



Louisiana Archaeological Society

NEWSLETTER

RICHARD A. WEINSTEIN, Newsletter Editor

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FROM THE EDITOR

I only have two brief comments regarding this issue of the Newsletter. First, please make sure that your pre-registration form for the upcoming 1992 Annual Meeting is mailed in soon if you have not already done so, and that you make your hotel reservations before January 3, 1992. The registration fee increases from \$15.00 to \$20.00 after January 10, 1992, and the hotel has set January 3rd as the cutoff date after which they cannot guarantee the special room rate being offered the society. The meeting should prove highly enjoyable and entertaining, as we have a fine keynote speaker, a banquet, and a wonderful slate of papers already in hand.

Secondly, as you will see, the initial two articles in this Newsletter relate to Poverty Point and its mystical qualities. The first, by John Connaway, was received a few weeks before the second, by Jon Gibson, without either knowing that the other had submitted an article. This is particularly coincidental, since the main thrust of Connaway's discourse is to provide a rather jocular review of an earlier study by Jon Gibson, and Gibson is taken to task for his failure to emphasize the importance of owls at the Poverty Point site. Gibson, however, must have received interstate, subliminal, telepathic signals (or something like that) from Connaway, and these surely inspired him to rectify the situation with his

article on the 1991 USL summer field school, and its highly apropos title. But those of you who read the two articles can learn that for yourselves.

See you in Baton Rouge.

Rich Weinstein
Newsletter Editor

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM OF THE 1992 LOUISIANA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

Dennis Jones, Program Chairman, and Carl Kuttruff, Facilities Chairman, report that final arrangements for the upcoming 1992 Annual Meeting are moving ahead according to schedule. Almost a full slate of abstracts has been received for the meeting, including a keynote address by Vincas P. Steponaitis of the University of North Carolina on his research at the famous Moundville site near Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Additional papers include the following:

- (1) "Motorized Shaker Screens," by Michael Comardelle.
- (2) "Sites of the Poverty Point Period in the St. Landry, Avoyelles Parish Area," by James A. Fogleman.
- (3) "Overview of Excavations at the Pump Canal Site (16 SC 27)," by Herschel Franks, Kenneth Jones, Michael

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Comardelle, and Marco Giardino.

- (4) "Owls and Trowels: The 1991 Excavations in the Western Ring at Poverty Point," by Jon L. Gibson.
- (5) "The First Complete Structure at Poverty Point: The 1991 Excavations on Ridge 2 Northwest," by Glen Greene.
- (6) "Technical Studies of Braided Cordage from the Bayou Jasmine Site," by Jenna Tedrick Kuttruff.
- (7) "Early Man in the New World: Who Came First?" by Willard Leutze.
- (8) "A Perforated, Spatulate Stone Celt from Louisiana," by Robert W. Neuman.
- (9) "The Ouacha and Chauacha: History and Archaeology of the Contact Period in South Louisiana," by Charles E. Pearson.
- (10) "Chantuto: Modern Usage of a Prehistoric Clam Shell Mound," by George Riser.
- (11) "An Archaic Mound Site in North Central Louisiana?" by Joe Saunders and Thurman Allen.
- (12) "An Analysis of Artifacts from the Kleinpeter Site, 16 EBR 5," by Malcolm Shuman.
- (13) "Investigations at Beka Plantation, Orleans Parish," by Rhonda Smith.
- (14) "Botanical Studies of Vegetal Cordage from the Bayou Jasmine Site," by Marie Standifer and Shirley Tucker

- (15) "Archaeology at the French Colonial Town of Old Mobile," by Gregory A. Waselkov.
- (16) "Women in the Field: A Historical Perspective on the Role of Women Louisiana Archaeology," by Susan Wurtzburg.
- (17) "Archaeological Investigations within the Durel Cottage, New Orleans," by Jill-Karen Yakubik.

In addition to the above, Mary Manhein and Barbara Lewis have expressed interest in presenting papers, but their abstracts have not yet been received.

Since there is time for approximately 25 papers, room still is available for about six more presentations. Thus, if you have been thinking of giving a paper at the meeting, but have not yet notified Dennis, please do so by the end of December. You will find a copy of the contributor form in this Newsletter. Please fill it out and mail it in as soon as possible.

A van tour of the Kleinpeter site will also be conducted Sunday afternoon for those individuals interesting in seeing this important mound group located just outside Baton Rouge. There is no cost for this tour, but seating is limited. It will be first come, first served, weather permitting. Please express your interest in the tour on the enclosed pre-registration form.

A preliminary program of events is included below.

