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ABSTRACT

157 river (or navigation) miles (253 km) of valley below Columbus before the Chattahoochee joins the Gulf of Mexico. Miller, Kelly, and Joe Caldwell to deem Montgomery Fields less than exciting, a simple habitation site. Nonetheless they sent Miller (1953) to dig it. When he first got there on March 23, 1953, he found UGA had already done “considerable digging right in the center of two small shell heaps.” The federal permit was issued on 16 April, and he

at total of 10,027 sherds but I looked at over 2/3 of the collection, and inventoried fewer than 4000 sherds. Possibly due to time constraints, the excavations at Montgomery Fields were done in only 31 of the 94 gridded squares (but that's still 3100 square feet or 288 square meters!).

Unfortunately, no photographs of Montgomery Fields were in the archives, though Miller mentioned taking pictures. There is no site map of the excavations, but Miller sketched individual unit floor plans in his field notebook. Scanning and photocopying are not allowed in the Smithsonian Anthropological Archives, but photography is permitted. Thus, from photos of these pages I (laboriously) pasted together the site map in Figure 3, assuming the 10-x-10-foot (3-x-3-m) units all showed features at the base of the plow zone/top of the subsoil, and thus were roughly the same depth/elevation.

The sandy plow zone averaged 15 to 18 cm thick. Features appeared below it in the lighter-colored alluvial sand subsoil (which would have been around Munsell color 10YR8/4 to 7/6, pale

toric flintknappers did not read our point guides, so we can only classify their work as well as possible using the existing standards. This can be difficult for the region's location near the juncture of three

Ground Stone and Other Stone that looked like hand-scooped pits extending into the hard clay subsoil, each containing similar materials: chert flakes and/or a broken chert tool, charcoal, shiny black hematitic stones, quartzite shatter and grinding on one another, as well as smaller quartzite pebbles (some battered), smooth river pebbles (some battered), and ochre or soft reddish or yellowish sandstone/multiple worn grooves, probably from sharpening by bone and/or wood tools. Grainy chunks of hematitic sandstone or red ochre may have been used as pigments. Gnarly, grainy natural sandstone concretions are abundant, in various ovoid shapes but also long thin pieces. They range from hematitic, black, and hard, to crumbly, to soft fine-grained red or yellow ochre.

Features including such hematitic stones may be part of Middle to Late Archaic ceremonial practice, as seen just over 21 miles downriver on the Apalachicola at the McKinney site, 8Ja1869 (Prendergast 2015). This multicomponent occupation, on high ground along a spring run on the first river terrace, had at least 22 very small features

gast 2015). So far no such features have been found elsewhere beyond the McKinney site, but they are so small and nondescript that they could be missed during shovel-testing or other sampling.

While Miller described no .sampling.

provenience (not pictured), and a very few early Weeden Island sherds from the plow zone suggest only the most fleeting Middle Woodland (A. D. 350-650) presence. The rim with a horizontally-expanded lip and large triangular punctations is unmistakably Weeden Island Plain, and the Weeden Island Punctate rim has typical large round and small trailed punctations. A polished tiny plain bowl (not pictured) is of less certain cultural affiliation, but could also be Weeden Island Plain; perhaps it is a toy or a paint pot. Other Middle to Late Woodland types include Carrabelle Punctate and Carrabelle Incised. Interestingly, there is no pottery identifiable as Fort Walton, the local-Mississippian cultural manifestation, though there are



Figure 8. Creek Indian or other historic Native American sherds: a-b, Chattahoochee Brushed; c-d, f, Leon Check-Stamped; e, Lamar Plain or Creek-type rim with appliqué strip.

unusual nature of these types within the entire ceramic chronology of the region demonstrates that new people must have been moving down the river from farther north in Georgia and Alabama (where such ceramics are earlier) after the original Fort Walton populations died out by about 1700 (White et al. 2012). These new native groups have identified at least one new species not into the empty lands that had once hosted large dense populations until they were decimated by Spanish and British colonial conflicts. With the historic aboriginal pottery are typical European items such as British crockery sherds and a green glass (liquor) bottle fragment. As with any ceramic assemblages, those from Montgomery Fields site show good potential for yielding information on temporal components and other aspects of past human activity with additional studies such as trace element and clay mineral analyses.

