



NEWSLETTER

Number 22

Iowa City, Iowa

September 1957

Despite the fact that there was no summer field trip in archeology this year we nevertheless managed to accomplish some field work. Four separate ventures were undertaken and a considerable amount of information was obtained. Adrian Anderson continued his work at Glenwood and finished the "Glenwood Culture" house we started in May. His preliminary report of this work appears in this issue. Dale Henning worked with Adrian, along with D. D. Davis, Paul Rowe and Leonard Kulbom. They excavated several more cache pits in the floor and have a considerable number of artifacts to show for their labors. Henning has been working on the Malone II rockshelter and plans to continue the excavation until he returns to the University in the fall.

Your editor made a trip to Council Bluffs in July to investigate a report from Mr. Dean Browning, Resident Engineer of the State Highway Commission, that a number of burials had been uncovered during earth-moving operations for a new highway. The burials were located on a spur of a bluff overlooking the Missouri River and proved to date from periods. The upper component was a mass burial of Glenwood affiliation and the lower component dated from the Late Woodland period. The Glenwood ossuary was interesting as it was the first we have had a chance to examine in situ. Mass burials are reported to have been found on many bluffs along the Missouri River but are rarely viewed in situ by professional archeologists. The Woodland burials were found in individual pits below the Glenwood ossuary. In some instances the older Woodland graves had been disturbed when the ossuary pit was dug with the result that bones of the less well preserved Woodland skeletons were found associated with bones that were more recent in appearance. A few Woodland potsherds were found out of context as well. artifacts, except potsherds, were absent but it was reported that some of the workmen who uncovered the burials had found some artifacts and removed them. These were not recovered and we have no idea what they were. Both primary and secondary burials were found in the ossuary. There was evidence of rough handling of the bodies in some cases. One skull was found with the topmost three neck vertebrae in situ but no other bones were present. The head had been severed from the body

while still in the flesh. In another instance a skeleton with a baby skeleton in the arms was found. It is not thought that these cases are the result of warfare or massacre but simply normal burial practices with some manipulation of the corpse in some cases.

No evidence of a Glenwood village was found but that is not surprising as the villages are normally found in valleys below the crest of the bluffs. One knoll on the bluff-top was probably a Woodland mound and may or may not have been associated with the Woodland burials. We were fortunate to find the few sherds we did, otherwise it would have been impossible to assign the skeletons to any period. The circumstances of the find illustrate the absolute necessity of all possible speed in salvaging archeological information.

It is fortunate that Mr. Browning had the intelligence and interest to notify us before the site was completely destroyed. The Highway Department also deserves credit because in response to a letter we sent them in 1954 they circularized all their districts with orders to notify us of archeological sites doomed to destruction. The incident emphasizes the problem we face in the recovery of archeological and paleontological material as it is uncovered by highway building. The federal interstate highway system will destroy an enormous number of sites in Iowa and we will need full cooperation from the highway authorities and local people if we are to salvage this unique material.

While on the subject of salvage archeology we must mention the fine work currently being conducted by the Northwest Chapter and their directing institution, Sanford Museum. Gravel pit operations are destroying parts of a large Oneota site near Correctionville that is extremely important to an understanding of the proto-historic period in Iowa. The above institutions and their personnel are doing all they can to save the material uncovered and rescue what data they can, even to the extent of a sum of money voted by the Northwest Chapter to Dale Henning to finance a trip to Correctionville to help them.

EXCAVATION AT CORRECTIONVILLE SITE

The following is an excerpt from the Newsletter of the Northwest Chapter, Iowa Archeological Society, Vol. V, No. 5, September 1957.

"Many NW members are now familiar with the circumstances of the discovery and work at site 13WD6 southwest of Correctionville. Since it is hoped this phase of the project will be written for the newsletter by some of the members who were instrumental in recovering specimens and data from this site in the early stages, we shall only mention that human skeletons were uncovered during stripping of overburden at a gravel pit, that adjacent to these skeletons and in an area where all the silt had been stripped already several shallow pits containing cultural material were discovered in the upper surface of the gravel. These appear to be the bottoms of storage pits which had extended to the original surface through some four feet of clay and silt formerly covering the gravel deposit.

