

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)

Name of Building or Site

Common

Edgewood College Mound Group

Historic (if applicable)

Location

Street Address

855 Woodrow Street

Aldermanic District

Tenth

Classification

Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.)

Indian mounds

Zoning District

R2 W

Present Use

educational campus

Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's office)

Name (s)

Edgewood College and City of Madison

Street Address

855 Woodrow St, Madison, WI 53711
and Ste G-100, 215 Martin Luther
King Jr. Blvd., Madison, WI 53710

Telephone Number

257-4861 and 266-4222

Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)

Parcel Number

0709-272-0099-2
including Edgewood Drive right-
of-way

Legal Description

see page 2

Condition of Property

Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins)

good

Altered or Unaltered?

altered

Moved or Original Site?

not applicable

Wall Construction

not applicable

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

Legal Description:

Section 28, T7N, R9E, part of NE 1/4 beginning at intersection of Southwest line of Edgewood Avenue and Southeast line of Monroe Street; thence Southwest along Monroe Street to Woodrow Street; thence South along Woodrow to shore of Lake Wingra; thence Northeast along South shore to Southwest line of Edgewood Avenue; thence Northwest along said avenue to point of beginning. Also part of Southwest 1/4 of Section 22, NW 1/4 of Section 27 and NE 1/4 of 28 - contains 52 acres in all - 10 acres of which is exempt by law, 1.78 acres assessed to L.T. Crowley and valuation of for the remainder 40.22 acres.

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance.

The Edgewood College Mound Group Archaeological District contains a prehistoric aboriginal site originally composed of 15 mounds (elements) of which over 70% still exist. The group is located on the grounds of Edgewood College, a private educational institution. The site currently consists of 11, or possible 12, mounds in conical, linear and bird-effigy shapes. The mounds date to the Late Woodland Stage (ca. AD 650 - 1200) and are part of the Effigy Mound Tradition. The mound group is contained in two discontinuous areas with modern buildings and landscaping in between. These areas are labeled on the maps and in the text as Areas A and B. These areas contain elements (mounds) which have a common cultural affiliation however, the intervening space between the areas has lost its significance due to extensive construction damage.

Background

In 1881, Governor Cadwallader Colden Washburn donated his home and surrounding property (45 acres) to the Dominican Sisters to continue their teachings. In the early 1900s, the college was instrumental in preserving the mounds. For this reason the site is rare, many of the mounds in the group remain in good condition. Area B is currently a woodland within the college grounds. Area A is a very small undisturbed plot surrounded by college buildings. In the past, the district was used alternately as pasture and cultivated fields for the college programs.

The district is located on the north shore of Lake Wingra, or Duck Lake. Several accounts from the years of early Euro-American settlement record the excellent hunting of ducks and other birds on this lake in the spring and fall. These reminiscences also record historic aboriginal use of the lake for hunting, fishing and the gathering of wild rice. During much of the year, the lake was marshy and one account recalls the shallow nature of the lake which appeared in the summer months as a sea of reeds and rice (Brown, mss; 1915:81). The lake was fed by springs, one of which still exists on the Edgewood College grounds.

Archaeological interest in the mound groups of Lake Wingra began in 1850 with a survey by I.A. Lapham, who mapped a large group on the northwest area of the lake. Some of it is believed to be part of the Edgewood College Mound group (Lapham 1855: plat XXXII). T.H. Lewis surveyed in the Lake Wingra area in 1888 (Lewis mss). In 1906, A.B. Stout mapped the Edgewood College Mound Group, noticing that the mounds found within the college grounds had escaped the destruction that had claimed an adjacent group (the Jefferson Street Group), sometime between 1850 and 1906 (Brown 1915: 105). Stout's map shows 15 mounds at Edgewood, two of which had been damaged (Stout mss). Stout describes the group as such:

The mounds of this group are scattered over the slopes of the ridge bordering Lake Wingra at this point. They are not on the crest. Nos. 5 and 6 are beyond the highest line of the ridge, on nearly level land. Others are on the gentle slope bordering the lake. (Stout mas).

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In 1932 and 1939, C.E. Brown reported excavations conducted in three of the conical mounds where human burials were uncovered. Many of the mounds including the three that were excavated were repaired in the early decades of this century (Brown mss).

