# THE THULE TRADITION IN NORTHERN LABRADOR



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by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the origin and cultural development of the Thule Eskimo Tradition in Northern Labrador, based on an analysis of archaeological material excavated during the summer of 1970 in Saglek Bay. The Thule Eskimo occupation of this region extends in time approximately from the mid-fifteenth century to the present. Specifically the objectives were: to establish the presence of the Thule Tradition prior to Euro-American contact; to investigate the cultural affinity and direction from which their ancestors migrated to the east coast of Labrador; to view the development of the Thule Tradition in relation to climatic changes as well as acculturative Euro-American influences; to investigate the changing settlement patterns and relate these changes to similar events in other areas of the arctic. The time span of Thule Eskimo occupation in Saglek Bay has been analysed with reference to three phases. The Early Phase (A.D. 1450 to 1700) establishes the presence of a prehistoric Thule Eskimo population on the Labrador coast and indicates a close affinity with the early Thule cultures in northern Baffin Island and NW. Greenland. The Communal House Phase (A.D. 1700 to 1850) is characterized by the appearance of large rectangular communal houses similar in structural design to communal houses in Greenland. The Late Phase (A.D. 1850 to PRESENT) represents the recent disintegration of the traditional Thule Eskimo culture in Saglek Bay, initiated by the establishment of the Moravian Mission at Hebron.

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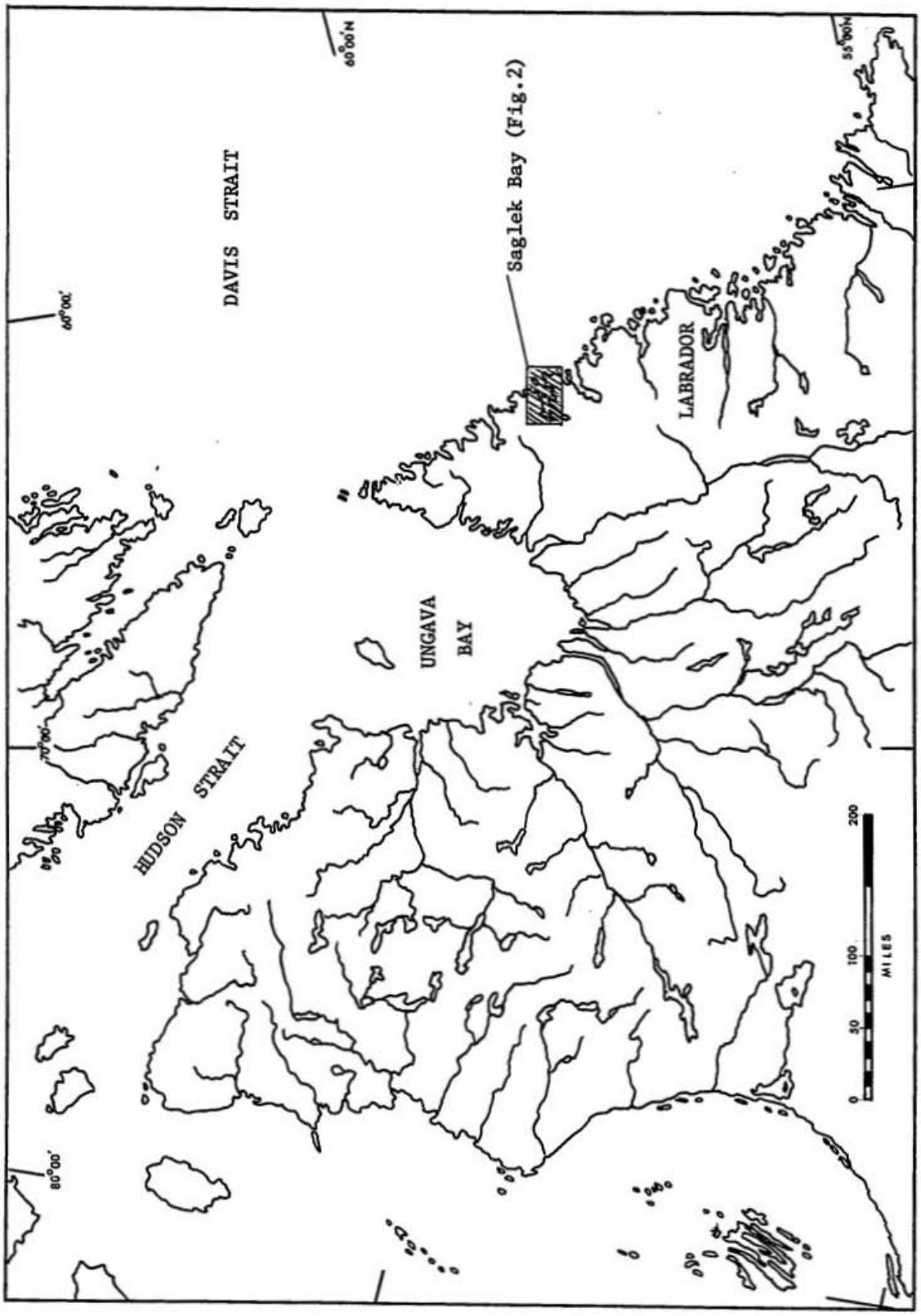
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Figure I

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is specifically oriented towards the appearance and development of the Thule Eskimo Tradition in Saglek Bay, Labrador. A brief sketch of the cultural developments and movements of the Eskimos, or New World Mongoloids (Laughlin 1963 : 12), is presented as an introduction to the arrival of the Thule Tradition in eastern Labrador.

The increasing number of archaeological sites located and investigated in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions enable us, however tentatively, to make inferences about the development of Eskimo culture as it may have taken place in time and space. I personally feel that the Eskimo culture evolved over a long period of time beginning perhaps some 10,000 to 15,000 years ago borne by a Mongoloid population originally inhabiting the southern Beringia coastline stretching from Hokkaido to Umnak Island and even farther eastward. Certain material evidence point to an early appearance of sea mammal hunters in northern Japan (Larsen 1970 pers. comm.). Investigations on Anangula Island by Laughlin (1963) and others have produced a stratified site with a radiocarbon date for the earliest occupation of 8423 ± 275 B.P. The island is estimated to have been linked with the mainland, forming a part of the Beringia coastline about 10,000 to 11,000 years ago (Bandi 1969 : 49), and probably was inhabited by a population ancestral to the present day Aleuts and Yupik speaking Eskimos. Connection between

Anangula and the Chaluka Village site on Umnak Island, the latter establishing a more or less unbroken occupation over the past 4000 years, suggests a continuum of the New World Mongoloid culture in this area. Lithic, linguistic, biological as well as morphological evidence suggests a connection between the Eskimo-Aleut population and the Chukchi, Koryak and Kamchadal (Laughlin 1963 : 12). The Eskimo-Aleut divergence is estimated to have taken place about 4500 years ago (Laughlin 1963 : 1) although Dumond feels that the common ancestor for these two groups will be found on a time level earlier than 4000 B.C. (Dumond 1969 : 1114).

We can postulate that the submerging of Beringia separated a fairly homogeneous sea-mammal-hunting oriented culture which had existed along its coastline. Much of the evidence for the existence of this culture is now however buried under the waters of the Bering Sea with the exception of such places as Anangula and Umnak Islands. The present coastline in any event was established about 5000 years ago and exhibited a variety of ecological habitats, from the arctic waters of the polar regions to the less severe regions of the northern Pacific. Changing environmental factors and ecological diversity created the need for economic, technological and social adaptations in different geographical areas.

Early evidence for a coast and tundra adapted Eskimo culture has been located on the Iyatayet site at Cape Denbigh. The residents of the site were the Denbigh people whom Giddings felt to be in a direct line of cultural continuity with the Eskimos, (Giddings 1964:242

The date for the Denbigh Flint Complex is still uncertain. Giddings (1967 : 269) has suggested a time period between 5,500 to 4,500 years ago, and Hopkins (1967 : 246) feels that the culture must be between 5,000 to 4,500 years old. Work in the Trail Creek Caves produced evidence of an early occupation period radiocarbon dated at 7120 B.C. The lithic material has been linked with the material from Band 8 at Onion Portage, the latter dated at about 6,000 B.C. (Larsen 1968 : 72). Larsen has suggested that these early people had their origin in Central Siberia, having spread east and west from there, and that their economy was based entirely on inland hunting and fishing, independent of the sea (Larsen 1968 : 72). It might be interesting to postulate that these inland oriented people gradually came in contact with the descendents of the maritime oriented New World Mongoloids whom I would like to refer to as the people of the Southern Maritime Eskimo Tradition. This development might perhaps also account for the linguistic differences between the Yupik and Inupik dialects of the Eskimo language.

The Denbigh Flint Complex is now usually included under the general term Arctic Small Tool Tradition (Irving 1953) and should perhaps even be included in a larger frame of reference such as the Circumpolar Microblade Tradition (Larsen 1968 : 74). In any event the Arctic Small Tool Tradition with its distinctive lithic assemblage spread by migration fairly rapidly eastward across the Arctic. It is known variously as the pre-Dorset (Canada), Independence 1 and Sarqaq (Greenland) cultures. The subsequent Dorset culture is also

included in this tradition. The Arctic Small Tool Tradition was present at Igloolik around 2050 B.C. (Meldgaard pers. comm.), had reached Greenland about 2000 B.C. (Knuth 1966 : 191), and Labrador as early as 1880 B.C. (Tuck pers. comm.), the S.W. Hudson Bay about 1500 B.C. (Nash 1968 : 4). There seems little reason to doubt that these people were Eskimos. Their way of life was oriented towards the tundra and the arctic coast and their cultural tradition lasted for approximately 3000 years. The location and nature of their dwellings and camp sites indicate that these people lived in small widely scattered nomadic bands taking advantage of the available game resources. The tremendous geographical extent of their arctic biome provided for a variety of selective processes. Fluctuations in abundance and kind of game, isolation of populations, dialectical diversification and technological idiosyncratic developments were all responsible for the formation of distinctive traits and sub-traditions. Around 1000 - 800 B.C. the central arctic witnessed a transition from the pre-Dorset to the Dorset culture; a development which has caused much debate. This new cultural period found its way into Greenland about 500 B.C. (Knuth 1966 : 191), Labrador about 535 B.C. (Tuck pers. comm.), and the west coast of Hudson Bay around A.D. 0 (Nash 1968 : 11), extending as far west as Bernard Harbour and Melville Island. Several theories concerning the origin of the Dorset culture have been advanced and debated over the years. Principally there are three major points of view: a) an influence of Indian cultures on the pre-Dorset; b) influences from Alaska; and c) gradual development <u>in situ</u> directly out

of pre-Dorset. This is not the place to discuss these different possibilities, short of stating that the Dorset cultural development may actually prove to have come about as a consequence of a combination of all the above mentioned influences. While the pre-Dorset to Dorset cultural development was taking place in the eastern Arctic it is important to reflect on the cultural developments in the Bering Strait Region and western Alaska. Events here ultimately had significant consequences for the eastern Arctic with the advance of the Thule Tradition.

On a series of elevated beach ridges at Cape Krusenstern, Alaska, Giddings located a long sequence of cultural developments from the early Denbigh Flint Complex (excluding Palisades I and II) to very recent. On Beach 53, Giddings located and named the Old Whaling Culture dating back to about 1800 B.C., (Giddings 1967 : 243). The evidence seemed to point to a people equipped for whale hunting although there looms the possibility that the appearance of whale bones in and around the house ruins may not necessarily have been derived from hunted whales. The carcass from a beached whale could equally well provide material for the construction of a house. The associated tools may or may not be definitely associated with whaling. In any event there may be some doubt as to whether or not these people were whale hunters. Their appearance is of a short duration and there is a considerable time gap between this culture and the subsequent Choris culture. Larsen states that, "only two Choris culture dates, 677 B.C. and 688 B.C. seem reliable," The gap between Old Whaling and Choris

is possibly narrowed following Larsens suggestion that, "it seems possible that Trail Creek Choris and Choris cover the period roughly from 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C.," (Larsen 1968 : 68). While evidence of the Choris culture did appear at Cape Krusenstern the main settlement site was located on the Choris Peninsula. The Choris people lived in large communal houses and seem to have emphasized an inland oriented caribou economy supplemented with some sealing. They possessed feather-tempered pottery and slate knife blades as well as a fairly eleborate carving technique (Giddings 1967 : 210). If the Dorset culture derived some of its distinctive elements from the western Arctic it may not be unreasonable to postulate a connection with the Choris culture.

At Cape Krusenstern, Beach 44 produced evidence of both the Choris and the subsequent Norton culture. The latter dates from around 400 B.C. to approximately A.D. 0 (Bandi 1969 : 65). If the Denbigh Flint Complex had its roots in a more interior oriented tradition, with Choris possibly being a continuation of this, Norton show signs of a greater orientation towards the sea. We may postulate that a more southern maritime oriented culture is asserting an increasing northern influence at this time.

Developments on the Asiatic shores of the Bering Strait as well as on St. Lawrence Island are more or less contemporaneous with Norton. The Old Bering Sea culture and the Okvik culture may have existed as more or less synchronous cultures showing evidence of a highly specialized sea mammal hunting development (Bandi 1969 : 68).

The subsequent Punuk culture on St. Lawrence Island is thought to have existed around A.D. 600 in an area of roughly the same geographical extent as the Old Bering Sea culture. Subsistence patterns do not seem to have changed to any large degree although whaling may have played a greater role than it had in earlier cultures. The transition from the Old Bering Sea culture to Punuk may have been partly influenced by a culture which during this period had developed in northwestern Alaska called the Birnirk culture, (Bandi 1969 : 78). On the Alaskan mainland other cultural developments had taken place since Norton times. The Near Ipiutak culture at Point Hope is seen as fairly contemporaneous with Norton, sharing such traits as pottery, slate implements and stone lamps. The following Ipiutak culture from a site excavated by Helge Larsen and Froelich Rainey in 1939 may date from about the second to the sixth century A.D. (Bandi 1969 : 114). This culture period presents somewhat of an anomaly perhaps only owing to limited discoveries in other areas. The main settlement of this culture was found at Point Hope and revealed between 600 to 800 houses. In its highly sophisticated art style this culture has been linked with Scytho-Siberian developments, and the elaborate burial customs, possibly associated with shamans, point to a very rich ceremonial life. Morphologically the people have features in common with the present day Yukagirs of northern Siberia (Bandi 1969 : 116). Fifty-two percent of the artifacts are made from flint and show some affinity with the Denbigh Flint Complex. The people were hunters of both land and sea mammals and whaling has been postulated (Bandi 1969 : 102). In

addition this culture also seems to have parallels with the Okvik and Bering Sea cultures in artistic developments and harpoon types. The lack of lamps and pottery remains a puzzle.

In 1939 James A. Ford began systematic excavations on a site located near Barrow in northern Alaska (Ford 1959). Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Knud Rasmussen, Van Valin and others had collected samples of artifacts from this site in previous years. With Ford's work the Birnirk culture, dated at about A.D. 700, was established as the major ancestor to the Thule culture. As stated earlier the Birnirk culture existed during, and may have influenced, the transition from the Old Bering Sea culture to the Punuk culture in the Bering Strait region. This again emphasizes the cross-fertilization of cultures (or "phases") in this large region. What I have referred to as the Southern Maritime Eskimo Tradition had, by this time, blended with, and slightly dominated, the Arctic Small Tool Tradition in the Bering Strait region. The Birnirk people were technologically well equipped to exploit a wide variety of resources including whaling. They lived in rectangular semi-subterranean houses, possessed dog drawn sleds as well as the umiak and the kayak (Bandi 1969 : 119). Traces of this culture have been located in several other areas. The Nunagiak site is located about a 100 miles west of Barrow. This site was seen by Ford as a development between Birnirk and Thule. However William Taylor has suggested that there is another stage between Birnirk and Nunagiak existing at Point Hope and Cape Prince of Wales. This stage is proposed to be the Western Thule culture (W. Taylor 1963 : 461). The Kurigiavik site at Cape Prince of

Wales shows a gradual development from late Birnirk to Western Thule culture with considerable numbers of Punuk traits and lacking many Canadian Thule elements. Taylor states (1963 : 461)

> "(a) that Birnirk culture existed as far east as Cape Parry prior to A.D. 900, and that this eastward spread of Birnirk constituted a first stage in the eastward Thule migration; (b) that Canadian Thule developed not in Alaska, but from this eastern extension of Birnirk; (c) that Thule culture generally developed from Birnirk along the Arctic coast between Capes Prince of Wales and Parry; (d) that an early Thule stage must separate Birnirk from Nunagiak."

This very brief discussion concerning the gradual development of the Eskimo Tradition leads us to postulate several major points. There seem to have been two major cultural spheres of influence in the Bering Strait region: One, the original coastally adapted mongoloid population which inhabited the Beringia coastline before its submergence and, Two, a more inland oriented cultural tradition, perhaps Larsen's Circumpolar Microblade Tradition. In the North American Arctic however this latter tradition becomes increasingly adapted towards exploitation of the sea. From the Denbigh Flint Complex to Ipiutak there seem to be an increasing influence from what we may term the Maritime Eskimo Tradition as exemplified by the Norton, Old Bering Sea and Okvik cultures. The Bering Strait region in other words is seen as a large sphere of cultural interaction which over a long period of time develops a very complex and sophisticated cultural tradition effectively adapted to the exploitation of the Arctic and the sub-Arctic environments. The people of the Arctic Small Tool Tradition

who migrated eastward into the Canadian Arctic and Greenland, subsequently becoming the pre-Dorsets, were cut off from this interaction sphere.

Nothing resembling a major cultural infusion eastward took place until the late part of the ninth century A.D. when the Birnirk people began to move east as far as Cape Parry. A climatic change may have been a major factor in extending this culture into the central Arctic as an ongoing development evolving into an eastern Thule culture on the way. By A.D. 950 this cultural tradition had reached Greenland as a full fledged Thule culture (Meldgaard pers. comm.) having moved eastward through the North American Arctic displacing or amalgamating with the existing Dorset people.

There are several indications that the Dorset Eskimos had already disappeared from many of the areas later inhabited by the Thule people, however it is possible that the two cultures did cross paths in different locations at different times. The many Tunnit legends seem to have originated from these encounters although they at later times probably refer to encounters with any unknown group of people (Meldgaard pers. comm.). At present the evidence for any Dorset-Thule assimilation are fairly weak although such incidents have been postulated. The now extinct Sadlermiut Eskimos may according to Collins have had a Dorset derived culture mixed with a strong Thule influence (Collins 1958). Evidence for a similar situation has been forwarded for the Belcher Islands (Quimby 1940). William Taylor has stated that "Indeed, Angmagssalik ethnography leads one to the working

hypothesis that the Angmagssalik culture was a late isolated Dorset expression that absorbed Thule overlay after Dorset had ceased to exist in arctic Canada," (W. Taylor 1967 : 44).

Since its first appearance the Thule tradition has continued its development, producing regional variations finally exhibited in the present day Eskimos. In order to present a hypothesis regarding the development which has taken place over a period of about 1000 years it may be useful to look at the climatic and ecological developments which may have served as powerful agents for shaping, developing, as well as limiting the viability of cultural continuity.

Climatic fluctuations depending on their range and duration must certainly influence the distribution and availability of fauna and flora in any given region. An Eskimo population occupying a somewhat marginal environment and being heavily dependent on hunting must have been greatly influenced by the fluctuating nature of their prey. Certain climatic factors may have favored a greater emphasis on sea-mammal hunting, others, an inland adaptation but, most, of course, a combination of both. Through time we have seen both archaeologically and ethnographically, alternating emphasis by different groups. Christian Vibe (1967), has investigated the relationship between arctic animals and climatic fluctuations, particularly regarding sea and land mammals and birds in Greenland. The interrelationship between these events and the appearance of Eskimo populations through time is also explored. The position of drift ice may influence local climatic conditions, precipitation, etc., as well as interrupting the

normal availability of game animals. In short, climatic factors may operate as a selective mechanism in cultural evolution. This is not an environmental deterministic view and the importance of social as well as ideological factors cannot be overlooked. Cultural evolution is a very complex system of a multitude of interacting factors each of which may be of greater or lesser importance in different situations.

Several ideas have been advanced to account for the eastward movement of the Thule Tradition. The existence of dog traction and whaling is seen by Jenness as a factor which may have given the Thule people an ecological advantage over the Dorset Eskimos, (Jenness 1940: 11). This point however does not really explain why the movement took place to begin with. That the migration eastward was fairly rapid can be attested to by the early appearance of the Thule people in northern Greenland. Robert McGhee (1970) has recently published an article dealing with the possible effect and relationship between climatic changes and the migration of the Thule Eskimos. Of major importance again is the seasonal distribution, duration and type of sea ice. The importance of these factors to the distribution of sea mammals has already been mentioned, the latter being directly related to the viability of the aboriginal culture. Using six climatic episodes presented by Bryson and Wendland (1967 : 280), McGhee (1970), suggests that during the warming stages of the Scandia to the Neo-Atlantic period, between A.D. 400 and A.D. 1200 there was a general retreat of the summer limit of pack-ice along the western Arctic coastline. This situation reduced the availability of ringed seal (Phoca hispida),

walrus (Odobenus rosmarus) and bearded seal (Erignathus barbatus), but increasing the importance of whaling.

The six climatic episodes from Bryson and Wendland are:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sub-Atlantic | 550 B.C. | A.D. 400 | Cold |
| Scandic | 400 A.D. | A.D. 900 | |
| Neo-Atlantic | 900 A.D. | A.D. 1200 | Warm |
| Pacific | 1200 A.D. | A.D. 1550 | Cooling |
| Neo-Boreal | 1550 A.D. | A.D. 1850 | Cold |
| Recent | 1850 A.D. | A.D. 1960 | |

(Bryson and Wendland 1967 : 280)

The archaeological record suggests that the Eskimos in western Alaska were well adapted technologically to take advantage of most kinds of sea mammal pursuits including whaling. The bowhead whale (Balaena mysticetus) was hunted along the open ice leads on their way to the summer feeding grounds. As the widening leads enabled the whales to migrate farther out to sea the Eskimos had to develop an open water whale hunting technique. This situation together with a decrease in the amount of pack-ice and seals may, according to McGhee, have given the impetus for the eastward migration of the Thule Tradition. These early Thule people can then be seen as being primarily dependent on whaling although they certainly would take advantage of any available food source. The summer feeding ground for the bowhead, or Greenland, whale (Balaena mysticetus) is the 200 to 1000 meter continental slope (Vibe 1967 : 85). Conditions for whaling were probably better in this region than along the north Alaskan coast with the whales being more

available over a longer period of time.

Several early Thule sites have been reported in regions closely approximating the areas inhabited by the whales during the summer. At the M 1 site at Resolute Bay, Collins noted the appearance of two harpoon heads representing an early stage of Thule (Collins 1952 : 51). Similar specimens have been located on the south coast of Devon Island (Taylor 1963 : 458). Several sites in northwest Greenland point to an early arrival of the Thule people as well. Ruin Island (Holtved 1944), Nugdlit (Holtved 1954) are two such sites the former having recently yielded dates as early as A.D. 950 (Meldgaard 1970). Closely related forms of the Sicco Open Socket harpoon head type have been reported at the above mentioned sites linking them to the Birnirk-Nunagiak period. All evidence point to a fairly fast migration of the Thule Tradition which may have attained its climax development during this move. According to McGhee, the culture had become regionally diversified by A.D. 1200, subsequently becoming the present day Canadian and Greenland Eskimos (McGhee 1970).

