

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Williams Site

other names/site number 22-Ha-585

2. Location

street & number

city, town

state

vicinity

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously

listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Kenneth H. P. Pool

June 24, 1988

Signature of certifying official

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Mississippi Department of

State or Federal agency and bureau

Archives and History

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Helena Byers

Special Agent in Charge

7-28-88

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Village or resource extraction site

Timberland

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

N/A

foundation N/A

walls

roof

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Williams Site (22-Ha-585) is a small shell (oyster and clam) black earth midden

The site was recorded in 1985 by Karl Lorenz of the University of Illinois Department of Anthropology Graduate Program and reported to the Department of Archives and History. The Williams Site is similar in size, configuration, and apparently cultural affiliation with the Up the Tree Shell Midden and the Three Sisters Shell Midden, two sites within 1/4-1/2 mile of the Williams Site,

Several 50 cm. test pits and approximately fifteen shovel tests (10" across x 12-20" deep) were dug throughout the site (see sketch map) revealing numerous fragment of faunal remains. Included in the faunal remains are deer bones, fish vertebra, and other unidentified mammalian skeletal elements. The deposit at the Williams Site extends from the present ground surface to a depth of 2-3'. The site appears to date sometime in the Woodland Period (100 B.C.- 1000 A.D.) on the basis of several sherds of plain sand tempered pottery located on the surface and in one of the test pits. A heavy growth of mixed hardwoods along with a thick underbrush of palmetto, saw grass, etc., cover and protect the site from erosion.

Some evidence of relic collecting activities are present at the site. Three small potholes (2' across x approximately 1-2' in depth) were noted in different portions of the site. Towards the center of the site evidence of the mining of shell (probably for the building of roads). In Coastal Mississippi it has been common practice to haul shell from aboriginal shell middens in order to accomplish this purpose. An area approximately 25' across x 5.8' deep has been removed by this activity, and an old road from which the haulers operated is visible going into the site. This apparently was done some time ago as the road ruts are barely visible and the damage to the midden does not appear to be recent. However, both the potholes and the hauling away of shell have destroyed only a small portion of this very rich midden.

The piece of land more than likely has never been in cultivation, however, it is likely that timber may have been harvested here in the

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Continuation Sheet**

Williams Site, Hancock County, Mississippi

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past. It should be noted that the density and compactness of the shell in the midden make excavation difficult but probably help discourage erosion. The heavy growth of vegetation also helps discourage relic collectors while at the same time helps protect the site from the many coastal storms and hurricanes which are not uncommon in this area. In many Mississippi coastal shell middens preservation of faunal materials is excellent; floral remains are sometimes preserved (acorn hulls from the Three Sisters Shell Midden) and the presence of human burials at the base of the midden (Richard Site in Hancock County) cannot be ruled out at the Williams Site.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Archaeology/prehistoric

Period of Significance

Woodland

Significant Dates

100 B.C.-1000 A.D.

Cultural Affiliation

Woodland

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Williams Site (22-Ha-585) is a small oyster and clam shell midden located at the end of a peninsula of land

A single/meter test pit reveals that the deposit extends to a depth of three feet below the present ground surface. Dating sometime in the Woodland Period (100 B.C.-1000 A.D.) the midden is black and greasy with abundant faunal remains and is likely to produce valuable information in the area of prehistoric archaeology. The Williams Site is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria D. Approximately 10% of the midden has been hauled away in order to utilize the shell as fill and to build roads. Several small relic hunters' holes are present but amount to less than .5% total damage to the site. Approximately 90% of the midden is intact and apparently in a good state of preservation (as evidence in the test pit and the shovel tests). The amounts of faunal remains are impressive, and it is this class of data that is essential in understanding subsistence strategies operative during the Woodland Period in Coastal Mississippi. Excavations should be geared to obtaining this class of data, and it is recommended that water screening through graduated mesh screen be utilized in an attempt to recover small skeletal elements that might fall through the normal 1/4" screen. The faunal remains should be analyzed by a zooarchaeologist and a test compiled of the numbers and varieties of this class of information. Besides giving insights into the diet of Woodland peoples, information regarding seasonality of occupation and/or utilization of the site should come into focus.

The excavations should also produce a larger sample of artifactual materials such as ceramics and/or lithics. This is important, as to date, only several plain sand tempered sherds have been recovered and we are in a difficult position to assign anything other than a period cultural affiliation (sometime in the Woodland Period). Hopefully through additional testing the site can be placed in a more secure, more accurate cultural/chronological position. At the Three Sisters Shell Midden, charred

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acorn hulls were recovered in a black earth and shell midden with abundant faunal remains, much the same situation as the Williams Site. It is reasonable to assume that this type of resource, or similar floral remains, will be recovered at the Williams Site further shedding light on Woodland subsistence/settlement patterns.

9. Major Bibliographical References

N/A

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Historic Preservation Division, Jackson, Mississippi

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property _____

UTM References

A _____
 Zone Easting Northing
 C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing
 D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The boundary is restricted to an area of approximately 300' _____ by 75' _____ where thick deposits of shell and black earth midden are continuously exposed on the surface with no apparent non-site areas.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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