

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Little River Archeological District (14RC2, 3, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 408)

AND/OR COMMON

Tobias-Thompson Complex; Tobias, Paul Thompson, C.F. Thompson,
Hayes No. 1, Hayes No. 2, Major & Taylor Sites

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER



NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Geneseo

VICINITY OF

First

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Kansas

20

Rice

159

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCES
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: grazing

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

See attached sheet

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Rice County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lyons

STATE

Kansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Kansas Archeological Survey

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Archeological Department, Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

STATE

Kansas

66612

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Description

The Little River Archeological District is comprised of 8 sites (Little River Focus, Great Bend Aspect, ca. 1500 to 1700 A.D.)

Site-by-Site Description

There has been some confusion with regard to the names of the sites within the Little River Archeological District. First, there are two Thompson sites: the C.F. Thompson Site--14RC9, and the Paul Thompson Site--14RC12. Second, the Kermit Hayes Site No. 1 and the Kermit Hayes Site No. 2 have been confused. Hayes No. 2, herein called 14RC13 in keeping with Wedel's 1968 designation, was previously labelled 14RC3 in Wedel's 1959 publication. In the 1968 description by Wedel, 14RC3 refers to the Hayes No. 1 Site. The later (1968) site numbers assigned by Wedel have been used in this report. Following is a description of any visible archeological features and/or excavations on each site within the district.

14RC8 -- The Tobias Site is located

s.

Prior to excavation, nineteen low inconspicuous mounds and numerous small depressions marking the locations of subterranean cache pits were evident on the surface of the site

e.

The mound diameters ranged from 25 to 40 feet, and no mound rose to a height above 2 feet. Surrounding one of the larger mounds (Mound 17) prior to excavation were six pits of unequal size and depth. This pit and mound complex has been considered as a single feature which has popularly been dubbed "council circle" by local collectors. At the present time, some of these mounds and depressions are still evident on the surface, for the site has never been cultivated and is still in native sod. This thick sod cover makes surface collection of artifacts almost impossible; however, in the cultivated area south of the natural pasture land, artifacts can be collected after each rain.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1500 - 1700 A.D. BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Significance

The Little River Archeological District [redacted], all of which relate to the Little River Focus of the Great Bend Aspect dating from 1500 to 1700 A.D. These sites are among the few in Kansas to link the historic and prehistoric periods; for they have been related to a historic culture, the Wichita Tribe, and may have been among the villages visited by Coronado in Quivira in 1542. The council circles present at three of the sites represent a unique feature which is not yet completely understood. Although five of the sites have been excavated in 1940, 1965-67, and 1971 by Waldo Wedel of the Smithsonian and in 1949 by Carlyle Smith of the University of Kansas, future excavations have potential for determining the traits and a cultural chronology for the Little River Focus, for understanding the evolution of the Little River culture into the Historic Wichita, for providing additional insight into the antecedents to Wichita culture, for tracing cultural contacts and trade routes both within and outside of the Plains, and for providing information about the impact of the first European contact on the inhabitants of the Central Plains.

Discussion

The eight archeological sites or extensive village areas which make up the landmark district must be viewed together. Excavations and surface collections have yielded materials which indicate that they all relate to the same culture--the Little River Focus of the Great Bend Aspect. Each village area [redacted]. Taken as a unit, they provide evidence for the settlement pattern of the Little River Focus. The three village areas [redacted] contain an unusual and as yet inadequately explained feature popularly called a council circle. The council circles each consist of a low mound surrounded by depressions or a ditch. Excavation revealed four basins surrounding and partially underlying the mound and inside of the ditch. The storage pits, hearths, post molds, and refuse and artifacts within these basins suggest that they were originally used as dwellings. It has been suggested that the circles represent forts similar to one described by Trevino of Col. Don Diego Parilla's expedition against a Wichita village on the Red River in 1759. The fort Trevino was larger than the council circles within the landmark but consisted of four subterranean structures surrounded by an earthen rampart and trench.

