The Woodland Stone Structure mound (1CA636) and the Mississippian temple mound (1CA196) were destroyed by the City of Oxford, Alabama in 2009; site 1CA636 during construction for a Sams Club store and 1CA196 during construction of a city-owned recreational complex.
The Davis Farmhouse, also known as the historic Freeman-Caver-Christian house, and the surrounding property contains some of the most significant archaeological sites in northeast Alabama.

Since 1979, the Jacksonville State University (JSU) Archaeological Resource Laboratory (ARL) has conducted several archaeological investigations at the former Davis Farm property. Archaeological data indicates Native Americans began to occupy this property as early as 10,000 BC and continued living along this portion of Choccolocco Creek through the sixteenth century. By the 1500s, the Davis Farm property contained a major aboriginal town formed around a prominent 30-foot-high ceremonial temple mound. JSU researchers believe this community may be the famous aboriginal town of Ulibahali which was visited by the sixteenth-century Spanish expeditions of both Hernando de Soto and Tristan de Luna. Although 23 archaeological sites have been recorded within the Davis Farm complex, 12 sites are believed to be the remains of this important ceremonial center. These sites can provide a valuable insight into the daily lives of Native Americans over the last 10,000 years, and yield important data concerning the cultural evolution that occurred within aboriginal populations in the southeastern United States. Although these sites are scattered over the entire Davis Farm complex, several lie in the immediate vicinity of the present historic Davis farmhouse. Four sites are within view of the boiling spring located on the Davis farmstead, and three of these sites (ICA187, ICA190 and ICA635) have received some degree of archaeological investigation.

In August 1986, as part of the proposed highway construction of the Interstate 20/Golden Springs off-ramp project, the ARL was contracted by the Alabama Department of Transportation to conduct a Phase II investigation of ICA190. This site lies immediately in front of the Davis farmhouse, on the east side of Boiling Springs Road, and in all likelihood continues west under the road toward the spring and into the Davis’ front yard. Two intensive surface collections were conducted; 18 posthole tests were excavated and 10 one-meter square test units were excavated. The highest density and diversity of artifacts occurred closer to the Davis Farm homestead and the boiling spring. Five hundred eighty-five artifacts were recovered from an intensive surface survey of ICA190. Gaming stones, greenstone tool fragments, and large amounts of ceramics and daub recovered from the surface hint of substantial village debris with the distinct possibility of subsurface features such as storage pit, hearths and human burials.

In May 1991, Jacksonville State University archaeological field school students visited ICA187. A brief surface collection yielded three Mississippian triangular bifaces, lithic debitage, greenstone tool fragments, daub, and numerous pottery sherds. Six 2-x-2-m excavation units were opened, uncovering three post stains and three aboriginal features. These features apparently were the remains of Native American storage and/or cooking pits and yielded pottery, charred nutshell fragments, daub, and wood
charcoal. The artifact assemblage recovered from the excavation was predominately of the Woodland (1000 BC–AD 600) and Mississippian (AD 600–AD 1600) time periods.

Another Davis Farm archaeological site, 1CA635, was also investigated that same field season. This prehistoric aboriginal site and nineteenth-century historic home site lies due west of 1CA187 across Boiling Springs Road. In all likelihood, the prehistoric aboriginal component originally would have been a continuation of 1CA187 prior to road construction. Into the 1980s, a small nineteenth century rectangular, board and baton tin roof single-pen slave house stood facing Boiling Springs Road. Six 2-x-2-m excavation units were placed across the site. Two excavation units placed near Boiling Springs Road and 1CA187 yielded mainly prehistoric aboriginal artifacts. Prehistoric material recovered included prehistoric bifaces dating from the Early Archaic (8500 BC) through the Mississippian time period (AD 700-1600). The excavation units in the vicinity of the former tenant/slave structure yielded nineteenth and twentieth-century ceramics; square hand-wrought nails, bottle and jar fragments, marbles, metal fragments, 1940 pennies, and other items associated with an early homestead. Historical artifacts indicated the structure had been occupied from the mid-nineteenth century until the 1960s. Prehistoric artifacts indicated a multi-component Archaic, Woodland, and Mississippian occupation similar to 1CA187 that lies due east of 1CA635, across Boiling Springs Road.

