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UTHOR OF *BLACK MAJORITY* AND *STRANGE NEW LAND*

Charleston, South Carolina, learned of plans among
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lavery and resistance in the Atlantic World.

sociate professor of American history at Soka University
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South Carolina, 1700–1820.

the Atlantic World
John White, series editors

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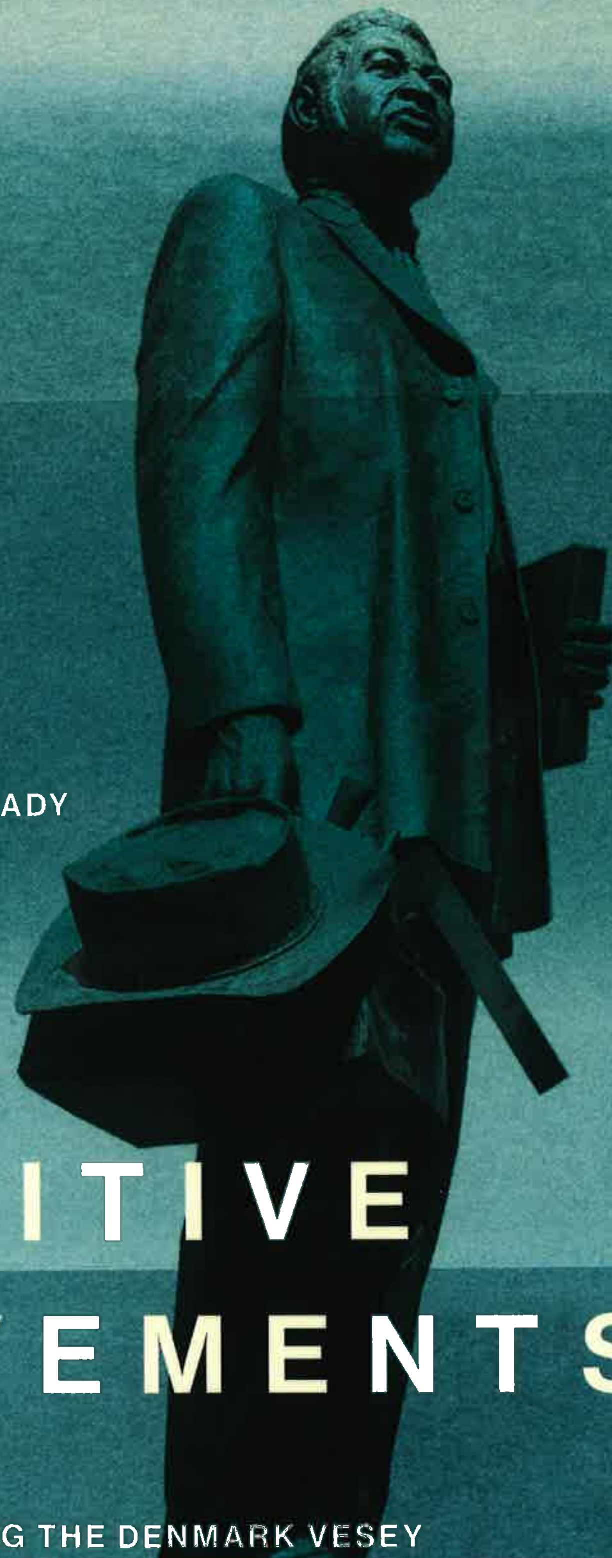
SPADY FUGITIVE MOVEMENTS



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JAMES O'NEIL SPADY

FOREWORD BY
MANISHA SINHA

FUGITIVE MOVEMENTS

COMMEMORATING THE DENMARK VESEY

SHAWN HALIFAX AND TERRI L. SNYDER

Slavery, Resistance, and Memory in the Lowcountry

The Commemoration of the Stono Rebellion

In 2006 the Sea Island Farmers Cooperative unveiled a South Carolina highway historical marker on its property south of Charleston beside the Savannah Highway (US 17).[1] The sign describes the Stono Rebellion (1739) as the "largest slave insurrection in British North America" and depicts the rebels as the freedom fighters that they surely were. It was not the first official recognition of the site's importance to early American history. In 1974, thirty-two years before the Marker was unveiled, the site where the Stono Rebellion began was successfully nominated as a National Historical Landmark (NHL). According to the *Charleston Evening Post,* along with the Robert Smalls House in Beaufort, Stono was the first African American history site to gain this Landmark status in South Carolina.[2] Although an official NHL plaque was issued in 1974, the Stono site is on private property, and owners are not required to provide public access to an NHL. For another three decades, therefore, the Stono site lacked a physical sign or designation that was accessible to the public. That oversight was remedied, however, when the Cooperative erected its highway marker in 2006.

Before the twenty-first century, the public and historic sites that recognized the history of slavery in the United States did so only timidly, according to historian Ana Lucia Araujo.[3] In contrast, thousands of public monuments memorialized battles and figures associated with the Confederacy. Calls for or the actual removal or destruction of these monuments followed in the aftermath of a white supremacist massacre in Charleston, South Carolina (2015), and deadly violence in Charlottesville, Virginia (2017). The civil unrest that erupted after a policeman murdered George Floyd in Minneapolis (2020) accelerated the removal of monuments associated with racial injustice.

The struggles over removal of Confederate and racist monuments reflect that the memory and commemoration of slave resistance are an ongoing part of

the struggle against racism in the United States. Perhaps nowhere is this better seen than in the haunting photographs of insurrectionists who invaded the US Capitol on January 6, 2021—many of whom wore or carried symbols of white supremacy, including Confederate flags. Even with these recent removals, however, the US historically has far fewer memorials that commemorate slavery and fewer still that, like the Stono Marker, acknowledge the resistance of enslaved people.[4] Surely the contested public memory of slavery, including the memory of uprisings like Stono, reflects the national resistance to any public reckoning with the history and afterlife of slavery in the US. In the past, Americans have found it easier to memorialize Civil War figures like Robert E. Lee and Abraham Lincoln than, as Jill Lepore has observed, to commemorate the millions of enslaved people whose bodies were "stolen, shackled, hunted, whipped, branded, raped, starved, murdered and buried in unmarked graves."[5] The fight to memorialize enslaved people has proven as difficult as removing symbols of the Confederacy, but the recent history of removals shows that this fight has taken a decisive turn.[6] The national reckoning with slavery is long overdue, but it is happening even as we write.

