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EVALUATION OF THE ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES
IN THE CLINTON BYPASS ROUTE,
CLINTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

by

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Prepared by the
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INTRODUCTION

The South Carolina Highway Department is proposing the construction of a bypass around the city of Clinton, in Laurens County, South Carolina. In accordance with environmental protection regulations outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and Executive Order 11593, the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, conducted a reconnaissance survey in the area of this bypass to locate and evaluate archeological resources that might be affected. This research was conducted by the Institute's Highway Archeology Program, which is based upon a cooperative agreement between the Institute and the Highway Department. The research was funded by the normal highway archeology budget for 1977.

The proposed bypass would extend from S. C. Route 72 on the southern edge of Clinton in a semicircle east of the city to S. C. 56 north of the city. Four alternate routes have been proposed (Fig. 1). Alternates 1 and 2 each run from S. C. 56 across S. C. 72 and U. S. 76 to a point on Springdale Road. Alternate 3 continues from this point to the southern end of the bypass, at S. C. 72. Alternate 4 leaves Alternate 3 along Springdale Road and connects with S. C. 72 at another point. The lengths of the alternates are: Alternate 1 -- 2 1/2 miles; Alternate 2 -- 3 miles; Alternate 3 -- 1 1/2 miles; and Alternate 4 -- 3/4 mile, combining for a total of about 8 miles. Following consideration of environmental and other data collected at this stage of the project, the Highway Department will select a final route.

Clinton is situated in the South Carolina Piedmont, an area of broad, flat ridgetops and narrow riverine zones. The inter-riverine ridgetop regions are bisected by numerous small streams and intermittent waterways

which drain into the larger rivers. Some of the larger rivers of the Piedmont have developed small alluvial floodplains. This division of the Piedmont into two physiographic zones is thought to have archeological ramifications, representing differential utilization of the environment prehistorically (House and Ballenger 1976; Goodyear, Ackerly and House n.d.).

The Piedmont is currently covered by oak-pine forest (Braun 1950). This area was at one time an oak-hickory forest, but virtually all of it has been cleared at one time or another during the past 200 years for the cultivation of cotton and other crops. This intensive agriculture also brought about severe erosion in the Piedmont wherein much of the topsoil has been washed away exposing underlying red clay (Trimble 1974).

These historical and environmental factors had an effect on the archeological reconnaissance of the proposed route of the Clinton bypass. Most of those areas which presented an exposed ground surface were eroded, with red clay exposed on the tops of low rises and slopes. This erosion is a mixed blessing archeologically, in that it exposes buried material for surface discovery, but destroys the distributional integrity of that material.

Presenting even greater problems for this reconnaissance was the vegetational ground cover. Surface examination to locate archeological sites is successful only in areas where there is some degree of ground surface visibility, such as in cultivated fields, paths, field and logging roads, and eroded slopes. Less than 20% of the Clinton bypass route, however, exhibited any degree of visibility. Subsurface testing was done at several loci that had high potential for the occurrence of

sites, but a more extensive program of subsurface testing was not feasible within the parameters of this project. This reconnaissance, therefore, cannot be considered to have located all archeological sites occurring within the impact zone of the Clinton bypass.

The South Carolina Piedmont is known to have been inhabited for at least 12,000 years by various groups of people including the early prehistoric nomadic hunters and gatherers; the protohistoric agricultural groups living in large permanent villages; and the historic European settlers. Until recently, much of what was known of South Carolina Piedmont prehistory had been interpolated from archeological work conducted in the neighboring states of Georgia and North Carolina. Currently, however, major contributions are being made to our understanding of Piedmont prehistory. Research conducted by the Institute's Highway Archeology Program (House and Ballenger 1976; Goodyear, Ackerly, and House n.d.) has contributed much to this body of knowledge.

