

## EXCAVATIONS IN DADE COUNTY DURING 1957

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Three sites, all shallow, black dirt middens typical of the region, were excavated in Dade County during 1957. From the total of twenty-one test pits, came 3,153 pieces of animal bone, 513 whole or fragmentary shells, 85 artifacts of various types, 4,205 potsherds, approximately ten percent of which were incised.

Examination of the bone fragments revealed that turtles were the most frequent prey of the inhabitants. However, there were also deer, raccoon, and fox remains as well as fish vertebrae and bones of large birds, some of them long-legged waders. Bones of the gopher tortoise suggested nearby dry, sandy areas. Sea turtle bones and shark vertebrae were evidence that foraging reached the coastal area as well as the fresh water swamps.

Fresh water clams, the conches Strombus and Busycon, the snails Planorbis and Ampularia, Pecten, Macrocallista, the Winged Tree, and Virginia Crested Oyster cover the classification of shell material in all the sites.

Vegetation, with the possible exception of mulberry and wild yam on the Medley site, basswood and snake plant on the Red Road site and heavy growths of giant bracken covering the Lehigh site, was typical of other hammocks in the vicinity where ficus and hackberry predominate along with wild citrus, pap-paw, willow, bay trema, groundsel, and wild coffee.

The first site is located in the NW 1/4 of Section 10, Range 40 East, Township 53 South, or approximately one mile southeast of commercial rockpit operations on the south

side of the Miami River at Medley, Florida. The midden, extending some fifty feet across, is in the center of a wooded area several feet above the surrounding muck land which is four feet above Mean Sea Level. Only two large trees, a mulberry and a ficus, grow on the midden proper.

Soil consisted of approximately a foot of black dirt and a foot of grey sand. A few inches below the surface was a stratum of orange colored soil. Its analysis showed charcoal, a considerable amount of aluminum, and quartz with iron salts in amounts sufficient to stain the soil. Tubers of the wild yam vine and minute pieces of bone and shell were also in the sample.

Three pits, five feet square and spaced fifteen feet apart, were excavated in the northeast quadrant.

The second or Lehigh site is in the central portion of lot 3, Section 3, Range 39 East, Township 53 South within a few hundred yards of a cement plant under construction. A new bridge across the Tamiami canal at its intersection with a traverse canal three miles west of Sweetwater makes this site easily accessible. The midden is located in the center of a rectangular wooded area, which, at its highest point, is five feet above the surrounding terrain. A cleared space sixty feet N-S and one hundred feet E-W, ringed with ficus and paw-paw and covered with bracken, contains the midden.

The Southeast and Southwest sides drop off abruptly into a low area. Old swamp buggy trails enter the hammock from the north side.

Six pits, arranged in a semi-circle, were excavated over a four-month period.

The third or Red Road site is in the NW 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 13, Range 40 East, Township 52 South, or about 1/2 mile west of the confluence of the Red Road and Biscayne canals near the extreme northwest corner of the Opa Locka airbase. Midden material is centered in the northeast quadrant of a badly eroded hammock, several hundred feet in diameter, situated in pasture land.

Early in 1936 test explorations were made here under the di-

rection of Mr. D. Lloyd Reichard and the results published by Willey (1949, pp, 89-90) under a site designation of Opa Locka #3. The small collection of material was divided between the U. S. National Museum and the State of Florida.

The immense root system of young hackberry trees made excavating difficult at the Red Road site. However, twelve pits, covering an area of 325 square feet, were dug in the northern and eastern parts of the hammock.

#### TEST RESULTS

Despite the shallow depth of the tests, stratigraphic results seemed to be satisfactory. Pottery types of the Glades III period were concentrated in the first 6 inches. Glades II period types were concentrated in the next lower 6 inches. Detailed results by sites will be found in the pottery tabulation.

In the Medley midden, with the exception of St. Johns Check Stamped (Fig. 1, lower) and a single Surfside Incised sherd, the only incised pottery uncovered was Key Largo Incised (Fig. 1, top row) which differed somewhat from the usual range. As for plain pottery, several fragments were limestone-tempered, some had extremely smooth surfaces, others were rather gritty, thin and easily broken. Much of the pottery was discolored by the reddish soil in which it was found.

No points or celts were unearthed here. There were, however, two nice examples of Busycon dippers.

The wild tubers found here were interesting as Skinner, (1913) noted Florida Indians eating wild potatoes that grew in the black swampland.

At the Lehigh site the predominate incised pottery was Miami Incised. Only a single sherd of Matecumbe Incised (Fig. 2, top row right) was found. Other basic types, such as Glades Tooled, Key Largo Incised, Opa Locka Incised, and Ft. Drum Incised, were found at their usual depths representing Glades III and Glades II times. (See pottery table). A single sherd each of noded and of pinched rims were found. One "fishbone" design sherd (Fig. 2, lower row right) was the first of its kind found in the area. Two other unique sherds (Fig. 2, top row middle and bottom row left)

were also found. These last two were in the lower half of the deposit.

There were no bone points, but *Strombus* celts were located in both the 0-6" and 6"-12" levels.

A good number of human bones, representing at least one child and one adult, were found in the four to eight inch level of Pit #2. Considering the depth, it is possible someone dug up the burials and scattered the bones. Since blue, faceted glass beads hinted at late Seminole occupation, it is also possible the bones were remnants of a disturbed Seminole internment.

A number of bone points were found, including bi-pointed, fluted, and socketed types. Some had tar (pitch) adhering to the base (Fig. 3, last two). Several appeared to be the tips of awls or pins. Others were projectile points. From their shape and the location of lashing marks, still others appeared to be parts of composite fish hooks (Fig. 3, last point). The fluted points seem to have been made from the cannon bone of deer. A rare spatulate point was found in the 0-6" level. One small, triangular quartz arrowhead was uncovered in the 6"-12" layer.

