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HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY RESEARCH BY IU-INDIANAPOLIS,.1988

In 1988 the Anthropology Department of Indiana University at Indianapolis (IU-I) undertook its third year of fieldwork as part of a long range research program designed to investigate cultural interaction and change in central Indiana between A.D. 1400 and 1850, particularly the effects of Euro-american and native American contact in the Lafayette area of Tippecanoe County, Indiana.

The field research undertook floodplain and bluff reconnaissance on the south side of the Wabash river, in the vicinity of the Wea village, 12 T 6. Seven new prehistoric and historic loci were recorded, and six previously recorded sites were revisited and systematically surveyed (including proton magnetometer work at 12 T 4 on the bluffs overlooking the floodplain). The reconnaissance discovered patterns of floodplain formation (deflation and scouring) which must be considered in defining site boundaries, and evidence that deposition has buried the evidence of most components predating the Late Woodland Period. Surface remains indicated that the Wea village was located on the narrower end of the floodplain, and crops probably were grown to the east of it toward Wea Creek.

Testing also was continued at the Wea village. This work included six two meter square excavation units. A wide range of artifacts of both native and imported manufacture were again recovered in association with abundant well-preserved faunal remains. Two more features were recorded at the Wea village, but we found no clear evidence of structures. Some areas of refuse midden and sheet midden have been identified through these tests. The most common artifacts recovered in the excavations were various decorations, including glass and shell beads, tinkling cones, and silver ornaments.

In conjunction with the work on the native American occupations, we continued the inventory of the 1968-1969 collections from Ft. Ouiatenon loaned by IU-Bloomington. In spring we completed the initial inventory of the 1968-1969 collections, and are now ready to move on to the materials recovered between 1971 and 1973.

Public outreach was enhanced with production of a popular brochure, an exhibit at the Feast of the Hunter's Moon, and a half-hour video on the research. Professional contacts were extended in the spring at a conference on French colonial archaeology in Illinois and in the fall during a trip to Quebec City to visit archaeological sites connected with government and commerce in New France.

Laboratory processing has continued into the fall, and we anticipate returning to the bluffs behind the Wea village in the spring. Continuing collections research and public education efforts also are planned as major elements of this integrated research program.
