

**THE WADDELLS MILL POND SITE (8JA65) REVISITED:  
THE RESULTS OF B. CALVIN JONES' 1973-74 INVESTIGATION**

Louis D. Tesar  
Archaeologist III  
Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research

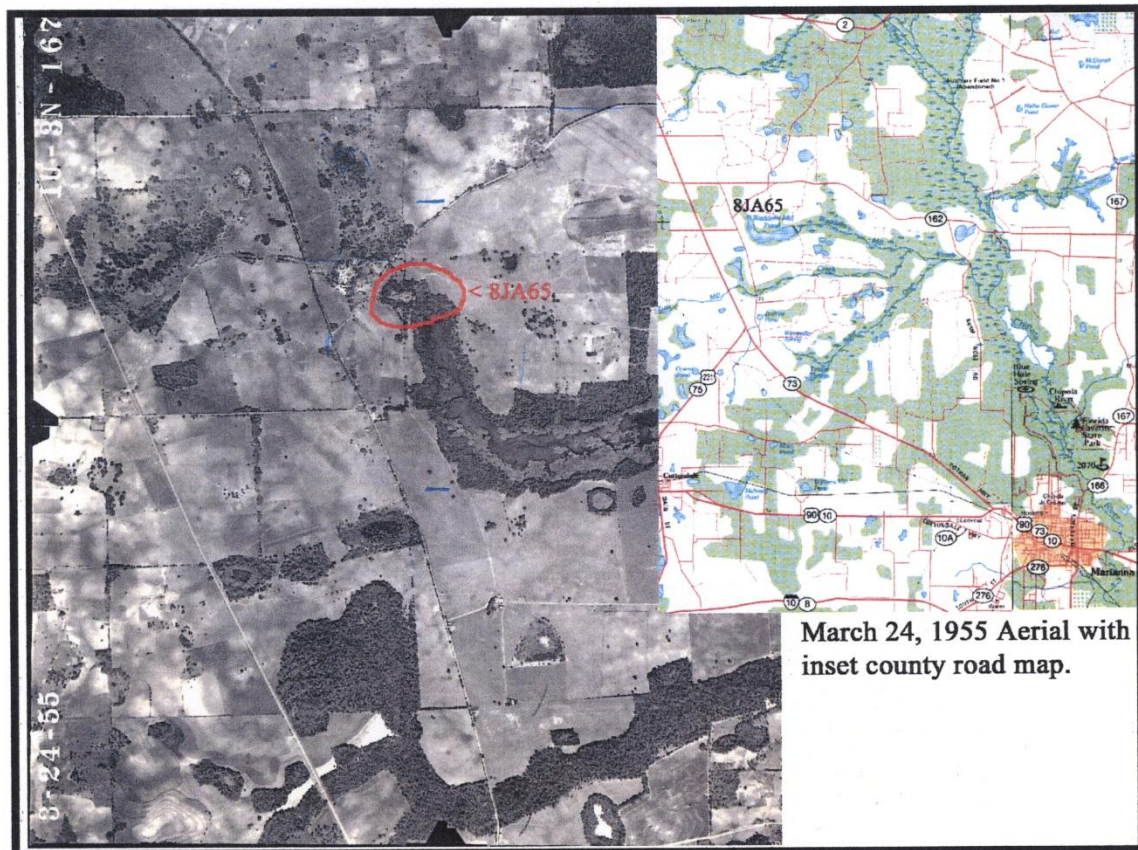
May 13, 2006

**THE WADDELLS MILL POND SITE (8JA65) REVISITED:  
THE RESULTS OF B. CALVIN JONES 1973-74 INVESTIGATION**

**Louis D. Tesar  
Archaeologist III  
Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research**

**May 13, 2006**

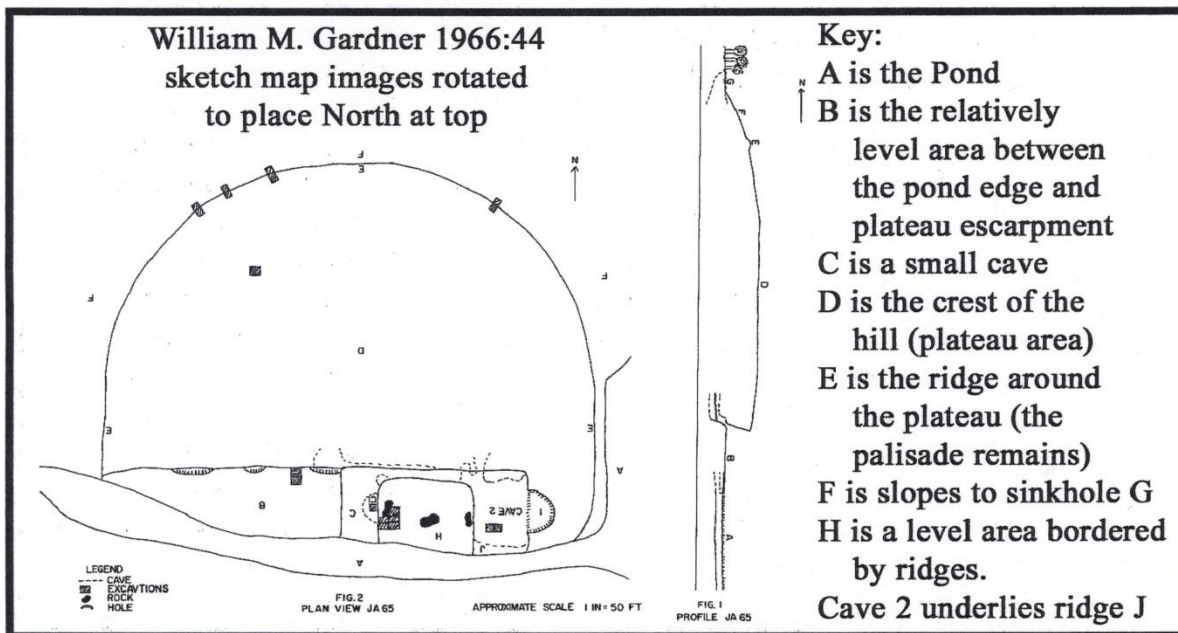
The Waddells Mill Pond site is located in SE ¼ of Section 32 and the SW ¼ of Section 33, Township 06 North/Range 11 West, about seven miles Northwest of the Marianna, Jackson County, Florida. The spring-fed artificial pond from which the site gets its name is the headwaters of Waddells Creek, a tributary of the Chipola River located about six miles to the East. The site is located in the western part of the Marianna Lowlands, in an area with a number of caves and rock shelters extending through the Florida Caverns State Park to the northeast.



The primary Fort Walton component at the site occupied a karst ridge plateau with two caves and rock shelter ledges on its southern escarpment side facing the pond into which springs discharge. The area is encompassed by a narrow, elevated horseshoe-shaped ridge feature, the remains of a palisade. Calvin Jones recorded two mounds; the



southwestern one is conical-shaped, while the northwestern one is a truncated pyramidal platform mound. Both originated during the Deptford-Swift Creek period.



In 1959-60, William Gardner conducted archaeological excavations at the site. He excavated 13 five-foot squares. Five were contiguous in Area H, four bisected the suspected palisade finding post molds confirming that interpretation, three were in Area B, two in Cave 2, one in Cave 1, and one on the plateau (Area E). The project had been planned for use in a graduate degree thesis; however, it was only briefly reported in *The Florida Anthropologist*.

