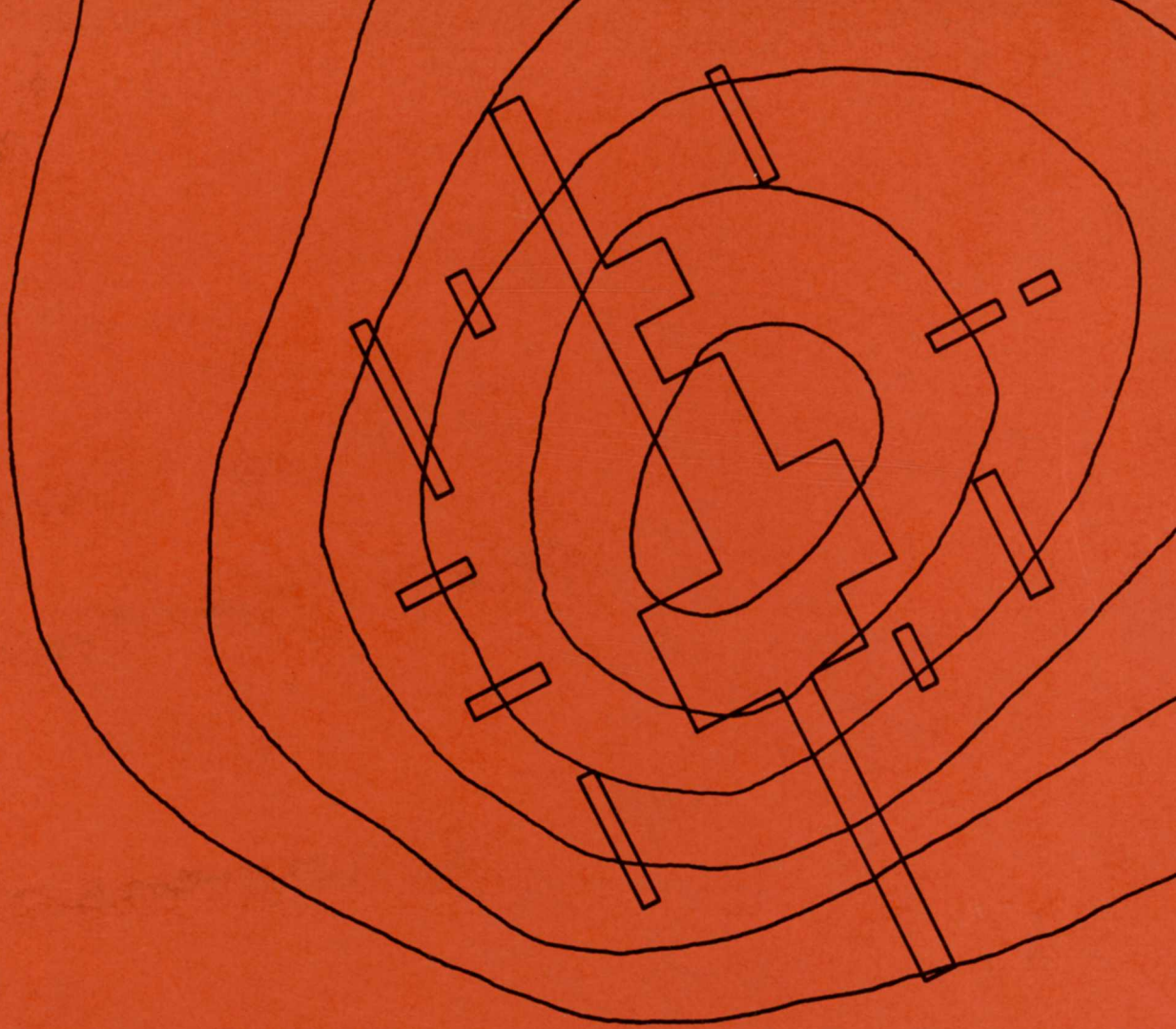




# **PHARR MOUNDS and BEAR CREEK SITE**

EXCAVATIONS AT THE PHARR MOUNDS

Prentiss and Itawamba Counties,  
Mississippi

and

EXCAVATIONS AT THE BEAR CREEK SITE

Tishomingo County,  
Mississippi

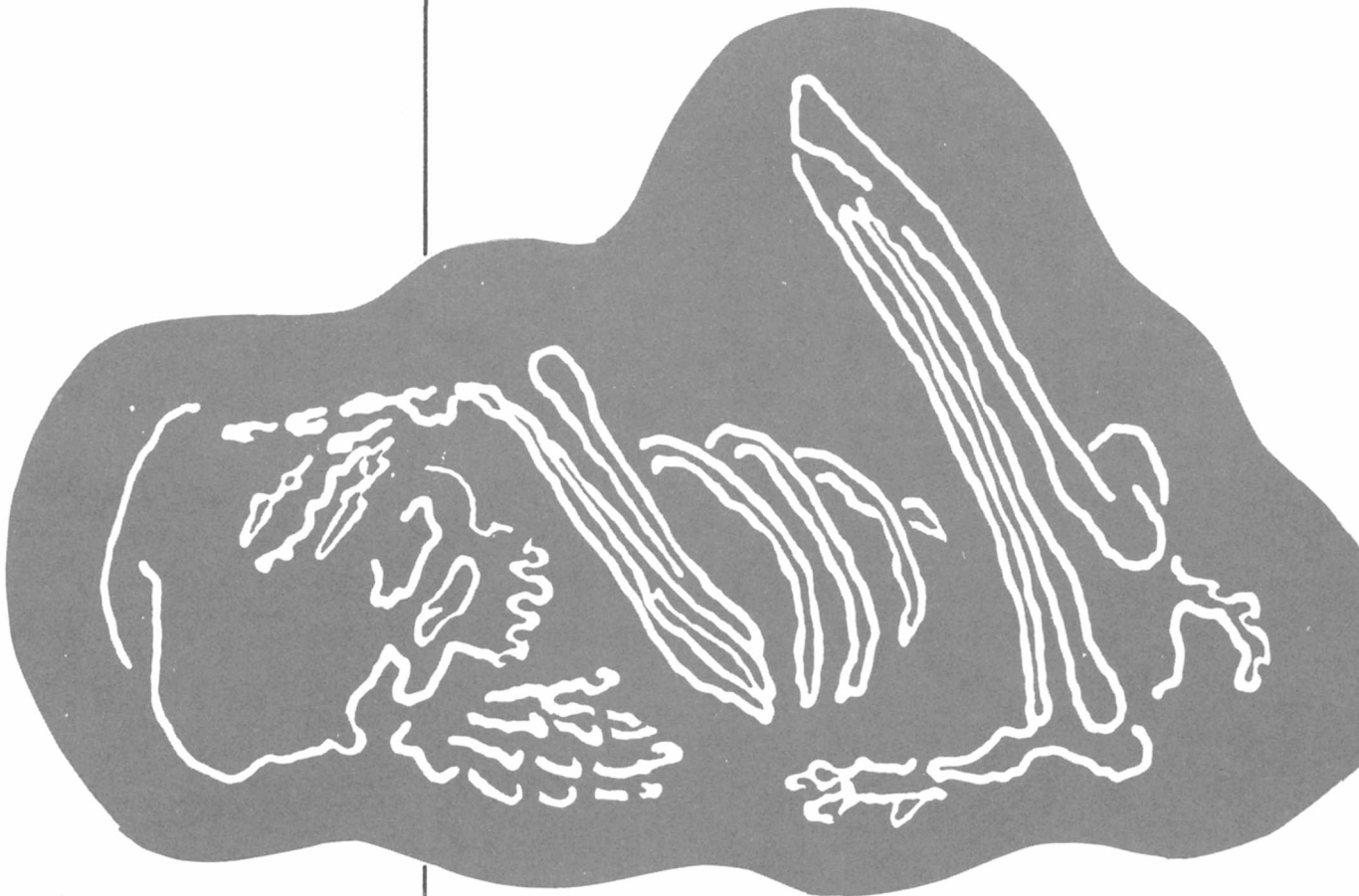
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## pharr mounds



EXCAVATIONS AT THE PHARR MOUNDS

Prentiss and Itawamba Counties,  
Mississippi

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## PREFACE

The Pharr Site has long been regarded as one of the most impressive archeological sites on the Natchez Trace Parkway and accordingly has been proposed for development as an exhibit-in-place. In order to provide information for its interpretation, the National Park Service carried out archeological investigations there during the summer of 1966. The fieldwork was supervised by the author.

As in the past, this project was expedited by the splendid cooperation of the Parkway staff. I would particularly like to thank the maintenance division for its help in setting up the grid system and making other aid available when requested.

February 1970

C.F.B.

## THE SITE AND ITS SETTING

The Pharr Site straddles the Prentiss-Itawamba County line in northeastern Mississippi, approximately 20 air miles northeast of the city of Tupelo. It is located in section 3-B of the Natchez Trace Parkway. The site is named from its location on "Pharr Flats," a broad, gently rolling terrace overlooking the marshy bottomlands at the junction of Little Brown and Mackeys Creeks (fig. 1).

The site lies in the headwaters of the Tombigbee River, on the southwestern fringe of the physiographic region known as the Tennessee River Hills. Locally, the topography is hilly and rugged, but broken frequently by broad, swampy stream bottoms. The upland topsoils are typically thin red loam and the bottoms are covered with rich brown or black sandy loam.

The principal archeological features of the site are eight dome-shaped mounds of varying size. Several of them have been considerably reduced by cultivation. The dimensions of the mounds, designated A through H, are:

| <u>Mound</u> | <u>Width/Length or<br/>Diameter (in feet)</u> | <u>Height<br/>(in feet)</u> |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A            | 55 by 65                                      | 7                           |
| B            | 105 by 110                                    | 18                          |
| C            | 115 in diameter                               | 18                          |
| D            | 80 by 95                                      | 12                          |
| E            | 165 by 175                                    | 8                           |
| F            | 60 in diameter                                | 8                           |
| G            | 200 in diameter                               | 6                           |
| H            | 110 by 130                                    | 2                           |

A search of the fields around the mounds turned up surface material in significant amounts only along the western side of the site. Flint spalls and chips (there was almost no pottery) were thinly scattered from the foot of the hill north of Mound A along the edge of the terrace to a point roughly 1,000 feet south of Mound G (fig. 2). Heavier concentrations did occur in some spots. One place in particular, an area of rich black soil about 500 feet southwest of Mound H, looked promising as a habitation area. The remainder of the site was virtually barren of surface material.

There are a number of large pits adjacent to the site which we thought might have been the source of the fill used in the mounds. Observation showed, however, that they were dug into a gravelly soil not found in the mounds. Local residents informed us that the pits had been dug recently to obtain road surfacing material.

## THE EXCAVATIONS

### Methods

A grid system of adjacent squares was used for horizontal control. The intersection of the primary axes was placed near the center of the site to avoid the use of four-figure designations. The grid was to have been oriented with the cardinal directions but, due to an error, the system was actually rotated  $18^{\circ}$  east of north. This was not discovered until a number of sacks and photographs had already been labeled. A changeover would have been unnecessarily confusing, and we continued to use the north-south, east-west designations.

Vertical control was exercised by reference to elevations of assumed datum points at each mound and near each excavation in the putative habitation area.

Excavation strategy was based on two concepts. First, it seemed probable that the mounds had been erected primarily to cover submound facilities. Surface collections made in the course of the Natchez Trace Parkway Archeological Survey (Jennings, 1940) suggested the site's relationship to the Bynum Site, where submound features were the rule. Secondly, the large size of the mounds made it likely that power equipment would be required at some stage if we were to accomplish more than limited explorations of these features.

Mound H was selected for our initial work. Cultivation had already removed most of the fill, making it possible to test the "submound concept" with a minimum of effort. Subsequent work was planned at Mound A, one of the smallest undisturbed mounds, to check the significance of the fill. Some caution was indicated until we had hard information on the nature of the mounds, and both were tested by manually dug trenches.



The work at Mounds H and A did indeed uncover submound features but, in the latter instance, evidence of a core structure also turned up. Subsequent excavation thus had to combine hand digging and power equipment, hopefully to provide a balance between volume of information and completeness of data.

Mounds D and E were chosen for further excavation. A 15-foot wide trench was manually dug into each mound to test for any structural data which might be contained in the fill. At Mound D, the bulldozer then stripped all but the bottommost 2 feet of fill from an area 60 feet wide all the way across the mound. At Mound E, the cut was 80 feet wide and, since such a small portion of the mound had been involved in the test trench, a 3-foot-wide balk was left down the center to provide a complete profile. At both mounds, the remaining 2 feet of fill and a shallow portion of the native soil were then removed by hand digging.

The approach-trench method of mound excavation was used at Mounds H and A, and in the test trenches at Mounds D and E. Work began with a 5-foot-wide trench on one side and the digging was carried toward the center of the structure. Fill was peeled from the vertical wall of the excavation in thin slices, and profiles were recorded every 5 feet. About 1.5 to 2 feet of the underlying native soil was included in the advancing profile to insure that no submound features were overlooked. This was checked further by cleaning the floor of the excavation after completing each 5-foot segment.

Two modifications in the technique were necessary because of the large size of the mounds. First, the manual excavations did not encompass the entire width of the mound and, second, in the case of three of the mounds, the test trenches were "stepped" due to the height of the profile.

In addition to the work on the mounds, a series of 3-foot-wide trenches were dug to test the "habitation area" along the western side of the site. Over most of the area, material was confined to the plow zone, and, accordingly, the trenches were quite shallow. Advantage was taken of a small area west of Mound H, where the deposit was slightly deeper (1.5 feet), to carry out a series of stratigraphic tests. Here, a number of 5-foot squares were excavated in one-half-foot levels, and the soil was screened.

### Mound H (fig. 3)

Continued cultivation had reduced this earthwork to a low rise, 1.5 to 2 feet high, which measured 110 feet wide by 130 feet long.

The mound fill which remained was a brown sandy loam. It closely resembled the site's present topsoil in texture and composition but was slightly darker in color. The native soil beneath the mound was a dark, humus-stained clay which faded into the underlying reddish-brown clay.

Excavation began near the north edge of the mound so that as the work progressed toward the center the profile would be shaded and protected from rapid drying. A 20-foot-wide trench was dug a distance of 60 feet, to a point just beyond the center of the mound. The paucity of information obtained discouraged further excavation.

Feature 5, a fired basin in the old ground surface beneath the mound, was the only significant feature uncovered in Mound H. It was rectangular, measuring 3.7 feet wide by 5.2 feet long, and was 0.7 foot deep. The bottom and sides of this depression and an area of the adjacent mound base had been baked brick-hard and was bright orange in color. The basin had been cleaned of fire debris, leaving only a thin lens of charcoal-stained soil in the bottom, and had been filled with yellow clay.

A greenstone platform pipe (fig. 22) was found on the old ground surface at the north edge of Feature 5. A number of postholes were scattered around Feature 5 but no pattern was discernible (fig. 3).

Two other features were observed, both of undetermined significance. The first was a small burned patch, 1.5 feet in diameter, on the old ground surface located on the S195 line. The second was a wedge-shaped deposit of yellow clay uncovered south of Feature 5. Only a portion of it was exposed by the excavations, but it appeared to be oval in outline and had steeply sloping sides. It was 8 feet wide and 15 feet of its length extended into the trench. The upper part of the feature had been plowed away.

No intact skeletal remains were found at Mound H (or in any of the other mounds). A number of small bits of decayed bone, which might represent the remains of inhumations, were found on the old ground surface beneath the mound.

It should also be noted that several tiny flakes of mica were found on the old ground surface beneath the mound.

Mound A (fig. 4)

This mound was 7 feet high and approximately 60 feet in diameter. Cultivation had sliced a small portion from the southern edge but this was the only damage. We began excavation on the south side because there were fewer tree stumps here, and a 25-foot-wide trench was dug 30 feet into the mound.

Mound A was built largely of brown silty clay which was similar to the native clay of the area. The fill was generally homogeneous in appearance, although the general direction of the loading could occasionally be seen. The only feature in the fill was 0.6-foot-thick layer of yellow clay on the old ground surface at the west side of the large submound grave (Feature 7) with a dome-shaped shell of the same material in the fill above it. A thin wedge, 0.2 to 0.4 foot thick, of water-sorted soil was found on the flanks of this dome, indicating that it had been exposed briefly to weathering.

The significance of the above structure was not recognized while excavations were being carried out. I regarded the mound as a single-stage earthwork built to cover the submound grave. The upper layer of yellow clay, which was matched by sloping load lines on the opposite side of the grave, was interpreted as indicating that mound construction was begun by heaping the first loads of earth around the sides of the grave. A subsequent look at the profiles showed, however, that the grave had been dug through the water-sorted material on the edge of the dome. This is an obvious indication that the dome was built before the grave was dug, and puts a new light on the whole matter. The dome of yellow clay would seem to represent the capped surface of a primary mound built to cover the low platform, or prepared mound base, of yellow clay on the old ground surface. The function of the primary mound was not determined, since no burials or other features were uncovered in the small portion of it exposed in our trench. It may be that the yellow clay base would have yielded mortuary facilities (a similar situation was to be later discovered at Mound D) but this, of course, is merely conjecture.

After a brief period--and the thinness of the eroded material on the flank of the mound suggests that it was brief--the grave was dug into the ground at the side of the primary mound and covered by an addition to the earlier structure.

Mound A features included a single submound grave, a pit intrusive in the top of the mound, and two cremations in the mound fill.

Feature 7 was a rectangular pit which measured 6.5 feet wide by 11 feet long. The flat bottom of the feature was 2.2 feet below the old ground surface. Three thin lenses consisting of bits of calcined bone mixed with charcoal-stained soil, presumably cremations, lay on the floor of the pit. A small, shapeless fragment of wood, covered on one side with a film of copper salts, lay near one of the cremations and was the only artifact. Three postholes were located on the margin of the pit, but no other structural features were found. There was no evidence of fire or burning within the pit.

Feature 9, a 3.5-foot-square pit, had been dug from the surface of the mound 4 feet into the fill. No artifacts or human remains were found in it, and it may well have been a looter's pit.

Two cremations, both represented by a thin lens of bits of calcined and charred bone, were uncovered in the mound fill. The cremation near the east side of the trench (fig. 4) was two feet above the mound base, and the one north of Feature 7 was five feet above the mound base. They had both been included in the mound as it was built.

#### Mound D (fig. 5)

This was one of the larger of the earthworks, being about 15 feet high and approximately 90 feet in mean diameter. It had not been damaged by cultivation.

A 15-foot-wide test trench was opened on the western side of the mound, where fewer tree stumps existed. No artifacts or evidence of burials were found in the upper fill in the test trench, but there were indications that Mound D was not a homogeneous heap of earth. We felt that enough information had been obtained here to give a good idea of the mound's composition, and we went ahead with plans to use the bulldozer. An area 60 feet wide completely across the mound was stripped of all but the bottommost 2 feet of fill. Subsequent excavation in the stripped area turned up very meager results, and work was halted well short of the eastern side of the mound.



The profiles and plans recorded in the test trench and observations in the later work showed that Mound D had three components. The initial phase in the mound's construction was preparation of the base. Humus had been scraped from a large oval area measuring approximately 35 by 45 feet, and had been replaced by a 0.5-foot-thick layer of mixed topsoil, yellow native clay, and reddish clay. Presumed mortuary facilities, described below as Features 14 and 15, were then placed on this base. Subsequently, a 10-foot-high dome consisting of basket loads of brown loam topsoil and native clay had been heaped over the base, covering its associated features. In the portion of the mound which was excavated, the perimeter of the prepared base coincided with its covering dome, and we assume that this relationship prevailed throughout.

Shortly after completion of the primary mound, at least one burial was laid on the old ground surface nearby. A mantle of pure brown loam topsoil was then added, completely covering the primary mound. No erosional material flanked the primary mound, indicating that no significant time elapsed between the building of the primary mound and the addition of the topsoil mantle.

Feature 14 was a burned area of the prepared mound base. The hard, orange-colored surface which defined the feature was rectangular and measured 3 by 4.5 feet. Near this area were scattered patches of ash and of charcoal staining, perhaps the results of cleaning of the fire area. No ash or charcoal was found directly associated with this feature.

Feature 15 was an oval area, 4 by 6 feet, paved with flat sandstone slabs laid on the prepared mound base. A broken copper spool and a few bone fragments, which has been preserved by the copper salts, were found on the paving.

The other burial, on the original ground surface just beyond the edge of the prepared mound base, consisted of a few crumbling skull fragments accompanied by two copper spools.

#### Mound E (figs. 6 and 7)

This mound, 8 feet high with a mean diameter of 170 feet, seemed to be a low earthwork relative to its areal dimensions, and we supposed that it had been much reduced by plowing. Local people, however, stated that the mound had been cultivated only recently and that its shape had been changed very little. The profiles in the preliminary test trench tended to bear out this information.

The fill was composed of thoroughly mixed brown loam topsoil and native clay. Despite the general homogeneity, the trend and direction of the loading were discernible.

A test trench was begun on the eastern flank of the mound and extended 40 feet into it. This preliminary work suggested that Mound E was a one-stage structure. However, subsequent excavations, carried out after the bulldozer had stripped the mound, showed it to be more complex. Although some details were lost in the stripping, much of the information was salvaged from the remaining two feet of fill and from the central balk.

Mound E was constructed in two and possibly three stages. The primary mound was heaped over a low burial platform and was itself completely covered by a secondary addition. A third period of use was indicated by pits which penetrated the fill of the secondary mound.

The central feature of the primary mound was a 1-foot-high platform. Its overall dimensions and shape could not be accurately determined because, except for a few feet, the eastern perimeter of the platform was not traced. However, it measured approximately 80 feet east-west, and the configuration of the western edge suggested a round or oval ground plan.

The surface of the platform was marked in the test trench profile by a thin, tenuous band of dark soil. The significance of this 0.2-foot-thick horizon was not recognized while the preliminary tests were underway since no features or artifacts were associated with it, and since the fill above and below it were identical in composition. Later work, after all but 1 foot of fill above the platform had been removed, uncovered a shallow fired basin, a number of artifacts, and a few scraps of decayed bone lying directly on this layer. The platform was obviously a prepared burial repository. As no intact skeletal remains were found, the number of interments, and whether they had been placed simultaneously or over a period of time, could not be determined.

The burial platform, as mentioned above, was covered by the primary mound. The crown of this low dome had been obliterated and its height at the center could not be determined. Its surface was indicated by a thin layer of gravelly, sandy soil. Deposits of water-sorted material on the old ground surface at the edge of the primary mound indicate the structure was exposed to weathering before being covered by the secondary mound.

On the east side, the primary mound extended a few feet beyond the edge of the burial platform. Here, the edge of the primary mound covered a probable crematory pit and two graves dug into the old ground surface. These excavations had been backfilled with primary mound fill and were plainly associated with the first construction stage.

The second stage of construction is represented by two graves dug into the primary mound and the mantle of fill which covered them and blanketed the earlier stage.

A third period of mound use is indicated by Feature 22, a grave which penetrated the secondary mound. We were unable to tell whether or not this represented a period of mound building. The outlines of this feature's intrusion could be traced to the present surface but, with the disturbance of the mound by cultivation, its surface of origin could not be determined. It should be noted that there were other layers of sand and gravel in the profile in addition to the one identifying the surface of the primary mound (fig. 6, dashed lines). None of the others were associated with erosional material or features, however, and were apparently not of structural significance.

The features uncovered in Mound E are described individually below and have been grouped according to their association.

Primary mound features included Feature 17, associated with the platform, and Features 11, 12, and 16, which lay beyond the platform's edge.

Feature 17 was a shallow, fired depression in the surface of the platform. Aside from a thin patch of charcoal-stained soil on the adjacent surface of the platform, there was no fire refuse. The feature was circular, measuring 5 feet in diameter and 0.2 foot deep. We assume that it was a crematory pit. A Marksville Incised vessel (fig. 12a) was found resting on the platform at the edge of the feature.

The artifacts recovered from the surface of the platform were the silver plating (fig. 20), possibly from a set of conjoined tubes; an untyped, sand tempered, zone stamped vessel (fig. 13c); a Baldwin Plain bowl (fig. 13a); and a rectangular slab of wood covered with sheet copper. As mentioned previously, occasional bits of decayed bone were also found on the platform.

Feature 11 was another possible crematory pit. An intense fire had burned the bottom and sides of the feature and left a 0.2-foot thick layer of wood charcoal. The feature was straight-sided with rounded ends and measured 4.3 by 2.2 feet. Basin-like in cross section, it was 1.4 feet deep. No human remains or artifacts were associated with this feature.

Feature 12 was a rectangular pit which measured 8.1 by 4.2 feet and was 2 feet deep. A Flint River Cordmarked pot (fig. 12b) had been placed in the northeast corner of the pit. No skeletal remains were in evidence.

Feature 16 was the third feature uncovered beneath the edge of the primary mound. It was a rectangular grave measuring 16 by 12 feet and was 0.9 foot deep. Three deposits consisting of bits of calcined bone and charcoal-stained soil indicate that the feature was used as a depository for cremations. There were no signs of burning within the pit itself.

Features 10 and 13 are associated with the second stage, and are presumed graves though no skeletal remains were found in them.

Feature 10 was a 3-by 7-foot rectangle which penetrated 2.5 feet beneath the surface of the primary mound. Two vessels were found on the pit floor, one piled on top of the other; a Flint River Brushed jar (fig. 12c) and an unnamed, sand tempered, zone stamped vessel (fig. 13d).

Feature 13 was a rectangular pit, approximately 9 feet deep. It measured 10.1 by 7.6 feet. There were no artifacts in it.

The third-stage grave, Feature 22, was an 8-by 4-foot rectangle. Its bottom lay 10 feet below the existing mound surface, but its original depth could not be determined due to the truncation of the mound. A large, unworked sheet of mica, a cartridge-shaped labret of greenstone, a sandstone grinding pallet, and a large lump of galena were found in the fill of the pit, 1.5 feet above the floor. No human remains were found in Feature 22.

The association of two features, 18 and 19, could not be determined, since they were located in the middle of the stripped area and did not intersect a profile.

Feature 18 was a rectangular pit, 5 by 10 feet. Two small lumps of galena and a cache of small points and blades were found in the fill of the pit, about 1 foot from the bottom. No skeletal remains were discovered in this feature.



Feature 19 measured 11.7 by 11 feet. Semicylindrical depressions along three sides of the pit probably represent the casts of decayed logs. The logs had laid on, or slightly in, the burial platform and this suggests a probable association of Feature 19 with that structure. No bones or grave goods were uncovered.

The nature of the old ground surface beneath Mound E requires description. The old humus was light gray in color over most of the mound base, but there were several black midden-stained areas. There were also a number of small burned spots on the old surface. Pottery was plentiful in the old humus here, when compared to other areas of the site where it was generally quite scanty. A number of postholes and Feature 21, a 1.3-foot-deep oval pit filled with midden-stained soil, were also associated with the submound horizon. This evidence suggests that Mound E had been built over an occupation area which had been protected from obliteration by the mound itself. It is noteworthy that the site surface around and near Mound E produced no evidence of habitation or use.

## Habitation Area

The Pharr Site was originally described as having an extensive village site in the area between the mounds (Jennings, 1941, p. 211). However, no indications of habitation were observed in the freshly plowed fields of this portion of the site. A scant handful of flint chips was the sole product of our surface reconnaissance. It seems remarkable that cultivation could have so thoroughly erased traces of the village. Nevertheless, the situation described above for Mound E suggests that this is probably what happened. Improvements in farming techniques quite possibly could have destroyed what less progressive methods had left relatively undisturbed as late as 1941 when the site was recorded.

The only area which showed surface indication of habitation was along the western edge of the site. In addition to the thickly scattered flint chips, a variety of projectile points and miscellaneous chipped stone artifacts were recovered from the surface here (figs. 14, 15, and 17). Included were several forms of projectile points similar to Archaic types (fig. 15h-k and n). Regrettably, they were not submitted for expert identification.

