

PART IV
CONCLUDING REMARKS

XIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS: CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RUSSELL RESERVOIR RESEARCH TO SOUTHEASTERN HISTORY AND PREHISTORY

THE PREHISTORIC OCCUPATION OF THE RUSSELL RESERVOIR: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

When the first European settlers arrived in the upper Savannah River in the vicinity of the Richard B. Russell Reservoir in the eighteenth century, they found little evidence for past human occupation. The closest Indian groups, the Cherokee, lived well to the north near the headwaters of the river, or to the northwest in Georgia. Little obvious evidence remained to indicate the nature and extent of prehistoric settlement. The evidence for the existence of these peoples was buried deep in the floodplain soils, or lay scattered about eroding upland surfaces, and remained obscure until the planned reservoir construction prompted the investigations summarized in this volume. Looking out over the tranquil lake that now covers this portion of the valley, it is difficult to realize the variety of human drama that has occurred over time. Momentarily exposed and examined with passionate intensity during the 1970s and 1980s, this record has once again been obscured, although this time we have records and memories of what went before.

The first true pioneers in the Savannah River Valley arrived some 11,500 years ago, at the end of the last ice age. Conditions in the area were cooler than today, although not appreciably so. The great ice sheets lay well to the north and, with minor fluctuations, were retreating for the last time. In addition to modern species, a host of late Pleistocene animals were present, including mammoth, mastodon, giant sloth, and other now-extinct forms. Like the glaciers, however, their numbers were rapidly dwindling, and by the end of the PaleoIndian era they too would be gone. These first Americans are thought, in fact, to have delivered the coup-de-grace that pushed many of these species over the edge into extinction. While we may never know for certain that large game animals like mastodon or giant ground sloth were hunted in the upper Savannah River Valley, evidence for these early PaleoIndian populations was found.

The earliest human occupation of the reservoir area, during the PaleoIndian era from ca. 11,500 to 10,000 years ago, appears to have been extremely limited. Only three artifacts, all Clovis projectile points, could be unambiguously attributed to this period. While some of the tools and debitage found with these points may date to the same period, they were typically mixed with the remains of later occupations, rendering interpretation difficult. No dense concentrations of artifacts were found, and PaleoIndian settlement may have consisted of little more than brief camps, occupied for a few days or so by groups passing through the area. Very little of the terminal Pleistocene land surface dating to this period

has survived in the floodplain, and of that only a tiny fraction could be examined. Until we can learn how to find and examine these surviving surfaces, and determine how early populations made use of them, inferences about PaleoIndian settlement must remain tentative.

Over time increasing numbers of artifacts appeared, and populations seem to have been growing rapidly throughout the region, filling the formerly empty landscape. By the Early Archaic period, from ca. 10,000 to 8,000 years ago, evidence for human presence was widely distributed throughout the reservoir area. Distinctive notched and beveled projectile points were found throughout the floodplain and in the surrounding uplands, indicating fairly appreciable use of the area. Scattered hearth remnants, stone tool scatters, and chipping debris were found at sites like Rucker's Bottom and Gregg Shoals on floodplain terraces, and have been interpreted as the short term settlements of a fairly mobile population. No evidence for permanent settlements was found, although it should be noted that the first secure evidence for sites of this kind does not appear until the Late Archaic, several thousand years later. The evidence from the reservoir indicates that groups were occupying the general area on a more or less year round basis well before this, certainly by the later Middle Archaic, if not before. While comparatively large areas were opened at the Archaic sites in the reservoir by modern archaeological standards, it is probable that only a fraction of the space that was used was actually examined. To better understand the prehistoric use of these landforms will require excavation of far larger areas than has been possible to date.

Little evidence for terminal Early Archaic/initial Middle Archaic populations was found in the reservoir area. Bifurcate and Stanly points, which are diagnostic of this period over wide areas of the southeast, were only rarely found. These forms are uncommon throughout eastern Georgia and western South Carolina, indicating that either the area was depopulated for some reason, or that other artifact categories were in use during this period. A continuation of Early Archaic stemmed and notched forms in this area to ca. 8,000 years ago, or an early appearance for contracting stemmed Morrow Mountain points may have occurred. Unfortunately, little was found in the reservoir to help clarify this problem. The few Stanly points that were found were typically made from metavolcanics, a pattern of raw material use differing from the almost exclusive use of quartz characteristic of the succeeding Middle Archaic, and the use of a wide range of materials characteristic of the Early Archaic. Low local populations, or an overlap of populations using a range of diagnostics, including bifurcates and Stanlys in low incidence, may be indicated.