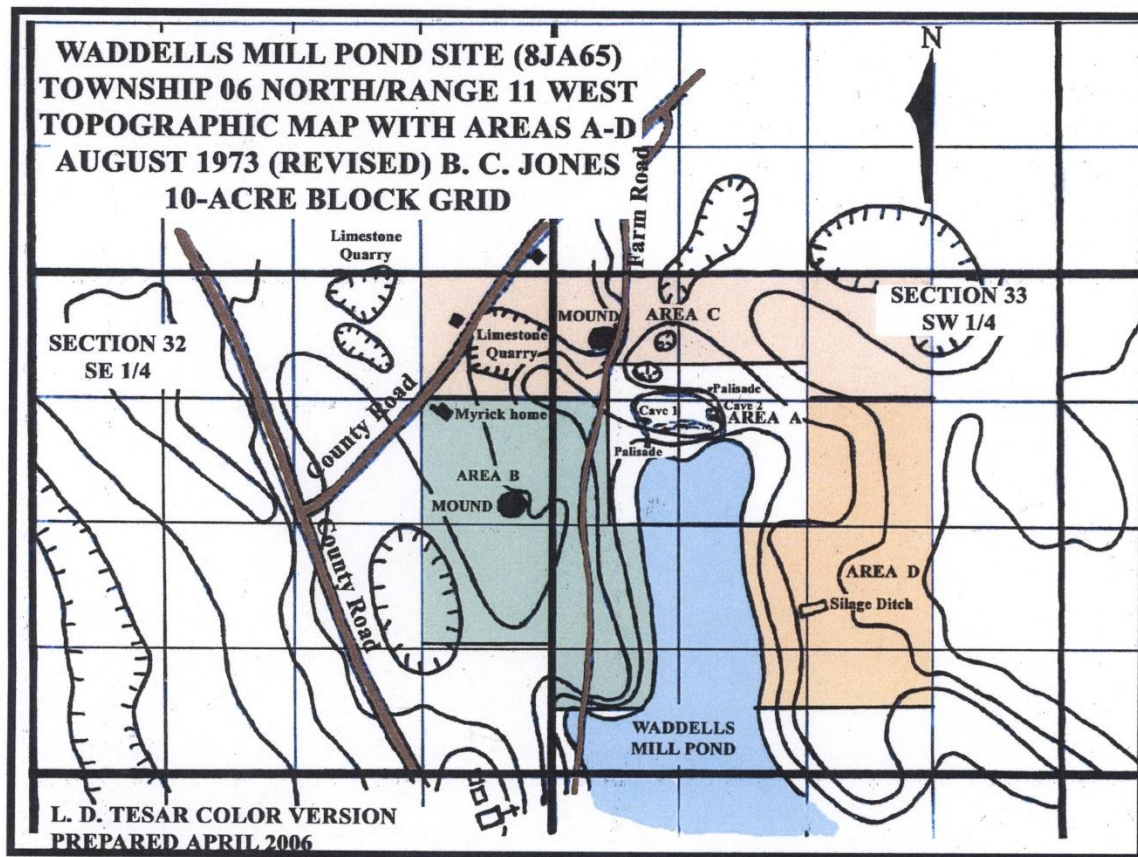
Gardner's artifact analysis focused on discussing the relative occurrence of Fort Walton plain versus incised/punctated ceramics. He commented on the excellent faunal preservation and included summary comments from a manuscript report prepared for him by Elizabeth Wing. He noted the occurrence of limestone grit in the ceramic temper, and associated the site with the Chacato (a.k.a. Chatot) (Gardner 1966:56). Although he found no Spanish artifacts, Gardner (1966:57) suggests that the historic Chacato (Chatot) occupation of the site included the Spanish mission of San Carlos de Yatcatani.

In 1972, Dan Penton, then employed as an archaeologist in what is now the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research, was sent to the site to collect information to prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination. The resulting form relied heavily on Gardner's 1966 *Florida Anthropologist* article. The site was listed in the National Register in September 1972.

In preparation for the Nation's bicentennial, B. Calvin Jones was assigned to locate and test a number of Spanish mission sites. The best of these were to be proposed for State acquisition with the goal of creating a Spanish mission trail from St. Augustine across



northern Florida. The Waddells Mill Pond site was selected to determine if evidence of the mission of San Carlos could be found there.

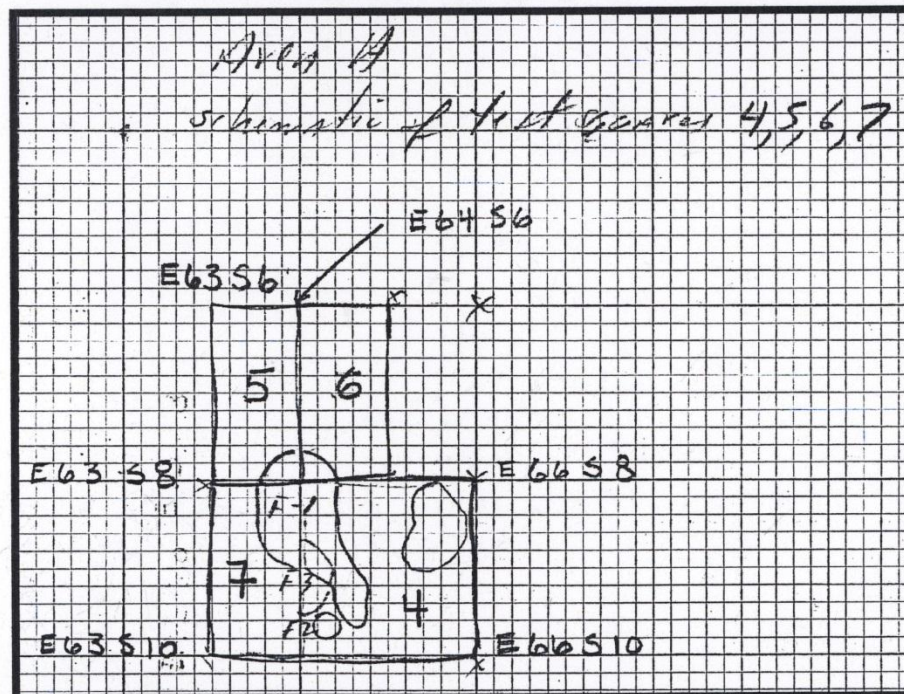
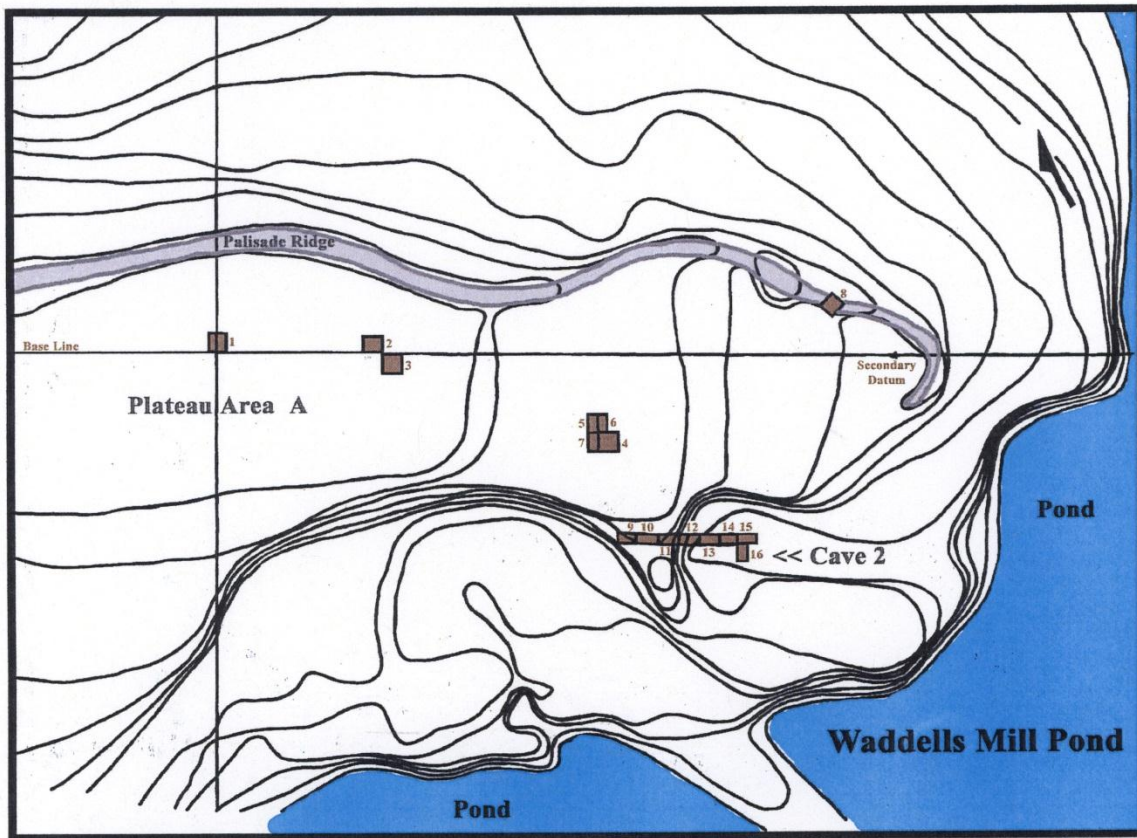


Calvin began work at the site in August 1973. He was assisted by Tom Potts and a crew of prisoners. He separated the site into four basic subareas to be investigated. Jones' Area A subsumes all of the area investigated earlier by Gardner, particularly the palisade, ridge plateau, and pond facing escarpment with its cave and rock shelter features. Area B covered the area to the southwest of Gardner's study area and includes a mound, which Calvin later described to me as a classic conical-shaped Woodland burial mound. Area C represented the northern site area, including a truncated pyramidal mound located near the northwest corner of Gardner's study area. Area D included the area east and southeast of Gardner's area.

