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Revisiting Holy Family Church

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Revisiting Holy Family Church

1. Archaeological Testing at the Holy Family Church
Cabokia, Illinois
Robert Mazrim, and Valary Carraro.....Page 1



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Archaeological Testing at the Holy Family Church *Cahokia, Illinois*

Robert Mazrim and Valary Carraro

This article serves as the technical report for the 2014 research-based archaeological investigations at the Holy Family Church in Cahokia, Illinois. The project was conducted jointly by the Sangamo Archaeological Center and the Illinois State Archaeological Survey, under the direction of Robert Mazrim and Dr. Duane Esarey. The excavations encountered well-preserved and heavily stratified soils, which could be delineated into four cultural layers extending into the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Each of the units also encountered cultural features, dating as early as the first decades of the eighteenth century and as late as the early-nineteenth century.



FIGURE 1: View of Holy Family Church and 2014 excavations.

1. Overview of the French Village and Holy Family Church at Cahokia

Robert Mazrim

The colonial community of Cahokia was built upon the foundation of an indigenous community of unknown time depth. That community was first observed by the French in the 1680s. In the winter of 1681-82, La Salle passed by a village of the Tamaroa Tribe of the Illinois on the east bank of the river, very probably at the site of Cahokia. When the party arrived at the village, they learned that its residents had dispersed on their winter hunt (Margry 1876: 590-91). La Salle continued southward, reaching the mouth of the Mississippi River in April of 1682 and claiming it for France. The explorers arrived back at the Tamaroa village in late June, where they were greeted with a calumet ceremony and given two Indian slaves. La Salle's party presented the leaders of the village with two guns (Margry 1876: 610). An incomplete narrative in La Salle's handwriting reported that the village of the Tamaroa consisted of 300 houses during this period (Margry 1876: 203-204).

Jean Baptist Louis Franquelin's 1684 Map of Louisiane, based on La Salle's journeys, depicts two adjacent villages, labeled "Maroa" and "Kaockias" at the approximate location of the modern site of Cahokia. Through the 1680s and 1690s, the place was generally referred to by the French as "Tamaroa", presumably due to the dominant presence of that tribe at the locale during the period.

The first documented French settlement at the Cahokia locale began during the winter of 1698-99, when French Seminarian priests established a mission there (e.g. Alvord 1907, 1920, McDermott 1949, Ekberg 2000). French traders may have already taken up residence at the village (see below). Certainly, with the construction of the mission on a floodplain ridge overlooking Rigolet Creek, began the earliest, continuously occupied European settlement in the Mississippi Valley. A French-descendant community still exists at modern day village of Cahokia - the core of which is anchored to the site of the 1699 mission and reflects much the same layout as it did in the 1740s.

In May of 1698, the Bishop of Quebec issued a patent to the Seminarists to establish a mission to the Tamaroa, who were positioned strategically along the Mississippi just below the mouth of the Missouri, and at the gateway to the other Indigenous nations that occupied the southern Mississippi Valley. Technically, as the Tamaroa were part of the Illinois nation, the Seminarist's patent infringed on the mission field established by the Jesuits amongst that nation 25 years earlier.

The Seminarist's ambitions to establish missions along the Mississippi were aided by Henri Tonti, who clearly shared La Salle's dislike of the Jesuit order and thus was quite willing to assist their rivals. Still working to link Canada to what was soon to become French Louisiana along the Gulf Coast, Tonti agreed to guide an expedition from Michilimackinac into Illinois and down the Mississippi. Three priests (Montigny, St. Cosme, and Davion), four laymen (including Thaumur de la Source), two blacksmiths, and Tonti's crew left Michilimackinac in eight canoes in September of 1698 (e.g. Garraghan 1928, McDermott 1949: 1949).

The priests and their party entered the Mississippi via the Illinois River on the 5th of December. The priests soon reached the village of Cahokia, who were still mourning the loss of women and children as a result of an Iroquois raid. The party spent the night at the Cahokia village, and the following day reached the Tamaroa. Most of that village was away on their winter hunt, but the priest could see that the village was a large one, and well suited for a mission that would also draw the Cahokia to the site.

"On the following day about noon we reached the Tamarois. These savages had recently received timely warning of our arrival through some of the Kaoukias, who carried the news to them... and on the following day, the feast of the Conception, after saying our Masses, we went with Monsieur de Tonti and 7 of our men well-armed. They came to meet us and led us to the chief's cabin. All the women and children were there, and no sooner had we entered the cabin than the young men and women broke away a portion of it to see us. They had never seen black gowns, except for a few days with Reverend Father Gravier, who had made a journey to their country. They gave us food and we gave them a small present, as we had done to the Kaouchias." (Garraghan 1928: 107)

In March of 1699, St. Cosme and Montigny reported to Canada that the village at Indigenous Cahokia consisted of 2000 inhabitants, which included 60 cabins of visiting Missouri (Garraghan 1928: 108). St. Cosme remained at the village, and with the help of two French men oversaw the construction of a presbytery and the cutting of logs for a chapel. The chapel was completed, and a cross raised at the site, in May of 1699. In April of 1699, Thaumur de la Source (who had stayed on with St. Cosme at the Tamaroa) reported that the village was the largest he had seen, containing 300 cabins and as many inhabitants as at Quebec (Garraghan 1928: 109, McDermott 1949: 8). Father Bergier later wrote that (at least by the first years of the eighteenth century) the Tamaroa actually constituted only a third of the population of the

village, along with the Cahokia, the Michigamea, and some of the Peoria. The name of the village persisted, however, as the Tamaroa were “still the oldest inhabitants.” (Garraghan 1928: 109).

In February of 1700, Marc Bergier joined St. Cosme along with St. Cosme’s younger brother (Garraghan 1928: 114). The Jesuits sent, uninvited, two more priests to the mission in March – Pierre-François Pinet and Joseph de Limoges. The elder St. Cosme withdrew from the mission in the spring, leaving Bergier in charge. St. Cosme went to Montigny’s mission at Natchez, and was murdered while traveling to Mobile in 1706 (Garraghan 1928: 116). At Cahokia, Bergier depended on the Jesuits to communicate with the Illinois. Pinet, who wrote an Illinois-French dictionary, would have had little trouble (McCafferty 2022). The Seminarian and Jesuit priests worked alongside each other congenially for a time, but the competition between the two orders was not resolved. Garraghan (1928: 12) suggested that the two priests may have maintained separate chapels during this era, and that Bergier actually focused his ministerial efforts on the French residents of the village (e.g. McDermott 1949: 10).

The mission at the Tamaroa was quickly taking on French inhabitants. In February 1700, D’Iberville (writing from Mobile) mentioned French traders who had already settled with the Tamaroa and had taken native wives (Margry 1876: 344, 441). Of course, it is possible that some had been living there prior to the arrival of the Seminarians in late 1698. The nascent village at Cahokia, situated on the northern edge of the French colonial settlement, also acquired a reputation as a bit of a lawless frontier at an early date. In 1708, there were rumors at Mobile that the French at Cahokia were inciting Indians into an inter-tribal war. In 1715, a Canadian official described the place as “a dangerous one, serving as a retreat for the lawless men of both this colony and of Louisiana” (McDermott 1949: 12).

In July 1703, Bergier reported that the entire Indigenous village had left on the summer hunt, on account of fear of an attack by the Sioux. The French too were leaving the village, heading down river to Kaskaskia. Bergier claimed he was nearly alone in the village, accompanied only by a Frenchman and a 10-year-old Pawnee slave (Garraghan 1928:1928: 132). Bergier died at Cahokia in 1707, and his death was celebrated by some of the Illinois in the village, who gathered around the cross he had erected and broke it “into a thousand pieces” (Garraghan 1928:135). Seminary priests did not return to Cahokia until 1712, when Dominique Marie Varlet assumed control of the mission.

In 1719, Fathers Jean Paul Mercier and Thaumur de la Source arrived at Cahokia (Garraghan 1928:137). The latter assumed responsibility for the mission until his departure in 1728, when Mercier replaced him. In October of 1720, Charlevoix described the village as one of the Cahokia *and* Tamaroa, reflecting the changing character of the place. He also described the village as not a particularly large one (McDermott 1949: 64). The mission was supplied, at least in part, by traders who had recently established stores at Kaskaskia. ‘

A few surviving inventories of goods shipped to Cahokia from Kaskaskia between 1718 and 1722 include tools and basic utensils, some trade goods for the Indigenous population, as well as supplies for the church itself (McDermott 1949: 64). In a 1718 shipment, basic goods included 2 muskets, 4 large pocketknives, 18 butcher knives, 4 dozen fire steels, 16 axes, two pair of scissors, and nearly 40 yards of cloth (blue, scarlet, or “flowered”). It is likely that much of this was intended for the Indian trade, or for the engages, slaves, and other employees of the church. For the priests’ use were two cassocks, three pairs of yard socks, a packet of black thread, and one pair of hob-nailed shoes. The list also contains 16 mattocks, suggesting the residents of the compound were doing substantial digging in rocky or very compact soil. Trade goods included glass beads, vermillion, bells, and “trinkets.” For use in the church were 19 collar bands “in the Oratorian style”; a chasuble, stole, and manipule “in the Spanish style”; a copper hand bell, 15 religious texts, and “an iron for making hosts.”

Four years later, the priests received another shipment of “ornaments of the church”, most of which they described as old and worn out. This included a black chasuble, stole and manipule, two altar cloths, 2 palls, and two relics from other missions: a copper lamp from the mission to the Tonicas [Tunica], and two copper candlesticks that had been “crushed under the ruins of the church of the massacre.”

The first mention of pottery or glass (always of interest to archaeologists) waited until 1724, when a shipment from Kaskaskia included “6 or 7 earthenware cups, only 1 of which arrived intact, and a goblet of earthenware”. Eighteen “jugs” (of unknown type) contained *eau de vie*, while another 18 were listed as containing “wine”. Plates, platters, a bowl, porringer and barber’s mug were all of “tin”, perhaps meaning pewter. Such items probably arrived at New Orleans a year or two earlier, and were sent to the mission from the stores at Kaskaskia. The long overseas and upriver transit time may explain the four pounds of chocolate that the priests described as old and spoiled

The mission property at Cahokia was formally granted to the Seminarians four years after the Illinois Country was annexed to Louisiana. In June of 1722, Commandant Boisbriant granted the priests four square leagues of land at their mission. This gave them full control of the property and its farm land, and also technically allowed them to act as *seigneurs* - encouraging settlement on their property in exchange for rent. The latter was never lucrative for the mission, however, as there was plenty of nearby land for the French to settle at no cost to themselves.

In June of 1723, Diron D’Artaguiette described the village of Cahokia as including “a wretched fort of piles” (commanded by St. Ange Sr. with 6 soldiers), as well as the church and the dwelling of Father Mercier (Mereness 1916: 80-81). D’Artaguiette was also responsible for a 1723 census of the Illinois Country, which included Cahokia. Referring only to the French population there, he counted seven *habitants*, one white laborer, one married woman and three children (McDermott 1949: 14). His census did not mention the priests and staff of the Seminarian mission.

A number of references suggest a dichotomy and physical separation between the French settlement and the mission at the Illinois village. Charlevoix noticed only the Illinois village, while D’Artaguiette’s census counted only French residents and not the mission. A census made in January of 1732 counted only those that the “Mission of the Cahaokias”, including the priests Mercier and Courier and five other French men connected to the mission (McDermott 1949: 14-15).

Before about 1730, much of the French settlement at Cahokia appears to have been situated away from the mission and the Tamaroa village. On his 1735 map of the village and the Holy Family parish, Father Mercier marked the location of a *former* “establishment of the French” (which was by then abandoned) located southwest of the current limits of Cahokia. Gums (1988:31) assumed that this settlement (outside of modern Cahokia) included the original 1699 mission. However, as Father Mercier made no mention of the original settlement being the former site of the Holy Family mission itself (which one would expect him to do), it seems likely that the mission itself had been built on the current Holy Family Parish property. Of course, its location was dictated by the presence of the Tamaroa village. The early separation between the French settlement and the mission at the Tamaroa village would also explain the oft-cited perplexing nature of the 1723 census, which counted *habitants* but made no mention of the mission complex or the priests associated with it (Peterson 1949a, Ekberg 2000, Belting 2003).

Sometime in the late 1720s, then, the initial French settlement, which had been located apart from the Indigenous village and mission (southwest of present-day Cahokia) was relocated to higher ground. The settlement joined the 1699 mission and its associated Tamaroa/Cahokia village on the sandy terrace overlooking Rigolet Creek. This soon became the village mapped by Mercier in 1735 (Figure 1.2). Of course, such a move would have put the French settlers amongst or very near the Cahokia and Tamaroa, for which

the mission had been established. It may have been this new proximity that led to the removal of the Illinois by the mid-1730s. A similar pattern occurred in conjunction with the expansion of the town of Kaskaskia and the formal recognition of a “new” Indigenous village known as the Guebert site (Mazrim and Weedman 2023).



FIGURE 1.2: Father Mercier's 1735 map of Cahokia.

In a memorial written in 1724, an unnamed priest or church official complained about the long-standing difficulty in obtaining funding for their missions along the Mississippi, stating that they rarely received funds for the construction of rectories and churches (which they often paid for themselves), for “decorations and lighting”, and that they were also refused chalices and church ornaments (McDermott 1949: 72).

