Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, Vol. 1, No. 1

Massachusetts Archaeological Society

Follow this and additional works at: https://vc.bridgew.edu/bmas

Part of the Archaeological Anthropology Commons

Copyright
© 1939 Massachusetts Archaeological Society

This item is available as part of Virtual Commons, the open-access institutional repository of Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.
BULLETIN OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

CONTENTS

Editorial Notes
Douglas S. Byers.................................................................Page 1

President’s Letter
Maurice Robbins...............................................................Page 2

The Report of the Project Committee
Benjamin Smith ................................................................Page 3

Our Survey (Indian Sites of Massachusetts)
Maurice Robbins...............................................................Page 7

Instructions for the Site Survey..............................................Page 8

The System for Site Identification...........................................Page 11

Our Nantucket Project
Edward Brooks................................................................Page 12
This is the first number of a mimeographed series to be known as the Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society. Numbers of the series should be released quarterly, and will bring to the members of the Society news or information which may perhaps be important at the moment, but which do not seem important enough to put in print. Certainly most of that which is released with this number will be of no value to persons who are not actively interested in the Society and its workings.

To those of you who had been hoping to see a nicely printed booklet this Bulletin will come as a distinct shock. It seemed wiser to postpone the publication of the more formal printed release until sometime later, when perhaps our membership will have grown. If you are anxious to see a journal printed by the Society, get one new member apiece. There is no lack of copy to get out a printed journal, but due to the fact that much of it came in late, and funds were somewhat short it seemed wiser to wait for its publication until the winter.

Although many of you may feel that nothing has happened since the official christening of the Society at the April meeting in Andover, the intervening time has seen many meetings. Your officers have been kept busy getting things started, and the members of the various committees have given many hours of their evenings when they would be enjoying life with their families or friends. Much thought has gone into the preparation of the reports which are released with this number. They are published at this time so that we may all have a chance to study them and act on them at the Holyoke meeting.

Don't forget that we are to have a meeting at Holyoke, October 14, 1939. You have all had your notices through the mail. This is just a reminder so you will be sure to come. Bring your number of the Bulletin with you so you can read the reports of the various committees again during the meeting if you have to.

D.S.B.
To the Members of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society:

It is inevitable in an association such as ours that to those individuals not for the moment actively working on a specific committee the period between the semi-annual meetings seems to be devoid of action. As the society progresses however and the various projects now in committee begin to operate all members will be asked to cooperate in securing archaeological and historical information for the files of the society.

It seems appropriate that this brief letter take the form of a report of progress and a digest of the problems which are most important to the Society at the present moment.

By your vote at the April meeting you created a Project Committee, a Bibliography Committee, a Survey Committee and a Membership Committee. The Project Committee as you will see by their report in this number of the Bulletin is a sort of executive committee charged with the duty of coordinating and supervizing the work of all other committees that may be set up to carry out a specific archaeological or historical project; the Membership Committee, for example, would not be one with which the Project Committee would be directly concerned. This Project Committee has been very active with a result most apparent in the fully coordinated program which you will be asked to approve at our October meeting.

The Survey Committee presents in these pages an outline of the mechanism of the Society's archaeological survey. This system will of necessity be expanded and perhaps supplemented as our experience proves it necessary.

Your Bibliography Committee also needs the cooperation of those members to whom historical and ethnological research appeals. Our success in this field depends on your cooperation and is most important to round out our entire program of study.

Several new projects are suggested in the report of the Project Committee and I solicit your consideration of these proposals, particularly in the case of a committee on artifact classification whose work will be most necessary to complete the survey work.

Membership continues to be one of the most important problems which the Society has to solve. The work of the entire Society depends upon our membership. It is expected that this Bulletin will prove a most effective means of selling the Society to interested persons in that it presents our program and gives evidence of the nature and purposes of the Society. However, this expectation is doomed to
disappointment unless the individual members see that it is circulated among prospective members, on your library shelves it can do no work.

In conclusion let me thank the members of the various committees, the Trustees and the Editor for the time and effort which they have given to the Society and urge your support by your presence at the regular meeting of the Society.

Sincerely yours,

Maurice Robbins, President

* * * * * * * * * * * *

The Report of the Project Committee

To The Society:

The following report is a summary of a series of meetings held by the Project Committee at Worcester on May 31st and June 12th, and at Andover on June 26th.

