

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Belmont Neck Site (38KE06)
other names/site number Belmont Plantation, Chesnut's Mound

2. Location



3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Dept. of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the
National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the
National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain):

Belmont Neck Site (38KE06)
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Domestic

Subcategory: Village Site

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Agricultural

Subcategory: Tree Farm

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation N/A
- walls N/A
- roof N/A
- other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Archaeology/Prehistoric
Archaeology/Historic

Period of Significance

A.D. 950-1300
1772-1796

Significant Dates

A.D. 1200 +/- 100 years

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Mississippian

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository:
Mulberry Plantation Archives,
Camden, S.C.; Department of
Anthropology, University of S.C.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property [redacted]

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

[redacted]

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Gail E. Wagner, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology
organization University of South Carolina date 24 October 2005
street & number _____ telephone (803) 777-6548
city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29208

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

[redacted]

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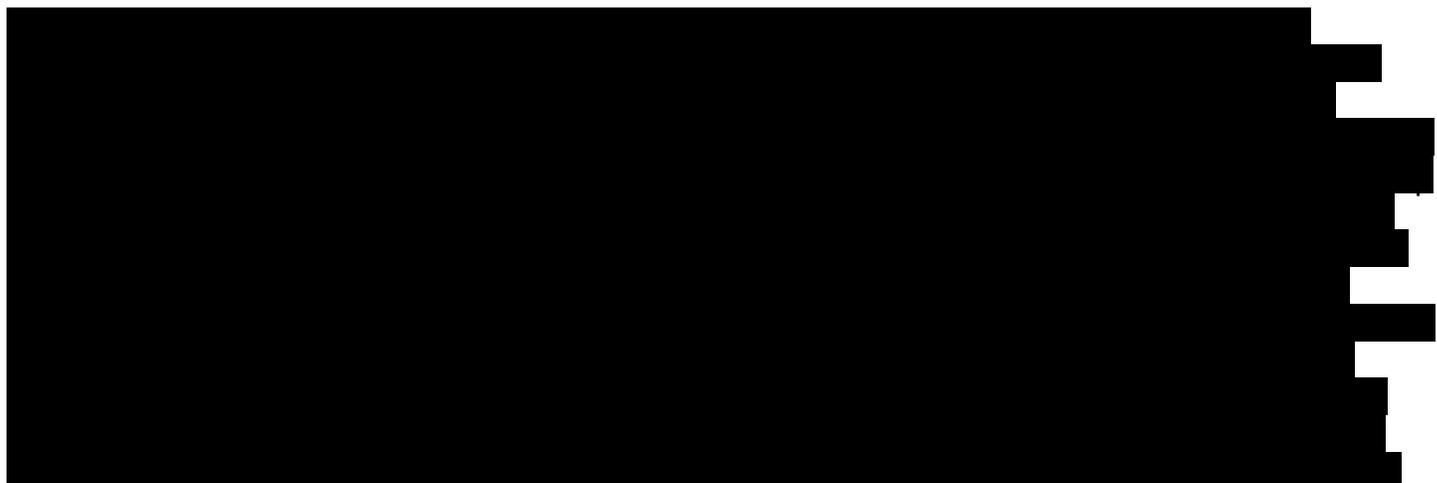
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BACKGROUND

The Belmont Neck Site is a multi-component site located [REDACTED] e [REDACTED] r in Kershaw County, South Carolina, in the Mulberry Plantation just south of present-day Camden (Figure 1). The site has Swift Creek (A.D. 100-750) through Middle Mississippian components (Etowah IV and Early Pee Dee, from ca. A.D. 950-1300) and historic components from 1737-1940. This determination is based on datable ceramics for the prehistoric period and historic documentation plus datable ceramics and glass from the historic period. Of particular significance for this nomination, from about A.D. 950-1300 this location was a single-mound center and town (38KE06) that initiated the beginning of the chiefdom of Cofitachequi. It appears to be the first of twelve mound towns along the Catawba/Wateree River (Wagner 2003). This early Mississippian occupation was the beginning of a new sociopolitical order for the region and marks the easternmost expression in the southeastern United States of Mississippian society. Also of significance is that from about 1772-1796, Belmont Neck was the location of indigo production by Colonel John Chesnut of Camden.



For a relatively brief period, from the 1750s to 1796, indigo was a profitable crop for inland South Carolina plantations, although “many people in the middle and back country continued to plant indigo for domestic use long after it was abandoned as a money crop” (Huneycutt 1949:6). Planted in April, the first harvest was in June to July, followed by second or even third harvests from the roots left in place (Huneycutt 1949:13). Processing necessarily followed quickly upon harvest, meaning that it was convenient to process indigo adjacent to the fields where it was grown. Another reason to situate indigo works far from main plantation houses was that not only was the smell obnoxious, but the

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processing attracted millions of flies (Huneycutt 1949:16). Processing required pumps and three wooden vats that lasted approximately seven years “and had to be located out of the sun near a constant clean water source” (Daniels 1995:78). Apparently 25-30 slaves could manage 50 acres of indigo and process it, with each acre yielding approximately 60-80 pounds of indigo (Huneycutt 1949:19). Joseph Kershaw, partnered with Ely Kershaw and John Chesnut, operated indigo works as early as 1760 (Kirkland and Kennedy 1905:14-15). John Chesnut, who grew the “false Guatemala” or “true Bahama” indigo, may have planted his first crop at Belmont Neck in 1772 (Daniels 1995:77). It was planted by hand until 1791, when George Washington sent John a drill plow (Daniels 1995:78, 85).

