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Tribes and Traders on the North Carolina Piedmont, A.D. 1000–1710

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Because of their small sizes and their location, the "Siouan-speaking" tribes that dotted the North Carolina piedmont managed to avoid the first waves of disease and disruption ushered in by the Spaniards during the sixteenth century. Even the creation in 1607 of a permanent English colony at Jamestown had no immediate impact upon these piedmont Siouans. Although word of the light-skinned foreigners and occasional trinkets almost certainly made their way to the interior through Indian intermediaries, it was not until 1646, following two Indian wars and the establishment of Fort Henry at the falls of the Appomattox River, that Virginia was in a position to develop a trade with tribes to the southwest (Merrell 1989: 28).

Interest in exploiting the newly opened frontier was almost immediate (see Bland 1651), and during the last half of the seventeenth century numerous traders and explorers turned their attention to the Carolina "backcountry" and began to venture into the heart of the North Carolina piedmont. Some, like John Lederer in 1671 (Cumming 1958), searched for the "Indian Sea," while others looked for the quickest passage through the Appalachian Mountains. Most, however, sought new suppliers of deerskins and pelts, and markets for their "edged tools" and ornaments.

Unlike their European rivals in the New World, these early Englishmen did not come to conquer or to proselytize the natives but to establish commercial relationships. Their motives seemed harmless enough. Yet the arrival of foreign traders presaged a tidal wave of cultural and biological devastation. By the end of the seventeenth century, the piedmont tribes had felt the full sting of disease, depopulation, and social upheaval. In this chapter, we review some of the consequences of this clash of cultures in light of recent archaeological studies conducted as part of the University of North Carolina's Siouan project.

History of Siouan Project Research

Although a North Carolina Siouan project was organized in 1938 by Joffre Coe (Coe and Lewis 1952; Lewis 1951) and reported on in 1945 by James B. Griffin (Griffin 1945), the current project traces its roots back only to 1972. In January of that year, Bennie Keel and Keith Egloff, both of the university's Research Laboratories of Archaeology, made a routine visit to the purported site of Upper Saratown, a seventeenth-century Siouan village on the Dan River in North Carolina (Fig. 10.1). They happened upon a relic collector who had just dug into one of the few undisturbed burials among the many that had been looted there since the early 1960s. With some persuasion, they convinced the pothunter to leave, salvaged the exposed grave, and returned to Chapel Hill to report to Coe, the Research Laboratories' director (Keel 1972). Because of the extensive looting, it was decided to begin full-scale excavations at Upper Saratown the following summer. Archaeological investigations

at the site continued every summer until 1981 (Ward 1980; Wilson 1983).

While excavations were being conducted at Upper Saratown, many of the staff and students associated with the Research Laboratories developed a strong interest in culture change on the piedmont during the contact period. When Coe retired as director in 1982, he was replaced by Roy Dickens, who also was very interested in contact period archaeology. Soon after his arrival, a long-term program of research was formally organized as the "Siouan project" (Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987).

The first phase of the project involved reviewing the Upper Saratown materials and other collections thought to date to the contact period. One of these was from the Wall site near Hillsborough, North Carolina, which was extensively excavated by Coe and Robert Wauchope between 1938 and 1941 (Fig. 10.2). This site was thought to represent the remains of the Occaneechi village that the English surveyor John Lawson visited in 1701 (Coe 1952, 1964; Lefler 1967). After a casual appraisal of the pottery and historic artifacts, the archaeologists raised questions regarding the date of the Wall site occupation. A comparison of the site's pottery with pottery from Upper Saratown suggested that the Wall site predated the contact period. Furthermore, the few historic artifacts recovered by Coe and Wauchope were primarily from the plow zone and appeared to date to the late eighteenth century, the period following the settlement of nearby Hillsborough.

To clarify the timing of the Wall site occupation, excavations were resumed there during the summer of 1983. It quickly became apparent that Wall was occupied too early to be the site of the 1701 Occaneechi village. Field reconnaissance of the area around the Wall site revealed another village site—the Fredricks site—that contained conclusive evidence of a late seventeenth- to early eighteenth-century occupation. This small village was completely excavated between 1983 and 1986 and is now believed to represent the remains of the Occaneechi village described by Lawson (Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987; Lefler 1967: 61).

In 1987 and 1988, Siouan project excavations were expanded to include late prehistoric and contact period sites in the Haw River drainage to the southwest and along the Dan River to the north. In 1989, work resumed on the Eno River in the same field that contained the Wall and Fredricks sites. These data, in conjunction with previous research, provide an almost continuous view of the northeast

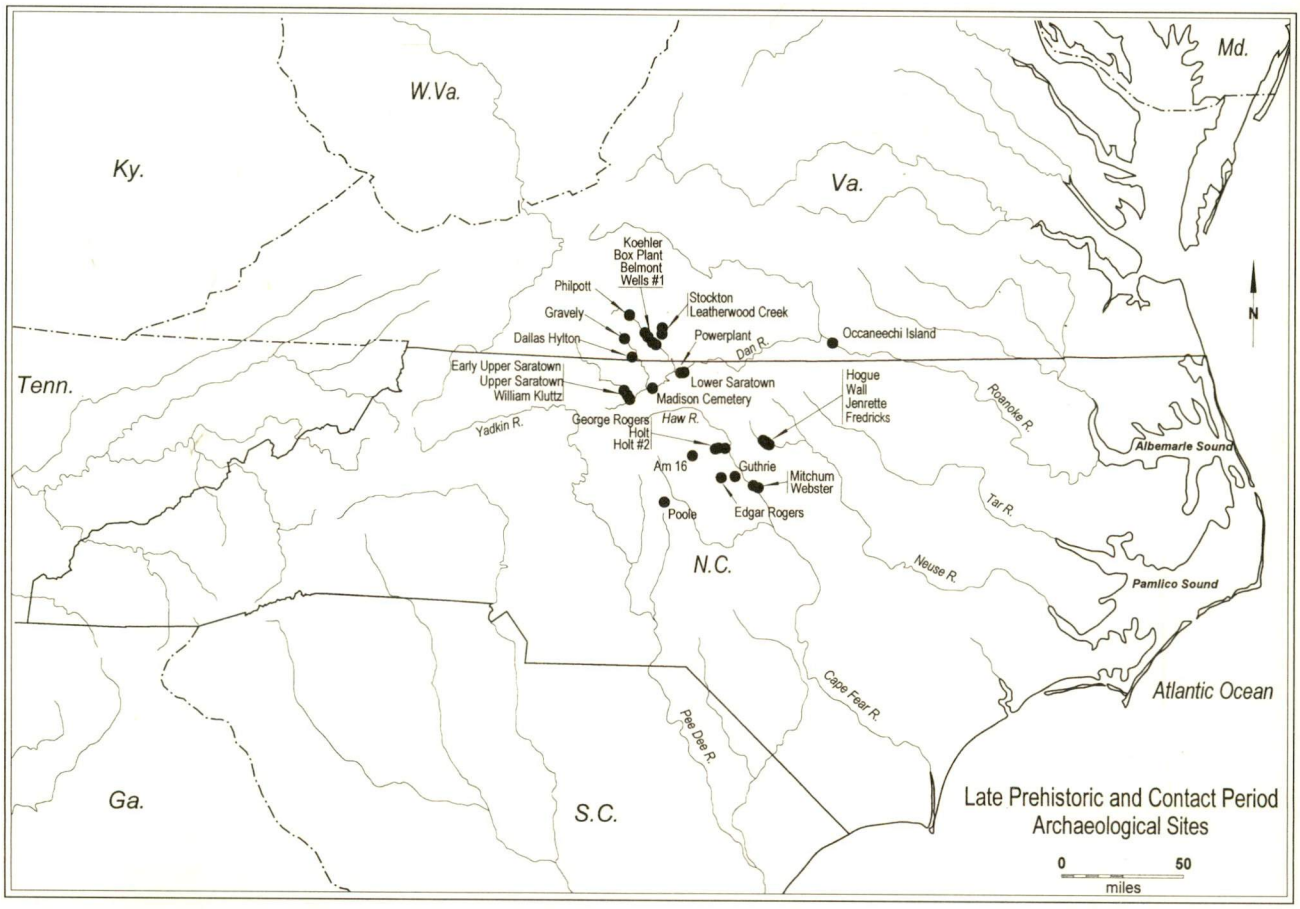

Figure 10.1. Selected late prehistoric and contact period sites in the Siouan project area. (Map by R. P. Stephen Davis Jr.)

