

Preserving History Through Archaeology



December 2022
Volume XI, Issue 10

GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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Happy Holidays
from GARS and FDF

EDITOR:

Delana M. Gilmore, MA, RPA
Email: gwinnettarchaeology@gmail.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR:

Jim D'Angelo, PhD RPA
Email: 4drdee@bellsouth.net

Georgia's Places of Perils

The Georgia Trust's *Places in Peril* program seeks to identify and preserve historic sites threatened by demolition, neglect, lack of maintenance, inappropriate development, or insensitive public policy. The list raises awareness about Georgia's significant historic, archaeological and cultural resources. Through this program, the Trust encourages owners and individuals, organizations and communities to employ preservation tools, partnerships, and resources necessary to preserve and utilize selected historic properties in peril. Historic properties are selected for listing based on several criteria: Sites must be listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the Georgia Register of Historic Places; sites must be subject to a serious threat to their existence or historical, architectural, and/or archeological integrity; and there must be a demonstrable level of community commitment and support for the preservation of listed sites. In November the Georgia Trust chose the following sites for this year's *Places of Peril*:

- **229 Auburn Avenue** (Atlanta, Fulton County) is a contributing resource to the Sweet Auburn Historic District but is threatened due to past storm damage and being left vacant for years (*pictured left*).



- **Beulah Grove Lodge and School** (Douglasville, Douglas County) was built in 1910 to serve as a school on the first floor and a Masonic lodge on the second but is threatened due to deterioration because of its infrequent use.

- **Chickamauga Masonic Lodge No. 221** (Chickamauga, Walker County), organized by former enslaved and first-generation freed African Americans, built in 1924 after the previous building burned but though maintained by local Masons from other regional lodges is threatened due to the need of structural repairs.

• **Dasher High School** (Valdosta, Lowndes County) was built in 1928 as the third public high school for African Americans but as the only surviving building from that era has begun to be unsafe due to deterioration.

- **Dudley Motel, Café, and Service Station** (Dublin, Laurens County) opened in 1958 to accommodate African-American travelers during the Civil Rights era but is threatened due to being vacant since the 1980s.

- **Lee's Mill on the Flint River** (Forest Park, Clayton County) operated as a mill until 1933, though parts of mill dating back to the antebellum period, but has been threatened by industrial development and the frequent flooding of the Flint River (*pictured right*).



- **McConnell-Chadwick House** (Milton, Fulton County) was built in the late 1830s as the homestead for Brigadier General Eli McConnell, who had been authorized to mediate conflict between Native Americans and white settlers in the area but is threatened due to the rapidly expanding residential and commercial development.

- **Old Campbell County Courthouse** (Fairburn, Fulton County), though built in 1871, served as the courthouse for Campbell County until 1932 when Campbell was annexed into Fulton but is threatened due to damage from a recent fire.

- **Wilkes County Training School** (Washington, Wilkes County) was established in 1956 as an Equalization School combining roughly 40 rural African-American schools in Wilkes County but is threatened due to lack of maintenance resulting into its deterioration.

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- **Yates House** (Ringgold, Catoosa County) was completed in the late 1830s being one of the few remaining antebellum houses in Catoosa but located near a water source is threatened due to security issues and vandalism (*pictured right*).

Founded in 1973, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation works for the preservation and revitalization of Georgia's diverse historic resources and advocates their appreciation, protection, and use. As one of the country's leading statewide nonprofit preservation organizations, the Trust generates community revitalization by finding buyers for endangered properties acquired by its Revolving Fund and raises awareness of other endangered historic resources through an annual listing of [Georgia's Places in Peril](#). ■ GT



From the Vault: Pocket Knife

This time of the year brings back so many memories for me because, though it is the holidays, it is also my birthday. Growing up, my parents made sure that I always had a birthday celebration—even though it was a few days before Christmas (Santa even came to my birthday parties!). When I got older, I started to celebrate my birthday with my father, which was on December 4. Sadly, my father passed away in 1996 while I was still in college. Going through his things, my brothers and I came across several of his pocket knives that he got as gifts from family members or clients. There was one pocket knife (*pictured left*) that I kept because it was the one that my father always had in his pocket. Even though he had several, he always had this one in his pocket. I asked about it and my brothers stated that it was probably one of the first ones he owned. Some of you probably have seen me using at Fort Daniel or other functions that Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) or Fort Daniel Foundation (FDF) attended.