Following the City of Charleston's official apology for slavery in 2018, Mayor John Tecklenburg and the city council created the Special Commission on Equity, Inclusion and Racial Conciliation in June 2020.[7] Seven subcommittees were established, including one on history and culture. A primary purpose of this citizen-member committee is to "review and address historical markers, memorials and monuments [in order] to tell a more comprehensive history of the City of Charleston, inclusive of all her people." The Special Commission's framework instructs the subcommittee to "take inventory of historical markers, memorials, and monuments and make a determination regarding whether or not they should be removed; identify additional spaces to showcase a more complete story of Charleston; and develop a plan to memorialize the contributions of individuals and groups not appropriately represented in the cultural landscape."[8]

One week following the Special Commission's creation, and before the History and Culture Subcommittee held its first meeting, the Charleston city council voted to remove the statue of John C. Calhoun. A week later, on June 23, 2020, it was removed. According to Tamika Gadsden, a local activist, the removal of Calhoun's statue was "not a marker of progress for the city. This is about Resistance. This moment was about the uprising we saw across the country."[9] Gadsden provides historical context for the removal of the statue and the Black Lives Matter protests happening in Charleston and across the country following the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and others. The uprisings marked another chapter in a long tradition of Black resistance that began

long before the twenty-first century wherever slavery existed, including places like the eighteenth-century Lowcountry region, home to the Stono Rebellion and, later, Denmark Vesey's uprising.[10]

The turn of the twenty-first century has marked a growing emphasis on publicly memorializing slavery and commemorating enslaved people's resistance. For instance, the National Park Service's "Network to Freedom" project (NTF) officially recognizes places associated with resistance to slavery. The project is dedicated to preserving and commemorating self-emancipation stories, the "first civil rights movement" of enslaved people and their descendants.[11] In Charleston County, the Caw Caw Interpretive Center, a center of research and exhibits on the Stono Rebellion, is an NTF site.

Five other efforts to memorialize slave resistance in the Lowcountry also deserve mention. First, at the city's harbor a historical marker now commemorates the enslaved ship pilot Robert Smalls, whose efforts on behalf of the United States made him a hero of the Civil War. It is significant for its prominent location at the east end of the popular tourist destination, the Battery. Second, a statue of Denmark Vesey, though the focus of controversy, now stands in Hampton Park. Ironically, the park is named to honor enslaver and Confederate General Wade Hampton, whose "Red Shirts" terrorized and disenfranchised Black voters to gain the governorship of South Carolina in the 1876 election. Residents neighboring Hampton Park sent a letter to the city council requesting that the city change the name of the park, suggesting that the new name honor the US soldiers who were held and died there as prisoners of war and the crowd of thousands of newly emancipated people who gathered to memorialize those soldiers on May 1, 1865. Historians cite this date, known as Decoration Day, as the first Memorial Day observance in the United States.[12]

Third, the first "bench by the road" was installed at Fort Moultrie in 2008 by the Toni Morrison Society to memorialize and contemplate the site as the entry point for about 40 percent of the captive Africans who were forcibly transported to North America.[13] Fourth, McLeod Plantation Historic Site, opened in 2015, has the singular purpose of sharing the stories of African Americans who were enslaved there, occupied it as soldiers, and owned it for a brief time, along with their descendants' ongoing and persistent struggle for freedom and racial justice. It is a member institution of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and states that it is "not just a place for memorialization and a place of conscience, but a place where the transformation of conscience can occur."[14] Finally, after decades of planning, the International African American Museum is scheduled to open in 2022. Located on a wharf where so many Africans who survived the brutal Middle Passage arrived in America, its mission is to "honor the untold stories of the African American journey at one of our country's most sacred sites. It will include exhibitions, an African Ancestors

Memorial Garden, and the Center for Family History."[15] These examples offer a new vision of how the nation can "remember and memorialize" slavery. Equally important, they reflect long-standing criticisms by Black Americans about the need to counter or correct the explicit racist messages perpetuated by some historic sites, monuments, and memorials. Many whites have only just begun to understand and acknowledge these messages since the massacre at Mother Emanuel in 2015, despite that many of these places and structures have existed since the nineteenth century.[16]

In light of the politics of memorialization and calls for racial justice, this collaborative essay reflects upon the history and memory of the Stono Rebellion, an uprising of enslaved people that began near Charleston in the early-morning hours of September 9, 1739. Stono is the largest slave revolt in British America, one of more than three hundred uprisings led by enslaved people between the European colonization of North America and the Civil War. It has been the subject of several studies and document collections, but Peter Wood's *Black Majority* (1974) was the first book to place Stono in the scholarly mainstream. Wood's account of colonial South Carolina began as a 1972 doctoral dissertation at Harvard that explored the colony's early connection to Barbados, the use of cattle, the introduction of rice, and the importation of enslaved Africans. It offered the first chapter-length treatment of the uprising and has provided a benchmark for later studies. Most importantly, this is one of the first accounts of enslaved people that did not minimalize them, that went beyond mere acknowledgment, exploring the critical roles that they played in the establishment of successful British colonies in North America.[17]

The history of commemorating Stono reflects the ways in which commemorating slavery—and rebellions by enslaved people in particular—are part of the ongoing struggle against anti-Black racism and white supremacy in the United States. For centuries, official histories erased and ignored episodes of Black resistance, pushing their memories to a "fugitive, half-hidden status" despite that Black historians from Reconstruction forward relentlessly wrote about these uprisings.[18] The public memory of the enslaved men and women who revolted against their bondage in early North America needs to be better chronicled in official US public markers as well as in our textbooks and academic and popular histories. Stono began with an initial group of about twenty enslaved people, mostly men of Angolan and Kongolese origins, at least some of whom intended to escape to Spanish Florida, where the Crown had offered freedom to slaves fleeing British territory. As the revolt unfolded over the course of a day, more than sixty followers joined the rebel forces. The acknowledged leader of the rebellion was a man named Jemmy (also sometimes called Cato). The rebels burned two dozen plantations and killed at least twenty-four whites before they were overtaken by a well-armed militia of about one hundred men. Official reprisals were

swift and harsh. The militia killed at least forty slaves, decapitated the dead rebels, and set their heads up on posts. Other enslaved people were executed when they returned to their plantations. In the wake of the Stono uprising, the South Carolina General Assembly passed the Negro Act of 1740. This became the core of the colony's (and later the state's) slave code for more than a century. The law placed duties on slaves arriving from Africa and the West Indies in an effort to discourage importation of Africans until more white settlers could be recruited from Europe. Fearful of rebellion, the legislators also made provisions to reward enslaved people who informed on one another.[19]

The drive to remember Stono and commemorate it as part of US history was spearheaded by African American historians and preservationists. Black historians had been writing about the Stono uprising since Reconstruction, although the rebellion was largely absent from mainstream US history textbooks until after Wood's book appeared in the mid-1970s. Similarly, Black historians and preservationists drove the successful nomination of the Stono site as an NHL in 1974. The local Charleston Sea Island Farmers Cooperative, a group of Black farmers, was given the NHL plaque in the 1970s because its property encompasses what is believed by many to be the brick foundation of Hutchenson's store, the physical beginning point of the uprising. And again in 2006, the Cooperative's efforts resulted in the erection of the highway marker.

The commemoration of Stono in the Lowcountry landscape and as part of the National Historic Landmark program was first undertaken by Black historians in the 1970s and then later by Black farmers in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Their actions, we argue, are part of the long history of Black antislavery thought, and their efforts to commemorate the Stono Rebellion were part of a wider fight against anti-Black racism. What is more, when the NHL designation was granted in 1974 and the Cooperative put up the marker in 2006, they faced a wider Charleston monument landscape that glorified South Carolina's white history and the "Lost Cause" narrative. That is now changing, as we chronicle above, but it is critical to remember that the Stono commemorations were radically pioneering in their determination to publicly remember the uprising of enslaved people in 1739.