During the Pacific climatic period (A.D. 1200 to A.D. 1550) the Thule people extended their territory southward. This movement is seen as one of the factors influencing the disappearance of the Norse from Vesterbygd in west Greenland. Ivar Baardssons relief expedition in A.D. 1350 could report that the Norse people were no longer inhabiting their northern settlement (Ingstad 1959 : 167). We know from the Icelandic Sagas that there was trade and occasional trouble between the Eskimos and the Norse. During this period of cooling the

same factors which caused the Thule people to move southward in Greenland were present in the Canadian Arctic causing a similar movement south. Whether the first Thule Eskimos came down along the east coast of Baffin Island or in the Hudson Bay region will be dealt with later in this thesis.

During the Neo-Boreal, A.D. 1550 to A.D. 1850 the climate deteriorated culminating in the "Little Ice Age" (Schwarzbach 1963 : 203). Baffin Island glaciers advanced (Andrews 1967 : 39) and the sea temperature dropped $1^{o}$ to $3^{o}$ C. (Lamb 1966 : 65). It is possible that whaling became limited by the same conditions which had existed prior to the warming trend, affecting certain areas more than others and it may be postulated that the different effects of this cooling trend may be directly related to the degree of diversification presently exhibited by the different Eskimo groups today. The area between Amundsen Gulf and Foxe Basin may have been influenced to a greater degree owing to its diversified physiographic nature and land-locked location. Other areas such as Baffin Bay, Davis Strait and Labrador may have been less influenced. It is interesting to note that the Eskimo cultures in these areas as well as in Greenland show the greatest affinity to the original Thule Tradition. The development of the Central Arctic snowhouse settlement pattern could have been a direct response to difficult and variable ice conditions (McGhee 1970). It had become necessary to create a very mobile type of settlement because of an increased emphasis on sealing. Whatever the reason, a southward movement of the Thule Tradition took place in the eastern

Arctic. William Taylor is of the opinion that the expansion to the Quebec-Labrador area came from Baffin Island about A.D. 1350 (Taylor 1964 : 203). As will be seen later this may prove to be very close to the evidence now accumulated from Saglek Bay. It is very possible that the Thule Tradition reached the western part of the Ungava Peninsula at a time prior to the arrival of the same tradition in Labrador. Excavations at Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island, by Collins in 1946, produced material evidence of an early Thule phase. Collins felt that the Crystal 2 site was established by Thule people, "who had not been long out of Alaska." (Collins 1950 : 29). Although the material evidence does have an early appearance there may be reason to believe that this in itself is not enough to support his conclusion. Several artifacts from Saglek Bay have an early appearance however the radiocarbon date does not substantiate this fact as will be discussed later.

## The Thule Tradition in Labrador.

Previous work on the Thule Tradition in Labrador has not been very extensive. Work in the Hopedale area (Bird 1945), produced evidence of European material influence in the earliest house ruins. The occupation period for the Thule Tradition has been estimated by Bird not to have extended back more than about 400 years (Bird 1945 : 179). Similar evidence has been forwarded by Fitzhugh from work in Hamilton Inlet in 1968 to 1969. Testing revealed an occupation span from the

16th to the mid 18th century and it was felt that the Thule Eskimos did not arrive in the area until about A.D. 1500 (Fitzhugh 1970 : 10). I feel that even this estimate is too early. In 1956 Jørgen Meldgaard explored two Thule sites in Hamilton Inlet and assigned them to a late variant of the Thule Tradition and the 18th to 19th century Eskimos (Meldgaard 1970). According to Speck the southernmost extension of the Labrador Eskimos took place during the 18th and 19th centuries between Michikamau Lake and the Gulf of St. Lawrence (Speck 1931). The appearance of Thule Eskimos in northern Newfoundland has been suggested by Hawkes (1916 : 4). Tanner's work on Sculpin Island near Nain does not throw much light on the question of the development of the Thule Tradition in Labrador (Tanner 1941). In 1969 James A. Tuck surveyed the Saglek Bay area and located enough sites and material to make this region the centre for a large scale archaeological exploration aimed at throwing some new light on the prehistory of northern Labrador. This thesis is the outcome of two months work on the house ruins in Saglek Bay belonging to the Thule Tradition.

## The Problems to be Considered.

Having briefly explored some of the theoretical ideas concerning the development of the Thule Tradition in general we turn now to Labrador. One of the first problems to elucidate is the question of when the Thule people first arrived in eastern Labrador. The fact

that they apparently did not reach the more central and southern regions before the 16th century does not negate the possibility that the Thule Eskimos were inhabiting the more northerly regions much earlier. The appearance of Europeans in southern Labrador may in fact have been the major reason for the Eskimos to venture that far south. The question of early Thule on the Labrador coast will be studied with the aid of comparative artifact analysis (both native and European), as well as the result of one radiocarbon date. One of the important points to be investigated is the cultural affinity of the Labrador Eskimos and the direction from which their ancestors migrated to the east coast of Labrador. In addition these events are correlated with climatic episodes to suggest why the migration took place.

A total of 56 house ruins were tested spanning a considerable time period from the earliest Thule to very recent occupation. It became very apparent that the houses had changed greatly in style and size through time. Similar changes have been noted in other areas of the Arctic and the sub-Arctic specifically in Greenland. The change in house styles have been the subject of much discussion and the development of large rectangular communal houses both in Greenland and Labrador is significant. An attempt will be made to place the communal houses from Saglek Bay in a time period in order to correlate the appearance of these houses in Labrador with their development in Greenland. The different hypotheses concerning the use of communal houses by the Thule Eskimos will be discussed.

Factors relating to cultural developments and contact

situations will be dealt with as part of an attempt to show that the present day Eskimos in Labrador are direct descendants of the Thule Eskimos. Changes in the overall cultural make-up is seen as the interaction of a large number of factors differing in priority and emphasis. The introduction of a few European trade items and increasing use of iron in the technological sphere does not necessarily mean a drastic change in the total cultural development. A shift in the economic orientation, whether brought about through climatic changes or through increasing contact with European cultural elements, is seen as a disturbing factor for cultural equilibrium. The imposition on the Eskimo ideological sphere by the Moravian Missionaries, set in motion a whole series of changes from which there was no return. The development of the Thule Tradition on the coast of Labrador is viewed as a series of adaptations to economic, material, social and ideological changes. The term "human ecological changes," is used here to denote the total interrelationship of all these factors in cultural developments. The question as to whether or not the first Thule Eskimos were prehistoric is a rather ambiguous point. If we consider the appearance of the Norse at about A.D. 1000, then the Thule people are certainly not prehistoric, in fact they had not reached this part of the world at this time. When the Moravian Mission was established in Nain in 1771 there were no doubt several groups of Eskimos in northern Labrador who had never seen a white person. It is important to keep in mind that although they probably had acquired European trade goods at this time they could easily have done so

without direct contact with any white people. The presence of contact material does not necessarily mean face to face contact. While the Eskimos are historic in some areas of Labrador they are prehistoric in others. It is all rather relative but nonetheless important to keep in mind.

The Thule Tradition as seen in Saglek Bay has been divided into three primary phases: a) The Early Phase; b) The Communal House Phase; c) The Recent Phase. The reasons for presenting this study in three phases are many. A total of 45 working days included the testing of 56 house ruins scattered from the outermost islands to the inner fjord areas. Tremendously adverse weather conditions and a subsequent slow thawing of the ground made it necessary to work a few inches at a time in each test square. Only by rotating from house ruin to house ruin was it possible to maintain an ongoing excavation. Each house was measured and drawn to scale, divided into three-foot squares of which several were selected for testing. Because most of these sod and stone houses were superimposed on older structures it became necessary to disregard cultural material found in the upper sod layers since they could have been dropped there by later occupants of the area. As a consequence, only material found in close proximity to the floor or sleeping platform areas has been used as representative of the individual houses.

It must be emphasized that this study is preliminary and while it will attempt to answer several important questions it may again pose as many new ones. Each of the three phases consists of a

number of houses and a combination of artifacts from them. Each phase is based on several criteria, the main ones being size and style of the houses to be included. The Early Phase consists of six houses ranging from pear-shaped single unit dwellings to multi-family structures as well as a few structures more square in outline. Out of 314 a total of 94 artifacts have been selected for closer analysis and comparison. None of the houses showed signs of European contact with the exception of such material found in the top sod layers. This material was excluded because of obvious association with newer houses. The Communal House Phase embraces that period of time when the large rectangular communal houses were in use in Saglek Bay. A total of seven houses are included in this phase represented by 113 artifacts, selected for closer analysis out of 302 artifacts. The Recent Phase represents that period of time when the appearance of Euro-American manufactured articles have almost completely displaced the traditional material culture. Out of 221 a total of 131 artifacts have been selected as representative for this phase consisting of 18 houses. Whereas the houses and artifacts for the first two phases were located on Rose Island (Fig. 2), the last phase includes material from sites scattered over a much larger area in Saglek Bay.

It should not be inferred from these phases that there are no transitional developments taking place between them. The evidence for such transitions was present but did not seem sufficiently clear to be included as Transitional Phases without further fieldwork.

# CHAPTER II

## ENVIRONMENT

### PHYSICAL:

Saglek Bay is located approximately 200 miles north of Nain on the east coast of Labrador, (Fig. 1). Geographically the bay is centered on 58°28' N latitude and 60°10' W longitude. Measured in a straight line the distance from the outermost island to the head of the deepest bay is approximately 36 miles. The width of the outer bay and island zone varies from about 15 miles at the mouth of the bay to about three miles just west of Branagin Island. The region represents the easternmost extension of the Canadian shield. The country is extremely barren and rugged resembling in many ways the Norwegian fjord landscape in physical appearance. The Torngat Mountains to the north of Saglek Bay rise to heights in excess of 5,000 feet, (Ives 1958 : 47). The southernmost part of the bay has a lower main elevation in general and is considered to be the northernmost extension of the Eastern Plateau Belt rather than a part of the Torngat Massif, (Smith 1968 : 19). The major streams in the area, Nakvak Brook and Killinek, run mostly from west to east with headwaters 20 to 40 miles west of the Torngat Mountains. The area has been divided into three major zones: a) an upland zone with an average elevation of 2,400 feet; b) the valley zone exhibiting classically overdeepened valleys; c) the outer bay and island zone a result of post-glacial submergence, (Smith 1968 : 12). Each of these zones played an important

role for the Eskimos during their changing annual subsistence cycle. The large entrenched valleys, down-cut as much as 1,500 to 2,000 feet served as access to the upland regions as well as trade and migration routes to other settlements as far away as Ungava Bay. Geologically the Saglek area consists mainly of intermediate gneisses, granitoid gneisses and gently folded metasediments of the Ramah series, (Smith 1968 : 10). This latter series produced the Ramah chalcedony from which the aboriginal inhabitants of Saglek Bay produced much of their lithic tool inventory. The fact that tools made from this material have been located in areas far removed from northern Labrador suggests the importance and existence of early trade along the eastern seaboard. Common post-glacial features in Saglek Bay are kame terraces, moraines, fluvio-glacial deposits, strandlines formed through isostatic rebound, cirques and ice-dammed lakes. The last major glaciation of this area was the Saglek glaciation which may have begun around 25,000 years ago or possibly later as a late glacial sub-stage, (Andrews 1966 : 135). One radiocarbon date from ten feet above present sea-level was obtained from the Tasisuak Lake area $56^{\circ}38'$ N, $62^{\circ}34'$ W, giving a date of 4,060 ± 130 B.P. (Smith 1968 : 92). Whereas this in itself may not tell us that much about when the area was capable of sustaining human occupation it may give us some indication of this. The earliest evidence of human occupation in this area so far comes from a radiocarbon date associated with cultural remains of 4,530 ± 105 years B.P., (Tuck pers. comm.). The area has thus probably been habitable over the last 5,000 to 6,000 years. The disintegration of the remnants of the ice sheet in Labrador and Ungava has been estimated to have occurred about 6,000 B.P.

(Ives 1968 : 195).

The maximum depth in the bay is 142 fathoms one mile south of Branagin Island and in places the cliffs rise perpendicularly from the sea to heights greater than 2,400 feet. Areas for human settlements are somewhat limited physiographically and become even more restricted when combining a suitable site with the local sea ice conditions.

ICE CONDITIONS:

In selecting the best location for a settlement the Eskimos had to take several factors into account. The seasonal nature of their exploitation patterns often dictated the necessity for establishing camps in various locations during the yearly cycle. The distribution of pack ice and fast ice was of utmost importance during the winter and late spring. Appearing off the coast of northern Labrador in early November the pack ice could remain until the early summer or later. As we experienced the pack ice could be intermittently present as late as the last part of July probably even in August. As stated earlier the pack ice is directly related to the availability of many of the game species important to the viability of the Eskimo population. Elton has suggested that the volume of pack ice has decreased and its arrival has become later since A.D. 1860, (Elton 1942 : 237). This seems to fit well with the Recent Climatic episode from A.D. 1850 to A.D. 1960 as described earlier.

The fast ice, which varies greatly in width along the coast owing to coastal physiography, tides and currents begins to form late

in November. This event seems to have marked the end of whaling and sealing from boats and transportation by dog sledge replaced water transportation, (J. G. Taylor 1968 : 58). The distribution and quality of fast ice also regulates to a significant degree the population of ringed seals (McLaren 1961 : 116).

FLORA AND FAUNA:

The outer bay and island zone is devoid of vegetation with the exception of grasses, flowering herbaceous plants, mosses and lichens. In the deeper valleys the growth of alders and willows attains a height of nine to ten feet. Hawkes has listed twenty varieties of berries used by the Eskimos of which cranberries and blueberries are the most important (Hawkes 1916 : 35).

The distribution and availability of game resources along the Labrador coast has been dealt with by several authors (Elton 1942; Low 1906; Mansfield 1964; Tanner 1944; Taylor, J. G. 1968). For the purpose of this study however an exhaustive listing of the different species does not seem warranted. The distribution and migration pattern of some of these animals will be discussed below in relation to the different phases.

It has been suggested that the development and movement of the Thule people was closely related to the movement of the large baleen whales. Garth Taylor suggests that the Eskimos in northern Labrador exploited the southern migration of the Greenland right whale (Balaena mysticetus), on its way south from Davis Strait and Baffin Bay (Taylor 1968 : 66). The Greenland Whale apparently spent the summer in the waters off Eclipse Sound and Prince Regent Inlet and

would appear off the Labrador coast in November. It would be tempting to suggest that as the cooling period of the Pacific, A.D. 1200 to A.D. 1550 began to assert its influence whaling became more difficult in the northern regions of Baffin Bay. In order to retain an economy based at least in part on whaling, groups of Eskimos began a southern migration along the east coast of Baffin Island subsequently reaching Labrador.

In spite of its comparatively small size the ringed seal (Phoca hispida) was and still is, of great importance as a source of food and fuel. Being primarily a coastal species one of its important attributes for the Eskimos is its tendency to remain in the bays during the winter. The young are born on the ice in dens under snow-drifts and the seals maintain breathing holes in the fjord ice during the winter (Vibe 1968 : 51). The migratory Harp Seal (Phoca groenlandica), has a northern distribution in the summer and a southern distribution in the winter. In early May they move northward from their breeding grounds in Newfoundland and southern Labrador, passing Cape Chidley about the end of June and again on their return migration in early November (Mansfield 1964 : 12). The Walrus (Odobenus rosmarus), were abundant in pre-mission times along the Labrador coast. Presently they are reported mostly from the northern parts of the coast. It seems likely that they were readily available during the Early Phase as well as the Communal House Phase (J. G. Taylor 1968 : 95). Their size made them very important game animals as did the manufacture of various tools and carvings from their tusks. The tusks also became an item of barter with more southern Eskimo groups.

Of land mammals the caribou (Rangifer tarandus arcticus), was probably the most important game animal. The skins were used for clothing and sleeping robes and the antlers prized for the manufacture of tools. Much of the meat was cached for use during the winter. The inland caribou hunt usually took place during the fall although the taking of caribou at other times of the year was not unusual. During our work in Saglek Bay we had the opportunity to become acquainted with several inquisitive visitors on the islands as well as on the mainland. The meat and eggs from several species of birds were important; the razor-billed auk, the dovekie and the Atlantic puffin all wintered in the area, (J. G. Taylor 1968: 80). Migratory species of importance were the common eider, the black guillemot, king eider and the Labrador duck.

Of the different species of fish the arctic char (Salvelinus alpinus) was probably the most important for the Eskimos in Saglek Bay. The char is found close to river mouths in the bays in late July and early August and the present day Eskimos still spend several months in these areas fishing. Numerous tent rings in the vicinity of the many river outlets attest to the importance of this food source over the centuries.

SITES EXAMINED:

As stated earlier 56 house ruins were located and tested. Seven sites were examined in various locations throughout the bay area. For the purpose of this analysis 31 houses were selected as representative of the three phases. The map (Fig. 2), shows the location of

these sites and the general areas surveyed.

A) Ikkusik site:

This site is located near the southeast tip of Rose Island and contained the largest number of house ruins. Roughly divided into four groups (Fig. 5) the site comprised 20 fairly distinctive houses together with evidence of several older structures in the form of borrow pits and sections of sod walls. The houses were all tested and three of them were more extensively excavated. The six houses comprising the Early Phase were all located at this site. In addition, the material and structural evidence for the Communal House Phase was also obtained here. The site does not possess a very protective harbour. The close proximity of the sina paralleling Rose Island a short distance to the east may have been the deciding factor for settlement. Most of the houses were superimposed making a comparative analysis of each house quite difficult.

B) Tuglavina site:

Also located on Rose Island this site is situated on the southwestern end approximately 500 yards from the Ikkusik site overlooking a narrow isthmus. The isthmus is uncovered at low tide and connects a small southern extension of Rose Island which may formerly have been completely separated from the main island. The original name for Rose Island was Saegleg meaning "a low area of land" according to several Eskimos in Nain. This is substantiated by reference to Wheeler (1953 : 74). This site can be divided into two groups (Fig.4), with a total of 14 fairly distinctive house ruins. The overlapping

of houses duplicates the situation at Ikkusik, one main difference being the relatively later occupation period of most of the houses at Tuglavina. A large amount of material for the Late Phase came from this site. Although older house structures had been mostly destroyed, a test trench produced evidence of an overlapping occupation period with Ikkusik during the Communal House Phase. The coast at the Tuglavina site is more sheltered from the open sea than is Ikkusik, however westerly winds from the inner fjord area occasionally create fairly rough water.

C) Upernavik site:

Situated on a small terrace about 50 feet above sea level this site produced five distinct house ruins of recent occupation. In addition there were traces of older houses in the form of sod wall sections. Historical records indicate that this site was occupied in 1773 (J. G. Taylor 1968) and should have yielded remains of two communal houses. It is reasonable to assume that the later inhabitants of the site obtained sods from these older houses to the point of destroying almost all evidence of their existence.

D) Branagin Island site:

A house ruin of recent occupation and several cache pits were located in a gently sloping grassy cove on the southwestern tip of Branagin Island (Fig. 2). The site presented an excellent vantage point and was the only habitable spot on the island.

E) Big Falls site:

Three house ruins comprise this site, all located on the mainland on the north side of the bay, (Fig. 2). The houses were partly overgrown by willows and only one of them produced any artifactual material. It clearly falls within the Late Phase. A large waterfall nearby cut through extensive Ramah chalcedony outcrops indicating the importance of this place in earlier times as a quarry for lithic material.

F) Nakvak Brook Site:

Four house remains and cache features were located on the west bank of the outlet of Nakvak Brook (Fig. 2). All are of quite recent origin; in fact one of the Eskimo families fishing in the area had inhabited one of the houses about twenty years ago. They included both possible winter structures and summer fishing camp structures consisting of a sod wall covered by a canvas tent. All of the structures belong to the Late Phase.

G) Big Island Site:

On the outermost island in the bay (Fig. 2), two houses were tested. Both of them were very recent in origin and could have been inhabited as late as the second world war.

