



POINTS

April 2021



Massanutten Chapter of the Archeological Society of Virginia

mcasv.net

virginiaarcheology.org

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Officers for 2021

President – Cindy Schroer

Vice President – Janice Biller

Program Chair – Carole Nash

Secretary – Kay Veith

Treasurer – Tom Mizell

Happy Spring,

What a beautiful time of year... daffodils and tulips, serviceberry and redbuds... It has been a long hard year and I look forward to getting back together and sharing our interests and passion for archeology. Still hoping that sometime this summer we will be able to gather together. Hope everyone is doing well!

Cindy Schroer, President...Massanutten Chapter/ASV

DUES

Thanks to everyone who has renewed their membership in the ASV this year. So many great perks for being a member plus it's a great way to support the chapter and archeology throughout the state. If you haven't joined the state organization I encourage you to do so.

Go to virginiaarcheology.org to renew online or download the form for mail-in.

T-SHIRTS:

We still have t-shirts available and pretty soon it will be t-shirt weather. Email Cindy Schroer at mcasv1979@gmail.com with your request and we will check to see if we still have one in the size you want. S/M/L are \$12, and XL/2XL/3XL are \$14.



Upcoming events:

Keep an eye out for Kay's emails, as we send notices as we become aware of events. If you want help with zooming on your phone for on-line events, let Cindy Schroer know.

Next chapter talk:

May 5, 2021... 7 p.m. (virtual)

Laura J. Galke, Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Plastered and Sealed: Wine Consumption and Bottle Seals among Virginia's Gentry

Identity was created and performed through sociable drinking, a popular license among Virginia's 'newly-elite' families. Personalized wine bottle seals amplified messages of privilege in a private, home setting. Custom-made seals manifested identity, class, and gender, allowing planters a material way to demonstrate refinement, pedigree, and taste. The aspiration for individualized or family seals expanded at a time when demand for tavern-, inn-, and coffee house-seals diminished. Refined, domestic entertaining countered popular European beliefs which maintained that colonists were rustic. Hundreds of seals curated at the Department of Historic Resources inform this analysis that, together with the Culture Embossed website, provide comparative data for thoughtful analysts throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Check these out for more great presentations:

The Archeological Conservancyarcheologicalconservancy.org and find them on Facebook. You can join their facebook presentations.

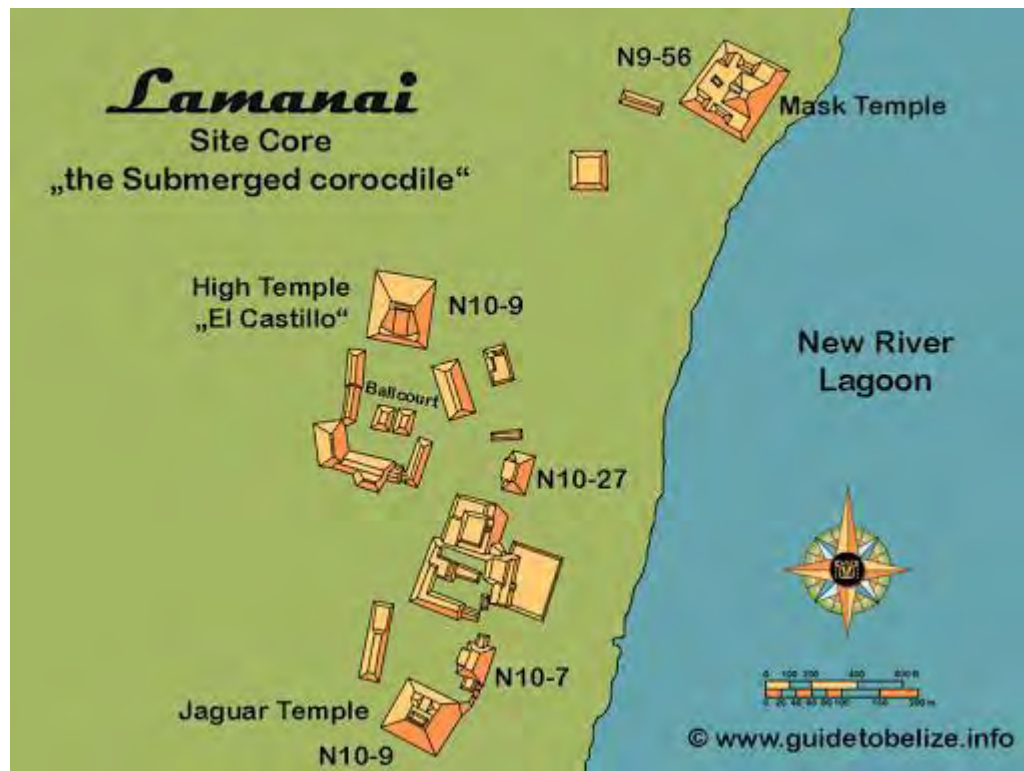
The Maritime Heritage chapter are giving virtual presentations. Check them out on facebook at www.facebook.com/martimeasv

Lamanai and the Maya of Belize

Compiled by Rosemarie Joswick Palmer, March 13, 2021



Belize is a fascinating country, just south of the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico, and north and east of Guatemala, with a coastline on the Caribbean Sea. Easiest access is flying into Belize City. Belize was formerly “British Honduras”, so English is spoken, as well as a pidgin English patois called Creole. It is a small country, about the size of the state of Massachusetts. It has three main paved roads, north and south, and east and west. The population is very diverse, with mixed ethnic heritage, i.e., descendants of the original British mixed with African slaves and Mayan Indians and mestizos. Transportation within the country is by an efficient bus system made up of cast-off school buses from the U.S. There are mountains, beaches, and “cayes” (keys) offshore with no cars allowed...these can be accessed by water taxi. It has the second largest reef in the world, second only to the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. Belize is separated into “districts”. The climate is tropical with rain forests, crocodiles, exotic birds, and monkeys. There is a Jaguar Preserve and several national parks, popular for eco-tourism. One US dollar = two Belizean dollars. Traveling in Belize is very economical. Jungle lodges are common, as well as high end beach resorts.



