

North Carolina Archaeology



North Carolina Archaeology

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ANOTHER LOOK AT THE TOWN CREEK MOUND

by

Daryl W. Armour

Abstract

In this paper, I outline and compare the individual contexts that make up the mound at the Town Creek site (31Mg2-3). The main objective of this research was to determine what activities may have been associated with the mound by looking at five different contexts: a premound midden, a premound earth-embanked structure, two mound-flank middens, and a mound summit deposit. These contexts were differentiated stratigraphically and spatially in the hope that a diachronic view of activities associated with mound contexts could be determined. In order to compare these contexts, abundance indices (adapted from Knight 2004, 2010) for artifact classes were calculated by weighting raw artifact counts by ceramic sherd and debitage density. While only a broad explanation of activities could be derived from this analysis, some interesting interpretations can be drawn.

Mississippian societies of the southeastern United States are commonly characterized by the presence of large towns, maize-centered agricultural subsistence practices, monumental architecture, and ranked social organization with centralized leadership (Cobb 2003:63; Earle 1987:283–285; Griffin 1967:189; Steponaitis 1986:388). Research regarding the role of platform mounds within these societies has been particularly intensive, and the interpretations regarding the use of these mounds have varied. Typically, mounds are thought to represent a distinctive type of public architecture on which buildings were sometimes constructed. In some cases, this architecture was in the form of residential structures. Other mounds represent ceremonial precincts within a community on which specialized activities occurred and to which access would have been restricted (Blitz and Livingood 2004:292; Cobb 2003:65; Griffin 1967:190; Lindauer and Blitz 1997:169).

In a paper outlining mound use within the Southeast and Southwest, Lindauer and Blitz (1997) outlined four activities that commonly occur on mound summits. These functions include their use: (1) as places of elite or chiefly residences; (2) as precincts for temples or mortuary shrines; (3) as places for nonresidential buildings that served as meeting places or council houses; and (4) as unroofed areas that functioned as

ceremonial stages open to public view. The authors, citing Knight (1981), state that the evolving rearrangement of a sacred precinct, punctuated by the repetitive addition of new stages, is a common unifying theme among late platform mounds in the Southeast (Lindauer and Blitz 1997:176). When these additions are repeatedly constructed in the same locations, they can be thought of as the physical manifestations reflecting societal norms and order through the manipulation of space, oftentimes referred to as microcosms or sociograms (Spielmann 2008:47–54).

Town Creek, located within central North Carolina, presents itself as an excellent case study for some of the current theories regarding crafting, feasting, and mound construction associated with a Mississippian mound site. When mound summits are used for elite residences, temple structures, or even public structures, access to the summit is believed to have been exclusive, or restricted. A mound summit's use as a ceremonial stage, on the other hand, could indicate more inclusive, integrative elements contributing to prosocial behavior. Inclusiveness is generated through activities in the form of feasting, crafting, and rituals, or through the construction of monumental architecture (Lindauer and Blitz 1997:170; see also Costin 2005; Jackson and Scott 2004; Knight 2004, 2010; Pauketat et al. 2002; Wilson 2001). In fact, recent studies have shown that ritual can increase both prosocial behavior and feelings of an inclusive social identity in participants (Xygalatas et al. 2012). Archaeologically, important insights about the social organization of societies can be gained through the materials left behind from such events.

The Town Creek Site

Town Creek is situated on the western bank of the Little River within southwestern Montgomery County, North Carolina (Figure 1). Town Creek can be thought of as a fringe site within the Mississippian cultural sphere in that it is on the periphery of the Mississippian world. Less than a hundred miles to the north or northeast, very different cultural traditions dominate the landscape. The closest Mississippian variant in North Carolina, the Burke phase, appears to the west within the upper Catawba River valley (Beck and Moore 2002:192). When initially encountered in the archaeological record, the material difference between the people that Coe (1952:308–309) had termed the Pee Dee and those living to the north was believed to be so stark that he described them as “invaders from the south” (Ward & Davis 1999:124–125). Researchers have come to recognize the Pee Dee as being part of the South

THE TOWN CREEK MOUND

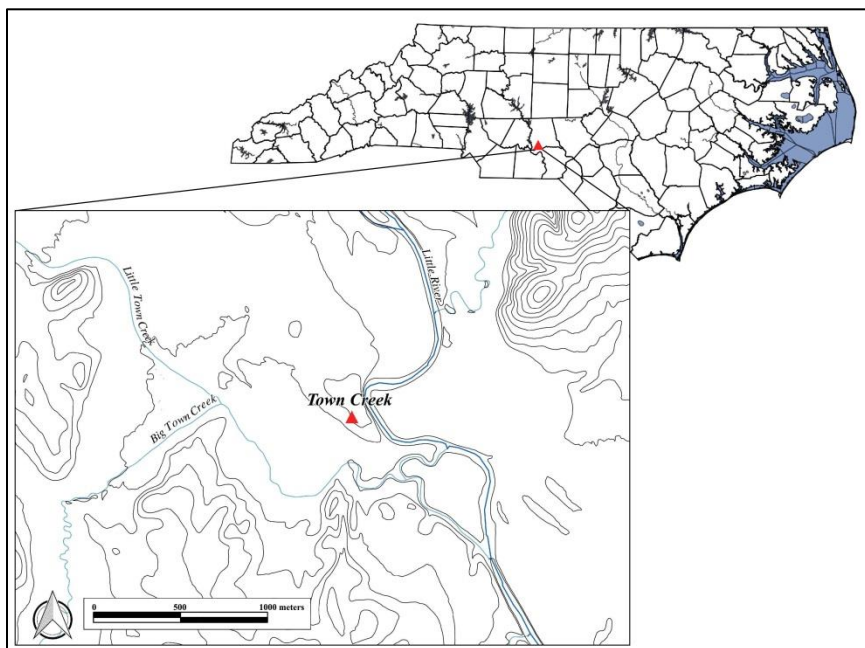


Figure 1. Location of Town Creek Indian Mound (31Mg2).

Appalachian Mississippian regional variant due to similarities shared among cultures in Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina, such as those between pottery styles and the manner in which mounds were constructed (Boudreaux 2007:6–9; Ward & Davis 1999:125–133).

Current interpretations regarding the use of the mound at Town Creek are similar to those at some larger Mississippian sites, such as Cahokia in Illinois, Moundville in Alabama, and Etowah in Georgia. Hypotheses for activities that occurred within mound contexts at these sites range from elite crafting and feasting episodes, and the use of mounds as temples or shrines for the dead, to the discussion that different occupational cycles of these summits were a means to asserting ties to the site's mythic past in order to assert claim to leadership (Astin 1996; Cobb and King 2005; Knight 2010; Lindauer and Blitz 1997; Pauketat et al. 2002). Instead of utilizing the mound as a seat of power for chiefly central authority or housing elite domestic structures, Town Creek's mound seems to have contained architecture and activities that represent more communal aspects of governance; however, crafting and feasting still appear to have been important activities (Armour 2012; Boudreaux 2007:112–115; Cobb 2003; Cobb and King 2005; Knight 2004, 2010).

In this paper, I consider ceramics, non-ceramics, and faunal remains to understand the types of activities that may have occurred throughout the mound's use. Ceramics have proven to be particularly important when determining differences between domestic and public contexts at Town Creek (Boudreaux 2007:95–104). Other artifacts, such as lithic tools, smoking pipes, and display goods, have helped researchers understand the types of activities (utilitarian or crafting) undertaken in a variety of mound and non-mound contexts (Astin 1996; Knight 2004, 2010; Wilson 2001). In addition, faunal analysis has proven to be highly beneficial in determining differential access to certain foods between the Mississippian “elite” and “commoners,” and discerning between competitive and non-competitive feasting (Jackson and Scott 2003:553; VanDerwarker 1999:28–32; Kassabaum 2014:314–343). Faunal assemblages can also contribute to our understanding of the depositional processes of certain stratigraphic units, differences in consumption between mound contexts, and the seasonality of deposition (deFrance 2009:134; Whyte 2011:54).

Mound Stratigraphic Sequence and Contexts

In order to obtain a diachronic view of mound use at Town Creek, I analyzed archaeological material from five different contexts: two premound deposits, two mound-flank deposits, and a summit level deposit. The earliest of these contexts was Level A, a midden that extended beneath most of the mound. A radiocarbon date and ceramics indicate that Level A was deposited during the early Town Creek Phase (A.D. 1150–1250) (Boudreaux 2005:59–72; Reid 1967:62). Structure 23a was a premound building that was used immediately before the mound was built. It was an earth-embanked structure that has been referred to as “The Earth Lodge” (Boudreaux 2005:126; Coe 1995:65; Swart 1940a) (Figure 2). Structure 23a was paired with another building designated Structure 23c. Structure 23a was smaller than Structure 23c and was encompassed by an earth embankment approximately four to six feet thick at the base (Boudreaux 2007:29). Structure 23a was supported by four large, deep-set roof supports and had a large hearth located within this space (Boudreaux 2007:30). Towards the end of this structure's use-life, residents razed it and incorporated its northeastern wall into the mound's fill (Boudreaux 2005:126; Coe 1995:80). This structure has never been directly dated.

Afterwards, an embankment was constructed that formed a square roughly 75 ft on each side. The earthen embankment served as a container in which fill could be incorporated and stacked for mound

THE TOWN CREEK MOUND

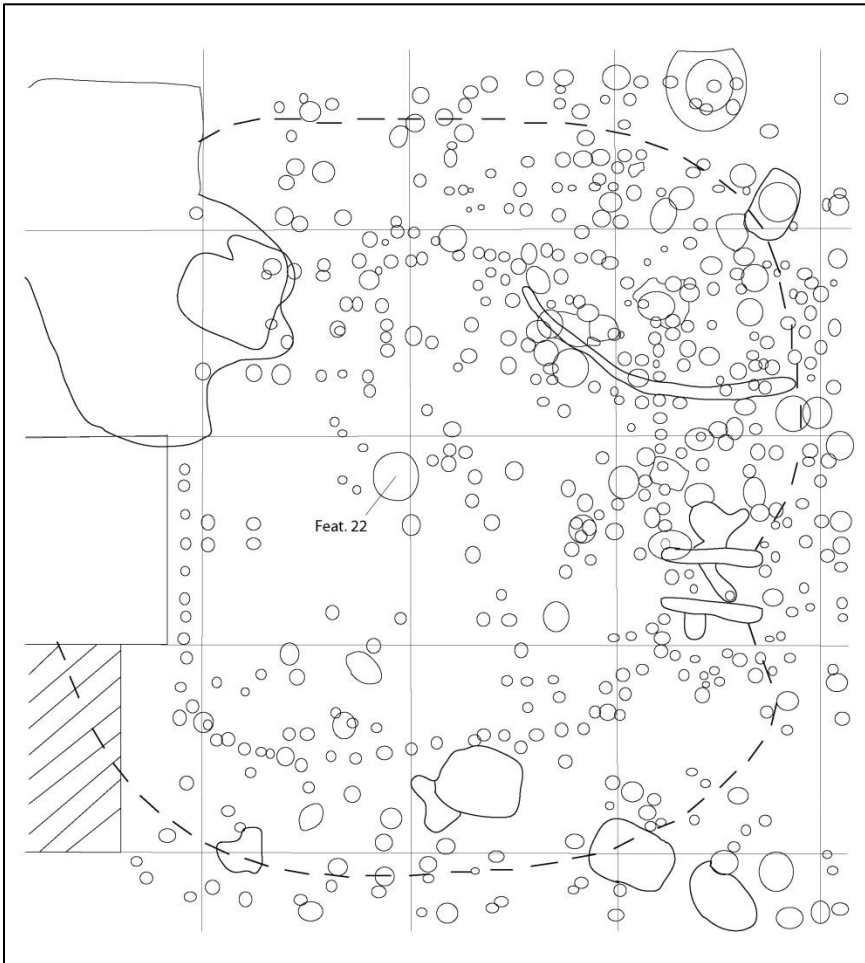


Figure 2. Plan drawing of Structure 23a. Each square represents a 10x10-ft excavation unit, and the dashed line indicates the edge of the earthen embankment surrounding the structure. Based on Joffre Coe's field map; adapted from Boudreaux 2007.

construction (Boudreaux 2005:136; Coe 1995:81). This embankment was constructed from clay, built about 3–4 ft high, and filled in approximately a foot higher than the embankment itself. Boudreaux (2005:136) has recognized this level as being the end of the first mound-construction stage, and he speculates that it may have contained public buildings on its summit. Unfortunately, mound excavations did not reach this surface (Boudreaux 2005:136). It is clear, however, that the summit of this construction level was used because a discrete mound-



Figure 3. Test trench 1 into the southern flank of the Town Creek mound, showing the etched location of Level X in profile. Courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

flank midden was located on its southern flank. Coe (1995:62) first wrote of discovering this midden, which he called Level X, in 1937 in a test trench located on the southern side of the mound (Figure 3). As described by Boudreaux (2005:227) and Armour (2012:15), one source of confusion is that subsequent excavators labeled other mound contexts Level X as well.

Notes from the first site supervisor, John Swart (1940a–c), indicate that he labeled as Level X multiple contexts across the mound's flanks. The initial discovery in the first test trench appears to be what others consistently refer to as being Level X, but some interpretations have been based on both contexts (Coe 1995; Reid 1967). In order to isolate discrete depositional events, I used profile drawings and original field notes to divide into two analytical units all of the deposits labeled as Level X. I used spatial and stratigraphic positions to assign some deposits to Level X-North, which appears to have been associated with the second or third mound-construction stages on the north side of the mound, and assigned others to Level X-South, which was a mound-flank

THE TOWN CREEK MOUND

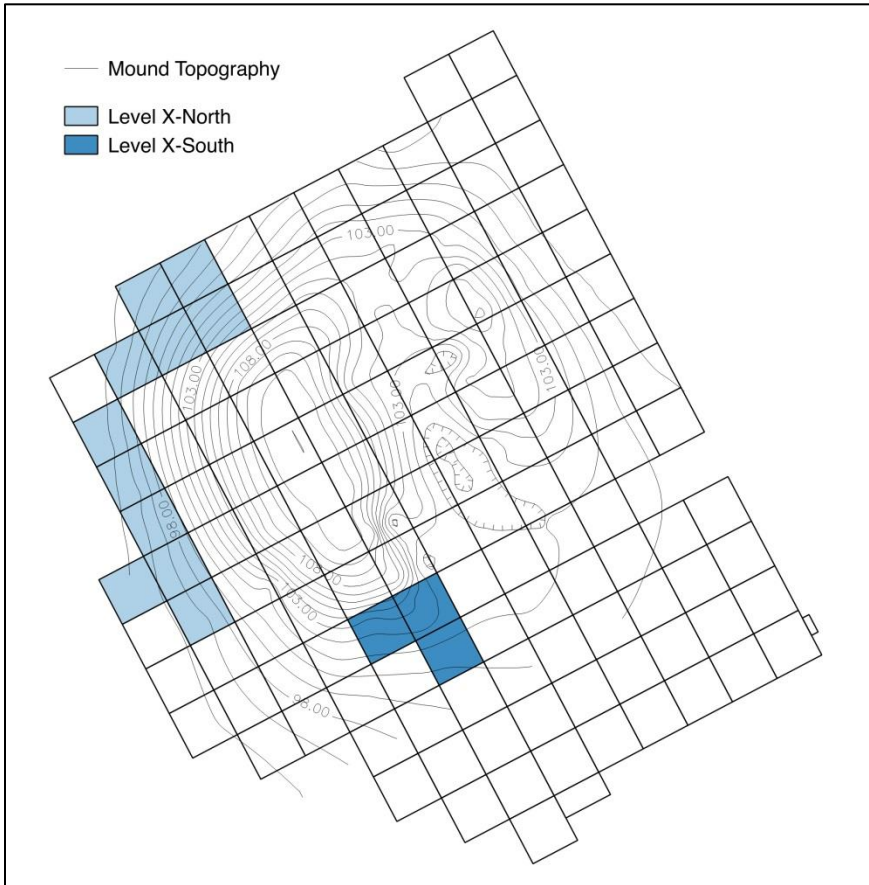


Figure 4. Map of the Town Creek mound excavation grid (in 10x10-ft units), showing the locations of two mound-flank middens, Level X-North and Level X-South.

midden associated with the first mound-construction stage on the south side of the mound (Figure 4) (Armour 2012:15–18).

Level X-South is a small isolated deposit that was contained within three excavation units. Coe excavated most of this context during his initial investigation, but in September 1940, Swart (1940c) noted that he had to return to Square 10 to remove some of Level X that was unexcavated. Based on the profile of the first trench (Coe 1937), Level X-South occurs stratigraphically above the first mound-construction stage (Figure 5). Based on the attributes of ceramics within the deposit, Boudreaux (2005:156) had assigned Level X-South to the late Town Creek phase (A.D. 1250–1300).

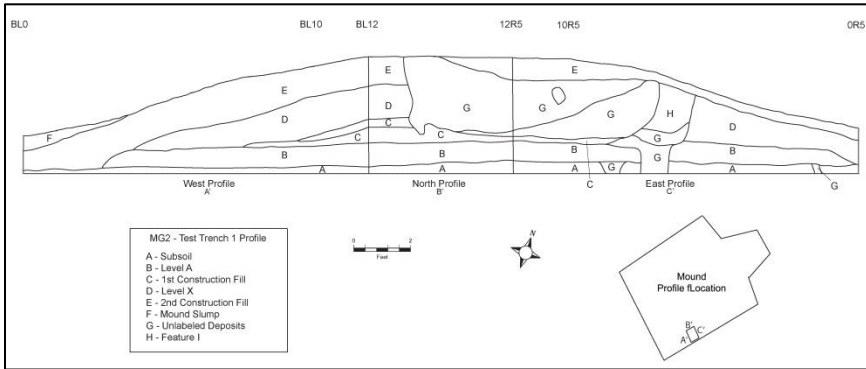


Figure 5. West, north, and east profiles of Coe's 1937 test trench 1 into the southern flank of the Town Creek mound.

Recently, accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) was used to date a small fragment of a deer humerus from this context (Armour 2012:18–19). Radiocarbon dating bone can be problematic, but more advanced collagen extraction methods have made it more reliable (Taylor 1987:53–61; see also Batten et al. 1986; Pettitt 2005). The uncalibrated radiocarbon age produced for this sample (Beta-317712) was 630 ± 30 B.P., with the calibrated two-sigma date being A.D. 1285–1400 (Bronk Ramsey 2001) (Figure 6). This date is bracketed by dates previously reported from other Town Creek mound contexts and helps confirm the results (Table 1).

The second mound-construction stage was much smaller than the first, raising the mound's height 2–3 ft. The western part of the mound summit contained two buildings, designated Structure 45a and Structure 45b and called “Townhouse I” or “Temple I” by Coe (1995) (Figure 7). This context was dated, and appears to have been in use between A.D. 1300–1400 (Boudreaux 2005:78). A 3–6 inch layer of dark soil, initially called the “1st Habitation Layer” and now referred to as the Stage 2 Summit, later superimposed these structures and is speculated to represent a mound-summit midden associated with these two structures (Boudreaux 2005:136; Coe 1995:77).

Level X-North is, in part, temporally associated with the second mound-construction stage. This deposit is located on the northwest corner of the mound. Based upon Swart's (1940b) notes, it was not until July 1940 that workers began fully excavating left of the baseline of the mound, and they did not reach this midden deposit until September. Swart (1940c) notes that initially they screened Level X-North fill due to

Table 1. Radiocarbon and AMS Dates from Mound Contexts at Town Creek.

Sample Code	Context	Uncal. Age (B.P.)	Uncal. Age (A.D.)	Uncalibrated 1-Sigma Range (A.D.)	Calibrated 1-Sigma Range (A.D.)	Calibrated 2-Sigma Range (A.D.)	Phase Association	Source
Beta-317712	Level X-South	630 ± 90	1320	1290–1350	1290–1320 1350–1390	1285–1400	Late Town Creek-Early Leak	Armour 2012
Beta-184061	Sq. 170L40/ Pit	300 ± 60	1650	1590–1710	1465–1651	1445–1955	Late Leak	Boudreaux 2005
FSU-185/FSU-175	Townhouse I	595 ± 50	1355	1305–1405	1305–1405	1290–1420	Early Leak	Reid 1967
FSU-186/FSU-176	Townhouse II	670 ± 40	1280	1240–1320	1279–1386	1270–1395	Early Leak	Reid 1967
FSU-145/FSU-154	Townhouse II	600 ± 140	1350	1210–1490	1262–1448	1060–1640	Early Leak	Reid 1967
Beta-201468	Structure 4a	820 ± 40	1130	1090–1170	1187–1261	1045–1265	Early Town Creek	Boudreaux 2005
FSU-184/FSU-174	Level A	745 ± 140	1205	1065–1345	1155–1397	1015–1440	Early Town Creek	Reid 1967

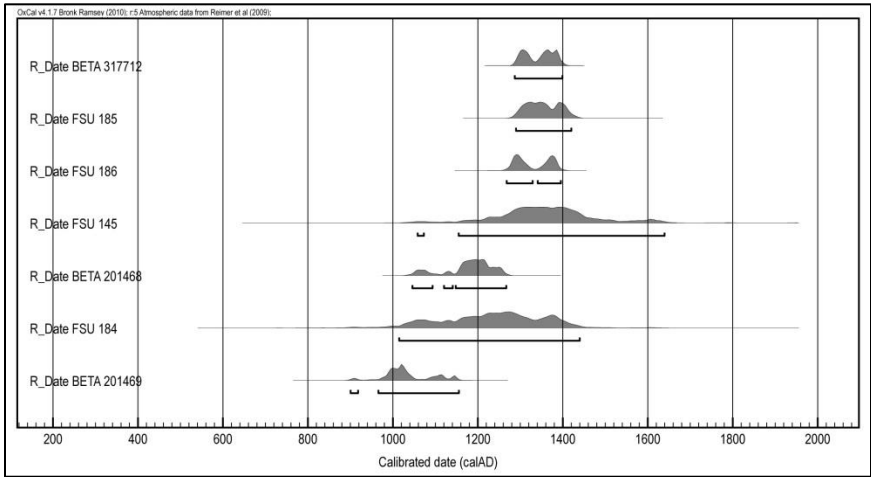


Figure 6. Oxcal graphical representation of radiocarbon and AMS dates from mound contexts at Town Creek.

the presence of trade beads in Square 80, but afterwards in Square 80L10 they stopped screening because not as many beads were being found. According to Swart’s (1940b) profile drawing, he identified this Level X as being a part of the mound’s western face (Figure 8).

The third mound-construction stage was different from the earlier stages. While the previous stages encapsulated the whole mound, the third construction episode only raised the mound’s summit a couple of inches to a foot. The summit of the third stage contained two buildings, Structure 46a and Structure 46b, which were arranged identically to the mound-summit structures of the second stage. These structures were called “Townhouse II” or “Temple II” and date to approximately A.D. 1262–1448 (Boudreaux 2007:36). While I did not analyze any artifacts from these contexts, they are, as I will explain later, important to note because of potential implications to the formation process of certain contexts.

Comparing Mound Contexts

In order to examine what activities may have been associated with the mound, I compared mound contexts by placing artifacts into groups and sub-groups based on their morphological and functional attributes (Table 2). The two most basic groups all artifacts fell within were tools or non-tools. The tool group consisted of artifacts that would have been used for hunting, processing food, and perhaps crafting (i.e., leather

THE TOWN CREEK MOUND

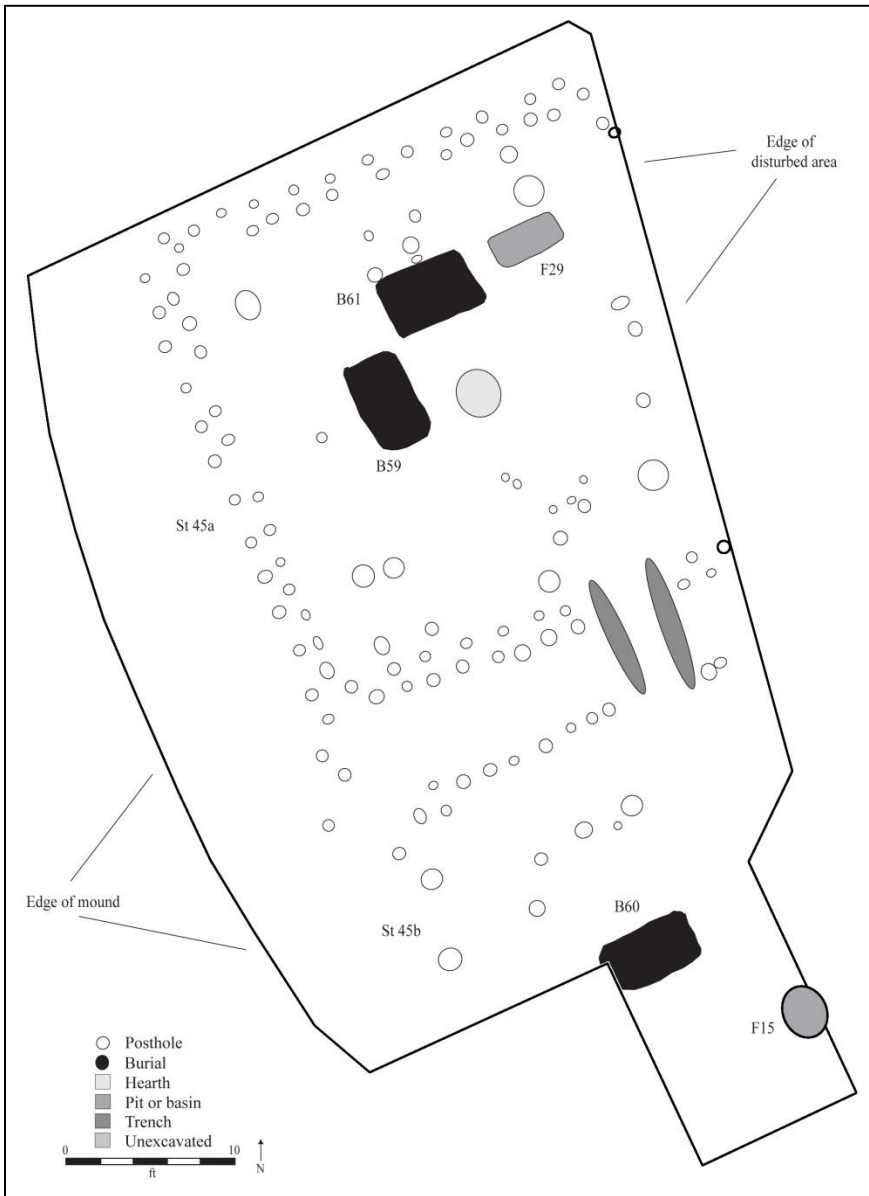


Figure 7. Plan of Structures 45a and 45b associated with the Stage 2 Summit of the Town Creek mound. Adapted from Boudreaux 2010.