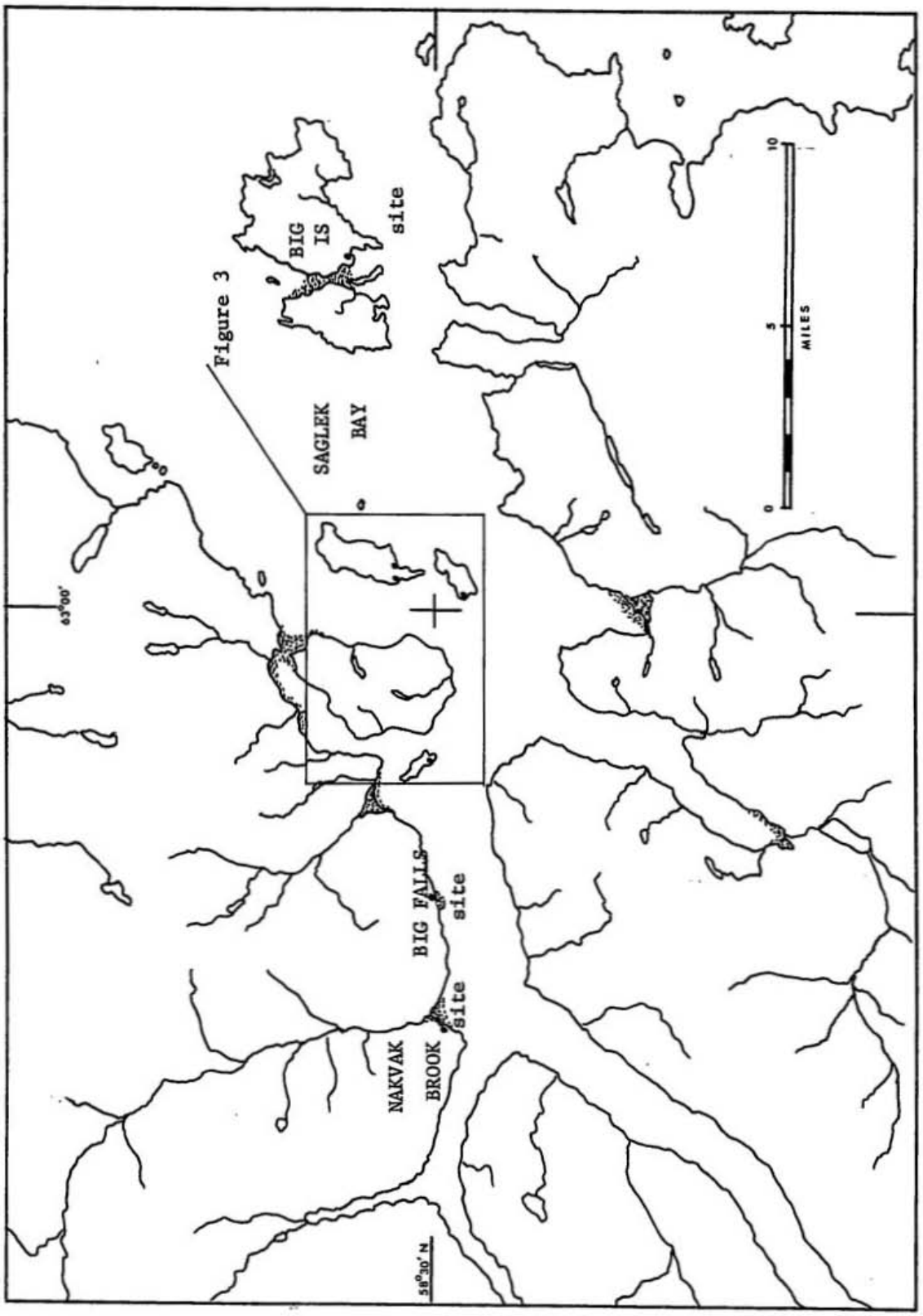
Figure 3
SAGLEK BAY
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NAKVAK BROOK site
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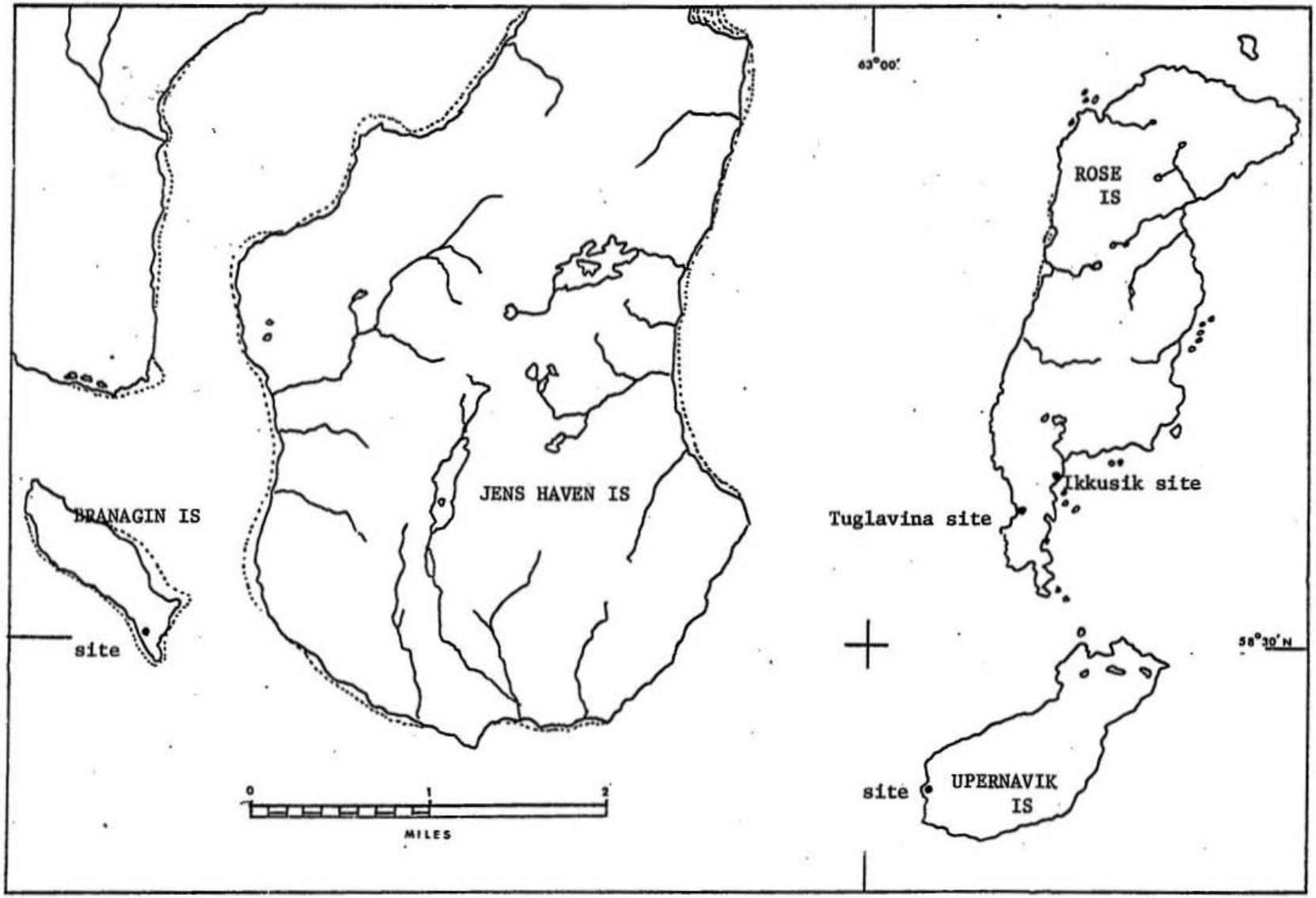
Figure 2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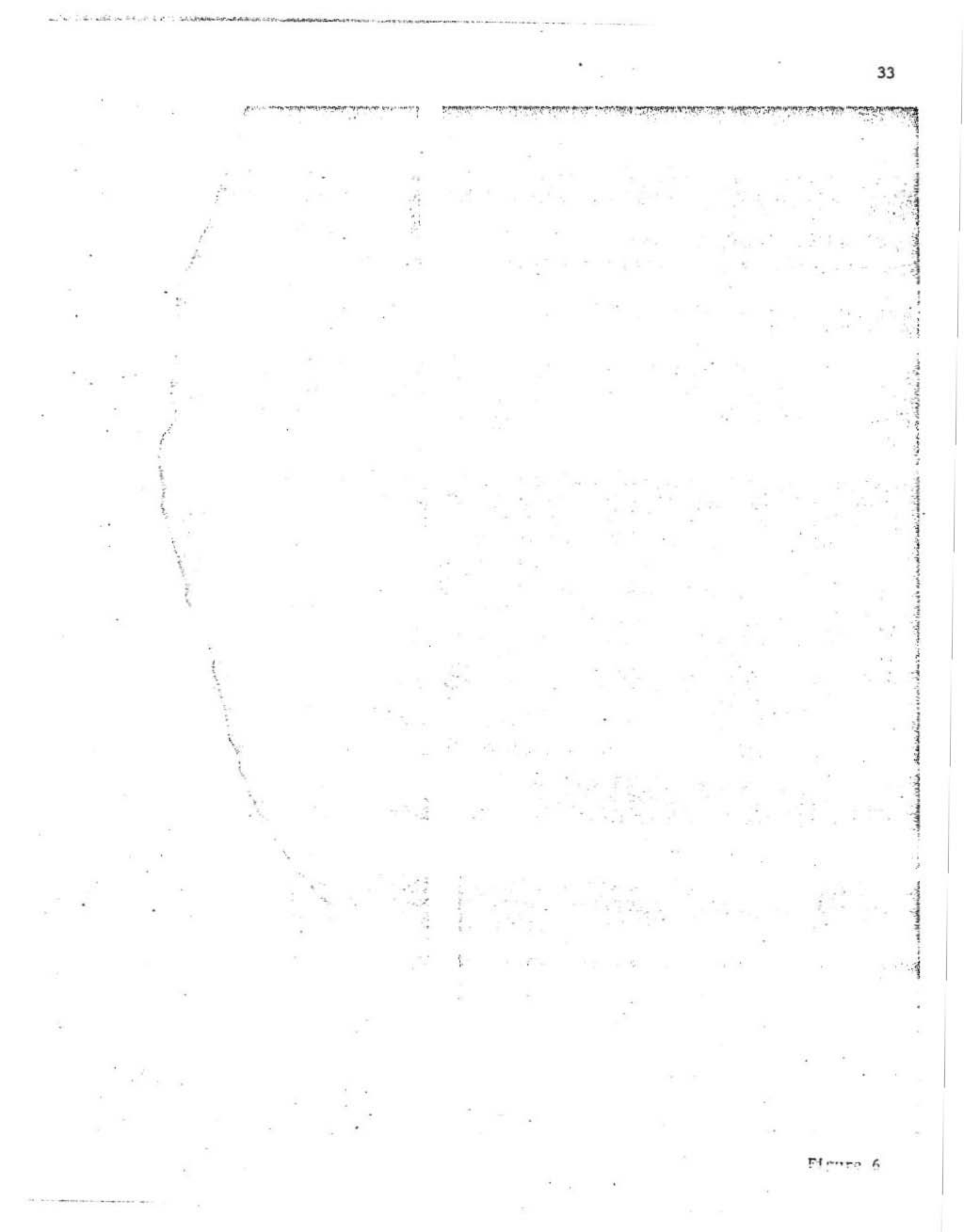

Figure 6

# CHAPTER III

## EARLY PHASE: A.D. 1450 - 1700

### Introduction

While working on the large communal house ruins on the Ikkusik site several faint depressions and low sod wall sections were noticed. These somewhat inconspicuous features were subsequently tested and produced most of the evidence for establishing the Early Phase. One of the major points elucidated was the question of when the Thule tradition reached the Labrador coast. The arrival of this tradition in Saglek Bay lying about 150 miles to the south of Cape Chidley would presumably have taken place a few generations later. With the testing and excavation of these house ruins the material evidence pointed to a period of occupation prior to the introduction of European trade goods. Subsequently one of the main criteria for this phase is the lack of such trade goods and the physical appearance of the houses. It is now impossible to know just how many of these houses existed originally on this site. The more recent communal houses had been built in the same area and had obliterated many of the older structures. The houses in this phase correspond generally to the "Type One" houses described by Bird (1945 : 132) from his work in the Hopedale area.

Several difficulties were encountered during the excavation of these houses. The slow thawing of the ground forced us to move from house to house in order to keep working. Upon returning to previous test squares these were usually full of water from ground

seepage or heavy rain. A low gradient made drainage difficult. Most of the house ruins were covered in part by the sod walls of more recent houses complicating the reconstruction of the original structural outline. Material from the uppermost layers was excluded as intrusive and upon later examination found to correspond well to the artifact assemblages of the Communal House Phase.

Material evidence presented for this phase must be viewed as representing an early, if not the earliest, period of the Thule tradition in Saglek Bay. It is not suggested that the infiltration of Euro-American trade items was non-existent until about A.D. 1700, but rather that the latter represents the approximate date for the full development of the communal houses as distinct from the early house structures. During our work on the Ikkusik site there were several indications of structural transitions possibly indicating a gradual development towards the large communal houses. This will be discussed later. A radiocarbon date run from a sample of willow located on the floor of House 21, produced a date of 275 ± 90 B.P. Using a correction table for the conversion of radiocarbon age to true age (Stuiver and Suess 1966 : 537), a date of approximately A.D. 1520 ± 90 was obtained. I strongly feel that the artifact assemblage indicates a date earlier than A.D. 1520. Justification for this assumption will be forwarded in the section dealing with artifact description and comparative typology.

A brief description and illustration of each of the tested and excavated house ruins selected for this phase, followed by a series of representative artifacts is given below.

Description of the excavated house ruins.

House 19:

The presence of this house was indicated by a shallow sunken area surrounded by a sod wall about one foot high located in the rear of mound I on the Ikkusik site (Fig. 5). It appeared to be a two-room structure sharing a common entrance facing south. Each of the two rooms appeared to be about the same size, approximately 14 feet wide and 18 feet long (Fig. 7), with an oval outline. Extensive sod robbing and the superposition of the rear wall of House 17 made complete excavation impossible. Section b, of this multiple dwelling was the better preserved. The front half of this room facing the entrance exhibited a flagged stone floor with the rear sleeping platform having been built up of sod layers covered with skins. Evidence for roof supports was lacking and presumably the structure had been taken down when the inhabitants moved. Another possibility of course may have been the decay of any wooden poles used as a framework. The entrance passage was constructed of heavy boulders with indications of a stone floor. Section a had been greatly disturbed and a pool of water had to be drained through the rear wall, hence the data from this room are less complete.

House 21:

Before excavation this house appeared as a very shallow depression about six inches deep with a "pear shaped" outline and the entrance passage facing southeast, (Fig. 5). Initial testing of the house revealed several layers of baleen strips in heavy concentration

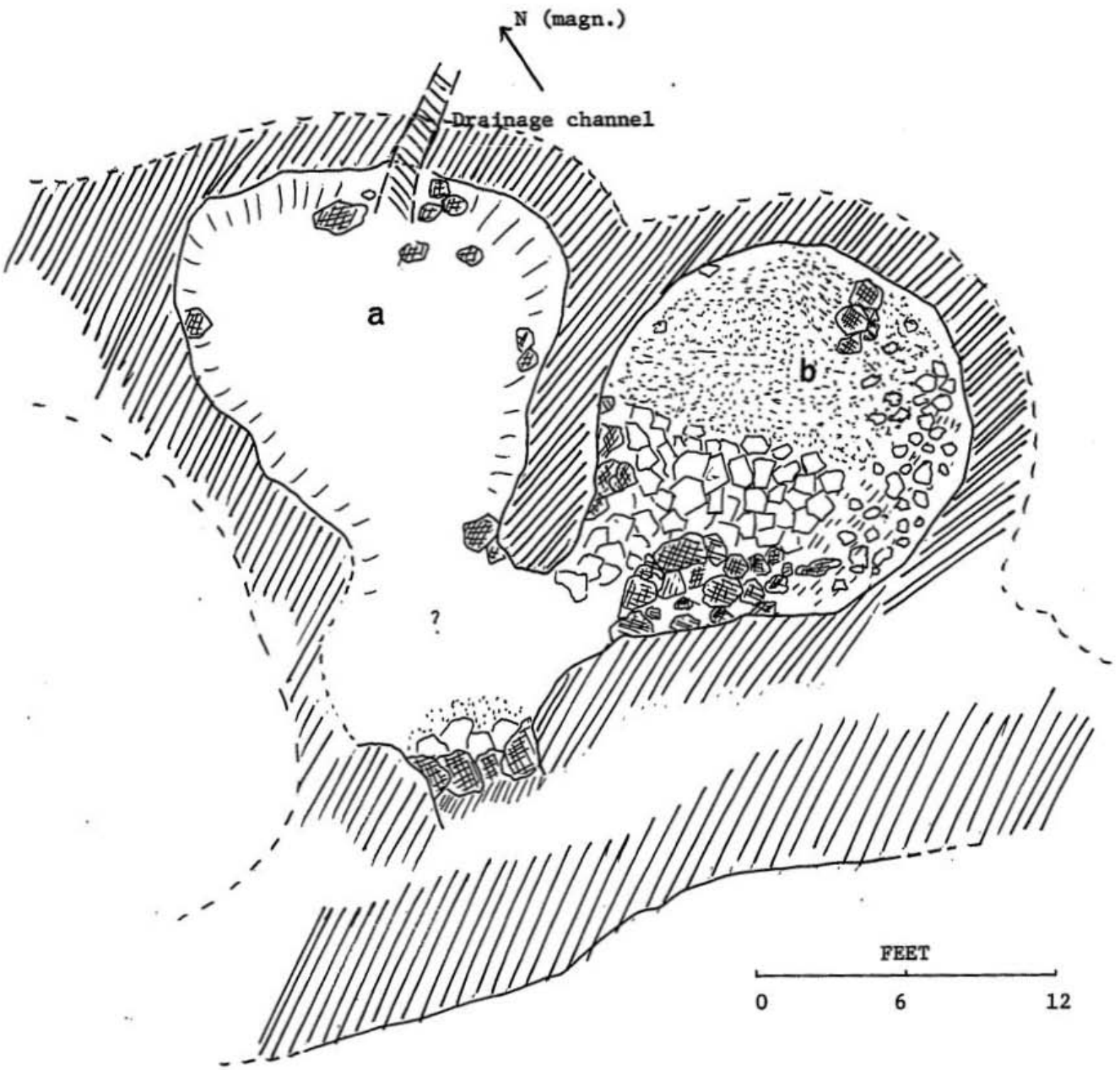


Figure 7 - House 19 , Ikkusik site

mixed with bone refuse, pieces of wood and whalebone. About 28 inches below the surface we located a carefully laid flagged stone floor. The discovery of a Thule Type II harpoon head (Pl. 1), on the stone floor prompted us to devote as much time as possible to this house. The radiocarbon date for the Early phase was run on a large piece of willow from the floor of this house in close proximity to the harpoon head. The size of the house could not be determined with any accuracy owing to the fact that part of the sod wall of the adjoining House 22 was superimposed on the southwest section of House 21. Only traces of the extent and outline of the entrance could be noticed. The inside dimensions of the house, excluding the entrance, would be approximately 15 feet in length and 12 feet in width. Excavation was quite difficult owing to the criss-crossed layers of baleen and constant seepage of ground water. Several profiles were drawn (Fig. 9), and one section was left unexcavated close to the centre of the house in order to retain some evidence of stratigraphy as we proceeded. At first it seemed likely that the house had been occupied on two different occasions. The thick matting of baleen was covered by a sandy layer containing little cultural material. Above this was a heavy concentration of bone refuse, baleen sections, pieces of wood, etc. Upon further study of the profile drawings and excavation notes it appears that the heavy concentration of baleen at the lowest level had something to do with the roof construction of the house. After the collapse of the roof the depression was gradually filled with sand and bits and pieces of refuse. Subsequently a new sod formed resulting in a more shallow depression used by the inhabitants of the communal

houses as a trash pit. The top six inches of sod formed since the decline of the Communal House Phase. The dwelling had originally been excavated into a brownish layer of sand underlying the sod; however the rear platform, consisting of an unexcavated section of this sandy layer was left as an elevated structure by the builders. Evidence indicated that the platform had been covered with twigs and skins.

One interesting and unusual aspect of this house were 25 dog skulls located throughout the two major concentrations of refuse. Several skulls were located within inches of the floor indicating an association with the original occupation of the house. Quite often the skulls were found in groups of two or three all facing the same direction. There was no indication of a sunken entrance passage, however the entire entrance section had been badly disturbed, and only faint traces indicated small side niches. Inside the house the floor area was skirted in most places by upright slabs of stone (Fig. 8). To the right of the entrance a large upright stone and associated charcoal indicated a fireplace, the surrounding sand being reddish and hard.

House 22 and 23:

These two houses are situated directly to the southwest of House 21. As previously mentioned House 22 has been partially built into House 21 indicating the later occupancy of the former. House 12 of the communal house type has been built into House 22 and its midden extended into House 23. Limited time did not allow us to do more than test a few squares in House 22 (Fig. 12). Heavy concentration of baleen slabs presented an excavation problem of similar nature to that

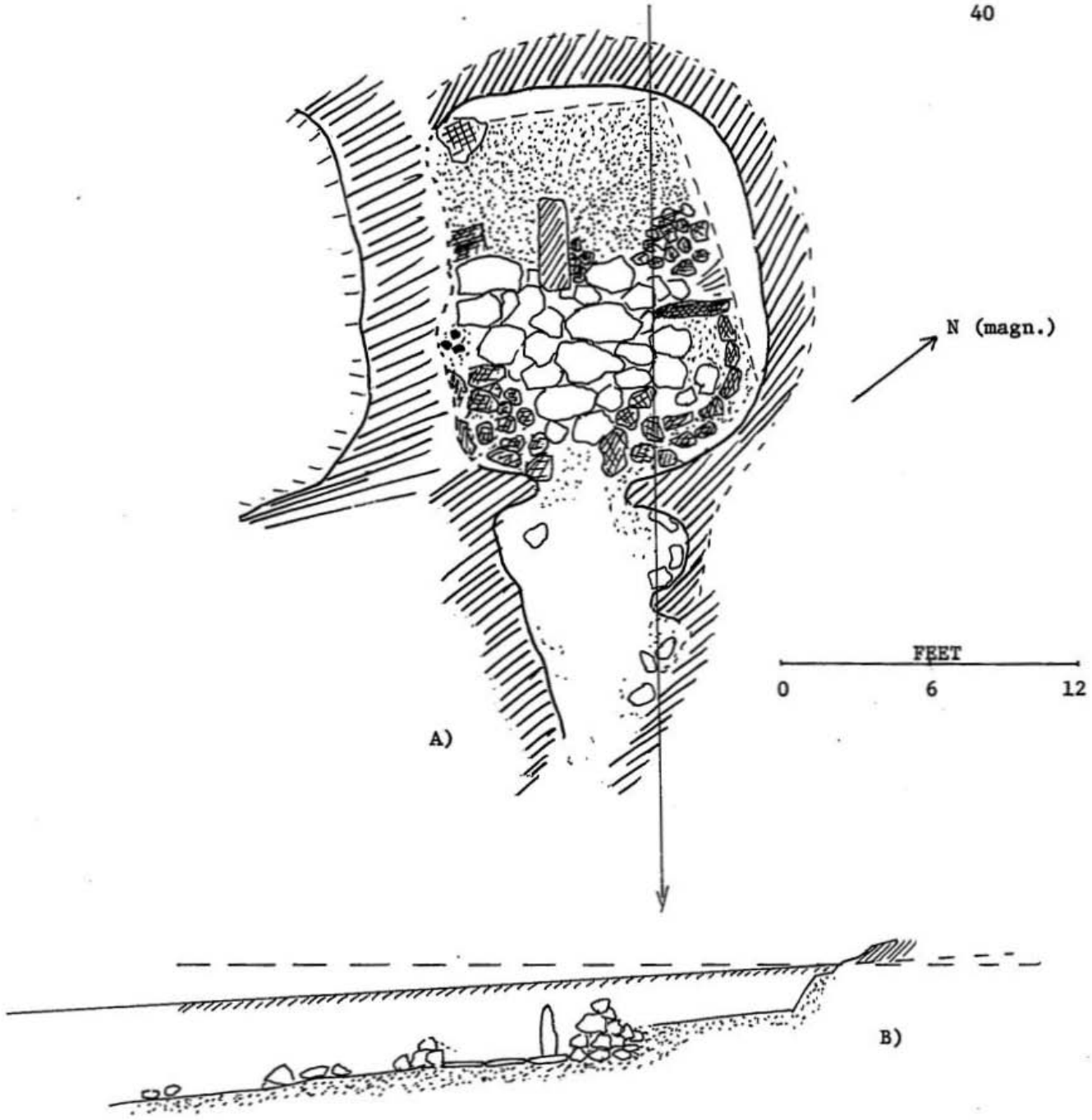


Figure 8 - House 21

A; ground plan of House 21, B; cross section of House 21

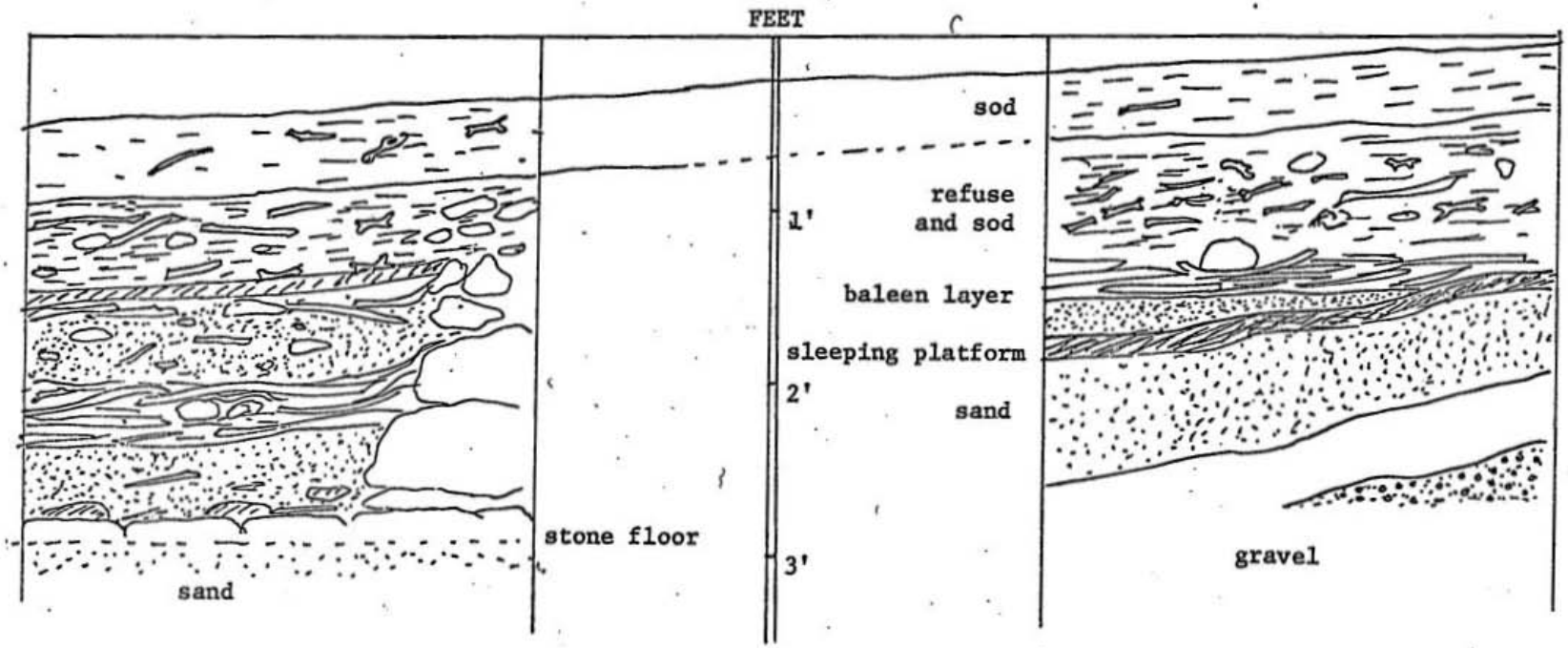


Figure 9 - profile from House 21

Figure 10 - Ikkusik site

House 21 - flagged floor in center

Figure 11 - Ikkusik site

House 23 - partially excavated

of House 21. The structure appears to have been somewhat square in outline with rounded corners, with the entrance facing south and extending into the rear of House 23. From a study of the artifacts collected from these two houses it is quite possible that they represent a multi-roomed dwelling unit connected by a passage. House 23 (Fig. 13), was tested to a greater extent. The house had a similar square outline with rounded corners and appears to have been of about the same size with a passage facing south toward the open bay. There was no evidence of a sunken entrance passage. A few items of Euro-American origin were found in the upper four to six inches of sod in both houses. An axe head in House 22 and an adze, chisel and an iron band fragment in House 23. All these items no doubt belonging to the period when House 12 was occupied. The baleen layer began about ten inches below the surface and extended in some cases almost to the flagged floor at a depth of 16 to 18 inches in House 23. The entrance of the latter was lined with upright slabs of stones and boulders and the house appeared to have been excavated into the sand with the walls built up of sod and stone. The platform was built on sand edged by a few remaining stones. A hollow space edged by slabs extended into the platform and had probably been a storage space. The outline of the house before excavation was much more pronounced than the outline for House 21. The remaining sod walls were about 24 inches high both in Houses 22 and 23.

