

The Enderle Site: An Historic Burial Locality in Erie County, Ohio

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ABSTRACT

The Enderle site (33ER82) is a small, multicomponent site located in northern Erie County, Ohio. The latest component at the site represents one of the few well documented historic Indian burial localities in Ohio. The 3 historic burials, 2 females and a male, were all young adults, evidence no major pathologies or trauma, and appear to have been buried contemporaneously. The burial program contains traditional as well as European elements. Associated trade goods indicate an A.D. 1760-1780 chronological placement, which in turn suggests a Wyandot or Delaware affiliation.

THREE post-contact Indian burials were recovered during the course of field work conducted at the Enderle site (33ER82) in August 1977. Enderle is a small, multicomponent site located in northern Erie County, Ohio, and within the right-of-way of the proposed State Route 2. It was one of 3 sites excavated within the proposed route in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Transportation's special effort to preserve cultural resources which would be adversely effected by construction. Certainly the information recovered from the Enderle site helps to justify their concern and expenditure.

The Enderle site is located at 41° 22' 13" north latitude 82° 33' 20" west longitude, in what is now northern Erie County, Ohio. It lies .32 km (.2 miles) west of the Huron River, and approximately 1.61 km (1 mile) upstream from the river mouth (Fig. 1). The site is 183 m (600 feet) above sea level and 6.10 m (20 feet) above the Huron River pool. It occupies one side and the top of

one of the numerous sand knolls in the undulating local topography. It lies well within the boundary of glacial Lake Lundy, and the sand knolls represent stabilized dunes which were formed at some point after the lake had receded about 6500 B.C. (Forsyth 1959).

The 3 historic burials at the Enderle site were discovered while shovel scraping a large area to expose Late Woodland features. The 3 burials were defined at this point as dark brown, rectangular discontinuities in the yellow sandy soil, and were designated as Feature-11, Feature-12, and Feature-16. They were on the apex of the sand knoll, about .91 m (3 feet) apart, approximately parallel to one another and oriented in a north-south direction (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3). Each of these rectangular areas was pedestalled, and the dark fill subsequently troweled and screened until the burial was encountered. Flotation samples were taken from the fill of each pit. Dental tools were then used to expose the skeletons and associated cultural material. Each of the burials was photographed, both in the conventional fashion and using stereo pairs, mapped and removed to the laboratory for analysis. No other burials were recovered from the site, and none of the other excavated fea-

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ally viewed as indicating a late 18th to early 19th century temporal placement (*e.g.*, Hayes 1965:6-8; Fitting 1975:218, 220), although Ritchie (1965:323) reports that Iroquois burials were associated with coffins in New York by the early 1700's.

Approximately 280 white, glass "seed beads" were also recovered with Feature-11. Morphologically, they range from donut-shaped to tubular, but the majority are slightly wider than they are long. A random sample of 30 beads, measured to the nearest millimeter, indicate a width of 2.3 mm (3/32 inch) and a length of 1.9 mm (1/16 inch). The standard deviations were .26 and .48 respectively. The vast majority of these beads were in direct association with the femurs and tibiae of the burial and appear to represent a design or decoration sewn on a garment. Those few beads found elsewhere in this massively disturbed burial probably represent rodent displacement.

The pattern formed by the trade beads associated with Feature-11 appears to have 2 major elements. First, there is a linear array of beads extending down each leg from the pelvis to the ankles, apparently outlining the lateral edge of a garment. The second major element consists of a zigzag line of beads (ζ) starting near the head of the left femur, crossing to the middle of the right femur, back to the distal end of the left femur, and across to the center of the right tibia. Presumably this represents a design across the front of the garment, which is probably a skirt. Although some displacement has occurred, the decorative pattern represented by the seed beads associated with this burial and that associated with the adjacent Feature-12 are 2 of the best preserved examples of historic beaded garment decorations recovered from archaeological contexts in the Midwest. Black (1967:252-53) reports a beaded garment from the single historic burial at the Angel site, Vanderburgh Co., Indiana, but he could not determine the nature of the pattern. Hayes (1965:8) notes a pattern of white glass seed beads outlining leggings at

the Big Tree Farm site, Monroe County, New York. Both sites relate temporally to the late 18th or early 19th centuries. Also, it should be noted that seed bead of the type found in Feature-11 are most common in what Quimby (1966:89-90) has called the Late Historic period (A.D. 1760-1820).

