

Preface

Brian Hayden

This is the final report of the Fraser River Investigations into Corporate Group Archaeology Project, a project that has lasted for 13 years. This has certainly been one of the great intellectual and collaborative undertakings of my lifetime. I trust that readers will recognize in the many contributions that make up this report, the remarkable interweaving of many divergent disciplines, lives, and perspectives into a united interpretation of the social and economic organization of a prehistoric community on the Northwest Plateau. This report is special for a number of reasons. Firstly, the nature of the archaeological remains at Keatley Creek are in my estimation, one of our most important national and world heritage treasures. The site is extraordinary in terms of its size for people following a hunter-gatherer way of life (with an estimated peak population of 1,200 -1,500). The large houses are extraordinary for pithouses and the preservation of organic remains and stratigraphy is excellent.

Secondly, this report is special because it seeks one of the most elusive entities archaeologists have sought from the beginnings of their systematic exploration of the past: notably, the basic social and economic and political organization in specific prehistoric societies. How did this organization mold the lives of people on a day to day basis? There have been many professional archaeologists who have said that such questions cannot be answered. There have been many others who adamantly maintain that such questions can be answered. However, while both sides have reveled in pronouncements, few archaeologists have successfully demonstrated how even basic aspects of social or economic organization can be reconstructed from the remote past.

The previous volumes demonstrated that with determination, collaboration, and a little luck, a fairly detailed reconstruction of past social and economic organization is certainly possible. This was the goal of the project from the beginning: to understand the social and organization of unusually large houses (residential corporate groups). The results have sometimes been surprising and intellectually exhilarating, as the following chapters document.

Third, as alluded to above, this report is remarkable for the unusual breadth of data and disciplines that have all contributed to making this report a landmark study in prehistoric archaeology. While I originally defined the basic problem orientation of the project, I have had the good fortune to have been aided from the outset by a remarkable team of collaborators, excavators, and analysts in specialized fields. I consider the substantial success of this project to be a tribute to all of them. Many of the authors of the following chapters helped plan the excavation and analytical strategies to be pursued from the outset of the project, and many were on the first field crew that tested the first housepits in a hesitant and hopeful manner, unsure as to whether we would find any intact or recognizable living

floor deposits upon which much of the fate of the project depended. Diana Alexander, Karla Kusmer, Dale Donovan, Dana Lepofsky, and Mike Rousseau were all members of that first field crew and planning committee. They helped modify our strategy as new realities confronted our initial idealistic models, and they continued their involvement in the project over the years in analyzing the overwhelming amounts of material recovered. I consider this final report on the work at Keatley Creek as one of the best examples of what collaborative, interdisciplinary archaeology can produce.

Fourth, this report is special because it substantially increases our depth of understanding in the study of complex hunter-gatherers. Complex hunter-gatherers have become very prominent in the theoretical domain of archaeology in the past two decades because they now appear to be the key to understanding most of the important cultural developments of the last 30,000 years of prehistory, including the emergence of prestige technologies, economic-based competition, private ownership, socioeconomic hierarchies, slavery, domestication of plants and animals, sedentism, and many tangentially related phenomena. This report also provides a major contribution to the systematic and detailed study of site formation processes which have rarely been documented in any thorough or systematic fashion.

Finally, this report is special because substantial parts of it have been built upon an in-depth understanding of the living descendants of the prehistoric Plateau peoples. We were privileged not only to read early ethnographic accounts of traditional Plateau lifeways as recorded by James Teit and others, but also to be able to work with a number of elders from the surrounding First Nations communities. From them we learned a great deal about traditional practices and especially how resources were used. This valuable information constituted a study of traditional resource use that was exceptional in its coverage and documentation of traditional lifeways. This study was published by the University of British Columbia Press under the title of: *A Complex Culture of the British Columbia Plateau* (Edited by B. Hayden). I certainly would like to extend my very deep gratitude to everyone in the native communities that aided us in this work, and especially to former Chief, Desmond Peters, Senior, of Pavilion.

