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THE BASKETRY OF 45SN100

by Debbie Padden

Editor's Note: This paper was written by a student enrolled in an anthropology course at Seattle Central Community College. Only the basketry and matting from the site are considered; none of the knots or cordage have been analysed for this paper.

Site 45SN100, near Duvall, Washington, is located on the Biederbost family farm. Some artifacts were discovered by the family who contacted the Washington Archaeological Society. The artifacts that have been excavated and catalogued as of June 1976, were found along the Snoqualmie River bank and in the river bed. As they had been compressed between layers of mud and clay they were preserved in an oxygen-free atmosphere and are remarkably intact.

Of the perishable artifacts excavated from this site, the matting and basketry have been classified according to a system of weave patterns set up and described by Dale Croes. In using this classification, only three weave types were discovered at 45SN100: open twining, checker, and twill.

Open twining requires three strands of material to make one stitch. Two horizontal strands encircle a vertical, twist once around themselves and encircle the next vertical strand.

Checker weave needs only two strands to make one stitch. Each horizontal strand that is in front of a vertical strant is placed behind the next vertical strand. To create the checker board effect, each vertical strand has alternating horizontal stitches in front and behind it all along its length.

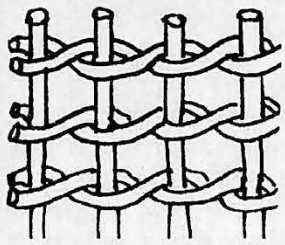
Twill requires three pieces of material to make one stitch. Two vertical strands are placed next to each other as if they were one strand. A horizontal strand is placed in front of these two and behind the next two. This pattern repeats in each row but is moved one vertical strand to the right of the row above it, thus creating a stair-step pattern.

The twill weave appeared as a fragment (body alone) only three times. When found as part of a basket it is always the bottom, therefore this weave pattern's main use was probably the bottom-work of baskets.

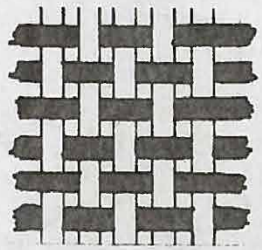
Fourteen pieces have been classified as open twining weave. One piece was a complete basket with a body, rim, and bottom. Two other artifacts have basket components; one has a body and bottom, the other has a body, rim and handle. The remaining eleven pieces are either fragments (body alone) or they contain a body and rim and/or reinforcement. because of the usually delicate and airy weave, these fragments may have been used for light cover pieces as well as being fragments of whole basket containers.

The checker weave was found in 41 of the 58 basket artifacts.

Only one of these was a whole basket; nine others have basket components such as body and handle, body, handle, rim and/or reinforcement. The remaining pieces contain only the body fragment with a rim and/or a reinforcement. These sturdier pieces may have been part of larger pieces of matting used in extensive coverage, large containers,or partitions used in the house or fishing industry.



Open Twining



Checker

Twill

Distribution of Woven Material by Weave

	Open Twining	Checker	Twill
1. Fragment			
A. Body only	7	9	3
2. Partial Baskets			
A. Body, bottom	1		
B. Body, rim	3	4	
C. Body, handle		2	
D. Body, reinforcement		8	
E. Body, rim, handle	1		
F. Body, rim, reinforcement	1	10	
G. Body, reinforcement, handle		2	
H. Body, rim, reinforcem't, handle		5	
3. Whole Baskets			
A. Body, rim, bottom	1	1	
Totals	14	41	3

Paradigmatic Classification of Woven Materials

Category	Class	Formal Dimension
I	A Body weave	1 checker weave 2 open twining 3 plain twining 4 check on bias 5 twill weave 6 twill on bias
	B Body rimwork	1 present 2 absent
	C Body reinforcement	1 single weave 2 double weave 3 no reinforcement
II	A Rim	1 present 2 absent
	B Rim weave	1 diagonal twining 2 tucked 3 braid 4 diagonal twining and tuck 5 no rim weave
III	A Handle	1 present 2 absent
	B Shape	1 twisted cord 2 straight cord 3 none
	C Placement	1 rim 2 body 3 bottom 4 body rimwork 5 none
IV	A Bottom	1 present 2 absent
	B Weave	1 twill 2 twill on bias 3 checker 4 checker on bias 5 none
V	A Knotted Cordage	1 straight cord 2 twisted cord

