

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE WORK IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, 1933

BY

BRUCE W. MURWIN

Southern Illinois State Normal University, Carbondale, Illinois

During the year of 1933, under the auspices of Dr. Warren K. Moorehead of Phillips Academy, some archaeological reconnaissance work was done in Southern Illinois, primarily in connection with axes and celts already collected. Of secondary importance was the locating of various forms of Indian remains and the collecting of surface material. In connection with the study of the celts and axes, sixteen collections were visited, photographed, and studied; fourteen others were visited and studied, but no photographs were taken; and twenty smaller collections are listed and may be visited later. The work included over two thousand miles of travel and the taking of over two hundred photographs. The summary of the work on stone axes has been submitted to Dr. Moorehead.

All of the study was confined to Southern Illinois, but the matter of locating and visiting sites was largely concentrated about Jackson, Williamson, Johnson, Union, and Alexander counties. As a result of the work, the following remains were located and mapped: large towns—7; village sites or camp sites—168; mounds or mound groups—42; rock shelters—28; workshops—21; "stone forts"—5; burials or burial grounds—58; rock carvings—7; limestone caves—7; flint quarries—5; salt works—3; salt licks—2; trails—3; and miscellaneous—12. Under miscellaneous is included one spring said to have been walled up with rock, and four small areas where there seemed to have been fire for a long period of time. Many of the sites were visited and collections of surface material were made.

Perhaps the most outstanding of the sites visited, and one which has probably never been reported in print, is the Kincaid group of mounds located near Brookport. This group of mounds covers an area almost one-half mile square located along the banks of Avery Lake. The largest of the mounds is about 650 feet long, 250 feet wide and 40 feet high and covers an area of approximately three acres. In shape it is described as a woman's inverted shoe. At the extreme west end, corresponding to the heel, is a sort of truncated conical mound that is about 60 feet across at the top and 40 feet high. About 20 feet lower is a small neck of land 25 feet across, which connects to the sole, which in turn is about 300 feet long, 100 feet wide at its widest point, and 15 feet lower than the heel or 25 feet above the level. Near the toe is a graded way about 40 feet wide leading down southeast toward the center of the village.

The second largest mound is about 375 feet long, 175 feet wide and 35 feet high. It has a flat top on which are located a house, barn, and other buildings. There are two large mounds of the truncated square pyramidal type about 250 feet in diameter at the base and 25 feet high, close to the others already mentioned. There are three slightly smaller mounds nearly one-half mile away at the east end of this village site. The area between has a few mounds some four to eight feet in height and 75 to 150 feet in diameter. This area also contains several large depressions and what appear to be a number of hut-rings. Northwest of the largest mound are three large depressions, the largest being over 500 feet across.

This site seems to represent the same culture as the Angel group near Evansville, Indiana, the Milligan mound in Dogtooth Bend near Cairo, and the Linn site in Union County. It should be studied more in detail, purchased by the state, and preserved as a park.