

SUSQUEHANNOCK MISCELLANY

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

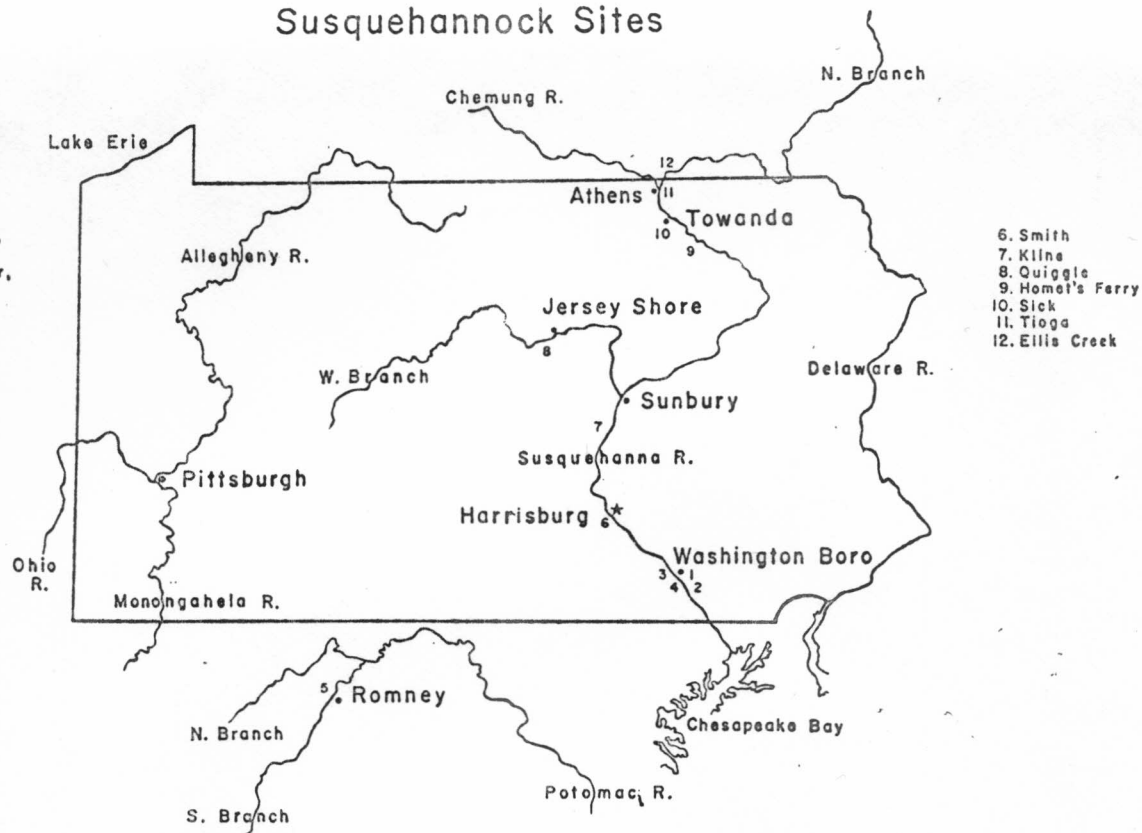
THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND
MUSEUM COMMISSION

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

1959

Susquehannock Sites

1. Frey, Eschelman,
Keller, Ibaugh,
Roberts, Strickler,
Shultz
2. Shenk's Ferry
3. Oscar Liebhart
4. Bert Liebhart
5. Harriot



6. Smith
7. Kilne
8. Quiggle
9. Homel's Ferry
10. Sick
11. Tioga
12. Ellis Creek

FIGURE 1. MAP OF SUSQUEHANNOCK SITES

The Strickler Site

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THE Strickler Site (La 3), situated one mile south of Washington Boro in Lancaster County, has been the location of many archaeological excavations over the past hundred years. Prior to 1931, when Donald A. Cadzow made extensive excavations, the work was confined to individual amateurs. Over the past ten years, I have excavated ninety-five burials and one large midden-filled pit within the site. From data relating to the various excavations made over the past years, including Cadzow's work, I believe the burial grounds extend on a terrace edge in an arc from the southwest end of the site to the northeast, with the village located toward the center of the arc. My excavations have been confined to the northeastern area of the burial line.

