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The Rembert Mounds, Elbert County, Georgia
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THE REMBERT MOUNDS, ELBERT COUNTY, GEORGIA

By JOSEPH R. CALDWELL

INTRODUCTION

During an archeological survey of the Clark Hill Reservoir in Georgia and South Carolina, by Carl F. Miller and the writer from January 12 to June 1, 1948, a number of test excavations were made at the site of the former Rembert mounds. This important group, almost totally destroyed since it was first described by William Bartram in 1773 (Van Doren, 1928, pp. 265-66), has never adequately been treated in a scientific report, and indeed is scarcely mentioned in any recent publication dealing with southeastern archeology. The waters of the new Clark Hill Reservoir will cover the place sometime in 1952, and it is possible that no more digging ever will be done.

The locality of the former mounds is in Elbert County, Ga., on the western side of the Savannah River 3 miles above its confluence with the Broad River and 50 miles above Augusta. There, the river turns eastward on its southeasterly course, curving around broad bottom lands. The aboriginal remains are situated close to the river at the northwestern end of the bend (pl. 55, *a*). The owner of the land is Webb Tatum of Elberton, Ga. His son, Webb Tatum, Jr., who was managing the property at the time of our visit, courteously permitted us to make our investigations.

When Bartram described the works in 1773, they comprised an imposing group of one large and several smaller mounds standing adjacent to some extensive structures which he called tetragon terraces. Bartram was impressed by the size of the main mound, the largest he had ever seen (Bartram, N. D.). Seventy-five years later, the site was visited by George White who noticed that the smaller mounds had been nearly destroyed (White, 1849, pp. 229-230). In 1878, Charles C. Jones, Jr., reported that only traces of the smaller mounds yet remained (fig. 36) and that the tetragon terraces were no more than gentle elevations (Jones, 1878, pp. 284-285). John P. Rogan made an archeological investigation at the site in 1886, under the

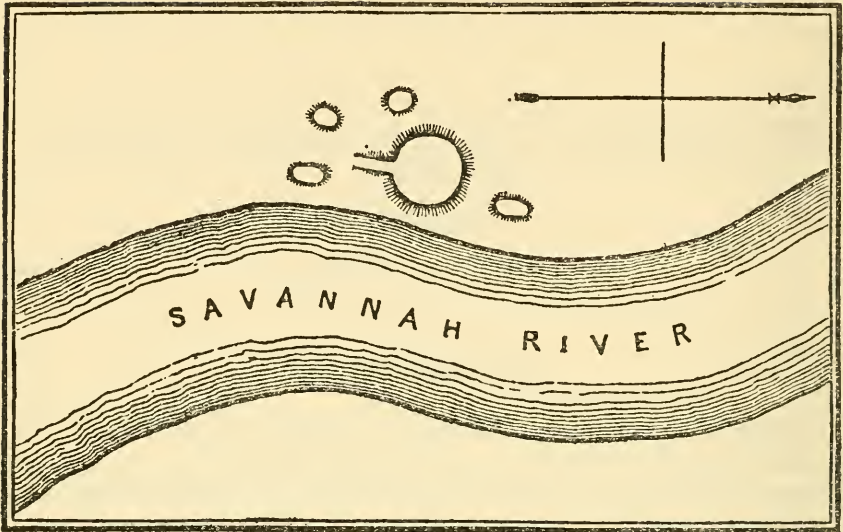


FIGURE 36.—C. C. Jones' map of the Rembert mounds.

general direction of Cyrus Thomas. Thomas reported that only the largest mound and one of the smaller were still standing at that time (Thomas, 1894, pp. 315-317).¹

When the writer arrived in 1948, it was learned that the large mound had been almost completely demolished during a particularly destructive flood in 1908. The remaining basal portions of the main mound were pointed out by Dude Dubose, an aged man who had played about there when a child, and his identification of the ruin was confirmed by another elderly man introduced to us only as the "Preacher." An unsuccessful search was also made for the small mound which had still been visible in 1886.

During 3 weeks' work, the survey party excavated five test pits in and about the large mound and dug six pits in the adjacent village area. Our purpose was to see if any important structural features might be present and whether there would be a great loss of material if the site were allowed to go under water without further excavation. These pits provided cross sections of strata and brought to light a considerable number of faunal remains, fragments of aboriginal pottery, and a few other artifacts.

The decorated potsherds most frequently occurring in the test pits could readily be assigned to the widespread type named Lamar Complicated Stamped (Southeastern Archeological Conference, 1939)

¹ Most of the material recovered during Thomas' excavation program was subsequently placed in the United States National Museum. Strangely, there is nothing there from the Rembert site.

which has been found throughout Georgia and in parts of South Carolina and eastern Tennessee. This is the marker type for the Lamar group of cultures, which in Georgia is correlated with Muskogean-speaking peoples, some of which later were known as Creeks. The pottery style is currently dated between A. D. 1450 and 1650. The Rembert mounds may not have been deserted for more than 200 years before Bartram's visit.

