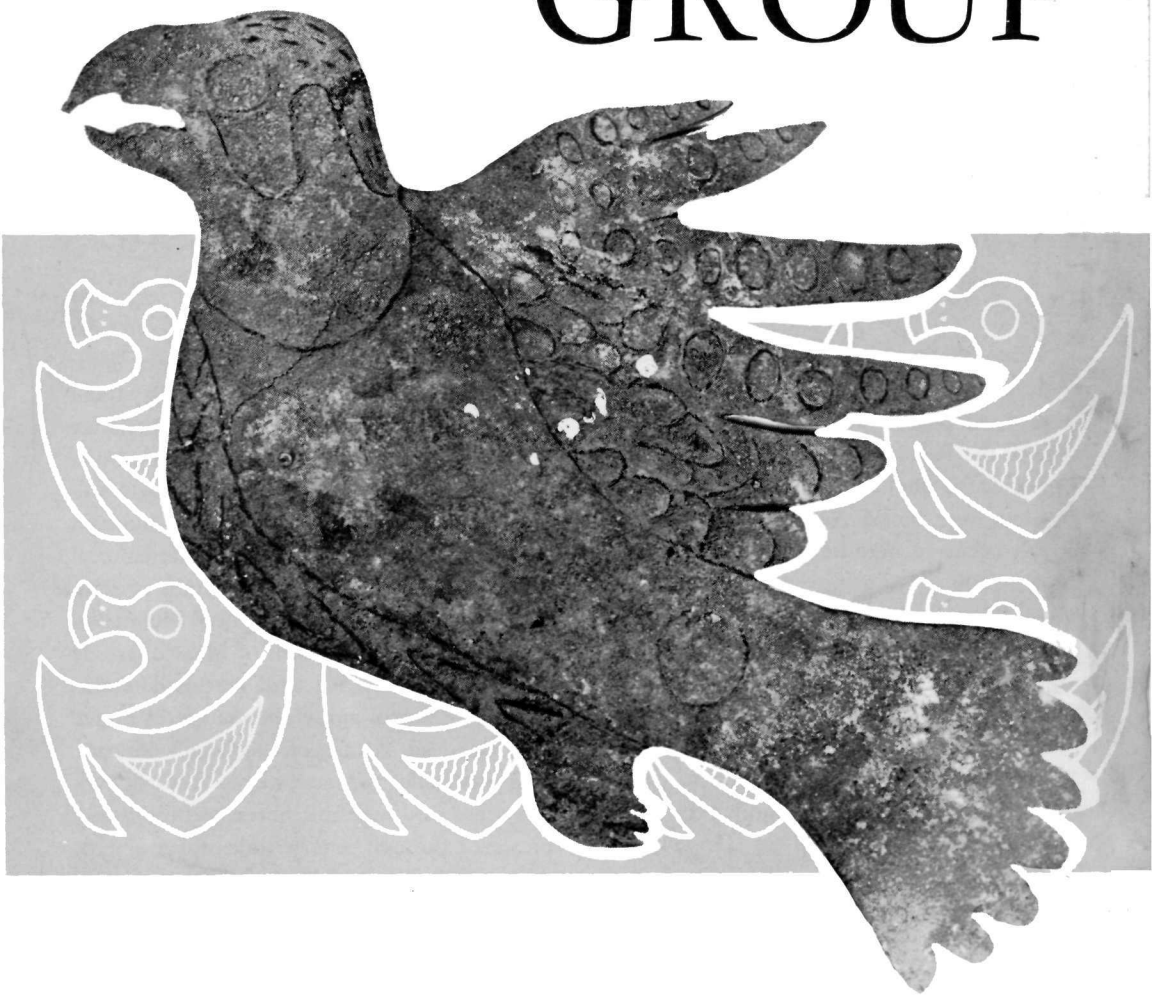


MOUND CITY GROUP



NATIONAL MONUMENT

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fred A. Seaton, *Secretary*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Conrad L. Wirth, *Director*



