

**The Stauffer-Will Farmstead:  
Historical Archaeology  
at an Aurora Colony Farm**

by

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## ABSTRACT

The Stauffer-Will Farmstead is an historic farm site located in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. The farm was developed beginning in 1869 as part of the land holdings of the Aurora Colony, a religious communitarian society established by German-American settlers in Oregon in 1856. Initial settlement of the farm was by members of the John Stauffer family, who maintained ownership of the property for more than a century.

Archaeological investigations in advance of the restoration of the farmstead were undertaken in 1979. Excavations were conducted in ten separate areas of the farmstead, including the former locations of the colony period hog barn, bake house, and well. In conjunction with the archaeological fieldwork, a review of documentary sources and photographs pertaining to the Aurora Colony in general and the Stauffer family in particular was carried out. In addition, formal interviews were conducted with long-term residents of the area, including several family members who were familiar with the more recent history of the farm.

As a result of this combined excavation-documentary-oral history research approach, a fairly complete reconstruction of the farm's history and its occupants' lifeways has been obtained. The evolution of the farmstead from Aurora Colony times to the present is documented. The content and meaning of the artifact assemblage recovered during the archaeological fieldwork is discussed and compared with assemblages from selected contemporary historic sites elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest.

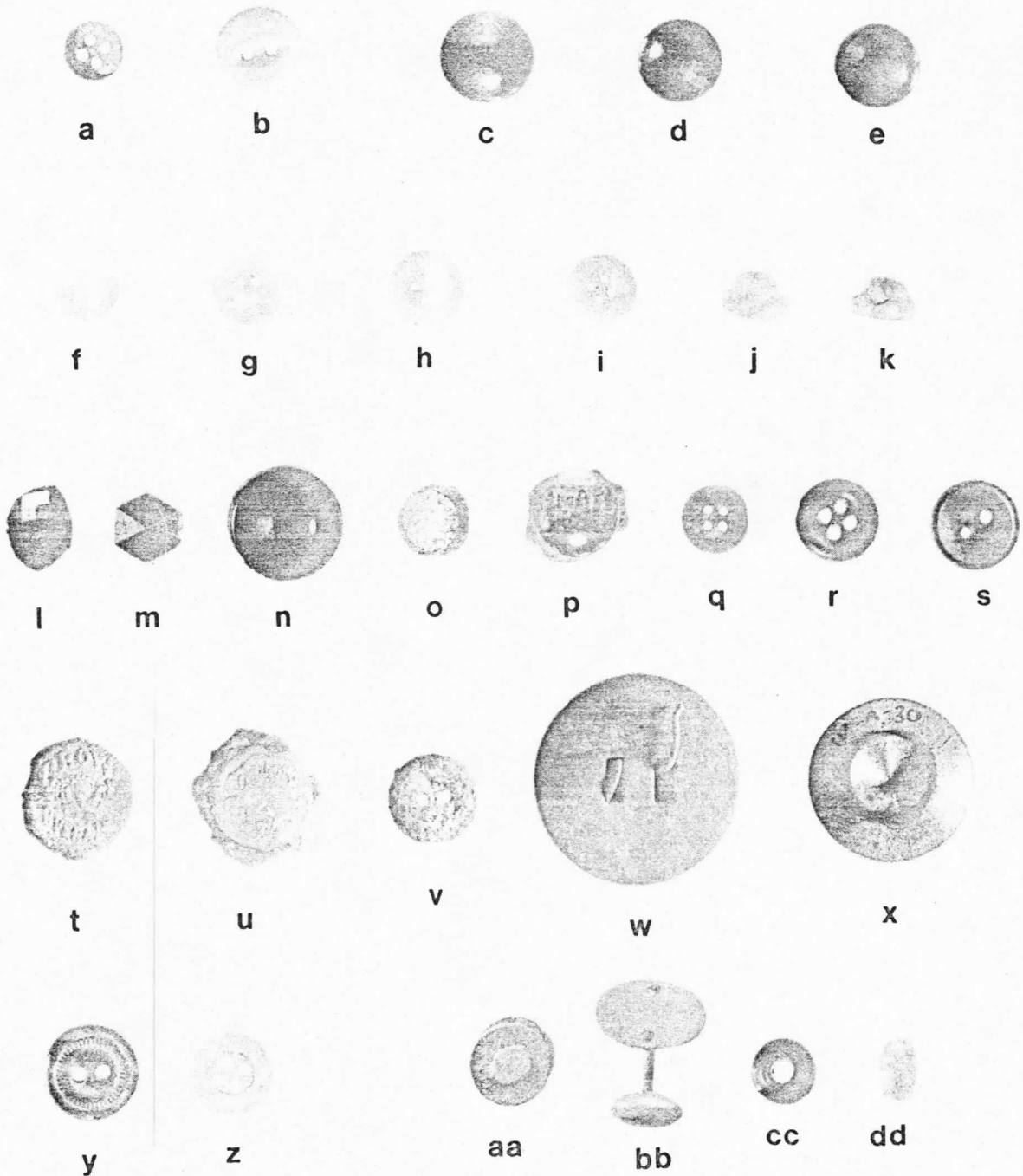


Figure 34. Buttons, fasteners and beads from the Stauffer-Will Farmstead (shown actual size): a-b, mother-of-pearl shell buttons; c-i, ceramic buttons; j-p, glass buttons; q-s, rubber buttons; t-w, metal buttons; x-z, plastic buttons; aa-bb, metal fasteners; cc-dd, glass beads.

Table 13.  
Distribution of Miscellaneous Fasteners

Fastener Type	Excavation Area										Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	
Grommets								4		14	18
Cuff Link							1				1
Brass Buckles		1		2				2	1	1	7
Snaps										2	2
Metal Zipper Pulls										2	2
Safety Pin				1							1
TOTAL	-	1	-	3	-	-	1	6	1	19	31

### Beads

Two round glass beads were recovered during the excavation of the colony period bake house (Area VIII) (Figure 34cc-dd). The first is a squat opaque black bead, while the other is an elongate translucent amber bead.

### Personal Items

The following items of a personal nature were recovered:

1. A blue-green octagonal perfume (?) bottle was recovered from the trash pit on the east side of the log house (Area X) (Figure 36a-b). The many bubbles and rough exterior of this bottle seem to indicate that it was blown into a mold, which would probably date its manufacture before 1870 (Lorrain 1968:40-41).