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Part I

Early Maps As a Source in the Reconstruction of Southern Indian Landscapes

Louis De Vorsey, Jr.

In his recent review article entitled, "Geographic Perspectives In Anthropology," Marvin Mikesell, a geographer, convincingly demonstrated the many close links which have existed between the two man-oriented disciplines—geography and anthropology (1967). He stressed the youthfulness, common ancestry, and the common intellectual roots which have shaped their developments through the past three quarters of a century. Both anthropology and geography were shown to have served as valuable academic bridges in recurring attempts to span the widening gulf between the physical and social sciences.

The concept of culture, which has formed the keystone of anthropology's impressive structure, is increasingly recognized as occupying a like position in modern geography. The academic geographer of the present day has moved far from the overriding preoccupation with the determinative role of the physical environment which characterized his discipline four or five decades ago. Rather, he now tends to shape his research and quest for understanding into the form of questions which ask how a particular group perceives, organizes, and utilizes its physical environment or habitat at any given point in time. Man, operating within the context of a culture group, has emerged as the active agent in the modern geographer's study of areal differentiation. Most modern geographers would agree with Charles Frake in concluding that man is "unique among organisms, [carving] . . . his ecological niches primarily with cultural tools of his own invention rather than with biological specializations" (1962:53). In a large measure this new direction in geographical thought has been due to

the lessons which geographers have learned from anthropologists and others. Fortunately, American academic geography, like anthropology, has been characterized by a high degree of electicism.

Mikesell concluded his review by expressing concern over the paucity of examples of cooperative studies undertaken by workers in anthropology and geography. He mentioned the fact that over four decades have passed since the eminent geographer Carl O. Sauer called attention to the overlapping interests of geographers and anthropologists. Sauer, in 1925, suggested that a gradual coalescence of the disciplines might "represent the first of a series of fusions into a larger science of man" (Sauer 1963:350n). Mikesell found the absence of this fusion "regrettable but understandable." He observed that "even the most uninhibited scholar is constrained, to some extent, by professional affiliations and the departmental structure of our universities." The boundary separating anthropology and geography departments might be likened to many of those marking the map of modern Africa —more arbitrary than logical. This long-standing academic demarcation has encouraged introspective methodologies and what Mikesell referred to as the "academic counterpart to nationalism."

Academic "nationalism" has given way to "internationalism" in this symposium on Indians in the Old South. Anthropologists are here joined with historians, linguists, and geographers to gain insight into the life and rich culture of the South's first Americans.

Historical Geography and Historical Cartography

Historical geography is a subfield of geography which has traditionally had strong ties with both anthropology and history. Currently the parameters and objectives of research in historical geography are the subject of lively debate by practitioners (Newcomb 1969). Most researchers cultivating this row of the geographic garden would, however, agree that the reconstruction of past landscapes is both a valid and important goal for their research (Broek 1932:7-10). It might be further asserted that the reconstruction of a region's landscape on the eve of its occupation by a new and distinctive culture group would be of considerable value to workers in a variety of disciplines including anthropology and history as well as geography. Such a reconstructed landscape could, in some measure, be viewed as the product of the culture group being dispossessed, in this case the Southern Indians during the eighteenth century. Similarly, such a reconstructed landscape might be employed as a datum base from which to gauge the impact of the dispossessing culture group in its

regional setting through time. In our case the dispossessing group would be the Anglo-European cultivators and their African slaves of the same century.

In his attempt to reconstruct a landscape of the past, the historical geographer should employ as many relevant and illuminating sources as possible. The range of these sources is broad and their character is varied. Early maps, showing as they do the spatial arrangement of landscape features, are, however, of particular value as sources in any attempted reconstruction.

Early maps, like maps of the present day, are, in their primary conception, conventionalized pictures of the earth's surface as seen from above, to which lettering, symbols, and color are added for feature identification and clarity. The word "picture" is used here in its broadest sense to include what is believed about any area of earth space as well as what is cognized and objectively determined to exist in the area. Early maps, however, differ from modern maps in many important respects. In the words of R. A. Skelton they are, "the end-product of a complex series of processes—assembly of information from various sources and in different forms, both graphic and textual; assimilation to the mapmaker's geographical ideas, to transmitted cartographic patterns, or to his political interest; and the resultant stages of compilation, control, adjustment, and copying" (1965:4). The collection, study, and analysis of early maps are the essential elements of historical cartography. Historical cartography in turn is frequently an ancillary to the study of historical geography (Koeman 1968).

Researchers interested in past Southern Indian landscapes are fortunate in having an excellent guide to the early maps of the region. This is the volume entitled *The Southeast In Early Maps* (Cumming 1962). Also of considerable value as an introduction to the cartographic history of the South is Volume VI (1966) of the journal, *The Southeastern Geographer*. This was a special topic issue which contained articles by Cumming (1966), De Vorsey (1966a), Friis (1966), and Ristow (1966).

Early maps should be considered as extremely valuable historical documents which require somewhat specialized treatment in their reading and analysis (Harley 1968). As Skelton indicated in the statement quoted above, early maps were seldom if ever constructed out of the rigorously controlled processes of measurement and computation which are taken for granted in our scientifically compiled modern maps. As a result, they frequently show a mixture of fact and fiction, both of which can contribute to a clearer understanding of the

geography of the past. Facts, such as coastlines, stream courses, animal licks, vegetation cover, roads, and settlements, are liable to change and alteration through time so a contemporary view of them at selected times in the past is indispensable (Coppock 1968).

