

The Fire History of
Cumberland Island National Seashore
1900-1983

CPSU Technical Report 7

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PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF THE REPORT SERIES:

In order to make data and results from managerial studies more easily and quickly available to interested scientists, the U.S. National Park Service Cooperative Unit at the Institute of Ecology has initiated a numbered technical report series. This series produces limited printings of data matrices, bibliographies, review papers and scientific project reports concerning U.S. National Parks and park related problems. The reports are from various sources, not all federally funded, and are intended to supply scientific information rather than deal with park policy. The reports are subject to technical editing and review for scientific accuracy by Institute staff but are not necessarily reviewed by external experts and are not refereed in regard to overall quality or importance to the scientific community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Fire History of Cumberland Island National Seashore 1900-1983

Abstract	2
Introduction	3
Methods	4
Results	8
Climatic Factors	28
Discussion	31
References	35

II. Appendices

Appendix A	37
Appendix B	45
Appendix C	67
Appendix D	95

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ABSTRACT

Historic land use and consequent disturbances from the period of aboriginal occupation to the present and climatic factors were examined to determine factors influencing fire on Cumberland Island. Three major fire susceptible communities, pine-oak-scrub, oak-scrub, and grass-sedge were located and examined for evidence of past fire.

The location and association of fire susceptible communities, the effects of historic land uses, the presence of pine, the network of roads, and coastal climatic patterns all influence the location, size and frequency of fire on Cumberland Island. The fire rotation for susceptible communities is 20 to 30 years and correlates to coastal drought cycles. Several sites had burned more than once since 1900. At least 3170 acres of the upland area north of Old House Creek has burned at least once since 1900.

Introduction

In July of 1981, lightning ignited a pine-oak-scrub and grass-sedge pond area on Cumberland Island National Seashore, Georgia. Low precipitation in 1980 and 1981, thunder storm winds and a 27 year accumulation of fuels in the pine-oak-scrub resulted in conditions suitable for a large wildfire. Within the first forty-four hours, over 1000 acres of scrub community burned, spreading fire into less susceptible vegetation communities (Jordan and Ruckdeschel 1982). Burning a total of 1700, the 1981 fire was the most severe the island had experienced since the National Seashore was designated in 1972. The severity of the 1981 fire raised many questions concerning the history and role of fire on Cumberland Island and the adequacy of the National Park Service fire management plan.

The objectives of this project were to determine historic and climatic factors influencing fire on Cumberland, to locate the fire susceptible communities on Cumberland Island and to determine the size and frequency of fires within these communities. The data presented in this report will be used to improve fire management planning for the National Seashore.

METHODS

Study Area:

Cumberland Island is the southern most of the Golden Isles of the Georgia coast. It is 17.5 miles long and 23,268 acres in area. The width ranges from 3 miles wide on the north end to .5 miles on the south end, varying to form the typical bone shape of a barrier island.

Cumberland Island has the greatest diversity of biotic communities of any of Georgia's Coastal Islands. Bozeman (1975) provides detailed information on the 22 recognized vegetation communities on Cumberland. This project focuses on the three vegetation communities thought to be fire susceptible: pine-oak-scrub, oak-scrub and grass-sedge (Jordan and Ruckdeschel 1982). The oak-palmetto community is not considered a major fire susceptible community although palmetto is very flammable under certain conditions.

Field investigation began in June 1983 and ended in September 1983.

Archival search and oral history:

Data on historic land uses, past fires and the location of vegetation communities were obtained by reviewing historic and contemporary written documentation located primarily in the National Park Service Library on Cumberland Island and at the University of Georgia. Historic maps and climatic records were obtained from the NPS and UGA libraries and from individuals associated with or living on the island. One park staffer, one permanent lifetime resident, one part-time resident and the nonresident foreman of the Ferguson farming operation were interviewed during the summer of 1983. No attempt was made to locate persons who

had lived on Cumberland in the past. Interview questions explored the dates, locations and effects of fires, storms and various land management practices on Cumberland for the past 80 years. Park personnel provided information on the history and management of fire on Cumberland since 1972 (see Appendix).

Fire scars and charcoal:

The investigator first located past burns on the north end of the Island and then progressed to the south end: trees were checked for signs of charcoal or basal scarring. In an area where fire was hot enough to burn through the bark, fire scars, sometimes referred to as "cat faces," will be evident at the base of the tree if the cambium layer has been destroyed. Once scorched, the bark usually peels off, revealing the sap wood underneath. The rate of growth of the tree may be slowed for a few years due to the trauma of the fire. The tree will then continue to grow and produce rings where the cambium was not destroyed, the wood rolling inward towards the scar, healing over and protecting the wound. In some cases, the new wood will eventually cover the wound and the scar will not be visible. When there is no obvious scar, charcoal can be present. Charcoal can remain on the bark of a pine tree up to seventy years (Arno and Sneds, 1977). Charcoal within a fire scar indicates that a fire occurred after the tree was initially scarred.

Several factors were considered while scouting for fire scars. First, it is important to locate basal scars away from a road because vehicle abuse can also result in scarred trees. Second, oaks, have thinner bark, thus tend to scar more easily than pines. Oaks are also

susceptible to root rot. Root rot scars can be distinguished because they usually scar up the basal root buttresses rather than forming in hollows of buttresses and, in hilly areas, root rot scars will not usually correlate with the upslope side of the tree as will a fire scar. Third, scrape scars can occur when a tree falls against another tree. The remains of the fallen tree will usually be close by to indicate the source of the scar. Lastly, trees will also scar from insect infestation, but the scars are usually irregular in shape and result from the dieback of cambium at more than one place (Arns and Sneek, 1977).

After locating fire scarred trees, the suspected boundaries of the burned area were mapped. If possible the fire was dated. Trees cut at the base by the National Park Service maintenance afforded the dating of two past fires. Because of mechanical problems and NPS policy limiting the cutting of live trees, dating of all other fires on Cumberland is based on verbal accounts.

The absence of fire scarred trees in sites reported to have burned was a common phenomenon due to extensive logging in the early to mid 1900's and the practice of harvesting trees in areas which had burned. Where there were no fire scarred trees, pine trees were cored using an 18 inch increment bore to determine date of regeneration. This method was used on sites demonstrating relatively even aged stands of trees in proximity to areas noted as having burnt in the past. Data from archival research interviews and historical maps helped determine what disturbance had occurred in the area to allow for the regeneration.

Finally, suspected fire boundaries were compared with historic and vegetation maps to determine any correlation with historic land use and management practices. For example, if an area known to have been a

field at one time also showed signs of a past fire, the boundaries of the field were checked to see if they matched with the boundaries of the fire.

RESULTS

Major Disturbances Prior to 1900:

Although this project emphasized the period from 1900 to 1983, some review of earlier human activity is useful. Although very little information on fire was located, the disturbances prior to 1900 are as follows:

1) Aboriginal occupation 2000 B.C. - 1562 A.D.

Torres (1971) suggests that the Indians were poor on Cumberland Island and dependent upon cultivation of corn, beans and pumpkins to survive. Indian use of fire on the Georgia coast islands has been documented in various sources (Bratton 1983). Historically, the Indians used fire to clear land for agriculture, to harvest blueberries and acorns and to regenerate vegetation such as natural grasses and herbs to attract wildlife (Pyne 1983). One evidence of fire, possibly in conjunction with clearing and cultivation, was a large Indian village on Cumberland named "Tacatacaru." The exact translation of the word "Tacatacaru" is unknown but the word does refer to fire (Winn 1972).

2) Spanish occupation 1562 - 1700

From the mid 1500's to the early 1700, Spanish missionaries and soldiers occupied Cumberland Island. The Spanish built their forts and missions in Indian old fields and village sites (Ross 1923). The Spanish only cleared land for fields and gardens near the mission sites. The Spanish would have observed Indian land management practices such as burning, but it is unlikely the small population of Spaniards ever used these extensively.

3) British occupation 1732 - 1776

The British arrived after 30 years of abandonment. Minimal clearing of land around the forts was utilized for protection and cultivation. During British occupation, the harvesting of oak timber and its shipment to northern shipyards began the first major phase of disturbance to the landscape. The few settlements which were established on Cumberland cultivated small areas around their settlement for food (Torres 1977).

4) Plantation Era 1783-1861

After a second period of abandonment lasting seven years, Cumberland Island became alive with activity. The rate of harvesting the live oak and cedar timber was accelerated to clear the land for the cultivation of cotton. Slave labor and improved tools facilitated the clearing, draining and diking of land necessary for cotton cultivation. A network of roads and drainage ditches crisscrossed the island connecting cotton fields and plantation buildings (Torres 1977). Before the Civil War, more acreage was cleared for cotton and improved for cultivation than at any other time. Bratton (1983) notes a possible increase of fire size and frequency on St. Simon's Island during this period. She attributes this change to both burning by slaves for clearing land and an increase in fire susceptible pine forest, due to accompanied by a decrease in the fire resistant live oak forest types. It is probable burning was similarly used for clearing fields on Cumberland Island.

5) Reconstruction 1865 - 1900

During the Civil War, Cumberland was abandoned. During reconstruction land owners returned to Cumberland Island, but the loss of slave labor had destroyed the plantation economy. Cotton fields through succession were allowed to return to forest throughout the island. The once open landscape of the plantation era began to change dramatically. In 1876, a Savannah newspaper noted "not one acre in cultivation" on Cumberland Island (Torres 1977). Anthropogenic fire may have decreased during this period, since clearing for agriculture had ceased.

Major Disturbances after 1900:

In the later part of the 19th century, wealthy northern industrialists began to purchase land in the Sea Islands. This introduced a period of consolidated land holdings and renewed building activity. The information in this report covers three eras, 1900-1925, when the Carnegie family managed much of the island, 1925-1972 when the land was largely in farm and recreational holdings and 1972-1983, when land purchase for and management as a National Seashore were initiated.

1) Carnegie and resort era 1900-1925

Prior to the turn of the century, a few wealthy families settled on Cumberland and invested in resort and recreation to supplement their elaborate lifestyles. Dungeness, in ruin after the Civil War, was rebuilt by Thomas and Lucy Carnegie as an elaborate estate for wealthy vacationers. In 1900, the Hight Point Inn was constructed on the north end of the Island, hoping to attract the tourist dollar after the war. Social outings to the beach, marsh or to the north end; pleasure rides; and hunting became the prominent activities on Cumberland Island.

The major activities on the Island from 1900-1925 were construction of estate and resort buildings and homes. Timber for construction on Cumberland was bought from the mainland though there were plenty of large trees on Cumberland (Miller Inter., 1983). According to J. B. Peeples and Mary Miller (Inter.) Cumberland Island timber was not as suitable for construction. A few recreation facilities such as a skeet field and golf course replaced abandoned cotton fields and several new roads were established for pleasure riding and duck hunting. Only a small amount of cultivation was maintained to provide for the Island families and guests. Lumbering was practiced on a very small scale on the north end of the Island (Miller, Inter.)

Prescribed fire was utilized to help keep the slough from Willow Pond to Lake Whitney open (refer to Fig. 3). Each fall or winter, when the water level permitted, the manager of the Carnegie estate traveled the slough by canoe (Peeples inter.). A blowpot or flame thrower was used to ignite the grasses. Mrs. Ferguson commented that after the sloughs were burnt, the length could be traveled in three days time by canoe. She noted that many species of wildlife and regenerated plants could be seen.

2) Farm and second home era 1925-1972

By 1925, high management cost and lack of cheap labor made it impossible to run the Carnegie Estates and the High Point Inn on Cumberland. Some of the smaller homes remained occupied, but many of the residents moved north from June until September (Mrs. Polly Carnegie, Inter.) A few people, including the granddaughter of Thomas and Lucy

Carnegie, Mrs. Lucy Ferguson, made Cumberland their permanent home.

Mrs. Lucy Ferguson remembers being able to look from the beach to the inlet across abandoned fields in the early 1900's. Secondary succession has since claimed the old fields, except Stafford Field, which has been kept clear. Succession has resulted in even aged stands of pine throughout the Island. In the 1940's, due to wet weather and bark beetle infestation, Mr. J.B. Peeples, Lucy Ferguson's foreman, began logging the pine. Mrs. Ferguson commented that she could not "reach even halfway around" some of the pines. Mr. Peeples clear cut pine at Yankee Paradise to prevent the spread of bark beetle infestation. He continued to log tracts of pine at Dungeness, Serendipity (Lucy Ferguson's home), Brickhill and Terrapin Point. Mr. Peeples noted that pine was not in continuous stands but was located throughout the length of the island. Mr. Peeples lumbered steadily until the early 1950's after which timber was cut only after fires, for small scale construction or for fire wood. Mr. Peeples noted several locations of sawmills on Cumberland and described a portable sawmill which could be moved to an area that had burnt so the timber could be removed. There were no major timbering or cultivation activities on Cumberland from the 1950's to 1983.

After the resorts closed, prescribed fire was not used to keep the slough open. Mr. Peeples did use fire to burn off the Swamp Field to improve the cattle range. Mr. Peeples noted that the Islanders never used prescribed fires to control underbrush though he had suggested the use of fire for years.

3) Establishment of the National Seashore 1972:

In 1972 Congress designated Cumberland Island as a National Seashore. As the U.S. government began to purchase property, lumbering ceased, and feral grazing animals, including all cattle and some wild swine, were removed. The Park Service began a program of fire suppression which continued through 1983. From 1972 to 1983, park crews extinguished or attempted to extinguish all anthropogenic and lightning-caused fires.

The Major Fire Susceptible Communities

Field investigation and interviews produced records or signs of fires in all three fire susceptible community types. The major fires by vegetation type and location were as follows:

Pine-Oak-Scrub

Location I - The major area comprising pine-oak-scrub is located on the north end of the island east of Terrapin Point and Brickhill Bluff and south of the settlement. The pine-oak-scrub community is surrounded by oak-scrub to the northeast and south, oak palmetto to the south and west and a strip of lowland mixed hardwood to the west of the southern extension. Pockets of grass-sedge are located throughout the pine-oak-scrub (Fig. 1).

Fire frequency

J.B. Peebles (Inter.) stated that every few years when the pine timber would "get right" in the pine-oak-scrub at the north end of the island, fire would go through and scorch the trees. Though he remembers small fires breaking out regularly in this area, Mr. Peebles recalls the northern area pine-oak-scrub supporting three major fires in his lifetime, one in approximately 1924, one in 1954 and one in 1981. (The fire in 1924 was also verified by Mary Miller.) Longleaf pine trees were located on the western border of the pine-oak-scrub area having fire scars. Several of the pines had been cut at the base by the National Park Service maintenance crew after the 1981 fire. The ring counts verified a fire in 1934, although no one interviewed recalled a fire in '34. Two trees also indicated a fire in 1954. None of the people inter-

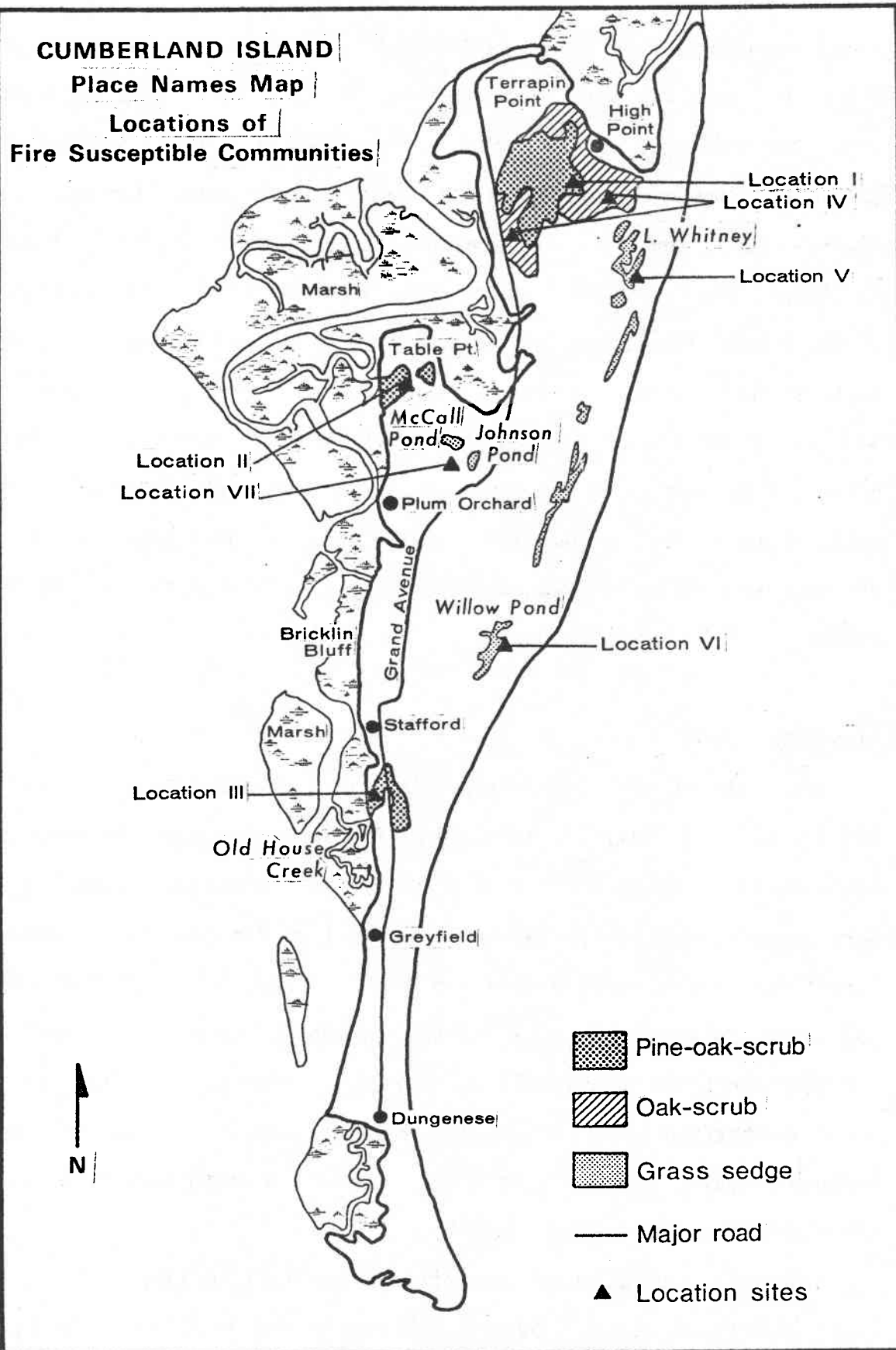


Fig. 1. The location of major fire susceptible vegetation communities on Cumberland Island. The Roman numerals refer to locations noted in the text.

viewed recalled a fire in the 1930's in this area in the pine-oak-scrub. Charcoal within the scars indicated the Terrapin Point area had burnt after the initial scarring. Sam Candler related to Carol Ruckdeschel (personal communication) that a major fire swept through the pine-oak-scrub, and oak-scrub area on either the 26th or 27th of August in 1954. The fourth major fire in the pine-oak-scrub on the north end of the Island occurred in July of 1981. This fire was documented by the National Park Service. Although direct evidence of the "1924 fire" is lacking, it is likely the "1924" and "1934" fires were two different burns. Misreporting on the part of the interviewees is possible but unlikely due to the ten year time interval, and the fact that two interviewees, Mary Miller and J.B. Peebles recalled a fire on the site in the 1920's.

Fire Size

The size of the fire in approximately 1924 was not determined in the field or by interview data. J.B. Peebles noted that the trees in the pine-oak-scrub and oak-scrub areas burnt in the fire in the 1920's were logged prior to the 1950's fire. Most of the pines were removed except for a large stand on Terrapin Point. Fire scars of similar depth and width, dated to 1934 were located throughout Terrapin Point east to the settlement and sporadically within the pine-oak-scrub. These scars could be attributed to either the 1924 or 1934 fire. Oaks at Lake Whitney revealed fire scars of similar depth and width as the scars in the pines at Terrapin Point (Fig. 2).

The only indication of the size of the fire in 1954 is the area shown unforested on the 1958 USGS topographic 15' quadrangle, "Cumber-

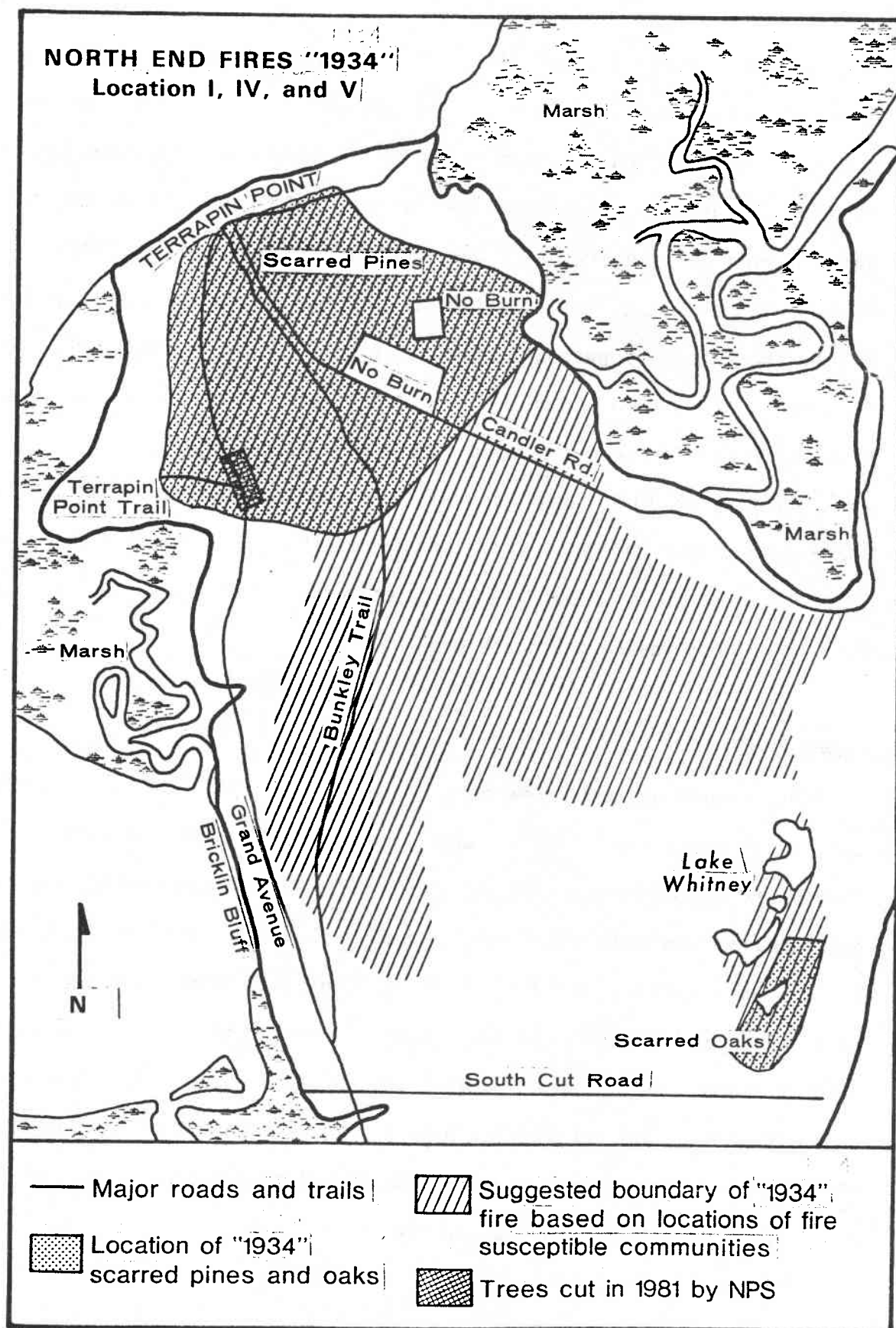


Fig. 2. The northwest end of Cumberland Island showing the approximate boundaries of the "1924" and "1934" fires (fire scars on cut trees were dated to 1934). Compare this figure to figure 3 showing later fires in the same area.

land Island North, Georgia" (Fig. 3). Actual boundaries of the fire were not determined, although it was presumably larger than the area shows on the map since cored trees did indicate mid to late 1950's regeneration of pines extending beyond the fire boundaries on the map. Uncle Nelson, an elderly black who spent most of his life on Cumberland related to Sam Candler that the fire in 1954 was the biggest fire on the Island (Ruckdeschel, personal communication). Approximately 825 acres is shown as open on the 1958 map. The fire was presumably larger since trees scarred in 1954 are located at the edge of the scrub.

