

Archaeological

Wayne

1. *Ceredo*: Petroglyph

Putnam County

2. *Hurricane*: History Row Native American Petroglyph

Kanawha County

3. *St. Albans*: Native American Site

4. *South Charleston*: Adena Indian Mound



Archaeology

Along The Midland Trail

Listen closely, and you will hear the echoes of the past. The footfalls of hooves. The creaks of wagon wheels. Feet marching in cadence to the drumbeat of war. Steam whistles and chugs of locomotives.

Pre-Euro-American Contact

Long before the coming of Euro-Americans to the area now known as West Virginia, native people traveled the route today called the Midland Trail. They traveled to trade with other nations and make war. Sometimes groups of native people migrated along the trail to find a new home.

The route stretched from central Virginia in the East, to the Ohio River where it met other trails leading to the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River, and the Northeast. Artifacts from these distant regions have been found at archaeological sites along the Midland Trail. The Trail has also been called the Kanawha or Buffalo Trail. At Lewisburg, the Midland Trail crossed the north-south running Seneca Trail. This trail is now U.S. 219. Archaeologists know that these trails were used by native people as early as 1000 B.C.

The Paleo-Indian Period (10,500 B.C. to 8000 B.C.) Native people have traveled and lived in West Virginia for over 10,000 years. The earliest known inhabitants were the Paleo-Indians. Paleo-Indians were mobile hunter-gatherer people who followed big game animals like the woolly mammoth and mastodon. They hunted their prey with fluted projectile points on the end of long spears. Several fluted points made by Paleo-Indians have been found along the Midland Trail.

The Archaic Period (8000 B.C. to 1000 B.C.) Around 8000 B.C. the climate in North America changed and most of the large animals that native people depended upon for food became extinct. In

order to adapt to the changing environment, native people began to hunt smaller game such as the white-tailed deer. They still lived in mobile bands, hunting and gathering to survive.

One of the oldest stratified archaeological sites in eastern North America is located along the Midland Trail at St. Albans. The site was used by hunter-gatherer groups from what archaeologists call the Archaic Period, approximately 8000 to 6000



MacCorkle Stemmed Point



St. Albans Side Notched Point



B.C. Each occupation was later flooded, sealing it until the next occupation. As a result, the archaeological deposits left by these early hunter-gatherers were separated by sterile zones of river sand, allowing each occupation to be dated and building a chronological sequence for the Archaic Period in the Kanawha Valley. Several new types of projectile points from the Early Archaic Period were named for the St Albans site. The Kessell Side Notched point was named for Sam Kessell, who discovered the St. Albans site.

The Woodland Period (1000 B.C. to A.D. 1000)

Sometime after 1000 B.C., the Kanawha Valley was home to Woodland peoples who buried their dead in earthen mounds. These people are sometimes known as the Moundbuilders and also as Adena and Hopewell. Between South Charleston and Institute, the Kanawha Valley was covered by a large complex of up to fifty earthen burial mounds, earthworks, and enclosures. The mound complex was called "The Ancient City of Kanawha" by Cyrus Thomas, who directed excavations of hundreds of mounds and earthworks in the Ohio Valley. The excavations were conducted by the Smithsonian's Bureau of Ethnology in the 1880s and were published in Report on the Mound Explorations of the Bureau of Ethnology in 1894. The map below shows the locations of the mounds and earthworks that were still intact in the 1880s. Unfortunately, only a handful of the mounds and none of the earthworks remain today.