THE LARGE MOUND

All that remained of the large mound in 1948 was an irregular remnant hidden in a fringe of scrub timber bordering the river (pl. 55, *a*). The remains reached to within 130 feet of the water's edge forming an elevation about 4 feet above the surrounding land and about 118 by 35 feet in extent. The rampaging of the river was everywhere apparent: washouts noted by Jones and Thomas were still pronounced, and another, reaching between them around the remains of the mound, was plainly that which had caused its destruction.

In 1773 the appearance of the large mound had been described by Bartram as follows:

The great mount is in the form of a cone, about 40 or 50 feet high, and the circumference of its base 200 or 300 yards, entirely composed of the rich loamy earth of the low grounds: the top or apex is flat: a spiral track or path leading from the ground up to the top is still visible, where now grows a large, beautiful spreading red cedar (*Juniperus Americana*): there appear four niches excavated out of the sides of the hill, at different heights from the base, fronting the four cardinal points; these niches or sentry boxes are entered into from the winding path, and seem to have been meant for resting places or lookouts.

Jones in 1878 (fig. 36) wrote about the mound in this fashion:

Overleaping the river bank, the turbid waters had carved deep pathways in the surface of the valley on both sides of the "great mount." There it remained, however, totally unaffected by these unusual currents. It had evidently suffered no perceptible diminution in its recorded dimensions. The Savannah River still pursued its long established channel, but "the four niches or sentry boxes," if they formerly existed, were entirely gone, and of "the spiral path or track leading from the ground up to the top" we could discover no trace. On the south a roadway, about 15 feet wide and commencing at a point some distance from the base of the mound, leads with a regular grade to the top. This manifestly furnished the customary means of ascent, as the sides are too precipitous for convenient climbing. This feature seems to have escaped Mr. Bartram's observation. . . .

The material employed in erecting this large tumulus differs from the soil of the surrounding bottom. It is a dark-colored tenacious clay while the surface of the valley is covered with a micaceous loam readily dissolving into an almost impalpable powder. Nearby are no traces of pits or excavations. Nor are there any indications that any earth was scraped up around the base. These facts afforded confirmation of the statement made by the present owner of the plantation upon which these tumuli are located, that the big mound had been built with clay brought from the Carolina side of the Savannah River.

There clay abounds; and we were informed that in the side of the hill immediately opposite, the excavations may still be seen whence the tough material was obtained for heaping up this mound.

Thomas, 1894 (figs. 38, 39) described Rogan's excavations in the large mound:

This, which is much the larger of the two, stands 130 feet from the river bank, and is, exclusive of the ramp or projection, an exact circle 151 feet in diameter, nearly flat on top, and 30 feet high at the highest point (north side), but only 27 feet near the south side. The diameter of the top is about 70 feet. The plan of the ramp or rather extension, as it seems to be, is shown. . . . The vertical outline of the mound, with a section of the shaft, is presented . . . [see fig. 39]. The right or southern end of this shows the slope of the extension. This has an average width on top of 20 feet.

The mound is covered with trees such as sugarberry, walnut, hickory and oak. One sugarberry is 6 feet in circumference (at stump height); a walnut, 5 feet; a hickory, 3½ feet; and an oak 10 feet. The shaft was carried down to the bottom. The first foot was of soil [fig. 39, *A*], then 7 feet of dark sandy loam [*B*], next 1½ feet of thoroughly burned yellowish clay and sand [*C*], with a large percentage of ashes. This layer had the appearance of having been put down and packed while wet and then burned; it was so hard that it was difficult to break it. Next 3 feet of black earth, also packed [*D*]; then 8½ feet of pure sand [*E*]; and last, resting on the original surface, 6 feet of hard bluish muck [*F*]. All these layers, except the bottom one, had charcoal, mica, fragments of pottery, and animal bones scattered through them, but the last were so far decomposed that none of them could be saved.

As fragments of pottery and animal bones were found in spots, together with ashes and other indications of fire, it is probable that these were fire beds where cooking had been done. All that portion of the shaft below the layer of burned clay was so very dry that when turned up it would crumble to dust. It is possible that the bottom layer of blue "muck" is partly the original soil, as it is so much like the surrounding soil, and that a part of the surrounding surface has been washed away since the mound was built.

Our authorities do agree that the mound was circular with a flat top, and both Jones and Thomas describe and illustrate a ramp projecting from the southern side. Bartram's failure to mention this ramp, which could not have been less conspicuous in his day, casts doubt upon his observation of a spiral path with four niches or sentry boxes. Jones found no such features, and questioned whether they ever had been present. A spiral path would seemingly have been interrupted by the projecting ramp. No such niches as Bartram noticed have ever been reported in the Southeast, but mounds with two ramps, one projecting and the other ascending along one side, have been found in Georgia, for example, on the large Tumlin mound near Cartersville in the Etowah Valley (Thomas, 1894, pl. 16) and on one of the superimposed mounds at Irene on the Georgia coast (Caldwell and McCann, 1941, fig. 9).