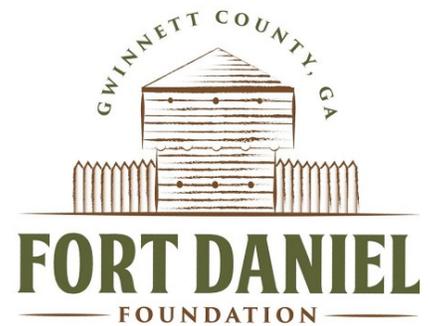


Now you are probably asking what does this have to do with this month's "From the Vault" selection? This month I wanted to highlight an artifact that probably had nothing to do with Fort Daniel or the men stationed there but is still a vital part of the history of the land that Fort Daniel resides on. In one of the cases along with other metal objects there sits a remnant of a pocket knife (*pictured on Page 4*) that was found during the early investigations at Fort Daniel. Because it was so poorly preserved, we cannot really date the artifact; therefore, we can only say that it dates from the 19th century or the 20th century—probably a time when the land was mostly used as agricultural fields. Though stating the obvious, the term *pocket knife* refers to a handled blade which can be carried within a person's pocket—the most common being one that "folds" or collapse into itself for easy, convenient, and safe portability.

The most early pocket knife originated somewhere in the Germanic regions of Europe and dates to between 600 and 500BCE.¹ These knives were primitive in construction and consisted of a plain handle and a somewhat unwieldy blade attached via a simple hinge—with no lock nor spring. By time of the Roman Empire technological advances were observed through the known world, and the pocket knife was no exception with the quality of materials improving. Ornate "friction folders" have been found made from copper, iron, and steel. At the same time in other parts of the world several cultures had developed their own versions of compact folding knives. For example, the Vikings created their own swiveling friction folders with iron blades and carved handles around the 8th to the 11th centuries. These types of folding knives (also known as penny, peasant, or farmers knives) were

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popular tool throughout both the Viking and Medieval periods, especially amongst craftsmen and in the agrarian communities.² By the 1600s a locking pocket knife was invented.

However, it wasn't until industrial changes in metallurgy that the pocket knife became available for everyone. Metal working greatly improved as blacksmiths developed better iron and finally steel. Sheffield, England had iron of excellent quality and were the first to make the first slip joint knife with a spring—resulting in a large volume of knives at a relatively low cost.³ The Sheffield pocket knives helped to lay the groundwork for establishing the standard for pocket knives.

By the 1890s revolutionary changes occur to the what would become the modern pocket knife. The Swiss government contracted Victorinox to develop a knife that their soldiers could use to open canned food. The



designer Karl Elsener created a pivot point mechanisms in the knife which made it possible to add many other hand tools⁴; thus the creation of the Swiss Army knife, which is still the benchmark of pocket knives.

How did the “Fort Daniel” pocket knife end up here? We don't know for sure, but mostly likely it fell out of a farmer or farmhand's pocket while he was tilling the fields that were cultivated over the remnants of Fort Daniel. ■ **DMG**

1. “The Complete History of the Pocket Knife.” Gallantry.com.

December 2022. <https://gallantry.com/blogs/journal/the-complete-history-of-the-pocket-knife#>.

2. Ibid.

3. “History and Origin of the Pocket Knife.” Hausoftools.com. December 2022. <https://hausoftools.com/blogs/news/history-and-origin-of-the-pocket-knife>.

4. Ibid.

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