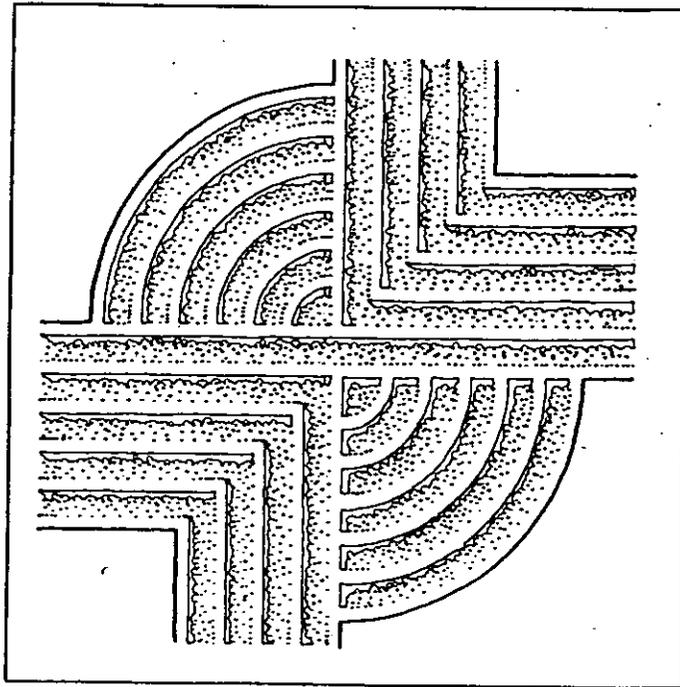


ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF THE  
PROPOSED UNITED STATES POSTAL FACILITY  
TRACT, LEXINGTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA



**RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 67**

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF THE PROPOSED  
UNITED STATES POSTAL FACILITY TRACT,  
LEXINGTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Chicora Research Contribution 67

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## Introduction

This investigation was conducted by Ms. Natalie Adams of Chicora Foundation, Inc. for Ms. Martha Van Nuis of the United States Postal Service Facilities Service Center. This 57 acre tract is situated on a knoll, south of Congaree Creek in Lexington County. The tract is bounded by Congaree Creek to the north, by Dixiana Road to the south, Overlook Terrace Business Park to the west, and privately owned property to the east (Figure 1).

Within the proposed U.S. Postal Service facility tract is a dirt road running north-south which curves around to the west near the northern boundary of the tract. Presently, development plans include the construction of a General Mail Facility and parking lots, which are likely to impact archaeological resources in the project tract.

This study is intended to provide a detailed explanation of the archaeological reconnaissance of the USPC facility tract and the findings. Chicora's proposal for work was based on a letter Ms. Martha Van Nuis received from Ms. Nancy Brock of the SHPO office which outlined that only a reconnaissance level survey was necessary for this tract.

The project included examination of the statewide archaeological site files held by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology for information pertinent to the project area. The field investigations were conducted July 2, 1991 by Ms. Natalie Adams. This field work involved 8 person hours. Laboratory and report production were conducted at Chicora's laboratories in Columbia, South Carolina on July 3, 1991.

## Effective Environment

Lexington County, situated in central South Carolina, lies in two physiographic provinces: the Piedmont Plateau to the northwest of the "fall line" and the Sandhills to the southeast. In the vicinity of the Fall Line, dividing the Piedmont and Coastal Plain, major physiographic and geologic subdivisions occur which likely influenced human occupation. On major drainages, such as the Congaree, the occurrence of rapids could interfere with water travel and the location of early historic occupation on the Fall Line reflects this concern (Jones 1971; Mills 1826:157). The Fall Line also strongly influenced prehistoric occupation since its location between two major ecotones could allow exploitation of a greater diversity of resources.

