

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

YUCHI TOWN SITE

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: YUCHI TOWN SITE

Other Name/Site Number: Sites 1RU57 and 1RU63

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: N/A

Not for publication: X

City/Town: Fort Benning

Vicinity: X

State: Alabama County: Russell Code: 113

Zip Code:

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: \_\_\_

Public-Local: \_\_\_

Public-State: \_\_\_

Public-Federal: X

Category of Property

Building(s):

District:

Site: X

Structure:

Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

\_\_\_

2

\_\_\_

\_\_\_

2

Noncontributing

\_\_\_ buildings

\_\_\_ sites

2 structures (dirt road & sewer line)

\_\_\_ objects

2 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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**4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Certifying Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Commenting or Other Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

**5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_\_\_

- Entered in the National Register
- Determined eligible for the National Register
- Determined not eligible for the National Register
- Removed from the National Register
- Other (explain):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic:	<b>Domestic Funerary Government</b>	Sub:	<b>Village Site Graves Council House</b>
Current:	<b>Landscape</b>	Sub:	<b>Forest</b>

**7. DESCRIPTION**

Architectural Classification: **N/A**

Materials:

Foundation:

Walls:

Roof:

Other:

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**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**

**Site Type:** The Yuchi Town Site (1RU57 and 1RU63) is the largest known historic village site associated with the Yuchi tribe. The Yuchi occupied this site from ca. A.D. 1716-1836, until removal to Oklahoma. Archeological evidence has also demonstrated a late seventeenth century occupation (Apalachicola) in the downstream portion of the site.

**Environmental Setting:** The Yuchi Town Site is located on the west bank of the Chattahoochee River on the Fort Benning Military Reservation, in Russell County, Alabama (figure 1). The site is about 4.75 miles south-southeast of the headquarters of Fort Benning. The site occupies a broad (2.4 km wide) terrace that rises about 10 m above the river (figures 2-5).

Vegetation consists of mixed hardwoods and pines, with a moderate under story of shrubs and vines. According to late eighteenth century descriptions, the vegetation had originally been composed of hickory, oak, blackjack, and long-leaf pine (Hawkins 1971:61).

The Yuchi Town Site has two site numbers, 1RU57 enclosing the western or upstream portion of the site; and 1RU63 enclosing the eastern or downstream portion of the site. Archeological investigations have shown these are two elements of the same site, which extends from the mouth of Uchee Creek to immediately north of what is now known as Bon Acre Landing. The main trading, residential, and ceremonial area of Yuchi Town, as described by various historical accounts is located approximately opposite the mouth of Oswichee Creek, which flows into the Chattahoochee River on the east or Georgia side of the river.

Archeological material dating from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth century used to define the limits of the Yuchi Town Site can be found along a 2.8 km strip bordering the Chattahoochee River. Uchee Creek joins the Chattahoochee River just northwest of the site, forming the northwestern boundary.

**Previous Archeological Investigations:** The two sites making up the Yuchi Town Site (1RU57 and 1RU63) were first recorded in 1958 by the Smithsonian Institution prior to the filling of the Walter F. George Reservoir. Archeologist David M. Chase, then an avocational archeologist stationed at Fort Benning, recorded the sites and then tested 1RU63 with the assistance of Harold A. Huscher, of the Smithsonian Institution (Schnell 1982:2-3). Using late eighteenth-century descriptions of Yuchi Town to guide him, David Chase began the survey at the area around the mouth of Uchee Creek. He found a low density of artifacts in the upstream portion of the site (1RU57), with the greatest quantity of artifacts coming from the downstream portion of the site (1RU63), which is separated from 1RU57 by a gully. Chase concluded that 1RU63 was the site of Yuchi Town, based on the quantity and presence of historic eighteenth-century European trade artifacts and contemporaneous historic Native American ceramics.

During initial excavations undertaken by Chase in 1958, he found three burials and the remains of a burned, possibly pre-Yuchi (pre-A.D. 1716) structure in the west end of 1RU63 (Chase 1960; Schnell 1982:3). In 1962, Harold Huscher returned to 1RU63 and expanded Chase's investigations, exposing 50 features and eight more burials (figure 6) (Schnell 1982). Although Chase's and Huscher's work has not been analyzed it is apparent that most, if not all, of the

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burials contained grave goods. Native American ceramic vessels, glass trade beads, a plain shell gorget, brass hawk bells, brass buttons, and a musket were some of the artifacts found in the graves (Schnell 1982).

In 1981, Mr. Frank Schnell, archeologist with the Columbus Museum, conducted investigations to delineate the limits of 1RU63 and evaluate its significance. Fieldwork involved the excavation of 59 shovel tests, excavated to sterile substrate, at 30 m intervals that were aligned in five transects spaced 200 m apart. Schnell noted two distinct concentrations of occupational debris at 1RU63, one located directly opposite the mouth of Oswichee Creek, and the other about 450 m downstream from the first concentration (figure 6). Schnell speculated this gap in the concentration of artifacts was linked to the presence of an open ceremonial area, described by Benjamin Hawkins in 1798, which may not have accumulated a significant amount of cultural debris (Schnell 1982:5-6). The Native American ceramic complexes identified by Schnell during this investigation were Lamar (A.D. 1400-1550), Abercrombie (A.D. 1550-1650), and Ocmulgee Fields (A.D. 1715-1836). Schnell also discovered an apparent isolated house site in the west portion of the site (1RU63), which he designated CM(Columbus Museum)3. This feature is now included within 1RU57.

