A Use of Historical Sources in Archaeology: An Indian Earthworks near Mt. Clemens, Michigan

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A USE OF HISTORICAL SOURCES IN ARCHAEOLOGY: 
AN INDIAN EARTHWORKS NEAR MT. CLEMENS, 
MICHIGAN

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The historical research required to identify the exact location of archaeological sites which may be presumed to have been destroyed for over a century is time consuming. The reasons for devoting one’s energies to such investigation are many.

Most archaeologists would, I believe, agree with me that it would be useful to establish the location of a former Indian site which is the direct forerunner of a modern European settlement. If such an Indian site had existed during the latest prehistoric period, then artifacts from it, when compared with written accounts by its first European visitors, should facilitate the description of the local prehistoric culture as it really functioned. If the former Indian site were that of an early historic Indian settlement, then the description would be of an Indian culture under the impact of acculturative influences, likewise a worthy topic for documentation. In either case, most American archaeologists would be anxious to relocate such a site in the hope that some of the original village debris might remain and could be excavated.

Such an opportunity is, however, not present in southeastern Michigan. When the first French settlers arrived in 1701, this corner of what later became the state of Michigan was, for all practical purposes, uninhabited.
Therefore, my reasons for attempting to relocate the first archaeological sites described for this area were different. To be explicit, I might list six reasons why I believe the pin-pointing of the archaeological sites first described from an area are justified: 1) I have concluded that it is justifiable to assume, as a premise to be tested, that the first areas chosen by Europeans for settlement commonly were the spots having the greatest ecological advantage in terms of defense, ease of approach, water resources, arable land, and availability of wild products. I suspect that the early European residents and prehistoric residents shared enough attitudes concerning the benefits and disadvantages of locations for habitation and other activities so as to cause the pieces of ground with the best potential for the first European settlers to be the same pieces of ground as had the greatest potential for the late prehistoric Indians. 2) I have assumed, again for purposes of argument, that the prehistoric sites and finds mentioned by early Europeans often include the largest and most conspicuous sites within the region adjacent to the first European place of habitation. 3) I assume that, in some cases, the conspicuousness of the first prehistoric sites to attract early describers was a reflection of a uniqueness of the sites which meant that they, in fact, lacked close parallels in the immediate region. 4) I might, at this point, note again that sometimes fragments of sites described at early dates still survive. For instance, four southeastern Michigan sites described in 1817 survive today, nearly 150 years later, and are being held in reserve by local professional archaeologists for excavation when funds become available. 5) Detailed research may tie an archaeological site described at one date to descriptions of it, or artifacts from it, from other dates. Sometimes these associations have not been previously made by excavators and collectors working many years apart. Several years ago I summarized the history of six ar-
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archaeological sites in Michigan which had first been mentioned in a book published in 1817 (Brown 1817). My research at that time was directed toward locating and specifying the modern condition of these sites (1961). In the case of four of these six sites new associations of data were made. The article which follows provides another instance of the grouping together of descriptions which had not previously been associated. 6) The pin-pointing of early sites in terms of later street and house sites facilitates the placement of archaeological data reported in early sources in relation to their local ecological correlates. Of course, the prehistoric micro-ecology requires reconstruction; but, at least sometimes, early sources can give hints of this, once the exact location of interest has been identified.

Since the publication of my first two-part article concerning six Michigan sites several colleagues, including one with interest in ethnohistory, have suggested that I should have made this initial article available in a more widely-circulated journal than the local archaeological serial where I chose to have it printed. With this feature in mind, I have prepared a discussion of my recent attempts at locating more accurately one of the six sites considered earlier, as an example of the use of documents, maps, and other sources in such a research task.

Let me start by stating that digging in written (and sometimes oral) sources as I report upon here relies heavily upon an extensive knowledge of the local publications and archives of an area. Without the great bodies of data amassed in the Reports of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan and its successor the Collections and Researches Made by the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society the resources of a major historical library such as the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library, and the aid of students and friends and colleagues in the field of history, such as James E. Babcock of the Burton Historical Collection and
Philip P. Mason of the Wayne State University Archives, I could not have achieved my present command of local historical resources. I might also state that standard archaeological bibliographies and atlases have proved to be of little aid in this type of archaeological research. Neither the recently-published bibliography by Alexis A. Praus (1964) nor the atlas by W. Hinsdale — which, in fact, designates the general location of the site I will be considering as containing a “circular inclosure” (1931:map 6) — have been of value in this investigation. It is the expert in the history of the locale who has provided the major aid to me.

The sources I use below include travel accounts and journals, county and city histories, U.S. census data, local agricultural plat maps and atlases, local road and street maps, federal land records, local probate court records, local oral traditions, family Bible records, and tombstone inscriptions. It should be noted that several of the published items are not widely held in libraries, and, as a result, investigations of the type outlined below require that the scholar engage in research in the local area of the archaeological site being studied.

I will be referring to the earthworks under discussion in the present paper as “Mi-4,” their designation in the Michigan Archaeological Site Numbering System, the “MB-” indicating the location of the site in Macomb County. Records for this site and others in Macomb County are maintained at Wayne State University and the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor).

I first encountered a reference to the site MB-4 in a newspaper article published in the Detroit Gazette (A Christian July 16, 1819). This 1819 version was ultimately traced to the source from which it had been plagiarized, The Western Gazetteer, by Samuel R. Brown, published in 1817. I reproduce below a part of that account (1961:16) because it will be necessary to make considerable reference to this passage in my discussion:
On the river Huron, thirty miles from Detroit, and about eight miles from Lake St. Clair, are a number of small mounds, situated on a dry plain, or bluff near the river. Sixteen baskets full of human bones, of a remarkable size, were discovered in the earth while sinking a cellar on this plain, for the missionary. Near the mouth of this river, on the east bank, are ancient works representing a fortress, with walls of earth thrown up, similar to those of Indiana and Ohio.

In the paragraph above, only the last sentence is of major significance. The first two sentences are included because of their relation to the final sentence.