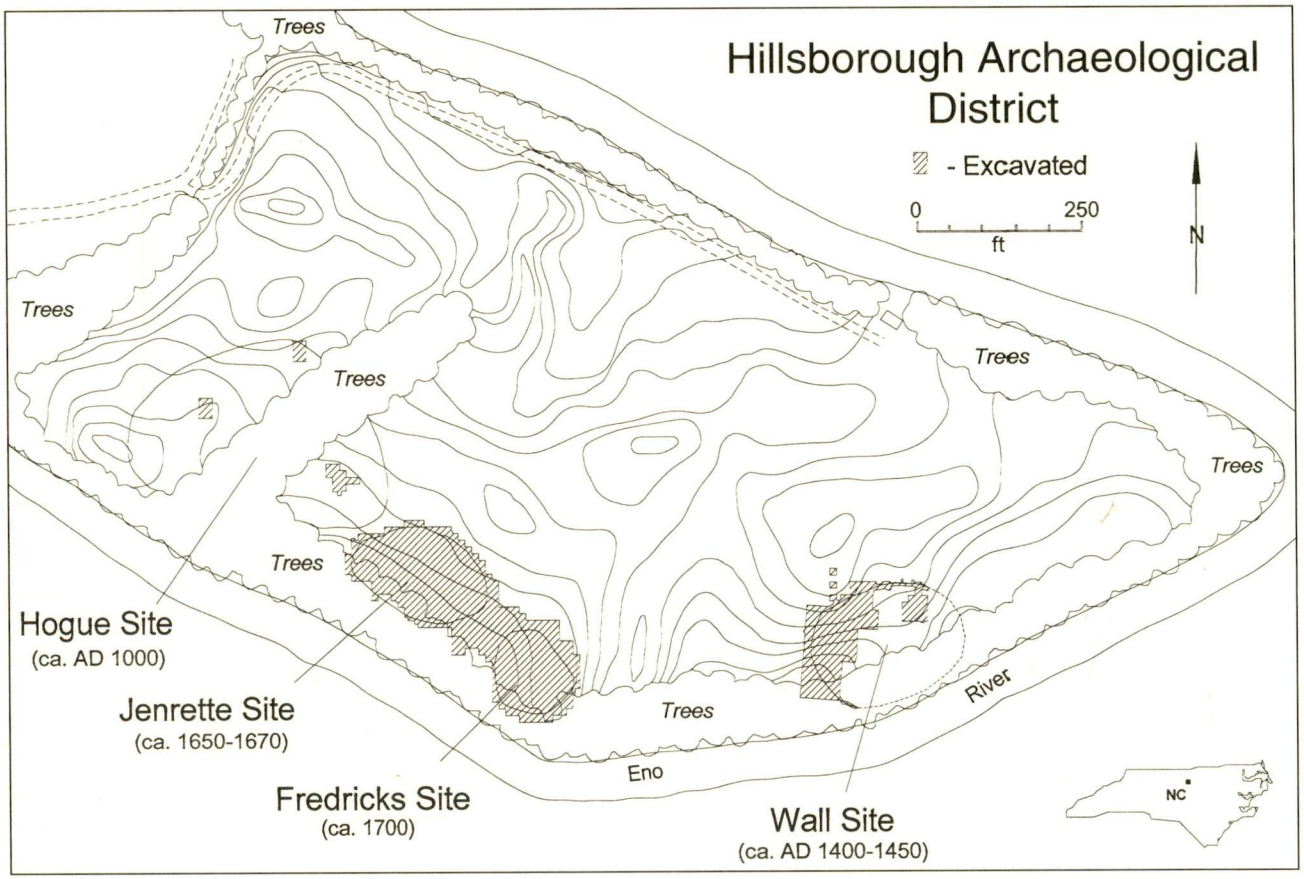

Figure 10.2. Excavated late prehistoric and contact period sites near Hillsborough, North Carolina, showing areas excavated through 1990. (From Ward and Davis 1999:238. Copyright 1999 by the University of North Carolina Press. Used by permission of the publisher.)

piedmont tribes from the eleventh century until the area was abandoned shortly after 1700 (Ward and Davis 1993) (Table 10.1).

Culture Chronology of the Haw and Eno River Drainages

HAW RIVER PHASE (A.D. 1000 – 1400). The early end of the late prehistoric cultural sequence in the Haw and Eno River drainages is defined by the Haw River phase. Dating of this phase is based on several radiocarbon assays obtained from sites in both drainages (Table 10.2). Most Haw River phase sites represent small settlements of widely dispersed households with associated storage pits, hearths, and burials. Archaeologically, such sites are recognized by very light concentrations of debris—mostly net-impressed potsherds of the Uwharrie and Haw River series, triangular projectile points, and stone flakes. Although some sites are located along the banks of the Haw and Eno Rivers, many are situated on ridges and knolls that border the smaller tributary streams. A few late Haw River phase sites seem to reflect more compact settlements and are situated on the floodplain of the Haw River, but none of these evidences an intensive or long-term occupation comparable to those of the succeeding Hillsboro phase.

Typical features on these sites are fairly large, cylindrical storage pits that were refilled with soil and refuse. Pit hearths and small, shallow basins also occur. Haw River phase features are usually widely scattered, and post hole patterns representing house structures have not been identified.

Subsistence remains include evidence of cultivated plant foods, including maize, beans, squashes, and sunflowers. Wild plant food remains are dominated by acorn and hickory nutshells (Gremillion 1993b). In addition, a wide range of faunal resources was exploited (Holm 1993). The subsistence picture is one of diversity, based on a mixed hunting-and-gathering strategy with some reliance on domesticated plants.

Burials have been found at only two Haw River phase sites. At the Guthrie site, both burials and other pit features were widely dispersed across the site. In contrast, the Hogue site contained a cluster of eight or more graves in a small cemetery-like area. In most cases the bodies were flexed and

Table 10.1
Chronological Framework for the Late Prehistory and Early History of the North-Central North Carolina Piedmont

Drainage	Period	Archaeological Phase	Estimated Time Range (A.D.)	Primary Sites Sampled by the Research Laboratories of Archaeology
Haw River	Late prehistoric	Haw River	1000–1400	Holt, Guthrie, Webster, Mitchum
	Protohistoric	Hillsboro	1400–1600	Edgar Rogers, George Rogers
	Contact	Mitchum	1600–1670	Mitchum
Eno River	Late prehistoric	Haw River	1000–1400	Hogue
	Protohistoric	Hillsboro	1400–1600	Wall
	Contact	Jenrette	1600–1680	Jenrette
	Contact	Fredricks	1680–1710	Fredricks
Dan River	Late prehistoric	Dan River	1000–1450	Powerplant, William Kluttz
Saratown	Protohistoric	Saratown (Early)	1450–1620	Early Upper Saratown, Powerplant
	Contact	Saratown (Middle)	1620–1670	Lower Saratown
	Contact	Saratown (Late)	1670–1710	Upper Saratown, William Kluttz

placed in simple pits. Grave goods were lacking, although several burials contained large stones that were placed near the feet of the deceased.

HILLSBORO PHASE (A.D. 1400 – 1600). Although this phase encompasses the period during which initial contacts were made between Europeans and southeastern Indians, there is no evidence of such contacts in the North Carolina piedmont. European goods are totally lacking, as are indications of disruptions caused by epidemic diseases and depopulation.

The settlement pattern of the earlier Haw River phase continued, but a few Hillsboro phase sites represent compact, nucleated villages with circular houses that were enclosed by multiple palisades. The best known example of this community type is the Wall site (Fig. 10.3). It is estimated that the Wall site was occupied for less than 20 years by a population of 100 to 150 people (Ward and Davis 1991).

Later Hillsboro phase sites, and in fact most habitation sites that can be attributed to this phase, are small and are situated along the valley margins or adjacent uplands of small tributary streams—a pattern of settlement that also typified the earlier Haw River phase. However, artifact and pit feature densities at Hillsboro phase sites usually are much greater, and remains of circular wall-post houses are now present. Evidence for increased intensity of occupation is particularly noticeable during the later half of the Hillsboro phase.

A new kind of pit feature—large, refuse-laden shallow basins—also appears during the Hillsboro phase. Such features are filled with rich deposits of food and other domestic refuse, and they frequently contain ash, charcoal, and fire-cracked rocks. These basins are interpreted as roasting pits, or "earth ovens," that were used in the preparation of large amounts of food, probably associated with community-wide ceremonies. Storage pits, though present, are overshadowed by these large food preparation facilities.

Although the stone tool technology of the Haw River phase, based on small, bifacially chipped triangular projectile points and ad hoc flake tools, continued into the Hillsboro phase, other aspects of native technology underwent substantial change. Unlike the net-impressed pottery of the preceding Haw River phase, Hillsboro series pottery has either simple-stamped, smoothed, or check-stamped surfaces and exhibits much greater diversity in vessel size, form, and decoration. Widespread use was made of bone and shell to manufacture tools and ornaments during the Hillsboro phase. Awls were made from deer and turkey bones, beamers from deer metatarsals, flakers from antler, and polished pins and needles from a variety of bone splinters. Shell artifacts include serrated mussel shell scrapers and a variety of marine shell ornaments, including circular shell pendants, large columella beads, large and small disk beads, and marginella beads (see Hammett 1987). These items indirectly reflect a subsistence base balanced between hunting and gathering and crop cultivation—an intensification of the pattern seen during the earlier Haw River phase.

Hillsboro phase burials were placed in shaft-and-chamber pits. At the Wall site, graves were widely dispersed and usually were placed inside or adjacent to houses. Some burials contained rich, middenlike deposits of fill in their upper zones and resembled trash pits when first encountered at the base of the plow zone. Grave goods, when present, consisted of pottery vessels and shell ornaments. It appears that children and some adult males received the most elaborate treatment at death, a pattern that continued into the contact period in the Haw and Eno River drainages (Ward 1987: 107).

