5 was 10YR4/2 dark grayish brown sand mottled with 10YR5/3 brown sand and 10YR5/2 grayish brown sand. This level is another 10 cm arbitrary level. Artifacts found include brick, cut and wire nails, mortar, hand painted pearlware, oyster shell, and bottle glass.

Feature 1 was below Level 5 and intruded Level 6. Feature 1 is approximately one meter east/west and 70 cm north/south. The feature continues into the north wall and is only 12 cm deep at the most. The feature contained small amounts of brick, window glass, cut nails, coarse earthenware, redware, oyster shell, and unidentified metal fragments.

Level 6 is 10YR5/4 yellowish brown sand. This level is a 10 cm arbitrary level. A few pieces of brick and mortar were found high in the level. Below this level is subsoil.

Test Unit 3

Level 1 was topsoil that was 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown, very loose loamy sand. This level was dug as an arbitrary 10-14 cm deep level and contained a mixture of older and newer artifacts. There was a high amount of architectural debris, including whole bricks, plaster, mortar, and cut and wire nails. Other important artifacts included a glass button, spoon, and a nearly whole projectile point with a small amount of tabby attached.

Level 2 was a 10cm arbitrary level containing 10YR3/3 dark brown loamy sand. Artifacts included architectural debris such as brick, mortar, plaster, cut and wire nails, roofing tin, and wood. Very small amounts of kitchen artifacts included refined earthenware, bottle glass, and, oyster shell. Notable in this level was a cope hook, a decorative hook for closing a monk's cape during a benediction. Father Andrew Campbell, Archivist at St. Vincent Archabbey, identified this artifact.

Level 3 is another 10 cm level with the same soil as Level 2, but this level contained significantly more architectural rubble: brick, mortar, plaster, architectural wood, window glass, cut and wire nails, and roofing tin. This level contained more kitchen artifacts including porcelain, Ironstone, Rockingham-glazed earthenware, and many sherds of bottle glass including a hob-skirted Coke bottle, cup bottom molded bottle, a continuous thread finish, and bottle glass with an applied color label, which gives this level a TPQ of 1935.

Level 4, a natural level 4-8cm thick, had mottled soil throughout the unit: 10YR3/1 very dark gray

sand, 10YR3/3 dark brown sand, and 10YR5/4 yellowish brown sand. This level contained less, but similar types of architectural materials including brick, mortar, plaster, architectural wood, window glass, and cut and wire nails. The only ceramic is one whiteware sherd, and the layer also contains oyster and clam shell, bottle glass, a .22 cartridge, and chimney lamp glass.

Level 5 contained 10YR4/2 dark grayish brown sand mottled with 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand. This level was in the north end of the unit, extending 40-65 cm from the north wall. This level had small amounts of the same architectural debris as above levels as well as a large staple. Ironstone, whiteware, oyster shell, and bottle glass were the kitchen artifacts found. Manganese dioxide decolorized bottle glass gives this level a TPQ of 1880. A bedspring, a flake, a screw, and two sherds of chimney lamp glass were also found. A small, thin fragment of slate with a right angle on one edge may be a portion of a writing slate.



Figure 8. Students from Benedictine Military School volunteer on site at Test Unit 3.

Level 6 was 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand. The natural level was only in the unit's north end, extending 40 cm from the unit's north wall and 12-14cm in depth. This level was below the substantial architectural rubble, although small amounts were found. Shell, bottle glass, and glass tableware was also found. Colorless glass provides a circa 1870 TPQ. Levels 5 and 6 as well as potentially the northern portion of Level 4 are a complex feature.

Level 7 is a 10 cm arbitrary level extending over the entire unit. Soils were 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand. This level still had a fair amount of architectural debris including brick, mortar, plaster, window glass, a large staple, cut nails, and a portion of a hook and eye latch. This level also contained eight buttons, two eyelets, Ironstone sherds, bone and oyster shell, bottle glass, and tableware glass. One bottle base formed by a post bottom mold is embossed with "WF&S/2/MIL". Made by the Northern Glass Works, this bottle dates between 1896 and 1900 (Lindsey). A partial table knife, chimney lamp glass sherds, and a flake were also found. This level may represent a monastery living surface or just after the site was abandoned.

Level 8 soils were 10YR3/3 dark brown sand mottled with 10YR4/3 brown sand that extended across the unit to a depth of 5-12 cm. The unit's north end was more dense with artifacts, although there was possible contamination from above as the walls were very dry and crumbly. Brick, mortar, plaster, window glass, a large staple, and cut nails were found. Other notable artifacts include an iron button, chimney lamp glass

fragments, a percussion cap, and a slate pencil. Pearlware, whiteware, bone, oyster shell, and bottle glass were found, and the colorless bottle glass again gives an approximate 1870 TPQ for this level. The soils and artifacts indicate that Level 8 is a buried A-horizon, the living surface during the monastery era.

Level 9 was a 10 cm arbitrary level with 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand mottled with 10YR4/4 dark yellowish brown sand. This level had fewer artifacts including brick, shell, plaster, bone, oyster shell, charcoal, a shell button, and four flakes. This level is a transition to subsoil.

Level 10 was 10YR3/6 dark yellowish brown sand mottled with 10YR4/4 dark yellowish brown sand and only contained one oyster shell and one flake. Below this level is subsoil.



Figure 9. Test Unit 3 south wall profile.

Test Unit 4

Level 1 was 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown loamy sand and was a 10-12 cm deep arbitrary level. This layer, as well as Test Unit 3 Level 1, had a large amount of root bioturbation from nearby trees. This level had much architectural debris: brick, plaster, mortar, window glass, cut and wire nails, and a ceramic pipe sherd. Some of the window glass has a curved edge to fit “arch windows” or “radius windows”. A historic photograph of the church and monastery shows arch windows. This level also has bottle glass (including a bottle neck with a crown cap), bone, oyster and scallop shell, and a large variety of eighteenth and nineteenth

century ceramic sherds. A porcelain button, .45 copper cartridge, chimney lamp glass, a flake, and two small pieces of plastic were found.

Level 2 is a 10 cm arbitrary level consisting of 10YR3/3 dark brown loamy sand. Window glass sherds were abundant in this level (n=286); other architectural materials include mortar, plaster, cut and wire nails, unidentified hardware, and roofing tin. The roofing tin appeared at the bottom of Level 2 and is the interface between Levels 2 and 3. Kitchen artifacts included Ironstone, coarse earthenwares, pearlware, bone, oyster shell, a variety of bottle glass, and a glass bottle stopper. Manganese dioxide decolorized bottle glass provides the 1880 TPQ for this level. Eyelets for shoes, two .22 cartridges, a shotgun shell, and chimney lamp glass were also found. The upper part of this level is probably topsoil and certainly post-dates the monastery.

Level 3 is a 10 cm arbitrary level consisting of 10YR3/2 dark brown loamy sand. This level has a heavy amount of architectural debris including brick, plaster, wood, window glass, cut and wire nails, unidentified hardware, and roofing tin. A bottle neck with a fine lipping tool finish provides the 1880 TPQ for this level. This level had a large amount of clothing artifacts including six buttons, one eyelet, and a safety pin. This level also contains bottle glass, table glass, one bone fragment, oyster and scallop shell, and a mix of late eighteenth and nineteenth century ceramic sherds. This level also contained two percussion caps, two copper cartridges (a .22 and a .45), chimney lamp glass, harmonica fragments, a screw, and a stone flake. Levels 2 and 3 are the same natural strata.

Level 4 extends one meter from the south wall of TU 4 and is 9-18 cm deep. The soils are 10YR3/2 dark brown loamy sand, mottled with 10YR5/6 yellowish brown sand. This level contained heavy amounts of architectural debris including brick, plaster, mortar, wood, window glass, cut and wire nails, unidentified hardware, and roofing tin. A metal pipe, presumably in situ and approximately 5 cm in diameter, was found running east/west at the unit's extreme south end. The pipe enters Test Unit 3 in its extreme northeast corner. A bottle base with an Owen's scar gives this level a 1903 TPQ. This level and Level 5 also contain window glass from "arch windows" or "radius windows". A caster wheel, an escutcheon plate, and two other unidentified metal furniture parts were found as well as an unidentified jewelry part, percussion cap, .22 copper cartridge, a shotgun shell, and chimney lamp glass. Kitchen artifacts include whiteware, yellowware, bone, shell, and a mix of bottle and table glass.

Level 5 covers the same area as Level 4 and is 5-11 cm in depth. The soils were 10YR3/3 dark brown sand. This level has similar architectural rubble to Level 4, but somewhat smaller amounts. This level contained animal bone, shell, a variety of bottle glass and table glass, and very small amounts of pearlware. A bottle neck's crown cap finish gives this level an 1892 TPQ, however, the bottle is fully machine made, which means the TPQ is likely closer to 1900. A small tin enameled pot and several small sherds of metal cans, charcoal, one melted glass sherd, and three percussion caps were found as well.

Level 6 was a 10 cm arbitrary level with 10YR4/3 brown loamy sand mottled with 10YR5/4 yellowish brown sand and 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown loamy sand. This level had small amounts of architectural



Figure 10. Test Unit 4 south wall profile. Test Unit 3 is to the west (right side of photograph).

debris and very few kitchen artifacts (porcelain, bottle glass, and shell). Additional artifacts include a hook and eye (but not a matched set), Native American ceramics, chimney lamp glass, and two stone flakes. This layer is nearing the bottom of the cultural materials. In the northern two-thirds of the unit, subsoil is below this layer. This layer is likely monastery era, with a circa 1870 TPQ from colorless bottle glass.

Level 7 is the same stratigraphic level as Levels 4, 5, and 6. This area was pedestalled because roofing tin was extending into the unit's eastern wall and could not be removed without damage. In between the close of fall 2016 excavations and December 2016, the roofing tin was removed by someone or some weather. The roofing tin was found beside the unit and recovered. Level 7 is the pedestalled area, extending 90 cm from the south wall and 25 cm from the east wall. The level was 16 cm deep, and the soil was 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown sand. The level contained a mix of architectural debris, nineteenth century ceramics, oyster shell, mixed bottle glass, and one stone flake. A bottle base made with a cup bottom mold gives this layer an 1870 TPQ.