Jones' suggestion that the mound had been built of clay brought across the Savannah River seems not only incredible, but senseless on

the part of the builders. Bartram's opinion was that the mound was "entirely composed of the rich loamy earth of the low grounds," and Thomas, discussing the washouts flanking the mound, says that "there are reasons for believing that at least a portion of the earth used in the construction of the mounds was obtained here, leaving depressions, and that, during high water, when the land was overflowed, as is frequently the case, channels were washed out from them to the river." None of the mound layers encountered by Rogan and Thomas corresponded to the type of clay described by Jones except possibly the extreme bottom layer which Jones could not have seen. The real coup de grace to Jones' theory, however, is administered by the multitude of potsherds, animal bones, etc., which Thomas found scattered through the mound and which must have been scraped up with the soil from the adjacent village site.

Our own test pits in the mound, Nos. 2 and 6 (fig. 40) showed that a considerable portion of the mound base had not been disturbed by the flood of 1908. Our strata can be correlated with Thomas' account of the mound structure when we consider that his upper levels have been washed away. All the layers we noticed in pits 2 and 6 occurred in Thomas' second lowest level, that which he called 8½ feet of pure sand. Thomas wrote that this layer was the lowest stratum containing potsherds, thus it must have extended down to our pre-

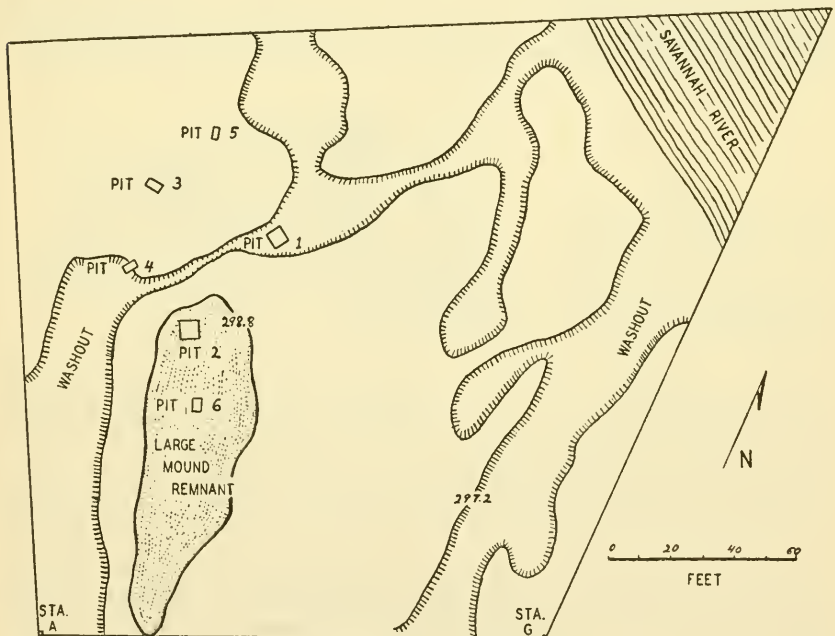


FIGURE 37.—Map showing test pits and wash-outs in the vicinity of the large mound remnant. Adapted from a topographic map by Kelly Mims, U. S. Engineers.

mound occupation layer. The pre-mound occupation zone is shown in figure 40 on the profile of pit 6. It was also found in pit 2, but did not appear on the west wall which is illustrated. This layer was composed of a 2-inch thick deposit of dark gray sand containing numerous potsherds and animal bones. Augur tests showed that the undisturbed sand below became gradually infused with clay as it extended downward. All the mound layers we found in the two test pits sloped downward toward a central point which presumably was the center of the mound. The significance of this cannot be determined without additional excavation.

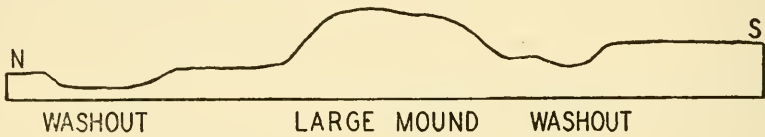


FIGURE 38.—Profile of large mound, adapted from Thomas.

Thomas' lowest level was :

... resting on the original surface, 6 feet of hard bluish muck. . . . It is possible that the bottom layer of blue "muck" is partly the original soil, as it is so much like the surrounding soil. . . .