Sites 1RU57 and 1RU63 were revisited during a survey of the Chattahoochee River flood plain on Fort Benning (Dickinson and Wayne 1985). Thirty-two shovel tests were excavated at 1RU57 which yielded 388 sherds of Native American pottery, including Abercrombie/Blackmon phase shell tempered sherds, and Lawson Field phase Chattahoochee Brushed sherds (pre-Yuchi and Yuchi) (figures 6 and 7). Artifacts were particularly concentrated in a 2 ha (5 acre) area located 650 m downstream from the mouth of Uchee Creek. At 1RU63 they placed a 90 m wide transect of 24 shovel tests across the southeastern portion of the site and recovered over 160 sherds of aboriginal pottery (figure 6). Plain sand- and grit-tempered sherds predominated with a few Chattahoochee Brushed sherds (A.D. 1715-1836) reported.

1RU57 was visited again in 1991 during a survey prior to timber harvesting on Fort Benning (Benson 1992). A transect of shovel tests followed the river bank, and inland site limits were established by additional transects and shovel tests. One hundred and twenty-one shovel tests were excavated and produced 73 artifacts (figure 7). This survey relocated the artifact concentration noted by Dickinson and Wayne (1985) at the northwestern end of the site, and demonstrated that archeological deposits extend along the length of the river levee. It was in the eastern end of this strip that Schnell located a possible isolated homestead site. It appears that several protohistoric-historic house sites are located along the rivers edge at 1RU57, with a major concentration on the northwest end. In summary, these surveys show there are continuous archeological deposits along a 2.8 km stretch along the west or Alabama side of the Chattahoochee River.

In 1991, Fort Benning sponsored an investigation of portions of 1RU63 which had recently been the target of looters, in order to gather evidence for eventual prosecution under the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA). Two areas measuring 40 x 100 m were examined (figure 6) (Braley 1991). Over 70 looters' pit of various size and depth were recorded in the two areas and four of the larger pits were reexcavated. All four of the larger looters' pits contained disturbed human skeletal remains; some of the pits contained the remains of multiple burials. Three of the looters' pits were located in the southeastern part of the site and the fourth was at the northwestern end of 1RU63, close to the area excavated by Chase and Huscher 30

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years ago.

The study concluded that looters had vandalized the graves of at least nine people. Archeological evidence and skeletal analysis strongly suggest that the deposits in the eastern part of the site date to the late seventeenth century, representing a major pre-Yuchi (Apalachicola) occupation. Analysis of the trade artifacts found, e.g., opaque blue glass beads (Ichtucknee plain), shell beads, brass or copper beads, and a fragment of a brass or copper bracelet (?), suggested a date range of A.D. 1650-1680 for the burials in this portion of the site. A large number of aboriginal pottery sherds were included in the grave fill and date to the Blackmon phase (A.D. 1650-1715). Sherds of this phase are characterized by a high percentage of shell-tempered, black-filmed, fine-tempered plain, and Abercrombie/Ocmulgee Fields incised wares. Grit-tempered Chattahoochee Brushed pottery, characteristic of the Lawson Field phase (A.D. 1715-1836) were also found in small amounts. The skeletal analysis determined that some of the individuals had cradle board deformation of the skull, which was not an uncommon trait during the seventeenth century. Thus, it appears that the burials and village deposits in the southeastern portion of the site date from the mid-seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, therefore pre-dating Yuchi occupation. The Blackmon phase corresponds to a time when Spanish influence from the Florida panhandle area was at its peak. It was during this time that the Spaniards established a short-lived mission at the Native American town of Sabacola, and garrisoned Spanish troops in a fort and garrison at the town of Apalachicola (1RU101) (designated an NHL in 1964), about six miles south of 1RU63.

The looted burial at the northwest end of the site appears to date to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century and is probably Yuchi. There was no cradle board deformation of the skull, in contrast to the burials in the downstream portion of the site. Artifacts left behind by the looters included a fragment of iron scissors, two lead musket balls, a small lead shot, wrought iron nails, and fragments of green and aqua colored bottle glass. The Native American ceramics in the disturbed fill included much higher percentages of grit- and sand- tempered types compared to the downstream portion of the site. This is in the most artifact-rich portion of the site, based on Schnell's 1982 report. This area was also the focus of David Chase's and Harold Huscher's excavations in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Their excavations are located about 90 m northwest of this burial. It is likely that this portion of 1RU63 is the location of the ceremonial precinct of the densely populated Yuchi Town described by Bartram.

In summary, previous work at Yuchi Town has encountered dense archeological deposits indicative of a major occupation (figures 6 and 7). The midden deposits are most concentrated at the northwestern ends of 1RU57 and 1RU63. At 1RU63, higher proportions of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century artifacts are found in the northwestern portion of the site, while there is more evidence for middle to late seventeenth century occupation in the downstream portion, which appears to indicate the presence of a major pre-Yuchi village.

**Historic Site Description:** Historically, the Yuchi occupied the Chattahoochee Valley from about 1716 until 1836 when they, and the population of the neighboring Creek towns, were resettled in Oklahoma. Prior to this time, from about 1681-1716, the Yuchi resided in the Ocmulgee River Valley, while from ca. 1670-1681 they lived in the Savannah River Valley near present-day Augusta.

The earliest documentation that the Yuchi had moved to the Chattahoochee Valley dates to 1716,

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when Diego Pena listed ten villages in the Apalachicola province. He encountered these villages as he proceeded upriver.

1. Chislacasliche's place on the site of ruins of the Sabacolan village just above the confluence of the Flint and Chattahoochee;
2. Savacola;
3. Apalachicola;
4. Achito;
5. Ocmulgee;
6. **Uchi**, where they speak a different language than the others;
7. Tasquigue, where they speak Yamasee;
8. Casista, where they speak Muskogee;
9. Cavetta, where they speak Muskogee; all the others speak the same language (Hitchiti) except the Sabacola, who have a distinct language, but also speak Apalachee;
10. Chavajal [Pena 1717 quoted in Boyd 1949].