Paradigmatic Distribution of Woven Materials

Artifact Number	I Body	II Rim	III Handle	IV Bottom	V Knotted Cordage
A	A1B1C1	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
B	A1B1C2	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
D	A1B1C2	A2B5	A1B1C4	A2B5	
E	A1B1C2	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
131a	A2B2C3	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
131b	A2B2C3	A1B3	A1B1C1	A2B5	
134	A3B1C2	A1B1	A1B1C4	A2B3	
135a	A2B2C5	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
135b	A2B2C3	A2B1	A2B3C5	A2B5	
137a	A1B2C2	A1B1	A1B1C4	A2B5	
328a	A1B1C1	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
328b	A1B1C1	A1B1	A2B3C5	A2B5	
329	A1B2C5	A1B2	A1B1C1	A2B5	
330	A1B1C2	A1B2	A2B3C5	A2B5	
332	A2B2C3	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
334	A2B2C3	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
335	A1B1C1	A1B2	A1B1C4	A2B5	
337	A1B1C2	A2B5	A2B3C5	A2B5	
2000	A2B]C2	A1B1	A1B1C1	A1B2	
2001	A2B2C5	A2B5	A2B3C5	A1B3	
2002					A2
2003					A2
2004					A1
2005					A2
2006					A2
2008					A2
2009					A1

DIGGERS NEED NOT DESTROY

by Bob Beattie

The constant fear of all archaeological excavators is that they must destroy a site to study it. With the advent of computers, this fear may be alleviated. Though the use of computers is out of the reach of amateurs and most professional archaeologists at the moment, the concept of storing huge amounts of data in a retrieval system is most attractive.

It has been suggested[1] that if we could store in a memory bank all of the bits of information we have available on a given site, and if we know the right questions to ask, that we could discover information, relationships and concepts that would lead to a whole new family of hypotheses. As is often the case in science, one hypothesis leads to many others and then there is always the help of serendipity. These factors would not be restricted to one site. Assuming a uniform system of input one could ask, for example, a computer in Vancouver, B.C. to search the sites in that area for the relationship between pH of the soil and the type and amount of lithic material. Another example would be asking for a profile of a color of soil at 45SN100. We may discover contour levels, suspicious flat areas, blank areas and most of them would be not at all obvious, even to the informed and experienced digger going down by levels.

Let's say we find a flat area and hypothesize that this was a long house. We could ask the computer to literally draw a profile of the stratigraphy of the area, also the stratigraphy beside it, under it and above it. One can easily see that these kinds of questions can lead to any number of other questions.

The whole problem in a system like this is to constantly formulate meaningful questions. We feel we have questions now. The things we ponder and question now will seem rudimentary and primtive when such a system is available. Another problem, one basic to the whole system, is what to put into the memory bank and how to formulate the information so it is retrievable in a manner that will answer our questions. Herein lies one of the dilemmas. We don't yet know the possibilities of what are meaningful questions, but there has to be a start--a trial and error beginning.

One such method on the site level has been proposed[2]. Each five-foot pit would be divided into 6 inch squares going down in 6 inch levels. This gives us 100 six-inch cubes for every level (6 inches is only arbitrary and could be one inch cubes or 1 foot cubes, depending on the nature of the site). Each cube is a separate unit encoded with all the information we can learn about it, ie: detailed artifact

descriptions, soil color, soil pH, soil weight, pollen studies, C14 dates, flotation studies, and so forth. So if we have this much information on every unit (computers are not fussy about consuming and disgorging great quantities of information), we can ask the computer to reconstruct just about anything we have removed and do it in a way that is infinitely more meaningful. So you see, diggers need not necessarily destroy[3].

Sound like Science Fiction? Maybe, but here is a system where you can have your dig and keep it, too.

References:

1. Streiff, Lee, Amateur Archaeologist, Vol. I, No. 1.
2. Sparling, Gerald (personal communication)
3. Koruga, John, Washington Archaeologist, Vol. 15, No. 4.

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A N N O U N C E M E N T

The results of the vote on the preferred evening for our laboratory sessions are in and counted. The majority have indicated that the first and third Tuesdays of the month are best. Therefore our first laboratory session is scheduled for March 15th at 7:30 PM. We will meet in the Anthropology Laboratory at Seattle Central Community College, 1705 Broadway (on Capitol Hill). The room number is 4105.

WE ALL LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT OUR SESSIONS. Please feel free to attend even though you haven't had an opportunity to dig at the site. Maybe we can learn something in the lab which wasn't apparent in the field--we might discover even more interesting information than we already know.