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PROPERTY



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CAPE COD AND THE MASSACHUSETTS MAINLAND;

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OF FILE D - ARCHIVAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPARISON

*Read before Mass. Arch. Socy.  
Meeting in Brewster Museum*

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It has been apparent for some time, to those who have excavated on Cape Cod, that there are certain respects in which Cape Cod archaeology does not coincide with that of some other parts of Massachusetts. It is due to this, I believe, that I am on the program this afternoon. A part of this paper, particularly that regarding preceramic times, is I may say, more or less a repetition of matter contained in a soon to be released report of the Culture Sequence Committee, ~~to which~~ <sup>to this report</sup> I will later refer more specifically. But before getting into comparisons and a discussion of what they bring out, I would like to give something of a review of the materials and the stratigraphy we find on Cape Cod.

At the outset, it seems well to state that the nomenclature used here, in general, follows the systems proposed by this society. In the interest of uniformity, I have freely translated the terms of various writers, perhaps beyond recognition. It will be recalled that with current practice, the term "corner-removed" includes all forms of stemmed points. But among stemmed points, there are many about one inch long and usually only incipiently shaped. The smallness in these cases appears to be of significance. So I will set them off by referring to them as "small stemmed", reserving the word "corner-removed" for larger stemmed points, which are commonly well enough defined to be placed in one or another of the numbered subdivisions of the class. Expanded-base Knife, I may explain, is a name lately invented for sundry trianguloid and leaf-shaped blades which exhibit only rough primary flaking, one form of this being the implement Bullen calls an "Asymmetric Trianguloid Knife". In respect to broad pottery categories, I shall employ the terms: Early, Early Intermediate, Late Intermediate, Late Prehistoric, and Historic.

Revised Form

(CAPE COD POTTERY)

Slide 1. On this slide we have a selection of Cape Cod pottery. Early ware is of two types. By far the most prevalent of ~~these is Vinette 1,~~ <sup>the form is the type which</sup> ~~the more often called Vinette 1.~~ which has cord-malleated exterior and interior surfaces. Although similar, the other type is excessively thick (walls up to 17mm.), has extremely coarse mineral temper, and is of a dark gray to blackish color. The surfaces are gritty, and there are only indistinct suggestions that this type was cord-malleated. There are no signs of coiling.

Early Intermediate pottery has mineral temper and occasionally shows coil breaks. The rim is slightly everted, with the lip either flat or rounded, sometimes being notched. Interiors are not channeled. Most rim sherds are decorated, rocker stamping being characteristic. Scallop shell, dentate, jabbed, and cord-wound stick impressions frequently occur. A feature often met with is a fillet or band of clay added to the outside of the rim.

Late Intermediate ceramics have coarse shell temper and exhibit strong evidence of coiling. The rim and side is straight and the lip flat and sometimes outplayed. Interiors are usually coarsely channeled. One of the two

main types of this pottery has a cord-malleated exterior, which otherwise is undecorated. The other frequently recurring type has a smooth exterior bearing patterns of horizontal and diagonal lines of cord-wound stick impressions. Rim sherds having either haphazard cord-wound stick, or perpendicular scallop shell indentations are found more rarely. A few rims are plain.

Late Prehistoric pottery on Cape Cod seems confined to one type, with its variations. It has fine to medium shell temper and does not show coil breaks. The rim is flaring, the walls relatively thin, and the interior smooth. The main diagnostic feature<sup>s</sup> for recognizing this ware <sup>is</sup> incised horizontal and oblique lines over cord-malleations.

This description of Cape Cod pottery will, in a general way, perhaps serve for the ceramics of other sections of this state, to which I will later refer. The main outlines of development are at least indicated, with the exception of Historic ware, which is almost unknown on the Cape.

(CAPE COD CHIPPED POINTS)

Scale, 4"

Slide 2. This slide shows a selection of chipped implements from the Small's Swamp shell heap, in Truro. In the earliest of three cultural horizons occur <sup>red</sup> specimens of the preceramic period. Characteristic are points that are quite small: triangular, stemmed, side-notched, and eared. Other artifacts from this earliest stratum include <sup>a few</sup> narrow, corner-removed points, a stemmed scraper, and a broken drill.