In February of 1990, a crew from the State Historical Society relocated and mapped the Edgewood College Mounds. Out of the 15 mounds originally reported by Stout, 11, or possibly 12, still exist at least in part. Many of the conicals located along Pleasure Drive fronting the lake are still in existence. The bird effigy mound can still be seen although both wings have been truncated by construction of modern roadways and sidewalks. Both bear effigies appear to be gone, the one in the southwest corner of the college grounds (Stout Mound 7) was probably destroyed during construction of a house in that corner. Brown (1915:106) mentions that one of the bear effigies (Stout Mound 5) was destroyed in 1908 by cultivation. It is possible that remnants of this mound remain and are visible as small elevated moundings topped by trees. This area is not currently included in the boundaries of the district. Future research in the area may determine the origin of these anomalous features.

The Mounds

Descriptions of the remaining mounds follow (see attached 1990 map). Measurements are approximate since edges of many of the mounds blend in with the natural contours of the landscape. The measurements also differ a little from those of Stout in 1906 since some of the mounds have been repaired repeatedly since the turn of the century, and modern construction has claimed portions of others.

Area A: On the 1906 map (see attached), this area contained Stout's Mounds 1, 2 and 3. Currently the area is landscaped with shrubbery and sidewalks abutting the college buildings. One, possibly two mounds, remain of the three originally mapped in 1906.

Mound 1 Conical: This earthwork probably corresponds with either Stout Mound 1 or 2. Landscaping in the area places doubt on which of the two it represents, if either. A portion of an earthwork remains, visible as a bank cut for a shrubbery garden but it is not possible to tell if this is a prehistoric mound or eroded modern banking. Future investigations will determine if this is a mound and if deposits still remain.

Mound 2 Conical: This mound corresponds with Stout Mound 3 and is located to the south of a road. The mound measured 27 ft. in diameter and 2 ft. in height in 1906 (Stout mss). It now measures approximately 20 ft. in diameter, 1-2 ft. in height and contains a looter's pit in its center. The pit is approximately 3 ft. in diameter, a foot deep and is filled with trash. Damage to the mound is extensive and an immediate preservation program is needed for the mound to survive.

Area B: Area B currently contains 10 mounds out of 12 mapped by Stout in 1906. Both bear effigy mounds are gone or unrecognizable from the surface and both linear mounds have sustained extensive damage. The conicals along the southern fence line appear relatively intact, however, the bird effigy by the school buildings is endangered. Almost

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6 acres of woodland in Area B have the potential to contain prehistoric deposits below the plow zone.

Mound 3 Linear: A small portion of what was once a 204 ft. long tapering linear is located adjacent to a drainage outlet. The portion remaining measures approximately 40 ft. long and 10 ft. wide. The mound lies on the edge of the drainage outlet and erosion of the outlet banks will soon affect the mound. This mound corresponds to Stout's Mound 4.

Mound 4 Conical: This mound corresponds to Stout's Mound 15 and is located adjacent to both a sidewalk and a road. Construction of these modern features truncated the mound on two sides; Stout describes the mound as mutilated in 1906, presumably by the road. The mound is low and barely visible. Currently the mound measures 20 ft. in diameter and 1-2 ft. high.

Mound 5 Conical: Mound 5 corresponds to Stout's Mound 14. This mound is located adjacent to Pleasure Drive outside of the college fence and is endangered by cars parking on the edge of the drive. The mound was probably subject to repair in the early part of this century. This observation was made by comparing the dimensions recorded in 1906 with current measurements. Stout records the diameter as 27 ft. and the height as 2 ft. Current measurements are 30 ft. in diameter and 3.7 ft. in height.

Mound 6 Conical: Mound 6 corresponds to Stout's Mound 13 and is also endangered by cars parking on the roadside. This mound contains a permanent marker, dated 1915, which was donated by Mr. James Pyott of Chicago, a member of the Wisconsin Archeological Society at that time (Brown 1915:106). The marker is causing a small erosional gully to form down the southside of the mound. Stout records measurements of 24 ft. in diameter and 2.5 ft. in height for 1906. Current measurements are 25-30 ft. in diameter and 3.4 ft. in height. This suggests that Mound 6 was repaired sometime prior to 1915.

Mound 7 Conical: This mound is also located along the drive, however trees prevent cars from parking too close to the earthwork thereby reducing the risk of damage. The mound appears oval and it was originally described as low and flattened with no measurements given (Stout mss). Current measurements are 12 ft. in diameter and 2.9 ft. in height. This mound corresponds to Stout's Mound 12.