MITCHUM PHASE (A.D. 1600 – 1670). The Mitchum phase is represented only by the Mitchum site and is attributed to the Sissipahaw tribe, which lived along the Haw River. This phase reflects the first contacts between Indians and Europeans in the Haw drainage. The Mitchum

Table 10.2
Calibrated Radiocarbon Dates from the Haw, Eno, and Dan River Drainages

			Calibrated Dates (Years A.D.)				
	Uncalibrated Age		Lower Limits			Upper Limits	
Archaeological Phase, Site, and Context	Sample No.	(Years B.P.)	2 Sigma	1 Sigma	Intercepts	1 Sigma	2 Sigma
Haw River Phase (Haw and Eno Drainages)							
Hogue (31Or231b/233), Feature 108	Beta-36096	1790 ± 200	350	15 (B.C.)	231	526	640
Fredricks (31Or231), Feature 30	Beta-20378	1030 ± 60	890	978	997	1026	1156
Hogue (31Or231b/233), Feature 1	Beta-20380	920 ± 70	980	1020	1044, 1090, 1122, 1139, 1152	1209	1260
Holt (RLA-Am163), Feature 1	Beta-20379	900 ± 100	904	1003	1133, 1136, 1156	1256	1280
Guthrie (RLA-Am145), Feature 3	Beta-23507	620 ± 70	1260	1281	1315, 1369, 1386	1408	1430
Webster (31Ch463), Feature 1	Beta-23506	510 ± 70	1280	1329	1418	1440	1490
Holt (RLA-Am163), Feature 2	Beta-23508	480 ± 50	1328	1411	1429	1442	1486
Hillsboro Phase (Haw and Eno Drainages)							
Wall (31Or11), Sq. 350R620, PH #3	GX-9834	495 ± 120	1280	1317	1424	1485	1650
Wall (31Or11), Sq. 340R640, PH #1	GX-9719	395 ± 140	1280	1410	1453	1650	1955
Edgar Rogers (RLA-Am162), Feature 1	Beta-23509	350 ± 50	1440	1450	1494, 1502, 1506, 1605	1637	1650
George Rogers (RLA-Am236), Feature 7	Beta-23510	350 ± 50	1440	1450	1494, 1502, 1506, 1605	1637	1650
George Rogers (RLA-Am236), Feature 1	Beta-20381	230 ± 60	1494	1639	1656	1955	1955
Wall (31Or11), Bu. 1-83	GX-9718	220 ± 145	1420	1490	1659	1955	1955
Mitchum Phase (Haw Drainage)							
Mitchum (31Ch452), Feature 7	Beta-23505	101.2 ± 1.0	1690	1700	1711, 1717, 1884, 1914, 1955	1955	1955
Dan River Phase (Dan River Drainage)							
Powerplant (31Rk5), Feature 18	Beta-36094	1480 ± 90	390	432	578	645	690
Leatherwood Creek (44Hr1), Feature 3	UGa-565	1370 ± 80	540	602	652	759	851
Clark (44Pk11), Feature 1	UGa-1363	935 ± 55	990	1020	1038, 1101, 1117, 1141, 1150	1186	1220
Stockton (44Hr35), Feature 27	UGa-617	925 ± 60	990	1021	1042, 1093, 1121, 1139, 1152	1191	1256
William Kluttz (31Sk6), Feature 15	Beta-36091	780 ± 70	1041	1194	1259	1280	1383
Lower Saratown (31Rk1), Feature 41	Beta-36092	750 ± 60	1161	1222	1264, 1268, 1276	1282	1386
Koehler (44Hr6), Feature 56	UGa-1364	645 ± 70	1260	1279	1298, 1374, 1378	1394	1420
Dallas Hylton (44Hr20), Feature 52	UGa-566	635 ± 60	1260	1281	1302, 1372, 1382	1394	1420
Box Plant (44Hr2), Feature B-15	UGa-619	620 ± 60	1280	1282	1315, 1369, 1386	1405	1420
Koehler (44Hr6), Feature 106	UGa-1365	610 ± 70	1264	1282	1321, 1367, 1388	1410	1430
Upper Saratown (31Sk1a), Feature 18	Beta-36089	590 ± 60	1280	1285	1328, 1350, 1391	1413	1430
Wells No. 1 (44Hr9), Feature 15	UGa-2831	570 ± 55	1280	1305	1332, 1343, 1394	1417	1440
Koehler (44Hr6), Feature 122	UGa-1366	545 ± 55	1280	1325	1409	1427	1440
Gravely (44Hr29), TP-2	UGa-2832	230 ± 70	1490	1532	1656	1955	1955
Philpott (44Hr4), Refuse Pit	UGa-2830	205 ± 55	1526	1647	1664	1955	1955
Saratown Phase (Dan Drainage)							
Early Upper Saratown (31Sk1), Feature 2	Beta-36090	600 ± 80	1260	1282	1323, 1353, 1363, 1365, 1389	1415	1440
Lower Saratown (31Rk1), Feature 46	Beta-36093	420 ± 60	1410	1428	1443	1492	1640
Powerplant (31Rk5), Feature 27	Beta-36095	970 ± 80	893	988	1025	1159	1230

site probably was occupied shortly after 1650 and consisted of a 1.5-acre palisaded village. A single house structure measuring 20 feet in diameter has been uncovered along with several pit features and two burials (Petherick 1987; Ward and Davis 1993).

Interaction with European traders had negligible effects on the lives of the Mitchum site inhabitants. Subsistence practices changed little from the preceding phases. Deer were the most important meat source, and the Haw River contributed fish, turtles, and mussels to the diet. Old World animals were not used, nor is there any indication that the peltry trade had a significant impact on the exploitation of animal resources (Holm 1987). Charred peach pits are the only dietary evidence of contact between Indians and foreigners (Gremillion 1987). Likewise, the ceramic and stone tool technologies of the Mitchum phase show clear continuities with those of the preceding Hillsboro phase and are remarkably similar to those at the roughly contemporaneous Jenrette site, discussed in the next section.

Mitchum phase features are poorly known. Because of

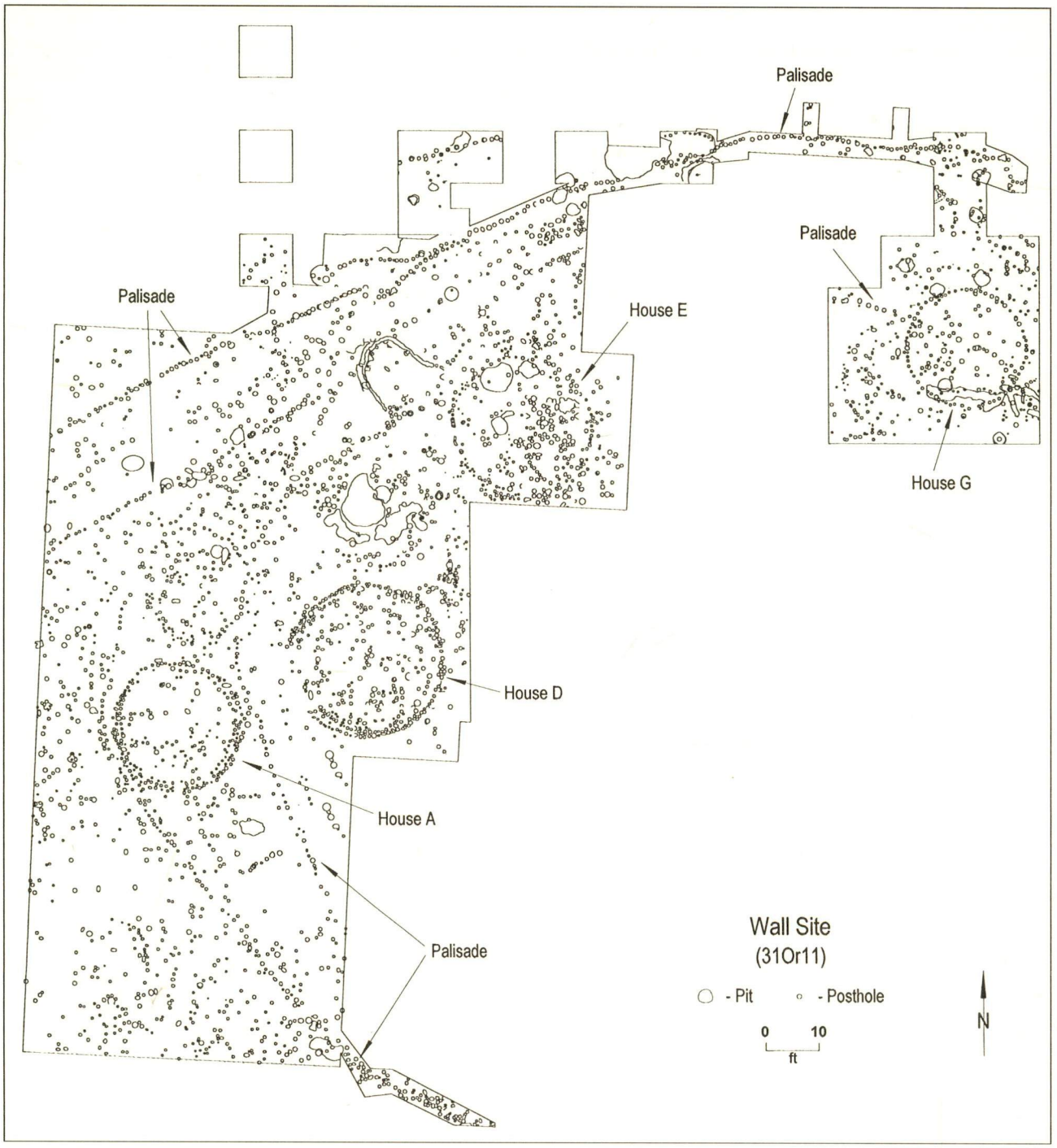

Figure 10.3. The Hillsboro phase village at the Wall site, as exposed by excavations conducted in 1938–1941 and 1983–1984. (From Ward and Davis 1999:114. Copyright 1999 by the University of North Carolina Press. Used by permission of the publisher.)

the sandy soil at the Mitchum site, most pit features were vague and poorly defined. Storage and smudge pits were the only functional categories that could be identified with confidence.

