

PREHISTORIC ARCHEOLOGY IN SOUTH CAROLINA
FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON SOUTH CAROLINA ARCHEOLOGY

Chairman: Dr. Robert L. Stephenson

Inferences Based on Distribution Studies of Prehistoric
Ceramics in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina

By

David G. Anderson, Archeologist
Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, USC

A primary orientation of this study was toward determining what kinds of **prehistoric** ceramics are present in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina, and where within the Coastal Plain these ceramics are to be found. Ceramic artifacts from a total of 315 sites (Figure 1) were examined for the incidence of attributes encompassing paste characteristics and methods of surface treatment. Eleven environmental variables, including soil type, vegetation cover, and drainage information, were recorded for each site. Collections of the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology and the Charleston Museum, as well as the collections of several members of the Archeological Society of South Carolina. For the purposes of efficient communication, the data are here reported using South's taxonomic framework for coastal South Carolina pottery (South 1973).

Stalling's fiber-tempered ceramics were observed on 82 sites, along the coast and just beyond Charleston Harbor, and inland along all the major river drainages. Moving northward from the Savannah River, the Edisto is the last drainage with a high incidence of this material. Along the Santee and the Pee Dee **Rivers** fiber-tempered pottery occurs with very low frequency. **Thom's Creek** punctated ceramics (Figure 2), generally regarded as the earliest sand-tempered ceramics in the Coastal Plain, were observed on almost 100 sites. The highest incidence for this ware occurred on sites along the Santee and Edisto Rivers, **suggesting** a center of popularity slightly to the north of that for Stalling's material (Figure 3).

Refuge ceramics, identified by the occurrence of the type Refuge dentate stamped, were observed on 21 sites, most of which were inland, in the center of the Coastal Plain, along the Santee and Edisto Rivers. Many of the sites with the Refuge ceramics also had Thom's Creek and Deptford ceramics, supporting **Waring's** thesis that Refuge 'evolved' into Deptford (Williams 1968). Deptford linear check-stamped proved to be the most commonly observed ware in this study, occurring on some 162 sites scattered both **immediately** along the coast and inland on all drainages, with some indication of a preference for inland, as opposed to tideland resources.

Sand-tempered cord and fabric-marked ceramics (Cape Fear ware group) were observed on many sites in the Coastal Plain; while the cord-marked material appears generally widely and evenly distributed. The fabric-impressed material decreased in both incidence and frequency proceeding south from the North Carolina border to the Savannah River, both on the coast and inland.

