

June 23, 2026

Good morning to the Honorable Senator Potter, and members of the committee of the Whole. I appreciate very much the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Isaac Northup, and I am the president of the Sprat Bay Homeowners Association. My family and I have loved and owned property on Water Island for over 25 years. My goal today is to highlight for this committee some issues that I think are important in the proposed lease and errors and omissions that occur in the body of that lease. Those points are as follows:

1. There are several errors in the development map of the proposed areas to be included in the lease. For instance, on the north side of Water Island is a long strip of land that is supposed to be included in the lease, but it is not. It is labeled on maps, one of which I am attaching to this, as area J. Area J is proposed for development but is not included in the list of areas to be conveyed by the lease. In similar fashion, the proposal for building this project calls for the building of a floating dock at Lot 112. In correspondence with us, the developers have now said that Lot 112 is not included in the project yet that is where their proposed dock was to be built. Since J is not included in the lease nor is lot 112, it is unclear exactly where the dock will be located. This is an important point because there are significant archaeological ruins of Carolina plantation on Lot 112 and in that area. That area was the subject of archaeological excavations by the National Park Service. It is a significant area of ruins because it is documented that the plantation there was owned for years by Jean Renaud, a freed enslaved person. This is the only known site where a former enslaved person became a plantation owner. A report on that excavation concludes by saying “ there is wealth in these ruins. The wealth in these ruins are the windows into the past. The rich history, both documented and excavated, is only a fraction of what this plantation has to tell us.” The plan is for all supplies for the hotel and for construction to come to that dock, which will cause extensive damage to the area. Simply put, it is not possible to tell from the submission exactly what is being leased and what is not and it is certainly not clear where the proposed dock will be built or how much damage will be done to the area.
 2. It is unclear what the developers plans are for Sprat Point. Attached to these remarks is a copy of the 1998 deed from the Department of interior to Sprat Bay corporation, the predecessor to Sprat Bay HOA. Paragraph 10 of that deed says the following:

Grantor agrees to transfer Sprat Point (lot number 279 as shown as an exhibit 1) to an agency of the US government, or the Virgin Islands government, or a private agency, such as the Nature Conservancy on condition that the parcel shall be set aside for conservation purposes as a habitat for birds and animals.
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The Grantee and Grantor recognize that lot 279 is landlocked and the Grantee agrees to permit reasonable land access across existing roads or rights of way to appropriate conservation agency officials for purposes of administration and inspection of the parcel as a habitat for birds and animals.

In response to inquiry, the developer has indicated a plan to build hiking or bike trails. It is my belief that any such development or “limited maintenance” of Sprat Point violates the language of paragraph 10. It is also my understanding that Sprat Point is now part of the territorial park system, which would be consistent I believe with the language of paragraph 10.

3. I read Governor Bryan’s recent testimony in Washington and realized the economic stress the Virgin Islands is under. I would simply ask that consideration be given to how this development will increase the burden on the police, ambulance services, fire protection and the hospital. The proposed lease speaks of building a fire station for instance but says nothing about who would pay for staffing it. The same is true for police and ambulance staffing.
4. Attached to the submission by the developer, beginning of page 145, is a letter signed by Governor de Jongh explaining the process by which the 2014 lease for the development of the hotel was approved. A hospitality advisor and asset management firm was engaged to assess three proposals for development of the hotel. After full consideration, and after meetings of the developers with Water Island residents, that lease was approved. That arrangement had virtually no opposition on Water Island because it was transparent, reasonable in scope and solicited the opinions of Water Island people. That process is in sharp contrast to what appears to be the swift movement of this project. The Senate has the ability to slow that process and make sure all questions are answered appropriately. I would hope that the process of considering the 2014 lease would be duplicated in consideration of this lease.

Thank you again, Senator, and members of the committee, for giving me and my fellow Water Island residents the opportunity to be heard before you today.