Celts were common in both levels. A grooved, unfinished, columella plummet was located at a depth of six inches.

Several European objects (Fig. 3, middle row) were found as well as faceted, blue glass beads, and a brass thimble. The beads are evidence of Seminole occupation.

From the six inch level was screened out two blue venetian glass ear bangles (Fig. 3). They are like ones reported by Fairbanks (1956) for the Macon trading post, dated 1685 to 1716. They also resembled those found by Sleight (1949) in a central Florida historic site, and those illustrated by Willey for Parrish Mound in Hillsborough County (Willey 1949, Pl. 58, f). These and a piece of Spanish majolica (Fig. 4, middle row center) suggest the use of the site during Spanish times, circa 1700.

Pottery distribution ran true to form, there were however six examples of odd types, four of which were Surfside Incised and two Key Largo Incised. Again Matecumbe Incised, other than as a variant, was missing. Fort Drum Incised was found in both

levels, the punctated version only in the bottom layer.

#### SUMMARY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In summation, all middens showed occupation in both Glades III and II times. The Red Road site was also used during Spanish times and it and the Lehigh site were, at least, visited by Seminole.

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ARTIFACT DISTRIBUTION

TYPE	MEDLEY		LEHIGH		RED ROAD	
	0-6"	6"-12"	0-6"	6"-12"	0-6"	6"-12"
<u>Busycon</u> dipper.	2				2	1
<u>Busycon</u> tool, broken.		1			1	
<u>Macrocallista</u> scraper.						1
<u>Strombus</u> celt.			3	2	2	6
<u>Strombus</u> tools, broken	2					
<u>Columbella</u> awl.				1	1	
<u>Fasciolaria</u> tool, broken	2					2
Spatulate point.					1	
Bone points.					8	20
Bone hair pin.						1
Worked bone.	1				2	1
Pumice abrader.			1		1	
Shell point.			1			
Worked shell.		2				
Brass keyhole plate.					1	
Musket ball.					1	
Blue Venetian glass ear bangle.					2	
Brass thimble.					1	
Quartz arrowhead.						1
Blue faceted glass beads.			8		6	
Old glass.					8	

POTTERY DISTRIBUTION

TYPES	MEDLEY		LEHIGH		RED ROAD	
	0-6"	6-12"	0-6"	6-12"	0-6"	6-12"
St. Johns Check Stamped.	2	1	1		46	6
St. Johns Plain.		3	3		7	9
Glades Plain body sherds.	58	51	511	333	1372	896
Glades Plain rims.	16	14	122	40	251	113
Glades Tooled.			14	2	42	6
Glades Tooled variant.			1		1	
Glades Tooled with an unusual treatment of rim.			1			
Glades Red.					3	
Surfside Incised.	1		4		10	7
Surfside var. line on inside of rim.						1
Surfside var. four line.					1	
Surfside-Matecumbe var.			1			
Key Largo Incised.		2	3	5	2	10
Key Largo var.						1
Key Largo-Opa Locka transitional.						1
Fishbone design rim.			1			
Matecumbe Incised.			1			
Matecumbe variant.						1
Miami Incised.			4	10	2	4
Miami Incised-like.			1			
Dade Incised.			1	1		1
Opa Locka Incised.			1	6	1	10
Ft. Drum Incised.				3	3	3
Ft. Drum Punctated.						1
Pinched rim.			1			
Noded impressed.			1			
Limestone tempered.	1	3	1			
Unique Incised.			1			
Intermediate paste, Belle Glade-like.			8	3	97	26
Unclassified Incised.				1		
Surfside-like with unusual treatment of rim.						1

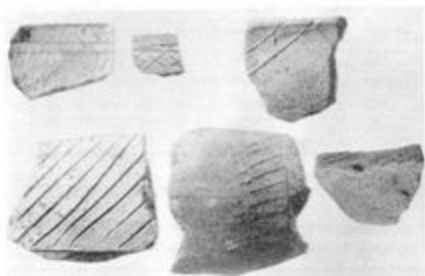


Figure 1. Key Largo Incised, Glades Plain, and St. Johns Check Stamped sherds from the 6 to 12 inch zone at the Medley site.

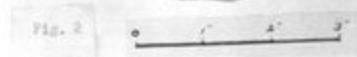


Figure 2. Surfside Incised, Matecumbe variant, Matecumbe Incised, Carrabelle-like incised, Glades Tooled, and incised "fishbone design" sherds from the Lehigh site.



Figure 3. Surfside Incised, Key Largo Incised, two Opa Locks Incised sherds; two blue glass pendants; Spanish Majolica sherd; brass keyhole plate; and bone points from the Red Road site.

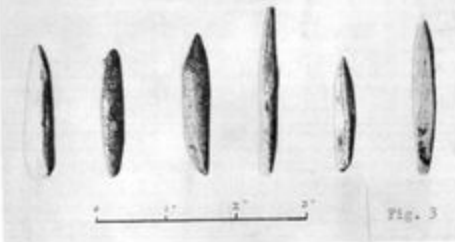
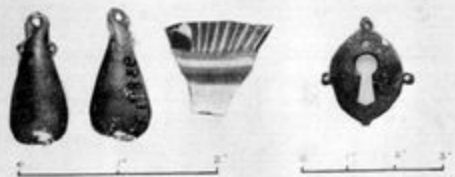
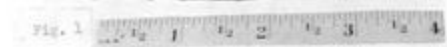


Fig. 3