Misconceptions such as the locating of deserts, lakes, rivers, and oceans where they did not exist in nature provide equally valuable insights. In this case, however, the insights afford a better appreciation of the motives, beliefs, and biases of those long departed individuals who lent life and significance to the landscapes of the past. Varrazano, in his passion to find an easy route to the Orient, reported the Carolina Outer Banks as a long narrow isthmus which blocked his entry to the "original sea . . . which is the one without doubt which goes about the extremity of India, China, and Cathay." Thus, in his mind the broad waters of Pamlico, Albermarle, and Core Sounds became the eastern margin of a beckoning ocean lapping the Oriental littoral somewhere to the west. This geographical misconception was an exciting idea to the sixteenth century European geographers and cartographers who heard it. It became incorporated in many maps of the period and did much to stimulate an interest in exploratory voyages and enterprises which led ultimately to the establishment of the Roanoke Colony (Cumming 1966:8). The satirist Swift drew attention to such cartographical shortcomings when he penned his now well known quatrain which read:

> So Geographers, in Afric Maps,
> With savage pictures fill their gaps,
> And, o'er inhabitable downs,
> Place elephants for want of towns.

Early maps can be viewed as "Cartographic Portraits" of regions of earth space. Just as a good portrait in its subjective rendering may reveal as much about the artist as about his subject, so an early map can reveal both the qualities of the landscape depicted and its author's background, training, and interests, in nearly equal measure. The understanding of early maps can be enhanced through a thorough knowledge of the historical circumstances surrounding their compilation and execution just as a viewer's appreciation of a portrait is enhanced by a knowledge of the painter and his school. The user of an early map, then, should not rest content with a superficial study of its content of lines and patterns. He should probe into the historical circumstances which surrounded its original creation by asking: Who was the cartographer? Why did he draw this particular map? For whom was this map originally intended? Answers to these and similar

questions will enable the researcher to utilize these early "map documents" more effectively.

Early maps represent sources of inestimable value to the researcher interested in both the current and past cultural and physical landscapes of a region. They can show zones of change and dynamism as well as continuity and stability in those landscapes. They can show which features and patterns of the present scene are relics of past periods and conditions. They may suggest the reasons for present day patterns and relationships which are inexplicable in purely contemporary terms. They can help explain human actions and habits which are also not comprehensible in the light of present conditions alone. They can illustrate the process of human modification of the environment in a region. They can illustrate too, the process of natural change in a region. They can remind us of forgotten resources. Finally, they may help us all to come a bit closer to the civilizing realization that the present is but the past flowing into the future.

Employing Early Maps: Two Examples

Early maps exist in a wide variety of formats and scales, depending on the skill and intent of those original cartographers who created them. Some are little more than crude sketches while others are intricately detailed, amazingly accurate, and artistically executed. Some show broad regions or a whole continent while others depict small areas of only a few hundred acres or less. Rather than discuss maps in general terms only, it seems advisable to demonstrate their use and value in two recent attempts to reconstruct aspects of the mid-eighteenth century Southern Indian landscape. The first of these utilized a large number of small and medium scale manuscript and printed maps to reconstruct the boundary line which separated the British colonies from the Indian tribal lands in the pre-Revolutionary Southeast (De Vorsey 1966b). The second utilized many very large scale original surveyor's maps of granted properties, known as plats. With these large scale depictions of a relatively small study area, an attempt was made to reconstruct the aboriginal forest cover on the eve of occupation by eighteenth century European cultivators.

The Southern Indian Boundary Line—A Small Scale Study

At the outset of the American Revolution the Southern Indian Boundary Line separated the British colonies from the territory of the Indian tribes in the Southeast. The climactic twelve year period, which began with the surrender of almost all of the eastern portion of the

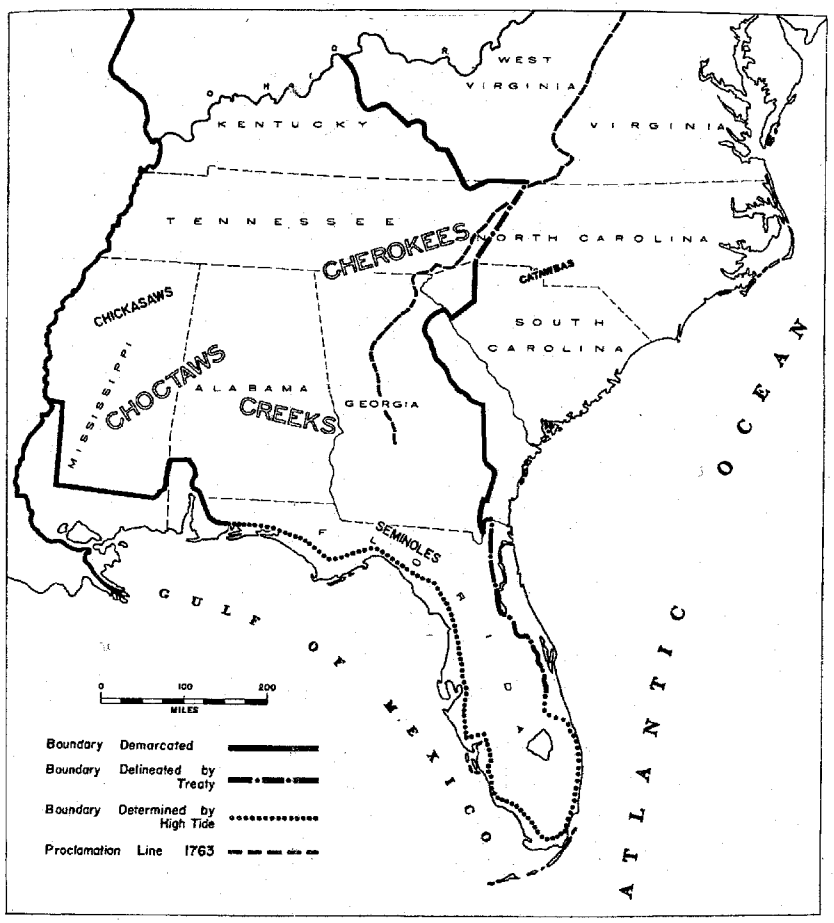

Figure 1. The Southern Indian Boundary Line on the Eve of the American Revolution. (Simplified from map on p. 232, *The Indian Boundary in the Southern Colonies, 1763-1775*, by Louis De Vorsey, Jr.).

