Colburn's Investigation of the Dillard Mound (aka J.J. Greenwood Mound), Rabun County, Georgia.

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The LAMAR Institute
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By Daniel T. Elliott

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Introduction

The Dillard Mound, also known as the J.J. Greenwood Mound, is located in northern Rabun County, Georgia on the east side of the Little Tennessee River. It is an earthen mound constructed by aboriginal peoples in the Late Lamar phase of the Late Mississippian period of Georgia’s prehistory.

The Dillard Mound is recorded in the Georgia Archaeological Site file as site 9RA3 (Hally 1989). Figure 1 shows the location of the Dillard Mound. Figure 2 shows a recent aerial image of the site from Google Earth (2010). Figure 3 shows a view of the mound in the 1930s. Figure 4 shows a view of the mound about 1961 (Courtesy of UNC Archaeological Research Laboratory, Chapel Hill). No detailed site plan is available for the site. This report on the Dillard Mound is a revision and expansion of two articles by Daniel Elliott that originally appeared in Volume 21 (Spring/Summer 1993) issue of the LAMAR Briefs. A 10-year compilation of the LAMAR Briefs, edited by Williams, is available on the internet at the LAMAR Institute’s website. The original offerings by Elliott included: “Preface to Colburn’s Report”, by Daniel T. Elliott and; “The Investigation of the J. J. Greenwood Mound, near Dillard, Georgia, by William B. Colburn”. This information on the Dillard Mound site is augmented with additional research conducted by the authors, as part of the LAMAR Institute’s Skeletons in the Closet Initiative, on the Colburn brothers (William B. and Burnham S.) and their involvement in the archaeology and geology of Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

The report is organized into five chapters. Chapter 2 contains historical and biographical background information about the Dillard Mound and the Colburn’s involvement at the site. Chapter 3 is a transcription of William B. Colburn’s unpublished report. Chapter 4 contains field drawings and photographic images from Colburn’s excavations at Dillard Mound. This is followed by the conclusions in Chapter 5. The report ends with a complete bibliography of references cited.
Figure 1. Location of Dillard Mound (9RA3), Rabun County, Georgia (ESRI 2012).
Figure 2. Aerial View of Dillard Mound, Courtesy of Google Maps (Google 2010).

Figure 3. Dillard Mound in 1930s.

Figure 4. View of Dillard Mound circa 1961, Courtesy of UNC Archaeological Research Laboratory, Chapel Hill.
Historical Background

The Dillard Mound, also known as the J. J. Greenwood Mound, presently recorded in the Georgia Archaeological Site Files as Site 9RA3, is a medium-sized truncated pyramidal earthen mound located in the Little Tennessee River floodplain in Rabun County, Georgia. The site was originally listed in the Georgia site files by Robert Wauchope (1966:167) with additional documentation by Teri Smith in 1979 and David J. Hally in 1989.

Artifact collections from Dillard Mound are located at the University of Georgia, Laboratory of Archaeology (UGA Catalogue Numbers 22602 and 31445), the Smithsonian Institution, Museum of Natural History, and possibly elsewhere.

Although two archaeological excavation projects (Colburns and Hally) have been mounted at the site, it remains poorly understood in social and political terms. Despite the abuses that this mound has endured (from erosion and archaeologists), the base of the remains largely intact and its associated village is essentially unexplored.

A short article concerning William B. Colburn's excavations at the J. J. Greenwood Mound site was published in 1936 in the Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters (Colburn 1936). At the end of this article Colburn lists his affiliation with the Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. This article focused on a stone alignment that was found south of the large mound, and which Colburn interpreted as a Cherokee "bowling alley" for beveled stone discoidsals. Colburn's article consisted of 3.5 pages of text, two plan drawings, and three photographs.