There are few references to Yuchi Town from the mid-eighteenth century. In the late eighteenth century William Bartram, the famous naturalist, traveled across Georgia and described this scene as he approached the river.

... we arrived at the banks of the Chata Uche river opposite the Uche town; where, after unloading our horses, the Indians came over to us in large canoes, by means of which, with the cheerful and liberal assistance of the Indians, ferried over the merchandize, and afterwards driving our horses altogether into the river swam them over ... The Uche town is situated in a vast plain, on the gradual ascent as we rise from a narrow strip of low ground immediately bordering on the river: it is the largest, most compact, and best situated Indian town I ever saw; the habitations are large and neatly built; the walls of the houses are constructed of a wooden frame, then lathed and plastered inside and out with a reddish well tempered clay or mortar, which gives them the appearance of red brick walls; and these houses are neatly covered or roofed with Cypress bark or shingles of that tree. The town appeared to be populous and thriving, full of youth and young children: I suppose the number of inhabitants, men, women and children, might amount to one thousand or fifteen hundred, as it is said they are able to muster five hundred gun-men or warriors. Their own national language is altogether or radically different from the Creek or Muscogulge tongue, and is called the Savanna or Savanuca tongue; I was told by the traders it was the same with, or a dialect of, the Shawanese. They are in confederacy with the Creeks, but do not mix with them; and, on account of their numbers and strength, are of importance enough to excite and draw upon them the jealousy of the whole Muscogulge confederacy, and are usually at variance, yet are wise enough to unite against a common enemy, to support the interest and glory of the general Creek confederacy [Bartram 1928:312-313].

In the late 1790s the Indian Agent, Benjamin Hawkins, gave this description.

U-chee; is on the right bank of Chat-to-ho-che, ten and a half miles below Cow-e-tuh-tal-lau-has-see, on a flat of rich land, with hickory, oak, blackjack and long-leaf pine; the flat extends from one to two miles back from the river. Above the town, and bordering on it, Uchee creek, eighty-five feet wide, joins the river. Opposite the town house, on the left bank of the river, there is a narrow strip of flat land from fifty to one hundred yards wide, then high pine barren hills; these people speak a tongue different from the Creeks; they were formerly settled in small villages at Ponpon, Saltcatchers, (Sol-ke-chuh,) Silver Bluff, and O-ge-chee, (How-ge-chu,) and were continually at war with the Cherokees, Ea-tau-bau and Creeks.

In the year 1729, an old chief of Cussetuh, called by the white people Captain Ellick, married three Uchee women, and brought them to Cussetuh, which was greatly disliked by his towns

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people; their opposition determined him to move from Cussetuh; he went down opposite where the town now is, and settled with his three brothers; two of whom, had Uchee wives; he, after this, collected all the Uchees, gave them the land where their town now is, and there they settled [note: Diego Pena visited in 1716 and the Yuchis were already settled].

These people are more civil and orderly than their neighbors; their women are more chaste, and the men better hunters; they retain all their original customs and laws, and have adopted none of the Creeks; they have some worm fences in and about their town, and but very few peach trees.

They have lately begun to settle out in villages, and are industrious, compared with their neighbors; the men take part in the labors of the women, and are more constant in their attachment to their women, than is usual among red people.

The number of gun men is variously estimated; they do not exceed two hundred and fifty, [this is in marked contrast to the 500 gun men reported by Bartram 20 years before] including all who are settled in villages, of which there are three [in the Flint River valley] [Hawkins 1971:61-62].

**Site Integrity:** Archeological investigations at the Yuchi Town Site have encountered dense archeological deposits indicative of a major historic Yuchi occupation. The midden deposits are most concentrated at the northwestern ends of 1RU57 and 1RU63. At 1RU63, a higher proportions of late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century (Yuchi occupation) artifacts are found in the northwestern portion of the site, while there is more evidence for a middle- to late-seventeenth century occupation in the downstream portion, which appears to indicate the presence of a major pre-Yuchi, or Apalachicola, village.

Archeological investigations have demonstrated that the Yuchi Town Site has intact features consisting of house patterns, burials, and midden deposits. The deposits are 40-50 cm thick in large portions of the site. The only impacts to the site have been cultivation, timber harvesting, and vandalism of some graves by pothunters and previous archeological excavations undertaken at the site to determine its extent and nature. There also exist two noncontributing features -- an abandoned sewer line (figure 6) and a dirt road (figure 7). The majority of the Yuchi Town Site is intact.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: X Statewide: \_\_ Locally: \_\_

Applicable National Register Criteria:           A X B\_\_ C\_\_ DX

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):           A\_\_ B\_\_ C\_\_ D\_\_ E\_\_ F\_\_ G

NHL Criteria:           **Criteria 1 and 6**

NHL Theme(s):

Areas of Significance:           **Archeology - Historic Aboriginal**

Period(s) of Significance:       **ca. 1650-1836**

Significant Dates:           N/A

Significant Person(s):       N/A

Cultural Affiliation:           **Apalachicola (Hitchiti-ancestral Creek), Yuchi**

Architect/Builder:           N/A

Historic Contexts:           **I. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS: INDIGENOUS AMERICAN POPULATIONS**

**D. Ethnohistory of Indigenous American Populations**

**3. Varieties of Early Conflict, Conquest, or Accommodation**

**b. Forced and Voluntary Population Movements**

**c. The Changing Cultural Geography of the Southeast**

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**State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**

**Summary Statement of Significance:** The Yuchi Town Site contains the remains of two historic Native American tribal occupations Apalachicola (ancestral Creek) and Yuchi. The first group, which allied with the Spanish in Florida during the seventeenth century against the English in the Carolinas, was ultimately destroyed as a culture. The second group constantly shifted its alliances with various European powers until they were displaced by the expanding American frontier in the Southeast, in the early nineteenth century. The Yuchi Town Site is an outstanding example of historic Native American cultures adopting various strategies to maintain their cultural integrity in the face of European colonization and American expansion.

