

A Small Hialeah Midden

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A SMALL HIALEAH MIDDEN

D. D. Laxson

In May, 1952, excavation was started in a group of hammocks located in Section 35, Range 40 east, Township 52 south, Dade County, Florida. Two sites were completed and notes published in *The Florida Anthropologist* (Laxson, 1953a and 1953b). The present paper refers to the smallest, southernmost, and last hammock in the group and is called Hialeah No. 3.

This small midden is located in a rectangular-shaped hammock about 500 feet long and 200 feet across at its widest point. It lies along the southern edge of a muck and sawgrass slough, running in a NE-SW direction. In approaching from the west across the sawgrass, it can be seen that the site sits upon a limestone ledge two feet above the low area.

The surface of the midden site is undulating, following the contour of the limestone underneath. Test holes showed limestone at depths varying from several inches near the western rim to several feet near the hammock's center. Some of the underlying limestone had solution holes; some could be broken off in flat, laminated pieces.

Vegetation is in no way different from other hammocks in the area. In the low spots bay, wax myrtle, groundsel, sawgrass, and tremula are evident. On the higher portions of the hammock are ficus, hackberry, pokeberry, elderberry, and wild grape.

The midden site is located near the eastern edge of a large ficus tree, forty feet east of the western rim bordering the slough (Fig. 1). A large hole has been burned in the tree, evidently to smoke out bees. A single wooden hive has been placed in the thick vegetation near the tree.

There was, even after a careful search, no sign on the surface of any occupation. It was decided to test the area just east of the large ficus because the larger roots disappeared under the ground on this side of the tree, seemingly indicating the deeper soil. On the west side of the tree, roots lay along the surface.