Like subsistence, mortuary practices seem to have changed little from those of the preceding phases. Shaft-and-chamber pits were dug near the houses, and flexed (perhaps wrapped) bodies were placed in the burial chambers. The only noticeable difference seen during the Mitchum phase was the substitution of glass trade beads and brass ornaments for those of shell and bone used earlier.

These ornaments—brass bells, rolled brass and copper beads, and small white and blue glass beads—represent most of the trade goods found at the Mitchum site. The

lack of gun parts and other iron tools suggests that the Sissipahaw were not yet fully engaged in the European trade network that was being established after 1650 along Virginia's southwestern frontier. This lack of direct contact with the Virginia traders may also explain the absence of evidence for disease epidemics during the Mitchum phase.

JENRETTE PHASE (A.D. 1600 – 1680). Like the Mitchum phase, the Jenrette phase is currently defined by excavations at a single site, the Jenrette site. It is attributed to the Shakori tribe and may be the village of Shakor that John Lederer visited in 1670 (Cumming 1958: 27–28). It is located on the Eno River, adjacent to the Fredricks site, which represents the 1701 Occaneechi village visited by Lawson (Lefler 1967). Between 1989 and 1998, the entire palisaded village was excavated, exposing wall-trench houses, numerous pit features, and five Jenrette phase burials. The area enclosed within the palisade is approximately 0.5 acres in extent (Fig. 10.4).

Wall-trench structures have been found in the Siouan area only at the Jenrette and Fredricks sites. The Jenrette houses were slightly the larger. All structures excavated at sites in the Siouan area reflect a common "bower" or "wigwam" type of construction. Whether the wall posts were set in individual holes or in trenches, their upper portions were bent and their tops tied together to create a framework for the roof. The entire structure was covered with thatch, bark, or wattle-and-daub, depending on the season.

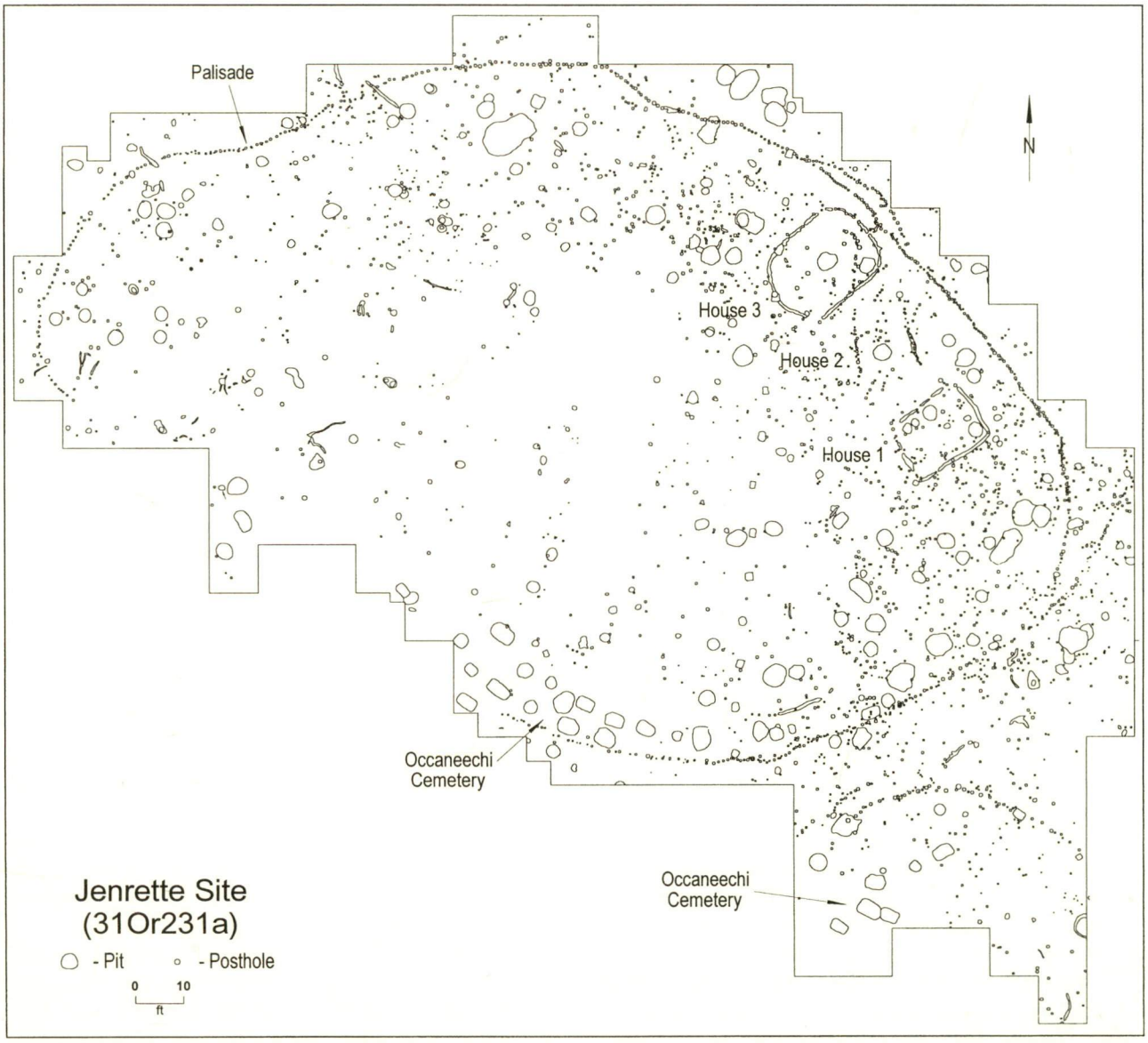

Figure 10.4. Archaeological plan of the Jenrette site near Hillsborough, North Carolina. (From Ward and Davis 1999:239. Copyright 1999 by the University of North Carolina Press. Used by permission of the publisher.)

In plan, the houses ranged from nearly circular at the Wall site and Upper Saratown to nearly rectangular at Jenrette. Contrary to Petherick's (1987: 48) suggestion, we see no evidence for separate summer and winter houses.

Large quantities of faunal and botanical remains were recovered from the Jenrette site, but they show no pronounced differences from the preceding phases in terms of the relative importance of plant and animal species. The presence of cultivated sumpweed at Jenrette, however, is the most recent occurrence of this domesticate in the eastern United States (Gremillion 1989).

During the Jenrette phase, storage pits and food preparation facilities described as roasting pits or earth ovens made up the majority of the subsurface features. Most storage facilities were located near houses and in some cases were dug into the house floor. The large, shallow roasting pits, like those described for the late Hillsboro phase, usually were located near the palisade. Similar facilities have been found at sites on the Dan River dating to the early contact period, but they have not been found on later sites in either the Haw, Eno, or Dan River drainage. This may reflect a breakdown in community celebrations brought on by disease and depopulation during the last quarter of the seventeenth century.

Simple pit and shaft-and-chamber burials are represented at the Jenrette site. Burial associations reflect the beginnings of trade with the English and consist primarily of small glass seed beads that probably were sewn on garments. Contacts between natives and Europeans were probably both indirect and intermittent, which may explain the lack of evidence for epidemic diseases during the Jenrette phase.

FREDRICKS PHASE (A.D. 1680 – 1710). The Fredricks phase defines the archaeological remains of the Occaneechis after they moved from the Roanoke River to the Eno River following Bacon's Rebellion in 1676. At present, the Fredricks site is the only site assigned to this phase (Davis and Ward 1991b). We believe this is the site of the "Achonechy Town" visited and briefly described by Lawson in 1701 (Lefler 1967: 61). The small, palisaded village was completely excavated between 1983 and 1986 (Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987; Ward and Davis 1988) (Fig. 10.5).

By the time of Lawson's visit, European diseases and warfare had decimated the Occaneechis and other piedmont tribes. Archaeologically, this decimation is indicated by the small size of the settlement and a very high crude mortality rate. A single palisade of small posts, some placed in wall trenches, enclosed no more than 10 to 12 houses of wall-trench and single-post construction. Probably fewer than 75 people lived in the village at this time (Davis and Ward 1991a; Ward and Davis 1991). Based on a detailed analysis of the burials in a cemetery located just outside the palisade, Hogue (1988: 99) calculated a crude mortality rate of 57 (per 1,000). This compares with a crude mortality rate of 38 computed for the late prehistoric Shannon site on the Roanoke River in southwestern Virginia, and a rate of 48 for the Upper Saratown site (Hogue 1988). These data, in conjunction with the historic record (e.g., Merrell 1989), leave little doubt that by the time of Lawson's visit, the northern piedmont tribes had suffered severe depopulation.

Although the Fredricks phase represents a time of dramatic disruption and upheaval, a surprising degree of continuity is reflected in the subsistence data. As seen during the Mitchum and Jenrette phases, the peltry trade and the introduction of European tools and trinkets seem to have had minimal impact on the Occaneechis' day-to-day subsistence. Deer, turkey, fish, turtles, and numerous small mammals were hunted and trapped. Only one bone each of pig and horse attest to the European presence (Holm 1987: 245). The only evidence of the use of Old World plants during the Fredricks phase consists of two watermelon seeds and numerous peach pits (Gremillion 1988).