Friday, January 17, 1992

4:00 PM - 8:30 PM
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
8:30 PM -

Registration
Executive Committee Meeting
Wine and Cheese Reception

Saturday, January 18, 1992

9:00 AM - 12:00 AM
9:00 AM - 12:00 AM
12:00 AM - 1:30 PM
1:30 PM - 4:10 PM
4:10 PM - 4:30 PM
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Registration Continued
Presented Papers
Lunch
Presented Papers
Break
Business Meeting
Banquet (Jon Gibson, et al. "Clarence Webb: The Medicine Man")
Keynote Speaker (Vincas P. Steponaitis, University of North Carolina, "Moundville, Alabama")
Cash Bar

8:30 PM - 9:30 PM

9:30 PM -

Sunday, January 19, 1992

9:00 AM - 12:00 AM
1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Presented Papers
Tour of the Kleinpeter Site

Note: The keynote presentation will be after the banquet and will be open to all attending the LAS meeting.

"SEARCH....", A RAPTORIAL REVIEW

By
John Connaway
Mississippi Department of
Archives and History,
Clarksdale, Mississippi

I recently read with interest, and not a small amount of envy of his insight, Jon Gibson's introductory narrative in *Search for the Lost Sixth Ridge: The 1989 Excavations at Poverty Point*. I was struck by the absence of what I thought to be an unequivocally intrinsic part of the Poverty Point spiritual cosmos. Alas, Jon, enraptured by yellow foxes and raucous locusts, failed (innocently I presume) to recognize the importance of owls in his supernatural traverses. I suspect the "Old Ones" were more concerned with owls than locusts, since locusts in their geospiritual form were more likely curated, handed down from their predecessors, the "Ancient Ones"; so why has there not been a "Season of the Owls"? Do they not give a hoot at Poverty Point anymore, or has the thrill of the locusts overwhelmed their wide-eyed, bellicose, nocturnal screeching and hooting? Perhaps the owlish joie de vivre is lost upon the modern interlopers of the "Old Ones" turf by their mere absence from the site at night, excavations being a concern of the daylight hours. But the "Old Ones" knew because they were there at night, listening in awe to the sinister owl-spirits of the dark mourning out their dreadful and austere ululations, portending dire events or perhaps merely venting their anguish at the incessant cadence of cicada pandemonium.

The owls must be given their due credit, Jon. Think of the impact owls must have had upon the Poverty Point inhabitants to have influenced their stone carving endeavors so decisively. In 1975, Dr. Webb reported in the L.A.S. Newsletter 20 owl pendants or beads and 3 preforms from Poverty Point. Let's face it, there are but a very scarce few "locust" beads in existence, even less from the Poverty Point site itself, and no preforms. The vast majority of such objects have been found in Mississippi, and most appear to be animals of various sorts, even some owls, foxes, and rabbits if you like, rather than locusts

(cicadas). And most are found on late Middle Archaic sites, not the full-fledged Poverty Point sites. Let's not continue to perpetuate the myth of a Poverty Point origin for such rarities until we have better contextual proof. Even Dr. Webb conceded to me a number of years ago that many other life forms are represented here. This is not denying the respect for the cicada and its reverberations alluded to in Choctaw and Coushatta mythology, nor by that of the "Old Ones" themselves, but let's not lose our temporal perspective while engrossed in reveries and musings about the whims of the "Old Ones" and yellow foxes. The spirits linger at Poverty Point, I'm sure, in a variety of forms, and for those in love with the site and its people, these can be felt and seen at the proper time, as Jon has undoubtedly done.

But have you ever sat out there at night and felt the spirit of the owls? The "Old Ones" apparently did; they even built a great "bird" mound. Who's to say this wasn't inspired by owls, who at the same time obviously stimulated an aggressive grinding and perforating of jasper pebbles in their likeness. I feel the cicadas were not the primary pervasive spiritual force among the "Old Ones" suggested by your adulation, but rather were greatly outranked by the "Avian Vision," or the "Bedazzlement of the Birds" if you will. Owls, who (or Hoo!) ranked high in the "Avian Vision," are grouped into two families (perhaps clans in the days of yore), the Barn Owls or Tytonidae and the rest of the owls or Strigidae. I suspect that in order to avoid adverse avian aversion, and avidly avowing themselves esoteric supplicants of the supernal shamanic Strigidae, the shamans among the "Old Ones" at Poverty Point practiced a form of spiritual avian anthropomorphism whereby the intrinsic ethereal character of birds and men were united symbolically with one another somewhere on the avian astral plane. A trenchant perception of this phenomenon availed itself upon the "Old Ones" shamans during the tribulations of tremulous trances in raptorial rapture. The closest they could come to representing this in earthly form was the ever popular talismanic Tytonidae, or laterally drilled jasper barn owl pendants. These objects, worn by the favored shamans, became not only terrestrial manifestations of spectral Strigidae and the thaumaturgical Tytonidae,

but also symbols of supernatural powers held by those who wore them. The reverence in which such theophanies were held by the minions of the shamans surely inspired a propensity on the part of the masses to regard said shamans with a certain amount of fear and awe, thus ensuring the shamans' continued high status among the "People." Adherence to such raptorolatry also lent oneself a certain amount of assurance of succor from bird-beak belligerence whilst tipping into the night to find relief from the evening's overindulged repast.