Our own findings corroborated Thomas' opinion that his lowest layer was natural and not part of the mound structure. It appeared to be undisturbed in our pits, contained no cultural material, and did indeed resemble the soil in the bottoms surrounding the mound. Thomas'

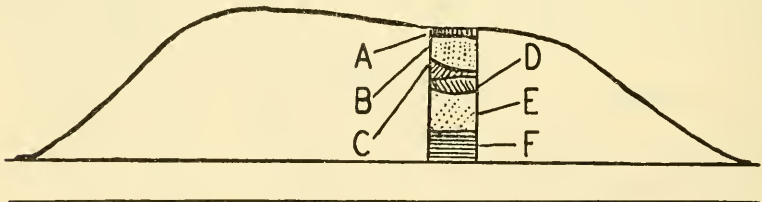


FIGURE 39.—Section through large mound, adapted from Thomas.

diagram (fig. 39) shows this lowest layer rising 6 feet above the surrounding terrain. This is evidently a mistake. Our measurements show the top of this layer to be at the general ground level, not greatly changed since 1886.

Three other test pits, Nos. 3, 4, and 5 were dug in an irregular elevation 40 feet northwest of the remnant of the large mound to see if this rise might be the small mound excavated by Thomas and Rogan. Judging from the slope and nature of the deposits uncovered, what we actually found was the feather edge of the large mound on the northwest side. If we consider the approximate center of the mound to

have been the point toward which the deposits in pits 2 and 6 sloped downward, then the position of pits 3 and 5, respectively 60 and 80 feet from the supposed center, is approximately the radius of the mound, the diameter of which, according to Thomas, was 151 feet.

The three upper layers in pit 3 (fig. 40) were water deposited and may have developed since the abandonment of the site by the Indians. Layer 4 was composed of dark organically stained sand containing a considerable amount of clay in massive deposits. All the cultural material found in the pit came from this layer, which was

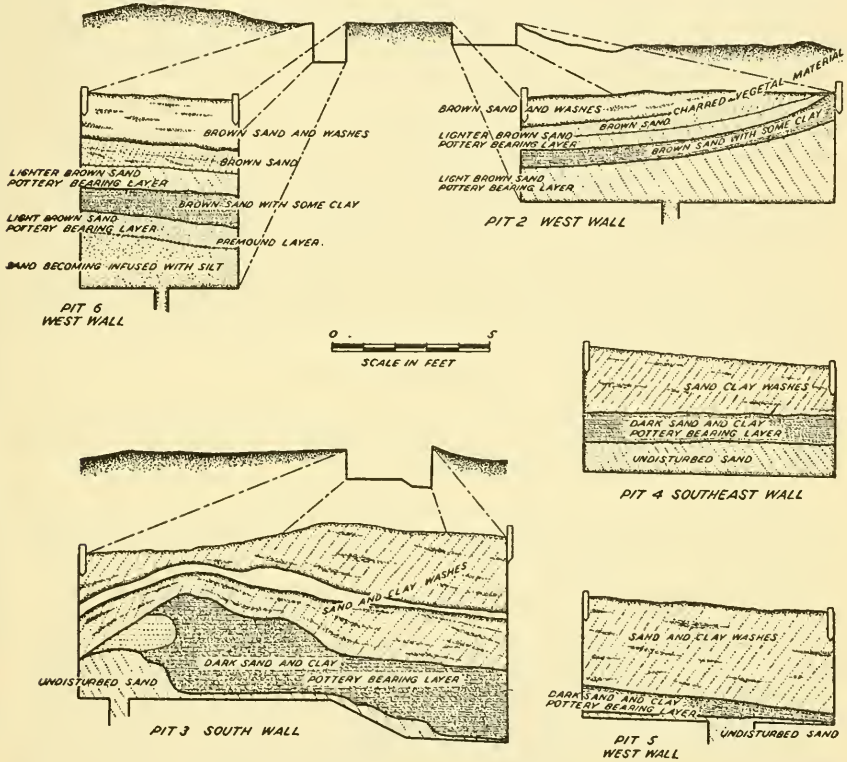


FIGURE 40.—Profiles of test pits in the large mound and vicinity.

full of potsherds, animal bones, and irregular rocks and pebbles. The bones looked extremely fresh when first brought to light and not at all decomposed. The bulk of the deposit sloped downward toward the west. Unfortunately, we did not have time to enlarge this excavation.

Pits 4 and 5 were dug 23 feet to the south and 24 feet to the west of pit 3 respectively. Pit 5 also showed the outward slope noticed in pit 3, probably the feather edge of the mound. Pit 4 contained the same strata as pits 3 and 5, but did not show any slope.

THE SMALL MOUND

In Thomas' time only one of the smaller mounds was still noticeable. He described it as standing:

. . . about 40 feet west of the base of No. 1. It is oblong in form, 58 feet long north and south, 41 feet wide, and 6 feet high. A large shaft had been sunk in the middle by some previous explorer, hence investigations were confined to the eastern and western sides, which presented one or two peculiarities. With the exception of the top layer of soil, one foot thick, the remainder of the east side consisted of river sand, with particles of charcoal and vegetable matter mixed through it, while on the west it was composed of small masses of red clay and dark earth. In this, at a depth of 2½ feet were the bones of a single adult skeleton. These were packed together in a space 2 feet square and 18 inches deep; the skull was placed face down and all the other bones piled about it. Immediately over the bones was a layer of red clay 2 inches thick, burned hard. Resting on this layer were the remains of a pretty thoroughly burned fire. A few fragments of pottery and a small clay pipe were found.

