



# PAST COMMUNITIES OF LOWER HADDAM NECK, CONNECTICUT: THE SALMON RIVER COVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISTRICT

Salmon River Cove Archaeological District  
*Haddam, Connecticut*



# Acknowledgments



We thank the following individuals for their help through the years on this most interesting project. Dr. David Poirier (former Staff Archaeologist of the State Historic Preservation Office) and Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni (Connecticut State Archaeologist) provided guidance and support throughout the archaeological investigations, and Dr. Poirier patiently reviewed earlier drafts of this publication. Daniel Forrest (present Staff Archaeologist of the State Historic Preservation Office) kindly provided commentary on the later version. Archaeologists Mary Harper and Ross Harper (Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc.), Dr. Warren Perry, Janet Woodruff and Gerald Sawyer (Central Connecticut State University), and historian Dr. Bruce Clouette (Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc.) freely shared their expertise and unpublished research on the archaeology and history of the Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company property. Dr. Karl Stofko, East Haddam Municipal Historian, generously shared his unpublished biographical research on several of the former occupants of the historic archaeology sites discussed in this report and his discoveries of old news accounts concerning portions of the Connecticut Yankee property. Lisa Malloy, Executive Director of the Haddam Historical Society, and local residents Robert Johnson, Susan (Smith) Olsen, Peter Smith, Alison Guinness, Jim McCutcheon, Constance (Brooks) La Rosa, and the late Lillian Brooks kindly shared information on the local history and physical landscapes.

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Cover image: Lower Haddam Neck and the confluence of the Salmon and Connecticut Rivers, view south (*Connecticut Yankee, Haddam Connecticut*).

Photos, this page:  
Top: the Schmitt house on the Salmon River, Haddam Neck view east (*Connecticut Yankee, Haddam Connecticut*).  
Bottom: Quartz Narrow Stemmed projectile points found at the Salmon River Cove Archaeological District, Dibble Creek 2 site.

Salmon River Cove Archaeological District  
Site Nos. 61-96 to 61-132  
2011

American Cultural Specialists LLC  
Torrington, Connecticut

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# Archaeological Surveys in Connecticut

## The Role of Archaeological Surveys

Most archaeological surveys are a result of the state and federal permitting processes. State and federal laws often require that an archaeological study be conducted prior to any subsurface work on large industrial or commercial projects such as sewer installations, roadwork, construction on housing subdivisions, schools, shopping malls, etc.

The great majority of archaeological surveys are on relatively small parcels of property. This is unfortunate because, unlike single site archaeology, a regional approach can provide insights into the overall economy, settlement system, and social organization of the communities of people who created the archaeological sites. No two archaeological sites are the same. Sites differ in size, in the kinds of objects and food remains their occupants left behind, the season of occupation, length of time occupied, and the number of times they were occupied. Documenting and interpreting such information helps archaeologists understand why a particular site was occupied and how that site reflects past cultures. Site types include fully sedentary villages and multi-seasonal base camps where the entire community repeatedly returned to stay for long periods of time; seasonal residential camps where some community members lived for several months at a time; and a variety of temporary camps representing short-term or overnight stays by small groups (families or work groups of a specific gender or age grade). Some short-term sites were special purpose camps such as men's hunting lookouts or animal butchering sites, women's nut or plant collecting camps, children's berry-picking camps, stone quarrying sites, tool making workshops, or sacred sites where spiritual ceremonies were conducted (naming ceremonies, puberty rites, marriages, death rites, etc.).

Comparisons of a region's archaeology sites show the range of site types occupied by its resident populations in space and through time. The diversity of concurrent

occupations across the local landscape illustrates the degree of cultural complexity within the local community. Changes in site function or size over time suggest cultural adaptations to changing physical or social environments, or both. Felicitously, we were given the opportunity to conduct a large-scale archaeological study in the lower Connecticut River Valley region. Our findings provide insights into some of the above questions that we share with our readers in the following pages.

## A Regional Perspective: Archaeology at the CY Property

The Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company (CYAPCO) property is a 582 acre parcel at the southern end of the Haddam Neck peninsula in the Town of Haddam. The CY facility was one of the earliest constructed nuclear power plants in the Northeast. It was the world leader in nuclear generation from 1980 to 1984. CY recently completed **decommissioning** this plant. The decommissioning process included decontamination and dismantlement of existing facilities and cleanup of any contaminated soils. As part of the federal regulatory review process, the **State Historic Preservation Office** (SHPO), which oversees the implementation of federal and state archaeological laws in Connecticut, required a comprehensive historic and archaeological survey of the CY property in order to professionally identify and evaluate archaeological resources for their potential eligibility for the **National Register of Historic Places** and to develop and implement appropriate management alternatives ranging from intensive archaeological excavations to *in situ* preservation. In effect, SHPO mandated a large-scale archaeology study of the Lower Haddam Neck district overlooking Salmon River Cove.

CY retained the archaeological firm of American Cultural Specialists LLC (AMCS) to conduct a seven-year study of the property. The surveys were carried out according

## The Value of a Regional Perspective

*A regional perspective may help us to better understand long term changes in our cultural heritage, particularly from the periods of pre-European contact, for which we have no written records. This perspective helps answer such questions as:*

- Did early indigenous peoples move freely and frequently across the landscape or did they have home territories?
- When did sedentary village life first appear and why?
- When and where were domesticated plants first cultivated and how did horticulture affect indigenous communities?

*A regional perspective also allows us to examine how different landscapes within our state may have fostered distinctive post-European contact cultures and histories. Regional studies help us to understand:*

- Why some rural colonial communities died out while others thrived.
- Why some rural landscapes fostered successful commercial farming while others did not.
- Why and how industrialization and urbanization differently affected parts of Connecticut.



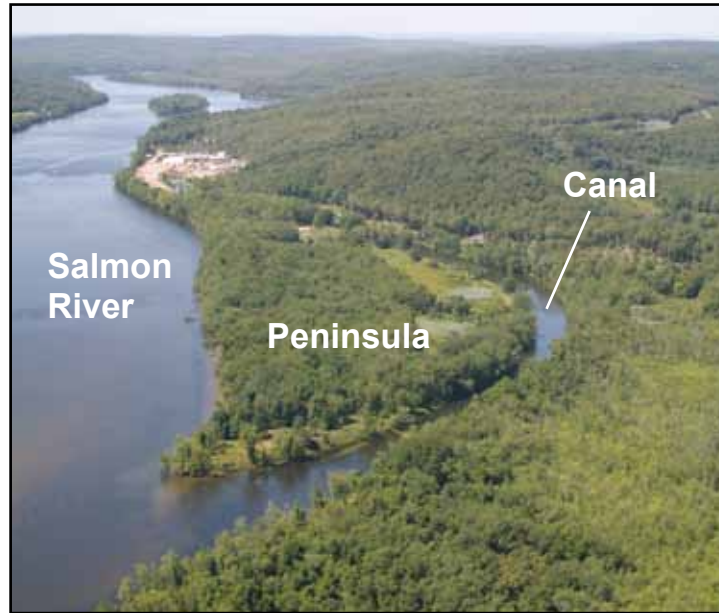
# Archaeological Surveys in Connecticut

to the SHPO's Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources. Investigations included documentary research, field walkovers, and systematic archaeological testing and excavations. Laboratory analyses included artifact identifications, analysis of plant and animal food remains, analysis of the stone material used to make tools at the sites, and **radiocarbon dating** of organic materials from the sites.

The archaeological surveys identified 30 Native American, European-American, and African-American sites across CY's diverse landscapes. Fifteen of these newly located archaeological resources possess historic and archaeological significance and are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The archaeological study provided interesting and important information about the communities that lived on the Lower Neck and changes to these communities over a span of at least six thousand years.

## The Rich Physical Landscapes of Haddam Neck

Haddam Neck is a village of the Town of Haddam located on the east bank of the Connecticut River. The main portion of the Town, formerly called Haddam Society, lies along the west bank. Haddam Neck is a triangular peninsula approximately four miles long and four miles wide bounded by the Connecticut River on the south and the Salmon River on the east and north. Located in the southernmost portion of Connecticut's **Eastern Uplands**, Haddam Neck contains north-south running chains of hills and plateaus cut by numerous small stream valleys. Ecologically significant wetlands, such as ponds, marshes, and wet meadows are abundant in these valleys.



has a long growing season of 165 frost-free days. The relatively mild climate and varied topography, soil types, and vegetation created a mosaic of natural resources upon which Native American people depended for thousands of years.

Above: Lower Haddam Neck and Cove Meadow on the Salmon River (Connecticut Yankee, Haddam, CT).

Right: Dibble Creek in 2008.

Far Right: Cove Meadow in 2008.



The underlying bedrock of the ridges consists of igneous and metamorphic rocks such as granites, gneisses, and schist. Such stone is visible on the landscape as outcrops (ledge) exposed by the last glaciations, and as boulder-strewn slopes left by the retreating glacial ice. Less visible,

but important to the ancient inhabitants of the region, were the cobbles and pebbles of quartz and quartzite found within the soils and stream beds of the area. Native Americans used these materials to make projectile points (generally called "arrowheads" or "spear points") and other tools. The upland soils that cover most of Haddam Neck are acidic, thin, and stony. In contrast, deep and rich sandy silt-loams formed on terraces and floodplains are found along the Salmon River and its tributary Dibble Creek. Fine sands and silts deposited by these rivers and earlier glacial meltwater streams cover areas such as a plateau overlooking the Salmon River in the north portion of the property ("The Schmitt Lot") and in the southeastern portion of the property overlooking Dibble Creek, near the Dudley/Ackley Farm site.

**Dibble Creek** winds its way through the east-central portion of the property, emptying into the Salmon River Cove near its confluence with the Connecticut River. The small streams and wetlands found on the property all drain into the Connecticut River. A flat floodplain parallels the Connecticut River along the southern portions of the property. After acquiring the property, Connecticut

Yankee cut a drainage canal through this area to form a second, smaller "Peninsula." This locale was part of the lowland traditionally known as the "Cove Meadow," which was prized for its fertile soils and heavy growth of salt hay.



# Archaeological Surveys in Connecticut

"Another large meadow extends from the foot of the hills southward across from the Connecticut to Salmon River Cove, and terminates at the junction of the two rivers just above the Upper Landing of East Haddam. This tract is called the Cove Meadow, and most of it is excellent land. Several smaller meadows lie between the two mentioned [Cove Meadow and Great Meadow, at the northeastern end of Haddam Neck]. These meadows are divided into narrow and long lots of varying width, and generally front on the river" (Bayles 1884: 394).

## Flora and Fauna

The varied geology and topography of Haddam Neck has supported the development of distinctive plant and animal communities. Today, Cove Meadow consists of open scrub, meadows, and marshland with stands of red maple trees mixed with locust and birch. This forest type is adapted to the frequent flooding of the rivers and long periods of inundation. The slopes immediately adjacent to the Cove Meadow are dominated by oaks with mixed hardwoods (black birch, hickory, ash, maple, and beech) that thrive where moisture is abundant but the soils are rarely saturated. The more rugged lands to the north support a forest community of oaks, hickories, tulip, black birch, white ash, and hemlock. A large stand of red cedar, a tree that thrives in recently cleared or disturbed areas, is located in the central portion of the property, between the upper Cove Road and Dibble Creek. Wetlands within the property range from wooded swamps to small vernal pools. A large red maple/tupelo swamp is found west of Cove Road; it drains into a small pond at the intersection of Cove Road and Haul Road.

The nuts, fruits, and varied plants found in such environments comprised a large part of the diet and medicine for the local Native Americans that lived here long ago. Today, Haddam Neck also supports a wide variety of animals, including white-tailed deer, beaver, fox, coyote, raccoon, opossum, muskrat, woodchuck, cottontail rabbit, squirrel, snakes, turtles, waterfowl, hawks, owls, and a variety of other bird species. Many of these species were sighted during our walkover of the CT Yankee property. Archaeological contexts show that moose and bear had also been available before European



Above: a deer on the edge of a terrace above the Salmon River.

Right: coyote pup visiting the Dibble Creek 3 site.



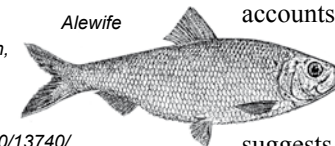
contact, while opossum and coyote, familiar to today's residents, are probably relatively recent arrivals in southern New England. After European colonization, however, animals such as deer and turkeys were virtually exterminated by the early 19th century due to overhunting and habitat loss.

