



Historic McNeill Plantation - Reddy Point

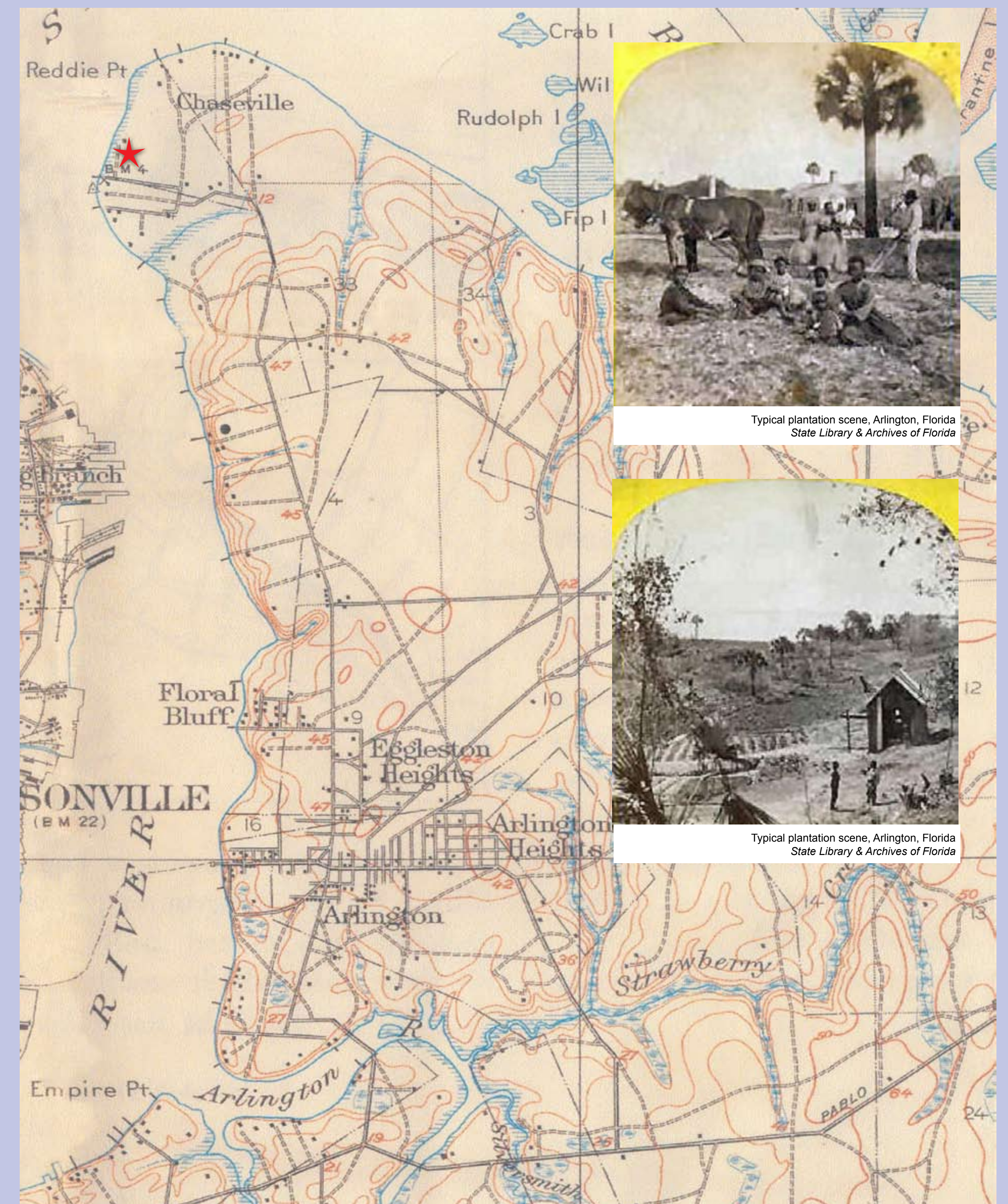
In 1772 Capt. William Reddy purchased two 400-acre tracts of land located where the St. Johns River bends eastward on its way to the Atlantic Ocean, naming them Hampstead and Point Plantations. Though Capt. Reddy only owned the property for two years, the name "Reddy's Point" stuck and is still used today. After Florida was returned to Spain in 1784 at the end of the Revolutionary War, a 182-acre portion of the land at the point was granted to Francis Richard and later purchased by Zephaniah Kingsley. By 1858 Reddy's Point was a working plantation owned by Kingsley's nephew Charles McNeill.

Charles was born in 1811 in Wilmington, North Carolina, the son of Martha Kingsley and Dr. Daniel McNeill. For health reasons, Charles was sent at the age of eight to Kingsley Plantation on Ft. George Island to live with his uncle Zephaniah and his African-born wife Anna and their mixed-race family. It was on Kingsley Plantation that Charles would learn the skills of plantation management.

Charles married Elizabeth Coffee, a free person of color, the daughter of a white planter and a former slave. Together they became the parents of nine "free colored" children. The plantation home was a modest, sparsely furnished log structure. Charles' sister, Anna McNeill Whistler, mother of the famed artist James Whistler, visited her brother in March 1858 and wrote to her son describing red birds cavorting in the blossoming citrus trees and berry patches and "peach orchards blushing with promise." Anna enjoyed "sea breezes on the Piazza, looking down the St. Johns two miles wide," and dining on "oysters fine and fresh." Union supporters, Charles and his family fled their home during the Civil War. After returning in the latter months of the war, he attempted to rebuild his burned homestead but died in 1869 before it was completed. He is buried in Stonington, Connecticut.

Source: *Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley*, by Dr. Daniel L. Schafer

1918 Arlington Map



Typical plantation scene, Arlington, Florida
State Library & Archives of Florida

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