

**Archaeological Excavations
at the Gladys Site
9PM1568**

By
Mark Williams

University of Georgia
Lamar Institute

Lamar Institute Publication 122
Lamar Institute
2006

Abstract

The Gladys site, 9PM1568, was located in northwestern Putnam County, Georgia during the summer of 2006. Limited shovel testing and excavations discovered a probable Early Woodland farmstead. This work recovered only a single small rock cluster feature. Additional excavations are certainly warranted for this interesting plow zone site of the early Cartersville period, ca. 500 B.C.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
List of Figures	iii
List of Tables	iii
Background and Acknowledgments	1
Topographic Mapping and Shovel Tests	5
Excavation Units	10
Artifacts	15
Summary and Conclusion	21
References Cited	22
Appendix 1. Shovel Test Locations	23
Appendix 2. Shovel Test Artifacts	24

List of Figures

Figure 1. Site Location Map 1	1
Figure 2. Site Location Map 2	2
Figure 3. 2006 Field Crew	3
Figure 4. Shovel Test Locations	5
Figure 5. Contour Map	6
Figure 6. Shovel Testing	7
Figure 7. Sherd Weight Distribution	8
Figure 8. Sherd Number Distribution	9
Figure 9. Location of Excavation Squares	10
Figure 10. Excavation Squares 1 and 2	11
Figure 11. Excavation Square 3	12
Figure 12. Feature 1	13
Figure 13. Excavation Squares 4 and 5	14
Figure 14. Excavation Square 6	15

List of Tables

Table 1. Sherds from Excavation Units	18
Table 2. Incised Sherds from Excavation Units	19
Table 3. Miscellaneous Material from Excavation Units.....	19
Table 4. Historic Artifacts from Excavation Units.....	20

Background and Acknowledgments

The Gladys site is located in the northwestern part of Putnam, County, Georgia, on land owned by the B.F. Grant Forest, a part of the Warnell School of Forestry of the University of Georgia (Figure 1). It is a small site located on the summit of a low ridge that runs east to west near a tiny stream, now named Whitehead Branch (Figure 2) (Williams 2006). The exact UTM location is 3700448 North and 272655 East (NAD1927). This places it about 100 meters west southwest of 9PM1428, the Monroe site (Williams 2006).

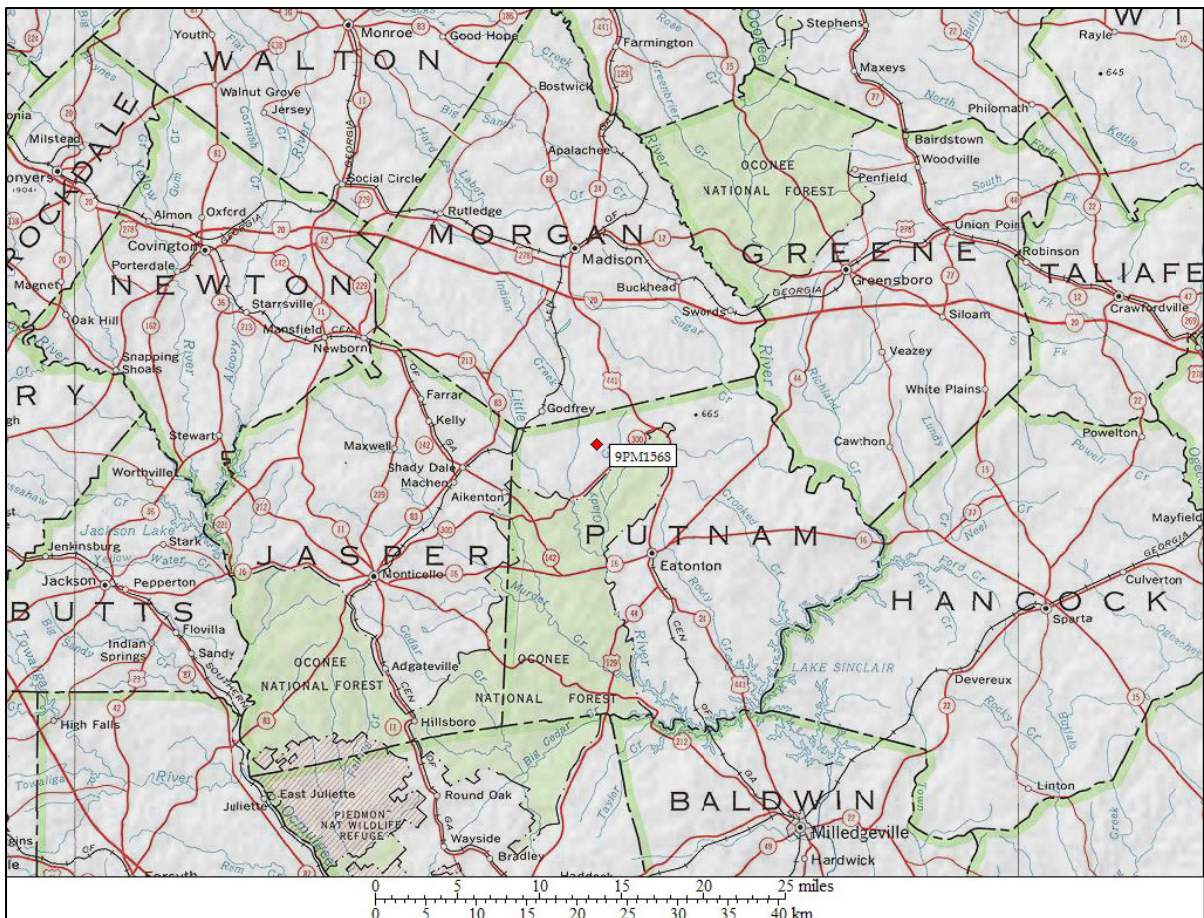


Figure 1. Site Location Map 1.