Two more houses should be mentioned however briefly since they structurally both belong to the Early Phase.

House 15:

This pear shaped house was one of the few not partially covered by any other structures. Testing however produced very little in the way of artifacts. The passage faced south and produced a rock floor at a depth of 20 inches below the surface with sides constructed of upright rock slabs and boulders. The interior of the house had a flagged floor and signs of a raised stone platform in the rear. The house measured 17 feet in width and 27 feet in length counting the nine foot entrance (Fig. 14). The above measurements are only approximate, because of the slumped sod walls and other disturbance.

House 16:

This house consisted of two rooms separated by a stone wall yet sharing a common entrance which faced east and was located on a steeper gradient than the house. Fragments of a soapstone lamp with a central ridge were located in the entrance. The house was literally a jumble of boulders and sod. A midden in the front of the house, directly opposite the entrance, contained a solid matting of baleen mixed with blubber, feathers, animal hair, pieces of skin, etc. Lack of time prevented us from returning to this house.

## Description of the objects found.

The following is a description and comparison of most of the artifacts shown on the plates for this phase. The implements have been selected as being representative of the total number of artifacts found. As with the houses all the artifacts are from the Ikkusik site.

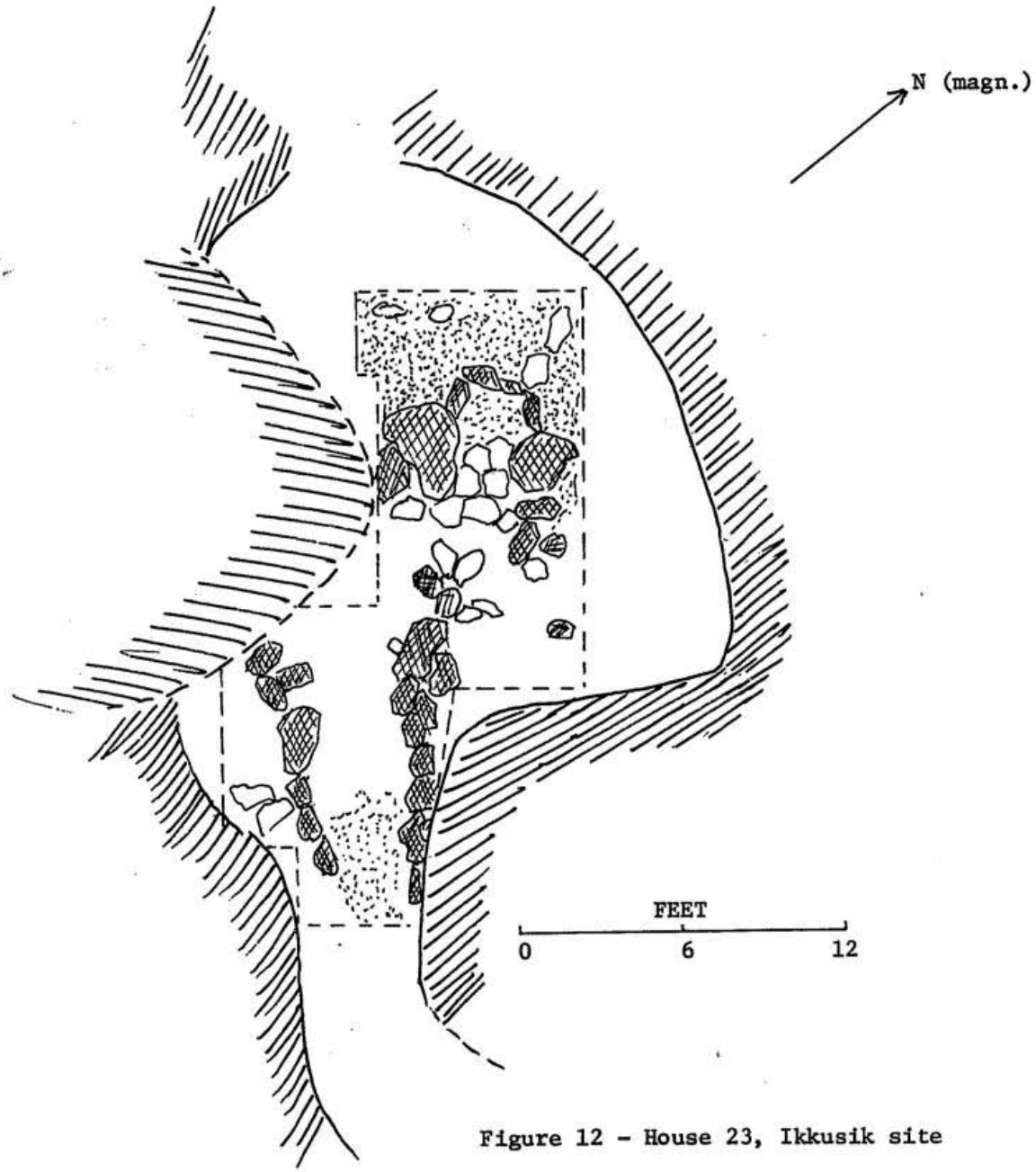


Figure 12 - House 23, Ikkusik site

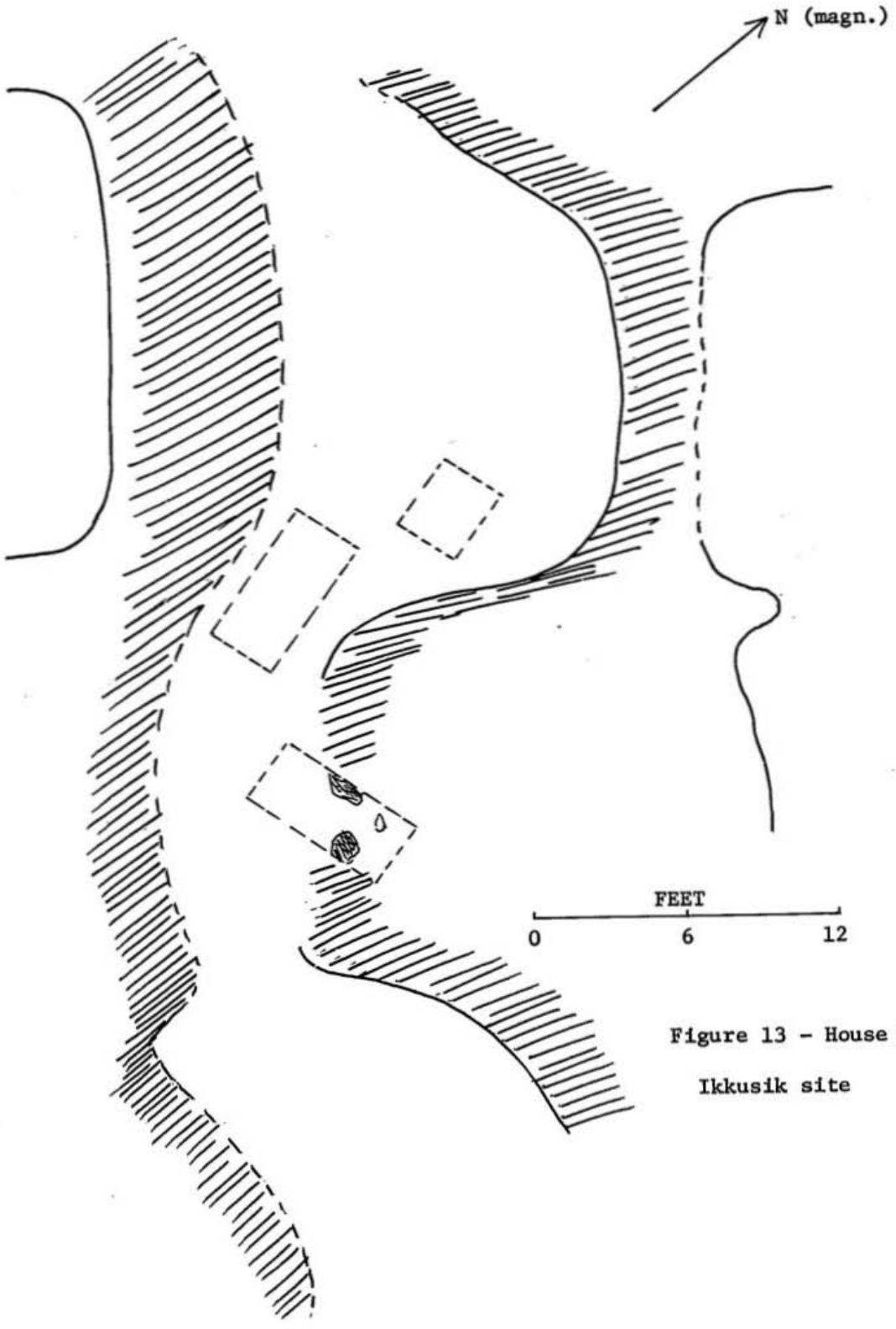


Figure 13 - House 22

Ikkusik site

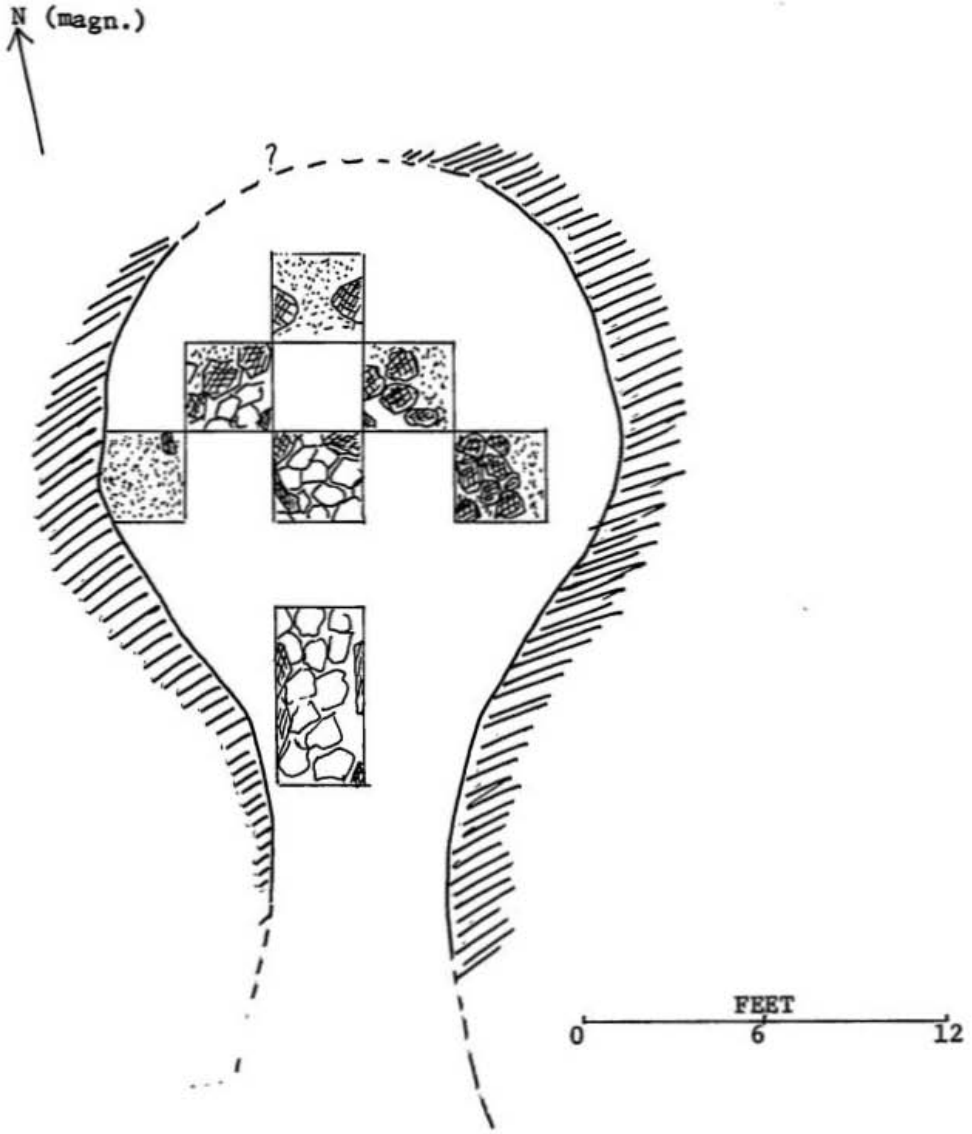


Figure 14 - House 15 , Ikkusik site

## Hunting Implements.

### Harpoon Heads:

Only two harpoon heads were located for the Early Phase, both in House 21. The first (Pl. 1,c), is thin with an open shaft socket, dorsal spur, two opposite barbs and drilled holes for lashing. One barb is broken. The harpoon head is made from caribou antler and belongs to Mathiassen's Type A1b1 (Mathiassen 1927 : 15). There are two somewhat conflicting adaptive styles in this specimen: the sharp angle of the spur and socket end, and the holes for lashing rather than slots. The use of drilled lashing holes is later than the use of slots yet the sharp angle of the spur resembles earlier forms from NW. Greenland (Holtved 1944 : 1; Pl. 3) and Pond Inlet (Mathiassen 1927 : Pl. 39,5). It is interesting to note that finds from the Crystal II site in Frobisher Bay include both the slotted and the drilled Thule Type II harpoon heads (Collins 1950). The second specimen (Pl. 1,d) differs in having had a blade at right-angles to the linehole and barbs not quite opposite each other. The spur, socket and one side of the line holes are broken. This specimen is made from bone and belongs to Mathiassen's Type A1d1, (Mathiassen 1927 : 17).

### Harpoon Foreshafts:

Five specimens were found, all of bone. Two specimens have been selected as representative of this phase both shown on Pl. 1, a and b. Both are made from whalebone and are rather heavy with flat oval cross sections at the rounded butt end. They have the greatest width where the attachment thong hole has been bored and show some

resemblance to a specimen from NW. Greenland (Holtved 1944 : 1; Pl. 6,18).

Mouthpiece for Bladder:

Plate 8,r, is a cylindrical mouthpiece made of wood with a wide sunken lashing groove. A smaller wooden artifact of similar shape (Pl. 8,q) may either be a toy mouthpiece or a mending disk for a bladder, (Holtved 1944 : 197). Two wooden bladder-mouthpiece plugs were located, together with three possible fragments.

Bows:

Seven fragments, of which five are of wood and two of baleen. Pl. 1,f and g shows the two end-pieces of baleen bows with square cut end knobs for string attachment. Both fragments have been broken at a point where the bow was bent back, a detail well illustrated in a complete baleen bow from NW. Greenland pictured in Holtved 1944 (Pl. 47). Two wooden bow fragments with rounded knobs for string attachment are most probably toys judging from their small size (Pl. 1,l and m).

Arrow Shafts:

Four arrowshaft fragments were also recovered (Pl. 1,j and k), including two wooden fragments with notches in the butt ends for string attachment. The butt end is somewhat broader and flatter than the rest of the shaft.

Quiver Handle:

Plate 5,g shows a handle made from whalebone. The perforated ends are somewhat flatter than the central section and broken through

the hole on one side. A handle from a grave on Iglosoataligarsuk Island in the Hopedale area is fairly similar (Bird 1945 : Fig. 39), as is a specimen from N.W. Greenland (Holtved 1944 : Pl. 12,15).

Small Lance:

Plate 1,h may be a small lance or a hunting knife. The rear end has an end knob with a suspension hole. The fore end has a slit for blade attachment with three lashing holes. This implement may have been used to dispatch wounded seals, (Mathiassen 1927: 218).

Slate End Blades:

As shown on Pl. 2,f-n and r, end blades from the Early Phase are medium-sized facet-ground slate implements for lances, harpoons, and possibly arrowheads. Two are unfinished and several are damaged. The one or two holes are usually close to the centre line of the blade although one specimen, (Pl. 2,m), appears to have been notched at the base rather than drilled. In all sixteen specimens were found.

Snow Goggles:

Plate 8,1, shows a broken pair of one-piece snow goggles made of wood with one round eye hole for the left eye and a more narrow oval slit for the right eye. The specimen is rather crude and has been repaired once with baleen string. Pl. 8,m, is a very well made pair of snow goggles with drilled holes in the edges for attachment.

## Transportation

### Sled Shoes:

The 17 sled shoe pieces found were made from whale bone. One interesting feature for the Early Phase is the means of attachment by lashing rather than the use of pegs. The usual method for preparing the lashing holes and groove was to drill three holes. The centre hole was only sunk halfway into the bone then cut to make a sunken groove between the outer holes which had been drilled all the way through. None of the houses for this phase produced any pegged sled shoes. On an average the width of the sled shoes for this phase is wider than the ones used during the Communal House Phase and later. Pl. 3,c shows one of the more narrow sled shoes with a series of lashing holes. A very similar specimen comes from NW. Greenland (Holtved 1944 ; Pl.15).

## Tools

### Snow Knives:

In all three complete knives and seven blade sections were found. Pl. 4,e shows a one-piece snow knife of whalebone with a unilateral end knob. There remains the possibility that this may be a snow beater. Two wooden snow knife handles (Pl. 4,f and g) are similar in having one sided end knobs at the base of the grip, though one (Fig. g), has a distinct bend where the handle meets the blade as well as holes for attachment very reminiscent of finds from Pond Inlet (Mathiassen 1927 : 200) and the Thule District (Holtved 1944 ; Pl. 18).

The blades are usually made from whalebone with the exception of Pl. 4,b which is a tip fragment of ivory. Pl. 8,a shows a wooden toy snow knife. A very deteriorated baleen one-piece snow knife was located in House 19.

Snow Beaters:

One specimen made from baleen with a cut hole in the handle for suspension is shown on Pl. 4,d.

Knife Handles:

Plate 5, a-f shows the six handles for men's knives from this phase all made from whalebone. The handles are rather similar in appearance with a slit along the upper edge extending almost across the end for blade insertion. The base is slightly curved with a hole for suspension and small rivet holes indicate the means of blade attachment. A somewhat similar handle is pictured from Pond Inlet (Mathiassen 1927 ; Pl. 46,6).

Adzes, Handle and Blade:

House 21 produced two rather unusual looking adze sockets (Pl. 5,h,i). They are both made from caribou antler and have sockets in the ends for blade insertion. Pl. 5,j shows a fairly typical adze handle made from wood although its size suggests that it may be a toy handle. Pl. 6,j shows an adze blade of nephrite (or low quality jade).

Ulo Handles and Blades:

Plate 5,k shows a fragment of an ulo handle made from whalebone. The two perforations under the handle crest served as a finger

grip and the remains of a small rivet hole on one side suggest that the blade was fastened to the handle with pegs or rivets. Several handles of this type have been reported from different sites in the arctic, e.g., from the Kuk site in the northern part of Southampton Island (Mathiassen 1927 ; Pl.70), and a prototype of this handle, from Comer's Midden is illustrated by Holtved (1944 ; Pl. 22,23). It is interesting to note that some of the woman's knives presented by Boas (1907 : 430) from Southampton Island had been obtained by Captain Comer near Frozen Strait not far from where the Kuk finds were made. Pl. 5,1 is a very deteriorated handle of bone with one hole extending across to each side for a finger grip. This may be a development from the double perforated grip. Somewhat similar handles have been found in NW. Greenland (Holtved 1944 ; Pl. 23) and Pond Inlet (Mathiassen 1927 ; Pl. 50). Pl. 6,1 shows a toy ulo depicting a type presented by Mathiassen from Pond Inlet with a long curved edge and notched at the upper end for a baleen binding (Mathiassen 1927 ; P. 50). Pl. 6,m is of similar shape with the exception of having been attached to a handle with pegs, one of which is still intact. Both of these ulos are also reminiscent of specimens found at Birnirk (Ford 1959 : 191). In addition two slate ulo fragments were found.

Knife Blades:

Seventeen slate specimens were located. Three one-piece slate knives are shown in Pl. 6,a,b,e. A similar one-piece slate knife with the handle lapped with baleen was found at Pond Inlet (Mathiassen 1927 : Pl.47). Most of the blades are single-edged and

two of them have holes drilled for hafting. Pl. 6,f illustrates a double-edged blade with six holes for hafting. Few of the blades found would seem to fit the narrow slit in the knife handles described above.

Drill Points:

A total of three drill points were located, all made from nephrite Pl. 2q is rounded at the upper end with a thinner four-faceted, ground slanted edge. One specimen (Pl. 2,p) is rather quadratic in cross-section curving to form a very small thin point at the base. These points are somewhat similar to the Naujan specimens (Mathiassen 1927 : Pl. 22) and Pond Inlet finds (Mathiassen 1927 : Pl. 49).

Whetstones:

Twenty-two schist and slate stones for grinding and sharpening blades and bone tools were found. The shapes are rather irregular although many take on a rectangular to prismatic form from use. Pl. 2,a,b are fairly typical representatives. The surface area used ranges from all four sides to only one.

Mattocks:

In all, ten specimens of whalebone were located. Typical representatives of the Early Phase are shown on Pl. 3,a,d. Notched in one end only, they are made from whalebone with oval holes for handle insert and hafting. Pl. 3,b is a mattock made from a former sled shoe.

Bodkins:

Five bone points were located of which three are shown on Pl. 8,n,o,p. These points were presumably used as bodkins when sewing. No sewing needles, thimble-holders or needle cases were located in the houses although one "winged" needle case was found in one of the graves. A report on Thule burials including human skeletal material and associated artifacts is now in preparation by J. Edson Way, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto.

## Household Utensils

Lamps:

The distinctive lamp type for this phase is the triangular soapstone lamp with an upright ridge near the front edge. Pl. 7,c may have been a toy lamp but has its counterpart in a lamp from Pond Inlet (Mathiassen 1927 : Pl. 52,4). Pl. 7,a shows a fragment of a soapstone lamp with one ridge intact. Presumably this lamp had two such ridges and may have looked like a lamp located by Bird in an early type house at Karmakulluk site in the Hopedale area on the Labrador coast (Bird 1945 : 166). A total of 15 fragments were found.