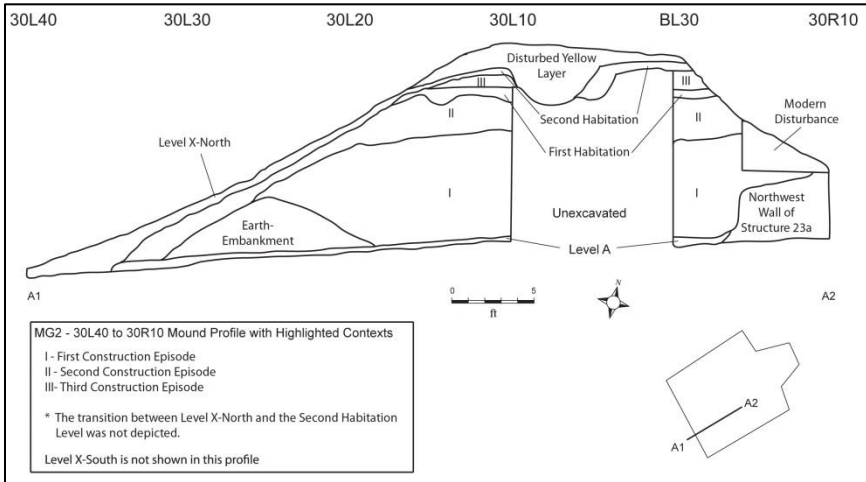


Figure 8. Mound profile drawn by John Swart in 1940. Adapted from Boudreaux 2007.

working or woodworking). This group contained projectile points, bifaces, and production tools. Production tools were further sub-divided into the following classes: small stone tools, large stone tools, tool production (i.e., hammerstones, abraders, and debitage), and small bone tools. The non-tool group represents those artifacts that do not appear to have been for any utilitarian purpose. These were made up of ornaments, discs, smoking pipes, and an engraved piece of slate. This non-tool class is thought to represent items with symbolic or expressive meaning intended for display or group participation. The purpose of classifying artifacts in this manner was to aid in the interpretation of potential activities being undertaken.

Comparisons among contexts were made based on total artifact counts, the presence or absence of artifacts, and abundance indices similar to those used by Knight (2004:315; 2010:352–355). Knight (2004, 2010) has developed similar indices to standardize artifact classes between contexts from different mounds at Moundville in order to assess mound function across the site. By replicating these indices, it is hoped that the data could then be utilized in a comparative method to determine the relative importance of activities represented in mound contexts based upon artifact ratios regardless of the total number of artifacts present (Astin 1996:6; Knight 2004, 2010). The faunal assemblages recovered from these contexts, analyzed by Susan Scott (2012), also are important to my interpretation of the activities represented in mound contexts at Town Creek.

THE TOWN CREEK MOUND

Table 2. Artifact Frequencies Sorted by Analytical Groups.

Artifact Classes	Level A	Structure 23a	Level X South	Level X North	Stage 2 Summit	Total
<u>Tools</u>						
Projectile Points						
Triangular	12	2	3	27	7	51
Pee Dee Pentagonal	-	1	-	8	3	12
Pee Dee Triangular	-	-	-	5	-	5
Guilford Lanceolate	1	-	-	-	-	1
Morrow Mountain II	-	-	-	1	-	1
Kirk	1	-	-	2	-	3
Preform	2	-	-	3	1	6
Unclassified	-	-	-	6	-	6
Fragments	16	-	3	39	4	62
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>147</i>
Biface						
Knife	2	-	-	2	-	4
Unidentified	5	-	2	27	4	38
Unfinished	-	-	-	5	1	6
Core	-	-	-	1	-	1
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>49</i>
Production Tools						
<i>Small Stone Tools</i>						
Bit-Tool	6	-	4	20	6	36
Scraper	3	-	1	8	-	12
Flake Tools	6	-	-	25	7	38
<i>Large Stone Tools</i>						
Celt	2	-	1	-	-	3
Chopper	-	-	-	1	-	1
<i>Tool Production</i>						
Abrader	-	-	1	-	2	3
Hammerstone	-	-	-	2	-	2
Debitage	40	-	11	201	48	300
<i>Small Bone Tools</i>						
Awl	-	1	-	-	1	-
Needle	-	1	-	-	1	-
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>257</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>397</i>

Table 2 continued.

Artifact Classes	Level A	Structure 23a	Level X South	Level X North	Stage 2 Summit	Total
<u>Non-Tools</u>						
Ornaments						
Pendant	-	1	-	-	-	1
Bead	-	1	-	-	-	1
Ear Spool	-	1	-	-	-	1
Copper	-	1	2	-	-	3
Pigment	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>Sub-Total</i>	-	5	2	-	-	7
Discs						
Ceramic Disc	1	-	3	9	1	14
Ground-stone Disc	1	1	-	-	-	2
<i>Sub-Total</i>	2	1	3	9	1	16
Pipe						
Pipe Fragment	-	1	3	4	1	9
<i>Sub-Total</i>	-	1	3	4	1	9
Other Artifacts						
Engraved Slate	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>Sub-Total</i>	-	-	1	-	-	1
Total	96	12	35	397	86	626

Comparative Indices

The calculated abundance indices were compared against pooled values to determine whether an artifact class was over-represented or under-represented. Ceramics analyzed by Boudreaux (2005) and debitage analyzed by myself (Armour 2012) were used to standardize artifact frequencies based on the assumption that they represent background activity that was relatively consistent across contexts (Table 3). The debitage was used in the standardization of lithic artifacts while ceramics were used to standardize the non-tool classes. The standardized value represents what was actually observed within a specific context. It is calculated by dividing the artifact class counts by the background (i.e., debitage or ceramic) class counts. This is expressed in the formula

$$S = CAC/CBC,$$

Table 3. Ceramic Frequencies Used for Data Standardization (adapted from Boudreaux 2005).

Mound Contexts	Small Check Stamped	Large Check Stamped	Curv. Comp. Stamped	Rect. Comp. Stamped	Fine Cord- marked	Fabric Marked	Plain	Burnished Plain	Small Simple Stamped	Stamped	Textile Impressed	Unidenti- fied	Total
Stage 2 Summit													
Feature 57	-	-	6	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	10
Sq. 20	1	-	2	2	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	2	11
Sq. 30	-	-	7	2	-	-	5	-	-	1	-	1	16
Sq. 30L10	1	-	16	5	-	-	10	-	-	3	1	3	39
Sq. 40	-	-	14	7	-	1	10	-	-	4	1	2	39
Sq. 40 & 50	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
Sq. 40-50L0-10	-	-	6	2	-	-	4	-	-	2	-	1	13
Sq. 40L10	-	-	5	2	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	10
Sq. 60	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Sq. 60L10	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	1	-	-	6
Sub-total	2	0	64	21	0	1	41	0	0	14	2	9	154
Level X, North													
Sq. 40-70L30-40	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Sq. 40L30	-	-	4	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
Sq. 50L30	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Sq. 60L30	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sq. 70L30	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sq. 80	-	-	33	9	-	-	30	1	-	6	5	-	84
Sq. 80L10	-	1	6	2	2	-	1	2	1	1	-	3	19
Sq. 90	-	-	14	11	-	-	42	2	-	5	3	8	85
Sq. 90L10	-	-	15	1	-	-	18	-	1	9	3	3	50
Sub-total	0	1	74	25	2	0	95	5	2	21	11	14	250
Level X, South													
Sq. 10	-	-	21	1	-	-	3	1	-	1	2	-	29
Sub-total	0	0	21	1	0	0	3	1	0	1	2	0	29

Table 3 continued.

Mound Contexts	Small Check Stamped	Large Check Stamped	Curv. Comp. Stamped	Rect. Comp. Stamped	Fine Cord- marked	Fabric Marked	Plain	Burnished Plain	Small Simple Stamped	Stamped	Textile Impressed	Unidenti- fied	Total
Level A													
Feature XXII	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sq. 10R10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Sq. 30L10	-	-	28	12	-	4	19	-	-	11	-	11	85
Sq. 30R40	-	-	3	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	6
Sq. 40R30	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sq. 80	-	-	22	9	-	-	10	-	-	6	1	1	49
Sq. 80L10	-	-	42	16	2	-	21	-	-	11	6	5	103
Sq. BL0	-	-	15	2	-	-	12	-	-	1	3	-	33
Sq. BL10	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
<i>Sub-total</i>	0	0	113	40	2	4	64	1	0	29	11	18	282
Inside Structure 23a													
30R20, West Wall	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
30R40	1	-	39	7	-	-	41	-	-	19	-	1	108
30R40, North Wall	-	-	8	1	-	-	4	-	-	2	-	1	16
30R40, NE Corner	-	-	6	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	9
<i>Sub-total</i>	1	0	53	8	0	0	46	2	0	22	0	3	135
Structures 46a and 46b													
Sq. 60L10	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	5
<i>Sub-total</i>	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5
Total	3	1	328	96	4	5	249	9	2	87	27	44	855

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where S is the standardized value, CAC is the context artifact count, and CBC is the context background count. The pooled value represents the sum of an artifact class across every context divided by the sum of the background artifact class across every context. The pooled value denotes an averaged value that should be expected within each context. This is expressed in the formula

$$P = TAC/TBC,$$

where P is the pooled value, TAC is the total artifact count, and TBC is the total background count.

Following the work of Knight (2010:353), I identified an artifact class as over-represented or salient when its observed value deviated by 50 percent or more from the pooled value. Any value under 50 percent was not considered to be salient. In order to calculate the percentage increase or decrease between the two values, the deviation (D) between the standardized (S) and pooled (P) values was determined by dividing the observed value by the pooled value and subtracting one, or

$$D = (S/P) - 1.$$

Eight indices were calculated to explore activity patterns within each context. These indices were then used to create an overall picture of what was occurring throughout the mound's use. In order to make the resulting values easier to interpret, the pooled values for each index were multiplied by either 100, for the lithic tool classes, or 1000, for the non-tool classes. Table 4 presents the artifact class frequencies that were used to determine the pooled and observed values, and the salient values are presented in Table 5.

Projectile Points. This index takes into account all projectile points that were analyzed within each context. Its inclusion is thought to help determine if activities potentially related to hunting, or even warfare, may be represented in some contexts.

Small Stone Tools. Small stone tools include bit-tools, scrapers, and flake tools. These tools are all believed to have been employed in light or fine woodworking activities, and they may have been used in craft production.

Large Stone Tools. The large stone tool class consists of greenstone celts and a chopper. These tools could have been employed in a wide range of activities that may have included coarse woodworking and possibly butchery, in the case of the chopper.

Table 4. Artifact Class Frequencies Used to Calculate Pooled and Observed (Standardized) Values.

Artifact Class	Level A	Structure 23a	Level X South	Level X North	Stage 2 Summit	Total
Projectile Points	30	3	6	92	16	147
Small Stone Tools	15	-	5	53	13	86
Large Stone Tools	2	-	1	1	-	4
Tool Creation	-	-	1	2	2	5
Small Bone Tools	-	2	-	-	-	2
Ornaments	-	5	2	-	-	7
Discs	2	1	3	9	1	16
Pipe	-	1	1	4	1	7
Debitage	40	-	11	201	48	300
Sherds	282	135	29	250	154	850
Total	371	147	59	612	235	1424

Tool Production. This index is used as an indicator of the production of other tools. This index is made up of abraders and hammerstones. The abraders were possibly used to make or sharpen bone awls and needles. The hammerstones would have been employed in lithic reduction (Daniel 1998:116; Knight 2004:309).

Ornaments. The ornaments class represents non-utilitarian artifacts that may have been more symbolic than utilitarian. Ornaments have been interpreted as being expressive adornments intended for display, sometimes in communal ceremonies (Knight 2004:317; Spielmann 2002:198). This class includes a pendant, bead, ear spool, copper fragments, and pigment. These objects would have functioned primarily as body adornments.

Discs. This class includes ground-stone and ceramic discs. These discs are often referred to as gaming pieces, but their exact function is unclear (Coe 1995:227; Knight 2010:63; Potter and Brown 2011:107).

Pipes. The pipe index is assumed to be indicative of ceremonial use or have some type of social significance associated with smoking. Hudson (1976:314, 318) notes the use of tobacco in the greeting of travelers and during ceremonies such as the Green Corn Ceremony. Likewise, Knight (2004:307) explains that tobacco was rare among sites around Moundville and suggests its use in non-secular activities. The saliency of this index could be important in assessing significance within the observed contexts because the smoking of tobacco is believed to not have been a common occurrence.

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Table 5. Observed, Pooled, and Deviation Values for Artifact Classes among the Five Analyzed Mound Contexts.

Artifact Class	Level A		Structure 23a		Level X South		Level X North		Stage 2 Summit		Pooled Value
	Obs.	Dev.	Obs.	Dev.	Obs.	Dev.	Obs.	Dev.	Obs.	Dev.	
<i>Tools</i>											
Projectile Point	<u>75</u>	0.53	-	-	54.5	0.11	45.7	-0.06	33.3	-0.31	49
Small Stone Tools	37.5	0.32	-	-	<u>45.4</u>	0.6	25.8	-0.08	27.08	-0.04	28.3
Large Stone Tools	<u>5</u>	2.75	-	-	<u>9</u>	5.81	0.4	-0.62	-	-	1.3
Tool Production	-	-	-	-	<u>9</u>	4.45	0.9	-0.4	<u>4.1</u>	1.5	1.6
Debitage	25.97	-0.26	-	-	37.93	0.07	<u>80.4</u>	1.27	11.51	-0.67	35.29
<i>Non-Tools</i>											
Ornaments	-	-	<u>37</u>	3.49	<u>68</u>	7.37	-	-	-	-	8.23
Discs	7	-0.62	7.4	-0.6	<u>103</u>	4.49	<u>36</u>	0.91	6.4	-0.65	18.8
Pipe Fragment	-	-	7.4	-0.3	<u>103.4</u>	8.77	<u>16</u>	0.51	6.4	-0.38	10.5

Note: Artifact classes with a deviation value over .50, shown in bold and underlined, are identified as being salient. Since Structure 23a contained nodebitage, the values for projectile points could not be calculated.

Debitage. The debitage index is a measure of lithic tool manufacture. Coe (1995:194) originally speculated that no major lithic manufacturing occurred at Town Creek. While this hypothesis may be correct, this index is used to determine whether any lithic tool manufacture or rejuvenation occurred.

Faunal Analysis

With the exception of Level X-North, all of the contexts analyzed for this research had associated faunal remains that were analyzed by Susan Scott (2012). Zooarchaeology has proven to be very insightful when considering many aspects of past societies. Specifically, the analysis of faunal assemblages can help to address questions concerning status distinctions and political inequalities as well as the types of activities responsible for an assemblage's deposition (deFrance 2009:134). In addition, the analysis of faunal assemblages can also help identify ritual behavior. DeFrance (2009:134) states that in all societies,

animals and the food they provide have ideological, symbolic, and social meaning beyond their economic uses. When ceremonies include feasting, the activity can serve to reinforce the power and position of those in control, create group identity, or create social distinctions between groups. The performance of these events can also help to reassert social and ideological goals within a society (deFrance 2009:134).

In regards to feasting events in Mississippian societies, Jackson and Scott (2003:555) have demonstrated that higher proportions of large animal remains, rather than more diverse assemblages, are more reflective of feasting episodes. The faunal assemblages from mound contexts at Town Creek are largely made up of whitetail deer remains (Table 6). The second-most prominent species is turkey. Very little fish remains were recovered within mound contexts, but this low representation may be attributable to a lack of screening during the excavations of the mound. Among the more unusual species, passenger pigeon and a large fox squirrel were present.

Results

The following section considers artifact class presence/absence data (Table 7), the comparative indices (Table 8), and the analysis of faunal remains in order to develop ideas about the activities represented within each context. Based on the presence or absence of certain artifact classes, it appears that very similar activities are represented in each context. While this may be true, the saliencies of specific artifact classes in each context could help differentiate the dominant activities taking place from those occurring in the background.

Level A

Based on material recovered in Level A, the premound midden may contain evidence of residual activities from earlier occupations. A similar observation was made by Reid (1967:56) when he analyzed ceramics from this context. Some of the artifacts may have come from the preceding Teal phase (A.D. 1000–1150) and Late Woodland period (A.D. 800–1000) occupations. The presence of Archaic Kirk and Guilford projectile points indicate even earlier occupations.

Level A had an artifact profile fairly similar to the other mound contexts. Of particular importance were large stone tools and projectile points, both of which were over-represented. The projectile points being salient may be a result of Level A containing artifacts from a much wider temporal span. Projectile points from both the Early Archaic and Middle

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Table 6. Faunal Elements, Identified by Species, from Analyzed Mound Contexts.

Species	Level A	Structure 23a	Level X South	Structures 45a and 45b	Total
Whitetail Deer	7	34	24	1	66
Turkey	3	7	13	-	23
Passenger Pigeon	-	4	-	1	5
Longnose Gar	-	2	-	-	2
Fox-Squirrel	-	1	-	-	1
Raccoon	-	1	-	-	1
Unidentified Large Mammal	-	4	4	22	30
Unidentified Small Mammal/Bird	-	-	-	27	27
Unidentified Large Bird	-	2	-	3	5
Unidentified Fish	-	-	-	1	1
Total	10	55	41	55	161

Table 7. Artifact Classes Present (indicated by X) within the Five Analyzed Mound Contexts.

Artifact Class	Level A	Structure 23a	Level X South	Level X North	Stage 2 Summit
<i>Tools</i>					
Projectile Points	X	X	X	X	X
Biface	X	-	X	X	X
Production Tools					
Small Stone Tools	X	-	X	X	X
Large Stone Tools	X	-	X	X	-
Tool Production	-	-	X	X	X
Small Bone Tools	-	X	-	-	-
Debitage	X	-	X	X	X
<i>Non-Tools</i>					
Ornaments	-	X	X	-	-
Discs					
Ceramic Disc	X	-	X	X	X
Ground-stone Disc	X	X	-	-	-
Pipe	-	X	X	X	X
Engraved Slate	-	-	X	-	-

Table 8. Salient Artifact Classes within the Five Analyzed Mound Contexts.

Artifact Class	Level A	Structure 23a	Level X South	Level X North	Stage 2 Summit
<i>Tools</i>					
Projectile Points	X	-	-	-	-
Small Stone Tools	-	-	X	-	-
Large Stone Tools	X	-	X	-	-
Large Stone Tools	-	-	X	-	X
Debitage	-	-	X	-	-
<i>Non-Tools</i>					
Ornaments	-	X	X	-	-
Discs	-	-	X	X	-
Pipe	-	-	X	X	-

Archaic periods were recovered. The large stone tools (i.e., two celts) also registered as being salient in this context. As discussed in the preceding section, these large stone tools are representative of coarser woodworking activities.

Although the small stone tool index value was not highlighted as being overly represented for Level A, the presence of a variety of these tools suggests that light or fine woodworking crafts may have occurred. Light woodworking may not have been as intensive as the activities indicated by the comparative indices. There were also 40 pieces of debitage, suggesting that some stone tool reworking or manufacturing occurred, although presumably in small amounts.

The faunal assemblage from Level A was made up of 70 percent whitetail deer (n=7) with the remainder being turkey (n=3). The minimum number of individuals (MNI) indicates that these could have come from a single deer and a single turkey. There were no exotic or rare species identified within this context.

Structure 23a

The artifacts within this structure are particularly interesting. Only three projectile points were found: two triangular points and one Pee Dee Pentagonal point. Structure 23a contained the only small bone tools (i.e., a bone awl and a bone needle) within the analyzed sample, and they may represent some type of crafting or ritualized behavior. These tools may have been used in the sewing of hides, weaving, or tattooing.

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A wide range of ornamental artifacts was also associated with this structure and include a broken stone pendant, a ceramic bead, what appears to be a small ear spool, a fragment of copper, and a piece of graphite that may have been used for pigment. This artifact class was the only class that was salient after standardization. A polished ground-stone disc and a pipe bowl fragment also were recovered from this structure. All of these non-tool artifacts are particularly important, and I interpret them as being of social significance. These artifacts were intended for display or to be used in the company of others, possibly attesting to the significance of Structure 23a to the pre-mound inhabitants of Town Creek.

The Structure 23a faunal assemblage consisted mostly of whitetail deer, followed by turkey. This structure also contained remains of a large mammal and a large bird that were not identifiable at the species level. Unusual species included the remains of at least two passenger pigeons, a large fox squirrel, and the dentary of a longnose gar. The needle and awl mentioned previously were made from a raccoon fibula and a turkey tarsometatarsus.

Based on the faunal remains, this structure appears to have been more exclusive in how it was used. Passenger pigeon has commonly been found in presumed exclusive settings at other Mississippian sites, and it has been reported as a delicacy (Jackson and Scott 2003: 554). Other artifact associations also suggest an exclusive function for Structure 23a. The dentary of the longnose gar and potentially the bone needle or awl, in combination with the graphite, could represent some type of tattooing complex (Coe 1995:238–240; Deter-Wolf 2010; Deter-Wolf and Diaz-Granados 2013; Hudson 1976:380); however, this does not rule out their use in leatherworking or basketry. The fox squirrel may also have had some type of ceremonial significance due to its reported large stature (Scott 2012).

Level X-South

Level X-South contained only a fraction of the artifacts analyzed for this research, at 5.2%. Surprisingly, after standardization, small stone tools, large stone tools, production tools, and all of the non-tool artifact classes were salient. Artifacts were standardized based on the total number of sherds and debitage to account for any background activity that may have also been associated with these contexts. Level X-South contained only 29 sherds and 11 pieces of debitage. In contrast, Level X-North had a total of 250 sherds and 201 pieces of debitage. The ceramic assemblage from Level X-South was unique, as it contained no

small serving or cooking vessels. Instead, only large cooking and serving vessels were present, suggesting more of an emphasis on serving larger groups rather than individuals (Boudreaux 2007:101).

Similar to Structure 23a, Level X-South contained a large amount of whitetail deer bone, followed by turkey. This level contained no unusual species, but it did contain at least three individual deer, one of which was no more than seven months old, as well as four individual turkeys, one of which was a poult. The fawn and the poult are important because they act as seasonal markers. The age of the fawn indicates that it died during winter while the poult indicates a summer harvest (Scott 2012). This may indicate that Level X-South contains materials from multiple events. While there are no indications in the field notes of any lenses or zones within Level X-South to substantiate this statement, it is not altogether implausible. Depositional processes in the sub-mound 51 borrow pit at Cahokia have been observed and demonstrate the use of one midden for several different events throughout several seasons (Pauketat et al. 2002:260–263).

Level X-North

The artifact assemblage contained within Level X-North is both abundant and diverse. Level X-North contained 60% of the total number of artifacts analyzed during this research, and it contained 67% of the debitage. This context had artifacts in almost every artifact class except ornaments and small bone tools. The diversity in artifact classes represents several different activities, including coarse and fine woodworking, tool production, and possibly ceremonial activity.

The only activities that actually stand out after standardization were lithic tool manufacture or rejuvenation and some form of social activity that is represented by high number of ceramic discs and pipes. The fact that the debitage and non-tool classes are overly represented suggests that these activities were particularly intensive. The production or maintenance of lithic tools represented here may reflect the need to generate new tools for crafting. The sheer number of artifacts within this midden may also be representative of the fact that Level X-North was not a discrete deposit, a hypothesis that will be explored later.

Stage 2 Summit

Similar to Level X-North, the majority of artifact classes were represented within the Stage 2 Summit. However, the only class that was salient based on artifact indices was tool production. This class consisted of an abrader and what may have been a sandstone saw. Similar saws at

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the Moundville site in Alabama have been demonstrated by Wilson (2001:121) to have been used for cutting or polishing purposes during the manufacturing of greenstone tools such as celts and chisels. It is likely that this artifact was used for similar activities at Town Creek.

Within Structures 45a and 45b, the faunal assemblage was equally as large as that found in Structure 23a, but the former's assemblage was primarily made up of unidentified mammals and birds. The majority of faunal remains from Structures 45a and 45b were recovered from a hearth feature and, consequently, were calcined. The only two anatomical elements that were not burned were from a passenger pigeon and an unidentified large bird, potentially also a passenger pigeon.

Discussion

The activities represented within each context indicate what was occurring within mound contexts during specific time periods within Town Creek's history. Based on the faunal and artifact analyses, two of the contexts seem to have served very similar functions. Structure 23a and the Stage 2 Summit (i.e., Structures 45a and 45b) contained smaller artifact assemblages, had similar associated faunal remains, and were small buildings interpreted as public structures. These public structures housed activities relating to ceremonies and political decision-making, and both are hypothesized to be socially exclusive due to their positioning away from the plaza with restricted entrances (Boudreaux 2005:30, 34). The diverse array of artifacts in Level X-North and Level A suggests that they are secondary deposits. Based on their stratigraphic association, Level X-North and Level A would not have been discrete deposits. Both are hypothesized to contain the residue of activities associated with multiple contexts and times, and probably also contained debris from Structure 23a or Structures 45a and 45b, respectively.

Something very different appears to be occurring within Level X-South. This flank midden is stratigraphically confined, and as such can be viewed as containing the refuse from a single event or a series of events occurring within close succession. Because of this, it is probable that this summit was used for a relatively short amount of time. This event (or events) was inclusive in nature, and I hypothesize it represents an integrative activity, possibly associated with the first construction episode, involving non-competitive feasting and crafting. Costin (2005:1035) has described crafting as an act of materialization, being any transformational process involving skill, aesthetics, and cultural meaning. These crafts are oftentimes created within exclusive settings, such as within mound-summit architecture. When these materials are

found within non-burial or non-residential contexts, however, it is thought that this may indicate ceremonies associated with communal integration (Lindauer and Blitz 1997:182).

Evidence for feasting consists of the concentration of food remains and ceramic assemblages of distinct size and functional attributes (Boudreaux 2005; Jackson and Scott 2004; Lindauer and Blitz 1997: 186; Pauketat et al. 2002:263–265). These events are linked to the economic and ideological realms of society (deFrance 2009:134). Feasting is a ceremonial performance and can serve to reinforce the power and position of those in control, create group identity, or create social distinctions between groups (deFrance 2009:134). Based on the artifact and faunal assemblages I analyzed, it appears that the small public structures in the mound area, both before and during the mound's use, were utilized by a subset of people and focused on small groups while data from Level X-South support a feasting episode thought to be integrative in nature.

During the Late Town Creek phase (A.D. 1250), the first episode of mound construction occurred and there was also a shift in the overall site layout. Aside from being a descriptive and exploratory account of the mound, one question that this research brings up is the functioning of the mound's first construction episode with regard to this change in community plan. Boudreaux (2005:401) presents a hypothesis, based upon comparisons with other South Appalachian Mississippian sites, that the structures located upon the first mound-construction stage would have been similar to those before and after it. One or two small rectangular structures, possibly earth-embanked, would have been located on the western side of the mound away from the plaza, and a larger, more ephemeral building would have been on the eastern side closer to the plaza. From his analysis of ceramic vessel attributes, Boudreaux concluded that a large integrative event might have occurred at this time.

I come to a similar conclusion. Furthermore, I hypothesize that the first mound summit may have been used as a ceremonial stage for public viewing and participation (Lindauer and Blitz 1997:175). Based on the large amount of production and crafting tools found, and faunal evidence depicting a large array of undiversified animal remains within Level X-South, this observation appears to hold true. This initial summit seems to have been intended for more inclusive activities such as feasting.

Judging from the locations and exclusive nature of other public structures within mound contexts, a picture emerges consisting of small,

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enclosed structures being built away from the plaza. Ceremonial or political activities are hypothesized to have occurred within these structures, and evidence derived from Structure 23a and Structures 45a and 45b appear to agree with this interpretation.

Restricted access to particular spaces and their exclusive use by groups of people are topics discussed at other sites. Site layout has been shown to provide a sense of formalized space that promoted exclusion at Etowah (Cobb and King 2005:180), and mound-summit structures at Moundville have been shown to be exclusive in nature and utilized for elite residences, based upon their associated artifacts (Jackson and Scott 2003; Knight 2010). I hypothesize that the Level X-South midden shows more evidence for inclusive-type behavior. It appears that large-scale activities related to feasting were occurring on top of the summit's surface. Artifacts from the structures, however, reflect exclusive activities. The first summit may have served as the stage for an integrative event for social cohesion. It may have been a renewal ceremony, such as the Green Corn Ceremony (Hudson 1976:365), or even an event celebrating the completion of the first stage in mound construction. Similar interpretations have been presented at Cahokia regarding the representation of social events from midden deposits (Pauketat et al. 2002).