In the first section, Terri Snyder traces the history of Stono's designation as an NHL in 1974 as part of her interest in both the history of self-emancipation and the contemporary politics of remembering slavery. In the second section, Shawn Halifax discusses efforts that started thirty years later to broaden the documented landscape associated with Stono, install the commemorative highway marker, and expand the NHL designation to include public lands where the event can be interpreted.[20] In the pages below we analyze the Stono Rebellion commemorations and the history and meanings of the national and local memory of Black antislavery resistance in the Lowcountry.

Snyder became interested in the story behind the Stono Highway Marker in 2011, as she recalls:

> I attended a conference sponsored by the Carolina Lowcountry in the Atlantic World Program at College of Charleston. After it concluded, I planned to drive to Savannah. At that time, I was researching Ebos Landing, a site on St. Simons Island off the coast of Georgia. On the drive south, I passed a South Carolina highway marker that commemorated the 1739 Stono River Slave Rebellion. As someone who studies and teaches early America history, I knew that Stono was the largest slave rebellion in colonial North America. I had first learned about the uprising when my African American history professor at the University of Iowa, Jonathan Walton, assigned Peter Wood's *Black Majority* (1974). I could recall how that book stirred my interest in the history of slavery and the early American South. I turned the car around and headed back, wanting to take a closer look at the sign.
>
> The photographs that I took of the Stono Marker that day look pretty much like everyone else's pictures of it. As I studied its inscription and took shots of its front and back, my attention was drawn to the credit line and date, "Erected by the Sea Island Farmers Cooperative, 2006." I lowered the camera and studied the words closely. Only then did I note the structure that sat farther back from the road, which I assumed to be the property of the Sea Island Farmers Cooperative. A chain-link fence prevented me from exploring any farther, and besides, Ebos Landing and St. Simons were waiting. I drove away from the marker, but the role of the Sea Island Farmers in commemorating the Stono site continued to intrigue me.

"The Stono Rebellion" historical marker (front side). Photo by Mike Stroud, courtesy of HMdb.org.

"The Stono Rebellion" historical marker (reverse side). Photo by Mike Stroud, courtesy of HMdb.org.

Later that day, I stood in front of the unmarked Ebos Landing on Dunbar's Creek, the site of a probable collective suicide by captive Africans in 1803. That event—which many historians consider to be a deliberate resistance to enslavement—occurred in a region of the US that is most closely associated with the flying African folklore—that is, stories of enslaved

Dunbar Creek, located on St. Simon's Island, Glynn County, Georgia, is commonly understood to be the site of Ebo (Igbo) Landing. Photo by Terri L. Snyder.

people who possessed the magical ability to leave their enslavement and fly back to Africa. I spoke to Denise Spear, the park ranger at historic Fort Frederica, also on St. Simons, who gave me directions to the unmarked site and explained how to locate Dunbar Creek. She told me that at least a couple of visitors a year asked about the Ebos Landing, but that she was not aware of any plans for an official state or federal designation, even though the story of Ebos Landing is part of the Georgia school curriculum and the folklore is fairly well-known.[21]

Public Memory and the Stono Rebellion in the Twentieth Century

The marked Stono Rebellion site and the unmarked Ebos Landing raise questions about public commemorations of the enslaved men and women who rebelled against their bondage in British North America and the early United States. After Reconstruction, African American intellectuals pushed hard for the inclusion of the African American past as part of US history. These scholars defied the standard, whitewashed version of slavery's history and rejected the proslavery "Lost Cause" accounts that treated slavery as a benign institution that benefited Blacks. Instead, the earliest generations of Black historians wrote African American history as a part of US history. After visiting Charleston early in the twentieth century, for instance, W. E. B. Du Bois wrote movingly of the ways in which the city's Black churches had been "'softened with the souls of the fathers and grandfathers who knew Cato [Jemmy] of Stono and Denmark Vesey.'"[22] In summoning the names of the leaders of organized rebellions, Du Bois invoked not only the Black historical memory of those uprisings but also the importance of those revolts to African American history. Several years later, Asa H. Gordon, a historian at Savannah State College, began his *Sketches of Negro Life and History in South Carolina* (1929) with the assertion that the history of African Americans was virtually unknown in South Carolina as well as across the nation, an omission that his book sought to rectify. Gordon's project was one of historical recovery. His book emphasized that Black history and African American achievements in South Carolina ought to be sources of "pride and honor" to the "entire citizenry."[23] Here too, a historian countered mainstream accounts, placing African Americans as central historical actors in US history.

Sketches devoted an entire chapter to enslaved freedom fighters in South Carolina. US history, Gordon argued, had been too "strangely silent" on the subject of resistance to slavery; enslaved people's quests for freedom had been "scarcely touched upon." He filled in the "missing pages" in the US history narrative and wrote about various forms of enslaved people's resistance: self-emancipation

through running away, self-purchase, and joining British or Continental troops in the American Revolution and War of 1812. His study addressed the importance of organized rebellion in enslaved people's fights for freedom: he included the Stono uprising and the Vesey Conspiracy in his portrait of South Carolina history.[24]

Well into the 1930s, as Kytle and Roberts have shown, Black historians working for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects in South Carolina drafted detailed essays about the Stono Rebellion, Vesey's Conspiracy, and other events in African American history. The essay devoted to Stono treated the rebellion as a principled act of resistance to slavery. It concluded by noting that the quickly spreading rebellion indicated that only a "spark" was needed for the "heated tinder" of enslaved people's animosity toward their enslavers to "burst into flame."[25] Although the essays produced by these Black historians were never published as planned, they provided an "alternative approach to the past [that was] rooted as much, if not more, in Black memory than in white."[26] As Black historians and intellectuals in the early twentieth century established the foundations for the study of African American history, they treated episodes of organized resistance like the Stono Rebellion and the Vesey Conspiracy as key moments in the story of America's past.

Four decades later, African American intellectuals and activists pushed again for national recognition of the Stono Rebellion's signficance to US history. In the early 1970s, African American organizations campaigned for the federal recognition of Black history sites. At that time, according to the National Park Service (NPS), "virtually no landmarks" honoring Black Americans even existed in the United States.[27] Black historians and preservationists gained momentum for their cause during the planning for the 1976 Bicentennial celebration of the nation's founding and used the occasion to press for federal recognition of Black history sites. As one might imagine, the absence of Black history landmarks across the country, as the USIA's *America Illustrated Magazine* argued, posed "special problems" for the Bicentennial celebrations. According to *Roots* author Alex Haley, a member of President Gerald Ford's Bicentennial Advisory Council, Blacks were not particularly "gung-ho" about celebrating the nation's two-hundredth anniversary. As Haley apparently put the matter, African Americans were not "going around saying, 'Wow, great, we were slaves in 1776.'" Still, Haley felt certain that, given more recognition of their history, African Americans would contribute to the celebrations.[28] In preparation for the Bicentennial and in an effort to rectify the "embarrassing" lack of officially recognized sites of African American history, the NPS came on board with the aim of identifying Black history sites for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and NHL status.

