Open-range cattle herding was a lucrative activity before plantation agriculture developed in the South Carolina backcountry. In this paper, the material record associated with two residences occupied by colonial frontier cattle raisers is summarized. British settlers and enslaved West Africans inhabited the Catherine Brown cowpen and the Thomas Howell site. Typical of frontier conditions, the material record at these sites revealed a juxtaposition of formative consumerism and folk traditions. Archaeological information indicates that despite wealth and the use of imported consumer goods, the two households relied upon impermanent architecture, used local ceramics, and supplemented their diets with wild game.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the colonial frontier in eastern North America has captured the imagination of scholars and the public alike. Popular images of long hunters traversing the frontier or extended families arduously making the hopeful yet uncertain journey into new territory along crude wagon roads have served as both icons of national consciousness and standard fare among academics. Modern research on the colonial frontier has transcended disciplinary boundaries, with scholars from the fields of political history, social history, folklore, geography, and American studies contributing to an enhanced understanding of this period (Dunaway 1996; Fischer 1989; Jordan and Kaups 1989).

Within the past thirty years, historical archaeologists have participated in this enterprise by systematically exploring the material characteristics of frontier life during the colonial period (e.g., Stone 1974; South 1977; Lewis 1984). Initially, frontier period research among archaeologists corroborated documentary information concerning the standard of living and material conditions of colonial settlers (e.g., Noël Hume 1979). More recently, as the research skills of historical archaeologists become more finely honed, their efforts not only supplement historical portrayals and descriptions but also have provided, in many situations, primary information about colonial material conditions, ethnic traditions, and cultural dynamics not accessible from written historical sources. Previously unknown architectural techniques in North America, such as earthfast construction methods (Carson et al. 1988), and undocumented pottery traditions like colono ware (Ferguson 1992) are two of the more significant discoveries achieved by historical archaeologists. Historical archaeology has also illustrated materially the general resilience of traditional cultural elements among Native Americans (Fitzhugh 1985) and enslaved Africans (Singleton and Bograd 1995) in Anglo-dominated societies.

Given the potential of archaeology to illuminate undocumented material aspects of the historic past, our purpose is to use archaeology to explore the topic of cattle herding—an important yet often overlooked part of the colonial frontier economy in the American South. This case study examines the material culture associated with two sites occupied by livestock raisers in colonial South Carolina, the Catherine Brown cowpen (38BR291) and the Thomas Howell site (38RD397). Located in the South Carolina interior—known then as the backcountry—Catherine Brown’s cowpen was inhabited between approximately 1757 and 1782 (Brooks 1987; Brooks et al. 2000), and the Thomas Howell site was occupied from the 1740s to the 1820s (Groover 1991, 1992, 1994). The Brown site is located next to Steel Creek in Barnwell County, adjacent to the Georgia border and the Savannah River. The Howell site is located in lower Richland County adjacent to Mill Creek and the Congaree River near Columbia, South Carolina (Figure 1).

Although historians recognize the importance of cattle raising and animal husbandry in general to the development of the early southern agricultural economy (Gray 1932), specifics on the material characteristics of colonial period herders have remained elusive. The social history and material conditions of early livestock farms, such as the number and types of outbuildings, the arrangement of holding pens, the style and construction methods associated with domestic architecture, the range of subsistence practices, the material influence of ethnic traditions, and the standard of living experienced by livestock-raising households, are sometimes alluded to in period accounts and descriptions but remain sketchy at best. The archaeological record of colonial period resources such as Catherine Brown’s cowpen and the Thomas Howell site offers important primary information on cattle-raising households in the southern backcountry.
The South Carolina Backcountry

South Carolina’s backcountry was a distinct geographical and cultural region during the colonial period, recognized as a specific place by the region’s inhabitants throughout the eighteenth century. With the passing of the frontier, in part due to the invention of the cotton gin and the introduction of plantation-scale cotton production in the South Carolina interior after 1790, the region came to be known as South Carolina’s upcountry in the nineteenth century (Meriwether 1940). The backcountry extended from a line approximately 50 miles inland from the coast, west to the Blue Ridge Mountains, and north to the border of North Carolina (Figure 1). This area encompasses five of the six main physiographic zones in South Carolina, including the Outer Coastal Plain, Inner Coastal Plain, Sandhills, Piedmont, and Blue Ridge Mountains (Kovacik and Winberry 1987).

Colonial migration into the backcountry began in 1731 with a township plan implemented by Governor Robert Johnson, who intended to encourage settlement of the interior to provide a protective buffer between Indians to the west and southwest and colonial plantations and population centers near the coast. The colonial government also anticipated that European settlers in the backcountry could come to the aid of coastal inhabitants in the event of a large-scale slave rebellion. These new townships attracted many immigrants from Europe, and the population of the colony almost tripled, from 30,000 to 80,000, between 1730 and 1760, largely due to the influx of backcountry settlers and enslaved West Africans (Meriwether 1940).

Twelve backcountry townships were established by the 1760s, yet only four—Williamsburg, Orangeburg, Saxe-Gotha, and the Welsh tract—proved successful. The others failed partly because of poor soils and bad locations. Further, many backcountry settlers, such as the Brown and Howell families, chose to live outside the boundaries of the townships. The need among settlers for fairly large land tracts suitable for farming was probably the main factor that discouraged settlement within townships (Meriwether 1940). Consequently, a dispersed settlement pattern began to develop in the vicinity of townships during the 1730s. One of these, the Congaree settlement in lower Richland County where the Thomas Howell settled, is illustrated in Figure 2, with residences located adjacent to major creeks and the Congaree River. A similar settlement pattern has been identified on the Savannah River site in Aiken and
Barnwell counties, where colonial sites cluster along major drainages (Figure 3) (Brooks 1987; Brooks and Crass 1991; Brooks et al. 2000).

Although many of the townships originally contained ethnic enclaves, such as the Germans in Saxe-Gotha, the Swiss Germans in New Windsor, and the French in New Bordeaux Township, the dispersed settlement pattern that developed in the backcountry discouraged maintenance of ethnic-based communities. Furthermore, most frontier townships and surrounding communities did not maintain populations sufficient to sustain insular ethnic enclaves. As a consequence, significant cultural restructuring began to occur among the second generation of settler families in the backcountry, ethnic-specific practices diminished, and a pan-cultural American society began to emerge during the ensuing nineteenth century.

In contrast to the coastal lowcountry, with predominantly British and West African ethnic groups, the population and economy of the backcountry were more
diverse, including German, Swiss, French, Irish, English, Scottish, and Welsh immigrants in addition to West Africans and local Native Americans. Farming households in the region held relatively small tracts and worked the land they owned. Planters (as the large landholders came to be called) certainly existed in the backcountry, yet the average planter in the interior owned approximately 12 slaves and represented less than 10 percent of the landholding population, which contrasted considerably with the wealthier slave owners along the coast (Klein 1990). In the lowcountry, rice and indigo were the main agricultural products. Backcountry farms and small plantations, on the other hand, produced surpluses of food crops and livestock that were often used to feed enslaved laborers on the coast (Meriwether 1940).