To do equal justice to the owl and his forebears of Poverty Point past, I heartily recommend a "Season of the Owls," if you haven't previously designated such, Jon, with a ground-breaking ceremony or opening rite to include a few incantations from the beloved song "Aves Maria." And if you don't believe in, or haven't felt the power of the owl's cry, sit in silent reverie one night upon the bayou bank and prescind all but the owl's chill call, whereupon reverting to a former time when a great mystique fell upon that sound. Or you might try the advice of Dylan Thomas in "Over Sir John's Hill" (no, he wasn't referring to me!) when he said:

Only a hoot owl
Follows a grass blade blown in
 cupped hands
In the looted elm.

I once had the privilege of listening to a whole group of owls, deep in the woods on a very dark late night, all hooting at once, an eerie feeling in itself. But to really punctuate it, there came out of the gloom, right in the middle of all this nefarious squawking, the most blood-curdling scream I've ever had the dismay of hearing, albeit a replication of what a banshee is purported to sound like. A most unsettling feeling! I realized, as I tried to smooth down the vertically standing hair on the back of my neck, that I had just heard a panther assailing the harmony of the owls, an experience indelibly etched in my brain. Just think what sort of an impact such an occurrence might have made upon an already fearful and superstitious people three thousand years ago! If you could conjure such as that up in your opening rites, it would beat the socks off the ultimate snipe hunt and assure

your supremacy over all future field crews within your realm of influence.

Once you've basked in the afterglow of a genuine horned owl hootfest, or spine tingled with the foreboding sensations of a screech owl's disparate call at the dark of the moon, you'll never wonder why the "Old Ones" were stricken with lapidary owl-mania. So, Jon, with all due respect to your menagerie of field seasons, how about including the majestic and revered "Kingdom of the Owl," as the "Old Ones," the "Ancient Ones," and no doubt all the "People" did at one time or another?

**"OWLS AND TROWELS,"
THE 1991 UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHWESTERN LOUISIANA
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT
THE POVERTY POINT SITE:
SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY
RESULTS AND IMPRESSIONS**

By
Jon L. Gibson
University of
Southwestern Louisiana

This is a summary of recently concluded archaeological fieldwork and an evaluation of its role in the visitor interpretive program at the Poverty Point State Commemorative Area (PPSCA). The fieldwork was conducted by the University of Southwestern Louisiana (USL) and was under my direction and supervision. The fieldwork was conducted as a field school for the university and was the fifth excavation season I have spent at the site. The dig was called "Owls and Trowels," in recognition of the prominence of ornaments in the area around the great mound where we were to dig and of my sincere desire to find an owl pendant, similar to the one Smoky Joe beat me to in 1978.

The fieldwork was carried out between 19 May and 10 June 1991. The location of the excavations was the western sector of the ridged enclosure. Adjoining sections of the third, fourth, and fifth ridges were tested by 13 one-by-one-meter test pits, dug to varying depths but all reaching into the subsoil. In addition, a number of solid cores was taken by Thurman Allen of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. The cores extended the extent of

stratigraphic exposure considerably, including that section of the sixth and outermost ridge next to the sondage-tested sections of the other ridges. Test pits and cores were aligned. Three or four test units were placed on line across the short axis of each ridge, and on ridge five, two additional test units were placed in line down the long axis of the ridge. Actually, each ridge was to have been examined by this T-shaped arrangement of aligned pits, but it was discovered that solid cores were more efficient and nearly as revealing as hand-dug units would have been in examining the linear axis of the ridges. The hand-dug cross-sections showed us the internal makeup and the cores showed us how far that particular makeup extended. However, I must emphasize that cores are not a substitute for sondages, only a supplement when used judiciously in view of stratigraphy revealed through hand excavation. In other words, test pits and solid cores work wonderfully together, but cores do not work by themselves.

The excavation rationale was simple: test the west sector of the ridged enclosure to determine if this section of the site differed architecturally and artifactually from other sectors of the enclosure. I anticipated this was the case because of the proximity to the big mound, presumably the ceremonial focus of the site, and because my earlier studies of the intrasite distribution of surface artifacts disclosed that the western sector of the ridged enclosure had a disproportionate number of polished stone objects and lapidary items, ornaments or luxury goods conceivably associated with a socially prominent segment of Poverty Point society, who lived or operated near the big bird mound. Did the artifact content from the ridge fill and from the old occupied ground surface beneath the ridge support this contention?

