Historical Archaeology Research Designs for Gamble Plantation, Ellenton, Florida

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts Department of Anthropology College of Arts and Sciences University of South Florida

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Date of Approval November 12, 2008

Keywords: slavery, Judah P. Benjamin, Robert Gamble, applied anthropology, historic preservation, anthropology of museums, Manatee River settlement

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all the men in my life: Daniel, Scott, Geoffrey, Marc, and Alex.
Acknowledgments

I acknowledge and thank my thesis committee. Dr. Brent Weisman, Dr. Kevin Yelvington, and Dr. Philip Levy made this thesis possible. In addition to the guidance, they also provided me with diverse and challenging models of anthropological studies.

I thank Dr. Uzi Baram. As my undergraduate advisor, he gave me the foundation to build upon. As my friend and colleague, he was always willing to listen and discuss issues regarding anthropology as a whole and Gamble Plantation specifically.

I thank Dr. Amy Reid, who listened endlessly to my brain swimming and whose advice enabled me to communicate what I wanted to achieve.

I acknowledge and thank Dr. Elzie McCord, Jr. who supplied his knowledge of Florida botany and southern African American perspectives. Our many discussions allowed me to see things other than through my limited experiences.

I acknowledge and thank the staff members of the Judah P. Benjamin Memorial at the Gamble Plantation Historic State Park. Former Park Supervisor, Don Bergeron, and Park Rangers Wayne Godwin, Ted Unger, and Don Dutcher were willing to share their knowledge and time with me.

I thank Daniel Hughes for his untiring help. He was always there to offer advice and discussions during all stages of this thesis. His willingness to share his experiences and books was invaluable.

I acknowledge Dr. Deborah Varos, Dr. Justus Doenecke, Dr. George Luer, Barbara Bardy, Dixie Schmidt, Kelly Scudder, Sherry Svekis, John Jaffer, other friends and family members who provided resources, encouragement, and were willing to read this evolving thesis.

I acknowledge and thank Pearlene McCord and her family and friends who accepted me as family. They were willing to share intimate life experiences and it is from their experiences that I learned some of the differences between assimilation and accommodation.

I thank members of the Anthropology Department of the University of South Florida.

Last, but certainly never least, I must tell the world how much I appreciate my husband and sons for their patience and encouragement. They were there for me on days when I felt overwhelmed by the process.
Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.......................................................................................................1
  Aims and Purpose of this Study ..............................................................................1
  About This Thesis ....................................................................................................6

Chapter 2: A History of the Gamble Plantation.................................................................9
  Virginian Roots ........................................................................................................9
  Planter Migration to Middle Florida ......................................................................12
  The Armed Occupation Act of 1842 ......................................................................19
  Slavery at the Gamble Plantation ...........................................................................30
  Conclusion .............................................................................................................32

Chapter 3: The Gamble Plantation in the Local Environment...........................................33
  Florida’s Environment ...........................................................................................34
  Soil .........................................................................................................................35
  The Manatee River .................................................................................................37
  Confronting the Environment ................................................................................39
  Land Use Over the Years ........................................................................................42
  Plantation Plants .....................................................................................................44
  Conclusion .............................................................................................................47

Chapter 4: An Inventory of the Plantation Today.............................................................49
  Geographic Location of the Plantation ..................................................................49
  The Mansion ..........................................................................................................50
  The Cistern .............................................................................................................53
  The Four Compartment Unknown Tabby Feature .................................................54
  The Patten House ...................................................................................................55
  The Sugar Mill .......................................................................................................56
  Previous Archaeological Research ........................................................................61
  Conclusion .............................................................................................................61

Chapter 5: Landscapes of Power: History and Culture in Plantation Archaeology..........66
  Landscapes of Power: Plantation Spatial Organization ............................................70
  Slave Housing Locations .......................................................................................76
  Slave Housing .......................................................................................................79
  Labor ......................................................................................................................87
  Foodways ..............................................................................................................94
Worldview and Religion ................................................................. 99
Resistance .......................................................................................... 102
Proposed Archaeological Methods .................................................... 105
Conclusion .......................................................................................... 112

Chapter 6: Presentation of the Past ..................................................... 114
  Presenting the Past at the Gamble Plantation .................................. 114
  My Approach ..................................................................................... 118
  Critical Analysis ............................................................................... 124
  Conclusion ......................................................................................... 127

Chapter 7: Conclusion: Archaeology for Whom? .............................. 129
  Stakeholders ..................................................................................... 130
  Conclusion ......................................................................................... 132

References .......................................................................................... 134

Appendices .......................................................................................... 147
  Appendix A: Plant Study of Gamble Plantation ............................... 148
  Appendix B: Plant Study of Gamble Plantation Sugar Mill .............. 153
  Appendix C: “Florida as A Sugar State” (Gamble 1888) .................. 160
List of Tables

Table 1  Map Unit Legend for Manatee County, Florida (FL081) (Courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service 2008:9) .......................................................................................35
Table 2  Plantation Artifact Patterns from Georgia and South Carolina (taken from Joseph 1989:58) ..............................................................85
Table 3  Manatee County Stakeholders. .........................................................................................................................131
# List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gamble’s Hill located on the James River in Richmond, Virginia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Annotated Map of Middle Florida, 1843 (taken from Svekis 2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Original Sales Book Plats circa mid 1800’s to early 1900’s. GLO Survey Plats notated with State of Florida Land Sales entries circa mid 1800’s to early 1900’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1940 aerial photograph tile 47 Palmetto Quad at 50% zoom (PALMM Collection).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1957 aerial photograph at 100% zoom Tile 13. (PALMM Collection.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Gamble’s Cistern located on the Eastern Section of the Mansion (taken by Silpa, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Gamble’s four compartment unknown feature (taken by Silpa, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Patten House (taken by Silpa, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Men Pose at the Ruins of Gamble Sugar Mill 1903 06108A (Manatee County Library).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Gamble Sugar Mill (taken by Silpa, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Carved clay bricks at the Gamble Sugar Mill (taken by Silpa, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1802 Mutual Assurance Greys Castle located in Richmond, Virginia (The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Gamble’s 1868 Hand Drawn Map (Manatee County Library).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Gamble Mansion before restoration (Manatee County Library).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Magnified view of out building (Manatee County Library).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This thesis is a research design that will serve as a baseline for further research and as a more inclusive interpretation at the Judah P. Benjamin Memorial at the Gamble Plantation Historic State Park in Ellenton, Florida. It reviews the history and archaeology of Robert Gamble's nineteenth-century enslaved labor-worked sugar plantation, focusing on how the demands of this capitalistic enterprise were expressed in the plantation’s culture and on the landscape. This thesis reviews the literature on the archaeology of slavery in the United States and the Caribbean to provide a critical lens through which new directions in research might be seen and conceived. At the same time, it reviews the archaeological and historical resources associated with the plantation.

The thesis is motivated by the following main research question: What was the nature of slavery on the Gamble Plantation? Subsidiary questions include the following: How was slavery evident in the plantation landscape? What were the day-to-day lifeways and activities of the enslaved labor force on the Gamble Plantation? While direct evidence of slave life at the Gamble Plantation might be scant, through a consideration of the literature we can infer how slave activity might be reflected in the archaeological
record. It offers research methods to assist in obtaining answers to how is this
plantation’s landscape built which might illustrate slavery activity.

The thesis also proceeds from the assumption that Gamble Plantation’s history
can be made more complete and relevant to park visitors. Public presentation is critically
examined and stakeholders are identified. It concludes with suggestions on how can a
more comprehensive and inclusive history can be told.
Chapter 1: Introduction

_Historical Archaeology -- as the archaeological study of historically documented time periods -- holds a similar ambition to add “the rest of us” to history and to make the history useful (Little 2007:14)._  

_Hearing the heretofore silent men and women of the past seemed to open new vistas of history, and for me, this realization made historical archaeology a deeply relevant subject (Orser 1996:159)._  

_Kind! I was dat man’s slave; and he sold my wife, and he sold my two chill’en ... Kind! yes, he gib me corn enough, and he gib me pork enough, and he neber gib me one lick wid de whip, but whar’s my wife? - whar’s my chill’en? Take away de pork, I say, take away de corn, I can work and raise deese for myself, but gib me back de wife of my bosom, and gib me back my poor chill’en as was sold away (unnamed source quoted in Mintz and Kellogg 1988:67)._  

Aims and Purpose of this Study

This thesis is a research design that will serve as a baseline for further research and as a more inclusive interpretation at the Judah P. Benjamin Memorial at the Gamble Plantation Historic State Park in Ellenton, Florida. It reviews the history and archaeology of Robert Gamble's (1843-1858) nineteenth-century enslaved labor-worked sugar plantation, focusing on how the demands of this capitalistic enterprise were expressed in the plantation’s culture and on the landscape. This undertaking is done in order to understand the complexities of the social relationships and the dynamics of the human lives involved with this plantation. The thesis reviews the literature on the archaeology of slavery in the United States and the Caribbean in order to provide a critical lens through which, it is hoped, new directions in research might be seen and conceived. The thesis traces the history of the plantation from a working sugar plantation in the mid-nineteenth century to its renovation and re-emergence as a memorial commemorating the Confederate Secretary of State, Judah P. Benjamin and as a Florida state park by the early
twentieth century where, nowadays, visitors are taken on guided historical tours of the mansion by park rangers and volunteer docents. At the same time, the thesis provides an accounting of the archaeological and historical resources associated with the plantation. In what follows, I critically examine the depiction of the past in these tours and in other ways history is represented at the park. I do so in order that more of the plantation’s history – and a more complete history – might be known and become more relevant to today’s park visitors and potential visitors. In the history and archaeology of the Gamble Plantation, and in the historic representations at the park, the emphasis has largely been focused on the person and accomplishments of the plantation owner Robert Gamble, his family, and Judah P. Benjamin. Missing, to a large extent, is a consideration of the number of enslaved African Americans who formed the core of the nineteenth-century plantation’s labor force, who cleared the dense Florida forests, who tilled the cane fields, harvested and processed the sugar cane in the boiling house and sugar mill, and whose labor erected the buildings that are now part of the park’s memorialized landscape.

Almost nothing is known about or depicted of their lives, the hardships they confronted, how and where they lived, their relationships of kinship and family, and the way they worshipped their gods. The thesis is motivated by the following main research question: What was the nature of slavery on the Gamble Plantation? Subsidiary questions include the following: How was slavery evident in the plantation landscape? What were the day-to-day lifeways and activities of the enslaved labor force on the Gamble Plantation and how can these be recovered in the present? What, in other words, can be reconstructed as “anthropology of slavery” on the Gamble Plantation and how can that information be made relevant? This thesis also examines the question: Who are the
stakeholders in today’s memorial and park? And it concludes with the question: How

can a more comprehensive and inclusive history be told there?

The answers to these questions revolve around an integration of historical and
archaeological approaches that I advocate here. The Historic Sites Acts of 1935 passage
offered opportunities for historians and archaeologists to work together. Historical
archaeology’s initial goal was public education and interpretation. Dubbed as the
handmaiden of history in its formative years, it provided details about the architecture
and landscapes of famous people and places. It offers opportunities to study people
documented in recent American history and is a means in which we can learn about
ourselves (Orser and Fagan 1995:5). Over time, the discipline became its own subfield of
archaeology with the goals developing beyond interpretation and reconstruction to
include challenging documentary supported history, reconstruction of cultural lifeways,
development of archaeological methods, and anthropologically examining modernity and
globalization:

As one of the humanities, (like history), historical archaeology seeks knowledge
and understanding to gain insight into the human conditions. As a social science,
(within the broader field of the applied anthropology), historical archaeology’s
goals are to systematically investigate, describe, and explain human behavior. As
part of anthropology, historical archaeology is becoming closely aligned with
applied anthropology, which seeks to apply the lessons of research to real world
issues. [Little 2007: 21]

Historical archaeology also borrows from other disciplines in the humanities. The
literary criticism term “close read” can refer to how one can cull from primary sources
information that can augment data obtained from the archaeological record.

Deagan offers a point that is useful to the study of slave plantations: She says that
the use of historical data alone for interpretation allowed for representation of “a one
sided view of colonialism and capitalism” (Deagan 1998:54). Often the historical records were written by biased Euro-American authors with “class-centered purposes in the complex societies” (Leone 1996:131). The non-literate voices were overlooked. These biased records often times do not illustrate a sense of connections, complexities, and dynamics in an American history that is filled with inequalities. Through the discipline of historical archaeology, we can anthropologically examine the struggles of the non-literate, disenfranchised, and undocumented silent voices that have been erased from their histories. It offers insight into the daily lives of people that have been forgotten or politically ignored and would not have appeared in historical documents. Hicks and Beaudry (2006:3) illustrate this benefit in their introduction to the *Cambridge Companion of Historical Archaeology*. They write:

In all cases, historical archaeologist bring awareness of how much of daily life remains undocumented, unspoken, and yet is far from insignificant and often leaves material traces. [Hicks and Beaudry 2006: 3]

Much of the plantation history of the Judah P. Benjamin Memorial at the Gamble Plantation Historic State Park has been lost. However, historical archaeology can provide meaning and significance to the “material traces” to which Hicks and Beaudry refer. As we will see, plantation archaeology has come a long way since its inception with the work of Charles Fairbanks in the late 1960s. Such that Ferguson is able to write (1992:xxxvi): “the archaeological record is about as close to the slave’s personal story as we can get.” Yet, historical archaeology cannot supply all of the answers. As noted by Singleton, it does not replace historical and oral research. She writes

Historical archaeology is an interdisciplinary pursuit wherein archaeological findings are used in conjunction with written, oral,
cartographic, pictorial, and other sources to gain insight into the past. [2006:269]

A benefit of blending archaeology and history is the shift from the study of the social elite to allowing us to view history as a “two sided version of cultural contact” (Deagan 1998: 54).

Why is all of this important? History is recreated with every presentation about the past at the Judah P. Benjamin Memorial at the Gamble Plantation Historic State Park. But this presentation is incomplete. Plantation archaeology studies offer “a microcosm of the broader society”(Wilke 2004: 110) and it is important to incorporate this data in public presentation. Embedded within nationalism is the deep seeded need to narrate the past in iconic presentations. Frequently, plantation museum settings create heroes of plantation owners and their elite society while diminishing or eliminating altogether the multi-vocality of other members of the community within the historical context. A critical theoretical approach opens discussions about slavery as a tool of capitalism. With a dialectic approach, slavery can be viewed with plantation owners, labor can be viewed with profits, and oppression can be viewed with resistance. While public audiences come to plantation museums to hear the stories connected with the famous people, they are entitled to receive the broader picture. It is important to include all elements of the past. Little clearly states this argument:

Whether learning about the past takes place in historic places or in the classroom, one of the pervasive ironies of our time is that we insist on editing our understanding of the past, often focusing nearly exclusively on what is judge good or patriotically appropriate. But, indeed, how can we expect to learn from the past if we don't see it complete with mistakes and disgraces as well as actions we judged to be heroic? [2002: 11]
Misconceptions and half truths about the past will continue until the story that is told becomes inclusive and not just a “cataloging of planter material culture” (Silpa 2003: 93; Burnham 1995:63). African Americans and others will continue to avoid historical sites that highlight the owner and neglect the histories of the people who built the mansion, cabins, dependencies, mills, and drainage canals.

Today’s visitors at the Gamble Plantation see visible features from the nineteenth century, including the Greek Revival mansion, the cistern, the four compartment unknown tabby feature, the sugar mill, and remnants of extensive drainage canals (described in Chapter 4). One of the most notable drainage canals is the large ditch that marks the eastern boundary of the park with a north/south orientation. This canal is the “permanent creek” that twenty years after its creation Robert Gamble mentions as he wrote about raising sugarcane in Florida. While these drainage canals represent Gamble's slaves’ major modification of the environment to fit his large-scale landscape, they also represent his involvement in a capitalistic enterprise and the slave labor necessary for him to participate within the nineteenth-century global economy. How can this history be told without telling the history of the enslaved laboring population whose work made it all possible?

About This Thesis

This thesis proceeds from the assumption that this history can be told – through organizing of the known primary documents and sources, through a consideration of the previous archaeological investigations at the Gamble Plantation, and through a process whereby this information is utilized in historical reconstruction in the light of
comparative archaeological studies of plantation slavery in the United States and the Caribbean. The thesis also proceeds from the assumption that this history can be made more complete and relevant to the visitors to the park. Further, when history is made relevant it will appeal to those potential visitors who are at present uninterested or indifferent to the kinds of stories presently narrated there.

The substance of the thesis begins in chapter 2 where I examine the primary and secondary historical sources to discuss Robert Gamble’s Virginian heritage, his family’s role in the migration of Virginian planters to Middle Florida, Robert Gamble’s settlement along the Manatee River, and past ownerships of the plantation.

In chapter 3, I situate the Gamble Plantation in the local environment, and show how Robert Gamble modified the environment so that he could best capitalize on his cash crops that were marketed within the global society.

Next, in chapter 4, I provide a detailed description of the built environment at the Gamble Plantation, as well as a survey of archaeological investigations of that environment.

Chapter 5 reviews the literature on plantation slavery in the U.S. South and in the Caribbean in order to work toward answers to the research questions posed above. It examines the literature on plantation landscapes in order to best identify areas where slave activity might be found. While direct evidence of slave life at the Gamble Plantation might be scant, through a consideration of the literature we can get an idea of how slave activity might be reflected in the archaeological record and of how to best proceed to move forward with archaeological research. It concludes with offering
research methods that assist in obtaining answers to how is this plantation’s landscape built.

Chapter 6 is a description and critical analysis of how the past is presented at the Gamble Plantation and park today. I show how the tours are conducted and the kinds of claims that are made, and that are not made, about the past, and then I provide a first-hand account of how the tours might be conducted in order to provide a more inclusive and critically subversive history.

Finally, chapter 7, I ask the politically charge question, Archaeology for whom? It introduces a discussion of potential stakeholders and in whose interest a more complete history and historical representation will benefit.
Chapter 2: A History of the Gamble Plantation

“In 1844 I carried ten of my negro [sic] men to the river and commenced operations... In 1849 I erected my first set of sugar works; they were of frame; the boiling house 40 x 30 feet, the draining-house 60 x 30, the mill-house 30 x 30. [Gamble 1888]

The above quote is taken from a historical narrative written by Robert Gamble thirty years after the sale of the Gamble Plantation. This narrative is devoted to the description of his experiences as a sugarcane planter in nineteenth century Florida. While this document offers great insight into the difficulties of raising sugarcane on the Florida frontier, missing from this document are the names, histories, and descriptions of the daily lives of the enslaved people who accompanied Gamble and help create the Manatee River settlement history. A benefit of Historical Archaeology has been the shift from the study of the social elite to anthropologically examining the struggles of the non-literate people erased from their histories. This chapter will discuss Robert Gamble’s Virginian heritage, planter migration to Middle Florida, Gamble’s settlement along the Manatee River, and past ownerships of the plantation.

Virginian Roots

The story of the Gamble family in Virginia reads like a novel of European aristocracy transferred to the Virginian planter class. His maternal great-grandfather, John Grattan, wealthy prior to his immigration from Ireland to Virginia, amassed a fortune in the mill and the mercantile business. John Grattan left Ireland due to religious and governmental intolerance described by John Grattan Gamble (1779-1852) in a family journal as “injustice he deemed he had suffered at the hands of the Government” (Gamble
Family Papers 1898: 2). Grattan “was the first person to cross the Blue Ridge in a carriage” and settled in Rockingham, Virginia (Gamble Family Papers 1898:3).

He was described by John Grattan Gamble as a firm, cold individual distant from family and society.

I can well remember how much of awe his manners impressed upon me in childhood & I have no recollection of having been ever seated on his knee, or of having been caressed by him as a child in the way I feel impelled to caress my Grandchildren. Although I can remember such evidences of affection in our Grandmother. Old age and its attendant bodily infirmity did not sweeten these manners & I have suspicion that the marriage of our Aunt Nancy to a man in no respects her equal was in great degree a wish to seek a more happy times. Mr. Grattan was a man of much considerdation in the country although personally he held himself aloof from social intercourse except with a few families forming what may be styled the aristocracy of Rockingham & Augusta. [Gamble Family Papers 1898:6]

Robert Gamble’s paternal grandfather, Captain Robert Gamble (1754-1810), was the son of a successful Virginian farmer. Captain Gamble attended Liberty Hall, known today as Washington and Lee University. He established friendships with politically and socially prominent Virginians early in his life. He settled in Staunton, Virginia after completing his education. He joined the patriots during the American Revolution and was promoted to the rank of Captain (Schene 1974:9).

Captain Gamble formed a prosperous mercantile partnership in Staunton with his brother-in-law, Robert Grattan following the war. He moved to Richmond, Virginia in 1793 and purchased Greys Castle in 1799. Greys Castle was a Georgian style house located on a rise above the James River commonly known as Gamble’s Hill (Figure 1) (Schene 1974:11).
Figure 1 Gamble’s Hill located on the James River in Richmond, Virginia

Captain Gamble dissolved his business partnership with Grattan prior to his move to Richmond and established another prosperous mercantile business with his two sons, John Grattan Gamble and Robert H. Gamble.

Captain Gamble reconnected his earlier friendships with the Virginian elite after his move to Richmond. His children secured family ties through marriage with members of the elite society. His eldest son, John Grattan Gamble, married Nancy Peyton Greenup, the daughter of Kentucky’s former governor, Christopher Greenup. Robert H., his second son, married Letitia Breckenridge, General Breckenridge’s daughter. Elizabeth married William Wirt, Attorney General for Presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, while Agnes Sarah married William H. Cabell, the Governor of Virginia (Schene 1974:11-4).
John Grattan Gamble was educated at Princeton University. He served as secretary to Chief Justice John Marshall in 1797 when Marshall was minister to France. His first wife, a daughter of a wealthy English merchant, died in Europe in 1810. He married his second wife, Nancy Peyton Greenup, in 1813 after his return to the United States (Schene 1974:12-13).

Robert Gamble, the son of John Grattan Gamble, was born in 1813 at his paternal grandfather’s house. There he spent most of his childhood until his father’s move to Middle Florida in 1827.

The Embargo Act of 1807 and the War of 1812 contributed to the ruin of Captain Robert Gamble’s Richmond’s mercantile business. John Grattan and Robert H. inherited their father’s mercantile business. Partially in an attempt to offset losses incurred in the mercantile business and partially in an attempt to capitalize on the planter migration pattern to Middle Florida, the brothers moved family and their slaves to Jefferson County in 1827 (Schene 1974: 15-17, 61-63, 67).

**Planter Migration to Middle Florida**

Americans felt confident with rapid westward expansion following the purchase of Florida through the Adams-Onis Treaty (1821). Florida boundaries were initially divided by the Spanish during their second ownership. When Florida became a U.S. territory, Florida remained informally divided into three areas. East Florida was bounded by the Atlantic Ocean and the Suwannee River. Middle Florida (Figure 2) was bounded by the Suwannee and the Apalachicola Rivers. Planters preferred Middle Florida for
their agricultural enterprises. People were drawn from as far as the tidewater areas of Maryland to South Carolina in an attempt to replace depleted plantations with the red clay hills of Middle Florida known as superior cotton land. The new territory offered speculative ventures, potential political careers, and fertile lands (Baptist 2002:22; Shofner 1976:16-18; Dovell 1952:322-24).

