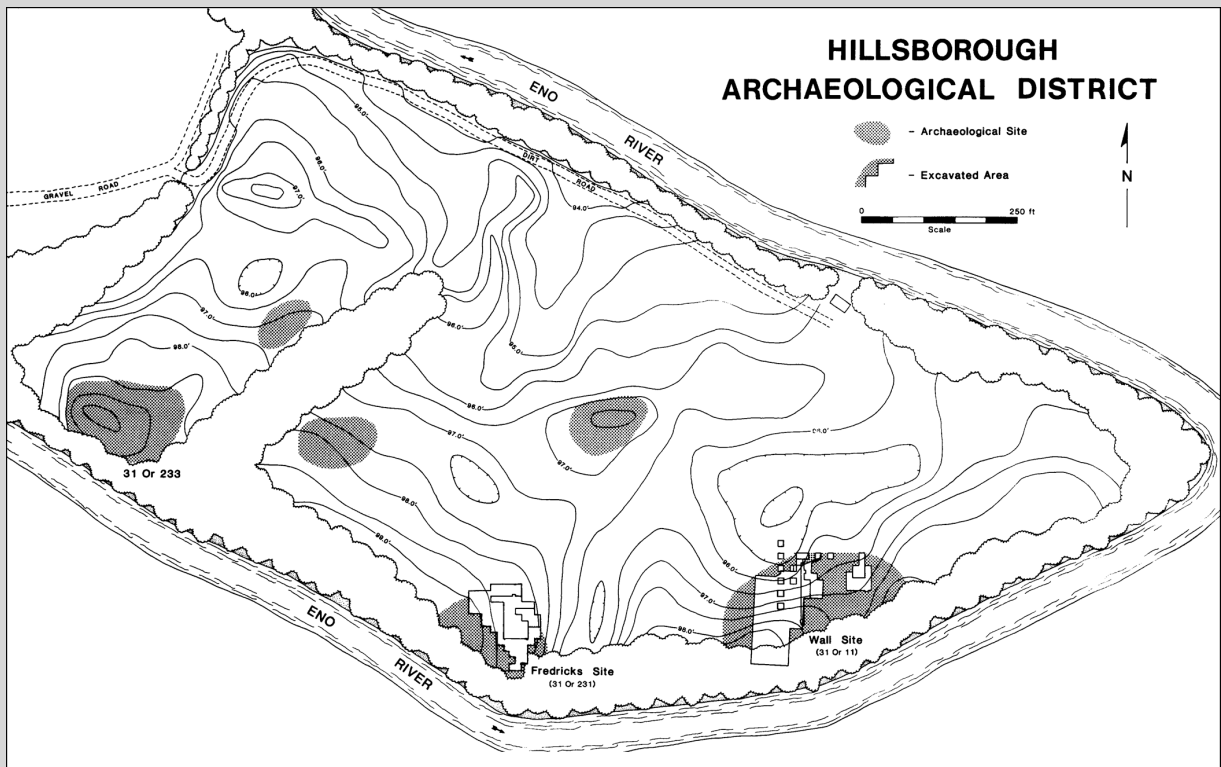


THE HISTORIC OCCANEECHI: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF CULTURE CHANGE

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF 1985 INVESTIGATIONS

Roy S. Dickens, Jr.
H. Trawick Ward
R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr.



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Research Laboratories of Anthropology
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill

September 30, 1985

Cover: Archaeological Sites and Extent of Excavations Conducted
Within the Hillsborough Archaeological District, Orange
County, North Carolina.

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Preliminary Report of 1985 Investigations

(National Geographic Society Grant #3094-85)

by

Roy S. Dickens, Jr.
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INTRODUCTION

The Fredricks site (31Or231), located on the Eno River near Hillsborough, North Carolina (Figure 1), represents the remains of an historic Occaneechi village that was visited and described by John Lawson in 1701 (Lefler 1967). Archaeological investigations at the Fredricks site began in 1983 as part of a larger research project, undertaken by the Research Laboratories of Anthropology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, to study culture change among the Siouan tribes of the North Carolina Piedmont during the Late Prehistoric and Historic periods (ca. A.D. 1300-1740). This site represents one of the latest and best-preserved Indian village sites yet discovered in piedmont North Carolina. Given its proximity to the Wall site (31Or11), an earlier Protohistoric period (ca. A.D. 1550) site that also has been investigated by the Research Laboratories, the Fredricks site has provided significant comparative data for investigating specific aspects of culture change within a single locality (see Dickens et al. 1985). Work at the Fredricks site has also allowed substantial insight into aboriginal lifeways on the Piedmont following the initial influx of English traders.

HISTORY OF INVESTIGATIONS

The Fredricks site was discovered by the Research Laboratories during 1983 while conducting excavations at the nearby Wall site. Limited test excavations of 800 ft² revealed a portion of a cemetery lying just outside the village and a segment of the village palisade. Three human burials within the cemetery were excavated; all three pits were rectangular with sharp corners (indicating that they probably were excavated with metal tools) and contained numerous artifacts of

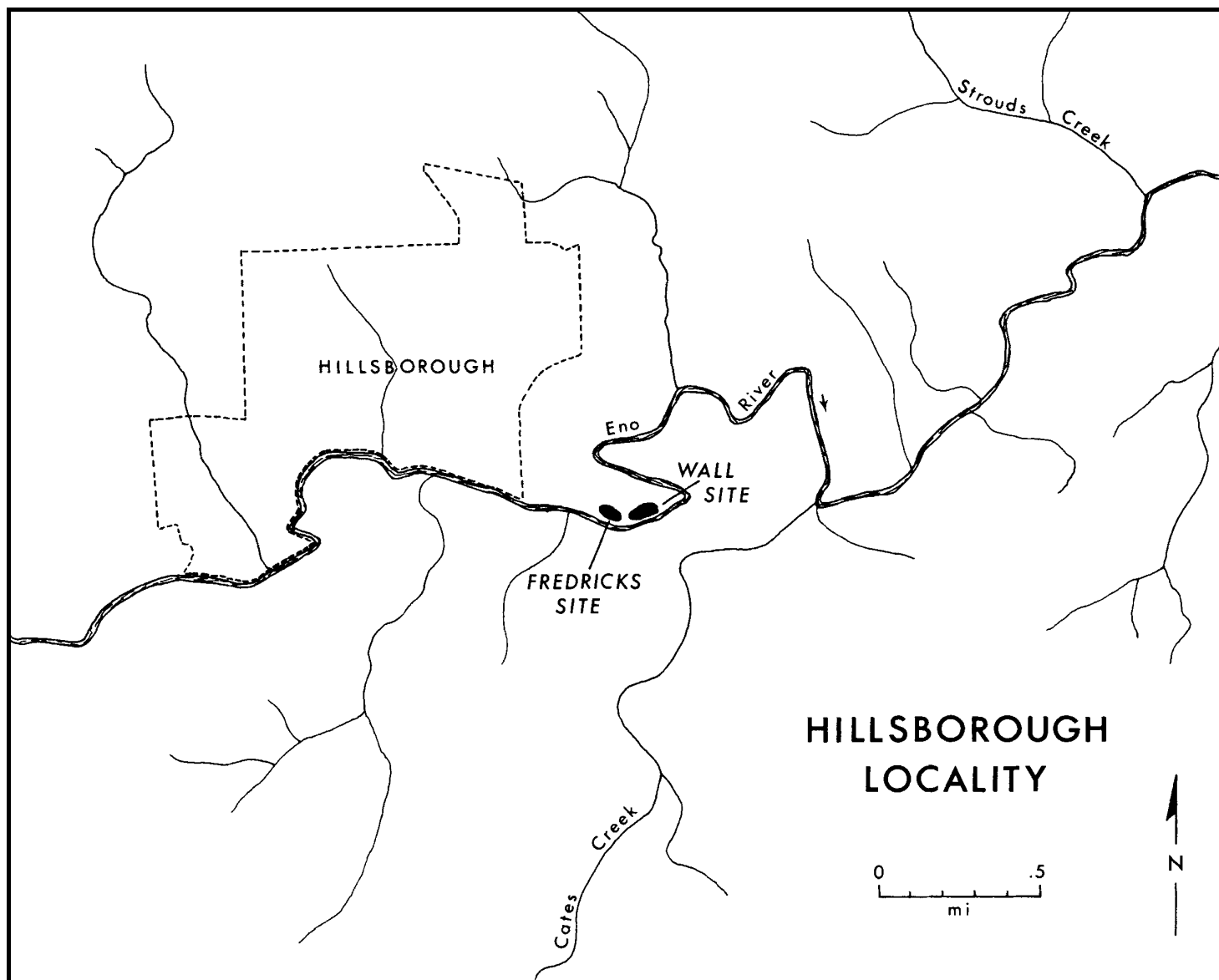


Figure 1. Location of the Fredricks Site Near Hillsborough, North Carolina.

Euroamerican manufacture. A fourth pit excavated within the cemetery contained neither human remains nor grave associations.

A second field season at the Fredricks site, conducted during the summer of 1984 and sponsored by the National Geographic Society, uncovered a much larger area of the cemetery and the adjacent village (Dickens et al. 1984, 1985). These investigations were designed to obtain additional data on mortuary behavior and to begin sampling domestic areas. In addition, systematic subsurface testing was undertaken on unexcavated portions of the site to delimit probable site boundaries and to make a preliminary assessment of internal site structure.

