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Timothy E. Baumann

University of Tennessee-Knoxville

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Results of the 1997 Excavations at the Brown Lodge/Caldwell Pottery Site (23SA451), Arrow Rock, MO

Timothy E. Baumann, University of Tennessee-Knoxville

An archaeological field school was jointly operated by the Missouri Archaeological Society (MAS) and the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (UTK) at the BrownLodge/Caldwell Pottery Site (23SA451) in Arrow Rock, Missouri between July 14 and August 8, 1997. The field school operated as a public archaeological project in cooperation with the Friends of Arrow Rock and the Arrow Rock State Historic Site and was partially funded by a grant from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

Arrow Rock is a Missouri River town located in Saline County, Missouri. Saline County is situated in west-central Missouri in Missouri's "Little Dixie" region, named for its inhabitant's southern heritage and Democratic views and the diverse agricultural system which operated during the antebellum period with enslaved African-Americans. After the Civil War, many of these enslaved African-Americans fled their masters and moved into towns like Arrow Rock to start their own segregated communities.

African-Americans settled the north side of Arrow Rock along Morgan and north Second streets. The Brown Lodge/Caldwell Pottery site is situated on Block #30, located on Morgan Street between Sixth and Seventh streets. The history of Block #30 includes five components: a stoneware pottery factory (1854-1870s), three African-American residences (1882-1950s), an African-American Odd Fellows lodge (1891-1900), an African-American Masonic lodge (1881-1931), and an African-American restaurant and bar (1881-1950s).

The 1997 field school continued archaeological work started in the 1996 MAS field school (Baumann 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 1998; Baumann and Krause 1997). The 1997 excavation goals were to evaluate the archaeological resources on Block #30, assist in the restoration of the Brown Lodge as an African-American heritage center, and determine if Arrow Rock's listing on the National Register of Historic Places should be amended to include its African-American heritage. The 1997 field school excavated 12 3 x 3 foot units and 89 posthole tests, recording seven new cultural features and collecting 424 bags of artifacts.

Excavations and surface mapping recorded numerous features associated with both the pottery factory and the African-American occupation. Features associated with the pottery factory included the remains of a circular, downdraft kiln and a brick foundation interpreted as a pottery workshop. Features associated with the African-American occupation included structural features linked to both the Brown Lodge and a residence on lot 121. Limestone piers and a midden were identified as the remains of a two story addition behind the Brown Lodge. Limestone piers, a cement sidewalk, a cistern, and two cellars were recorded and partially excavated of the lot 121 house.

Artifacts collected from the 1997 excavations are currently being processed and analyzed in the Historical Archaeology Laboratory at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Deb Krause, a

graduate student in Art History and Archaeology at the University of Missouri-Columbia is writing her master's thesis on the stoneware pottery component of this site. Tim Baumann, a doctoral student in Anthropology at the University of Tennessee, is writing his dissertation on Block #30's African-American heritage. Initial interpretations of artifacts and features associated with the African-American component are described below:

Ceramics

The ceramic assemblage collected during the 1997 field season came from two general proveniences; the lot 121 house site and the Brown Lodge. Ceramics around the lot 121 house were plentiful including decorated whitewares, porcelain, ironstone, and salt-glazed, slipped, and bristol-glazed stoneware. The most unique ceramic pieces from the house site included a porcelain mustache cup, and an ironstone plate with a monogram "B" standing for the Bush family who occupied this site between 1903 and 1941. Identified makers' marks all date after 1890. Most of the house site ceramics were collected from a cistern and a root cellar behind the house.

Very few ceramics were collected from the Brown lodge. The Brown Lodge is a two story frame structure with a Masonic hall on the second floor and a restaurant and bar on the first. The Masons were active on this site between 1881 and 1931. The restaurant and bar was in operation into the 1950s. The few ceramic sherds found around the lodge suggests that first floor establishment was used more as a bar than a restaurant or that meals were not served or prepared in ceramic dishes.

Construction Materials

Construction materials collected or observed from this site included brick, shingles, plaster, vinyl flooring, and limestone piers. In the 1880s, when African-Americans began to purchase their own property and build homes in Arrow Rock, they had little money to buy construction materials, consequently, many of the first African-American houses were constructed of scrap or recycled materials. These houses were generally constructed of wood frame, on a limestone pier foundation, with a central brick chimney. The Brown Lodge, a communal structure built in 1881, was likely constructed with better materials than most houses. The Brown Lodge is constructed of a wood frame, cut nails, a continuous limestone foundation, and a brick chimney.

