

## Notes and Documents

### The Provenance and Historical Accuracy of “A View of Savannah as it Stood the 29th of March, 1734”

BY RODNEY M. BAINE and LOUIS DE VORSEY, JR.

CONSIDERED one of the rarest of American urban prints, “A View of Savannah as it stood the 29th of March, 1734,” is the most often photocopied graphic item in the collections of the University of Georgia Libraries. First composed and commissioned for engraving and printing in 1734 under the auspices of the Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America, it presents an arresting high oblique perspective view of how James Edward Oglethorpe laid out the streets, squares, and building lots of Georgia’s first settlement. The Trustees were eager to advertise and promote their unprecedented effort to develop a British colony on the American seacoast north of Spanish Florida. It was a utopian scheme which included the ideal of planned urban settlement as a mechanism for taming a hostile frontier and ensuring the growth of an egalitarian, hard working and loyal citizenry. It is not surprising, therefore, to find in the second half of the twentieth century, thanks to the ease of photofacsimile reproduction, “A View of Savannah as it Stood the 29th of March, 1734” has become an icon of New World urban planning. What is surprising, however, is that questions concerning the provenance and historical accuracy of “A View” were seldom if ever raised by scholars of either Georgia history or the history of urban design. Recently such questions have emerged and will be examined in this article.

In his 1986 article in the *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, George F. Jones argued that Noble Jones, not Peter Gordon, produced

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THE GEORGIA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY  
VOL. LXXIII, No. 4, WINTER 1989

the engraving by P. Fourdrinier titled "A View of Savannah as it Stood the 29th of March, 1734."<sup>1</sup> Although his evidence is flawed, historian Jones is correct in his conviction that Noble Jones contributed to the creation of the striking and often reproduced image of Savannah as it stood a year after its founding. The source for Fourdrinier's engraving was no doubt based upon a copy of the town plan or plat for which Noble Jones, as the first surveyor of Georgia, was responsible. That plat apparently fell victim to time and is no longer extant.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately for students of early Georgia history at least one copy of that plat reached London and served as the source for the sketch from which Fourdrinier engraved his famous perspective view. With the discovery of that sketch, executed by a London draughtsman, George Jones, it is now possible to document the provenance and discuss the historical accuracy of the "View of Savannah," which is still almost universally but incorrectly attributed to Peter Gordon, the London upholsterer who served as Savannah's first bailiff.

On November 8, 1733, Peter Gordon, suffering from a fistula, set out from Savannah for London, and carried with him

<sup>1</sup>George Fenwick Jones, "Peter Gordon's (?) Plan of Savannah," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 70 (Spring 1986), 97-101. The view of New Ebenezer which he used as evidence for Noble Jones's prospect of Savannah was discovered with drawings made by Baron Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck; and Mr. Jones advanced no evidence to suggest that it was not drawn by the baron himself. Other similar views in the baron's collection show a style much closer to the New Ebenezer view than to the Fourdrinier engraving. See Kristian Hvidt, ed., *Von Reck's Voyage: Drawings and Journals of Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck, 1732-35* (Savannah, 1980).

For assistance in our research we are indebted to Ms. Barbara Rystrom and Ms. Mary Ellen Brooks of the University of Georgia Libraries, to Dr. John E. Simpson of Savannah State College, to Ms. A. Boulton, of Oakham, Leicestershire, England, and to Ian Lester, Esq., Assistant Clerk, Carpenters' Company, London. For permission to reproduce George Jones's drawing and P. Fourdrinier's engraving of Savannah from the De Renne Collection we thank the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Georgia Libraries.

<sup>2</sup>Prior to his departure to Georgia in 1732, Oglethorpe received "A Power . . . to set out, Limit and Divide five thousand Acres of Land in Georgia in America," in Allen D. Chandler, Lucian L. Knight, and Kenneth Coleman, eds., *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, 32 vols. to date (Atlanta and Athens, Ga., 1904- ), 2: 9 (hereinafter cited as *Colonial Records*). Once he had surveyed the tract selected on Yamacraw Bluff, Oglethorpe drew up "a Plan of the Town and Plot of the Garden Lots and Farms respectively, with proper Numbers, References, and Explanations for the more easy understanding thereof which Plan and Plot are hereunto annexed and set forth in Folio One and Folio Nine of this Book." The "Plan" and "Plot" are no longer extant. The text of the deed and the references describing the allocation of gardens and farms was published by William Harden in *A History of Savannah and South Georgia* vols. (Chicago, 1913), 1:25-30.

a letter from the town's founder, James Edward Oglethorpe, to Georgia Trustee treasurer George Heathcote along with other letters and packets, including apparently one addressed to a George Jones that contained Noble Jones's plat of Savannah and instructions (possibly also details) for converting it into a perspective view of the town. When he arrived in London on January 6, 1734, he immediately made arrangements for his operation and delivered "all the letters and packets."<sup>3</sup> After Gordon had recovered from surgery and secured Jones's sketch of Savannah on February 27, he recorded in his *Journal*,

I waited upon the Trustees at their office, and gave them the best account I was able, of the situation of affairs in the Colony, and at the same time presented to them a view of the new Town of Savannah, its situation, and manner it was laid out in, as likewise the forme and elevation of all the houses and publick buildings that were compleated at the time I left it. The Trustees seem'd pleased with it, and order'd me to gett a compleat drawing made of it, which I presented to them as soon as it was finished, and for which they ordered me a small present.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, on April 6 the Common Council of the Trustees ordered "That sixteen Guineas be paid to Mr. Peter Gordon as a Consideration for his Draught of Savannah."<sup>5</sup>

What the Trustees approved could not have been merely Noble Jones's plat: the perspective view that Gordon described as exhibiting to the Trustees and that Percival mentioned could have probably served Fourdrinier with little or no modification. Gordon's account is clarified by John Percival, first Earl of Egmont. In both his diary and his journal for that day he recorded that what the Trustees ordered was not a "compleat drawing," but an engraving. According to Percival, Gordon "produced a sketch of the town and adjacent country as it was when he came away in November last, which we ordered to be engraved for the satisfaction of the subscribers to the undertaking."<sup>6</sup> The

<sup>3</sup>E. Merton Coulter, ed., *The Journal of Peter Gordon 1732-1735* (Athens, Ga., 1963), 64.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>5</sup>*Colonial Records*, 2: 65.

<sup>6</sup>John Percival, First Earl of Egmont, *The Diary of Viscount Percival, afterwards First Earl of Egmont*, R. A. Roberts, ed., Historical Manuscript Commission (London 1920-

Trustees' parent organization—the Bray Associates—had a strict rule that all of their publications were to be carefully reviewed and approved before they were printed; and the Georgia Trustees adhered to the same practice.<sup>7</sup> Before they ordered an engraving made, they would have insisted upon seeing the proposed sketch.

After the Common Council approved George Jones's sketch and ordered Gordon to have it engraved, with the money from subscriptions to go to the needy. As grasping as Gordon could be, he probably took it fairly promptly, again by Oglethorpe's direction, to the well-known engraver P. Fourdrinier. Fourdrinier had engraved plates for *The Villas of the Ancients Illustrated*, by Oglethorpe's friend Robert Castell, who was in part responsible for the selection of the site of Savannah;<sup>8</sup> and like Oglethorpe, Fourdrinier had subscribed to Castell's book. But apparently Oglethorpe had instructed Gordon to delay final approval of Fourdrinier's engraving until he returned to London. It was he, not the Trustees, who insisted upon a "compleat drawing."

Belated, Oglethorpe finally arrived in mid-June with a party of Creek Indians who demanded most of his attention. "As soon as Mr. Oglethorpe arrived in England," Gordon continued, "he gave me an account of what additional buildings had been raised since my coming away, and desired that I would have it printed and dedicated to the Trustees, in which I was assisted by a subscription of many of the Honable. Trustees and other noblemen and ladies."<sup>9</sup> It is noteworthy that Oglethorpe directed that it be *printed*, not *engraved*. Probably most of the engraving had already been finished; all that remained was to get George Jones to add the additional buildings to his sketch, take it to Fourdrinier to incorporate them and

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23), 2: 36. Percival's *Journal* confirms that "Gordon presented a draft of Savannah whc. We orderd to be engraved." Robert G. McPherson, ed., *The Journal of the Earl of Egmont* (Athens, Ga., 1962), 43-44.

<sup>7</sup>See "Manuscripts of Dr. Bray's Associates, Minute Book, 1727-1732," Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts Facsimiles, from English Archives, Library of Congress," 23.

<sup>8</sup>See Rodney M. Baine, "The Prison Death of Robert Castell and its Effect on the Founding of Georgia," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 73 (Spring 1989), 67-78.

<sup>9</sup>Coulter, *Gordon Journal*, 65.

add the dedication and the title that dates the view as a prospect of Savannah when Oglethorpe left it, on or about March 29, 1734. Although the plate is undated, it was probably finished and copies pulled in 1734. Both Oglethorpe and Gordon were surely anxious for it to appear as soon as possible, since Gordon was preparing to leave England for Georgia on October 31 when he could no longer solicit subscriptions.<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately for the previous understanding of its provenance, when the engraving appeared, it carried no mention of either Noble or George Jones, but a dedication prominently signed by Gordon and in tiny letters the claim "P Gordon inv." Thus the engraving has, until George F. Jones claimed Noble Jones as author, always been attributed to the pen of Gordon, despite the fact that Fourdrinier identified him with the term "inv," the usual engraver's abbreviation for the Latin *invent*. Used in this context, "invent" implies that Gordon was not the artist author of the work engraved. Had the view been Gordon's original composition, Fourdrinier would have acknowledged his role with the conventional "del," the abbreviation for *delineavit*.<sup>11</sup>

In the production of the engraving there were, as just indicated, actually five men with various roles: Oglethorpe, Gordon, Noble Jones, George Jones, and Fourdrinier. Oglethorpe, whom the Trustees had placed in charge of all the propaganda for the colony, surely created the idea, secured a plat and details from Savannah's surveyor Noble Jones, and deputized Gordon to carry these to George Jones, thence to the Trustees, and finally to the engraver Fourdrinier, all to await his final approval before printing.<sup>12</sup>

Noble Jones, whose role had been ignored until historian Jones argued his case, protested against Gordon's effrontery as soon as he discovered that both his role and that of George Jones had been ignored. Writing to Oglethorpe, he complained, "I Understand Mr Gordon Made a large Sum by his prospect of Savannah. I always thought him a Man of More

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>11</sup>Hans Hammelman, *Book Illustrators in Eighteenth Century England*, edited and compiled by T. S. R. Boase (New Haven, Conn., 1975), 11.