If the mission church at Cahokia suffered such deprivations, things had changed by the early 1730s. In 1735, Fathers Mercier and Courier assembled a report (sent to Quebec) on the condition of the parish, along with a drawing of the church property (Tucker and Temple 1975). What is now usually referred to as Mercier's map provides a critical view of the physical layout of the church compound as it was during the early eighteenth century (Figure 1.3).

By 1735 the missionaries inhabited a house that was 84 feet long in a compound that also included a well, a bake oven, a barn, a shed, a stable, and at least three cabins for black and Indigenous slaves or servants. Also part of the church complex was a garden, an orchard, and six acres of cultivated fields. The core buildings may have been enclosed by a stockade. Notably, the church is located outside of that stockade – presumable for maintaining a certain distance from the Indigenous members of its congregation.

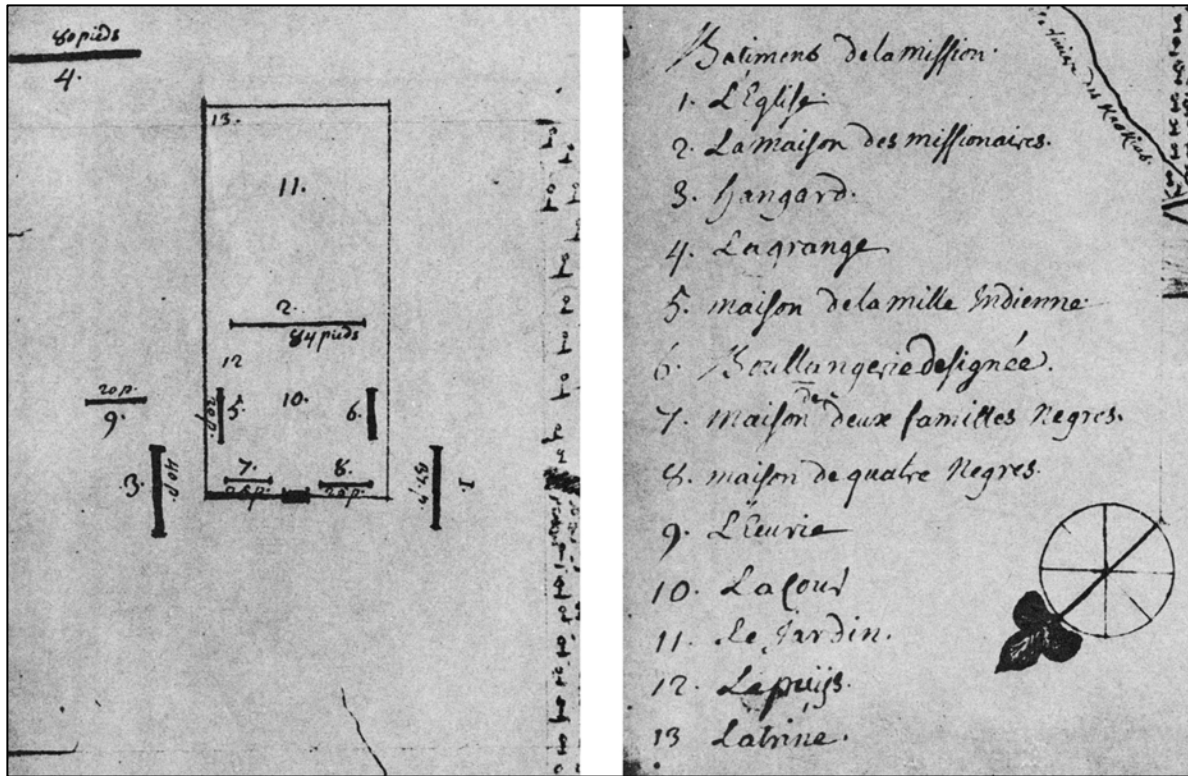


FIGURE 1.3: Mercier's 1735 inset map of the mission church compound. Translation courtesy of Michael McCafferty.

Buildings of the Mission

1. The Church.
2. The Missionaries' House.
3. Barn-Storage Building.
4. Barn.
5. [This note appears to include "la mille", but such a phrase is not possible. This is probably a copyist's error for "Maison de la [fa]mille indienne", or "House of the Indian family".]
6. The structure appointed to be The Bakery. [This could also translate as "designated as a Bakery."]
7. House of two Black families.
8. House of four Blacks.
9. The Stable.
10. The Courtyard / The Stable Yard.
11. The Garden.
12. The Well.
13. Latrine.

Meanwhile, probably in an effort to encourage stable French settlement, the French government (along with the priests at Cahokia) encouraged the Illinois to move away from their village. In 1731, the local French government "bought from the Indians the land on which we would wish to locate the settlers that might come here" (McDermott 1949: 78-79). Shortly afterwards, "more than half" of the Illinois moved 3.5 leagues "from the mission." The purchase consisted of a parcel fronting the "river that runs past the village" (presumably Rigolet Creek) for a distance of 30 arpents and extending 10 arpents deep. These dimensions described an area longer (east-west) than the village as it was before mid-late-nineteenth century flooding, but also shallower (north-south), extending only to approximately Second Street to the south.

By 1735, most of the Illinois were probably relocated approximately one-half mile to the north, as shown on the Mercier map and later field verified by F. Terry Norris (Personal Communication 2007). Later

that year, a mission and an Illinois village were established on the first terrace of Monks Mound (Walthall and Benchley 1982).

During the 1730s, the domestic and agricultural character of the locale expanded (Ekberg 2000), and the place began to take on the appearance of a French village. Eleven French houses and the Holy Family Parish complex are included in Mercier's 1735 map of Cahokia. Ekberg compares the layout of the village depicted by Mercier to a thirteenth-century French manorial village, as opposed to those along the St. Lawrence River Valley (Ekberg 2000: 60). By 1752, the population at Cahokia was 126, not including children under the age of 12 (Belting 2003: 39). Alvord's genealogical research found that most of the residents of Cahokia were French Canadians by birth, with only a small number of residents having arrived from lower Louisiana or directly from France (Alvord 1907: xvii). The 1752 census of Cahokia, considered incomplete, counted 136 inhabitants. During the 1760s, Prairie du Pont (just to the south of Cahokia) was divided into farm lots. The construction of new houses on those lots ultimately created a "satellite agricultural hamlet" of Cahokia (Ekberg 2000: 62).

Father Mercier died in March of 1753, and was replaced in 1754 by Father Forget. In 1763, Forget, fearing the arrival of the British, endeavored to sell the church and its property. On Halloween day of 1763, a group of Cahokia citizens and Holy Family parish members drafted a letter of protest regarding the sale. The letter, sent to a judge at Kaskaskia, was actually written several days before the Forget's sale of the property was finalized. In their letter, the villagers complained that Forget had no right to sell church property, and that they had lately begun building a "spacious rectory" for the priest. Adding to their frustration, Forget's replacement (Father Luc) was asking for a new rectory to be constructed on another parcel of land (Alvord and Carter 1915: 45).

Forget proceeded with the sale, which was finalized on November 5, 1763. The priest sold 12 black slaves to Layssard and Lagrange ("merchant traders in the Illinois Country" for the sum of 20,000 livres. The property itself was sold to Lagrange for 12,500 livres, and included "a house built of stone, comprising several rooms, several other outbuildings such as barns, stables, cattle sheds, cabins, mill, and generally all the buildings attached to the said house as well as the land dependent on it." No mention was made of the church. The property was described as 350 feet wide and 900 feet deep. The sale also included the saw and grist mill on the "Little River of the Cahokias." (McDermott 1949: 80-83)

An undated memorandum described the Holy Family property as it was just prior to Forget's departure for France. Included in the sale to the merchant JB Lagrange (for 12,500 livres) was a "stone house", as well as other buildings, a plantation "divided into court, garden and orchard measuring 350 feet in length and 900 in depth", and a watermill and its equipment located on the "Little Cahokia River." Also included in the sale were 12 African slaves. A payment plan had been established between Forget and Lagrange that allowed Lagrange 6 years to pay for the property in full. The writer of the memo noted that mission officials in Paris had not yet seen "a sou of the sale price." (Alvord and Carter 1915: 48)

The British began describing the village of Cahokia in 1765. In the winter of 1765-66, the British engineer Philip Pitman noted that the place contained 45 houses, a church "near its center", and "what is called a fort" that consisted of a small house "in the center of the village." (Peterson 1999: 21).

Writing to Quebec from Kaskaskia in June of 1768, Father Meurin (a Jesuit) explained that the villagers' complaints had fallen on deaf ears with British Lieutenant Colonel Reed (at Kaskaskia) who refused to get involved in the matter of the sale of the church property. Reed apparently suggested that the sale had been approved by the French Commandant, and that he had no desire to "meddle with the affairs of the church." The villagers countered that the Commandant had falsely persuaded Forget to sell, suggesting that the British would confiscate all church property upon their imminent arrival. Meurin also

reported that Lagrange had recently lost the property in a game of cards, and subsequently died insolvent. The new owner, M. Jautard, had tried to sell the church property to the British in the spring of 1768, but Meurin evidently stopped the sale. Jautard then fled Illinois to Canada to escape his debts.

Meurin went on to describe the condition of the church property, as it was five years after it had been abandoned by Forget:

“...the estate is not worth an eighth of what it was worth at its first sale. Lagrange and later Jautard sold the slaves and the cattle, and the fields and buildings are ruined. Only the ground is left and a house built by M. Forget, so some 60 odd feet, the roof of which is not even finished. He only stopped building at the moment of the sale.”
(Alvord and Carter 1921: 311-14)

A year later (in June 1769) Meurin wrote again to Quebec, complaining that the parishes in the Illinois Country were suffering from lack of missionaries. The villages (including Cahokia and far-off Vincennes) were too widespread to serve effectively, and Meurin's health was failing. His fellow priest, Gibault, was stationed at Kaskaskia and apparently often complained of being sick as well. Meurin observed that Gibault was also largely unwilling to leave the comforts of his well-attended and supported parish at Kaskaskia.

Meurin had wintered at Cahokia prior to 1768, but had recently “retired” to Prairie du Rocher and was hoping that new missionaries would assume responsibilities at far off parishes such as Cahokia and Vincennes. He reported in his 1769 letter that the British had taken possession “in the name of the King” the house and grounds of what he still called the Tamaroa mission. Meanwhile, the residents of Cahokia were still pleading for the return of their church and for a resident priest (Alvord and Carter 1921: 548-57).

The following year (June 1769), Father Gibault wrote to Quebec that the Tamaroa mission still had no resident priest (Alvord and Carter 1921: 557). Church officials in Quebec had evidently suggested that Gibault himself move to Cahokia, to attend to the needs of the Catholic villagers there. In October of 1769, Gibault wrote a long letter explaining why he would not be moving to Cahokia, which he described as a small, isolated village too far from other parishes and the population center (and his home) at Kaskaskia.

“Besides, what would I do at Cahokia? I have told you already, the village is small and distant from all others, that the mission formerly so flourishing is nothing anymore – not a slave; the mills are in ruins, the milldams have been carried away by the waters, the barns have fallen, the orchard for lack of a fence has been destroyed by animals, which have eaten the bark off of the trees clear to the sap – in a word, only the four walls of the house are left for the roof and floors are not worth anything. Furthermore, the colonel never would permit me to rent it, giving as his reason that he was keeping it to make a barracks.”
(Alvord and Carter 1921: 608-625)

Gibault's remarks make it clear that while the British had designs on the property (to use a barracks), the unfinished rectory and other buildings were still nearly in ruins by the fall of 1769. Gibault continued:

“... and yet you believe I should be at Cahokia, as for me who am here on the ground, it seems to me incongruous to make practically a new establishment with nothing – for I should not even be lodged – to take the pains to rebuild fences, the mills, the barns, and the plows, to hire laborers and to watch them: I suppose I should have the means to do all that? I could not do this without entering into negotiations with someone or through some business arrangement, inasmuch as I could hardly live on the tithes; all this seems to me, and rightly so, incompatible with the position of a missionary.”

“If there were, at the time of M. Forget, 30 slaves, two or three hundred animals, oxen, plows, horses, well-kept buildings, well-regulated mills, the yard, orchard, and gardens well enclosed, I should put some person in whom I had confidence at the head of the estate and go about my profession. But with nothing one can do nothing.”
(Alvord and Carter 1921: 608-25)

The only known eighteenth century scale map of Cahokia is the Thomas Hutchins “1766” map of Cahokia (Figure 1.4). Hutchins was a British ensign and army cartographer, who drew an unusually detailed map of the village of Cahokia, depicting streets, blocks and lots. Hutchins also marked the locations of dwellings and barns on these lots, which he numbered to correspond to a key that listed owners or occupants as he understood them. The function of such an unusually detailed map is unclear, but it seems likely it was designed for use by the British as part of their occupation of the village. The map and its key were discovered by Charles Peterson in the mid-twentieth century (Peterson 1949b: 200-201). While dated by Peterson to circa 1766 (based on the date of a visit by Hutchins), it was recently suggested that the map dates closer to 1770, based on some of the family names noted on the document (Seinke 1985). The same year, Hutchins reported 300 inhabitants of Cahokia (McDermott 1949: 1949:23). In 2006, the author created a digital overlay of the Hutchins map onto modern aerial photos (Mazrim 2011). F. Terry Norris created a similar overlay in 1984, without the aid of digital software (Norris 1984). Both overlays revealed that the modern streets and blocks in Cahokia have changed little since the mid-eighteenth century.