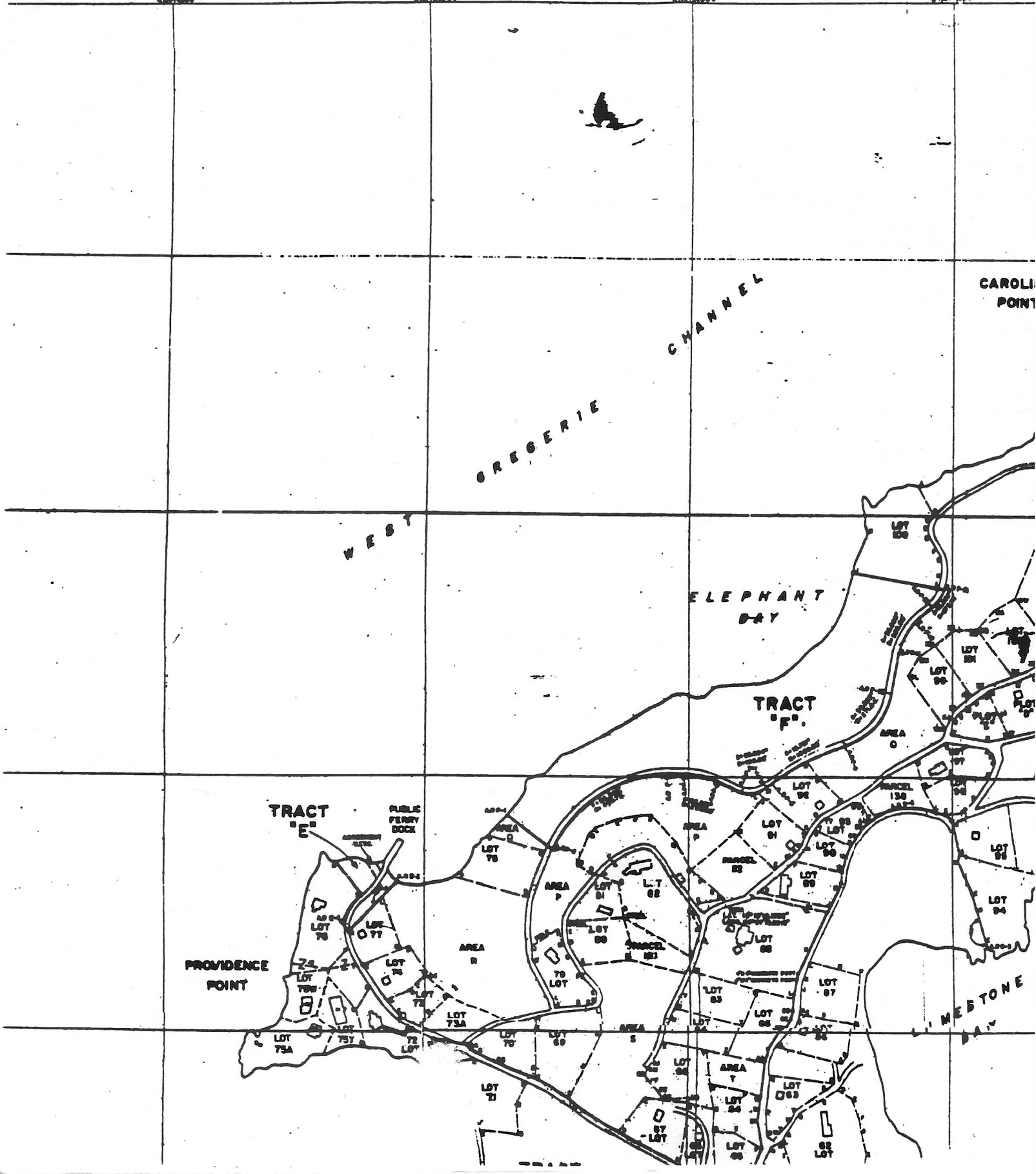
Sincerely,



Isaac N. Northup, Jr., President
Sprat Bay Homeowners Association

EXHIBIT
WATER ISLAND
UNITED STATES VIRGINIA

EL 1214.000 EL 1213.000 EL 1212.000 EL 1211.000



PROVIDENCE
POINT

MESTONE
BAY

DRUM BAY

McNEEMON
BEACH

TRACT
"C"

TRACT
"D"

TRACT
"B"