Jefferson County historian, Jerrell H. Shofner, presents the Middle Florida frontier settlement as a “crucible of democracy” (1976:35). Within this crucible of democracy, a person’s title and class distinction did not matter as much as the person’s ability and willingness to face the challenges of wilderness settlement. Self reliance, self confidence, and human equality gave the white settlers the opportunity to advance within the Middle Floridian social and economic structure. While this crucible of democracy offered the early Floridian settlers the opportunity to advance and succeed, members of the social elite with greater financial resources and letters of introductions found settlement to their advantage.
Some of Virginia’s, Maryland’s, and Carolina’s oldest families were among the original families settling in the Leon and Jefferson Counties. The Gambles were listed with such families as Randall, Randolph, Call, Gadsden, Murat, and Wirt (Dovell 1952: 325; Shofner 1976:17-23; Matthews 1983: 151-152; Schafer 1996:213). These families brought with them their ideology based on the plantation system and frequently continued a lifestyle much like the ones left behind (Shofner 1976:35). With this move many perspective Middle Florida planters forced their slaves to migrate as well. The Gamble brothers were no exception. They brought their families, bags, carts, mules, and their Virginian slaves.

The plantation system allowed for planters to control the political, social, and economic arenas of the newly forming territory (Baptist 2002:4; Dovell 1952: 322; Shofner 1976:85). Though some of the Florida planters held other professions, social status was attained through plantation ownership. Membership in the political arena was near impossible without ownership of land and slaves. And those public officials who did not own plantations were aware of the social and economic needs of the planters (Matthews 1983:151; Dovell 1952: 332).

Planters assumed economic control of Florida. The basis of the economy in Middle Florida was the agriculture production of cotton, tobacco, and sugarcane that was sold on the global market (Baptist 2002:21; Shofner 1976:85). Cotton was the primary cash crop. Florida’s climate and soil promoted extremes in cotton growth. Dovell argues that Sea Island cotton stalks reached ten to twelve feet in height with planters receiving triple the prices compared to standard southern cotton prices (Dovell
John Grattan Gamble and Robert H. Gamble purchased land in Middle Florida for themselves, their brother-in-law William Wirt, and Maryland friend and relative through marriage, Thomas Randall in 1826. William Wirt’s interest and subsequent purchase of property promoted the growth of Middle Florida due to his position as the Attorney General of the United States (Shofner 1976:21).

Robert H. Gamble arrived in Jefferson County in 1826 and established Weelaunee Plantation. His cash crops varied over the years from cotton, tobacco, and sugarcane. John Grattan Gamble arrived in Tallahassee with his family and slaves on December 24, 1827. He moved to Jefferson County on Christmas Day where he established Waukeenah Plantation. The Gamble brothers extended their land purchases from 800 and 600 acres (respectively) to own title to 10,000 acres of valuable land. Through successful land acquisitions they positioned themselves to control future county land purchases and politics in two-thirds of the township (Shofner 1976:26-27).

Some sugarcane plantations flourished on the east coast of Florida prior to the Second Seminole War (1835-1842). These plantations were destroyed by the Seminoles during the War and the east coast sugar production never recovered (Dovell 1952: 329). Middle Florida proved to be poorly suited for growing sugarcane due to the short growing seasons and the initial cost of the sugar processing equipment (Shofner 1976: 85-88). John Grattan Gamble and his brother, Robert H Gamble, are listed as some of the few Middle Florida planters who invested in the installation of sugar
refinery equipment to make sugar, molasses, and rum (1976: 85-88). Robert H. Gamble invested large sums of money devoted to sugarcane agriculture. He purchased large tracts of land, sugar refinery equipment, and augmented his initial force of 87 Virginian slaves to a total of 108 slaves. The sugar refinery included a brick furnace, large boiling pans, and a method for separating the molasses from the sugar. Rum was made from the residue. Skilled white laborers were utilized to build and repair the refinery. Bricks were made on site in a kiln that was constructed in 1833. Hogsheads for storing the sugar were made in the plantation cooperage. Water from the Welaunee Creek powered the saw and grist mill (Shofner 1976: 87). By the mid-1830’s the risks involved with sugarcane agriculture caused planters to abandon it as a cash crop though cultivation for private consumption continued. Even though the 1844-45 drop in cotton prices rekindled an interest in sugarcane agriculture, it was never again considered a major cash crop in Middle Florida.

Tobacco agriculture for cigar wrappers was also a cash crop on the Gambles’ plantations in the 1840s. Robert H. Gamble started as early as 1834 growing tobacco but it took until 1844 and Gamble’s sale of $20.00 per 100 pounds of tobacco before other Middle Floridians began to have an interest in growing tobacco. West Indian and Cuban tobacconists familiar with tobacco cultivation were introduced to help the planters in this venture. Cigars made on Gamble’s plantation were sold to purchasers Birtchett and Sunderburger in Tallahassee and John T. Farish in New York. Gamble’s production exceeded hundreds of thousands of cigars throughout the 1840s (Shofner 1976: 116). Tobacco agriculture in Middle Florida ended by the time of the Civil War (Shofner 1976:476).
Planters lead the social life that thrived in Middle Florida (Matthews 1983:151; Shofner 1976: 41; Dovell 1952: 333). They utilized fashionable hospitality to welcome other equal upper class Floridians and travelers to their homes. Even with the class mobility noted among the early Middle Florida settlers, there was a clear avoidance of social contact with lesser class members known as the “crackers” (Shofner 1976:41).

Many of the tidewater planters brought with them their cultural landscape ideals to Middle Florida and modified the environment to fit their cultural landscape. Shortly after the Gamble brothers’ arrival they cleared the land for agriculture in the “Virginian style” (Shofner 1976:30). This Virginian style required the removal of “nearly everything from the field” (1976:30). What trees that were not utilized for construction of buildings and fences were either burned or girdled. Gang slave labor provided the necessary work force to clear, fence, and plant. Thomas Randall’s gang prepared over 50 acres in three months (1976: 30). Robert H. Gamble’s slaves drained a 250-acre pond to obtain an already cleared field. Gamble had slaves prepare the land for sugarcane by housing cattle on the fields during the winter season prior to planting.

The Union Bank was chartered in 1833. Declared a major blessing by many Middle Floridians in 1835 it would later become the downfall of many of the planters in the 1840s. John Grattan Gamble was elected bank president. The bank issued territorial bonds to supplement money used for loans. These territorial bonds bore a maximum of six percent interest and were sold internationally in order to raise the necessary operating funds. Loans were secured by Middle Florida lands and this speculative investment appeared safe. Shareholders used their land, slaves, and other assets as collateral as an
option for paying for stock. Stockholders could borrow a maximum of two-thirds of their bank stock. Three month residency in the territory was the only requirement needed to be a stockholder. Within the first year Gamble sold $1 million of stock and $500,000 of territorial bonds. Robert H. Gamble was the largest stockholder worth $83,000 followed by John Grattan Gamble with $75,000 (Shofner 1976:108).

The planters expected the Union Bank to prosper. Funds borrowed on the stock allowed Robert H. Gamble to purchase an additional two groups of slaves to augment his working force. John Grattan Gamble purchased Neamathla Plantation in Leon County and the slave force to work it. However, the panic of 1837 and the ensuing national depression, unsound loaning procedures, fluctuating cotton prices, and the Second Seminole War destroyed chances of prosperity. The Union Bank suspended specie payment during the 1837 panic. The depression that affected the rest of the county hit Florida later and lasted longer. All Floridians were affected by problems that confronted the banks. Many of the debtors defaulted on their bank payments. The Union Bank had only $13,000 in reserve specie with $550,000 in circulation by 1840. Expenditures for travel and supplies to the north were prohibitive. John Grattan Gamble paid $3.33 for every dollar spent on John Jr.’s northern medical education (Shofner 1976:110-111). To add to the problems experienced by the Floridians, they also faced uncontrollable natural disasters. Middle Florida crops were destroyed in the 1839 drought. A yellow fever epidemic hit Tallahassee in 1841. Two severe storms (1842 and 1843) swept through Middle Florida and damaged crops in Madison, Leon, and Jefferson Counties. The 1843 storm did little destruction to Tallahassee though, because the town had already been severely damaged by fire earlier that year. Success of the bank debtors was the only way
the bank could survive. However, by 1843 the bank had to institute law suits across Middle Florida for the defaulted payments because few planters recovered from the losses that occurred from the 1836 cotton overproduction and market decline, the economic downturn, and the unforeseen natural disasters (Shofner 1976:111; Schene 1974: 64-65).

The Armed Occupation Act of 1842

The Manatee River settlement was a result of The Armed Occupation Act of 1842. The Act granted 160 acres of unsettled land north of Palatka and south of Newnansville to heads of families who could obtain a permit, build a house, cultivate five acres of land, and maintain the residence for five consecutive years (Matthews 1983:128; Dovell 1952:234). This Act allowed for the settlement of the Florida frontier with armed occupationists. The cost and time devoted to the Second Seminole War (1835-1842) had been disastrous for the United States and the passage of the Act was intended to push the remaining groups of Seminole further south into the Everglades or to encourage them to emigrate west (Brown 1999:84).

While the Armed Occupation Act attracted many subsistence farmers, merchants, professionals, military men, fishermen, and skilled craft people, there were a few Middle Florida planters who utilized the Act as a method to recuperate lost family fortunes (Matthews 1983: 129-47). Like the Middle Florida migration of the 1820s, the planters, such as Joseph and Hector Braden, William Pinkston Craig, William Wyatt, and the Gamble brothers, Robert, John Jr., and William, expanded to the frontier with economical, political, and social motivations. They viewed the rich hammocks known
for its light sandy soil and the temperate climate as ideal land for sugarcane (Dovell 1952:416; Matthews 1983:149; Rivers 2000:98; Rolland et al. 2004: 3-8). They created sugarcane plantations along the Manatee River in the newly opened South Florida frontier. Slaves provided the labor necessary for these owners to participate within the global market of sugar and molasses production. Oaks harvested for shipment on these plantations also contributed to the planter’s income. These agricultural products were shipped to New Orleans, St. Marks, Florida, and New York City.

Relationships between the planters existed prior to their move to the Manatee River area. While the Bradens (Joseph and Hector) originated from Virginia and moved to Middle Florida, it is unknown if they had connections with the Gambles prior to their move to Middle Florida. Their relationships were well cemented in Middle Florida though. John Grattan Gamble was president of the Union Bank while Hector Braden, a prominent lawyer, held the position of director of the bank. Historian, Janet Snyder Matthews, speculates that the social contacts held by the Gamble Family while in Middle Florida continued following Robert Gamble’s move to the Manatee River area (1983: 152-5).

Samuel Reid, one of the government surveyors, assisted in the land division along the Manatee River in 1843. He recorded his observations of large ponds and first rate hammocks as he surveyed sections eight and seventeen in township thirty-four south, range eighteen east. Reid’s observations and measurements were later published as the township map (Rolland et al. 2004:3-8). These observations were noted about land that Gamble would later own.
Six thousand acres along the Manatee River/Sarasota Bay were choice areas for settlement. One hundred permits were granted to Hillsborough County that included the Manatee River area (Dovell 1952:424). Fifty claims were filed for lands along the Manatee River and Sarasota Bay (Rolland et al. 2004:3-8). The riverbank hammocks were selected for tight settlement clusters with more claims on the north side of the Manatee River noted than on the south (Matthews 1983:129).

When Robert Gamble arrived in 1844 with ten male slaves other Armed Occupationists were already present. He employed a skilled brick mason to direct and train his slaves (Gamble 1888; Matthews 1983:152; Schene 1974:28-29). He filed for preemptive status for his home on March 12, 1846 (Matthews 1983: 154).

Gamble did not receive free land from the government. Instead, he purchased land acquisitions from other occupationists for $1.25 per acre. His initial purchase was the northwest quarter and lot two of section seventeen, Township 34 South, Range 18 East which amounted to 207.60 acres. He erected the mansion on this parcel. His brother, Dr. John Gamble, Jr., attained the western half of section eight, Township 34 South, Range 18 East which totaled 320 acres (Matthews 1983: 149-152; Rolland et al. 2004: 3-8). This area was the site of Gamble’s first sugar mill and the combined total acreage exceeded 500. Over time Robert Gamble and his brothers, John Jr., and William acquired 3450 acres of non-contiguous land on the north and south side of the Manatee River for a total investment of $10,000 (Schene 1974:35; Matthews 1983: 154-156).

Gamble’s cash crop was sugarcane though he grew corn, sweet potatoes, grapes, citrus, and guava (Matthews 1983:154). In addition to the sugarcane, oak timber
harvested on the north and south sides of the Manatee River were sent to New York for shipbuilding. Palms were shipped to the Texas Gulf for building wharfs.

He was known to compost bagasse, manure, and trash on future planting sites and probably, like his uncle, also penned cattle on these future sugarcane fields. While sugarcane requires tremendous amounts of water during its growing season, it does not thrive if its roots sit in water. Gamble had his slaves clear the dense hammocks for cultivation and drain the wetlands by constructing sixteen miles of drainage canals which included the creation of a “permanent creek” (Gamble 1988).

His first sugarcane harvest was in 1849. Unfortunately, fire destroyed the harvest, the crops in the fields, and his wooden sugar mill. Gamble was paid $15,000 in insurance money and rebuilt his mill by 1850 but this time he constructed it of red brick and tabby

By late arrival from Manatee, [sic] South Florida, we were sorry to learn of the entire destruction by fire of the sugar works upon the plantation of Col John G. Gamble, of this city. The fire was accidental, and, although every precaution was thought to be taken, it had made considerable progress before it was discovered. The engine, and appurtenances, the buildings, some eighty hogsheads of sugar, a quantity of molasses, staves, &c., were destroyed. Insurance to the amount of $15,000 had been effected at New Orleans, but still the loss to Col. Gamble is heavy, amounting, as he thinks to some $5,000. On the same night the sugar works of Mr. Gates, in the Manatee [sic] settlement were also destroyed, and no doubt by accident. Mr. Gates works were much smaller, and the extent of his loss is not stated. [Tallahassee Floridian and Journal, 24 February 1849]

This short column, when read closely, reveals information that is not available about the plantation operations. If every precaution was taken, then how did the fire start? Was it a fluke thunder storm that occurred during the Florida winter months? While one fire is plausible as accidental, it is difficult to perceive that at two separate
locations these fires erupted accidentally in the same evening. Was it slave carelessness because of exhaustion? Are we, in the 21st century, witnessing slave resistance either through feigned ignorance or deliberate arson that was not recorded by the dominant society? Did these fires start out as controlled fires ordered by the masters that went out of control?

Of interest is that John Grattan Gamble is credited for the plantation ownership and not Robert Gamble. The insurance company awarded Gamble $15,000 for damages. Presumably, this large infusion of money funded the rebuilding and the new machinery for the mill.

Schene argues that while the new sugar refinery and equipment cost Gamble $25,000, the land cost $5,000 and the slaves cost $53,000, Gamble still netted a profit of $9,000 a year later in 1850 (Schene 1974: 54). The harvest yielded 230 hogsheads of sugar and 10,000 gallons of molasses with 320 acres under cultivation by 89 slaves (Matthews 1983:163; Schene 1974:54). This harvest was a 287.5% increase over the previous year.

Beyond all that is mentioned, it must be taken into consideration that brick and tabby were utilized to rebuild this mill. Red brick requires kiln firing while tabby air dries over six to eighteen months. Additionally, crop replanting to mitigate the loss of the damaged fields and the amount of work required for Gamble to achieve a 287.5% increase would indicate that slave labor for the year 1849-1850 was intensive.
In addition to the 1849 fire, Gamble’s success was marred by hurricanes, poor business decisions, and a fluctuating sugar market. He faced two hurricanes, 1846 and 1848. His brother William was killed on the Manatee River during the 1848 hurricane. Several days of frost in 1851 damaged the sugarcane crop which resulted with a drop in one-third of the harvest. The plantation exceeded the 1850 harvest in 1852 and 1853 which encouraged Gamble to expand his cultivated areas and augment his labor force (Gamble 1888:28; Matthews 1983:165).

One of the few extant documents written by Gamble is an article titled "Florida as a Sugar State". This article covers Gamble’s life as a sugarcane planter thirty years earlier and offers insight into the plantation and its function that includes labor performed by the slaves, and the impediments encountered on the Manatee River frontier. A copy of it is located in the Appendix of this thesis.

Gamble also wrote an article titled “Florida Ship Canal” for the DeBrow’s Southern and Western Review promoting the construction of a canal between the Indian River and Tampa Bay. The canal would have facilitated a direct shipping route to the Atlantic seaboard (Rolland et al. 2004: 3-26).

John Grattan Gamble died in 1852 and Robert Gamble was made executor of his father’s estate. Robert Gamble spent a considerable amount of time in Tallahassee as he attempted to manage his father’s Leon and Jefferson County estates.

The Third Seminole War (1855-1858) forced Robert Gamble to arm his slaves (Brown 1991:106-107; Matthews 1983: 211, 213, 291). Though Gamble never
experienced any attack at his plantation, the home of fellow planter and friend, Dr. Joseph Braden, was raided on March 31, 1856 by a small Seminole war party (Camp 1979: 55-60; Matthews 1983:224). The Seminoles stole some of Braden’s slaves and miscellaneous spoils during the invasion. During this time period, a small military group consisting of a sergeant, a corporal, and eighteen privates were stationed on the plantation (Matthews 1983:234).

Additionally, sugarcane market prices dropped to less than seven cent per pound throughout the 1850’s. Cost to the sugarcane planters averaged between four and six cents per pound to produce the sugar. The “ideal” one cent per pound profit margin did not include losses from weather fluctuations, equipment repairs, and other unforeseen expenses. Financially secure planters potentially could have ridden out the fluctuating sugar market but by 1852 Gamble had already mortgaged his property and slaves. The credit firm, McConochie & Donnel of New Orleans, foreclosed on a portion of Gamble’s property for an overdue note of $5,000 in 1852. Additional foreclosure proceedings were brought against him in 1854 by the R.L. Maitland & Company, also of New Orleans (Rolland et al. 2004:3-24).

Gamble moved to Tallahassee in 1856 and left Allan MacFarlan, his brother-in-law, in charge of the plantation (Schene 1972:56). MacFarlan assumed the mortgages and ownership of the plantation. Nathaniel P. Hunter served as plantation overseer for both Gamble and MacFarlane (Matthews 1983:238; Rolland et al.2004:3-28). Despite these attempts to save the plantation, the Gambles were forced to sell. On December 18, 1858, the estate of John Grattan and Nancy P. Gamble, Robert Gamble, Catharine
Gamble Hagner, and Allan MacFarlan sold the 3450 acres to the partnership of Louisiana sugar planters John Cofield and Robert Davis for $190,000. Included in the sale was “the sugar house and other improvements and with the machinery, engines, saw mills, grist mills, dwelling houses, and other improvements” and “all the mules, oxen, cattle, wagons, carts and farming utensils of every description” (Deed Book A, p.78-81, Clerk of Court Manatee County Courthouse). The 185 slaves were listed individually by name and assigned sale number. Of the 185 slaves sold, forty-one came from the Nehamathla Plantation in Leon County.

John Cofield was born in North Carolina in 1812 and moved to New Orleans in 1837 where he established a plantation. He met Robert McGuinn Davis, a New Orleans banker, and formed a partnership in the 1850s. Through that partnership they purchased the Gamble Plantation. Cofield and his wife, Ann L., moved to the plantation in 1859 and hire George W. Graham as plantation overseer. The plantation increased its number of slaves to a total of 190 by the time of the 1860 Manatee County census. Ninety-eight male and ninety-two female slaves were listed under Cofield’s ownership. Rolland et al. (2004:3-46) argue that Cofield and Davis either started moving the slaves and equipment to Louisiana or selling them because a year later the tax assessor noted only 11 slaves and $10,000 worth of equipment remaining on the plantation. Sugar production reduced to the amount of eighty hogsheads by 1861. It appears that Cofield and Davis participated in the Florida cattle industry to offset losses accrued from sugar agriculture. In February, 1861 they sold 800 head of cattle to John Curry for $3,700. Cofield returned to Louisiana in 1862.
The confederate government commandeered the plantation in the spring of 1862 (Schene 1972:58). Captain Archibald McNeill was assigned to the plantation as overseer and lived in the mansion with his family until 1873. Sugarcane agriculture continued on the plantation until the Federal troops destroyed the sugar mill in 1864. McNeill also supplied the Confederate government with cattle and corn produced on the plantation (McDuffee 1961:130, 133; Schene 1972:59; Matthews 1983:241, 264-270; Rolland et al. 2004:3:46-47). Allan MacFarlan’s executors foreclosed on Cofield and Davis in 1871 for non-payment of the mortgage and in 1873 Cofield and Davis lost the plantation.

Captain McNeill is also noted for his role in helping the Confederate Secretary of State, Judah P. Benjamin, escape from the United States following the Civil War. Arrest warrants were issued for the Confederate Cabinet. In May, 1865 Judah P. Benjamin arrived at the plantation asking for asylum and sought McNeill’s assistance to flee to Cuba. McNeill connected Benjamin with blockade runner, Captain Frederick Tresca, who lived in the Manatee Village (Davis 2001:354-356). Benjamin escaped with Captain Tresca’s help to Bimini. From Bimini, Benjamin escaped to Cuba where he secured passage to England.

MacFarlan and Gamble maintained interest in the plantation during the Cofield and Davis ownership. MacFarlan wrote to George Patten in 1868. His letter contains criticism of McNeill’s farming abilities and the lack of management skills to prevent the plunder the plantation had received.

Dear Sir! Your favor of the 17th Ultimo and 4th Instant have been received. The former reached this whilst my official duties absorbed all my attention, and since my return from Charleston in discharge of these
duties my health has been such as to prevent my writing. Moreover the statements that you make took me so much by surprise that I felt, as I now feel, at a loss what to do. On yesterday I was consulting with a friend as to the propriety and expediency of sending a special agent to confer with you and if necessary to proceed to Manitee. I fear, the old residents who consider the land exhausted of the elements necessary to make sugar" are utterly ignorant of that which they affirm, and that Captain McNeill "could not make sweet potatoes" indicates to me that Captain McNeill could not make sweet potatoes on the best sweet potato land in South Carolina or Georgia. It is one of the best places for making sweet potatoes that I ever saw and when managing the Estate of Col. Gamble I saved, in one or two years, over fifteen hundred dollars by having a large field of potatoes planted in sections at different times giving us potatoes of fine quality throughout the entire year, having no trouble in saving them as we dug as we wanted. The other residents said then that corn could not be made and yet in the face of this I made more than was needed …

As to the absence of all demand for land by purchase, I can only give the opinion that until a few enterprising settlers take hold and make some improvements, realize the mildness of the climate, prove that by raising stock, fishing and oyster gathering, cheap living with good health attach to the locality, there will be little or no demand for lands. Besides in this particular case the residents who seem to have appropriated nearly everything about the sugar house even the bricks of the chimney, are not yet satisfied with the amount of plunder already had and I have no doubt throw every obstacle and every discouragement in the way of parties desiring to purchase. It is a very unusual thing for an agent to disparage the property of his principal and it is equally unusual for a faithful agent to allow the property of his principal to be plundered and destroyed as seems to be the case in this instance. I must confess that I have but little confidence in Captain McNeill and that when I first read your letter my indignation was fully aroused at what I believed to be his base misrepresentations and faithless conduct. But I have dwelt long enough on these matters and I now will submit a proposition premising that I still think my original one very low -- I will agree to take six thousand dollars for the plantation proper, not including the Tierra Ciea tract… [MacFarlan 1868]

Instead of the original $6,000.00 asked by MacFarlan, Patten purchased the plantation in December 1873 for $3,000 at public auction (Deed Book A, p.418-423; Matthews 1983:356, 359-360,364).
Patten sold some sections of the plantation for large farm tracts and other sections for housing subdivisions. It is noted in the park tour presentation that Patten named the Township Ellenton after his daughter. In one correspondence to sell the mansion, he describes the condition of the plantation at the time of his purchase.