First, it is necessary to explain that the "river Huron" of this account is at the present time known as the "Clinton River," a change of name induced by the existence of two rivers near Detroit which by 1820, or so, had become known as the "river Huron." Prior to Americanization of the Detroit area in the late 1820's, the river mentioned in this passage was often meticulously referred to as "river Huron of lake St. Clair," a procedure which was satisfactory when reference to it was not commonly necessary. However, as the settlement of its drainage by English-speakers became common after the termination of the War of 1812, the shortened "river Huron" of the present account came into use, with far-too-much confusion resulting. So I first note that MB-4 is located on what today is called the "Clinton River."

Second, let me repeat the reasoning in my earlier article concerning the meaning of the statement "near the mouth of this river, on the east bank." Reference to Map 1 makes it clear that the Clinton River runs from the west and flows into Lake St. Clair at the eastern end of the river, and, therefore, has no eastern bank, but has a northern bank and a southern bank. So the significant question to ask is — Does the "east bank" refer to the north bank or the south bank? Here knowledge of local Detroit geographical terminology is essential. In the local Detroit usage, when one considers geographical location, the following terms are significant:
Map 1  The Clinton River area, southeastern Michigan.
“across the river,” meaning “in the Windsor area of Canada,” if the speaker is in Detroit, or “in the Detroit area of the United States,” if the speaker is in Windsor; “on this side of the river,” meaning “on the same side of the river as the speaker;” “downriver,” meaning “downstream on the Detroit River from Woodward Avenue in Detroit and from Oulette Street in Windsor;” and “upriver,” meaning “upstream on the Detroit River from these same two central streets,” between which a ferry once plied. In relation to the use of this local geographical terminology, it is to be noted that the general course of the Detroit River is from north to south, and that, therefore, “upriver” tends to mean “north,” and “downriver,” “south.” However, at the point of division between “upriver” and “downriver,” at the foot of Woodward Avenue in Detroit and on the river front at the end of Oulette Street in Windsor, the Detroit River is flowing from east to west. As a result, the term “east” is more likely to be applied to “upriver,” which in the case of the bank of the Clinton River means the northern bank. I concluded in my previous analysis that MB-4 was more likely located on the north bank than the south bank of the Clinton River.

Third, the phrase “near the mouth of this river” requires analysis. A visit to the mouth of the Clinton River on its north bank in the summer of 1960 made it clear that the region of the actual mouth was too swampy to allow earth walls to stand for any considerable length of time. MB-4 had to be some distance upstream from the mouth.

With no more data then known to me I concluded in my earlier article (1961:21-22): 3

If my guess about the meaning of the phrase “on the east bank” is correct, this would place the site on the north bank of the Clinton River, possibly in the southeastern corner of Selfridge Air Force Base, near the first great bend of the Clinton River, due south of the North River Road, at a point 3.7 miles eastward from the Edsel Ford Expressway.

At the time I prepared my first article, I was unable to pin-
point MB-4 with the accuracy which I felt necessary. This was partly because my 1960 tour of the area near the site provided me with no informants who know of the site. This latter phenomenon, I might add, I realized was not startling, for I could not prove that the site had existed after 1817, indeed, a rather long period for one to expect oral tradition to be retained.

In the early summer of 1964, I followed the suggestion of my colleague Philip P. Mason and consulted the work of Rev. John Heckewelder, who had lived on the Clinton River between 1782 and 1786 (Reichel 1876:~). There I found that in his discussion of the Lenape (or Delaware) Indians and their way-of-life, he states (Heckewelder 1876:48-49):

> It is related that they [that is, the Lenape Indians] had built to themselves regular fortifications or entrenchments, from whence they would sally out, but were generally repulsed. I have seen many of the fortifications said to have been built by them, two of which, in particular, were remarkable. One of them was near the mouth of the river Huron, which empties itself into the Lake St. Clair, on the north side of that lake, at the distance of about 20 miles N.E. of Detroit. This spot of ground was, in the year 1786, owned and occupied by a Mr. Tucker.

This passage by Heckewelder — which continues with an account of a fortification east of Sandusky, Ohio, six to eight miles inland from Lake Erie — provided the necessary key for the further location of MB-4.

Looking back at Brown’s original account, I now realize that I should have grasped that all of Rev. Heckewelder’s works should have been searched for information on MB-4. The Heckewelder volume, edited and revised by Rev. Reichel and published by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, could not in itself have been the source of Brown’s data, for the Heckewelder volume was not finished until about a year after Brown’s death (Library of Congress 1942-46 20:395). It is internal evidence in Brown’s passage which should have caused me to suspect that Heckewelder or one of his
associates provided the data on MB-4. The analytical technique which I should have used is one which I call “adjunctive position.” By this term I mean that two statements which occur directly adjacent to each other often reflect some inobvious logical connection. One will note that in the second sentence quoted from Brown, there is mention of “the missionary.” In my earlier article I had already identified the missionaries involved as the Moravian settlers at New Gnadenhütten, west of Mt. Clemens. These men included David Zeisberger, John Heckewelder, George Youngman, William Edwards, Michael Young, Gottlob Senseman, and John Connor (Heckwelder 1820:284, 346). Reference to both Pilling’s (1891) Algonquian Languages and the Library of Congress Catalogue of Printed Cards indicates that only Zeisberger and Heckewelder left published works. Zeisberger’s journal (Bliss 1885) provided no data on MB-4. I should have realized that one of the works by Heckewelder might have included useful material.

Heckewelder’s passage stating that MB-4 was located on property which “was, in the year 1786, owned and occupied by a Mr. Tucker” became a major lead to a more detailed placement of the site under consideration. The next step in my research became obvious: to identify to whom Heckewelder referred when he mentioned “Mr. Tucker” as a resident of the Clinton River “in the year 1786.” Reference to any of a number of sources, the best of which was written by Rev. H. N. Bissell (1884) in 1858, makes it clear that the man in question was William Tucker who moved to the Clinton River in 1784.

