

People, Places and Transport: St. Paul's Parish Then and Now

Kimberly Pyszka

Auburn University at Montgomery

Maureen Hays

College of Charleston

As archaeologists we study change through time. Certain themes, however, timeless. One such theme is how relationships and communities are formed when people gather together. In her book, *St. Paul's Parish*, Jennifer Gilliland (2012) provides an historical overview of twentieth century St. Paul's Parish, South Carolina, focusing on four themes: 1) Agriculture and Industry, 2) Gathering Places, 3) Trains, Planes, and Automobiles, and 4) Parish People. In this essay, we apply archaeological methods in St. Paul's Parish on a property known today as Dixie Plantation to argue that these themes were as critical in the parish's development during the first half of the eighteenth century as they were in maintaining the parish community amid rapid cultural changes in the twentieth century.

Introduction

St. Paul's Parish was one of the original parishes created by the 1706 Church Act establishing the Church of England in the colony. It is located south and west of Charleston, South Carolina, and today is made up of several small communities including Meggett, Yonges Island, Hollywood, Rantowles, Ravenel, and Adams Run. In the 300 years since its founding, St. Paul's Parish transitioned from an early eighteenth century remote, sparsely settled frontier parish, to an eighteenth and nineteenth century agricultural parish with numerous large rice and cotton plantations, wealthy planters, and enslaved people. As with many other areas of the South, the end of the Civil War and the fall of the plantation economy brought hard times to St. Paul's Parish, but throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, the parish remained true to its agricultural history.

In her 2012 book, *St. Paul's Parish*, Jennifer Gilliland (2012) provides an historical overview of twentieth century St. Paul's Parish, focusing on four themes: 1) Agriculture and Industry, 2) Gathering Places, 3) Trains, Planes, and Automobiles, and 4) Parish People. As archaeologists working in the early St. Paul's Parish, we recognize Gilliland's twentieth century themes as those we also see as pivotal to the parish's development during the first half of the eighteenth century. In addition to these themes, we recognize the role of the natural landscape and the Anglican Church in the growth and development of the parish. This essay uses archaeological and historical methods to address these themes—the parish's natural landscape, certain “charismatic personalities,” and the role of the Anglican Church. In particular, we intend to demonstrate that the Anglican Church played a significant role in the growth of St. Paul's Parish in two ways. First, it provided social gathering places for early eighteenth-century residents facilitating a means for social, economic, and political interactions. Second, it acted as a catalyst for the development of transportation networks facilitating the growth of agriculture in the parish and later the movement of people into the interior.

Our research centers on the 900+ acre Dixie Plantation, located within St. Paul's Parish. Originally granted in the 1680s, Dixie Plantation was nearly continuously occupied until 1995. The name “Dixie Plantation” in reference to this property is first documented in 1882 when Ann Eliza Richards, the widow of Frederick Richards who purchased the property in 1863 wrote, “I leave Dixie Plantation, and all proceeds therefrom to my son Frank Richards, for his lifetime” (Abstract of Title 1917). Dixie Plantation is historically and archaeologically significant and holds tremendous potential for better comprehending many aspects of the history of the South Carolina Lowcountry. Most recently, the property was the home and nature sanctuary of naturalist and artist John Henry Dick. Upon his death in 1995, Dick bequeathed the property to the College of Charleston Foundation, its current owners. In the past, this area was pivotal to colonial expansion and development while today it provides a buffer from encroaching development, preserving both the cultural and the natural resources.

In order to address Gilliland's twentieth century themes within the context of the founding and expansion St. Paul's Parish in the first half of the eighteenth century, it was necessary to utilize archaeological methods in addition to researching historical documents. Our archaeological field

methods included non-invasive ground penetrating radar (GPR) to obtain information on sub-surface features, shovel testing at fixed intervals to conduct an initial survey of the sites and determine site boundaries, and excavating test units of a fixed dimension (typically 5x5 feet) to focus on data collection of artifacts and to study architectural features below the surface. Our historical document research primarily focused on letters written by the parish's early Anglican ministers back to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) in London. The SPG was a privately funded group based out of London whose vocation was to supply the colonies with Anglican missionaries. In addition to those letters, biographical information about colonial land owners, their titles and land grants, and early maps were also utilized.