Level 8 extends 45 cm north from Test Unit 4's south wall and is 16 cm deep. The soil was 10YR3/3 dark brown sand. This level is the last remnant of the darker feature containing rubble. In the southwest corner, there was a small void in the soil, which is a possible animal burrow. Pockets of orange soil were found in this area. Architectural artifacts include window glass, cut and wire nails, very small fragments of roofing tin, plaster, and mortar. Ironstone, oyster shell, and bottle glass were also found. A cup bottom mold on a bottle base also gives this layer an 1870 TPQ. Levels 4, 5, 7, and 8 are the complex feature that corresponds with Test Unit 3 Levels 4, 5, and 6. This feature relates to the building's destruction or collapse.

Level 9 was 10YR4/6 dark yellowish brown sand mottled with 10YR4/3 brown sand. This level is an

arbitrary 10 cm level that was sterile subsoil.

Test Unit 5

Level 1 was 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand and was dug in a 10-18 cm natural level. This topsoil contained a heavy amount of architectural debris including brick, window glass, cut and wire nails, small sherds of roofing tin, and mortar. Several pieces of an extremely worn shoe sole were found as well as an eyelet. Ironstone, creamware, dipped ware, bone, oyster shell, and miscellaneous bottle glass were also found. A crown cap finish on a bottle neck provides an 1892 TPQ. This level also contained chimney lamp glass, a small fragment of a sieve, and a brass washer. There is a brick pier in the northeast corner of the unit, starting just below the surface and extending 22 cm down into Level 3.

Level 2 is an arbitrary 12 cm level with 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown sand. Level 2 also contained a heavy amount of architectural debris including brick, window glass, cut and wire nails, small sherds of roofing tin, plaster, wood, and mortar. A shoe sole fragment mends with the portion from Level 1, and eyelets match those from Level 1. Additionally, this level had a brass suspender buckle. This level contains a large variety of eighteenth and nineteenth ceramics, animal teeth and bone, shell, table glass, and a mix of bottle glass types. A bottle glass fragment embossed with the words “DIETZ” is likely from a DIETZ Junior oil lamp. Another notable artifact is a whole bottle labeled, “St. James Beverage Co./ SAVANNAH GA/ CONTENTS 9 3/4 Oz.” The bottle is fully machine made and dates to ca. 1918-1920 (Cardwell 2018). See Appendix A for more information. Four copper cartridges, a Minie ball, rubber hose fragments, thermometer glass tube, chimney lamp glass, miscellaneous hardware, a stone flake, and a small, thin slate fragment were also found. Levels 1 and 2 are post-monastery and likely more recent topsoil.

Level 3 soils were 10YR2/1 black sand mottled with 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand that was 3-8 cm deep. This level contained lesser amounts of architectural debris including brick, window glass, cut and wire nails, small sherds of roofing tin, tabby, and mortar. Another small piece of shoe sole was found that is similar to those found in Levels 1 and 2. Kitchen artifacts include porcelain, Ironstone, whiteware, edgware, bone, oyster shell, table glass, and mixed bottle glass.

Level 4 soils were 10YR3/1 very dark gray loamy sand. This level was dug as a natural level. The southwest corner was dug deeper than the rest of the level, because darker soil persisted in this corner. Although due to the soil’s sandy nature, no definite feature boundaries could be discovered. This darker soil in the southwest corner persisted to the bottom of the unit. This feature would eventually be seen in the south wall profile of the unit, however, there was also significant bioturbation disturbance, which probably contributed to the indiscernible edges of the feature. Fewer artifacts were found in this level, including very small amounts of architectural debris, Ironstone, hand painted pearlware, shell, bottle glass, a bullet, and chimney lamp glass.

Level 5 was an arbitrary 10 cm level, and soils were 10YR3/6 dark yellowish brown sand mottled with 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand. Artifacts within the level include window glass, a cut nail, mortar, Native American ceramics, oyster shell, and a .22 cartridge.

Level 6 was another arbitrary 10 cm level with lighter colored soil, 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand. This layer contained few artifacts, and the artifacts continued to be mixed: architectural debris, shell, colorless bottle glass, chimney lamp glass, a stone flake, and a biface fragment. The colorless bottle glass gives this level a TPQ of circa 1870.

Level 7 had the same soil as Level 6 and was a final 10-20 cm level. The few artifacts found came from the southwest corner, which proved to be a feature once seen in the wall profile. A rotting, large in situ root was found at the deepest part of the southwest corner. Artifacts found include architectural debris, bone, oyster shell, and two stone flakes. Levels 4, 5, 6, and 7, which includes the southwest corner feature, are monastery-era levels. Below this level is subsoil.



Figure 11. Test Unit 5 south wall profile. Note the feature in the southwest corner.

Test Unit 6

Level 1 was 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand. This layer was topsoil and was removed as one natural layer. This layer had much architectural debris including brick, partially burned wood, window glass, cut and wire nails, concrete, and mortar. Many iron springs were found in the northern half of this unit. Once the layer was completely removed, the metal bedspring frame from a mattress was revealed. No cloth was present, and

the metal was extremely corroded. There were a few kitchen artifacts such as Ironstone, oyster shell, and bottle glass including one sherd formed by cup bottom mold (TPQ 1870).

Level 2 was 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand but appeared slightly lighter in the wall profile. This level was a 10 cm arbitrary level. Artifacts include much architectural rubble, cut and wire nails, a rectangular door hinge, and small amounts of roofing tin. Most of the bedspring fragments were removed with this layer. Only the outermost frame remains in situ and continues into the north and east walls. The bedframe was in extremely poor condition, heavily rusted, and most held together with roots. Fragments were removed as this layer was hand excavated. Kitchen artifacts include Ironstone, hand painted pearlware, transfer print ware, edgeware, Native American ceramics, bone, oyster shell, bottle glass, and table glass. This layer also contained a .32 cartridge, shotgun shell, chimney lamp glass, and one small piece of slate, which could be from a writing slate.

Level 3 was a 10cm arbitrary level containing 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown sand. This level contained brick, window glass, cut nails, roofing tin, mortar, plaster, and concrete. Kitchen artifacts include Ironstone, pearlware, transfer print sherds, bone, oyster shell, and bottle glass, including manganese dioxide decolorized bottle glass, which gives the layer an 1880 TPQ. Other notable artifacts include a small porcelain button, a .22 cartridge, chimney lamp glass, and three small fragments of slate, which are possibly from a writing slate.

Level 4 was intended to be another 10 cm arbitrary level, but it was stopped shortly after excavation started as a new feature was encountered. Feature 5 was bisected and excavated, then Level 4 was continued. Level 4 soils were 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand. Level 4 had fewer artifacts than above, including brick, cut nails, small fragments of roofing tin and mortar. Kitchen artifacts include hand painted refined earthenware, transfer print, Native American ceramics, bone, shell, and bottle glass. The ceramics provide a 1795 TPQ, however, the chimney lamp glass and button suggest a much later TPQ. Additional finds include a porcelain button, a white clay pipe stem, chimney lamp glass, and a stone flake.

Feature 5 was in the unit's southeast corner and continues into the unit's south and east walls. Intruding Level 4, the feature was only 14 cm deep, extending over one meter north/south and 60 cm east/west. Artifacts include cut nails, mortar, plain pearlware, Native American ceramics, shell, and colorless bottle glass, which gives the feature a circa 1870 TPQ.

Level 6 was 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand mottled with 10YR4/2 dark grayish brown sand. This level is a 10 cm arbitrary level. Very few artifacts were found: one brick fragment, ten Native American ceramic sherds, and one small iron concretion. Levels 3, 4 and Feature 5 are monastery-era. Level 6 is potentially monastery-era, but transitioning into subsoil and the Native American occupation.

Level 7 was a 10 cm arbitrary level with 10YR4/4 dark yellowish brown sand. This layer contains one Native American ceramic, one oyster shell, and two stone flakes. Subsoil is below this layer.



Figure 12. Test Unit 6 east wall profile. Note the remains of mattress frame.

Test Unit 7

Level 1 was a natural level 1.5 to 6 cm in depth and was 10YR2/1 black loam. Upon removing this stratum, large sections of broken Savannah gray brickwork were exposed. At least three large sections of brickwork were identified and were likely once one piece, based on the cracking and orientation of the bricks. Large amounts of bricks and mortar were recovered. A sample was kept while the rest was weighed and discarded (93 kg). Artifacts from this level were almost exclusively architectural: a wire and a cut nail, mortar, window glass, shell and animal bone.

Level 2 was 21 cm deep. The 10YR3/3 dark brown sand was only excavated in the unit's southwest corner, which is the only part of the unit not covered in brickwork. 46 kg of brick and mortar were weighed and discarded. This level also primarily contained architectural materials, but also shell, colorless and manganese decolorized bottle glass, and a writing slate fragment.

Level 3 was 10YR3/3 dark brown sand and 7 to 10 cm deep. This level (and the rest in this unit) was also only excavated in the southwest corner of the unit. The remaining levels seem to extend beneath the brickwork but were not excavated for safety reasons. No rubble was weighed and discarded in this level. Level 4 was very similar to Level 3 in soil (10YR3/3 dark brown sand) and depth (8-10 cm). Level 5 was another

arbitrary level of the same soil and similar depth (11-16 cm). Stratigraphically, levels 3 and 4 are the same and contain similar artifacts: mostly architectural materials such as brick, window glass, cut nails, and mortar with smaller amounts of glass and shell. Level 5 appears to be the same soil, however, there are fewer architectural materials with oyster shell, transfer print, and Native American ceramics.

Level 6 was 8 cm deep and 10YR4/6 dark yellowish brown sand mottled with 10YR3/3 dark brown sand. Below this level is subsoil. A number of Native American pottery sherds were found together in the southwest corner in addition to a writing slate fragment, plain pearlware, brick, and mortar.

Test Unit 8

Level 1 was 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown loam. Level 1 was a natural level, between 14 and 33 cm deep. The variance in depth is due to the brick and rubble pile. Weighed and discarded brick totaled 134.5 kg. Window glass, cut and wire nails, a large cast iron pintle, oyster shell, and bottle glass were found.

