

Layer 3 (center layer) Stratigraphy Card



Site Feature, Layer 3 - Trash-Filled Storage Pit

Trash-Filled Storage Pit

When this trash-filled storage pit first became visible to archeologists excavating this site, it appeared as a dark circular stain about 3 feet in diameter. The large bell-shaped pit turned out to be 6 feet deep and 6 feet across at the bottom. Lined with dried grass, pits such as this one once served as a “bin” for storing dried crops. Water or rodents eventually found their way into the food stored in the pits. After a pit became infested, the owners moved its contents to a new pit and the old became a receptacle for their trash, such as broken pottery, worn-out tools, dwelling and hearth sweepings. The materials excavated from this pit include these types of materials.

Archeologists feel lucky when they find chunks of burned wood (charcoal) in the trash and soil mixture of a pit. Charcoal can be dated with a technique called radiocarbon dating, a complex chemical test. Chunks of charcoal gathered from this pit were sent to a laboratory for radiocarbon dating. The radiocarbon test indicated that the wood dated from A.D. 1520 \pm 50 years (plus or minus 50 years).