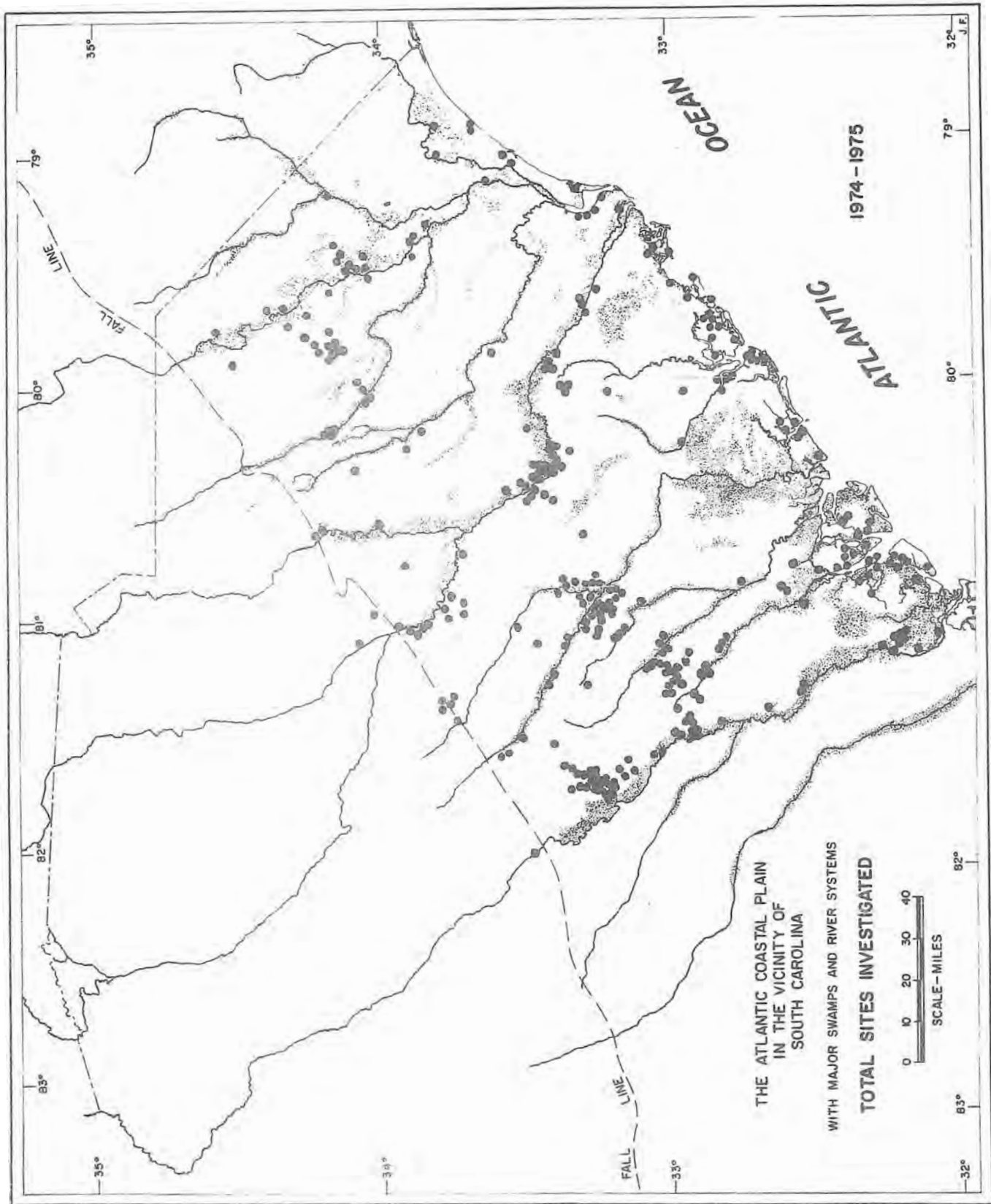


Figure 1. Location of the 315 sites used for collection study during the ceramic distribution study in 1974 and 1975 by Anderson.