Lexington County is bounded to the north by Newberry County,

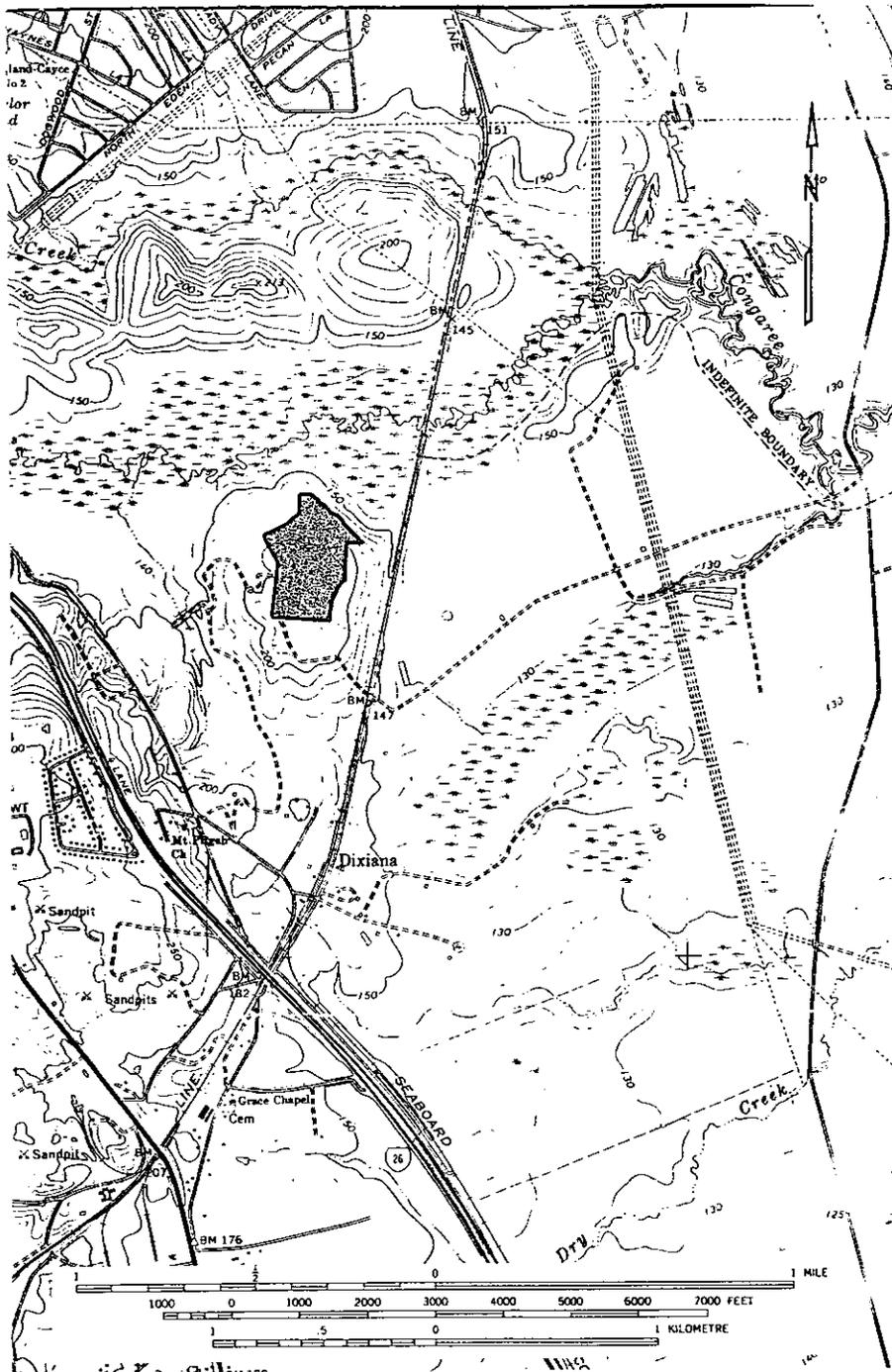


Figure 1. Vicinity of USPC facility tract.

to the east by Richland and Calhoun counties, to the south by Orangeburg County, and to the west by Aiken and Saluda counties. The project area falls within the Sandhills region. The geology of the Sandhills is characterized by marine-deposited sediments and the project area is characterized by Lakeland soils which are excessively drained (Lawrence 1976: 25, 78).