Higher up we have a level in which the points are of varieties of the corner-removed, and they <sup>more</sup> are associated with Early and Early Intermediate types of pottery. Some of the points are of rounded base type with sharp corners and a stubby blade, a form often met with at this level on Cape Cod. Another corner-removed variant frequently found here is the type with a

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pointed stem. Certain types of side-notched points make what seems their first appearance in this horizon.

In the top zone of Small's Swamp, medium and large size triangular points prevail.<sup>ed</sup> Other specimens include leaf shaped knives and one point with narrow side-notches. Broken artifacts seem to indicate that a few corner-removed points carried over into this late stratum. The pottery ~~of~~<sup>from</sup> this zone is Late Intermediate in some areas of the site, and Late Prehistoric in others, the two classes apparently not being intermixed.

Slide 3. On this slide, the Holden site is represented with two cultural levels. The preceramic material came from yellow sand underlying the shell heap proper. It is characterized chiefly by implements of three categories. One class consists of eared points, either notched or without notches. Another comprises small triangular and small stemmed points. And the third class is made up of expanded-base knives, which were found in large numbers. In this earliest zone of Holden, corner-removed points were only sparsely present. Implements other than chipped, include a plain-back gouge, a whale-tail pendant,<sup>and</sup> a small oval bannerstone, ~~and a supposed grooved weight for a spear thrower.~~

In the upper or pottery bearing zone, the artifacts were in company with more or less shell. Preponderant here are corner-removed points, with the narrow type being the most numerous. Of somewhat less importance are side-notched and truncated forms. The accompanying pottery is largely Early Intermediate, rocker stamping being very common. Only two sherds are of <sup>Early</sup> Vinette-1 type. Three specimens are tempered with shell and may mark a slight intrusion of Late Intermediate, after the site was virtually abandoned.

Slide 4. At the Warren's Field site represented on this slide, we have a general similarity to the last site mentioned. There is again a preceramic horizon in yellow sand, yielding eared points and expanded-base knives. There

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are some fairly small triangular points. Eared points here tend to be larger than at the Holden site, many of them falling into the class of Eared No.1. Expanded-base knives are again numerous, in fact, outnumbering all other stone artifacts from the site. Additional implements include: an elongate side-notched point, pentagonal knives ~~with sharply angled tips~~, expanded-base and eared-base drills, a grooved axe, and a few oval scrapers or choppers. So far no corner-removed point has been found in this stratum.

Stone artifacts from the ceramic zone are not numerous. Of the two dozen or so that ~~have been~~ <sup>were</sup> discovered, corner-removed make up the most frequent class, with side-notched a close second. Three points are of narrow triangular type. A majority, or about 75%, of the accompanying potsherds are of Vinette 1 type, while the rest are Early Intermediate. <sup>early</sup>

Slide 5. With the Rose site, in Truro, we have three horizons. Again there is a level in yellow sand underlying shell heap debris. But the only sure link with the preceramic levels of the other Truro sites is one typical eared point. The prevailing form from the lowest zone here is a narrow side-notched point of a type almost unknown from other Cape sites. Hence, this stratum seems aberrant as concerns its area. There are some steatite sherds. <sup>(Great Falls?)</sup>

When we move up to the <sup>material of the</sup> lowest ceramic zone, we have the usual assemblage of corner-removed points and Early Intermediate pottery. I may note, however, that some of the points show a specialization of the stem not present on the other slides, namely, a carefully worked concavity of the base and sharp basal corners.

The top zone of the Rose site <sup>had</sup> has the expected broad bladed, triangular points, which were present in large numbers. It will be noticed that a few corner-removed points carried over into this late horizon. The pottery of this level is chiefly Late Intermediate, with no more than a trace of Late Prehistoric.

(COMPARISONS)

We now come to the section dealing with comparisons. In the report of the Culture Sequence Committee, to which I have already alluded, three regions of this state are considered well enough understood from clearly stratified sites as to permit comparisons on a stratigraphic, or level by level, basis. One of these sections is northeastern Massachusetts, as known from sites in the Andover-Ipswich area. <sup>mls</sup> Another section is the southeastern mainland of this state, or to be more exact, the Taunton River area, as known from sites most of which are near that stream. <sup>mls</sup> The third section is, of course, Cape Cod, which as we are aware, is known from locations in the Truro Wellfleet area. <sup>mls</sup> The adherence to stratified sites, I may say, will not be so strict here as it was in the committee report. As I go along, I will summarize the necessary evidence from the two mainland sections.

