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SOUTHERN LIMIT OF TIMUCUA TERRITORY

by RIPLEY P. BULLEN

ACCORDING TO A popular belief the area south of Tampa Bay was the domicile of the Calusa Indians. Whatever the origin of this dogma, it is likely connected with the fact that Narvaez and De Soto supposedly landed in Timucua Indian territory. How far south of Shaw's Point this territory may have extended has never been delineated. Historically, north Florida east of the Aucilla River was inhabited by Timucua, and south Florida, south and west of Lake Okeechobee, by Calusa Indians.¹ Archaeological evidence suggests that regional differences in material culture had existed for about 1,500 years before the coming of the Spanish in the sixteenth century.² The languages spoken in these areas in prehistoric times are unknown.

Professor John M. Goggin in 1947 divided Florida into eight archaeological areas: the Central Gulf Coast, area 2, covered the territory from the Aucilla to the Manatee rivers; area 3, the Manatee Region, ran from the Manatee to the middle of Charlotte Harbor; and the Glades area included the land south to the tip of the peninsula.³ The Central Gulf Coast was clearly western Timucua territory and the Calusas lived south of Charlotte Harbor. The Manatee Region, Goggin called intermediate, because of "the admixture of cultural contents in some of the sites."⁴ In 1949, however, he grouped the Manatee Region with the Central Gulf Coast as occupied by Indians of the Gulf Tradition as opposed to those of the Glades Tradition found further south.⁵ Recent study supports Professor Goggin's allocation.

There is also evidence available to support the contention

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1. Adelaide K. Bullen, "Florida Indians of Past and Present," *Florida From Indian Trail to Space Age: A History*, Charlton W. Tebeau and Ruby Leach Carson, eds., 3 vols. (Delray Beach, 1965), I, 318.
 2. Ripley P. Bullen, "Florida's Prehistory," *ibid.*, 306.
 3. John M. Goggin, "A Preliminary Definition of Archaeological Areas and Periods in Florida," *American Antiquity*, XIII (October 1947), 114.
 4. *Ibid.*, 119.
 5. John M. Goggin, "Cultural Traditions in Florida Prehistory," *The Florida Indian and His Neighbors*, John W. Griffin, ed. (Winter Park, 1949), 18.

that all of the Manatee Region, including Boca Grande and the area immediately south of Punta Gorda on the south side of the Peace River, properly may be considered Timucua territory. This is based on the assumptions that the Timucua made the Indian pottery found with other historical material in known Timucua territory north of Tampa Bay, and that the areal extent of such pottery in quantity indicates the extent of Timucua hegemony. It is also assumed that the strikingly different Glades Area pottery was made by the Calusa. A further assumption states that common ceramic history implies common culture history. These assumptions are not always completely correct as two people making the same pottery may speak different languages, and the western Timucua, north of Tampa Bay, did not make the same types of pottery as the eastern Timucua in the St. Johns River valley. Nevertheless, they would seem to be reasonable hypotheses for the problem under discussion.

The archaeological culture periods of the Central Gulf Coast and those of the western Glades Area are well known. This consideration of the ceramics of these areas begins at around A.D. 500 with the Glades II period to the south and the Weeden Island period to the north. In the western Glades Area at that time predominantly plain gritty and sand-tempered pottery is found. Decoration, when present, consisted of straight lines made by incision, linear punctation, and series of short parallel lines. Typologically such vessels are referred to by archaeologists as Miami, Gordon's Pass, or Sanibel Incised.⁶ Lateness in the period is marked by the presence of Key Largo Incised sherds, fragments of vessels decorated with incised arcades. Trade sherds include Belle Glade Plain from near Lake Okeechobee and St. Johns Plain, and Dunns Creek Red from northeast Florida. This ceramic complex is typical of Glades II times which ended about A.D. 850.⁷ After that, during the Glades III period, there may be some holdover of the above types but the highest and hence latest levels produce Surfside Incised and Glades Tooled containers. Sherds of St. Johns

6. Gordon R. Willey, *Excavations in Southeast Florida*, Yale University Publications in Anthropology No. 42 (New Haven, 1949), 95-100.

