

Mapping the Cedar Creek Mound 9JO208

By
Mark Williams
University of Georgia
LAMAR Institute

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This brief report documents a very brief project undertaken on the Cedar Creek Mound in the northern portion of Jones County Georgia on July 8, 2002. It is on land administered by the United States Forest Service as part of the Oconee National Forest. The site was located by Jill Kingham in early 1996 (Kingham 1996:26-27). This work was conducted by the summer 2002 University of Georgia Archaeology Field School under the direction of the author and Jared Wood, with the direct assistance and permission of archaeologist Jill Kingham of the United States Forest Service. The crew consisted of Tara Coile, Ryan Duggar, Jacob Estes, James Fitzgerald, Jennifer Funk, Jason Grey, Kate Kruskamp, Nicole Polhill, Christopher Rayle, Emily Reynolds, Phinizy Spaulding, Jr., Bethany Smith, Daye Stewart, and Gail Tomczak. We were also aided by retired U.S. Forest Service archaeologist Jack Wynn.

The simple goal from the beginning of this project was to use out Total Station to make a contour map of a small mound discovered about 1997 by Jill Kingham. Because of mud, we were only able to drive to within 1.5 miles of the site, and hiked the rest of the way in with all the equipment. We did not arrive at the mound until ca. 1 PM and, due to other prior commitments by Jill Kingham, had to leave the site by 3 PM. Remarkably, we were able to accomplish our goal in the time window available! In addition to making the first contour map ever made of this mound, we made a small, but interesting surface collection of artifacts in the small amount of exposed ground near the mound.

The site is located in a mature forest with the exception of a logging road that completely transects the site. It is located ca. 25 meters south of the mound. The mound has approximately six 19th century graves on the summit. A few of these are marked with field stone, but none are inscribed in any way. The mound is not on the flat summit of a hill, but is on slightly sloping ground. This makes it a bit more difficult to estimate its height. At a glance it is about 1 meter

high on the uphill eastern side, and perhaps 2 meters high on the down slope western side. The summit is generally flat, but not perfectly so. The mound is ca. 20 meters in diameter at the base and ca. 13 meters in diameters at the summit. It is covered with trees, and we cleared it of brush prior to mapping it.

The total station used was a Sokkia Set 6F, coupled to a Psion data collector using C&G Field Plus software. The instrument was set in the middle of the summit. The GPS coordinates of this location was 3672844 North and 269059 East, NAD 1927. The GPS coordinates were taken using a Garmin GPS III+ and an external amplified antenna. A total of 60 elevations was recorded on and immediately around the mound. More would have been desirable, but time permitted only these. The ground beneath the total station was given an arbitrary elevation of 100.00 meters. Figures 1-3 show some images of the mound.



Figure 1. Total Station on Mound Summit.

