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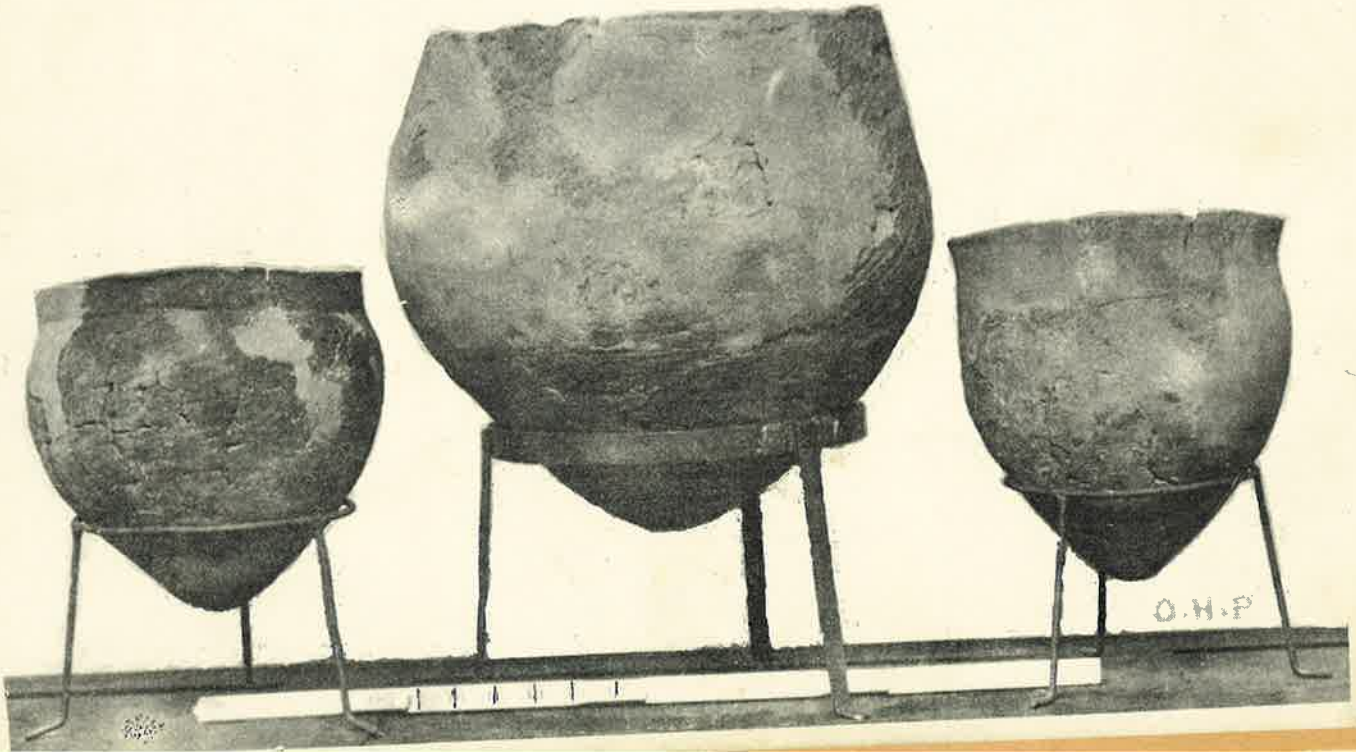
THE ARCHEOLOG

NEWS LETTER OF THE SUSSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



COVER ILLUSTRATION: POTTERY VESSELS RECOVERED FROM THE LEWES SCHOOL SITE

The cover illustration for this edition of the ARCHEOLOG is a composite photograph of six pottery vessels found under very unusual circumstances, during the course of a remodeling and reconstruction program at the Lewes, Delaware, public school. In leveling the school's football field a grader uncovered some refuse pits. An immediate examination of the area was undertaken by H. Geiger Omwake, and fragments of Indian pottery were found. Mr. Omwake was assisted by William Ingram, Ralph Karl, Roger Vandegrift and James Moore.