…There had been cleared and cultivated by Gamble 1300 acres of which 1000 was planted in sugar cane and 300 in the form of farm products for supplies.

At the time of my purchase it had been destroyed by Federal troops from blockading vessels. The sugar house valued at $100,000 was burned with fences and Negro houses, and the plantation was entirely abandoned.

Since my purchase I have laid off and sold many farms of from 10 to 40 acres which have been put into cultivation with vegetables a truck farms of which are also planted with orange trees and cultivated between the rows. [Patten 1888]

The Patten heirs divided the remaining estate. Dudley Patten inherited the mansion. In 1895 Dudley Patten built the Victorian house to replace the deteriorating mansion. The mansion was abandoned after the Patten family moved into their new house. The Manatee County ordered the property, which included the mansion and only three acres, to be sold for tax purposes in 1910. James Romeo Wood purchased the property in 1914 for $1,600 and sold the property to Armour Fertilizer Works in 1920. Under the management of the Armour Fertilizer Works the mansion was utilized to house raw manure during composting which contributed to greater deterioration (Almy et al. 2004:3-22).

The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) raised money to purchase and preserve the mansion. They purchased it in 1925 and donated the property to the State of Florida in 1927 as a Confederate memorial dedicated to Benjamin (Baker 1978:7). The
mansion’s connection with providing asylum to Benjamin during his escape from the United States was the reason the UDC purchased the house in 1925 and saved it from further deterioration.

Oral history taken from one of the park rangers is used to support information about the park’s initial history. Park Ranger, Wayne Godwin, (Godwin, personal communication 2008) started working for the park in the 1970s. He stated that the mansion was utilized as a Confederate museum with self-guided tours. Park rangers would collect twenty-five cents from visitors at the mansion’s doorway. In the late 1970s a tour script was developed and interpretive tours replaced the passive self-guided tours.

**Slavery at the Gamble Plantation**

There is limited historical and archaeological information left behind that addresses the lives of Gamble’s slaves. Gamble stated that he entered the Manatee River frontier in 1844 with ten male slaves (Gamble 1888). He increased the number of his slaves, which included women and children as he expanded the plantation. One hundred eighty-five slaves were listed as property when Gamble sold the plantation in 1858.

Alan MacFarlan, Gamble’s brother-in-law, responded to George Patten’s inquiry concerning the former Gamble Plantation in 1868. Information about the landscape, and early settlers can be obtained by reading this document. What this document also reveals is a description about the changes in the slave quarters’ construction materials utilized during Gamble’s ownership and while under the supervision of MacFarlan.

As to the fencing there is some difficulty but not such as to be insurmountable. We never had pine rails brought down the river but used the pine logs of which doubtless plenty remain. I fully understand the difficulties about building materials, more especially the lumber. As for
other material the abundance of shells and the facilities for making the best lime from oyster shells, houses for dwellings and other purposes can be easy built by Tabi [sic]. Before I took charge the negro [sic] houses were of Palmetto thatched with Palmetto leaves.

If we cannot find more evidence from the historical documents, we need to rely on historical archaeology to supply the missing information. And our imaginations are needed to supply the logical inferences. For one example of many, we might start in looking for evidence of the slaves and their day to day activities where they lived – in the slave residences. Historian Janet Snyder Matthews states that Gamble erected 57 slave cabins constructed of Palmetto and thatch and tabby (Matthews 1983:169). While multiple archaeological excavations have been conducted on the plantation and its surrounding areas, the archaeology has yet to reveal the slave quarters.

Why is it important that the slave quarters be found? Historical archaeologists have illustrated that the interior and exterior areas surrounding the slave cabins can yield important and tangible information about slave living conditions (Heath 1999:27-8; Otto 1984:9; Singleton 1991:152). While the trend in archaeology of the African Diaspora is to move away from the study of oppression to a study of freedom that illustrates agency, what would archaeological information tell us about Gamble's enslaved population? Undocumented history supported by archaeological investigation has the potential to open new avenues of thought about Gamble's enslaved population and also complicate local histories. Data obtained from slave cabins could provide insight into the daily lifeways of the enslaved people who have been so sufficiently erased from their history. We will pursue these and other questions in subsequent chapters.
Conclusion

This chapter examined Robert Gamble’s history starting from his Virginian roots and traces his path to Middle Florida, his settlement along the Manatee River to his eventual return to Tallahassee in 1856. Primary and secondary historical sources reveal information about the Gamble family movement yet remain silent about the slaves that the Gambles forced to migrate from Virginia to Middle Florida. It is unknown if some of these original Virginian slaves were included in Robert Gamble’s move to the Manatee River. We do know that the slaves at the Manatee River plantation experienced instability due to the management of multiple owners and overseers prior to their final pre-Civil War forced migration to New Orleans. It is speculated that the slaves were either sold in Louisiana or integrated on other sugarcane plantations owned by Cofield and Davis. Slaves experienced the harsh realities of planters’ capitalistic endeavors on sugarcane plantations, especially in the Caribbean and Louisiana. In chapter five, this thesis reviews the historical and archaeological literature concerning slavery. Aspects of labor on sugarcane plantations in the Caribbean and Louisiana are discussed. It draws from other archaeological models that have examined slave lifeways and creates inferences of potential results that can be anticipated from archaeology at the Gamble Plantation. It is hoped that through archaeological research a broader version of Gamble Plantation’s history which will include the slaves’ histories can be brought forward.

The next chapter examines Gamble Plantation’s local environment. Environmental factors impact settlement viability. Humans modify the environment conducive for settlement. Evidence of slave activity can be revealed through the examination of environment.
Chapter 3: The Gamble Plantation in the Local Environment

Environmental factors can determine the living and cultural viability of a site. Changes in the environment including climate, vegetation, and fauna can encourage favorable human activity while adverse conditions may not sustain occupation. Humans are known for modifying the environment to meet their needs. Shared communal contacts are reflected within the landscape and frequently, the expressed landscape and environment influences the communal activities (Winberry 1997:11).

Robert Gamble’s imperative was to participate in the economic enterprise of global exportation of primarily sugar and molasses and secondarily oak timber. When he wrote about the plantation, he described the land as very wet and in need of an extensive drainage system in order to grow sugarcane. That this work was undertaken indicates the presence of enslaved labor, but not in any straightforward or unproblematic way. Thus, it is important to understand the human-environment interaction in order to answer our research questions regarding slavery at the Gamble Plantation.

Humans leave behind traces of their presence. Some of the traces become conscious reminders of the past and highlight stories of their creators. Other traces are sometimes dropped or discarded as people assumed their daily lives. Some features deteriorate with age and collapse upon themselves as time passes. Either way remnants of human stories are left behind for future generations to tease out the tangled web of obvious and hidden histories. In order to understand the circumstances of a place, it becomes necessary to catch the image of the present like a single exposure of a picture.
Florida’s Environment

Florida is divided into ten physiographic sections. These sections are further divided into districts and subdistricts. The Central Highlands, the Tallahassee Hills, the Marianna Lowlands, the Western Highlands and the Costal Lowlands constitute the natural topographic divisions (USDA 1981:2). Ellenton, Florida lies in the area referred to as the DeSoto Slope. The DeSoto area lies within the broad coastal region of Tampa Bay and the Manatee River. The subdistrict has broad coastal plains that are disrupted by swamps and drainage systems subject to areas of wet prairies, flatwoods and cypress swamps (Rolland et al.2004: 2-1).

The climate of the Manatee River area is subtropical. Its close proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and low elevations influences the temperature. Thus, it is characterized by high relative humidity, long summers and short warm winters. The Gulf of Mexico tempers the climate and protects the area from winter frost. The warm moist environment is conducive for agriculture including winter vegetables and citrus (USDA 1981:1).

Winter temperatures that fall below freezing levels are confined more to the eastern sections of Manatee County. Areas around bodies of water are considered frost free and are suitable for growing cut flowers, tomatoes, cabbage, peppers, escarole, lettuce, cucumbers, eggplant, and celery. Summer temperatures can reach above 95 degrees with afternoon thunderstorms cooling the air (USDA 1981:1).
Soil

Table 1 describes the plantation’s and the surrounding area’s soil. The soil matrixes consist of EauGaille-Wabasso-Bradenton-Chobee complex found most frequently in Manatee County. These soils are characterized as nearly level sandy soils with poor to very poor drainage. Present would be broad flatwoods with scatterings of seasonal ponds. Natural vegetation would include South Florida slash pine, live oak, huckleberry, water oak, cabbage palm, and sawpalmetto. In low depression areas the natural vegetation would consist of sawgrass, maidencane, cypress, willow, St. Johnswort and sedges.

Table 1 Map Unit Legend for Manatee County, Florida (FL081) (Courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service 2008:9)

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<th>Acres in AOI*</th>
<th>Percent of AOI</th>
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</table>

*Area of Investigation.

The largest percentage of soil found on the park mansion area is EauGaille. The five inch surface layer is very dark gray fine sand. The subsurface is grayish brown while the subsoil layer is black fine sand. The lower layer is grayish brown sandy clay with the substratum consisting of grayish brown fine sand, loamy fine sand, and fine
sandy loam (USDA 1981:23). The water table is noted at 10 inches below surface during the rainy season and at 40 inches below surface during the dry season.

Bradenton fine sand is second largest percentage of soil present on the park mansion area. It is located in the low-lying ridges and hammocks. It is a poorly draining soil. The 6 inch surface layer is dark gray fine sand. An 11 inch subsurface layer is noted as grayish brown fine sand with the lower 2 inches noted as brown fine sand. The subsoil is a sandy loam for 47 inches. Limestone with fractures and solution holes is noted below the subsoil. This soil is suitable for fruit and vegetable agriculture, especially citrus (USDA 1981:15).

Chobee loamy fine sand is found in the park area. It is nearly level and very poorly drained in small to large depressions. The 8 inch surface is black loamy soil. A 43 inch subsurface layer is noted as sandy clay. The substratum is calcerous gray loamy fine sand. Its natural vegetation ranges from red maple, water oak, cabbage palm, ferns, and water tolerant grasses. Chobee loamy fine sand is located in the northeast corner of the property in the vicinity of the eastern drainage canal and in the sugar mill parcel.

Wabasso fine sand is lowest percentage of soil found in the park area. It is also nearly level and poorly draining. Due to its wetness, it is poorly suited for crop cultivation, especially citrus agriculture unless water drainage systems are installed. The 7 inch surface layer is very dark gray fine sand. The subsurface layer is 28 inches of fine sand coated with organic matter. Beneath the fine sand layer is a 37 inch layer of brown fine sand. Grayish brown to gray loamy material is noted in the next 65 inches. Its natural vegetation ranges from long leaf pines, cabbage palms, sawpalmetto, wax myrtle,
huckleberry, and running oak. Wabasso fine sand is located in the southeastern section of the property near the eastern drainage canal.

The sugar mill parcel consists of the same Wabasso-Bradenton-EauGaille soil complex. Two pockets of Chobee are noted on the twenty acres. Rolland et al. (2003:2-1) note that ponds located at the sugar mill site were greatly modified to hold water.

**The Manatee River**

The Tampa Bay and Manatee River Region were areas of speculation for future plantation developments as early as 1821. The rich hammocks adaptable for agriculture and easy access to the Manatee River drew planter attention to the potential economic gain through cash crop cultivation and exportation (Brown 1999:7; Silpa 2003:43). The location of the Manatee River area offered beneficial climate and marl soils to grow higher yields of sugarcane which also carried higher returns at the global market.

The Manatee River feeds into the Tampa Bay at the west and is composed of brackish water. It converges with the fresh water Braden River to the east. Gamble describes the Manatee River in a letter to George Patten written in May 1868. He writes:

> The River is one of the most beautiful I know, being indeed as far as the settlement is concerned an arm of the sea, the mouth is six miles due west from my former residence, emptying into Tampa Bay due east from the entrance to the bay at Egmont Island! The width of the River varies in that distance from one to one 'half miles. Schooners can lay and take in cargo drawing 7½ to 8 feet 100 yards from the landing which is within three hundred yards of the residence & three miles lower down a vessel drawing 10 ½ feet can receive her cargo. [Gamble 1868]
Mangroves and other flora grow along the shallow edges of the river. Abundant estuarine life has contributed to the settlement of pre-historic and historic populations inhabiting the area (Schwadron 2002:17). Oyster mounds located on the north and south sides of the river are visible evidence of prehistoric populations. Historical data reveal that Cuban and Florida born fishermen established fishing ranchos along the coastline for the export of fish to Cuba as early as 1740 (Matthews 1983: 73-74; Schwadron 2002:50-51). Private residences and business now populate many sections of the river’s edges.

The *Lures of Manatee* (McDuffee 1961) is a history book that focuses on the settlement of the Manatee River area. McDuffee’s book contains a great deal of historical information concerning members of the Manatee River settlement including quotations. Unfortunately, her data are totally non-supported. Her book notes the utilitarian benefit as well as the charm the river offers (McDuffee 1961). McDuffee’s description of the river illustrates its romantic appeal while underscoring its role in transportation. Settlement of the Manatee River area and further inland required the river or horseback for movement because of the lack of practical roads and rail transportation. The roads on the Florida frontier were cart tracks in sand and carriage travel was impractical and difficult (Dovell 1952:327). McDuffee’s states this fact.

Back in the days before the coming of railroads and the more recent network of fine paved highways, the river served this remote community as its broad highway of traffic—the artery of transportation through which flowed the products of this section to the outside world. [McDuffee 1961:11]. Settlement beyond the Gulf of Mexico coastline would have been delayed, difficult, and isolated without the river as a means for shipping and communication. Letters, news, and
supplies were shipped from St. Marks, Florida to the budding Manatee River settlement every six weeks (Matthews 1983: 167).

Planters utilized the river because of its easy access to the Gulf of Mexico to ship their products to New Orleans (Matthews 1983: 149). While Gamble chose land that required extensive drainage, its location on the river and easy access to the Gulf allowed for a means of transportation of his cash crops to New Orleans, the Gulf Coast of Texas, and New York City. The property’s location outweighed the manual cost of wetland drainage provided through slave labor. This land required the construction of sixteen miles of drainage canals which included the creation of a “permanent creek” (Gamble 1988) provided by intensive slave labor for Gamble to realize high sugarcane harvest.

**Confronting the Environment**

Gamble wrote an article titled “Florida as a Sugar State” for the *Tallahassee Floridian* in 1888 about his experiences as a sugarcane planter. The article reveals a wealth of information about the topography and soils that Gamble encountered on his property.

The topography of these lands was very peculiar, the base being limestone, superimposed upon which were various beds of marl, and upon this a strata of chocolate colored argillaceous soil, filled with finely attriterated fossil [sic] bone of the manatee, and also many entire ribs of this mammal completely petrified; this constituted the true soil, but upon this was the surface soil, sand and vegetable matter. This substratum of limestone was dense in innumerable places, forming basins or ponds varying from one-fourth acre to six or eight acres. During the rainy season the ponds were filled and were gradually depleted by evaporation the succeeding dry season. The soil in these ponds was a rich unctuous muck approaching to clay in texture, while all the lands which lay between them and above their high water mark, was the usual light soil, with the chocolate soil described above. Between these rich lands and the river, on
the south, was a small sand prairie, acting as a dam and effectually preventing the escape of the heavy rainfall of our rainy season. Running my level over the tract determined the lowest point touching the prairie. From this point I started my system of ditches, the main trunks running north and south, and east and west, but dug to different levels, according to the profile of the lands, to avoid unnecessary depths of the ditches. These ditches, in the hammock, varied from one foot wide, one and a half deep to 4 feet wide and deep, the larger ditches being excavated for three or four feet of the depth through a kind of hard concrete shell; in other places through limestone, requiring the use of gunpowder. The lineal length of these ditches, great and small, was sixteen miles, and the ditch or canal across the prairie was, in its widest part, 20 feet, and in its deepest, 9 feet. In fact, I created a permanent creek which runs to this day. [Gamble 1888]

These wet areas were also noted by Samuel Reid who worked as a government surveyor for the Manatee River Area in April 1843. Reid’s observation notes of Section 8 Township 34 Range 18 South were recorded. He noted three large ponds and first rate hammocks that went for miles. The hammocks contained Live Oak, Red Bay Oak, and Hickory (DEP U.S. Government Survey Field Notebooks vol. 89:139). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the 1845 and the present environment in order to understand the modifications that Gamble made to achieve his goal of large scale sugarcane production.

Gamble’s article, Reid’s survey notes, and the original 1843 sale book plat illustrate that the land had many ephemeral ponds that flooded during the rainy season due to the limestone substrate (Figure 3).
Reid also noted that the property contained three large ponds during April 1843 which is the tail end of the dry season for Manatee County. For Gamble to pursue agriculture activity and architecture construction the land needed an extensive drainage canal system. Gamble’s slaves used pick axes to create sixteen miles of drainage canals that spanned his 3,450 acres. These canals were located in north/south and east/west directions. The sizes varied from one foot to twenty feet wide and one and one-half foot to nine feet deep. In areas were the slaves confronted limestone, gunpowder was used. Functional remnants of these canals remain today in Ellenton/Palmetto areas.
Land Use Over the Years

The U.S. Department of Agriculture created 9x9 aerial photographs of Florida starting in 1937. These medium altitude, historic aerial photographs are the oldest data which illustrate anthropogenic impacts and changes in land use. While Florida’s aerial photographs were initially intended to provide farmers with accurate assessments of their farms and soil conservation they have proved to be invaluable to other professions as well. Archaeologists utilize aerial photographs to illustrate patterns of human activity that survive as topographic features but are too complex to define at ground level (David 2006:4).

The following aerial photos are taken from the University of Florida Map and Digital Imagery Library. The Library houses the most complete collection of Florida aerial photographs taken between 1937 and 1975 beside the National Archives. The photographs are magnified to demonstrate 20th century activity.

The 1940 aerial photograph (Figure 4) illustrates that the area was heavily utilized for agricultural purposes. Citrus agriculture is noted east of the mansion’s drainage canal and in the sugar mill parcel. The canals are noted spanning north/south with drainage into the Manatee River. The eastern boundary canal in the Gamble mansion area is very clear. North of the mansion, agricultural fields are apparent with drainage/irrigation canals spanning not only north/south but also east/west. In the western section of the photo, the east/west canals appear to drain into a creek as well as drain into the north/south canals.
The 1957 Aerial Photograph (Figure 5) illustrates that some citrus trees appear to be surviving in the sugar mill area. A body of water is noted in the southwest corner of the sugar mill parcel. Development in the mansion park area has increased. Citrus agriculture west of Ellenton-Gillette Road appears to be flourishing.
In searching for evidence of slave life and activity on the Gamble Plantation, the environment can reveal clues. Had the site not been disturbed through human occupation and cultivation, a totally different collection of natural vegetation would have been noted.

On an extensive walk-through survey of the park and sugar mill in mid-March 2008, Elzie McCord Jr., Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Biology at New College of Florida, and I identified a number of plants on the property. Plants were identified to species when possible. However, many could not be identified beyond genre because they lacked reproductive structures. These plants are listed in Appendix A and Appendix B. Wunderlin and Hanson (2003) was utilized for plant taxonomy. Many of the plants were
noted to be invasive exotic species. Of interest, the Thatch Palm, *Thrinx morrisii* H. Wendl, originated from Middle Florida in Monroe County. This palm is slow growing and can reach heights of 20 to 30 feet tall. It is topped with five foot wide fronds. A historical record (MacFarlan 1868) illustrates slave houses as being constructed of Palmetto and Thatch. It is unknown if the Thatch Palm is the Palmetto and Thatch referred to by MacFarlan.


Early uses of lime and rosary pea were for medicinal and religious purposes in West Africa (McClure 1982: 291). The historical consumption of limes for the prevention of scurvy is well known, but other roles the citrus played are lesser known. Twigs of it were chewed to promote dental hygiene. Tea infusions limes were utilized in the Caribbean Islands for the treatment of colds, pneumonia, dyspepsia, dysentery, and skin lesions (1982: 292).

McClure argues that the incorporation of lime into the Caribbean culture as a charm or “gris-gris” was attributed to its ability to help ward off spirits. Lime trees were
often found planted in Caribbean church yards. These plantings might be attributed to folk belief (1982: 292).

Rosary pea originated in India but by 1454 reached the west coast of Africa and was incorporated into their folk culture. While African and Caribbean cultures similarly utilized the plant for medicinal and religious purposes, there are some differences. It was noted for the treatment of hoarseness, cough, granular lesions of the eye lids, and fever reduction in West Africa and the Caribbean islands (McClure 1982: 294). In West Africa, the brilliant red and black seeds functioned as jewelers’ weights and currency but this important usage was not repeated in the Caribbean Islands. The seeds when strung on a necklace were thought to bring good luck (Poole 1850 as cited in McClure 1982:295). McClure notes that children were included in the practice of stringing rosary peas and this tradition was common in other areas of the Caribbean Islands and South Florida (1982:295). Caribbean enslaved populations utilized the seeds for body ornamentation and were known to arrive from Africa with the seed ornaments as their only processions (Park 1815 and Poole 1850 as cited in McClure 1982:295).

The usage of rosary pea was not limited to healing and charms. It was also known for its role in poisonings. The toxin, abrin, obtained from the rosary pea was sold by herbalist for poison curses in Africa, the Caribbean Islands, and south Florida (1982:295).

Castor bean originated in Africa. It was introduced to America early during the slave trade. African and Caribbean cultures used it for medicinal purposes. The oil was often used as a poultice. It was indicated to promote childbirth, stimulate milk
production, and as purgative. The seeds contain ricin, a toxin that is similar to abrin. Ingestion of only two castor bean seeds can result with death (1982:297)

Lime trees and rosary pea are identified in the park canal and the sugar mill environments. Though the healing qualities of lime have been widely recognized in colonial Caribbean societies, the plant could have possibly been introduced when the sugar mill was converted to citrus agriculture. Castor bean is not located in either sites but grows prolifically throughout the surrounding areas that once comprised the Gamble Plantation. While there is no way of knowing when these plants were introduced to the environment, their presence allows for questions if Gamble’s slaves incorporated them into their lifeways for medicinal and religious purposes.

