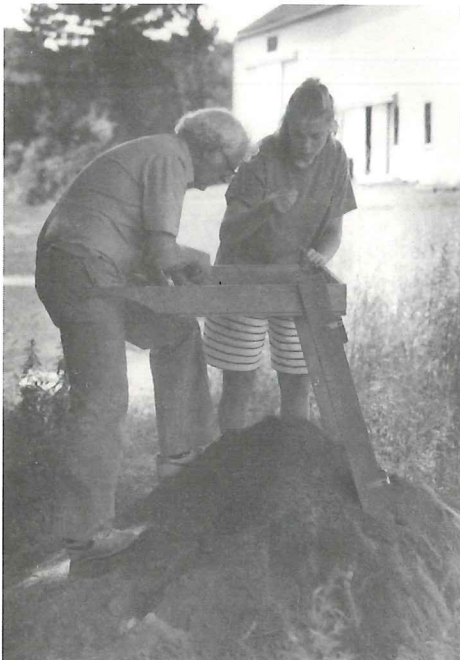


CONTEXT



SPL volunteer excavator Tom Horth looks for artifacts in the screen with the help of Rachelle Hecht, a student from Lincoln-Sudbury High School. (Photograph by Michael Hamilton.)

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Archaeological Research at the Spencer-Pierce-Little Farm, 1989

by Mary C. Beaudry

The Spencer-Pierce-Little house (SPL) and 230 acres of land was acquired by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) in June of 1986. Shortly thereafter, SPNEA brought in Professor Mary Beaudry of the Department of Archaeology to direct preliminary archaeological testing at the site, at first chiefly to minimize possible harm to archaeological remains through restoration of the house. The archaeological record at the site, like its documentary history, has proved to be exceedingly rich and complicated. Beaudry now foresees many years of archaeological research aimed at recovering details of the changing use of the land over time and how this relates to changes in property ownership and household membership, shifting agricultural practice, and changes in technology. The wide variety of buried feature types, complex stratigraphy, and long range of occupation periods at the site (from prehistoric times to 1986) also serve to make SPL an ideal site for teaching archaeological methods. See Context 6:1-2 (1987) 8-9.

The 1989 field season at the Spencer-Pierce-Little farm in Newbury, Massachusetts, was active and productive in a variety of ways. The site was the location for a Boston University Summer Term field school in archaeology as well as for workshops cooperatively sponsored by the Center for Archaeological Studies and Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School. A number of volunteers also participated in the

summer excavations, which I supervised along with teaching assistants Sara Mascia, David Landon, and Sally Pendleton. Sara, assistant archaeologist for the Spencer-Pierce-Little project, is conducting her dissertation research on Edward Little's nineteenth-century transition from tenant farmer to owner of SPL and the effects this had on the archaeological record (e.g., in terms of landscape, trash disposal, outbuilding construction and demolition, and so on). Sally, who is specializing in garden archaeology and archaeobotany, plans to use data from excavations at the SPL garden for her M.A. thesis. David has been project zooarchaeologist since the SPL project began. The varied specialties of these advanced graduate students added considerably to instruction in field techniques, as students were able to learn firsthand about conducting documentary research and how to identify and interpret animal bones as well as seeds and plant remains. This fall, students enrolled in my Introduction to Archaeology are visiting the site on Saturdays to learn how to dig as part of the hands-on component of the course; Ph.D. student Rick Kanaski has volunteered his time to help Maureen Smyth, teaching assistant, and me in leading the Saturday field trips.

This summer we explored three areas around the Spencer-Pierce-Little house, which is a unique first-period (about 1700) cruciform-plan structure

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Field school students Anita Schoen (left) and Jim Newton (center) discuss their excavation of the "garden" at SPL with teaching assistant Sally Pendleton (right). (Photograph by Michael Hamilton.)

continued from page 1
of brick and stone. The excavation units were placed in locations identified on an early nineteenth-century map of the property as a flower garden, wood house, and poultry house, respectively. Limited excavations had been carried out in the latter two areas in 1987; see *Context 6: 1-2* (1987) 8-9. We also excavated several units in the east cellar of the house itself. The latter were not highly informative, but in one unit, against the base of the chimney (rebuilt shortly after the American Revolution), we found a five-pound cannonball. Why a cannonball should have been in the cellar remains a mystery!

While intensive excavations went on around the house, a crew of students surveyed the fields for evidence of additional sites. Along the northern boundary of the present property, we dug a transect of over thirty test pits, each fifty square centimeters in size. This edge of the property abuts former SPL land that has been developed into a housing complex for the elderly. As part of its plans to restore and interpret the rural character of the Spencer-Pierce-Little farm, SPNEA intends to plant a thick row of trees along the boundary as a visual screen against the housing blocks. Our test units, excavated into

a shallow plow zone overlying what was in most cases an undisturbed substratum, revealed a few post holes and ditch segments from earlier field boundaries but no evidence of prehistoric sites or of historical sites related to the operation of the Spencer-Pierce-Little farm (e.g., tenant housing, barns, and so on). Thus it appears that the construction of a vegetational screen will not destroy any valuable archaeological evidence; even so, we hope to monitor any earth-moving operations that take place.

A systematic walkover survey in the freshly plowed fields surrounding the house lot turned up considerable quantities of nineteenth-century

artifacts, possibly field trash that accumulated when the fields were manured. No concentrations of artifacts were pinpointed, but from the surface of a small rise south of the house, archaeology major Harley Erickson collected a fine Archaic-period projectile point of local chert. This is one of only a few prehistoric artifacts found during the archaeological survey of the property, but farmer Dick Walsh has been turning up flakes, points, and ground stone tools for years; sadly, his collection—which he says filled a bushel basket—is inaccessible for study (it was in a shed used to store flammable chemicals which in fact caught fire, destroying most of the structure and its contents). We remain hopeful that we eventually will locate prehistoric sites on the property, for the area remains rich in the sorts of aquatic and terrestrial resources that would have attracted prehistoric hunter-gatherers and agriculturalists.

Our work near the house had mixed results. In the garden area, Sally found nothing in the way of planting beds or evidence of a garden plan. Instead, the entire area was lined rather unevenly with a mixture of waterworn cobbles, jagged glacially deposited stones, gravel, brick crumbs, and broken brick bats, presumably intended more to retain moisture in the area than to promote drainage. The sandy soils here drain readily and rapidly (the SPL house cellar in fact often acts more or less as a sort of sump or dry well for the entire field complex!), so the prepared base of this garden could not have

David Landon and Wahid Moustafa Gad, (one of a group of Egyptian archaeologists who visited the site) discuss the recording system at the Spencer-Pierce-Little site. (Photograph by Michael Hamilton.)





Field school students Jonathon Dietz and volunteer Chris Quinn discuss their excavation of the "garden" at SPL with teaching assistant Sally Pendleton. (Photograph by Michael Hamilton.)

served the same function as the elaborately paved garden beds archaeologists have found at sites in Colonial Williamsburg and Hampton, Virginia. It appears that in the Chesapeake, colonial gardeners made use of everyday household refuse, including broken wine bottles, shells, and even butchered animal bones, to line asparagus beds so that the clayey soil would drain properly. We found nothing of the sort at SPL, but Sally did locate at least one planting hole for an unidentified small plant, along with post holes along the former fenceline that bounded the garden. At some time in the recent past, the area of the garden had been modified, and fill was brought in to serve as the base for the present lawn.

Excavations in the wood house area proved tantalizing; possible foundation remains of a crude outbuilding were found, but these overlie strata containing early to mid-nineteenth-century artifacts. The evidence suggests that a succession of structures—for example, sheds, stables, carriage house—had existed here, but we have much more digging to do to sort out the sequence of construction and identify individual structures. What did seem clear was that by the late nineteenth century

this area was used for dumping trash from either the main house or the tenant farmer's house as well as material discarded from various farming operations. Students found large quantities of utilitarian ceramics (redware and yellow ware, as well as stoneware), glass from bottles as well as drinking vessels and window glass, hardware and nails, horse and ox shoes, and other artifacts.

Perhaps what the late nineteenth-century dump in the wood house area, which lies to the north and rear of the main house, signifies is a shift in trash disposal patterns. The east yard, where the poultry house was located, produced enormous quantities of household refuse, all of which dates to early in the nineteenth century. The fact that the poultry house was torn down sometime after 1813 (the date of the map on which it is depicted) and that trash disposal ceased here by the second quarter of the nineteenth century suggests to me that there was a shift in the treatment and use of the space around the house. We have scanty evidence from the eighteenth century or earlier, but it appears that the east yard, which nowadays we would think of as the front yard, was long a utilitarian work area; we have uncovered some

evidence of paths leading to this area both from the kitchen at the rear of the house and from the original bulkhead entry into the cellar (which was at the front of the house). What prompted this shift remains unclear. Was it the construction of the attached tenant farmer's house in about 1805, resulting in a need to reorder yard space for reasons of practicality and for privacy? Or did a transition in ownership result in sweeping changes to the farm landscape as a whole?