continent by the French and Spanish in 1763, and ended with the political break between the seaboard colonies and the British Crown in 1775, saw this boundary line emerge on the map of the new world. As can be seen in Figure 1, it extended across a vast expanse of the wilderness from the Ohio River on the north to the Florida peninsula on the south and to the Mississippi River on the west.

Over much of its great length the Southern Indian Boundary Line evolved from a hazy administrative concept, conceived in expediency, to a geographic reality demarcated across the untamed frontier landscape. The remainder of its length was delineated in detail in eighteenth century documents and maps. Needless to say, the Southern Indian Boundary Line was a factor of great moment to the Indians, pioneer settlers, and British administrators concerned with America's first "west" since it was a restrictive barrier beyond which white settlement was not allowed to extend.

For brevity the following points are enumerated in summary without further discussion. They are considerations which seem indispensable in any attempt to bring the Southern Indian Boundary Line out of the obscurity in which it has resided for two centuries.

1. As the struggle for eastern America occupying Europe's three greatest powers came to a head in the middle decades of the eighteenth century, the Indian tribes, armed and informed by the Europeans, played an increasingly pivotal role.
2. As Britain emerged victorious over France and Spain, she realized that her tenure in interior America would depend on an ability to achieve a *modus vivendi* with the powerful Indian tribes living there.
3. The chief cause of discontent and disaffection on the part of the Indians was their fear of losing their hunting grounds and tribal lands to the advancing tide of white colonists from the seaboard.
4. Britain adopted a policy aimed at containing her bourgeoning colonies to the Atlantic slope while guaranteeing the Indian tribes the unmolested possession of the interior.
5. To implement this policy and clearly mark the line of division between King George's white and red subjects, the Southern Indian Boundary Line was painstakingly negotiated, ratified, delineated, and, in a large measure, demarcated.
6. The diligent efforts of John Stuart, His Majesty's Superintendent for Indian Affairs in the southern department, in carrying out the British program resulted in an impressive corpus of manuscript descriptions, surveyor's sketches, and carefully executed maps which can be effectively employed to reconstruct the Southern Indian Boundary Line.

Surprisingly, there was no published source, be it historical atlas, reference work, scholarly monograph, or paper, to which the investigator of the Southern Indian landscape could turn to find this significant and extensive element reliably illustrated or described. The task was to translate the corpus of manuscript maps, sketches, and descriptions of the Southern Indian Boundary Line to topographic maps of the present day. Regrettably space does not permit a systematic review of all the original maps employed in this cartographic reconstruction.

Rather than attempt any sort of comprehensive review of the many early maps utilized in reconstructing the Southern Indian Boundary, three are reproduced here with brief comments. It is hoped that anthropologists and others will identify ways in which these and similar maps might be employed in reconstructing other facets of the Southern Indian landscape.

Figure 2 is a photographic reproduction of William Bonar's artistically embellished map of the mid-eighteenth century Creek Indian heartland, along the Coosa, Tallapoosa, and Chattahoochee Rivers. The area shown includes that portion of Alabama which stretches from the Coosa, north of Montgomery, south and eastward to the juncture of the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers in northernmost Florida. Although distance is badly distorted, the map shows the names and locations of many Creek towns as well as two of the chief routes into the area from Georgia and South Carolina. The "French Fort" shown on the Coosa River near the fork of the Alabama (Moville) River was Fort Toulouse, built by the French in 1716. A plan of the fort was included as one of the six vignettes embellishing the margins of the map. The other vignettes include intimate firsthand views of the Creeks, their structures, and implements of peace as well as war.

Bonar accompanied Samuel Pepper, a representative of the governor of South Carolina, on a diplomatic mission to the Creeks during a period of considerable tension. The resourceful Bonar gained access to the French stronghold, Fort Toulouse, in the guise of a packhorseman. He was discovered by the French and arrested. While enroute under guard to the French headquarters at Mobile he was rescued by a party of pro-English Upper Creeks. His map was intended to give the Carolinians a clearer view of the conditions then existing in the Creek heartland. It was recognized as valuable by his con-