A submound borrow pit found at Cahokia has been interpreted as representative of an annual gathering of people involved in integrative events. Pauketat et al. (2002: 276) states, "The events of its creation may encapsulate the processes whereby people accepted or accommodated a Cahokian organization, identity, and way of life." Similar to Town Creek, the deposits within this pit date to the beginning of monumental architecture in the American Bottom (Pauketat et al 2002:263). At Town Creek, I hypothesize a similar event may be reflected by archaeological material from Level X-South. Although the scale of the event is nowhere near as large as the events at Cahokia, Level X-South appears to represent such an integrative event that may have facilitated the social cohesion of residents at Town Creek.

For the early Town Creek occupants, those who had access to exclusive structures or settings were most likely the heads of households or lineages. During the late Town Creek phase, however, something changed that affected village layout, spurred mound construction, and shifted from older individuals to younger individuals within public contexts (Boudreaux 2010:224). Level X-South represents an event that was associated with this change in village layout and shifts in power.

The feasting, crafting, and construction activities went hand-in-hand with this event. At Town Creek, the mound summits served as communal stages. Instead of just displaying the power of elites, like Cahokia, Moundville, and Etowah (Cobb 2003; Cobb and King 2005; Knight 2010), these summits may also have been used more for the communal sponsoring of events as well as political decision-making.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to outline and compare the individual contexts that make up the mound at Town Creek. I assessed each context individually and interpreted the social setting of their deposition. The main objective of this research was to determine what activities may have been associated with the mound by looking at five different contexts: Level A, Structure 23a, Level X-North, Level X-South, and the Stage 2 Summit. These contexts were differentiated stratigraphically and spatially, and they provided a diachronic view of activities associated with mound contexts. Another objective was to define Level X by developing a more detailed description of its spatial and stratigraphic location within the mound. In order to compare these contexts, comparative indices were adapted from Knight (2004, 2010) in which artifact classes were standardized so that more dominant activities could be discerned from the entire assemblage.

While only a broad explanation of activities could be interpreted from this analysis, it appears that the deposit from Level X-South represents activities that were distinctly different from those represented by other mound contexts. Both Level A and Level X-North are thought to represent heterogeneous deposits comprised of material from multiple contexts. The activities represented by deposits associated with Structure 23a and the Stage 2 Summit represent exclusive settings that would have only been accessible to a subset of Town Creek's inhabitants. Level X-South deposits, though, represent a larger, inclusive event that would have been visible and more accessible to a greater portion of Town Creek's inhabitants. I hypothesize that the activities responsible for the deposition of Level X-South were similar to the events that took place at Cahokia during the beginning of its episode of extensive mound construction (Pauketat et al. 2002). This episode may have been an integrative event that facilitated social cohesion at Town Creek.

Notes

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LOOKING FOR INDIAN TOWN: THE DISPERSAL OF THE CHOWAN INDIAN TRIBE IN EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA, 1780–1915

by

Forest Hazel

Abstract

The Chowanoke, or Chowan, were an Algonkian tribe that lived along the Chowan River in northeastern North Carolina when first encountered by the English in the late 1500s. Over the next two centuries, the tribe maintained its distinct social identity and by the early 1700s the Chowan were settled on reserved land in what is now Gates County. With the sale of its last communal land in 1821, the tribe ceased to exist as a social unit, though tribal members and their descendants continued to live in the area. In this paper I trace Chowan settlement history, land ownership, and genealogy from the latter years of the reservation into the twentieth century, focusing on their now-forgotten community just southeast of Gatesville that was known as Indian Town.

While several of North Carolina's native communities have vanished in the last 300 years through a combination of warfare, disease, or migration, the Chowanoke, or Chowan, tribe is one whose demise can be well documented, in a manner similar to the excellent work done by Patrick Garrow with respect to the Mattamuskeet Indians of Hyde County, North Carolina (Garrow 1975). The Chowan resided in what is now central Gates County, North Carolina, in the northeastern part of the state, lying just south of the border with Virginia and west of the Great Dismal Swamp (Figure 1). Now before someone complains that the Chowan are not gone, but have merged with the "Meherrin," the "Pee Dee," or some other group, let me explain what I mean. It is abundantly clear that some Chowan ancestry exists today among certain families¹ that make up the non-Indian population of the Southeast, as well as in groups like the Meherrin² of Hertford County. This will be demonstrated later in this paper. The sad fact, however, is that the Chowan tribe ceased to exist in any demonstrable sense of the word as a social unit shortly after 1821 when the last 30 acres of communal land was lost to the Robins family in Gates County.³ Many of the Chowan descendants continued to live in the area throughout the next century (and even up to

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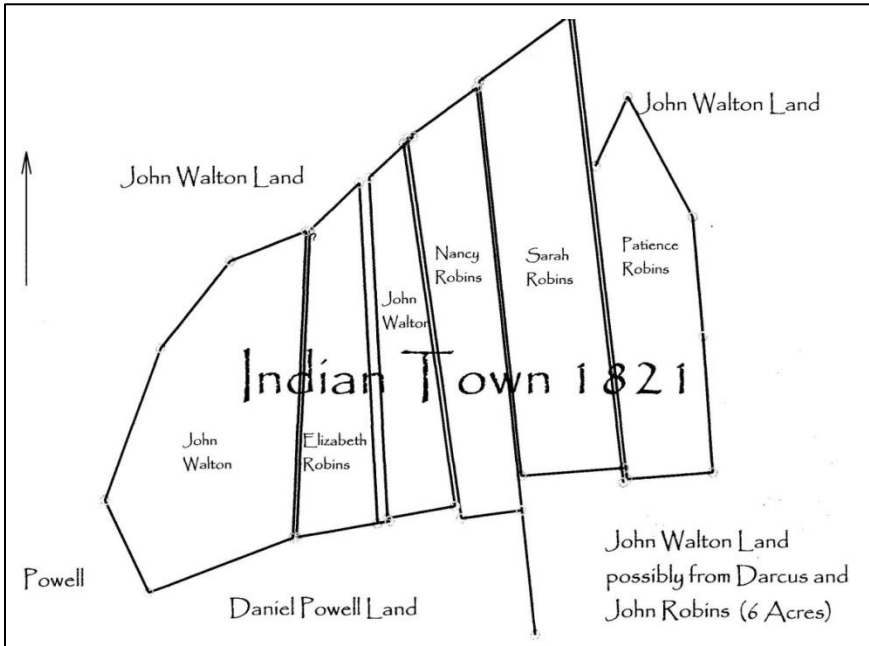


Figure 1. This plat of Indian Town was created using the survey done by the Gates County, North Carolina surveyor in 1821 at the direction of the county court. There were some minor problems with some of the tracts closing completely, and some lines, such as in the tract surveyed for Nancy Robins, are too long and may actually be run to points on adjoining tracts not mentioned in the survey of Indian Town. It is possible that the county surveyor anticipated that Walton was going to acquire the entire tract and so an accurate survey of each individual's portion was not crucial. He would have been correct, as it turned out. The above survey totals roughly 18 acres; the remaining 12 acres had been lost previously to John Walton.

the present day), but at this point there is no evidence of social interaction between them to any significant degree.

Tracing the Reservation

The purpose of this paper is not to go into detail regarding the early history of the Chowan Indian tribe. The timeframe covered here will run from roughly 1790, when the last section of the reservation between Bennett's Creek and Catherine's Creeks was sold off by the tribal leaders, to the dispersal of the community in the mid-1800s, ending with the continuation of some of the Chowan bloodlines among the contemporary Meherrin Indian and other families in Hertford and surrounding counties.

After a brief and unsuccessful war with the colonists in 1676–1677, the Chowan moved to land in what was then Chowan County, north of the Chowan River and located between Bennett’s Creek and Catherine’s Creek. This area would become Gates County in 1779. Chowan headmen requested a survey to be made of their land in 1707, and it appears that one was ordered in 1724; however, no known copy of it exists today.

Archaeological work by David Phelps of East Carolina University in the 1980s at a site referred to as Robert’s Wharf (31GA1), on the east side of Bennett’s Creek, showed an early reservation period occupancy built on earlier periods of occupation by native peoples (Phelps 1982). It is not known if this was the site referred to in some mid-eighteenth century Chowan County deeds as Indian Town. In 1787, Jethro Meltear of Gates County sold 50 acres of land to Jonathan Roberts on the east side of Bennett’s Creek, with its south side bordering on the Indian Gut and its western boundary the run of Bennett’s Creek. This was just south of the Chowan Indian patent line as shown on Meltear’s 1782 land grant which consisted of 250 acres on Bennett’s Creek between Indian Gut to the south and “the old Chowan Indians line” on the north.⁴

The last tract of reservation land was sold on April 12, 1790 to William Lewis and Samuel Harrell by James Robins, Benjamin Robins, George Bennett, and Joseph Bennett, “Chief men and representatives of the Chowan Indians Nation of the county of Gates and state of North Carolina.” For \$100, paid in Spanish-milled dollars, the two purchasers got 400 acres of what is basically swamp and marsh lying directly on the Chowan River between the mouths of Bennett’s Creek to the west and Catherine’s Creek to the east. On the north, it began at the southwest corner of Patrick Lawler’s patent on Bennett’s Creek and then ran east along Lawler’s line across Indian Neck, along Ephraim Blanchard’s southern line, continuing through a savannah to Aaron Blanchard’s line, and along his line to Catherine’s Creek “at the mouth of the Indian Swamp.”⁵ From there, the line followed Catherine’s Creek to the Chowan River, west along the river to Bennett’s Creek, and then north up the creek to the first station.

William Lewis later purchased more of what had once been part of the old reservation.⁶ On November 19, 1794, he purchased 214 acres from Henry Hill and his brother Henrick, described as follows:

in the pocosin of Bennett’s and Catherine’s Creeks, ... it being a tract of land the said Hill (their father Henry Hill, deceased) purchased from the Chowan

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Indians containing 640 acres be the same more or less as per deed bearing the date the 26th of May 1748....⁷

As was done in previous purchases of Chowan Indian land, Lewis and Harrell filed a petition to obtain legislative approval for their transaction with the Indians. Their petition, dated October 23, 1790, reads as follows:

To the Honorable the General Assembly of the state of North Carolina at next sitting,

The petition of William Lewis and Samuel Harrell, both of Gates County and state aforesaid humbly sheweth, that the true and absolute Lords Proprietors of North Carolina did give and grant to the Chowan Indians a certain tract of land lying in Chowan county, now Gates, containing eleven thousand three hundred and sixty acres as appears by patent bearing date April 4th, 1724 which said Indians did sell and convey to sundry persons the greatest part of the land granted them as aforesaid. And since then the whole of the Chowan Indian men is dead, leaving a parcel of Indian women, which has mixed with negros, and now there is several freemen and women of mixed blood as aforesaid which have descend from the said Indians, and the said freemen as aforesaid, considering themselves heirs to the aforesaid Indians and entitled to the small remnants⁸ of the aforesaid tract of land that was not sold nor conveyed by the aforesaid Indians in their lifetimes, have for a valuable consideration conveyed the said remnants of land to your petitioners. We therefore desire that you in your wisdom will take the case under your consideration and pass a law authorizing the said free men of mixed blood as aforesaid to sell and make title to the remnants of land aforesaid, and that such titles shall be good and valid in law against any of their descendants, or grant such other relief as you in your wisdom shall think just, and we as in duty bound will ever pray,

William Lewis
Samuel Harrell

We the under subscribers certify that facts are truly stated in the above and that the said freemen alluded to in the petition did in the late contest with Great Britain behave themselves as good and faithful soldiers in behalf of this and the United States. [Signed by 17 Gates County residents]⁹

The petition is interesting for several reasons, one being the statement that some of the Chowan Indians had served in the Revolutionary War. This is quite likely true, as there would have been nothing keeping them from doing so, and it would have been a source of cash money and adventure, just as it was for their non-Indian neighbors. Unfortunately, Robins and Bennett are not exactly distinctive names, and a cursory examination of North Carolina's troop rosters did not yield anyone whose records provided enough information to confirm this statement. Still, Jesse Martin, a free person of color from Gates County, can be shown to have served and applied for a pension, so it is not

unlikely that some of the Chowan did as well.¹⁰ Some of the 17 non-Indian men who signed the petition were likely veterans themselves and would have had firsthand knowledge of their neighbors' service.

The second and more interesting aspect of the petition is the magical transformation undergone by the "Chief men and representatives of the Chowan Indians Nation" between April 12, 1790, when they as Indians sold the last of the reservation lands, and October 23, 1790 when they became "free men of mixed blood," of Black ancestry. It would seem that Lewis and Harrell wanted to ensure that none of the descendants of the Indians, including the group that was living on a separate 30 acre tract since 1782 (see below) could contest the sale of the land. Therefore, the Indian character of the group was de-emphasized in sort of a "they're not *Real Indians* anymore" mindset. It is a clear example of the colonial attitude that regarded Indians as Indian only as long as they were "pure blooded" and possessed a reservation to set them apart from non-Indians.¹¹ Going along with this position was the notion that any amount of African ancestry (or even the suspicion thereof) forever eliminated a person from Indian status. The "one drop" rule did not just operate between Blacks and Whites in the South.

In any case, the petition was initially rejected. On November 13, 1790, the Legislature's Committee on Propositions and Grievances denied it on the basis that "the petition laid before your committee was not preferred by the Indian proprietors of the land mentioned in the said petition, but by persons...who hath made a conditional purchase of said land." In other words, the request should have come from the Indians, as had been the case in prior purchases of Chowan land.

However, in February, 1791, James Robins, one of the original "Chief men" who signed the deed (who apparently was not quite as dead as was stated in Lewis and Harrell's original petition, and seemingly still an Indian) petitioned the Committee on Propositions and Grievances regarding the sale of the last piece of land. He stated in part:

that the undisposed remnants of said tract (the old reservation) appear to be the right of your petitioner and others of the same tribe and which remnants by the confession of your petitioner and the information of a respectable character has been disposed of to William Lewis and Samuel Harrell for a valuable consideration and that the money has actually been paid to the above mentioned tribe who have all signed a deed to the aforesaid purchasers William Lewis and Samuel Harrell except six Indian women the descendants of said tribe . It also further appears that the confirming the right of the aforesaid purchase will in no wise affect the land on which the said Indian women now live.¹²

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In view of Robins' petition, Governor Alexander Martin on January 2, 1792 approved the sale of the land, there having been a resolution passed by the General Assembly on December 22, 1791. The Chowan Reservation was now history, but the communal land holding of the tribe would continue for at least another generation.¹³

The Last Thirty Acres

Roughly 10 years prior to the sale of the last 400 acres of Chowan Reservation land, a group of Chowan Indians purchased 30 acres in Gates County, on which they would live for almost 40 years, or at least a generation after the reservation was only a memory. On August 1, 1782, "the above named Indians" James, Benjamin, Pashents (Patience), Sarah, Nancy, Elizabeth, Darcas and Christian Robbins, "for and in consideration of the sum of five pounds," purchased a small tract of land from their neighbor, Henry Hill, whose father, also named Henry Hill, had previously purchased several tracts of reservation land in Indian Neck.

Henry Hill, Sr., had made his Gates County will in January 1781, and in part of it he states

Item I give unto my two sons Himbrick Hill and David Hill a certain peace of Lands Called Gabriel's neck beginning on Richard Freeman's Line Near Capt. Roberts Mill Pond and up said Freeman's line to the *Injen town Road* along said Road to the Miere [Mirey] Branch then down said Branch to Gabriel's Branch....¹⁴ [italics added]

From this we can surmise that the Chowan were already living on the property that they would purchase from Hill the following year.

The tract that the Chowan purchased from Henry Hill, Jr. was described as follows:

Being part of the land the said Hill held in his long deed and is bounded as follows, viz, Beginning at a pine, a corner tree in Seabrook Wilson's¹⁵ line, so along a line of marked trees to a dead white oak, a corner tree and so running along a line of marked trees to a white oak being a corner tree standing on the edge of the Flat Pond, then running down the Flat Pond to a corner tree it being a sweet gum it being a corner tree and from thence to the first station be the same thirty acres more or less.¹⁶

On July 17, 1783, Henry Hill sold a tract adjoining the Robins' to Henry Griffin, described as follows:

Beginning at a red oak, a corner tree in Blanchard's thence running by a line of marked trees to a post oak on the line of *the children of Nan Robbins* along their line to Seabrook Hinton's line up Hinton's line to Bennett's Creek Road

and running down said road to Blanchard's line, down Blanchard's line to the first station, one hundred acres...."¹⁷ [italics added]

By 1794, however, James Robbins seems to have replaced Nan (Nancy) Robbins as the most recognized member of the Indian Town community. On November 13 of that year John B. Walton sold some 50 acres to Dempsey Jones and his wife,

lying and being in the lower part of Gates County situate in the Indian Neck; Beginning at James Robin's corner tree a white oak, thence along a line of marked tree to the said John B. Walton's line a white oak his corner tree along said Walton's line to the old Indian Patent Line to a red oak a corner tree of Griffin's line, along the said Griffin's line to a pine a corner tree hence along a line of marked trees to the first station....¹⁸

This change is confirmed in 1799 when Henry Hill sold yet another tract of land, this time to Daniel Powell. The deed reads:

Beginning at a pine, a corner tree of Seabrook Hinton and the said Daniel Powell standing *at the Indian Road*, then running nearly an east course the said Hinton's line to a pine a corner tree of said Henry Hill and Seabrook Hinton, thence *along James Robin's line* to a gum, a corner tree of said Robbins, thence along the said Robins' line to a white oak and maple corner trees, thence nearly a south course by a line of marked trees to a red oak *on the Indian Road*, thence along the road and Daniel Powell's line nearly a north course to the first station containing thirty-five acres...."¹⁹ [italics added]

It is impossible to know who was living in Indian Town at any given time. No doubt the population changed slightly from time to time as people worked outside the settlement in the surrounding area as laborers or apprentices. In the 1810 Federal Census of Gates County, the following cluster can be identified as Indian Town, with nine households containing 34 individuals counted consecutively. All the households are enumerated as "free people of color," there being no category in 1810 for Indians. The heads of household and the number in each household, listed in the same order as in the census, are as follows: George Bennett (5), Darcus Robins (4), Sally Robins (4), John Sanders (2), Lewis Robins (3), Nancy Robins (5), Jacob Robins (5), James Robins (2), and Ciziah Rice (1). The relationship of John Sanders and Ciziah Rice (or Price) to the Chowan Indians is not known. As John Sanders is listed as security for Noah Robbins' March 31, 1825 marriage license to Mary Dozier, he may have been married to one of the Indian women. According to the 1850 Federal Mortality Schedule for Gates County, he was a 60 year old mulatto millwright who died in July 1849 of dropsy.

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It is unlikely that the 30 acres of land in Indian Town was sufficient to support even the reduced number of Native people living there. While there is no way of knowing at this point how much of the land was used for farming, it is unlikely that there was enough to provide for the settlement. Some of the Indians may have worked at trades. For example, apprentice bonds for several of the young men from the 1780s through the early 1800s show that George Bennett was apprenticed to Henry Booth in 1781 to learn a cooper's trade, and Josiah Bennett was apprenticed to Edward Briscoe the same year to learn to be a shoemaker. Samuel Robbins was bound out in 1783 to Richard Freeman as an apprentice cooper, and James Robbins, "an Indian boy about the age of eleven year, was sent with William Gordon to "learn to read and write and also the art and mystery of a turner...."²⁰ Race is not always specified in the apprentice bonds or in the corresponding court minutes. This practice was still being carried out in the 1830s, when Lemuel Skinner offered a five dollar reward for Josiah Price, a "free colored" indentured apprentice who had run away and who had a grandmother and two brothers in the vicinity of Gates Court House.²¹ Table 1 provides a partial list of Chowan Indian children who were bound out in Gates County between 1781 and 1821.

Table 1. Chowan Indian Children Bound Out in Gates County.

Name	Year	Description
George Bennett	1781	an Indian boy
Josiah Bennett	1781	an Indian boy
Benjamin Robins	1781	an Indian boy
Charles Robins	1794	Indian or Mulatto boy
Elisha Robins	1781	Indian boy
Jacob Robins	1765	an Indian boy
James Robins	1796	Indian boy
John Robins	1794/1796	Indian or Mulatto boy
John Robins (#2)	1819	free boy of color
Lewis Robins*	1800	-
Samuel Robins	1784	-
William Robins	1823	a colored boy

* Lewis Robins is not described as an Indian when he is apprenticed out, but is living at Indian Town in 1820/21.

One of the effects of binding these young men out as apprentices to neighboring whites was that whatever tribal culture remained at that point among the Chowan was probably not passed on. These boys were taken out of their homes usually in their pre-teen or early teen years and essentially forced to live in a non-Indian culture until adulthood.²² It is likely that some remnants of the tribal language still remained in the late 1700s, as well as skills like basketry, pottery making, and traditional methods of agriculture.²³ With the young men separated from their people, however, they would have had little or no opportunity to learn these skills.

F. Roy Johnson, a writer and historian who collected folklore and historical data from the Gates County region, recorded a story involving both the Chowan and the Buckland Plantation, some six miles north of Gatesville. According to his informant, Mrs. W. M. Riddick, shortly after the Revolutionary War General William Baker was owner of the prosperous Buckland plantation, which had been the site of the Indian school at Sarum. One morning, in a fit of pique, the General had his slaves whip a young Indian boy “who had been raised with slave children on a neighboring plantation” and who was found asleep beside one of the Buckland slave cabins.²⁴ The severity of the beating, done in spite of the pleas of the General’s wife and son, and the reluctance of the slaves, caused the boy to fall dead at the edge of the woods. Thereafter, the plantation seemed cursed; the General’s son soon died, crops failed, and a ghostly figure haunted the grounds. This story *may* have been based on some incident involving a bound out Chowan boy; however, no corroborating evidence of this incident has been found.²⁵

Although the Chowan Indians may have lived in a sparsely settled area, on their own land, it is clear that they had interactions with the non-Indian society around them. The county government was clearly aware of their existence, and they were expected to fulfill the same duties and obligations as anyone else. For example, they were expected to pay county taxes or at least list themselves for such, in the event they were able to pay. Often they were not. Blake Robins was an insolvent taxpayer in 1818; James B. Robins was one in 1823; and Noah Robins and John Robins were insolvents on the 1827 tax list.

When the Chowan people broke the laws of the State, they were prosecuted for it. When Bashford Robins produced a bastard child with Ann Jones, the county issued an order for his arrest on June 13, 1791. John and Darcus Robins incurred a debt to Henry Pugh in 1812, and were summoned to court when they did not pay it. In 1815, when

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Christian Robins was afraid that John Robins would “beat, wound, maim or kill her, or do her some bodily harm” he was forced to post a bond for good behavior. When John Sanders was accused of stealing a hog from Jacob Robins in October 1814, he was arrested. Several minor cases involving the Chowan appear in the Gates County court records of the early 1800s, usually for minor matters such as affray,²⁶ assault, or petty theft.

One of the more interesting court cases involving a Chowan Indian came from neighboring Perquimans County, NC, in the Spring term of court, 1850, when Blake Robins was charged with “illegally carrying firearms”, it being illegal for a “free person of color” to do so without having first obtained a license from the county court. The case is continued several times in Superior Court, until in Spring term 1852 a final notation of “noleprosique” is written in. It is likely that the court realized that Blake Robins, born and raised in Indian Town in Gates County, was not the sort of “free person of color” referred to by the law.

Some of the Indians were clearly attempting to make a living by farming. In particular, Lewis Robbins, an adult living in Indian Town in 1810, was still enumerated as a farmer in the 1850 Federal Census of Gates County. He was sued in 1821 by John Walton as one of the residents of Indian Town,²⁷ and later purchased 28 acres of land from Wm. W. Cowper and another tract of land consisting of 45 acres. He mortgaged these plots to John Riddick in 1845 and 1850 and lost both of them when he could not repay the deed of trust. In fact, in September of 1850 he lost not only the 45 acres of land, but also “four head of cattle, three sows and eight shoats, two beds and steads, and the necessary clothing, one grey horse, cart & wheels, crop of corn, peas and potatoes, all the household and kitchen furniture, one loom and gear (?), all the farming implements and other working tools and the property of every kind and description in the possession of the said Lewis.” He and his family were left with nothing. By 1860 he is enumerated as an 80 year old mulatto living with his 60 year old wife (?) Betsy adjacent to the household of Elisha Rooks in a small cluster of free mulatto Sawyers, Artises, and Rooks. The March 1862 Gates County will of John Willey, Jr. leaves “to my son John Willey, my Riddick and Shepard farms and the land where Lewis Robins now lives containing 800 acres.”

William Robins, son of James, also farmed, having gotten 50 acres from his father, James Robins. When his estate was settled in 1855, the inventory included: one old mare, two sows and nine pigs, one horse cart and wheels, one old cow, one old loom and wheel, two beds and

furniture, one cross cut saw, one looking glass, one lot of old crockery, two pine tables, five Windsor chairs, three plows and a variety of other tools and household goods worth a total of \$162.02.²⁸ While this seems like a trifling amount today, it was not too bad for a small farmer of that time and place, particularly one of Indian background.

It should be noted that the Chowan Indians retained their Indian identity, as least on paper, far longer than most other Indian tribes in the state. Aside from the documents showing who was living in Indian Town, there are the land sales up into the 1790s, the apprenticeship papers into the early 1800s, the Price-Strother Map of 1808 showing the Chowan Indians right where they were at the time,²⁹ and even a court case from Chowan County in 1811 identifying Nancy Robins as being “a free person of color of Indian extraction.”³⁰ Most of the other tribes had been stripped of their Indian identity 75 years or so earlier.

Arguably the final days of the communal life of the Chowan Indians began in May 1815, when the Court of Gates County issued a writ in favor of Henry Pugh, who had received a judgment against John Robbins and Darcus Robbins, two of the Indians from the Indian Town settlement. Their six acres of land was advertised for sale and publicly auctioned off on July 20, 1815, and John Walton, one of their neighbors, was the highest bidder. This meant that Walton was owner of six of the undivided 30 acres of the Chowan Indians’ land.

At that point, Walton began to push the Chowans to have the land divided, so he could claim the six acres that he won in court. On February 23, 1819, he also purchased “all my part, right, and interest to and in a certain piece or parcel of land situate, lying and being in the county of Gates and state aforesaid at a place called the Indian Town joining the lands of Nancy Robbins, Elizabeth Robbins, Sarah Robins and the said John Walton, containing by estimation five acres”³¹ from Christian Robins, who had moved to nearby Perquimans County. This gave Walton 11 acres out of the original 30.

In the February 1821 term of the Gates County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Walton filed the following claim, stating:

he is tenant in common with Sarah Robins, Nancy Robins, Elizabeth Robins, Theney Robins of Gates County, Lewis Robins of Pasquotank, and Judith Robins of Chowan in a place know and called by the name of Indian Town.... He has frequently called upon his cotenants in common aforesaid in the most friendly manner to consent to a partition of the said land according to the restrictive right and right and interest of each tenant in common, and your petitioner will hope that that the said defendants would

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have complied with this reasonable request.... That the said defendants intending and contriving to injure and oppress your petitioner in this behalf, have utterly refused to consent to a partition of the land aforesaid or any part thereof....³²

In May 1821, Walton also purchased the one acre share of Judith Robins (now living in Chowan County) she had received that from her mother Patience Robins.³³ This meant that Walton now had a claim to 12 acres out of the original 30 and possessed the largest share of the land. Walton was also a wealthy and politically well-connected landowner in Gates County, which probably expedited his acquisition of the last of the Chowan land.

