Organization of the Volumes

The report is organized into three volumes. Each volume has a separate thematic focus, these are: taphonomy, socioeconomic organization, and excavation documentation. This organization is somewhat different from traditional archaeological site report formats where all the information pertaining to a given type of material such as lithics or fauna is presented together in a single chapter or section. Given the complexity of the database at Keatley Creek and the complexity of the issues being addressed, it was thought that a traditional type of material-focused organization would make it difficult for readers to follow all of the related arguments, models, and issues related to the central themes of the research at Keatley Creek. We therefore chose to structure the organization of these volumes around the major research questions at the site, especially site formation processes and prehistoric socioeconomic organization. For those accustomed to the more traditional material-focused organization of site reports, this may at first seem somewhat awkward since some of the information on lithics, for example, is presented in all three volumes. However, after reading a few chapters, and especially with some judicious use of the table of contents and indexes of the volumes, readers should be able to orient themselves sufficiently to find any type of information that they are interested in. We also have included frequent chapter cross-references to direct readers to other relevant data or interpretations in the report.

Volume I

Because questions of taphonomic biases, disturbance, mixing, and basic issues of accurate identification of the origins of sediments had to be dealt with prior to any consideration of artifactual patterning, the first volume dealt with general formation processes at the Keatley Creek site. Chapters included sediment analyses, microfabric analyses, faunal taphonomy, botanical taphonomy, lithic strategies and source identifications, and specific comparisons of rim to roof to floor formation processes. Background chapters on basic geological, environmental, climatic, typological, and dating issues were also included in this first volume.

Volume II

The second volume, dealt with evidence for social and economic organization at the Keatley Creek site. Overall differences between housepit assemblages were dealt with as well as differences in the internal organization of space and domestic groups. Prestige artifacts were analyzed, including the large assemblage of domesticated dogs from HP 7. In addition to botanical, faunal, chemical, and lithic patterning, this volume contains an ethnographic summary of accounts of pithouse life, an analysis of architecture and heating strategies, an overall synthesis of what the socioeconomic organization of the Keatley Creek community was probably like, and an evaluation of the results of the Fraser River Investigations into Corporate Group Archaeology project.

Volume III

In order to present as full a picture of the data upon which the previous interpretations were based, relatively detailed reports of all the test trenches and extended excavations are presented in this, the third and final volume. This volume also contains a description of the lithic typology used by the project (Chap. 1), an illustrated catalog of all the modified bone tools from the site (Chap. 2), and a special analysis of unusual scapula tools at the site (Chap. 3). The intention is for this volume to be used as a kind of reference book, similar to a
The Excavation Program

The overall goals, excavation methods, and sampling strategies of the FRICGA Project have been presented in Vol. I, Chap. 1. Here, it is perhaps useful to note that there were in actuality several subprograms of research that were conducted during the course of excavations at Keatley Creek. The initial goal of sampling housepits in order to determine which of them would be most useful for dealing with questions of socioeconomic organization at the site constituted the core of the sampling program. The reports of all the sampled structures are presented in Chapter 10 of this volume. While we initially focused on the housepits in the center of the site, it soon became apparent that it would be difficult to find simple, undisturbed small housepits in the central area. We thus began a testing subprogram that focused specifically on small housepits, generally on the periphery of the site. Mike Rousseau and Martin Handley undertook the responsibility for testing many of these structures and they have written an overall summary of their excavations (Chap. 10.1) as well as many of the individual excavation reports. After they completed their testing, I began to consider the possibility that small ritual structures might have played important political roles in the organization of the community at Keatley Creek and that such structures might be preferentially located on the periphery of the site. Thus, over the next 10 years I continued the testing of small structures on the periphery of the site and extended some of the excavations within some structures, especially those in relatively remote parts of the site such as Terrace 1 (HP 109), Terrace 2 (HP's 104, 105, 106), and the terrace south of Keatley Creek (HP's 9 and 107). The location of these structures and the other housepits that were tested is presented in Figures 1 and 2. Subsequently, it seemed possible that some of the very small structures at the site might also play roles in the sociopolitical organization of the Keatley Creek community. While only a few of these structures have so far been identified at the site (EHPE's 3, 11, and 26), we endeavored to test and explore a few of them also.