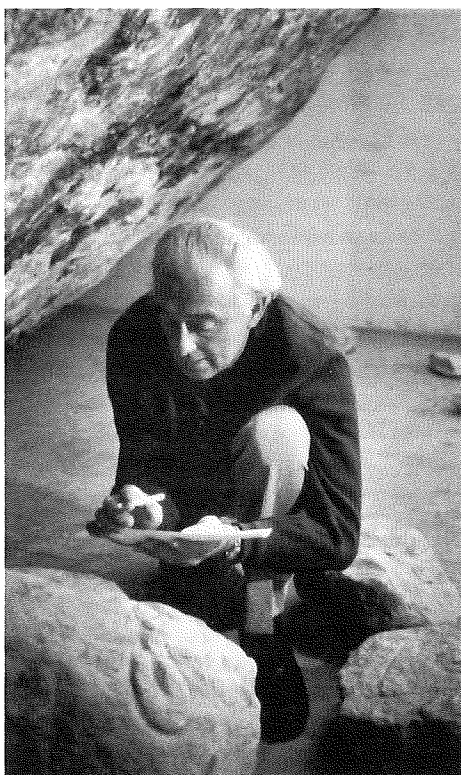
To address these possibilities satisfactorily, we will have to obtain additional excavated data as well as precise chronological information on the timing of the shift; in other words, we must await full analysis of the thousands of artifacts we have recovered. What is more, we will need to examine the documentary record closely and consult with the architectural historians about changes to the house that seem to coincide with the change we see in the archaeological record. The construction of the tenant house is one such change. Another alteration that may be related to what we see archaeologically is the fact that the door leading from the east side of the kitchen was closed up and converted into a window at an unspecified date. Here indeed is evidence of a change in the patterns of movement in and around the house and yard. The archaeological evidence has given us a few clues, enough for us to know that the east yard, once a highly utilitarian work space, was converted into a manicured lawn and served thereafter as part of the formal space around the main house. Our investigations will continue in hopes of shedding light on the reasons for this change, when it took place, and what it had to do with both the practical functioning and symbolic image of the Spencer-Pierce-Little farm.

Professor Beaudry and her assistant, Sara Mascia, are already making plans for the 1990 field season at SPL, which will include another field school (June 18–July 29, 1990) as well as more excavation opportunities for high school students and adults. Watch for more details in future issues of Context.

Marshack and Biddle to Give Context and Human Society Lectures

The Humanities Foundation of Boston University has awarded a two-year grant to the Center for the continuation in 1989-90 and 1990-91 of the Distinguished Lecturer series on "Context and Human Society." The series is concerned with the inter-relationships of human societies and their environments, both natural and manmade.

The Distinguished Lecturer for 1990 will be Alexander Marshack, Research Fellow of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University (but resident in New York City, where he worked for Time-Life Inc. for many years before becoming a prehistorian). His work on the beginnings of cognition and notation, and the symbolism and significance of Palaeolithic art, has opened an entirely new field of scholarship. His research relates to the evolving relationship between the first modern humans and their environment during and at the end of the Ice Age. His book, *The Roots of Civilization* (1972), suggests that Upper Palaeolithic humans could not only count and observe the heavenly



bodies, but also that they made permanent notations of what they had seen, on fragments of bone or ivory. While the first humans of our own subspecies, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, of 30,000 years ago had a technology and economy that appear primitive to our eyes, Marshack's work shows that their brains were as developed and as active as ours.

In 1991 the Context and Human Society speaker will be Martin Biddle, Fellow of Christ Church, Oxford University. Biddle has, over the past thirty years, been the major figure in the development of medieval and post-Medieval archaeology both in Britain and on the Continent. His excavations at Winchester were the first major urban archaeology project, and have had a profound influence on both American historical archaeology, and the relationship between archaeology and history. Biddle has also carried out important work at St. Albans Abbey, and at the royal mausoleum of the Mercian kings at Repton in Derbyshire; at the latter site he and his wife, Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle, found both the encampment and the skeletal remains of the Viking army that overwintered there in A.D. 874. Martin Biddle was also the first Chairman of RESCUE, a group devoted to saving Britain's archaeological sites from destruction and bringing pressure to bear on government and developers to ensure funding of salvage excavations if destruction is inevitable. Since the group was founded in 1971 it has had a profound effect on the public perception of archaeology in Britain, and has seen greatly increased budgets for investigation and publication come into effect.

The juxtaposition of these two lecturers will allow us to examine human/environment relationships both with the minimal evidence surviving from the Ice Age, and with

Alexander Marshack studying carved vulva images, Les Eyzies, France.

Carbon Dating in Cambridge

by John W. Cuzzo

A summer internship at Cambridge University's Godwin Laboratory brought me right to the point where archaeology meets the natural sciences. Separate facilities within the lab are designed to handle thermoluminescence, oxygen isotope, and radiocarbon dating techniques. I dealt mainly with radiocarbon, but was also able to observe work involving the other processes.

When I first stepped into the lab, I was a bit confused, not only by the equipment, but by what I was supposed to do. I expected a course in radiocarbon dating carefully structured to lead me step by step through the theory and process. What I found was a working laboratory staffed by busy scientists. Since the lab could operate perfectly well without my assistance, I initially felt like an intruder. Within a short time, I came to the understanding that if I was to learn anything it would be on my own initiative. So I began to probe into the inner workings of the lab by constantly asking questions and getting involved in anything I could. Only then did I realize that I was learning much more than any academic course could teach me.

Under the professional guidance of Dr. Roy Switsur, Mike Hall, and Andrew Garrod, I participated in every stage of the radiocarbon

the dramatically contrasting wealth of documentation of the Middle Ages. It will present two complementary ways of looking at the human past, in two widely differing worlds of nature and social development. The rationale behind this double selection, following on from Colin Renfrew's lectures on "Aspects of Cognitive Archaeology" in 1988-89, is to examine the near and distant limits of the time span of human society, from the origins of modern humanity more than 30,000 years ago to the beginnings of the modern age in post-Roman times.

procedure. The complex mass of glass tubes and metal framework slowly became understandable. I began by pre-treating charcoal samples from excavations in East Africa. I also worked with peat and bone samples. Pre-treatment involves the removal of any inorganic or organic carbon that has become part of the sample. This process alone demonstrates the need for clear communication between archaeologists and lab technicians. Samples excavated from different contexts usually require different pre-treatment techniques.

The next step results in the conversion of the sample's carbon to very pure benzene. This chemical process requires a low vacuum, several purifications at high temperatures, precise timing, and careful attention to various valves, gauges, and thermometers. A highly explosive gas, acetylene, and a rapidly combustible metal, lithium, both turn up in the conversion. Any mistake may lead not only to greater error, but also to dangerous chemical reactions.

Measurements of the benzene's radioactivity are then made in a scintillation spectrometer, and the results are subjected to a barrage of corrections. Background radiation, natural fractionation, counting efficiency, barometric pressure, and temperature are all taken into account. Each correction comes along with its own group of problems, as I experienced in my own experiments with counting efficiency.

Before a date is given, final calibration is made using dendrochronological techniques. Despite the complexity of the entire process, with large enough samples the lab can obtain dates accurate to within fifty years.

When I left Cambridge, I knew that I had obtained a working knowledge of radiocarbon "language." I also realized the importance, as an archaeologist, of knowing exactly what goes on when your sample disappears behind laboratory doors.

John W. Cuzzo is a student in the Ph.D. program in the Department of Archaeology.

History and the Central Artery Project

by Nancy S. Seasholes

An archaeological project generally involves much more than just an excavation; almost every such project also requires a great deal of "behind-the-scenes" work, which, although not as visible as fieldwork, is just as important. In historical archaeology, one of these less visible but vital tasks is historical research, the results of which often determine where excavation units are placed, what archaeological resources are targeted, and how the finds are interpreted.

On the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel project in Boston, for example, historical research played an essential role. This major highway project will involve putting several miles of now-elevated expressway underground and building a new tunnel under the harbor to the airport. As part of the environmental review that must precede construction, Boston University's Office of Public Archaeology was hired to assess the archaeological resources along the entire route.

In order to decide where to dig, we had first to determine where intact archaeological resources might still exist. Such a determination is not easy to make in Boston because so much of the city is on land that was created by filling. In addition, a great deal of the city's land, whether fill or original, has been disturbed by previous construction. In order to determine which parts of the project area were on original land and which on fill, we used historical maps. And in order to determine which areas were relatively undisturbed, we made sets of computer-generated maps that showed the location of buildings with basements, utility lines, and support piers for the present Artery—all features that have destroyed archaeological remains. The other areas were considered to have archaeological potential.