It will be recalled that the Project Committee was authorized late in the April meeting of the Society. It has appeared obvious from the start of the committee meetings that its duties were not too clearly defined. The Committee felt that it should draw up for approval by the Society a declaration of its duties and a statement of the manner in which they should be performed. Part One of the following report contains this declaration and statement, together with a section on tenure of office. Part Two of the report is devoted to proposed projects and suggestions on projects already under way.

Part One

Section A - Purposes of the Project Committee are:

1. To act as a coordinating body in presenting a definite program for the Society. This program will be based on a detailed analysis of the objects of the Society as set forth in the Constitution, and should permit the Society to function efficiently. The Committee's reports shall, for the most part, take the form of recommendations to the Society.

2. To offer its recommendations on suggested projects. All suggested projects shall be submitted to the Project Committee sixty days prior to a regular meeting in order
that the Committee may make its analysis and present recommendations to the Society for final action. Acceptance or rejection of the projects rests with the Society.

3. To keep in touch with other committees and to coordinate their projects which, of course, will have been authorized by the Society.

Section B - The Project Committee shall have no power to control in any way private projects undertaken by groups or individual members of the Society.

* * * * *

Note: The Committee has been appointed to serve for one term only, but it is the opinion of the members that, due to the length of time necessary to complete some of the projects it hopes will be undertaken, a more permanent tenure of office should obtain in the future. It therefore recommends Section C.

Section C - Tenure of Office

It is recommended that at the expiration of the term of the present Project Committee members, the Committee be continued by the appointment of three members to serve for one, two and three years thereafter respectively, and that one member to serve for three years be appointed at each subsequent October meeting of the Society.

Part Two

Suggested Projects

Section A - Historical Research

It is suggested that a committee on Historical Research be appointed to serve in the same manner as the Project Committee:

1. To conduct research on the Indians of the historic period.

2. To encourage pursuit of such research by the members of the Society.

3. To submit periodically summaries of various aspects of Indian history.

4. To indicate where information is lacking and which particular aspects require prompt investigation.
Section B - Artifact Classification

It is suggested that a Committee on Artifact Classification be appointed for a period of one year to work out a classification for ultimate adoption by the Society in order that a survey of artifact distribution may be made at a later date. This committee should submit a preliminary report to the April meeting in 1940.

Section C - Conservation

It is suggested that a Conservation Committee be appointed for a period of one year to investigate as far as possible sites uncovered by disinterested parties such as public and private contractors, etc. Its membership should be widely scattered geographically.

Note: Because at the April meeting (1939) certain important committees were appointed and empowered to act, although no plan of action was presented, the Project Committee, with the approval of the President, assumed the responsibility of offering certain suggestions to these committees, which it hopes may be carried out by them in the interests of coordination and in the value of ultimate results.

Section D - Site Survey

1. It is suggested that the Site Survey Committee be appointed to serve in the same manner as the Project Committee:

2. It is suggested that the Site Survey Committee:
   a. Record the location of each site upon a map.
   b. Prepare an explanatory card for each site.
   c. Prepare an anthropological record of each site.
   d. Record the previous disturbance of each site.
   e. Record the collections from each site, and the owners and present location of each collection.

Section E - Bibliography

1. It is suggested that the Bibliography Committee be appointed to serve in the same manner as the Project Committee.
2. It is suggested that the Bibliography include:

   a. A list of titles arranged alphabetically by authors.

   b. A subject index to include:

      1. References to New England archaeology - Pre-Columbian.

      2. References to Post-Columbian Indian history and ethnology.

3. It is suggested that the Bibliography Committee should submit from time to time lists of publications of interest including:

   a. Anthropological literature of a general nature.

   b. Anthropological literature relating only to Massachusetts.

4. It is suggested that the Bibliography Committee draw up such forms upon which to record its information as shall be consistent with the filing requirements of the repository. It appears that a card index system like that at Andover might be used, and that much material might be transferred directly from Andover's records to those of the Society.

In accordance with instructions, I have forwarded to the Chairmen of the Committees now at work the suggestions outlined above for their consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin Smith, Chairman
OUR SURVEY

At the April meeting the Society voted to make a survey of the Indian sites of Massachusetts. Mr. Ripley P. Bullen was appointed chairman to carry out this survey, and he and the Project Committee have cooperated to work out the instructions which are printed elsewhere in this BULLETIN.

The many advantages of such a survey are self-evident. The mere mapping of the Indian sites in Massachusetts would be a valuable contribution to archaeological knowledge. Through the cooperation of our membership we hope also to compile information covering the various artifacts found. This should result in a real basis for a culture study which will justify the existence of the Society and insure its recognition in the field of science.