Twenty-seven new 10x10-ft units (2,700 ft²) were excavated, and six 10x10-ft units excavated in 1983 were re-exposed. These excavations uncovered six additional burials within the cemetery, a 90-ft palisade segment, and approximately 2,250 ft² of the village area inside the palisade. Mapping of postholes revealed two complete domestic structures. In addition, an oval, wall-trench sweat lodge with an interior fire pit was exposed in the southwesternmost corner of the excavation. Subsurface testing of unexcavated areas consisted of auger sampling at 2.5-ft intervals to identify archaeological features. This procedure proved to be highly reliable and was successful both in delimiting the remainder of the cemetery and in identifying areas of intensive domestic activity within the village. It was somewhat less effective, however, in providing a precise definition of site boundaries.

RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The exploratory work conducted at the Fredricks site during 1983-1984 provided information sufficient to answer some general questions about the period of occupation, the overall configuration of the material-culture inventory, mortuary behavior, and subsistence activities; however, it did not provide a firm basis for addressing larger problems pertaining to overall settlement structure and composition. In order to address these latter problems, a third season of fieldwork was undertaken at the Fredricks site, funded by a second grant from the National Geographic Society. The specific research questions considered by this work included: 1) Is the existing cemetery the only one on the site, and was it the result of one episode of warfare?; 2) What were the habitation structures like and how were they arranged in the settlement?; 3) Did more than one tribe reside in the village?; and 4) What was the size and overall pattern of the settlement? Fieldwork undertaken to answer these questions consisted of excavating the remaining burials in the cemetery, isolating domestic structures in the northwestern and southeastern parts of the village, and uncovering a large portion of the village palisade.

FIELD METHODS

The 1985 field season at the Fredricks site lasted eight weeks, from May 21 to July 17. The field crew consisted of 17 undergraduate students enrolled for six course credits in Anthropology 151 (Archaeological Field School) at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and 10 undergraduate and graduate field assistants. Excavations were supervised by Dr. Roy S. Dickens, Jr., Dr. H. Trawick Ward, and Mr. R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr. of the Research Laboratories.

Dr. Dickens provided overall direction for the project.

Field methods employed during the 1985 excavation were similar to those of the two previous field seasons (see Dickens et al. 1984). Site preparation consisted of bushhogging the work area (ca. 150x150 ft) and re-establishing the site grid and reference point for elevations. All plowzone (0.5-1.0 ft thick) was excavated in 10x10-ft units, with soil being dry screened through 1/2-inch wire mesh using hand sifters (Figure 2). A 20-liter soil sample from the plowzone of each unit was waterscreened through 1/16-inch mesh to assess small artifact content. A few of the squares in the vicinity of Structures 5 and 6 also contained a thin zone (0.1-0.5 ft thick) of midden and old humus at the base of plowzone. When encountered, this zone was removed separately. Processing of midden soil was similar to that described for plowzone.

Following the removal of plowzone, the bottom of each excavation unit (top of subsoil) was carefully trowelled in order to identify and record pits and postholes (Figure 3). The trowelled surface was documented by black-and-white and color photographs and was mapped at a scale of 1 in=2 ft. The drawings of each excavation unit were subsequently combined to produce an overall plot of the excavation. Photographs were also made of all procedures and of the general progress of work. Horizontal and vertical control was maintained through reference to the site grid and by using a transit and rod to determine elevations (Figure 4).

Sixty-two 10x10-ft units forming a single block were excavated in this manner (Figure 5). In addition to these excavations, two 10x10-ft units excavated in 1984 were re-exposed.

The 1985 excavations at the Fredricks site exposed 30 archaeological features, including three human burials, another possible burial



Figure 2. Removing Plowzone.



Figure 3. Trowelling the Top of Subsoil to Expose and Map Archaeological Features.



Figure 4. View of Excavation Showing Removal of Plowzone (left foreground), Feature Excavation (center and right foreground), Taking Elevations and Mapping (center), and Trowelling Top of Subsoil (background).

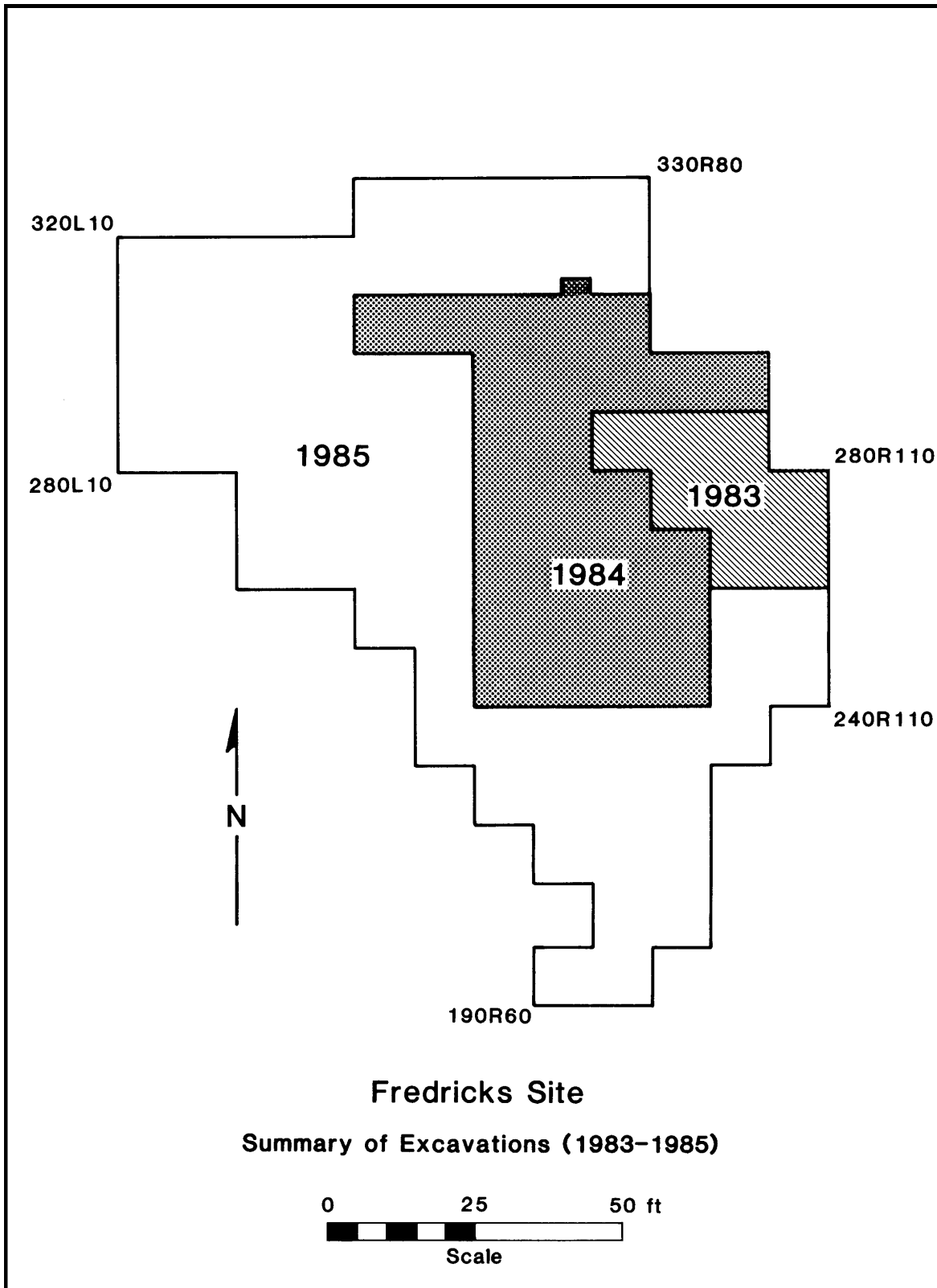


Figure 5. Area Covered by 1983, 1984, and 1985 Excavations.

(not excavated), 13 pits, 10 shallow pits, basins, and depressions, one hearth, and one tree stump. Architectural features exposed during these excavations included approximately 100 ft of the palisade, the remains of three wall-trench structures, and approximately 1,337 additional postholes representing at least three additional structures and other unidentified architectural features (Figure 6). Only one of the wall-trench structures (Structure 5) was excavated. All postholes were systematically recorded but most were not excavated.

Excavation of features, burials, and Structure 5 was accomplished using trowels, grapefruit knives, brushes, and other small tools (Figures 7-8). Sunscreens, constructed of wooden frames and bedsheets, were erected over features during excavation to minimize the damage to feature contents by the summer sun. Feature fill was removed in natural zones, when evident, and all fill was waterscreened through sluice boxes having a sequence of 1/2-inch, 1/4-inch, and 1/16-inch wire mesh (Figures 9-10). This technique permitted the recovery of minute artifacts, including shell and glass beads, lead shot, small animal bones, and carbonized plant remains. Standard 10-liter soil samples from each zone of each feature were simultaneously processed by flotation to retrieve very small, extremely fragile carbonized seeds and plant parts that might otherwise be lost in the waterscreening (Figures 11-12). Elevations were taken following the removal of each soil zone of a feature in order to establish precise provenience for zone contents and to permit the calculation of soil volume.

