Archaeological Studies of Gender in the Southeastern United States

Edited by

Jane M. Eastman and Christopher B. Rodning

Foreword by Jerald T. Milanich, Series Editor

University Press of Florida

Gainesville · Tallahassee · Tampa · Boca Raton

Pensacola · Orlando · Miami · Jacksonville · Ft. Myers

06 05 04 03 02 01 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Archaeological studies of gender in the southeastern United States / edited by Jane M. Eastman and Christopher B. Rodning; foreword by Jerald T. Milanich.
p. cm. — (The Ripley P. Bullen series)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-8130-1875-7 (cloth: alk. paper)
1. Indians of North America—Southern States—Antiquities. 2. Indians of North America—Southern States—Social life and customs. 3. Sex role—Southern States. 4. Southern States—Antiquities. I. Title: Archaeological studies of gender in the southeastern United States. II. Eastman, Jane M., 1963–. III. Rodning, Christopher Bernard. IV. Series.

E78.S65 A75 2001
975'.01—dc21 00-047667

The University Press of Florida is the scholarly publishing agency for the State University System of Florida, comprising Florida A&M University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida International University, Florida State University, University of Central Florida, University of Florida, University of North Florida, University of South Florida, and University of West Florida.

University Press of Florida
15 Northwest 15th Street
Gainesville, FL 32611–2079
http://www.upf.com

« 6 »

Piedmont Siouans and Mortuary Archaeology on the Eno River, North Carolina

Elizabeth Monahan Driscoll, R. P. Stephen Davis Jr.,
and H. Trawick Ward

Gender was a meaningful aspect of past mortuary ritual, and interpreting gender in archaeologically visible mortuary patterns demands more than knowledge about the biological sex and age at death of interred individuals. Gender roles are often actively created, negotiated, and reinforced through mortuary ritual. By examining the material remains of burials and individuals and evidence of other aspects of burial ritual, archaeologists can learn a great deal about the gender roles within past communities. This chapter reviews mortuary patterns at the Fredricks site, the early eighteenth-century settlement of Occaneechi Town, located in the Piedmont of North Carolina. The people who occupied Occaneechi Town were under considerable stress from European-introduced diseases, and they were also recently dislocated from their previous homes in Virginia. Historic records indicate that several disparate groups came together in the Piedmont at the time the site was occupied, due to their diminishing numbers and increasingly embattled existence. We examined mortuary patterns at the site with an eye toward discerning possible cultural differences among the burials, especially in the realm of gender.

The Fredricks site was discovered in 1983 by archaeologists from the University of North Carolina's (UNC) Research Laboratories of Archaeology and was excavated between 1983 and 1986 (fig. 6.1). It represents

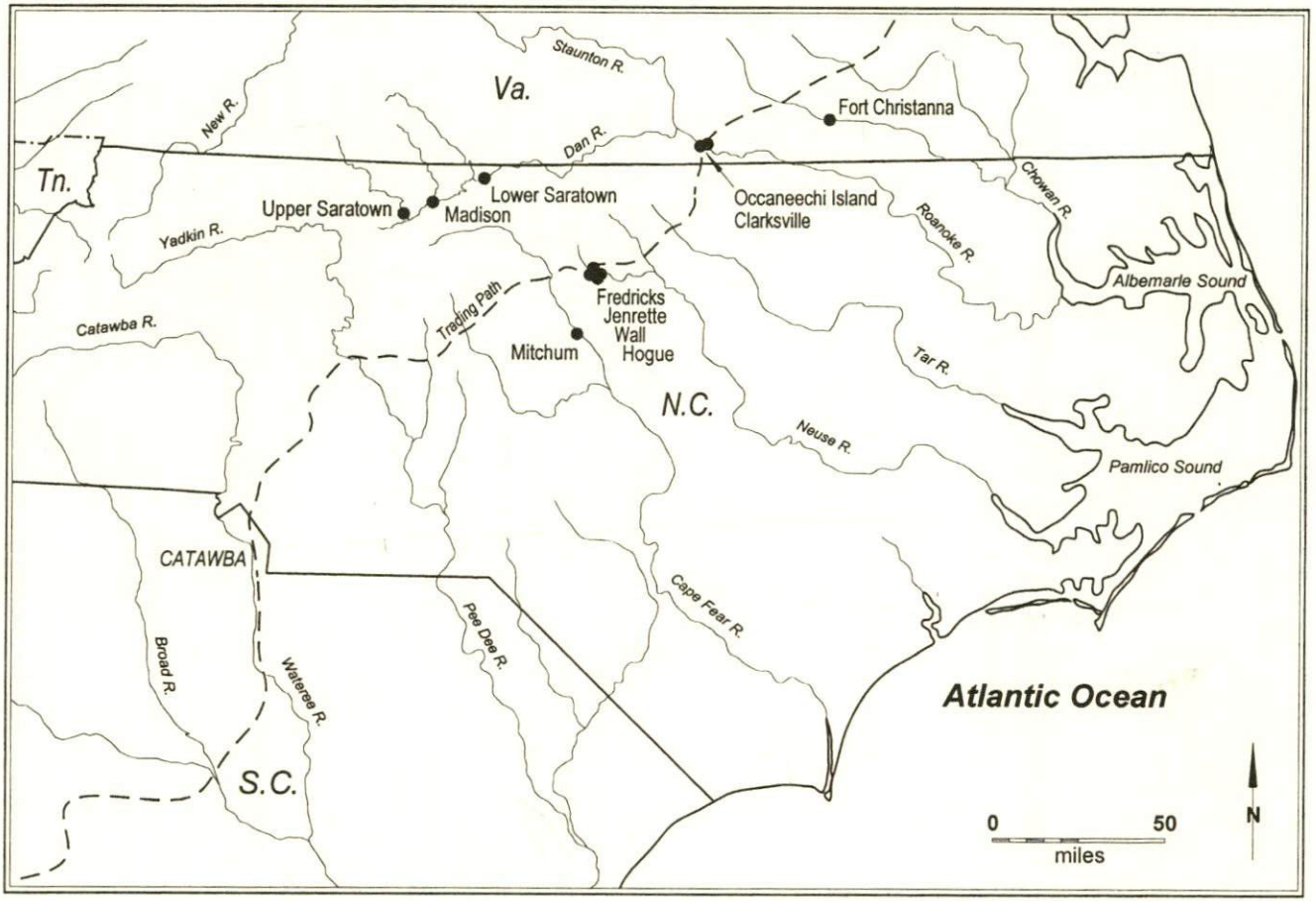

Fig. 6.1. Fredricks and other sites mentioned in the text.