<sup>12</sup>*Colonial Records*, 2: 3.

Honour than to Enfringe So much on any Mans Right.” That the offended Jones wrote the words with pen dipped in the bile of irony is made obvious in the sequel: “A hundred pound it is Said he gott by it, which has Set a Certain person who has the keeping the Register book to fall upon the Same practice here, which makes Me Cautious how I Put any Platts in it.”<sup>13</sup>

As George F. Jones pointed out in his recent article, there is no reason to suppose that Gordon was capable of drawing the original sketch: his trade of upholstery did not call for any such skill and neither he nor anyone else ever mentioned such an ability on his part. Moreover, although the Trustees received him with open pockets in 1734 and paid for his return voyage and the expenses of his wife and two servants, they soon learned that he was dishonest and devious.<sup>14</sup> On June 29, 1737, Percival recorded in his *Diary*, “we shew’d him that he was indebted 27£ odd money to the Trustees for so much Cash advanced him, which he must account for. He pretended to know nothing about it.”<sup>15</sup> Since he intended to publish his so-called *Journal* as a justification of his conduct, especially with the Georgia Trustees, it is unsafe to rely too heavily upon its statements or its chronology.<sup>16</sup> The final section especially, which includes his account of the view, is in no sense a day-by-day or week-by-week account, but rather a retrospective defense.

Noble Jones, on the other hand, was both capable and credible. Born in London on June 20, 1702,<sup>17</sup> he was apprenticed in 1717 to his father, Edward Jones, a carpenter.<sup>18</sup> And as Francis Price’s *The British Carpenter* (London, 1733) shows, trained carpenters of that day were skilled in many of the qualifications of architects and surveyors, as well as those of master builders or contractors. Indeed the great architect Inigo Jones (in one

<sup>13</sup>Noble Jones to Oglethorpe, July 6, 1735 *Colonial Records*, 20: 429. Note that Jones mentioned no sketch, but was concerned only about his plats.

<sup>14</sup>McPherson, *Percival Journal*, 66.

<sup>15</sup>Roberts, *Percival Diary*, 2: 417.

<sup>16</sup>See Coulter’s introduction to Gordon, *Gordon Journal*.

<sup>17</sup>A. Boulton to Rodney M. Baine, October 1, 1987, citing “St. Martin Vestry Baptism and Burial Register, 1697-1704.” He was baptized four days later.

<sup>18</sup>John Eddins Simpson, ed., *The Jones Family Papers*, Georgia Historical Society Collections, 17:3. Neither Noble Jones nor his father was a member of the Carpenters’ Company, Ian Lester to Baine, June 22, 1988.

of whose churches, Lincoln's Inn Chapel, Noble Jones married Sarah Hack and after whom he named his first-born Georgia son<sup>19</sup>) had been trained as a joiner (carpenter). In the opinion of the critical William Stephens, Noble Jones had "pretty good skill in architecture."<sup>20</sup> The settlers frequently complained of his alleged indolence and the Trustees of his failure to send his reports and plats to them promptly. But Percival defended him from the aspersions of the Georgia malcontents: "Mr. Jones made himself many Enemies by his hot and passionate temper, but they who personally know him, affirm that he is a sober able and just Man, and so the Trustees have found him."<sup>21</sup>

George Jones, the draughtsman, was probably the son of William Jones, bricklayer of St. Margaret's, Westminster. This George Jones was apprenticed on July 8, 1716, to carpenter William Brooman and became a freeman of the Carpenters' Company on March 12, 1723.<sup>22</sup> Since the Jones to whom Noble dispatched his plat was probably a relative, it seems likely that the draughtsman's father was the William Jones born to William and Mary Jones of St. Margaret's, Westminster, on January 19, 1671, and that Noble's father, Edward, was the son born to the same parents on November 9, 1663.<sup>23</sup> Because George had the advantage of being trained by a freeman of the Carpenters' Company, he was apparently more capable than was Noble of performing the more demanding aspects of carpentry, like complicated draughtsmanship. Having become a freeman of the company in 1723, he may well have been the George Jones, Esq., who a decade later contributed twenty pounds toward the Georgia Colony.<sup>24</sup> At any rate the draughtsman possessed the tools and experience needed to render Noble Jones's planimetric plat of Savannah into the high oblique view that Fourdrinier's engraving made into an icon of New World planned urban design.

<sup>19</sup>Boulton, citing "Micro-fiche Index for London and Middlesex" (1984).

<sup>20</sup>William Stephens, *A Journal of the Proceedings in Georgia*, in *Colonial Records*, Vol. 4: Supplement, 118.

<sup>21</sup>Patrick Tailfer, et al., *A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia, with Comments by the Earl of Egmont*, Clarence L. Van der Steeg, ed. (Athens, Ga., 1960), 115.

<sup>22</sup>Ian Lester to Baine, June 22, 1988.

<sup>23</sup>Lawrence F. Tanner, ed., *The Register of St. Margaret's, Westminster, London*, Harleian Society (London, 1935), 64: 110, 28.

<sup>24</sup>*Colonial Records*, 3:9.

We discovered George Jones's drawing, "His Majestys Colony of Georgia in America," reproduced here, in the De Renne Collection of the University of Georgia Libraries, incorrectly identified there as a *copy* of the Fourdrinier engraving rather than its manuscript model.<sup>25</sup> The title itself is a persuasive clue to the fact that his image predated the engraving. Had George Jones been copying a Fourdrinier print, his title would have included reference to Savannah and not simply "His Majestys Colony of Georgia in America." But when Gordon left Savannah, that single Georgia settlement represented virtually the whole colony.

Further evidence of the antecedency of the Jones drawing can be gained from careful comparison with the engraving. Such a comparison will reveal that the foreground pine forest to the east and west of the town on the bluff of the river is broader on Jones's drawing. So too is the islet in the stream between Hutchinson Island and the Savannah shore shown to be longer. It is clear that Fourdrinier, doubtless to economize on copper plate size, cropped the right and left margins of Jones's drawing. Had the drawing been, as heretofore claimed, "after" the Fourdrinier engraving, it is extremely unlikely that George Jones would have troubled to add several more trees and irrelevant portions of the islands and riverbank. Fourdrinier has also regulated and developed George Jones's irregular token shadows; and George Jones has apparently retained from Noble Jones's plat the shading which identifies the yet unassigned town lots and Trust lots, some of them boasting public buildings which belonged to the Trustees. A copier of the engraving would have neither the motive nor the means to introduce these details, which engraver Fourdrinier ignored.

<sup>25</sup>Leonard L. Mackall, ed., *Catalogue of the Wymberly Jones De Renne Georgia Library* (Wormsloe, Ga., 1931), 3: 1279. Mackall's mistake was copied in William P. Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps* (Chapel Hill, 1962), 211. It will be noticed that George Jones's pen and ink drawing was originally taller: the bounding lines are missing at the top, and little of the original is now left above the skyline. The original title, however, was hacked from this damaged section and affixed to what remains. Also incorrectly cataloged by Mackall (3:1279-80) as a copy of Fourdrinier is "A View of the Town of Savannah, in the Colony of Georgia, in South-Carolina. Humbly Inscribed to his Excellency Gen Oglethorpe. Published Oct<sup>r</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 1<sup>th</sup> [sic] 1741." This engraving is also based upon the sketch by George Jones.

What the drawing by George Jones and the famous engraving by P. Fourdrinier show is two-thirds of the town plan James Edward Oglethorpe had surveyed and staked out overlooking the Savannah River soon after his arrival in the first days of February 1733.<sup>26</sup> The central road running from the river front bisecting the developed portion of the town and continuing through the forest to the apparent horizon is Whitaker Street, still a main thoroughfare through modern Savannah's historic district. The other two streets linking four open squares and paralleling Whitaker are Bull Street on the left (east) and Barnard Street on the right (west).

As the view clearly indicates, it was an orderly and symmetrical city plan "laid out on a virgin site previously unviolated by land surveyors" with "neatly rectangular wards precisely centered on squares of uniform area."<sup>27</sup> Four wards, each containing forty house lots which measured 60 by 90 feet and four public or Trust lots also 60 by 90 feet, are shown in the engraved view. Derby Ward, centered on Johnson Square, occupies the northeast (foreground left) quadrant; Percival Ward, centered on (Percival) Wright Square, the southeast (background left); Deckers Ward, centered on (Market) Ellis Square (foreground right), and Heathcote Ward, centered on (St. James) Telfair Square, completed the town nucleus shown under construction in March 1734 when Oglethorpe left it.

The 160-house lots provided by the four wards shown in the view were more than enough to accommodate the original contingent of settlers. Proof that two additional wards were in fact surveyed by Oglethorpe at the outset can be found in the view itself as well as in cartographic depictions of the new col-

<sup>26</sup>"Whereas the said James Oglethorpe hath set out and limited . . . Five Thousand Acres in such a regular manner as is most convenient for the support of a Town and the Inhabitants thereof, and hath set out part of the said Five Thousand Acres for a Town called Savannah, with Lotts for Houses, and left a Common round the Town for convenience of Air; and adjoining to the Commons, hath set out Garden Lotts of Five Acres each, and beyond such Garden Lotts hath set out Farms of Forty Four Acres, and One hundred forty and one Pole each, and hath drawn a Plan of the Town and Plot of the Garden Lotts and Farms respectively, with proper Numbers, References, and Explanations for the more easy understanding thereof . . .," quoted from William Harden, *A History of Savannah*, 1: 25.

