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**THE NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
OF MARYLAND**

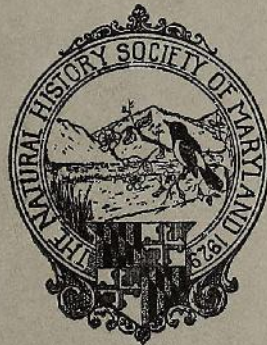
PROCEEDING No. 9

**SOME INDIAN VILLAGE SITES
OF TIDEWATER MARYLAND**

BY

RICHARD E. STEARNS

CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY



BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

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of Maryland
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Baltimore, Maryland



PREFACE

This proceeding is a resume' of twenty-five years archaeological research in Tidewater Maryland, the most intensive effort being in the last fifteen years during which time a considerable collection of Indian artifacts has been accumulated. The artifacts of each village site have been kept together, so as to make comparison and study simple.

Many of these artifacts were found on the surface, in cultivated fields and on river banks subject to erosion by the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Also various sites were excavated, from which many fine specimens were taken.

It is deemed necessary to explain some of the terms herein used in the description of pottery.

The term "basketry impressed" is used to describe the surface impressions on such sherds as those shown in Plate X b, Plate XII, No. 10, and Plate XVIII, Nos. 1, 5, 10 and 15. The writer is not certain that these impressions are actually those of basketry, but as some descriptive term is necessary, the word basketry will suit this purpose until such time as we are able to discover the true nature of the material used.

"Cord impressed" and "fabric impressed" are terms used in describing surface impressions applied with a paddle wrapped with cords or covered with a piece of woven fabric or net. Typical examples of sherds so impressed with cords are shown in Plate XV, No. 1 and Plate XIV; those impressed with fabric, Plate VIII Nos. 6 and 15, and with net, Plate XIII No. 15.

"Beach ~~and~~ sand tempering" consists of sand which has the appearance of having been gathered from the beach. The grains of sand vary in size from minute particles to small pebbles one-eighth of an inch in diameter. Sherds containing this form of tempering material have a rough surface and are nearly always "cord impressed" and are never decorated. Typical examples are shown in Plate XVI, Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 7.

"Crushed quartz tempering" consists of large pieces of quartz which have been crushed to the size desired for use as a tempering agent.

Oyster shell was likewise used when crushed into small pieces.

I wish to express my appreciation of the aid received and work done by Mr. T. Milton Oler, Jr. along the Magothy River; to Mr. Woodward Burkhardt for his work along the Magothy River and Little Round Bay, and Conowingo; to Mr. Paul Hurlock at Booby Bar Site; to the members of the Society for many courtesies; and to Mr. James Marks of Love Point who extended me the privilege of photographing his specimens from Kent Island; and last but not least to my wife, who accompanied me on most of my trips and aided me in all my efforts.

R.E.S.

JAN 17 '44

INTRODUCTION

It is very evident that our fast encroaching civilization is gradually obliterating and effacing the Indian Village Sites along the Chesapeake Bay tidewater regions of Maryland. For twenty-five years Mr. Richard E. Stearns has been making a systematic study of these sites and their contents with the idea of throwing light upon the lives, manners and customs of the aborigines of this State.

With this in mind, and the conditions imposed on us by the War, which naturally divert efforts of this sort, Mr. Stearns thought it advisable to publish the results of what has already been accomplished.

Up to the present time very little has been published on the archaeology of the Upper Chesapeake Bay Region. This publication, "Some Indian Village Sites of Tidewater Maryland", should be a welcome addition to this scanty supply of literature and an incentive to others to add to the knowledge of these already worked sites, as well as to discover new ones which no doubt exist, but which have been overlooked so far.

Mr. Stearns, who is Curator of Archaeology of this Society has published numerous articles in the Society's Bulletin on various phases and sites of Maryland Archaeology, and recently published Transaction No. 6, on "The Hughes Site, An Aboriginal Village Site on the Potomac River in Montgomery County, Maryland". These publications should be a stimulant for others to continue the work Mr. Stearns has so ably begun.

Edmund B. Fladung, President

VII BODKIN CREEK

There are two sites which we have examined on this creek. One is on the north shore about one-quarter mile from the entrance to the creek and contains some thin shell deposits. The only artifacts which we have been able to find consist of a few stemmed arrowpoints of quartz and rhyolite and some sherds bearing the impressions of cords and fabrics, and tempered with crushed quartz or shell.

The other site contains a shell deposit which extends for two hundred feet just outside the entrance of Bodkin Creek, on the south shore. We recovered about one hundred sherds that had been washed out of the shell bank by storms. These were cord and fabric marked, tempered with crushed quartz, beach sand, or shell, and bore no decorations.