**Apalachicola Settlement at Yuchi Town**

As early as the mid-1500s, Spanish expeditions explored the Southeastern United States and initiated the first contact between Europeans and Native Americans. However, the lack of mineral wealth in the area limited Spanish interest to the creation of coastal settlements, such as St. Augustine, Florida, to safe guard shipping through the Straits of Florida. To protect St. Augustine from attack by hostile tribes the Spanish established missions along the Georgia coast and northern Florida. The missions were intended to convert the Native Americans to the Catholic religion, acculturate these tribes into Spanish society, and serve as a mechanism to provide the Spanish with labor, food supplies, and military allies. By 1675, some 40 missions serving some 25,000 Native Americans in Florida and Georgia were in operation.

Beginning in 1670, however, England gained a toe-hold in the region with the establishment of Charles Town (Charleston) and the Carolina colonies. By 1680, English-inspired depredations on the Atlantic coast missions and slave raids into the Florida interior began to weaken the mission system. By 1686, the missionaries were forced to abandon all their missions on the Georgia coast, and English traders and raiders were penetrating Spanish territory in West Florida and the Chattahoochee River Valley, the ancestral home of the Apalachicola (Creek) Indians (Saunders n.d.:3; Schnell 1982:4-1).

During the last quarter of the seventeenth century the Chattahoochee River Valley from the falls south to the confluence of the Flint River was known to the Spanish as the Apalachicola Province, a term that refers to the socio-political territory of the Apalachicola tribe. Often, a province would take the name of its paramount chief, so provincial names changed from time to time, or shifted to new territories as groups moved about. In 1675, the Spanish recorded 13 towns within the Apalachicola province. It was noted that the southern towns spoke a dialect of Hitchiti, while the northern towns, near the falls, spoke Muskogean. These groups were ancestors of modern Creek tribes. The pre-1716 occupation at Yuchi Town was probably one of the Hitchiti speaking Apalachicola settlements noted by the Spanish in 1675 in the southern part of the Province of Apalachicola (Schnell 1982:4-2).

According to Mark F. Boyd, author of *Here They Once Stood, The Tragic End of the Apalachee Missions*, the Apalachicolas of the Chattahoochee River Valley became the

... object of intensified Spanish interest, probably in an effort to forestall the English in that quarter. In 1679 an effort to effect their conversion was rejected, only to be resumed

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with military aid in 1681, with similar insuccess [1951:8].

Twice in 1685, Antonio Matheos, the Deputy Spanish Governor of West Florida led expeditions northward from the province of Apalachee (in the present-day Tallahassee, Florida area), to drive out English traders among the Apalachicola. During his second expedition Matheos received the formal submission of eight Apalachicola towns at the expense of burning four recalcitrant Apalachicola settlements (Boyd et. al. 1951). According to Mark F. Boyd,

Despite three later expeditions in successive years the [Apalachicola] Indians could not be dissuaded from their preference for the English traders. Finally, in 1689, the Spaniards built a blockhouse near Coweta [Apalachicola Fort Site, designated an NHL in 1964], where a garrison was maintained until 1691, when exigencies in St. Augustine required withdrawal of the small force. The fort failed of its purpose, as the presence of the garrison and memories of the burned villages impelled the [Apalachicola] Indians to leave the Chattahoochee and move nearer to the English on the banks of the upper Ocmulgee River [Ocmulgee National Monument], which from the name of the Indian tribes settling there became known as Ochese Creek by the English [Boyd et. al. 1951:8-9].

### **Yuchi Settlement in the Ocmulgee River Valley**

While the Spanish efforts of the 1690s to bring the Apalachicola within their sphere of influence were driving that group east, the Yuchi tribe was on the move west under pressure from the English. The Yuchi apparently had settled in the Ocmulgee River Valley, around present-day Macon, Georgia, only a few years before the Apalachicola arrived in the vicinity, from the Chattahoochee River Valley. The Yuchi formerly were located on the Savannah River near present-day Augusta, where they were settled near a Native American group known as the Westos. The origins of the Westo and Yuchi tribes are presently not known.

Regardless of their origins, the Westos and Yuchis in the Savannah River Piedmont area were being outfitted with firearms by the English as early as the 1670s. In 1674, Dr. Henry Woodward reported that the Westos lived in a compact palisaded village decorated with human scalps on poles. The Westos were fierce warriors who captured Native American slaves and traded them to the English planters in the Charles Town area. The Westos preyed on other tribes, in the Savannah River Valley, who lacked firearms. In 1680, war broke out between the Westos and the Shawnee, who were allied with the English, and in 1681 the Westo and Yuchi removed themselves to the Ocmulgee River Valley (Swanton 1979). According to Benjamin Hawkins (1971), who was Indian Agent to the Creek in the 1700s, the Yuchi also had a village on the Ogeechee River.

Despite their physical distance from the Spaniards in northern Florida, the Apalachicola (Creek) towns and the Yuchi town on the Ocmulgee were not safe havens. In 1695, an Apalachicola raid on Spanish-allied Chatot Indians resulted in punitive retaliation by a Spanish expedition against the Ocmulgee River towns, resulting in the burning of 6 villages, including one called Uchichi (Hann 1988:363). Uchichi may have been a Creek village, but there is potential that it is a reference to the main Yuchi town on the Ocmulgee. It was during the Apalachicolas' residency on the Ocmulgee that they came to be known as "Creek" Indians to the English traders. During the late seventeenth century the English referred to the people on the Ocmulgee River as the Ochese Creek Indians. Dropping the term Ochese resulted in the modern appellation for the

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Creek tribe.