After completion of excavation, all features and burials were extensively documented by black-and-white and color photography, and by drawings in profile and plan at a scale of 1 in=1 ft. Also, extensive notes were kept by all excavators in both field journals and on

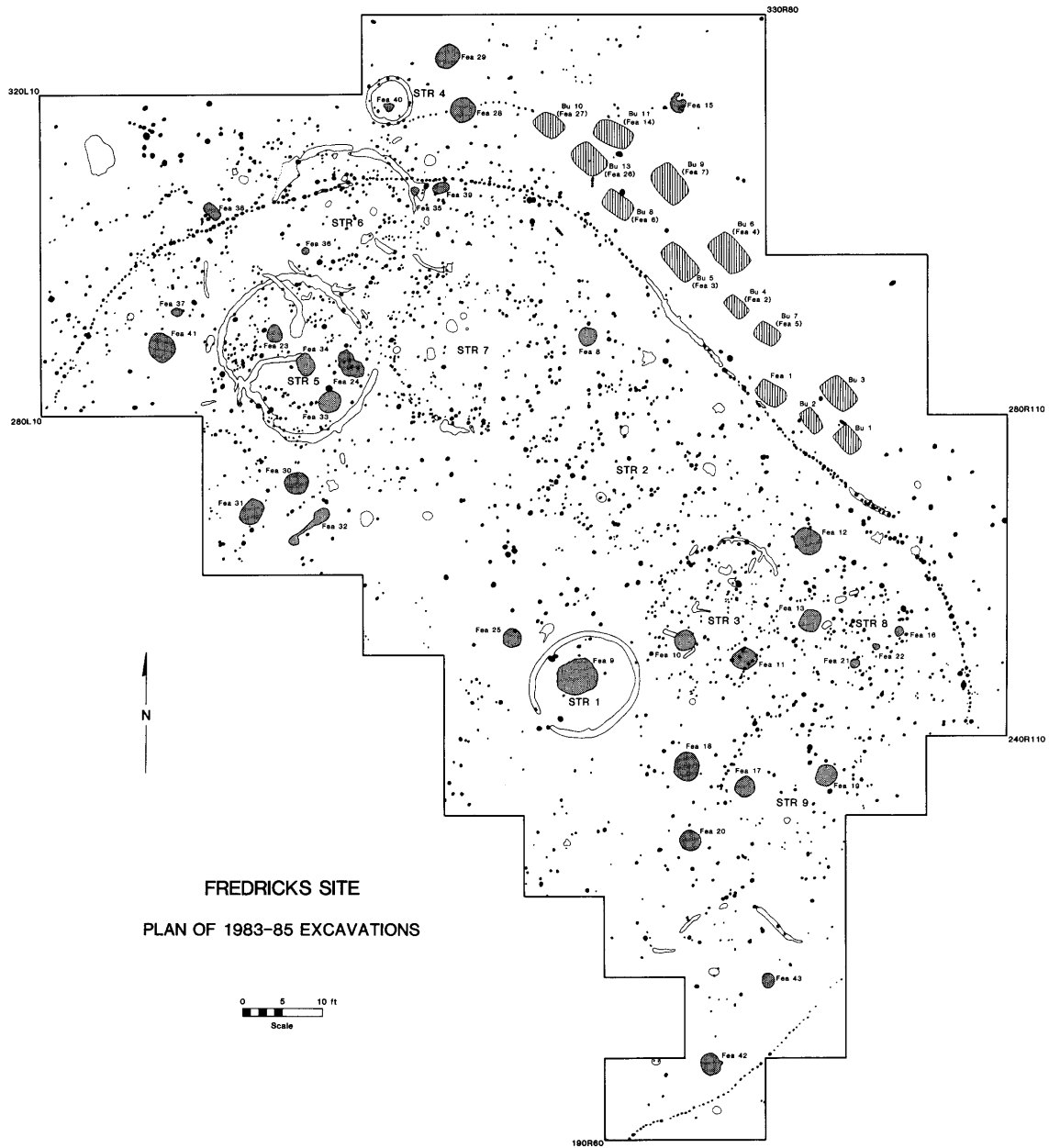


Figure 6. Fredricks Site Plan Showing the Results of 1983, 1984, and 1985 Excavations.



Figure 7. Excavating an Archaeological Feature.



Figure 8. Close-up of Food Scraps Contained Within Feature Fill.



Figure 9. Waterscreening Feature Fill.



Figure 10. Feature Contents Recovered by Waterscreening.

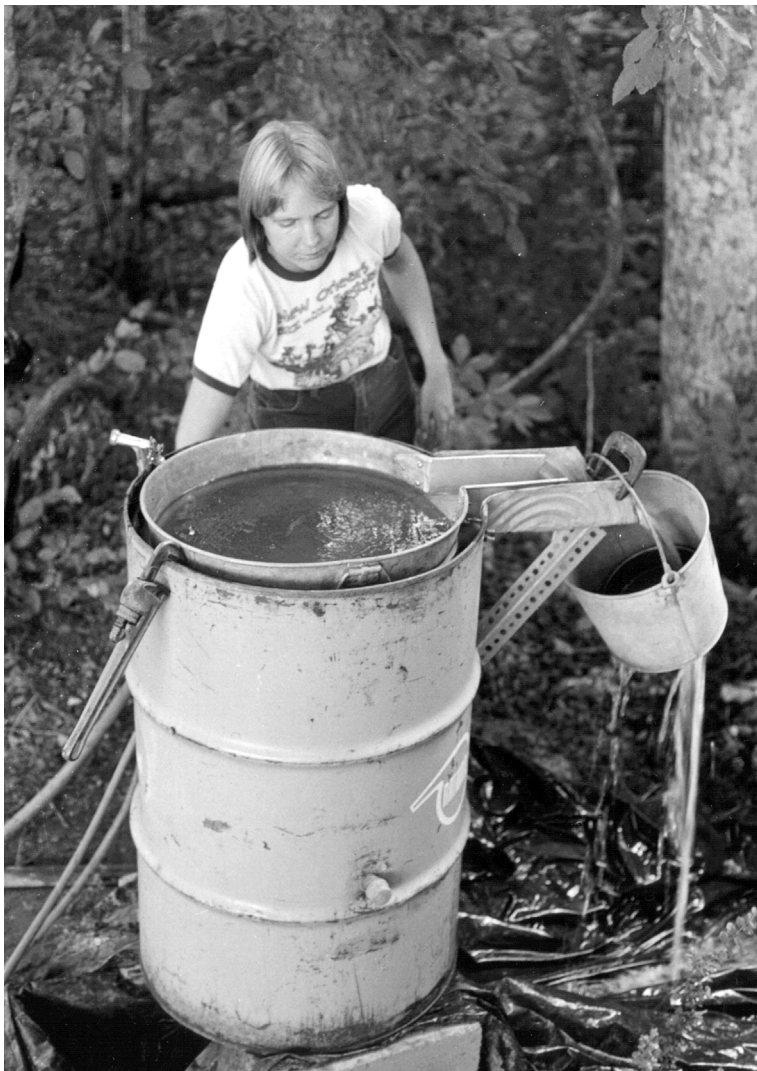


Figure 11. Use of Flotation to Recover Small, Fragile Ethnobotanical Remains.



Figure 12. Close-up of Charcoal Sample Recovered by Flotation.

standardized feature and burial data forms.

Special care was taken with human burials to preserve the integrity of contextual relationships among human remains and burial furniture during excavation, and to provide exhaustive documentation of those relationships. In instances where burial remains (e.g., bones, bead clusters, and corroded metal artifacts) were too fragile or too complex to permit thorough cleaning and full documentation in the field, they were pedestaled and removed in situ to the conservation laboratory of the Research Laboratories where the remains could be carefully cleaned, documented, and preserved.

RESULTS

The 1985 excavation at the Fredricks site was nearly twice as extensive as those undertaken during the two previous seasons, and were of sufficient size to permit a determination of village size. Certain questions, however, still remain about the internal structure of the village. Results of the 1985 excavation indicate that the site was substantially smaller than previously thought. It now appears that the community, as delimited by the palisade, covered approximately 10,000 ft² (about .25 acre). Over 60% of this area has been excavated; an additional 3,000 ft² has been excavated beyond the palisade in the vicinity of the cemetery and Structure 6. Despite this extensive work, the intrasite structure still is only generally understood because of the incompleteness of the architectural record. Plowing has reduced most house patterns to diffuse scatters of postholes, making their identification difficult.

Thirty features and burials were recorded during the 1985 field season. Twenty-five of these were excavated using procedures outlined

above; the remainder were mapped and augered to determine depth.

A preliminary description of archaeological features and structures is presented below. An additional summary of burials and other features from all three excavation seasons is provided in Table 1.

Burials

Three burials were excavated during 1985 and comprise the remaining burials within the village cemetery. In all, this cemetery contained 12 burials and an additional probable burial (Feature 1).

Burial 10 (Feature 27) contained the remains of a sub-adult, 4-5 years of age at time of death (Figure 13). The burial was loosely flexed and placed on its left side. Skeletal remains were very poorly preserved. Artifacts accompanying this burial included two check-stamped ceramic pots, one small plain ceramic pot, one greenstone celt, one turtle carapace "cup", an iron hoe, lead shot, and nine brass bells. Numerous small white, red, and blue glass beads were scattered on the pit floor near the skull. Remnants of fiber matting across the pit bottom indicate that this individual was "wrapped" prior to interment.

Burial 11 (Feature 14) was a young adult of indeterminate sex, approximately 15-17 years old at death (Figure 14). Bone preservation was generally poor. This burial was loosely flexed and lay on its right side. Several artifacts associated with Burial 11 occurred as clusters and appear to represent separate bundles or containers. The first cluster, located near the feet, contained several Cornaline de Allepo beads, vermilion and red lead, wire C-bracelets, and a snuff tin. An adjacent cluster contained a case knife, two Jews harps, and lead shot. A third cluster, located near the right knee, consisted of a concentration of Cornaline de Allepo beads. In addition to these

Table 1. Summary of archaeological features at the Fredricks site.

