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# Surface Survey and Ground Testing at Sam's Site (36Ch283): A Multicomponent Site in Chester County, Pennsylvania With a Nearby Shenks Ferry Occupation

Marshall Joseph Becker

West Chester University of Pennsylvania, [mbecker@wcupa.edu](mailto:mbecker@wcupa.edu)

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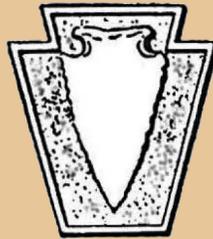
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# Pennsylvania Archaeologist

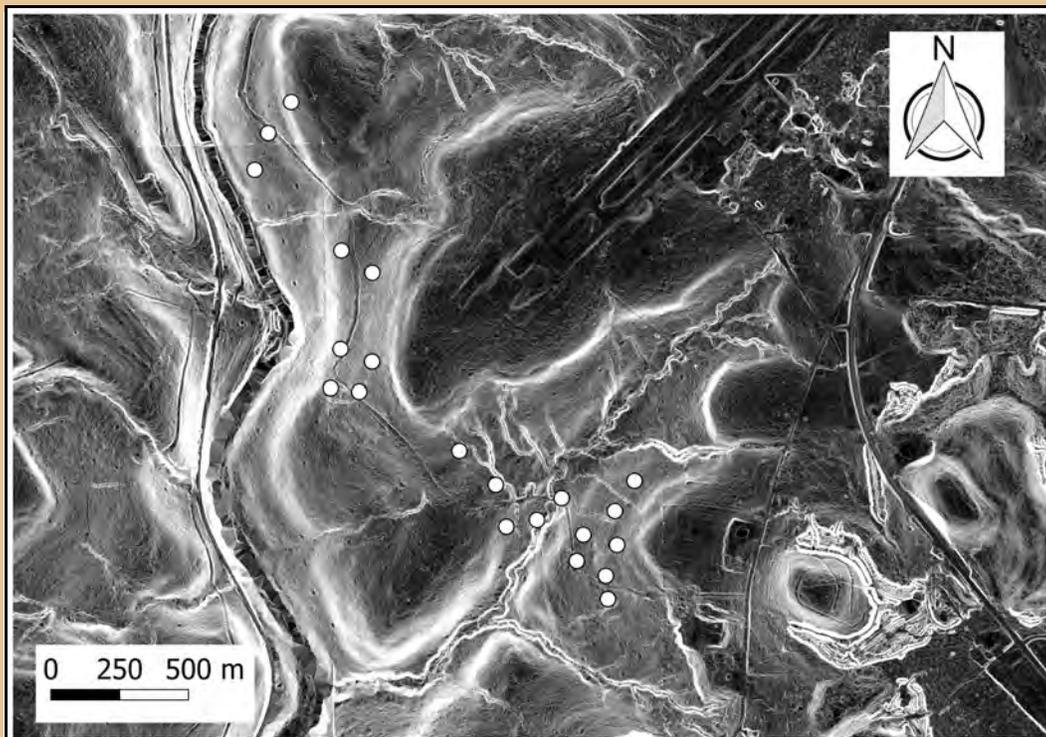


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**SURFACE SURVEY AND GROUND TESTING AT SAM'S SITE (36Ch283):  
A MULTICOMPONENT SITE IN CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA WITH A  
NEARBY SHENKS FERRY OCCUPATION**

**MARSHALL JOSEPH BECKER**

Dedicated to the Memory of Ronald A. Thomas 1941 - 2004

**ABSTRACT**

Surface collecting from 36Ch283, a multicomponent site in south-central Chester County, Pennsylvania, suggests that activities at this location over a long period of time were confined to a very slight rise not larger than 15 by 25 m. Phase II testing of the area adjacent to this site revealed a possible Shenks Ferry habitation area located on the shallower grade above the knoll, at a short distance from the focus of surface collecting. The very different picture presented by the surface finds, however impoverished by intensive activities of amateur collectors, demonstrates the importance of surface collections in the interpretation of more extensive information recovered through excavations. The Shenk's Ferry occupation at this site suggests an intrusion of these people in the early 16th century, perhaps resulting from a population displacement when the Susquehannocks shifted into the lower Susquehanna River Valley ca. 1500 AD.

**INTRODUCTION**

Site 36Ch283, Sam's site, is situated on a south facing slope along the north side of Taylors Run in central Chester County, Pennsylvania (Figure 1). The location of this small site, along the southern margin of a large field adjacent to and south of Strasburg Road (East Bradford Township) that was slated to be "developed" in the late 1990s, suggests that it was first plowed in the early 18th century when fields in this general area were being cleared. Therefore, this field had been under cultivation for well over 250 years. The topsoil over the entire field had long since eroded away, leaving the artifacts behind. The original surface level at the site itself, which is on a very slight rise along the slightly steeper surface dropping down to Taylors Run on the south, must have vanished quite early in the agricultural history of this area (Becker 2009). The artifacts remained remarkably in place.