By May 1821, Walton had filed a petition in the Gates County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for a division of the land. The suit was addressed to Sarah, Nancy, Elizabeth, Theney, Lewis, Judith, and Feasey Robins. A jury was impaneled and sworn, and it decided that “the petitioner was tenant in common with the defendants.”³⁴ The court ordered that a committee composed of George Sutton, Richard Bond, Henry Bond, Daniel Powell (whose land adjoined the Indian Town land to the south), and William Hinton, along with Israel Beeman, the county surveyor, “make a division of a certain piece of land lying in the county in a place known and called by the name of Indian Town ... among the claimants according to the above decree....” This survey and division was presented at the August 1821 term of Court, and divided the tract into six sections (see Figure 1). Then, section 1, that of Patience Robins, was subdivided into four parts among what were likely her children Judith, Lewis, Theney, and Feasey Robins. Walton had purchased Judith Robins’ one acre allotment on May 13, 1820, so this also went to him.³⁵

By May Term of Court, the defendants responded with an answer to Walton’s claim which is interesting, for one reason, because it gives some hints about who was living at Indian Town in 1820. It reads as follows:

State of North Carolina Gates County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions

3rd Monday of May 1821

The answer of Sarah Robins, Elizabeth Robins, Theney Robins, Lewis Robins, and Judith Robins to the petition of John Walton.

These respondents now and at all times (illegible) and reserving to themselves all manner of benefit of exception to the numerous errors and insufficiencies of petitioner’s petition contained, for answer thereto as for such as they are advised is material for them unto, they answer and say that they together with Rachel Sanders, James Robins, Jacob Robins, Nancy Martin,³⁶ James Bell Robins, Cilva Martin, Tamar Robins, Jacob Robins the

Younger, Blake Robins, Noah Robins,³⁷ John Robins, Kingston Robins, Seth Robins, and George Bennett, who are not parties in this petition, are the true and absolute proprietors and owners of the tract of land called the Indian Town, described in the petitioner's petition, but they utterly deny that the petitioner has any right, title, or interest in the same: and as this worshipful court will not interfere with the lands which have been transmitted to them from the original Indian possessors, whose descendants they are, they pray to be hence dismissed with their reasonable costs and charges most wrongfully sustained on this behalf.

A. M. Gatlin
Att'y for the debts.³⁸

To add insult to injury, Walton went back to court and filed another claim against the Indians in August 1821, suing them for \$18.05 for debt and \$1.87½ cents "for the cost and charges in said suit." He was successful, and the court then gave him the remainder of the Indian Town tract to pay the debt. This was the last of the communal land owned by the Chowans. The name of the area, however, would be remembered as Indian Town for at least another century, and it may be that some of the people continued to live on the land as tenants even after they lost ownership of it.

Looking for Indian Town

Repeated inquiries among Gates County residents made by telephone, email, and a personal visit to the area did not show any specific recollection of the location of Indian Town on the part of anyone, nor did any historic maps show anything useful. The closest any person could come was vaguely recalling the excavations made by David Phelps at 31GA1, the Roberts Wharf site on Bennett's Creek. While this site certainly represented *one* of the historic Chowan settlements, a preliminary examination of the deeds relating to the 30-acre tract called Indian Town in the early nineteenth century showed that the two sites did not seem to be in the same area of the county (although both were in the Indian Neck).

In the interest of historical accuracy, research was conducted to determine the location of Indian Town ca. 1782–1821. This involved roughly 4–5 weeks of studying and copying old deeds and plats from Chowan and Gates counties, comparing them to modern tax and topographical maps, reading existing historical accounts, examining old county maps, and talking to residents of the area. It became obvious that the name Indian Town had not continued in use as a geographic place name in any form, and while its location may have existed in oral

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tradition as late as 1915 or so,³⁹ it had been forgotten by the turn of the twenty-first century.

This meant using old deeds and surveys to locate the site, a process made more difficult due to changes in names of various roads and watercourses over the past 200 years. For example, Gabriel's Branch is one of the watercourses associated with many of the deeds that also mention Indian Town. It no longer exists. A road called "Indian Town Road" was frequently mentioned; if it exists in any form today, it is probably no more than an overgrown, nameless, dirt farm lane. The "Bennett's Creek Road" was finally determined to be part of modern route NC 37 in its long east-west stretch east of Gatesville, although it gradually became known as "the main road from Edenton to Gates Court House" or just "the main road". The Gates County court house was not built until about 1781, and even after that it took time for the new name to gradually come into general use.

Since the process of discovering the site would make an instructive paper in and of itself, and take up more space than available here, suffice to say that it was primarily by examining the land of John Walton and Daniel Powell, the Chowans' immediate neighbors, and the run of adjacent streams, and then comparing those to a plat of Indian Town developed from a survey, that the determination was made. The final key was the 1816 deed to John Walton from his father, which reads in part "Beginning at the Indian Swamp at Bennett's Creek Road, running along said road a westerly course to Hinton's line, then along Hinton's line to the Indian Town...."⁴⁰ Indian Swamp runs into what was then Bennett's Creek Road at a pretty specific point, which gave us a starting point. Using this starting point, along with the other deeds and a topographical map which showed a branch off of Flat Creek near the Bennett's Creek Road that would fit well with the configuration of the plat of Indian Town, it was possible to locate the site on the ground (see Figure 1).

The site was visited in December 2012, and at present is a low, cut-over section of flat, overgrown land adjacent to a rather expensive modern housing development a few miles east of Gatesville on Route 37 (Figure 2). At present we have no idea what the settlement pattern was at Indian Town; it would make an interesting archaeological study, particularly in light of the similar work over the past few years at the Catawba Nation in South Carolina by Steve Davis and Brett Riggs of UNC Chapel Hill's Research Laboratories of Archaeology.



Figure 2. Part of the old Chowan Reservation on Indian Neck Road in south-central Gates County, North Carolina. Most of the old reservation is farmland today.

There likely was one of two possible patterns of settlement at Indian Town. Households may have been dispersed over the entire 30 acres, or they may have been more or less concentrated in a smaller area within the tract, more or less adjacent to each other. This latter settlement pattern was documented at the Barkhamsted Lighthouse site in northwestern Connecticut, an early nineteenth-century village of mixed blood Narragansett Indians that formed and disintegrated at roughly the same time as Indian Town in Gates County (Feder 1994:158). If we assume that the 1810 Census showing nine households and 34 individuals is accurate, then the potential exists for at least nine separate structures, not counting outbuildings. Only archaeological investigation in the field will shed any light on how the Indian Town community was arranged spatially. Since the land base at Indian Town was not large

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enough to support the population in 1834, the inhabitants must have supported themselves in some other way. Working for neighbors would be one way, but there also exists the possibility that they supplemented their income by producing items like baskets or pottery for sale to their neighbors.⁴¹ Such was the case with the Barkhamsted Lighthouse Indians and members of the Catawba Nation (Riggs et al. 2006) at roughly the same time period. Archaeological investigation at Indian Town would be able to address this question more directly, at least as regards production of ceramics

The Bloodline Continues

Although the Chowan community dispersed, families did not quickly forget where they had come from. In 1915, the United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs received a letter from Mary L. Teasley of Portsmouth, Va., on behalf of her mother which states in part:

I am forced to appeal to you for justice in behalf of my aged and widowed mother and children who are the descendants of Blake Robins and Nellie Robins⁴² a tribe of Indians who once inhabited northeastern North Carolina prior to their removal to Indian reservations out to the territories to the West by the U. S. Government several years back, who possessed thousands of acres of land in Gates County, N. C. and it's neighboring sections and which is now held by unrightfully and unlawful owners....

Ms. Teasley requested that the Justice Department investigate the matter and see that the land "is divided amongst the rightful heirs of Nellie and Blake Robins."

This letter was filed with the Guion Miller Commission applications concerning the Eastern Cherokee, since Ms. Teasley had applied to the Commission in 1908. No action was ever taken on the issue of the land ownership.⁴³ Ms. Teasley's mother Sarah Smith Green had also previously applied to the Miller Commission. The connection to the Chowan Indians becomes clearer in the mother's application. She stated she was born in 1843 in "Indian Town", Gates County, North Carolina, a daughter of Willis and Sarah (Smith) Robins, and a grand-daughter of Blake Robins.

Also applying was Betsie Smith, born 1833, of Gatesville, a daughter of Blake Robbins and Hulda Smith. Her attorney, A. Pilston Godwin, who assisted most of the Chowan applicants, gave this account of her family: "she is a direct descendant from the Indian on her father's side. Cherokee. The Robins were free black Cherokee Indians and lived in what is known in Gates County as Indian Town"⁴⁴

When James Mooney of the Smithsonian Institute conducted a survey in 1889 seeking information on Indian remains and groups in the Upper South, he received several responses of interest from the area of the old Chowan Reservation. Two of the three responses mentioned specific individuals of Indian ancestry living in the vicinity of Gatesville, and the third spoke generally of mixed natives in the vicinity. All three of the individuals mentioned — Jethro Eure, his brother Isaac Eure, and Allen Reed — are described as having significant Indian ancestry, with estimates ranging from one-quarter to two-thirds (sic) Indian. The Eures are, in most censuses and on their death certificates, identified as children of “James Bell”, born ca. 1778 by his white or mixed-blood wife, Nancy Eure.⁴⁵ The children are identified by either surname, depending on the particular census. On their Gates County death certificates Jethro and Isaac are described racially as “mulatto” and “yellow”, respectively, and in at least two Federal censuses, the James Bell family is living within two households of one of the Indian Robins: Noah Robins in 1830 and Benjamin Robins in the 1850 Gates County census. Both Jethro and his brother Isaac Eure applied to the Guion Miller Commission as Cherokee descendants in 1908, and both were rejected for failure to “show a genuine connection to the Eastern Cherokee.”⁴⁶

On both of their Guion Miller applications, the Eures state that their father was James Robins, instead of Bell, and their mother Nancy Eure. This name confusion is clarified a bit by a careful reading of the Chowan Indians’ response to John Walton’s 1821 Court complaint, which identifies one of the Indians at Indian Town as “James Bell Robbins”.⁴⁷ In a letter dated June 30, 1909, from Jethro Eure to Guion Miller, he states:

My father’s name was James Robins. Died May 6, 1858. His age at then was 78. The son of Sallie Robbins. Here is a list of names of some of the old Indians: Nannie Robins, Betsie Robins, Jacob Robins, John Robins, Lewis Robins, Seth Robins. Some of these are those that the government gave land but were driven from it without being compensated for their lands.... My Indian name is Jethro Robbins; my English name is Jethro Eure....

Jethro and Isaac had a brother, Calvin, who, when he registered to vote on October 25, 1902 indicated that he descended from James Robins.⁴⁸ Calvin did not apply to the Miller Commission.

Some of these applicants were still living in the vicinity of the old Indian Town when they applied, either at Vivian, Willow, or Gatesville. Vivian was a Post Office less than a mile east of Indian Town (Figure 3). Willow was a couple miles further east. Table 2 lists the Guion Miller

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Figure 3. The location of Indian Town on a mid-twentieth century map of Gates County, NC. The site is approximately two miles east of Gatesville and just north of NC 37, in the curve of a small branch that is a tributary of Flat Branch. The road to the west is Lowe Road, and the dark line northeast of the site was once a road that ran down to NC 37, and may have been what was referred to as the Indian Town Road.

applicants who were of Chowan ancestry. An examination of the 1870 Federal Census of Gates County shows at least four readily identifiable Chowan families living within a mile or two of the old Indian Town tract.⁴⁹

Much has been written about the Robins family, and in some ways they seem to have retained memories of their Indian identity longer than some of the other families, yet with more work, lines of Bennetts, Beasleys, and Hitters may be traced out. In 1830, George Bennett and his wife were still living in Indian Town, next door to Kedar Powell, son of their old neighbor Daniel Powell and adjacent to Nancy Robins. The Bennetts were gone by 1840. Who were the other three persons living in George Bennett's household in 1810, and where did they go? Are their descendants still living in the area, or did they move away? Where are

Table 2. Known Chowan Applicants to the Guion Miller Commission.

Name	Location
Jethro Eure	Willow, Gates County, NC
Isaac Eure	Hobbsville, Gates County, NC
Sarah Elizabeth Greene	Gatesville, Gates County, NC
Sarah Green Butler	Gates, Gates County, NC
Nancy V. Green Butler	Gates, Gates County, NC
Margaret J. Burke	Vivian, Gates County, NC
Nancy V. Eure	Willow, Gates County, NC
Junius Chisholm Eure	Willow, Gates County, NC
Mary L. Green Teasley	Portsmouth, VA
Ella A. Green Ruffin	Portsmouth, VA
Betsie Smith	Gatesville, Gates County, NC
Blake Smith	Gatesville, Gates County, NC
Joseph Smith	Gatesville, Gates County, NC
Ella Knight	Selwin, Gates County, NC
Martha Knight	Selwin, Gates County, NC
Charles W. Greene	Gatesville, Gates County, NC
Edward Lorenzo Greene	Gatesville, Gates County, NC
Wallace Greene	Gatesville, Gates County, NC

the descendants of the Hoyter/Hiter family, who were once chief men of the tribe? They do not appear on the 1790 sale of the last of the reservation land; however, there was a “free colored” family of five headed by Elizabeth Hitom in nearby Currituck County in the 1790 North Carolina census, and in 1800 it had been replaced by the household of six headed by Abraham Hiter. By 1850, non-white Hiteres were scattered throughout northeastern North Carolina. It is possible that these families descend in part from King Hoyter and his family, although more work would be needed to confirm or deny this.

When initial fieldwork was done in Gates County in 1991, area residents remembered little about the Chowans. What was remembered by some of the White members of the community was that: (1) they had for the most part intermarried with local Black families; (2) their descendants were known for “root doctoring” and casting spells; and (3) around the time of the Civil War, some of them were attending church

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Figure 4. Mary Emma Eure, 1876–1950, was the grand-daughter of James Bell Robins and Nancy Eure of Indian Town, Gates County, NC. Her father Isaac Eure was one of the Guion Miller Cherokee applicants. She lived most of her life on the old reservation lands in Gates County, where she is buried at Lebanon Grove Church.

services at the “Old Chapel” at what is today known as Old Chapel Crossroads near Mintonville, on the east side of Catherine’s Creek north of Old Town Landing. They came to church by wagon from their homes in Indian Neck, where some of them remained as tenants on the neighboring farms.

As of 2014, there are still some Chowan descendants living on the old Reservation lands off Carter Road, southeast of Gatesville. Several families of Eures, descendants of James Bell Robins by his son Isaac Eure, own land less than a mile from the old Indian Town. Isaac had lived near his brothers Jethro and Calvin on land adjoining or near that of Nathan Parker since at least the mid-1800s.⁵⁰ The 1910 Census shows that Betsie Smith, daughter of Blake and Hulda Smith Robins, at that time lived just up the road from the Eures.⁵¹ A visit to one of the Eure descendants confirmed that his grandmother, Mary Emma Eure (Figure 4), lived just south of the intersection of Carter road and Indian Neck Road in a small log cabin on the west side of the road, where her father Isaac Eure had been given 110 acres of land by his mother Nancy Eure in 1874.⁵² Mr. Eure knew that his grandmother was of Indian descent. He also related how she used to plant flowers at each end of her vegetable garden to “sidetrack the butterflies” and presumably other harmful insects. Later conversations with other Eure family members showed that Emma Eure claimed to be of Cherokee descent, had hair down to her

waist, and acted as a traditional healer for family members who were hurt or sick.⁵³

It is possible that some of the old reservation land remained in Indian hands throughout the nineteenth century. The 110 acres mentioned above that was given by Nancy Eure to her son Isaac Eure in 1874 was in the Indian Neck and may have been land that was owned by James Bell Robins, Isaac's father, during his lifetime. Likewise, in 1839 William Robins sold 50 acres of land to James T. Freeman described as "adjoining the lands of said Freeman, Isaac Hyatt, Noah Rountree, and Nathan Parker...." This same tract was noted in 1837 as "the land devised to me on the death of my father James Robins...."⁵⁴ So, the family of James and Nancy Eure Robins owned land in the Indian Neck that was part of the old reservation prior to 1837, and this researcher has not been able to locate a deed documenting their purchase of that land. Further work may show continuous Indian ownership of the land from the reservation period up until the mid-twentieth century, when the 110-acre tract was divided and sold off by descendants of Isaac Eure. More work remains to be done on this topic.

Other Chowan descendants made their way to Hertford County, where their descendants joined in the mixed Indian communities at Little California, Winton, and Archertown. Noah Robins, after the sale of Indian Town, remained in Gates County until at least 1831 when, at the August term of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, he, Polly Robins, John Robins, Nancy Robins, and Riddick Price were all granted certificates proving them to be free people of color. In the wake of the Nat Turner slave uprising that had recently taken place in nearby Southampton County, Virginia, the Robins probably felt it prudent to get the certificates. It is possible that at that point they were preparing to leave the Indian Town area for places where their background was not known, and desired the protection the papers would give them.

By 1850 Noah Robins was in Bertie County, enumerated as a 47-year-old Black male,⁵⁵ with his wife Susania (age 23),⁵⁶ son Noah (age 21), and son Jackson (age 2). His presumed kinsman Thomas Robins was in adjoining Hertford County with his family, including a wife who seems to have been a Reynolds, although his first wife in Gates County was Precie Robbins.

In 1860 Noah Robbins was still in Bertie, near the town of Colerain, living and farming with sons Jackson, William, and James. His son Noah was also farming land next to him in his own household. Adjacent to them was the household of his cousin Parker D. Robins (Figure 5),

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Figure 5. Parker Davis Robbins was an inventor, Union soldier, carpenter, Reconstruction-era politician, shipwright, and Chowan Indian. He died at his home near Magnolia in Duplin County, NC in 1917. Photo courtesy of the NC Museum of History.

whose occupation is given as “mechanic”.⁵⁷ Parker D. Robins (and several of his relatives) served with the US Colored Troops of the Union Army during the Civil War. Parker Robbins was postmaster of Harrellsville during Reconstruction, a successful farmer and businessman, and recipient of several patents for various inventions after the war. He also built houses and, in 1888, built a steamboat named the “St. Peter”. In 1877 he moved to Duplin County, North Carolina, where he lived until 1917, dying on his farm near Magnolia.⁵⁸

By 1880, Noah’s son Andrew Jackson Robins had moved to Hertford County, and was head of his own household (Figure 6). He would eventually leave a large number of descendants.⁵⁹ Many of the present-day Indians and Indian descendants of the Hertford County area descend from these Robins, but at some point most of them began spelling their name with two “b”s as Robbins.⁶⁰

While the Robbins today account for a large percentage of the known Chowan descendants, there are certainly others. In 1991, when I initially began investigating the connection between the Meherrin and the Chowan Indians, through the Robbins family,⁶¹ I had the opportunity to interview an elderly gentleman living near the community of Eure in southwestern Gates County, who claimed descent from King Hoyter/Hiter of the Chowan Indians. Mr. Raleigh Taylor, who has now passed on, was 85 years of age when I visited him at his home in 1991,



Figure 6. Andrew Jackson Robbins' grave at Philippi Baptist Church near Winton, NC. He was a descendant of Noah Robbins of Indian Town.

and seemed to have an excellent memory and a distinct pride in his Chowan ancestry.⁶² He stated that his grandmother, Frances Ann Lynch, was a Chowan Indian whose Native name was “Antles”, and that her mother and father were called “Cess” and “Ceress”, which he said meant “King and Queen of the Corn” (Figure 7). Mr. Taylor said his mother could speak the Indian language, but had not wanted him to learn it.

He said his grandfather, Harold Taylor, had been murdered by the Ku Klux nightriders for having married Frances Lynch, she being an Indian and he White, and that his grandmother had taught at a school near Sarum in Indian Neck where “Whites, Indians, and Coloreds” all attended. Frances Lynch had an English name because she was raised by a White family in the area. Photographs in his possession of his mother as a young woman, and of his grandmother seem to bear out the tradition of Indian ancestry.⁶³

Other Chowan descendants from the Blake Robins line also arrived in Hertford and became part of the Indian community there in the Winton area. William T. Butler, son of William and Sarah Green Butler (Figure 8), moved there, but always shared with his grandchildren that his people came from “the old Bennett’s Creek reservation”, and remembered his grandmother walking home from the fish market in Gatesville⁶⁴ with a

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Figure 7. Frances Ann Lynch Taylor (1834–1910), maternal grandmother of Raleigh Taylor, of Gates County, NC. Her Indian name was said to have been “Antles.” Photo courtesy of Mr. Richard Phelps.



Figure 8. Sarah Green Butler was a Chowan Indian, descended from Blake Robins of Indian Town, and has descendants among the Meherrin-Chowanoke of Hertford County. Photo courtesy of the Meherrin-Chowanoke Indian Tribe.



Figure 9. The above photo shows Pleasant Butler and his wife Nancy Green Butler with their children, ca. 1900. Nancy was a Chowan Indian who applied to the Guion Miller Commission in 1908. She was a descendant of Blake Robins of Indian Town. Photo courtesy of the Meherrin-Chowanoke Indian Tribe.

basketful of fish balanced on her head.⁶⁵ There were at least three different family lines of Chowan who moved to Hertford County and added descendants to the modern community: Thomas Robins, Noah Robins, and Blake Robins (Figure 9).

So, the Chowan are still with us, not in an organized community on their old reservation lands but as Native American descendants like hundreds, if not thousands, of other North Carolinians today, some of whom retain an Indian identity while others have forgotten from whence their people came. But while they remain, the Chowan can never be truly said to have disappeared.

Notes

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offered suggestions on how to write this so that normal people might understand what I was talking about.

¹ There are a number of contemporary websites which greatly exaggerate the number of Chowan Indian family surnames, based on the error of assuming that every early “free colored” family in Gates County was Chowan in origin, where there is no reason to make such an assumption. Equally questionable is the practice of “theorizing” that a specific family has a Chowan Indian ancestor because one of their non-Indian male ancestors living in Gates County has a spouse who cannot be identified and therefore was “probably” a Chowan Indian female. This is simply wishful thinking based on little or no evidence.

² There are currently two groups of Indian people using the Meherrin name in North Carolina: the state-recognized Meherrin Indian Nation, which for all practical purposes (until recently) based its descent from a single woman, Sally Smith Lewis (1834–1909), who is identified in a single 1958 newspaper article as “a full blooded Indian, obviously a Meherrin”; and the Meherrin-Chowanoke Indian Nation, which descends in part from the Robins family of Chowan Indians and claims descent as well from the Meherrin. In point of actual fact, due in all likelihood to the Hertford county records having burned not once but twice in the mid-nineteenth century, neither group can readily document descent from anyone identified in a pre-1900 record as a Meherrin Indian, although they probably do have Meherrin ancestry along with probable Chowan, Yeopim, Tuscarora, and Nottoway ancestry. Both groups are related by blood and split after a disagreement over leadership and the concept of amending the tribal name to “Meherrin-Chowanoke”.

³ Although other family lines were present at Indian Town, notably the Bennetts, only the Robins held title to the property. It should also be noted that some contemporary writers seem to assume that all Robins found in the early Chowan/Gates county records are Chowan Indians. This may not be the case. There are, specifically, the families of John Robins Sr. and John Jr. found on the 1790 census that are enumerated as white. They later moved to nearby Perquimans County where they and their descendants are still enumerated as white. There *is* an Indian John Robins who signs a deed of sale for part of the reservation in 1734, but he is *probably* born too early to be the one mentioned in the 1790 census (Chowan County Deed Book W-1, p. 250). In addition, one Bashford Robbins is in the 1790 Gates County census as the head of a household of three persons: one white male 16-24 years old and two free people of color whose ages and genders not stated. John and Bashford also owned land in the vicinity of the Indian Robins, just to further muddy the water. The relationship, if any, of John and Bashford to the Indian Robins is yet to be determined.

⁴ Roberts purchased approximately the southern third of Meltear’s grant along the creek. This *may* be where Roberts Wharf is today, but having been unable to pinpoint “Indian Gut” off Bennett’s Creek; it is difficult to say with certainty.

⁵ There appear to be two areas named “Indian Swamp” in Gates County — this one and then one 5–6 miles north of it. The two areas are just a bit too far apart to be part of the same feature, in all likelihood.

⁶ Since the survey of the old reservation does not seem to have survived, the northern limits are not determined. What is clear is that pretty much everything on Indian Neck south of what is now NC route 37 was once part of the lands laid aside for the Chowan Indians.

⁷ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 3, p. 149.

⁸ Note the use of the plural form, inferring that there was more than just the tract being purchased by Harrell and Lewis. See below regarding James Robins' land in Indian Neck in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

⁹ General Assembly Session Records, Nov-Dec 1790, Box 2, NC State Archives, Raleigh.

¹⁰ It is even possible that Martin was himself Indian or part Indian. Jethro Martin would later marry, on October 8, 1806, a Nancy Robins with Jacob Robins as bondsman (Gates County Marriage Bonds).

¹¹ This is an attitude which continues to the present day in the mind of a certain segment of the public, differentiating between "real" Indians and ones who are simply asserting an undeserved ethnic identity.

¹² Gates County Deed Book, vol. 3, p. 207.

¹³ There may have been other Chowan, or perhaps Meherrin, living in Gates County. F. Roy Johnson notes the tradition regarding Fort Island that "People of full Indian blood lived upon this island until a few decades before the Civil War", in his 1965 book *Tales From Old Carolina* (p. 23), but he provides no details on surnames or tribal affiliation.

¹⁴ Gates County Will Book #1, Will of Henry Hill, Jr., January 24, 1781.

¹⁵ This name may be an error; as later deeds consistently refer to Seabrook Hinton as the adjacent landowner. The Hintons were old property owners in the area.

¹⁶ Gates County Deed Book, vol. "A", p. 33.

¹⁷ Gates County Deed Book, vol. "A" part 2, p. 46.

¹⁸ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 3, p. 207.

¹⁹ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 4, p. 314.

²⁰ Gates County Court Minutes, February Term, 1791.

²¹ *Edenton (NC) Gazette*, November 30, 1831, p. 4. He is probably the grandson of Keziah Price of Indian Town.

²² I have seen no Gates County apprentice bonds for Indian females, although some Chowan females may have been bound out from time to time.

²³ The Nottoway, Pamunkey, Nanticoke, and Choptank languages all were remembered (if not spoken conversationally) well into the early to mid-nineteenth century. The first two were spoken in southern Virginia, the third in Sussex County, Delaware, and the last in the Locust Neck section near Vienna, Maryland. These communities were not greatly different in size or social situation from that of the settlement at Indian Town. Word lists were collected at Pamunkey and Nottoway in 1844 and 1820, by Rev. E. A. Dalrymple and Peter DuPonceau, respectively. The Nanticoke language was still remembered by Lydia Clark, an elderly Nanticoke at Oak Orchard, Delaware, prior to her death in 1856, and William Vans Murray collected a Choptank vocabulary from the female leader of the nearly vanished tribe, Mrs. Mulberry, in 1792.

²⁴ While it is clear that there were Indian slaves in old Chowan County, there is no evidence that any of them were Chowanoke. They were more likely from the Caribbean or New England. William Hinton, grandfather of the Seabrook Hinton whose land adjoined Indian Town, had as part of his 1736 estate “an Indian wench named Moll”.

²⁵ F. Roy Johnson Collection, NC State Archives, box labeled “Indians”. No date given for interview with Mrs. Riddick, and no informant info other than name. It is presented simply as an interesting anecdote.

²⁶ Generally, an affray is when two or more individuals decide to engage in a public brawl.

²⁷ Gates County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, May Term 1821.

²⁸ Gates County Records of Estates, NC State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

²⁹ It is the writer’s belief that many early maps of North Carolina are unreliable regarding Native settlements. It frequently can be demonstrated with other records that Native communities had dissolved and yet are still being shown on maps years later. Many of these maps appear to simply be copies, with varying degrees of modification, or earlier maps. Jonathan Price and John Strother, however, are correct in their placement of the Chowan Indians in the area of Gates County where they have located them on the map. There is even a later map reference to the Chowan Indians, that of the Henry S. Tanner’s “Map of North and South Carolina” dated 1823, but this is probably a regurgitation of the 1808 Price-Strother Map.

³⁰ Chowan County Superior Court Minute Docket 1810–1813, p. 39, October 2, 1811. She had stabbed to death a slave who became involved in a scuffle with what appears to have been her daughter, Kitty Robins, at a “frolic” held at Kitty Robins’ house.