Level 2 was also a natural layer, 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown loam and varied in depth between 4 and 22 cm. The level was deepest in the northeast corner and shallowest in the southwest corner. This level had many architectural artifacts including wood, window glass, cut and wire nails, roofing tin, and mortar. Additionally, 86 kg of brick and mortar was weighed and discarded. Ironstone, hand painted and transfer printed refined earthenware, bone, oyster shell, and bottle glass were found.

Level 3 was 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown sand, but only 12.75 kg of brick were weighed and discarded. Window glass and cut and wire nails were abundant. Two cast iron decorative elements were found in close proximity. These pieces match, but do not mend to another piece in Level 2. A small brass eyelet, six writing slate fragments, a glass bottle stopper, many types of refined earthenware and bottle glass, animal bone, and oyster shell were found. A crown cap bottle finish gives this layer an 1892 TPQ. The level was 10 cm deep in the southern end, and 14-17 cm deep in the northern end.



Figure 13. Test Unit 7 planview facing south showing Savannah gray brickwork.

Level 4 was 10 cm deep and 10YR3/3 dark brown sand mottled with 10YR3/6 dark yellowish brown sand. Only 4.75 kg of brick were weighed and discarded. Window glass, cut nails, mortar, a Prosser-style button, European and Native American ceramics, bone, oyster shell, burned seeds, bottle glass, and lamp glass were found.

Level 5 was 10YR4/3 brown sand mottled with 10YR4/4 dark yellowish brown sand and 10YR6/2 light brownish grey sand. This was a natural layer, which was 8 cm deep in the southern end and 13-18 cm deep in the northern end. Level 5 had small amounts of architectural materials, bone, burned seeds, and bottle glass. Levels 1-5 extended across the entire unit. Below Level 5, two features appeared (6 and 7) that intruded Level 8, which was transitional subsoil.

Feature 6 was 10YR4/2 dark grayish brown sand and was only 3 cm deep. The feature was approximately 30 cm in diameter and continued into the unit's east wall. While the feature was round and distinct from the surrounding soil, it was very shallow and small. The only artifact found was a small piece of bone.



Figure 14. Test Unit 8 west wall profile.

Feature 7 initially appeared to be a trench-shaped feature in the northern end of the unit. After excavating the top 15-20 cm, a darker concentration of soil and oyster shell appeared in the southwest corner of the feature. This darker fill appeared to be going under Level 8, so Level 8 was excavated, and then the edge of Feature 7 was more distinct. Feature 7 is most likely a post hole and mold. The post hole edge was very

difficult to see, but the post mold was very distinct with dark loam and oyster shell. The west wall profile suggests the posthole intrudes levels 5 and 8, while the post mold intrudes subsoil.

Level 8 is 20-28 cm deep and 10YR4/6 dark yellowish brown sand. The level extended across the whole unit. Few artifacts were found in this level, and most were Native American with the exception of mortar. Below this level is subsoil.

Test Unit 9

Level 1 was an arbitrary 10 cm deep level that was 10YR 2/1 black loam. In addition to brick (89 kg were weighed and discarded), this level contained window glass, mortar, cut nails, shell, and bottle glass. Below this layer was two types of brickwork. The collapsed Savannah gray brickwork from Test Unit 7 continued into this unit. Then at the unit's southern end, there was a separate section of brickwork consisting of one layer of orange brick, laid on its side and mortared together. The mortar for the orange brick is decaying and crumbling, unlike the strongly mortared Savannah grays.

Level 2 (10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown sand) was excavated between the brickwork sections. The level was 11-13 cm deep. 52 kg of brick was weighed and discarded. Additional architectural materials include window glass, cut and wire nails, a partial metal pipe, and mortar. An escutcheon plate, shell, and bottle glass, including sherds with Owens' scars (TPQ 1903) were also found.

Level 3 was excavated only at the unit's northern end between the Savannah grays and orange bricks. The level had 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand and was 11 cm deep. Several large roots caused bioturbation. Brick, window glass, cut nails, mortar, bone, oyster shell, and bottle glass were all found all in small amounts.

Level 4 was 10YR2/2 very dark brown sand and was 10 cm deep. Artifacts were similar to Level 3: brick, window glass, a nail, plaster, mortar, and shell. This level was only on the unit's



Figure 15. Test Unit 9 planview facing south showing two types of brickwork.

southern end, south of the orange bricks. Although the same depth below surface, Levels 3 and 4 were separated because they were slightly different colors. Below Levels 3 and 4, the soils were the same color and contained similar artifacts, so the next layers were excavated together across the unit.

Level 5 was excavated on both sides of the orange brickwork. This arbitrary level was 9 cm deep and 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand. The south end continued to have a large amount of root bioturbation. This level had fewer architectural items (window glass, cut nails, and mortar) and more kitchen and personal artifacts (Ironstone, animal bone, shell, and a .33 brass cartridge).

Level 6 was 10-15 cm deep and was 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand and 10YR5/4 yellowish brown sand. The unit's northern half did not contain artifacts other than charcoal. All artifacts were found in the southern half (brick, window glass, a cut nail, mortar, plain pearlware, and oyster shell) and all were in small amounts.

Level 7 was 10YR3/3 dark brown sand and 10YR4/4 dark yellowish brown sand. The layer was 10 cm deep. There were few artifacts in the unit's northern end. Most artifacts were in the southern end and at the top of the level. These artifacts included brick, window glass, a cut nail, bone, and oyster shell.

Test Unit 10

Level 1 was 10YR2/1 black loam and was an arbitrary 8 to 10cm level. Only 5 kg of brick was discarded, significantly less than the other units in the area. Other artifacts include a modern ceramic bath tile, window glass, a wire nail, mortar, bottle glass, and many oyster shells.

Level 2 was 10YR2/1 black loam mottled with 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown sand and 10YR4/2 dark grayish brown sand. This was a natural layer 13-16 cm deep. 53.75 kg of brick and mortar were weighed and discarded. Window glass, cut nails, a large wire spike, roofing tin, and mortar were additional architectural artifacts. Oyster shell was extremely abundant in this level. Other kitchen artifacts include Ironstone, plain whiteware, mocha ware, dipped ware, and transfer printed earthenware, lusterware, bone, glass tablewares, and a glass bottle stopper. Many bottle glass sherds were found, including a base with a diagnostic, Illinois Glass Company maker's mark dating from 1915 to 1929. The unit's northern half was a little darker and had nearly all of the brick rubble. This unit, and this level in particular, also had more oyster shell than any other unit or



Figure 16. Test Unit 9, close-up of orange brickwork. Facing west at the unit's south end.



Figure 17. Test Unit 10 west wall profile.

level. Root bioturbation is present in the northeast corner, and extends below level 2.

Level 3 was 10YR3/2 very dark grayish brown sand mottled with 10YR3/3 dark brown sand. This was a 10 cm arbitrary level containing brick, window glass, cut nails, roofing tin, mortar, whiteware, dipped ware, yellowware, bottle glass, a writing slate fragment, a stone flake, and a chimney lamp glass sherd. Notable in this level are Japanese hard paste porcelain sherds with a Geisha girl design (ca 1875-1950) and what may be a partial brass box. The “box” is embossed with, "PATENT/ WIEN/ LEOP. PIP..." Oyster shell continues to be abundant, but not as much as the previous level.

Level 4 was 12-14 cm deep and 10YR4/3 brown sand. The root bioturbation continues in the northeast corner. It is a very round hole, probably a palm tree. Brick, window glass, a cut nail, roofing tin, mortar, plain pearlware, transfer print (including Willowware design), bone, oyster shell, bottle glass, chimney lamp glass, and a writing slate fragment were found.

Level 5 is 10YR4/3 brown sand mottled with 10YR4/6 dark yellowish brown and 10YR5/4 yellowish brown. The layer is 10-13 cm deep and had few artifacts that were a mix of historic and prehistoric including window glass, roofing tin, Native American ceramics, and oyster shell.



Figure 18. Test Unit 10, Feature 7 west wall profile.

Level 6 was 6 to 10 cm deep and 10YR4/6 dark yellowish brown sand mottled with 10YR3/4 dark yellowish brown sand. This is a transitional level to subsoil with few artifacts (bone, oyster shell, an iron fragment, and a stone flake).

Located in the southwest corner of the unit, Feature 7 intruded subsoil and extended into the unit's west wall. When looking at the west wall profile, the feature appears higher in the wall and possibly intruded Levels 5 and 6. The feature (10YR5/4 yellowish brown loose sand) was subtly different from the surrounding soil, and no southern intrusive edge was detected in the unit's west wall profile. The feature extended 16 cm into subsoil. The feature had definite walls, no post mold, and the only artifact was an oyster shell.

Interpretation and Conclusions

In general, we can state that we have positively identified the site of the Benedictine monastery and Freedman school. The cope hook, slate pencil, writing slate fragments, and time frame of the artifact assemblage all confirm the site's initial identification. The site is well preserved with distinct layers. Few modern disturbances have been found. Oetgen identified three buildings initially constructed for the Skidaway mission: "a monastery, a dormitory for the students, and a storehouse" (1969:4). Portions of the church, monastery, and school have been identified in Test Units 3 through 10. No outbuildings such as privies were identified. A more detailed hypothesis of the layout of the buildings and other living spaces will be discussed below.



Figure 19. Slate pencil found in Test Unit 3, Level 8 (left) and a cope hook found in Test Unit 3, Level 2 (right).

There is evidence of earlier and later occupations on the site. Small amounts of Native American ceramics and stone flakes are found in the lowest layers of units. Plantation-era ceramics and other artifacts have been found, but no direct evidence for the plantation buildings or occupation areas have been identified. Later occupations including the Floyd family's vacation home or the Union Camp occupation may be present at Test Units 1 and 2 as well as in surface finds and upper layers.

