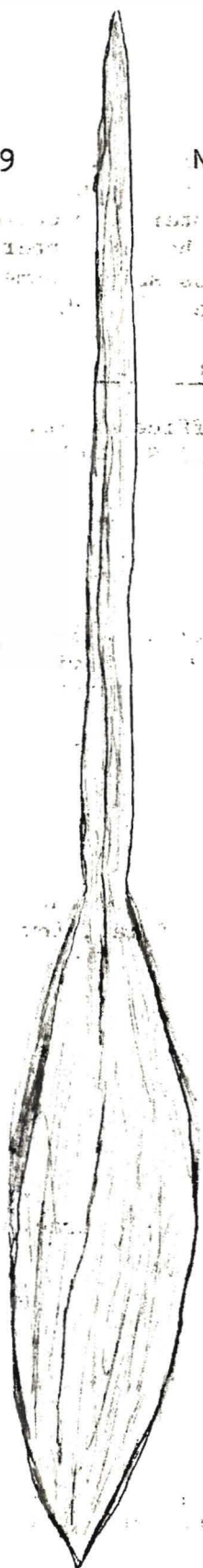


# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY, 1969

NUMBER 50

IOWA  
ARCHEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY



RAT TAIL COPPER POINT  
LOUISA COUNTY

## AN OLD COPPER POINT FROM SOUTHEASTERN IOWA

Robert Ritzenthaler

Mr. George A. Horton of Columbus Junction, Iowa, reports the finding of a rat-tail copper point in Columbus City township, Louisa County, Iowa. It was a surface find. While it is probably a "stray" (there are no other copper specimens known for that area), it is of interest because of its location quite far south of the concentration of the Old Copper culture. Its position on the Iowa River which joins the Mississippi some 15 miles away suggests riverine traffic. The piece measures 8½ inches in length.

### OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES FOR YEAR 1967 - 1968

President	Adrian D. Anderson	Office of State Archeologist, 129 S. Capital, Iowa City
Vice President	Stanley Klein	405 S. Broadway, Toledo
Sec-Treas.	Mrs. Phil Thornton	326 Otsego Street, Storm Lake
Trustees: '68-'69	David M. Gradwohl Don G. Spears Paul D. Kline	Dept. of Soc. & Anthro. ISU, Ames 536 S. Davis St. Ottumwa 1003 N. "C" St. Indianola
'69-'70	Romayne Pansegrau George L. Miller Joe Beals	RFD#1, Toledo 2403 Carey Ave., Davenport RFD, Cherokee
'70-'71	LeRoy G. Pratt Dr. Marshall McKusick Herburt Sovereign	317 SW 42nd St., Des Moines Dept. of Anthro & Sociology U of Ia., Iowa City 906 N. Taylor, Mount Ayr

### EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor:	George Horton
Artist:	Don Duck

Send all manuscripts, notes, comments and reports of finds to the Editor. Try to include illustrations whenever possible, whether tracings, drawings, sketches, photographs or maps. These will make the NEWSLETTER much more interesting and meaningful to everyone. The address is:

Don G. Spears  
536 S. Davis Street  
Ottumwa, Iowa 52501

### SOUTHEAST CHAPTER

The SE Chapter meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Friday of each month at the Iowa Illinois Gas and Electric Company Auditorium, 225 E. Main Street, Ottumwa

### NORTHWEST CHAPTER

The NW Chapter meets on the 3rd Sunday of each month, usually at the Sanford Museum, Cherokee, although some of the meetings are field trips.

Please stop at Tom Roysters free museum in Muscatine, 1904 Hershey Avenue, 50 happy years of collecting.

## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As President of this organization, I must offer my apology to all of you for the long delay in the appearance of the Newsletter. When our editor, Mr. Garland Gordon, returned to graduate school to further his studies in anthropology, it was my hope that I would be able to continue his good work. As you are well aware, I was not.