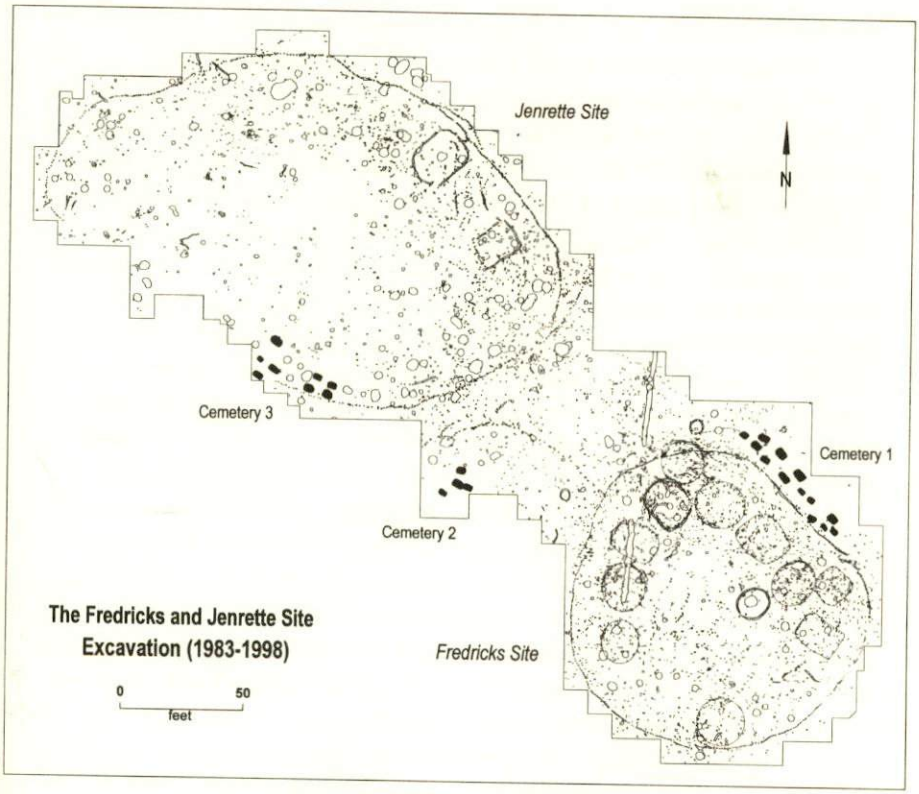

Fig. 6.2. Excavation plan of the Fredricks and Jenrette sites showing the three cemeteries.

Occaneechi Town, a settlement of the Occaneechi tribe on the north bank of the Eno River, near present Hillsborough, North Carolina, which was visited by John Lawson in 1701 (Lefler 1967). Archaeological excavations revealed a small village about one-fourth of an acre in size which consisted of about a dozen houses of bower construction, arranged in a circle around an open plaza where a large sweat house stood. A stockade of small saplings surrounded the village, and a cemetery containing thirteen graves was located along the stockade at the northeast side (Davis et al. 1998; Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987; Ward and Davis 1988) (fig. 6.2).

The Fredricks cemetery represents a unique mortuary feature in the North Carolina Piedmont. At other excavated late prehistoric and contact-period village sites, including Wall, Upper Saratown, and Mitchum, burials are more randomly scattered and located within or just outside dwellings. At Wall, a fifteenth-century site located directly to the east of

Fredricks, all of the burials were placed within or in the vicinity of the houses. The individuals were all flexed and placed in shaft-and-chamber pits with their heads to the southeast. At Upper Saratown, 111 burials have been excavated, and they also were found either within or near houses (Navey 1982; Ward 1987). Other Piedmont Siouan sites, such as Madison, Clarksville, and Mitchum, reflect similar spatial arrangements and indicate a Siouan mortuary pattern during the late prehistoric and contact periods. The first cemetery excavated at Fredricks was immediately conspicuous by its departure from this pattern. Because the historic record indicates that depopulation from European diseases caused various Piedmont ethnic groups to form amalgamated communities, it has been hypothesized that the Fredricks cemetery represents the resting place of Occaneechis who had joined the previous local residents of this bend in the Eno River (Ward 1987).

In 1989, a second cemetery, containing four graves, was discovered (fig. 6.2). It, too, was located outside the stockade, between Fredricks and the newly discovered Jenrette site, a Shakori village dating to the middle to late seventeenth century. During the 1995 and 1996 field seasons, archaeologists found yet another Fredricks cemetery. This burial group was located west of the other two cemeteries, within and adjacent to the stockade surrounding the slightly earlier Jenrette site.

Recently, we have begun to question our earlier assumption regarding cemeteries as representing spatially separated burials associated with ethnically distinct social groups. Could they not just as easily reflect deaths from different epidemics and a recognition of the contagiousness of Old World diseases (Ward and Davis 1993:416)? In this chapter, we will explore this question by examining several dimensions of mortuary behavior, including grave associations, burial pit structure, and body positioning, along lines of age and sex. It is our hope that behavioral differences or similarities within and among the Fredricks burial groups will shed light on the advent of cemetery interments in the North Carolina Piedmont during the contact period.

The Fredricks site excavation was part of the Siouan Project of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology. This project has sought to reconstruct patterns of culture change among the Native American groups of the Piedmont in northern North Carolina and southern Virginia (Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987). Archaeologists have conducted research at several sites, including Fredricks, Wall, Jenrette, Hogue, Upper Saratown, Lower Saratown, and Mitchum. Initial investigations focused on the watersheds of the Dan, Eno, and Haw rivers, which together comprise

the heartland of the Piedmont Siouans during the contact period. Research at the Fredricks site, discussed in this chapter, has led to many conclusions about the nature and impact of European contact and interaction on the Occaneechis and other Siouan peoples.

Elsewhere, scholars have written comprehensive descriptions of the histories of the Occaneechis and their Piedmont neighbors, which we summarize here (see Cumming 1958; Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987; Merrell 1987, 1989; Rights 1957). When European explorers began surveying the Piedmont in what is now Virginia and North Carolina, they encountered several Native American tribes who spoke related languages (now recognized as Eastern Siouan [J. Mooney 1894; Speck 1935]) and who descended from a common cultural background. These groups practiced comparable subsistence strategies of foraging and farming, and their societies were organized along kinship lines and according to relatively egalitarian rules of social reciprocity.

As traders and colonists spread across the Piedmont and as interactions among Native Americans and European Americans became more direct and more intense, the Occaneechis became prominent entrepreneurs among these Siouan groups. The Occaneechis controlled the supply side of the deerskin trade, and their language became a *lingua franca* across the Piedmont. One of their villages, on an island in the Roanoke River, was located at a natural ford where the Great Trading Path from Virginia to Georgia crossed the river. From this location, the Occaneechis attained a pivotal role in the fur trade. It was here that John Lederer visited them in 1670 (Cumming 1958). Although not as populous as other groups in the area, their fierce and pugnacious reputation and their willingness to back it up with warfare and intimidation seem to have reinforced the Occaneechis' role in the trade network.

This prominence ultimately led to armed hostilities with Nathaniel Bacon's Virginia frontier militia in 1676. First enlisting the Occaneechis as allies to defeat a group of Susquehannocks he had pursued into their region, Bacon then attacked the Occaneechis (Billings 1975:267–69). This battle so reduced the numbers of the Occaneechi that they were unable to defend their village on the Roanoke and retreated southward. They relocated on the Eno River, near present Hillsborough, North Carolina. There John Lawson, an English surveyor, found them in 1701 (Lefler 1967:61). By this time, warfare, disease, and alcohol had virtually destroyed the Occaneechi and many other Piedmont tribes (Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987). During the first three decades of the eighteenth century, remnants of these once-autonomous Siouan groups either gathered together for

protection near Fort Christanna in Virginia or joined the Catawba in South Carolina.

