

SUSQUEHANNOCK
MISCELLANY

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND
MUSEUM COMMISSION

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

1959

A Susquehannock Cemetery *The Ibaugh Site*

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LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

THE small town of Washington Boro located along the Susquehanna River about three miles south of Columbia, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, is the location of a large Susquehannock Indian village. The aboriginal town apparently occupied nearly the same area as the town of Washington Boro does today. The site covers more than forty acres and is not approached either in number of graves or quantity of industrial debris by even the largest of the Fort Ancient townsites of the Ohio Valley.

The presence of European trade goods would date the town at a time when the Susquehannocks were entering intensively into the fur trade. According to type and frequency of these trade goods, as well as of the native pottery, this site is distinctive in the Susquehanna drainage area. It seems possible, therefore, that the native population of the Susquehanna Valley had drawn together at this time into one town for security reasons. It is also likely that the long war between the Five Nations of New York and the Susquehannocks had been reinforced by rivalry for control of the fur trade in the Susquehanna Valley.

The site lies on a terrace formed by the Wisconsin glaciation in a sheltered cove surrounded by steep hills of thinly-mantled schist. The terrace of the Sassafras Soil Series lies 100 to 150 yards from the present riverbank and is dissected from the surrounding hills by small streams bounding the site on the north, east, and south. The western edge of the site reaches almost to the edge of the terrace, but does

The anthropometric evidence fails to substantiate this attractive picture. Although the skeletal remains were in poor condition, the long bones of thirteen individuals were sufficiently intact to permit a reconstruction of stature using Hooton's formulae (Hooton, 1949, pp. 728-729). The heights that were computed ranged from 4 feet 10.9 inches to 5 feet 7.7 inches, with the mean or average height for these thirteen individuals at 5 feet 3.7 inches. This calculated mean height actually exaggerates the mean stature slightly, since in all cases except one, where female identification was positive, the formulae for male remains were used.

Examination of the skeletal remains showed no gross osteological pathology, except that the tibias of three individuals were markedly rachitic, and another showed a completely healed break.

A preliminary study of ten crania, four male and six probably female, shows that only with respect to the cephalic index does this group differ significantly from the various Iroquois series studied by Hrdlicka, Ritchie, Knowles and Neumann. Our series, colored at least in part, by the probable preponderance of female crania, yields a mean cephalic index of 79. If this degree of relative round-headedness should be sustained by additional materials from the site, it would seem to corroborate Hrdlicka's observation that "In the Atlantic States as one proceeds southward, the type (Algonkin-Iroquois), without interruption and without alteration in its characteristically high vault, shows a rise in cephalic index, without, however, reaching higher than mesocephaly" (Hrdlicka, 1927, p. 48).

GRAVE GOODS

(*Figures 17 and 18*)

A majority of the burials contained both native materials and European trade goods. In some cases, the latter were limited to small quantities of beads found scattered throughout the grave fill. This scattering gave the impression that a handful or several handfuls of beads were tossed into the grave as the body was being covered with earth. Quantities of beads were also found concentrated in clusters in the grave, while in a number of instances it was apparent that the beads had been sewed upon clothing, or perhaps blankets or animal hides. In a few cases, portions of the original pattern were discernible.

The glass bead series as well as the whole assemblage of European trade goods resembles those materials found on the Seneca sites of Factory Hollow and Dutch Hollow in New York (Wray and Schoff,

1953; Ritchie, 1954). Numerically, the small white and blue so-called "seed beads" are the most conspicuous, with red seed beads present but in lesser quantities. These beads occur with their larger equivalents or counterparts, although the larger sizes are distinctly in the minority. A fairly wide range of large and small polychrome beads was evident, in addition to a smaller sampling of striped spherical beads. A number of small and medium-size star or chevron beads was obtained, while only two large star beads are known from this site. Dark blue is the dominant color of these distinctive star beads with their red, white, and blue stripes. Only a few tubular, wampum-shaped beads made by a cane technique were found.

European trade goods made of iron are represented from both excavations by several knife blades, four axes, two iron hoes, three probable hinge fragments, scissors, a few nails, a forged iron arrow point (tanged), and some scraps too small to determine their original use, as well as an iron gig and several small rods. Items of brass included two pipes, two small kettles, bracelets, rolled tubular beads (cut from the brass kettles), and a variety of small plain or corrugated pieces of brass that had been bent over or clipped to clothing, apparently for nonfunctional reasons. A steel sword was also found.

Objects which had been on clothing included discoidal shell beads (Quahog), large cylindrical conch columella beads, discoidal cannell-coal beads, cylindrical and hourglass-shaped red shale beads, perforated elk tusks, perforated bear tusks, tubular brass beads, brass cones, brass bells, perforated pendants of brass, "ears" from brass kettles, a large sheet of brass worn as a breast ornament (sewed to clothing), beaver fur (some hematite-painted), leather thongs, flat brass beads crimped onto leather straps, and the maxillae of a bear found on a skull (the remains of a bear-robe).

Outstanding both in terms of quantity and quality were the clay pottery vessels of native manufacture (Figure 17). The 1957 excavations yielded about thirty-five whole or nearly whole pots, most of which contained what apparently were food offerings when they were placed in the grave. This is attested to by the animal and fish remains that were frequently found in the vessels. Interestingly, a bone tool kit was found in one of the pots from burial 8b.

All the burials except 27b and 15b (and the previously described burial) contained pottery and other items of material culture. It is quite likely, however, that the burial 15b once held one or more pottery vessels. Grave pits 15b and 18b overlapped, with 15b being the earlier of the two since it appeared to have been disturbed as the

practices. Almost all the burials show a westward orientation, with the body invariably flexed. We note with interest that this westward orientation of burials holds for virtually all cases, since we had felt that the few examples we knew earlier were probably accidental. However, Alsop described this placement of flexed Susquehannock graves in 1666 (Alsop, 1666, pp. 78-79). Flexed burials were also observed in 1831 (Hazard, 1831, Vol. 1, p. 395). This westward orientation, the flexure, and the cultural offerings contrast with the eastward orientation and the grave furniture of the burials found on earlier Shenk's Ferry sites.

The trade goods found at the site correspond closely to those found at the Seneca sites of Factory Hollow and Dutch Hollow in New York State (Wray and Schoff, 1953, pp. 55-56; Ritchie, 1954). This enables us to date the Susquehannock occupation of the site somewhere between 1600 and 1625. The uniformity of the types of European trade goods would indicate a relatively narrow time depth for the site, probably not more than a single generation.

A preliminary examination of the Ibaugh Site assemblage and a comparison with materials from other Susquehannock sites in Lancaster and York counties makes it clear that this site is one part of a Susquehannock cultural sequence in the lower Susquehanna Valley. The occupation of this site falls between the time of the earlier Schultz Site and the later Strickler and Leibhart sites. While the poorly understood Roberts Site shows certain similarities to the Ibaugh Site, its chronology in the sequence needs clarification.

The Ibaugh Site is obviously one portion of an extensive cemetery which presumably served a very populous community of perhaps three thousand or more. Perhaps at this period most of the aboriginal population of the Susquehanna Valley was drawn into one large community as a defensive measure against the growing incursions of the Five Nations. Apparently, the struggle for the control of the beaver trade was already taking place at this early date.