Cooking Pots:

In all nine wooden and ten soapstone bowl fragments were located. The best evidence for the style of the soapstone vessels comes from three toy fragments, each found in different house structures (Pl. 8,e,f,g). They indicate the use of large, heavy, round-cornered, four-sided vessels, with a longitudinal line ornament.

Pl. 7,d is also presumably a toy fragment and shows the suspension holes in the corner edge.

Human Figures:

Two wooden dolls were found in Early Phase houses. Pl. 8,c probably represents a male figure with arms indicated by knobs, unfortunately the head is missing. Pl. 8,d presumably also a man, has one arm indicated and the other broken. Both figures seem to have a similar style of clothing. The front lines indicate the limit of the trousers and the pointed frock.

Basketry:

A piece of material woven out of grass or bark was located near the entrance of House 21. The specimen was investigated by Peter Wagner at the National Museum at Copenhagen where the material is presently being preserved and restored. The weave-pattern is quite fine and the only comparative specimen that I have seen came from the Aleutian Islands.

Sealing Nets:

House 21, 22, and 23 yielded several sections of knotted baleen suggesting the use of this material for nets. Several researchers have debated whether or not the Eskimos used nets for fishing and seal hunting (Kleivan 1966 : 48). From finds in the Disko Bay region in Greenland, Mathiassen states "now we have a sealing net found in a layer that is undoubtedly earlier than the time of the whalers and the arrival of Danes in Greenland --- accordingly the

obvious thing to do is to place it among the elements which the Eskimos learnt from the Norsemen" (Mathiassen 1934 : 97). Whether or not the Norsemen introduced the use of nets we now have nets from Saglek Bay pre-dating European contact (not counting the Norsemen). The size of the mesh, (nine inches) would suggest their use for seal hunting and I don't feel that Kleivans statement to the effect that the missionaries first introduced the use of seal nets can be supported. (Kleivan 1966 : 49).

## Miscellaneous and unidentified objects.

Several flat oval pieces of wood for bowl bottoms were located, however salvage was impossible in most cases. Fragments of baleen sides for bowls were also found. Many pointed and charred sticks of wood were found some of which had probably been used as wick trimmers. Other wooden pieces, charred and rounded at one end, may have been used in fire drilling. A total of 106 pieces are unidentified and consist mainly of wood, baleen and bone fragments. A total of 104 pieces of lithic material were located consisting primarily of Ramah chalcedony. Typologically the material has been classified as Maritime Archaic (one specimen), pre-Dorset (one specimen), Dorset (four specimens), wasteflakes (91 pieces), and seven biface fragments. The above mentioned artifacts from earlier cultures could have been used by the Thule people. It is equally possible however that they represent earlier camp sites and that the artifacts were present in the sod blocks which the Thule people cut out for their houses.

The following plates illustrate the objects with a list of their catalogue numbers and place of finding. For the Early Phase all the houses are found on the Ikkusik site map (Fig. 5), denoted by the abbreviation Ik, followed by the house number.

PLATE 1.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Harpoon foreshaft | N 10275 | Ik. 21 |
| b | " " | N 10274 | Ik. 21 |
| c | Harpoon head, antler | N 10239 | Ik. 21 |
| d | " " , whale bone | N 10240 | Ik. 21 |
| e | Arrow head, toy? | N 10241 | Ik. 21 |
| f | Bow fragment, baleen | N 10245 | Ik. 21 |
| g | " " " | N 10246 | Ik. 21 |
| h | Hunting knife or small lance | N 10184 | Ik. 21 |
| i | Arrow fragment, wood | N 10177 | Ik. 21 |
| j | " " " | N 10143 | Ik. 21 |
| k | " " " | N 10153 | Ik. 21 |
| l | Bow tip, toy?, wood | N 10210 | Ik. 21 |
| m | " " " " | N 10140 | Ik. 21 |

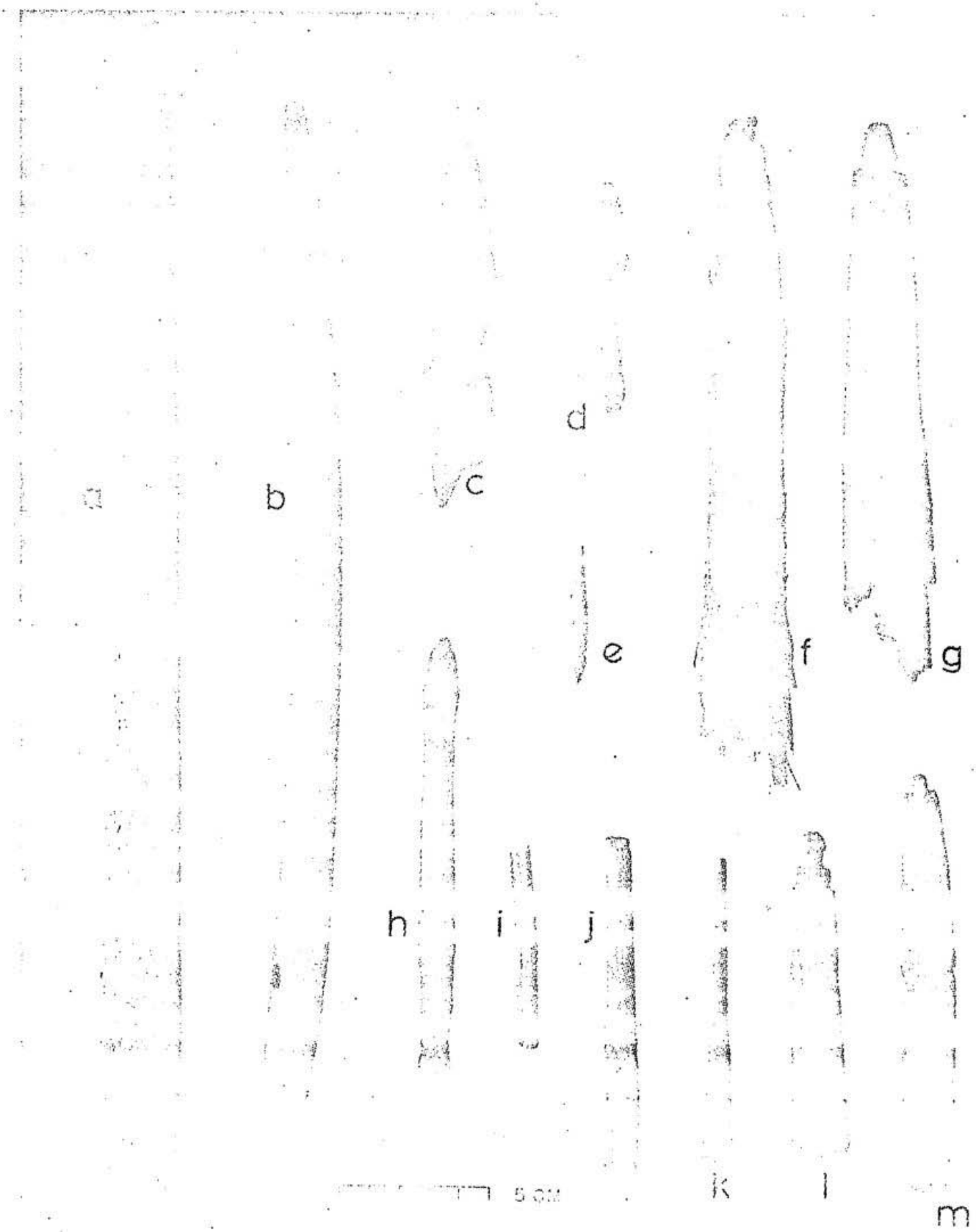
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PLATE 2.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Whetstone, | N 10434 | Ik. 23 |
| b | " | N 10422 | Ik. 23 |
| c | " | N 10430 A | Ik. 23 |
| d | " | N 10454 | Ik. 23 |
| e | " | N 10430 B | Ik. 23 |
| f | Harpoon blade, slate | N 11229 | Ik. 23 |
| g | " " , slate fragment | N 10242 | Ik. 21 |
| h | " " , blank | N 11228 | Ik. 23 |
| i | " " " | N 11226 | Ik. 23 |
| j | " " , slate | N 10517 | Ik. 22 |
| k | " " " | N 10379 | Ik. 19 |
| l | " " " | N 10414 | Ik. 23 |
| m | " " " | N 10518 | Ik. 22 |
| n | " " " | N 10424 | Ik. 23 |
| o | Drill point | N 10520 | Ik. 22 |
| p | " " | N 10426 | Ik. 23 |
| q | " " | N 10521 | Ik. 22 |
| r | Harpoon blade, slate | N 10516 | Ik. 22 |

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PLATE 3

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Mattock head, bone | N 10445 | Ik. 23 |
| b | " from sled shoe | N 10231 | Ik. 21 |
| c | Sled shoe, bone | N 10238 | Ik. 21 |
| d | Mattock head, bone | N 10446 | Ik. 23 |
| e | Sled shoe, bone | N 10389 | Ik. 19 |

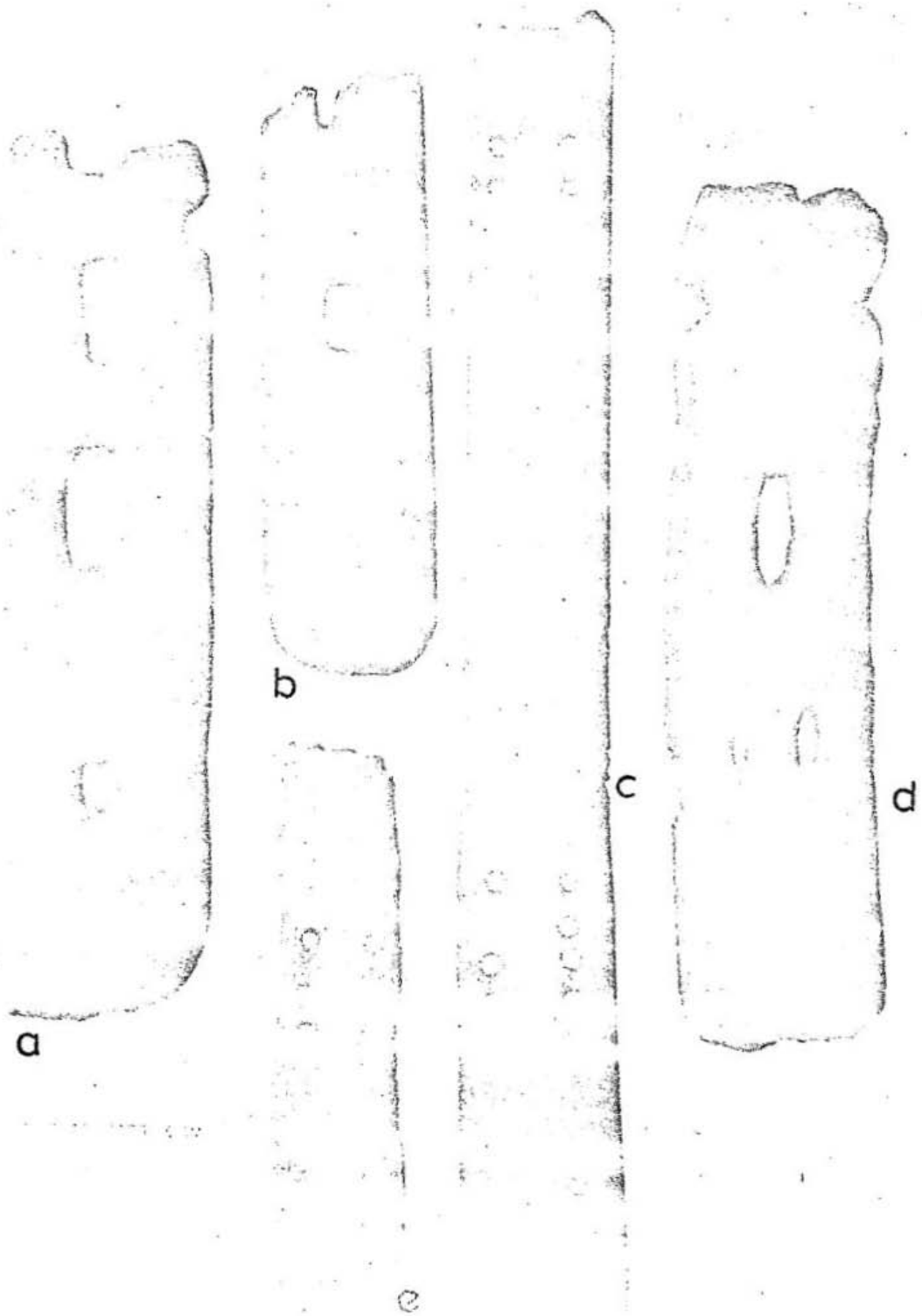
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PLATE 4.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Snow knife blade | N 10155 | Ik. 21 |
| b | " " " tip | N 10139 | Ik. 21 |
| c | " " " " | N 10215 | Ik. 21 |
| d | Snow beater, baleen | N 10269 | Ik. 19 |
| e | Snow knife, whale bone | N 10243 | Ik. 19 |
| f | Snow knife handle, wood | N 10190 | Ik. 21 |
| g | " " " " | N 10305 | Ik. 21 |

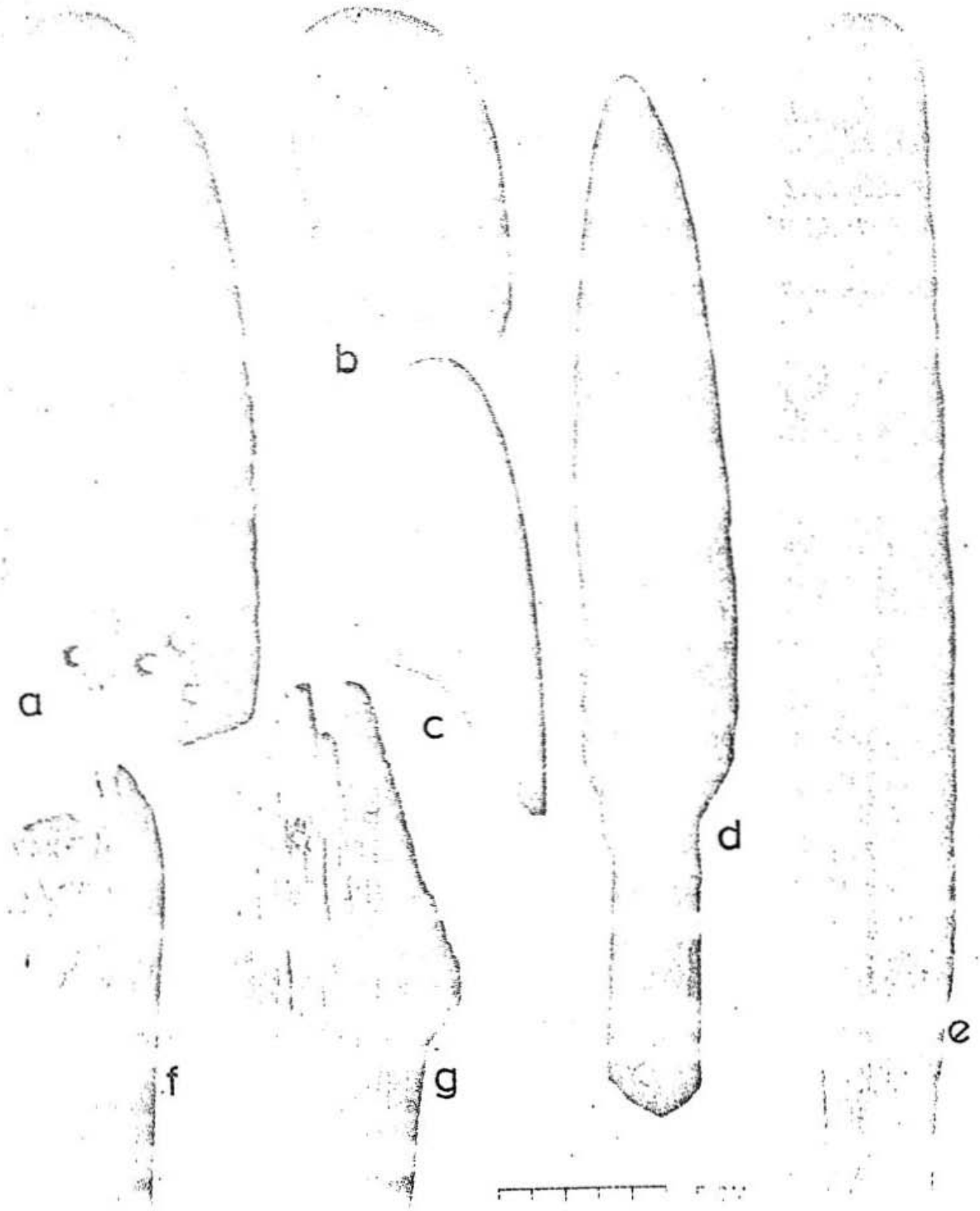
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PLATE 5.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Knife handle | N 10376 | Ik. 19 |
| b | " " | N 10279 | Ik. 21 |
| c | " " | N 10217 | Ik. 21 |
| d | " " | N 10278 | Ik. 21 |
| e | " " | N 10186 | Ik. 21 |
| f | " " | N 10294 | Ik. 21 |
| g | Quiver handle | N 10221 | Ik. 21 |
| h | Adze socket | N 10230 | Ik. 21 |
| i | " " | N 10229 | Ik. 21 |
| j | " handle | N 10206 | Ik. 21 |
| k | Ulo handle | N 10280 | Ik. 21 |
| l | " " | N 11231 | Ik. 23 |

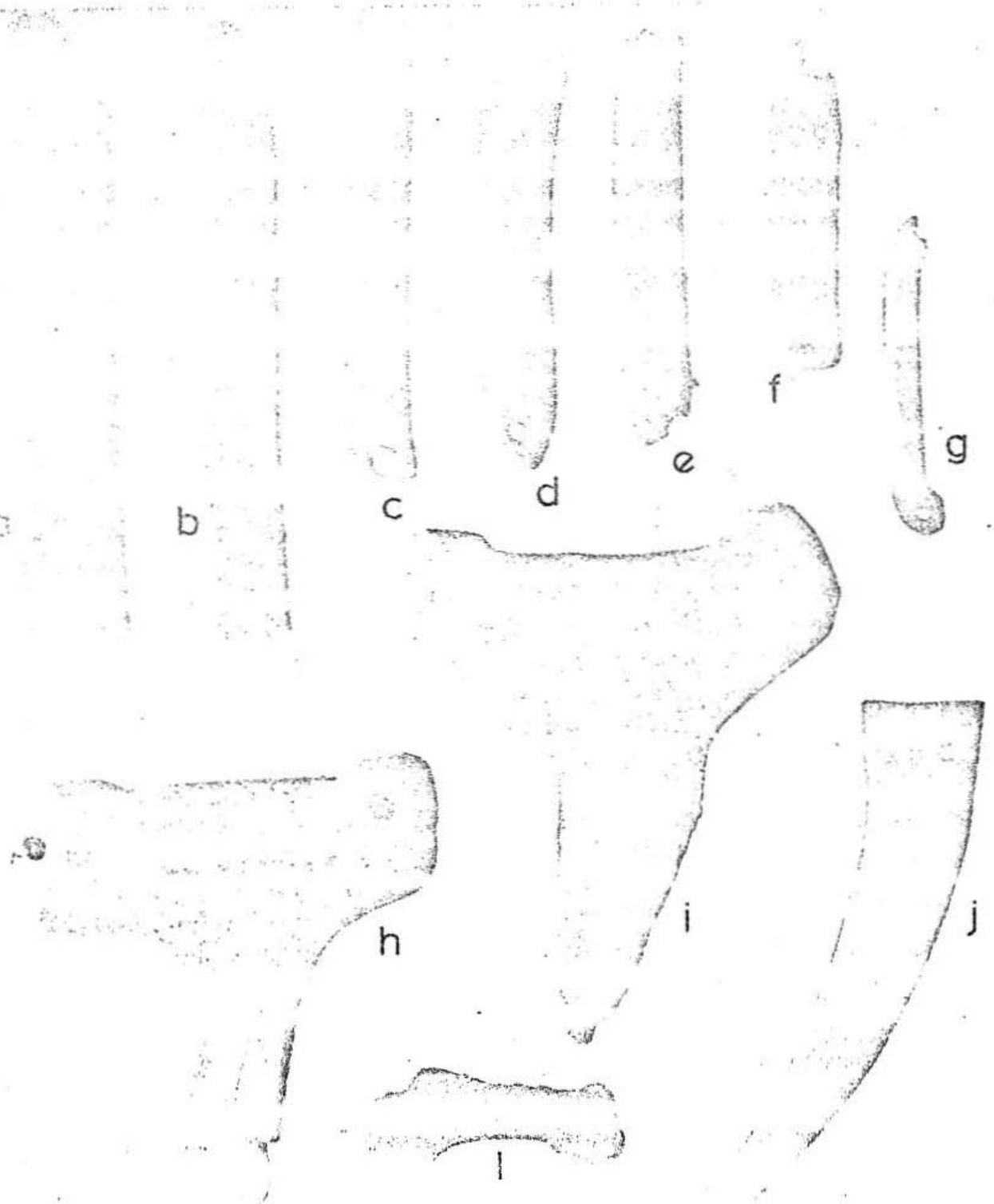
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PLATE 6.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Slate knife, one piece | N 10531 | Ik. 22 |
| b | " " " " | N 10438 | Ik. 23 |
| c | " " blade | N 10530 | Ik. 22 |
| d | " " blade tip | N 10711 | Ik. 21 |
| e | " " one piece | N 10456 | Ik. 23 |
| f | " " blade | N 10423 | Ik. 23 |
| g | " " toy? | N 10324 | Ik. 21 |
| h | " " blade | N 11222 | Ik. 23 |
| i | " " " | N 10712 | Ik. 21 |
| j | Adze blade | N 10713 | Ik. 21 |
| k | Slate knife fragment | N 10431 | Ik. 23 |
| l | Toy ulo blade, slate | N 10413 | Ik. 23 |
| m | " " " " | N 10412 | Ik. 23 |