Merrell (1987) has described four stages of interaction between Europeans and Native Americans in the Piedmont. During the first era, between 1525 and 1625, interactions between Europeans and Native Americans involved mostly indirect contacts. European material culture was carried inland by Native American groups from the coastal regions. In addition, Spanish explorers traveled through the western Piedmont of North Carolina between 1539 and 1541 (Hudson, Smith, and DePratter 1984) and again between 1566 and 1568 (Beck 1997; Hudson 1990), and some Native Americans may have traveled to the South Carolina low country to satisfy their curiosity about the strange new people. Although Spanish-introduced diseases certainly began to impact some Native Americans at this time (M. T. Smith 1987), particularly those in direct contact with or in close proximity to the Spanish explorers and settlements, these diseases do not appear to have impacted peoples of the northeastern North Carolina Piedmont. Current archaeological and ethnohistoric evidence suggest that significant depopulation from European diseases in this area did not occur until after 1650, and then it resulted from English, not Spanish, contacts (Ward and Davis 1991).

The second stage of interaction began with the defeat of the Powhatan Confederacy in 1622 and again in 1644, eventually leading to the spread of Virginia traders and colonists to lands west of the falls of James River. The first explorers were followed quickly by traders eager to barter with the Native Americans. The increased contact led to clashes between English settlers and Native Americans in the 1650s and 1670s, including Bacon's rebellion and the destruction of the Occaneechis' Roanoke River trading center.

The third stage of interaction saw a dramatic increase in intercultural exchange between natives and colonists. With the strongest native groups defeated, the remaining scattered groups were subject to incessant Iroquois raiding. The most serious problem for the Siouan Piedmont groups were attacks by "Sinnagers," probably warriors of the Seneca and perhaps other western Iroquois tribes. Their war parties regularly attacked Piedmont tribes, taking prisoners and destroying villages. These raids eventually drove the Sara from the Dan River along the North Carolina–Virginia border to South Carolina, where they joined the Catawba. The Occaneechi, Tutelo, and Saponi sought refuge in Virginia, signing a treaty with Lieutenant Governor Spotswood in 1714 and relocating to Fort Christanna on the Meherrin River (Alexander 1972; Lefler 1967:242;

Merrell 1987; L. B. Wright 1966:398). This sanctuary was short-lived, and in 1728 the refugees headed to join the Catawbas in South Carolina. In 1732 they returned to Virginia and began to disperse. Some joined remnants of the Tuscarora in eastern North Carolina, while others merged with their old enemies, the Six Nations (Merrell 1987:26).

The history of the Piedmont Siouans presents a complicated picture of amalgamation and dispersal in the face of various threats and opportunities. Remnants of individual tribes sought to maintain unique cultural identities throughout the process, even when joining with other groups. For example, although the Occaneechi, Saponi, Tutelo, and Stuckanock resided in a single village at Fort Christanna and were considered one nation by the Virginians, each group continued to elect its own headman, and each group preserved its own customs (Brock 1885:88; Merrell 1987; L. B. Wright 1966:315–16). One of the questions we seek to answer here is whether the community at the Fredricks site represents such an amalgamation of distinct ethnic groups whose identities were expressed through mortuary ritual.

In this chapter, we draw from the mortuary patterns at Fredricks to learn more about the social and political arrangements of the Occaneechi residents of the site. The practices underlying these archaeologically visible mortuary patterns include rituals performed before, during, and after the actual burial of an individual. Because archaeologists usually can observe only the manner in which the dead were disposed and the spatial relationships between burials and other architecture, they often compare the material culture of burials of members of different age and sex groups to answer questions about social status, gender, and group affiliation. Methods for such comparisons begin with the "assumption that an individual's treatment following death bears some predictable relationship to the individual's state in life and to the organization of the society to which the individual belonged" (O'Shea 1984:3).

The first archaeological studies to evaluate systematically the relationship between mortuary patterns and social structure sought to prove that such relationships were relatively straightforward (J. A. Brown 1971). Binford (1971) assessed the relationship between an individual's "social persona" (Goodenough 1965) and the dimensions of this social persona that were recognized in differential mortuary treatment. Each individual has a number of social identities, such as father, brother, and husband. Together, these identities constitute an individual's social persona (Goodenough 1965). Binford (1971) searched the Human Relations Area Files (Murdock 1967) for funerary distinctions based on the following social

identities: age, sex, social position, and social affiliation. He found that sex, social position, and social affiliation were the most common factors symbolized but that there were major differences in mortuary behaviors of mobile foragers, shifting agriculturalists, settled agriculturalists, and pastoralists.

Saxe (1970) further expanded the notion of social persona and the significance of social role in mortuary treatment. Saxe applied componential analysis based on the work of Goodenough (1965) on the concepts of role and persona, stating that "(d)eath calls forth a fuller representation of ego's various social identities than at any time during life" (Saxe 1970:6). Therefore, archaeologists are not merely excavating individuals but rather a "coherent social personality" (Saxe 1970:4).

The spatial dimension of mortuary ritual—how graves are arranged across a site—can also be a sensitive social barometer. For example, cemeteries may contain individuals of equal rank, and several cemeteries within a site may reflect the sociopolitical hierarchy of a group. In more-egalitarian societies, burials segregated in cemeteries may express strong lineage affiliations, the presence of corporate groups, or the presence of kinship structures such as clans (Bartel 1982; Howell and Kintigh 1996; Peebles 1974; Saxe 1971; Tainter 1978).

The initial assumptions in mortuary analysis came under considerable criticism in the early 1980s, at the same time as the processual archaeology in which they were rooted came under intense scrutiny (Trigger 1989) and for similar reasons. Processual archaeology often fails to take into account the importance of ritual and symbolism in society (Hodder 1982; Shanks and Tilley 1982). This is especially important in mortuary analysis since disposal of the dead is a ritually dominated practice (Hodder 1982). Hodder (1982) argues that the entire funeral rite, and not merely the physical disposal of the dead, is the appropriate frame of reference for generalizations about social organization.

However, mortuary practices can mask rather than express real social relationships and realities. After all, it is the peers of a deceased person who perform mortuary rituals. The survivors may reinforce their own position by demonstrating their relationship to the dead (Huntington and Metcalf 1979). Or it may be in their interest to downplay the wealth or position of the dead (Shanks and Tilley 1982). This may lead to "masked rank," where internal tensions resulting from social inequality are neutralized by the appearance of egalitarianism in mortuary (and other) ritual (Trinkaus 1995). In this way, ritual can reflect cultural notions of how things *should be*, not how they actually *are*. Ritual is an idealized

expression of power relations, and in these expressions the dead are subject to manipulation by the living (Parker Pearson 1982).

Conkey and Spector (1984), in their seminal article on gender and archaeology, point out that our interpretations of the past are often colored by our perceptions of relationships between men and women. This is an especially important point to keep in mind when using mortuary remains to reconstruct past activity patterns, sociopolitical organization, and gender roles. We can determine the sex, health, and diet of an individual from his or her skeletal remains. Using that information and knowledge about the mortuary context and other aspects of the site, we can reconstruct social categories. But we must always be conscious that we are attempting to use *biological* and *physical* remains to reconstruct aspects of *social* and *cultural* identities, and we must be aware of our assumptions.

A gendered perspective can be especially enlightening for mortuary studies in archaeology. By dividing a group of related burials into gender categories based initially on biological sex and age at death, we can learn about the meaning these categories held for people. For example, shell ornaments are commonly associated with subadult burials in the Southeast (Thomas 1996). We can speculate about the meaning of such symbolism, but without considering children as a separate category this pattern would be obscured. By looking at burials of young women and comparing them with older, postmenopausal women, we can learn how their status may have differed in life. We may also learn about gender roles by comparing males and females of similar ages. The importance of a gendered perspective to mortuary studies cannot be overemphasized. The patterns revealed through sorting by both age and sex add tremendously to our understanding of past social interactions. Incorporating health and diet information sorted by gender criteria also helps to point out arrangements that might be masked through ritual practices. What is obscured by ritual is as important and interesting as what is revealed. The present case study of the mortuary dimensions at Fredricks clearly demonstrates the importance of a gendered approach.