Although most aspects of Occaneechi technology and tradition appear to have remained relatively intact, there is clear evidence that the trade between Indians and Virginians intensified considerably during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. This is seen primarily in the grave goods associated with the Occaneechi burials. Knives, hoes, kettles, and guns were added to the beads and brass ornaments that appeared during the Mitchum and Jenrette phases. Shaft-and-chamber burial pits were abandoned in favor of rectangular, straight-sided graves dug with metal tools. Bodies were still flexed, but burial pits no longer were placed in and around dwellings. The Fredricks site burials were carefully aligned and interred in at least two cemeteries adjacent to and outside the village palisade. The existence of separate cemeteries might reflect the amalgamation of different ethnic groups forced to band together as a consequence of depopulation, or, more likely, they might reflect episodes of epidemics and a recognition of the contagiousness of Old World diseases (Ward 1987; Ward and Davis 1991).

Cultural Chronology of the Upper Dan River Drainage

DAN RIVER PHASE (A.D. 1000 – 1450). The cultural pattern that emerged after about A.D. 1000 in the upper Dan River drainage is recognized as the Dan River phase and is coeval with the Haw River phase to the south. Its chronological position is reasonably well established by radiocarbon dates from both Siouan project excavations and several sites excavated by Richard Gravely in southern Virginia (Table 10.2).

Throughout the late prehistoric and contact periods, the upper Dan River drainage supported a much larger population than the Haw and Eno River drainages. Still, early Dan River phase (A.D. 1000–1300) settlements apparently consisted of scattered household clusters with associated features, similar to the small communities of the Haw River

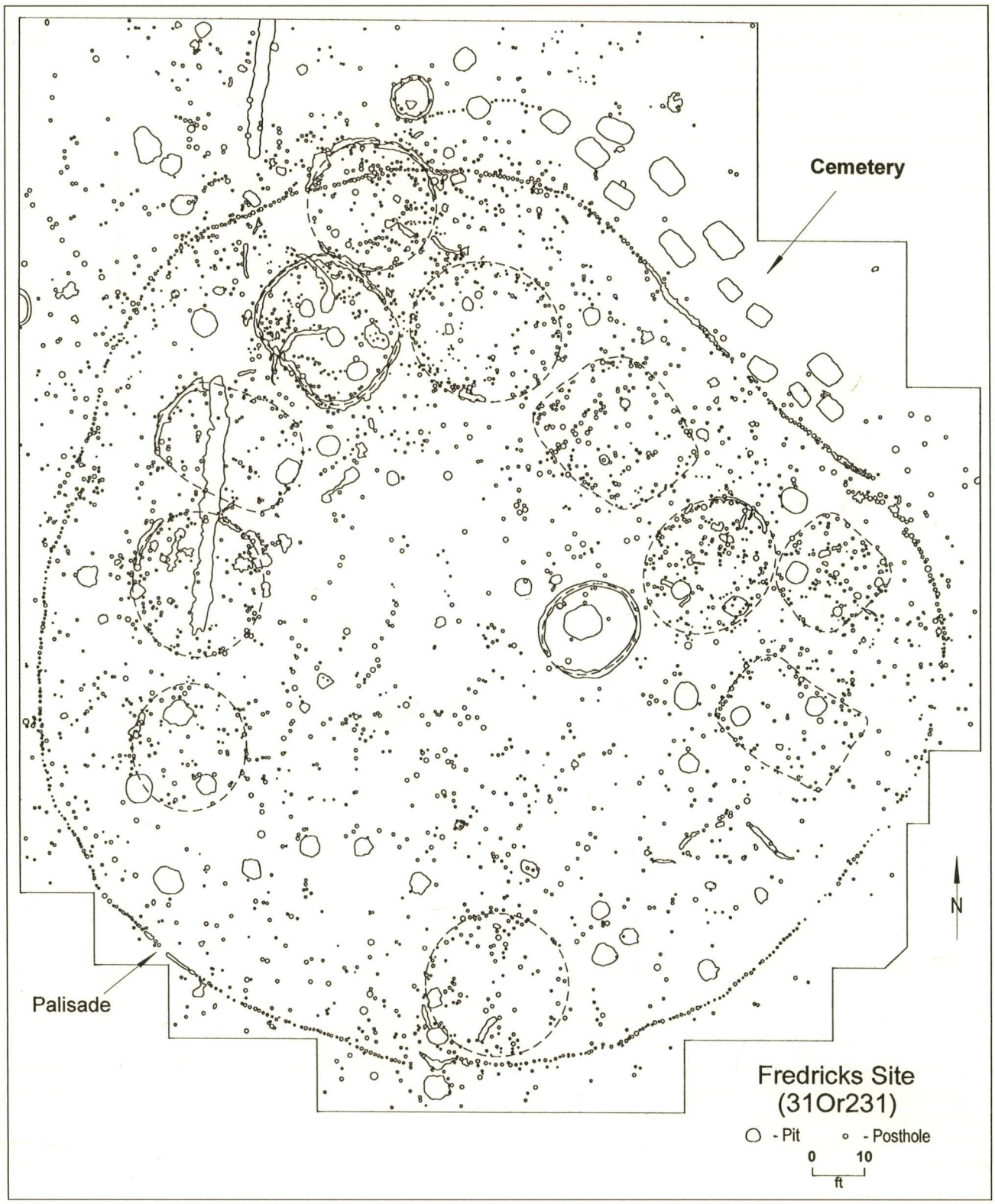

Figure 10.5. Archaeological plan of the Fredricks site (Occaneechi Town) near Hillsborough, North Carolina. (From Ward and Davis 1999:243. Copyright 1999 by the University of North Carolina Press. Used by permission of the publisher.)

phase. Like Haw River phase settlements, these sites are characterized by relatively sparse artifact densities.

Subsistence remains suggest a mixed economy of hunting, gathering, and agriculture. At the Powerplant site, evidence of maize was found in almost every feature. Other cultigens included beans and sunflowers, clearly indicating the importance of agriculture during the early Dan River phase (Gremillion 1993b).

Typical features are large storage pits and large, shallow basins that usually contain secondary deposits with modest amounts of cultural material. Feature contents suggest less intense activities, perhaps lacking the ritual component indicated by the large quantities of food remains found in many pits from later sites.

The single early Dan River phase burial excavated at the Powerplant site was a flexed individual who had been placed in a simple oval pit without grave goods. This interment was similar to early Haw River phase burials at the Hogue site in the Eno drainage, although many more graves were clustered together at the Hogue site.

The late Dan River phase is known primarily from isolated pit features found during excavation of later site components, from survey collections, and from excavations in southern Virginia on the Dan River. The combined evidence suggests that by A.D. 1300, Dan River phase populations began to coalesce into larger, more nucleated villages enclosed by palisades.

One of the most interesting aspects of Dan River material culture is the variety of bone, shell, and clay tools and ornaments that were used. Most information about bone working, shell working, and ceramic art comes from various sites in the Smith and Mayo River drainages of southern Virginia that were investigated by Gravely during the 1960s and early 1970s (see Gravely 1983). Most were habitation sites or villages that spanned the duration of the Dan River phase.

Bone artifacts include awls, pins, needles, fishhooks, beamers, gouges, antler flakers, antler picks, turtle carapace bowls and cups, and a variety of beads. Mussel shells were fashioned into serrated scrapers; shell from the marine whelk was used to make long columella beads, shorter barrel and disk beads, circular gorgets, and pendants; and a variety of other beads were made from marginella and olive shells. Clay, in addition to being used for well-made Dan River series pottery, mostly net impressed and often highly decorated, was also employed to make numerous other items, including beads, dippers or spoons, cups, disks, and elbow pipes.

EARLY SARATOWN PHASE (A.D. 1450–1620). The processes of coalescence and amalgamation begun during the later half of the Dan River phase intensified during the early Saratown phase. Site size and occupational intensity increased, although the overall number of sites appears to have decreased. Many early Saratown phase sites are located along the Dan River near the mouths of the major tributaries (i.e., the Smith and Mayo Rivers and Town Fork Creek). Although overall site numbers decreased from those of the Dan River phase, the population of the Dan River valley appears to have increased. One of the largest, richest, and most intensively occupied sites in the entire region, Early Upper Saratown, was occupied during this phase (Davis and Ward 1991a; Wilson 1983).

The most characteristic features of the early Saratown phase are large, straight-sided or bell-shaped storage pits. Roasting pits, or "earth ovens," are also common. These facilities are similar to those of the Jenrette phase and the middle Saratown phase. The large storage pits suggest curation and village abandonment during part of the year (DeBoer 1988; Ward 1985), whereas the large cooking pits suggest feasting and community-wide celebrations.

Analysis of faunal remains reveals the exploitation of a variety of resources from varied habitats. White-tailed deer and black bear provided the bulk of the usable meat, followed by raccoon, beaver, turkey, and mountain lion; turtles also were an important meat source. Wilson (1983: 531–542) suggested that this variety reflected a shift from a focal, specialized subsistence orientation during the Dan River phase to a more diverse utilization of animal resources during the early Saratown phase.