Rather than rely on their own staff of historians, however, the NPS hired a Black consulting firm. Park officials knew that having Black historians and preservationists prepare the nominations would give them credibility.[29] Park Service officials turned to the Afro-American Institute for Historic Preservation and Community Development, based in Washington, DC, founded in 1970 by brothers Robert and Vincent DeForrest.[30] The DeForrests formed a company specifically for the Bicentennial project, the "Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation" (ABC). The ABC consulted with the NPS to "stimulate interest [in the Bicentennial] among Blacks throughout the country." The ABC directed its efforts at conducting a "nationwide survey of Black history sites that would then be nominated for NRHP and NHL" designation.[31] The firm appointed an advisory board of African American political and cultural leaders such as Shirley Chisholm and Roberta Flack. Prominent Black historians on the board included Professors John Blassingame (Yale University), Letitia Brown (George Washington University), Benjamin Quarles (Morgan State University), and Dorothy Porter Wesley, the archivist who curated the Black history collections at Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.[32] Congress appropriated funding for three years, and the ABC began immediately to identify Black history sites for federal recognition.[33]

The ABC historians drew on some of the work of earlier generations of Black historians. For instance, Asa H. Gordon is cited in the bibliography for the Stono Landmark Nomination. They quickly assembled a sizable list of sites for nomination. This is especially remarkable, considering that each nomination required a written narrative and extensive bibliography to justify its inclusion in the NHRP or as an NHL, just as was required for any other nominated site. Nominations also required fieldwork: each site had to be visited, documented, and photographed. Historian Marcia M. Greenlee, historical projects director for the ABC, wrote the nomination for Stono and twenty-six other sites that she visited over the course of 1973 and 1974. In order to be successful, the nominations had to intersect with designated NRHP themes then in place: "European Exploration and Settlement," "Society and Social Conscience," "Development of English Colonies," and "Major American Wars."[34]

By 1974—two years before the Bicentennial celebrations began—the ABC had achieved some success. In July of that year, the secretary of the Interior issued a press release announcing that thirteen "sites associated with the history of Blacks in America" had been selected as National Historic Landmarks, and the site of the Stono Rebellion was one of those.[35] In 1974 NHL status officially recognized that a site possessed exceptional value in US history: NHL status was given only to those sites deemed to "hold national significance," "illustrate a turning point or significant event in American history," or "preserve the stor[ies]

of nationally important historic events, places, and people for all Americans." The press release explained that because Black Americans had "played many prominent roles in the development" of the United States, it was "only fitting that more of the sites involved in their efforts be recognized" as the Bicentennial approached.[36] NHL status is rare relative to NHRP status: today, more than 90,000 places are listed on the NHRP, but only some 2,600 have NHL status.[37]

Although many of the individuals who were central to the ABC's work are no longer alive, in 2018 Professor Marcia M. Greenlee spoke about her work with the ABC. She recalled that the organization's mission was "wide open" when she joined it. The group searched for a geographical range of sites and made a special effort to document Black history sites in the Midwest, not just in the North and South. The ABC, she said, sought to look beyond well-known individuals and evaluated potential sites in terms of their overall importance to African American history. In this regard, she remarked, they were particularly interested in slave rebellions. Greenlee traveled to Stono—indeed, just as she visited many of the initial nominations made by the ABC—and she remembered being struck by the relative "remoteness of the site." Even looking back nearly forty years later, she reflected on the courage of the Stono rebels in their "willingness to risk everything in making their attempt at freedom."[38] Her remark reflects how Black historians and intellectuals sought to create a history of Black antislavery and resistance that far predates the entry of those terms into the historical mainstream.

The Stono Rebellion NHL designation was exceptional for two reasons. First, it was driven by strategic planning on the part of Black historians and preservationists. Second, it was unique because it was the only site of the thirteen originally designated as NHLs that commemorated a rebellion by enslaved people.[39] Indeed, the nomination narrative begins by discounting any ideas of a harmonious master-slave relationship. Rather, it asserts that Blacks were not "so supine as to submit to enslavement without resistance" and refers to the Stono rebels as "freedom fighters."[40] The nomination statement sought to displace America's "false picture" of slavery—that is, the view that that enslavers and enslaved people lived together in "perfect harmony" in early America.[41] The reality, the statement argued, was much more complex. African Americans resisted enslavement, and whites lived in fear of slave revolts. In arguing for Stono's nomination, the statement explained the conditions that precipitated the revolt: the African origins of the rebels, the Black majority in South Carolina, the lure of freedom in Spanish Florida, the accessibility of weapons, and, of course, the resistance to the regime of slavery itself. The statement noted that South Carolina's slave system was modeled on the Barbados system and that violence, famine, epidemics, and high mortality were constants. It concluded with an analysis of the Angolan origins of the rebellion's leader, Jemmy, and suggested that his

leadership and command of the rebels were grounded in African beliefs and military customs. In addition to noting that in the wake of the rebellion, South Carolina adopted "one of the most comprehensive slave codes" in British North America, the statement also concluded that the rebellion itself exacerbated fear and terror in the white population.[42]

The other twelve Black history sites designated as NHLs in 1974 commemorated significant individuals who fought slavery and racism, Black churches, and free Blacks and formerly enslaved people who rose to prominence. The greatest number of nominations focused on military sites. Sites commemorated Black participation in the American Revolution, the massacre of Black soldiers at Fort Pillow (1864), and the establishment of the first Black officer training school at Fort Des Moines (1917). Several sites documented Black individual resistance to slavery and racism: Harriet Tubman, Paul Cuffee, and Martin Luther King Jr. However, the Stono NHL was the only site successfully nominated in the first round of efforts by the ABC that commemorated armed rebellion by enslaved people against their white enslavers.[43]

The ABC historians achieved a great deal in a short amount of time. Their work, like that of other public commemorations across the Americas, gained force alongside movements for racial civil rights and liberation.[44] Not only were they fighting against ongoing anti-Black racism, but their work was also part of a much longer Black antislavery tradition. They identified the Stono rebellion for NHL status as part of their own struggle against racism, and they were equally interested in combating the erasure of Blacks from the historical record. Uprisings like Stono had been ignored in the mainstream history narrative and public landscapes. The ABC historians used the occasion of the Bicentennial to gain public recognition for African American history sites. They not only obtained Landmark status for thirteen Black history sites, but they also made a total of sixty-one nominations for the NRHP over the course of their funding.[45] Still, they fought an uphill struggle against racism and the preference to ignore slavery in favor of emphasizing Black progress after Reconstruction. For instance, a report retrospectively reviewed the ABC nominations in the mid-1980s and declared that the nomination of too many African American history sites had "damaged" the integrity of the NHL program. The writer claimed that the program ignored the "concept of site integrity and the significance of relationships between the sites and their subjects."[46] The DeForrest brothers, who founded the ABC, which was discontinued after its three-year appropriation expired, continued to work to preserve African American history sites in the Washington area until the end of their lives. They collected artifacts of Black political culture and donated some of these materials to the Smithsonian, which, in turn, has donated materials to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.[47]