The extent of Sam's site was sharply demarcated by the density of artifacts that were recovered solely through surface collecting (Cherry 1983:394-395). A test pit at the south central margin of the site produced no features and no artifacts. The entire site was confined to a slight rise (approximately 25 - 35 cm) along the slope just before it drops down sharply to Taylors Run. The rise is in the form of an oval approximately 15 - 25 m across. This knoll appears to be a natural rise rather than the result of intermittent occupation over the millennia. Neither plowing nor subsequent erosion appears to have influenced the distribution of the artifacts that define this location, a distribution that appears tightly limited to the area of the knoll. These findings attest to the accuracy of studies that suggest plow zone mobility of artifacts is negligible (see below for "tillage effects"). Only a few lithic pieces had been recovered by surface collecting from nearby, in the field immediately surrounding this site. No attempt

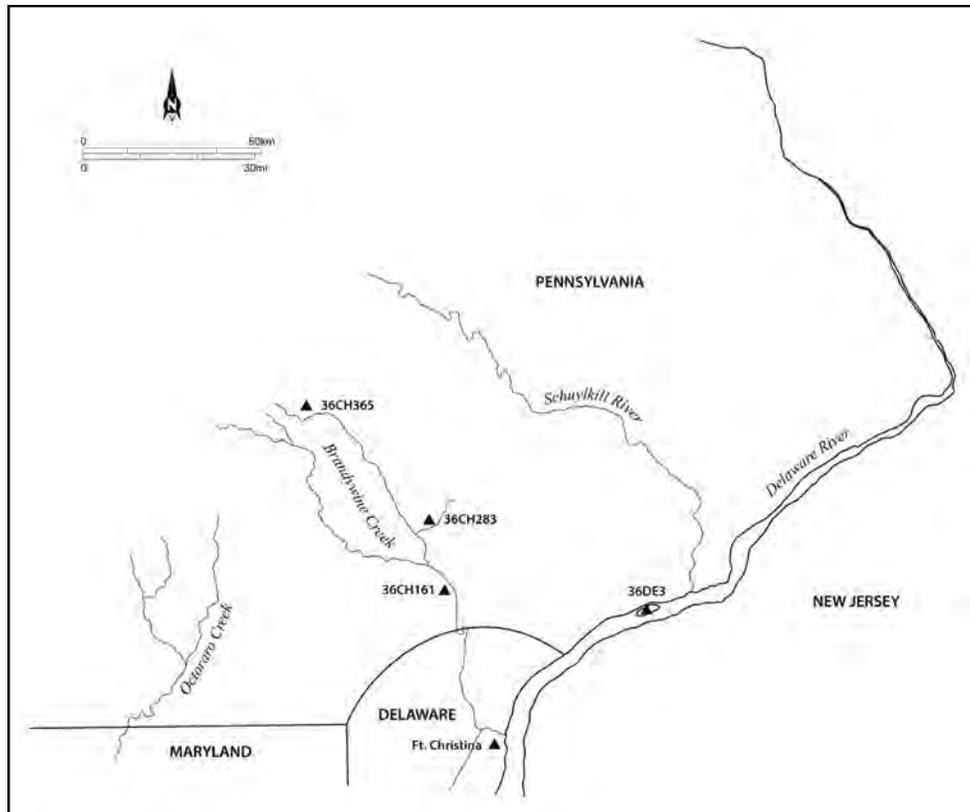


Figure 1. Location of 36Ch283 on Taylors Run (“Sam’s site-Parke Farm”) and some nearby sites in the Piedmont Region of Chester County, southeastern Pennsylvania.

has been made to further delineate this site using soil phosphate studies (Cavanagh *et al.* 1988). This location, with all the topsoil gone and no subsurface features expected, might be an excellent test case for such methodologies (Lippi 1988), particularly since chemical fertilizers of all types have been used here for at least 50 years prior to 1990.

What was believed to be the Terminal Woodland and/or Early Contact aspects of this site appear to conform to what Raber (1994) identifies as early Late Woodland period Minguannan Complex camps. The lithic scatter involves a limited number of stone types. Quartz artifacts and fragments of quartz form the overwhelming majority of all the materials recovered, with relatively well-formed crystals apparently representing an artifact category. Jaspers from the Hardyston Formation are present, but poorly represented. Differential removal of jasper pieces is suggested by the recovery of numerous tiny flakes and chips of jasper, normally ignored by relic collectors. The evidence from the surface collection indicates that this site, like nearby 36Ch161, "was inhabited seasonally by small, mobile groups of non-horticulturalists, a reconstruction consistent with that of Custer (1986a) and others regarding the economy of the Minguannan Complex and related cultures of the Piedmont Uplands" (Raber 1994), and consistent with the ethnohistoric evidence (Becker 1999, 2006a, 2010, 2011).

### **SURFACE SURVEYS AND SURFACE COLLECTIONS**

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as every state in the union, maintains a rapidly growing list of archaeological sites which have been registered by diligent amateurs as well as dedicated professionals. Increasingly these files are now computerized, and thereby increasingly valuable for understanding the prehistory as well as history of our state. The importance of these data cannot be underestimated (King 1990; Rieth 2008; Carr 2008). Obviously, there are limits as to what may be done with data from broad site surveys including multiple sites that are recognized only by surface collections (Cherry 1983).