Brick concentrations and limestone piers were visible around both the standing Brown lodge and the lot 121 house site. The brick and limestone concentration behind the lodge was identified as a razed two story rear addition that housed a kitchen on the first floor and an external stairway and second story entrance to the Masonic Hall. Some of the brick from the rear concentration had heavy salt glazing suggesting that bricks were recycled from the earlier pottery kiln that was found archaeologically adjacent to the Brown Lodge.

Vessel Glass

Examples from the lot 121 house site varied greatly and included soda, whiskey, wine, medicine, milk, and perfume bottles. Glass containers collected from the Brown Lodge included mostly

whiskey bottles, shot glasses, and tumblers. Again, the high frequency of alcohol related glass artifacts suggests that the lodge's first floor was used more as a bar than as a restaurant.

Faunal Remains

Faunal remains from the Brown Lodge include both wild and domestic species representing two activity sets: 1) human food consumption and 2) non-human scavenging. Oral history of the Brown Lodge states that pork, fish, rabbit, and chicken were served in the first floor restaurant. The human food consumption is represented by carp, the most common, followed by pig and cattle bones. The remaining animal bones of opossum, rabbit, bird, and mole have heavy gnawing and have been attributed to small carnivorous scavenging (i.e. dog, cat, raccoon, opossum). While some of these bones may have been scavenged subsequent to human consumption of the meat, no cut marks were identified on these bones.

Floral Remains

The best preserved floral remains came from the cellar fill behind the lot 121 house site. A cursory analysis identified corncobs, peach pits, and charred wood from cooking and heating.

Metal

Hinges, furniture tacks, tin cans, tools, wire, and indeterminate rusted masses were collected from both the lot 121 house site and the Brown Lodge. The most interesting metal objects include an abundance of tin cans and paint can openers collected from the cistern and cellar behind the lot 121 house. Oral history and census data indicate that Franklin Bush, who lived on this property from 1903-1931, was a painter, plasterer, and wallpaper hanger. These tin cans, some still containing paint, and painter's keys are likely related to Mr. Bush's occupation.

Miscellaneous

A general list of objects found in this category include: buttons, marbles, lead seals, glass beads, a chandelier crystal, pipe fragments, and keys.

Buttons collected from the rear lodge midden when were diverse when compared to buttons from other areas excavated on Block #30. These buttons were varied and represented coat, shirt, fraternal, and military types manufactured from metal, cloth, wood, bone, plastic, and porcelain material. A black plastic fraternal button with a crescent moon and star is the only artifact directly associated with the Masonic hall. A World War I general army service button also was collected. This button may have belonged to WWI veteran Lewis Hodges, who is buried in Arrow Rock's African-American cemetery. This large button assemblage may be explained by patrons losing buttons while removing their coats upon entering the establishment. Recovery of a thimble also suggests the manufacture or repair of clothing in the kitchen or on the back porch.

Lead seals embossed with "Boonville, MO" also were collected around the Brown Lodge. These seals have been associated with packages or deliveries made to the lodge from Boonville, Missouri. At this time, we are unsure of these packages' contents.

The chandelier crystal and glass beads were found around the lot 121 house site. Chandelier crystals and quartz crystals have previously been found on African-American sites, particularly in slave quarters. Similar chandelier crystals were recovered by Amy Young from slave quarter root cellars on the Locust Grove plantation in Kentucky (Young 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997). Young interpreted these crystals along with perforated coins, beads, and "X" marked artifacts (marble, spoon) as religious or ideologically significant objects to African-Americans. These objects were often worn as pendants for good luck charms or to ward off evil.

One blue and one yellow bead were also recovered from the lot 121 house site. Blue beads and the color blue have also been associated with African-Americans, and, like crystals, were supposed to ward off evil spirits (Stine et al. 1996). Often doorways and windows were outlined in blue to keep spirits from entering the house. Perhaps significantly, the standing Brown Lodge's front door and windows are outlined in blue paint.

Investigations of Arrow Rock's African-American heritage at the Brown Lodge/Caldwell Pottery Site reflects African-American struggles for freedom and equal rights after slavery in Missouri. This struggle is imbedded in the first property, houses, and personal objects bought and used outside the context of slavery

Future plans include a MAS/UTK field school on Block #30 and along north Second Street in May 1998. Excavations on Block #30 will concentrate on the Brown Lodge to better define its architectural integrity for its eventual restoration. North Second Street contained African-American structures of seven households, a church, a schoolhouse, and a bar. Investigations at Second Street will include mapping of surface features and posthole testing to expand our knowledge of the entire African-American community and ultimately amend Arrow Rock's National Register Listing to include its African-American heritage. More information on this program is found on page 11 of this issue of A-A A.

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