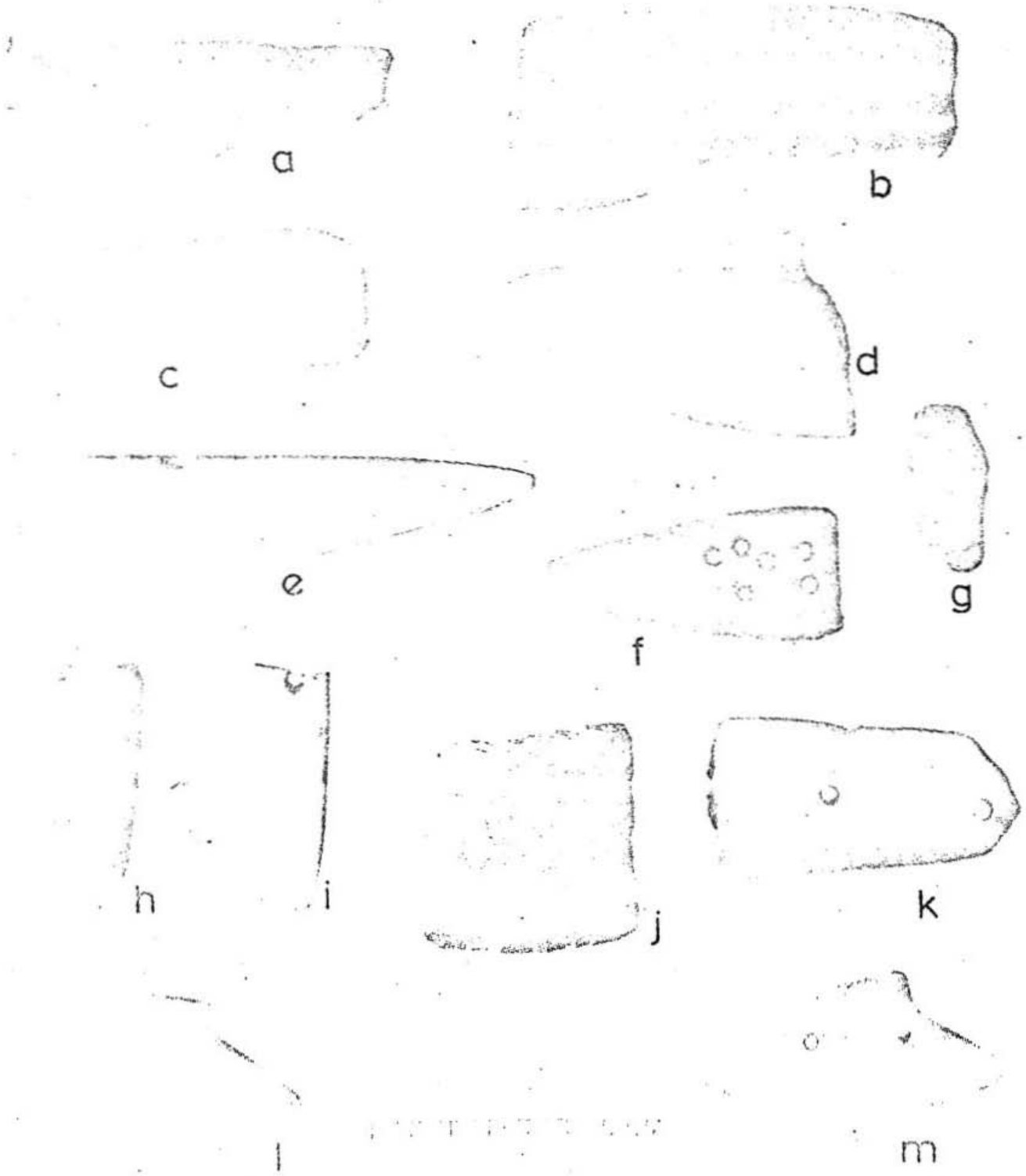
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PLATE 7.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Lamp fragment | N 10306 | Ik. 21 |
| b | " " | N 10308 | Ik. 21 |
| c | " " toy lamp? | N 10439 | Ik. 23 |
| d | Cooking pot fragment | N 10450 | Ik. 23 |
| e | Lamp fragment | N 10307 | Ik. 21 |
| f | " " in process | N 10453 | Ik. 23 |
| g | Soapstone blank | N 10719 | Ik. 21 |

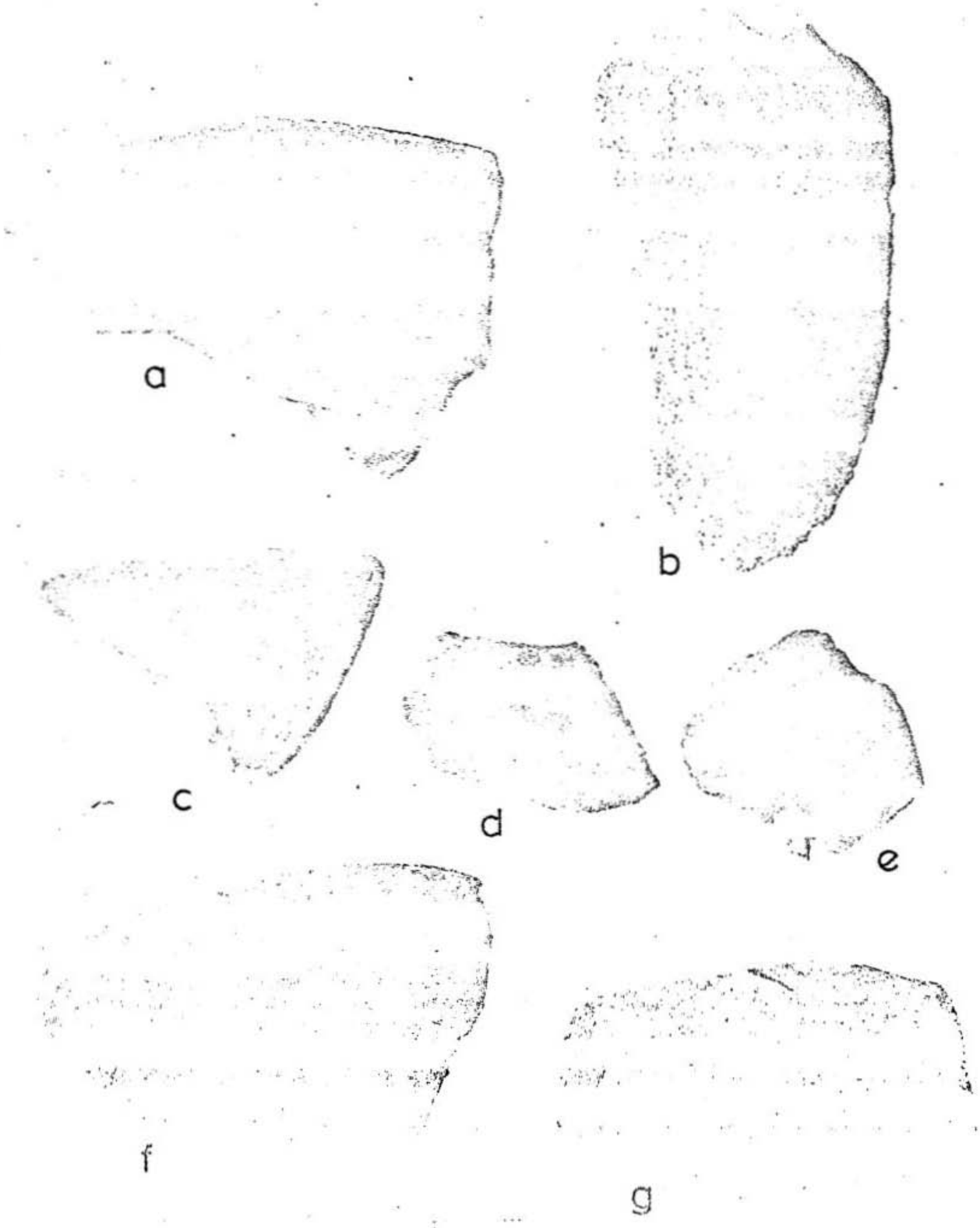
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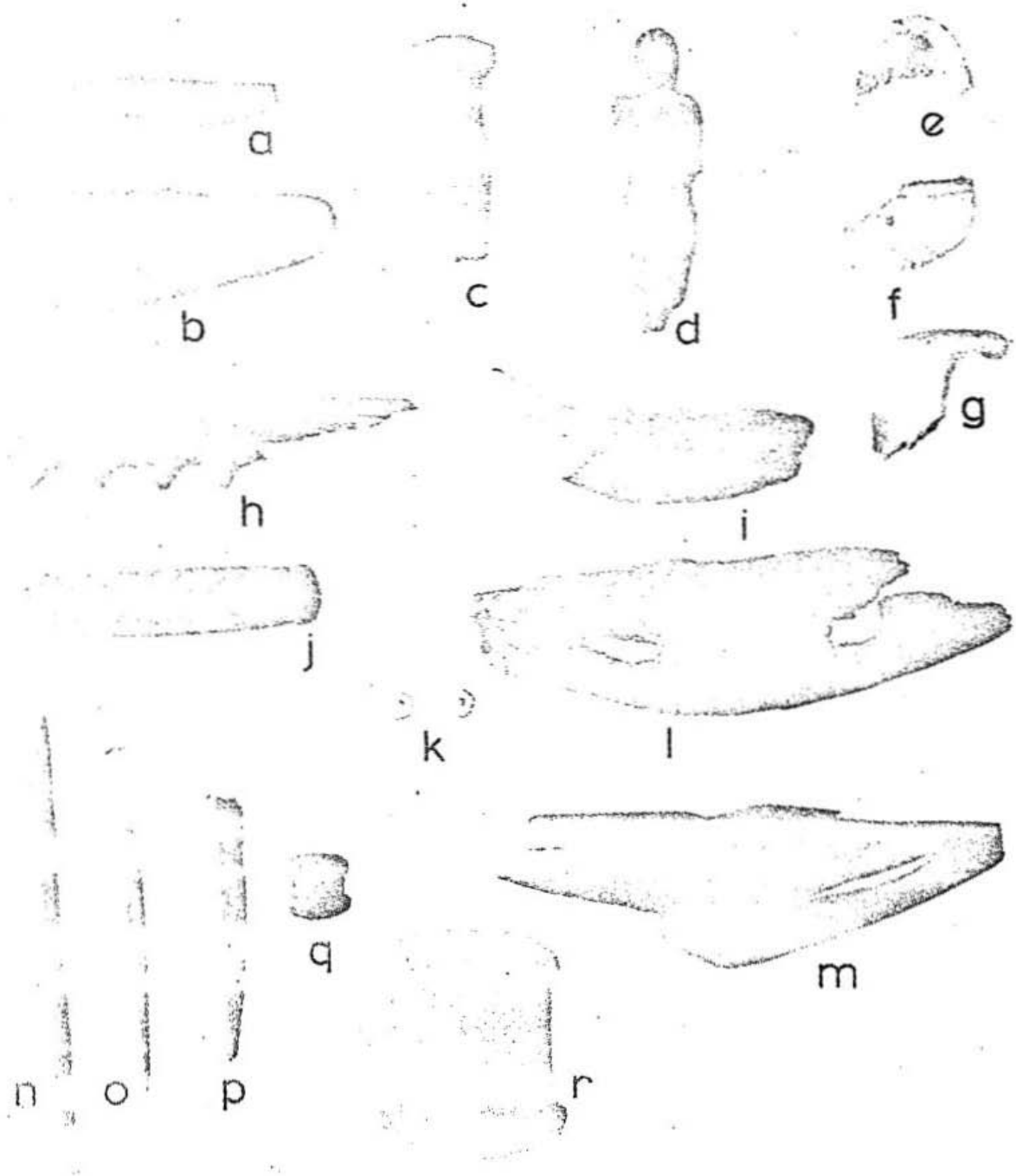
PLATE 8.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Toy snow knife | N 10196 | Ik. 21 |
| b | " " " tip | N 10322 | Ik. 21 |
| c | Doll | N 10218 | Ik. 21 |
| d | " | N 10458 | Ik. 23 |
| e | Toy cooking pot fragment | N 10429 | Ik. 23 |
| f | " " " " | N 10706 | Ik. 21 |
| g | " " " " | N 10542 | Ik. 22 |
| h | Handle? | N 10128 | Ik. 21 |
| i | Bear tooth with suspension hole | N 10192 | Ik. 21 |
| j | Handle? | N 10207 | Ik. 21 |
| k | Soapstone beads | N 10522 | Ik. 22 |
| l | Snow goggle | N 10147 | Ik. 21 |
| m | " " | N 10146 | Ik. 21 |
| n | Bodkin | N 10145 | Ik. 21 |
| o | " | N 10321 | Ik. 21 |
| p | " | N 10303 | Ik. 21 |
| q | Mending disk for bladder? | N 10222 | Ik. 21 |
| r | Bladder mouth piece | N 10203 | Ik. 21 |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## Summary.

The available evidence seems to indicate that the Thule Eskimo Tradition reached the Saglek Bay area on the east coast of Labrador sometime around A.D. 1500. From an analysis of some of the more diagnostic artifacts, comparisons were made with finds from other areas in the Arctic. The results tend to favour a closer affinity with Thule sites in eastern Baffin Island, specifically the Pond Inlet region, and NW. Greenland. Hughes (1968 : 22) in a discussion on the ABO blood-group system gene frequency among present day Eskimos, presented a distribution table which would indicate a higher degree of correlation between Baffin Island and Labrador Eskimos than between the latter and Ungava Eskimos. These facts would lend support to the hypothesis that the Thule Eskimos of the eastern arctic originally advanced southward along the east coast of Baffin Island eventually reaching the Labrador coast. Hutton states that the Eskimos at Killinek informed him that their forefathers visited the Innuit of the far north apparently using the Button Islands and Resolution Island as the Tutjat, stepping stones (Hutton 1912 : 28). The Thule Eskimos could also have crossed the Hudson Strait farther west and further research will be required to illuminate this particular question. There was no sign of European manufactured goods in this Early Phase although that is no proof that the Eskimos had not heard of or seen any Europeans. We know that the Norsemen frequented the Labrador coast even before the Thule Eskimos arrived (Ingstad 1969) and if they made any contact along this coast it would have been during the time

of the decline of Norse colonization of Greenland. As far as we know the Dorset Eskimos were not present in Labrador during the early voyages of exploration by the Norsemen indicating that the Skraellings, referred to in the Islandic Sagas, were Indians.

I suspect that a diffusion of European goods reached Saglek Bay and northern Labrador within the time span of the Early Phase. As the Thule Eskimos ventured southward along the coast, European trade goods were much in evidence in southern Labrador. Consequently, by the time the Thule Eskimos reached the Hopedale area they were apparently well within the historic period. The early house types excavated by Bird correspond very well in style to the early houses in Saglek Bay; however his work produced ample evidence of contact material in these houses (Bird 1945). I feel that Bird's (1945 : 180) conclusion that the Thule Eskimo settlement period occurred somewhere between A.D. 1550 and 1600 in the Hopedale area is correct. This would also support Gosling's suggestion that the Eskimos did not frequent the southern Labrador coast until the latter part of the sixteenth century (Gosling 1910 : 18).

The house ruins for the Early Phase in Saglek Bay indicate a variety of styles, from pear-shaped single unit dwellings to features more square in outline as well as multi-family structures. Whether or not there is a development from one style to the next is difficult to determine. Patterson has suggested a development of house styles in Greenland beginning with the single round house to the double round house followed by small rectangular houses as intermediate structures

between the rounded and the large communal houses (Patterson 1939 : 45). It must be emphasized that it is often quite difficult to clearly define the exact configuration of the older houses and thus classify them. Based on the little evidence we have from the Ikkusik site in Saglek Bay it would appear that the more square-cornered houses are later than the rounded forms. The development of house styles in Saglek Bay seems to be in agreement with Patterson's suggestion. Holtved states that "even in the 13th century developments were moving fast towards foursided houses in Greenland." (Holtved 1944 : 104). The same development is much later in Saglek Bay if the radiocarbon date of A.D. 1520 ± 90 is accurate, since the date was obtained from a single round house.

Returning to the question of the arrival of the Thule Eskimos in this area I feel that the radiocarbon date represents the upper range of the time period. From a study of the artifact typology and comparative analysis with other finds, specifically in NW. Greenland, I would suspect that the Thule Eskimos arrived in northern Labrador sometime around A.D. 1400. Further investigations of early Thule house ruins together with additional radiocarbon dates will be needed to clarify this point.

# CHAPTER IV

## COMMUNAL HOUSE PHASE: A.D. 1700 - 1850

### Introduction:

The appearance of large communal, or common houses, in Saglek Bay is of considerable significance. Because of the limited time in the field and the large number of houses to be tested, six houses were selected as representative of this phase. All the houses were located on the Ikkusik site (Fig. 5) although there were indications of a few similar structures on the Tuglavina site (Fig. 4) and on Upernavik Island. However, the house ruins on these latter sites had been destroyed too extensively to allow reconstruction. The development of the large communal houses in Greenland has been debated by several scholars over a long period of time and several theories have been forwarded. Some of these theories will be discussed in the summary after a review of the evidence from Saglek Bay has been presented.

In order to estimate the time period for the use of these houses, diagnostic artifacts have been assembled from the six houses and represented on the following plates. Since all the houses contained Euro-American trade goods to some degree, particular attention has been paid to comparative dating of some of these items. Information from the early mission records has been valuable for establishing at least one absolute date for the use of communal houses in Saglek Bay. The structural features of the houses in the area compare to a remarkable degree with the style of the houses in Greenland

suggesting perhaps something more than a completely independent development. Artifacts considered to be representative for the phase have only been included from finds made in close proximity to the various house floors and middens. Material located in the top sod layers has been separated as possibly intrusive since younger houses have been built into, or on top of, older structures. All measurements of house size have been taken from the inside walls.

Returning to an earlier discussion (p. 12, this study) of the influence of climatic fluctuations and faunal distribution upon changes in cultural developments, an attempt will be made to correlate the development of these communal houses with climatic changes.

The illustration and description of the house ruins will be followed by a presentation of the more diagnostic artifacts and their comparative distribution. The summary will include a brief discussion of the various theories as to the origin of the large communal houses and their relation to the houses in Saglek Bay.

## Description of the excavated house ruins.

### House 3:

This is one of the largest of the communal houses measuring approximately 46 feet in length and 21 to 28 feet in width, with the entrance passage facing southwest. The sod walls of this rectangular structure were still quite outstanding with the rear wall measuring about six to seven feet above the floor level. Three lamp platforms could be distinguished extending out from the rear sleeping platform

(Fig. 15). The house had been excavated into a sandy layer which subsequently had been used as support for the sleeping platform. The central part of the lamp platforms also consisted of sand surrounded by upright slabs of stone. Testing produced evidence of a very evenly laid stone floor but revealed no signs of material for roof support. In comparison to House 8, which will be described later, the sod cover being only six to twelve inches thick within House 3 may indicate that the roof was taken down and the construction material used elsewhere. The general wall construction was a combination of sod and boulders. Lack of time prevented us from returning to this house except to extend the test squares downward after a period of thawing. A test trench was put down through the centre of the midden area to the left of the entrance producing an assortment of bone refuse, broken artifacts and two gun flints (Pl. 11,r).

House 10:

This large communal house ruin was situated in the rear of mound one at the Ikkusik site (Fig. 16). The structure was rectangular in outline with a width of about 35 feet in the rear tapering towards the front where it measured about 27 feet. Five lamp platforms could be observed extending out from the rear sleeping area as well as from both sides which presumably also served as sleeping platforms. Testing produced evidence of a flagged floor both in the entrance passage and the central floor area. The platforms are again built up of sand evidently covered with twigs and skins. Several large pieces of whale bone were located indicating the use of this material for roof const-

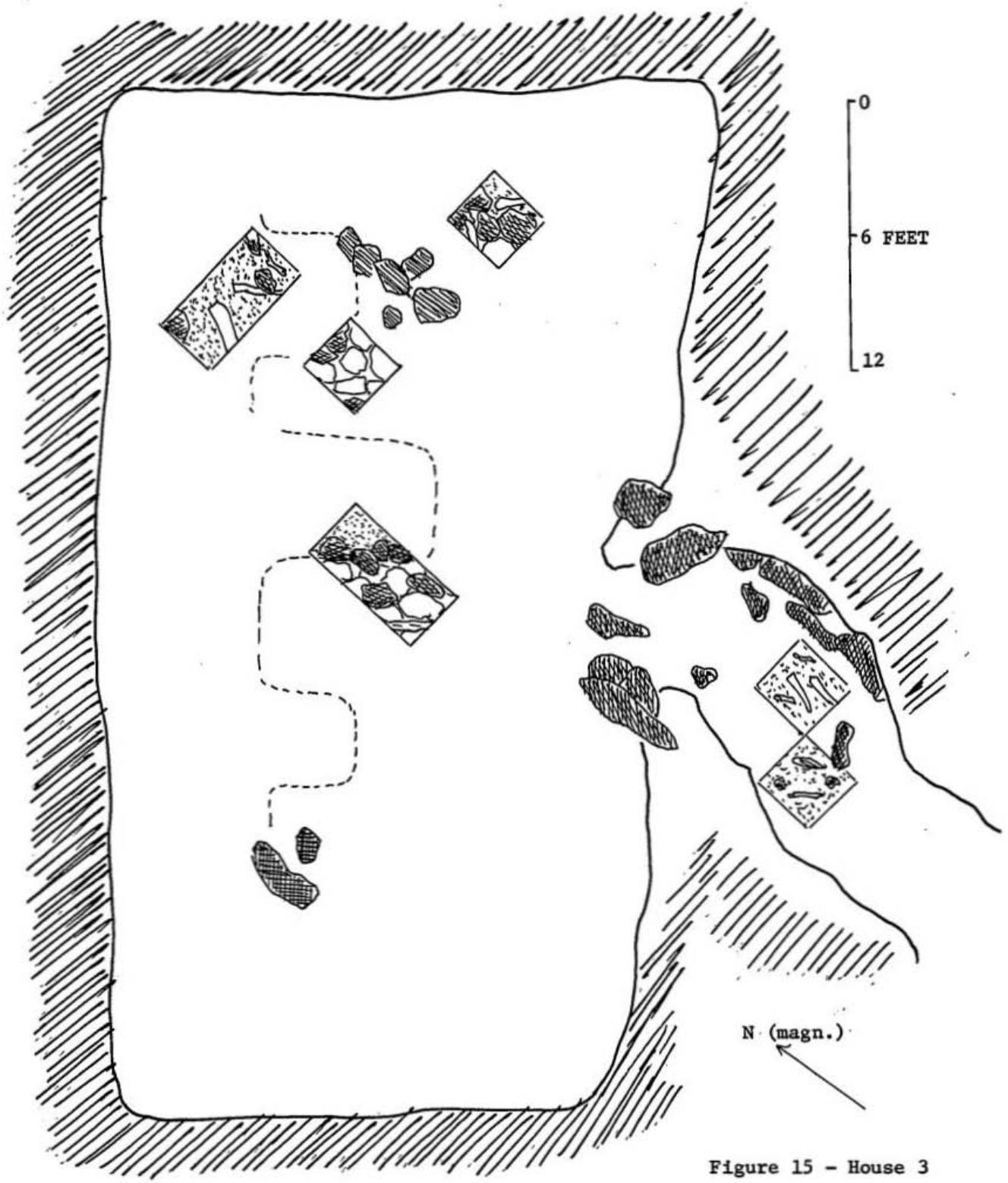


Figure 15 - House 3

Ikkusik site

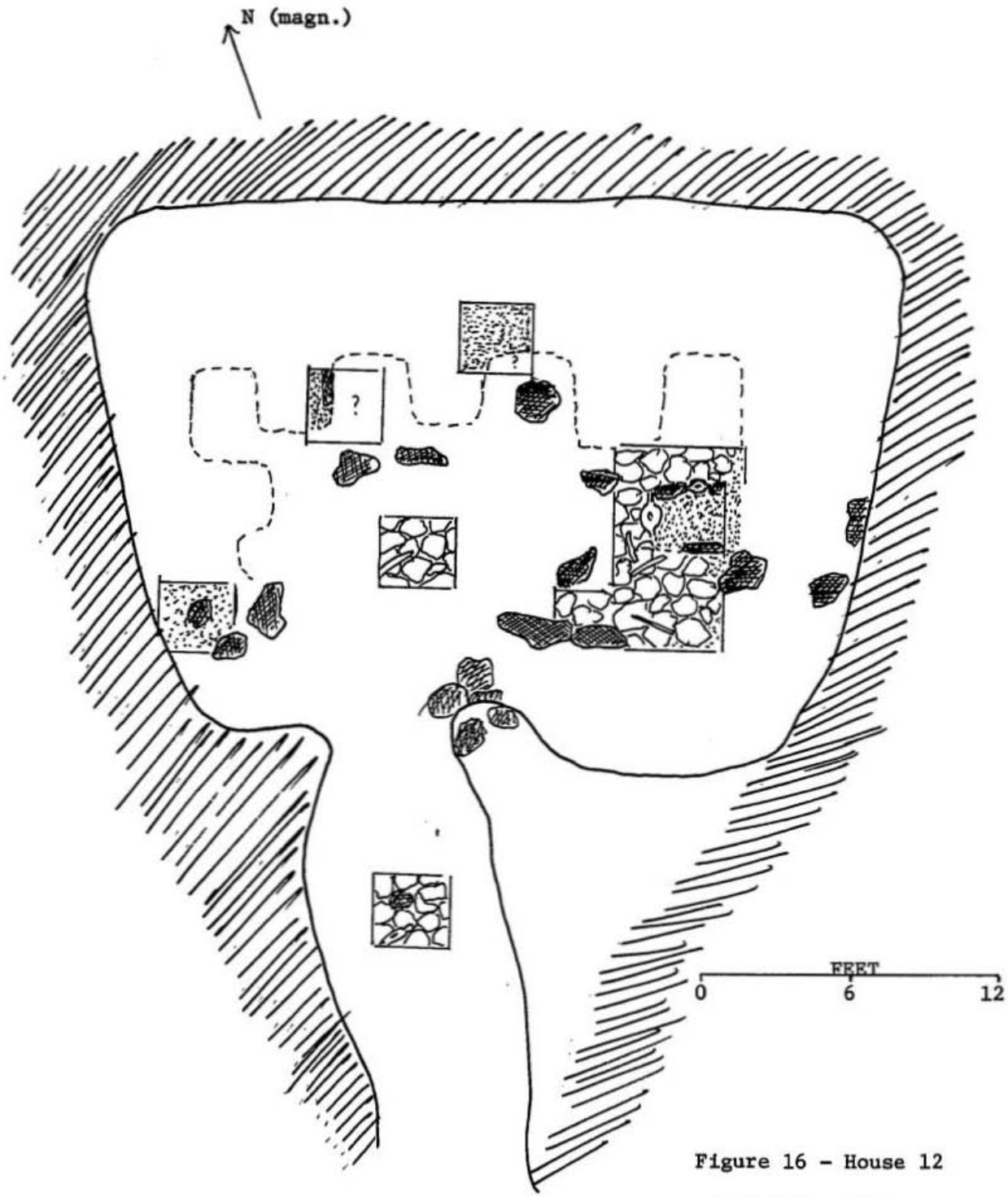


Figure 16 - House 12

Ikkusik site

.ruction. The walls were constructed from sod and boulders, of which several were found scattered throughout the house, and extended about six feet above the floor level in the rear. The entrance passage measured about 18 feet in length and faced southwest. One noteworthy feature observed in several of the communal houses was one or more whale vertebrae incorporated in the wall structure surrounding the lamp platform. The vertebrae protruded from the base of this wall and showed indications of having been used as chopping blocks. House 10 showed two such vertebrae in one platform and may have had similar features on the other lamp platforms.