Located near the centers of the village areas [redacted], these circular structures or features probably served some special purpose, and alternative views concerning their use have been proposed. Wedel (1967 and 1968) has discussed

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY [REDACTED]

UTM REFERENCES [REDACTED]

A [REDACTED]
ZONE EASTING [REDACTED] NORTHING [REDACTED]

B [REDACTED]
ZONE EASTING [REDACTED] NORTHING [REDACTED]

C [REDACTED]

D [REDACTED]

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See attached sheet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Francine Weiss, Archeologist, Landmark Review Project

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey Division, NPS

DATE

Visited: November 1975

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, N.W.

TELEPHONE

202-523-5465

CITY OR TOWN

Washington, D. C.

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE

Landmark

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Boundary Certified: *[Signature]*

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Designated: *July 19, 1964*
Boundary Certified: *[Signature]*
DATE: *March 7, 1979*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

4/24/79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE (1)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Description

The site has been excavated three times by Waldo Wedel of the Smithsonian Institution. Although many of the mounds had been vandalized prior to these careful excavations, enough of the site remained intact to make Wedel's investigations worthwhile; indeed, much of the site still remains intact for future research. In 1940, Wedel tested two relatively undisturbed mounds, both of which turned out to contain only refuse with no evidence of the presence of structures. Wedel also trenched the council circle mound whose upper portions were found to contain refuse similar to that in the other two mounds investigated. However, the midden was underlain by other features (cache pits, fire basins, ash lenses, and lumps of charcoal) which must have pre-dated the mound's construction. This council circle mound also appeared to overlie portions of two basins which were excavated and found to contain boulders, cache pits, hearths, and post molds. Parts of human skeletons somewhat above the original ground surface of the basin, bison skulls without lower jaws, and a variety of artifactual and food remains were found within these structures, one or both of which were destroyed by fire. Judging from the masses of fire-hardened clay, the charred remains of poles in the post molds, and the amount of charred grass from the burnt structure, it can be assumed that the posts supported a pole and thatch structure covered with clay or mud daub. The cache pits, found both in the basin and in other areas of the site, were large, cistern-shaped pits with cylindrical necks with diameters of 40 to 78 inches. The necks extended to a depth of 24 to 48 inches, below which the walls flared out to a maximum spread at the bottom of 45 to 99 inches. With a total depth ranging from 30 to 82 inches, these pits were initially used for caches and later filled with refuse after the caches were removed. Maize, beans, wild plum, bird and fish bones, turtle remains, and bison, dog, deer, antelope, and rodent bones were among the food remains found at the site. Artifacts unearthed include: a point, needle fragment, and other objects of worked antler; bison scapula digging tools; bone awls, shaft straighteners, beads, and other objects of worked bone; points, mainly triangular in shape; drills; knives; numerous end and side scrapers, axes; cache flints; grooved mauls; hammerstones; mealing stones and manos; mortars; shaft smoothers; sharpening stones; pipes, generally of catlinite; sandstone disks; a turquoise bead; shell beads and pendants and a possible shell spoon; and Geneseo type pottery. Geneseo Plain and Simple Stamped wares were generally represented by gray, sand-tempered sherds of amphora-like jars, while Geneseo Red Filmed wares were generally finer textured, sand-tempered sherds--slate gray to buff in color--from more globular shaped pots covered with a red film. Some grit-tempered, cord marked sherds reminiscent of Upper Republican pottery of northern Kansas and southern Nebraska and some shell-tempered sherds were also recovered during excavation. Charred remains of a coiled basket, cord imprints, a short section of twisted grass or corn husks, and a partially charred small bundle of straight sticks are among the perishable materials from the site. Objects of European manufacture

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE (2)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Description

include: iron fragments suggestive of a knife blade, an iron awl-like artifact, an iron axe, strips of copper, blue glass beads, and a necklace of glass, turquoise, and bone.