In 1780, indigo was John Chesnut’s main cash crop. Documents exist in which he asks the British (unsuccessfully) to compensate him for the confiscation of his indigo crop (Daniels 1995:85). In 1788, John Chesnut had eight men, six women, and sixteen of Ely Kershaw’s hands at Ogilvie’s Neck, with Abram Kelly as overseer (Daniels 1995:79). In 1793 the overseer at “the Neck” was Thomas Watt’s overseer (Daniels 1995:109). The indigo market collapsed in 1796, which was the last year John Chesnut produced indigo. It took two years for his 1796 indigo to sell (Daniels 1995).

During the nineteenth century this plantation took its name, “Bell Mount,” from the abandoned Indian mound that dominated the bend. Extensive earthen dikes had been built by slave labor to protect the land from flooding. In 1842, when S. H. Boykin drew a survey for James Chesnut (II), an overseer’s house was located on top of the mound, and a double row of slave cabins was located to the north (Figure 5). The present landowners indicate that the wooden Mulberry farmhouse from Highland Field was moved by slaves to this location when the present brick main house was built in 1820 (Daniels 2004). The family called the moved wooden structure on the mound “High House,” where in 1929 “old Dave Brisbane” (65 years old) was installed as caretaker (Williams 1929) (Figure 6). By the early twentieth century, Long Pond, indicated on the 1842 plat some distance south of the mound, had been used for dumping refuse. Known as “Indian hole,” it was a source of superstition and the workers plowed around it (Daniels 1984). A large cattle barn was erected at the field edge some time before 1937 (Figure 7), and the collapsed structure is still in place. The overseer’s house was taken down sometime between 1939-1942 (Daniels 2004) (Figure 8).

Today, the base of the mound remains, as do the foundations and collapsed superstructure of the cattle barn. Loblolly pines were planted over much of the site in 1991, leaving broad borders, field access roads, and fire breaks in grass (Figure 9). Much of the prehistoric and historic records remain preserved in the dirt deposits at the site. The disturbed plowzone, up to 30 cm thick at the surface of the ground, contains a mixture of historic and prehistoric artifacts. However, in undisturbed deposits below the plowzone are both historic and prehistoric deposits and features extending down to a little over 1 m below ground surface.

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PHYSICAL SETTING

The Belmont Neck site sits within a large Wateree River meander bend t [REDACTED]. Here, the channel attains an elevation just below 130 feet amsl. (above mean sea level), while the gently sloping floodplain of the bend rises to a maximum elevation of 137 feet amsl. Soils in the higher elevations of the bend are classified as Congaree loam (Mitchell 1989:20), which includes moderately fine, dark brown sandy to silty soils derived from successive overbank flood episodes. Lower elevations of the bend, which drop as low as 126 feet amsl in swales, are characterized by Chewacla loam (Mitchell 1989:20), a poorly drained, yellowish brown, clayey soil that is seasonally flooded. The belt of Chewacla loam rings the high ground of the bend and currently supports a mature hardwood bottomland forest. The archaeological Mississippian site is optimally located at the northern interface of the soil type distributions. Here, a relatively high elevation offering protection from flooding coincides with very near access to the river. The high elevations in the field were planted in loblolly pine in 1991, leaving grassy edges and dirt access roads. The prehistoric and historic components of the site are located mostly in the area of planted trees and in the grassy access areas, but also somewhat in the hardwood forest. At present, it is unknown where the boat landing for the indigo operation was located.

The historic settlement on Belmont Neck was established over a prehistoric midden that may have had a thin veneer of flood deposits capping it. The historic occupation impacted the prehistoric midden only marginally through limited constructions that carried features down into the midden matrix. Historic cultivation mixed the upper part of the prehistoric midden with the historic plantation settlement and resulted in the formation of a 20 to 30 cm thick plowzone of disturbed dirt with artifacts from mixed contexts. Some deep plowing occurred on a limited basis, leaving parallel lines of deeper plow scars through the prehistoric midden. However, the prehistoric midden has retained a great deal of integrity, and both historic and prehistoric cultural features are well preserved across the core of the site.

SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Dr. William Blanding (Squier and Davis 1848:107) was the first to describe a 15-foot tall mound at Belmont Neck: "Little is known respecting it, having been for many years the site of an overseer's house" (Figure 10). The first archaeological investigations were in 1985, when the site was a plowed field. A surface collection was made, and a single posthole test was dug (DePratter 1985).

