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**The McNary Reservoir: A Study in Plateau Archeology**  
**By JOEL L. SHINER**

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would result in breakage. The complete specimens probably averaged over 8 cm. in length.

One incomplete specimen, carved and polished from deer or elk antler, is obviously a gambling device. Its outline is a symmetrical long slender ellipse, and it is also elliptical in cross section. One surface is smooth and plain, while the other is covered with an estimated number of 18 small shallow pits that were drilled into the surface. It is estimated that the die had an original length of 8.5 cm. and a width of 2 cm.

The only ornaments of non-European manufacture that could be found were two small shell beads. One of these was a short section of *Dentalium* from the Pacific Ocean; the other was a small disk from river mussel shell and drilled slightly off center. Because of their small size, both of these ornaments could have been lost during the occupation. They were not associated with the late burials in the site.

The European trade goods were restricted to a depth of only 1 foot below the surface. The other 2½ to 3 feet apparently dated from pre-contact times. Of the four glass beads found in the midden, three were of the cylindrical type that is believed to be the earliest in the region. The other was shaped like a doughnut and was identical with those beads found in the burials and those recovered in the ruins of Fort Walla Walla (Garth, 1952 b). There were two bits of sheet copper, one an irregular flat fragment and the other a rolled tubular bead. Another copper object is believed to be a stud used for joining leather harness of some sort. The last item of European origin was a broken fragment of a clay pipestem.

The small assortment of trade goods is nevertheless significant, since it is highly indicative of a time relationship with site 45-BN-3 on Berrian's Island. The aboriginal artifacts are also very similar.

#### BURIAL CUSTOMS

The burials at the Wallula site constitute a minor problem. Their presence, before being robbed, was clear because of the numbers of small human bones and ornaments left behind. About all there is on which to speculate is the large collection of glass and porcelain beads that was salvaged. The group of beads differs considerably from those found in the graves at 45-BN-3. The latter were nearly all blue and white, the blue beads constituting 64 percent of the total. Most of them were of cylindrical shape, although there was considerable variation. Site 45-BN-3 and its trade material is believed to date from the middle and late 1700's and possibly in the early 1800's (Osborne.<sup>6</sup> The dating appears to be upheld by the Wallula site where the earliest trade goods are identical to those from Berrian's Island.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 3, p. 164.

den seems to prove that it was not a permanent village in 1806 and thereafter.

In 1812, Robert Stuart mentioned the Walla Walla River. "On this stream and its neighborhood live the nation from whom it derives its name" (Rollins, 1935, p. 62). Stuart, however, did not specifically mention the mouth of the Walla Walla.

Fort Nez Percé (later called Fort Walla Walla) was built in 1818 on the east bank of the Columbia River about 500 yards north of the Wallula site. It was a trading post surrounded by a stockade and protected by a company of armed men. Some years after he was in command of Fort Nez Percé, Alexander Ross wrote an excellent account of life at the post. He tells that by 1818 the Indians had guns and horses, iron knives, and all sorts of trade goods. Most of these had been acquired after 1805, for Lewis had reported the Indians to be terrified at the sound of a gunshot. Ross mentioned that the nearby territory belonged to the Cayuse and the Walla Walla tribes, but he did not mention a permanent village at the mouth of the Walla Walla River.

By 1818, the Indians were probably using part of the Wallula site as a burial ground. The beads found in the graves are of bright-colored porcelain, and are identical with beads found in the excavation of Fort Walla Walla by the National Park Service (Caywood, 1951, personal communication). In view of the evidence cited earlier from Lewis and Clark, it would seem that the bodies were interred some 15 years after the site was no longer being occupied.

#### SITE 45-BN-3 (BERRIAN'S ISLAND)

Site 45-BN-3, on Berrian's Island, was about 5 miles east of McNary Dam and opposite a point equidistant between 35-UM-3 and 35-UM-5. Berrian's Island was separated from the north bank of the river by a narrow channel, and the site was located at the downstream end of the island facing the main channel on the river. The site was used for both habitation and burial, the latter being the most important use as judged on the basis of few signs of habitations and many burials.

#### ARCHITECTURE

The owner of the property on which the site was located reported that there had been three or four house pits on a slight ridge just north of the burial area. However, during the spring flood of 1948, these pits were washed away or covered up. Test pits in that vicinity failed to uncover any sign of houses. Occupational debris was found on the western side of the burial area, but no houses were detected.