<sup>27</sup>John W. Reps, "C<sup>2</sup> + L<sup>2</sup> = S<sup>2</sup>? Another Look at the Origins of Savannah's Town Plan," in Harvey H. Jackson and Phiniza Spalding, eds., *Forty Years of Diversity: Essays of Colonial Georgia* (Athens, Ga., 1984), 138.

ony which he had a direct hand in preparing. In the view the clue to the existence of the additional wards is a building shown near the line of the pallisade. It is numbered 12 and identified as "The Parsonage House," at that time assigned to Samuel Quincy who had replaced Henry Herbert, the first minister sent to Georgia. Because he probably arrived on July 21, 1733, two weeks after Oglethorpe "put each family into Possession of an House Lot," Quincy's parsonage was located on Trust lot T in what became Lower New Ward.<sup>28</sup> Lower New Ward and Upper New Ward to the south were subsequently named Reynolds Ward and Anson Ward respectively and centered on Reynolds and Oglethorpe squares. Quincy's relationship with the Georgia Trustees was not smooth, and he left the colony to be replaced by John Wesley, the better known resident of Georgia's first parsonage on Reynolds Square. The placing of the parsonage made excellent sense, since Trust lot T was adjacent to Trust lot D, which faced Johnson Square. This is where both the engraved view and George Jones's drawing place the numeral "9" explained as "The Lott for the Church," which was not yet built.

Maps that illustrate Oglethorpe's original six ward plan for Savannah include the largest map of colonial America ever printed, Henry Popple's "A Map of the British Empire in America with the French and Spanish Settlements adjacent thereto . . . ." It has been shown that Oglethorpe provided Popple with maps and information based on his first year's experience in Georgia.<sup>29</sup> On the basis of this intelligence Popple reworked his copper plat showing Georgia to include the settlements Oglethorpe had founded there as well as the more accurate delineation of the coast and islands he provided. Due to the small scale of the Popple map, Savannah appears as little more than a symbolic array of six small rectangular black spots representing the original six wards.

<sup>28</sup>For Quincy's arrival date, see E. Merton Coulter and Albert B. Saye, *A List of Early Settlers of Georgia* (Athens, Ga., 1949), 42. Oglethorpe reported the ceremony in his letter to the Trustees dated August 12, 1733 in *Colonial Records*, 20: 30.

<sup>29</sup>For an illustrated discussion of Oglethorpe's contributions to the Popple map see Louis De Vorsey, Jr., "Maps in Colonial Promotion: James Edward Oglethorpe's Use of Maps in Selling the Georgia Scheme," *Imago Mundi*, 38 (1986): 35-45. The Trustees for the Colony of Georgia were among the subscribers to Popple's map, see *Colonial Records*, 2: 52.

On a far larger scale map titled "A Map of the County of Savannah," the town plan is clearly shown as six rectangles with a large flagstaff and flag overlooking the Savannah River and "Hutchinsons" Island.<sup>30</sup> The clearest and most unequivocal map rendition of the original Savannah plan is titled, "A Plan of the Town of Savannah as began and intended to be carried on in Georgia."<sup>31</sup> This unsigned manuscript is dated ca. 1740 and is located in the Moravian Archives. It is interesting in that it shows a structure located at the front of each house lot. The only occupied Trust lot shown is the one facing Reynolds Square, where the "Parsonage House" is shown in the Gordon view.

The broad esplanade fronting on the steep bluff bank formed what was known as the "Bay" and is marked in part today by Savannah's Bay Street. South Broad Street, now Oglethorpe Avenue, bounded the town to the south and separated it from the South Common. On the east the town proper was separated from the East Common by the axis of present day Lincoln Street. To the west the line of division from West Common was formed by Jefferson Street.

As Jones's drawing and Fourdrinier's engraving are studied, questions concerning the historical accuracy of the scene they portray are inevitable. Do these similar images form a reliable and historically accurate graphic inventory of Savannah's built environment just over a year after its founding? The remainder of this essay is devoted to answering this crucial question.

As pointed out above, both the drawing and the engraved print are equipped with numbered legends identifying fifteen of the structures or sites shown in the perspective views. For clarity and ease in understanding, the features and places identified in the legends will be discussed first. Following those discussions several of the other identifiable but unnumbered structures or elements in the scene will be assessed in an effort to determine their historical and morphological accuracy.

<sup>30</sup>Oglethorpe's role in the publication of *A Map of the County of Savannah* is developed by Louis De Vorsey, Jr., "Oglethorpe and the Earliest Maps of Georgia," in Harvey H. Jackson and Phinazy Spalding, eds., *Oglethorpe in Perspective* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1989).

<sup>31</sup>For an excellent photograph of this plan, see Reys, "C<sup>2</sup> + L<sup>2</sup> = S<sup>2</sup>?", 106-107.

1. *The Stairs going up.* One of the key natural features influencing Oglethorpe's decision to locate Georgia's metropolis, Savannah, where he did was the relatively level site he found with an elevation of about forty feet above mean sea level. Locally known as Yamacraw Bluff the site was on the right (south) bank of the Savannah River which, thanks to a slight curving in its course to the sea, was deeper and actively eroding in the direction of the bluff. As a result, a steep, sandy escarpment had to be negotiated before river-borne visitors could clamber to the level bluff top. As Oglethorpe wrote to the Trustees:

I fixed upon a healthy situation about ten miles from the sea. The River there formes a half Moon along the South side of which the Banks are about 40 foot high and upon the top a flat they call a Bluff. The plain high ground extends into the Country Five or Six Miles and along the River side about a Mile. Ships that draw twelve foot water can ride within ten Yards of the Bank. Upon the River side in the Center of this plain, I have laid out the Town.<sup>32</sup>

"The Stairs going up" were cut into the scarp face prior to the arrival of the first contingent of Georgia colonists. In the words of one of that number, Peter Gordon:

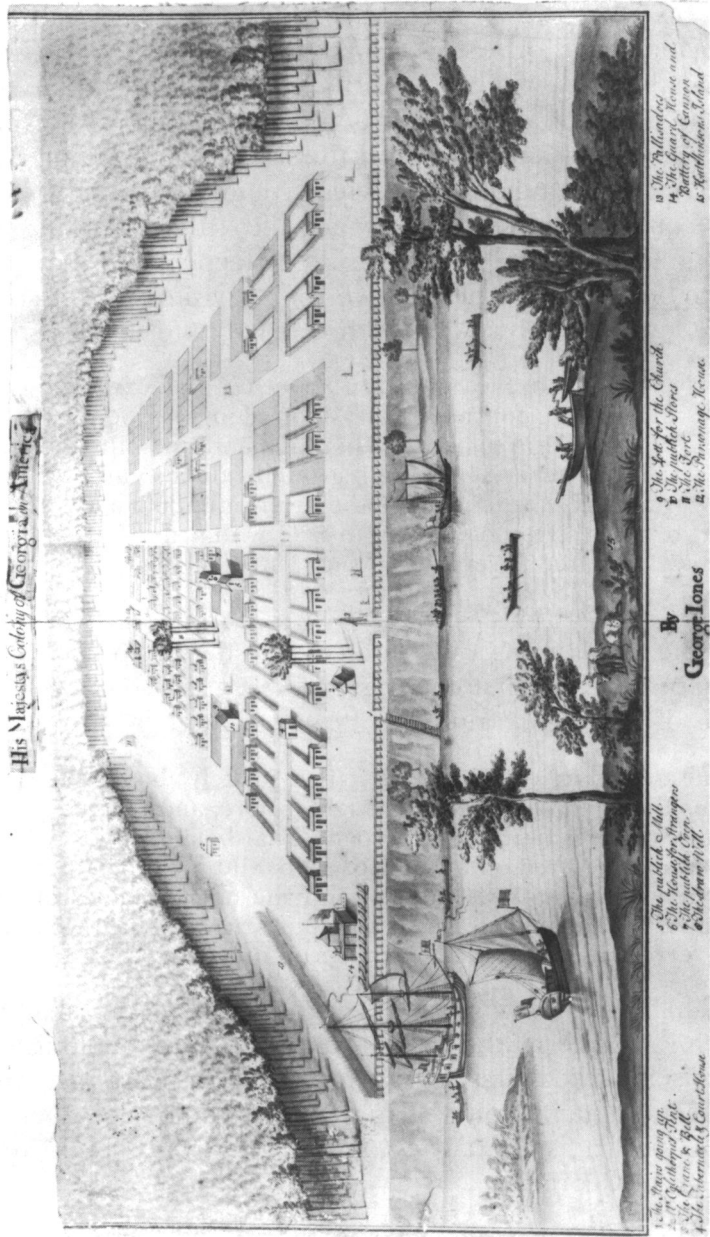
And as soon as we landed, we sett emediately about getting our tents fixed, and our goods brought ashore, and carryed up the Bluff, which is fourty foot perpendicular height above by water mark. This by reason of the loos sand, and great height, would have been extreamly troublesome had not Captain Scott and his party built stairs for us before our arrivall, which we found of very great use to us in bringing up our goods.<sup>33</sup>

Captain Francis Scott was officer-in-charge of the small party sent in advance of the main group of Georgia colonists who had disembarked first at Beaufort in South Carolina. Among his tasks Captain Scott was to secure a number of river craft, locally known as "periagae" and "to gett hutts built for owr passage to Georgia."<sup>34</sup>