Feature/Burial Number	Excavation Season	Type	Center Location	Dimensions (ft)		
				L	W	D
Bu. 1	1983	Burial	276.8R90.3	3.6	2.6	2.4
Bu. 2	1983	Burial	279.3R85.8	3.1	2.6	2.1
Bu. 3	1983	Burial	282.7R89.1	4.4	3.2	3.0
Fea. 1	1983	Burial?	282.7R80.7	3.9	2.9	2.8
Fea. 2/Bu. 4	1984	Burial	293.5R76.5	3.2	2.2	2.1
Fea. 3/Bu. 5	1984	Burial	299.2R69.5	5.0	2.8	2.1
Fea. 4/Bu. 6	1984	Burial	300.6R75.7	5.6	4.0	2.3
Fea. 5/Bu. 7	1984	Burial	290.0R80.4	3.4	2.3	1.4
Fea. 6/Bu. 8	1984	Burial	306.5R61.7	4.0	2.5	2.5
Fea. 7/Bu. 9	1984	Burial	308.7R68.2	5.1	3.5	2.3
Fea. 8	1984	Tree Stump	290.0R58.0	2.4	2.2	2.3
Fea. 9	1984	Fire Pit	247.4R56.6	5.0	4.7	2.9
Fea. 10	1984	Storage Pit	251.6R70.0	2.6	2.3	3.1
Fea. 11	1984	Pit	249.5R77.4	3.0	2.4	1.5
Fea. 12	1984	Pit	264.0R85.5	3.4	3.2	1.1
Fea. 13	1984	Pit	254.0R85.7	2.8	2.4	1.5
Fea. 14/Bu. 11	1985	Burial	315.2R66.2	4.9	3.1	3.1
Fea. 15	1985	Tree Stump	318.8R69.3	2.6	1.5	1.4
Fea. 16	1985	Shallow Basin	253.0R96.6	1.3	1.1	0.2
Fea. 17	1985	Storage Pit	233.5R77.5	2.7	2.4	2.1
Fea. 18	1985	Pit	236.3R70.3	3.3	3.3	0.9
Fea. 19	1985	Storage Pit	234.5R87.6	2.7	2.6	2.4
Fea. 20	1985	Pit	224.0R71.5	3.0	2.8	1.5
Fea. 21	1985	Shallow Depression	248.9R91.1	1.2	1.1	0.1

Table 1 Continued.

Feature/Burial Number	Excavation Season	Type	Center Location	Dimensions (ft)		
				L	W	D
Fea. 22	1985	Shallow Depression	251.1R93.7	0.8	0.7	0.2
Fea. 23	1985	Pit	291.1R20.0	2.2	1.9	1.5
Fea. 24	1985	Shallow Basin	286.0R28.5	4.3	2.2	0.5
Fea. 25	1985	Shallow Basin	252.2R48.5	2.3	2.3	0.6
Fea. 26/Bu. 13	1985	Burial	312.0R58.0	4.6	3.2	2.3
Fea. 27/Bu. 10	1985	Burial	316.5R53.2	3.5	2.8	2.9
Fea. 28	1985	Storage Pit	318.0R42.5	3.2	3.2	3.0
Fea. 29	1985	Storage Pit	324.7R40.7	3.0	2.8	3.4
Fea. 30	1985	Storage Pit	271.5R21.5	2.9	2.8	2.2
Fea. 31	1985	Burial?	267.5R16.0	--Not	Excavated--	
Fea. 32	1985	Rodent Disturbance?	266.0R23.0	--Not	Excavated--	
Fea. 33	1985	Pit	281.5R25.9	3.0	2.6	1.7
Fea. 34	1985	Hearth	286.0R22.3	--Not	Excavated--	
Fea. 35	1985	Cob-Filled Pit	307.8R36.6	0.9	0.8	0.6
Fea. 36	1985	Cob-Filled Pit	300.4R22.3	1.8	0.9	0.3
Fea. 37	1985	Shallow Basin	292.6R07.0	1.8	1.0	0.5
Fea. 38	1985	Shallow Basin	305.5R11.5	2.5	1.3	0.3
Fea. 39	1985	Shallow Basin	308.2R39.8	2.1	1.6	0.7
Fea. 40	1985	Shallow Basin	318.5R33.5	1.3	1.0	0.2
Fea. 41	1985	Storage Pit	288.5R05.0	3.5	3.2	1.9
Fea. 42	1985	Pit?	198.0R73.0	--Not	Excavated--	
Fea. 43	1985	Pit?	209.5R80.5	--Not	Excavated--	



Figure 13. Burial 10.



Figure 14. Burial 11.

artifact clusters, four pewter buckles were found near the skull and a large cord-marked ceramic bowl lay near the chest.

Burial 13 (Feature 26) was an adult male, 37-42 years old at death (Figure 15). This burial was also loosely flexed and was placed on its left side. As with the two previous burials, skeletal remains were in generally poor condition. Artifacts accompanying Burial 13 included two bone-handled case knives, a pewter porringer, and a kaolin trade pipe.

Storage Pits (Figures 16-20)

Six of the features excavated during 1985 (Features 17, 19, 28, 29, 30, and 41) are interpreted as storage pits. These pits varied from 2.5-3.5 ft in plan dimension and all but one exceeded two feet in depth. Two had straight sides; the remainder had "bell-shaped" profiles. Features 17 and 19 were located within Structure 9 at the southeastern end of the village. Features 30 and 40 were located just west of Structure 5. Feature 30 was the only pit identified at the Fredricks site that does not appear to be associated with the Historic period occupation. In addition to an apparent absence of Euroamerican artifacts (based on field observations), the pottery from this feature was mostly net impressed, indicating a late prehistoric cultural association. Finally, Features 28 and 29 were both located outside the village palisade and just northeast of Structures 4 and 6. The location of these pits and the paucity of Euroamerican artifacts within their fill indicate that they date to an initial period of Occaneechi settlement preceding the establishment of the palisaded village.

All of these features contained moderately rich assemblages of artifacts and subsistence remains, and provide substantial new information for studying domestic activities at the site.



Figure 15. Burial 13.

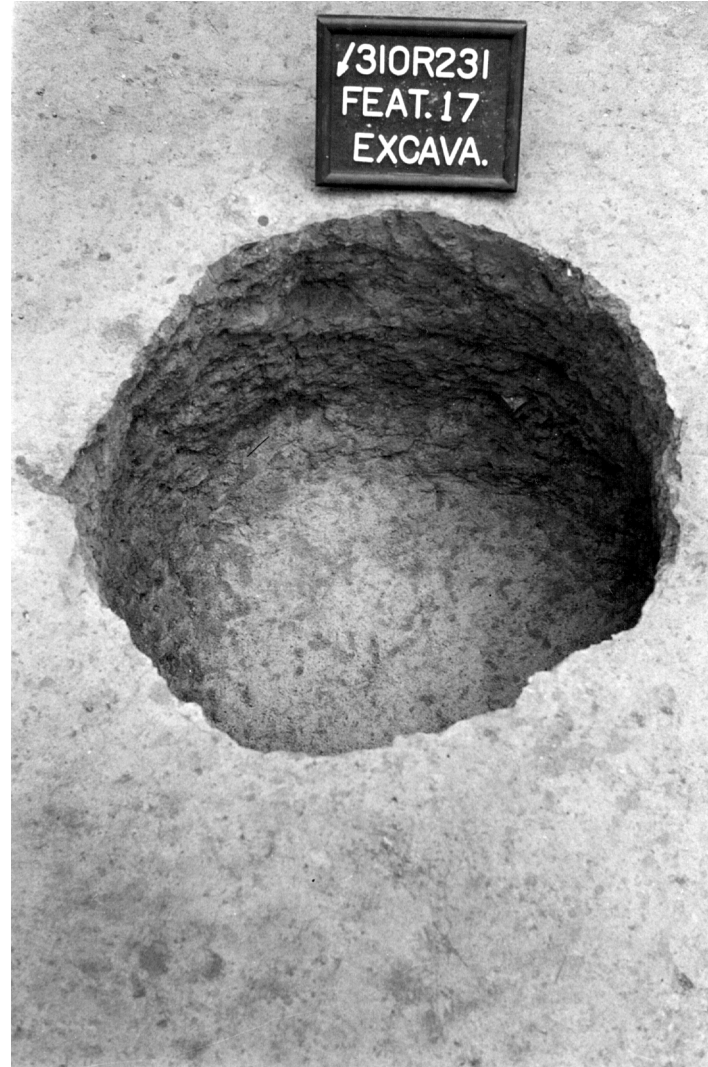


Figure 16. Feature 17.



Figure 17. Feature 19.

