

# DRAYTON HALL

## Preliminary Archaeological Investigation at a Low Country Plantation

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Historic American Buildings Survey measured drawing of Drayton Hall.

Sixteen metal buttons of various types that could not be correlated with the South button types were found, including a flat metal (brass?) core with a highly corroded iron oxide (?) coating and enamel on the face over the coating. A bone button back (turned green), similar to type 20, but with two layers of gold leaf over a concave front, was also recovered.

✓ Beads. Thirty-two glass beads, faceted and unfaceted, with colors including red, blue, striped and clear were found in many areas of the site. The beads ranged in date from the late 18th century to the mid-19th century (fig. 45).

Coins. Only five coins were found, three of half-penny denomination. There were two George II (young-head) and one George III (young-head) found (fig. 13). While finding such coins is not unique, what is highly unusual is that all three of these coins were minted in Ireland. None of the dates was legible but all were in the 18th century.

Toys. Five clay marbles were found during the excavations. In the 20th-century dump the bisque doll's head previously mentioned (fig. 26) was found, along with the frame of a tricycle.

Other. A brass pistol butt plate in the shape of an anthropomorphic face (fig. 46) was recovered from the 18th-century trash deposit (10B). It is quite detailed, showing the teeth, pupils of the eyes and a pig-like nose. Several fragments of rectangular graphite pencil were found and half a carved bone fan handle and part of a brush back were excavated (fig. 33).

### Construction Material

Window Glass. The single most numerous item excavated was window glass. In all, more than 30,000 fragments of window glass were excavated, 72.3 percent (21,856 fragments) from Unit 38 alone, the triangular unit immediately against the house. This extraordinary amount of window glass is possibly the result of a severe storm that necessitated major roof and window repairs. Charles Drayton did record in his diary (Drayton 27, 30 August 1813) that damage had been done to the roof and window panes were broken. Further, the historical architect confirmed that all the window sashes were changed during the early 19th century. This would make the vast quantities of window glass found outside the house more readily explicable, although it is still possible that the glass derives from some other source. Some of the glass was of more recent date, the result of vandalism or of natural mishaps, but these two factors can account for only a small portion of the window glass fragments found.

Nails and Spikes. More than 14,700 nails and spikes were excavated, including handwrought, machine-cut and wire types, although few of the latter were discovered. A large number of the nails were found in the south flanker area, a result in accordance with the hypothesis that this building was intentionally dismantled. More difficult to account for is the large quantity of nails that was found in the area immediately outside the main house. This may be the result of the window alterations and roof repairs mentioned previously or of the post-Civil War repairs that were made to the house. The majority of the nails were badly corroded.

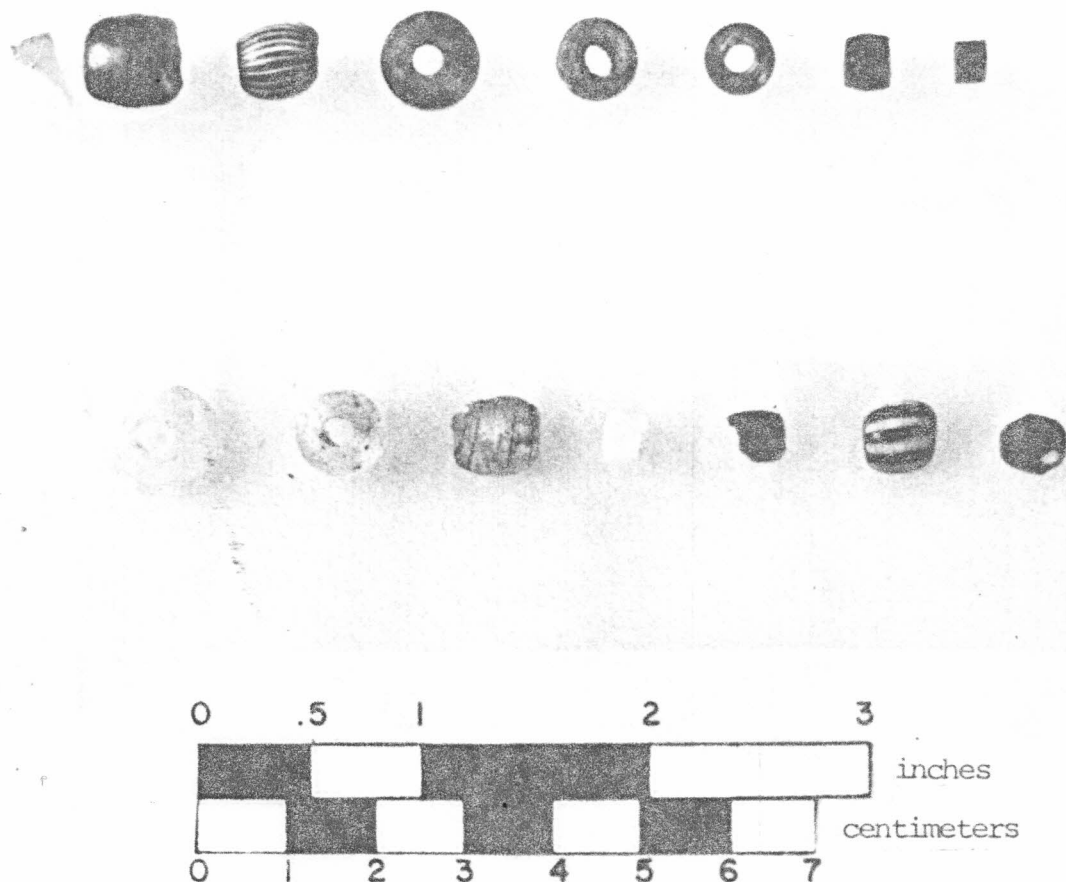


Figure 45: Glass beads. Top row, left to right: wound, ultramarine, Unit 38B V/JG; tubular brite navy with 26 white stripes; wound, brite navy, provenience unknown; wound, brite navy, Unit 17B/SH; wound, brite navy, Unit 22B/BSE; tubular faceted brite navy, Unit 38B IVa/QD; tubular brite navy, Unit 17B/SG. Bottom row: wound, light gold (opal), Unit 22B/BSF; wound, clear crystal, Unit 17B/SE; wound, pale blue (opal), Unit 17B/BJT; tubular white, Unit 7B/GE; tubular, faceted emerald, Unit 18B/OE; tubular, black and white stripes, Unit 17B/SI, tubular, faceted black, Unit 10B/DF0.