Three locations along the western side of the site were tested (fig. 2). Only one location, southwest of Mound H, produced features or subsurface artifacts in significant quantity. This was an area of black, midden-stained soil which excavation showed to be 1 foot deep. Aside from three shallow depressions in the native clay, 1.2 to 2.8 feet deep and filled with midden-stained soil, only two features of note were uncovered.

Feature 3 was a circular pit, 3.5 feet in diameter and 2 feet deep. It was filled with the rich black soil and is noteworthy because it contained a large lump of burned daub, the only piece found at the site, a few bits of calcined bone, and over 100 sherds of shell tempered pottery. This is virtually the only shell tempered pottery from the site.

Feature 6 was a trash pit. It was a roughly circular depression, 15 feet in diameter and 1.3 feet deep. The pit contained an extraordinary amount of pottery. Only one-quarter of the pit was excavated and 470 sherds were recovered from it.

The results of the stratigraphic tests carried out in this area were not illuminating. Most of the 1 foot of fill had, of course, been churned by plowing and the percentage distribution of types did not vary significantly from top to bottom (table 4).

The excavations and surface finds in the area of habitation failed to produce conclusive results, and we can only theorize about the nature of the several occupations.

Most of the large quantity of flint scrap was plainly the byproduct of tool making. This indicates a chipping station which may predate the mounds.

It seems reasonable that the midden-stained soil beneath Mound E and southwest of Mound H was the product of an occupation contemporaneous with the mounds. Most of the pottery recovered from these areas dates from this occupation, and Feature 6 seems to have been used as a trash pit during this period. At least one feature, Feature 3, is later, but since virtually no other shell tempered pottery was recovered outside of this pit, it may be viewed as an isolated incident.

The black greasy soil would seem to indicate an intensive, continuing occupation but, aside from a single lump of daub and a few isolated postholes, no structural features were uncovered. There are many reasons which might account for this. Perhaps only the crudest of shelters were built. Even a relatively sturdy wattle-and-daub structure need not have left surviving remains. If the structure had simply been abandoned, without having been burned, no fired daub would have been produced and the decomposing wall posts could readily be absorbed without trace in the rich brown loam.

No evidence was recovered to indicate the settlement pattern, but it seems likely that the area was used intermittently, perhaps during burial rites and mound building, or in connection with seasonal harvests, or both.

## DESCRIPTION OF CERAMICS

Several pottery wares identified by the use of different tempering materials--sand, limestone, burned clay, vegetable fiber, and shell--were recovered at the Pharr Site. The types and miscellaneous decorated sherds are grouped below under these categories.

### Sand Tempered Ware

The Pharr sand tempered pottery was compared with type sherds collected at the Miller Site (Jennings, 1941) and the Bynum Mounds (Cotter and Corbett, 1951). The comparison showed that the Pharr material fits very comfortably in the Miller ceramic tradition.

#### Baldwin Plain (figs. 13a and 19e-f)

##### Paste:

Temper: Abundant, very fine sand. Mica flecks are present in virtually all sherds but are abundant in only a few. They seem to represent the use of a micaceous clay rather than an intentional addition to the paste.

Texture: Fine and homogeneous with temper evenly distributed. Very gritty.

Color: Dull brown, reddish brown, grayish brown, and buff are most characteristic.

Surface finish: Most sherds are badly weathered but smoothing of the exterior was apparently common.

Form:

Rim: Both direct and everted rims are represented.

Body: Two hemispherical bowls were recovered.

The sherds indicate that globular jars with slightly everted rims are also represented.

Remarks: The paste described for Baldwin Plain is typical of all the sand tempered types. Any individual peculiarities will be mentioned below.

Furrs Cordmarked (figs. 13b and 19g-h)

Vessels with direct and slightly everted rims are represented in the sherd material. The restored jar has a conoidal base and the suggestion of a shoulder on the body. Partial obliteration of the cordmarking by smoothing is common.

Saltillo Fabric Impressed (fig. 19a-c)

The sherds indicate that large vessels with direct and slightly everted rims are typical of this type. The great majority of the sherds are badly weathered, frequently leaving only faint indications of the "washboard" effect produced by fabric marking. Partial obliteration as a result of smoothing is also frequent.

Zone Stamped (fig. 13c-d)

One complete vessel, one partially restorable bowl, and a few sherds represent this category.

The decoration consists of bands of dentate rocker stamping enclosed by broad incised lines. The stamping is finely executed and a close examination was necessary to reveal that the examples were rocker stamped. A plain rocker stamped band encircling the base of the bowl is the only exception to this technique noted.

The complete example is a compound jar with cylindrical base and a four-lobed midsection topped by a cambered rim. The curvilinear motif is centered on the peak of the lobes and the design element is repeated twice. The rim is cross hatched.

The partially restored bowl has a square base and widely expanding sides. The motif consisted of chevrons and other curvilinear elements and the design was apparently repeated four times.

Sand tempered, zone stamped pottery is apparently not common, but has been reported from several locations in nearby Alabama: Pickwick Basin (Webb and DeJarnette, 1942, Plates 100-1-2C and -2D); Guntersville Basin (Heimlich, 1952, p. 36), and with Porter Hopewellian pottery (DeJarnette, 1952, p. 277).



Miscellaneous (fig. 18)

There was also a variety of decorated sherds of unnamed types.

Six cord-impressed sherds differ from ordinary cordmarking in the careful execution of the cord impressing. Groups of three parallel cord impressions and a herringbone motif represent deliberate attempts to form designs.

Five sherds show vestiges of red filming in zones outlined by broad incised lines.

Bold, plain rocker stamping occurs on three sherds.

One sherd is decorated with rows of circular punctates.

Six sherds have incised decorations. Three are cross hatched rims and two have herringbone motifs.

There are three brushed sherds.

Limestone Tempered Ware  
(figs. 12b-c, and 16)

This ware is represented at Pharr by the types Mulberry Creek Plain, Long Branch Fabric Marked, Flint River Brushed, and Flint River Cordmarked. All of these decorative techniques occurred on the same paste, which is described as follows:

Paste:

Temper: Limestone, which has been entirely leached out. The angular vesicles indicate that the temper was very abundant and that the particles were generally quite large. In contrast to the sand tempered wares, the clay used is non-micaceous.

Texture: Medium to coarse, usually poorly compacted and contorted. Surfaces are smooth and not gritty.

Color: Buffs and tans most common. Less frequently, dull red or reddish brown.

Surface finish: Exteriors smoothed.

Form: The two complete vessels of Flint River Cordmarked and Flint River Brushed types have oblate bodies, everted rims, and tetrapodal bases. Tetrapodal support was evidently common, for a number of limestone tempered conical feet were recovered. Rims are direct or everted and occasionally thickened by the addition of a strip of clay to the exterior.

## Clay Tempered Ware

This material is part of a widespread tradition for which, as far as I know, no workable typology has been formulated. Clay tempered pottery is given one set of names in the Mississippi Valley and another set in the Northwest Alabama area. Without sample sherds it is impossible to judge which the Pharr material most closely resembles. The only example assigned a type name is a Marksville Incised, var. Marksville, ornamental jar, which was identified by Stephen Williams (personal communication).

Plainware, red filming, cordmarking, and fabric impressing were all found on clay tempered paste. Again, the paste to which these decorative techniques were applied is similar and a single description will suffice.

### Paste:

Temper: Fine to medium bits of burned clay.

Burned vegetal material or charcoal common.

Mica flecks on a few sherds.

Texture: Smooth and "slick" as opposed to gritty.

Fine to medium, contorted.

Color: Tan, buff, or brown.

Surface Finish: Exteriors well smoothed.

Form: The only vessel recovered, the Marksville Incised jar (fig. 12a), is a jar with four mammae-like lobes and a cylindrical rim. The single rim sherd recovered is everted with a plain, flat lip.

## Fiber Tempered Ware

All examples are plain sherds.

### Paste:

Temper: The tiny "worm trails" on the surfaces  
and in the core indicate fiber of some sort.

Texture: Very coarse, poorly wedged, and contorted.  
Slightly gritty.

Color: Tan, buff, or gray.

Surface finish: All surfaces are eroded.

Form: No data.

## Shell Tempered Ware

All examples are plain sherds.

### Paste:

Temper: Coarse shell added to a gritty, micaceous  
clay.

Texture: Coarse, poorly wedged, contorted.

Color: Tan to brown.

Surface finish: Poorly smoothed.

Form: The rim sherds seem to represent typical Middle  
Mississippian pots with globular body and everted  
rim.

## CERAMIC ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to relate the Pharr Site culturally and temporally to other archeological units through an analysis of its ceramic assemblage.

The primary context into which the site must be fitted is the Miller ceramic sequence. Pottery relatable to this sequence was present in overwhelming numerical superiority and was doubtless the native ware of the builders of the Pharr mounds. The question of which period Pharr belongs in will involve, as will be shown below, information on the Miller sequence itself and on one of its key sites, Bynum. Before getting too far afield, however, let us first discuss the material recovered from the Pharr Site.

The whole vessels from the platform at Mound E are the only tight association evidence found and do not shed much light on the temporal placement of the site (table 1). Several were trade vessels or exotic forms which cannot be related temporally to the Miller sequence, and the single specimens of Baldwin Plain, Furrs Cordmarked, and Saltillo Fabric Impressed make up too small a sample on which to base any definite conclusions. We must therefore fall back on the evidence represented by the sherd assemblage.

TABLE 1.--Provenience of partial, nearly complete, and complete pottery vessels, Pharr Site

|                                        | Mound E surface<br>burial platform | Mound E fill<br>burial platform | Mound E<br>Feature 10 | Mound E<br>Feature 12 | Mound D top<br>half fill |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Baldwin Plain                          | 1                                  |                                 |                       |                       | 1                        |
| Furrs Cordmarked                       |                                    | 1                               |                       |                       |                          |
| Saltillo Fabric<br>Impressed           | 1*                                 |                                 |                       |                       |                          |
| Zone stamped,<br>sand tempered         | 3**                                |                                 | 1                     |                       |                          |
| Flint River<br>Cordmarked              |                                    |                                 |                       | 1                     |                          |
| Flint River<br>Brushed                 | 1*                                 |                                 | 1                     |                       |                          |
| Marksville Incised,<br>var. Marksville | 1                                  |                                 |                       |                       |                          |

\* partial vessel

\*\* 2 partial, 1 nearly complete

The initial problem in using the sherd assemblage is to determine whether the sherds, included fortuitously with the fill, are truly indicative of the age of the mounds or whether they date from an earlier occupation. In this regard, the relatively consistent percentage distribution of types throughout the excavation units would seem to be significant (table 2). The percentages recorded for the mounds are very close to those noted for their respective submound horizons. Furthermore, the percentages for the habitation area fall well within those for the mounds. The small number of Saltillo Fabric Impressed sherds recovered by screening in the stratigraphic tests in the habitation area is anomalous, but most of these sherds are small and badly weathered. Many of those identified as plain may originally have been fabric impressed.

TABLE 2.--Percentage distribution of sherds, Pharr Site

|                  | Sand                         |               |                  |               |            | Limestone            |                                 |                           | Clay  |            |                  |                      |                      |
|------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|                  | Saltillo Fabric<br>Impressed | Baldwin Plain | Furrs Cordmarked | Miscellaneous | Red Filmed | Mulberry Creek Plain | Long Branch<br>Fabric Impressed | Flint River<br>Cordmarked | Plain | Cordmarked | Fabric Impressed | Plain Fiber Tempered | Plain Shell Tempered |
| Mound H          |                              |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| plow zone        | 54                           | 25            | 1                | 1             | 1          | 6                    | 6                               | 4                         |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| mound fill       | 51                           | 33            | 3                | T             |            | 6                    | 3                               | 3                         | T     | T          | T                |                      |                      |
| old humus        | 49                           | 38            |                  | T             | 1          | 5                    | 2                               | 4                         |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| native clay      | insufficient data            |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Total            | 51                           | 33            | 3                | T             | T          | 6                    | 3                               | 4                         | T     | T          | T                |                      |                      |
| Mound A          |                              |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| ton half fill    | 36                           | 55            | 1                | 4             |            | 5                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| bottom half fill | 37                           | 58            | 1                |               |            | 3                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Feature 7        | 36                           | 56            | 3                |               |            | 6                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| old humus        | 23                           | 63            |                  | 9             |            | 6                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Total            | 35                           | 57            | 1                | 3             |            | 4                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Mound D          |                              |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| ton half fill    | 32                           | 44            | 12               |               |            | 3                    | 3                               | 6                         |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| bottom half fill | 54                           | 36            |                  |               |            | 8                    |                                 | 3                         |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| bottom 2' fill   | 38                           | 33            | 8                |               |            | 13                   |                                 | 8                         |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| old humus        | 32                           | 39            | 5                | 2             |            | 7                    |                                 | 12                        | 2     |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Total            | 39                           | 38            | 6                | T             |            | 8                    | T                               | 7                         | T     |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Mound E          |                              |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| ton half fill    | 49                           | 26            |                  |               |            | 21                   | 3                               | 3                         |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| bottom half fill | 51                           | 42            |                  |               |            | 4                    | T                               | 2                         |       |            |                  | T                    |                      |
| burial platform  | 45                           | 39            | 5                | 1             |            | 5                    | 2                               | 2                         | 1     |            |                  | T                    |                      |
| old humus        | 42                           | 44            | 3                | 1             |            | 6                    | 1                               | 3                         | T     |            |                  | T                    |                      |
| Feature 21       | 52                           | 44            | T                |               |            | 2                    |                                 | 1                         |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Feature 12       | insufficient data            |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Feature 11       | 67                           | 33            |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Total            | 45                           | 41            | 3                | 1             |            | 5                    | 1                               | 2                         | T     |            |                  | T                    |                      |
| Habitation area  |                              |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| surface          | 30                           | 33            | 2                |               |            | 11                   |                                 | 7                         | 17    |            |                  |                      |                      |
| trenches         | 40                           | 38            | 7                | 1             |            | 5                    | 2                               | 3                         | 1     | 1          |                  |                      | 2                    |
| Feature 6        | 55                           | 38            | 4                | T             |            |                      | 1                               | 1                         |       |            |                  | T                    |                      |
| Feature 3        | 3                            | 1             |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 96                   |
| Feature 5        | insufficient data            |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| Feature 4        | insufficient data            |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| strat. test      |                              |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| 0.-0.5'          | 10                           | 69            | 5                |               |            | 1                    | 2                               | 1                         | 8     | 4          |                  |                      |                      |
| strat. test      |                              |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| 0.5-1'           | 16                           | 66            | 4                | 2             |            |                      |                                 |                           | 11    | 2          |                  |                      |                      |
| strat. test      |                              |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| 1.-1.5'          | 18                           | 65            | 4                | 1             |            |                      |                                 |                           | 10    | 1          |                  |                      |                      |
| Total            | 34                           | 43            | 4                | T             |            | 1                    | 1                               | 1                         | 4     | 1          |                  | T                    | 9                    |

T-less than 1%



This consistency suggests that the mounds and the area from which the fill was obtained are essentially coeval and that there seems to be little question of significantly earlier material being included with mound fill. It can be argued, it is true, that the mounds were built just as Furrs Cordmarked was beginning to comprise a major percentage of the ceramic complex but before there was a chance for much of it to become available. The large quantities of Saltillo, which reaches its peak of popularity earlier, could be explained by an earlier occupation. This possibility cannot be absolutely denied, but it would appear to be less likely than the explanation offered. Had there been much Furrs Cordmarked around when the mounds were built, we would expect to find levels, features, or excavation units that contained a lot of it, and none were found.

The ceramic assemblage in the mounds would thus seem to reflect their true age. This assemblage, if the above arguments are correct, is characterized by high percentages of Saltillo Fabric Impressed and Baldwin Plain. Equally characteristic is Furrs Cordmarked, which, although it occurred in low quantities, was recovered consistently among the excavation units.

According to the existing framework of the Miller sequence (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, p. 33), Furrs Cordmarked is diagnostic of Miller II, whereas large percentages of Saltillo Fabric Impressed would indicate Miller I. An explanation of this apparent anomaly requires a review both of the Miller sequence itself and of the Bynum Site.

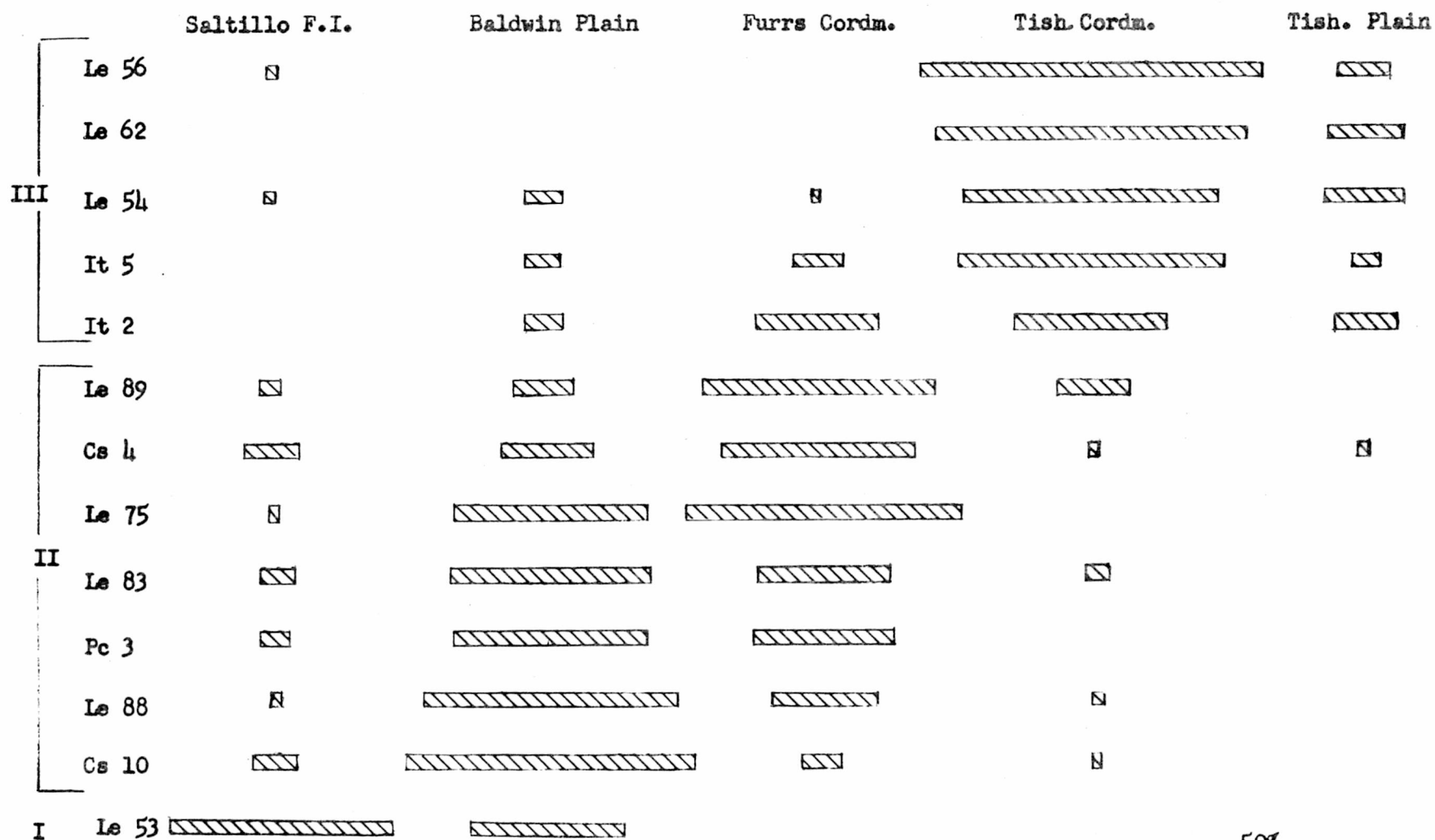
"Miller" is a ceramic complex which was first characterized by Jennings from data gathered in his excavations at the type site and from surface material collected at other sites in Lee County, Mississippi (Jennings, 1941, pp. 189-213). He later described the complex in terms of a sequence of three pottery assemblages or time periods: Miller I, characterized by fiber tempered pottery and sand tempered Saltillo Fabric Impressed; Miller II with the sand tempered Baldwin Plain and Furrs Cordmarked; and Miller III with the clay and grit tempered Tishomingo Plain and Tishomingo Cordmarked (Jennings, 1944, pp. 411-413). Cotter and Corbett subsequently used this sequence in assigning a time level to the Bynum Mounds. They presented the complex more formally than Jennings had done but made no essential changes in it (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, p. 33).

The complex depicted in these papers is one of neat blocks of time characterized by diagnostic pottery types. As these authors realized, the situation is greatly oversimplified. There is an additional body of data which will shed light on the Miller sequence: the surface collections made at sites in Chickasaw, Lee, Prentiss, and Itawamba Counties, Mississippi, which were gathered during the course of the Natchez Trace Parkway archeological survey. A large number of collections were gathered before World War II by Jennings and afterwards by Cotter and Corbett. Time did not permit a search for the collections amid the vast amount of uncataloged material stored at Ocumulgee National Monument. But Jennings had sorted and tabulated his pre-war collections and these data were available for seriation (Jennings, 1940).

The results of this seriation (table 3) presents a clearer picture of the Miller sequence and its components. Unfortunately, Miller I is poorly represented, but the single site recorded is bolstered by the pure Saltillo-Baldwin horizon at Bynum (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, p. 33). The table shows that Miller II is best defined as beginning when Baldwin Plain starts to decline in favor of Furrs Cordmarked. The latter type reaches its greatest popularity about the middle of the period. Miller III is ushered in when the clay-grit tempered types become more popular than the sand tempered types. Baldwin Plain and Furrs Cordmarked die out altogether during this period.

The transition from Miller I to Miller II is poorly represented, and it will be seen that the Pharr assemblage cannot be fitted precisely into the table. Obviously, the site, with its quantities of Saltillo Fabric Impressed, fits more comfortably into Miller I than in the succeeding period. The presence of Furrs Cordmarked in the Miller I assemblage at Pharr is contradictory to Cotter and Corbett's depiction, but a glance at the seriation chart (table 3) will show that it does no real violence to the scheme of things. It would suggest a time late in the period, however.

TABLE 3.--Seriation of surface collections of sherds made by Jennings (1940)



50%  
scale

The Bynum Mounds are located in Chickasaw County, Mississippi, and comprise a key site of the Miller complex. A cursory examination shows that the mounds at both Bynum and Pharr manifest strong Hopewellian influences. This will be dealt with in a later section, but the similarity needs to be brought out now, for it plainly indicates that the two sites were generally contemporaneous. Since Pharr has been assigned to Miller I and the Bynum Mounds to Miller II (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, pp. 30-32). a review of the latter site is also in order.

Briefly, the situation at Bynum is as follows. Pure Baldwin-Salttillo horizons were sealed beneath the mounds. These types also dominated percentages in the fill of the four mounds excavated. A few sherds of Furrs Cordmarked, Tishomingo Plain, and Tishomingo Cordmarked were found in two of the mounds--all but a handful coming from within a foot of the surface. The other two mounds contained only Baldwin and Salttillo. In the village area, some features produced virtually pure Salttillo-Baldwin assemblages and others yielded these types mixed with later types. The mounds, and thus the period of Hopewellian influence, were assigned a Miller II time level on the basis of the Furrs Cordmarked and Tishomingo sherds. The large amount of Salttillo Fabric Impressed in the mounds was interpreted as a fortuitous association with fill obtained from a Miller I village area (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, pp. 22-35).

There is evidence at Bynum itself to suggest a Miller I level for the site. Surely the two mounds which yielded only Saltillo and Baldwin would fit here. Furthermore, the pure Saltillo-Baldwin horizons beneath all four of the Bynum mounds strongly suggest that in each case these strata were sealed by construction before appreciable quantities of the later types became available. Had Furrs Cordmarked or the Tishomingo types been extant in any significant quantities at the time the mounds were built, some would surely have shown up in the old soil horizon. True, the mounds could have been erected on an abandoned (Miller I) portion of the village, with the Miller II settlement being located elsewhere at the time the mounds were built. This still does not explain why there were no **later sherds on** the old ground surface, only a handful in the fill, and with the largest portion coming from within a foot of the surface. Mound building would have drawn people, with their pots, to the construction site. The pots were just as likely to get broken and the pieces included with the fill during the time of construction as afterward.

The importance of the few Furrs Cordmarked sherds as a time indicator of the mounds seems to have been exaggerated. This type is not, as has been suggested by the evidence at Pharr and in the seriation of surface collections, strictly diagnostic of Miller II.

The absence of fiber tempered pottery in the mounds, which the authors list as being diagnostic of Miller I (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, p. 33), might also have misled them. Fiber tempered pottery has been found on the surface of several northeast Mississippi sites with Saltillo Fabric Impressed but, so far as I am aware, a true association between the two has not been demonstrated. No one knows when Miller I began, and it is possible that fiber tempered pottery continued into the early part of the period. The data at Pharr show, however, that the Miller I assemblage persists into Hopewellian times, presumably long after fiber tempering had disappeared. The Miller I assemblage, in other words, need not be as early as Cotter and Corbett thought it to be.

The presence of Tishomingo Plain and Tishomingo Cordmarked sherds in an otherwise good Miller I assemblage at Bynum is frankly puzzling and not readily explainable. All we can suggest is that these types were accidentally introduced into the sample. Cotter and Corbett (1951, p. 19) observe that, "...Furrs is predominantly a sand tempered ware. But occasionally clay pellets and grit are noted. Since Tishomingo Cord is predominantly clay-grit tempered, but does contain some sand, the dividing line between the two is not sharp and distinct, and the type Furrs Cordmarked blends into the type Tishomingo Cordmarked." This is one possible explanation.

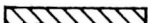
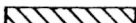
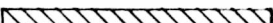
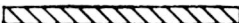
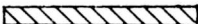
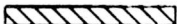
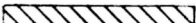


In short, the large quantity of Saltillo Fabric Impressed is held to be more indicative of the age of the Bynum mounds than a handful of types presumed to be later. The evidence, while not absolutely conclusive, at least strongly suggests that this was the case.

Although Bynum and Pharr share a late Miller I age, seriation of the pottery totals from the individual mounds demonstrate that the two sites are only partly contemporaneous (table 4). They overlap in time, with Bynum lasting somewhat later.

It may be noted also that the seriation of the Bynum and Pharr assemblages fits neatly at the bottom of the Miller II sites in table 3. We are perhaps splitting hairs by insisting on drawing the line at the top of the Bynum material; the placement of the dividing line between Miller I and Miller II is, after all, purely arbitrary. The significant fact is that Pharr and Bynum are roughly coeval.

TABLE 4.--Seriation of sherds from mounds at Bynum and Pharr Sites

|         | Saltillo F.I.                                                                       | Baldwin Plain                                                                         | Furrs Cm.                                                                             | Tish. Cm.                                                                           | Tish. P.                                                                            |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bynum D |    |     |                                                                                       |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
| Bynum A |    |     |    |  |                                                                                     |
| Pharr A |    |     |    |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
| Bynum B |    |     |    |  |  |
| Pharr D |    |     |    |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
| Pharr E |  |   |  |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
| Pharr H |  |  |  |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |

50%  
scale

Note: Only totals from the mound fill itself were seriated. Material from mound base and near surface excluded. Bynum Mound F not seriated due to small sample.

A second cultural unit, the Marksville Phase, is interjected into the discussion by the recovery of three vessels. The Marksville Incised, var. Marksville, jar (fig. 12a) would seem to be an actual import from the south. The sand tempered, zone stamped vessels obviously represent a borrowed decorative technique applied to the indigenous paste. James B. Griffin (personal communication) states that the shape of the jar (fig. 13d) is reminiscent of specimens recovered at Marksville, suggesting the possible source of this borrowing.