By laying out a T-shaped arrangement of test pits and cores on adjoining sections of ridges, I hoped to determine if the activities on each ridge were similar and if the similarities were contemporaneous. Radiocarbon dating would hopefully provide a framework for ascertaining whether the ridge construction and ridge activities were coeval or successive.

Initial results and preliminary impressions of the fieldwork include:

1. Tens of thousands of artifacts were recovered, including Poverty Point objects, chipped stone debitage, debris, flake tools, plummets, gorgets, steatite and sandstone vessel fragments, Wheeler series pottery, and others. Several features were recorded, among them hearths and postmolds. Dozens of radiocarbon and matrix samples were taken.

2. Narrow ridge-flank middens were discovered along each ridge. These dark anthropic zones lined the side slopes of the ridges, leading to the suspicion that trash and garbage generated from ridge-top activities were discarded down on the ridge flanks.

3. The ridges were built by a series of increments, ranging from probably seven on West Three, the tallest of the tested ridges, to three on West Four and West Five. The surface of the most pronounced increment in West Three appears nearly flat for a space of 10-12 m and then exhibits sharply angled sides. This at first suggested that the ridge was constructed as a series of mantles forming flat-topped linear platforms, but subsequent measurement of the dip and strike of these increments indicated that clay-capped, silt-loam domes formed the structural mass of the ridge. At this stage, I really cannot tell whether the overall morphology was a linear flat-topped platform and construction proceeded by joining little mounds together, or if some other building method and form were employed.

4. Rapid construction was suggested by the appearance in West Three of a series of five superimposed hearths, each let down in top of a new layer of dirt that had been added to the ridge directly over the preceding one. If construction had been drawn out, with weeks, months, years, or centuries intervening between building episodes, it seems unlikely that the workers would have placed their fires exactly over the spot where earlier fires had been built. There were no other signs of the area being marked in any way or being within a house or other kind of wooden (confining) structure. Radiocarbon dating of the samples from these hearths may help clarify the rapidity of construction.

5. Intensity of occupation before, during, and after construction seems to have been diminished progressively westward from West Three. In fact, the last really black ridge-flank midden occurs off the western slope of West Two. The middens on West Three, Four, Five, and Six are not as darkly stained, nor apparently do they have as many artifacts. The old ground surface beneath the ridges bears only a light scatter of materials, which seems to thin as one moves westward beyond West Three. However, this thinning probably relates to the lowness of the original landscape here; the old surface seems to have a concave area, or depression, which held water much of the time, judging by the number of concretions in the old soil.

Twenty-three USL students earned from three to nine hours academic credit for participating in the program. These included: Erica Bammel, Margaret Barre, Kathleen Bergeron, Thomas Bourque, Chad Breaux, Mary Buller, Denise Decuir, Natalie Donlon, Aimee Finley, Andree Fortier, June Hayes, Shannon Hughes, Michelle Hutchins, David Kent, Sonya Lacombe, John Mayer, Chad Nunez, Doug Palombo, Michael Pears, Helen Perilloux, Angel Quin, Donna Trahan, and David Vige. Carl Kuttruff shared field duties with me. Lisa Coleman was field supervisor, and June Hayes ran the field lab. The hands-on experience, especially in an archaeologically complicated situation like Poverty Point, will be invaluable to these students as they continue their education. Most of the students were anthropology majors. I cannot emphasize enough the advantage PPSCA affords archaeological field training programs for college students. The facilities and the support are unparalleled in the South and I suspect in the country, and have greatly enhanced the educational mission of the university.

The eight hour field work day was augmented by an evening lecture series, to which the public was invited. Lectures and demonstrations were given by: Thurman Allen (soil scientist, Soil Conservation Service), Arville Touchet (State Soil Scientist, Soil Conservation Service), Carl Kuttruff (formerly an archaeologist with the Tennessee Department of Conservation and now an archaeological consultant), Jenna Kuttruff (expert on archaeological textiles and LSU professor), Jay

Johnson (archaeologist and professor, University of Mississippi), Marvin Jeter (archaeologist and professor, Arkansas Archeological Survey, University of Arkansas, Monticello), Fred Mayer (remote-sensing specialist, Lockheed Corp.), Dennis LaBatt (manager, PPSCA), David Griffing (ranger, PPSCA), James Fogleman (specialist in south central Louisiana archaeology, principal at Morrow Elementary School, and old fogie), and Joe Saunders (regional archaeologist, Louisiana Division of Archaeology, NLU).