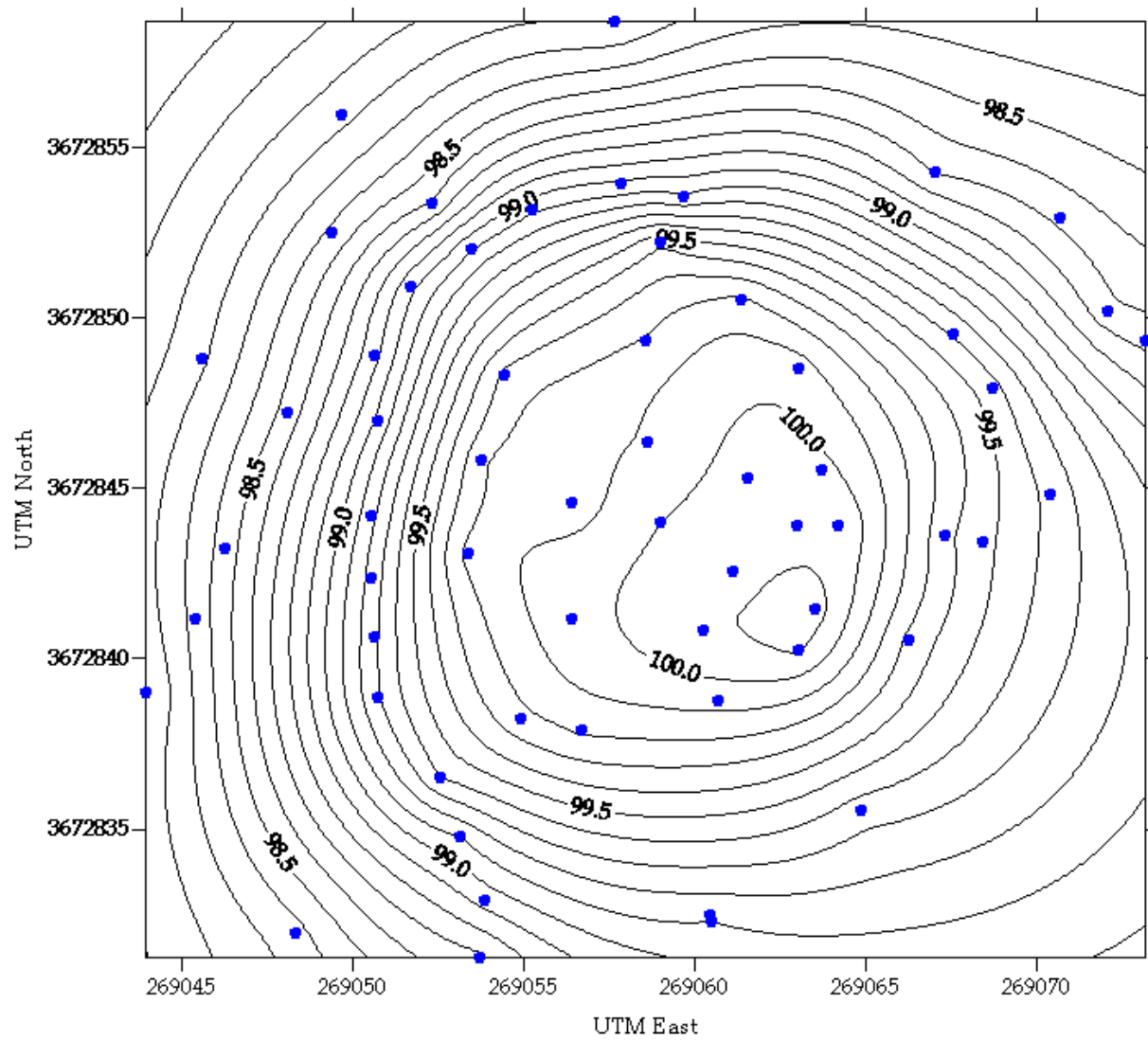


Figure 2. Student on Southeastern Edge of Mound.