³¹ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 10, p. 523.

³² Civil cases Involving Land: Gates County 1820, NC State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

³³ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 10, p. 523.

³⁴ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 10, p. 44.

³⁵ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 10, p. 523. It is not known how Walton was able, in May 1820, to purchase Judith Robin’s share of the land prior to the actual division of the land which took place over a year later in August 1821. Perhaps he was anticipating a successful suit.

³⁶ Originally Nancy Robins, she married Jethro Martin October 8, 1806. Gates County Marriage Bond. Jacob Robins was the bondsman.

³⁷ Ancestor of most of the Robins family found among the contemporary Meherrin-Chowanoke Indians in and around Hertford County, North Carolina. This record is the only (known) source demonstrating the connection of Noah Robins to the Chowan Tribe, thus establishing a connection between the contemporary Meherrin-Chowanoke and a historic Indian tribe indigenous to North Carolina.

³⁸ Gates County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, May term 1821.

³⁹ The Guion Miller Cherokee applicants like Jethro Eure, Isaac Eure, and Sarah Green knew where it was prior to World War I, but they seem to have been the last generation to do so.

⁴⁰ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 10, p. 220.

⁴¹ John Pipkin's April 1745 Chowan County, NC estate inventory lists, among other items, "one Indian pan", indicating that Native pottery was still being made at least as late as the mid-eighteenth century. Pipkin lived in the area of Chowan that became Gates County in 1779. Chowan County Court Minutes, 1746-1748.

⁴² The information in this letter is a little unclear. The only Nellie Robins so far located was the wife of William Robins, who appears to have been a James prior to marriage. Blake Robins' wife was named Hulda Smith, and many of their children went by the Smith surname. Nellie outlived William, so Ms. Teasley may have been claiming on behalf of two family lines.

⁴³ Guion Miller Applications, Rejected Application nos. 32353 & 34391. Several of Mary Teasley's siblings applied as well.

⁴⁴ Guion Miller Application no. 30297 (rejected).

⁴⁵ On his application, Jethro Eure names his maternal grandparents as "Bilsie Eure and Sallie Robbins, so he and his brother Isaac may have been Chowan on both sides.

⁴⁶ Guion Miller Applications nos. 32354 and 32355, respectively.

⁴⁷ Names were not standardized until the states began issuing birth certificates in the early twentieth century, and so changing one's name was usually just a matter of doing so publicly, without resorting to legal channels.

⁴⁸ Gates County Permanent Registration of Voters, 1902-1908, NC Department of Archives and History. Calvin Eure had to name an ancestor who voted in 1867, or to have been a voter himself in 1867, in order to register himself. This was known as voting under the "Grandfather Clause". In point of fact, Calvin Eure was old enough to have been a voter himself, so it is unknown as to why he had to list an ancestor. His brother Jethro is listed as a voter himself.

⁴⁹ US Federal Census of 1870, Gates County, Mintonville Township, households 16 (Jethro Eure), 34 (Isaac Bell), and 36 (Calvin Bell), all sons of James Bell Robins. The fourth household is just at the town limits of Gatesville, and is that of James Green, no. 88 Gatesville Township.

⁵⁰ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 23, page 271 shows that on July 26, 1859, Calvin Eure purchased 35 acres of land from Nathan Parker. Gates County Special Proceedings to the Superior Court Book 1, p.161 shows that when Nathan Parker's land was divided in January 1908 it bordered the land of Calvin Eure and "Isaac Bell".

⁵¹ 1910 Federal Census Gates County, Mintonville Township. Isaac Eure is household 223 and includes his daughter Mary Davis and five children; Blake and Joseph Smith are households 208 and 209, respectively.

⁵² Conversation with Mr. Adolph Eure, 74 years old, Gatesville, NC, on February 13, 2013. Mr. Eure also related how when he was a young boy just starting school, his

family stopped walking to Hinton Grove School near the home place because of the numerous black bears in the vicinity.

⁵³ Interview on February 20, 2013, with Daisy Eure and Mildred Eure, Gatesville, NC; great-granddaughters of Isaac Eure.

⁵⁴ Gates County Deed Book, vol. 16, p. 101.

⁵⁵ Census enumerators often were not terribly concerned with getting the ethnicity of the families 100% accurate, and in 1850 the form did not offer “Indian” as a choice. It is also possible that Noah was of mixed Indian and Black ancestry. Few American Indian communities in North Carolina are ever enumerated as Indian prior to the early twentieth century, and some not until even later.

⁵⁶ Probably a second wife, given the makeup of the household.

⁵⁷ Households 331, 330, and 332, respectively. Bertie County 1860 Census.

⁵⁸ Interestingly, some of his neighbors believed him to have been a Portuguese, according to notes in the Rodney Barfield Collection at the NC State Archives, Raleigh (Parker D. Robbins File).

⁵⁹ He married three times: Harriett Hayes (1882), Sally Reynolds, and Susan Archer (1896).

⁶⁰ There is no need here to go into great detail regarding the Robbins family in Hertford County. Mr. Marvin Jones and the Chowan Discovery Group have done a far better and more comprehensive job than I could. Readers who desire more historical and genealogical detail on the Robbins family and its branches in Hertford County would do well to consult the Group’s website at <http://www.Chowandiscovery.org>.

⁶¹ At the request of then Meherrin Chief Earl Pierce.

⁶² For all intents and purposes, however, he undoubtedly would have been considered a White man in the community.

⁶³ That and the story of the murder of his grandfather by the Ku Klux Klan over the matter of intermarriage did not seem to be the kind of thing he would have created out of whole cloth. His story is given to allow readers to form their own conclusions, and no attempt has been made to verify any of what Mr. Taylor said.

⁶⁴ Presumably Gatesville, since they were living near there.

⁶⁵ Conversation with his grand-daughter, Denyce Chavis Hall, on February 7, 2013.

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DIVERSITY IN DÉCOR: FIREPLACE TILES AND MURALS FROM THE OVERHILLS ESTATE ON FORT BRAGG

by

Linda F. Carnes-McNaughton

Abstract

The Overhills Estate became property of the United States government in 1997. Previously the estate was a private, exclusive leisure and sports home for the vacationing Rockefeller family and their special guests, and later a working farm. Several residences were built on the estate, along with support structures and landscape features geared towards recreational activities of seasonal visitors. At its pinnacle, the furnishings of these domestic buildings represented affluence. Of particular interest were built-in decorative elements, some dating to the late seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries, which remained *in situ* once the estate changed ownership. These tiles and murals testify to a penchant for indoor art. As the buildings pass into the archaeological record, destroyed by cultural and natural processes, the remains of these artworks now become artifacts of remembrance.

In 1997, the United States Army, in their effort to create a land buffer on the north edge of Fort Bragg Military Installation, purchased a large and unusual tract of land from members of the famous Rockefeller family. This tract, situated north of the Lower Little River, is located in the Sandhills region of North Carolina. What began as an exclusive hunt club in the early twentieth century evolved into a secluded winter resort home for the Rockefellers and their guests, and included over 58 structures (e.g., homes, cottages, quarters, a lodge, barns, stables, and dog kennels) and dozens of landscape features (e.g., a lake, a golf course, a polo arena, riding trails, tennis and handball courts, gardens, and animal pens) situated on 10,000 acres of pine lands (Figure 1).

Overhills, at its peak of operation as a private estate, grew to nearly 40,000 acres, but after the Great Depression of the late 1920s and 1930s was reduced to a core area, which remained intact for another eight decades. From its humble beginnings in the 1900–1910 era, this core area evolved from the nineteenth-century turpentine plantation of Daniel McDiarmaid and his descendants. As the wealthy northerners began to explore and appreciate the wild flora and fauna of the Sandhills, they



Figure 1. Aerial view of the Overhills Estate, ca. 1938, showing the golf course, railroad, and The Hill complex of houses. Courtesy of North Carolina State Archives.

also grew to enjoy the mild climates of this region. Outdoor activities on the vast, undeveloped landscape took the form of traditionally British specialized sports, such as golf, polo, fox hunting, and quail hunting (Figure 2). During the decade from 1910 to 1920, noted Scottish golf course architect Donald Ross was commissioned to lay out a private course for the family. He later went on to achieve great fame as the designer of several premier courses in America.

Percy Avery Rockefeller, nephew of John D. Rockefeller, became the principal landowner in 1922 and began regular seasonal residence on the property. Percy and his wife Isabel were responsible for the construction of new houses on the estate, including Croatan Lodge (Figure 3). In winter and spring, they and their guests would descend on the secluded estate by trains accessed by a private rail line from Sanford. Fox hunting, horseback riding, and outdoor sport occupied their time in the pines. Purebred horses and hounds required exclusive care and tending, which involved hired personnel to maintain (Irwin and O'Shea 2009:1–27). As Percy and Isabel Rockefeller shared their love for the outdoors with their family and descendants, the Overhills Estate became

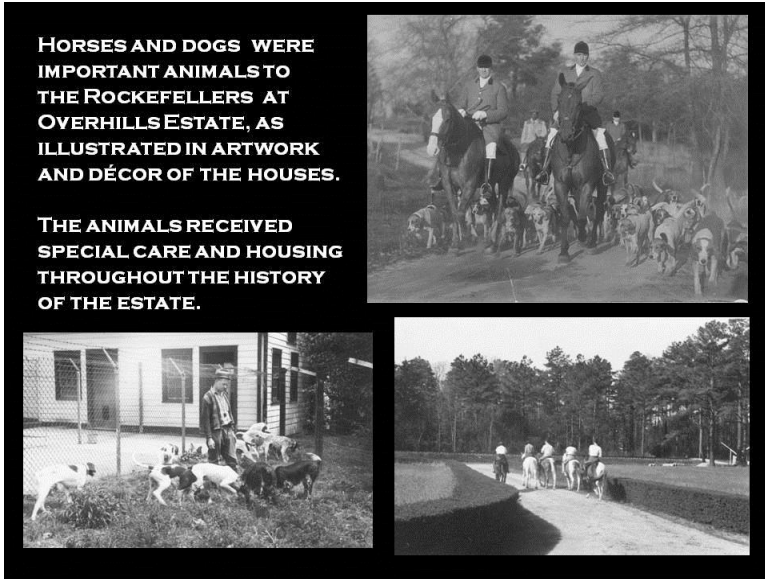


Figure 2. Composite photos, ca. 1930s–1940s era, showing the hounds and horses ready for the fox hunting, the dog kennels, and recreational horseback riding, all favorite pastimes of the Rockefeller family. Photos from Overhills Document Collection (ODC), on file at the Fort Bragg CRMP.



Figure 3. Croatan Lodge (built 1920s) front view, ca. 1996. Photo from ODC, Fort Bragg CRMP.

a special place of fond memories passed on to multiple generations. Avery Rockefeller and his wife Ann later built another residence called Birdsong, aptly named for their favorite past-time—bird watching!

People, Place, and Memory

For the families who owned this place and the families who worked as their hired help, they shared experiences and knowledge that constituted a kind of community. Their collective memories of Overhills form an apparent “place consciousness,” with the common denominator being the people who lived, visited, or worked here (Anderson 2004:255–256; Van Dyke and Alcock 2003:5–6). While not a town or formal settlement, Overhills was nonetheless a well-defined setting. Irwin and O’Shea (2009:1), in their oral history study of the property, remark that “its geographic boundaries were fixed, though not necessarily conspicuous.” They go on to describe Overhills as a “place controlled by a certain family through time, with a continuity of purpose; the creation of space in which the central operation was generally related to the practice of outdoor activities” (Irwin and O’Shea 2009:1). Many of those former residents and workers interviewed for the oral history project remembered it as a place rich with a historical built environment and natural and agricultural landscapes, meaningful to their collective past. Testimonials by invited guests and family members recorded in the numerous Guest Books from the 1920s through the 1990s (now housed in the CRMP Archives) provide a rich tapestry of just how they felt about this setting and their experience within it. The longer Overhills persisted as a large Rockefeller property, the more it became steeped in history, and the richer the “sense of place” became. As revealed in this current study, their persistent, strong desire to bring the “outdoors” indoors became the underlying theme of their dwelling décor.

The *archaeological study of memory* explores this person-place relationship derived from how humans create, modify, and move through a spatial milieu or, put simply, how the role of place shapes and influences human identity. In studies by cultural geographers, the dialectic between people and places has been described as profoundly “spatial, indeed palatial, with identity being influential and influenced by its inhabited material places” (Anderson 2004:255). This perspective recognizes the context and the “passage of time in place” as integral to human existence (Casey 1987). In this way, places such as Overhills, Croatan Lodge, or Birdsong House are not just passive stages on which actions happen; instead, they are the medium that impinge on, configure, and facilitate these processes. Places, then, are not only a medium but

also an outcome of action, producing and being produced through human manipulation. In this way, the *in situ* artwork visible in Croatan Lodge and Birdsong House, purchased or commissioned, testify to this person-place relationship that the Rockefellers (and their guests) enjoyed for eight decades at this special retreat. As this artwork, the cultural artistic expression of *their* world, now transitions from the built environment into the archaeological realm, what can it tell us about this place and those people?

The Artwork of Overhills

Croatan Lodge, the largest and grandest dwelling on the estate, served the Rockefeller family for several generations (Figure 3). Designed and built for Isabel and Percy Rockefeller, their access to and appreciation for global markets through their travels and international connections provided a rich array of furnishings and styles. Among the many guests was a young self-taught and naturalist illustrator from Greenwich, Connecticut, who worked with world-class artists like Roger Tory Peterson (of Audubon fame) and Percival Rousseau (whose portraits of hounds and horses hang in museums and private collections). This young artist was Ethel Peterson, affectionately called “Miss Pete” by the Rockefeller gang. Her tenure as artist-in-residence, alongside Mr. Rousseau, began under Percy and Isabel’s era during the late 1920s and continued until the late 1990s. Miss Pete not only created many items of portable art (e.g., lamps, valances, wall-hangings, and furniture) which were removed by the family upon their departure, but she also created *in situ* murals of birds and dogs in Croatan and later created images of similar themes in Birdsong House. In the third floor boys’ bathroom of Croatan, these whimsical dog murals served to document the family’s love of dog-culture (Figure 4). Humorous poses and colorful dogs as anthropomorphic characters delighted the visitors of this loo (one of a dog’s expression and quote after suffering a bee sting). One recognizable tribute in the dog mural was the Yale University Bulldog mascot, which graced the door jamb (Figure 5). All of the Rockefeller men were Yale graduates, so this meaningful tribute to their alma mater was targeted for the adult visitors.

On the opposite end of the third floor was the girls’ bathroom, which Miss Pete chose to decorate with bird-theme murals, again documenting the local Sandhills avian groups. Birds and wildflowers were captured in various naturalistic poses, draped over towel bars or climbing up reeds, while other scenes depict tall grasses growing out of the bathtub, or “pond,” with resident bullfrogs or ducks playing along the

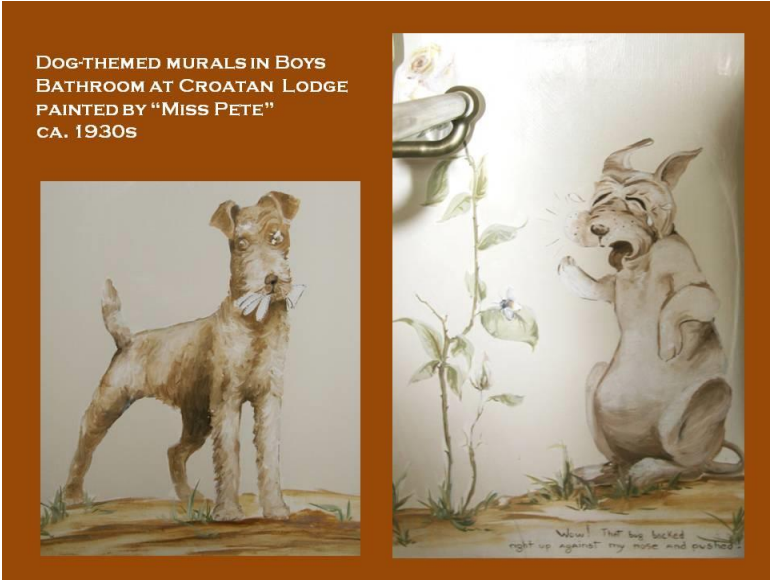


Figure 4. Dog murals by Miss Pete, from Boys Bathroom at Croatan Lodge. Photo from ODC, Fort Bragg CRMP.

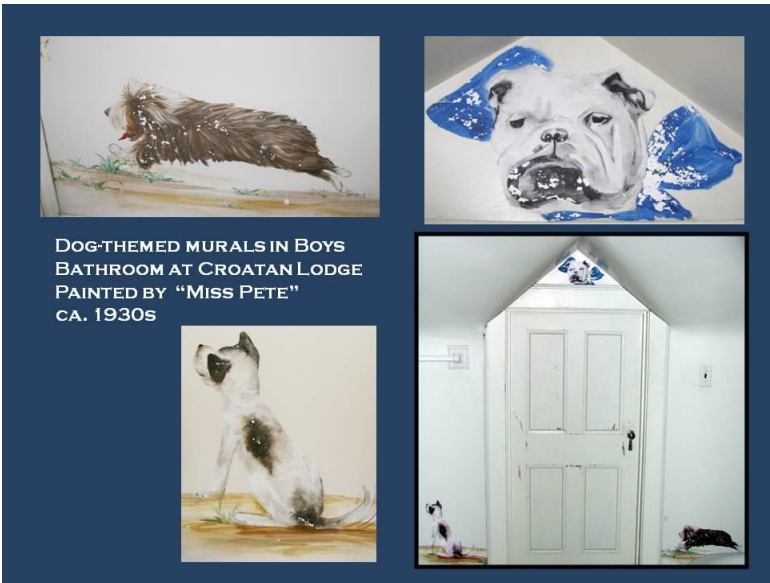


Figure 5. Composite of dog murals by Miss Pete in Boys Bathroom, Croatan Lodge; showing Yale University Bulldog mascot, the alma mater of most Rockefellers. Photo from ODC, Fort Bragg CRMP.

base molding of the bathtub, looking for water. And in the sunny window gables, numerous Sandhills pine warblers, perched on branches, sit ready to launch out the window (Figure 6). These murals, painted during the 1930–1940s era, were photographed in detail in 2002. Following ownership transfer to the Army, our CRM team began to document these *in situ* features (McNeely 2005). Now, they are obliterated and stained beyond recognition, passing once more into the collective memory of those who saw them fresh and those who saw them fading away.

Miss Pete continued her artwork in the later residence called Birdsong House, built by Percy and Isabel's grandson Avery Rockefeller and his wife Ann in 1963. Birdsong House was an expanding ranch-style dwelling built of wood with six chimneys, 14 bedrooms and 14 bathrooms, a large kitchen, and eventually an indoor swimming pool. The multiple chimneys served as stacks for six decorative fireplaces, each fitted with thematic motifs in tiles, some of which survived a fire on February 4, 2009 (Figure 7). This maelstrom, initiated by arsonists, burned the house to the ground, leaving only the derelict indoor swimming pool building standing. As word reached the Fort Bragg CRM office, a team was dispatched to photograph the ruins and remove whatever remained of the *in situ* decorative tiles (Figure 8). One of the oldest sets of tiles, identified as Dutch tiles made in the 1690s to 1720s period, once used to adorn the Blue Bedroom fireplace jamb, did not survive the intense heat very well. Only a few of these antique gems were salvaged by firemen working with the CRM team. Known as "slim tiles," these early earthenware or delft tiles measured 13 cm square and illustrated "animals in roundel" (or circles) (Korf 1964:119; Pluis 1998:57, 402; Van Dam and Tichelaar 1984:89). Family photographs (ca. 1960s), now in the CRM Overhills Archive file, provided important information about the original arrangement and context for tiles and fireplace complete with a wooden mantle. A close-up view of the tiles *in situ* illustrates the pattern in which tiles were affixed, with classic "spider-head" corners, typical of the early eighteenth-century Dutch style and likely manufactured in Friesland, Holland (Korf 1964:34, 42–45; Noel Hume 1969:285–294). Outside of the work by Beaman (1997:16–34) on eighteenth-century tiles from the colonial port of Brunswick Town and Lautzenheiser et al.'s (1998) work on seventeenth-century fireplace tiles found at the Eden House site, no others are known to exist in North Carolina. How these tiles came to be in this 1960s house will be discussed momentarily.



Figure 6. Composite of bird murals on the walls of Girls Bathroom at Croatan. Painted by Miss Pete in ca. 1940s. Photo from ODC, Fort Bragg CRMP.



Figure 7. Standing chimneys were all that remained of Birdsong House after the fire of February 4, 2009. Photo from ODC, Fort Bragg CRMP.



Figure 8. Image of the Blue Bedroom at Birdsong House, ca. 1960s with Dutch tiles *in situ*, along with wooden mantle. Photo by Rockefeller family, on file ODC, Fort Bragg CRMP.

In a master bathroom at Birdsong House, portions of some decorative tiles were salvaged from the fire; here, 15 partial or whole tiles were removed. This series represented commissioned artwork documenting the local flora of the Sandhills region, bringing those beloved favorite species from the outdoors to the indoors (Figure 9). These porcelain tiles measured 15.5 cm (6 inches) square. Backmarks revealed the name Pilkington, England, a known tile maker and source of the industrial tiles. Given her naturalistic themes, it is considered that Miss Pete also painted these floral motifs. The fireplace tiles which once served the living room at Birdsong were also decorated with commissioned art, this time expressing the Rockefeller's love for the equine. These painted tiles around the jamb were arranged as one continuous bucolic scene of horses and trees in pasture lands. One whole and one partial tile survived damage from the 2009 fire. The name "Bernice" was found on the corner tile, which may indicate Bernice Morgan, a long-time employee of the Rockefellers from 1957 until the 1990s, and who was also tasked with horse maintenance. He may have been the artist, or, alternately, his name may have been added to this scene as a tribute for his long-term dedication to the horses and Rockefellers.



Figure 9. Rescued floral series tiles taken from the chimney fall after the fire. These were porcelain tiles with commissioned artwork of local floral species. Tile photos on file at the Fort Bragg CRMP.

The master bedroom fireplace which possessed the namesake of this house, Birdsong, was trimmed out in porcelain tiles featuring local bird species (Figure 10). A total of 11 tiles survived the heat from the fire and were partially reconstructed. A small decorative glyph with a date of 1962 was noted on a corner tile. This artist's mark could not be conclusively identified from our records or family papers, so it remains unclear if Miss Pete had a symbol for her work or if this is the hand of another artist. Gracefully painted, the tiles show various "Audubon" type images of local birds commonly found in the Sandhills and commented on in the Guest Books of the estate. These tiles measured 15.5 cm (6 inches) square. The mastic used to affix all of these tile sets onto the fireplace jams was determined to be asbestos-based (commonly used during the 1960s construction era). This finding created some concern for safe handling and storage of these artifacts. Protective gear (gloves and masks) were employed to handle the tiles, measure them, photograph them, then store them in see-through six-mil plastic bags, labeled by provenience.

The last of the series of tiles was found on a fireplace in a rear room which connected the main house to the indoor swimming pool addition,



Figure 10. Rescued tiles from the master bedroom fireplace at Birdsong House which depict its name. These were commissioned artwork of local bird species known to the Sandhills and Rockefeller's Overhills Estate. Tile photos on file at Fort Bragg CRMP.

so it sustained the least impact from the 2009 fire. Known as The Spanish Room, it served as an overflow dining area and was decorated in an outdoorsy, wooded theme. Because this room was further away from the epicenter of the fire and because these tiles were made of low-fired earthenware, their survival rate was much better than the porcelains (Figure 11). With the help of local firemen, nearly 20 tiles were saved from the wreckage. Following removal on a single day after the fire, all the chimneys were then pulled down by the Safety Inspectors' demolition team. A careful study of these tiles provided a wealth of intriguing information about their origin, style, and meaning. Manufactured in the northern Catalan region of Spain, these decorative polychrome, hand-painted, tin-enameled earthenware tiles depict a variety of themes. Though the tile tradition dates back to the middle 1500s, these tiles appear to be late eighteenth-century or early nineteenth-century replicas of traditional tiles called "*rajoles d' oficis*" or "tiles depicting trades/occupations" from the Catalonia region (Telese et al. 2002). Historical sources and museum curators (Casanovas 2013; Mota Pinto 2013) indicate that a great many designs came from contemporary *auques*, which were popular broadsheets of the day,



Figure 11. Ruins of the Spanish Room fireplace after the 2009 fire, with decorative tiles still in place. These were later removed by the fireman before pulling the chimney down. Photo from ODC, Fort Bragg CRMP.

illustrating men and women at work, celestial objects, musician series, saints and stories, nautical themes, buildings, floral and faunal series, and fruits (Figure 12). The emergence of this tile tradition corresponded with the vogue for decorated interiors, especially kitchens, or places for washing, and patios. Initially commissioned only by the well-to-do, this trend later spread to a wider public. In early tiles, distinctive vegetal motifs (e.g., a lily or agave or palmette) accompanied the central figure, and the edges were trimmed in a single color frame (e.g., yellow or blue). Although a few tiles are known with free-hand designs, most were painted over an outline pounced from a pricked transfer image (Figure 13). As mentioned, storied figures are common on Catalonia tiles, and two of the Overhills tiles display images of the seventeenth-century character Don Quixote of La Mancha, (by Cervantes), seen fighting his windmills and the household cats on his bed as he suffers hallucinations. The whole tiles measured 12 cm (4¾ inches) square and 1.5 cm (½ inch) thick, hand pressed and irregular on the unglazed underside.

Several tiles depicted men and women at various occupations or activities — hunting, drinking, flower sellers, and a milk maid with an oxen yoke (Figure 14). One tile shows a musician playing a type of



Figure 12. Example of animal series of the Catalonia tiles, showing polychrome painted majolica. Tile photos on file at Fort Bragg CRMP.



Figure 13. Catalonia tiles depicting scenes of the Spanish legend of Don Quixote on horseback and fighting his hallucinations. Tile photos on file at Fort Bragg CRMP.

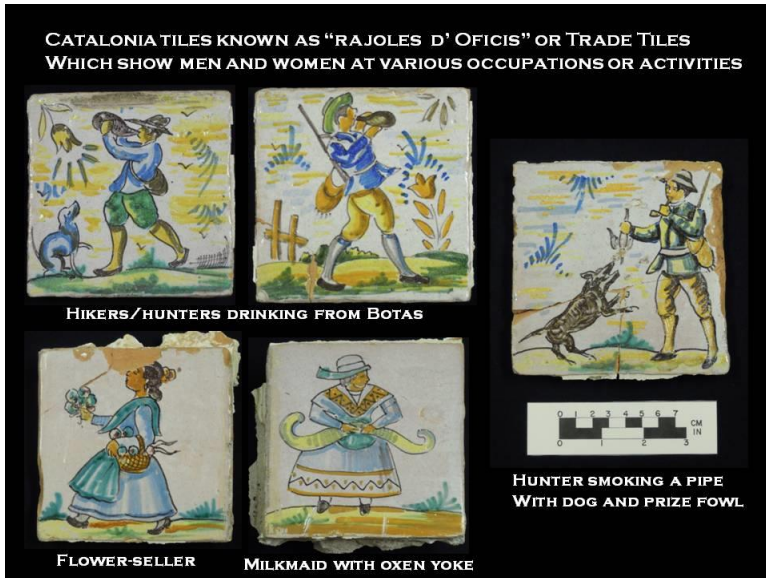


Figure 14. Examples of "rajoles d'oficis" tiles rescued from the Birdsong House fire, showing men and women of various trades in regional dress. Tile photos on file at Fort Bragg CRMP.

