

Chapter 6. NORTH-CENTRAL FLORIDA, 2500 B.P.-A.D. 1702

In north-central Florida the post-Archaic culture sequence is well-known: Deptford (2500 B.P.-A.D. 200), Cades Pond (a Weeden Island-related culture, A.D. 200-700), and the Alachua tradition (Hickory Pond, Alachua, and Potano I and II periods, A.D. 700-1702). The Potano II period overlaps with the time of the Spanish Franciscan missions among the Timucua Indians.

The Setting

North-central Florida's northern boundary is the Santa Fe River. Its eastern boundary is a line drawn north-south through Putnam and Marion counties, excluding the St. Johns River drainage (e.g., the Oklawaha River), but including the many lakes of the Florahome Valley in western Alachua and eastern Putnam counties. The western boundary is marked by the onset of the coastal flatlands. The Middle Florida Hammock Belt extends south from north Florida through the central portion of north-central Florida. Its end at about Belleview in Marion County demarcates the southern boundary of the north-central region (Milanich and Fairbanks 1980:22, 30-32).

As in north Florida, the hardwood forest was a major area of prehistoric settlement. Loamy soils and many lakes and wetlands also provided important resources. Many sites are also found adjacent to the extensive lakes and wetlands in the Florahome Valley area, but these have been little studied. Portions of north-central Florida are characterized by karst topography, and many sinkholes as well as chert outcroppings are present.

The environment of the region remained unchanged throughout the post-Deptford period into the colonial period. Modern agricultural and development activities, however, have greatly reduced the natural forests, lowered water tables, and, unfortunately, destroyed a large part of the archaeological record. In late prehistoric times, north-central Florida probably was one of the most densely populated areas in the state.

Deptford (2500 B.P. to A.D. 200)

Deptford sites in north-central Florida are recognized by the ceramic complex that includes Deptford Check Stamped and Deptford Simple Stamped pottery and which dates after 2500 B.P. (for descriptions of ceramic types see Caldwell and Waring 1939a, 1939b; Milanich 1971b:161-172; Willey 1949a:353-360). But unlike coastal sites characterized by distinct middens and relatively large amounts of pottery and other debris, the inland Deptford sites of north-central Florida are quite small with few artifacts (nearly all of which are potsherds). Most sites appear to be small camps that were reoccupied as later period sites.

We can suggest that the Deptford population of northern Florida was quite small and initially was not associated with year-round occupation of the interior forests (Milanich and Fairbanks 1980:71-72). Approximately 70 sites with Deptford components are recorded for north-central Florida, but the actual number of artifacts from any one site is often only a handful, as evidenced by collections at the Florida Museum of Natural History and by excavations (e.g., Fradkin and Milanich 1977:170, 173; Mullins 1977:20, 24).

An exception to these small, presumed part-time sites occurs in north-central Florida in the late Deptford period (ca. A.D. 100-200) and is presumably related to a change in settlement pattern associated with the development of the Cades Pond culture. The River Styx site (8AL458), a mound with an associated horseshoe-shaped embankment and an adjacent village, was studied by Ripley P. Bullen and by E.

Thomas Hemmings (Hemmings 1978). Deptford pottery came from the mound and was also collected from the village (but in small quantities).

Cades Pond, A Weeden Island-Related Culture

This north-central Florida culture was first recognized by John M. Goggin (1949:25), who established its temporal position relative to the Alachua tradition. An overview of Cades Pond appears in Milanich and Fairbanks (1980:96-111) and serves as a basic introduction.

Material culture. The distinctive nature of its ceramic and lithic assemblages (relative to the preceding Deptford complex and subsequent Alachua tradition material assemblage), along with site patterning, make the recognition of Cades Pond relatively easy. At village sites, ceramics are largely undecorated (more than 90%) large bowls and either have quartz inclusions in the paste or they exhibit a St. Johns paste. St. Johns Plain sherds are a minority ware at villages, ranging from a high frequency of 24% (of total sherds) at the Hawthorne Village site (8AL462) to a low of 3% at the Melton village site (8AL169) and the nearby Olster site (8AL346) (Milanich 1978c:164). Percentages of undecorated ceramics with quartz particle inclusions at those same three sites are 65, 94, and 89, respectively. Other minority pottery types, usually comprising less than 1% each of the total ceramic inventory from any one site, include Dunn's Creek Red, various Weeden Island decorated and plain types, and St. Johns Check Stamped. We do not have a workable seriation for Cades Pond ceramics and do not understand if the relative differences in ceramic types are temporal or geographical.