Feature-12 was encountered approximately .91 m (3 feet) east of Feature-11 (Fig. 3 and Fig. 4). The burial in this feature was lying in an extended position with the head to the south. Preservation was considerably better than in Feature-11, in part, because it was approximately 45.72 cm (18 inches) further below the surface and hence less subject to disturbance. Cranial, pelvic, and femoral morphology indicate that this individual was a female. The dentition suggests that she was in her mid-twenties at the time of death (C.O. Lovejoy 1977, pers. comm.).

European trade goods were associated with the burial in Feature-12. Fifteen iron nails and nail fragments, stylistically identical to those recovered in Feature-11, outline the burial. These, too, have preserved wood adhering to them, and a coffin burial is inferred. Beneath the burial and extending slightly beyond its margin in both a north-south and east-west plane, was a loosely woven mat. The mat was constructed of noded reeds, probably horsetail (*Equisetum sp.*), and appears to have been used as a coffin lining. The presence of both an obvious European element in the burial program (the coffin), and a traditional element (the reed mat lining), serve to document the differential borrowing that often characterizes a culture contact situation.

About 2000 white, glass "seed beads" were associated with the femurs and tibiae in Feature 12. They are identical stylistically with those recovered from Feature-11. Further, the pattern represented by the distribution of these beads bears a high degree of similarity to that noted in Feature-11. More specifically, lines of beads are found just outside and parallel to the legs just as they were in Feature-11. A design



Fig. 4. Map of Feature-12 showing distribution of white seed beads (+), black tubular beads (0), nail fragments (shaded), metal container (hatched), and pewter hair plates.

vaguely similar to the greek letter sigma (Σ) occupies a field bordered by the 2 linear arrays and is centered over the lower femurs and upper tibiae. Below this design, a line of bead extends between the 2 north-south bands and is perpendicular to them. As with Feature-11, it is inferred that the distribution of seed beads with this burial

represents a decoration or design sewn on a skirt.

Also, associated with the legs of Feature-12 were 3 lumps or bunches of organic material. In all cases these were found just beneath the tibiae. They had been preserved by salts resulting from the weathering of small, thin pieces of copper (or brass)

wire associated with the organic material. Little remained of the wire itself except a green stain. The organic material is not woven but appears to be made up of long, parallel fibers. These fibers showed no medulla under magnification and are, therefore, not animal hairs although this is their general appearance. Both the presence of green metallic thread and bunches of parallel fibers have also been reported with historic burials at the Lasanen site (Cleland 1971:69).

A small, ovate metal container was associated with the right hand of Feature-12. It is 8.26 cm (3¼ inches) long and 5.92 cm (2⅓ inches) wide, and is composed of at least 2 distinct layers; a thin outer layer which is highly corroded and appears to be rusted fabric or bark and an inner layer of iron. A brass hinge and a latch are visible on the exterior. Similar "vanity boxes" have been recovered from the Lasanen site, a site dated to the period A.D. 1670-1705 (Cleland 1971:24-25), and the Canawaugus site, a site utilized between A.D. 1787-1810 (Hayes 1965:6).