Regarding material life, geographic isolation and frontier conditions likely encouraged the persistence of ethnically based folk cultures and practices in the backcountry during the colonial period. The nineteenth-century decline in ethnic-based material traditions was partly a consequence of the penetration of industrial consumer culture. Formative consumerism resulted in greater levels of material homogenization among the residents of the region, particularly in the types of household items they used and discarded. For example, colono ware and lead-glazed earthenware or redware ceramics were typical household wares during the colonial period, often comprising a third or more of the ceramic assemblages at frontier sites. As the colonial period waned, these locally produced ceramics decreased in prevalence or disappeared entirely at domestic sites, having been replaced by industrially produced wares (Ferguson 1992; South 1999).

Concerning frontier domestic architecture, extant historical and archaeological information suggests that

Figure 3. Colonial settlement on the Savannah River site indicated by the distribution of eighteenth-century sites and plat maps.
backcountry dwellings were usually small timber-framed structures; brick dwellings were practically non-existent (Meriwether 1940). Surviving historical sources provide depictions and written descriptions of timber-framed structures used by early colonial settlers in the backcountry. For example, in February 1736 the Georgia Salzburger community of Ebenezer, approximately 100 miles northwest of Savannah, moved a short distance to a more hospitable site named New Ebenezer near the Savannah River. One of their number, Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck, sketched the Salzburgers’ house-raising activities (Figure 4). The settlers at New Ebenezer initially constructed large, barrack-like structures, “two large huts, each forty feet long and twenty-four feet wide,” on the bank of the Savannah River (Hvidit 1980:36). In the foreground of the sketch, settlers fell and dress trees with axes; a large tent is located to the left, with new structures at the center and on the right of the clearing. The partially completed structure on the right, covered with long vertical planks, contains adults and children as well as drying clothes hang from a line. Two individuals hold vertical framing timbers in place as the frame of the structure on the left is raised. Both structures are of earthfast construction, as indicated by the wall timbers extending into the ground and the absence of a foundation or ground sill. This subtle architectural detail is significant, since archaeologists and architectural historians have encountered very few historical drawings clearly depicting earthfast construction techniques (e.g., Carson et al. 1988), a once prevalent but seemingly forgotten architectural tradition. Further, the temporary hut on the right indicates walls formed from vertical split logs or planks held together by horizontal split rails, not unlike a large picket fence or palisade wall. This construction method appears to be similar to plank-framed houses described by Carson et al. (1988:155). A month later, von Reck sketched the arrival of families by rowboat at the fledgling town of New Ebenezer (Figure 5). Town lots were surrounded by picket fences, and the new single-story, one- and two-room dwellings appear to have been frame structures with central chimneys.

Other historical descriptions likewise suggest the prevalence of both timber-framed and earthfast dwellings in South Carolina’s colonial settlements. For example, in a 1710 promotional pamphlet designed to encourage settlement, Thomas Nairne recommended to newly arrived settlers that “whilst some Servants are clearing the Land, others are to be employed in squaring or sawing Wall-plats, Posts, Rafters, Boards and Shingles, for a small House for the Family, which usually serves for a Kitchin afterwards” (Nairne 1988:62). Similarly, in 1764 frontier guide Patrick Calhoun reported that a group of French Huguenots at newly founded New Bordeaux settlement “had set up six houses, and that frames were ready for fourteen more,” in an assembly-line method of dwelling construction probably typical of house raisings (Meriwether 1940:253). The remnants of a timber-framed structure with wattle-and-daub-filled walls, razed in Orangeburg County in 1835, also provides a glimpse of construction methods associated in backcountry South Carolina dwellings. Noted historian Alexander Salley (1898:223-224) related that

Mr. W. W. Culler gives a description of a dwelling house that was built about 1750, or earlier, by his great grand-father, Benedict Koller. The last wall of this house was torn down by Mr. Culler himself about 1835. It was about 16 × 20 feet. The
sides were built by putting up in line eight lightwood posts, with eight or nine feet clear the ground, about two feet apart. Each post had a groove cut in the sides facing the neighboring posts. The spaces between the posts were filled in by sliding into these grooves a wicker work of small twigs made somewhat as stick baskets are made. The ends of the house were built up in the same manner, save that space was left for a door. The outside wall was then plastered over with a plaster made of red clay and the inside was quite smooth when plastered with a plaster made of native lime. The floor was made by hewing small logs flat on the upper and under sides and laying them together as a floor is laid, and then putting on a finishing touch with an adz. The roof was made of the same material and then sodded. The door was made of the same sort of boards joined together by wrought nails. The hinges were made of dogwood. Beneath this structure was a cellar, which has only been filled up in the last decade.

Wood and clay chimneys, or country chimneys, were common architectural elements used by colonial period settlers from Maryland to the Carolinas. “Another name for the wooden fireplace and hood is ‘Welsh chimney,’ which in Wales, or on the English side of the Welsh border, is a wicker and thatch contraption. The poles or sticks of the wattled hood generally projected through the thatched roof, and a round clay coating was daubed on the sticks to make the stack” (Forman 1948:21). Due to the labor, time, and fuel required to manufacture bricks, the flammable wood and clay chimneys were an economical yet hazardous substitute for brick chimneys. These chimneys were typically placed on the gable ends of dwellings (Forman 1948:21, 70, 99; Main 1982:147), where they could easily be pulled down if they caught fire. They persisted in use during the nineteenth century, especially on slave dwellings.

Although dwellings were modest on the colonial South Carolina frontier, merchants in the region provided residents with relatively easy access to industrially manufactured goods, as indicated by the broad range of consumer items listed in backcountry inventories (Meriwether 1940). The availability of consumer items is likewise corroborated by the abundance of European ceramics, tobacco pipes, glass beverage containers, and discarded personal items usually recovered from frontier sites (Lewis 1984; Scurry et al. 1980).

In summary, the backcountry was populated predominantly by farming households and a smaller proportion of slaveholders. Dwellings were typically small in size and timber framed. In contrast to stereotypes advanced by historians and historical observers emphasizing the meager material possessions of frontier settlers (Abernethy 1957; Bridenbaugh 1974; Dick 1964; Woodmason 1953), most backcountry residents furnished their dwellings with a fairly wide range of manufactured goods made available by local merchants and traders. Conversely, few backcountry residents achieved the high material standards attained by the minority planter class in the South Carolina lowcountry.