VIII KENT ISLAND SITES

These sites consist of two groups of shell deposits, one near Love Point and the other about one mile south of Love Point, both facing the Chester River. In addition there is some shallow deposit at Kent Island Landing. The location of the shell deposits is marked on the map (Fig. 36).

We have made but few visits to these sites and consequently our own collection is rather small. However, we have examined and photographed an excellent collection belonging to Mr. James Marks of Love Point. This collection covers the entire range of artifacts likely to be found here, with the exception of bone articles and pipes. Two stone pipes were washed out of graves some years ago, but have not been available to either Mr. Marks or the writer, so we do not know what types they are.

With the exception of some of the sherds, all the illustrations used in this report of the Kent Island sites are of specimens in Mr. Marks' collection.

POTTERY

We have available for study about one hundred sherds. Mr. Marks had at one time a great many more, but these were lost during a period when he was absent from his Love Point home, and they cannot be located now.

The sherds are impressed with cords and fabrics and contain crushed quartz or shell as tempering material. No form of decoration was noted. A few sherds are illustrated in Plate XIV.

STONE ARTIFACTS

About twenty grooved axes and half that number of celts have been recovered from these sites. Most of the axes are three-quarters grooved, a few full grooved, and some are rather large. Three are shown in Plate XIV. The celts are all more or less similar to the one shown in Plate XIV, Number 1.