Our archaeological data comes primarily from two sites—the original 1707 St. Paul's Parish Church and its parsonage. The ruins of the former church are located within a clearing in the northeastern portion of Dixie Plantation. The only above ground evidence of the structure are four eighteenth-century gravestones and an earthen mound that covers the remaining church foundations. Archaeological investigations at the church site occurred between 2009 and 2011 (Pyszka et al. 2010; Pyszka 2012a). Excavations at the parsonage site, located approximately 175 yards north of the churchyard, occurred concurrently with those at the church. Through the excavation of test units, thousands of early-eighteenth century ceramics, bottle glass, tobacco pipes, and architectural materials have been recovered, as well as the parsonage house foundations (Pyszka 2012a; Pyszka 2012b; Pyszka et al. 2011 (2013)).

Religious sites, such as these two, have the potential to inform us about many aspects of colonial life, including information about the expression of religious and social identity, consumerism and trade networks, and colonialism in practice. Whether in South Carolina or elsewhere, religion played a significant role in colonial life. For many colonists, the freedom to practice their religion openly was the primary reason they left their homes and families in Europe. Many such colonists found their way to the Carolina colony, in large part due to its stance of religious tolerance. Although the Church of England was considered the colony's "only true and orthodox" religion, any Christian groups, with the exception of Catholics, that had "any seven or more persons agreeing in any religion," including "Jews, Heathens, and other Dissenters" were welcomed

(Dalcho 1820:4-5). Throughout the colonies, religious institutions such as the Anglican Church, the Catholic Church, the Congregational Church, and the Moravian Church, played important religious and social roles, as well as influential roles in colonial politics (Brinsfield 1983; Sirmans 1966). The Church Act in 1706 gave the Church of England political and social power over *all* South Carolinians—Anglicans, dissenters (Christians who separated from the Church of England), and enslaved people.

Parish History and Landscape

Even though the Carolina colony was founded as a place of religious tolerance, the Church of England was the dominant religion. Anglicans and dissenters lived and worked together in relative harmony until the late 1600s when growing religious divisions in England carried over to the colonies. South Carolina Anglicans, especially those who were General Assembly members, sought to establish the Church of England as the official state church and provide the Church with political and financial backing. This process was not easy. After several years of debate and “tricky” politics, the General Assembly passed the Church Act in 1706, which finally established the Church of England in the colony. It remained so until 1790 when the new state of South Carolina passed its constitution, separating church and state. The Church Act called for the creation of nine parishes, among them St. Paul’s Parish. As originally defined, the parish’s boundaries included the South Edisto River to the west, the Stono River to the northeast, the Atlantic Ocean to the southeast, and the Berkeley county line to the northwest (Cooper 1837). Today this area comprises the towns of Hollywood, Ravenel, Meggett, and Adam’s Run, as well as the Sea Islands of Johns Island, Wadmalaw Island, Yonges Island, Kiawah Island, and Seabrook Island. Because of a rapidly growing population, in 1734 the parish was divided, with the Sea Islands forming St. John’s, Colleton Parish, while the area on the mainland north of the Stono River remained St. Paul’s Parish (Figure 1).

Throughout its history, the natural landscape surrounding St. Paul’s Church was pivotal in its development for two main reasons; the Stono River provided transportation and the low-lying marshes were ideal for growing rice. European settlement began in the early 1680s. During the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century this area, then located within Colleton County, was considered wilderness. The Stono River and

other waterways allowed for the initial population movements of European settlers south of Charles Town in pursuit of the Indian trade, while also allowing them to maintain access to and contact with Charles Town and England. Its relatively high ground allowed for settlement immediately adjacent to the deep water tidal waterways (South and Hartley 1980). Initially this area attracted entrepreneurs involved in the growing Indian trade with the Yamasee and other Indian groups further to the south, as well as with those settlers seeking large tracts of land (Zierden et al. 1999). In addition to their own homes, early settlers founded the frontier community of New London, later called Willtown, along the Edisto River that served as a trading center and provided protection to English settlers from the Spanish and Native American groups (Zierden 2002; Zierden et al. 1999). According to the Thornton-Morden Map, by ca. 1695 a few widely scattered settlers were living along the Stono River and surrounding waterways. The landscape's low-lying marsh areas that surrounded the waterways were ideal for growing rice, which would become the most important cash crop in colonial South Carolina. After the rise of the plantation economy during the first half of the eighteenth century, the waterways facilitated shipping crops to Charles Town's ports.