Plant food utilization during the early Saratown phase cannot be directly assessed because no botanical samples have been analyzed. Given the results of the analyses of Dan River and middle Saratown phase samples, there is no reason to suspect that early Saratown phase samples would present drastically different patterns of plant food use. The only difference that might be hypothesized is an increase in the importance of agricultural production. The relatively large size of the settlements and the apparent intensity of their occupation suggest that agriculture might have been more important than it was during the preceding and succeeding phases. There is little doubt that this was the case when early Saratown phase sites are compared with the hamletlike communities of the early Dan River phase. Current data indicate that a process of agricultural intensification that began during the Dan River phase probably reached its peak just prior to the first contacts with Europeans. A similar trend toward increasing agricultural production is seen during the Haw River and Hillsboro phases.

Mortuary behavior during the early Saratown phase is known only from the excavation of six graves at the Early Upper Saratown site. Four individuals were placed in shaft-and-chamber pits, whereas the other two were interred in simple pits. The most interesting characteristic of these burials, particularly those in shaft-and-chamber pits, was the large quantity of associated grave goods. Hundreds of bone and shell beads, along with bone awls, shell hairpins, three conch-shell rattlesnake or Citico-style gorgets, serrated mussel shells, and a burnished Oldtown series pot, accompanied these individuals (Wilson 1983: 379–385).

The richness of these burial offerings stands in sharp contrast with that of the earlier Dan and Haw River phases, and the absence of European trade materials contrasts markedly with the quantities of trade goods (primarily glass beads) found in the late Saratown phase burials at Upper Saratown, located only a few hundred yards away. The mortuary complex also reinforces the changes suggested by shifts in settlement, community pattern, and subsistence. That is, during the early Saratown phase, people living in the Dan River drainage were integrated into relatively large, nucleated villages with some degree of specialization and sociopolitical stratification. This may represent the apogee of Siouan cultural development in the Dan River valley.

MIDDLE SARATOWN PHASE (A.D. 1620 – 1670). The middle Saratown phase is represented at Lower Saratown, located on the Dan River just below the mouth of the Smith River. This phase marks the first arrival of European trade goods in the northern North Carolina piedmont. Although Spaniards supposedly traveled through the region several decades earlier (Hudson 1990), their visits left no discernible traces in the archaeological record. Even the early seventeenth-century English settlements on the James River meant little to the piedmont tribes. It is doubtful that many natives living along the Dan River during the middle Saratown phase ever laid eyes on a European or felt the deadly sting of their diseases. The few beads and trinkets that found their way into native villages probably were passed along through traditional trade networks.

Survey data suggest that settlement patterns during the middle Saratown phase changed little from those of the preceding phase. Most people continued to reside in large, palisaded villages, and the population of the Dan River valley seems to have stabilized. Limited excavations just inside the palisade at Lower Saratown uncovered two superimposed, single-post structures similar in size and shape to wall-trench and single-post structures on the Eno and Haw Rivers.

Middle Saratown phase features are very similar to those found on other protohistoric and contact period sites on the piedmont. Large, shallow roasting pits are common and usually are located around the periphery of the village. These appear not to have been recycled and normally are filled with food remains and cooking debris. Circular storage pits and small, cob-filled smudge pits also characterize the middle Saratown phase. The large storage pits, like those on other piedmont sites, were quickly filled with soil and refuse after they were no longer suited for their primary purpose.

Although contact with Europeans is indicated by the presence of a small number of glass and brass beads, European influence is not seen in the food remains. Data from Lower Saratown point to a varied diet balancing wild plant and animal resources with indigenous crop production. As in the early Saratown phase, turtles, mussels, and fish from the Dan River provided important supplements to the diet of terrestrial deer, turkey, and bear. Maize was both abundant and ubiquitous. Beans also were grown, along with squash, but sunflowers and other common eastern North American cultigens were not harvested (Gremillion 1989).

The single middle Saratown phase burial excavated at Lower Saratown points to a continuation of the shaft-and-chamber type of grave. A relatively small number of grave goods, mostly rolled copper or brass beads, may contrast with the extensive use of shell beads and ornaments during the early Saratown phase.

LATE SARATOWN PHASE (A.D. 1670 – 1710). By 1670, the flow of English goods reaching the inhabitants of the Dan River valley increased dramatically. It was also during the late Saratown phase that European diseases struck with devastating force, making many of the excavated villages appear more like cemeteries than habitation sites. The most extensive investigation of this phase has taken place at the Upper Saratown site. Excavations there between 1972 and 1981 uncovered several houses, numerous pit features, and 111 burials (Ward 1980; Wilson 1983) (Fig. 10.6). At another late Saratown village site—the Madison Cemetery site located near the confluence of the Mayo and Dan Rivers—an amateur archaeologist uncovered graves so tightly packed that he thought he was working in a cemetery rather than a habitation site (Gravely 1969: 11).

The end of the late Saratown phase is represented by the William Kluttz site, located just downstream from Upper Saratown. This site was occupied between 1690 and 1710, probably by the former inhabitants of Upper Saratown. Here, numerous shallow graves clustered in a cemetery area attest to the continuing devastation of alien diseases.

As evidenced at Upper Saratown and the William Kluttz site, community patterns changed drastically during the short time span of the late Saratown phase. At Upper Saratown, occupied during the first half of the phase, the community consisted of a palisaded village occupied by 200 to 250 people living in circular houses. Although no structures were found at the William Kluttz site, the distribution of artifacts and features suggests a very different community pattern by the turn of the eighteenth century. By this time, the communities no longer consisted of compact, palisaded villages but rather of widely dispersed households. Ceramic evidence further indicates that remnants of neighboring tribes that survived the onslaught of epidemic disease may have merged with the Saras to form dispersed refuge communities such as the William Kluttz site.

The most characteristic late Saratown phase features are large, deep, almost perfectly circular storage facilities. These pits usually measure over 3 feet in diameter and often as deep. Typically, they contain stratified deposits that are rich in food remains and other domestic refuse. Large roasting pits are also frequently encountered; they are identical

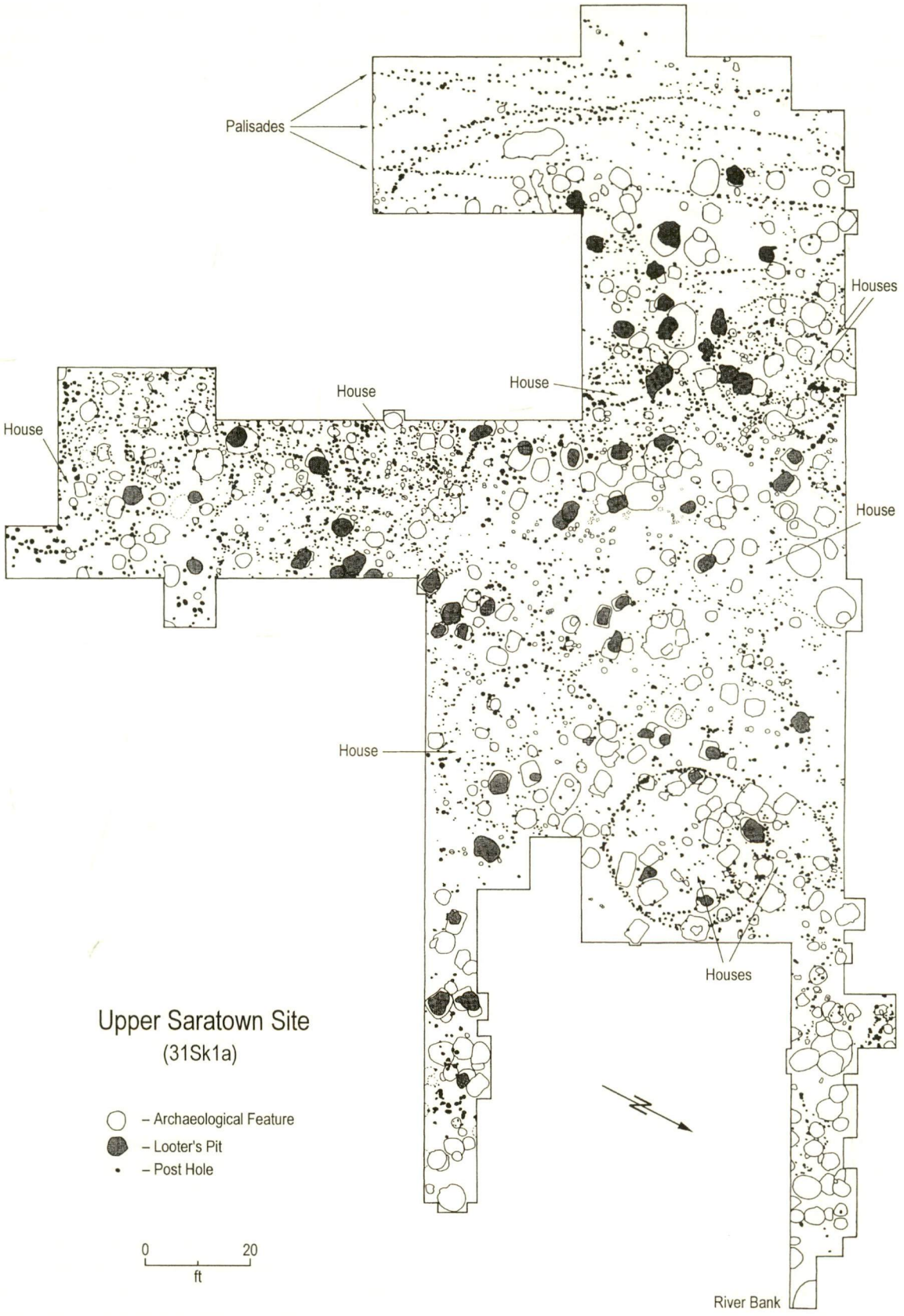

Figure 10.6. The late Saratown phase village of Upper Saratown, excavated between 1972 and 1981. (Courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina.)

to those described for the late Hillsboro, Jenrette, and middle Saratown phases. Usually these large cooking facilities are located around the edges of the villages and near the palisades, and they probably were used to prepare large amounts of food that were consumed during ritual celebrations (Ward 1980; Wilson 1977).