Lamanai is one of the oldest, continuously inhabited archaeological zones in the Maya World, dating to 1500 B.C. It is also one of a handful of Maya sites that have retained their original name. "Lamanai" means "submerged crocodile". The archaeological park covers about 860 acres and is the second largest site in Belize. Most of the site is unrestored and the trails lead over rainforest-covered pyramids with howler monkeys roaring in the background. The main ceremonial structures, however, have been nicely restored. There is a museum. The site lies along the west bank of the New River Lagoon. The majority of visitors to the site take a water taxi from Orange Walk, or from the Tower Hill Toll Bridge. This is usually a 4-hour tour with half of it spent on the river. Or you can stay at the Lamanai Outpost Lodge within walking distance on trails to the Mayan ruins.

Lamanai was occupied as early as the 16th century BC. The site became a prominent center in the Pre-Classic Period, from the 4th century BC through the 1st century CE. In 625 CE, "Stele 9" was erected there in the Yucatec language of the Maya. Lamanai continued to be occupied up to the 17th century AD. During the Spanish conquest of Yucatán Spanish friars established two Roman Catholic churches here, but a Maya revolt drove the Spanish out. The site was subsequently incorporated by the British in British Honduras, passing with that colony's independence to Belize.

The vast majority of the site remained unexcavated until the mid-1970s. Archaeological work has concentrated on the investigation and restoration of the larger structures, most notably the Mask Temple, Jaguar Temple, and High Temple. The summit of this latter structure affords a view across the surrounding jungle to a nearby lagoon, part of New River.



Rosemarie Palmer at the Mask Temple



High Temple



Jaguar Temple

A significant portion of the Temple of the Jaguar Masks remains under grassy earth or is covered in dense jungle growth. Fully excavated, it would be significantly taller than the High Temple. In the jaguar temple there is a legend that you can find an ancient spear called the heart of the jaguar, even though the temple got his name from the jaguar masks on each side.

The Maya ruins of Lamanai once belonged to a sizable Mayan city in the Orange Walk District of Belize. "Lamanai" comes from the Maya term for "submerged crocodile", a nod to the toothy reptiles who live along the banks of the New River. Lamanai Belize jungle brims with exotic birds and hydrophilic iguanas. There is evidence on Mayan life that dates from about 1500 B.C. through Postclassic (A.D. 950-1544) and Spanish colonial times (A.D. 1544-1700) ^[5]

Nearby ancient Mayan site of Chau Hiix presents evidence of a very long continuous occupation from Early Preclassic (ca 1200 BC) to Late Post Classic (ca 1600 AD). It lies between Lamanai and Altun Ha, another site further to the east. It is positioned on Western Lagoon near its outlet into Spanish Creek. Chau Hiix is 15 km east of Lamanai and is accessible by waterways travel. Altun Ha lies another 25 km further to the east. The material culture of Chau Hiix shows close ties with both Lamanai and Altun Ha, as well as evidence of interaction with centers in Petén Basin.

There are considerable ancient irrigation works at Chau Hiix, so it was probably an agricultural community supplying food for Lamanai.

Earliest cultural activity at Chau Hiix has been traced to the early Middle Preclassic Swasey phase (ca 1000-500 BC).



(researchgate)

Various copper axes

Among the many important aspects of Postclassic and early Spanish colonial period Maya life at Lamanai is shown by the presence of significant numbers of copper artifacts. Copper indicates broader trade relations in the southern Maya lowlands, and as a reflection of technological change, the history of metal artifact use at Lamanai is an invaluable element in the reconstruction of Postclassic and early historical dynamics. The archaeological contexts of copper objects recovered at Lamanai beginning, with the appearance of metal at the site by around A.D. 1150.^[7]

The archaeological contexts in which copper objects have been recovered at the ancient Maya site of Lamanai in northern Belize have great significance in that these objects served great purpose for the residents of the community during Postclassic time that dates from A.D. 950-1544. Nearly all of the copper objects found at Lamanai are distinctly Mesoamerican in form and design and based on metallurgical analyses it appears that manufacturing technologies were distinctly Mesoamerican as well. The presence of production materials and mis-cast pieces along with the results of chemical compositional and micro structural analysis support the idea that the Mayans at Lamanai were engaged in the on-site production of copper objects by late pre- Columbian times. Objects are classified and examined in the contexts, forms, styles, uses, and sources of copper objects dating from the Buk ceramic phase, which coincides with the Early Postclassic period (A.D. 950-1200).

There were copper objects recovered at Lamanai beginning, with the appearance of metal at the site by around A.D. 1150. The term "copper" is used to describe the metal found at the site;

however, all of the copper artifacts found at Lamanai were alloyed with other metals such as tin or arsenic and could technically be considered bronze (Hosler 1994: 210-213).

The number and variety of copper objects recovered at Lamanai indicate that, as a new commodity with remarkably unique aural and visual properties, metal artifacts played an important role for at least some members of Postclassic and later contact period society. Masson notes that "metal was probably the most high-valued luxury good in this region of the Postclassic Maya world" (2003: 279). The inclusion of copper bells, elaborate rings, and button like ornaments in Early and Middle Postclassic elite burials shows that at least some residents of the site displayed such items in certain social and ritual settings. Copper bells worn during performances acted as auditory reminders of the high social standing of those who displayed them, and the lustrous copper finger rings and elaborate clothing ornaments served as visual indicators of elevated status.

In addition to several other Mayan ruins in Belize, there are over 30 Maya villages that dot the inland region of Toledo District. Over half the population and most of the villages are Maya. Traveling south along the Southern Highway, clusters of thatched huts appear with increasing regularity. Along the interior roads of the Toledo District you will encounter Maya women herding their children while balancing washloads or firewood on their heads. You will see Maya men heading to or returning from their milpas (farmlands), machete and produce in hand.

