

29 Jun 2005

**Waties Island** – Waties Island is named for either William **Waties**, Sr. or Jr. Originally from Wales, William Waties, Sr. settled near Charleston around 1694. In 1716 he was appointed as a factor for trading with the Indians north of the Santee River and established a trading house at Uauenee (Yauhannah), otherwise called the Great Bluff. In 1735 his son, William Waties, Jr., also a former Indian trader, helped survey the boundary line between NC and SC in the area of present day Horry County. Waties Sr., Jr. and III accumulated large tracts of desirable land along the Waccamaw, Pee Dee, and Little Rivers in Horry County, as well as along the coast and in the Georgetown area.

The oldest known plat for Waties Island is a survey dated 7 May 1754 and certified 31 July 1754. On the document it states, "*South Carolina. Pursuant to a precept from George Hunter Esq. Surveyor General, dated the 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, Anno Domini, 1754, I have admeasured and laid out an Island known by the name of Waties Island, in Prince George Parish, Craven County, unto William Allston: Butting and bordering S.E. on the sea, N.E. on Waties Inlet, N.W. on a creek running through a Salt Marsh, and S. on Master's Inlet, and containing Seventy one and a half acres; Having such shape and form as the above plat represents. Certified this 31 July 1754. Zech: Brazier, D.S.*"

This plat would have accompanied a King's Grant issued by the Royal Governor of South Carolina deeding the property to William Allston. It is interesting that the island was already called Waties Island yet there is no evidence that William Waties ever owned the island. It is possible, but there is no evidence, that he had a Proprietary Grant for the island but he never recorded it, and that Allston purchased the land from Waties' heirs but still applied for a King's Grant for the property to make sure that he had a clear title. William Waties, Sr. left a Will but it has been lost.

It is possible that the island may have been named for Waties, Jr. who, according to records, owned 1,150 acres in the area as of 1733. Five Hundred acres bordered the creek which ran behind the island, and at least two maps call that creek Waties Inlet.

In 1995, a total of 1,049 acres on the island and the adjoining uplands of Little River Neck was deeded to the Coastal Educational Foundation, Inc. The gift has been protected with a perpetual conservation easement through The Nature Conservancy of South Carolina. It was the wish of Anne Tilghman Boyce that the property she left to a charitable trust be maintained "in essentially a wilderness state". Through her bequest, the support of her surviving children and a large cash gift from her sister-in-law, Kitty Lou Tilghman, Coastal has gained a magnificent addition to the facilities it can offer to students and faculty for education and research. In 1998 Rebecca Randall Bryan donated an adjacent 4.65 acre tract located along the Intracoastal Waterway, bringing CCU's total acreage in that area to 1,105.17 acres.

The Waties property is an outstanding example of an undeveloped complex of ocean frontage, fresh and saltwater marshes, tidal creeks, and upland woods. Surrounded by a rapidly urbanizing environment, it is becoming increasingly significant for research, monitoring, and education about the natural coastal habitat. The island is a dynamic place where change is the rule rather than the exception. This makes Waties Island an excellent outdoor laboratory in which to study natural coastal processes.