

Rev.

Barnwell's three 500-acre plantations lay along Skull Creek and Port Royal Sound. These holdings later made up large portions of the Waight/Elliott Myrtle Bank Plantation, and Fish Hall Plantation, which has been mistakenly listed as a holding of the Draytons.

Barnwell already had land on Parris Island and on St. Helena, but he did plant his Hilton Head holdings, and upon his death he left the three plantations to three of his children — John, Katherine and Bridget.

Through sales and inheritance, John's property (Fish Hall) devolved to Mary Baynard Pope, who left it to her grandchildren from the marriage of her daughter Emma to Thomas Fenwick Drayton. The Draytons were unable to take possession of their land due to the Civil War, but the name stuck and the land is still referred to as "Drayton Plantation." Katherine Barnwell died without issue and her portion was added to the estate of her sister, Bridget. When her son, Robert Sams died without children, the estate was sold and became Myrtle Bank, later the site of the Elliott family's experimentation with Sea Island Cotton. William Elliott was a well-known Lowcountry planter, but it was his son, William Elliott II who pioneered the long-stapled cotton brought in from Barbados, thereby creating a large part of the wealth of the antebellum South.

The Talbird Saga

The Talbirds were another early family along Skull Creek and their story definitely is the substance of which dreams — and novels — are made. The head of the South Carolina clan of Talbirds was born Henry Talbot, son of Sir John Talbot, Lord Mayor of Dublin.

When Henry was five years old, he was sent to live with his uncle and namesake, Henry Talbot, in London, to become his heir. Through either accident or jealousy, the young

boy was lost by a servant in the streets of London and was rescued by a sea captain from Plymouth. Not being able to find his family, the childless mariner took the young boy home to Plymouth where he and his wife raised him as their own.

Later in life, after the family had moved to America, the boy was told of his background, the family having discovered it soon after their impromptu adoption. Talbot went back to Ireland to claim a share of his father's estate, but was thrown into prison as an imposter by a younger half-brother.

His legal problems were solved through help from a sister who believed his story, but his brother would not relent and Talbot returned to South Carolina. He did, however, come armed with contracts to build a series of lighthouses along the coast, and as part-payment for the lighthouses, Talbot was given a grant on Hilton Head's Skull Creek.

And herein lies the hazel-hatchery part. A lazy or ignorant clerk in London who made out the grant papers spelled Talbot's names as Talbird. Since the papers would have to be sent back to London to record the change — and since Talbot had no particular love for his patronymic as the result of his brother's actions, he left the spelling as it was and adopted that version himself thereafter.

A neighbor to the Talbot/Talbird property on Skull Creek was John Ladson, whose father-in-law, John Conyers, also lived nearby. Young John Talbird, one of Henry's six children, met and married Ladson's daughter, Mary Ann, and was given his father's Hilton Head property as a wedding present.

The wedding took place in December 1778, shortly after the fall of Savannah to the British. John soon found himself on duty with the Continental forces as a lieutenant in the company of his brother, Capt. Thomas Talbird. Wounded and captured during a battle on John's Island, John was a prisoner for a time in Charleston, but was paroled and sent home

in 1780.

When the Tories of Capt. Dick Pendarvis tried to recruit Talbird to fight against his friends and family, he slipped away and joined the Continentals once more, fighting with "The Swamp Fox," General Thomas Francis Marion, only to be captured a second time and placed on a prison ship in Charleston Harbor.

Pendarvis, a kinsman of the Martinangeles of Daufuskie, became a scourge to the Lowcountry and was responsible for the death of Talbird's step-brother, Capt. James Doherty. Talbird's nephew, a Captain Leaycraft, tracked down Pendarvis and executed him.

Shortly thereafter, a troop of British soldiers from Savannah and led by Isaac Martinangele of Daufuskie, landed on Hilton Head and marching the length of Skull Creek, burnt every plantation and home they found. One of these, of course, was the Talbird home, despite the fact that Isaac's wife was the sister of John Talbird.

Mary Ann Talbird, left destitute except for the furniture that her brother-in-law saved for her from the fire, later that day gave birth to her second child. The date was Oct. 17, 1781, the same day that Lord Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington at Yorktown. The child, Henry Talbird, was called "Yorktown Henry" throughout his life.

The Martinangeles weren't through, however, and a few nights later, they raided Hilton Head, killing Charles Davant from ambush near the site of the present Antebellum Cemetery, near Folly Field. Two weeks later, on Christmas Eve, a group of patriot soldiers known as "The Bloody Legion," and led by Capt. Leaycraft, went to Daufuskie and killed both Philip and Abraham Martinangele.

The bloodletting stopped after that and Hilton Head (and Hilton Head Plantation) moved on into the halcyon days of Sea Island cotton and the great fortunes that were to be amassed from it.

XIX: 46 "Old Hilton Head Names"

Names in South Carolina