This important site has received precious little additional attention since Colburn's visit. Archaeologist Robert Wauchope (1966:47) mentioned Colburn's work on the site in his survey of northern Georgia. Both authors of this monograph made independent discoveries (actually rediscoveries) of this site early in their careers. Williams rediscovered the mound while on his first honeymoon in 1969.

The present author first “discovered” Dillard Mound in 1977, during a reconnaissance survey by the University of Georgia, Department of Anthropology for a series of rip-rap erosion control feature locations in the Little Tennessee River for the USDA, Soil Conservation Service (Jefferies et al. 1978).

A local guide during the 1977 survey, U.S.D.A. Soil Conservationist Beecher Bleckley, stated that this mound and possibly one other were located in this stretch of the Little Tennessee River valley. Upon viewing the other location, however, Elliott determined it to be a large natural knob surrounded by floodplain.

Cyrus Thomas lists an earthen mound in Rabun County in his 1891 publication (Thomas 1891:52). Thomas noted, "Mound on the east bank of Tennessee River, just below the junction on Mill Creek.” This site, which has not been relocated in modern times, is designated Site 9RA4 in the Georgia Archaeological Site File, based on Thomas’ brief description.
Limited test excavations were conducted on the mound in 1987 by the University of Georgia, Department of Anthropology, under the direction of David J. Hally and Marshall W. Williams. No formal report of their work is available, although Hally notes that Etowah and Lamar components were identified in their excavation (Hally 1989). Wynn (1990:54-55) briefly discussed the site in his review of Mississippian research in Georgia's Blue Ridge Mountain province, noting, “Dillard (9Ra3, also called Greenwood) Mound, while initially built during early Etowah, was augmented during early Tugalo, and possibly completed by 18th century Cherokees. Test excavations in 1981 by David Hally and Marshall Williams indicate Lamar Incision, complicated stamping, and folded pinched rims. The rim width measurements ranged from 11.9 mm to 19.9 mm, suggesting Late Lamar occupation. Hally feels ceramic traits indicate Dillard mound was built during early Tugalo phase, about A.D.1500, a bit earlier than Barnett at Carter’s Lake.” Smith (1992:46-47) added, “Some European material has been recovered from this site, and it is likely that it is the location of Old Estatoe of the early eighteenth-century (B. Smith 1979: Map 2; Marshall Williams, personal communication)”. To date, no report of Hally and Williams 1987 test excavations at 9RA3 has been written.

In March, 1993 in a reconnaissance visit to the Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, this author [Elliott] rediscovered documentation and artifacts related to Colburn's excavations at Greenwood Mound during the early 1930s at the Smithsonian Institution. One portion of this research discovery was a report written in 1932 by William B. Colburn to Neil M. Judd, Curator of Archaeology at the Smithsonian (Glenn 1992; William B. Colburn 1932a). That document is transcribed in the following chapter. A set of photographs showing the excavation in progress is not reproduced, but are available at the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, for examination. A site plan map drawn by Colburn was transmitted to Neil Judd in February, 1932 (Burnham Colburn 1932b-c).

Frank M. Setzler, Jr., an archaeologist with the Smithsonian Institution, visited the Colburns in North Carolina to examine their collection in 1931. He documented this visit and his notes are preserved in the National Anthropological Archives but these have not been examined by the authors (Setzler 1931).

A small type collection of pottery from the Greenwood Mound site was presented in 1944 to the U.S. National Museum by Burnham S. Colburn, William Colburn's brother, where it is housed as Accession 172293, Catalogue Number 388121. This type collection consists of one drawer of pottery sherds, which was examined by Elliott in the Museum of Natural History basement (Washington, D.C.) in March, 1993 and found to contain predominately Lamar ceramics. The collection, which has since been transferred to the Suitland, Maryland repository, was not completely analyzed due to research constraints. A recent online query of the National Museum of Natural History's Anthropology collection identified it as containing “ca. 50” potsherds from Dillard, Rabun County, Georgia. The collection was acquired by the
Smithsonian Institution from Burnham S. Colburn in February, 1946. Although the museum possesses other collections by Colburn, including material from Bartow County, Georgia and sites in North Carolina and Tennessee, only one accession comes from the Dillard Mound.