The body of this issue is composed of two reports of archalogical investigations conducted by members of the Society. I am sure you will find them interesting. I hope these reports will stimulate other members to contribute descriptions of projects you have been engaged in. The Newsletter needs reports of your work if we are to have anything to publish.

## LAB NOTES: UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, IOWA CITY

Mr. Robert Alex is completing his analysis of the archaeological material obtained from his excavations along the Cedar River. He will travel to Mexico with a field party directed by Dr. T. Charlton, Department of Anthropology, at the end of January. Another member of this field party will be Mr. Larry Zimmerman, who excavated the Skadeland site. This is a Mill Creek village in O'Brien Co., and the excavation was assisted financially by the Sanford Museum and the Northwest Chapter of the Iowa Archaeological Society. Mr. Zimmerman's report on that work will be completed in the immediate future.

Mr. Ned Ewart has prepared a paper on the distribution of clovis points in Iowa. He will be leaving the University at the end of the semester, but hopes to have the paper published.

## NORTHWEST CHAPTER NEWS

The latest issue of the Newsletter of the Northwest Chapter of the IAS reports on a collection of pottery and stone artifacts from the vicinity of Magnolia, Iowa, found by James Diggins.

## HIGHWAY SALVAGE ARCHAEOLOGY

As many of you know, the State Archaeologist has the legal responsibility to salvage archaeological remains that are threatened by state highway construction. Members of the Society can do great service to the state by reporting site locations known to be in the path of new highway construction or relocation projects. Borrow-pits areas are included in the specifications of the Antiquities Act.

Watch for construction routes near sites in your particular areas and, if at all possible, let the State Archaeologist's office know before construction begins.

## Salvage Investigations on the Burke Site

Dean L. Schwarz

During the winter of 1966-67 considerable erosion took place on a roadcut in the Bear Creek, Waterloo Creek, and Upper Iowa River confluence area. Upon investigation of this eroded area one of my students, John Coiner, and I found several Oneota burials exposed and partially washed down the bank. The report that follows is the result of our salvage investigations of these burials in April.

All the burials are thought to be primary, extended and supine. They were buried in a row as in a cemetery with their heads orientated toward the northwest with the exception of burial number one, which was west by northwest. Doubt arises to all being primary, extended when the children's burials are considered for they were badly damaged by erosion and probable earlier digging.

With one and possibly two exceptions there was no strong indication of cross cultural ties. That exception was the glass beads found with burial number seven which suggests trade with the early French. The copper or brass beads and ear rings could also suggest this but might indicate workings of native copper from the Great Lakes.

The area of the digging was not in the erosion hill dug by the W.P.A. in 1936 under the direction of Ellison Orr and Charles Keyes. It is about one thousand yards to the north on a small bench above the flood plain. Surface investigation of the area below the bench indicates a village campsite.

Although the landowner was very cordial in giving permission to carry out needed work, he indicated that upon completion he desired that no further work be done on the farm.

### Burial one

located on the right downgrade, head to west by northwest, right tibia and fibula, metatarsus and tarsus were washed down the hill, male, burial in many rocks of all sizes, depth 30 inches

Grave objects: scapula hoe found beside the left femur, two black obsidian chips found near ribs

### Burial two

fifteen feet to the left of burial one, on top of the hill or bench, ankle and feet bones missing from this burial also, tibia and fibula removed by unknown "visitor," head to northwest, female adult, depth 30 inches, in clay and sand.

Grave objects: Oneota shell tempered jar found to right of the skull, the vessel is unbroken and uncracked, very finely made, rim has delicate impressed decoration that is regularly spaced, two strap lugs with impressed dots, shoulder area has decorative vertical lines made with the fingernail, the neck and rim are round and the shoulder and belly are elliptical, bottom of the pot has carbon deposit from cooking over a fire (this is not the result of a reduction firing of the pot for under the carbon the evidence of the oxidation process can be observed) in the orifice of the pot was found a bone tool, both ends

of which were worn round from use (it was probably used to stir food), a triangular projectile point, a curved flake knife and a scraper were found just under the pot along with four iron objects, one in the form of a knife, another that could be a ring, one may be an awl, around the neck were fourteen tubular copper or brass beads, two more beads can be seen in the corrosion of the iron knife, on each side of the skull were coils used as ear ornaments, one having ten turns. These were not made of wire but of finely rolled tubes of copper rolled into coils<sup>1</sup> one snubnosed scraper was also found under the pot.