The results of this research identified several areas in which archaeological remains might still exist and would therefore merit

archaeological testing. One of these areas is today a parking lot under the Central Artery in the North End section of Boston. This area is on land that was part of the original Boston peninsula and could, therefore, contain archaeological remains both of prehistoric and historical times; in the latter case, houses and house lots dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Our historical research had located not only this area in general, but also specific property lots that seemed to have particularly high archaeological potential. The problem was how to find these lots in today's world, for, when the Central Artery was constructed in the 1950s, the city blocks on which these lots were located were demolished, obliterating the historical street patterns and all other landmarks. We solved the problem by turning once again to our computerized maps: we made sets of same-scale overlays with a map of the present area over an historical map that showed all the former streets, buildings, and lots, and were thus able to pinpoint the location in the parking lot of our targeted historical lots. We then placed our test trenches accordingly.

Historical research not only helped us decide where to dig, it also helped us to determine what we were looking for and to interpret our findings. In what we called Trench C, for example, historical research led us to expect remains of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century house lots. Figure 1 shows the archaeological plan of Trench C and next to it, in Figure 2, is an historical map of the same area. This latter map is from an insurance atlas, a source often used by historical archaeologists because, for a given city, the maps show not only all lots and buildings but also building construction materials and use. As is apparent from a comparison of the archaeological plan with a 1929 insurance atlas map, Trench C was

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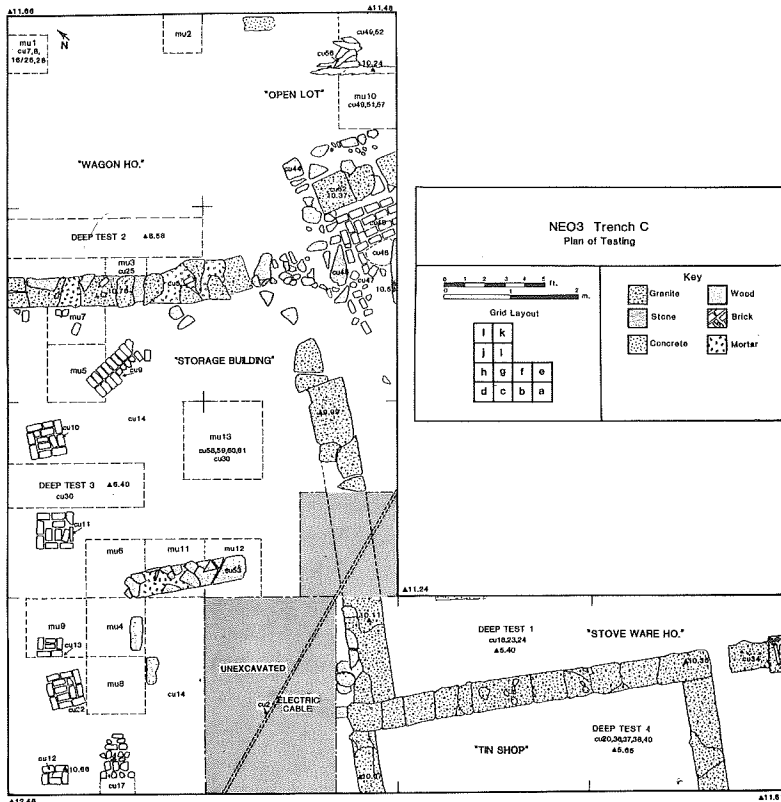


Figure 1. Archaeological plan of Trench C.

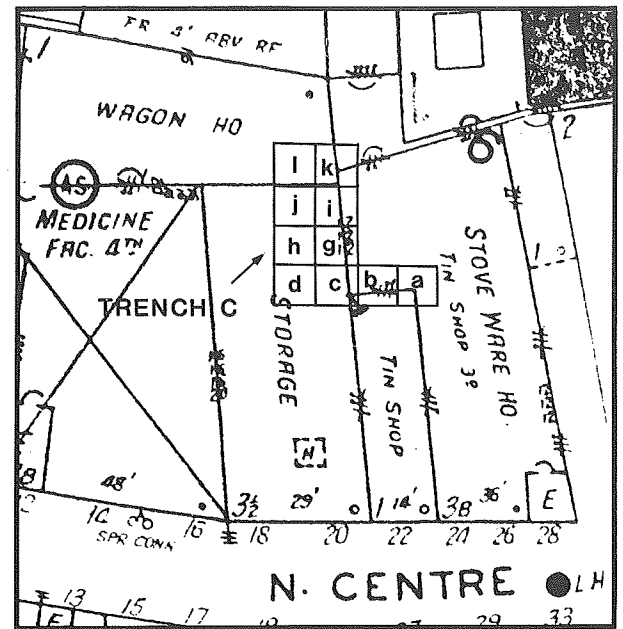


Figure 2. Detail from 1929 Sanborn Insurance Atlas map showing location of Trench C.

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located in parts of five different historical lots.

The part of Trench C located in what we called the "Storage lot" (so named because in 1929 it had contained a storage building; see Fig. 2), proved to be particularly interesting because there we found artifacts from the early eighteenth century. We recovered parts of glass wine bottles, bowls of clay smoking pipes, and pieces of ceramics, including one stamped "AR" for "Anna Regina" (Queen Anne), who ruled England from 1702 to 1714.

From our historical research we knew that in the early eighteenth century the part of the "Storage lot" in Trench C had been the back part of a large estate, so one interpretation was that the artifacts had been used by the people living on this estate. On the other hand, Trench C was quite far from where the former estate buildings had been located, so another possibility was that the artifacts came from people living on the lot next to Trench C. Historical research had indicated that in the early eighteenth century this adjacent

lot had been very long and narrow, only seventeen feet wide, and yet had contained a two-family house. On such a narrow lot it was likely that some of the trash might have ended up on the lot next door, that is, on the lot where Trench C was located. Regardless, however, of whether the artifacts were associated with people living on the large estate or in the two-family house, these artifacts are significant because they provide a rare insight into lives of early eighteenth-century Bostonians. We are therefore recommending further excavation in this area.

Historical research also helped us interpret our findings in another part of the parking lot, in what we called Trench B. In the southern part of this lot we again found eighteenth-century artifacts, many of them in a well that was partly covered with a wall. The archaeological plan of Trench B is shown in Figure 3; the well in question can be seen near the bottom of the plan, in what we termed Grid b. Figure 4 shows the location of Trench B on a 1929 insurance atlas map of the area, and from this map it is apparent that Grid b, where the

well was located, was in the back part of a lot that fronted on Salem Street.

It is not often that one can find a precise reference in the historical records to an archaeological feature such as the well, but that is exactly what happened in this case. Going back to the deeds for the Salem Street lot, we found one from 1698 specifying that the property line between this lot and the one on the corner ran through the middle of a well! A 1727 deed made the location of the well even more precise, for it said that the property line ran west from the street for twenty-nine feet, then jogged south three feet through the middle of a well, and then continued west again. And because of the position of the well in relation to the lot lines, we are certain that the well we found was the same as the well that was referred to in the deeds.

The jog through a well was again mentioned in a 1786 deed, but not in 1823; we suspected, therefore, that the well was filled during that period. This conclusion was supported by the artifactual evidence, for the artifacts from the top level of the well dated to about 1795. Even without the well,

however, the 1823 deed still referred to a three-foot jog in the property line, and this reference provided an explanation of the wall over the well: the wall had clearly been built to mark the lot line after the well had been filled in.

In this case, the significance of our findings lay not as much with the artifacts and features themselves as with the fact that they provided a unique opportunity to verify the historical records with archaeological evidence. And had it not been for the historical research, this comparison would not have been possible.

We were also aided by historical research in interpreting our most surprising archaeological find. It was located in what we called Trench A, again in the same parking lot under the Artery in the North End. Trench A was intended to intersect the original shoreline and had been placed so that the east end of the trench was over original land and the west end over a former cove, known as the Mill Pond (Fig. 5). We had expected to find evidence of the shoreline, remains of a bulkhead built along it in the eighteenth or early

nineteenth century, and, possibly, prehistoric remains.

We did not find the expected archaeological resources, but instead, to our surprise, we found a large wharf-like structure extending into the Mill Pond. The structure was built of layered timbers, each layer at right angles to the adjacent ones, a type of construction typical of wharves of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nevertheless, because it seemed unlikely that there would have been a wharf in the Mill Pond, which was a closed body of water, we at first were not certain that what we had found was really a structure of this type.

Once again historical research provided an answer. An examination of the deeds for the lot on which the structure was located indicated that, when it was sold in 1709, it contained a "wharffe." A wharf had not been mentioned in a 1693 deed, thus implying that this wharf had been built between 1693 and 1709. This date of construction was consistent with the evidence from the wharf in Trench A, for the artifacts found just above and between the timbers dated

from the early to mid-eighteenth century. It thus seemed very likely that the wharf we had found was the one mentioned in the deed.

Still unanswered, however, was why there would have been an early eighteenth-century wharf in the Mill Pond, which had been dammed in the seventeenth century in order to power some tide mills. Again we found an answer in historical records, this time a 1712 petition asking that the ten-foot wide flood gates in the North Water Mill (Fig. 5) be enlarged so that boats could enter the Mill Pond more easily. This petition, then, explained how ships could have entered the Mill Pond and thus why there would have been a wharf there.