The work was carried out by the University of Georgia summer archaeology field school under the direction of the author. The students for this excavation included Sam Benson, Eric Berg, Becky Blystone, Blake Coleman, Inger Cox, Lauren Doak, Stuart Garth, Kelli Guest, Hannah Morris, Richard Moss, Candace Rutledge, and Eric Soderstrum (Figure 3). University of Georgia archaeology graduate student John Turck played an important role as field assistant on this project. The work was also aided by former field school students Ellen Burlingame, Viki Dekle, and Peter

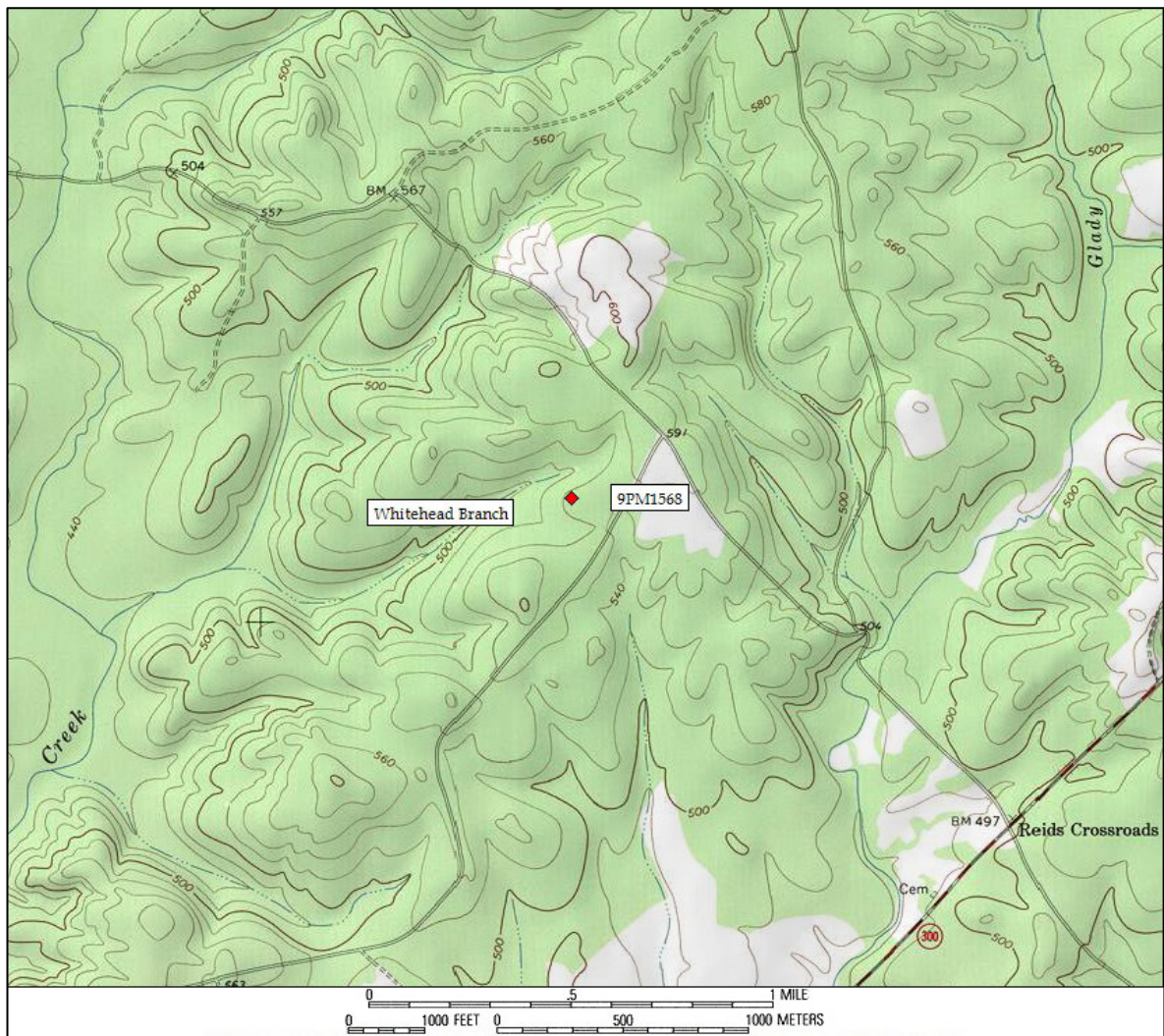


Figure 2. Site Location Map 2

VanDyck, Jr. I thank all these people for their contribution. I also thank my archaeology colleague Jared Wood for reading and editing this report.

The work at the Gladys site (named by the students after both the pet cat of one of the students and the middle name of one of the field assistants) took place on June 21-22, July 11-12, and July 18. Although we were on the site during these five days, the total number of work days there was only three. Prior to the locating and testing of the Gladys site, the field school conducted minor additional excavations at the Late Mississippian period Monroe site, mentioned above. This site had been extensively excavated during 2005. As part of the work there I decided to conduct a



Figure 3. 2006 Field Crew.

series of shovel tests from the site to the west along the summit of the ridge in hopes of potentially locating a small outlying site that also dated to the Late Mississippian period. This pattern had been noted in other places nearby, and seemed a reasonable possibility here also. Consequently, a series of shovel tests through the area now labeled the Gladys site did locate a few plain pottery sherds and hopes were high that such an outlying small farmstead had indeed been located.

Once we believed there was a Lamar site in this location, I decided to implement a set of additional shovel tests to determine the boundaries of the site and to prepare for actual test excavations on the site. The two or three original shovel tests that drew our attention to the site had only produced plain sherds—sherds that I assumed were Lamar Plain sherds. After we had excavated almost 50 more tests, we were able to define the distribution of the sherds, but careful examination of those sherds led to a big surprise. The sherds from the tests dated almost exclusively to the Early Woodland period. While this was interesting, it was certainly not what I expected, and thus we decided to delay further work at the site until after we had conducted work on another known Lamar farmstead about a kilometer to the south (9PM1414). This explains the gap in the dates when we worked on the site presented earlier. This delay also gave me some time to rethink the implications of the discovery of the Gladys site as an Early Woodland “farmstead”.