The next question to be answered was what land was “owned and occupied by... Mr. Tucker” in 1786. This matter proved to be far from easily answered. The issue ultimately reduced itself to whether in 1786 Tucker was referred to as owning and occupying: a) the land which has held by his son Edward Tucker in 1852; or b) that held by his son Charles Tucker in 1858. This problem I might note
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was posed by my investigation of references to William Tucker in the *Reports of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan* and its successor following a provocative conversation with Miss Isabella Swan, a local historian of Grosse Ile, Michigan. Rev. H. N. Bissell gives a brief biography of a Mr. William Tucker, whom Bissell states arrived on the Clinton River in 1784 and established his residence at the location occupied by his son Charles at the time of Bissell’s writing (1858) (1884). The other significant source on William Tucker’s life derives from an interview which Mrs. Electra Stewart recorded from Edward Tucker, another son of William Tucker, in 1852 (1884a; 1884b). Much of the difficulty I had in locating MB-4 hinges upon the weight to be given the Bissell account as opposed to the Edward Tucker (or Mrs. Stewart) account concerning the location of Tucker’s cabin in 1784.

The Edward Tucker account of 1852 (1884b:359) says the following concerning William Tucker and the original location of his cabin:

> In the summer of 1773 he went to Virginia, and on the 8th day of August, 1773, he married and brought his bride on horseback right through the wilderness, and through a village of the Wyandottes to the part of the farm where my house now stands. The house was of logs and stood a few feet in front of this present homestead.

The Edward Tucker account continues (1884b:361) with the following passage which refers to events after the Revolutionary War:

> After peace was declared we returned to our farms on the Clinton river. The present homestead was built four feet back of the first log house, and here my father died, March 7, 1805. Mother died in 1848, a very old woman.

These passages seem in direct contrast to Rev. Bissell’s biographical statement about William Tucker (1884:452-53):

> In the spring of 1784, he removed his family to the banks of the Huron river, and erected his cabin on the site where his son, Mr. Charles Tucker, now lives. A deed of land is now in the possession of Charles Tucker, signed by ten Indian
chiefs, conveying to William Tucker six miles from the mouth of the Huron river, on its northern bank, and three miles back from the stream. It bears date September 22, 1780. It was not signed by the British Governor of Canada, and therefore proved valueless when this territory was wrenched from British control.

Knowledge of early discussions of Macomb County makes the next source to be considered obvious. The first agricultural plat of Macomb County was published by Geil, Harley and Sivard in 1859 (Geil 1859). This map shows properties held at that date by both "E. Tucker" and "C. Tucker." "E. Tucker" held two pieces of land in the area of William Tucker's original "six miles from the mouth of the Huron river, on its northern bank:" one plot, labelled "145," has a house over a mile north of the river, on what is today called Sugar Bush Road; the other area, labelled "195," has no house on it. The one house belonging to E. Tucker in 1859 almost certainly was not on the original site occupied by William Tucker; it was much too far inland from the Clinton River to meet Heckewelder's description of MB-4.

The Geil, Harley and Sivard map shows that in 1859 a "C. Tucker" owned three plots in the area covered by William Tucker's original deed: one is north of that labelled "E. Tucker" and contains no buildings; another plot, numbered both "147" and "319," had two farmhouses on it; the third, numbered "80," had one house on it. (See Map 2, which is derived from the Geil, Harley and Sivard map.) One of these three house sites was almost certainly on the ground occupied by one of William Tucker's original cabins. Of these house sites, the two near the river clearly occupied the more favorable locations for residence in the 1780's (when transportation was most commonly by water).

Comparison of the Geil, Harley and Sivard map with the United States Geological Survey (U. S. G. S.) map of 1952 does not make the location of the original Tucker cabin site (or sites) any clearer. No house which could represent the old Tucker house
site survived on the north side of the North River Road — the general course of which is shown on the 1859 map — as late as 1952, the year represented by the cultural data on this the latest U.S.G.S. map of the area. Indeed, in the area of the "C. Tucker" holdings the land designations on this the latest U.S.G.S. map refer to both "147" and "146," which have boundaries enclosing much more land than that designated as "C. Tucker's" in 1859. This U.S.G.S. map also identifies land units "145" and "195."

The above comparison does not provide the placement of MB-4, although it does establish that the Tucker cabin of interest to us must have stood somewhere in land unit "145," "195," "147," or part of "146." The question becomes: Can an investigation of the history of these land units provide a lead on the location of MB-4?

I should at this point note that the numbered land units in south-eastern Michigan are known as "Private Claims" or "P.C.'s" and are plots of land which were granted to owners of and squatters on land, upon proof of their occupancy of the land as of the date 1796. This date is that of the British withdrawal from and the American occupation of Detroit.

There are two standard works on Private Claims. One is a rough map dated 1810, which lists Aaron Greeley as "Surveyor" (1810). The other, and much less commonly known source, is found in the American State Papers (Lowrie and Clarke 1832 I). The former lists the owners of each Private Claim, although it does not indicate the location of buildings. The Greeley map states that P. C. 145 was granted to "Edward Tucker," P. C. 195 was granted to "Michael Trambley," P. C. 146 was that of "William Tucker," and P. C. 147 was granted to "Charles & Jacob Tucker." From these data it becomes clear that only buildings on P. C. 145, 146, and 147 are relevant. Reference back to the 1859 map shows on the "A. Tucker" property the only house on P. C. 145 which might have bearing on the location of MB-4; it is on the river front of P.C.
145 — a location suggesting what might be an early house site.

The *American State Papers* proved valuable, for they provide abstracts of the hearings to validate the Private Claims. The abstract of the hearing on Private Claim 145 reads as follows:

No. 145 — EDWARD TUCKAR [sic]. —The Board took into consideration the claim of Edward Tuckar to a tract of land; and the notice by him filed this day was read in the words and figures following, to wit:

To PETER AUDRAIN, *Register of the Land Office at Detroit*. Sir:

Take notice that I now enter with the Commissioners of the Land Office at Detroit my claim to a tract of land, situate, lying, and being on river Huron of lake St. Clair, containing about five acres in front, more or less, extending to lake St. Clair in depth, bounded in front by river Huron, in rear by lake St. Clair, above by lands claimed by John Tuckar, and below by lands claimed by Michael Tremblé. I made claim and set up title by virtue of a long possession and occupancy, and improvements made by my late father, who, by his last will and testament, bequeathed the same to me.

For EDWARD TUCKAR,
CATHERINE TUCKAR, her X mark.

Witness, PETER AUDRAIN.