Other information about the work at Greenwood Mound is contained in letters to and from Neil Judd and the Colburns which are curated in the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. Judd also prepared a 20-page catalog of the materials donated to the museum by Burnham Colburn (Judd ca. 1944). Judd’s catalog of the Colburn collection has not been examined by the authors.

Although there is considerable overlap in the content of Colburn’s 1936 article and his 1932 excavation report, the unpublished excavation report contains many details not found in his publication. The report shows that the excavations were far more extensive than described in print, including two excavations on the summit of the large mound, extensive excavation on the southern slope of the mound, and near complete excavation of the smaller mound. Extensive deposits of pottery and pipes were encountered south of the mound. According to the report there were more than 32 cubic feet of sherds recovered from the site, and the present whereabouts of these collections is unknown. Two burials, at least two occupation floors with hearths, a possible crematorium, and numerous post molds were found within the mound. There are significant differences between Colburn’s 1932 plan map and that published in his 1936 article. Please notice that the North-South grid designations are entirely changed. Both are reproduced here for comparison. Together, these two versions of Colburn's excavations provide a greater understanding of this important mound site. This mound was excavated in the transition from the William K. Moorehead school of “mound plundering” and the more methodic WPA-era of mound research.

Who were the Colburns, and what was their role in Georgia archaeology? The Colburn family moved from New England to settle in Detroit, Michigan in the late 1800s, where they became pillars of the community. William Cullen Colburn, the father of Burnham and William B. Colburn, was the president of the Detroit Bridge and Iron Works, which meant that his children were part of the elite Detroit society (Leake 1912:666). The letterhead on some of these letters show that both William and Burnham Colburn were affiliated with Biltmore Forest, Biltmore, North Carolina during the 1930s. A brief bit of biographical research demonstrates that the Colburns were wealthy industrialists and financiers with a strong interest in geology and archaeology. Their brief foray into northern Georgia marks an important event in Georgia archaeology. Unfortunately, it is a tale only partly told.

Burnham Standish Colburn, Sr. was the older brother of William Bennet Colburn (Figures 5 and 6). Burnham was born on December 1872 in Detroit, Michigan. Burnham graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering (University of Michigan 1902:152).
In 1900 Burnham a single man living in Buffalo City, Erie, New York (U.S. Census 1900). Around 1902, Burnham married Elizabeth G Pierce (Ancestry.com 2010). In 1910, Burnham and Elizabeth had a family of four and were living in Detroit, Michigan (U.S. Census 1910). A 1912 history of Detroit identifies him as “Burnie Colburn” (Leake 1912:348). Burnham was a wealthy man, serving as Vice President of the People’s State Bank of Detroit, Michigan and as retired director of the Canadian Bridge Company (Alexander 2008:113). By 1920, Burnham was living in Asheville, North Carolina with his wife Elizabeth and five children (U.S. Census 1920). He served as president of the First National Bank and Trust Company in Asheville, North Carolina. He also served as treasurer of the Biltmore Estate Company from 1933-1953. He died on December 26, 1959 at his home in the Biltmore Forest, Buncombe County, North Carolina (Schaller 1961; North Carolina Death Certificates, 1909-1975, Ancestry.com 2010). Burnham Colburn’s association with the Biltmore Forest spanned many decades. He and his brother, William, helped to found the Southern Appalachian Mineral Society in 1931. Burnham accumulated a large collection of mineral specimens, mostly from North Carolina (Federal Writer’s Project 1939:146; Lininger 1992). The collection also included many Indian relics, as noted in a 1939 guidebook, “The Colburn Museum (open to mineralogists by permission of owner) at the residence of Burnham S. Colburn, Greystone Court, Biltmore Forest, contains one of the finest collections of southern Appalachian minerals and Cherokee Indian relics in existence…The Cherokee relics include ancient clay pots found in graves, stone weapons, and gorgets, carved from conch shells”. The Colburn Earth Science Museum continues today as a testament to the Colburn’s involvement in geological exploration in North Carolina. Mineral specimens from their collection are also held by the British Museum, the Cranbrook Institute of Science, the McKissick Museum and the Smithsonian Institution (Colburnmuseum.org 2010). Burnham Colburn purchased the George Barnes collection of Indian relics, which he added to his museum at Biltmore Forest prior to 1931 (Armstrong 1931:93-94). Barnes collection, which was mostly from Tennessee, also included some items from Georgia.

