

Aboriginal "Shell Heaps" on Gunpowder Neck. Harford County, Maryland. H.C.M. Nov. 2, 1891.

Scale, 1 mile

210580

Office,
263 S. FOURTH ST.

Philadelphia,

1878

9725 - 9825

Mercer

Shell deposits, Longhorns Creek M²

Aboriginal Shell deposits on
Gunpowder Neck
Harford County Maryland.

On Nov. 1, 1891 I visited an extensive oyster shell deposit on the Bell Farm, ^{upon a knoll close to Bush River} (see map) A, 1, covered about $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 acres & was a smooth layer of oyster shells - (no doubt much levelled by long cultivation) about 1 foot in thickness. The shells were mingled with charcoal, fire broken stones, & Indian implements, ~~at~~ among which I found one characteristic "turtleback" (see specimens herewith ~~given~~ sent)

A, 2, on another & higher knoll close to the water, formed a layer (at the deepest part) 2 feet in thickness & contained similar aboriginal remains. Where the high bank facing Bush River had fallen away the ^{top} stratum of shells, overlying the clay bank 15 feet ^{in thickness}, could be plainly seen extending the whole length of the bluff. The deposit at A, 2, had also been levelled by cultivation - It extended over an area of 2-3 acres.

A, 3, covered an area of at least ^{& extended inland on the high ground for nearly} $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile - four acres, ~~but~~ it was much thinner

2) than the others - ~~the~~ + the evidences of the manufacture of arrowheads were more plentiful. There was a spring at the head of the marshy inlet between A. 1. + A. 2.

On the following day I saw much smaller + thinner deposits, where the cultivated fields ^{being} ~~were~~ simply sprinkled with oyster shells, ~~+ a few~~ ^{aboriginal} implements, + fire ~~broken~~ stones, at E (Mouth of Wattersons Creek, at bank) ^{in the woodland}

on the Sheckel property, and F, on the Brick House property. E extended + F ^{at} ~~over~~ covered hardly an acre each.

"E, where the surface could be seen, the ground was thickly strewn with fire fractured pebbles Hammer stones + fragments of white quartz were also numerous, + I found several arrow heads + rudely chipped ^{stone} implements.

From colored "field hands" who were familiar with the whole of Gumpowder Neck, I learned that there were large shell deposits at B. Legos Point (Sitting Farm) - at C. Ricketts Point, (Ricketts Point Farm) and at D. Days Point, (Rousis' Farm) + that the deposits at A + B were far larger than those at C + D.

Gumpowder Neck a peninsula lying between the mouths of Gumpowder + Bush Rivers

3) on the upper west shore of the Chesapeake Bay, about 15 miles below the mouth of the Susquehanna, lies North + South upon the Bay, + it is to be noticed that the great shell deposits ~~all~~ front the water to the Eastward ^{* (1)}

I remarked at A + C

(1) That the arrowheads + chips were rare + ~~fast~~ with one exception (a ^{yellow} Jasper chip) ^{at A. 3}, were all of white quartz -

(2) That the ~~so~~ soil among the shells was very much blacker than the common soil of the region, + that fine fractured stones were very ^{common} frequent -

(3) That round pebbles (not occurring elsewhere) generally far less battered than common hammer stones, were ~~be~~ + probably used to open the oysters, were very frequent among the shells -

(4) That all the implements found were of a rude type + in but one case showed traces of polishing ^{* (2)}

(1) * Oysters no longer exist in considerable quantities in the Gunpowder or Wash rivers -
(Information of Captain Owen + Edward Lynch)

4)

H. C. Mercer -

November 3rd 1891.

* (2) The implements found were a fair record. Doubtless few had ever been carried away by the negroes who notice nothing but axes & arrowheads -

wanted.

Camp sites on sand all along the river - +
Curiously enough opposite these outcrops argill. chips were frequent, but in many cases these had been struck off river pebbles.