The vanity box was opened in the laboratory and was found to contain a number of European-made artifacts. At the bottom of the container had been placed 4 pieces of scrap silver, 2 silver hair plate hasps, 1 silver hair plate without hasp, 2 plain brass finger rings, 2 iron straight pins with spherical heads, 4 white glass seed beads, 1 black glass tubular bead, 3 silver tubular beads rolled from scrap silver, 1 silver ear bob without wire ring or tinkler, and 1 silver ear bob with silver tinkler (Fig. 5). The spherical portion of each ear bob was 7 mm (9/32 inch) in diameter. One of the pieces of scrap silver exhibited 2 parallel grooves transversing the length and appears to be part of a bracelet (see Quimby 1958:317-19). Another was engraved with a design and the letters I SOIT and obviously was part of a larger composition of some sort (Fig. 5 and Fig. 7). Quite possibly the letters represent part of the phrase HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE, the motto of

the Order of the Garter and present on the British coat of arms. Quimby (1958:318) notes that the British commissioned Indian leaders as "gorget captains" and presented them with silver gorgets and arm bands engraved with the royal arms. The remaining 2 scraps bear stamped, scroll-like designs and appear to have been cut from the same sheet (Fig. 5 and Fig. 7). Quimby (1966:91) regards trade silver as temporally related to the general period A.D. 1760-1820. Stone (1974:136-37), however, relates silver ear bobs very similar to the Enderle examples to the French occupation (A.D. 1730-1760) at Michilimackinac.

Slightly above this material and against one side of the container were 12 brass finger rings (Fig. 5 and Fig. 7). They had been strung on a woven cord and were stacked on edge and against each other, forming a cylinder of rings. The cord was of European origin and approximately 30.48 cm (12 inches) long. It had been knotted, forming a loop on which the rings were suspended. All of the rings were made of brass and represented 2 general types, plain rings and rings with settings. The 5 plain rings are plano-convex in cross-section and are of the following sizes: 4, 4, 5, 5, and 5¾. All conform to Stone's (1974:127) Series-C, Type-1, Variety-a at Michilimackinac where they occurred in Features 263c and 75. Plain finger rings have also been recovered from the Ada site (Herrick 1958) and the late 18th century Big Tree Farm site (Hayes 1965).

The 7 rings with settings are stylistically similar to one another, differing only in diameter and the color of the central stone. Four of the faceted central stones are clear glass, 2 are cobalt blue, and 1 is emerald green. In all cases the central stone is flanked by 3 small bits of cobalt blue glass on each side. It should be noted that most of the central stones had been considerably abraded, presumably as a result of wear, and that several exhibited conchoidal fractures. Further, many of the small blue stones were missing. Clearly, these rings