The Cades Pond lithic assemblage contains a number of tools, including Pinellas-like projectile points (thought to be late [Milanich 1978c:165]) and a variety of stemmed "points" that might be classified as Duval, Bradford, Columbia, Taylor, and Jackson types in Bullen's typology (1975:13-14, 19-21). These "points" might better be described as hafted knives and scraping tools in various stages of use. As tools are resharpened or reshaped, they often change shape and size (e.g., Taylor specimens are probably worn down Columbia types). Other lithic tools are Cross Creek perforators (Smith 1971:128), triangular knives and perforators, manos and metates, sandstone abraders, and large amounts of debitage (Milanich 1978c:154, 159, 162). Cumbaa's (1972) excavations at the Melton village site produced a large number of bone tools, including double-pointed leisters, splinter awls, perforators, flakers, deer ulna awls, scrapers or fleshers, punches, and fids. Some leisters showed hafting stains, probably from pitch. Shell columella and shark's teeth tools are also known from Cades Pond sites.

Settlement pattern. Cades Pond sites are centered among the various lakes and wetlands in eastern Alachua County and extend eastward into western Putnam and Clay counties (from Paynes Prairie east past Orange and Lochloosa lakes and Lake Santa Fe to the many lakes in the Florahome Depression around Putnam Hall, Melrose, and Interlachen). This latter eastern area is little known archaeologically. What are believed to be Cades Pond sites are also found in northwest Alachua County in the Santa Fe River's natural bridge and Buzzard Roost Prairie and Swamp locality.

Cades Pond village sites are often located near mounds. Hemmings (1978) has summarized information on Cades Pond settlement patterning, as has Milanich (1978c). Site types include: complex mound-villages (some, such as River Styx, Cross Creek [8AL2/3], and Ramsey Pasture Mound [8AL78], have earthworks associated with mounds and burial areas); villages with no adjacent mounds; mounds not at villages; and camps, probably used to procure specific resources, such as chert-quarry sites around Paynes Prairie. The size of village middens and the density of artifacts within them varies.

The richness and density of material remains at the Cades Pond village sites studied thus far suggest long-term occupations. Large storage pits and evidence of structures were found at the Melton village and Hawthorne village sites, although no complete house patterns have been found.

Milanich (1978c) developed a model for Cades Pond settlement patterning that grouped the various types of sites into six nexuses. Each nexus contains a variety of sites, occupies a specific territory about 5000 hectares in size, and includes a variety of aquatic habitats. The relationship of these nexuses to the adjacent marsh-prairie-pond-lake systems strongly suggests a dependence on aquatic resources, and this is borne out by the data from 8AL169 summarized in the discussion of subsistence below.

Each nexus probably represents a community bound by social ties and each has a center, the major complex mound-village site at any point in time (Milanich 1978c:170). Each nexus may represent a community with individual sites representing villages in varying stages of occupation, growth, fissioning, and abandonment.

The Cross Creek nexus, with the River Styx site as its center, is probably the oldest group of Deptford/Cades Pond sites in north-central Florida. This nexus might be the community from which other communities and nexuses budded as populations and pressure on resources increased. Cades Pond offers excellent opportunities to formulate research questions concerning demography, economic pressures, and social and political organization among pre-Mississippian non-farming peoples. The richness of the Cades Pond archaeological record and the preservation of floral and faunal remains in some village sites will allow archaeologists to test these models.