Calvin established a baseline and took several hundred transit elevations to prepare a detailed topographic map of the plateau and associated caves and escarpment features. The contour intervals have been traced and key features colored to highlight their location in this presentation and the associated project report. In Area A there were four 2 m x 2 m shovel test units (Numbers 1-4) on the Plateau and one (Number 8) on the Palisade Ridge. There were three 1 m x 2 m test units on the Plateau (Numbers 5-7) and eight (Numbers 9-16) within Cave 2. Fort Walton period ceramics dominated the artifact sample. Calvin reports that the prisoners had trouble maintaining excavation control of levels and features within levels. I sorted and described over 25,000 artifacts collected by



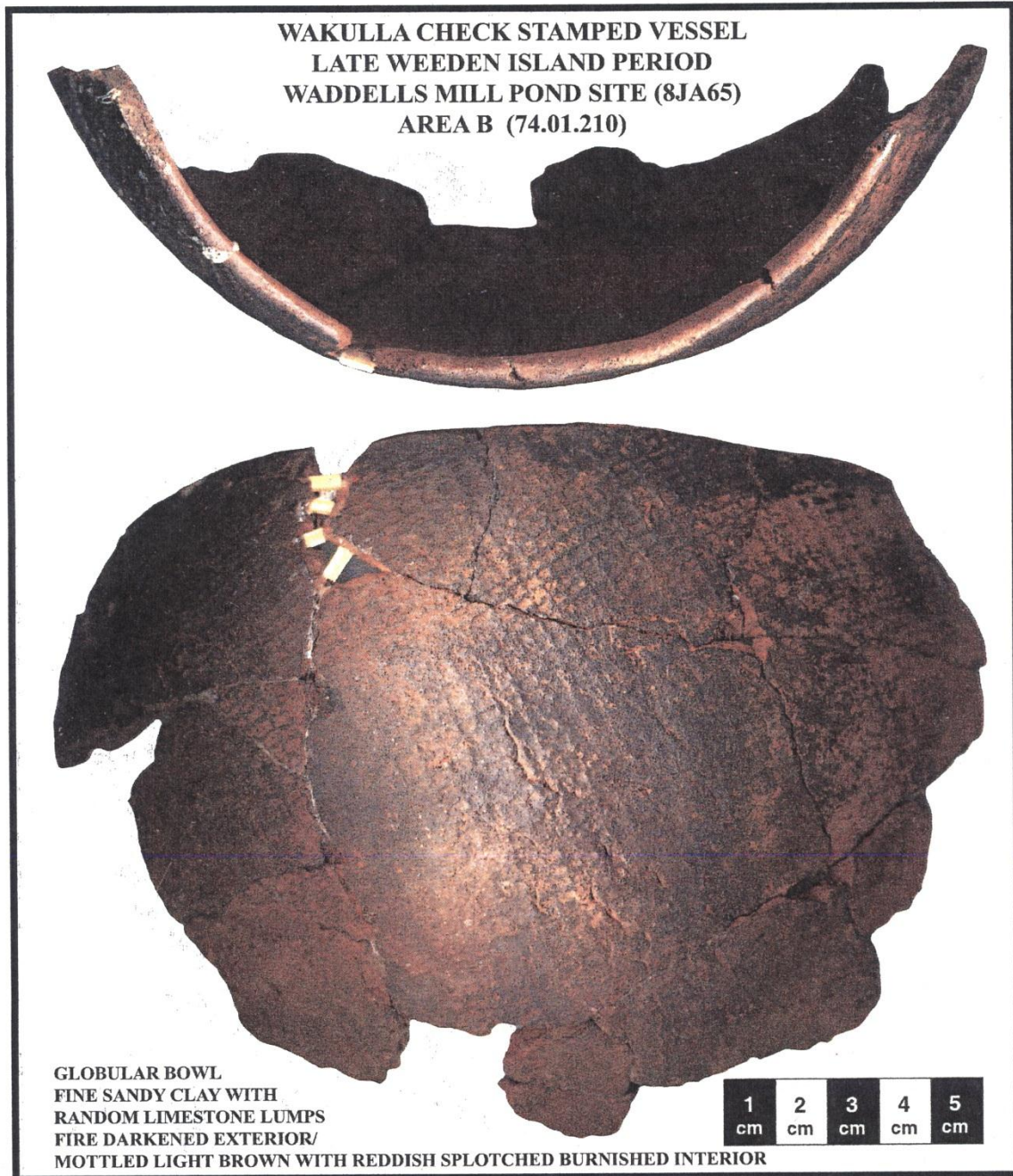
Calvin in Area A. That is roughly 61% of the more than 41,000 items processed during this study.



Page 39 in Waddells Mill Pond (8JA65) Project Fieldbook Number 1 (1973)



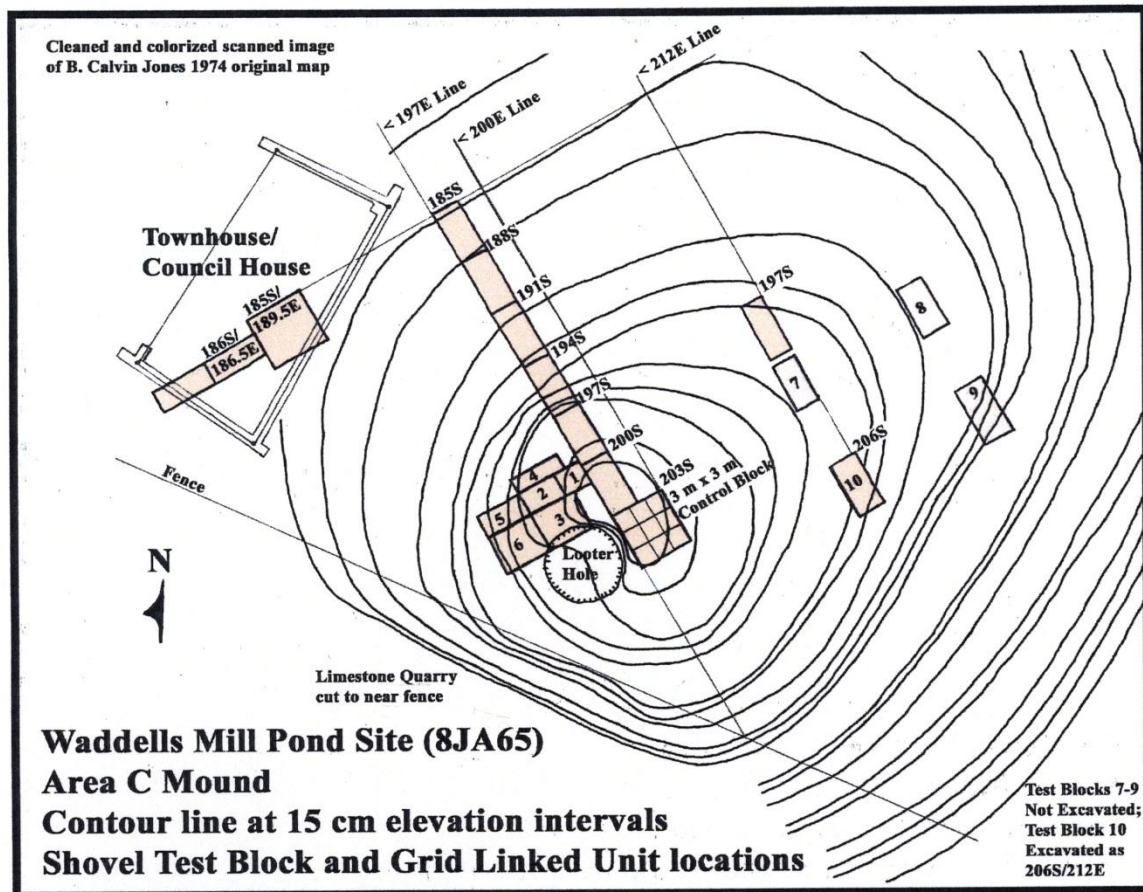
Of particular interest on the plateau, aside from discovering palisade post holes in Test Square 8, was the large pit feature found in Test Square 4. Its discovery led to expansion of the excavation area to reveal the entire feature—designated Feature 1. Excavation of three half-squares accomplished that. The pit contents are informative.



Calvin conducted only limited investigations in Area B. These focused around a restorable Wakulla Check Stamped vessel recovered when excavation was conducted in the edge of the farm road where a concentration of sherds was found.



Calvin requested and received OPS funding to hire anthropology students to maintain better control of the excavation. He returned to the site in October 1973 and began work in Area C.

