



Long Island and Wormsloe, 1875

De Renne Family Papers, Hargrett Library, University of Georgia.

Long Island, lying east of Wormsloe across the salt marsh and Skidaway River, has historically been a part of the plantation. Noble Jones acquired the island as part of a royal grant during the colonial era, and, after inheritance and sale separated the two tracts, George W. Jones purchased the island and reunited the properties in 1856. Like Wormsloe proper, Long Island grew Sea Island cotton on its low fields, and its soil was some of the estate's most productive ground.

Following the Civil War and Emancipation, Long Island served as the site for an aborted experiment in African American landownership. Wartime Union orders granted freedpeople rights to certain coastal lands, including Long Island. Four men claimed plots on Long Island (three of whom may have been former slaves on Wormsloe) where they cultivated the land for themselves rather than for a master. In 1867, the federal government returned ownership of the land to the Jones family - who had changed their name to De Renne the previous year - and Long Island's brief African American masters faded from the historical record.