

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY-NOMINATION FORM**

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Etowah
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Northbank of Etowah River about 3 miles SW of Cartersville
CITY, TOWN
Cartersville
STATE
Georgia

VICINITY OF
 VICINITY OF
Seventh

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Seventh

CODE
13

COUNTY
Bartow

CODE
015

2 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY - major

NAME
State of Georgia - Department of Natural Resources
STREET & NUMBER
270 Washington Street Room 707-B
CITY, TOWN
Atlanta

(Chief Historic Sites operations currently: Mr. Alson Waylor)

VICINITY OF
Georgia

STATE
Georgia

30334

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Bartow County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
Cartersville
STATE
Georgia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Georgia State Archeological Survey
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Department of Anthropology, University of Georgia
CITY, TOWN
Athens, Georgia

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

STATE
Georgia

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Etowah is located in a State Park near Cartersville, Georgia, on the north bank of the Etowah at the point of the river's emergence from the Piedmont province where it begins flowing toward the west across the southern end of the Great Valley section of the Ridge and Valley Province. This location is also at the point where the Etowah Valley widens to permit the development of a considerable floodplain area and alluvial soils necessary for cultivation. The site is thus on the boundary between two major physiographic provinces (Piedmont Province and Great Valley Section)--an ideal location for the exploitation of various resources.

Etowah consists of three large platform mounds, two plaza areas, associated village debris, and a surrounding ditch attached to large borrow pits. Early reports indicate that there were at least four other small mound structures within the enclosed area; but these have been destroyed by cultivation and are now only barely visible at the surface, if at all. Refer to the accompanying Map B for a clarification of the features evident on the site in the late 1920's.

Mound A, the largest at the site, is a flat-topped mound which covers several acres, measures about 330 by 380 feet at its base, and rises to a height of about 50 to 60 or 65 feet. A clay ramp stepped with logs leads up its eastern side to the mound top. The northwest corner of Mound A is lower than the eastern half; the southwest corner is even lower than the northwest corner. There are thus different levels of Mound A. These levels may have formed an alternative access route to the mound top. Mound B, a rectangular truncated pyramid, is slightly south and slightly east of the dominant Mound A. Mound C, also flat-topped, is situated slightly southwest of Mound B. Early reports indicate that Mound C had a ramp facing east. One of the plaza areas is situated between Mounds B and C and south of Mound A, and another is to the east of Mound A.

For nearly a hundred years, excavations have been conducted at Etowah. Sometime between 1883 and 1885, John P. Rogan, under the direction of Cyrus Thomas of the Bureau of American Ethnology, conducted excavations of Mound C and tested Mound B and several of the other small mounds (not now visible) on the site. Then, in 1925, 1926, and 1927, Warren K. Moorehead of the Phillips Academy at Andover, Massachusetts conducted intensive excavations of Mound C. Moorehead also tested Mound B and investigated small portions of the village area. Sometime between 1938, and 1941, Robert Wauchope of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the University of Georgia sunk several trenches near the moat on the west side of the concentration of village debris. In 1952 and 1953, William Sears of the Georgia Historical Commission conducted excavations in the village area and in the vicinity of Mounds B and C. Lewis Larson of the Georgia Historical Commission investigated Mound C in 1954; and in the same year, Roger Kelly of the University of Georgia excavated in

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES - 1200 or 1350 to 1600 or 1650?? BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Etowah, located near Cartersville, Georgia, is a Mississippian center serving numerous smaller contemporary village sites in the Etowah Valley and consisting of three large platform mounds, a village area, and an encircling ditch or moat which was originally paralleled by a palisade. Overlooking the Etowah River, the site is important as an expression of the eastern expansion of Mississippian culture and of the forms Mississippian culture took as a result of interaction with other Southeastern cultural traditions (e.g. Gulf Coast Tradition). Even more significant is the vast quantity of unusual and elaborate ceremonial material which the site has yielded. Many of these objects exhibit design elements characteristic of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex, also known as the Southern Cult, which was evident in the Southeast during Late Mississippian times. Etowah stands as one of three major sites in the country to provide extensive evidence for this complex.