House 12:

The smallest house in this phase, House 12 was almost square in outline and measured 24 feet in length (rear wall), by 20 feet in width (rear wall to entrance). The entrance passage faced southeast and measured 19 feet in length (Fig. 17). The rear sod and stone wall extended seven feet above floor level, the side and entrance walls being slightly lower. Testing showed a flagged stone floor within the house as well as in the entrance. Two lamp platforms were evident before testing and upon excavation they shared the same feature of having a whale vertebrae inset in the lamp platform structure. The rear sleeping platform was again built on an unexcavated section of sand, covered with twigs and skin. The sleeping area may have extended down along each side of the house and there may have been additional lamp platforms. The left half-section of the house, facing the rear wall, was very disturbed. A semi-circular arrangement of

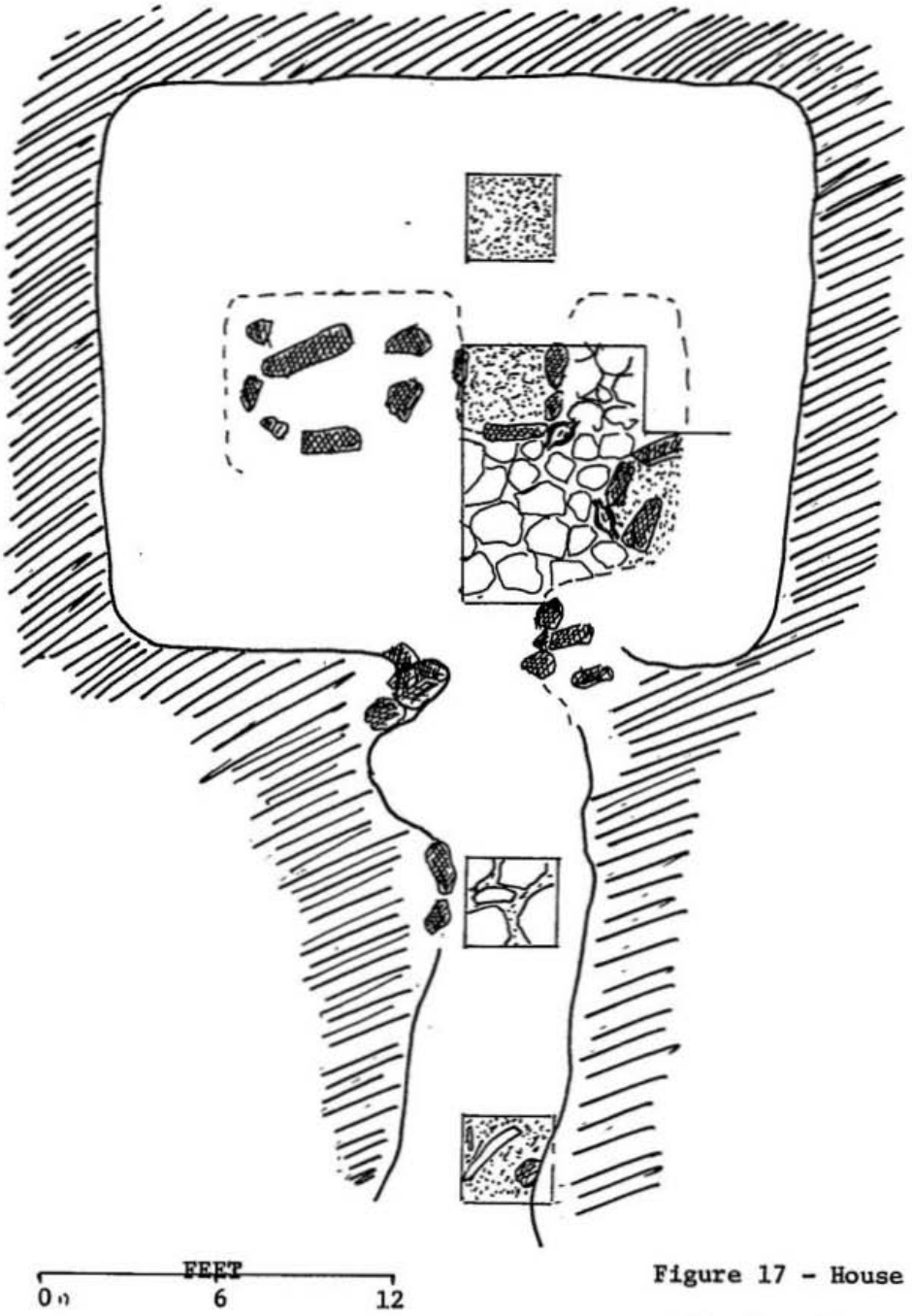


Figure 17 - House 5

Ikkusik site

stones in this area of the house were probably situated in this way by accident. Enough pieces of wood and whale bone were found scattered around to indicate roof construction of this material. More baleen strips were found during testing of this house than in any of the other houses comprising this phase.

House 8:

Initial testing of this house ruin produced such a quantity of whalebone and wood that we decided to excavate this house as thoroughly as possible. Time did not permit us to complete the excavation, although a considerable amount of structural information and artifacts were obtained. The length of the rear wall measured about 36 feet and raised approximately 8 feet above the floor level. The width of the house varied for the two sides. Facing the entrance, the side wall to the right was about 18 feet long, while the left wall extended out into a semi-circular compartment with a total length of about 28 feet. This feature is less developed in the other houses although they also show some indication of having a similar extension. The house contained six lamp platforms (Fig. 18) and apparently had sleeping platforms on three sides. Three of the lamp platforms had the vertebrae feature similar to Houses 12 and 10. The entrance passage was about 33 feet long facing southeast. The passage was sunk about eight inches lower than the floor level and paved with flat stones. As with the other houses representative of this phase there were indications of side compartments in the entrance. The roof had been built from large timbers and whale bone and the general appearance

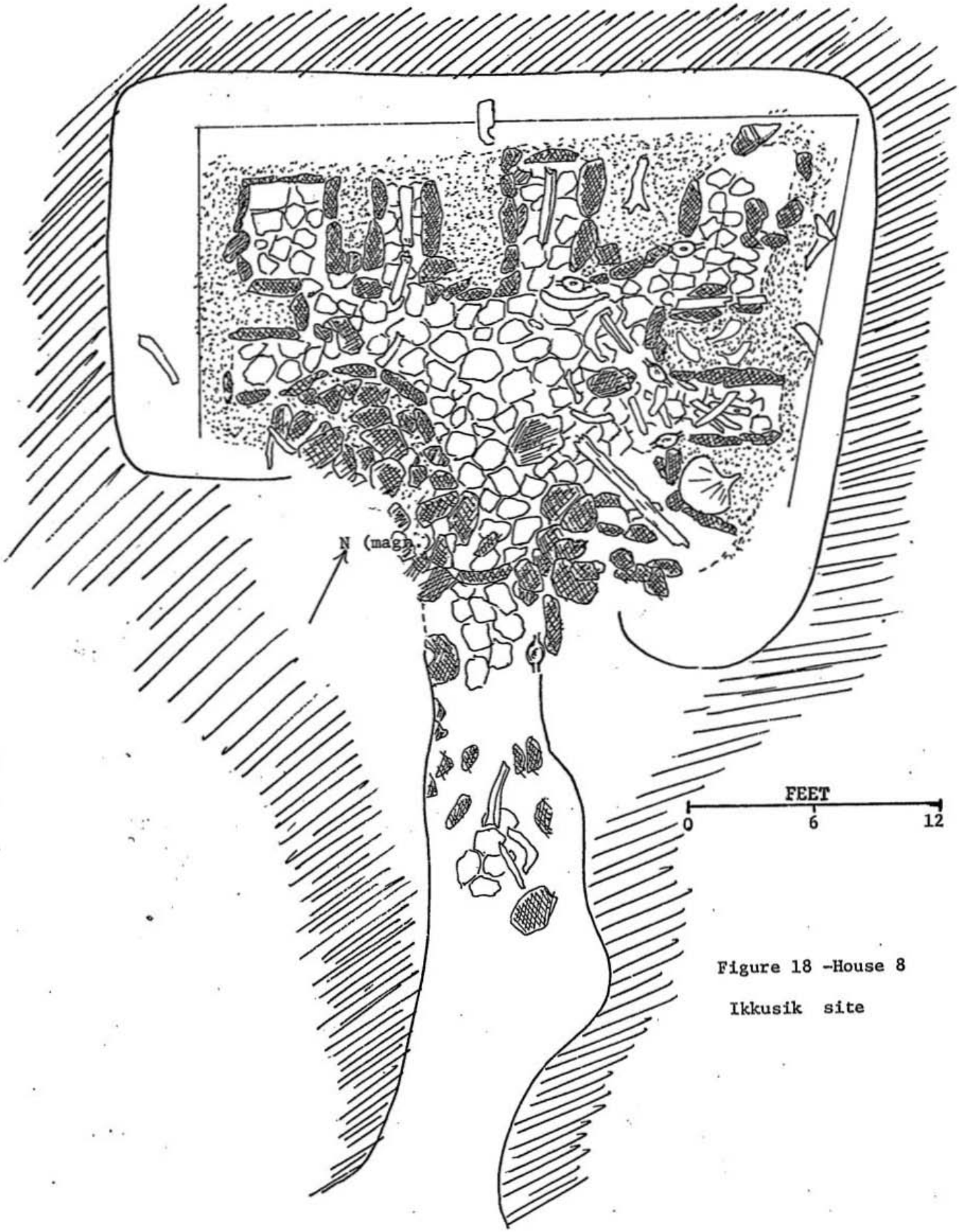


Figure 18 -House 8

Ikkusik site

seemed to indicate that the house had collapsed and been left fairly untouched. The structure had been dug into the sandy slope which again made up the core of the lamp platforms and the sleeping platform. The flagged stone floor inside the house was laid on the original levelled sand.

The two remaining houses for this phase should more appropriately be termed house features inasmuch as they were basically two large areas of sod rob filled with rain and melt water. Situated in mound 2 at the Ikkusik site they appear to have been two very large houses. House 17 (Fig. 21) measured approximately 50 feet in length, the width being impossible to estimate because of the superposition of House 5 which had been built into this structure. The large area of sods were no doubt cut by the builders of House 5. House 18 which we did not have time to investigate to any extent measured about 42 feet in length and the width was again impossible to determine because of the imposition of a house built in front.

House 17:

After draining this structure a large area of muck containing some refuse and a few artifacts considered to be intrusive had to be removed. With heavy rains and seepage the area was never completely drained and structural features could in most cases only be guessed at by feeling ones way down through the mud. By this method it was established that the house had a flagged stone floor and also what appeared to be lamp platforms. In several instances a layer of compressed sods probably the original roof sods was encountered near the floor level.

Figure 19 - Ikkusik site

draining a house site for testing

Figure 20 - Ikkusik site

house 18 after drainage

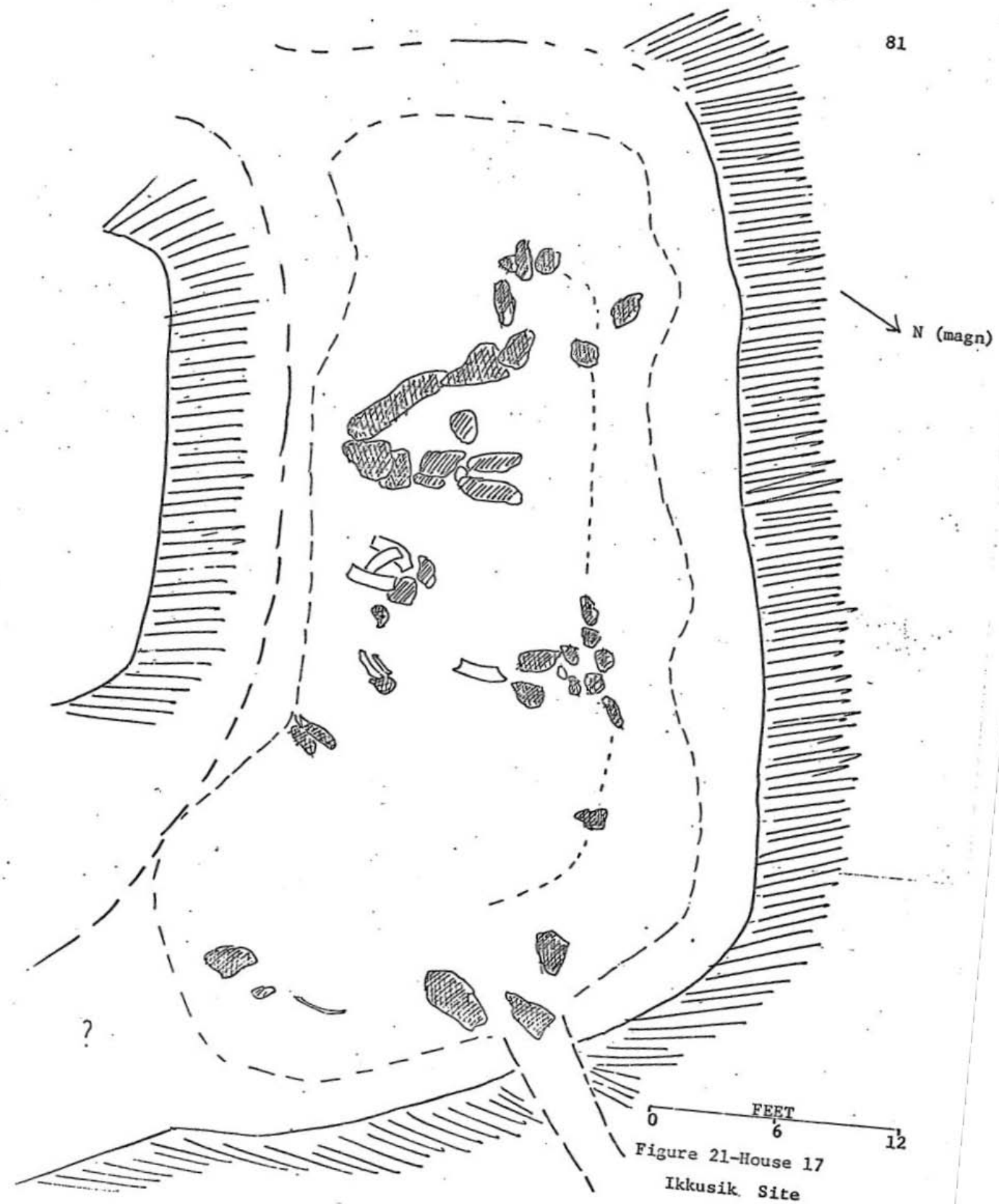


Figure 21-House 17
Ikkusik Site

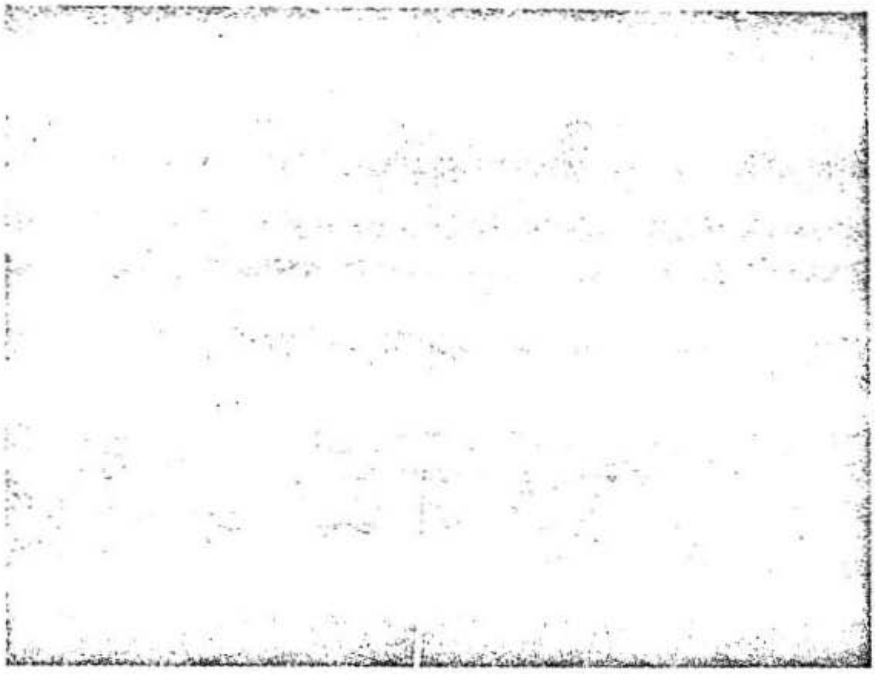

Figure 22 - Ikkusik site

House 17 partially tested

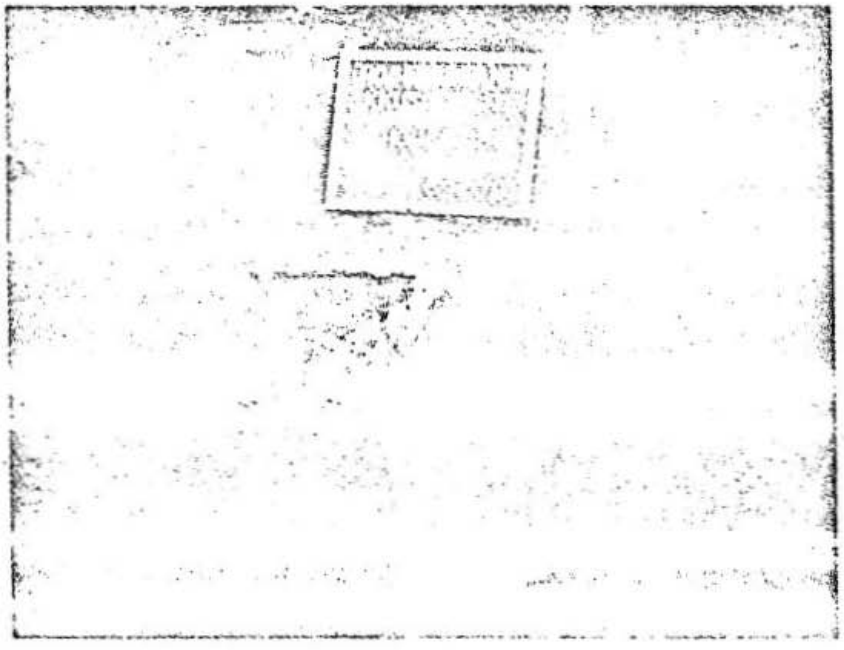

Figure 23 - Ikkusik site

House [illegible] ...ged floor & platform edge

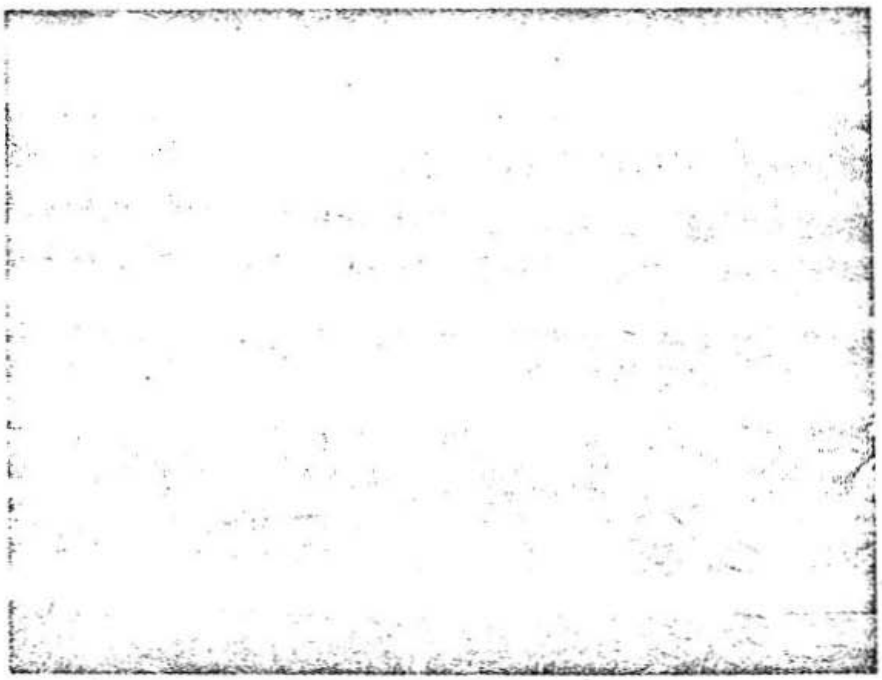

Figure 24 - Ikkusik site

the inside of House 8 during excavation

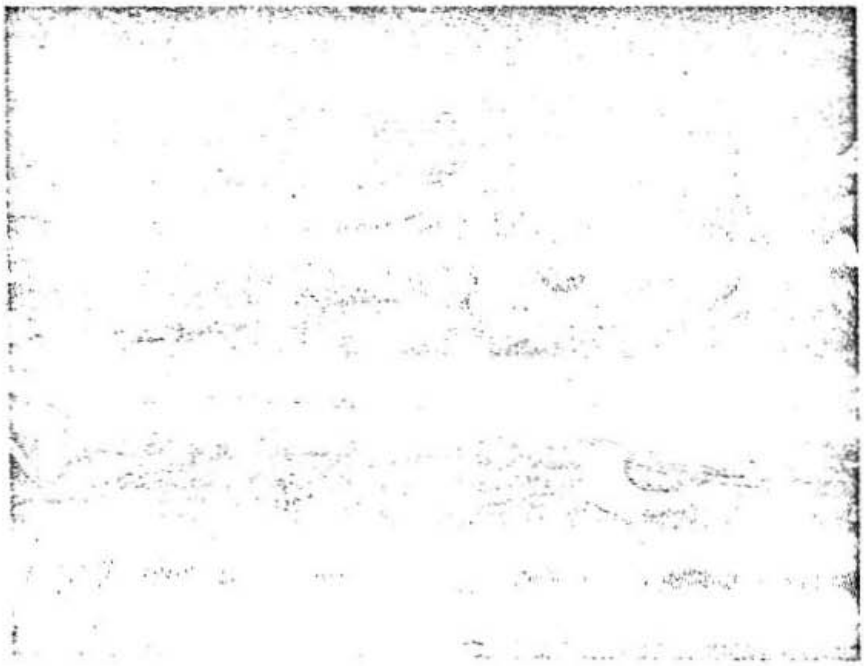

Figure 25 - Ikkusik site

[illegible] platforms in House 8

Beneath this layer, and more or less on the floor, we located a large number of artifacts in an excellent state of preservation. Large pieces of whale bone and wood indicated the roof support although they were no longer in situ. Physical appearance seemed to indicate that the entrance passage had been located on the side of the house but this could not be established with certainty.