PPSCA staff, Dennis LaBatt, David Griffing, and Lisa Simpkins, guided tourists to the dig site daily, where visitors witnessed first-hand archaeology in progress. Guides went over the latest finds and activities, and the public was free to talk with the crew at work. Dig areas were roped off to keep visitors a safe distance from deep pits and equipment but close enough to let them "experience" the feel of a real excavation. The experience was profound for many of them, judging by their comments.

A COLES CREEK SITE IN UNION PARISH (16UN81)

**By
James Harty
Bernice, Louisiana**

In October, 1990, a small bayou in southwestern Union Parish had dried up into small pools of water. While walking along the dry part of the creek bed, several large ceramic sherds were observed protruding from an eroding creek bank approximately 90 centimeters below surface. At the extreme bottom of the the find were ceramics, flakes, bone, and charcoal. The sherds are representative of the Coles Creek Culture. This opinion was shared by Dr. Joe Saunders, Regional Archaeologist from Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe, Louisiana, and Dr. Frank Schambach, Arkansas Archeological Survey Archaeologist from Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia, Arkansas.

Union Parish is a large rural parish located at the extreme northern tip of the the north central part of the state. Its northern boundary is adjacent to Arkansas and is part of an area named the Felsenthal region by

some archaeologists (Rolingson and Schambach 1981:104-105).

Of the 109 sherds found, 78 are plain. Nine of the plain sherds are from rims. Thirty one sherds are decorated, with seven being rim pieces. Horizontal incised lines around the rim area, as well as overhanging lines, are common characteristics associated with the decorated sherds. Several body sherds are

decorated with overhanging lines, with one sherd having triangular punctations below the last line. These decorations suggest that the pottery is Coles Creek Incised. Other characteristics include clay particles in the temper, little polish on the exterior of the sherds, and bumpy to fairly smooth surfaces.

Figure 1 provides illustrations of the seven rim pieces found at the bottom part of