### **Warfare on the Chattahoochee Frontier**

During the latter part of the seventeenth century the struggle in the Southeast between the Spanish and the English was primarily the result of two colonial frontiers, Spanish Florida and English Carolina, in collision over control of land, and trade with Native American tribes for furs and slaves. Southeastern Native American tribes, as trading partners and sometime allies of these colonial powers became part of a global conflict between England and France, with Spain allied to the latter, known as King William's War (1689-1697). King William's War saw England and France embroiled, when

... in 1688 William of Orange and his wife, Mary Stuart, succeeded to the English throne vacated by James II, whose penchants for Catholicism and for a powerful monarchy had cost him the loyalty of his people. As soon as King William had settled onto his throne, he brought England into the war he was fighting against France. This contest engulfed Europe and spread across a large part of the world before it ended nine years latter [Ritchie 1986:29-30].

The English wasted little time using the displaced Apalachicola, or Creeks, to attack Spanish mission towns in Florida to secure Native America slaves and to develop English plantations along the South Carolina coast. Soon, the Apalachicolas were attacking Chatot mission towns in northern Florida. In 1695, in retaliation, the Spaniards and a force of Apalachee launched a punitive expedition against the Apalachicola towns on the Ocmulgee River and burned six, including one called Uchichi, which may have been ancestral to Yuchi Town. The Apalachicola would get their revenge on the Spanish and their Apalachee allies during Queen Anne's War (1702-1713).

In the Southeast,

... the Creeks, especially the Lower Creeks, found themselves sandwiched between the aggressively commercial Carolinians to the Northeast the missionizing Spaniards to the south and southeast. These two opposing forces thus began a rivalry for the commerce and allegiance of the Creeks. It was to last for the next 80 years - a rivalry often complicated by French interests to the southwest [Kohler et. al. 1980:19].

To prevent wholesale destruction of the Spanish missions of Apalachee, the Spanish constructed a small fort at Pensacola, in 1698. Their allies, the French, constructed a fort and town on Mobile Bay, in 1702, under the leadership of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville. Iberville's concern with the English caused him to secure peace between the Choctaws and Chickasaws, and ally them to the French. In March of 1702, Iberville witnessed the conclusion of the peace between the Choctaws and Chickasaws, who promised to expel English traders from their territory (Higginbotham 1977:80).

The main threat to the new French settlement of Mobile, and the Spanish in Florida, came from the Governor of South Carolina, James Moore. A Barbadian of Irish descent he came to the Carolinas in 1675 and rose to become governor in September 1700. Almost immediately he began planning offensive actions that he hoped would break the Franco-Spanish hold on the Gulf

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Coast (Higginbotham 1977:114).

Colonial frontier warfare in the Southeast was based on disputes over territory and trade, but this conflict was also a sidelight to larger conflicts between European monarchs. Earlier, in King William's War (1689-1697), England and France fought mainly in Europe and at sea in the Caribbean, with minor conflicts in New England and the Southeast utilizing Native Americans in raids. In November of 1700, Philip V, grandson to France's Louis XIV, assumed the Spanish crown. The English disputed the accession because they feared the Franco-Spanish coalition would lock them out of the profitable New World trade. This new war, referred to in Europe as the War of Spanish Succession and in America as Queen Anne's War (1702-1713), saw England and France again fighting, with Spain allied to France (Bannon 1974:109).

Governor Moore and the English in Carolina used this larger war as a means to pursue territorial disputes by means of arms, and to gain control of the slave and fur trades with Native American tribes in the Southeast. The Peace of Utrecht (1713), ending Queen Anne's War, failed to resolve the disputes in the Southeast. The only result was the destruction of numerous Southeast Native American villages and the relocation and/or enslavement of thousands of Native Americans.

Still smarting from the earlier conflicts of the 1690s with the Spaniards and Apalachees, the Apalachicola (Creek) towns on the Ocmulgee River were eager to get revenge. At the outbreak of the War of Spanish Succession, Governor Moore undertook a raid in May of 1702 that destroyed the Timuquan mission and village of San Tomás de Santa Fe in northeastern Florida. The Apalachicola participated in this raid on the side of the British.

Clamoring for revenge, the Spanish Governor of Florida, Zúñiga y Cerda, in the summer of 1702, sent out a punitive force of Spanish and Apalachees more than 800 strong to strike at the English traders and their Native American allies living on the Ocmulgee. Anthony Dodsworth and other Carolina traders learned of their approach, assembled an army of 500 Apalachicola (Creeks) and decimated their enemies in a battle on the Lower Flint River. In effect, this was the first blow struck by the English for control of the Mississippi Valley (Crane 1977:74).

Governor Moore followed up these successes with an even bolder plan.

By September of the same year [1702] the Carolina Assembly had approved legislation to equip an expedition to attack St. Augustine; by October 29, Moore and Colonel Robert Daniel, with a force of 500 English volunteers and 450 Yamasee, Tallapoosa and Alabama warriors, were laying siege to Governor Zúñiga y Cerda and his much smaller force huddled in the Castillo de San Marcos [Higginbotham 1977:114].

Unfortunately for Governor Moore,

Four Spanish relief galleons sent by the governor of Cuba, Benítez de Lugo, appeared off the bar of the Castillo de San Marcos, trapping Moore's ships inside the harbor. The frustrated governor hastily burned his vessels on the nearby beaches and slowly retreated to Carolina, after setting fire to the abandoned village of St. Augustine [Higginbotham 1977:116].

Realizing St. Augustine was too well fortified, Governor Moore turned his attention to West Florida and the Native American villages and missions that formed a protective buffer around

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Spanish Pensacola. In early 1703 Moore returned to Spanish territory

... at the head of 1,500 Yamasee and Tallapoosa Indians and 48 Carolinians. Ravaging the countryside, Moore and his unholy warriors swept through the district of Apalachee [around modern-day Tallahassee], burning villages and butchering hapless natives, slaying even those who carried a flag of surrender. After a massacre at Ayubale, Moore marched through practically every village in the province, through Bacuqua and Escambe, Patale, and Aspalaga, demanding and receiving one unconditional surrender after another. When the ruthless marauders returned to Carolina the next year [1704] they had for all practical purposes destroyed the province of Apalachee as a useful Spanish zone of defense [Higginbotham 1977 :116].