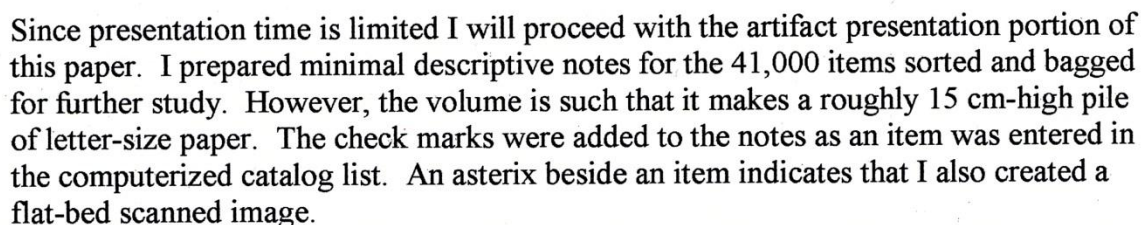
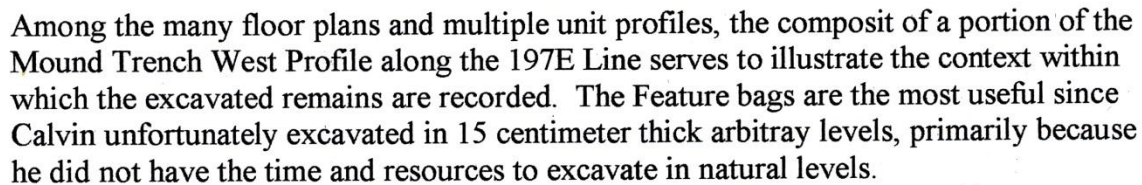


Gardner indicated his surprise that the large Fort Walton component at Waddells Mill Pond lacked a mound. Calvin recognized that what Bill thought was a large spoil pile from an adjacent rock mine was actually a truncated pyramidal platform mound.

Calvin set up his transit on 200S/200E and laid out initial shovel test locations for his crew to begin excavation, while he recorded elevations of the mound surface to prepare a contour map. Planned Test Blocks 7, 8 and 9, while shown on his map, were not excavated. Test Block 10 was excavated as Test Unit 206S/212E. Near the eastern base of the mound, test excavation revealed evidence for what Calvin identified as a Townhouse or Council House.

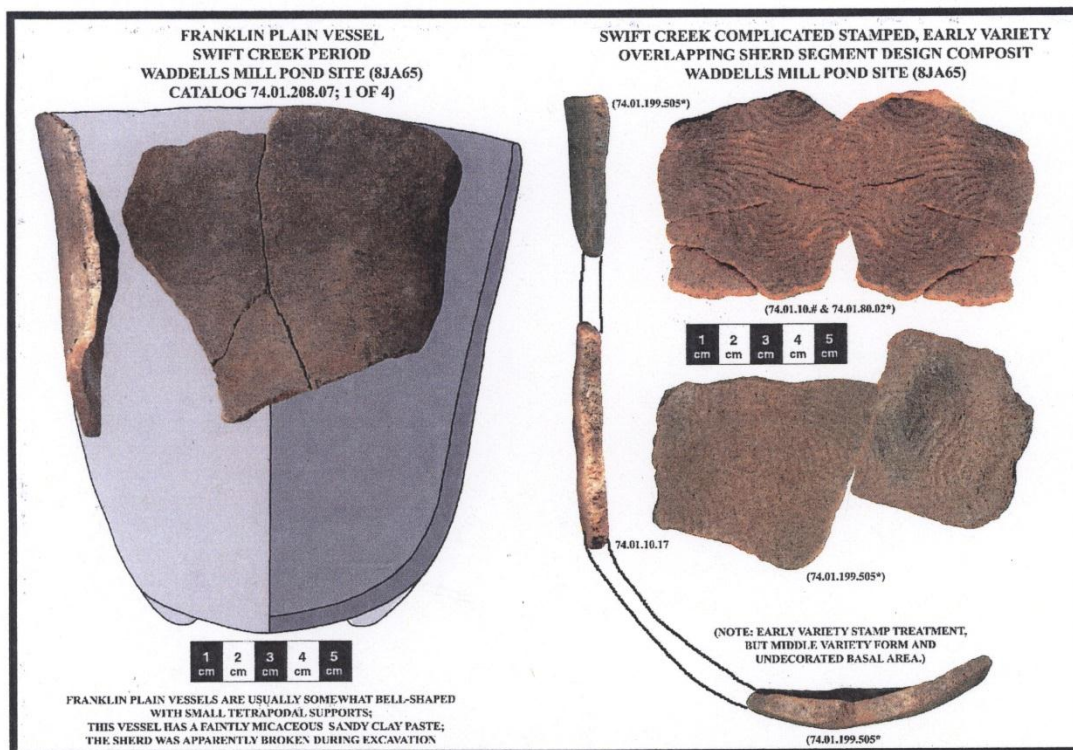
Calvin decided to excavate a trench across the mound to document its construction sequence. He soon discovered that the Fort Walton component revealed in Shovel Tests 1-4 capped a mound primarily of Deptford-Swift Creek construction. There were intrusive Fort Walton burials in the top meter, of the three meter high mound.



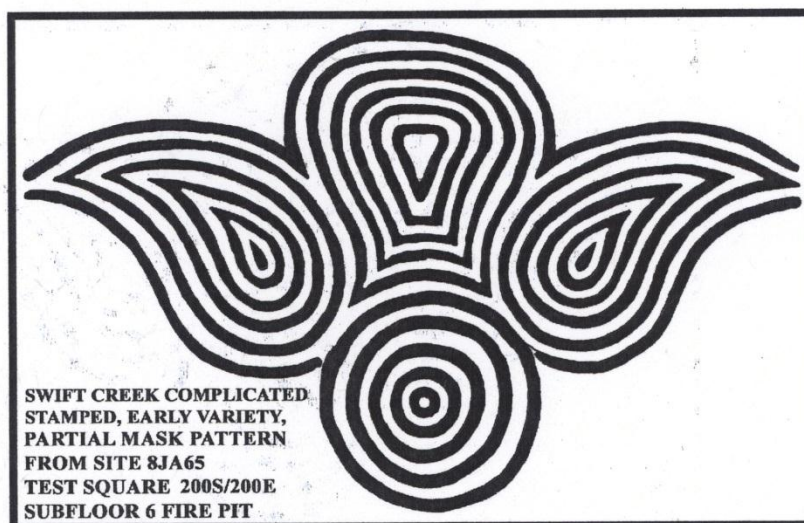




When I complete my report all of the project notes will be available to other researchers. However, Nancy White requested and I have given her right of first refusal for my notes. I hope that one of her students will combine my notes with their own review of the collection and information from other sites in a more comprehensive study than the report that I am preparing.

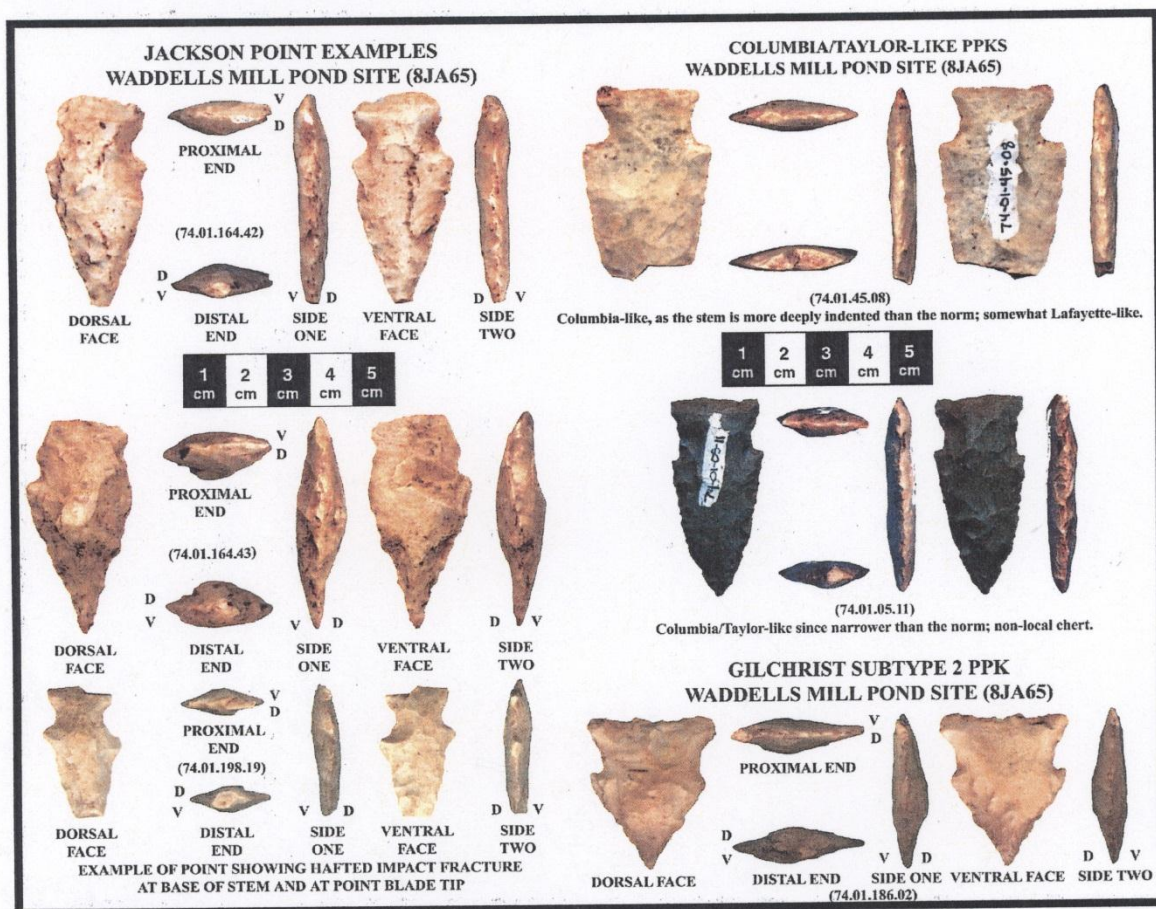


Shown here are two representations of the likely vessel forms of these Swift Creek period sherds. The one on the left is a typical Franklin Plain vessel, while the one on the right is a Swift Creek Complicated Stamped, early variety vessel.