Test Units 1 and 2 (Area 1)

Most levels throughout Test Units 1 and 2 have substantially the same types of artifacts, a mix of architectural and domestic kitchen wares and little else, which seems to suggest one occupation component. This strongest evidence for this is a particular type of odd mortar, which was found in every level except the feature at the base of Test Unit 2. This mortar is flat and heavy and with a tan inside and gray outer portion. The mortar is distributed through both units in a very similar manner, with numbers peaking in level 2. (two graphs)



Figure 20. Mortar from Test Unit 2.

At least some of the upper layers, if not all layers in Test Unit 1, post-date the monastery. The key information is the electrical elements found in Test Unit 1, Levels 2 and 3. These levels both contained a graphite bar with a copper nut and bolt, which secures a broken-off copper bracket. These may be pieces of a knife switch or parts of a fuse box (John Roberson, Pers. Com.). Either way, these pieces are likely electrical in nature, and point to a later occupation than the monastery. Test Unit 1, Levels 4 and 5 are potentially



Figure 21. Knife switch or fuse box item.

monastery era. Pieces of a “rubber” garden hose were found in Level 5. A patent search indicated rubber hoses were around from the 1860s, but the exact material of this hose is unknown. Armstrong chemistry professor Cliff Padgett performed XRF elemental analysis on this artifact and found a high concentration of lead and calcium (Elec. Comm). This is an avenue of further research to better date this artifact and therefore this area of the site.

Test Unit 2 levels have TPQs in the late 1800s with the exception of Feature 1 and possibly Level 6. Feature 1 is likely plantation era, but the feature has little depth. Level 6 is transitional subsoil, containing only brick and mortar. Test Unit 2 appears to be more intact, with an increasing number of cut nails and decreasing number of wire nails as

the depth increases. Test Unit 2 also contained two *in situ* iron pipes, which means the building had somewhat modern plumbing. The pipes were in levels 3 and 4. Based on the pipes' size, they were likely water pipes. The brick piers visible on the surface are substantial, and the bricks are more modern than those found elsewhere, again, suggesting a later occupation than the monastery.

However, on deeper investigation, this area is difficult to interpret, unlike the distinctly stratified Test Units 3-10. Test Units 1 and 2 have fewer artifacts compared to the other test units. The number of artifacts present suggest this is area saw less intensive use. The strongest evidence suggesting these test units do relate to the monastery era is the mixed ages of the domestic artifacts, older ceramics and younger bottle glass. This pattern is seen in all ten test units. A very small number of window glass sherds were found, only one in Test Unit 1 and seven in Test Unit 2, perhaps indicating this is the storehouse, which would have little need for many windows (Oetgen 1969:4).



Figure 22. "Rubber hose" fragments

Given this mixed evidence, this area may have been lightly used by the monks, as it is not far from the other buildings, and later occupied by others. We have not identified the Floyd family's early 1900s house, or, less likely, this area may relate to Union Camp employees. Older artifacts in Feature 1 are likely remnants from the plantation era. The bulk of the archaeological evidence points to a single, later occupation that is not the monastery or school.

Test Units 3 and 4 (Area 2) Architecture

In the St. Vincent Archabbey archives is a historic photograph marked "Skidaway Island, near Savannah, Ga. Chapel and house" (Figure 23). The building is constructed of two different materials: a "white end", potentially tabby, and a darker portion in the foreground, which is clearly clapboard. We hypothesized the white end of the building lies on The Landings' property where a tabby basement is preserved, and the clapboard end of the building extends to the brick pier on Dyer's property. This hypothesis has held up.

In both units, Levels 1 and 2 are topsoil and post-monastery. In Test Unit 3, Levels 3, 4, 5, and 6 are all "destruction" levels of building collapse. Level 7 may be monastery era, or an occupation directly after the monastery. Levels 8 and 9 are the monastery occupation, and Level 10 is subsoil. In Test Unit 4, Levels 3, 4, 5,



Figure 23. Archival photograph from the St. Vincent Archabbey archives showing the “chapel and house”.

and 7 are destruction levels. Levels 6 and 8 are monastery era, and 9 is subsoil.

The building in the historic photograph is a substantial building, which when collapsed or intentionally destroyed would account for the amount, type, and diversity of materials encountered including brick, mortar, plaster, wood, and nails. The collapse layers contain enormous amounts of window glass (n=1,049) compared to 106 fragments in the monastery layers. Some of the window glass sherds had intact corners and curved edges, which match the historic photograph. The church end of the building has arched windows on the second floor and on first floor at the building’s front. What is not

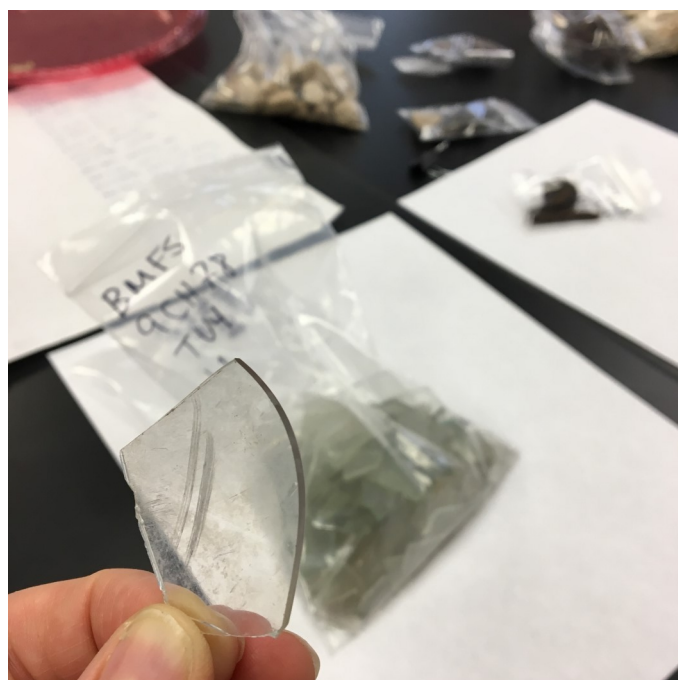


Figure 24. Arched window glass fragment

visible in the picture is the inside of the building. Large amounts of plaster were recovered from the collapse layers, suggesting a formal, more elaborate building. Undecayed wood (n=72) was also found, including a few pieces with right angles and some with paint. This wood could be from window frames, clapboard siding, shutters, or lathing. Smaller amounts of mortar than plaster and the plethora of nails suggest this building was of wooden construction with brick piers. Large and small fragments of roofing tin were also found with the larger sheets topping the rubble layer in Test Unit 4. Some of the larger roofing tin pieces were over two feet in length.

Cut nails dominated the nail assemblage (n=355), but wire nails were present (n=85) as well as 155 unidentified nails or nail fragments. This nail pattern fits with the time frame. In lower layers few, if any, wire nails are found. In higher layers, wire nails are found in small numbers. Generally, American buildings before 1883 were made entirely with cut nails, although wire nails were used for other applications like wooden boxes. After 1897, all American buildings were likely made with the cheaper wire nails (Adams 2002:70). We would expect the 1878 monastery buildings to be constructed with cut nails, but any repairs, additions, or later buildings could have wire nails. This is exactly the pattern we see in the strata.

Test Units 3 and 4 were specifically placed to catch the clapboard edge of the building. That goal was achieved. Test Units 3 and 4 are situated into a small slope. The layers of this slope likely built up as the building fell down. Of particular interest is a complex feature at the interface between Test Units 3 and 4. This feature runs parallel to the southern wall of the tabby basement on The Landings property and is the church's northern wall. Figure 25 shows the position of Test Units 3 and 4 and the best guess of where the church and monastery walls were based on the tabby basement ruins and stratigraphic evidence.

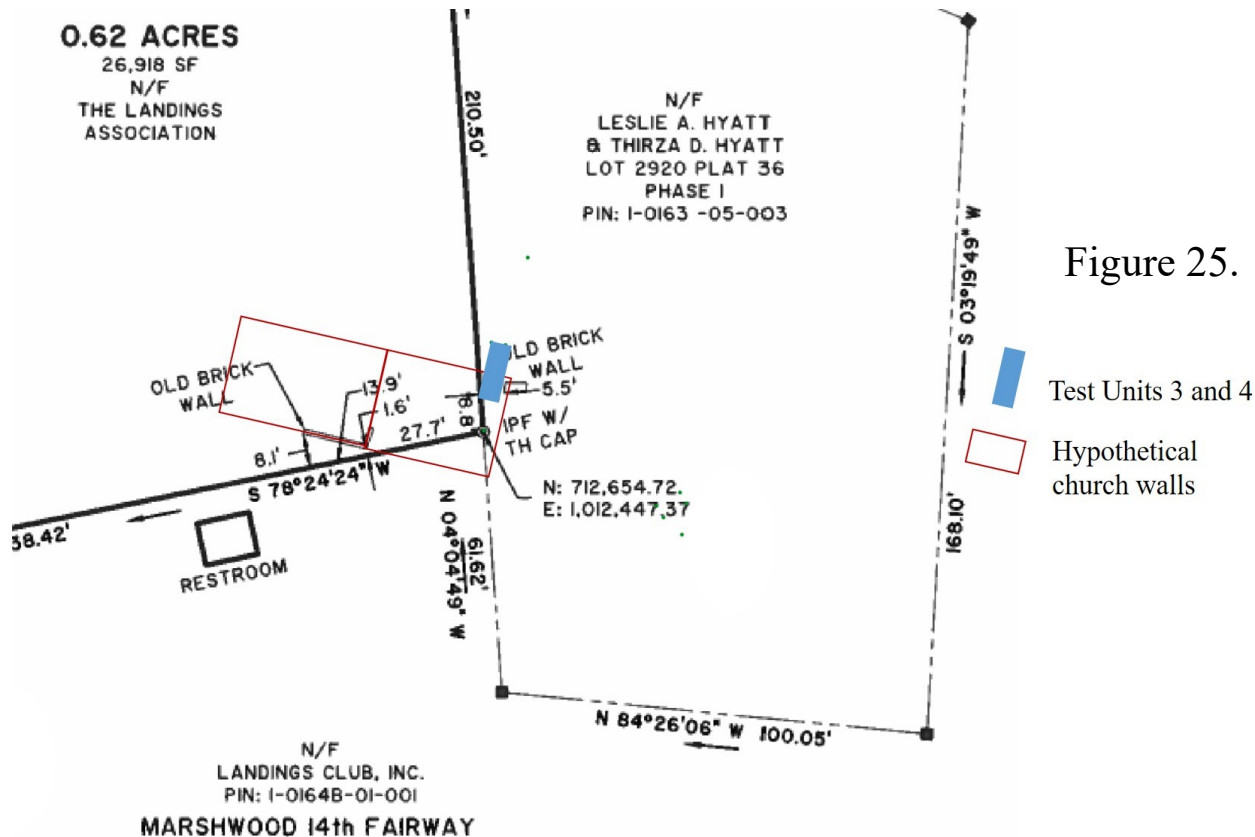


Figure 25.