Conclusion

This chapter started with the premise that environmental factors can control the probability of human survival. Positive conditions would encourage settlement while the adverse conditions would prevent or impede settlement. Gamble knowingly chose land on the north side of the Manatee River that was wet and required massive drainage canals while land located on the south side of the river had a drier environment. His plans had to be foresighted and enormous to undertake such a massive project of draining 3,450 acres.

Gamble did not do the work. However, he used his level to determine where to place the canals. African Americans held in slavery dug with pick axes for Gamble to modify the environment not only suitable enough to make the environment conducive for settlement but to produce his cash crops. Creating sixteen miles of canals had to be a
continuous laborious project throughout the entire time Gamble owned the property. Successful agriculture in this section of Florida is completed during the fall, winter, and spring months. Sugarcane is harvested during the winter. What time of year were the canals dug? If the slaves dug canals through limestone when other agriculture requirements were not required, then the digging was done during Florida’s hot, humid summers. From aerial photographs we can visualize the canals that still are present and operating in the area. From this environmental study of the past we see a man determined to create a successful plantation no matter the physical and emotional cost to his enslaved population.

We know the flora changed over time due to human intervention and occupation. We also know that some of the plants found growing wild in the eastern canal, the sugar mill, and areas surrounding the plantation were used by slaves in folk and medicinal practices. Archaeological botanical data, macroremains, pollen, and phytoliths, can explain the human-plant association (Pearsall 1989: 1-9). These few plant species open us to potentially new views of Gamble’s slaves. Did root conjurers or midwives use a tea to cure a cold, pneumonia, stomach pains, diarrhea or skin lesions? Did they have access to the plants? In-depth botanical studies might open new avenues of thought concerning slave medicinal and religious practices at the Gamble Plantation.

The next chapter discusses and provides descriptive details of the remaining nineteenth century architecture at the plantation and reviews past archaeological investigations.
Chapter 4: An Inventory of the Plantation Today

Humans leave behind traces of their presence. Some of the traces become conscious reminders of the past and highlight stories of their creators. Other traces are sometimes dropped or discarded as people assumed their daily lives. Some features deteriorate with age and collapse upon themselves as time passes. Either way remnants of human stories are left behind for future generations to tease out the tangled web of obvious and hidden histories. In order to understand the circumstances of a place, it becomes necessary to catch the image of the present like a single exposure of a picture.

This chapter will address the description of the Manatee River, the plantation and the sugar mill. I provide an inventory of the nineteenth century architecture at the Judah P. Benjamin Confederate Memorial and the Gamble Plantation State Park, and show, too, how archaeological investigations conducted in the recent past have revealed significant features that might be investigated further.

Geographic Location of the Plantation

Today the plantation is located in Ellenton, Florida and is owned by the State of Florida. The park is a mere fragment of Gamble’s original plantation. Presently, the park is divided into two parcels. The first 16 acre parcel is irregular in shape and bounded to the south by U.S. Highway 301. Vacant lots, private residences, small businesses, and a fire station are located south of U.S. Highway 301. The main public entrance to the park is situated on U.S. Highway 301. The Manatee River lies one quarter of a mile south of the mansion (Baker 1987:6). The Mansion Memorial Cemetery bounds the parcel to the
north. West of the park are small businesses and Ellenton-Gillette Road. A drainage canal provides the eastern boundary. East of the drainage canal are private residences, small businesses, and five acres of vacant property designated for housing development.

The 16 acre parcel houses the main park complex which includes the nineteenth century brick and tabby Greek Revival Vernacular mansion with its adjacent cistern, a four compartment unknown tabby feature, the Patten house, the twentieth century park office and museum, storage buildings, ranger residences and the United Daughters of the Confederacy Archival building. The mansion, the cistern, the four compartment unknown feature and the Patten House are nineteenth century architecture (Parks 2001: 2-7). Descriptions and functions of these structures are discussed later in the chapter.

The second parcel is positioned one half of a mile north of the mansion on 19 3/4 acres. It is bounded to the west by Ellenton-Gillette Road and to the south by 17th Street (Parks 2001: 5-93). The site is predominately flat with elevation differences no more than a meter. The mill ruins are located approximately 152.4 meters (500 feet) to the north and 18.3 meters (60 feet) to the east of the southwest corner of the property (Rolland et al. 2004: 2-15). This parcel contains the remains of Gamble’s sugar mill and is not open to the public.

The Mansion

Initial frontier homes in Middle Florida and along the Manatee River area were utilitarian in nature. Log cabin construction was the standard for planters’ first homes in Middle Florida (Shofner 1976). Planters’ homes reflected status and their position in society after the plantation was established. Four planters resided on the Manatee River.
Of the four, only Joseph Braden’s and Robert Gamble’s homes were two-storied utilizing tabby construction. Of the four planters, Gamble was the only planter on the river to construct a Greek Revival Vernacular mansion. While the meaning of vernacular refers to the local architectural style and construction materials of the area, the park utilizes this descriptive adjective to describe the adaptations made to the house for accommodation to Florida’s climate. The three foot overhang of the roof and veranda, the two foot thick walls, high ceilings and lower doorways, and window placement of east/west constituted the vernacular qualities of the house. The overhangs kept the sun off of the living sections in the house. The thick walls served as an insular quality. The high ceilings and low doorways trapped the heat at the ceiling level and prevented it from expanding to other rooms. Placement of east/west windows allowed for a constant flow of the Gulf of Mexico breeze. These adaptations work remarkably well because the temperature in the mansion is comfortable throughout the year.

While historian Julia Floyd Smith (as quoted in Rolland et al. 2004: 3-40) states that Gamble initially lived in a log cabin that was later occupied by his overseer, historical documentation about Gamble’s residence is limited to his statement “My dwelling house was also of brick & covered with iron, two-stories high and contained ten rooms” (Gamble 1868) (Figure 6).
The mansion is surrounded on three sides with eighteen tabby columns covered with stucco. The columns support the verandah and roof and also create an illusion of size and grandeur (Parks et al. 2001: 2-9; Matthews 1983: 168; Silpa 2003:51).

The mansion is comprised of three sections. The two-storied red brick southern section facing US. Highway 301 is the main element. The central element is two storied red brick and is attached to main element. The third section is the detached two storied brown tabby brick northern element. A breezeway separates the northern building from the central and southern elements. A verandah surrounds the eastern, western, and southern sections of the main and central elements. All three elements are covered in stucco. The outside dimensions of all elements including the verandah are 12.5 meters (41 feet) by 28.4 meters (93 feet). The height measuring from grade to eave is approximately 6.1 meters (20 feet) (Parks et al. 2001: 2-9).
The construction sequence of his ten room house is also unknown. Three architectural firms have examined the mansion during the DEP’s ownership and none of these architects agree as to the construction stages. The most recent examination completed by the architectural firm Renker Eich Parks Architects Incorporated asserts that the main element with the second story was the first to be constructed. The free standing, north tabby building was the second section built while the two story central element was the last section built (Parks et al. 2001: 2-11).

The Cistern

East of the mansion is the (figure 7.0). It is 4.9 meters wide (16 feet) by 9.1 meters (30 feet) long and 1.2 meters (4 feet) deep. The walls are 0.6 meters (2 feet) thick. The structure is covered by a wooden gabled roof.

Figure 7 Gamble’s Cistern located on the Eastern Section of the Mansion (taken by Silpa, 2008).
A conduit that connects the mansion and cistern serves to drain rain water from the roof of the house (Parks et al. 2001:2-15). The cistern stored rainwater for the mansion residence. Gamble disliked the taste of the local water supplies and was suspect that the water would create gastrointestinal infections.

I had large cisterns capable of supplying drinking water to a force of 160 negroes [sic] large and small and others at the residence for the whites. The water of the Country is unwholesome and rain water must be relied upon ... It is one of the healthiest and pleasantest climates I ever knew, if you use the cistern water, otherwise, there will be prevalence of bowel complaints, dysentery & diarrhea. [Gamble 1868]

**The Four Compartment Unknown Tabby Feature**

A four compartment unknown tabby feature (Figure 8) is located 74.0 meters (243 feet) east of the mansion. Its function is unknown. It is 4.5 meters (13 feet) wide by 9.1 meters (30 feet) long and is 1.2 meters (4 feet) deep. The walls are 0.30 meters (1 foot) thick. The interior is divided into four equal sections. The northern section has a 15.2 centimeter (6 inch) diameter drainage outlet that empties into the eastern canal. The feature is constructed with tabby bricks and the methods are consistent with Gamble’s nineteenth century construction (Parks 2001:2-16).
The Patten House

The Patten House (Figure 9) was built by Dudley Patten in 1895 to replace the deteriorating mansion. The second generation of Pattens lived there. It is built in the popular Victorian style (Parks et al. 2001:2-16). It was originally located 50 feet south and west of its present location. In 1969 the State moved the house 50 feet east and north to accommodate the expansion U.S. Highway 301 and to facilitate a better viewshed of the mansion.
The Sugar Mill

Two historical sources written by Gamble reveal detailed descriptions of the sugar mill. While his discussion of the mansion is limited to the number of rooms and sizes, he offers greater insight into the construction and building materials of the mill. It is unknown whether these descriptions are generated because of pride or are a necessary detail that documents the management of his enterprise. Either way, these descriptions can be utilized to tease out nineteenth century images of his sugar mill as a comparison to the present sugar mill features.

Gamble wrote this description in a letter to George Patten in 1868.

I constructed two buildings for my sugar works. No. 1, 180 feet long & 40 feet wide in the clear, of brick; 40 feet of the length 22 feet high in the walls, 40 feet of the 40 length 17 feet high, 40 feet of length as & 40 ft. of the length 12 feet high.
The draining room being 60 feet long and having a brick cistern on each side the full length of the house & additional building having a cooling room 40 x 30 & a draining room 60x40 also made of brick & covered in iron.

I had two Steam Engines one of fifty horse power to drive the cane mill which was a very fine and large one as you may conceive when I tell you that the top roller weighed 5 tons! Everything on the premises was in unison, there were two ranges of boilers for evaporating cane juice, each one of the five kettles the largest in each range 500 gallons, & at the head of each range, a steam pan for granulating; a second Engine of 8 horse power ran my grist & saw mill & supplied water to boilers which supplied the steam pans with steam, & ran a draining machine during the rolling season. [Gamble 1868]

A clearer description of the sugar mill was written by Gamble in an article titled "Florida as a Sugar State".

The buildings I erected were as follows: The mill house 40 x 40 [12.192 x 12.192 meters], walls 16 feet [4.8768 meters] high; cooling house 40 x 40 [12.192 x 12.192 meters], walls 12 feet [3.6576 meters] high; draining house 40x 60 [12.192 x 18.288 meters], walls 8 feet [ 2.4384 meters] high.

All of these bricks were made on the spot and by my own force, and with the exception of one white workman, as boss-brick layer, they were all laid by my own negroes; the most intelligent being selected and under the guidance of Mr. Godard, who was one of the "armed occupationists" and a master workman, they did good and loyal work.

The roof frames of these houses were massy, and it being my intent at a future day to cover with slate. The carpentry of this work was done by contract, but all of the timber was sawed by hand on the plantation, as was all the lumber of every kind used in construction. This work was all completed in time to take off the crop of 1850-51.[Gamble 1888]

Gamble’s first mill was constructed of wood and located on his brother’s John’s tract of land, north of Robert Gamble’s property (Figure 10). It contained a 12.2 by 9.1 meters (40 by 30 foot) boiler house, a 18.3 by 9.1 meters (60 by 30
foot) draining house, and a 9.1 by 9.1 meters (30 by 30 foot) mill house (Gamble 1888).

Figure 10 Men Pose at the Ruins of Gamble Sugar Mill 1903 006108A (Manatee County Library).

The second mill (figure 11.0), constructed with red and tabby brick was clearly an enlargement of his first building. The 25 % increase in size indicates that Gamble anticipated larger harvest yields as he continued to expand his land and slave holdings.

Carl King and C. Warren Johnson, in conjunction with Manatee Community College, mapped the sugar mill in 1973. Their study illustrates an L-shaped feature that measures 53.3 meters (175 feet) north-south and 32.0 meters (105) east-west. The Manatee County Historic Society obtained a historic marker because of the work completed by King and Johnson.

Oral histories indicate that the mill was destroyed by the Federal Army during the Civil War (Gamble 1868) while archaeological excavations (8MA713) revealed “limited
and localized evidence of possible historic, burning episodes (150N 29 E; 130 N30 E) which occurred around the mill...No evidence of the catastrophic destruction of the sugar mill (with artillery shells and fire) by the Union forces during the Civil War was recovered” (Rolland et al. 2004: 6-28).

Further deterioration to the remaining walls has taken place since King and Johnson mapped the site. Bland Archaeological Associates conducted field work at the sugar mill in 2004 and utilized the architectural and historical research completed in 2001 by Renker, Eich, Parks Architects Incorporated. The architectural firm provided detail descriptions of the mill’s physical condition in their assessment of the existing site foundations and walls. They illustrated that the mill stood in ruins with an overgrowth of vegetation that supported the foundation and vertical walls (Parks et al. 2001: 5-94; Rolland et al 2004: 2-15).

Only portions of the original mill walls exist (Figure 11). The walls vary in height. One section of the wall is approximately 3.0 meters (10 feet) in height. There is no evidence of the original height of the mill and Rolland et al. (2004: 2-16) assert that the remaining wall height is 45 % Gamble’s initial building. The construction material is composed of clay brick, limestone rubble, and tabby brick. Rolland et al. (2004:2-16) speculate the earliest section was constructed with clay brick. This wall is described as the long narrow section that runs from the center of the mill north and measures 12.8 meters by 36.3 meters (42 feet by 120 feet). The bricks range in color (orange to red to purplish gray), size, and texture. The mortar is gray/brown with shell inclusions. There is no Portland cement noted in the construction of the mill which indicates that the mill
was more than likely constructed prior to the use of Portland cement (2004: 2-17). A full description of the mill ruins and features by Bland Archaeological Associates 2004 located in the Florida Master Sites File.

Figure 11 Gamble Sugar Mill (taken by Silpa, 2008).

A chain link fence surrounds the outside of the mill. The extant remains are visible from the street with a historic marker describing the function of the mill. While most of the exotic flora has been removed since the suggestions made by the architectural firm in 2001, there are still resilient outcroppings of Brazilian pepper. Patches of Bermuda grass have taken hold inside of the mill site.

Presently, clay and tabby brick and limestone rock walls remain visible. Since May 2007 a section of one wall has fallen from the north east corner. Debris of metal, mortar, limestone rubble, tabby and clay bricks can be found scattered on the ground.
Carved initials and words can be found in the red brick (Figure 12) on the west side of the west wall. It can be speculated that this writing can be attributed to soft, under-fired nineteenth century bricks, or bricks damaged from weather exposure that were carved after firing by graffiti artists. It is also possible that these red bricks were carved by the enslaved population prior to firing while the clay was still plastic.

![Figure 12 Carved clay bricks at the Gamble Sugar Mill (taken by Silpa, 2008).](image)

**Previous archaeological research**

Baker and Peterson (1978) conducted an impact study to gain an overview of the park’s cultural resources in January 1978. Contracted by the Florida Division of Parks they conducted this archaeological survey in an area slated for development of a parking lot, museum, residence and record building. They utilized a Strata-Scout earth resistivity meter to measure the average soil resistance between points 3 meters apart in an attempt to develop a contour map of soil resistance (1978:1). Marked variations in soil consistency would potentially indicate areas of activity such as refilled pits or buried walls. The area investigated was divided into five squares measuring 45 meters on a side. Squares Nos. 1 and 2 were low in elevation. Visual inspection revealed that Square No. 1 was covered by more than 50% of standing water. Ground water was found a few centimeters below the surface in Squares Nos. 1 and 2. The electric resistivity survey was effective for Squares Nos. 3 and 4 but equipment malfunction prevented further electrical profiling. Square No. 5 was tested utilizing a trenching machine for arbitrary subsurface testing.

Feature No. 1 was located at W 313 and W 309. Artifacts, (blue shell edged pearlware, large mammal bone, and unidentifiable iron fragment), excavated suggest that this feature was either a trash pit or the remains of a building contemporaneous with the antebellum period.

An east-west Trench along the grid line N390 revealed a stemmed projectile point that dates to the late Archaic period. No other cultural materials were found in this trench.
The area back of the mansion was experimentally scanned in July, 1981 utilizing a proton magnetometer. This testing was done to determine the feasibility of future usage of proton magnetometer scanning. The method proved unsuitable due to the heavy presence of scattered ferrous debris (Baker 1987: 8).

Baker conducted an intermittent auger survey and limited test excavations (8 MA 100) in June and August 1987. The objective of the survey was to gain an overview of archaeological resources on the plantation through examination of the landscape. The auger survey excavations were spaced at 10 meter intervals on the plantation grounds. A total of 479 auger excavations were taken. Two test units were additionally excavated. The results of the excavations revealed a gross distribution of modern and historic materials with the greatest concentration found behind the mansion and in the southwest corner of the site.

Two test trenches (N233/E222 and N252/E212) were excavated. Visible eastward plow were identified approximately 30 centimeters below the surface in trench N233/E222. Trench N252/E212 also showed evidence of plow scars running in an easterly direction at 30 centimeters below the surface. Brick fragments marked the depth of the plowing.

Multiple trash pits were noted along the eastern edge of the property N160/E230, N300/E290, N230, 240/E290, N110/E290.
At N190/E30 and N170/E280 two concentrations of materials appear to reveal the
remains of a single structure associated with the unknown tabby feature. Baker identifies
this unknown feature as a cistern associated with the historic building.

Baker located post mold at N252/E218 that formed the fence that skirted the cane
fields and the old road bed which stretched northward from the mansion (1987: 36).
Subsequent archaeologists suggest the road bed might have led from the mansion to the
sugar mill (Rolland et al. 2004: 4-7).

Baker was present to monitor the trenching procedure utilized to install an
electric security system in February 1992. Six trenches were excavated utilizing a Ditch
Witch trenching machine. Trench 3 revealed the original shell carriageway at 20
centimeters below the surface. Two 19th century trash pits were located at the southern
end of Trench 2 and designated as Feature 1A and 1B. Baker writes that the “backyard of
the house was predictably confirmed as an area of concentrated activity and could thus be
defined as ‘archaeologically sensitive’. It is important to note, however, that Features 1A
and 1B were located outside this ‘sensitive’ zone” (Baker 1992:14).

Rolland et al. (2004) conducted an archaeological survey at the sugar mill
between February and July 2004. The methods utilized during the archaeological survey
included historical research, ground penetrating radar, metal detection, and systematic
subsurface testing. The systematic subsurface testing incorporated 306 shovel tests and
six test units. There was evidence of 20th century land modification. The artifact
assemblage revealed historic artifacts with “a fairly homogenous, low density deposit of
20th century historic artifacts intermixed with scattered structural debris” (Rolland et al.
Most of the twentieth century artifacts were associated with citrus agriculture. There was no evidence found of the large scale mill destruction by the Federal Army as recorded in oral and local histories. No nineteenth century artifacts could be attributed to usage during Gamble’s ownership. A kaolin pipe and an 1889 nickel were the only artifacts that could be definitely attributed to the nineteenth century. Rolland et al. (2004:6-29) writes, “Archaeological testing confirms that the area around the extant sugar mill ruins contains a highly mixed matrix which represents a composite of these various activities”.

**Conclusion**

One hundred sixty-five years after its beginning the plantation stands in various stages of deterioration with some areas receiving more restoration than others. The mansion was renovated multiple times throughout its history. Architectural restoration is apt to be approached based on the salience of the history that is presented. From a visitor’s perspective, the mansion looks like it did in the nineteenth century though visitors are made aware of the multiple restoration processes through photographic aides and the tours. The only architectural features that can be given functional roles are the sugar mill, the mansion and its adjacent cistern. The functional role of the four compartment tabby feature is unknown. The archaeological evidence of the carriageway and roadbed indicate that Gamble avoided utilizing the area to the east of his mansion for a reason which is discussed in another chapter.

Any structures that indicate slave lifeways have disappeared from the landscape. All of the archaeological surveys associated with the plantation and the sugar mill to this
date have not revealed any of the slave quarters. Multiple trash pits located on the eastern edge of the property could indicated the location of slave cabins, slave yards, and their associated trash pits.

The next chapter reviews the historical archaeological literature of plantation landscapes and slavery in the U.S. South and in the Caribbean. It will examine the Gamble built landscape as an expression of power through spatial organization. It will specifically address how slave activity might be reflected in the archaeological record and it will propose archaeological methods to examine those questions.
“Landscape studies are the exploration of how people shaped and were shaped by the land within a dynamic cultural and natural context” (Zierden and Stine 1997: xi).

Humans do not behave randomly but follow behavioral patterns established by their culture. The locations of homes, farms, seasonal encampments, and burials are dependent on the culture and the natural environment. Settlement is affected by availability of food and fresh water supply, transportation, material resources, and topography (Feder 1997: 42). Landscape modifications such as gardens, homes, agricultural fields, canals, and roads are produced within an agreement of dynamic cultural and societal rules that functionally benefit not only the community but also the individual (Deetz 1990:1; Zierden and Stine 1997: xi). Hood (1996: 123) argues that landscapes are created through human perception and usage which “carry cultural meaning in specific contexts. Cultural landscapes can be extended to include all aspects of culturally defined space.” Therefore, a cultural landscape is the modification through development and usage of the natural environment that conforms to societal and cultural rules and can be divided into societal, technological, and ideological dimensions (Deetz 1990:2). The cultural landscape carries symbolic meaning that can be utilized to describe, assert, and perpetuate power relationships between social classes (Leone and Shackel 1990:64; Leone 1992; Yentsch 1994; Shackel and Little 1994).

A general sense of Gamble and his lifestyle is achieved when the plantation’s landscape is examined. His landscape, the mansion, the cistern, the sugar mill, the
unknown tabby feature, and the canals established his economical, political, and social position within a frontier society and served as an illusion of power, order, and control. While it is recognized that the Gamble plantation landscape is extant evidence of his enslave population’s labor, hidden within this remaining landscape are the lifeways and values of the African Americans that survived during slavery. To achieve a greater sense of his enslaved population, I suggest that we need to identify areas of slave activity that include the location of the slave quarters, areas of labor, and areas of communal bonds.

In this chapter, I review some of the relevant literature in historical archaeology on slave plantations in the U.S. South and in the Caribbean. This is done with the aim of showing how comparative work might be useful to serve as a guide for future research at the Gamble Plantation in order to bring the lives and activities of the enslaved population into greater focus.