The Connecticut River and its tributaries are home to many fish species, including **anadromous** and

**catadromous** species

such as herring, alewife, shad, smelt, Atlantic salmon, sturgeon, white perch, sea lamprey, and American eel, which appear in large numbers

during their spawning seasons. The importance of fishing to the economy of pre-contact Haddam communities is evident from the recovery of sturgeon, salmon, shad, alewives, catfish, pickerel, pike, and trout remains in local archaeology sites. It is clear from early journals and histories of New England and the surrounding regions that fish were an important food source for post-contact Haddam communities as well. While many of these accounts embody the biases of their

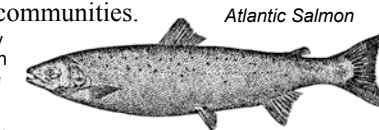


Alewife

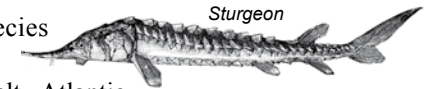
writers, the frequency with which fish are mentioned by many different writers suggests that it is unlikely that these

descriptions were exaggerations. This observation is supported by ichthyologists who since the 19th century suggested that salmon, shad, and sturgeon were all plentiful in southern New England's rivers and streams prior to the construction of mills and dams in the 1800s. Writing in 1819, local historian David Field noted that the Connecticut River and its tributary streams still abounded in salmon, shad, bass, alewives, pike, carp, perch and other fish (Field 1819:9-10). What made this resource even more valuable was that the timing of the anadromous fish runs was very predictable. These species entered rivers and streams each spring, a time when other local wild food sources would have been depleted. The fish runs continued into the early summer, making longer Native American occupations possible during pre-contact periods. During the post-contact, they played an important role in the economies of both Native American and non-Native communities.

Whitney, William. The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia: An Encyclopedic Lexicon of the English Language. New York: The Century Co., 1889. "Atlantic Salmon." Retrieved 12/04/05. [http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/28200/28285/atlsalmon\\_28285.htm](http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/28200/28285/atlsalmon_28285.htm)



Atlantic Salmon



Sturgeon  
Goodrich, S. G. Animal Kingdom Illustrated Vol 2. New York: Derby & Jackson, 1859. "Sturgeon." Retrieved 12/07/07. [http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/13700/13702/sturgeon\\_13702.htm](http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/13700/13702/sturgeon_13702.htm)



# Archaeological Surveys in Connecticut

The importance of the Connecticut and Salmon rivers to local communities was multifold. In addition to providing a plentiful food source, the rivers facilitated travel, providing Indian peoples an alternative to traversing the irregular and sometimes rugged topography of the lower Connecticut Valley. The river served as a corridor for trade and communication with other indigenous communities. The exchange of goods and information helped to strengthen social and political ties between neighboring communities.

In sum, the CY property historically contained a broad mix of land forms, water sources, vegetation types, and wildlife that supplied life-sustaining resources for its human inhabitants. The ecological variability provided compelling incentives for the strong and enduring Native American presence in the region, as demonstrated by the ages of the many archaeology sites that have been identified across and adjacent to the property. Although Native Americans living in Haddam Neck did not live in isolation from other Indian groups, there would have been little need for them to travel far beyond the Greater Neck and the Salmon River drainage to obtain their staple resources.

*The woodland property owned by CY on Haddam Neck is significant in regards to both its history as well as in its importance ecologically. The wide spectrum of physiographic features supports a diverse array of wildlife habitat and forest cover types. From the bedrock hilltops overlooking the confluence of the Connecticut and Salmon Rivers to the floodplain woodlands, wetlands and meadows, this relatively small slice of Connecticut is a unique representation of most of the major ecosystem components found throughout the state. Replete with valuable geological and interesting hydrological features, the land has clearly supported the needs of migratory and indigenous fauna down through the ages. Given these same features in addition to the timber resources, the land has provided food, shelter and a means of economy for native people as well as those settlers who first ventured onto this peninsula for subsistence centuries ago” (Irving and Childs 2001:3).*

## Pre-Contact Cultural Periods in Connecticut

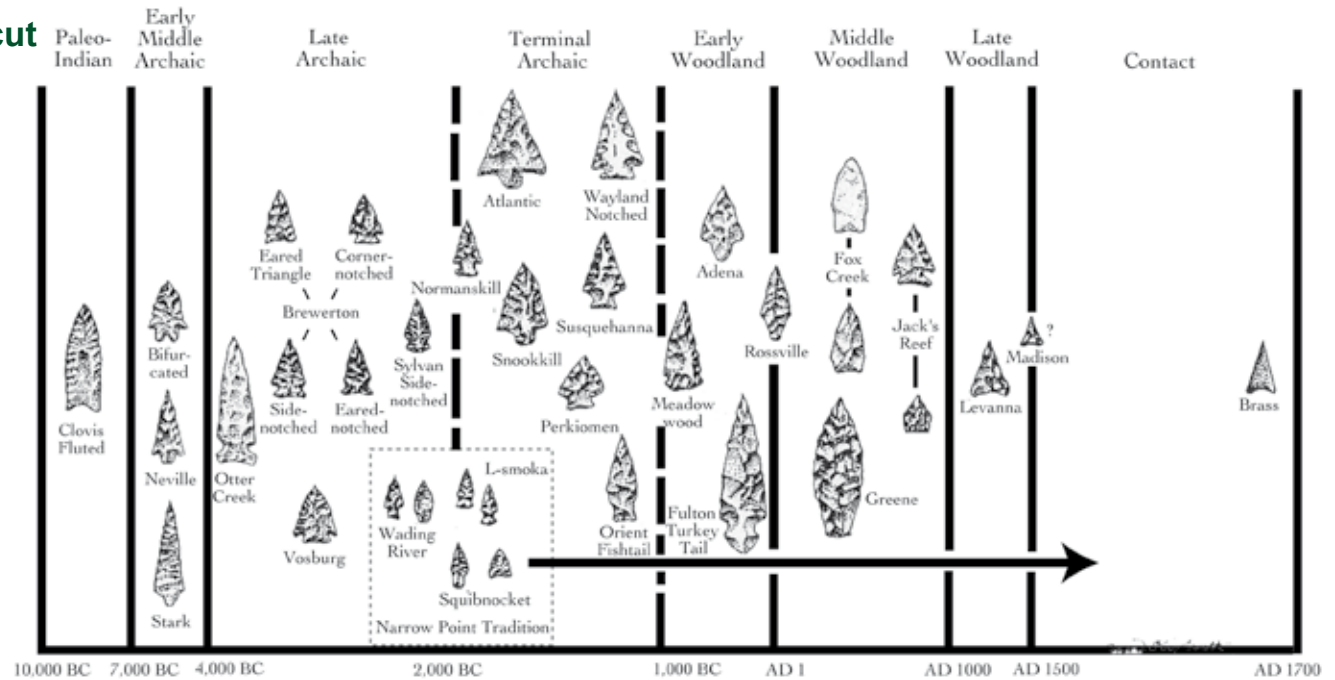
STAGE/PERIOD	ARTIFACT TRADITIONS	YEARS B.C./A.D.
<b>Paleo-Indian</b>	fluted point, parallel-flaked point (Plano point)	?-7000 BC
<b>Archaic</b>		
Early	Atlantic Slope Gulf of Maine	7000-6000 BC
Middle	Neville	6000-4000 BC
Late	Laurentian Narrow Point	4000-2000 BC 4000-1750 BC
Terminal	Narrow Point Susquehanna/Broad Spear	1750-750 BC
<b>Woodland</b>		
Early	Narrow Point Point Peninsula	750 BC-AD 300
Middle	Narrow Point Fox Creek Jack's Reef Point Peninsula Windsor	AD 300-1000 AD 600-1000
Late	Levanna Windsor Owasco-Garoga East River Shantok	AD 1000-European contact AD 1000-European contact AD 1000-European contact European contact

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## Pre-Contact Archaeology in Connecticut

The archaeological record provides evidence of a succession of Indian occupations across what is now Connecticut prior to the appearance of the first Europeans. The state's earliest known settlers, the Paleo-Indians, appeared following the recession of the glacier that covered the state until about 15,500 years ago. The oldest known sites in Connecticut likely date to approximately 11,000 years ago, though very few of these sites have provided reliable radiocarbon dates. Among the few radiocarbon-dated Paleo-Indian sites in the state is a small temporary camp at the Templeton Site in Washington, Connecticut. Several dates taken from plant charcoal found at the site range between 10,190 to 9,390 radiocarbon years before present. Archaeologists have debated for decades over whether Paleo-Indians were responsible for the extinction of Ice Age mammals in the region. Whether the disappearance of the mastodon, mammoth, musk ox and other large mammals resulted from the overhunting by small groups of Paleo-Indians, environmental changes or some other causes remains unresolved. Little is known about Paleo-Indian lifeways in southern New England, but their presence here is evidenced by a small number of sites where their very distinctive fluted lanceolate projectile points have been found. Although it was long believed that these groups consisted of small bands of nomadic hunters following herd animals, a growing body of evidence from sites in the northeastern United States suggests that these people exploited a large range of food resources that included smaller mammals, fish, nuts, fruit, and other plant foods.

What archaeologists have termed the Archaic Period (ranging from 7000 to 750 BC) coincides with a climate that was becoming warmer and drier beginning about 10,000 years ago. This climactic change brought new resource opportunities as it resulted in the northward migration of trees, plants and animals adapted to warmer conditions. Very different styles of projectile points



New England point typology (Lavin 1984).

replaced the fluted point of the Paleo-Indians. They included bifurcated bases, serrated edges, corner and side notches. In addition to serving as time markers, some of these point styles may have had functional purposes related to adaptations made to changing resources. Barbs on bifurcated points of the Early Archaic Period (7000-6000 BC), for example, may have been designed to secure the point in the prey. Some of the new point styles may be cultural markers and signal the appearance of new Indian communities into the region.

Although Early Archaic communities appear to have been oriented towards more localized resources than the preceding Paleo-Indians, the rarity of archaeology sites from this time period has limited our understanding of these people. The sites do suggest an early diversity in technology, diet and settlements that continued throughout

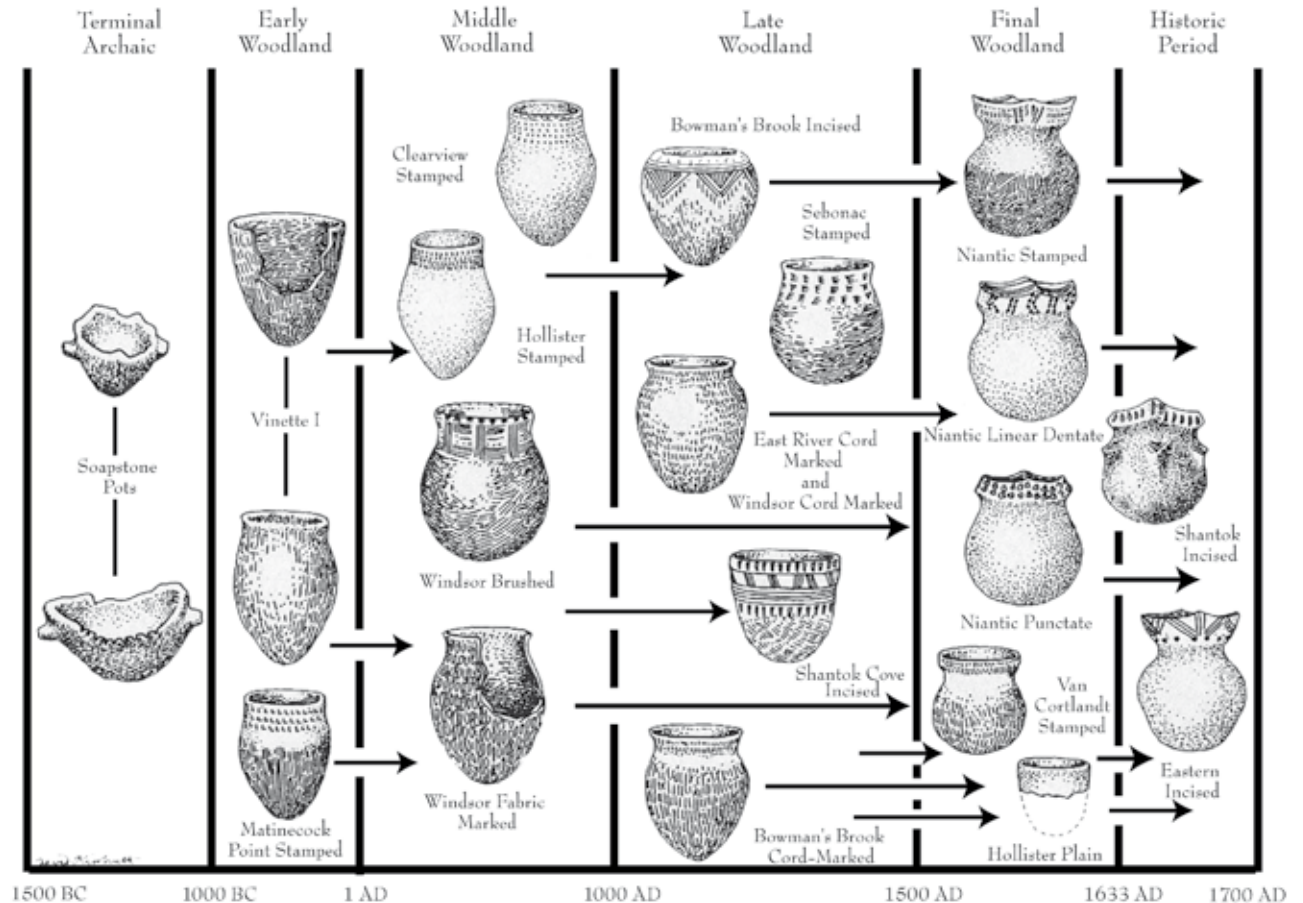
Native American history. The increased number and size of archaeology sites during the Middle Archaic Period (6000-4000 BC) suggest a growing population in the region. Increased reliance on local resources, especially local stone types, indicates a more intensive use of the landscape and the possible development of territorial boundaries. In addition, a wider variety of tool types (e.g., scrapers, drills, axes, gouges, pestles, **utilized flakes**) corresponds to an increased number of activities within sites and functional distinctions between sites. Although the Middle Archaic archaeological record suggests the gradual rise of territoriality, it is not until the Late Archaic Period (4000-1750 BC), with its proliferation and diversity of sites indicative of a rapidly expanding population, that the intensive exploitation of a broad range of animal and plant resources within a circumscribed area becomes clear. Late Archaic sites