Cattle Raising

Historians have suggested that the southern backcountry economy progressed through several developmental stages during the eighteenth century, beginning with the deerskin trade, followed by cattle herding, subsistence-level agriculture, and eventually plantation-level commercial production by a few planter households (Gray 1932; Kovacik and Winberry 1987; Meriwether 1940). Residents of the Brown and Howell

Figure 5. Sketch by von Reck showing recently completed houselots, fences, and dwellings as settlers arrive at New Ebenezer in 1736. (Photograph courtesy of the Royal Library, Copenhagen, Denmark.)
sites, for example, were engaged in livestock herding. We assume that cattle and hogs were raised for local consumption as well as for export to Savannah and Charleston and to other colonies. This predominant economic activity structured daily material life and provided important links to the larger economic system that operated beyond the South Carolina frontier.

Trade for deerskin from Native Americans was the first substantial economic activity conducted by colonists on the interior frontier of South Carolina. As the tempo of settlement increased along the frontier, cattle herding became an important economic pursuit. The sandy soils of the Upper Coastal Plain were not ideally suited for agriculture, but the natural landscape of other areas contained forage-rich canebrakes and swampy creek drainages very conducive for cattle grazing. Consequently, many early settlers were able to raise large herds of cattle in the interior and quickly amassed considerable wealth from the activity. In turn, the profits generated from cattle provided the capital necessary for some colonial frontier families eventually to develop their property holdings into formal plantations operated with slave labor. Some of the sons and daughters of cattle raisers in the interior became the backcountry’s planter class by the beginning of the nineteenth century (Meriwether 1940).

Land use and herding methods associated with South Carolina cattle raising appear to have been fairly consistent throughout the colony and with other regions of the South. The nature of cattle raising “was determined largely by the relationship between population and supply of land” (Gray 1932:138). As the population increased in an area where herding was active, cattle owners either moved herds to less populated areas or stayed and developed their animal husbandry methods for a specific area of land. By the 1750s the Lower Coastal Plain was almost entirely given over to rice and indigo production, forcing some of the earliest cattle raisers to move their herds farther west to the thinly settled Upper Coastal Plain:

The expansion of the plantation system into herding regions frequently resulted in a sort of transition economy, which continued as long as farms and plantations were widely scattered. In the coastal plain with its extensive wet lands, even long after settlement there were large areas of range land adjacent to the plantations. While the labor force of such plantations was largely employed in the production of crops, large herds of cattle and hogs were kept in adjacent woods, swamps, or savannas by methods requiring but little care except the occasional attention of one or two superannuated slaves. In the Carolinas and Georgia, where the production of stock for exportation to the West Indies was a prominent phase of industry in the plantation districts, herds of a thousand head of cattle for a single plantation were not uncommon. Ownership was distinguished by brands [Gray 1932:138].

On the eve of the Civil War, historian John H. Logan (1859:151-152) provided an interesting perspec-

tive on cattle raising and cowpens in colonial South Carolina:

The business of stock-raising, at this point [about the 1760s], on the frontiers, was scarcely less profitable than it is at present in similar regions of the west; and numbers of enterprising men engaged in it, either personally or through their agents. Having selected a tract, where cane and porvine grass grew, they erected in the midst of it temporary cabins, and spacious pens. These were used as enclosures, in which to collect the cattle at proper seasons, for the purpose of counting and branding them. At an earlier day, a cow-pen was quite an important institution. It was usually officered with a super-intendent, and a corps of sub-agents. For these a hamlet of cabins were erected, besides the large enclosures for the stock; all of which, with a considerable plat of cleared land in the vicinity for the cultivation of corn, made quite an opening in the woods.

Despite the availability of several secondary historical studies of colonial cattle raising, such as the works of Gray and Logan consulted above, few primary historical documents exist for interpreting the social history and archaeological record associated with Catherine Brown’s cowpen and the Thomas Howell site. Observations recorded by William Bartram (1955) are a notable exception to the general lack of primary historical information related to frontier cattle herders.

During the 1770s, famed naturalist William Bartram traveled through the southern colonial backcountry along the Savannah River Valley in both South Carolina and Georgia. In late April of 1776, Bartram stayed overnight at the house of a prosperous cattle herder approximately 100 miles inland from Savannah while en route to visit the Cherokees. This cowpen was located across the river from Silver Bluff plantation, the residence of George Galphin, one of the wealthiest colonists in South Carolina. The plantation was a short distance north of Catherine Brown’s cowpen. Bartram (Harper 1955:255–256) was intrigued with the backcountry cowpen, and his detailed description, quoted below in its entirety, provides us with a relevant analogy for interpreting site structures and activity areas encountered at the Thomas Howell and Catherine Brown sites:

Having dined at the ferry, I crossed the river into Georgia. In the evening I took up my quarters at a delightful habitation and ordered my horse a stable and provender, and refreshed my spirits with a draught of cooling liquor, I betook myself to contemplation in the groves. Directing my steps towards the river, I observed in a high Pine forest on the border of a savanna, a great number of cattle herded together, and on my nearer approach discovered it to be a cowpen: on my coming up I was kindly saluted by my host and his wife, who I found were superintending a number of slaves, women, boys, and girls, that were milking the cows. Here were about forty milk cows and as many young calves; for in these Southern countries the calves run with the cows a whole year, the people milking them at the same time. The pen, including two or three acres of ground, more or less, according to the stock, adjoining a rivulet or run of water, is enclosed by a fence: in this enclosure the calves are kept while the cows are out at range: a small part of this pen is partitioned off to receive the cows, when they come up at
evening; here are several stakes drove into the ground, and there is a gate in the partition fence for a communication between the two pens. When the milkmaid has taken her share of milk, she looses the calf, who strips the cow; which is next morning turned out again. I found these people, contrary to what a traveler might think, perhaps, reasonably expect, from their occupation and remote situation from the capital or any commercial town, to be civil and courteous: and though educated as it were in the woods, no strangers to sensibility, and those moral virtues which grace and ornament the most approved and admired characters in civil society. After the vessels were filled with milk, the daily and liberal supply of the friendly kine, and the good wife, with her maids and servants, were returning with it to the dairy; the gentleman was at leisure to attend my enquiries and observations, which he did with complaisance, and apparent pleasure. On my observation to him that his stock of horned cattle must be very considerable to afford so many milk cows at one time, he answered, that he had about fifteen hundred head: “my stock is but young, having lately removed from some distance to this place; I found it convenient to part with most of my old stock and begin here anew; Heaven is pleased to bless my endeavors and industry with success even beyond my own expectations.” Yet continuing my interrogatories on this subject: your stock I apprehend must be very profitable, being so convenient to the capital and seaport, in affording a vast quantity of beef, butter, and cheese, for the market, and must thereby contribute greatly towards your emolument: “yes, I find my stock of cattle very profitable, and I constantly contribute towards supplying the markets with beef; but as to the articles of butter and cheese, I make no more than what is expended in my own household, and I have a considerable family of black people, who, though they are slaves, must be fed, and cared for: those I have, were either chosen for their good qualities, or born in the family, and I find from long experience and observation, that the better they are fed, clothed, and treated, the more service and profit we may expect to derive from their labour: in short, I find my flock produces no more milk, or any article of food or nourishment, than what is expended to the best advantage amongst my family and slaves.”