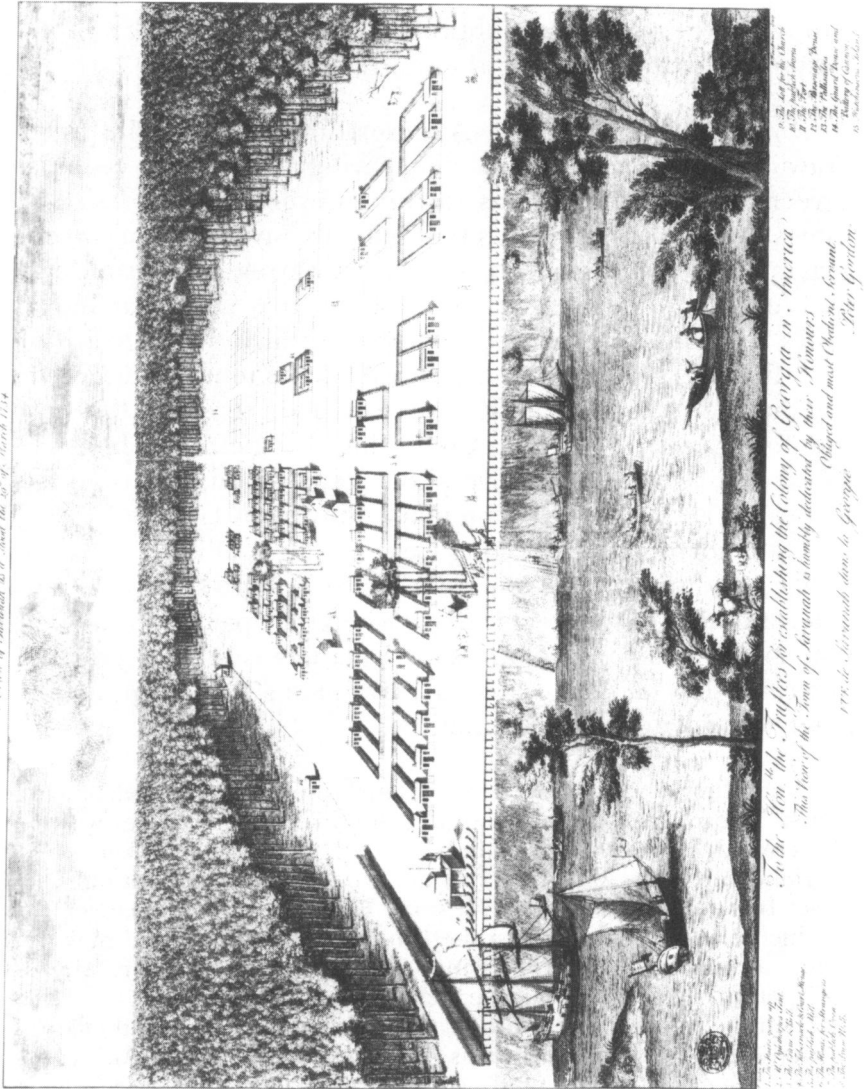
<sup>32</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 9.

<sup>33</sup>Coulter, *Gordon Journal*, 35.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 33. Francis Scott was a member of the original contingent of colonists who accompanied Oglethorpe aboard the *Anne*. Identified as a "reduced officer" he was dead in less than a year, *A List of Early Settlers of Georgia*, 47.



George Jones's drawing, 1734  
(see enlarged foldout)



P. Fourdrinier's engraving, 1734

It wasn't very long before Thomas Christie, Savannah's recorder, reported the rebuilding of "the Stairs down ye Bluff" in a letter dated December 14, 1734.<sup>35</sup> Heavy use, rain and windy weather were no doubt responsible for the quick deterioration of the stairs built in the sandy escarpment.

2. *Mr. Oglethorpe's Tent.* A close comparison of the Jones drawing and the Fourdrinier engraving reveals that essential agreement exists insofar as to the location, style and size of James Edward Oglethorpe's tent billet in Savannah. In the engraving guy ropes are shown supporting both the front and back of tent while guys appear only on the tent's rear in the Jones drawing. Similarly, the engraving includes a group of four figures standing just to the left of the tent's entrance. It is tempting to ascribe an identity to the person with the staff standing closest to the tent. Could this be Oglethorpe himself? These figures as well as several others engaged in various activities are absent in the preliminary drawing by George Jones.

Oglethorpe's tent served as Georgia's first, albeit temporary public building when it was quickly pressed into service for the entertainment of the local Indians when they paid a ceremonial visit shortly after the colonists' arrival. The colorful scene was described by Thomas Causton, Savannah's storekeeper, in a letter to his wife still in England:

At our first landing, they [the Indians] came to bid us welcome and before them came a Man dancing in Antick Postures with a spread Fan of . . . Feathers in each hand as a Token of friendship, wch. were fix'd to small Rods about four foot long, Set from Top to Bottom with small Bells like Morrice Dancers which mad a jingling whilst the King and others followed making a very uncouth Hollowing. When they came near, Mr. Oglethorpe walked about ten steps from his tent to meet them. Then the man with his feathers came forward dancing and talking, which I am informed was repeating a Speech, the Acts of their Chief Warriours, and at times came close and moved his Fans over him & Strok'd him on every Side with them; this continued more than a Quarter of an Hour. Then the King & all the men came in a regular manner & Shook him by the hand;

<sup>35</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 121.

after that the Queen came and all the Women did the like. Then Mr. Oglethorpe conducted them to his Tent and made them Sit down.<sup>36</sup>

On Sunday, a few days later, in the words of Peter Gordon, “we hade Divine Service performed in Mr. Oglethorpe’s tent, by Reverd: Doctor Herbert with thanksgiving for our safe arrivall.”<sup>37</sup>

Oglethorpe’s original intention was to return to London much sooner than he eventually did. In a letter to the Trustees written only four months after the construction of Savannah began, he stated his intention to return in a matter of weeks.<sup>38</sup> Life in the bivouac was familiar to Oglethorpe from his experiences in campaigns on the continent and initially he probably had no plan to construct a more permanent abode for himself. Also, good officer that he was, he no doubt realized the importance of setting an example of self sacrifice in the matter of creature comforts for his London artisan colonists. Governor Robert Johnson of neighboring South Carolina drew attention to just how imperative Oglethorpe’s example of self sacrifice was to the infant colony on the Savannah when he wrote: “He is indefatigable in his Endeavours, and without his Industry, Prudence and Resolution I apprehend the Spirits of the People unused to such Hardships and fatigues, as must necessarily attend new Settlements, must have sunk under them. But his good Example enables them to surmount all Difficulties.”<sup>39</sup>

3. *The Crane & Bell*. In a letter written to the Trustees a little more than a week after the colonists’ arrival at the site of Savannah, Oglethorpe reported that they had spent that first week “in unloading and making a Crane.” The crane surmounted by a bell is depicted clearly on both the drawing and the print. As in the case of Oglethorpe’s tent, more details are present in the print than in the drawing. On the print several figures are shown at the crane where barrels and boxes are being hoisted up the bluff face from a small vessel in the river. It is clear that

<sup>36</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20:16-17.

<sup>37</sup>Coulter, *Gordon Journal*, 37.

<sup>38</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 25.

<sup>39</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 26.

the cargoes were skidded up the bluff face which appears to have been smoothed into a steeply inclined ramp with boards or timbers serving as tracks to minimize friction.

That a crane of this sort served the town with mixed satisfaction for several years can be determined from a journal entry written by Colonel William Stephens who served as president of the county of Savannah. In 1739 Stephens recorded the following with respect to the town's crane and need for more reliable and efficient cargo handling facilities:

The way down to the water-side wearing away apace with the loose sand, which made it very incommodious in passing up and down with burdens, and the crane growing often out of repair, which made it dangerous, as well as expensive; the General [Oglethorpe] agreed with one to build a wharf down at high water mark, with a store house and proper convenience on it; which must undoubtedly proved a cheap bargain to the Trust, who are to pay only 50£ sterling to the undertaker, who is Duchee the Potter provided he can effect it, but there are few who think it possible it can be done for that sum; and argue, that if it costs twice that sum to do it firm and strong, it must not be thought dear.<sup>40</sup>

4. *The Tabernacle & Courthouse.* The small building shown at the rear of house lot 11 on the corner of Bull Street and Bay Lane served as early Savannah's temporary house of worship and courthouse. Some idea of the character and size of the structure may be gleaned from the "General Account" of the Trustees' expenditures "for the Religious Uses of the Colony," where it was noted that a portion of the sum of just over fifty pounds was spent "for the Charge of Building a Tabernacle of Split Boards, 36 Feet long and 12 Feet wide, for Divine Service."<sup>41</sup> Since the same sum also covered the cost of "Building

<sup>40</sup>*Colonial Records*, 4: 315.

<sup>41</sup>*Colonial Records*, 3: 87. It is significant to note that the tabernacle cum courthouse, an obviously public building, was not located on a Trust lot. The house lot it stood on had been originally awarded to Joshua Overend, a forty-year-old mercer. Overend died in June 1733, while his widow was en route from England. In her absence Oglethorpe rented the house and lot and had the tabernacle cum courthouse built. One early visitor to Savannah mentioned that after Oglethorpe's tent became nothing but rags he took up residence "in a house without a chimney in it, and indeed much harder than any of the people that are settled there," *A New Voyage to Georgia By a Young Gentlemen* (London, 1737), 40. A century later artist Joseph Louis Firmin Cer-

an House for the Minister, paling in his Garden etc.," it might be concluded that the tabernacle-courthouse cost something less than twenty-five pounds to construct.