(Early Preceramic) Present information warrants a two-fold division of preceramic times. <sup>at the lowest level at which comparisons can very well be made</sup> To start <sup>^</sup>with, we have both in northeastern Massachusetts, and in the Taunton River area, an Early Preceramic, Eskimo-like manifestation, which is characterized first of all by a predominance of corner-removed points. There are also a few semi-lunar knives. This corner-removed point, pre-pottery stratum is reported by Bullen as occurring with great uniformity at the bottom of sites throughout the Shawsheen River valley, an area which he has intensively studied. This level seems richest, however, in the Taunton River section, where Fowler enumerates the following additional diagnostics: plummets, plain-back gouges, and oval bannerstones. But on Cape Cod, this Early Preceramic horizon has not been found, and it is presumed to be absent on at least the lower part of the Cape.

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(Late Preceramic) When we come to a lesser depth in the two mainland sections, we find a Late Preceramic, or ~~as it is sometimes called,~~ a Stone Bowl horizon. As between the above two areas, this level is not very securely tied together, but there is a common possession of at least three diagnostic traits, namely: small triangular points, small stemmed points, and expanded-base knives. In both areas there are, as a carry-over, a dwindling number of corner-removed forms. In the Taunton River section, where this horizon exhibits its greatest profusion, there are additional markers, such as: eared points, grooved-back gouges, grooved axes, steatite sherds, and steatite working tools. Now on comparing the materials of this Late Pre-ceramic of the Massachusetts mainland with the artifacts from the earliest known level on Cape Cod, there is manifest a general agreement. And save for a scarcity of steatite ~~or~~ in the latter region, the equation is especially close as regards Cape Cod and Taunton River.

In identifying the oldest Cape remains with the Late Preceramic, one matter requires comment. There are at some Cape locations, considerable numbers of plummets, plain-back gouges, whale-tail pendants, and other <sup>implements</sup> ~~artifacts~~ that might seem to belong more properly in the earlier preceramic period. But so far as Cape Cod is concerned, these objects do not antedate a time which saw the use of very small points, artifacts which almost certainly arrived relatively late in pre-pottery times.

(Ceramic Periods) Comparisons involving ceramic times are now in order. For this era in northeastern Massachusetts, Bullen outlines five stages. In the first, Early pottery occurs with small triangular, small stemmed, and side-notched points, with the exception of the last the points being the same as in the Late Preceramic. In the second stage, vessels are Early Intermediate, with some hang-over of Early, while the points are corner-notched. In the third stage, Late Intermediate pottery is found with small and large triangular points. And in the fourth and fifth stages, the

pottery is, respectively, Late Prehistoric and Historic, while the chipped points are <sup>large</sup> triangular throughout both late phases. In regard to the second or Early Intermediate stage, <sup>I may say</sup> the correlation with stone traits is obviously incomplete, owing to a scarcity of specimens. For the purpose of comparison, therefore, the two intermediate stages will have to be considered together.

For the Taunton River section, according to Fowler's outline, the first, or Early, pottery stage exhibits Early type pottery with small triangular and narrow side-notched points. In the second or Intermediate stage, which has not been subdivided into Early and Late phases, Intermediate types of vessels, with some overlapping of Early, are found with points which are again small triangular and narrow side-notched. In the two stages which follow, the ceramics are, respectively, Late <sup>Prehistoric</sup> ~~Pre~~ceramic and Historic, while the chipped points are all of large triangular types.