Topographic Mapping and Shovel Tests

We accomplished both of these necessary steps at the same time by taking elevations at the locations of the shovel tests made on the site during the first period of research at the site. The shovel tests were placed around the site in a random pattern. The locations of the shovel tests were recorded using a Sokkia Set 630R total station. The location of the total station was chosen near the center of the

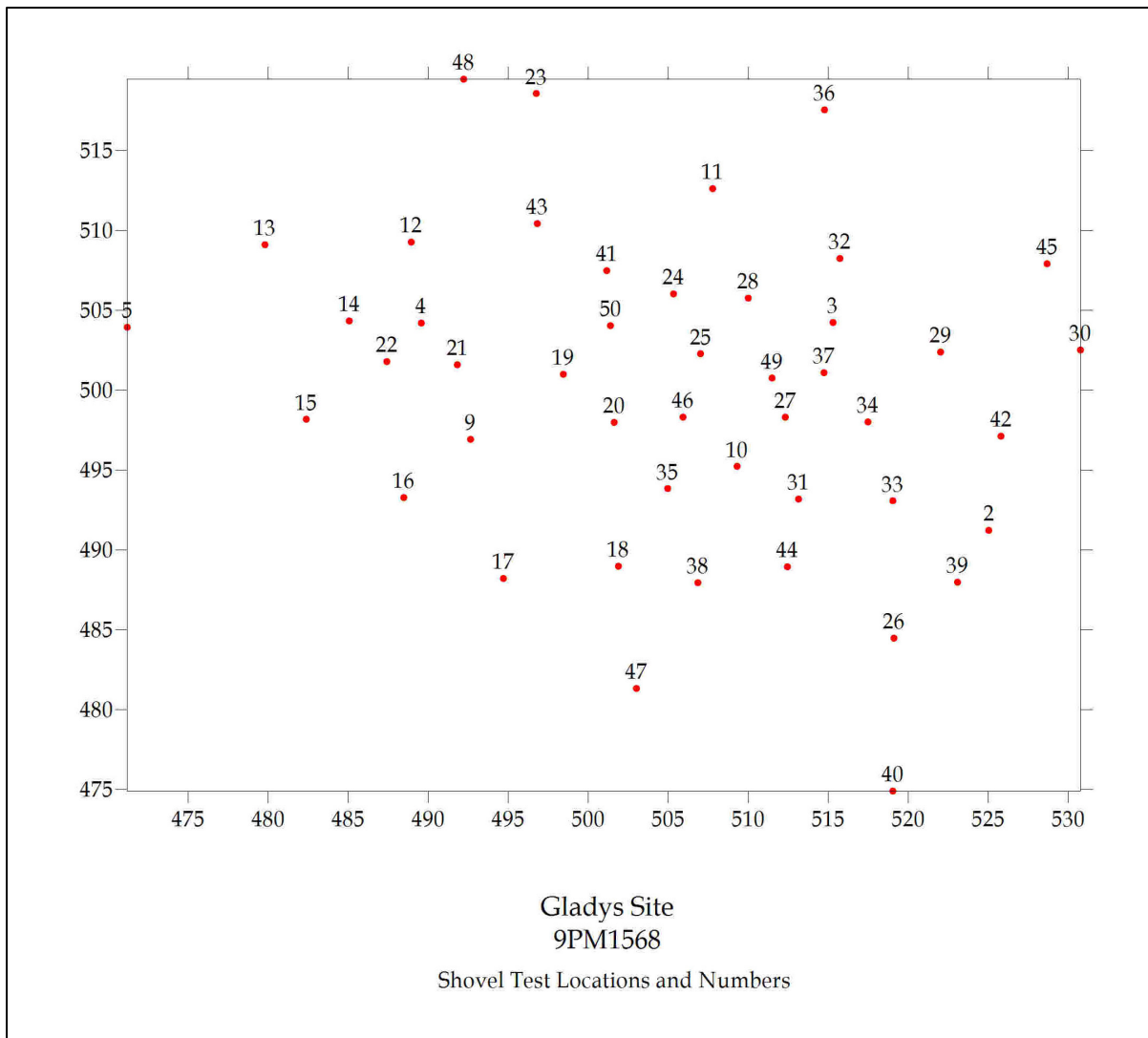


Figure 4. Shovel Test Locations

distribution, and was designated with the grid coordinate of 500 North, 500 East.

We gave Shovel test 39 an arbitrary elevation of 00.00 meters. The resulting

locations of the shovel tests and the elevations are presented in Appendix 1. Shovel

Tests 1 and 6-8 are missing from the list since these were well away from the site

that became designated as 9PM1568.

The locations of the numbered shovel tests with their numbers mapped with their locations is presented in Figure 4. The contour map of the site resulting from