Bartram’s description of the cowpen near Silver Bluff provides useful insights for interpreting the archaeology and social history of colonial cattle raising. The cowpen Bartram visited was about 3 acres in size, upon which grazed a cattle herd of 1,500 head. The cowpen itself consisted of a fenced enclosure of indeterminate size, where calves were kept while the cows ranged during the day. Cows were milked in the evening, kept in the pen at night, and released in the morning. The fenced pen was divided in two by a gated partition of driven stakes; the smaller area was used to receive and hold the cows during milking.

In addition to the general appearance of the cowpen, Bartram also noted details of household-level economic practices and subsistence activities associated with the cattle raisers. According to information provided by his host, subsistence and economic activities were divided into two domains: dairying and beef production. Dairy products, mainly milk, butter, and cheese, were produced for household consumption by the cattle herder’s wife and several slaves—women, boys, and girls. In contrast to dairying activities, the sale of live cattle at the residence Bartram visited was oriented toward commercial markets.

If we assume that the cowpen visited by Bartram was typical, his description provides important information on socioeconomic class and social relations between slaves and slaveholding backcountry cattle raisers. The herder visited by Bartram was very prosperous by backcountry standards, owning 1,500 head of cattle. Bartram likewise praised the herder family’s demeanor as “civil and courteous” despite their frontier situation. It is interesting to note that regardless of their apparent economic success, Bartram observed the herder’s wife, adult female slaves, and slave children all working together in the daily dairying activities. The attitude of Bartram’s host also clearly was paternal toward the enslaved African Americans, and the herder was cognizant of the relationship between benevolent slave treatment and satisfactory task performance. Kind treatment certainly does not negate or minimize the pernicious institution of slavery, but this example illustrates that in some situations slavery was based on an implicit negotiation of material conditions.

Bartram’s narrative suggests that social relations between slaves and slaveholders among backcountry herding households were as yet largely undifferentiated and integrated. If accurate, this situation implies a greater degree of cultural interaction and exchange between backcountry cattle raisers and their slaves than occurred among slaves and slave owners on large coastal plantations. Put another way, social relations within backcountry herder households with slaves were probably very different from those in planter households on medium- to large-scale plantations in the lowcountry—typically the standard or archetypal context used to characterize all slave contexts in South Carolina.

The knowledge required to raise cattle in the diverse environments of South Carolina derived from several different ethnic groups that settled the southern colonial frontier, particularly British immigrants of Celtic ancestry and slaves from West Africa. Historian John Otto suggests that the “likely source for Carolinian cattle-ranching may be found in the hundreds of British immigrants who settled in Carolina during the late seventeenth century. . . . Among these colonists were many Irish, Scots, Welsh, and ‘West Country’ English. . . . Significantly, Western Britain . . . was one of the few areas in Europe to have developed cattle-ranching” (Otto 1986:120). Many African slaves also had well developed knowledge of animal husbandry and open-range herding. Peter Wood argued in Black Majority (1974:28–33) that slaves from West Africa were valued not only for their abilities to grow rice but also for their expertise at cattle raising. Senegambian slaves in South Carolina had been herders in Africa and kept their cattle in a manner similar to the British (Otto 1986:122). The methods used by both cultures were very similar. Cattle
were allowed to graze with little supervision most of the year until spring, when the calves and mothers were herded to a central area or pen. The calves were penned continually while the mothers were let out during the day to return and feed their calves at night. Otto states that since both cultures were represented in Carolina at the same time, “cattle-ranching apparently evolved in syncretistic fashion, incorporating African as well as British practices” (1986:122).

This important crucible of cultural interaction provided by the colonial frontier eventually resulted in the development of African American herdsmen who were very adept cowhands. These early cattle raisers from the colonial South later moved west with the frontier. As Guice notes, “Mounted slaves—some of whom came from African tribes with long herding traditions—tended cattle for generations, often becoming expert horsemen. Though the use of blacks as cattle hunters, or cowboys, first was prevalent in the Carolinas, generations of their descendants watched over livestock as the culture of their masters spread across the South and into Texas. Considering this experience, it is not surprising that free blacks in significant numbers became cowboys in the trans-Mississippi West after the Civil War” (Guice 1989:24).

The southern backcountry, especially South Carolina and west Georgia, served as a core area where livestock raising became prevalent in the southern colonies. As settlement expanded west throughout the nineteenth century, this economic activity diffused along the edge of the frontier. Scholars such as Guice (1989) and Jordan (1969, 1981, 1993) emphasize that the origins of cattle raising and cowboy culture in the American West consequently can be traced to eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century settlers of European and African ancestry in the southern backcountry and the lower South.

The cultural dynamics at the Catherine Brown cowpen and the Thomas Howell site aptly illustrate this historical process. Exact details about the specific identities of the site residents probably will never be known, but converging lines of information indicate the sites were inhabited by settlers from the British Isles (perhaps of Welsh origin), enslaved Africans, and possibly enslaved Native Americans. Since Welsh and other Celtic groups’ herding practices were generally similar to those of West Africa, these customs would have been familiar to recently imported slaves. Both groups used various open-range systems that were environmentally well suited for the South Carolina backcountry. As a result, livestock raising potentially provided an important common ground or similar economic practice between the British and African residents of the Brown and Howell sites. In turn, these shared customs would have encouraged cultural interface between the two groups. This background information provides the framework for the following discussion of the material culture associated with the backcountry residences of two livestock raising households, the Catherine Brown cowpen and the Thomas Howell site, in South Carolina.

**The Catherine Brown Cowpen**

Specific historical details about the Catherine and Bartlett Brown household are not entirely clear from documentary information, a situation that is typical of early frontier sites. Bartlett, born circa 1733, was the son of Benjamin Brown of Albemarle County, Virginia. Benjamin was born in 1710 and was the first of 11 children. His father, Benjamin Brown Sr. (1690–1762), immigrated to Virginia from Britain (King 1940:13). According to Brown family genealogist W. H. Miller, Benjamin Sr. resided in Wales before migrating to Virginia (Miller 1907).

Catherine Holcombe and Bartlett Brown were married in Virginia in 1754. Church records from Orangeburg, South Carolina, show that within four years of their marriage, the Bartlett Brown family moved to South Carolina. Bartlett (spelled “Bartilott” in the church records) and Catherine had two sons: Benjamin, born January 27, 1756, and William, born October 8, 1757. William was baptized in 1758 by the Rev. John Geissendanner, a German Swiss rector of the earliest Anglican Church in Orangeburg District, South Carolina (Salley 1969:182). In a different source, Manning and Anderson (1949:27–28) state that Bartlett and Catherine Brown had three sons named James, Joseph, and John. Additional historical information that might clarify this issue is lacking. For the purposes of this study, we assume that the Catherine and Bartlett Brown household consisted of the two parents, between two to six sons, several daughters, and several slaves.