The wharf in the Mill Pond was an important discovery, for it was the first such wharf ever found in that area and was quite unexpected, since no wharves are shown in the Mill Pond on historical maps. Many questions, however, still remain about this wharf. For what purpose was the wharf used? If the use was commercial, what kinds of goods were shipped there? Was this the only wharf in the Mill Pond or were there others? What types of ships could enter the Mill Pond and dock at this wharf? The answers to these questions can be found through both historical research and archaeological investigation, and we have thus recommended that further excavation be conducted in this area.

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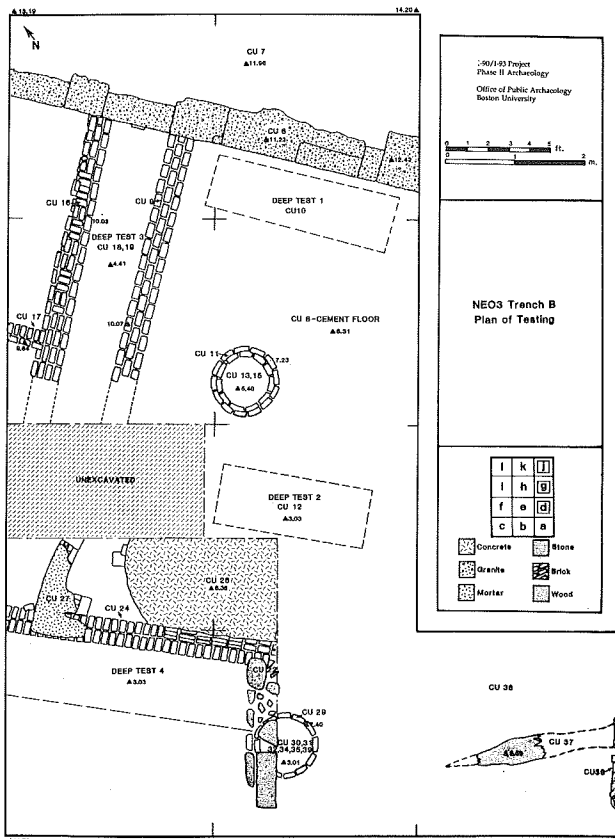


Figure 3 (left).
Archaeological
plan of Trench B.

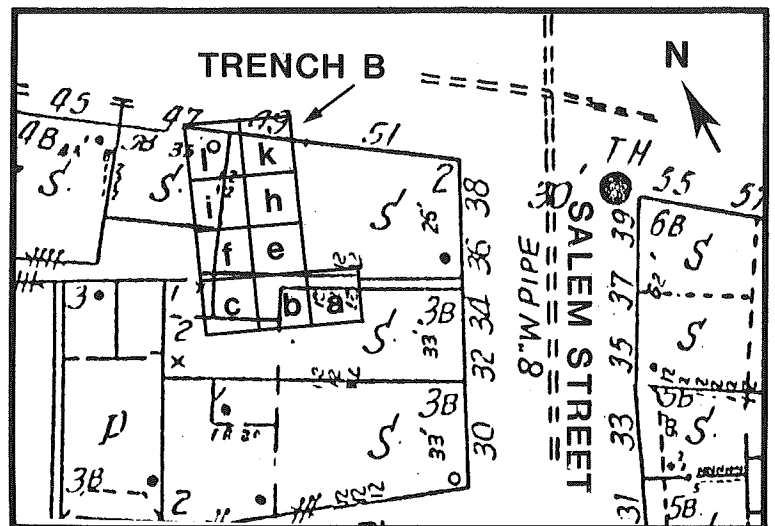


Figure 4. Detail from 1929 Sanborn Insurance Atlas map showing location of Trench B.

Zooarchaeology: Understanding the Interactions of Humans and Animals in the Ancient World

During the fall semester the Department of Archaeology offered a new course in zooarchaeology, the analysis of animal remains from archaeological sites, taught by visiting Lecturer H. Sorayya Carr. A specialist in Mesoamerican zooarchaeology, Dr. Carr received a Ph.D. in anthropology from Tulane University in 1986. Her most recent work has been with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, involving the excavation and analysis of a large faunal collection from an Archaic period rock shelter site in central Oklahoma. Most of her research, however, has been in the Maya area, where she has analyzed faunal remains from Cerros, Belize, and Komchen, Chichen Itza, and Isla Cerritos in the Yucatan. She has also participated in several field projects at Maya sites, including the Cuello project directed by Professor Norman Hammond.

The analysis of organic remains is increasingly becoming an integral part of archaeological research designs. Once ignored or relegated to simple species lists appended to site reports, faunal and botanical assemblages are now recognized as an important source of information on ancient lifeways. Palaeoethnobotany is a well-established part of the archaeology curriculum at Boston

University, and the Department hopes in the future to be able to offer zooarchaeology on a regular basis as well.

In the Maya area, where for a long time studies focused on the spectacular ruins of ceremonial and administrative centers with their fascinating, complex iconography and hieroglyphic texts, the systematic collection and analysis of plant and animal remains are (with a few notable exceptions) a relatively recent development. The Cuello Project incorporated the recovery and analysis of organic remains from its inception, resulting in the collection of several thousand animal, bird, and fish bones. With its long Preclassic sequence, Cuello provides some of our best information to date on early Maya animal use. The analysis of this material by Dr. Elizabeth Wing and Sylvia Scudder of the Florida Museum of Natural History has revealed that the people of the Cuello community used a rather broad spectrum of animal resources. Deer, dog, armadillo, and mud turtle remains were especially frequent in

the collection. The use of reptiles, especially turtles, is a common feature in the Maya area. Other interesting features of the Cuello faunal assemblage include imported marine fish and the ritual deposition of a cache of deer skulls. The Cuello material will be coming to Boston University when the Department's physical facilities have been enlarged.

As these finds at Cuello indicate, faunal studies can tell us not only what people were eating, but also about other aspects of their society and economy. Dr. Carr's analyses of faunal remains from sites in Belize and Yucatan have illuminated aspects of trading systems and economic specializations on both the intracommunity and the regional level. She is quick to point out, however, that faunal analysis need not be limited to addressing economic questions. She maintains a strong interest in Maya folk zoological concepts as revealed in contemporary discussions with Maya people, colonial period ethnohistoric texts, and more ancient artistic depictions. It is in the integration of all these diverse types of data that we will reach the best possible understanding of the ancient Mayas' interactions with their animal world.

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In sum, historical research was a not-so-visible, but essential, part of the Central Artery project, as it is of most historical archaeological projects, for the research enabled us to place the excavation units in areas with archaeological potential, predict what we would find, and interpret the results, all very important parts of any archaeological project. For details on the excavations of the Central Artery, see *Context*, Vol. 7, 1-2 (1988) 1-4.

Nancy Seasholes is Project Historian for the Office of Public Archaeology and a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Archaeology.

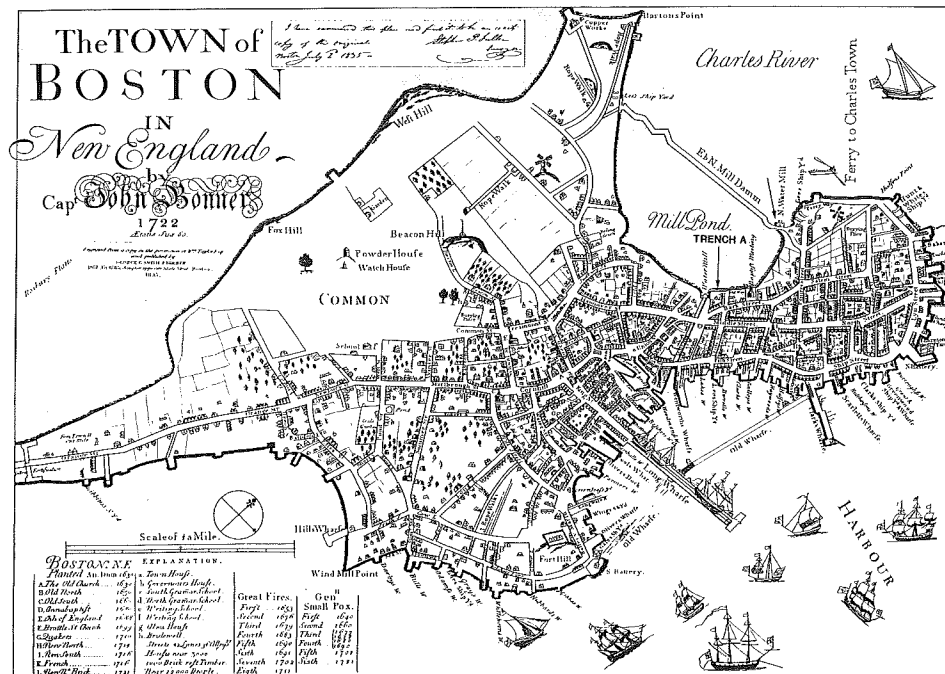


Figure 5. 1722 map of Boston showing the Mill Pond and location of Trench A and North Water Mill (indicated by arrows).