While the natural landscape was significant to the growth of St. Paul's Parish, and more specifically the development of the property adjacent to the church, there are also cultural factors that acted as catalysts facilitating population movement and development in the parish. We have identified three catalysts—"charismatic personalities" (our equivalent to Gilliland's "Parish People"), the Anglican Church (Gathering Places), and transportation networks (Trains, Planes and Automobiles) as pivotal to understanding life in the early decades of St. Paul's Parish.



Figure 1: Map illustrating Dixie Plantation situated in the center of St. Paul's Parish 1707. Dotted line indicates the 1734 division from the southern portion of the parish. The portion of the parish within the dotted line became St. John's, Colleton Parish, while the area to the north remained St. Paul's Parish.

Parish People: Charismatic Personalities

As Gilliland states, “There are numerous people over the years that have made St. Paul’s Parish what it is today, and this area has been blessed with a large number of distinguished inhabitants” (2012:9). Unfortunately, most of St. Paul’s earliest “Parish People” remain nameless and faceless. However, there were a few “distinguished inhabitants,” whom we refer to as “charismatic personalities.” These are individuals who through force of personality not only drew settlers to the frontier but also held the community together religiously and politically, and when the parish was all but deserted

during the 1715-16 Yamasee War between colonists and local Native American tribes, they helped draw people back to the parish in a critical time of development. These “charismatic personalities” included an Anglican minister, General Assembly members, a Speaker of the House, a landgrave, a two-term governor, and several traders and planters. This section discusses the known people associated with the early decades of the property immediately adjacent to St Paul’s Church and a couple of seemingly strong-willed, charismatic personalities that affected the church’s history, as well as that of the entire parish.

The Thornton-Morden Map of Carolina provides clues to the first white settlers of the area around what would later become the location of the St. Paul’s Church and parsonage house, glebe lands, and, later, Dixie Plantation. On the map, three names are associated with modern property’s boundaries—Mr. Peters, Mr. Blake, and Captain Bristow. Mr. Peters is William Peters, the first known settler associated with present-day Dixie Plantation. Peters arrived in South Carolina at some point prior to September 1682 and later became a member of the General Assembly and High Sheriff of Colleton County (Baldwin 1985:184). The land immediately to the north was granted to Captain John Bristow, a sea captain from Bermuda who arrived in the region prior to 1678 (Baldwin 1985:35). Joseph Blake, one of the Lords Proprietors’ deputies who arrived in the region prior to 1685, and who eventually served two terms as governor, owned the land immediately to the south of Mr. Peters (Baldwin 1985:26).

The charismatic personality to most influence the development of the parish was Landgrave Edmund Bellinger. Under the proprietary government of South Carolina, landgraves such as Bellinger, fulfilled important roles in the colony as they held at least 48,000 acres and served as members of the colonial Parliament. New governors were typically appointed from among them. Bellinger gained his landgrave title on May 7, 1698 (Smith 1914:65), and he held large tracts of land in the southwestern portions of the colony that included parts of Colleton County and what would later become St. Paul’s Parish. In addition to this large tract of land, which would later include the settlement of Edmundsbury, Bellinger began buying up land as it became available. As an important member of the community, Captain Bristow hosted a meeting at his home to discuss with nearby residents to discuss rents due to the Lords Proprietors (Rivers 1719:182). At this meeting it was decided that a petition would be made at

a General Assembly meeting in January 1696 for the abatement of debts due, which stated that three- to four-year extensions were to be given on all quit-rents (Rivers 1856:185). On May 16, 1701, four years after this petition at the point quit-rents were to come due, Bellinger filed a warrant for all the land from Peters to Bristow (Salley 1915:170), possibly because neither one had yet paid rent. One of the reasons he illustrates a charismatic personality is that it was from this land in 1706 that Bellinger donated 39 acres to St. Paul's Parish for their church and cemetery (Conveyance from Estate of Edmund Bellinger; Dalcho 1820). While Protestant, Bellinger was a well-known dissenter, disagreeing in many matters with the Anglican Church (Bolton 1982:24). However, this did not cloud his judgement in matters of business. He must have known if the Anglican Church could establish itself in this area, the settlers would follow and the economy would thrive. This would have also allowed him to sell or rent land to settlers and thus increase his profits and influence.