The quest to recover past social and economic organizations on the Plateau has been long and arduous, and it has led to many unexpected ventures, both geographical and intellectual. I have been constantly surprised by new facts, new relationships, new perceptions, new conclusions, and new questions. However, the quest has never become dull or boring. If anything, it has been too interesting and too captivating. At times, it has been difficult to hold all the threads together in order to make a coherent fabric of the past at Keatley Creek and to create coherent theoretical images of the past. However, the main themes have remained clear and resilient. The venture has been a wonderful growing experience, even if I have at times been exhausted by the endeavor.

I am confident that as a result of the excavations at Keatley Creek, the new conceptual, methodological, and theoretical approaches that I and the other analysts have developed will stimulate further advances in the exciting area of documenting and understanding past social and economic organization. However, many of the advances that we associate with this project have been fortuitous and serendipitous. I certainly did not foresee or plan for all of them. Many of the advances were developed by interested students and analysts who became intrigued by the project and developed their own innovative ways of looking at the data. Once again, I must acknowledge my very good fortune in having such interested, dedicated, and talented individuals involved in this project. It is above all, they who have made it successful.

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

dictionary. It should be consulted whenever any questions about excavation or stratigraphic details of a housepit arise from reading analyses or interpretations in the other volumes.

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 in tact 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 4•9. 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

these excavations is provided at the beginning of the chapter by Mike Rousseau, Martin Handley, and James Spafford.

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.

Acknowledgements

I apologize for anyone who helped in the project and whom I have forgotten to acknowledge.

Of utmost importance for the success of this project has been the good will and cooperation of the people that have generously permitted us to excavate on their legal and traditional lands: Mr. J.E. Termuende of the Diamond S Ranch, and the Pavilion (Ts'qw'aylaxw) Indian Band. The Fountain (Xaxli'p) Indian Band has also provided substantial support. More than anyone else, Desmond Peters, Senior, of the Pavilion Band, has been a mentor of our research in the area and has been invaluable in providing information on traditional culture. In the creation of this project, Dr. Arnoud Stryd was both

an inspiration and a generous advisor. Morley Eldridge has provided many seminal ideas and data. Trevor Chandler, in particular, has been a constant supporter. We have always been warmly welcomed by the people in the Lillooet region whether in meetings, at gatherings, on ranches, on reserves, in museums, or in stores; and we are grateful for their interest, their hospitality, and their friendship.

Many professionals have provided advice, comments, and suggestions throughout the research and the writing of this report. I would particularly like to thank Roy Carlson, Phil Hobler, Jon Driver, R.G. Matson, Michael Blake, Mike Rousseau, Al McMillan, Grant Keddie, Rick Schulting, Ken Ames, Jim Chatters, T. Douglas Price, D'Ann Owens Baird, Jim Spafford, Ann Eldridge, Marvin Harris, Polly Wiessner, John Clark, and Ernest Burch, Jr. Both Robert Arthurs and Chris Hildred generously arranged for aerial photography of the site and nearby features. Triathlon Inc. translated air images into contour maps. Larry Marshik provided survey maps of the site. Jaclynne Campbell, Elizabeth Carefoot, Bob Birtch, Gary Stasiuk, Jim Spafford, and Andrew Henry spent many hours assembling the illustrations for which I am extremely grateful. A number of specific illustrations were also drawn by Sasha Brown, Suzanne Villeneuve, Celene Fung, and Tom Munro. Anita Mahoney and Barb Lange shouldered the enormous responsibility of turning the many manuscripts into a legible and coherent clean manuscript for which I am eternally grateful. Jennifer Provençal was instrumental in putting the manuscripts into final form for which I am also extremely thankful.

In addition to the many authors that have helped produce this final report, I would also like to thank the many crew members and volunteers that contributed their time and expertise to help gather, process, and organize the basic data upon which everything else rests. There have been many scores of individuals involved in this aspect of the project, and I am grateful to them all.