Subsistence. Stephen Cumbaa's (1972) thesis on the Melton village site has produced a wealth of quantified data. His zooarchaeological analysis demonstrates Cades Pond reliance on aquatic habitats; 85% of the 1500 individual animals used for food at the site came from aquatic habitats. Included were snails, clams, 12 species of fish, frogs, 7 species of turtles, 5 species of water snakes, alligator, 7 species of water birds, otter, and muskrat. Mesic hammock fauna were also important in terms of meat volume; these included deer, black bear, panther, opossum, rabbits, squirrel, skunk, rats, and foxes. Identified plant remains include hickory (especially mockernut hickory), pine nuts, acorns, Chickasaw plum, persimmon, and wild cherry. No cultigens have been identified from Cades Pond villages. The metate-manos that are in collections were possibly used to grind nuts or wild seeds. As noted above, the preservation of floral and faunal remains in some Cades Pond sites can provide an excellent data base. The significance of any village site is greatly enhanced by excellent preservation, a fact that should be taken into consideration in planning any archaeological investigations of Cades Pond sites.

Chronology. Several radiocarbon dates are available for Cades Pond sites. The earliest, as might be expected, is from River Styx (1770 ± 85 radiocarbon years: A.D. 180 [N-2170]). Others are from the Melton village (1730 ± 90 : A.D. 220 [N-2169]) and the Hawthorne village (1460 ± 70 : A.D. 490, 1675 ± 65 : A.D. 275, and 1740 ± 70 : A.D. 210 [UM-1781-1783, respectively]). The dates support the accepted chronology for Deptford and Cades Pond in north-central Florida.

Alachua Tradition: Post-A.D. 700 Occupation of North-central Florida

The Alachua tradition was originally defined by John Goggin (1947, 1948a, 1948b, 1949) who recognized the distinctive nature of the Alachua archaeological assemblage, especially the ceramic complex. He divided the tradition into temporal periods based on relative percentages of three ceramic types: Prairie Cord Marked, Alachua Cob Marked, and Alachua Plain. The Hickory Pond period was defined as having more cord marked than cob marked pottery, the later Alachua period having more cob marked than cord marked. The onset of the Potano period is marked by the appearance of Spanish artifacts in Alachua tradition village sites.

Building on Goggin's work, Milanich has refined the ceramic seriation for the Alachua tradition and the period designations (1971a:28; Milanich and Fairbanks 1980:170-171). The present chronology is: Hickory Pond period (A.D. 700 to 1250), Alachua period (A.D. 1250-ca. 1585), Potano I period (A.D. 1585-1630 [decline of Alachua tradition ceramic assemblage and appearance of Leon-Jefferson and other

complexes at missions]), and Potano II period (A.D. 1630-1702 [the time of the demise of the indigenous ceramic assemblage and its replacement by the Leon-Jefferson ceramic assemblage]). Summaries of the Alachua tradition can be found in Milanich (1971) and Milanich and Fairbanks (1980:169-1890).

Material culture. Other ceramic types beyond the three mentioned above have also been defined for the Alachua tradition and fitted into the ceramic seriation (Lochloosa Punctated, Prairie Punctated-over-Cord Marked, Prairie Fabric Impressed, and Alachua Net Impressed; see Milanich 1971a:28-36). The overall ceramic assemblage is distinct from similar, contemporary ceramic assemblages to the north in north Florida and to the west in interior Dixie and Levy counties. Sherd discs and sherd hones are also common at Alachua tradition sites.

The lithic assemblage associated with the Alachua tradition has also been defined (Milanich 1971a:37-40, 50-52). The assemblage is remarkably similar at Hickory Pond, Alachua, and Potano I sites, and includes Pinellas points, small blades and flakes perhaps used as scrapers or knives, perforators and burins made from flakes, drills, unifacial and bifacial knives of several types, large unifacial scrapers, spokeshaves, hammerstones, mortars, and hoes.

Bone tools (awls and pins) and shell ornaments (ear pins) have been found at Alachua tradition sites, but in many fewer numbers than lithic artifacts. *Busycon* cup fragments are also known, but rare. All the studies of Alachua tradition material culture were done nearly two decades ago or earlier; certainly new analyses are warranted.