FIGURE 1.4: Hutchins’ circa 1770 map of the village of Cahokia.

The tenure of British troops at Cahokia is poorly understood. Gibault reported that they intended to use the unfinished rectory as a barracks, but had not done so as late as 1769. If they did clean up and restore the property to a habitable construction, they would have done so between the spring of 1770, and their departure from Cahokia in the spring of 1772 (Peterson 1999: 22).

American troops arrived at Cahokia in July of 1778 under the command of Joseph Bowman, immediately after George Rodgers Clark occupied the town of Kaskaskia. Bowman took possession of “a strong stone house well-fortified for war.” Clark later referred to the house and its grounds as “the old British fort” (Peterson 1999: 26). The place was subsequently known as Fort Bowman, and was occupied by as many as three or four dozen troops at a time between 1778 and 1780.

From the symmetry between these descriptions and those of the stone house built by Father Forget in 1763, as well as with the remarks made by Gibault (1769) and later petitioners referring to its use as a barracks, Peterson and other historians have assumed that Fort Bowman and the Holy Family compound were one and the same. It is possible, however, that two should not be conflated, and that the unfinished and partially ruined stone house at Holy Family was simply used as an ancillary barracks for a more traditional fortification located nearby.

Pittman’s 1765/66 description places the church *near* the center of the village, and a French-period fort (consisting primarily of an old dwelling) *in* the center of the village. Hutchins’ map, drawn about four years later, depicts a palisade structure surrounded by a large vacant area in the center of the village, two blocks west of the site of Holy Family. He did not label the structure, and Peterson assumed this was a “public square”. While common in American town plats, public squares were not part of the French village development in colonial Illinois, and it seems much more likely that the unlabeled facility on Hutchins’ map was a fortification. The conspicuous vacant area around the fort probably served as a *glacis*, or the area surrounding a fort kept clear for security purposes.

Gibault’s letter stated only that the building was intended as barracks, and that the British had yet to arrive in 1769. The 1787 petition does indicate that the stone building was indeed used by the military, which left it in a bad state. However, it seems improbable that Bowman’s entire company (and a visiting company of Virginia cavalry in 1780 managed to squeeze into the 60-foot unfinished stone rectory at Holy Family. Instead, the old house was apparently cleaned and remodeled by the British between 1770 and 1772, and reoccupied by the Americans six years later as a barracks that perhaps supported a nearby, more traditional fortification that Hutchins depicted on his map.

In 1787, seven years after the American military departed Cahokia, the Catholic population there was still trying to get its church back. The parish had been without a resident priest for years, and in June of 1787, members of the Cahokia community wrote to Seminary officials in Quebec, asking that the property be returned to the parish (Alvord 1909 560-66). While the old mission property had supposedly been commandeered by the British and American military, Jautard, who had won the property in a card game back in 1768 was evidently still trying to sell it. Now living in Montreal, word spread at Cahokia that he was trying to sell the parcel again in the spring of 1785. The villagers claimed that Father Gibault had in fact received power of attorney over the property in 1768, but had “made no use of it.” In the spring of 1786, Father St. Pierre assumed that power of attorney, and was attempting to return it to the care of the parish.

The writers of the 1787 petition described the Holy Family compound as it was 24 years after it was abandoned by the church and seven years after it ceased to be used as a barracks by the Americans.

“This consists of four walls of a stone house with ground 300 feet wide by 900 long, and also a field three arpents wide with a length the same as the fields belonging to the inhabitants... [The stone house was] entirely ruined by the English and American troops who have lodged there. The defacements and injuries it had suffered during the time it was abandoned were such that there remained standing only four walls, which can be repaired with much labor, for they are without a roof covering, false-roof, flooring, and the chimneys have tumbled down; there are some fences on the land; the orchard has been so destroyed

that there is no vestige of it; all the other buildings have been destroyed even to the wells, which have been filled in.”

(Alvord 1909: 560-66)

The villagers also stated that during its abandonment, they had removed its windows, sashes and flooring for safekeeping. While the 1787 letter is the most direct reference of an actual occupation of the Forget's house by British and American military, the accompanying history and description (coupled with previous descriptions made by other writers) suggests that this occupation must have been minimal and that the property had been in a general state of neglect for over 20 years.

The 1787 letter also refers to plans for a new church, which may or may not have been the vertical log church that still stands today: “We have decided to build a church of the ruins of this house, for our former wooden church has fallen and we are obliged to say mass in a rented house. We have commenced work on our projected church, which will cost us more than 15,000 or 16,00 livres.”

This passage indicates that the church building had fallen some time previous, and that mass was held in a rented house off of the old mission property. It seems likely that the mission church had been abandoned sometime in the 1760s, while the future of the property was uncertain. By the late 1760s, descriptions of the property indicate that all of the structures on the parcel were essentially ruined, and no description of the property (including Hutchins' ca. 1770 map) between 1763 and 1787 refer to a church building there.

It has been largely assumed (e.g. Mansberger 1994, Peterson 1999) that the 1787 letter referred to plans to construct the vertical log church that still stands today. However, parish oral history holds that the log church was not finished until 1799. This is supported by a 1799 document crafted by parish officials, titled “Regulations of the Church-Wardens at Cahokia” that outlines regulations for the “new church”, consisting primarily of pew rental and cemetery fencing rules (McDermott 1949: 87-92). It seems unlikely that it took over ten years to complete a relatively simple post-on-sill structure. Instead, it seems more likely that the 1787 plans were delayed or abandoned, and that the parish continued to hold mass in a rented building somewhere in the village for another 12 years. The log church that was completed in 1799 still stands today.

During the early-nineteenth century, a new rectory was constructed east of the church according to oral traditions of the parish. Based on the parish history and artifacts found in 2014, the rectory was probably built after the close of the War of 1812 under the direction of Father Francis Savigne (1811-1827). Tradition has it that the rectory caught fire on Christmas Eve of 1835, during the subsequent tenure of Father Peter Doutreluingue (John Reed, personal communication 2011). The following year, Father John Francis Loisel oversaw the construction of a new building across the street to the west of the log church.

In 1889, a new limestone church was constructed east of the log church. It was demolished in the mid-twentieth century, and was replaced by the modern church that stands in its place today.

2. The 2014 Fieldwork at Holy Family

Robert Mazrim

In October of 2014, research-based Archeological testing was conducted on the grounds of the Holy Family Church in Cahokia. The project was conducted jointly by the Sangamo Archaeological Center and the Illinois State Archaeological Survey, under the direction of Robert Mazrim and Dr. Duane Esarey. The initial four-day fieldwork consisted of three 1 x 2 m test units aligned in a north-south line row to examine the stratigraphy of an area located northwest of the 1799 log church. A one-meter balk separated each unit, and the base line (forming the east walls of the units) was situated 12.75 meters from the north east corner of the log church. A permeant datum was driven at the northwest corner of the foundation of a modern belltower, one meter east of the southeast corner of Unit 2 (Figures 2.1 - 2.3).



FIGURE 2.1: View of the 2014 excavations, looking southwest.



FIGURE 2.2: Accommodations for several days of heavy rain.

The location of the investigations was based on two considerations. Firstly, the area was chosen in an area least likely to encounter human remains. Secondly, the investigations also considered the location of substantial structures depicted on the 1735 Mercier map. A digital overlay was created using Mercier's 1735 church compound map, Hutchins' 1770 map of lot boundaries, and modern aerial photographs (Figure 2.4). Ultimately, the test units were placed at the general location of one of the dwellings depicted on Mercier's map. This focused the work on what was originally the extreme northwest corner of the compound, at least according to Mercier's map and presuming the overlay is roughly accurate. The remains of a structure were indeed encountered here. Features 1 and 4 are interpreted as components of a dwelling occupied by two enslaved families of African descent. Two weeks later, a fourth test unit was then placed adjacent to the northernmost test unit (Unit 1), to expand upon Feature 1.

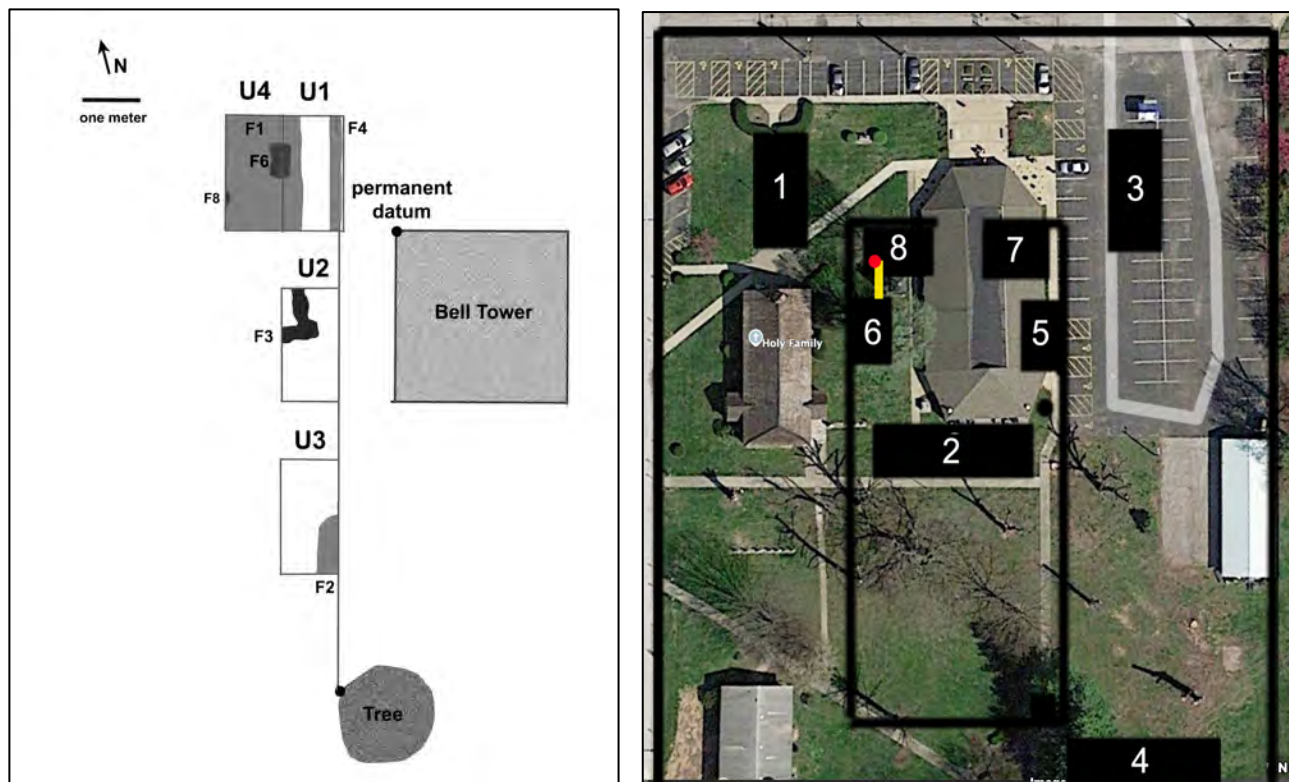


FIGURE 2.3: 2014 base map of excavations.

FIGURE 2.4: Overlay of Mercier's 1735 sketch map onto modern aerial photo.

The excavations encountered a very well preserved and heavily stratified soil column, which could be delineated into four cultural layers, described below (Figures 2.5 - 2.10). Each of the units also encountered cultural features, dating as early as the first decades of the eighteenth century and as late as the early-nineteenth century.

STRATIGRAPHY

Cultural Layer A: Modern Topsoil

The upper 30 cm of the topsoil in Units 1-3 represent a modern, dark brown silt-loam A-horizon, mixed with lenses of redeposited yellow clay subsoil. This layer contains only small quantities of 20th century debris and scant evidence of the earlier debris found in subsequent levels. Layer A was thickest in the south end of Unit 3, where the subsequent Zone B stone layer was at its thinnest.

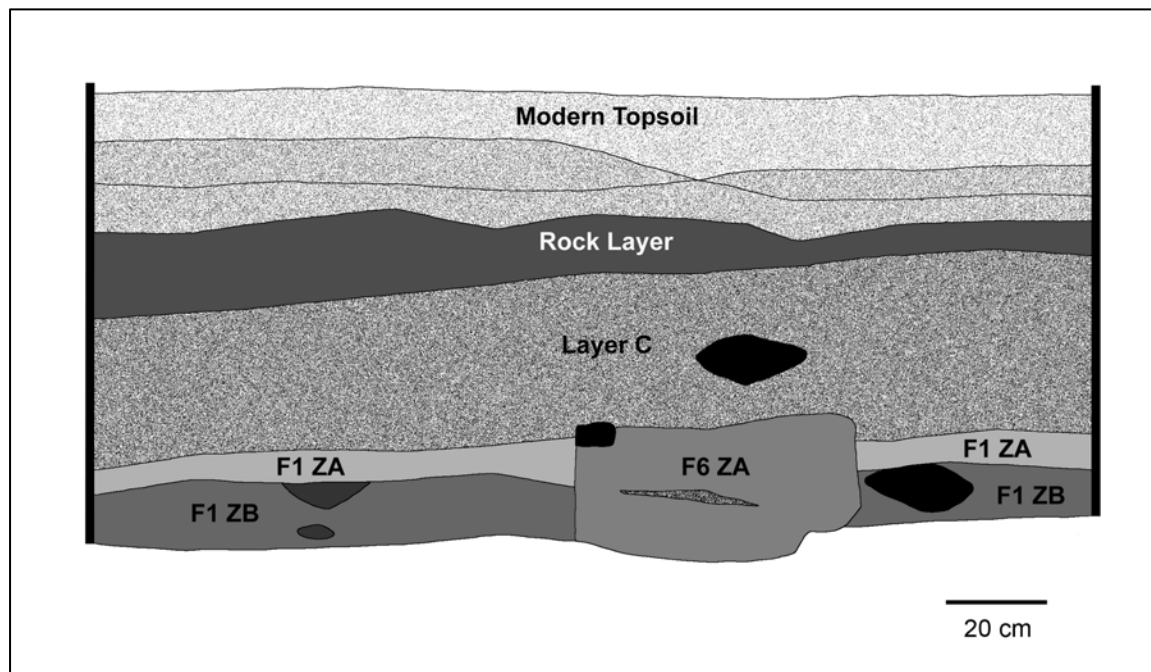


FIGURE 2.5: Unit 1 West Profile.