I don't believe prehistoric man broke off or found ^{along the river} in situ any argillite bet. New Hope + Trenton on this side - If there is such a workshop it must be inland + is probably near Doolington where the blue vein runs. I will find it if it exists.
Had another look at

198

Doylertown. Dec 9, '91

Dear Dr. Abbott -

Back last night having worked up (see map) river from New Hope to Morrisville - It won't do to say there is no argill. nearer than Pt. Pleasant for there is at A a small vein - But this is not on the river - + the other outcrops though in color + texture at F + G exactly like argill. have not the conchoidal fracture that the stone chips would have

Trenton gravels + saw Volk.

At Morrisville found argill blade
+ fine fract. stone sticking in the verpen-
-dicular
sand bank

also

a very muddy
chipped stone, round

+ grey sandstone

in talus below -

Saw² large gravel exposures
at wheat sheaf - + hunted

a whole day in vain for Playwicky -

But my interest is in the upper
Yardley quarry - on hill-side

Glacial
drift

loam

sand

bricks

shale drift

contains

3 ft. down

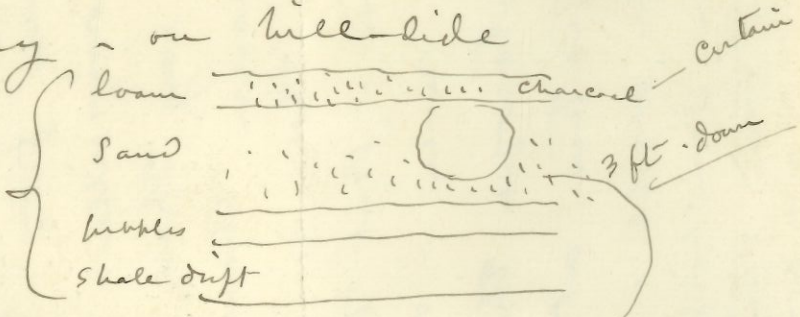
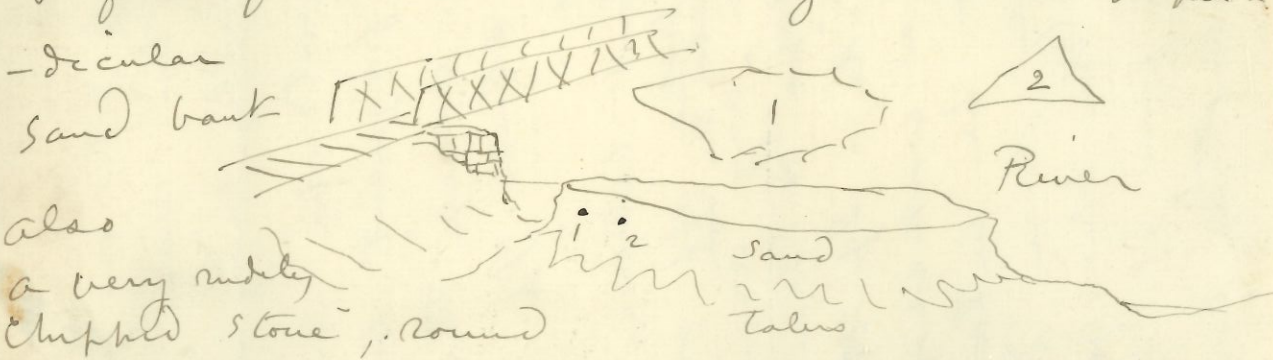
Volk says he thinks one specimen is chace -
but they are buggling. There is a black
something in the drift that in fine
particles would fool the devil.

He also says a tree might have
been struck by lightning. I found
no relics.