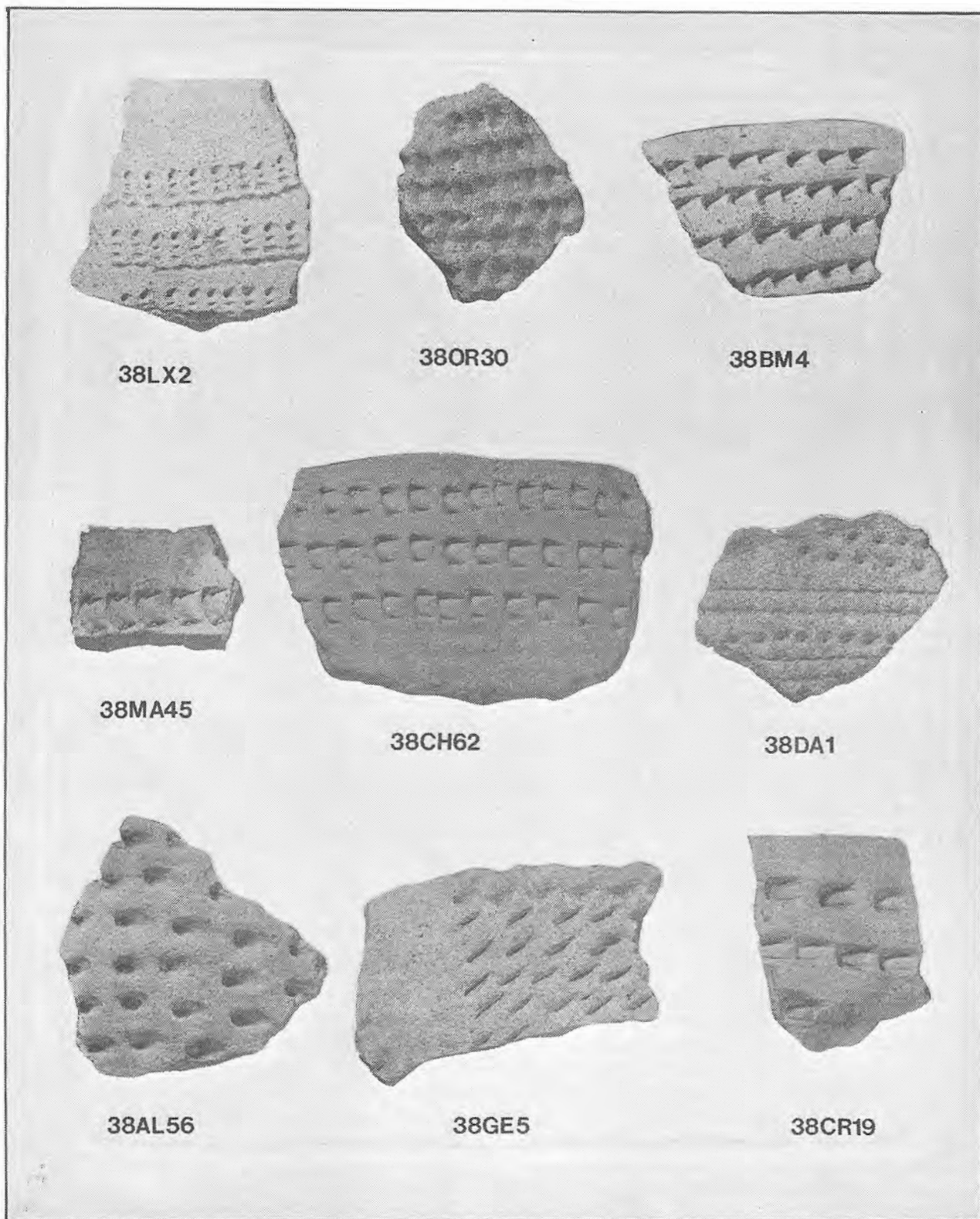


Figure 2. Examples of Thorn's Creek punctate ceramics from a number of sites in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina. Note the variations in decorative punctations found on this ware.