Faculty News

Professor Kathryn Bard presented a paper at the International Geological Congress in Washington, D.C. in July on "Predynastic Settlement Patterns in the Abadiyeh-Semaineh Region, Upper Egypt." The paper embodied results of her fieldwork in May and June 1989 in the Nile Valley, which located the first Naqada III settlement site known.

Professor Clemency Coggins was an invited speaker, as a guest of the Governor of Chiapas, at the First International Congress of Mayanists held in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico, in August. Apart from her plenary address in Spanish, "El hombre, la mujer, y el enano" ("Man, woman, and dwarf"), on the function of human figures in Maya art, she also presented "Reflexiones sobre la obra de Marta Foncerrada de Molina" in a session paying tribute to a colleague. The Congress was organized by the Seminario de Estudios Mayas of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Professor Norman Hammond, spent the period from mid-May through July as a Visiting Fellow of Worcester College at Oxford University, by invitation of the Provost, Lord Briggs, and the Fellows. He carried out research at the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, working in the Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit with Drs. Rupert Housley and Ian Law. Oxford has the first dedicated accelerator mass spectrometer (AMS) radiocarbon dating laboratory in Britain, and one of few in the world. Professor Hammond and his collaborators devised and completed a series of experiments on the dating of bone collagen, specifically on bone that had been collagen-depleted by tropical leaching. Hammond also gave his annual seminar at the Centre de Recherches en l'Archéologie Précolombienne at the Université de Paris I (Sorbonne) in June. This year's topic was the recently completed Nohmul Project, a study of the emergence and decline of a medium-sized Maya city in northern Belize.

Professor Julie Hansen attended the Eighth Symposium of the International Workgroup for Palaeoethnobotany in Nitra, Czechoslovakia, in June. She gave a paper on "Appendicitis, Cause and Cure: Toward an Interdisciplinary Publication," arguing for publication of palaeobotanical work in mainstream archaeological journals rather than more specialized botanical publications that are less often consulted by archaeologists. Professor Hansen also spent several weeks working at the Bronze Age site of Mochlos in Crete, establishing a water-sieving system for the recovery of botanical remains and very small objects. The results should shed further light on the economy of early Bronze Age Crete before the emergence of the palace-based society of the Minoans.

Professor David Kennedy is celebrating two happy events: he and his wife Julie produced their third child, Neil John Powell Kennedy, in October, and in January his book, *Rome's Desert Frontier From the Air*, coauthored with Derrick Riley, will be published in London by Batsford. The book details the defenses of Rome's eastern frontier, running from the Red Sea to northern Iraq for nearly 2,000 miles, and surveys some hundred military sites, many of which have not been investigated on the ground for decades.

Professor Fred Kleiner has been on leave supported by the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation in 1988-89, during which time he has continued to serve as Editor-in-Chief of the *American Journal of Archaeology*.

Professor Patricia McAnany was one of the invited speakers at the Dumbarton Oaks annual symposium on Pre-Columbian Studies held in Washington, D.C., over the Columbus Day weekend. The topic of the 1989 meeting was "On the Eve of the Collapse: Classic Maya Civilization in the Eighth Century," and she presented a paper on the economic organization of the ancient Maya. Professors McAnany and Hammond will be directing a new venture for the Department of Archaeology in the

spring of 1990, a field study in archaeology class in Belize, Central America. The first half of the semester will be devoted to learning stratigraphic excavation and on-site survey techniques at the early Maya village site of Cuello, and the second half to studying another early settlement associated with possible intensive agricultural developments at K'axob. Each faculty member will teach one-half the semester in Belize and one-half on campus, where they will share courses on Maya and Mesoamerican archaeology, while graduate student **Elizabeth Platt** will act as teaching fellow on the field course for the entire semester. Students will be participating in an important research project, and learning by immersion in its procedures and from its staff, rather than taking part in a standard field school.

Professor James Wiseman lectured on "Municipal Organization and Roman Citizenship in Macedonia" at the Vth International Conference on Ancient Macedonia held in Thessaloniki, Greece. Following the conference, which was sponsored by the Institute for Balkan Studies, he led a tour for the Archaeological Institute of America from Venice through the Greek islands to Ephesus and Istanbul, Turkey. Wiseman also lectured at the National Museum in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, on Boston University's excavations of the ancient city of Stobi in Macedonia.

Student News

Kathleen H. Bond (M.A. 1987) presented a paper "that we may purify the corporation by discharging the offenders': Workers' Alcohol Use, Leisure Time, and Company Policy at the Boott Mills Boardinghouses, Lowell, Massachusetts" at the Lowell Conference on Industrial History, October 26-28, 1989.

Nancy-Jane Brighton (B.A. 1989) successfully defended her undergraduate honors thesis, *Island of History: Household Archaeology at the Jackson Homestead, Newton,*

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Archaeological Survey in the Hu-Semaineh Region, Egypt

by Kathryn A. Bard

In May and June 1989, I directed an expedition to locate Predynastic sites in the Hu-Semaineh region of Upper Egypt; the modern villages of Hu and Semaineh are located southeast of Nag Hammadi, downriver from the Qena bend where the Nile flows east to west. Sir Flinders Petrie excavated Predynastic and pharaonic cemeteries, and a Roman fort, in this region in 1898-99, but he did not excavate Predynastic settlements. Analysis of a 1986 Landsat Thematic Mapper image by Dr. Farouk El-Baz, Director of Boston University's Center for Remote Sensing, indicated that some of Petrie's sites were beyond the edge of cultivated fields, and therefore they might still be preserved. Fieldwork in 1989 consisted of relocating Petrie's Predynastic sites, assessing their potential for future excavations, geoarchaeological investigations, and a systematic survey of two sites.

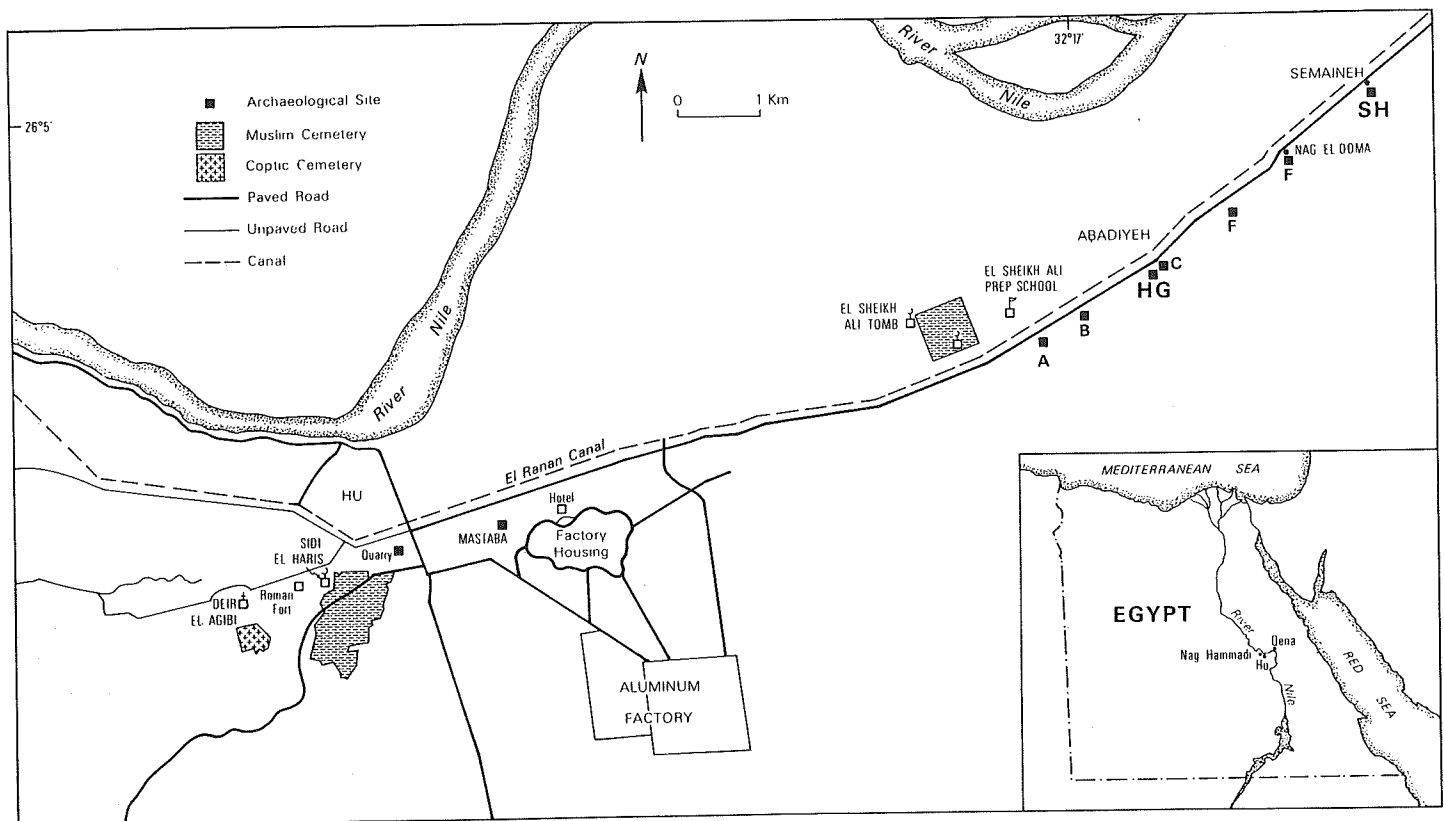
Professor Fekri A. Hassan of Washington State University organized the field logistics, and is supervising analysis of the sediments and geology of the region. The National Geographic Society provided financial support for the project.