#### Burial three

three feet to left of number two, 20 inches deep, child, orientation undeterminable, partial, (disturbed previously?), considerably washed away, rock slabs over burial, no ribs, skull in fragments

Grave objects: twenty large tubular copper or brass beads.

#### Burial four

five feet to left of burial three, skull orientated to northwest, adult female, 24 inches deep in clay and sand, bones of feet washed down bank

Grave objects: slightly modified clam shell spoon found lodged beside teeth, sharp bone awl found under skull.

#### Burial five

child, badly washed down bank, only partial skull fragments and sundry bones, orientation questionable, 20 inches deep (?)

Grave objects: none

#### Burial six

three feet to left of five, six and seven partially overlap each other, both are from 6 to 24 inches deep, the skull being 24 inches and the feet 6, male adult, head to northwest, all but the skull badly decayed, ribs missing, in clay and sand.

Grave objects: one well worn polishing stone (six inches long) of granite or feldspathic type rock, twenty-nine chipped stone pieces found in a cache with the polishing stone between the right hand and femur--there were five triangular projectile points, one drill (?), six snubnosed scrapers, one broken knife, two rough projectile points, a piece of slate and several flint chips; a beaver incisor was also found in the cache; above the pelvic girdle was a broken shell tempered Oneota pot with a broken clam shell spoon (?) inside. The pot will be restored in the near future.

#### Burial seven

head to the northwest, 6 to 24 inches deep, adult female

Grave objects: ten blue-green glass beads near neck, two triangular projectile points above the burial, copper ear coils at sides of the skull.

<sup>1</sup> Mildred Mott Wedel, "Oneota Sites on the Upper Iowa River," The Missourian Archaeologist, Columbia, Missouri; Volume 21, December 1959. p73

TABLE 1: TRAIT LIST OF ONEOTA ARTIFACTS

		BURIAL NUMBER						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>Bone</u>	Total							
hoe, scapula	3	1	1		1			
awl	1		1					
stirring (round at ends found in pot)	1				1			
<u>Chipped stone</u>	36	2	3				29	2
triangular projectile	8		1				5	2
obsidian chips	2	2						
rough projectile points	2						2	
drills	1 (?)						1(?)	
black slate	1						1	
chips	13	t h r o u g h o u t					13	
trianguloid knife (broken)	1						1	
curved flake knife	1		1					
scrapers, snub- nose	7-		1				6	
<u>Copper or brass</u>	36		16	20				
beads, rolled tubular	36		16-	20				
ear coils	x		x					x
<u>Glass</u>	10							10
glass beads (bluegreen)	10							10
<u>Ground stone</u>	1						1	
polishing stone	1						1	
<u>Iron tools</u>	4		4					
ring(?)	1		1					
knife	1		1					
awl(?)	1		1					
object	1		1					
<u>Pottery</u>	2		1				1	
undamaged	1		1				1	
restorable(?)	1						1	
sherds (all Oneota)		t h r o u g h o u t						
<u>Shell</u>	2					1	1	
complete spoon	1					1		
unrestorable spoon	1						1	
<u>Tooth</u>	1						1	
beaver insisor	1						1	

REPORT OF A MOUND EXCAVATION BY MEMBERS OF THE STATE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSN.  
AND THE GARNAVILLO HISTORICAL SOCIETY. CONDUCTED AS A SALVAGE OPERATION.