The site was reexcavated in 1965, primarily in an attempt to determine the nature of the council circle mound. Wedel found that the two previously excavated basins were accompanied by an additional two similar structures yielding post molds, pits, caches, fireplaces, human bones, and bison skulls. Ranging in size from 10 to 12 feet in width, from 32 to 36 in depth, and from 30 to 60 feet in length, these four irregularly shaped oblong basins were spaced around the mound in the semi-cardinal directions inside of the depressions noted before excavations and roughly parallel to them. An unworked sandstone slab over 4 bone beads was uncovered in the "patio" area or center of the quadrilateral formed by the basins. Each basin contained a layer of boulders underlain by the charred remains of poles, grass, etc. Wedel (1968) contends that the basins represent the ruins of burned out houses which had been constructed on a framework of poles, thatched with grass and partially covered with mud and clay. The boulders had probably outlined the pit and structure and had fallen into the pit once the house had burned. The human bones found within the basin have not yet been adequately explained. The six irregularly shaped pits which were evident before excavation around the council house mound were found to exhibit no evidence of structures. The actual use of this complex feature is not known at the present time.

In 1971, Tobias was again reexamined by Wedel. A total of 28 cache pits were excavated in a 20 by 250-foot area. Artifacts and food remains similar to those described above were unearthed during these excavations. Of particular interest was the recovery of a fragment of rusted chain mail similar to the one found in 1940 at 14RC9 which will be discussed below.

14RC9 -- The C.F. Thompson Site

Most of the site is covered by native sod, but the northernmost portion is cultivated. In 1959, ten or more mounds were visible in the sodded portion while four were faintly discernible in the cultivated fields. The ten mounds in sod clustered in an area measuring 100 by 175 yards:

The mounds are superficially the same as those at the Tobias Site, although one or two may be a bit larger. No council circle has ever been observed at the Thompson site. The mounds and depressions in sod at Thompson are faintly visible today as they were at Tobias. The cultivated mounds are no longer discernible.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE (3)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Description

In 1940, the C.F. Thompson Site was excavated by Waldo Wedel. Two mounds were tested, and five cache pits were excavated. The artifact assemblage from the site was similar to that from Tobias and will not be discussed here in detail. However, several additional items of importance were unearthed. Of particular interest were four glaze-paint sherds representing late Rio Grande forms which were used from the first quarter of the 16th century until the mid-17th century. The presence of these sherds helped to date the site and indicated that the inhabitants of the site had contact with the Southwest. Other pottery types not evident at Tobias included an incised sherd characteristic of Middle Mississippian wares of the Steed Kisker Site near Kansas City, another reminiscent of Oneota, and six red-filmed sherds exhibiting probable Southeastern affinities. An incised pipe fragment of puebloan type reemphasizes the Southwestern contacts. Also of importance was the recovery of three iron rings of chain mail, most probably of Spanish origin. As mentioned previously, this find was strengthened in 1971 by the discovery of another chain mail fragment on the Tobias Site.

14RC12 --

[REDACTED], the Paul Thompson Site is still planted in native sod which permits minimal destruction of features prior to excavation when compared with cultivation. Some features are thus still evident in the irregular contours of the sod. The Paul Thompson Site contains the smallest and perhaps the best preserved council circle within the landmark. At the surface, the circle appeared similar to the one at Tobias; however, the six pits surrounding the mound at Tobias were replaced by a more continuous encircling ditch at 14RC12. Village debris is probably scattered around this somewhat centrally located council circle mound.

Excavations at the site in 1967 by Wedel were conducted in an attempt to determine the nature of the council circle. As at Tobias, the circle was found to consist of a mounded center surrounded by four oblong house pits oriented at the semi-cardinal points inside of the encircling surface depressions or ditch. At the ground surface under the mound in the "patio" were small fireplaces and two large cache pits underlain by a large centrally located fireplace. Hearths, post molds, boulders, cache pits, bison skulls, and a variety of refuse and artifactual material were unearthed during these excavations in the basins or house pits. Only two of the house basins were completely excavated, while the other two were merely tested. As at Tobias,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE (4)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Description

this site also did not reveal any evidence of house features in the outer ditch which was visible prior to excavation. Wedel (1968) mentioned two noteworthy differences between the Tobias and Thompson circles. First, the Thompson excavations provided little evidence for mud or clay coverings on the structures over the house basins, and second, human remains were conspicuously absent at Thompson and present at Tobias.