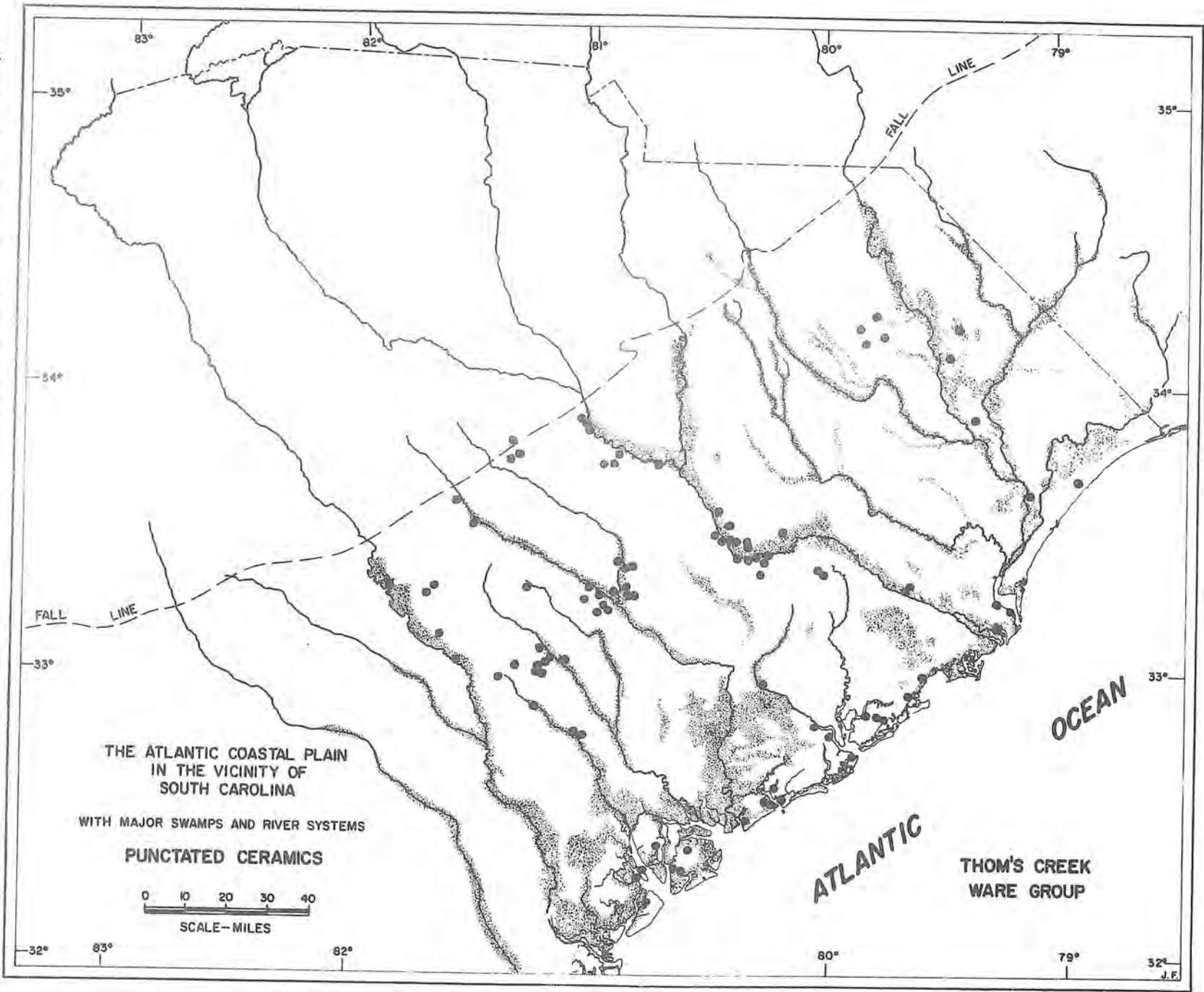


Figure 3. Locations for the 97 sites where punctated Thom's Creek ware-group ceramics were found in this study. The vicinity of the Santee and Edisto Rivers, both inland and along the coast, seems to be the center of greatest frequency.