All three of these sites, and several other sites in the vicinity of the Davis farmstead, have yielded archaeological material which indicates they were occupied for thousands of years by prehistoric Native American populations. Also, based on the limited excavations of three of these sites (1CA187, 1CA190, and 1CA635) and the extensive excavations of several similar village sites in Calhoun County, there is a high probability that these sites will contain numerous human remains. Woodland and Mississippian peoples typically buried their dead in and around their dwellings. Spectacular grave goods occasionally accompany these graves. Recently, several impressive artifacts have been recovered from the vicinity of the former temple mound (1CA196) including a large greenstone effigy bird pipe, a greenstone elbow pipe, large greenstone tubular pipe, and a ceremonial blade constructed of exotic chert.

In addition to the significant prehistoric archaeological resources, the Davis Farm complex contains a wealth of early nineteenth century historical archaeological data. The limited excavations at 1CA635 provided information concerning the lives of the tenant and/or slave quarters inhabitants. Harry Glenn Davis (former landowner of Davis Farm) and Edward Ash (distant relative to Harry Davis) have stated that there are possibly 30 additional tenant house sites along the same ridge line as the structure on 1CA635. Potential slave graves were also visible along the ridge top behind these dwelling as late as the 1980s. Adjacent to the Davis house site are several historical (circa 1850) graves. Early 1930s
photographs of the Davis farmhouse clearly show the location of the free-standing kitchen next to the structure (http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/hhh.al0057). In all likelihood a privy also should be located in the vicinity of the main residence. The privy, kitchen, and other nearby outbuilding areas near the Davis house would provide valuable information concerning early daily life of the citizens of Calhoun County.

Finally, the entire yard around the house and, in particular, around the boiling spring has high potential for containing intact archaeological remains. The large spring has undoubtedly attracted populations of humans for thousands of years. Historically, the spring was a focal point of county social gatherings in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Cement stairs and other early modifications in and around the spring are still evident. As stated earlier, ICA190 likely continues into the Davis front yard near the spring. While no archaeological investigation has been conducted in the Davis yard, or in the area around the spring, these two areas are high-probability locales for significant archaeological remains. There is a strong probability of unearthing intact subsurface aboriginal features (i.e., storage, cooking, burial pits, post-stain patterns of aboriginal structures).

The Davis farmstead is a valuable archaeological and historical resource. In the vicinity of the farmhouse lies significant archaeological data that can shed light on prehistoric populations that inhabited this area of Alabama. Once this important data is destroyed by construction or development, it is lost forever.
Late Mississippian Dwelling
Discovered during Excavation of 1Ca198

Figure 2.13. Mississippian structure located during 2001 excavations at 1Ca198.
2007 PHASE I SURVEY FOR THE PROPOSED
OXFORD RECREATIONAL COMPLEX

1CA196 (MISSISSIPPIAN TEMPLE MOUND)

Site 1CA196 was excavated on a 30-m-x-30-m grid. Due to the overwhelming majority of positive shovel tests, standard site delineation was not attempted. Rather, since the staff of the JSU-ARL believed we had a truncated temple mound, and likely the plaza areas for the mound, it was felt that field time would be better spent defining the edges of the newly enlarged 1CA196.