Just when Savannah's divine services shifted from Oglethorpe's tent to this temporary house of worship has not been determined.<sup>42</sup> It would appear, however, that the town's courthouse began its legal functioning on July 7, the date Oglethorpe reported that he "held the first Court and administered the Oaths of Allegiance Supremacy and Abjuration named the several Wards and Streets & put each family into Possession of an House Lot."<sup>43</sup>

In the years that followed the dual purpose structure was embellished with a "piache" or covered portico on three of its sides. Critics of the Trust, writing in 1741, were outspoken in their condemnation of the fact that Savannah still had no proper church in spite of the generosity of charitable persons who had donated seven hundred pounds "for that express Purpose."<sup>44</sup> Much to the embarrassment of the Trustees it took until 1750 to complete a proper church building in Savannah.<sup>45</sup>

5. *The publick Mill.* The presence of a public mill in the center of the nascent metropolis of Oglethorpe's Georgia is a reminder of the utopian nature of the colony. In his tract, *Reasons for Establishing the Colony of Georgia*, Benjamin Martyn, secretary to the Trustees, pointed out that the colonists would be settled in compact towns and allotted, "no more Land than what can with Ease be cultivated" rather than spread thinly

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veau showed the widow Overend's cottage in his famous painting. For a color reproduction of the painting and discussion see Joseph Frederick Waring, *Cerveau's Savannah* (Savannah, 1973), 10.

<sup>42</sup>The term "tabernacle," read in light of the fact that almost a quarter of Savannah's residents were Jews in mid-1733 could suggest to the unwary that Hebrew services were held in this building. This would be an unwarranted conclusion; the word meant simply a temporary place of worship in Trusteeship Georgia. The Earl of Egmont, for example, mentioned the construction of a "Tabernacle" by the Lutheran Salzburgers that "serv'd them for a church," quoted from the "Journal of the Earl of Egmont," *Colonial Records*, 5: 60.

<sup>43</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 30.

<sup>44</sup>Tailfer, *A True and Historical Narrative*.

<sup>45</sup>Reba Carolyn Strickland, *Religion and the State in Georgia in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1939), 89-91.

with “too large Quantities of Land.”<sup>46</sup> Populous towns along the Savannah and Altamaha rivers, it was argued, would form a barrier and “render the Southern Provinces of the British Colonies on the Continent of America, safe from Indian, and other Enemies.”

The towns were to be formed of a hundred families who would be transported and equipped by charity and allotted land in three parcels totaling fifty acres. The tripartite land division took the form of “one lot for a House and Yard in the Town, another for a Garden near the Town, and a third for a Farm.” Thus the Savannah shown in George Jones’s sketch and Fourdrinier’s engraving is to be seen as a well-planned agricultural village providing central housing and facilities for a yeoman farmer population who were to till outlying fields.

Both “corn mills” and “saw mills” were constructed by the Trust at various times in Georgia; they also employed servants “to be employed therein.”<sup>47</sup> Without adequate supervision and upkeep such complex equipment was vulnerable to breakdown, and, if the critics of the Trust’s administration of Georgia are to be believed, served “only to amuse the World, and maintain some Creatures who assisted in keeping their neighbors in Subjection.”<sup>48</sup>

There is some reason to believe that the mill shown in “A View” had fallen into disuse by the spring of 1735. In a letter dated March 1 of that year, Patrick Houstoun stated that he thought that the Trustees might “give me the lott in the square where the Public Mill stands for a lott” on which he would operate a store and “build a house . . . to beautify the town as much as there [the Trustees’] house will do.”<sup>49</sup>

6. *The House for Strangers.* This facility is shown as a large building occupying the central portion of Trust lot C between Johnson Square and Whitaker Street. It may have been the building Peter Gordon described as having been “fitted up on purpose” for a formal meeting between Oglethorpe and the

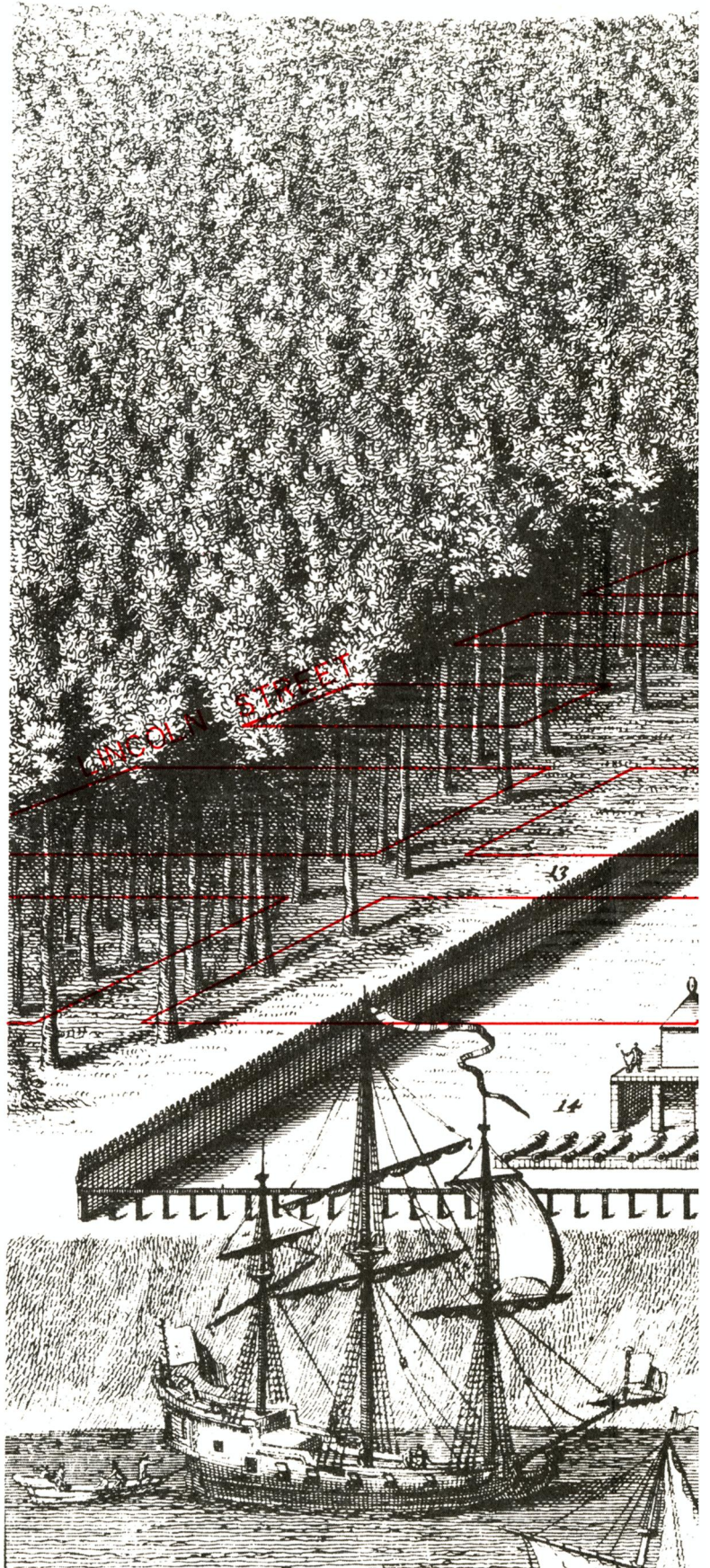
<sup>46</sup>*Reasons for Establishing the Colony of Georgia, With Regard to the Trade of Great Britain* . . . (London, 1733), 29.

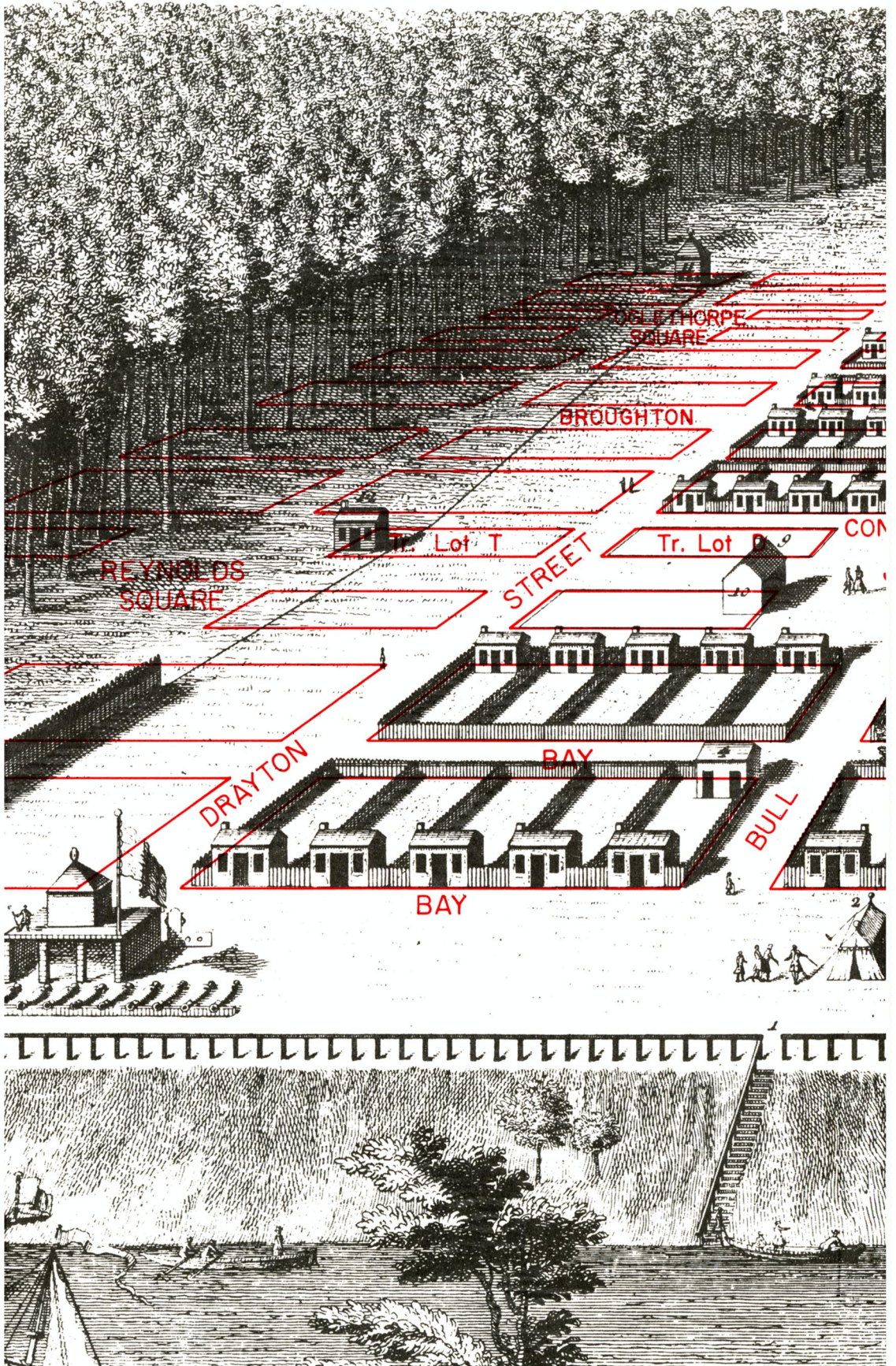
<sup>47</sup>*Colonial Records* 3:116, 145; 2: 149.