The other major excavation goal of the research program at Keatley Creek was the complete excavation of a number of housepits that we considered (on the basis of test trenches) were contemporaneous and had intact floor deposits. These were important for dealing with our questions about the social and economic organization of the community and the pithouses within it. The full descriptions of these excavations with stratigraphic profiles and floor plans are presented in this volume in Chapters 49. The locations of these extensively excavated housepits is presented in Figures 1 and 2.

We also began a subprogram of sampling non-housepit structures. We refer to these as "Extra-Housepit Excavations," or EHPE's. These included a wide range of cultural depressions or features that could not clearly be identified as housepits on the basis of surface characteristics. Initially, we undertook these excavations because we wanted to know if considerable amounts of faunal materials were being thrown away outside of the housepit contexts and therefore biasing the remains that we were recovering associated with the housepits. This did not turn out to be a very significant factor, but in the process of exploring this possibility we discovered an interesting range of roasting pits, cache pits, very small structures, and smaller enigmatic pits. We later became aware of the potential importance of some of these features for understanding and documenting the sociopolitical organization at the site, especially the possible role of roasting pits for documenting feasting, the role of some cache pits in association with possible secret society lodges, and the role of small structures as seclusion facilities, or perhaps as residences for indigent individuals or families. The location of all the EHPE's is provided in Figures 1 and 2, and the detailed descriptions of the excavations are provided in Chapter 11. General analyses of
Field Interpretations

One of the factors that was critical for the success of our research at Keatley Creek was the ability to reliably identify floor deposits while actually excavating them and to be able to follow living floor deposits. While other approaches stress the importance of formulating interpretations of deposits only after laboratory tests and analyses have been completed, this would clearly not work if we were to achieve our goals. The delays and confusion that such an approach would entail would quickly thwart any attempts to isolate living floor deposits from other deposits. Moreover, laboratory tests and analyses can only provide relatively crude, overall measures of variability using a very finite number of variables and samples. In contrast, field workers habitually distinguish color variations that are many times more subtle than can be recorded with any Munsell color chart as well as a host of relatively intangible and sometimes ephemeral observations such as differences in moisture content of different strata in the morning vs. the afternoon, the "feel" of troweling through sediments, their softness or compactness, the orientation of artifacts within sediments, and the "flaky" nature of some sediments. Field excavators also make constant observations on the totality of sediments being excavated rather than on a limited number of samples. In short, the field excavators are the individuals who have access to the most observations and the most relevant kinds of observations. It is above all the excavator who is in the best position to interpret what is being excavated, to ask questions about formation processes, and to try to determine the nature of the deposits. When asked to interpret deposits they begin to formulate models and hypotheses and expectations which may prove to be correct or may have to be modified. But by engaging excavators in the process of interpretation in the field, I am convinced that much better archaeology and interpretations are the result. Laboratory analysis certainly has its place, but, like statistics, it is probably best used for demonstrating the reality of the interpretations that we already feel fairly confident about on the basis of our innate assessments of situations. Thus, a key component of the research at Keatley Creek has been to engage all excavators, but especially those with experience and expertise, in stratigraphic interpretations in the field. Individuals who directed each of the more extensive excavations were generally chosen for their expertise in fieldwork and they were the ones who were asked to write up interpretations in their reports. I think that anyone trying to write up a report on the basis of someone else's generally sparse fieldnotes or results from laboratory tests will produce a much less satisfactory analysis. The following chapters, thus, represent the product of this approach. I feel confident that those who consult these chapters will appreciate the worth of this strategy and the great merit of engaging those who have taken the time to document their observations and interpretations in this manner.

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