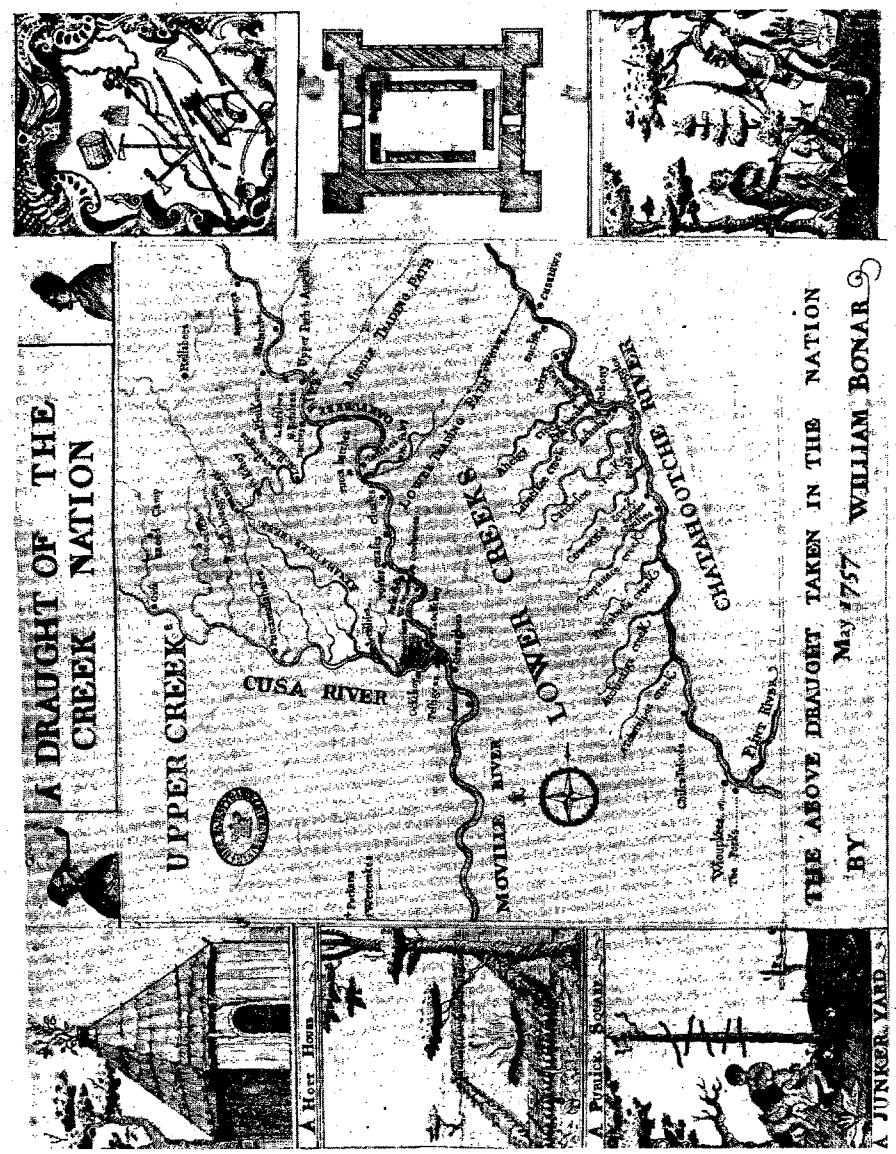

Figure 2. "A Draught of the Creek Nation, 1757," by William Bonar, (From the original manuscript in the British Public Record Office, C.O. 700 Carolina/21. Crown Copyright Material, reproduced with permission.)

temporaries and today represents a rich source for anyone studying the mid-eighteenth century Creek Indian landscape of the Southeast.

Figure 3 is a reproduction of a manuscript draught of the boundary line which was surveyed between the Cherokee lands and the colony of South Carolina in 1766. As can be seen it is an official document, inscribed by the Cherokee representative as well as the Carolina surveyor and commissioner. The line was surveyed from the Savannah River northeastward for approximately fifty-five miles to the Reedy River near the crossing of present day state route 101. The map shows a number of blazed line trees which are identified as to species as well as several named creeks and rivers. Of particular interest is the pair of parallel dotted lines which indicate the route of the "Road to Fort Prince George," the South Carolina outpost in the Lower Cherokee county. The map is of continuing significance since the surveyed line it shows still functions as the boundary between Anderson and Abbeville counties in South Carolina.

The last map in this series relating to the reconstruction of the Southern Indian Boundary Line is Figure 4. For clarity it has been redrawn from Samuel Savery's original manuscript dated January 1769. The area shown lay along the course of the Georgia-Creek Indian Boundary Line in the eastern part of the colony. Included are portions of several present day counties lying along a rough arc about forty miles to the west of Augusta. It is a valuable and interesting map, showing as it does the location of the outermost fringe of the Georgia settlement frontier during the summer of 1768 when Samuel Savery laboriously conducted his survey and boundary demarcation. The surveyor's descriptions of the character and quality of the land near the line are of particular interest. Many of the place names of creeks and other features shown have changed with time so this map would be particularly valuable to anyone attempting to interpret early documentary references or descriptions concerning the area shown. The "Creek Path" indicated is a segment of one of the most important aboriginal routeways in the Southeast. It was known as the Lower Trading Road or Lower Creek Trading Path and crossed the Ogeechee River near the present day Georgia community of Agricola (Goff 1953).

Aboriginal Forest Cover In Greene County Georgia—A Large Scale Study

In addition to the many hundreds of small and medium scale manuscript maps listed and described by Cumming in his book, *The South-*