Dale Henning has offered to spend several days at the site excavating in an undisturbed area adjacent to the pits in hope of finding a living surface. However, it will be necessary to finance this work in some way. Therefore, it has been suggested by several NWIAS members that part of our NWIAS ARCHEOLOGICAL FUND be used for this purpose.

To determine the feeling toward this idea a postal card containing a brief statement concerning the purpose of this dig was sent to all those who contributed or pledged to this fund. It is estimated that travel, food and mechanical stripping should not exceed \$75.00 and may be considerably less. Dale will be housed at Sanford Museum and will have kitchen and laboratory facilities available. Permission has been given by Mr. Fred Theis, manager of the Concrete Materials plant at Correctionville, owners of the land, to conduct excavation at the site. (Those who have pledged toward this fund but who may not have paid the pledge are urged to do so. Send to Joe Beals, Chairman, Cherokee, Iowa. Contributions will be welcomed from those who wish to add to this fund.)

After study, the specimens will be returned to the Northwest Chapter to be disposed of as they see fit. Part of Dale's plan is outlined below in a quote from a recent letter. Here is an opportunity to do something constructive with our fund and to demonstrate that at least one group of individuals, other than students and professional archeologists, is doing something about recovering evidence of our rapidly disappearing prehistoric past". (Editor's note - The NW Chapter has already done a great deal to prove their sincere interest in the scientific investigation of our rapidly disappearing heritage of the past.)

"The plan, as viewed from here, would be to lay bare a square in the field adjoining the stripped area, provided the owner will give his consent. With luck, a living surface should appear under at most a foot of sod which would give a more definite idea of the way of life than excavating the remainder of the pits as found in the stripped area. I also want to excavate carefully at least one whole pit to determine the exact method of construction and purpose. There is also a faint possibility of discovering the remains of an Oneota house which would be worth a whole summer's work. The material correlates roughly with that reported in the northeast corner of Iowa, parts of Wisconsin, and Missouri. Upon completion of my excavation, the material will be analyzed according to relationship to material reported from other sites believed to be of the same manifestation..... This work could be highly important as sites attributed to the Oneota culture are rapidly being destroyed by plowing and work such as that being done at the site currently of interest".

RECENT COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. W. N. Anderson of Stratford, Iowa sent us a large scale map of the area around Stratford with site locations of a number of areas in which artifacts have been found. We are indebted to Mr. Anderson for his kindness. The map contains a large amount of information and must have taken a considerable amount of time to prepare. Mr. Anderson is Station Agent for the Chicago and Northwestern Railway Co. and has a collection of artifacts on display at the depot. I am sure he will be happy to show his collection to any members in that area.

Reynold J. Ruppe
Editor
Iowa Archeological Society

PRELIMINARY NOTES ON EXCAVATIONS IN SOUTHWESTERN IOWA

Adrian D. Anderson

On the week-end of the 27th and 28th of April, 1957 students enrolled in the Archeology Laboratory at the State University of Iowa conducted a field trip to Glenwood, Iowa in the southwestern corner of the state. The field party was made up of the following personnel:

Dr. R. J. Ruppe
Dr. T. McCorkle
Dale Henning
Darrell Henning
Richard Flanders
Charles O'Neal
Carol O'Neal

Adrian Anderson
Barbara Anderson
Janis Runde
Patricia Wolfe
James Scholtz
Donald Beckmeier
Robert Schabaker

The purpose of the trip was the planned excavation of a Glenwood Culture house-site which had been located for us by Mr. D. D. Davis of Glenwood. The house is one of fifteen which comprise an occupation area located in a small valley that opens onto the flood-plain of the Missouri River. The house sites are dispersed randomly along the valley floor from its mouth to the upper end. At the present time only the northern side of the valley seems to have been used for house sites. It is hoped that in the coming year we will find sites on the southern slope when it is in cultivation. Judging from a cursory examination of the material from these house sites it is probable that they can be equated with certain sites, such as the Burns site, directly across the Missouri River in Nebraska.

We were fortunate to be able to set up our tents in a pasture adjoining the cornfield where the house site is located. This meant that we had to carry our equipment only 100 feet, a fact for which all were grateful by Saturday evening.