MARINA
BASIN

BAY

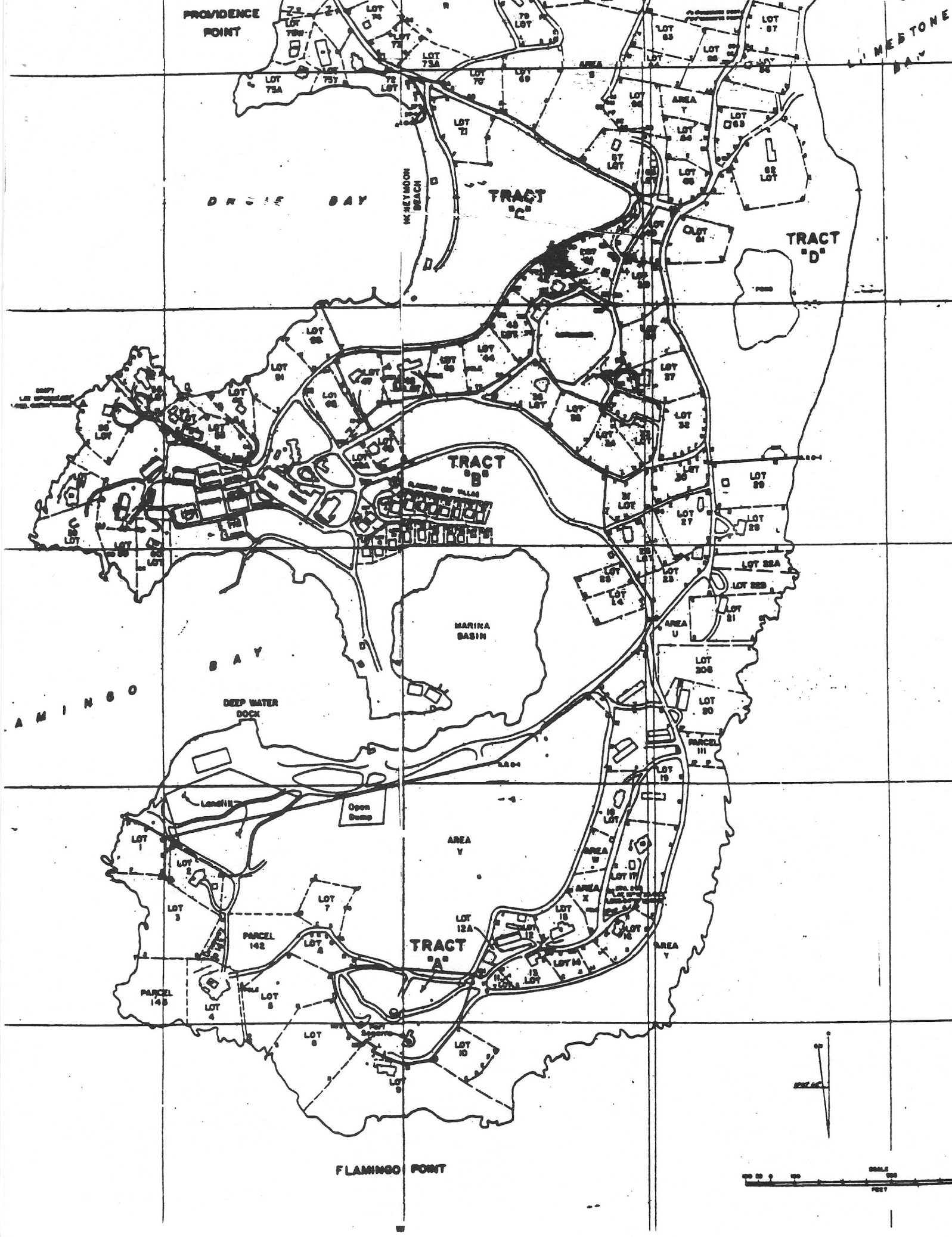
DEEP WATER
DOCK

FLAMINGO

Open
Dump

TRACT
"A"

FLAMINGO POINT



Handwritten
W.L.M. 1

QUITCLAIM DEED

THIS INDENTURE, made this 9th day of June, 1998, between THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, by and through its DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS, herein called the "Grantor", and SPRAT BAY CORPORATION, a U.S. Virgin Islands corporation, herein called the "Grantee."

WITNESSETH: That for and in consideration of the sum of TEN DOLLARS (\$10.00) and other good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, the Grantor hereby grants, sells, releases, and quitclaims to the Grantee, the successors and assigns of the Grantee, all of the right, title, and interest of the Grantor in the real property including the improvements thereon described as follows:

2654
1998

Property located on Water Island near St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands, consisting of approximately 112.724 acres, more or less. The subdivided property is designated as the Sprat Bay properties as marked and shown on a copy of the 1979 map of the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, (revised July 1996) attached hereto as Exhibit 1, excluding Sprat Point (Lot 279 on Exhibit 1), and by this reference made a part hereof, and as more particularly described on a plan prepared by Marvin Berning and Associates, entitled Composite Survey Map: Eastern Water Island, Nos. 10 and 11 Southside Qtr., St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands dated March 26, 1996, Drawing No 1027-2 attached hereto as Exhibit 2 and made a part hereof, and the 96 individual metes and bounds descriptions of each parcel identified thereon (i.e. Parcels Nos. 1 through 96) attached hereto as Exhibit 3 all of which are incorporated herein by reference and made part hereof and all improvements thereon, including the roads, the dock, and the pier all as shown on Exhibit 2 (all the foregoing being hereinafter referred to collectively as, the "Property").

TOGETHER WITH the rights, privileges, and appurtenances, thereunto belonging;

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the Property conveyed hereby in fee simple forever.

SUBJECT, HOWEVER, to and with the benefit of Virgin Islands zoning regulations, now or hereafter in force, laws, rules, and regulations of the United States Virgin Islands, and covenants, restrictions, and easements of record and to Restrictive Covenants attached hereto as Exhibit 4, and made a part hereof, all of which shall run with the land and be binding upon the owners from time-to-time of all lots on Water Island, and inure to the benefit of all of such lots and to the Grantor herein. Additionally the following are also included as easements, covenants and agreements of record:

1. The Property is sold in "as is" condition with no express or implied warranties other than those expressly stated herein.
2. The Grantor agrees to comply with the requirements of Section 9620 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1981 (CERCLA) to the extent required with respect to the Property subject to this sale.