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often reflect the collection and preparation of foods that require significant processing before consumption, such as acorns that must be boiled and leached to render them edible. Archaeologists believe that such foods are likely to have been used only when “easier” food resources were unavailable or in insufficient supply to support the community. This may have been the case when enough people lived in the region that communities could no longer move freely to areas of abundant resources and had to rely on the material that could be extracted from a smaller territory.

The use of resources from different environmental zones continued during the Terminal Archaic Period (1750-750 BC). New tool types are characteristic of this time period. They include varieties of “**broad spear**” knives or projectile points -- Susquehanna Broad, Perkiomen, Snook Kill, Wayland Notched and Orient Fishtail types. A number of projectile points known as “Narrow Points” are also contemporary with Terminal Archaic occupations. These points, however, span the Late Archaic through at least the Middle Woodland periods (and possibly later) and thus are less useful as temporal markers. Whether the broad spears indicate the presence of a second cultural group contemporary with those using the narrow points or were used for another functional purpose has as yet to be determined. Soapstone cooking vessels are also characteristic of the Terminal Archaic Period. The size of many of the vessels, some weighing as much as fifty pounds, precluded carrying them from site to site and also suggests an increased degree of sedentism or the seasonal gathering of larger groups at sites where these large vessels were stored.

Although clay pots were introduced during the Terminal Archaic Period, pottery vessels become increasingly more prevalent at archaeological sites dating to the Woodland periods. The Woodland periods may also have seen the introduction of the bow and arrow and the use of



New England pot typology (Lavin 1984).

smoking pipes. Like projectile points, Native American pottery was made in a variety of forms and styles and often serves as a temporal marker for Woodland period sites. Differences in surface treatments and decoration on pottery sherds are often characteristics of one or another of the three Woodland periods: Early (750 BC to 300 AD); Middle (300 AD to 1000 AD) and the Late (1000 AD to European Contact). The mixing of **artifacts** from these time periods in historic plow zones and the small

number of professionally excavated sites in Connecticut have limited our understanding of Woodland occupations, particularly those of the Early and Middle Woodland periods.

The advent of horticulture using exotic plants in New England about 1000 AD marks the onset of the Late Woodland Period. Maize, in particular, was a tropical grass and was only able to adapt to colder climates



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such as New England's after it had been in cultivation for millennia. As Native Americans developed strains of maize that could survive and yield crops in shorter growing seasons, the use of maize spread northwards. This change to maize horticulture supplemented by other cultigens such as beans, squash/pumpkins, and sunflowers led to increased populations. Native Americans living in major river valleys and coastal areas appear to have dwelled in large permanent or semi-permanent villages, while inland populations may have continued a more mobile settlement pattern similar to those that marked the Archaic periods. Floodplains, with their rich and stone-free soils were well suited for intensive planting and villages in these locations may have formed to allow large fields to be tended and protected. Along the coast, the year-round supply of marine resources may have had a similar effect on Native American settlement patterns. Pots representing ceramic styles from geographic areas outside Connecticut and the presence of non-local artifacts and artifacts manufactured from non-local stone types provide evidence of interregional communication and trade networks throughout the Woodland periods.

## Native American Sites near the Connecticut Yankee Property

The state files at the Office of State Archaeology (OSA) list a total of 91 archaeological sites within two miles of the Connecticut Yankee (CY) property; 30 of these sites are located on Haddam Neck. The majority are Native American sites spanning the Paleo-Indian through Late Woodland periods. They reflect a relatively large population and continuous indigenous settlement for this portion of the lower Connecticut River Valley. Twenty-one Native American sites are located on the east side of the Connecticut River.

Today as well as in the past, the availability of water and hospitable landscapes is an important consideration for site selection. Most of the known sites are situated on

terraces overlooking the Connecticut and Salmon Rivers; some however, are on knolls and ridges overlooking smaller tributaries of these rivers. These locations afforded Native American peoples an opportunity to observe and exploit a multitude of resources. They suggest a broad-spectrum economy based on the hunting, fishing, and gathering of a wide variety of animal and plant foods for both Archaic and Woodland stage communities in this region.

Beyond locating archaeology sites within the CY property, the AMCS survey sought to gain insights into their temporal and functional relationships to each other and to the different landscapes across the lower Haddam Neck. Some previously investigated archaeology sites offered clues to evolving regional Native American residential patterns leading up to the formation of village communities. Descriptions of these sites follow.

## The Dill Farm Site

At the **Dill Farm Site (41-50)** in East Haddam, an **Atlantic Slope tradition** camp site characterized by bifurcate base points (Early Archaic c. 9000-7000 years ago) was separated from a later Middle Archaic **component** by a sterile soil layer. Early Archaic contents included an apparent **cache** of quartz flakes and quarry blanks, retouched flakes and scrapers. Its excavator has suggested the site might represent a brief stop in the community's **seasonal round** (*John Pfeiffer, personal communication 1986*). The Middle Archaic occupation at the site appears to have been of longer duration and there is evidence of Paleo-Indian use as well. Walnut and hickory nut fragments indicate a fall occupation or possibly evidence of storage. If Dr. Pfeiffer is correct this would be very early evidence for a seasonal settlement pattern based on differential availability of food sources.

## The Salmon Cove Site

The **Salmon Cove Site (41-35)** is located on the west side of the Connecticut River south of the CY property. The site appears to have been an extensive Late Archaic occupation that may have functioned as a seasonal spring fishing camp.



Salmon River Cove  
looking northwest.

## The M.R. Site

The **M.R. Site** is located east of the Connecticut Yankee property along the Moodus River, close to its confluence with the Salmon River. Projectile points, soapstone bowl fragments, and clay pottery indicate that the site was occupied from the Terminal Archaic through Middle Woodland periods. Other stone artifacts included scrapers, "**sinew stones**" (possible used to clean and process animal sinew to make cordage or bindings), pitted stones and possible **perforators**. In addition to post molds (small circular stains formed by posts and stakes driven into the ground), several small hearths, a large stone platform hearth and a storage pit with stones at top and bottom and lined with bark were encountered. This last feature was radiocarbon dated to AD 400 and is believed to represent a fall or winter occupation because it

# Haddam Neck and the Connecticut Yankee Project Area

contained carbonized hickory, acorn, hazelnut, butternut, American walnut and beech nut fragments. Post molds aligned in a linear pattern possibly represented part of a pole frame house structure. Despite the site's location near the river, the range of artifacts and number of features are indicative of more lengthy occupations associated with hunting. The proximity of this site to sites of similar age within the CY property suggests that they represent parts of a complex settlement system for a single resident Indian community.

A number of sites along the Connecticut River near the project area provide insight into Native American lifeways during the Middle and Late Woodland Periods and are included as part of The Lower Connecticut River Valley Woodland Period Archaeological Thematic Resource. These Native American residential sites are characterized by numerous large storage pits, evidence for increased sedentism, and riverine locations. These changes may have been a direct result of the newly developing tidal marshes and their abundant food resources. Throughout the post-glacial period in Connecticut, sea levels were -- and still are -- rising. This was caused by the melting of enormous Ice Age glaciers that once covered much of the northern hemisphere. As the ice sheets retreated many cubic miles (!) of meltwater were flushed into the world's oceans. Initially, the ice melted rapidly and seas rose dramatically, but the pace of change slowed through the millennia. The rate of sea level rise is important, as rich tidal estuaries and marshes will only form when changes to sea level are slow. The Middle to Late Woodland periods coincide with a phase of very slowly rising seas and the expansion of shellfish beds and estuaries -- a factor that may have played an important role in

expansion of Native American populations over the last 2,000 years. Although we may not think of Haddam as a "coastal" area, the Connecticut River is very flat and the tides in Long Island Sound affect areas many miles from the shore. The tidal influence is very apparent in the vicinity of Haddam Neck. Non-local stone types become more prominent in tool assemblages during this time, suggesting the continued expansion of trade networks.

## Previously Reported Archaeology on the CT Yankee Land

Prior to our field studies, three archaeology sites had been reported from Connecticut Yankee property. Site 61-19, near the western end of the Connecticut Yankee Peninsula, consisted of Native American artifacts that had

been exposed by construction associated with the nuclear power plant. The exact location of this site could not be determined during our property walkover because much of the area now lies beneath the roadway to the Peninsula or was being used for the storage of materials. The site was likely a fishing camp, based on the fact that this shore of the Connecticut River was known for its highly-prized fishing spots in post-contact times.

A variety of Native American artifacts dating from the Paleo-Indian, Middle Archaic, Late Archaic and Woodland Periods were recovered from the Haddam Neck Site (61-82), located on Connecticut Yankee property on the northern side of Salmon Cove. It was near this site that an artifact collector found a fluted projectile point dating to the Paleo-Indian Period. This camp location provided a panoramic view of activities on the Salmon River. An

unspecified Woodland period site (61-90) was also reported near this portion of the project property. The site contained an assortment of stone **debitage**, a pre-contact pottery fragment as well as a number of post-European contact ("historic") period artifacts. These three sites indicated a high degree of archaeological sensitivity for portions of the Connecticut Yankee property and suggested that Native American use of the area extended over thousands of years.

The Connecticut Yankee property in 2007, view south showing Cove Meadow at the confluence of the Salmon and Connecticut rivers (*Connecticut Yankee, Haddam, CT*).





# Haddam Neck and the Connecticut Yankee Project Area

## The Native American Seasonal Round

In the 17th century the English trader John Pynchon described how Indians living in the Connecticut River Valley near Springfield, Massachusetts (most likely members of the Algonkian-speaking Agawam community) divided the year into months based on lunar phases as they pertained to the different aspects of Native economic activities. The months provide a sequence beginning with the planting, cultivating and harvesting of Indian corn, beans and squash (spring through summer) and describe fall (the fall is the best time for hunting white-tailed deer although not specifically mentioned in Pynchon's description) and the onset of winter beginning with frost covering the ground, followed by ice forming on the waterways. Spring returned when the ice was gone from the river -- a sign that anadromous fish would be plentiful in the rivers during the next lunar month (late March and April). A keen awareness of nature would have been essential to the survival of Indian communities throughout southern New England.