Another one of the parish's early eighteenth-century charismatic personalities is Robert Seabrook, who is buried in the St. Paul's churchyard. The Thornton-Morden Map places a Seabrook (probably Robert) as owner of land across the Stono River from Peters and Blake. This charismatic personality is pivotal to the history and development of the land in many ways. While much has been written about the Seabrook family history (Webber 1916:14-25), little is known about Robert, a merchant who arrived from England prior to June 1680. At that time he received 200 acres of land and a few months later, Seabrook owned two lots in Charles Town (Webber 1916: 14). Seabrook eventually owned several tracts of land in Colleton County. In 1692, Seabrook was fined by the General Assembly for the "unlawful Commerce wth pyratts selling unto them provisions arms & ammunition" (Salley 1907:54, 60). Despite his transactions with pirates (or possibly because if it), Seabrook became an influential and prominent figure in colonial politics and the South Carolina Anglican Church. In 1705, he was elected to the General Assembly, later becoming Speaker of the House, and with the 1706 establishment of the Church of England, Seabrook was selected to be one of the nineteen church commissioners (Webber 1916:15). In addition, he was named one of the original three church supervisors to St. Paul's Parish. Seabrook and the other two supervisors, Hugh Hicks and Thomas Farr, oversaw all construction and design aspects of the original St. Paul's Parish Church (St. Paul's Vestry to SPG Secretary, January 20, 1715).

William Peters, Joseph Blake, John Bristow, Edmund Bellinger, and Robert Seabrook were just a few of the early settlers of Colleton County who built their homes in the frontier areas of the developing colony. Their prime location along the Stono River allowed these early settlers to maintain contact with Charles Town and with the Lords Proprietors back in England. Each in his own way, helped to shape the landscape and history of the Dixie Plantation property, St. Paul's Parish, and Colleton County through the early-eighteenth century. These "charismatic personalities" become less of a catalyst for the movement of European Americans into the frontier areas of the developing colony after this initial early settlement. However, one personality is still pivotal, Reverend William Tredwell Bull, minister at St. Paul's Parish Church from 1712 to 1723. It was the Reverend Bull who saw the parish through the 1715 Yamasee War and its aftermath when the parishioners, old and new, return to the nearly-deserted parish, ultimately expanding the parish population and church structure. In the period to follow, the Anglican Church and the physical location of the St. Paul's Parish Church as a gathering place became significant forces behind the development of new transportation networks that facilitated the movement of agricultural products to the ports, as well as settlers into the frontier.

Gathering Places: St. Paul's Parish Church

At the beginning of her chapter titled "Gathering Places," Gilliland writes that parish residents would gather at stores, houses, churches, and schools to "share stories, celebrate birthdays, remember loved ones, or simply to discuss their children, what is going on in town, and to catch up on the latest gossip" (2012:35). Social gathering places would have been especially important to early eighteenth-century residents of St. Paul's Parish given their frontier location, limited access to good roads, and reliance upon the tides for transport by water. Because of the remoteness and vast size of the parish, with the possible exception of the Willtown community, such gathering places were very few and far between. Our argument is that St. Paul's Parish Church and specifically its parsonage served as two of the earliest and most significant gathering places for parish residents.

Historical documents provide little evidence of the history and architecture of St. Paul's Parish Church and its parsonage house. Letters written by Anglican missionaries, local vestrymen, and some of the

colony's political leaders written to the SPG provide the only surviving description of the original church. Completed in 1707, the original St. Paul's Parish church was "A Small but convenient Brick Church in length 35 in breadth 25 feet having been begun soon after ye ratification of ye said Act and finished by them upon one acre of Land given by Landgrave Edmund Bellenger" (St. Paul's Vestry to the SPG Secretary January 20, 1715).