The building's size and detail in the photograph matches the artifact assemblage. After reviewing the strata and artifacts, the hypothesis holds that Test Units 3 and 4 are the clapboard end of the building depicted in the historic photograph. The building's substantial construction and finishing details (such as plaster) also suggests the monks intended to stay on Skidaway Island long-term, which makes the puzzle of their leaving after two decades more interesting.

Test Units 5 - 10 (Area 3) Architecture

Test Units 5 through 10 surround a brick and tabby debris pile at the property's southern end. Consistent with the Phase I test pits, Test Units 5 and 6 were placed to examine the rubble pile, which was hypothesized to be a third building. This building may be the run-down, rough-looking building behind the church in the historic photograph. The building's corners in the photograph are jagged, suggesting a log construction with the logs interlinked at the corners. This could be the early "log house" Father Melchior mentioned (Gamble 84). In the final semester of excavation, Test Units 7-10 were placed to further explore this area because it was thought to be the school and was the site's most endangered section.

Test Units 5-10 had simpler stratigraphy than Test Units 3 and 4 and contained a different architectural artifact signature. Unit's upper strata (typically Levels 1-2) date after the monastery and into the early 1900s. Below topsoil, the next one to three levels date to the monastery, however, the percentage of architectural materials are higher than the percentage of kitchen materials. In next level(s) below, artifacts date to the monastery, but the numbers of artifacts drops precipitously and the percentage of kitchen artifacts is greater than the architectural artifacts. This indicates that while there are many levels that date to the monastery, we can distinguish between the deeper occupation levels and abandonment levels above. Finally, below the monastery levels are a mix of nineteenth century artifacts, Native American artifacts, and items like bone and shell, which are not easily dateable. See Figure 26 for a schematic of test units, levels, and occupation eras.

Brick and mortar are primarily found in the topsoil, especially the larger whole brick, bats, and chunks of brickwork. While a significant amount of brick was found, it appears to mostly come from two central sources: a chimney originally constructed near the north end of Test Unit 7 and a pathway that cuts east/west through Test Unit 9. There is very little plaster in these six units. Roofing tin was found in the upper levels. Only Test Unit 5's topsoil had significant amounts, and all were small fragments. Window glass was found in particularly high levels in Test Unit 5 and 8. The levels peak in the topsoil, but amounts are also found in the abandonment levels.

There were no wire nails in the monastery's occupation levels, and of the monastery abandonment levels, only Test Unit 5 Level 3, had wire nails (n=6). In the topsoil levels, cut nails are equal to or outnumber wire nails except Test Unit 9 Level 2. The near lack of wire nails indicate this is the earliest building found on the property.

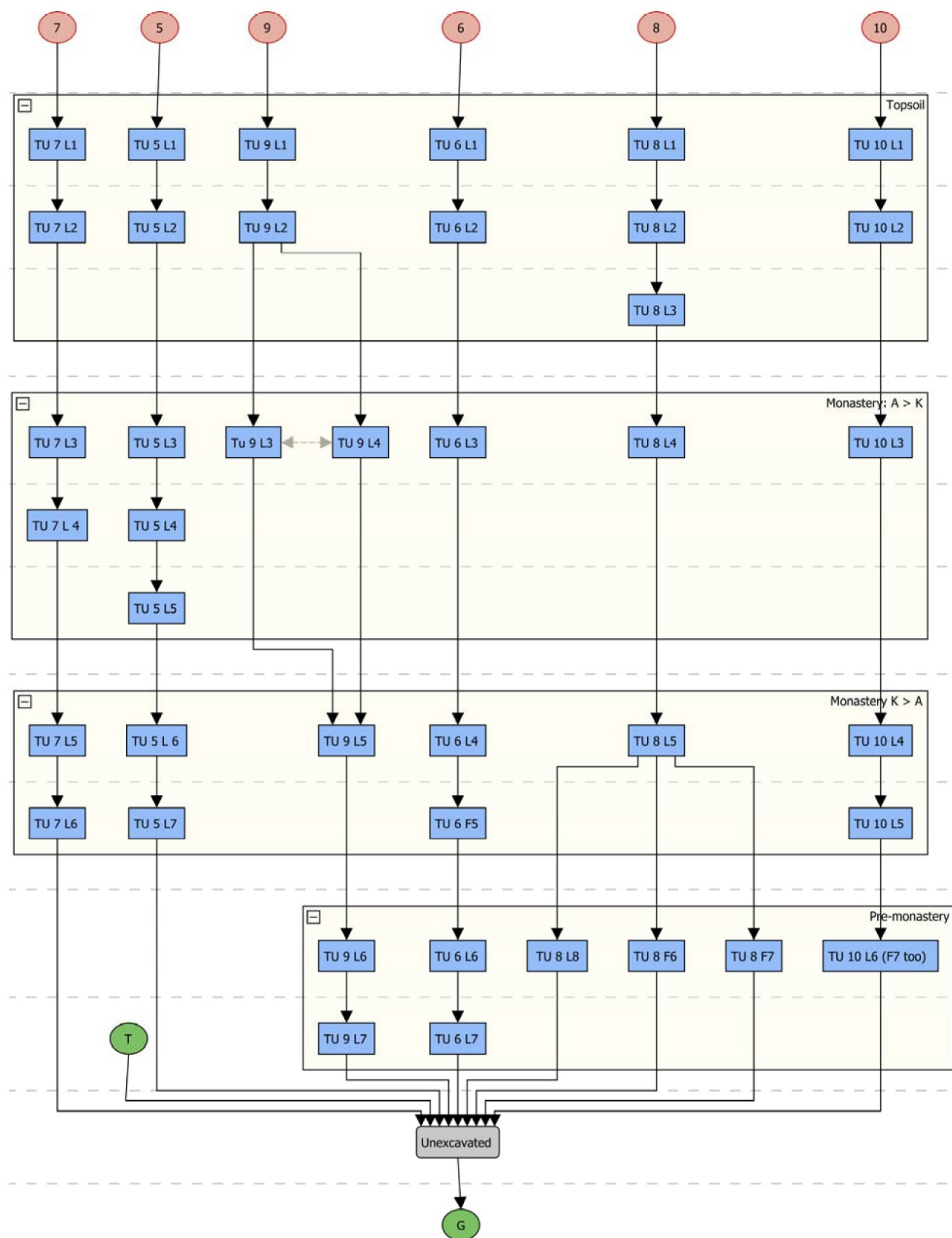


Figure 26. Test Units 5 through 10 strata in a Harris Matrix, showing occupation eras: Topsoil, Monastery abandonment, Monastery occupation, and Pre-monastery.

A deep feature was found in Test Unit 5's southwest corner, although it was disturbed by bioturbation. No distinguishable edges were seen on this feature, although the anomaly was noted in levels 4, 5, 6, and 7 and finally defined by profiling the south wall, which bisected the feature. Levels 6 and 7 are essentially this feature and surrounding subsoil. A small brick pier was found in Test Unit 5's northeast corner. Unfortunately, without a larger excavation and more features uncovered, it is not possible to fully understand how these features relate to the building and how it sat on the landscape.

Another feature was found in Test Unit 8. This feature intruded subsoil and likely dates prior to the monastery. The feature contained brick, bone, shell, olive green bottle glass, a stone flake, and small amounts of charcoal. The feature had very dark soil at its core, suggesting this is a posthole that has leached over time. Since we could not excavate enough area (and therefore enough features) to discover patterns and determine how the building functioned and sat on the landscape, we turn to artifact distributions.



Figure 27. Test Unit 8, Feature 7: close-up of the posthole and post mold feature.

Writing slate fragments were found in Test Units 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10. In Area 3, twenty-three fragments were found throughout topsoil, monastery abandonment layers, and monastery occupation levels. Additionally, one was found in Test Unit 3, level 5 as well as a slate pencil fragment in Test Unit 3, Level 8. The slate fragments were all very thin, and smoothed flat on at least one side, usually both. The concentration of writing slate fragments is the best indication that



Figure 28. Writing slate, Prosser button, and dipped ware found in Area 3.

this building is the school. Within this area, the fragments appear in most stratigraphic layers and units, without any concentrations or specific distribution patterns.

Beisaw (2004:2) stated, "The richest archaeological assemblage for schoolhouse sites often lies within the foundation walls." The author further wrote, "Subfloor areas may or may not have served as specialized storage areas but invariably served as artifact traps" (Beisaw 2004: 5). Comparing the number of artifacts per unit is a very approximate way to start understanding how the building sat on the site, and this comparison was made more difficult by differential sampling. Test Units 7 and 9 were only partially excavated, because large sections of brickwork were discovered below topsoil, preventing full

excavation of the unit. Looking at the total number of artifacts recovered from each unit, and roughly compensating for the percentage excavated, shows us that Test Units 6 and 9 have fewer artifacts than other units, and Test Unit 10 has the third least while Test Unit 5 has the most by far (Figures 29 and 30). Two types

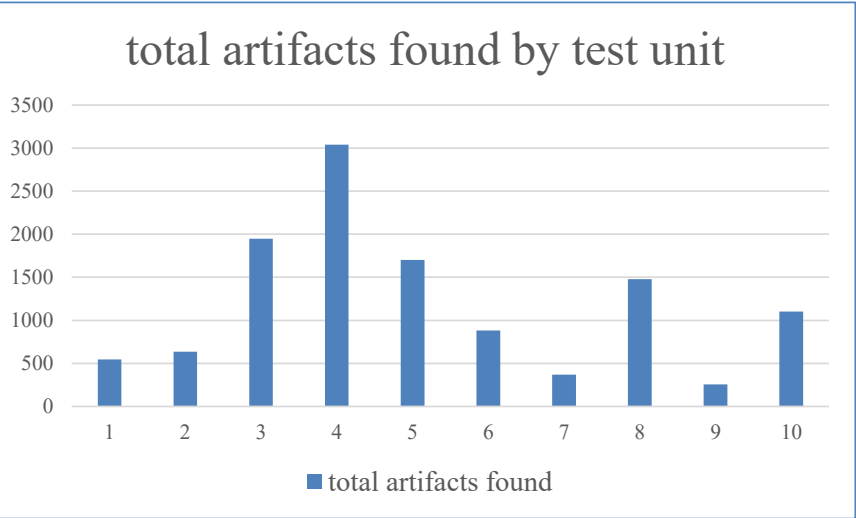


Figure 29.