We began work early Saturday morning. In spite of the fact that many of the students had not had previous experience in archeological field work the work progressed smoothly. We set up a datum line and the five-foot grid system which was oriented by compass. We then began the excavation of three squares. Shovels were used to remove the first six inches of earth to get below the plow line. From then on trowels were used to excavate by six inch levels to the floor. All earth was sifted through one-quarter inch screens. The floor was found at thirty-six inches below datum and the excavation of other squares was started. By Saturday evening we had five squares down to the floor level.

Sunday morning two large charred posts were located which were approximately nine inches in diameter and nine feet apart. They were apparently two of the main support posts. A large fire pit and two cache pits were also found. The cache pits contained ashes, earth, pottery and stone and bone tools.

Lack of time forced us to leave the site before excavation was completed. Further excavation was planned and during the summer Dale Henning and the author returned to the site and continued excavation for eleven days from June 25th until July 5th. An area twenty-five feet square was excavated by us with the assistance of several inter-

ested amateurs from the Glenwood area.

It was discovered that the house had two occupation levels. The floor of the last occupancy was thirty-six inches below datum and separated from the floor of the first occupancy by an almost sterile layer of yellow earth approximately four inches thick. A total of seven large cache pits and three small cache pits were found in the floors. A number of charred posts eight to ten inches in diameter were found as well as many smaller posts with diameters of from two to four inches.

Very few artifacts were found on the lowest floor level. In direct contrast, there were many broken pottery vessels and other artifacts on the upper floor. The upper floor level had a layer of fired clay above it while the lower level did not. From these facts it seems safe to assume that the layer of sterile yellow earth which separated the two floors was carried in as an attempt at "house cleaning" and that following the span of time represented by the upper floor level there was a fire which destroyed the house. To the time of writing there have not been enough postmolds found to determine the shape of the house.

The following diagram of the excavated area illustrates the position of the features mentioned above as well as our system of designating squares by number and level. Also pictured are some of the artifacts found at this site.

Figure A is an elbow pipe of fired clay. The effigy on the upper surface of the pipe is a salamander or lizard. The figure is approximately natural size.

Figure B is a pipe of the Plains variety made of soft stone ground to shape and drilled. A stem is necessary for this type. The sketch is approximately natural size.

Figure C is a snub-nosed scraper of light tan flint. It is $2\frac{1}{4}$ " long, 1" wide, $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide and almost triangular in cross-section.

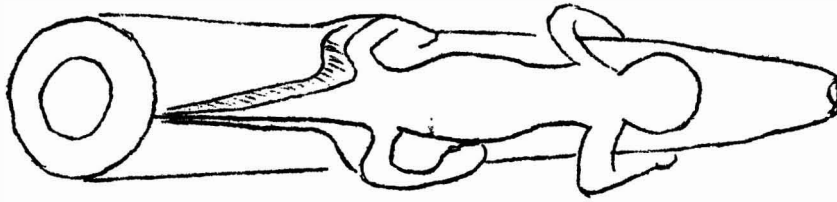
Figure D is a projectile point $1\frac{3}{16}$ " long, $1\frac{13}{16}$ " long and $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. It is corner notched with the notches $\frac{1}{16}$ " deep about $\frac{1}{16}$ " wide. The base is $\frac{5}{8}$ " wide.

Figure E. Small side-notched point. $\frac{9}{16}$ " wide at the base, $\frac{3}{4}$ " long and $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick. The base has a slight basal notch.

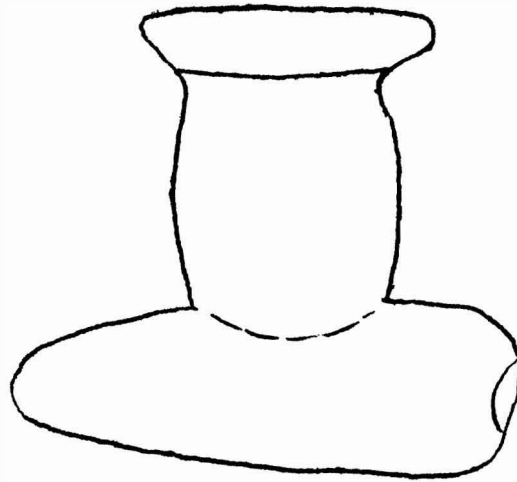
Figure F. Side notched triangular projectile point. $1\frac{1}{16}$ " long, $\frac{5}{8}$ " wide and $\frac{3}{16}$ " thick. Notches are $\frac{3}{16}$ " deep and $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide.