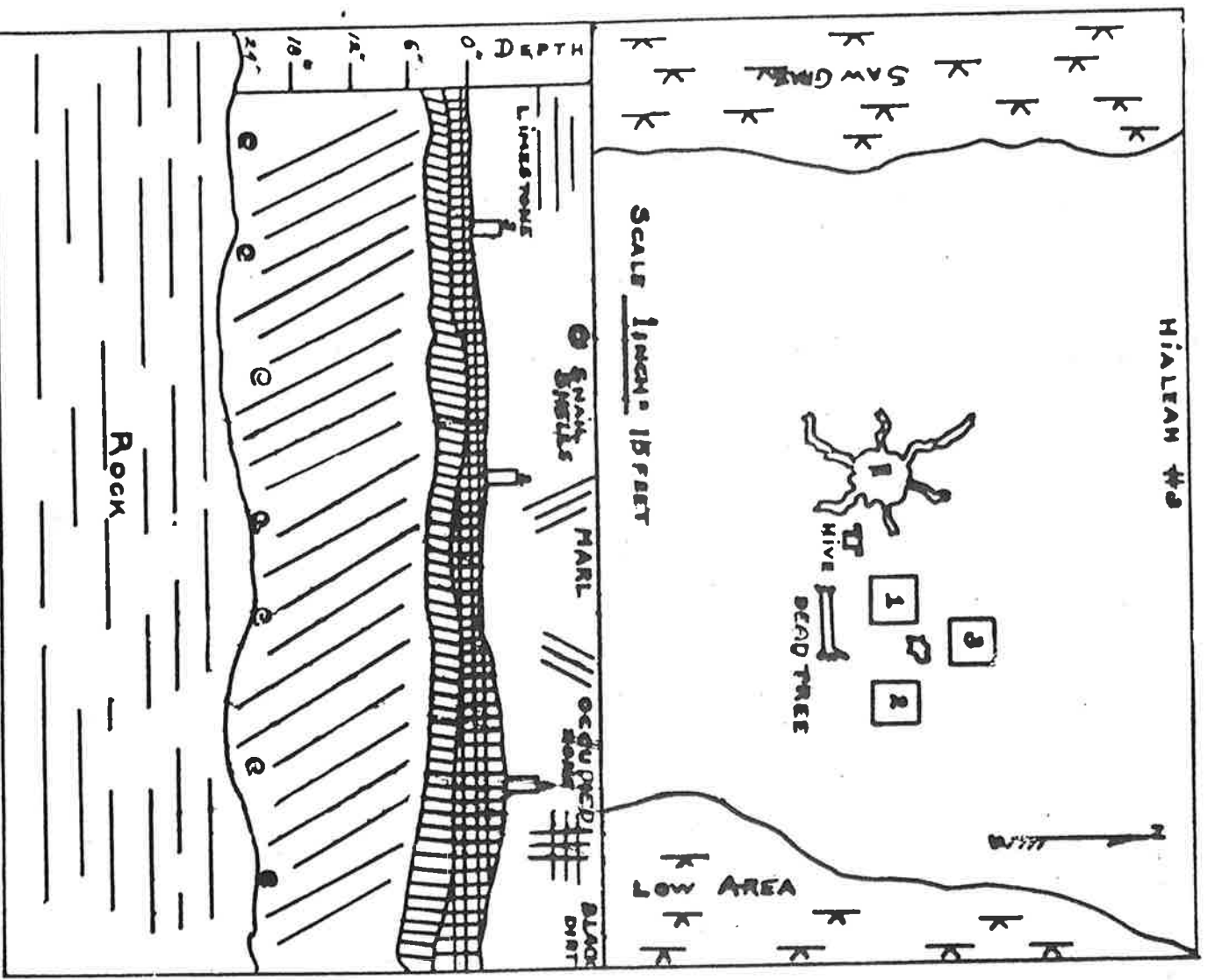


Fig. 1.

As soon as digging began, it became obvious that a peculiar situation existed. The midden area was small, covering twenty feet in a N-S direction and fifteen feet to the E-W. The soil profile seemed to show from three to six inches of black dirt and then a narrow occupation zone of from four to six inches in a dark grey sand (Fig. 1). Below this there was about eighteen inches of a grey marl down to the limestone. There was very little material, except snail shells, in this marl.

Three five-foot-square pits were started. It was apparent that there was to be no worthwhile material below the six- or eight-inch level. Therefore

no deeper excavating was done. In an effort to locate additional material, test holes were dug at two-and-a-half foot intervals across the midden area. Nothing promising was found so the project was halted.

Examination of sherds from Hialeah No. 3, classified in Table I, showed this midden to be of the Glades II period (presence of Key Largo Incised and absence of Glades Tooled sherds). The unclassified incised sherds

Table I

DISTRIBUTION OF SHERD TYPES IN HIALEAH NO. 3.

0-6" level

	Pit 3	Pit 2	Pit 1
Unclassified incised	1	2	3
Unclassified punctated		1	
Surfside Incised			1
Key Largo Incised		6	7
Glades Tooled (?)		1	
Black painted Glades Plain			1
Belle Glade-like, but Glades Plain paste			1
Glades Plain	42	81	37

BONE AND SHELL MATERIAL IN HIALEAH NO. 3.

0-6" level

	Pit 3	Pit 2	Pit 1
Pieces of cut bone handle	1		
Shark vertebrae bead	1		
Turtle bone	5		
Deer bone (incl. antler)	3	2	4
Clam shells	3	2	
Conch shells	1	2	2
Land snail (Euglandia, sp., recent)	1		
Macrocallista shell			1
Unidentified animal bone	1		

(Fig. 2, first two rows) were quite interesting. One (Fig. 2, first sherd) was similar to one illustrated by Goggin and Sommer for Upper Matecumbe Key (1949, Pl. 1, R). Those with vertical lines between horizontal lines (Fig. 2, second row) closely resembled one illustrated by Willey for the Belle Glade site (1949, Pl. 5, L).