The parish also acquired an additional 71 acres to be used as the glebe land on which "a small, but Convenient House of Brick [was] Erected there upon with a small Out Kitchen and some few other necessary Timber Buildings" (William T. Bull to the SPG Secretary January 3, 1717). Three different SPG missionaries—Reverends Dun, Maitland, and Bull—lived at the parsonage house during their respective tenures in the parish. The parsonage house and outbuildings, with the exception of the kitchen, were burned in late July of 1715 during the Yamasee War (William Bull to the SPG Secretary August 10, 1715). By the 1720s, the population of St. Paul's had increased largely due to the growth of rice production in the colony and the parish's prime rice-producing lands along the Stono River and other waterways. To help meet the parish's growing population, the church was enlarged during the 1720s with renovations completed in 1732 (Andrew Leslie to SPG Secretary, January 12, 1732); however, there is no description of the size of the addition or its relation to the original 25x35ft. rectangular church. During this period, the glebe lands were also expanded when parishioners purchased an additional 400 acres in 1727, bringing the church holdings to over 500 acres (Churchwardens and Vestry of St. Paul's Parish to SPG Secretary, February 5, 1729). After the division of the parish in 1734, the original parish church was no longer centrally located. Therefore, at some point between 1736 and 1739 a chapel of ease was built at Beech Hill about eight miles to the north. In 1742 parishioners first petitioned to have this chapel of ease declared the parish church due to its central location (William Orr to SPG Secretary, March 31, 1742). When the South Carolina Anglican Church approved their petition is not known, but it did occur by 1756 when the original church along the Stono River was dismantled and the materials reused at the Beech Hill church (Dalcho 1820:357).

Today, the only above-ground evidence of the former St. Paul's Parish Church are two slight mounds with a few fragmented bricks laying on the ground surface and four early-eighteenth century gravestones. Through the use of GPR and archaeological excavations, it has been

determined that the two slight mounds do represent the ruins of St. Paul's Parish Church (Pyszka et al. 2010). This GPR testing makes it possible to "see" the footprint and brick foundations of St. Paul's Church (Figure 2). The GPR data also provided the information needed to determine that the original 25x35 ft. rectangle church was transformed into a cruciform after the completion of the 1720s addition. Three gravestones located in the southeastern portion of the present-day churchyard belong to St. Paul's Parish Church supervisor, Robert Seabrook (d. 1710), his wife Sarah (d. 1715), and their son Benjamin (d.1717). The fourth gravestone is that of Amerinthia Elliott Lowndes (d. 1750). Amerinthia's gravestone also provides evidence of other burials as it states that even though she lived in Charles Town with her husband, she wished to be buried near her deceased parents, suggesting that they are also likely buried in St. Paul's cemetery. Archaeological testing indicates a strong likelihood of additional unmarked burials in the churchyard, especially in its northwestern quadrant (Pyszka 2012a:218).

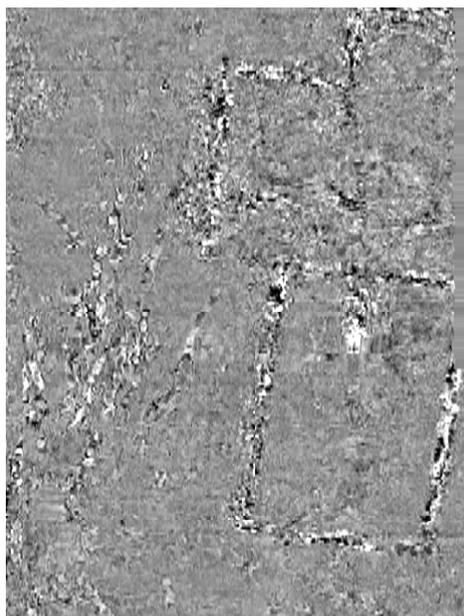


Figure 2: Results of Ground Penetrating Radar illustrating church foundations. Image created by Scott Harris (Pyszka et. al. 2010).