The Saluda and Congaree Rivers drain the eastern portion of the county, and the north fork of the Edisto River drains the western portion. Numerous smaller streams (such as Congaree Creek) are found throughout the county. Vegetation in the Sandhills region is characterized by two major forest types: the longleaf and loblolly pine communities (Frothingham and Nelson 1944:19-21). These communities consist primarily of pine with several species of hardwoods including gum and oak (Braun 1950: 285-286). Currently, the vegetation in the surrounding area consists of mixed pine/hardwood with a light understory of vegetation.

The tract itself consists of the initial stages of secondary revegetation as the area has been recently stripped.

#### Background Research

General accounts of Lexington County history are presented by Anderson (1975), Gay (1974), Goodyear (1976), Meriwether (1940), Michie (1989), and Trinkley (1974).

Lexington County was first occupied by Europeans who built a fortified military garrison (Fort Congaree) in 1718 on the site of an a former Congaree Indian village. A second fortification was established 2 1/2 miles north after attacks by Iroquois from the Ohio Valley upon settlers in the late 1740s. These two forts were significant in the defence of the Carolina backcountry (Central Midlands Regional Planning Council 1974:132).

The first large trading post in central South Carolina was built near the old Congaree fort site in 1733. This post was an exchange center between Charles Town and the western settlements. During this year the area received political identity as Congaree District. Two years later it was renamed Saxe Gotha in an attempt to bring immigrants from Germany and Switzerland to the piedmont. Most of these early settlers were small farmers while the more prosperous ones operated stores, trading posts, saw and grist mills.

When the wagon road between the town and Augusta was opened in 1754, river traffic increased. A ferry operation began over the Congaree, and the village moved towards the ferry site where Granby Village was established sometime before 1774. As the head of navigation on the Congaree River, Granby became an important commercial center. Indigo, cotton, manufactured ropes, Indian corn, beeswax, and other goods from Saxe Gotha and the up country

were transported to Charles Town where they were exchanged for salt, fabrics and other merchandise needed in the interior (Central Midlands Regional Planning Council 1974:134).

During the American Revolution Fort Granby, below the present town of Cayce, was the major outpost for British regulars in the area. In 1785, Lexington County was established in the Orangeburg District. With the development of Columbia, across the river, Granby Village declined in importance. The county seat was then moved from Granby Village to the town of Lexington (Central Midlands Regional Planning Council 1974:135-136).

By 1860 the county contained 73 saw mills, one cotton and wool mill, eight carriage and wagon makers, one sash and blind factory, two boot and shoe makers, one tannery, one blacksmith, one turpentine distillery, one printing establishment, and one wooden bucket factory. Also, Guignard Brickworks, established in 1804, was a prospering business. The largest single pre-war industry by far was the Saluda Factory on the Congaree (see Trinkley 1989).

During the Civil War Union forces invaded Lexington County and shelled the city of Columbia from the west bank of the Congaree. After the war most families were left destitute. Economic recovery was slow, aggravated by lack of capital and heavy reliance on an unproductive agricultural economy (Central Midlands Regional Planning Council 1974:136-137). See Figure 2 for location of historic settlements in the study area.

Previous archaeological investigations in Lexington County are presented in Carrillo (1976), Ferguson (1976), Goodyear and Harmon (1979), Harmon (1980), Roberts (1990), Tippet (1982), and Trinkley (1980).

In researching the Institute's site files, one site (38LX239) was listed as potentially within the project boundaries. Site 38LX239 was first described by Michael Trinkley in 1982 during a survey for the relocation of State Road 129. It consisted of a late 19th/early 20th century component surface collected from a 100 by 150 foot area which had been heavily disturbed by cultivation as well as a variety of construction activities. The site was recommended as not eligible for the National Register. Central UTM coordinates were E494370 N3754230.

Since the project tract has recently been stripped, it was believed that the project area had a low potential for containing intact archaeological sites.