Public Memory and the Stono Rebellion in the Twenty-First Century

Whatever their federal designations, landmarks are ultimately tied to history and local memory.[48] Apart from national conversations, people in Charleston had their own aims for commemorating the uprising, although it would take another thirty-two years before even a modest public commemoration would be realized in the form of a South Carolina highway marker. According to historian Dr. W. Marvin Dulaney, Executive Director of the Avery Institute of African American History and Culture at the College of Charleston from 1994 through 2008, when he arrived in Charleston, he saw far too few memorials of slavery—much less slave rebellion—on the local landscape. As director of the Avery, he sought to make African American history more visible in Charleston. The highway marker was just one example of memorializing the history of Black resistance in the Charleston landscape.[49]

For the Sea Island Farmers Cooperative, the commemorations were deeply personal. The Cooperative's farmers are the collective owners of the designated NHL property, and there is a distinct possibility that some are direct descendants of the freedom fighters. The families of many members have lived in that part of Charleston for generations, stretching back long before freedom came. Also, the farmers were quite aware of how much "white Charleston" liked its sanitized history. The farmers must have understood the fugitivity of Stono's memory: the tourism industry and history tour guides discussed by Kytle and Roberts did not view the Stono Rebellion as part of Charleston's official history.[50]

For the Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission (Charleston County Parks), the discovery of how the Stono Rebellion touched its own parkland at Caw Caw County Park and Interpretive Center (Caw Caw) provided a compelling history specific to the newly opened public park. That history challenged, and continues to challenge, the park system to transform the marginalized and segregated treatments that slavery often receives at public history sites in Charleston to those focused on Black expressions of resistance in their passive and violent forms through interpretation and public programs. Commemorating the rebellion at the park provides accessible space for public dialogue about slavery, racism, resistance, and Black fugitivity in American history.

Caw Caw opened in 2000. The tract, originally purchased in 1985 by Charleston County Parks, was to be a wildlife preserve for public access and to interpret the Lowcountry's natural wonders. Because the site's landscape has been so affected by human activity, however, it became evident to park planners that Caw Caw's natural history could not be told without sharing its cultural history, too.[51] Today, the park stretches over seven hundred acres. Over half is made up of wetlands in various states of natural plant succession. Within the park's

boundaries, Caw Caw Swamp, or Stono Swamp as it is sometimes referenced on eighteenth-century maps, forms the dark headwaters of the Stono River. Rain and spring-fed water flow from the swamp into tidal creeks that merge into the Wallace River and exit park boundaries before joining Rantowles Creek, and farther downstream the Stono River. Historically the Wallace and its headwaters were referred to as the Western Branch of Stono, or simply Stono. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, the swamps and long-leaf pine savannahs here were used by colonists as free-range cattle country.

The original 1994 historical assessment of the park is discouraging in its conclusions, claiming that "a historical examination of the Tea Farm [Caw Caw] tract in isolation is difficult and rather unproductive."[52] Now, nearly thirty years later, knowledge of the site's history has increased substantially. It is being considered for inclusion as an expansion of the Stono Rebellion National Historic Landmark and forms the heart of local efforts to be added to the National Park Service's tentative list for designation as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).[53]

Caw Caw warrants consideration for culturally and historically significant reasons related to the Stono Rebellion. It illustrates the colony's ever-growing dependence on the international trade of enslaved people from West and Central Africa, specifically its rice-growing regions. In the early 1700s the Lowcountry was experiencing an economic and ecological shift to wetland rice cultivation, an almost unfathomable transformation powered by Africans enslaved for their knowledge and experience as rice farmers. By 1710, Africans, captured and imported in ever increasing numbers, and Indigenous people were forced to literally cut and carve from the swampy wilderness expansive rice fields and agricultural plantations for their European enslavers on the frontier between English Carolina and Spanish Florida.

When Caw Caw opened in January 2000, the park's history focused on the history of African and Gullah-Geechee people whose labor converted the landscape into a grand "hydraulic machine" for cultivating rice but included no meaningful stories about them. Despite the lack of personal stories, park guests often left with an overwhelming sense of awe after taking in the vast landscape and the realization of just how difficult and complete the transformation of the land had been at the hands of enslaved people in these once dangerous and disease-infested hinterlands of the colony. Through Caw Caw's interpretive programs, visitors began to understand how enslaved people were forced to settle down in confined spaces and from the surrounding swamps and bottomland forests cut and remove the complex root and "knee" systems of countless bald cypress trees (*Taxodium distichum*) and dig millions of cubic feet of mud. They began to understand that enslaved Africans constructed the Lowcountry's tremendous wealth-producing rice plantations.

In addition, the park deserves consideration by the NPS for NHL status because research indicates it to be the site of a central confrontation during the Stono Rebellion—a struggle largely overlooked by historians studying the event. On that late summer day in September 1739, Jemmy, or Cato, and other freedom seekers were confronted and turned back by other enslaved people on the grounds of what is Caw Caw. The park was the site of a central and perhaps counterintuitive clash among enslaved people during the uprising, resulting in death for at least one of the rebels.

Linking Caw Caw County Park to the Stono Slave Rebellion

Shawn Halifax, the site's cultural history interpretation specialist and Charleston County Park's first public historian, had been researching Caw Caw's history for five years. By 2004, remarkable discoveries linking the park to the rebellion by investigating late eighteenth-century land records were being made. Two important plats of the park property located during master planning shed light on its early ownership. Unfortunately, because the site's earlier researchers did not have contextual knowledge of the area's history, these plats went largely unstudied for ten years. Both are twentieth-century Henry A. M. Smith copies of plats generated during a 1790 property dispute and describe early eighteenth-century land grants and ownership of the site.

Figure 1 illustrates the original land grants. Tract No. 2 is a five hundred-acre grant to Col. Robert Gibbes (May 1704). Tract No. 3 is a three hundred ninety-acre grant to Thomas Elliott known as Laurel Hill (June 1711). A settlement is indicated in the southwest corner of this tract (highlighted). The plat shows two additional tracts that make up the park property. Tract No. 4 is a four hundred ten-acre grant to Elliott (July 1711); west of tracts three and four is a final tract of four hundred sixty-three acres, also granted to Elliott (May 1723). The unnumbered tract is subdivided into a sixty-acre tract named Morris's Nook (highlighted) and has a road running along its eastern edge labeled "the Road from Laurel Hill."[54] The second Smith plat illustrates the same properties from a later date. There are several items of interest on this plat. On the tract labeled tract No. 2 (this is the same property labeled tract No. 4 in figure 1), written twice, once upside and again along its eastern boundary, is the name Thomas Rose (highlighted), indicating that he once owned the tract. To the north lies the 390-acre Laurel Hill tract (highlighted). Near the southern edge of the plat, Pon Pon Road (highlighted) is shown cutting east to west through the properties. Finally on this plat the Wallace River is labeled Stono (highlighted).[55]

The names of people and places on these plats—Thomas Elliott, Thomas Rose, Morris's Nook, Stono, and Pon Pon Road—mean little without context. Several books are helpful, but Wood's *Black Majority* and Mark Smith's *Documenting*