The fire in 1981 burned all 500 acres of the pine-oak-scrub at the North end of the Island (Jordan and Ruckdeschel). J.B. Peeples noted that the fire in 1981 was the largest he had ever seen, consuming a total of 1700 acres on the north end (Fig. 3).

Location II

The second largest area of pine-oak-scrub is at Table Point. An area of pine-oak-scrub in the west central portion of Table Point is surrounded by oak palmetto to the north and east and buffered by a mixed oak hardwood forest to the south. A smaller area of pine-oak-scrub lies in the east central portion of Table Point separated from the other pine-oak-scrub community by less than a quarter mile of oak-palmetto which extends north, west and south of the area. A pocket of grass-sedge lies between the two pine-oak-scrub communities. A strip of oak-buckthorn scrub forest lies east of the area extending south west to King's Bottom (Refer to Fig. 1 and Fig. 4).

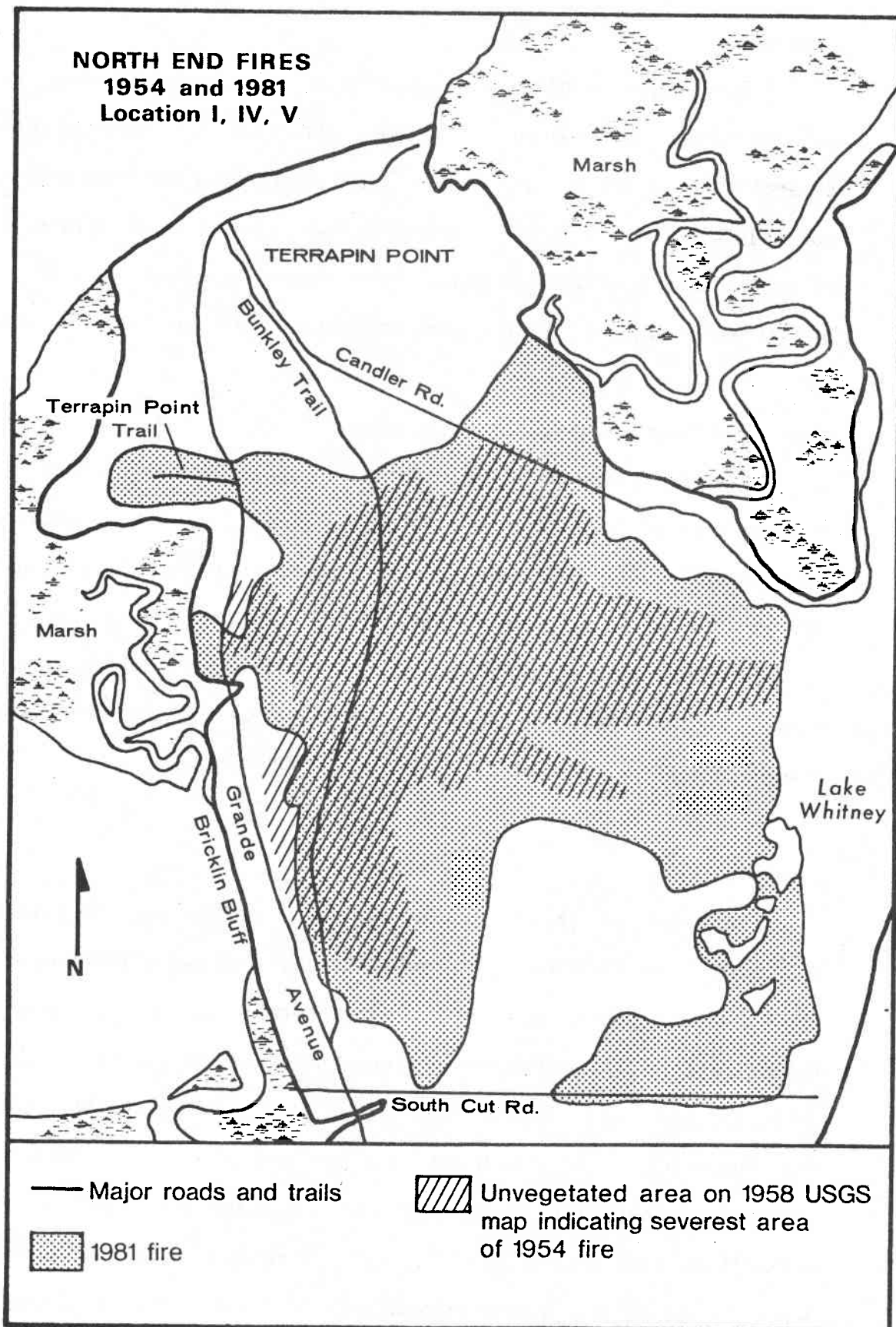


Fig. 3 The northwest end of Cumberland Island showing the boundary of severe fire in 1954 and the boundary of the entire 1981 fire. The 1981 fire was suppressed by the National Park Service.

Fire frequency

J.B. Peeples recalled the Table Point area having severely burned two to three times in his lifetime, and each fire having consumed several hundred acres. The earlier date of fire in the area was in the early 1920's. Mr. Peeples referred to the major area of fire as south of Table Point near Johnson Pond. Fire-scarred oaks were located in the oak palmetto adjacent to the pine-oak-scrub. The oaks were of similar DBH and height as those scarred at Lake Whitney. The fire scars were also of similar width and depth as those at Lake Whitney.

In 1963, a fire on Table Point burnt south to within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of Plum Orchard road (Peeples, Inter.). A third major fire occurred in July of 1977. The fire was suppressed by National Park Service personnel at Johnson Road, King's Bottom Trail and East Table Point trail.

In 1980, a fire began by machinery sparks, igniting vegetation along the powerline. The powerline and existing roads were harrowed and graded to confine the fire.

Fire size

The sizes of the fires in the early 1920's and 1963 were not determined because extensive logging in the area had eliminated most of the scarred pines. Scarred oaks were located throughout the oak-palmetto and scorched trees along the marsh, King's Bottom and near Johnsons Pond. J.B. Peeples noted that fire on Table Point would burn from the Point on the salt marsh to King's Bottom and to Johnson's Pond, indicating that fire consumed approximately the same vegetation communities each time (Fig. 4). The suppressed fire in 1977 burned 310 acres including the pine-oak-scrub on the western side of Table Point

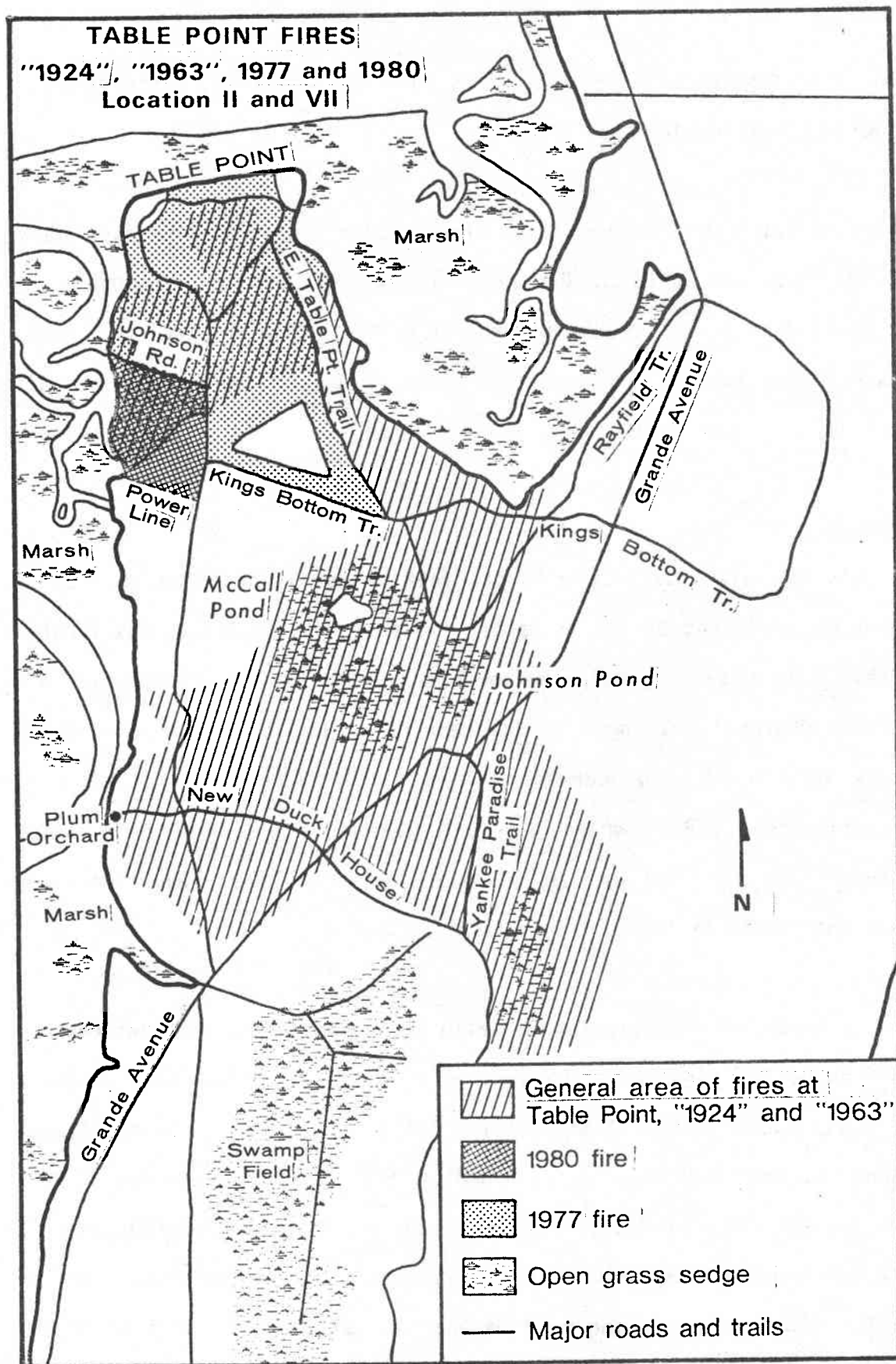


Fig. 4. Table Point on the west side of Cumberland Island. The map shows the actual boundaries of two fires suppressed by the U.S. National Park Service (1977, 1980) and the projected boundaries of two earlier fires.

and the suppressed fire in 1980 burned 40 acres, primarily of pine-oak-scrub (Fig. 4).

Location III - A wishbone shaped area of pine-oak-scrub lies just south of Stafford and north of Old House Creek. A strip of lowland mixed hardwood forest and oak-buckthorn-scrub forest border the west side. Oak-palmetto forest surrounds the southern and eastern side. A small area of pine-oak forest lies to the north (Refer to Figs. 1 and 5).

Frequency

In the vicinity of Old House Creek, a small pocket of tall pines securing a blanket of approximately two feet of pine litter was located within a high canopy oak-palmetto community surrounded by the pine-oak scrub. Charcoal was found at the base of a few of the pines though no scars were found. No scars were found on the oaks in the surrounding oak-palmetto. J.B. Peebles does not remember this area ever having burned (Fig. 5). The lack of scars indicates the last severe fire may have been prior to 1900.

A pocket of pine-grass sedge also lies adjacent to the southeastern portion of the pine-oak-scrub west of Pratts Trail. No scars or charcoal was found in the pine-oak-scrub but scarred oaks and charcoal were found in the oak-palmetto surrounding the area on the edge of the pine-sedge (Fig. 5). J.B. Peebles recalled this area burning once in the 1960's at a time when he was clearing out the thick pines. He recalled the fire not doing much damage. No other signs of fire in the pine-oak-scrub were located or reported by interviewees.

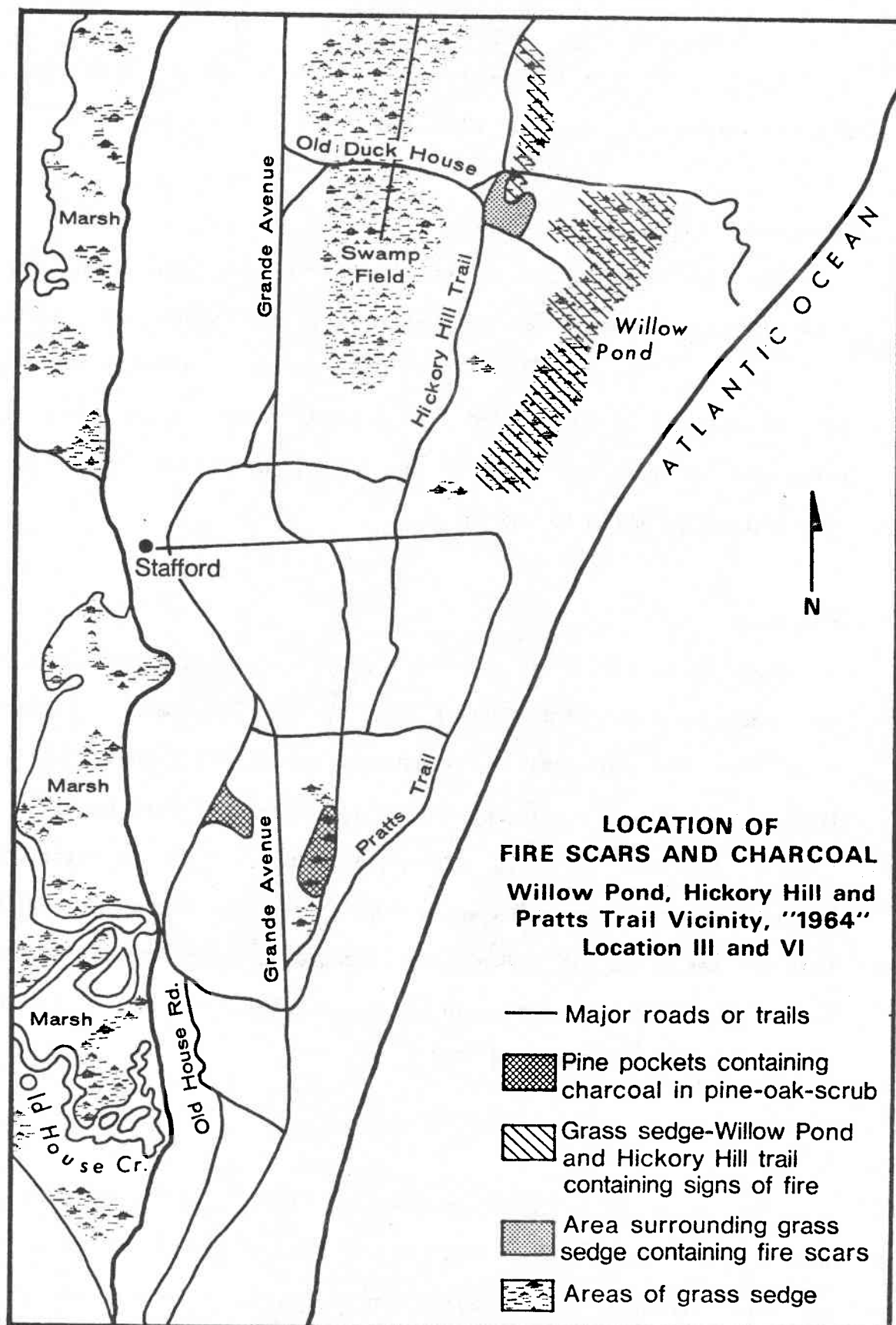


Fig. 5. The middle section of Cumberland Island showing location of charcoal and other signs of fire.

Size

The size of the fire which burnt west of Pratts Trail was not exactly determined. No other fire scars were found in the area.

Oak-Scrub Location IV

The two major areas of oak-scrub lie east and south of the pine-oak-scrub community at the north end of the Island (Refer to Figs. 1, 2 and 3). The southern area is surrounded by oak-palmetto. The eastern portion is surrounded by pine-oak forest to the north west, mixed oak hardwood and marsh to the north, dune-scrub-thicket to the east and oak-palmetto to the south.

Frequency

Mary Miller recalled that fire swept through the oak scrub area just west of High Point several times in her lifetime. J.B. Peebles noted that the oak-scrub was consumed each time a severe fire swept through the area. The even size of the oak-scrub when the 1981 fire consumed the area indicates regeneration from a previous catastrophe. No large oaks or pines which would scar were in the oak-scrub. Assuming that the oak-scrub has burned each time the adjacent pine-oak-scrub has burned, the frequency of fire in the area would correlate with the dates of "1924," "1934," 1954, and 1981.

Fire size

The amount of oak-scrub consumed in "1924," "1934" and 1954 could not be determined in the field. Ninety percent of the 520 acres of the oak-scrub community on the north end was consumed in the fire of 1981 (Refer to Figs. 2 and 3).

Grass-Sedge Communities

Areas of grass-sedge are located throughout the north half of the Island. Historically, some of the grass-sedge areas were permanently or periodically covered in water in the form of ponds and the slough running the length of the north half of the Island. Lucy Ferguson recalled the grass-sedge growth of the slough was burned off each year during the early 1900's. Today, the slough and many other grass-sedge areas are in the process of secondary succession. Shrubs and pines are now prolific in some sites. Other grass-sedge areas are still periodically filled with water maintaining the area in grasses.

Most of the grass-sedge areas which burn do not by themselves support a major fire, but contribute to one. Areas of grass-sedge will not retain obvious superficial signs of fire such as scarring. Layers of charcoal due to burns can be retained in the soil, but coring for charcoal was not utilized in this project. Because of the high combustibility and volume of fire fuels, the grass-sedge areas were assumed to have burnt in their entirety during the periods of drought.

Because of the abundance and "scattershot" distribution of grass-sedge communities, only three major areas were checked for fire. The three major areas of grass-sedge are at Lake Whitney, the vicinity of Old Duckhouse and Willow Pond, and at Johnson and McCall's Pond.

Location V - Lake Whitney

Lake Whitney is located at the northeast corner of the Island southeast of a major area of oak-scrub (Refer to Figs. 1, 2 and 3).

Fire frequency

Accurate dates of fire at Lake Whitney were not found. Signs of scarring and charcoal were found at Lake Whitney in the oak-palmetto adjacent to the major areas of grass-sedge. The Lake Whitney area is vulnerable to fire from the oak-scrub immediately to the northwest. In 1981, the fire raced through the oak-scrub and burned all of the grass-sedge at Lake Whitney (observation). If the grass-sedge burnt each time a severe fire consumed the adjacent oak-scrub, the Lake Whitney area burned at least as frequently as "1924 or 1934," "1954," and 1981.

Location VI - Vicinity of Old Duck House Road and Willow Pond

Willow Pond is located northeast of Stafford. Old Duck House Road runs east to west just north of Willow Pond (Refer to Fig. 1,2 and 3).

Fire frequency

Dr. Coleman Johnson, a former resident on Cumberland Island, remembered a fire near Old Duck House Road in the vicinity of Willow Pond in 1922 (Ruckdeschel, personal communications, 1983). He said the flames were very high and the fire moved fast, causing birds to flee. J.B. Peebles also noted a fire in the mid to late twenties south of Yankee Paradise. The exact location is unknown, but grass-sedge and pine is peppered with charcoal throughout the site. Dr. Johnson also recalled a fire in approximately 1925 - east of Hickory Hill Road in the vicinity of Willow Pond (which could have been the same fire). Fire scars and signs of charcoal were found on pine stumps in an open grass-sedge savannah in the vicinity of Willow Pond, indicating the area had burned.

Charcoal in the scarred pines and in the scars of oaks in the surrounding oak-palmetto indicated a second fire. No scars were found in the area east of Hickory Hill. Dr. Johnson noted a second major fire in the Willow Pond area. In 1963, a fire began 1/2 mile south of new Duckhouse and spread into the vicinity of Willow Pond.

Size

The size of the fires in the vicinity of the grass-sedge at Willow Pond and Old Duckhouse Road was not exactly determined because of the lack of fire-scarred trees in the area.

Location VII Johnson & McCall Pond

Johnson and McCall Ponds lie just south of Table Point and King's Bottom and northeast of Plum Orchard. Both Ponds were dry in 1983 and portions contained young pines (Figs. 1 and 4).

Fire frequency

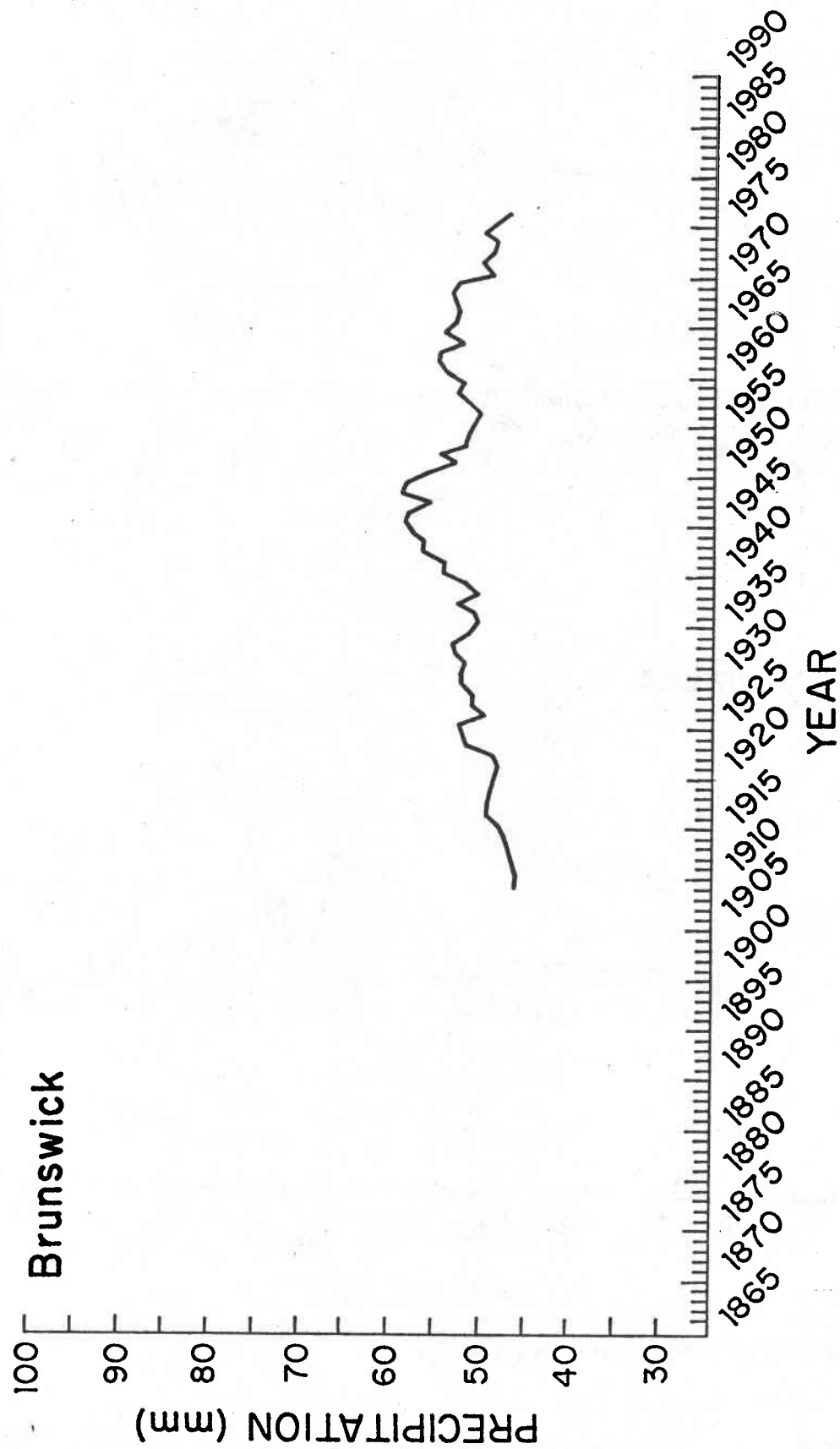
J.B. Peebles recalled Johnson Pond burning severely in approximately 1924. The second major fire J.B. Peebles remembers in this area occurred in 1963. Fire travelled from Table Point through this area to within 3/4 mile of Plum Orchard.