The Egyptian Predynastic dates from approximately 4000 to 3000 B.C. Most of the known Predynastic sites are located in Upper Egypt, though related sites exist in Lower Egypt and in Nubia above the First Cataract. At the beginning of the sequence the earliest farming communities appeared in the Nile Valley, but later social organization became complex. By the Terminal Predynastic period major centers had developed in Egypt, and the First Dynasty emerged by 3000 B.C. The fourth millennium B.C., therefore, was a period of major social and political change in Egypt.

Unfortunately, most of what is

known archaeologically about the Predynastic is from cemeteries. Although cemeteries in Egypt have sometimes yielded rich burial goods when not looted, information from cemeteries is very specialized. Archaeologists need to excavate settlements as well as cemeteries for a better understanding of the economic and social organization of an ancient culture. Because very few Predynastic settlements have been excavated or preserved in Egypt, our 1989 fieldwork concentrated on a search for such sites. It was particularly important to survey this area in 1989 because a new land reclamation project that will irrigate 17,000 acres of low desert for cultivation was nearing completion, and most of Petrie's sites will soon be destroyed.

As the few known Predynastic settlements are located near their cemeteries, it was hoped that some settlement remains could still be located in the Hu-Semaineh region. Both Predynastic and pharaonic settlements have not been well preserved in Egypt for a number of reasons. Because of the narrowness of the floodplain, modern settlements



Location map of Hu Predynastic sites.

are often located on ancient ones and cannot be excavated; extended cultivation and shifts in the bed of the Nile in the last 5,000 years have also destroyed earlier settlements. Even when ancient settlements have been preserved, earlier archaeologists in Egypt were less interested in excavating them than in the potentially rich remains of tombs and temples.

The 1989 fieldwork began at Hu and continued sixteen kilometers eastward to Semaineh. Sites around Hu were less well preserved, and two of Petrie's Predynastic sites there were destroyed in recent years. Cemetery U is now the site of a gravel quarry, and what had not been quarried away from the cemetery was covered with asphalt. Another Predynastic cemetery of Petrie's had been destroyed by bulldozing for housing in the northern area of the Nag Hammadi aluminum factory, built in the 1950s.

The survey was more fortunate in locating the remains of a Predynastic village in the vicinity of Abadiyeh, where Petrie had recorded the site as "entirely plundered." The site was named HG after the modern village of Halfiah Gibli, on the western edge of the site. Although test pits excavated at HG indicated that deposits were thin, scatters of sherds and tools of Predynastic manufacture indicated the extent of the village, slightly greater than one hectare in area. Because there were no remains of substantial mud-brick architecture in the village, Petrie had presumed that it was plundered, but village housing must have consisted of less substantial materials. Unfortunately, part of HG had been cultivated from 1955 to 1965, thereby disturbing the archaeological deposits of the site. The site extends southeast across a small wadi. This area had recently been bulldozed in preparation for cultivation, but in one area in the southeastern quadrant of the site we found heavy concentrations of artifacts and a stratified midden. Four large limestone blocks were located in this undisturbed area, and

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Endangered Archaeological Sites in Egypt

Although Egypt's pyramids, tombs, and temples are endangered by erosion and ground water, as well as structural and other conservation problems, the most threatened sites in Egypt are its ancient settlements. This became startlingly clear to me during my fieldwork in the Hu-Semaineh region in the summer of 1989.

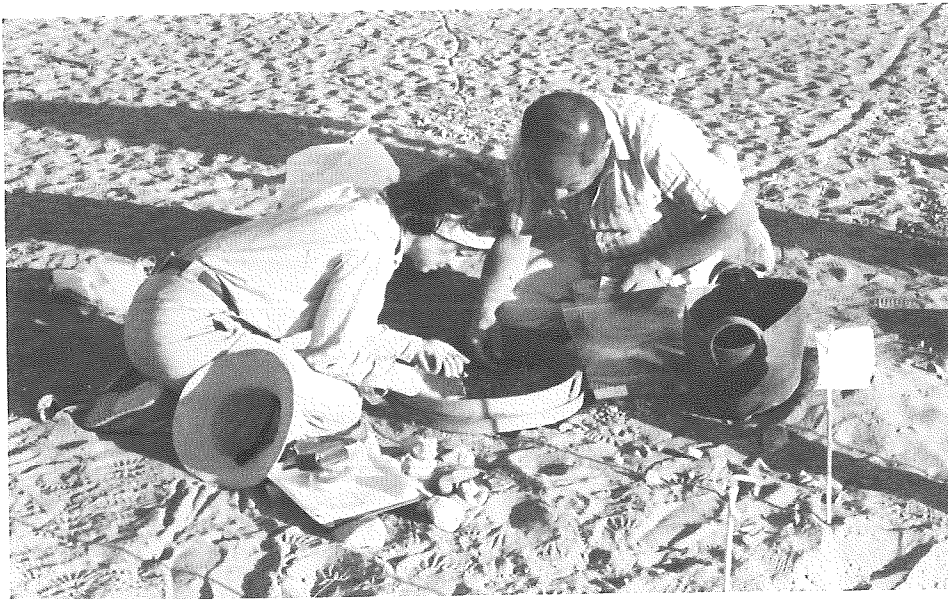
A 1986 Landsat Thematic Mapper image of the region showed cuts in the earth for irrigation canals that were of such a large scale that they could be detected from earth orbit. Once in the field, I came across a sign next to one of these canals proclaiming that 17,000 acres of land would soon be reclaimed for cultivation. The canals are located precisely in the area where my survey for Predynastic sites was conducted. But irrigation on a small scale had already preceded the construction of the network of large canals, and I frequently ran across small pumps lifting water up onto the elevated spurs of land overlooking the floodplain to irrigate small plots of land.

Known Predynastic sites in the Hu-Semaineh region are located on spurs that are several meters above the floodplain. Deposits of the villages are thin, as no substantial mud-brick architecture was constructed, and housing was probably of more perishable materials. If Predynastic occupation existed at one time on the floodplain, which is likely, that evidence has now been obscured by more than 5,000 years of cultivation. Because of the thin deposits of Predynastic settlements up on the spurs, any modern cultivation as a result of the new irrigation schemes will effectively destroy any remaining evidence.

Two of the Predynastic sites near Hu excavated by Sir Flinders Petrie in 1898-99 had already been destroyed by recent quarrying for gravel and the construction of housing for the Nag Hammadi aluminum factory. The very first day I was on survey I ran into a bulldozer clearing land for cultivation in an area where Predynastic sites had once been located. One of the settlements I located (HG) had recently been partially bulldozed, and most of this site had been cultivated for ten years, thereby disturbing the Predynastic artifacts and their deposits.

At the large Predynastic site of Nagada, where I worked in 1978, I also saw major changes. Many areas which had been open desert eleven years ago were now irrigated and cultivated, or were being bulldozed in preparation for cultivation. What had once been a very bumpy dirt road to Camp Nagada where we lived during the excavations was now a paved road to Thebes. New villages existed where I remembered only desert. The main Nagada cemetery with over 2,000 burials was still intact, but Cemetery T, which was possibly the burial place of rulers of the earliest state in Egypt, could not be found; it has probably been destroyed.

Egypt today has one of the highest birth rates in the world, with a very limited amount of fertile land to provide food for its burgeoning population. As cultivation and industrialization expand and new villages and housing complexes are created, ancient settlements still buried in the ground are being destroyed because the extant evidence is of a much less spectacular nature than what remains of tombs and temples. Particularly for the Predynastic period, where archaeological evidence is lacking for the processes involved in the transformation from village society to state, the origins of civilization are being forever obscured by bulldozing and development.



Kathryn Bard sieving test pit deposits with field assistant at site HG.

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these blocks could only have been brought in close proximity by man, perhaps in Predynastic times.

At the eastern end of Abadiyeh Petrie had noted Predynastic villages, but this area is now covered with modern houses and threshing floors, and very few Predynastic remains were seen there. East of this area, near the modern village of Semaineh, Petrie had excavated a small cemetery, mainly with grave goods dating to the Terminal Predynastic. To the north of the graves Petrie excavated are the remains of a Predynastic village not mentioned by him, which we named site SH. Typical Predynastic potsherds were collected in a surface survey of SH, and a test pit in the northern part of the site indicated the remains of mud-brick below the surface.