A 160' linear located  $W\frac{1}{2}$  SE. SE. 14-94-3 plowed down by farmer owner Francis Schaefer in 1967 to prepare the timber cleared area for cultivation. Schaefer reported the mound leveling to me on March 22, 1968. I at once notified Garland Gordon of the Effigy Mounds staff, advising that more field work would take place very soon. Garland Gordon visited the location promptly and a salvage operation was felt urgent. Directions were given to me as to lay-out and procedure. On Monday, March 25th, George Maier and I proceeded to measure and stake the location. Alternate 5' plots were laid out along an arbitrary center line of the scattered mound made quite indistinct, but determined to be a linear 160' long and 24' wide.

Careful excavation was started the same day on plot 80N, 5E, cornering the mound center. At a four inch depth, rock was encountered, limestone and an occasional piece of St. Peters sandstone, none heavier than thirty pounds. The stone area enlarged as work progressed to a nine inch depth at the end of the first days work.

The following day I started alternate section 85N, 5W., frost was encountered at 14"., the only thing noted was a small piece of charcoal near the northwest corner at the 14" depth, but as the soil pattern indicated rodent activity, this was presumed to have been rodent introduced. I then proceeded to alternate plot 90N, 5E, there again frost restricting depth to 14"., and on this day the farmer was crowding in with his field machines. No significant floor or soil pattern in this plot.

The following day plot 85N, 5E., was started, this being adjacent to the first area holding the rock structure it was bound to reveal the continuation of this feature. Rock was encountered at one inch below the surface, this plot was lowered to a depth of 14" and frost, now there was a considerable rock area exposed. Occasional charcoal flakes were noted in the dark earth fill area, which now surrounded the rock monument. At this time the area for deeper excavation was staked to shape a plot 5'x3' and also at this point farmer Schaefer offered to shift his spring work to another field, and I know that this inconvenienced him.

The following forenoon this plot was lowered to a depth of 24" with the stone monument isolated and still intact. From the start of this excavation, adjacent to, and emanating from the rock structure was noted a profusion of rodent burrows, easily distinguished by the darker earth patterns, this was to play an important part in the ultimate results of this project. That afternoon all was in readiness to take down the stone monument. Garland Gordon and George Maier joined in this. Careful search of the earth between the rocks resulted in the finding of a human skull fragment by Gordon at a depth of 12" below the surface. Rocks continued to a depth of 24" and nothing more of significance was noted. It was reasoned that the skull fragment was carried to its location by rodents.

The following forenoon I worked alone encountering only a small hand sized flat stone with a clam shell adhering to its underside, still working in dark soil the limits however receding considerably as to outside extremities indicating that the pit had been dug tapering or cone shaped. Progress was slow because of frost.

At a depth of 27" a portion of a skull appeared to the far west side of the original pit adjacent to the undisturbed clay; the original pit had now tapered down considerably to a dark earth pattern of 18x20 inches as compared to the original top dimension of 3'x6'.

Very careful procedure brought forth no mere bone, and no teeth, not even soil tracings of bone. There is no question but that rodents destroyed the remains, no doubt quite soon after burial. The rock pile was a perfect home site, there were even rodent trails out of the bottom of the pit. No doubt the only reason that the portion of the skull escaped was because of its location at the very edge of the pit next to the clay soil. Just below the skull another stone structure was found, about 8" in height, flat rocks set vertically forming an oval 11"x20" with a piece of white sandstone on top and directly beneath what had apparently been a bundle burial. This small burial platform was dark earth filled. I had expected to find some offering in this small vault like structure after removing the top sandstone slab, but it was vacant of any artifacts. So the only item found that had been included in the burial was the clam shell. The portion of the skull at the burial location was a piece about five square inches, in good state of preservation with the entire outer edge rodent gnawed.

This project had developed into a real squeeze operation between reluctant frost and fast moving farm machines.