The significance of the limestone tempered pottery at Pharr is uncertain. This ware has been found in Middle Woodland horizons in northwest Alabama and has been speculatively tied to the Copena Culture (DeJarnette, 1952, p. 277). The exact relationship has never, as far as I know, been precisely defined, however. Jennings asserted that Copena was later than the Miller complex (Jennings, 1941, p. 215), apparently on the basis that limestone tempered pottery is later than sand tempered pottery in northwest Alabama. In northeast Mississippi, however, limestone tempered pottery apparently never became dominant. Natchez Trace Parkway archeological survey records (Jennings, 1940) show that sherds of this ware, while found at many sites, were always very sparse. The data from Pharr suggest the contemporaneity of limestone tempering and sand tempering. Limestone tempered sherds turned up consistently, though usually in low numbers (table 5), and two limestone tempered vessels were found in graves at Mound E (fig. 12b and c). What this contemporaneity means in terms of Copena and Miller I is questionable, and will continue to be so until more is known about the relationship of Copena and limestone tempered pottery.

TABLE 5.--Provenience of sherds, Pharr Site

|                  | Sand                        |               |                  |               |            | Limestone            |                                 |                           | Clay  |            |                  |                      |                      |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|                  | Saltito Fabric<br>Impressed | Baldwin Plain | Furrs Cordmarked | Miscellaneous | Red Filmed | Mulberry Creek Plain | Long Branch<br>Fabric Impressed | Flint River<br>Cordmarked | Plain | Cordmarked | Fabric Impressed | Plain Fiber Tempered | Plain Shell Tempered |
| Total            |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | Total                |
| Mound H          |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| plow zone        | 36                          | 17            | 1                | 1             | 1          | 4                    | 4                               | 3                         |       |            |                  |                      | 67                   |
| mound fill       | 246                         | 158           | 17               | 1             |            | 29                   | 14                              | 16                        | 1     | 2          | 2                |                      | 486                  |
| old humus        | 83                          | 64            |                  | 1             | 2          | 9                    | 4                               | 7                         |       |            |                  |                      | 170                  |
| native clay      | 7                           | 1             | 1                |               |            | 2                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 11                   |
| Total            | 372                         | 240           | 19               | 3             | 3          | 44                   | 22                              | 26                        | 1     | 2          | 2                |                      | 734                  |
| Mound A          |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| top half fill    | 80                          | 122           | 2                | 8             |            | 10                   |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 222                  |
| bottom half fill | 34                          | 53            | 1                |               |            | 3                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 91                   |
| Feature 7        | 13                          | 20            | 1                |               |            | 2                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 36                   |
| old humus        | 8                           | 22            |                  | 3             |            | 2                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 35                   |
| Total            | 135                         | 217           | 4                | 11            |            | 17                   |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 384                  |
| Mound D          |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| top half fill    | 11                          | 15            | 4                |               |            | 1                    | 1                               | 2                         |       |            |                  |                      | 34                   |
| bottom half fill | 21                          | 14            |                  |               |            | 3                    |                                 | 1                         |       |            |                  |                      | 39                   |
| bottom 2' fill   | 18                          | 16            | 4                |               |            | 6                    |                                 | 4                         |       |            |                  |                      | 48                   |
| old humus        | 13                          | 16            | 2                | 1             |            | 3                    |                                 | 5                         | 1     |            |                  |                      | 41                   |
| Total            | 63                          | 61            | 10               | 1             |            | 13                   | 1                               | 12                        | 1     |            |                  |                      | 162                  |
| Mound E          |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| top half fill    | 19                          | 10            |                  |               |            | 8                    | 1                               | 1                         |       |            |                  |                      | 39                   |
| bottom half fill | 88                          | 71            |                  |               |            | 6                    | 1                               | 4                         |       |            |                  | 1                    | 171                  |
| burial platform  | 273                         | 237           | 30               | 7             |            | 31                   | 14                              | 13                        | 6     |            |                  | 1                    | 612                  |
| old humus        | 368                         | 381           | 25               | 7             |            | 50                   | 12                              | 25                        | 1     |            |                  | 2                    | 871                  |
| Feature 21       | 85                          | 71            | 1                |               |            | 3                    |                                 | 2                         |       |            |                  |                      | 162                  |
| Feature 12       | 6                           | 4             | 2                |               |            | 1                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 13                   |
| Feature 11       | 16                          | 8             |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 24                   |
| Total            | 855                         | 782           | 58               | 14            |            | 99                   | 28                              | 45                        | 7     |            |                  | 4                    | 1892                 |
| Habitation area  |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| surface          | 14                          | 15            | 1                |               |            | 5                    |                                 | 3                         | 8     |            |                  |                      | 46                   |
| trenches         | 70                          | 65            | 12               | 2             |            | 8                    | 3                               | 6                         | 2     | 2          |                  | 3                    | 173                  |
| Feature 6        | 260                         | 178           | 18               | 1             |            |                      | 6                               | 6                         |       |            |                  | 1                    | 470                  |
| Feature 3        | 3                           | 1             |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  | 106                  | 110                  |
| Feature 5        | 1                           |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 1                    |
| Feature 4        |                             | 1             |                  |               |            | 1                    |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      | 2                    |
| strat. test      |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| 0-0.5'           | 24                          | 159           | 11               |               |            | 3                    | 4                               | 2                         | 19    | 10         |                  |                      | 232                  |
| strat. test      |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| 0.5-1'           | 9                           | 37            | 2                | 1             |            |                      |                                 |                           | 6     | 1          |                  |                      | 56                   |
| strat. test      |                             |               |                  |               |            |                      |                                 |                           |       |            |                  |                      |                      |
| 1-1.5'           | 12                          | 44            | 3                | 1             |            |                      |                                 |                           | 7     | 1          |                  |                      | 68                   |
| Total            | 393                         | 500           | 47               | 5             |            | 17                   | 13                              | 17                        | 42    | 14         |                  | 1                    | 1158                 |

The uncertain meaning of the clay tempered pottery has already been discussed. However, the presence of the Marksville Incised specimen does hint at an origin for the unnamed material.

All the shell tempered pottery came from a single trash pit in the village and clearly represents a later intrusion unrelated to the primary occupation.

## CHIPPED STONE ARTIFACTS

The provenience of the chipped stone artifacts from the Pharr Site is given in table 6.

### Projectile Points

#### Type A (fig. 14a-c)

14 specimens. Slender, stemmed points, generally thick and crudely chipped. Blade edges slightly convex; shoulders narrow and tapered; stem straight to slightly contracting; base rounded to straight. Length: 4.3-6.3 cm. Width (at shoulders): 2.2-3.6 cm. Thickness: 0.7-1.0 cm.

#### Type B (fig. 14g-h)

5 specimens. Slender, stemmed points. Blade edges straight to slightly convex; shoulders narrow but well defined; stem slightly expanding with straight base. Rather thick, biconvex cross section, but well made, symmetrical. Similar to points of Type "A," but the shape of the stem and the generally better workmanship distinguish them. Length (est.): 4.3-5.4 cm. Width (at shoulders): 2.0-2.2 cm. Thickness: 0.9-1.0 cm.

TABLE 6.--Provenience of chipped stone artifacts, Pharr Site

|                                   | Habitation area |                   | Mound H          | Mound A                 |                  | Mound D                         | Mound E                 |                  |                 | Total                    |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
|                                   | surface         | strat. cut 0.5-1' | brown loam humus | plow zone top half fill | bottom half fill | bottom half fill bottom 2' fill | plow zone top half fill | bottom half fill | burial platform | Feature 21<br>Feature 18 |
| <b>Projectile points</b>          |                 |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| A                                 | 3               |                   | 1                | 1                       | 3                | 2                               | 1                       |                  | 1               | 2                        |
| B                                 | 3               |                   |                  | 1                       |                  |                                 |                         | 1                |                 |                          |
| C                                 | 4               |                   |                  | 1                       |                  |                                 |                         | 3                |                 |                          |
| D                                 | 4               |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 | 1                       | 1                |                 | 2                        |
| E                                 | 2               | 1                 |                  |                         | 1                |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| F                                 | 2               | 1                 |                  |                         |                  |                                 | 1                       |                  |                 |                          |
| G                                 | 1               | 1                 |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         | 1                |                 |                          |
| H                                 |                 |                   |                  | 1                       | 2                |                                 |                         | 2                |                 |                          |
| I                                 | 1               |                   |                  | 1                       |                  |                                 |                         | 1                |                 |                          |
| J                                 | 6               |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| K                                 |                 |                   |                  | 1                       |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 | 1                        |
| L                                 |                 |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         | 1                |                 |                          |
| <b>Blades, blanks</b>             |                 |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Lanceolate                        | 6               |                   | 1                | 1                       |                  | 1                               |                         |                  | 3               | 4                        |
| Triangular                        | 2               |                   |                  |                         | 1                |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Recurved                          | 1               |                   | 1                |                         |                  | 1                               |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Large blade frags.                | 2               |                   |                  |                         | 1                |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| <b>Misc. small artifacts</b>      |                 |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Stemmed drills                    | 2               |                   | 1                |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Transverse base drill             | 1               |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Flake drills                      | 2               |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Spatulate artifacts               | 1               |                   |                  |                         | 1                |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| <b>Misc. blade and core tools</b> |                 |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Elong. bl., str. base             | 10              |                   | 1                | 1                       | 1                | 1                               |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Elong. bl., rnd. base             | 8               |                   |                  |                         | 1                |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Triangular cores                  | 3               |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 | 1                       |                  |                 |                          |
| Triangular flakes                 | 2               |                   |                  | 1                       |                  |                                 |                         | 1                |                 |                          |
| Ovate cores                       | 3               |                   |                  | 1                       |                  |                                 |                         |                  | 1               |                          |
| Leaf-shaped cores                 | 6               |                   | 1                |                         | 1                |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| <b>Flake tools</b>                |                 |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Knives                            | 2               | 1                 |                  |                         | 1                |                                 |                         |                  |                 | 1                        |
| End scrapers                      | 9               |                   |                  | 1                       | 1                | 1                               |                         |                  | 2               | 1                        |
| Side scrapers                     | 9               | 1                 | 2                | 1                       | 2                |                                 | 1                       | 1                | 2               | 2                        |
| "Spokeshaves"                     | 3               |                   |                  |                         |                  |                                 | 1                       | 1                |                 |                          |
| Flake tool frags.                 | 6               |                   | 1                | 2                       | 2                |                                 |                         |                  |                 |                          |
| Lamellar flakes                   | 11              | 1                 | 1                | 1                       | 5                |                                 | 2                       |                  | 1               | 1                        |



Type C (fig. 14d-f)

8 specimens. Slender, corner-notched points. Blade edges straight to convex. Wide, U-shaped notches form broad, horizontal shoulders and concave-sided stem. Base straight or occasionally convex. Length: 3.7-7.6 cm. Width (at shoulders): 1.4-2.8 cm. Thickness: 0.5-1.2 cm.

Type D (fig. 15c-e)

8 specimens. Broad, corner-notched points. Blade asymmetrical with straight to slightly convex edges. Wide notches form blunt barbs and straight stem. Base straight. Length: 4.2-6.8 cm. Width (at shoulders): 2.6-3.9 cm. Thickness: 0.9-1.3 cm.

Type E (fig. 15h-j)

4 specimens. Thin, well made, corner-notched points. Blade edges straight or concave with expanded barbs. Narrow, U-shaped notches form wide flaring stem with straight or mildly convex base. Measurements taken on the only specimen. Length: 5.0 cm. Width (at shoulders): 3.5 cm. Thickness: 0.8 cm.

Type F (fig. 15f-g)

4 specimens. Broad, corner-notched points. Blade edges straight or convex. Deep, narrow notches form elongated barbs and expanding stem. Base is straight. These points are flattened to slightly biconvex in cross section and finely chipped. Length: 5.2-6.2 cm. Width (at shoulders): 3.7 cm. Thickness: 0.7-1.0 cm.

Type G (fig. 15n)

3 specimens. Broad, stemmed points which tend to be thick and crudely chipped. Blade edges straight, expanded at shoulders; stem straight or slightly contracting with straight base. Length: 4.5-5.0 cm. Width (at shoulders): 2.9-3.8 cm. Thickness: 0.7-0.9 cm.

Type H (fig. 15a-b)

5 specimens. Points with wide, shallow side notches. Blade edges straight to convex, serrated in two specimens; base straight. Thin and well chipped. Measurements taken on the only complete specimen. Length: 5.5 cm. Width (at shoulders) 2.4 cm. Thickness: 0.7 cm.

Type I (fig. 15l-m)

3 specimens. Slender, stemmed points. Blade edges slightly convex; shoulders narrow; stem and base straight. Points are thin, symmetrical. Length: 5.9 cm. Width (at shoulders): 2.6-3.1 cm. Thickness: 0.8-1.0 cm.

Type J (fig. 14o-p)

6 specimens. Tiny triangular points. Edges straight to slightly convex or concave; base straight or concave. Length: 1.6-2.6 cm. Width (at base): 1.3-1.8 cm. Thickness: 0.3-0.4 cm.

Type K (not illustrated)

2 specimens. Broad, stemmed points, thin and finely chipped. Blade edges convex; shoulders narrow, tapering; broad stem with convex or straight base. Length: 4.3-4.5 cm. Width (at shoulders): 2.3-2.8 cm. Thickness: 0.6-0.8 cm.

Type L (fig. 15k)

1 specimen. A large, broad, stemmed point. Blade edges convex; shoulders wide, horizontal; short stem with straight sides and base. Length: 6.7 cm. Width (at shoulders): 4.7 cm. Thickness: 1.6 cm.

Blades and Blanks

The artifacts described below are of uncertain function. Some may be blanks, i.e., roughed out, unfinished points. Most of the examples show some pressure retouching of the edges, however, and may be finished points or knives.

Lanceolate (fig. 141-n)

16 specimens. Small to medium-sized elongated blades with convex edges and straight bases. Edges retouched by pressure chipping. With two exceptions, the blades are thin and well made though usually slightly asymmetrical. Nine of the 16 examples are complete. Length: 3.9-6.3 cm. Width: 1.6-2.3 cm. Thickness: 0.6-0.9 cm.

Triangular (fig. 14k)

3 specimens. Medium-sized triangular blades with convex edges and straight bases. Two specimens are thin with retouched edges. The third is considerably thicker and without retouching. Two examples are complete.

Length: 4.1-5.4 cm. Width: 2.7-3.5 cm. Thickness: 0.7-1.0 cm.

Recurved (fig. 14i-j)

3 specimens. Medium-sized blades with recurved edges. Base is straight to slightly concave. These examples are thicker and show less retouching of blade edges than the specimens in the two preceding groups.

Length: 4.6-5.7 cm. Width: 1.6-2.5 cm. Thickness: 0.9-1.1 cm.

Large blade fragments (not illustrated)

3 specimens. Fragments of very large, parallel-sided blades. Very thin, well-made artifacts with even blade edges. None show pressure retouching. The base of one example has been ground. Length: no data. Width: 4.4-4.5 cm. Thickness: 0.8 cm.

## Miscellaneous Small Artifacts

### Stemmed drills (fig. 17a-b)

3 specimens. Drill points with wide bulbous stems. Length of complete specimen: 4.5 cm. Width (at shoulder): 2.0-3.3 cm.

### Transverse base drill (fig. 17d)

1 specimen. Drill point with expanded base. Length: no data. Width (at base): 2.1 cm.

### Flake drills (fig. 17c)

2 specimens. Random flakes with blade edges modified by pressure chipping. The ventral side of both specimens is a single flake scar. Length: 3.8 cm. Width: 1.5-2.3 cm.

### Spatulate artifacts (fig. 17e-f)

2 specimens. Blunt bladed, stemmed specimens of unknown function. Both examples are crudely shaped by primary chipping without retouch. A small amount of battering on the frontal edge is the only indication of use.

## Miscellaneous Blade and Core Tools

These bifacially chipped tools were sorted solely on the basis of shape. While obviously unsatisfactory, this turned out to be the only practicable method. Some attempt was made initially to distinguish function by the recognition of "use scars" and "battering." This fell through because of the author's inability to distinguish evidence of use from what must be the result of clumsy attempts at shaping the edges. Thus, the most extensive "use scarring" was found on the base of several knives.

### Elongated blades with straight bases (fig. 17k-m)

15 specimens. Small to large blades which tend to have parallel sides and a straight base. Examples vary from thin with even edges to thicker specimens with sinuous edges. Only three examples show a significant amount of retouching on the edges. Only two examples are complete. While similar to the large blade fragments, these artifacts tend to be more crudely worked.

Length: 5.1-10.2 cm. Width: 2.1-5.3 cm.

Thickness: 0.9-1.5 cm.

Elongated blades with rounded bases (not illustrated)

9 specimens. These artifacts are very similar to those in the foregoing group but are distinguished by the shape of their bases. They also tend to be thicker and cruder. None show an appreciable amount of pressure flaking. No complete specimens were recovered, but the range of dimensions would seem to fall within that recorded for those above.

Triangular cores (fig. 17g-h)

4 specimens. Large triangular to ovate cores. None show appreciable retouching. Generally rather thick and crude. Two specimens are complete. Length: 6.1-6.8 cm. Width: 2.8-4.5 cm. Thickness: 1.0-1.4 cm.

Triangular flakes (fig. 17n)

4 specimens. Broad, crudely chipped flakes. Roughly triangular with convex sides. In one example the ventral side is a single flake scar. All specimens are complete and show a minor amount of pressure retouching on the edges. Length: 4.7-6.6 cm. Width: 2.9-4.4 cm. Thickness: 0.9-1.3 cm.

Ovate cores (fig. 17i-j)

5 specimens. These are thick but well-shaped artifacts with even edges. Biconvex in cross section. The edges of one example are ground. None are complete. Width: 4.1-4.6 cm. Thickness: 1.1-1.8 cm.

### Leaf-shaped cores (not illustrated)

8 specimens. Thick, crude elongated cores shaped entirely by percussion chipping. Blade edges sinuous. Only three examples show evidence of possible use. The artifacts in this group are similar to ovate cores but are generally cruder and more elongated.

### Flake Tools

The artifacts in this category were made from random discarded scrap. Rarely were they shaped, and then usually only by pressure chipping on the edges.

Lamellar blades, struck from prepared cores, have been included here. Thirty-five were recovered at Pharr, some used and some unused. A sample of the unused blades was sent to Raymond S. Baby of the Ohio Historical Society for possible identification of the flint source. He stated (personal communication) that six of the specimens submitted were of Flint Ridge, Ohio, material and that two examples suggested Elkhorn, Kentucky, flint.

### Knives

5 examples. Random flakes with bifacial use scars.

Four examples have pressure retouched edges.

### End scrapers

15 examples. Roughly triangular to square flakes, unifacially pressure flaked on one end to produce a steep scraping edge. In most specimens, one edge was also used.



### Side scrapers

21 specimens. Flakes with broad scraping edges indicated by unifacial use scarring; otherwise they were unaltered. Twelve examples are lamellar flakes.

### "Spokeshaves"

5 specimens. Artifacts with a notch pressure flaked in one edge to produce a concave scraping edge.

### Flake tool fragments

11 specimens. Tiny flakes with unifacial use scars on one edge. Most are perhaps fragments of larger artifacts.

### Unused lamellar flakes

24 specimens. These blades, struck from prepared cores, were unaltered.

## OTHER ARTIFACTS AND MATERIALS

The provenience of the artifacts in this category is given in table 7.

### Platform pipes (fig. 22)

Two complete and two fragmentary platform pipes were recovered. One of the complete specimens was of beautifully ground and polished greenstone. The remaining pipes were molded from clay.

### Miscellaneous clay artifacts

Three artifacts made from clay were of undetermined function. One was a flattened, flask-shaped artifact (fig. 23c) which had been molded around a small twig or reed, leaving a narrow channel which extended about one-half its length. This unusual object was found in the old humus beneath Mound E.

A small cone-shaped object was also found beneath Mound E. Its base was rough, as if it had been broken off of something. Perhaps this object was a vessel appendage.

TABLE 7.--Provenience of other artifacts and materials, Pharr Site

|                              | Habitation area | Mound E surface<br>burial platform | Mound E mound base | Mound E old humus | Mound E Feature 18 | Mound E Feature 22 | Mound H mound base | Mound H fill | Mound H old humus | Mound A Feature 7 | Mound D mound base | Mound D Feature 15 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Platform pipe,<br>greenstone |                 |                                    |                    |                   |                    |                    | 1                  |              |                   |                   |                    |                    |
| Platform pipes,<br>clay      | 1               |                                    | 1                  |                   |                    |                    |                    | 1            |                   |                   |                    |                    |
| "Flask"-clay                 |                 |                                    |                    | 1                 |                    |                    |                    |              |                   |                   |                    |                    |
| "Celts"                      |                 |                                    |                    | 1                 | 1                  |                    |                    |              | 1                 |                   |                    |                    |
| Palettes                     |                 |                                    |                    |                   |                    | 2                  |                    |              |                   |                   |                    |                    |
| Labret                       |                 |                                    |                    |                   |                    | 1                  |                    |              |                   |                   |                    |                    |
| Copper covered<br>wood       |                 | x                                  |                    |                   |                    |                    |                    |              |                   | x                 |                    |                    |
| Copper snools                |                 |                                    |                    |                   |                    |                    |                    |              |                   |                   | 2                  | 1                  |
| Silver plate                 |                 | x                                  |                    |                   |                    |                    |                    |              |                   |                   |                    |                    |
| Galena                       |                 |                                    |                    |                   | x                  | x                  |                    |              |                   |                   |                    |                    |

The third specimen in this group is an amorphous lump of burned clay which looks as if someone had squeezed it when still plastic and then tossed it in the fire. Perhaps it is the product of a potter's activities. This artifact was found in the black midden area west of Mound H.

"Celts" (fig. 23a-b)

Three flattened, rectangular artifacts are called celts for want of a better term. They are made of a friable, shaly sandstone and would have been totally ineffective as a chopping tool. The edges of all specimens are flat and ground.

Palettes (not illustrated)

Two fragments of tabular sandstone were found which show evidence of grinding on one surface. Two adjacent edges of one specimen appear to have been smoothed and straightened by abrasion as well.

Labret (not illustrated)

This small ground object is made of greenstone. The flattened flange-like base supports a tapering, cylindrical tube with a small hole drilled about half-way into it. This beautiful artifact approximates the size of a .22-caliber cartridge, which it closely resembles.

#### Copper-covered wood (not illustrated)

Two finds of copper-colored wood were recovered. The first consisted of a number of small stained fragments found with one of the cremations in the large pit beneath Mound A. The second is a thin rectangular piece of wood with sheet copper on both sides, taken from the surface of the burial platform at Mound E.

#### Copper spools (fig. 21)

Three copper spools were recovered from the mound base beneath Mound D. All are of the bicymbal type, of complex construction. Each spool is made of two small, inner flanges and two larger, outer flanges. The space between the two halves was first wound with vegetable fiber, which may have been grass (not string or twine), then filled with clay and, finally, wrapped with more fiber. In two specimens, the outer flange consisted of two sheets of copper hammered together. In the other case, a single, thicker sheet appears to have been used. The outer flanges of one spool (fig. 21c) were covered with a thin sheet of what seems to be silver.

### Silver plate (fig. 20)

Several pieces of very thin metal sheets were found together on the burial platform beneath Mound E. Their shape suggests that they might have once jacketed a set of conjoined tubes. Three sheets are elongated, finger-shaped pieces and are bent as if each partially wrapped a single tube. The two remaining fragments are broader and fluted or rippled as if they covered on side of two or three joined cylinders.

### Raw materials

Two small pieces of galena were found in Feature 18, a pit dug into the burial platform at Mound E. A larger lump was found in Feature 22, a pit beneath Mound E. Small pieces of unworked mica were recorded in each of the excavated mounds. A large unworked sheet was found in Feature 22.

One bit of negative information is worth mentioning here. On the off-chance that some obsidian might turn up, all flint scrap was saved and examined. No obsidian was found.

## COMPARISONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Two areas of comparison are dealt with in this section. First, the Pharr, Bynum, and Miller sites will be compared; and secondly, the relationships of the Hopewellian components of the Miller sequence to other archeological units will be explored.

The three excavated sites of the Miller sequence are situated reasonably close to one another geographically. Pharr and Bynum are 40 to 50 air miles apart, with Miller roughly midway between the two. The temporal dimension must also be considered since the Miller Site yielded a Miller II pottery assemblage. No sherd counts for the two mounds are presented in the excavator's report, but the statement that Furrs Cordmarked and Baldwin Plain predominated in the fill of both mounds (Jennings, 1952, p. 264) supports this assignment.

Examination of the mounds at the three sites shows that there is little or no similarity in specific structural details. There are, however, certain broader resemblances present, particularly between Pharr and Bynum, which may indicate a similarity of purpose or function. To put it another way, there would seem to have been a number of commonly held cultural ideals or concepts which were carried out by different structural means.

The most widely shared concept was that the raising of the mounds (or their components) was a signal event; i.e., they were built as a result of continuous effort over a short period of time. The only exception to this was Miller Mound A, which was an accretional structure.

Corollary to the above, inclusive burials were not common. This trait occurred at Pharr only at Mound A, where two cremations were found in the fill and not recorded for Bynum at all. Miller Mound B contained 3 inclusive burials and Mound A, the accretional earthwork, contained 27 inclusive burials.

Another such idea or concept present at Pharr and Bynum, but not at Miller, is mass interment in a prepared facility. This is represented at Pharr by the burial platform beneath Mound E. At Bynum, it occurs in Mounds B and D, where burials were deposited in the ashes of a burned charnel house or crematory structure (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, pp 6-11).



The concept of mounds being built to cover crematory facilities appears at Bynum where, at Mound B, the fire basin and associated superstructure were located (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, fig. 3). It is represented at Pharr in the fired basins beneath Mound H and E and also perhaps by the burned and ash-stained area on the mound base beneath Mound D. At Miller, a large burned area was found beneath Mound B, but this seems to have had some function in preparing the mound base rather than having anything to do with cremation (Jennings, 1941, pp. 192-193).

The interment of three or four individuals in a single grave is common to Pharr and Bynum but absent at Miller. At Pharr, graves apparently intended for multiple interment were found beneath Mounds A and E. The three burials flanked by logs at the mound base beneath Bynum Mound A reflect the same custom (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, fig. 4).

Little can be said in regard to burial traits at the three sites because virtually no skeletal remains were uncovered at Pharr, and most of those found at Miller were extremely fragmentary. However, some observations on the frequency of cremations and inhumations can be made.

Inhumation seems to have predominated at Pharr. We assume that the scraps of bone found on the mound base at Mound H and on the platform at Mound E, and also the empty graves in the latter mound originally contained inhumations. Cremation was represented only in two of the graves and by the inclusive deposits at Mound A. In contrast, more cremations than inhumations were encountered in the Bynum mounds (Cotter and Corbett, 1951, pp. 5-11). All of the interments at the Miller Site were inhumations.

The artifact assemblages of the three sites exhibit a number of correspondences, as indicated in the following tabulation.

|                     | <u>Pharr</u> | <u>Bynum</u> | <u>Miller</u> | <u>References</u>                   |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Pots as grave goods | x            |              | x             | Jennings, 1941, pl. 10              |
| Conch shell dipper  |              |              | x             | Jennings, 1941, p. 194              |
| Platform pipes      | x            |              | x             | Jennings, 1941, pl. 10              |
| Celts               |              | x            |               | Cotter and Corbett,<br>1951, p. 41  |
| Copper spools       | x            | x            | x             | Cotter and Corbett,<br>1951, pl. 11 |
|                     |              |              |               | Jennings, 1941, p. 203              |
| Conjoined tubes     | x            |              |               |                                     |
| Galena              | x            | x            | x             | Cotter and Corbett,<br>1951, p. 39  |
|                     |              |              |               | Jennings, 1941, p. 203              |

The above table does not tell the complete story, however, for it is equally significant that grave goods (as most of the above were) were much more common at Pharr and Bynum than they were at Miller. Two vessels, a conch shell dipper, one platform pipe, and the remnants of what may have been a copper spool were the only items found in the two mounds at Miller. This is in sharp contrast to the caches of celts, flint blades, and spools at Bynum and the variety of goods found at the Pharr Site.