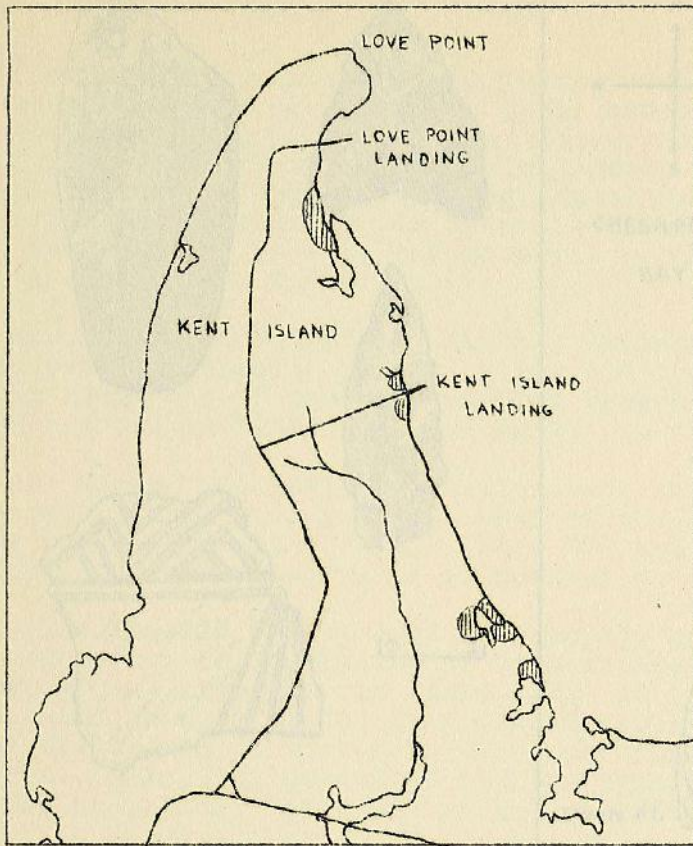



Fig. 36  SHELL DEPOSITS

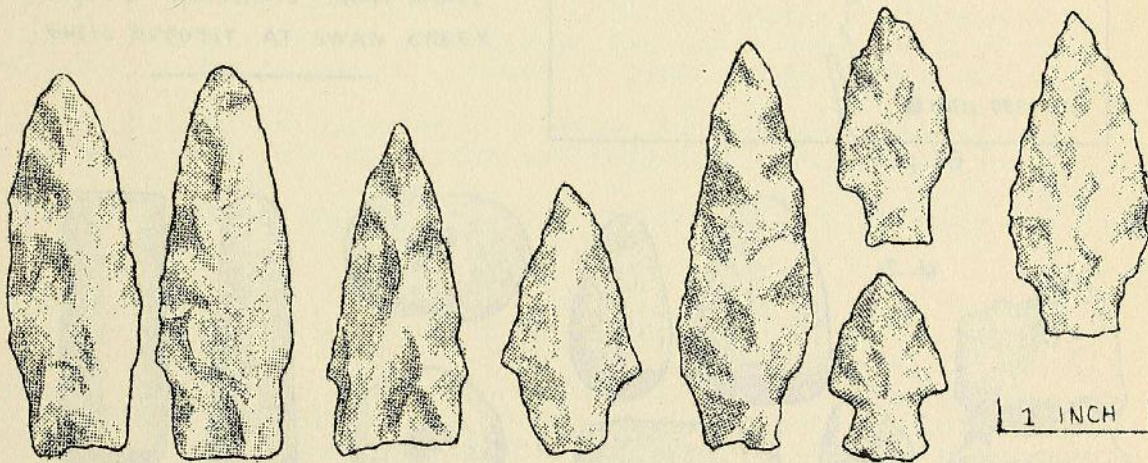
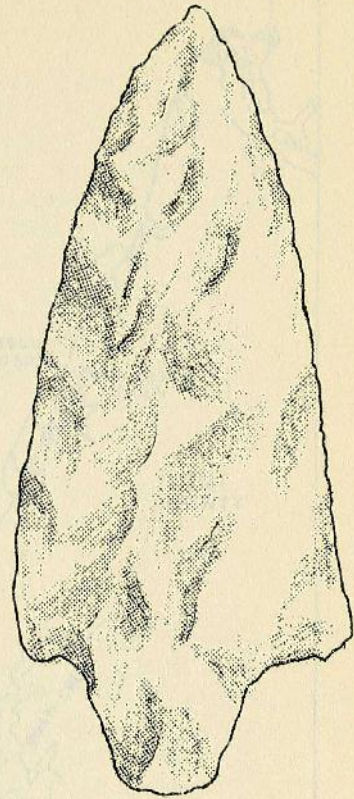