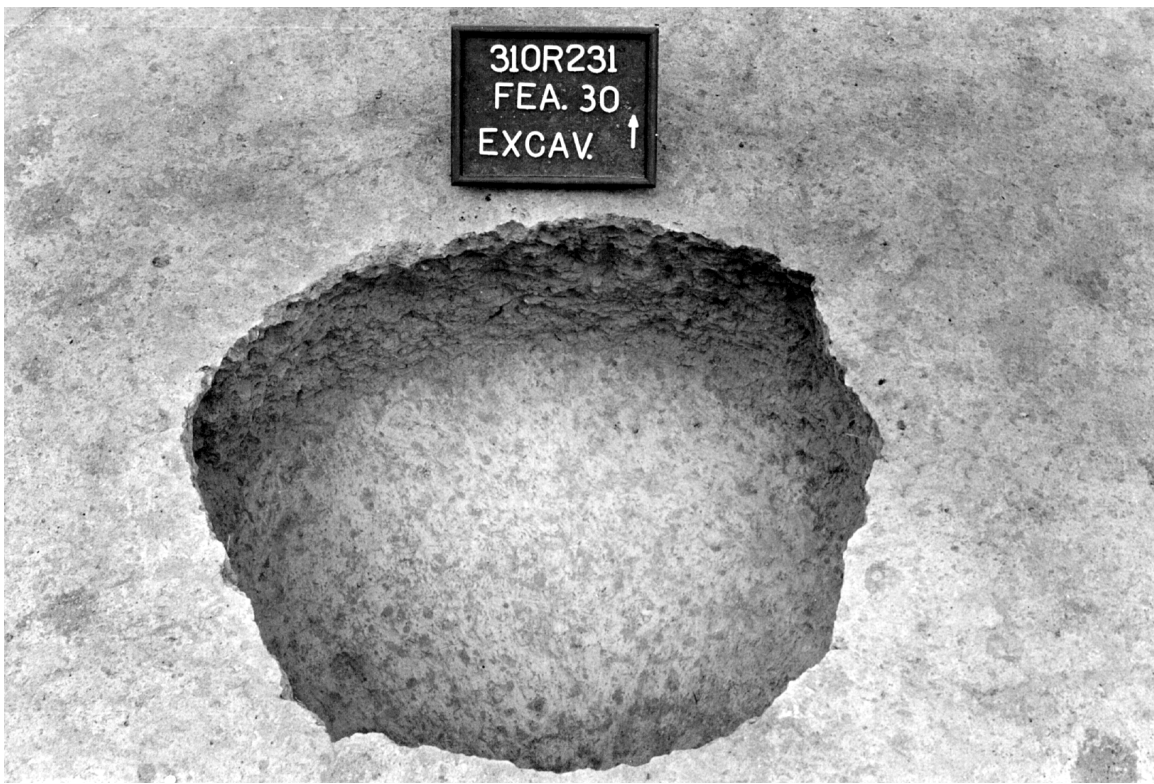


Figure 18. Feature 30.

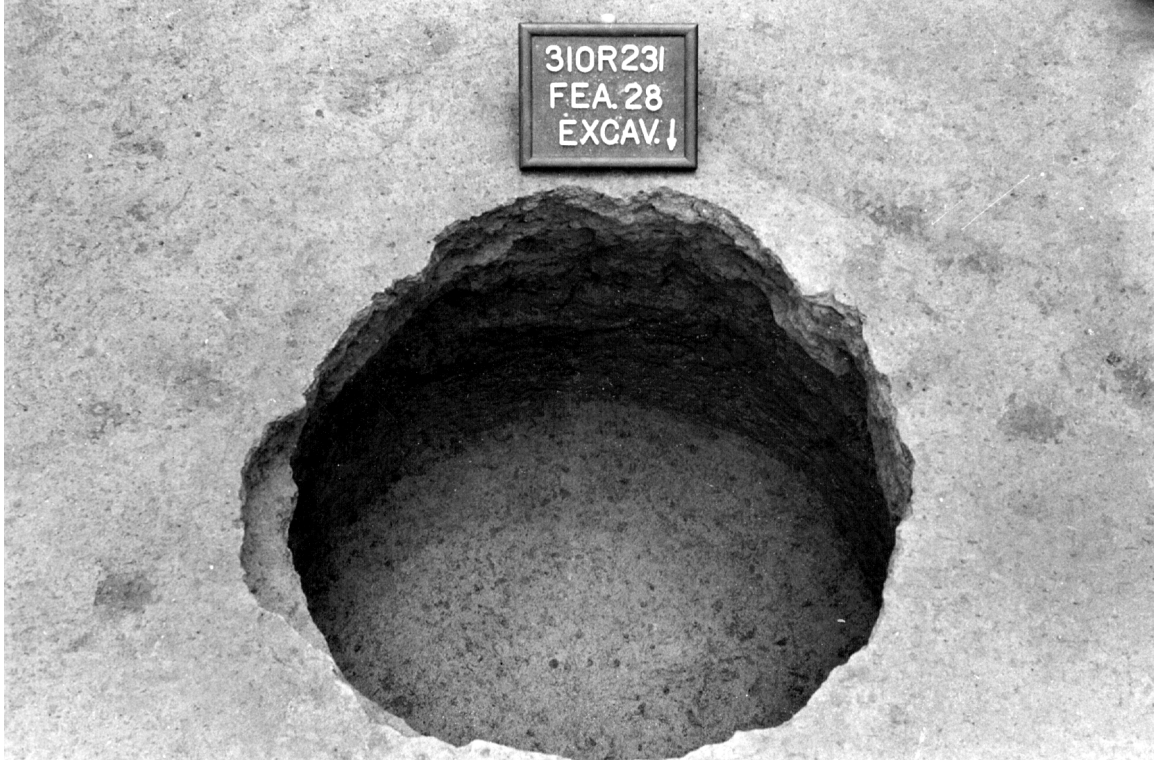


Figure 19. Feature 28.

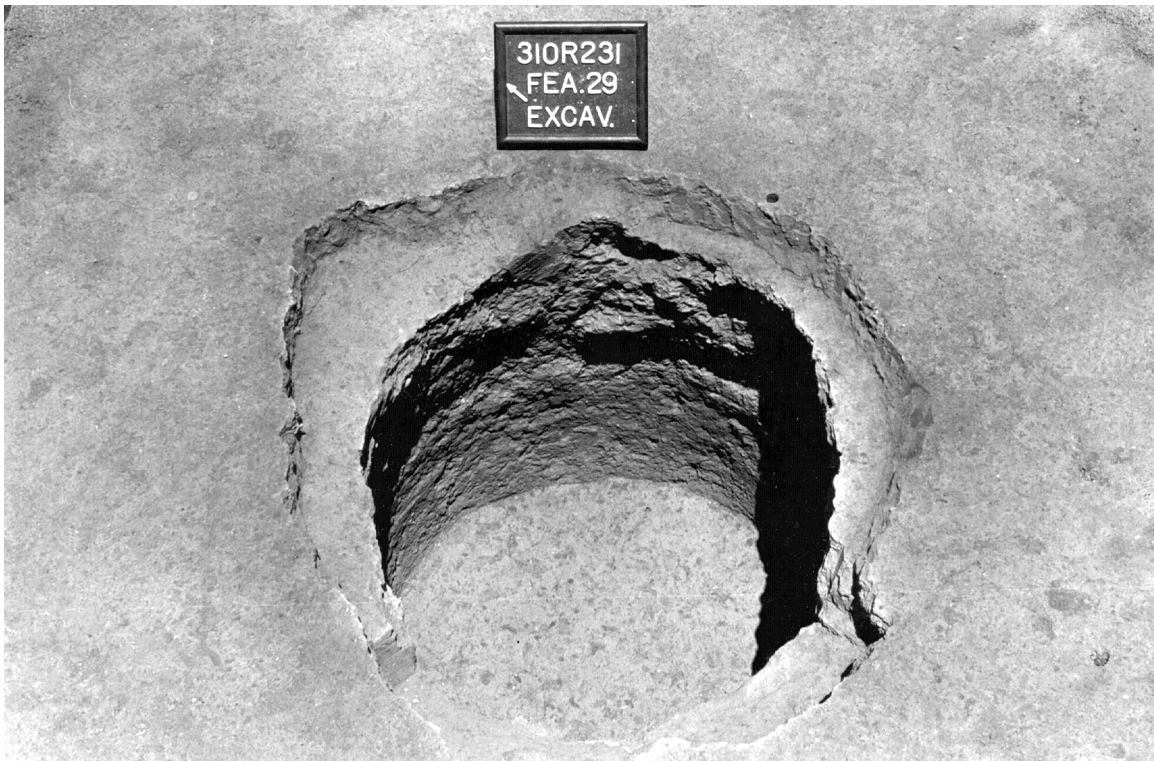


Figure 20. Feature 29.

Pits (Figures 21-23)

In addition to storage pits, four other pit features (Features 18, 20, 23, and 33) were excavated. These also may have served as storage facilities; however, their shallow depth (ca. 1.0-1.5 ft) makes functional interpretation less certain. These pits tended to be straight-sided to slightly "bell-shaped" in profile. Features 18 and 20 may be associated with Structure 9; Features 23 and 33 were located inside Structure 5. All of these features contained numerous artifacts. Feature 18 was particularly interesting in that it contained a heavy concentration of sherds and vessel sections from several large, simple-stamped and check-stamped jars.

Shallow Basins (Figure 24)

Seven shallow basins (Features 16, 24, 25, 37, 38, 39, and 40) were excavated. These features were mostly oval in plan, shallow, and lacked distinct pit walls. The probable use of these features is undetermined. Feature 16 was located within Structure 8; Feature 24 lay within Structure 6; and Feature 40 was located inside Structure 4. Associations for the other shallow basins are indeterminate. Most of these features contained only a small number of artifacts.

Shallow Depressions

Features 21 and 22 were classified as shallow depressions and consisted of little more than dark stains at the top of subsoil. They were only 0.1-0.2 ft deep and probably represent the bottoms of either large postholes or small basins. Both were situated within Structure 8.

Miscellaneous Features

Other features excavated at the Fredricks site during 1985 include: two charred corncob-filled pits (Features 35 and 36) in the vicinity of Structure 6; and a tree stump (Feature 15) located just



Figure 21. Feature 20, Zone 2.