Archeologists have discerned three general phases of occupation at Etowah: Etowah, Wilbanks, and Lamar. The exact date of the initial occupation of the site is unclear as is the initial period of mound construction; and in fact, the dates of the various phases have been a subject of controversy. Larson, the most recent excavator at the site, believes that the Etowah phase dates from about 1350 - 1450, Wilbanks from about 1450 - 1550, and Lamar from post-1540, although he readily points out that other archeologists would take issue with his feelings concerning the lateness of these dates (Larson, personal communication). Dates as early as 1000 A.D. and 1200 A.D. have been proposed for the beginnings of occupation at the site (e.g. Willey, 1966). As mentioned in the preceding description (No. 7), some scatterings of Woodland material have been noted, but no Woodland living floor has been discerned. Woodland sites do exist in other areas of the Etowah Valley, and it is thus no surprise that some Woodland artifacts were recovered.

Several of the reports on Etowah (e.g. Caldwell, 1954) imply that the Etowah phase is composed of several sub-phases (Etowah I, II, III, and IV) on the basis of subtle changes in pottery types. Larson, however, doubts the existence of Etowah I and believes that Etowah IV is indistinguishable from the Wilbanks phase (personal communication, 1977). Larson's basic interpretation from his excavations is that there is only one Etowah phase.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(Attached)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approximately 170 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A			
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

B			
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Latitudes/Long - UTM not available on maps

A 34° 7' 42"/84° 48' 10"
 C 34° 7' 16"/84° 48' 42"

B 34° 7' 34"/84° 48' 11"
 D 34° 7' 42"/84° 48' 42"

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Francine Weiss, Archeologist, Landmark Review Project

ORGANIZATION

NPS HSS

DATE

visited:

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW

TELEPHONE

202-523-5465

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9/8/83

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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Mound B and in the plaza area on the west side of Mound B. In 1955, 1956, 1957, and 1958, Larson, still with the Georgia Historical Commission, continued his work on Mound C. In 1961, Larson, then affiliated with Georgia State University, again excavated in Mound C. In 1962, he examined the village area near the river east of Mound A and the moat and palisade. His investigations in the village area east of Mound A continued in 1964 and 1965 while he was still with Georgia State University and in 1972 and 1973 after he had become affiliated with West Georgia College.

The amount of information gleaned from these excavations could fill volumes. Unfortunately, there are no published accounts of some of these investigations, especially those conducted over the last 20 years, although there are a few preliminary reports and short interpretive publications. The following discussion will be based upon the available published material.

As indicated by the foregoing history of work at the site, most of the excavation prior to 1961 concentrated upon an examination of Mound C, a platform mound which measured about 150 feet square at its base and 60 feet at its summit and rose to a height of about 18 feet above the surrounding area. The structure probably served as a temple mound and was subject to periodic rebuilding. Five stages of mound construction consisting of successive clay mantles were discerned. The area on which the mound was built yielded evidence for four successive post structures which, because of their large size (one was 111 by 40 feet, another 40 by 28 feet), are thought to have been public buildings of some sort. After each stage of mound construction, a wall of posts was built to encircle the mound. Each of the successive summits probably supported a building. Throughout the years, Mound C has probably yielded over 350 burials.

The last level of Mound C construction contains Wilbanks ceramics and is thus considered a manifestation of the Wilbanks phase. There were about 100 burials unearthed from the perimeter of the mound base inside of the encircling palisade. These burials were generally extended in rectangular pits or in more elaborate log tombs and are thought to coincide in date with the final Wilbanks phase of mound construction. The graves have yielded radiocarbon dates spanning a range from 950 to 1450 A.D. which seem a bit early for the Wilbanks period which is thought to date to about 1500 A.D. In any event, the graves have yielded a rich variety of exotic and finely crafted artifacts. Many of the grave goods were ornaments which were parts of elaborate costumes. These excavated ornamental articles include: ear ornaments (some of wood covered with copper), Columella pendants and necklaces, engraved shell gorgets, wooden beads with sheet copper, chokers and bands worn on arms and legs, headdresses and hair ornaments, and cut-outs of copper and mica. Other artifacts include: rattles in disc or zoomorphic forms made from wood covered with