Attention should also be directed to Flannery's (1976:51) observation from his work with Mesoamerican village contexts that "surface remains are just that - the junk you find on the surface and nothing more." While this theme is often repeated even by people involved in surface surveys, and has been summarized by Cherry (1983:378-393), the remains from most of the sites occupied by hunting and gathering peoples usually are entirely limited to what they left on the surface.

Small sites such as 36Ch283 also yield far less information than artifact scatters at village and other larger sites (Schofield 1991). While archaeologists working in the Mediterranean or in Mesoamerica can excavate to "ground prove" observations made on the basis of surface collections, those of us working with foraging societies rarely have such luxuries. Thus we are limited for the most part to what we find on the "surface" (often in the plow zone). Lewarch and O'Brien (1981) offer an early review of the relevant literature on what became a focus of interest ("ploughzone archaeology," Schofield 1991). Once Orton (1982) discussed stochastic processes as applied to spatial analysis, many other archaeologists became concerned with "tillage procession." An entire issue of the *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* was devoted to this subject (Bewley 1985). Ammerman (1985) provides input from Continental European contexts. Tillage effects have been discussed at length in *American Antiquity* (Odell and Cowan 1987; Dunnell 1990; Yorston 1990; Cowan and Odell 1990; Shott 1995). Custer (1993) specifically addresses the problem of plow zone studies in the Middle Atlantic region, offering important considerations for those involved in this research (King 2006). Bintliff *et al.* (2000) shifted the focus to future applications (Alcock 2000). With the development of massive machines to provide "mechanical vegetation treatments," the possible effects of such processes have become of interest. Odess and Robertson (2007) found that while these extraordinarily heavy machines sometimes caused destruction of individual artifacts, on the whole the inventory was 90% untouched, and individual pieces commonly were relocated far less than one meter. In general there is agreement that plowzone archaeological sites retain some degree of integrity and should be protected (Perazio and Raber 2005).

Concerns with tillage and other stochastic processes seem irrelevant, as the borders of small sites appear to remain sharp after hundreds of years of plowing. If we have any problems with artifact relocation at small sites, as at 36Ch283, they are due to "collectors" failing to record the materials from sites; artifacts that are critical to an interpretation of the site. This "selective removal" of artifacts may seriously distort our ability to interpret the data from sites such as 36Ch283.

### **Collecting at 36Ch283: The Ethos of Collectors**

Critical to the evaluation of the materials recovered from the site is the known history of collecting in this general area and at this location in particular. Plowing using teams of horses and plows with low seats gave earlier farmers a greater ability to see large artifacts plowed up in the course of their work. No large artifacts are known or reported from this site; the possibility that none may have been made or used here seems unlikely. Unsystematic "artifact" collecting may simply have removed most of the evidence for large tools. However, the site appears to have been well known to "artifact hunters" in the West Chester area since at least 1915. At least three different local collectors had revealed the location of this knoll to me during the years between 1983 and 1985. Not surprisingly their information was "revealed" only after they had been informed that a West Chester University field crew had visited the site in April, 1983.

During this same period 36Ch283 was listed among many sites in the West Chester area reported to the archaeologists at the Pennsylvania State Museum by a family of local collectors who had been active for more than 50 years (Becker 2006b). Operating from their residence within the borough of West Chester, Mr. Dutt and his two sons ranged over the countryside gathering up materials on the principal that "more is better." Their diligence effectively diminished the artifact numbers from large numbers of archaeological sites by removing material in vast quantities from them. Since they recorded none of this information, and mixed the artifacts from all of these locations in large barrels and bins, these sites were effectively obliterated. They offered to donate these barrels of artifacts to the State Museum of Pennsylvania. As a condition for accepting this material, State Museum staff requested information regarding the locations of the many sites (150+) collected by the Dutts over decades. Among the "sites" reported was one identified as "The Dutt L Site," later assigned the number now used: 36Ch283. Note

should be made that at least two other "sites" reported by the Dutts in this "series" were later field tested by the author (both by surface collecting after plowing and also with three test pits in each; pits 2x2 m square), and not a single artifact nor flake was recovered from either site. Hoffman *et al.* (1992) also tested another of these Dutt sites and found no evidence of human activity, although the State Museum had assigned it the number 36Ch289 (Hoffman *et al.* 1992:I-3, II-5). Thus only one of four of these reported "sites" tested proved to be a verifiable site, and this had already been tested and registered. This suggests a well-known aspect of the world of "collectors" as often experienced by academic archaeologists. The common code of "collectors" involves misrepresentation of site locations, now recognized as an anthropological rule, and one that was operating here.

A formal evaluation of the value of "informants" in reporting archaeological sites in New York has been made by Bender and Curtin (1990:13; Sullivan 1992:6). Both studies found the information to be useless. Another site reported to Becker as Contact period in date was located above the Schuylkill River not far from Philadelphia. The collector wished to participate in the excavation of what turned out to be an artifact dense site of the Archaic period. The misattribution of date was deliberately intended to encourage me to conduct testing because the collector had had a heart attack and could no longer dig. Misrepresenting the materials he had recovered as Contact period, he had hoped to co-opt our crew into sharing "finds" with him!

