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WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, WASHINGTON STATE MUSEUM, SEATTLE 5, Wn.

NEXT MEETING: Seattle Chapter - January 10, 1962 - 8:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Washington State Museum
4037 15th Avenue N. E.
Seattle 5, Washington

PROGRAM: TOMMY BOB, the oldest living Samish Indian, will discuss the customs and times of the Samish.



ANNUAL REPORT, 1961
WASHINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Ted Weld

The most significant change made in 1961 was the incorporation of the Society as a non-profit corporation, and the adoption of a new constitution which was made necessary by the incorporation proceedings. The adoption of the new constitution, in turn, resulted in the formal dissolution of the Palus and the Columbia Basin Chapters, which had both become inactive, due principally to lack of that all-important element, professional guidance.

The Society took the initiative part in preparing and submitting proposed legislation on antiquities to the 1961 State Legislature. The bill died in committee at the end of the session, but the preliminary research was thorough, and consequently is not wasted. As a preliminary step, all of the other states had been queried as to antiquities

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FOUNTAIN BAR, A SITE ON THE COLUMBIA
RIVER IN SOUTH CENTRAL WASHINGTON

Willi and Ted Weld

ABSTRACT: Fountain Bar, Site 45 KL 18, located on the Columbia River in Klickitat County, Washington, T3N, R19E, south half of sections 32, 33 and the SW 1/4 of 34, has been known as a village site historically having been reported by both Lewis and Clark and David Thompson in their journals. The ethnographic record was stated by Dr. Verne Ray. These statements locate the village in the vicinity of Rock Creek which is at the westerly extremity of Fountain Bar. The report deals with an excavation made at the east end of the bar and demonstrates that the site extended beyond the immediate occupation reported at Rock Creek. Twelve pits ranging in size from 18" in diameter to 42" long by 30" wide and in depth from 6" to 24" were the features under investigation. The five deeper pits were used for storage, the two with the largest diameter were used for roasting fish and the remaining five were earth ovens used for roasting roots and other foods. Stone artifacts recovered include projectile points, knives, drills, scribes, scrapers, flake knives, choppers, cobble-flake scrapers and notched sinkers; bone artifacts consisting of one needle, two awls, two gambling pieces and one digging stick handle; shell beads; two pieces of baked clay; and a large variety of trade or Caucasian-made goods. The abundance of stone artifacts, storage pits and earth ovens indicates a permanent village site. Although a comparatively late site, it is reasonably certain that the time span of occupation starts in prehistoric time and ends in early historic time.

AREA DESCRIPTION

Fountain Bar is located on the north side of the Columbia River about 14 miles above the mouth of the John Day River. Rock Creek crosses the bar and empties into the Columbia near the west end, and two miles upstream from the east end, and across the river on the Oregon side, is the town of Blalock. The S.P.&S. Railway parallels the bar along its north length, and behind the railroad tracks are high basalt cliffs. At the upper end, where the bar narrows down to the cliffs, is a large spring which is visible only when the Columbia is low. This may be the "fountain" for which Fountain Bar is named. The bar is approximately 2½ miles long and about 3/8 mile wide for most of its length. Portions are completely blown out down to the river-worn bedrock, and other areas are covered with big sand dunes which are constantly blowing and moving. Thus, an area which is now covered with sand and sagebrush may, even in historic times, have been blown out and then re-covered by the shifting sands. The winds are very strong along this part of the Columbia. Nathaniel Wyeth, who made a trip up the river in February, 1832, makes this comment about the area around the John Day River: "One thing I observed in this part of the river is that the savages are civil and as much as one in ten has lost an eye as I suppose from the effects of the fine sand of the river being blown about or the violent wind for which this part of the river is noted." (Sources of Oregon History, p 183).

Awl: 1 awl (Fig. 9) made from a piece of twisted copper wire. It is blunt at one end and very sharp at the other. 32 mm long and 2 mm in diameter at the butt end.

Lead Balls: 2 balls: 1 is round, 13 mm in diameter, and is apparently a ball for a muzzle-loading gun. The second, weighing approximately 25% more than the round one, has been flattened by impact when fired. It has a diameter of 20 mm and is 10 mm thick in the center.

Fish Hook: 1 iron sturgeon hook.

Arrow Points: 2 points made of iron.

Harmonica: 1 piece.

Rivets: 4 harness rivets, brass.

Nails: Several dozen square nails and pieces of nails.
1 horseshoe nail.

Pendants: 2 small brass pendants with punched holes.
4 pendants of iron, with punched holes.

Tacks: 15 brass tack heads.

Iron Pot: 1 handle and 1 piece of the rim.

Watch Parts: 1 brass key for a key-winding watch.
1 brass ring with stem, may be a handle to a pocket watch.

Eyelet: 1 brass eyelet, possibly from a shoe or boot.

Iron and Brass Pieces: 21 pieces of various sizes and shapes. None with perforations.

Bottle Glass: Quantities of glass were present: all of it was coated with a white incrustation and all of it was weathered. The clear glass had turned lavender from the sun. The colors were: very dark green, medium green, light green, brown, white (clear), and lavender.

China: 3 pieces of heavy white ironware.
1 piece, white with green decoration, appears to be a part of a small porcelain pipe.
5 pieces of blue and white, possibly old Willow Ware.

GLASS BEADS

Tubular, faceted translucent (so-called Russian) beads:

Dark blue: 8 beads, all small. The longest 6 mm; smallest 4 mm.
Crystal: 5 beads, from 7 mm to 5 mm in length. Some of these are slightly lavender, from the sun.
Amber: 1 bead, 5 mm long.

These beads are often called "Russian Beads" because they were traded by the Russians. According to Emory Strong (1959, p. 225) "They are found in the oldest sites (along the river) and are more plentiful near the coast than on the upper river, indicating trading vessels as their source. Sometimes this is the only type bead found in a site, but copper beads seem always to be with them."

Oval, ultramarine blue, translucent beads:

4 broken pieces. This bead is also more common along the coast than it is in the interior.

Round, opaque sky-blue beads. (Often referred to as "China" beads).

5 beads, all broken in half. The largest is 11 mm in diameter; the smallest 7 mm. This is the type of bead which is most common above the Cascades along the Columbia River.

Tubular, semi-translucent, paste glass. Medium blue:

2 beads, approximately 3 mm long.

Tubular, translucent glass, light blue:

1 bead, 5 mm long.

Round, translucent glass beads:

2 medium blue; 5 mm and 6 mm in diameter.
1 amber colored; 9 mm in diameter.

Round, Cornaline d'Aleppo bead. Red translucent outside; white opaque core:
1 broken bead. Compete, it would measure 11 mm in diameter.

These beads were widespread in the latter part of the first half of the 19th century.

Near-round, faceted, garnet-red translucent glass bead.

1 bead with sloping facets around each end, leaving a slight ridge around the center of the bead where the facets meet.
Diameter, 13 mm.

Barrel-shaped, polychrome bead of light blue opaque glass with zig-zag line of red and white encircling it.

1 bead, 8 mm long and 6 mm in diameter at the center.

CONCLUSIONS

The abundance of stone tools at this location, together with the cooking and storage pits and the great quantity of charcoal throughout, indicate that this was a permanent village site. The point types and the presence of European trade articles indicate a late site. Although trade goods are not always good dating material, nevertheless the rolled metal beads and the articles made of sheet metal and twisted wire were among the earlier of the trade items brought into this region and it is probable that the site was occupied at, or before, the time of the first explorers along this part of the river. How long it was occupied in pre-historic times is impossible to