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copper and containing shell gravels, copper celts, stone celts, monolithic axes, long chipped flint blades, shell bowls or cups--generally of Busycon, and stone paint palettes along with such pigments as ochre, kaolin, graphite, and galena. Pottery was rarely included with the graves, but when it was, it was generally classified as Wilbanks Complicated Stamped ware. The open bowl form was usual although some bottle forms were present. Two negative-painted bottles, an embossed black ware bottle and a gourd effigy bottle with both negative and positive painting have also been recovered. Two statues of Georgia marble--one representing a man, the other a woman--each of which stands about two feet in height and weighs nearly 100 pounds, have been unearthed in association with the dismembered bodies of three individuals in a log tomb. These statues are among the most spectacular of the finds from the site. Many of the artifacts contain decorative designs which are characteristic of the Southeastern ceremonial complex which will be further described in the following Statement of Significance (No. 8).

The earlier levels of Mound C have not been thoroughly analyzed in the literature, and it is unclear when construction of the mound was begun. In all probability, at least some of the stages of construction date to the Etowah phases which preceded the Wilbanks phase. It was originally assumed that the Southeastern ceremonial complex dated to the Etowah phases, but Larson's excavations indicate that these objects were found in the Wilbanks. It is possible that the Etowah phases will yield early examples of the complex which climaxed in the Wilbanks phase at the site.

Limited published data is available on the excavations conducted in Mound B and in the plaza area between Mounds B and C (Kelly, 1956; Kelly and Larson, 1957). The latest occupation in the plaza dates to the Lamar period. There are also intrusive Lamar pits and burials within Mound B. It is possible that the final stage of construction of Mound B dates to the Wilbanks phase, that is, to the same period as the final level of Mound C. The date of the first phase of Mound B construction is also not definitely known and probably falls within the Etowah phase. Underlying the protohistoric Lamar level on the eastern edge of the plaza just west of Mound B is an accumulation of debris dating to the Wilbanks phase. The post holes of some rectangular Wilbanks phase houses with depressed interior floors have been discerned. In this area, beneath Wilbanks materials, large saucer-shaped depressions filled with refuse have been found. The refuse (e.g. Etowah Plain, Etowah Complicated Stamped, Hiwassee Red on Buff wares) probably dates to the Etowah phases. A few post holes in the vicinity of these depressions indicate that they were associated with structures. Kelly and Larson (1957) suggest that these areas were used for community cooking. Overlying these possible cooking areas, post holes from Etowah phase houses were found. Other post holes and a wall trench may be the remains of a palisade enclosing a ceremonial ground in the plaza. The Etowah, Wilbanks, and Lamar phases will be further discussed in the Statement of Significance.

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Other excavations at the site have yielded evidence of post molds of the palisade which paralleled the ditch or moat encircling the village and mounds. The palisade probably had rectangular bastions, and the moat was probably 9 to 10 feet deep with flat sides and bottom. Its base was about 25 feet wide and its top about 31 feet in width. Published accounts relating to excavations in the area east of Mound A are not available, but Larson (1971) does mention that the residential area of the site yielded burials without the elaborate accompanying grave goods found with individuals interred in or near the mound. These village areas in general contain numerous features and everyday artifacts relating to the various phases of occupation at the site. Houses of the Wilbanks and Lamar phases have been discerned as has a clay plaza area, raised about 8 inches above the surrounding terrain, just east of Mound A. Some of the Lamar houses intruded into this plaza. There is also evidence of occasional scatterings of Woodland occupation (probably about 800 A.D.), but no Woodland living floors have been discerned.

The animal remains from the site have been analyzed by Parmalee and van der Schalie (1960). They found that deer was the most common animal hunted judging from the amount of deer bone excavated. Turkey was the most important bird, and turtle remains were also relatively frequently encountered. The most common fish remains were of the freshwater drum while freshwater mollusks were also an important food item. Large marine whelks and clams were used to manufacture implements and ornaments, and sharks' teeth, also imported into the area, were probably ornamental in nature. Other animals hunted included such species are: bear, beaver, opossum, rabbit, squirrel, and raccoon. The recovery of bones from the Ivory-billed woodpecker is interesting, for this species occasionally appears in shell carvings from the site.