The first West Chester University field team visited 36Ch289 in April, 1983, and then again the following July. Subsequent visits were generally made only once each year, with two visits being the most in any calendar year. Each visit involved 5 - 10 students and lasted from 40 minutes to 3 hours at most. These visits resulted in enormously different recovery rates, since no attempt was made to correlate the collecting with the plowing cycle or with rainfall. At one point in the period of site visits in the 1980s a 2x2 m test pit was dug at the southern margin of this site, overlapping the projected boundary by 1 m. This area was at least half into the area that was too steep to permit easy plowing. The test was taken down to sterile soil into which the plow had previously cut, or to approximately the same depth in the unplowed area. No features of any kind were detected, not even significant root holes.

### **The Surface Collections and Their Interpretation**

The relatively tight scatter of materials over the limited surface of 36Ch283 reveals that the artifacts have not moved far despite plowing and extensive erosion. No greater concentration of material is found along the downslope edge of the site area, not even of tiny flakes pressed off stone artifacts in the finishing or retouching process. While the collecting technique (intensive walking) has not enabled us to define activity areas, the long duration of intermittent use and the many different peoples using this surface may not provide the ability to recognize such stations even were we to intensively test and sift the soils. This does not mean that such work should not be done, but only reflects the usual lack of funding available to conduct such work at this particular site. Redman (1987) provides useful suggestions regarding how sites of large size may be sampled (Brown 1985), but small sites (e.g. summer stations) present entirely different problems.

The effects of plowing on a site have been frequently noted and discussed in the literature. Much of this research targets historic sites with more varied and much larger artifact inventories. Riordan (1988) discusses what he believes to be the considerable surface movement of bricks and apparently larger items in plowed historic sites, but most authors find that plowing does not significantly move artifacts from where they fell. This applies to battlefields (Sharpe 2013) as well as to other contexts. Others discuss the effects of "trampling" (Nielsen 1991). In general, all these considerations should be taken into account with each site to be evaluated.

### **THE MATERIALS RECOVERED: ARTIFACT CATEGORIES**

One of the principal problems in the discussion of materials recovered from a site relates to visual identification of materials, whether stone type or metal (Becker 1992). Macroscopic identification of lithic materials is particularly difficult (Calogero 1992). Thin sectioning or X-ray diffraction is advisable for accuracy, but may be superfluous.

### **Ceramics**

Only a small handful of low fired ceramic bits were recovered through surface survey at this site. While the meaning of this material may be debated (Neff 1993), even these small sherds are important indicators of activity at this site (cf. Dunnell and Simek 1995).

### **Jaspers**

The extensive jasper deposits of the Reading Prong, in Lehigh and Bucks counties of southeastern Pennsylvania yield a high quality material that would appear to be ideal for the production of stone tools. However, jaspers rarely form a majority of the tools found at any site in the area at any date, except for the PaleoIndian period (Kraft 1973; Witthoft and Mason 1949). The reasons for this distribution are not clear. Jaspers from the Reading Prong range from light yellow through red to dark brown, but other colors are known. Mottled or pocked artifacts and raw pieces may result from fire processing. The quarries at Macungie and Vera Cruz tend to be of fine quality and caramel-brown in color (Smith 1970:51), but a wide range of colors seems to be present (Smith 1970:46). Witthoft and Mason (1949:34) claim that the Durham quarry produces more honey-colored jasper, and that deep chocolate pieces come from Vera Cruz.

All these descriptions reflect subjective evaluations and limited views of the materials from any single "quarry" area. Trade in these jaspers regularly carried this material at least 100 km from the deposits, and more distant finds clearly indicate that this was a well-used resource (Smith 1970). However, late Archaic period jaspers from Centre County, Pennsylvania may be Bald Eagle Jasper, which derives from Berks and Centre counties (Webster *et al.* 1977:47). Late Woodland and Contact period uses are documented (Forks of the Delaware Chapter 14 1980), but for far less of the tool inventory than during the PaleoIndian period.

Red and yellow chips and flakes of jasper have been recovered from the knoll at 36Ch283, as well as a few tool pieces. In 1983 a student (Mr. Morton) said that he believed that his father (a Dr. Morton) had collected jasper triangulars from this site. Dr. Morton was unwilling to be interviewed regarding his activities at the site or any possible collections. In 1988, Bill Baldwin, who was at that time farming the land including this site, was interviewed concerning artifacts that he had recovered from a site on his own property (36Ch284; Becker n.d.a). Baldwin noted in 1988 that "gone years ago" he had found a big blade of red jasper that he estimated to be ca. 12 cm. long. He had given this blade to someone, but could not recall the name of the recipient. Baldwin also had given many items from 36Ch284 to the Dutt family, thus effectively destroying all hope of recovering information regarding these items.

### **Rhyolites**

Rhyolites from sites in this area probably derive from quarries located in the zone where the Blue Ridge crosses the Pennsylvania-Maryland border (Stewart 1987). Stewart's earlier work with rhyolites are reviewed, and metamorphosed varieties appear to be best represented in local artifact inventories.