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In 1998, a grid of 77 30-cm diameter shovel test pits (STP) and one 1 x 2 m unit were excavated to begin to delineate site boundaries and investigate site stratigraphy (Cable et al. 1999) (Figure 11). A total of 47 of the STPs yielded artifacts of historic and/or prehistoric affiliation, and by mapping the distributions of artifacts of different time periods, the location of the old slave settlement and overseer's house could be defined (Figure 12), as could those areas where the various prehistoric components were concentrated. Additionally, an area of prehistoric sheet midden ("anthropic soils") was mapped. A site datum and an azimuth, both consisting of iron rebar, were placed just south of the built levee (Figure 11). The archaeological site boundaries shown in Figure 11 are minimum boundaries, and may be extended outward when deeper tests and tests further out from the center are completed.

The 1 x 2 m test unit was placed on the northeastern slope of the rise to evaluate the potential for preserved cultural features. A number of cultural features were visible at the base of the plowzone. Two historic postmolds, three prehistoric postmolds, and a prehistoric feature were discovered. Charred plant remains from Feature 2, thought to be a prehistoric roasting pit that originated in the midden, were radiocarbon dated to 780 ± 50 BP (Cable et al. 1999). The 1-Sigma calendar calibration for the assay is A.D. 1220 to 1280, which would indicate an Early Mississippian period affiliation for the feature. The large proportion of complicated stamped sherds in the fill of the feature supports this assignment.

Further testing undertaken in 2001, 2003, 2004, and 2005 will be briefly summarized together, since the 2001 and 2003 work entailed only a few days each and all four seasons of work were geared to examine the same questions about the site. Since 2001, work at the site has been aimed to ask and answer the following questions: (1) what did the original land surface look like (why choose this spot to begin the Wateree Valley's first experimentation with a new sociopolitical order, the Mississippian?); (2) where did the dirt come from to build the mound and what did the mound look like? and (3) where has the former mound dirt been dispersed historically? Investigations have also focused on learning more about the diet of the inhabitants and how they impacted the local landscape (anthropogenesis).

During the 2001-2004 field seasons, a 1 x 2 m unit (N332 E428 E½) was placed at the highest point on the mound but in line with two deep potholes that appear to have been illegally excavated some time between the planting of the trees in 1991 and testing in 1998. Two other 1 x 2 m units were placed over two potholes at the south end of the highest portion of the mound. All three of these units were either underneath or in the vicinity of where the historic overseer's house had been located (Figure 13). Test Unit 2 excavation was ended shortly below plow zone when a prehistoric burial pit with some intact human bone was discovered. Test Unit 3 revealed a large, incompletely defined historic pit that had been dug into prehistoric midden. The west profile of Test Unit 3 showed evidence of bulldozing, probably associated with the razing of the overseer's house some time after the photograph was taken in the early 1930s. In 2005, 66 Giddings core samples were drilled in

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north-south and east-west transects through the site, one bucket-auger sample was taken, and four backhoe trenches were excavated (Wagner and Bartley 2005).

Unit N332 E428 E ½ was excavated down into the subsoil below the mound and underlying A horizon/midden, providing a complete profile of the prehistoric Mississippian occupation at the site (Figure 14). Initial Mississippian village deposits consist of an Ab Horizon/midden about 8-21 cm thick formed over a B horizon. By implication, a village was present for some time before the decision was made to construct an earthen mound on top of part of the village (Wagner and Bartley 2005). Only the first two mound stages appear to remain in situ at the site, the first consisting of midden, and the second consisting of basket-laid fill of three colors (black, gray, and yellow). Within the 1 x 2 m unit, 7 postmolds originated in the lower midden/Ab horizon village deposits and extended down into the B horizon. Minimally an additional 6 postmolds and 3 pits originated in the first mound stage and extended down into the lower midden and B horizon. Not all features were successfully identified in the first mound stage because it is difficult to identify black-colored features in a black midden. Additionally, the decision was made to get the unit excavated down to sterile, spending minimal time on identifying and excavating features. All feature fill was saved for flotation recovery of small plant and animal remains, and flotation samples were taken from all excavation levels.

Beginning at the present ground surface, the shallow plowzone cuts into the second mound stage, which consists of three distinctive colors of nearly sterile silty clay averaging about 40 cm in thickness. The colors are black, gray, and yellowish brown. Whereas the dirt for the first mound stage obviously originated at least in part within the village, the second mound stage appears to have been quite deliberately gathered for its colors, which meant the dirt came from outside or underneath the village midden. These colors and textures of dirt could well have originated in a nearby swale. In places this basket-laid fill contains a mixture in basket-loads of the three colors, but in places it formed caps of purely one color or the other. Within the 1 x 2 m unit, the cap was black at the north end, mixed in the middle, and yellowish-brown at the south end. A pot bust was found immediately on top of the first mound stage. The partial fabric-impressed vessel had been used to carry a load of yellowish-brown silty clay.