Undoubtedly, agriculture and the gathering of plant remains were important to the subsistence of the inhabitants of the site. Certainly, agriculture would be necessary to support the population of a center as large as Etowah. The soil type on which the site is located is called Huntington fine sandy loam. It is naturally fertile, with a highly friable texture and is especially desirable for corn. Although it is subject to overflow, this soil type is well-drained between inundations. Thus, the area surrounding Etowah would have been ideal for cultivation using the methods of the Mississippian farmers.

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Condition

The site, currently in good condition, is now owned by the State. An attempt has been made to restore the mounds to their original rectangular, flat-topped, truncated pyramidal shapes. Wooden steps leading to the mound tops have been built to minimize destruction to the sides of the mounds by visitors. For the most part, the vegetal cover is grass, but there are a few trees within landmark boundaries, particularly along the river bank and on Mound A. There were some erosional gullies noted along the sides of the reconstructed Mound C (Refer to photo), which did not have a solid grass covering at the time of the 1975 National Park Service visit. In general, however, the State is concerned about the site and its preservation. The ditch and borrow pits surrounding the site were partially filled with water. A bridge leads over this moat from the State-owned museum which houses collections from the site, to the mound and village area. This small museum, while not a contributing factor to the national significance of the property which is based on the site's intrinsic archeological value, nevertheless makes a worthwhile contribution to the interpretive aspects of the site.

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The Etowah phase is basically characterized by Etowah Plain and Etowah Complicated Stamped pottery types. The decorations on the complicated stamped ware include line-block, diamond, and filfot cross motifs rather than the curvilinear designs of the later periods.

Wilbanks Complicated Stamped and Wilbanks Plain sherds characterize the Wilbanks phase. These wares are thick, course and grit-tempered and readily distinguishable from the Etowah types. There is some degree of over-stamping; and the design elements are curvilinear and include figure 8's, concentric circles, and concentric figure 9's.

The Lamar Plain and Lamar Complicated Stamped wares of the succeeding Lamar phase are similar to the Wilbanks phase. Lamar Plain and Wilbanks Plain are especially difficult to differentiate out of context. The sherds are thick, course, and grit-tempered; and the decoration is heavily over-stamped.

It is interesting to note that there is a contrast between the Etowah and Wilbanks pottery sequence and that there is a greater marked continuity between Wilbanks and Lamar ceramics. The excellent embellished pottery of Etowah times with its sharply defined patterns is thinner and stronger than the succeeding massive, overstamped types of Wilbanks. Despite what appears to be deterioration in ceramic art during Wilbanks time, however, the use of the platform mounds continues. In fact, as has been pointed out in the preceding section (No. 7), the elaborate ritualistic materials of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex from Mound C appear to date to the Wilbanks phase, although there may have been some from previous periods.

The Lamar ceramics are similar to the Wilbanks. During the Lamar phase at Etowah, the usage of various areas at the site changed. Mound B contains intrusive elements as does the plaza east of Mound A. Mound C, on the other hand, appears to lack the intruding Lamar materials, and it has been suggested (Kelly and Larson, 1957) that the sacredness of this structure was still recognized by the Lamar period inhabitants of the site. It is possible that the builders of the mounds at Etowah were related ancestrally in some way to the Lamar who, in turn, are generally considered the late prehistoric/protohistoric/early historic Creek. Indeed, attempts have been made to trace evidence for the roots of modern Creek ceremonies (e.g. Busk or Green Corn Ceremony) back to the time of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex (Howard, 1968).