The burials are contiguous and not widely separated. Eleven to twelve square feet constitutes the average area of an individual grave. Eighty-three graves contained skeletons in the flexed position, while the remaining twelve were extended. Two multiple extended burials were included, one containing two adult skeletons and the other three. Six small-child or infant burials were also included in the total of ninety-five. Acid soil conditions have caused rapid decomposition of the skeletal remains. Consequently, few physical measurements could be made with any degree of accuracy. The same soil conditions are responsible for the low proportion of infant and child burials to adult burials. As a result of decomposition, the skeletal remains from the Strickler Site are very few. It is interesting to note that on one set of long bones, a marked bowing caused by rickets can be observed.

Three adult crania permitted measurements, and two of these are quite longheaded. One skull with a length of 183 mm. and a width of 127 mm. has a cephalic index of 69, and the other is 182 mm. long by 130 mm. wide, yielding a cephalic index of 71. Both these skulls show marked alveolar prognathism; and in the case of the first, the

alveolar jutting is combined with marked facial prognathism as well. The third cranium is massive in size and belonged to a male of about thirty-six years of age. The skull length is 187 mm. and the width 140 mm., with a cephalic index of 75.

The orientation of the bodies in 90 per cent of the graves suggests that the long axis was placed along a northwest-to-southeast line with the head positioned to the northwest. Faces are directed to the east. The orientation of the remaining 10 per cent was varied.

Most grave pits were like bathtubs in shape, or roughly irregular and pear-shaped. The depth varied from eighteen inches to forty-eight inches from the surface of the topsoil to the bottom of the gravepit. No postmolds or fireplaces were encountered in the vicinity of the graves. A considerable amount of tree bark was removed from beneath and along the sides of brass kettles. The bark had been penetrated by the copper salts and therefore was preserved. Many gravepits were probably lined with bark before the body was placed in the ground.

Of particular interest was the association of native material with European trade goods. Most graves contained brass kettles, gun parts, metal or kaolin pipes, and glass beads together with native-made pipes of clay or stone, clay pottery vessels, and only occasional tools of stone. All pottery is within the known range of historic Susquehannock shell-tempered pottery. The minority pottery type is Washington Boro Incised. It is recognized by medium-to-high collars, generally with two or more horizontal bands of incising and the frequent occurrence of face effigies. Strickler Cord-marked is the majority pottery type. It is recognized by rather coarse cord marks on the exterior surface. A simple flared rim and a bulging rounded collar characterize the two major subtypes of this type. Toy pots and crude miniatures of the larger vessels are common. A total of thirty-six large and sixteen toy vessels were excavated.

A variety of pipe forms were encountered (Figure 22, E, H-J, L). These include stone, clay, and trade pipes. The most common of the native clay forms is a buff-colored, trumpet-shaped pipe with a tulip-like bowl (Figure 22, L). This distinctive pipe form is derived from the earlier Susquehannock and Iroquois ring-bowl types. A total of forty-three trumpet pipes were unearthed. Two have "watchwheel-decorated" (fine dentate) bowls, three are ring-bowl forms, two have human effigy faces, one is a large clay pipe with a loon on the bowl, while still another is decorated with a serpent. This constitutes the stylistic range of the clay pipes. Two trumpet pipes have fine dentated

designs filled with kaolin. Many pipes have a dottle of tobacco remaining in the bowl.