### **Quartz**

This term generally is used to describe the milky white material commonly found throughout southeastern Pennsylvania, generally in large deposits. In fact, the milky white material is appropriately termed "quartzite" which is a compact granular rock formed from quartz metamorphosed from sandstone. Large quantities of this white material were found directly on the small knoll, but very little was found beyond. Much of the "quartz chippage" may be plow shatter from larger blocks. This distribution suggests that this true quartzite was being brought to the site as large chunks of stone with quartzite inclusions or masses on or near the knoll suggest that a natural outcrop is near. Outcrops of the milky colored material appear in numerous fields as well as along outwashes, and encampments around such deposits often are designated as procurement stations. However, quartz deposits in this area are so common that the association with small campsites such as this may be entirely coincidental. The Late Woodland peoples throughout this region who produced so many artifacts from quartz were extremely skilled knappers. Quartz triangulars, or pieces thereof, are the most common artifacts (Figure 2) recovered from this knoll.

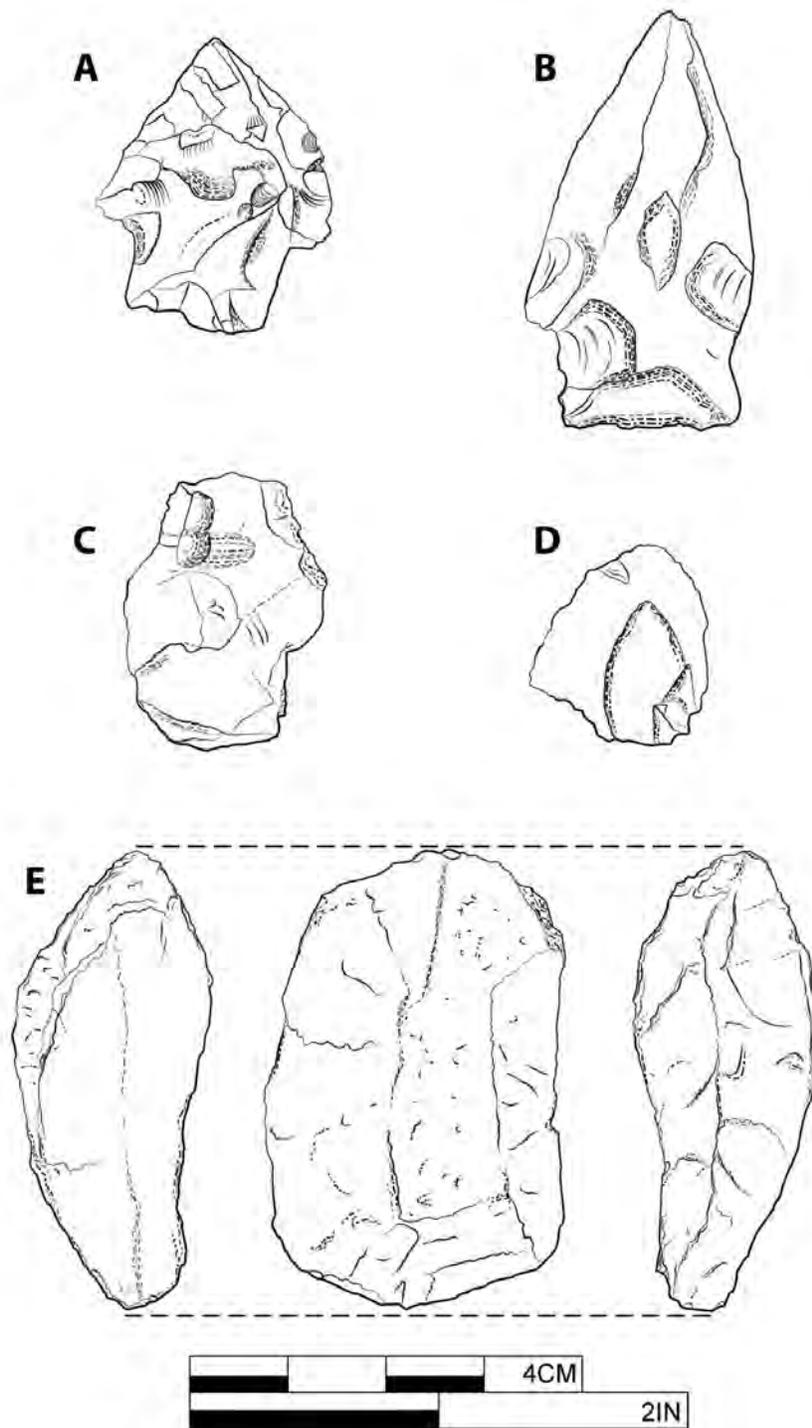


Figure 2. A variety of surface finds from 36Ch283: A. Jasper blade, reworked; B. Argillite biface; C. Quartz blade; D. Jasper flake; E. Quartz biface (3 views) with cobble cortex.