We presume that the other small mounds seen by Bartram and Jones were burial mounds. White (1849, p. 230) wrote that:

Captain Rembert has excavated the smaller mounds and found human skeletons, jars, pipes, beads, breast-plates, stone hammers, hatchets, arrowheads, etc. . . .

THE VILLAGE SITE

There is no doubt that the Rembert mounds stood upon an extensive village site. Bartram stated that there were:

. . . some very large tetragon terraces on each side [of the mound group], near one hundred yards in length, and their surface four, six, eight, and ten feet above the ground on which they stand.²

We have already noted that when Jones visited the site:

The tetragon terraces had lost their distinctive outlines, and were little more than gentle elevations; their surface littered with sherds of pottery, flint chips, and occasionally fragments of human bones.

In 1948 no surface materials were visible in the area adjacent to the mound except for a few sherds in the old washout to the west. Six test pits were dug in the general village area (pits 7-12) and cultural material appeared in four of them. The locations of these pits are shown in plate 55, *a*. Each one was only about 2 feet square and it seemed unnecessary to mark them for future reference. The cul-

² Bartram's term "tetragon terrace" which he also calls a "four square" terrace, is today obscure. Elsewhere in his writings he has said "the tetragon terraces seem to be the foundation of a fortress" (Van Doren, 1928, p. 407), and "Cherokee mounts are always accompanied by the vast tetragon terraces placed at one side or the other" (Bartram MS., p. 83). He states that tetragon terraces are characteristic of the region of northern Georgia and adjacent States which were formerly occupied by the Cherokees, but are not found in the lower Creek country south and west of the Altamaha River. (See Van Doren, 1928, pp. 406-407.)

tural deposits encountered in the pits varied from 0.7 to 1.4 feet in thickness and in pit 7 obtained a thickness of 3.3 feet. Most of the material found consisted of potsherds, but pit 12 yielded animal bones and ash as well. Exploratory trenches in this area would be advisable if additional work should be done at the site.

POTTERY

The numerous potsherds found by us at the Rembert site were examined while they were coming out of the test pits but there was no evidence of stratigraphic change in the pottery types. The large mound and village area were used for the most part during one major period, although random sherds datable to earlier times indicate sporadic occupations by previous peoples. The bulk of the decorated sherds from all the test pits belong to the type of pottery called Lamar Complicated Stamped. This is a common style at late sites in most of Georgia and the adjoining parts of South Carolina and eastern Tennessee. Fairbanks has suggested the dates 1540-1650 for the type as it occurs in central Georgia (Fairbanks, 1946, p. 103), the region where it was first described (Southeastern Archeological Conference, 1939). A terminal date of 1600 was suggested for the variant which was found at the Irene site on the Georgia coast (Caldwell and McCann, 1941, pp. 46-47). A recent statement is that:

The Lamar site at Macon and the Irene site on the coast are among the latest prehistoric sites in their respective areas. No historic materials have been found at either, but Waring has reported Spanish wheel-made pottery from some coastal Lamar sites, and historic chinaware and nails were found in the upper levels at Hollywood [near Augusta on the Savannah River]. A number of historic Cherokee sites in eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina have a Lamar-like pottery which is considerably later than in Georgia. It is likely that many and perhaps all Lamar-like sites are post DeSoto [Caldwell, n. d.].

A. R. Kelly and Gordon R. Willey are now inclined to a somewhat earlier beginning date for Lamar Complicated Stamped (personal communication from Gordon R. Willey) but no earlier than 1450. We are on fairly sure ground if we place the occupation at the Rembert site between this date and 1650.

The most abundant single type of pottery at the Rembert site was Lamar Plain. A variant of this has been described on the Georgia coast (Caldwell and McCann, 1941, pp. 48-49) but not in central Georgia where it also occurs. At the Rembert site as elsewhere, association with the stamped type and correspondence in many ceramic features other than surface finish indicate that Lamar Plain was made at the same time as Lamar Complicated Stamped. This is also true of the type Lamar Bold Incised (News Letter, Southeastern Archeological Conference, 1939). The corresponding type on the

Georgia coast is Irene Incised (Caldwell and McCann, 1941, pp. 47-48).

LAMAR COMPLICATED STAMPED (pl. 56, A-F')

This type of pottery at the Rembert site was made of gritty local clay by the coiling method usual in the southeast, and further tempered with relatively large particles of quartz. The exterior surfaces of the vessels were fired to colors ranging from dark gray through shades of brown to red and buff. The firing was not well controlled. A single color is often seen to prevail over a large vessel fragment, but it is not unusual to find a sherd showing two or more shades of color. The interior surfaces were frequently darker than the exterior, generally well smoothed, often burnished.