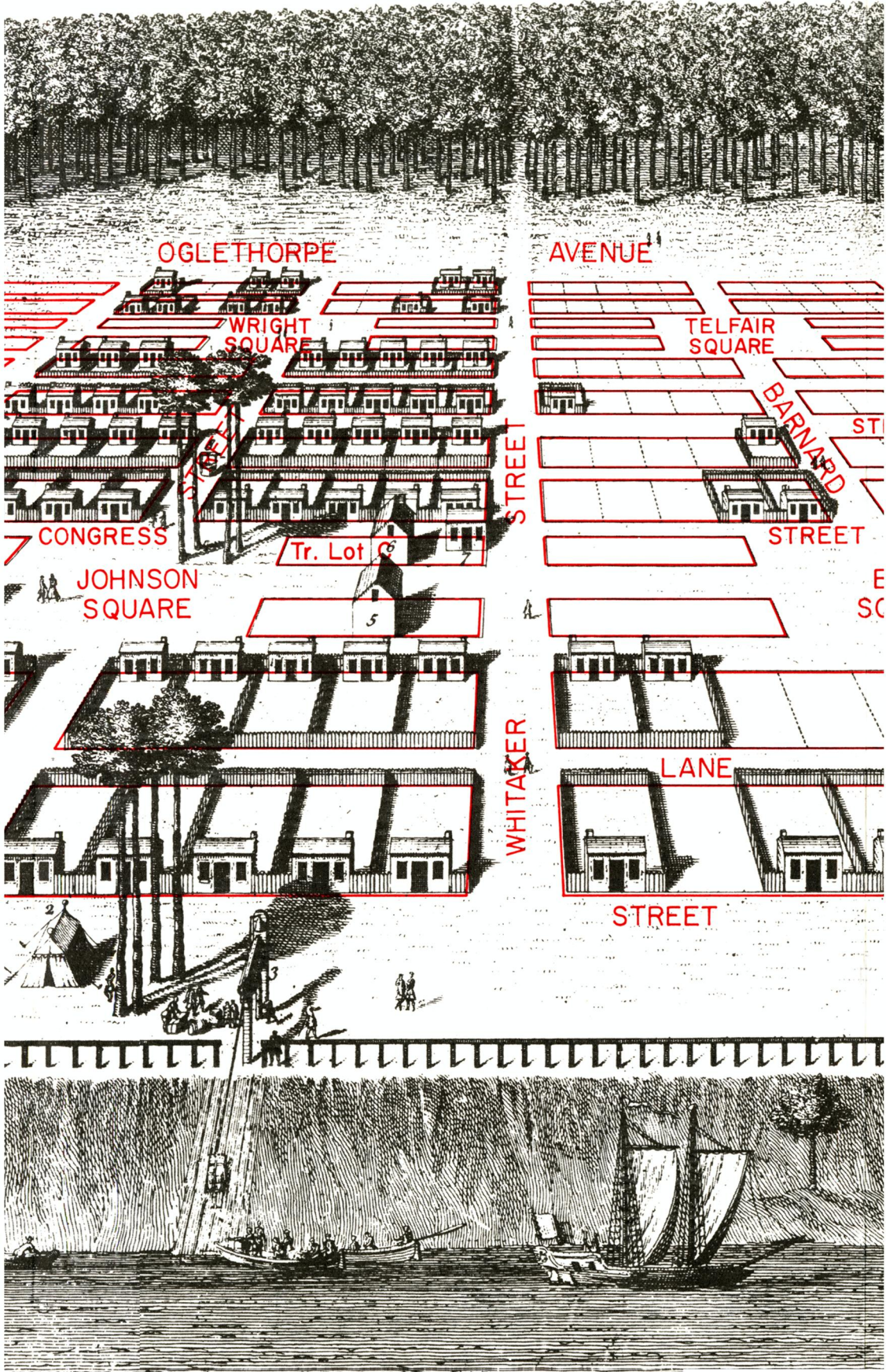
<sup>48</sup>Tailfer, *A True and Historical Narrative*, 36.

<sup>49</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 238.

The streets and squares labeled in red represent Savannah's six-ward plan overlaid on the original four-ward plan indicated in the Fourdrinier engraving. *Overlay by Louis De Vorsey, Jr.*







OGLETHORPE

AVENUE

WRIGHT SQUARE

TELFAIR SQUARE

CONGRESS

Tr. Lot 6

STREET

JOHNSON SQUARE

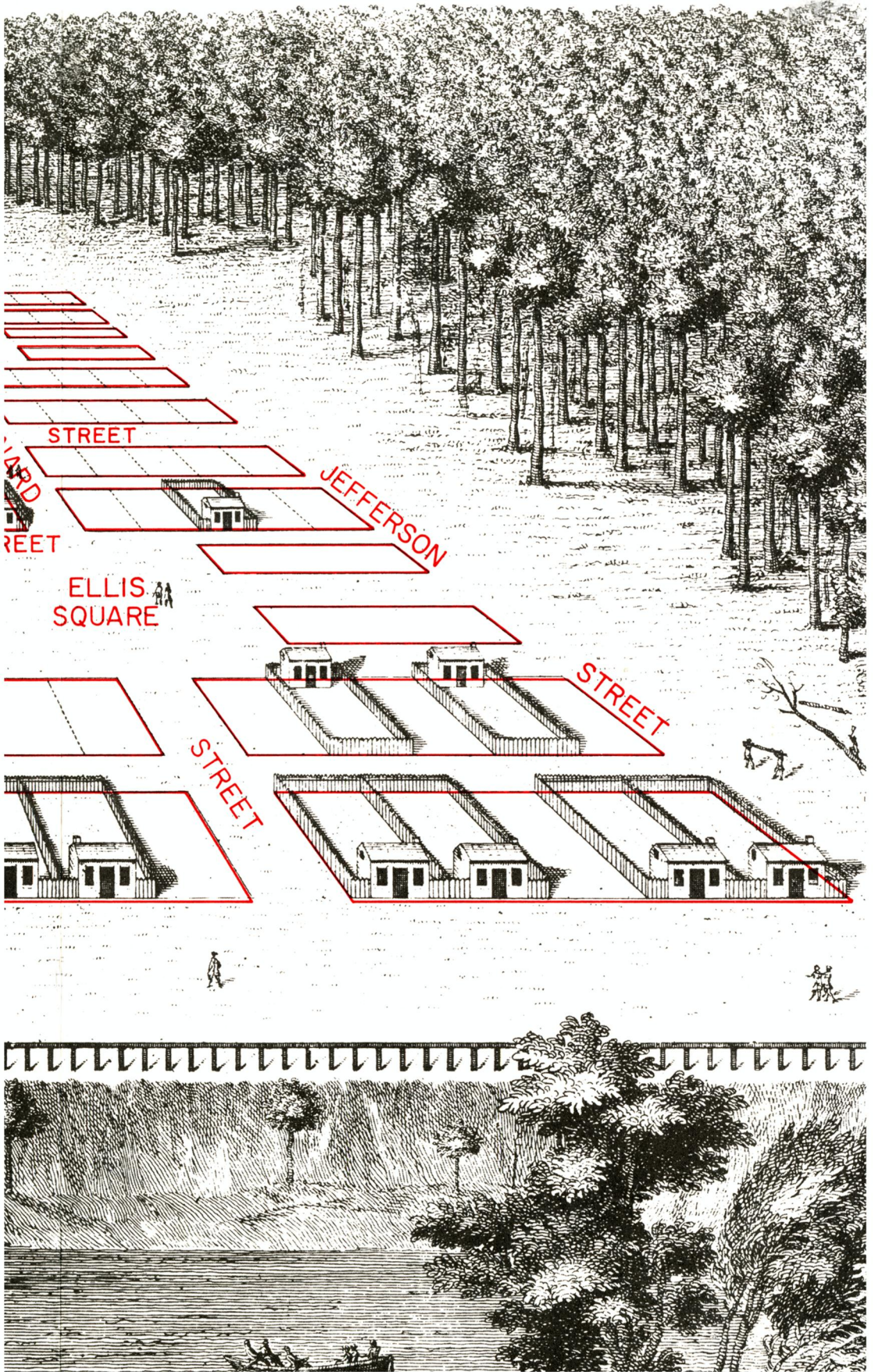
STREET

STREET

WHITAKER

LANE

STREET



Indian chiefs that convened on March 7, 1733.<sup>50</sup> Oglethorpe sat between Captain Scott and Jonathan Bryan on a bench covered with “blew cloath” to receive the colorful delegation. In Gordon’s words, “most of them had their heads adorned with white feathers in token of peace, and friendshipp.”<sup>51</sup> After a ceremony of dancing and singing, the Indian’s “King and Other Chiefs” presented Oglethorpe with several deer hides as representative of their only source of wealth. When he wrote to the Trustees a few days later Oglethorpe omitted the colorful details of the Indian ceremony but proudly mentioned that the Creeks and Uchees “referred a Difference to me to determine which otherwise would occasion a War.”<sup>52</sup> Details concerning the size and construction of the house for strangers are not revealed in the extant records. It appears to have been fully occupied when the first transport of German Protestants called Salzburger arrived on March 12, 1734. The main body of Salzburger were provided with a tent “in which they are to live until Mr. Oglethorpe can come down from Charleston to see them.”<sup>53</sup> To help alleviate the colony’s chronic labor shortage, Oglethorpe had purchased earlier forty Irish indentured servants from the captain of a sloop which had been forced to take refuge in the Savannah River “through Stress of Weather and want of Victuals.”<sup>54</sup> This large influx arrived only months before the Salzburger and probably required all available public shelter, including the House for Strangers. The anonymous author of the tract titled *A New Voyage To Georgia* mentioned that Savannah was equipped with “conveniencies for all those that come over there, till they have built them a house.”<sup>55</sup>

7. *The publick Oven.* Like the public mill described above, the public oven provided another essential facility for the functioning of Oglethorpe’s fortified settlement. Since sufficient bricks were lacking, the houses being built under his direction in-

<sup>50</sup>Coulter, *Gordon Journal*, 43.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 13.