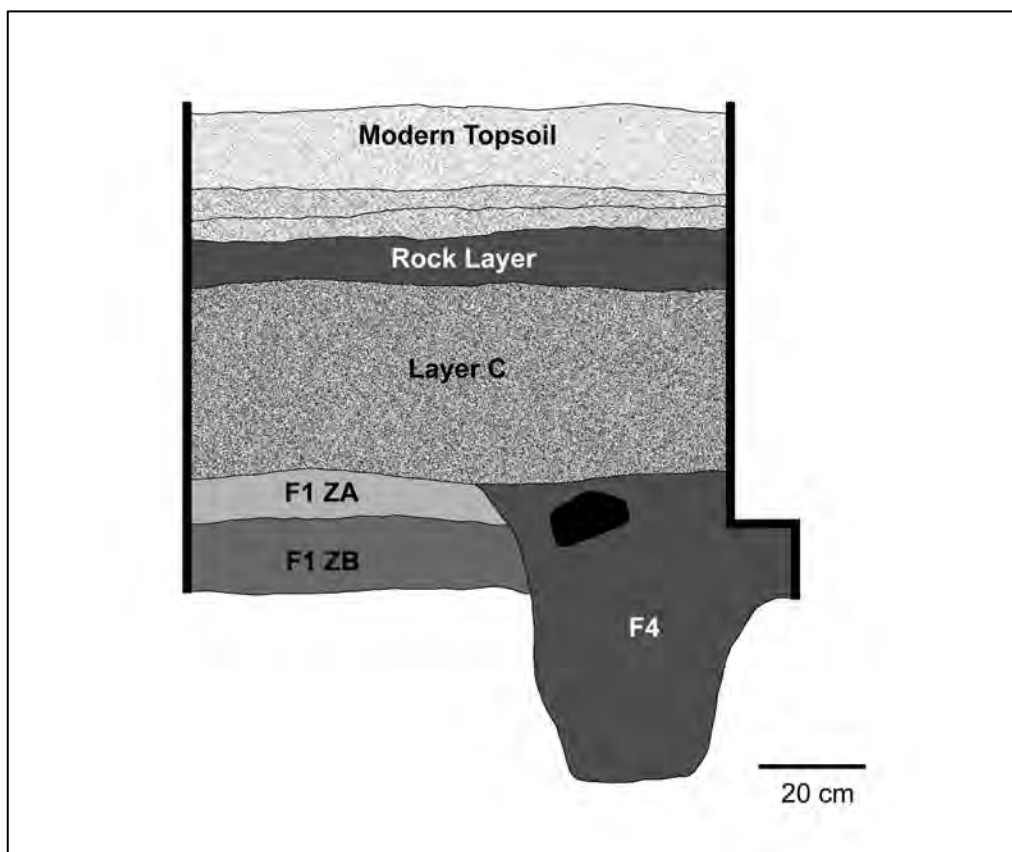


FIGURE 2.6: Unit 1 North Profile.

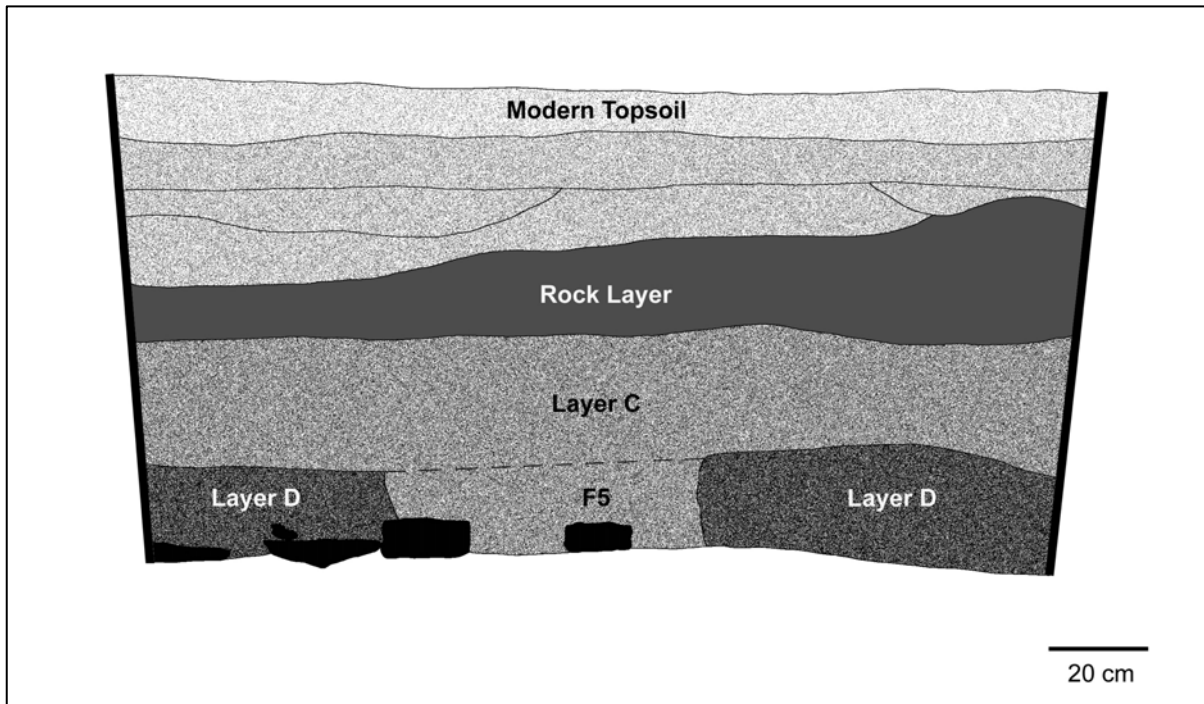


FIGURE 2.7: Unit 2 West Profile.

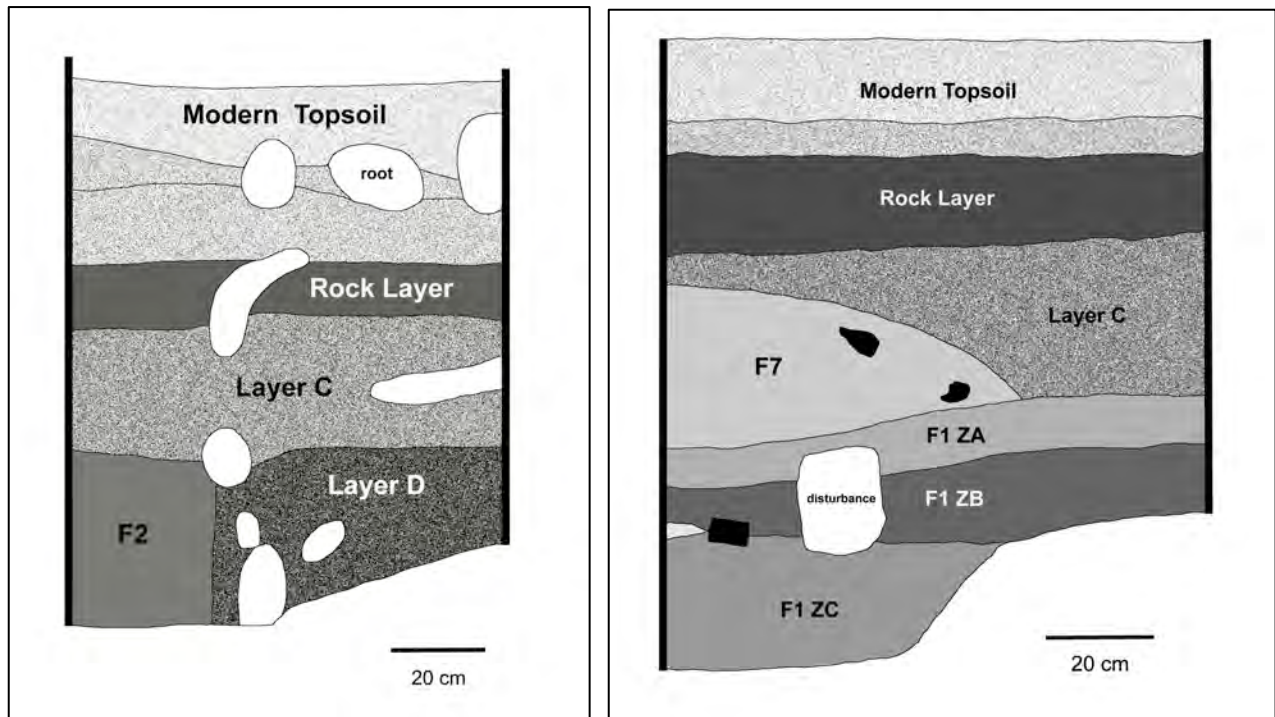


FIGURE 2.8: Unit 3 South Profile.

FIGURE 2.9: Unit 4 North Profile.

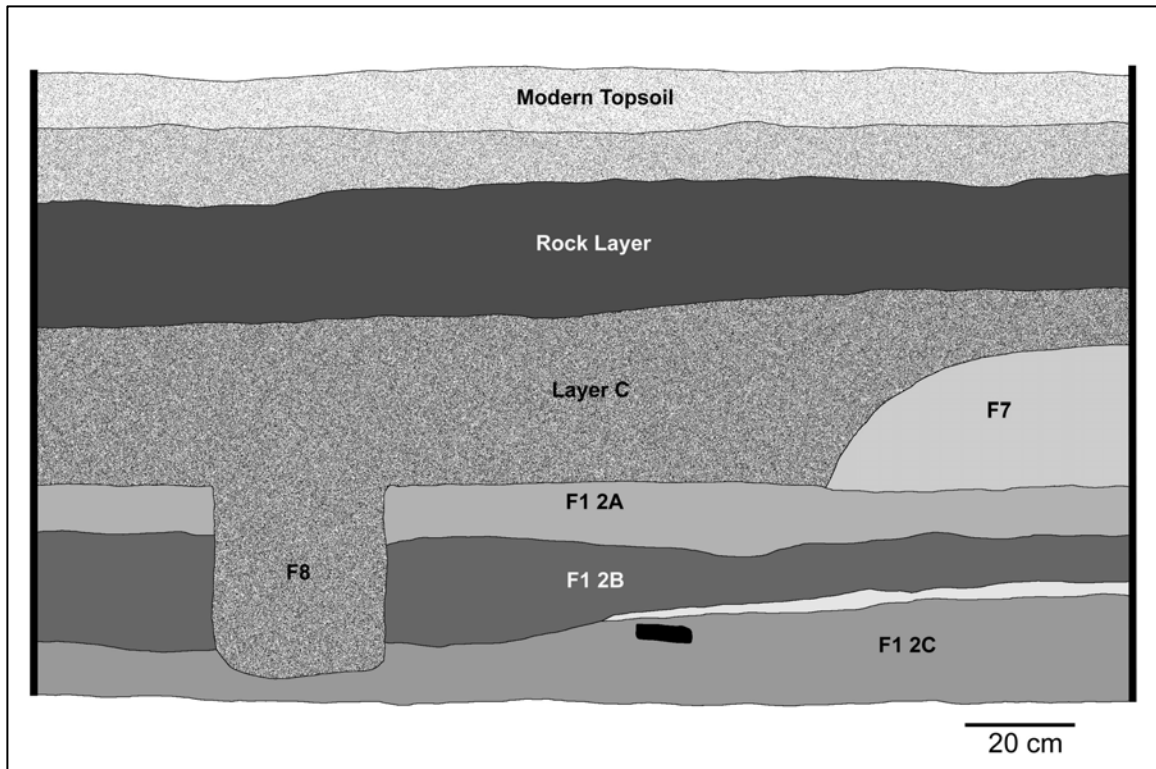


FIGURE 2.10: Unit 4 West Profile.

Cultural Layer B: Limestone Debris

A layer of compact limestone debris was encountered at approximately 30cmbs in Unit 1, and 40cmbs in the south end of Unit 2. In the south end of Unit 3, little stone was encountered and “Layer B” in that unit consisted of a deepening of Layer A soils. In Units 1 and 2, the layer of small, tabular limestone debris averaged 5-15cm thick (Figures 2.5, 2.7). This layer contained only limestone and patches of silt loam topsoil.