Thanks to its distinctive texture, the first mound stage is easy to track in the Giddings cores. The silty clay basket-laid fill is also easy to track. From the cores we know that these first two mound stages covered an area approximately 13 m north-south by 24 m east-west. The second mound stage was laid directly on top of the first, and did not extend the basal area of the mound. Non-mound midden deposits cover an area approximately 79 m north-south and 72 m east-west, or 1.4 acres (0.57 hectares). In contrast, Cable (Cable et al. 1999) found positive shovel test pits or the presence of artifacts over an area 9.7 acres in size.

The Giddings cores have located six low areas. These could individually represent a ditch around the mound precinct or town, borrow pits where dirt was obtained to build the mound, or old natural

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swales or levee edges. The most likely candidates for borrow pits or swales are broad – one to the north is possibly 148 m wide and up to 1 m deep for 8 of those meters; one to the east is at least 20 m wide and 0.66 m deep; another further to the east is at least 16 m wide and over a meter deep; and one to the west is at least 8 m wide and 0.8-0.96 m deep. The planted loblolly trees on top of two of these wide areas did not survive, which means these areas are marked on the surface of the ground by lack of trees or only very scattered trees. Thus, present-day vegetation may serve as a clue to the ancient topography beneath the surface. The fill in the low areas is dark brown to black silty clay or silty clay loam. Narrower and shallower (ca. 0.4 m deep) low spots occur 62 m west and 81 m south of the center of the mound.

The 20-m long north-south backhoe trench at the edge of the present terrace along the Giddings core north-south transect promises to be of great interest. It appears that up to 1.5 m of dirt has been deposited historically at this location: bricks are found at 90-110 cm below ground surface. This may be the location of the riverbank during the Mississippian period. Nearby, to the east and slightly to the northwest of the site datum, is a large, deep, U-shaped excavation into the terrace edge. Two earthen ramps lead down into it. Although it has not yet been investigated or mapped, it may well be the location of the eighteenth century indigo vats.

DESCRIPTION OF PREHISTORIC COMPONENT AT 38KE06

MOUND CONSTRUCTION

Only the first two mound stages are preserved, totaling approximately 3 feet (1 meter) out of the possibly 15-foot high mound described historically by Blanding. The mound appears to have been placed on a low natural terrace. Construction began some time after a substantial village occupation had already been established. The first two mound stages covered a rounded rectangular area whose basal area was not extended when the second stage was added. The first stage of construction used dirt from the village area, but dirt of different colors (black, gray, and yellow) for the second stage was deliberately sought away from occupation areas. Features and artifacts within and below the mound are well preserved and abundant, and include preservation of small plant remains as well as bone. At least one human burial was placed in the second mound construction stage, in an extended position in a burial pit.

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SUMMARY OF ARTIFACTS

The 2001 and more recent collections are still in the process of being tabulated and analyzed, so here we report in detail only on the 1998 and earlier collections of artifacts from the Belmont Neck site. However, the 2001-2005 excavations have made clear that bone is extremely well preserved in the midden, an unusual and significant situation for South Carolina. Even small and fragile bone such as small fish bones are well preserved, as are small charred plant remains. It has also become clear that artifact size may be large in the abundant undisturbed deposits that still exist below the disturbed plowzone.

CERAMIC SHERDS

The 1998 survey collection totaled 1149 sherds and fired clay fragments. The 1998 collection from STPs and one test unit compares quite well with the composition and overall proportions of a 1985 surface collection taken when the site was a plowed field. Most of the material is associated with the Mississippian period and the same four complicated stamped ceramic types are present (i.e. Swift Creek, Woodstock, Etowah, and Savannah). Additional types represented include sand-tempered comb incised, Camden Incised, and a sherd with incised lines over Savannah Complicated Stamped.

Detailed analysis of the complicated stamped sherds from the collections provides a fundamental basis for evaluating the range of Mississippian occupations at the site. The Etowah Complicated Stamped sample exhibits a wide range of motifs. Minority motifs in the sample suggest that the Etowah occupation of the site may have been relatively lengthy. Based on this evidence, it would seem that the Belmont Neck site has both late and early Etowah period components. The presence of a small amount of Woodstock Complicated Stamped, an immediately ancestral type to Etowah Complicated Stamped, tends to support this contention, as well (Cable et al. 1999).

PREHISTORIC LITHICS

Seventy-nine lithic artifacts were recovered during the 1998 survey and testing project. Nine artifact categories were identified in the collection. Most of this material was composed of quartz derived from river cobbles and vein outcroppings. Minor raw material types consisted of Carolina Slate Belt igneous and metamorphic rocks (i.e. argillite, basalt, diabase, jasper and tuff), chert and limestone from the Coastal Plain, steatite, and quartzite. Ground stone or chipped stone tools were not recovered during the 1998 testing, although they were recovered during testing in 2001-2005.