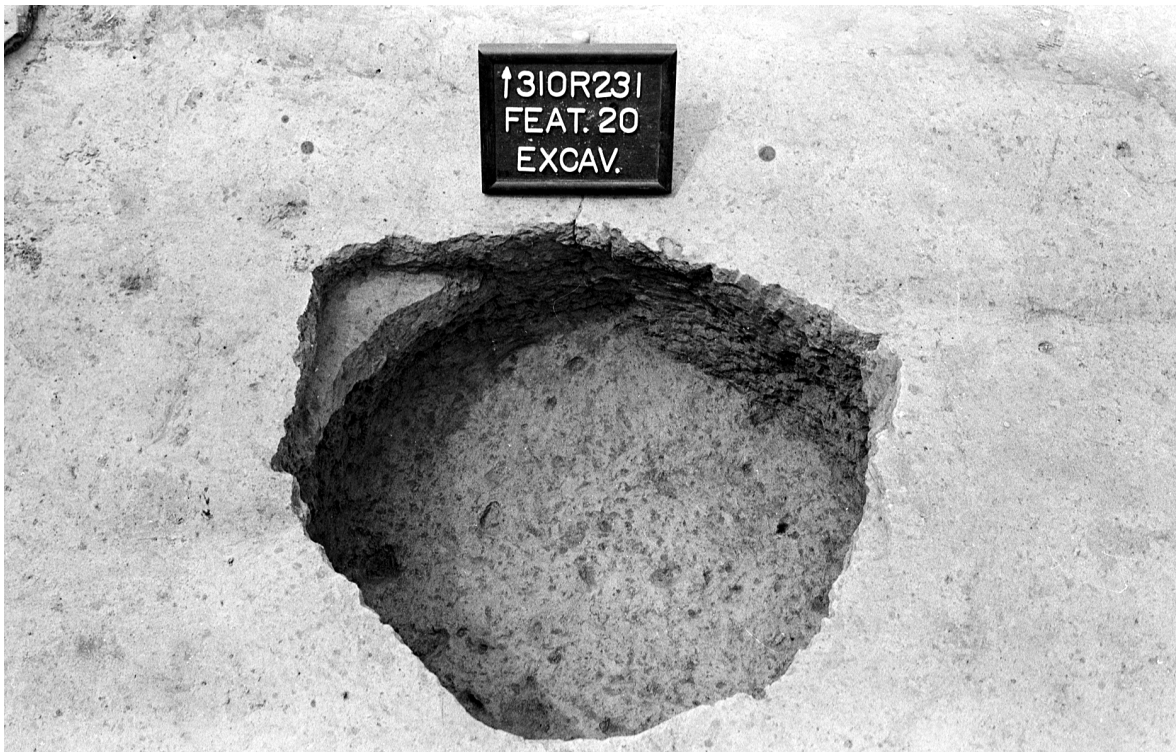


Figure 22. Feature 20, Excavated.

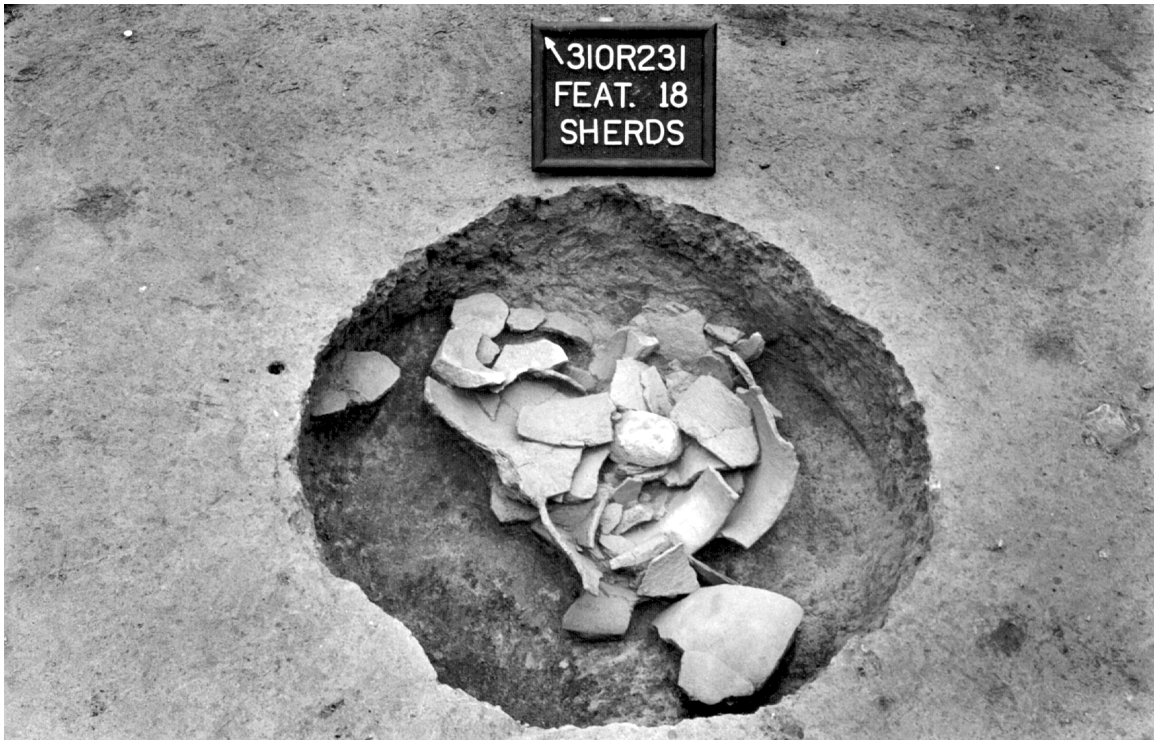


Figure 23. Feature 18.



Figure 24. Feature 25.

northeast of the cemetery. Features that were mapped but not excavated include: a hearth stain (Feature 34) associated with Structure 5; one possible burial (Feature 31); two probable pits (Features 42 and 43); and one probable rodent disturbance (Feature 32).

Structures (Figures 25-26)

Three structures were exposed by previous excavations at the Fredricks site. Structure 1 was an oval wall-trench structure located in the center of the village, and is interpreted as a communal sweat lodge. Structures 2 and 3, located adjacent to the palisade and defined by concentrations of postholes and poorly defined wall-post alignments, represent domestic structures.

During 1985, six additional structures were exposed. These structures are briefly described below.

Structure 4 was a small, circular wall-trench structure located outside the palisade at the north end of the excavation. It was approximately five feet in diameter and contained Feature 40, a small shallow basin. Its proximity to Structure 6 suggests that it probably was associated with this larger structure. Structure 4 may represent either a small sweat house or an above-ground storage facility.

Structure 5 was a well-defined wall-trench house located at the northwestern end of the village. It was oval-to-rectangular in form and measured approximately 16 x 19 ft. In addition to a centrally located hearth (Feature 34), two pits (Features 32 and 33) and a large shallow basin (Feature 24) were also located inside this structure.

Structure 6 was a wall-trench house located at the northern end of the village, and was intruded by both the village palisade and Structure 5. As a consequence, it may represent one of the initial houses constructed at the site by the Occaneechi. It was roughly

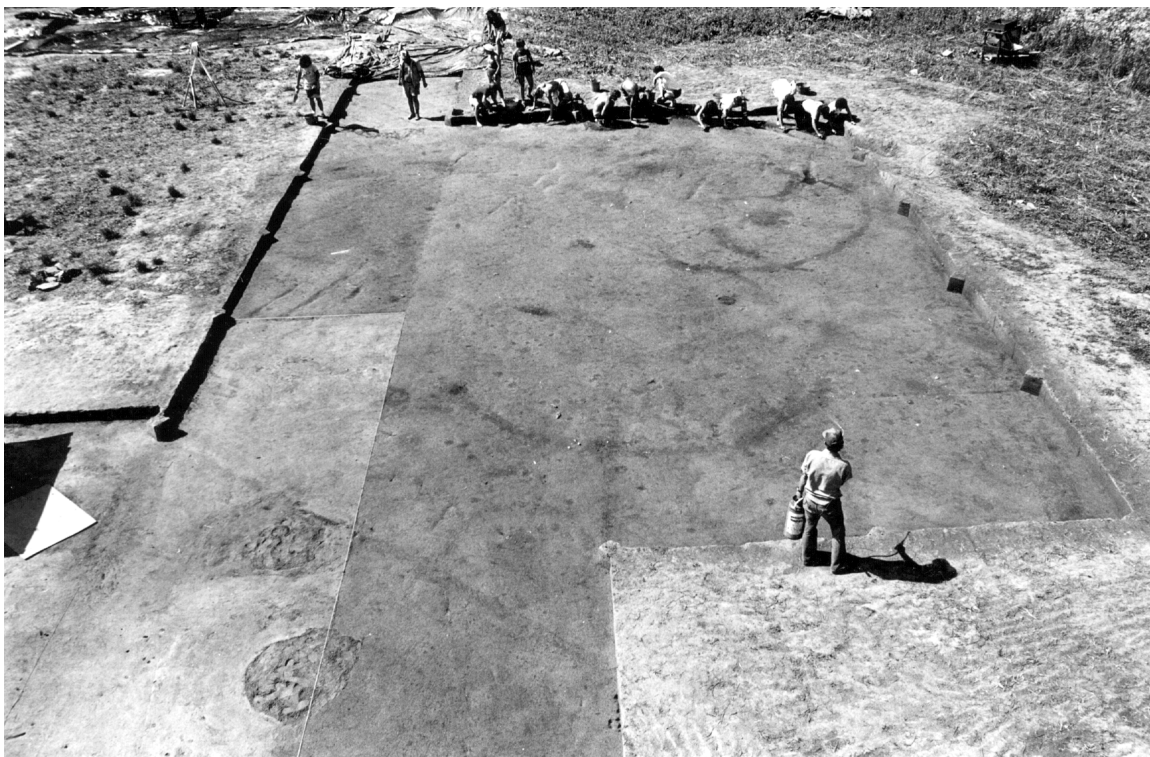


Figure 25. Structures 5 (background) and 6 (foreground) at Top of Subsoil.