3. The Grantee agrees to comply with the use restrictions, if any, on portions of the Property set forth in the list of Restrictive Covenants attached hereto as Exhibit 4. Said list complies with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion (no jeopardy) to protect endangered species and the National Historic Preservation Act to protect cultural and archaeological resources. Specific restrictions are addressed by lot, tract, or plot.

4. The Grantee agrees to comply with use restrictions, on the property set forth in the list of Water Island Restrictive Covenants attached hereto as Exhibit 4, the Archaeological Covenant attached hereto as Exhibit 4, and the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), pursuant to 36 CFR 900.5 (c), attached hereto as Exhibit 5 and by this reference made a part hereof. Said list complies with the Department of the Interior, Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as compliance under the National Historic Preservation Act. Specific restrictions are addressed by lot, tract, or plot.

5. The Grantee agrees to comply with access stipulations whereby property owners will provide and allow access to the property subject to the Memorandum of Agreement, to any official of the National Park Service, the Virgin Islands SHPO, or their agents, for the purpose of carrying out any archaeological data recovery, inspections or other field work pursuant to the terms of the MOA.

6. The Grantee agrees not to introduce any non-native animal, with the exception of common household pets, such as cats, dogs, and caged birds, to Water Island.

7. The Grantee agrees not to use, as a matter of course, off-road vehicles or heavy duty, mechanical beach cleaning equipment on any beach on Water Island and agrees further to keep animals off any beach on Water Island. This restriction shall not prohibit Buyer from using heavy equipment to return the beaches to their condition prior to any major storm or natural disaster.

8. The Grantee hereby releases the United States, its Departments, agencies and employees from any claim for the value of possessory interests in improvements on Water Island whether the claim is predicated upon the Water Island master lease of 1952, any sublease, or any other basis. This release covers all and every property interest on Water Island including the interest in any home or dwelling as may have been constructed by the Grantee and the interest in common properties on Water Island including by way of example roads, docks, and beaches. The Grantee hereby agrees not to bring any claim for the value of any alleged possessory interest against the United States, its Departments, agencies, or employees in any judicial, administrative, arbitration, or other forum.

9. Provided settlement is completed as contemplated hereunder, the Grantee will offer to each current sub-sublessee the opportunity to purchase his or her parcel from the Grantee at the price of \$17,500 per acre, plus a pro-rata share of the cost of the corporate facilities which include lots 80, 81, 82, 96, 91, 94, 46 (portion), 77, 78, 79, and 93 for a total of approximately 15.66 acres plus road rights of way totaling 7.74 acres for a total common area of 23.40 acres and improvements thereon including the dock and the pier. The cost of these common facilities, i.e., 23.40 x \$17,500 will be spread over a total of 89.34 acres available for sale or a per acre charge of \$4,583.61, plus costs of the transfer such as title insurance, transfer taxes, legal fees, survey costs and the like currently estimated to be an additional \$1,000 to \$2,000 per acre, plus all delinquent fees and interest owed to the Grantee by the respective sub-sublessees, as determined by the Grantee's Board of Directors. If no unforeseen expenses are

incurred, the estimated offer price per acre will be \$17,500 plus \$4,583.61 plus \$2,000, plus delinquent fees and interest. Thus the total price per acre is estimated to be \$24,083 per acre, plus delinquent fees and interest. The Grantee will extend the offer in writing to each sub-sublease holder to complete settlement within a period of ninety (90) days following settlement with the Grantor hereunder. Grantee and Grantor recognize that Grantee intends to impose covenants on each parcel identified in Exhibit 3 hereof. Those covenants will be applied uniformly to each residential parcel. All such lots will also be subject to any restrictions imposed by the Grantor under this deed conveying the Property to Grantee.

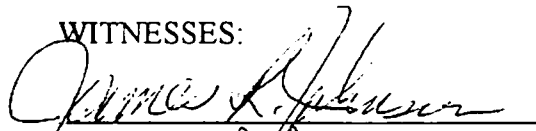
10. Grantor agrees to transfer Sprat Point (Lot No. 279 as shown in Exhibit 1) to an agency of the U.S. Government, or the Virgin Islands Government, or a private agency, such as the Nature Conservancy on condition that the parcel shall be set aside for conservation purposes as a habitat for birds and animals. The Grantee and Grantor recognize that Lot No. 279 is landlocked and the Grantee agrees to permit reasonable land access across existing roads or rights of way to appropriate conservation agency officials for purposes of administration and inspection of the parcel as a habitat for birds and animals.