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PLANT REMAINS

The inhabitants of Belmont Neck were growing maize (*Zea mays*), maygrass (*Phalaris caroliniana*), chenopod (*Chenopodium* sp.), and tobacco (*Nicotiana* sp.). They also collected hickory, acorn, hazelnut, and other wild products. The first stage of the mound at Belmont Neck contains the earliest tobacco so far recovered in South Carolina. The dependence on the starchy seed complex (maygrass and chenopod) in conjunction with maize so far is highly unusual for South Carolina and looks more like the subsistence pattern seen at comparably aged early Mississippian sites in the midcontinent west of the Appalachian Mountains. Although initial deposits at the site contain a variety of floodplain wood species along with pine, by the close of occupation landscape modification increased, resulting in a wood assemblage dominated by pine and oak.

ANIMAL BONE

Although the animal bone from the 2001-2005 testing has not yet been analyzed, it is obvious that small fish were being netted and used for food. Deer were also important in the diet. A variety of animal species have been recovered from the prehistoric deposits.

HUMAN BURIALS

During the 2004 field season, two 1 x 2 m test units were placed over two deep potholes at the south edge of the highest remaining portion of the mound. Although the pothole in Test Unit 3 had targeted a large historic feature, excavation of Test Unit 2 revealed that the looter had located and partially excavated an extended prehistoric burial. Remnants of human bone were recovered and the edges of a rectangular burial pit with rounded edges were defined. The head had been placed to the north, with the feet placed to the south. As soon as it was ascertained to be a burial pit with some bone still in situ despite extensive damage from the looter, all bone was replaced and the burial was re-interred. It appears that the burial had originated in or above the second mound stage of massive basket-laid fill composed of three colors. It is likely that other prehistoric burials are present and preserved at this site.

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DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC COMPONENT

HISTORIC ARTIFACTS

Historic artifacts were widely spread throughout the site and represent both ante-bellum and post-bellum occupation. The 1998 survey and testing project was responsible for the recovery of 539 artifacts, nearly 2.3 kilograms of brick fragments and about 360 grams of melted glass shards. Artifact categories included ceramic sherds (n=94), broken bottle glass (n=116), nails and nail fragments (n=185), architectural and furniture pieces (n=6), a pewter container, clothing (n=1, a button), activity items (n=5) such as lead shot, a harmonica reed, and an iron hoe or shovel part, and miscellaneous unidentified metal fragments (n=131). Diagnostic of the ante-bellum period are various pearlware types, olive green bottle glass, creamware, and possibly alkaline glaze stoneware. Post-bellum occupation is diagnosed by manganese bottle glass, some types of whiteware/ pearlware, and yellow ware.

The overall composition of the assemblage closely parallels that of the 1985 surface collection described by Babson (Cable et al. 1999). This collection consisted of 168 ceramic sherds, 82 bottle and other glass fragments, 14 miscellaneous items, and an unspecified number of metal artifacts including nails. Babson concluded that most of the diagnostic material in the collection dated to a one hundred-year period starting around 1825 and ending around 1925. A more detailed examination of the collection, however, revealed that the occupation may have been punctuated by several peaks with potential gaps between. The ceramic data indicated an early and steep peak predating 1830 represented by a variety of pearlware types, while a larger and broader late nineteenth century peak was represented by earthenware and whiteware types. Glass data were comparable, but less even.

FEATURES

The fill of (historic) Postmold 1 in the 1998 1 x 2 m test unit at the northeastern edge of the rise indicates it had been dug through the midden into the underlying substrate and quickly filled with the backdirt. The outline was sub-squarish in shape and measured approximately 32 cm on a side. The walls were vertical and extended to a depth of 68 cm below ground surface. The base of the feature was flattened. Although a relatively abundant collection of prehistoric sherds was recovered from the fill of the feature, numerous nail fragments were also present, strongly indicating an historic affiliation. Postmold 5 was not excavated, but a piece of rusted metal observable in the top of the feature suggested an historic affiliation. A large historic pit with unknown dimensions was located and partially excavated in Test Unit 3 at the south end of the mound. Flotation samples were taken for the recovery of small artifacts, including plant remains. This feature was undoubtedly under or part of the large wooden structure visible in the 1930s photograph (Figure 6), and the top of the feature was cut by bulldozing.

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STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

PREHISTORIC PERIOD

The principal components of significance include the Mississippian occupation, which spans an approximate 400-year period from about A.D. 950 to A. D. 1300, and the late eighteenth century plantation settlement geared toward indigo production. Based on our current knowledge, the site is unique in containing a long and extensive record of early Mississippian occupation in South Carolina. It is rare that a Mississippian site in South Carolina yields evidence of pre-A.D. 1200 Mississippian occupation and there are no known sites north of the Savannah River that have platform mounds from this early period other than Belmont Neck.

Prior to construction of a mound, an extensive midden 8-21 cm thick accrued at this location. Mound building began during the Etowah period in north Georgia and increased in intensity during the succeeding Savannah period. Cable speculates that the core of the Belmont Neck platform mound contains the remains of an earth-embanked structure with a pit foundation (Cable et al. 1999). We should expect such a structure to be well preserved and to not have been impacted by plowing. Submound earth-embanked structures tend to date to the late Etowah and early Savannah periods in north Georgia.