Today, there are two main groups of Maya in Belize, the Mopan Mayas and the Kekchi Mayas. The Mopan Maya originally inhabited parts of central Belize and the Peten in Guatemala. All were driven out of Belize by the British in the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1886, the modern Mopan began migrating back to Southern Belize from the village of San Luis in the southern Peten, Guatemala escaping forced labor and taxation and searching for a place with fertile soils and clean rivers. They eventually founded the modern village of San Antonio in the Toledo District, which continues to be the largest Mopan settlement in southern Belize.

The Kekchi Maya are originally from the Verapaz region of Guatemala. They migrated to Belize in the late 1800s after losing their land and freedom to German coffee growers. The Kekchi settled in the lowland areas along rivers and streams, forming small, isolated villages throughout Toledo District. Because of their isolation, the Kekchi have become the most self-reliant ethnic group in Belize. They are peaceful people known for their cooperative practices in farming and cultural development. While over 30 distinctly Kekchi communities exist in Toledo, over the years the Kekchi Maya have mixed with the Mopan communities. The largest village of Kekchi Maya is San Pedro Columbia.

The language spoken by the Kekchi and Mopan Maya is probably a dialect of Cholan, the language of the Classic Maya heartland. This ancient way of speaking has developed into several distinct languages. Linguistically, the Mopan are separate from the Kekchi. Because of the language differences, and the mixing of the two cultures, most Maya in Toledo are tri-lingual in Kekchi, Mopan, and English. Many Maya also understand Spanish.

The Maya Village Homestay Network encourages foreigners to visit traditional Maya villages by staying in the homes of the Maya Indians. Guests can observe and actively participate in daily village life. Homestays currently exist in three villages: Aguacate, San Jose, and Na Luum Ca. Tourists are connected with a Maya family that will provide meals, a hammock, and involvement in daily lifestyle activities such as tortilla preparation, farming, and land tilling. The program provides a hands-on experience of Maya life as it has been lived for centuries in Belize. No special facilities are offered, nor is there much privacy. The homes are simply built of

wood planks, with roofs of thatched palm leaves and floors of beaten earth of cement. Each home has an outhouse and all bathe in nearby rivers or use a bucket and cup to pour water over you. The host family and the entire community benefits from the income which is used for service projects such as potable water systems and health clinic.

For more information, contact The Tourist Information Center at demdatsdoin@btl.net.

ArtiFACTS: First Peoples

Analysis of Prehistoric Ceramics/Glossary of Terms

Prepared by Carole Nash for ASV/COVA/VDHR Archaeological Certification Program

Updated August 2019

Sources:

- A. Glossary of Ceramic Attributes
(http://www.tiwanakuarcheo.net/9_glosarios/data/ArchNet_Ceramic_Attribute.htm)
- B. Orton, Clive, Paul Tyers, and Alan Vince. *Pottery in Archaeology* (Cambridge Manuals in Archaeology). Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- C. Rice, Prudence. *Pottery Analysis*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1987.
- D. Rye, Owen S. *Pottery Technology: Principles and Reconstruction. Manuals on Archaeology 4*. Taraxacum: Washington, D. C., 1981.
- E. Shepard, Anna O. *Pottery for the Archaeologist*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1956.
- F. Sutton, Mark and Brooke Arkush. *Archaeological Laboratory Methods: An Introduction, 6th Edition*. Kendall Hunt Publishing, 2014.

I. Technological Attributes

(related to the manufacture of ceramic vessels; include the selection of raw clays, preparation of paste, and firing).

1. **Atmosphere:** the gases in the air in the firing environment of clay vessels.
2. **Clay:** one of several hydrous alumina-silica minerals that are formed by decomposition of rock, chiefly granite, and have the property of plasticity. Clays are produced through two basic geological processes: the weathering of bedrock and the deposition of fine-grained sediments in water. Clay particles measure less than 0.005 millimeters in diameter.
3. **Clay Body:** clay or a blend of clay and temper suitable for forming a vessel; often interchangeable with "paste".
4. **Clay Matrix:** both the raw clay and constituent materials. Raw clays often contain mineral and/or organic inclusions which must be removed or cleaned prior to vessel construction.
5. **Coiling:** method of hand building a clay object by successive additions of ropes or coils of clay.



(<https://link.springer.com/>)

6. **Fire Cloud**: a dark area on the surface of the vessel caused by the saturation of carbon in the pores during firing; indicative of the close proximity of fuel and vessels.



(shesc.asu.edu)

7. **Fire Cracking**: a network of fine cracks on the surface of an unglazed vessel caused by rapid firing.
8. **Firing**: heating pottery to a temperature high enough to cause permanent destruction of the clay minerals; rendering pottery hard and durable by heating.
9. **Firing Core**: zone of contrasting color (usually black or gray) in the cross section of a vessel wall, caused by and indicative of variations in atmosphere and rate of heating and cooling during firing; usually associated with the incomplete removal of carbonaceous material.



(mdpi.com)

10. **Friable**: crumbly, easily eroded, poorly bonded.
11. **Inclusion**: any constituent of a fired pottery vessel or fragment that was not originally a clay mineral (eg. , plant remains, rock fragments, etc.)
12. **Leather Hard**: stage of drying when plasticity is minimal but water content is still sufficient to allow some kinds of modifications state intermediate between plastic and bone dry.
13. **Open Firing**: firing technique done without a kiln; usually short in duration and reaching low temperatures between 600 and 800 degrees Celsius. A bed of slow-burning fuel is prepared on the ground surface or in a shallow pit, the pottery to be fired is placed over the fuel, and more fuel is placed around and on top of the pottery. When the fuel burns itself out, the firing is over. Open firings are known for rapid temperature rises.



(researchgate.net)

14. **Oxidizing**: firing atmosphere in which the amount of oxygen is more than required to combust the fuel.