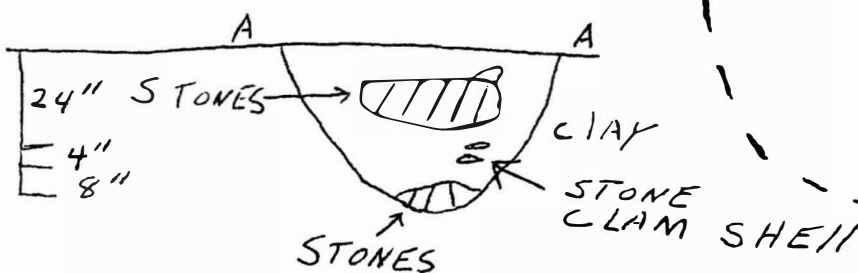
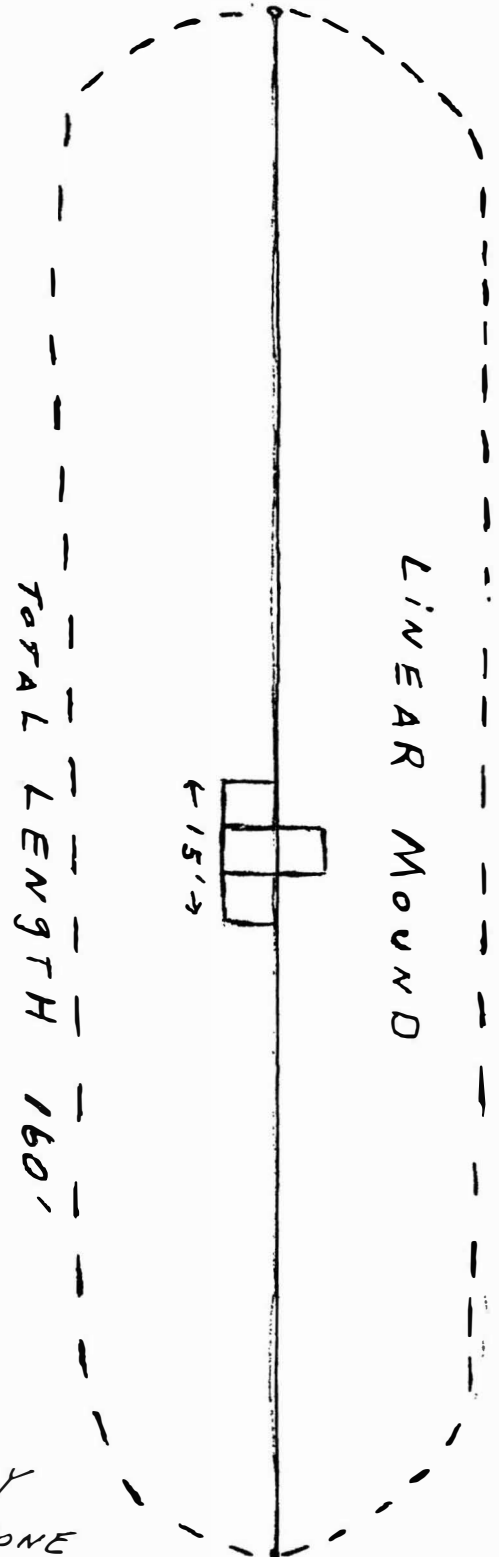
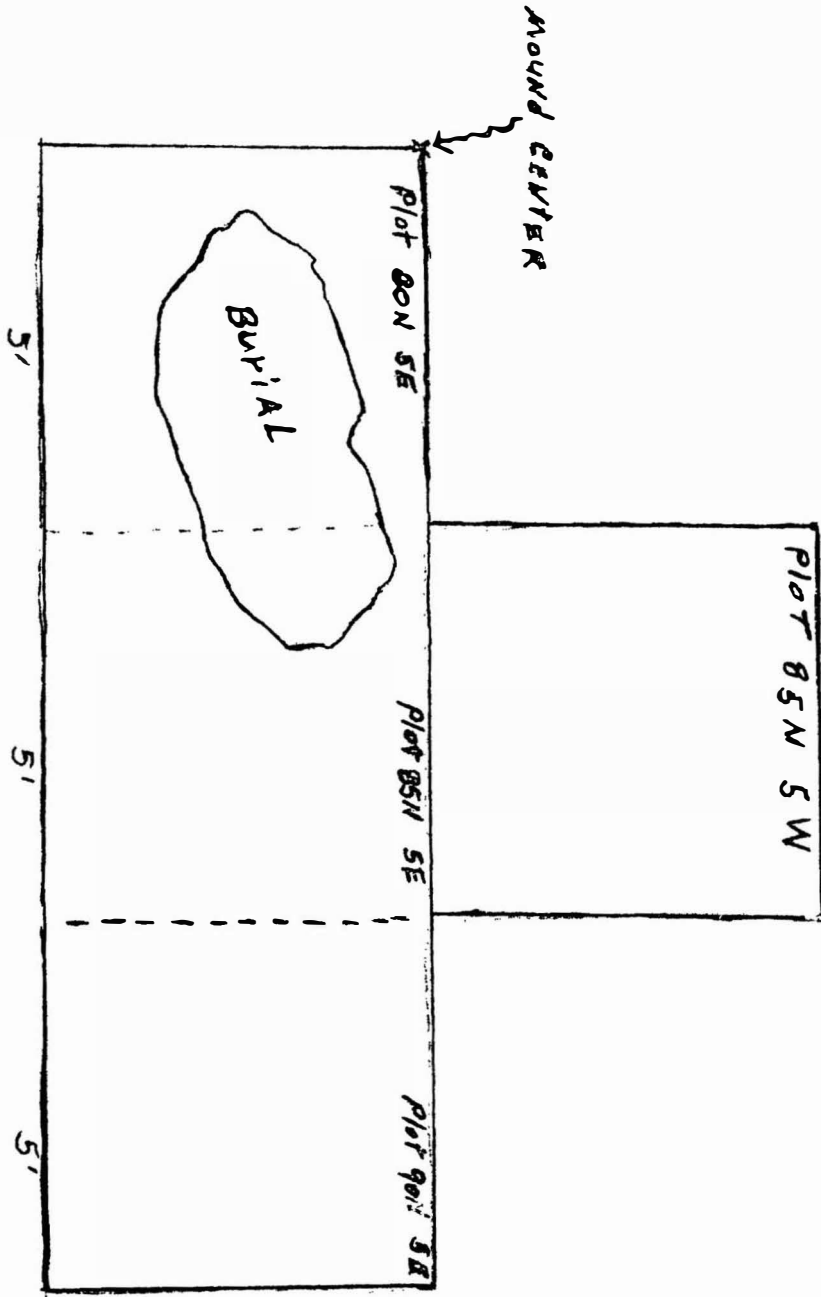
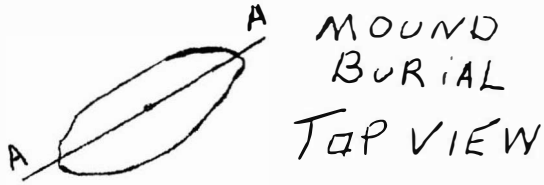
Our thanks to a patient farmer - Francis Schaefer; to Archaeologist Garland Gordon for his direction and good will and to George Maier for his assistance in the work.

Material recovered, sketches, photos, and story is on exhibit at the Historical Museum at Garnaville, Iowa

Submitted by

Arnold Reggman  
Member of the State Archaeological  
Assn. and Curator of the Garneville  
Museum.





IOWA ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
OFFICE OF THE EDITOR  
EFFIGY MOUNDS NATIONAL MONUMENT  
MCGREGOR, IOWA 52157

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

**BULK RATE. PERM, 260**  
**OTTUMWA, IOWA-52501**

RETURN REQUESTED

DON G. SPEARS  
536 S. DAVIS ST.  
OTTUMWA, IOWA 52501