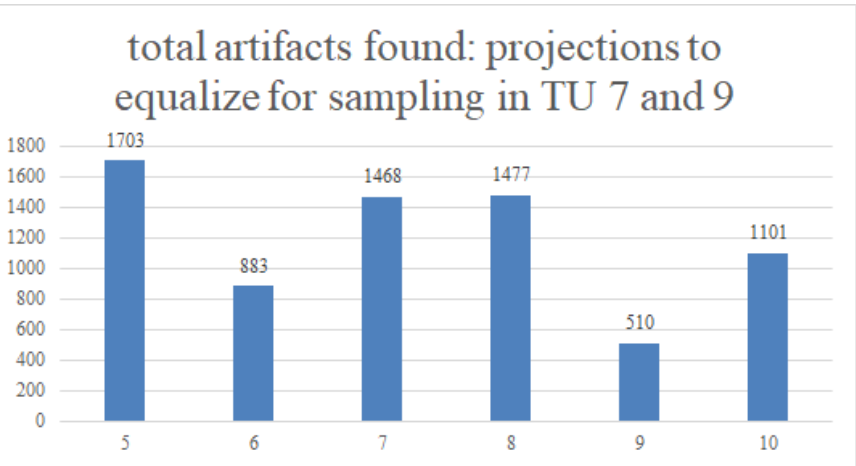
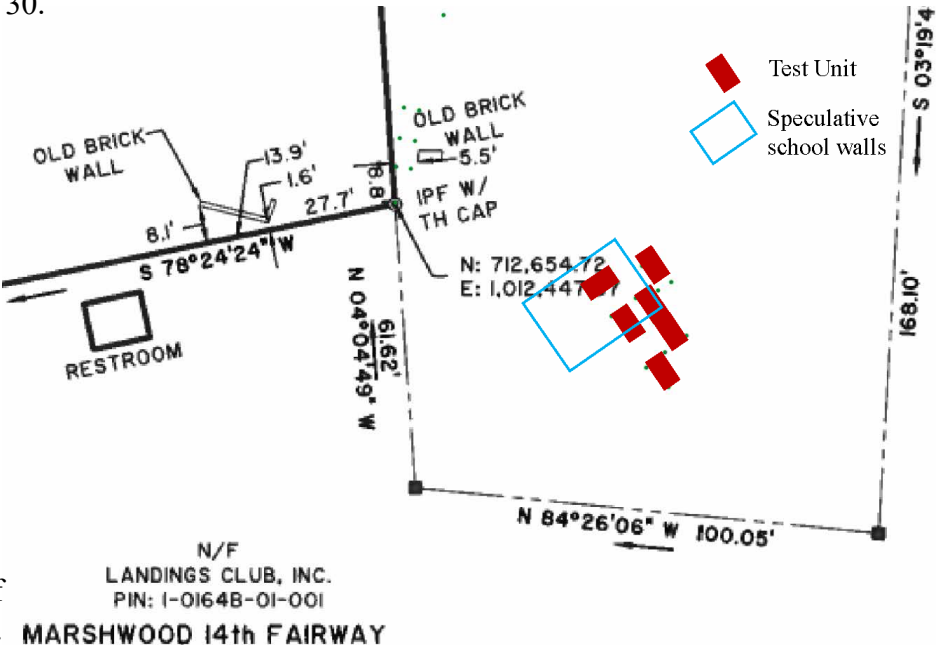


Figure 30.

a fallen chimney, and likely marks this as the end of the building that extends west from Test Unit 7. Figure 31 shows the speculative placement of building. However, this can only be a best guess. Without more excavation, we will never be sure.

Figure 31. Speculative placement of the school walls.



of brickwork were mapped in contiguous Test Units 7 and 9: strongly mortared Savannah gray bricks that originally stood at least 2.4 meters high and fell over, cracking into sections. Savannah gray bricks predominate the brick scatter in Area 3. Moving south, the second brick area is loosely mortared orange bricks laid sideways. This section is only one brick deep; because of the depth, this patch of bricks would not have been a structurally sound wall, rather likely served as a pathway outside of the building. Figure 31 shows Test Units 7 and 9’s contiguous brickwork.

All of this information combines to suggest that the building sat over Test Units 5, 7, and 8, and possibly 10. The height of the Savannah gray brickwork in a concentrated area suggests that it is

Artifact Analysis Test Units 3-10



Figure 32. Test Units 7 and 9 facing south. Savannah gray brickwork in the foreground and orange brickwork in the background.

This site is different from most every other school site archaeologically investigated because it has domestic, religious, and educational components. Like many school excavations, this site had few artifacts in the occupation layers (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:125-126). One challenge of this site is the difficulty in separating the deposits of the white European-born monks, black American-born monks, and African American students to determine differences and similarities in their lifestyles as well as the relationships between each group.

The monastery occupation levels have relatively few artifacts that mostly consist of architectural debris and small amounts of kitchen artifacts including ceramics, bottle glass, and faunal remains. There is an interesting dichotomy between the glass and ceramic artifacts. Some ceramic sherds are contemporary with the monastery (three sherds of Ironstone), but the rest pre-date the

monastery including plain pearlware, hand painted wares, and transfer printed wares, all from the late 1700s to approximately 1840 (n=14). Surprisingly, Native American ceramics (n=39) outnumber European types. This pattern holds in the monastery abandonment levels, where there is a greater diversity of ceramics. Dipped wares, mocha ware, hand painted, and transfer printed white-bodied wares as well as yellow wares were found and predate the monastery (n=31). Contemporary ceramics (n=26) include Ironstone, Rockingham glazed earthenwares, and Japanese hard paste porcelain. Seven un-dateable European-American sherds were present as well as five Native American sherds.

In contrast, the bottle glass is contemporary. All 30 sherds in the monastery occupation levels and the 222 bottle glass sherds from the abandonment layers are contemporary (or likely so, as many are not very diagnostic). While an argument could be made that the sherds of olive green or amber bottle glass could pre-date the monastery, no diagnostic features were present to accurately date these sherds. The age of the ceramics may speak to the economic status of the monks, who might have purchased outdated and therefore cheaper materials. Whereas the bottles would be newly purchased with whatever foodstuff or medicine was needed.

Comparing Monastery Occupation and Abandonment levels: Kitchenware and Small Finds, Test Units 5-10

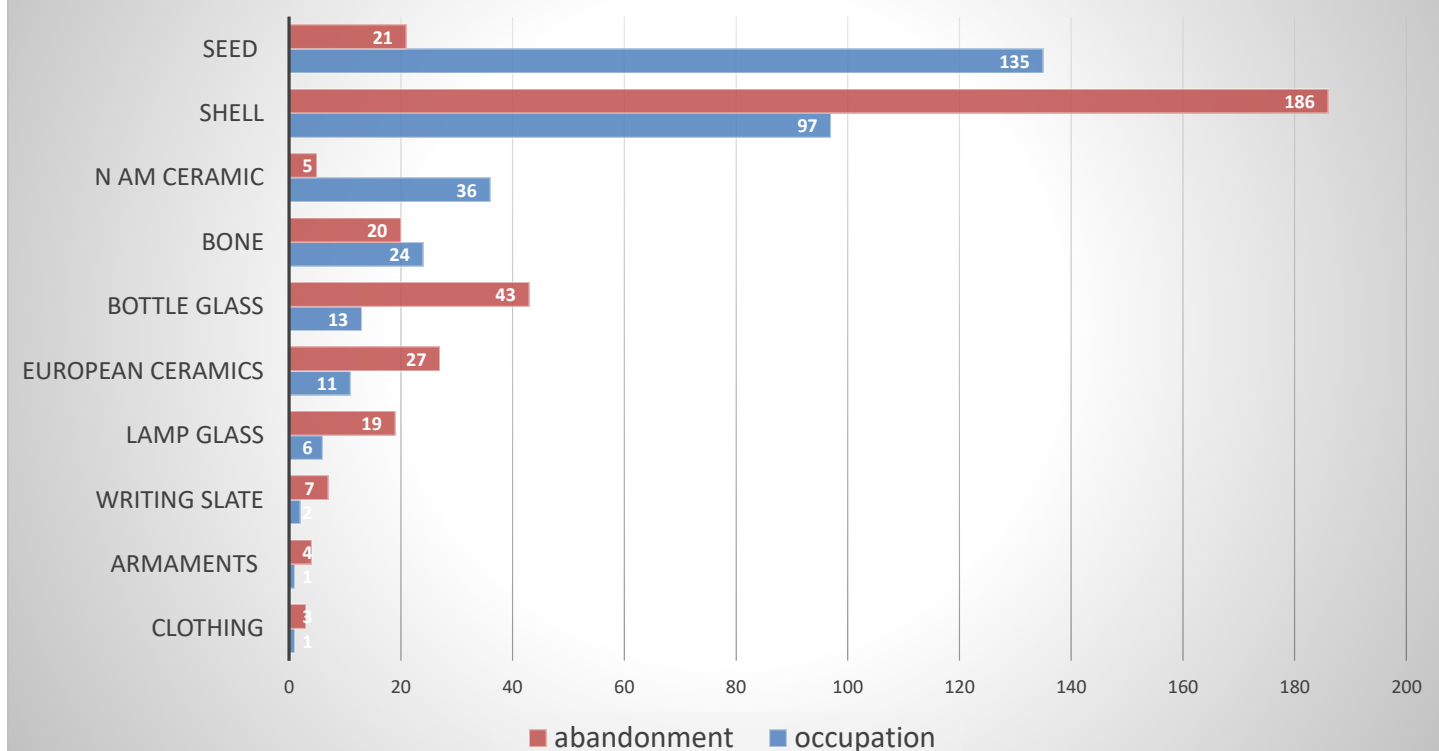


Figure 33.