Robert Gamble included 185 enslaved people in the December 1858 sale of the Manatee River plantation. This deed of sale lists their names and sale numbers and offers the only insight into the slaves as individuals. Of the few available historical records written by Gamble, we see a paternalistic view when he writes, “I carried ten of my nergo men”; or “my own force” (Gamble 1888). Yet on a whole, Gamble’s tone concerning his enslaved people is much like a farmer who views the economic value of his livestock. Phrases such as “most intelligent being selected …they did good and loyal work”, “sawed by hand,” or “laborers and teams” (Gamble1888) illustrate that Gamble generally attributed their value as craft/skilled or field laborers. This “one-sided view of colonialism and capitalism” (Deagan 1998:54) is presented when the lives of enslaved populations are viewed from plantation owners’ records. This static nineteenth century
view demonstrates that this plantation owner was either unaware of his slaves beyond their economic value or felt it was unnecessary to comment about them. There is no mention of their lifeways including the locations of their homes, the architectural materials and style, their foodways, their communal activities, or their resistances and accommodations.

Slavery limited African American’s control over their lives, their health, and resources while their owners profited from their labors. Archaeological studies of African American slaves have focused on lifeways (Fairbanks 1984; Otto 1984; Singleton 2001, 1995, 1991, 1988; Ferguson 1992; Kelso 1997; Lindtveit and Klein 2003; Heath 1999), status (Otto 1984; Yentsch 1994; Wilke 2000), resistance (Orser and Nekola 1996; Wilke 2000; Orser and Funeri; Yentsch 1994), religion (Wilke 2000; Yentsch 1994; Heath and Bennett 2000), power (Orser 1988), and bioarchaeological studies (Blakey 2001; Blakey et al. 2004; Rathburn 1987; Owsley et al. 1987; Kelley and Angel 1987; Rankin-Hill et al. 2004). These archaeological studies reveal aspects of the daily lives of enslaved people not evident in archived historical records. Excavated artifacts have allowed archaeologists to infer ways that slaves utilized to regain some control over their lives while living within the constraints of slavery. Archaeological research has provided evidence of slave lifeways and illustrates that their lifeways were neither static nor dependent upon their owners for cultural or social identity (Singleton 1991:153; Wilke 2000:165).

How is slave activity reflected within the archaeological record? How can we see evidence of their daily lifeways, which would include their worldviews, their homes, their foodways, their gender identity, their labor, their communal activities, and their
resistance? The answer to this question requires examination of prior archaeological research. While slave archaeology began with Charles Fairbanks’ work at the Kingsley plantation in 1967, to date there remains a dearth of published data concerning Florida slave archaeology. Other southern plantation archaeological sites are examined due to the lack of published materials on Florida slave archaeology. Furthermore, Florida plantations were created following the planters’ move from areas such as Virginia, Maryland, South Carolina, and Georgia. It is likely that they transplanted their ideals of what worked in their areas of origin to their new enterprises.

The specific areas I pursue are spatial organization, slave housing, slave labor, slave foodways, slave worldview and religion, and slave resistance. It is hoped that these discussions will become the bases for further investigations into the world of the enslaved workers on the Gamble Plantation. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the way forward by outlining various methods of ethnohistorical and archaeological investigation.

**Landscapes of Power: Plantation Spatial Organization**

Historical archaeologists have noted that activities on a plantation contribute to the structural arrangement (Orser and Nekola 1996:395; Lewis 1985:37). The archaeology of plantations offers insight into the lives of the planters, the overseers, and the enslaved humans that were involved in plantation operations (Fairbanks 1984; Lewis 1985; Orser and Nekola 1996; Otto 1984; Singleton 2001; Silpa 2003). Nineteenth century planters manipulated their landscapes through spatial organization by placing themselves central and aloof from the general population (Vlach 1993: 8). Social status and agriculture production dictated the spatial arrangement of the structures. Functional
outbuildings were located within close proximity, but separate from the main house (Lewis 1985:37). A relatively self contained plantation was organized in a nucleated settlement pattern containing clusters of dwellings and service buildings bordered by crops (Orser and Nekola 1996:395). Goodwin (1994) illustrates the spatial arrangement of relatively self-reliant Caribbean sugar plantations. Spatial organization of Caribbean sugar plantations was influenced by the location of the sugar mill complex (Goodwin 1994:99). Goodwin illustrates this arrangement by describing Betty’s Hope Estate located in Antigua, West Indies. The spatial layout of the plantation consist of the mill, boiling houses, and the curing house surrounded by the great house, outbuildings, slave villages, and agricultural fields (Goodwin 1994:27).

Florida plantations started during colonial British ownership. The northeastern Atlantic side served as ideal locations for plantations. As with other southern plantations, Florida plantations were economic enterprises that traded in global markets and enslaved people were exploited for the purpose of cash crop cultivation (Morgan 1998:187; Payne 1999: 51; Lewis 1985: 37). Florida's plantations were subdivided into areas of “residences, crop cultivation, and product processing” (Payne 1999: 50-51). Florida plantation archaeology has illustrated that function and social stratification were major factors that dictated spatial organization (Baker 1999:116; Payne 1999: 50). Within the social stratification, owners and overseers held the highest level positions while the slaves formed the lower working levels (Payne 1999: 51).

Residences were also arranged according to status and function. The owner’s home was usually held the central position that symbolically represented power, control, order, and social status (Payne 1999:50). Gamble’s mansion was located 0.4 kilometers
(¼ of a mile) north of the Manatee River (Baker 1987:6). The ten room home is surrounded by eighteen columns that create an illusion of grandeur and power.

Overseer’s homes were located in positions that allowed the overseer to supervise and direct plantation operations. In one plantation, Vlach (1993:5) found that the slave quarters were located in rows of two behind an overseer’s modest home. Robert Gamble contracted the services of David Lanner and Nathaniel Hunter as overseers. However, the location of the overseer’s residence remains unknown. Allan MacFarlan resided in the mansion and managed the plantation following Gamble’s move to Tallahassee in 1856.

Members of Gamble’s family moved in 1827 from Virginia and Maryland to Jefferson County, Florida with expectations of plantation cultivation. They brought with them their cultural attitudes and modified the landscape to fit their Virginian planter ideals. Robert Gamble applied these cultural landscape methods as he had gangs of his slaves clear and drain 1500 acres of hammocks and wetlands (Gamble 1888).

Archaeologists have illustrated that slave settlement patterns were controlled by plantation owners (Singleton 2001:106; Lange and Handler 1985:17). Historical records indicate that Gamble landscaped his plantation utilizing his Virginian heritage through the clear cutting the land. Presently, there are no maps or insurance records have been found to illustrate how he or his father dictated the placement of slave quarters and outbuildings. However, there is an insurance map (Figure 13) of his grandfather’s house, Grey’s Castle. This house was built during the late eighteenth Century and bears the architectural markers of symmetry, logic, and order commonly observed with
Georgian-style construction. While the house appears symmetrical, the 1802 Mutual Assurance map illustrates that dependencies were not symmetric but built to one side of the Georgian mansion.

Figure 13 1802 Mutual Assurance Greys Castle located in Richmond, Virginia (The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia).

At the Gamble Plantation, the only extant features other than the mansion and the sugar mill are situated east of the mansion. Baker’s auger survey illustrates that the United Daughters of Confederacy archival building is constructed above a 19th century historic building associated with the unknown tabby feature (1987:35).
Gamble’s 1868 hand drawn map (Figure 14) illustrates the location of the mansion at point A and the sugar mill at point B. The road from the wharf curves to line up along the west side of the mansion where the shell carriageway was located and then deviates to behind the mansion (Daniel Hughes, personal communication, March 20, 2008). The 1843 plat indicated large ponds and seasonal wetlands, but did not indicate any large bodies of water that needed to be avoided located in the areas of the wharf road and east of the mansion. The road deviation can be possibly attributed to Gamble’s built environment if he landscaped his plantation like his grandfather’s Richmond house and built to one side (east) of the mansion (Silpa 2007).

![Gamble’s 1868 Hand Drawn Map](Manatee County Library)

An early twentieth century picture of the Gamble Plantation (Figure 15) illustrates an outbuilding located adjacent to the mansion cistern.
On magnification, the picture indicates potentially another outbuilding located behind the outbuilding and unknown activities located to the east of the outbuilding (Figure 16).
While these buildings are more likely late nineteenth and early twentieth century construction, past human behavior has demonstrated that construction patterns frequently repeat themselves. People tend to locate buildings where buildings were present in the past.

**Slave Housing Locations**

Unfortunately, historical records reveal disparate, fragmented, and confusing testimony to the location of the 57 slave quarters. Baker illustrates the spatial complexity of this plantation when he states that it was “a rather complex archaeological puzzle” (Baker 1987:38). Therefore, to gain a greater understanding of Gamble’s enslaved population, it is necessary to decipher the archaeological puzzle of the Gamble’s
landscape. Specific attention should be applied to the potential locations of Gamble’s slave quarters.

Archaeological studies have suggested that slave residences were often situated near work assignments (Payne 1999:50). The confusion concerning the location of Gamble’s slave quarters might be related to the size and the multiple activities involved in this plantation’s operation. Gamble’s plantation consisted of 3450 acres with 1500 acres actively cultivated. Gamble may have had multiple slave quarters on his estate organized by labor. At Hampton Plantation in St. Simons Island, Georgia a similar spatial organization divergence is noted. Hampton Plantation consisted of 15,000 acres with greater than 400 enslaved inhabitants. The plantation was divided into several slave settlements: Hampton Point, Jones, Busson Hill, and Five Pound Tree (Butler et al. 2007:123).

One source of archived information reveals that Gamble’s slave quarters were located south of the mansion while another document indicates that the quarters were locate north of mansion near the sugar mill. A further complication is an oral history that situates the slave quarters northeast of the mansion but close to the unknown tabby feature (Almy et al. 2001:3-25).

Some archaeologists suggest that the slave quarters “may have been situated south and /or west of the mansion, not far from the river” (Almy et al 2001: 5-94). The combination of Baker’s auger survey, the location of the multiple trash pits by Baker, Gamble’s Virginian cultural landscape, and the early twentieth century photograph offers
insight into the possible location of some of the slave quarters to the east and south east of the mansion.

Archaeologists have also noted that slave quarters were arranged for observation (Singleton 2001:105; Orser 1996a:400; James Davidson personal communications 3/2007; Henry Baker personal communications 8/2002). Gamble viewed schooners landing at the wharf on the river from the mansion’s second floor veranda (Matthews 1983:167). The second floor also could have served as an observation point of the slave quarters if they were location to the east and south of the mansion.

Gamble’s landscape carried messages of power for people who viewed his mansion from the Manatee River. Though slave quarters located east and south east of mansion would have cluttered Gamble’s landscape with unsightly architecture, this landscape would have had little negative influences on nineteenth century people. Kelso’s study of Monticello’s seventeenth to the late nineteenth century landscape illustrates that trash and slave quarters had little effect on the people. Instead of finding the landscape as an eyesore, the people accepted it as common occurrence and focused their attention on the architecture and gardens (1990:15-16).

Product processing structures were located in areas allowing easy transportation of raw materials to the facility. Gamble’s 1868 map indicates a road that leads from the sugar mill to the west of the mansion and then to the wharf. But the road was not the only method to transport processed sugar to the wharf. Flat bottom boats could have also been constructed to accommodate the canals just as they had been in Middle Florida on Robert H. Gamble’s plantation (Moates 2007:131).
Slave Housing

Archaeology of the interior and exterior areas of slave quarters often challenges historical documents (Fairbanks 1984; Heath 1999; Otto 1984). Slave housing at the Gamble Plantation remains an enigma due to the disparate and conflicting records about the location, architectural style, and construction materials. Allan MacFarlan described the conditions of the plantation in a letter to George Patton in 1868. The letter discusses the potential building materials that were available when MacFarlan took charge of the plantation in 1856. He writes:

As for other material the abundance of shells and the facilities for making the best lime from oyster shells, houses for dwellings and other purposes can be easy built by Tabi [sic]. Before I took charge the negro [sic] houses were of Palmetto thatched with Palmetto leaves.[MacFarlan 1868]

This excerpt implies that during Gamble’s management, the slave quarters were temporary structures utilizing palmetto logs and leaves. Permanent dwellings made of tabby were erected following MacFarlan’s arrival.

The architectural style, construction materials, and the location of slave cabins was dictated by plantation owners as a method to control and dominate their slaves (Heath 1999:33; Lewis 1985: 197; Singleton 1991: 153, 1988: 355; Singleton and Bograd 1995:20). Planters frequently situated the quarters near work sites but still within observational distance of the main or overseer’s house (Davidson 2007:47; Rivers 2000:133; Orser 1996b:400; Singleton and Bograd 1995:20; Daniel et al. 1980:144).

Florida slave cabins at Kingsley and Bulow Plantations where spatially arranged in a semi-circle arc that surrounded the main house (Davidson 2007; Rivers 2000: 133). The forty-six slave cabins at Bulow Plantation were 137.6 meters away from the main
house. They were 12 x 16 feet wood frame constructed with board floors and shingle roofs. Coquina blocks served as foundation for the wooden slave cabins. The only artifacts associated with the slave cabins were two axe heads and rusted iron fragments that Daniel et al. suggests are fragments of an iron kettle (Daniel et al 1980:73-75, 144).

Daniel et al. (1980:144) compare Bulow’s slave cabins with historical documents that describe slave cabins at St. Joseph’s Plantation owned by General Hernandez. Hernandez’s slave cabins where entirely constructed of palmetto leaves and logs. The construction style of the palmetto log and leaf cabins appears to be unusual for the nineteenth century but possibly following African construction style, “made entirely out of palmetto leaves thatched from top to bottom and had only one small low aperture to crawl in by… (and) looked very much like an oven” (Smith 1836:158 as cited in Daniel et al. 1980:145).

Slave quarters at Kingsley Plantation were located approximately one-quarter to one-half mile (402.4 meters or 804.7 meters) from the main house (Rivers 2000:133). The cabins were two-roomed divided by a single wall. Construction materials consisted of tabby during Zephaniah Kingsley’s ownership (Davidson 2008:49; Rivers 2000:133). Davidson suggests that while the semi-circular arc may be representative of Anna Kingsley’s African heritage and provide some privacy for the slaves, the semi-circular arc may have also been designed by Kingsley as a defensive maneuver utilizing the thirty-two slave cabins as thirty-two well-armed sentry posts (Davidson 2007:43-44).

The nineteenth century sugar plantation, Ashland-Belle-Helene Plantation, (16AN26), in Ascension Parish, Louisiana had thirty slave cabins by 1850 to house 165
slaves. The slave cabins were located in double rows between the mansion and the sugar mill. Cabins 1 and 2 were excavated in 1992 (Yakubik and Mendez 1995). The cabins were of wood construction measuring 40 by 20 feet (800 square feet), double penned with a central brick chimney. Excavated flat glass indicates that the cabins had glass window panes. Fragments of dried whitewash were excavated in Cabin 2 (Yakubik and Mendez 1995).

Baker (July 2002: personal communications) described the potential locations of Gamble’s slave cabins during a private conversation. He remarked on the unusualness of the landscape at Gamble Plantation because the auger survey did not reveal a semi-circular arc that is present at Kingsley and Bulow plantations. He suggested that some slave quarters might have been located along the road from the wharf at Ogden’s Point in present-day Palmetto.

Prior to the nineteenth century many slave homes reflected West African construction consisting of mud and daubing technique with stick and clay chimneys. Steep palmetto thatch roofs allowed for rain run-off. Rather than wood plank flooring, the homes had dirt floors. The advantages of clay homes were their impermanence and insular qualities, and access to floor pits (Ferguson 1992:66-81). Within these subterranean pits archaeologists have found evidence of food and material goods (Heath 1999: 5, 37; Kelso 1997:67).

Artifact analysis of subterranean pits offers insight into slave life. These pits are created and maintained by the inhabitants of the slave cabins and are not representative of the slaves owners (Heath 1999:37). At Mulberry Row, the slave complex at Monticello
in Virginia, Kelso (1997) found that the subterranean pits varied in size from 2x3 feet to 4x6 feet. They ranged from being line or unlined and all contained a similar pattern of material culture: tools, locks, nails, buttons, glass, and butchered fauna (Kelso 1997:67). Kelso suggests that while these pits could have been used for food storage, they could also represent evidence of resistance. He supports his argument with historical documents that examine property stolen by slaves and the recovery of locks from some of the pits (Kelso 1997:67-70). Yet Davidson presents a different perspective by suggesting that the brass lock escutcheons found in slave cabins W-12 and W-13 potentially allowed for the enslave people to lock their homes or possessions (Davidson 2007:53).

The acidic, sandy Florida soil would not be conducive to subterranean storage pits. It is unlikely that such pits will be found in Gamble’s slave cabins.

Nineteen century medical doctors described slave housing as being unhealthy, inhumane, and ugly which contributed to slave health conditions (Rivers 2000:133). Slave housing by the nineteenth century was greatly influenced by the abolitionist movement (Ferguson 1992:80; Singleton 1991:153; Singleton 1988:355). A reactionary stand by the southern proslavery was to standardize slave ownership practices (Kelso 1997:61; Singleton 1988:354). By the 1830’s single family homes were altered from African architecture of mud and daub houses to raised cabins measuring 16 x 18 feet. Raised cabins prevented the accumulation of domestic refuse and allowed for air circulation (Kelso 1997:61).

The raised log style houses met abolitionists’ goals to provide a more humane and healthy environment but also restricted agency of slaves’ control of their space. Private
storage spaces located in dirt floors were no longer available to the slaves. Planters could inspect areas beneath the raised floor (Ferguson 1992:82).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, historical documents reveal confusing descriptions concerning Gamble’s slave cabins. If Patten’s (1868) document accurately details the descriptions, then two architectural styles and materials were utilized in their construction. The first would be temporary housing consisting of palmetto logs and thatch. This construction might leave a foot print of regularly spaced post mold. There is no way of knowing if the design would be rectangular, square, or round like the African style slave cabins at St. Joseph’s plantation described by Daniel et. al. (1980:145). Construction after 1856, during MacFarlan’s supervision, potentially changed to permanent housing utilizing tabby. Tabby construction would leave a foot print within the archaeological record that may be visualized through ground penetrating radar (GPR).

Artifacts recovered from slave cabins offer insight into the lifeways of enslave people not perceived in the historic records. Ceramics, tools, buttons, beads, animal bones, kaolin pipes, and glass bottles illustrate how enslaved people struggled and created coping mechanisms for survival during their bondage. From these artifacts we can tease out the deeper stories of their worldview with social and communal identity, gender, and resistance.

Stanley South (1977, 1978) created pattern recognition as a method to address the theoretical question “What can be learned about behavior from the distribution of materials in archaeological assemblages?” (Singleton and Bograd 1995:21). Artifacts were divided by eight functional categories of architecture, kitchen, furniture, arms,
clothing, personal, tobacco, and activities groups. Percentages of each group could be attained and compare to other assemblages. Differences in the category distribution were assumed to be the result of behavioral differences (Singleton and Bograd 1995:21).

Slave artifact pattern is based on slave material culture. Critical examination of slave artifact pattern recognition has shown that its usage has been to primarily organize collected data and illuminate new patterns or deviations but not offer any explanation of these differences as cultural changes over time (Singleton and Bograd 1995:21-22). Singleton and Bograd (1995:22) criticize categorization because it is a static presentation. It might suggest that the site was African American but not what it meant to be an African American at that particular site.

Joseph (1989) examines the variation between the Georgia and the Carolina Slave Artifact patterns (Table 2) in an attempt to explain changes of slave material culture over time found on rice and cotton plantations. The temporal difference is based on eighteenth century rice plantations in South Carolina and nineteenth century cotton plantations in Georgia.

Joseph argues that architecture and technological innovations affect the way the slave patterns of Georgia and Carolina appear (Joseph 1989:55). Architectural artifacts are influenced by the construction materials and architectural styles. Frame structures leave a greater quantity of architectural debris in the archaeological record compared to structures made of tabby, brick, and mud daubing. The shift of architectural style during the nineteenth century of mud-daubing to raised log cabins can influence pattern formation (Joseph 1989:60).
While planter status can influence slave material culture and create a higher kitchen group, Joseph argues that the technological innovations of the Industrial Revolution influenced the decline of colonoware usage. The low-cost massed produced European ceramics allowed for planters to equip their slaves with cheaper cooking and serving vessels (Joseph 1989: 61). Thus by the nineteenth century there is a decrease in the kitchen group in slave artifact patterning.

Table 2 Plantation Artifact Patterns from Georgia and South Carolina (taken from Joseph 1989:58)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Georgia Planter</th>
<th>Georgia Slave</th>
<th>South Carolina Rice Planter</th>
<th>South Carolina Slave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>54.09</td>
<td>24.34</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>77.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>43.27</td>
<td>70.78</td>
<td>39.65</td>
<td>17.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arms</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.05</td>
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<td>Clothing</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.53</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would Joseph’s argument of slave pattern recognition hold true at Gamble Plantation? If his argument is correct about changes over time then slave cabins at the Gamble plantation should exhibit a higher frequency in the architectural group if the slave cabins were constructed with wooden materials. If the cabins were constructed with tabby, would the frequency of the kitchen group increase?

Communal, domestic work, and leisure activities took place within the yard areas allotted to enslaved people. Heath and Bennett (2000:38) write “Like the structures they surround, yards and gardens have the ability to instruct scholars about the lives of their
inhabitants.” Slave cabin yards housed storage sheds, small animal compounds, gardens, and areas for communal activities (Heath and Bennett 2000:41; Yakubik and Mendez 1995). Slaves raised gardens for consumption and sale. Otto suggests the care of the gardens and sale of the produce represented the domain of women, while men hunted and fished (Otto 1984: 45, 59). Yet Heath and Bennett (2000: 42) argue that gardens were located near the slave cabins and were tended by both genders.

At Ashland-Belle-Helene Plantation in Louisiana, slave cabins were space 72 feet apart and surrounded by fences. Yakubik and Mendez (1995) speculate that the fences served to contain small domestic livestock and gardens. The slaves’ agricultural activities in their yard spaces at Ashland-Belle-Helene Plantation, like other southern plantations, allowed for the slaves to vary and supplement their diets and provided access to economic resources. Produce, poultry, and eggs were either brought to market on Sundays or purchased by the slaves’ master. In Middle Florida, Gamble’s uncle permitted the slaves to cultivate one of his fields for their private consumption and sale. He also paid three of his male slaves $17.95 for cotton and corn that they grew in their combined garden (Shofner 1976: 129-130; Rivers 2000: 30).

Yards were areas of socialization that took place within the slave’s private space. Back porches and animal burials as note in Davidson (2007) were conducted not under the gaze of the master. Singleton (2006: 283) describes the use of ceramic discs, tobacco pipes, and alcohol glass bottles as potential evidence of slave recreation or religious activities. Kaolin pipe stems, game pieces or ceramics disc, and marbles could represent socialization and how enslaved people spent their few leisure hours.
The presence of buttons, sewing needles, pins, and beads could represent domestic sewing work or laundering. Lower densities of domestic trash such as ceramics, glass, fauna bone, sewing needles, buttons, and children toys noted in the center areas and higher densities along fence lines could be the result of yard sweeping (Heath and Bennett 2000:48).