After completion of all the shovel-tests at the site, 453 artifacts were recovered from 1CA196 during the current survey. The majority of these materials are Native American (n=399); however, some historical items (n=33) and 21 modern items were encountered. Historical material recovered included: extruded brick fragments (n=6), Bristol-glazed stoneware (n=1), amber container glass (n=4), aqua container glass (n=1), light aqua container glass (n=2), a milk glass lid liner (n=1), an undifferentiated nail (n=1), and slag (n=17). Modern items consisted of clear container glass (n=18), brown container glass (n=2), and a small piece of rubber (n=1). The historical items may be associated with a barn that once stood atop the severely truncated earthen mound, or they could be stray pieces of fill debris, which is prevalent in this area near the project boundary. It is likely that the slag was once part of the road surface surrounding the project boundary.

Of the 399 Native American artifacts recovered, these included pottery (n=74) and lithics (n=325). Both the ceramic assemblage and the lithic assemblage suggest a Woodland/ Mississippian component at the site. Temporally diagnostic items include Etowah Complicated Stamped pottery (n=14); combinations of grit, sand, and grog-tempered sherds (n=36), including one cord-marked specimen; a Mountain Fork hafted biface (n=1); and a Copena hafted biface (n=1). In addition, evidence of prehistoric farming activities was present in the form of several broken greenstone implements (n=3) and numerous pieces of fragmented greenstone that were too degraded (n=17) for further identification.

Past investigations at the site yielded material consistent with an Etowah II and possible Barnett phase affiliations (Holstein and Little 1986). Material recovered during the current investigation supports the Mississippian Etowah II (A.D. 1200 to A.D. 1400) designation; however, no shell-tempered pottery or early European artifacts (key components of the Barnett phase) were encountered during this survey. This absence of shell-tempered ceramics could be due to any number of issues, not the least of which is removal during past sod-farming activities, but also harsh chemicals and mechanical churning of the soils over a number of years that would have degraded shell-tempered sherds. Grog-tempered pottery was
prevalent across the site. Knight (1998:195) suggests that grog-tempered ceramics may represent possible ties to the Woodland/ transitional Mississippian West Jefferson complex; though, our project area is somewhat north of the area studied by Knight. The cord-marked ceramics, along with the Mountain Fork hafted biface, suggest a Late Woodland component at the site, as well.

Lithic material recovered from the site indicate local acquisition of much of the stone; however, the presence of Chickamauga chert (n=9), Bangor chert (n=3), and Tallahatta sandstone (n=1) provides evidence for trade. Evidence for on-site manufacture and repair of lithic tools is prevalent. Approximately 44 percent of the prehistoric material recovered is chipped-stone debitage (n=175). Early stage (1/2-inch or larger) knapping activities is noted only with locally available cherts and sandstones, with only later stage (repair) being represented by non-local raw material. This also is supported by other lithic debris recovered from the site, such as cores (n=3) and tested cobbles (n=1). In addition, 12 pieces of mica were recovered from what appeared to be a feature in Transect 28 Shovel Test 05. Mica or muscovite would have been locally available and is indigenous to the metamorphic Piedmont. Based on the material recovered from 1CA196 during the current survey, there may still be intact Late Woodland and Mississippian deposits at the site. Stratigraphy encountered in shovel tests is generally consistent with that encountered by Holstein and Little (1986) during past investigations. Based on comparisons with their data, current shovel-test profiles indicate there is still, on average, 21-cm of artifact-bearing soils present at the site, and some tests yielded deposits at depths ranging between 37 and 60 cmbs. The deepest deposits were recovered from Transect 29 Shovel Test 02, items recovered from this test were debitage (n=7) and fire-cracked rock (n=3).

JSU archaeologists believe that at least one feature, and possibly two, was intruded into during shovel testing. These tests (TR28 ST05 and TR28 ST08), which contained Etowah Complicated Stamped, grit-tempered cord-marked, and sand-tempered complicated-stamped cord-marked ceramics, indicate that Late Woodland/Mississippian features exist at the site currently.