An early record places a “Bartelott Brown, Indian Trader” in South Carolina by June 1754. Assuming the Indian trader is Bartlett Brown from Albemarle County, Virginia, then he apparently was in South Carolina within months of his marriage to Catherine Brown (SCDAH 1766). Catherine Brown’s first recorded link with the Steel Creek area is a 1757 plat map (SCDAH 1757:260). This map indicates that Egerton Leigh, surveyor general, “measured unto” Catherine Brown, on May 3, 1757, 100 acres on Steel Creek. The tract was bounded on the southwest by William Pinckney and by vacant land in all other directions. On January 22, 1759, Catherine Brown received a royal grant for the same property. The tract in the grant contained “one Hundred acres near Steel Creek in Granville County Bounded South Westward on William Pinckney’s land and on all other Sides on Vacant land” (SCDAH 1759:156). Of interest is the registration of the Steel Creek tract to Catherine Brown rather than to her
husband. The historical records are not clear as to why this was the case. The Brown cowpen was occupied approximately between 1757 and 1782, based on archaeological information. The specific identity of the site occupants is unknown, although architectural information and the presence of colono ware suggests a household composed of British settlers and West African slaves, paralleling the historical records associated with the tract.

Between 1757 and 1776, Catherine owned 100 acres and Bartlett owned 2,090 acres of land for a combined total of 2,190 acres (SCDAH n.d.a; SCDAH n.d.b; SCDAH n.d.c; SCDAH n.d.d; SCDAH n.d.e; SCDAH 1800). This amount of land placed the Brown household among the upper 13 percent of landowners in the study area between 1757 and 1776 (Brooks et al. 2000).

The exact number of slaves owned by the Brown family is not known. Surviving information indicates that Catherine owned at least three slaves in 1758. Bartlett Brown Jr., the son of Bartlett Sr. and Catherine, owned seven slaves in 1790 and 11 slaves in 1800 (SCDAH n.d.a). During the period between 1758 and 1800, members of the extended Brown family owned an average of seven slaves. In general, the Brown extended family appears to have been average for the number of slaves they owned by midcentury, but during the closing decades of the century, they owned more slaves than most of their neighbors. In fact, during this period, they were among the upper 20 percent of slaveholders in the study area. For example, 32 slaves are listed in the 1823 probate inventory of Bartlett Brown Jr. This inventory suggests that by the first quarter of the nineteenth century, members of the Brown family owned an atypically large number of slaves compared to other slaveholders in the region (SCDAH 1823).

Despite the incomplete and sketchy character of original records pertaining to the Brown family, surviving information indicates that Bartlett and Catherine Brown owned the home and cowpen on Steel Creek as well as additional land tracts along the creek. They both, either by marriage or birth, also may have had Welsh cultural and ethnic influences, a detail that is consistent with architectural data recovered archaeologically from the site.

The Archaeological Investigations

Personnel with the Savannah River Archaeological Research Program conducted archaeological investigations at the Catherine Brown cowpen in 1984. This project, directed by Richard Brooks, was done in conjunction with the L-Area Reactivation project on the Savannah River site (SRS), a Department of Energy facility (Brooks 1987; Brooks et al. 2000). As revealed through site investigations, the Brown cowpen, containing a dwelling, outbuildings, and a livestock enclosure, formed a square complex measuring approximately 80 × 100 ft. An extant cattle path, which appeared as a ditchlike landscape feature, bisected the site along a north-south axis and passed through the fenced enclosure (Figures 6 and 7). The structures encountered at the site were of wooden frame, post-in-the-ground or earthfast construction, and consisted of a dwelling and a smokehouse. The dwelling at the cowpen was constructed during an early period of site occupation, probably in the third quarter of the eighteenth century between the late 1750s and 1760s. The dwelling may have been the first residence at the site and possibly later was used for slave quarters, since another dwelling, probably constructed during the fourth quarter of the eighteenth century, was located immediately north of the early residence adjacent to the cowpen. This structure was located outside of the project area and was not investigated. It also had been previously disturbed by road construction in the late nineteenth century.

The early dwelling next to the cowpen was approximately 16 × 26 ft and had a wood-and-clay chimney along the long or lateral south wall of the dwelling (Figure 8). Wood-and-clay chimneys (called “Welsh chimneys” by colonists during the eighteenth century) and chimneys centered along long walls were typical Welsh vernacular architectural elements (Forman 1948; Wiliam 1978). In general, the dwelling at the Brown site possibly resembled a late medieval English- or Welsh-style timber-framed, open hall cottage (Figure 9). A smokehouse was found to the west of the cowpen and southwest of the
dwelling. This smokehouse, measuring approximately $4 \times 6$ ft, contained a central brick-lined firebox.

Several other activity areas were identified at the site. The first activity area consisted of the cowpen, denoted by a large, dark, rectangular stain, representing the remains of a fenced enclosure (Figures 6 and 7). The fenced enclosure also contained a butchering area along the west side. This area appears as a prominent, north-south oriented artifact concentration (Figure 7). The butchering area also contained postholes associated with a butchering rack or frame, a large offal trench, and a bone-filled refuse pit. The enclosure appears to have been of both wattle and driven split rail construction and was approximately $40 \times 66$ ft (Figure 10). Wattle fences were constructed of very small driven posts spaced at close intervals with vines and branches woven.

Figure 7. Artifact distribution map of the Catherine Brown cowpen based on data from systematic shovel test pits.

Figure 8. Plan view of the earthfast dwelling at the Catherine Brown cowpen.
between the posts. Driven split rail fences were typically more substantial than wattle fences and consisted of larger split posts spaced against one another (Figure 10). Each individual split post was driven in the ground or placed in a small trench. The split rail posts at the Brown cowpen appeared as crescent-shaped post molds, suggesting logs were split, cut into short sections, and then driven in the ground or placed in a trench in a contiguous row to form the fence.

Artifact Analysis

Artifacts from the Brown cowpen were assigned to the functional typology developed by South (1977). The analysis also incorporated typology modifications originally proposed by Wheaton et al. (1983) and Wheaton and Garrow (1985). In their study of Yaughan and Curriboo plantations, Wheaton and Garrow placed colono ware in the “Kitchen Group” rather than the “Activities Group,” since this ware primarily was related to foodways. This adjustment creates artifact distributions that more closely parallel the distributions encountered at domestic sites that do not contain colono ware.