Cultural Layer C: Early-Nineteenth Century Midden

Located between approximately 50-80cmbs across the entire tested area was a thick, reasonably homogenous buried A-horizon. This consisted of a fine, sandy clay loam laden with domestic debris, small fragments of animal bone, and architectural debris such as hand-forged and machine-cut nails, limestones, and the occasional small soft mud brick fragment. This layer was approximately 20-30cm thick across the excavation units (Figures 2.5, 2.7, 2.10). The majority of the debris in Layer C reflects a domestic midden dating ca. 1815-1835. With the exception of a single fragment of a circa 1860 soda water bottle from Unit 3, no artifacts post-dating 1840 were recovered in this zone. Root and rodent disturbance was significant in this zone.

Five features appear to originate in the Layer C topsoils. Three date to the 1820s or 1830s (Features 3, 5, 7, and 8). Feature 3, a limestone footing in Unit 2, originates in this layer (at approximately 65 cmbs) and could also possibly date to the late-eighteenth century. Feature 6 (in Unit 1) originates near the base of this layer, and contains only pre-circa 1815 debris.

Cultural Layer D: Early-Mid-Eighteenth Century Midden

A sharp break in the soil profile was encountered at approximately 70-85cm below surface. This abrupt transition is at its highest in Unit 1 (at 70cmbs), and trended downward to the south, where it was 85cmbs in Unit 2 and 90cmbs in Unit 3 (Figures 2.5, 2.7).

Below this break was a layer of clayey silt loam mottled with charcoal, small flecks of burnt clay, and small patches of silt. This layer represents a second buried remnant A-horizon. Layer D was largely indistinguishable from the fill of the Feature 1 subfloor pit in Units 1 and 4, as the pit was essentially filled with the surrounding A-horizon sometime prior to ca. 1750. Domestic debris falls precipitously in this layer, while the number of fragments of large animal bones in Layer D increases significantly. Also present in Layer D is a light-to-moderate amount of domestic and architectural debris. Rodent disturbance was moderate at this level, particularly in Units 1 and 4. No post-1765 creamware was found in Layer D in undisturbed contexts, and nothing else in the sample indicates post-ca.1770 deposits below this line. The sharp break that defines the top of Layer D appears to reflect a substantial clearing activity that cut into a circa 1760s living surface.

This clearing event also truncated Feature 2 in Unit 3. Features 1 and 4, representing a subfloor depression and wall trench of a structure, appear to have been filled prior to this clearing event, however. After the circa 1770 clearing event, Zone C topsoils developed over this truncated eighteenth-century living surface, creating approximately 30cm of new topsoil and sealing the Layer D A-horizon remnant.

FEATURES: Pre-1770

Three features were identified below the ca. 75cm clearing event and date to the French colonial era.

FEATURE 1 & 4 STRUCTURE

Feature 1 represents the eastern portion of a subfloor depression beneath a post-in-earth building (Figures 2.9, 2.11). The size of the depression is unknown, but measures greater than two meters north-south, and 1.5 meters east-west. In cross section, the depression consists of a broad, gently-sloping basin with a deeper and more straight-walled portion approximately one meter west of its easternmost limits. The deeper portion of Feature 1 extends to a maximum depth of 115cmbs in Unit 4. That portion was filled with a blocky, silty clay subsoil (Zone C). Containing no artifacts, it appears that the deeper basin was filled during the occupation of the building above, and may perhaps be flood-related.

Directly on top of that clayey fill, and extending across the sterile clay floor of the surrounding shallow depression, was a lens of red-brown manganese staining that may reflect standing water – perhaps from floodwaters pooling beneath the structure. Directly atop of that staining in the northwest corner of Unit 4 was a lens of lime and small heat-reduced limestones, suggesting the preparation of mortar or plaster nearby.

In Unit 4, two zones of fill capped the Feature 1 depression, above the manganese-stained clay that filled the deeper basin (Zone C). Zone B was a dark brown silty clay loam containing small amounts of domestic and architectural debris, and significant quantities of large animal bone (particularly along the eastern edge of the unit). Atop this was Zone A, which consisted primarily of a layer of silty yellow sand mixed with small patches of the Zone B clay loam (Figures 2.9, 2.10). While the sand generally contained no artifacts, the associated darker soils intermixed at this level also contained significant quantities of large animal bones. At this level, the faunal remains were concentrated along the easternmost periphery of the depression, primarily in Unit 1. Zones A and B were most easily separated in Unit 4, where the feature trended downward. In Unit 1, they were visible in profile, but were collected together as general Feature 1 fill.



FIGURE 2.11: Unit 1 Feature 1 base (adjacent Feature 4 unexcavated).

FIGURE 2.12: Unit 3 Feature 2 base of excavations.

The sand found in Zone A may represent a second flooding episode, where water-borne soil was swept beneath the building. This would have been protected from foot traffic and subsequent disturbances that may have erased its presence outside of the limits of the Feature 1 structure. Alternatively, the sand was brought to the site intentionally, perhaps as part of the construction process. Based on the small sample of temporally diagnostic artifacts found in Feature 1, it seems likely that the structure was built early in the sequence of events at the site, and was abandoned before 1750.

Located directly against the eastern limits of the Feature 1 depression was a segment of a north-south oriented wall trench designated as Feature 4 (Figure 2.6). The trench extended to a depth of 30cm below surrounding sterile clay, approximately 50cm below the circa 1770 horizon line, and 125cm below modern grade. It measured approximately 50cm wide. Feature 4 is interpreted as the eastern wall of a post-in-earth structure that was built over the Feature 1 subfloor cellar. The log wall seated in Feature 4 may have trapped standing water and flood-borne sand beneath the structure sometime during the early eighteenth century. The fill of the segment of the Feature 4 trench contained very little material, consisting of nails, some bottle glass, and clay daub or *bousillage*.

FEATURE 2 PIT

Situated approximately five meters south of the Feature 1-4 structure, Feature 2 is a pit of unknown size found in the southeast corner of Unit 3 (Figures 2.8, 2.12). Only a small portion of the pit was excavated within Unit 3. The material is consistent with activities predating ca. 1770. The function of the pit is unknown.

FEATURES: Post-1770, Pre-1840

Five features were found directly above the 75cmbs line that represents a circa 1770 clearing event. The features are associated with the British or early American periods.

FEATURE 3: LOG STRUCTURE FOOTING?

Feature 3 was uncovered in Unit 2 (Figure 2.13). It consists of the limestone corner footing of a structure of unknown size. Dislodged stones associated with the feature were first encountered in Zone C at approximately 80cmbs, but only the bottom two courses were in-situ. These rested on the top of sterile clay, in a broad, irregular trench or excavation that cut through the Zone D remnant eighteenth century A-horizon. The top of this excavation originated in the post-ca.1770 Zone C soils, but was difficult to define in the west profile of Unit 2 due to root and rodent disturbance.

The stones that compose F3 are undressed and roughly dry laid in a broad, irregular trench, visible in the eastern wall of the unit but not assigned a feature number. As opposed to a post-on-sill structure, it seems more likely that this crude corner footing supported a horizontal log structure built during the British or (perhaps more likely) the American period. Small fragments of soft mud brick debris were found in association with the stones. It should be noted that Feature 3 was not seen in Units 1 or 4, one meter to the north. If the stones did serve as a footing, they were either dislodged and removed, or perhaps the footing was only located beneath the corners of a structure.



FIGURE 2.13: Unit 2 Feature 3.

FEATURE 5: ROBBER'S TRENCH

Feature 5 is a steep-walled pit that was observed in the east and west walls of Unit 2 (Figure 2.7). The pit was not recognized during the excavation of Unit 2, however, and was defined later in profile. Thus, its contents were not collected separately but instead as part of Cultural Layers C and D. This might account for some post-1770 material collected as part of Layer D.

Feature 5 may have also contributed to the higher density of early-nineteenth century debris recovered from the upper half of Layer C in Unit 2. This material consists of fragmentary, redeposited domestic debris as well as the largest sample of nails found in the 2014 testing. The pit appears to have been associated with the demolition and/or robbery of the Feature 3 stone footing during the early-nineteenth century. When the footing was demolished the upper portion of Feature 5 fill was mixed with the surrounding midden (Layer C), and the two became largely indistinguishable.

FEATURE 6: PRIVY VAULT

Located approximately three meters north of the Feature 3 stone footing, Feature 6 is interpreted as a small privy vault dating to the second half of the eighteenth century. Drawn in plan at 72cmbs, Feature 6 superimposed the fill of the Feature 1 subfloor cellar.

Feature 6 is a square, straight-walled pit (Figure 2.14). Its slightly bowed or warped west wall and uneven floor may reflect occasional shoveling out of fecal material via a trap in one wall of the shed above the vault. Although small, the pit fits the morphological type of rural, pre-1840 privy vaults in Illinois (Mazrim 2002: 166-169). Temporally sensitive artifacts suggest that it may have been closed before ca. 1815.



FIGURE 2.14: Unit 4 Feature 6.

FEATURE 7: SOIL DEPOSIT

Feature 7 was observed as a zone of differential drying of soils within Cultural Layer C (Figure 2.10). The feature contained patches of ash and charcoal mottles, and small bone fragments were pushed into this matrix. It also produced a small amount domestic debris dating to the late-eighteenth or early-nineteenth century. That material was probably introduced through mixing with the surrounding Layer C deposits. The feature was more visible in profile, and had the appearance of a “heap” of soil deposited atop the filled Feature 1 pit cellar. Subsequently, a new A-horizon, labelled Cultural Layer C developed around and over this feature.

FEATURE 8: POST

Feature 8 clearly originated in Cultural Layer C, and was probably a post hole excavated into the lower Cultural Layer D soils (Figure 2.10). It probably dates to the early-nineteenth century, and may be coeval with Features 3 and 5 in Unit 2.

3. Artifact Analysis

Robert Mazrim and Valary Carraro

MATERIAL CULTURE SAMPLES

Four cultural layers were observed as part of the 2014 testing. Excavations began with the collection of debris in arbitrary 20cm layers but was adjusted in each test unit to accommodate cultural layers when recognized. Layer A is a light twentieth-century midden that was only sampled during the excavations. Layer C consisted of a thick buried A-horizon heavily laden with early-nineteenth century debris. Layer D (truncated and defined by the circa 1770 horizon line at 70-80cmbs) is an earlier remnant A-horizon containing artifacts dating to the first half of the eighteenth century, as well as a small amount of lithic debris and shell-tempered ceramics that are likely of prehistoric origins. Layer B consisted only of limestone debris from the 1889 construction of the stone church and was not collected.

Cultural Layer A

This layer contained only a small amount of post-1900 debris, some of which may have been affiliated with picnicking on site. It was not analyzed.

Cultural Layer B

This zone contained only limestone debris affiliated with the 1889 church directly to the east.

Cultural Layer C: U1 = 40-70cmbs; U2 = 50-80 cmbs; U3 = 50-85cmbs; U4 = 40-70cmbs.

This layer was collected from all four units. For the most part, it appears that this material that was deposited between ca. 1815 and 1835, with a concentration of activity in the 1820s. A small percentage of this material, including prehistoric chert debris and shell tempered sherds, have been “kicked up” into this layer from an older A-horizon below. Generally, the material is very heavily fragmented. Larger sherd size occurred more frequently in Unit 2, Level 3A, between 70 and 85 centimeters below surface.

The overwhelming majority of the debris from this layer is kitchen related – principally service-related ceramics. The sample of unrefined ceramics affiliated with food preparation and storage is very small. From Unit 3 Level 2 there is an intrusive 1860s long neck soda water bottle fragment, but for the most part there appears to be minimal pre-1840 intrusions into this cultural zone. Generally, there is little evidence of a post-1835 occupation in this layer, which does correspond to the oral tradition of a fire in 1835 that apparently destroyed the rectory and caused it to be rebuilt across the street.

Cultural Layer D: U1 = 70-85 cmbs; U2 = 90-100cmbs; U3 = 95-120cmbs; U4 70-75cmbs.

This cultural layer was collected below 70cmbs and as deep as 120cmbs. This layer was best defined and collected within Units 1, 2, and 4. In comparison to the nineteenth century Layer C, debris density in Layer D is much lighter. That density increases from south to north, and thus the largest amount of debris was recovered from Units 3 and 4. Those units exposed the Feature 1/4 structure, which may have been used as a quarters for enslaved West Indian or African families during the early-eighteenth century (according to its possible position on the Mercier map).

No post-1760 creamware or other temporally sensitive artifacts are present in Layer D. Diagnostic French domestic materials are few. Ceramics consist of a mix of very small fragments of tin-glazed and lead-glazed coarse earthenwares. Glass consists principally of fragments of heavily iridescent olive-green wine/spirits bottles.

Layer C Artifacts

A minimum of 74 refined ceramic vessels is present in Layer C (Figures 3.1 – 3.4). The assemblage is composed of heavily fragmented and spalled specimens, which may result in undercounted totals. Pearlware

dominates this sample (58%), followed by whiteware (21%), creamware (9%), tin-glazed (7%), and porcelain (4%). With regards to vessel form, teawares (mnv=33) outnumber tablewares (mnv=27) by a small margin. In pre-1840 contexts in rural Illinois, teawares generally outnumber tablewares by a margin of 3-to-2 (Mazrim 2002: 212-214). Thus, in this sample (presumably affiliated with a rectory), tablewares may have been used more heavily. There are no toiletwares (such as common chamber pots) present.