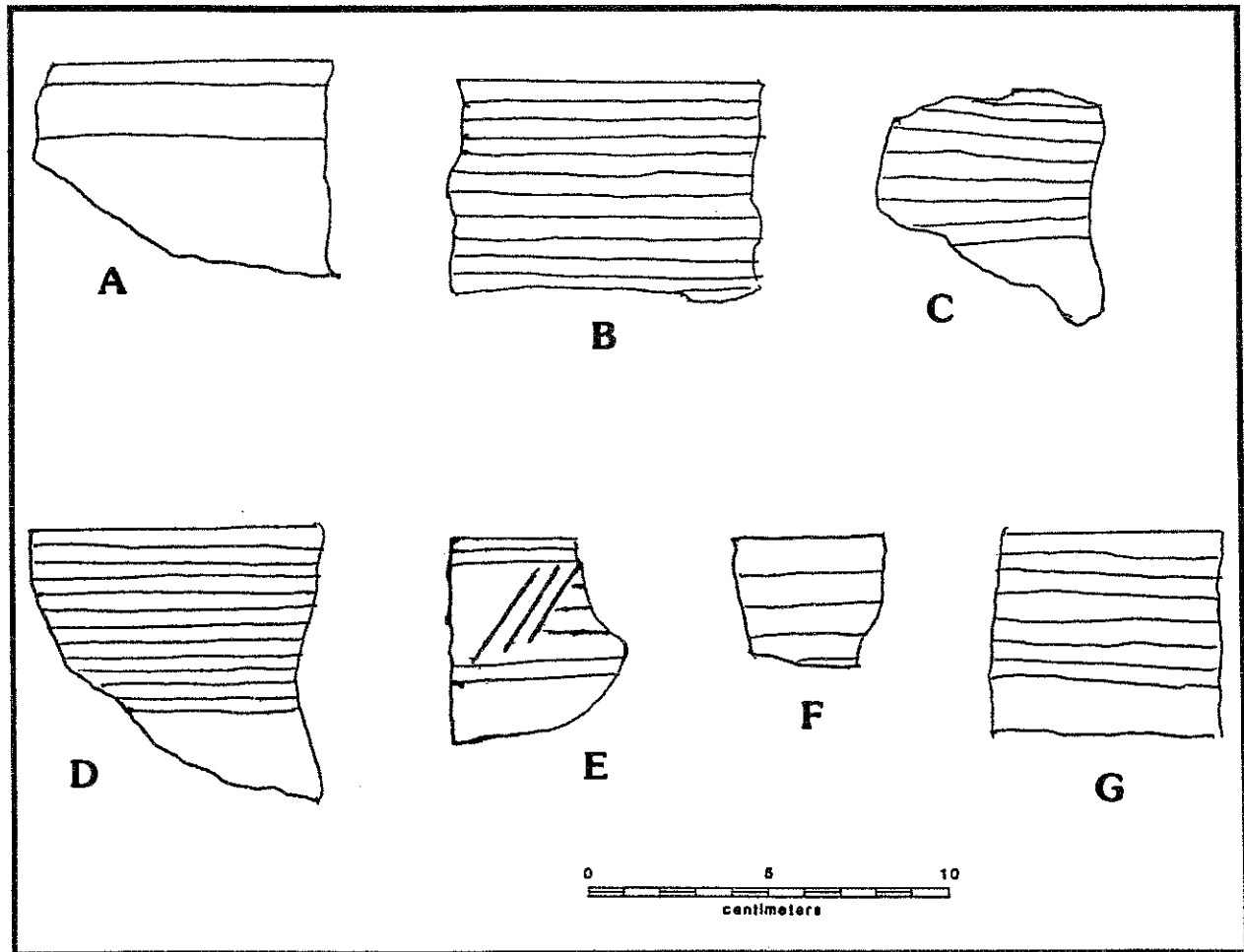


Figure 1 (Harty). Coles Creek period ceramics from 16UN81.

the site. Illustration A is a sherd that has two incised lines widely spaced on a fairly smooth surface. The lines are not overhanging and a single incised line is located on top of the lip. This sherd is probably an example of Coles Creek Incised, *var. Greenhouse* (Phillips 1970:72).

Illustrations B and C are rim sherds consisting of several regularly spaced horizontal lines that are overhanging. Enough treatment is present on sherd B to suggest a plain body. These sherds are examples of

Coles Creek Incised, *var. Coles Creek* (Phillips 1970:70). Schambach calls such sherds with overhanging lines "Boise" in the Felsenthal region (Schambach 1990:54).

Illustration D shows closely spaced incised lines around the rim area and a plain body. The lines are not overhanging and the rim tends to taper toward the lip. This sherd is probably Coles Creek Incised, *var. Mott* (Phillips 1970:75).

The sherd in illustration E could not be identified.

Sherd F shows regularly incised horizontal lines, but not enough is available for identification as to type and variety.

Illustration G is a complete rim sherd consisting of seven close-spaced horizontal lines that fits the Class B pattern, "Barrington 1::Plain" in Schambach's classification system for the Felsenthal region (Rolingson and Schambach 1981:135).

The only fauna found with the sherds was a small portion of the mandible of a deer with three teeth intact.

The potential of the site is good according to Dr. Joe Saunders because at least 90 centimeters of soil covers the area. This increases the possibility of an undisturbed deposit. The chance of finding uncontaminated charcoal samples also adds to the potential of the site

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TWO ARCHAIC PROJECTILE POINT FORMS FROM NORTHCENTRAL LOUISIANA

By
Joe Saunders
Regional Archaeologist, NLU
and
David Griffing
State Park Ranger, Poverty Point State Commemorative Area

A recent evaluation of a site in Lincoln Parish (16LI7) recovered two dart points and a hearth beneath an earthen mound. The hearth and artifacts in the submound surface appear to be associated. Charcoal from the hearth has been dated to 2,909 ± 100 B.C. (calibrated date, Beta-47622).

Neither projectile point represents a clearly distinguishable point type. Each has combination corner/side notches, which is somewhat reminiscent of the Trinity projectile point type from northeast Texas (Suhm and Jelks 1962; Turner and Hester 1985).

Projectile Point A (#63; Figure 1a).

Projectile point 1a is 45.4 mm in length. Width at the shoulders is 28.2 mm. The stem is 10.8 mm in length, with a width of 20.7 mm at the notched portion and 24.4 mm at the base. The corners of the stem, or "ears," protrude 1.7 mm beyond the base of the point, as a result of basal thinning on the dorsal side. The body of the point is 10.2 mm thick. The weight of the point is 10.7 g.

The dorsal surface of the projectile point body (Figure 1a) has been resharpened along the left edge, producing a concave edge. The ventral side (not illustrated) has been resharpened along both edges. An examination of the edges under a microscope (X27) shows that the right edge (from the perspective of Figure 1a) is rounded by use-wear, whereas the left edge displays significantly less use-wear. Some grinding is present in the notches. The raw material is assumed to be a local chert.

Projectile Point B (#73; Figure 1b).

Projectile point 1b is 50.5 mm in length. Width at the shoulders is 24.9 mm. The stem is 12.8 mm in length, with a width of 18.1 mm at the notched portion and 22.6 mm at the base. The base is convex and its center extends 4.8 mm. The body of the point is 9.7 mm thick. The weight of the point is 11.3 g.

The dorsal surface of the projectile point body (Figure 1b) has been resharpened along both edges. The ventral side (not illustrated) has been resharpened along the entire length of the left edge, but only along the

upper half of the right edge. Microscopic examination of the body shows rounding on both edges by use-wear. The base of the point is heavily ground, including the notches, and it appears that haft-wear has dulled the dorsal face of the stem, obscuring the flake scars. The raw material is an unidentified chert.