Archaeological examination of Gamble’s slave cabins and their yards could offer a sense of how his enslaved population used their domestic space over time. Yard artifacts can illustrate how they spent their leisure hours, conducted communal activities, compensated resource limitations, conducted their domestic chores which included gender related activities, and constructed their world views.

**Labor**

Sugarcane (Poaceae: *Saccharum* spp.) is a perennial grass that can reach twelve feet in height. It requires frost-free temperatures during active growing stages, abundant, well drained water, and fertile soil to achieve optimal harvestable yields. While sugarcane matures in fourteen to eighteen months, climate regulates the growing and harvest seasons. Temperatures must remain above seventy degrees Fahrenheit to prevent growth retardation (Rehder 1999:19). Forty inches of evenly distributed rainfall is required to reach optimal maturity. The root system is shallow and highly susceptible to root rot and water borne diseases. Drainage canals and irrigations ditches are necessary to provide the delicate water balance needed in sugarcane cultivation (Rehder 1999:17).

Sugar, the processed product of this sucrose-laden grass, profoundly changed European diets. This rare commodity originally consumed by European elites in the
seventeenth century became a staple by the middle of the eighteenth century following the development of New World sugar plantations (McDonald 1993:5).

The cultivation of sugarcane was arduous no matter the plantation’s geographical location. A steady supply of large labor forces was needed to work sugar plantations (McDonald 1993:5). Soil preparation, which included composting and tilling, started a season before planting the sugarcane stalks. Planting started in late December or January. Plant maintenance required irrigation and weed and pest control (Schene 1974:45-47).

On sugar plantations in Jamaica, slaves’ work cycles were continuous during the entire growing season. They dug five feet by five feet holes, six inches deep, and planted sugarcane sections. The canes were covered with dirt and over the following months compost and dirt were added to the holes to until the fields were level. Weed removal was required for approximately three to four months until the sugarcane growth had mature enough to prevent weed infestation (McDonald 1993:5).

Jamaican slaves worked in field gangs from sunup to sunset. Workdays consisted of fourteen hours in the field with rest times at midmorning for breakfast and a midday dinner. During harvest, the slaves worked their usual hours in the field plus additional five hour shifts at the sugar mill. Armed with machetes or knives, slaves stripped the leaves, cut the cane stalks, loaded, and transported the harvested canes to the sugar mill. Sundays were the only days of respite from their eighteen to twenty hours of work. On this day, slaves had to work their gardens, hunt, and fish in order to supplement their ration allotment (McDonald 1993: 11).
In Jamaica, labor was established early in the slaves’ lives. Slave children were introduced to gang labor under the direction of elderly slave women (McDonald 1993: 8). Their tasks of weeding, collecting fodder, and general cleanup prepared them for progression into the adult gang labor system.

Sugarcane cultivation in Louisiana had a shorter growing season than in Jamaica because of the threat of frost (McDonald 1993: 11-15; Rodrigue 2001:13-15; Follett 2005: 11-15). Gang labor was the most utilized labor system in Louisiana sugarcane plantations. Slaves’ work schedule reflected this reduced cycle, especially during the planting and harvest seasons. Horse, mule, or ox drawn plows were utilized to till furrows. After planting, the slaves plowed and hoed between the six foot rows to decrease weeds and create drainage/irrigation ditches. During the summer months when the sugarcane required less maintenance, slaves tended other plantation crops, mended roads and fences, constructed outbuildings, created bricks, built and maintained levees, dug drainage ditches, cut and transported lumber for fuel for the sugar mill and the cooper. During harvest the slaves worked seven days a week for sixteen or more hours, stripping, cutting, and transporting canes to the sugar mill.

Slave children on Louisiana sugar plantations completed the same types of labor as experienced by the slave children in Jamaica. McDonald summarizes the harsh realities of slave life on sugarcane plantations in Jamaica and Louisiana.

To please the palates of white Western Europeans and Americans, black slaves suffered and died within a system characterized by undernourishment, overwork, harsh punishment, poor housing, inadequate clothing, high infant mortality, ill health, despair, and life-spans shortened by a grim regime. [1993:15]
As illustrated by the literature on Jamaican and Louisianan sugarcane plantations, there is no reason to expect that labor at Gamble plantation was any less intensive for his slaves. The climate at the Gamble plantation would have been more like Jamaica thereby the growing season would not have been as shortened as in Louisiana. Like Louisiana sugar plantations, Gamble needed extensive drainage and irrigation ditches to productively grow sugarcane.

A few white settlers were employed by Gamble to supervise slave work activity. Otherwise, all labor was provided by the slaves. Timber “was sawed by hand on the plantation, as all the lumber of every kind used in construction” (Gamble 1888), hauled three miles downriver, and prepared for shipment. Sixteen miles of drainage and irrigation canals were dug with pick axes, gunpowder used only in areas of heavy limestone. Buildings were constructed including two sugar mills, Gamble’s mansion, slave cabins, and any other dependencies Gamble needed for running the plantation. Clay and tabby bricks were made prior to the construction of any buildings. Agricultural fields were prepared, planted, and harvested.

Sugar and molasses production following harvest was the most intensive and dangerous portion of sugarcane agriculture. Timing was a major factor in sugar production. Canes were harvested by the slaves and transported to the mill. If canes were not rolled within forty-eight hours of harvest the juice dried within the stalk or soured (McDonald 1993:7). Canes had to be harvested before frost otherwise the juice crystallized within the stalk rendering the cane useless for sugar (Schene 1974:45).
Slaves fed the cane into the rollers to extract the juice. Gamble had a fifty horsepower steam engine to drive massive rollers that weighted greater than 5 tons. His rollers were so thorough that inhalation of the bagasse could result in “near suffocation” (Gamble 1868).

The raw juice was clarified through filters and evaporated in large kettles. Steady fires stimulated boiling and speeded the evaporation process. Gamble utilized vacuum kettles during the last stages of evaporation (Gamble 1868). Lower boiling temperatures were needed when vacuum kettles were used and resulted with less burning (Schene 1974:48). Economically, this advantage meant less fuel utilized with greater quality and quantity of syrup.

The thickened syrup required transfer to a wooden tank for granulation. Following granulation, the sugar was transferred to hogsheads suspended in the draining room. Molasses dripped from holes in the bottoms of the hogsheads into cisterns that ran the length of the draining building (Gamble 1868). The hogsheads of sugar were caulked and the molasses collected after a period of twenty to thirty days (Schene 1974:51-52).

Sugar making required the labor of skilled and field slaves. Fuel to support the fires was cut and transported to the sugar mill. The steam engine boiler fire was consistently maintained during the clarification and evaporation stages. Skilled sugar makers identified when the juice thickened into syrup. During the clarification and evaporation stages hot syrup was transferred from kettle to kettle or to hogsheads.
Hogsheads were made prior of the year’s harvest. Refined sugar and molasses required shipping preparations.

It is unknown whether Gamble used the gang or task system of labor. Gamble describes utilizing the gang system when he wrote of employing a supervisor “.... and placed him over a gang of my axemen” (Gamble 1888). The gang system was more exhaustive requiring the slaves to work from sunrise to sunset. The task system was more lenient and allowed the slaves free time after completion of their tasks. The gang labor system was standard practice in Middle Florida, Louisiana, and Jamaica (Rivers 2000:20-21; McDonald 1993: 11-15; Rodrigue 2001:13-15). The difference between the gang labor of Louisiana and Jamaica and Middle Florida is that Middle Florida utilized women to work the agricultural fields along with the men (Rivers 2000:20-21).

Gamble owned house servants as well as skilled and field laborers. This position potentially could be as demanding as other forms of labor because of the multiple roles these people had to portray. Besides the demanding care of the household and cooking, house servants were forced to be confidant/gossiper for the owner while remaining loyal to the slave community. The house servants performed their labors under the watchful eye of the owner and conveyed messages of “loyalty, servility, accommodation, and trustworthiness” (Wilke 2000: 235). Ironically, plantation observers deemed house servants, slave drivers, and skilled laborers highest on the slave hierarchy due to the positions they held on the plantation. Root doctors, conjurers and preachers held the highest positions within the slave community because of the association with magic and spiritual powers (Otto 1984:37).
Historical records reveal that Middle Florida planters John Gratten Gamble and Robert H. Gamble gave their slaves time off on the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas (Rivers 2000: 29). Labor at the Gamble plantation, like other southern plantations, probably offered few leisure hours for the slaves. Burns, strains, broken bones are potential injuries that indicate the intensity of plantation labor. Forensic studies of skeletal remains of enslaved people have revealed severe occupational stress. Their skeletal pathology showed evidence of arthritic degenerative changes, bone hypertrophy, Os acromiale (non union of the shoulder joint), ulna (Parry) fractures and depressed skull fractures (Owsley et al. 1987: 185-197; Kelley and Angel 1987:119 & 209; Blakey 2001:405).

Gamble did not leave documentary reference to building locations except the mansion and the mill. Logically it appears that artifacts near the mansion would be associated with Gamble. Artifacts located near the mansion’s detached north building designated as the kitchen and slave work rooms, dependency features, agricultural fields, and the canals would be associated with slave labor activity. The kitchen/slave work room areas would involve food procurement and preparation and potentially laundering. The dependencies functioned as utilitarian buildings that serviced the main house while simultaneously serving as labor locations for the slaves. Past archaeology of kitchen and laundry yards have revealed utilitarian ceramic bowls, faunal bones, sewing materials such as buttons, pins, and sewing needles, pipe stems, children toys, and animal interments (Lindtveit and Klein 2003: 109-111).
Areas designated as potential slave labor are likely to yield artifacts associated with that specific activity. Artifacts that represent finished products, waste products, or tools can be utilized as evidence in defining the type of labor performed. Raw and waste materials such as bone, coal, slag, clinkers, and iron objects will help identify the types of labor. Kelso (1997:82) utilized this method to help determine artifact association with the people and activities involved on Monticello. While logically this approach appears straightforward, excavation of the sugar mill was anticipated to reveal evidence of slave labor yet it illustrated three generations of twentieth century citrus agriculture.

Foodways


In a biocultural synthesis framework, Blakey et al. (2004) researched the African Burial Grounds (NYABG) in New York City. Forensic examination of 419 skeletal remains showed evidence that slave owners were not compelled to invest monies in child slaves because it was more cost effective to purchase an adult slave than to raise one (Blakey et al. 2004: 541). Children born in New York experienced a high incidence of hypoplasia and hypocalcification associated with high nutritional stress. Poor intake of calcium in infant and childhood diets allowed high levels of lead absorption. The children experienced a high incidence of infections, anemia, and growth retardation.

Bioarchaeological studies of thirty-six nineteenth century skeletal remains recovered at a South Carolina plantation near Charleston revealed high levels of malnutrition and disease. Evidence of skeletal and dental growth disruptions created by anemia and infection was indicated in 92% of the male children (Rathburn 1987: 239-53). Common occurrences of dental caries and tooth loss which indicates periodontal disease and abscesses are noted (Owsley et al. 1987: 185-197).

Caribbean bioarchaeology revealed high frequencies of nutritional and disease stresses. Skeletal studies of enslaved populations at Newton Plantation in Barbados and the Galways Plantation reveal harsh lifestyles marked by episodes of severe malnutrition and infections leading to early deaths (Blakey 2001:409).

These harsh bioarchaeological details create questions of how slaves coped with their physical, environmental, and psychological stressors. They formulated methods to prevent being passive pawns in this control (McKee 1999:219). Enslaved populations developed cultural buffering systems to offset food insecurity. They raised small animal livestock, gardened, hunted, fished, and stole food to supplement their diets (McKee 1999:227; Heath 1999:37). Economically pressed plantation owners allowed their slaves to hunt and raise gardens and poultry to avoid the high cost of maintaining their property (Berlin and Philips 1993:2).
Owner records have also revealed reduction of rations as a form of punishment (McKee 1999:227). Historical documents show that slave diets’ consisted of corn, preserved meats, and vegetables (Singleton 1991: 154; Shofner 1976:129-130). Middle Florida plantation owners indicate limiting rations of corn to one peck weekly, offering staples for slaves to prepare their own morning and evening meals, and adhering to slaves’ wishes of pork over beef (Rivers 2000: 128, 133; Shofner 1976:129). John Gratten Gamble rewarded his slaves with a large meal after harvest. Rivers quotes an unnamed historical source that the slaves, “had plenty to eat and a great deal too much to drink, and they danced, quarreled, and fought throughout the night” (Rivers 2000: 172).

Zooarchaeological analysis of slave cabins and trash pits provide insight into some of the foods consumed by slaves. These studies provide data of types, qualities, and quantities (Singleton 1991: 154). As early as 1967 Fairbanks found tangible evidence of wild caught species which illustrated Kingsley’s slaves augmented their diets through hunting and fishing activities. Unfortunately, his research did not include quantification. Walker (1985) focused her quantification study of the vertebral fauna obtained from Kingsley’s slave Cabin W-3. Besides domestic pig (Sus scrofa), cow (Bos taurus), and chicken (Gallus gallus), wild terrestrial species such as opossum (Didelphis virginiana), raccoon (Procyon lotor), white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus), gopher tortoise (Gopherus polyphemus), and alligator (Alligator mississippiensis) were identified. Freshwater and marine fish such as boney fishes (Osteichthyes), black diamond terrapin (Malaclemys terrapin), bowfin fish (Amia calva), freshwater catfish (Ictaluridae), and sheepshead (Archosargus probatocephalus) were recovered (Walker 1985:44-45).
At Kingsley the faunal butchering practices indicated both cleaving and sawing. Frequent occurrences of cow and pig skulls, teeth, and feet indicate that the slaves consumed the less desirable cuts of the animals. Walker’s study illustrates that of all fauna recovered 40.1% were wild species with the highest frequency of 40% consisting of nocturnal animals (Walker 1985:49-50). This high frequency supports Otto’s argument that raccoons, rabbits, opossums, wood rats, and mink found in Tidewater slave refuse indicates that these animals were more apt to be trapped during the slave’s leisure hours in the evenings (1984:46).

At Cannon’s Point, artifacts of fish bones and net weights indicated that the slaves supplemented their diets more with aquatic resources than terrestrial species (Otto 1984:47, 54, 56). The slaves also raised hogs, rabbits, and poultry for consumption. Poultry was raised not only for meat consumption also for their eggs (Otto 1984:58).

It should be also noted that rat and snake species were recovered from Kingsley’s slave cabin W-3. While there is no way to determine if these animals were used to supplement the slave diets, it should also be considered in remarking about the unsanitary conditions of the slave cabins. Kelso remarks also on the unsanitary conditions of slave lifeways because of the number of faunal specimens excavated were gnawed by rodents (1997:92).

The faunal assemblage preserved in oyster middens offers glimpses into community and foodways. At St. Anne’s slave settlement on St. Simons Island, Georgia, the slaves depended upon aquatic resources to supplement their weekly ration of one peck of corn. While the cabins were closely situated near each other, their trash
middens differed. The study suggests that despite the close living arrangements, each family made their decisions as to what fauna to procure and prepared within their individual cabins (Butler et al. 2007:128).

The faunal assemblage recovered at Monticello’s slave cabins and refuse areas indicate that the slaves consumed beef, pork, or poultry. The bones represented poorer cuts of meat and were split or sawn into small pieces in building “r”, “s”, and “t”. Soups and stews were prepared with these less meaty sections. The faunal assemblage in slave cabin “o” suggests a varied and richer diet because of the inclusion of long bones which represent meatier portions of the butchered animal. Yet, these bones were also split into smaller sections for soup/stew preparation (Kelso 1997:93-96).

Rivers (2000:128) argues that Florida slaves benefitted from an environmental climate that supported agricultural growth. He posits that large and varied quantities of crops provide sufficient foods for human and animal consumption. Rivers (2000:127-128) and Smith (1973:80) assert that planters were compelled to provide adequate food and clothing because slaves represented the planter’s largest investment. To date we have no knowledge of Gamble’s slaves’ diets. While historians Rivers and Smith argue that plantation owners were compelled to feed and care for their slaves out of economic self-interest, one should also acknowledge that at Kingsley, Ryefield, St. Anne’s, Cannon’s Point, and Monticello plantations, the slave diets were less than adequate. Slaves had to augment their diets to survive. Ideally, if slave cabins or refuse areas are located on Gamble Plantation then zooarchaeological analysis will address how well Gamble’s slaves fared.
Worldview and Religion

Fairbanks’ initial excavation at Kingsley plantation offered new ideas about slave lifeways. In 1967 Charles Fairbanks (Fairbanks 1984: 1-14) conducted archaeological research with the Florida State Park Service in order to reconstruct slave cabins for site interpretation. Fairbanks sought to find material culture that was representative of “Africanisms” (Fairbanks 1984:2), or evidence of African influenced traditions that carried-over through the Middle Passage. While Fairbanks was unsuccessful to establish evidence of African traditions, the excavation of two slave cabins at Kingsley plantation presented significant differences concerning slave lifeways than portrayed in historical records. The artifact assemblage included musket flints which suggested that the Kingsley enslaved population supplemented and varied their diet through hunting activities (Fairbanks 1984:2). Gun possession by enslaved people was in defiance of slave codes and evidence that slaves prepared varied diet within their homes opened new directions and questions for slave archaeology. Fairbanks and Ascher’s excavation of a slave cabin at Ryefield on Cumberland Island in 1971 revealed a similar artifact assemblage. Fairbanks argues that the firearms, outdated British ceramics, and wild fauna suggested similar slave lifeways as what was found at Kingsley plantation (Fairbanks 1984:2).

Firearms have been found consistently within slave cabins (Fairbanks 1984; Otto; 1984; Kelso 1997). It becomes insightful when southern and Florida planters armed their enslaved people in defiance of southern slave codes. The archaeological record illustrates the presence of these illegal items yet institutionally they were banned out of
fear of slave revolt. The presence of guns as suggested by Otto (1984) might have been evidence of specialized hunters, though the frequency of their presence would not be as high. The high percentage of wild animal species found in the archaeological record of slave cabins and refuse areas indicates hunting activities. Yet Davidson (2007) suggests that these firearms might have served the additional function of protection. Gamble armed his slaves and posted sentries at work centers during the Third Seminole War (1855-1858). The archaeological record of Gamble’s slave cabins might reveal a high incidence of firearms not only because of hunting activity but because of the need to arm his slaves during the threat of the Third Seminole War.

Archaeologists argue that Fairbanks’ search for African cultural traits implies a stagnant culture that did not evolve over time (Davidson 2007:20; Singleton and Bograd 1995:27). Davidson’s (2007) archaeological research at Kingsley Plantation was to reassess the work completed by Fairbanks and to create a baseline of “the root metaphors and symbols at play within several different West and Central African cultures from the late 18th century onwards” (Davidson 2007: 20). Analysis of two Kingsley slave cabins illustrates some of the aspects of Fairbanks’ original archaeological research (Davidson 2007: 76). A chicken sacrifice intentionally interred with a chicken egg, a proximal deer tibia, an iron hoe, and beads were identified as house charms and offer insight into the worldviews of the people who lived in those slave cabins (Davidson 2007: 102).

Archaeologists argue that evidence of African worldview survived middle passage (Yentsch 1994:193; Ferguson 1992:118). These evidences can be seen in rice agriculture, food preparation, houses, and religion. Ferguson (1992:118) suggests that
due to the relative social and physical isolation of plantations many of the African traditions that the slaves brought with them were retained and incorporated with new concepts and materials. This creolization of Euro-Christian and African religious traditions was a survival method employed by slaves (Rivers 2000:106).

Yentsch (1994) maintains that the use of beads and button by slaves was utilized as body adornment that replaced the African tradition of body scarification, conveyed cultural identity, and carried metaphysical and religious meanings. This cultural expression that survived the middle passage carried symbolic magic. Not only used to decorate their outer appearance, beads and designs identified kinships and cultures. The colors of the beads held great magical significance though the meanings varied among cultures. Yentsch uses as examples the color blue and green. Blue was associated with the sky and specific gods while green was associated with “the color of vegetation after rainfall” (Yentsch 1994:193).

Artifacts of magical specialists should be identifiable to some degree (Wilke 1997: 85). Traditional healer/magician assemblage could contain cast iron metal bases, bird skulls, animal paws, medicine bottles, bullet casings, doll parts, shells, projectile points, metal knives, nails, and spikes (1987:85-6). Artifacts recovered from an African American midwife’s home site in Mobile, Alabama revealed a large number of medicine and whiskey bottles related to midwifery and “objects of magical significance, including yellow sulfur, a glass crystal, and flaked stones” (1987:85).
**Resistance**

Paynter posits that the relationship between master and slaves was one where the master developed strategies to extract labor from the slaves while the slaves designed strategies to resist planter control (Paynter 1988: 412). Historical documents such as private journals, articles, and letters illustrate methods that planters resorted to exert control and coerce labor. Whippings and withholding food were common punishments utilized to coerce slave compliance in Middle Florida. Slaves were also rewarded with money and gifts as an incentive. Oral histories taken from freed slaves offer their perspective as they devised methods to resist (Douglas 1941:101). As archeologists, we must be careful not to look exclusively for resistance because we are apt to see these actions in everything we find (Howson 1990).

Scholars have illustrated that slaves created methods to resist planter control (Singleton 2001:108; McKee 1999:219; Howson 1990). Work avoidance, escape, and rebellion are considered overt forms of resistance. More subtle forms of resistance are reflected in comments by the owner as a representation of economic losses, disloyalty, and inconveniences. Barbara Little discusses the need to examine the subtle forms of resistance.

It is important to distinguish between various forms of protest. Overt political protest and revolt shows up in documents. However, archaeology is needed to find protest where it is manifested more subtly in everyday religious expression, aesthetics, buildings, and other forms of material culture. Such pervasive everyday forms of protest may be more effective in rebellion, partially because they are more widespread and persistent. [Little 2007: 90]
Archaeologists have studied the types of resistance exhibited by slaves. Ferguson (1992:75) and Wilke (2000:137, 157) argue that maintenance of African culture identity is a form of resistance. Otto (1975:111-112) and Ferguson (1992:75) illustrate the tension of control and agency between master and slave when they utilize a cited narrative of Okra, a Cannon’s Point Plantation slave, St. Simons, Georgia. Okra’s choice was to build a mud walled house in African architectural style while his owner forced him to remove the structure and was replaced by a two-pen cabin.

Slaves utilized cultural identity as a form of resistance (Wilke 2000:157). Body scarification, a form of cultural identity, was prohibited by slave masters. Wilke argues that personal adornment replaced body scarification as a form of identity. Beads and buttons not only represented cultural layers but also a form of covert or subtle resistance.

A form of resistance that is neither tangible nor measurable but certainly powerful was through the master’s palate. Wilke argues that food preparation reflected the cook’s African heritage (Wilke 2000:137). This subtle form of resistance allowed slaves to exercise power over their masters.