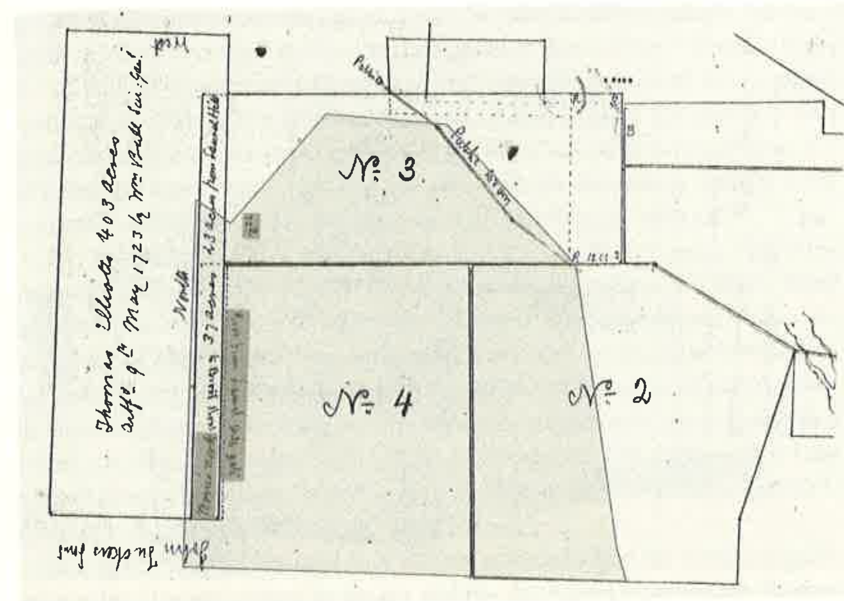

Figure 1. "Plan of the lands and the bounding tracts on which the dispute arose between the Hon: Isaac Holmes Plaintiff (exec of the estate of Jas Stanyarne decd) and the Hon: Hugh Rutledge defendant." The outlined area is the approximate Caw Caw County Park boundary. From the H.A.M. Smith plat collection (SCHS# 1102.00) at the South Carolina Historical Society.

Stono are the most enlightening: the former because it explores the critical roles played by enslaved people whose labor was the backbone of the Lowcountry economy and the latter because it gathers many of the few known primary documents and illustrates how the event has been interpreted over time and from different perspectives. In "An Account of the Negroe Insurrection in South Carolina," cited in both books, two key passages place the rebellion in relationship to Caw Caw: "All lying upon the Pons Pons Road" and "When they advanced upon the home of Thomas Rose with the intention of killing him . . ."[56]

An entry found in the South Carolina *Journal of the Commons House Committee* for November 29, 1739, provides more context. It describes July, a man enslaved by Thomas Elliott, who was granted his freedom and awarded a new suit of clothing because he prevented "his master and his family from being destroyed by the Rebellious Negroes." It also lists Ralph, Prince, Joe, Larush, and Pompey, all enslaved by Thomas Elliott, and two unnamed men and a woman enslaved by Thomas Rose, who were rewarded money for "opposing the Rebellions Negroes."[57]

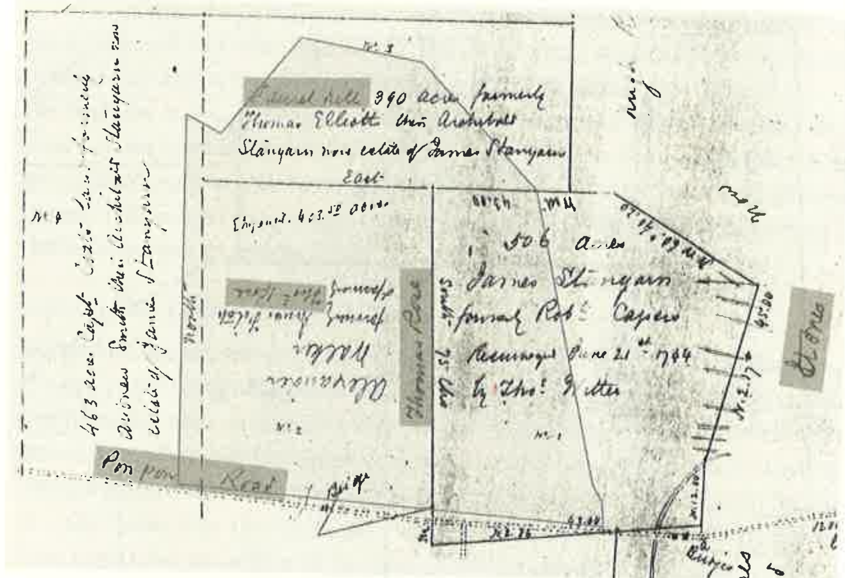

Figure 2. "General plan of land at Stono, Laurel Hill, Coats, Stanyarne etc." The outlined area is the approximate Caw Caw County Park boundary. From the H.A.M. Smith plat collection (SCHS# 1102.00) at the South Carolina Historical Society.

Research revealed two Thomas Elliotts, father and son, both closely related to Thomas Rose. The 1731 will of Thomas Elliott Sr. states, "I Give Devise and bequeath unto my Son Thomas Elliott all that plantation or tract of Land at Stono on which my said Son Thomas Elliott now Lives . . . with all the houses and buildings theron [*sic*]." Elliott Sr. bequeathed to his daughter Beuler a tract of land described as "land at Stono called Maurice's [*sic*] Nook . . . with the houses theron [*sic*] standing."[58] In 1733, two years after her father's death, Beuler Elliott married Thomas Rose.[59] The will also indicates that Thomas Elliott Jr. lived on his father's lands on Stono in 1731. It is likely he still lived there eight years later. Because Elliott and Rose are mentioned together in the November 29, 1739, journal entry, it is equally plausible that Elliott and Rose were neighbors on September 9, 1739. They likely became neighbors in 1733, when, it is presumed, Thomas Rose received the 410-acre Elliott Sr. 1711 land grant (Figure 1) that abutted Morris's Nook, quite possibly as a dowry from his brother-in-law Thomas Elliott Jr. (Figure 2).

Caw Caw encompasses Thomas Rose's estate and much of Thomas Elliott's estate, including the settlement located at Laurel Hill. In 1991 Michael Trinkley and Natalie Adams of the Chicora Foundation performed a shovel-test survey of

the Laurel Hill settlement (Figure 1). They identified a settlement site that contained many artifacts that date to the time of the 1739 rebellion. Fifteen artifacts were found. Five pieces of Colonoware and one yellow slipware have a mean ceramic date of 1733. Two pipe stems were found. One with a diameter of five sixty-fourths has a date range of 1680–1750; the other, with a diameter of six sixty-fourths, has a date range of 1720–1750. The six remaining artifacts were metal nails and a belt buckle. No dates were provided for these items.[60]

To summarize, at Caw Caw County Park archaeologists located a circa 1730s domestic site located on land along the headwaters of the Stono (Wallace) River that was owned and occupied by Thomas Elliott Jr. His property was fronted by that of his brother-in-law, Thomas Rose, whose estate was located on the Pon Pon Road. Both men are named together in a House of Commons report about the Stono Uprising, describing how the freedom seekers were turned away in a violent and deadly encounter with fellow enslaved men and woman. Caw Caw is where a very complex and significant episode associated with the largest slave rebellion in English North America unfolded.