HFC Layer C MVC	Plate/Pitr	Dish	Bowl	Pitcher	Other Table	Cup	Saucer	Tea/Sgr Pot	Other Tea	Chamber	Ewer	Basin	Other	Tl
Porcelain: undecorated														1
Porcelain: painted						1	1							
Porcelain: printed														
Creamware: undecorated	1												1	1
Creamware: dipped/annular														1
Creamware: painted						1	1							
Creamware: molded		1												
Pearlware: shell edged	8													
Pearlware: other edged	4													
Pearlware: dipped/annular			4											
Pearlware: china glaze painted						1	2							
Pearlware: pastel PC painted						2	3							
Pearlware: mono broad painted						3	2							3
Pearlware: poly broad painted														
Pearlware: blue printed	3			1	1	2	2	1						1
Pearlware: other printed														
Pearlware: other														
Whiteware: undecorated														
Whiteware: shell edged														
Whiteware: dipped/annular														
Whiteware: PC broad painted						2	1							
Whiteware: PC sprig painted							2							
Whiteware: sponged														
Whiteware: blue printed						2	1							1
Whiteware: red printed	2					1	1							
Whiteware: green printed														
Whiteware: purple printed						1								
Whiteware: brown printed														1
Whiteware: black printed	1													
Whiteware: Other														
Ware type indeterminate														
Tin-glazed	1												1	3
Dry bodied black or red														
Silver luster														
Yellow-glazed														
Copper luster														
Other:														
Total = 74	20	1	4	1	1	16	16	1					2	12

FIGURE 3.1: Refined Ceramic Minimum Vessel Count, Cultural Layer C.

Pre-1820 creamware includes both tablewares and teawares (Figure 3.2). Most are undecorated, however a brown-sponged cup and saucer set and a dendritic or “mocha” dipt vessel are present. The pearlware portion of the assemblage (Figure 3.3) is dominated by edged plates and painted teas. Printed (blue) tablewares include three plates, a pitcher, and a pepper pot. Patterns are unidentifiable due to the

small size of the fragments. Pearlware teas are more commonly printed. 72% of the teawares are painted. The presence of matching cup and saucer sets is visible. One pair is decorated in a Chinoiserie motif, and two others are hand-painted.



FIGURE 3.2: Tin-glazed and porcelain (top row) and creamware, Cultural Layer C.

The whiteware sample consists mostly of teawares (Figure 3.4). Unlike the pearlware assemblage, the whiteware portion of the sample consists mostly of teawares. The majority of these vessels represent new colors (such as red and green) that were unavailable prior to the introduction of whiteware. Transfer printing is more prevalent on whiteware vessels than pearlware, suggesting a shift toward a more formal tea setting after 1830 (e.g. Mazrim 2002: 217, 262). Porcelain (Figure 3.2) comprises only 4% of the sample ($mnv=3$), although porcelain is generally rare in pre-1840 contexts in Illinois (e.g. Mazrim 2002: 209-212). One of the porcelain saucers is decorated in the eighteenth-century “Famille Rose” pattern.

Two tin-glazed vessels are present in the Layer C sample (Figure 3.2). However, it is possible that one or both of these vessels originated in the earlier Layer D deposit and was introduced to the later A-Horizon through disturbance. A French *faïence brune* plate or platter is decorated with an unidentifiable blue painted motif. A small fragment of a possible Spanish colonial majolica jar was also collected as part of Layer C.

A minimum of six unrefined ceramic vessels were collected as part of Layer C (Figure 3.4). All are lead glazed coarse earthenwares. Four are of probable French origins and two possibly made in North America. The French vessels include a “Saintonge slipped plain” type indeterminate, a “iron green-brown” glazed jug (represented by a lip fragment), a second iron green-brown type indeterminate, and “amber-red speckled” rim fragment from a small bowl. Each would fit comfortably in a mid-eighteenth century French domestic assemblage in Illinois (e.g. Mazrim 2011: 43-46). While the Saintonge vessel was likely deposited

before 1800, it is possible that some of the other French kitchenwares were still in use after 1800 (e.g. Mazrim 2001: 84-85, 2011). Like the tin-glazed specimens, some of these may have been introduced into Layer C from below via rodent disturbance.

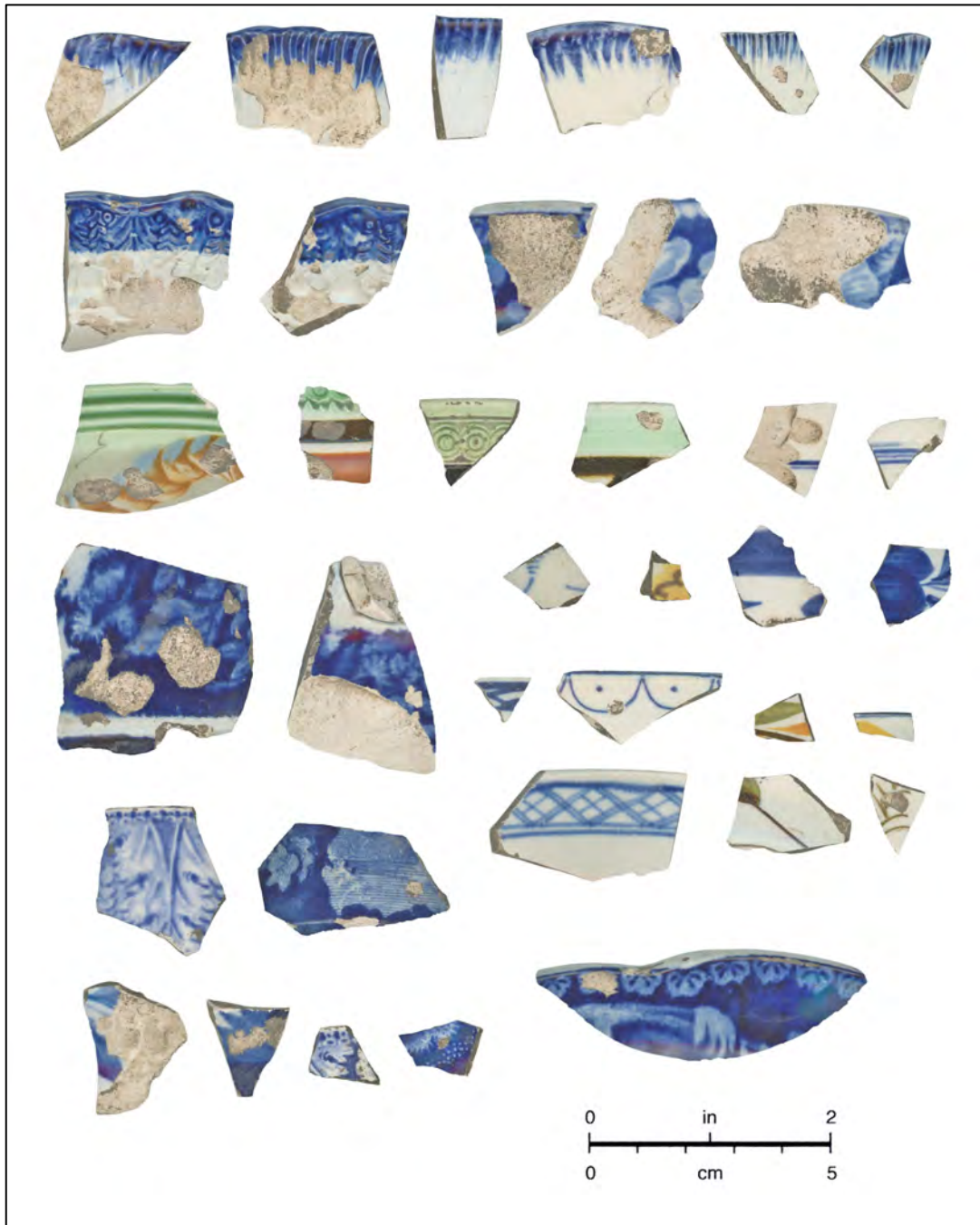


FIGURE 3.3: Pearlware table and teawares, Cultural Layer C.

Two lead-glazed or “redware” vessels may be of North American origins. However, given the early nature of this sample they were probably made outside of Illinois. One of these is a table bowl with a black manganese glaze on its interior and exterior. The other is a small unidentified table service vessel that is finely-potted with an unmodified rim. It is lead-glazed on both surfaces.

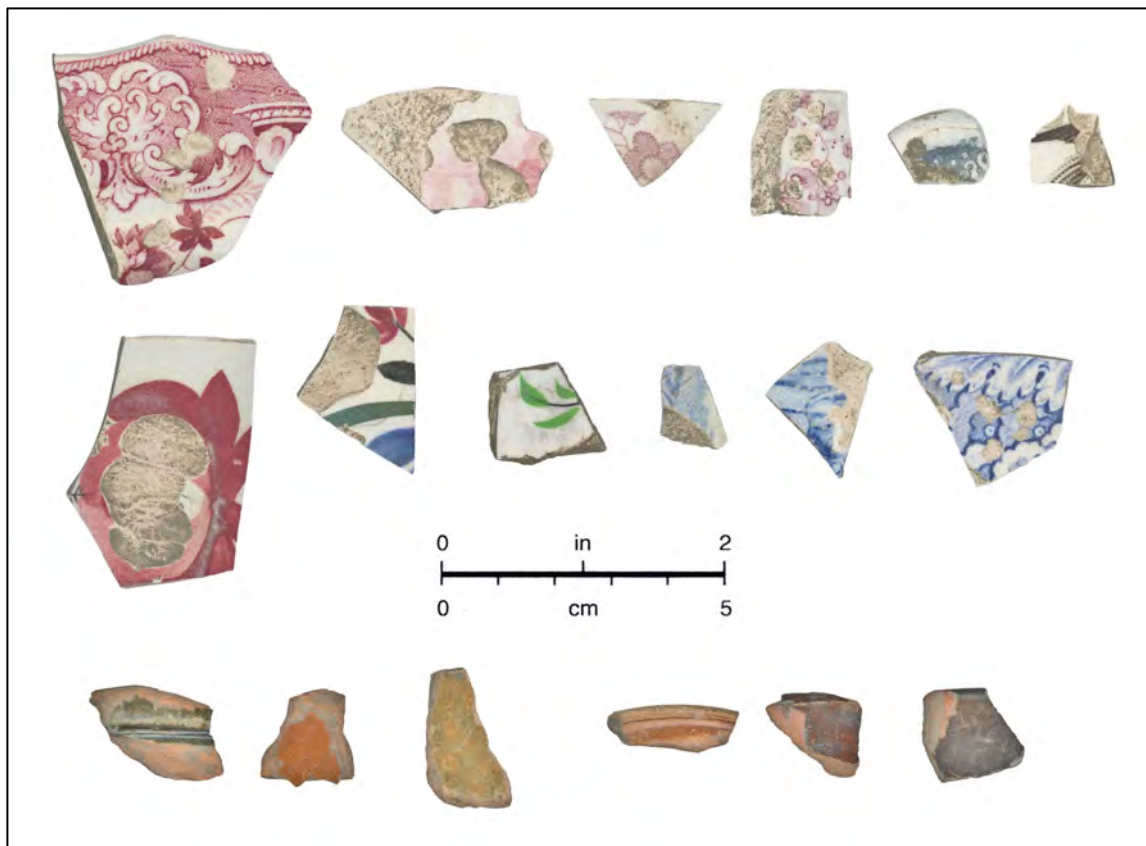


FIGURE 3.4: Whiteware and coarse lead-glazed earthenwares, Cultural Layer C.

A minimum total of 24 glass vessels is present in the Layer C sample (Figure 3.5). Eighteen are product bottles, and seven are tablewares. Glass packaged products consist mostly of wines or liquors (mnv = 15) in this sample. Seven are wine bottles, all of olive glass and represented by lip fragments. Three of these have flattened, applied lips, which are characteristic of post-circa 1825 bottles. Two, darker-olive wine bottles have pronounced string lips, slightly “V” shaped in profile, and probably predate 1825.

Three American whiskey flasks are present, each molded in pictorial imagery but represented by very small sherds. Two of the flasks are in aqua glass, and one is molded with horizontal ribbing on its sides. The third flask is of amber glass and has vertical ribbing on its sides. A single sherd is embossed with a possible glass house or city name, but is illegible, reading “...S/...HO...”. At least three medicine or utility bottles are present. All are probably dip-molded vials, two in aqua glass and one in flint glass.

Diagnostic table glass consists of drinking glasses and a small serving dish. Three are flint glass, dip-molded tumblers. These are very thin-bodied. The fourth is a press-molded, flint glass, “lacy” pattern sweet meat dish. The remainder are small flint glass type-indeterminate fragments.



FIGURE 3.5: Spirits bottles and flint glass tablewares, Cultural Layer C.

Smoking pipes are the most frequently occurring artifacts outside of ceramics and container glass (Figure 3.6). A conservative minimum of five pipes are represented by seven bowl fragments, a partially intact bowl, and one complete bowl. The partially intact bowl is plain with a pronounced spur. Two pipes are molded in a vertically-ribbed pattern. A fourth pipe is molded in a basket weave pattern. The fifth pipe is represented by an intact bowl and is the most unusual in the sample. It is molded with a human figure on each side of the bowl. One male figure is smoking a pipe, and the other drinking from a bottle. The mold seam of this pipe is decorated in a leaf pattern. Two heel fragments are present but could possibly belong to the pipes above. One heel has a spur and the other is flat. There are 21 stem fragments. All diagnostic pipe fragments date to ca. 1815-1840.