How would the subtler forms of resistance be reflected in the archaeological record? Forms of resistance can be identified with each subtitle of this chapter. Home construction was a form of resistance. Slaves adapted their homes while under the supervision of their owners. While plantation owners attempted to control their enslaved population with spatial organization, their slaves viewed and arranged their landscapes differently (Singleton and Bograd 1995:20). Defiance of the planter’s spatial arrangements empowered them through gaining some control over their private lives.
Challenge of spatial control is observed with the location of porches. Kingsley’s slaves constructed their back porches on the exterior of the semi-circle arc not visible to Kingsley’s observations (Davidson 2007:47). Animal interments with artifacts associated with magic found under slave houses, in slave yards or work spaces offers insight into religious practices that were not always approved of by their owners. Stolen property, broken tools, and stolen food supplies can be found within cabins and in slave yards (Singleton 2001:108; Singleton 1991: 151, 153).

Slave diets can be examined for resistance. Beef was more economical than pork in Florida during the nineteenth century and plantation owners tried to alter slave dietary patterns of pork consumption to beef (Shofner 1976:129). As a form of resistance slaves refused to consume beef and insisted on pork. This resistance could be identified in the archaeological record by exhibiting higher quantities of pork bones found in slave cabins and trash pits.

The consumption of alcohol can be viewed as a form of resistance. In the Matanzas Province of Cuba, it was illegal for slaves to purchase alcoholic products. Singleton’s (2006: 279) archaeological work at Cafetal del Padre, a coffee plantation in Cuban, revealed alcohol bottles in the slave village. Singleton posits that the illegal purchase of alcohol was without owner approval.

The historical record concerning Gamble’s slaves is silent. We know that he sold one hundred eighty-five individuals in 1858. We can look at his remaining landscape and know that they created it through strenuous labor according to his dictates. But what does it tell us about them? We have no idea of how they designed the landscape to meet their needs. We have no idea of their homes, diets, or methods of resistance. In an
interview fifteen years following his first archaeological investigation of Kingsley’s slave cabins, Fairbanks said that he began slave archaeology because “it was an undocumented aspect of America’s past” (Shapiro 1982:15). Forty years after Fairbanks initial work examining slave lifeways, we still have unanswered questions about the enslaved people at Gamble Plantation.

**Proposed Archaeological Methods**

Background research of historical data and past archaeological surveys on the plantation provide the historical context while identifying potential sites that have been previously investigated (Feder 1997:50). While Gamble left limited data concerning the plantation, others have examined aspects of the plantation’s history and archaeology (Almy et al. 2001, 2004, 2007; Roland et al. 2004; Silpa 2003; Parks et al. 2001; Matthews 1983; Schene 1974; Baker 1987, 1992; Baker and Peterson 1978; King and Johnson 1973). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, all archaeological investigations have yet to reveal evidence of the African American lifeways that existed on this plantation. Myles Bland suggests that the explanation for the lack of nineteenth century material culture excavated at the sugar mill reflects the three generations of 20th century citrus farming and that the enslaved population’s time spent at the sugar mill was totally involved in coerced labor. Bland proposes that the food consumption (lunch) and other communal activities took place off site (Bland personal communication 5/2008).

Interviews with State Park Rangers, local historical communities, and the surrounding community offer insight into historical and site data and may provide important explanations to the spatial organization of the plantation. Ethnohistorical
interviews also can supply threads of information as to how the African American culture might have used and perceived the plantation landscape (Feder 1997:52).

A review of the environmental aspects that could have impacted 19th century settlement and land use of the plantation should be completed. A vegetation study of current flora specimens located on the park and the sugar mill with a comparison of the 19th century flora allows for understanding of use changes of the environment. Changes in environmental flora are often attributed to changes in the environment such as plants that would survive in wetlands cannot survive well drained environments. These types of changes might offer evidence of Gamble’s 16 miles of canals. It can be assumed that the canals were constructed for drainage and irrigation of agricultural fields. Thus, through the process of elimination, it can be presumed that permanent architecture used for functional dependences such as slave or overseer homes, barns, food storage buildings, and coopers/blacksmith shops were not constructed in potentially wet areas.

Furthermore, understanding of flora that was used by the enslaved African American populations on other plantations for medicinal and religious purposes can potentially open new avenues to understanding the lifeways of Gamble’s enslave population. A preliminary identification of the flora was conducted in March 2008. These plants are listed in tables in the Appendix of this thesis.

This design suggests the utilization of non-invasive and invasive archaeological methods. Non-invasive methods of survey include aerial photographs, the assemblage of maps including historic, present, and topographic maps, and remote sensing.
Archaeological excavation is invasive to the archaeological record and should be limited to areas of high suspect of nineteenth century cultural resources.

Aerial photographs of the Palmetto area allow for determination of environmental factors such as topography, cultural features, canal and stream drainage. Chapter 3 examines the environment and illustrates the area’s usage for agricultural purposes since the 1940s. The aerial photographs also illustrate many canals that run north/south and east/west.

Historical maps also help identify land usage. As with other historical documents, the cartographer could have been guided with preconceived perceptions and biases. An example is Gamble’s 1868 hand drawn map. It illustrates the sugar mill located directly north of the mansion. Yet, the mill is located north west of the mansion. The map does not contain architectural features other than the mansion, the mill, the wharf, and the roads leading from the wharf to the mansion and sugar mill. It can only be assumed that slave homes and other dependencies were not important enough for Gamble to mention. He mentions the creation of a permanent creek but fails to present it in the map. The map is not created to scale and cannot be overlaid on a current map with accuracy. At best, these historical maps can be utilized as guides.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps illustrate landforms with line and symbol representations of human created and natural features (Napton and Greathouse 1997: 181). A 1:24,000-scale map (7.5- minute series) supplies the archaeologist with precise details of the terrain. Roads, streams, canals, and
vegetation patterns are enlarged and plotted. Contour lines indicate the elevation of topography to help determine the location of potential areas of past use.

Remote sensing obtains images of the earth’s surface from “suborbital and orbital altitudes in various wavelengths of the visible and invisible spectrum” (Napton and Greathouse 1997: 178). The process generates general data over large areas and allows for detection of anomalies below the soil level without destruction of the ground.

Geographic and archaeological data can be represented and modeled through the utilization of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Mapping, layering, and spatial analysis involves the application of GIS (Napton and Greathouse 1997:225). Whitley demonstrates the usefulness of a GIS-integrated research project to map and interpret the cultural landscape of the Silk Hope Plantation, the Cherry Hill Plantation, and the Dublin/Richmond Plantation in Georgia (Whitley 2008:3-4). The use of GIS as an informational tool allowed for management of layers of data and coordinate point locations of artifacts and features with historical maps, and aerial photographs. Activity areas, behavioral patterns and land usages were clarified when GIS was utilized as a reconstructive- analytical tool. The most ambitious usage was as a cognitive-interpretive tool. Whitley utilized GIS to interpret the enslaved population’s perception and usage of the environment and the changes in behaviors and perceptions over time.

The use of Global Positioning System (GPS) will assist in precise locating and recording structures on site with relative speed. The use of the surveyors’ transit will allow for the team to “measure horizontal and vertical angles with great accuracy and to
lay out roads, bridges, buildings, and other types of construction” (Napton and Greathouse 1997: 217).

Ground-penetrating radar (GPR), proton magnetometer, and electrical resistivity can be utilized to help locate and potential identify buried architectural features and clusters of material culture. Due to the widely scattered ferrous debris and pipes (Baker 1987: 8) proton magnetometer survey proved not suitable for remote sensing.

GPR is considered an active remote sensing procedure where brief electromagnetic pulses are released into the ground via a transducer. The time of radar wave reflection is measured as the energy pulses encounter subsurface and geologic objects (Rolland et al. 2004:5-1; Feder 1996:59-61). This technique reflects buried features such as house foundations and floors, wells, and walls 5 meters below soil level. The radar graphic record is useful for inferring cultural and natural resources and the report can facilitate decisions for test unit placement. However, the radar signal can be distorted in areas with high clay densities and subsurface water. Rolland et al. utilized a GSSI SIR-3000 digital control system during the archaeological survey of the sugar mill in March 2004 (2004: section 6:1). The high clay content and soil moisture, and iron debris limited the radar performance. Rolland et al state “GPR signal penetration is site-specific and determined by the dielectric properties of the soil present. It must be noted that the current project tract exhibits several factors which limit the effectiveness of GPR” (2004:6-3).

The high cost of subcontracting ground-penetrating radar and its effectiveness in site-specific areas limits utilization of the procedure to areas that are suspect for cultural
resources. GPR should be utilized around the UDC archival building, the four compartment unknown tabby feature, and the trash pits areas identified by Baker in 1987.

The Judah P. Benjamin Confederate Memorial at the Gamble Plantation Historic State Park (8MA100) should be remapped in order to identify the existence and condition of all structures on the estate. The northwest section of the plantation was mapped during the 1978 Baker and Peterson resistivity survey. Baker mapped the park during his 1987 Archaeological Auger Survey. Structural changes have occurred over the last twenty-one years. Mapping the estate will include new buildings, parking lots, and other structures not represented in Baker’s map.

Expansion of Baker’s (1987:11) auger survey and utilization of the Cartesian coordinate grid system that he established will be helpful in maintaining continuity of the mapped park area. To understand Gamble’s landscape and thereby find areas that illustrate areas of slave activity, it is logical to identify and located Gamble’s built environment.

Based on Baker’s (1987) Cartesian grid this project should include subsurface testing of the areas surrounding the four compartment storage feature located at N 160/ E 290, the United Daughters of Confederacy office building located at N 190/ E 290 and the multiple trash pits located at N160/E230, N300/E290, N230/E290, N240/E290, and N110/E290.

Archaeological investigation of the 19th century subsurface historic building that supplied rain water runoff of the four compartment tabby feature identified by Baker
(1987:35) as a cistern might offer some insight into the identity and function of these two features. Inference of the spatial arrangement of the plantation could be attained. The subsurface historic building could range from overseer house, one of the slave cabins to one of the many outbuildings that served as maintenance for the plantation.

Additionally, archaeological investigation of the multiple trash pits (Baker 1987) located on the eastern borders of the park offer potential insight into the location of slave cabins, yards, and refuse areas. Depending on the identification of these sites, research questions can address notions such as status, slave lifeways, and slave labor.

Pedestrian surveys offer a means to obtain surface collections. Though the park rangers maintain the property on a regular basis, past archaeological surveys have yielded nineteenth century surface artifacts. Surface collection can provide information on site conditions, spatial variability, site function as well as artifacts (Shafer 1997: 35)

Any test units need to be excavated to the water table or at least to the depth of 50 cm. in intervals of 10 cm. below soil level. The natural and cultural layers of the soil supply key information about the site (Feder 1997: 124). Nineteenth century material cultural was predominately found between the 20 cm and 40 cm below soil level on this plantation’s 1987 excavation. It is hypothesized that evidence of building features and 19th century material culture will be visualized during excavations 50 cm below soil level.

One liter soil samples from the matrix of each test pit should be collected for flotation studies. Analysis and identification of plant materials provides critical
information about the food consumption, house construction, human-plant association and the natural environment that was available. Botanical macroremains and seeds not only assist in identifying the function of the site but could provide insight into medicinal and religious practices that Gamble’s slaves utilized.

Two tablespoons of soil obtained from the center of the floor of each pit should be retrieved and stored in sterile plastic bags developed for chemical analysis. Chemical signatures in the soil reveal areas of human activity (Feder 1997: 59) Concentrations of phosphorus and other major and minor elements retrieved from archaeological sites reveal information about food preparation and consumption and aids in the determination of domestic activities (Wells et al. 2000: 449). Soil chemical signatures of the exterior of slave cabins should reveal high concentrations of phosphorus. Exterior areas of slave cabins reveal evidence of their daily lives. Work, food preparation and consumption, and socialization took place outside their homes (Ferguson, 1992: 72; Heath, 1999: 33; Otto 1984:8).

Conclusion

Since Fairbanks’ pioneering work at Kingsley Plantation, multiple archaeologists have explored slave archaeology looking for answers to how these people lived while owned by another person. This section of the thesis has examined the theoretical issues of built landscapes utilized as power and how enslaved people negotiated their daily lives within the restrictive boundaries of slavery. It has answered the question of how we might see slave activity reflected within the archaeological record at the Gamble Plantation. Due to the dearth of historical data concerning Gamble’s enslaved population
it becomes logical to attempt to examine his built environment to place slave activity upon it. This thesis has provided a conceptual framework for future research at the Gamble Plantation in order to understand lifeways of the enslaved people at Gamble Plantation. Through identification of the spatial relationships and functional capacities of architectural features on his landscape, we can tease out inferred stories about his slaves that have been effectively eliminated through conscious oversight by the literate members of the plantation and the effects of time. A review of archaeological and historical literature provides some sense of Gamble’s slaves but only in an indirect way. Accepting that slave activity can be reflected in these ways presented in this thesis, we create new inferences about the slaves and the landscape at Gamble Plantation. We can infer how they built their homes, what materials they used, their labor activities, what foods they might and might not have eaten, their worldviews and religious practices, and their resistances. Archaeological research can offer opportunities to retrieve tangible evidences of Gamble’s enslaved population in order to build a more in-depth story about their past. We can utilize these inferences generated here to serve as an outline for future archaeological and more forward through archaeological research at the Gamble Plantation.
Chapter 6: Presentation of the Past

The Judah P. Benjamin Confederate Memorial at the Gamble Plantation Historic State Park is owned by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Bureau of Cultural and Natural Resources of the Florida Park Services. The mission of the Bureau of Natural and Cultural Resources is to coordinate and standardize effective preservation of natural and cultural resources in the Florida State Parks. The Bureau accomplishes its mission by the supervision of the management, restoration, and protection of the natural and cultural resources. In a multifaceted approach, the Bureau reviews impacts on cultural resources, develops standards for resource management and operational procedures, tracks and analyzes resources management activities, issues permits, and provides advice and technical support for natural and cultural resource management programs.

In this chapter, I provide a description and critique of the way the past is presented at the park. Included within the description, I offer my experience as an anthropologist volunteering as a park docent. It is hoped that through examination of the public presentation that new insightful methods will be developed to offer a more inclusive plantation history.

Presenting the Past at the Gamble Plantation

The Gamble Plantation is opened for public usage and offers a guided walk through antebellum history. Regularly scheduled tours are available five days a week.
Additionally, the recreational areas of picnic pavilions are available during daylight hours.

The tours are given by park rangers and volunteer docents. A tour script provides the tour guide with information to convey to the public. While the tour script is the official version to be presented to the public, tour guides add their flare to the script and highlight different aspects of the tour.

The mansion tour is slated to last 45 minutes and provides historical information about Robert Gamble, his family, and Judah P. Benjamin. In a short span of time a visitor learns about the Armed Occupation Act of 1842, settlement along the Manatee River, the three major plantations located on the river, the massiveness of Gamble’s plantation, his profits and losses due to nature, expansion, and the sugar market, the sale of the property, and the role that the United Daughters of the Confederacy played saving the plantation from deterioration. The tour presentation focuses on a planter (Gamble), a confederate (Benjamin), and the material culture of the planter society. Limited social and historical contexts are related in conjunction with the planter material culture. Burnham (1995:63) argues that it is common that many plantation presentations offer a view from the planter’s mansion. He describes mansion tours as a “cleansing ritual” and “a cataloging of planter material culture” while limiting discussions about the people who did the work. Singleton (1997:146) describes plantation museums as a repository for planter material culture that may contain something made by African Americans such as a quilt.
Park rangers at the Gamble Plantation are cognizant of the limited knowledge conveyed to the public concerning Gamble’s enslaved population. The park “attempts to provide information about the plantation that can be historically supported” (Park Supervisor Don Bergeron: personal communication 3/2008).

Much controversy has been written concerning presentations at historical museums (Silpa 2003; Little 2002; Burnham 1995; Singleton 1997; Gable and Handler 1996; Handler and Gable 1997; Gable et al. 1992; Smith and Ehrenhard 2002). Gable and Handler (1996) offer a poignant discussion about historical museums in their argument concerning Colonial Williamsburg. They illustrate that information is not always historically accurate. They argue that historic museums utilize data that can sell their image.

Heritage is one form of cultural salvage. A “lost world” or a world about to be lost is in need of “preservation,” and the museum or heritage site bills itself as the best institution to perform this function. Heritage museums become publicly recognized repositories of the physical remains and, in some senses, the “auras” of the really “real.” As such, they are arbiters of a marketable authenticity. They are also objective manifestations of cultural, ethnic, or national identity, which outside the museum is often perceived as threatened by collapse and decay. Yet preservation entails artful fakery. Reconstruction, as it were, is the best evidence for the validity of a constructive paradigm. Critics of this or that version of authenticity have before them in a heritage site ample evidence from which to build their deconstructive arguments. [Gable and Handler 1996: 568]

At the Gamble Plantation discussions about slavery vary depending on the tour guides’ knowledge of slavery and their personal investment in the plantation as they attempt to recreate a credible history. In the official script, the slaves are introduced and given a role within the dining room, the office, the slave work room, and the kitchen.
Nineteenth century material culture within the mansion is utilized to help describe slavery and contributes to the illusion that the slaves existed within a static relationship with their owner. The audience’s attention is focused on these stage props rather than the *house servants* who were slaves laboring at all hours under the watchful eye of the owner. Mansion visitors observe the story of slavery as it is represented and in turn they internalize their experience as an interaction with the past. There is no discussion of issues of power and resistance. I maintain that the presentation within the slave work room and the kitchen appears more like a composite of slave narratives taken from the Florida WPA Slave Narratives and the 1970s historians’ views of slavery rather than an individualization of the slave conditions that existed at the Gamble Plantation. If the idea of slavery is reconstructed from planter’s archival records, generalized reproductions of slave narratives, or outdated historical research, then the complexity and diversity of how enslaved people survived within the boundaries of slavery is lost. I argue in my undergraduate honors thesis that such a presentation hides slave labor while it incorporates the labor within the tour.

The roles of slaves and master are inactive when addressed within the context of the great house. Static presentation of these roles conceals the dynamics of slave/master relationships: resistance and domination. This type of interpretation encourages an image of slaves as passively existing for the master’s needs.

The planter’s life and his material culture become the focus of the tour. The enslaved population is written out of their history. As we traveled throughout the mansion, explanations of slave labor were given. Their labors were rendered indiscernible as the tour group’s attention was drawn to furnishings, china, and a tea chest. Examples of slave work were interwoven with the material culture of the planter aristocracy. [2003:91]
Interpretations as to how the enslaved people lived outside of the contexts of the plantation owner are not brought forward. The cultural dynamics of their lifeways such as house construction, foodways, labor, communal activities, resistance, and accommodation are erased or distorted during a presentation through the setting of the great house. Wylie argues that the enterprise of understanding other cultures “depends on the possibility of rendering these cultures intelligible to us” (2002: 154). She posits that, “the museum serves as a kind of ritual context in which unresolved contradictions in the present are articulated in historical terms and symbolically resolved” (2002: 157).

Discussions about slavery are minimized for many reasons which could include ignorance, discomfort, or patriotic needs to present celebrated heroes of our American past. African Americans are a vital portion of America’s past that are forgotten or written out of their history. Gamble’s slaves provided the labor to maintain the plantation including the construction of the buildings and the drainage canals, yet Gamble is credited for their creation. Historical data remains silent about Gamble’s slaves.

My Approach

I serve as a volunteer docent for the park which places me in a unique position as an applied anthropologist. Until recently, I guided park visitors through the mansion one afternoon a week. I have benefitted from the opportunity to be immersed in park activities and obtain an insiders’ perspective. As I stated earlier, park rangers attempt to portray historically supported data. Park rangers do not attempt the “artful fakery” that Gable and Handler (1996) address. They welcome new insight concerning the plantation.
They are also constrained by the script they are given to recite and the time frame allotted for the tours. As a scholar-activist both constraints create conflicts for me.

The tour script was written during the 1970s. I examined aspects of the tour in detail in my undergraduate honors thesis (Silpa 2003). As previously mentioned, it appears to me as composite of slave narratives that includes excerpts from planter journals and 1970s historians’ views of slavery. Obviously, historical archaeology has presented new insights about slave lifeways that could be incorporated. Yet, this script remains the current official presentation.

As an undergraduate docent, I memorized the script and worried that it took forever for me to give the tour. On my first solo tour, a visitor who identified himself as a member of the Sons of Confederacy- Jeff Davis Chapter, patted my hand at the end of the tour and said, “Now dear, you don’t need to be so nervous. Maybe you shouldn’t include so much about the slaves” (anonymous: personal communication 2002).

I heard visitors remark that Gamble was good to his slaves because he allowed them to raise gardens or that the slaves were happy to be his slaves because they did not run away. My undergraduate thesis addresses these comments.

Planter documents describe slavery as dependent relationships. These historical documents offer a view that is imbued with biased beliefs. Food, clothing, and housing were examples of the master’s goodness. Assumption that relationships and goodness can be measured in food, clothing, and housing negates the complexity of the issues. Relationships of power, domination, accommodation, and resistance are lost when the generalized opinion of goodness is deduced. [Silpa 2003:96]

I returned to role of volunteer docent as a graduate student. Armed with scholastic data, I felt confident in my approach. While the tours that I give vary
depending on the audience’s age and knowledge of Florida, I start my tours informing the group that I am an archaeologist and have concentrated my interest on this plantation, specifically the enslaved population. I inform them that they will receive from me a different approach than what they would receive from other docents. I realize that this statement professes a sense of credibility in which the audience could interpret that I can supply a more authentic version of history. My statement is not meant to bolster my status nor can I offer a more “authentic version” of history than other docents. Indeed, the park rangers and some of the docents have read many of the same historical books. I cannot offer an authentic version of history because there is no such entity. History is our interpretation of the past. Handler and Gable demonstrate that historic museums and sites lack authenticity because “we cannot recreate, reconstruct, or recapture the past” (1997:223). They argue that the material culture from the past at Colonial Williamsburg and other historical museum settings is not history. They stress, “‘the past’ exists only as we narrate it today” (1997:224).

My statement serves to alert the audience to three points of my narration: history, slavery, and time. I inform them that I will present a great deal of historical and archaeological facts placed in context of my understanding of history and society, give an in-depth tour of slavery as known from historical and archaeological researches, and that my tour will require more of their time than other tours. In other words, I use my introductory speech as an avenue for someone to choose another time to attend the tour if my tour conflicts with their ideology or time constraints. On the whole, the audience has been receptive to my introduction, probably because of the credibility it implies. My pre-tour statement has also proved to back fire when a visitor asked me, “Why would an
archaeologist work as a tour guide? Don’t you have something to dig up, someplace other than here?” (Anonymous personal communication: 2008).

I do not wait until I am in the house to introduce slavery. I underscore on multiple occasions that plantations were capitalistic enterprises that made their owners rich on the backs of slaves. While this approach does not lend itself to prettiness or history within a tight neat package without conflicts and discrimination, I stand firmly on Little’s (2002:11) premise that history is learned in historic places and that we should be willing to illustrate the good, the bad, and the ugly parts of our American history if we are to learn and move forward.

I tell them about Gamble’s built plantation landscape as remaining visual clues of Gamble’s need to display power and economic success during an era of social and economic unrest. When I address planter material culture, the audience learns that these items were utilized to display social status by a society that profited from slave labor. This approach is effective when I discuss the locked tea chest or the matching dinnerware.