The chipped stone industries at Pharr and Bynum show many similarities, as shown in the tabulation below. Much of the material at both sites is from the surface or the habitation area excavations, however, and are of little value in relating the mounds.

| <u>Pharr</u>                 | <u>Bynum</u> (references in Cotter and Corbett, 1951) |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Point Type A (fig. 14a-c)    | Plate 10, nos. 18; 22-24                              |
| Point Type F (fig. 15f-g)    | Plate 5, nos. 1-4                                     |
| Point Type J (fig. 14o-p)    | Plate 13, nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5                          |
| Blades (fig. 17k-l)          | Plate 10, nos. 26, 27                                 |
| Ovate cores (fig. 17i-j)     | Plate 13, nos. 16, 17                                 |
| Lamellar blades (not illus.) | Plate 13, fig. 11                                     |

Some artifact types may also be shared with the Miller Site but the provenience of those depicted (Jennings, 1941, pl. 7a-c) is not clear.

The comparisons cited above suggest that the Pharr and Bynum sites shared a body of mortuary concepts which is only dimly reflected at Miller. The outstanding traits of this complex are the use of prepared depositories, the raising of mounds as an important event, and the relatively common inclusion of artifacts with the dead. Both cremation and inhumation were a part of the complex. In contrast, the Miller mounds show signs of evolving into structures which were added to merely as the occasion arose, grave goods were sparse, and cremation was not practiced.

Up to this point in the report, the terms Miller I and Miller II have been used by me to designate ceramic assemblages and/or time periods. The preceding discussions have added flesh to these bare outlines, however, with a description of the mortuary customs which accompanied the pottery types. I propose that the two units may now be designated Phases, as that term has been defined by Willey and Phillips (1962, p. 22). The Miller I Phase may be defined by the ceramic assemblage and distinctive mortuary tradition shared by the Pharr and Bynum sites. The Miller II Phase is on shakier ground, resting solely on the data from one site, but is quite distinct from the earlier phase both in pottery and in mortuary tradition.

Certain of the artifacts and mound construction traits described above indicate that the Miller I Phase sites share yet another trait; both were receiving influence from Hopewellian units. A brief review of appropriate nearby units is thus in order.

Geographically, the nearest possible source of these Hopewellian influences is the Copena Focus of northwest Alabama. As summarized by DeJarnette (1952, pp. 278-279), however, Copena shows little resemblance to Pharr or Bynum. Copena mounds cover individual graves. Large multiple individual graves and mass burial repositories are not reported. There are a few correspondences in the artifact assemblage, such as copper spools, celts, and raw galena, but they are more than outweighed by the differences. The flat copper reels, copper beads, copena blades, elbow pipes, and greenstone spades which are characteristic of the Alabama complex are not recorded for the Miller I Phase sites.

The Marksville Culture of the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley has been summarized by Jennings (1952, p. 261). The mounds at both the Marksville and Crooks sites bear a striking resemblance to Pharr Mound E. A low platform, covered by a primary mound which in turn was covered by a secondary mantle, occurred at both sites. Log tombs had been let down into the platform at Marksville, and at Crooks the burials were placed on the platform itself. The two sites featured inhumation to the exclusion of cremation, and inclusive burials were also present. Both traits depart significantly from the tradition at Pharr and Bynum.

The Helena Crossing Site (Ford, 1963), which had Marksville pottery, should also be mentioned. The mounds here were erected over large log-covered tombs. Additional burials were placed on the surface of the mounds and were then covered by secondary additions. Grave goods, with possible counterparts at Pharr, included conjoined tubes which were silver-plated, bicornal spoons, and lamellar blades. The latter were of Harrison County, Indiana, flint (Ford, 1963, p. 47) and not of Ohio and Kentucky material as were the identifiable examples from Pharr. Cremation was not practiced at Helena Crossing, unless the single burned tomb beneath Mound C is a reflection of this custom.

A detailed comparison of the Miller I Phase with Midwestern Hopewellian units is beyond the author's purview and will not be attempted. That Pharr and Bynum were influenced by these units is plain. Contact through trade is represented by the lamellar blades of Ohio and Kentucky flint and, perhaps, by the silver-plated spools and conjoined tubes, all found at Pharr. Cultural concepts as well appear to have spread from the Midwest. This is most obviously represented by the burned crematory structure beneath the Bynum mounds, an Ohio Hopewell trait (James B. Griffin, 1967, p. 183). Cremation may also be traceable to a northern center, where it was common (op. cit., p. 183).

The Miller I Phase thus had ties with both Ohio Hopewell and Marksville. Of the two influences, the stronger seems to have come from the north. The importance of cremation, not recorded at Marksville sites, and the preponderance of northern trade goods suggest this. Southern influence, seen in the trade pottery and possibly the burial platform at Pharr, seems to be less strong.



The foregoing discussion is intended only to point out the Hopewellian traits which occur in the Miller I Phase and to determine the possible sources of these influences. There is no possibility of defining formalized cultural relationships between the various units at this stage. Satisfactory conclusions involve larger questions, including the entire "Hopewellian" tradition. For the present, the Miller I Phase is best described as a discrete archeological unit which was receiving Hopewellian artifacts and ideas. As such, it is on a par with Marksville, Copena, and other "cultures" insofar as separateness is concerned, if not in geographic spread or in richness. Its niche in the scheme of things may well involve other nearby sand tempered pottery complexes such as the Porter Hopewellian of southwest Alabama (DeJarnette, 1952, p. 277 ) and the sand tempered tradition in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley (Phillips, Ford, and Griffin, 1951, p. 432).

## DATING THE SITE

A sample of the charcoal found in Feature 11, the supposed crematory pit beneath Mound E, was submitted to Geochron Laboratories. The date obtained, which is in the 1-sigma range, is given below:

Sample GX0845       $2345 \pm 90$  B.P. (395 B.C.)

The date previously obtained for the Bynum Site should also be mentioned: 674 A.D.  $\pm 150$  (Libby, 1955, p. 106).

It seems obvious that the atom has failed us in both instances. The contemporaneity of Pharr and Bynum and of Pharr and Marksville has been amply demonstrated.

Dates from Marksville sites suggest that this period began around the time of Christ or shortly before and lasted until about A.D. 200. Four dates for the Helena Crossing Site have been published (Ford, 1963, p. 46): 140 B.C., A.D. 30; A.D. 220, and A.D. 335, all with a plus or minus of 150 years. The date obtained for the Panther Lake Site, which had both Tchefuncte and Marksville pottery, was A.D.  $180 \pm 190$  (Krueger and Weeks, 1966, p. 149). The range of these dates agrees closely with that recently suggested for the Marksville period by James B. Griffin (1967, fig. 1).

It seems reasonable to assign a date of A.D. 1-200 to the Pharr Site and to the Bynum Site as well.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Pharr Site consists of eight large dome-shaped mounds and an area of domestic habitation. Four mounds were investigated: Mounds A and H were partially excavated, and Mounds D and E were dug almost completely. The occupation area was briefly tested.

The mounds were erected to mantle interments and/or supposed crematory basins, both of which had been placed on a (usually) prepared facility. This preparation took the form of a low platform at Mound E, and perhaps at Mound A, and the replacement of the old humus with a thin layer of red and yellow clay at Mound D. The exception to this practice occurred at Mound H, where inhumations and a crematory basin were placed directly on the old ground surface.

The covering of crematory basins was more than accidental. It may have been as important an objective as the covering of burials. Mound D, where a probable crematory facility but no cremations were uncovered, suggests this.

Secondary additions to the mounds were made to cover additional interments placed at the side of the primary mound, or in shafts which penetrated the primary mound. At Mound D, the addition was made very soon after completion of the primary mound, whereas at Mounds A and E a pause ensued of sufficient length to permit weathering of the earlier structure.

Both inhumation and cremation were practiced at Pharr. Judging from the number of empty graves, which we assume held inhumations, and the remnants of bone at Mounds A, D, and E, the former would appear to have been more common.

The lack of skeletal remains made it impossible to determine the number of burials present and the function of the mounds, whether they were status repositories or the tribal cemetery. Nor was it possible to tell whether the burials were deposited simultaneously, as might have been the case had they been removed from a charnel house, or separately. It might even be argued that we cannot be really certain that inhumations were not included in the mound fill while they were being constructed, as were two cremations at Mound A. The total absence of artifacts and the failure to locate a single scrap of bone in the fill argues against this possibility. However the mounds were used, their construction, or that of their components, seems to have been a signal event.

Since the number of burials was undetermined, the occurrence of grave goods can only be vaguely characterized as being fairly common. At Mound H, the greenstone platform pipe was the only find. This sparseness was repeated at Mounds A and D where, respectively, a copper-covered wooden artifact and the spools were the only finds. Mound E was more fruitful; several graves contained vessels, one grave produced a cache of flint blades, and the burial platform yielded a variety of artifacts.

The mortuary tradition manifested in the mounds and burials clearly required considerable energy to fulfill. The sheer size of the earthworks (or their components) and the fact that they were built as a result of a continuous effort are perhaps the most obvious testimony of this. Further evidence to the importance attached to burial is presented by the inclusion of what must have been highly treasured possessions, some of which--pottery copper spools, and the conjoined tubes--were traded over great distances.

The excavations and surface collecting in the area of domestic habitation showed that the site had been intermittently occupied from Late Archaic through Middle Mississippian times. The most intensive occupation was apparently that of the mound-building people, who, we have hypothesized, lived here intermittently at times of mortuary rites and seasonal exploitation of nearby food resources.

The pottery recovered in the excavations was studied to determine the site's relationship to the Miller ceramic sequence. The initial step was to determine whether or not the sherd assemblages recovered from the mounds reflected the true age of the structures. Examination of the sherd counts showed that the percentage distribution of types was relatively consistent in all excavation units in the mounds and habitation area, and this strongly suggested that the occupation of the area from which fill was obtained did not significantly predate the construction of the mounds.

The ceramic assemblage, characterized by high percentages of Saltillo Fabric Impressed and Baldwin Plain and low percentages of Furrs Cordmarked did not fit into the Miller sequence as it had been described. A review of this archeological unit and a key site, Bynum, was necessary to resolve the discrepancies.

The Miller sequence as depicted by previous writers consisted of time periods characterized by diagnostic pottery types. This scheme was much oversimplified, proposing as it did that pottery types died out and were abruptly replaced by other wares.

To obtain a clearer understanding of the Miller sequence, we seriated surface collections from appropriate sites in northeast Mississippi. This seriation made it possible to define the time periods on the basis of the percentage distribution of types rather than on their mere presence or absence.

Miller I was poorly represented in the seriation but could be loosely characterized by large amounts of Saltillo Fabric Impressed. It was also shown that small percentages of Furrs Cordmarked, while not actually present in the collections seriated, were not incompatible. On this admittedly rather shaky basis, Pharr was assigned to a late Miller I age.

The Miller I ceramic assemblage was shown to have a different composition than as previously described. Not only was it pointed out that Furrs Cordmarked could have appeared in small quantities late in the period, but also that fiber tempered pottery is absent from the assemblage. Pharr demonstrates plainly that, whenever the period began, late Miller I is on a Middle Woodland level, much too late for fiber tempering.



A review of the Bynum data in light of the revised definition of Miller I suggests that this site, too, fits more comfortably here than in the succeeding period, as previously suggested. The presence of Furrs Cordmarked and the absence of fiber tempered pottery at Bynum, which appears to have been instrumental in the Miller II assignment, have been removed as objectives. Further, a study of the percentage distribution of types among Bynum's excavation units suggested that the large amounts of Saltillo Fabric Impressed recovered from the mounds is truly characteristic of their age and not merely chance inclusions from an earlier habitation area.

Inspection of the "tradeware" pottery from Pharr indicated contacts with the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley and northern Alabama. Contacts with the Marksville culture included both the importation of vessels and the borrowing of decorative techniques and vessel shape. The significance of the limestone tempered pottery, whether it was traded or was a minor native ware at the site, could not be determined. It was, however, demonstrably contemporaneous with the Miller I sand tempered assemblage.

Comparison of mound construction and mortuary traits affirmed the affinity between the Pharr and Bynum sites, which had first been suggested by the ceramic analysis. Despite differences in detail, Pharr and Bynum manifest an unmistakable "flavor" of similarity. At both sites, the mounds were built over prepared burial repositories and crematory facilities, and their construction was a signal event. Artifacts were commonly placed with burials at both sites, and cremation as well as inhumation was practiced. It seems clear that the Pharr and Bynum people shared a common mortuary tradition.

The Miller Site, on the other hand, stands by itself, the hallmarks of the Miller I tradition having all but disappeared.

Since we now know more about the units than what kind of pottery was made, it has been proposed to designate Miller I and Miller II as Phases. Previously, these units had been nothing more than subdivisions of a ceramic sequence. This proposition is being put forward cautiously and tentatively. Later work may well show that the mortuary tradition of Pharr and Bynum does not coincide with the Miller I ceramic assemblage. However, use of the present terms seems preferable to cluttering up the literature with still another name.

The appearance of certain artifacts and cultural traits indicates that the Miller I Phase was in contact with Hopewellian and/or Hopewell-inspired units. It is equally obvious that the traits received were unequally distributed, for, generally speaking, Pharr had the Hopewellian artifacts and Bynum had the Hopewellian-like mounds. More important than these differences is the sharing of the mortuary tradition which, itself, has a generalized Hopewellian flavor.

A cursory examination of Copena and Marksville showed that these units shared little with the Miller I Phase beyond the fact that all three were Hopewellian influenced. Apart from the possible link of the burial platform at Pharr with similar structures at Marksville and Crooks, few traits were shared.

The genesis of the Miller I Phase mortuary tradition must remain uncertain until more is known of other nearby archeological units. The knowledge presently available indicates its closest ties are to Ohio Hopewellian. The northern trade goods and the crematory facilities beneath the mounds appear unmistakable in this regard.

The radiocarbon dates obtained for Pharr and Bynum were considered to be unacceptable. The Marksville vessel at Pharr and the Hopewellian traits at both Pharr and Bynum suggest a date of A.D. 1-200 for the Miller I Phase.

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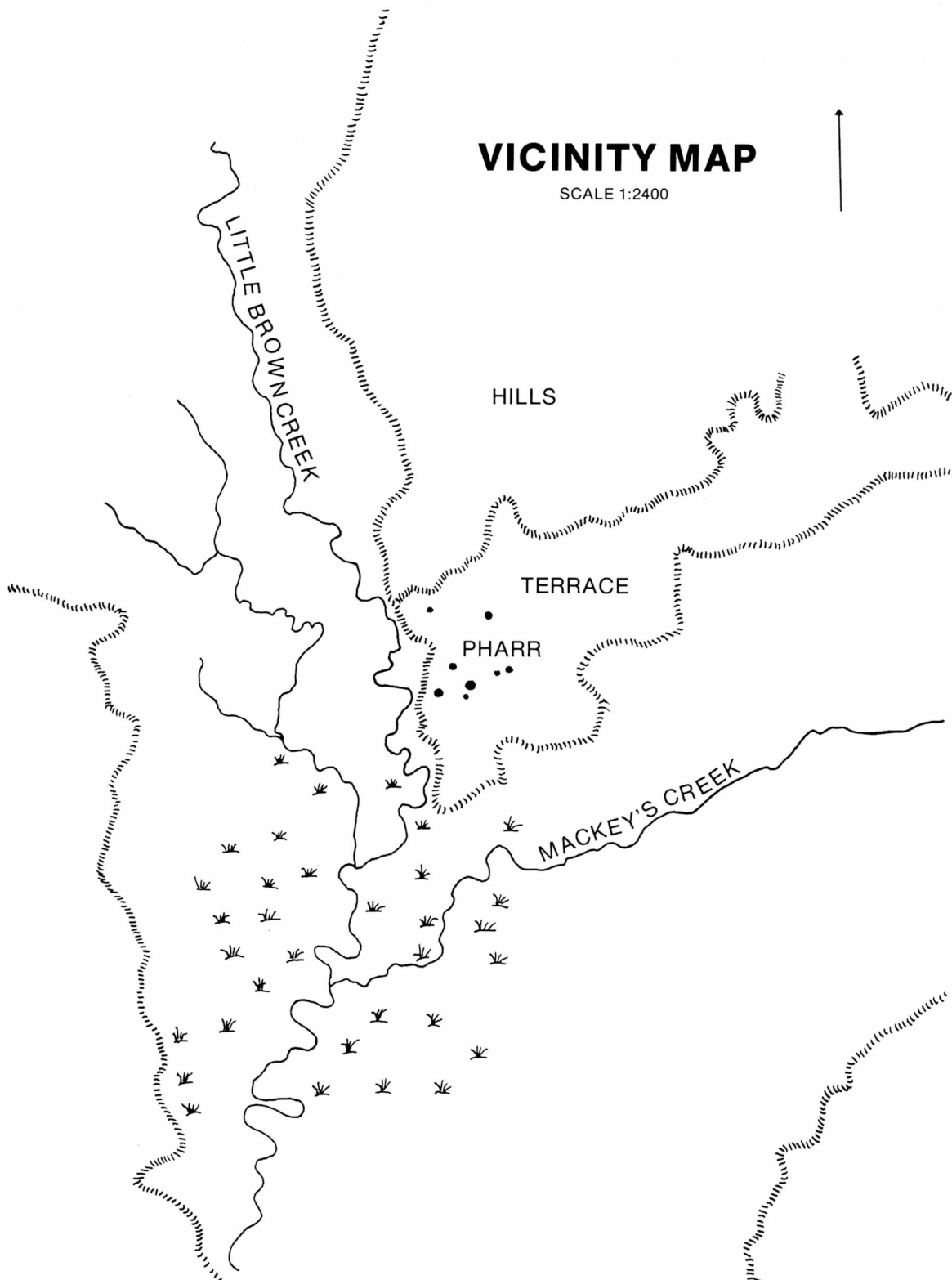


FIGURE 1

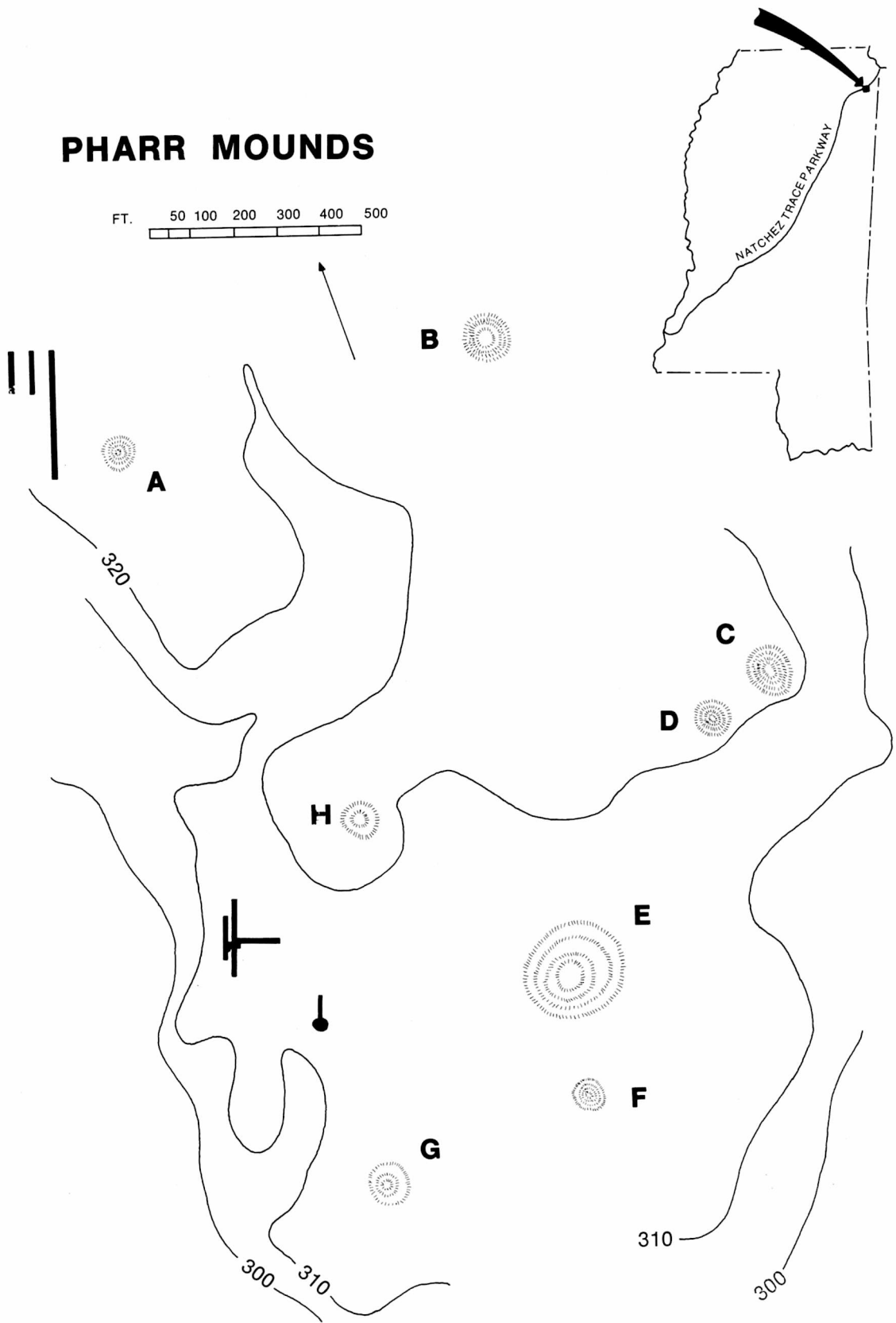


FIGURE 2



# **MOUND H** 1 FT. CONTOUR

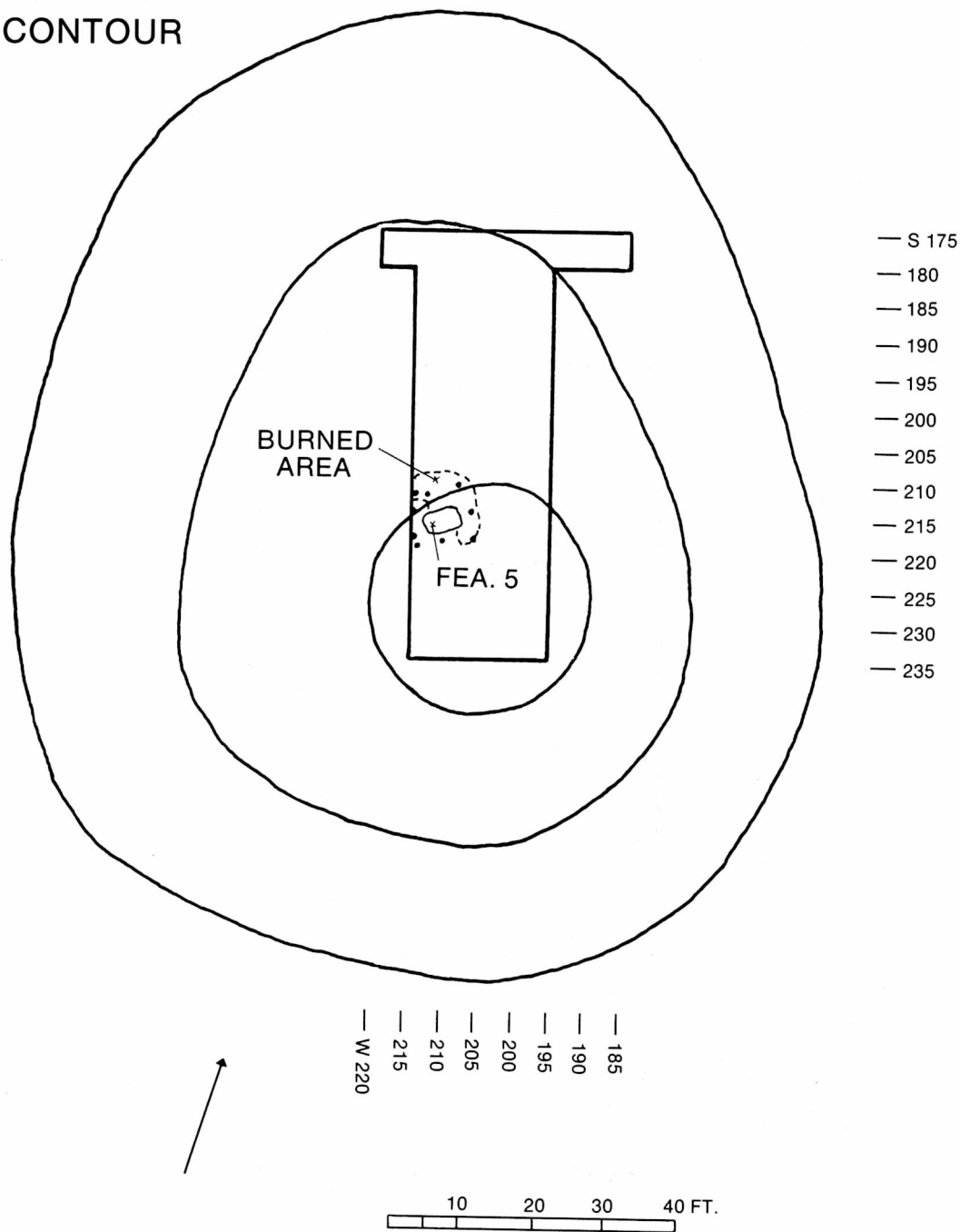


FIGURE 3

# MOUND A

## 2 FT. CONTOUR

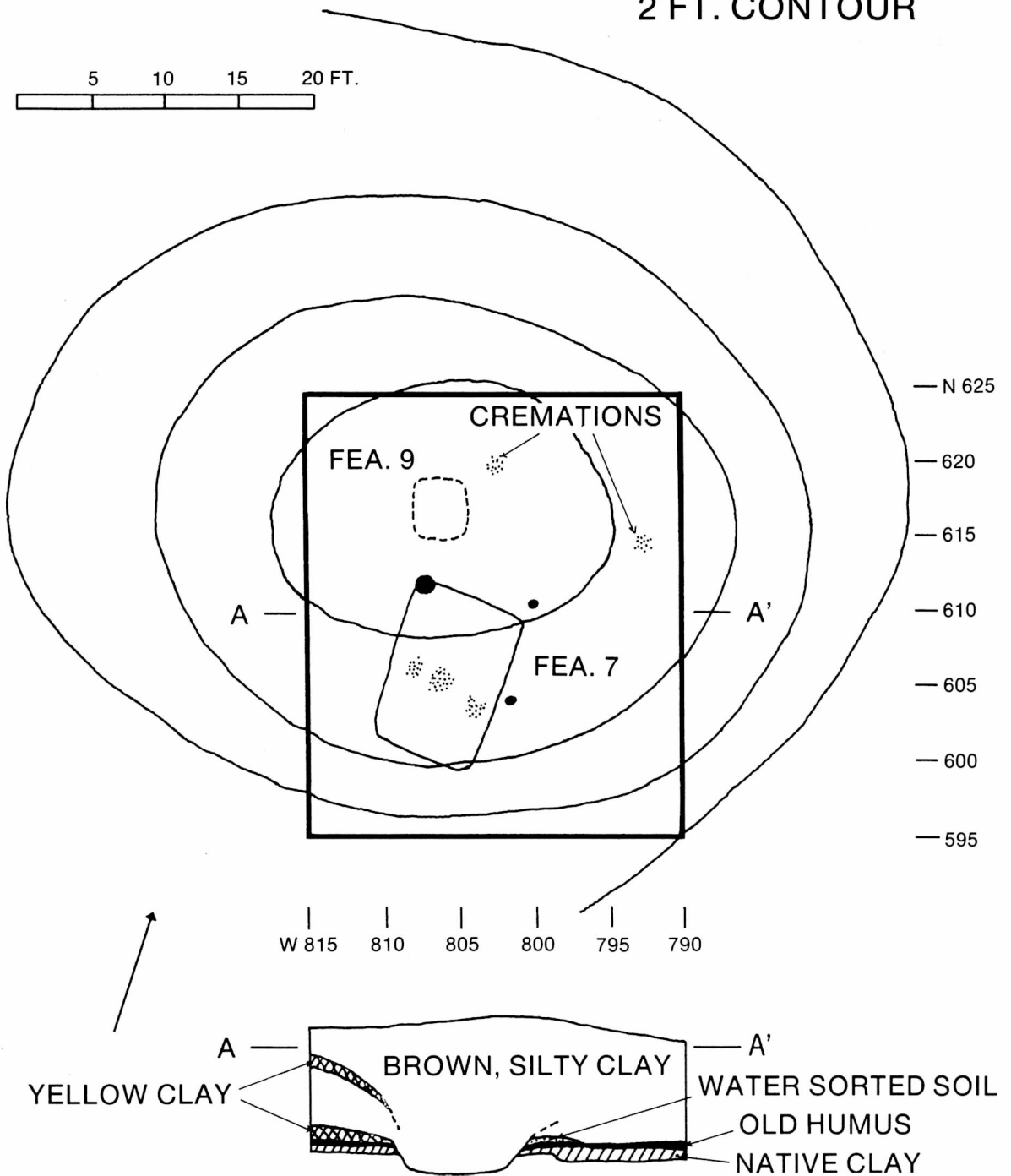
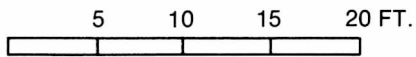