At both sites HG and SH there was evidence of ground-stone working. Tools for stone working collected at the sites include polishers and multifaceted grinding stones of quartzite and a dark red igneous rock. The polishing stones are too large to have been used to polish pots, and perhaps stone vessels which are found in elite Predynastic graves were manufactured at these sites. Analysis of thin sections from several of these tools is now being done to determine the areas of origin.

Because of its proximity to the

Terminal Predynastic cemetery H, site SH almost certainly dates to this period. As little archaeological evidence exists for the Terminal Predynastic, it is hoped that SH will provide missing information from the period when the early state was formed in Egypt. Charcoal samples from sites HG and SH are currently being processed for radiocarbon dating in laboratories at Oxford (using the accelerator mass spectrometer) and Southern Methodist University (using conventional dating techniques). Results from the SH samples may help resolve the recent controversy over the beginning of the First Dynasty and the starting point for the 3,000-year Egyptian pharaonic chronology.

Plans for future fieldwork in the Hu-Semaineh region include selective excavations at sites HG and SH, and the completion of a detailed archaeological and geological survey of the region in 1990 and 1991. It is important that this fieldwork be done as soon as possible because construction of irrigation canals for large-scale cultivation is nearing completion, and all archaeological sites are in imminent danger of destruction.

Kathryn Bard is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Archaeology, specializing in Egyptian archaeology.

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Massachusetts, before graduating *summa cum laude*. Brighton received a fellowship for graduate study in the Ph.D. program in history and anthropology at New York University.

John W. Cuzzo, graduate student, had a summer internship at Cambridge University's Godwin Laboratory, working primarily with radiocarbon dating techniques (see this issue of *Context*, page 4).

Lauren J. Cook, Ph.D. candidate, has taken a position with John Milner Associates in Philadelphia as a field supervisor for archaeological investigations of worker housing in Paterson, New Jersey. Cook hopes to use data obtained there for comparison with his dissertation study of working-class material culture from the Boott Mills in Lowell, Massachusetts.

David H. Dutton, graduate student, has been hired by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C., as an Assistant Historic Preservation Specialist. Dutton is assigned to the Northeast.

Jeffrey Jobe, graduate student, has received a grant-in-aid from the Boston University Chapter of Sigma Xi to continue his research at Middlebury Plantation, South Carolina.

Don Jones, Associate Director of the Office of Public Archaeology and graduate student, participated in the excavations at the Sanctuary of Poseidon on the Isthmus of Corinth, Greece, for six weeks in the fall.

Lia Karimali, graduate student, participated in the excavation of a Neolithic site known as Kitrini Limni, near Kozani, Greece. Her special interest in the project, directed by Mihalis Fotiadis of the University of Michigan, was the classification and analysis of flaked stone artifacts.

During the summer 1989 **Leslie A. Mead**, graduate student, conducted background research on the Ethan Allan Homestead in Vermont; her survey of archival sources and reports of previous archaeological work at the site resulted in the preparation of a detailed plan for future archaeological

investigations of this important historic site.

Elizabeth Shapiro Peña successfully defended her doctoral dissertation, *Wampum Production in New Netherland and Colonial New York: The Historical and Archaeological Context*. Her Ph.D. degree will be awarded in January 1990. Peña's analysis of documents and archaeological materials from Albany, New York, brings to light evidence of Dutch wampum-making in an artisanal neighborhood of the colonial city. Peña works as a site interpreter for the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, Bureau of Historic Sites.

Sally Pendleton, graduate student, completed a report this fall for the Arlington Historical Society/Prince Hall Mystic Cemetery Association detailing the results of her research on what may be the only black Masonic cemetery in this country. The report provides the AHS with information needed to complete an application for nomination of the site to the National Register of Historic Places. The study, funded by a grant to Boston University from the AHS, was performed under the direction of Professor Mary Beaudry.

Tom Tartaron, graduate student, spent the summer working on several projects in Greece. The first was the site of Kitrini Limni where he was responsible for conducting electromagnetic surveys which he did also at the site of Langadas for Stelios Andreou of the University of Thessaloniki. For the remainder of the summer, he joined Curtis Runnels, first at Larissa in Thessaly to participate in Professor Runnels' search for Palaeolithic occupation in Greece, and finally at Nafplion for the joint Swedish-American Berbati Valley Survey Project.

Grace H. Zeising, graduate student, completed a report on the archaeological testing at the Jackson Homestead in Newton, Massachusetts. During the fall, 1989 she worked with Fritz Hemans, Assistant Director of the excavation project at the Sanctuary of Poseidon on the Isthmus of Corinth, Greece.

Against All Odds? The SAA's Campaign to Save the Past for the Future

by **Mary C. Beaudry**

In 1989, the Society for American Archaeology initiated a campaign against looting and vandalism at archaeological sites. The "Save the Past for the Future" project is aimed at dealing with a problem that SAA members all agree is one of the chief concerns facing archaeology today. Looting and site destruction, often for profit, has become an enormous challenge for scientists, law enforcement officials, museum specialists, and educators, as well as for many members of the general public who are genuinely interested in learning about the past as well as in preserving quickly vanishing elements of America's history and prehistory. The problem is not confined to ancient civilizations or even to prehistoric monuments and grave sites; it is global and it takes many forms. It exists even on our very doorstep.

Last May, close to seventy-five concerned individuals—cultural resource managers, law enforcement officers, and archaeologists—met for a working conference on the looting problem, organized by the SAA. In the crisp air of Taos, New Mexico, at the Fort Burgwin Research Center, much was accomplished. The conference attendees each participated in one of three workshops: Understanding the Problem, Preventing the Problem, and Combatting the Problem. Each work group produced a written report by the end of the conference; these reports offered specific action steps toward accomplishing the goals of educating the public as well as public officials, of enforcing existing laws against looting and trafficking in antiquities, and of generating new legislation and programs to further protect our heritage.

I attended the conference representing the Society for Historical Archaeology as its President during 1989. The text of the position statement I prepared for the

conference follows. In it, I chose to address only one aspect of the wider problem of site destruction, that of investor-sponsored excavation for profit. The Society for Historical Archaeology has taken the position that maintaining professional ethics is the first step in making clear the true goals of archaeology to both our colleagues and the public. While this statement presents the issue from my own viewpoint, I remain convinced that the majority of archaeologists deplore the commercial exploitation of archaeological sites as much as they lament the loss of sites to wanton destruction and mindless vandalism. Pious lamentation, however, isn't enough. What the SAA's campaign to "Save the Past for the Future" is about is making us all aware that in order to combat looting and commercial exploitation of archaeological materials, we have to get busy and do something about it.

POSITION STATEMENT

Looting by Any Other Name: Archaeological Ethics and the Looting Problem

I was invited to attend this conference to represent the Society for Historical Archaeology in my capacity as its current president, so I feel it is appropriate to address certain issues of professional ethics that at present absorb much of the Society's time and concern. They center around the activities of some archaeologists that, while perhaps sanctioned by existing laws and governmental regulations, overstep the bounds of archaeological ethics and serve to foster treasure hunting and professional looting. The SHA has been involved chiefly with the problem of shipwrecks, treasure hunters, and well-meaning archaeologists, but it is the opinion of the majority of the Society's Board of

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Here's how you can help.

For more information on the campaign, write to SAA Anti-Looting Project, SAA Office of Government Relations, 1333 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036. Whether you'd simply like to be kept informed, want free brochures to distribute, or would feel proud to wear the dramatically stylish "Save the Past for the Future" tee shirt (\$10 each, children's sizes available), your support is appreciated.

Help document looting and vandalism in your area by taking photographs of such activity. Send slides and photographs to the SAA at the address above for use in public education efforts.

Send the SAA Office of Government Affairs copies of articles on looting and archaeology in general from local papers.

Send information to the National Park Service for its LOOT and LEAP databases. LOOT is a listing of looting cases that have been prosecuted. LEAP is a list of education products resulting from archaeology. You can contact the National Park Service Archeological Assistant Division, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127. Phone: (202) 343-4101.

Take part in excavations organized by your state archaeological society (e.g., the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, c/o Bronson Museum, Attleboro, MA), local college, or university. *Context* often lists excavation opportunities at Boston University-sponsored excavations, and the Archaeological Institute of America, 675 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215, annually publishes a comprehensive listing of fieldwork opportunities as well as an archaeological travel guide.

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Directors that the best-intentioned efforts of federal and state agencies to work with and to regulate the activities of treasure hunters only serve to legitimate their undertakings, to validate their finds—hence driving up their cost in the open market—and to encourage and to foster continued programs of licensed looting.