In colonial America, churches were often at the center of nearly every community — whether a Spanish mission town, a small New England

village, or larger towns such as Williamsburg and Charles Town. Located in the center of St. Paul's Parish and along the Stono River, the primary means of transportation through the parish, St. Paul's Parish Church was literally and figuratively the "heart" of the parish for Anglicans and dissenters alike. The parish had a reputation of having a large number of dissenters living within it, in particular Presbyterians (Bolton 1982:24). Reverend William Dun, the first SPG missionary assigned to St. Paul's, provided a census of his parish in 1708. In this census he stated that of the approximately 300 adults in his parish, 220 were dissenters—150 Presbyterians, 8 Independents, 40 Anabaptists, 10 Quakers, "& above 12 others, whom I cannot tell what to make of" (William Dun to SPG Secretary, September 20, 1708). Reverend Guy from neighboring St. Andrew's Parish wrote of the large number of dissenters in St. Paul's Parish and his concern that "some of our Church people [Anglicans] will be in danger of being Seduced by them." (William Guy to SPG Secretary, January 7, 1723).

While Reverend Dun did not provide specific information about how many dissenters actually attended church services, there is every indication that throughout the colony, dissenters often attended Anglican church services. A simple explanation is that churches were few and far between. While nearly each parish had an Anglican church, and some parishes had chapels of ease, dissenting churches were fewer in number. For dissenters who found themselves without a church or who had to travel great distances to their faith's church, attending any church service, even an Anglican one, may have been more preferable than not attending church at all. However, there are more complex explanations. Throughout the British New World, the Anglican Church remained very popular with English settlers, even among a number of dissenting groups, because it provided a sense of English identity to its members. For colonists far from England and in a new, unsettled, and foreign land, the familiar language, culture, and customs likely provided a sense of home and made their new life more bearable. Attending Anglican church services, being surrounded by English customs and practice, people who looked and talked like themselves, must have provided dissenters a sense of home, and a way to remain English even though far from home (Hawkins 1983; Woolverton 1983).

As a dissenter, attending church services at one's Anglican church had its advantages. Because the Anglican Church was the government-

backed religion in the colony, dissenters who sought political position often found it advantageous to show themselves as allies of the Anglican Church, even if they did not officially join. While at St. Paul's Church, or one of the other Anglican churches, dissenters had opportunities to discuss political events with their fellow parishioners and to gain favor.

Archaeological testing (shovel testing outside the churchyard and excavation units within it) revealed very few artifacts that would provide any supporting evidence that St. Paul's parishioners used their churchyard as a social gathering area — a place to eat, drink, and socialize before or after church. This result was not entirely unexpected since previous work at Anglican churchyards in Virginia indicates that they were often kept clear of debris likely out of respect for the sacred nature of the churchyard (Brown and Harpole 2004; Harpole and Brown 2005; Harpole and Brown 2007). Although their numbers were too low to suggest even moderate use of the churchyard by parishioners, a few tobacco pipe fragments and ceramic sherds associated with the consumption of food and beverages (i.e. plates, platters, cups, and mugs) were identified. The recovery of these types of ceramic vessels is consistent with those from other churches sites (Scharfenberger 2009; Ward and McCarthy 2009). Much like today's church potlucks, parishioners would have brought already prepared food to enjoy before or after church services.

At the nearby parsonage site, there is solid archaeological evidence that it was a significant social gathering area for parishioners. Analysis of recovered artifacts (Figure 3) revealed a larger number of tobacco pipe fragments, multiple ceramic tankards and other drinking vessels, and glass "onion" bottles, typically used to hold rum, wine, or other spirits, than would be expected at a residential site such as the parsonage. During the early colonial period, liquors of various types such as rum, whiskey, gin, and brandy were the beverages of choice for most people. This practice was largely due to the belief that alcoholic spirits were healthier than water which was often considered unsafe to drink (Salinger 2002:2-3). A comparison of the artifact assemblage from the parsonage site to four known colonial taverns—one located in Jamestown, Virginia, the Lovelace Tavern in New York City, the John Earthy Tavern site in Pemaquid, Maine, and Cape Cod's Wellfleet Tavern—indicates that the parsonage house functioned in a way similar to that of a tavern (Pyszka 2012b:75-84). Taverns, more commonly called ordinaries during the Colonial period, were

places where guests could enjoy food, drink, tobacco, and various forms of entertainment, or even spend the night while traveling (Lounsbury 1994, 369). As guests congregated at the tavern, other activities would ensue such as business and political meetings and the sharing of the latest news from around the parish or Charles Town. In a remote frontier parish such as St. Paul's that had little, if any, gathering places outside of the church, the parsonage house would have provided another place to meet, but with more of an emphasis on the secular rather than religious activities. The use of the parsonage house as a gathering place for the larger community would have been a familiar practice to the Anglican missionary and many parishioners. Back in England, residents would often assemble at the local parsonage house to socialize, as well as to receive medical treatment, and to further one's education (Bax 1964:3).