In a 2017 letter the National Park Service acknowledged the historic significance of the rice agriculture landscape and the documentation linking Thomas Elliot, Thomas Rose, July, Ralph, Prince, Joe, Larush, Pompey, and the two unnamed men and a woman enslaved by Thomas Rose to the Stono Rebellion at Caw Caw. It states that the site is eligible for NHL designation under Criterion 1: "Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, or that outstandingly represent, the broad national patterns of US history and from which an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained." It recommended that Caw Caw should pursue an "update and boundary expansion of the Stono Slave Rebellion Site NHL (NHL Reference NO. 74001840), which includes Laurel Hill Plantation site and any other parts of the [Caw Caw] property that can be linked via material evidence to the Stono Rebellion." It also recommended additional archaeological testing be undertaken at Laurel Hill to strengthen the evidence of the site's association with the rebellion.[61]

Beginning in 2020, students from Clemson University/College of Charleston's graduate program in historic preservation, under the leadership of Associate Professor and Program Director John Marcoux, began assisting Caw Caw in its efforts to update the boundary expansion of the NHL. Students are conducting research to update the NHL, preparing a historic landscape report and performing additional shovel tests, as recommended by the NPS.[62]

Tracing the Route of the Freedom Seekers

In 2004 the story of the Stono Rebellion was not being discussed nor was it marked, even though in 1974 the National Park Service had declared the

Hutchenson Store site an NHL.[63] The NHL designates just one four-acre piece of property for an event that, according to present estimates, took place over at least a fifteen-mile stretch of Lowcountry landscape.[64] Halifax turned his attention to determining the entire landscape associated with the event. The search started near the end of the route, where the freedom seekers and a militia mustered from Reverend Archibald Stobo's Willtown Presbyterian Church engaged in battle.[65] There is strong evidence to suggest that Elias B. Bull, the first historical preservation planner for the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Regional Planning Council of Governments, who served from 1970 to 1981 and assisted Greenlee in her NHL application for the Stono Slave Rebellion site of Hutchenson's store in 1973 and 1974, at least considered a separate and specific application for the Presbyterian Church at Wiltown for its association with the Stono Rebellion. The "Wiltown Bluff" nomination form to the National Register of Historic Places was prepared in 1974 by Bull. The application does mention the Stono Rebellion. However, in Bull's papers at the Charleston County Public Library there is an incomplete and unsigned National Registration form titled, "The Stono River Slave Rebellion and the Wiltown Presbyterian Church." Sections are alternately typed and handwritten in a style that seems to match Bull's handwriting.[66]

A study by Richard Stockton of properties near the junction of the road to Wiltown (modern Parker's Ferry Road) and Pon Pon Road (modern US Highway 17 and Old Jacksonboro Road) focuses on Battlefield Plantation, which, according to local lore, was so named because of the battle that occurred there during the rebellion.[67]

Stockton cites a 1759 conveyance and plat of land being sold by James Bullock that is bounded by lands belonging to, among others, Royal Spry, Thomas Sacheverel, and "part on Hext." According to Stockton, Bullock likely acquired this land after his marriage to Jean Stobo, the daughter of Reverend Archibald Stobo, around 1727. Bullock still owned the land at the time of the Stono Rebellion in 1739.[68] One of the only contemporaneous accounts of the rebellion to name specific people directly involved in the event includes the "Account of the Negroe Insurrection in South Carolina," originally printed in the March 1740 edition of London's *Gentleman's Magazine*. The anonymous account names the four individuals Stockton references in his report: "they burnt Colonel Hext's house and killed his Overseer and his Wife. They then burn Mr. Sprye's [*sic*] house, then Mr. Sacheverell's [*sic*] and then Mr. Nash's, all lying upon the Pons Pons [*sic*] Road, and Killed all the white People they found in them. Mr. Bullock got off, but they burn his House. . . ."[69] Unfortunately, Hext, Spry, and Sacheverel are named on the Bullock conveyance and plat that date eighteen years after the rebellion with no indication of when they acquired their properties. However, it is very plausible that these are the same individuals.[70]

Although not all the locations mentioned in the historical record have been identified, enough of them are known that a route can be traced. They include, from west to east, the locations of Wiltown Presbyterian Church, where the local militia was mustered; the Spry, Sacherevel, Hext, and Bullock properties near the final battle site; Thomas Rose's and Thomas Elliott's plantations, where a skirmish broke out among enslaved people; and Hutchenson's store, where it is believed to have all began. With more research, perhaps all the named sites can be found.[71]

Erecting the Stono Rebellion Highway Marker

Halifax traced the route from its end because the start of the route near Hutchenson's store and its associated cellar is well-known. However, it is almost never accessible. The current property owners, the Sea Island Farmers Cooperative, keep the property gated and locked. Serendipitously on the week of September 9, 2004, while Halifax was driving past the site to the South Carolina Historical Society to perform more research on the rebellion, an opportunity to see the cellar for the first time presented itself.[72] The following paragraphs are his first-person recollection of this first visit to the NHL:

> While driving to Charleston, I noticed the driveway gate to the Cooperative open and someone mowing the grass. I did a U-turn in front of Peter Miller's gas station and drove back. I stopped, got out and approached an older African American man. I shared my interest in the place and asked about the Stono Slave Rebellion. He said I'd have to speak with Mr. Inabinett, who it just so happened would be arriving shortly.
>
> While waiting he showed me the cellar. It's a relatively nondescript hole in the ground, lined with brick and grown over with weeds. While standing there he told a little bit of what he knew. Growing up in the 1950s and 60s, across the street at Peter Miller's there was a "beach" for Blacks. A place Blacks could gather for entertainment and recreation during Jim Crow segregation.[73] He called it a beach, but it's not what most people would call a beach. Just a slope leading down to the Wallace River where it narrows to a stone's throw across. There are no waves or sandy beaches, just a terribly swift tide and miles of salt marsh grass as far as the eye can see, interrupted only by small hummock islands.
>
> He recalled for me a day at Peter Miller's that must illustrate something of what it means to be Black in Charleston. As a young man he was having fun with friends and family, when just across the street—right on the Cooperative's property, right next to Hutchenson's store cellar, right where he now stood sharing this story—the Ku Klux Klan gathered in their white robes, erected a cross, and set it ablaze. When the Cooperative

purchased the property in the early 1970s, they did it silently through a white lawyer, because the seller would have never sold the land if he knew the buyers were a Cooperative of Black farmers. Mr. Inabinett arrived as the man finished his story.

I didn't know then but do now. Mr. Curtis Inabinett is a Korean War veteran, a former Charleston County school teacher and principal, the first Black mayor of Ravenel, a South Carolina state legislator, and at that time a Charleston County councilman. As an employee of Charleston County Parks, he was my boss, in a way. However, more than that he is a man deserving of respect and honor. A leader who has broken down racial barriers everywhere he has been.

I do not know what his impressions were of our meeting, or if he even remembers it. Mr. Inabinett confirmed the property was the site of Hutchenson's store. He went inside and returned with the bronze plaque designating it an NHL. I shared my story of tracing the Stono Rebellion route from the park to Battlefield Plantation and that I was interested in erecting a South Carolina highway marker to commemorate the rebellion.

