

MCKISSICK SITE

About three miles northwest of Peru, strata containing cultural materials were found exposed in the sides of a recently cut gully. Owing to the limited amount of time available there, no detailed description is at present possible. The situation in several respects, however, seems to resemble that at the Walker Gilmore Site in Cass County. A small stream, now dry except for brief periods when it carries run-off water, enters the wide Missouri bottom at the western edge of the ancient bend heretofore mentioned. The excavation of a drainage ditch which has straightened the channel to the river has greatly accelerated erosion, resulting in a vertical-walled gully nearly 20 feet deep. For a distance of about 100 feet are exposed two strata, at depths of 13 and 16 feet, containing charcoal and burned earth. From the upper, in addition, were removed a few sherds, a part of a large, stemmed projectile point, and several fragmentary bones, mainly bison. The exterior surfaces of the sherds are heavily cord-marked and the black paste is grit-tempered and granular. One sherd suggests the presence of a slight collar on the rim.

A basin-shaped hearth underlaid by burned earth and containing a little charcoal and ashes appeared at a depth of 11½ feet in a redeposited yellow clay zone, with no other evidences of occupation except flecks of charcoal and burned earth which seemed to have been washed in with the soil. Two burned-earth areas in the 13 foot zone were probably also hearths. The lowest stratum, although heavily loaded with fragments of charcoal and burned earth, produced no artifacts and appeared to be washed-in material.

From the limited evidence at hand it appears that some people, probably with an eastern culture, lived in an old stream valley while it was being silted up, and that recent erosion has cut through portions of the occupation area. The nature of much of the washed-in material may also indicate the former existence of habitation sites higher on the original slope.