On February 19, 1932, Burnham Colburn wrote to Neil Judd, Curator at the Smithsonian Institution, in which Colburn mentioned the recent discoveries at Dillard Mound made by...
his brother, noting, “he reported the location of three distinct Chunky fields” (Burnham Colburn 1932a:1).

Shortly thereafter, Burnham Colburn conveyed a lot of field photographs and sketch maps of the Dillard Mound to the Smithsonian Institution, which he briefly described in a letter to Neil Judd on February 28, 1932, “You will find enclosed herewith a set of photographs, each with a brief description on the back, also a sketch map of the locality with locations of digging etc. and on the back of the sheet containing a map a plan of the eight foot cut into the center of the mound” (Burnham Colburn 1932b:1). Colburn continued, “I am going to Dillard tomorrow, Monday, for the day and will be home again Monday evening. If you or any of your assistants can come down to look over the situation we would be delighted, and particularly so if you could come in person, and we would be glad to turn over the balance of work to you so that we would know that no scientific facts are overlooked and that a Smithsonian report would cover the matter if you believe the subject deserves this handling. If you will telegraph me… I will arrange to meet you or your representative at any time at the Biltmore station of the Southern Railway and after breakfasting here take you to Dillard. In the mean time nothing there will be disturbed or moved or further investigated but the surplus earth will be removed and everything cleared up for your easy inspection and investigation as you should direct” (Burnham Colburn 1932b:1).

Neil Judd’s reply to Burnham Colburn was written on March 1, 1932, contained his regrets, “Unfortunately, there is no one here just at this time who can get away to join you in the work at Dillard. Half our staff is in the field; the rest of us have to do double duty”, and Judd included this advice for the excavator William Colburn, “it is quite evident Brother Bill needs no help… No one may predict what the mound contains. That it was the site of the town house seems certain. You may find basal burials and even others in the overlying strata. Finding superposed floor levels indicates successive periods of construction. I do not know what your upper and lower flat stones may signify, if anything. Neither can I say what the piles of small stones mean. They may cover burials and they may not. Heye found burials under similar piles at Nacoochee, if I recall correctly… Setzler and I will be glad to assist in so far as we can from our desks here” (Judd 1932:1).

Burnham Colburn conveyed to the U.S. National Museum a lot of pottery sherds from the Dillard mound, or a “Mound ½ mi. NE. of Dillard, Rabun Co., Georgia”, which was catalogued as #388121 and given Accession# 172293. This collection, which has not been formally analyzed, includes approximately 140 sherds exhibiting bold incised, stamped and punctuated decorations (Judd ca. 1944).

William Bennet Colburn was the younger brother of Burnham Colburn and a more obscure figure in history. He was born in either Canada or Michigan on December 2, 1882. In 1900 he was living with his parents, William Cullen Colburn and Mary Augustus Standish Colburn, in Detroit, Michigan (U.S. Census 1900). In 1910 William was living in a boarding house in Detroit, Michigan (U.S. Census 1910). A 1912
history of Detroit identifies him as “Willie Colburn” (Leake 1912:348). He married Lucy R. [undetermined maiden name] in Michigan about 1912 and the couple was divorced in Michigan about 1920 (Ancestry.com 2010). The couple had two children who were born in 1912 and 1914. In 1932 William Colburn began his association with the Cranbrook Institute in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. He remained associated with Cranbrook as a member of the Board of Trustees until 1944 (Huff 2008).