Cable hypothesizes the presence of a palisade wall enclosing the town (Cable et al. 1999). No specific evidence of such a feature has yet been identified, but both the 1937 (Figure 7) and 1949 (Figure 8) aerial photographs show a faint northwest-to-southeast oval around the mound area that may represent surficial evidence for a palisade. Palisade walls are typical features of early mound sites throughout the region. In fact, palisades are typically found on non-mound sites from this period, as well. One of the sequential palisades at Town Creek (North Carolina) enclosed an area of about 90 x 120 m (ca. 2.7 acres) and the wall at Hiwassee Island (Tennessee) encompassed a similar area (85 x 100 m or 2.1 acres). However, the area (5.2 acres, 140 x 160 m) enclosed by the hypothesized palisade wall at Belmont Neck based on the 1998 (incomplete) STPs is about twice the size of these examples. Of course, it is quite possible that the scale of the Belmont Neck village has been overestimated by reliance of contour algorithms and that the actual size is more in line with Town Creek and Hiwassee Island. Only further investigation will resolve this particular issue.

Cable infers that the site would have reached its peak population and also its greatest size during the early Savannah period, about A.D. 1200-1300 (Cable et al. 1999). The wide distribution of Savannah Complicated Stamped ceramic sherds tends to support this conclusion. The earlier Etowah style shows a more restricted distribution that appears confined to the topographic rise. The earlier Woodland ceramic types are mainly restricted to the rise, as well.

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Very little is known of Etowah period settlement plans. In Georgia it is known that during the Etowah period some platform mounds were initiated, that many of the earth embanked council or chiefly houses that ultimately gave rise to Savannah period platform mounds were built, and that some domestic structures were square in plan and constructed with wall trench foundations. Excavations at Brasstown Valley in the Blue Ridge of north Georgia have recently exposed some of the only complete settlement plans of the early Etowah period. Here, a sequence of superimposed and repositioned palisade enclosures containing only several circular domestic houses at one time was identified. Larger public structures were absent and very little functional differentiation of space could be defined, with the exception of clusters of roasting pits. These occupations were characterized as hamlet level settlements and they ranged from about 20 x 20 m to 40 x 60 m in size. In general, these hamlets are identical to earlier Woodstock phase palisaded settlements throughout north Georgia. If an early Etowah period occupation is present at Belmont Neck, as the recovered ceramic assemblage suggests, then we might expect it to look similar to the hamlets described at Brasstown Valley. Hamlets of this size could easily be accommodated on the topographic rise.

Recoverable data from the Belmont Neck site can inform on the following Mississippian research topics: (1) Mississippian origins in the state; (2) the organization and structure of an early regional mound center; (3) the chronology and phase structure of the early Mississippian culture in the Wateree Valley; (4) subsistence and dietary change in the early Mississippian period; and (5) anthropogenic effects by Mississippian folk.

HISTORIC PERIOD

Brothers John (1743-1818) and James (1745-1772) Chesnut moved to the vicinity of Camden around 1756 with their mother, Mrs. Sutton. John became a clerk in Joseph Kershaw's store in 1758, while James became a planter. In 1764, John Chesnut achieved partnership in the store and business (Table 1). John began to accumulate land and slaves. Sometime between 1764 and 1777 he bought the Belmont Neck property, at that time called "Ogilvie's Neck" (Daniels 1995). A deed specifically references this property as the land originally granted to the Seawrights and Edwards (Kirkland and Kennedy 1905, Diagram 9) (Figure 3). He began planting indigo on his Mulberry lands around 1772, and by 1780 it was his most important cash crop. John planted his last indigo in 1796, the year the market collapsed. Soon thereafter, wheat was grown at Belmont Neck. John sold the Belmont Neck property to his son, James (1773-1866), in 1805. James continued to grow wheat at Belmont Neck. In 1867 Johnny Chesnut and David Williams II began to grow cotton at Belmont Neck.

The 1985 archaeological surface collection on the Belmont Neck mound by DePratter and Judge did not produce any early- to mid-eighteenth century materials. The mound is located in the portion of Belmont Neck granted to Wm. Seawright in 1737. It is not known if Wm. Seawright ever occupied the place, and further research is needed to trace the use of the land between 1737 and the 1770s. Likewise, researchers have not yet been able to locate deeds between 1737 and 1805. However,

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other documents show that John Chesnut owned Belmont Neck by 1777 (Daniels 1995). Family records indicate that under John Chesnut (who lived in “downtown” Camden), eight men, six women, and 16 of Ely Kershaw’s hands plus an overseer named Abram Kelly lived at Belmont Neck in 1788. In 1793 the overseer was Thomas Watt’s overseer (Daniels 1995).

