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Madsen: *Exploring the Fremont*

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1905-1920s; Consolidation and Recreation, 1920s-Present; and Summary.

Notable findings of the project include additional data on the Esselen-Salinan boundary and some of the results of Jones' ongoing research into the projectile point chronology of the Central Coast. These portions of the report are accompanied by numerous maps and good artifact illustrations. Other discussions of prehistoric topics cover Central Coast chronological sequences, explanatory models, settlement pattern changes, and artifacts and temporal placement of reserve sites. The background investigations include examination of some of Harrington's notes, historical research, as well as interviews with descendants of pioneer families of the area, resulting in a detailed compilation of the exploration and settlement of the southern Monterey County coast within five of the chapters outlined above.

This document is also notable in another respect: the results obtained from field schools often go unpublished. This may be particularly true of field schools that do not conduct subsurface excavations. This report contains a wealth of information from a little known area of California that must be regarded as a notable accomplishment for a field school dealing with the surface archaeology of the area.

While this volume contains a large amount of valuable information, there are unfortunately also a number of errors, inconsistencies, omissions, and editorial lapses that detract from the quality of the work. Uncritical reliance on this report as a reference will only serve to perpetuate these errors. For example, in the table that reports significant excavations on the central coast, Broadbent is reported as having conducted excavations at CA-MNT-101 in 1953; the citation for this excavation is given as Broadbent (1951a). The bibliographic

reference under Broadbent (1951a) is to U.C. Archaeological Survey Manuscript 125. However, Manuscript 125 actually reports Broadbent's work at CA-MNT-107. (Broadbent never conducted excavations at CA-MNT-101.) An errata sheet would be a major addition to this volume.

While this report details the first three field seasons, several additional seasons, some including subsurface investigations, have subsequently been conducted. Based on the current volume, we should be able to look forward to interesting and enlightening results from subsequent reports as well.



Exploring the Fremont. David B. Madsen. Salt Lake City: Utah Museum of Natural History, 1989, xiv + 70 pp., 70 figs., \$12.00, (paper).

Reviewed by:

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This beautifully produced little book is the exhibit catalog for a Utah Museum of Natural History exhibit on the Fremont culture. The museum is the repository for the most extensive collections anywhere of Fremont archaeological materials, and many interesting and informative specimens are illustrated in the book. David B. Madsen, who by his own testimony has been mystified by the Fremont culture through more than twenty years of study, provides an account of it here that is aimed at a lay audience.

The book begins with a synopsis that evokes the variation and diversity of Fremont culture and the landscape in which it grew.

The Fremont range included most of Utah north of the Colorado and Virgin rivers, and adjacent areas of Nevada, Idaho, and Colorado. In the characterization by Madsen,

Some people were primarily settled farmers, growing corn, beans and squash along streams at the base of mountain ranges; some were nomads, collecting wild plants and animals to support themselves; still others would shift between these lifestyles.

Fremont culture arose out of the Desert Archaic, with the gradual adoption of horticulture, ceramics, and substantial semi-subterranean dwellings. The earliest corn known in the Fremont area comes from Elsinore, in central Utah, where radiocarbon dating places it between 2,340 and 1,940 years ago. Pottery and pithouses appeared soon afterward. Madsen describes and illustrates four classes of artifacts which by their distinctive typology set off the Fremont from neighboring Anasazi cultures that were largely contemporaneous, and from the Numic immigrants who replaced the Fremont folk. These artifacts include one-rod-and-bundle coiled basketry, hide moccasins of unique style, thin-walled grayware pottery, and anthropomorphic figures wearing hair bobs and necklaces, that are rendered in both rock art and clay figurines.

A chapter on archaeology sketches for the lay reader the bases of archaeological interpretation, at the same time giving a brief history of efforts by archaeologists to define the Fremont culture beginning with the pioneering 1931 account of Noel Morse. Madsen notes that the question of regional variation in Fremont culture has preoccupied many archaeologists, including himself. But in the current presentation he avoids pigeon-holing by simply stressing the diversity of Fremont culture in general, and presenting sketches of sites that illustrate different aspects of the Fremont lifeway.