The example of the commercial salvage of the pirate ship *Whydah* off of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, by Maritime Explorations, Inc. (MEI), is a case in point. In this instance the salvors received an exclusive state permit that was interpreted by some as legitimating the project; this in turn enhanced the salvors' ability to attract large-scale investors. The success of this venture (MEI did in fact recover objects deemed of commercial value) combined with the aura of respectability conveyed by the permit gave its instigators the rationale for further depredations on the submerged archaeological resources of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In a remarkable and utterly incomprehensible move, the Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological

Resources recently granted treasure salvor Barry Clifford, President of MEI, a permit to conduct an exploratory reconnaissance on British ships scuttled in Boston Harbor during the Revolutionary War. While clearly historical and possibly eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, these wrecks can in no way be conceived of as having commercial value independent of their historical value (e.g., as with a recent wreck deemed to be "in marine peril")—they are not treasure ships and do not contain cargo of intrinsic monetary value. Why, then, should the Commonwealth of Massachusetts abdicate its responsibility as protector of historical resources and issue a permit to a professional salvor turned treasure hunter for activities that could cause irreparable harm to the integrity of these sites? Why would a commercial salvor want to undertake such a project in the first place if not for publicity as well as to raise funds for additional treasure hunting? This example makes it evident that programs that give licenses to commercial salvors put the power in the salvors' hands, allowing their

decisions as to what constitutes a commercially-viable recovery venture to override public officials' mandate to protect historical resources.

As a society the SHA has taken the hard-line stance that to condone, or worse, to promote licensed looting efforts motivated by commercial interests damages the profession at large and endangers sites both on land and under water. This position is for understandable reasons wildly unpopular among treasure salvors; far less explicable is the fact that it offends some archaeological bureaucrats who take inordinate pride in their "cooperative" or "collaborative" involvement in projects such as the so-called archaeological excavation of the pirate ship *Whydah*.

The Society's by-laws set forth ethical standards that led to rejection of a paper on the *Whydah* project (in addition to rejection of other papers on commercially-exploited shipwrecks whose contents were sold) from inclusion in the SHA annual meetings. This move was interpreted by state and federal archaeologists overseeing the *Whydah* permit as denial of a forum for presentation of results of what they had begun to see as their own project: "we can't get a forum for *our* project." Apart from the fact that the annual meetings of a professional organization are not intended to provide an open forum for any and all would-be presenters, something is very wrong indeed when archaeologists charged with enforcing imperfectly formulated state and/or federal laws that allow commercial salvage of historic shipwrecks confuse enforcement with personal involvement in a project (and in fact speak of it as if it was their own!). Such a situation is extremely dangerous and should alert both state and federal archaeologists that they need to take a long, hard, objective look at the nature of their involvement in such projects. Seeing professional archaeologists go beyond obligatory regulation and enforcement of minimal standards (ostensibly so that at least *some* archaeological information results from commercial looting) by claiming

that such involvement constitutes an exemplary project—a model for others to follow—is frightening enough, but when archaeologists are so misguided as to tout such projects as if they were their own, they put the archaeological profession in serious jeopardy.

Are we to say that looting and treasure hunting are givens, inevitable facts of archaeological existence, something we can do no more about than to offer our services as collaborators? To adopt the rationale offered by those who deal in and publish on looted antiquities—"of course we deplore illicit excavations/smuggling [read treasure hunting], but we have to get whatever information we can" . . . ? If we can't lick 'em, join 'em?

If we really thought that, we wouldn't be here at this conference. Are terrestrial archaeologists willing to accept the premise that they cannot prevent looting so they might as well join the pothunters and "loot it right," grab what information they can, and let the pothunters make the money and run? I think not—I hope not!

Why then should we apply a double standard and send mixed messages to the public? If we are going to eliminate looting, pot-hunting, treasure hunting, and trafficking in antiquities, we first must get archaeologists out of the looting business. Next, we must address the treatment of sites according to uniform standards regardless of site location, nature, or date. Most important, we must all be very clear on the distinction between minimal standards required by law and the highest ethical standards to which as professional archaeologists we should all subscribe and adhere. If we strive to change laws so that they truly protect resources and if we avoid sending confused and contradictory messages to the public as well as to other members of the profession, we will be able give looting its rightful name and never be asked to call it—or misconstrue it as—archaeology.

Mary C. Beaudry is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Archaeology, specializing in New World historical archaeology.

Mesoamerican Conference at Boston University

Over a hundred delegates attended the seventh Northeastern Mesoamerican Conference, which was held in the Department of Archaeology on October 27-29. While the meeting was intended to have a regional catchment, the topical focus on the archaeology of the Gulf Coast of Mexico attracted participants from as far away as Arizona, California, Canada, and New Mexico.

Organized and cochaired by Professors Patricia McAnany and Clemency Coggins, the conference included a major session on the recently completed project at Matacapan, a site in the Tuxtla Mountains of Veracruz where the cultural impact of Teotihuacan was perceived as being so strong that a possible colonial enclave of Teotihuacanos might have existed there. Robert S. Santley of the University of New Mexico, the project director, and Philip J. Arnold and Ronnie Kahn presented papers on the political and economic organization of Matacapan, craft specialization, and ideology. George Cowgill of Brandeis University led the discussion.

Complementing this were presentations by Barbara Stark of Arizona State University on her project in La Mixtequilla, just west of the Tuxtals; by George Stuart of the National Geographic Society on the discovery of the La Mojarra stela, a monument with a 400-glyph text dating to A.D. 156; and by Thomas Killion, a Research Associate of the Department of Archaeology currently teaching at Hamilton College, on the use of ethnographic data in studying tropical agricultural systems. Wendy Ashmore (Rutgers University) was the discussant, and the evening was followed by dinner and dancing in the the Castle at Boston University.

The final day of the conference was devoted to Olmec archaeology, with Robert Sharer (University of Pennsylvania) presenting new data on Olmec settlement patterns around La Venta; Rosemary Joyce (Harvard University) examining Olmec iconography; and David Drucker (Brandeis University) offering an archaeoastronomical explanation for the orientation of La Venta. Gordon R. Willey, Distinguished Research Fellow in the Department of Archaeology, was the discussant for this session, and raised the question that Olmec monumental art might be later than had hitherto been thought.



Patricia McAnany (left) and Clemency Coggins (right) of the Department of Archaeology at Boston University organized and chaired the conference.

Center Activities

October and November were active months for the Center's lecture and colloquium program. Following last year's successful Maya lecture series, this fall highlighted Ancient Egypt, an area that Boston University's Department began to develop two years ago when **Professor Kathryn Bard** joined the faculty, and which was already very much in the forefront of research by the Center for Remote Sensing, headed by **Dr. Farouk El Baz**. Bard and El-Baz, joined forces to give two public lectures on the beginnings of Egyptian civilization more than 4,000 years ago: the first dealt with the emergence of the Egyptian state under the first Pharaohs and their immediate precursors, the focus of Bard's research.

In the Fourth Dynasty, towards 2500 B.C., the pyramids at Giza near Cairo were erected. In pits nearby wooden ships were buried for journeying in the underworld: one was excavated some years ago and is now displayed in a special museum, while another has only recently been investigated. Dr. El-Baz described how his team used remote-sensing methods to penetrate and record the ship in its stone tomb without allowing air to enter from outside: the lecture culminated with a video film of the actual discovery, made by the project's sponsors, the National Geographic Society.

Other visiting speakers in October included **Dr. Simon Price** from Oxford University, who analyzed

"The Size and Resources of Greek Cities" from tribute documents; **Dr. Seamus Caulfield** of the National University of Ireland, who described recent discoveries of Neolithic field systems buried under blanket bog in County Mayo, at the first of a series of brown-bag lunch meetings; **Professor Mark P. Leone** from the University of Maryland's Archaeology at Annapolis project, examining "The Archaeology of Capitalism at Annapolis"; and **Professor Robert Santley** of the University of New Mexico, who spoke on "Intensive survey of an urban landscape in the Tuxtla Mountains of Veracruz." **Professor John Rick** of Stanford University went beyond the call of duty in delivering three talks in one day: the first on "Education and Archaeology at Zuñi Pueblo," at a brown-bag lunch, the second a departmental lecture on "Prehistoric Hunters of the High Andes," and the third a jointly-sponsored meeting with the Boston Society of the Archaeological Institute of America at which he addressed the problem of "Disaster in Paradise: What Really Happened on Easter Island." October ended with the Northeastern Mesoamerican Conference (see page 15 of this issue of *Context*).

Professor Erik Trinkaus, Professor of Anthropology, University of New Mexico & Université de Bordeaux lectured for the Archaeological Institute of America about "Life Among the Neandertals." The lecture was cosponsored by the Center for Archaeological Studies and Department of Archaeology at Boston University.

Dr. Paul Zimansky, Assistant Professor in the Department of Archaeology at Boston University spoke on "City of the Grim Reaper: The Rediscovery of Mashkan- Shapir."

The Center for Archaeological Studies., which was founded at Boston University in 1980, has as its chief aim the development and coordination of interdisciplinary archaeological programs in education and research on local, national, and international levels. The Center also seeks to increase national and international awareness of the importance of understanding other cultures, and of preserving the world's cultural heritage, by involving professional archaeologists, scholars in other fields, and the general public in the activities of the Center.

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