Spanish bagpipe called a *Gaita* or *gaita de bota*, which is pumped by the overlapping arm and has a conical-shaped chanter (or *puntero*) (Palau Musica Catalana 2013) (Figure 15). This type of musical instrument was native to the north-central region of Spain. (This region known as ancient Galicia is where the pipes were used to march in grand processions of Saints through the towns.) The other figure is a hiker with shepherd's staff, wearing traditional knee trousers, jerkin, and a fedora of the region.

A few accent tiles represented the day-and-night series of crescent moon and rising/setting sun with anthropomorphic faces. The combination of these tiles, used to decorate The Spanish Room at Birdsong House, testify once again to the Rockefeller's access to, and appreciation of, global markets and their travels into a larger world beyond the Sandhills. Bear in mind also that Percy Rockefeller was the nephew of John D. Rockefeller, who funded the development of Colonial Williamsburg and who had access to Old World architectural salvage companies, among other artisanal resources (Figure 16). Even normally undecorated architectural elements, such as the lead gutter anchors from Croatan, bear ornamental Old World motifs, including the Passant Lion,

DIVERSITY IN DÉCOR



Figure 15. Catalonia tiles depicting a musician playing a Spanish bagpipe, or gaita, and a shepherd in regional dress. Tile photos on file at Fort Bragg CRMP.



Figure 16. Three decorated gutter anchors, embossed with heraldic or nationalistic symbols removed from Croatan Lodge. Guttering dates to ca. 1920s and is made of lead. Photos on file at Fort Bragg CRMP.

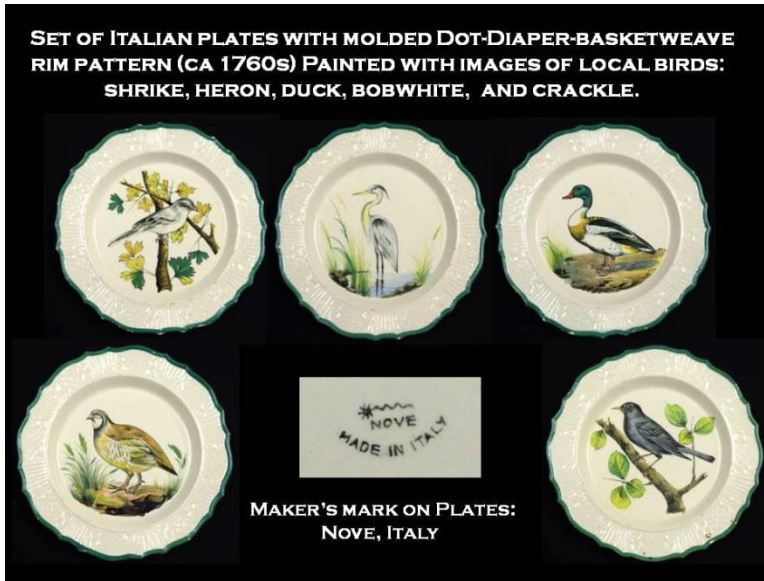


Figure 17. Composite of molded creamware plates purchased at the Overhills Estate sale, showing bird species of the Sandhills region. Close-up view of back mark on plates. Photos on file at Fort Bragg CRMP.

the Tudor Rose, and the Oak Leaf which all have nationalistic or heraldic meaning.

Finally, a small sample of the portable property from the Rockefeller's estate homes at Overhills also was included in this study of artwork (Figure 17). These specimens include hand-painted, molded creamware plates with a dot-diaper-basketweave border (popular in the 1760s) and embellished here by original artwork of what-else, BIRDS! These plates also bear an Italian maker's mark "Nove" shown here with its "trailing comet" logo, dating ca 1950s (Kovel and Kovel 1986).

Concluding Comments

The Overhills Oral History Project, completed in 2009, provides an exceptional source of interviews and narrators' testimonials on what this secluded resort meant to their collective memory of place. Those interviews and the multiple remarks found in the guest books compiled over many decades provide inscribed- meaning to the commemorative place they called Overhills. Places and memories are intertwined to create what researchers term a "sense of place," which, using this example of interior décor, is constructed and reconstructed on a history

of social engagement with the landscape, built environments, and people, and is inextricably bound up with remembrance, as documented by these surviving artifacts (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003:5). As the imprint of past activities and events at Overhills lingers on in the collective memories of those who were there, the remaining tangible artifacts represent the seasonal rhythms and responses to the local environment by specific people in a cognitive place. It seems fitting that the last entry in the Croatan Lodge Guest Book was made by Avery Lincoln Chappell Smith, the great grand-daughter of Percy and Isabel Rockefeller, who on November 17, 1996 lamented “I just had to write this one last thing. Goodbye beloved Overhills, Croatan and all the most wonderful people in the world. I will always love you and never forget you, so many great memories and fun. Never will there be another place like Overhills.”

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THERMOLUMINESCENCE DATING OF SANDHILLS POTTERY: RESULTS FROM A CONTROLLED EXPERIMENT

by

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Abstract

As part of data recovery investigations at three prehistoric sites at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, a controlled experiment was conducted on the thermoluminescence (TL) dating of Sandhills pottery. Twenty-five sherds were each split into two pieces, with one piece sent to the TL laboratory at Oxford University and the other piece to the TL laboratory at the University of Washington. An additional sherd was broken into four pieces, with each lab dating two pieces of the same sherd to consider intra-laboratory variability. From the viewpoint of archaeologists hoping to confirm or refine the regional ceramic chronology, the results were disappointing. Only by using the two-sigma ranges was it possible to achieve the expected inter- and intra-laboratory correspondences between results from two pieces of a given sherd. The large two-sigma ranges (more than 1,000 years in certain cases) precluded using the results for chronology refinement. It is unclear what factors led to the variability within and between laboratories. Additional experiments are recommended before TL dating can be considered a viable use of investigative time and funds in the Sandhills.

In 2006, the Archaeology Group of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (hereafter NCDOT) contracted New South Associates (hereafter New South) to conduct archaeological data recovery investigations at Sites 31CD64, 31CD65, and 31CD871. All three archaeological sites were investigated during the initial survey and evaluation phase (Gunn and Sanborn 2005) for the proposed alignment of I-295, otherwise known as the Fayetteville Outer Loop (or FOL), and designated as TIP# U-2519 by the NCDOT. The project corridor, as a whole, measures approximately 27 miles in length on new location and extends from I-95 south of Fayetteville to just west of NC 24/NC 87 (Bragg Boulevard) on the north side of the city. In addition, all three archaeological sites were situated within the limits of Fort Bragg Military Reservation. Although it was recommended that these three sites not be impacted by the proposed construction project, it was determined that

avoidance was not a feasible or prudent alternative; therefore, data recovery investigations were conducted on each site in coordination with NCDOT, NC-HPO, and the Fort Bragg Cultural Resources Management Program (FBCRMP) under a permit pursuant to the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979.

As a result of the survey and evaluation phase (Gunn and Sanborn 2005), Sites 31CD64, 31CD65, and 31CD871, along with 15 other sites, were recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) per Criterion D based on their stratigraphic integrity, the analyses of artifacts and site function, and relevance to regional and local research problems. Located on the same landform overlooking a spring that drains into Stewart's Creek, Sites 31CD64 and 31CD65 were originally identified by Loftfield (1979) and later evaluated as prehistoric ceramic-lithic sites (Gunn and Sanborn 2005). Site 31CD871 was also evaluated as a prehistoric ceramic-lithic site on the upland margin of a Cross Creek tributary watershed. All three sites represent a complex series of repeated occupations over time, ranging from the Early Archaic to the Late Woodland periods.

In its research design, New South Associates, following Espenshade (2004), proposed to conduct a blind experiment in TL dating by dividing individual sherds and having one portion of each sherd dated at the Oxford University TL laboratory (Oxford) and the other portion dated at the University of Washington TL laboratory (Washington). The goal of the experiment was to gauge the inter- and intra-laboratory variability in results, as that variability may be related to suspicious TL results from the Sandhills region.

A Brief Overview of TL Dating of Ceramics

In its simplest form, TL is the release of stored energy in the form of light from a substance when it is heated (Aitken 1970; Mazess and Zimmerman 1966). Minerals (e.g., quartz sand grains) acquire stored energy through absorption from nuclear radiation. Because pottery also contains minerals, it accumulates electrons through time and the amount of natural TL in a sherd depends on the time elapsed since its last firing. Heating to above 500 degrees C removes the accumulated TL and the firing of clay into pottery resets the clock to zero (Aitken 1970). The process then begins again and is dependent on the constituents in the pottery as well as the radiation dose rate. Age estimates are achieved through measurement of the natural signal, sensitivity of the sample to radiation, and the average dose rate (Feathers 2000).

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Several potential issues exist with respect to the method, including variability in sherds from the same site, the possibility that ceramics heated to less than 400–500 degrees C might not have had their geologically acquired TL “drained”, the potential for the TL clock to be reset through subsequent events, and large error ranges (Drover et al. 1979; Mazess and Zimmerman 1966; Patch et al. 2010).

History of TL Dating at Fort Bragg

The archaeological record of the Sandhills is notorious for its general lack of datable carbon from feature contexts. The region has seen many forest fires in the prehistoric, historic, and modern periods, and the sandy soils are subject to bioturbation. Carbon from general excavation levels cannot necessarily be trusted to produce an accurate date for the associated artifacts. Faced with such a challenge to creating a local chronology for the Woodland period, the Cultural Resources program at Fort Bragg initiated an effort to create a chronology based on the TL dating of prehistoric pottery (Herbert et al. 2002).

As reported in Herbert et al. (2002), 20 sherds were submitted for TL dating at the University of Washington laboratory. The sherds represented a grab sample from various sites at Fort Bragg, and there was no guarantee that the sherds were representative of all Woodland pottery on the base. A thin-section was first removed from each, and it was subjected to petrographic analysis. The sherds were then sent to the University of Washington laboratory for TL dating. The results were characterized by significantly large sigmas. For example, a two-sigma date range for Sample 21 was 2253–89 B.C. (one sigma range is 1712–630 B.C.), and the two-sigma result for Sample 11 was A.D. 1197–1815 (one sigma range is A.D. 1347–1659). Despite the large sigmas, Herbert et al. (2002) proposed a ceramic chronology. The researchers went so far as to question the established chronologies in nearby regions, even when the questioned chronologies were well anchored in multiple, internally consistent dates. The chronology derived by Herbert et al. (2002) was considered preliminary by the researchers, but was neither refined nor validated.

Concerns with Method

In reviews of draft and published versions of the Herbert et al. (2002) article and other TL studies (especially Dykeman et al. 2002), Espenshade (2004, 2006) raised several issues of concern.

First, Espenshade argued that both the Dykeman et al. (2002) and Herbert et al. (2002) studies began with the unproven premise that the

method always works. The results are taken as unquestionable, and post hoc arguments are offered to explain away any apparent discrepancy between the expected date and the result, such as: (1) sherds without evidence of refiring are assumed to have been refired; and (2) vessels are assumed to have had a longer than expected production span or to have been heirlooms that survived for a hundred years. These bridging arguments do away with any “problem dates” and help prove, in a circular argument, that TL always works.

Second, both sets of results underline that the laboratory does not understand and cannot quantify the effect of anomalous fading on results. Anomalous fading is defined by Herbert et al. (2002) as “the loss of thermally stable signal through time.” For example, Dykeman et al. (2002:154–155) report:

Two exceptions, a Jemez Black-on-White sample (UW236) and Dinéah Gray sample (UW246), suffered anomalous fading, which could explain their younger age. However, two other samples that indicated fading produced ages similar to others of their ceramic type.

In the Herbert et al. (2002:97) study, anomalous fading was recognized on two samples. Rather than dismiss the samples, Herbert et al. (2002:97) argue: “Ages determined for samples 18 and 28 should be considered minimum values.” Herbert et al. (2002:98) ultimately present a mean and a sigma for these dates, which is a mathematical impossibility for an “or earlier” result. Anomalous fading is a common problem in the TL dating of sherds (for example, it occurred in four of the 12 sherds dated in the Dykeman et al. study, and in two of the 20 sherds in the Herbert et al. study), but the laboratory cannot explain why it apparently affects some results but apparently does not affect other results. The cavalier treatment of this problem makes it sound as if anomalous fading is being used as a convenient post hoc, bridging argument only when the result is clearly “bad.”

To further cloud the anomalous fading issue, Herbert et al. (2002:96) argue that it is important to evaluate anomalous fading by retesting subsamples stored up to eight weeks; however, they failed to conduct this test on five of their 20 samples. They nonetheless accepted those five results as correct.

The impression that the TL laboratory does not quite understand the potential biases is reinforced in the Herbert et al. study. The researchers note a relatively high percent of errors in age estimates. The mean (16.2%) and median (13.8%) errors were noted as “higher than usual” (Herbert et al. 2002:98). Herbert et al. (2002:98) suggest:

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This may be partially due to the lower sensitivity to TL than is observed in Southwestern pottery. In other words, everything else being equal, the North Carolina sherds demonstrate a lower signal-to-noise ratio and smaller increases in signal with equal increments of dose. . . . Another possible source of error is variation in signal arising from differences among aliquots, due to greater heterogeneity and coarseness in the North Carolina pottery pastes that affect the distribution and, hence, relative contribution of grains responsible for the signal.

Espenshade (2004, 2006) felt that these uncontrolled, unquantifiable regional differences undermine the confidence that one can place in the tenet that TL dating always works. When a laboratory cannot quantify the impact of a recognized effect (such as anomalous fading) on its results, it is not logical to assume that every result is correct.

Espenshade (2004, 2006) proposed controlled experiments to verify the robustness of the TL dating of prehistoric ceramics. He specifically proposed sending split samples to different laboratories to determine if identical results were produced. Espenshade (2004) also called for caution in using the Fort Bragg TL chronology until the robustness of the method could be evaluated. He argued that the 20 TL results of Herbert et al. (2002) — of which at least two were questioned by the original researchers and five others were not tested for anomalous fading (in contradiction to the accepted TL protocol) — is not a sufficient basis for creating a local chronology and typology.

Espenshade's (2004) review of the Navajo pottery study was prompted by the claim of Dykeman et al. (2002:145) of "remarkable correspondence between tree-ring and thermoluminescence results." Espenshade demonstrated that using the same baseline premises as the TL-tree ring study, he could achieve correspondence in 35 percent of the cases, by randomly assigning a date within the 413-year period of Navajo pottery production. Thus, blind guessing resulted in 35 percent correspondence while the TL dates achieved only a 40 percent correspondence. As a result, Espenshade suggested that TL dating was being oversold for chronology building.

In their response to Espenshade's critique, Feathers et al. (2005) did not address the particular concerns raised by Espenshade. Instead, they claimed that all cases of non-correspondence between the TL results and the tree-ring dates were attributable to the differences between the date of manufacture and the date of deposition. Feathers et al. (2005) did not address that random selection of dates within the Navajo ceramic period almost matched the performance of TL dating. The response from Feathers et al. (2005) underlined the basic difference in approach

between those researchers and Espenshade. The TL advocates were certain that TL dating always works, and discrepancies between the results and expected dates should be addressed post hoc. Espenshade argued that certain of the results suggest that TL dating was not working very well, and that controlled experimentation was necessary to demonstrate the robustness of the dating method. Espenshade argued that if we always start with a given that TL works perfectly, we will never know if problems arise.

Methodology of the Present Study

The data recovery excavations at sites 31CD64, 31CD65, and 31CD871 presented an excellent opportunity for controlled experimentation and further consideration of the Herbert et al. (2002) Sandhills TL chronology. In part to address concerns about the TL dating of ceramics, NCDOT and Fort Bragg agreed to a TL study that was designed to: (1) determine the possible effects of forest fires on the TL dating of surface and near-surface sherds; and (2) examine variability within and between TL laboratories. In this article we focus on the results related to variability in TL dates between laboratories.

Samples were selected from unique vessels identified at each of the sites representing multiple culture-historic types. For 25 sherds, each was broken into two pieces. One piece was sent to the TL laboratory of Oxford University and the other piece was sent to the TL laboratory of the University of Washington. The two pieces were broken from a single sherd to assure that there was no distortion caused by dating two pieces that really were not from the same vessel. To be clear, each sherd began as a single, solid entity before being broken into two pieces.

For a twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh sample, one large sherd was broken into four pieces. Two pieces of this large sherd went to each laboratory. This allowed consideration of intra-laboratory consistency.

At both laboratories, their standard procedures were followed. The laboratories did not correspond regarding premises or results. In the discussion that follows, the preliminary results from both laboratories are used in the comparisons. These are the results that normally would have been provided any consultant submitting samples. Dr. James Feathers of the University of Washington undertook post-hoc revisions in order to improve the correlation between the results from the two laboratories. It is important to recognize that such revisions would not have been undertaken if only a single laboratory had provided service. In other words, if only the Oxford laboratory or only the Washington laboratory

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had processed the samples, there would have been no results other than the preliminary results.

Analysis

The analysis of the results was achieved through visual and statistical consideration of correspondence. Because the two results for each sherd are dating the same event (i.e., the last time that sherd had been exposed to sufficient energy to reset the TL clock), there should be correspondence of all samples. In other terms, any failure for the coupled dates to correspond can be blamed only on the dating method employed.

In an earlier study Dykeman et al. (2002) defined correspondence to have occurred when the one-sigma range of the TL result overlapped with the associated tree ring date. In our current study, correspondence was initially defined as having been achieved when there was overlap between the one-sigma ranges of the coupled pairs.

As discussed below, the results using one-sigma ranges for correspondence were disappointing. The analysis was then revised by using a two-sigma correspondence. The paired results were considered to correspond if there was any overlap in their two-sigma ranges.

The same measures of correspondence also were used for the quartered sherd. Here, the biases from different laboratory procedures were removed, and enhanced correspondence would be expected for the two sherds run in each laboratory.

Results

Table 1 presents the data on correspondence, defined as overlap of one-sigma ranges. Using this measure, less than half of the paired results show correspondence at the one-sigma level. Twelve (46%) of the paired samples show correspondence while 14 (54%) do not. For the intra-laboratory samples (in bold), the Oxford results show correspondence at one-sigma, but the Washington results do not.

When lessening the standard for correspondence to overlap at the two-sigma level (Table 2), 19 (73%) of the paired results show correspondence and seven (27%) do not. Although 73% is a significant improvement over the 46% achieved using one-sigma ranges, these results underline that the only defensible way to use the results is with their two-sigma ranges. Even using two-sigma ranges, the results are far from the theoretical 100% correspondence that should come from dating two halves of the same object.

Table 1. Correspondence at One-Sigma, Preliminary Results.

Vessel	Sample	Washington Result	Oxford Result	Correspondence
871-4	21	1499 BC +/- 262	1772 BC +/- 440	Yes
871-6	12	AD 1433 +/- 35	AD 1533 +/- 35	No
871-7	20	AD 1317 +/- 53	AD 1473 +/- 45	No
871-9	18	2538 BC +/- 290	1127 BC +/- 210	No
871-15	6	AD 1306 +/- 56	AD 1543 +/- 35	No
871-16	16	1755 BC +/- 273	942 BC +/- 195	No
871-17	10	AD 1294 +/- 62	AD 1443 +/- 55	No
871-18	24	AD 1342 +/- 57	AD 1003 +/- 30	No
871-19	1	AD 1473 +/- 31	AD 1533 +/- 35	Yes
871-20	17	AD 1241 +/- 51	AD 1448 +/- 55	No
64-1	19	177 BC +/- 167	AD 93 +/- 170	Yes
64-2	9	718 BC +/- 234	AD 323 +/- 105	No
64-3	8	107 BC +/- 141	AD 198 +/- 120	No
64-4	2	307 BC +/- 296	AD 98 +/- 175	Yes
64-7	23	AD 144 +/- 133	AD 363 +/- 150	Yes
65-1	11	851 BC +/- 174	802 BC +/- 190	Yes
65-2	14	1238 BC +/- 221	1007 BC +/- 225	Yes
65-3	3	1724 BC +/- 242	1337 BC +/- 240	Yes
65-4	22	2036 BC +/- 273	1727 BC +/- 270	Yes
65-7	25	2739 BC +/- 462	2092 BC +/- 305	Yes
65-10	13	1132 BC +/- 181	1572 BC +/- 255	No
65-11	5	1484 BC +/- 145	1472 BC +/- 270	Yes
*65-12	4	706 BC +/- 217	AD 643 +/- 125	No
*65-12	27	1477 BC +/- 279	AD 543 +/- 125	No
65-15	15	AD 625 +/- 95	AD 1003 +/- 85	No
65-18	7	2022 BC +/- 247	1992 BC +/- 290	Yes

Note: * denotes intra-lab sample (four parts of the same sherd).

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Table 2. Correspondence at Two-Sigma, Preliminary Results.

Vessel	Sample	Washington Result	Oxford Result	Correspondence*
871-4	21	1499 BC +/- 262	1772 BC +/- 440	Yes
871-6	12	AD 1433 +/- 35	AD 1533 +/- 35	Yes
871-7	20	AD 1317 +/- 53	AD 1473 +/- 45	Yes
871-9	18	2538 BC +/- 290	1127 BC +/- 210	No
871-15	6	AD 1306 +/- 56	AD 1543 +/- 35	No
871-16	16	1755 BC +/- 273	942 BC +/- 195	Yes
871-17	10	AD 1294 +/- 62	AD 1443 +/- 55	Yes
871-18	24	AD 1342 +/- 57	AD 1003 +/- 30	No
871-19	1	AD 1473 +/- 31	AD 1533 +/- 35	Yes
871-20	17	AD 1241 +/- 51	AD 1448 +/- 55	Yes
64-1	19	177 BC +/- 167	AD 93 +/- 170	Yes
64-2	9	718 BC +/- 234	AD 323 +/- 105	No
64-3	8	107 BC +/- 141	AD 198 +/- 120	Yes
64-4	2	307 BC +/- 296	AD 98 +/- 175	Yes
64-7	23	AD 144 +/- 133	AD 363 +/- 150	Yes
65-1	11	851 BC +/- 174	802 BC +/- 190	Yes
65-2	14	1238 BC +/- 221	1007 BC +/- 225	Yes
65-3	3	1724 BC +/- 242	1337 BC +/- 240	Yes
65-4	22	2036 BC +/- 273	1727 BC +/- 270	Yes
65-7	25	2739 BC +/- 462	2092 BC +/- 305	Yes
65-10	13	1132 BC +/- 181	1572 BC +/- 255	Yes
65-11	5	1484 BC +/- 145	1472 BC +/- 270	Yes
*65-12	4	706 BC +/- 217	AD 643 +/- 125	No
*65-12	27	1477 BC +/- 279	AD 543 +/- 125	No
65-15	15	AD 625 +/- 95	AD 1003 +/- 85	No
65-18	7	2022 BC +/- 247	1992 BC +/- 290	Yes

Note: * denotes intra-lab sample (four parts of the same sherd).

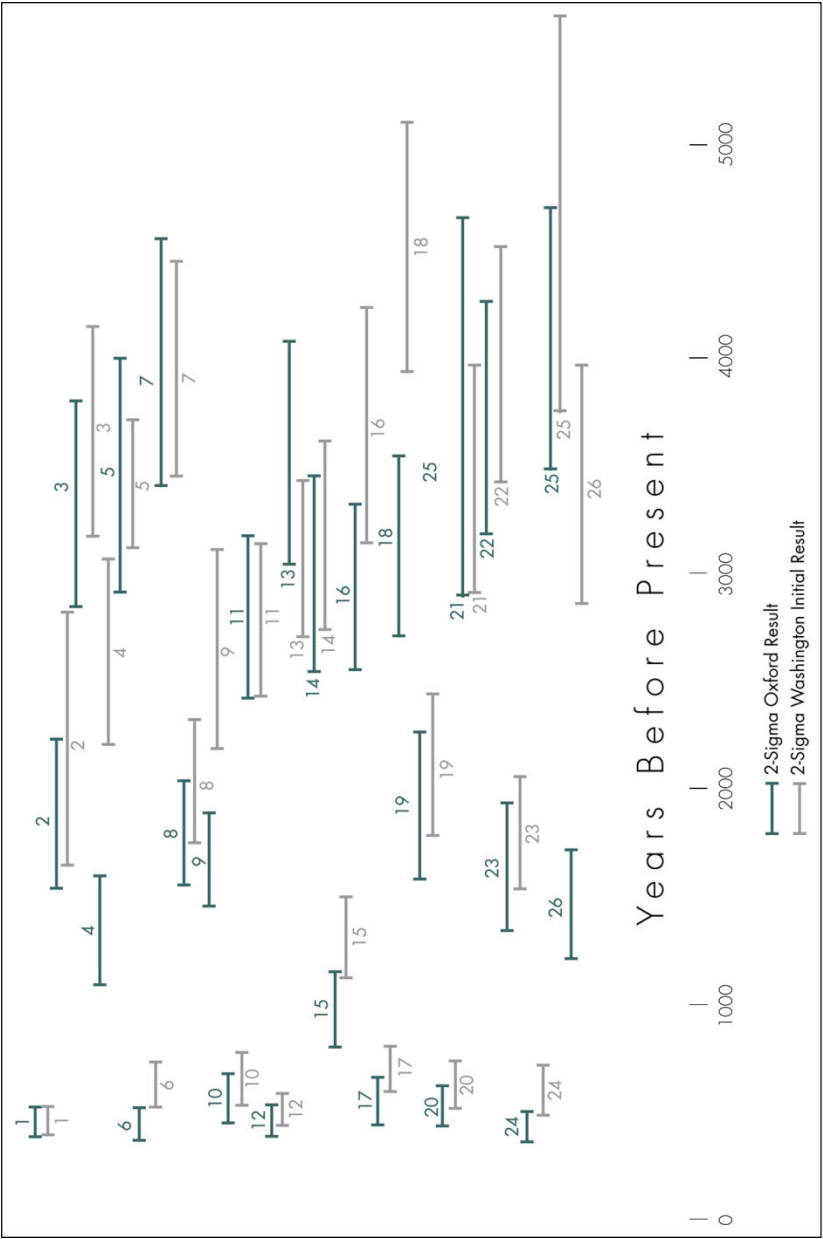


Figure 1. Two-sigma range plots for paired results from both laboratories.

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Turning again to the intra-laboratory results (in bold), using the two-sigma approach to correspondence, there is correspondence in the paired samples in each lab. Put simply, the only way to achieve correspondence in the Washington results for two quarter-pieces of the same sherd, run in the same laboratory, using the same premises, is to lessen the threshold for correspondence to overlap in the two-sigma ranges. This suggests that the low levels of correspondence (46% using one-sigma ranges, 73% using two-sigma ranges) are not simply the result of differences in the premises used by each laboratory.

It must be emphasized that none of these results were questioned by the laboratories. Indeed, all were presented as reliable dates. When one looks at Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 1, the dilemma facing a Sandhills archaeologist is clear: how can any date be trusted? How would the archaeologist know which result, if either, most closely reflects the actual resetting of the TL clock?

Beyond the trust issue, this demonstration that two-sigma ranges must be used translates into long temporal spans for many of the sherds. It must be emphasized that the use of two-sigma ranges is not a recommendation or a personal preference; instead, it is the only means by which correspondence can be achieved for two results that should be statistically identical. Having had to redefine correspondence as overlap between two-sigma ranges in order to approach the expected levels of correspondence (i.e., to achieve correspondence in 73% of the cases), those two-sigma ranges are the only honest way to present the results.

Unfortunately, at two-sigmas, the ranges are not conducive to confirming or revising regional chronology. Indeed, using the present results, the results of Herbert et al. (2002), and the type series descriptions provided by Herbert (2003), we find an incredible potential time range for key ceramic series (Table 3). The uselessness of two-sigma ranges for chronology-building in the Sandhills is underlined by the fact that all three major series show a span essentially from the onset of pottery production to the historic period. None of the adjoining regions show three series being coeval for more than 4,000 years.

Discussion

The only way to get the results from the two laboratories to approach the correspondence levels expected is to use the two-sigma ranges. Even using a two-sigma approach to correspondence, 27% of the paired samples do not correspond.

