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A PROTOHISTORIC MANDAN OR HIDATSA BUNDLE

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The emphasis on the use of bundles is an often cited characteristic of Plains Indian groups. A number of bundles of village or tribal significance are described in the Plains literature, but archaeological examples of personal bundles are rare. The purpose of this note is to place on record a cache of exotic items regarded as the personal bundle of a protohistoric Mandan or Hidatsa male.

In 1968 the Northern Natural Gas Company, Dana College, and the University of Missouri jointly sponsored a field project designed to explore the archaeological potential and significance of earth lodge villages between the towns of Stanton and Sanger on the Missouri River in North Dakota. This project, directed by myself and Donald J. Lehmer, resulted in the testing of 16 villages in the Stanton-Sanger area. The feature described here was discovered quite without design or expectation in one of these villages--the Mahhaha site.

The Mahhaha site, 320L22, is a large earth lodge village on the west bank of the Missouri River within the limits of the hamlet of Fort Clark in Oliver County. Our first test in

Perishable Vegetal Remains

Several hundred seeds of *Nicotiana rustica* (identified by Hugh C. Cutler and Leonard W. Blake, Missouri Botanical Garden) were on the north edge of the feature near some red powder. Near the center of the feature were six squash seeds (Fig. 2, f), probably *Cucurbita pepo* since this was the only species of squash cultivated on the Plains before the arrival of Europeans. The three complete and undistorted seeds are 12 mm. long and 7 mm. wide, and are probably of the cultivar "Mandan" (Cutler and Whitaker 1961). There is a single endocarp of wild plum (*Prunus americana*). A number of sticks or wooden rods, perhaps 10 or 12 of them, overlay much of the feature (Fig. 2, d). They are badly deteriorated, but were originally more than 120 mm. long and averaged approximately 6 mm. in diameter. None of the ends of the sticks are preserved.

Pigments (two varieties)

A small volume of red ocher or powdered hematite was in the north end of the feature near the mass of tobacco seeds. A small piece of soft (1.0 Moh's scale), off-white, silty clay approximately 30 mm. long and 17 mm. in diameter (Fig. 2, i) was near the center of a bone or antler bracelet.

European Trade Beads (29 specimens)

A large globular bead of translucent white glass is somewhat irregular in form and one end is pecked flat. Its dimensions are 13 mm. long and 12 mm. in diameter (Fig. 2, q). In addition, there are six opaque white porcelain tubular beads of slightly varying sizes and proportions. Lengths of these beads range from 6 to 8 mm., diameters from 6 to 8 mm. (Fig. 2, p). The 22 seed beads average 2 mm. in length and 3 mm. in diameter. Twenty of them are transparent and blue; one black and one white specimen are opaque (Fig. 2, l). The seed beads had been strung, since most of them lay in a line when found.

Ground Stone Disk (1 specimen)

A disk fashioned from local red siltstone is 70 mm. in diameter. A slightly tapering hole, 19 mm. in diameter, is near its center. The object is lenticular in cross-section, with a maximum thickness of 8 mm., and tapers to a flat-to-pointed blunt edge. The sides of the hole are burned, suggesting that the specimen was once a pipe (Fig. 2, o).

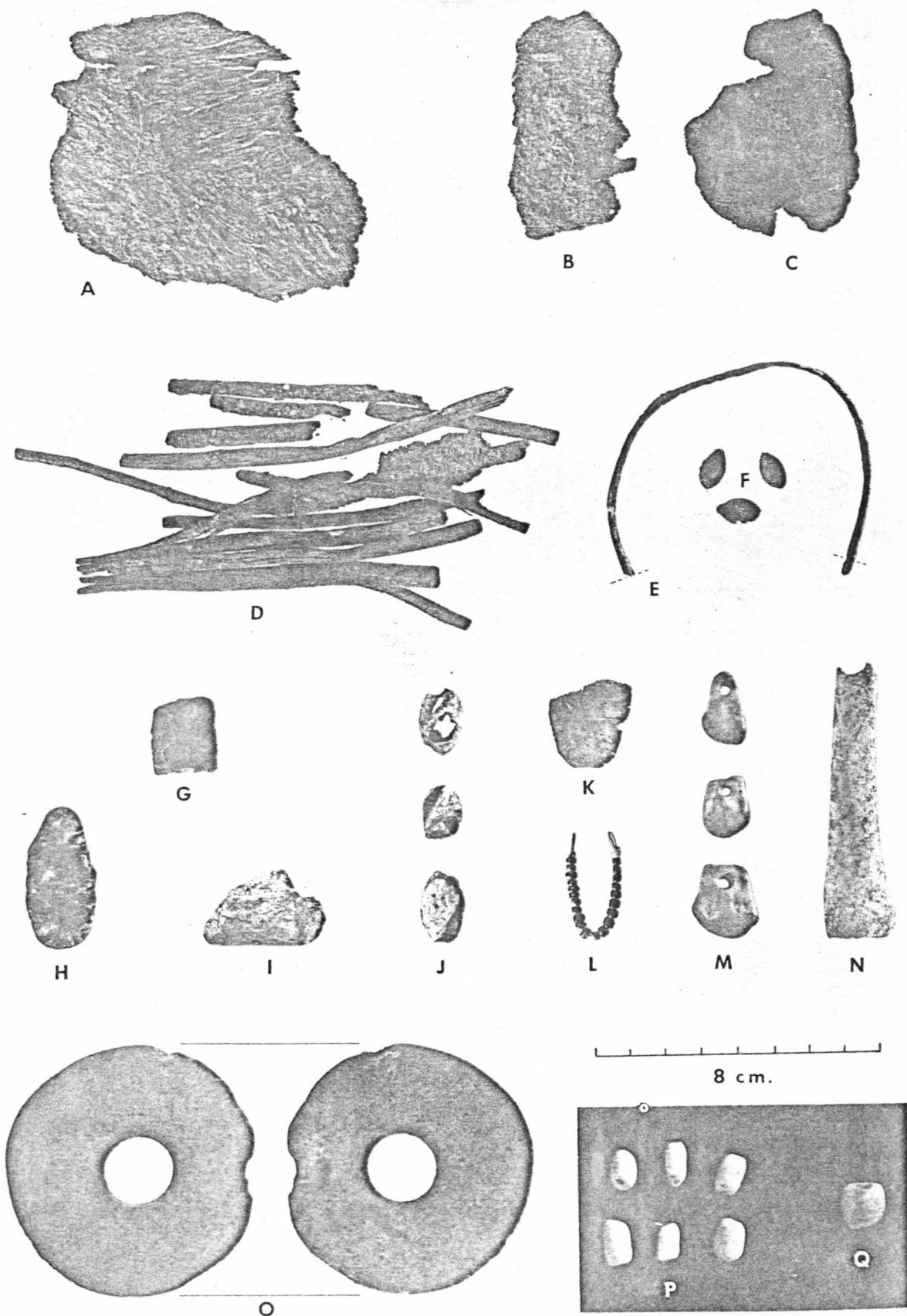


Fig. 2. l: seed beads; p: opaque white porcelain beads; q: translucent white glass bead