The raid of 1703 started from the town of Achito (Hitchiti) on the Ocmulgee River, and included hundreds of Apalachicolas, and by early 1704 resulted, according to Moore, in the enslavement of thousands of Apalachees. Recent analysis suggests that these numbers were greatly exaggerated; probably several hundred were killed and “it is likely that those enslaved by Moore numbered many more than 1,000 ...” (Hann 1988:279). Nonetheless, this was a devastating blow to the Spanish.

The British were not the only colonial power that contributed to the demise of the Native Americans in the Southeast. The French at Mobile found themselves promoting attacks on tribes allied to the English. Although not wanting to incite the Native Americans by practicing slavery or conducting raids as did the English, they could not ignore direct attacks on Frenchmen. In 1704 the English and their Alabama allies attacked a small party of Frenchmen. The French encouraged their allies the Chickasaws to attack the Alabamas, and it was soon noted “the Chickasaws were bringing Alabama scalps to Fort Louis [Mobile] in exchange for guns, bullets, and powder” (Higginbotham 1977:131).

By 1708, the English and their Native American allies had successfully isolated the Spanish fort at Pensacola, by destroying the Native American tribes allied to the Spanish and carrying the inhabitants off as slaves, or causing them to remove themselves further west to the Mobile area (Higginbotham 1977:357). The Governor of French Mobile, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, realized the English would soon attempt a similar offensive against Mobile. In a letter from Bienville to Pontchartrain, the Minister of France’s colonies, he noted

The English of Carolina are doing everything possible to win over all our Indian allies. This past spring two Englishmen envoys of their governor, arrived at the village of the Chickasaw to ask them to deliver presents to all our allies. One of these two came to the grand village of the Choctaw and was not well received although he gave them a very large present. The proposal that he made to them in his speech stunned them: it was to aid them to destroy all the small nations that were nearest to our fort -- the Tomeh, Apalachee, Mobile, Tawasa, Chato, Pascagoula and Pensacola [Higginbotham 1977:357-358].

The English continued their journey westward into the Mississippi River Valley attempting to disrupt French accords with the Yazoo, Tensa, Natchez, Tunica, Arkansas, and Koroa tribes (Higginbotham 1977:358).

In the first week of May 1709 the long-awaited attack by the English, with 500 to 700 Alabama allies, struck a Mobilian village 13 miles up the Mobile River from Mobile. The Mobilians were able to beat off the attack before a French force under Bienville arrived. The Mobilians and

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French pursued the Alabamas, who were burdened with 28 captive Mobilian women and children. The Alabamas killed the captives, and while Bienville returned to look after the fort, the Mobilians continued the chase. They returned to Mobile with 34 Alabama scalps and five prisoners (Higginbotham 1977:383-385). Bienville turned the Alabama prisoners over to the Mobilians, who “roasted them over a slow fire” (Higginbotham 1977:385).

### **Resettlement of the Chattahoochee Valley**

The end of Queen Anne’s War, meant a change in the attitude between the English and their Native American allies. Expansion of the English Carolina frontier dispossessed Native Americans from their traditional homeland and threatened the Apalachicola and Yuchi tribes that had relocated to Ocmulgee. Unfair treatment and even enslavement at the hands of English traders caused the one-time allies to revolt against the English in the Yamassee War of 1715. Over 400 English colonists were killed along the Carolina seaboard, and English traders living in the Creek towns on the Ocmulgee were put to death.

The English retribution was so swift and severe that the Yamassee tribe ceased to exist as a cultural entity. The Apalachicola, Yuchi, and Creek removed themselves to the Chattahoochee River Valley to avoid English reprisals in 1715. The major settlement was at Yuchi Town. The Yuchi, who spoke an isolate in the macro-Siouan phylum, were linguistically distinct from their Creek neighbors along the Chattahoochee, but they seem to have been incorporated into the loose structure of the Creek confederacy by the time of the Yamassee War and they remained associated with the Creek until removal (1836). In the meantime, the resettled tribes of the Chattahoochee turned again to the Spanish of West Florida for trade (Kohler et. al. 1980:21).

In 1716, Diego de Pena, from Spanish Pensacola, met with the chiefs of the ten resettled towns in the Chattahoochee, one of which he encountered while proceeding upriver was called “Uche” (Yuchi) (Chase 1960; Kohler 1978). Pena noted that this town had the second largest population in the province (Schnell 1982:4-2). However, Spanish influence with the Southeast tribes was on the wane by 1716. When Captain Tobias Fitch visited the Lower Creeks in 1726, it was to investigate rumors of French rather than Spanish traders among the newly resettled towns along the Chattahoochee. Symptomatic of this decreasing Franco-Spanish influence was the founding of the Colony of Georgia in 1733 and the treaty which General Oglethorpe was to negotiate with the Creeks on the Chattahoochee, in 1739. The substance of this treaty was that the Creeks “... would not suffer either the Spaniards or any other people, excepting the Trustees of the Colony of Georgia ...” to settle any of the lands which, “by ancient right, belong to the Creek Nation.” (Kohler et. al. 1980:22)

In 1776 the famous naturalist William Bartram passed through “Uche Town,” of which he says