11. No member of or delegate to Congress or resident commissioner shall be admitted to any share or part of the Contract which gives rise to this conveyance which Contract is dated December 6, 1996 recorded with the Recorder of Deeds for the District of St. Thomas and St. John on December 31, 1996 and in Book 47-N, Page 57 as Document No. 7254, (the "Contract") or to any benefit that may arise herefrom, but this restriction shall not be construed to extend to the Contract if made with a corporation or company for its general benefit.

12. Grantee recognizes that it is a part of the Virgin Islands Community and is subject to Virgin Islands law. Grantee agrees to continue to comply with Virgin Islands Law including the law relating to beach access.

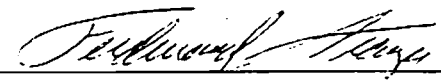

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Grantor has signed this instrument as of the date first written above.

WITNESSES:





THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

By  

Allen Stayman, Director
Office of Insular Affairs

Washington, D.C.)
) ss.
)

Ferdinand Aranza

On this 9th day of June Acting, 1998, before me, personally appeared Allen-Stayman, who acknowledged himself to be the Director, Office of Insular Affairs, United States Department of the Interior (Department). On behalf of the Department, he, being authorized to do so executed the foregoing instrument on behalf of the Department for the purposes therein contained by signing his name.

In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand and official seal.

[Signature]
Notary Public
My commission expires April 14, 2002

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned hereby certifies that for recording purposes, the consideration for the within conveyance does not exceed \$1,972,670.00. This Quitclaim Deed is exempt from stamp taxes and recording fees under 33 Virgin Islands Code Section 128(1) and 28 Virgin Islands Code Section 134(a) (3).

NOTED IN THE CADASTRAL RECORDS
FOR COUNTRY/TOWN PROPERTY, BOOK FOR
WATER ISLAND, "SPRAT BAY" NOS. 10 and 11
SOUTHSIDE QUARTER, ST. THOMAS, VIRGIN
ISLANDS.

ATTEST:
It is hereby certified that the above
mentioned property/s which, according
to QUITCLAIM DEED dated June 9, 1998
belongs to: SPRAT BAY CORPORATION (GRANTEE)

Cadastral Survey/Tax Assessor Offices
St. Thomas, V.I. Dated: June 25, 1998
[Signature]
Phyllis Harrigan, Real, Property Record Officer
Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Cadastral Survey/Tax Assessor Offices
St. Thomas, V.I. Dated: June 25, 1998
[Signature]
Phyllis Harrigan, Real, Property Record Officer
Office of the Lieutenant Governor

RECORDED AND CANCELLED IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE FOR THE
OF ST. THOMAS AND ST. JOHN, VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE U.S.A.
BOOK _____, PAGE _____, SUB NO. _____, AND ENTERED IN
THE REAL (PERSONAL) PROPERTY REGISTER FOR
_____ QUARTER NO. _____ (AUXILIARY
_____ PAGE _____
DATE: _____ 19____

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OFFICE RECORDER OF DEEDS



University of
Massachusetts
Amherst

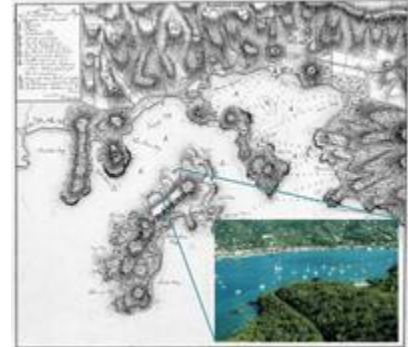
Wealth in Ruins: The History and Archaeology of a Caribbean Plantation

Item Type	Article
Authors	Yates, Emily
Download date	2026-06-24 13:25:40
Link to Item	https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14394/1849

Wealth in Ruins: The History and Archaeology of a Caribbean Plantation

By Emily Yates

Water Island is a small Caribbean island just south of St. Thomas. In 1996 it was officially recognized as the fourth US Virgin Island. At less than 500 acres it is home to 161 residents (2000 Census). On the northwest end of the island is Carolina Point (Figure 1; click on the images below to see larger illustrations). This promontory offers a clear view overlooking the West Gregerie Channel and Charlotte Amalie Harbor. This was certainly a strategic location for monitoring the merchants, traders, settlers and visitors arriving on St. Thomas.



The plantation on Carolina Point was excavated in 1998 by a team of archaeologists from the National Park Service (NPS). Those excavations recorded the Great House, several outbuildings, and 3 slave cabins (Figure 2). On either side of Carolina Point are freshwater wells likely associated with this plantation. The rich and varied history of this plantation was first brought to light by Historian George Tyson and through continued research by the NPS Project Historian David Knight with the aid of Translator Gary Horlacher. The NPS excavations punctuate the rich history of Water Island.