Systematic excavation of the pits was hampered by the construction work in progress at the time. However, from the fragments recovered it was fortunately possible to assemble and restore six pottery vessels of various sizes. One was restored by Orville H. Peets, and the others by Mr. Omwake.

The specimens are all typical Townsend ware, fabric impressed, and with no surface design. The clay is shell-tempered. One of the pots shows a series of oblique gashed lines.

The large vessel in the middle of the ~~top~~ lower row was restored by Mr. Peets from fragments found in the course of the grading. The bottom is conical and the rim has a pronounced insloping.

On the left of it on the ~~upper~~ lower row is a smaller example with a more pointed base. The neck is constricted, with an apparently straight-sided rim. This pot, restored by Mr. Omwake, has been presented to the Art Division of the State Department, at Dover, Del.

The three examples illustrated on the ~~bottom~~ top row were found in refuse pits at the same site, and also restored by Mr. Omwake. The smaller vessel on the left is the only one in the group with a rounded bottom.

The cover photograph and the plate illustrating the article on dendrochronology were prepared by Mr. Peets, in the latter case with the assistance of Mr. Ehlers.

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T H E A R C H E O L O G

Bulletin of the Sussex Archeological Association

June, 1954

C O N T E N T S

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COVER ILLUSTRATION

Pottery Vessels from the Lewes
School Site

NOTES ABOUT THE PHILLIPS - ROBINSON - BENSON SITE Mispillion

NEAR MILFORD, DELAWARE

H. G. OMWAKE

During the fall of 1953 Mr. Harold Welch, a resident of Milford, led the writer, his son, and Roger Vandergrift to a field on the south bank of the Mispillion River, not far from the City of Milford, from the surface of which Mr. Welch and members of his family had gathered many Indian artifacts over a long period of years. The field is owned by Mr. H. R. Phillips and on it are located the storage tanks of his oil company.

The presence of weathered oyster and clam shell fragments on the surface indicated the likelihood of shell refuse middins. Probing quickly verified the fact. Permission to excavate the pits was obtained from the owner by Mr. Welch.

Subsequently a total of ten shell refuse pits was determined. Permanent axis markers were established and the location of each of the pits was recorded on a scale map. To date seven of the pits have been excavated by Vandergrift, Perry Flegel, and the writer.

Examination of the land of Mr. Wm. Robinson and the partners Benson and Bridgham, west of the Phillips field indicated that the site was much more extensive than at first believed. Six shell refuse pits were located on the Robinson land and nineteen on the Benson-Bridgham property and one in the middle of the roadway between the two. Permission to excavate was readily granted by Mr. Robinson and Mr. Benson and the six pits in the Robinson field were explored by Vandergrift and the writer. The approach of the current planting and growing season brought all work to a halt in April and nothing further can be done until Fall.

The physical aspects of the entire Phillips-Robinson-Benson site are such as to make thorough examination highly desirable. It is believed that the necessary permission for the conduct of an organized and supervised excavation involving removal of certain areas of top soil, with the subsequent replacement, could be obtained and the writer strongly urges that the Association explore the possibilities for obtaining sufficient financial backing to permit the conduct of a real investigation. In the meantime, no harm can be done through

exploration of the shell refuse middins.

It would be extremely premature to attempt any description of the materials recovered from the pits thus far excavated. There is evidence, however, that there were at least two occupations of the site, one by a people who tempered their pottery clay with coarse pulverized quartzite and another by people who used ground shell temper. The pottery culture of the latter differs in several respects from that previously revealed in shell refuse middins in the Lewes area. Decorated pottery pipes are present. Lithic objects are infrequent and bone objects seem to be neither so numerous nor in such great variety as was found at the Lewes Sites.

The great challenge offered by the site seems to be the possibility that the attributes of a cultural occupation earlier than that of shell-temper pottery people can be determined in situ for the first time and this writer cannot emphasize too strongly the desirability of conducting a full-fledged excavation, properly orgnaized and supervised by competent personnel.