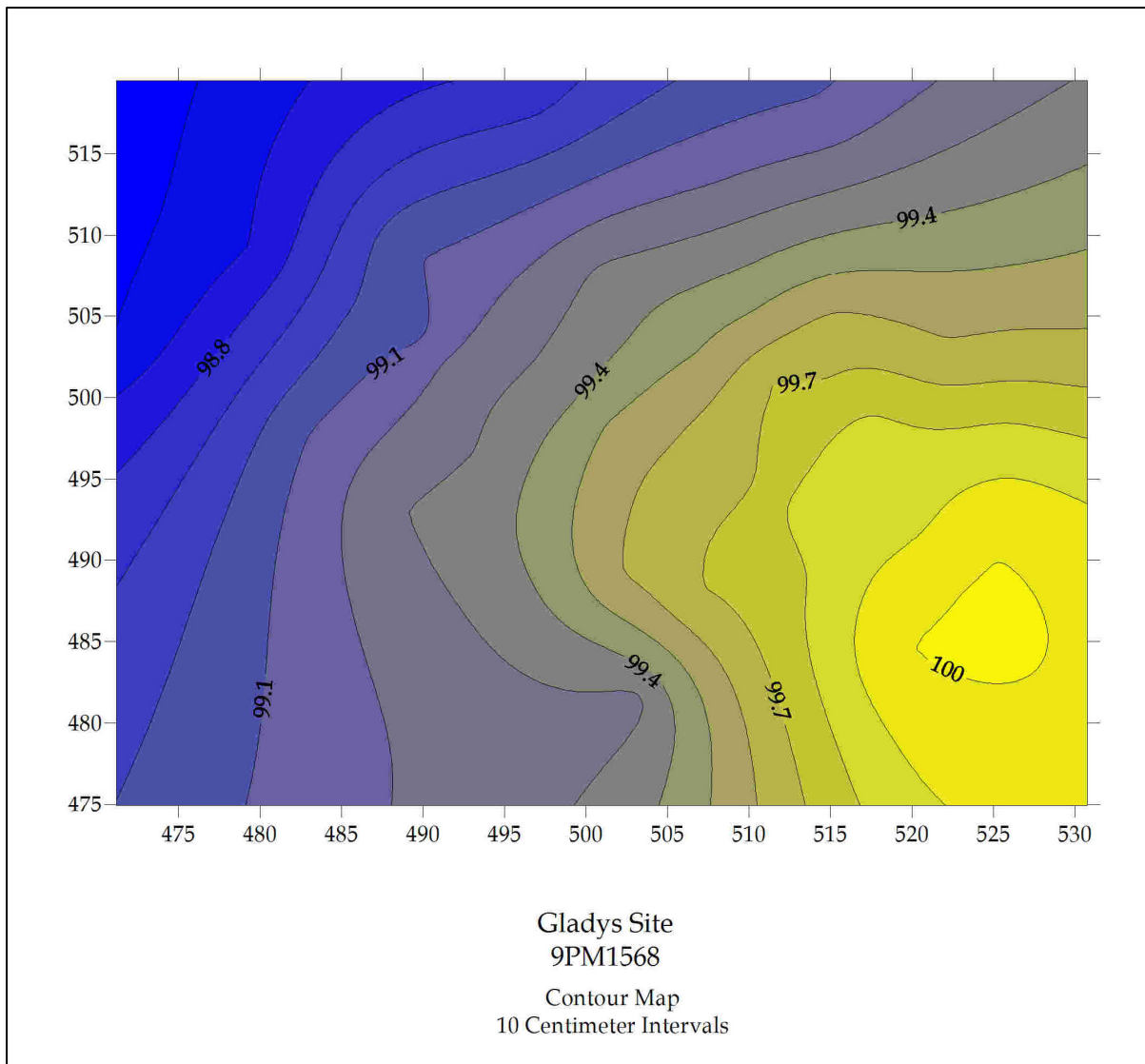


Figure 5. Contour Map.

the elevations made at the shovel tests is presented in Figure 5. This was made using the program Surfer from Golden Software. As can be seen, the site is on a relatively smooth ridge top that descends a bit to the north of west. As the ridge goes further to the west, its slope increases as it drops toward Whitehead Branch about 100 meters to the west.

The shovel tests themselves were all excavated to sterile red clay, typically no more than 15 centimeters deep. All the fill was screened through $\frac{1}{4}$ inch mesh hardware cloth to recover artifacts (Figure 6). Note in the figure that the current vegetation is a pine forest planted about 1980, with minimal undercover.



Figure 6. Shovel Testing.

Figure 7 shows a density map of the weight of sherds from the shovel tests. As can be seen from this image, there seems to be a generally circular shape to the occupation. The diameter of this circular area is 25 to 30 meters, and there seems to be a limited continuation of the density to the east of the main area. In fact, except for a single hot spot on the western side, the majority of the sherds seen centered on the eastern side of the circle. The size of this circular area seems exactly the same as the hundreds of farmsteads known from the Lamar period, some 2000 years after the