In spite of some variation, which time does not permit exploring, there appears to be a general correspondence between the two mainland sections for the whole of the ceramic era. And when Cape Cod is brought in, there is still a general correspondence, except for one important discrepancy. Taking the off-cape areas together, the Intermediate ceramic period was a time when triangular, side-notched, and corner-notched points were the rule. In neither of these regions were there at the time corner-removed forms, save for a belated few. In contrast, Cape Cod in Early and Early Intermediate pottery times has its greatest ~~use and~~ development and use of corner-removed types. In this lies what seems to me a significant difference between the Cape and the mainland sections I have mentioned up to this point. I would like to discuss this matter <sup>more fully.</sup> ~~to some length.~~



(DISCUSSION)

When I first mentioned a heavy concentration of corner-removed points in pottery strata on Cape Cod, I believe I encountered some raising of archaeological eyebrows. At that time, I thought this might be a matter peculiar to lower Cape Cod, but it now appears that, as regards southeastern Massachusetts, <sup>the distribution of this association</sup> ~~it~~ is not so restricted. For instance, the collection of pottery and chipped implements obtained by Bullen and Brooks from the Herrecater Swamp shell heap on the east end of Nantucket Island, would appear normal if found on Cape Cod. While there are no dependable data respecting stratigraphy at Herrecater Swamp, owing to mixture by plowing, the collection sorts out in a way indicating that at this Nantucket site, corner-removed and similar types of projectile points, were associated with Early and Early Intermediate pottery, the site in this regard being in line with Cape Cod.

More unequivocal data from the Islands comes from two shell heaps at the west end of Martha's Vineyard, which were excavated by Byers and Johnson. <sup>more</sup> Hornblower, the larger of the two sites, appears to have been intact as concerns both the deposit called "shells" and the stratum called "brown sand". Evidently there was no pre-pottery level, and there seems to have been little change in chipped forms during the occupation. Bullen, presumably from first hand knowledge, refers to Hornblower as a typical Vinette Type 1 pottery site, although he says there were some Early and Late Intermediate sherds. Byers and Johnson state that broad based, late triangular points were not present. It appears, then, that the site pertains chiefly to Early and Early Intermediate ceramic times, evidently being slanted towards the Early phase. An inspection of the table in the original report shows corner-removed points the dominant class both in the "shells" and in the "brown sand", in the "shells", the more recent of the two, this category accounting for 61% of all points together. At the nearby <sup>Sub major</sup> Squibnocket site, seven of ten recovered points are corner-removed, while all five potsherds are tempered with mineral.

Therefore, it is clear that at the Martha's Vineyard sites, we have, as on Cape Cod, a concurrence of corner-removed points with the older types of pottery

So all in all, it is probable that the area of southeastern Massachusetts exhibiting this particular association, includes all of Cape Cod, as well as the Islands to its south. <sup>ms</sup> Although not much is known about the westerly side of Buzzard's Bay, this section may possibly be included also. <sup>ms</sup>

The question as to why this part of southeastern Massachusetts differs from other portions of this state at this special cultural level is difficult to answer, in view of our incomplete knowledge of southern New England archaeology. However, a <sup>s</sup> consideration of the problem leads to some possibilities that it will do no harm to explore. As one explanation of this anomaly, there has been proposed a theory of retardation or culture lag, inspired no doubt by the isolated position of Cape Cod. But on close inspection, this theory appears to ignore the character of the horizon immediately preceding the Early Ceramic. So far as Cape Cod is concerned, there seems to have been nothing in an underlying stratum from which a varied assortment of corner-removed points could lag. Furthermore, a retardation in any part of of the area in which the Late Preceramic was established, would it seems, result in a hang-over of very small points, eared points, and so on--- but not of corner-removed forms. Thus the chances are not very good for resolving this problem on a basis of purely local retardation.

Nevertheless, the theory need not be discarded entirely, for some such a retardation apparently did take place in sections where our Late Preceramic was little operative. This brings us to the possibility of something like a radical intrusion of influences, if not of people, from some area outside of Massachusetts, possibly induced by the fact that the southeastern coastal section of the state was at the time only sparsely populated. Of possible sources of an invasion that could →

have brought in the typological association in question, time allows a discussion of only the one that seems most likely on geographic grounds, namely, the region bordering Long Island Sound. <sup>make</sup> According to Smith and to Rouse, the earliest pottery level both on Long Island and in Connecticut, refers to the North Beach focus of the Windsor aspect. Vessels of this focus are pre-  
 prevailingly of Vinette 1 type, while those of the succeeding Clearview focus are mostly of dentate stamped types. Projectile points are chiefly corner-removed, those on Long Island at least apparently being an inheritance from an earlier preceramic horizon. These corner-removed points remain dominant through North Beach, Clearview, and into the still later Sebonac focus, in which there is a change to triangular forms. Thus as regards pottery and chipped implements, the earlier Windsor foci correspond in general with the Early and the Early Intermediate ceramic levels of the ~~Cape Cod~~ <sup>southeastern</sup> ~~area~~ <sup>corner</sup> of Massachusetts. Indeed, this similarity in some cases may be more than general, for one may suspect that the Hornblower site, if transported, might pass for a normal North Beach site. <sup>map 65 miles</sup>