In the vicinity of Johnson and McCall's Pond, dead, bleached white oaks revealing scorch marks up to 30 feet high were located consistently around both ponds. Scorched stumps were also located within the grass-sedge of both pond areas. Scars and charcoal on the tops and sides of the stumps indicated the area burned, was logged, and then burned again.

CLIMATIC FACTORS

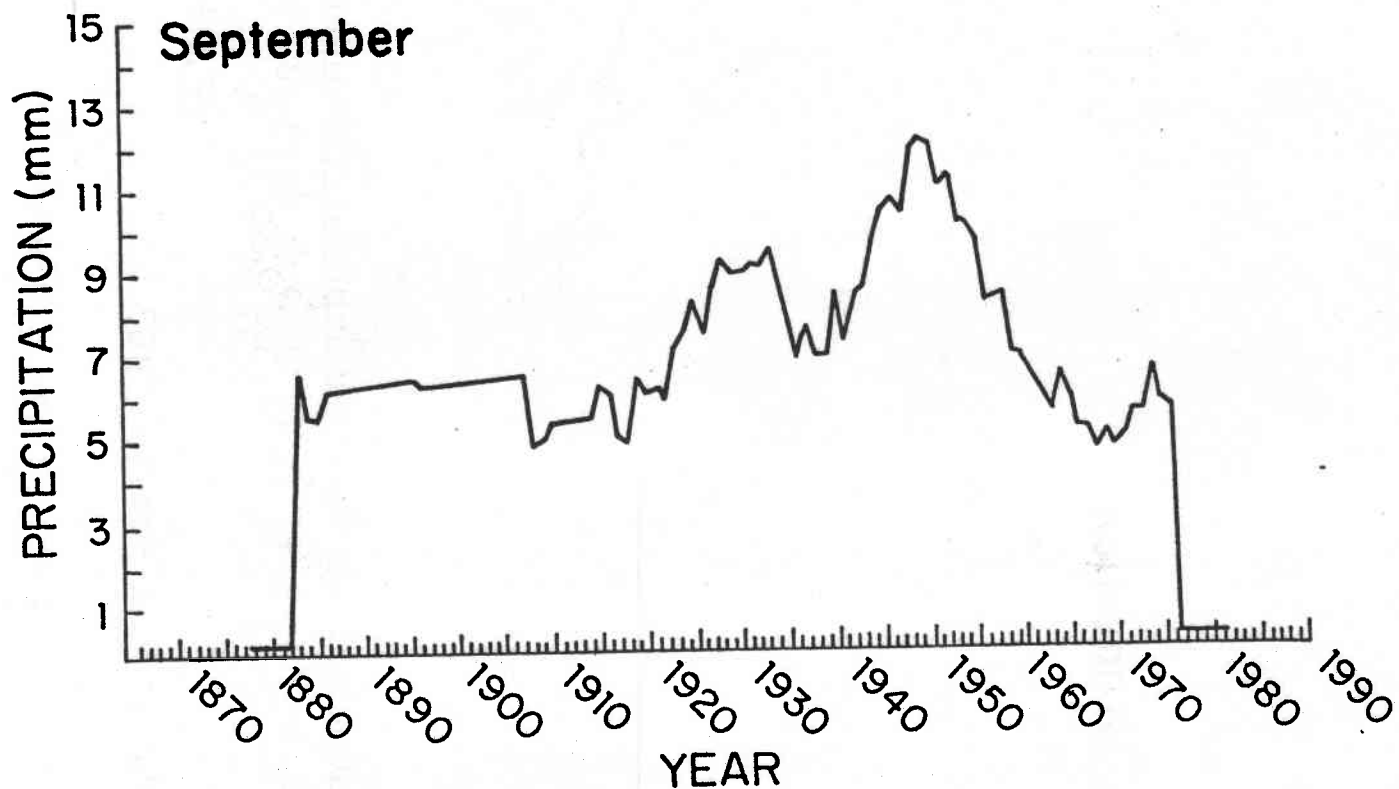
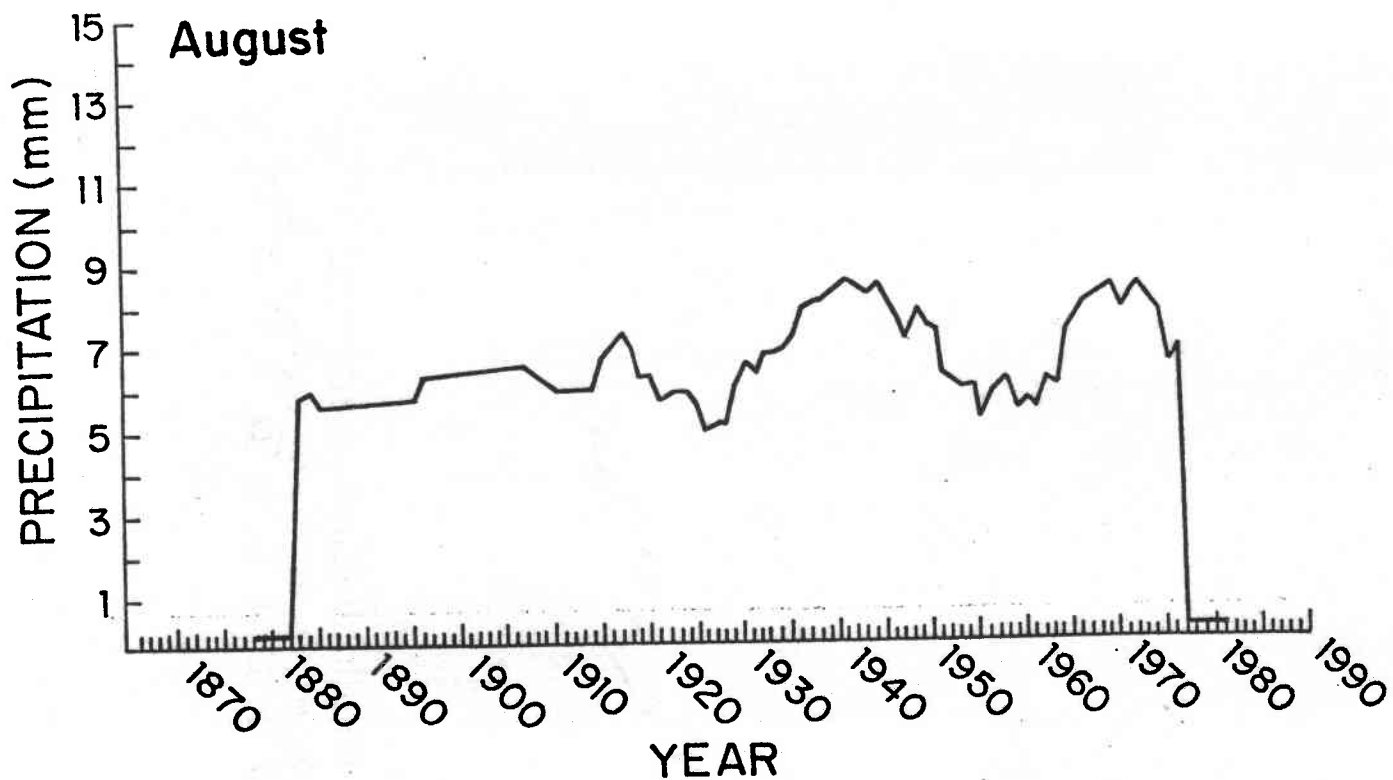
Precipitation patterns

Precipitation records for the southeast coast of Georgia, including Brunswick, Georgia were examined to determine precipitation patterns in the vicinity of Cumberland. Climate on the southeast coast of Georgia is governed by the maritime air-mass off the Atlantic Coast. Variations of rainfall statewide are greatest on the east coast. The driest years on record for Brunswick are 1916, 1931, and 1954. In 1981, a record breaking drought was recorded, though the mean rainfall in the state of Georgia as a whole was within the standard deviation. The dates for drought years represent a 23-27 year cycle. The major drought periods were the early seventies continuing to the present, the mid 1950's, lasting 11 years, the mid 1930's, lasting 13 years, and the early 1900's, lasting 11 years (Figs. 6 and 7). The wettest years were 1964, 1948, 1929 and 1912, representing a 17 year cycle. The wettest years were 1964 and 1929. The wet periods were the 1960's, the mid 1940's and early 1920's. The driest years 1954, 1931, and 1916 were preceded in each case by an unusual wet year (Plummer 1983).



Adapted from Plummer, 1983.

Fig. 6. Total annual precipitation for Brunswick, Georgia (adapted from Plummer (1983)).



Adapted from Plummer, 1983.

Fig. 7. Precipitation for Brunswick, Georgia for the months of August and September. Adapted from Plummer (1983).

DISCUSSION

During this project, live trees were not wedged in order to date fire scars. When dead trees were wedged, decay sometimes prevented accurate reading of rings. Boundaries of fires were difficult to locate because extensive logging had eliminated a majority of the fire scarred pines. Fire dates were thus more often based on both interview data than on field verification.

The number of trees cored on Cumberland was sufficient to sketch a pattern of regenerated pine growth in areas but not adequate to define the boundaries of fires. Despite these limitations, there was only one major discrepancy between the field and interview data. It seems most likely there were two separate fires in the northern third of the island in the 20's and 30's.

Between North Cut and South Cut Road and on Table Point several fire susceptible areas of vegetation occur in close proximity to each other. These areas will therefore continue to be prone to large fires. Past patterns of land use and abandonment, particularly Civil War release of abandoned cotton fields, have resulted in even aged stands of pine throughout Cumberland. The presence of pine may have increased the number of ignitions. Pines are an important element in a fire susceptible community because emergent pine trees are often prone to lightning. Pines are also very resinous, producing highly combustible fuels.

Aside from individual elements in the vegetation the association and size of the three major fire susceptible communities on Cumberland are also important influences on fire. Areas of pine can burn severely

if sufficient pine litter has accumulated, but dead or dry vegetation material from other fire susceptible communities can add to fire severity and size. J.B. Peebles noted that lightning would strike a pine and the fire would "explode" when it hit the scrub. During droughts, fire may also spread through interior marshes.

The road network existing in the early to mid 1900's also had an influence on fire on Cumberland, as did the existence of fields and pastures. In the early to mid 1900's, parts of the road network were utilized as firebreaks. According to J.B. Peebles, when fire broke out, the surrounding roads were graded and harrowed. The existence of the road network saved time, labor and energy which would have been spent on cutting fire breaks on the Island. The existence of the road network and other cleared areas helped to contain surface fires, yet may have also contributed to litter build-up in other areas not burnt.

Reduction in road width or maintained mileage, release of fields, and removal of grazing animals may all contribute to changes in fire spread and potential size.

Precipitation patterns for Brunswick from the early 1900's until the 1980's reflect definite cycles of drought. Cycles of drought can be correlated with years of severe fire. Major fires on Cumberland were noted in approximately 1924, 1934, 1954, and 1981. Major periods of drought for Brunswick lasted from 1912 to approximately 1922, the mid 1920's to 1943, the late 40's to the mid fifties and from 1977 continuing until 1982. Peak dry years for Brunswick were 1954 and 1981.

The months of August and September exhibit definite precipitation cycles, demonstrating severe drought periods rising to peak wet periods. Lightning storms are most common in June, July, August and September. In the past, most severe fires have occurred in July and August.

According to Bozeman et. al. (1978), 656 acres of pine-oak-scrub 588 acres of oak-scrub and 575 acres of freshwater grass-sedge are located in the northern two thirds of Cumberland Island. Data from this study indicate 90% of the three fire susceptible communities has burned severely at least once since 1900. The three major areas comprised of the fire susceptible communities, Table Point, the north end scrub and the Willow Pond area, have each supported at least two major fires in the last 80+ years. In the three major areas of fire, approximately 3170 acres have burned. Pine is present at all of the fire sites located.

The evident fire rotation on Cumberland Island in the fire susceptible communities since 1900 is approximately every 20 to 30 years. There appears to be a direct correlation between major outbreaks of fire and the local 23-27 year coastal precipitation cycle. Though a few fires have been documented as man-caused, a majority of the major fires were caused by lightning.

We conclude, therefore:

- 1) A large percentage of the upland acreage north of Old House Creek is fire prone (roughly 1800 acres) and at least 3170 acres has burned since 1900.
- 2) The natural rotations are related to natural drought conditions.
- 3) The natural rotation pattern for fire prone communities (scrub, pine, interior marsh) is fire at 20 to 30 year intervals. (These intervals may vary at a specific site, however. Even after a hot fire, fuels may build up sufficiently in a scrub area to burn after 3 to 10 years. Conversely, a wet

cycle might delay a fire more than 30 years.) The methods used in this study only detect fires hot enough to scorch bark.

4) A number of the fires since 1900 were large, greater than 50 acres. Natural fires in the north end scrub and at Table Point may consume several hundred acres.

5) Since most of the fires documented by scars and charcoal were "hot" fires, on the average, there is at least one serious fire per every ten years on Cumberland. These fires, however, tend to occur in groups of two to three during drought periods, making the cycle an average of two large fires (likely to occur within a few years of each other) at roughly twenty year intervals.

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APPENDIX A

Following is the transcription of an interview of Zack Kirkland, chief of interpretation and resource management at Cumberland Island National Seashore. The interview was conducted by Sally Turner on July 7, 1983. Subject of the interview was the 1981 fire on Cumberland Island.

[Refer to USGS topographic map. 1979 & 1958 on map of Cumberland in "Fire History of Cumberland Island 1900-1983" by Sally Turner]

Sally Turner: My name is Sally Turner, and today is July 7th, 1983, and I'm interviewing Zack Kirkland. He's with the National Park Service on Cumberland Island.

S.T.: How long have you been with the National Park Service?

Zack Kirkland: I've been with the National Park Service for 16 years.

S.T.: 16 years...and how long have you been on Cumberland?

Z.K.: 8 years.

S.T.: And what is your position here on Cumberland?

Z.K.: I'm chief of interpretation and resource management.

S.T.: Great. So you were very involved with the fire in 1981.

Z.K.: Yes, I was the first fire boss until relieved by a more qualified person.

S.T.: Okay. Well, could you give the conditions that preceded the fire? What were the conditions that made that particular day just right?

Z.K.: Well, the summer of 1981 was a severe drought, and the fuel was very dry. The temperature on the day of the fire reached about 100° and the winds were from the Southwest, which again would cause it to be drier wind than if it were sea breeze during the day of the fire also.

S.T.: We'll just go through... Where did the fire begin? Where did it start?

Z.K.: Okay, it was on, I think, a Thursday night there was a thunderstorm, and there was rain on the southern end of the island, but on the northern end, there was a dry lightning storm, and several residents reported later seeing lightning strike the ground in the area of the northern half of the island. And one of our turtle taggers reported seeing a red glow or a fire on the western side of the island from the beach, and this was about 4 o'clock in the morning, and apparently there had been a lightning strike and the fire had established a foothold during the night. We were advised of it about 5:30 that morning, and the first ranger on the scene arrived about 6:30 a.m. or 7:00 a.m., I'm not sure which now, and already the flames were about 4 to 5 feet high, and were not manageable.

S.T.: How big an area was that?

Z.K.: It was hard to tell from all the smoke. He said he believed it to be in excess of 4 acres.

S.T.: Who was that?

Z.K.: Dave Casey, he was a ranger, the first one on the scene.

S.T.: Okay, so what happened after that?

Z.K.: At 5:30 that morning we contacted other employees of the park and we got about a total of 8 of them together, and brought a grader to the scene of the fire, and also a pumper unit, and we first proceeded to grade the South Cut Road, which had become fairly overgrown with grass and small seedling type trees, and we wanted to establish a good fire break there, since the fire seemed to be closest to the South Cut.

S.T.: That's right in here.

Z.K.: Yes.

S.T.: And you graded on the north side of the road, or ...?

Z.K.: On the road itself.

S.T.: Okay.

Z.K.: When the grading was completed down there, they moved the grader up on the North Cut Road, and did some grading to strengthen the fire line there. There were more sapling size trees that had to be cut down with a chain saw on the North Cut, and we began to do that, proceeding from west to east, and by then, this was in the afternoon, 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and some thunderheads had been starting to build up. The flames at this time were probably 5 to 6 feet in height, and we thought we would be able to stop the fire at the fire breaks, fire break at the North Cut Road. But the thunderstorm winds struck about 3 o'clock p.m., and the fire crowned out about then, and it was really racing towards the north or northwest, and we had to drop back away from the first firebreak at North Cut Road, because we knew it wouldn't hold the fire crowning out. The winds were, I'm not sure what they were, they seemed like they were maybe 50-60 MPH thunderstorm type winds. So then the plan of attack was to drop back to the Candler Road, which is just right here, and backfire along it, and we did this, and the fire just roared across that firebreak too. Then the strategy was just to defend the houses; drop back into High Point. We had a team from the southern end come up to Half Moon Bluff, and there the procedure was to wet down the houses, using garden hoses to stop any spotting that might occur on the houses. And we did have some hot spots that affected the area around Mrs. Miller's property, the motor house. McKEE?

S.T.: So that was at High Point and Half Moon Bluff. Were there any homes that were in danger?

Z.K.: No, the only other home that we thought was in danger was down here on the South Cut Road, Thornton Morris's house.

S.T.: But it didn't reach that far.

Z.K.: No, it seemed to be moving more to the north and northwest.

S.T.: And this all happened on the first day.

Z.K.: On the first day.

S.T.: By late that afternoon, how big was the fire? Do you remember how far it had spread?

Z.K.: I'd say 1500 acres, probably.

S.T.: Okay. So what happened on into the night? What type of ...

Z.K.: We established a night crew. They tried to strengthen the lines we had around the fire, the areas that occurred, and that night, a more qualified fire boss came in, and also I think it was about 12 National Park Service firefighters arrived that night to help out the next day.

S.T.: Who was the fire boss that came?

Z.K.: Jim Brunsford was his name, with the U.S. Forest Service.

S.T.: Okay. What was his initial reaction when he got here, to the fire?

Z.K.: Just that it was a very hot fire. What had burned was very hot, and he was more concerned at that time with the South Cut fire line. The fire had really burnt itself out, reached the marsh, on the northern side, and his greatest concern was to protect the southern end of the island should we get a shift in winds, that would send it southward. So he concentrated on work in the South Cut.

S.T.: Did they put fire lines south of the South Cut Road, as well, or did they just watch it?

Z.K.: No, they just mainly watched it, and they did some burning out of the area; sent some fires to burn it out, the fuels. Because this was really most concerned about, jumping the fire lines in this area, also right in the marsh area, just south of South Cut. One day there was a thunderstorm, I think it was about the third day of the fire, and the thunderstorm winds were driving a head fire right down this marsh, and there was great concern about it jumping the firebreak.

S.T.: By the second day, how many people were

Z.K.: I think it was this marsh here (south of South Cut Road).
NORTH

S.T.: It looks like it was stopped very effectively by the South Cut Road.

S.T.: By the second day, how many people working on the fire?

Z.K.: I think there were close to 40 people. We got about a dozen volunteers from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and people who had read about the fire in the paper, and volunteered their services. They came down for that weekend, the first weekend of the fire.

S.T.: They were put up here on the island?

Z.K.: Yes, they were put in the dormitories like this.

S.T.: Great. What type of vegetation was this that burnt so hot right north and south of Candler Road.

Z.K.: It was very dense palmetto, and mixed with small hardwoods on in, and wax myrtle. You had palmettoes, and the next higher brush was the bayberry or wax myrtle, and then there was pine trees, so that it was a sort of continuous fuel line. *LADDER*

S.T.: So that contributes to a very hot fire, that type of community.

Z.K.: Yes, right.

S.T.: What other communities seem to be susceptible to fire?

Z.K.: The other major community would be the marshes.

S.T.: The marshes ... and that marsh grass burnt real fast.

Z.K.: Just burns real fast. Comes back quickly. The palmetto and the marsh grass both recover very quickly from a fire. You'll see green shoots in 2 or 3 days.

S.T.: Okay, so the fire itself lasted how many days, did you say?

Z.K.: I'd have to check the fire report on that, but it seems like about two weeks.

S.T.: Two weeks. What stopped the fire?

Z.K.: I think that more than anything it ran out of fuel, and went into a different type of fuel, like the mature live oaks, and it just died on its own, but it became manageable, so the Park Service could put it out.

S.T.: Is this up in here (near High Point and Half Moon), mature live oaks.

Z.K.: Around the houses.

S.T.: Near High Point and Half Moon.

Z.K.: You ^{*WEST*} get an open understory and ^{*MATURE*} mature oak trees right there. And on the plus side, there was maturity pine trees and open understory. You just didn't have that dense palmetto ~~Lyonia~~ pine trees which you have to burn intensely.

THAT BURNED
S.T.: Okay. Did the people on the island help, or did they leave?

Z.K.: They were busy, most of them that were there, were concerned about their personal property, and they were busy loading it and protecting it in one manner or another. Some of the cars that were parked in garages were pushed out into open fields, so that if the house burned, it wouldn't destroy the vehicle.

S.T.: Right. It seems like to me that after the fire there would be something that characterized the fire, that made it a bit different from another? Was there anything special that you remember about this fire that stands out in your mind?

Z.K.: Mainly the way that it seemed to be stopped by the live oak forest, and that once it reached that it didn't penetrate very deeply, because it stopped. *THEM*

S.T.: I bet you were all happy about that.

Z.K.: Yes. From an airplane, it looked like The thing that impressed me was going up in an aircraft to look at the fire, and it impressed me to see the islands of live oak trees with the houses in them; seeing green when everything else was black.

S.T.: I know that mature live oak is supposed to be a mature stage of barrier island vegetation. Do you know why this was pine-oak scrub?

Z.K.: It probably has to do with the soil type, I would think.

S.T.: Are there other areas like this, that could go as far as a fire?

Z.K.: Not as large, but there are some areas. There are some on Table Point, and down near Old House Creek, but the acreage is a lot smaller. I would say it's probably 40 acres in size, in two places.

S.T.: What's the total acreage of this fire?

Z.K.: It was 1700 acres.

S.T.: So if say 30 years from now, if it's burnt again, what would be the procedure? Would y'all let it burn until it got back to the hardwoods, or ...?

Z.K.: That probably would be the procedure. Our hope is that we will be able to protect private property through prescribed burning, that we would reduce the fuel loading around the houses, and that way we could just let nature take its course in the rest of the area. If it burns every 20 or 30 years, we'll let it burn.

S.T.: How is the vegetation now, after two years?

Z.K.: It has really recovered remarkably to me. I'm not sure how the pines are doing, but the palmettoes look almost like they did before the fire. The hardwoods are now 3 or 4 feet high, with sprouts and seedlings, so it is recovering quickly. We have been told that ~~it~~ would burn again now, particularly with some of the trees that were killed by the fire and not consumed are now material that could burn again, falling over and creating fuel load that could burn again if conditions were right.

could

S.T.: Do you feel like the park employees are prepared maybe more now than they were before, before a big fire like this?

Z.K.: I think we understand a lot more about fires on the island now than we did before. Before we thought our fire season was from October through March, and then the spring would begin, but based on the history of the fire on the island, and from what we have learned recently, now we feel like our fire season is from May through September, and coincides with the period of lightning activity and thunderstorms. Just about all of our fires historically that were natural fires were caused by lightning and we get very few man-caused fires over here, compared to what they get on the mainland.