The historic occupation on Carolina Point began in the early 18th century. The first known resident, Albert de Ruyter, is indicated on a 1718 map. Sea captain De Ruyter was employed as a steward of the Danish West Indies Company to host incoming merchant ships. Carolina Point offered the clearest view into the harbor, allowing de Ruyter manage the flow and movement into Charlotte Amalie. Livestock was also kept on the island for provisions to the colony on St. Thomas.

After de Ruyter's death around 1720 his Water Island holdings were turned over to his widow and her nephews. She soon remarried a St. Thomas builder named Olle Hennigsen. He had a growing business as a mason and lime burner on St. Thomas, and this union proved to be rather profitable for him. To support St. Thomas' growing population and mercantilism, the essential building material limestone was harvested from Water Island by various St. Thomas builders at least as early as 1711. Hennigsen continued to export limestone from the island, and being the prudent businessman, he petitioned the Danish West Indies government for a formal sanction of his rights to Water Island's resources soon after his marriage. He received this sanction on April 10, 1725.

After Henningsen's death around 1730 the main exports of the island were cut stone rather than harvested limestone. Also exported was prepared lime, evidence that the widow's nephews were investing their efforts in the lime burning and quarrying industries rather than harvesting, livestock, or agricultural enterprises. From 1737 to 1740 exports of gray stone (locally known as "Blue Bitch") from Water Island appeared in the St. Thomas records (Figure 3). This rock must be quarried and like harvesting limestone and burning lime, this required a considerable effort to cut and transport. This extreme effort could have been fuel for a local insurrection. From a 1732 tax roll we learn that all of the slaves had run away from the island, and that Jan Cramieu, the widow's nephew and Overseer, left Water Island. The following year all property belonging to the Cramieu family was liquidated.



Ownership of the island becomes a complex affair after the Cramieus, and legal ownership is not entirely documented. Title to the land was exchanged several times by marriage. Separate estates were established by split inheritances. A New York carpetbagger labored for years to finagle distant relations out of their inheritance to claim it for his own. Time after time the estate at Carolina Point fell into bankruptcy and was auctioned. And one family's oral history includes the story of Joseph Daniel being presented the island as a reward by the British Navy for his support during the War of 1812. The list of owners includes numerous St. Thomas planters and merchants involved in many aspects of maritime trade. A few owned and rented commercial and residential properties on St. Thomas, several were sea captains or in the shipping industry. Two were freed men of color who themselves owned slaves. Most were absentee landlords. Several were newly arrived immigrants to the colony.

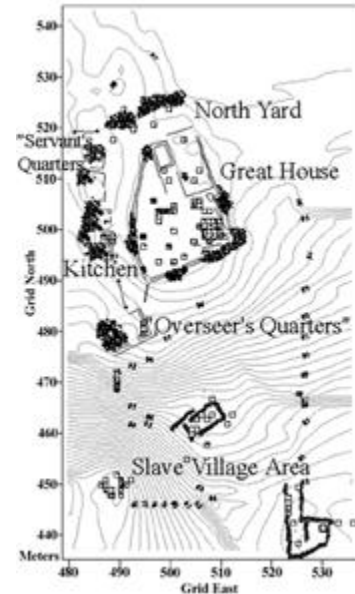
In 1769 the rightful title to the island was transferred to Jean Renaud. Renaud was an established planter on St. Thomas and was part of the growing population of French Catholics in the colony. Originally from Martinique, he was one of the free men of color to own this plantation. For two decades he worked towards rehabilitating the plantation back into a productive agricultural enterprise. The plantation structures underwent massive growth and renovation during his tenure and he progressively added to his slave population and arable acres. He began this plantation with 18 slaves, within a decade the number rose to 39, and by 1786 Renaud had expanded his workforce to 60, an extraordinarily high enslaved population for a non-sugar producing plantation.



The structures at Carolina Point reflect the bust and boom of the plantation as it moved from provisions to quarrying, and cattle to cotton. The growth and expansion of the plantation is coupled by the evidence from repeated

attempts to repair and rebuild the bankrupt estate. The plantation structures are attributed to Renaud's ownership and the labor of his slaves. Now obscured from view by dense vegetation, the configuration of the plantation is similar to a 1778 depiction (Figure 4) of a large house on the bluff, 9 cabins, fieldstone walls, cleared land for pasture, two freshwater wells, and a house on the opposite bay.

NPS excavations focused on the Great House, Kitchen, Overseer's Quarters, and Slave Village where three cabins were identified (Figure 5). No documentation has been found that describes the architecture of any structure on Carolina Point. Typical Dutch architecture during the eighteenth century included half-timbered homes with a brick or rock foundation, and tiled roof. What remains today of the Great House are rock and coral foundations and brick wall supports. Having been destroyed by fire, the upper portions of the house could surely have been constructed of timber. Glazed ceramic roofing tiles were also found throughout the Great House rubble.