A detailed account of the prehistory of the entire eastern North American continent has been written by Griffin (1967). Of greater application to this project are the Piedmont-specific, culture-historical discussions by House and Ballenger (1976: 23-29) and Goodyear, Ackerly and House (n.d.).

Our concept of Piedmont prehistory changes with **ongoing** research as new data clarify, support, or disprove currently accepted ideas. The data from the archeological sites found and analyzed during this research are consistent with our present understanding of the inter-riverine Piedmont. Culture-historical and brief functional discussions appear later in this report with considerations of the significance of these archeological resources.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE DATA

Ten archeological sites were located during the reconnaissance of the four Clinton bypass alternates. Eight of these sites were found to contain only prehistoric cultural material, and two produced both prehistoric and nineteenth century artifacts. Eight of these sites are located near enough to the proposed routes that they are in danger of being affected by construction. Two sites are located well outside of the impact zone.

An archeological site, as defined in this study, is an area at which either prehistoric or historic artifacts are found. Artifact analysis of the material collected during this project was conducted, utilizing the typology developed for the standard Highway Program analysis form. A detailed discussion of this typology can be found in House and Ballenger (1976: 89-93). A compilation of this data is presented in Table 1.

Upon the discovery of a site, one of two collection methods was used. If only a few artifacts were visible at a site, a total collection of the area was made. If larger amounts of material were present, such as was often the case with large scatters of broken quartz, a selective collection for analysis was made of potentially diagnostic pieces. These special purpose collections provide temporal and/or functional data, but cannot be viewed as being statistically representative of a site or its contents.

38LU85: This small scatter of prehistoric lithic material was found in a newly planted wheat field 200 meters west of U. S. 76 and thirty meters north of Springdale Road. Both Alternates 1 and 2 are

TABLE 1

ARTIFACT ANALYSIS OF THE SITES LOCATED DURING THE CLINTON BYPASS SURVEY

	Quartz Chunks	Quartz and Other Flakes	Quartz Thinning Flakes	Quartz Uniface	Quartz Hammerstone	Quartz Blanks	Non-quartz Lithic	Historic Ceramics	Other Historic
38LU85			2				1 a		
38LU86	1	1	2			2	1 b		
38LU87						1		1	
38LU88	2?	2							
38LU89		1	1						
38LU90	2	1	1		1?	1			
38LU91 Locus 1								1	
38LU91 Locus 2		3	2					3	2 c
38LU92				1					
38LU93	3	1							
38LU94	2?		1				1 d		

a = Coastal plain chert Hardaway point

b = Slate cruciform drill tip (?)

c = One fragment of green glass and one marble

d = One fine grain igneous thinning flake (?)

potentially damaging to the site. The young wheat made collecting difficult here, and during a subsequent trip to the site for further collecting it totally obscured the ground surface.

The site is situated atop a low rise sloping to the south toward Springdale Road. An unnamed creek which flows into Shell Creek lies about 100 meters to the west. The field in which 38LU85 is located is a fine silty loam.

This area is covered by broken quartz, much of which appears to be unmodified by human activity. Several biface thinning flakes were collected in a selective sample along with a broken Hardaway point of Coastal Plain chert. This point style, described by Coe (1964: 64-67), is indicative of the Early Archaic period.

38LU86: This site is located in an adjoining field, northwest of 38LU85. A quartz scatter was seen at the west end of this field, extending into the bordering treeline. The creek lies a short distance to the west.

As with 38LU85, young wheat partially obscured visibility here. An area approximately 20 meters by 20 meters was collected, producing a quartz chunk, several quartz biface thinning flakes, two quartz blank fragments, and what appears to be the broken tip of a slate cruciform drill. This drill is the only temporally sensitive artifact from the site, and may be indicative of the Late Archaic period.

38LU86 is located north-west of Alternates 1 and 2. Therefore, adverse impact to this site from construction of the Clinton bypass is not anticipated.