Settlement patterns. Alachua tradition village sites are ubiquitous in that portion of the Middle Florida Hammock Belt that ranges from about Belleview in Marion County into northern Alachua County at the Santa Fe River. Villages tend to occur in clusters, perhaps representing abandoned and new villages, and are usually found on high ground adjacent to lakes and ponds, often with sinkholes or small streams nearby. This pattern of settlement is very unlike that of the earlier Cades Pond culture which has a much more aquatic orientation.

Site clusters occur on the east side of Orange Lake (8AL100, 101), between Levy Lake and Paynes Prairie (8AL30-36, 47, 48), on the northwest end of Paynes Prairie (8AL19, 20, 27, 28, 30, 57), the north side of the prairie (8AL17, 49, 52, 54 and 8AL8, 29, 56), at the Moon Lake locale on the west side of Gainesville (8AL330-337), west of the Devil's Millhopper (8AL272-274, 279), near Alachua (8AL166), and in the Robinson Sinks locale in northwest Alachua County. Other sites are near Rochelle south of Newnan's Lake and north of Orange Lake. The linear arrangement of these clusters mirrors the linear distribution of hardwoods, but it also may reflect site placement along aboriginal trails. Small campsites, perhaps for the procurement of specific resources, have been found in Alachua County, and almost every site in the county contains at least several Alachua tradition potsherds.

Several of these clusters (Orange Lake, Moon Lake, Millhopper, Alachua, Robinson Sinks, Rochelle) contain Spanish materials from the mission period, although missions have not as yet been identified except in the Rochelle, Millhopper, and Robinson Sinks locales. As yet no differences in settlement pattern have been noted during the nine centuries of Alachua tradition occupation. In fact, except for relative percentages of ceramic types, the same way of life appears to have persisted to the time of the early Spanish missions.

Many burial mounds have been found within the Alachua tradition region, but only three have been excavated (Woodward Mound [8AL47], Henderson Mound [8AL463], and Law School Mound [8AL297]; see, respectively, Bullen 1949, Loucks 1976, and Fradkin and Milanich 1977). Consequently, it is uncertain which mounds are Alachua tradition and which are Cades Pond. Both cultures are associated with burial mounds that are not located immediately adjacent to villages. The Woodward Mound is next to a village, while the other two excavated Alachua tradition mounds are not. Loucks's excavations at the Henderson Mound revealed a non-random distribution of females, perhaps a reflection of matrilocality and lineage burial.

Storage pits and other features indicative of structures have been found at villages. Our best information on community and household patterning comes from the Richardson site (8AL100), where a portion of a circular house was uncovered (Milanich 1972).

Subsistence. The Alachua tradition peoples used the resources of the hardwood hammocks and the nearby lakes. Studies of subsistence thus far carried out have tended to center on zooarchaeological analysis of the bones of animals, focusing on minimum numbers of individuals, as opposed to meat weights or caloric intake (the research was done prior to the early 1970s). Milanich and Fairbanks (1980:171-172) and Milanich (1972) have provided overviews on subsistence, including information on butchering and meat distribution, based on data from the Richardson site.

Maize kernels have been identified from the Richardson site, a Potano I village. Corn cob impressions on Alachua Cob Marked potsherds indicate that maize was present. That no changes in settlement patterning occur between the Hickory Pond and Alachua period suggests maize agriculture was present throughout both periods. A limited number of other charred plant food remains have been recovered, but there has not been a concentrated effort to recover plant remains from any Alachua tradition site.

Previous Research

No problem oriented studies of the Deptford culture in north-central Florida have been carried out. There have been, however, studies of coastal Deptford sites, and these are pertinent to future work in interior peninsular Florida. Standard references include: Caldwell 1952, 1971; Caldwell and Waring 1939a, 1939b, 1939c; Milanich 1971b, 1973a, 1973b; 1980; Willey 1949a:353-361, 507).

In north-central Florida, a great deal of archaeological research has been carried out, the result of four decades of work by University of Florida archaeologists and students. The groundwork for all subsequent research was laid by John M. Goggin in the late 1940s and 1950s (1947, 1948a, 1948b, 1950, 1953). During that same period Goggin's students surveyed a number of tracts within north-central Florida, providing collections and reports that are curated at the Florida Museum of Natural History. Their information also provided the data base for the Florida Master Site File records for much of Alachua County. Archaeological surveys of a portion of the Paynes Prairie tract (Mullins 1977) and an area just south of Lake Tusawilla (Milanich 1974) also have provided information on the post-Deptford occupations of north-central Florida.