This tract contains five acres in front, more or less, extending in depth to lake St. Clair, is bounded in front by river Huron, in rear by lake St. Clair, above by lands claimed by John Tuckar, and below by lands claimed by Michael Tremblé.

Whereupon, as evidence of his claim, the claimant exhibited to the commissioners a legal copy of the will of the late William Tuckar, his father, from which the following is extracted, viz.

"I give and bequeath unto Edward Tuckar the farm he now occupies containing five acres in front, bounded east by Tremblé, north on Indian or wild land, west on a farm belonging to me, adjoining James Conner."

William McScott, Esq. was brought forward as a witness in behalf of the claimant, who, being duly sworn, deposed and said, that, in the year 1804, the claimant was in possession and occupancy of the premises, and has continued so to this day.

This claim is postponed for further evidence (Lowrie and Clarke 1832 1:345).
The abstract of the hearing on Private Claim 146 reads as follows:

No. 146. WILLIAM TUCKAR [son of the original William Tucker].—The board took into consideration the claim of William Tuckar to a tract of land on river Huron; and the notice by him filed this day was read in the words and figures following, to wit:

To PETER AUDRAIN, Register of the Land Office at Detroit.

Sir: Detroit, June 16, 1808.

Take notice that I now enter with the Commissioners of the Land Office at Detroit my claim to a tract of land, lying and being on river Huron of lake St. Clair, containing about six acres in front, more or less, and extending in depth to lake St. Clair, bounded in the front by the river Huron, and in rear by lake St. Clair, above by the lands of the widow Tuckar, and below by the lands claimed by François St. Obin. I make claim and set up title by virtue of possession and occupancy, and improvements made by my late father, deceased, who, by his last will and testament, has bequeathed the same to me.

For WILLIAM TUCKAR,
CATHERINE TUCKAR, her X mark.

Witness, PETER AUDRAIN.

Whereupon, as evidence of his claim, the claimant exhibited to the commissioners a legal copy of the will of the late William Tuckar, his father, from which the following is extracted, viz.

"I give and bequeath unto William Tuckar the farm he now occupies, containing six acres in front, be it more or less, bounded south on the river Huron, east by the lands occupied by François St. Obin, north on the lake St. Clair, west on my own lands."

This tract contains about six acres in front, more or less, extending in depth to lake St. Clair, (but not to exceed six hundred and forty acres in the whole,) is bounded in front by river Huron, in rear by lake St. Clair, above by the lands of widow Tuckar, and below by lands claimed by François St. Obin.

Baptiste Comperet, Jun. was brought forward as a witness in behalf of the claimant, who, being duly sworn, deposed and said, that, previously to the 1st July, 1796, the claimant was in possession and occupancy of the premises, and continued so until 1804, when the deponent left river Huron.
William McScott, Esq. was also brought forward as a witness in behalf of the claimant, who, being duly sworn, deposed and said, that the claimant was in possession and occupancy of the premises in the year 1804, and has continued so to this day.

And thereupon it doth appear to the commissioners that the claimant is entitled to the above described tract of land, and that he have a certificate thereof, which certificate shall be No. 146; and that he cause the same to be surveyed, and a plot of the survey, with the quantity of land therein contained, to be returned to the Register of the Land Office at Detroit (Lowrie and Clarke 1832 1:345).

The record of the hearings on P. C. 147 reads as follows:

No. 147. CATHERINE TUCKAR, in trust for her two sons Jacob and Charles. — The Board took into consideration the claim of Catherine Tuckar, widow and executrix of the last will and testament of the late William Tuckar, deceased, in trust for her two sons Jacob and Charles, to a tract of land on river Huron; and the notice by her filed this day was read in the words and figures following, to wit:

To PETER AUDRAIN, Register of the Land Office at Detroit.

Sir: Detroit, June 16, 1808.

Take notice that I now enter with the Commissioners of the Land Office at Detroit my claim for myself, and my two sons Jacob and Charles, to a tract of land on river Huron of lake St. Clair, containing about twelve acres in front, more or less, and extending in depth to lake St. Clair, bounded in front by the river Huron, and in rear by lake St. Clair, above by lands now claimed by Michael Tremblé, and below by lands claimed by my son William Tuckar, I make claim, and set up title, by virtue of a long uninterrupted possession of more than twenty years, and by valuable improvements made by my late husband, and in conformity to the entry made by my late husband with the former commissioners, in vol. 1, page 42, under the date of 9th January, 1805; which tract of land he left me, by his last will and testament, during my natural life.

CATHERINE TUCKAR, her X mark.

Witness, PETER AUDRAIN.

Whereupon, as evidence of her claim, the claimant exhibited to the commissioners a legal copy of the last will and testament of her late husband, from which the following
is extracted, viz.

"I give and bequeath to Catherine Tuckar, my trusty and well beloved wife, the farm I now live on, together with all the buildings, stock," &c.

"I give and bequeath unto Jacob Tuckar and Charles Tuckar, my youngest sons, (after the death of their mother) the farm I now live on," &c.

Baptiste Comparet, Jun., was brought forward as a witness in behalf of the claimant, who, being duly sworn, deposed and said, that, many years previous to the 1st July, 1796, the late William Tuckar was in possession and occupancy of the premises, and continued so until the year 1804, when the deponent left river Huron.

And William McScott, Esquire, was also brought forward as a witness in behalf of the claimant, who, being duly sworn, deposed and said, that, in the year 1804, the late William Tuckar, deceased, was in possession and occupancy of the premises, and continued so until he died; since which time, the widow has occupied the same to this day.

And thereupon it doth appear to the commissioners that the claimants are entitled to the above described tract of land, and that they have a certificate thereof, which certificate shall be No. 147; and that they cause the same to be surveyed, and a plot of the survey, with the quantity of land therein contained, to be returned to the Register of the Land Office at Detroit (Lowrie and Clarke 1832 1:345-46).

Detailed comparisons of the hearings on P. C. 145, 146, and 147 make several features clear which have considerable bearing on the question of whether the Edward Tucker account or the Rev. Henry Bissell account of the location of the original Tucker cabin is the more accurate. The 1808 claim signed by Elizabeth Tucker notes her residency on P. C. 147 for "a long uninterrupted" period "of more than twenty years" and, unlike the presentations in P. C. 145 and 146, mentions "a valuable improvements made by" William Tucker (I). P. C. 147 was clearly the main Tucker farm in 1808. However, Elizabeth Tucker's reference to "more than twenty years" residence on P. C. 147 in 1808 does not preclude that in 1786 she was living on Edward Tucker's P. C. 145.