The subsistence pattern described for the earlier protohistoric and contact period Siouan phases continued into the late Saratown phase. A balance appears to have been struck between wild and domestic food resources. Corn, beans, squashes, and gourds were cultivated, and peaches were a popular Old World addition (Wilson 1977). As in other contact period Siouan phases, there is no evidence that European animals played any role in the subsistence cycle during the late Saratown phase.

Like community patterns, mortuary patterns reflect dramatic changes during the late Saratown phase. At Upper Saratown and the Madison Cemetery site, graves were placed within and around domestic structures. Usually these were deep shaft-and-chamber pits, with the "central chamber" type occurring most frequently. Bodies were flexed and often were accompanied by large numbers of European ornaments, particularly glass beads and copper trinkets (Navey 1982). Toward the end of the late Saratown phase, however, a drastic change took place.

Excavations at the William Kluttz site uncovered a cemetery that contained numerous, shallow pit burials (Ward and Davis 1993). Most were subadult interments with no associated artifacts. The implication is that the community could no longer muster sufficient energy to continue its traditional mortuary practices. The isolation of the dead in a cemetery might also indicate a growing understanding of the contagiousness of alien microbes, a lesson perhaps learned earlier at Upper Saratown. That most of the dead were subadults points to their deaths having resulted from a single epidemic, since adults who survived earlier epidemics at Upper Saratown would have developed some immunity to new waves of European diseases.

In addition to the cemetery burials, two individuals were placed in traditional shaft-and-chamber pits. One of these was a young adult male outfitted in European attire, with a pistol in his belt. Although most of the dead in the cemetery received comparatively little attention, this grave suggests that some individuals warranted special treatment. And the fact that this person was a young adult male reinforces the pattern of differential status identified for the Occaneechis during the Fredricks phase (Ward 1987).

Contact, Interaction, and Change

Using the chronological framework just presented, we now synthesize and review some of the more specific consequences of the interaction between the piedmont Siouans and the English. The discussion focuses on four different but in most cases related topics: trade, intertribal relations, subsistence, and disease.

TRADE. During the Jenrette and middle Saratown phases, only a few glass and copper beads found their way into the piedmont villages. The scarcity of trade goods suggests that these items were exchanged through native intermediaries operating within traditional trade networks. During the 1670s, this picture changed abruptly and dramatically when Virginia traders began making regular trips into the "backcountry" searching for new markets.

The intensification and spread of the peltry trade is directly reflected during the late Saratown and Fredricks phases. Thousands of glass beads, copper bells, and other ornaments—but very few tools and weapons—have been recovered from Upper Saratown. At Occaneechi Town, guns, iron knives, and hatchets were popular items, along with beads and trinkets (Table 10.3). The Occaneechis' role as middlemen in the Virginia trade allowed them to control the flow of goods to more remote groups like the Saras. And by controlling access to firearms and using intimidation when necessary, the Occaneechis were able to maintain their dominant position (Davis and Ward 1991b; Merrell 1987). The Virginia trader Abraham Wood noted that the Occaneechis' supply of arms and ammunition made them "the Mart for all the Indians for at least 500 miles" (quoted in Merrell 1982: 91).

The Occaneechis' stranglehold was broken by Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, and groups like the Saras began receiving the full inventory of goods offered by English traders (Davis and Ward 1991b). The young adult male from the William Kluttz site was buried with a 1680 British military-issue pistol, tucked in a leather belt with a brass buckle that was used to hold up cloth trousers. After 1676, the Saras were no longer satisfied to deal in glass beads and copper trinkets but had gained access to weapons and other utilitarian goods offered by the Virginia traders.

The introduction of iron tools and firearms, however, had no major impact on the traditional technologies of the piedmont tribes. They were used alongside, not in place of, their aboriginal counterparts. At Occaneechi Town, lead shot and gunflints were recovered from almost every excavation unit, but so were stone arrow points. Clay pots were still being made, although copper kettles were available, and while glass beads were worn and sewn on garments, shell beads also continued to be used. Perhaps the only new technology introduced by the traders is represented by the numerous pairs of scissors needed to cut and shape the bolts of cloth that were used to make clothing, bags, and other items that animal skins had provided in the past.

The peltry trade probably had a greater impact on traditional Siouan social structure than it did on technology. Among the piedmont tribes, individuals who could deal most successfully with the Virginia traders might have gained a level of prestige and influence impossible within

Table 10.3

European Trade Artifacts from Feature and Burial Contexts at Upper Saratown and Occaneechi Town (Fredricks Site)

Artifact Type	Material	Upper Saratown	Occaneechi Town
Awls	Iron	—	2
Axes	Iron	—	5
Beads	Copper/brass	519	3
Beads	Glass	324,779	11,790
Bell fragments	Copper/brass	—	2
Bells	Copper/brass	149	33
Bottle fragments	Glass	28	48
Bottles	Glass	—	2
Bracelet	Copper/brass	—	2
Buckle fragments	Copper/brass	—	6
Buckle tang	Iron	—	1
Buckles	Copper/brass	—	3
Buckles	Pewter	—	9
Button	Copper/brass	2	1
Buttons	Glass	—	11
Buttons	Lead	—	3
Buttons	Pewter	—	6
Cones	Copper/brass	18	—
Cut ornaments	Copper/brass	5	—
Cooper's tool	Iron	—	1
Ember tenders	Iron	—	2
Fishhook	Copper/brass	1	1
Fishhook	Iron	—	1
Flakes	Glass	9	6
Gorgets	Copper/brass	6	—
Gun	Iron	—	1
Gun springs	Iron	—	2
Gunflints	Flint	10	47
Hoes	Iron	1	5
Hook	Iron	—	1
Indet. fragments	Copper/brass	—	3
Indet. fragments	Iron	34	98
Jew's harps	Iron	—	3
Kettle	Copper/brass	—	1
Kettle fragments	Copper/brass	—	1
Knife blades	Iron	—	8
Knife handles	Bone/wood	—	9
Knives	Iron	1	14
Lead shot	Lead	26	410
Lead sprue	Lead	—	27
Mirror fragment	Glass	—	1
Nails	Iron	8	39
Pendant	Copper/brass	1	—
Pin	Copper/brass	—	1
Pipe fragment	Kaolin clay	—	146
Pipes	Kaolin clay	—	4
Pipes	Pewter	—	4
Porringers	Pewter	—	3
Projectile point	Glass	1	—
Rings	Copper/brass	30	—
Scissors	Iron	2	6
Scrap	Copper/brass	6	—
Scrap	Lead	—	8
Scrap	Pewter	—	2
Sheet/strip	Copper/brass	74	22
Sheet/strip	Indeterminate	1	—

Table 10.3 *continued*

Artifact Type	Material	Upper Saratown	Occaneechi Town
Sheet/strip	Iron	3	85
Snuff box	Copper/brass	—	2
Snuff box	Iron	—	1
Spoons	Copper/brass	1	3
Tack	Copper/brass	1	—
Tack	Iron	—	1
Thimble	Copper/brass	—	1
Wire coil	Copper/brass	—	2
Wire fragments	Copper/brass	—	12
Total		325,716	12,911

the traditional social structure. For the Fredricks and late Saratown phases, mortuary data from Occaneechi Town and the William Kluttz site suggest that these individuals were young adult males (Ward 1987). Earlier, during the middle Saratown phase, mortuary evidence indicates that adult females rather than young adult males might have occupied positions of highest prestige (Navey 1982). These differences in status recognition appear to reflect the relative impact of trade on the social structures of the Saras and Occaneechis at the beginning and end of the contact period (cf. Davis and Ward 1991b).

The ethnohistoric documents point to comparable differences. John Lederer observed in 1670 that kinship was traced through the female line and that among the "remoter" tribes, such as the Eno, the government was democratic. However, a "democratic" social order seems not to have been the norm among the tribes that had been heavily engaged in trade with the English. The Occaneechis were said to have had two "kings" governing them when they lived on the Roanoke River, astride the main trading path from Virginia to the Carolina piedmont. The nearby Saponis were ruled by an "absolute monarch," according to Lederer (Cumming 1958).

EUROPEAN PLANTS AND LIVESTOCK. The Europeans not only brought new tools and strange weapons to the New World but also filled their boats with horses, pigs, chickens, and other creatures unknown to Native Americans. They packed seeds of wheat, barley, and peaches to be planted in the fertile soils of their new home. Surprisingly, archaeological evidence has shown that most piedmont Indians virtually ignored these new plants and animals. They planted peaches and watermelons, but the traditional trinity of corn, beans, and squash remained the mainstay of the diet (Gremillion 1989).

