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ARCHEOLOGY.—*Palachacolas Town, Hampton County, South Carolina.*¹
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The importance of the archeological site Palachacolas Town on the lower Savannah River lies in the certainty of its historical dating and ethnological identification. Pending the development of a general method of dating archeological materials in eastern North America,² the only absolute chronology available is for localities known to have been occupied by specific groups of Indians in historic times. Archeological materials and artifacts from sites which were not re-occupied or inhabited prior to the documented dating can be presumed to have been in use during the period of the recorded dates. Conversely, such artifacts can then help date other undocumented sites at which they may be found.

Palachacolas Town, later called Parachocolas Fort or simply Parachuckle, was situated on the right bank of the Savannah River about 50 miles from the mouth. The site had been occupied sometime during 1680–1716 A.D. by a band of Appalachian Indians, who were Lower Creeks speaking the Hitchiti dialect.

The Creek Migration legend places these people in southwestern Georgia when they were first encountered by the invading Muscogee, and Swanton has pointed out that they later composed an important town in the Creek Confederacy³:

... shown by the Creek name which it bears, Talwa Iako, "Big Town," and from Bartram's

¹ Received August 16, 1948. This paper is published by permission of the Secretary, Smithsonian Institution. The bulk of the material described is in the United States National Museum.

² See MARTIN, QUIMBY, and COLLIER, 1947, pp. 9–13, for a recent summary of methods of archeological dating. Also Kelly, 1939.

³ SWANTON, 1922, p. 129.

statement that it was the leading White or Peace town . . . in Chiaha Square, September 18, 1768, a Lower Creek speaker says: There are four head men of us who have signed our names in the presence of the whole lower Creeks as you will see: Two of us out of Pallachicolas which is reckoned the head town of the upper and lower Creeks. . . .

The Appalachian remained in southwest Georgia at least until 1680⁴ but Milling has marshalled data to show that they arrived on the Savannah River no later than 1684.⁵ Certain it is that these people were located on the Savannah River for some time prior to 1716 and abandoned the town in that year, after the Yamassee War. According to Swanton:

... the Apalachicola, and part of the Yuchi and Shawnee, abandoned their settlements on the Savannah and moved over to the Chattahoochee. The Apalachicola chief at that time was named Cherokee Leechee (Cherokee killer). The date is fixed by a manuscript map preserved in South Carolina. They settled first at the junction of the Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers, at a place known long afterwards as Apalachicola Fort. Later they abandoned this site and went higher up; in fact, they probably moved several times.⁶

Evidence to substantiate a dating between 1680 and 1716 is found at the Palachacolas site itself, for the fragments of Indian clay pottery there closely resemble potsherd material from the historic (Hitchiti) Trading Post, at Ocmulgee near Macon, Ga., dated 1680–1718, and resemble sherds from the Kasita site, near Columbus, Ga., late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries.⁷

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁵ MILLING, 1940, pp. 176–177.

⁶ SWANTON, 1922, p. 131.

⁷ KELLY, 1939, p. 332. See also Newsletter, Southeastern Archaeological Conference, pottery