The entire exterior surfaces of the vessels were stamped with impressions of carved paddles, possibly of pottery or wood. A rather elaborate fylfot cross was the principal design motif (pl. 56, A-D) here as in central Georgia and on the coast, but other designs are found as well (pl. 56, E, F) in all three areas. Most vessel rims at the Rembert site have an applique strip below the lip, which was decorated by incising, notching, or pinching. No complete vessels were found, but the sherds indicate that the customary Lamar form of jar with rounded bottom, rounded sides, and outcurving rim was present. The sides seem to be somewhat straighter and the rim less flaring than in central Georgia or on the coast.

LAMAR PLAIN (PLATE 56, G-L)

The unusually high proportion of plain pottery at the Rembert site is itself a noteworthy fact. The sherds conform well to the coastal type in paste and surface finish, but there are proportionately more jars and fewer bowls. The former have the straighter sides and less pronounced rim flare which we noted to be characteristic of the stamped pottery. Similar applique rim treatment is frequently found.

LAMAR BOLD INCISED (PLATE 56, M)

Only three sherds of this type were found, and since a much higher proportion is usual at Lamar sites elsewhere, we consider the scarcity of Lamar Bold Incised to be a distinctive feature of the local pottery complex.

OTHER TYPES OF POTTERY PRESUMABLY MADE DURING THE LAMAR PERIOD AT THE REMBERT SITE

A few other sherds are believed to have been made at the same time as the Lamar types because they conform to these in most respects

except surface finish. They were too few, however, to be assigned type names. Plate 56, *N* is one of a group which shows a curiously rough and uneven surface. This might be intentional roughening or possibly the circumstance of the vessel having been fired without first having been smoothed. Other sherds show a lightly brushed or combed surface (pl. 56, *Q*), still fewer are cord roughened (pl. 56, *S*), and two sherds look as though they might have been decorated with a corncob, although it is unlikely that this was the method used.

EARLIER POTTERY TYPES

Some sherds resembling types which in other areas have been found stratigraphically below Lamar pottery show that the Rembert site was occasionally occupied during earlier times. A few may be Savannah Check Stamped (not shown) (Caldwell and McCann, 1941, pp. 44-45). Others had the distinctive bar and triangle and bar and circle designs which are called Etowah Stamped (pl. 56, *O*, *P*). This type has been found abundantly at the Tumlin mounds near Cartersville, Ga., and at other sites on the Etowah River (Wauchope, 1948, pl. 18, *B*, top row). Still earlier pottery in the Etowah area is like the check stamped sherd shown in plate 56, *V*, the simple stamped sherd, 56, *U*, and the sherd decorated by a cord-wrapped stick, 56, *T*. Not shown is a specimen of the type Woodstock Diamond Stamped (Wauchope, 1948, pl. 18, *A*, top row), and an unidentified net-marked sherd.

ARTIFACTS OTHER THAN POTSHERDS

Such objects were not especially frequent, but nearly all specimens were characteristic of other Lamar sites in Georgia.

Sherd disks (pl. 55, *b*, *E*).—Seven disks made of sherds were found. Four of them were made from Lamar Complicated Stamped sherds, two were plain, and the decoration of the other was indistinct.

Pottery pipes (pl. 55, *b*, *D*, *H*).—There was one complete pottery elbow pipe and one pipe bowl fragment. No tempering material was visible in either. Both had burnished exterior surfaces.

Fired clay wall plaster (pl. 55, *b*, *A*).—Three small fragments showing wattle impressions indicated the former presence of wattle and daub buildings.

Bone tube (not illustrated).—A fragment of a cut bone tube (probably turkey tibio-tarsus) $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter was found. A roughly triangular perforation in one side three-fifths of the distance from the cut end may be accidental, for the specimen is in bad condition.

Stone disk (pl. 55, *b*, *F*).—There was one small greenstone disk, somewhat chipped. Thickness about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch.

Stone projectile points.—In this region at present, only a few types of stone points can be assigned to chronological periods. One of the two points found at Rembert's (*I*), made of quartz, can be duplicated at other Lamar sites. The remaining specimen, a fairly large coarsely flaked stemmed point of weathered chert, resembles examples from Stalling's Island (see Claffin, 1931, for various examples of early points) and is probably an old type.

Stone chips (not illustrated).—Several chips and flakes of quartz and chert were recovered in the excavations, but such materials are much less frequent at Rembert's than at most sites in the vicinity.

Shell (pl. 55, b, B, C).—One massive bead made of the central columella of conch, and two small disk beads probably also conch, were found. There was also one cut fragment of conch shell. Such shells must have been brought from the ocean, probably from the Georgia-South Carolina coast.

Other materials.—There were two small unworked fragments of sheet mica, obtainable locally, and a piece of bitumen, probably from the coast.

TRAIT LIST

General:

A fair-sized town with a group of burial mounds around a very large sub-structure mound with associated tetragon terraces.