FIGURE 4

# **MOUND D** 2 FT. CONTOUR

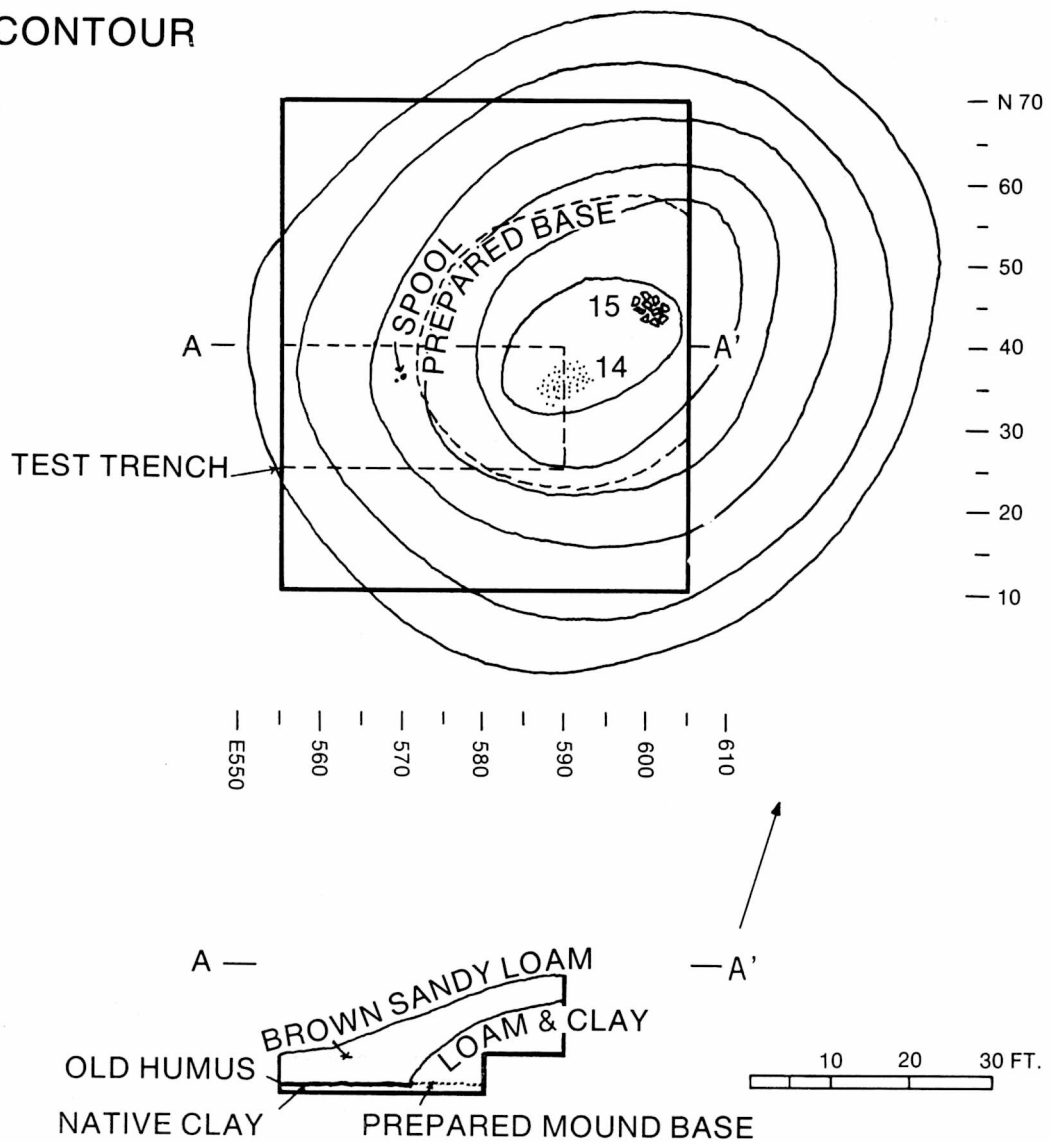
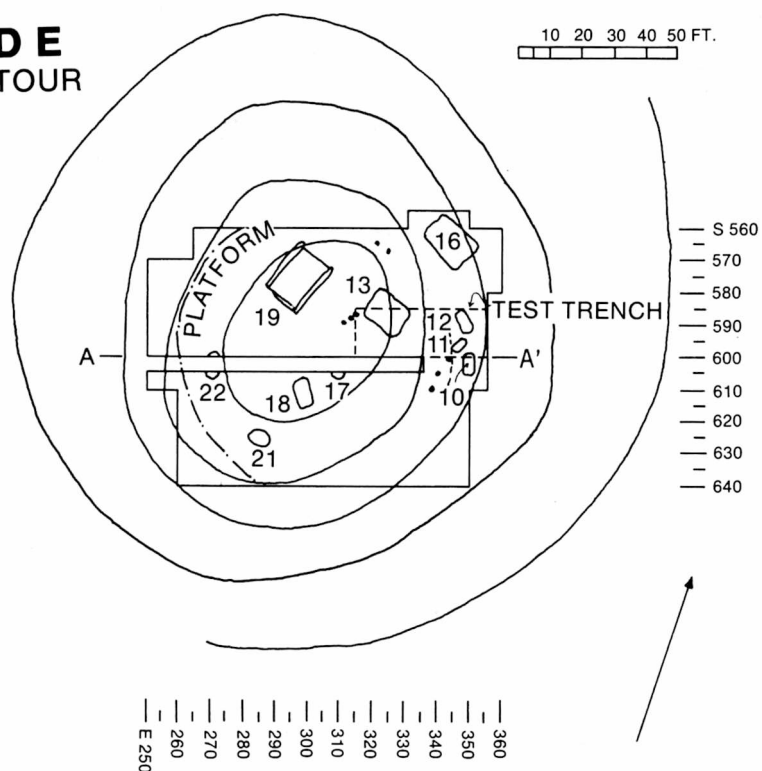


FIGURE 5

**MOUND E**  
2 FT. CONTOUR



**PROFILE ENLARGED &  
VERTICAL SCALE DOUBLED**

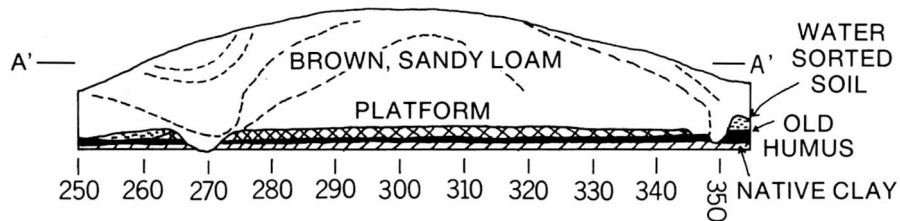
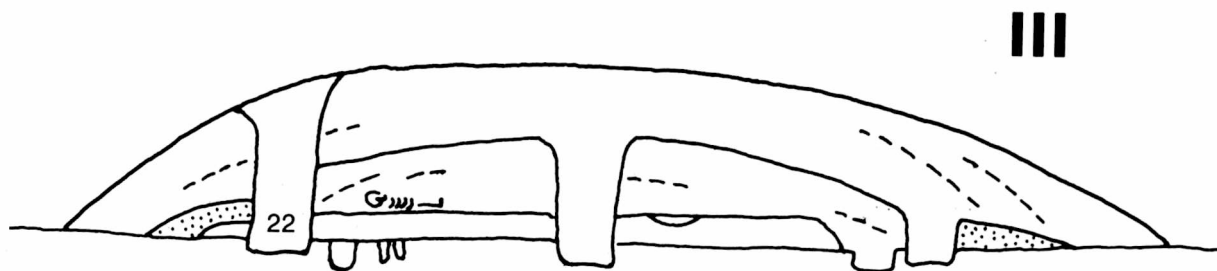
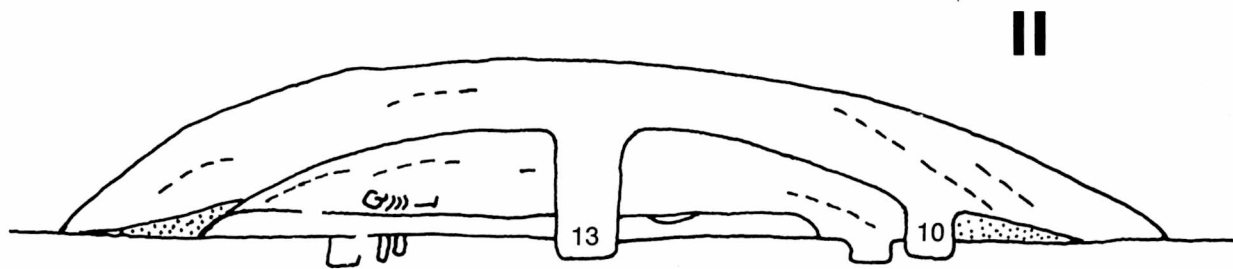
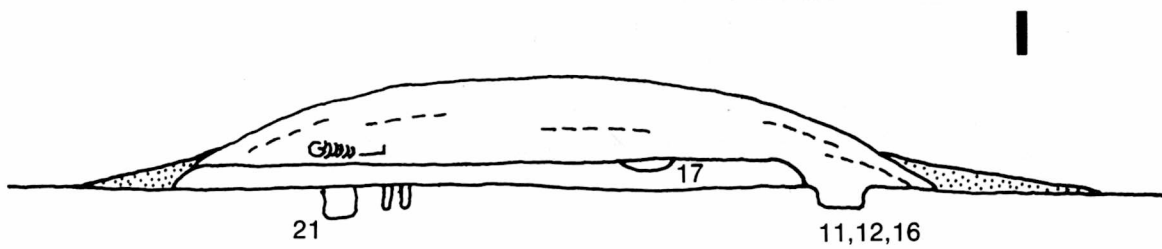


FIGURE 6



Schematic Profile of Mound E

FIGURE 7



Mound D



Mound B, the largest of the group.

FIGURE 8



Mound A, excavation      e initial trial trench.



Large grave beneath Mound A. Cremations near tip of arrow.

FIGURE 9

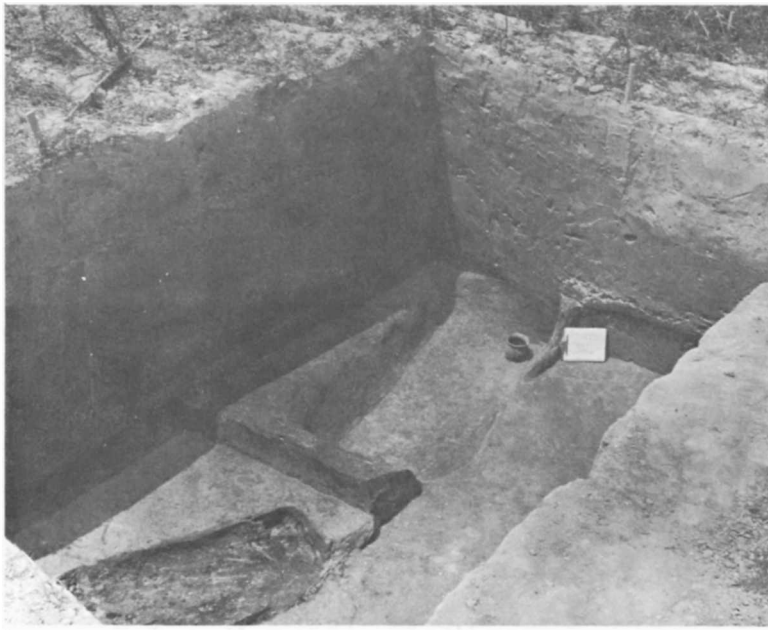


Mound E, after the bulldozer had stripped all but 2 feet of fill from the mound base.



Feature 19, the possible log tomb beneath Mound E.





Two features revealed in the test trench at Mound E. Feature 11, the possible crematory pit and Feature 12, with the Baldwin Plain jar. The faint line about half way up the left bank marks the surface of the primary mound covering the burial platform.



Mound E. The corner of Feature 13, a grave intrusive from the stage 1 surface. This surface is marked by line of gravel approximately 1 foot below rim of excavation. The surface of the burial platform is marked by the dark line just above the clip board.

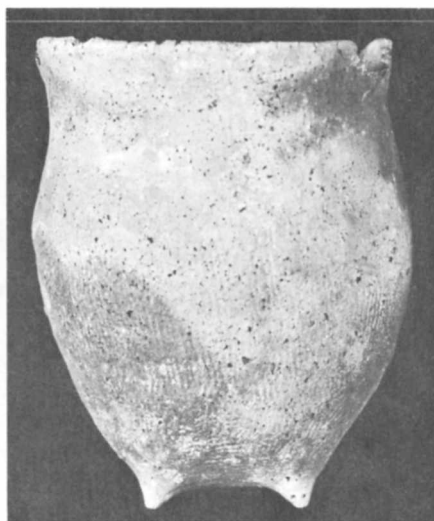
FIGURE 11



a. Marksville Incised, var. Marksville; Mound E, surface of burial platform.



b. Flint River Cordmarked; Mound E, Feature 12.



c. Flint River Brushed; Mound E, Feature 10 (found with zone-stamped vessel, fig. 13d).

FIGURE 12

a. Baldwin Plain; Mound E,  
surface of burial platform.



b. Furrs Cordmarked;  
Mound E, fill of burial  
platform.



c. Unnamed zone-stamped;  
Mound E, surface of burial  
platform.



d. Unnamed zone-stamped; Mound E,  
Feature 10.

FIGURE 13

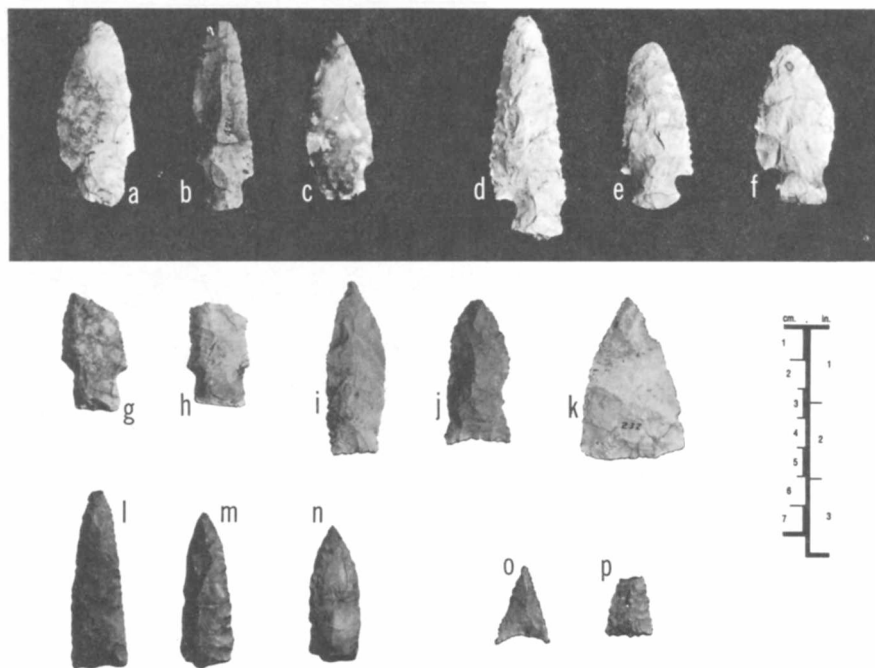


FIGURE 14. Projectile Points and Blades. a-c, Type "A"; d-f, Type "C"; g, h, Type "B"; i, j, recurved edged blades; k, triangular blade; l, n, lanceolate blades; o, p, Type "J".

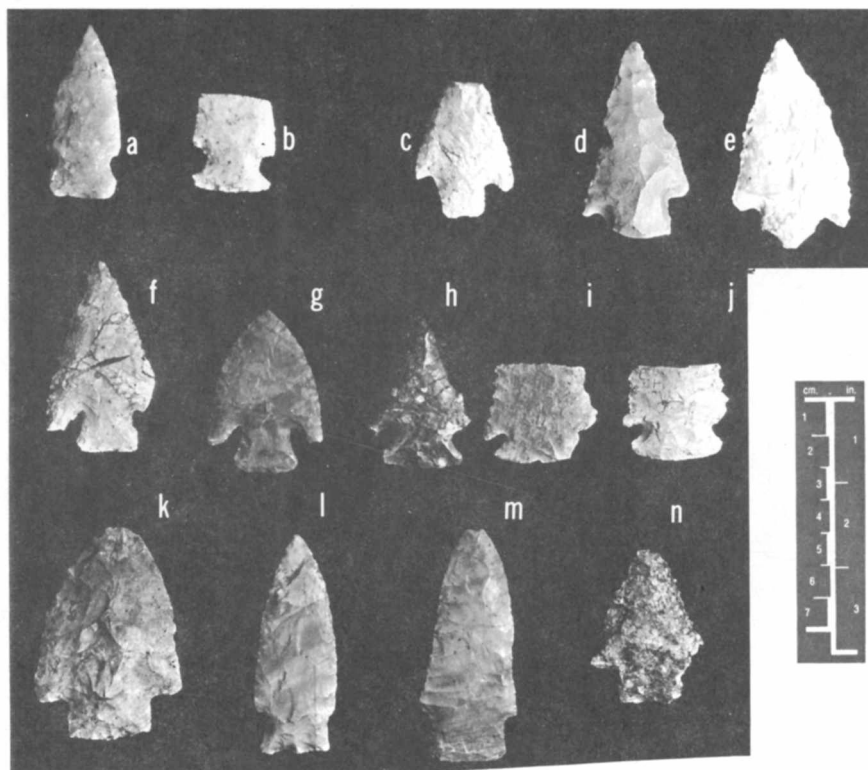


FIGURE 15. Projectile Points. a, b, Type "H"; c-e, Type "D"; f, g, Type "F"; h-j, Type "E"; k, Type "L"; l, m, Type "I"; n, Type "G".

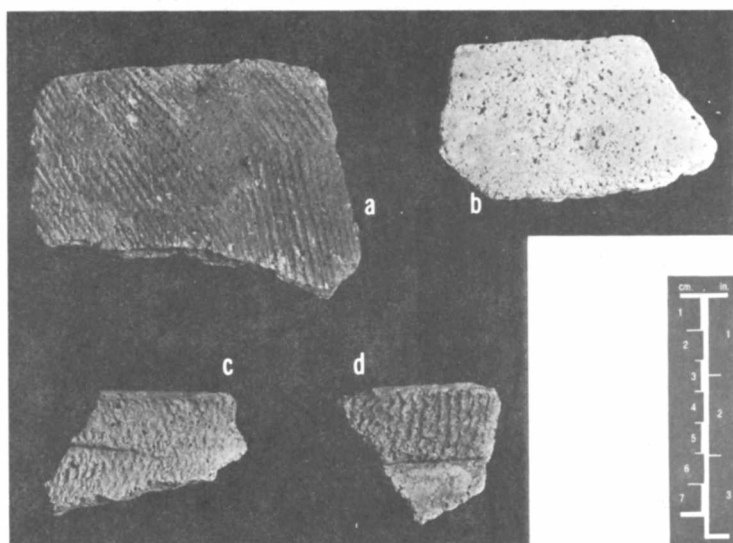


FIGURE 16. Limestone tempered pottery. a, Flint River Cord-marked; b, Mulberry Creek Plain; c, d, Long Branch Fabric Marked.

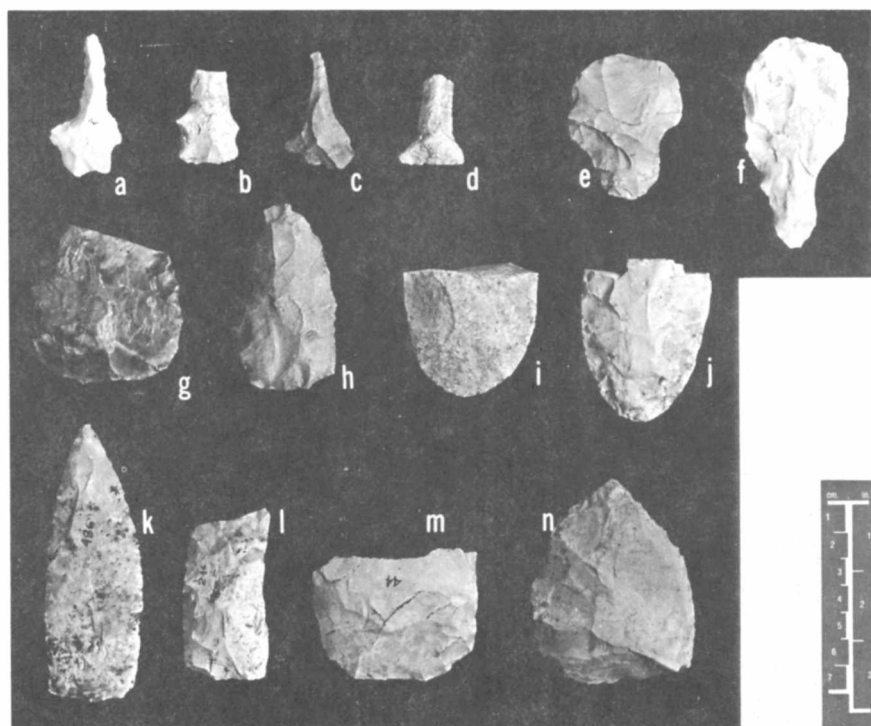


FIGURE 17. Miscellaneous chipped stone artifacts. a-d, drills; e, f, spatulate artifacts; g, h, triangular cores; i, j, ovate cores; k-m, long blades with straight bases; n, large, triangular flake.

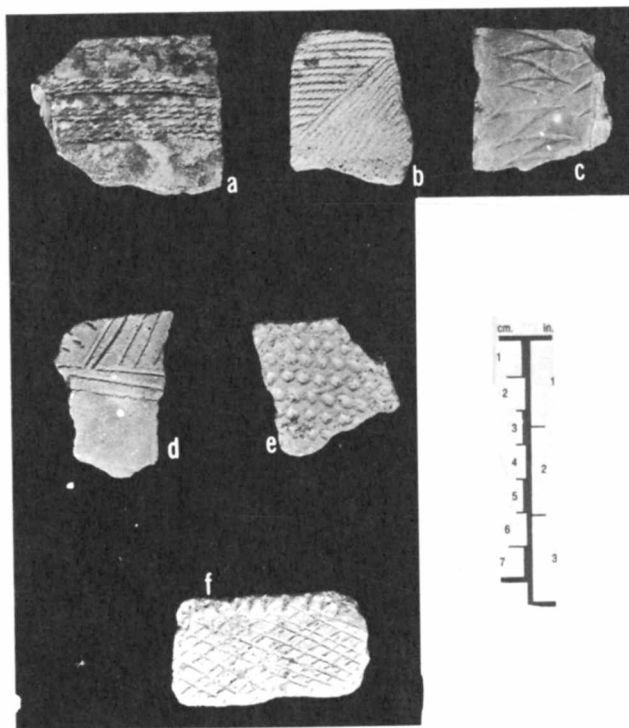


FIGURE 18. Miscellaneous sand tempered pottery. a, b, cord impressed; c, rocker stamped; d, f, incised; e, punctated.

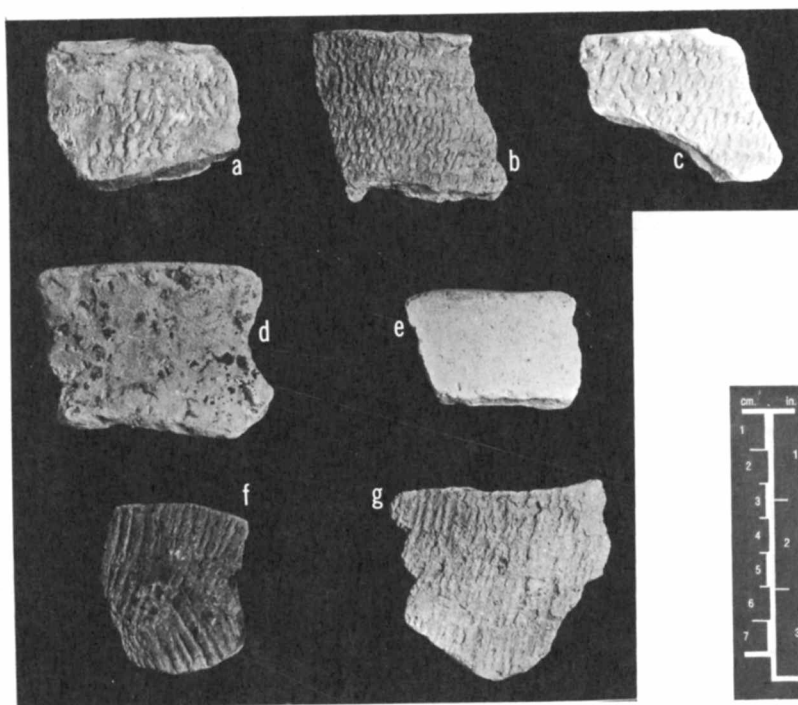


FIGURE 19. Sand tempered pottery. a-c, Saltillo Fabric Impressed; e, f, Baldwin Plain; g, h, Furrs Cordmarked.

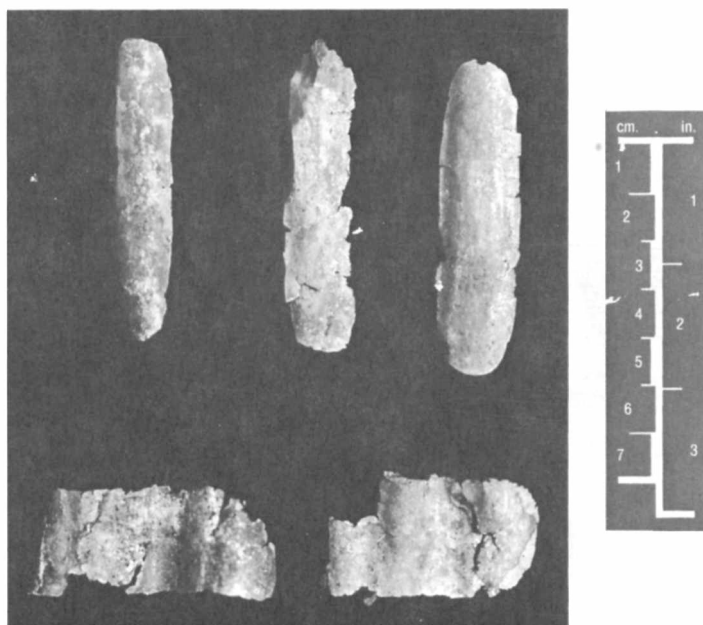


FIGURE 20. The foil-thin silver plating, possibly from conjoined tubes, found on the burial platform beneath primary Mound E.