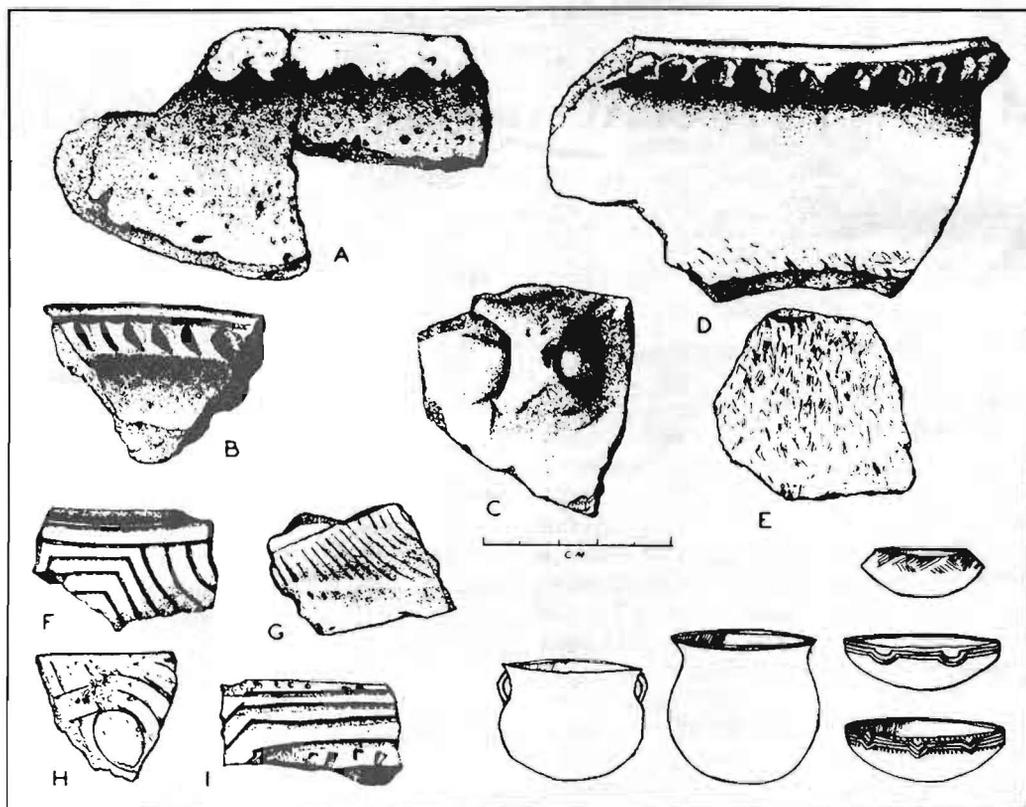


FIG. 1.—Historic Indian pottery from Palachacolas ca. 1680-1716 A.D.

In 1901 D. Roland Steiner sent two small pottery vessels and some glass beads from Palachacolas to the United States National Museum. We do not, unfortunately, know the circumstances under which this material was found. A much larger collection was received in 1943 through the courtesy of Marmaduke H. Floyd, of Savannah, Ga. A few potsherds were also obtained by the writer when he accompanied Mr. Floyd to the site in 1939.

POTTERY

The larger of the two pottery vessels found by Steiner is shown in Fig 2, A. Both have a similar form which is characteristic of the western Georgia type *Kasita Red Filmed*.⁸ They are fired to a reddish color extending through the paste, and the smaller

vessel appears as if it might have been painted. This specimen shows no tempering material, but grit particles are present in the larger. Both have their surfaces carelessly smoothed, but the coil fillets on the exterior of the one shown were left partly unobliterated, perhaps for the effect.

The sherds in Fig. 1 are all from the writer's collection, but the description here includes Floyd's ceramic material as well. Altogether there are seven sherds decorated by incising (B, F, G, H, I) conforming closely to the type *Ocmulgee Fields Incised*. Six are from shallow bowls, two with a carinated shoulder. The firing colors range from reddish buff to dark gray. The two dark gray sherds are burnished, and nearly all the rest are carefully smoothed on both surfaces. No tempering material can be seen, but some small lacunae are present.

The 16 plain sherds have the same paste features as those decorated by incising, but

types: *Ocmulgee Fields Incised*, *Kasita Red Filmed*, *Walnut Roughened*.

⁸ See preceding footnote.