The 1985 surface collection did produce a date range from 1820-1925 based on an analysis of ceramics and glass (Babson 1986:22). An 1842 plat of “Bell Mount” by Boykin depicts 14 structures: two large structures marked as “Bell Mount” and, to the immediate northeast, a slave street with six structures on each side marked as “Negro Houses” (Figure 5). By this time, James Chesnut (1773-1866) had been living in the 1820 brick structure at Mulberry Plantation for twenty-two years. It appears that James was growing wheat at Belmont Neck (Daniels 1995).

The short-lived production of indigo at Belmont Neck from approximately 1772-1796 is counted as significant for this nomination. The processing of indigo was notoriously noxious and a location far from the owner’s house would have been desired. Indigo production by necessity was located adjacent to the fields where indigo was harvested and it required a supply of fresh water and shade for the tanks. Abundant general historic documentation exists for the growing of indigo along the Wateree River south of Camden by the 1750s (Winberry 1979). When Elkanah Watson visited Camden in 1786, he remarked in his Memoirs that Camden conducted “a valuable interior trade in tobacco, flour, deerskins, indigo and beef” (Kirkland and Kennedy 1905:15). Likewise, when George Washington visited Camden in 1791, he noted in his diary that “On the Wateree, within a mile and a half of which the town [Camden] stands, the lands are very good; they culture Corn, Tobacco, & Indigo” (Kirkland and Kennedy 1905:307). Joseph Kershaw, partnered with Ely Kershaw and John Chesnut, operated indigo works as early as 1760 (Kirkland and Kennedy 1905:14-15). Family documents make it clear that John Chesnut grew indigo at Belmont Neck (Daniels 1995). When the British occupied Camden in June of 1780, “a lot of indigo, valued at \$5,000, was taken from Colonel Chesnut” (Kirkland and Kennedy 1905:144). So far wheat but not indigo has been identified in flotation samples from historic contexts at the Belmont Neck site, but few samples have yet been analyzed.

The discovery of documentary information (including plats, deeds, plantation records, and personal correspondence) and archaeological deposits that show a high degree of archaeological integrity justify the eligibility of the Belmont Neck historic occupation even though no eighteenth century structures remain standing. Beginning in perhaps 1772, a cadre of slaves and an overseer were established on this property, where they produced indigo until 1796. Shovel test pits have relocated the area of the slave village to the north of the mound, and the overseer’s house on top of the mound (Figure 12). Investigation of the early plantation settlement would provide important information concerning the structure and layout of inland indigo plantations and the character of the material culture and economy of a small satellite plantation. The lack of high status individuals occupying this site will give us good information on low status overseers and slaves in the upper coastal plain.

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Verbal Boundary Description

[REDACTED]

Boundary Justification

[REDACTED]

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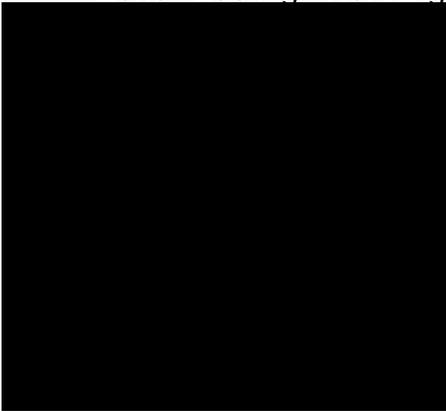
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Section 10: UTM References, continued

Zone Easting Northing



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Table 1. Historic Chronology of Belmont Neck Property.^a

1734	Fredricksburg Township (centered on Mulberry Plantation) first surveyed.
1737	William Seawright land grant of 250 acres at north end of bend. Robert Seawright land grant of 50 acres in center of bend.
1748	William Newitt Edwards land grant of 290 acres at south end of bend.
1758	Joseph Kershaw sets up flour mill and Pine Tree Hill store.
1764	John Chesnut becomes partner with Joseph and Ely Kershaw, William Ancrum, and Aaron Loocock.
1760s	John Chesnut bought his first slaves.
1772	Likely the first year John Chesnut planted wheat or indigo on Mulberry plantations.
1777	By this time John Chesnut had bought "Ogilvie's Neck" from Charles Ogilvie. He owned 49 slaves, plus 22 held jointly with Ely Kershaw.
1780	John Chesnut indigo crop lost to British in occupation.
1780s	Two crop failures, but John expanded indigo production.
1788	John Chesnut lists how many slaves are at Belmont Neck, plus name of overseer.
1790	John Chesnut owned 135 slaves and sold $\frac{3}{4}$ ton of indigo. He is the single largest slave owner in Camden District.
1791	John Chesnut receives drill plow for planting indigo from George Washington; James Chesnut is a student at Princeton University. John expands indigo production.
1793	Overseer at "The Neck" was Thomas Watt's overseer.
1795	John Chesnut sold Senior and McGirtt/Williams land to his son, James Chesnut.
1796	Last indigo crop, market collapses. This indigo did not sell until 1798.
1797	John and son James are working the fields together. They plant a large rice crop and try growing hemp.
1798	John Chesnut sells Ogilvie's Neck but immediately buys it back again at a loss.
1799	John and James return to growing wheat as an important cash crop.
1805	John Chesnut sells Belmont Neck land to his son, James Chesnut. Now James Chesnut owns the core of the present Mulberry Plantation (Belmont land plus Senior and McGirtt/Williams lands as indicated on Figure 3).
1815	John Chesnut will recorded.
1818	John Chesnut died.
1820	High House moved to Belmont Neck mound? Brick Mulberry plantation house built.
1835	Final settlement of John Chesnut will.
1842	Plat surveyed and drawn by S. H. Boykin.
1867	Johnny Chesnut and David Williams II undertake joint venture in cotton on Belmont Neck land.
1939-1942	High House razed.
1991	Loblolly pines planted in Belmont Neck field.