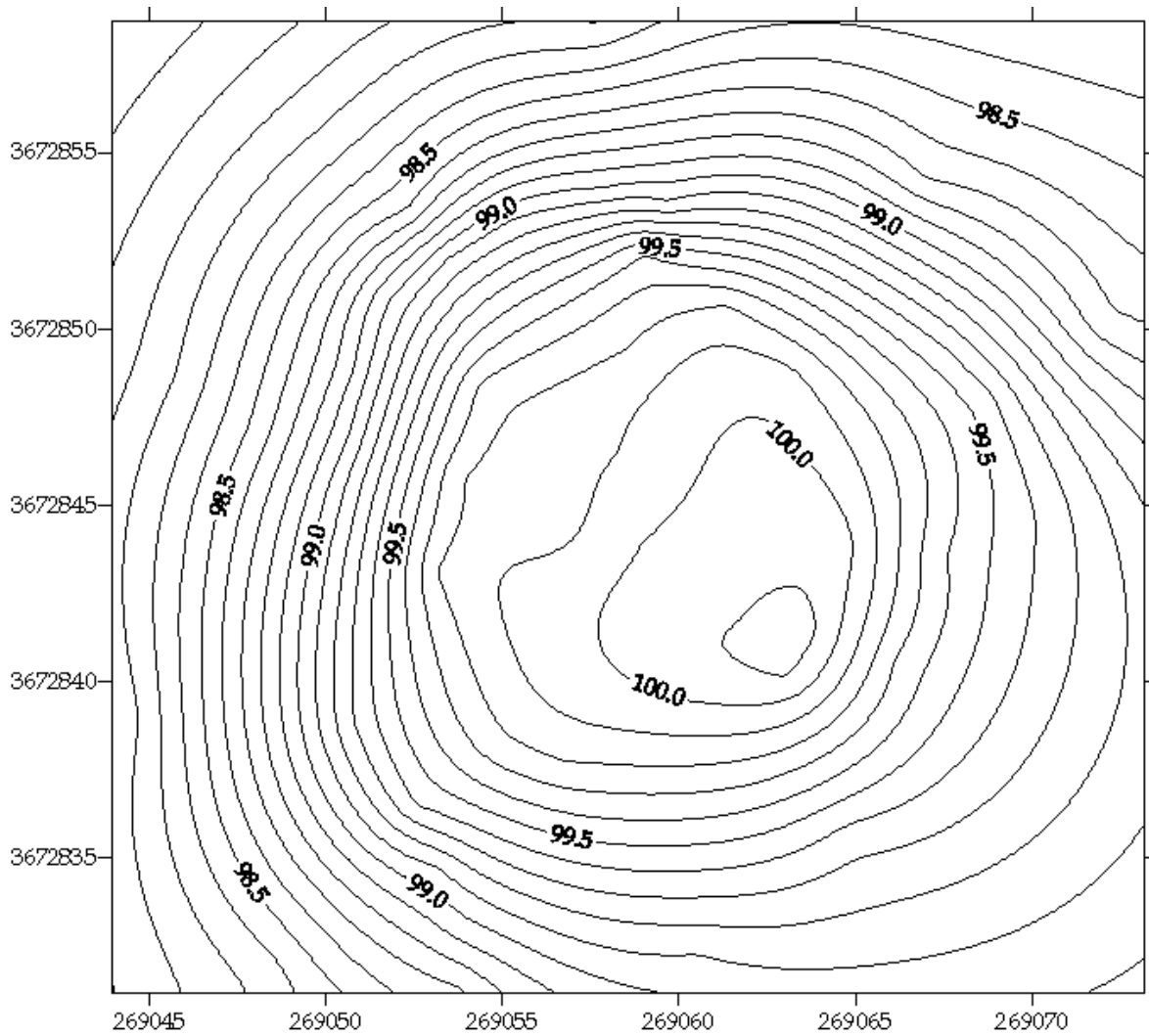


Figure 3. Students Down Southern Side of Mound.

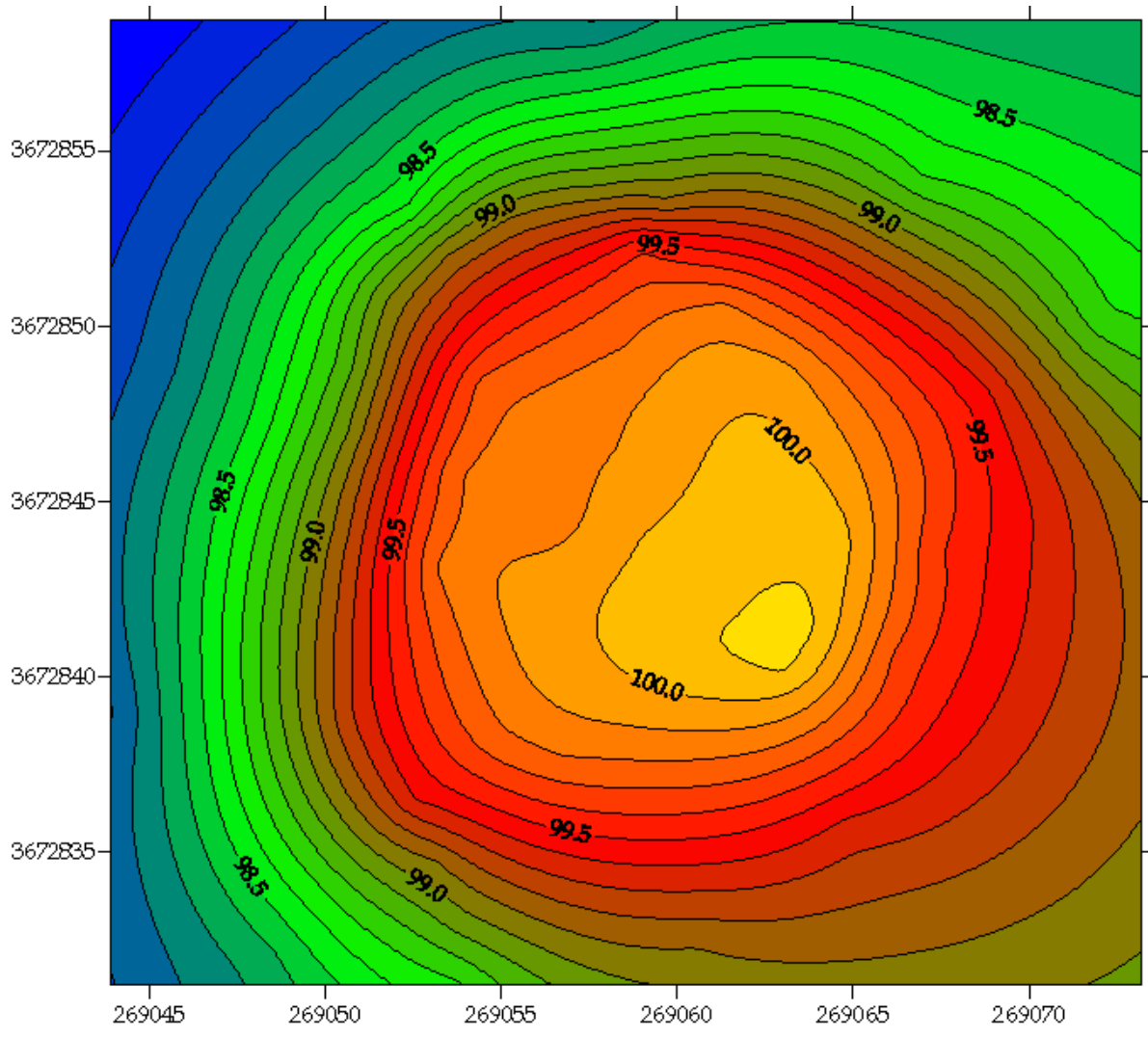
Figure 4 on the following page shows the contour map made with Surfer 8 from the data gathered by the Total Station. It is presented with 10 centimeter contours and includes the locations of each of the 60 points chosen for elevation recording. With 20-20 hindsight, additional elevations should have been taken on the southeastern and southwestern parts of the mound, particularly in the lower parts of the mound. It is thus difficult to determine whether the mound was ever rectangular in shape. While it might be argued that it is based upon the western side of the mound, the eastern side as presented clearly is rounded. The mound is clearly higher on the eastern part of the summit, with the extreme southeastern part some 50 centimeters higher than the western summit edge. Some of this may have to do with the historic burials, which are mostly on the eastern side of the mound summit. It also appears that the mound is most gently sloped on the eastern / southeastern side, but I do not interpret this as a ramp. As with some other Indian mounds, this one may be a modification of an existing natural hill feature. Only detailed excavations can answer this question, however. I would certainly recommend that the mound be remapped in the future, with several hundred elevations being taken. An additional version of the map with the elevation location points is presented in Figure 5, while Figure 6 is a color shaded version of Figure 5.