Although William Bennet Colburn’s biography is sketchier than that of his brother, it is from William that we learn most of what occurred at the Dillard Mound excavations (Colburn 1932a-b, 1936). Like his brother, William had a strong interest in gems and minerals (Colburn 1992a-b).

Dear Mr. Judd:

I am sending you the complete set of photographs of the work done at the J.J. Greenwood Mound, at Dillard, Georgia, together with photographs taken here in the Museum of some of the discoids, the broken pipes, and a representative showing of the potsherds.

We have not the space to really study the potsherds as I would like to, but are preserving them all with the idea of doing this when we have a museum with adequate work room. I do not believe that we have photographed more than a third of the patterns and different rims of these pots, but hope that the photographs that we have sent will give you a good idea of the type of things we ran into.

Under separate cover I am sending you two maps and the diagram of the field rocks forming the business end of the bowling alley for your suggestions before I finish them. As you will note in the large scale of the mound proper I have left practically everything in lead pencil, as I do not know exactly what are the important items to ink in to reduce to a more convenient size for our permanent record. I would appreciate very much your looking these over and returning them to me with instructions. I want you to be absolutely candid and write me full instructions as to the whole thing and I will consider it a very great favor for you to criticize fully.

I am also sending you an unembroidered account of the work, which of course could be very much elaborated and humanized by the
insertion of some of the local color which always accompanies the excavation of a mound, but which I did not think that you wanted, at least at present... (Colburn 1932b:1).

William Colburn's manuscript account of his investigations at the Dillard Mound, a transcript of which is reproduced in the next chapter, was made by this author [Elliott] from a typescript copy on file in the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution. The original document is currently archived in its facility in Suitland, Maryland.
The Investigation of the J.J. Greenwood Mound, Near Dillard, Georgia, By William B. Colburn, 1932

The J. J. Greenwood Mound is situated one-half mile northeast of the village of Dillard, Georgia, one-quarter of a mile east of the main road between Franklin, N. C., and Clayton, Georgia, and about two miles south of the North Carolina line. It rests in a sheltered valley, through which runs the Little Tennessee River, which has its source in the mountains a few miles from this spot.

On January 28, 1932, the writer, accompanied by Mr. Milkey, a government surveyor from Franklin, N. C., assisted by the owner and two men, surveyed the mound and its immediate surroundings and enclosed the mound proper in a rectangle one hundred and seventy-six and one-half feet long by one hundred and thirty-five feet wide, placing posts at intervals of fifteen feet, as shown on the accompanying map.

On February 1st the actual work of excavation commenced with the digging of a five-foot trench between the five and ten-foot lines at the southerly end of the rectangle. This trench was excavated to a depth of approximately two inches below the undisturbed earth and entirely crossed the width of the rectangle, except for two and one-half feet at each side. At the easterly end of this trench the depth necessary was approximately three feet. At the westerly end it proved to be slightly over five feet.

This trench was purposely excavated below the mound proper, and as very few potsherds and no charcoal was found in either end of this trench, it was decided to continue the excavation towards the mound on a sixty-foot front, thirty feet on each side of the center or zero post.

The method employed from this point on was by completely excavating in five-foot strips so that at each five-foot line the face of the wall could be carefully examined, of course noting anything of importance uncovered during the work.

During the first ten feet of this work a great quantity of potsherds was found with considerable charcoal, broken pipes, and a few discoidal stones. No stratification was evident in the walls and the condition of the potsherds indicated that this had evidently been dirt graded down from the mound during many years of plowing and that the original mound had not been reached.