### Field Methods

The initially proposed field techniques involved a pedestrian survey using transects spaced at 200 foot intervals. All areas of open ground with good surface visibility would be examined for



evidence of archaeological remains. Shovel tests would be judgementally placed to verify ground disturbance, soil profiles, and in areas of high archaeological probability which evidenced minimal disturbance. These tests would be minimally 1-foot square and excavated to subsoil. Fill would be screened through 1/4 inch mesh. Soil colors would be noted using a Munsell color chart.

Should sites be identified through pedestrian survey, shovel tests would be used to obtain data on site boundaries, artifact quantity and diversity, site integrity, and temporal affiliation. The information required for completion of South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology site forms would be collected and photographs would be taken. Notes would be maintained for profiles at any sites encountered.

Actual field methods did not divert from those initially proposed. In the field it was verified that most of the topsoil (Zone Ap or A) had been stripped off and that most of the ground surface was visible. In areas where there was low surface visibility, shovel tests were dug to locate any unseen artifactual materials.

A total of nine transects were traversed at 200 foot intervals with reference points located at every 200 feet along the transect. Four judgemental shovel tests were dug to verify ground disturbance and to obtain soil profiles. Four shovel tests were also dug to determine the integrity of one new site.

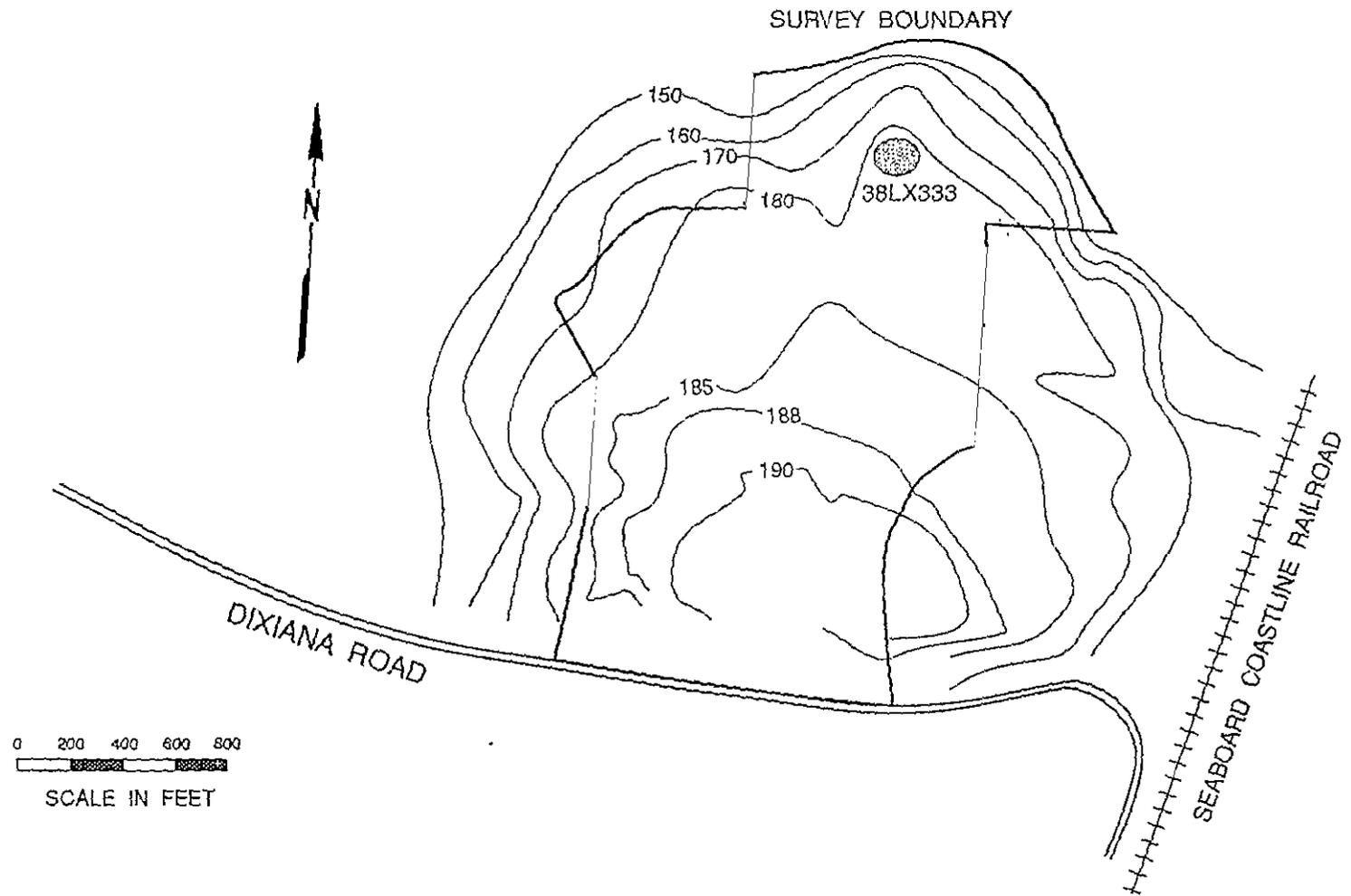
#### Laboratory Analysis

The cleaning and analysis of artifacts was conducted in Columbia at the Chicora Foundation laboratories on July 3, 1991. It is anticipated that these materials will be catalogued and accessioned for curation at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, the closest regional repository. Site forms have been filed with the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. Field notes and photographic materials have been prepared for curation using archival standards and will be transferred to the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology upon completion of the project.

Analysis of the collections followed professionally accepted standards with a level of intensity suitable to the quantity and quality of the remains.

#### Results

The pedestrian survey identified one new site (38LX333) in the project area (Figure 3). 38LX239 was not relocated and it is believed to have been destroyed by the relocation of State Road 129. Four judgemental shovel tests were dug which indicated that no more than 0.2 feet of topsoil remained on the tract. Visual



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U.S. POSTAL SERVICE FACILITY