Old World animals were even less popular than Old World plants. The only evidence of their use comes from the Fredricks site, where one bone each of pig and horse was recovered (Holm 1987). As was the case with tools and trinkets, only those items that did not require a reorganization of traditional ways of doing things were incorporated, and these were used alongside, not in place of, familiar native resources (Gremillion 1993b).

INTERTRIBAL RELATIONS. Palisaded villages such as the Hillsboro phase Wall site attest that conflict was not unknown before the arrival of Europeans. Hostilities increased dramatically, however, during the contact period, when Indian slaves and stolen deerskins could be traded for the prized guns and kettles of the foreigners. The knife-scarred skull of a scalp victim and a lead ball flattened against the fibula of a young woman in the Occaneechi cemetery at the Fredricks site are clear evidence of such hostilities. And often these conflicts took the form of raids by larger, well-armed groups from as far north as Pennsylvania and New York. In 1701, John Lawson was forced to turn off the main trading path to Virginia after being warned of a "Sinnager" (Seneca) raiding party in the vicinity of Occaneechi Town (Lefler 1967: 61).

Not only did the infusion of European goods and arms increase external threats, but the competition for foreign trade and a market for native slaves heightened hostilities among the North Carolina piedmont tribes themselves. Whereas in the past, blood feuds and revenge fueled the fires of conflict, the European presence introduced new motives and new ways of conducting warfare.

At different points during the later half of the seventeenth century, groups such as the Wainokes, Occaneechis, and Tuscaroras gained unprecedented opportunities, through trade and the acquisition of firearms, to obtain and exert economic and political power. All of these groups lived along the ever-advancing colonial frontier and thus were in a position to control, or at least influence, contacts with more remote tribes. The Occaneechis, located astride the principal trading path out of Fort Henry, achieved particular success in this respect. By controlling access to firearms and using intimidation when necessary, the Occaneechis were able to maintain their dominant position as middlemen. Significantly, when their downfall came in 1676, it was at the hands not of their deprived "trading partners" but of the superior forces of Nathaniel Bacon and his well-armed militia.

DISEASE. Without a doubt, the most devastating result of the European arrival on the North Carolina piedmont was the introduction of new diseases to which the native people had little or no immunity. Smallpox, measles, and other viral infections swept across the region, killing and disabling thousands. Their devastation was enhanced even further by increased movements of people during the contact period. The intensification and spread of traditional trade networks to accommodate the flow of European goods and deerskins also facilitated the rapid spread of deadly pathogens (Wood 1987: 31).

There can be no argument over the final, devastating result of the introduction of foreign diseases, although scholars debate the timing and spread of those diseases into the interior Southeast. Many researchers (e.g., Ramenofsky 1987; Smith 1987) generally support the position taken by Henry Dobyns (1983), who believes that waves of pandemics swept through the interior Southeast soon after the arrival of the first Spanish explorers. According to Dobyns (1983: 13), diseases spread from population to population on their own momentum, without the necessity of face-to-face contacts between natives and foreigners. Others (e.g., Blakely and Detweiler-Blakely 1989; Henige 1989; Milner 1980; Snow and Lanphear 1989) have suggested that, rather than continent-wide pandemics on the heels of the Spanish *entradas,* the spread of Old World diseases depended on a number of local and regional factors. Population densities, community size, and the degree and nature of the contacts between natives and foreigners all affected the timing, speed, and scope of the devastation of diseases such as smallpox, measles, and influenza. Both of these positions depend heavily on historical and ethnographic data.

In the Siouan project area, there is neither ethnographic nor archaeological evidence of epidemic diseases until the arrival of the Virginia traders in the last half of the seventeenth century. In 1670, John Lederer passed through southern Virginia and central North Carolina visiting the villages of the Saponis, Occaneechis, Enos, Shakoris, Saras, and others without mentioning any signs of population disruption or decline (Cumming 1958). Three years later, James Needham and Gabriel Arthur traveled through the north-central piedmont without reporting any evidence of depopulation. Even John Lawson in 1701 was impressed with the numbers of people he encountered during the middle leg of his journey through Catawba country (Lefler 1967: 46). As he moved northeastward and began to visit groups that had been intensively engaged in the Virginia deerskin trade, however, his observations changed. There, Lawson described large vacant areas and small towns of "not above 17 houses." At Sapona, he mentioned for the first time the amalgamation of once-distinct tribes into single villages as a consequence of depopulation (Lefler 1967: 50–53). It was these more northern piedmont groups that caused Lawson (Lefler 1967: 232) to observe: "The Small-Pox and Rum have made such a Destruction amongst them, that, on good grounds, I do believe, there is not the sixth Savage living within two hundred Miles of all our Settlements, as there were fifty Years ago."

The archaeological record also points to a late arrival of epidemic diseases in the Siouan area. Late Hillsboro phase sites (1500–1600), which were occupied during the time of the initial arrival of Spaniards in the Southeast, consistently have low burial densities and show no evidence of increased mortuary activity. Despite extensive testing, few burials have been found. Nor is there any evidence of a breakdown or disruption of other cultural components during the Hillsboro phase. On the contrary, settlements became more densely populated, subsistence practices became more intense and diverse, and ceramic and lithic technologies became more elaborate.

It could be argued that cemeteries were located away from the habitation areas, and we simply failed to find them. Or, as some have suggested, the living were so weakened that they were unable to bury their dead (Ramenofsky 1987; Smith 1987). The first argument can never be completely dismissed because of the nature of archaeological data. However, the typical pattern of Siouan burial from the late prehistoric period until the close of the seventeenth century was to place graves in or near domestic structures. These are the site areas that were intensively tested and excavated during the Siouan project. Evidence from the Fredricks and William Kluttz sites indicates that this pattern did change by 1700, when both the Occaneechis and the Saras began to bury their dead in cemeteries. Still, using the same subsurface testing strategy as that employed at earlier sites, we were able to locate cemeteries at both sites (Davis and Ward 1987; Ward and Davis 1993).

There is also ample archaeological evidence that the dead were buried even during the most virulent epidemics. At Upper Saratown and the Madison Cemetery site, two Sara villages that were decimated by diseases during the late seventeenth century, individuals were buried in traditional shaft-and-chamber pits with appropriate ritual. Even at Occaneechi Town, where probably fewer than 50 souls survived, deep graves were arduously dug into a stiff subsoil clay, and the dead were laid to rest with full, traditional ceremony.

Only at the William Kluttz site, which represents the last desperate gasp of the Saras on the Dan River, is there evidence that the decimation had become so great that it affected the burial of the dead. There, children and subadults were interred in shallow pits within a cemetery, apparently with little attendant ritual. Adult graves, however, were placed away from the cemetery and displayed traditional deep pit forms. Burial goods indicate that those individuals were given their last rites in a traditional manner. Even during the worst of times, the dead were still buried, and more often than not, with full ceremony.

Further evidence for the late arrival of epidemics on the Carolina piedmont comes from excavations at sites occu-

pied during the Mitchum, Jenrette, and middle Saratown phases (ca. 1600–1680). At the Jenrette site, more than 14,000 square feet of the palisaded village have been excavated, exposing more than 75 pit features but only two graves. Extensive auger testing and excavations at Lower Saratown have revealed only a single burial among more than 40 pit features. And both of these sites contained trade materials suggesting only indirect contacts with European traders.

These data alone may not be entirely convincing, and contrary arguments could still be made about the reliability of the excavation samples and the possibility of drastically altered mortuary patterns. Yet when the burial density data from sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century sites are compared with those from late seventeenth-century sites, the differences are so striking that they cannot be explained away by sampling error. At Upper Saratown, the graves were so dense that it was difficult to dig a 10-by-10-foot excavation unit without uncovering the top of at least one burial pit. At the Madison Cemetery site, the number and density of graves led an avocational archaeologist to mistakenly assume the site was a cemetery (Gravely 1969). The sheer numbers and concentrations of burials on sites postdating 1670, compared with earlier sites, make it clear that diseases, not sampling error or burial practices, were the culprits responsible for the dramatic differences in mortuary evidence.

Summary

By viewing the archaeological data of the Siouan project against the background of the ethnohistoric record, it is possible to create a composite picture of life on the Carolina piedmont during the seventeenth century with a great degree of clarity and focus. At first glance, this picture appears to be one of explosive and dramatic change. It cannot be disputed that the Indian societies that entered the eighteenth century were vastly different from those of 1600 or even 1650. From the native perspective, the ultimate consequence of Indian-European contact was both devastating and irreversible. Yet as one moves in for a closer look, it becomes clear that change was tempered by stability and that many native traditions persisted in the face of the devastation brought on by disease and depopulation. The Siouan peoples of the piedmont were not simply passive observers of their own demise; rather, they were active participants trying in their own culturally prescribed ways to adjust to and even benefit from the emerging new world order. Although change brought short-term success for some groups, such as the Occaneechis, their ultimate fate was the same as that of their neighbors. By 1714, the Occaneechis had removed to Fort Christanna, under protection of the Virginia colonial government, while other groups, including the Saras, Shakoris, and Sissipahaws, drifted southward, where they eventually joined the Catawbas (Mooney 1894). Although some families might have remained in their ancestral homeland, and others returned from Virginia in small numbers throughout the later half of the eighteenth century (Hazel 1991), the English, German, and Scots-Irish immigrants who first settled the North Carolina piedmont during the 1730s and 1740s found only abandoned villages and vacant fields.

Acknowledgments

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Location of Primary Collections

All artifact collections and associated records of the Siouan project, as well as Richard Gravely's collections and notes, are curated at the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.