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INTERSITE VARIABILITY IN THE CABORN-WELBORN PHASE: DIFFERENTIAL RAW MATERIAL USE

The present study examined the use of exotic raw materials in artifact manufacture as an index of intersite variability in the Caborn-Welborn phase. Differential use of exotic cherts in the manufacture of diagnostic Caborn-Welborn endscrapers has been documented in surface collections from three sites: two large villages, Murphy (12 Po 1) and Hovey Lake (12 So 19), and one small village, Caborn (12 Po 32).

"Blue-gray" cherts (a cover term incorporating a number of geologically similar named types such as Wyandotte and Hopkinsville) dominated each of the three assemblages. Burlington/Crescent, Dover, Kaolin, and Mill Creek cherts occurred in lesser frequencies at each of the three sites.

Only the Burlington/Crescent chert (the most distant of the exotic cherts identified) displayed statistically significant variability in its use relative to other chert types at each of the three sites. These cherts occurred at or above their expected frequencies at both of the large village sites, and below the expected frequency at the small village, the Caborn site.

Several hypotheses may be proposed to account differential use of Burlington/Crescent chert between small villages:

- 1) Large villages, such as Murphy and Hovey Lake, may have occupied positions of superordinate rank in a hierarchically organized settlement system which afforded them greater access to the most distant chert resource areas. This hypothesis rests on the assumption that the sites analyzed represent contemporaneous occupations.
- 2) It is perhaps more reasonable to assume that these sites represent successive occupations. This temporal factor may account for the differences between the assemblages instead of an invocation of any structural or functional differences between large and small villages.
- 3) It is interesting to note that the two sites where Burlington/Crescent cherts occur in appreciable quantities also have substantial Early-Middle Woodland occupations. It is possible that the Caborn-Welborn populations at Murphy and Hovey Lake were making use of Burlington/Crescent cherts brought into the area by earlier, Woodland populations.

It is not possible to decide which of these possibilities might be the best alternative on the basis of the data at hand. Future research must attempt to establish tighter chronological control and seek to define other dimensions of intersite variability within the Caborn-Welborn phase.