14RC3 -- The Kermit Hayes No. 1 Site [REDACTED]

This site has been cultivated for many years, and any surface features have therefore been obliterated. The cultivation, however, continually brings artifacts to the surface. Although the site has never been formally excavated, it probably contains extensive village remains. The presence of a council circle has never been noted for this site.

14RC408 -- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. It has likewise not been excavated and is currently cultivated property. The absence of a council circle is also noteworthy.

14RC14 -- The Taylor Site [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As with the two previously discussed sites, the Taylor probably represents a village area and does not exhibit any evidence for a council circle. Although the site was cultivated for many years, it has recently been planted in grass.

14RC2 -- The Major Site [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. The site has been cultivated for many years, and thus the evidence for any surface features has gradually become more and more limited. In 1940, comparatively insignificant mounds were noted by Wedel as he surface collected on the site. In 1948, excavations were conducted by Carlyle S. Smith of the Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, in two refuse mounds; one mound was completely excavated while the second was trenched. A large cache pit intruding into one of the mounds was also excavated. The artifacts from the dig closely paralleled the types described by Wedel. (Refer to Tobias Site description.) However, no artifacts of European or Puebloan manufacture were recovered. One interesting aspect of these 1948 excavations was that Smith (1949) noted the presence of some cultural stratigraphy at the site; he mentions, for instance that shell-tempered wares are

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE (5)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Description

found in the upper levels of the site. As Smith points out, further exploration at this and similar sites may thus eventually lead to the determination of a chronology within the Great Bend Aspect.

14RC13 -- The Kermit Hayes Site No. 2

The site has been cultivated for many years, and no surface indications of mounds or cache pits are apparent nor were they evident in 1940 when Wedel first visited the site to surface collect. During this 1940 visit, Wedel noted the presence of a large, well-defined council circle about 40 yards in diameter with a central mound 2 feet in height surrounded by a continuous ditch 13 to 18 in. deep and 12 to 15 feet wide.

with scattered petroglyphs pecked into the bluff face. This petroglyph site, known as the Peverly Site (14RC10), is sheltered by trees and off the main roads and is therefore in good condition despite the presence of adjacent farm buildings and a bit of modern graffiti. Because of its proximity to the other sites within the landmark district and because of its condition, the site has been included within landmark boundaries although it cannot be established with absolute certainty that it relates to the Little River culture.

According to Wedel (1968), the council circle at the Hayes Site No. 2 is the largest and one of the most perplexing. Known from aerial photographs to actually be elliptical in shape, this circle may have contained two outer ditches (i.e. a triple concentric arrangement when the inner basins are considered); for local informants told Wedel (1968) that two concentric ditches--one continuous, the other broken into quarters--were visible prior to cultivation of the site. When the site was excavated by Wedel in 1966-67, however, only one outer circle, which may have actually consisted of four segments separated by low ridges, was evident. It seems possible that only two rings existed and that both were evident prior to cultivation but that cultivation and subsequent erosion of the features masked the inner basins. The excavations revealed the four oblong basins placed in the semi-cardinal directions around the center of the mound. Underneath the mound was a large centrally located fireplace similar to the one at the Thompson circle. Three of these basins were outlined, and one was tested; but none were totally cleared. In three of the four basins, scattered human bones were encountered; and in the fourth, a mass of partial to complete skeletons representing at least fifteen individuals was uncovered. Hints of fireplaces and post molds as well as two small pits and a dog burial were among the features revealed by these excavations. The boulders present at the other circles were conspicuously absent at Hayes. The outside ring of depressions was devoid of recognizable house features but contained reddish brown

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE (6)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Description

subsoil similar to the earth which makes up the mound. According to Wedel (1968), it thus appeared that the earth for the mound construction may have been "borrowed" or obtained from the surrounding outside depressions.