S.T.: Dave Casey was mentioning there is a place in Jacksonville where they have a lightning pattern on a computer. Have you seen that?

Z.K.: No, I have seen similar things, though, in Boise where they demonstrated that. They could show where the lightning struck, and see if you might find a fire there.

S.T.: If I was going to ... since I am researching the history of fires, how else could I research that besides interviewing. What have you found out about the history of fires?

Z.K.: Well, I went over and tried to get the records at the Georgia Forestry Service, but it turns out that they were instructed to destroy a lot of their records that were more than three years old. This was a few years ago when Jimmy Carter was governor, and unfortunately, that finished up a lot of their historical records that would have been helpful. ^{WE} But they have annual maps for fires in ^(FIRES) the county and where they are located, and I didn't see any, I think it was from 1960 to the present, I didn't see on their maps any fires on Cumberland Island, and I'm sure there were fires that occurred, but apparently the Georgia Forestry just simply didn't get involved in, and probably they were put out by residents.

S.T.: Or possibly just let burn out naturally, until they went out. Okay. So what now as far as preparing park employees for fires. Does the Park Service do that on a regular basis, have training?

Z.K.: We have a regular training course that gets a person qualified or red-carded to fight forest fires, and we have presented those courses, we didn't do it this year, but for the past three years, we've done it each year, and most of the staff now is red-carded to fight fires.

S.T.: How do you watch for fires now, as far as is there a way that you can thoroughly predict when the conditions are right for a fire?

Z.K.: Yes, that's what Dave Casey does. He's a fire behavior officer, and we have a weather station where we get the data. He computes the data, and then we can find out what the burning index is. Like, if a fire starts, how intensely will it burn, and we know that fires are most likely to happen during the lightning season, so we are particularly geared up during July and August to watch for any lightning strikes that might start fires.

S.T.: And that's mainly what you're looking for is lightning?

Z.K.: Yes, and then we know from the weather information and the calculator information that Dave calculates just how intensely the fire will burn if we have one, and we can predict whether it's going to be controllable or not by men or whether to take heavy machinery.

S.T.: Okay, I don't think I have any more questions. Is there anything else that you would like to add as far as how you felt about how things went?

Z.K.: I think that talking with the ^{CROWN} experts and all that quite likely the fire was going to burn like it did, regardless of what we tried to do, because certainly when it became a ground fire, it was no longer manageable, and we just had to retreat and attack it when it becomes manageable again. And given the conditions, you know, 100° temperature and I think the burning index was close to 50, which would mean the flame heights were 5 feet high or so, and then even much higher than that with thunderstorm winds, I think that all in all, even with more men or more equipment it's unlikely we could have done things much differently than what we did do.

S.T.: Great. Okay, well thank you so much, Zack, I do appreciate it.

APPENDIX B

Following is the transcription of an interview of Miss Mary Miller, part-time Cumberland Island resident. The interview was conducted by Sally Turner on July 18, 1983. The purpose of the interview was to elicit Miss Miller's memories of the (1) fire history of Cumberland Island, (2) past land management practices, and (3) storm history of Cumberland Island. Questioning spanned the years from the early 1900's through 1983.

Miss Mary Miller
Cumberland Island - North End
July 18, 1983

[Refer to map of Cumberland Island
1900-1983 by Turner and place names
by Hillestad and Bozeman, 1975]

Sally Turner: How old were you when you first came to Cumberland?

Mary Miller: I was not born here but I was brought here as soon after I was born as I could come.

S.T.: So you have been here all your life.

M.M.: Uh huh, off and on. I lived here until I was about 8 or 9. My father ran a hotel at the north end.

S.T.: You lived at the hotel.

M.M.: We lived at the hotel. It belonged to his aunt.

S.T.: So, what year was that that you first, or can I ask you how old you are?

M.M.: Yes, I'm 80 years old.

S.T.: So that would have been in 1903 that you were born and then you came over shortly after.

M.M.: I was just a week or two old.

S.T.: Oh, my goodness!

M.M.: You see there were no doctors over here so my mother figured that was the reason my brother was crippled because there were no doctors. She didn't have medical care like she needed and so the other two - my brother and I were born in (Burney?).

S.T.: Did your father build the hotel?

M.M.: No. It was built way back. Actually that is what I'm working on and I haven't got the exact facts about when it was built. I have been going to Woodbine to get deeds and stuff and that is what I'm working on so I can't really give you the ... when I get my paper done you can read yourself.

S.T.: Okay, so your father bought the hotel.

M.M.: No, he was running it for his aunt.

S.T.: Do you remember your parents talking about what the island was like before you were born?

M.M.: Oh sure.

S.T.: What was it like?

M.M.: Well there were a lot of people living down here and it was altogether different from what it is now. I mean, I am talking of the north end but there were a number of families that lived up in the north end and my father was born on the island, his mother was born on the island and his grandmother was born on St. Simon's. You see, I have four lines of family that came from the north end of Cumberland so I am oriented to it quite well.

S.T.: Did the kids go to school here or did they go....?

M.M.: At some times they had schools but when my brother and I were little my brothers and I, we had a governess - they had it more than I did because they were older than I was. By the time I was ready to go to school my mother thought it was time we went to town.

S.T.: So, you all moved off of the island?

M.M.: We moved off of the island but we still had a house. My grandparents had a house over where our house was on the north end that burned. Well, his house burned too. I never saw it to know it, I mean in my day it had already burned, but we had this house and we came and went. As soon as school was out in the summer time we came over here and stayed and we spent Christmas and Thanksgiving in the other one.

S.T.: Where is the house?

M.M.: It's gone, it burned. It was there near what was the (negro) settlement west of Half Moon Bluff. It was to the west of the settlement towards the river.

S.T.: Was it on Candler Road, could you see it from Candler?

M.M.: No, it was on Bunkley Road. My grandmother was a Bunkly. No, you couldn't see it from the Candler Road at all it was half a mile back.

S.T.: And that didn't catch any of the woods on fire when it burned?

M.M.: No, it burned the trees around it. It was a terrific fire because we had a lot of gasoline in cans, you know, we had to bring it over that way and they was exploded, of course. So it was a terrific fire. None of us were here.

S.T.: Who fought that fire?

M.M.: I don't know. I had been in Europe and I came home and my brother said, "you better sit down" and I said, "why what is the matter" and he said, "the house on Cumberland is burning up." And Larry had come over with some other people to see about it. But it burned up alright. There was nothing left except twisted cans and pipes and stuff like that.

S.T.: When was that?

M.M.: In 1968. Then we built where we live now over on Half Moon Road. You can see our place from Mr. Olson's place at Half Moon Bluff. We were around the other side of the dock.

S.T.: Do you have a dock that goes down?

M.M.: Yes.

S.T.: Oh, I saw that. Whenever ya'll built the second house did the timber come off of this island or do you remember?

M.M.: No, we brought it to town, we didn't have a saw mill.

S.T.: So, when the saw mill burned...

M.M.: That saw mill they've said so much about that it was an ancient saw mill and so on, that saw mill was put there -- Bud Olson's father put it there to cut timber to build the dock. See the dock would have to be a big dock. The walk would have to be rebuilt every so often because every storm when we had a hurricane it blew the dock away and all of us furnished timber--the Candlers and us furnished timber and they sawed it and we built the dock. The last storm took it away - I mean another storm took it away.

S.T.: When was that?

M.M.: Oh, I don't know. One of the bad ones we had, but I'm not sure which one. It has been gone a long time because we have been using the landing over there on Hawkins Creek near Brickhill for a long time.

S.T.: Do you remember when the saw mill was built?

M.M.: It was after Candler bought High Point. There was another saw mill further over in the woods over towards the walk. There were a number of little 'ol saw mills that were put up. The paper played it up big to be an antique. It was just a little 'ol saw mill and it hadn't been used in years. It was rusted and everything.

S.T.: So, do you think that when they built High Point Inn they used timber off of this island - built the hotel and ... or do you know?

M.M.: No, I don't think so, but that would be so far back. They probably had some sort of saw mill, yes. I don't know. But see my research has been in the old newspapers. I have been going through the Brunswick newspapers from 1837 with the microfilm and along in there would say that a barge of lumber went over to Cumberland, so I assume most of it came from town.

S.T.: Oh, okay. So maybe that was just used for rough building.

M.M.: It was used to build that dock.

S.T.: Just the dock.

M.M.: That's what they set it up for.

S.T.: Were there a lot of big storms during your lifetime here?

M.M.: Well, we have a hurricane every so often. They've done damage, but in these old newspapers they have something about bad hurricanes.

S.T.: Yes, I'm curious about the storms because I have never experienced a hurricane. What kind of damage would it do?

M.M.: It could take the roof off of this house or most anything. I have lived through several old hurricanes, but not too many...Brunswick, Ga. has been fortunate. It sorta passes through some way or another but when I worked for the Red Cross during the war I was teaching in Jacksonville, Fl. and worked for the Red Cross and I know we had 2 or 3 terrific ones down there in which I helped evacuate people from the beach and all like that. But well, you just never know what is going to blow down. You have to watch for live wires and all that kind of stuff. We've never really had any big problems.

S.T.: Would it take down the big live oaks?

M.M.: It will if they are rotten. I mean, you know, it will blow off limbs and all that. I noticed in the paper one time in one of these old papers it said that when there had been a hurricane that one of the people who came up from the island said that the storm did only damage to trees, it didn't destroy any property.

S.T.: Do you remember any of the dates?

M.M.: Every fall.

S.T.: Oh, okay. So they are pretty regular.

M.M.: You just never know. We watch to see. Today they have a hurricane watch that tells you on the radio. But back in the early days you didn't know until it came that it was coming. In fact I had one story about another relative of ours who was a captain club who lashed himself to the wheel of his boat . . .

S.T.: When High Point was functioning as a hotel, what kind of activities were going on, what kind of hunting, etc.?

M.M.: You get the park to let you read the thing I wrote about the entertainment at the hotel. It's all in that. But let me correct one statement now that everybody's made wrong because of the Clanders. High Point is the whole north end and the high point is actually down where the Cumberland wharf was that part along there, but when the Clanders bought the hotel property they just put up the name on it and called it High Point, which was not right. They called their place High Point, but when it was hotel times the whole north end from Terrapin Point to the coast was High Point.

S.T.: What did they call the little train?

M.M.: It was just a little tram.

S.T.: A tram, horse drawn.

M.M.: All that is in my paper.

S.T.: Okay, I'll read that.

M.M.: They've got a copy here because I brought one to Zack, and they've got one in St. Mary, maybe two or three.

S.T.: Do you remember going back and forth on the tram? Those woods from Cumberland Wharf to the first entrance to the Candler compound, along Candler Road, do you remember those woods always being pine woods?

M.M.: Yea. The island is entirely different. Over here you're in an oak grove, another place you'll be in a pine grove, another place you'll be in hickory nuts or cedar or something. I think that is one interesting thing about the island. It is so diversified.

S.T.: And, it has always been that way?

M.M.: Yea, around the place where our house burned we had these great big huge oaks but right out in front of it was a pine forest. My father was in the lumber business and he cut timber on the island several times. He cut around Plum Orchard once for the Candlers - the Carnegies - and he would have all these ox carts and stuff to pull the timber out and all that kind of business - a bunch of niggers to do that kind of work. But this article that I have already written, the one I'm working on now tells about the - well I've got it finished except to type it - about how we got transportation back and forth to town and all that. But the next one is going to be about the beginning of hotels and things over here.

S.T.: What did your father do, did he sell the timber off of this island, take it to the mainland?

M.M.: He bought it. He'd buy a tract of timber from one of these young people who never went into the business. He had in Brunswick a lumber yard with saw mill, planing mill cabinet work and all that after we left Cumberland and he bought some timber. He would just go through it and offer people so much for it. He could look at a tree and tell you how tall it was and he could figure from that quickly mentally how much lumber he could get out of it and then he would drag it out of the wood and raft it and put it together and take it to town and take it to the mill and cut it into lumber. He had a bigger saw mill - this was just a little thing he had down here, and then he sold the lumber.

S.T.: Is that pine?

M.M.: Pine or oak or cedar or any kind of wood he wanted particularly - cypress was much in demand in that day.

S.T.: Did he ever clear cut areas?

M.M.: No, he didn't clear cut because when you clear cut you destroy the growth of what is coming later and a small tree is no good for lumber. Now today they do a lot of clear cutting because they use the pulp wood, but in that day you didn't have any use for that small timber so you didn't cut it.

S.T.: So, it was constantly regenerating.

M.M.: Right, 'cause pines drop their cones and that seeded and so forth and that keeps it coming up.

S.T.: What areas did he cut out of?

M.M.: Around Plum Orchard and up at the north end. We had nearly a hundred acres of land which we just had to sell to the park and he's been dead since 1949 so that's been nearly 40 years, well it's been nearly 50 years since he cut that timber so it has had plenty of time to grow back. Its been 60 or 70 since he - no it must be about 50 - since he cut the timber for the Plum Orchard people.

S.T.: Somebody told me about a stand of long leaf pines.

M.M.: Well, all that along the north end is long leaf. Along the sides of the Candler Road is all long leaf and they have those huge cones.

S.T.: It said that it had not been cut at all back in the 40s. Do you remember an area that hadn't been cut?

M.M.: Unless it is on the south side - the Carnegie side- I don't know because it was cut through and around Plum Orchard and it was cut up further to the north. Because I know he cut it because I drove for him in the summer time.

S.T.: You drove the big trucks?

M.M.: No, no we just had a car we drove around. That's the way I got to know the roads on the island so well. He knew every inch of the island. He was born and grew up here.

S.T.: Was there any large areas of cultivation going on back then?

M.M.: Not in my day now up there behind the Candler part there is an open field. Now that was always planted for food for the hotel and then near where our house was which is now a stand of pines with a mill I can remember when that was planted. My grandfather had planted it and then after when we kept coming back some of the island negroes planted it on shares we got a share and they got a share. No large farms in my day but before there were a lot of large farms.

S.T.: Can you remember any abandoned fields?

M.M.: Oh yeah. There are a lot now that are grown up. There are so many names and I have forgotten - I haven't forgotten the names, but - there was Beach Field, you see during the time of the Civil War the place was planted everywhere with sea island cotton. Stafford Plantation was a big sea island cotton growing place so when my great grandparents lived on the north end they planted cotton and my great grandfather planted rice well they had to grow everything they needed and that was all they had in that day was agriculture. There was no manufacturing over here at all. The only thing they ever manufactured over here were bricks.

S.T.: When did they do that?

M.M.: Back before the Civil War.

S.T.: That was at Brick Kiln?

M.M.: Brick Kiln (or Brickhill).

S.T.: Do you remember them burning off the land? It is a common practice now to burn off timber areas to keep the scrub from coming back in.

M.M.: Yea, I know it is. It is very poor practice.

S.T.: Do you remember them doing that here?

M.M.: Oh yeah. Everybody used to do it too for new growth for the cattle because they raised a lot of cattle over here and then the fresh green grass would come up. But that is considered poor practice now. It would burn the young trees and things and over here what we would run into would be the palmettos. You should have seen those palmettos through the Candler Road from the dock to the Candler house. You should have seen that area. It looked like an alligator farm - it was awful.

S.T.: All underneath those big pines?

M.M.: There weren't so many pines then. There is nothing left in that area. I talked to one of the park men one day and asked him if he thought there was any kind of an air current that would take fire through that because there has never been a big growth where the saw mill was.

S.T.: It has always been oak scrub?

M.M.: Yeah.

S.T.: Were there palmettos and scrub all growing under those pines north and south of Candler Road all the way to the wharf from High Point?

M.M.: Oh no, it has always been clear. That is the odd part of it. See this is all clear here. Some areas are all clear and some of them are not. But that has always been clear at Little Greyfield.

S.T.: Did they burn underneath there at all?

M.M.: Not in my day.

S.T.: As far as burning for the cows was that just in the open fields?

M.M.: No, they burn the woods. And sometimes they cause a sure nough fire.

S.T.: Was that basically up at the north end?

M.M.: No, everybody did it, all over. I don't know about on the island but I know they still do it on Glen County. You see these forest fires, these woods burning at night. A lot of times they have been set. Sometimes it has been a careless person throwing a cigarette out or sometimes its been lightning but a lot of it is set and that is why they have fire protection. You see back in the old days they didn't have any fire protection.

S.T.: They just let it go?

M.M.: Well, the people who were burning it were burning a certain area. I know my father and I own a place back from Brunswick and we definately did not want ours burned and we went out there one day and somebody had burned some near us and it had come into our part and burned up a whole lot of what we didn't want burned because he being a lumber man realized what damage it did.

S.T.: Do you remember any of those here on the island ever getting so hot to really damage the timber?

M.M.: The last one--you can look and see what it did.

S.T.: Oh, the '81 fire.

M.M.: Yeah. Through that same area there that I call the sink part between the wharf and Candler's that part has burned I know a number of times, but when I don't know. I just know that time, some time back, and then recently.

S.T.: I've got it dated somewhere in the late 50's. Do you remember a fire in there?

M.M.: Could have been, I don't know exactly. But I do remember the one before that.

S.T.: And that was probably in the early 30's.

M.M.: Yes.

S.T.: And it burned basically just that sink area or do you remember how far it went?

M.M.: Well, it started further back in here. The Carnegies brought over fire fighters and of course they were trying to keep it from destroying timber and everything. They fought clear on up but like I said, it stopped before it crossed the road because of a heavy rain that night.

S.T.: It stopped before it crossed the Candler Road?

M.M.: Yes.

S.T.: Did it burn down in the Terrapin Point, down around

M.M.: I don't think so. You say you found a fire down there?

S.T.: Uh huh.

M.M.: One of my great-grandmothers lived down there. I don't know what happened to her house or anything, either rotted down or burned down, I don't remember. It was a great, great grandmother that lived down there. Because my grandfather. . . .

S.T.: What about hunting - did a lot - I won't ask you much because I'm going to read it in your paper, but I remember reading that they brought a deer down from up north and introduced it to the islands?

M.M.: Oh, we've always had deer on the island.

S.T.: Yeah, but did they introduce another species?

M.M.: I've never heard of it. Now the Carnegies have always done peculiar things like bring in different kinds of animals, like Miss Lucy has two donkeys down here now.

S.T.: Guido and Sophia.

M.M.: Yeah, and things like that and now she is raising some pheasants over there. She's always gone in for that kind of thing - trying to do something different. The deer are native. Ken Morgan and I have been talking about that. He insists that the island - well I know the island deer are smaller than the ones on the mainland 'cause one of the men that was with Larry yesterday, Bill Jones, who is from Sea Island, built a plantation - an old plantation out from Altamaha and their deer are much bigger. They hunt out there in the winter time and they hunt over here, or did until the park took hold, and the deer at Altamaha are much larger than the ones on the island.

S.T.: Do you remember, I know everywhere I go now I see deer, has there been a time where there were more deer than there are now.

M.M.: Yes, uh huh.

S.T.: There was a lot more deer.

M.M.: Right. In fact, these hunts, see the parks had controlled hunts, the Carnegies didn't allow any hunting on their land except every so often then they might give my father or somebody permission to bring a few friends to the north part of their land. And they had their own hunting parties, of course, but not like the Park has had lately.

S.T.: And when you say the Carnegies, is that as far north as Stafford?

M.M.: No, that property went all the way to the big dock (Cumberland wharf). There is a remains of a gate there at the big dock at the west end of the Candler's road and that was the end of the Carnegie property.

S.T.: The Candler Road.

M.M.: Just south of the Candler Road.

S.T.: I didn't realize they owned all the way up to there.

M.M.: Yeah, the whole business - all the way up.

S.T.: Then, everything north of that would be High Point.

M.M.: Right.

S.T.: Uh huh. Okay. Do you recall the highest population of deer, was there any one time?

M.M.: Oh, I don't know. There was always plenty of them and sometimes you see more but it seems like lately we haven't seen as many as we used to. Me living up at the north end I went through the island a lot 'cause if I came over on the park boat, but the last year or two I haven't seen very many when I go to the north end and I have seen as many as 30 or 40 just riding up to the north end.

S.T.: I also heard somewhere that all the livestock used to just graze wild on the island.

M.M.: They did. Peoples stock was marked. People branded and the brand - or they marked them on the ears - and that mark was recorded in the courthouse so that everybody knew whose property it was but everybody's grazed.

S.T.: I know that hogs, I've seen the damage they do . . .

M.M.: They don't do half as much damage as the park says they do. I think it is foolishness to take them off.

S.T.: So, there has never been any more damage before than there is . . .
(End of this side of tape)

S.T.: Also, I'm drawing on what I kinda picked up from different places, but somebody told me that back in the 1920's that there was no beach, that the water came up to the trees.

M.M.: Oh, no! It might have down south, but at the north end we had more white sand then we've got now.

S.T.: Do you remember down at the south end?

M.M.: No, I didn't come to the south end much. You see, we only had horse and buggy transportation and to come it's some 18 miles from where my house

was to Dungeness and you don't do that often with a horse and buggy. But, we had a wide beach. Now where the bath house was for the hotel out on the beach is grown up. You know where the Candler's has their beach house, out on the beach, well I can remember well even further back there is still a well that was a shower between the two bathhouses they had big long bath houses for the men and women where you change your clothes, you didn't go out in your bathing suit in that day, and they went out on the little tram car things.

S.T.: That went all the way to the beach.

M.M.: It went from the Cumberland wharf dock to the beach at High Point.

S.T.: When did that quit running? Did that quit - running when the hotel closed?

M.M.: Oh well, yes. The hotel closed and then for a while it was a club but by this time, you see, cars had begun to come in and they could use a truck or something instead of the tram cars and it was much more practical because you didn't have to feed a mule or something to draw it.

S.T.: I find those tram nails every once in a while. Do you remember what important people came and stayed? I'm just curious about that.

M.M.: Well, for example, at the hotel - near the hotel - was a huge auditorium built by the Georgia Education Association. I found a picture of it. I kept telling people the thing was there and nobody would believe me. They wouldn't believe it was as big as I said it was. Well, I found a picture in one of the old Brunswick papers and I got copies of that showing that big auditorium. That will be in my next paper and at one time the president of every college in Georgia was down here for the Georgia Education Association and the governor came frequently and it had a convention center and so on. The hotel would take care of 5 or 6 hundred people.

S.T.: I've only been up there once and we weren't stopping, we were just going through.

M.M.: Well, the hotel itself as you see the house that was a hotel that was only part of it. They had 2 big long rows (I don't know whether I've got a picture of those in that paper, if not it will be in the next one) but 2 long rows of houses Macon row and Atlanta row and then there were 4 8-room cottages to the side going down to the waterfront and there was a pavilion down at the waterfront. Going out towards the beach there must have been a dozen 2-room cottages and the hotel is not as large as it used to be. The back part of it was torn off. The kitchens and part of the diningroom and so forth were torn off.

S.T.: Was the duck house part of that?

M.M.: No, the duck house belonged to the Carnegies and it was east of Plum Orchard on the beach.

S.T.: Did the people who came to High Point go duck hunting?

M.M.: Oh, yeah. They went duck hunting, but not down here. They went up to Lake Whitney or somewhere.

S.T.: Do you remember them ever burning the marshes off in order to regenerate the vegetation for the ducks?

M.M.: No, I don't remember that. It has always been against the law to do any kind of baiting of ducks but they did it. They put grain on the lakes and the ducks, of course, would come and they would shoot.

S.T.: Has the sand always been up right next to Lake Whitney?

M.M.: Yeah, but it is encroaching all the time. The lake is getting smaller and it is not as full- just past what we call High Hill the highest hill you get to going towards the north end. There used to be a regular river coming out of there, freshwater out into the ocean and the negroes called it "Runawater" and so we always called it "Runawater" too. But the "Runawater" is gone now. I mean there is no water coming out of the lake at all. It's not that high.

S.T.: It flowed into the ocean.

M.M.: Uh huh.

S.T.: The marshes - do you remember them being higher than they are now?