Mr. Inabinett, in no uncertain terms, let me know I was out of order. At the time I had a hard time understanding why. Didn't he see all I wanted to do was help tell an important story? I didn't get it then but do now. In my excitement over my research of the eighteenth century, and in my naïveté about South Carolina's late twentieth-century history, and in my twenty-first-century white skin, I possibly posed a threat. Not a dangerous threat, more of an annoying "Here we go again, another white man who's going tell us our history and how to tell it" kind of threat. For him this was not my story to share; it was the Cooperative's.

If he indeed thought these things, he had every right to. When I try to place myself in his shoes, it's what I would think. How many times do people that look like me insist the Stono Rebellion was good for "Black slaves because afterward laws were passed that ensured their better treatment"? How many times do those same folks choose not to acknowledge how draconian the Slave Code of 1740 was? How many times is it not mentioned that these men, women, and children only wanted the same liberty as their White oppressors? I backed down from placing the marker in front of the county park but did not stop working for placement of a highway marker at the Cooperative.

Not once with all my white privilege did I consider that I was advocating for the erection of a sign commemorating the largest and most violent Black-on-white violence in South Carolina's colonial history at the very location where just thirty years earlier the KKK terrorized the local Black

Unveiling the Stono Rebellion (1739) Highway Marker, September 9, 2006. Photo by Shawn Halifax.

community. Many of those Klansmen and the Black families they terrorized probably still lived right there in the neighborhood. I was so blind to the racism.

Today, I clearly see just how far out of my lane I had swerved during that first meeting with Mr. Inabinett. I am forever indebted to him for the valuable lesson he taught me, even though it took several years for me to see what the lesson was.

During 2004 and 2005 members of the Cooperative, the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor, the Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston, the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, and Halifax worked to erect the marker. According to Dr. W. Marvin Dulaney, who was then the Avery director, at some point before September 2006 the Sea Island Farmers Cooperative had "done the work" and sponsored a South Carolina state highway marker for the Stono Rebellion.[74]

The Highway Marker Program seeks to "mark and interpret places important to an understanding of South Carolina's past, either as the sites of significant events . . . or for their association with institutions or individuals significant in local, state, or national history." The Highway Marker Program is not publicly funded: institutions such as churches and schools or "historical, patriotic, civic or other organizations" may "suggest, document, sponsor, and pay for" a marker and its subsequent upkeep.

Individuals are not allowed to sponsor markers, but they may propose and pay for them if they have institutional or organizational sponsorship. Sponsors are also responsible for paying for the cost of the installation and upkeep. The cost is $2,200 for a country marker with distinct printing on both sides, like the one for Stono, plus a $250 research fee.[75] Dulaney recalled that the Avery donated some funds for sponsorship.[76] The South Carolina Department of Archives and History held meetings to discuss the language of the marker, although no records of the discussion exist.

The Stono Highway Marker was officially unveiled in the early-morning hours on September 9, 2006, the anniversary of the beginning of the Stono Rebellion. Mr. Curtis Inabinett and Dr. Dulaney made remarks for the ceremony.

Historic Highway Markers Are Not Memorials

The purpose of commemoration is to not only publicly remember but also to publicly reckon with the past. The Stono marker commemorates the 1739 rebels in the public landscape as freedom fighters. In doing so, it is part of the ongoing battle against the erasure of Black history in the United States and against anti-Black racism itself. The marker exists because of the efforts of the members of the Sea Island Farmers Cooperative, who are part of a longer tradition of Black antislavery activism that encompasses the work of Black historians in the early twentieth century to document the history of the Stono Rebellion and the efforts of Black historian-activists in the 1970s to successfully nominate Stono as an NHL. It is part of an even longer tradition of Black antislavery activism in America manifested by the Stono rebels, themselves only one generation removed from the English settling of Charlestowne and arrival of the first enslaved Africans in the colony. All of these groups—and others—kept alive the flame of Stono and the meaning of Black antislavery work for all who pass by the property or view the marker or the NHL plaque on a website. This is one way in which public memory—by which we include the federal NHL designation, the South Carolina state highway marker, and the interpretive programs of Caw Caw—is a springboard for spreading knowledge and understanding. Public commemorations such as Stono are political and personal: they revive the memory of a place, an event, and a culture, and, at the same time, they foster individual reflection on the US past and present. Halifax describes this convergence of the political and personal, the past and present:

> I feel an overwhelming sense of pride every time I drive by the Stono Marker simply because *it is* there. It gives me pure delight. Its presence is a silent reply to all those who sought to send a message when they placed the heads of the executed freedom seekers on mile markers and passed the 1740 slave code. It is a silent reply to men like Thomas Jefferson, John C. Calhoun, Jefferson Davis, and George Wallace. It is a silent reply to the cowardly Ku Klux Klan terrorists burning their crosses next to Peter Miller's and to the white supremacist and murderer of nine at Charleston's Mother Emanuel. This history will not be erased.

However, a simple marker is not enough. At Caw Caw, the trailside interpretive kiosks at the park were replaced and a new sign interpreting the Stono Slave Rebellion unveiled at Laurel Hill in 2007. Current plans call for the Stono Slave Rebellion to become a primary focus of the park's interpretation as new exhibits are developed. In 2015 the Charleston World Heritage Coalition convened a group of international experts to provide guidance in the organization's bid for the City of Charleston to become a UNESCO World Heritage site. The experts recommended the application be refocused from the downtown area of Charleston and its historic architecture to sites that exhibit Charleston's role in the diaspora of Africans captured in the transatlantic slave trade and the plantation economy of rice, indigo, and cotton that contributed to the city's tremendous wealth during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the convening the members of the group toured the county park. Walking through its incredibly intact rice fields, they learned about its role in the Stono Slave Rebellion. When they finished touring, they suggested the site be included in a revised application as a key property in the overall nomination.

In 2017 the National Park Service, which recommends sites to UNESCO, declined to include Charleston in its tentative list.[77] However, it held out hope and suggested that the coalition work to fill missing gaps in its nomination before 2026. According to Executive Director Brittany Lavelle Tulla, "The Coalition is going to focus on a few properties that tell the story best—Caw Caw County Park being one of the most important."[78] As Tulla maintains, "The Stono Rebellion was not only an integral event in the history of Charleston and the surrounding area, but it also impacted history on both a national and international level. Caw Caw's intact rice fields and preserved landscape tell this story, and it is not until the city, the nation and the world are presented with the history that Caw Caw encapsulates will each truly understand the development of the United States of America."[79]

It is envisioned that the Stono Rebellion will be recognized by the United Nations and the world as a World Heritage site worthy of memorial because of its significance to the history of the transatlantic slave trade and as an example of the human quest for personal liberty and social justice. The fight to commemorate antislavery struggles of the past, like the Stono Rebellion, continues to be part of a larger, ongoing struggle against racism and exploitation. The historians who wrote about Stono in the 1930s, the preservationist-activists who successfully gained NHL recognition for the site in the 1970s, the Cooperative's

farmers who sponsored the highway marker in 2006, and the cultural interpreters of Caw Caw who link enslaved labor and rebellion in their programs have all undertaken this struggle. More work remains to be done, but each group, in distinctive ways, has made the story of the Stono Rebellion part of the story of the United States past and present.