Cedar Creek Mound
Contour Interval 10 Centimeters
Blue Dots are Elevation Locations
Figure 4.



Cedar Creek Mound
Contour Interval 10 Centimeters
Figure 5.



Cedar Creek Mound

Contour Interval 10 Centimeters

Figure 6.

While the mapping operations on the mound were underway, the rest of the crew looked carefully at all exposed earth on the site for artifacts. The road into the site was the most obvious place to search and it diligently checked. There was a relatively recent firebreak plowed north to south on the eastern edge of the mound and this was also carefully checked. The results of these collection efforts were meager. Flaked stone fragments numbered 14 , while potsherds numbered 80. The following simple table shows the flaked fragments recovered.

Category	Number
Quartz Flakes	5
Quartz Shatter	2
Quartz Biface	1
CP Flake	5
Piedmont Chert	1
Total	14

Table 1. Surface Collection Lithics.

There is nothing surprising in this table, given the sites location in the Piedmont not too far from the Coastal Plain. Clearly these items could date to any prehistoric period. Additionally, a single hunk of limonite was recovered. This material is common on some Middle Woodland sites, such as the Fortson Mound (Williams 1992).

Table 2 presents the pottery sherds from the surface collection.

Category	Number
Plain	48
Napier Complicated Stamped	13
Vining Simple Stamped	6
Unidentified Stamped	6
Simple Plain Rim	3
Folded Rim	3
Unknown Incised Rim	1
Total	80

Table 2. Surface Collection Ceramics.

Other than the plain pottery, the most common pottery is the very rare type Napier

Complicated Stamped. The simple stamped could have occurred at the same Late Woodland period, thus there is every reason to believe that this site and presumably the mound date to the Napier period. Indeed, I know of only a single other mound that dates to this period—the Kenimer mound in White County (9Wh68) (Williams 1999). Interestingly, that mound, perhaps like this one, is one created by the modification of an existing or natural topographic feature. Clearly the Cedar Creek mound needs more attention in the future. While there may be Swift Creek pottery at the site (Kingham 1996:26), the sherds we recovered were clearly Napier in type (Williams and Thompson 1999:83-84).

Finally, across the logging road that runs east to west across the apparent center of the site to the south is a large elongated ridge that may or may not be natural. There is some bulldozing along it, but the feature itself is a real puzzler. It is oriented east-west, is less than a meter high, is perhaps 20 meters or more wide, and is some 100 meters or more long. We did not have time to map this strange feature. Kingham was also puzzled by this feature in her initial examination of the site (Kingham 1996:27). To determine if it is natural, Indian made, or if it dates to the 19th or even early 20th centuries, excavations would have to be undertaken on it. For now it simply adds more interest and curiosity to this important archaeological site.

References Cited

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