M.M.: Well in different areas right up there near where my place is the north place, out between Little Cumberland and Big Cumberland the marshes are as high as they have ever been, I'm sure.

S.T.: Uh huh, the water. What about the interior marsh, do you remember them draining the marshes in order to plant or anything like that.

M.M.: No, that would have been way before the Civil War.

S.T.: I just wondered what kind of effect that had on the trees and fires and stuff. Do they ever turpentine over here?

M.M.: No, that's always been on the mainland. There's never been any boxing of trees like they do on the mainland - not in my day and I'm sure I would have seen scars of it if they had been.

S.T.: I thought when I was out looking I came up on a tree that had a cut in it. It looked like a turpentine cut.

M.M.: Not that I ever heard of. That might have just been done on that one tree or something but I'm sure I would have remembered it.

S.T.: Uh, huh. What about, was there a field on Candler Road from the entrance to the settlement west, was there ever a field right in there that you remember?

M.M.: Well, yeah Mildred Frazer's grandmother lived right in there on the north side of Candler Road and they had a farm. Everybody has their own farms.

S.T.: There were people living up and down on that road?

M.M.: Oh yeah.

S.T.: I should have brought my other map. Where is . . . this will be Candler and I think . . . let's see . . . north cut like that . . . does that look about right? And then north cut kinda like that. It goes all the way . . .

M.M.: North cut comes over this way. It comes past Hawkins Creek . . . you see here's Hawkins Creek and north cut is up here.

S.T.: Oh!

M.M.: I'm wrong. This is south cut I'm talking about. Right, I'm sorry.

S.T.: Where was the house that burned? Your family's house? Do you know approximately . . .

M.M.: Let me see. We had two houses to burn right in here, my grandfather's and mine.

S.T.: Okay. This road's not used anymore is it? (North of Candler, runs in front of the settlement).

M.M.: No, but that used to be the main road to the dock. You see the car track went straight but this was the main road to the dock and cut north.

S.T.: That would have been the horse and buggy.

M.M.: All of this land was ours that we had to sell. In fact all the way up to the car track. You've got this with the car track. And this is the road going to the settlement.

S.T.: Right here, uh huh.

M.M.: This property right here is where Mildred Frazer's folks lived.

S.T.: Oh, okay.

M.M.: Her grandmother lived here. See she is a cousin of mine. Her house was right here at this point.

S.T.: Do you know when there was a home there?

M.M.: Well, I was looking back to see if I had anything of interest for you. Her grandmother's home burned and then they rebuilt again and it was there up until I'd say the 20's and then it rotted down - it didn't burn. But they only had 7 acres in there. Her great-grandfather owned all of

this over in to here all the way into the marsh and out to the beach (the area including Half Moon). It had belonged to various members of the family and he bought it up from the rest of them and so on. And when he sold this part to Macon Co. he reserved four tracks of 7 acres each right in here and her people had one track and her uncles and aunts had the other 2.

S.T.: Were there ever any homes built up in this area, west of the settlement?

M.M.: Oh, yeah. It was Bunkley.

S.T.: Who lived up in this area?

M.M.: Well along this bluff on Terrapin Point right here was where the Down's plantation was and that was one of my grandparents, hers too. We have double cousins in this business. The Downs were here and right in here just past the big dock was where the Bunkley's lived.

S.T.: I bet they had a spectacular view.

M.M.: And right past there down from the point that we call today Burbanks (on Terrapin Point) the Clubs lived.

S.T.: Oh, I see.

M.M.: And then between where there is an old well, later on a man by the name of Benson and we call it the Benson place today. And this now instead of being Clubs they sold to Burbanks and so we call that Burbanks place.

S.T.: But, there are no homes left.

M.M.: No, they are all gone. The birds come and seed right there off, they'll come right on the porch. (Referring to birds that flew on the porch.)

S.T.: I see you've got your binoculars there.

M.M.: My eyes are bad, and see I've got a birdfeeder out there. I can't always tell what it is without my binoculars (all locations on Terrapin Point Bluff). This man, Benson, had a 3 story house right there. Now, I don't know what kind of a house my grandmother was born in but she was born in one right there. And you see she married a Miller and a Downs over here married a Miller and it was that daughter over here and that's the way he came to Cumberland and Miller came through the Downs. They were also related to the Clubs and to the ... its a terrible mixture. They were related to the Bunkleys and the Clubs and the Downs but the actual Millers didn't come and live on the island until the time of these four children were left in Brunswick in Glen County, their mother died, and their Grandmother Downs raised them over here. You see they all lived up and down this bluff where there wasn't nobody to marry except the boy next door or the girl next door. So brother and sister married brother and sister. They are in the cemetery the Bunkley and Miller 2 lots, brother and sister married. That's my grandmother and grandfather and Bunkley's grandmother and grandfather.

S.T.: So, you and Miss Frazer grew up together.

M.M.: No we didn't actually. Her grandfather died early and her grandmother who has this house on the 7 acre track went to town to Brunswick to live and she had 7 children and her father was one of them. They grew up in Brunswick, Ga. while I was growing up down here and then her father moved about a good bit. He was in the army, I guess, anyway he moved about a good bit and then she married while I was off to school. I'm older than she is. Anyway, she married fairly young and married a man from New Jersey or Delaware. Anyway, she went up there to live. She didn't come back to Brunswick until she retired - he died and she retired. I didn't really know Mildred until she came back to Brunswick to live. I knew she existed, I knew she was a cousin and all that but I didn't really know her personally. I knew her cousin in Brunswick very well and all like that but I just never was around her.

S.T.: Does she live in Brunswick now?

M.M.: She lives in St. Simons.

S.T.: And you live on St. Simons?

M.M.: No, I live in Brunswick.

S.T.: So, during the world war were there people living up here still?

M.M.: You see on this point down here at Half Moon Bluff where Bud Olson lives, where his family lives that was what was a Fadder place and Mr. Candler bought it from the Fadders and when he died he willed it to Bud Olson's father who had worked for him and taken care of the north High Point hotel property. So that's the way they got it. Mr. Candler willed 5 acres or 10 acres, I'm not sure.

S.T.: Were there any homes in here?

M.M.: Yes, there were a lot of homes all about in this area, but I can't tell you exactly where - now the Downs there were several brothers and sisters one Downs had a place here at Brick Hill and of course all of this was a field at one time. All this was a field at Brick Hill.

S.T.: You remember that being a field?

M.M.: Partly. But the Carnegies had a game people that lived - where is the Bunkley trail is this it? This little right here the Carnegies had a man, you know, to watch whatever you call it - anyway he lived there. I remember Mr. Brock lived there and he farmed as well, had a lot of farming but you see you could go to the hotel this way and it cuts off. You can still go through there unless it has been raining a lot then it is real low.

S.T.: Would you get off the boat here at Brick Kiln (Hill)?

M.M.: We got off at Hawkins Creek, which is right up here. That was where we keep our boat. That was where they were going yesterday to get the boat.

S.T.: Do you know about when the Downs lived up here, about what year?

M.M.: No, I don't.

S.T.: Was it before the war?

M.M.: Oh, yeah. Winifred Downs, who was my great, great grandmother must have died about 1850. My great grandfather was born in 1803. She raised all his four children. It was before the Civil War.

S.T.: Uh, huh. Where are these people now, do they come back to the island, or?

M.M.: No, all that is left of the Downs family - it was a big family and it scattered - some direct decendants live in Fernandina and there are a few in Brunswick and they are far removed as far as being cousins of mine, but they are on that same source.

S.T.: I didn't realize there were so many people living on the island back then.

M.M.: Yeah, they had a good time down here.

S.T.: I bet. Did you spend Christmas holidays. . . .?

M.M.: Yeah, but by the time we were doing that there weren't too many people living down here. Fadders were still here when we came back and Louise Fadder married and was an only child and she has some cousins too. She went to Pennsylvania and came back down here 2 or 3 years ago and I made a tape of asking her questions. Made a pretty good tape.

S.T.: Great!

M.M.: She remembered a lot that I didn't remember. She hadn't been here in 50 years. I took her around a little bit. She stayed at Greyfield, she and her husband and son.

S.T.: Did you grow up knowing Mrs. Lucy Ferguson?

M.M.: Yes. But again, you see, they came in the winter time and we came in the summer time, and, but we'd see each other and then Mrs. Lucy got to staying on the island more. She stayed on the island more than any of the other families. But she used to go back north every year. There is a place up near New Bedford called Rickerson Point in Massachusetts where they came from and her niece Mary Bullard is really the Cumberland Island historian. She has done some tremendous things and is working - she called me up the other day and said she is getting another pamphlet book to the printer this week.

S.T.: Is she going to be coming to the island anytime?

M.M.: In October, she told me. She lives at New Bedford, or at North Dartmouth but she's got a place up here near where the one you were talking about Nancy Butler on up by Plum Orchard about 2 miles but she is crippled so she has to come only when she can get her car that she can drive over here and stuff like that. *Those are the prettiest birds out there.

S.T.: I haven't seen one up close.

M.M.: Oh, you haven't?

S.T.: I've seen just a flash of color but they are beautiful.

S.T.: I'll ask you one more question and if you want to, if you can think of anything you want to add . . . do you ever remember sassafras growing on the island?

M.M.: I don't remember it particularly growing on the island but I remember when we had sassafras tea. I know that place we had out in the country we had sassafras but I think it did grow over here but I'm not sure where or what.

S.T.: I was wondering because you know the island was named - the Indian name for the island meant sassafras and you would think that you would find it here.

M.M.: Right, well it would have been only - I don't remember how you - I know it is a root and you dug it up but I wouldn't know what the plant itself looked like. We had it - my grandmother.

S.T.: You used to make tea?

M.M.: Yeah, sassafras tea.

S.T.: Was that for ailments or just to drink?

M.M.: No, it was to drink. You would put sugar and cream in it which would make any drink to a child taste good but I haven't had it since I was a child.

S.T.: Is there anything that you would like to talk about or that you would like to add?

M.M.: I don't anything to tell you.

S.T.: Uh, huh. Well, we've talked and covered a lot; you've given me a lot more to go on. This map [Refer to USGS map] was done in '58 and this shows the boundaries of a fire that occurred before '58 because a lot of this now is completely vegetated.

*Referring to a painted Bunting (bird)

M.M.: Well, there were all these old fields along in through here there was Ray Field, and Beach Field and in my great great grandfather's will he left half to one child and half to the other - one of the big old fields.

S.T.: Uh, huh. Do you remember the boundaries of those?

M.M.: No I can't think what the name of it was even. And Mary Bullock says you're wrong that wasn't on Cumberland that was on the mainland and I said you're wrong it was on Cumberland and one day she said, "you're right." He had property in Camden County and he had property over here. He was the one who lived here when my grandmother was born right in there - there was one called Briar hammock, I'm not sure where it was but he owned half of it, I mean he owned all of it and he gave half to Thomas Pitt and half to his daughter Matilda.

S.T.: When was that a field?

M.M.: You see when we were little even when I was in college, for example, my father would have a hunting party down here. At that time we had a Ford, probably a Model T, and I would put if the Carnegies had given us permission - I would put people on a stand on this place and that place and the other place and I knew then where they were but now they've grown up so much I can't remember them.

S.T.: But you remember them being clear open field.

M.M.: Oh, yeah, open fields. They hunted in those you know they would get on a stand and he had hunting dogs, he always had hunting dogs and in fact one of the niggers said he had 18 of them.

S.T.: And how old were you when you were driving them around?

M.M.: Well, I was in college then but I mean we didn't have a car until, well we did have a car a time before I went to school, but you see cars hadn't come out then except just a few.

S.T.: I bet you had fun then driving around like that.

M.M.: I did but my father drove but he was blind in one eye, he was hit with a baseball bat when he was a little boy and if he could get somebody else to drive he'd do it which we approved of because we were afraid he would have an accident.

S.T.: How did your mother enjoy living down here?

M.M.: My mother came from up near Rome, Georgia. She was never quite - she loved the island and she stayed over here a lot - but she was never quite happy about crossing St. Andrews between here and Brunswick 'cause it could get terribly rough and also she had a sister drown over here and but she loved the island and she loved to fish. She would run us all crazy because we all had to take her fishing at one time or another. It was my turn to do it this time or my brothers turn but one of my brothers, Larry's father, loved to fish as much as she did so if he was down here he would take her. But she'd come over to Brick Hill and fish.

S.T.: Right off the dock there.

M.M.: No, there weren't any docks then. But down here along here where Brick Hill River is it was a low bluff and she liked to fish down there - it is still a low bluff.

S.T.: Where did your daddy take the timber off of the island? Was that at Brick Hill?

M.M.: No, it was back up here at Plum Orchard. Well he cut his own timber up here but back down here he was cutting Candler timber.

S.T.: Uh, huh. Where would he take it off the island?

M.M.: He would take it off the island here at the big dock (Cumberland wharf). They would drag it up there and there were a lot of little roads through the island where they drug timber; you see it was balanced on an ox or a mule to pull it and it would bump as it went along and the roads - you could tell a timber road by the way it was bumpy.

S.T.: I saw a picture of one of those in a book, it was really interesting. Where did ya'll keep - ya'll had oxen to pull them?

M.M.: Over here we (End of tape)

M.M.: A lot of the houses burned because there was no fire protection, but also a lot of them rotted down. So far as I know the houses down on the waterfront all of them rotted down.

S.T.: I guess the salt water and the hurricanes and all the storms

M.M.: Well, the people moved away and left them. I think one of the Negroes built part... built his house, just snatched it from the Bunkly House which was going to pieces at that time.

S.T.: Did they move out all the furniture when the people moved out?

M.M.: Oh, yeah. They'd to to town, take it to town.

S.T.: When would the I know I saw the chimneys the other day near Lucy Foster's house... that area...they didn't burn those down, did they?

M.M.: It makes a nice story to say that Robert Stafford burned them, but the archeologist said there are no signs of any fire around them.

S.T.: Were there houses burned at High Point? Slave quarters...? that story is the one

M.M.: ...with the chimney, yeah. No, there were none burned. They just rotted down at our end. I can remember when there were ... let's see ... there were Clifford and Alex and Charlie and Brenda and Roger and Malcolm, Uncle Primus... I can remember when there must have been about 8 Negro houses or 9 or 10 right in that settlement, back behind. It's grown up now. That was right by us.

S.T.: And all those homes just rotted down ...

M.M.: ...just rotted down...except for two, and the one by the church is . . . The one next to the church they're going to tear it down and they were telling me the other day it was rotten...

S.T.: Did you ever go swimming in the Recreation Hall down there at the Carnegie?

M.M.: Yeah, but not often. I mean not in my youth. It was later. I used to do a lot of work for the Methodist Church in the summer time, and we took camps of intermediate children, a camp all around for South Georgia, and we came to St. Mary's on part of it. Mrs. Perkins, the last of the original daughters of Thomas and Mrs. Carnegie was still on the island, then; she lived at the Grange and she would send a boat over and bring the children over to camp, let them go swimming if they wanted to, take them come over to the beach, and furnish them with a magnificent lunch.

S.T.: Oh, great!

M.M.: She did that for 2 or 3 years, and then they camped at St. Mary's. She was real nice. I never did see her, though. She never came out; she just arranged for it. She did a lot for the church in St. Mary's; she gave them song books and things of that sort...

S.T.: I know that the garden area back behind there, back behind Dungeness is now all grown up. Do you remember when it was all cleared out? ... and vegetables? Were there vegetables planted?

M.M.: Yeah. In fact, one of the Negroes that lived in that red house up there at North End, Roger, Roger Alberta, lived there ... was the rose gardener, he worked at Carnegie. He stayed down there all week and then he come up on the weekend at home. A lot of the Negroes worked down here.

S.T.: What kind of plants did they have?

M.M.: Oh, I don't know. I wasn't so interested in that ... Of course, you can tell where the old houses were now by when you see crepe myrtles, and you'll see oleanders, and you'll see sago palms, and things like that ... At Benson's, on Terrapin Point, there was quite an article in one of those old papers, where he had a century plant that bloomed, and he built a thing around it, and charged admission to go up and see the century plant...

S.T.: It's probably not there anymore, is it?

M.M.: Oh no, the century plant is long gone. It bloomed, and I think they're supposed to die after that.

S.T.: Oh, okay.

M.M.: If you go down to that far point (Terrapin Point), though, along the bluff, you'll see some of the most gorgeous sago palms there are anywhere, and of course, there are oleanders down there too.

S.T.: I haven't seen those.

M.M.: That's on the last notch, going to the ...

S.T.: Were y'all aware of the Indian middens?

M.M.: No, you're more aware of those kinds of things now. Some of my family is still a'hunting them now, but ... where the old fort was, my father had a whole lot of stuff he had picked up around there.

S.T.: Where is that?

M.M.: Fort Saint Andrews there between Terrapin Point and the dock. The fort's gone.

S.T.: Were there signs of it ... do you remember seeing any?

M.M.: Oh yeah. I used to know exactly where it was, because he knew where it was.

S.T.: Mmm.

END OF TAPE

APPENDIX C

Following is the transcription of an interview with Mrs. Lucy Ferguson, Mr. J. B. Peebles, long-time foreman for Mrs. Ferguson, and Melvin, a friend of Mrs. Ferguson's from Fernandina.

The interview was conducted by Sally Turner on August 12, 1983. The purpose of the interview was to elicit Mrs. Ferguson's and J.B. Peebles' memories of (1) fire history of Cumberland Island, (2) land management practices, and (3) storm history for the period of early 1900's through 1983.

[Refer to USGS topographic map of Cumberland Island, 1979 and 1958 on map of Cumberland in "Fire History of Cumberland Island from 1900-1983" by Turner and place names map by Hillestad and Bozeman, 1975]

Interview with J.B. Peebles, Lucy Ferguson and Melvin
August 12, 1983

J.B. Peebles: I've been a woods man most of my life and the thing is I cut timber for seven years and cut it for saw milling during the war and all that because the reason I got started with it is in Yankees Paradise all the timber was dying and you know the bugs have got in it so it was mostly a heart timber, yellow pine timber, in that area but . . .

Sally Turner: That was a bark beetle that got in there?

J.B.P.: It was some kind of beetle and it started dying out and it was several hundred acres that died out pretty fast. To start with I was cutting dead and dying timber and it finally got started and cut all that down. Pine timber was in every place.

S.T.: Where were the main areas that you cut in besides Yankee Paradise?

J.B.P.: Well, I cut even down in Dungeness down there. It was a small area out from Old House Creek. All through that part of it and you know any spot on this track around Stafford here I cut through that three times in my life ... cut out the mature pine and is still some of the best pine on the island in this area.

S.T.: What about in Terrapin Point, did you cut timber up in there?

J.B.P.: Yea, I cut timber up in there but when I was cutting it they didn't allow me to cut within 200 feet of the road but later some man came in and set up a saw mill up at Brickhill and he cut all that I had left up side the road. I wasn't allowed to cut any within 200 feet of the road when I was cutting - only the dead ones.

S.T.: About when were you cutting, do you remember about what year?

J.B.P.: I started in '42 and cut on through the war and couldn't make any money when I was cutting it. The OPA price then I think was \$29 on boards and \$32 dollars a thousand on 2 x stuff and timbers averaged about \$56 and it was about the prettiest timber in the south. The heart timber here won't last any longer than sap timber will on the mainland. There's something about the . . . there's just not much pitch in it. It looked like it would grow, it had the grains of it, most of it was coarse because it was fast growing timber. It was young, and most of it I think died from just old age... old matured ...

S.T.: Did you select cut or did you clear cut areas?

J.B.P.: Well, if bugs was in it I had to clean cut it, and but it wasn't any money in it - couldn't make any money in it. I was giving 1/3 to the

Estate for stumpage. I had to clean up the tops where the next man came along later after I went as far as I could go with it just before the Korean conflict. I had to give it up same time as most the other saw mills did.

S.T.: When was that about -- 19 . . ?

J.B.P.: Well, that was just before the Korean deal I had to give it up. I was one of the last that quit with the saw milling.

S.T.: Do you remember a fire in about 1954 on the north end and in about the same area of the fire of 1981?

J.B.P.: I'm not sure about the dates on those but . .

S.T.: It would have been about 30 years ago.

J.B.P.: Oh, yeah. I remember many a fires on places on the island. It was most of the time it would be up on the north end. I don't remember any fires on this end, but up on the north end was where we'd have the fires from lightning.

S.T.: Did you ever assist in cutting fire ditches or anything like that?

J.B.P.: I'd helped out with a fire, when I was saw milling I'd help get out there and stay with it until the fire was out. You would have to watch them sometimes for 10 days before someone else was cutting down the trees and throwing sparks and all that kind of stuff. Yea, we'd have to get out there and stay with it until a good rain would come and get it pretty well cleared. It was a pretty rough time of it then. I'd beg them to control burn and that would have been the best insurance they could have had on protecting the island was to control burn at the right time and the right moisture after a freeze in the winter so that it wouldn't mess up the trees. But that would have been the best insurance they could have had was control burn and I don't say burn it all but years ago they had so many roads on the island that was when we would have to head off the fires with light equipment as the estate had back then, they would harrow the roads? Back burn - fight fire with fire, you know, stop it. Back burn against the wind and all that stuff. That's the surest way to stop it.

S.T.: Have there been areas that have burned continually, same areas that you recall?

J.B.P.: Mostly Table Point was some of the worst fire. I think the old mature trees there draw this lightning, you know, that whenever you started a fire in the tree, and that rough stuff with so many palmettos and pine straw stuff that set the fires, and generally they happen at the worst time of the year, you know. The fire would ruin everything as it went. In the Table Point area from up in around Plum Orchard to the area where it stays rough most of the time.

S.T.: ... all that scrub.

J.B.P.: Yup.

S.T.: What about up at Terrapin Point? Has there always been pine, that real clear stand of pines up there at Terrapin?

J.B.P.: Yes, there used to be...I cut a few 85 foot pilings in King's Bottom area and at Terrapin Point. Had to get special orders, and I have cut three 115 feet long. I'd have to drag them all the way to the water with crawler tractor and be careful to keep from breaking them, and all that kind of stuff. The longest I've ever cut was 115 feet long, and that's a tall tree.

S.T.: How old do you think those pines are up there?

J.B.P.: I never did count the grains, but they were the old originals that were there; you know, old timber. It's, I'd hate to say, maybe, no telling.

S.T.: I counted just south of Terrapin Point; I've cored some trees, and they were anywhere from 60 to 80 years old, and then when you get on heading east towards the settlement, I cored two trees up there that were 155 years old, so there's some old trees up there.

J.B.P.: You mean the fresh stumps a-sawed off?

S.T.: No, they're still alive. This is taking an increment corer, and you core into the tree. Right now the sap's running so high, that hole fills up so quick that the insects won't get into it.

J.B.P. You have to plug it, or put some paint on it or they will get in it.

S.T.: Or glue. I've been using Elmer's Glue. And pull that out and be able to tell how old they are (referring to core).

J.B.P.: I know there's some old trees 'cause none of that land has been in cultivation back yonder (the north end).

S.T.: That area back there was in cultivation (the south end)?

J.B.P.: You can tell when there was cultivation; you find some old ditches.

S.T.: Are those old drainage ditches?

J.B.P.: Yeah, those old ones. I mean, you know, you just happen up on them here and there, I mean, in different areas. Most of the land where there weren't so many palmettos, if it was thick in palmettos, it was not in cultivation. But where you see the open land, you know what I mean, not many palmettos, that was in cultivation.

S.T.: Do you remember areas that were fields, way back, that now have got grown up?

J.B.P.: Oh yeah, this side (south) of Plum Orchard, the Carnegie Estate used to keep it underbrush, you know, where there were a group of houses . .

S.T.: Behind Plum?

J.B.P.: That was ... I owned some this side of Plum Orchard near the canal south of Plum anyway, that was some of the last old fields that were kept open.

S.T.: There's Plum right there. And that's the mansion and that's the houses, so you're talking about this area back behind it.

J.B.P.: This . . . east of Plum Orchard, that's where some of the best original long leaf pine was.