This pattern undoubtedly repeated itself for many centuries prior to Pynchon's life, differing only in the types of foods harvested at the various times of the year prior to the introduction of domesticated plants to Connecticut peoples around 1000 years ago. Prior to horticulture, the use of a wide variety of foods including nuts, berries and other fruits, tubers, seeds and plant greens, mammals, birds and even reptiles would have required a Native American community (or at least some parts of the community in the form of work groups) to frequently move to different locations across the landscape as those food sources became available.

Procuring foods and other basic resources involves both logistical and scheduling consideration. Some resources were dispersed, found scattered across the landscape while others were more concentrated. Resources can be mobile (i.e. white-tailed deer), making their exact location at any time less predictable than more stationary resources (i.e., nuts, berries, plants, fish). It was necessary for Native Americans to adopt subsistence and settlement strategies that put people at the right places at the proper times of the year to maximize the exploitation of food resources.

This annual movement through a home territory is known as the community's seasonal round. The later addition of domesticated foods or coastal resources may have encouraged some Native communities to adopt a more sedentary way of life. This theory needs to be tested through additional research.

<b>Lunar Calendar of Indians living in the vicinity of Springfield Massachusetts (cited in Thomas 1976: 5)</b>	
<i>Squannikesos</i>	part of Aprill & pt. of May, when they set Indian corne
<i>msonesqua n nimock kesos</i>	pt. of May & pt. of June, when ym [their] women weed their corne
<i>Tow wa kesos</i>	pt, of June & part of July, when they hill Ind corne
<i>matterl la naw kesos</i>	when squashes are ripe & Ind beans begin to be eatable
<i>mi cheen mee kesos</i>	when Ind corne is eatable
<i>pa[s] qui taqunk kesos</i>	ye middle between harvest & eating Ind corne
<i>pe pe narr qunnikesos</i>	bec: of white frost on ye grass & g[round]
<i>pap sap qhoho</i>	or about ye 6th of January. Lonatanassick: so called bec: they account it ye middle of winter
<i>Squo chee kesos</i>	bec ye sun hath [not] strength to thaw
<i>Wapicummilcon</i>	pt. of February and part of march, bec. Ye ice in ye River is all gone
<i>Namossack kesos</i>	pt. of march and pt. of aprill, bec of catching fish

# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

Our initial archaeological research was documentary and archival. It included a review of local histories and land records, interviews with local scholars and other individuals with knowledge of Haddam Neck, and an examination of the state site files at the Office of State Archaeology, pertinent archaeological literature, USGS topographic maps, aerial photographs and historic maps. These sources provided information regarding the history, past land uses and the locations of known archaeology sites on and near the project area.

Using this information a series of walkovers, or pedestrian surveys, were conducted across the entire project area to help determine whether archaeological sites might be found on the property and where they might be located. In addition to above-ground cultural features such as foundations, cellar holes, stone walls, wharfs/docks and roadways, and artifacts found on the surface during walkovers, professional assessments concerning the relative archaeological sensitivity (i.e., moderate to high vs. low or no sensitivity) were based upon characteristics of the physical environment. Areas in close proximity to water sources and landforms such as terraces and rockshelters that have been associated with archaeological sites elsewhere in Connecticut were designated as having a moderate to high sensitivity. Those locations displaying significant modern disturbance/modification and unlikely to contain intact archaeological components were depicted on the maps as having low or no sensitivity and were eliminated from the later subsurface testing. Maps were created that depicted the degree of sensitivity across the overall project area.

Areas of moderate to high archaeological sensitivity were investigated through archaeological subsurface testing. Subsurface testing involves the excavation of small test pits to identify an archaeological resources in an area. The results of this sampling guided our decisions to either end or continue our archaeological investigations in those localities. The contents of the 30 archaeology sites discovered in these sensitive areas helped with our regional interpretation of community life on lower

Haddam Neck. The sites are described below, with pre-contact Native American and Post-contact occupations discussed separately.



# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## Native American Sites identified at CY

Our archaeological surveys located 27 archaeology sites with a Native American component in a variety of environmental zones. These included the Connecticut River floodplain, the Salmon River floodplain and terraces overlooking it, lowland wetlands, terraces overlooking upland creeks and streams, high ridges overlooking water sources, inland springs and wetlands, upland slopes and hill sections. The sites fall into three broad categories: (1) Ephemeral sites of very short duration identified by a small scatter of stone flakes and chips with no temporally **diagnostic artifacts** (artifacts of known age based on their form or other characteristics); (2) Small camp sites with a limited assemblage of stone tool types with and without diagnostic artifacts and/or features; and (3) Larger sites with a wider range of tool types, diagnostic artifacts and **cultural features** such as stone lined hearths. At many of the larger sites artifacts from different time periods were recovered, indicating that Indian peoples used these same locations repeatedly over a long span of time.

Although sites dating as early as the Paleo-Indian period have been reported on and near the project area, no evidence of these earlier occupations was found during our archaeological surveys. Late Archaic through Middle Woodland period sites account for the majority of the Native American occupations identified on the property. The repeated use of the same sites suggests not only continuity in Native American economic and settlement systems during this time, but also the relationships among many of the sites suggest that they were associated with an enduring annual seasonal round. The archaeological evidence supports the idea that for over two thousand years a resident community radiated out from large multi-seasonal base camps to exploit local, seasonally available foods.

A range of different site types were encountered during our archaeological surveys. An Indian community or

work groups from the community positioned themselves to exploit a variety of resources, traveling to many different locations during the course of a seasonal round. Paths to small temporary and task specific/single purpose sites such as hunting lookout stations, nut-harvesting and berry-picking locations, or quarry workshops would have radiated out from larger seasonal and multi-seasonal base camps. The many interconnected sites on lower Haddam Neck form a Native American neighborhood we call the Salmon River Cove Prehistoric Archaeological District.

Our archaeological investigation sought to determine if any sites on the Connecticut Yankee property were eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This determination is based on a site possessing scientific integrity and meeting one or more of the following:

**“A. [Sites] that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or**

**B. [Sites] that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or**

**C. [Sites] that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or**

**D. [Sites] that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history” (Poirier 1987:7).**

Five large multi-seasonal or seasonal residential sites, located during the Connecticut Yankee survey, meet Criterion D and are individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. These sites are Dibble Creek 1-3, Wood Road, and Barn 1. However, many of the smaller and/or more temporary sites that might not be eligible for the National Register individually such as Stone Wall, Cove Road Rockshelter, High Terrace, Hidden Terrace, Spring Rockshelter, Borrow Pit North, and Ackley Ridge are also significant because together they enable us to better understand the complexity of the indigenous settlement system and its annual seasonal round of economic activities.

## Seasonal and Base Camps

Occupations at the base camps would have included the entire community (several families and lineages), although it would have been rare that everybody was on the site at the same time. In the case of seasonal fishing camps, these locations were sometimes populated by a number of separate family groups or other work groups (for example, adult males). The vast quantities of anadromous fish available during spring runs provided the food requirements that made larger gatherings possible. Alternatively, the work of catching and processing the fish before they spoiled may have required a large labor force. Meetings at these fishing locations gave Indian peoples an opportunity to trade goods, exchange information, build alliances and obtained marriage partners. Seasonal and base camps are recognized by increased quantities and variety of artifacts and features. The sites usually encompass an extensive area, although this can also occur when small groups of people return to the same general area over a long span of time.

# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## Dibble Creek I (61-12): Base Camp

**Dibble Creek I** was a large fall-winter base camp located on an upland terrace above Dibble Creek. A variety of stone tools and clay pottery sherds were recovered from the site. These stylistically distinctive artifacts and several radiocarbon dates show that the site was occupied from the Late Archaic to the Late Woodland period, with the majority of the occupations occurring during the earlier end of the range. Numerous cultural features in the form of large stone platform hearths and other cooking hearths and a cache were also found. The cache, an underground deposit of 29 finished, partially worked and broken stone **bifaces** was discovered near the center of the archaeological excavation. This cache contained **broad blades** including Snook Kill projectile points/knives diagnostic of the Terminal Archaic. Many of the blades recovered are asymmetrical and were clearly intended to be used as knives. Clear distinctions between projectile points and knives are often difficult to make, as many tools may have started out as knives and were later modified to make a projectile point or vice versa. The number of knife blades (19) suggests large-scale processing of terrestrial resources such as white tailed deer.

This cache is unusual in that it is not associated with a burial(s) and does not appear to be a ceremonial offering. The cache was located within a domestic occupation area that included other artifacts and cooking hearths, suggesting that these pieces had been stored for future use. The Dibble Creek I site covers at least 3000 square meters based on the distribution of artifacts.



Left: stone-lined hearth found at the Dibble Creek 1 site.



Below: exposed top of broad spear cached underground deposit at initial excavation at the Dibble Creek 1 site.



Left: profile view of broad spear cache.

Below, right: stone projectile point found within the cache at Dibble Creek 1.

Below, left: Native American clay potsherds from the Dibble Creek 2 site :

Top row (l-r): Shantok Cove Incised rim sherd; two incised and punctuated body sherds; dentate stamped body sherd. Bottom: two dentate stamped body sherds, one smoothed rim with dentate stamped lip; brushed body sherd.



## Dibble Creek 2 Site (61-125): Base Camp

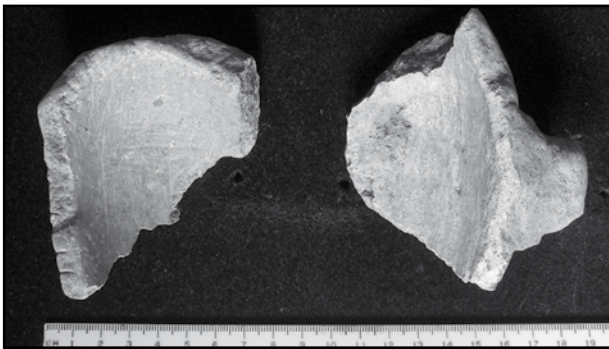
The **Dibble Creek 2 site**, a fall-winter base camp, was situated at the edge of wetlands associated with Dibble Creek, not far from its confluence with the Salmon River. Artifacts indicate that a wide range of activities took place during occupations that spanned the Late Archaic through the Late Woodland periods. Stone tools recovered from the site include a sharpening stone (used to put a sharp edge on a bone or antler tool such as a knife or a needle point); scrapers; utilized flakes; a knife (for scraping and cutting); a drill (woodworking); graphite (for pigment); and projectile points (hunting). Pottery and calcined (burned) bone indicate food preparation and consumption as well. This range of activities is generally associated with occupations of some duration. Longer stays would have been possible as this location provides access to aquatic resources associated with the creek, wetlands and river, and terrestrial resources found in the nearby uplands. Eighty-seven projectile points demonstrate the importance of hunting during these occupations.



# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

Hickory, American walnut, oak and beech nutshell and charcoal fragments were recovered from the matrix of a hearth feature, radiocarbon-dated to 2340 BC. This date indicates that at least one of the site occupations occurred in the Late Archaic period. Nearly 75 percent of the faunal assemblage consisted of large mammal bone (primarily white tailed deer), further supporting the importance of hunting during these occupations. Some medium-sized mammal and bird bones were also recovered. No reptile or amphibians elements, indicators of warmer weather occupations, were recovered. The significant role of hunting and the presence of mast foods (acorn and nuts) suggest that the site served as a fall/winter base camp.

## Rock House Site (61-118): Seasonal Camp



L to R: Steatite bowl fragment with incised decoration along rim, and steatite bowl fragment with lug recovered from the Rock House site.

The **Rock House site** was located at the very eastern boundary of the project area on a broad terrace between a large rock outcrop and the Salmon River. A spring at the eastern edge of the terrace probably made this location even more attractive. In addition, a narrow point of land juts out into the river a short distance south of the terrace forming an ideal fishing location (the Salmon River Dock site). This small peninsula is still used by fisherman today. Like other sites located during the survey, the Rock House



Projectile points from the Rock House site.

site appears to have been occupied repeatedly during pre-contact times and again in the 18th century by free African-Americans. The repeated use of the site limited interpretations of faunal materials recovered during excavation of the site, as it was difficult to separate the materials associated with individual occupations. Many stone artifacts including Orient Fishtail points, a Broad Spear point fragment, and steatite bowl fragments dating to the Terminal Archaic were recovered, likely linking this site to the other Terminal Archaic occupations at the Ackley Ridge, Borrow Pit North, Dibble Creek 1, Dibble Creek 2 and Dibble Creek 3 sites on the Connecticut Yankee property, and the M.R. site located directly across the Salmon River.



Jacks Reef  
Pentagonal projectile  
point of chert from  
the Rock House site.