craftsmen, and worked with a great variety of material foreign to Ohio. Copper from the Lake Superior region was used for breastplates, head-dresses, ear spoons, and other ornaments and ceremonial objects. Stone tobacco pipes were beautifully carved to represent the bird and animal life around them. From obsidian, a volcanic glass brought from the Rocky Mountain region, they made delicately chipped ceremonial blades. Fresh water pearls from local streams, quartz and mica from the Allegheny Mountains, ocean shells from the Gulf of Mexico, grizzly bear teeth from the West, all were used in making the beautiful and elaborate pieces buried with the dead. Pottery of excellent workmanship was made, and even woven fabric of bark and other wild vegetable fibers has been found, preserved through contact with copper objects. Animal bone was used extensively, and wood must also have been important in the manufacture of implements and utensils.

The Hopewell people apparently lived in small villages near rivers and streams, often some distance from their mounds, which must have been used chiefly as ceremonial centers. Though it is believed that they knew how to raise corn and may have had simple gardens, their diet was augmented by the hunting of wild animals and the gathering of wild fruits and

vegetables. Though their culture was widespread, and made use of materials obtained by travel and trade in distant parts of North America, the evidence of their remains suggests that they were a peaceful and more or less sedentary people. Possibly this was one of the reasons for the disappearance of their culture. But whether it was due to conquest by more warlike tribes, or disintegration from within, or a combination of various factors, the Hopewell culture flowered for a period and then passed away.

Exploration and Excavation of Mound City

The Mound City group consists of a rectangular earth enclosure approximately 13 acres in extent, within which are located 24 burial mounds. The earth walls of the enclosure vary in height from 3 to 4 feet, with an entrance or gateway on both the east and west sides. The largest mound in the group was described by early observers as 17½ feet high and 90 feet in diameter, but it is somewhat smaller today. All the mounds are conical in shape, with the exception of one which is elongated. Just outside the enclosure are two additional mounds, and several depressions from which material was taken for constructing the wall and mounds.

The site was mapped and partially excavated in 1846 by two pioneer archeologists, E. G. Squier and E. H. Davis. The results of their ex-

tensive survey of prehistoric earthworks, *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley*, appeared in 1848 in the first publication of the newly founded Smithsonian Institution. Although many of the mounds had been noticed by earlier explorers, the work of Squier and Davis was the first detailed study of the prehistoric structures in the Mississippi Valley, and is a milestone in American archeology.

The excavations at Mound City by Squier and Davis produced a great many spectacular objects, most interesting of which were a large number of stone tobacco pipes, many being realistically carved in the images of birds, animals, and the human head. These objects, first acquired by the Blackmore Museum in England, were later transferred to the British Museum, London.

During the First World War the area comprising Mound City was occupied by Camp Sherman. At the close of the war, the Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, in 1920 and 1921, conducted extensive excavations at the site, supplementing the information secured by Squier and Davis. A few years later the Society restored the earthworks to their present appearance and developed the tract into a State memorial. The final excavation of the site by the society brought to light many interesting details of the construction and purpose of the mounds, and yielded many fine artifacts typical of the Hopewell culture. Examples of these objects, now on exhibit in the Ohio State Museum at

View of mounds and earthen enclosure wall at Mound City Group National Monument



Obsidian Blade.



Copper Headdress.



Excavated at Mound City and now on display at the Ohio State Museum

Columbus, are shown in the accompanying illustrations.

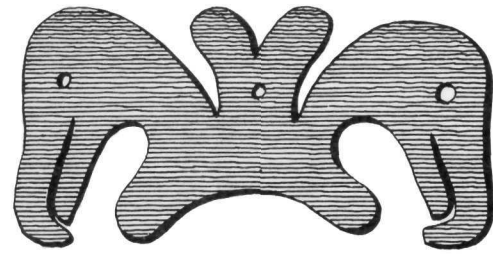
Since Mound City was primarily a ceremonial center for the disposal of the dead, much of the information obtained from its excavation concerns the burial customs of the people. The site of each mound was originally occupied by a wooden structure, which was probably the scene of the last rites for the body. It is believed that after a suitable period of use, this structure, probably a mortuary temple, was intentionally burned, perhaps with the idea of purification, or of allowing the spirit of the dead to escape to the spirit world. Then over the bones and the offerings left with the dead, the mound was erected. This was a considerable task when one remembers the simple tools and equipment used by the Indians. Using only digging sticks, or hoes of shell or animal shoulder blades, they scraped up the earth, carried it in baskets or skins, and dumped it, load by load, on the slowly growing mound. It is obvious that only a small percentage of the Hopewell dead were buried in mounds, an honor pos-