Table 3. Temporal Spans of Key Ceramic Series Based on Two-Sigma TL Results.

Series	Span Based on Two-Sigma TL Results
New River	2572 B.C. to A.D. 1603
Cape Fear	2582 B.C. to A.D. 1613
Hanover	3663 B.C. to A.D. 1793

The results from the quartered sherd were especially troubling. There was no correspondence between the Oxford results and the Washington results using the two-sigma measure. Furthermore, there was only intra-laboratory correspondence between the two results from Washington when the two-sigma ranges were used. From the viewpoint of a consultant who could have received any of the four results, with the laboratory fully backing each as a good date, this is disturbing. One laboratory would confidently be providing a Late Woodland date for this sherd (or more correctly for the last heating of this sherd to the TL threshold), and the other laboratory would confidently be presenting an Early Woodland or Late Archaic date. If you asked the laboratory to redate the sherd (as we essentially did), there is no promise that you would receive a result within the one-sigma range of the original result.

In practical terms, the mean or the mean and one-sigma range cannot be used validly to place the TL-dated sherds in a chronology. The only valid representation of the age of the sherds is the two-sigma range. To re-emphasize, this was not a case where we were hoping that a result should date the same (i.e., should show correspondence) with another date or with our expectations. In all cases, we know that both sherd halves from the paired samples last exceeded the TL threshold at the same time. We are running two results for a shared event, using identical material. This is the reason that we have loosened the definition of correspondence to try to make the percent of cases corresponding closer to the theoretical 100 percent. If the dating processes used at both laboratories were perfect, all the matched pairs should have achieved correspondence.

With the large sigmas commonly associated with TL-dated sherds of the Sandhills, these two-sigma ranges can be as large as 1,848 years. Based on the results of the two-laboratory experiment, all that we can say, for example, about Sample 25 was that it was last exposed to heat above the TL threshold at some point in the 2,181-year range from 3663

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B.C. to 1482 B.C. With such a large range for a single sherd, the difficulty in attempting to refine chronology is clear.

In actuality, if we assume that one of the two-sigma results (i.e., either the Washington or the Oxford result) captures the actual date, we are faced with not knowing which one is correct. In practical terms, we then have to use the range created from the extremes of both two-sigma results. For Sample 9, this would result in a 1,719-year range from 1186 B.C. to A.D. 533.

For the quartered sherd, any of the four two-sigma results may be correct: 2035–919 B.C.; 1140–272 B.C.; A.D. 293–793; or A.D. 393–893. The only safe way to talk about a date for this sherd is to say it probably falls within the 2,928-year span from 2,035 B.C. to A.D. 893. When dating a single object multiple times, the expectation is that additional results will narrow the span. In the case of the quartered sherd, the additional results significantly expanded the possible date range. The four-date suite underscores the fact that the poor correspondence is not simply the result of a single rogue sub-sample.

It is also appropriate to consider another set of troubling results. McNutt and Gray (2009) conducted both TL dating and AMS radiocarbon-dating of paste organics for two sherds from site 31HK1620. The Hanover I sherd yielded a two-sigma calibrated radiocarbon date of A.D. 670–880 and a TL result of 200 B.C. +/- 140. The Hanover II yielded a two-sigma calibrated radiocarbon date of A.D. 570–660, and a TL result of 650 B.C. +/- 400. We would be remiss if we assumed that the radiocarbon dates must be correct, or that the TL dates must be correct. With the TL dates being earlier in both cases, post-production reheating of the sherds cannot explain the differences. Regardless of which, if any, of the results reflects the dating of the pottery production, the disparate results from the TL and AMS dating again present the archaeologists with a quandary. With both the TL and radiocarbon laboratories claiming valid results, who are we to trust? Incidentally, if additional dating of paste organics by AMS provides consistent results, this method may ultimately prove better suited than TL for refining the local ceramic chronology.

The bottom line seems to be that there are unknown factors affecting our ability to TL date prehistoric pottery from the Sandhills. Absent a second result on the same sherd from another laboratory, regional archaeologists will not be able to rely on TL results for chronology building. Even then, regional archaeologists will be forced, in certain cases, to choose which date they think is correct. This is not an

acceptable procedure for the rigorous development of a local ceramic chronology.

The laboratories of Oxford University and the University of Washington deserve full credit for their willingness to participate in this experiment. It is hoped that now additional research will be undertaken to address the factors affecting TL dating in this region. It has been suggested that heterogeneous pastes of the Sandhills may be a factor. An experiment that compares two-lab results from relatively homogeneous and heterogeneous sherds from the region could be undertaken to test this hypothesis.

Initial experiments by Patch et al. (2010) and their review of the literature on pine forest fires suggest that long-leaf pine fires have the potential to reset the TL clock on surface and near-surface sherds. Further experiments using thermocouples and a variety of fire intensities could help verify the suspicion that many of the Fort Bragg sherds were reset after their deposition.

As an adjunct to the fire heat study, it would be useful to compare TL results from sherds thought to have been deposited on the ground surface and those deposited in deep features. The feature sherds should have been protected from forest fire reset. A consideration of depositional context might become part of an improved protocol if there are indications that materials from deep features are yielding better TL results than sherds that were deposited near-surface.

The literature is also unclear on what happens to a TL result if not all the sherd achieved the TL threshold during the firing or use of the pot. There is almost always a temperature differential between the surface(s) exposed most directly to heat and the interior or core of a vessel wall. If the entire core was not exposed to sufficient heat to reset the TL clock, a TL sample that captures partly the surface layer and partly the core may yield a result that does not accurately reflect the date of the pot firing or use.

TL dating is expensive and time-consuming. It has been argued that it is best way to date ceramics in the Sandhills (Herbert et al. 2002), where charcoal-rich features are uncommon (but see Patch et al. [2010] for a rebuttal of this low-carbon characterization). The insight provided by dating the same sherds in two different laboratories questions the usefulness of TL dating in this specific region. When the results come with large sigmas, and when only the two-sigma ranges can be validly used, the method is not well suited to confirming or refining

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chronologies. Also, it is clear that spurious results were received from one or both laboratories, but neither laboratory was able to identify the spurious results until the inter-laboratory comparison was undertaken.

Two of the authors (Patch and Espenshade) work for cultural resource management consultants and the other two authors (Wilkerson and Mohler) work for a government agency paying for archaeological research. Because of the concerns raised in this study, none of us can justify the continued use of TL dating of ceramics in the Sandhills until further experiments are completed. Beyond expending project funds and calendar time, the possibly spurious results are troublesome as they may be leading to bogus chronologies. The results of both laboratories do not agree, even using two-sigma ranges, for 27% of the cases. In those cases, the results of one or both laboratories must be considered spurious. There are unacceptable results without any explanation offered with the results. One needs only to compare the contrasting chronologies that would have resulted if we had used only the Washington results or only the Oxford results (as most projects do).

Indeed, with the mandate that only two-sigma ranges can be used in chronology building, the data return is not presently worth the effort. In the future, if methods are recognized that will help eliminate spurious results and will improve inter- and intra-laboratory consistency, we will revisit the use of the method.

These results also will hopefully make the advocates of TL dating stop to question their automatic assumption that TL is always working. There is more going on here than currently acknowledged. There are no valid *post hoc* explanations for the low correspondence among the paired results in this study. We hope that field archaeologists can continue to work with the TL laboratories to identify and eliminate, as feasible, the factors that caused the intra-laboratory and inter-laboratory inconsistencies seen in our study.

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THE NELSON BIFACE CACHE (31GF475)

by

Shawn M. Patch

Abstract

In the mid-1950s a large biface cache was discovered in eastern Guilford County by Samuel L. Nelson. This article discusses details of the discovery, similar caches in North Carolina, a context for caching behavior, detailed artifact analysis, and interpretations.

The Nelson biface cache was found in southeastern Guilford County, North Carolina in the mid-1950s. While on a break from college, Samuel L. Nelson recovered the cache during a road improvement project on his family's farm. According to his recollection, the bifaces were "stacked like cord wood," but there was no evidence for an associated pit or other feature. The cache was not associated with any obvious habitation site, village, quarry, or burial (Ballenger 1996; Hurst 2006). Stacking and careful burial in pits appear to be common features in certain caches (Ballenger 1996; Carr and Boszhardt 2003; Dillian and Bello 2010; Hammatt 1970; Stroebel 1937).

The cache was in an upland area approximately 120 meters from an unnamed tributary of Alamance Creek, which is more than 650 meters away. The modern topographic map shows a typical Piedmont landscape, and there is nothing unusual about the setting.

Like many residents of the North Carolina Piedmont, Nelson has a large collection of artifacts assembled over a lifetime of working the family farm. His larger collection includes the typical sequence of projectile points as defined by Coe (1964). The biface cache, however, is unique because of its discovery, number of artifacts, and good context.

Biface Caches in North Carolina

Biface caches are not unusual in parts of North Carolina. In fact, many archaeologists are familiar with caches either directly or indirectly (Lea Abbot, personal communication 2008; Jeff Irwin, personal communication 2008). They are widely known but under-reported, and very few have been excavated professionally. Consequently, there is

relatively little published information and detailed analysis. Claggett et al. (1982) identified a small cache of large bifaces in Jordan Reservoir; Herbert et al. (2012) discussed the recovery and excavation of two caches from the Sandhills area, as well as additional caches; and Hranicky (2008, 2013) discussed two separate caches of very small size. Irwin (personal communication 2008) had knowledge of several large caches from the Sandhills in private collections. Cache sizes range from only a few artifacts to as many as several hundred, although most of those known are on the lower end.

Archaeological Perspective on Caches and Caching Behavior

A wide range of caches have been recognized in North American archaeology (Amick 2004; Ballenger 1996; Carr and Boszhardt 2003; Custer et al. 1996; Dillian and Bello 2010; Garfinkel et al. 2004; Gary and McLearn-Gary 1990; Hammatt 1970; Kornfeld et al. 1990; Krakker 1997; Lassen 2005; Miller et al. 1991; Minor and Toepel 1989; Rogers 1993; Scott et al. 1986; Stroebe 1937; Vehik 2007; Wiseman et al. 1994). Despite the recognition that caches occur frequently in the archaeological record, they are almost always identified opportunistically (e.g., revealed by erosion, plowing, or construction, or by chance discovery) (Amick 2004; Ballenger 1996). Different types of caches have also been identified (e.g., burial, ceremonial, and utilitarian).

In its simplest form, a cache is a hiding place for storing food and/or implements for safekeeping that is subsequently lost (Kornfeld et al. 1990). Tool caching is a response to anticipating future needs in the face of spatially or temporally restricted resource distributions (Binford 1979:258). Binford (1979) defined passive gear and insurance gear, the latter of which was intended to meet a variety of needs in the general area and was cached at known landscape markers to facilitate recovery in the future. Insurance gear often contains one particular artifact class (e.g., biface) with high versatility and flexibility (Hurst 2006:105). In short, caches were created specifically to “hedge” or protect against the unknown.

Cache composition is often early stage bifaces, cores, and flakes that are not easily assigned to specific groups or periods (Hurst 2006). Bifaces may have been particularly valuable because they represent a predictable source of stone in an area that was otherwise devoid of suitable raw material. Bifaces can both provide flakes and serve as tools. Large caches in particular would represent a source of material for future

visits and provide a hedge against adverse environmental conditions (Vehik 2007).

Utilitarian purposes are typically inferred when a cache includes unfinished tools that are relatively uniform (Amick 2004:137). When these are found in areas with poor quality and/or low raw material availability, it suggests they were intended to provide a reliable source for future needs (Amick 2004). In areas with abundant, high-quality material, they may have been used for exchange.

Caches can provide important clues about population movement, seasonality of occupation, competition for resources, raw material procurement, technological organization, tool manufacture, trade or exchange systems, and use of storage facilities (Kornfeld et al. 1990; Wiseman et al. 1994). It may be possible to derive inferences about technological systems from the perspective of implement storage behavior (Kornfeld et al. 1990). The amount of information depends on a number of factors such as the presence of diagnostic artifacts, their cultural affiliation, and dating.

Diagnostic artifacts can provide insight into time- and culture-specific activities, but many caches lack these (Hurst 2006). Because of the frequent lack of diagnostic artifacts and direct cultural affiliation, their full explanatory potential is not always achieved (Scott et al. 1986). However, even caches without diagnostic artifacts have information value regarding a range of research questions.

Hurst (2006) discussed several research themes related to the decision-making processes involved in caches. The first involved raw material source location (i.e., how much material was needed, and what is the range of anticipated functions?). The second was where to place the cache on the landscape (i.e., what was its position in relation to other resources, and could the location be easily identified for retrieval?). The final theme was the cache location itself (i.e., how much material to carry versus cache [i.e., store], and what kinds of tools were required for future needs?).

These questions relate to transportation costs and potential uses for a particular cache (Hurst 2006). The distribution of lithic resources on the landscape influenced the placement of caches, which often times were at the mean distance between two known sources (Hurst 2006). Caches must have been placed near identifying landmarks so their locations would not be forgotten.

Artifacts

The collection of 83 artifacts from the Nelson cache today includes 81 bifaces and two small irregular tools, all produced from a high-quality meta-sedimentary material (Figures 1–7). The size of the original cache is unknown because at least a few specimens have been lost over the years as a result of various circumstances. The two small tools do not appear to be formal and are possibly small cores or scrapers. Because they are so different from the rest of the cache, they are not included in the statistical analyses presented below.

Metric attributes (length, width, thickness, and weight) were recorded for all bifaces (Table 1). Scatterplots of thickness in relation to length, width, and weight are shown in Figure 8. There is a clear linear relationship in each of these plots. Thickness and width have the least amount of variation and show a more regular linear relationship.

Summary statistics for all bifaces are presented in Table 2, and histograms of each metric attribute are presented in Figure 9. Each attribute has relatively close measures of central tendency (i.e., mean, median, and mode) as well as normal distributions. Given these factors, it seems likely that flakes of a certain size were being deliberately produced or selected for biface production. These data indicate a consistent and well-executed assemblage.

Biface length has a mean of 82.7 mm, a median of 81.9 mm, and a mode of 83.3 mm. The minimum value is 58.6 mm and maximum value is 110.9 mm, with a range of 52.3 mm and standard deviation of 12.2 mm. Length shows the greatest range of variation among the recorded attributes, but this was certainly conditioned to a certain extent by the size of the original material.

Biface width has a mean of 47.8 mm, a median of 47.4 mm, and a mode of 44.4 mm. The minimum value is 34.1 mm and the maximum value is 68.5 mm, with a range of 34.4 mm and standard deviation of 5.9 mm. Width shows a relatively tight distribution around the mean, median, and mode.

Biface thickness has a mean of 14.6 mm, a median of 14.5 mm, and mode of 16.8 mm. The minimum value is 10.6 mm and the maximum value is 19.7 mm, with a range of 9.1 mm and standard deviation of 2.1 mm. The thickness histogram shows more variation but still has an overall normal distribution.

NELSON BIFACE CACHE



Figure 1. Photographs of individual bifaces (1 of 7).



Figure 2. Photographs of individual bifaces (2 of 7).

NELSON BIFACE CACHE

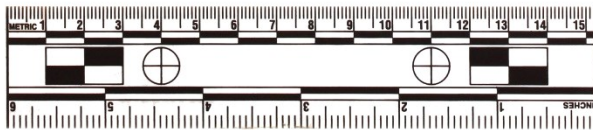


Figure 3. Photographs of individual bifaces (3 of 7).



Figure 4. Photographs of individual bifaces (4 of 7).

NELSON BIFACE CACHE



Figure 5. Photographs of individual bifaces (5 of 7).



Figure 6. Photographs of individual bifaces (6 of 7).

NELSON BIFACE CACHE



Figure 7. Photographs of individual bifaces (7 of 7).

Table 1. Summary of Metric Attributes for Bifaces (n=81).

Catalog No. (31GF475.x)	Length (mm)	Width (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Weight (g)	Description
3	95.1	57.9	16	46.81	biface
4	79.1	44.3	13	42.45	biface
5	74.3	47.1	15.2	43.61	biface
6	97.1	56.6	17	46.39	biface
7	75	50.8	15.8	42.54	biface
8	100.4	45.8	16.2	46.45	biface
9	83.3	42.8	10.6	34.31	biface
10	83.3	41.3	13.5	41.57	biface
11	73.8	56.2	13.4	42.87	biface
12	65.4	45.8	11.6	37.84	biface
13	88.6	50	15.6	53.74	biface
14	70.4	41.2	12.3	37.61	biface
15	96.6	49.6	15.3	51.12	biface
16	72.6	49.8	16.2	48.44	biface
17	68.3	44.8	11.4	34.36	biface
18	84.6	58.9	15.6	46.03	biface
19	58.6	34.1	14.2	28.86	biface
20	101.2	68.5	17.6	58.15	biface
21	90.4	49.4	17.5	54.34	biface
22	110.9	47.4	17.7	52.79	biface
23	96	51.7	16.8	53.06	biface
24	102	45.1	16.9	46.56	biface
25	82.1	43.6	12.1	42.46	biface
26	85.4	47	16.8	53.18	biface
27	76	43.5	13.7	43.24	biface
28	95.7	50.2	15.3	46.94	biface
29	79.5	42.5	18	45.61	biface
30	75.9	49.9	15.6	47.02	biface
31	88.8	51.2	16.9	47.22	biface
32	67.2	44.4	12.4	37.19	biface
33	70.6	46.8	10.8	37.52	biface
34	70.9	43.4	13	38.03	biface
35	77.3	51.5	14.3	47.33	biface
36	74.8	48.3	13.2	46.56	biface
37	78.1	48	16.8	49.3	biface
38	66.3	39.9	11.1	37.33	biface
39	95.4	55.4	18.6	50.42	biface

NELSON BIFACE CACHE

Table 1 continued.

Catalog No. (31GF475.x)	Length (mm)	Width (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Weight (g)	Description
40	106	62.7	17.3	53.17	biface
41	81.9	45.6	15.9	46.2	biface
42	103.5	53.5	17.3	53.49	biface
43	87.7	49.3	14.6	52.44	biface
44	84.6	44.1	13.2	49.83	biface
45	107.8	51	15.7	51.03	biface
46	64.9	43.9	14.6	38.34	biface
47	71.3	39.2	14.4	37.87	biface
48	80.9	41.7	16.5	44.54	biface
49	69.7	43	11.9	36.63	biface
50	73.3	49	12.2	44.27	biface
51	92.3	42.2	15	46.24	biface
52	89.7	49.7	12.6	52.74	biface
53	83.6	53	16.8	47	biface
54	88.7	51.9	13.1	49.83	biface
55	81.1	53.9	13.4	53.18	biface
56	82.9	50	12.5	52.1	biface
57	103.1	47.7	15.4	53.8	biface
58	94.4	51.4	17.6	54.66	biface
59	94.6	51.2	13.7	51.55	biface
60	74.2	43.1	12.4	40.72	biface
61	73	44.4	14.5	40.62	biface
62	81.3	48.8	15.3	42.75	biface
63	73.7	37.8	12	34.1	biface
64	88.9	47.4	14.9	43.13	biface
65	82.9	45.3	13.7	41.94	biface
66	76.4	38.4	12.7	38.82	biface
67	78.6	45.7	13	40.31	biface
68	68.2	40.9	11.9	32.45	biface
69	74.6	45.1	14.7	41.35	biface
70	100.7	55.9	14.2	45.04	biface
71	86.4	55.9	15.2	53.03	biface
72	64.5	44.4	11.89	34.48	biface
73	61.9	48.1	14.8	40.77	biface
74	69.9	44.9	12	39.66	biface
75	93.9	40.6	12	41.23	biface
76	78.8	56.2	16.3	43.13	biface

Table 1 continued.

Catalog No. (31GF475.x)	Length (mm)	Width (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Weight (g)	Description
77	66	44.8	12.9	40.29	biface
78	86.7	48.6	19.7	54.57	biface
79	82.4	42.5	12.1	43.34	biface
80	94	49.8	12.1	52.47	biface
81	77.3	42.3	11.6	42.06	biface
82	71.8	45.6	12.2	43.13	biface
83	102.9	57.5	16.9	46.75	biface

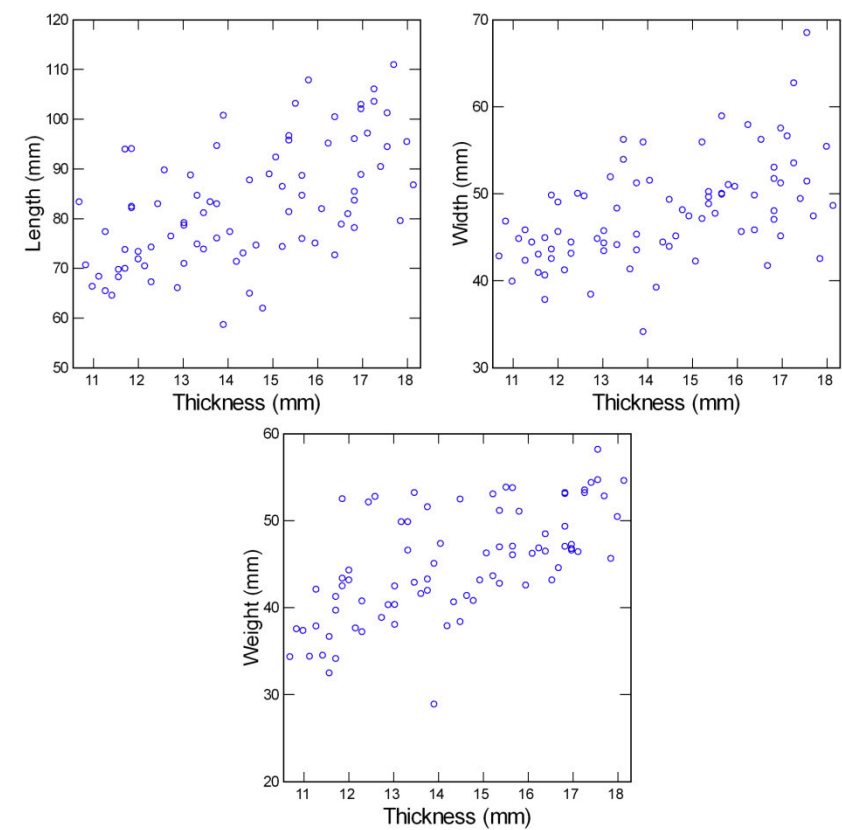


Figure 8. Scatterplots of thickness (x-axis) and length, width, and weight (y-axis).

NELSON BIFACE CACHE

Table 2. Summary Statistics for Bifaces (n=81).

Statistic	Length (mm)	Width (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Weight (g)
mean	82.7	47.8	14.6	45.0
standard error	1.3	0.6	0.2	0.7
median	81.9	47.4	14.5	45.0
mode	83.3	44.4	16.8	43.1
standard deviation	12.2	5.9	2.1	6.3
range	52.3	34.4	9.1	29.3
minimum	58.6	34.1	10.6	28.9
maximum	110.9	68.5	19.7	58.2
sum	6702	3872.7	1170.69	3644.3
count	81	81	81	81

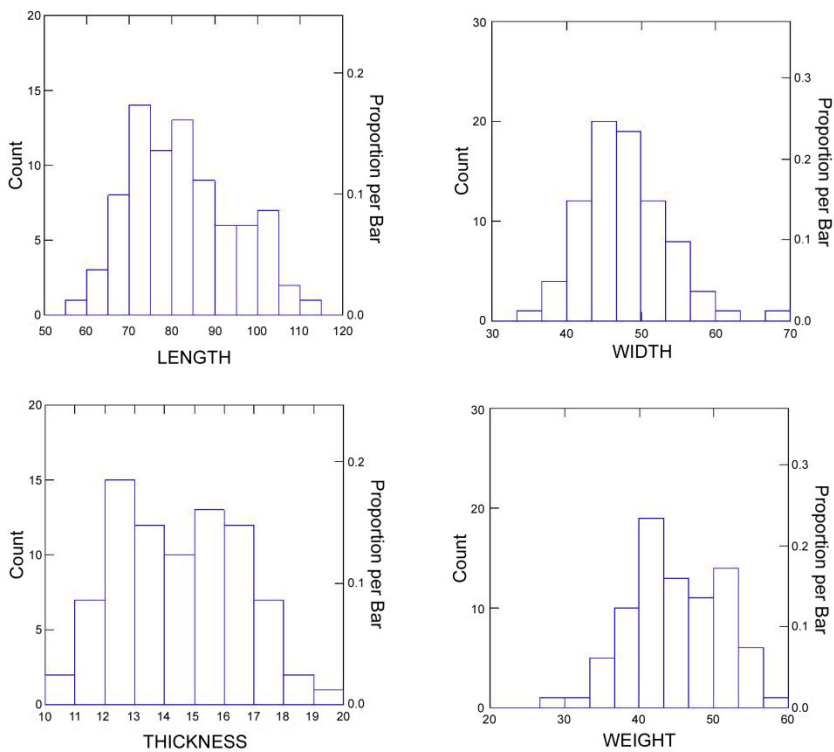


Figure 9. Histograms for length, width, thickness, and weight.

Biface weight has a mean of 45.0 g, a median of 45.0 g, and mode of 43.1 g. The minimum value is 28.9 g and the maximum value is 58.2 g, with a range of 29.3 g and standard deviation of 6.3 g. The corresponding histogram approximates a normal distribution.

Table 3 lists calculations of various measurement ratios, and Table 4 lists summary statistics for those ratios. Thickness:width is commonly used for biface analysis. Hurst (2006) considered this ratio important for assessing transport costs. Daniel (1998) used the same ratio in his study of bifaces from the Hardaway site. A lower ratio represents a thinner, lighter, and later-stage biface. Hurst (2006) noted that lower ratios decrease the overall weight relative to cutting edge. Daniel (1998) noted that thinner bifaces tend to represent later production stages.

Table 3. Ratio Calculations for Various Metric Attributes.

Catalog No.	Th:W	L:W	L:Wt	Th:Wt	W:Wt
3	0.28	1.64	2.03	0.34	1.24
4	0.29	1.79	1.86	0.31	1.04
5	0.32	1.58	1.70	0.35	1.08
6	0.30	1.72	2.09	0.37	1.22
7	0.31	1.48	1.76	0.37	1.19
8	0.35	2.19	2.16	0.35	0.99
9	0.25	1.95	2.43	0.31	1.25
10	0.33	2.02	2.00	0.32	0.99
11	0.24	1.31	1.72	0.31	1.31
12	0.25	1.43	1.73	0.31	1.21
13	0.31	1.77	1.65	0.29	0.93
14	0.30	1.71	1.87	0.33	1.10
15	0.31	1.95	1.89	0.30	0.97
16	0.33	1.46	1.50	0.33	1.03
17	0.25	1.52	1.99	0.33	1.30
18	0.26	1.44	1.84	0.34	1.28
19	0.42	1.72	2.03	0.49	1.18
20	0.26	1.48	1.74	0.30	1.18
21	0.35	1.83	1.66	0.32	0.91
22	0.37	2.34	2.10	0.34	0.90
23	0.32	1.86	1.81	0.32	0.97
24	0.37	2.26	2.19	0.36	0.97
25	0.28	1.88	1.93	0.28	1.03

NELSON BIFACE CACHE

Table 3 continued.