Figure G is one of the variety of snub-nosed side scrapers which has the usual median ridge close to one of the edges. $2\frac{3}{8}$ " long, $1\frac{1}{16}$ " wide and $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick.

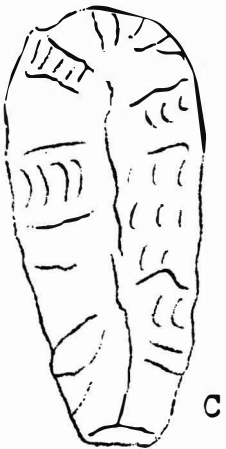
Figure H, I, J, K. H and I are examples of pottery vessels with broad-trail incised design found in abundance at this site. Both are shell-tempered and lack the cord-marking which is so indicative of "Glenwood Culture" ceramics. J and K are examples of typical Glenwood pottery.



A



B



C



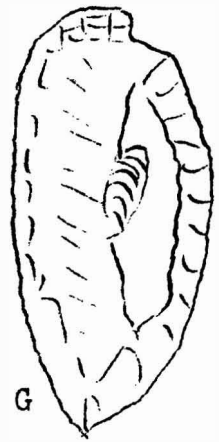
D



E



F



G

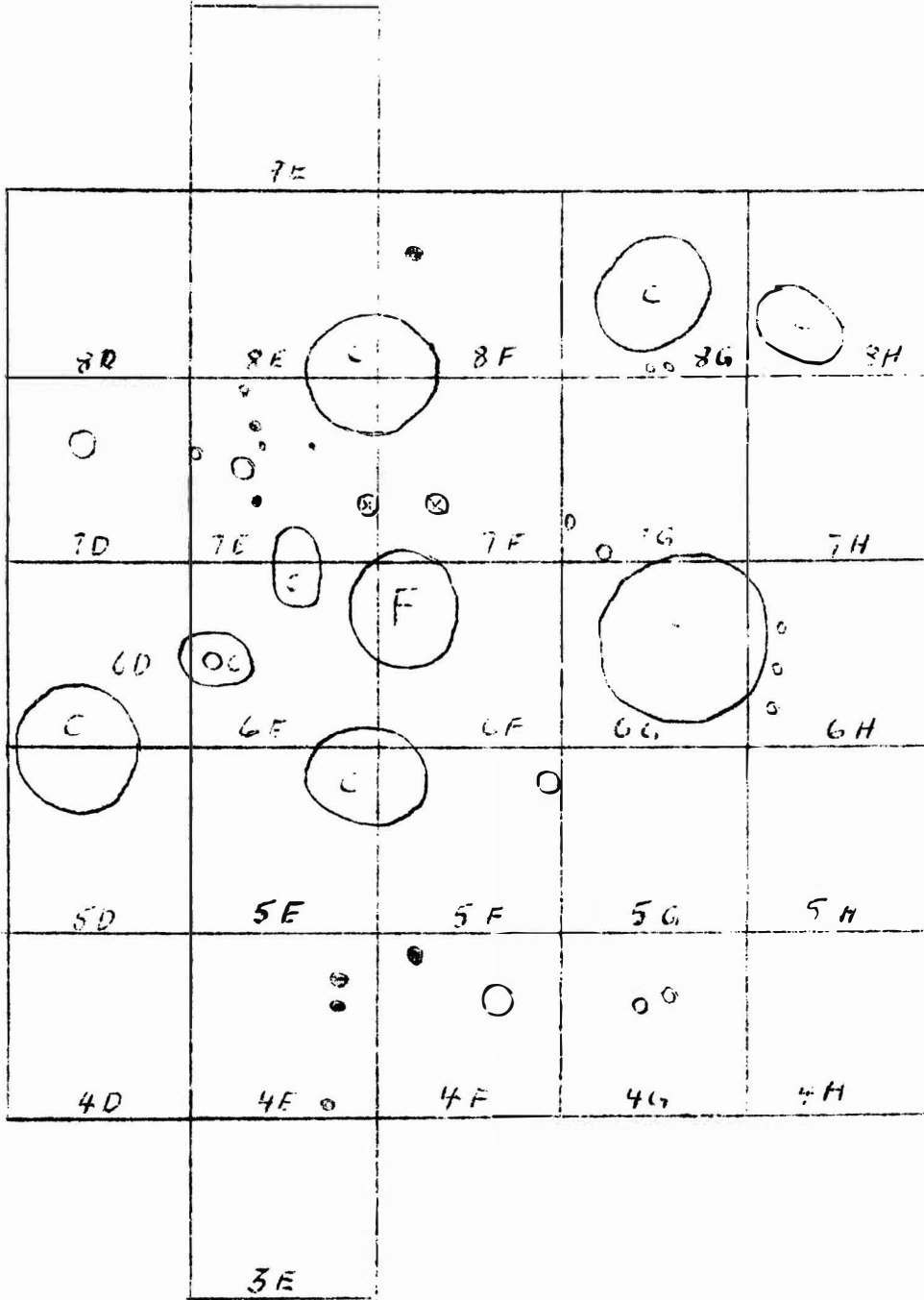
"Glenwood Culture" Artifacts

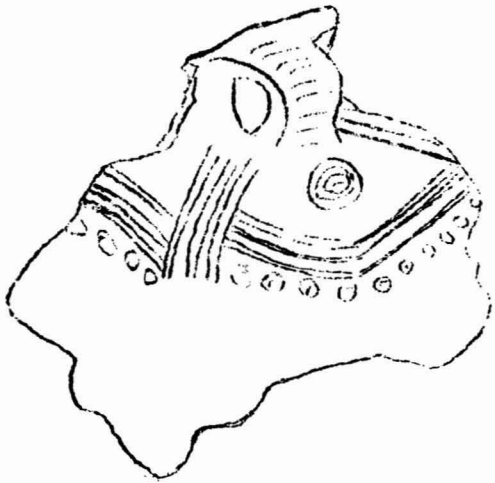
Approximately natural size

SITE PLAN, 13ML12

- F fireplace
- C cache pits
- o ● charred posts

Each square = five feet

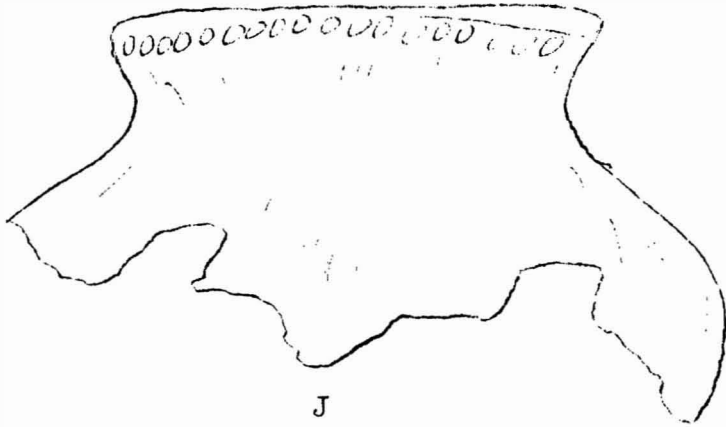




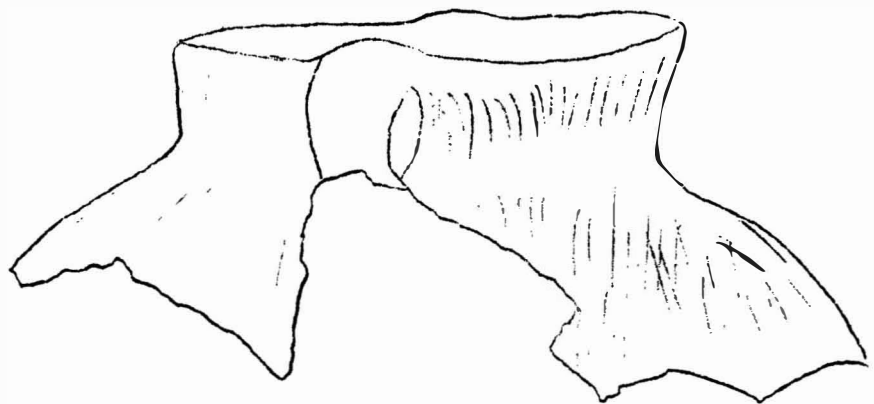
H
One quarter natural size



I
One third natural size



J
One third natural size



K
One third natural size

"GLENWOOD CULTURE" CERAMIC TYPES