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Description

An archeological site survey was conducted by the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina during the last week of February, 1974 of the Duke Power Company X-81 Plant, Site B in eastern Cherokee County. This survey revealed fifteen previously unrecorded archeological sites, three of which warrant further investigation. The three, 38CK5, 38CK6, and 38CK8, are located in areas that do not appear to be threatened by the presently planned construction activity. They are important archeological sites, though, and must be fully considered for full investigation before other, future, construction might be undertaken in the area.

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ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF
THE DUKE POWER COMPANY'S PROPOSED
X-81 PLANT, SITE B

by

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Prepared by the
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ABSTRACT

An archeological site survey was conducted by the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina during the last week of February, 1974 of the Duke Power Company X-81 Plant, Site B in eastern Cherokee County. This survey revealed fifteen previously unrecorded archeological sites, three of which warrant further investigation. The three, 38CK5, 38CK6, and 38CK8, are located in areas that do not appear to be threatened by the presently planned construction activity. They are important archeological sites, though, and must be fully considered for full investigation before other, future, construction might be undertaken in the area.

INTRODUCTION

At the request of Duke Power Company the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology conducted an archeological site survey of an area in eastern Cherokee County under investigation by Duke Power Company for future development. This site survey is required by the National Environmental Policy Act as part of the Environmental Impact Statement that must be filed preceding any construction activity that uses Federal funding. The archeological resources and historical values of an area are considered part of the environment and thus come under the consideration of this Act.

The primary purpose of this survey, then, was to locate and record any archeological sites, either prehistoric or historic, that might be destroyed or endangered by construction activity.

A secondary goal was to obtain information regarding historic settlement and usage of the area by persons connected with the iron industry in operation there during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was felt that the proximity of the survey area to known iron manufacturing sites and to the Broad River valley would be reflected in a concentration of historic house and possibly village or community sites. The writer also felt that the possibility existed of locating previously unrecorded iron manufacturing sites.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY AREA

The portion of Cherokee County surveyed lies within the Southern Piedmont Region, a zone between the Blue Ridge and the Fall Line. Elevation of the survey area ranges from approximately 450 feet to

slightly over 800 feet within a distance of less than two miles and most of the survey area consists of moderately to steeply sloping terrain interspersed with small tributary stream valleys. A small portion of the area consists of relatively level upland and of the alluvial floodplain along the Broad River. The most prominent geographic feature of the area is McKown's Mountain, a ridge of 800 feet elevation that runs north-south and borders the survey area on the west. On the east and north the survey area is bounded by the 99 Islands Lake, a hydroelectric impoundment, and a short stretch of the Broad River below the 99 Islands Dam.

The survey area is mostly forested at present and hardwoods predominate, pines and other evergreens being interspersed on the ridge tops. This area was part of what was once known as the "Coaling Grounds", a region almost entirely denuded of its forest cover to provide charcoal for the nearby iron furnaces (Moss 1970:64). As a result of this practice the present hardwood forests are mostly immature growth and considerable understory exists in places, making the ridge slopes difficult to traverse. An insignificant amount of land is under cultivation and most of the cleared land is utilized as pasture or is lying fallow.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Named for the last Indians to live there Cherokee County was first occupied by Anglo-American colonists around 1750. The wave of Scots-Irish immigrants that flooded into the Carolina Up-Country in the 1750's and 1760's brought the area a permanent population comprised

mostly of farmers. During the American Revolution the battles of King's Mountain and Cowpens were fought in the immediate vicinity and the general area was the scene of considerable military activity.

Iron manufacturing in the Up-Country of South Carolina took place in what are now Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union, and York counties. This area was known as the "Iron District" by 1776. The utilization of the district's iron resources probably began in the early 1770's with the influx of settlers from Pennsylvania who were familiar with iron and the manufacturing process. The rich iron resources, the abundant supply of fast-moving water, and the lack of an internal transportation system in the province gave special impetus to iron manufacturing in the Up-Country and by the time the American Revolution began there were a number of foundaries operating, some of which were able to supply iron products to the American war effort. The Iron District of South Carolina reached its peak production during the middle decades of the nineteenth century and assisted the war effort of the Confederacy but loss of slave labor and other contributing factors caused a decline of operations and by 1900 South Carolina's iron industry was defunct. Surface mining for minerals carries on the mining tradition today although textiles play a more important part in the economy of the area. (Moss 1972: 307-28).