When I speak about slavery as a mode of labor, I attempt to create an emotional comparative with our comfort, our work, and our routines. While I realize that here in the 21st century it is difficult to appreciate the emotional and physical impacts that slavery created in the 19th century, I endeavor to create physical discomforts that might give the audience a hint of the daily stressors slaves experienced. It is especially effective when some aspects of slave labor are reviewed such as digging sixteen miles of drainage canals, caring for the sugarcane fields, and harvesting the crops and timber while the
audience is standing outdoors in the heat of the summer. In the house, I highlight that the house slaves worked at all hours depending on the needs of the master. The script describes them as house servants. I criticize even the language the tour script utilizes to portray the house slaves because in our present language, house servant, translates to the words of domestic hired laborer who can go home after the shift is completed. I explain this deviation to the audience. I am determined that the audience will remember that slavery existed in all aspects of this plantation. In rooms where discussions about slavery normally diminish in the tour script and center either on the elite or their material culture, I stress that the house slaves provided the maintenance of the material culture. Examples of this portion of my presentation are the feather mattress and the matching wash basin, pitcher, and chamber pot located in the Benjamin bedroom on the second floor. I remind the audience that while the social elite slept on feather mattresses, these mattresses required daily plumping and that while the elite liked matching wash basins, pitchers, and chamber pots, the slaves filled the water for the pitchers and emptied the basins and chamber pots.

During the hot summer months when the temperature is comfortable within the house, I emphasize that the slaves lived in houses that lacked the mansion’s insular quality. When I speak about slave gardens I explain that slave diets historically were less than adequate and that gardening augmented their weekly peck of corn. I also point out the economic advantage slave gardens provided the owner. I recognize that my actions are subversive. Yet, since I have given the tour in this manner, no one has remarked that Gamble was good to his slaves.
What have I learned from my approach? I have learned that audiences and their salient inquiries and objectives vary immeasurably. Some members have come to see the planter material culture. Some want to hear the story of the Gamble or Benjamin and direct questions that could be interpreted as a desire to place them in heroic or iconic roles. Some members of the audience have toured this plantation on multiple occasions and attempt to guide or correct me with recitations of their memory of Gamble’s or Benjamin’s history as I deviate from the script. Sometimes, if I am greatly behind, I will skip mentioning a piece of furniture or the plantation bell and all too often a member of the audience will inquire about them.

Reactions to my approach differ. Some visitors look lost, tired, or possibly bored. Other times, I receive insightful questions and remarks that reinforce to me that my “flare” is getting the point across that slavery was neither good nor did people want to be slaves. Is my approach educational? I hope so. In the spring of 2008, I had a family with two young girls as members of my tour. The eldest girl looked to be at the most nine years of age. She asked about the location of the slave cabins. I explained that the location was unknown. When we arrived up on the second floor verandah, she pointed to the eastern boundary north of the UDC building and said that she thought the slave cabins were located there. I told her that was where I thought they were as well. From then on, the little girl stayed close to me and plied me with questions. At the end of the tour while we were still within the Benjamin room, the young girl approached me again. This time her mother admonished her for “bothering the nice lady.” The following is presented in conversation form to feel the impact.
**Little Girl:** “Was Gamble married?”

**Silpa:** “Yes, but not when he lived here.”

**Little Girl:** “He lived in this big house all by himself?”

**Silpa:** “To our knowledge, yes, he did except when his family or friends visited.”

**Little Girl:** “Why did he need such a big house for himself?”

**Silpa:** “You tell me.” (The little girl pushed out her lips and pulled her eyebrows together as she contemplated her answer.)

**Little Girl:** “Because he was greedy?”

Out of the mouth babes, we hear the need for a more inclusive history. I am grateful that I stopped the mother because the remarks made during those few minutes demonstrated that we can make a difference of how people view the past regardless of age.

**Critical Analysis**

I have taken some friends, who identify themselves as African Americans, to the plantation grounds. After I reviewed the slaves’ massive contributions on the plantation and in the Palmetto/Ellenton areas, one of my friends looked over at the mansion and said, “As long as the presentation highlights the owner and oppression and not the contributions of the slaves, you will not get African Americans to come here” (Elzie McCord, Jr. 2007: personal communications). How can this problem of non-inclusion be corrected? Little posits that historical archaeologists make conscious choices that contribute to what sections of history “are told, embellished, excluded, or glossed over” (1994:44). As stewards of America’s past, it is our responsibility that multiple historical facets are publically brought forward. Little (2003) argues that historical presentations can be compared to theater presentations. Presently, the stage and setting is the mansion. The main characters and supporting roles are Robert Gamble and Judah P. Benjamin.
The stage props are the planter material culture. Additional settings and characters are needed. Tours that highlight places of labor will shift characters, settings, and stage props. Ideally, this concept will require tours to start with an explanation of plantations as capitalistic enterprises based on slave labor. The tour script should note from the beginning that the slaves created this plantation and not wait until the audience is in the mansion and utilize the material culture to offer explanations about slavery. Another opportunity would be to offer regularly scheduled slave tours as I have seen at Monticello and Mount Vernon.

A major step should include requesting from the African American community what stories they would like to have incorporated into the Gamble presentation. Common ground can be found among the stakeholders through community partnering. An African American community outreach program can assist in facilitating this partnership. Local African American communities can be reached through the media, schools, churches, and organizations such as fraternities and sororities. African Americans trained as docents can offer their insights into slave interpretation.

Approaching this site as unique is another method that explications of slavery at the Gamble Plantation can be completed. Singleton (1997: 147) notes that the excavated slave housing and industry areas at Monticello’s Mulberry Row created an opportunity for slave interpretation. Offering discussions about housing, foodways, labor, gender roles, worldviews, communal life, resistance, and accommodations about Gamble’s enslaved people will present the important roles African Americans played in American
Archaeological research at Ashland-Belle-Helene Plantation enabled Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism and the Shell Chemical Company to partner, find common ground, and individualize the results. The booklet, *Beyond the Great House: Archaeology at Ashland-Belle Helene Plantation* (Yakubik and Mendez 1995) goes beyond focusing exclusively on the plantation mansion and tells the stories of enslaved and post Civil War African American wage laborers. This booklet, which is also available on the Internet, is written so that the interpreted archaeological data are available to the public. While Louisiana planters and plantations are discussed generally and include specific details of the ownerships and functions of Ashland-Belle-Helene Plantation, the website emphasizes that “the sweat and hard labor of slaves converted the fertile land into wealth and prestige for the planter” (Yakubik and Mendez 1995). In clear, concise language without academic jargon, the public learns about the plantation’s spatial organization and changes over time, the construction sequence and alterations of the sugar mill, the sugar making process, and the lifeways of the enslaved and free people who lived in the quarters. The public is able to view archaeological maps of the excavated slave cabins, faunal remains of foods the slaves consumed, and fragments of ceramics and tools they utilized. The website enables the public to internalize ways in which the slaves spent their limited leisure hours through explanations and pictures of marbles, kaolin pipes, and porcelain doll fragments. Included with pictures of beads, shells, and punctuated coins that served as charms is a description of the ways that slaves created and maintained their worldview. The method that the Louisiana Department of
Culture, Recreation and Tourism and the Shell Chemical Company chose to partner and convey their archaeological results truly illustrates their commitment to public archaeology. Contrary to many plantation presentations in which the planter is highlighted while slaves are erased, this booklet underscores the history, contributions, and the material culture of Ashland-Belle-Helene Plantation’s enslaved and freed African Americans.

**Conclusion**

Anthropologists have examined how slavery is presented in historic settings (Smith and Ehrenhard 2002; Gable and Handler 1997; Gable et al. 1992; Singleton 1997). The presentation of the past can affect what people take away intellectually about Gamble Plantation. Image often constructs the salient messages given in any historic museum. How can a confederate memorial museum maintain their image while incorporating a more inclusive history?

The DEP can utilize lessons learned from past mistakes made at other historic museums to avoid repetition. Handler and Gable (1997) examine Colonial Williamsburg’s attempt to center their narratives on “‘the other half’ and the dispossessed, and less on the silk-pants patriots, the upper crust, they wanted to tell a story that was more critical than celebratory” (1997:78). They observed that the excuse to gloss over or avoid discussions concerning African Americans at Colonial Williamsburg was because African American history was “undocumented” (1997:84). What stories that were told avoided discussions of miscegenation, power, and inequality, and as a substitute “focused on the morally neutral monetary values and on the comparatively benign form of slavery that existed at the time” (1997:114).
While this question of how can a confederate memorial maintain its image and tell the slaves’ stories appears as a contradiction, common ground can be achieved as illustrated at Ashland-Belle-Helene Plantation and in my presentations. Data obtained from archaeological research can help create a booklet written for the public. Websites can be created that highlight all inhabitants involved with the plantation. Offering additional tours that center on slave labor or their lifeways is another option, while updated Gamble tours that are centered in social and historical context can maintain the image of antebellum Florida. Negotiations among stakeholders can assist in deciding which stories should be told.

The next chapter opens with asking the politically charged question of archaeology for whom. It examines different stakeholders that could be impacted by archaeological research. It concludes this thesis by addressing what benefits will be achieved through this research.
Chapter 7: Conclusion: Archaeology for Whom?

Arqueología para quién? (Archaeology for Whom?) (Rebecca Panameno and Enrique Nalda 1979 as cited by Randall H. McGuire 2007)

McGuire (2007) argues that archaeologists are stewards working within a political agenda. Who benefits from archaeological research? Why is it accomplished? Archaeologists may vary their methods and analyses, but the question of why do we attempt to reexamine the past remains. Why should archaeological research be completed at Gamble Plantation? This thesis began on the premise that Gamble Plantation’s history can be made more complete and relevant to park visitors. It demonstrates that through historical archaeology, people who were normally undocumented within the historical record can be given a voice to their past. While this move would offer a more complete history, it can also complicate local histories. Public presentation of archaeological data concerning slave lifeways can be politically charged, especially in an arena where the image is based on a confederate hero and the antebellum culture. If the image of Robert Gamble is stressed as a capitalistic entrepreneur who profited from slave labor then local communities might react with outrage. If the park continues status quo, then African American communities remain silenced, alienated, and will not attend. McGuire (2007) poses the question that if archaeologists are steward’s for some else’s property then whom do we serve? I illustrate in the previous chapter that the added dialectic flare of viewing profits with slave labor has not alienated visitors during my tours. I believe that common ground can be reached. McGuire (2007) points out that while politics is a dirty word, so is our work. We must be willing to get dirty and work for the more inclusive histories connected with this plantation.
This chapter will identify some of the known stakeholders and their roles and concludes by addressing the benefits of archaeological research.

**Stakeholders**

One of the complexities of the Gamble Plantation is that it is multivocal. This multivocality can be expressed as stakeholder groups or individuals who have a direct interest, involvement, or stake in the history and archaeological record of Gamble Plantation and the Manatee River area. The concerns of the stakeholders and private communities can have various agendas and resources (Zimmerman 2006:40). With each stakeholder group there are different levels of salience that must be recognized and addressed. The most obvious stakeholders are those directly involved with the plantation but it is not limited to these groups alone. The African American communities especially have a stake in the plantation because it is a place of their history that is largely overlooked.

It is imperative that African Americans professionals and community be involved with all phases of archaeological research at the Gamble Plantation. Singleton (1997:148) argues “white archaeologists have a superficial knowledge of African American history and culture, and are likely to interpret the archaeological record in such a way as to reinforce stereotypes of black life.” Expectations of the African American community need to be addressed. Little demonstrates the value of input from the African American community.

Archaeologists have successfully brought a measure of complexity and sophistication to their questions and approaches about African-American archaeology. They also have come to appreciate the value of involvement
of dissenting communities can bring to the methods, results, and meaning of the work. [Little 2007: 115]

The following list (Table 3), includes but is not limited, to the Manatee County community groups that fall in the stakeholder category:

**Table 3 Manatee County Stakeholders.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) the Judah P. Benjamin Chapter</th>
<th>The UDC purchased the Gamble Mansion and the 16 acres in 1925 because of its connection with the escape of the Judah P. Benjamin, the Confederate Secretary of State. The UDC has taken an active interest and role in the preservation of the property from the beginning.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gamble Plantation Preservation Alliance (GPPA)</td>
<td>The Gamble Plantation Preservation Alliance is the park’s Citizen Support Organization (CSO). This group is vital in its role to of supporting the park through volunteers that educate visitors, host special events and raise funds designated for park projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee County Historical Society (MCHS)</td>
<td>The MCHS contribute to other Manatee historical organizations. The group sponsors a historical marker program and offer college scholarships for history majors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee County Historical Commission (MCHC)</td>
<td>The MCHC focuses on the preservation of historic architecture and artifacts. It is responsible for the management of the 12 acre Manatee Village Historical Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmetto Historical Commission</td>
<td>The Palmetto Historical Commission focuses on the Palmetto History. The group is active in preservation of historic architecture and obtaining oral histories in its attempt to preserve the uniqueness of the Palmetto community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Family Heritage House</td>
<td>The Family Heritage House is a research center that houses a collection of African American History. It is designed to encourage local families to research their heritage and assists in the dissemination of the African American culture to the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee and Sarasota County Branches of the NAACP</td>
<td>This group strives to eliminate racial discrimination and ensures the right of educational, social and equality of all people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

As stewards of the archaeological record it is our responsibly to meet the needs of diverse communities. Archaeologists offer a method of understanding cultural diversity through preservation of the past (Smith and Ehrenhard 2002). By facilitating common ground to all potential stakeholders, we can advance a more complete knowledge of the plantation’s past. Common ground allows stakeholders to view Gamble Plantation as “an integral part of the collective human experience” (Smith and Ehrenhard 2002:121). The key word here is collective, not exclusive.

A common desire to protect all aspects of its history will be fostered if the local community is made aware of this plantation’s historical richness. Recently, a local real estate developer had a cultural resource archaeological survey on his property that was once a portion of the original plantation (Almy et al. 2007). He is now applying for a historical marker for one of the Gamble canals found during the survey. The real estate owner, who is also a stakeholder, has capitalized on his find. His property is selling because it offers a sense of history (Marion Almy: personal communications 8/2008).

Through archaeological examination of Gamble’s landscape we can achieve an understanding of his spatial organization and power. It will serve as a source of data for other archaeological plantation studies, especially in the placement of slave cabins when their location is missing from the historical record. More importantly, understanding the landscape offers a chance to anthropologically examine the lives of Gamble’s enslaved people. The park, the community, and anthropology as a whole will benefit from new insights on the nature of these people. It will open avenues for informed discussions on
how they lived within slavery’s constraints, how and where they constructed their homes, what they ate, what communal buffering systems they created, their worldviews, the types of labor they performed, and their resistances. The archaeological field, especially Florida, will benefit because this thesis is written as a model for future archaeological research at this and other plantations.

Archaeological research at the Gamble Plantation will offer an opportunity to examine issues that have not been addressed due to the lack of documentary data. While tangible evidence can complicate local histories it can also offer new interpretive insights of Gamble’s enslaved population. The Gamble plantation can move beyond being a repository for the planter material culture to one of a more inclusive historical museum that places African Americans in prominent roles rather than erasing them.
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Appendices
**Appendix A: Plant Study of Gamble Plantation**

Shows identified plant families, common names, and specific epithets which currently occur in the park and along the canal on the eastern edge of the Gamble Plantation which flows in a north-south direction toward the Manatee River. Blank country of origin denotes native species when species are indicated.

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<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Area of Origin</th>
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<td>willow</td>
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<td>Ginger</td>
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Appendix B: Plant Study of Gamble Plantation Sugar Mill

Shows identified plant families, common names, and specific epithets which currently occur in and around Gamble’s sugar mill site. Blank country of origin denotes native species when species are indicated.

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malvaceae</td>
<td>Fanpetals</td>
<td><em>Sida</em> spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malvaceae</td>
<td>Caesarweed</td>
<td><em>Urena lobata</em> L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oleaceae</td>
<td>Privet</td>
<td><em>Ligustrum</em> spp.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix B (Continued)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Family</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Area of Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxalidaceae</td>
<td>Woodsorrel</td>
<td><em>Oxalis</em> spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poaceae</td>
<td>Johnsongrass</td>
<td><em>Sorghum halepense</em> L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poaceae</td>
<td>Bermudagrass</td>
<td><em>Cynodon dactylon</em> (L.) Pers.</td>
<td>Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poaceae</td>
<td>Vaseygrass</td>
<td><em>Paspalum urbillei</em> Steud.</td>
<td>South America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poaceae</td>
<td>Crowngrass</td>
<td><em>Paspalum</em> spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polygonaceae</td>
<td>Knotweed</td>
<td><em>Polygonum</em> spp.</td>
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<td>Plantaginaceae</td>
<td>Plantain</td>
<td><em>Plantago</em> spp.</td>
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<td>Pteridaceae</td>
<td>Brake Fern</td>
<td><em>Pteris</em> spp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosaceae</td>
<td>Loquat</td>
<td><em>Eriobotrya japonica</em> (Tumb) Lindl.</td>
<td>Asia</td>
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<td>Rubiaceae</td>
<td>Wild Coffee</td>
<td><em>Psychotria nervosa</em> Sw.</td>
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</table>
### Appendix B (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Family</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Area of Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rutaceae</td>
<td>Grapefruit</td>
<td><em>Citrus maxima x reticulate x maxima</em></td>
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<td>Rutaceae</td>
<td>Tangerine</td>
<td><em>Citrus reticulata</em> Blanco</td>
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<td>Citrus</td>
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<td>Sapindaceae</td>
<td>Carrotwood</td>
<td><em>Cupaniopsis anacardioides</em> (A.Rich.) Radlk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smilacaceae</td>
<td>Greenbrier (6 species)</td>
<td><em>Smilax</em> spp.</td>
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<td>Solanaceae</td>
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<td><em>Solanum americanum</em> Mill.</td>
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<td>Nightshade</td>
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<td>Lantana</td>
<td><em>Lantana camara</em> L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verbenaceae</td>
<td>Turkey Tangle Fogfruit</td>
<td><em>Phyla nodiflora</em> (L.) Greene</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vitaceae</td>
<td>Virginia Creeper</td>
<td><em>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</em> (L.) Planch.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Family</td>
<td>Common Name</td>
<td>Scientific Name</td>
<td>Area of Origin</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Vitaceae</td>
<td>Wild Grape</td>
<td><em>Vitis</em> spp.</td>
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</table>
Appendix C: Florida as a Sugar State

In 1844 I carried ten of my negro [sic] men to the river and commenced operations… In 1849 erected my first set of sugar works; they were of frame; the boiling house 40 x 30 feet, the draining-house 60 x 30, the mill-house 30 x 30. My machinery consisted of a fifty-horse steam engine. My mill was, for those days, a gigantic affair, a horizontal of 3 rollers 5 feet long, the largest roller weighing 5 tons.

With this structure I took off my first crop in 1849-50, and had scarcely finished rolling when the whole was burned, crop and all. The crop consisted of 80,000 lbs. of sugar and 4000 gallons and molasses. This was a terrible blow, and I had to commence de novo.

I had saved largely of seed cane from this crop, had extended the area of cane land, and would largely increase the acreage in cane for 1850-51. In addition, therefore, to this increased cultivation, the provision of fuel, and some 250 hogsheads, which had to be made on the plantation, and all other ordinary requisites for taking off a crop about three times as large as one just lost, I had to construct anew and complete, and on a much more extensive plant, a new establishment.

This I determine should be of brick. The buildings I erected were as follows: The mill house 40 x 40, walls 16 feet high; cooling house 40 x 40, walls 12 feet high; draining house 40x 60, walls 8 feet high.

All of these bricks were made on the spot and by my own force, and with the exception of one white workman, as boss-brick layer, they were all laid by my own negroes; the most intelligent being selected and under the guidance of Mr. Godard, who was one of the "armed occupationists" and a master workman, they did good and loyal work.

The roof frames of these houses were massy, and it being my intent at a future day to cover with slate. The carpentry of this work was done by contract, but all of the timber was sawed by hand on the plantation, as was all the lumber of every kind used in construction. This work was all completed in time to take off the crop of 1850-51. This crop consisted of 231,000 pound sugar and 11,530 gallons molasses.

The crop of 1851-52… was cut short by frost… Crop of 1851-1852 was 163 hogshead sugar, 195,000 pounds, and 8,150 gallons of molasses. Crop of 1852-53 was 156,000 pounds sugar and 7,000 gallons molasses. Crop of 1853-54 was 363,000 pounds sugar and 15,150 gallons molasses.
Appendix C (Continued)

This year I erected to second draining house, also brick, 40 x 60 feet. These draining houses on either side of the central alley contained cisterns for holding molasses, extending the whole length of the house, each 3 feet deep, lined with hydraulic cement; the hogsheads for placed on the beams over these cisterns. My boiling house was furnished with two sets of kettles arranged along each side, each set consisting of five open kettles, headed by a steam kettle, in which the syrup was concentrated to sugar. An eight-horse engine furnished the steam to operate these steam kettles, and one of Hurd’s centrifugal draining machines, the first one I believe which he made. This engine was also used to drive a grist mill and one of Page’s circular saws, and from the time of its erection furnished all the lumber for the plantation, including staves for hogsheads. The largest kennel in each of the open range kettles held 500 gallons. My mill was raised on massy brick work, capped with three tiers of heavy timbers, 16 inches square, bolted together by heavy rods, which were anchored in the base of the brick work and some ten feet above the kettles, and the cane was carried up to it by an endless band composed of wooden slats and iron chains, and extended from the mill far into the cane yard; this carrier was five feet wide and moved in a trough 14 inches deep, and while the mill was in motion a solid mass of cane five feet wide and 14 inches high pass continuously between the roller and was so effectively crushed that the bagasse as it passed from the rollers was nearly as dry as tinder, cut in two at every joint, and if applied to the mouth while inhaling would produce partial suffocation by its fine, dry impalpable powder.

The crop up of 1854-5 was 303,600 pounds sugar in 12,650 gallons molasses. The records of 1855-56 and of 1856-57 have been mislaid… All the fuel consumed in making my sugar and driving my machinery had to be produced three miles down and upon the opposite side of this broad river. Laborers and teams were dispatched from the plantation, who cut and halted to the river bank. There it was loaded upon large flats, 40 feet long and 12 feet wide, boated to the landing to my place and thence hauled three-fourths of a mile to the furnace…

I left the Manatee in the spring of 1856, placing the plantation and the whole estate in the care of another party. In 1858-9 I sold the plantation to Messrs. Cofield & Davis, sugar planters in Louisiana, and the teams, negroes [sic] &c., and &c., were removed to their estate in Louisiana. This section of the State fell into the hands of the Federal troops early in the war, who wantonly broke and destroyed the massy machinery and kettles.
Appendix C (Continued)

The war coming on immediately and the negroes [sic] emancipated, these gentlemen were ruined, and their ruin involves that of their creditors. These lands, some three thousand-three hundred acres, are now selling for $50 to a $100 per acre...

These ventures, together with my normal duties as a planter and the erection of the two-storied brick dwelling containing ten rooms, and in part covered with iron, constituted the sum of my operations between 1844 and 1856, at which later period I returned to Middle Florida. [Gamble 1888]