By the later Middle Archaic, from 7,500 to 6000 years ago, human groups appear to have been living year round in the upper Savannah River Valley in fairly appreciable numbers. Diagnostic Morrow Mountain projectile points were widespread, and were the most common prehistoric projectile point category found in the reservoir area. Use of locally acquired raw materials, particularly quartz, characterized tool assemblages, and there was no evidence for interaction with other areas. Like the preceding Early Archaic, site assemblages remained fairly uncomplicated, consisting of little more than projectile points and other

bifacial tools, casually utilized flakes, cracked rock, and cobble tools. Considerable residential movement was indicated, with sites occupied for comparatively brief periods. As during the earlier periods, however, the actual area excavated and the number of isolated components found dating to the period was small.

Little evidence for terminal Middle Archaic/initial Late Archaic occupation was found within the reservoir. Traditional diagnostics used to identify this period, Guilford Lanceolates and large Savannah River Stemmed points, were somewhat uncommon or, in the case of the latter type, were typically found in later Late Archaic context. A replacement of Morrow Mountain and Guilford forms locally by smaller square to slightly expanding or contracting stemmed points was indicated at sites like Gregg Shoals and Rucker's Bottom. Use of quartz continued to characterize these assemblages, although a range of raw materials, particularly metavolcanics, came into use soon after.

The first evidence for sedentary communities characterized by structures, rich associated midden areas, and large quantities of debris indicative of fairly long term occupation occurred during the Late Archaic period. Three major assemblages were found dating to between 4,500 and 4,000 years ago, at the Sara's Ridge, Paris Island South, and Rocky River sites. No ceramics were found in association with the primary occupations at these sites, which were occupied about the same time or slightly before the first appearance of fiber tempered pottery in the coastal plain. The presence of posts at all three sites, and a probable structure at Sara's Ridge, indicated considerable investment in shelters and other site facilities. The presence of pit-features and dense scatters of fire cracked rock indicate cooking was accomplished over hearths and possibly in skin-lined pits, using perforated soapstone slabs for cooking stones.

A range of large and small projectile points was found with these occupations, most resembling the Small Savannah River and Otarre types. Few true large Savannah River Stemmed points were found, and the use of point size as a dating criteria during the Late Archaic was shown to be invalid locally. While a general trend from larger to smaller points is apparent from the late Archaic to the Woodland in the region, Late Archaic assemblages from reservoir area typically included a range of size and shapes. Projectile points during the preceramic era were made primarily from quartz and metavolcanics, materials occurring within the piedmont. No evidence for interaction with other areas such as within the coastal plain or Appalachian Summit area was found, and population movement appeared to have been restricted to within the piedmont.

This pattern changed from 4,000 to 3,000 years before the present, when fiber tempered pottery appeared at a number of sites, and use of a wide range of raw materials characterized stone tool assemblages. Greater interaction with groups throughout the region was indicated, particularly with populations in the lower portion of the drainage. Use of perforated soapstone slabs clearly predated soapstone bowls in the reservoir, a pattern that can be seen at stratified sites like Gregg Shoals, McCalla Bottoms, and Rocky River, and that is also evident when

Late Archaic assemblages dating from 4,500 to 4,000 years ago are compared with those dating from 4,000 to 3,000 years ago.

Only incidental evidence for the use of shellfish during the Late Archaic period was found, in the form of a single isolated fragment at Gregg Shoals. Massive quantities of shellfish debris, comparable to the middens observed at Late Archaic sites such as Stallings Island, Rabbit Mount, and Bilbo along the lower Savannah River, were not found anywhere in the reservoir. Shellfish remains of any kind were only rarely encountered, and when found tended to come from Woodland and Mississippian contexts. The Late Archaic occupations in the reservoir thus offer a counterpoint to settlement models developed from the pottery-bearing, shell midden sites of the lower drainage.