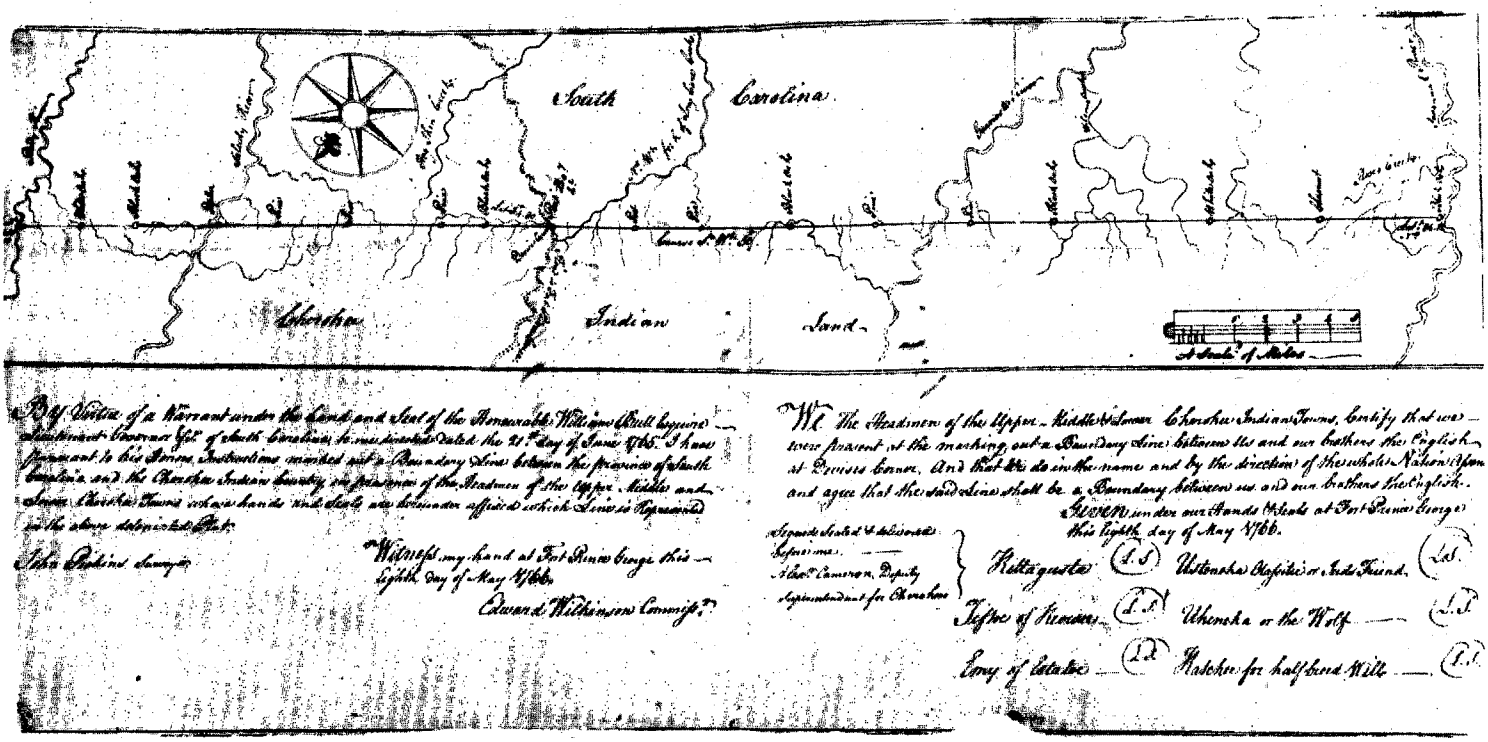

Figure 3. "Boundary Line Between the Province of South Carolina and the Cherokee Indian Country, Marked Out In Presence of the Head Men of the Upper, Middle and Lower Cherokee Towns, Whose Hands and Seals are Affixed. . .," by John Pickens. 1776. (From the original manuscript in the British Public Record Office, C.O. 700 Carolina/26. Crown Copyright Material, reproduced with permission.)