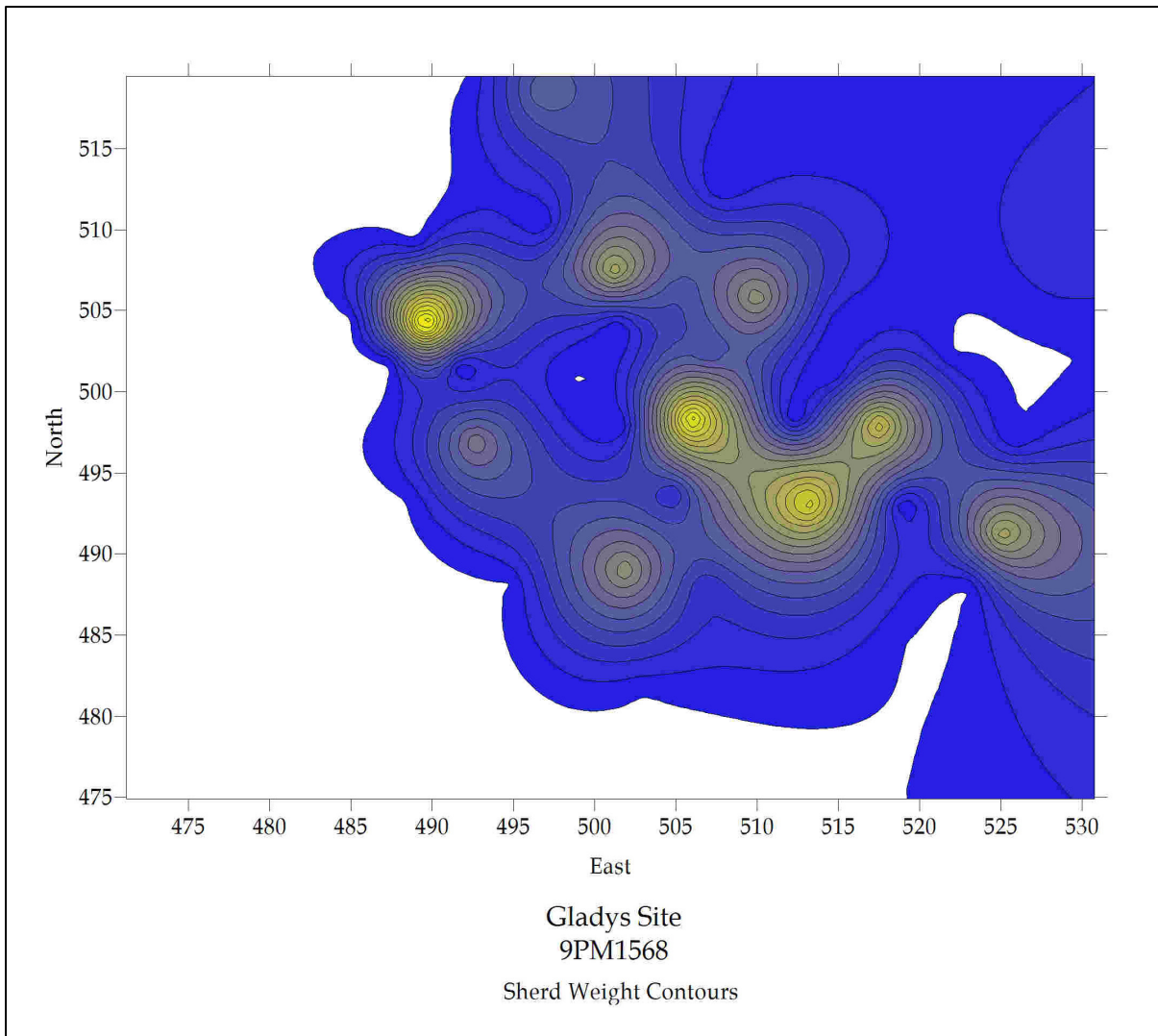


Figure 7. Sherd Weight Distribution

site discussed here.

Figure 8 shows the distribution map of the number of sherds from the shovel tests, rather than the weight. The circular nature of the distribution is not apparent in this figure, but the area of highest density is clearly the same as the high density area on the eastern side of the circle shown in Figure 7. Further, the pattern extends more to the east just as in the weight drawing. This map gave us a clear guide of where to place excavation units once we came back to the site for the second session at the site.

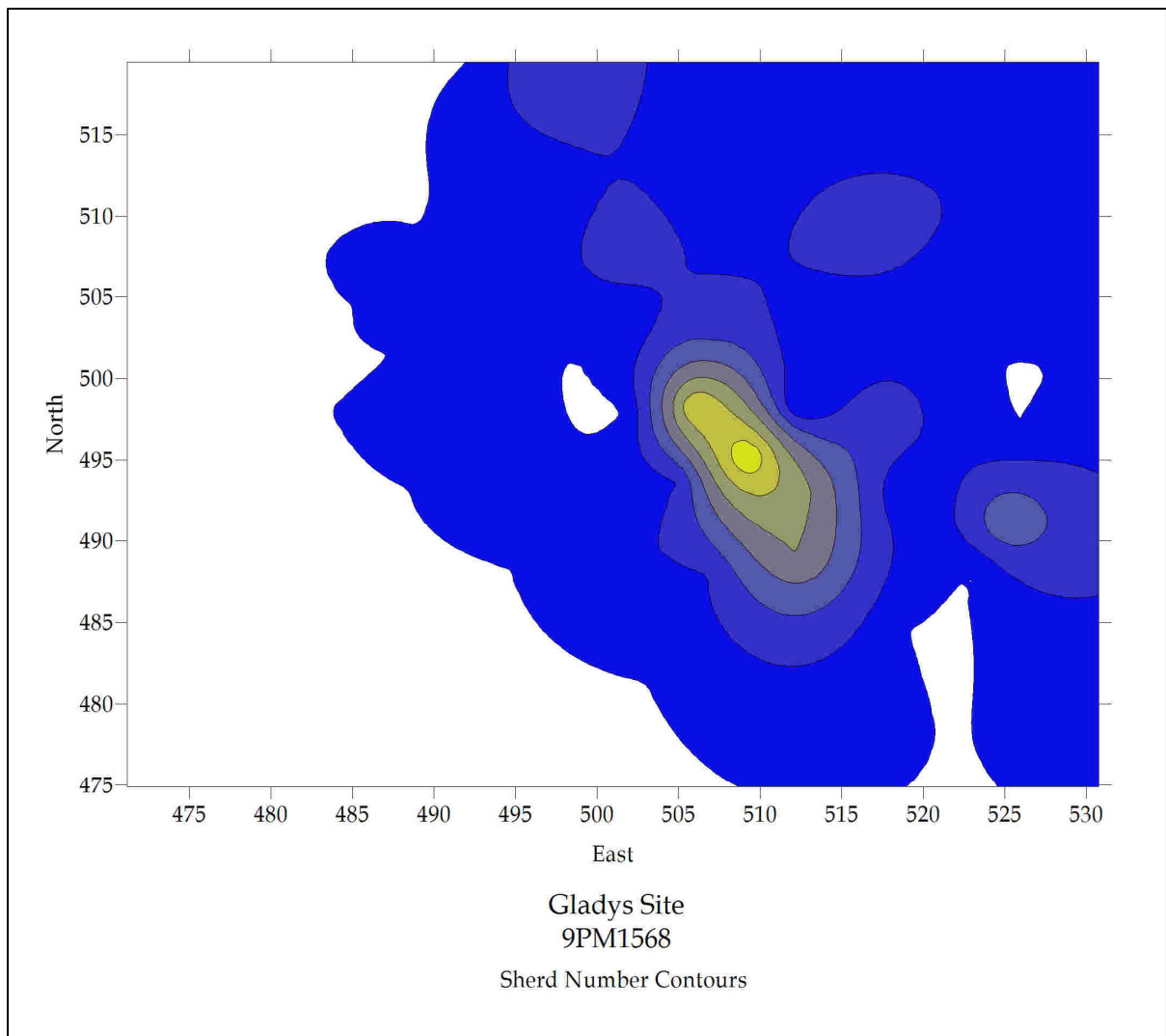


Figure 8. Sherd Number Distribution.