During the excavation of the third five-foot strip in the sixty-foot cut, at a depth of approximately three feet, at the easterly end a number of field stones were discovered which upon being carefully cleared were found to be placed in a definite pattern. To the West of these stones for a distance of fifteen feet at the same level with them were smooth hard-baked clay runways, which were only partially uncovered when a cloudburst destroyed all possibilities of taking a complete photograph, of what I believe to have been some kind of a bowling alley.

The field stones were arranged when originally uncovered in three lines of three squares each on three different levels, approximately six inches high, one below the other and an opening to each line of squares at the left hand side. Between the upper and the one next below there appears to have been some kind of a plank lying in the ground at a level with the hard-baked clay to the west of the squares. The arrangement is indicated on the accompanying sketch and the arrangement of the field rocks is still somewhat outlined in the photograph taken immediately after the cloudburst.

To the west and at both sides of the hard baked clay runways were eventually found some thirty-two discoidal stones,
a good proportion of these with beveled edges so that when rolled they would take a natural curve. No discoidal stones were found hollowed in the center.

The next five-foot cut still showed no signs of the original mound contours but an increase of potsherds and charcoal was noted in the westerly half.

The five-foot cut between the thirty and thirty-five foot lines showed the first signs of mound contours and in the westerly half continued the profusion of broken pottery, pipes, and discoidal stones. The east end, however, of approximately fifteen feet, below a depth of six inches, was entirely barren of either potsherds or charcoal. In the next five-foot cut there appeared a marked decrease in the potsherds and charcoal at the west end and an entire absence of either at the east end. Therefore it was decided to continue this cut from the forty-foot line on a forty-five foot front from the east fifteen-foot point to the west thirty-foot point. This cut was continued for a distance of twenty feet towards the center of the mound or to the sixty-foot line, each five-foot strip showing less and less of potsherds or charcoal.

During this excavation I had talked with a number of farmers who had lived in this vicinity for a great many years and had learned that originally there had been a small mound close to the larger one, due South from it, and while the work was going on in our main cut I excavated as shown on the map, but found only a profusion of broken pottery and broken pipes. This excavation was all done to an inch or two below the undisturbed dirt.

On account of the disappearance of the potsherds and charcoal in the main cut or any signs of burials, an eight-foot cut was made between the ninety-second and one-hundred-foot lines from the western side of the mound directly towards the center, completely excavating this trench. This work progressed at the same time with the main cut to a point nineteen feet from the center post of the mound, before finding anything more than layers of charcoal and burned clay. At this point immediately on the floor of the cut at a point designated as (92-93)-(W18-19) a pile of small field rocks were uncovered which seemed to be definitely arranged and pointing towards the southerly wall, at which point we tunnelled [sic] for a distance of three feet and found two larger field rocks placed at a level five inches higher than the smaller rocks and twelve inches to the South. In continuing the excavation of this eight-inch trench, on a level fifty inches higher, a large flat rock, evidently well burned, was found at a point designated on the map as (95 1/2-97)-(W16-17), and thirty-three inches higher, still another flat rock was found at (98-99) - (W11 1/2-12 1/2) and eighty-two inches higher than this stone, was found what is thought to be a cremation bowl formed of fitted flat rocks, so that the edges, which were roughly rounded, would form a hollow bowl, the rim of which was approximately three inches higher than the center of the whole. This was located at 93 1/2-W5 and was fifteen inches below the surface of the top of the mound, as it then existed.

After uncovering these four items in the eight-foot trench the men were transferred to the seventy-five foot line from W15 to E20, where a trench five feet wide, or to the eighty-foot line, was excavated to a depth of approximately six feet at the center. No potsherds, bones, or other signs, with the exception of charcoal, were discovered. However, in the next cut, between the eighty-foot and eighty-five foot lines two different floor levels were found and cleared, the lower one having a number of field stones scattered over it, as shown in the picture of this section. Between the eighty-five foot and ninety-foot lines in the same cut the floor level at the top remained the same, while the lower floor was some six inches higher than in the previous five-foot cut. Also post holes were found at three different points, the westerly one at 90-W11 1/2; the next at 85-W4 1/2; and the third at 84-E11. A burial was also found at a
depth of four feet at (88-90)-(E12-15). This was found to be in such a bad state of decomposition that it could not be prepared for a satisfactory picture and it was impossible to tell in what position the body had been buried. The trowel in the picture is pointing to one of the thigh bones. One arrowhead was found with this body.