A Jack's Reef Pentagonal point as well as a hearth radiocarbon dated to AD 720 are consistent with occupation(s) during the late Middle Woodland Period. As elsewhere, Narrow Point tradition

projectile points were also recovered. These points may date as early as the Late Archaic period or as late as the early Middle Woodland period. Native American pottery recovered from the site includes the styles **Vinette Interior Cord-marked** and **Modified Interior Cord-marked** (characteristic of the Early and early Middle Woodland Periods and sometimes associated with Terminal Archaic occupations). Other pottery sherds with smoothed surfaces probably relate to the late Middle Woodland occupation. These sherds and the steatite fragments establish the presence of containers used for food processing and cooking, activities involving women. The proximity of the Salmon River would have presented opportunities to obtain anadromous fish during the spring and early summer.

## Structure 1/Barn 1 (61-129) & Structure 2: Possible Seasonal Camp

During the subsurface testing, stone that supported the Dudley/Venture Smith barn was uncovered. This site was designated **Structure 1/Barn 1**. Subsequent excavation revealed additional stonework indicating numerous modifications and/or additions to this building. While trying to trace the footprint of this stonework, eight Levanna points and aboriginal pottery sherds indicative of the Late Woodland period were recovered. Earlier types of projectile points were also present indicating that this spot had been used by Native American groups for thousands of years. The variety of stone tool types suggests that some of the pre-contact period occupations at this location were likely of a longer duration than the typical ephemeral encampment. Located above the Salmon River and close to a spring, this site would have made an ideal seasonal camp. Excavation here focused on the historic structure(s), and so it is possible that intact features remain undiscovered adjacent to and below the stonework of the barn.

# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## Summary of Connecticut Yankee Native American Sites

SITE	TIME PERIOD(S)*	SITE TYPE, FUNCTION***	EST. SIZE	NEAREST WATER SOURCE
Wood Road (61-102)	LA-MW	Upland Camp	800 sq. m	Unnamed Stream, Wetlands
Upper 91 Site (61-103)	Unknown	Women's Plant Processing Ephemeral Upland Camp	Undetermined	Wetlands
Stone Wall Site (61-104)	Unknown	Upland Camp Lithic Workshop	600 sq. m	Unnamed Stream, Wetlands
Cove Road Rockshelter (61-105)	Unknown	Ephemeral Upland Camp	10 sq. m	Wetlands
Hidden Terrace Site (61-113)	Unknown	Upland Camp, Women's Plant Processing	25 sq. m	Seasonal Stream, Wetlands
Spring Rockshelter (61-117)	EW-MW	Temporary Upland Camp Women's Plant Processing	60 sq. m	Spring
Borrow Pit North Site (61-122)	TA	Temporary Camp	Undetermined	Spring
High Terrace Site (61-120)	Unknown	Upland Camp	500 sq. m	Salmon River
ISFSI Site (61-98)**	Unknown	Ephemeral Upland Camp	Dispersed lithic scatters	Dibble Creek
Ackley Ridge Site (61-122)	TA	Upland Camp, Hunting Stand	Undetermined	Salmon R. & Dibble Creek
Dudley/Ackley Site Complex (61-99)	TA, W	Camp	Undetermined	Dibble Creek
Dibble Creek 1 Site (61-124)	LA-LW	Base Camp	3000 sq. m	Dibble Creek
Structure 1/Barn 1 (61-129)	? & LW	Seasonal Camp	Undetermined	Spring
Structure 2-Schmitt Field/Grid (61-127)**	LA	Temporary Camp	Undetermined	Salmon River
West Locus (61-132)	Unknown	Camp, Woodworking	50 sq. m	Ancient Dibble Creek
Axe Locus (61-133)	Unknown	Camp, Woodworking	700 sq. m	Spring, Salmon River
East Locus (61-131)	LA-LW	Camp, Woodworking	100 sq. m	Spring, Salmon River
Dibble Creek 3 Site (61-130)	TA	Camp	560 sq. m	Ancient Dibble Creek
Smith/Dudley/Andrews Complex (61-101)	TA, E/MW	Camp	Undetermined	Salmon River, Spring
Peninsula 1 Site (61-115)	MW	Camp	Undetermined	Connecticut River
Peninsula 2 Site (61-116)	MW	Camp	Undetermined	Connecticut River
Sylvester/Hezekiah Brainerd Site (61-96)	LA-EW	Camp	Undetermined	Connecticut River
Grinding Stone Site (61-114)	Unknown	Camp, Women's Plant Processing	Undetermined	Connecticut River
Dibble Creek 2 Site (61-125)	LA-LW	Base Camp	500 sq. m	Dibble Creek
Wharf Site (61-123)	LA	Temporary Camp	100 sq. m	Dibble Creek, Salmon River
Rock House Site (61-118)	LA-MW	Camp	300 sq. m	Spring, Salmon River
Redware Site (61-121)	W	Temporary Camp	10 sq. m	Spring

\* E=Early; M=Middle; L=Late; T=Terminal; A=Archaic; W=Woodland

\*\* Disturbed

\*\*\*The function of some sites may have changed through time



# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

in pre-contact times, hunting was normally carried out by men while women focused on obtaining nuts, berries and other plant foods for both immediate and later use. Both genders may have participated in fishing. Raw materials for stone tools required either travel to quarry locations, the collection of suitable river cobbles from stream beds, or trade with other Native groups.

Unrelated to the procurement of resources were sacred burial and ceremonial sites; some of the latter sites' purposes and locations may be difficult or impossible to identify from the archaeological record. These sites are all important if we are to fully understand the entire Native economy, social organization and settlement patterns. Data recovered during archaeological testing at Native American sites across the CT Yankee property provide examples of many of the activities that occurred away from the large encampments during a seasonal round.

## Temporary and Task Specific Camps

The function of temporary camps and task specific sites was to obtain food and other resources located away from the larger more permanent base and seasonal camps. Over half the sites identified during the survey are located in the upland areas of the property. The time Native Americans spent at these sites depended on the nature of the resource being sought. Many sites such as hunting stands represent very brief stops by one individual or perhaps a small hunting party. Often these sites have left a very small imprint on the archaeological record, perhaps a few stone flakes from re-sharpening a projectile point. Wild plant gathering was usually more labor intensive and may have required longer stays. Bedrock mortars and grinding stones found at some of these sites indicate that plant foods were processed directly at these locations. Artifacts such as utilized flakes were probably associated with these activities as well. Assuming that the traditional Native American division of labor also existed

## Wood Road Site (61-1-2) & Upper 91 Site (61-103): Gathering/Food Processing and Cooking

The **Wood Road site** is located in the eastern portion of the property close to a small unnamed stream and wetlands. Based on the distribution of cultural material, the site encompasses approximately 800 square meters. Narrow stem projectile points recovered at the site suggest the site may have been occupied as early as the Late Archaic period. Two other projectile point forms from the site, a Fox Creek and a Levanna, indicate Middle and Late Woodland Period occupations. Pottery, a variety of stone tools (including an anvil stone, a scraper and utilized flakes<sup>1</sup> and substantial quantities of calcined bone suggest gathering, processing and cooking activities involving women during these encampments. An excavated charcoal feature, radiocarbon-dated to 1270 $\pm$ 50 years BP<sup>2</sup>, falls within the Middle Woodland Period (AD 300-1000). The size of this site and the range of stone tool types are suggestive of more than ephemeral camps during some of these time periods. On the ridge line to the east of the Wood Road site at the Upper 91 site several small scatters of stone debitage were recovered. Sharp-edged undifferentiated flakes and a pointed stone

that may have served as a stone pick or digging tool suggest that this area may have been exploited by a women's task group seeking plants and tubers. Since no **diagnostic artifacts** were found, the age and possible relationship of this site to the Wood Road site is unclear.

<sup>1</sup> Utilized flakes exhibit flake scars from intentional modification and/or use. Many of these flakes were used for simple cutting tasks or as expedient scrapers.

<sup>2</sup> "BP" refers to Before Present. BP dates represent the estimated age of a sample in radiocarbon years before 1950. Radiocarbon years have to be calibrated to accurately reflect calendar years. Calibrated dates are presented as years BC/AD.



# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## **Hidden Terrace Site (61-113): Women's Foraging Site**

The **Hidden Terrace site** is located south and on the west side of the ridge from the Cove Road Rockshelter. This well protected site situated between a large rock outcrop and steep slopes a short distance from a seasonal water source and upland wetlands yielded only six stone artifacts, none of them temporally diagnostic. A concave depression in a large boulder on the eastern slope of the terrace appears to have served as a mortar to process nuts or seed, suggesting the site was also used by women during plant foraging trips. This activity would explain the scarcity of stone tools.

## **Grinding Stone Site (61-114): Women's Foraging Site**

The **Grinding Stone site**, located at the intersection of Cove and Haul Roads at the junction of the upland ridge with the lowland Cove Meadow is surrounded by ground disturbances, a stone wall and a small pond. The site was identified by a boulder with a large rectangular depression (a mortar) that appears to been created by grinding mast foods such as nuts and seeds. Testing here yielded a quartz fragment, a quartz flake and a possible fragment of fire-cracked rock. The absence of formal tools and paucity of artifacts is consistent with sites where women collected and processed plant remains.

## **Spring Rockshelter (61-117): Foraging Site/Camp**

The **Spring Rockshelter** was formed by a large erratic on a high terrace above a small spring. The size of the site approaches 60 square meters. Pottery accounted for all but four of the artifacts (a **biface** and debitage) recovered during subsurface testing at this site. All but two of the artifacts were recovered on a small terrace below the rockshelter, likely washed down the slope over the centuries or tossed down by inhabitants of the shelter. The surface treatments on the pottery sherds suggest they were associated with Early Woodland or early Middle Woodland occupations. Similarities with pottery suggest this site served as a temporary site used by a women's work group while foraging upland resources and may have been associated with the larger, long term Dibble Creek 2 site.

## **Stone Wall Site (61-104): Stone Tool Making and Repair**

The **Stone Wall site** about 400 feet north of the Wood Road site is located on a small terrace above wetlands.

The site is only slightly smaller (about 600 square meters) but the artifact assemblage was composed almost entirely of stone debitage associated with stone tool making and/or repair. The absence of different tool types and **cultural features** suggests limited activities consistent with a short-term occupation(s) during upland hunting forays. The age of this occupation was not determined.

## **High Terrace Site (61-120): Stone Tool Making**

As the name implies the High Terrace site is situated at one of the higher elevations near CT Yankee's eastern property line. This broad terrace (site was estimated to be over 500 square meters) afforded Native Americans an excellent view of the Salmon River to the east and also access to a wide range of terrestrial and aquatic resources. It appears from the quartz debitage recovered at this site that tool manufacture was the primary activity during the occupation(s). Some of the quartz may have been obtained from quartz veins exposed in the rock outcrops that bound the western side of the terrace. The **lithic** assemblage and the absence of temporally diagnostic artifacts or cultural features suggest this spot was used briefly.



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## **Cove Road Rockshelter(61-105): Camp/Hunting Stand**

Further west, the **Cove Road Rockshelter** is situated between a rock outcrop and a small wetland. Subsurface testing at this site yielded a projectile point tip, a utilized flake, a small quantity of debitage and a single fire-cracked rock. The limited stone assemblage provided no information regarding the age of this site and suggests a very ephemeral camp site or hunting stand encompassing about 10 square meters.

manufacture was one of the activities that occurred during this occupation. Notable were two conjoining pieces of an Orient Fishtail projectile point that suggest relationships between this site and Borrow Pit North and other Terminal Archaic sites within the project area. Different functional artifacts such as scrapers, utilized flakes, and pottery suggest other activities also occurred during the pre-contact occupation(s) of this site; however, the quantity of artifacts are inconsistent with a long term occupation of the site. The size of this site and the specific type of occupations are unclear due to disturbances caused by later Anglo-American use of this area. A stone hearth was uncovered a short distance west of and below the ridge within the Dudley/Ackley Site Complex. Charcoal from this hearth yielded a radiocarbon date that falls within the Terminal Archaic, 3360+/-70 years BP. Other projectile points and pre-contact pottery found in the vicinity of the ridge indicate that like many of the sites on the property, this location was visited by Native Americans over the course of several millennia.