15. **Paste**: prepared mass of clay that is transformed into a material used in the constructions of pottery. Paste can be described as fine, medium, or coarse-grained. Paste can also be described in terms of porosity, quantity of temper, or organic material.
16. **Permeability**: property that allows fluids to pass through ceramics, measured as the amount of liquid passing through a given thickness of ceramic in a given time.
17. **Pinching**: technique of hand building vessels by squeezing the clay between the thumb and fingers.



Level and score the surface, then place another coil on top. Join it to the pot using a criss-cross motion with your thumb.



After joining the inside and outside of the coil, use thumbs and index fingers to pinch the coil up, turning the pot as you work.

(ceramicsartsnetwork.org)

18. **Plasticity**: property of clay that allows a change of shape when pressure is applied, and retention of the new shape when pressure is removed.
19. **Pottery**: low-fired, non-vitrified objects including cooking, serving, and storage vessels.
20. **Preheating**: heating vessels prior to firing to remove remaining free moisture.
21. **Primary Clay**: clay in association with the parent rock from which it formed by weathering; also known as "residual clay".
22. **Reducing**: atmosphere during firing in which carbon monoxide is present because insufficient oxygen is available to combust fuel.
23. **Secondary Clay**: clay moved from its original place or formation by erosion and redeposited; also known as "transported clay".
24. **Sherd**: a term archaeologists use to refer to a broken fragment of pottery; also known as "shard" or "potsherd".
25. **Slip**: a fluid suspension of clay or clay-body in water; a non-vitreous coating applied to a pottery vessel.
26. **Temper**: material added to a clay in the formation of vessels or other objects. Temper is added to clay in order to reduced rapid shrinking and/or expansion during the firing process. Temper also allows for a more even distribution of heat energy through the ceramic paste during firing and/or use of the vessel. Uneven heat distribution can result in cracking and failure during the manufacturing process. A variety of materials can be used as tempering agents, including crushed shell, crushed stone, sand/grit, organic fibers, and crushed pottery (grog).
27. **Texture**: surface quality of a vessel, judged by touch and sight and expressed as roughness or smoothness.
28. **Thermal Expansion**: increase in the size (volume) of a ceramic body when heated.
29. **Thermal Shock Resistance**: the ability of a vessel to withstand sudden changes in temperature or cycles of heating and cooling without damage, such as cracking.
30. **Turntable**: disk or other device that can be revolved slowly by hand and supports a vessel being formed.

31. **Void**: open space in a pottery fabric; pore; sometimes caused by the decomposition of tempering agents over time.

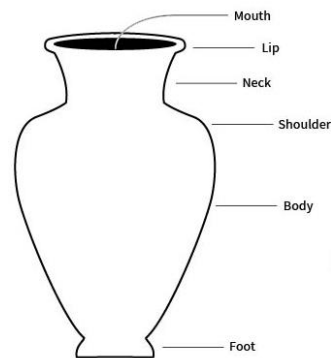
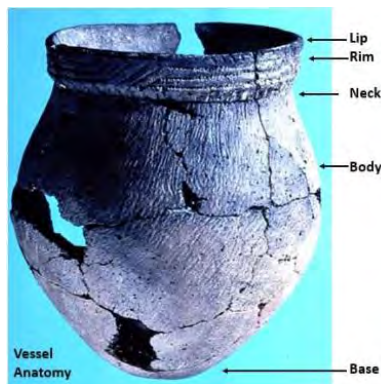


(blogs.umb.edu)

32. **Wedge**: to knead or mix a plastic clay body with the hands or feet or to cut and rejoin the mass before kneading. The purposes of wedging are multiple: to eliminate air pockets, randomize the orientation of clay and temper particles, compress the mass, and provide a uniform distribution of moisture.

II. Morphological Attributes

(related to the form and shape of a vessel). These are presented in ascending order, from vessel bottom to top.



(myartlesson.com)

1. **Foot**: a ring-like or lug-like projection on the base of a vessel, formed by tooling or adding a coil.
2. **Base**: the bottom of a vessel. Portions of a base found at archaeological sites are known as basal sherds. Vessel bases occur in three forms: conoidal (cone-shaped, pointed), globular (rounded) or flat. Basal sherds are usually the thickest sherds from a vessel.
3. **Body**: portion of the vessel between the orifice and the base, sometimes referred to as the belly. Body sherds occur as flat or slightly curve and are generally lacking in diagnostic morphological attributes. The curvature of the body sherd may be an indication of the shape of the vessel. Also known as the “wall”.
4. **Shoulder**: the upper part of the body of a restricted vessel; the portion between the maximum diameter and the neck.
5. **Neck**: portion of the vessel between the shoulder and the rim, typically characterized by a marked constriction of the maximum body diameter. Also known as the “throat.”
6. **Collar**: thickened area above the neck and below the rim, providing extra relief to the vessel wall profile. “True collars” are made from separate coils that are appended to the vessel neck; “Pseudo collars” are made from the extension and folding to the neck.
7. **Rim**: vessel opening. Described in terms of profile as straight, inverted, or everted. Also known as the “orifice.”
8. **Lip**: the uppermost portion of the vessel; the edge or margin of the vessel orifice.

9. **Lug:** flat appendage on vessel rim, perpendicular to the body; used as an aid in lifting the vessel.



10. **Vessel Size:** the volume of the pottery vessel, often the product of vessel function. Storage, cooking, and processing activities require different kinds of containers. Sizes can range from very large vessels for storage to miniature containers for medicine or other precious materials.

III. Surface Treatment and Stylistic Attributes

(related to finishing the vessel, either for decoration or the completion of the forming process).

1. **Brushing:** a technique of bonding coils, characterized by a series of overlapping and uneven lines which often cover the entire exterior or interior surfaces, and resulting from the use of fivers, quills, and stone or shell scrapers.
2. **Burnishing:** a method used to smooth a vessel surface. A smooth object like a stone is rubbed over an unfired, leather hard vessel surface, resulting in a luster. This method also strengthens the surface bond of the clay particles by aligning them.