The Kitchen had a paved stone floor and plastered walls constructed of fieldstone and cut coral -- very typical for the time and area. Inside the kitchen was an iron skillet, placed upside down, on the floor; a large grinding stone; fragments of a cast iron pot; and the remnants of a baking sheet. The Overseer's Quarters likewise had plastered fieldstone and cut coral walls, but an unrefined floor. The original flooring may have been wooden planks, now long since deteriorated. Few artifacts were found within this structure. Two slave cabins had fieldstone walls, and one had a plaster floor. The artifacts recovered have a wide timeframe which indicates these cabins and this area was occupied for an extended period. The artifacts show the presence of both men and women -- evidenced by hand tools, buttons, and beads.

Upon his death in 1793 Renaud's holdings were given to his wife Rebecca, although this was not to last long. The next year Rebecca married Peter Tameryn, a freed man of color and the Captain of the Free Negro Corps. He inherited this position from his father Mingo Tameryn. Mingo was respected for his role in maroon hunts throughout the colony and for his efforts to quell the slave revolt on St. John in 1733-34. (This was the same time all of Cramieu's slaves ran away from Water Island!) In accordance with Renaud's will Water Island was divided equally between Rebecca's new husband and the children of Renaud's sister. Thus, by the turn of the eighteenth century Water Island became two separate land holdings and each was operated independently.



Tameryn's control of Water Island was the northern half, where Carolina Point is located. Peter and Rebecca lived on

the estate briefly from 1803 until his death in 1806. It took four times on the auction block until the property, all household furnishings, and 27 slaves were finally sold to Captain Archibold Kerr in 1807. He employed an overseer for four years and worked as an absentee landlord, as he was already a well-established merchant and ship owner on St. Thomas. Unfortunate for him, Water Island proved to be a poor investment as the British gained control of the Danish West Indies in 1807 and stymied the trade relations both in and out of the islands. Also, between 1807 and 1818 Kerr lost his Carolina Point slaves at an alarming rate due to a prolonged outbreak of yellow fever. And so he opted to make substantial upgrades and needed repairs to the main residence before putting it on the market. Evidence of his renovations and repairs are visible in the arched cistern (Figure 6).



Baron Lucas de Bretton purchased the estate in 1819 with the ambition to bring new life into the plantation. First he gave the plantation a name: what was simply known as the "Water Island Estate" became "Caroline's Lyst" which means "joy" or "folly". The vast majority of ceramics recovered from the Great House date to the Baron's ownership. At the height of early 1800's European dining fashion was ceramics that mimicked Chinese porcelain (Figure 7). The Baron likely bought or brought this service set while residing on Water Island. He kept production at a slow pace, running a gentleman's farm rather than a commercial undertaking. He ran the estate for 9 years, but each year he experienced a decline in the estate's value. In 1828 the plantation was again put up for auction, this time as the bankrupt estate of the Baron.

Within 3 years the plantation had 3 different owners. Each had bought the property, all furnishings, some livestock and slaves hoping to establish a productive estate. Each was disappointed and resold everything at auction. For a meager amount the plantation was then sold to an Italian immigrant named Cosmo Francovitch, an established planter on St. Thomas, and ran Caroline's Lyst as an absentee landlord. But when Francovitch died three years later Caroline's Lyst and 3 slaves were auctioned and gleaned about half of its appraised value. James Hazzel, Jr. bought the property and set his son as the estate manager. The Hazzels were a prominent family in the islands and owned a growing amount of property within the Danish West Indies. They were involved in a number of various enterprises from maritime trades to rental properties on St. Thomas and other nearby islands. The Caroline's Lyst estate saw no agricultural enterprises during Hazzel's ownership, rather it was used for commercial industry -- limestone and gray stone.



In 1842 James Hazzel, Jr. sold the estate to a St. Martin sea captain, Benjamin Barton. He and common-law wife

Susanna Cohen lived on the estate for less than a year when Barton died suddenly. As they were not legally married and had no legitimate offspring, the property was given to Benjamin's sister Ann Quark, and the children of his deceased sister, Mary. Barton's brother-in-law became the executor of the estate in 1843 but was never in residence at Caroline's Lyst. He was a blacksmith on St. Thomas and leased the land to Raimond Certain of France. Certain labored to reestablish pasture and provision grounds while maintaining cattle, sheep, and goats on the property. Some of the artifacts recovered from the Great House are indicative of Certain's occupation. A stack of French-themed plates was recovered in a corner of the dining room (Figure 8). Other plates in the collection herald Napoleonic victories. The maker's marks indicate production between 1834 and 1839. Certain began leasing the plantation in 1843 when he arrived from France and likely brought these plates with him.