Summary of Skeletal Analysis

We begin the process of interpretation with the information gathered from the biological remains of the individuals interred at the Fredricks site. Biological sex, age at death, and pathology of the thirteen individuals buried in Cemetery 1, excavated between 1983 and 1985, were studied by Patricia Lambert using standard osteological and osteometric proce-

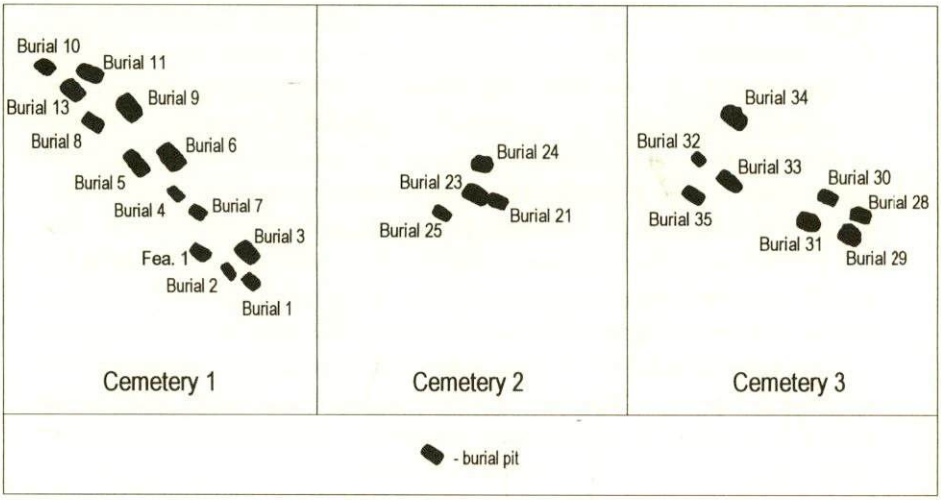

Fig. 6.3. Maps of Cemeteries 1, 2, and 3 at Fredricks, showing individual burial designations.

dures (W. M. Bass 1987; T. D. White 1991). After 1985, human remains no longer were removed from the ground but were analyzed *in situ*. Several researchers, including Elizabeth Monahan Driscoll, performed the *in situ* analysis of age, sex, and pathology on the twelve individuals buried in Cemeteries 2 and 3. Different researchers have reported estimates of age at death in different ways (fig. 6.3).

All three cemeteries were similar in age and sex composition (table 6.1). Each contained a preponderance of subadults and a mix of male and female adults (fig. 6.4). Young adult males (aged eighteen to twenty-five years) were conspicuous by their absence in each cemetery. There is a difference between the average age of the females in Cemeteries 1 and 3. Taking the median of the age estimate for each female, we found that the two females (aged approximately nineteen and thirty years old) in Cemetery 1 averaged twenty-four years old, ten years younger than the three females in Cemetery 3, who averaged about thirty-three years old at death (aged approximately thirty-five, thirty, and thirty-five years old). The adult males were similar in age in both Cemeteries 1 and 3.

Pathology was examined for the individuals in Cemeteries 1 and 3. Cribra orbitalia, porotic hyperostosis, linear enamel hypoplasia, caries percentage, and periostitis were all recorded where possible. Each tooth was examined for evidence of caries. The percentage of teeth present which had at least one carious lesion was calculated for each individual.

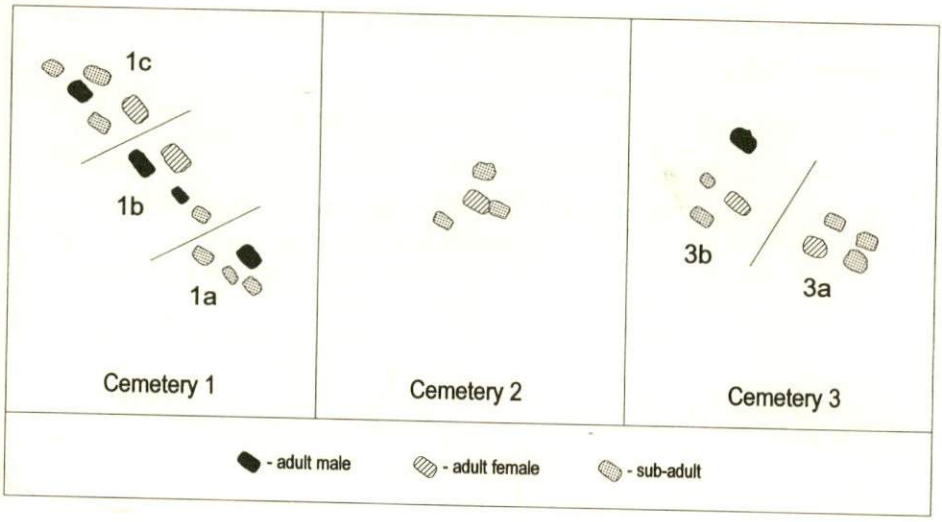

Fig. 6.4. Maps of Cemeteries 1, 2, and 3 at Fredricks, showing burial groups and age/sex determinations.

Caries rates were considered by age and sex for Cemeteries 1 and 3. Caries information was not recorded for Cemetery 2, where human remains were poorly preserved. The percentages of carious-lesion prevalence vary widely. The percentage of carious teeth per individual is correlated with age. Therefore, the females in Cemetery 1 should have fewer carious teeth due to the younger age of the two women. The average for the two women in Cemetery 1 is 34 percent, only slightly lower than the average of 40 percent for the three females in Cemetery 3. Part of the problem of comparing caries incidence is that older individuals may have lost more teeth that were carious, skewing the results. The average for the males, however, is also slightly different between the two cemeteries. The four males in Cemetery 1 had an average of 45 percent carious teeth, while the males in Cemetery 3 had an average of only 31 percent carious teeth. Because the ages of the males are similar in both cemeteries, this slight difference in caries percentage may indicate subtle differences in diet between the two groups, but to draw firm conclusions from such small samples is unwarranted.