Due to the vicissitudes of funding, there have been many agencies involved in the financing of this project. By far, the bulk of the funding has come from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (and its predecessor, The Canada Council). Additional financing has been provided by the SSHRC Small Grants Committee at Simon Fraser University, the President's Research Committee at Simon Fraser University, the Simon Fraser University Special Research Projects Fund, the Simon Fraser University Publications Committee, The McLean Foundation, and the British Columbia Heritage Trust. I gratefully acknowledge the support of all these agencies.

Individuals who helped in excavation, lab work, and manuscript preparation include:

Sandy Addison
Catherine Adler
Art Adolph
Brent Adolph
Diana Alexander
Lucy Andersen
Marianne Averagesch
Ed Bakewell
Mike Bardill
Andrew Barton
Kevin Berry
Marie Besse
Sylvie Beyries
Vandy Bowyer
Michael Brand
John Breffit
Hart Briggs

Doug Brown
Manya Buchan
Dave Bukach
Chris Burk
Carolyn Burr
Kelly Bush
Michael Cairns
Sally Carr
Terry Clouthier
Mark Cook
Tobin Copley
Scott Cousins
Marnie Craddock
Alan Craighead
Eva Craighead
Dave Crellin
Tina Crellin
Lanna Crucefix
Lita Cudworth
Joanne Curtin
Kathy Davis
Maria De Paoli
Avrom Digance
Dale Donovan
Theresa Doucette
Morley Eldridge
Rob Field
Karen Forrester
Nora Franco
Alejandro Frid
Pierre Friele
Katrin Froese
Rob Gargett
Paul Goldberg
Margaret Greene
Glen Guthrie
Martin Handly
Don Hanna
Mike Harrower
Erik Hayden
Rene Hayden
Seline Hayden
Andrew Henry
Andrew Hunt
Astrid Huser
W. Karl Hutchings
Gyles Iannone
Cheryl Jacklin
Stephanie James
Laurie Janeson
Don Jolly
Richard Kernahan
Chris Knussel
Michelle Koskatalo

Derek Kowalchuck
Rizard Krukowski
Ian Kuijt
Karla Kusmer
Dana Lepofsky
Eva Linklater
Diane Lyons
John MacDonald
Robert MacNevin
Yvonne Marshall
Tiffany McMullen
Carol Mehling
Peter Merchant
Emma Micklewright
Meredith Mitchell
Julia Morris
Sara Mossop
Bob Muir
Eva Nagy
Elana Newsmall
Nicole Oakes
Joanna Ostapkowicz
D'Ann Owens
Laura Pasacreta
James Perodie
Lorna Potter
Bill Prentiss
Heather Pringle
Jennifer Provençal
Cathy Puskas
Jasmyne Rockwell
Mike Rousseau
Katherine Russell
Dennis Sandgathe
Rich Schulting
Jeff Scott
Marzena Siniiecka
John Smalley
Jim Spafford
Christopher Spencer
Jason Turner
Rena Vastokis
Suzanne Villeneuve
Michael Will
Rae-Dawn Wilson
Susan Wilson
Michelle Wolstencroft
Sue Woods
Eldon Yellowhorn

Figures

Figure 1. The location of housepit structures and Extra Housepit Excavation locations in the Keatley Creek site. (Contour interval = 5m.). The Keatley Creek site core with assigned numbers of housepits can be viewed as an enlargement. The five largest housepits are designated in bolder numbers.

Figure 2. A detailed view of Terrace 2 and the housepits located on it.