GODS, GRAVES, AND SCHOLARS

Archeologists everywhere have followed with interest the amazing success of the most popular introduction to the subject, C. W. Ceram's "Gods, Graves, and Scholars", which has recently appeared in its fourteenth printing. The book, written by the editor of a German publishing house, Karl W. Marek, and published under a pseudonym, is an English translation of the German original, "Götter, Gräber und Gelehrte", (1949).

The book tells the story of archeology since the days of the great pioneer Winckelmann, reviewing Schliemann's excavations at Troy and Evans' spectacular discoveries in Crete. Unfortunately it appeared too early to include the very recent successes in the decipherment of the Mycenaean script, by Ventris.

Included are accounts of Champollion's solution of the problem of the Rosetta Stone, and the discoveries of Petrie and others in Egypt. One of the most interesting chapters recounts Carter's discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen.

The book describes Botta's work at Nineveh, and the decipherment of the Babylonian tablets by Grotefend and Rawlinson. There is also a vivid account of the excavations of the Sumerian civilization, which now appears to be the oldest in the world. Also discussed are the Toltec, Aztec and Mayan excavations.

The book contains 32 plates and numerous text drawings. It is highly recommended as a popular introduction to the history of archeology.

REPORT FROM THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

EDITOR'S NOTE: Permission for publication of a report on archeological material from the Ritter sites and the Miller-Tom sites has been kindly granted by the U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C. through F. M. Setzler, Head Curator of the Department of Anthropology. This report was prepared by the Division of Archeology, U. S. National Museum.

Owing to the importance of this report it is presented here in its entirety

The material, from the collection of H. Geiger Omwake, of Greenwood, Delaware, has been donated to the U. S. National Museum and will be accessioned as part of its permanent study collections.

REPORT ON ARCHEOLOGICAL MATERIAL
Sent to
Division of Archeology, U. S. National Museum
For
Examination and Report
From
Delaware

The sherds from the Ritter sites and Miller-Tom sites (Omwake collection) have been examined and analysis sheets made, which are herewith submitted.

Except for three bodysherds which are sand tempered, all the ceramic material falls into what Blaker has called the Townsend Ware. This ware as described is characterized by the use of pulverized shell as a tempering agent, was fashioned by coiling, and is red-buff to gray-buff in color. Interior and lips were smooth but lips were occasionally decorated. The exterior surface was roughened with twined-woven fabrics having a coarse warp and a close fine weft of two-strand counter-clockwise twisted cord. After roughening, the exteriors were subsequently smoothed in varying degrees. For this ware Blaker proposed five types. (Blaker, Margaret C., Pottery Types from the Townsend site, Lewes, Delaware. Eastern States Archeological Federation, Bulletin No. 9, July 1950, p. 11).

In making the analysis of the Omwake material all sherds were counted except the very small "buckshot" specimens. When several sherds were found forming a repaired section, the section was counted as one sherd. Rims which had been fastened togather or which fitted, were counted as one sherd but no time was spent in searching for fits. Sherds which carried any portion of the lip were considered rimsherds but if no lip was present the sherd was classified as a "near rimsherd."

A certain number of rimsherds were found which, because of their small size, or because of damaged exterior surfaces, were unclassifiable. A few others did not fall into one of the five types set up by Blaker and which have, therefore, been listed under Unclassified but all

are Townsend ware.

The Townsend Corded Horizontal type, as set up by Blaker is "characterized by pseudo-cord decoration in simple linear designs, principally the encircling band". (1950). In the recent Onwake material (Ritter and Miller-Tom), especially that from the Miller-Tom site, sherds were found which, in every way, conform to the type except that the decorative impressions are made by the use of an actual cord rather than by a cord-wrapped twig or cord as is the case with type specimens. These have been lumped in the Townsend Corded Horizontal but occurred as follows:

Ritter 1 - Pit 2, all carried true cord impressions.
Ritter 2. None.

Miller-Tom, Pit 5. 18 of the 75 sherds of Townsend Corded Horizontal showed true cord impressions.

Pit 6. 17 sherds were truly corded.

Pit 7. 4 out of 6 were true cord-impressed.