The design motif appears to represent a mask. The thermal degrading of the base and lower side sherds indicate that it functioned as a cooking vessel.



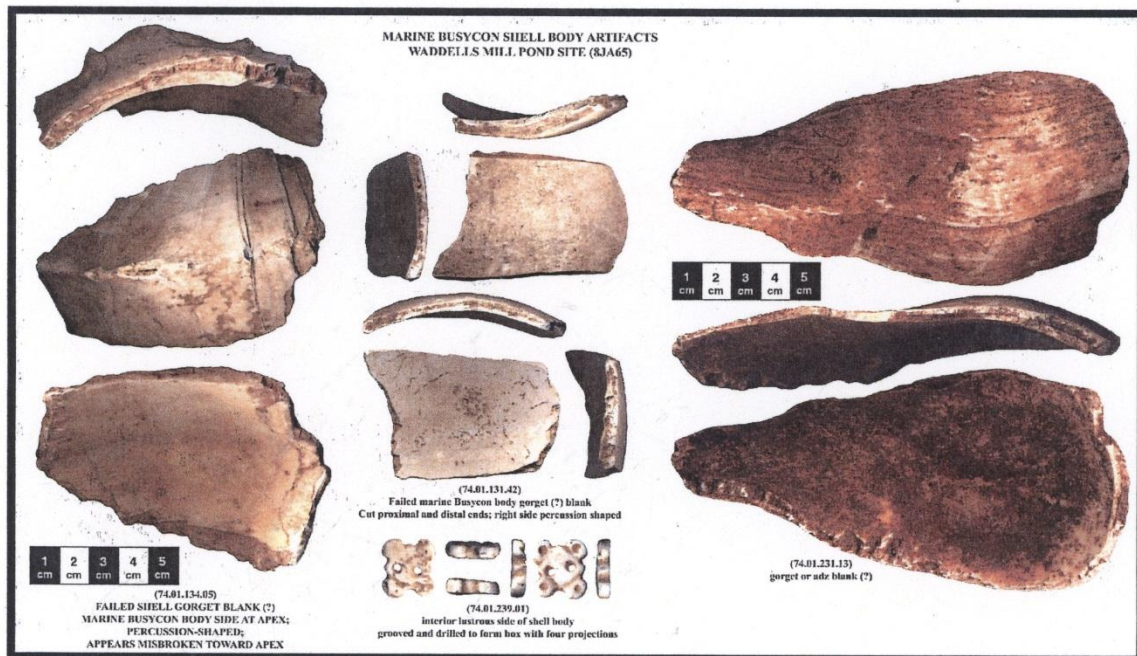
Stone artifacts are present, but not in the quantity that I would have expected based on findings at other Swift Creek mound sites, such as the Block-Sterns site (8LE148) that Calvin and I reported in 1996. The stone projectile point/knives range from Paleoindian to Fort Walton times. The cut sheet mica and crystal quartz expedient flake tools are associated with the Swift Creek component. There was not as much ground stone as expected, and most of the ceramist's burnishing stones come from the site's Fort Walton component. The latter is not surprising since a large sample of material was excavated from the Fort Walton village area, while the Woodland village component in Area B was subjected to only one shovel test unit, that from which the Wakulla Check Stamped vessel sherds shown earlier came.

Copper artifacts have been recovered over the years by the site's more enthusiastic artifact collectors. Evidence of their digging was noted in the areas investigated by both Gardner and Jones. However, Jones did not encounter any copper artifacts in his excavation.



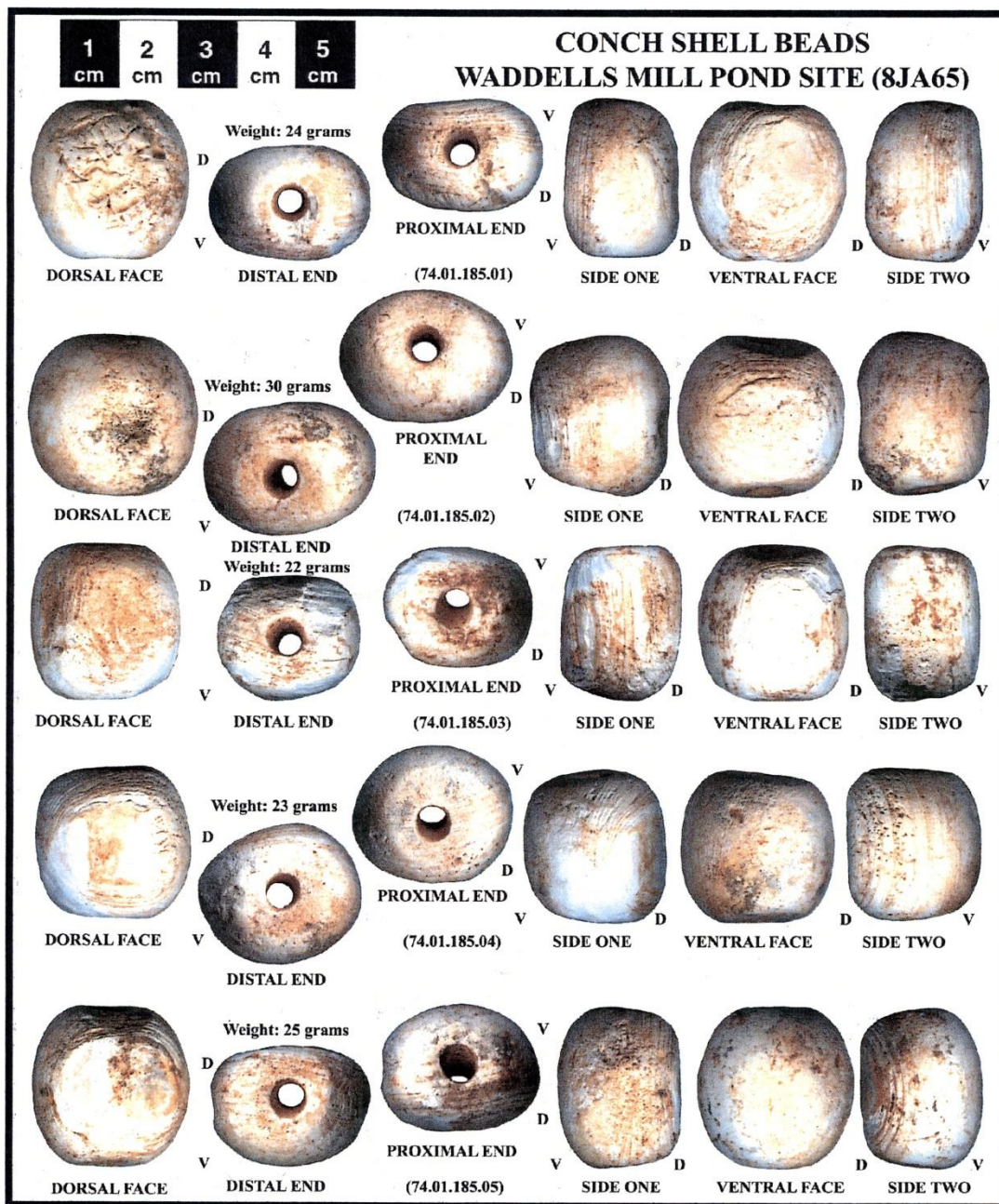


Bone tools also were not as common as expected, given the low soil acidity and the quantities of preserved faunal remains from food preparation and consumption. Of particular note is a bone flesher. Deer were the primary source of meat and presumably hides from which to make leather. Antler pressure flakers and other bone items were also found.