One of the few diagnostic bottle glass sherds is an amber base embossed with “WF&S/2/MIL”. Northern Glass Works manufactured this bottle in Wisconsin between 1896 and 1900 (Sussex-Lisbon Area Historical Society, Inc.). Recovered in Test Unit 3, Level 7, it is likely a beer bottle, and is the only artifact in this level that post-dates 1890. This one artifact is intriguing because it points to the monastery lasting longer than previously thought and shows the monks had access to more resources than previously believed. Alternatively, this artifact is evidence that Level 7 dates a later occupation of the property, likely a Skidaway Island resident who took over the site when the monks left and not the Floyd vacation home, which does not start until after 1906.



Figure 34. Northern Glass Works bottle embossed with “WF&S/2/MIL”.

Another intriguing artifact is two sherds of Japanese hard paste porcelain decorated with a Geisha girl design. This design was manufactured circa 1875-1950 (Diagnostic Artifacts of Maryland). The first sherd is a thick-walled base, and the second is a thin-walled rim, suggesting at least two vessels were present on site. These sherds were found in Test Unit 10, Level 3, which is a monastery abandonment level. So these porcelain vessels could belong to the monastery inhabitants or the



Figure 35. Japanese hard paste porcelain with Geisha Girl design.

Floyd family. The type of ceramic suggests it belongs to the wealthier Floyd family, but it is curious to wonder if the monks had ceramics with geishas printed on them.

Most of the monastery era artifacts relate to food production with few personal artifacts. Burned seeds (only from Test Unit 8, Levels 4 and 5) and shell (found throughout the site) predominate the kitchen assemblage. Shell heavily outnumbers bone, indicating the monk were eating what was locally available. Lack of animal bone could be because of acidic coastal soils, but it more likely is confirmation of Moosmüller's writing that the monks had, "no fresh beef, nor many other luxuries" (Oetgen 1976:16).

Area 2 and 3 have similar numbers of kitchen artifacts, however Area 2 is only two test units, and Area 3 has six. Therefore, Area 2 has roughly three times more kitchen-related material culture, again suggesting that Area 2 is the locus of domestic life: sleeping quarters, food preparation, and perhaps social life. This pattern becomes more pronounced when comparing the monastery abandonment layers (Area 3) to Area 2's rubble-

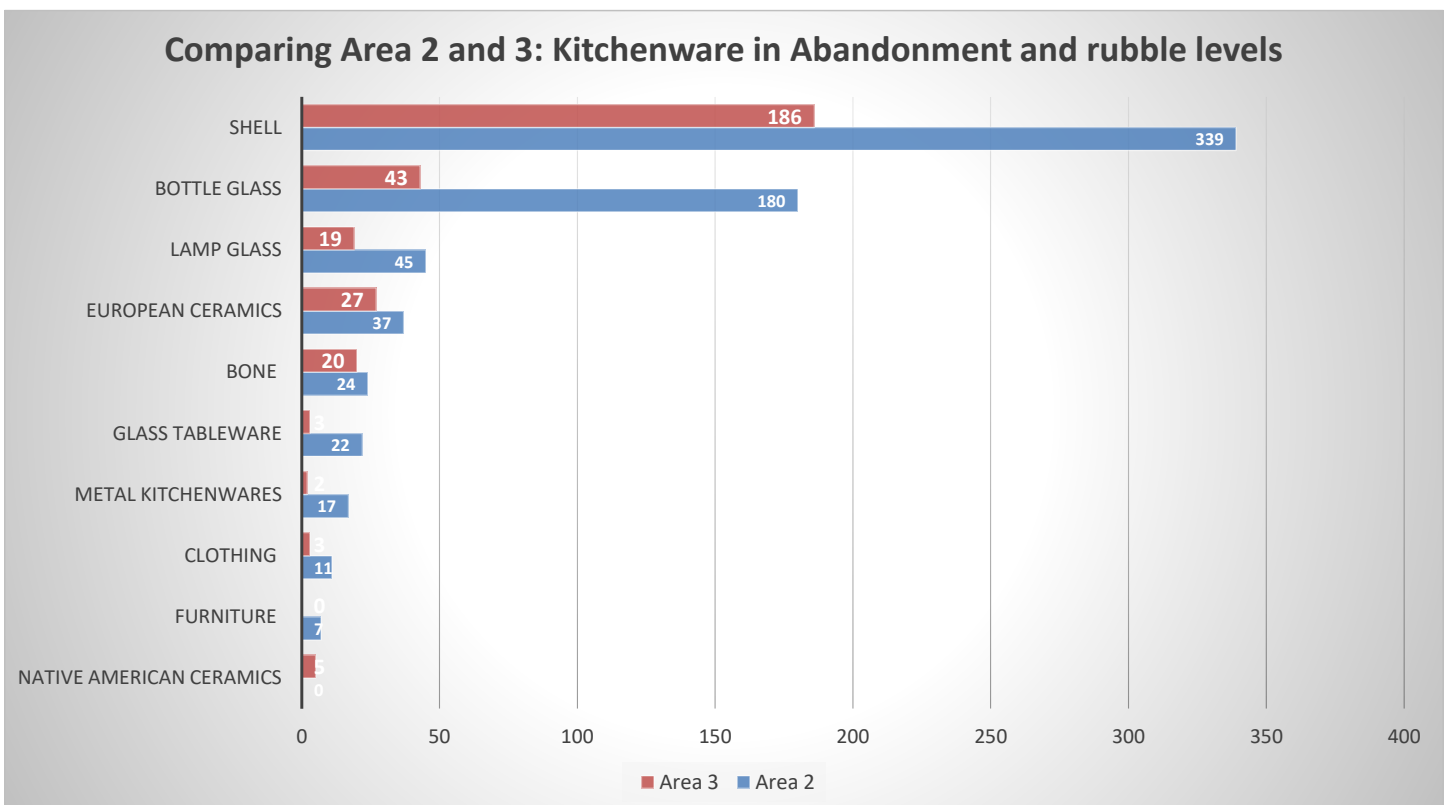


Figure 36.

filled destruction levels. Only one piece of glass tableware and a partial butter knife was found in the Area 2 monastery levels, which also points to the materially simple life of the monks. More was discarded in the abandonment levels (see Figure 36) but still in very small numbers.

Furniture items also follow this pattern. No furniture artifacts were found in occupation levels, but the abandonment and destruction levels had some. In Area 2, seven artifacts were found including two bedsprings, a caster wheel, an escutcheon plate, and three unidentified hardware pieces. In Area 3, a portion of a mattress was found in Test Unit 6's topsoil (levels 1 and 2). The cloth parts of the mattress had decayed, leaving the iron structure and springs, which were heavily corroded and crumbled at the touch. The mattress was not fully uncovered, but extended into the north and east unexcavated portions beyond the unit. The only other furniture artifact in Area 3 is an escutcheon plate from Test Unit 9, Level 2, also topsoil.

One of this site's challenges is determining what artifacts were deposited by the monks, what artifacts were deposited by the students, and what may have been shared. Small finds, while rare, can be very telling. While the monastery levels contain few small finds, clothing items are by far the most numerous. Buttons were the most common small find (n=23 with n=11 in monastery occupation strata and two more in the abandonment layers). Eyelets (n=12) were second most common, followed by parts of shoes (n=11). The shoe soles were extremely worn and were likely disposed of. The eyelets are all similar, small and brass, and are likely from shoes. In fact, based on cross-mending the fragmented soles, all eleven shoe fragments probably only represent two shoes, and if the eyelets come from the shoes, we are really only talking about two items that were fragmented.



Figure 37. Buttons

Buttons may give insight into the students. Buttons have been researched as an insight into African American style and ethnic expression. However, both monks and students would have had buttons on their clothing. Brother Tim Brown of Benedictine Military School (2017, elec. comm.) described the monks' clothing. "The monks' habit consists of a tunic (cassock) which buttons up the front, and a button used to attach the cowl (hood) to another piece called the scapular. I'm not sure if the tunic of the 19th century had buttons on it, but I am sure that a button was used to attach the cowl." Once again, because the students and monks were living in the same household, it is nearly impossible to separate who was wearing (or throwing away) what items. These buttons are an excellent avenue for further research.

The distribution of the clothing artifacts is also telling. Most were found in Test Units 3 and 4 (n=27), one in Area 1 (Test Units 1 and 2), and 23 artifacts in Area 3. When only the monastery era levels are

examined, 15 artifacts are found in the occupation levels and three in the monastery abandonment levels. The three artifacts from the abandonment levels are in Area 3. Additionally, 14 of the 15 artifacts from the occupation phase are in Area 2, the area identified as the church. The remaining button is in Test Unit 6, associated with the school. The concentration of clothing items in Area 2 again suggests this was the church and the dormitory. The historic photograph discussed above shows the church at one end of the building, and the dormitory is likely at the other, white end.



Figure 38. Reconstructed glass lamp body from Test Unit 3.

Roughly equal numbers of lamp glass were found in Area 2 (n=70) and Area 3 (n= 66). Lamp glass was found throughout all levels. In Test Unit 3, a broken, but nearly complete, glass oil lamp base was found. The reconstruction shows the lamp is very simple in design, possibly reflecting the monk's simple tastes and vows (Father Andrew, pers comm).