As this last cut had left only a two-foot wall between this cut and the eight-foot cut, work was commenced on a five-foot trench between (90-125)-(E35-30). This was excavated only to a depth of approximately three feet so that it would coincide with the deepest part of the last cut. A post hole was found at 93-E29. In the next five-foot cut towards the center of the mound two floors, about six inches apart, were found at depths of approximately two and a half feet and three feet, a fire-place being located on the higher at (103 1/2-108)-(E22-24 1/2) and on the lower at (90-95)-(E22-24 1/2), and a post hole through the center of this fireplace at 93-E23. The next excavation was seven feet in width towards the center of the mound, in which both these floor levels continued, and another fire-place was located at (97 1/2-102)-(E17-19 1/2) and immediately beside it, to the South, a burial was found at a depth of four feet, six inches lower than the fireplace. This burial was in the same condition as the other and nothing was found with it.

When the work at the mound had progressed to this point it was visited by Dr. Warren King Moorehead and it was decided to complete the excavation of the eight-foot cut and an additional ten feet which would cut the center of the mound. This was completed some few days later and as nothing in the way of burials or relics of any kind were discovered, the work was abandoned. However, near the bottom of this cut five new post holes were found, approximately on the one hundred foot line, between W19 and 11, at approximately two feet intervals. These post holes extended above the floor for a distance of about three and a half feet and into the undisturbed dirt for about an additional twelve inches. All of the post holes found in this mound contained a small amount of charcoal, the burned remnants of the original posts. The posts on the floor of this eight-foot cut were of approximately the same diameters, of about four and a half inches. One large post hole was found at 96-E7 with a diameter of ten inches. The bottom of this post hole was only five feet below the surface of the mound.

In caving in the wall running north and south, on the line between the E18 posts, a post hole was found at 100-E18, its bottom being twelve inches below the bed of the fire-place, which may have been used for some sacrificial purpose.

In exploring the immediate vicinity of the mound a deposit of white pipe clay was located one hundred and fifty yards northeast from the center of the mound through which ran the drain ditch shown on the large map, and less than a quarter of a mile southeast of the mound, on the banks of Kelly Creek, there is a deposit of red clay suitable for making of pottery and pipes. It was also found that the channel of the Little Tennessee River had originally been within eighty feet of the mound and due south of it, as shown by the dotted lines on the map. The course of this stream was changed to facilitate farming in this valley.

One of the interesting finds made close to the bowling alley was a discoidal stone of the beveled edge type from which one large flake had been chipped off. This chip was discovered three days after the stone itself was recovered some fifteen feet away, and upon being placed in position on the originally stone showed clearly that after breaking off of this chip the discoidal was reworked by the Indians. Also several discoidals were found made of a mica schist. These, of course, were very roughly finished but were interesting from the amount of sparkle from the mica.
No complete pots were found, but sixteen cartons of over two cubic feet capacity each were filled with potsherds from the early excavations before reaching the mound proper. These potsherds, while fragmentary, show a great many different types of designs, from very rough with little decoration to very highly incised and paddle decorated bowls and urns, some of which must originally been two or three feet in diameter. A few of these designs are shown in the accompanying photographs of potsherds recovered during this work (Colburn 1932a).
Images of Dillard Mound