Certain was the last occupant of Caroline's Lyst to own slaves. When the 1846 plantation register (census) was taken he had 4 field laborers -- but they were no longer on the island when the first census after Emancipation was taken. While many freed slaves were tied to their locations by servitude or lack of a better option, Certain's slaves chose to leave the island altogether. Further notations on the 1850 census list three additional men in residence at the estate. Africa native Alfred, age 70; St. Thomas native, Johannes Paul, also 70; and St. John native, Jacob, 23 years old. The older men were listed as invalids, and Jacob's occupation was simply "unemployed". These men were likely former slaves, however not on Water Island. Their names do not appear on any register or census for the island prior to 1850. Their appearance on the island, however, may be related to the fact these men were infected with leprosy.

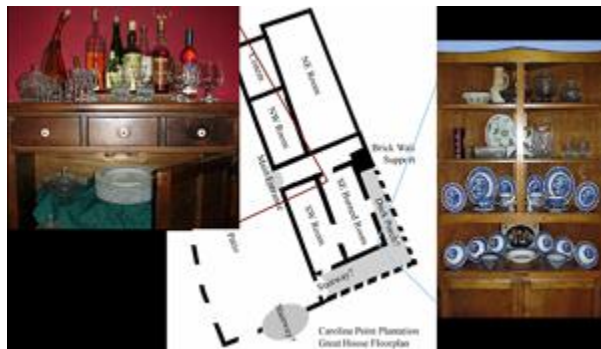
Leprosy was spreading at an alarming rate throughout the West Indies in the second half of the 19th century. The spread of the disease was not fully understood as medical writings of the time indicate it could be partly due to leprosy vaccines that were being administered. Several leper colonies throughout the Caribbean were established by the turn of the century. But prior to the inception of the St. Croix Leper Asylum, the closest "remote" locations were Hassel and Water Islands. A small leper colony was established on Hassel Island; however this is the first evidence of such on Water Island. More research is needed to determine if these men were part of a colony or just isolated individuals. A few years later a prolonged outbreak of Asiatic cholera on St. Thomas stalled the agricultural production Certain had reestablished at Caroline's Lyst. It appears that by 1853 there were no residents or production at the estate.

Meanwhile, Captain Joseph Daniel was methodically purchasing portions of Water Island. Daniel operated a ship repair and rigging yard business located in Charlotte Amalie, and ran a fleet of lighters which serviced approaching vessels into St. Thomas Harbor. He also owned a number of rental properties on St. Thomas, both commercial and residential. By 1859 he owned nearly all of Water Island. One small parcel, Caroline's Lyst, was co-owned with Eugene Pannet, whose two sons were living in the Great House. In 1862 Daniel petitioned the courts for a pardon from the yearly tax on Caroline's Lyst due to the main house suffering significant damage rendering it useless for residential living, and thus exempt from taxes. Pannet's son, according to Daniel, set a brush fire too close to the house.

The house was fully furnished at the time of the fire, and to the delight of the archaeologists, an outer brick wall fell in, sealing the contents of one room. Many of the ceramics recovered from within the house date around 1820, about the time Baron Lucas de Bretton took ownership of the plantation. It was after he went bankrupt that the property changed hands on an increasingly frequent basis due to bankruptcy. It is quite likely the estate was being auctioned with all furnishings intact. The archaeological record supports this idea -- the wide variety of artifacts and ceramics excavated in 1998 reflect the plantation's numerous owners since the Baron.

The intensity of the fire was located in the southeast corner room of the Great House. The brick wall was found under one-and-a-half feet of building rubble and enclosed a thick layer of ash that covered the entire room. The artifact collection recovered from the Great House is typical of a nineteenth century plantation (bone buttons, brass tacks, rose-headed nails); but the most significant find was the large amount of broken pottery -- over six thousand pieces from the southeast room alone, over 190 pounds!

Reconstruction of these pieces into vessels was a huge undertaking, but with fantastic results. The pieces recovered from just one room of the Great House have resulted in 176 reconstructed vessels. This is the largest known comparative collection of whole and nearly whole 19th century tableware ceramics (Figure 9).



From the reconstructed vessels and other artifacts recovered, reconstruction of the room, and house, is possible (Figure 10). For example, in the northwest corner of the room a large amount of bottle and drinking glass was found. This is also where the stack of French plates was, obviously stored, not displayed. The china cabinet in the southeast corner of the room fell over during the fire. Burn patterns on many vessels indicate they broke before burning. The resulting "spray" pattern of artifacts indicates where items were stored or displayed in the cabinet. Willow bowls were displayed below plates and larger serving dishes. Porcelain was above all Willow pattern vessels. And clear melted glass was found mostly among the porcelain.

Caroline's Lyst now lies in ruins. But there is wealth in these ruins. This is only a brief view of the plantation's Great House and three cabins. The outbuildings, including the kitchen, bake oven, and overseer's quarters have been largely uninvestigated. The remains of a privy have never been found and the entire Slave Village is a huge untapped resource. The

wealth in these ruins are the windows into the past. The rich history, both documented and excavated, is only a fraction of what this plantation has to tell us.