Catalog No.	Th:W	L:W	L:Wt	Th:Wt	W:Wt
26	0.36	1.82	1.61	0.32	0.88
27	0.31	1.75	1.76	0.32	1.01
28	0.30	1.91	2.04	0.33	1.07
29	0.42	1.87	1.74	0.39	0.93
30	0.31	1.52	1.61	0.33	1.06
31	0.33	1.73	1.88	0.36	1.08
32	0.28	1.51	1.81	0.33	1.19
33	0.23	1.51	1.88	0.29	1.25
34	0.30	1.63	1.86	0.34	1.14
35	0.28	1.50	1.63	0.30	1.09
36	0.27	1.55	1.61	0.28	1.04
37	0.35	1.63	1.58	0.34	0.97
38	0.28	1.66	1.78	0.30	1.07
39	0.34	1.72	1.89	0.37	1.10
40	0.28	1.69	1.99	0.33	1.18
41	0.35	1.80	1.77	0.34	0.99
42	0.32	1.93	1.93	0.32	1.00
43	0.30	1.78	1.67	0.28	0.94
44	0.30	1.92	1.70	0.26	0.89
45	0.31	2.11	2.11	0.31	1.00
46	0.33	1.48	1.69	0.38	1.15
47	0.37	1.82	1.88	0.38	1.04
48	0.40	1.94	1.82	0.37	0.94
49	0.28	1.62	1.90	0.32	1.17
50	0.25	1.50	1.66	0.28	1.11
51	0.36	2.19	2.00	0.32	0.91
52	0.25	1.80	1.70	0.24	0.94
53	0.32	1.58	1.78	0.36	1.13
54	0.25	1.71	1.78	0.26	1.04
55	0.25	1.50	1.53	0.25	1.01
56	0.25	1.66	1.59	0.24	0.96
57	0.32	2.16	1.92	0.29	0.89
58	0.34	1.84	1.73	0.32	0.94
59	0.27	1.85	1.84	0.27	0.99
60	0.29	1.72	1.82	0.30	1.06
61	0.33	1.64	1.80	0.36	1.09
62	0.31	1.67	1.90	0.36	1.14
63	0.32	1.95	2.16	0.35	1.11

Table 3 continued.

Catalog No.	Th:W	L:W	L:Wt	Th:Wt	W:Wt
64	0.31	1.88	2.06	0.35	1.10
65	0.30	1.83	1.98	0.33	1.08
66	0.33	1.99	1.97	0.33	0.99
67	0.28	1.72	1.95	0.32	1.13
68	0.29	1.67	2.10	0.37	1.26
69	0.33	1.65	1.80	0.36	1.09
70	0.25	1.80	2.24	0.32	1.24
71	0.27	1.55	1.63	0.29	1.05
72	0.27	1.45	1.87	0.34	1.29
73	0.31	1.29	1.52	0.36	1.18
74	0.27	1.56	1.76	0.30	1.13
75	0.30	2.31	2.28	0.29	0.98
76	0.29	1.40	1.83	0.38	1.30
77	0.29	1.47	1.64	0.32	1.11
78	0.41	1.78	1.59	0.36	0.89
79	0.28	1.94	1.90	0.28	0.98
80	0.24	1.89	1.79	0.23	0.95
81	0.27	1.83	1.84	0.28	1.01
82	0.27	1.57	1.66	0.28	1.06
83	0.29	1.79	2.20	0.36	1.23

Table 4. Summary Statistics for Metric Attribute Ratios.

Statistic	Th:W	L:W	L:Wt	Th:Wt	W:Wt
number of cases	81	81	81	81	81
minimum	0.23	1.29	1.50	0.23	0.88
maximum	0.42	2.34	2.43	0.49	1.31
mean	0.30	1.74	1.85	0.32	1.07
standard deviation	0.04	0.23	0.19	0.04	0.12

The minimum thickness:width ratio is 0.23, the maximum is 0.42, and the mean is 0.30, with a standard deviation of 0.04. The corresponding box plot shows four outliers (numbers 48, 78, 19, and 29), all of which have ratios ranging from 0.40 to 0.42 (Figure 10). Even with these included in the sample, the bifaces show a remarkably consistent thickness:width ratio. Daniel (1998:60–62) listed thickness:width ratios for Type I bifaces as 0.48 and Type II bifaces as

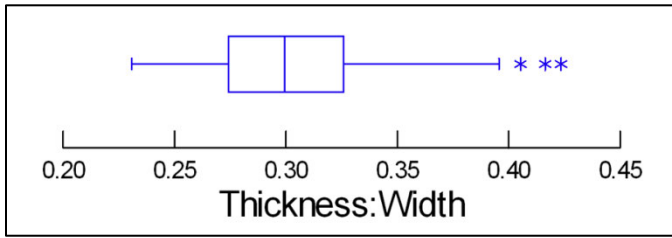


Figure 10. Boxplot of thickness:width ratios.

0.33. Thus, the Nelson cache bifaces have a ratio (0.30) very similar to the Type II bifaces in Daniel's (1998) analysis. The measurements together with the overall morphology, technology, and flaking patterns reflect tools that were very close to finished forms.

Discussion

The 81 bifaces are all complete and remarkably consistent in terms of size, shape, width/thickness ratios, and flake removals. In plan view, they tend to be ovate in shape with clearly defined proximal and distal ends. Bases tend to be rounded (slightly convex) or straight, with a few that are angled. Distal ends are all pointed. In profile they have regular edges.

The bifaces were all manufactured from large, relatively flat core reduction flakes (flake blanks). Certain tools retain evidence of the original flake with intact bulbs of force, ventral surfaces, and dorsal cortex, while others have been completely shaped. The flaking patterns were designed for thinning and shaping and show good execution. Many bifaces show systematic flake removals that reach the centerline, but there is no evidence of the overshoot technique. Although step and hinge terminations are present on certain bifaces, they occur in very low frequencies. There is no evidence for basal or lateral edge grinding and there is very little edge retouch. Knapping technique is similar across the entire assemblage and suggests the bifaces were made by a single individual in a quarry location using soft hammer percussion (Amick 2004; Dillian and Bello 2010).

Along the continuum of biface production, these fit best in the middle-stage or late-stage range. There is little evidence for manufacturing being terminated at different stages. Morphology and metric attributes suggest these were tool preforms that needed very little additional modification before use. Macroscopic inspection does not

show any evidence for use such as edge modification, polishing, resharpening, recycling, fractures, or haft elements. In short, these tools were deliberately cached before final production stages.

The total weight of the cache is approximately 3.6 kg (7.9 pounds). This suggests a relatively heavy load that was transported over a long distance from its presumed source to final location. The number and size of potential tools in later production stages would have provided a predictable and reliable source for future needs. A high amount of energy was invested in tool production, transport, and storage, all of which clearly indicate the value ascribed to this cache.

Raw material identification to a specific location is difficult given the range of variation throughout the slate belt. However, the recent study by Steponaitis and Irwin (2006) of stone sourcing in the Carolina Sandhills provides good comparative information on multiple quarry locations. Most of the cache specimens appear to be of the same material. Although there is a certain degree of variation, it is not outside the range expected in a single quarry or narrow geographic area. Dominant colors are blue and green, with an occasional darker or lighter example. Phenocrysts are not present. Certain specimens are banded, but not the type of banding that is typically seen from Uwharrie sources (Randy Daniel, personal communication 2008). The material is more consistent with metasedimentary types such as mudstone, siltstone, or argillite (Chris Moore, personal communication 2008). Sources for these materials have been identified in Chatham County, which is geographically one of the closest potential source areas to the cache location (Steponaitis et al. 2006). The use of a single raw material suggests specialized/direct procurement rather than opportunistic procurement or exchange. The cache location itself is in an area of low-quality material that is not easily accessible. This provides additional support for caching behavior that was designed for future raw material needs.

A lack of diagnostic artifacts in the cache makes dating extremely difficult with any precision or confidence. In addition, bifaces were manufactured and used throughout prehistory. Absent other contextual information, it is necessary to rely on comparative information and knowledge of regional archaeology. The large sizes, flaking patterns, and internal consistency most likely indicate an Archaic date, but anything more specific would be conjecture.

Conclusions

The Nelson cache is one of the larger reported caches in North Carolina. Technological analysis indicates an assemblage of well-executed bifaces that were produced at a quarry location by a single individual. The knapper's goal was to produce nearly finished tools from high-quality raw material that could be transported and stored for future uses in an area with less desirable, lower-quality, or less abundant materials. The tools were likely intended for utilitarian purposes.

Notes

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BOOK REVIEWS

A Passion for the Past: The Odyssey of a Transatlantic Archaeologist. Ivor Noël Hume. University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 2010. 384 pp., illus., index. \$29.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8139-2977-4; \$29.95 (ebook), ISBN 9780813929965.

A Glorious Empire: Archaeology and the Tudor-Stuart Atlantic World. Essays in Honor of Ivor Noël Hume. Eric Klingelhofer, Editor. Oxbow Books, Oxford, UK, 2013. 194 pp., illus. \$65.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-84217-510-1.

Reviewed by Thomas E. Beaman, Jr.

There are very few individuals in our discipline who have inspired and influenced the archaeological exploration of American historic sites more than Ivor Noël Hume.

His extensive investigations in the Tidewater region of Virginia helped to define the use of archaeology to supplement the historical record and to craft extensive data for the restoration of numerous seventeenth- and eighteenth-century structures and landscapes. Noël Hume's many elegantly written publications have carried his vision and practice of historic site exploration far beyond the eastern shores of Virginia: from the pioneering textbook *Historical Archaeology* (Knopf, 1969); through regional or site-specific studies in *Here Lies Virginia* (Knopf, 1963), *Martin's Hundred* (Knopf, 1982), and from Roanoke to Jamestown in *The Virginia Adventure* (Knopf, 1994); to detailed artifact studies of *All the Best Rubbish* (Harper and Rowe, 1974) and *If These Pots Could Talk* (Chipstone, 2001); and through his years of regular contributions in to *Colonial Williamsburg* magazine. In fact, this reviewer does not know a single historical archaeologist working on pre-Revolutionary era sites who keeps Noël Hume's arguably most seminal work, *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America* (Knopf, 1969), more than an arm's length from their desk or lab table.

While his primary laboratories of American colonial sites were found in Virginia, Noël Hume and his work have been very important in North Carolina, and have contributed both directly and indirectly towards the archaeological development and exploration of historic period sites in the "Old North State." His indirect contributions range from a

paradigmatic publication to being a ceramic consultant. In an important publication for archaeologists on historic sites before the emergence of scientific field and interpretive methods, Noël Hume first articulated a humanistic paradigm, the use of archaeology as a “handmaiden” to supplement the written historical record, in the *North Carolina Historical Review* (41[2]:214–225;1964). Noël Hume also provided ceramic identification and dates for Stanley South at Brunswick Town as he transitioned from a familiar prehistoric artifact database to an unfamiliar material one of historic period sites (South, *An Archaeological Evolution* [Springer Science + Business Media, Inc., New York, 2005], p. 111). This collaboration allowed South to produce the “Description of the Ceramic Types From Brunswick Town” manuscript (on file, North Carolina Office of State Archaeology Research Center, 1959), which predated Noël Hume’s *A Guide to Artifact of Colonial America* by a decade. Though South recounted Noël Hume’s idea of counting artifacts as “anthropological idiocy,” his formula of calculating a mean ceramic date even managed to eventually convince Noël Hume of its validity (South, *An Archaeological Evolution*: 111, 235–237).

Noël Hume’s more direct contribution to the archaeology of North Carolina has come in his search for the remains of Fort Raleigh and evidence of the first English explorers and settlers to venture into “Virginia” (what is now North Carolina). Beginning in 1992, Noël Hume established a hand-picked archaeological cabal of his long-standing friends and those whose work he valued to conduct this exploration at the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site on Roanoke Island. As detailed in his work, *The Virginia Adventure*, through several seasons of fieldwork Noël Hume identified what he interpretively claims as a “workshop” of metallurgist Joachim Gans and Thomas Harriott from the 1585 expedition. While this interpretation continues to be questioned, it has led to further exploration of the Fort Raleigh site by the First Colony Foundation and others.

Despite this storied career and authorship of an archaeological canon of literature enviable to modern archaeologists, Noël Hume’s *A Passion for the Past: The Odyssey of a Transatlantic Archaeologist* is a decided departure from his previous works; instead of telling the story of site exploration or the origins and uses of artifacts, he turns a reflectively critical eye to himself. This autobiographical volume encompasses his life story, from his ancestral lineage and childhood to his lengthy career. The use of “Odyssey” in the subtitle is certainly appropriate; as this book demonstrates, his journey to success was indeed a long and arduous one.

Given Noël Hume's talent for writing the past more as a tale than dryly factual, his gift of written eloquence in *Passion for the Past* presents a bleak and honest account of many tribulations and triumphs experienced through his lifetime. This work encompasses a gambit of emotions, from his loneliness in childhood resulting from neglectful parents, excitement in moments of discovery as a mudlark on the Thames River, to the triumph and then heartbreak at having one of his proudest monuments—the museum of Wolstenholme Town and Martin's Hundred at Carter's Grove—closed.

The Preface of the text well establishes a sober tone for these and other events, as he discusses the “cutthroat” nature of archaeology and “its share of assassins,” such as “...young Turks eager to clamber to prominence over the ruins of their predecessors' reputations,” by summarizing that “...anyone who leads at the beginning can expect to be damned in the end” (p. x).

Given Noël Hume's penchant for storytelling, and perhaps due to his brief career as an actor, *A Passion for the Past* is formatted as a theatrical work in two acts. Act I, “In The Old World,” encompassing 15 chapters and almost two-thirds of the text, provides previously untold stories of his childhood, coming of age in wartime Britain, and formative archaeological experiences. Noël Hume's childhood from birth through age 18 (Chapters 1–7) proved difficult years, largely through his cast of self-absorbed characters: a father's early abandonment that provided no financial support, his mother's neglect while focused on social climbing to find another husband, not to mention a number of hostile nursemaids and school officials akin to Dickensian villains. The immediate post-War years (Chapters 8–10) would find Noël Hume barely supporting himself as a stage actor in second-rate productions, though many of the frustrating personalities from his childhood seemed to reemerge in the form of agents and directors.

Chapters 11–15 detail the formative experiences of Noël Hume the archaeologist. In early 1949, a BBC radio interview inspired him to begin “mudlarking,” or searching the muddy banks of the Thames River in London for material remnants of London's two millennia of occupation. After repeatedly turning in recovered artifacts to Adrian Oswald of the City of London's Guildhall Museum, Oswald hired Noël Hume as his assistant, and then his replacement. For over six years, Noël Hume and a largely volunteer crew conducted salvage excavations on Roman period, medieval, and post-medieval sites around London at areas of construction to restore and rebuild the city from the heavy damage it

incurred through repeated bombings in World War II. Also during this time, he met and married Audrey Baines, who shared his many adventures in London, America, and beyond. Act I concludes with an invitation to consult on eighteenth-century artifacts recovered from excavations in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The second act of *A Passion for the Past*, “In The New World”, continues the autobiographical narrative as Noël Hume recounts what archaeologists will recognize as his more familiar, successful adventures and accomplishments in America. Ensnared in Tidewater Virginia from 1956, with Audrey at his side, Noël Hume directed excavations up and down Duke of Gloucester Street in Williamsburg and began documenting his work in popular print (Chapters 16–20). Chapter 21 documents his initial involvement with National Geographic Society and the explorations at Carter’s Grove and Wolstenholme Town, and follow with a trip to see excavations of comparable seventeenth-century “bawns” in Ireland (Chapter 22) and a vacation to Egypt (Chapter 23). With the excavations at Carter’s Grove completed and a museum constructed on-site by 1983 (Chapters 24 and 25), the Noël Humes retired from archaeology in Williamsburg, but remained active through discovery of the sixteenth-century “Science Center” of Joachim Gans on Roanoke Island (Chapter 26), underwater exploration of the *Sea Venture* shipwreck in Bermuda (Chapter 27), and as a consultant on the rediscovery investigations at Jamestown (Chapter 28). His final scene, Chapter 29, finds Noël Hume dabbling again at playwriting to unsuccessfully challenge popular notions and change perceptions of the early Virginia colonists, and lamenting lost arts while thankfully acknowledging those who supported his efforts. His final curtain call extols, “...the party’s over now” (p. 340).

The most maudlin tones struck by Noël Hume result from his fears on his legacy and the impermanence of his accomplishments, which greatly reminded this reviewer of Prospero in William Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Once a powerful sorcerer, the aged Prospero has lost control of his “art” and is confronted with a new, modern age of science and exploration. Certainly evident at his advanced age, *A Passion of the Past* is Noël Hume’s *Tempest*. It finds him contemplating being “damned in the end” over which of his works and accomplishments will be sustained by his audiences in an era of more quantitative, patterned-based explanations and post-modern academic interpreters. But like Prospero, one can be sure that Noël Hume has a few more tricks up his sleeve that will continue to ensnare his audiences of archaeologists and non-

archaeologists alike. In fact, since the publication of *A Passion for the Past*, he has written an excellent biography of Giovanni Belzoni, and is undoubtedly at work on another tome.

With the trend of archaeologists documenting the life and careers of our fellow retired or deceased colleagues, *A Passion of the Past* stands as a more unique example because it gives us the perspective and events of Noël Hume's loves, labors, and loss, in his own words, warts and all. Yet as a historical context for understanding his other works, this volume could be considered one of his most valuable texts to date.

Noël Hume's autobiography had little time to gather dust before the publication of *A Glorious Empire*, a festschrift dedicated to his archaeological work and its influence on multiple generations of modern archaeologists. Though both volumes center on Noël Hume's works, *A Glorious Empire* stands in stark contrast to *A Passion to for the Past* as a celebratory tribute to his career, with none of the critical self-reflections, fears of the future, or melancholy regrets that Noël Hume himself provided.

This assembled volume of contributions is organized by Eric Klingelhofer, who worked as Senior Archaeologist with Noël Hume at Colonial Williamsburg from 1975–1979, and more recently at Fort Raleigh. In a brief preface, he credits Noël Hume with greatly simplifying the preparation of this collection, because there was no need to duplicate what he detailed personally in his autobiography. However, Klingelhofer does include a list of the many honors and awards Noël Hume has received, as well as a far-from-complete, but well-selected, bibliography of Noël Hume's works. He also lauds Noël Hume and describes the incredible influence he had on his own career and love for the material past, a mantra that becomes very familiar throughout the volume for its inclusion by all the authors in the contributed papers.

The first work in the volume is by Noël Hume himself. A reprint of his famous essay, "Cassandra at the Well," sets the paradigm and theme for the volume, and well describes his approach to archaeology. Noël Hume argues the best way for archaeology to gain wider acceptance and support as a discipline to connect with the public, noting that "there must be places where the artifacts can be shown, and the story told. I use the word 'story' deliberately, because that is what it has to be if the TV-trained public is to look or listen" (p. xvii). He reminds that archaeology does not end at excavation, artifacts should not be isolated in storage, and it is not enough to write "jargon-riddled and thinly illustrated reports" (p. xviii). Noël Hume continues that, "Our most effective and lasting

contributions to history and thus the public good, are less likely to depend on our erudition, our persistence, our reports, or our luck, than on skills taught not in schools of anthropology but in classes in creative writing, media arts, and exhibit design” (p. xviii). He cautions that if we ignore this path, “we shall continue to impress ourselves, but in increasingly threadbare and penurious numbers” (p. xviii). All of the contributors in this volume subscribe to this view, and have taken this road less travelled with Noël Hume by attempting to engage the public at every turn—through well-written books on excavations, the construction of museums and museum displays, and even including the public in their field work. The results of this path are self-evident in the projects and careers of the archaeologists who contributed to this volume.

The tributes begin as six friends and colleagues of Noël Hume provide short reminiscences about first meeting him, working with him, or the influence he had on their lives and careers. John Austin, former curator of ceramics at Colonial Williamsburg, remembers Noël Hume and his first wife, Audrey, as mentors who provided historical and decorative context to the ceramics chosen for exhibits, as well as in his seminal study of tin-glazed earthenwares from Williamsburg. Alistair Macdonald of the First Colony Foundation recounts working with Noël Hume and his lofty expectations of excavators, and fondly remembers occasionally being admonished for breeches of field etiquette. Macdonald first touches on the theme of Noël Hume having a “long family tree” of archaeologists who learned from and were influenced by him, and speculates these descendants often ask as he does, “What would Noël do?” Merry Abbott Outlaw began as a “pot washer” in the Colonial Williamsburg laboratory, but credits Noël Hume’s excitement over bits and pieces with igniting her lifelong passion for colonial ceramics. Conservator Alexandra Klingelhofer noted that the challenge of excellence was the gift Noël Hume gave to those who worked with him, as he always sought excellence in every aspect of his work and from those around him. Jamie May of Jamestown Rediscovery was introduced to Noël Hume’s works as a student, and noted his writings remain essential building blocks for one who seeks a career in historical archaeology. Finally, the late Geoff Egan credits Noël Hume not only for his own interest in cloth seals, but also for his continual work to keep an open connection between the Museum of London and Virginia archaeology.

The heart of *A Glorious Empire* is the 15 chapters that directly relate to artifacts, sites, and projects that highlight the hallmarks of Noël

Hume's career, all written in the style of culture history for which he is known. These contributions can be subdivided into three topical areas: artifacts from American excavated contexts, buildings and landscapes in America, and post medieval bits from Britain that remind of Noël Hume's archaeological genesis. All chapters are well chosen and authored by notable archaeologists who were instructed and/or heavily influenced by Noël Hume's work.

Five essays on artifacts excavated on American sites highlight Noël Hume's stylistic approaches to the studies and stories of material culture. Nicholas Lucchetti discusses how Joachim Gans and Thomas Harriott's experiments on copper at Fort Raleigh prepared early settlers of Jamestown for the communicative value copper brought in trades with the local natives. Ceramicist Beverly Straube explains the differences in four types of European earthenware costrel forms found at early settlement sites, including border wares, marbled slipwares, starred costrels, and Martincamp flasks. Images from a writing slate with text and images of people, birds, trees, and a fleur-de-lei recovered in early contexts from Jamestown was identified by William Kelso as likely made by colonist William Strachey. With a focus on seventeenth-century North Devon slipware, Robert Hunter contemplates the idea of "heirloom pots" with dates, names, or associations with famous individuals that survive as museum examples while more ordinary ceramics end up broken in the ground. He urges more awareness and collaborations are needed between archaeologists and decorative arts historians to help refine ceramic chronologies and to better understand the range of stylistic and symbolic analyses. David Gaimster and Trip Kahn compare a stoneware sphere with 10 holes likely made between 1725 and 1790 in Lower Manhattan to a style of ceramic "fireball" or "stink-pot" grenade commonly excavated on sites related to battles in the English Civil War (1642–1651). This style of projectile would be launched by hand or sling, and was primarily used as an aid to board enemy ships.

The second topical area of contributions focuses on Noël Hume's work with historical structures and landscapes. These five studies revisit sites that he either excavated or consulted with others in their interpretations. James Tuck and Barry Gaulton expound upon Noël Hume's "handmaiden to history" concept and summarize 20 years of excavation at Ferryland, Newfoundland, to identify Sir George Calvert's manor houses of 1623 and 1628 by their construction techniques. Volume editor Eric Klingelhofer reviews artifacts and historical records

of Site A at Martin's Hundred (identified as Harwood's Plantation) and reinterprets structure D as a unique, impermanent building from 1624 that vertically combined a storehouse, residence, arsenal, and watch post. With a combination of historical documents and data from Noël Hume's 1964–1965 excavations, architectural historian Edward Chappell details the functional layout of Samuel Matthew's older, English-style residence of 1630 at Blunt's Point and draws comparisons to similar residences at Kingsmill, Flowerdew, and Clifts plantations. Brian Lacey explores the past 30 years of research into similarities of architectural and landscape designs between Irish plantations in Ulster and at Wolstenholme Town in Martin's Hundred. As both colonial settlements were initially supported by backers of the Virginia Company, Noël Hume in the early 1980s had briefly explored potential continuities of these early seventeenth-century British colonial settlements. Carter Hudgins reconsiders the expansion of Robert "King" Carter's residence at Corotoman plantation and compares the archaeological record with 251 other contemporary probates from Lancaster County, Virginia. With the increased number of specialized rooms in residential expansions, the presence of more personal property and household goods, as well as the acquisition of more capital such as livestock and enslaved labor, Hudgins well documents the gradual shift in material life between old traditions and new conventions among the Virginia gentry in the first portion of the eighteenth century.

The final five contributed studies focus on either artifacts or excavations in Britain. While their focus is on the manufacture or use of material culture within British sites, these essays have methodological or comparative value to Noël Hume's work in America. Peter Addyman identified the owner of a signet ring found in excavations near King's Manor in York as Sir Arthur Ingram (the elder), a controller of customs in London that influenced the right of the Virginia Company to import tobacco. Based on collections in London from the Tudor and Stuart periods, Jacqueline Pearce offers a delightful dissection of historic horticultural watering pots, including the "sprinkler" (both simple and handled) and "rose" types. In the longest and most well illustrated contribution, Martin Biddle expands on Noël Hume's early study of glass wine bottles, and attempts to define a dated typology from the second half of the 17th century based on glass bottle seals excavated from taverns in Surry and Oxford. After his identification of four basic bottle shapes, Biddle notes that excavations show some tavern owners changed their dates on seals every year. When tavern owners filled these dated bottles from casks of wine, Biddle observes that their "customers expected

wines of known vintage” and owners provided “scrupulous attention to the interests of well-informed customers” (p. 140). The drawings and information in this article alone are worth the price of this volume. David Higgins discusses the production and use of molded decorative smoking pipes in seventeenth-century Britain. The strong influences of Dutch and French styles, as well as a few examples from Scotland and Ireland, lead Higgins to the conclusion that the lack of elaborately molded decorative pipes may indicate they were not as high in demand as one might expect. Finally, in one of the more unique contributions, Ian Blair, Bruce Watson, and Jacqueline Pearce review Noël Hume’s 1949–1957 excavations related to the 1666 Great Fire of London which included five sites that produced significant assemblages from the event. Interestingly, it was during this time that Noël Hume developed and began to use his ER record system, which combined museum accession numbers with excavated contexts.

In his Introduction to the festschrift dedicated to James Deetz (*The Art and Mystery of Historical Archaeology: Essays in Honor of James Deetz*, edited by Anne Elizabeth Yentsch and Mary C. Beaudry, CRC Press, Boca Raton, Florida, 1992), Noël Hume observed about his friend and colleague, “Who would indeed deny that in the field (or jungle) of mid- to late 20th century archaeology, Jim is indeed an exotic—as such, to be treasured beyond price.” While Deetz’s legacy was (and continues to be) secured and preserved by his numerous graduate students, Ivor Noël Hume never taught archaeology in a classroom; however, all of us who read his words, studied his artifact guides, or had the pleasure of working with him in the field became his pupils in the practice of historical archaeology. The contributions and reminiscences in *A Glorious Empire*, written by the students of his vast works, certainly well illustrate that, like Deetz, Noël Hume himself was also an exotic specimen of historical archaeology, whose influential works continue to be treasured as priceless.

Both *A Passion for the Past* and *A Glorious Empire* seek to address the legacy of Ivor Noël Hume’s contributions to archaeology through his roles as professional mentor, prolific author, and colleague, and each provides a contrasting vision. One’s legacy is the sum total of influence and accomplishments accumulated throughout a professional career, and can be unusually difficult to fully address or understand, especially while the person is still as capably active as Noël Hume. As scientists, we recognize and accept that legacies cannot simply be created, written, or rewritten to be more positive or negative in the twilight of retirement or

after the sundown on a career. It is time and future work performed by others on our studies and sites that will be the truthful adjudicators of our deeds. The fears expressed by Noël Hume in *A Passion for the Past* are that his legacy is being and will continue to be damned or disappear into the footnotes of archaeological history by “young turks” under a parade of new paradigms.

However, his colleagues and disciples, many of whom were “young turks” in their own right, act as arbiters with *A Glorious Empire*—aptly named for the depth and breadth of Noël Hume’s influence—and truly craft a volume that well illustrates that his fears are unfounded and his legacy will continue to endure on both sides of the Atlantic. Closer to home, there is certainly no doubt for those of us in the future who will explore historic period sites in North Carolina, as well as elsewhere in the Middle Atlantic and Southeast, that the accomplishments and invaluable contributions of Ivor Noël Hume will be long remembered.

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