Excavation Units

Once we decided to place excavation units in this site, the locations of the units were determined by the area of highest sherd number density based upon the shovel tests. We excavated six 2 by 2 meter units altogether. These were grouped into three separate sets of squares. The first consisted of two squares oriented north to south on the western side of the area selected. The second consisted of three

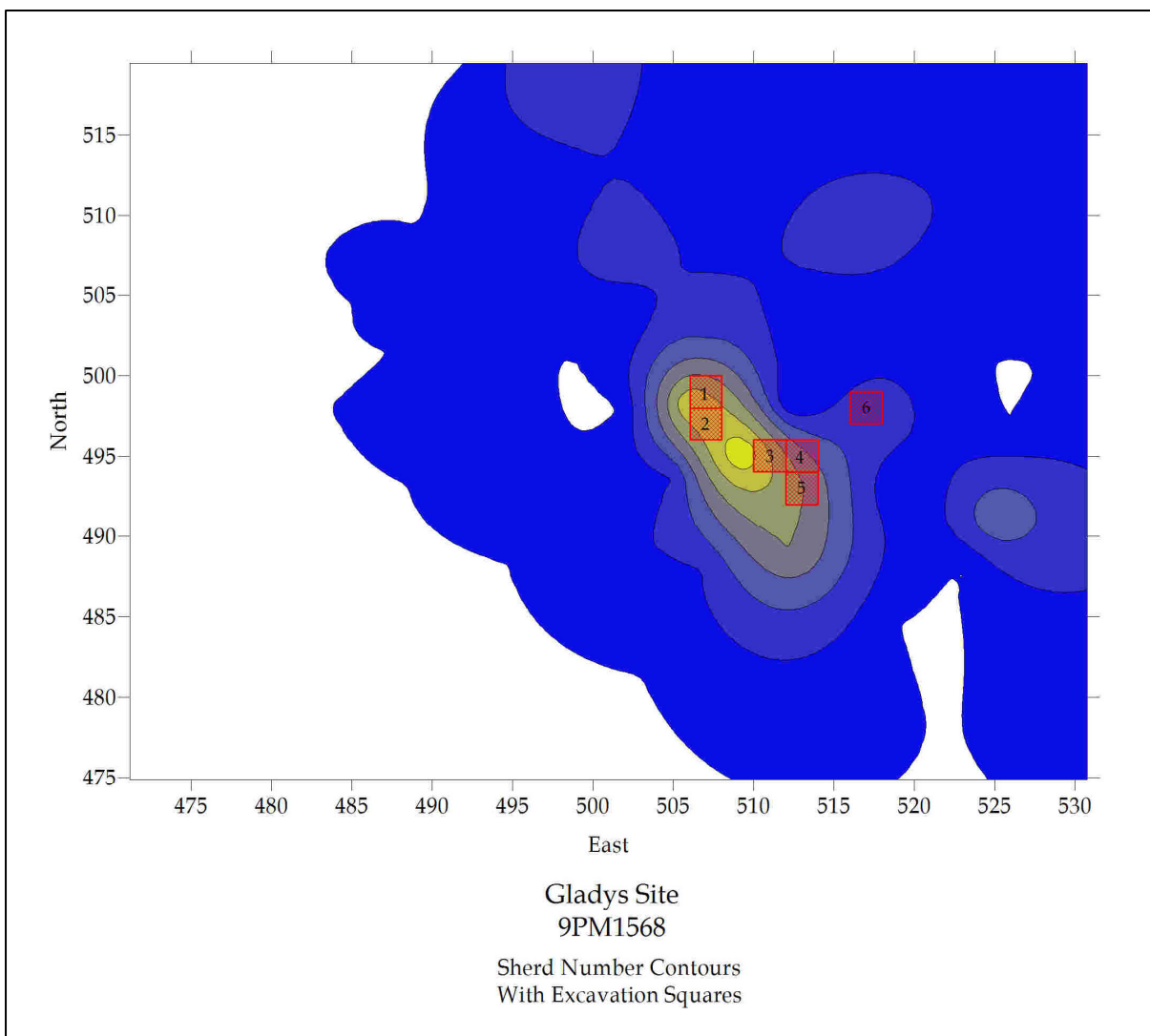


Figure 9. Location of Excavation Squares.

adjacent squares located in the center of the selected area, and the third was a single square to the northeast of the second set. The locations of the six squares are labeled on Figure 9. As with the shovel tests, each of the units was excavated in a single level to the sterile red clay at an average depth of only about 12 centimeters. All the fill from each square was screened through $\frac{1}{4}$ inch mesh hardware cloth to recover artifacts. Figure 10 shows Excavation Squares 1 and 2. No features or post molds were visible in the floor of the unit.



Figure 10. Excavation Squares 1 and 2.

Figure 11 shows Square 3, and the attachment to Square 4 to the right. The only thing noticed in the floor of this unit was a cluster of rocks that may represent a hearth area. This was designated as Feature 1. There is a possibility that this is a natural cluster of rocks, but there was no other such cluster found in any of the other squares. A surfer map of the rock locations is shown in Figure 13 on the next page. As can be seen, the cluster is not very impressive. There was no obvious charcoal visible associated with the rocks. The largest of the rocks in the northwestern part of the cluster is about 15 centimeters across. The others are obviously smaller. All seem to be made of granite or saprolite.



Figure 11. Excavation Square 3.