Artifact assemblages from colonial domestic sites typically consist of kitchen and architectural items and small proportions of artifacts in the furniture, arms, clothing, personal, tobacco pipe, and activities categories. Kitchen items usually comprise between 50 to 75 percent...
of the assemblage, architectural artifacts usually represent 25 to 30 percent, and the remainder is distributed among the other six artifact categories. Anomalous distributions, consisting of an unusually high number of artifacts in one of the six secondary categories, typically indicate that functionally specific activities occurred at a site. For example, the “Tobacco Pipe Group” at the Brown site and the “Clothing Group” at the Howell site were unusually high, suggesting relatively intense activities associated with these items at the sites.

The artifact distributions tabulated for the Brown cowpen and the Howell site are presented in Table 1. The main artifact categories are ranked by prevalence, which serves to identify the primary consumption items and the main refuse producing activities at the Brown cowpen (Tables 2 and 3). Artifacts associated with food consumption and leisure activities comprise 84 percent of the total artifact assemblage from the site. Faunal remains (n = 5,355), ceramics (n = 1,038), wine and case bottles (n = 919), and tobacco pipes (n = 583) represent the primary consumption-related categories. Nails (n = 1149) also were abundant at the site but were not included in these distributions. In contrast to the four systemically active artifact categories listed above, nails are a systemically passive, nonconsumption-related artifact that are usually only used once to construct structures or make improvements. Nails usually enter the archaeological record indirectly during architectural construction episodes, renovations, razing, or after abandonment, rather than through intentional discard.

Among the categories of bone, ceramics, bottle glass, and tobacco pipe fragments, faunal remains represent 68 percent of the consumption-related artifacts. When faunal remains are excluded, the distribution of manufactured artifacts in the consumption-related category consists of ceramics (41 percent), wine and case bottles (36 percent), and tobacco pipe fragments (23 percent). The prevalence of consumption-related items, especially the faunal remains, bottle glass, and tobacco pipe fragments near the livestock enclosure, reinforces the colonial context of the Brown site cowpen. The abundance of bottle glass and tobacco pipe fragments may illustrate a social aspect of the site related to livestock sales. Perhaps similar to a market day held among rural communities, residents may have met at the Brown cowpen on livestock butchering or sale days and imbibed beverages and smoked pipes as part of the festivities. The prevalence of faunal remains also suggests that commercial butchering activities may have occurred at the cowpen. Cattle and hogs clearly were butchered at the site, as indicated by the numerous skeletal elements from heads and feet. The low occurrence of elements from the forequarters and hindquarters likewise implies these cuts were sold and transported from the cowpen (Reitz 2000). Revolution-ary War records also indicate that the Brown family sold beef to the Patriots (SCDAH n.d.f).

The identified animal species also reveal trends in dietary practices at the Brown cowpen (Table 4). Domesticated animal species include cow, pig, and chicken. Wild species are represented by deer, raccoon, pheasant, turtle, and fish. By bone weight, excluding commensal species and unidentified fragments, domesticated fauna comprise 82 percent of the assemblage.

Table 1. Functional distribution of artifacts from the Catherine Brown cowpen and the Thomas Howell site (South 1977; Wheaton et al. 1983).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artifact Groups</th>
<th>Catherine Brown Cowpen</th>
<th>Thomas Howell Site</th>
<th>Revised Carolina Artifact Pattern Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>51.48</td>
<td>2,102</td>
<td>60.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>29.41</td>
<td>1,201</td>
<td>22.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arms</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>14.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>14.43</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipe activities</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>4,083</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Artifacts from the Catherine Brown cowpen and Thomas Howell site ranked by primary consumption-related categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artifact Categories</th>
<th>Catherine Brown Cowpen</th>
<th>Thomas Howell Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faunal</td>
<td>67.83</td>
<td>5,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceramics</td>
<td>13.14</td>
<td>1,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine/case bottles</td>
<td>11.64</td>
<td>919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco pipes</td>
<td>7.39</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption total</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>7,895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conversely, wild resources represent 18 percent (Reitz 2000). The large numbers of flints and lead shot in the artifact collection from the site likely were used to kill livestock before butchering, rather than for hunting wild game. Nonetheless, given the presumed abundance and availability of cattle and hogs at the site, the occurrence of wild game is somewhat surprising. This trend suggests that the site residents were not satisfied with a monotonous diet of beef and pork and occasionally enjoyed the dietary variety provided by wild game.

Ceramics are prominent items within the main consumption categories identified at the Brown cowpen. The ceramic assemblage is dominated by colono ware, but when considered by the functional variables of tableware (including plates or flatware, tea ware, and food service ceramics) versus utilitarian ware, the prevalence of colono ware is less pronounced. Tableware and teaware represent 48 percent of the ceramic assemblage and consist of approximately 10 main ware types. The tableware category includes delft, Jackfield, agate ware, Astbury ware, green-glazed creamware, creamware, pearlware, white salt-glazed stoneware, scratch blue stoneware, and porcelain. Utilitarian ceramics, comprising 52 percent of the assemblage, include colono ware, Iberian jars, slipware, Westerwald stoneware, and British brown stoneware. Only five ceramic types are represented in the utilitarian ware category.

The ceramic assemblage suggests aspects of the consumption and preparation of food. Most of the tablewares recovered from the site are plates or flatware rather than hollowware (Table 5). Plates usually are indicative of portioned meals (Deetz 1977); however, many eighteenth-century plates, like white salt-glazed ones, served as soup bowls rather than flatware. Beverages were consumed from teacups. The occupants of the earthfast structure at the Brown cowpen used a broad range of imported tablewares despite their isolated frontier conditions. In contrast to the tablewares, the utilitarian ceramics from the site exhibit much less variability and mainly consist of colono ware. The limited range of utilitarian ceramics suggests that the site residents were using these wares mainly for food preparation and processing; they were used for food and liquid storage to a much lesser extent.

Use of colono ware was an important aspect of the foodways practiced at the site. The colono ware sherds generally are similar in curvature to industrially manufactured hollowware fragments, such as footed bowls. The colono ware sherds unfortunately are too small to accurately identify the types of vessel forms that were present. Likewise, assuming that the slave owners and slaves resided in separate dwellings, the presence of colono ware was not useful for determining if the excavated dwelling was the Brown family residence or a dwelling occupied by slaves. Alternatively, the early mean ceramic dates suggest that the excavated structure may have been the original family dwelling. The prevalence of colono ware in the butchering area does suggest that this ceramic type was used during cattle butchering or for dairying.