(www.crt.state.la.us)

3. **Cord Marking:** a type of paddling in which the paddle is wrapped with cordage, leaving a highly textured surface and overlapping rows of cord impressions on a nearly leather hard vessel. Often, the individual cords and fibers used in cordage manufacture can be seen with the unaided eye, giving indirect evidence of textile manufacture. The patterns of cord impressions are referred to as "S" twists (left) or "Z" twists (right), depending on the direction in which the maker twined the cord.



(Texas Beyond History)



(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>)

4. **Fabric Marking:** a type of paddling in which the paddle is wrapped with sections of hand woven fabric, leaving its impression on the surface of the nearly leather hard clay vessel. The fineness of the fabric is largely dependent on the materials used (usually, plant fibers).



5. **Incised Decoration:** method of decoration utilizing a sharp instrument such as a fingernail, bone, shell, or stone tool. Incised decorations may include rows of patterns of straight lines which are arranged in zones. Incising can be determined by the characteristic “V”-shaped valleys which result from the displacement of the clay by the sharp instrument.



6. **Net Marking:** a type of paddling in which the paddle is wrapped in a hand woven net (cordage tied together to form a lattice of variably sized mesh), leaving its impression on the surface of a nearly leather hard clay vessel. As with fabric marking, the fineness of the net is largely dependent on the materials used.



7. **Paddling:** repeatedly striking a nearly leather hard clay vessel with or without opposing pressure. The technique is employed to modify shape, size, surface treatment, and compact the paste. Also known as the “paddle and anvil technique” in which a flat beater is used on one surface (usually exterior) and a stone or clay anvil is used on the other surface (usually interior). Paddling obliterates coil marks and irregularities and thins the vessel walls.



(texasbeyondhistory.net)

8. **Punctation:** a displacing technique in which a hollow tube or similar instrument is used to impress the surface of a wet vessel, often in patterns of lines (linear punctuation). Apparently, punctuation was used solely as a decorative technique.
9. **Stamping:** technique in which a tool is used as a die to impress a repeated pattern of identical motifs into a wet clay vessel. Carved or grooved wooden paddles or shells often served as the stamp.
10. **Scraping:** a technique of finishing in which a tool such as a large stone flake or shell is dragged across the surface of the vessel to thin out the walls and remove surface imperfections. It is commonly used in finishing vessels that are shaped by coiling, molding, or pinching and is usually carried out before the vessel reaches the leather hard stage. Clay pastes having large inclusions usually exhibit linear scars or ridges where the particles were dragged along the surface during scraping, showing the direction of movement of the scraping tool (which may be smooth-edged or toothed/serrated).

ArtiFACTS: Historic

Nail Chronology as an Aid to Dating Old Buildings

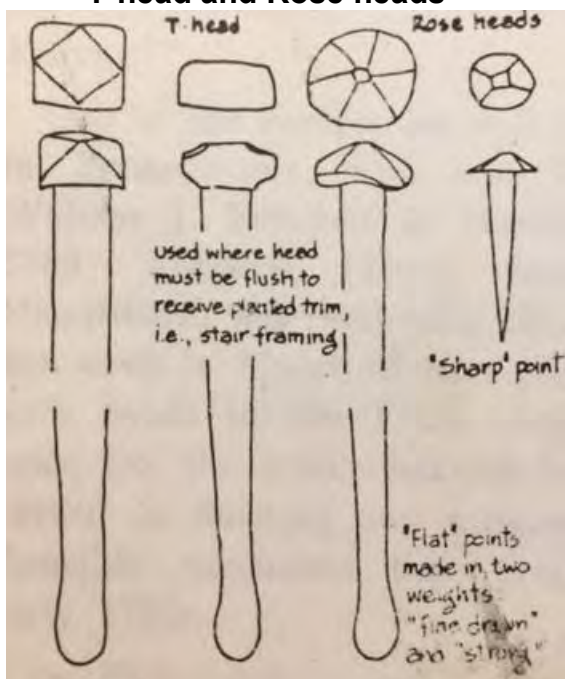
Sources:

- A. Nelson, Lee H., National Park Service, *Nail Chronology as an aid to dating old buildings*.
- B. Tremont Nail Co., *The History of Cut Nails in America*

There are generally three nail types found in American buildings: 1) Hand-wrought nails, 2) cut nails, and 3) wire nails. Within these groups there is a great deal of variety and differences that allow us nails to be used as dating tools.

I. Hand-Wrought Nails ...Types commonly used in 17th, 18th, 19th c.

T-head and Rose heads



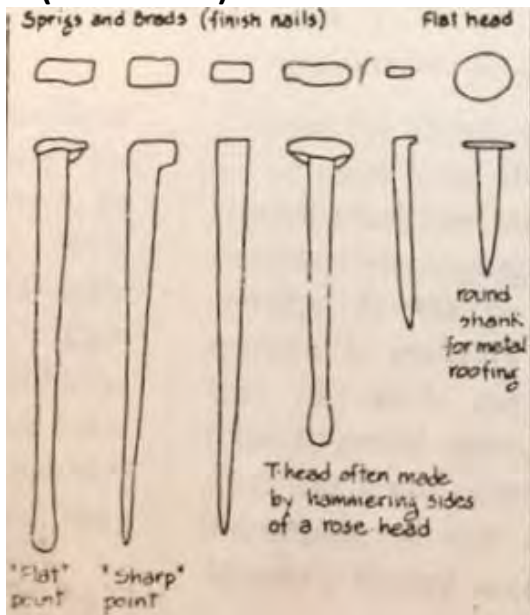
General Purpose Nails:

For framing, lathing, and most concealed work, sometimes for hinges, or where head was used for decorative effect. Other shapes were available for special purposes, i.e. clasp nails, boat nails, coffin nails, etc.