Linear enamel hypoplasias are furrows in the tooth enamel that form when a young individual suffers a period of growth disruption. This disruption may be due to inadequate nutrition, a period of poor health, or both. The body sacrifices growth to divert its resources to survival. If the individual survives the episode, enamel deposition resumes at a nor-

Table 6.1. Age, sex, and mortuary attributes for the Fredricks Cemetery burials

Burial, age, and sex	Mortuary attributes
Cemetery 1 (Group 1a)	
Burial 1 (subadult, 3.5 ± 1 yrs.)	*Garment* (heavily decorated—small shell and glass beads, buttons) *Adornment* (large glass and shell beads, shell gorgets) *Funerary objects* (spoon, hammerstone, iron knives, scissors)
Burial 2 (subadult (7.5 ± 2 yrs.)	*Garment* (heavily decorated—small shell and glass beads, buttons) *Adornment* (large glass, shell, and bone beads) *Funerary objects* (pewter porringer, Fredricks Check Stamped pot, iron knives, Jew's harp, lead shot)
Burial 3 (male, 32 ± 5 yrs.)	*Garment* (lightly decorated—wampum) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (wine bottle, iron ax, iron knives, scissors, pewter pipe, ember tender, striking flint, iron nails, lead shot, brass buckle)
Feature 1 (neonate?)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (none)
Cemetery 1 (Group 1b)	
Burial 4 (male, 25 ± 4 yrs.; disarticulated bundle); Burial 4a (neonate, 1 month)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (pewter porringer, wine bottle, bundled tubular shell beads)
Burial 5 (male, 41 ± 9 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (iron ax, iron knife, kaolin pipes, shell-beaded bag)
Burial 6 (female?, 19 ± 3 yrs.)	*Garment* (lightly decorated—small shell and glass beads) *Adornment* (wire bracelets, large glass beads) *Funerary objects* (dog-lock musket, Fredricks Check Stamped pot, iron hoe, pewter pipe, scissors)

Burial 7 (neonate, <3 months)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (brass bells) *Funerary objects* (none)
Cemetery 1 (Group 1c)	
Burial 8 (subadult, 3.5 ± 1 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (copper kettle, Fredricks Check Stamped pot, basket, iron knife, brass spoon, brass buckles)
Burial 9 (female, 30 ± 5 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (iron hoe, iron knife)
Burial 10 (subadult, 4.5 ± 1.3 yrs.)	*Garment* (heavily decorated—small glass beads) *Adornment* (large glass beads, brass bells) *Funerary objects* (Fredricks Check Stamped pots, plain pot, small celt, iron hoe)
Burial 11 (subadult, 17 ± 3 yrs.)	*Garment* (lightly decorated—small glass beads) *Adornment* (large glass beads, buckles) *Funerary objects* (cord-marked pot, iron knife, lead shot, Jew's harps, bone-handled punch/awl[?], tin box, wire C-bracelet)
Burial 13 (male, 40 ± 5 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (pewter porringer, kaolin pipe, iron knives)
Cemetery 2	
Burial 21 (subadult, 10–15 yrs.)	*Garment* (lightly decorated—small glass beads) *Adornment* (large glass beads, brass bells) *Funerary objects* (cylinder-shaped iron object)
Burial 23 (female, 20–35 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (none)
Burial 24 (subadult?)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (none)
Burial 25 (subadult)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (Fredricks Check Stamped pot, pewter pipe)

continued

Table 6.1 *(continued)*

Burial, age, and sex	Mortuary attributes
Cemetery 3 (Group 3a)	
Burial 28 (subadult, 1.75 yrs. ± 7 months)	*Garment* (heavily decorated—small glass and shell beads) *Adornment* (large glass beads, brass bells) *Funerary objects* (kaolin pipe)
Burial 29 (subadult, 12 ± 2.5 yrs.)	*Garment* (lightly decorated—small shell beads) *Adornment* (large shell beads, brass ornaments) *Funerary objects* (iron knife, iron scissors, brass Jesuit ring, brass thimble)
Burial 30 (subadult, 1.5 ± 0.5 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (shell gorget) *Funerary objects* (iron knife, scissors, brass Jesuit[?] ring)
Burial 31 (female, 30–39 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (Fredricks Check Stamped pot)
Cemetery 3 (Group 3b)	
Burial 32 (subadult, 3 ± 1 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (chipped-stone projectile point, iron knife)
Burial 33 (female, 25–35 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (iron knife, kaolin pipe)
Burial 34 (male, 40+ yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (none) *Funerary objects* (plain pot, chipped-stone projectile points, iron ax, iron knife, scissors, clay pipe, ember tenders, gunflints, sheet brass object, glass button)
Burial 35 (subadult, 6 ± 2 yrs.)	*Garment* (undecorated) *Adornment* (large shell and glass beads, shell gorgets) *Funerary objects* (Fredricks Check Stamped pot, iron ax, iron knife, brass spoon, polished stone discoidal)

mal rate, leaving behind a gap that permanently marks the period of slower growth. Most of the individuals in Cemeteries 1 and 3 were evaluated for linear enamel hypoplasias. Of the individuals in Cemetery 1 who could be scored, nearly all had at least one hypoplastic line, except one child (Burial 8, aged approximately three and a half years). Two infants and one other child (Burials 1, 4a, and 7) could not be scored. The individuals in Cemetery 3 displayed a similar pattern. Again, one young child (Burial 32, aged approximately three years), showed no lines, likely having died before they could form.

The other pathological indicators evaluated could not be scored reliably in over half of the individuals in the two cemeteries, making their usefulness dubious. The overall pattern of health and nutrition indicators from the skeletal remains portrays individuals who had a fairly significant disease load and relatively high infant and child mortality. Unfortunately for this study, the European diseases that annihilated the majority of Native Americans in the Southeast, including smallpox, chicken pox, measles, influenza, diphtheria, cholera, bubonic plague, typhus, and scarlet fever, do not leave markers on the skeletons of the victims (Dobyns 1983; Ortner and Putschar 1981). Therefore, while we can speculate on the causes of death of such a large percentage of the estimated population of Occaneechi Town, we cannot pinpoint the diseases. Evidence of traumas on the skeletal remains include a healed broken arm for Burial 2 and possible scalping marks on the Burial 4 cranium. Additionally, a flattened piece of lead shot was found resting against the left fibula of Burial 9, indicating a likely gunshot wound.

In summary, there are no patterns of health or nutrition indicators that would indicate that inclusion in a specific cemetery was due to social status, if status carried any social buffering from disease or food shortages. Overall, the assemblage of individuals paints a picture of a population under acute disease stress.

Burial Groupings

Next, we consider the spatial organization of burials at the site. One of the more interesting features of the Fredricks site cemeteries is that graves are clustered spatially into groups of four or five individuals. Cemetery 1 contains three such groups, Cemetery 2 is comprised of a single group, and Cemetery 3 contains two groups (fig. 6.4). Even more intriguing is the similarity among the groups in terms of age and sex composition. Each group consists of a young adult female, sometimes an older adult male, and several subadults. The spatial separation and the age and sex

composition of each group suggest that they represent households or families. Given the age ranges estimated for the female in each cluster, it is biologically possible that the children were born to that female.

There are two exceptions to the pattern described above. In Cemetery 1, Group 1a does not contain an adult female. Group 1b in Cemetery 1 contains a young adult female, an older adult male, a subadult, and the bundled remains of a young adult male. The occurrence of a few infant bones with the bundled young adult male suggest that they were buried or curated elsewhere prior to reburial in the cemetery. Perhaps this is an indication that young adult males were treated differently after death and usually buried elsewhere. Alternatively, the general absence of young adult males from the burial population may reflect their involvement in the fur trade—a lifestyle that would have kept them away from the village for long periods and perhaps made them less susceptible to villagewide epidemics. It also is possible that increased exposure to disease through trade led to death away from the village. Perhaps, given the violent history of the Occaneechi prior to their relocation to North Carolina, young males were largely absent in the living population as well. They may have been killed in the conflicts, or some may not have joined the older men, women, and children on their flight south. It seems unlikely that this situation would have persisted, however, given the nature of the settlement as a trading outpost.