Summary and General Comments

The landmark district thus contains eight closely related archeological sites. Much village debris has been collected from these sites, five of which have been partially excavated. Unfortunately, the sites had been pot-hunted prior to excavation, and some evidence of recent vandalism is present. The three sites on the [REDACTED] contain a unique feature, popularly known as a "council circle," which consists of a low, man-made mound surrounded by four large house basins which are in turn surrounded by depressions or an encircling ditch.

Of the eight sites, two (14RC8 and 12) are in native sod, while portions of two more (14RC2 and 9) are also in this undisturbed context. On these sites in native pastureland, depressions and slight mounds of varying sizes representing possible site features are evident. One site (14RC14) was cultivated in past years and is now seeded in grass. The rest are currently under cultivation. This farming activity coupled with the sandy nature of the soil has resulted in some erosion of the protective top soil and consequent destruction of the upper portions of some sites. Additionally, the construction of modern farm terraces has caused damages to some sites. Although these farming practices are destructive, the depth of some site features (for example storage pits extending to 8 feet below ground surface) and the large size of these sites assures that much information can be recovered despite this damage.

[REDACTED] Although these intrusions have done permanent damage, the area destroyed is small in comparison with the total site area. These features along with houses and farm buildings within landmark boundaries obviously do not contribute to the national significance of the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE (1)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Significance

the possible significance of the circles in relation to solstitial phenomena and has indicated that their alignment may be related to the positions of the winter solstice sunrise and the summer solstice sunset. The presence of the human bones in the council circle house basins is far from understood. Wedel (1968) suggests that the bones may be linked to sacrificial observances relating to the solstices. More conclusive evidence relating to the use of the council circles may be discovered through further excavation, either within the Little River Archeological District or at other sites representing the same culture, namely the Little River Focus of the Great Bend Aspect.

This culture, as illustrated by the sites within the landmark district, is a semi-sedentary Plains Village type which, according to Wedel (1968), originated to the south (See McLemore Site landmark file.) and spread northward [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Features representative of the Little River Focus include a few relatively inconspicuous mounds and numerous large bell-shaped storage pits, but few signs of house pits or house mounds. Indeed no houses other than the council circle basins have been identified during excavations within the landmark. Work in stone and bone from these sites includes numerous end scrapers plus side scrapers, a variety of knife types, drills, small triangular arrow points, chopping tools, etc. Such weapons and cutting and scraping tools were the predominant artifacts as would be expected for a culture with a well-developed hunting and skin-working economy. However, milling stones, manos, bone hoes, and digging stick tips indicate that horticulture was also an important part of the economy. Bison bones along with remains of charred corn, beans, squash and sunflower seeds from the sites further emphasize the presence of these complementary subsistence activities.

Some of the artifacts found during excavations of the sites indicate contacts with other cultures over a considerable distance. Examples of these trade items include: catlinite from Minnesota, Alibates agatized dolomite from the Texas Panhandle, shell from the Gulf of Mexico, and a number of objects from the Southwest such as turquoise beads and pendants, olivella shell beads, shaft straighteners of Rio Grande Pueblo form manufactured out of New Mexico stone, and malachite or azurite. Of particular importance was the recovery of several glazed potsherds from the Rio Grande drainage in New Mexico. Not only did these sherds provide evidence for contact but they also enabled the Kansas sites to be dated to 1500 to 1700 A.D. because the chronology for the Southwest glaze paint wares is so well established.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE (2)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex) - Significance

It is generally conceded that although an area in New Mexico is known as Quivira in the later Spanish colonial period in the Southwest, the natives of Quivira of Coronado's time were Wichita speakers living in an area located by various scholars from Texas northward. It has often been suggested that Quivira of this early time period lay near the great bend of the Arkansas River. Although European artifacts are not abundant within the landmark, some have been found. They included such items as fragments of chain mail, some glass beads, a few iron awl-like objects, and a knife blade. This small percentage as well as the limited variety of European manufactured goods excavated from the landmark sites lends support to this idea of the great bend area as a point of very early contact between Plains Indians and Europeans, if not as the actual spot visited by Coronado in 1542. Certainly, the recovery of chain mail indicates an early date. At later sites, one would expect to find a greater number and variety of artifacts (probably including gun parts and flints) as is the case for 18th century Wichita sites in northern Oklahoma and in the Red River Valley.

