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Archaeology of Tenant Farming in the Upper Coastal Plain of Georgia: The Free Cabin Site

By Pamela A. Johnson



Prior to work being done to widen Highway 25 (called Peach Orchard Road) in Hephzibah, Georgia, an archaeological excavation took place to investigate a site with a series of cabins associated with tenant farming by African Americans. The Free Cabin was part of a tenant farming community on the Rhodes family plantation. Examination of the structure, yard, and artifacts revealed a unique way of life and a landscape of organized work. After the excavation and analysis of the site's materials, a public education initiative began and an informative brochure and Powerpoint-style video presentation were developed discussing the site and its potential to educate the public about this important time in history. The completion of these informative materials was made possible by funding from the Federal Highway Administration, Georgia Division, with assistance from the Georgia Department of Transportation and New South Associates. The video presentation is 25 minutes long and addresses subjects such as tenant farming and sharecropping in the late 19th century, agricultural production strategies, dietary patterns, market impacts, and the interpretation of landscape features and vernacular architecture styles. If you are interested in obtaining a CD copy of this presentation, entitled *The Archaeology of Tenant Farming in the Upper Coastal Plain of Georgia: The Free Cabin Site*, you may obtain a copy of the brochure and/or CD video by contacting Pamela A. Johnson at the Georgia Department of Transportation, 3993 Aviation Circle, Atlanta, Georgia 30336, email Pamela.Johnson@dot.state.ga.us.