38LU87: A single fragment of a quartz blank and a small sherd of historic pearlware were collected from a field northwest of State Road 8, several hundred meters northeast of its intersection with State Road 547. The field, which was being plowed at the time of this survey, was a fine silty loam with red clay exposed on the tops of low rises. The artifacts were found on a slope dipping gently to the southeast. The two pieces collected comprise a total collection of this site, as no other cultural material was visible in the fine silty loam.

38LU87 lies within the proposed route of Alternate 1. The prehistoric quartz biface blank is not diagnostic of any particular period; the historic ceramic fragment is datable to the nineteenth century.

38LU88: This site was discovered along the edge of a garden plot bordering the lawn immediately to the north of Bailey Memorial Hospital. The hospital is on Route 56 at the southern edge of Clinton. 38LU88 lies directly in the path of Alternate 3.

Visibility in the freshly planted garden was excellent, but the adjoining lawn obscured any archeological materials which may exist there. An estimate of the extent of the site, therefore, could not be made. Two quartz fragments which appear to be chunks from early stage biface manufacture, and two early biface reduction stage flakes of quartz were collected in a selective collection taken from a small area (approximately 10 meters by 5 meters) of the garden. Other broken quartz was visible at this location.

38LU89: This site was located along Alternate 1, approximately 1/4 mile south of Route 72. Prehistoric lithic material was discovered along a narrow strip of exposed ground between an overgrown field and an intermittent stream. Due to the constraints presented by this poor

visibility, the extent of this site could not be determined. Two quartz flakes were collected which appear to have been the result of human modification; other broken quartz present was not collected at this time.

38LU90: This site was discovered about 100 meters southeast of 38LU89. It is located at the edge of the same overgrown field and appears to extend into the adjoining pine woods. The land surface slopes westward toward a deep gully containing an intermittent stream; the soil at this location is a light brown silt.

The exposed area on the periphery of the field is littered with large amounts of broken quartz. A selective sample, collected for analysis, yielded chunks and biface thinning flakes of quartz, a quartz blank, and one piece that is possibly a quartz hammerstone. None of this prehistoric lithic debris is culturally diagnostic, and therefore cannot be assigned to a particular temporal period. 38LU90, like 38LU89 to the northwest, lies within the Alternate 1 route.

38LU91: A plowed field southeast of the intersection of State Road 8 and State Road 547 (in the path of Alternate 2) provided good ground visibility at the time of the survey. Cultural material was found on the top and slopes of a low eroded rise in this field. The slopes were sandy, while the top of this rise was exposed red clay.

Collections were made here at two loci. From locus 1, approximately 100 meters to the southwest of the top of the rise, a single sherd of historic pearlware was collected. Locus 2, an area 20 meters by 10 meters atop the rise, produced both prehistoric and historic artifacts. Three early stage biface reduction flakes and two thinning flakes of quartz were collected. Historic material gathered at locus 2

include one marble, one fragment of green glass, one sherd of whiteware, one of ironstone, and one of blue transfer-printed earthenware (all nineteenth century in origin), and a dark grey, decorated, glazed stone-ware sherd (also thought to be from the nineteenth century).

From the material recovered it is possible to determine that 38LU91 was the scene of prehistoric activity (although a particular time period cannot be determined from the analysis of artifacts collected), and nineteenth century activity.

38LU92: A single artifact was collected from this site, which is located along Alternate 2 approximately 1/4 mile northeast of State Road 547 and 100 meters southeast of State Road 8. This artifact, however, is a steep-angle end scraper, diagnostic of the Early Archaic period. The uniface was found on the eastern slope of a low rise. No other cultural material was visible at this location, although visibility in the plowed field was excellent at the time of the survey.

38LU93: This site was located in a plowed field along Alternate 2, three-quarters of a mile north of State Road 547 and approximately 100 meters east of State Road 8. The land surface here slopes very gently to the south, and the soil is a light reddish-brown silt.

A selective collection of three quartz chunks and one quartz flake was taken from this location. Other broken quartz debris was seen here, but was not collected.

