The Early Woodland Manifestation in Greene County, Indiana

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In the archaeology of the eastern United States the transitional period from a hunting and gathering to a food producing economy—Terminal Archaic to Early Woodland—is not as well known as a number of earlier cultural manifestations on an Archaic level. Of the latter, culture content, the way of life, and even biological populations themselves have been described in considerable detail, although far less is known concerning broader traditions, particular streams of diffusion, and cultural continuities. This applies equally to comparative work on the biological populations themselves: their origins, population size, migrations, micro-evolutionary differentiation, contacts and mixtures, as well as their eventual fate.

If this is true of the levels of culture, such as the Archaic, or of particular cultures themselves, such as the Great Lakes or Tennessee-Cumberland Archaic, it applies to a still greater extent to the transitional periods between culture climaxes. Often the validity of particular Archaic groupings have been questioned, chiefly because they rested on lithic complexes which may exhibit only limited local specialization. If food production and the use of pottery are added to various local manifestations and adapted to local conditions, it is generally difficult to distinguish the warp and woof that contribute to the cultural whole. Similarly, it is obvious that the early biological populations of the area, although derived from a common gene pool, because of their small size, relative isolation, and wide dispersal, may vary tremendously. All this adds to the difficulty of reconstructing the early history of the different ethnic groups that inhabited the eastern part of the continent. Answers to questions, such as a single or multiple origin of food production or pottery-making, the diffusion of tool traditions or ceremonial complexes, or the question of local physical differentiation versus the advent of a new group to an area, can only be found after detailed interdisciplinary data has been collected under test conditions and analyzed in its total temporal, spatial, and structural setting.

With the aim of contributing to an elucidation of the history of the Middle West in the transition from Terminal Archaic to Early Woodland manifestations, the artifacts from the two sites in Green County that yielded Marion Thick ware are described and compared to Baumer, Fayette Thick, (7) and Red Ocher (4) ceramic types of the same general time level. Lithic artifacts from these two sites are in turn compared with those which were associated with early pottery types of the other areas to determine to what extent these complexes shared traits, and in which particulars they differed.

The present paper constitutes part of an archaelogical survey the junior author has conducted along the west fork of the White River

over a period of more than two years, visiting many of the sites repeatedly. This stream, which courses southwest through the central part of Greene County, is joined by Eel River near the town of Worthington a few miles south of the Owen County line. In pre-historic times the interior of Greene County had rather extensive marshlands. These were known as the Worthington Marsh, Four Mile Marsh, Bee Hunter Marsh, and the Goose Pond. The Early Woodland pottery from the Oliver site, which Helmen (9, 10, 11) named Marion Thick, is found in the same drainage approximately eighty miles upstream.

Greene county was originally surveyed for archaeological sites in 1932 by Glenn A. Black (1), who located 32 village sites, 78 camp sites, 2 workshops, one shell mound, eight cemeteries, and 129 artificial mounds. Although Black collected 630 potsherds on the surface and 2,768 from the excavation of two village sites, he reported no evidence of Early or early Middle Woodland pottery. After visiting fifty-seven of the surveyed habitation sites, examining many of the collections in the same area, and locating sixty-nine additional habitation sites, from which 597 potsherds were collected, the junior author found only two sites which produced thick Woodland pottery. The Thompson Site yielded twenty-one potsherds of which thirteen were of this type, and the Davis Site one out of the four found.

The Thompson Site is located upon a projection of high ground which borders the north edge of a former marsh known locally as the Goose Pond. The soil is clay, and the site covers approxmately two acres, being elevated ten feet above the marsh into which it gradually slopes. It is located in the N.E. ¼ of the N.W. ¼ of the S.E. ¼ of Section 28, T.7N., R.7W., of Stockton Township.

Evidence of human burials from the southern end of the site consisted of six skull fragments from at least two individuals whose graves were disturbed during the cultivation of the field. Besides some deer teeth and mussel shells, the evidence for occupation includes the following lithic materials: fire cracked stones, hammer stones, pitted stones, flint spawls, 2 full-grooved granite axes, 2 granite celts, 1 thumbnail scraper, 1 pointed humpbacked scraper, 1 end scraper, 1 expanded base drill, 1 "T"-shaped drill, 9 small side notched projectile points, 1 small side notched serrated point, 1 diagonal notched point, 3 lanceolate points, 1 small triangular point, 2 small bifurcated base points, 6 stemmed points, 5 stemmed barbed points, 3 stemmed weak shouldered points, 1 small tanged weak shouldered point, 1 tanged point, 1 small trianguloid knife, 1 broad deep basal notched point, 8 sherds of grit and sand tempered cord marked pottery, and 13 sherds of coarse grit and clay, thick, plain and cord marked pottery.