Woodland occupations were comparatively infrequent in the reservoir. No evidence for transitional assemblages bridging the Late Archaic/Woodland were found. A decrease in the occurrence of extralocal lithic raw materials took place, indicating a possible drop in interaction with groups in other areas. The cultural sequence for the area resembled that in both northwest Georgia and in the Appalachian Summit, with fewer ties to the coastal plain. The earliest Woodland ceramics were fabric impressed, which were replaced by check, linear check, and simple stamped wares, which were in turn replaced by simple stamped and brushed assemblages. Late in the Woodland complicated stamping appeared, with assemblages resembling Swift Creek and Napier wares from central Georgia present in low incidence. A co-occurrence of these later Woodland Swift Creek materials with local assemblages characterized by plain, simple stamped, and brushed ceramics was inferred. Large triangular Yadkin-like points were present in Early and Middle Woodland assemblages in the area, co-occurring with small stemmed Swannanoa-like forms. Later Woodland forms included similar triangular and smaller stemmed points.

Evidence for structures was found at several sites in the reservoir, and moderately well defined structures were found at the Rucker's Bottom, Simpson's Field, and Rufus Bullard sites. Small hamlets or villages occupying floodplain terraces were indicated. Evidence for the use of cultigens was minimal, and subsistence appears to have been directed primarily to wild resources. No evidence for elaborate ceremonial or mortuary behavior was found, and the area was outside of major regional developments such as the Hopewellian ceremonial/exchange network.

Simple agriculturally-based chiefdoms appear in the area shortly after A.D. 1100, reflecting a spread of this adaptation from the west. Major assemblages were documented at Beaverdam Creek Mound, a single mound ceremonial center occupied for about 100-150 years from ca. A.D. 1200-1300, and at Rucker's Bottom, where two small villages were occupied from ca. A.D. 1200 to 1450. No other major Mississippian occupations were documented, although evidence for small hamlets or villages was found at a number of sites, including at Clyde Gulley, Simpson's Field, and the Beaverdam Site Group. Isolated structures were found at these latter sites, and a three-tiered settlement hierarchy consisting of ceremonial centers, large villages, and small villages/hamlets appears to have

characterized local settlement.

The small ceremonial center at the Beaverdam Creek site went through six separate construction episodes. Two earth embanked structures or "earthlodges" were built initially, one on top of the other, followed by four platform mound stages. The makers of the earthlodges were participating fully in the Mississippian economic and ceremonial adaptation, as witnessed by the widespread presence of corn in features, and the elaborate interment of an adult male with extensive ritual paraphernalia between the first and second structures. The earlier Beaverdam phase village at Rucker's Bottom was probably a subsidiary, tributary community associated with the center. The inhabitants of this village do not appear to have lived as well as those at the center. They were generally in poorer health and of shorter stature, with less elaborate grave goods. Some foods, notably deer hindquarters, may have been leaving the site as tribute. Both of the Beaverdam phase components, at the mound center and at Rucker's Bottom, were characterized by diversified subsistence strategies, focusing on a fairly wide range of wild plant and animal foods, over and above cultigens .

Shortly after A.D. 1300 the Beaverdam Creek Mound site was abandoned, with the Rembert Mounds to the south becoming the principal ceremonial center in this part of the drainage. About this time the village at Rucker's Bottom was relocated to the northern part of the terrace, and simple ditch and stockade fortifications appeared. Greater site autonomy was inferred, and no evidence was found for foodstuffs leaving the site as tribute. Subsistence became increasingly focused, with a much narrower range of species exploited. An emphasis on deer and nuts, particularly acorns, was evident. This has been attributed to subsistence intensification, and the need to maximize caloric return during the collection of wild resources. Both the earlier and later villages at the site were characterized by structures about plazas, a typical southeastern Mississippian arrangement. Large circular structures were found in both villages to the south of the plazas. These have been interpreted as council houses, and their presence may indicate considerable local decision-making in these societies.

Shortly after A.D. 1400 the Mississippian populations in the Russell Reservoir area disappeared, and the area was effectively abandoned until European settlement in the 18th century. This depopulation occurred throughout the lower drainage, and indicates fairly major population movement took place at this time. While answers remain elusive, it appears that the local chiefly societies in the Savannah River Valley were caught between major chiefdoms developing in the drainages to either side, on the Oconee and along the Santee/Wateree. When De Soto passed through the area in 1540 it was deserted and formed a buffer between two rival provinces of Ocute along the upper Oconee and Cofitachequi in central South Carolina. The populations that lived here had vanished, and are thought to have been absorbed into one group or the other.