Reference to the court proceedings on P. C. 145 are, however, very revealing. One notes that in contrast to the evidence presented
on P. C. 146 and 147, Baptiste Comparet, Jun., presented no evidence of occupancy of P. C. 145 prior to 1804, nor, one should note, did Elizabeth Tucker, features which would not seem to coincide with an assertion that she lived on P. C. 145 as a bride. Further, the court did not consider Edward Tucker's evidence sufficient to prove ownership and left the case open.

This latter fact provides a motive for Edward Tucker falsely claiming early occupancy of his land by William and Catherine Tucker. The Edward Tucker claim seems to have been insufficiently validated in the land hearings.

Additionally, it may be meaningful that one other aspect of the 1852 interview of Edward Tucker by Mrs. Electra Stewart has been strongly questioned. Edward Tucker claimed that his father William was the person who told Col. Gladwin of the impending attack on Detroit by Pontiac in 1763 (Stewart 1884:359). A review of this claim has been published by Helen F. Humphrey (1934:157), who classes Edward Tucker's (or Mrs. Stewart's) statement as having "no apparent authenticity," and views Angelique Cuillerier as Col. Gladwin's informant.

In summary, the evidence from the land hearings tends to support Rev. Bissell's assertion that the original Tucker cabin was that occupied by Charles Tucker in 1858. It is a bit surprising that Rev. Bissell's account is the more accurate, when, as far as information is available, Rev. Henry N. Bissell did not arrive in Mt. Clemens until 1854 (Leeson 1882:690) and authored his crucial articles only four years later (1884).

But before accepting the published extracts of the hearings before the Commissioners of the Land Office as the only possible early sources on the location of the "ground...owned and occupied by ...Mr. [William] Tucker [1]," I consulted the name William Tucker in the Michigan and Detroit Biography Index in the Burton Historical Collection (ms. n.d.). This file lists two sources on the
William Tucker who died in 1805: one is in the Detroit News-Tribune for April 26, 1896, and the other is a work by Reuben Gold Thwaites and Louise Phelps Kellogg (1908). The Thwaites volume provides a brief biography of William Tucker, but no data of value in the present context; in fact, it misplaces William Tucker's farm by stating: “At its close [that is, the close of the Revolutionary War], Tucker settled on his farm on the site of the modern Mt. Clemens, and there resided until his death in 1805” (Thwaites and Kellogg 1908:203) — whereas, in fact, the Tucker farm was still to the east of the Mt. Clemens city limits as late as 1965. The article in the News-Tribune was more useful, for it states that an overhauling of the Probate Court records had located the will of William Tucker, who died in 1805. The Tucker will was mentioned because it conveyed to Tucker’s widow slaves “Peter and Hannah and their daughter and three sons” and in a codicil “set free...his ‘Black man and black woman, viz. Peter and Hannah” (News-Tribune April 26, 1896).

A close reading of the William Tucker will (Wayne County Probate Court Records 1805), available in the Old County Building in Detroit, confuses, as well as clarifies, the status of the first William Tucker cabin. The “Inventory of the Estate of the Late William Tucker” lists four parcels of real estate owned by William Tucker (I) which in 1805 had buildings on them. There are:

a) 1 Farm where on the Widow now Resides Supposed to Contain Six hundred Acres where of 60 Acres are supposed to be Cleared & under fence with a Dwelling House, Barn Stable out houses & Orchard thereon....

This “farm” is clearly the same farm which was later designated P. C. 147.

b) Also [that is, 1 Farm] Occupied by William Tucker [that is, William Tucker, the son of William and Catherine Tucker] Supposed to Contain 6 Acres in front Where of Thirteen are supposed to be Clear & under fence with a
That is, P. C. 146 also had a house and barn on it. However, there is no reason to assume that William Tucker, the elder, ever lived in this house; it may as well have been occupied in 1805 by the family of William Tucker, the younger, or by the family of Peter and Hannah, or by a tenant — although I know of no evidence suggesting that William Tucker, the father, had a tenant working for him.

c) 1 Also [that is 1 Farm] Bequeath to John Tucker supposed to contain four Acres in front Whereof Three Acres are Cleared hath Building theron But are in ruins....

The fact that this edifice is called a "Building," not a "House," and that the "Building" was "in ruins" in 1805 precludes it from being the Edward Tucker homestead of 1852 or the Charles Tucker house of 1858, and, therefore, precludes it from being the original Tucker cabin.

d) 1 Also [that is, again 1 Farm] Occupied by Edward Tucker supposed to contain five acres in front whereof five acres are Clear with a house thereon....

The existence of a farm and house occupied by Edward Tucker (F. C. 145) in 1805, at the time of William Tucker's death, confirms nothing more than that by 1805 a house stood on the land; it says nothing of a house being there in 1786.

There are several additional features to note concerning the listing of four farms left by William Tucker (I). First, it is the property on which "the Widow now Resides" that includes "60 Acres...supposed to be Cleared & und [er] fence," as compared to the farm "Occupied by William Tucker" (II) with its "Thirteen [acres]...supposed to be Clear & under fence," the farm "Occupied by Edward Tucker supposed to contain...five acres...Clear," or the farm "bequeath[ed] to John Tucker supposed to contain... Three Acres...Cleared." It was common in this early period of settlement for a few acres to be cleared each year. This being the
case, one may assume that the farm with the most land cleared was that first settled, making it highly likely that the original Tucker fields were on what later became P. C. 147.

Second, it is to be noted that only the farm on which the widow Tucker resided is listed as having an orchard on it. Reference to the 1875 Macomb County atlas shows several orchards in the area of P. C. 145, 146, 147, and 195 (Stewart 1875:25). But it is the William Tucker orchard that played an important role in the early history of the Mt. Clemens area. The Honorable Warren Parker writes concerning it (1892:489):

Mr. [William] Tucker [I] planted a large orchard of apple trees, some French pears and an abundance of cherries and small fruits. This orchard was the only source of supply to any extent to the early settlers of Macomb county. The fruit grown there was celebrated for soundness and fine flavor. Twenty-five cents per bushel was the price ordinarily paid.