S.T.: Oh ...

J.B.P.: Table Point and King's Bottom had mostly slash pine, yellow slash, and all that east of Plum Orchard was old original long leaf yellow pine.

S.T.: Were they logged out, did you cut those?

J.B.P.: I logged that area . . . on to King's Bottom and several hundred acres.

S.T.: That would have been King's Bottom.

J.B.P.: King's Bottom, that was slash pine; there was pretty good moisture in the slash, and where the power line was long leaf yellow pine.

S.T.: You remember this area around McCall's Pond and Johnson Pond (south of Table Point) ever burning?

J.B.P.: Yeah ...

S.T.: A real hot fire?

J.B.P.: A real hot fire in the area of that Johnson Pond. There is good timber there now, but that bottom land in the Point of Johnson Pond that has been burnt, and the times, way back when the fire ditch hit the Point.

S.T.: Do you know about when that could have burned?

J.B.P.: One of them was when I was a kid; I'm 72 years old, I was about 12 or 14 ... See, on these things I can't remember exact dates on them, or years. I'm just guessing mostly. So that around the 1920's, early 1920's.

S.T.: I picked up a fire, and that one was probably started by lightning; that's about how most of the fires around here started, by lightning. I found a fire up on Terrapin Point, and you can go up there now and see scarred pines, you know a cat face, I'm sure you know what that is. But it went almost to the western edge of Terrapin up to the northwestern side, just below the landing strip, and then I haven't been able to track into that area that burnt in '81, but I cored some trees in there, and I'm picking up trees that regenerated after 1936, so I'm thinking that it came down into this area. Do you remember that area burning, that would have been about 1936? If you're 72, let's see.

J.B.P.: It would have been 37 years ago.

S.T.: You'd have been about 36 or 37. Do you recall that area burning then?

J.B.P.: That area up in there at the north end has had pretty regular fires all my life. In areas there, pines would get thick and pretty as you please, and they were like really growing, next thing you know a fire would hit'em and knock'em out again.

S.T.: Completely wipe them out?

J.B.P.: Pretty much wipe them out in most areas in that area you're talking about there. I used to beg them to do control burns so if a fire got out, it wouldn't do so bad, you know, you could stop it easier, but they didn't like the idea of fire.

S.T.: Who is this, the Park Service?

J.B.P.: Even the Estate. The estate, they didn't really know what it took to make a clock tick, on that kind of stuff. I've never had any trouble with fire because, and I've planted more trees in my life. In the winter I used to have as many as 5 machines going, you know, little crawler tractors. That was after, it was many years ago now, but it doesn't seem like so long. I was one of the first that started out planting trees. I planted them over several counties, when it started raising seedlings; that was many years ago. The state planted them, you know, furnished the plants; we had to pay them for them, but I planted them over several counties in Florida and Georgia. I just fixed up with planting pines, and made a little money at it. Got about \$5 a thousand for planting them, and I made pretty good, I thought then. That was good money.

S.T.: But you think that just in the past couple of years they've started recognizing the need for prescribed burning, to go in and burn an area. That hasn't been a practice that's been around for a while. Like, y'all never used to burn the timber up north, did you, to keep the scrub and all that down?

J.B.P.: No, they never did. The Old Master burned it for them.

S.T.: He kept up with it.

J.B.P.: The old lightning hit some of those trees, and get it going. The times that I was here to cut timber, I'd have to get out there. The Estate would cut it for firewood, and all that kind of stuff, and when they got a sawmill. They had a little sawmill; they would cut them some lumber when the fires would hit. 90% of that went to waste.

L.F.: Here's your chance to tell them the park something. Of course, I know they won't listen. If they were wise, they'd have a ... controlled fire.

S.T.: That's what they're wanting to do, I think, but then they get so much pressure from the Sierra Club and organizations like that that they have to be very careful how they go about it.

J.B.P.: Environmentalists, I guess, have kicked on controlled burning. If you know what they do, then they'll be helping 100 times more than they hurt, and that's the best insurance they can get, I mean in the way of protection from fires, is to control burn it. Areas where it's so rough most of the time, if they burn it in blocks to where if they can get a fire going, they can stop it right quick. It's just hard to stop when that mulch is, you know, laying on the bushes, and down to 18 inches of mulch in lots of places. It's just accumulation of straw and leaves and stuff to where palmetto is growing and tyty bushes and all that stuff. They try to keep it so it's not so deep, you know, down to the ground, so that if the fire gets out you can stop it.

S.T.: If you could recall, like, how often the north end burned, either at Table Point or Terrapin, was there any kind of cycle to that. Would the litter accumulate for so many years, and then burn off?

J.B.P.: When it accumulates to where it's good and heavy, and the lightning hits a tree, it's just like hitting a powder barrel. It ignites it right there, especially at a dry time. Summer or winter, it gets going. The fire gets, you know, it's hard to stop it. The only way you can stop it is by back burning it to head it off.

S.T.: Would that happen as frequently as every year, or was there a space in there?

J.B.P.: No, there'd be sometimes ... well, it would take it several years to accumulate enough of that stuff that when the lightning hit a tree that it would explode, you know and take off.

S.T.: Do you remember a fire around Squaw Town (west of Red Bridge). I remember Mrs. Polly Carnegie did an interview, and she talked about helping fight a fire close to Squaw Town, and that must have been in the early 1930's. She said it was big and it burned hot, and that everybody went out and they dug ditches, and went out with the shovels, and she got out there and I think she said you might have been out there, Mrs. Ferguson, helping to fight that fire around Squaw Town.

S.F.: I don't think so, not then ...

J.B.P.: Squaw Town ...

S.T.: Close to Squaw Town.

J.B.P.: Oh yeah, they've had them every place, over on the north end.

L.F.:
but they only get up on their hind legs, so no matter what they see all the time. . . . they don't seem to have any hind legs to stand on.

J.B.P.: (Laughs) Well, if there was enough blood there, they'd get on the jump, because they'd get to where ... I've seen water on this island so deep that right out here at this airport, it'd be overflowing across the road like Niagara Falls, coming across that old field out there. And

I've seen it so wet that you couldn't turn a car around, you know, off the road, you couldn't ... Areas just like down the road there other side of the dipping vat, the water would be swim a horse. And I've seen it at Dr. Johnson's house up there had a bunch of timber cut at that Table Point end so wet and stayed wet so long until I finally got out and took the bands off my diesel tractors and had water clean up in the tractor. Wrapped the logs across, put ropes across them, after they tore down the palmettos and came out through the woods down to the water to where I could get to bring them across the river. Gosh, there was just a raft of logs behind that tractor, and all that kind of stuff. It seems unbelievable it's happened in the past. About 1940, it was probably during the war. It got so wet; that's when it was mostly wet, wettest I've ever seen it. A road truck or tractor would stand up in the woods, water running across. The Inland Waterway was lower than the island; so much deeper that the water was going across the ridge, you know, like unbelievable how that water can flow from the east going west. It wasn't salt water; it was

S.T.: Fresh water?

J.B.P.: Rainwater, coming so much there that we had a real wet time during the war.

S.T.: How long did that last?

J.B.P.: It lasted long enough that bugs and sourness was getting in my logs so bad that I had to do something with them or lose them.

S.T.: So that was when your heavy cutting was?

J.B.P.: Yeah.

S.T.: . . . during that time?

S.T.: What about the hurricanes that hit this island, did they do a lot of damage?

J.B.P.: Yes. I've seen it to where that it would take us several weeks to clear the roads. This earth would get so wet until these old live oaks, especially the live oaks, would fall over, and the old trees would uproot and like stick itself in the flour barrel, and get so wet they'd kind of fall over. That's the way this earth would get, and when it's wet enough...

S.T.: And then a hurricane...?

J.B.P.: ... the wind, and you know, the water that's in the earth and all would make the ground so soupy until the wind would just blow them over, and cover these roads up. Would take 5 or 6 weeks to bulldoze and two man chain saws back then. We didn't have one man chain saws then. Cross-cut saws and two main chain saws. Get out there and work like a sun-of-a-gun and those big crawler tractors clearing the roads so you could travel the main road. Those trees would just uproot all over.

S.T.: Would there be fires after hurricanes because of the downfall?

J.B.P.: No, that was a protection ... I mean that water, but generally in the dry time is when you have fires... you have these thundersqualls come up and lots of lightning you know. It wasn't so much when it's really wet times, it drives the fire out, but if it's dry times, you'll see just lots of lightning, and thunder and lightning, but not much rain, that's when your fire gets going.

S.T.: When would that be, in what month?

J.B.P.: Well, ...

S.T.: July?

J.B.P.: Well, I wouldn't say exactly what month, but you know some years you have lightning and lots of it in April and different times of the year. In May, one of the driest months, used to be, but you'd have it also in the spring and summer

S.T.: Where did you take the timber off, usually?

J.B.P.: Well, you had to raft it at Plum Orchard; part of it down at Old House Creek, was cutting the timber down there, and I'd put logs in the water all along these different bluffs, Old House Creek mostly and Plum Orchard, back inside the enclosure there; had as many as 30 men working at Plum Orchard there. We were cutting pilings for the Grody Shipyards and all that stuff. We furnished pilings to Jacksonville Shipyard and some went to different places in the country, different places that would sell the pilings. Epton Russell was one of the biggest buyers, but they were the middlemen. They counted the money; I lost the money back at that time. But I made a little money on piling.

S.T.: How many of the structures here on the Island were made from timber off this Island. Did they usually bring that timber back over from the mainland already boarded?

J.B.P.: Most of these houses were built out of the best grade of pine from inland, you know, like on the mainland. This timber from this Island is just corky-like; the harder looking like it's good is over on the mainland. It's pretty, so they used to say you know when they loaded on these gondola box cars; the boards that had to go in box cars and your timbers into gondolas. We had extra length gondolas and all that stuff. I cut special order timber for the government. And all this through the War had the highest priority, higher than the pulp mills had when they started, you know during the War. The government was using it as stuff that was uncut, and they had the OPA prices so a man couldn't produce. After a fire in the sawmill they'd cut lots of lumber and store it, and all that kind of stuff, and at times even before I was really selling lumber, I'd go over and sawmill it for them and all that kind of stuff and stack it, and lots of it just went to waste because they couldn't use that much lumber. They'd cut it up into firewood and all that kind of stuff. . . . year round cutting firewood for the Estate and members of the family and all that stuff.

S.T.: As many fireplaces as there was everywhere, I'm sure they went through a lot.

J.B.P.: Nothing but the heart was used and no way what we have to use nowadays for firewood.

S.T.: In your opinion, was the '81 fire a pretty severe fire, that one that happened about 2 years ago.

J.B.P.: That was one of the worst you ever had; that was the worst.

S.T.: Do you recall what other ones were real severe in the past?

J.B.P.: When I was a young fella, I mean back when I was a boy, one about as bad as that hit, and I couldn't say what year it was, but it cleaned it out up on that north end pretty well. There were some spots that would be left with timber; was, you know, there would be places where it had been burned within a short time before that where it hadn't gotten so doggone rank in the underbrush.

S.T.: That was at the same place, in the same area?

J.B.P.: Over here, out from ..., south of Yankee's Paradise, it's a big area in there where it went through kind of like it did up on the north end. That was way back when I was probably an 18 year old boy.

S.T.: And this other big one was before that, before you were 18?

J.B.P.: Yeah, that was back when I was younger, that was way back, but this one in '81 was one of the worst fires they ever had, but up in that area (the north end), in my time I remember 3 times it burned; about 90% of it burnt, not as bad as it did this last time.

S.T.: So, what I'm picking up is about a 20 year, 25 year fire cycle in that area. Does that seem about right to you, that it burns pretty bad.

J.B.P.: About every year, we'd have a little fire, but they'd get it stopped. Back yonder my brother-in-law was one of the foremen with the crew and I remember several times they'd have to be with it for several weeks and they couldn't get off; they had to stay with the fire.

J.B.P.: Once after they'd get it stopped ... they'd use the light equipment to harrow down the roads and backburn to it. Back in there was blocked off and several hundred miles of road was back then.

S.T.: Those were logging roads, or ...?

J.B.P.: They were just roads that they kept open, all in the center woods and in blocks, in roads, you see, going side to side.

S.T.: Okay, that could have ... when the Island was broke up into tracts, that was probably after that ... wouldn't it have been?

J.B.P.: Oh, that was before then ...

S.T.: Before that?

J.B.P.: When they broke up to divide it, it was; all the roads was pretty much open then, but since it was divided, there's no more old roads kept open. That's when the estate was paying the expense and all that; they kept them open. Had a road all the way down the telephone line from one end of the Island to the other pretty much. From the other side of Plum Orchard to where it went across to the mainland. Had a road down through to where they had the telephone line; had to keep the moss. The wind had blowed moss across that telephone wire and that would stop it.

S.T.: Uh, oh

J.B.P.: I'd send somebody after each wind to go along the pole and pull the moss off the telephone wire, and dead limbs and stuff would fall on it and that would mess 'em up. Telephone exchange was inside that big room in there (in Mrs. Lucy Ferguson's home).

S.T.: I think I heard it just a little while ago.

J.B.P.: After the war they kind of got it hooked up different, but then they had telephone exchange and that went to every house and a system to operate that and cook for the men that worked, you know. I tell them now that people had to work like the old timers worked. My sister is 76 years old and when she was younger she took care of that telephone exchange and did the cooking, getting the messages to the other people and all that stuff. Didn't think much about it.

S.T.: Part of life, wasn't it?

J.B.P.: Yeah, getting about \$125 a month back then to do it.

S.T.: You mentioned earlier about the ditches and you said that that usually indicated where there had been cultivation.

J.B.P.: Oh yeah, everyplace you'd find ditches.

S.T.: Okay, this is Brickhill. All along here is the bluff. This is right here at the bluff. This is south cut, and north cut. There is a ditch that follows; it's about 20 feet off the main road that runs all the way up the main road, all the way about up to this slough, and then it runs up into a wet area up in this is there's a ditch that runs up into a real wet area, and then a ditch that runs on the other side of it, and part of one that runs perpendicular to it, going east and west. Do you think that that was a drainage ditch, or do you think maybe that that could have been a fire ditch.

J.B.P.: It was one of those drainage ditches, just like out here. Out further of the great field in these open spots where you'll see so many palmettos you'll find old ditches, ditch patch you call them. Down at Old House Creek back in the woods there you'll find some, you know under coloration most of the Island way back years ago.

S.T.: That was before the Civil War, and after

J.B.P.: When they freed the slaves and all, that was done away with.

S.T.: Why do you think the palmettos grow ... it seems like the palmettos grow right up to the ditch, and then they stop. Have you ever noticed that? I was just curious.

J.B.P.: Right up to the ditch?

S.T.: Or sometimes they'll skip over it in a few places, but I've noticed real clean lines.

J.B.P.: Palmettos mostly grow anyplace. By the berries you scatter; animals carry the berries, but I don't know what to say about the ditch part. I guess because it was cut out back when it was wet enough to old them out.

S.T.: Do you remember back when you first started coming here as a boy, was there as much palmetto as there is now.

J.B.P.: There's just more and more, every year. Cultivated fields . . . looked like on high land and places where they wouldn't need ditches. A man could have more water . . . than they have nowadays.

S.T.: Do you remember draining any of the marshes, did y'all ever do that, or was that done?

J.B.P.: Oh, I did about 200 acres in the swamp field northeast of Stafford, and just reclaimed the old land down next to the Plum Orchard, and that would be 2 miles from where the clearing was and tried to get the water going out when it rained swampy and a few feet of muck

S.T.: What used to be grown there?

J.B.P.: You had rice of different kinds and everything else, corn and beans, any green vegetables and any kind of plant. We still got some over there, some land in cultivation there ... never seen any in years. Had a grading machine and all that stuff just disappeared

S.T.: What else was in cultivation? Was the North End in cultivation when you were born?

J.B.P.: Not too much; there were a few fields up there, several colored people up there which was the practice and Dr. Johnson at Plum Orchard always planted the north end with cornfields all my life since we were kids . . . we made good money on hogs on the Island because it's for hogs, the best fallow anyplace in the United States . . . 72 hog pens on the Island and last year they used automatic . . . and I think 5 tons of corn . . . and when they get ready to catch up. I wouldn't sell my sow if I hadn't had pigs. The open sows is barren and when the males are castrated, ... when they get up to the size, they just set the pens overnight 4 days and a half they have a hog in the pens. Put them on barges and take them off.

S.T.: There were a lot more hogs back then than there are now.

J.B.P.: Yeah, you couldn't look no place

S.T.: I know ...

J.B.P.: I've seen plenty of hogs. They'd be around here everywhere you looked and they kept the underbrush from growing up.

S.T.: They kept it from growing up?

J.B.P.: Oh yeah, the underbrush

S.T.: You think they had more of an effect on that than the deer did? Grazing?

J.B.P.: The hogs would keep the main herbs and all that stuff and they'd go in the marsh and when the tides was up, they'd go out on the marshes and get all kind of drafts and we'd let them loose and talk to them ... and eat mussels... when the weather was on and during acorn seasons, the acorns would be more feed per acre than we'd have in the field...

S.T.: Producing the acorns did you ever see pigs on the beach? Did they get out on the sand dunes or ... ?

J.B.P.: ... they'd go out there a little bit, but yes when they want to get rid of them on account of destroying the seaweed, and ...

S.T.: That's what I've heard ...

J.B.P.: ...wild oats and the wild oats and the turtles

S.T.: You don't think so

J.B.P.: Yes, I was thinking they would, yes ... at times, but back when we had screw worms in the summer. Turtle nests, take a little screw worm medicine on the turtle nests, and I've never seen where they're really get active . . . you know, where they laid. I did that for years, and I raised more turtles, I imagine, than all the scientific stuff you can do.

I've never seen a raccoon . . . smelled like coon or pine tar and maybe a little screw worm medicine . . . turtle nests . . .

S.T.: Were there more turtles back then than there are now?

J.B.P.: I don't say there was any more but I just imagine there was more turtles loose back then; they maybe kept . . . had so many screw worms, cows got on the beach at night, rather than bring all the cows in when they'd . . . newborn calves and cows back there before the cowbirds come in, they would have to be sprayed and ticks pulled out of ears ... They'd go to dark places and big old houses and . . . to get rid of the screw worms.

S.T.: Did there used to be more deer than there are now, do you think?

J.B.P.: That storm even did away with the squirrels, some reason, and the snow and the ice you had at that time did away with the screw worm, and the government thought they had done a big wonder

M: (Laughs) ...

J. B. P.: what happened to them. I had 30 head shut up in this field out here, and the morning the ice and the snow was so deep we were right out cutting that ice those things up. I had a fellow over here with me helping me and he got kind of puny when we got back to doctoring the cows for a few days, and at that time, the screw worms was out of their ears, mostly in their ears...there were 33 cases of them. They had been putting sterile flies all over for a couple of years but after that fallout whatever was in that snow and stuff, we never had another case of screw worms.

S.T.: Oh, so that was in '57 too? When was that?

J.B.P.: What year was the ice and the snow?

M: Do you remember when it snowed so bad it killed all the camphor trees and everything? It was in 1966 or '67.

J.B.P.: '57 wasn't it?

M: Maybe '57.

J.B.P.: I'm not sure

L.F.: ... cold winter and it killed everything, stayed froze so long.

J.B.P.: What year was it, no that was when we got rid of the screw worms, but when we had the water come so high in the ocean that covered Cumberland Island up, and it washed away all the sand dunes. What year was it the storm did away with the sand dunes the beaches? What year was it that you and Ricky was on the island in the storm that lasted so long, we all finally left ... everybody else had left but you and Ricky, and y'all finally went over... ?

M: Let's see, that was the year before Charlie was born

J.B.P.: You remember, what year was it that the sand dunes was washed away? The storm ...? The sand dunes washed away?

S.T.: On the south end?

J.B.P.: On the south end all the sloughs was covered up and done away with all the sloughs? ... We had 250 head of cattle that were ranging in that area and it destroyed the range

L.F.: . . . could find . . . that washed ashore today...way up in there ...

M: Charlie'll be 19 this winter, I mean this November and that storm come along the year before Charlie was born.

S.T.: So that would've been 20 years ago ...

M: Cullen's boy? ...

S.T.: So that would've been 1963? Does that make sense?

J.B.P.: I was thinking about '57 when we had the storm that washed the beach away and liked to went across inland, into the oceans ...

M: I think '67 is when it washed the beach away at home ..

J.B.P.: 60 what?

M: '67, you know that was 3 or 4 years before Charlie

J.B.P.: We had two of them that like to washed all the beach away.

S.T.: Let's see, ...'67

J.B.P.: I'm not sure about that one.

M: I'm not sure about that date, but I do know the year before Charlie was born, why, I was in St. Augustine, you know, and they went on a boat ride ... my house

J.B.P.: In St. Mary's, it was ... couldn't hardly drive ... know where the hotel is there, water all up in there

S.T.: And we thought the snow storm was

J.B.P.: What did away with the screw worms ...

S.T.: And that was in '57?

M: I was trying to remember that cold winter we lost every camphor tree in Fernandina from 8th Street down to the beach, we lost every one of them that cold winter.

S.T.: Do you remember that?

L.F.: ... you don't remember dates, they don't make any impression on you ... there's a few might be able to you, but the people in Fernandina ... don't you think you could get some people?

J.B.P.: They got records of it, I reckon, but when all that freeze was on that time was after the war, and that's been a

L.F.: it was well after the war

J.B.P.: I was over here, and I must have had a boy helping me, and boy he got all bad sick when we had one of the Belgian sheep dogs tied in the back; he was a vicious type thing, and he was making a figure 8 all night, ya know, with the chain, and he'd make that figure 8 to keep from getting

tangled, and next morning he had a path that deep and the dog was jet black, but he was snow white the next morning, unbelievable ... he had so much snow on him... and his name was snow, and he was snowed under pretty much that night

L.F.: It went down to 18 ...

S.T.: 18?

L.F.: ... temperature ...

S.T.: Oh, gosh ...

J.B.P.: 17 ... 18

L.F.: On the farm, the pine trees were bent over with snow, but not too many years ago, the palmettos on the main road were covered with snow, just a few years ago ...

J.B.P.: There was a time over at the mainland we cut a 200 acre field and when the snow and ice got on it so heavy so the others had them popping and shooting like cannons shooting ...

L.F.: In 1899, there was snow everyplace over the island as far as I could tell that was in my childhood

S.T.: There was a bad winter, real bad winter?

L.F.: I guess it had to be, everything covered with snow. I heard the old people talk about it.....

J.B.P.: Well, I agree, I should have remembered the year of the snow and ice.

M: I can't remember dates ...

J.B.P.: Now about the storm, you should remember that well, about covering up the Dungeness Dock and everything down there ...

L.F.: That was in 1918 or 1919, I think ...

J.B.P.: I'm talking about when it washed away the dunes out there, and did away with the sloughs at south point and all that stuff ... covered it up with sand and like to

M: They came in there sand back up there on the south end, they got rid of the sand the storm they had to open up the channels again, and there was a lot more dirt up here on the south end and the . . . sound over on the north end . . . about getting rid of the sand out in the channels so they could keep the river open, Inland Waterway.

S.T.: But you think that was probably in '57 or '63?

M: Oh

S.T.: You said there was a bad one when this boy was ... about 20 years ago, that would have been in 1963, but that's not the one we're talking about now ...

M: We're talking about one before ...

S.T.: One before that ...

J.B.P.: This was way before the park got the land. They didn't realize what had happened to the sand dune, and they're talking about getting rid of the hogs and the cattle because they destroy the sea oats, and the sea oats and the turtles, but

M: 38 years ago, when would that have been?

S.T.: 38 ...

M: When Cullen was 2 years old is when the water go so high, because all the house boats had to be sunk over there around ... plant, you know, the water was high as the dining table in the ... plant

S.T.: That was in 1945 ...