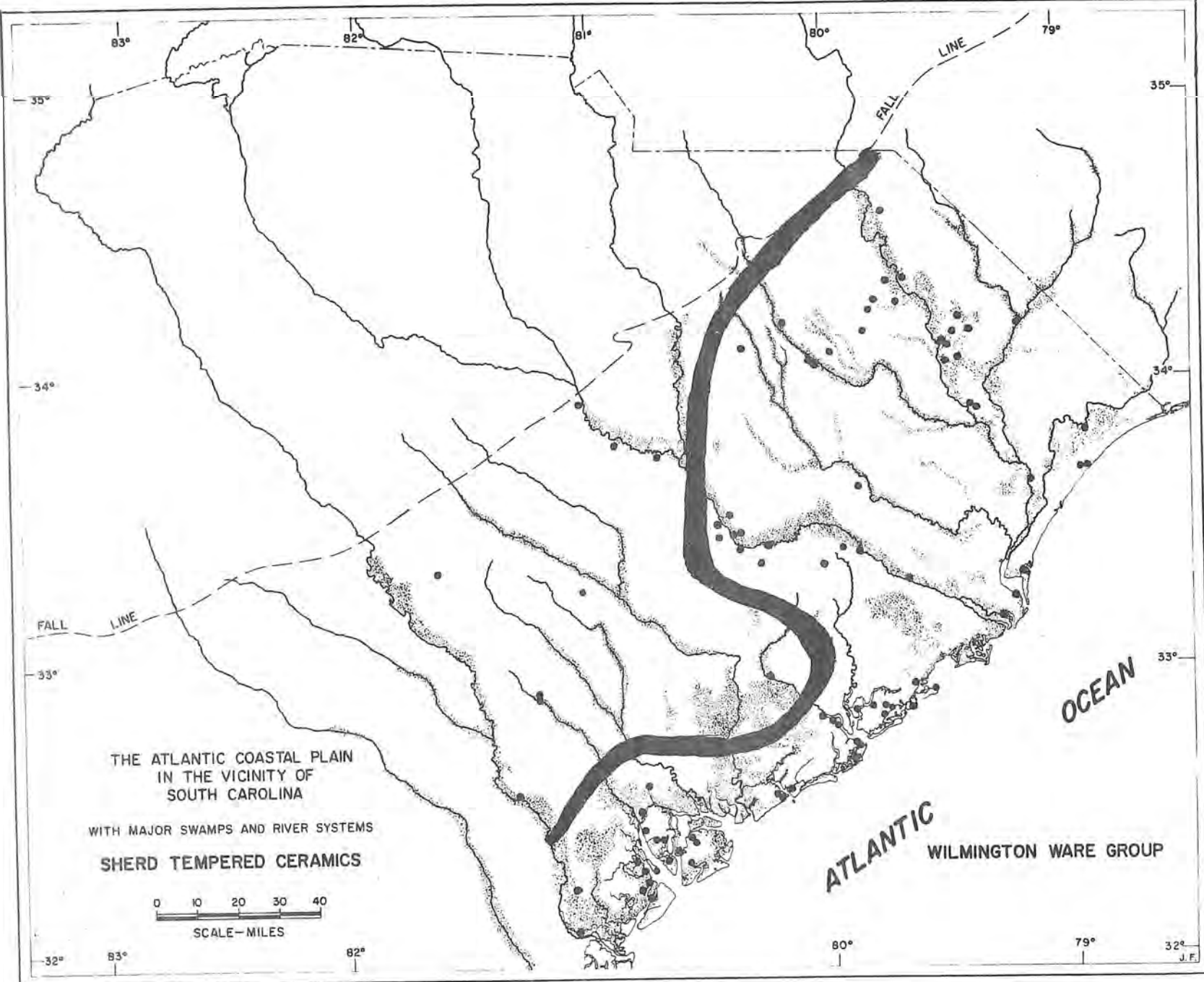


Figure 4. Wilmington ware-group ceramics. Southeast of the Santee River, the ware is reported from incidental finds in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina.

Sherd-tempered ceramics have been observed and described in both Carolina in Hanover ware (South 1960:36-38), and along the Georgia coast and at the mouth of the Savannah River at Wilmington Island in Wilmington ware (Caldwell and Waring 1939). Sherd-tempered ceramics were observed more-or-less continuously along the coast from Georgia to North Carolina, and inland along and to the north of the Santee River (Figure 4). The almost complete lack of sherd-tempered material inland in the Coastal Plain south of the Santee River is particularly interesting. South of the Santee a marked preference for tideland resources seems to be indicated.

Material from the Savannah River region called Wilmington is generally thicker, sandier, and somewhat more poorly made than material to the northeast. This variation is slight, however, and can be detected only through study of assemblages — individual sherds may be readily substituted in assemblages over the area. The use of South's "Wilmington ware-group" is suggested for all sherd-tempered material recovered in the South Carolina area as a means of avoiding confusion.