Mound building and burial:

Large mound circular with flat top and a projecting ramp from the summit, but probably not with a spiral ramp and probably not with niches or sentry boxes at the cardinal points.

The mound constructed of layers of sand and clay probably obtained from the ground adjacent and the lower building deposits sloped inward toward the center of the mound.

The smaller mounds contained burials with grave offerings which according to White were: Jars, pipes, beads, breastplates, stone hammers, hatchets, arrowheads, etc.

An oblong mound (dug by Rogan) had a burial of the bundle type face down and other bones on skull and over it a layer of red clay burned hard with fragments of pottery and a clay pipe perhaps associated.

Pottery:

	<i>Occurrence</i>
Lamar Complicated Stamped.....	Frequent.
Lamar Plain.....	Frequent.
Lamar Bold Incised.....	Few.
Minority Lamar (?) types.....	Few.
Etowah Stamped.....	Moderate.
Savannah Checkstamped.....	Few.
(Early) Checkstamped.....	Few.
(Early) Simple Stamped.....	Few.
(Early) Cordwrapped Stick Decorated.....	Few.
Woodstock Diamond Stamped.....	Few.

Other artifacts:

Sherd disks.....	7
Pottery elbow pipes.....	2
(Fired) clay wall plaster.....	3
Bone tube.....	1
Stone disk (small).....	1
Stone projectile point, triangular, slightly concave base, quartz.....	1
Stone projectile point (probably pre-Lamar), large, stemmed, coarse chipping, weathered chert.....	1
Stone chips, quartz, and weathered chert.....	X
Shell bead, massive conch.....	1
Shell bead, small disk, conch (?).....	2
Shell cut fragment, conch.....	1
Mica, small unworked fragments.....	2
Bitumen, small piece.....	1

Mammalian remains:^a

Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*):

- 2 distal ends of humeri.
- 1 Distal end of ulna.
- 2 fragments of ulnae.
- 1 distal epiphysis of femur.
- 7 fragments of radii.
- 6 fragments of ribs.
- 1 fragment of scapula.
- 5 vertebrae.
- 1 fragment of pelvis.
- 8 fragments of mandibles.
- 3 fragments of maxillae.
- 1 fragment of antler.

Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*):

- 1 mandible.

CONCLUSIONS

The recent investigations at the Rembert site provided certain new data which place this once important mound group into the current picture of southeastern archeology. The site was once the place of a fair-sized town, apparently with permanent buildings of wattles woven between uprights and plastered with clay. The most striking feature must have been the imposing circular and flat-topped substructure mound, with a projecting ramp leading up to the summit, the largest mound Bartram had ever seen. Around this stood a group of burial tumuli and the extensive platforms which Bartram called tetragon terraces.

The mounds and associated village were built and utilized during the Lamar period in Georgia, at some time between A. D. 1450-1650, probably by a Muskogean-speaking people.

Local variations in the Lamar pottery at the Rembert site are straighter sides and less rim flare on jars than are found at Lamar

^a Identified by Henry W. Setzer, Division of Mammals, United States National Museum.

sites in central Georgia or on the coast. There is also a much higher proportion of undecorated pottery and much less pottery decorated by incising. We could discover no stratigraphic variation in the pottery of the Lamar types occurring at the site, although random sherds indicated that the place had occasionally been occupied by earlier peoples.

The relatively few artifacts other than pottery conform in the main to the kinds of artifacts found at other Lamar sites. The employment of bitumen and the use of conch shells for beads show connections with the Coast.

It is extremely doubtful if the large mound ever had the spiral ramp with niches at cardinal points which Bartram described. We are also inclined to discredit Jones' theory that the large mound was constructed of clay brought from the other side of the Savannah River.

At this writing much of the basal portion of the large mound is still intact. In view of the neglect of this site in the past, it has been recommended that an excavation program be undertaken before 1952 when the place will be covered by water.

LITERATURE CITED

BARTRAM, WILLIAM.

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See also Van Doren, 1928.