sibly accorded only to persons of high rank.

Archeologists discovered, in excavating Mound City, that they were not the first to disturb these ancient remains. In many of the mounds were found intrusive burials of another prehistoric people, accompanied by artifacts quite distinct from those of the Hopewellians. Another group of Indians had found the mounds a convenient and suitable place for the burial of their dead, and then they too left the region well before the white man came.

Mound City Group National Monument

The 13-acre mound area, with the surrounding property, was established as Mound City Group National Monument on March 2, 1923, by Presidential proclamation. It now contains 67.50 acres. Although Federal jurisdiction was transferred from the War Department to the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior in 1933, the Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society continued to administer the area until August 1, 1946.



(Cover) Copper Breastplate—Eagle Design. Excavated at Mound City and now on display at the Ohio State Museum

The outstanding prehistoric burial shrine in southern Ohio

The Hopewell People

When Greece was reaching its greatest glory, the prehistoric Indians called Hopewell were developing a distinctive culture. By the time of the Roman Empire, these same people had achieved one of the outstanding societies of prehistoric North America. Their cultural zenith occurred here in the Scioto Valley of southern Ohio. For at least 17 centuries these people flourished. But by A.D. 1200—when the cliff dwellers of the Southwest were building their famous apartments—the Hopewell Culture was fading. Hundreds of years later, European settlers found only deserted burial mounds and ceremonial earthworks to hint of these vanished people. Mound City is the most concentrated group of Hopewellian mounds. The name Hopewell comes from a group of mounds 5 miles west of Mound City, the first of this type to be thoroughly excavated.

The Hopewell people are best known for their high artistic achievements and for their practice of erecting mounds of earth over the remains of their dead. From the extraordinary wealth of burial offerings found in the mounds, archeologists have learned a great deal about these prehistoric people. They were outstanding among the American Indians as artists and



Effigy Tobacco Pipe of Stone (Left). Pottery Vessel (Right). Excavated at Mound City and now on display at the Ohio State Museum

How To Reach the Monument

The National Monument is on the west bank of the Scioto River, 3 miles north of Chillicothe, Ohio. From Chillicothe, take U.S. 35 and State Route 104.

About Your Visit

The monument is open all year. Organized groups may receive special service if advance arrangements are made with the superintendent.

Before touring the site, be sure to come to the visitor center, where exhibits and dioramas help you to understand the Mound City story. From the visitor center, a grass walk leads to the embankment surrounding the mounds. Just before entering this enclosure, you will pass between two "borrow pits." The Indians took thousands of basket loads of earth from these and other pits to build the mounds. Inside the enclosure you will see the 24 mounds which covered the evidence of elaborate burial rites. Beyond the opposite embankment, the walk leads to the Scioto River.

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.

Nearby Points of Interest

Southern Ohio is very rich in prehistoric Indian sites. Among those set aside as State memorials under the custody of the Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society are Fort Ancient, Fort Hill, Miamisburg Mound, Newark Earthworks, Seip Mound, and Serpent Mound.