### **Quartzite**

This term is applied to two very dissimilar appearing materials: one being the crystal or crystalline masses of vitreous luster and cryptocrystalline form ( $\text{SiO}_2$ ) which is actually "quartzite." True quartz is

without color and is extremely difficult to work. The term quartzite also is applied to a gray material which Ebright (1987) correctly notes was a major lithic resource in much of the Northeast. Ebright (1987: 34-35) specifically identifies the Hardyston Quartzite deposits of Robesonia, Pennsylvania, at the southwest tip of the Reading prong so well noted as a jasper source, as one of 12 North American areas. This relatively fine grained material was extensively utilized during the Archaic period (e.g. 36MG42) but appears to have been used less frequently thereafter. While the fracture pattern of these quartzites appears quite rough, it seems far easier to work than the milky quartz known from dozens of deposits in outcroppings all around Chester County.

### **Quartz Crystals**

Among the larger bits of quartz collected from this site are several examples that have recognizably crystal shape. These were not distinguished from other quartz fragments until excavations at the Montgomery site (Becker 1992, 2017) suggested that the local Lenape were collecting and saving rough quartz crystals. Similar use of less-than-perfect quartz crystals have been recognized from a Contact period Native community in Massachusetts (Murphy 2002). Such crystals also appear in other contexts, with attributions ranging from Native (Cipolla *et al.* 2019:137) to African-American (Schiszik 2019:11). The problematical article by Jones (1999) is very revealing of the quality of African-American attributions. An example also appears in a “Clovis” level at a site in Virginia (Johnson 1999a, 1999b).

### **Native Clay Pipes**

Not a single fragment of Native-made pipe, in stone or clay, was recovered from the surface at 36Ch283. However, the fill of a burial associated with the nearby Shenks Ferry occupation produced a broken example of a Native-made clay pipe which has a punctate design (Matlack 1992:69, Figure 2). In many ways this is similar to the Late Woodland or Early Contact example known from the Trenton area (Martin 1991: 24—25, fig. 6; Snow 1978: 61, fig. 2).

### **THE “PARKE SITE” AREA OF 36Ch283**

Near the activity zone of “Sam’s site” is a cluster of features identified by the excavators as a Shenks Ferry structure (ca. 4.5 by 6 m), surrounded by a possible palisade, a single burial near that structure, and other minimal traits (Hoffman *et al.* 1992: III-3). This Shenks Ferry phase of activity in this area also had been identified with the site number 36Ch283, with the inference that there was continuity in use of this particular area. I do not believe this to be the case.

The mechanical stripping of soil over what became designated as the Parke site was motivated through a maximum of caution in evaluating this area for development. The near total absence of surface finds probably related to the relatively short term use of this area. What has been described as a palisade line, consisting of a total of only nine features (numbers 2 through 10) extend in an arc suggesting an enclosure estimated to be some 15 m in diameter. The intervals between these “post molds” is generally greater than 1.70 m. A possible burial, in a grave measuring 0.30 by 1.60 m, extends east-west very close to the northernmost point of the projected palisade line. The extreme decay of any skeletal material is to be expected in this area (cf. Becker 2009, 2017). Also within the palisade is an array of posts that have been interpreted as the single house pattern within the palisade (Hoffman *et al.* 1992: II-15, 30). This oval reconstruction measures about 2 by 3 m, with the longer diameter being east to west.

A total of only 44 pottery sherds were recovered from the Parke site area, none of which measured more than 2.5 cm. This reflects the numbers of these poorly fired vessels recovered from trash and other pits, where they were relatively better preserved than ceramics from the knoll. The recovery of an intact stem and small portion of the bowl of a ceramic, trumpet shaped pipe may be significant. The fragment of the bowl has an intensive punctate design, not rouletting (cf. Bressler 1993:87, noted below). “A Radiocarbon date of 470±60 (A.D. 1420-1540)” is, on the same page, given as a site dating to “ca. A.D. 1600” (Hoffman *et al.* 1992:III-3). They list 36Ch351, 36Ch365 in Honeybrook, and 36Ch161 as being Chester County sites associated with the Shenks Ferry people (Hoffman *et al.* 1992:III-4). For a review of the data on Shenks Ferry in Chester County, see Nass and Wright (1990).

## DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATIONS

Small sites throughout Pennsylvania, variously defined, rarely attract more than shovel testing at or near the specific location. Almost never is the surrounding area subject to more than shovel testing. An impressive and fortunate abundance of caution was exercised in a Phase II examination of the area immediately to the north of the multicomponent site previously identified. The revelation of a possible Shenks Ferry structure, post line (palisade?) and burial offer a set of information providing possible insights into the locations of Shenks Ferry sites. Despite decades of investigation, and efforts to delineate the nature of Shenks Ferry settlement patterns, the culture represented by these sites remains poorly understood.

Ronald Thomas (MAAR Associates, personal communication February 6, 1996) believed that the two aspects of 36Ch283 formed a cultural continuum that describes the long history of cultural activity at this location. His view of the Parke site structure as indicating Lenape settlement at a location used by their ancestors assumed that the Lenape were relatively settled horticulturalists, a view reflecting 1950s historians perceptions of all regional Indians being just like the Five Nations of New York (Figure 3). I strongly disagreed with his interpretation of the Parke site as at all related to the Lenape, preferring to recognize that this was one of the pieces of evidence for a Shenks Ferry expansion, or relocation, into southern Chester County around 1500 CE. This remains my preferred interpretation.