The Davis Site is found in the N.W. ¼ of the S.W. ¼ of the S.W. ¼ of Section 4, T.7N., R.6W., of Grant Township. It is located twenty-five feet above the Latta's Creek Bottoms upon a southern projection of a ridge which borders the flood plain of the creek to the south. The soil is sandy, and the ridge slopes rather abruptly into the creek bottoms. The site roughly covers an area 600 feet east and west by 300 feet north and south.

As on the Thompson Site, human skull fragments, deer bone, and mussle shells were found on the surface. Lithic material includes fire cracked stones, hammer stones, pitted stones, flint chips, 1 stemmed scraper, 1 end scraper, 1 "T"-shaped drill, 3 stemmed projectile points, 3 stemmed barbed points, 2 side notched points, 1 bifurcated base point, 2 sherds of sand tempered cord marked pottery, and 1 sherd of thick,

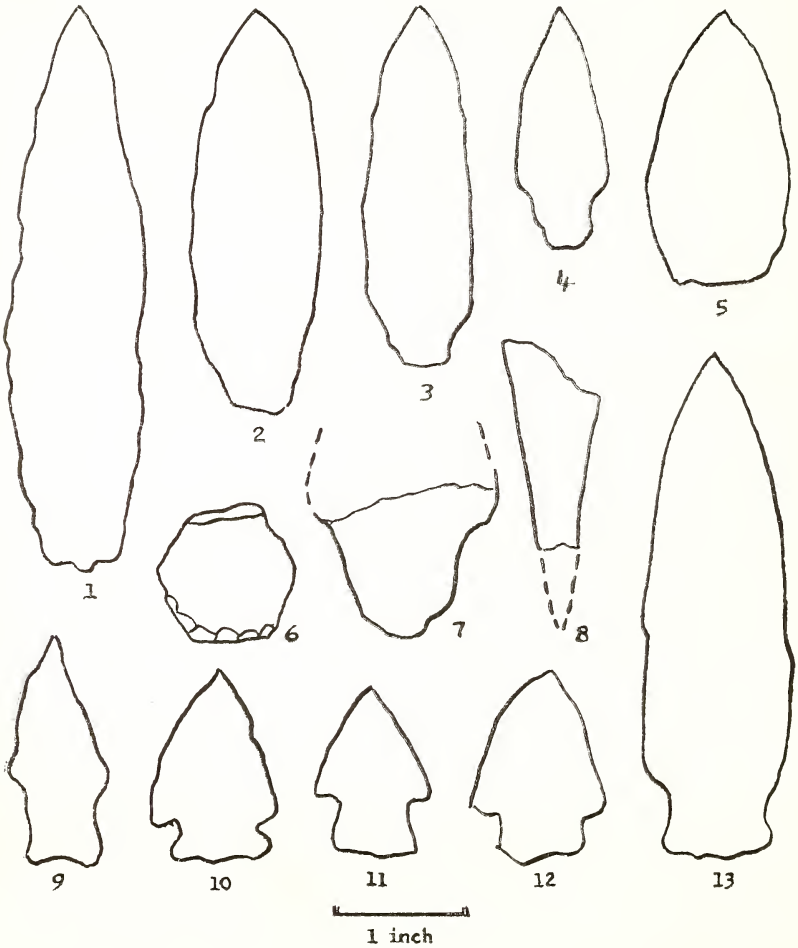

Figure 1

Artifact forms from the Thompson site resembling Baumer lithic material

coarse grit and clay tempered, cord marked pottery. Black reports 1 drill, 2 side notched projectile points, 1 triangular point, 1 knife, and 12 sherds of sand tempered cord marked pottery.

The one Early or early Middle Woodland potsherd found on the Davis Site is very similar to one of the sherds found on the Thompson Site. They are both on the average 15 mm. thick, exhibit cord markings on the exterior, irregular cord wrapped paddle edge markings on the interior, coarse grit and clay tempered, buff colored and quite hard. Besides the similarity of pottery and burials in the living area, the similarity of Woodland artifacts attests to the fact that they represent components of the same focus. These are stemmed barbed projectile points (No. 11 Fig. 1 and No. 4 Fig. 2), stemmed weak shouldered points No. 13 Fig. 1 and No. 1 Fig. 2), small stemmed points (No. 9, 12 Fig. 1 and No. 2, 7 Fig. 2).

The Greene County Thick pottery type has the following characteristics.

Method of Manufacture	coiled (?)
Temper	coarse grit and clay, particles up to 4 mm. in diameter; sand, limestone, and water-worn pebbles occur.
Thickness	walls 7-16 mm., most often 11 mm.; rim 6 mm. (?)
Texture	coarse
Hardness	3.5
Color	tan to buff to orange buff to reddish buff to gray; core buff and/or dark gray
Lip	flat to very slightly rounded (?)
Rim	straight to slightly flaring (?), vertical cord markings to lip (?)
Body	exterior usually cord marked (sometimes smoothed), sometimes plain; interior usually plain with irregular cord wrapped paddle edge impressions occurring
Base	unknown
Decoration	1 plain body sherd shows 2 parallel lines 4 mm. wide and spaced 18 mm. apart produced by a cord wrapped dowel or paddle edge.