Clothing-related items include buttons, buckles, and a tinkling cone (Figure 3.6). Three pewter buttons are present. The first is a plain flat disc button with an embedded iron eye shank. The second is a cast-eye button with a dot relief pattern on its face. Mold seams are visible on the back of the button and shank. The third button is fragmentary, yielding little information. All three buttons are 18mm in diameter and were probably used on outerwear.

Three gunflints and a lead ball comprise the arms and ammunition category. One gunflint is broken. It is bifacial and made from Burlington chert. Bifacial flints are often attributed to Indigenous manufacture in Illinois. Two others are of British flint and fashioned in the blade style. Both are heavily worn (Figure 3.6). An approximately 50-caliber lead ball is unusually degraded, possibly from an impurity in the lead.



FIGURE 3.6: Pipes (rows one and two), buckles, buttons, tinkling cone (row three), musket ball, gunflints, and key (row four) from Cultural Layer C

One large, iron skeleton key was used on a rim lock or perhaps a large padlock (Figure 3.6). One small, brass tack may have been affixed to a trunk. Seven small pieces of brass were probably cut from scrapped kettles. Six have obvious cut edges. Cut kettle brass, used in repairs or for ornaments such as tinkling cones, is also generally affiliated with an Indigenous presence. Given their pre-1840 contexts, eight coal clinkers might suggest the presence of blacksmith on site, as opposed to a coal-fired stove.

Likely of prehistoric origins are nine chert flakes and 13 blocky chert fragments. Three shell-tempered ceramic sherds were also recovered. Two have smooth exteriors, and one may possibly be decorated with punctates.

Layer D Artifacts

From Layer D is a minimum of five tin-glazed vessels, found distributed across the test units (Figure 3.7). The first vessel is represented by a rim fragment of a possible Rim Style A plate (e.g. Waselkov and Walthall 2002). Only one blue band is visible due to a break. The second vessel is a base fragment from a polychrome painted faience brune plate. The third may be an undecorated white faience plate represented by a large base and marley fragment. Two small fragments represent a fourth vessel, but all that can be said about that vessel is that it was green-painted. Finally, two undecorated fragments represent a fifth type indeterminate tin-glazed plate. All of these appear to be French faience and fit comfortably into the early to mid-eighteenth century. A single Chinese porcelain vessel is present. It is represented by a small fragment and is probably a teacup. It is painted in a red overglaze motif.

Fragments from three unrefined vessels were recovered from Layer D (Figure 3.7). All are of French origins. A rim sherd from a Saintonge slipped-plain kitchen or serving bowl has a slightly rolled rim and is characteristic of mid-eighteenth-century products from Western France (e.g. Brain 1979, Mazrim 2011). Two type-indeterminant hollow vessels are glazed on both interior and exterior surfaces. One is glazed in an iron green-brown finish and the other in an orange amber-red speckled finish, again characteristic of early-to-mid-eighteenth century coarse earthenwares from France. Likely bowls or medium capacity jars, these were probably used in the kitchen as opposed to service.



FIGURE 3.7: Tin-glazed and lead-glazed ceramics, spirits bottles, possible iron button, brass hasp, micmac pipe bowl fragments, cut brass, knife blade, clay tablet-like item, and possible latch keep, Cultural Layer D

As can be expected from the age of the Layer D sample, little container glass is present in this assemblage. Two olive-green wine or spirits bottles are heavily iridescent, and clearly date to the eighteenth century. They are represented by heel fragments only (Figure 3.7). Two additional olive-green wine bottles are represented by thin body sherds. One is blown from a light olive glass, is not iridescent, and is probably of early-nineteenth century origins. It may be intrusive from Layer C. Finally, a single aqua vessel is represented by a flat body sherd. Non-diagnostic, it may represent a medicine bottle. It too is likely to be intrusive from Layer C.

From the small tools category is a fragment of pewter that may represent a spoon and an iron cast clasp knife blade of the *Samois* style (Figure 3.7). Two fragments of tobacco pipes were found in Layer D. Both are of the Micmac style. One is fashioned from limestone and is represented by a plain bowl fragment. The other is a redstone pipe, also represented by a plain bowl fragment (Figure 3.7).

Two possible clothing-related artifacts are present. What may be an iron button is heavily corroded with a concave front, and a small brass loop that may have functioned as a hasp or an eyelet (Figure 3.7).

Architectural materials include 23 hand-forged nails and a possible hand-forged iron latch keep (Figure 3.7). Four nails are of the appropriate size for light framing, while the others are smaller. Half of the sample is broken. Also present are two fragments of what appeared at first to be a soft mud brick, but instead each specimen represents a six-sided, tablet-like object. The object was low-fired from a sandy red-buff colored mud. Five pieces of kettle brass are present in the sample. All are small, and have been cut. Two are narrow strips. A piece of looped brass wire is also present.

Of note in this layer is the presence of coal clinkers and a large piece of unprocessed galena. The coal clinkers, in this context, strongly suggest the presence of a blacksmith in the church compound. The raw galena, perhaps collected across the river in southeast Missouri, might suggest casual on-site ore smelting or perhaps simply the occasional mineral collecting from the area of the mines.

Pre-Columbian materials from this zone include two small body sherds of shell-tempered ceramic with smoothed exteriors. These are not diagnostic to Danner Series pottery of the Illinois Tribes, and are assumed to be of Mississippian origins - although the relative paucity of associated chert debris in the sample seems surprising. A possible seventeenth or early-eighteenth century, non-local origin of these smooth-surfaced, shell-tempered sherds cannot be ruled out. A large flake of Burlington chert is also present.

Feature 1

Feature 1 was observed at the base of Units 1 and 4, with Unit 4 serving as an extension of Unit 1 in order to follow the feature to the west. Only a portion of the eastern edge of the feature was delineated – the remaining limits are beyond the limits of the Units 1 and 4.

Artifacts associated with this pit are fewer in Unit 1 than Unit 4 materials, as Feature 1 crossed only a portion of Unit 1. Most of the artifacts from Feature 1 in Unit 1 are animal bones. These have not been analyzed, but both cattle and bison bones appear to be present in the sample. Feature 1 artifacts from Unit 1 were collected in a single zone at 75cm to 100cm below surface. Feature 1 fill within Unit 4 was collected in three cultural zones - Zones A, B and C. Zone A was approximately 75cm to 85cm below surface and Zone B 80cm to 100cm below surface. The single collection bag for Zone A also reads “sand”. The only non-faunal material from Zone A is fragmented iron material, including one possible latch keep. The preponderance of the debris was collected from Zone B. No artifacts are present from Zone C, at the base of the pit.

The combined Feature 1 sample includes fragment of a minimum of only two ceramic vessels (Figure 3.8). The first is a tin-glazed plate (represented by two fragments) with a polychrome edge decoration. While the plate is French faience, the rim style is not present in Walthall’s rim style typology. The plate may predate the circa 1730s “Guillibaud” type styles, which compose the majority of the Walthall rim styles (Mazrim 2011: 34-36, Waselkov and Walthall 2001).

From both units is a total of five fragments of a small handmade jar that at first seemed to be of Indigenous origin (Figure 3.8). This vessel, however, is untempered, very hard-fired, and appears to have been made using a coil method - based on longitudinal breaks visible on two body sherds that may reflect

poorly welded coils. The small jar has an unmodified rim and a smoothed surface with a few incidental tool marks and a possible fingerprint. The small vessel may in fact be a “colonoware” vessel made by the enslaved residents of the small cabin noted on Mercier’s 1735 map. The hardness of the clay could even reflect a firing in a nearby French bake oven, perhaps affiliated with the “bakery” depicted very nearby on Mercier’s map. If this vessel does indeed reflect manufacture by a potter from the West Indies (or elsewhere), it is the first piece of colonoware yet observed in Illinois.

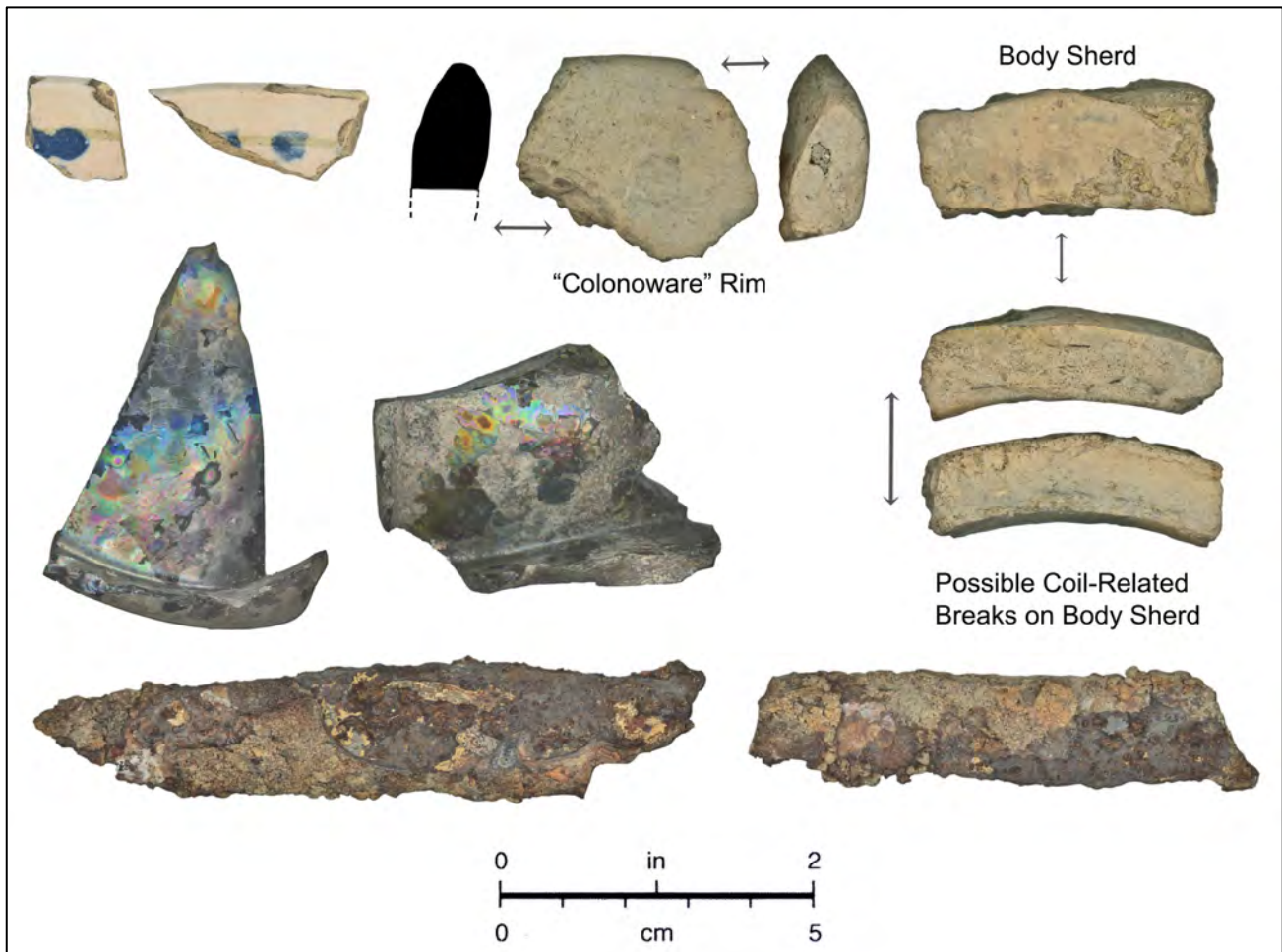


FIGURE 3.8: Tin-glazed plate, possible Colonoware jar, spirits bottles, and clasp knife blades from Feature 1.

Container glass from Feature 1 consists of fragments of a minimum of four wine / spirits bottles. Three are olive green bottles represented by body sherds and a single heel fragment. The fourth is a corner base fragment from a dark olive, square, case bottle.

Two iron clasp knife blades are present (Figure 3.8). One is in the *Saimois* style, and the other is a hawk’s bill style knife. Two very small white seed beads were also found in Feature 1. Finally, a large hand-forged nail has an intentionally curled or looped tip. Its modified function is unknown.

Fifteen nails were recovered from the pit cellar. Four could be considered large framing nails and four others are lighter-duty framing nails. Two are bent and 13 are broken, perhaps reflecting the dismantling of the building rather than its slow decay (Bill Weedman, personal communication 2024).

Pre-Columbian debris from Feature 1 includes three fragments of a thick-bodied, shell-tempered vessel with a smoothed exterior. These sherds are quite similar to those found in other contexts at the site. The sample is completed by two Burlington chert flakes and a quartzite hammerstone.

Small Features

Feature 2

Feature 2 is a pit of unknown size and shape, a small portion of which was encountered in Unit 3. It was filled before ca. 1770, based on the surrounding stratigraphy. Artifacts from the pit consist of an olive-green neck from a spirits bottle (with slightly tapered, flattened string lip), a base fragment of a second olive green spirits bottle with large kick-up, a heavily corroded nail, and a fragment of Burlington chert.