In spite of the variation in the base form of the two projectile points, the corner/side notching on both specimens suggests that they are products of the same technological "tradition." However, given the range of variation between the two specimens, and their

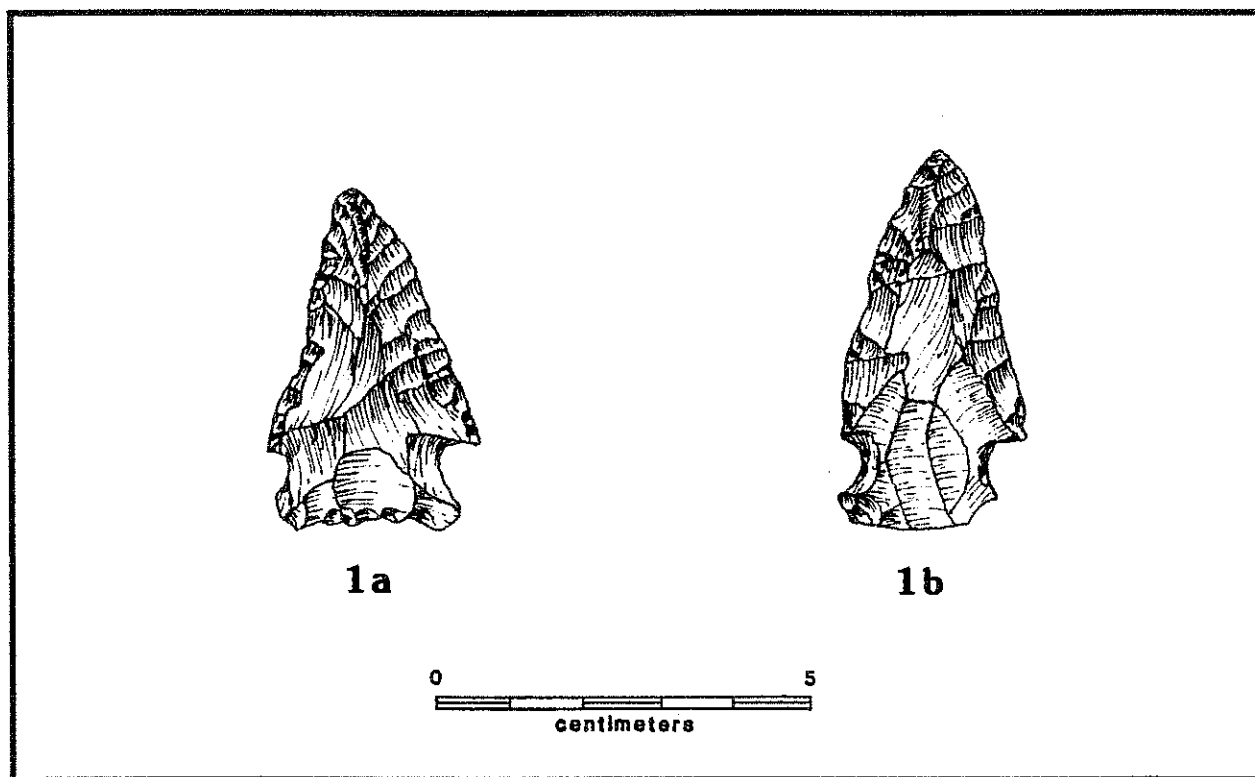


Figure 1 (Saunders and Griffing). Archaic projectile points from 16LI7.

degree of resharpening, it would be premature to suggest that these two forms can be used to define a new "type." Nevertheless, it does not seem unreasonable for amateurs and professional archaeologists to infer that points similar in form date to approximately 3,000 B.C.

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CHAPTER NEWS

Northeast Chapter

Reported by
David Jones

The October meeting of the Northeast Louisiana Archaeological Society was held on the 17th in the Chemistry Building on the NLU campus in Monroe. David Griffing, Park Ranger at the Poverty Point State Commemorative Area gave a slide presentation on the Insley site, a locale with a Poverty Point period component situated in Franklin Parish. Poverty Point related artifacts from Insley currently are on display at the museum at the Poverty Point State Commemorative Area.