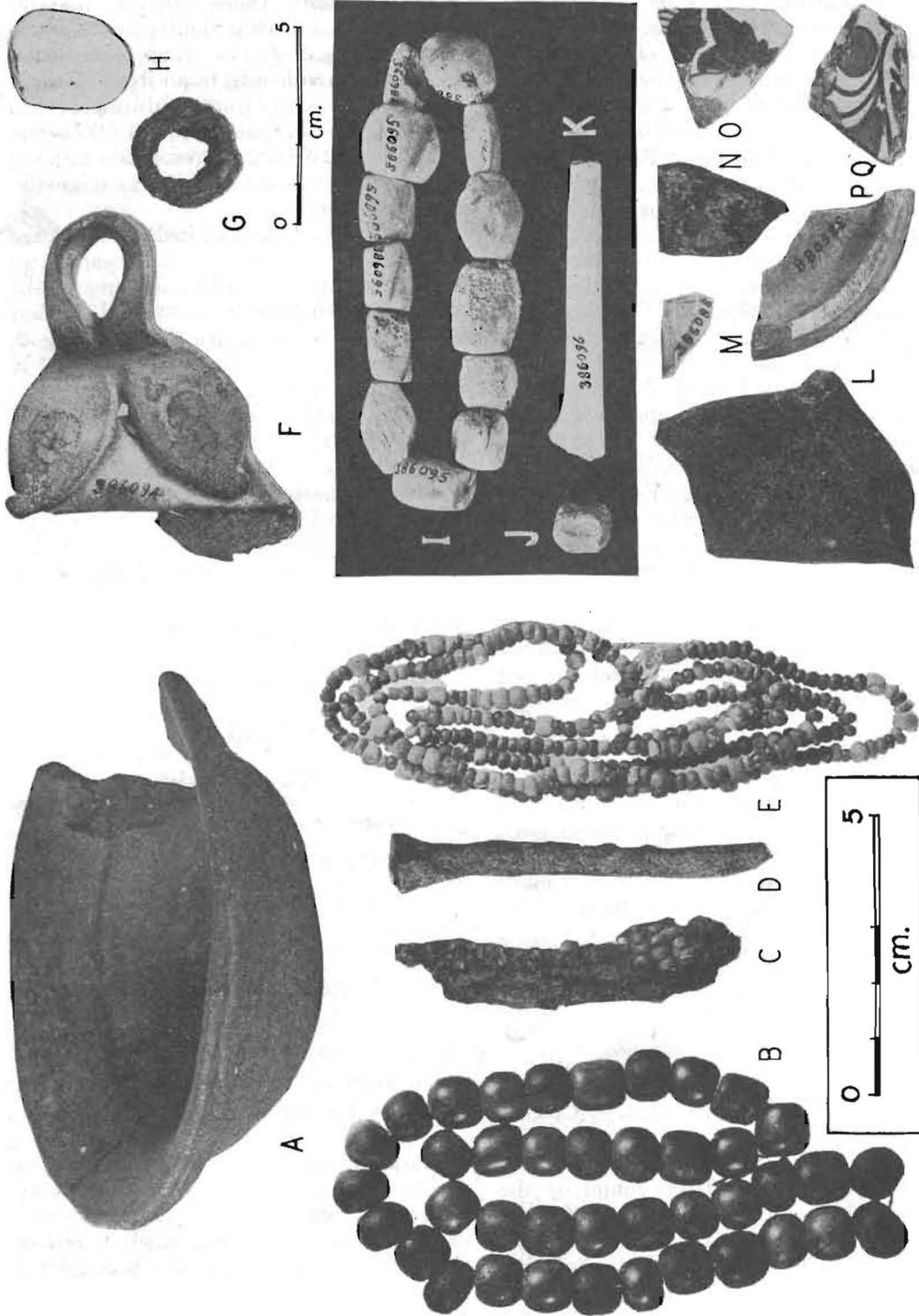


FIG. 2.—Historic artifacts from Palachacolas.

three of the four rimsherds in the sample are from flaring rim vessels, and the form of the other is uncertain. One has an indented rim band, and another has a handle suggesting Mississippian influence (Fig. 1, C). No historic plain type has yet been described from Ocmulgee or Kasita, but undecorated sherds are represented in the collections there.

Three sherds show a roughening of the exterior by the use of short incised or scratched lines (Fig. 1, D, E) and are evidently counterparts of the Ocmulgee type *Walnut Roughened*. They have the same paste characteristics as the sherds described above. One shows a pinched rim band.

There are six shell-tempered sherds. The specimen illustrated (Fig. 1, A) is from a flaring rim vessel with a thickened lip, notched at the lower edge. Four sherds are decorated with a carelessly applied cord-wrapped stick or paddle, the impressions somewhat smoothed over. Another is the rounded base of a vessel, again showing the use of cord.

There was one sherd of the type *Lamar Complicated Stamped*, a type slightly earlier than those we have been discussing.⁹

OTHER ARTIFACTS

The glass beads in Fig. 2, B, E, are a small portion of a number found by Floyd with a burial 18 inches deep in the exposed face of the bluff. Similar beads and other objects were sifted from sand at the foot of the bluff and were presumably from the

same interment. There were two massive conch columella beads similar to the string shown in Fig. 2, I. The group of small red beads shown adhering to an iron fragment (C) was apparently from beadwork sewn to clothing. The wrought-iron nail (D) is one of two which, if actually associated with the burial, may indicate that it was originally in a wooden coffin.

With another burial 12 inches deep in the bluff Floyd found many glass beads, two massive columella beads, and three of the shell-tempered sherds mentioned earlier. Also present were a conch shell disc, Fig. 2, H, an iron ringlike object (G), and a part of a copper cauldron (F).

With a third burial which had fallen out of the bluff Floyd found glass beads similar to those shown, as well as the shell beads (I), pipestem (K), and lead bullet (J) illustrated in Fig. 2.

On the surface but near the bluff Floyd found, in addition to some of the Indian pottery described, crockery (L, P), chinaware, glass (M, N), and trade pipe fragments.

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⁹ Newsletter, Southeastern Archeological Conference, 1939, pottery type *Lamar Complicated Stamped*.