Because of general resemblance and association with early Woodland lithic material, logically the thick Woodland pottery from the Thompson and Davis sites, should be compared with similar early types of neighboring areas. These include Fayette Thick pottery found in Fayette County, Kentucky, Red Ocher Crushed Rock pottery found in Fulton County, Illinois, Baumer Plain and Fabric Marked pottery found in Massac County (3), Illinois, and Marion Thick pottery from Marion County, Indiana. Similar types are known from Owen, Marshall, and Vigo Counties, Indiana.

In a comparison with Fayette Thick it was found that the Greene County Thick is generally thinner and harder. The texture of both are coarse. Fayette Thick shows an absence of clay tempering, and gray

coloring. The rims of both types are cord marked but the markings of Green County Thick are vertical whereas those of Fayette Thick are horizontal or oblique. Both have plain or cord marked exteriors, but Fayette Thick is often cord marked or fabric impressed interiorly in contrast to Greene County pottery. Fayette Thick often shows a pinched over cord-marked exterior, whereas the exterior markings on Greene County sherds is often smoothed and shows a parallel line design on one plain sherd.

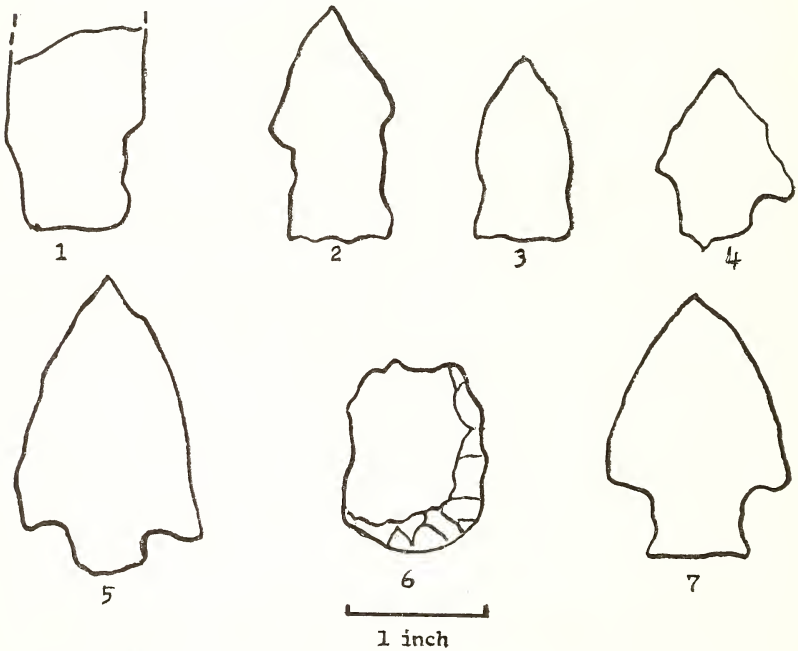

Figure 2

Artifacts from the Davis site resembling Baumer lithic material

As in the Fayette Thick type from Kentucky, the Red Ocher Crushed Rock type from the Illinois Valley shows no clay tempering and the vessels are generally thicker than those from Greene County. Further, it does not show the color range of the Greene County pottery, nor does it exhibit the smooth exteriors or interiors. But all three types are of approximately the same thickness, texture, and color range. The Green County pottery is quite harder than either of the other two. All exhibit flattened lips and similar rim construction, with Baumer sometimes showing insloping rims. Coarse grit and waterworn pebble tempering material is characteristic of all three with the size of the particles generally larger in Marion Thick. Limestone, clay, and sand tempering occur in the Baumer and Greene County pottery, whereas

it is absent in Marion Thick. Marion Thick and Greene County vessels are usually cord-marked on the exterior with the markings smoothed in some instances; Baumer is usually fabric impressed on the exterior with occasional cord markings which are sometimes smoothed. Marion Thick is rarely fabric impressed and lacks plain exteriors, which are sometimes found on Greene County and Baumer sherds. The interior of Greene County and Baumer sherds are usually plain, whereas that of Marion Thick is usually cord-marked or fabric impressed, although some plain interiors do exist. None show the cord wrapped paddle edge impressions of the Green County type. The Marion Thick pottery which has been described is entirely undecordated; Baumer pottery exhibits punctate and incised designs on the plain variety only, whereas one plain sherd from the Thompson site shows parallel cord wrapped paddle edge or dowel produced lines on the exterior.