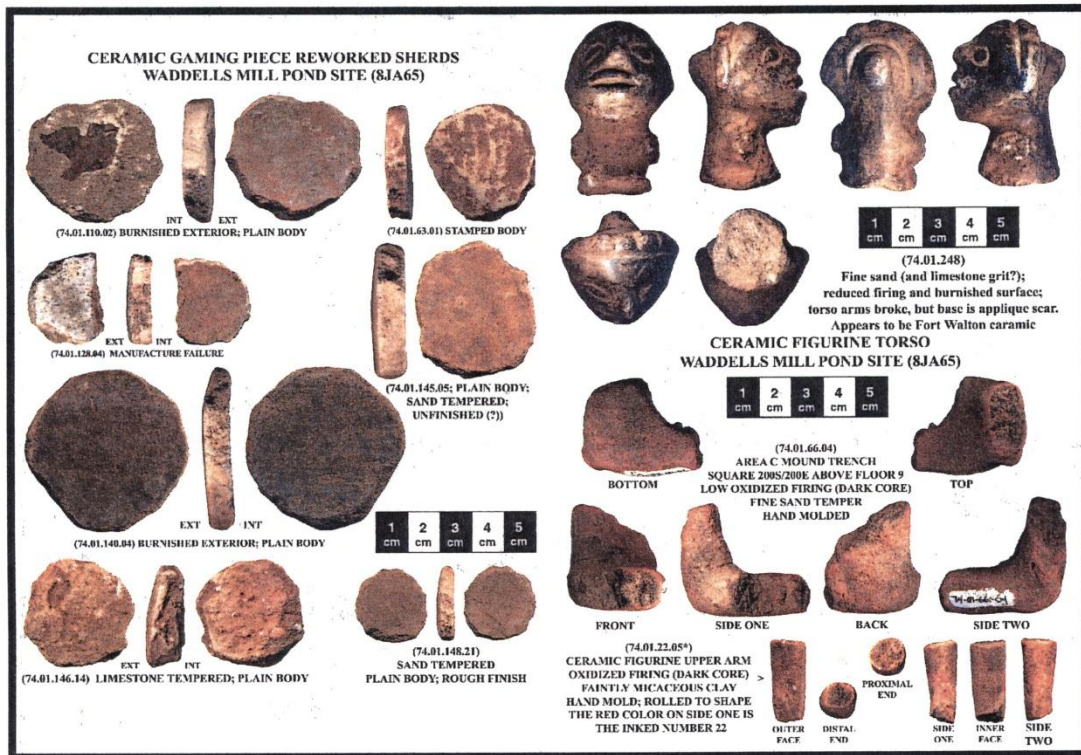
Mississippian shell gorgets are reported to have been found by people informally digging at the site. However, only shell blanks or preforms were found by Jones. A single cut shell bead was found in the general site area.



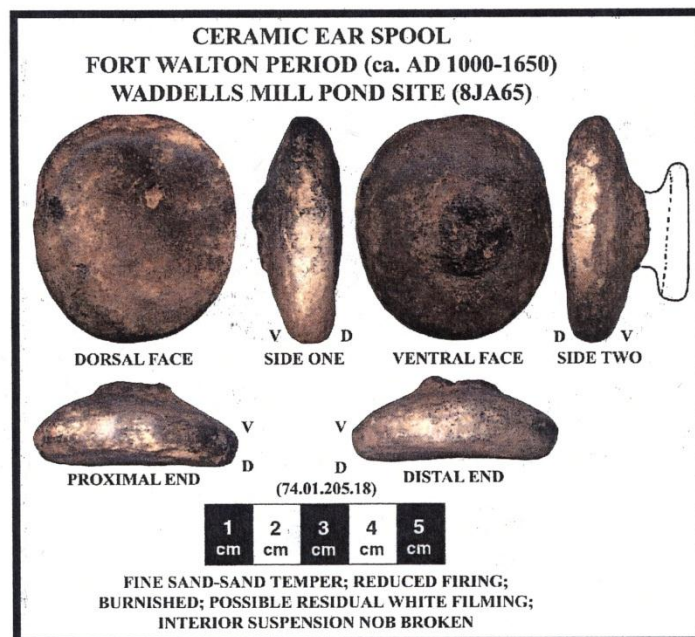
Five large columella beads were excavated in association with Burial # 2 in Area C Test Blocks 2-4. While the shell used to manufacture these items probably came from the St. Andrew Bay or Choctawhatchee Bay area, the possibility that some of them derive from fossil shell must also be considered. About four miles upstream from where the Chipola River is crossed by the State Road 20 Bridge may be found Miocene age fossil shells that are essentially undegraded.



Ceramic clay manufacture waste lumps and coil fragments date to both the Swift Creek and Fort Walton periods. Indeed, over 90 percent of the more than 41,000 items in the site collection are ceramic artifacts.



Ceramic game pieces fashioned from pottery sherds are as common at this site as at most other Fort Walton village sites. Ceramic figurines, all broken fragments, were found and are associated with both the site's Swift Creek and Fort Walton components.





A broken ceramic ear-spool dates to the site's Fort Walton component. Its temper suggests that it may have been made at the site.

Of primary interest to me are the site's ceramic vessel fragments. An assessment of ceramic temper, vessel form, and surface treatment indicates that while the majority of the Swift Creek and Fort Walton vessels were made on site, a notable sample originated elsewhere.

Woodland period ceramics date from Deptford through Swift Creek, and include some Weeden Island material. However, the Swift Creek ceramic series dominates, including Gulf Check Stamped, St. Andrews Complicated Stamped, Crooked River Complicated Stamped, and of course Swift Creek Complicated Stamped, early variety sherds. Only a sample of Swift Creek Complicated Stamped sherds are shown here.



The early variety Swift Creek vessel form is typically somewhat bell-shaped—that is rounded conical shaped bowls and jars with flaring rims. Early variety rims are generally tapered to a thin edge and may be plain, scalloped or notched. Vessel bases may be plain or have small tetrapodal supports. Stamped vessels have the impressions over the entire exterior vessel surface. That treatment extends to Crooked River Complicated Stamped, St. Andrews Complicated Stamped, Gulf Check Stamped and so on. The bull's eye and laddered snowshoe forms are typical elements of more complex designs. I was surprised when one of the stamps extrapolated to a flower pattern.





The middle variety lacks tetrapods and the bases are more rounded and flattened. Rims are generally plain and of thickness equal to that of the vessel side walls. The lower third of the vessel is generally undecorated.

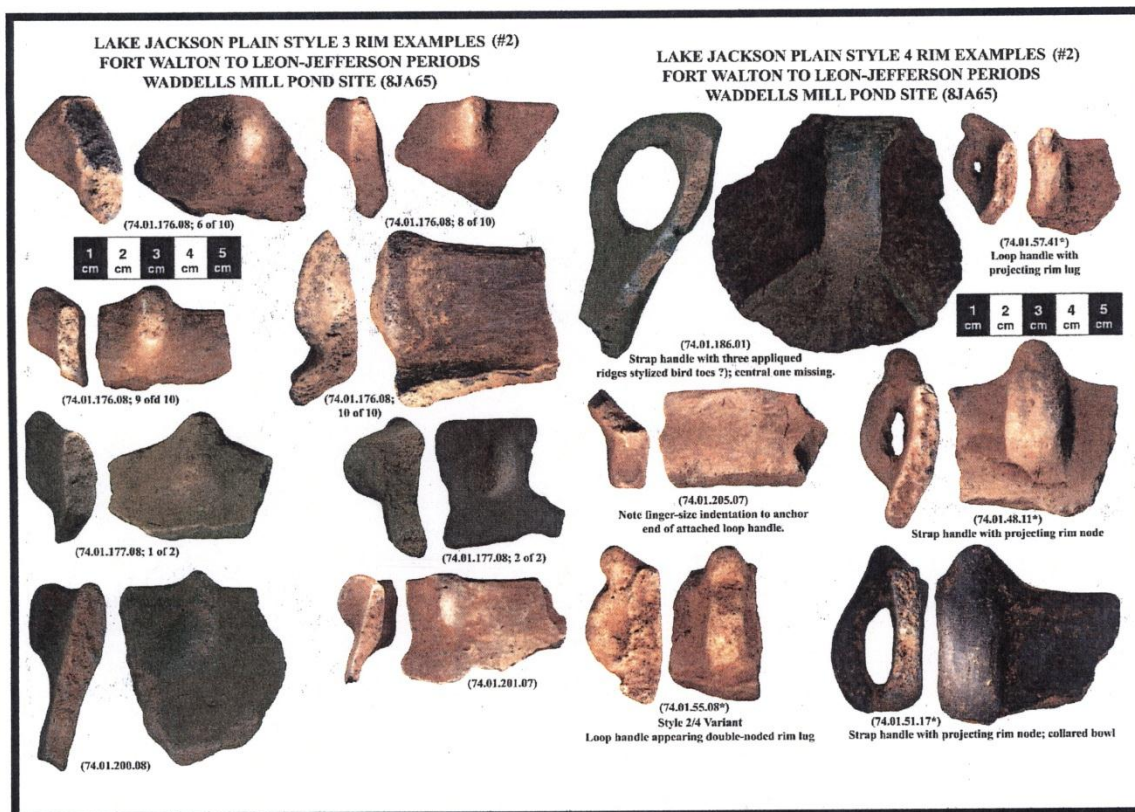
Late Swift Creek (early Weeden Island period) forms generally are simple and globular bowls and larger cooking vessels. The stamped motif is generally restricted to the area between the vessel shoulder and defined rim area. Appliquéd rim bands and oblique horizontally incised near rim lines creating a similar appearance are the norm. Early stamping is more finely executed and by late times smearing of the simplified decorative motif is not uncommon.