I feel that, as members, we all owe the Society cooperation in mapping and filling out cards for all the sites we know of and forwarding them at once. I therefore ask that each one of you consider yourself a member of the Survey Committee.

The knowledge possessed by each one of us may be small and localized, but the total of all that knowledge will constitute a valuable record. The result of this accumulated information may prove that some of your own sites are far more significant than you realize! The information will only be used for scientific purposes, and we can promise without hesitation that no one will be deprived of the rights of prior discovery.

Please record every site of which you know, even though it may be in the center of a city or entirely exhausted. Send in sites located anywhere in the state even though your knowledge about some of them may be limited. All duplications will be taken care of by the chairman, and your information may supplement very nicely the report of someone else on the same site. Bear in mind that this survey seeks to reproduce prehistoric conditions and, naturally, we all want as complete a picture as possible.

Your chairman has a man-sized job on his hands. He and the Project Committee have given very generously of their time and stand ready to continue on the never ending task of compiling the information which we expect from you. Let's make it as easy as we can by a whole hearted cooperation in this project. Who will be the first to send in a site? And who will send in the most?

Mail your site cards to and ask any additional information from Ripley P. Bullen, 39 Forest Street, Worcester, Mass.

Maurice Robbins
Instructions for the Site Survey

1. Secure a U.S. Geological Survey Topographical map of the areas where your sites are located. They may be secured for 15¢ each through your local stationery store, your chairman, or one of the following stores:

AMHERST: A.J. Hastings, James A. Lowell
BOSTON: Old Corner Book Store, H.A. Shepard & Co., J.L. Hammett Co., Chas. C. Hutchinson
CAMBRIDGE: Harvard Cooperative Society
CHATHAM: Mayflower Shop
FRAMINGHAM: C.L. Bates Stationery Co.
GREENFIELD: C.H. Demond & Co.
HAVERHILL: The Stationery Shop
HOLYOKE: Fitzgerald Book & Art Co.
LOWELL: G.C. Prince & Son, Inc.
NEW BEDFORD: Poor Bros., C.E. Beckman & Co.
NORTH ADAMS: Frank T. Martin, Inc.
NORTHAMPTON: Bridgman & Lyman, Hampshire Bookshop
PITTSFIELD: W.H. Shandoff, Charles Secor
PLYMOUTH: A.S. Burbank
SPRINGFIELD: Johnson's Bookshop
WALTHAM: A.T. Ball
WORCESTER: Davis & Banister

2. Mark the site on the map in red, either pencil, crayon, or ink. The area in red should represent as closely as possible the area of the site. Then outline the red with a black or blue ink line.

3. Fill out the Site Record Card (one for each site) as completely as possible. For your guidance we are showing below a sample card filled out. It is not necessary to type but printing would be appreciated.

(Front of card)

THE MASSACHUSETTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Site Name: Indian Lake
Site No.: M-21-4
Location: On north shore of Indian Lake (previously called North Pond) in Ward 1, City of Worcester. Extends from shore to top of knoll about 300 yds. and about 400 yds. from brook easterly. Site surrounds present Norton boat house.
Geographical Features: On shore of lake between brooks and protected by high hill on north.
Previous Records: None

Site Name: Indian Lake
Site No.: M-21-4
Location: On north shore of Indian Lake (previously called North Pond) in Ward 1, City of Worcester. Extends from shore to top of knoll about 300 yds. and about 400 yds. from brook easterly. Site surrounds present Norton boat house.
Geographical Features: On shore of lake between brooks and protected by high hill on north.
Previous Records: None

Owner: Norton Co.
Attitude: Poor

(cont. on p. 9)
### Historical References

In Smith's "History of Worcester"

### Date Reported
9/15/39

### Has Site Actually Been Visited
Yes

### Reported by
George C. Jones

---

## ARTIFACTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>COLLECTIONS AT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triangular</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Worcester Historical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notched</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Salisbury St., Worcester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stemmed</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>James E. Bentley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaf</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>44 Union St., Worcester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Quartz</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Spear Points (over 3")

| Scrapers          | 2   |                                     |
| Perforators       | 5   |                                     |
| Grooved Axes      | 2   |                                     |
| Chipped Axes      | 2   |                                     |
| Celts             |     |                                     |
| Adzes             |     |                                     |
| Gouges            | 2   |                                     |
| Plummets          | 2   |                                     |
| Sinkers           |     |                                     |
| Problematical Forms |   |                                     |
| Pestles           |     |                                     |
| Mortars           |     |                                     |
| Ground Slate      |     |                                     |
| Pipes, Type       | 1   |                                     |
| Clay Pottery      |     |                                     |
| Soapstone         |     |                                     |
| Worked Bone       |     |                                     |
| Skeletal Material |     |                                     |
| Copper, Form      |     |                                     |
| Red Ochre         |     |                                     |
| Worked Shell      |     |                                     |
| Contact Material  |     |                                     |
| Others            |     |                                     |
Classify your sites as to type from the following list:

- Rock Shelter
- Small Camp
- Village
- Shell Heap
- Cemetery
- Mound or Earthwork
- Quarry
- Work Shop
- Fish Weir
- Pictograph

4. If you already have your sites numbered, send the numbers in and the chairman will attempt to incorporate them, otherwise leave the site number blank. To avoid duplication the chairman will assign definite numbers which he will put upon your map and return it, so that you may mark your specimens according to the statewide system, and may use your map to record more sites.

5. Send your map and site cards to the chairman. He will copy off the sites from your map, number and return it. He will also copy and return the site cards if requested.

6. Ten site cards are being sent to each member. The chairman will be glad to send you as many more as may be required.

7. Send in your surveys as soon as possible. Don't wait for a large number at one time.

8. Additional information can be secured from

Ripley P. Bullen  
Chairman of Survey Committee  
39 Forest St.  
THE SYSTEM FOR SITE IDENTIFICATION

For ease in reference, filing and cataloging it seemed necessary to adopt a statewide method of identifying sites easily and simply. An identifying number, preceded by an M (for Massachusetts) has been assigned to each of the U.S. Geological Survey Topographical maps for Massachusetts. The identification for each sheet is this number with a capital M in front of it. This includes all the land in Massachusetts with the exception of a small portion on the Providence sheet which is called R4. This coincides with previous work done in Massachusetts as well as that done by the Narragansett Archaeological Society in Rhode Island.

A site, for example, might be M18/8 meaning the eighth site in the Northampton quadrangle of Massachusetts. It is suggested that all artifacts found be marked for identification with the Society's site numbers. The ease and accuracy of marking specimens in this way is evident. And your map shows the exact location.

The following is a list of the quadrangles and reference numbers:

- M1 - Haverhill
- M2 - Newburyport
- M3 - Berlin
- M4 - Greylock
- M5 - Hawley
- M6 - Greenfield
- M7 - Warwick
- M8 - Winchendon
- M9 - Fitchburg
- M10 - Groton
- M11 - Lowell
- M12 - Lawrence
- M13 - Salem
- M14 - Gloucester
- M15 - Pittsfield
- M16 - Becket
- M17 - Chesterfield
- M18 - Northampton
- M19 - Belchertown
- M20 - Barre
- M21 - Worcester
- M22 - Marlboro
- M23 - Framingham
- M24 - Boston
- M25 - Boston Bay
- M26 - Sheffield
- M27 - Sandisfield
- M28 - Granville
- M29 - Springfield
- M30 - Palmer
- M31 - Brookfield
- M32 - Webster
- M33 - Blackstone
- M34 - Franklin
- M35 - Dedham
- M36 - Abington
- M37 - Duxbury
- M38 - Provincetown
- M39 - Taunton
- M40 - Middleboro
- M41 - Plymouth
- M42 - Wellfleet
- M43 - Fall River
- M44 - New Bedford
- M45 - Falmouth
- M46 - Barnstable
- M47 - Yarmouth
- M48 - Chatham
- M49 - Gay Head
- M50 - Marthas Vineyard
- M51 - Muskeget
- M52 - Nantucket
OUR NANTUCKET PROJECT

Excavation at site M52-3, a shell heap on Nantucket Island, sponsored by the Society started on June 26th and closed on August 26th. During the two months in which operations were carried on four members of the Society assisted with the work. Mr. and Mrs. John Brown of the Narragansett Archaeological Society paid us a visit, as did Miss Pray, Secretary of the Haffenreffer Museum. A representative collection of stone objects, totalling some 175 specimens, and approximately 50 potsherds, mostly in poor condition, was obtained from the excavated area. Surface indications show an untouched area of shell fifty meters long by ten meters wide. Not one day was lost due to bad weather, and everyone enjoyed a swim after work.

The collection is now at the Department of Archaeology in Andover where it is in process of being cleaned and cataloged preparatory to study. A few of the specimens will be on exhibition at the October meeting when a more comprehensive report of the excavation will be presented.

Edward Brooks