Complicated-stamped ceramics, South's Chicora and York ware-groups, were observed on 91 sites in the Coastal Plain. Although the ware was found all along the coast, inland it was observed almost exclusively along major river systems that drain the Piedmont and only rarely along rivers originating in the Coastal Plain. Following Ferguson (1971a, 1971b), it is probable that these late prehistoric sites were situated to take advantage of both the excellent lines of communication and the regular flooding and periodic soil enrichment these drainages afforded.

It is as a data base from which to generate hypotheses and build more sophisticated models of prehistoric human behavioral patterns in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina that I feel this study will lend itself in the future. Descriptions of all of the sites investigated, all of the data sheets, and a draft manuscript outlining many of the results of this study are on file at both the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology and the Charleston Museum. An earlier and somewhat different version of this paper was presented at the 31st Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference in Atlanta during November 1974, and that initial statement has appeared elsewhere (Anderson 1975).

REFERENCES CITED

- Anderson, David G.
 1975 Inferences from distributional studies of prehistoric artifacts in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina. *Bulletin 18*, pp. 180-194, Southeastern Archaeological Conference.
- Caldwell, Joseph R. and Antonio J. Waring, Jr.
 1939 Some Chatham County pottery types. *Newsletter*, Vol I, Nos. 5&6, Southeastern Archaeological Conference.
- Ferguson, Leland G.
 1971a South Appalachian Mississippian. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
 1971b Temple mound distribution and South Appalachian Mississippian development. Paper presented at the 36th meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Norman, Oklahoma.

South, Stanley

1960 *An archaeological survey of southeastern coastal North Carolina.*
Brunswick Town State Historic Site, Wilmington, North Carolina.

1973 Indian pottery taxonomy for the South Carolina coast. *The Notebook*,
Vol. V, No. 2, pp. 54-55. Institute of Archeology and Anthropology,
University of South Carolina, Columbia.

Williams, Stephen (Editor)

1968 The Waring *papers: the collected works of Antonio J. Waring, Jr.*
(See: The Refuge Site, Jasper County, South Carolina, pp. 198-208.)
Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University.

A Functional Interpretation of the
Dalton Projectile Point in South Carolina

By

James L. Michie, Amateur Archeologist
Archeological Society of South Carolina, Inc.

The Dalton projectile point is conspicuously present in South Carolina, and it ranges from the Piedmont through the Coastal Plain to the Atlantic Ocean. For the most part, the Dalton is characterized by parallel lateral edges, a deep basal concavity, and a steepled blade which frequently appears with a beveled edge and serrations. Actually, it is quite similar to the classic Dalton of the Southeast, and if differences exist, they would have to include the material used for manufacture and the limited degree of resharpening along the blade.

Daltons appear to have been manufactured from a variety of material, including chert, quartz, and slate. However, the variety of material, except for quartz, does not contain an appreciable amount of silica, therefore, the cherts and slates deteriorate considerably when exposed to the elements, especially when they remain on or near the surface for long periods of time. In the same area of the Piedmont and Fall Line where sites are relatively shallow and are exposed to constant erosion, the early materials are subjected to great amounts of weathering resulting in surface deterioration of points and tools. The same is true in the Coastal Plain, but deposition seems to be somewhat greater, allowing for more preservation of lithic material. However, if the material has remained exposed for a length of time, it too will suffer. And such has been the case with our early tools such as Daltons.

In the initial stage of manufacture the Dalton is widest in the blade area and narrowest in the base. But after it has been subjected to **resharpening**, the base assumes the widest portion while the blade becomes considerably narrower and steepled. For the most part, the tool undergoes at least three phases of development before it becomes lost or discarded. Phase one is initial manufacture. Phase two is first **resharpening**. Phase three is a second resharpening. **Seldom** does the Dalton go through a fourth phase. In addition to resharpening,