If these groups of burials can be interpreted correctly as family units, then they suggest that several households experienced episodes of multiple death—a situation expected to result from exposure to highly lethal epidemics. The presence of four older subadults within the cemeteries supports the likelihood that Occaneechi Town suffered from European-introduced or other disease epidemics. This age group usually has the lowest mortality in a population not experiencing a significant infectious-disease load. Thus, normally we would not expect to see this proportion in the burial population in the absence of such epidemics (Weiss 1973).

How should we interpret multiple cemeteries comprising separate family or household groups? It is possible that each cemetery represents a kin group burial area. However, the morphological characteristics of the burial pits and the differential distribution of certain artifact types (discussed below) suggest differences greater than what might be expected between related kin groups. Given that Occaneechi Town was occupied at a time of widespread depopulation across much of the Piedmont, during which refugees from decimated villages came together to form new communities (see Lefler 1967:61–62, 232), it seems more rea-

sonable to view each cemetery as representing a distinct but culturally similar ethnic group that maintained its own mortuary tradition.

Funerary Objects

Items intentionally buried with an individual during a mortuary ritual constitute an important source of information about that person's identity within his or her society. By examining the patterned distribution of such items by age and sex and across space, we hope to provide some preliminary insights into the Fredricks burial population at four levels:

1. Individuals (examined as gender categories of adult males, adult females, and subadults).
2. Burial groups (possibly reflecting family units).
3. Cemeteries (mortuary manifestations of ethnicity or of specific disease episodes).
4. The entire burial population (a corporate group that may have been ethnically diverse).

Of the twenty-five burials within the three cemeteries, twenty were accompanied by nonperishable grave goods (fig. 6.5). This prevalence of mortuary items is in sharp contrast to those preceding groups in the region who often buried their dead clothed in beaded garments but with few accompanying grave goods. In most cases, funerary objects found

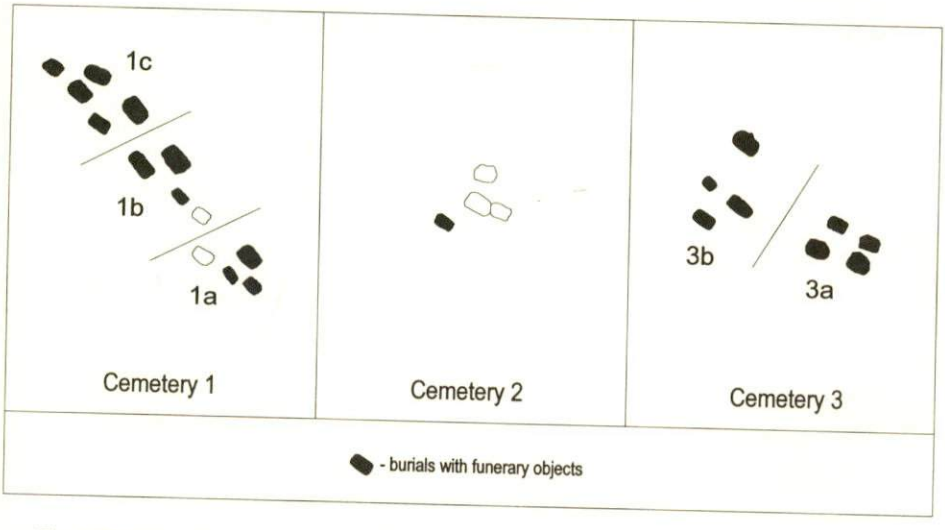

Fig. 6.5. Maps of Cemeteries 1, 2, and 3 at Fredricks, showing the distribution of funerary objects.

with the Fredricks burials were items of European manufacture, and, collectively, they display a wealth in trade goods that has not been found archaeologically elsewhere in the Piedmont (see table 6.1).

The occurrence of identical artifact types and styles within all three cemeteries, including a Fredricks Check Stamped pot in at least one burial in each cemetery, indicates that they are roughly contemporaneous and further differentiates these burials from the other scattered shaft-and-chamber graves which can be attributed to the slightly earlier habitation of the Jenrette village. Within all three cemeteries, funerary objects tend to occur in clusters on the burial pit floor, and in several instances the presence of preserved organic material suggests that mortuary goods were placed in skin or cloth bags, or baskets.

Funerary objects found in cemetery burials include iron knives, metal scissors, iron axes and hoes, clay and pewter smoking pipes, ember tenders, lead shot, gunflints, a musket, pewter porringers, wine bottles, a brass kettle, spoons, and clay pots. Over one-third of the individuals wore garments that were decorated with glass beads, shell beads, or buttons. Almost one-half wore necklaces of large glass or shell beads or were adorned with shell or brass ornaments (fig. 6.6).

By examining the distribution of funerary objects, several gender-specific patterns can be seen (fig. 6.7). First, subadults were most likely to be buried clothed in garments decorated with beadwork or adorned with necklaces, anklets, or bracelets. All four individuals buried in heavily decorated garments were subadults, and three of five individuals in

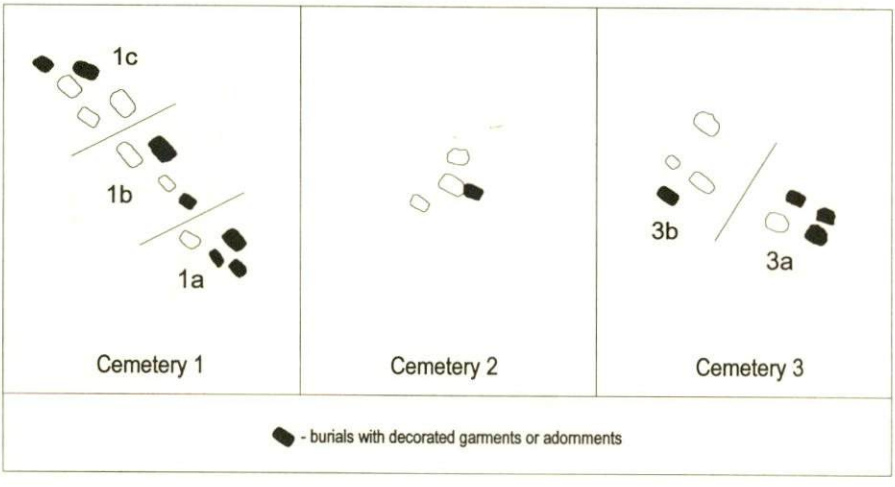

Fig. 6.6. Maps of Cemeteries 1, 2, and 3 at Fredricks, showing the distribution of decorated garments or adornments.