7. Bullen, "Florida's Prehistory," *Florida From Indian Trail to Space Age*, I, 306.

Check Stamped trade vessels from northeast Florida are time markers for this period. These data come from excavations at the Key Marco,⁸ Goodland Point,⁹ Lower Fisheating Creek,¹⁰ Turner River,¹¹ and Turner River Jungle Garden¹² sites. They are supported by data accompanying research collections at the Florida State Museum, Gainesville, and by that in the Laboratory of Anthropology records at the University of Florida. The pottery types which belong to the Glades Tradition, it would seem, must equate with the Calusa. None of the decorated Glades pottery types, so far as is known, have been found north of the middle of Charlotte Harbor except for a few Glades Tooled sherds discovered during the Cape Haze survey and excavations on the north side of that harbor.¹³ This strongly implies that the Calusa never occupied any of the land north of the middle of Charlotte Harbor.

The archaeological situation in the Central Gulf Coast region north of Tampa Bay is substantially different. Here during the Weeden Island period, which equates with Glades II temporally, are found the full range of Weeden Island ceramics - Carrabelle, Weeden Island, and Pypys Bayou Incised and Punctated, various complicated stamped, and dentate, shell and cord marked vessels.¹⁴ Such decorated types are also found in northwest Florida and some even as far west as Louisiana, but only as extremely rare trade sherds or poor local copies in the Glades Area. Dunn's Creek Red in Weeden Island I and St. Johns Check Stamped in Weeden Island II - as in the Glades Area - are found as trade vessels from northeast Florida. St. Johns Check Stamped vessels are also present in the succeeding Safety Harbor period.

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8. John C. and Linda M. Van Beck, "The Marco Midden, Marco Island, Florida," *Florida Anthropologist*, XVIII (March 1965), 5, 9.
 9. John M. Goggin, "Cultural Occupation at Goodland Point, Florida," *Florida Anthropologist*, II (November 1949), 71.
 10. John M. Goggin, "Archaeological Notes on Lower Fisheating Creek," *Florida Anthropologist*, IV (November 1951), 54, 57.
 11. William H. Sears, "The Turner River Site, Collier County, Florida," *Florida Anthropologist*, IX (June 1956), 53.
 12. Dan D. Laxson, "The Turner River Jungle Gardens Site," *Florida Anthropologist*, XIX (December 1966), 136-38.
 13. Ripley P. and Adelaide K. Bullen, *Excavations on Cape Haze Peninsula, Florida*. Contributions of the Florida State Museum, Social Sciences No. 1 (Gainesville, 1956), 20, 43.
 14. Gordon R. Willey, *Archeology of the Florida Gulf Coast*, Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 113 (Washington, 1949), 407-09.

Late protohistoric pottery from north of Tampa Bay belongs to the Safety Harbor period and reflects influences from Middle Mississippian people living to the west. This pottery exhibits incised and punctated decoration (Ft. Walton, Safety Harbor, Pinellas, and Englewood Incised) stylistically different from that of the Glades Area plus new features such as handles, rim lugs (Lake Jackson Plain), and the water-bottle shape.¹⁵ There are also differences in paste and temper. The only similarity - except for extremely rare trade sherds - is notching at the outer corners of lips which is reminiscent of Glades Tooled rims.

Continuity of people between the Weeden Island and Safety Harbor periods is indicated by slight stylistic similarities in the pottery decorations and by the presence in many of the Weeden Island period burial mounds of Safety Harbor pottery without any break in the construction or use of the mounds.¹⁶ The Thomas mound on the Little Manatee River, east of Tampa Bay, contained Weeden Island and Safety Harbor pottery in addition to Indian worked copper and silver objects.¹⁷ The Safety Harbor period Parrish and Picnic burial mounds, east of Tampa Bay, also produced European objects.¹⁸ That the Safety Harbor ceramic complex is that of the western Timucua is further documented by the finding of European objects in the burial mound, in the village midden, and in the upper part of the temple mound at the Safety Harbor site on Phillippi Point,¹⁹ which is believed to be the site of Tocobago visited by Pedro Menendez in 1567.²⁰

If the correlation between the Safety Harbor ceramic complex and the Timucua and that between the Glades pottery complex and the Calusa seems demonstrated, the Manatee Region between Tampa and Charlotte Harbor must be examined. No decorated Glades Area pottery north of the middle of Charlotte Harbor except for a few Glades Tooled rim sherds from

15. *Ibid.*, 458, 472, 479.