The Greene County Thick pottery seems to be more closely associated with Baumer pottery than with Marion Thick pottery in terms of tempering material, especially in regards to the increased particle size and the absence of clay and sand in the Marion Thick type. The fact that Baumer sometimes exhibits insloping rims, as well as the similarity of Marion Thick rims to Green County rims is minimized due to the questionable association of the rim sherds classified as Greene County Thick pottery. The Greene County pottery shows more of an affinity for Baumer than for Marion Thick in terms of interior surface treatment—usually plain as opposed to usually cord marked—but differs from both by the presence of cord wrapped paddle edge impressions. The exterior of Greene County sherds is much more like Marion Thick than Baumer, which is usually fabric impressed in contrast to cord marked. Both Baumer and Greene County pottery show designed exteriors, but they differ in style, whereas no decorated Marion Thick sherds were noted.

According to Griffin (8, p. 98), who briefly touches upon possible interrelationships of the earliest ceramics of the Middle West, the different kinds of pottery should be regarded as various types of the same ware. He specifically includes Marion Thick, Baumer, Crab Orchard Fabric Marked, Fayette Thick, and even Vinette I of the northeastern United States in the same category. We herewith would add Greene County Thick as an additional type of the Early Woodland ware, with possible closer affiliation to Baumer and Marion Thick than to the other types. This may in part be due to greater spatial and temporal separation from the Red Ocher complex and the Fayette type of the Early Adena period. The employment of clay tempering by both the Baumer and Greene County communities is suggestive of contemporaneity and that the idea may have diffused from southern Illinois up the Wabash and White rivers.

Red Ocher Crushed Rock Type (2)

Method of Manufacture	unknown
Temper	coarse crushed rock
Thickness	average 14 mm.
Texture	little preparation of paste

Hardness	2.5
Color	tan or yellow buff
Lip	(?)
Rim	insloping or slightly flaring
Body	exterior basketry impressed (?); interior cord marked (?), cord wrapped paddle edge markings (?)
Base	unknown
Decoration	unknown

Fayette Thick Type (6)

Method of Manufacture	coiled
Temper	coarse grit, limestone and flint predominant
Thickness	10-17 mm., average 14 mm.
Texture	coarse
Hardness	soft
Color	light buff to orange buff
Lip	flattened
Rim	horizontal or oblique cord markings
Body	walls vertical (?); exterior plain or cord marked, cord markings often vertical; interior cord marked, fabric impressed, or plain
Base	flat (?)
Decoration	pinched decoration over cord marked exterior, cylindrical handle riveted to wall sometimes present

Baumer Plain and Fabric Marked Types (12)

Method of Manufacture	coiled
Temper	coarse grit, usually clay and limestone, particles up to 3mm. in diameter, sand and/or waterworn pebbles sometimes present
Thickness	8-15 mm.
Texture	coarse
Hardness	2.0-2.5
Color	dull gray to buff to brown to reddish buff to black
Lip	flattened
Rim	straight, insloping, or slightly flaring
Body	straight sided tapering somewhat to base; exterior usually fabric impressed, some plain, cord marked occurs with some of the markings smoothed; interiors usually plain
Base	small, heavy, and flat; often definite heel at juncture of base and wall
Decoration	punctate and incised on plain variety only

Marion Thick Type (9)

Method of Manufacture	coiled
Temper	coarse grit up to 9 mm. in diameter, water-worn pebbles
Thickness	8-15 mm., lip thinner
Texture	coarse
Hardness	2.0-3.0
Color	exterior and interior buff to orange, gray occurs, core gray
Lip	flattened
Rim	thinned and slightly flaring, cord marks vertical lip
Body	straight to slightly flaring sides; exterior usually cord marked, cord marks sometimes smoothed, fabric impressed rare; interior usually cord marked, sometimes fabric impressed, sometimes smooth
Base	rounded?
Decoration	none

Marion Thick Type, Iowa

Paste:

Method of manufacture: Coiled

Tempering: Coarse grit. Crushed rock in fragments often exceeding 0.2 or 0.3 cm. in diameter.

Texture: Coarse. Sherds were granular and sandy. Temper showed through the vessel walls.

Hardness: 2.0 to 2.5. Sherds were soft and friable.

Color: Yellow-orange or red-brown, but might range to dark brown or gray. Interior surfaces often black. Cores colored on exterior.

Surface Finish: Cord-wrapped paddle roughened on exterior. Some sherds evidently were textile impressed. Small areas of cord marking appeared on the interior, especially on the inner rim.

Decoration: None.

Form:

Lip: Flat.

Rim: Straight.

Shoulder: Evidently slight to no shoulder expansions.

Body: Probably deep jar.

Base: Unknown, probably conoidal.

Thickness: Lip: 1.0 cm.; Rim: 1.2 cm.; Body: 1.2 to 1.5 cm.

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