This section contains several images pertaining to Dillard Mound and William Colburn’s excavations. Figure 7 shows Colburn and his work crew at the site in 1932. Figure 8 is a field sketch of the mounds and the excavation plan. Figure 9 is a modified version of the plan, which was published. The excavation plan differs between these two maps. Other differences include the inclusion of two smaller excavation areas (B and C) on the field plan, which is not shown on the published version. Also the main excavation area is considerably large on the field sketch than on the published version. Figure 10 is a field plan view of an “8 foot cut” (B on Figure 8) into the west side of Dillard Mound. Figure 11 is a photograph of the excavated “bowling alleys” at Dillard Mound. Figure 12 is the published sketch of the “eastern end of the bowling alleys”. Figure 13 is a photograph of a cremation with ceramics excavated by Colburn in Dillard Mound. Figure 14 is a 1993 photograph of the Smithsonian Institution’s ceramic type collection from Dillard Mound, when the collection was curated in the basement of the National Museum of Natural History. This collection has since been transferred to its Suitland, Maryland curatorial facility. Figure 15 is a photograph of an unusual form of a Lamar phase vessel sherd from Dillard Mound, also taken in 1993 at the National Museum of Natural History.

Figure 7. William Colburn (far right) and His Excavation Crew at J.J. Greenwood Mound (Cranbrook Archives 2008).
Figure 8. Burnham or William Colburn's Field Sketch of the J.J. Greenwood Mound Excavations, Prior to March 1, 1932 (Burnham Colburn 1932b-c).
Figure 9. Floor Plan of the J.J. Greenwood Mound, Near Dillard, Georgia (William Colburn 1936:2, Figure 1).
Figure 10. Burnham or William Colburn's Field Sketch of an “8 foot cut” in the J.J. Greenwood Mound Excavations, Prior to March 1, 1932 (Burnham Colburn 1932b-c).

Figure 11. Colburn's Suggested Bowling Alley at J.J. Greenwood Mound (Cranbrook Archives 2008).
Figure 12. The Eastern End of the Bowling Alleys (William Colburn 1936:4, Figure 2).
Figure 13. Cremation Vessel Excavated by Colburn at J.J. Greenwood Mound (Cranbrook Archives 2008).

Figure 14. Ceramics from Dillard Mound, 1946 Donation to Smithsonian Institution by Burnham S. Colburn (SI, NMNH Acc. 172293, Cat. A388121-0 (Elliott 1993).
Figure 15. Example of Lamar Ceramics from Dillard Mound (Elliott 1993).
Conclusions

Despite the number of preliminary studies that have been conducted by archaeologists at the Dillard Mound (9RA3), this site remains poorly understood. So what do we know about the site?

The site contains a single flat-topped earthen mound and a village area. The full extent of the village area is unknown and the full stratigraphic sequence for the mound remains undocumented. Early excavations by the Colburns revealed a series of linear stone alignments and clusters of stone discoidals that were interpreted as a “prehistoric bowling alley”, or some similar gaming place. The Colburns recovered a substantial ceramic sample from the site, but this collection at the Smithsonian Institute, National Museum of Natural History has not been analyzed.

A limited testing effort on the Dillard Mound by the University of Georgia in the early 1980s by David J. Hally remains unreported. No professional archaeology has been undertaken at 9RA3 since the incomplete work by Hally.

The current disposition and preservation trajectory for the Dillard Mound site (9RA3) is unknown. The site is privately owned and under no guarantee of any long-term preservation. It remains one of the few Mississippian settlements that have been identified in the headwaters region of the Little Tennessee River. This region has not been studied in depth and archaeologists have not established a ceramic sequence or cultural history for the Mississippian period in this portion of Georgia.

This monograph presented previously unpublished information about the Dillard Mound site and the previous archaeological work that was done there. Clearly, this is an important site that has the potential to instruct modern societies on the aboriginal settlement history of this portion of Georgia. Hopefully, the historic preservation prospects for the Dillard Mound and proper archaeological documentation by Hally and his colleagues are forthcoming.
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