Figure 3: Selection of artifacts from the parsonage site. Example of onion glass bottle, pipe bowls and stems, and ceramic types.

With the exception of Willtown in the very southern portions of the parish, St. Paul's Parish lacked other villages, towns, or even large settlements until at least the 1720s. Outside of Willtown, there was no

central place for people to conduct business transactions, hold political meetings, or socialize with other settlers. In addition, difficult traveling conditions due to the lack of roads and the great distances between plantations would have made social visits even more difficult. In the case of St. Paul's Parish and likely South Carolina's other rural parishes, the local Anglican church and parsonage house became the center of the larger parish community. Many of St. Paul's residents traveled to the church to attend Sunday services and to worship together. The period before and after church services was likely the only time throughout the week that many parishioners saw one another outside of their own family, enslaved laborers, or immediate neighbors. As most parishioners traveled to the church via the Stono River and other tidal waterways it would have been preferable to travel in the direction of the current because the tidal currents in the rivers are often very strong. These tidal currents come in and out at about six hour intervals with the elevation of the rivers and creeks rising and falling between six and eight feet in the process. Parishioners may have spent several hours at the church or the nearby parsonage, socializing with one another as they waited for the tide to turn. Throughout the week, the parsonage house likely served as the primary gathering place in the parish, especially when guests arrived from Charles Town or other areas of the colony bringing the latest news and gossip from outside the parish.

Trains, Planes, and Automobiles: Transportation Networks

For twentieth century St. Paul's Parish residents, automobiles and trains were the primary means of transporting people, agricultural products, and other goods around the parish, to Charleston, and beyond (Gilliland 2012:79). For St. Paul's early eighteenth-century residents, "trains, planes, and automobiles" were still 200 years in the future. The waterways of the Lowcountry, such as the Stono River, were the "roads" of the region, and residents relied primarily on boats for personal transportation and as a means for transporting their goods to Charles Town and its ports. From there, goods were shipped elsewhere in the American colonies, the Caribbean Islands, and across the Atlantic Ocean back to England. However, as settlement moved into the interior, travel by water was no longer adequate. By the mid-eighteenth century, a number of roads, bridges, and ferry crossings had been constructed in St. Paul's Parish, and while overland travel was an option, traveling by water remained the primary methods of transportation throughout the nineteenth century. In this section,

we argue that the presence of St Paul's Church as a gathering place influenced the development of early transportation networks in the parish, allowing for a rapid growth of its agricultural products during the early decades of the eighteenth century, as well as making it easier for people to move around the parish and into the interior areas of the colony (Pyszka 2013).

On Nov 24, 1707, St. Paul's Reverend Dun wrote, "I am settled in a place where I can see but very few of them without going by water and it is very chargeable to keep a boat and slave to row me" (William Dun to SPG Secretary November 24, 1707). In this same letter, he also mentioned that the only way he could travel to Charles Town was via water. Transportation was not just an issue in St. Paul's Parish, but elsewhere around the developing colony. In 1705, the General Assembly of South Carolina began passing several acts for the building of bridges and roads, including two located specifically in St. Paul's Parish (McCord 1841). In 1712, the General Assembly commissioned a bridge to be constructed across the Wadmalaw River (lower Stono River) from Thomas Seabrook's land to Elizabeth Blake's lands because the people were "greatly interrupted in their communication with other parts, and are kept from the worship of God" (McCord 1841:24). Elizabeth Blake was the widow of Governor Joseph Blake, who owned the property immediately south of the present-day Dixie Plantation property and the Seabrooks owned the land immediately across the river from both properties. Therefore, this bridge was likely a mile or so south of St. Paul's Parish Church. A year later, the General Assembly commissioned a number of other roads and stated that the people of John's and Wadmalaw Islands "shall make and keep in repair the aforesaid path from Stono Bridge to the Ferry path; as also, to the Church [St. Paul's Parish Church] (McCord 1841:31). Today, the 14th tee of the Links at Stono Ferry golf course marks the location of the former ferry crossing, approximately one mile north of the St. Paul's churchyard.