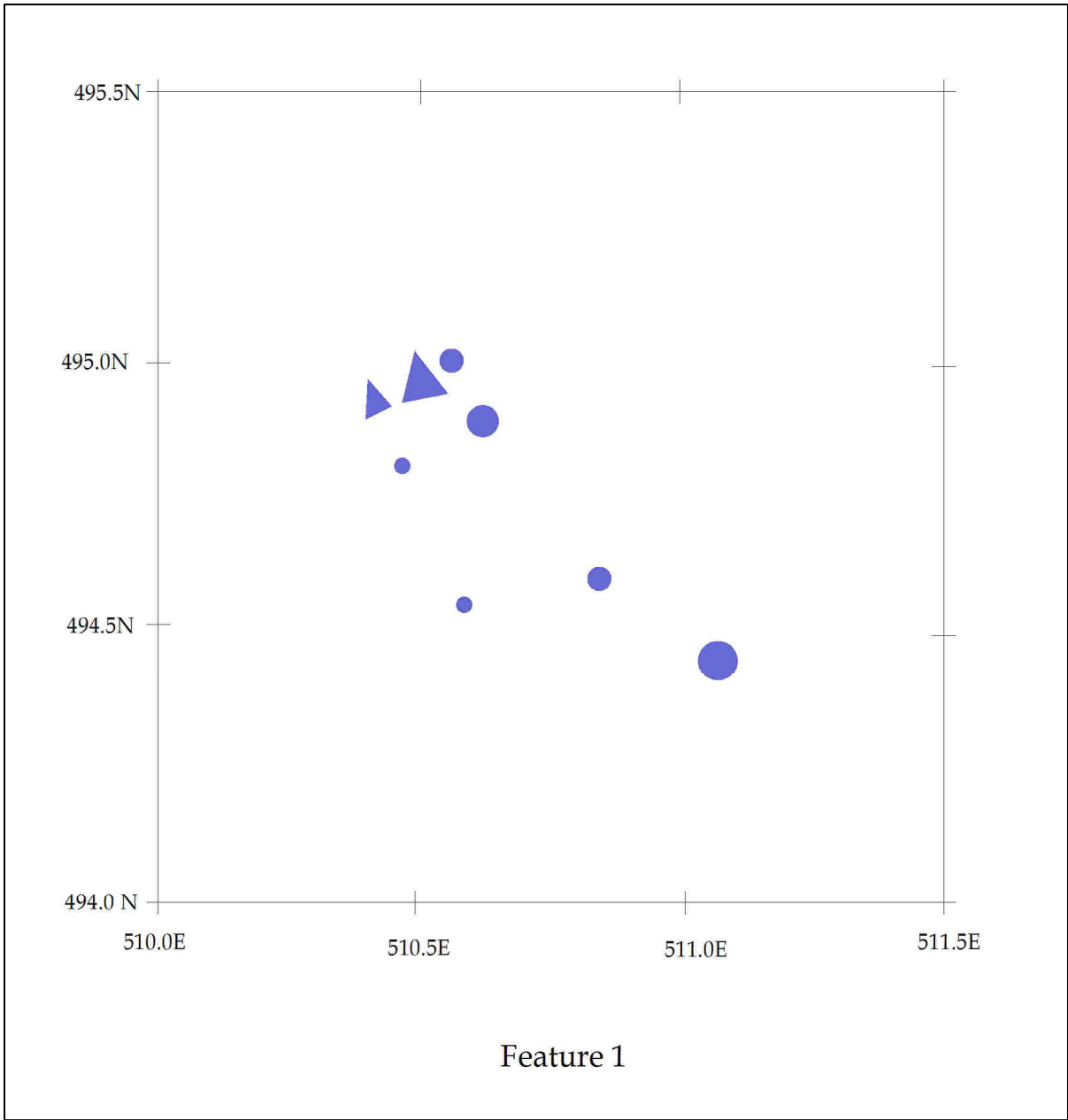


Figure 12. Feature 1.

The rest of the middle excavation unit, consisting of Squares 4 and 5, is shown in Figure 13. No features or posts were located in these squares. Finally, Figure 14 shows the last excavation unit, Square 6 located to the northeast of Square 5. No features or post molds were located in Square 6.



Figure 13 Excavations Squares 4 and 5.



Figure 14. Excavation Square 6.

Artifacts

The artifacts from the Excavation Units are listed below in a series of tables. All of the sherds greater than ½ inch in size are listed in Table 1. As can be seen, sherds were not particularly plentiful, although Square 2 had more than any of the other squares. Squares 1-3 are collectively more much richer than Squares 4-6. The site is not a pure Cartersville component, however. There were four sherds from the late Mississippian Lamar period--the incised sherds and the folded pinched rim listed in Table 1. This is slightly disappointing, but not too surprising. The Monroe site, a Lamar period farmstead (Williams and Shapiro 1990, Williams 2006), is located only 100 meters east of the Gladys site.

Because there is a minor Lamar occupation at this site, there is a possibility that a small amount of the plain pottery assigned to the Woodland Plain category actually is Lamar Plain (Williams and Thompson 1999). Woodland Plain is generally thinner, sandier, and not burnished as opposed to the Lamar Plain which is thicker, has some larger grit particles, and often is very smooth or burnished. On the other hand, these types do overlap at the extremes. It is clear, however, that the vast majority of the plain pottery from the Gladys site is Woodland Plain.

It is very noteworthy that there is almost no Cartersville Check Stamped pottery in the collection from the Gladys site, only Cartersville Simple Stamped is present. This likely dates the site to the middle part of the Early Woodland period,

perhaps about 300-500 B.C. using traditional dating characteristics from northern Georgia.

Table 2 lists the lithic material from the excavations squares. The vast majority of the material is quartz (78.9 percent), while Coastal Plain chert accounts for 14.1 percent. Ridge and Valley chert is present, but rare. This is quite different from the high percentage of this material present in Middle Woodland period sites in the area. Diabase, a local igneous material that is usually associated with the Late Archaic period, is also present in small quantities at the site.

The distribution of the lithic material is a bit different from that of the pottery. Squares 3 and 4 have the highest lithic density, while 1 and 2 on the western side and 6 on the eastern side have lower density. The general similarity in distribution of lithics across the site as a whole, however, gives strong support to the hypothesis that the majority of the lithics were made and used by the same people that made the ceramics during the Early Woodland period.

The weights of a number of other categories of artifacts are listed in Table 3. The material labeled as daub may be natural clay lumps, but their distribution is most dense in Squares 2-4, just as the ceramics and lithics. Square 3 is also the location of the only possible feature found at the site. It is also perhaps noteworthy that this same area has the lowest density of unmodified rock. Perhaps the area of a possible house was cleared of rocks, either consciously or unconsciously.

Square 2 has the largest amount of sherds larger than ½ inch, while Square 3 has the highest density of sherds less than ½ inch. The difference may indicate

differences in trampling rates in various parts of the site. If a larger block were excavated at the site in the future, it might indicate a very interesting pattern.

The Gladys site is also the location of, or at least very near an early 19th century farmstead. There are a number of linear rock piles near the site that might represent the foundations of cabins, but all seem to be isolated, and do not form clear squares or rectangles. There does not seem to be a pattern in the distribution of this material over the six squares that were excavated at the Gladys site. The presence of so many nail fragments (all wrought) does imply that there was some building quite close to the squares.

