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### Abstract

New and recent information suggests that the Late Woodland Sandusky tradition Eiden Phase populations of northern Ohio slowly underwent cultural change and demographic expansion as a result of 'Mississippification.' This process of acculturation resulted in the emergence of a new cultural configuration which has been termed the Wolf phase. It is suggested that Wolf phase populations expanded from the region of Sandusky Bay, westward into N.W. Ohio, S.E. Michigan and S.W. Ontario as a result of demographic expansion and an accompanying shift in their settlement-subsistence system. The expansion of the Upper Mississippian Wolf manifestation into the region surrounding the western end of Lake Erie resulted in the withdrawal of the indigenous Late Woodland Western Basin Tradition populations into S.W. Ontario (and perhaps other areas), where they are believed to have been absorbed by their cultural kinfolk, the Late Woodland Ontario Iroquois Tradition peoples. It is suggested that Sandusky Tradition groups persisted in the western region of Lake Erie until at least the early historic contact period, ca. A.D. 1650.

dates from sites such as Fort Meigs: A.D. 1340 $\pm$ 50 (DIC-399), A.D. 1440 $\pm$ 50 (DIC-398) (Stothers 1975c, Stothers and Pratt 1981); Pearson: A.D. 1500 $\pm$ 55 (UGA-2536) (Bowen 1980, Stothers and Pratt 1981); Liahn: A.D. 1550 $\pm$ 60 (DIC-1007) (Kenyon pers. comm. 1979, Fox 1978); Kelley Mansion: A.D. 1560 $\pm$ 65 (DIC 485) (unpublished, I. Stehli pers. comm., cf. Davis, Pratt, and Wilkie 1976). Additional evidence for temporal placement of the phase is seen in the popularity of the notched appliqué rimstrip.

Such appliqué strips are characteristic of Reeve Filleted and Tuttle Hill Notched ceramics which have been associated with the middle component at the South Park site dated by radiocarbon determinations of A.D. 1430 $\pm$ 75 (CWRU-2a), A.D. 1440 $\pm$ 55 (WIS-539) and A.D. 1470 $\pm$ 55 (WIS-538) (Brose 1973: 32) and which are characteristic of the Greenwood phase (A.D. 1350-1500) of the Whittlesey focus (Brose 1976b). A similar type identified as Moccasin Bluff Notched Appliqué Strip occurs in the Berrien phase at the Moccasin Bluff site, which is assumed to date to ca. A.D. 1400-1600.

#### Indian Hills Phase

The final phase of the Sandusky tradition is best represented by the Indian Hills site at Rossford, Ohio, although identical ceramic types occur on the Portage River at the Petersen, Edwards and Libben sites; at the Muddy Creek site near Sandusky Bay; and, possibly, at the Hudson site near Fremont.

Indian Hills ceramics are predominantly shell tempered with some sites exhibiting frequencies approaching 100%. Vessels exhibit finely cordmarked, globular bodies, and rims display an increased eversion over Fort Meigs phase vessels. Strap handles are common, although the notched appliqué strip characteristic of Fort Meigs phase vessels is rare in the Indian Hills phase.

Decoration is carried out primarily through the use of a two or three toothed dentate stamp, although trailing or incising occurs in minor frequencies. Cord-wrapped stick impressions rarely occur. The predominant motif consists of a horizontal band of vertical stamped impression on the exterior rim surface above vertical columns (plaits) or horizontal dentate stamp impressions. As in the Fort Meigs phase, trailed or incised triangular or festooned motifs occur on a small percentage of Indian Hills

phase vessel necks, and may represent the persistence of earlier Sandusky tradition stylistic elements. As in earlier phases, lips exhibit punctuations or transverse impressions and interior rim surfaces are not decorated.

The non-ceramic assemblage of the Indian Hills phase apparently includes the same types of artifacts present on Fort Meigs sites, with one notable exception.

At the Indian Hills site, and possibly at Petersen and Libben, contact period artifacts are associated with Indian Hills phase ceramics. Such artifacts include: rolled and tubular sheet brass beads; cannel coal beads; brass wire spirals; cut sheet brass fragments; a brass pendant; a hand made gunflint and four glass beads were recovered from an excavated context at Indian Hills. Two beads are varieties of a polychrome design termed "Flusheye/Striped" (Kidd 1970: 74-75) and dated to the late 16th to early 17th century A.D. in New York State (P. Pratt 1961). A plain white oval bead and one "gooseberry" (Kenyon 1969: 13) bead were also recovered. The "Flush eye/striped" beads and one white bead were recovered from a pit feature and were in direct association with Indian Hills phase ceramics. A radiocarbon date of A.D. 1610 $\pm$ 100 (M-2268) was obtained from this feature (Stothers 1973).

In addition to the material from Indian Hills, an iron sword blade recovered from the Libben site (G. Edwards pers. comm. 1979, Vietzen 1965) and several small ovate, lead plates recovered from Petersen (Vietzen 1965) may be associated with Indian Hills phase occupations.

The Indian Hills site consists of a village area of ca. 3.5 ha. enclosed by a double palisade line. The site lies on a peninsula of upland formed by a sharp bend of a creek. The site location is similar to many of the Whittlesey "Forts" (Whittlesey 1877) and, like some large Whittlesey sites, parallel earthen walls cross the peninsula area outside the stockade. Intra-site features include circular (ca. 4.5 - 7.5 m.) single post pattern structures (Prahl 1969) associated with daub fragments, storage and refuse pits, and a few burials. There is some indication of an unoccupied, perhaps plaza area in the central portion of the enclosure. Two ossuaries each containing ca. 15-35 individuals (Becker 1972: 14-19, Prahl 1969) were recovered east of the stockade

area.

As in the Fort Meigs phase, Indian Hills phase sites are known primarily from large, permanent village sites. However, at Libben only a few Indian Hills phase sherds were recovered and these have been interpreted as representing the efforts by occupants at the Petersen site (across the Portage River) to obtain clay for ceramics (Prufer and Shane 1976: 302).

The appearance of Sandusky tradition material in the Maumee Valley was at first interpreted as the migration of two separate Upper Mississippian populations. A Whittlesey-like group (Fort Meigs) was perceived as entering the area from the east, while a second (Wolf) intrusion was felt to have arrived in northern Ohio and southeastern Michigan from an unknown location, presumably to the south or west. These Upper Mississippian groups were perceived to have driven Western Basin tradition peoples into Ontario prior to the abandonment of the Western Lake Erie region about A.D. 1400 (Stothers 1973, 1975a,c, 1978, 1979a,b,c).

Present information suggests one or more Wolf phase village groups entered the Maumee Valley ca. A.D. 1300, possibly due to the agricultural potential of the floodplains in the lower valley area. It appears that Springwells phase Western Basin tradition populations abandoned the lower Maumee Valley and Bay area about this time, although Springwells occupations continue in the interior and upriver portions of the region until ca. A.D. 1470 (Cufu 1969, Stothers 1973). Subsequently, Springwells populations appear to have been absorbed by similar Ontario Iroquois Tradition occupations to the north or by other Late Woodland populations outside the lower Maumee region. The Fort Meigs and Indian Hills phase materials from the Maumee Valley area are now interpreted as later manifestations of the original Wolf phase immigrants. The majority of the Sandusky tradition remains from the Maumee Valley may represent sequential movements by one or more village groups over a period of several centuries.

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**THE SANDUSKY TRADITION**  
**INDIAN HILLS PHASE**  
**Ca. A.D. 1550 - 1650**

