

Anthropology 355U, Winter 2010

Historical Archaeology and the Origins of the Modern Pacific Northwest

Maxville Logging Camp Group Project: Distributed 2/8/2010, Summary of Sources Due: 2/22/2010, Group Project Presentations and Research Paper Due: 3/12/2010

Purpose: This project will familiarize you with the historical archaeological exploration of railroad logging camps in the Pacific Northwest and develop ideas regarding how the documentary record and archaeological record work together to reconnect modern people to an archaeological site.

Project: Maxville was a railroad logging town in Wallowa County, northeastern Oregon, which was owned and run by the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company between 1923 and 1933. It is unique in Oregon as it had a population of African American loggers from Arkansas. The nearest major town is Wallowa, Oregon.

It is possible that the joint NPS/Portland State University/Washington State University Vancouver archaeological field school will spend a week surveying and recording this site, filling out a site record form for the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. This class group project will collect information on the setting, history, and anthropology of the site of Maxville and will identify issues of the recording of an historical archaeological logging camp site that will help guide the proposed field research.

Step 1. Each student should read Clark (2002) to get background on historical railroad logging. Each group should watch the Oregon Public Broadcasting special on Maxville available on-line at: http://www.opb.org/programs/oregonexperience/programs/19-The-Logger-s-Daughter/text_pages/7. Groups will be designated and students should share contact information and set times to meet outside of class.

Step 2. Each group will collect sources and data on an aspect of the history of Maxville that pertains to historical archaeology. Group assignments for research are as follows:

Group 1. Environmental Background. This group will collect environmental and landscape background information pertinent to the site, particularly as it pertains to possible human use of the area. You should look at the U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute series topographic map for the area to examine and describe its topography, nearest water source, etc. Explore general sources on landscape, geology, and vegetation to describe the natural resources of the area that may have led to the establishment of Maxville. If there is a soil survey for Wallowa County, this may provide some good information.

Group 2. General History of Wallowa County. This group will summarize briefly the history and ethnohistory of Wallowa County. Questions you should answer are: What cultural groups have used the area in the past – from precontact American Indians to the present? What are the major historical industries/commercial undertakings? What major trails/transportation corridors, people, and events have shaped the county? This group's research will put the Maxville site into a broader historical context. It is expected that this group will examine historical maps, as well as, documents to put Maxville in cultural context.

Group 3. History of Race in Wallowa County. This group will explore the dynamic of race and history in Oregon as it pertains to the Maxville Site. How prevalent were ethnic minorities, including African Americans in Wallowa County and nearby areas prior to the establishment of Maxville? Are there any notable events surrounding race relations in the area and what are their outlines? How might this history impact on the importance of the Maxville site in interpreting history in Oregon?

Group 4. Historic Census Analysis. This group will explore census data for Maxville to summarize the attributes of the inhabitants of the town. The group will seek to answer questions

of household composition, occupation, and other socioeconomic and demographic attributes. Are all the families the same? How are they different? Can you find differences in the composition and characteristics of African Americans at Maxville compared with other groups? How does Maxville compare with the characteristics of other nearby towns at the same time period?

Group 5. Logging history and the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company. This group will summarize the logging history of the region, with particular attention to the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company. What was the origin of the company? How did they log? What is the history of logging in Wallowa County? Logging journals, like the **Lumberman**, will be ideal sources for this group.

A summary of sources will be due for each group on February 22.

Step 3. Each group will summarize the information they have gathered and use it to discuss the following question:

How does the information you have collected affect what might be found archaeologically at Maxville? How do you think your information pertains to the way the camp was located and how it was laid out? What types of artifacts might be associated with particular groups (e.g., African Americans)? Is there any likelihood of other historical uses of the same site area?

Step 4. Each group will develop a research paper that presents its information and summarizes the archaeological implications of that information in a 10-12 page research report (exclusive of references). The research paper is due on the last day of class (March 22).

Step 5. Each group will develop a short (8-10 minute) presentation on the findings of their research, summarizing their research paper. One or more members of the group will present these findings on the last day of class (March 22).