Mound 8 Conical: Mound 8 is located north of the fence, within the college grounds. Currently it is in the wooded area; a small pit can be seen in its center. Mound 8 corresponds with Stout's Mound 11, reported as excavated in 1939 (Brown mss). The excavation was conducted after a human bone was found during a mound repair episode in 1939. Two bundle burials were found in a pit located in the center of the mounds. In 1978, Zada Law Schlundt conducted a preliminary skeletal analysis on these burials and determined that one individual was a female between 30 and 40 years of age (Individual A) and the other was a male between 30 and 60 years of age (Individual B) Schlundt 1978). Poor preservation of the bones was noted as well. No other artifacts were found in the burial pit. Measurements of the mounds in 1906 were 25 ft. in diameter and 2.5 ft. in height (Stout mss). Current measurements are 20 ft. in

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diameter and 1.4 ft. in height.

Mound 9 Conical: Mound 9 corresponds to Stout's Mound 10 and is also located to the north of the fence within the college grounds. This is probably one of the mounds excavated by Brown and a crew in 1932 (Brown mss). At that time, the crew found that the burial had been disturbed by a looter prior to 1932 as only small pieces of human bone and a few human teeth were recovered. Measurements before excavation in 1932 approximated those taken in 1906 (Stout mss) and were reported to be 22 ft. in diameter and 2.5-3 ft. high. The mound was reported to be restored after excavation. Currently the mound measures 20 ft. in diameter and 1.9 ft. high.

Mound 10 Conical: This mound corresponds to Stout's Mound 9, also reported to be excavated in 1932. Within this mound, the crew found a boulder, a badly decomposed bundle burial, small pebbles, red earth and ashy soils (Brown mss). The materials appear to have been found on the original ground surface with the mound then built over them. No interpretation or analysis of the burial was done at the time. The mound was restored after excavation. Mound measurements in 1906 and 1932 are similar: 20 ft. in diameter and 2 ft. high in 1906 and 20-23 ft. in diameter and 2.5 ft. high prior to excavation in 1932. Current measurements are 20 ft. in diameter and 1.7 ft. high.

Mound 11 Linear: Mound 11 corresponds in location to the tapering linear mound mapped as Stout's Mound 8 in 1906. Presently there is a large area in the center of the mound which appears to have been removed, possibly by the construction of a sewer line. The area on either side of the cut appears almost vertical, not sloping as would be the case if there were two separate linear mounds. On the eastern side, a large tree has fallen onto the mound remnant. Stout recorded the tapering linear as 240 ft. long, 15 ft. wide and 1.5-2 ft. high. Currently the mound measures 210 ft. long with a 50 ft. swath cut out of the middle, 10 ft. wide at the eastern end and 1.2 ft. high.

Mound 12 Bird Effigy: This effigy is Stout's Mound 6 and was reported to have been fenced in 1908 to avoid the destruction that occurred to the bear effigy (Stout Mound 5). In 1919, a marker was placed on the mound by the Madison Women's Club (Brown 1919). The marker is still in place. The area including the mound has become a deposit for leaf, branch and general clearing debris. Both wings of the bird have been truncated by construction and landscaping. The design of the effigy is slightly different from most bird effigies; one wing is slightly drooping (Figure 4). Measurements taken in 1906 record the wings to be 122 ft. and 126 ft. long, the length of the body as 80 ft., the width of the body as 24 ft. and the height of the mound as 3 ft. Currently, the wings measure 90 ft. and 70 ft., the length of the body as 75 ft., the width of the body as 20 ft. and the height of the mound as 3-5 ft. The head of the bird is positioned toward the lake.

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Original Owner People of the late Woodland Stage Effigy Mound Tradition	Original Use ceremonial and funerary
Architect or Builder People of the late Woodland Stage Effigy Mound Tradition	Architectural Style not applicable
Date of Construction ca. 650-1200 A.D.	Indigenous Materials Used not applicable

List of Bibliographical References Used

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continued on page 8

Form Prepared By:

Name and Title

Cynthia Stiles-Hanson, Assistant State Archeologist, and Katherine H. Rankin, Preservation Planner

Organization Represented (if any)

State Historical Society of Wisconsin and City of Madison

Address

P. O. Box 2985
Madison, WI 53701

Telephone Number

266-6552

Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

February 10, 1993

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Bibliographical References Continued

- 1919 Archeological Notes. The Wisconsin Archeologist (os) 18(4):157.
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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (9)

Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:

The Edgewood College Mound Group Archaeological District contains two discontinuous areas composed of 11, possibly 12, mounds in conical, linear and effigy shapes. Most of the group is located in a wooded area on the grounds of Edgewood College. The mounds are in good condition since they were the subject of preservation concerns in the early part of the century when farming and building practices damaged or destroyed a large number of Lake Wingra mounds. Out of 148 mounds recorded in the latter part of the 19th century, only 69 were present in 1915 (Brown 1915:114) and an even smaller number exist at the present time. The Edgewood group is unique in that the preservation efforts started in the 19th century preserved most of the mounds and area between them. Although some of the mounds have been excavated and/or repaired, intact deposits may exist in at least half of them. In addition, aboriginal mounds derive their significance not only from deposits but also from their arrangement. The site maintains sufficient integrity to yield significant information on the Late Woodland State of Madison's prehistory.

Effigy mound groups like Edgewood College Mounds are generally dated to the Late Woodland Stage circa 650-1200 A.D. Many believe, however, that the effigy mounds themselves were built during a rather narrow time span of AD 800-1100 (Benn 1979.)

Effigy mound groups are believed to have functioned as ceremonial centers for the periodic reinforcement of kinship ties and belief systems of individual Late Woodland social groups. Dane County once contained over 1000 mounds in approximately 115 locations or centers that are attributable to the Late Woodland Stage (Peterson 1979:53). This figure includes at least 289 effigy mounds. Most of these were found in the four lakes area around Madison and most have been destroyed by agricultural practices and urban expansion. Approximately 200 mounds in approximately 50 locations remain. These include less than 60 effigies.

The Edgewood College Mound Group Archaeological District has the potential to yield important information on the Late Woodland Stage. For example, ceramics and other artifacts can help clarify the nature of the Late Woodland sequence. This is important, since it has recently been proposed that not all Late Woodland populations participated in the construction of effigy mounds (Salkin 1987). Charcoal and other organic material associated with ceremonial activities can provide radiocarbon dates that will further refine the temporal span of mound construction. Recently, the role of maize horticulture in Woodland society has been a research issue (Arzigian 1986). Since these types of mounds frequently contain burials, analysis of teeth and bone chemistry can provide insights into diet of the Effigy Mound people.

However, in light of the fact that mounds are now protected as burial places under Wisconsin state law, it is relevant to point out that significant information concerning Late Woodland peoples can be gained from Effigy Mound groups such as Edgewood College mounds through non-destructive studies. Clark Mallam has studied the location and

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arrangement of Effigy Mound groups as well as Effigy Mound types in Iowa and has gained some insights into Late Woodland social systems and ideology as a result. By analyzing the geographical distribution of Effigy Mound types, for example, he was able to determine that a number of separate social groups were responsible for Effigy Mound construction in northeastern Iowa (Mallam 1976).

In a more recent essay, he suggests that the meaning and function of Effigy Mound groups can be addressed through such analysis aided by ethnographic analogy. He observes, for example, that Effigy Mound groups tend to be located near zones of predictable and annual occurring resources. This suggests to him that a complex set of ideological, social, political, and economic relationships may be involved in mound construction. He suggests that mounds "are not so much burial sites as they are metaphorical expressions about the idealized state that should exist between nature and culture---balance and harmony" (1984:19). In his view, the Late Woodland people were expressing their "cosmological convictions" by sacralizing the earth" through the construction of mounds,