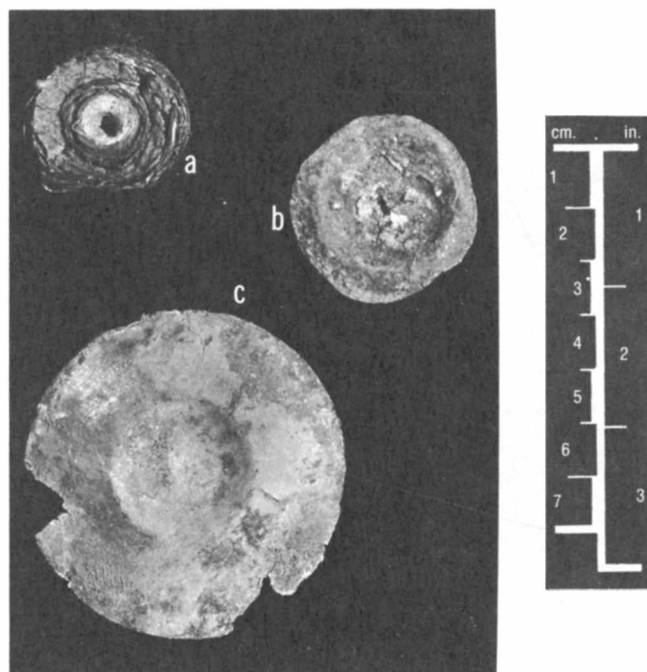


FIGURE 21. Spool-shaped artifact. a, inner core of clay, wrapped with vegetable fiber; b, inner flange; c, silver plated outer flange.



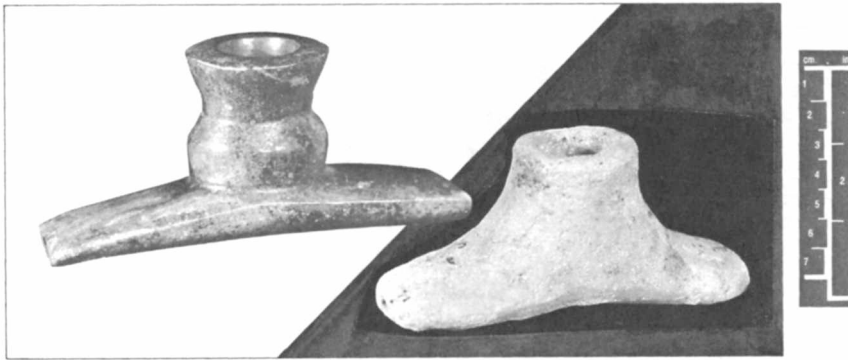


FIGURE 22. Platform pipes of greenstone and clay.

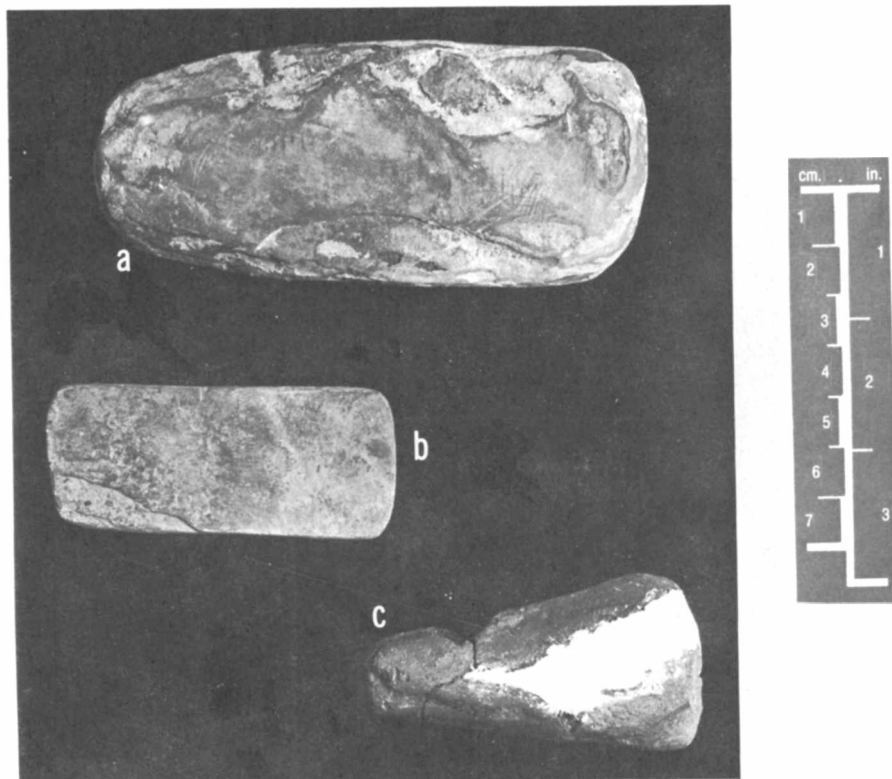


FIGURE 23. Miscellaneous artifacts. a, b, "celts" of shaly sandstone; c, flask-shaped artifact of clay.





**bear creek**

EXCAVATIONS AT THE BEAR CREEK SITE

Tishomingo County,  
Mississippi

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## PREFACE

Two sites on the Natchez Trace Parkway, both located on Section 3-A in northeastern Mississippi, were excavated by the author for the National Park Service during the summer of 1965. These sites had been proposed as interpretive features, and their investigation was undertaken to provide information for this purpose. The first, called the Bear Creek Site, consists of the damaged remnant of a small temple mound and a village area. The other, the Cave Springs Site, is situated approximately one-half mile to the west of the Bear Creek mound. This locale is a large oval sinkhole with overhanging ledges at each end forming shallow rock shelters. Test excavations at the Cave Springs Site revealed only a small patch of darkened soil, containing a handful of flakes and two crudely chipped and apparently unfinished, stemmed dart points, in the rock shelter in front of the southeast cave.

I would like to thank Dr. Elizabeth S. Wing of the Florida State Museum, for identifying the faunal remains; James W. Cambron, who identified the projectile points; and John W. Cottier of the museum at Moundville, Alabama, for examining some of the pottery from the Bear Creek Site.

August 1966

C.F.B.

## THE SITE AND ITS SETTING

The Bear Creek Site is located approximately 5 miles east of the town of Tishomingo, Mississippi. It lies between Bear and Cedar Creeks, which flow past the site only a few hundred feet apart and come together about one-quarter of a mile to the north. The conjoined stream proceeds tortuously northward some 28 miles to its confluence with the Tennessee River (fig. 1).

This corner of Mississippi lies in the physiographic region known as the Tennessee River Hills. The topography is rugged, with steep hills and deep ravines carved by the numerous creeks and branches. Some of the larger streams, however, have produced broad terrances. The site is located on such a terrance and there is an abundance of gently rolling, well-drained land in its immediate vicinity. The soil is a brown, sandy loam.

Today the countryside is largely clothed, as perhaps it was prehistorically, in a forest dominated by oak and hickory. In addition to numerous species of these genera, there are also sweetgum, black tupelo, sourwood, dogwood, tuliptree, and American chestnut. Frequently found along the streams are bald cypress, water oak, sycamore, beech, American elm, winged elm, slippery elm, red maple, and black walnut.

The climate of northeast Mississippi is characterized by hot summers, generally mild winters, and abundant rainfall. Monthly mean temperatures range from 44° F., in January, to 81° F., in July. The growing season is long, with an average of seven months between killing frosts. Precipitation averages 51 inches a year but is unevenly distributed, and dry spells are common in the summer and fall.

When first recorded in 1950 by the archeological survey of the Natchez Trace Parkway, the Bear Creek mound was described as being 12 feet high and 100 feet in diameter. In the meantime, it had been badly damaged by cultivation, and when excavation began the mound was a low rise, a mere 4 feet high. Roughly oval in outline, it measured about 140 by 180 feet (fig. 2). South and east of the mound scattered flint chips, sherds, and bits of burned daub indicative of village remains were strewn over the surface of an area measuring some 350 by 450 feet.

In sum, the builders of the mound and village found an excellent location for their settlement. The rich soil and an amenable climate would have made agriculture a productive enterprise and the surrounding forests offered many potential food sources, both wild plants and game.



## THE EXCAVATIONS

### Methods

A standard grid system was utilized with the axes rotated 30 degrees east of north to correspond with what was thought to be the orientation of the mound. For the sake of convenience, however, loci on the grid were designated as being south and east of the intersection of the base lines. The 0-0 coordinate was placed northwest of the mound so that the entire site would be in one quadrant. The mound was laid out in 10-foot squares, and each square was designated by the location of its northwest corner.

When a topographic map was made, it was found that the mound was oriented with the cardinal directions. It was decided, nevertheless, to utilize the grid as established despite the inconveniences entailed.

The first excavations took place in a series of 10-foot squares just north of the mound. They were dug to provide preliminary training for the laborers and to test the area as a possible dump for the back dirt from the excavation of the mound. (It was later decided to dump the back dirt over the bank into the creek bottom.) The base of a fluted projectile point and a few flint chips were found in the plow-disturbed soil near the surface, but otherwise the tests were sterile.

Although the mound had been greatly reduced, there was still the chance that some information had survived. Accordingly, a 5-foot-wide test trench was begun on the western side of the mound and carried in successive 10-foot segments across the width of the structure. The fill was removed in horizontal, 6-inch layers, and digging was carried 1.5-2.0 feet into the undisturbed native clay beneath the fill.

No postholes, house midden, or other features suggestive of structural remains were located by the trench. However, the profiles showed the presence of two level and continuous horizons which offered further possibilities. To insure that nothing was overlooked, the surfaces of these layers were uncovered in a number of squares adjacent to the test trench. These broader excavations also failed to turn up any significant structural features.

With the possibilities of the mound exhausted, we turned to the village area. To obtain some idea of the magnitude of the remains, a series of 5-foot-wide trenches, spaced at 50-foot intervals, were dug across the village area (fig. 2). It soon became evident that no midden deposits remained. The artifacts, relatively few in number, all came from the plow zone. Only the area immediately to the southeast of the mound was productive. Trench E250 and the northerly portion of trenches E200 and E150 intersected a number of trash pits and postholes. A fair number of sherds were also recovered here. West and

south of this area the features rapidly thinned out and the trenches were all but barren of material.

When the preliminary testing was completed, the next task was to remove the plow-disturbed soil from the more promising areas revealed by the trenches in the hope of uncovering house patterns and other features. Since extensive areas were involved, a bulldozer seemed to be the most economical and rapid means of accomplishing this. A Case Model 750 bulldozer was used to back-drag the disturbed soil from three large areas. Two house patterns, numerous trash pits, two burials, and many scattered postholes were uncovered.

The meager results of the excavations were disappointing and I gave some thought to recommending the abandonment of the site as an interpretive feature. Upon reflection, however, it assumed an importance out of proportion to its scientific value. The excavations showed that the site manifested an unusually long occupation, as will be discussed later, and this in itself would make an interesting interpretive story. The site is, furthermore, the only known Middle Mississippian manifestation at the northern end of the Parkway and will offer the sole opportunity to interpret this aspect of parkway archeology to many visitors.

The mound in its damaged condition was obviously unsuitable as an in-place exhibit, and we decided to reconstruct it.

To accomplish this, a series of narrow trenches was dug into the flanks of the mound to determine its original perimeter. It was then a matter of staking the sides and bulldozing the surrounding disturbed soil back on top of the mound. The reconstruction is, of course, conjectural in part. While the perimeter is accurate, the slope of the sides and the height are estimates. The mound, as reconstructed, is 8 to 10 feet high--somewhat less than the original height recorded by the survey. This was, presumably, an estimate, and a survey photograph (fig. 7) suggests that it may have been in error.

### The Mound

The excavations showed that the mound had been roughly square in outline and had measured 85 to 90 feet on a side (fig. 3). It was constructed of a yellowish-brown, silty loam in which the individual, peck-size loads were visible.

A number of stages of construction were seen in the test trench profiles. These were indicated by interruptions in the otherwise continuous basket loading and, in one case, a horizontal layer of red clay.

Our interpretation of the building sequence is illustrated in figure 4. Stage A, the earliest, was a low, flat-topped earthwork, capped with a layer of red clay. Its platform was

square, measuring about 30 feet, with sides which roughly paralleled the sides of the final stage of the mound. A number of features were associated with Stage A. Five post-holes were scattered from the center to the western edge of the platform. A circular pit, 3 feet in diameter and 1.3 feet deep, was also located near the western edge. It had been dug from the surface of the clay cap and contained a small, flat slab of sandstone. The pit was otherwise sterile. A small patch of the surface of the platform near the southwestern corner had been burned and was bright orange in color and brick-hard.

Feature 1, the large circular pit in the center of the Stage A surface, seems to date from a later stage and will be discussed subsequently.

There were two shallow depressions in the native clay beneath Stage A. Neither contained artifacts or burials. They may have been small borrow pits where, before construction of the mound began, clay was obtained to plaster house walls. One depression was located directly beneath Feature 1 but seems to have had no connection with it. The loaded soil above it extended unbroken and undisturbed between the bottom of Feature 1 and the depression.

After Stage A had been completed, the mound was increased by adding fill to the eastern and southern sides, thus enlarging the already existing platform. No features were noted on the remnant of Stage B surface uncovered in the excavations. Its shape and size were not determined.

Stage C extended the mound a few feet farther to the east and covered the surface of Stage B and a portion of the surface of Stage A, raising a part of the preceding platform about a foot. Only a small portion of its surface survived and, aside from Feature 1, nothing of note was uncovered. Feature 1 was apparently dug after Stage C had been completed, since its eastern side is adjacent to the edge of the platform of this phase. Alternatively, when Stage C was built, it may have extended only to the edge of the pit, in which case Feature 1 was earlier. Feature 1 was a circular pit, 12 to 14 feet in diameter, and had been dug some 4 feet below the surface of Stage C. It was filled to a depth of 2 feet with water-sorted soil which had obviously washed in from the pit's sides. No skeletal material or significant artifacts were found in the feature, and its function was not determined.

The final construction phase, designated Stage D, is represented by a narrow wedge of fill covering the eastern flank of Stage C and the fill overlying the preceding platform

and eastern side of Stage A. This final mantle **completely** covered the surface and sides of the older earthworks.

The surface of the final stage was obliterated by cultivation. Most of the disturbed soil on the flanks of the mound was from this stage, and its contents provide the only clues to its use. A considerable lens of burned daub (the mud plaster used in house**construction**) was uncovered on the western flank of the mound and indicates that a house or temple had been built on the final stage.

A number of burials were made in Stage D. Two pits, both **intrusive** from the fill of this stage, were noted in the test trench profile. Excavation **showed** both graves to be rectangular, measuring about 6 feet long and 3 feet wide. Feature 2, the pit in the E10 segment of the trench, contained only a few crumbling bone fragments. Feature 3 yielded two restorable vessels and a considerable portion of a third. A few bone fragments were also found near the bottom. Additional evidence of burials in this stage is the splintered and broken human bones found in the disturbed fill on the mound's flanks. They would seem to represent burials destroyed when the mound's summit was pushed off.

One more feature needs to be mentioned. Feature 4 was a deep, trash-filled pit adjacent to the eastern side of the

mound. A large quantity of splintered bone, shell, and pottery sherds were removed from it.

The picture that emerges is of a mound which was successively rebuilt in flat-topped stages. The significance of these stages, whether they constituted mere pauses in an essentially continuous building process or were functional structures, could not be determined in most instances. It is certain that the Stage A platform never supported a building--there were too few postholes and no daub or charcoal associated with it. It is equally certain that a portion of this platform in conjunction with the Stage C surface was exposed for a considerable period before the final mantle was added. This is indicated by the depth of washed-in soil in Feature 1. Too little remained of the other surfaces to determine their nature except for Stage D, on which, as already mentioned, a building was constructed and burials were made.

### The Village

The two houses, many pits, and numerous postholes which constitute the only village remains uncovered were concentrated in a small area immediately southeast of the mound (fig. 2). This is a considerably smaller area than that defined by the presence of surface material. It may be that the surface material south of the mound, where few features



were found, was transported from the mound and strewn over the surface by cultivation. Erosion may have erased some features, but there is no reason to believe that it was more active in this area than to the east, where features survived.

#### House 1

House 1 was a subrectangular structure, with slightly bulging sides and rounded corners, which measured 22 by 24 feet (figs. 5 and 8). Its walls were supported by posts set in individual holes. The postholes averaged 0.7 foot in diameter and were spaced an average of 1.7 feet apart. They averaged a foot in depth, though doubtless they had been truncated by cultivation. Some of the postholes were oval in outline and were dug with one side slanted to the bottom. This was probably done to allow heavier posts to be slid into place. Two oval-shaped holes on the western side of the house suggest that heavier posts had been placed here, perhaps to support the door lintel.

Small bits of burned clay, some still bearing the imprint of round twigs or cane, were found in many of the postholes. They indicate that the house walls were wattle-and-daub and that the house had been destroyed by fire.

Since the houses overlapped, it was impossible to assign interior features to one house or the other. The pattern of large postholes within the houses suggests strongly, however,

that each roof was supported by four posts.

A shallow, circular hearth, 1.5 feet in diameter, within the house patterns had burned sides and was filled with ash.

#### House 2

House 2 was rectangular, with rounded corners, and measured 20 X 21 feet. It was oriented very nearly with the cardinal directions. Short, parallel trenches with postholes at either end indicate that an entranceway projected from the western side of the structure (figs. 5 and 8). The size and spacing of the wall posts were the same as in House 1. Burned daub was again found in the postholes, suggesting that House 2 was also destroyed by fire.

#### Pits

A number of pits of differing sizes and shapes were uncovered in the village area (fig. 8). They varied in depth from less than 1 foot to 2.5 feet. All were filled with black, midden-stained soil but were generally free of debris other than occasional pieces of pottery or bone.

The function of these pits is unknown. It may be that they were borrow pits where clay was taken for plastering the houses.

#### Burials (figs. 2 and 6)

Burial 1 was located during the excavation of the mound but should properly be described with the village area. It lay 20 feet west of the mound in a shallow grave, only 1.5 feet below the old ground surface. Much of the skeleton had been absorbed and only the skull and segments of a few of the long bones could be traced. The body apparently lay on its back, with the legs flexed and drawn up to the left side. No artifacts were associated with it.

Burial 2 was uncovered in the E250 trench, some 20 feet north of S300, where it lay only 0.9 foot below the present ground surface. This was the primary interment of an adult. The body lay on its left side with the arms folded on the chest and the legs flexed. The bones were quite soft and crumbly but easily traced. There were no grave goods.

Burial 3 was located approximately 25 feet north of S300E150. It lay 0.4 to 0.8 foot below the surface and had been partially disturbed. The bones were in an advanced state of decay and were difficult to trace, but a flexed inhumation

was suggested. Again, there were no grave goods.

Burial 4 was uncovered in the large stripped area east of trench E200. Like the others, it lay in a shallow grave, only 1.2 feet deep. This was the primary interment of an adult who had been placed in a supine position. The bones were readily traceable but extremely crumbly and none were removed intact. No artifacts were found with the interment.

#### SUBSISTENCE

The recovery of bits of charred corncobs in the old soil horizon beneath the Bear Creek mound indicates that the Indians practiced agriculture.

Apparently hunting was also important. The bones found in the trash pits and mound fill show that a wide variety of game was taken; opossum (Didelphis marsupialis), beaver (Castor canadensis), raccoon (Procyon lotor), black bear (Ursus americanus), turkey (Meleagris gallopavo), and box turtle (Terapene carolina). Additionally, garfish (Lepisosteus sp.) were taken from the streams.

Although no native plant remains were recovered, the Indians undoubtedly took advantage of the seasonal abundance of nuts and other wild vegetal foods.

## CERAMICS

The plain pottery wares described below have not been assigned to named types for two reasons. First, plainware typology has not evolved sufficiently, at least in northeast Mississippi, to be of much use. Some of the existing types, for example, have extremely wide distribution in space and time. In other cases, types from different areas which appear to be very similar, at least in the literature, have been given different names. The second reason is that in the instances where significant types have been set up, as in the sand tempered wares, samples were not available for comparative purposes.

The proveniences of pottery sherds and vessels in the Bear Creek mound and village are given in tables 1 and 2.

### Shell Tempered Wares

#### Plain, coarse temper (fig. 11)

The vast majority of the pottery is the typical coarse, Middle Mississippi ware. The paste is poorly wedged and abundantly tempered with large particles of crushed shell. The predominant shapes are small to large jars with low, gently outturned rims. Pairs of narrow strap handles are common. A thickened strip of applique had been added to the exterior of one rim to form a notched flange. The only

TABLE 1.--Provenience of pottery sherds, Bear Creek Site

| MOUND                 | Shell         |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         | Clay  |                          | Sand  |            |                |          |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|------------|----------------|----------|
|                       | Plain, coarse | Plain, fine | Moundville Incised | Moundville Filmed-Inc. | Barton Incised | Unidentified incised | Unidentified red filmed | Plain | Mulberry Crk. Cordmarked | Plain | Cordmarked | Cord impressed | Engraved |
| Uncertain provenience | 344           | 4           |                    | 2                      | 1              |                      |                         | 26    | 2                        | 2     | 1          |                | 1        |
| Plow zone             | 19            |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         | 2     |                          | 2     |            |                |          |
| Native soil           | 21            |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         | 2     | 2                        | 1     |            |                |          |
| Zone A                | 10            |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         |       | 2                        | 2     |            |                |          |
| Zone B                | 7             |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         | 9     | 1                        | 3     | 2          |                |          |
| Zone C                | 13            |             | 1                  |                        |                |                      |                         | 1     |                          | 1     |            |                |          |
| Feature 4             | 131           | 12          | 2                  |                        |                |                      | 1                       | 2     |                          |       |            |                |          |
| Total                 | 545           | 16          | 3                  | 2                      | 1              |                      | 1                       | 42    | 7                        | 11    | 3          |                | 1        |
| VILLAGE               |               |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         |       |                          |       |            |                |          |
| Surface               | 25            |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         | 4     |                          |       |            |                |          |
| Plow zone             | 249           | 3           | 1                  |                        |                | 1                    |                         | 21    | 2                        | 2     |            | 1              |          |
| House 1 postholes     | 4             |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         |       |                          |       |            |                |          |
| House 2 postholes     | 3             |             |                    |                        |                |                      |                         |       |                          |       |            |                |          |
| Other postholes       | 85            | 3           |                    |                        |                |                      |                         |       | 1                        |       |            |                | 1        |
| Pits                  | 110           | 1           | 3                  |                        |                | 1                    |                         |       |                          | 1     |            |                | 1        |
| Total                 | 476           | 7           | 4                  |                        |                | 2                    |                         | 25    | 3                        | 3     |            | 1              | 2        |
| GRAND TOTAL           | 1,021         | 23          | 7                  | 2                      | 1              | 2                    | 1                       | 67    | 10                       | 14    | 3          | 1              | 3        |

TABLE 2.--Provenience of pottery vessels, Bear Creek Site

|                                             | Feature 3 | Village<br>pit | Village<br>native<br>soil |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Plain, coarse (shell)                       |           | 1              |                           |
| Moundville Incised<br>(shell)               | 3         |                |                           |
| Long Branch<br>Fabric Marked<br>(limestone) |           |                | 1                         |

other vessel shape represented is a hemispherical bowl with a straight rim which is notched on the exterior.

Plain, fine temper (fig. 9a-c)

The paste of this ware is fine and compact in texture and the temper is finely ground. It is much harder than the coarse ware and the vessel walls are generally thinner. In color, the sherds tend to be tan or gray. The reds and browns which predominate in the previous type are rare. Only two rim sherds were recovered, both representing jars with low, gently outflaring rims.

The sherds described here are related to the fine shell tempered ware which is widespread in the Southeastern United States (Phillips, Ford, and Griffin, 1951, pp. 125-126). Two nearby analogues are Bell Plain in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley (ibid.) and an unnamed category from the Gunter'sville Basin (Heimlich, 1952, p. 23).

Moundville Incised (figs. 9d and 11)

References: Heimlich, 1952, p.24; and DeJarnette and Wimberly, 1941, p. 83.

The sherds exemplifying this type are similar in paste characteristics to the coarse plainware. Medium size to very large jars with outturned rims, which tend to be more nearly straight than the curved rims of the plain vessels, are represented.



The decorative motif, consisting of a series of arches encircling the upper portion of the body, is executed by series of four lines, single lines, or a single line with closely spaced lines at right angles to it. There are four sherds in which troweling of the unhardened clay had produced a ledge which formed the arches. The ledge was flanked by closely spaced lines perpendicular to it or rows of stick punctates.

The arch motif was apparently quite common during Late Mississippian times (Sears, 1964, p. 279). A similar treatment is found on vessels of the Mouse Creek culture of east Tennessee, which is on a protohistoric time level (Kneberg, 1952, p. 198, pl. 110v). Similar vessels were also found at the Bessemer Site, where they were associated with a Moundville ceramic complex (DeJarnette and Wimberly, 1941).

Moundville Filmed-Incised (fig. 10d)

Reference: DeJarnette and Wimberly, 1941, p. 84; and Heimlich, 1952, pp. 28-32 (described under "black filmed shell tempered ware").

Two sherds, probably from the same vessel, belong in this type. The vessel appears to have been a plate. The design was incised on the interior and consists of circles filled with parallel lines. Both interior and exterior are black filmed and polished. The paste of these sherds is very fine and the temper particles are very finely ground.

### Barton Incised (fig. 9f)

Reference: Phillips, Ford, and Griffin, 1951, pp. 114-119, figs. 86 and 95.

A single rim sherd with a crudely incised design is of this type.

Barton Incised was identified in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley, where it is found throughout the Mississippi time period. Analogous types are apparently quite rare along the Tennessee River in north Alabama.

### Unidentified incised (fig. 9e)

A single sherd with coarse paste has been assigned to this category. The design is a crudely incised zig-zag.

### Unidentified red filmed

Only one red filmed sherd was found. The paste is coarse and the exterior is covered with a bright orange wash of micaceous clay.

## Clay Tempered Wares

### Plain

This is a coarse ware tempered with medium to large particles of burned clay. The paste is characteristically lumpy and contorted and has a slick, "soapy" texture. Surface colors range from tan or orange to red and, rarely, gray.

This ware is analogous to Baytown Plain in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley and adjacent territory (Phillips, Ford, and Griffin, 1951, pp. 76-82). It also appears to resemble the description of McKelvey Plain from the north Alabama area (Heimlich, 1952, p. 21).

Mulberry Creek Cordmarked (fig. 10e and f)

Reference: Heimlich, 1952, p. 21; and Phillips, Ford, and Griffin, 1951, pp. 82-87).

These sherds with cordmarked exteriors have the same paste characteristics of those described above. The type name has been used to designate wares in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley and in north Alabama.

Sand Tempered Ware

The paste described for the plain pottery below is characteristic of all the sherds of this ware.

Plain (fig. 10a and b)

These sherds are abundantly tempered with very fine sand. The micaceous paste is dense and compact. Surface colors are tan, rusty brown, brick red or, rarely, dark gray. The single rim sherd has a flanged rim with flattened lip.

Comparison with sherds of Baldwin Plain (Jennings, 1941, p. 200) from sites in Lee County, Miss., showed close resemblances in size and abundance of temper, surface color, and presence of mica.

The sand tempered sherds were sent to Moundville, Ala., for possible identification. Mr. John W. Cottier examined them and stated that they did not resemble any of the north Alabama wares.