Goggin's original taxonomy and syntheses for north-central Florida, including Cades Pond and the Alachua tradition, were refined and added to by Milanich (1968, 1969, 1971a, 1972, 1978c) and other University of Florida students. Notable is the work on Cades Pond done by Samuel Smith (1971), Steven Cumbaa (1972), and E. Thomas Hemmings (1978). Mound excavations of Alachua sites have been reported by Bullen (1949), Loucks (1976) and Fradkin and Milanich (1977).

These various studies, summarized in Milanich and Fairbanks (1980), provide firm bases on which new, more modern studies should be undertaken, especially in north-central Florida. The archaeological record of north-central Florida is a very rich one that has great potential for providing new knowledge.

Important Sites

Many sites have been studied in north-central Florida. Key excavated Cades Pond sites are the Cross Creek-River Styx nexus; the Levy Lake nexus (including the Wacahoota mound-village complex [8AL58/59] excavated by Goggin, but never published), the North Paynes Prairie nexus (including the

Melton village and mounds), and the east Lake Lochloosa nexus (the Hawthorne village site; adjacent mounds remain unexcavated). More details on these sites can be found in Milanich (1978).

Excavated Alachua tradition sites that are important to our understanding of the prehistory of north-central Florida include Woodward Mound and village (8AL47/48), Rocky Point (8AL27), Richardson, and 8AL273. Surface collections from a number of other sites are curated at the Florida Museum of Natural History (as are collections from nearly all sites in north-central Florida).

A number of Potano I and II sites in Alachua County are probably related to Spanish missions and/or ranches (as are several of the late Indian Pond assemblage sites in north Florida); they are discussed in another section of this plan.

No prehistoric sites in north-central Florida have yet been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Research Questions

Gaps in the database. Because of the nature of the Deptford sites in north-central Florida little information has thus far been collected, and nothing is known about most aspects of the Deptford period in northern Florida. For the later Cades Pond culture, however, and the Hickory Pond, Alachua, and Potano I periods, the archaeological record is extremely rich and offers excellent opportunities for research.

Chronology. The relative chronology for Deptford seems firm, but more radiocarbon dates are needed to establish a Cades Pond chronology that is tied to artifacts and can be used to provide an absolute chronology for inter- and intra-nexus village sites. Such a chronology would require technological and attribute analyses of ceramics. Moreover, the generally accepted chronology for the Alachua tradition periods needs to be tied to radiocarbon dates and phases within the various periods established.

Economy. While we have relatively good subsistence data from the Cades Pond period, very little information exists for the earlier and later time periods. Moreover, most of our subsistence data are derived from zooarchaeological studies; the role of plants, particularly cultigens, in north-central Florida is very unclear.

What was the economic base of the interior Deptford peoples in north-central Florida? Were they hunter-gatherers?

Did Deptford peoples occupy the northern forests on a seasonal basis? Are they the same Deptford population that inhabited the Gulf coast to the west?

Is the intensive harvest economy documented for the Cades Pond Melton village present at all other villages? Is it consistent through time?

What crops were cultivated after A.D. 700, and were they present from the beginning of the Hickory Pond period?

Is there any reliance on cultigens during the Cades Pond period?

Settlement patterns. The collection of baseline data on settlement patterns is of primary importance for the Deptford period. For the latter time periods, more sophisticated and detailed questions may be addressed.

Why, at ca. A.D. 200, is there a change from (seemingly) small Deptford populations and campsite-size sites to the larger populations and villages of the Cades Pond culture?

Is the nexus model of Cades Pond settlement correct?

Can we seriate villages within nexuses to establish the actual sequence of village growth, fissioning, and abandonment?

Can we use such data to estimate actual population growth?