The sites within the landmark thus appear to be representative of the culture of the ancestors of the Wichita who in the initial contact period were little affected by the European presence. By the 18th century, however, the Wichita had moved away from the great bend of the Arkansas about 200 miles to the south. Perhaps increasing pressures from Osage and Plains Apache or climatic changes precipitated this southern movement (Wedel, 1968). In any event, as mentioned in the preceding paragraph, they became much more influenced by trade and contacts with Europeans after their move.

It thus seems clear that the excavations within the landmark have provided information concerning the cultural history of the Wichita Indians and tracing relationships back into prehistory and forward into historic times. The sites have illustrated trade and contact between Indians and Europeans as well as among various Native American cultures both within and outside of the Plains. Future excavation can provide additional information on these points and can provide an opportunity for a detailed investigation of the culture known as the Little River Focus of the Great Bend Aspect. House type, village plan, and size of community are among the aspects which might be examined. The possibility exists for the determination of a chronology within the Little River Focus as indicated by the stratigraphic variations at the Major Site. It is certainly fortunate that large portions of the village areas--and even portions of the council circles--remain relatively intact for future investigation.

See also: McLemore Site, Harrell Site, and Deer Creek Site landmark files.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE (1)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex)

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Wedel, Waldo R.

1959. An Introduction to Kansas Archeology. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 174. Washington, D. C., pp. 497-503.

Additional references pertaining to the Great Bend Aspect in general:

Monger, Earl.

1970. A Preliminary Report of the Larned Site. Kansas Anthropological Association, Newsletter, Vol. 15, No. 8, Topeka, pp. 1-15.

Udden, J. A.

1900. An Old Indian Village. Augustana Library Publication, No. 2, Rock Island.

Wedel, Waldo R.

1941. In Search of Coronado's Province of Quivira. Explorations and Fieldwork of the Smithsonian Institution in 1940. Washington, D.C., pp. 71-74.
1942. Archaeological Remains in Central Kansas and their Possible Bearing on the Location of Quivira. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 101, No. 7. Washington, D.C., pp. 1-24.
1959. An Introduction to Kansas Archeology. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 174. Washington, D. C.
1961. Prehistoric Man on the Great Plains. University of Oklahoma Press. Norman. pp. 105-107.
1967. The Council Circles of Central Kansas: Were They Solstice Registers? American Antiquity, Vol. 32, No. 1. Salt Lake City, pp. 54-63.
- 1968a. Some Thoughts on Central Plains--Southern Plains Archeological Relationships. Great Plains Journal, Vol. 7, No. 2, Lawton, pp. 53-62.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE (2)

Little River Archeological District - (Tobias-Thompson Complex)

Bibliographical References - (Continued)

Wedel, Waldo R.

1968b. After Coronado in Quivira. Kansas Historical Quarterly, Vol. 34.
Topeka, pp. 369-385.

1970. Some Environmental and Historical Factors of the Great Bend Aspect.
In "Pleistocene and Recent Environments of the Central Great Plains,"
edited by Wakefield Dort, Jr., and J. Knox Jones, Jr., University of
Kansas, Department of Geology, Special Publication 3. Lawrence.

Smith, Carlyle S.

1949. Archaeological Investigations in Ellsworth and Rice Counties,
Kansas. American Antiquity, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 292-300.

Author Unknown.

1972. "People of the South Wind," Kansas, 1972.