Will bring specimens down
day after tomorrow - Shendel obt. Chadwick -

Yours H.C.M.

small black
particles - many
perhaps not chace
but some may be
just under the
huge boulder -



July 24, 1892

Received of Chas. C. Abbott,
Ninety one dollars ³⁴/₁₀₀, on account
of explorations in Susquehanna
June and
Valley, July, 1892 —

H. C. Mercer.

~~Received.~~

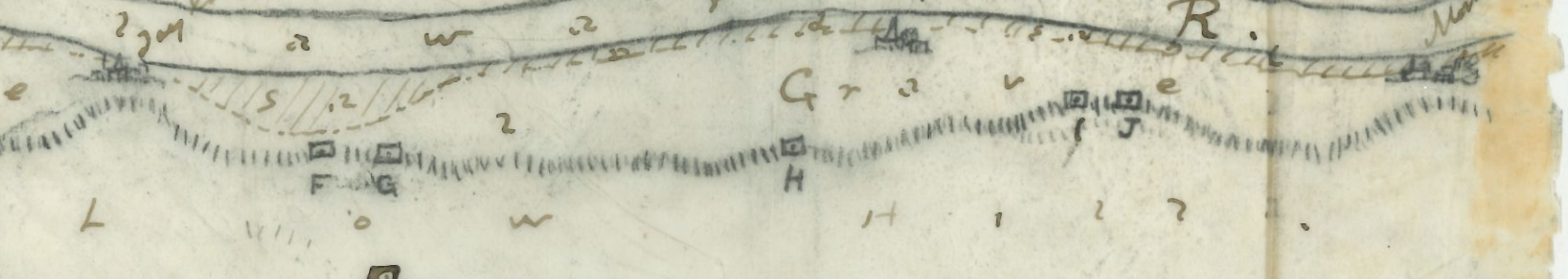
Lowell Jones
amount to \$27.00

to exhibit the blue at F + G. Mr. Parshale
 possesses argillite. yet the fracture not suff. conchoidal
 for the Ludians. K I did not visit.

Map showing blue slate or argillite
 on st. side bank bet New Hope
 Trenton.



□ = Quarry -
 A small vein of true argillite - B
 F + G hard blue
 + K



Blue slate ends bet. H + I.
 no true argill available for specimen. chiefly
 same at it.
 slate bet. fracture - C + D ditto. E soft blue slate
 H Red shale + soft loamier
 shale -
 I + J lavender soft sandstone +
 grey sandstone.

240581

MERCER COLLECTION

635
p7

The American Naturalist, July, 1894
"Progress of field work in the Department of American and Pre-
historic Archaeology of the University of Pennsylvania" by H. C.
Mercer.

FORGE CAVE, one mile below Barren Springs, New River, Pulaski Co.
Va.

Explored in February, 1894, with no indication of
successive epochs. A six-sectioned trench showed:

- 1) red earth left by nitre leachers in 1863-64,
with bottle glass, nails, domestic fowl bones,
etc., 15-17 inches. (White Man).
- 2) charcoal and ashes in hearth layers, sometimes
invaded by diggings from above, sometimes un-
disturbed, with arrowheads, chips, unglazed
pottery, and bone awls, 7-9 inches. (Predecessor
of White Man).
- 3) rough, unworn blocks of limestone, larger towards
the bottom, containing, for some distance down,
infiltrations from layer No. 2, resting on the
rock floor, 8 feet. (No trace of human or animal
occupancy)

Animal remains, identified by Cope, consisted of the
Unio, Paludina, Catfish, Tortoise, Frog, Domestic Fowl,
Bird (undetermined), Turkey, Marmot, Ungulate (undeter-
mined), Beaver, Lynx, Domestic Sheep, Elk, and Deer.
Position and presence of bones and shells proved them
to be of a fauna preyed upon by man.

5 potsherds, 12 bone awls, triangular chert arrowhead,
and infrequent hornstone chips were found in midden
layer.

Conclusion:- No earlier people than the Indian resorted
to Forge Cave.

MERCER COLLECTION

635
p8

From "Annual Report of the Curator of the Museum of American
Archaeology" Vol. I, No. I, 1890.

PT. PLEASANT, Bucks Co., Pa.

Site visited March 25, 1890 and revisited in late April.
The evidence proved it was a workshop where argillite
implements had been manufactured. Flakes, chips, cores,
perfect and imperfect implements were found as well as
several large specimens of typical paleolithic implements.
There was no evidence of antiquity greater than that of
Indian relics in general.