

INTRODUCTION

*But howe the people furst began
In that country or whens they cam
For clerkes it is a question.*

John Rastell ca. 1520
A New Interlude . . .

On the subject of New World archaeology there have been fewer questions more persistent than those pertaining to the early occupation of this continent: where did the people come from? How did they get here? When did they arrive? A brief, conservative answer to a non-technical readership might say that the first migrants, so far unnamed, may have come from Asia, across the Bering land bridge some 40,000 years ago, followed by an occupation variously termed Clovis, Ilano, Paleo-Indian or Fluted Point, again from Asia using the same route 12,000 years ago. This answer would ignore a number of uncertainties that presently occupy those archaeologists working with the early data.

Among the questions that occupy this group's attention are: was the fluted point complex an indigenous development originating somewhere south of the Canadian border, or did it enter *in toto* from

the Old World?; if the latter is correct, was the complex derived from a solely Asian base or does it have ultimate roots much farther west? These questions have so far not been answered due in part to the greatest mass of data coming from sites far south of the original point of entry. To answer these questions data have been needed from northern sites, and specifically data on the range of lithic technology and its placement in time. The Putu site was excavated with the expectation that data within that site might help answer those questions.

This report, presented with the above aims in mind, is organized in the following manner. *Setting* defines the location and environmental context. The section *Data* begins with excavation techniques, how data were acquired, followed by descriptions of the strata, features, artifacts, and dating. *Conclusions* include a summary of data, comparisons with other sites and the problems of technological content and placement in time. A full, complete discussion of Paleoindian origins is not the object of this report--the main objective is the presentation of data from Putu.

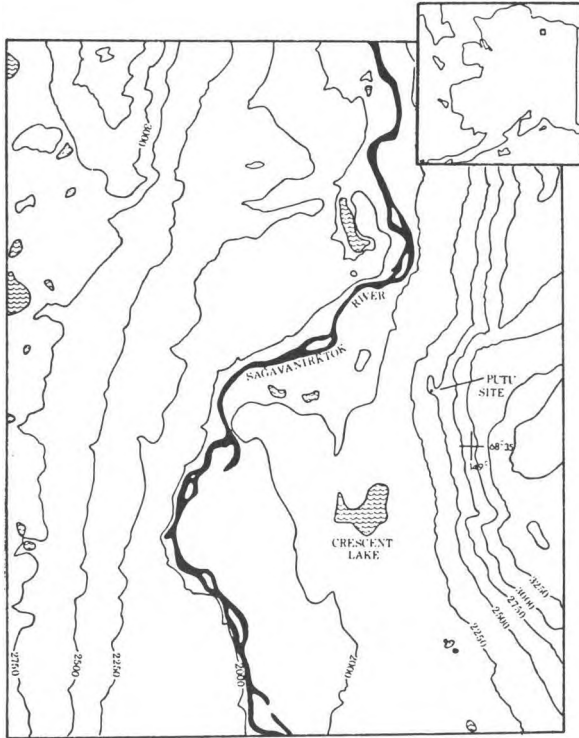


Fig. 1.

Location of the Putu Site.

Fig. 2.

View of Putu Knoll looking west across the Sagavanirktok Valley. The Putu Site is to the left at the base of the hill. The Bedwell locality is at the highest part of the knoll.