Nawthis Village was a large farming community on the southern Wasatch Plateau of central Utah, situated at an elevation of 6,600 feet. Substantial masonry buildings and pit-house structures were both in use. Corn, beans, and squash were grown, and pinyon nuts, chenopod seeds, cattails, and Indian rice grass were gathered. Deer, mountain sheep, rabbits, squirrels, and other small animals were hunted.

Bull Creek, on the northern flank of the Henry Mountains in east-central Utah, has given evidence of over a hundred small sites, including dwelling places, toolstone quarries, storage areas, temporary camps, rockshelters, and observation points. These were occupied by people who bordered Anasazi puebloan territory to the south, and who used structures and pottery of types traceable to both Fremont and Anasazi traditions.

The Orbit Inn site and others like it in far northern Utah, where the Bear River enters the Great Salt Lake, were oriented to rich salt marsh ecosystems that provided marsh plants, waterfowl, fish, shellfish, and even bison. Their occupants dug storage pits, built pole-framed structures with slightly excavated floors, and made distinctive slate knives and stone pestles.

Hogup Cave, in an arid peninsular mountain range west of the Great Salt Lake, was occupied by people who manifestly represented the more mobile end of the range of Fremont subsistence-settlement patterns. While at Hogup they hunted and gathered on the mountain flanks and along the moist margins of the salt flat, and left behind in the dry cave fragments of basketry, worn-out moccasins, pieces of netting, and many other items in addition to their characteristic grayware pottery.

Finally, Topaz Slough, in the Sevier Desert of west-central Utah, gives evidence of many small sites in the open that suggest temporary

camps occupied by people who came to collect the seeds of desert marsh plants and grasses, and catch the rabbits, small rodents, insects, and lizards of the locality.

Professional archaeologists need to write more books of this kind, to convey their research to the public that supports it. Madsen has appropriately mentioned but not unduly belabored the esoteric concerns of archaeologists, while keeping the account descriptive and focused on what is most interesting about prehistoric people, the ways in which they lived in their time and place. The illustrations are plentiful, well-chosen, and beautifully executed. The overall design of the book is elegant. All involved in the Utah Museum of Natural History project that produced this work have done a good thing.



Papers on the Archaeology of the Mojave Desert. Mark Q. Sutton, ed. Salinas: Coyote Press Archives of California Prehistory No. 10, 1987, 152 pp., \$12.45 (paper).

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Mark Q. Sutton has brought together a series of six papers addressing four subjects: (1) A Pinto occupation at Black Butte; (2) the prehistoric and ethnohistoric use of mesquite in the southwest Great Basin; (3) alignments of cairns at two sites; and (4) the archaeology, faunal remains, and pottery from the Denning Springs Rockshelter. The papers of this collection are both short and limited in their contribution to the prehistory of California. However, these papers do include important data and/or ideas that are of value and in-

terest to researchers working in the Mojave Desert.

Martin Lord's paper on the Black Butte Pinto site is based on his analysis of a collection housed in the San Bernardino County Museum, and observations made by Lord and others. This primarily is a descriptive report with sections on geological setting and environment, the site, the artifacts, a general characterization of the assemblage, and a brief interpretation of its chronological placement. This paper makes available important data from a Pinto Period site. Lord notes the existence of questions of chronological interpretation and problems of cultural processes associated with Pinto material, but he does not address these questions. To do so requires more than a traditional descriptive report with and this clearly was not the intent of the author.

Adella Schroth's paper on the use of mesquite in the southwestern Great Basin is a literature survey of the uses of mesquite in the Mojave and Colorado deserts (mesquite is not found in the Great Basin Desert). Schroth presents a thorough coverage of this topic including the pertinent information on the distribution and biology of mesquite, ethnographic uses, and archaeological evidence for its use. Two minor errors should not detract from this paper: Ash Meadows is to the east of Death Valley, not west of it as stated on p. 57; and the mesquite from Ash Meadows dated to $4,450 \pm 360$ B.P. was not found in an archaeological context as she states. This mesquite sample was recovered from the sand dune-peat bog interface, in a stratum of burned material that could not be positively identified as having a cultural origin. This is an important paper for anyone interested in historical or prehistoric use of mesquite and how it may have been integrated into the subsistence strategies of past societies of these desert regions.