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Archaic Occupations at White Bend: Helton, Falling Springs, and Hemphill Horizons

edited by
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Buried sites frequently offer a wealth of information not found at locations that have been impacted by plowing or subjected to artifact collecting, and the Archaic occupations at the White Bend site in the LaMoine Valley of west central Illinois are no exception: almost 257,000 artifacts were recovered from an area measuring only 98 m². Covered by up to 1.5 m of alluvial and colluvial deposits, the Archaic cultural components at White Bend consist of a 20-cm-thick Hemphill midden (ca. 2650 B.C.) overlaying a 40-cm-thick Helton midden (ca. 4100 B.C.). A Falling Springs occupation (ca. 3500 B.C.) is also present within the Helton midden.

In addition to the artifact-laden Helton midden, which included more than 100 Matanzas and Karnack points, numerous grooved axes, and a plethora of other chert and groundstone cobble tools, as well as smaller quantities of floral and faunal material, the Helton occupation is marked by four small pit features arranged in a semi-circular pattern; one Helton pit feature is located a short distance from these four. It is argued that the four features mark the location of a single-family residence whose occupants dispersed into the Valley during the winter months over a period of several years.

The Falling Springs occupation, which is one of the more northerly occurrences of this cultural manifestation in west central Illinois, is likely a temporary field camp focused on fall hickory nut processing. Only two pit features and a sparse amount of cultural material, including six McLean points, are associated with this occupation.

The Hemphill occupation at White Bend is suggested to be a one-time-only event that likely lasted at most several days and was focused on two paired steaming pits. These pits contained 175 and 410 kg of lithic material, respectively, the majority of which was comprised of burned limestone, dolomite, and sandstone. Almost 50 points, consisting of bold side-notched varieties such as Osceola and Godar, are associated with this occupation.

This volume includes discussions on site geomorphology and stratigraphy, radiocarbon assays, midden and features, lithics, botanical remains, and faunal artifacts, as well as a chapter devoted to the spatial analysis of select artifacts. Illustrated with more than 50 figures and containing links to 17 online appendices, this book is a valued resource for those interested in the Archaic of the Midwest.

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Table Appendices

To facilitate the production process long appendices tables are available online in their original Excel format and are not included in the paper copy of this report. Copy the URLs below and paste them into a web browser to download the data. Excel or a similar program that can open .xls file is required.

- A** Excavation Block Profile Descriptions
http://isacs.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA238_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_A.xls
- B** Core Logs
http://isacs.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA238_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_B.xls

Table Appendices

- C** Material Inventory
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_C.xls
- D** Matanzas Point Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_D.xls
- E** Helton Horizon Hafted Scraper Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_E.xls
- F** Karnak Point Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_F.xls
- G** Bold Side Notched Point Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_G.xls
- H** McLean Point Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_H.xls
- I** Miscellaneous Projectile Point Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_I.xls
- J** Hafted Drill Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_J.xls
- K** Unidentifiable Biface Fragment Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_K.xls
- L** Early Stage Biface Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_L.xls
- M** Middle Stage Biface Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_M.xls
- N** Refined Biface Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_N.xls
- O** Helton Horizon Preform Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_O.xls
- P** Non-Hafted Bifacial Tool Attribute Data
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_P.xls
- Q** White Bend Faunal Inventory
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/29/11HA938_White_Bend_Archaic_Appendix_Q.xls



Back: In-progress White Bend Archaic main block excavation, view is to the northeast. Photography by Richard L. Fishel.

Front (left to right): Bold Side Notched point, McLean cluster point, two Karmak points, drill, and grooved axe. Photography by Marcia L. Martinho.

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