^a Taken from Daniels 1995, who researched public and private documents. John Chesnut (I) born 1743, married Sarah Cantey 1770, died 1818. James Chesnut (II), son of John, born 1773, married Mary Bowes Cox 1796, died 1866. Johnny Chesnut grandson of James Chesnut (II), son of John Chesnut (II), who was the eldest son of James Chesnut (II).

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The following information is the same for each of the figures accompanying this nomination:

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Location of Property: U.S. Hwy. 521, Camden vicinity
Kershaw County, South Carolina

- Figure 1: [REDACTED] 3]
- Figure 2: Location of Fredericksburg Township [Kirkland and Kennedy, *Historic Camden* (1905)]
- Figure 3: Early Land Grants in Fredericksburgh Township [Kirkland and Kennedy, *Historic Camden* (1905)]
- Figure 4: Old Fields on Edwards' Grant, 1748 [Teal, *Guide to Selected Historical Sites* (1992)]
- Figure 5: Plat of Bell Mount Plantation [SOURCE?]
- Figure 6: 1930s Photograph of High House on Belmont Neck Mound [Courtesy the Daniels Family]
- Figure 7: 1937 Aerial Photograph of Belmont Neck
- Figure 8: 1949 Aerial Photograph of Belmont Neck
- Figure 9: 1999 Aerial Photograph of Belmont Neck
- Figure 10: Blanding's Manuscript Map of Belmont Neck [Source for Engraving in Squier and Davis, *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley* (1848)]
- Figure 11: Extent of 1998 Testing at Belmont Neck Site [Cable et al, *Wateree Archaeological Research Project* (1999)]
- Figure 12: Historic Plantation Map Based on Shovel Test Pits [Cable et al, *Wateree Archaeological Research Project* (1999)]
- Figure 13: Area of 2003-2004 Three Test Units, Photograph by Gail E. Wagner
- Figure 14: N332 E428 E1/2 West Profile, Photograph by Gail E. Wagner

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs accompanying this nomination:

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Location of Property: [REDACTED], Camden vicinity
Kershaw County, South Carolina

1. Daniels Family Photograph, ca. 1930-1932
View to Northwest, showing "High House" on top of prehistoric mound
Photographer Unknown
Mulberry Plantation Archives, Camden, S.C.
2. Belmont Neck Site, view to north, showing Test Unit 3 (TU3) in foreground, TU2 in mid, and excavation crew in front of N332 E428 E1/2 deep stratigraphic unit. Units are situated between rows of planted loblolly pines.
Date: 28 May 2004
Photographer: Gail E. Wagner
Location of Negatives: Wateree Archaeological Research Project, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.
3. Belmont Neck Site, facing south, N332 E428 E1/2 level 04 top, with 10-cm scale pointing north.
Provenience 78.
Date: 28 May 2004
Photographer: Gail E. Wagner
Location of Negatives: Wateree Archaeological Research Project, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.
4. Belmont Neck Site, facing north, with 10-cm scale, showing broken fabric-impressed pot section that had held yellowish-brown dirt to build Mound Stage 2, Unit N332 E428 E1/2, mid-level 05, Provenience 112.
Date: 28 May 2004
Photographer: Gail E. Wagner
Location of Negatives: Wateree Archaeological Research Project, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

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5. Belmont Neck Site, Artifact, fabric-impressed pot section with cm scale. Recovered from Unit N332 E428 E1/2, Level 05.
Date: 28 May 2004
Photographer: Gail E. Wagner
Location of Negatives: Wateree Archaeological Research Project, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

6. Belmont Neck Site, Facing west, with 10-cm scale pointing north. Unit N332 E428 E1/2 west profile with Feature 10a at base center. Soil layers from top to bottom: plow zone, basket-laid dirt forming Mound Stage 2, Mound Stage 1, midden/A Horizon, subsoil.
Date: 28 May 2004
Photographer: Gail E. Wagner
Location of Negatives: Wateree Archaeological Research Project, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

7. Belmont Neck Site, Facing north, with 10-cm scale pointing north. Unit N332 E428 E1/2, Feature 3 (Provenience 143) north profile and base. Numbers label adjacent unexcavated features 8, 9, & 10.
Date: 28 May 2004
Photographer: Gail E. Wagner
Location of Negatives: Wateree Archaeological Research Project, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.