

# Plantersville: The Legacy of Rice

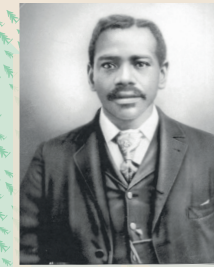
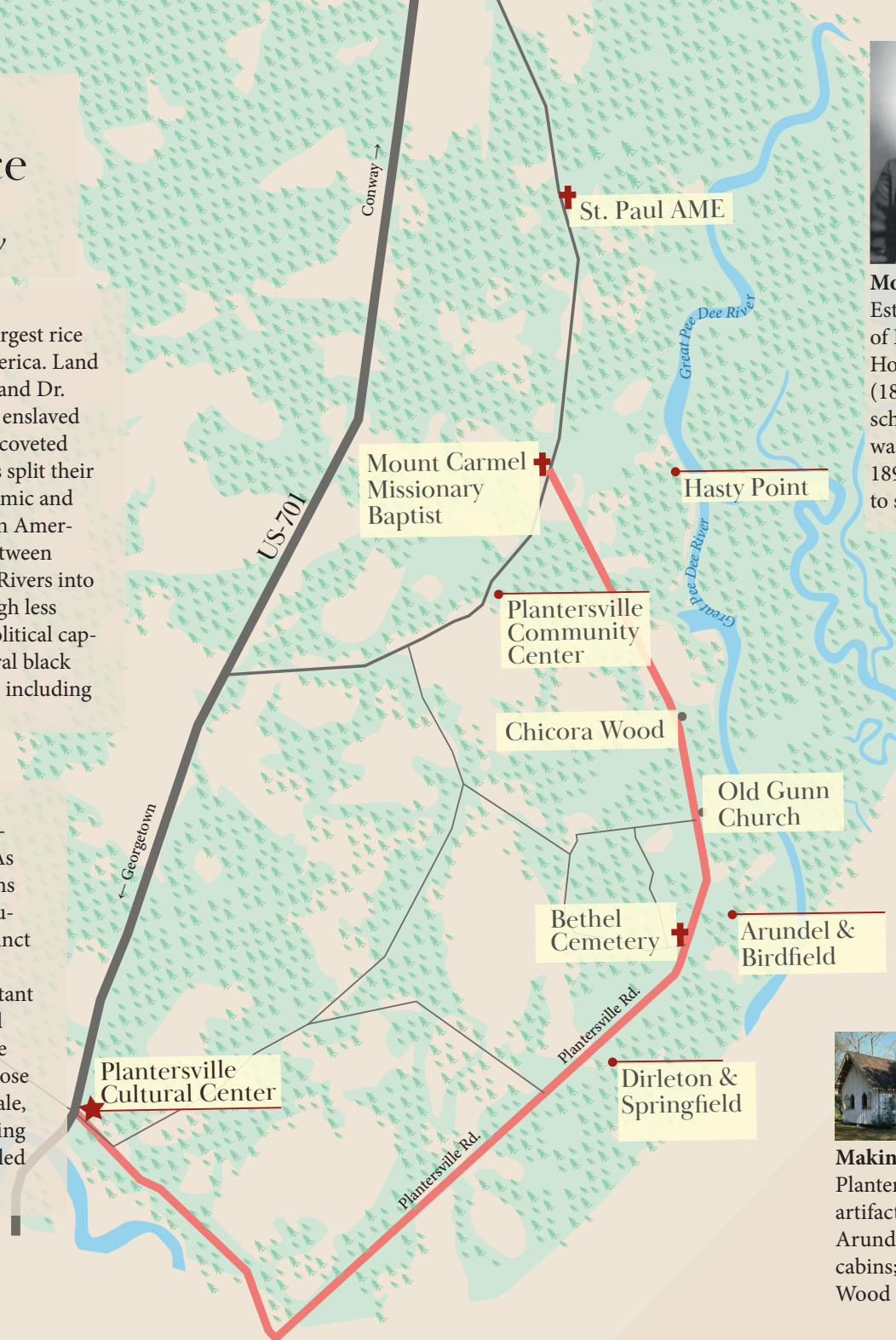
 : US-701 Scenic Byway

## Plantersville Early History

Plantersville encompassed many of the largest rice plantations both South Carolina and America. Land owners included Governor F. W. Allston and Dr. Edward Thomas Heriot, whose immense enslaved labor force produced the internationally-coveted Carolina Gold Rice. While many planters split their time between Plantersville and the economic and political capital of Charleston, the African American enslaved population would travel between plantations along the Black and Pee Dee Rivers into Georgetown. This historic network, though less publicized, made Georgetown a major political capital during Reconstruction, electing several black congressmen to state and US legislatures, including Plantersville-born John Bolts.

## Villages

Plantersville has one of the few intact cultural landscapes left in the Lowcountry. As African Americans purchased large swaths of land after Emancipation, many communities formed into self-sufficient and distinct "villages." These villages still exist today. Some are named after founders or important community leaders: Jackson, Annie, Ford Town, Bromell Town. Others preserve the names of the plantation communities whose history trace back to the 1800s: Nightingale, Dirleton, Arundel. This is why the founding organization of the Cultural Center is called the Village Group.



## Mount Carmel

Established in 1886, under the leadership of B. Rowell and former South Carolina House of Representative Charles S. Green (1872-1876), the church had a primary school whose teacher was John Bolts, who was elected to serve in the SC House in 1898 and 1900, the last African American to serve until 1972.



## Old Gunn Church

Also known as Prince Frederick's Church, this Gothic Revival church's construction began in 1859, but halted due to the Civil War. No longer benefiting from enslaved labor, the rice economy collapsed, and the church, like the surrounding plantation economy, fell into disrepair throughout the 20th century.



## Making Rice

Plantersville hosts many of the few existing artifacts of rice production and enslaved life. Arundel features of the few standing slave cabins; Hasty Point holds a rice barn; Chicora Wood and Dirleton both have rice mills.