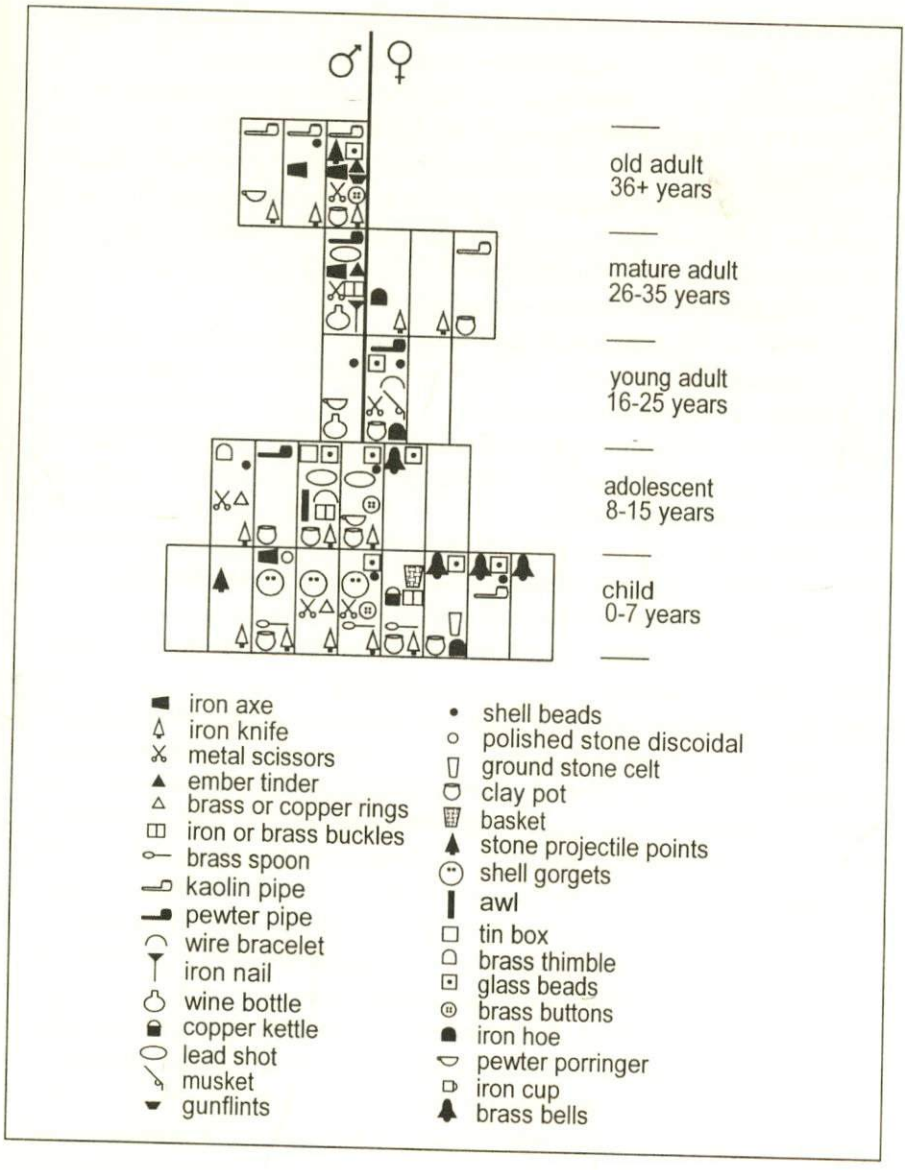

Fig. 6.7. Chart showing the distribution of funerary objects, decorated garments, and adornments by age and sex.

lightly decorated garments also were subadults. Likewise, ten of the eleven individuals adorned with necklaces or other ornaments also were subadults. Metal spoons, which occurred in three separate burial groups, were associated exclusively with subadults. These were sometimes decorated and worn as ornaments.

Certain other classes of funerary objects were associated with adult males or females but usually did not accompany subadults. Only two of the eight individuals with smoking paraphernalia were subadults, while four of the five adult male burials had clay or pewter pipes. Large metal implements likewise were distributed differentially among adult female and male burials and may reflect gender-specific activities in the Occaneechis' daily lives. Iron axes were found in three of the five adult male burials and in one subadult burial, while iron hoes accompanied two of the five adult females and one subadult.

European-made containers and native-made clay pots also appear to be differentially distributed. Of the nine burials with clay pots, six were subadults, two were adult females, and only one was an adult male. The pot associated with the adult male was one of the few vessels found that was not Fredricks Check Stamped. Conversely, two of the three pewter porringers and both wine bottles were found in adult male graves. Such a pattern might reflect the very different ways (by local manufacture and through the fur trade) in which these two types of containers could have been acquired by women and men, respectively.

Firearms and related items do not show an age- or sex-specific distribution. The one musket found is associated with a young adult, probably female, individual. This individual had been tentatively identified in the field as a young adult male, and identified as an adult male aged between twenty-five and thirty-five years at death by a previous researcher (Ward 1987; H. H. Wilson 1987). A recent reanalysis of these skeletal remains leads us to believe that the individual was younger than the original estimate and may have been female. The individual (Burial 6) died at a young age (about seventeen to twenty-two years), and it can be difficult to be certain of sex in young adults. However, comparison of the size and morphology of this skeleton with the rest of the individuals at the site leads us to believe that the individual was more likely female than male.

The reevaluation of Burial 6 as possibly a young woman poignantly raises the subject of gender and assumptions of gendered roles and activities. When the individual was thought to be a male, the automatic assumption was that this individual probably acquired the weapon through trade interactions in which he was likely to have been an active participant. However, once we realized that the individual could have been a young woman, we had to reevaluate our assumptions. It forced us to ensure that our explanations of how this weapon came to be included in this burial were based on ethnohistory and other evidence and not on our own assumptions of what a man or a woman would be doing with a

musket. Approaching this interpretation with a gendered perspective brings up additional interesting questions to consider. If the burial was that of a young woman, was she involved with trading? Did she participate in raids or hunt with it? What is the symbolism of this grave inclusion? These are all questions we may not have considered if we simply assumed the gender roles of men and women in this group.

Four subadult burials contained varying quantities of lead shot or gunflints. Most adult males had one or two iron knives; however, almost half of all adult females and more than half of the subadults also were buried with knives. Scissors likewise are not strongly associated with males, females, or subadults.

It is possible to detect spatial patterns in funerary accompaniments not only among the three cemeteries but also among the six burial groups within those cemeteries. As a simple comparative exercise, each burial group was characterized based on the occurrences of funerary objects representing twelve separate artifact classes, and then each group was compared to every other group (see table 6.2). It was found that the three groups within Cemetery 1 (Groups 1a, 1b, and 1c) and one of the Cemetery 3 groups (Group 3b) were very similar to one another in terms of burial goods. The other Cemetery 3 group (Group 3a) appears somewhat less closely related, while the Cemetery 2 group shares few common traits with the other groups.

Whereas most burials in Cemeteries 1 and 3 contained funerary objects, only one of the four Cemetery 2 burials was accompanied by artifacts and another wore a garment lightly decorated with glass beads. These artifacts—a Fredricks Check Stamped pot and a pewter pipe—do indicate that Cemetery 2 is culturally and chronologically associated with the two other cemeteries. It is noteworthy that two of the four burials within Group 3a contained brass Jesuit rings (see Wood 1974). While such artifacts are much more common on seventeenth-century sites in the Northeast, they have not been found in North Carolina except at Fredricks. Their presence in the Eno River Valley may reflect a historical and perhaps cultural relationship between the Susquehannock and the Occaneechi (Ward 1987:89–90). Moreover, these rings serve to distinguish the individuals comprising Group 3a from the other cemetery burials.