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The Southeastern Ceremonial Complex is characterized by a variety of decorative motifs: cross, sun circle; bi-lobed arrow; forked eye; death symbols (skull, femur, radius and ulna, and skeletal hand); naturalized or anthropomorphized eagle; naturalistic woodpecker; winged, plumed, horned, and/or anthropomorphized rattlesnake; naturalistic cat; and antlered figures. These decorative elements are generally associated with certain artifacts such as: circular shell gorgets, mask gorgets, columella pendants, embossed copper plates, sheet copper hair ornaments, ear spools, celts, monolithic axes, batons or maces, effigy pipes, notched stone disks, discoidal stones, conch shell bowls, ceremonial flints, and bottles (painted red or black, negative painted, appliqued, engraved, bipartite, tripartite).

The Southeastern Ceremonial Complex, sometimes called the Southern Cult, is considered the trappings of a prehistoric religious movement which swept across the Southeast without paying attention to cultural boundaries and which imposed a sort of religious unity on the entire region. It is unclear whether or not the complex actually represented a cult as it is strictly defined, but it certainly exhibited shared elements which took hold over a wide geographic area. The origin of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex has been the subject of a great deal of controversy. The God-animal representations appear to indicate some Mesoamerican affiliation. These connections seem logical given the similarities between certain aspects of Mississippian culture such as platform mounds with Mesoamerican cultural manifestations. Nevertheless, as Willey (1966) points out, there are some archeologists who would argue that Mississippian and the Southern Cult manifestations resulted from the development of Southeastern expressions of widespread Native American mythological concepts rather than from diffusion from Mexico.

Etowah should be viewed in relation to its surroundings. It was the largest village in the Etowah Valley which contains numerous smaller contemporary sites. As such, it was probably the main ceremonial center serving the larger community. It should be pointed out that the entire valley is incorporated into a National Register district nomination of State significance (Etowah Valley District). As mentioned in the description, the site is situated at the intersection of two physiographic zones and thus its inhabitants had access to a variety of resources. Its location near a good supply of Huntington fine sandy loam is not surprising, for this soil type is well-suited for aboriginal cultivation. In addition to agriculture, the subsistence activities of the site's inhabitants included hunting, especially deer and turkey; gathering nuts, fruits, and roots; and obtaining fish and mussels from the river.

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It has been suggested (Larson, 1972 b) that warfare played an important role in Mississippian society as indicated by the palisades surrounding so many of the important villages, including Etowah. According to Larson, this warfare may have resulted from competition, for the resources, particularly agricultural land, in the vicinity of the village.

There were numerous materials of exotic origin recovered from the site: e.g. flint--probably from the Tennessee area, copper from North Carolina, pottery from the Mississippi Valley, and marine shells from Florida. These exotic articles are generally associated with the ritualistic paraphernalia and appear to have been parts of ritual costumes. It is interesting to note the high quality of craftsmanship and the uniformity of style which appear to indicate that specialists made these ritualistic artifacts. Most of the ceremonial objects were found in association with the burials of Mound C, and it seems logical to assume that the individuals in Mound C were representative of the highest social class at the site. The fact that elaborate grave goods were not found with burials in the village area confirms this assumption. It is thought that a position in the high social class was inherited (Larson, 1972 a). Although variation in age and sex does exist among the buried individuals, children wear the same costumes as adults indicating the probability that the right to the social position is based on birth rather than on acts performed during a lifetime. Sear (1968) has inferred that the organization of the society was based on religion and ceremonialism. Larson (1971) believes that the ritualism is closely linked to the economic system. The exotic raw materials and artifacts, some of which may have been crafted, provide evidence for regional exchange systems which, according to Larson (1971), may be one of the reasons for the spread of the Southern Cult. In keeping with this idea, Larson (1971) has postulated that the burials in Mound C represent the individuals of a descent group which controlled the trade, consumption, and redistribution of the exotic and specialized raw materials and crafted artifacts which served as expressions and validation of their social position.

Numerous questions remain unanswered about Etowah, and much of the site remains unexcavated. Only Mound C has been extensively examined. Further information concerning the settlement pattern of the site and its relationship to other sites in the Etowah Valley and in other parts of the Southeast need additional clarification. Excavations and analyses at Etowah may shed additional light on trade relationships, the nature of the Southern Cult, and the reasons for the cult's rise and decline. More specifically, the dating, the chronological sequence and intrasite patterning at Etowah are not totally understood and should be investigated further.