Wrought nails continued to be used long after The introduction of cut nails, but generally such Use was limited to situations where their superior clinching ability was needed (i.e. batten doors)

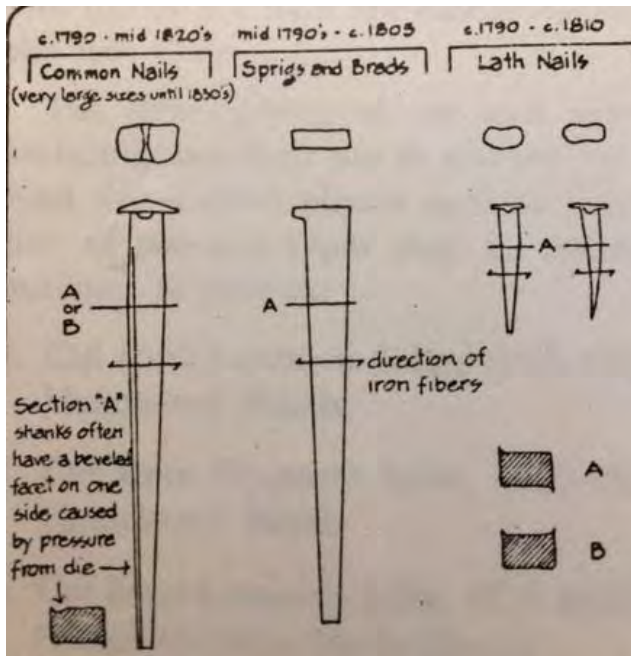
Sprigs and Brads (finish nails)

Flat head



"Sprigs" and "Brads": These names were often confused, or used inconsistently; but they generally refer to headless, or L-head or T-head nails. Smaller sizes were usually called "sprigs", c. ½" to 2", usually sold by quantity. Larger sizes were usually called "brads", 4d to 24d, usually sold by weight. These nails were generally used for trim with heads countersunk and puttied; also used for flooring. Other characteristics of hand-wrought nails: shanks usually taper on both faces; iron fibers run length-wise; lack of uniformity (especially heads).

Ila. Early Machine-Cut Nails with Handmade Heads



Common Nails: c. 1790's – mid 1820's

Heads usually have 2-facets, sometimes more. Headed in tool like wrought nails. Earliest nails of this type usually have section "A"; later ones usually have section "B" and are more uniform in manufacture.

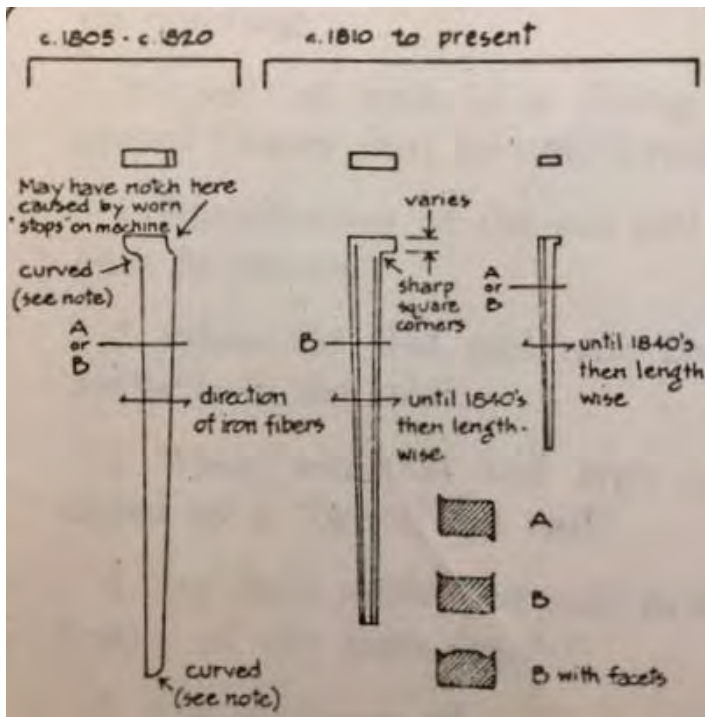
Sprigs and Brads: mid 1790's – c. 1805

Size and shape of heads vary because heads were forged. Smaller sizes called sprigs (2" or less), and larger sizes called brads but by early 19th c., all were often called brads.

Lath Nails: c. 1790 – c. 1810

Heads vary in size and shape, usually thin and flat (no facets), and eccentric to shank. Shanks vary in length and width and often have a sharp point. Bulge under head often present.

IIb. Completely Machine-Cut Sprigs and Brads



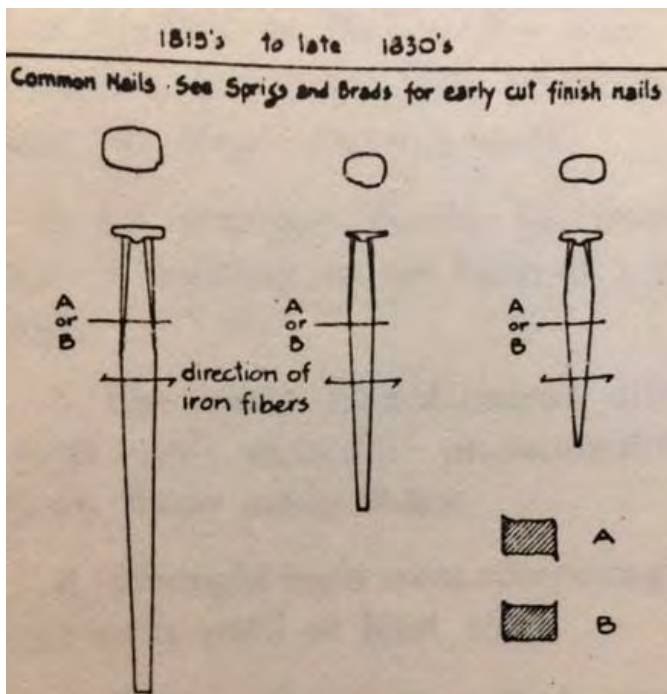
c. 1805 – c. 1820

Early completely machine-cut sprigs and brads available in a variety of size. Curved corners and points are characteristic of this type.

c. 1810 to present

Perfected machine-cut sprigs and brads were much used for trim and flooring. Once perfected, they have changed little, and are not readily dateable except that the direction of iron fibers offers a general clue (see sketch). Beveled facets caused by pressure of die, often missing on small nails.