The concentration of colono ware near the cattle pen also suggests that in the 1750s, this ware probably served a food storage or processing function similar to that of lead-glazed redware, brown slipped earthenware, alkaline-glazed stoneware, and yellow ware, all of which appeared later in the nineteenth century. Very limited numbers of European manufactured storage vessels or utilitarian ceramics were identified at the site, consisting mainly of Iberian jars. The use of colono ware as a utilitarian ceramic for food preparation and storage thus would seem likely, but the colono ware sample contained only one jar. The site residents may not have extensively used ceramics for food storage, based on these low number of storage vessels. Instead, the presence of the smokehouse indicates that meat was preserved by smoking or salting. Barrel bands, although not readily identifiable as scraps, suggest that some salting of beef and pork also was done, since beef usually was not

Table 3. Distribution of the primary consumption-related artifacts and secondary artifacts recovered from the Catherine Brown cowpen and Thomas Howell site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artifact Categories</th>
<th>Catherine Brown Cowpen</th>
<th>Thomas Howell Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary consumption total</td>
<td>83.67</td>
<td>7,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary artifacts total</td>
<td>16.33</td>
<td>1,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblage total</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>9,436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Identified faunal resources recovered from the Catherine Brown cowpen ranked by bone weight.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faunal Resources</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Weight (g)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cow</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1234.10</td>
<td>66.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>306.45</td>
<td>16.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>1541.55</td>
<td>82.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>267.50</td>
<td>14.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Turtle</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54.90</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pond Turtle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raccoon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>328.30</td>
<td>17.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faunal total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1869.85</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
smoked as a preservation technique. Furthermore, the prevalence of flatware suggests the site residents were eating more roasts and steaklike cuts of meat rather than liquid-based meals using hollowwares (Table 5).

In a classic study, Otto (1984) examined ceramic function and form as a way to understand antebellum status differences between planters, overseers, and slaves. As expected, he determined that distinct material culture differences existed between the different status groups. A similar analysis with the ceramics from the Brown cowpen produced ambiguous results since the dwelling cannot be assigned to either slave owners or slaves. The functional distributions of European and colono ware ceramics from the site are illustrated in Table 5.

Confusion about identifying the occupants of different habitation areas at the site can be eliminated by assuming that frontier compounds or houselots were relatively small and thus encouraged cultural interaction. The frontier likely exerted a distinctive effect on settler households regarding the relationships between whites and blacks. As suggested by other backcountry studies, planters and slaves probably lived in close proximity to one another, often in the same houselot or at least in the same small, nucleated settlement (e.g., Groover 1991; Steen et al. 1996). A similar situation probably was present at the Brown site. This frontier proxemic, prevalent for safety among settler households, would have encouraged cultural exchange and fusion. In contrast, slaves on lowcountry rice plantations often lived in isolated settlements and experienced little interaction with whites.

The Thomas Howell Site

Between late 1990 and early 1991, six years after site investigations were concluded at the Catherine Brown cowpen, excavations were done at another colonial period residence occupied by cattle raisers in South Carolina. Mark Groover (1991, 1992, 1994) conducted limited block excavations at the Thomas Howell site (38RD397) for thesis research through the Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina. The Howell site, located adjacent to Mill Creek near Columbia in lower Richland County, was settled in the early 1740s by the Thomas Howell family, who had migrated from Maryland (Figure 1). Thomas Howell well illustrates the substantial amount of wealth held by some colonial period cattle raisers in the backcountry. He owned 110 head of cattle when he died in 1760, placing him among the top 12 percent of cattle raisers in the colony according to the historian Meriwether (1940). In addition to cattle raising, Howell owned the rights to a river ferry on the Congaree River and to a toll road that he constructed near his residence (Figure 2). Upon his death in 1760, 14 African slaves were listed in Howell’s probate inventory and will, which placed him among the top 20 percent of slaveholders in the backcountry (Groover 1991; Klein 1990; SCDAH 1760a, 1760b).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ware</th>
<th>Flatware</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Hollowware</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Teaware</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Ware Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>36.10</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6.99</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>56.91</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonno ware</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>21.78</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>77.72</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form total</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>32.61</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>24.19</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>43.20</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11. Plan view of Structure 1 at the Thomas Howell site.
The Archaeological Investigations

Block excavations at the Thomas Howell site partially exposed a post-in-the-ground structure measuring approximately 16 × 17 ft. This structure may have had a lean-to addition or ell along the north wall. An 8-foot-wide wood-and-clay chimney was located along the west wall. The size of the chimney was determined by postholes that served as part of the chimney supports. These support posts were surrounded by oxidized soil. A large, rectangular pit cellar measuring 12 × 10 × 2 1/2 feet (Figure 11) was in the center of the building immediately adjacent to the chimney. The large amount of daub rubble found in the pit cellar was a clue to the construction technique used to build the chimney. Ceramics from a primary occupation stratum in the base of the cellar produced a mean date of 1762. The ceramics from the cellar also were assigned to bracketed ceramic date ranges (South 1977), which suggested the structure was in use between approximately 1740 and 1775. A lens of charcoal, indicating the structure was destroyed by fire during or after the 1770s, was located above the primary cellar deposit. The cellar hole then was left open between about 1775 and 1820 and was used as a refuse pit, as indicated by ceramics recovered from the upper fill of the feature above the chimney rubble (Groover 1991).

The orientation of daub rubble in the profile walls of the cellar excavation indicated that when the structure was destroyed by fire, the chimney toppled into the cellar. Like the dwelling at the Brown site, the chimney associated with the Howell structure probably was located in the center of a long wall on the west side of the building. The presence of a Welsh chimney like that at the Brown site is not surprising since the surname Howell is Welsh. Due to the substantial size of the chimney and the large cellar, the structure at the Howell site was likely a detached kitchen, as colonial period earthfast dwellings did not usually contain large cellars (Groover 1991).

Artifact Analysis

Besides architectural details, investigations of the Howell site also provided information about household material culture and cultural interaction among backcountry residents. Typical of colonial period domestic residences, the artifact assemblage from the Howell site consists mainly of kitchen and architectural items (Table 1). The main consumption categories at the site are ceramics, faunal remains, and clothing items (Table 2). These three categories comprise approximately 72 percent of the recovered artifacts, while artifacts in the architecture, furniture, arms, personal, tobacco pipe, and activities categories represent approximately one-third of the assemblage (Table 3).

Tabulated by ware and form (Table 6), tableware, composed of flatware and teaware, comprises approximately 57 percent of the ceramic collection. Delftware, white salt-glazed, creamware, and pearlware were the main types of tableware used by the site residents. The remaining quarter of the ceramic assemblage is composed of hollowware utilitarian vessels, mainly small colono ware bowls and stoneware jugs. The storage vessels consist of Nottingham, British brown, and Westerwald stoneware containers.