There is a lot of ongoing research on the presumed symbolism of the designs and on their distribution as exchange items. I will not discuss that issue here, but will address it in our report.

By far the majority of the ceramic sherds are from Fort Walton vessels. It is unfortunate that site looting has disturbed key areas of the Fort Walton occupation. Fort Walton ceramic vessels made at the site have a fine sand-sand (grain size) temper, with the addition of grainy to coarse (2 mm) limestone inclusions frequently noted. Very fine



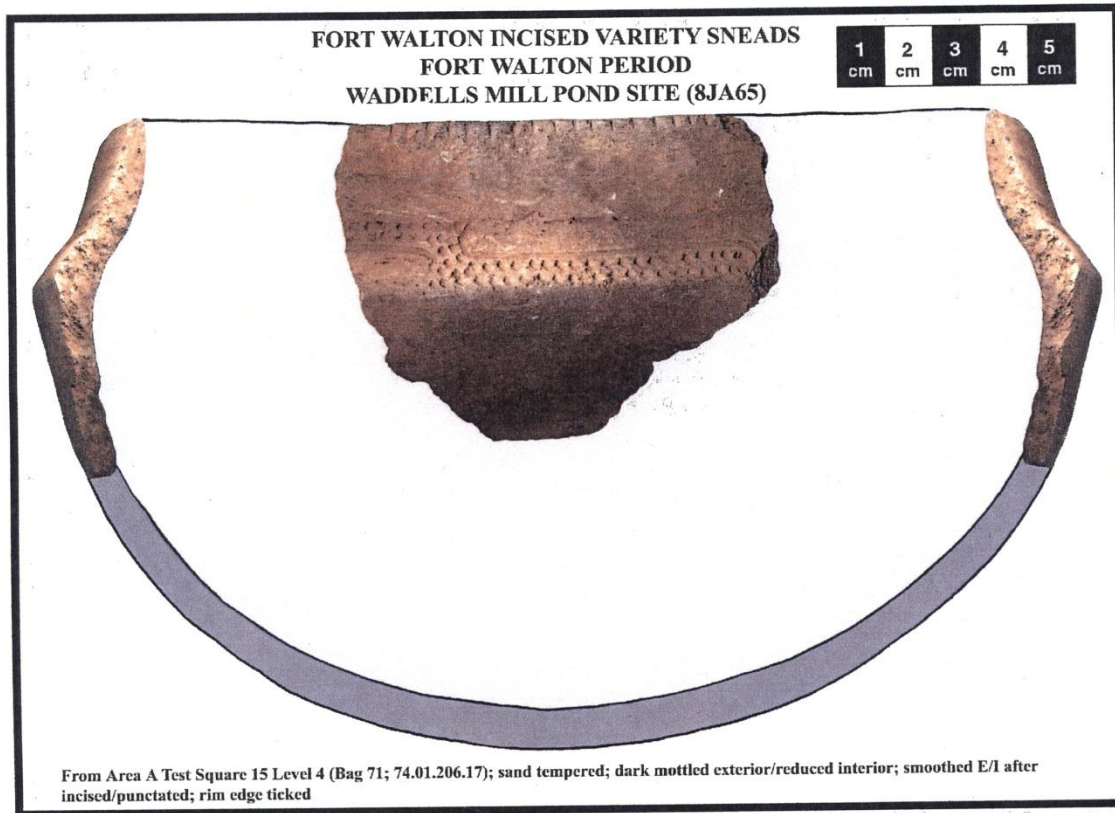
sandy clay vessels have the same temper and appearance as similar vessels originating in the St. Andrews Bay and Choctawhatchee Bay area. The shell tempered vessels are of the Pensacola series and perhaps include some Moundville associated material. The gritty sand material likely comes from the Lower Apalachicola River basin, while the micaceous clay probably comes from the Upper Apalachicola-Chattahoochee River area. I found few ceramic grog tempered Apalachee Fort Walton and Leon-Jefferson or Lamar series sherds.



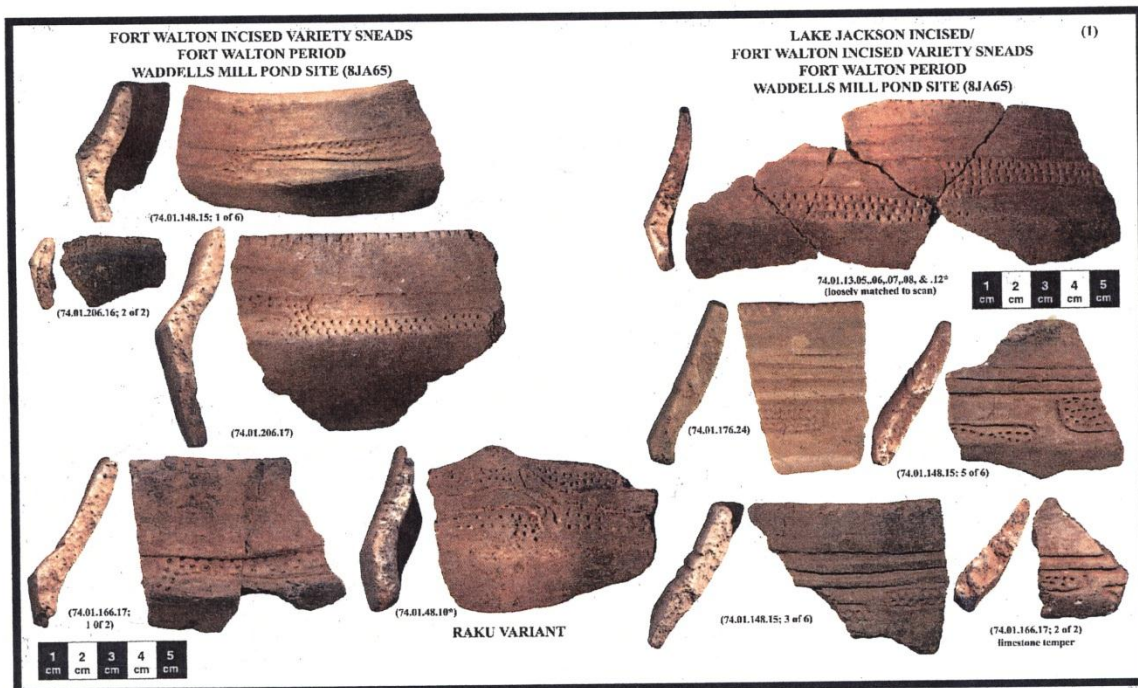
Roughly half of the vessels, when rim sherds are considered, are plain bowls and large plain cooking pots with collared rims. The bowls can be identified as Lake Jackson Plain and Pinellas Plain, while the cooking pots are almost exclusively Lake Jackson Plain. The seven rim styles described by Calvin Jones are represented. Lake Jackson Incised vessels are also well represented. Cool Branch Incised varieties and other Fort Walton and Pensacola series incised ware are of note.

Our understanding of Middle Mississippian Fort Walton and related Pensacola, Moundville, and Safety Harbor ceramic manufacture and decorative motifs is expanding. Some have suggested use of a type variety system from which they, perhaps prematurely, drew certain conclusions.





As a test of one such proposal, I identified the Fort Walton age material using John Scarry's typology. I found a large amount of material that could not be confidently identified in that typology. In my remaining time, I will focus of Scarry's Fort Walton Incised varieties to illustrate the problem.