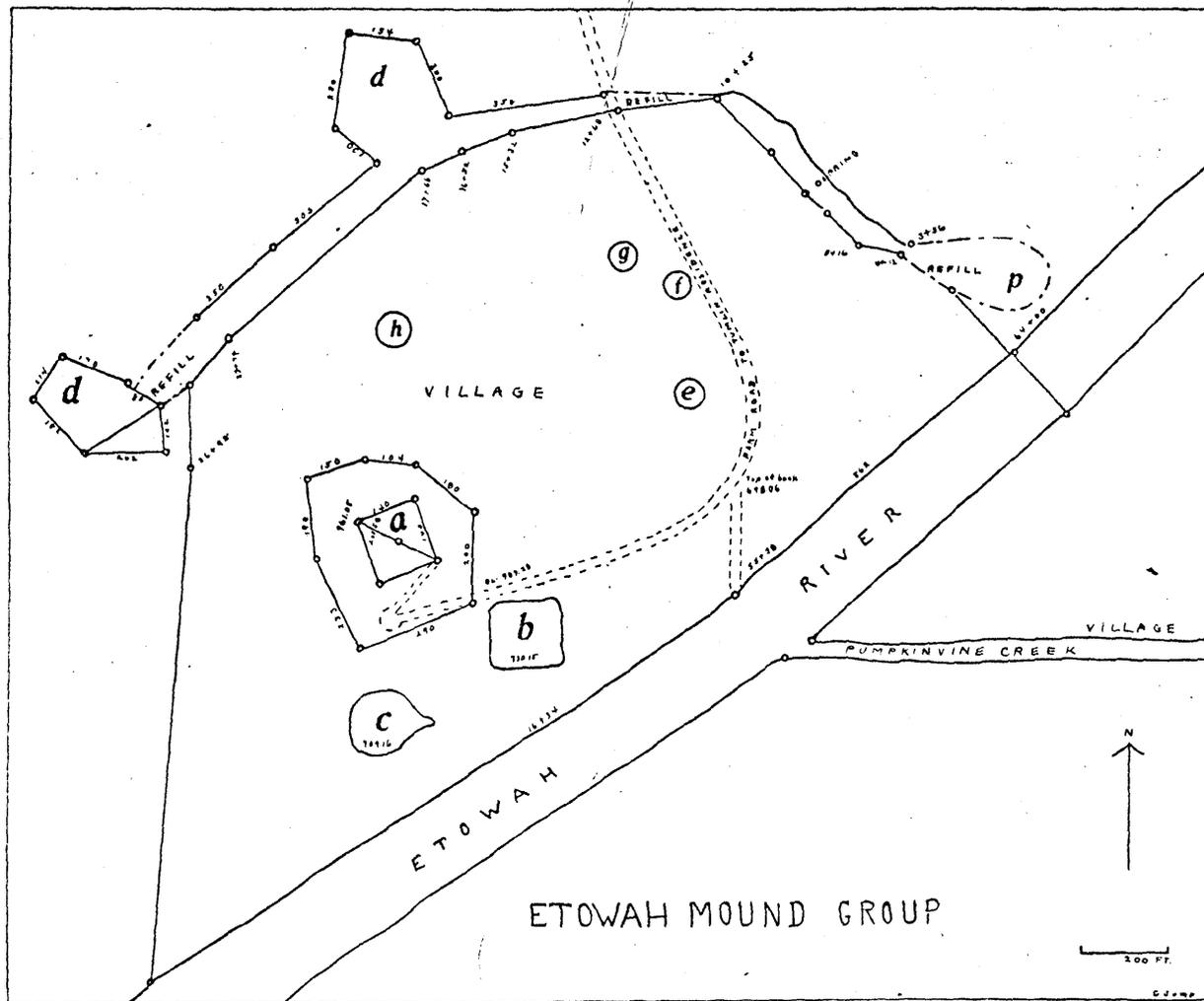


Figure 36. Ground plan of Etowah mound group and village site.

Map B
 From: Moorehead (1932b).