Pit 8. All were true cord-impressed.

It is worthy of note that Townsend Herringbone was not found as a complete rimsherd in a single pit of the three sites. It was completely absent at both the Miller-Tom site and the Ritter 2 site. The only place it was found was at Ritter 1 where nine near rimsherds of this type came from pit 9, and one from pit 22.

The unclassified sherds consist of one sherd from the Ritter 1, Pit 8, which has the rim folded over, forming a slight thickening. It is decorated with a series of parallel diagonal cord-wrapped twig impressions with evidence that a number of parallel horizontal pseudo-cord impressions were present below. It may be only a variant of the Townsend Corded Horizontal.

The other Unclassified sherds are smooth and without rim decoration. Otherwise they seem to be near or quite identical with the rest of the material.

RITTER 1

RIMSHERDS	PITS								
	2	3	4	8	9	10	22	25	Total
Rappahannock Fabric-Impressed		2	2	11	3	2	15	4	39
Rappahannock Incised							3		3
Townsend Incised Band	1		1	1	5		10		18
Townsend Corded Horizontal	3		9	1	13		7		33
Townsend Herringbone									
Unclassified		3	1	1	2			5	12
Unclassifiable	1		2		2		5		10
NEAR RIMSHERDS									
Rappahannock Incised				1	20				21
Townsend Incised Band	1		1	5			6		13
Townsend Corded Horizontal			7	4	12		5		28
Townsend Herringbone					9		1		10
BODY SHERDS									
Townsend Series	58	51		194	509	99	220	85	1216
Unclassified-Sand-Tempered							3		3
TOTAL	64	56	23	218	575	101	275	94	1406

Bodysherds 1219 or 86.70% of total sherds
Near Rimsherds 72 or 5.12% of total sherds.
Rimsherds 115 or 8.80% of total aherds.

Rimsherds	No. of Sherds	Percent
Rappahannock Fabric-Impressed	39	32.50
Rappahannock Incised	3	2.50
Townsend Incised Band	18	15.00
Townsend-Corded Horizontal	33	27.50
Untyped	12	10.00
Unclassifiable	15	12.50
Total	120	100.00

RITTER 2

RIMSHERDS PIT

	1	2	6	7	8	Total
Rappahannock Fabric-Impressed		1			3	4
Rappahannogk Incised					3	3
Unclassifiable	1		2	1		4
NEAR RIMSHERDS						
Townsend Corded Horizontal				2	1	3
BODY SHERDS						
Townsend Series	44	9	11	18	118	200
Totals	45	10	13	21	125	214

Body sherds 200 or 93.45% of total from site
Near rimsherds 3 or 1.40% of total from site
Rimsherds 11 or 5.14% of total from site

RIMSHERDS

	No. of Rims at site	Percentage of Type in site
Rappahannock Fabric-Impressed	4	36.36
Townsend Incised Band	3	27.27
Unclassifiable	4	36.37

There were no Townsend Incised Band, Townsend Corded Horizontal, Townsend Harringbone or Unclassified rimsherds in the above mentioned pits. Near rimsherds absent from Ritter 2 were Rappahannock Fabrick-Impressed, Rappahannock Incised, Townsend Incised Band and Townsend Herringbone.

MILLER-TOM SITE

RIMSHERDS	PITS						
	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Rappahannock Fabric-Impressed	1		5	4	4		14
Rappahannock Incised			4				4
Townsend Corded Horizontal	1	1	75	45	6	2	130
Unclasifiable			5	9		3	17
NEAR RIM SHERDS							
Rappahannock Incised			1				1
Townsend Corded Horizontal	4		67	18	6	6	101
BODY SHERDS							
Townsend Series	18	11	859	415	63	156	1522
Total	24	12	1016	491	79	167	1789

Body Sherds 1522 or 85.10%
Near Rimsherds 102 or 5.70%
Rimsherds 165 or 9.20%

RIMSHERDS

	No. at site	Percent of Rims
Rappahannock Fabric-Impressed	14	8.48
Rappahannock Incised	4	2.42
Townsend Incised Band		
Townsend Corded Horizontal	130	78.79
Townsend Herringbone		
Unclassifiable (eroded, etc.)	17	10.30
Total	165	99.99