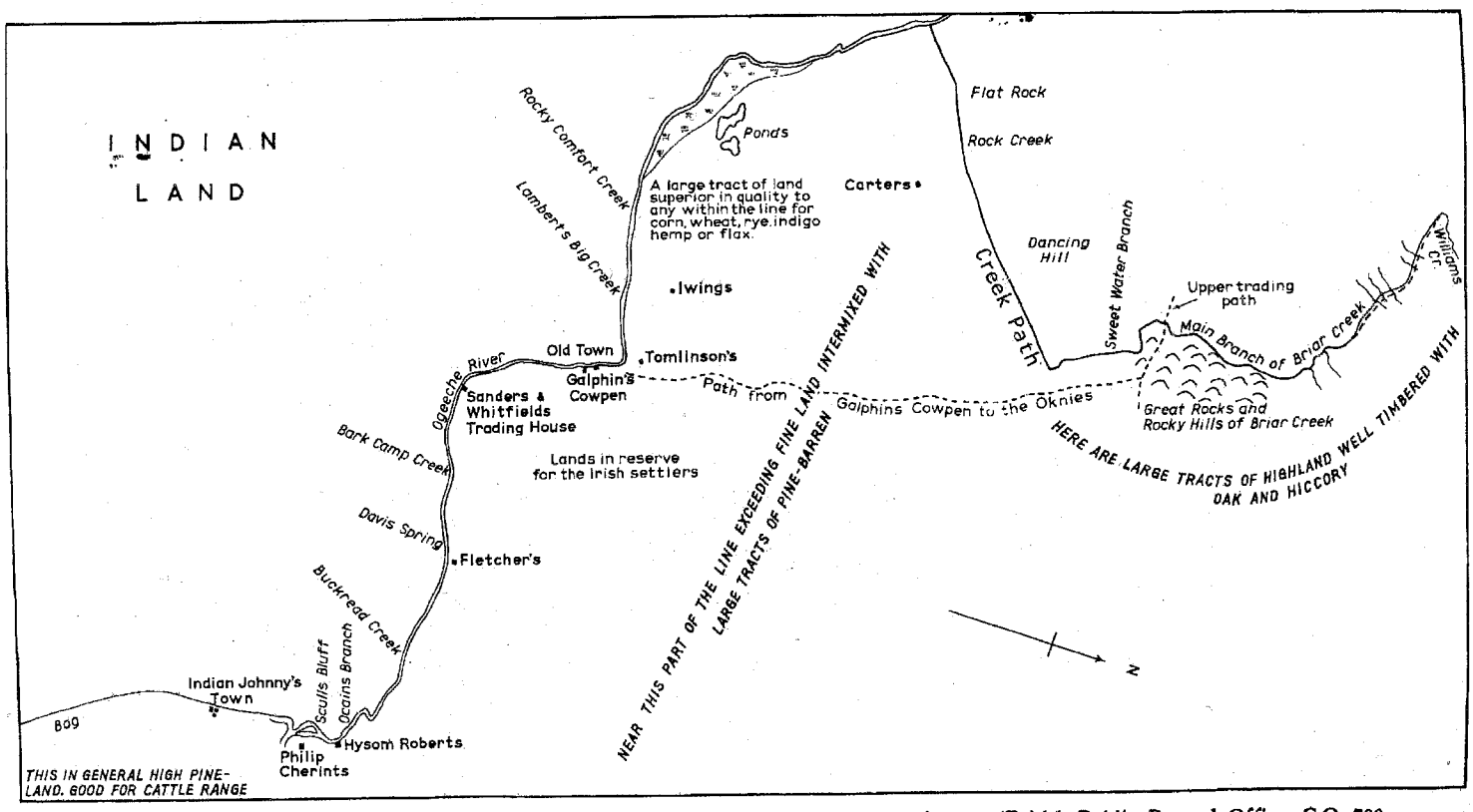

Figure 4. Tracing from Samuel Savery's map of the Georgia-Creek boundary of 1768. (British Public Record Office, C.O. 700 Georgia/14. Crown Copyright Material, reproduced with permission.)

east In Early Maps, there exisits another vast body of primary cartographic evidence which may be valuably employed in efforts to reconstruct past Southern Indian landscapes. This is composed of the several million large scale land maps, called plats, which were prepared as the public domain of the eastern colonies and states was delivered from governmental control into the hands of private citizens and commercial enterprise. This vast corpus of primary evidence is almost untapped at the present time. Its potential value seems enormous.

As might be imagined, the transfer of land, the most fundamental and prized resource of the age, was highly formalized and generally required that an accurate survey and description of the transferred land parcel be prepared and recorded in a central administrative office. The importance of these plats and documents has resulted in their careful preservation to the present day in our state and national archives. The surveyor general of Georgia, for example, maintains approximately one and one-half million survey plats and documents which are available for study and scholarly use.

Figure 5 is a copy made from a particularly interesting survey plat found in the Georgia archives. Thanks to the doodling of one early land surveyor, this plat presents a contemporary view of an eighteenth century land surveying party at work. The surveyor can be seen in frock coat and breeches, sighting on a black oak corner tree through the sight vanes of his circumferentor or surveyor's compass mounted on its "jacobs staff." The chain carriers, following him along his traverse, are shown wearing bits of their Revolutionary War army uniforms. These Revolutionary veterans are measuring distance with a Gunter's chain composed of carefully measured wire links. Edmund Gunter perfected this measuring device in 1620. It was based on the statute rod as a unit of land measurement with 100 links which equalled 66 feet or one rod. Still another member of the party is shown aiming at a deer with a flintlock.

It can be seen that the surveyors noted many landscape features on their plats. These often included such things as tree types, drainage features, soil quality, notable terrain features such as hills, large rocks, swamps, and springs. Many plats showed aboriginal cultural features such as Indian burial and temple mounds, paths, old fields, and villages, as well as fishing and hunting camps. There can be little doubt that these plats may be employed to yield valuable data concerning the landscape of the Southeast on the eve of its occupation by sedentary European cultivators.