While the seasonal occupation of the tiny knoll which was the focus of surface collecting at 36Ch283 endured for perhaps millennia, and may have been occupied by Minguannan Complex peoples during the Late Woodland period, the adjacent Shenks Ferry occupation, identified as the Parke site, seems to have been placed on the relatively more level adjacent area at the top of the slope (cf. Herbstritt and Kent 1990). Why the Shenks Ferry people were in this area at all is addressed elsewhere, but the occupation at this specific location may have been spurred by the clearing of the lower slope for firewood, done by previous but always intermittent occupants of the site. Thus exploitation strategies used by the people centered on the low rise may have been entirely different from the later occupants higher up the slope. Also of note is the paucity of stone tools, debris, or other evidence of more than a very short term occupation at the single structure identified by Thomas. All the occupants at this site, including those of the Shenks Ferry people, may have selected the location for its south facing aspect, using solar energy to their advantage (cf. Mires 1993).

The multicomponent aspect of 36Ch283, on a small knoll, continued to be a focus for collectors throughout the period when West Chester University crews used it to demonstrate the persistence of small sites. At least twice during the many University collecting visits, when our visits to the plowed and planted field had followed soon after a period of rain, two sets of footprints through the mud led from the nearest parking with direct access to the knoll. At no time was there any evidence that collectors had any interest in the area later revealed to bear a Shenks Ferry occupation.

Farther up along the East Branch of the Brandywine from 36Ch283, in Honeybrook Township (Chester County) is an apparent Shenks Ferry site (36Ch365) identified in the records as the King-Spinelli site, after the two property owners. This seems to be a relatively large Shenks Ferry occupation. Some 4,000 pieces of Woodland ceramics were recovered by Marjorie Johnson and others. At the time, around 1990, Abner King farmed both properties. I suspect that 36Ch365 was earlier identified as the ceramic-rich Kauffman site in an area "near Honeybrook" that was reported to me.

Some interesting comparanda have been published from Lycoming County; data supporting the evaluation of the Parke Farm (36Ch283) activity area as Shenks Ferry. Bressler (1993:86) reports on site 36LY251 which consists of a single, very large isolated construction of oblong shape with rounded corners, long axis east-west. This feature has a maximum length of 14.6 m, and a width (north-south) of ca. 5.2 m. If this is a house, it is extremely large. In the northeast corner of this construction was a single burial (described as "in-house") and a single elbow pipe. Bressler believes this structure is related to the adjacent Bull Run stockade village complex (1230 - 1480 CE), but the connection is not demonstrated. Bressler terms this the "Stewart or northern phase of these people," which he suggests developed about 1200 CE, and probably from the Clemsons Island culture. This aspect of Shenks Ferry disappear about 1525 - 1550, when a McFate-Quiggle tradition (Kent 1984) emerges along the West Branch of the Susquehanna; or about the same time that the Susquehannock people come down that river into the lower

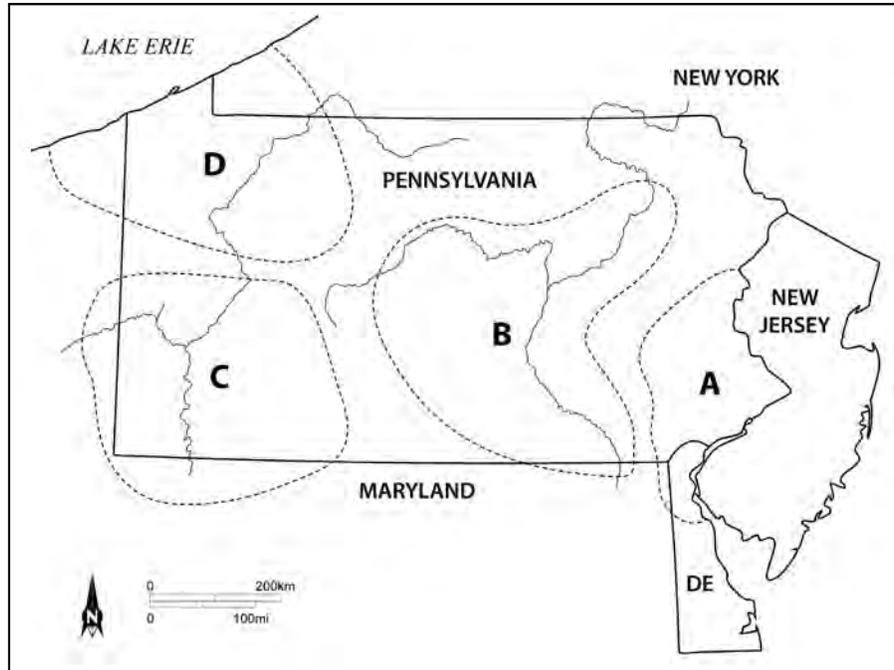


Figure 3. Protohistoric period peoples of Pennsylvania: A. Proto-Lenape (Lenape); B. Shenks Ferry (Confederated Susquehannock: Minquas); C. Monongahela (Black Minquas); D. “McFate” ceramics (Erie).