The prehistoric archaeological investigations conducted during the Russell Reservoir project have provided a fairly detailed picture of life within the central piedmont over the last eleven millennia. While the sequence of occupation in the

Russell Reservoir exhibits expected similarities and differences with occupations in nearby regions, fairly dramatic differences are evident when comparisons are drawn within the drainage itself. From the terminal Middle Archaic on, increasing divergence characterizes assemblages in the coastal plain and piedmont, a pattern that may reflect the emergence and development of distinctive social entities in these areas. This is most clearly seen in the distributions of temporally diagnostic artifacts. Terminal Middle Archaic MALA projectile points, Late Archaic Stallings, Thom's Creek, and Refuge pottery, and later Woodland and Mississippian cord marked wares common in the coastal plain are infrequent or absent in the central piedmont portion of the drainage. Cartersville, Swift Creek, and Napier materials, present to common in the Piedmont, are virtually nonexistent in the coastal plain portion of the drainage. Distinctive cultural divisions are thus indicated as far back as 5,000 years ago in the drainage.

The prehistoric archaeological investigations associated with the construction of the Russell Reservoir have gone a long way towards shedding light on the record of human settlement in the upper Savannah River, a record that was previously almost completely unknown. Through thoughtful analysis these assemblages have been able to tell us a great deal about life during these early periods, highlighting archaeology's role of "making mute stones speak."

THE HISTORIC OCCUPATION OF THE RUSSELL RESERVOIR: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The selection of portions of eastern Abbeville and Anderson and western Hart and Elbert Counties as the setting for a regional study followed the plans and dictates of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the upper portion of the Savannah drainage. Throughout this report we have referred to this setting in a variety of ways: as the project area, as the Russell Reservoir, as simply the reservoir, and sometimes as the region. Despite this varied nomenclature, our historical overview clearly presents the area under consideration as a region. Geographically, the definition of region denotes an area distinguished by some recognizable physical characteristic or characteristics from surrounding areas. When applied to cultural geography and history, regional studies are based on two models of the "region." The first is an environmental model, in which human behavior represents an adaptation to a particular environmental setting. An example of environmental region in southern historiography comes from Charles Joiner's (1984) study, *Down by the Riverside*, which examines the rice plantation culture that developed along the Waccamaw River in South Carolina's Georgetown District. This culture and economy was dependent on the tidal flow of the Waccamaw, without which rice agriculture was not profitable. River and man thus merged to form a historic region. A second historical definition of region is dependent on political boundaries. For example, Darrett and Anita Rutman's (1984) examination of life in Colonial Virginia was developed from a single county, Middlesex, during the period from 1650 to 1750. The use of politically defined regions offers great advantages to the historian, since historical

records are most often collected and organized by such political units. Thus towns, districts, counties, and parishes are all commonly explored social expressions of the region.

The Russell Reservoir fails to fulfill the requirements of either of these historical definitions of region. We have noted at numerous points in the text the difficulty in abstracting our regional behavior from statistics on the larger counties which contribute to the area. Statements such as "although calculated for Elbert County as a whole, these numbers can be applied to the reservoir" are frequently interspersed throughout this report. County-wide statistics do provide a gross level of documentation for our region, but we do not and cannot know whether our particular portion of the county varied greatly from the whole. Nor does the Russell Reservoir meet the requirements of a cultural-environmental definition of region. The Savannah River, that environmental attribute selected by the Army Corps, was certainly of great importance to the area's inhabitants. Yet it did not give rise to any particular cultural enterprise. Its power was never adequately harnessed for the development of a thriving industrial community; its numerous shoals and falls prohibited the Savannah from serving as a main transportation artery; and the river provided no particular benefits to the cotton economy. Based on traditional models, the Russell Reservoir cannot be considered as a region.

And yet it was. The area was clearly perceived as a unit by its inhabitants, who spoke in terms of local landmarks, places, persons, and events. Until the late nineteenth century the area was characterized by participation in a common economy, the agriculture of King Cotton. Although this agriculture was not limited to this one particular setting, and occurred throughout the Old South, historians recognize that the cotton economy of eastern Texas differed from that of the Mississippi delta or the Georgia Piedmont. While characteristic of the South as a whole, the cotton economy was at the same time a regional concern. Although separated into two states and four counties, the area's inhabitants regularly crossed legislated boundaries to sell cotton, visit neighbors and relatives, attend church, and pursue new economic opportunities. Politically defined lines on a map did not act as social limits. In seeking an explanation for why this particular place in time acted as a region, we are inevitably drawn to its isolation and self-sufficiency and to its inhabitant's identification with their landscape. Isolation characterized the reservoir from the frontier period up to the current century. Early routes of migration skirted the area; later, river transportation and overland routes proved difficult, and journeys to and from the region were infrequent. It was not until the arrival of the railroad in the late 1880s that the regional character of the reservoir began to vanish, a transition noted in the historic synthesis by the difficulty in characterizing the most recent history of the area.