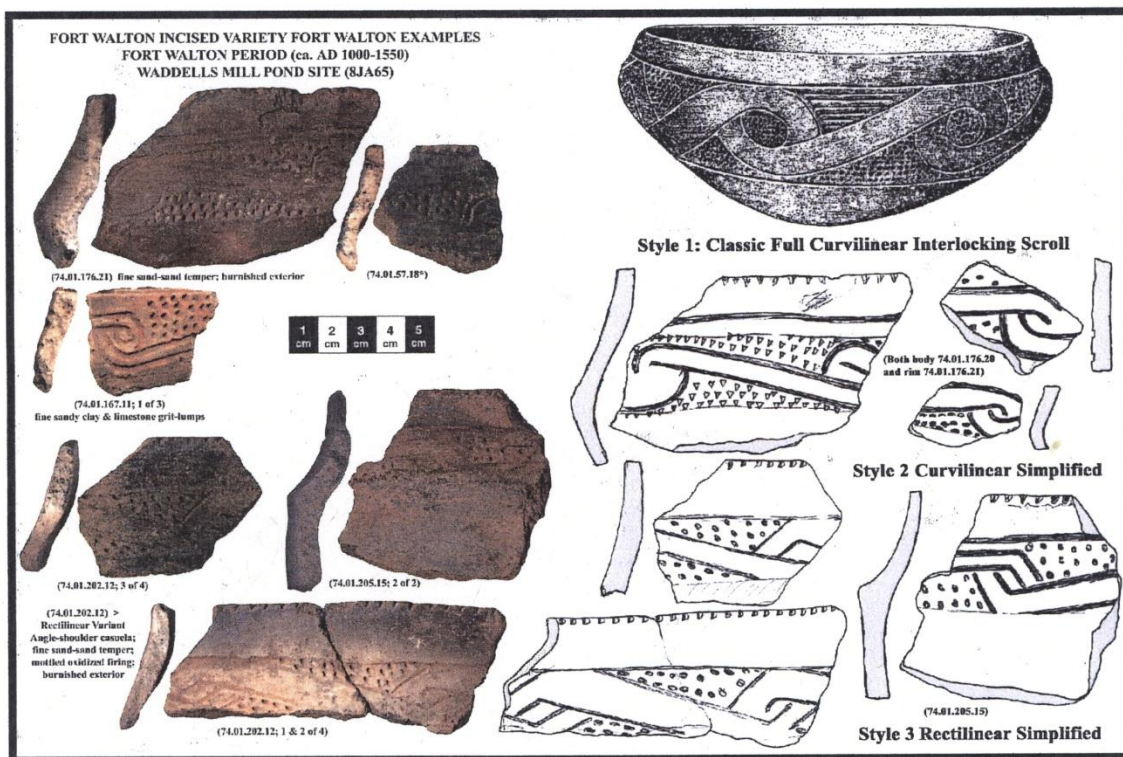
This includes combinations that he did not describe, such as horizontally incised rims, which by themselves would be identified as Lake Jackson Incised, linked to vessel bodies with Fort Walton Incised varieties and Cool Branch Incised varieties. The ones shown here are Fort Walton Incised variety Sneads and the undescribed combination of Lake Jackson Incised over Fort Walton Incised variety Sneads.

Also of note are several examples of what has been called “raku” ware, a sloppily made ware, including the Fort Walton Incised variety Sneads example shown here (center bottom).

In their Cemochechobee report, Schnell et al. (1981:190-191) note:

There are several possible interpretations for such vessels, including learning by imitation (Knight 1978:69). On the other hand, several “raku” vessels found in ritual context in the mortuary mound suggest that such vessels were manufactured (by male priests?) for specific ritual uses. Little attention was paid to form or fineness of execution on these vessels, and they were poorly fired.

An example of sympathetic magic in which such vessels likely were used is noted in John Hann’s Apalachee translations. Returning from a buffalo hunt, the Spanish, Apalachee and their Chacato guide “encountered four shells placed in a clearing along the trail together with some pots of boiled herbs. ... the Chacato informed them that it was a charm designed to prevent their finding their way back to their own land so that they would die of hunger on the trail (Fernandez de Florencia 1678)” (Hann 1988:186-187). I believe that the poorly fired, sandy clay tempered “raku ware” at Waddells Mill Pond served a similar ceremonial purpose.









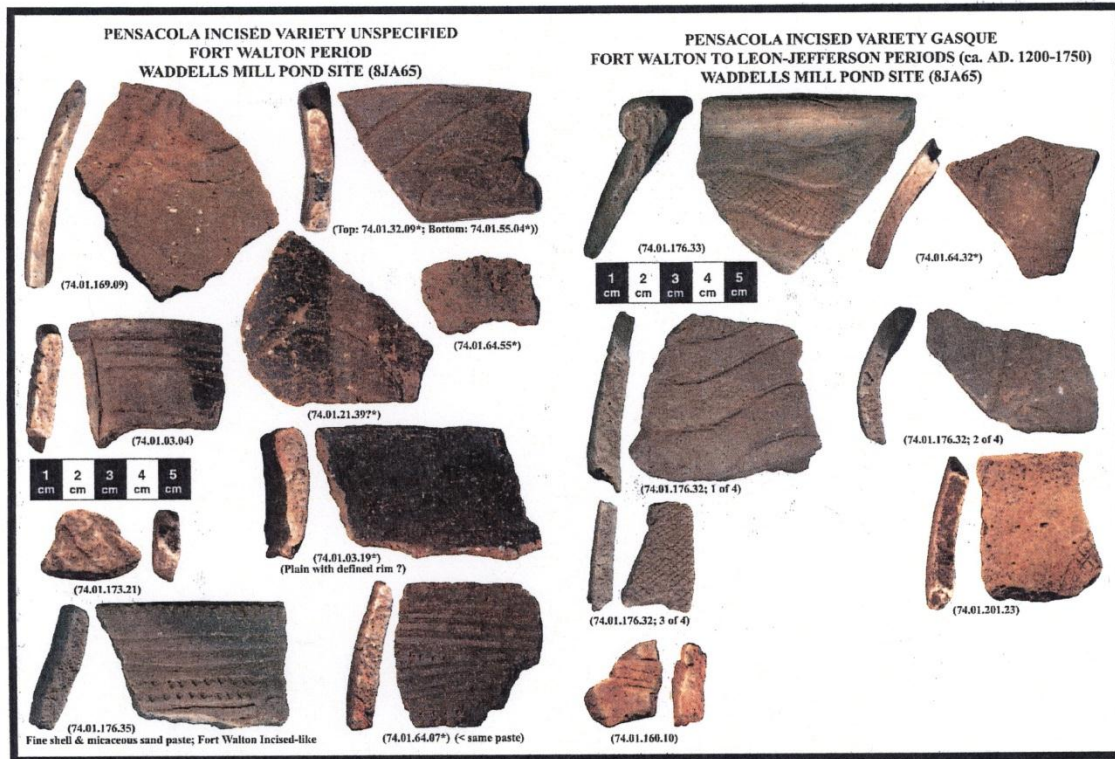
There also seems to be a transition in the ceramic group identified as Fort Walton Incised variety Fort Walton. The variety begins as a well executed curvilinear interlocking scroll motif with zoned punctations that developed directly out of similarly decorated earlier Northwest Florida coastal Weeden Island Incised examples. I refer to these as Style 1, the classic full curvilinear interlocking scroll variant described by Willey (1949) as the type example. However, at Waddells Mill Pond, while other Fort Walton incised/punctated ware occurs in its classic form, the variety Fort Walton occurs in two more simplified modes. I refer to these as Style 2 curvilinear simplified and Style 3 rectilinear simplified. I am still in the process of correlating provenience data to determine if the transition is chronological or has some other interpretation.



Fort Walton Incised variety Choctawhatchee occurs as both exchange or war booty ware and as locally manufactured ware. The locally manufactured copies are generally less well executed and, of course, the ceramic paste is local. It should also be noted, that unlike Vernon Knight, I do not include "practice ware" in the category "raku" ware.

The better executed copy ware made from local ceramic paste may be the result of Chisca or other area people living at the Chacato Waddells Mill Pond site village, or they may have been made by foreign "brides" brought to the site as war booty by the Chacato warriors. The Chacato were noted for their aggression and frequent raids on surrounding people. The palisade around their village was likely a defense against retaliating attacks.





The final examples shown are from the shell-tempered Pensacola series. The Chacato historically had links with the Chisca around Choctawhatchee Bay and reportedly roamed as far as Pensacola Bay. Other shell-tempered ware, a distinct minority, appears to be derived from the Moundville area.

In conclusion, Calvin's work at the Waddells Mills Pond site has provided a wealth of cultural data. Our understanding of prehistoric-historic exchange networks in Northwest Florida is being furthered by the analysis of this material. It is also clear that Gardner was mistaken when he concluded that the Spanish mission of San Carlos was located at this site; no Spanish material has been found there. However, Spanish artifacts have been found at the JA160 40-acre cave and rock shelter complex overlooking Spring Branch about a mile Northwest of Waddells on Milton Plantation (Jones and Tesar 1998).