Seven stone pipes made from serpentine or steatite were among the most attractive artifacts excavated from the site (Figure 22, H, I). The most unusual one is of serpentine. It has a vase-shaped bowl with a calumet-like disc around the rim of the bowl (Kinsey, 1959, Pl. 1, e). Other pipes include a plain vase-shaped bowl of steatite, three effigy pipes, and one with a lizard twined around the bowl. Another has a snake coiled about the stem and bowl with the head protruding from one side of the bowl. Still another pipe has a duck effigy on the bowl. Other stone pipe forms include a gracefully shaped pipe with a plain, cylindrical bowl, while a contrasting pipe has a rather square-shaped bowl rim. The latter is decorated on the bowl with a cut design similar to those incised on pottery.

Four trade pewter pipes were found (Figure 23, O). These pipes of European origin include a plain tulip-shaped bowl pipe, an effigy pipe with two small owls on the end of a shaft protruding from the bowl, another with a large owl effigy, and the fourth with an otter-shaped effigy on the bowl. The pipestems range in length from eight inches to the large otter pipe of twenty-seven inches in length. Completely decayed fragments of other pewter pipes were found in several graves.

Four short-stemmed kaolin trade pipes were excavated. Of particular interest was the association in the same grave of two stone pipes and two clay pipes of aboriginal manufacture with a kaolin trade pipe. Both the Indian clay pipes have fine dentated designs filled with an inlay of kaolin. It was not uncommon to find two or more pipes in one grave. A total of sixty-seven pipes were removed. Fifty-nine were of native manufacture, while the remainder were of European origin.

Only a few native stone artifacts other than pipes were found. One of these items was a long pestle, which shows additional wear on the center portion of the bar. Possibly it served both as a whetstone and as a milling stone. Other stone tools include a gorget, which shows signs of wear and use as a whetstone or sharpening tool for steel knives; eight mullers (one particularly attractive granite muller was found inside a brass kettle); numerous odd-shaped hones or whetstones; and a few small triangular arrow points, four of quartz and three of flint.

Packages of prepared paints included ochre, specular hematite, kaolin, and graphite. A rattle made from the shell of a box turtle was found containing twenty-nine small, water-worn quartz pebbles.

Five holes had been drilled through the bottom shell and six through the top shell. Stains made by the rawhide lacing are still visible around the perforations on the bottom side.

Organic material from the Strickler Site includes portions of three small wooden bowls, fragments of eleven spoons, and sections of rifle stocks. Several pieces of coarse woolen trade cloth, probably blankets, linen cloth, and a few pieces of native cloth were found in and near brass kettles, together with fragments of matting, bear, deer, and beaver hides. Bear teeth were also found, but none had been drilled for suspension. Seeds from the brass kettles included corn or maize, pumpkin, squash, and beans. A few charred corn cobs were uncovered.

Shell beads of the large tubular and disc varieties were not common. However, ten thousand conventional wampum beads were unearthed. These are small tubes, about three-eighths of an inch long with straight longitudinal drill holes. Other items of shell were pendants of various designs and shapes such as turtles, birds, bird and animal claws, and crescents. A few shell spacers were found. One large cluster of so-called Nanticoke wampum was also found.

Glass beads were found in abundance and consisted mostly of the tubular type made by a cane technique. Beads occur in many sizes and colors. A total of 30,309 beads was found of which 19,670 were wampum-shaped, tubular-type beads; 9,830 were spherical, red or black, cane-made beads; 800 were small seed beads; and 9 were large, polychrome beads (so-called "Venetian beads"). No stone or star beads were encountered. The most interesting type of bead was a translucent, twisted, green, blue, or amber cane-glass bead $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches to $5\frac{7}{8}$ inches long, of which eight were discovered. These beads were found associated with the skulls in a manner suggesting their use as hair pipes (Ewers, 1957). Apparently, they were attached to a band or a leather thong that was worn around the skull and over the ears.