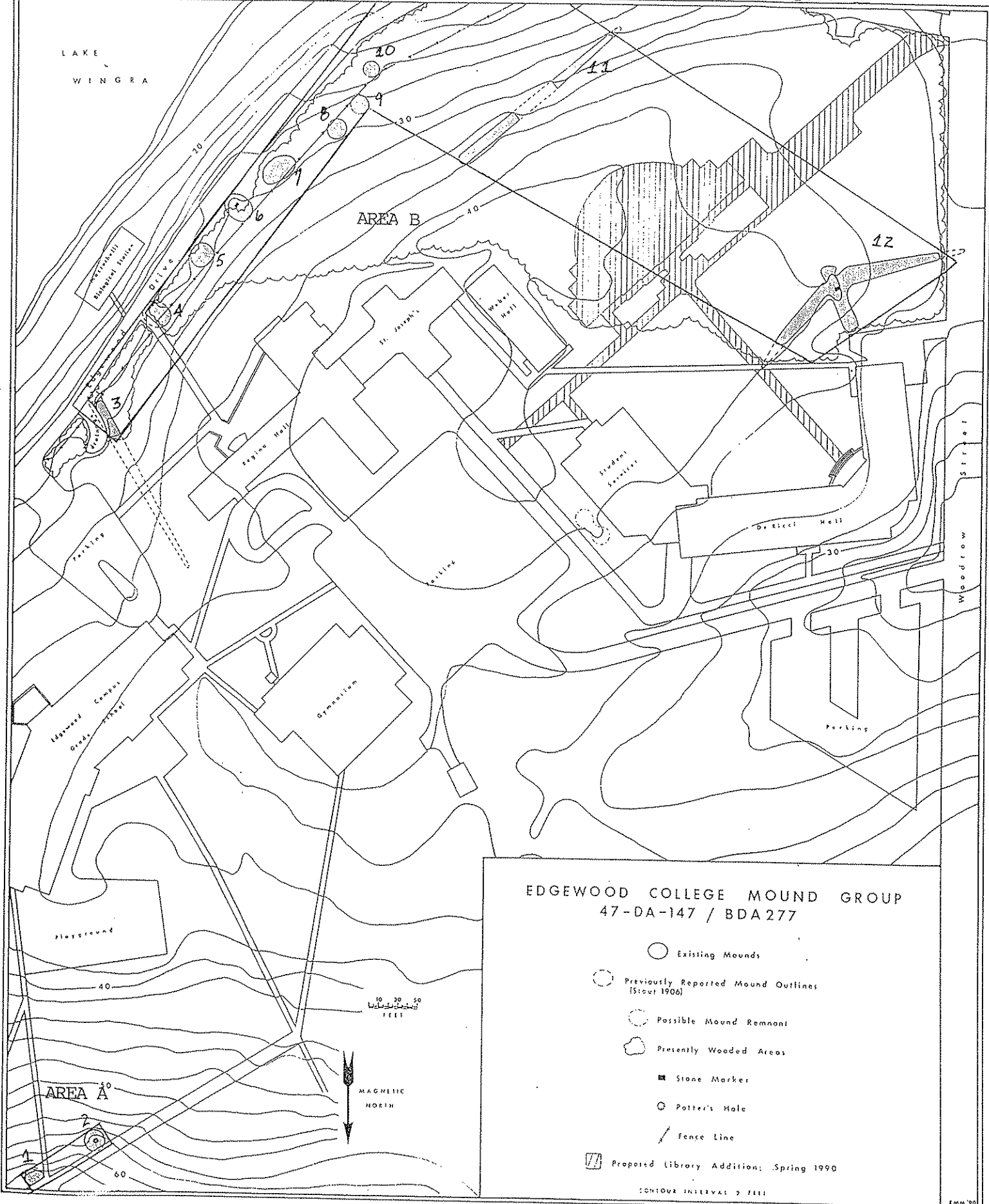
. . .in other words, they consecrated the mosaic environment with its varied resources and ecological relationships by defining it as sacred space. If the rhythm--balance and order--of this region could be maintained, the resources on which humans depended would continue. In this sense, mound building may be perceived as an ongoing world renewal ritual, a sacred activity humans entered into in order to insure regular and consistent production of natural resources. (1984:19).

Mapping of mound groups and mound alignments have convinced others that they functioned primarily as calendric devices and recorded symbolic geometries (Scherz 1987).

Similar analysis of mound group location, arrangements, and physical relationships to other sites can make substantial contributions to our understanding of Late Woodland society in the southwest and southcentral part of Wisconsin.

The Edgewood College Mound Group contains a high significance in this collection since it contains mounds which have received preservation attention in the past. Over 70% of the mounds located in 1906 still exist in good condition. In addition the area between the major portion of the group (Area B) has been preserved as well, although a preservation plan is needed to continue the work done in the early part of the century. This area has the potential to provide information on the use of the Lake Wingra area through prehistoric time.

NOTE: Although the entire Edgewood College campus is included in the nomination, as is the right-of-way for Edgewood Drive, it is the intention of this nomination that the Landmarks Commission will review only building projects or other land disturbances occurring within fifty feet of the boundaries of Areas A and B shown on the attached map.