J.B.P.: That was back when we had the high waters and storms back in '45 and '46 that they had the ... when I was logging, and we had to drift the logs across the Island with a bulldozer, I mean, with the crawler tractors and it was so deep we took the fan belts off and bulldozers go, ... diesel the smokestacks would be sitting in water on these crawler tractors, t.v. 35 and 9 I had to log with

M: And that's when it washed the 9 houses off

J.B.P.: The water got so deep right out here where it normally is dry in the wet times, by golly, it was so deep they'd swim a horse. You remember old, uh, Holton ... he had his daughter with him, and he left his car on the other side over there

L.F.: ... carry her across the ... to his house

J.B.P.: It was so deep, she was ... he had her on his back ... and the water come up under his chin ... and I remember it being so deep up there that, by gosh, you'd swim a horse in there.

M:

L.F.: ... It was the only way I could control her

S.T.: Gosh, ...

L.F.: That's when the big trees came washing down ...

S.T.: Those were big pine trees?

L.F.: Great big trees ... whole trees came washing down at . . .

J.B.P.: All kinds of stuff, it was all trees, you know

L.F.: old house ...

J.B.P.: It was like Niagara Falls at Old House Creek, the water pouring off that bluff. It uprooted where we had been putting logs, had a log . . . the trees that we went in next to the water . . . bough . . . it washed all that out, and laid a new doggone bluff there ...

M: We had a girl from the Midwest and she had a baby just got home from the hospital and she never

M: So the girl next door she says, "is she going to stay home?" We'll be better off, is what we'll do, we'll tell the boys in the that if the water gets too high and starts up and they see it's coming up to our steps, because where we live at, why you made about three steps up from the sidewalk up to the steps, which made the place about this deep to the bottom of the street. And so these two boys come by in a jeep, and I says "No, Horace, let us stay here with her and this little baby." I says, "I got the bathtub full of water, and I've got everything, you know." It had been wet for several, you know, it had been raining for about a week before the hurricane hit. The ground was soppy wet before then. Well, that night when that hurricane struck, why we was in this house; of course, when you're in 2 and 3 story buildings and them all close together, you hear the roar, and anyway, finally when the eye of the storm passed over, the girl run over and she says, "how y'all making out?" I says, "We're doing along fine," I says, "how's your dad?" cause he was sick. "So far, so good." So next morning, she come back and the girl says, the one that had the little baby, she says, "well, this ain't been so bad, has it? She says, "Miss Melvin, will you stay with that baby while I carry her downtown? Big oaks, as big as a house with their roots turned right straight up in the air, and just layin' everywhere, you couldn't even go down the street.

S.T.: Was that Dora, that hurricance, did they have a name for that one?

M: I think that was Dora. I'm not sure, but I believe that was Dora.

S.T.: Was that the one that wiped out the dunes on the south end? ... Okay ...

J. B. P.: Yeah

M: Not only on this island, but ...

S.T.: Because I can look up the date on that, because they'll have it at the weather place or something like that. What were you talking about, Mrs. Ferguson?

L.F.: I'm so amused at my son Ricky he had not been through to that hurricane up North where it slowly got washed away and here was the hurricane coming at us here at 100 miles an hour and there wasn't anybody here to do

anything so he took our boat up St. Mary's River to put her in a safer place 3 o'clock in the morning. The moon was shining, but what did Ricky say to me - I didn't think it was so hot and beautiful, but . . . Ricky turns around and says, "Mother, . . . this is more fun than [sneaking], isn't it?"

S.T.: (Laughs) That was out here, a storm ...

J.B.P.: Storm that was reeling out, because they got the message that a 100 mile an hour wind coming, you know, ...

L.F.: We never had a real hurricane here ...

J.B.P.: What about back years ago when it washed the tables and all from the porches of that Capn's house down at Dungeness?

L.F.: 1899 ...

J.B.P.: That was before my time ...

L.F.: Yes, it was before my time, too, but the family talk about it so much. There was a desk sitting on the porch in the Captain's house and everybody saw it wash away down the river, and what impressed everybody so much was a bottle of ink standing on it, and it stayed there.

J.B.P.: A what on it?

L.F.: A bottle of ink

J.B.P.: Bottle of ink?

S.T.: And it didn't topple over or?

J.B.P.: Didn't fall over ...

S.T.: Gosh, was that a bad storm. I mean did it come into the Inland ...

M: The high tide, is what really gets you

L.F.: . . . that was just talk ...

J.B.P.: Yeah,

L.F.: But it made a great impression on me ...

J.B.P.: Just back in the '40's, it was bad enough ...

M: Yes, and I'll agree with that

J.B.P.: That was wind and raining and raining, and that was during the war and the thing was they was really needing the lumber and all that and we couldn't produce it for about 6 weeks. Anyway, the logs that we had cut, lots of them cut down and piling and all that stuff and by gosh, we had to

wait until we could get 'em out, but by golly, we finally got 'em out, a bunch of 'em, by drifting them across to where Doctor Johnson's house in Table Point and put 'em on the bluff and we put 'em on the rafts, and from there pulled them across to the mainland. 2 sawmills over there, one about 120,000 feet a week, and one at 55. Anyway, that was a rough time between that and all the OPA prices and all that put a fix on me. I'm telling you, rough time, really, trying to keep your crew people and working about 50 other people at that time and everybody looking hungry like a bunch of young mockin' birds with their mouths open. Had my troubles and theirs too.

L.F.: 1930 Bill Jones gave me a book . . . of the Island not too many years, you know. I think it certainly was true.

J.B.P.: It was wet enough

L.F.: . . .when I . . . the sand dunes had washed back some of it a quarter of a mile, the big sand dunes

J.B.P.: You remember South Point (south of Dungeness), right down there about . . . plenty of them sand dunes was high as that cabbage palmetto tree there. It's no sign of 'em anymore. It wasn't the cattle or the animals that did it. It was the storms, and it like to have washed the ocean to the inland side. One big sand dune there that it was about to go round it and tear it down next to the marsh on the inland side; if it had just lasted just a little bit longer, it would've went on through and had a South Point in the island instead of a point....

S.T.: It would've cut straight through to the . . .

J.B.P.: Cut straight through to the Inland Waterway.

M: We lost that whole row, you know, every bit of that beach ground, it's true, every house on there. It went in there and drove them rocks up there now and they built a road, you know, for you to go one way down the north end of the beach, and the other day, some fella got smart enough with the condominium business come in there, some strangers from ? I wanted to sell people . . . chairs between, see it ain't been taken off the maps, and he was going to sell the people the spots to set their lawn chairs out on the beach. Now that's about as dumb as you can get. Buy space to set your lawn chair on the beach...

S.T.: That's a hard way to make a livin', I think.

M: Well, I think he'll make a little before he's going to . . . himself out
I might find an honest way to make a living.

J.B.P.: . . . Canada and the United States was havin' them a feud about the fella ... what was the name? You saw it on television, didn't you?

S.T.: I don't watch television.

J.B.P.: 2 or 3 times it was on, about some of the bondsmen fellas went to Canada and got him by force and brought him back, you know without extradition papers, now they got them for kidnapping and all that stuff ...

S.T.: I could do what?

L.F.: Sometimes they ... for instance, you know, where they'll the old treasure old ... That is a true story and for any ... if they could be located ... that hole ... a ship came in

**Topic of conversation switches to a car that passes by ...

M: I don't know but one come breezin' through here a while ago ... south end...

L.F.: Who is that?

J.B.P.: I don't know.

S.T.: They came through this way earlier.

L.F.: Those people are busy doing that

J.B.P.: Oh, Larry.

M: He's going to the house now. We didn't know where he'd come from, he come between the houses.

**Conversation returns to previous discussion

S.T.: So a ship came to the island, and?

L.F.: This is absolutely a true story. A ship came in with no name on it they were up to Dungeness, and they wanted permission to go up in the tower and take sights. There wasn't one white person left at Dungeness, every other person they'd gone to a wedding or a funeral, and this was a white boy who became Judge Swann and he was a companion to one of the Green children..... they wouldn't say no to anything, so they did what they wanted, and they went up in the tower and took sights south of Dungeness and didn't find what they wanted and came back and they went up that road where you and I know, where the big treasure hole is and that hole when I was a kid, was big enough to drop a Model T Ford down. I tried to tell the park about it, but I tell you, if somebody would spend the time, which I'm not going to do ... we had a man called Harold Ober who was with us several years. I'm pretty sure he must be dead. He came to us just as a young fella ... from Harvard University; he was tutor to my brother. He became one of the most important of people, literary people. I don't know what he was called, but he became very famous. He was kinda ... all your young writers. He was ... I was crazy about him because he was ... and he ... forever. And we took him to Europe with us one summer and I have a photograph of about 12 of us made together on the Crown Princess Cecilia and have all those photographs of all of us together. And in

Newport, Rhode Island he found all these documents of Cumberland Island. The pirate who buried the treasure and was going to be executed gave the jailor all the maps and the information, and he got them both and came down here and he dug up the treasure and put it on the boat and got away with it. Now, Judge Swann was the kid and the only white person left at Dungeness and . . .

M: Not that I know of

L.F.: But you must find out

S.T.: He's (Judge Swann) at Fernandina?

L.F.: Because . . . he lost these . . .

J.B.P.: When I was a kid, I went and looked at the hole, and where they got the chest from ...

L.F.: I doubt if he's (Harold Ober) alive because he was 22 when I was 7. I was very much in love with him, and I remember cross the English Channel was terrible, and my whole family was sick, poor Harold Ober was sadly sick too, and the thing I would do was lie on his stomach with my arms around his neck ...

S.T.: He wrote an account... .

L.F.: He was very famous, many literary people in Europe would tell you about him.

S.T.: Didn't he write an account of Dungeness, didn't he write an article?

L.F.: He wrote of us a great deal.

S.T.: But he didn't write anything about Dungeness?

L.F.: He was working his way through college and he was like 20 when he came to us. Wasn't a bit famous at the time, no. But he wrote it ...

J.B.P.: Probably he wrote everything he could, if he was a writer ...

LF.: Oh gosh, I remember many years later seeing a picture of him on the cover of, I think it was, Time

S.T.: What do you think happened to the treasure?

J.B.P.: It was carried away.

L.F.: Those papers can be looked up in Newport, Rhode Island.

S.T.: Okay.

L.F.: Somebody has 'em, and that would be the place to look.

J.B.P.: The man who got in jail, the man was to be executed, and in jail he gave the jailer all the maps

L.F.: Everything

J.B.P.: ... and papers where the treasures were on the Island.

L.F.: That is true.

S.T.: And that man that dug up the treasure was Harold Ober.

L.F.: No.

S.T.: Okay. Harold Ober was here when that man

L.F.: The man dug up the treasure was the jailer. The pirate was going to be killed, and the pirate gave him everything how to get the treasure and he came down and got it

S.T.: And Judge Swan was the boy at Dungeness ...

L.F.: He was just a kid, and he had a companion, I think it was a Green one of Gerald Green's.

S.T.: Okay, I'll look that up.

L.F.: I've always wanted to do that. It takes too much time.

S.T.: Where's the hole? Where's the treasure hole, or can you tell?

L.F.: It's right . . .

J.B.P.: Not too far from where the new well was or a little bit north.

S.T.: cemetery ...

L.F.: The new cemetery. It's right behind there in the woods.

J.B.P.: No, it's back about maybe 600 yards ...

L.F.: . . . extensive work down that road.

S.T.: Is that a road? Is that Nightengale Trail?

L.F.: I must take you to it.

J.B.P.: That must be the... I don't know whether I'd even be able to find the old road now or not. Doubt if you could ... the old road used to be the river road from the cemetery.

S.T.: It's behind the cemetery?

J.B.P.: Pretty close to where that new artesian well has been put out in the last few years.

L.F.: Behind the Captain's House.

S.T.: Okay.

L.F.: Not too far.

J.B.P.: Yeah, but it's

S.T.: Okay. I've read about that treasure. I read an account, a newspaper or some kind of account in the library. I read about that. But I didn't ...

L.F.: I'd like to see that ...

S.T.: Would you? Okay, I'll see if I can't find it again.

L.F.: I've forgotten the names

S.T.: Okay.

L.F.: There was supposed to be another treasure ... anyhow, ...

J.B.P.: You know there were treasures on the Island, but you never know who got 'em. You know they moved by now. I 'magine they have ...

L.F.: ... Fernandina, what would you call it, the stronghold of the pirates and we always really had ...

S.T.: There's supposed to be a well on the north end that the Spanish dropped I think \$9,000 worth of silver down the well whenever the ... during one of the, you know, attacks of the island

L.F.: When my brother was working in a museum in London he ...

J.B.P.: Well, I guess that's about it

L.F.: We brought home some maps ...

J.B.P.: ... I haven't told you a thing ... static, it wasn't really something that to do you too much good

M: She might have to do a lot of research on getting some of these dates ...

J.B.P.: Yeah, that's

M:

[S.T.: That's Isabelle

L.F.: Is her half-daughter arriving?

M: at Greyfield

J.B.P.: Well, I'd a been 13 years old.

S.T.: Do you remember that hurricane?

M: We can ...

J.B.P.: Well, I remember the one in '26.

S.T.: '26?

J.B.P.: 1926 sometime all in that time. We, they had it so in Florida .. Miami, West Palm Beach I went with ... down there

J.B.P.: pick up his wife in a model T car ... tar and they had telephone lines across the road and everything else.

S.T.: Do you remember coming here? Do you remember what kind of damage it did?

J.B.P.: Yeah, it did damage all over the county ... Yeah, we felt it when they had that bad one down the state, down in West Palm Beach the boats was all over, up on the hill and everyplace ... you know way away from the water. Yeah, I remember pretty good about it ... but I didn't remember so much about what the damage they heard of on the Island.

S.T.: Okay ...

[CHANGED LOCATION]

J.B.P.: South end . . . freshwater, I mean fresh . . . that was a good rain, . . . had 500 head of cattle and they'd stay in there for a good while and the mid Island they had pretty good grazing

S.T.: Where'd you have to move the cows to after that?

J.B.P.: Well, they just moved back up the Island, most of 'em, but some stayed in there, but ...

S.T.: What I wanted to see is if you can remember when you were a boy, any place that was an open field that's grown up now? If you remember any areas were open fields, even if you couldn't get down a real boundaries if I made it general?

J.B.P.: . . . this side south of Plum Orchard it wasn't being planted, but they kept the little trees cut out, when I was a kid, they kept it chopped down. I guess they was hoping to replant it again, you know claim it again, but they just kept the bushes and trees and all cut out.

S.T.: You think that was Cotton Field at one time?

J.B.P.: . . . I imagine there used to be everything planted there.

L.F.'s cook: How long are you going to be here?

S.T.: Just whenever y'all run me off.

J.B.P.: Okay ...

S.T.: I'll put it in, you want me to watch it?

L.F.'s cook: I want you to tell us how to get to Christmas Creek and how to go about flounder gigging ...

J.B.P.: You better be sure it's an ebb tide ...

[CHANGED LOCATION]

J.B.P.: At Plum Orchard, that's a big field out there, you cut all kind of yellow long leaf yellow pine out of there, but I can't remember when that was in cultivation. This would be south of the Plum Orchard Canal ... south of the canal inlet, on the main road on both sides. Where you see that open area ... where you see all through the woods, that was, when I was a kid, that was being kept clean, an open field, all the little trees were being kept chopped off by the estate's labor.

S.T.: Was that all the way to Duckhouse Trail?

J.B.P.: No, that didn't go, probably was a 200 acre field back in there that was

S.T.: That was in front or behind Plum? - that was in front.

J.B.P.: Well, that would be south of Plum... Plum Orchard Canal, south of Plum Orchard Canal. You see the canal on there?

S.T.: Oh, I see, this would be south of that... in that field.

J.B.P.: It shows the field on that map ...

S.T.: You see, this is Plum. It shows the building and then it's got the driveway that goes in front of it, and this is Duckhouse Trail, and this would have been, this is that, where the birds come in, that slough area... is that where you're talking about? And then there's a creek further back from that? Is that the canal?

J.B.P.: The canal is south of Plum Orchard a mile

S.T.: Oh, this would have been down here, then. Okay. So all the way down to there, to Plum.

J.B.P.: That's where they used to keep it cleared out, you know, was on this side of the canal... on this side, going into the swamp fields, there's some rough land between the swamp field and this other field, this high land field I'm just trying to name all these places, but there's so many moons things have slipped.

S.T.: But that would have been west of the Main Road, or was it east ...? east and west

J.B.P.: I used to own, I had some land in there, but the government took away from me.

S.T.: The government took it...?

J.B.P.: Yeah

L.F.: ... have to go ...

S.T.: Okay, that's fine. I'm sorry I kept you so long

APPENDIX D

Following is the transcription of an interview with J.B. Peeples, long-time foreman for Mrs. Lucy Ferguson. The interview was conducted by Sally Turner on September 10, 1983. The purpose of the interview was to further question Mr. Peeples regarding fire history, land management practices and storm history of Cumberland Island from the early 1900's to the present.

Interview with J. B. Peeples on Cumberland Island
September 10, 1983

J.B.P.: ... and you know _____ work with me
not poison ...

S.T.: I tell you, you're hard to get hold of, 'cause you work long hours,
for sure.

J.B.P.: Well, I get out at the crack of day and I come back in about 9 or
so. I work in _____, 27 miles from home right now.

S.T.: Well, you have a long drive then, too, don't you?

J.B.P.: It's not a very long drive, but all of it takes up your time,
your day...

S.T.: Okay, do you know Dr. Coleman Johnson?

J.B.P.: Oh, yeah.

S.T.: Well, he had talked about a fire in about 1922 at Old Duckhouse Road.
That would have been right around here, near Willow Pond ... do you remember
that fire?

J.B.P.: Oh, yeah ...

S.T.: Was that a big fire?

J.B.P.: Yes, a pretty good fire _____ back
of the Yankee Paradise, right on through to Willow Pond. That's many moons
ago.

S.T.: I know in 1922, that's been a while.

J.B.P.: Yeah, that's about it.

S.T.: Do you know how far north and south that fire went. Did it go
very far north?

J.B.P.: It was _____, gosh, I think ... about 2 miles
I imagine.

S.T.: Did it go all the way up to Duckhouse, the new Duckhouse.

J.B.P.: No, I didn't know of a fire in that area. Used to burn those
sloughs off in the right time so the ducks could get around in with a
canoe to duck shoot, and ...

S.T.: Y'all used to do that?

J.B.P.: They used to do it. They'd open one end from Whitney Lake right
on back south into the sloughs, all back in through there, with a canoe.
And in the duck time, you know, trying to shoot ducks. But then they'd go

in through there, just looking at the alligators and the birds, and they something like a flamethrower, like these things you'd burn they'd go in and burn some of that stuff, ... cattails and all that stuff go up and they'd try to go with a canoe, you know, and ...

S.T.: How often would they do that?

J.B.P.: Well, they would try to catch it when the water was low enough that they could go through with that big old blow pot. They had like you heat metal with? ... and _____ cut their way through there, so from one opening to the other, you see... and I don't know how the fire got started between Yankee's Paradise, south of Yankee's Paradise and Willow Pond, but that's some bad land in there, like it is up at the north end opposite Brick Hill. We used to call that the bad land up there because every few years there'd come a fire through there. About the time the timber'd get going good, the timber ... the last time the fire was in there, I had a contract with someone logging to a boy that was just back from the war, a pilot during the war, world war II. He and two other fellas, two brothers, Burton, Wilbur and called him Red Wilbur and this Gross boy was _____ for the county _____ back across, two of 'em at one time ... Squaw came up and found 'em. Anyway, they were cutting timber and after the war this boy had been through all the war, and came back and it wasn't two months after he got back before he wanted to contract for some of the logging up there for me at _____ in the area where it burned. So it was right after the war, and that burned through there.

S.T.: That was at Brick Hill?

J.B.P.: The Brick Hill area... and this other happened when I was just a kid of a boy, and Dr. Johnson was about my age, you know, Johnson, we were about close age. He just died last year.

S.T.: Yeah, that's what I heard ...

J.B.P.: He was by here just a short time before he died, and he talked with me about all the things, and that it looked like it was much better for him, he went in there and stretched out on the settee a while and talked about the old days and all that stuff, and dropped off to sleep. I could tell he was in mighty bad shape. He had bad heart trouble, and we had things in common, you know Anyway, he was a nice fella

S.T.: Well that fire at Brick Hill, what were about the boundaries of that area that burned back then? Was it a particular area?

J.B.P.: Oh, it burned pretty much from High Point land back to the ... 'bout like it did the last time in '81, and several times in my lifetime that burned because they call it the bad land. Lightning hit us in the old original trees whenever you get timber just where it's thinned out, to where it's just some of the old heart timber, that kind of draws the fire, you know. As far as lightning; if it's going to catch a tree, explodes on the underbrush and _____ That was the last real big fire that they had that was right after world war II. They had this up there last year but anyway the land at Table Point burned out.

2 or 3 times in my time.

S.T.: How much of that would burn?

J.B.P.: In the Table Point area?

S.T.: Uh, huh ...

J.B.P.: Several hundred acres.

S.T.: Would it be just that top part of it, or like, how far south did it usually go?

J.B.P.: It would go from the marsh on the King's Bottom side on back to the woods west of Johnson Pond and that area, back to Table Point. That's about the area is burned, 250 acres or that's happened pretty regularly, you know. Gets pretty heavy with underbrush.

S.T.: Right ...

J.B.P.: The lightning hits, and puts, ... started, and then generally, back then they had roads all through the places, and and grapes and all that stuff, backburn and get it stopped that way ... lots of times a fire like that ... the rain would generally some help stop it, you know. It kept going ... you have to fight fire with fire, you know. You have to backburn whenever you get a fire coming; you've got to backburn so to keep your fire low, so it won't keep jumping.

S.T.: Right, right...

L.F.:

million dollars,
and
every
and he teaches
in good condition
never had noticed

J.B.
waste of time and energy...

J.B.P.: Oh well, we don't know it all. That doesn't mean a way, I

L.F.: The ditches are still there. If somebody could explain to them that they have got to go after a rain and they've got the machines and everything to keep the ditches open and it's a simple job to do if you have the machine.

J.B.P.: Well, we didn't do it really like they did in the old days. We just made a little quick job and didn't think nothing about it. From Dungeness back to Plum Orchard was a good many years that we kept it up, you know, and didn't think nothing much about it. Just run a grading machine through there and level it off a little bit, and kept the straw

out of the road, so that you could work your grading machine without it clogging up and all that stuff, get that drug off the road. Cut little ditches from the main road, you know, on each side so the water could get away and all that.

L.F.: In many places, they tried to build the roads
such a simple thing

J.B.P.: They'll get to that one day; they'll get to that one day, and no use in worrying about it...

L.F.: . . .

J.B.P.: You old woman in a hurry; took 84 years to get

L.F.: . . .

J.B.P.: Well, that's their way of doing in, and don't worry about it ...

L.F.: . . .

S.T.: (Laughs)

L.F.: he came back to me in a few days

S.T.: Mrs. Ferguson, do you remember when they used to burn off the sweet water area?

L.F.: What is she calling sweet water?

J.B.P.: The sloughs, that's from Whitney Lake back to in behind Duckhouse We used to burn that so we could get in there duck shooting, you know. The manager of the Island used to take his canoe and help with a paddle to push him and go through with a big blowpot and cut those cattails and all down so when the duck shootin' time come we could get back in through there. I was telling her about they did in the fall, the late fall and first of the winter so that there'd be better duck shooting. Used to be thousands of ducks

L.F.: I told her I was
Duckhouse machines 3 days to do it in

J.B.P.: Now that was back in the Carnegie Mooney days and we didn't have to worry about how you going to pay taxes and all these things.

S.T.: To do that now, they'd have to go in and dredge it all out in order to open those.

L.F.: J.B. and I could do it in a couple of days if we had the machines.

J.B.P.: Yeah, I used to keep up until a few years ago to go through the machinery and chopper when they didn't have a bulldozer. After they got

the bulldozer we'd angle the blade and go down and knock all the underbrush out, off the roads you know and lay it over like raking hay, just roll it back. And that was 10 times faster than labor, you know, men could do it. Did that just for a pasttime more or less.