Thus while it was not the intent of the Corps to select a reservoir project which could also serve as a regional history, they have none-the-less succeeded. Our experience in the reservoir investigations suggests that there are many more regions throughout the South than are generally recognized by historians and geographers. Geographers look for broad physiographic zones, historians for

political boundaries or regional economies, yet the research in the Russell Reservoir suggests that regions are also composed of a common history. The inhabitants of the reservoir knew of Millwood, of Pearle Mill, knew the various ferry crossings and farms which dotted the landscape, knew the destruction of the boll weevil and the wages of tenancy. This common knowledge is in part a feature of regional isolation, but is also a measure of tenacity. As our overview demonstrates, families have remained in the region for generations, and can be traced from the early Antebellum period up to the present.

The agricultural heritage of the area certainly accounts for much of this regional coherence. Yet the agrarian ties to the land were not simply a product of economics; as the oral history suggests, the landscape possessed the region's history. The words of Windell Cleveland, of the Alexander-Cleveland farm, in response to the loss of his family farm, bear hearing (in Worthy 1983:107).

It's not takin' your life, but in other words, its the same as takin' your life -- takin' something you've worked for years to build up.... Land is precious, I tell you, people just don't realize what it means."

In the reservoir, land meant history. From the White sister's cabbage palm to Windell Cleveland's farm, the area's history was clearly expressed in terms of physical landmarks. But how and why do such landmarks serve as historic references? An answer comes in part from a distant region, the western Pacific, and the work of Bronislaw Malinowski (1922). In *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, Malinowski attempted to explain why the Trobriand islanders carried out the cultural tradition of the kula ring, a trade network in which the kula objects were continually in exchange, and never owned. Malinowski noted that the kula provided a means of regulating trade, and of providing entrepots to hostile territory, but the kula was also a means of expressing Trobriand history. The kula objects themselves had names and personal histories; by continually trading these objects history was shared, and each "owner" became part of this history. Malinowski also noted that the trade route among the various islands was a refresher course in Trobriand mythology and history; various reefs and islands had associated mythologies. All history is, in a sense, mythology, a means of explaining the present by past events. In traditional culture, mythology is transmitted verbally, while modern societies record history in print. Yet even where recorded history exists, oral history continues. By connecting oral history to points on the landscape, history is given a frame of reference. Thus Henry Cook, a grand-nephew of Ezekiel Clinkscales, remembers that his uncle took him to "where a band of friendly Cherokee Indians had camped for many years in a cane brake on the 'bottoms'" (in Gray 1983:46). Ezekiel Clinkscales was born in 1861; it is unlikely that he ever witnessed a band of friendly Indians camping near the river. Yet the story lives in the Clinkscales oral history, a survival made possible by its connection to the landscape and thus its physical reality.

Regional loyalty, this sedentary aspect of southern culture, has frayed in the past decades as the old ties of agriculture have released man from the land. It is likely that there were many other regions across the South, places where history was shared as a common bond, and that these regions are now disappearing. We are

fortunate to have encountered one while its identity was still known.

The first historical perceptions of the region cast its isolated wilderness against the canvas of an industrial and agrarian community. Naturalist William Bartram noted the "solitary" aspect of the region, its isolation, inaccessibility, and "uncultivated" nature. Bartram offset this wilderness with the vision of a garden, a "country which promises plenty and felicity." The industrial potential of the region was noted, the river was cited for its numerous "convenient places for erecting Saw and Grist Mills." The intent for this region appears to have followed the settlement plan employed in New England; small farms would intermesh with mills and other industry, and provide a haven of white society against the perceived threat of the growing coastal slave population.

Life on this frontier proved difficult, and as would be a pattern in later years, isolation characterized the European presence in the area. Fortifications of the region, such as Fort Independence, appear to have consisted primarily of stockaded homesites, where settlers could seek protection during times of warfare. The fortified homesite was a characteristic of other frontier regions, and reflects local adaptation to isolation and distance from established communities. In general, the project area's frontier is characterized by hostilities between whites and indians throughout most of the Colonial period, and trade and other cross-cultural interaction apparently did not occur in this setting. The Russell Reservoir reminds us that there were two types of frontiers: an active frontier, characterized by cultural conflict between native groups and the new arrivals; and a passive frontier, in which these groups coexisted peacefully. The project area is an example of the former.