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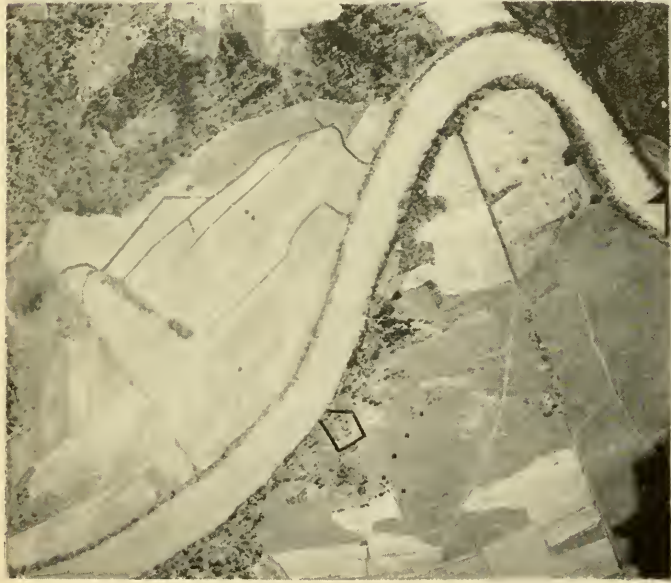
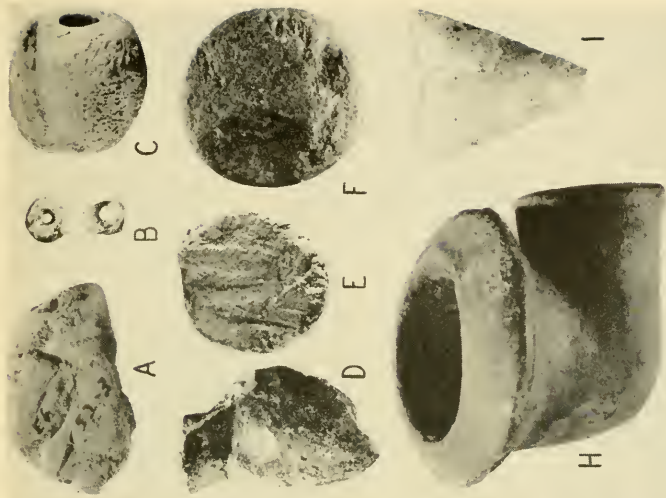
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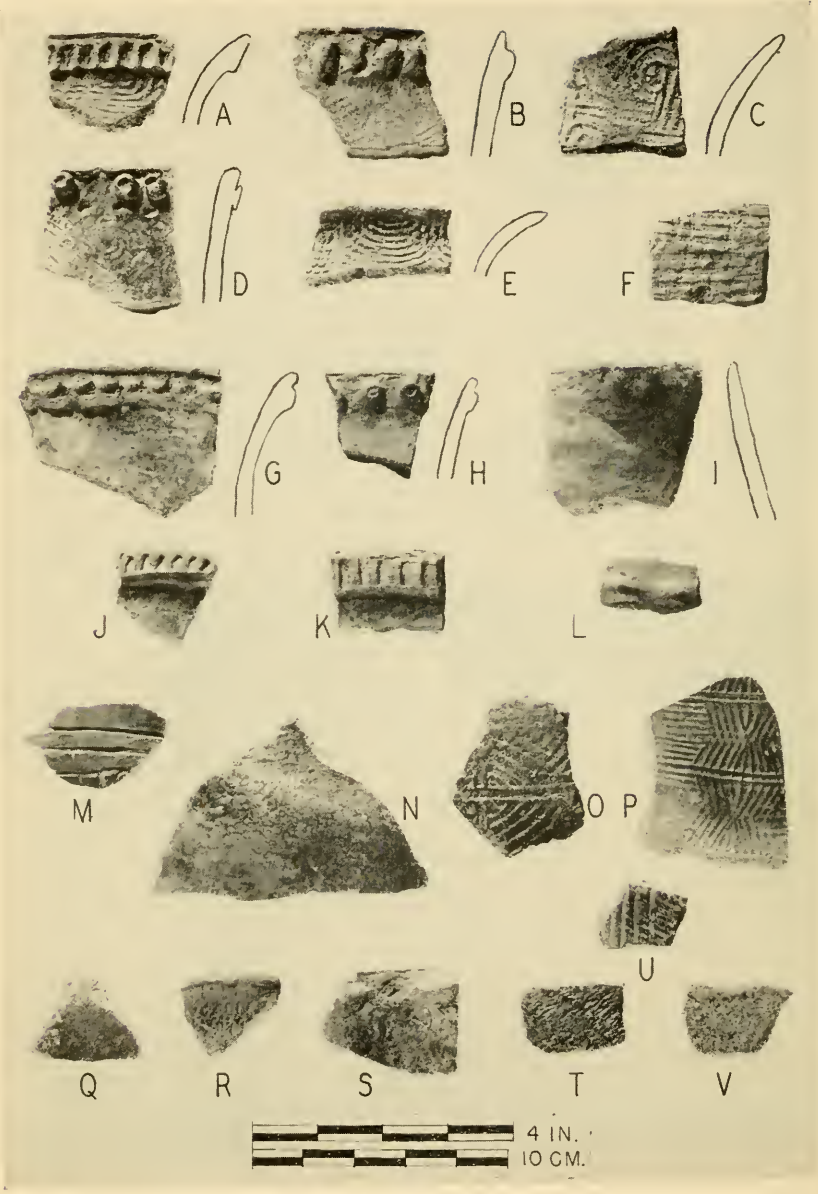
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FEET*a**b*

a, Aerial view of the Rembert mounds' location, and the accompanying village site. The outlined area indicates the mounds, and the location of the test pits is shown by the black dots in the field below. *b*, Pottery pipes, stone disks, projectile point, and shell beads.



Potsherd types.