Throughout the colony, there are other examples of the General Assembly commissioning roads, bridges, and ferry crossings for the purpose of easing the movement of people to church services. In 1705, one act stated that the people of Craven County (St. James' Santee Parish) were in need of a road and bridge over Echaw Creek so that they could join "themselves together on the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday, for the public service and worship of God" (McCord 1841:3). Similarly, on April

17, 1725, the General Assembly ratified an act “to open and make a road from William Smith’s plantation on Wassumsaw Swamp, to the Chappel at Goose Creek” (McCord 1841:62). In total, between 1705 and 1750, the General Assembly passed 68 acts relating to the construction of various types of transportation infrastructure projects. Of those 68 acts, 9 specifically stated that at least one of the reasons for the construction of the road, bridge, or ferry crossing was to aid in the movement of people to their local church (McCord 1841). It is also during this time period that Willtown Road was constructed which connected Willtown to Charles Town. Willtown Road still exists; however, it is now called Dixie Plantation Road and runs through the property. The creation of Willtown Road would have also provided St. Paul’s parishioners a convenient means of transportation to the church as the road runs within one-third of a mile of the church site.

Even with the construction of roads, residents of St. Paul’s and other rural parishes still relied heavily on water travel through the nineteenth century, largely because it was still the easiest way to move around. In 1723, St. Andrew’s Reverend Guy described the terrible conditions of the roads between his church and St. Paul’s Parish Church. Even though the two churches were separated by only about eight miles of land, he wrote that he was “forced sometimes to go by water by reason of ye badness of ye roads” (William Guy to SPG Secretary, January 7, 1723). He further describes his trip to St. Paul’s Church via two rivers, which suggests that he traveled down the Ashley River to the Stono River in order to reach St. Paul’s Church. However, the creation of roads, bridges, and ferry crossings did affect life in the frontier parishes, including St. Paul’s. Besides aiding the movement of people to church, the development of transportation networks aided in the movement of people and goods to Charles Town. In the earliest years, furs, English goods, and enslaved Africans and Native Americans could easily be transported between Charles Town and frontier areas and towns, such as Willtown, via these transportation networks. As the plantation economy began to take root in South Carolina, the roads, bridges, and ferry crossings put in place, at least in part to help people attend their local Anglican church, provided ways for planters to quickly move their crops to Charles Town's ports.

The More Things Change, the More They Remain the Same

The more things change, the more they remain the same, and the themes that Jennifer Gilliland identified as characterizing twentieth century St. Paul's Parish—people, agriculture, transportation, and gathering places—are timeless. These same themes were as critical in the parish's development during the first half of the eighteenth century as they were in maintaining the parish community amid rapid culture change in the twentieth century. Whether it was the waterways, bridges and ferry crossings of the eighteenth century or the twentieth century's "Trains, Planes, and Automobiles," these various modes of transport served the same purpose – to gather people together. This gathering of people allowed for the formation of relationships and communities, and the maintenance of those ties.

Here we have taken a look at a portion of St Paul's parish located on property known today as Dixie Plantation. While only a small portion of the parish, in the eighteenth century this landscape and the place of the church were pivotal for colonial development and expansion. Initially, charismatic personalities were granted land, and as they moved into the area, they were followed by others. After one of these individuals had the foresight to donate land to the Anglican Church to establish a parish church and glebe for its maintenance, these specific points on the landscape, church and parsonage, became gathering places for the early eighteenth-century residents. These religious gathering places also provided a means for secular economic and political interactions. For the sole means of transporting people to the church, transportation networks developed linking waterways, and ferries with newly commissioned bridges and roads. However, these same networks later spurred the growth of agriculture and the transport of goods thus allowing strong economic ties to be built and maintained with the growing local cities and England. These ties to place bind residents together and create community through time.

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