DOCUMENT RESEARCH

In preparation for the archeological site survey of the area, document research was carried out in the files of the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology and the Historic Preservation Division of

the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Sources consulted were:

The archeological site files at the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia

Environmental Reconnaissance Inventory of the Charleston District prepared by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Washington

Historic Places in the South Carolina Appalachian Region: A Survey G. Randal Haithcock, Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments, 1972

Mills Atlas of South Carolina by Robert Mills, Robert Pearce Wilkins and John D. Keels, Jr. Columbia, 1965

Although a number of important historical sites are in the general area, research revealed only one in the immediate survey area. The publication Historic Places in the South Carolina Appalachian Region: A Survey listed Graham's Iron Works, a nineteenth century foundry, as being in the area of the proposed Duke Power Company development. The survey of the area failed to locate this site and subsequent research and investigation proved the map in that publication to be in error. The location of Graham's Iron Works is further upstream on the Broad River and is not in the area intended for development by Duke Power Company.

The following individuals were contacted regarding their knowledge of possible historic resources in the area of interest:

Mrs. Christie Fant, Coordinator, Historic Preservation Division, The South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia representing the State Historic Preservation Office.

Mr. Jack Blanton, The Cherokee County Historical Society, Gaffney

Professor B.G. Moss, Limestone College, Gaffney

Mr. Dean McKown, lifelong resident of the area

Mr. Randal Haithcock, Appalachian Council of Governments, Greenville

SURVEY TECHNIQUE

The method employed for locating archeological sites was surface collection of artifacts. The entire area was covered on foot and special emphasis was placed on exposed areas such as fields, road cuts, road beds, erosional cuts, and graded areas. Considerable earth moving and tree clearing activity has already taken place in the area and this assisted visual inspection in wooded areas. In other areas it was necessary to scrape-shovel ground cover away to observe the soil.

Careful attention was given to the flood plain area below the 99 Islands Dam, to rock outcroppings and small creek valleys (as possible locations of rock shelters) and to bluff and ridge tops. The fact that 99 Islands Lake covers most of the river bottom adjacent to the survey area eliminated the kind of terrain where certain types of site would probably be found. Indicative of this is the concentration of sites found at the end of County Road 13 below the 99 Islands Dam.

Archeological sites of contemporary origin (20th Century) are being created by the removal of dwellings and outbuildings on some portions of the Duke Power Company property. Any further survey work in the area should include recording these habitation sites.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Fifteen sites were located and recorded as a result of this survey. Two of these (38CK12, 38CK19) are not in the area delineated as Duke Power Company property but are in proximity while three others (38CK5, 38CK6, 38CK16) are partially located on Duke Power Company land.

The accompanying map (Figure 1) illustrates the site locations.

It should be noted that although no recommendations for further work at present are made for most of the sites located, this does not negate the importance of their being investigated as an archeological resource should their existence be threatened by this or other projects in the future.

38CK5---located in a cultivated field on the west bank of the Broad River and continuous through a wooded area south of the field. Two Guilford points, one Morrow Mountain point, a side notched cutting or scraping tool, scrapers, flakes, cores and other worked stone material consisting of quartzite, slate, and chert were collected. Historic ceramics consisted of earthenware and ironstone.

Artifacts collected on this site seem to indicate prehistoric occupation dating 500-1000 B.C. and historic occupation beginning in the 19th century. A more detailed survey of this site is recommended as well as stratigraphic testing to determine if occupational levels exist. This was one of three prehistoric sites recorded on the lower terraces of the river valley.

38CK6---located in a small field overlooking the confluence of the Broad River and a small creek. Two Savannah River points, one Morrow Mountain, one Guilford point, and a Palmer point were collected. Slate, chert, and quartzite chips and flakes were collected. Historic ceramic material consisted of stoneware, ironstone, porcelain, blue-edged ware and overglaze painted yellow ware.

Artifacts collected from this site seem to indicate prehistoric occupation dating 6500-1000 B.C. and historic occupation beginning in

the nineteenth century. Stratigraphic testing and a more detailed survey of this site are recommended.

38CK7---a nineteenth century historic house site on a ridge overlooking Broad River valley. Saltglazed stoneware and leadglazed earthenware were collected and one possible quartzite core. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK8---located in a fallow field on the west bank of the Broad River. This was the only site at which prehistoric ceramics were collected. Sand Tempered Cape Fear Fabric Impressed and Cape Fear Cordmarked sherds were collected as well as a plain untempered sherd and several unidentified Sand Tempered sherds. One Guilford point fragment, one probable Thelma point, other worked slate and quartzite, and burned earth were collected.

Artifacts collected on this site seem to indicate occupation dating 5000 B.C.-1000 A.D. Its proximity to 38CK5 warrants investigation of both sites as part of a continuous habitation area and it is recommended that further survey and testing be done here.

38CK9---one worked piece of quartzite probably dating 5000-1000 B.C. was collected on a hillside adjacent to 99 Islands Lake. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK10---two pieces of worked quartzite probably dating 5000-1000 B.C. were collected on the crest of a ridge near one of the backwaters of 99 Islands Lake. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK11---one Guilford projectile point base and one piece of worked quartzite probably dating from around 4000 B.C. were collected on a cleared hillside. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of the site.