Faunal Materials

Unfortunately, Miller's (1953) field notes say that he did not keep much of the animal bone or shell from Montgomery Fields. However, some

est indication that the material was utilized in any form. One would think that the larger mussel shells may have served as spoons and such. If so, they were only used during the single meal and then discarded and another used at the next meal. No beads or any ornaments, fragmentary or otherwise, were seen or found. No bone tools either.” Indeed, riverine-shell artifacts are still not known

nificant. They could have been used in some common as elite burial goods, and fancy artifacts cred ritual or just as charms, say, for good fishing, often found at everyday domestic sites (e.g., or perhaps only decorative, if expensive objects (White 2014). What seems to count more is what

Miller noted (in a letter of May 18) that might have been done with the artifacts that be Kelly was now admitting he was never favorably grave goods, during people's lives or during impressed with Montgomery Fields but it had to be for funerary rituals, not necessarily how special their be excavated because it was second-best in the manufacture or styles were.

ervoir, though it was "mainly a check-stamped" By the Late Woodland, at Montgomery site. The Fairchild's Landing site, 9Se14, not Fairchild's and elsewhere in the region, people had away on the lower Chattahoochee (see Figure 2). Apparently stopped building burial mounds with which Caldwell (1978; Caldwell et al. 2014) was elaborate graves, though certainly ritual or other digging at the same time, was considered more ideologically-driven behavior remained significant. portant and became more famous because of probably springs were revered as favorable places Middle Woodland component, especially its Swift Creek Complicated-Stamped pottery. However, ground on a hot day can be pretty sacred, and we too, was a basic shell-midden habitation site, and how that springs were very important in the be also had a later, Late Woodland component-site of systems of historic indigenous peoples of the lar to that at Montgomery Fields. Most of the sites Southeast (Hudson 1976). But the site has much along the Flint and lower Chattahoochee were to say in terms of how everyday life was lived— fish parently plowed up; the abundance of materials, shellfishing, gathering, hunting – and how ma the plow zone was what probably attracted archaeologists were obtained from afar by those repeatedly ologists in the first place. But Miller said he got siding at this strategic location. Another hypoth real stratigraphy, if shallow, at Montgomery Fields, is that Late Woodland peoples such as those at which was rare in Georgia at that time. this site were also becoming busy with gardens fea

He saw that at Montgomery Fields and also in growing maize, a crop being introduced to the region at Fairchild's Landing, the ceramic stratigraphy around A.D. 800-900 (e.g., Milanich 1974). did not agree with what Sears (e.g., 1951a, b) was Miller wrote, about halfway through his getting at the Kolomoki mounds (9Er1), 67 miles 10 field notebook (p. 56) that "Cotter and Cald (108 km) upriver on the lower Chattahoochee well visited the site today and both reacted simi One of Miller's letters to the Smithsonian says ly in that they thought that there was not much that Caldwell was "tickled to death" at the possi the site. I thought so from the immediate start bility of "throwing a monkey wrench" into Sears's but thought it politic to keep my mouth shut and chronology. Sears (1956) misinterpreted the time dig it since it was recommended by the U. of of the height of burial mound construction asso Georgia upon Kelly's word." He did not realize ated with Middle Woodland ceramics, which was why the reservoir-area archaeology was so crucial, both Swift Creek Complicated-Stamped and early and thought there was enough outside the actual Weeden Island types in this region, considering pot area (within which salvage was taking place) to be happening in later Mississippian times, though which was not destined to be damaged and was reversing the chronology. He also promulgated more significant, so the expenditure was not the notion of a "sacred-secular" dichotomy in the justified to extract "meager bits of information lives of Woodland peoples, the idea that material from the small insignificant sites therein." At that culture was different at mounds than at campsite he could not understand that, not only were villages because these were two different parts of these sites significant, but also damage outside the life (Sears 1973). Such interpretations have been immediate pool – indirect adverse effects – would soundly contradicted by data from sites throughout the be extensive, with construction of parks, resi out the region, where plain, even ugly pots are

archaeological investigations in the region after res

portant nexus of human habitation, aggregation, and politics. But it has seldom been studied as a whole, and the documentation and materials are spread among collections across the eastern U.S. However, thanks to the wonderful institutions that preserve this archaeological heritage, it is there to study. The Smithsonian's National Anthropological Archives and National Museum of Natural History Collections at the Museum Support Center are valuable resources (Rappaport 2017). A more

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