Feature 4

Feature 4 is a segment of a wall trench associated with the early-eighteenth century dwelling that stood over the Feature 1 pit cellar. It produced a body sherd of an olive-green spirits bottle, three fragmentary, corroded nails, and two pieces of clay daub.

Feature 6

Feature 6 is small privy vault located in Units 1 and 4. It punctured Cultural Layer D and its construction postdates the ca. 1770 clearing event. The temporally sensitive refined ceramics found in the fill suggest a closure during the late-eighteenth century or prior to ca. 1815.

Fragments of approximately seven refined vessels are present in this sample. Two are tin-glazed. One of these is a mid-section of a plate with yellow & brown painting. It may be of Spanish colonial manufacture. The second tin-glazed vessel is represented by a small sherd of a *faience brune* holloware, brown-glazed on both the interior and exterior surfaces. Eleven fragments of undecorated creamware are present in this sample – but they are small and generally non-diagnostic. One teacup is represented by a rim fragment.

The presence of pearlware extends the date of the feature fill beyond 1780. Five fragments were recovered, but most are small and it is difficult to identify vessel forms. One is blue painted; one (cup) is decorated in a polychrome soft pastel or mineral pigment motif; and three fragments are blue-printed. One of the latter is in the Chinoiserie / Willow pattern. No unrefined ceramics are present.

Product bottles include at least two or three wine/spirits bottles reflected by six very small, olive-green, heavily iridescent body sherds. The base of a flint glass vial is present. It is round, and appears to have been blown in a two-piece mold. It has a slight pontil scar that has been polished smooth. It may be of British origin. The small bottle may have tapered upwards, suggesting it could have contained the patent medicine known as “Godfrey's Cordial”, which was packaged in distinctive tapered bottles for nearly a century.

Glass tablewares consist of small fragments of drinking glasses or tumblers. All are of flint glass. One is plain-bodied, one is dip-molded in a ribbed pattern, and one is etched or wheel-engraved in a floral pattern.

A fragment of a small pewter and glass cross pendant was found in the pit (Figure 3.9). The pewter casting is decorated with clear glass jewels. A single light blue seed bead was also recovered. Other items from the small privy vault include a white clay stem fragment with heel spur, a cut strip of lead scrap, and three iron nail fragments.



FIGURE 3.9: Cross pendant, pipe stem, brass button, and pearlware from Feature 6.

Feature 7

Feature 7 is a discrete zone of soil deposited in a pile atop the filled Feature 1 pit cellar. It produced a small amount of very fragmentary, redeposited household debris that was probably introduced through mixing with the surrounding Layer C deposits. A minimum of seven refined ceramic vessels includes a tin-glazed type indeterminate vessel; an undecorated creamware vessel; a pearlware China Glaze painted saucer; a pearlware soft pastel painted saucer; a pearlware blue-painted type intermediate; a pearlware dipt hollowware; and a pearlware blue-printed type indeterminate. Feature 7 also produced two fragments of bottle glass, a fragment of a clasp knife blade, three fragments of window glass, and three nails.

4. Summary

Robert Mazrim

The village of Cahokia, Illinois is one of the most significant in the colonial history of the Midwest. The church that the Seminarian priests began to construct in the winter of 1698 is one of the first documented European edifices in the upper Mississippi Valley. And the colonial village that immediately took root in the midst of the Illinois tribal village was one of the first of its kind in the region.

It is difficult to know the history of the original mission church, and it seems likely that it was rebuilt overtime before its abandonment in the 1760s and replacement in 1799. However, based on the overlay of the Mercier map, as well as incidental finds on the property over the years, it seems quite likely that the original church was located directly in front of the still-standing 1799 church, and is now crossed by a modern sidewalk. The 1799 church itself was quite possibly constructed on the stone foundation of Father Forget's unfinished rectory. That unfinished building may have been occupied by British and then American soldiers for a brief time during the second half of the eighteenth century.

To the east was a small compound created by the Seminarian priests, a few French settlers, and the labor of Indigenous people and those of African descent. The 2014 excavations have demonstrated that the archaeological preservation at this site is high, and the well-stratified deposits reflect the written history of the site to a surprising degree.

Occupation of the site that ultimately became the Holy Family Church compound may have begun during the Mississippian period, resulting in a light scatter of chert debris and shell-tempered pottery mixed into the buried living surfaces. The chert debris is non-diagnostic, and the pottery is generally smooth-surfaced. The Tamaroa village that attracted the French to the locale was probably established by that tribe sometime in the late-seventeenth century. While the sherds found at the site do not conform with variants of Danner Series (the ceramic tradition affiliated with at least some of the Illinois tribes), it is not impossible that they reflect seventeenth or eighteenth-century vessels made elsewhere (perhaps down river), that were brought to the site during its occupation by the Illinois.

The colonial development of the site traditionally begins with the 1699 construction of a mission church in the midst of the Tamaroa village. Based on Father Mercier's map it seems likely that mission church itself was located to the north or northwest of the 1799 long church and well west of the 2014 investigations. Within the 2014 test units, the earliest activity from this era is reflected by the Feature 1/4 structure. Feature 1 appears to be a subfloor storage facility and depression beneath a post-in-earth French colonial structure. Feature 4 is interpreted as a section of the east wall of that building. According to the Mercier map (if the overlay is accurately placed on the modern landscape), this building might be one marked as the dwelling of "four blacks" – presumably slaves from the West Indies or elsewhere. The structure could have been built any time between circa 1700 and its depiction in 1735, although it seems likely that it was constructed as the mission complex stabilized and expanded during the 1720s. The size of the building is still unknown, but its footprint is well preserved beneath nearly a meter of overburden and soil development.

The fill of the pit cellar contained evidence of flood-borne deposits, perhaps made while the building was still occupied. It is possible that that facility took on water on several occasions, and this may have nearly filled the space below the dwelling with alluvium prior to the abandonment of the building. Artifacts associated with the feature pre-date circa 1750 and consists of domestic debris and animal bones. The latter have not been analyzed, but both cattle and bison bones seem to dominate the sample. The four individuals living in this dwelling may have been involved in livestock and butchering at the church compound.

Fragments of only two ceramic vessels were found in the pit. One is a tin-glazed plate (probably French faience) that falls outside of Walthall's rim style typology. The plate may predate the circa 1730s "Guillibaud" type styles, which compose most of Walthall's rim styles generally associated with mid-eighteenth-century contexts in Illinois. The Feature 1 and Layer D sample is instructive with regards to imported ceramic traditions, as it reflects deposits as early as the first quarter of the eighteenth century, and otherwise seems to predate ca. 1750.

A small unglazed earthenware jar may perhaps be a "colonoware" vessel made by the enslaved residents of the small cabin. It is hard-fired and appears to have been made using a coil method. If this vessel does indeed reflect manufacture by a potter of African descent, it is the first piece of colonoware yet observed in Illinois.

Container glass from the pit cellar consists of fragments from several eighteenth-century wine or spirits bottles. Two clasp knife blades from the cellar are of styles common in the midwestern fur trade throughout most of the eighteenth century, and probably originated in such an inventory.

Features 1 and 4 were truncated by the circa 1770 clearing event, but it is unclear if the building was still standing at that point. Based on the character of the wall trench fill, it seems possible that the dwelling was abandoned and dismantled prior to that event, however. At the other end of the line of test units (south), Feature 2 is a pit of unknown size. It may be affiliated with the early-eighteenth century occupation of this portion of the site. It also produced fragments of eighteenth-century wine or spirits bottles.

Surrounding these features is a buried topsoil that was collected as Cultural Layer D. It produced materials similar to those found in coeval Features 1, 2, and 4. This includes fragments of a minimum of five tin-glazed vessels, all probably of French faience. A fragment of a Chinese porcelain teacup was also recovered. Three lead-glazed coarse earthenware kitchen vessels are also of French origins. Container glass, again, consists principally of wine or spirits bottles.

Two fragments of Micmac pipes (one fashioned from limestone and one from redstone) were recovered. Micmac pipes are quite common in eighteenth century contexts at Cahokia, and were probably used by all members of the fur trading community (e.g. Mazrim 2011, Mazrim and Weedman 2023, Waselkov 2017).

A small amount of architectural material, consisting of hand-forged nails and a possible latch keep, reflect the early-eighteenth century structure nearby. No window glass was found in this layer. Of note is the presence of coal clinkers from this soil, which may reflect blacksmithing in the church compound. A piece of raw Galena might reflect a visit to the lead mines in present-day southeast Missouri.

After the 1763 sale of the church property, the historical record makes it clear that the complex was abandoned, and that most of the buildings associated with the church compound were in ruins by 1768. This is consistent with the soil profile and artifact distribution in Units 1-4. A circa 1770 ground clearing event is represented by a sharp break in soil deposits at approximately 75cmbs in all units. This may be affiliated with the brief tenure of the British (between ca. 1700 and 1772), or perhaps upon the arrival of the Americans in 1778.

Above the 75cmbs break, little in the sample seems to reflect the presence of either the British or American military. Some of the undecorated creamware and China Glaze pearlware could have been deposited by Americans occupying the unfinished stone rectory nearby. Some of the bottle glass and the two British gunflints could perhaps date to this era. But most of the temporally diagnostic artifacts from Layer C postdate circa 1815.

Evidence of a second building was found within the Layer C soils. It could possibly date to the otherwise poorly represented period between circa 1770 and 1815. This structure (again of unknown size) is reflected by Feature 3 - the disturbed corner of a stone-footed structure. Undressed, slightly tabular limestones were dry-laid inside a wall trench, the edges of which were difficult to define in profile due to abundant root and rodent disturbance. The 2014 excavations exposed the southeast corner of this building. Feature 5 is a rough excavation that was probably affiliated with the robbery of the upper courses of this stone footing, sometime during the early-nineteenth century.

Feature 6, interpreted as a small privy vault, cut into the filled Feature 1. The material recovered from its fill post-dates circa 1780, but could potentially predate the mid-1810s. The privy may be affiliated with the Feature 3 structure found in Unit 2. Aside from small fragments of redeposited domestic debris, the pit produced a broken cross pendant decorated with glass jewels.

Most of the Layer C deposits may be affiliated with a rectory built nearby during the early-nineteenth century. This building (perhaps located on the east side of the 1799 church and south of Unit 3), was probably constructed during the tenure of Father Francis Savigne (1811-1827). Tradition has it that the rectory caught fire on Christmas Eve of 1835, during the subsequent tenure of Father Peter Doutreluingue (John Reed, personal communication 2011). The following year, Father John Francis Loisel oversaw the construction of a new rectory west of the log church, on the opposite side of Church Street. Thus, the apparent mid-1830s closure of the domestic midden aligns well with the history of domestic activity on the church property.

The overwhelming majority of the debris from this layer is principally related to food service. Conversely, the sample of unrefined ceramics affiliated with food preparation and storage is rather small. Ceramics consist mostly of Staffordshire Queenswares. Container glass is reasonably well represented, particularly for its age. Artifacts that fall outside of the typical ceramic and glass categories are few, however. The exception is smoking pipes. A proportionally high number of pipe fragments are present in this sample, suggesting that smoking was occurring in the same area where food service vessels were broken or discarded. The paucity of artifact classes (such as clothing-related items or small tools) also seems to suggest a segregation of spaces, resulting in a view mostly restricted to food-service and smoking activities.

In Layer C, refined ceramics exhibit a slight emphasis on tablewares, although teawares still dominate the sample as they do in most American-era contexts before 1840 in Illinois. Coarse kitchen ceramics include a mix of French and American vessels. At least some of the former were probably still lingering in the old French communities during the early-nineteenth century, and the latter appear to have been made in the upper Ohio Valley or further east. Few redware potters were working in the area before 1835.

Although the sample is highly fragmentary and difficult to diagnose, the container glass sample is proportionally larger than is typical to this era. Wine bottles dominate diagnostic specimens, and at least three American whiskey flasks were also observed. Table glass consists of simple drinking glasses and small serving dishes. Smoking pipes are the most frequently occurring artifacts outside of the ceramics and glass categories. All are of white clay and probably of British origins.

The Christmas Eve fire of 1835 at the rectory isn't obviously reflected in the character of the debris from Layer C. Little melted or burnt material is present. Heavy spalling of refined ceramics, however, may reflect exposure to heat. This might suggest that whatever structural fire did occur, it wasn't so extensive as to thoroughly burn the contents of the kitchen. And of course, most of this material was probably already deposited into the local midden before the 1835 fire.

Above Layer C was a layer of tabular limestone debris that is very likely affiliated with the 1889 construction of the stone church, which was located immediately east of the 2014 excavations.

The 2014 excavations at the Holy Family Church site encountered a rich, well-developed, and well-preserved soil column containing a number of features and at least two living surfaces dating to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The site is a very significant one in the development of French colonial Illinois. It is also one of the few sites known to be associated with the Illinois Tribes. The Illinois are not obviously visible in the sample, unless tribal members are responsible for some of the trade goods that were found in the compound. It also seems entirely likely that the Illinois were simply using many of the same household items as their French neighbors.

The Feature 1 and Layer D assemblages represent some of the earliest French domestic samples yet recovered in the region. Notably, much of this material might have been affiliated with a small dwelling inhabited by enslaved individuals of African descent. The unassuming fragments of a plain untempered clay jar (if they indeed reflect the handiwork of one of those individuals) might perhaps be the most culturally significant items recovered during the 2014 excavations.

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