Figure 26. Structure 5 (background) Following Excavation.

circular and measured about 17 ft in diameter. No features were associated with this structure.

Structure 7 lay immediately east of Structure 5, and was defined by a circular alignment of postholes. This house was approximately 18 ft in diameter and was the most clearly defined non-wall-trench structure identified at the Fredricks site. No features were associated with Structure 7.

Structure 8 was situated between Structure 3 and the palisade at the eastern edge of the village, and was represented by a concentration of postholes measuring about 14 ft in diameter. Features associated with this house included a pit (Feature 13) excavated in 1984, a shallow basin (Feature 16), and two shallow depressions (Features 21 and 22).

Structure 9, situated at the southeastern end of the village, is a poorly defined, rectangular house that measures about 11 x 17 ft. Several of the postholes that comprised this structure pattern probably were eradicated by plowing. Two storage pits (Features 17 and 19) were associated with Structure 9; in addition, two other pits (Features 18 and 20) located west of the structure also may be associated.

Artifacts (Figures 27-29)

A large collection of artifacts and subsistence remains were recovered from both plowzone and feature contexts. Although these materials are still being cleaned and catalogued, initial field and laboratory observations indicate that they represent a significant new body of information about Occaneechi lifeways. The 1985 excavation not only greatly expanded the size of the Fredricks site artifact collection, it also provided a substantial increase in number of samples that can be used to address questions about domestic activities at the site. Analyses of all artifact classes, including historic artifacts,

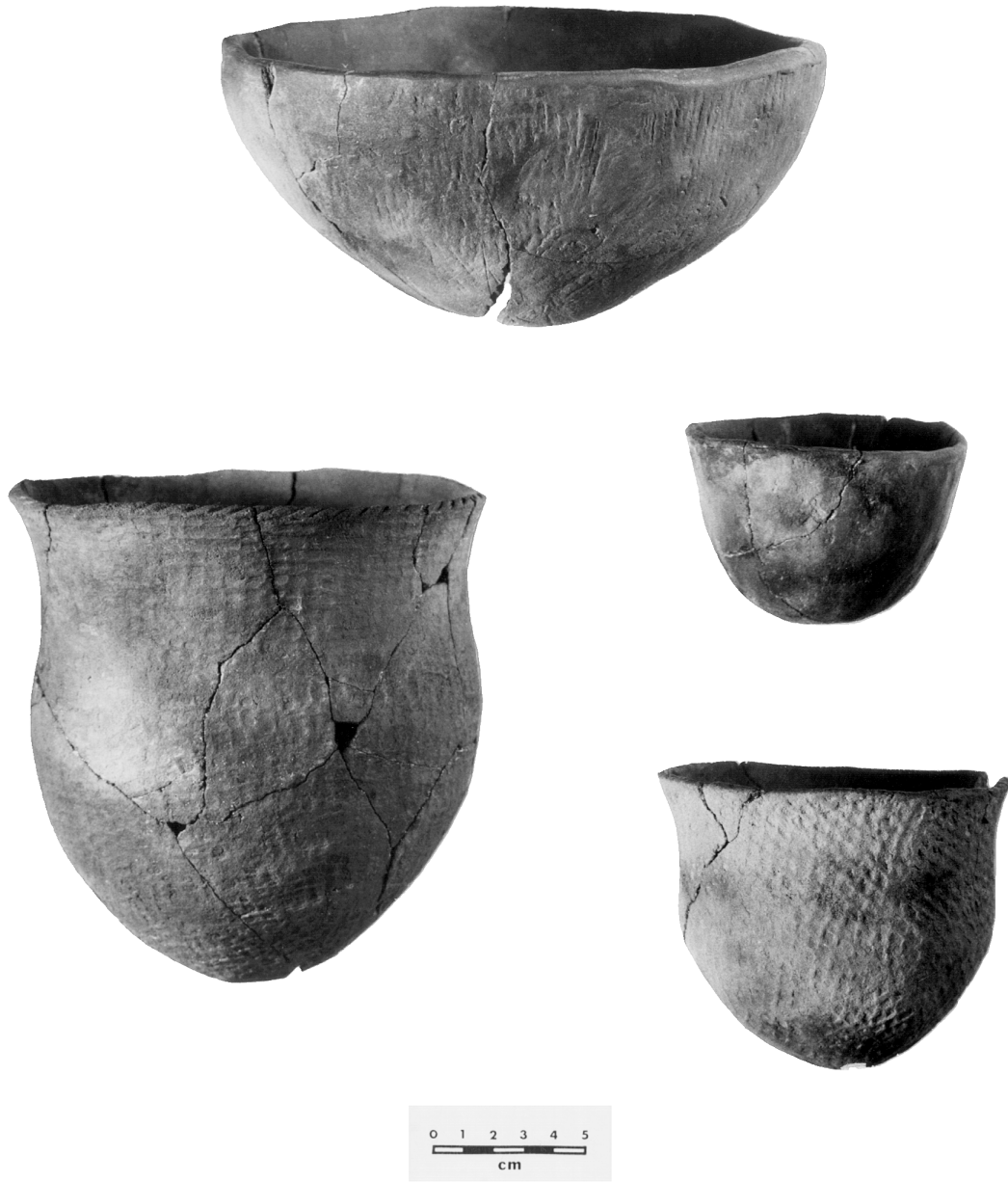


Figure 27. Clay Pots Recovered from Burials 10 and 11.

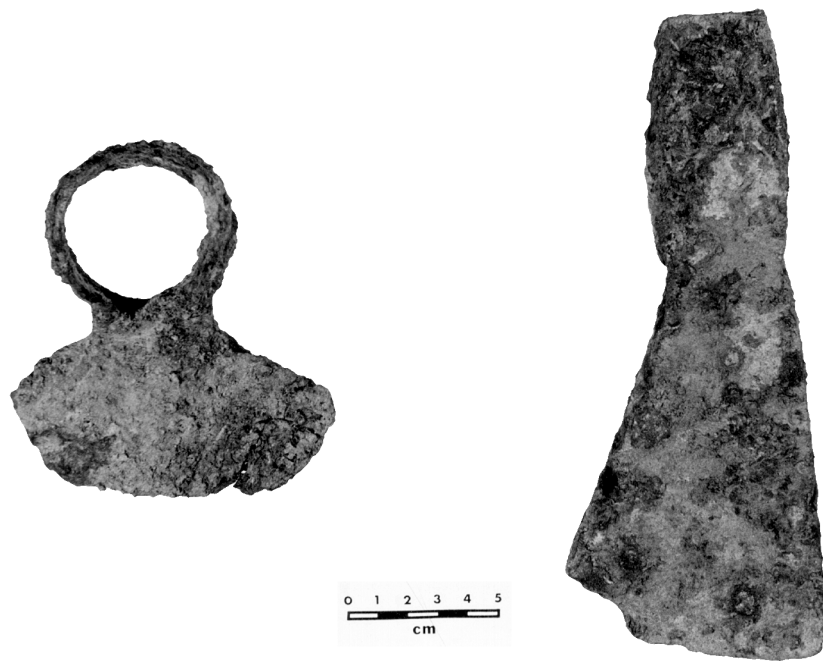


Figure 28. Iron Hoe and Axe Fragments.

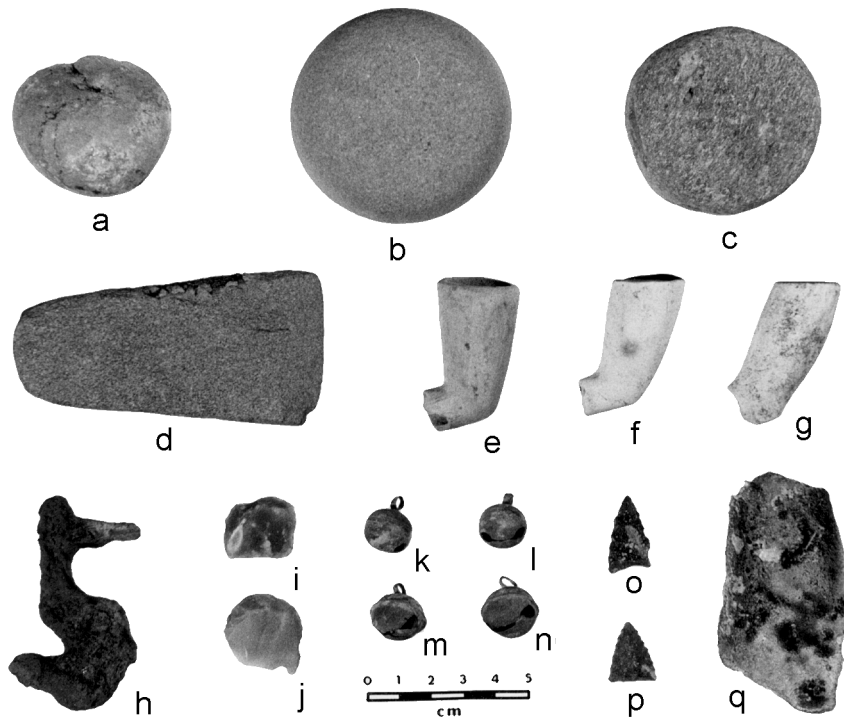


Figure 29. Selected Small Artifacts Recovered During 1985 Excavation: Hammerstone (a); Discoidal (b); Stone Disk (c); Celt (d); Clay Pipes (e-g); Gun Lock (h); Gunflints (i-j); Brass Bells (k-n); Projectile Points (o-p); and Bottle Glass (q).

ceramics, lithics, ethnobotanical remains, and faunal remains, will be greatly enhanced by these new data.