Figure 3. Survey tract and location of 38LX333.

observation noted subsoil exposed over most of the tract.

Site 38LX333 is located in and to the east of a dirt road which runs through the tract. Surface collection indicated that the site is about 50 by 50 feet in size. The central UTM coordinates are E494460 N3754490 and the soils are excessively drained Lakeland sands. Artifacts recovered consist of one light olive green bottle glass sherd, one dark olive green bottle glass sherd, one aqua bottle glass sherd, three manganese bottle glass sherds, one plain whiteware, one polychrome hand painted whiteware, one blue edged whiteware, one whiteware sherd with dark brown interior glaze.

The datable ceramics yield an MCD (South 1977) of 1854, however, the presence of manganese bottle glass suggests that the site represents a late nineteenth/early twentieth century occupation. A sparse amount of brick rubble was also noted.

Four shovel tests were excavated to determine if the site contained any intact cultural remains. No artifacts were recovered from the subsurface, and soil profiles indicate that, at most, 0.2 foot of light brown sandy loam A horizon (Munsel Color 7.5YR6/4) remained in some areas. Otherwise, shovel tests immediately exposed the light reddish brown sandy subsoil (Munsel Color 5YR6/4).

This site appears to represent a late nineteenth to early twentieth century domestic occupation. No statements are possible regarding probable status of the occupants or function of the site. The 1940 General Highway and Transportation Map of Lexington County (which represents the earliest edition available) fails to identify any early twentieth century structures in the project area. This suggests that the area had been abandoned at least by the early 1930s.

Because of site disturbance, lack of subsurface remains, and scarcity of surface artifacts this site is not recommended as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### Summary and Recommendations

As a result of the archaeological reconnaissance of the USPS facility tract, one new site (38LX333) was discovered. This site is not recommended as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. No further investigations are recommended for this site by Chicora Foundation.

Site 38LX239 was not relocated. It is believed that this site has been destroyed by the relocation of State Road 129.

We stress that this investigation was performed only as a reconnaissance level study and is not intended to be considered as

an intensive archaeological survey with systematic subsurface investigations. In spite of this, our visual examination of the tract verified that the area has been extensively damaged and that it is unlikely that any in situ archaeological remains exist.

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