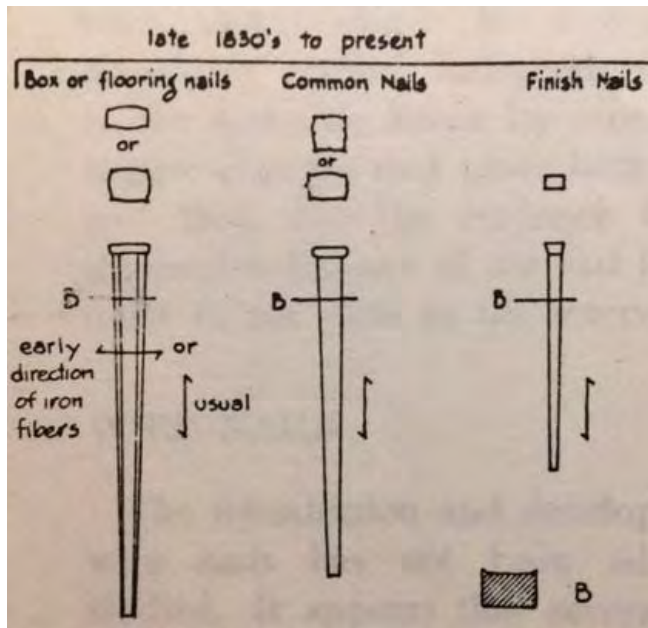
IIc. Early Machine-Headed Cut Nails



1815's to late 1830's

Nails of this period are distinguished by their irregular heads which vary in size and shape, usually eccentric to shank, though they were more uniform by 1850's. Nails were irregular in length and width, but more uniform at end of period. Nails generally have a rather distinct rounded shank (under head), caused by wide heading clamp. These nails were more readily available than finishing nails, and were often locally modified by hammering the sides of the heads, thus making them into finish nails which could be countersunk. The direction of iron fibers also distinguishes nails of this period from later nails.

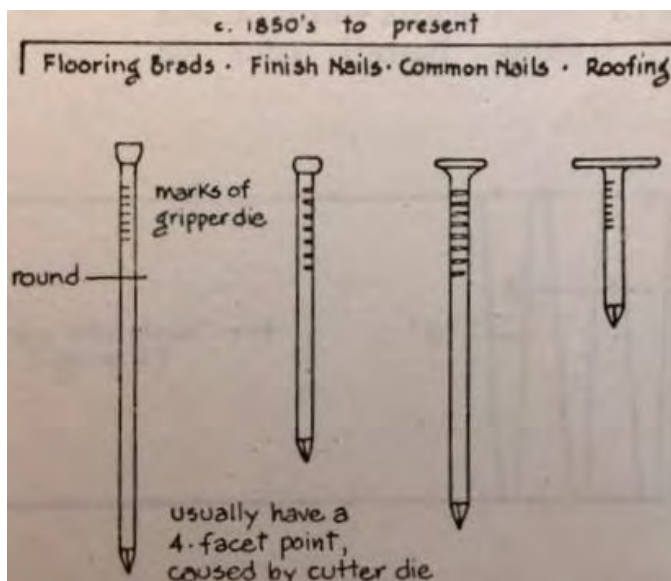
IId. "Modern" Machine-Cut Nails



Late 1830's to present

Heads tend to be uniformly convex on each side and uniform in size and shape, depending on nail style. After c. 1840, cut nails were generally made with the iron fibers running lengthwise (and later were annealed), which made them capable of clinching without rupture, thus almost completely displacing the hand-wrought nail for building construction. There are many "modern" nail styles not illustrated here, but after the 1840's, cut nails are not readily distinguished from those made today, so that other factors, i.e., decorative details, etc., are better indicators for dating purposes.

III. Modern Wire Nails



c. 1850's to present

These nails are usually manufactured from steel wire, which is held in gripper dies and headed (producing gripper marks on hanks); then wire is advanced and sheared to length with cutter die; and wire stock is then advanced to repeat operation. Earliest wire nails were only available in very small sizes (for picture frames, etc.) Larger sizes were not widely available or used in American building construction until the third quarter of the 19th century. By the late 1880's, they were fast superceding cut nails because of their relative cheapness. Wire nails are not readily dateable, though early examples have bulbous heads that are eccentric to shank. In more recent years wire nails have been made in a great variety of sizes, head shapes and shank designs (e.g. threaded nails), although cut nails continue to be made for specific purposes.