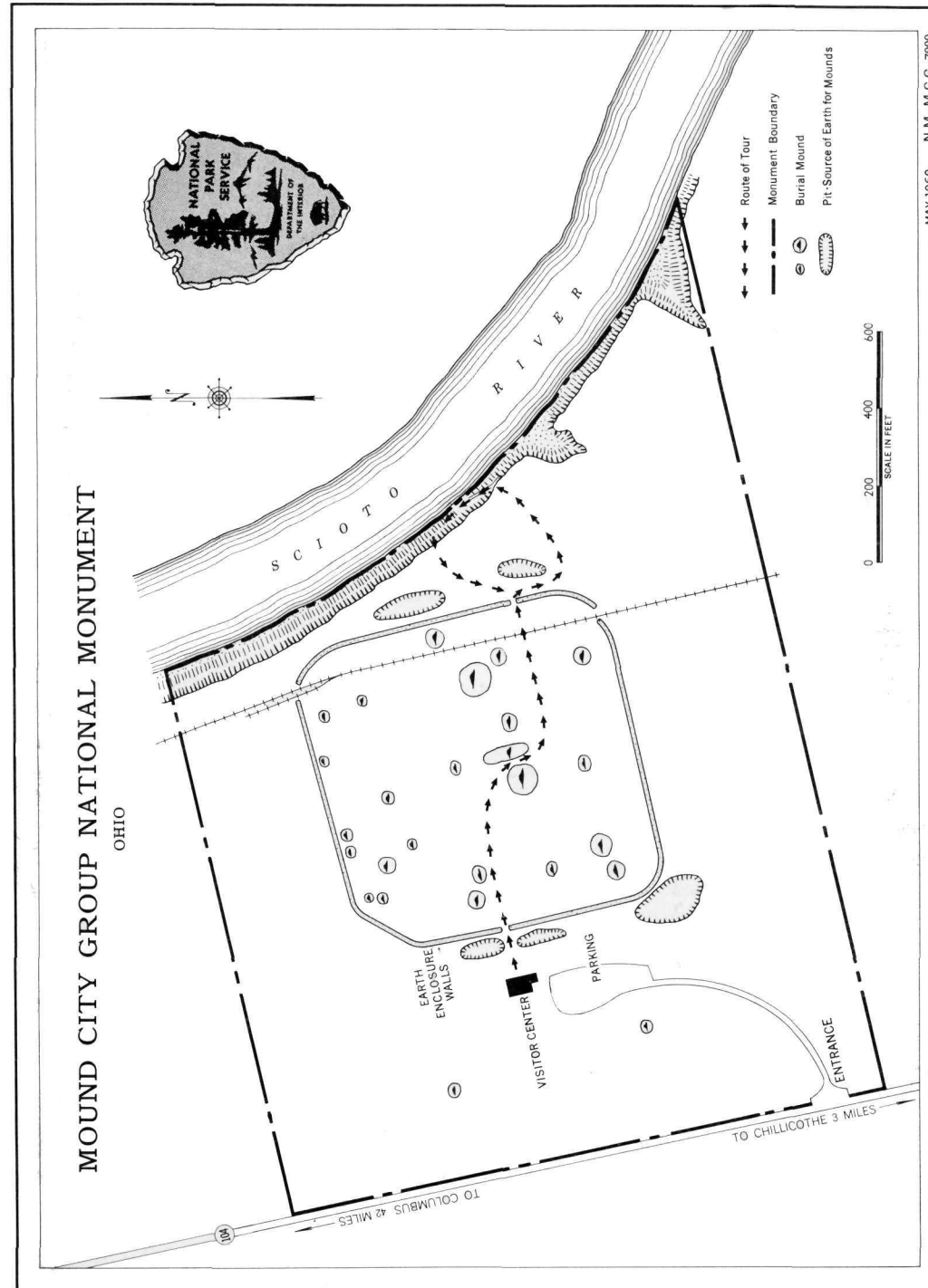
You can see historical and archeological exhibits in the Ross County Historical Society Museum in Chillicothe. Many objects excavated at Mound City are at the Ohio State Museum in Columbus.

Administration

Mound City Group National Monument is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Box 332, Chillicothe, Ohio, is in immediate charge.

Mission 66

This vital 10-year program is designed to develop and protect the National Park System so that you and other visitors can enjoy it fully. The attractive new Mound City Visitor Center is a result of Mission 66.



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