



1979

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DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS NO. 36

1979

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PULLMAN HEALTH CLINIC PROPERTY,
VILLAGE OF PULLMAN, ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

William M. Cremin

PURPOSE OF INVESTIGATION:

The project was initiated upon receipt of a contract (dated 15 May 79) signed by Mr. Robert Q. Hendershott, Administrator, Pullman Health Clinic. Our objective was to determine whether existing plans to construct a health facility would impact cultural resources.

PROJECT PERSONNEL:

Principal Investigator - Dr. William M. Cremin, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, WMU

Field Assistants - William Rutter, M.A. Candidate in Anthropology, WMU

-Thomas Berres, Graduate Student in Anthropology, WMU

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY EVALUATED:

The area under consideration consists of 1.23 ha (3.03 acres) situated at the intersection of 55th and 109th streets in Pullman, Michigan. The property lies in the NW 1/4, NW 1/4, SE 1/4 of Section 9, Lee Township, Allegan County, Michigan. Examination of the relevant topographic, soil and geologic maps indicates that the location in question is situated at an elevation of approximately 199.5 m (665 ft) above sea level. The soil may be described as coarsely textured sand to sandy loam, reflecting the presence in this area of former glacial lake beds. Assigned to the Oakville-Oshtemo Association, the soil found on this parcel is closely associated with Oak-Pine Woodland in western Allegan

County. However, it also occurs near the edge of the aforementioned soil association, bordering an area occupied by Granby-Au Gres soils to the south and west. Soils of the latter association typically support climax Beech-Maple Forest.

Importantly, the property is proximal to several standing bodies of water (Lower and Upper Scott Lakes are but a short walk from the project) and a 3rd order stream (Scott Creek) which is tributary to Middle Fork Black River. This creek flows by the property at a distance of 200 m to the north.

Cursory examination of the property revealed that the back third consisted of heavily disturbed second growth forest. Here, we frequently encountered deep depressions, presumably created by heavy machinery and usually filled with modern garbage of all sorts. The front or north two-thirds was in field, with corn stubble still standing from last year's planting.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH:

During the past four years, WMU has conducted systematic site location survey in Allegan County. However, the area here under consideration has yet to be evaluated. With respect to the presence of known sites in the general area, the WMU site files are silent. Hopefully, this situation will be remedied before the completion of the current field season, as my colleague, Dr. Elizabeth Garland, has two survey teams working into this area of the county from the north.

FIELD PROCEDURES:

Field procedures employed consisted of systematic transect survey with subsurface testing at designated intervals. The wood-

lot to the rear of the property was traversed from south to north at 15 m intervals, with shovel tests placed every 15 m along lines of survey. A total of 16 tests, ranging in depth from 40-120 cm below the modern surface, were placed in the woods, revealing a well developed A horizon underlain by sand extending to an undetermined depth. None of our tests produced the slightest evidence of cultural material, excluding the significant deposits of modern debris/trash filling the many depressions found throughout the woodlot.

As we moved into that portion of the parcel formerly under cultivation, we examined the surface as well as shovel tested along transects. Here, our shovel tests also failed to produce any cultural evidence. However, as we neared the northern limits of the field, we did recover several potsherds from the surface. Although the field had recently been washed by rain and surface visibility was excellent, no chippage or other sorts of debris was observed.

Our final task before completing the survey was to return to the location of the sherds and cluster test this area of the field. A series of tests were placed within 3 m of the surface find, revealing in two instances additional pottery but no sub-surface features. The pottery recovered and the location of the findspot are discussed more fully below.

SITES RECORDED:

At approximately 20 m E and 40 m S of the NW property stake, we found a total of 60 potsherds. Of this number, 45 are cord-roughened body sherds, eight are decorated body sherds and seven are rim sherds. The Late Woodland affiliation of this pottery

is suggested by both the quality of workmanship and decorative attributes. Lip notching characterizes all rims, and in most cases punctations occur in either single or multiple rows. One or possibly as many as three vessels appear to be represented by this ceramic assemblage. Tentatively, I would suggest that this material fits comfortably into the category Allegan Ware, but final determination must await examination of the sherds by Dr. Garland, who was instrumental in the establishment of this ceramic ware.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The discovery of a concentration of prehistoric cultural material through application of phase I methods is foreign to our young contract program at WMU and to my personal experience. And, clearly, it is appropriate that I recommend that more intensive evaluation of this property and findspot be undertaken to determine the extent and potential significance of this site prior to the commencement of construction activity. The Pullman Health Clinic site will be recorded with the Michigan History Division, Michigan Department of State as soon as a new state site number has been received.