

What We Leave Behind

Joseph Caldwell and David Swain didn't recycle. In 19th-century Chapel Hill, an abandoned well made for a convenient landfill. That's where University archeologists and anthropology students found a spittoon, a chamber pot, bowls, plates, cups, tobacco pipes and beer, wine and medicine bottles apparently tossed there by the first two UNC presidents and their families. The well was in the back yard of the second president's house, and the home's foundation recently was unearthed after lying hidden for 118 years. It's the next-door neighbor to the current president's house on Franklin Street.

Caldwell moved into the house, which was owned by his new bride, in 1809, according to *The First State University* by William Powell '40. He lived there until his death in office in 1835. President Swain (class of 1825) chose to live across the street until 1849, when he moved into the house. It

burned in 1886, 18 years after Swain, UNC's second president, left office. Math Professor James Love, son-in-law of Cornelia Phillips Spencer, built a new house on the site in 1887.

A team headed by Stephen Davis, associate director of the Research Laboratories of Archeology, went digging on the site where the Love House will be renovated and expanded to house the Center for the Study of the American South. It's routine — if UNC is disturbing land and the archeologists think there might be something there, they go in ahead of the bulldozers.

Davis' team found 13,000 artifacts. The early 19th-century

pieces were a surprise — and as it turned out, that was just the new stuff.

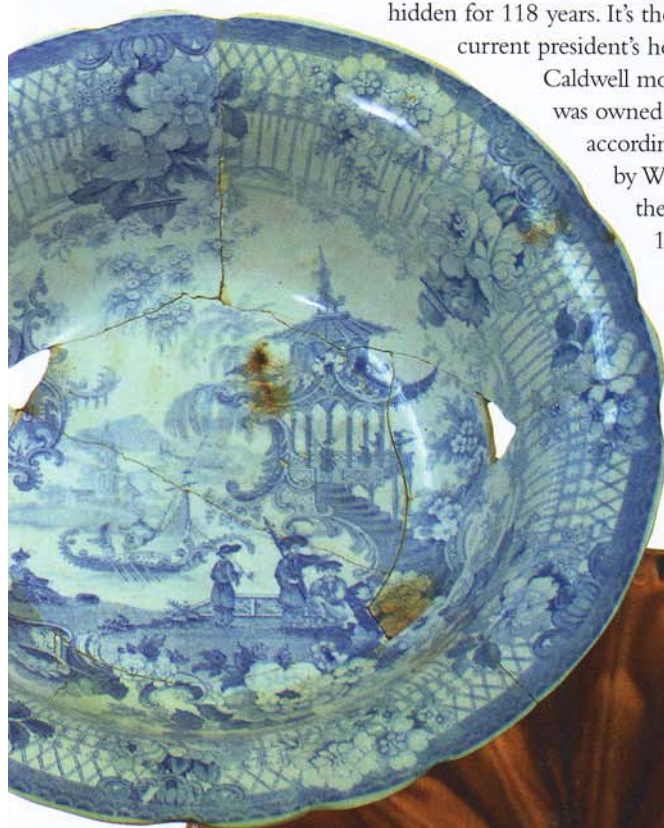
A lower layer of soil under the floor of the well house had protected earthenware cooking pots, spear points and other materials that are evidence of a 2,000-year-old prehistoric camp, pointing to the Middle Woodland Period,

about 500 B.C. to 500 A.D., a time for which few sites have been found in this region.



RESEARCH LABORATORIES OF ARCHEOLOGY

Staff and students clean the completed excavation — routine when land is disturbed on old parts of the campus and surroundings.



A bowl, a ceramic spittoon and a bottle, apparently leftovers of the first two UNC presidents and their families.