Susquehanna Valley. The elbow pipe is distinguished by finely detailed incised decoration (Bressler 1993:87; for comparative types, Matlack 1992:69-70). While Bressler (1993:87) suggests that the Shenks Ferry people are ancestral to the Susquehannock, I believe that the Shenks Ferry people formed into only one of the four or more confederated units of the Susquehannock (Becker n.d.b).

Returning to site 36Ch283, the interpretation of nearby site 36Ch161 as an encampment area for early Late Woodland Minguannan peoples (Figure 3) appears to apply also to the 36Ch283 knoll, except for what appears to be a Shenks Ferry intrusion, possibly before 1550 AD. The Minguannan Complex appears to reflect a foraging tradition which continued well into the historic period (to about 1740 AD) by the people who called themselves “Lenape” (Becker 2006a, 2010, 2018).

### **36Ch283: INTERPRETING THE PARKE FARM ASPECT**

The presence of a possible Shenks Ferry occupation at the adjacent “Parke Farm” aspect of site 36Ch283 may be of importance to understanding the culture history of this region. The juxtaposition of these two areas may reflect the considerable movement of populations before and after the early Contact period. The Shenks Ferry activity at 36Ch283 appears to reflect what Raber (2018) identifies as a “*persistent place.*” An attempt to use this specific occupation in the determination of the cultural boundaries of the Shenks Ferry people may not be warranted (Wobst 1974). Furthermore, the exploitation strategies of peoples toward the interior of present Pennsylvania must have differed from that of peoples along the coastal plain even long before contact. Once these Shenks Ferry folk moved into the coastal plain, they may have altered their exploitation strategy, and residence type within a very short period of time; or perhaps soon relocated back to the area from which they had come (Becker n.d.b). The Lenape were a hunting and gathering peoples, as they are known from both during the early historic period as well as from the archaeological record. As Raber (1994) points out, following Cohen (1977:27-40), the addition or shift to horticultural or to agricultural technologies is spurred by necessity rather than opportunity. The Lenape certainly had considerable opportunities to engage in food storing technology (Becker 1999), but continued to be hunters and gatherers, enjoying the bounty of extensive anadromous fish runs (Becker 2006a) balanced by winter hunting and year round plant collecting.

The peoples of the interior of Pennsylvania, like those of central New York, were forced to seek food producing mechanisms to provide themselves with secure food sources as a cushion against the vagaries of the hunt, despite the enormous extent of their foraging ranges. The traditional view of all Northeastern Woodland peoples as horticulturalists exploiting and storing a standard set of cultigens at the time of or immediately prior to European contact (Becker 2018; Custer 1986b, 1989; Kent 1984) cannot be sustained by either the archaeological or the historical evidence.

Raber's (1994) interpretation of nearby 36Ch161 as revealing a Shenks Ferry occupation also appears to apply as well to 36Ch283. The importance of surface collections, even from sites as extensively stripped by relic collectors as this one, is shown by what we can infer from the evidence at hand. This record, so similar to what we have from many sites, reflects what has happened to thousands of archaeological sites known to have been in Pennsylvania, most of which in urban regions are now completely destroyed or in the process of being pillaged. Often the damage is done by well meaning "collectors" who simply fail to record the results of their efforts. Despite the ravages of plowing and data removal by unrecorded collecting, small sites such as "Sam's" can be very informative and may be locations signaling other, nearby Native American activities.

The cultural effects of a Shenks Ferry expansion or intrusion into this area, now southern Chester County, appears to have been minimal. Quite possibly the Shenks Ferry people at this site returned to their traditional home area after achieving some balance in their relationship with the Susquehannock invaders (Becker n.d.b). I have long suggested that one of the four Susquehannock affiliates, or parts of the Susquehannock Confederacy (Becker n.d.b) was composed of the people whom we identify archaeologically as Shenks Ferry.

## CONCLUSIONS

The evidence from 36Ch283, as at 36Ch161, indicates the use of this site in Chester County as a seasonally inhabited encampment by mobile foragers, probably utilizing anadromous fish resources during the warmer months of the year (Becker 2010; Price and Brown 1985a, 1985b). The idea that this site, as other sites in this region, are quartz procurement stations appears contradicted by consideration of the suggested age of the earlier components at 36Ch283, during periods when local quartz was rarely if ever used. The use of quartz crystals, not surprisingly, are common in Native rituals throughout the world. In a few North and South American cases quartz crystals have been linked with feather use in rituals (Barbosa Rodrigues 1899, Vol. 2:50; Orjuela 1983).

The self-evident information regarding the sharply limited artifact count and variety, limited to a very restricted area that defines this site is telling us a great deal. After centuries of tillage these small bits of evidence reveal the answer to a question so often asked (e.g. Boismier 1997) and so often tested regarding possible migration of artifacts. Even at 36Ch283, on a relatively steep slope, there appears to have been minimal downhill sliding or migration. Asking the same questions regarding artifact migration at other small sites is likely to yield similar results.

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Marshall Joseph Becker

Professor of Anthropology, Emeritus

West Chester University

mbecker@wcupa.edu