Three harmonica reed plate fragments may be from the African American students or workers. Note that one of the fragments is thicker, heavier, and has a higher lead content, which could indicate it is a concertina fragment. This

artifact needs more specialized research. In December 1878, Father Oswald had a letter writing exchange with Abbott Wimmer requesting funding for musical instruments and an instructor,

“If we could organize a brass band for the Negroes, not only the people here, but also from other islands would be won over to the Faith. Of course, in church, I would allow nothing else than Gregorian chant, but the band could entertain the worshippers before and after the services. On Christmas Day some of our Negroes somewhere got a big drum, two fifes, six muskets and a sword. They were around the house all day and made an awful noise” (quoted in Oetgen 1976:16).

Father Oswald was denied. But this anecdote illustrates the enthusiasm for music amongst the students, while making it seem less likely that the harmonica belonged to the monks. This may also be a cultural misunderstanding. Were the students making an awful noise? Or were they practicing African American drumming and ring shouts similar to those documented in the WPA project *Drums and Shadows*?



Figure 39. Harmonica fragments.

Field researchers were surprised by the number of armaments found. Most of the armaments found were brass cartridges (n=23). Seven pistol percussion caps were found. Three partial shotgun shells and two rifled bullets complete the assemblage. Six .22 caliber brass cartridges were in Area 1, seventeen armament pieces were found in Area 2, and twelve were found in Area 3. In Area 2, two were found in topsoil, and one in a monastery occupation level. The remainder were found in the rubble layers. In Area 3, one copper cartridge was in an occupation layer of Test Unit 9. Seven items were found in topsoil and four in the abandonment layers.

Historical documents records that one of the monks, Daniel Hefti, was killed in a gun accident. The thirty-three-year-old Hefti had only been in Georgia for several months when he died on December 8, 1883, two days after accidentally shooting himself. Father Melchior's letter to Abbot Boniface reads, "Last night Father Daniel was to rid us of several strange dogs which were frequenting our place, annoying us and preventing us from sleep. He had a fair chance to shoot, but it seemed, wished to spare them once more, and inflict a good blow with the butt of his gun; but alas, he missed the dogs and struck a log, causing his gun to go off. He shot himself in the intestines and Dr. Dupon says that he cannot live" (Oetgen 1969:8).

However, since the majority of the gun evidence is post-monastery occupation, we can interpret this as belonging to the African Americans who continued to live in the area. Annelise Morris (2017:34-35) has interpreted firearms evidence as a complex combination of hunting practices and the social practices of recreation and protection. Hunting provided both food and a social activity that bonded men and provided new neighbors an entrance to society. At Morris' site, target practice from the front porch was a social activity and that demonstrated the presence of guns and the competence of their users.

"At the same time these items (and the skilled use of them, demonstrated in this "friendly" way) were indexing the means and skills of defense. ... I would argue that these artifacts represent a skillful negotiation of social practices that at once underscores Black masculinity by opening previously restricted social networks and showcasing the ability to provide for a family, while at the same time subtly indicating the willingness to defend this same family" (Morris 2017:36).

After analyzing what we found, we also need to flip the question and ask, what is not present? Nearly 12,000 artifacts were recovered, but no toys, which is very unusual for schools (Gibb and Beisaw 2000). Doubtless, the boys played with make-shift toys and games, however, the lack of identifiable children's artifacts at a school echoes deeply and sadly.



Figure 40. Sample of armament artifacts from Test Unit 4, Level 4.

The writing slate fragments and slate pencil were the only definitive educational artifacts. We will not be able to determine much about the quality of education. According to the historical record, the students were learning the basics: reading, writing, and mathematics. Few education-related artifacts also indicates a primarily book-based education. We found no evidence of technical trades, but the letters between the monks state they were learning agricultural sciences. Tools, waste materials, hardware, pins and needles, science equipment, measuring devices, and musical instruments can indicate a technical education as well (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:125-126).

No religious artifacts were found. This is not surprising, as any religious objects would be highly valued and curated. Monastic life is certainly seen in the types and amounts of artifacts. Further investigation of Benedictine architecture, spatial arrangements, and diet would be helpful in further exploring how Benedictine values and concepts are represented on this site.

As a final note, many of the levels within the monastery occupation and below the monastery-era contain Native American artifacts, particularly stone flakes and ceramics. These artifacts are few in number and were not analyzed beyond identification in the catalog.

End of the Monastery and School

As discussed in the historical background section, sources do not agree on the exact date of the monastery's closure. All of the reported dates fall within 1889 and 1899. One interesting clue is the bottle base from Test Unit 3, Level 7 that was previously discussed. This level contains many kitchen and personal artifacts including many buttons and is consistent with the monastery findings except for a bottle manufactured by the Northern Glass Works. The base has embossed letters on the base: "WF&S/2/MIL" and dates to 1896-1900. This layer seems to be an occupation layer, but exactly who? Was the monastery still active in the late 1890s? Were some of the African American families still working the plantation and living here?

Recommendations and Future Work

The Dyer's lot containing Test Units 1-10 has been developed, and all archaeological materials were destroyed or heavily disturbed. In April 2018, next-door neighbors Nikki Sleeth and Roy Samras reported that when the site was cleared of vegetation, a mechanical excavator dug a large hole, deposited the remaining archaeological materials, particularly architectural rubble, and then covered up the hole (Pers. Comm). While most of the church and monastery building is preserved on The Landings property, I do not recommend excavation now. This very small portion should be preserved in situ for future archaeologists. Digging Savannah's work will focus on continued artifact and collections research.



Figure 41. Dyer's House during construction. Picture taken facing south towards Test Units 5-10.



Figure 42. Another angle on the Dyer's house construction. Facing south southeast and showing displaced archaeological materials.

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n.d. Archival photograph hand-labeled, "Skidaway Island, near Savannah, Ga, Chapel and house"

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Appendix A: St. James Beverage Company Bottle

By Kirstyn Cardwell

Ms. Seifert found an old crown cap glass bottle on the monastery dig. The inscription on the bottle says “St. James Beverage Company Savannah GA” and “contents 9 and $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.” The design on the bottle is an eagle in a chalice with ribbon coming out of bottom that may say “ST. James Beverage.” The top half of the bottle has arched lines while the bottom has a grid pattern. The bottle is fully machine made. This has been determined because of the seam running down the side of the bottle. The top was not found but would have been a crown cap. There are no identifying marks on the bottom of the bottle.

To attempt to find information on this bottle, I looked in many different places. I started with the internet and then looked into different establishments around Savannah. There was an identical bottle being sold on the Worthpoint website through EBay. The listing is “SAVANNAH GA ST JAMES BEVERAGE CO SODA BOTTLE 9 1/4 OZ.”¹ They have pictures of their bottle posted, and the writing on the bottle matches what we suspected the script said. There was also an EBay listing for a “Vintage Savannah GA St James Jamaica Punch 6.5 oz. Aqua Soda Bottle.” It had a picture of a bottle with the same words on it. The bottle also had the same eagle symbol on it, but the words in the banner read “St. James Jamaica Punch.” The shape of this bottle is similar to the original one, and it also has a crown cap. The item was being sold by Southeast Bottles.² The seller has put the country of origin as Jamaica, but I believe this is a misunderstanding on their part. The flavor of the soda is Jamaican punch but besides that it has no relation to Jamaica.

This conclusion comes from a brewer and bottler journal from the 1920's. The Brewers Journal from October 1920 has a single entry about the St. James Beverage company: “St. James beverage Co., Savannah, has installed a new syrup room. Jamaica Punch is the specialty.”³ The exact same sentence appears in the American Bottler, Volume 40 from September 1920.⁴ The only other place I could find the company mentioned was in a list of bottlers and soft drink manufactures from the “Seventh Annual Report Of The Commissioner of Commerce and Labor of the State of GA for the Fiscal Year Ending in December 31, 1918.”⁵ I checked the 1916, 1917, and 1918 fiscal year and could not find the company mentioned. I could not find the report for the 1919 or 1920 fiscal year.

Next, I began looking around in Savannah. My first stop was the Bull Street Library. I looked in the city directories for 1916-1920. There were multiple sections the company could have been listed in, but it was

in none of them. Every company listed had the owner's information with it. The next place I visited was the Savannah History Museum. The company was not shown in the museum at any point so I talked to the curator. She explained that they kept no records of that kind on site and that she had never heard of the company before. I decided to go to some of the antique shops downtown so I could talk to the owners. The shops I went to were Southern Charm Antiques and Antique Market (before Broughton St.). I had hoped that one of them may have heard of the company because they had been collecting items from this time period but neither of them had. I was directed to a bottle collector named Gene who sets up shop at Keller's flea market on the weekend.

I was not able to find Gene, but I did find a bottle collector named Larry. Larry has been collecting bottles since he was 10 years old. He was the largest bottle collector in Georgia until he retired a couple of years ago. Larry had the Jamaican St. James Beverage company bottle at his booth. He claimed it was patented in 1923-24. He explained to me that the St. James Beverage Company had a parent company named Try Me Bottling Company. They were also the parent company to Sincrest and Topp. The Try Me Bottling Company is closed down, but they had a red brick building at the cross section of Whitaker Street and Victory Drive. The company made fruit flavored drinks and ginger ale. He also said the bottles for the company were made up north by American Glass Works. ⁶

At the City of Savannah Research Library and Municipal Archives, I looked through the Business Census for 1913, Vol. 1 and 2 of the specific Tax Receipt book and the five Receipt books for the 1920's. I could not make out who the businesses in the Tax receipt book were so I could not gain any information from them. They did not have business Census records for 1914-1930. I looked for both the St. James Beverage Company and the Try Me Company in all of the records. The researcher on duty helped me find a listing of the company in a city directory online. The entry states "St. James Beverage company., J. T. Sultanaki pres, 7-9 Montgomery, n, tel 14."⁷ The pres after J. T. Sultanaki means that he was the president of the company. The company's Savannah, Georgia, address is 7-9 Montgomery Street. I looked through the entire business census before she found the president's name by just looking for the company titles. I re-checked the census to look for his name in the records on site but still came up with nothing. The company is first found in directories in 1921 and is gone by 1930. The address stays the same until 1928 when it changes to 406 Bay Street.

If I had more time to do research, I would have liked to look into the owner of the company and the Try Me Bottling company online and in the city directories between 1920-1930. I would also check at the Georgia Historical Society in Savannah, Georgia.

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