

Here is the comment of Maj. Samuel Dubose:

“Upon the resort of the planters to the inland swamps for the cultivation of rice, the work of reclamation and preparation for rendering them safe and productive was both arduous and precarious; subject as they were as often to an excess of water as to a want of it when most needed. It is now a source of surprise and wonder to examine the amount of labor and skill some of the fields in this neighborhood exhibit. Take for instance, ‘Wantoot,’ the patrimonial estate of Daniel Ravenel, esquire, who died in 1807. On his land four swamps unite to form ‘Biggin,’ each contributing copious streams.

“To unite and concentrate these into one, and bear off the water when in excess, as well as distribute it into the fields of the different plantations, called for judgment, perseverance and an amount of labor not easily understood. Mr. Ravenel resided in Charleston during the summer months when the work had to be chiefly carried on, and from thence he issued his orders to his driver, who occasionally went to town to receive them. On these occasions, for his better understanding of his master’s wishes, the carpet would be taken from the floor of the hall, and a plat of the swamp, the creeks, watercourses, etc., chalked out for the driver’s study and understanding.

“This man was slow of understanding, but very faithful and assiduous in executing his master’s wishes. His success was a matter of wonder to the community.”—*Address of Maj. Samuel Dubose at the 17th Anniversary of the Black Oak Agricultural Society, April 27, 1858; reprinted by Dr. T. Gaillard Thomas, New York, 1887. Pages 9 and 10. Knickerbocker Press.*

The Will of Daniel Ravenel, of Chelsea, is recorded in the Probate office in Charleston. See Will Book 1774–1778, p. 172. He devises Chelsea, Brunswick and Hip-