The William Tucker orchard was located along the north side of the North River Road on P. C. 147, behind the house at the eastern edge of what in 1875 is labelled “Charles Tucker’s Estate.” See Map 3.

With the location of MB-4 only weakly established as near the house along North River Road in P. C. 147, a more thorough search of sources seemed called for. Other maps and aerial photographs (Spees 1935; U.S. Dep’t Agriculture 1940) only duplicated information. Federal censuses established nothing new. A complete review of all citations to Tuckers in the Reports of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan, Collections and Researches Made by the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, and Michigan History provided no new data. Manuscripts relating to Tuckers held in the Burton Historical Collection also proved useless for my purposes.

I searched the standard county histories of Macomb county for every reference to the name Tucker (Leeson 1882; Eldredge 1905: 535-36), as the last items to be reviewed before checking for
MB-4 in the field. The copy of *The History of Macomb County, Michigan*, published by M. A. Leeson, in the Burton Historical Collection (1882) has a typescript index added, which, however, it appears does not index the whole volume. A chance scanning of the section on early history of the county produced the following passage (Leeson 1882:236) concerning William Tucker:

He arrived with his family in the spring of 1784, and selected as a site for his dwelling a spot but little distance from what was evidently an old Indian fort used in the days of the struggle for possession of this country between the Chippeways and the Sauks.

The remains of this fort as they appeared at his arrival consisted of an embankment and corresponding ditch on the outside, sweeping from the bank of the stream around about one and a half or two acres of ground, to the bank again, making nearly a complete circle. The opening being directly at the river bank. Outside of this were the evidences that the soil had been cultivated and that the Indian had for a time raised maize there. Within it were found many bits of broken pottery of a peculiar character. There were other similar remains of what must have been rude forts on the banks of the Huron on the lands subsequently and even to this day owned by the descendants of William Tucker.

At last, the form of MB-4 had been established. Reference to a 1940 aerial photograph (U.S. Dep't of Agriculture 1940) showed that at that date what might easily prove to be the enclosure remained. Along the river bank, immediately adjacent to the site of the old Charles Tucker house, was the dark shadow of a great crescent — overlooked in the previous viewing of the same photograph. See Map 4 for a sketch.

Finally, with the general location of MB-4 established, S. M. Brown's description proved far more accurate than suspected. MB-4 is located on the Clinton River "near the mouth... on the east bank," for at the location of the site this river, which generally runs from west to east, bends sharply and flows from north to south, producing an east and a west bank. MB-4 is on the east bank.

The area of MB-4 was visited on September 6, 11, and 13, 1965.
The entire area of the 1940 crescent shadow was covered with summer cottages, permanent houses, garages, driveways, and lawns. The soil was exposed in only one area, and that was later identified as a locality where foreign soil had been recently introduced.

During the visit of September 6, local residents of the area near the crescent shadow pointed out "the Old Tucker place" — a large house with grey brick facing, standing on the west side of Riverbank Road. Mr. Vinzenz R. Kilian, the neighbor to the south of the Tucker place, had aided in its repair several years ago; he noted that when he had added the brick facing he had removed siding two feet wide and 24 feet long of what appeared to be white pine. The house itself was said to be constructed of oak four-by-fours, with oak twelve-by-twelve beams.

Mrs. T. Jastrzemowski, who has lived two houses north of the Old Tucker place for the last 30 years, gave a list of former owners of the house, which she claimed had stood on its present site for 160 years. She stated that the floor beams of the Tucker house were still visible in the basement and that some of them had a bit of bark on them. The attic of the Tucker house had not been finished until after Mrs. Jastrzemowski had moved into her house. The kitchen shed at the rear of the old Tucker house had been detached some years ago and had been moved north to form the core of a separate very small house adjacent to, but not touching, the Old Tucker place.

Mr. Allen Collinson, who lived some five houses north of the Tucker place, took me down to see the white marble grave stone of Eliza Little. The stone which now lies flat on the ground reads:

ELIZA,
Wife of
WILLIAM T. LITTLE
DIED
March 30, 1826
Aged 22 Years  
9 Mo's & 27 Ds. 

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

William Tucker's only daughter married a Mr. Robert Little (N. Little 1883:355; Wayne County Probate Court Record 50); it would appear by the deceased woman's date of birth that she must have been the wife of one of William Tucker's grandsons—a man probably named for his grandfather. Mrs. Jastrzemowski noted that the tombstone of Eliza Little, which now lies to the east of Riverbank Road (see Map 1), had been moved to its present location when Riverbank Road was cut through. The gravemarker was originally in the path of Riverbank Road to the east of the Old Tucker place.

Mr. Kilian stated that he had found old ox shoes in the yard of his place, but no other early historic artifacts were known to have been found locally. No trace of Indian occupation had been found or heard of: no axes, no arrowheads. My own inspection of the soil revealed no flint chips, no dark soil, and no potsherds.

At the close of September 6, I still felt more interviewing was necessary, for I had neither located Indian artifacts, nor, did I feel that I had definitely found the original Tucker house site, for the present building was on the west, not the east, side of the main road, as it was shown on the old maps (for instance D.J. Stewart 1875). Mrs. Jastrzemowski had identified the person whom she felt was likely to know the most about the old local area along the North River Road, Mrs. Anna Beaufait, the mother of the present Harrison Township supervisor and a woman well into her 80's.

When Mrs. Beaufait was interviewed on September 11, she proved a useful informant, for she could remember the Old Tucker place when it was on the east side of North River Road. Mrs. Beaufait
moved from Mt. Clemens onto the farm next to the Alex. Tucker place in 1900, when she married George Beaufait. Alex. Tucker, a grandson of Charles Tucker, was a close friend of her husband, and the neighbor and nephew of Frank Tucker, the last Tucker to live in the old Tucker house. Mrs. Beaufait visited the old Tucker place when it was occupied by the old bachelor Franklin Tucker and his two spinster sisters, three persons whom I already knew from census rolls to be children of Charles Tucker. The house was then much in need of repair with plaster falling off the living room ceiling. Mrs. Beaufait also had visited the house when it was under its next ownership, by the Ed. Irwins. The Irwins had had the house extensively repaired. Mrs. Beaufait did not realize that the house was a log house — it was covered by siding when she had visited it, nor did she know anything of Indian remains on that property.