The Strickler Site contains more trade material and of a more varied type than any other known site in Lancaster County. These items range from small, straight, brass pins to guns and armor plate. Approximate dates can be obtained from much of this material. The seventeen muskets (eight doglocks and nine flintlocks) and three flint boxes are of types made as early as 1625 (Figure 23, G, H). A complete armored breastplate was found in an upright position at the head end of one grave. It was placed in this position as part of the burial offerings along with the other personal effects of the deceased. The armor is apparently English and of a style prevalent during the first half of the seventeenth century (Peterson, 1958).

Other iron material consists of a pistol, three sword blades, one spear, twenty-four axes of various sizes, sixteen hoes, four celts, two choppers, and one sickle. Iron carpenter's tools include a claw hammer, a lather's axe, four wood chisels, a wood punch, two wood scrapers, a pod drill, two wood files, and a wood reamer. Over two hundred lead musket balls of various sizes were found, with a few gun tools, bullet molds, and a gang mold.

Items of brass are represented by sixteen hawk bells, a candleholder, six jew's-harps, two buckles, three Jesuit rings with the lettering IHS, four plain or secular rings, thirteen bracelets, and five brass vanity cases and snuff boxes. Three contained wild plum seeds shaped for use as dice in the bowl game, one held trade beads, and one wampum.

Except for the glass beads, brass kettles were the most abundant of all trade materials (Figure 23, R). A total of seventy-two were recorded. The kettles range in size from twelve inches in diameter and seven inches deep to five inches in diameter with a four-inch depth. All the vessels were constructed by the same method of manufacture. They have a round iron hoop for a rim, around which the brass is wrapped. A half-round iron handle is riveted beneath the rim. Many are well-worn and show indications of one or more repairs made by riveting small patches of scrap brass to worn and thin spots on the bottom and sides. Most kettles contained bones of deer, bear, and fish, and also seeds and undetermined food particles. Triangular brass arrow points were made from discarded kettles as well as cones or jinglers and tubular beads. Twenty-nine triangular brass points and a few jinglers and tubular beads were found. Four arrow points had portions of the shafts remaining; these had been oxidized and preserved by the brass. Spiral-shaped pendants and ear ornaments of brass were also preserved and catalogued.

Iron trade knives were abundant. A total of fifty was found, including three with unusual figurine handles (Figure 22, B-D). Two brass-handled, figurine knives were cast in the likeness of a man holding a rifle with the figure of a dog posing at the man's feet on the reverse side. There is a human head suspended below the waist of one of the figures. The third knife handle has the cast figures of a woman and child. These are possibly of Dutch manufacture. A few have brass handles, and five have well-preserved stag antler handles.

Items of glass included four case bottles (Figure 23, F), seven mirrors, a burning lens, and a candleholder. Other objects excavated include forty-five iron bracelets, three spoons (one stamped with the French fleur-de-lis), two lock keys, nine scissors, three straight pins,



FIGURE 21. GOLD-SILVER PENDANT FROM STRICKLER SITE

seven iron jewel boxes, six black glass buttons, a padlock, and a bell of an undetermined metal.

One Grunhauser wine jug (Figure 22, A) and numerous bellarmine fragments were found which have some bearing on dates for the site. Grunhauser jugs were made in Europe about 1640. The jug and bottle series of the Strickler Site closely corresponds to that from Williamsburg, Virginia.

Three glazed-tile squares were removed from one grave. Two of the tiles are amber colored, and the other is green. These tiles are similar to those that were used to face the fireplaces at Pennsbury Manor, William Penn's estate on the Delaware River. Probably, they represent the earliest local tile industry of the Delaware Valley.

The most outstanding artifact recovered was a pendant of electrum (a gold-silver alloy) cast in the likeness of a cicada or harvest fly. It was cast by the *cire perdue* or lost-wax method, a process whereby the original is modeled in wax and covered with clay of sufficient thickness to form a mold. Then the heat of the poured metal melts the wax, which runs out as the vacant space is filled with hot metal. This process by its very nature destroys the model so that only one cast can be made by it. Examples of this work are found very early in South America, a tribute to the technological advancement of the Indians in that area. This specimen possibly originated in the Antigua area of present Colombia. It is a matter for conjecture as to how this gold pendant came to be possessed by a Susquehannock; however, the technique is a South American one, and the object

represented is an insect indigenous to this hemisphere. The pendant, quite worn, may represent some of the Spanish loot from South America which was used for barter over an extended period in Europe as well as in North America.