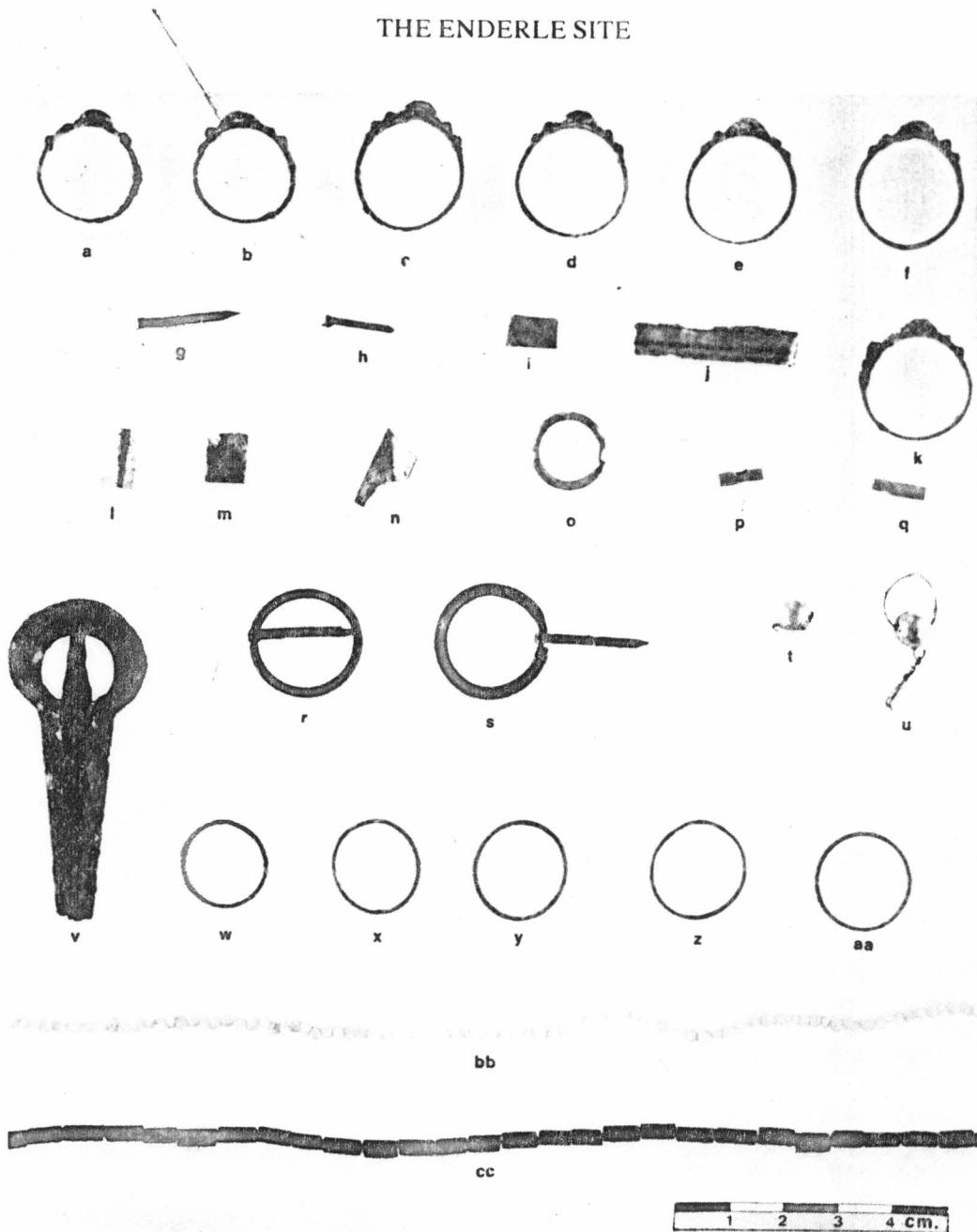


Fig. 5. Artifacts with Feature-12: a-f, k, rings with settings; g-h, hair plate tangs; i-j, l-n, scrap silver; p-q, scrap silver beads; o, r-s, hair plates; t-u, ear bobs; v, jew's harp; w-aa, plain rings; bb, seed beads; cc, tubular beads.

were not in pristine condition at the time of burial. These rings included the following sizes: 4, $5\frac{1}{4}$, $7\frac{1}{4}$, $7\frac{3}{4}$, 8 and 8.

All of the rings with settings conform perfectly with Stone's (1974:123-125) Class-1, Series-A, Type-1. At Michilimackinac they

occurred in Features 120, 124, and 127 which were associated with the late French and early British occupation of the fort. This would indicate a temporal range of A.D. 1750-1780 at Michilimackinac (Stone 1974:131). Stone (1974:131) also reports



Fig. 6. Textile fragment with Feature-12 (length 128 mm; width 59 mm).

that this type of ring was recovered at the Santa Rosa site which dates to A.D. 1722-1752. Apparently the multicomponent Ada site also produced a ring of this type (Herrick 1958:7). Thus, the available evidence suggests that the type spans the period A.D. 1720-1780.

Near the top of the vanity box and centrally located was found a packet of 7 bi-pointed straight pins and a brass jew's harp. The pins averaged 26 mm (1-1/32 inch) in length and were stuck parallel to each other in a piece of badly decomposed paper. Hayes (1965:6) recovered a bundle of pins from the late 18th century Canawaugus site in New York. The jew's harp has a maximum length of 59 mm (2-5/6 inches) and a maximum width of 25 mm (31/32 inch). File marks are evident on various surfaces. The Enderle example conforms to Stone's (1974:141) Series-B, Type-1, Variety-a, a type which appears to post-date A.D. 1735 and is occasionally found on sites as late as A.D. 1830. Stone (1974:145), however, feels on the basis of the Michilimackinac evidence that brass jew's harps are generally earlier than their iron counterparts.