Later on September 11, Mr. Allen Collinson, a full-time resident of the area of MB-4 for 12 years and an owner and vacation resident for another 12 years, was interviewed in detail. He gave a history of the original soil surface, covering the 24 years of his experience. His own land had been covered by foreign soil when he originally purchased it, an introduction by the immediately previous owner. Mr. Collinson believed only one small area — now covered by lawn — retained its unaltered original surface. Removal of a small area of sod in that lot revealed a grey clayey loam with a trace of sand in it. The soil appeared to be typical of that found locally in marshes.

On September 13, at the suggestion of Mrs. Beaufait, her son Ralph, the Harrison Township supervisor, was interviewed. He put the key township records at my disposal, including plats of the two subdivisions of old P.C. 147: Riverside Homes, subdivided in 1917, which contains the land on which the old Tucker place stands; and Joy Gardens, subdivided by 1938, located on the east side of the present North River Road (Harrison Township 1917;
Mr. Beaufait said he was too young to know much about the history of the area around MB-4 which he knew under the local name of "Frank Tucker Point," although he did suggest that the "County History" placed the Indian fort on that point. Mr. Beaufait suggested that I talk with Mrs. Wann Wilhelmus, of North River Road, the only Tucker who still lived near the old Tucker house; Mrs. Wilhelmus had been a Miss Maria Tucker.

Mrs. Wilhelmus could remember little of Tucker family history; she had once been in the old Tucker house, but not until she moved to her present address on North River Road in 1935. Mrs. Wilhelmus showed me an area of her garden where she had encountered cinder from the old North River Road; it was only about twelve feet from the line of willows which she said marked the former river's edge. She said that in 1926 the North River Road had been moved somewhat inland from its former location, placing it at the rear, not the front, of the present river-front cottages. For the first time, I realized that North River Road had altered its course after the publication of the 1916 plat map (Ogle 1916:81). Mrs. Wilhelmus suggested that I talk with her uncle, William Harold Tucker, of South Broadway, Mt. Clemens, a man much interested in Tucker family history.

Mr. Tucker proved an outstanding informant; he owned the "Births" and "Deaths" pages from the Charles and Franklin Tucker Family Bible. He confirmed the relocation of the road to the east of the old Tucker house. He had visited the house often before his father Lafayette Tucker, son of Charles Tucker, had died in 1903, and William H. and his mother had moved into town; Frank Tucker and his sisters Helen and Adelia had lived in the old Homestead then. The family Bible registered:

Frank Tucker
Died Feb. 8 1903

Helen Tucker
Died 1903
However, it was not these details which were most exciting. William H. Tucker had heard about the location of the early Indian encampment from his father, uncle Frank, or another relative. The Indian enclosure had been on the point to the south of the old Tucker house—Supervisor Beaufait's "Frank Tucker Point." The area to the south of the old Tucker house as William H. Tucker remembers it about 1900 was as follows: The old North River Road passed on the river side of the Tucker house, proceeded to its south a few yards and turned abruptly eastward and inland. On the south of the road as it ran back from the river was a splitrail snake-fence. On the south of the fence was a ditch or moat, which was all that remained of the Indian village of the early era of Tucker settlement; this moat still filled with river water as William H. Tucker remembers it, although it later washed full of soil as a result of local floods. To the south of the ditch was an area which was used by the Tuckers as a pasture, but flooded when the river was especially high. At the extreme south, at the very end of Frank Tucker Point, was the highest spot of land to the south of the Tucker place. See Map 5. Mr. William H. Tucker remembers that around 1900 when there was major flooding the Clinton River used to stand with water all the way south of the modern bridge over the River (see Map 1), leaving above water only high spots, like the rise on which the Frank Tucker house stood. W. H. Tucker said that no one that he knew of had ever found Indian relics on the old Homestead, although he had an arrowhead and two axes from the Lafayette (or Alex.) Tucker place where he had been raised.

Mr. William H. Tucker stated that family tradition held that the first William Tucker had taken up land in the spot occupied by the original Homestead because he had lived in the adjacent Indian village when he had been an Indian captive in his youth; i.e., during the 1750's.

The exact location of MB-4 tentatively established, I visited
the end of Riverbank Road in the area of the high spot specified by William H. Tucker. Today, Mr. N. W. Larrabee, of 29210 Riverbank Road, owns this property, on the east side of Riverbank Road, and has occupied it for 24 years. Mr. Larrabee remembers that before the Clinton River Cut-off was built by the U. S. Army Engineers the land on which his house stands used to flood commonly — both at the time of spring thaw and after heavy summer storms. He had seen the water hub-cap deep on Riverbank Road and knee-deep in his ground-level garage.

Mr. Larrabee has never seen Indian artifacts from the area near his house, although as many pieces have been found on his old farm near Vassar, Michigan, he was familiar with them. He has not only plowed two lots to the west of Riverbank Road near his house, but has spaded much of his own land here, as well as digging a drain ditch around it. My own cursory examination showed no trace of Indian occupation; the soil is a gray and very sandy loam.

In conclusion, let me return to the six reasons which I listed early in this paper for undertaking detailed research on an archaeological site reported early in the history of European settlement of an area. First, I hypothesize that the occupation sites chosen by early European settlers probably were the same as those chosen by Indians because the two cultures in general shared attitudes concerning ecological advantages. In the case of MB-4, it now seems clear that this feature was significant in the placement of the Tucker house. Second, I speculate that sites reported by early Europeans probably included the largest and most conspicuous sites within the region adjacent to the first European habitation. Data relating to MB-4 tends to confirm this assumption. Third, I postulate that the uniqueness of the sites first described tended to bring them to the attention of the Europeans. This again was relevant in the early description of MB-4. Hinsdale identifies no
other enclosures within 5 miles of MB-4; one is symbolized 6 miles to the northeast in New Baltimore; while a group of them, known as the "Macomb County forts" (Cannon 1912), was located 18 air miles northwest (Hinsdale 1931:map 6).