38CK12---a nineteenth century historic house site located on a ridge crest. Ironstone and leadglazed earthenware were collected. One piece of worked chert was collected also. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK13---a small collection of worked quartzite probably dating 5000-1000 B.C. was made on a gradual slope. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK14---this site is located on a low knoll east of McKown's Mountain One Savannah River point, one Guilford point, a bifacially worked tool, flakes and chips made of quartzite and slate were collected. Three historic dwelling sites are adjacent to the site and historic ceramics collected included ironstone, stoneware, leadglazed earthenware, and polychrome pearlware.

Artifacts collected on this site seem to indicate prehistoric occupation dating 5000-1000 B.C. and historic occupation beginning in the nineteenth century and continuing to the present. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK15---located on a long ridge above a small creek valley. One point fragment, one bifacially worked tool, and several quartzite chips were collected all probably dating 5000-1000 B.C., as well as one fragment of nineteenth century historic ceramics. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK16---located at the terminus of County Road 13 on the west bank of the Broad River. This is identified on USGS maps as the site of Borden's Ferry. No artifacts were collected. Further documentary research is recommended.

38CK17---a nineteenth century historic house site located on a ridge 1/2 mile west of 99 Islands Lake. Ceramic material included ironstone, stoneware, earthenware, porcelain, transfer printed white ware, and transfer printed ironstone. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK18---a nineteenth century historic house site located on a ridge 1/2 mile west of 99 Islands Lake. Ceramic material collected included creamware, ironstone, white earthenware, transfer printed white earthenware, and lead glazed earthenware. No recommendations are made at present for further investigation of this site.

38CK19---identified by Professor B. G. Moss of Limestone College as the Stroup family cemetery this nineteenth century family burial ground is located on the point of a peninsula extending southwesterly into 99 Islands Lake. Documentation and preservation are recommended.

SUMMARY

On the ten sites where historic material was collected the ceramics were almost entirely of the nineteenth century with no material observed that could be identified as originating solely in or as being strictly confined to the eighteenth century. It thus appears that none of the historic sites located by this survey were occupied before ca. 1800. Further survey work would be necessary to locate earlier historic sites as the documentary history of the area predates the earliest recovered

ceramics by five decades.

The concentration of historic sites in a relatively small area (10 in approximately three square miles) and the background of the area as supporting both agriculture and industry probably indicate that this area was relatively populous during the nineteenth century. More detailed archeological survey work and more intensive documentary research would be necessary to investigate the relationship of historic settlement patterns of the area to the iron industry and the Scots-Irish migration of the mid-eighteenth century.

The prehistoric artifacts collected from eleven sites date from the Archaic and Woodland periods of North American prehistory. The earliest probable evidence of human occupation collected on this survey was a Palmer point dating ca. 6500 B.C. (Coe 1964: 121). Most of the stone material collected dates from the Middle to Late Archaic periods or from about 5000 B.C. to about 1000 B.C. Prehistoric ceramics collected at one site included Sand Tempered Cape Fear Fabric Impressed and Sand Tempered Cape Fear Cordmarked of the Middle Woodland period (A.D. 300-800) in association with a probable Thelma point (1959: 154-5).

The prehistoric people of the Middle Archaic period were primarily nomadic hunters and gatherers living off game, nuts, berries, and plants. In the Late Archaic to Early Woodland period (2000 B.C. to 300 B.C.) subsistence was provided by mixed hunting, gathering, and perhaps cultivation of plants and the lifestyle was semi-nomadic.

As no complete survey of archeological sites has been undertaken in this area very little is known of the settlement patterns of the prehistoric people who lived there. Further survey work would be necessary to compile sufficient data to attempt to answer such questions

as why there appears to be little or no occupation of this area between the time of the Middle Woodland culture and Anglo-American occupation in the mid-eighteenth century.

CONCLUSION

As a result of this archeological site survey it appears that there are no significant archeological sites endangered by presently planned construction activity on the Duke Power Company X-81 Plant, Site B. Three archeological sites (38CK5, 38CK6, and 38CK8) exist that warrant further investigation, but these appear to be well removed from the scene of presently planned construction activity. If any construction activity does occur in the area of these three sites (38CK5, 38CK6, and 38CK8) the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology should be notified. The scarcity of information regarding the prehistoric occupation of this region increases the value and importance of these sites and requires that they be fully investigated if they are ever endangered.

More detailed survey work and stratigraphic testing would probably suffice to determine the extent and depth of any site in question and determine occupational levels. On the basis of information thus gained a decision could be made as to whether the site warranted excavation.

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