Square	Woodland Plain	Cartersville Check Stamped	Cartersville Simple Stamped	Cartersville Simple Stamped Tetrapod	Medium Incised	Fine Incised	Folded Pinched Rim	Totals
1	33	0	5	0	0	1	0	39
2	44	0	20	1	0	1	1	67
3	29	2	7	1	0	0	0	39
4	22	0	2	0	1	0	0	25
5	12	0	2	0	0	0	0	14
6	15	0	3	0	0	0	0	18
Totals	155	2	39	2	1	2	1	202

Table 1. Ceramics from Excavation Units.

Square	Quartz Flake	Crystal Quartz Flake	Quartz Shatter	Quartz Flake Tool	Quartz Biface	Coastal Plain Secondary Flake HT	Coastal Plain Tertiary Flake	Coastal Plain Tertiary Flake HT	Coastal Plain Shatter	Coastal Plain Flake Tool	Ridge/ Valley Flake	Diabase Flake	Diabase Shatter	Total Flaked Stone
1	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	8
2	20	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	23
3	17	0	17	0	0	0	3	4	0	1	0	0	0	42
4	5	0	17	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	6	31
5	6	0	11	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	22
6	10	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	16
Totals	64	1	45	1	1	1	9	8	2	1	2	1	6	142

Table 2. Lithics from Excavation Units.

Square	Hematite	Daub	Unmodified Rock	Sherds > 1/2 inch	Sherds < 1/2 inch	Sherd Total
1	0.0	102.0	3930.0	105.0	89.0	194.0
2	6.0	463.0	3491.0	293.0	85.0	378.0
3	6.0	447.0	2560.0	122.0	132.0	254.0
4	10.0	442.0	1644.0	63.0	90.0	153.0
5	1.0	213.0	2952.0	37.0	58.0	95.0
6	0.0	24.0	3760.0	54.0	41.0	95.0
Totals	23.0	1691.0	18337.0	674.0	495.0	1169.0

Table 3. Miscellaneous Weights of Materials from Excavation Units.

Square	Green Glass	Unknown Historic	Green Salt Glazed Stoneware	Plain White Pearlware	Transfer Print Pearlware	Blue Hand Painted Pearlware	Iron Fragment	Nail Fragment	Total
1	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	10
2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5
3	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	5	9
4	0	0	1	5	0	1	0	4	11
5	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	6
6	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	6	12
Totals	9	1	1	9	3	2	2	26	53

Table 4. Historic Artifacts from Excavation Units.

Summary and Conclusion

This brief report documents limited testing of a small site dating to the Early Woodland period in the central Georgia Piedmont. The site was located in a search for Late Mississippian farmsteads, and its discovery was certainly serendipitous. Shovel tests show that the site is about 30-40 meters in diameter, the same as many later farmsteads of the Late Mississippian period in the greater Oconee Valley. Given its small size, I suggest that this site might also be a single family based occupation, perhaps a farmstead for people growing crops associated with the pre-corn and beans native eastern cultigens--sunflower, goosefoot, etc. In this regard, its association with the nearby tiny Whitehead Branch, might imply horticulture in beaver meadows likely located there at that time. The length of the occupation was likely not long, given the paucity of artifacts and features. I would be surprised if the occupation at the Gladys site was over just a few years. Given the limited amount of excavation, however, it is not surprising that a structure was not located at the Gladys site. Hopefully the brief testing from the 2006 excavation reported here will stimulate others to excavate more on this potentially important site in the future. In my own mind, the most important future research question suggested by this brief project is the nature of the earliest horticulture in the Georgia Piedmont. Perhaps it grew out of extracting plants from naturally occurring beaver meadows nearby.

References Cited

Williams, Mark

2006 Archaeological Excavations at the Monroe Site, 9PM1428. *Lamar Institute Publication* 120. Lamar Institute.

Williams, Mark, and Gary Shapiro

1990 *Lamar Archaeology*. University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa.

Williams, Mark, and Victor Thompson

1999 A Guide to Georgia Indian Pottery Types. *Early Georgia* 27(1).

Appendix 1

Shovel Test Locations

Shovel Test	North	East	Elevation
2	491.23	525.03	99.993
3	504.25	515.28	99.640
4	504.21	489.55	99.070
5	503.95	471.19	98.602
9	496.91	492.63	99.286
10	495.22	509.28	99.657
11	512.60	507.77	99.218
12	509.27	488.94	99.090
13	509.10	479.80	98.713
14	504.32	485.07	99.008
15	498.16	482.38	99.079
16	493.28	488.48	99.295
17	488.22	494.68	99.345
18	488.98	501.88	99.589
19	500.99	498.43	99.344
20	497.98	501.62	99.521
21	501.58	491.83	99.236
22	501.79	487.40	99.108
23	518.56	496.74	98.854
24	506.02	505.31	99.404
25	502.27	507.03	99.516
26	484.47	519.10	99.995
27	498.30	512.30	99.738
28	505.77	509.99	99.477
29	502.39	522.02	99.627
30	502.52	530.75	99.636
31	493.19	513.13	99.828
32	508.25	515.70	99.479
33	493.06	519.03	99.836
34	498.00	517.46	99.832
35	493.82	504.96	99.643
36	517.55	514.75	99.123
37	501.10	514.73	99.699
38	487.95	506.83	99.692
39	487.98	523.06	100.000
40	474.90	519.02	99.855
41	507.47	501.17	99.330
42	497.12	525.79	99.852
43	510.42	496.81	99.144
44	488.94	512.44	99.767
45	507.92	528.68	99.515
46	498.31	505.91	99.594
47	481.32	503.01	99.273
48	519.47	492.20	98.801
49	500.75	511.48	99.701
50	504.03	501.40	99.362

Appendix 2

Shovel Test Artifacts

Shovel Test	Sherd Number	Sherd Weight	Quartz Flake	Chert Flake	Green Salt Glaze Stoneware	Hand Painted Pearlware	Blue Transfer Pearlware	Iron Nail	Iron Fragment
2	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	1	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
9	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
10	7	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
18	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
28	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
37	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
38	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
39	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
41	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
43	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
44	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
46	6	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
47	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
49	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	43	80	13	6	1	1	1	5	1