<sup>53</sup>George Fenwick Jones, ed., *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America . . . Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, 10 vols. to date (Athens, 1968), 1: 60.

<sup>54</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 41.

<sup>55</sup>*A New Voyage to Georgia*, 40.

cluded no oven facilities. In a letter written by a Charles Town merchant dated January 17, 1734, mention was made of Savannah's "glorious large Oven which convinces all Travelers that there is no want of good Bread."<sup>56</sup> In his year-end report to the Trustees written a few weeks earlier, Oglethorpe mentioned that bricks sent by the Trust had been used in constructing the oven and a smith's forge as well as other facilities.<sup>57</sup> In Fourdrinier's engraving and Jones's drawing the public oven is shown as a building lacking a chimney located on the same Trust lot as the house for strangers and only a few steps from the public mill. In today's Savannah the site of the oven is on the east side of Whitaker Street between Congress Street and St. Julian Street.

8. *The draw Well.* The draw well was belatedly dug at the exact center of the original six-ward town Oglethorpe laid out on sandy Yamacraw Bluff high above the tidal waters of the Savannah River. Its site is in the middle of the intersection of Bull Street and Broughton Street, the commercial heart of today's historic Savannah district.

It is somewhat surprising to find that the town well was not among the first of the public facilities built in the early weeks of Savannah's occupation. It was not until people began to become sickly and die from drinking the river water "which at high water was brackish," that the need for a safe potable water supply was addressed.<sup>58</sup> Ironically the first Savannah resident to die was the town's physician, Dr. William Cox, who was given a military funeral at Oglethorpe's orders.<sup>59</sup> At first those who died after Dr. Cox in the hot spring weather, both men and women, were buried with gun salutes and the town bell tolling. Soon, however, "the people began to die so fast that the frequent firing of the canon and our small arms struck such terror, in our sick people (who knowing the cause, concluded they should be the next)," that Oglethorpe ordered military

<sup>56</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 44.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>58</sup>Coulter, *Gordon Journal*, 45.

<sup>59</sup>Coulter and Saye, *A List of Early Settlers of Georgia*, 11.

funerals to cease.<sup>60</sup> Springs of fresh water were sought and found about a half mile from the town. To avoid the “trouble of going so farr to fetch it,” Oglethorpe ordered the central well dug and good water was found at the surprisingly shallow depth of twenty-five feet.<sup>61</sup>

Why Oglethorpe, otherwise astute in his survival planning, did not anticipate the water supply problem which seems to have contributed to Savannah’s high first year death rate begs an answer.<sup>62</sup> A possible solution is found in the early spring season of Oglethorpe’s arrival in Georgia. February conditions in the Savannah area led Oglethorpe to report that he had “fixed upon a healthy situation about ten miles from the sea,” where “the River is prety wide and the water fresh.”<sup>63</sup> In a follow-up letter to the Trustees dated February 20, 1733, he elaborated on the site factors that had persuaded him to decide on Yamacraw Bluff:

I chose the situation for the Town upon a high ground forty feet perpendicular above high water mark; The soil dry and sandy, the waters of the river fresh, springs coming out from the sides of the hills.<sup>64</sup>

Coming as he did from the more maritime climate of southern England, Oglethorpe was ill-prepared to anticipate the drying up of “springs” flowing out of the sandy terrain or the upstream intrusion of brackish water in the river as Georgia’s hot March and April sun rose ever closer to the zenith. Prior to the construction of flood control and power dams along its upper course and headwater tributaries, the lower Savannah River was subject to seasonal freshets in late winter and early spring.

<sup>60</sup>Coulter, *Gordon Journal*, 46.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.* William Gerard De Brahm, the joint Surveyor General of Lands in Georgia’s first royal government, reported his own experience of finding water in a well dug to only twenty-four feet on his portion of the Trust lot facing Lincoln Street between President Street and State Street. For a detailed description of his well and bucket mechanism see Louis De Vorsey, Jr., ed., *De Brahm’s Report of the General Survey in the Southern District of North America* (Columbia, 1971), 152.

<sup>62</sup>Of the 114 colonists who sailed aboard the *Anne* with Oglethorpe, 29 or just over one-quarter died within the first year of their arrival in Savannah. See Coulter and Saye, note 59, xii.

<sup>63</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 9.

<sup>64</sup>British Public Record Office, London, Colonial Office Papers 5/711, 17.

During periods of high water and freshet the estuary's salt water wedge was held downstream from Savannah and the surface water flowing past the town was fresh. During periods of seasonal drought and low river discharge the tidal pulse forced brackish or salt water up the channel to the town and above. The hydraulic subtleties of Georgia's coastal streams and estuaries came under intensive study sometime later when rice became the region's staple.<sup>65</sup>

9. *The Lott for the Church.* The Trust lot on the southeast corner of Johnson Square, marked with the numeral 9 on "A View" and Jones's drawing, was designated for occupation by Savannah's first formal house of worship. As mentioned earlier, a church was not completed on this historic spot until 1750. This delay was seized upon by the critics of the Georgia Trust's administration who came to be known as "clamorous malcontents." In the tract titled *A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia in America*, published by malcontent leaders Pat Tailfer, Hugh Anderson and David Douglas, it was pointed out that the Trustees acknowledged that by 1741 over seven hundred pounds had been donated for the construction of Savannah's church but it was still not built.<sup>66</sup> Christ Church, the handsome edifice that graces *The Lott for the Church* today was not completed until 1840.

10. *The publick Stores.* Under the provisions of their royal charter, the Georgia Trustees were "impower'd to collect Benefactions, and lay them out in Cloathing, Arming, Sending over, and supporting Colonies of the Poor, whether Subjects or Foreigners in Georgia."<sup>67</sup> In keeping with this responsibility

<sup>65</sup>For a non-technical discussion of coastal river hydraulics see Sam B. Hilliard, "Antebellum Tidewater Rice Culture in South Carolina and Georgia," in James R. Gibson, ed., *European Settlement and Development in North America: Essays on Geographical Change in Honour and Memory of Andrew Hill Clark*, (Toronto and Buffalo, 1978), 91-115. Information on the effects of freshets, tides and winds in the river near Savannah is reviewed in Louis De Vorsey, Jr., "Dating the Emergence of a Savannah River Island," *Environmental Review* 4 (1980):6-19.

<sup>66</sup>For a published reprint of this and other malcontent associated tracts see Trevor R. Reese, introduction, *The Clamorous Malcontents: Criticisms & Defenses of the Colony of Georgia, 1741-1743* (Savannah, 1973).

<sup>67</sup>Trevor R. Reese, ed., *The Most Delightful Country of the Universe: Promotional Literature of the Colony of Georgia, 1717-1734* (Savannah, 1972), 70.

they were careful in their planning for the material needs of the colonists to be sent to the “debatable land” lying between Spanish Florida and South Carolina. As numbers of London’s worthy poor were being interviewed for selection to accompany Oglethorpe, large sums were being spent “for Provisions for three months after their Arrival in Georgia and until they could be had in Carolina,” and for “working tools and necessaries . . . Arms and Ammunition for the Use of the Colony.”<sup>68</sup> The “Cloathing and Accoutrements” sent included such items as watch coats, pea jackets, and bedding.

To protect these stores from the weather and safeguard them for proper distribution, a “large and commodious Store house” was built on the Trust lot next to that reserved for the as yet unbuilt church. In both the drawing by George Jones and the engraved view, the public storehouse is notable in that no window is shown on the northern wall while both the public mill and house for strangers have windows. It is probable that windows were omitted in the storehouse in an effort to increase its security. There can be no doubt that the Trustees’ storehouse was one of the busiest places in early Savannah. Nor is it surprising to find that its imperious guardian, Thomas Causton, became the focus of the discontent that set in after the first flush of enthusiasm began to wane among the Georgia pioneers.

In his journal, the Earl of Egmont noted in January 1734 that Oglethorpe was feeding and supplying the needs of 437 charity colonists and servants settled in and around Savannah.<sup>69</sup> Typical non-food items dispensed were “clothes . . . and household equipment, kettles, pots, pans, saws, shovels, guns, and whatever else they need for keeping house and tilling the soil.”<sup>70</sup> Typical of the foodstuffs were the salted meat, herring, cheese, butter, flour, rice, and Indian corn.

*11. The Fort.* This structure is shown as a small building with a pyramidal roof and firing ports on both the drawing and the engraved view. There are, however, aspects of this depiction

<sup>68</sup>*Colonial Records*, 3:52-53.

<sup>69</sup>McPherson, *Egmont Journal*, 39.

