Housepit 5 Test Trench

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Housepit Location and Description

Housepit 5 is located on the top of a terrace on the north bank of Keatley Creek. (Vol. III, Preface, **Fig.1**). It is an oval and is 22 m along its short axis with a prominent rim; no entrance features are evident.

Test Trench Excavation Results

The initial living surface of the housepit area was on a paleosol. The initial house excavation followed, probably during the Plateau horizon. Several re-occupations occurred, the final one during the Kamloops horizon.

Two, possibly three, living surfaces are identifiable in this housepit (**Fig. 1**). The floor deposit of the main, and latest, occupation is found in the center of the housepit. It is directly overlain by a Kamloops horizon roof identified as such by a side-notched point. The pre-housepit living surface occurs in a paleosol underlying the rim spoil of the housepit. This paleosol is composed of well compacted silt approximately 10–20 cm thick. Below the surface of the paleosol there is an abundance of large flake blanks, cores, and secondary flakes. Four biface tips, a biface, five microblades, and a microblade core were also found within this paleosol. It is possible that this represents the floor deposit of the initial housepit, but it has been interpreted as an ancient ground surface for the silts resemble an aeolian deposit. Silts such as this are found beneath the rims in HP 4 and HP 7 as well. The third living surface is found on a slope above and west of Feature 2; it ends where the sterile steps up abruptly to the paleosol silts. This bit of floor is overlain by rim spoil or roof and is not associated with any diagnostic

artifacts. It could be associated with the Kamloops horizon floor, or it could represent another occupational horizon. Further excavation is required to clarify this relationship.

The first rim spoil deposits directly above the paleosol in the northern half of Square E are clearly truncated. These represent an early rim. Above this truncated rim, two yellow, gravelly lenses dip southward toward the outside of the rim and undoubtedly extend beyond the test trench.

These lenses are truncated by the Kamloops roof deposit which blankets the whole housepit. Between these lenses are variously textured rim spoil deposits which are also truncated by the Kamloops roof deposit. This complicated arrangement of lenses suggests numerous occupation re-excavation cycles; the presence of a possible earlier floor (Stratum V) supports this notion, as does a small surface remnant (Stratum IX) cut into the paleosol.

Many shallow pit features extend into the sterile material. Four of these pits are overlapping, having been excavated at different times. One large, bell-shaped storage pit was excavated to a depth of one meter. The pit fill deposits were layered, but did not contain much sterile material.

Excavation Summary and Conclusions

In sum, HP 5 has only one truly diagnostic artifact; the Kamloops side-notched point found in the roof deposit, indicating that the subjacent floor is also Kamloops horizon. Microblades and a microblade core were found in the paleosol silts predating housepit construction. The complex rim and ambiguous floor deposit (Stratum V) suggest many cycles of occupation and

re-excavation. Thus the housepit probably has been used from at least The Plateau horizon and possibly earlier, ending in the Kamloops horizon.

The Kamloops floor in HP 5 is very hard to follow in the center, where its texture is no different than the texture of sterile. Here, the distinction is made primarily based on compaction and very subtle color changes. The Kamloops floor is a very distinct silty material towards its edge, but at the center it is very clear.

The upper boundary of the paleosol living surface is very well defined at its contact with the overlying rim deposit, but at its base its contact with the basal till is gradational.

Figure Captions

Figure 1: Housepit 5 east wall profile and floor plan.

Figure 1: Stratum Legend for Housepit 5

(*dry* Munsell colors)

I Surface, dark gray (10 YR 3/2) silty loam: relatively coherent.

II Kamloops roof fill, gray (10 YR 3/2) silty loam with a high gravel content plus occasional charcoal chunks and cobbles–mostly fire cracked rock.

III Kamloops floor deposit, gray to dark gray (10 YR 4/2–5/2), same characteristics as II in the center of the house except slightly more compact and becoming slightly lighter in color. Towards the periphery of the house, this strata becomes much lighter in color and less gravelly than the overlying deposits.

IV Kamloops roof fill or rim spoil, gray (10 YR 4/2). Similar to strata II except that it is slightly browner in color and has more rootlets. It seems less consolidated than roof fill.

V Possible floor facies, brown, (10 YR 5/3). Thin layer of highly organic silty loam with high gravel content, like the strata above it. Very unconsolidated.

VI Possible rim spoil, brown (10 YR 5/4). Same as strata V except that it is a lighter gray brown. Highly unconsolidated, may have slumped.