38LU94: This site was discovered on a northwest-facing slope between Route 72 and Miller's Fork. One quartz biface thinning flake and two quartz chunks (probably the result of human activity rather than natural

processes) were gathered during a selective collection, as was a thinning flake of a fine-grained igneous material. This site lies several hundred meters to the northeast of the impact route of Alternate 2, and no adverse impact to it is anticipated.

SIGNIFICANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The significance of an archeological site is based upon several different factors (Scovill, Gordon, and Anderson 1972; Schiffer and House 1977; Klinger and Raab 1976; and House and Schiffer 1975). The historical, educational, and recreational potential of a site must be considered, as well as the scientific contribution it will make toward a clearer understanding of the prehistoric or historic era.

Evaluation of the significance of archeological resources is vital within the framework of environmental impact research. It is only after this decision on significance has been made that recommendations for the appropriate mitigation of adverse impacts to these archeological resources can be outlined. A wide range of approaches to mitigation can be prescribed ranging from the modification of a project to avoid impact to a site, to total or partial excavation, or comprehensive and systematic surface collection of impacted sites.

The reconnaissance fieldwork of the Clinton bypass routes encountered several constraints which have restricted the evaluation of the archeological resources located there. As mentioned earlier in this report, less than 20% of the impact area provided any degree of visibility. Consequently, the ten sites discovered by the survey probably represent only a small percentage of the total archeological sites present within the route.

Second, the material which was collected from the field provided only minimal data concerning culture-historical or functional aspects of the ten sites. This paucity of information understandably reduces our knowledge of the archeological resources and, in turn, diminishes the value of our appraisals of their significance and outlined mitigation procedures. A conscientious attempt has been made, however, to overcome these limitations and prescribe a schedule of mitigation which will insure minimal loss of archeological potentials.

Very few temporally sensitive artifacts were recovered. Consequently, we can determine little about the periods of prehistory when these sites were occupied. Early Archaic tools were discovered at two sites. 38LU85 produced a Hardaway projectile point, and 38LU92 had a steep angle unifacial scraper. A broken tool fragment found at 38LU86 appears to be the tip of a cruciform drill, which would place this site within the Late Archaic period. Historic material collected at 38LU87 and 38LU91 is a product of nineteenth century occupation. Other sites can only be said to have been occupied sometime during prehistoric times.

Even less can be said at this time about the functional roles which these sites played within their total settlement and subsistence systems. Those inferences which are made are tenuously grounded on a slim data base, and should be viewed accordingly. By plugging these minimal data into the broader framework of the Interstate 77 survey (House and Ballenger 1976), most of these sites appear to be loci of inter-riverine hunting activities.

It is our recommendation that none of these ten sites be considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The historic, educational, and psychological values of these sites are

minimal and do not warrant nomination. The scientific value of these sites is real but, for the following reasons, is not worthy of National Register status. Erosion has taken its toll on these sites, lessening the spatial integrity of artifacts, and most of the sites exhibit low artifact densities. Excavation probably would not produce significant amounts of additional information.

The steps that have already been undertaken by this research have adequately gathered data from most of the ten sites. These sites have been recorded, documented, described, and analyzed. This information is recorded for future Piedmont archeological research.

It is felt, however, that additional collecting at several of these sites, at a time when ground surface visibility is more favorable, would produce culture-historical and functional data worthy of such measures. It is recommended that total surface collections of artifacts be made before construction of the Clinton bypass at the following sites: 38LU85, 38LU86, 38LU90, and 38LU91.

The fieldwork prescribed here as mitigation of adverse effect to these four sites can be conducted in one day, and would be financed by the normal Highway Archeology budget. This would be done in coordination with highway construction and would in no way hinder that work. A formal report to the Highway Department on this work will not be required. These collection procedures and those already implemented should adequately preserve the scientific information which can be gleaned from these sites and no further mitigation will be required.

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