Fig. 37 CHIPPED IMPLEMENTS OF QUARTZ, QUARTZITE AND RHYOLITE
KENT ISLAND SITES

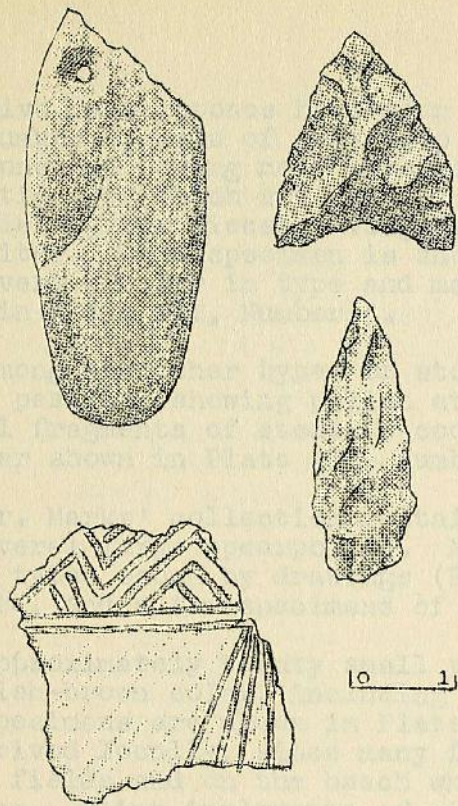


Fig. 38 ARTIFACTS FROM SMALL SHELL DEPOSIT AT SWAN CREEK

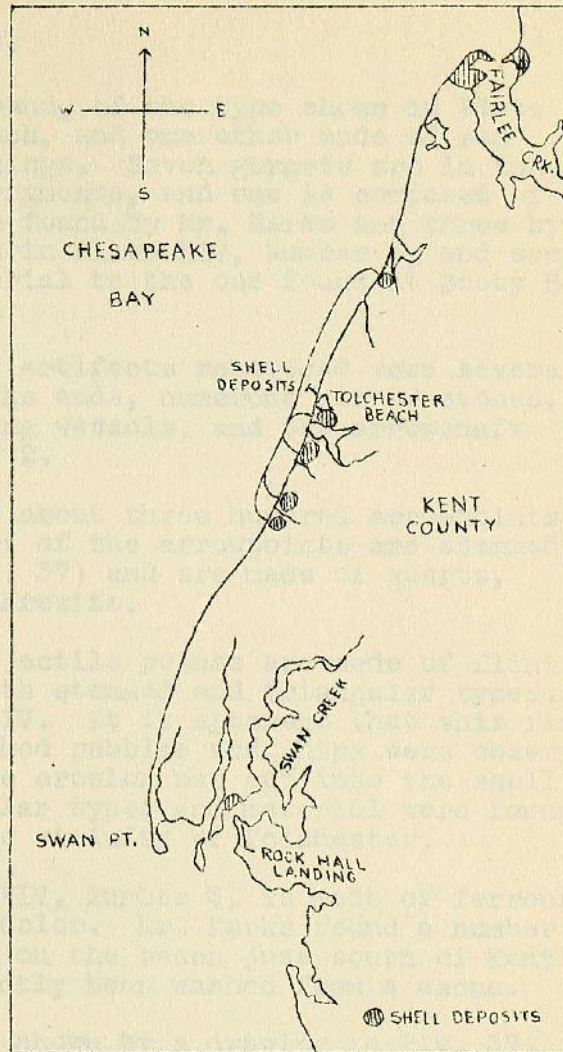


Fig. 39

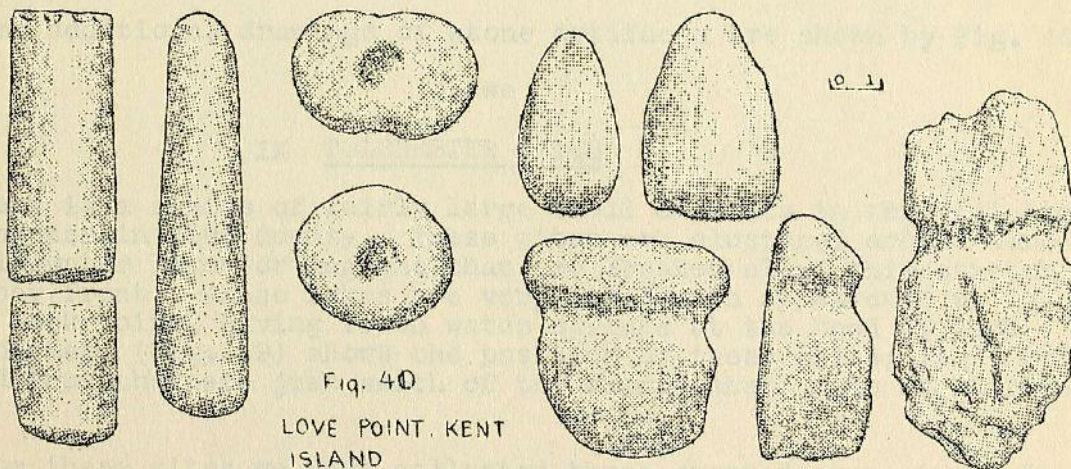


Fig. 40
LOVE POINT, KENT
ISLAND

Five bannerstones have been found, of the type shown in Plate XIV, Number 5, made of grey trap rock, and one other made of red sandstone and having more pointed wings. Seven gorgets are in the collection, of which six are but fragments, and one is composed of five pieces, two pieces having been found by Mr. Marks and three by the writer. This specimen is shown in Plate XIV, Number 4, and seems to be very similar in type and material to the one found at Booby Bar, shown in Plate III, Number 4.

Among the other types of stone artifacts recovered were several broken pestles, showing polish at the ends, numerous pitted stones, several fragments of steatite cooking vessels, and the arrowshaft smoother shown in Plate XIV, Number 2.

Mr. Marks' collection contains about three hundred arrowpoints and several large spearpoints. Most of the arrowpoints are stemmed, of the types shown by drawings (Fig. 37) and are made of quartz, rhyolite, and a few specimens of quartzite.

Approximately twenty small projectile points are made of flint of a greyish-brown color, including both stemmed and triangular types. Five specimens are shown in Plate XIV. It is apparent that this flint was derived locally, since many flaked pebbles and chips were observed in the fields and on the beach where erosion has cut into the shell deposits. Flint implements of similar types and material were found at Booby Bar, Rocky Point and in the vicinity of Tolchester.

The spearpoint shown in Plate XIV, Number 3, is made of ferrous quartzite, of a dark reddish-brown color. Mr. Marks found a number of points of this type and material on the beach just south of Kent Island Landing where they had evidently been washed from a cache.

A large rhyolite spearpoint is shown by a drawing in Fig. 37. There is another in the collection an inch longer than this one.

Some additional drawings of stone artifacts are shown by Fig. 40.

IX TOLCHESTER SITES

There is a series of fairly large shell deposits in the vicinity of Tolchester in Kent County. These sites are clustered around some small tidewater lakes or lagoons that are located along this stretch of the bay front. These lakes are very similar in appearance to the lake at Rock Point, having fresh water springs at the head of each one. The map, (Fig. 39) shows the position of these sites; it is to be noted that they are just south of the famous shell heap at Fairlee Creek.

From these sites we have collected three grooved axes, two celts, an ovate two hole black slate gorget and numerous arrowpoints. A broken bannerstone and some sherds were also found.

The artifacts from these sites resemble very closely those found at the Kent Island sites.