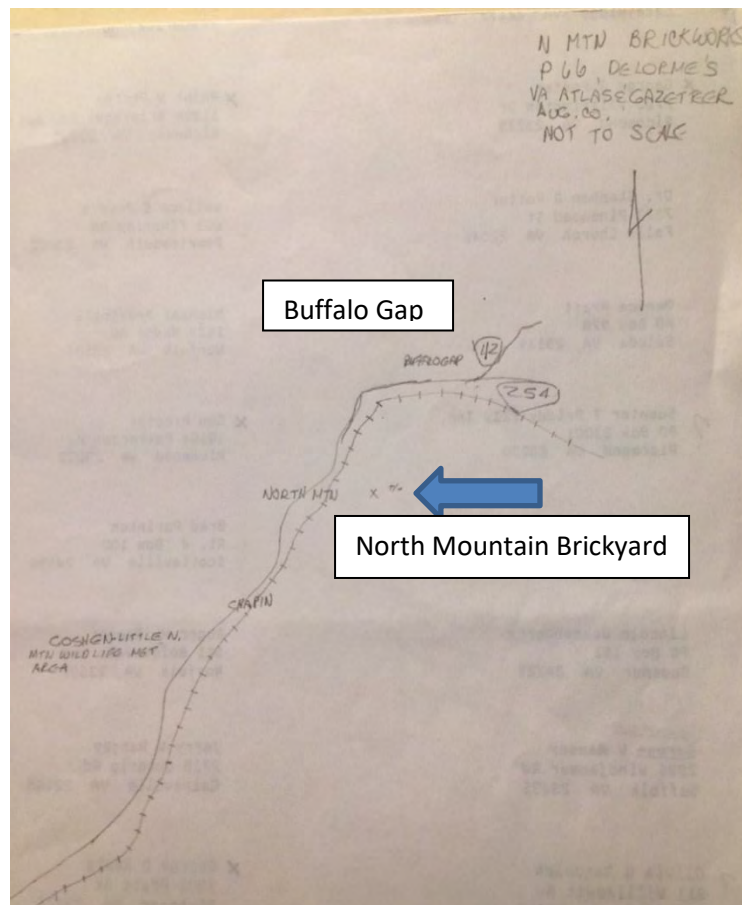
An interesting note:

From Pennyweight to Penny ... a small "d" indicates penny – originally the terms 8d and 10d were used to denote prices of nails per hundred count. However, due to the fluctuations of prices this significance was lost and the terms were retained to designate sizes. Example 2 d = 1 inch, 8d = 2 ½ inch, 100d = 8 inch.

A chapter history lesson...

North Mountain Brickworks

This brickyard, abandoned when visited by the chapter in 1987, is located east of Rte. 42, and south of Buffalo Gap in Augusta County.



Here is what we wrote about the brickworks at that time.

We haven't dated the various features such as the ovens, engines & designs of the ductwork throughout the area. The best we could do at the time was take as many photos as we could.



Brick Beehive Oven



Engine and other machinery



James Wilson exploring the underground ductwork



Abandoned structures, machinery and tons and tons of bricks

The history of the place as discovered in our reading of the chain of title & the chancery suit in which the property was involved leads us to think that we saw was what someone from several earlier generations would have considered a modern brickworks. Reason: a business involved, as this was, in such a legal tangle could not have afforded to spend much for continual modernization.

Originally built in the late middle of the 19th century it had one of the most checkered business & financial & litigational careers of anything ever seen.

The main part of the research was done by Eleanor Parslow & turned over to Cynthia Rice (Schroer). Pictures were taken in 1985? (1987) by Eleanor Parslow, Cynthia Rice (Schroer), Donald Rice, & James Wilson. Mr. Wilson also made a video tape of the visit.

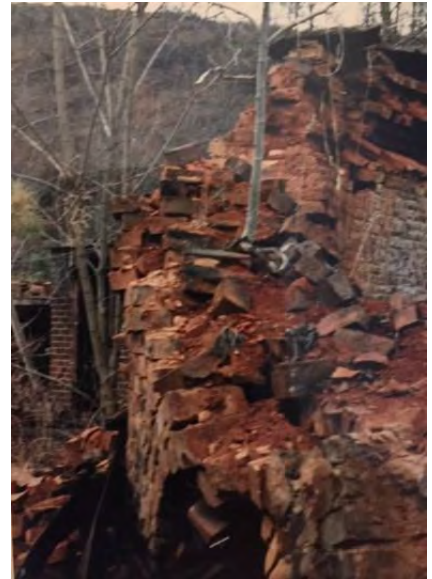
The research, as I remember, showed that the owner of the property had owned an oil well in West Virginia, which went bankrupt in the 1850's. In 1859, suit was brought against the brickyard owner by his WV creditors to get his then profitable brickyard to pay for this \$2000 debt to them. The brickyard owner demurred. He said that if he gave them his brickyard, they would be getting thousands of dollars more than the \$2000 owed them. The chancery suit continued on & on, through the ensuing Civil War, the Spanish American War, and World War I. It finally was closed in 1926. During this time the original plaintiff, defendants, witnesses, lawyers, & judges, etc. had all died. By 1969, the brickyard, now owned by another brick company, was in receivership.

Bricks already fired, bricks waiting to be fired, equipment including a huge steam engine, the huge beehive ovens, the brick ductwork from the main fans all sat there, attractive nuisances to vandals. The gun club (who had bought the property) was pretty much forced by the Department of Mines & their insurance company to obliterate these constructions to protect themselves from lawsuits. So they did.

Here are a few more pictures from our visit. I continue to be amazed at the footprint this business left on this landscape both above and below ground. LIDAR might provide an interesting look.



Brickyard industrial complex



wall of collapsed oven
(notice the thickness)



Several ovens in the Brickyard



North Mountain, Staunton truck



Cindy Schroer standing inside an oven
(these are enormous structures)



Impoundment pond

In 1987, the Brickyard was demolished. The cleanup project was completed by Woodyard Brothers of Dublin and funded by the Virginia Division of Mined Land Reclamation. This site was one of eight planned for reclamation during 1987.



About eight years ago I attended a wedding on this property; the groom was a member of the hunt club and they had a building that overlooked the old brickyard. From our vantage, there was no evidence that the brickyard ever existed; the thickets created by the secondary growth of the forest hiding the surface and what lay beneath.

Newsletter:

If you would like to contribute to the next "POINTS", your submissions are encouraged. I would love to have your research articles, photographs, "What is this?" pictures, book and video recommendations, memories, announcements, etc. Send things to me at mcasv1979@gmail.com

Thanks to Rosemarie Palmer for the article on the Mayan ruins at Lamanai, Belize and to Carole Nash for contributing the Analysis of Prehistoric Pottery terms for the ArtiFACTS: Native People section of our newsletter.