The Uche Town is situated in a vast plain, on the gradual ascent as we rise from a narrow strip of low ground immediately bordering on the river: it is the largest, most compact, and best situated Indian town I ever saw; the habitations are large and neatly built; the walls of the houses are constructed of a wooden frame, then lathed and plastered inside and out with a reddish well tempered clay or mortar, which gives them the appearance of red brick walls; and these houses are neatly covered or roofed with Cypress bark or shingles of that tree. The town appeared to be populous and thriving, full of youth and young children: I suppose the number of inhabitants, men, women, and children might amount to one thousand or fifteen hundred, as it is said they are able to muster five hundred gun-men or warriors. Their own national language is altogether or

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radically different from the Creek or Muscogulge tongue, and is called the Savanna or Savanuca tongue; I was told by the traders it was the same with, or a dialect of, the Shawanese. They are in confederacy with the Creeks, but do not mix with them; and, on account of their numbers and strength, are of importance enough to excite and draw upon them the jealousy of the whole Muscogulge confederacy, and are usually at variance, yet are wise enough to unite against a common enemy, to support the interest and glory of the general Creek confederacy [Bartram 1928].

In addition to the Bartram account, other eighteenth century reports by David Taitt and Benjamin Hawkins exist to give an idea of the changes that occurred at Yuchi Town during the period before removal. In 1776, Bartram estimated that Yuchi Town had 1000 to 1500 people, while Hawkins estimated that they had 250 “gun men” (warriors) in 1798. Assuming the total number of warriors would be less than one quarter of the population, probably there were over 1000 people in Yuchi Town in 1798. Apparently there was a drastic population reduction in the next few decades, because the 1832 census of the Lower Creek towns listed a total of 399 Yuchi and 36 slaves in Yuchi Town (Schnell 1982).

### **Yuchi Removal**

With the end of the American Revolution (1783), American settlers began to move on to Creek lands in Georgia. Spain, which had reacquired Florida as a result of siding with the United States in the war hoped to establish a buffer against American expansion by encouraging Creek hostility to American settlement of Georgia.

The Middle Chattahoochee River Valley became the focus of United States and Lower Creek relationships because of its strategic position as one of the few good river crossings along the Chattahoochee River. All overland traffic from Georgia into what is now Alabama, crossed the Chattahoochee at this point (Morgan 1983:10). Originally an Indian trading path, the crossing was approved in 1805 by Congress to be upgraded to a Federal Road, which was completed in 1811. The Federal Road began in Augusta, Georgia, ran through Fort Hawkins (present-day Macon, Georgia), on west to the Chattahoochee River crossing, and finally terminated at Mobile, Alabama (Chase 1974:28).

The movement of white settlers over the Federal Road and on to Creek lands resulted in increasing friction between the two groups. Creek leaders such as William Weatherford (known as Red Eagle) secured military stores from British traders and their Spanish allies in West Florida. The conflict, which began as a Creek civil war between elements of the Upper and Lower Creek tribes and later evolved into an attempt to stop American encroachment, was called the First Creek Indian War (Owsley 1981).

The First Creek War was one of the most serious Indian threats to the federal government during the War of 1812. As part of a strategy to hamper the United States war effort, British and Spanish agents in Spanish West Florida supplied the Creeks with war materiel. Many Creek leaders such as Red Eagle (William Weatherford), saw this as an opportunity to stop American encroachment on their Creek homeland. Other elements of the Creek favored alliance with the United States, leading to internal fighting among the tribe. The Creek civil war quickly escalated into a war between the Creeks and Americans. With the Creek attack on Fort Mims, Alabama, on August 30, 1813, the First Creek War started. The war lasted for nearly two years

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and ended with the defeat of the Creeks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, on March 27, 1814 (Caruso 1963:322).

The Treaty of Fort Jackson, ending the First Creek Indian War, required that the Creek "Indians were to be settled in an area delineated by Line Creek on the west and the Chattahoochee on the east" (Chase 1974:4). A Creek Indian Agency was established at the abandoned site of Fort Mitchell (designated a National Historic Landmark in 1990) along the Federal Road, in the newly created Creek Territory on the Alabama side of the Chattahoochee River in 1817 (Chase 1974:4).

In 1825, because of conflicts between American settlers and the Creek, the Creek Indian Agency at Fort Mitchell was regarrisoned by a variety of regular Army units, marines, state militias, and friendly Creeks to maintain peace (Morgan 1983:14). By 1828, however, the governments' peace policy changed with the election of Andrew Jackson as President. All efforts to treat the Native American tribes as sovereign nations, whose treaties bound the federal government to certain protective actions, was ended. Instead, Jackson favored total Indian removal from the eastern side of the Mississippi and worked with Congress to pass the Indian Removal Bill of 1830.

In the face of this bill the Creeks appealed to the Supreme Court, which declared the legislation unconstitutional. The Jackson Administration, however, repudiated the Court's decision and accelerated the removal program by closing the Indian Agencies, and forcing the signing of the Treaty of Washington, by which the Creeks ceded to the United States all of their remaining land east of the Mississippi River.

In 1832, following the signing of the Treaty of Cusseta, which granted the Creeks land in the west in return for their holdings east of the Mississippi River, the Creek Indian Agency was closed by the administration of President Andrew Jackson (Morgan 1983:14-15). Fort Mitchell, located about three miles upstream from Yuchi Town, became the Headquarters of the Army of the South and was used as the facility to hold Creek and Yuchi prior to their shipment west. Indian removal began in 1836, and was completed by 1838 (Green 1982; Morgan 1983:16).

During the early nineteenth century there is no mention of the Yuchi participating in the Creek War, either as allies of the Creeks or Americans. However, their Indian agency, like the Creeks' was located in Fort Mitchell. In 1832, a census of the Lower Creek towns was accomplished and it was noted "there were 192 males, 194 females, and 22 slaves listed as living in Yuchi Town" for a total of 103 families (Schnell 1982:4-7).