On the top of the box had been placed a piece of folded cotton fabric (Fig. 6 and Fig.

7). It's apparent function was to consolidate the contents of the box, perhaps to keep it from rattling. The cloth was removed from the metal container by Martha Thomas of the Textile Department, Cleveland Museum of Art. It proved to be 128 × 59 mm (5-1/32 × 2-5/16 inches), and was constructed using a plain tabby weave. The vertical threads (presumably warp) have a Z-twist and are mostly coarse and uneven in diameter. There are between 52 and 56 threads per centimeter (132-142 per inch). The horizontal threads (presumably weft) have a Z-twist and are much finer than those of the vertical. There were 38 threads per centimeter (97 per inch). On the cloth was a block-printed design of maroon florets arranged in staggered rows. There also appears to have been a net-like background design consisting of alternating red and pink dots. Research by the Textile Department of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum indicates that this fabric is French and dates between A.D. 1760-1780 (G. Moss 1978, pers. comm.).

At the neck of the burial in Feature-12 was a beaded necklace composed of about 230 black, glass tubular beads. The necklace was made by sewing the beads to-

gether so that they formed a rather tight-fitting choker, a single bead in thickness and from 5 to 8 beads wide (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5). These black beads are considerably larger than the white seed beads found with the burial. A random sample of 30 indicated a mean length of 6.2 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch), and a mean width of 3.1 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch). The standard deviations are .59 and .18 respectively. These beads represent a type sometimes referred to as "imitation wampum" and are typical of what Quimby (1966:88, 90) has labelled the Late Historic period (A.D. 1760-1820). Similar necklaces have been reported from the Angel site (Black 1967: 255) and the Canawaugus site (Hayes 1965: 6). Both finds date to the late 18th or early 19th centuries.

Two pewter hair plates were recovered underneath the cranium of Feature-12 and were associated with preserved human hair (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5). They are 21 mm (13/16 inch) in diameter and do not bear maker's marks. One of these artifacts is undecorated while the other has a design on one face that resembles a longitudinal section of rope. Similar designs occur on brooches relating to the A.D. 1760-1780 occupation of Michilimackinac (Stone 1974:135) and the late 18th century—early 19th century occupation of the Niles site, Berrien County, Michigan (Jelinek 1958). At the latter site this brooch style was associated with a silver locket bearing Robert Cruickshank's cartouche. Cruickshank was actively working between A.D. 1799-1806 (Quimby 1958: 324). Hair plates similar to the plain specimen found at Enderle have been recovered from a number of sites, including Michilimackinac (Stone 1974), Niles (Jelinek 1958), Valley Sweets (Brose 1966), Angel (Black 1967), Ada (Herrick 1958), Canawaugus (Hayes 1965), Kantzer (Fitting 1975), Fulton (Quimby 1938), Franklin (Quimby 1938), and Cook (Quimby 1938). Temporally, these sites range from about A.D. 1760-1820.

To the left of the cranium is a massive, elliptical concentration of white seed

beads. There are approximately 700 beads represented in this cluster. Only the upper most layer of beads in this concentration were mapped (Fig. 4). Morphologically, the beads exhibit the same range of variation found among those associated with the post-cranial skeleton of Feature-12. The distribution of these beads in an elliptical lens about 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ inch) thick suggests that they were sewn on the exterior of a bag or pouch. Also found in this area and associated with the bead concentration are a number of vermilion lumps. The vermilion is a brilliant red, greasy (the consistency of lipstick) and obviously of European origin. A 1 liter (1.06 quarts) flotation sample from this area was processed but was found to contain only 4 additional white beads, small fragments of vermilion, and wood charcoal. The presence and placement of this bag is interesting in light of the 18th century Delaware mortuary practice of breaking a hole in the sealed coffin near the head and subsequently using this hole to place a bag of vermilion near the head. The hole allowed the deceased's spirit to move freely to and from the body until it found its final resting place (Newcomb 1956:40).