## **Venture Smith/Dudley/Andrews Site Complex (61-101) & Schmitt Field/Grid (61-127): Hunting, Stone Tool Making/Repair, Woodworking**

A number of Native American loci (discrete **activity areas** within a site) were identified across the **Venture Smith/Dudley/Andrews Site Complex**. The archaeological materials were found within an expansive open field on the former Schmitt property in the northwestern section of the project area. Although post-contact plowing, ground leveling and the construction of barns and other structures have disturbed the archaeological record across this portion of the CT Yankee property, the distribution of bone, shell and stone artifacts recovered during the survey provided clues to the age of some of the loci and activities that occurred during these occupations. The loci are described below.

Stone artifacts were recovered next to an historic dry-laid stone retaining wall (Structure 2) located on the eastern slope of the Schmitt Lot. The artifacts included a Normanskill projectile point diagnostic of the very late Late Archaic Period (ca.2000BC- 1800BC) and stone debitage. These materials suggest hunting and tool manufacture and/or maintenance indicative of a smaller encampment.

A ground stone celt or ungrooved axe head, uncovered at the **West Locus (61-132)** close to the western edge of the field provides evidence for woodworking activities possibly related to a winter-spring base camp. In addition to cutting trees for fuel, the celt may have been used to construct dugout canoes and for framing

for Native American house structures. Additional testing near this find yielded only three flakes. These artifacts with one exception were recovered from the plowzone within a 50 square meter area. It is unclear as to which of the occupations on this portion of the property they belonged.



Stone tools found at the Schmitt Field site:  
above: ground stone grooved axe fragment from Axe Locus;

right: ground stone celt from West Locus.



## **Ackley Ridge Site (61-122) & the Dudley/Ackley Site Complex (61-99): Stone Tool Making, Resource Processing, Cooking**

The **Ackley Ridge site** is located on a high, narrow ridge line south of a "borrow pit", an area used for sand and gravel mining. The site location affords a good view of Salmon Cove to the east and Dibble Creek to the south and west. The lithic assemblage indicates that stone tool



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The **Axe Locus (61-133)** takes its name from the haft section of a basalt axe found near the eastern tree line at the edge of the Schmitt Field grid. This ground stone tool provides further evidence of wood cutting and/or working. As was the case with the West Locus, it was not possible to determine a specific time period or cultural affiliation for this and other artifacts excavated across approximately 700 square meters.



Right: stone weight from the Native American component at the Venture Smith Homestead.



The recovery of a slate knife similar to those found in the blade cache at Dibble Creek 1 at the **East Locus (61-131)**, located on the eastern side of the field, alludes to possible connections between the two sites. During the archaeological survey a total of 12 projectile points were found within this part of the project area. A number of the points are diagnostic of the Terminal Archaic period further suggesting that this locus might have served as a satellite site to the larger Dibble Creek 1 base camp. The size of the East Locus was approximately 100 square meters. Other points span the Late Archaic through Late Woodland periods, another example of the way in which different Native American groups often selected the same locations throughout pre-contact.

## **Dibble Creek 3 (61-130):**

### **Stone Tool Making, Resource Processing**

The Terminal Archaic Period is also represented at the **Dibble Creek 3 site** located near the western tree

line of Schmitt's Field. At this upland location a large concentration of non-local chert artifacts (a total of 61) was recovered from a single test pit at depths down to 80 centimeters (2.5 feet) below the ground surface. This assemblage differed from lithics found in the immediate area and at many of the other sites on the CT Yankee property, where the artifacts were made from locally available stone types. The exotic stone material and the deeply buried artifacts in very sandy sediments suggested that this may have been the location of an early occupation. Further excavations were conducted to locate diagnostic stone tools and features that would provide answers to the age and purpose of this occupation. Charcoal extracted from a circular stain believed to be a hearth yielded a radiocarbon date of 3470 $\pm$ 60 years BP (1520 BC uncalibrated). While this date was much more recent than expected, it does fit well with a Terminal Archaic Orient Fishtail point recovered from one of the excavation units just inside the tree line. Although the point is made from mylonite, a relatively local stone type probably obtained at the Honey Hill Fault in Higganum, Connecticut, many Terminal Archaic points are made from cherts and rhyolites that do not occur in the lower Connecticut River Valley. Rhyolite, a stone formed by rapidly cooling volcanic magma, was recovered in quantity at this site. In total, over 3500 artifacts, primarily stone debitage, were recovered at Dibble Creek 3. The assemblage included two hammerstones, seven cobble cores, a possible abrader, two scrapers, 22 utilized flakes, three complete projectile points, five point fragments and two very small ceramic sherds suggesting primarily tool manufacture and maintenance activities. Cooking and processing of other materials appears to have occurred here as well. The Orient Fishtail point alludes to possible relationships with Ackley Ridge,

Borrow Pit North, Dibble Creek 1 and 2 and Rock House within the CT Yankee property where this point type and steatite were also found.

Evidence of a Terminal Archaic occupation(s) was also found during the excavation of the long narrow terrace below the eastern edge of Schmitt's field near the edge of the Salmon River and the Venture Smith home lot. Although the intensive use of this terrace by the African-American Venture Smith and subsequent property owners has disturbed much of the archaeological record, over 200 Native American artifacts were recovered. Among these are stone debitage, stone bifaces, drills, knives, a stone net or line weight, projectile points and clay pottery. From the assemblage it can be inferred that tool making, food and raw material processing, cooking, fishing and hunting occurred during these encampments. Five Terminal Archaic projectile points were identified: one Orient Fishtail, three Snook Kill-like and one Susquehanna type.



# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## ***Borrow Pit North Site (61-122): Tool Manufacturing/Maintenance, Possible Woodworking***

East of the Spring Rockshelter is what was once a large expanse of terrace above the Salmon River. Much of this terrace was destroyed by the removal of sand during the construction of CT Yankee's atomic power center. The **Borrow Pit North Site** is located on the intact portion of the terrace on the northwest edge of the sand pit. An Orient Fishtail projectile point was recovered at the site. The lithic assemblage consisted almost entirely of debitage from stone tool making or maintenance and suggests a short term occupation. The stone artifacts included a fragment of a drill broken during manufacture or while working materials such as wood or antler.

eroded and it is likely that evidence of Native American occupations has been lost in some places and deeply buried in others. Some pottery sherds recovered during subsurface testing indicates that Native Americans were present during the Woodland period. Sherds from the Peninsula 2 site were dated to the late Middle Woodland Period. No diagnostic stone artifacts were recovered or features associated with Native Americans were identified at either site. Historic fishing spots along this stretch of the River suggest that Native Americans also selected this area for its fishing opportunities.

## ***Redware Site (61-121): Cooking and Tool Manufacture/Maintenance***

Like the Rock House Site, the **Redware Site** was occupied first by Native Americans and later by a free African-American. This site is situated on high ground above a seasonal spring between the Spring Rockshelter and Borrow Pit North sites. The Dibble Creek 1 site is a short distance to the south. Native American artifacts recovered at this site included 1 quartz projectile point mid-section, 1 quartz biface, 62 pieces of debitage and six body sherds of pre-contact pottery. This small assemblage reflects stone tool manufacture and maintenance and cooking activities during the occupation of the site. The fragmented and eroded condition of the ceramics prevented attributing them to a specific culture, although one or both surfaces of the sherds were smoothed indicating an occupation later than the Early Woodland Period. This site appears to have been used as a temporary camp occupied by a small group of Native Americans seeking resources found along the Salmon River and in the adjoining uplands.



## ***Peninsula 1 & 2 (61-115, 61-116): Possible Fishing Camps***

Historic activities and constructions have badly damaged the archaeological record at a number of the lowland sites on the CY property. At the Peninsula 1 and 2 sites located along the Connecticut River the river bank has been badly

Above: Debitage from  
Peninsula 2 Site.



# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## Post-Contact Archaeology Sites

The same landscape that attracted Native American communities to Lower Haddam Neck for thousands of years became the center of an 18th and 19th century Anglo-American and African-American community. The home and farm lots of some of the earliest residents of Haddam Neck were identified during archaeological investigations of the CT Yankee property. The remains of some lie buried below the ground, but a number of cellar holes, wharfs, docks, stone walls and colonial roadways are still visible. The colonial roadway that weaves through the ridges between these sites provides a glimpse of how this early neighborhood was tied together. This community is represented by the Dudley/Ackley Archaeological Complex, the Smith/Dudley/Andrews Archaeological Complex, and the Brainerd, Peninsula 1, Peninsula 2, Rock House and Redware sites. These sites are what the Department of the Interior refers to as a **"rural historic landscape"** which is defined as:

*"a geographical area that historically has been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupancy, or intervention, and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings, and structures, roads and waterways, and natural features. Rural landscapes commonly reflect the day-to-day occupational activities of people engaged in traditional work such as mining, fishing and various types of agriculture" (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1999:1-2).*

The archaeological investigation was an initial step towards interpreting this landscape using information gleaned from the artifacts, features and structures that were uncovered at these sites. The material culture provided clues about 19th century economy, technology, social standings, and the general lifestyles of the members of this community. Extensive excavation of the Venture Smith home lot yielded considerable insight into a remarkable character in American history. Through

his perseverance, ingenuity, and hard work, this freed slave became a significant member of this community. A separate booklet has been dedicated to the archaeology conducted at Smith's home because of his importance to American heritage.

However, some questions remain unanswered. In the case of the Smith/Dudley/Andrews Archaeological Complex, so called because it encompassed the Venture Smith farm,

Right: Rockingham-glazed teapot, embossed with a woman's figure and the words "Rebekah at the Well" dating to Wells Andrews' occupation of the Smith homestead.

Timothy Andrews and Sylvester Dudley's first farm, and the farm of Wells Andrews, interpretations were made more difficult because of the changes in ownership of the property which resulted in overlapping occupations. Dudley had a home lot immediately north of Smith, which he eventually sold to Timothy Andrews and that home lot has not been identified yet. Later, after the death of Smith's son Solomon, Timothy's son Wells Andrews bought a portion of the Smith farm, including its home lot.

## Wells Andrews Home Lot (Schmitt House Site, #61-126)

As noted previously, Sylvester Dudley was Venture Smith's nearest neighbor; they shared a barn. In 1813 Dudley sold his farmstead to Timothy Andrews, who continued to share a barn with Solomon Smith until 1816. Timothy eventually transferred the farm to his son Wells and is buried along with his wife and daughter in the family cemetery, which is located west of the present Schmitt house. In 1846 after Solomon Smith's death, Wells purchased eight acres of the Smith home lot and adjacent agricultural field, enlarging the Andrews farm to ca.30-40 acres and building himself a home "commanding a beautiful view of the cove and River" (*Connecticut Valley Advertiser* 1926:1).

The Andrews barn burned down in 1907. Archaeological investigations just south of the cemetery unearthed the foundations of a barn complex composed of a series of connected structures/sheds that may represent modifications to a single building over time (*Barn 1 site*). This interpretation is supported by the nails that were recovered at the site. They include hand-wrought, machine cut and wire nails manufactured over a span of roughly one hundred years. The kinds of artifacts recovered clearly indicate the building was used as a barn. These artifacts include: a bridle bit, horse tackle, scythes, an iron axe head, an ox shoe, iron barrel straps and bands, wagon parts and bucket handles. Charred and melted ceramic and glass fragments clearly show that the barn had burned down.

The Andrews family cemetery.





# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

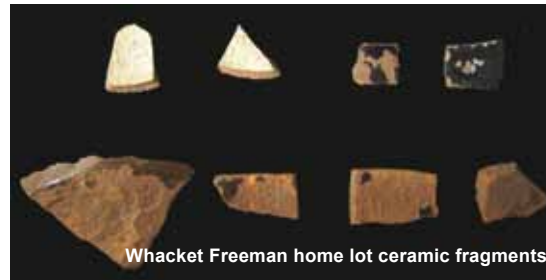
The Wells Andrews house burned in 1925. The Schmitt house was built on the Andrews home lot a year later as a summer place for Clifford Cheney of Cheney Bros. mills in Manchester, CT, world famous for their silk fabrics. An inspection of the house's foundation and stone work suggests it may have been built in part upon the foundation of Wells Andrews' house. Cut stones can be seen in the present foundation. The cellar was examined for further evidence of the earlier structure, but a skim-coat of cement on interior walls obscured remnants of previous construction.

Archaeological investigations immediately behind the Schmitt house uncovered burned soil, charred wood fragments, and molten artifacts -- evidence that the Schmitt house had been built over or very near the old Andrews house, with some of its foundation stones incorporated into the new building. Additionally, some of the recovered nails, glass and ceramic artifacts date to the Andrews occupation of the property. Other artifacts, however, pre-date Wells Andrews and suggest an association with the Venture/Solomon Smith family. The artifacts are few in number and do not tell us much about the Andrews family. An iron wedge tip, possibly from a feathering wedge used to split large stone blocks or boulders, suggests involvement in quarrying activities.

