

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF
2,317 ACRES IN CHRISTIAN COUNTY, KENTUCKY

By

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For:
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ABSTRACT

Dr. Jack M. Schock conducted an archaeological overview of 2,317 acres in Christian County, Kentucky in May 2004. This overview was requested by Mr. G. Michael Baker, Director of the Economic Development Council in Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

The above listed overview identified one National Register caliber house, one historic cemetery containing a minimum of 18 graves, one significant prehistoric site and three minor prehistoric sites. There is also evidence of a few additional minor prehistoric sites in the mentioned acreage area. However; overall there is a very low number of archaeological sites in this project and most of them are going to be insignificant.

This report is strictly an overview and is not suitable for submission to the Kentucky Heritage Council in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Procedures

The basic procedure for conducting this archaeological overview was to investigate the project area for (1) standing building with historic potential, and (2) to look for locations with the potential for prehistoric sites. There are no streams within or near this project which greatly reduced the potential for prehistoric sites. Thus; the main potential for said sites would be on ridges adjacent to sinkholes which contain water or which have held water in the past. Most sinkholes in this project are dry including some that are quite large and deep. Most of this project is in grass or planted in wheat.

Prehistoric Sites

The main locations with adequate ground visibility were corn fields, three of which either had deep sinkholes or were adjacent to sinkholes currently holding water. The first and largest cornfield is located at the west end of the tract. There are two large deep, but dry sinkholes present. The ridge crests above these sinkholes were walked but no prehistoric chert flakes were found. Thus; this particular cornfield has no archaeological sites present.

The second area examined has a sinkhole pond which contains water. A small rural house is present west of the pond as well as cornfields to the northwest and south of the pond. Three prehistoric sites were found. This investigation was limited to determining whether sites were present or not and did not include the collection of any artifacts,

Site 1 did produce at least two worked artifacts although neither were diagnostic. There is also a light scatter of lithic debris present.

Site 2 has a light scatter of artifacts extending into a cornfield but most of the site is in grass or woods.

Site 3 is located on a knoll. A very light scatter of chert flakes is present but this site definitely has no archaeological potential.

The third area examined is a cornfield located at the east end of the proposed project. Site 4 is situated on a knoll and a southwest extending lower ridge located in a cornfield at the east end of the project. Two deep sinkholes which hold water are present west of this site area. Three Archaic points and several worked artifact fragments, along with numerous flakes were seen on this site. This is the only prehistoric site found which would definitely warrant Phase II testing or preservation.

Figure 2 shows other locations in the proposed project which have the potential for prehistoric sites based on the presence of sinkhole ponds.

Historic Sites

House # 1 - The only definite historic structure (House 1) with National Register potential is near the center of the project. This is a large 2 story brick house dating from the mid 1800's. Mr. Baker previously pointed out this home to the investigator. If archaeological work was conducted at this site, it would include checking for early out building locations associated with this home.

House # 2 - There is a second 2 story frame house over 2,000 feet east-southeast of house 1. This is an older structure of indeterminate age which might warrant further work.

If a detailed archaeological survey was involved in all or part of the project, other former house locations would also be assigned archaeological site numbers. However; there is the possibility that none of the other locations might warrant Phase II archaeological work.

Cemetery

There is a historic cemetery to the west of House 1. The cemetery is fenced off with a wrought iron fence and gate. A minimum of 18 graves are present. Most of the tombstones are of the Garrott Family and the majority of the deceased were buried in the late 1800's. The earliest death date observed was Issac Garrett, born July 7, 1792 and died August 16, 1868. The latest death dates were those of Mary and Edmund Garrott who died in 1924 and 1925 respectively. Other last names observed include Martha Jackson 1821-1874 and Addie R. Ragsdale 1829-1878.

Summary

If a detailed archaeological and historical investigation were to be conducted on this property, it is assured that further historical documentation would be deemed necessary on House # 1 and existing cemetery. Archaeological testing would also be required on the house location.

The only prehistoric site found warranting additional work is site # 4. However; site 4 will likely be in a buffer area and will be preserved rather than needing Phase II work.

The three other prehistoric sites are also likely to be in buffer zones. Other possible site locations are basically along the outer edges of this project.

This proposed project area has a very low density of archaeological sites and many of the individual parcels of ground will yield no sites.

VITA

The investigator's vita is on file at both the Kentucky Heritage Council and the Office of the State Archaeology.

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