After evaluation of the stratigraphy and recovered artifacts, the staff of the JSU-ARL believe that the multi-component prehistoric site of 1CA196 is eligible for inclusion to the NRHP under Criterion C, due to what is left of a unique architectural feature (the Mississippian temple mound) and under Criterion D for what information this site might reveal about the complicated interactions of peoples within a prehistoric urban environment. Thus, we offer three recommendations: the first is avoidance of the area so that no future construction-related activity for the new recreation complex will negatively impact this site; if avoidance is not feasible then we suggest encapsulation of the area under horizontal chain-link fence at the interface of the current ground surface and the encapsulation soil so that
erosion of the area will be stabilized, and that the area will not be subject to further artifact removal by avocational archaeologists. Finally, if encapsulation is not an achievable goal, we suggest that Phase II testing be performed at 1CA196 to come to a better understanding of the deposition of artifacts within the vertical and horizontal planes of the sites stratigraphy if construction is attempted within this portion of the project area.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

As stated earlier, JSU-ARL archaeologists believe sites 1CA196, 1CA768, 1CA771, 1CA772, and 1CA774 all retain significant research potential.

In consultation with Barge, Waggoner, Sumner, and Cannon, Inc., supervising engineer Keith Magee, stated that the aims for the project are that no construction or soil removing activities will be conducted north of the western portions of Transects 09 through 14 in Section One and north of Transect 71 in Section Three. Therefore, it appears that the majority of 1CA196 will be avoided. Based on early engineering schematics, the northern periphery of the proposed lake appears to negatively impact 1CA771 and 1CA774. The excavated lake will also come relatively close to the southern edge of the truncated mound at 1CA196; therefore, our clients have agreed to work closely with archaeologists to modify lake boundaries to avoid cultural resources whenever possible. Thus, the staff of the JSU-ARL suggests that a professional archaeologist monitor the excavation of the proposed lake to determine if archaeological features are being threatened. Concerning construction impact to sites 1CA768 and 1CA772, Keith Magee stated the purpose of the proposed lake is to provide soil to build the southern portion of the project area up approximately five feet so that it will lie approximately one foot above flood level. Therefore, it seems that encapsulation of these sites will be an automatic condition of the construction activities within the project area. If Barge, Waggoner, Sumner, and Cannon, Inc., as well as the City of Oxford, intend to construct the proposed recreation complex in this manner, they will be in compliance with the management aims of this report.
Aerial photograph and a sample of the artifacts recovered from 1CA196.
Etowah Complicated Stamped sherd recovered adjacent to the mound during excavations conducted at the site by the Jacksonville State University Archaeological Resource Laboratory in 1983. Pictured in the upper left corner is a reproduction of the pot fashioned by potter Patsy Hanvey. The lower right photograph shows the sherd in its original position in Feature 6.

Figure 2.6. Ceramics recovered during the 1983 excavation of Feature 6 at 1Ca196.

Figure 2.7. Lower portion of temple mound, 1Ca196, excavated in 1995.
Figure 2.4. 1979 aerial view of ICa196 and possible Native American road/trail system.

Figure 2.5. 1979 aerial view of ICa196 and possible Native American road/trail system with superimposed definition of road/trail system and temple mound.
1998 JSU-ARL excavation at site 1CA196. JSU personnel are standing at the base of the temple mound.

Harry Holstein where site 1CA196 once stood, January 19, 2010.
There has been controversy regarding the laws of Alabama which protect graves. Currently, the burial laws in Alabama do not include prehistoric Native American sites (see Code of Alabama §41-3-1 through §41-3-6: Aboriginal Mounds, Earthworks and Other Antiquities, Alabama Historical Commission Chapter 460-x-10: Burials, and 93-095: Alabama Cemetery and Human Remains Protection Act 93-905, and Code of Alabama 1975 §13A-7-23.1).

The January 22, 2010 edition of The Anniston Star reported State Senator Wendell Mitchell introduced a proposal that would strengthen protection of these sites. So far, the bill has not faced opposition. Should the bill pass the Senate, it must go through the entire process again in the House. Alabama Governor Bob Riley’s office will be the last stop for signage into law.