Comparisons by sites	Ritter 1	Ritter 2	Miller Tom	Townsend
Rappahannock Fabric-Impressed	32.5	36.36	8.48	35%
Rappahannock Incised	2.5		2.42	23%
Townsend Incised Band	15.0	27.27		20%
Townsend Corded Horizontal	27.5		78.79	19%
Townsend Herringbone				3%
Unclassified	10.0			
Unclassifiable	12.5	36.36	10.30	

DIGGING AT THE DE VRIES SITE RENEWED

Work on the De Vries site was suspended over a year ago until an analysis could be made of the data already collected. All artifacts found were refered to the Smithsonian Instution for identification and dating, and the remains of a large red cedar post were sent to the University of Oklahoma for the purpose of tree-ring dating if possible. Reports have now been received on the data collected. The artifact evidence in this case is inconclusive and as a result it was not possible to date the cedar post because of its advanced stage of disintegration.

The committee in charge of this project met recently and decided to continue the investigation. It was decided to trench, in the cemetary lot, along the post mold line where it had not been possible to use the bulldozer in the earlier work. The object of this trenching is to try to find another cedar post for tree-ring dating and to secure a more detailed pattern of the post molds than was possible with the bulldozer. A positive identification of the Dutch palisade depends on securing as complete a post mold pattern as possible. There is not much chance of finding artifacts of the early Dutch period in the trench, with the possible exception of yellow "tile" brick which were used in the building of the brick dwelling and the cook houses. All surface implements and personal effects left by the Dutch would have been appropiated by the Indians, and the white inhabitants did not live long enough on the site to have formed refuse pits.

It is proposed also, to dig a trench between Pilottown road and the Lewis canal through the grass plot of the De Vries monument, in line with the post molds already discovered but permission to dig must first be secured from the State Park Commission. This proposed trench is in the critical area of the De Vries site because it is here that the northwestern bastion of the palisade should be found, as shown on the sketch made by De Vries in 1632. If the post mold line is found to make a right angle turn to the West, this would be strong evidence to support the conjecture that the line of post molds so far discovered represents one side of the old Dutch palisade. Here also may be found a concentration of the yellow "tile" brick remaining either from the old dwelling house or from these bricks piled up for loading on to the boats in the creek to be used in the construction of the old fort farther East along the bank near the present Lewes post office.

The work in the cemetary lot was started May eight of this year and was continued on May twenty second of this year. Inclement weather has prevented much work during this spring. It is too early in the excavating to describe the remaining part of the post mold line. It is hoped that continued digging will result in more definite conclusions before the next publication of the Archeolog.

C. A. Bonine

PARTS OF TWO UNKNOWN ARTIFACTS FOUND

One of the factors that continuously stimulates and holds the "digger"is the finding, from time to time, various artifacts that as far as he can determine cannot be identified with any habit, custom or use of early man. Parts of two of such objects are described in the report that follows.

From the Phillips site pit No. 7 Mr. P. S. Flegel has reported the finding of parts of two artifacts shown in the drawings on the following page. They are made of clay similar and identical to that clay which has been used in the manufacture of some of the pottery vessels found at the site. The one piece (Fig. 1 and 2.) is composed of three matching sherds in which were evenly spaced four holes around the edges of the artifact. Two of the holes were complete while the other two were only partially complete. The searching of a number of books and phamplets showing a great number of artifacts used by the native aboriginals failed to reveal anything like these described herein.

The following additional information is recorded relative to the above mentioned artifacts.

Dimensions:
- Diameter. 2-3/4 inches.
- Thickness. One-fourth inch tapering to nothing at the edges.
- Holes drilled 7/8 inches apart.
- Holes 3/8 to 1/2 inches from the outer edge.
- Holes 1/8 inch in diameter and slightly countersunk on the obverse and reverse sides.