L.F.: because we used to do
these things and so many friends that we took there and

J.B.P.: You ever seen the movin' picture about
and all that turtles and all that jazz? They showed it last year, I believe
we got the old films and put 'em together, the old tapes and it took a little
while to make 'em do, but they could have 'em refixed, they should be refixed.
It's pretty interesting ...

S.T.: That would be great. Yeah. When do you remember the last time they
burned off the sloughs. Was that like in the early 1900's when they quit
that?

J.B.P.: No, see I'm, I was born in 1911. That fire Dr. Johnson was talking
about - we were just kid of a boys then - and it's been so many, plenty of
'em, but you know they'd get it stopped before it went too far, but the rain
most of the time helped put 'em out. If they'd have a little fire, they'd
have to watch it for weeks after the darn fire, and cut all the old dead
trees down out of the way of it, and rake around. And long as some smoke,
they'd have to keep pouring water to keep it from breakin' out again.

L.F.: Why do they call it sweet water? The slough?

J.B.P.: The sloughs

S.T.: From Willow Pond up to Lake Whitney

L.F.:

J.B.P.: I've been on the machinery so long and so much until I got to
where the person has to talk pretty clear for me to understand them and
I got where I can't ... she don't talk loud enough for me to understand
her now. She says I talk too loud. You want to talk plain, where I can
hear you.

L.F.: Nobody can hear me

J.B.P.: Well, quit talkin' through your nose.

L.F.: my throat and ...

J.B.P.: Stretch your back out to where your vocal cords sound off like a
bull alligator.

L.F.: [voice]

J.B.P.: Sound off like a peacock ...

S.T.: You know the area that they call Ray Field?

J.B.P.: Ray Field?

L.F.: Yes, I know it well ...

J.B.P.: Coupla of _____ back over there ...

S.T.: Has that area burned before?

J.B.P.: Not up to that, but _____ over the hill where you could stop it ...

L.F.: _____ from Ray Field right up to the

J.B.P.: Anyway from the Table Point, King's Bottom, I've seen all that burn through there. Anyway, soon as the Johnson Pond back here on the north of the Johnson Pond burned ... come up from King's Bottom, they had a fire right through from the marsh all the way across there one time to end of Johnson Pond.

S.T.: The South end?

J.B.P.: That's been years ago. I can't say today when, the north side of it,

S.T.: Down to the north side of Johnson Pond ...

J.B.P.: Yeah, the north side of Johnson Pond ... and the King's Bottom area ... coming in from Table Point badlands.

L.F.: I believe

J.B.P.: Pardon?

L.F.: _____ one time ...

J.B.P.: You mean, you didn't burn it, it burned itself. Lightning caused

S.T.: Lightning caused these up at Table Point?

J.B.P.: Most of 'em, I think. Might have been a careless campfire or some poachers or something on that order, you can't say, but always try to think it was lightning caused the fires. Most of the fires they had back then.

S.T.: So, whenever you were lumbering and cutting down the timber, were most of the trees you took down, did they most of them have fire scars.

J.B.P.: Well, they'd been scorched. We had to cut them after that because bugs would get in them. If it's cut. If it burns in the summer like when you have the lightning in the summer that causes you to have to cut lots of the timber because to keep the bugs from killing all of it. And when the boys got _____ out to World War II that was worse than lightning

they thought. Then the fire came through from High Point end, not all the way from High Point from about the Candler's land, south through to Brick Hill area and they all left a little strip of pines; you can see where the big pines still area. That didn't burn, but all the bad land with the underbrush got so thick, it sweep through there.

S.T.: That was after the War?

J.B.P.: After W.W. II; not too long after W.W. II. But say, when Jack Gross got "drowned," you remember? They were cutting up there in the area where the last big fire, where the fire burned, you know, a couple of years ago, a year ago, over a year ago, two years, I guess. Anyway, that had burned right after the war, so that's been, how many years, 23? 22 or 3? But anyway, we've been lucky not to have a fire this year. When it comes in later after this heat, more than likely, we'll have some more lightning and we'll have some more fires, that's started, wherever you got some good big mature old trees. It'll hit that and start the fire.

S.T.: Do you ever remember on Pratt's Trail [east of Stafford], do you know where Pratt's Trail is? There's some, this is the main road right here, and then Pratt's Trail is right here; there's Stafford, and there's an open area, looks like it might have been full of water that ran along to the west side of Pratt's Trail, and now it's got pines in it; it's like a pocket of pines. Has that area ever burned down in there?

J.B.P.: I've seen that burn. Yeah.

L.F.: J.B., that's the pine

just before

big

pinos and a pretty good ditch

J.B.P.: Well, that's down, that's on down this side ...

S.T.: Close to where they ...?

J.B.P.: When was the last fire from the new field back in to Nancy Fancy's you call it? How many years it been since they had a fire in that area?

L.F.:

J.B.P.: It wasn't no big fire ...

L.F.: Cynthia

J.B.P.: No, there hasn't been a bad fire in that area in a long time. Back when they was taking in the new field, when they had, you know, the old piling trees, high the old big oaks; we'd pull 'em up and drag 'em up in a big pile and make a fence around the new field. That been a long time.

S.T.: That's close to Nancy's Fancy?

J.B.P.: Yeah, and I think a fire got out from that toward Nancy's Fancy in the badlands there. that fire when they started clearing some land, back where the pit pines are, south of Stafford Field, back in that area.

S.T.: Uh uh, back in there...

J.B.P.: If you got a fire in there, it didn't do so bad, 'cause there wasn't much pine I planted all the pines you see back over there that was after W.W.II, several years after W.W. II.

S.T.: You think it's real important to have the pine in order to have a big fire, a hot fire? Like, you don't usually find hot fires in just the oak, do you? The oak palmetto or the

J.B.P.: Oh well, the palmettos makes a mighty much fire, like ... looks like old tires are burning or something like that, it makes such a hot fire. But, that tyty, well, where you have gallberries and tyty is generally where your fire explodes. That old tyty stuff kinda looks like dog fur, looks like gallberry, only so thick you can't hardly crawl, you can't go over it, and you can't go under it ...

L.F.: How about

J.B.P.: It's burned three times in my lifetime.

L.F.: Fire is a terrible thing here on Cumberland

S.T.: I know it, I know it. And it's usually on the North End, too. I mean, you haven't had that many hot fires below Stafford, have you?

J.B.P.: No, I don't know of any fires around Old House Creek area and that badland there. I don't know of any fires to speak of. Way back, it seemed like it was something north of an area there that wasn't too big an area, but there's some bad land in there, what we call bad lands, where they have so much tyty and all that stuff like that. But, ...

S.T.: There haven't been many hot fires?

J.B.P.: Most of your bad fires have been up north of Plum Orchard.

L.F.: I don't know how you feel about this, James.

J.B.P.: I wouldn't worry about them because the money it would take to spray the trees and all would do more harm than good. You wouldn't want to bother that because it don't amount to that much where the young pines are being killed. It kills little quarter of acre spots and like that where the thick pines are, but still, that wouldn't be worth the thousands of dollars it takes to go out there. That'd be a waste of your taxpayers' money.

L.F.:

It's something I haven't seen in my life before

J.B.P.: Your young pines'll get beetles in them at times, kill out a little spot from lightning hitting the spot - they maybe just started it.

L.F.: Remember,

J.B.P.: On the mainland, we had spots like that ... I know on Cumberland Island I've been seeing it since I was a kid. I've seen it at Yankee's Paradise; there would be acres and acres of big pines would die, and that's the reason they started cutting timber over here was because the bugs was getting more and more each year and

S.T.: Was that because of the fire, and then the bugs ...

J.B.P.: The fires
would draw lightning

The old mature trees

END OF SIDE ONE OF TAPE

S.T.: In about 1963, south of new Duck House, you know where Yankee Paradise comes down, and there's the New Duck House, do you remember a fire? That wouldn't have been but twenty years ago.

J.B.P.: Well, there was one in there, but it didn't amount to ... it wasn't such a big area. I cut the timber after the fire in that area. It was ... asking about the fire on the New Duck House Road, you know, where the tall pines grew back in there, and I went in there and cut them after the fire?

L.F.:

J.B.P.: Yeah, the fire started them. The fire burned the trees, and the bugs started in on them, and I went in there and cut them, and tried to replant them, but it didn't do so well.

S.T.: That was the recent one in 1963? And you said that ... you mentioned before a fire south of Yankee Paradise that was real hot in about 1924, or '27.

J.B.P.: Well, that was in the area you're talking about, ...

S.T.: ... that's about the same area ?

J.B.P.: ... south of Yankee Paradise. That was a good hot fire went through the area there. It was pretty much stopped before it got to the Plum Orchard Beach Road. Forestry people came over and cut some fire lines in there; got ahead of the fires, got them stopped.

S.T.: That was in the '20's?

J.B.P.: No, that was since then. That was probably in the '63's, maybe, that time.

S.T.: Okay.

J.B.P.: ... that that happened, wasn't it? That's been 20 years ago.

S.T.: And where were the trees that got infested so bad by the bark beetles? You said that was at Yankee Paradise?

J.B.P.: Well, different places ... wherever you had a fire, in the summer you're going to have beetles to clean them up. You know, that goes along with the fire. When the beetles hit, you've got to clean cut it. Pretty much green cutting.

S.T.: Okay. Where is Squaw Town?

J.B.P.: Squaw Town is ...

S.T.: Where is Squaw Town ... I've read a lot about Squaw Town.

J.B.P.: That's where Perkins out on the Squaw Town Creek ... where the Perkinses live.

S.T.: Is it near Red Bridge, is it that point right there?

J.B.P.: Between Red Bridge and Cow Head Bridge in that area. Cow Head Bridge is ...

L.F.: the house is there

J.B.P.: You've been there, haven't you?

L.F.: They have a big

J.B.P.: What old field was that, do you remember? What old field? I never did keep up with the names of the old fields.

S.T.: Here, I've got something to show y'all ...

L.F.: Squaw Town ...

J.B.P.: I know it, but it was ... it was ... Was that Holson-Daws?

L.F.: Olson-Daws

S.T.: They called it McIntosh Field?

J.B.P.: Was that McIntosh in at Squaw Town, between Cow Head Bridge and

S.T.: Right, and then there's Holzendorf. Mrs. Ferguson, this map was done in 1898, and it's got on it, let me turn it that way, all the old fields, all the names of them, King's Bottom Field and Ray Field, Plum Orchard Field, all the different ... Terrapin Point Field, all these ...

L.F.: Brick Hill

S.T.: Brick Hill ...

J.B.P.: I remember when they used to try to keep some of these old fields open, you know, kept it underbrushed and all the little trees cut out and all that. For years, the Carnegie Estate did that, and they had the all ... How many hundred miles of road did they used to have on the Island?

L.F.:

J.B.P.: I say, how many miles did they call it?

L.F.:

J.B.P.: Several hundred miles of roads, you know, it's about gone out now.

L.F.:

J.B.P.: Had crossroads there, far apart ...

L.F.:

J.B.P.: Back roads had marsh, road out there close to the marsh and they had roads out here east of the main road, and they had crossroads all back to across the other, and they used to keep them open. That way you could run a horse as fast as you want to go ...

L.F.: They were great protection.

J.B.P.: Yes, it would help. It wouldn't cost much. Take a little bulldozer and lay all that stuff to the side that's covering up the roads. One man get out there and take two months or more to go over it and knock them back out of the way and clear the roads for fire protection. I could do it in two months with a bulldozer ... clear it back

S.T.: From these old maps, you could ... these have a lot of the old roads on them.

J.B.P.: Yeah, they're supposed to show on the old maps, the old roads.

S.T.: They've got ...

J.B.P.: I forget how many hundred of miles of road they used to call it, and I used to have [hog] trap on every road on the Island from one end to the other. I'd have to take the 5 tons of corn it would take to go around and scatter out for the first time, and then I'd go back and put my automatic gates down where they all go in and I'd put plenty of corn and all of them could eat ... pens for the hogs, and then I'd castrate the little males, and take out the We'd never sell a sow after she'd had pigs, but that was the reason we had so many hogs, and we'd load up several barge loads, take them, haul oats and what not in the old days ... the last days when the market started to

all about you know; we'd have a truck to meet the barge over there and run them out of the barge take them on to the markets. They'd furnish lots of meat for this America, I can tell you that, because this place is the best natural hog range there is in America, and by a little help, they do raise fast, you know. Through the hard times, we used to put out a little corn, at different times, to ... you know, so they'd come to the places we had the oil and bags tacked onto trees. But the hard times, we'd throw out a little feed ...

S.T.: corn ...

J.B.P.: ... and these hogs would raise more hogs per acre than they would on a farm. They had the marsh in the summer for herbs, and all that, and then they'd come out to freshwater lakes; every acorn crop they'd go to the lakes, you see, and it was just the best national range in America ...

S.T.: Did you used to go to Douglas ... or Valdosta

J.B.P.: We sent stuff to Valdosta, every place.

S.T.: You ever known a man named G.W. Turner in Douglas?

J.B.P.: Oh yeah, ...

S.T.: That's my grandfather ...

L.F.: Who's your grandfather?

S.T.: G. W. Turner. He used to own the livestock company in Douglas.

J.B.P.: We've sold stuff to that market, and have it hauled there mostly. Yeah, I've heard the name. I can't place him exactly, but all the old-timers would call me up to haul out the peoples, but any place I go now, I mean lots of people know me that I don't know. Times have changed pretty fast.

S.T.: Yeah, that's right; that's right.

L.F.:

They got paid 25¢ a day

J.B.P.: Yeah, that was my timbering, and livestock was my livelihood for many moons. You know, I loved even sawmilling all my life since I was a kid, timbering, planting trees in the winter. In the winter, I'd generally have 5 or 6 machines running over several counties; I'd be planting trees, and I'd try to have them running together in big tracts from Clay County right on back up through Glynn County, , Camden and Nassau

S.T.: .. all over, yeah

J.B.P.: I guess I was the one who first started on tree planting, and I've had to control burn on many a tract, you know, so we could plant back in. We didn't harrow the ground and bed it all like you do now; we just planted them and the after timber was cut through the and right on ... We had little crawler tractors ...

S.T.: Y'all didn't do that here, though, control burn?

J.B.P.: No, it's never been, I don't know why, they was always. I used to beg them. After cutting timber in an area, I'd tell them, let's burn it and replant and put ten trees for each one we're taking out, and all that; couldn't get them to listen.

S.T.: What about Swamp Field? Did y'all burn that?

J.B.P.: Yeah, I cleared it and burned it Muck will burn on and on; you've got to catch the moisture just right.

S.T.: How often would y'all do that - would y'all burn off the swamp fields?

J.B.P.: Part of that swamp field was burned every year for years, about a 200 acre spot.

S.T.: What part of it? Would that be the ...?

J.B.P.: That would be from one end to the other, from Plum Orchard Canal right on back to the south end. They burned that for cattle range. That was the best cattle range, you know, for summer grazing. They had different types of grass planted and horses and cattle would gang to it. They had as many as 500 head of cattle at a time.

S.T.: Would that go from Main Road back to ?

J.B.P.: Not from the Main Road, just to swamp area, the swamp field area was just about 200 acres, as far as the eye could see from one end of it to the other ... I cleared that again back 20 years ago, I guess, and we put another floodgate on the Plum Orchard end so it would be out of sight on the road. After the government got it, I just quit with it, but I had it all back to good stuff, like it used to be when the old had it.

S.T.: Those fires never caught anything else on fire, did they?

J.B.P.: No, they always had it fixed in good shape where they couldn't. They'd have it harrowed all the way around the edges of it, and then come in ... Back then they used blowpots; now they got a flamethrower, you know, type thing. I've got one and keep it in back of the truck. Just haven't taken it out this year; they're used for that kind of stuff. They use two of them; one ... they get 30 feet apart from the fire line that way they don't burn it and let the fire suck together so going across, you know, even if the wind is out of the ... tend to burn on the west wind because not winds when you got a west wind. That's your best wind to burn on.

S.T.: What about this area north of Willow Pond, actually northwest of Willow Pond, there's an open; it's open now. It's just got a bunch of grass growing in there, and Old Duckhouse crosses it. You know the area I'm talking about?

J.B.P.: Yeah ...

S.T.: ... Do you remember that burning?

J.B.P.: Well, it's been fires about every place you can mention ...

S.T.: I'm convinced that everything has burned on this Island at one time or another ...

J.B.P.: It has burned so many years apart, and it causes so much harm when it burns. Now I have said all the time, and beg them to burn it about every 3-5 years to keep it from getting too rough. Let it have a chance for the pine mass and all to get re-established and you know 5 years, 5-8 years wherever you've got a good stand of young pine you don't burn; you surround that. That'd be the best insurance against fires is the old saying, "Fight fire with fire," and to control burn it when it won't burn up your big oaks. Big timber won't get too much mulch down there. That stuff'll just keep burning whenever it gets too hot. If you let it get too much accumulation on the ground. That up yonder next year ought to be burned again where that hot fire ...

S.T.: It's ready to go.

J.B.P.: ... It's ready to be burned again.

S.T.: The area at Table Point, I know in '77, that area burned real hot. Do you remember when the last real big fire was before that, before 1977?

J.B.P.: It must have been along in '63 or something on that order.

S.T.: '63 ...

L.F.: Plum Orchard

J.B.P.: Pardon?

L.F.: Plum Orchard in '63

J.B.P.: Yeah, about '63.

S.T.: And that burned from Table Point down to Plum?

J.B.P.: Table Point not down to Plum, but within 3/4 of a mile of Plum, just at Table Point bad area, but at that time other small one. They got it stopped before they got to Plum.

S.T.: How often do they have big fires up there [Table Point], if you had to say, like about

J.B.P.: Well, in the rough ground where it gets so many years on the way, you know, towards a fire, it's close after another fire to get it stopped right easy. And it's been fires ever since I can remember, I can't. You know, it'd have to be about things and times and what occasion to make it rhyme up, and I couldn't pinpoint the dates.

S.T.: Okay.

L.F.: You can remember people on the Island now Think of the hunters they

J.B.P.: Well, they've been lucky with the campers and all. They've been pretty cautious with them.

S.T.: Campers. They haven't had any camper fires I don't think since the Park's had it.

J.B.P.: They're pretty cautious. They stress to them what the danger could be and all that. Person mean enough to do it could really make a fire, you know, a person wants to willfully set a fire they could really make a mess.

S.T.: Well, I think ...

J.B.P.: I haven't told you anything much that would do you any good.

S.T.: You sure have. What I've done is mapping out the areas, like this is the area at Table Point that usually burns from what I've picked up, and this is the Johnson Pond area, kind of around Plum Orchard, down to Yankee Paradise.

J.B.P.: I've seen most all that burn. I mean all this Yankee Paradise up to the Greyfield area, and on back to the Johnson Pond, which is where ... where is the Johnson All that area in there I've seen different times, I've seen it burn.

S.T.: Okay, and then I picked up, in this area, in the Willow Pond area, and then that little dry area in there, I picked up fire, and then this place, south of new Duckhouse, just right in that open grassy area, I picked up. When they were burning the sloughs, would they do that about every year?

J.B.P.: They did that about every the time they had to have the water just the right height, sometimes get in there with hip boots and wade all through there, and try to burn some of that cattail off, so that you see the ducks and get the boats through and all that stuff.

S.T.: And when do you remember this little area down south of Stafford below that planted pine area, that's got all those, it's just like a pocket of pine that runs along there. Do you remember the last time that it burned? Because those pines in that area don't look that big, don't look to be but about ...

J.B.P.: Well, like they were cut out, kind of worms in the other fire, is the reason they're no bigger ...

S.T.: Oh, I see.

J.B.P.: And used to have a little portable mill here on the Island whenever an area like that got burned, did some sawmilling, all that kind of stuff.

S.T.: Just take them all down. Looked like those pines would be really the only thing that would burn because it's oaks all the way around it.

J.B.P.: Well, where the oaks are around it, God, that's where it will make a fire in those palmettos; that's about fifty feet high. It goes up like diesel. The hotter it gets, the higher the flame will go. They really make a fire, and in that open area it won't burn so high, but in where the oaks are it'll singe the tops out of all of them. And it won't kill oak unless it's real or something like that, but you know, don't kill them so bad. Messed them up

S.T.: Well, I think I ought to start writing ...

J.B.P.: I don't remember exactly when that was burned down in that area. I know they thought it caught from where they was clearing what they call New Field back where the pretty straight rows of pines opposite that and come on through into the area where you talking about the pines look too small. There used to be pines up to 80 feet tall; tallest trees I've cut on the Island were King's Bottom, and they were ... I cut some spuds, and I cut some, several piling 115 feet long ... had to drag them all the way out of the woods, down to the water with a tractor. We'd load them on the truck

S.T.: huge ...

J.B.P.: But, I have cut a few piling 115 feet long. That's a long tree.

S.T.: That is.

J.B.P.: ... piling ...

S.T.: When were those cut in there down below Stafford, out of that area?

J.B.P.: Some they cut during the war, some ... and that was big pines. But areas of that you're talking about there was cut back in ... gosh, before the war, way back before the war ... and that been probably in '38 or '40, something like that. It was ...

S.T.: Well, those trees in there now don't look like they could be ...

J.B.P.: No, there's not many, just volunteers. Black pine in there now. Used to be most of that would be slash, yellow slash. Now what's taken over the most of them is - I planted some in there; they didn't do so good. That was after the war. On the Island in all I planted 2 million pines.

S.T.: Wow ...

J.B.P.: I begged the man that was superintendent plant them in the areas where they got the oak trees
Two different ones said, "Oh, we're going to ; you go ahead and plant them. We'll oaks, and they just let them stand there and to nothing." Much of these big oaks are. It's useless to plant pines under them.

S.T.: You can't, no.

J.B.P.: I begged them not to do it. The managers that got after the manager; they were supposed to be foresters and whatnot, and I don't ... Two of them I know didn't hardly know a slash from a black pine. And they didn't know hardly from a dog piddle.

S.T.: What about south of Greyfield, or down to Dungeness. Did that area ever burn?

J.B.P.: No, I never heard of that.

S.T.: It didn't look like it had.

J.B.P.: Not much there to burn.

S.T.: It's just mostly open there. I was trying to see if I had anything else. I've got some dates from different places, like east of Hickory Hill in 1925, but the way it looks is it just depended on if it was dry enough and the winds were right ...

J.B.P.: East of Brickhill, you say?

S.T.: Of Hickory Hill.

J.B.P.: Oh, Hickory Hill
Well, that's part of the part that burned way back, back when I was a young chap. The area back in between that and King's Bottom, you know, made a pretty hot fire.

S.T.: But that would've been ...

J.B.P.: ... that would've been north ...

S.T.: ... of Willow Pond?

J.B.P.: ... north of Hickory Hill.

S.T.: Well, Hickory Hill runs

J.B.P.: Yeah, I know ...

S.T.: north and south, so east of it would have been somewhere along in here. It either would have been this area where Willow Pond is, or the area north of that. Do you know what

J.B.P.: I don't remember much about a fire in that area because that wouldn't have amounted to anything so much because that would've have been easy to stop because ... it wouldn't have been very hard to stop in that area. We're going to burn that, I hope this year, because the area in there ... it makes a pretty good grazing for cattle and plus it's getting too rough.

S.T.: North of old Duckhouse.

J.B.P.: East of the Brickhill.

S.T.: In this part here where Willow Pond is, or north of that.

J.B.P.: Well, it'd be along in, opposite Willow Pond, Mrs. Ferguson's land across this Willow Pond.

S.T.: Probably right about there?

J.B.P.: Hers comes in across part of the Willow Pond, and we was going to burn what's inside the fence, and try to, you know, do a little bit. We was going to be do it last year, and times got to a point that we just didn't get around to it.

S.T.: You're ready to eat, aren't you?

L.F.: Yes.

J.B.P.: Let's eat a bite while we're resting.

END OF TAPE