Several fieldstone foundations were built into the slope behind the house. Some likely represent former 18th or 19th century outbuildings and retaining walls. A spring and remnants of a springhouse are immediately adjacent to the terrace on the edge of the slope. A covered well was located on the east side of the Schmitt house. Here the yard slopes down towards the water and a boat slip. A **privy** was situated away from the house to the west. Although landscaping efforts by later owners had heavily disturbed it, the site has significance for its close association with Venture Smith. Some of the stone foundations may date to Venture's occupation of the property.



## Whacket (Freeman?) Home Lot (Redware Site, #61-121)



Top row, L-R: yellow glazed redware (2); black glazed redware (2=American Jackfield). Bottom row, L-R, all redware: bowl fragment; dark glazed interior; dark brown glaze; light brown glaze.

In 1778 Venture Smith sold a 12-acre strip of land to two free black men from East Haddam, Peter and Whacket. The men later divided the strip, Whacket taking the south portion and Peter the northern part. It ran from Salmon River Cove into the wooded uplands, giving the men access to both riverine and woodland resources. Most of it was rocky upland on poor soils. The men were likely attempting to emulate the success of Venture Smith in lumbering and fishing. Their relatively brief use of the property suggests that they were unable to do so. Whacket remained on the property until 1780, when he sold it to Amos White, who sold it back to Venture in 1787. Peter stayed nine years longer, selling the property back to Venture Smith in 1789.

Archaeological excavations on an upland ridgeline located a small domestic site near a small spring. The nails and ceramics indicate a late 18th century occupation. Stone foundations or piers were absent, although window glass fragments were recovered, suggesting that a small, windowed, ephemeral structure had once stood there. The sparse artifacts and light domestic footprint correspond with Whacket's short occupation of the property.

## Peter (Freeman?) Home Lot (Rock House Site, #61-118)

Excavations on a small terrace overlooking Salmon River Cove recovered twice as many artifacts as at the Redware site as well as some stacked stonework, suggesting the foundation or pier of a building. The relatively large amount of domestic artifacts and their dates of manufacture confirm that it was a late 18th century house. Except for the stacked stonework in one area, the house footprint is just as fragile as the one at the Redware site, suggesting that it too was small and simple in construction. At both sites, the bulk of the ceramic tableware consisted of inexpensive, locally made ceramics. These characteristics suggest occupation by persons of lower socio-economic status. Below the house remains, stonework in the bank of the river show where a dock or wharf once stood (*Salmon River Dock Site, #61-119*).



Both home lots and associated dock are significant archaeology sites because they are rare examples of 18th century free black rural homesteads. The archaeological remains can provide insight into the material culture and economic endeavors of two families representing that group of marginalized peoples in the lower Connecticut River Valley. Additionally, both men were contemporaries of Venture Smith, and comparison of all three households demonstrates a degree of social and economic diversity within the local 18th century black community. Future research has the potential to provide information on the archaeological identification of ethnicity.



Above: Rock House ceramics (African American residence).

Left: Kaolin pipe fragments from the Rock House site (African American residence).

# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## Dudley/Ackley Farmstead (#61-99) Dudley/Ackley Archaeological Complex)

The most conspicuous archaeological feature on the CT Yankee property is the extremely well-preserved cellar hole of the Ackley Farm house ruins at the southeastern end of Haddam Neck, overlooking the confluence of Salmon River Cove and Dibble Creek. Three other structures were also located in the immediate area of the House: a covered well, the privy, and the barn foundation. Haddam Neck resident Mrs. Robert Steiner, who wrote a news article on Venture Smith, was apparently the first person to misidentify the Ackley ruins as the remains of the Venture Smith homestead, mainly due "to the very high doorways, not characteristic of that period" (Steiner 1960; O'Conner 1966). This was because Venture Smith was described by contemporaries as a very large man. He was over six feet tall and so broad that he had to enter a normal-size doorway sideways (Anonymous NDA).

Archaeological testing between the Ackley house and the barn uncovered the buried foundation of Sylvester Dudley's second house, built around 1813. Twelve years later he built the Ackley house for his daughter and son-in-law John Ackley. The old Colonial roadway winds its way past the front doorways of each building, terminating at Dibble Creek Wharf.



## The Dudley House

The pattern of stonework indicated that the cellar hole if not the house itself was 16 foot square. No stone piers were located to suggest a larger building. They could have been displaced as the property was obviously re-

graded when the cellar hole was covered over. Only the lower courses of stone were uncovered, suggesting that the upper stone was borrowed -- probably during the rebuilding of the Ackley house (see below). Burned artifacts suggest that the house either caught fire or was taken down under controlled burning. The age ranges for the ceramics and vessel glass associated with the building fit well the documentary evidence for its occupation from about 1813 to 1846, when the widow Dudley passed away.

## The Ackley Farm

Local farmer John Brainerd bought the 93-acre Ackley Farm in 1856 and expanded it into a successful 200-acre farm. Records note he planted potatoes and broom corn. Archaeological contexts contained the remains of pig and cow, showing that site occupants were pasturing animals as well. Brainerd sold the farm in 1870. It passed through several owners. In 1877 the unoccupied house burned down and a smaller one was eventually built in its place.

The archaeological study uncovered evidence of burning (charred wood, burned and melted artifacts). Stonework surrounding the cellar indicates that the original house was quite large, at least 52.5 feet by 30.8 feet. The northern stonework was not clearly defined, and it was not clear that all of it was part of the house. Some of the stacked stone may have been associated with outbuildings

on that side of the house. Cut stone and depressions encountered west and north of this foundation suggest that outbuildings once stood on the high ground above Dibble Creek. Like all the homesteads with the exception of Venture Smith, kaolin pipe fragments provided evidence of tobacco smoking. The great variety of ceramic tableware included some expensive pieces such as porcelain, Delft, black transfer print and hand-painted polychrome wares. A black glass bead may represent women's jewelry, and a pre-1850 inkwell

indicates literacy. They suggest middle class social and economic status for the Dudley/Ackley family.

The Dudley/Ackley Site is historically significant for several reasons. It is one of the earliest known Anglo-American homesteads in this part of Haddam Neck and was partly contemporary with the Solomon Smith homestead. Like the Whacket and Peter homesteads, it has the potential to address some current anthropological issues such as the archaeological identification of ethnicity, the relationship of ethnicity to class, and the degree of diversity within ethnic groups. Additionally, it represents a successful 19th century farm that could be a case study of regional farming -- why some Connecticut farms succeeded while many failed in the transition from subsistence to commercial farming.



# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee

## Stephen/Daniel Russell Homestead (Peninsula 1 Site, #61-115)

The Russell house was located in Cove Meadow on a high terrace overlooking the Connecticut River. It was built by Stephen Russell in the late 18th century but came to be identified with his son, Captain Daniel Russell. Archaeological excavations revealed a buried house foundation (some stonework was identified as deeply as three to four feet below the ground) with an estimated size of 36 feet by 32 feet (the western end of the house had eroded over the river bank) – a large house. Other evidence of wealth included expensive transfer print and porcelain tableware, women's jewelry beads, and possible imported British window glass. As at the Dudley/Ackley homestead, numerous kaolin pipe fragments indicated tobacco smoking was a common recreation.

In agreement with the documentary record, the age range of the artifacts suggests that the house was first occupied in the late 18th century, and was abandoned about 1840. The large concentration of stone between the terrace bank and the river is the remains of the contemporary fishing pier called the **Dumpling Fish Place** owned by the Shailer family pre-1812. The site is significant because its deeply buried and virtually undisturbed remains represent a well-to-do Anglo-American sea-oriented (?) homestead contemporary with those of the Brainerd, Dudley/Ackley, Andrews, and Smith families.



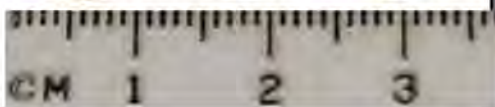
Above: fragments of early 19th-century hand-painted polychrome pearlware ceramics from the Stephen/Daniel Russell homestead.

## Unidentified Residential Site (Peninsula 2 Site, #61-116)

The Peninsula 2 Site was located southeast of the Russell home lot. The concentration of domestic artifacts (broken ceramic tableware, window glass) and building materials recovered during excavation is strong evidence that this site is the location of a home lot. The age range for the recovered ceramics and nail fragments suggest that the site was occupied between the mid-to late 18th century and the 1820s. No foundations were found despite extensive archaeological trenching and use of a four-foot probe. The deeply buried foundation at the Russell Homestead not far west of this site suggests that the stonework may have been buried beyond the reach of the probe. There is also the possibility that the stone may have been borrowed by the Russells for use at their home lot. No documents have been found to date that identify a home lot in this area of the Peninsula. The site's significance lies in its mid-18th century date, undisturbed condition, and the tantalizing mystery of its ownership.



Glass beads from Peninsula 1 site.



## Sylvester/Hezekiah Brainerd Homestead (#61-96)



Early undated photograph of the Sylvester/Hezekiah Brainerd house (courtesy of Mrs. Susan (Smith) Olsen).

The house of Sylvester and son Hezekiah Brainerd was located along the Connecticut River in the western corner of the CT Yankee property. It was part of a rural, agrarian homestead associated with the local quarry industry and coastal shipping trade. The Brainerds were farmers and part owners of the stone quarries on the ridge above their residence. A roadway from the quarry once passed in front of their home to a wharf on the Connecticut River, where the quarried stone was shipped to various ports. Cut stones that appear to be steps leading to the edge of the Connecticut River were likely associated with the wharf activities. The archival research indicated that the house was occupied from roughly 1840 to the early 1960s, when it was torn down. Archaeological excavations located two iron wedges, at least one of which was a quarry wedge. The age range for the recovered artifacts spanned the late



Left: ceramics recovered at Peninsula 2 site c. late 18th century-1830. Top (l-r): handpainted polychrome pearlware, handpainted Empire Style pearlware, handpainted "value added" pearlware; bottom (l-r): Annular pearlware, Annular pearlware, Green shell-edged pearlware.



# Archaeological Studies at Connecticut Yankee



Fragment of porcelain doll's head from the Brainerd site.

18th through the 20th centuries. The presence of porcelain and hand-painted tableware, fancy glass fragments, the remains of a girl's porcelain bisque doll, and a faceted gemstone reflect the high social status of the Brainerds relative to the families east of them. Archaeological investigations uncovered the house foundation as well as a covered well, a privy, and a large trash pit. The exposed house foundation measured

approximately 36 by 26 feet, a sizable structure. The house was even larger: An undated photograph of the house shows a single story addition at the back of the two-story main structure; it probably rested on stone piers that were dislodged during the house's demolition. Large quantities of melted glass artifacts indicate that the structure had been burned prior to being torn down.

The site is significant because the house foundation was virtually undisturbed, and it represents a family of entrepreneurs in the forefront of early industry and commerce in the lower Connecticut River Valley. The Brainerds exemplify the new rural elite -- American success through typical Yankee hard work, ingenuity, and diversified economic efforts for social and political gain.

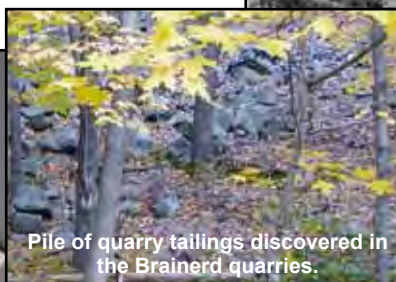


Ceramics from Sylvester/Hezekiah Brainerd house.

Top (l-r): Whiteware, Blue shell-edged whiteware, bottom (l-r): transfer print, Red transfer print, Blue transfer print, all on whiteware.

## Brainerd Quarry Complex (#61-97)

A vast industrial archaeology site on Quarry Hill dates to the mid-18th century, when Josiah Brainerd and his sons first began operating a granite/gneiss quarry there. The site covers a number of independent Brainerd quarry operations over time. The quarry was in operation until the early 20th century; its southwestern end encompassed the Shaylor Quarry, an early 19th century operation that was located ca. 1/2 mile from the Brainerd operations and purchased by Sylvester Brainerd in 1835 and 1842. Cultural features include rock cuts, talus slopes formed by quarry debris, cut stones, spoilage piles (waste rock or tailings), and stone with drill holes, as well as several wood roads leading from the quarries to the wharves along the Connecticut River. This site is an ideal candidate for use as an



Pile of quarry tailings discovered in the Brainerd quarries.