Photographs

photo 1. After the fire of 1996, Keatley Creek from the air.

photo 2. Before the fire, colour infrared photograph from the air.

photo 3. Looking West from Terrace 1, Photograph of Keatley Creek

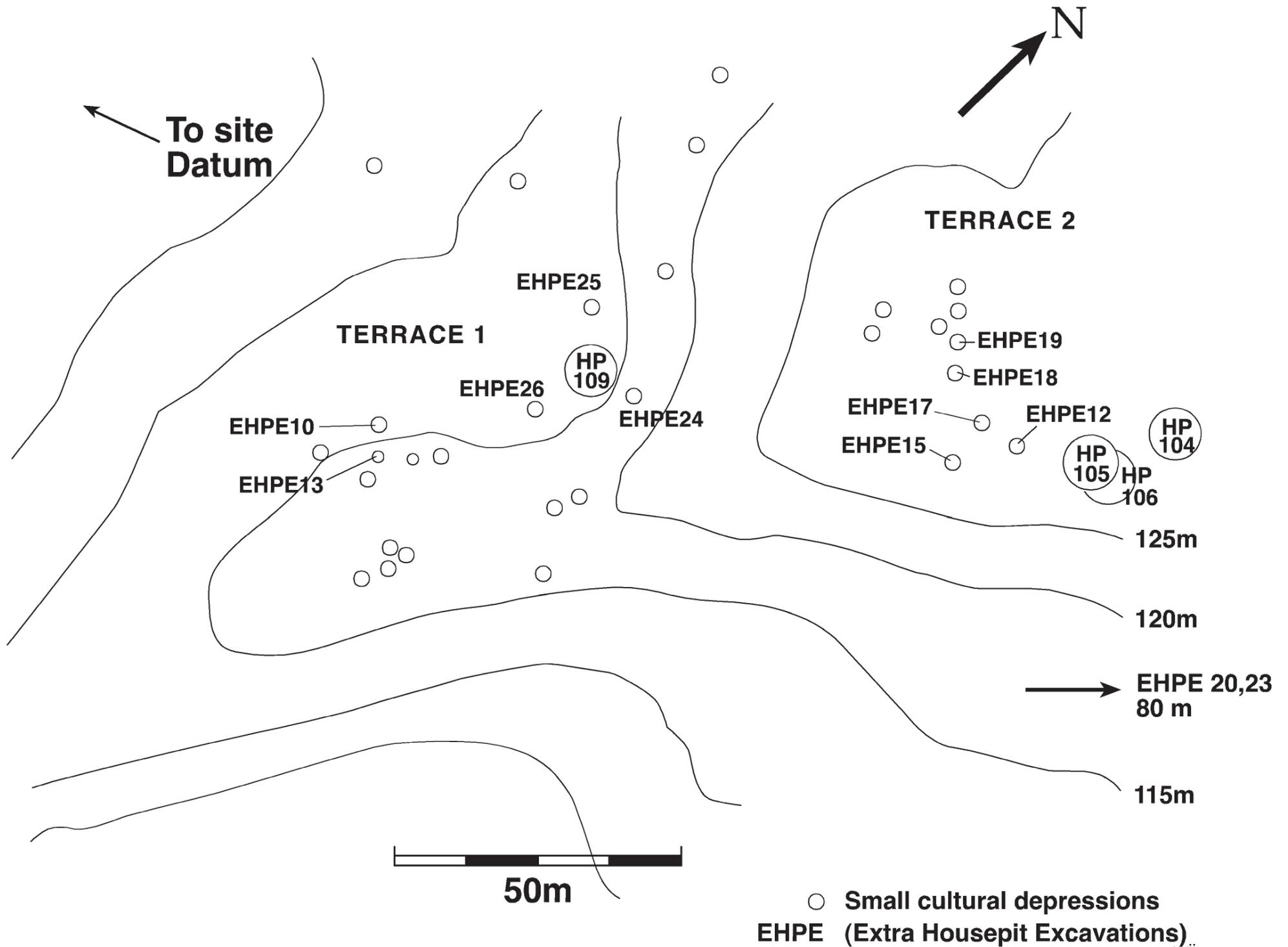


Figure 2. A detailed view of Terrace 2 and the housepits located on it.



Photo 1. After the fire of 1996, Keatley Creek from the air.



Photo 2. Before the fire, colour infrared photograph from the air.



Photo 3. Looking West from Terrace 1, Photograph of Keatley Creek.