#### Cordmarked

These sherds are analogous to Furrs Cordmarked (Jennings, 1941, p. 199), the counterpart of the above-mentioned Baldwin Plain.

#### Cord impressed (fig. 10c)

One sherd was found with a row of elongated punctates flanked by two parallel cord impressions. A second set of cord impressions apparently joins the first at an angle.

#### Engraved

Two sand tempered sherds were decorated by engraving. One shows a series of concentric, curving lines. The other has a line filled triangle pendant from the outermost of a series of curving lines.

## Limestone Tempered Ware

### Long Branch Fabric Marked

Reference: Heimlich, 1952, p. 17.

The fragments of a single vessel represent this type. It had deteriorated so badly that restoration was impossible.

The paste is medium textured and contorted. Leaching has removed all of the temper, leaving angular vesicles in the core and on the surface. Surface colors range from dull brown to gray. The vessel is decorated on the exterior with impressions of basketry or coarse fabric. This has been all but totally obliterated by weathering.

### Discussion

The array of pottery types documents the occupation of the Bear Creek Site through the Woodland period and into Mississippian times. Over a span of many centuries several different groups inhabited the site, for the most part, I assume, briefly and sporadically.

One of these groups is represented by the sand tempered pottery. As the descriptions suggest, this ware seems most closely related to ceramics of the Miller complex. This indicates a probable relationship to peoples in the general Lee County, Miss., area.

A second group tempered their pottery with bits of crushed limestone and decorated the exteriors of their vessels with (probably) basketry impressions. Similar wares were manufactured in the Tennessee Valley of north Alabama, and this may have been their cultural hearth.

Following these two groups, whose temporal relationship is uncertain, came the makers of clay tempered vessels. Because their method of making pottery was common to many groups, the relationship of these people is unknown.

The shell tempered pottery was made by the builders of the temple mound. This combination of shell tempered pottery and temple mounds is diagnostic of the Middle Mississippian pattern, a culture type widespread in the Southeast during late prehistoric times. Some of the pottery types appear to resemble wares of Moundville and other late units, suggesting a late Mississippian (A.D. 1400-1600) time level.

## ARTIFACTS

The provenience of the projectile points and other chipped stone artifacts in the Bear Creek mound and village is given in table 3.

### Projectile Points

The array of projectile points recovered constitute an interesting side-light on the history of the Bear Creek Site. Several of the types were manufactured during Paleo-Indian or Early Archaic times, many thousands of years before the earliest pottery makers arrived on the scene.

With the exception of types "A" and "B," which are purely descriptive categories, the points were identified by James W. Cambron. The dates were taken from the Alabama Handbook (Cambron and Hulse, 1964).

#### Lost Lake (fig. 12a)

This type is represented by the base of a large point with straight, serrated edges. One face of each edge is beveled, producing rhomboid cross section. Deep, U-shaped corner notches form simple, sharply pointed barbs and expanding stem. Estimated age: Early Archaic, ca. 3000 B.C.

TABLE 3.--Provenience of projectile points and other chipped stone artifacts, Bear Creek Site

|                                  | Mound                    |           |             |        |        |        | Village |           |      |            |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|-----------|------|------------|
|                                  | Uncertain<br>provenience | Plow zone | Native soil | Zone A | Zone B | Zone C | Surface | Plow zone | Pits | Post holes |
| PROJECTILE POINTS                |                          |           |             |        |        |        |         |           |      |            |
| Lost Lake                        | 1                        |           |             |        |        |        |         |           |      |            |
| Morrow Mt.                       |                          |           |             |        |        |        |         | 1         |      |            |
| Cumberland<br>Fluted             |                          |           |             |        |        |        |         | 1         |      |            |
| Big Sandy I                      |                          |           |             |        |        |        |         | 1         |      |            |
| Madison                          |                          |           |             |        |        |        | 1       |           |      |            |
| Provisional<br>Category 1        | 1                        |           |             |        |        |        | 1       |           |      |            |
| Provisional<br>Category 2        |                          |           |             |        |        |        | 1       |           |      |            |
| Type A                           |                          |           |             |        | 1      |        |         |           |      |            |
| Type B                           |                          |           |             |        |        |        |         |           | 1    |            |
| OTHER CHIPPED<br>STONE ARTIFACTS |                          |           |             |        |        |        |         |           |      |            |
| knives                           | 3                        |           |             | 2      |        |        | 4       | 2         |      |            |
| inscribers                       |                          |           | 1           |        |        | 1      | 3       |           |      |            |
| shaped cores                     |                          |           | 1           |        |        |        | 3       |           |      |            |
| pebble chopper                   |                          |           |             |        |        |        | 1       |           |      |            |
| undif. cores                     | 2                        |           |             |        |        |        |         | 1         |      | 1          |
| core fragments                   | 1                        |           |             |        |        |        | 1       | 1         |      |            |
| end scrapers                     |                          | 1         |             |        |        |        | 1       | 1         |      |            |
| side scrapers                    |                          |           | 1           | 1      |        |        | 1       |           |      |            |
| spokeshave                       |                          |           |             |        |        |        | 1       |           |      |            |



Morrow Mountain (fig. 12b)

One complete specimen. Medium-size, stemmed point, planoconvex in cross section. Recurved blade edges; shoulders horizontal and slightly expanded; contracting stem with rounded base. Estimated age: Early Archaic, 4500 B.C. Length: 5.8 cm. Width: 2.5 cm. Thickness: 0.8 cm.

Cumberland Fluted (fig. 12e)

This type is represented by one proximal fragment with auriculate base intact. Channel flake scar does not extend to base, which is beveled. Basal and lateral edges ground. Estimated age: Paleo-Indian, 8000 B.C. or older. Width at base: 2.1 cm. Thickness: 0.6 cm.

Big Sandy I (fig. 12f)

One specimen. Medium-size point, lacking part of base. Flattened in cross section. Shallow side notches form rounded, expanded auricles. Base concave. Edges of notches and base ground. Estimated age: Early Archaic, 8000 B.C. or older. Length: 2.4 cm. Estimated width: 2.7 cm. Thickness: 0.6 cm.

Madison (fig. 12j-1)

Three specimens. Small points. Flattened in cross section. Blade edges straight to slightly concave, serrated in one example; base straight. Estimated age: Mississippian period, probably contemporaneous with the mound and village.

Length: 3.4 cm. (complete specimen). Width: 0.9-1.8 cm.

Thickness: 0.4-0.6 cm.

Provisional Category I (fig. 12g and h)

Reference: Cambron and Hulse, 1964.

Two complete specimens. Medium-size, stemmed points. Biconvex in cross section. Blade edges straight to slightly convex; shoulders narrow, tapering; straight stem with slightly convex edges and straight or convex base. Stem edges and base ground in one example. Length: 4.2 and 4.4 cm. Width: 2.2 and 2.6 cm. Thickness: 0.9 and 0.8 cm.

Provisional Category II (fig. 12i)

Reference: Cambron and Hulse, 1964.

One complete specimen. Cambron (personal communication) believes that this may be a Jacks Reef Corner-Notched point. Small, stemmed point. Flattened in cross section. Broad blade with convex edges; shoulders narrow; wide, expanding stem with straight edges and base. Length: 2.1 cm. Width: 1.5 cm. Thickness: 0.5 cm.

Type "A" (fig. 12c)

One complete specimen. This point does not resemble any of the described types and has been placed in a descriptive category. Medium-size, pentagonal point. Biconvex in cross section. Edges of upper portion of blade straight, converging

near tip; edges of lower blade straight, ground near base; base straight. Length: 4.8 cm. Width: 2.6 cm. Thickness: 0.9 cm.

Type "B" (fig. 12d)

One specimen, lacking the tip. This is also a descriptive category. Medium-size, side-notched point. Planoconvex in cross section. Blade edges straight; U-shaped notches form blunt auricles; base slightly concave. Length (estimated): 4.1 cm. Width: 2.2 cm. Thickness: 0.8 cm.

Blank

This specimen, showing primary percussion chipping only, is apparently an unfinished leaf-shaped point with a concave base.

### Other Chipped Stone Artifacts

Knives (fig. 14a-e)

These are bifacially chipped artifacts which vary from triangular to laurel leaf in shape. They are biconvex or, rarely, planoconvex in cross section. In the latter case, the ventral side is a single flake scar. They are generally roughly chipped with sinuous edges, but in a few instances the edges were retouched by pressure flaking. Only two specimens are complete, and the following measurements are estimated. Length: 0.5-8.0 cm. Width: 2.5-4.5 cm.

### Inscribers (fig. 14 1-o)

These tools have blunt, rounded ends which are use-scarred and, in one case, slightly ground. All are relatively thick and crudely chipped. Two specimens are elongated blades; one has a series of shallow notches pressure flaked in the sides. The remaining two examples are larger flakes with narrow, beak-like projections. This class of artifacts is related to the burins and perforators described from other sites. Only the tips of the examples ~~from~~ the Bear Creek Site show evidence of usage suggesting that they were used for engraving or incising. The following measurements are for the elongated examples. Length: 3.7-5.2 cm. Width: 1.4-1.6 cm. Thickness: 0.5-0.6 cm.

### Shaped Cores (fig. 15a-c)

These are thick, crude cores which are ovate or laurel leaf in shape. They show percussion flaking only. Portions of the edges of all examples reveal some battering. Such artifacts are frequently identified as "choppers," but the small size of these specimens would make them chopping tools of limited efficiency. Length: 6.9-8.4 cm. Width: 3.9-5.6 cm. Thickness: 2.1-2.8 cm.

### Pebble Chopper

This artifact is a thick, crude implement, one side of which is the cortex of the pebble. It is wedge-shaped and was manufactured solely by primary percussion chipping. The

battered edge suggests its function but, as with the tools described in the preceding group, its small size makes it a rather unsatisfactory chopping implement. Length: 6.7 cm. Width: 5.1 cm. Thickness: 3.0 cm.

#### Unidifferentiated Cores (fig. 15e-g)

This group includes four crude, amorphous cores which were shaped by primary chipping. They appear to be unused and their function is unknown. Length: 3.5-5.3 cm. Width: 2.4-4.4 cm. Thickness: 1.7-3.7 cm.

#### Core Fragments

These are apparently fragments of larger tools. On each specimen, one side is a single flake scar, and the opposed face shows the primary chipping of the parent core. None show evidence of use.

#### End Scrapers (fig. 14f-h)

These are roughly triangular flakes with steep, thick scraping edges produced by unifacial pressure flaking. They were roughly shaped by percussion chipping. Length: 3.8-5.9 cm. Width: 3.1-4.0 cm. Thickness: 1.1-1.5 cm.

#### Side Scrapers (fig. 14i-k)

These tools have broad, thin scraping edges. They were roughly shaped by primary chipping and the edges were retouched by unifacial pressure flaking. Length: 4.4-5.9 cm. Width: 3.0-3.5 cm. Thickness: 0.9-1.5 cm.

### Spokeshave (fig. 15d)

This is a large flake, one side of which is a single flake scar. A deep notch has been unifacially chipped in one side to form a concave scraping edge. Length: 9.7 cm. Width: 3.8 cm. Thickness: 2.0 cm.

## Ground Stone Artifacts

The provenience of ground stone artifacts, other artifacts, and miscellaneous materials is given in table 4.

### Stone Bowl Fragment

This appears to be the fragment of a steatite bowl, 1.3 cm. thick.

### Celts (fig. 13b)

One complete specimen of granite and two fragments of greenstone were recovered. The granite celt is roughly triangular, with convex sides and a rounded poll; it is flattened in cross section. The bit is well battered. In contrast, the bits of the greenstone specimens show no signs of use. Length: 9.7 cm. Width at bit: 4.4 cm. Thickness: 2.5 cm.

### Tabular sandstone

In the immediate vicinity of the site, Bear Creek flows over formations of tabular sandstone. Five fragments of such material apparently used as grinding anvils were found.

TABLE 4.--Provenience of ground stone artifacts, other artifacts, and miscellaneous materials, Bear Creek Site

|                        | Mound                    |             |           | Village |           |      |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------|-----------|------|
|                        | Uncertain<br>provenience | Native soil | Feature 4 | Surface | Plow zone | Pits |
| stone bowl<br>fragment |                          |             |           | 1       |           |      |
| celts                  | 2                        |             |           |         | 1         |      |
| tabular<br>sandstone   | 4                        |             |           |         | 1         |      |
| hammerstone            |                          |             |           |         | 1         |      |
| polished<br>pebbles    |                          |             |           | 1       |           |      |
| pigment                |                          |             |           |         |           | 1    |
| pottery<br>disks       | 5                        |             | 2         | 3       | 2         | 4    |
| stone disks            |                          |             |           |         | 6         |      |
| glass bead             |                          |             |           | 1       |           |      |
| mica                   |                          | 1           |           |         |           |      |
| bone<br>beamer         |                          |             | 1         |         |           |      |
| cut bone               |                          |             |           |         | 1         |      |

The edge of one specimen had been abraded to form a smooth margin, but the others were unaltered.

#### Hammerstone

This is an unshaped stream cobble, of a convenient size to be held in the hand. One end and a side are battered.

#### Polished Pebbles

Several stream-polished pebbles were picked up from the surface. One specimen was a perfect disk and had apparently been altered by use.

#### Pigment

A lump of light, porous, fossiliferous mineral, with one side ground flat, was collected. The mineral is deep maroon in color and produces a fine, brick-red powder which may have been used as a pigment.

#### Other Artifacts and Miscellaneous Materials

##### Pottery disks (fig. 13c-e)

Varying from 2.4 to 4.8 cm. in diameter, these disks were cut from coarse shell tempered pottery.

##### Stone disks (fig. 13f-h)

These are the stone counterparts of the pottery disks described above. One is greenstone, four are of sandstone,



and one is of a reddish-brown sedimentary mineral. They range in diameter from 3.0 to 4.9 cm. and in thickness from 0.8 to 1.7 cm.

#### Glass bead

This trade bead was a surface find. It is cylindrical, with a faceted surface, and is compound. The inner core is a translucent, milky white; the outer is clear. It measures 0.5 cm. long and 0.6 cm. in diameter. The orifice is 0.2 cm. in diameter.

#### Mica

A small sheet of unworked mica was found in the mound fill.

#### Bone Artifacts

Two specimens of worked bone were found. One was apparently used as a beamer or hide scraping tool (fig. 13a). It was made from the long bone of a large mammal which was cut or abraded to form a rounded scraping edge. The other specimen is a bird bone with two small holes cut in one side. Its function is unknown.

## SUMMARY

The primary physical features of the Bear Creek Site are a modest temple mound and the remains of a small village which were occupied during late prehistoric times by a Middle Mississippi people. However, the projectile point and pottery types found here indicate that they were only the last in a long line of inhabitants of the site.

The earliest occupation of the site occurred during Paleo-Indian and Early Archaic times, from approximately 8000 to 3000 B.C. The early people were the makers of the Cumberland Fluted, Morrow Mountain, Lost Lake, and Big Sandy I points. As these artifacts suggest, they were hunters. Small bands, probably no more than a few families in each, wandered constantly in search of game and wild plant foods. They may have made a kill and stayed only long enough to butcher it. Some bands doubtless camped for short periods, but none tarried long.

The presence of pottery tempered with sand, clay, or limestone indicates that peoples of the Woodland cultural pattern succeeded the early hunters. Their visits were also transitory and took place from about the beginning of the Christian era until A.D. 1000. The Woodland peoples were also hunters and gatherers but evidence from other sites suggests that they had become more proficient in the harvest and use of wild

vegetal foods. Agriculture was introduced into the Southeast during this period and, though it was probably never a primary source of food, it constituted an important supplement. The more efficient exploitation of the natural environment and the beginnings of agriculture provided food in greater, if not munificent, abundance. This allowed some groups to have at least a seminomadic existence.

The 10,000 years or so of history sketched above poses an interesting question: Why was the site visited again and again by so many different peoples? Its location provides the clue for what is perhaps the most likely answer (fig. 1). The prehistoric inhabitants of this area relied on many sources of food. One of these sources was the extensive mussel shoals of the nearby Tennessee River. They were harvested for thousands of years, as the huge shell heaps which once lined the river bank testify. Game, nuts, berries, and other wild foods were also important and were sought far and wide throughout the surrounding hills. The relatively flat valley of Bear Creek would have been the easiest route between the Tennessee River Valley and the hill country to the south--certainly easier than a route across the hills themselves. Furthermore, the terrace on which the site lies is high and dry, and during aboriginal times probably supported a relatively open forest of oak and hickory. To the east and west, however, on the far sides of Bear Creek and Cedar Creek, is low bottomland, often

marshy and densely forested. Thus the wanderings of pre-historic bands would have funneled across these few acres of traversable ground.

The Middle Mississippians came for a different reason, and they came to stay. They were farmers who were attracted by soil which was not only fertile but light textured and easy to cultivate with the crude implements at their disposal. Hunting was also pursued. Most of the faunal remains recovered were probably left by these people, but agriculture was by far their most important source of food. Intensive cultivation wrought important changes, for it was no longer necessary to roam about. Assured of a plentiful supply of food, they led a settled life.

Who were the Middle Mississippians and what were they like? The term refers to a way of life or cultural pattern, rather than a single nation. Many Southeastern tribes shared in it. Archeologically, the pattern is manifested by flat-topped mounds and, usually, shell tempered pottery. Remnants of Middle Mississippians persisted into historic times, and the accounts of early explorers supply many other details on this culture.

Intensive agriculture, permanent villages, and temple mounds are only the surviving evidences of the complex, well developed culture which was the Middle Mississippian way of life. They were a populous people, for their villages were

often large and were frequently accompanied by several temple mounds. Religion was no longer the casual, personal experience of the preceding Woodland folk. It was well organized and probably in the hands of a professional priesthood. Political control was likewise centralized and hereditary leadership was widespread. In some portions of the Southeast there were even embryonic confederacies bound by treaty or conquest. In short, the Middle Mississippians were far from being simple folk.

The picture that emerges of the Bear Creek Site during this occupation is one of a small religious and/or political center. The temple mound, diminutive by Middle Mississippian standards, probably supported a wattle-and-daub structure to protect the sacred objects of the villagers or, perhaps, was the house of the "priest-king." Unfortunately, the mound had been so badly damaged that we were able to determine nothing about the size and shape of the building on top of it. Temple mounds customarily fronted on a plaza, an open area where communal ceremonies were held. It was impossible to determine whether or not there was a plaza here, but the area on the south side of the mound with the village features clustered at one side (fig. 2) is suggestive.

The village, too, was quite small. Only two houses were located, representing one dwelling superimposed on the remains of an earlier house. It is possible that additional houses are represented by the numerous scattered postholes in this area,

but certainly no more than eight or ten such structures could have been accommodated here.

There is some question, in the author's mind at least, that the small population of the village would have been capable of building the mound. For, though small as temple mounds go, there is still a great amount of earth in it. The Bear Creek Site may have been the ceremonial center for other hamlets or farmsteads nearby. Parkway survey records disclose the presence of two sites with Mississippian pottery in the vicinity. Site MTo2 is located on Cedar Creek, about 2 1/2 air miles south of the Bear Creek Site. The other, Site MTo8, is upstream on Bear Creek and approximately 7 air miles southwest. The possibility exists that people from these or other settlements helped build the mound and participated in the ceremonies which took place here.

The motif of a series of arches encircling vessels is apparently quite late and suggest the Middle Mississippian occupation occurred sometime during the time span A.D. 1400-1600. The lack of abundant cultural debris and the small size of the village indicate that this occupation was of short duration, perhaps no longer than a generation or two.

Since the Middle Mississippian pattern of the Mississippi-Alabama-Tennessee area has not been subdivided into cultural units, no specific relationships of the Bear Creek occupation can be drawn.

The black filming and encircling arch motif appear rather commonly on sites in the Tennessee River Valley of north Alabama, and these features suggest relationships in this direction.

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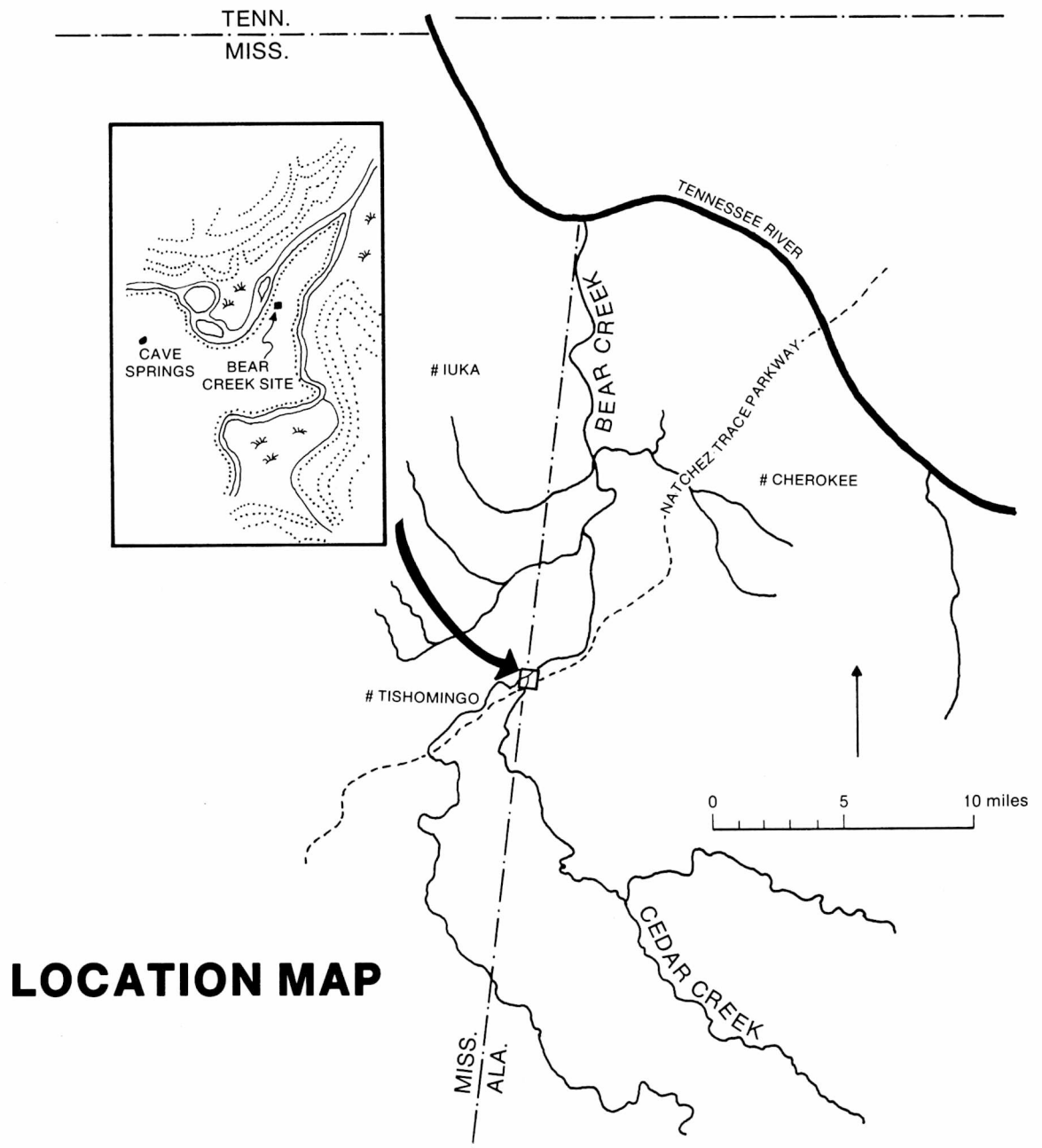


FIGURE 1

# **PLAN OF EXCAVATIONS IN MOUND AND VILLAGE**

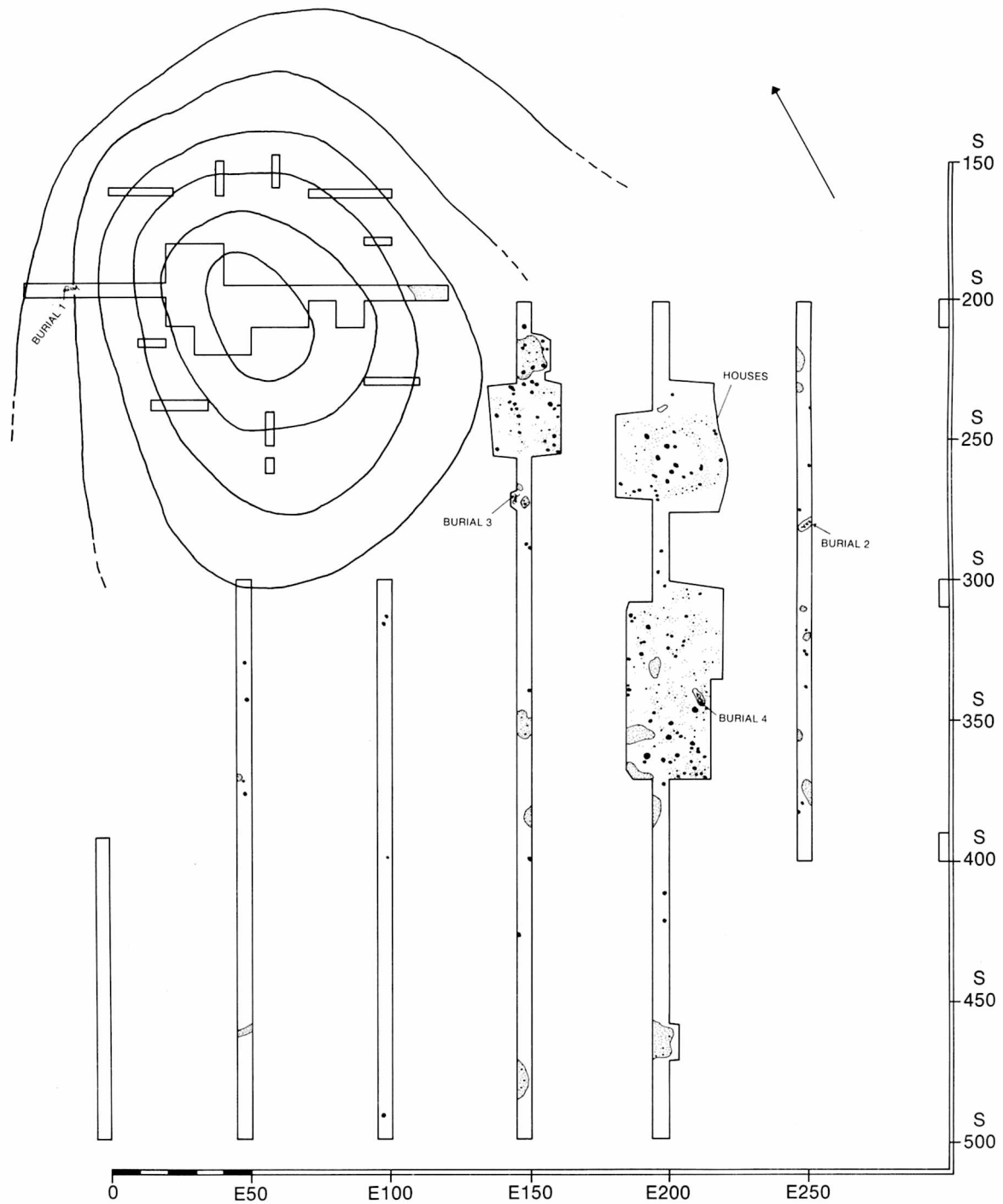
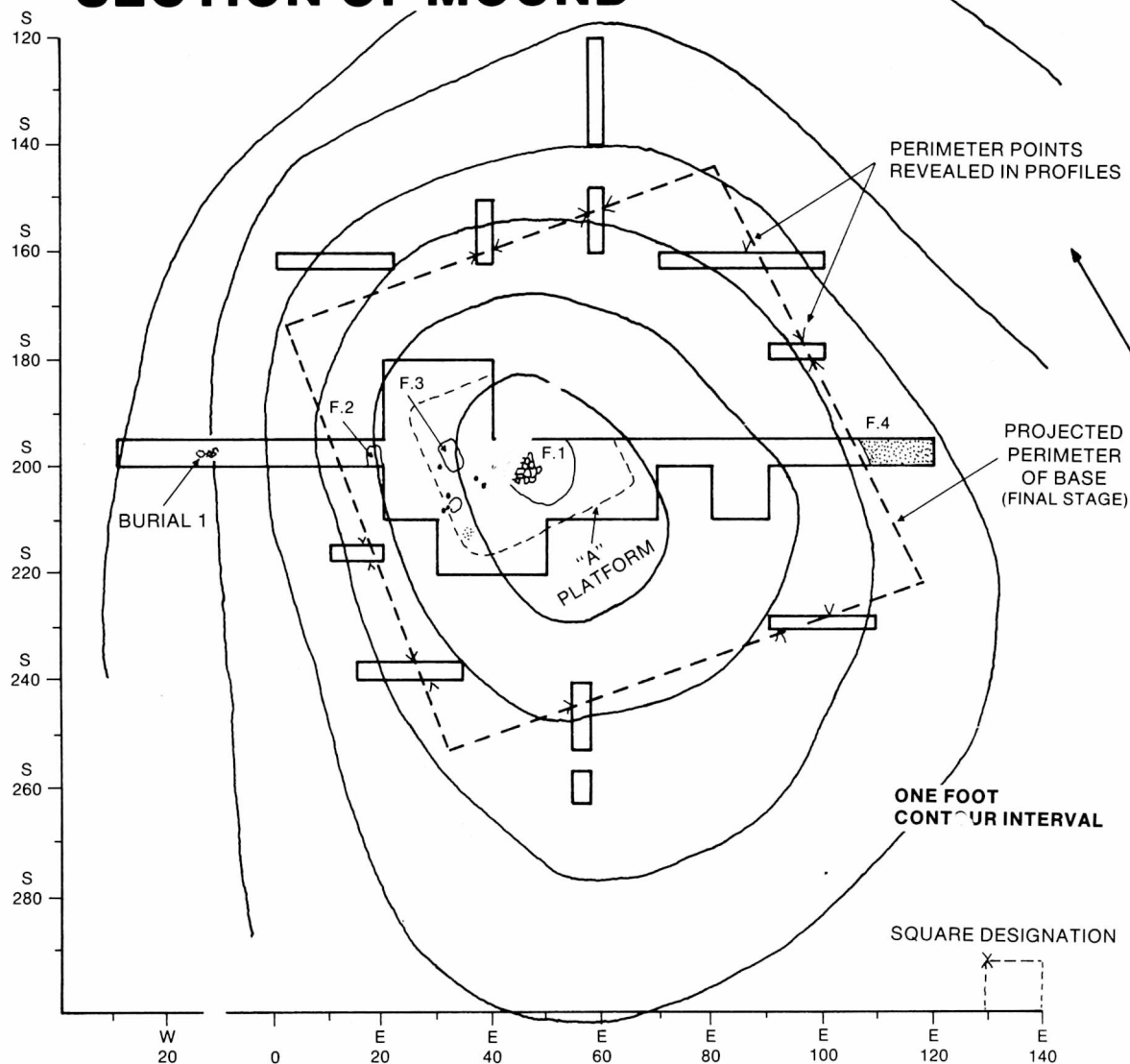