Burial Pit Morphology

The morphology and fill characteristics of the burial pits, as well as the occurrences of other pit features possibly associated with the burial ritual in Cemetery 3, indicate some differences among the three cemeteries

Table 6.2. Comparison of pairs of burial groups within the Fredricks Cemeteries based on artifact content

Burial group pair[a]	Garment[b]	Adorn[c]	Funerary[d]	Pot[e]	European container[f]	Large iron[g]	Firearms[h]	Knife[i]	Scissors[j]	Smoking[k]	Spoon[l]	Other metal[m]	Total no. shared attributes[n]
2-3a	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
2-3b	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1a-2	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	2
1c-2	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
1b-2	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	4
1c-3a	X	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	X	5
1a-3a	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	6
1b-3a	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	X	-	X	6
3a-3b	-	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	6
1b-3b	-	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	7
1a-1b	-	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	8
1b-1c	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	X	-	X	8
1c-3b	-	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	8
1a-1c	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	9
1a-3b	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10

a. "X" indicates that a pair of burial groups shares the same attribute state.
b. Similar amount of garment decoration in burials.
c. Adornment items present in some burials.
d. Smiliar frequency of burials with funerary objects.
e. Clay pot present in some burials.
f. European-made container present in some burials.
g. Large iron tool present in some burials.
h. Firearms-related objects present in some burials.
i. Iron knife present in some burials.
j. Scissors present in some burials.
k. Smoking-related items present in some burials.
l. Spoon present in some burials.
m. Other metal object present in some burials.
n. 0 = no similarity, 12 = completely similar.

which may be related to ethnicity. While all the graves were rectangular in outline and the bodies were usually deposited in a loosely flexed position with the heads oriented to the southeast, pit depths below the base of the plow zone varied greatly. The graves in Cemetery 1 averaged 2.3 feet in depth, while those in Cemetery 2 averaged 2.0 feet deep, and those in Cemetery 3 were only 1.4 feet deep (almost a foot shallower than those in Cemetery 1).

The most striking characteristic of the deep burial pits in Cemetery 1 was a refuse-rich fill which was deposited in the tops of several of the graves, particularly those in Group 1a at the southeastern end of the cemetery. Similarly, the graves in Cemetery 2 also were topped with a dark, organically enriched fill. While some of the graves in Cemetery 3 (Group 3a) contained upper zones of dark fill, others (such as those in Group 3b) hardly could be distinguished from the yellow subsoil clay surrounding the pits.

A unique feature of Cemetery 3 was the presence of six pit features aligned with and interspersed among the graves (fig. 6.8). These shallow, basin-shaped pits ranged from three to five feet in diameter and usually were less than a foot deep. All contained fill zones rich in refuse, particularly animal bones. Before excavation, it was sometimes difficult to distinguish these features from burial pits.

We believe that the association of refuse, particularly food refuse, with burials reflects feasting behavior that was a part of the mortuary ritual (Ward 1987). If this is the case, then a different form of this ritual was practiced when burials were placed in Cemetery 3 than was the case for Cemeteries 1 and 2. In addition to depositing the refuse from the mortuary feasts in some of the graves, special pits also were used for this purpose in Cemetery 3 but not in either of the other cemeteries. This distinction, when considered with the unusual shallowness of the graves in Cemetery 3, suggests a somewhat different pattern of mortuary behavior. This difference, though not great, is on a scale that would be expected between ethnically distinct but culturally related tribal groups, such as the Siouans of the Piedmont during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The distinctiveness of Cemetery 3 is indicated further by the presence of Jesuit-related artifacts in two of the burials. Based on this evidence, it can be argued that the people buried in this cemetery probably had contacts with Iroquois groups to the north who were directly in contact with the Jesuit missions. The lack of evidence in Cemeteries 1 and 2 of similar contacts further suggests ethnic differences between the people buried in

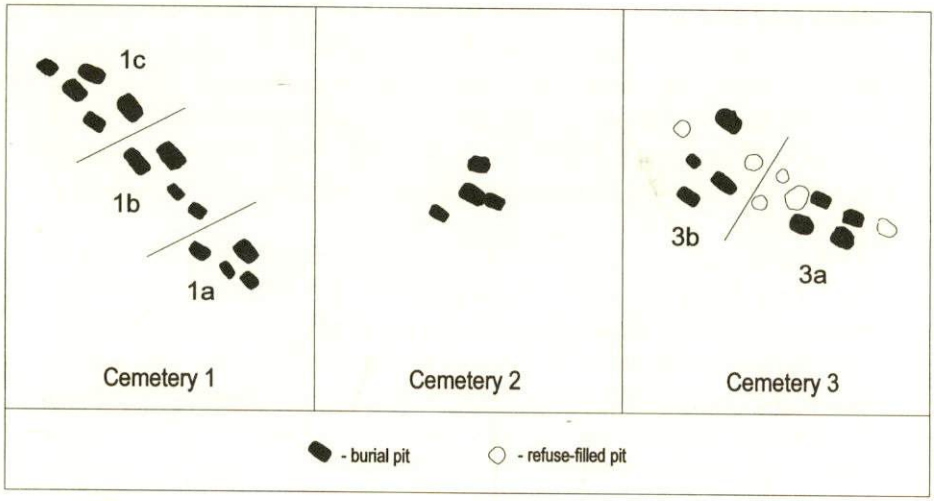

Fig. 6.8. Cemeteries and associated refuse-filled pits at Fredricks.

them and the individuals buried in Cemetery 3. Perhaps the Cemetery 3 individuals were the first Occaneechi arrivals from the Roanoke Valley, where in 1676 they were living near the Susquehannocks (Billings 1975: 267–69).

Conclusions

Archaeological research conducted since 1986 at the Fredricks site and adjacent Jenrette site has shed much new light on the community known historically as Occaneechi Town and on its treatment of the dead. Most obviously, the twelve additional burials found in Cemeteries 2 and 3 indicate a mortality rate far higher than the one estimated from the initial 1983–86 excavation. Given our estimate—based on site size and architectural remains—that Occaneechi Town probably was occupied for less than a decade by only fifty to seventy-five people, the present burial sample accounts for a substantial portion of that population. It seems likely that epidemic diseases affected this group, resulting in several episodes of multiple deaths.

Some of the insights we have gained, such as the recognition of multiple cemeteries and corresponding evidence for subtle differences in mortuary ritual, bear out earlier predictions and are consistent with the archaeological expectations of an ethnically diverse population. Others, like the detection of six separate burial groups that have similar numbers

of individuals, and similar age and sex profiles, suggest that these cemeteries alternatively may represent individual families. More research is needed to establish which explanation is more accurate, but perhaps both are correct. Perhaps these related Siouan groups shared the idea that cemeteries should be organized by kinship groups but differed in other aspects of the mortuary ritual, such as feasting-refuse disposal and the types of mortuary items to include in the burials.

Besides consideration of the spatial organization of cemeteries, other patterns in the mortuary data were identified. One such pattern is the near absence of younger adult males in the burial population. This pattern is puzzling, but it may be explained by increased mobility of young males during the deerskin trade and warfare of the seventeenth century.

Finally, the nonperishable artifacts that accompany the burials in all three cemeteries indicate that each population shared much of the same material culture. These mortuary items further suggest that the gender-based choices made for those individuals in death—reflected in the decoration of their clothing, the adornment of their bodies, and the objects placed in their graves—were similar for all three cemeteries.

Authors' Note

Archaeological excavations at the Fredricks and nearby Jenrette sites were undertaken as an archaeological field school by the Research Laboratories of Archaeology with financial support from the National Geographic Society, the National Science Foundation, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. We wish to thank the dozens of students who participated in the excavations, and we particularly want to acknowledge Patricia M. Lambert and Marianne E. Reeves, who assisted Elizabeth Monahan Driscoll with the *in situ* analysis of human remains found during the Jenrette site investigations. We also gratefully recognize the helpful comments of the editors, Jane M. Eastman and Christopher B. Rodning, both of whom helped supervise the fieldwork at Fredricks and Jenrette. Chris also drafted figure 6.7.