

## Tanyard Archaeological Site Timeline

### 2001 - TE Grant and Archaeological Discovery

In 2001, The Jones County Commission obtained a Transportation Enhancement (TE) grant from the Georgia Department of Transportation that included funds for sidewalks and historic signage in Clinton. As a preliminary for the Clinton project, the Commission hired archaeologists Daphne Owens and Daniel Battle (Cypress Cultural Consultants, LLC) to survey a 13-acre tract owned by The Old Clinton Historical Society (OCHS) to determine locations for sidewalks and historical assets that should be preserved.

This led to the significant discovery of the remains of a c.1810 tanyard and bark mill built beside a creek just two years after the settlement of Clinton. In the 1820s, it was the most prosperous business in Clinton. It remained in business until it was destroyed by Federal soldiers when they occupied Clinton in November 1864.

Though locals were aware of the tannery, it had never before been investigated by professionals. The archaeologists were very excited by the discovery of what Mr. Battle called the best-preserved tannery of this era in the Southeast, relatively unaltered since its destruction in the last months of the Civil War.

### 2006 - Archaeological Site Study

In 2006, the same archaeologists conducted a site study funded by the Georgia Department of Transportation and the Jones County Commission. The project included mapping, ground penetrating radar (GPR), historic research, and limited archaeological testing.

A number of site features were identified including seven rectangular tanning-vat depressions where hides were soaked, a bark mill grinding stone, and walls of a structure. Small objects such as buttons and fragments of china, earthenware, and metal were unearthed.

A very interesting find was a Federal Infantry soldier's Eagle I button, a Civil War ration can, a 0.25cal. bullet casing, and a piece of jewelry were discovered in the soil next to a brick fireplace in the structure. This find and the burned floor boards at the base of the chimney indicated that Union soldiers were the last residents before the structure burned in a fire possibly set by these soldiers.

### 2016 - Clinton Tanyard Master Plan

In 2015, the Jones County Commission contracted with The Jaeger Company to develop a master plan for preservation and development of the tanyard site. The plan was presented to the Commission in 2016. Among the areas addressed in the plan were:

Protection of existing archaeological resources  
Education of the public through interpretive signs  
Provisions for tours – guided and self-guided  
Inclusion of an interpretive trail  
Connection to other historic resources both in the surrounding property and in Old Clinton  
Inclusion of field work with college and university archaeologists  
Stabilization of the stream bank

2017 - OCHS Begins Implementation of the Master Plan

First step: Stabilize site and clear land of privet and other undesirable vegetation.