

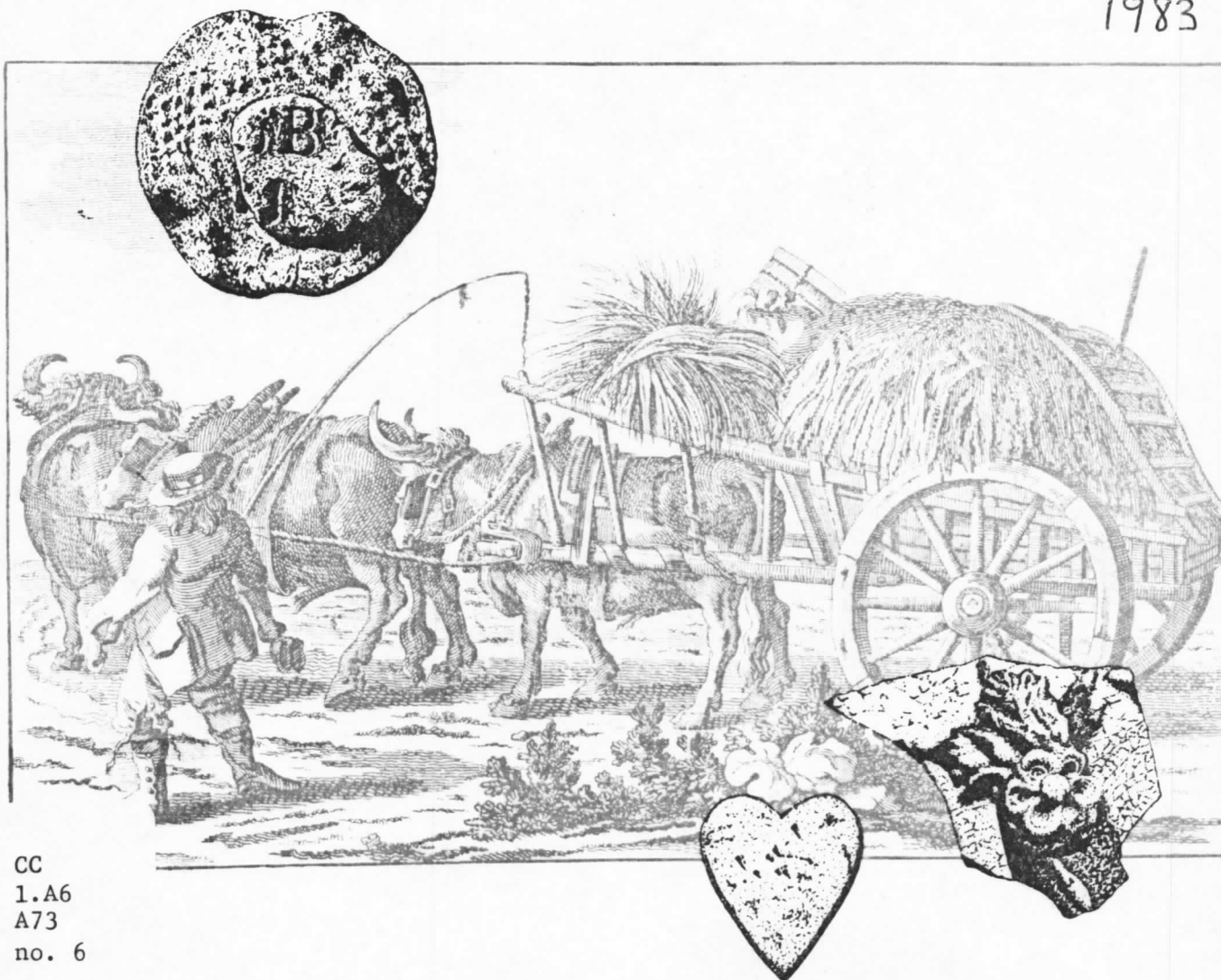
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Archaeological Investigations at French Farm Lake in Northern Michigan, 1981-1982

A British Colonial Farm Site

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Abstract

Preliminary survey and excavation upon a British colonial farm site (20EM57) in Emmet County, Michigan, suggest that the remains of the John Askin Farm, hitherto known from historic documents only, has been found. Limestone masonry architecture is associated with a lone colonial component at the site. Intersite comparisons demonstrate that the farm was contemporaneous with the late British occupation of nearby Fort Michilimackinac (1774-1781) and was occupied by someone of wealth and privilege. The artifact assemblage is at variance with the Carolina and Frontier patterns generally associated with British settlements in North American, but is remarkably similar to a "deviant" pattern known from British occupation of the Hepburn-Reonalds House in Brunswick Town, North Carolina.

Door Lock Plate possibly 1761-1781, Great Britain: 1 specimen

Iron Latch Bar Catch, possibly 1761-1781, Great Britain: 1 specimen

Key (SB, T1, Va), possibly 1761-1781, Great Britain (Figure 42C):
1 distal end fragment

Window Hinge, possibly 1761-1781, with cultural origin unknown:
1 specimen

Door or Window Hinge, possibly 1761-1781, with cultural origin unknown:
4 specimens

Nails, 1761-1781, probably Great Britain (Figure 42D): 76 forged specimens

Barrel Bands (Hoops), 1761-1781, Great Britain (Figure 43A): 10 specimens

Forged Scythe Blade, dates and cultural origin unknown (Figure 43B):
1 specimen

Tin Lid (?), dates and cultural origin unknown: (Figure 44A): 1

Bale Seal (Sa T1), probably 1761-1781, Great Britain (Figure 44B): 1

Iron Wire, dates and cultural origin unknown: 5 specimens

Sheet Brass Scrap, dates and cultural origin unknown: 7

Sheet Lead Scrap, dates and cultural origin unknown: 2

Sheet Tin Scrap, dates and cultural origin unknown: 28

Unidentified Iron Objects: 8

Glass Trade Beads

Necklace Beads (Stone 1974 : 88-107)

CI, SA, T3, Ve: possibly 1761-1781 and of British origin
though Stone (1974 : 93 and Figure 48K)
says this is a French religious bead
dating between 1710-1750 (Figure 44C):
1 specimen

Discussion of Glass Trade Beads

Even though only one glass necklace bead (CI, SA, T3, Ve) was found in 1981 at the French Farm Lake farm site, it is of interest because one identical to it was recovered in early 1770s context, a British occupation deposit, along the Rue de la Babillarde at Michilimackinac (Heldman and Grange 1981 : Table 11).

Stone's (1974 : 93 and Figure K) claim of French origin and a religious function of this bead type rests with interpretations based on stratigraphic and distributional associations at Fort Michilimackinac. In the case of this necklace bead type, his sample consists of only one specimen.

The more recent analysis at Michilimackinac (op. cit.) suggests that the bead type found in the fort may be British in origin. The specimen from French Farm Lake, of course, is also associated with the British occupation there. A re-analysis of this and other bead types is badly needed in order to determine if, in fact, bead types generally were used by French traders, as Stone claims, or whether some types were traded by both French and British traders, or even exclusively by British traders.

While it is true that only one bead was recovered from test excavations at the farm in 1981, a bale seal was found as well. With fine mesh screening techniques used for specimen recovery, duplicating those used in the fort, it may eventually be demonstrated that the owner and/or workers actually carried on the Indian trade at the farm, however low these observed frequencies from 1981 may seem. More excavation is needed to determine if this suggestion, as a working hypothesis, has any validity in fact.