CONCLUSIONS

The 1985 fieldwork at the Fredricks site was undertaken to address a series of research questions about intra-settlement patterning and possible ethnic variability among the village population. Although artifact analyses have not yet begun, some preliminary observations can be made.

First, part of the fieldwork focused upon completing the investigation of the cemetery and exploring the potential for additional cemeteries. Auger testing during 1984 indicated that five to seven additional burial pits would be encountered at the north end of the cemetery (Dickens et al. 1984:27). Five pits were exposed in this area; however, only three of them were burials. The remaining two pits, located about 10 ft beyond the cemetery, were deep storage pits associated with Structure 6.

In all, 13 burial pits (including Feature 1) comprised this cemetery and contained the remains of three infants or neonates, four sub-adults, five adult males, one adult female, and one young adult of indeterminate sex. Although the spatial relationships among these burials and the kinds of associated artifacts indicate that all individuals were interred over a relatively short time period, it is difficult to determine if the cemetery was the product of a single event. The evidence of violent death observed on Burials 4 and 9 indicates that warfare may have been responsible for at least some of the deaths.

While a substantial portion of the village and adjacent area outside the palisade remains unexcavated, a sufficient area has been excavated and auger tested to suggest that there was only one cemetery. With the exception of a single unexcavated pit (Feature 31) within the palisade that may be a burial, no other evidence exists for additional interments. Most of the unexcavated area beyond the palisade lies to the southwest, between the village and Eno River. Although this area has not been auger tested, it seems unlikely that an additional cemetery is present at this location since it would have been reserved for a variety of domestic-related activities (being alongside the river), and thus probably was not suited for mortuary activities. The location of the cemetery along the "back" side of the village afforded it a certain degree of privacy and seclusion. If all or at least most of the burials at the Fredricks site have been identified, then it strongly suggests that the Occaneechi resided here for an extremely short period of time, possibly on the order of only a few years. This interpretation is also supported by the general lack of evidence for significant architectural repairs.

Archaeological excavations during 1985 also contributed significantly toward our knowledge about village development, domestic architecture, and the overall village plan. There is evidence to suggest that the site was initially settled by one or a few families. Remains of this initial occupation consist of Structure 6 which is intersected by the palisade and Structure 5, Structure 4, and Features 28 and 29. Ceramics from both features are similar to those from features inside the palisade; however, a significantly smaller number and variety of Euroamerican artifacts were found. The fact that Structure 6 was intruded by the palisade suggests that it was no longer

in use when the larger village was established.

In addition to identifying six more structures (including another possible sweat house), the expanded excavation in 1985 also permitted a much more secure interpretation of the two poorly defined domestic structures exposed in 1984. These new data indicate that houses were of wall-trench as well as single-post construction, were of variable shape ranging from sub-rectangular to circular, and provided approximately 175-250 ft² of interior floor space each. Hearths were centrally located, and some houses had interior, subterranean storage facilities.

Whereas much of the southwestern half of the village remains unexcavated, certain inferences can now be drawn about the overall settlement plan (Figure 30). The Occaneechi village was small and compact, encompassing only about .25 acre. It was surrounded by a palisade constructed of small saplings and probably was comprised of 11-12 houses situated in a circle along the inside of the palisade. Assuming approximately five persons per household, this suggests that the community contained approximately 50-75 individuals. Interior to the houses was a common area, or plaza, which contained few architectural features. The central feature within this plaza, as well as within the larger village, was an oval sweat lodge (Structure 1). Its relatively large size (compared to Structure 4) and its location indicate that this was a communal facility. Because of the compact nature of the settlement, it is likely that a variety of domestic activities were conducted outside the palisade, probably between the village and the Eno River located about 50 ft to the southwest.

Finally, the 1985 investigations sought to determine if other ethnic groups resided at the site along with the Occaneechi. Although direct ethnohistoric evidence is lacking, Lawson's accounts of Piedmont

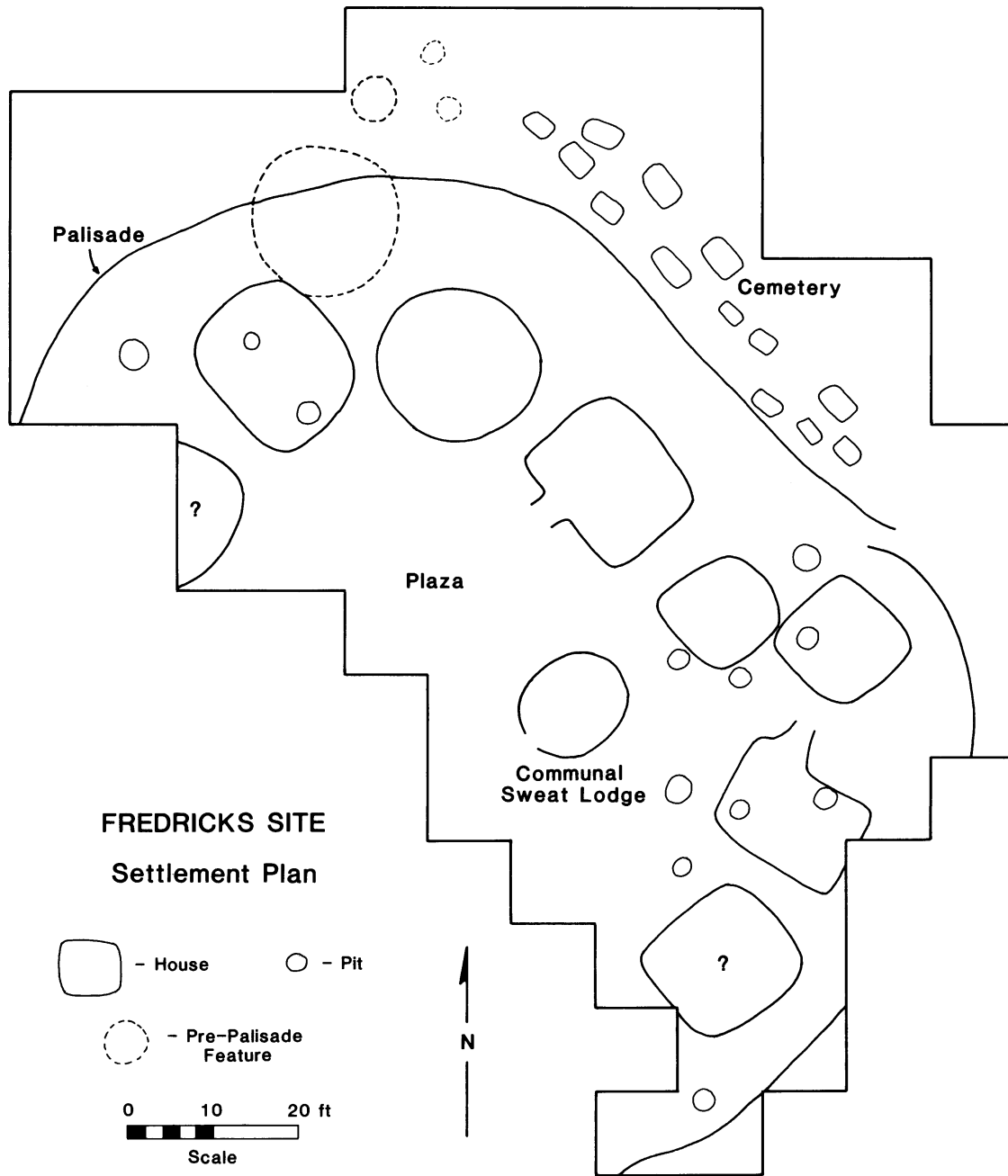


Figure 30. Settlement Plan of the Occaneechi Village.

Indian societies indicate that many villages had become multi-ethnic communities by the early eighteenth century (Lefler 1967). This research question was approached in a preliminary way by an analysis of pottery from the 1983-84 excavations (Dickens et al. 1985). This analysis concluded that most variability in the pottery assemblage could be best explained by multiple site occupations over time rather than by a single, multi-ethnic occupation. This question can be more fully addressed with recently acquired ceramic data; however, field observation and an initial examination of sherd samples only add strength to the previous explanation and offer no evidence for the presence of other historic ceramic traditions at the site. If members of other tribes were residing with the Occaneechi, then they probably occupied separate, nearby villages and thereby contributed little to the archaeological remains of the Fredricks site.

Future work at the Fredricks site should be directed at completing the excavation of the palisaded area in order to obtain a comprehensive map of structures and features within the enclosure and an overall plot of the distribution of artifacts. Further investigation should also be undertaken in the area along the north side of the palisade where evidence has been found for a possible initial occupation just prior to the establishment of the enclosed settlement. This final phase of fieldwork will provide information on the total history and spatial configuration of this historic tribal community.

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