16. *Ibid.*, 110, 119-20, 132-33.

17. Ripley P. Bullen, *Eleven Archaeological Sites in Hillsborough County, Florida*, Florida Geological Survey, Report of Investigations No. 8 (Tallahassee, 1952), 14-17.

18. *Ibid.*, 66-69; Willey, *Archeology of the Florida Gulf Coast*, 145, 155.

19. John W. Griffin and Ripley P. Bullen, *The Safety Harbor Site, Pinellas County, Florida*, Florida Anthropological Society Publications, No. 2 (Gainesville, 1950), 18, 24.

20. *Ibid.*, 31.

Cape Haze has been located.²¹ Both Weeden Island and Safety Harbor ceramics have been found in quantities in the burial mounds of the Manatee Region in Manatee and Sarasota counties. Examples are the Palmer mound in Osprey²² and the Englewood mound just north of the Charlotte County line.²³ Weeden Island pottery was also uncovered at Cayo Pelou, east of Boca Grande.²⁴

The more common Safety Harbor ceramics have been unearthed at Englewood, Arcadia, Hickory Bluff, and in the Boca Grande burial mound²⁵ as well as on Cape Haze.²⁶ In 1962 the author accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Robert Max Jones to the *Aqui Esta* burial mound southwest of Punta Gorda. Pottery from this location included various water bottles, a vessel with incised hands on the sides, applique ropes at the base of water bottle necks, Lake Jackson Plain containers with lugs and handles, and Pinellas Incised vessels. Incised hands are a feature of Tampa Bay ceramics and presumably have a ceremonial connotation. Pottery from the *Aqui Esta* mound is so typically Safety Harbor that it leaves no doubt but that the people who made this mound and were later buried in it must have belonged to the Safety Harbor culture and, based on the assumptions mentioned earlier, they must have been Timucua.

Only a little Safety Harbor pottery has been recorded south of Charlotte Harbor. None is recorded in the Florida State Museum's research collections. Examination of the records of the Laboratory of Anthropology, Department of Anthropology of the University of Florida, revealed that Englewood Incised sherds are recorded for Upper Captiva Island, Pine Island, the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River, and Johnson's Key in Estero Bay; Ft. Walton Incised for Johnson's Key and Demorey Key; Lake Jackson Plain for Demorey Key; Safety Harbor Incised for four locations on Pine Island; and Papyrus Bayou Punctated and Pinellas Incised for Pine Island. In every instance only one or two sherds of these types are listed. This sprinkling

21. Bullen and Bullen, *Excavations on Cape Haze Peninsula, Florida*, 20, 43.

22. Florida State Museum records, catalogue of specimens from the Palmer site, Sarasota County.

23. Willey, *Archeology of the Florida Gulf Coast*, 132-34.

24. *Ibid.*, 344-45.

25. *Ibid.*, 342-46.

26. Bullen and Bullen, *Excavations on Cape Haze Peninsula, Florida*, *passim*.

of sherds is what might be expected as a result of trade across a cultural boundary. They do not support a possibility that the Timucua had any substantial influence around Pine Island Sound, the Caloosahatchee River, or Estero Bay. While this area has not been extensively exploited archaeologically, enough work has been done by various people, including real estate developers, to substantiate this conclusion which, of course, agrees with the historical records. It seems evident that the division between the Timucua and Calusa territories occurred along the middle of Charlotte Harbor. The north shore of this body of water is very low and marshy. Probably the Calusa paid little or no attention to it. Their "center of gravity," if contemporary historical data is accurate, was in Estero Bay some thirty-five miles further south.

The southern limit of Timucua territory is of interest to historians since it is one of the points bearing on Hernando De Soto's landing place. The reports of that expedition seem to indicate that the landing occurred in Timucua territory and that the Indians of Ucita and of the villages of Hirrihigua and Mocozo were not very different from those encountered as the expedition moved northward.²⁷ The delineation of the southern boundary of Timucua territory as the north and northeast side of Charlotte Harbor would suggest that De Soto did not land further south. This would eliminate the San Carlos Bay - Caloosahatchee River-Fort Meyers area as a possible landing site, but it would not discard the Charlotte Harbor-Peace River-Punta Gorda location as a possible landing point.

27. Edward G. Bourne, *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto*, 2 vols. (London, 1905), I, 23-44.