VII Pit fill, light brown (10 YR 3/2). Silty loam with some gravels, well consolidated.

VIII Rim spoil deposits, stratified yellow and dark brown lenses (10 YR 5/4 / 10 YR 3/3), very unconsolidated with many rootlets, lots of gravels and large angular cobbles. Lots of fire-reddened and charcoal lenses, birch bark, and carbonate flecks. Hydrophobic.

IX disturbed paleosol (10 YR 4/3) silts with rootlets, unconsolidated.

X Paleosol (10 YR 4/3) silts showing some A horizon formation in the top 20 cm. The old surface has been burned. Artifactual material is abundant, including microblades.

XI Sterile, yellow (10 YR 4/4) silts, unweathered, parent material.

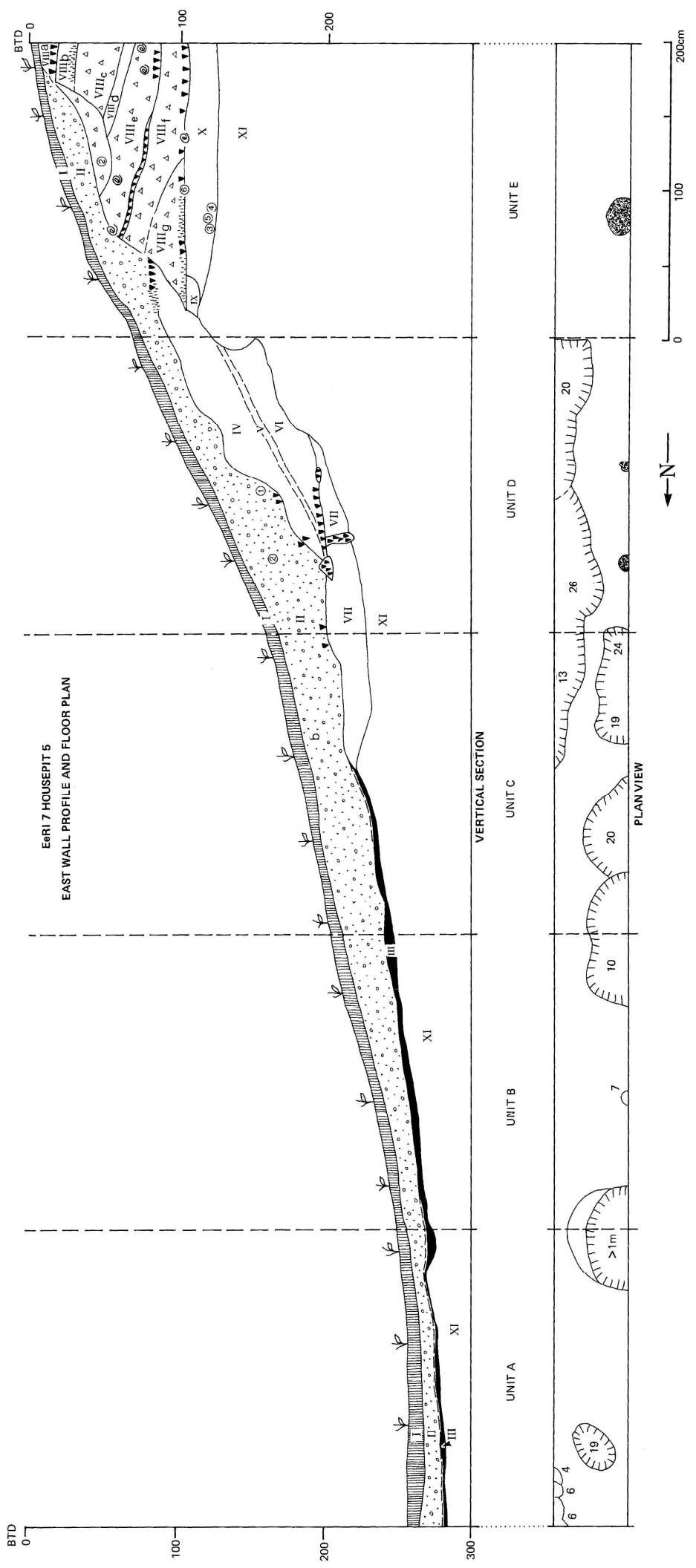

Figure 1. Housepit 5 east wall profile and floor plan.