As in house pit 7, the side of house pit 6 nearest the river was lower, suggesting an entranceway there. None of the houses, 5, 6, or 7, were deep enough for a roof entrance to have been used.

House 59 was quite different from any other structure excavated in the McNary region. It was nearly 65 feet long and 16½ feet wide, in the form of a rectangle with rounded ends (pl. 46, *a*). The floor was less than 1 foot deep except where a small fireplace had been dug into the floor. The dimensions of this house were almost identical to those of the multifamily units reported by Ray (1939, pp. 136-137), Lewis and Clark (Thwaites, 1904-5, vol. 3), and others for the historic period. Ray's informant reported that the mat lodge was usually 60 feet long and 16 feet wide, rectangular in floor plan with rounded ends. The superstructure was an inverted V section covered with mats, although there was often a gap in the roof, the length of the house, through which smoke might escape. Several families could live in each mat house, each with its own fireplace.

#### MATERIAL CULTURE

Although there were several occupations of houses 5, 6, and 7, the artifacts recovered from the various levels of occupation showed too few differences to suggest any change in the material culture. In house pits 5 and 6 the non-European artifacts were mostly cobble choppers and hammers. An awl made of wood, a thumbnail scraper, and two elk rib fleshing tools were also found. The fleshing tools were simply sections cut off a rib and used without special preparation.

In house pit 7 about the same kinds of materials were found. Besides cobble choppers and hammers, a crude bone awl and a notched net weight were recovered. House pit 59, the long mat house, was more productive. Twelve projectile points from the floor included three that were small and triangular, four that were small and corner notched, two that were side notched, and three broken unclassified points. These small projectile points made of obsidian, jasper, and petrified wood are typically those of the late prehistoric and early historic periods. A few flake scrapers and a hammerstone were also recovered in house pit 59, as was a basaltic pebble that appeared to have been used as an arrow-shaft polisher.

The assemblage of European trade goods associated with the houses was significantly different from that of either 45-BN3 or 45-WW-6. Instead of glass beads and copper, the trade goods included fragments of tin cups in house pits 5, 6 and 7; bits of glass, possibly window glass, in house pit 59; and a fragment of canvas in house pit 7. Other trade items included a large caliber rifle or pistol ball, a fragment of a square nail, and a horseshoe and a machine-made mother-of-pearl button. The horseshoe and button were in the fill of the houses and

could represent a utilization of the site after the main occupation had ended. However, the general character of the assemblage of trade materials suggests that the houses were occupied after white men were living in the vicinity. There were four glass trade beads in house pit 59, and all were of the type found at Wallula, which are believed to be from Fort Walla Walla.

Scattered about the terrace were four or five piles of medium- to large-sized rocks. Excavation revealed nothing beneath them and no structure associated with them. Piling up rocks was one of a number of tasks given to boys who were in training for the spirit quest (Spier and Sapir, 1930). The custom was based on the idea that the spirit quest was not only a very serious affair, but one which required careful preparation. Thus, small boys were given tasks which were difficult as well as frightening in order to test their strength and their courage. They would be sent out alone on a dark night to some remote spot to leave some object or pile up stones to show that they had been there. This may be an explanation for the rock piles.

#### BURIAL CUSTOMS

Several test pits were excavated in the steep bank at the river's edge in hope of finding an over-the-bank dump. In one of the test pits, however, a complete burial was found. The remains were of a male somewhat over 50 years of age who had been interred without any burial furniture. All metrical measurements and morphological observations fell within the expected ranges, and no anomalies or pathological conditions could be seen. The teeth were in extremely poor condition, which would be expected for an individual of that age. Erosion of the bank also washed out a stone bowl that was practically identical with those recovered at the Wallula site.

#### ECONOMY

A complete analysis of the animal bones was not available at the time of this writing. Osborne, however, reported the presence of horse and bison bones in considerable numbers and the absence of antelope bones (Osborne, 1953, p. 262). Bones of fish and deer were recovered in quantity, as is usual in McNary sites. In addition to the bones, the artifacts showed that both hunting and fishing were important. Net weights and projectile points were found in the houses, and were eroding from the riverbank. Data on foods obtained by gathering are always difficult to recover and other than one stone bowl none were found at site 45-BN-6. The stone bowl may have been used as a small mortar for grinding seeds and berries.