The residents of the Thomas Howell site consumed a greater variety of faunal resources compared to the Catherine Brown cowpen residents (Tables 4 and 7). Two-thirds of the faunal assemblage consists of domesticated species, mainly cow and pig. The remaining one-third of the identified faunal remains consists of a broad range of wild resources, represented by 10 different species as compared to only four wild species identified at the Brown site. The remains of white-tailed deer, opossum, raccoon, rabbit, turkey, catfish, duck, bass, sunfish, and squirrel were recovered from the site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faunal Resources</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Weight (g)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cow</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>173.10</td>
<td>33.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>161.15</td>
<td>31.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15.90</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>350.15</td>
<td>68.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>134.95</td>
<td>26.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opossum</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.75</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raccoon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catfish</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duck</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunfish</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squirrel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>163.45</td>
<td>31.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faunal total</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>513.60</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries wild species are sometimes viewed as dietary supplements among lower economic groups, such as enslaved African Americans and poor whites, many households placed a great deal of social value on wild game. Individuals often regarded game as a prestige food, since wild resources provided fresh variety in the diet. Wild game often was viewed as a welcome alternative to the mundane fare of smoked and salted meat obtained from domesticated animals (Reitz 1986, 1987; Reitz and Honerkamp 1983).

Clothing items also were prevalent within the artifact assemblage. Consisting of pins, buttons, and silver and gold twist thread used to embellish clothes (Figure 12), clothing items represented 14.15 percent of the artifact assemblage. This large percentage of clothing artifacts is related both to recovery techniques and site-specific activities. Most of the clothing artifacts were recovered from the original, primary fill in the pit cellar, which was deposited while the cellar was still in use and the structure was still standing. All of the material from this deposit was water-screened through fine-screen mesh. The clothing items were probably accidentally lost during their use, a reflection of the importance of household clothing manufacture in preindustrial contexts. The artifacts probably were dropped on the floor and fell between the floorboards into the cellar.

Conclusion

The archaeological investigations of the Catherine Brown cowpen and the Thomas Howell site illustrate several basic trends in material culture associated with cattle raisers in the South Carolina backcountry. As presented in Table 8, information from the Brown site suggests that the actual cowpens were relatively small. The dwellings and outbuildings used by livestock raising households in the backcountry, regardless of financial success, were also modest in construction methods and size. Although the structure at the Howell site possibly was a kitchen, it also was relatively small compared with contemporary structures in other contexts, reflecting the different spatial proxemetics that existed among eighteenth-century settlers. The two sites examined in this study, combined with historical information, indicate wooden-frame structures probably were the predominant architectural form in the South Carolina backcountry. Although cattle raisers and other colonial settlers lived in small dwellings, they possessed access to a fairly broad range of imported, industrially manufactured consumption items, such as ceramic tableware, glass bottles, and tobacco pipes. In addition to imported wares, the cattle herders considered in this study also used colono ware, a locally available ceramic. A somewhat unexpected discovery is that the residents of the study sites, despite access to domesticated livestock, also consumed a relatively broad range of wild animals.

Beyond these basic material trends, the Catherine Brown cowpen and Thomas Howell site also reveal important information about larger processes that first appeared during the colonial period. It was a time of transition and cultural restructuring in eastern North America, characterized by a succession of economic practices, including the deerskin trade, cattle herding, and early plantation agriculture. Culture change, encouraged by the interrelated processes of capitalism and globalization, often was particularly pronounced in frontier settings (Dunaway 1996; Hopkins and Wallerstein 1987). Furthermore, historical and cultural processes that originally were set in motion during this time period did not end with the passing of the frontier. As a result, the origins of many characteristics that continue to define and influence American society today can be identified at colonial residences such as the Brown and Howell sites. For example, archaeological information recovered from the study sites reveals two primary

Figure 12. Micro-photograph of silver and gold twist thread recovered from the basal deposit of the pit cellar in the earthfast structure at the Howell site (scale in millimeters).
trends associated with material life among cattle-raising households in the South Carolina backcountry: the beginning of consumerism in North America and the cultural interaction that occurred in the study region. The long-term effects of both of these trends, consumerism and cultural interface, continue to shape the modern world.

The first stirrings of the transition from a preindustrial, folk-based culture to an industrially based society grounded in consumerism is evident at the study sites. Typical of frontier settings, the site residents possessed a relatively prominent folk-based cultural orientation combined with early, formative consumerism. A folk-based heritage particularly is evident within the domain of architecture. The residents of the sites chose to use an economically modest style of impermanent, vernacular architecture, as illustrated by the earthfast structures. Despite the persistence of vernacular architectural traditions, a noticeable level of formative consumerism also was apparent at the residences, represented collectively by imported teaware and flatware, crystal stemware, large proportions of container glass, noteworthy amounts of tobacco pipe fragments, and fragments of silver and gold twist thread. Paralleling trends identified in previous archaeological studies on the SRS (Cabak and Inkrot 1997; Cabak et al. 1999), culture change typically occurs first among items used in the household, whereas architectural forms are more resistant to change.

The transition from a folk-oriented, preindustrial society to an industrially based society was just beginning during the second half of the eighteenth century. At the same time that consumerism was being adopted by residents of the study sites, European settlers also were influenced by the non-European cultures encountered at household and regional levels. Indicative of globalization and sustained culture contact, several different cultural traditions—Native American, West African, and European—interacted and were transformed in the southern backcountry. Over time, the transformation encouraged by these encounters shaped the South as a distinctive culture region. Manufactured by local Native Americans and enslaved West Africans, and subsequently adopted by European settler households, colono ware is a material metaphor of this process during the colonial period. The prevalence of this locally produced ceramic is not remarkable in a frontier context like the Catherine Brown cowpen and the Thomas Howell site. Its ubiquity does illustrate, however, the level of cultural interaction and influence that undoubtedly occurred at many backcountry residences, particularly multiethnic households (Groover 2000).

The material trends discussed in this article are not intended to represent a monolithic regional pattern of frontier material culture among cattle-raising households in the southern backcountry. Rather, the characteristics identified at the study sites are merely preliminary observations that can be further revised and clarified as additional information becomes available.

**Notes**

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Table 8. Comparison of material characteristics associated with the Catherine Brown cowpen and Thomas Howell site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Economic Activity</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number of Slaves</th>
<th>Site Spatial Configuration</th>
<th>Architecture Distribution</th>
<th>Ceramic by Percentage</th>
<th>Faunal Types by Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown site</td>
<td>Cattle herding</td>
<td>Welsh, West African</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rectangular 60 × 80 ft</td>
<td>Timber frame, earthfast 16 × 26 ft</td>
<td>36 64</td>
<td>17 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howell site</td>
<td>Cattle herding</td>
<td>Welsh, West African</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Timber frame, earthfast 16 × 17 ft</td>
<td>29 71</td>
<td>32 68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CATTLE RAISERS IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA BACKCOUNTRY

Brooks, Richard D., and David C. Crass

Brooks, Richard D., Mark D. Groover, and Samuel C. Smith

Cabak, Melanie A., and Mary M. Inkrot

Carson, Cary, Norman F. Barka, William M. Kelso, Gary Wheeler Stone, and Dell Upton

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Dunaway, Wilma

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