Feature-16 represents the third and final burial found at Enderle. It was about 1.2 m (4 feet) east of Feature-12. The skeleton was located somewhat deeper in the ground than that of Feature-11 but not as deep as that of Feature-12; it would have been about .91 m (3 feet) below the modern surface. This burial is extended and the head oriented toward the south. The bone itself is somewhat better preserved than that of the other 2 burials but still evidences considerable rodent disturbance. Size and robusticity indicate that it is a male. Femoral length indicates this individual was about 1.83 m (6 feet) tall. Dental morphology and osteology suggest an age at death of about 30 years. There are no obvious signs of trauma or debilitating pathology (C.O. Lovejoy 1977, pers. comm.). Three iron nails with associated wood, stylistically identical to those recovered from the other

2 burials at Enderle, outlined the skeleton and would again indicate a coffin burial. A reed mat like that recovered with Feature-12 was also associated with this burial.

The available evidence suggests that the historic component at the Enderle site is late during the contact period, probably dating between A.D. 1760 and A.D. 1780. The rings and jew's harp would indicate an 18th rather than 19th century affiliation, while the presence of silver artifacts, bead styles, and burial pattern would indicate a late 18th century temporal placement. The burial pattern, which involved both the placement of the body on a reed mat and within a wooden coffin may represent transition from a traditional to a European burial format. Brose (1966) documents another such transition in Michigan from bark-lined crypts to wooden coffins at the Valley Sweets site as having occurred in the late 18th century. The most temporally restricted evidence from Enderle appears to be the decorated pewter hair plate, which should date between A.D. 1760-1806 on the basis of the Michilimackinac and Niles site evidence, and the decorated fabric, which should date between A.D. 1760-1780.

If the temporal placement of the Enderle burials is correct, then it is likely that these individuals were Wyandot or Delaware, although there is evidence for considerable movement along the south shore of Lake Erie during this period by a variety of ethnic groups. The Wyandot (or Huron) moved into the general area during the mid-1600's but were concentrated somewhat further west along Sandusky Bay during the period in question. There is also some evidence that the Wyandot retained some commitment to the ossuary type of burial program typical of Huronia until considerably after the period that the Enderle site was utilized (McKenzie and Prufer 1967). They were, however, the dominant ethnic group in the region during the late eighteenth century.

Another possibility is that the Enderle burials are Delaware. The Moravian Delaware settlement of New Salem was established on the east bank of the Huron River within 3.22 km (2 miles) of the Enderle site in 1789 under the leadership of the missionary Daniel Zeisburger. A second Moravian Delaware village, Petquoting, was established in 1804 about 4.83 km (3 miles) upstream from the Enderle site by Gotfried Oppelt, and a Moravian Chippewa village was established at about the same time and within .81 km (½ mile) of the site by the missionary Frederick Denche. Significantly, Oppelt's diary records that in 1804 a large "pagan" Delaware village extended for more than 1.6 km (1 mile) along the banks of the Huron downstream from Petquoting (White 1976:3, 5-6). Given the burial program and temporal placement of Enderle, it is unlikely that these individuals were the heavily enculturated Moravian Delaware or Chippewa. However, the fact that there was a large, traditional Delaware village within a mile of the site, and that it was occupied only slightly later than the Enderle site, suggests the possibility that the burials at the site could have been Delaware.

Summary and Conclusions

The Enderle site represents one of the few well documented historic Indian burial localities in Ohio. The structural similarities among the 3 Enderle burials and the location of these features argue that they are roughly contemporaneous and should be viewed as an "archaeological event." All 3 were young adults and exhibit no major pathologies or trauma. A cause of death cannot be directly determined from the available evidence. Although the presence of coffins and trade goods argue that the population from which these individuals came was subject to considerable European contact and enculturation, the mortuary