Again, rather than describing and discussing the original land

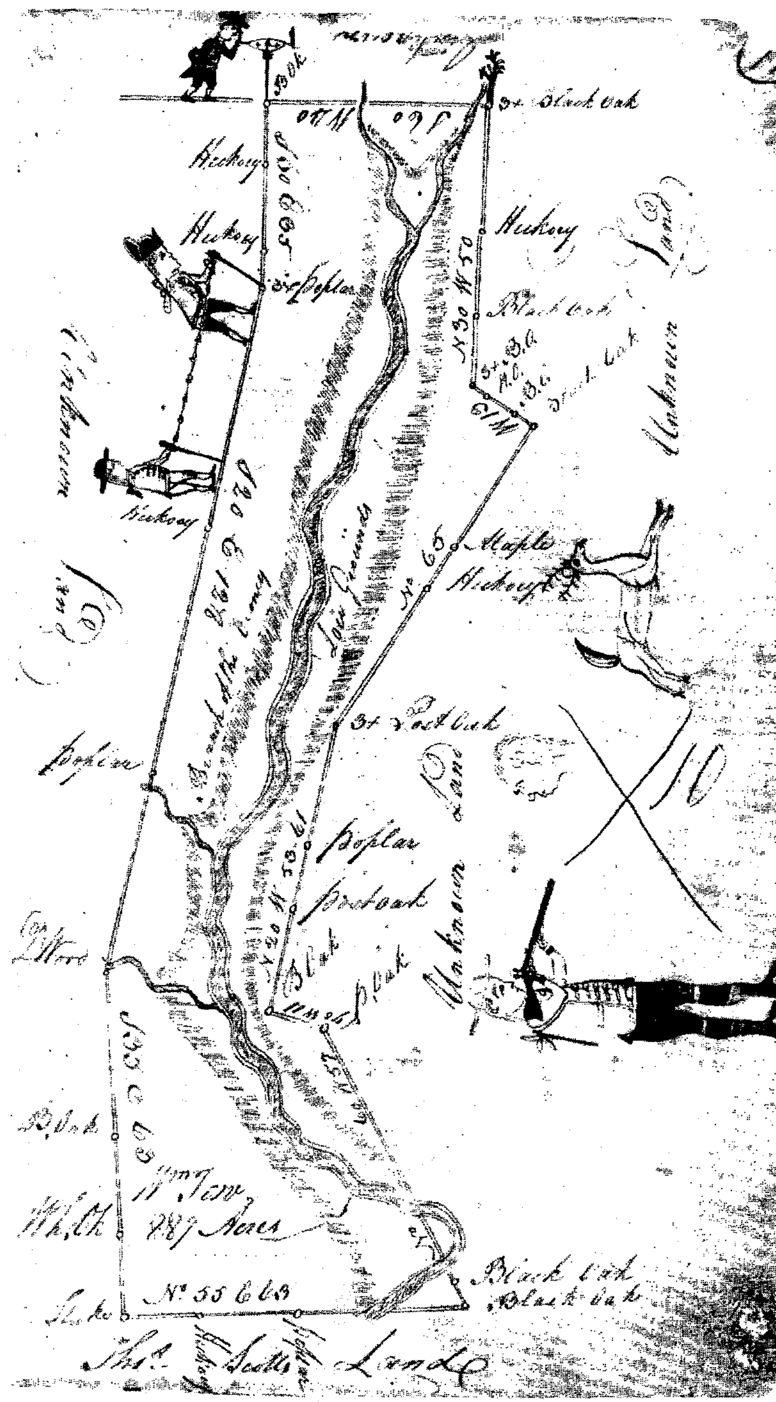

Figure 5. Copy of the survey plat of William Few's grant of 1784, (original scale, 1 inch represents 20 chains). This plat is one of many thousands maintained by the Georgia Surveyor General's Department, reproduced here with permission.

survey plats in general terms only, it seems advisable at this point to demonstrate their value in a more specific way through a large scale study which made use of them. This study is a small portion of a larger effort to gain a clearer and more accurate understanding of the character and composition of the forest cover of eastern America in the late eighteenth century.

Even a superficial examination of the accounts written by early explorers and travelers in the Southeast reveals a view of the forests which is widely at variance with what the present landscape reveals. One of these early travelers through the aboriginal Southeastern forests and glades was the well known Pennsylvania naturalist William Bartram (1958).

Bartram's writings have been extensively utilized by scholars interested in the eighteenth century South. Doubts have arisen from time to time, however, concerning his accuracy as a reporter of the aboriginal southern scene. Who, for example, would not have second thoughts regarding his colorful description of the hardwood dominated forest cover of the area now included in Georgia's Greene and Oglethorpe counties, if they were only familiar with the present day pine dominated scene in the area?

Bartram traveled through this portion of Georgia during the spring of 1773. He was almost rhapsodic in his glowing description of the forest he observed there. He wrote of "the most magnificent forest I had ever seen." He went on to describe

> this sublime forest; the ground perfectly a level green plain, thinly planted by nature with the most stately forest trees, such as the gigantic black oak . . . whose mighty trunks seemingly of an equal height, appeared like superb columns. To keep within the bounds of truth and reality, in describing the magnitude and grandeur of these trees, would, I fear, fail of credibility; yet I think I can assert, that many of the black oaks measured eight, nine, ten, and eleven feet diameter five feet above ground, as we measured several that were above thirty feet girt, and from hence they ascend perfectly strait, with a gradual taper, forty or fifty feet to the limbs (1958:24).

In an effort to check Bartram's description of the aboriginal hardwood dominated forest in Greene and Oglethorpe counties, original survey plats were employed as a source of data for a partial reconstruction.

The original survey plats for the study area, shown in Figure 6, were retrieved from Georgia State Surveyor General's files. The