All of this material was found in a narrow occupation zone (Fig. 1, lower, second zone from surface). These "unclassified" incised sherds

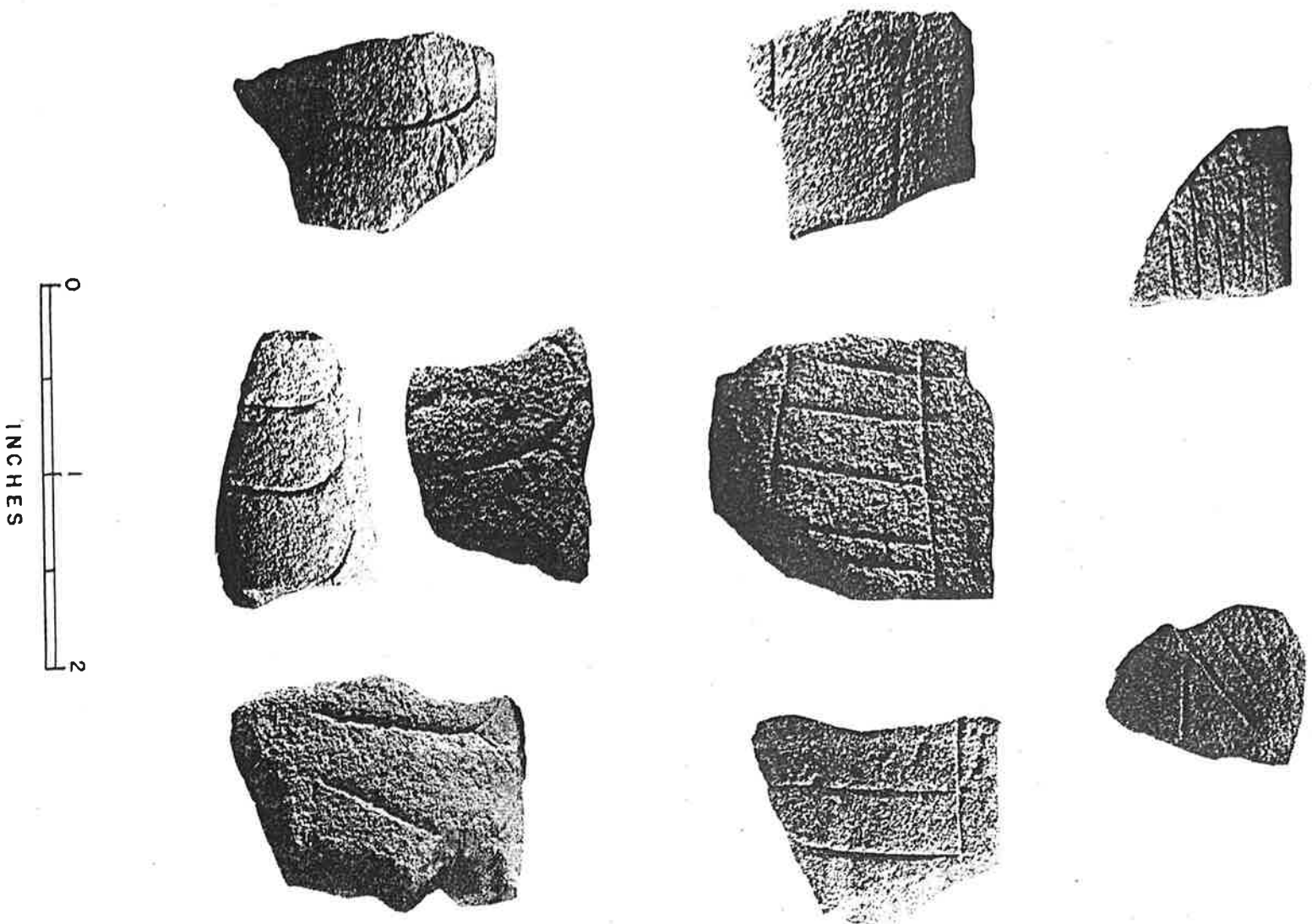


Fig. 2.

were associated with the relatively abundant Key Largo Incised pottery (Fig. 2, third row) and hence date also to Glades II times, probably late in that period or circa 900-1000 A.D. (Goggin, 1950).

This work has been reported to record this association as the "unclassified" incised sherds appear to represent a rare Miami-area type.

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HIALEAH, FLORIDA