FIGURE 2

# PLAN AND CROSS SECTION OF MOUND



**S200 PROFILE**  
(VERTICAL SCALE EXAGGERATED)

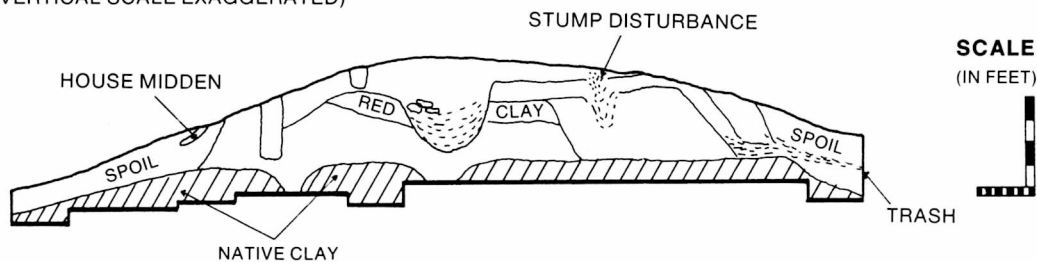
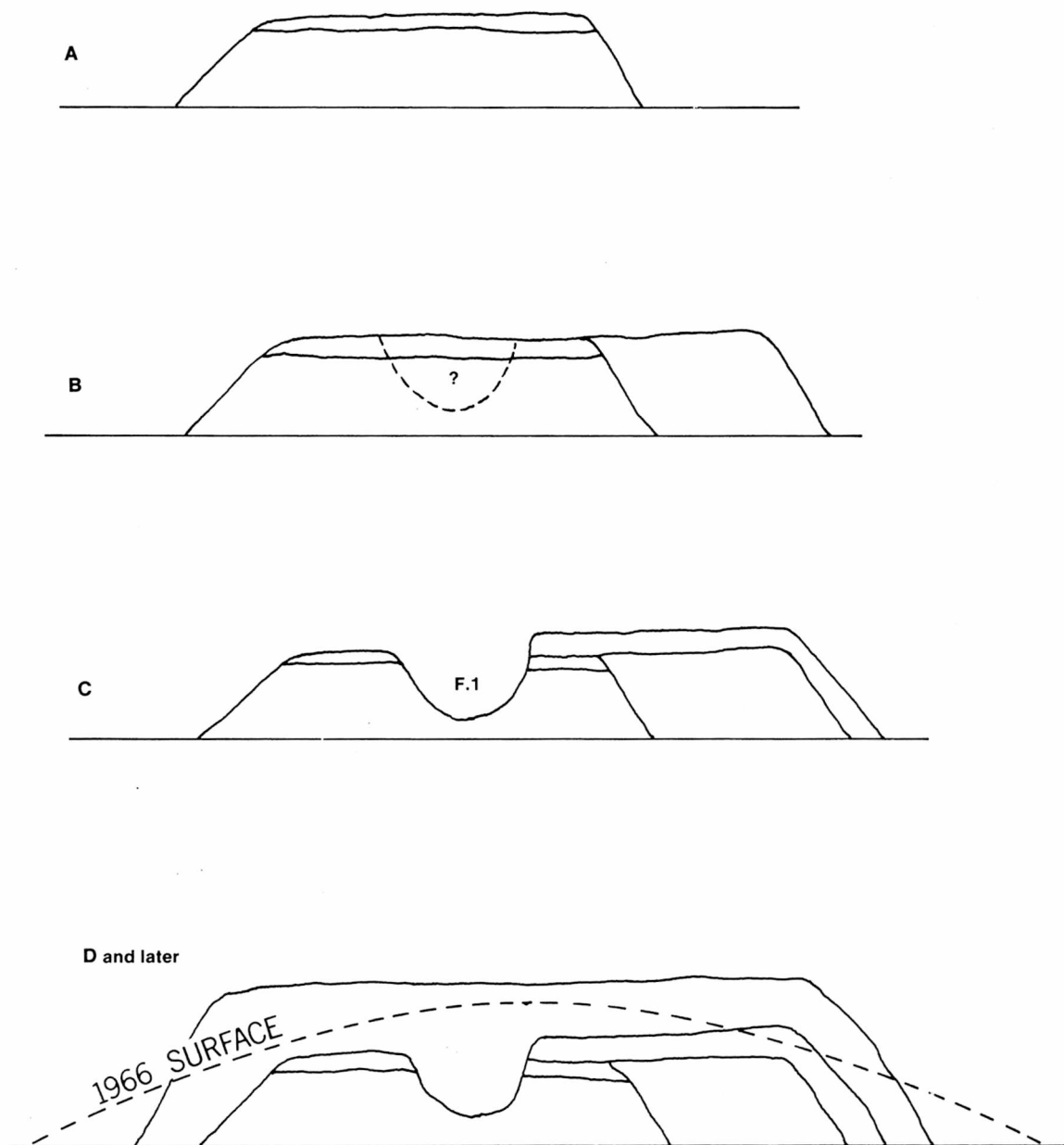


FIGURE 3



**Stages of mound construction (schematic).**

FIGURE 4

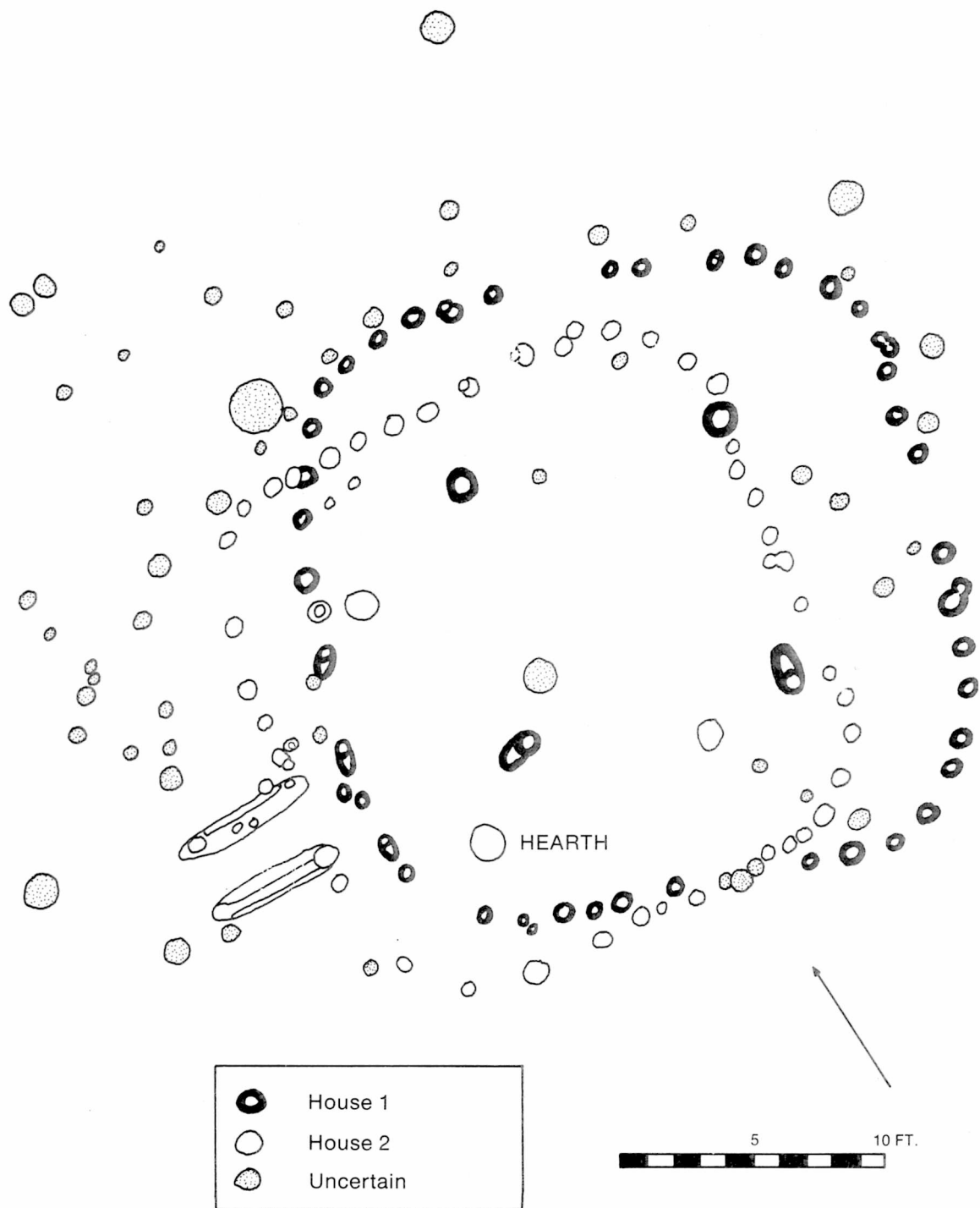


FIGURE 5

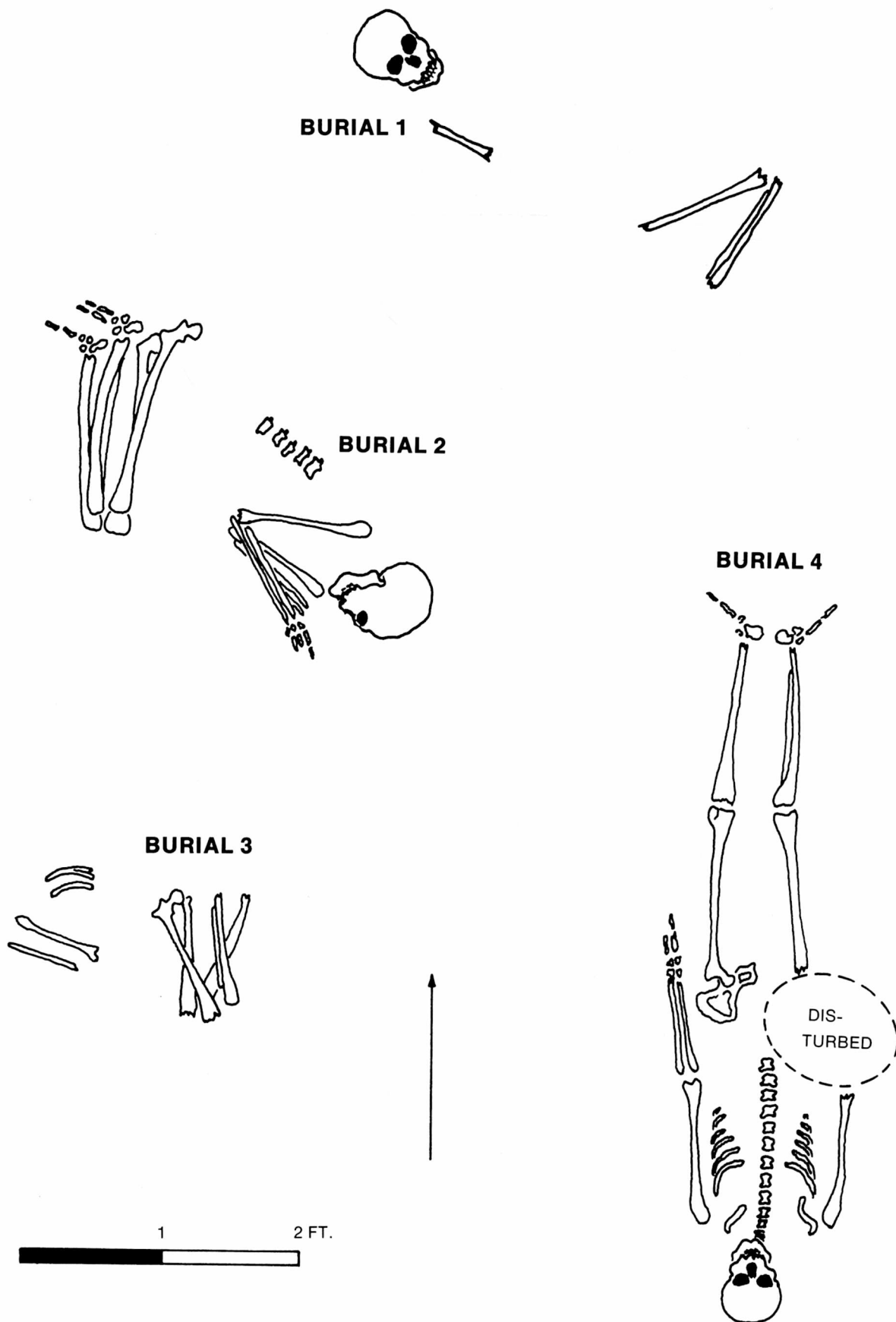


FIGURE 6



The mound in 1950.



The mound in 1965, after years of cultivation.

FIGURE 7





Houses 1 and 2.



Partially excavated pit in village area.

FIGURE 8

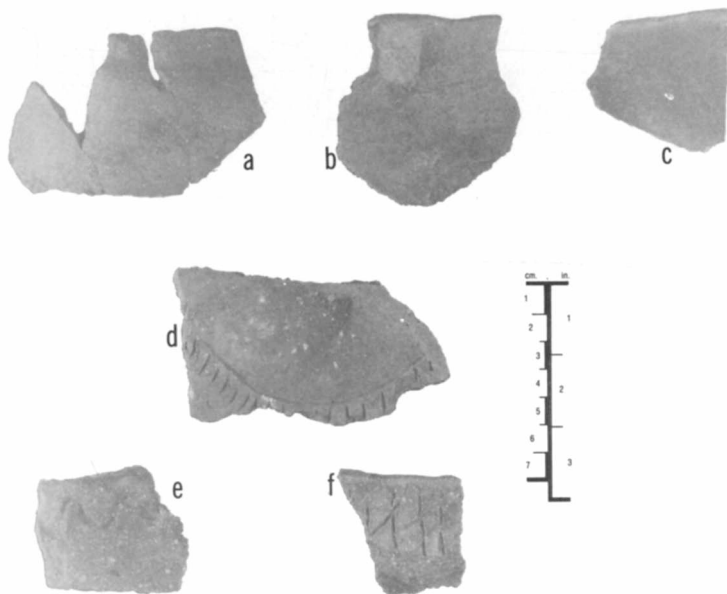


FIGURE 9. a-c, Plain, fine shell tempered; d, Moundville Incised; e, unidentified incised, shell tempered; f, Barton Incised.

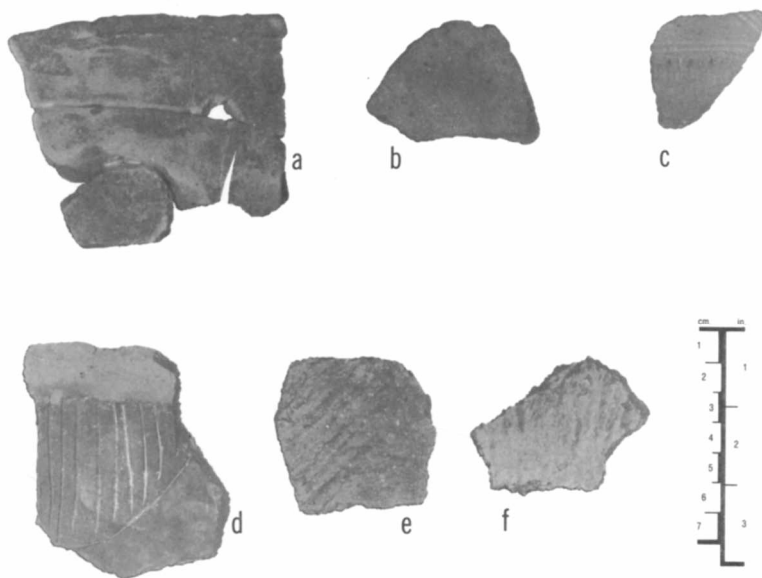


FIGURE 10. a, b, plain, sand tempered; c, cord impressed, sand tempered; d, Moundville Filmed-Incised; e, f, Mulberry Creek Cordmarked.



Moundville Incised.



Plain, coarse shell  
tempered.



Moundville Incised.

FIGURE 11

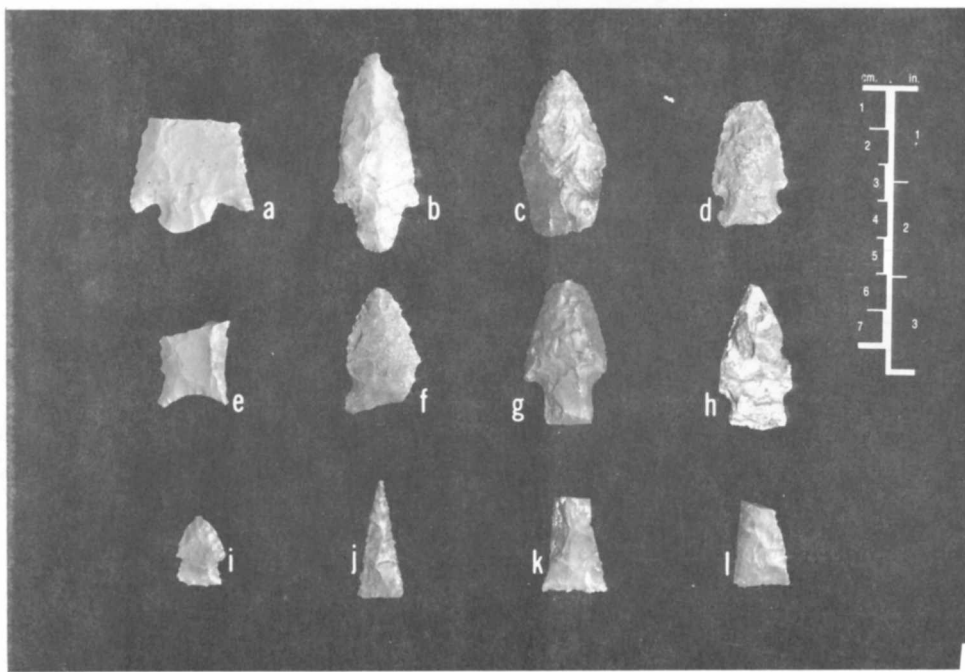


FIGURE 12. a, Lost Lake; b, Morrow Mountain; c, Type "A"; d, Type "B"; e, Cumberland Fluted; f, Big Sandy I; g, h, Provisional Category I; e, Provisional Category II; j-l, Madison.

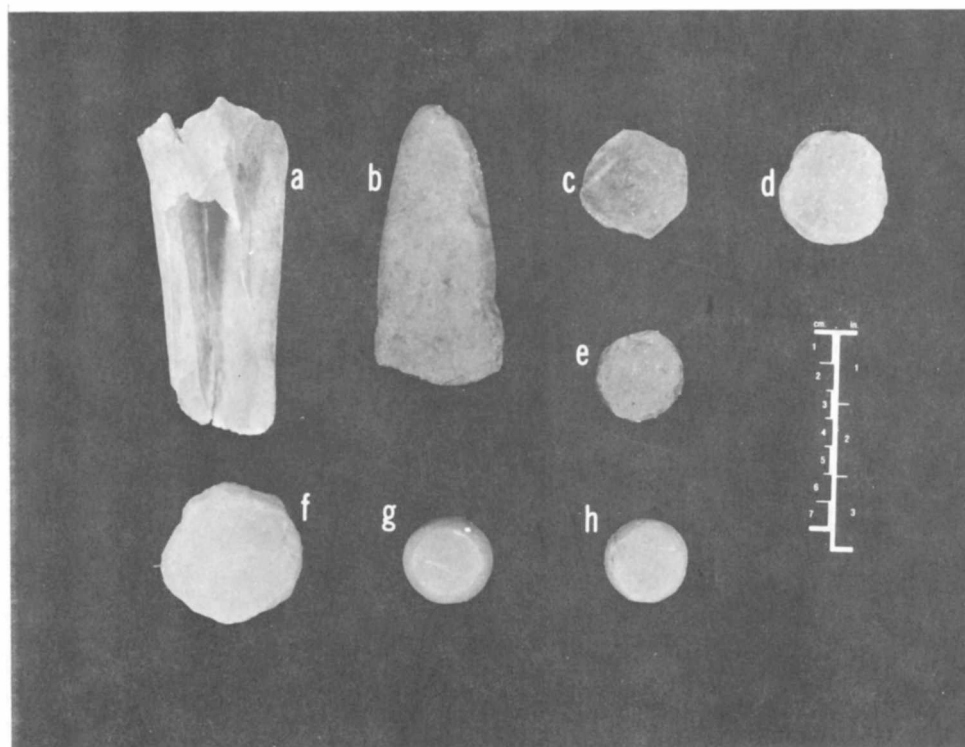


FIGURE 13. a, bone beamer; b, celt; c-e, pottery disks; f-h, stone disks.

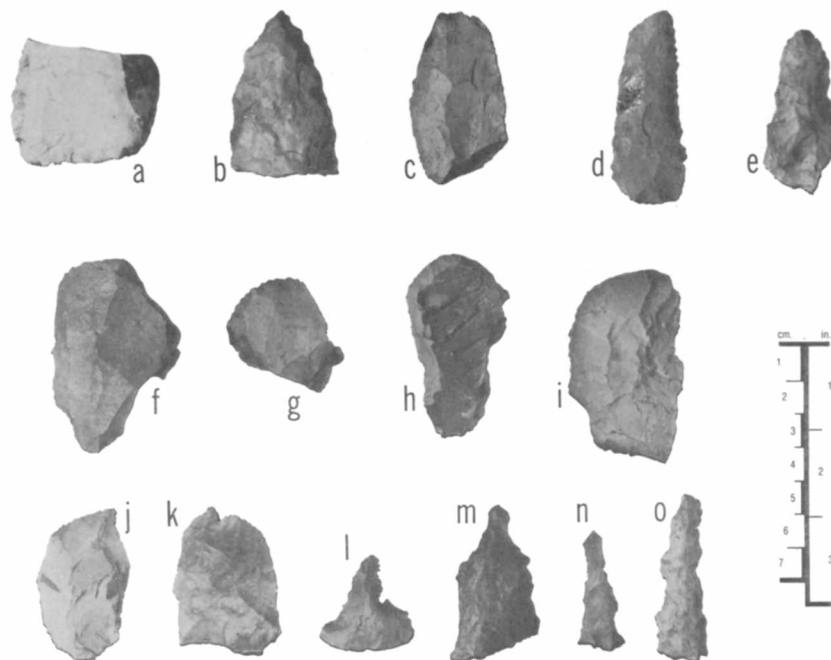


FIGURE 14. a-e, knives; f-h, end scrapers; i-k, side scrapers; l-o, inscribers.

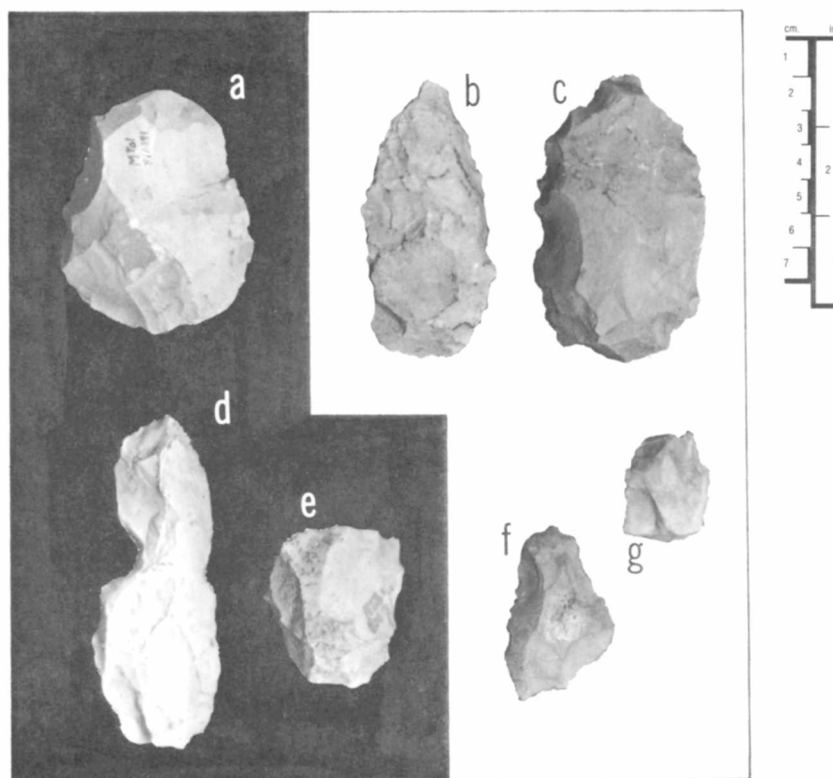


FIGURE 15. a-c, shaped cores; d, spokeshave; e-g, undifferentiated cores.