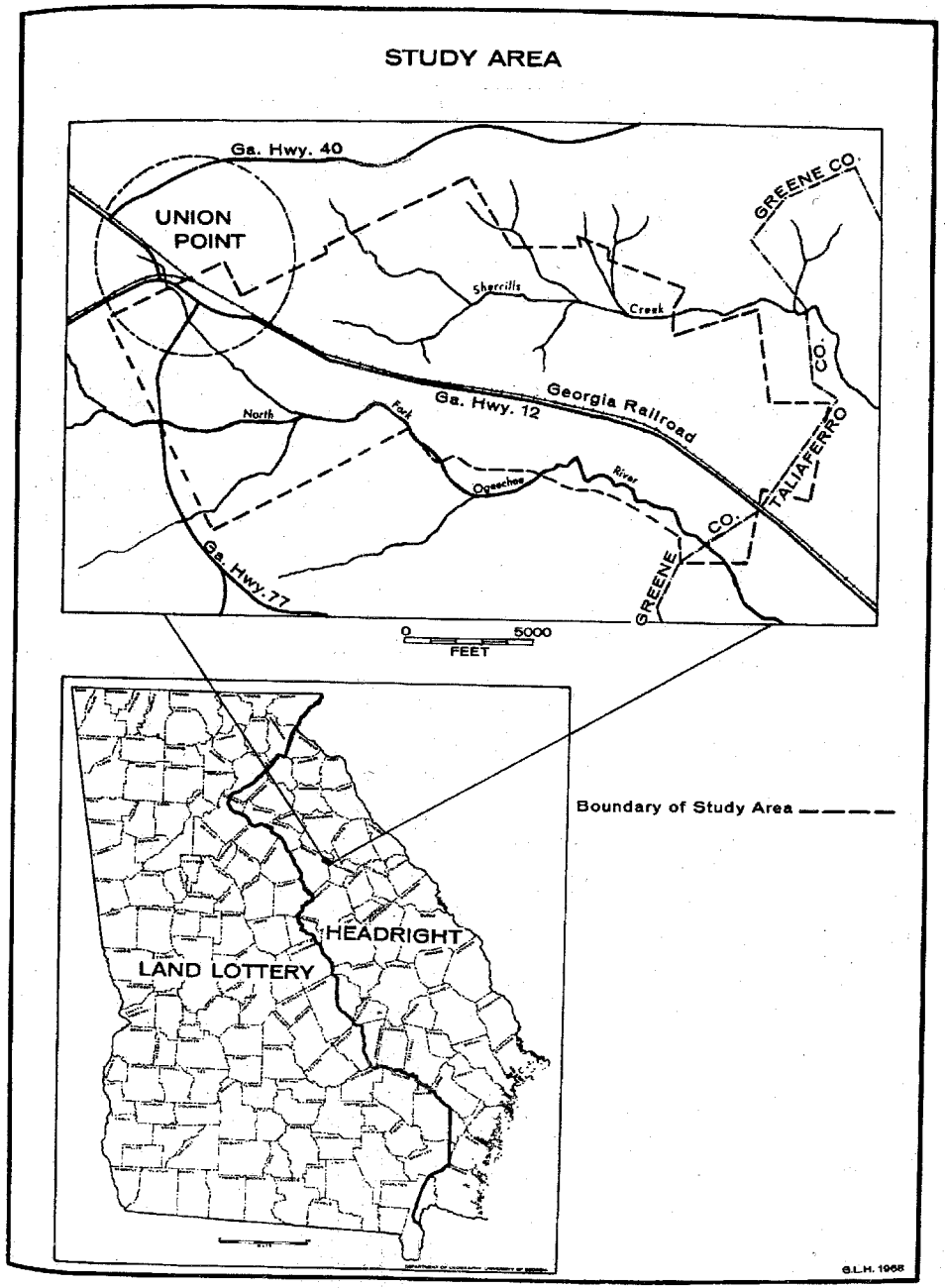

Figure 6. Location Maps Showing the Study Area in Greene County, Georgia. (From an original by Gerald L. Holder.)

several plats covering this area were then mosaicked jigsaw-puzzle fashion. With the aid of a Saltzman projector this mosaic was then keyed to a topographic map of the area. This operation was necessary since the study area is within the Headright region of Georgia and so lacks any regulated cadastral system such as that present in the western two thirds of the state. With the study area correctly located on the map and landscape of the present day, attention was turned to the forest cover (Holder 1968).

It will be recalled that land surveying practices in the eighteenth century entailed the identification, as to species, of several line, corner, and witness trees on each plat registered. In addition to this data, a number of the plats included the surveyor's descriptive commentary on the general character of the forest cover, as he perceived it, on the land surveyed. In all cases where such verbal descriptions appeared they emphasized the hardwoods, oak and hickory, and only occasionally was pine included. When pine did occur it followed oak and hickory. After noting these verbal descriptions, the plats were then scrutinized more closely and the individual tree types were counted. A total of 197 trees were identified on the mosaicked plats of the study area. Of these, 80% were hardwoods with oaks alone accounting for 57% of the total number. Only 18% of the identified trees were pines. A check of recent aerial photography of the study area revealed that hardwoods account for only about 40% of the cover with pines accounting for 60% of the total.

It would seem that the original plats have lent confirmation to William Bartram's account of a hardwood dominant forest in this portion of the eighteenth century Georgia Piedmont. The plats are, however, only one source of data and represent a somewhat biased sample of what the original forest was really like. They are biased because surveyors probably tended to select a hardwood tree on which to strike a blaze rather than a less durable pine, if the choice was available. This fact probably resulted in the inclusion of a higher percentage of hardwoods than a random sample would have produced.

Other data such as maps, documentary accounts, saw mill ledgers, the timbers found in extant old buildings, and pollen grain counts in marshy beds need to be considered before definite conclusions can be framed concerning the forest cover of the study area two centuries ago. It does seem clear, however, that this source of data confirms rather than denies Bartram's accuracy as a reporter of the eighteenth century scene.

Conclusion

Anthropologists and geographers share a large common ground in both the material which they examine and the methodology of that examination. In this paper a small part of that common ground has been uncovered through the examination and analysis of early maps of the South. The small and large scale studies discussed here are of limited interest in themselves. What is of major interest, however, is the fact that these early maps represent poorly understood and neglected data sources which may contribute to a deeper understanding of the South's aboriginal heritage. The maps also represent an area of research effort where the expertise of the geographer can valuably contribute to the goals of the anthropologist and vice versa. Perhaps they chart the way toward that fusion of the disciplines to which Sauer alluded so long ago.

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Physical Anthropology of Indians of the Old South

William S. Pollitzer

In a sense the physical anthropology of the Indians of the South begins with the earliest observations of the European adventurers who travelled among them, trading and surveying, and recording the appearance of body and face. Thus, Lawson (1714) not only speaks of the stature of the natives of North Carolina, of their tawny color and their scant facial hair, but also of the deformation of the skull induced by the cradleboard—an early reminder of the influence of culture upon physique and a caution to all subsequent students of skulls. Subsequent to that early contact we have the impressions also of Adair, Bartram, Swan, and many others (Swanton 1946). Swanton's extensive studies of Southern Indians rest largely upon voluminous historical documents, and they understandably contain relatively little detailed account of physical measurements. Boas published on the physical anthropology of the Indians of North America as early as 1895, including measurements on stature and cephalic index among Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Creeks (Boas 1895). In the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth, Clarence B. Moore excavated many sites in the South, sometimes finding and describing skeletal material.

Large scale descriptions of the bones of the dead begin with Hrdlička. In his study of the Lenape or Delawares (Hrdlička 1916), based on 57 skeletons from Mausee near the junction of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, he characterized these Algonkian people as having good-sized skulls which were oval to elliptical in shape and moderate in length; he found them similar to Iroquois, and different from eastern round-heads. In a subsequent publication (Hrdlička 1927) he reported on similar Algonkian remains from Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky whose mean cephalic index ranged