Color: The color of the clay is dark gray.
Shape: Circular, tapering toward the e ges.
Design: None. Surface marked with cord wrapped stick impressions.
Temper: Shell.
Hardness: 3.0
Texture: Medium fine.

UNKNOWN ARTIFACTS FROM PHILLIPS SITE

Fig. 1. Circular Clay Artifact
(Actual Size)

Fif. 2
Profile.

The Piece of shard shown below (Fig. 3.) is a piece of a similar artifact such as described immediately above. It is not from the same artifact since the edge is thicker, the material lighter in color having more brown color in it and the curvature indicating a larger object. However the holes are the same diameter and the same distance apart but are slightly farther from the edge of the object. It is also cord wrapped stick impressed, having no design and is shell tempered

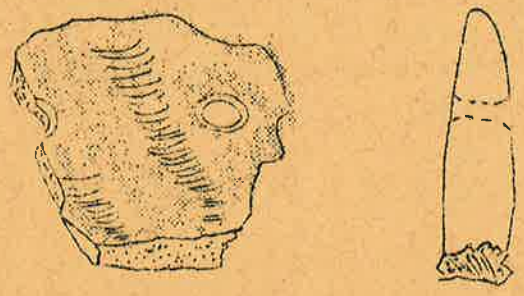

Fig. 3. Part of another artifact
Similar to the above.
(Actual size)

Perry S. Flegel

D E N D R O C H R O N O L O G Y

This relatively new science of tree-ring analysis had its first successes in the semi-arid Southwest where marked differences of tree growth in seasons of abundant rain or drought made the establishment of a chronology easier than in the Mississippi Valley or in the East. Slowly, however, research of the most exacting kind is extending the age of certain woods (at present cedar has given the best results) on the master chart. And there is a corresponding expansion in area covered. The record kept at the University of Chicago goes back five centuries and wood has been reported from Tennessee which may be much older. Our member C. A. Bonine sent a section of a recently cut cedar to Robert E. Bell at the University of Oklahoma for analysis. In his report Dr. Bell said that - to his surprise - the Delaware specimen correlates perfectly with the chart of the MI. Valley for the years of the life of this tree i.e. 1883 to 1953. This is very important news for it means that if we give the necessary effort to it we can make a chart for cedar in the East extending back further than historic times.

We must have no illusions as to the amount of work involved though at first we shal be dealing only with trees found above ground and not connected with any given site. The first samples need not be very old for they must have some wood grown between 1883 and 1900 so that they can be checked with our Del. No.I. The oldest wood will be found underground and here the most careful excavating techniques must be used and full reports kept for such wood will be like a piece of pottery which does connect with any other. An old stump unimportant in itself may be very valuable because it has grown over the ground containing older wood. Stratigraphy can give such a specimen a temporary place and aid in finding connecting sections in other areas.

Our interest in dendrochronology was aroused when we found old pieces of cedar at the de Vries site and there is still some hope of getting out an old fragment large enough to date. In the larger post molds the cedar was entirely rotted away which, in itself, is a rough indication of age. We had feared that it would be necessary to work out a chart for this area before any dating of specimens could be made but now it seems safe to use the Mississippi Valley chart for it is unlikely that the climate changed here in the past in a way it had not also changed further west; also the news of the Delaware correlation will encourage work in states in the half-way zone so that differences will be further reduced.

Using tree-ring dating on a given site often runs into great difficulties ;frequently the number of wood specimens is small or of poor quality. On the Kincaid site (so. Ill.) about five hundred fragments of wood were found but only twenty were suited to anglysis and only eight were finally dated. The de Vries site would present a much simpler problem for a bark date - real or estimated - of not later than 1630 would, with other evidence we have, verify the location of the stockade.

Study of the diagrams below may incline some of us to leave actual analysis to specialists. Our Mr. Ehlers who copied these graphs from the article by Dr. Bell in "Archeology of Eastern United States" tells me that the graphs and the histogram at the bottom of this page record exactly the same information. The former do not give the nearly "complacent rings" however. It is obvious from this that times of drought, because exceptional, are the significant ones to the dendrochronologist. O. H. P.