Fourth, I suggest that sometimes early sites can be relocated and their surviving fragments excavated. Residents of the area around MB-4 have now been alerted to report artifacts from that site to professional archaeologists, although there appears to be no vestige of the site remaining.

Fifth, I theorize that the detailed location of an archaeological site may allow descriptions from various dates to be attributed to sites noted at an early period. This proved to be the case in the instance of MB-4. It should be pointed out that Mr. W. H. Tucker's oral material included data relating to some 210 years before I recorded it; Heckewelder's and Leeson's references were to events about 180 years ago.

Sixth, I propose that the pin-pointing of a site might allow the establishment of local ecological correlates. In the case of MB-4 such correlates can be established, and, in fact, are possibly suggestive of quite general ecological features. William H. Tucker and N. W. Larrabee both mentioned the extensive flooding of the field in which MB-4 lay. When the Tuckers arrived on MB-4 in 1784, the site was strewn with pottery, adjacent garden beds were visible, and the embankment of the enclosure was extant. It seems unlikely that the land could have been flooded often since its occupation by Indians. The date of this latter occupation is not certain. However, William H. Tucker's statement that the original William had lived at the site as an Indian captive gives some basis of dating. Tucker is alleged to have been captured between 1752 and 1754, when he was about eleven (Bissell 1884:452). He was released when he was about eighteen, due to intercession by the British, probably about 1761 or 1762 (Bissell 1884:233). Therefore,
I suspect that major flooding of the Clinton River was rare or unknown during the entire period between 1762 and 1786, when Heckewelder visited the site. Possibly this suggests that in the Lake St. Clair basin the period between the 1760's and 1780's was warmer and drier than that in the first years of the 1900's. Other investigators might bear these preliminary findings in mind as they attempt to work out the history of the water levels in Lake St. Clair.

NOTES

1. At this point, I would like to acknowledge the utility of manuscripts prepared under my direction by the late Abbie G. Whyte — "Archaeology of Michigan," and by Thelma Kostegian — "Notes on the Bibliography of Michigan Archaeology." I should also note the aid given to me in learning of obscure early sources by my former student Neil H. Johnson, now of State University of New York at Binghamton.

2. See Pilling (1961:13-17) for a detailed discussion of the sleuthing involved in identifying the original source of the newspaper account signed by "A Christian."

3. This reference gives a summary of my earlier reasoning concerning the location of site MB-4. See Map 1 for details of the geography mentioned in this sentence.

4. Isabella E. Swan had found it necessary to review many of the sources relating to the Tucker family in her research for the biography of Elizabeth Denison (1965) which she had just readied for the printer when I talked with her in the late fall of 1964.

5. Chemokiman et al (1884:551-52) contains a copy of this document. I might note that the late Kenneth Metcalf, formerly Librarian at the Edison Institute, Greenfield Village, Dearborn, informed me that his Tucker Indian deed was acquired by Greenfield Village about 1962.

6. I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Neil H. Johnson for bringing this source to my attention.

7. Those interested in linguistics might note how French-
speaking Peter Audrain spells the name of presumably illiterate Michael Tremble, in contrast to the way English-speaking Aaron Greeley renders the same name — Michael Trambley.

8. The first version of this tale to appear was published by Mrs. Sheldon (1856), later to become Mrs. Stewart.

9. This clipping is held in at least two copies in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library. It is to be found in the scrapbooks assembled by Friend Palmer, on page 58 of Volume 13, where it is stamped “May 1896” and no source is given. The other copy is located in the C.M. Burton Scrapbooks, on page 222 of Vol. 5. The Burton Scrapbooks are available in the Burton Historical Collection’s Microfilm No. 227, Reel No. 1. It is the latter source which identifies the exact date and newspaper of origin.

10. This “Inventory” is filed with the William Tucker Last Will and Testament in Wayne County Probate Record No. 50. It starts on page 50-1 and continues on page 50-2, of that record.

11. For instance, Hubbard (1822-41?); Automobile Club of Michigan (early 1940’s?); The Detroit Edison Company (1951; 1952); Hancock (1854); Macomb County Road Commission (1935); Ogle (1895:33; 1916:81); Perfect Survey Engineering Co. (1960; 1961); Rockford Map Publishers (1962); Standard Map Co. (1910-20?); The Thrift Press (1910:map 10); U. S. Post Office Department (n.d.).

12. No Michigan census records for 1800 or 1810 are listed as existing in the government microfilms of census returns published by the National Archives (see 1961:143-45). The 1820 federal census of Macomb County was consulted in three versions (see Kresge 1950; U. S. Bureau of Census 1820; 1821). A review of the U. S. Bureau of Census for Macomb County (1830; 1840; 1850; 1860; 1870) shows Charles Tucker as a resident in each of these dates, although no other data of value were encountered.

13. Review of these volumes is aided by Spencer (1904; 1907). Many of the references to the name Tucker appear not to be related to William Tucker (I) and his descendants. Such persons are a Mr. Tucker of Dorr & Tucker, New York (Tenney 1892:8): a Lieut., Col. Tucker of Fort Niagara (Drummond 1889:603): a Rev. Tucker of St. Clair County (Carleton 1902:88; Crawford 1894:268; J. D. Williams 1889:558): Benjamin R. Tucker of Liberty magazine (Fine 1952:2, 10): Mrs. C. M. Tucker of Pontiac (Hyler 1896): Chester S. Tucker, M.D., born in Floyd Hill, Oneida County, N.Y.
(Haynes 1892:32, 35).


14. These manuscripts relate to the following members of the family of William Tucker (I): Alice Tucker, descendant of William Tucker (I), with intervening males uncertain (Burdett 1875): Catherine Tucker, wife, not mother, of Charles Tucker (Tucker and Tucker 1839): Catherine Tucker, wife of William Tucker (I) (Burdett 1875; Madison n.d.a; b; Woodward 1807): Charles Tucker, son of William Tucker (I) (Burdett 1875; Denissen n.d:9383; Madison n.d.a; b; Tucker and Tucker 1839).


Also, William Tucker (II), son of William Tucker (I) (Burton 1817-28:124; J. Campau 1800-07; Madison n.d.a; b).

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