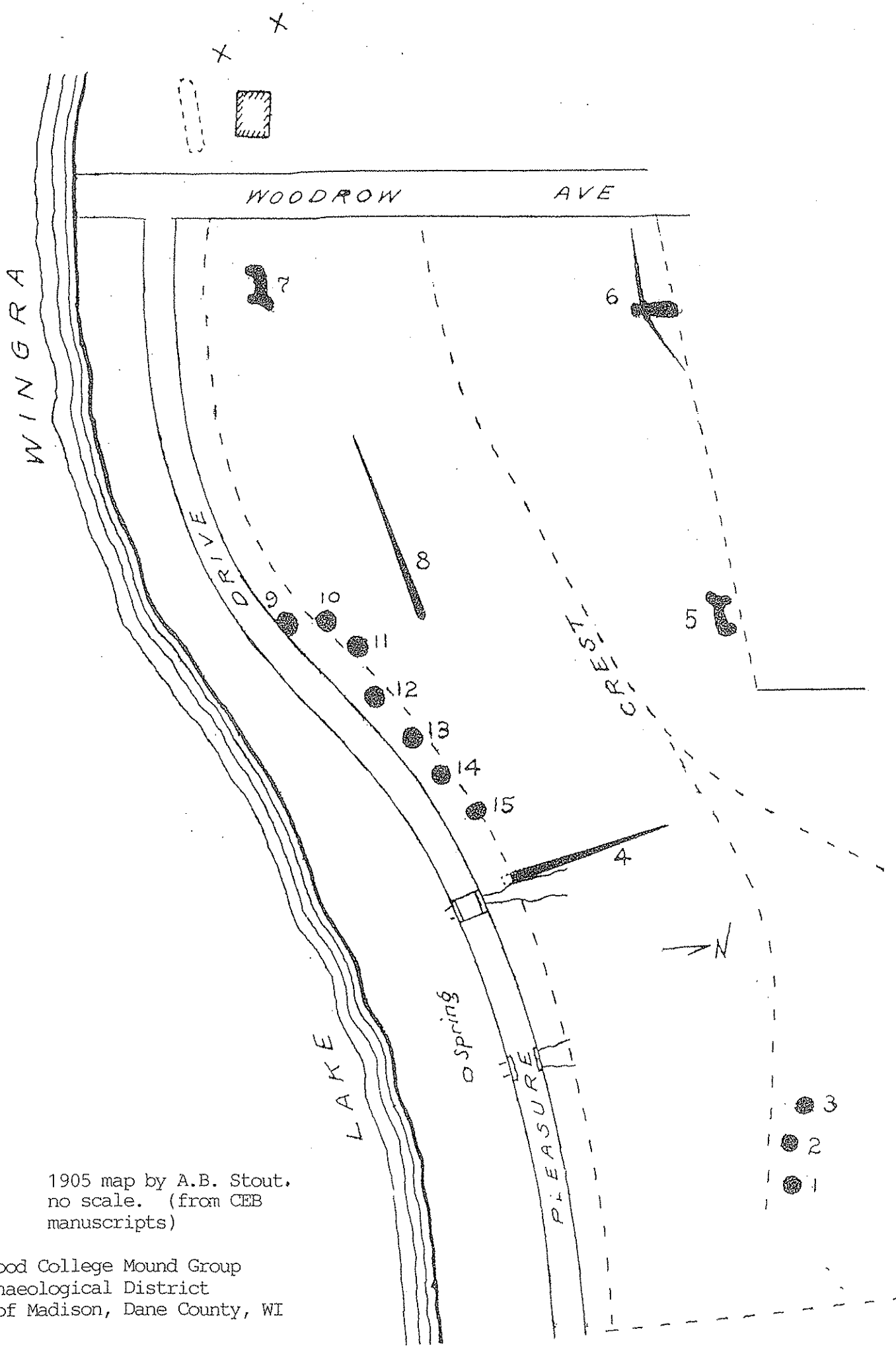
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE MOUND GROUP
47-DA-147 / BDA277

- Existing Mounds
- Previously Reported Mound Outlines (Scout 1906)
- Possible Mound Remnant
- Presently Wooded Areas
- Stone Marker
- Potter's Hole
- - - Fence Line

Proposed Library Addition: Spring 1990

CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET

1990 map of Edgewood College Mound Group Archaeological District, showing areas, boundaries and mounds.



1905 map by A.B. Stout.
 no scale. (from CEB
 manuscripts)

Edgewood College Mound Group
 Archaeological District
 City of Madison, Dane County, WI