A large, midden-filled pit which I excavated at the Strickler Site was of unusual size. It was found during a highway reconstruction project and is located along the west side of the roadway that divides the site. The pit measured twelve feet in diameter by eight feet in depth. It contained the usual debris material found in Indian refuse: broken pipe fragments, potsherds, animal bone, fish bone, and river mussel shell. Charcoal and ash consolidated the fill, with a few glass beads and brass pendants thinly scattered throughout. No other trade materials were found. The potsherds found in the midden are similar to the burial pottery, except that the refuse pottery is heavier and shows more evidence of use. One medium-size bear skull was found, which had a portion of bone removed, perhaps for the purpose of extracting the brains. Two large sturgeon jaws and many bones of deer and bear along with bones of smaller mammals and birds were removed. Charred corn and beans were found. An awl made from a turkey leg bone was located. Of particular interest was a twelve-inch layer of white ash covering the bottom of the pit. From this level a stone pipestem and a broken stone pipe were removed. These pieces showed evidence of exposure to extreme heat. The animal bone and other items had also been damaged by fire, possibly indicating the burning of rubbish. Judging from the amount of material contained in this midden-filled pit, I believe it was probably a main refuse pit of the village.

SUMMARY

A comparison of the material culture of the Strickler Site with that of the Ibaugh Site in Washington Boro is of significance. The marked differences, both in kind and in quantity, point out time differences between the two sites and indicates a sharp surge in the trading activities. Greater European contact is obvious at the Strickler Site. Similarities between the material culture of the Strickler Site and the Oscar and Bert Leibhart sites are noted.

At Strickler's, brass kettles occur with a frequency of two to one (seventy-two to thirty-six) over the native-made pottery. Only two brass kettles are known to be from the Ibaugh Site. At Ibaugh's, two native and two trade pipes were found. Even though the sample size is of a different proportion, the Strickler pipe series suggests that

smoking was more common at this later site. Native-made pipes exceed the trade pipes by more than seven to one (fifty-nine to eight). No European kaolin pipes were found at the Ibaugh Site, but at least four are known from the Strickler Site.

A greater quantity of shell beads and pendants may indicate increased coastal, mainly Delaware and Virginia, contacts. Correspondingly, the glass-bead types found at Strickler's are of a different order from the types common to the Ibaugh and Washington Boro sites. Tubular beads, particularly the brick-colored ones, made by a cane technique are the most common bead type. This contrasts with the small blue-and-white beads typical of the Ibaugh Site. Also guns are common at Strickler's but are virtually unknown at Washington Boro.

The presence of European trade material, suggesting diverse origins, may reflect competition and rivalry induced by the passion of the English, Dutch, and Swedes to control the fur trade.

The absence of artifacts made of bone and antler, such as combs, figurines, awls, arrow points, and fish hooks is interesting in the light of the occurrence of these items at the older Schultz and Washington Boro sites. Bone items of this sort are still common at the later Seneca sites, Dann and Marsh (Wray and Schoff, 1953). Apparently, boneworking went out of fashion in Susquehannock culture rather rapidly, while it persisted for a time among the Seneca.

The impressive amount of European trade goods in proportion to the somewhat meager assemblage of native manufactured materials indicates that a great deal of acculturation had taken place. At the Strickler Site, the Indian was far more dependent upon European artifacts than he was upon his own handmade tools. The old Indian culture was rapidly undergoing tremendous changes. The trade materials suggest that the Strickler Site dates from 1650 to 1675.

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