Above: 19th-century quarry at Haddam Neck (Haddam Historical Society, Haddam, CT).

outdoor classroom for studies in local history, geology, mining, early American industry, the Industrial Revolution in Connecticut, and other related topics for grammar school, high school, and college students.

## Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

The many Native American sites identified on the CT Yankee property are like the pieces to a number of puzzles mixed together. These sites did not exist in isolation. Each site represents one aspect of Native American subsistence and settlement systems prior to European contact. In order to understand the lifeways of the Indian groups who exploited the CT Yankee property, the chronology and relationships between these sites need to be understood. The archaeology conducted across the CT Yankee property demonstrated that Native American people exploited the many different resources found within the diverse environmental zones of the lower portion of Haddam Neck for thousands of years prior to the arrival of Europeans. It seems clear that by 6000 years ago Native Americans had already begun to establish a settlement pattern based on seasonally available resources, that is, an annual seasonal round consisting of hunting, fishing and gathering activities. Indian groups located themselves at strategic locations to take advantage of different foods and raw materials. Artifacts diagnostic of different time periods at a number of the CT Yankee sites suggest that many of the sites continued to be selected for the resource opportunities they afforded by different Indian cultures throughout the pre-contact periods. Some Native Americans continued to live in Haddam Neck into the third quarter of the 19th Century<sup>3</sup>. The Terminal Archaic period (c.4000-3000 years BP) is represented by numerous sites on the CT Yankee property. The locations and artifact assemblages from these sites provides perhaps the best example of the movement of an Indian community to obtain different types of resources throughout the year. Terminal Archaic components were found throughout the CT Yankee uplands and lowlands, with many of the sites being located on riverine terraces. Although the resources of

<sup>3</sup> Many Native Americans are buried in the Old Rock Landing Cemetery. Dartmouth College erected a monument to the Abraham Symons family in 1925.



## Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

the Lower Neck permitted such a permanent residential community with an essentially self-contained settlement system, this community was not isolated from the outside world; the Connecticut River permitted contact and trade (e.g., in chert, rhyolite and other stone types) with other Native American communities.

While the archaeological excavations yielded much information about the Native American utilization of the CT Yankee property, areas left unexcavated due to time constraints at many sites identified still hold the potential to provide further insight into Native American lifeways. For example, future excavation at some of the base camps and seasonal sites may provide evidence of house structures and additional features that aid in our interpretation of the occupations. At some post-contact sites, excavations focused on historic structures with the intention of leaving remnants of these buildings in place. Intact pre-contact components may lie below some of these structures. As more archaeological sites come to light across southern New England, comparisons with sites identified during the survey of the CT Yankee property should enhance our understanding of Native American residential patterns, economies, and social life.

Later residents of Haddam Neck selected many of the same locations that were used by Native American communities prior to Anglo-American settlement. This was evidenced by the many stone artifacts and pieces of prehistoric pottery that were uncovered near the sites of colonial structures. These latter occupations can be seen as a continuation of a long sequence of residential communities across Lower Haddam Neck. The relationships between these Anglo- and African-American properties are made more obvious by the colonial roads that connect them with one another and with other areas outside the community. The paths taken by these roadways in many cases may have followed those of earlier Indian trails. Each site summary explains the significance of that specific archaeology site:

Undisturbed 18th and/or early 19th century rural home site;  
Home of individual important to regional or national history;  
Contemporary neighbors of that important individual – Venture Smith;  
Known Anglo- or African-American affiliation with potential to address ethnic and class issues;  
Capacity to inform on the regional transition from subsistence to commercial farming.

They are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places because they meet criterion “D” of the federal government’s requirements for eligibility; they “have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history” (Poirier 1987:7). Additionally, the homesteads comprising Lower Haddam Neck formed a rather insular, geographically circumscribed community of households literally connected by a Colonial

roadway and figuratively by economic, social and religious relationships. In sum, they represent an *historic rural landscape district*, composed of a variety of land uses that incorporate several types of 19th century landscapes – agriculture, industry (mining, lumbering), and maritime activities (fishing, shipbuilding, coastal trade). The rural historic landscape is one of the categories of property that qualifies for listing on the National Register as a historic site or district. In summary, these and other archaeology sites help provide interesting, sometimes fascinating, stories about local people that are not found in Connecticut history books. They are an important part of our cultural heritage. Sadly, hundreds of state sites have been destroyed just within the past 10 years.

“Archaeological resources, however, are fragile and non-renewable. Many sites have long since been destroyed.... Once a site is destroyed by development, suburban sprawl, or an uneducated treasure seeker, its story is gone forever. This is why archaeology sites are so very important....” (Lavin 2007:304-305).

The stories most at risk are those of the people who truly made America what it is today, but whose stories were never found in local history books until recently -- slaves, servants, immigrant laborers, women, Native Americans, African Americans and other non-Anglo-American social groups often referred to as “marginal” or “disenfranchised.” To preserve their and other Connecticut stories, we must protect our archaeological sites from disturbance and destruction through the public education, promotion of State archaeological preserves, and the enactment of effective town regulations regarding local historical and archaeological resources.

# Glossary

## **Anadromous fish**

Fish that inhabit salt water but return to freshwater to spawn.

## **Activity areas**

Discrete locations within an archaeology site where specific activities are performed, such as stone tool making, woodworking, or cooking; identified through the complex of artifacts and cultural features their performers left behind.

## **Artifact**

An object made by humans such as projectile points, stone tools, nails, buttons, ceramic dishware, coins, and dolls.

## **Atlantic Slope tradition**

An Early Archaic cultural tradition characterized by Southeastern point styles and mobile settlement patterns.

## **Biface**

Stone artifact that has had flakes removed from both sides.

## **Broad blade/Broad spear**

A biface with a wide blade; a term specifically used to describe Snook Kill, Susquehanna Broad, and other wide-bladed point styles dating to the Terminal Archaic period.

## **Cache**

An underground deposit of artifacts.

## **Catadromous fish**

Fish that inhabit fresh water but return to salt water to spawn.

## **Component**

An assemblage of artifacts and/or features associated with a particular occupation(s) or time period.

## **Cultural feature**

Non-portable artifacts, such as a stone foundation, well, dock, refuse pit, etc.

## **Decommissioning**

Decontamination and dismantlement of existing facilities and cleanup of any contaminated soils.

## **Debitage**

Waste material such as fragments, flakes, chips, and

shatter created during stone tool making.

## **Diagnostic artifact**

An artifact style characteristic of a specific time period and/or cultural tradition.

## **Eastern Uplands**

A geographic region in inland eastern Connecticut characterized by north-south running chains of hills and plateaus cut by numerous small stream valleys.

## **Ecofact**

A natural object used by humans, such as animal bones and plant remains that are the remains of cooking and consumption activities.

## **Fishery/Fish house/Fish place**

A “fish-place” was normally a spot near good fishing grounds, where one was legally allowed to build a small structure to house fishing equipment and process fish.

## **Lithic**

Stone.

## **Modified Interior Cord-marked pottery**

An early style of Native American pottery similar to Vinette Interior Cordmarked except that its interior or exterior surfaces have been smoothed in part.

## **National Register of Historic Places**

A listing of standing historic architectural structures and archaeological sites that the federal government deems significant because they are unaltered/undisturbed and meet one of more of the following criteria: associated with events that made a significant contribution to broad patterns of American history; associated with the lives of important persons; exhibit attributes of a specific type, period, or method of construction or is the work of a master, or possess high artistic values; or provided or may be likely to provide important information on American history/prehistory (Poirier 1987:7).

## **Perforator**

A tool with a sharp point, used to punch holes.

## **Privy**

An outhouse, a small wooden outbuilding containing a toilet with no plumbing.

## **Radiocarbon dating**

An absolute dating method by which the death date of organic materials such as wood burned in a hearth can be computed based on the relatively regular disintegration of the radioactive carbon isotope (C14).

## **Rural Historic Landscape**

“A geographic area that historically has been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupant, or intervention, and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings, and structures, roads and waterways, and natural features. Rural landscapes commonly reflect the day-to-day occupational activities of people engaged in traditional work such as mining, fishing and various types of agriculture” (U.S. Dept. of the Interior 1999:1-2).

## **Seasonal Round**

Subsistence/settlement strategy involving movement of a population or segment of population at various times during the course of a year to obtain food/other resources.

## **Sinew Stone**

A stone with grooves through which sinew can be drawn to remove fat.

## **State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)**

The regulatory agent responsible for ensuring that federal archeology regulations are followed within the state. SHPO is mandated to coordinate cultural resource review and preservation activities between the state and the federal government as stipulated in 36 CFR 60, The National Register of Historic Places, in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and in the Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s Regulations 36 CFR 800 (Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties; see Poirier 1987:15).

## **Utilized flakes**

Flakes displaying flake scars resulting from deliberate modification or use wear.

## **Vinette Interior Cordmarked pottery**

The earliest style of pottery found in Northeastern North American, whose interior and exterior surfaces were impressed with a cord-wrapped paddle.



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# State Archaeological Preserves

State Archaeological Preserves were established by the Connecticut Legislature as a mechanism to protect significant archaeological sites. The designation process began in 2000. Archaeological sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and/or the State Register of Historic Places qualify for designation as a Preserve, whether or not the land is private or public property. The National Register is the official Federal list of districts, sites buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture worthy of preservation. These contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation. Similarly, the State Register of Historic Places is a census of historic and archaeological resources that are integral to the development of Connecticut's distinctive character.

The Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism is empowered to designate archaeological sites as Preserves (C.G.S. Section 10-384). The Commission, in coordination with the Office of State Archaeology and, when appropriate, the Native American Heritage Advisory Council, works with property owners to nominate significant archaeological sites as Archaeological Preserves. The Commission is also charged with maintaining the master listing of all Archaeological Preserves.

Preserves recognize both the educational and cultural value, as well as the fragile nature, of archaeological resources. Many of Connecticut's Preserves are on private land and fall under the protection of property owner rights. In addition, Connecticut law provides that, regardless of whether a Preserve is on private or public land, no person shall "excavate, damage, or

otherwise alter or deface the archaeological integrity or sacred importance" of a Preserve. Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-390 provides significant

penalties for vandalism and the unlawful collecting of archaeological remains from State Archaeological Preserves.

## Connecticut State Archaeological Preserves

*(as of September 2009)*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Putnam Memorial State Park, Redding and Bethel                   | 16. Governor Samuel Huntington Homestead, Scotland  |
| 2. Axle Shop-Spring Factory Archaeological Site, Hamden             | 17. Cady-Copp House Archaeological Site, Putnam   |
| 3. Kent Iron Furnace, Kent  | 18. World War II "Hellcat" Sites, Preston   |
| 4. Newgate Prison and Copper Mine, East Granby                      | 19. Henry Whitfield State Museum, Guilford  |
| 5. Fifth Camp of Rochambeau's Infantry, Bolton                      | 20. Dividend Brook Industrial Archaeological District, Rocky Hill   |
| 6. Fort Wooster Park, New Haven                                     | 21. Fort Griswold State Park, Groton  |
| 7. Fourth Camp of Rochambeau's Army, Windham                        | 22. Ebenezer Story Homestead and Tavern, Preston  |
| 8. Small Pox Hospital Rock, Farmington                              | 23. Fort Stamford, Stamford   |
| 9. New London Engine House & Turntable, New London                  | 24. New England Hebrew Farmers of the Emanuel Society Synagogue and Creamery Archaeological Site, Montville |
| 10. Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District, Canterbury | 25. Prudence Crandall House Museum, Canterbury  |
| 11. Aunt Polly, East Haddam   | 26. Le Beau Fishing Camp & Weir, Killingly  |
| 12. Cornfield Point Light Ship LV51, Old Saybrook                   | 27. The Lighthouse Site, Barkhamsted  |
| 13. Bridgeport Wood Finishing Company, New Milford                  | 28. Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Filley, Haddam   |
| 14. John Brown Birthplace, Torrington                               | 29. Pine Island, Groton   |
| 15. Air Line Railroad, Colchester and East Hampton                  | 30. Ash Creek Corduroy Road, Fairfield  |



Lower Haddam Neck and Cove Meadow  
on the Salmon River, view north  
(Connecticut Yankee, Haddam, CT).

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