

RESULTS FROM JUNE 22, 2011

After a late evening in Nashville, we were back at work at 7:00 this morning. Below, Robert assists Hillary and Megan with excavations in the westernmost of our Mound 3 units!



As the day proceeded, several interesting artifacts were recovered from atop Mound 3. The first is an unusual bird effigy head – from the rim of a bowl. Although duck effigies are relatively common in the late 1300s and 1400s in the Nashville area, this particular bowl is another crested bird – with an almost serpentlike profile.



More exciting was the discovery of a fragment of a negative painted human effigy bottle – the very type of bottle that Robert has been researching. The fragment contains part of the left arm, shoulder, and left breast – and retains some vestiges of painting (not really visible in this photo).



Of the handful of these bottles known, it most closely resembles one found at the site in the 1800s by Myer – shown below in a period photograph. This is an incredible find – this is the first fragment excavated from a non-burial context in recent history – with the associated charcoal, we will be able to get an idea when this bottle was discarded.



As the day proceeded, we were able to clean up three of the units containing the large band of clay on top of Mound 3. The dense clay feature is visible in the photograph below running from the upper left diagonally across all three units to the lower right. About a meter wide, it contains virtually no artifacts – and clearly is part of a structure that once stood on top of the mound. The darker soil to the lower left of the feature is midden containing artifacts presumably discarded by people using the mound-top structure. The deposit to the upper right is largely ash mixed with artifacts – at this point it is difficult to tell whether the ash is from burning of the structure or some other activity.



With one of the nicest days thus far – overcast and in the upper 70s – the crew worked away to reveal more secrets of Mound 3.



As excavations proceeded, many clisters of ash were revealed like that shown below – the white ash flecked with charcoal is a reminder of the people who lived here some 800 plus years ago..



Excavations on the pre-mound surface to the west revealed part of a large circular pit visible below as a dark stain covering most of the excavation floor.