In the same year as this census the Creeks signed a treaty relinquishing ownership of all lands east of the Mississippi River, which included Yuchi Town on the west bank of the Chattahoochee. The land was surveyed and laid out according to township, range, and section. Individual Creek and Yuchi had the option of removal to Indian Territory or of being assigned a section or half section of land. The sections comprising the site of Yuchi Town were assigned to individual Yuchi at that time (Schnell 1982:4-10-4-11).

The majority of Native Americans along the Chattahoochee elected or were forced, to move to Oklahoma, where descendants of the Yuchi Town residents still reside. The Yuchi Town Site is considered the "mother" town for a significant portion of the Yuchi population living in

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Oklahoma and throughout the nation today. There are Yuchi living today who can trace their ancestry directly back to this town through the census of 1832. It's the main town from which their Yuchi ancestors were removed 160 years ago, and it is still significant in their culture (Schnell 1982:7-11).

### **Future Yuchi Town Research**

The Yuchi Town Site includes archeological sites 1RU57 and 1RU63. Yuchi Town contains the remains of two significant occupations that are temporally distinct. From ca. 1550-1715 it was occupied by the ancestors of the Creeks. These people spoke the Hitchiti dialect. Collectively, their towns were part of the Apalachicola province. Later, after the emigration of refugees following the Yamasee War, the site was settled by the Yuchi.

The site is considered to have outstanding potential to add to our knowledge of protohistoric and historic Native American culture in the Southeast because (1) it is the site of two distinct historic Native American occupations -- Apalachicola and Yuchi; (2) both ethnic groups were linked to European colonial powers which attempted to use the Native American groups to further their imperial ends; (3) similarly, the Apalachicola and Yuchi used the European colonial powers, England in particular, by switching alliances to maintain their cultural integrity. First, they allied themselves with the English in order to avenge the destruction of their settlements at the hands of the Spanish. Then, with increasing abuses at the hands of the English, they participated in the Yamasee War. With the establishment of Mobile, on the Gulf coast in 1702 and Fort Toulouse in central Alabama in 1717, France also became a contender for control of the Southeast. However, the end of the American Revolution (1783) and the Spanish expulsion from Florida in 1821 saw Anglo-Americans increasingly dictate Native American policy in the Southeast. Therefore, the Yuchi Town Site is an outstanding example of a historic Native American site important in the colonial aspirations of Spain, England, and France for their control of the Southeast. Later, the site is also important to the young American nation.

Future investigations could provide specific information that compares and contrasts Apalachicola and Yuchi culture. This would involve the archeological study of architecture, community patterning, diet, mortuary behavior, and artifact studies. Future studies could determine the varying degrees of acculturation as influenced by Spain, England, France, and the United States on the Chattahoochee tribes from the late seventeenth century until the time of removal. This would be revealed in changing settlement patterns, quantities and types of trade goods, faunal and floral remains, mortality rates, etc. Future investigations could enable existing Yuchi tribal members to better understand their own heritage.

The Yuchi were among the last Native American tribes in the Chattahoochee Valley therefore, the Yuchi Town Site has the potential for examining certain eighteenth and early nineteenth century cultural processes. As Schnell points out, "Since the Yuchi were a relatively late arriving group in the Chattahoochee Valley, there is a great potential for the examination of 18th and early 19th century diffusion and assimilation" (1982:7-10-7-11).

Not only is this site important because of the amount of information which it holds for archeological, historical, and ethnohistorical research, but also it is the "mother" town for a significant population of Yuchi Indians living in Oklahoma and throughout the nation today; it is a place of the heart. There are Yuchi living today who can trace their ancestry directly back to

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this town through the census of 1832. This was the main town from which their ancestors were forcibly removed 160 years ago, and it is still the burial place of their ancestors.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.  
 Previously Listed in the National Register. **July 19, 1996 (95000453)**  
 Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.  
 Designated a National Historic Landmark. **July 19, 1996**  
 Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #  
 Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office - Alabama  
 Other State Agency  
 Federal Agency **Fort Benning; U.S. Army COE-Savannah District**  
 Local Government  
 University  
 Other (Specify Repository): **Mr. Chad O. Braley, Senior Archeologist, Southeastern Archaeological Services, Inc., 565 North Milledge Avenue, Athens, Georgia 30601**

**Mr. Al Rowland, Yuchi Tribal Organization, Inc., Post Office Box 1990, Sapulpa, Oklahoma 74067**

## **10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property: 280 acres

UTM References:     **Zone   Easting   Northing**

**A 16 3575960 692750   B 16 3575640 693780**  
**C 16 3575230 694530   D 16 3574150 695330**  
**E 16 3573950 695100   F 16 3575230 693730**  
**G 16 3575620 692710**

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the property is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points: A 16 3575960 692750, B 16 3575640 693780, C 16 3575230 694530, D 16 3574150 695330, E 16 3573950 695100, F 16 3575230 693730 and G 16 3575620 692710. The Chattahoochee River forms the northern boundary.

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**Boundary Justification:**

The boundary for the Yuchi Town Site is based upon historical references (Hawkins 1971) and numerous archeological survey and testing projects contracted for by Fort Benning and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These surveys have delineated the maximum extent of subsurface cultural resources which are used to create the present boundary for this site.

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**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

Name/Title: **Mr. Chad Braley**  
**Senior Archeologist**

Address: **Southeastern Archaeological Services, Inc.**  
**565 North Milledge Avenue**  
**Athens, GA 30601**

Telephone: **(706) 546-1850**

Date: **July 27, 1992 (Revised September 29, 1993)**

Edited by: **Mark R. Barnes, Ph.D.**  
**Senior Archeologist**  
**National Register Programs Division**  
**National Park Service, SERO**  
**1924 Building**  
**100 Alabama Street, SW**  
**Atlanta, GA 30303**

Telephone: **(404) 562-3173**

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March 28, 2019