<sup>70</sup>Jones, *Detailed Reports*, 1: 65.

that raise questions as to its accuracy. The records reveal, for example, that Oglethorpe reported the construction of not one but two “blockhouses Musket shell proof and very defensible with four port holes for Cannon and one piece of Cannon ready to be put in each,” in his June 9, 1733 letter to the Trustees.<sup>71</sup> This report was seemingly verified by Peter Gordon when he gave his account and “presented a draft of Savannah” to the Trustees on February 29, 1734.<sup>72</sup> Gordon told the Trustees that there were “2 block houses at the Angles of the town” each with four guns.<sup>73</sup> As shown on both depictions, the southeastern blockhouse fort stood in the space occupied by modern Oglethorpe Avenue just east of Abercorn Street.

It is puzzling to discover that neither the drawing nor the engraving shows any sign of a second blockhouse fort. One obvious explanation could be that it did not appear on the town plat from which George Jones prepared his perspective view. Or, it might be that both Oglethorpe and Gordon were describing a planned second fort which hadn’t yet been completed when Oglethorpe left Savannah. This seems an unlikely explanation in view of the language used by Oglethorpe and Egmont, however. A third explanation might be that Oglethorpe deliberately omitted the second fort in an effort to keep from fully compromising Savannah’s defenses. He was all too aware that hostile Spanish eyes would pore eagerly over the engraved view as soon as it was broadcast from Fourdrinier’s press.

*12. The Parsonage House.* As discussed above the parsonage was located on Trust lot T in Lower New Ward which later became known as Reynolds Ward. It was separated from the lot for the church by modern Drayton Street and was built close to Reynolds Square.

*13. The Pallisadoes.* An apparently incomplete log palisade is shown stretching to the south from the edge of the bluff along the left or eastern side of the drawing and engraving. Peter Gordon wrote that on February 7, “we begane to digg

<sup>71</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 23.

<sup>72</sup>McPherson, *Egmont Journal*, 44.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*

trenches for fixing palisadoes round the place of our intended settlement as a fence in case we should be attacked by the Indians.”<sup>74</sup> In his letter to the Trustees, June 9, 1733, Oglethorpe mentioned that “one Hundred and forty yards on the East side of the town was fortified with pallicadoes Seventeen foot long.”<sup>75</sup>

Although Oglethorpe was silent as to why he did not complete the palisade defense work around Savannah, the reason is not difficult to comprehend. He wrote to the Trustees just three days after beginning the abortive palisade project and happily reported at some length that “a little Indian nation the only one within fifty miles is not only at amity but desirous to be Subjects to His Majesty King George, to have lands given them amongst us and to breed their children at our schools. Their Chief and his beloved man who is the second man in the Nation desires to be instructed in the Christian Religion.”<sup>76</sup> Rather than enemies to be feared, Tomo Chichi and his band of Indians became tractable and valued allies “who, by ranging thro’ the Woods, would be capable of giving constant Intelligence, to prevent any Surprize upon the People.” They formed “two Companies . . . of Forty very Clever Men. Their pay is one Bushell of corn pr. month for each man while we employ them in War or hunting, a Gun at their first listing and a Blanket p Ann.”<sup>77</sup>

14. *The Guard House and Battery of Cannon.* In his March 12, 1733 report to the Trustees on the condition of Savannah, Oglethorpe mentioned that “our Battery of Cannon and Magazine [is] finished. This is all we have been able to do by reason of our Number of which many have been sick and others unused to Labour.”<sup>78</sup> As noted earlier, much of the initial urgency concerning defensive works subsided when the local Indians evidenced their eagerness to become allies and outguards for the Savannah settlement.

<sup>74</sup>Coulter, *Gordon Journal*, 37.

<sup>75</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 23.

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 9.

<sup>77</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 23.

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 14.

A more distant menace soon made itself felt when an Irish Catholic spy was discovered to be sending “intelligence from our Town to St. Augustine.”<sup>79</sup> Oglethorpe “retained” the spy and his messengers were apprehended by the Indians. While this was going on, Oglethorpe “fortified our Town then shewed them our workes, our Cannon, and our Men under arms who being strengthened by several Carolina people were pretty numerous.”<sup>80</sup> Duly impressed, the Spanish agents were sent to Charles Town and told “they might give an account to the Governour of Augustine of what they then saw.”<sup>81</sup>

In his report written a month after this exercise in deterrence through apparent military strength and preparedness, Oglethorpe described “a Battery of Six pieces of Cannon upon the Water side and a Guard house of 36 foot long upon 24 foot wide the sides covered with thick slat and the top with bark.”<sup>82</sup> According to the notes the Earl of Egmont made from Peter Gordon’s oral report to the Trustees, “there was a battery of 12 guns on the River and over them a Guard Room.”<sup>83</sup>

Neither Oglethorpe’s nor Gordon’s description seems to accord exactly with the guardhouse and array of cannons as drawn by George Jones and engraved by Fourdrinier. That this apparent disagreement exists is not surprising in the light of the growing tension with the Spanish in St. Augustine. Savannah’s defenses were under almost constant development during the first year of Oglethorpe’s residence. What the view shows probably represents a project which was underway when Oglethorpe left Georgia at the end of March 1734. In a letter from Thomas Christie dated December 14 of that year, Oglethorpe was informed of the completion of “the New Guard house” with four cannon “mounted on new Large Carriages handsomely painted besides five pieces fixed in a platform and designed for a salute besides four others ye old Carriages.”<sup>84</sup>

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 21.

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 21.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 22.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 23.

<sup>83</sup>McPherson, *Egmont Journal*, 44.

<sup>84</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 123.

15. *Hutchinson's Island.* Oglethorpe's year-end report on conditions in Georgia, written in December 1733, drew the attention of the Trustees to Hutchinson's Island, the area dominating the foreground of Jones's drawing and the engraving by Fourdrinier:

Over against the Town lyes Hutchinson's Island one of the most delightful spots of Ground I ever saw; about 3 miles in length and one wide; a great part of it is natural Meadow the rest covered with tall Trees many of which are Bays above four score foot high. In that Island on the farther Side which commands the Northern Branch of this River opposite to the Town there is a House built and an Overseer lodged with four servants belonging to You with Orders to cut a Walk through the Wood in a strait Line the breadth of this Town which will serve as a Meadow for feeding of Cattle and give a beautifull Prospect of the other River.<sup>85</sup>

William Harden, citizen and historian of Savannah, was the first to reveal that the island was named for a close friend of Oglethorpe and benefactor of the colony, Archibald Hutchinson, Esq.<sup>86</sup>

Although not mentioned in the numbered legends on the drawing and print, the most arresting features included are the numerous houses shown. Did Savannah's first permanent residences really look like these or should they be interpreted as merely symbolic? The evidence is that George Jones provided a reasonably accurate depiction of what was actually built during Savannah's first year of existence.

Savannah's first shelters were huts built of crudely split logs or as they were called "clapp boards." These were soon found to be inadequate and "a sufficient number of negroe sawyers, who were hired from Carolina" were put to work to provide squared lumber and boards. On March 1 "the first house in the square was framed, and raised, Mr. Oglethorpe driving the first pinn."<sup>87</sup> Progress in house building proceeded slowly and on March 12, Oglethorpe informed the Trustees that "Our

<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 41.

<sup>86</sup>Harden, *A History of Savannah*, 1: 14.

<sup>87</sup>Coulter, *Gordon Journal*, 42.

people still lye in Tents there being only two clapboard Houses built and three saw'd Houses framed, our Crane, our battery of Canon and Magazine finished."<sup>88</sup>

In a letter to his wife, also dated March 12, 1732/3, Thomas Causton described the three framed houses as "made of timber of one floor, only a Cock loft over it to hold two beds."<sup>89</sup> Causton continued, "the lower part will make one large room and two small ones." The houses "stood in a piece of Ground which with the intended garden is 20 yards broad in front and 30 yards long in depth." These are, of course, the dimensions of Savannah's house or town lots. A week later a visitor from Charles Town reported on the housing effort by writing "there are Four Houses already up, but none finished."<sup>90</sup> He went on to state that Oglethorpe was expecting more sawyers and with them planned to finish two houses a week.

Oglethorpe described the completed houses as having "sides covered with feather edged Board and the tops with shingles."<sup>91</sup> House dimensions were "24 foot in length upon 16 foot in Breadth" with "one Story eight foot high with Garrets over them." The houses were "raised upon Logs two foot above the Ground and are floored with inch and half plank." In the words of Johann Martin Boltzius, the senior pastor of Georgia's Lutheran Salzburger community, "Savannah's houses and gardens are arranged in mathematical regularity, which will look very pretty after everything has been put in order."<sup>92</sup> There can be no doubt that the houses shown in "A View of Savannah as it Stood the 29th of March 1734" were built according to a common plan and precisely sited on Savannah's newly surveyed house lots.

Before closing this review of Savannah's built environment as revealed in "A View of Savannah as it stood the 29th of March, 1734" attention should be directed to a small structure just visible at the southwest corner of the guardhouse. Almost obscured by the shadow stands Savannah's instrument of public

<sup>88</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 14.

<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*, 20: 17.

<sup>90</sup>Reese, *Clamorous Malcontents*, 228.

<sup>91</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 23.

<sup>92</sup>Jones, *Detailed Reports*, 1: 62.

punishment, the town stocks. Punishments were harsh for those who didn't abide by the code of conduct insisted upon by Oglethorpe and his Utopian fellow Trustees. Robert Parker, identified as an Alderman of Lynn, who spent over two years as a resident of Savannah drew the Trustee's attention to many of the abuses occurring in the town in a letter written at the end of 1734.<sup>93</sup> He disclosed that in Oglethorpe's absence punishments meted out for minor infractions were "frequent & Shocking, even to Disgust the Neighboring Provinces." As an example he cited the case of the community's only "Dairy Wife" and butter maker who was made to sit in the Stocks for three hours in heavy rain and then "Carried on Board a Sloop & Ducked." She was so badly bruised against the ship's side that "she was lame for 2 or 3 months after." It is little wonder that no caption was provided to draw attention to this darker side of Savannah's built environment.

<sup>93</sup>*Colonial Records*, 20: 141.