We may now inquire whether some of our Massachusetts archaeology does not represent an early Windsor intrusion. In this connection the Basto site in northeastern Connecticut seems of great interest. Of this site, Rouse says that all foci of Windsor are present, save one. From an inspection of data given separately by Praus and by Rouse it appears that in the Sebonac component, corner-removed outnumber triangular points four to one. As the Basto site is only 14 miles from the Massachusetts line--- and for that matter only 37 miles from Attleboro--- there is here an implied suggestion that full-blown Windsor may have extended into the central part of Massachusetts. And incidentally, it will be noted that <sup>at the Basto site</sup> we have corner-removed points in a pottery stratum, again edging in on us, this time from location well removed from Cape Cod.

In regard to the possibility of an actual extension of the Windsor aspect to the south shore of Massachusetts, a definite opinion can hardly be ventured, owing to a complete lack of published data respecting ceramic times for nearly all of the coastal strip from the Rhode Island line to the heel of Cape Cod. In so far as I know, no one has attempted to fix the eastern limit of this aspect. Be this as it may, it seems to me probable that ~~at least~~ Windsor-like influences spread eastward and then northward to the end of Cape Cod, for otherwise, there appears no plausible way of accounting for the corner-removed points we find there. However, there were doubtless other influences at work on the Cape at this time, since the rocker stamping and added fillets of early Cape pottery were probably not derived from the southwest.

Perhaps after all, the best one can do at the present time to explain the anomalous situation we have in the southeastern corner of Massachusetts at this period is to advance an hypothesis that there took place here a blending or interplay of influences from two quarters: one complex, which was possibly the more dominant, coming from, or identified in some way with, the Long Island-Connecticut area; the other set of influences coming from the Massachusetts coast to the north.

(SUMMARY)

To end this paper with a quick summary of Massachusetts archaeology as it looks to me at the instant, I may say that the first occupation stage that is well marked in our region, pertains to an Early Preceramic, or <sup>or</sup> Early Archaic, horizon, which although widespread in the whole Northeast, seems to have missed some isolated and marginal areas like Cape Cod. The most obvious feature for recognizing this level is the presence of stemmed or corner-removed points without pottery. Felsite implements are patinated, and the artifacts are found in soil or sand, but never, it seems, in black earth and shell middens.

Succeeding this we have a Late Preceramic, or Late Archaic, manifestation, which was of somewhat limited distribution, although probably covering most of southern New England. The most frequently found diagnostics are: eared points, very small stemmed and triangular points, and in some places, steatite sherds. Felsite tools are patinated, and the materials are again in soil or sand, instead of in shell heaps. This horizon may have been something in the nature of a local development, centering in, and spreading from, the areas containing the southern New England steatite quarries.

Following, come the not very well differentiated Early and Early Intermediate ceramic periods. Criteria for readily determining these stages on most of the mainland of this state are: side-notched points; straight sided, broad based triangular points; and potsherds having interior cord-surfacing or exterior rocker and dentate stamping. In the Cape Cod area for the same periods the criteria are: corner-removed and similar points, along with side-notched and truncated forms, plus pottery of the types last mentioned. When occurring near salt water, in both areas, the artifacts of <sup>periods</sup> this time are connected with shell deposits.

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Throughout the still later prehistoric stages, Massachusetts archaeology displays a more or less uniform sameness, the pottery being Late Intermediate followed by Late Prehistoric, but with everywhere a prevalence of late types of triangular points. At coastal sites the artifacts are chiefly in black earth and shell deposits.

The general pattern for the whole of prehistory is perhaps one of transition, except for Cape Cod, where there seems to have been a cultural break at the end of preceramic times, and again at the end of Early Intermediate ceramic times.