Cades Pond was apparently the first year-round human occupation of north-central Florida. Did its population enjoy an extremely high rate of growth through time?

Can we identify early and later nexuses?

As with villages, did nexuses bud off from one another after a certain level of population (or villages) was reached?

Are centers within nexuses sequentially occupied (e.g., does Cross Creek follow River Styx)?

How can a center be identified?

What other types of occupation sites besides villages are present?

What do the clusters of Alachua tradition village sites represent?

How are they alike or different?

Within clusters are the villages sequential or contemporary?

Is each cluster a single group through time?

Social and political organization. Information on social and political organization in north-central Florida is very limited, especially for the Deptford period.

Does the lack of Deptford burial mounds versus their presence in the Cades Pond culture reflect differences in levels of social organization, with Deptford society organized as bands and the Cades Pond society organized in lineages or other kin-based intervillage units?

What do presumed Cades Pond centers represent?

Who was interred in mounds?

Are mounds associated with lineages?

Does the McKeithen Weeden Island model of big men affiliated with ranked lineages (Milanich et al. 1984:41-43, 188-192) hold for Cades Pond?

How do the archaeological correlates of such a system compare with those of later chiefdom systems?

Do the Alachua tradition site clusters represent separate political units? Were they chiefdoms?

Were chiefdoms present in prehistoric times?

What are their archaeological correlates?

Did European contact help to confederate the Potano peoples?

Did changes in social and political organization occur after contact?

Do burial mounds represent matrilineal lineages (as suggested from the Henderson Mound)?

Health and nutrition. Bioarchaeological studies provide a wealth of information regarding subsistence, health and nutrition status, and social organization. It is important that we examine existing burial populations and make provisions for future bioarchaeological studies.

How does the health of the Cades Pond people (with their aquatic economic orientation) compare with that of later agriculturalists in north-central Florida? Chemical analyses of human remains from Cades Pond and later peoples are needed to establish a database to answer questions regarding the relative importance of maize in diets.

Are dietary differences detected through time or within populations the result of social differences?

Can we detect epidemics in Potano I populations (or other impacts of European contact, such as dietary stress)?

Regional and temporal relationships. Evolutionary trends are still unclear for the north-central Florida region. Further, there are many unanswered questions regarding interactions between populations with the region and outside it.

What is the evolutionary relationship between Deptford and the succeeding Cades Pond culture?

A major area of research is the origins of the Alachua tradition and its relationship to Cades Pond.

Does the Alachua tradition really represent an intrusive population?

Did Hickory Pond period agriculturalists displace the late Cades Pond peoples?

What happened to the latter? Were they forced into the wetlands of eastern north-central Florida, an area not settled by the Alachua tradition peoples because of a lack of suitable agricultural lands?

The relationships of the Alachua tradition to sites with similar (but not the same) ceramic assemblages located to the west in Levy and Dixie counties (Chiefland north to Cross City) need to be established. Collections from the latter region suggest a separate taxonomy is needed and the assemblage should be defined. Still another area for research is the impact of European contact in the early sixteenth century.

Can we detect changes in mound building, village size or numbers, burial patterns (cf. Smith 1987)? North-central Florida (and north Florida) is an obvious area to apply Marvin Smith's model developed for the post-contact interior of the southeast.

Preservation Goals

A number of archaeological sites have been preserved on state-owned lands in north-central Florida, such as within the Paynes Prairie and San Felasco preserves. Others are included in lands now being considered for state-purchase (e.g., Prairie Creek and Cross Creek parcels in Alachua County). Those

state-owned lands that have not been inventoried should be surveyed in order to draw up a list of preserved sites to see if a cross section is represented.

Locate unrecorded sites, especially in the Putnam Hall and Melrose areas and in the Ordway Preserve, which is state-controlled.

Complete Florida Site File forms for all new and revisited sites, especially those located in the last three years as a result of the de Soto Trail project.

Excavate sites of various types, especially Deptford sites, to assess their National Register eligibility and obtain interpretive data.

Nominate to the National Register clusters or nexuses of sites and key sites, including the Cross Creek site (if not in a district), Hawthorne Mound and Village site, and River Styx site.