The agrarian-industrial community envisioned by Georgia's and South Carolina's political leadership never developed in the project area. In part, this was due to the expansion of the southern frontier during the period from 1790 through the 1840s. As better lands became available, or at least the promise of better lands, settlers of the project area continued the westward migration which had brought them to the region. This "leap-frogging" settlement characterized the region until the early nineteenth century. The invention of the cotton gin, and the increasing value of short-staple cotton on the world market, caused the spread of plantation agriculture and the rise of King Cotton. By the 1810s and 1820s the project area had clearly entered the cotton economy. Those regional towns which had started in the Colonial period slowly faded from the landscape, as the plantation became the nucleus of social and economic interaction. The industrial development of the period was also geared toward the plantation economy; the mills that existed primarily produced flour and lumber. Finished products were purchased from outside the region, and the area's planters traded and interacted with factors in Augusta, Savannah, and Charleston. The Savannah River provided one avenue for the transit of items, while roads connected the region with market communities on its periphery. In general, transportation was difficult, and this difficulty partially explains the region's lagging role in the cotton economy, as its one time dominance was assumed by plantations centered on the Mississippi drainage.

The Civil War was a distinct event in the history of the South, and one which has received prominence in southern historiography. While the War and the abolition of slavery were fundamental changes for southern culture, the research conducted in the project area suggests that the transformations which occurred following the War were not as great have been described, or as might be imagined. Cotton continued to dominate the regional culture. Blacks continued to comprise the bulk of the agricultural work force. Whites continued to direct black labor and to receive the greatest share of profit. The most dramatic change in the regional culture, as presented by the project research, was the shift from nucleated to dispersed settlement which characterized the transition from slavery to tenancy. The research conducted in the reservoir indicates that this shift was not an immediate reaction to emancipation, but followed a period of consideration during which blacks and whites sorted through their objectives and desires. In the end, blacks relinquished political and economic power for privacy and personal authority, while whites gave up authority in exchange for political control and profit. This resolution of the War's outcome is the impetus behind the settlement pattern shift. Under tenancy, the material life of blacks appears to have improved only slightly over that experienced during slavery. For white landowners, the postbellum culture was harsher, and a number of planters lost the fortunes they had established prior to the War.

The region continued to function in isolation throughout most of the postbellum period. With the exception of the shift from slavery to tenancy, there is little to distinguish the postbellum years from those of the antebellum. Cotton was the main product of the region; mills continued to serve the regional economy as opposed to a national economy. There was greater urbanization in the region after the War, as small towns developed, housing basic services once provided by the plantations. Regional isolation and regional character were removed with the arrival of the railroads in the 1880s. With their arrival, industry shifted its attention from flour and lumber to textiles; towns developed around railroad depots, where merchants served functions once available only in cities like Augusta; transportation within and beyond the area was facilitated. Regional identity began to erode. This process was accelerated by the arrival of the boll weevil and the cotton depression of the 1920s. As cotton agriculture became unprofitable, so did tenancy, and tenants either abandoned or were forced off their farms, and sought employment in other climates. Later, many blacks returned to their birthplace for retirement, and brought with them the realization of their degradation in the South, a knowledge that fanned the flames of the civil rights movement. Whites left the region or found employment in local textile mills, which provided few jobs to blacks until the 1960s. Elberton's granite industry provided some jobs; farming provided very few. Agriculture remained profitable, but under a new organization featuring a diversity of crops and employing machinery instead of men. The human bond to the landscape was broken.

The region's landscape was scarred by the wounds of two centuries of intensive agriculture. Slowly this landscape has healed, and new forests have risen from once plowed fields. This reforestation was noted in the survey as an impediment to site identification. It has also masked the region's history. The sense of loss is

best expressed by Blake Crocker's story of the search for his former home (in The History Group 1981):

I went down there where I... farmed.... I lived in this one place and rented this one-mule farm.... There was an old gin-house there and I made a barn, a big barn. And I went in there, it wasn't too long ago, just looking around, you know, like you could go back to it. And I couldn't locate the place exactly where the house stood; it done growed up with such trees and things that it just didn't look like the same country. There was wilderness on each side and I couldn't tell exactly.... Of course, I didn't stop, I was just riding down the road looking and trying to figure it out. And I never did figure out exactly where that old place was at.

With the closing of the flood gates in 1983, the region has vanished. We hope this report has presented, if not exactly, at least some sense of the history of this region, some measure of where "that old place was at."