The November meeting of the society occurred on the 14th. Dr. Joe Saunders, Station Archaeologist at NLU, provided a slide presentation on his recent work on a mound in Lincoln Parish. This mound dates before the Poverty Point period.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CONVICTS LOOTERS ON TWO NATIONAL MILITARY PARKS

The following press releases were received from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior:

Vicksburg National Military Park ARPA Violators Enter Guilty Pleas

On Monday, May 20, 1991, Nelson A. "Andy" Dupuy, Jr., and Alvin D. Rando, both from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, entered guilty pleas to violations of the Archeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA). The pleas were made before District Judge Thomas Lee in U.S. District Court in Jackson, Mississippi. The charges and subsequent pleas were the result of ARPA violations which occurred within the boundaries of the Vicksburg National Military Park on May 27, 1990. Investigation into the incident was conducted by Vicksburg National Military Park rangers, with assistance from National Park Service archaeologists and cartographers from Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area and the Southeastern Archeological Center in Tallahassee, Florida.

Under terms of the plea agreement with the United States, Dupuy and Rando will each pay a fine of \$5,000; will forfeit all items seized in connection with the violations, including four metal detectors and a 1988 Eddie Bauer version 4x4 Ford Bronco valued at \$12,000, will be barred from all federal and state Civil War parks for a period of two years; will complete a minimum of at least two hundred hours of community service; will each pay the special assessment of \$25; and will cooperated fully with the government providing details of the incident.

Judge Lee scheduled sentencing for Dupuy and Rando for Friday, July 26, 1991.

Shiloh Felony ARPA Case

Seven months of investigation and preparation by the National Park Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the United States Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee, came to a successful conclusion on September 17, 1991, with the sentencing of two brothers for using metal detectors and digging Civil War relics in Shiloh National Military Park, Shiloh, Tennessee. Before passing sentence, United States District Judge James D. Todd, Jackson, Tennessee, told the two men he had the feeling that *some* people with metal detectors consider digging up Shiloh battlefield as "no big deal." He said, "stealing history *is* a big deal," and he intended to reflect it in the sentence!

Dr. Bennie C. Keel, a National Park Service Archaeologist from Tallahassee, Florida, made an assessment of the extent of archaeological damage done by the two men totaling over \$15,000. Defense attorneys argued that since the park rangers found only 79 small excavation sites, and recovered only 137 historical artifacts, the assessment was excessive. Judge Todd replied he had no reason to question Dr. Keel's assessment, as it had been made in accordance with Congressional intent as set forth in the law. Todd went on to explain that Dr. Keel's assessment took into account the fact that artifacts randomly removed from a battlefield destroy the archaeological integrity of the historic site. Any future scientific study of the disturbed area will be missing important information because these artifacts are no longer there. In other words, what the two men did was like ran-

domly tearing pages out of an unread history book!

Judge Todd asked the defense, "What is the value of Plymouth Rock?" He commented, "We could maybe break it up and perhaps get a couple of hundred dollars worth of minerals out of it, but what is it really worth?" It is priceless, and so is Shiloh!

Judge Todd said he had heard all of the testimony in the trial and found there was "overwhelming evidence" against the defendants. He agreed with the jury's decision and commented he would have been surprised if they had decided otherwise. The two accused men, Michael Lee Preston, age 35, from Bartlett, Tennessee, and Gary Eugene Preston, age 29, from Whiteville, Tennessee, were convicted in July of three counts each of the felony Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA). They were each sentenced to two months incarceration to be served, two months in the community treatment center, and three years supervised release. They each must pay \$7,563.67 restitution to the National Park Service during the period of supervision for a total of \$15,127.34, the exact amount of Dr. Keel's archaeological assessment. Also, they are prohibited from entering any National Military Park for three years, and must pay a \$150 special assessment to the court. Since the men are now convicted felons, they are prohibited from possessing any firearms or dangerous weapons. The Prestons were represented in court by Defense Attorneys Scott Kirk and Roger Staton from Memphis, Tennessee.

The two metal detectors seized as evidence from the Preston's car were later reported to be stolen from "Pappy's Metal Detectors and Old Relics" in Memphis, Tennessee. The Memphis City Police have arrested another man for the theft of these and other merchandise worth over \$54,000. Shiloh Park rangers are cooperating with Memphis officers on the case, which has not yet come to trial.

This was the first felony ARPA case to be prosecuted for looting a Civil War battlefield; so it was very important, not only for Shiloh, but for all federally administered battlefields, according to Assistant United States Attorney Cam Jones, who represented the Government in court. There have been misdemeanor ARPA cases successfully prosecuted recently at Vicksburg National Military Park, Mississippi, Fredericksburg and Spot-

sylvania National Military Park, Virginia, and Kennesaw Mountain National Military Park, Georgia.

"The looting of the nation's most important historic sites has become a major problem to their scientific archaeological integrity, and it has to stop," said Archaeologist Keel. Many of the artifacts looted from park lands are sold for profit, so large quantities of relics are often taken. The National Park Service hopes that court actions such as this will deter such destructive behavior.

DON'T FORGET THE ANNUAL MEETING IN BATON ROUGE

January 17, 18, and
19, 1992