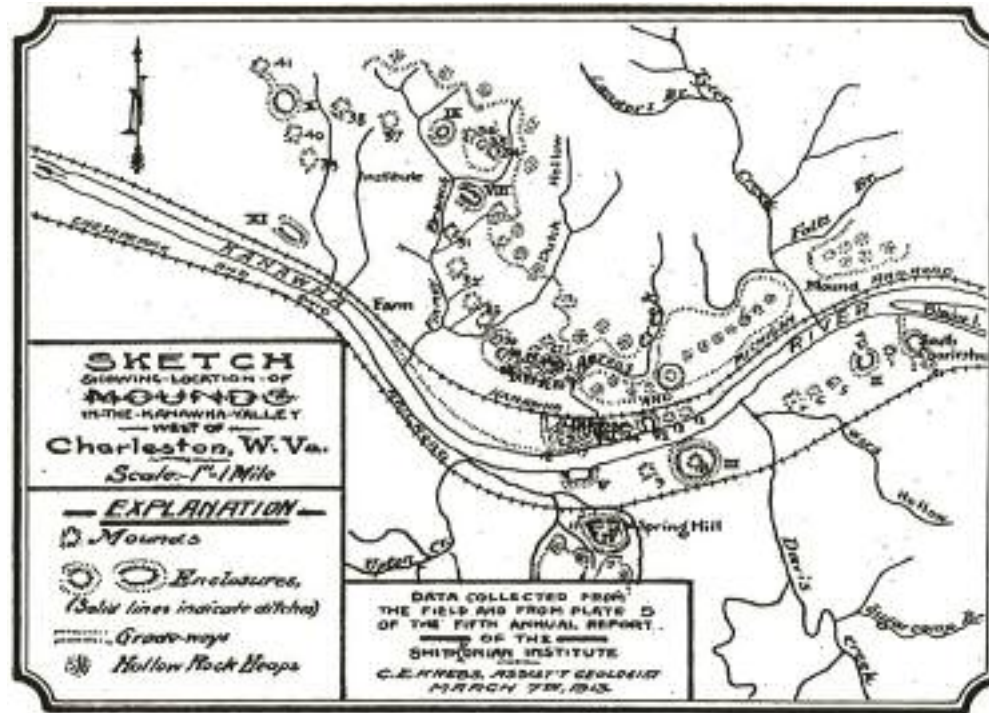
The Creel Mound in South Charleston and the Shawnee Reservation Mound in Institute are two of the mounds excavated by the Smithsonian that remain from the complex that once covered several miles on both sides of the Kanawha River. Artifacts from the mounds are at the Smithsonian Museum Support Center in Suitland, Maryland.

One of the mounds excavated by the Smithsonian was later excavated by members of the West

Virginia Archaeological Society. They were able to date the remains of a log tomb at the base of the mound at 175 B.C. This date indicates that the mound was built after the high point of Adena culture in the Ohio Valley. Most of the mounds from the complex had both typical Adena and Hopewell items and projectile points. In the Ohio Valley, the Hopewell culture followed the Adena in time. This suggests that the mound complex was built and used over several hundred years.



4.7



Late Pre-Contact History (A.D. 1000 to 1650)

Around A.D. 1000 the native people living along the Midland Trail began to grow corn, beans, and squash and to construct circular villages along the Kanawha River. Several village sites have been found from this time that allow us to know how these people lived. Along the Midland Trail villages were located at Mt. Carbon, in Fayette County and Marmet in Kanawha County.

In the Cabell County town of Salt Rock, approximately 10 miles south of the Midland Trail, a group of Native Americans lived in a village at a site called Gue Farm. A short distance from the village are two large stones with engravings called petroglyphs. The Salt Rock petroglyphs are some of the best preserved examples of rock art in West Virginia. The engravings on the stones are of animals and people. One engraving shows a full-length human figure with a "Weeping Eye" mask. A marine shell mask with the "Weeping Eye" design was also found at Gue Farm, which allows archaeologists to be certain that the stones are associated with the nearby village. The village is thought to have been occupied sometime between A.D. 1550 and 1650.

Native Americans lived along the Midland Trail until some time after European contact, which is around A.D. 1540 in the Southeast. European trade items such as glass beads and copper and brass ornaments have been found at Marmet, in Kanawha County, that were traded into the area from the Southeast. However, when the first Europeans arrived in the Kanawha Valley, the villages had been abandoned. No one knows exactly why, but there were probably several factors. The Iroquois Nations had raided villages on the Ohio River and into Virginia. Pressures from the Iroquois as well as encroaching European settlement in Virginia might have forced the native people to leave the valley. Other factors might have been disease and depletion of local resources.

Because the villages in the Kanawha Valley were not occupied when the first settlers arrived, no one has been able to identify the native people who lived there.

Several Eastern Indian tribes had a presence in the Kanawha Valley. The Cherokee at one time claimed the land south of the Kanawha River as part of their territory. The Shawnee traveled the Midland Trail and established a village at the mouth of the Kanawha River in the 1700s. Siouan speaking people such as the Tutelo, Saponi, and Monacans migrated from the Ohio Valley into Virginia some time before A.D. 1600. However, to this day, no one has been able to establish a link between these Indian nations and the villages on the Midland Trail.



Fluted Projectile Point