## Description of the objects found.

The following is a description and comparison of some of the artifacts illustrated as representative of this phase. The material was found at the Ikkusik site in the houses just described as well as from their midden deposits where these could be tested.

### Hunting Implements.

Harpoon Heads:

As is the case with the Early Phase, the Communal House Phase assemblage is equally lacking in harpoon heads. One of the three specimens located is a wooden toy harpoon head (Pl. 18,k). A one-piece iron harpoon head is illustrated on Plate 9,a. The blade and the single central spur are both parallel to the line hole which has been pierced through a flattened central ridge. Pl. 9,b depicts a specimen from the midden of House 8 and belongs to Mathiassen's Type B II c 2, with both hole openings on the upper side, an inset iron blade with a rivet and two dorsal spurs (Mathiassen 1927 : 13). The geographical distribution of this harpoon head type is very large, ranging

from NW. Greenland (Holtved 1944 : Pl. 4) to grave finds from the transitional period at Pond Inlet (Mathiassen 1927 : 65). A very similar specimen was located by Bird in the Hopedale area among artifacts obtained from his Type III house ruins (Bird 1945 : Fig. 18,b).

Harpoon Foreshafts:

Plate 9,g and i, shows two foreshafts made from whale bone. The area surrounding the lashing hole widens out almost as a bulge before ending in a pointed butt. Pl. 9,f is a small foreshaft of bone with two holes for lashing close to the butt end. This specimen is probably a toy. In all, four specimens were located.

Mouthpieces for Bladders:

Plate 9,l to o, are mouthpieces made from wood with a raised ridge in the centre. This is a change from the mouthpieces of the Early Phase where the sunken central groove extended evenly between the two ends. According to Boas no pieces with a "middle ring" have been found outside the Igloolik region (Boas 1907 : 428). At this point I know of no other such finds. Pl. 9,h is a mouthpiece made of ivory and shows a fair resemblance to a specimen from NW. Greenland (Holtved 1944 : Pl. 5,19).

## Transportation.

Sled shoes:

A total of 26 fragments were found. With the exception of two specimens all the sled shoes for this phase have several charac-

teristics in common. Like the early sled shoes they are still made of whale bone but differ in being narrower in width and attached exclusively with pegs. Pl. 12,a,b may either be intrusive from an older period or show a transition from the rather broad, thick lashed shoe. Pl. 12,a shows both lashing grooves and a peg. Pl. 12,c-f, are typical examples of sled shoes from the Communal House Phase. It is interesting to note that with the introduction of iron for sled shes the dimensions of width and thickness remained approximately the same. In more recent times they seem to be approaching the width of earlier times.

Kayak Paddle Tips:

Three broken paddle tips are illustrated on Pl. 14,a to c. Made from whale bone they are fairly similar with a flat rounded tip and two extended edges for fastening. The wooden section of the paddle would be fastened into a cut socket at the base of the tip with pegs or rivets. The edging would likewise serve to hold the tip in place with pegs or rivets. A similar specimen is illustrated by Bird (1945 : Fig. 19). Four paddle tips were located in all.

## Tools.

Knife handles:

A total of 12 handles all made of bone. Pl. 13,a to d, shows four knife handles made from whale bone. The handles consist of two pieces of bone held together with iron rivets, the end knobs on the handles widen out to both sides with a central hole for suspension.

Pl. 13,a has presumably been made from an old sled shoe section.

Ulo Handles and Blade:

Plate 13,f is a handle made of whale bone somewhat similar to that shown for the Early Phase (Pl. 5,1). The wooden handle seen on Pl. 13,j is more reminiscent of recent handles (Boas 1907 : 32), and may indicate an early stylistic change which has diffused widely. Pl. 10,b is a one-piece salte ulo recovered from House 10. In connection with these implements mention should be made of a skin scraper (Pl. 10,a) with a curved iron blade and a wooden handle.

Knife Blades:

One complete slate knife blade is shown on Pl. 10,e. Ground along one slightly curved edge the blade has one drilled hole for hafting as well as a small notch on the upper edge presumably for lashing. Fragments of three blades are shown on Pl. 10,g,h and k.

Whetstones:

A fair number of schist and slate stones for grinding and sharpening were found. Pl. 10,c is a rather large specimen showing wear on three sides. The remaining whetstones are rather irregular in shape as illustrated on Pl. 10,f,i,j and l.

Drill Mouthpieces:

Two wooden mouthpieces were found. Pl. 14,h is triangular in cross section with a rim on both sides of the wider part. The hole for insertion of the drill piece is located in the centre of the broad outer rim. Pl. 14,i is similar in appearance although lacking the rim,

perhaps due to deterioration.

Mattocks:

Eleven specimens were located all of bone. Pl. 11,a is a fairly typical representative of the mattocks for this phase. Made from whale bone it has a centrally cut hole for hafting and two opposite side notches in each end. A similar specimen from Naujan is illustrated by Mathiassen (1927 : 01. 21,5). Pl. 11,d may have had a secondary use as a beaming tool, being more curved with one edge sharpened between the end notches.

## Household Utensils.

Lamps and Cooking Pots:

In all fifteen lamp and nine bowl fragments were found, The triangular soapstone lamp depicted on Pl. 15,f is typical for this phase. The ridge along the front part of the lamps from the Early Phase is now missing. In House 8 we located two chunks of soapstone which had been crudely hollowed out and used as lamps. Pl. 15,b is a side fragment of a soapstone cooking vessel the bottom section of which appears to have been very thin compared to the sides. As in the Early Phase the evidence for cooking vessels were very scanty. An edge piece shown on Pl. 15,a has a longitudinal line ornament along the edge as well as one hole for attachment. It would appear that the general outline of the vessels have become more sharply rectangular and less curved than the earlier forms.

Bowls, etc.:

Plate 17,a shows the oval bottom of a bowl made from wood. A large bowl with sides and bottom made of wood was located in a trash pit outside House 8. The wooden rim had been lashed with baleen. Pl. 17,b is a thick rectangular piece of wood slightly wider in the centre with cut marks on one side, presumably having been used as a cutting board. Pl. 17,f is a very well carved wooden spoon from House 17.

Dolls and other toys:

Two human figures carved in wood were located. Pl. 18,e shows the upper part of the body attached to a long thin wooden shaft. The knob above the face may indicate hair style. Pl. 18,g is unfortunately a very deteriorated wooden specimen showing traces of the limit of a pointed frock. Pl. 18,d is a copy of a flintlock rifle carved in wood and of equal interest is a carving of a Euro-American style boat shown on Pl. 18,j.

## Euro-American Trade Goods.

Along with structural changes of the houses in this phase we have also entered a period when Euro-American contact is beginning to leave traces in the "material culture" of the Thule Eskimos in Saglek Bay. Plate 19 shows a variety of such material. As we have seen on other illustrations of artifacts for this phase iron has become an important source material for knife and harpoon blades as well as rivets. Use of the flintlock rifle is indicated not only by the toy

carving but also by the location of three gun flints, presumably English, as shown on Pl. 19,r.

The material was taken to the Rochester Museum and Science Centre in Rochester, New York, where Daniel M. Barber and Charles F. Hayes III, were kind enough to examine and identify many of the different pieces. One of the important points to elucidate was the approximate time-span during which the large communal houses had existed in this area. The analysis of the material could of course only be dealt with in terms of the very small sample. The ceramic pieces were considered to be mostly of English origin with a few French fragments showing up. Barber and Hayes felt that the ceramic collection, "containing fragments of creamware, pearlware, and stoneware could best support an A.D. 1770 to 1850 time span". The pipe stem sample, Pl. 19,i,j, is far from adequate for a good analysis. It should be noted however, that using the average stem bore diameter as a time period indicator, (Deetz 1967 : 41), we arrive at a time span of about A.D. 1750 to 1800. Both the knife, Pl. 19,l and the bottle fragment, Pl. 19,n were estimated to date somewhere around A.D. 1800. Two iron adzes were located in close proximity to House 12, they compare very closely with specimens illustrated by Quimby in a discussion on French trade goods in the Middle Historic Period A.D. 1670 to 1760 from the lower Mississipi Valley, (Quimby 1966 : 71).

Miscellaneous and unidentified objects.

A total of 56 objects remain unidentified. These consist

mainly of bone, baleen and wood fragments, as well as pieces of soapstone and slate. The remaining lithic inventory for this phase includes 122 pieces, mostly of Ramah chalcedony, of which 104 are waste-flakes. Typologically the remaining specimens have been classified as pre-Dorset (three), Dorset (eight) and seven biface fragments. As with the Early Phase, the pre-Dorset and Dorset specimens are probably intrusive.

PLATE 9.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Harpoon head, iron | N 10343 | Ik. 17 |
| b | " " antler & iron blade | N 10000 | Ik. 8 |
| c | ? | N 10606 | Ik. 5 |
| d | Trout needle, | N 10187 | Ik. 17 |
| e | " " bone | N 11237 | Ik. 17 |
| f | Harpoon foreshaft, bone (toy?) | N 10667 | Ik. 3 |
| g | " " whale bone | N 10086 | Ik. 8 |
| h | Bladder mouth piece, ivory | N 10351 | Ik. 17 |
| i | Harpoon foreshaft, whale bone | N 10369 | Ik. 17 |
| j | Bow tip fragment, wood | N 10327 | Ik. 17 |
| k | Toy bow, wood | N 11233 | Ik. 17 |
| l | Bladder mouth piece, wood | N 10546 | Ik. 18 |
| m | " " " " | N 10041 | Ik. 8 |
| n | " " " " | N 10325 | Ik. 17 |
| o | " " " " | N 10025 | Ik. 8 |

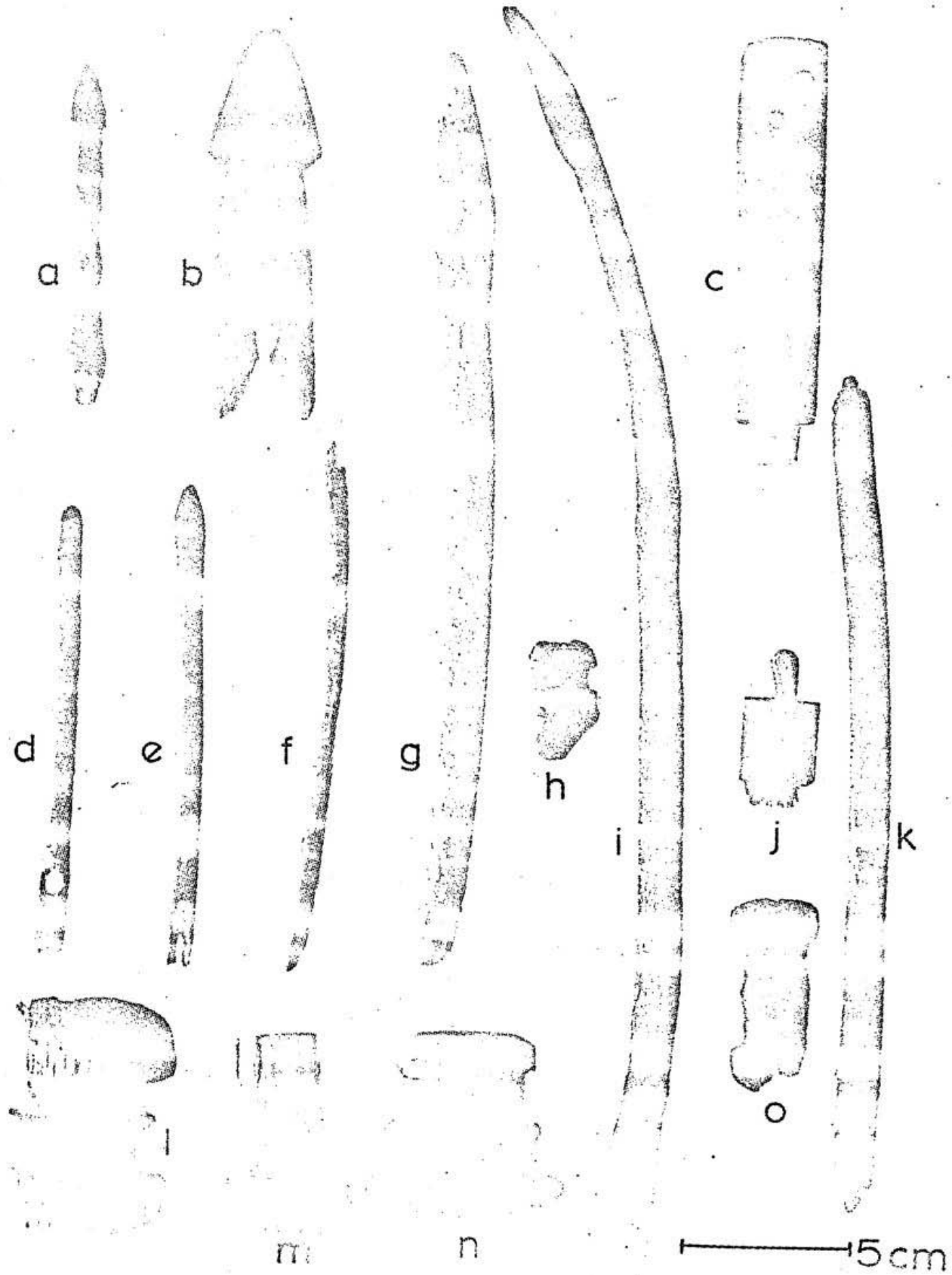
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PLATE 10.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Skin scraper, iron blade | N 11247 | Ik. 8 |
| b | Ulo, slate | N 10555 | Ik. 10 |
| c | Whetstone | N 10552 | Ik. 10 |
| d | Knife? iron | N 10344 | Ik. 17 |
| e | Knife blade, slate | N 10346 | Ik. 17 |
| f | Whetstone | N 10359 | Ik. 17 |
| g | Knife blade tip, slate | N 10590 | Ik. 17 |
| h | " " " " | N 10164 | Ik. 17 |
| i | Whetstone | N 10672 | Ik. 3 |
| j | " | N 10095 | Ik. 8 |
| k | Knife blade fragment, slate | N 10684 | Ik. 3 |
| l | Whetstone | N 10673 | Ik. 3 |

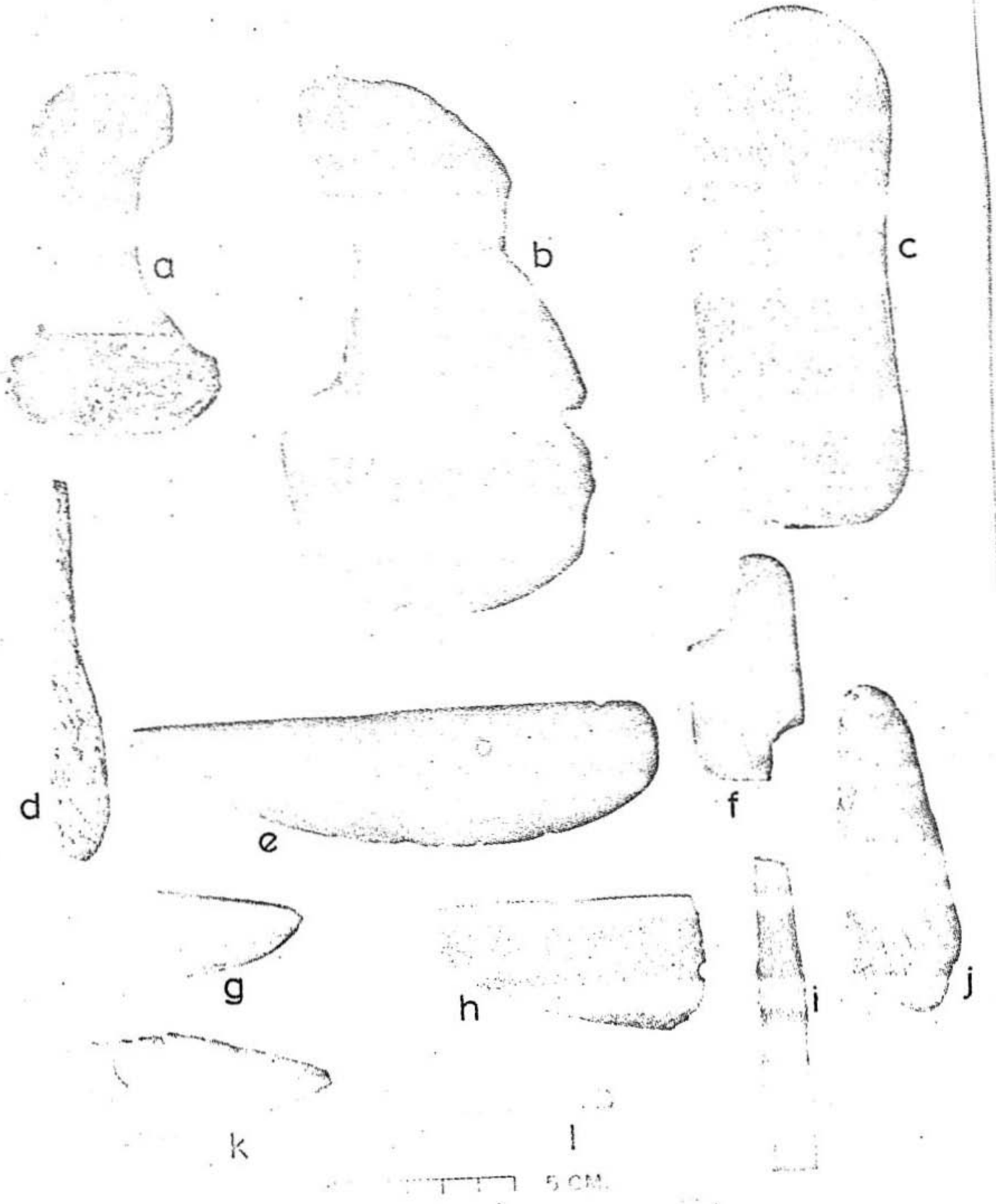
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PLATE 11.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Mattock head, whale bone | N 10010 | Ik. 8 |
| b | " " fragment, whale bone | N 10326 | Ik. 17 |
| c | " " " " " | N 10553 | Ik. 10 |
| d | " " whale bone | N 10002 | Ik. 8 |

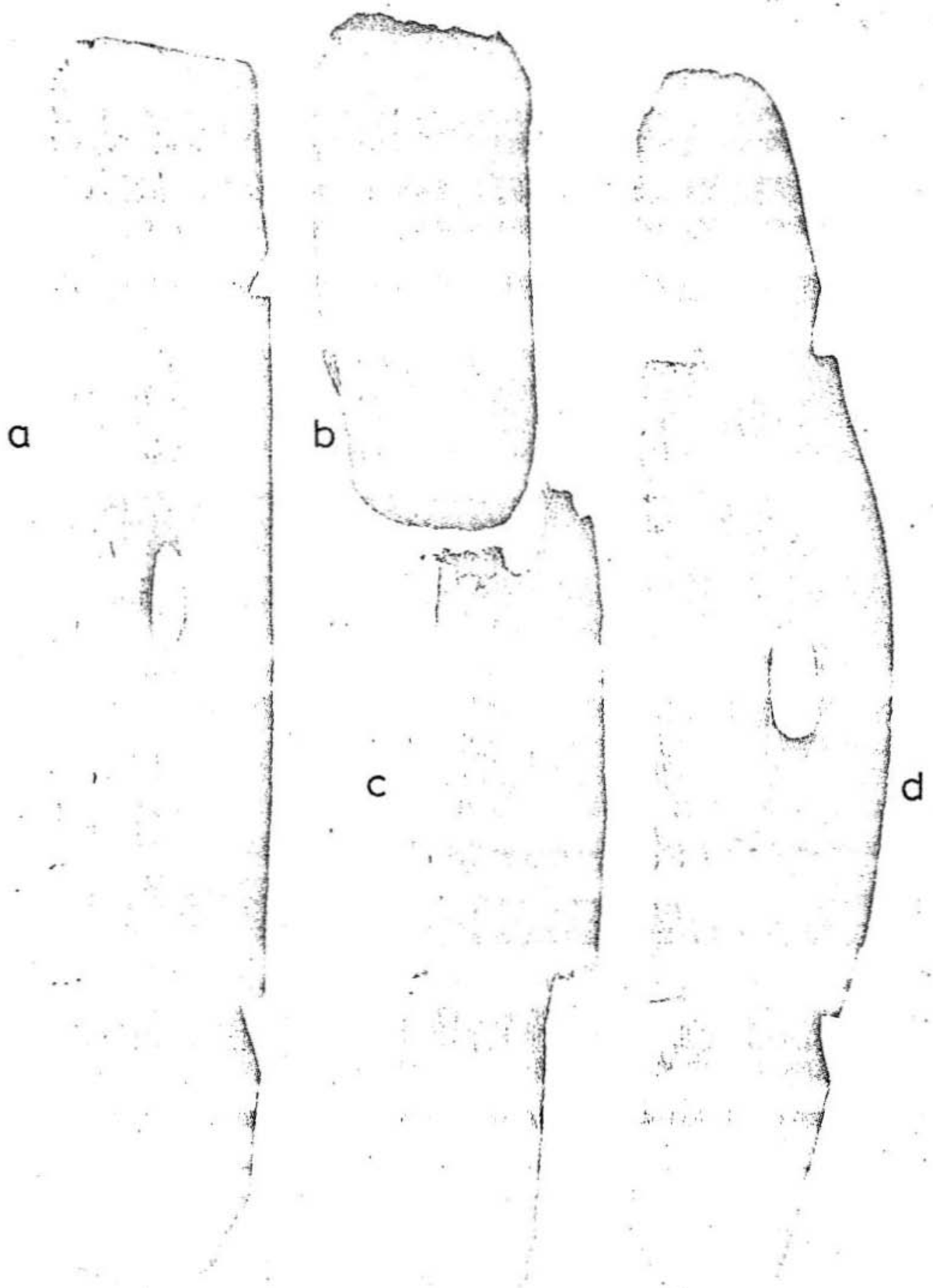
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PLATE 12.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Sled shoes, whale bone | N 10047 | Ik. 8 |
| b | " " " " | N 10366 | Ik. 17 |
| c | " " " " | N 10165 | Ik. 17 |
| d | " " " " | N 10549 | Ik. 18 |
| e | " " " " | N 10315 | Ik. 17 |
| f | " " " " | N 10063 | Ik. 8 |

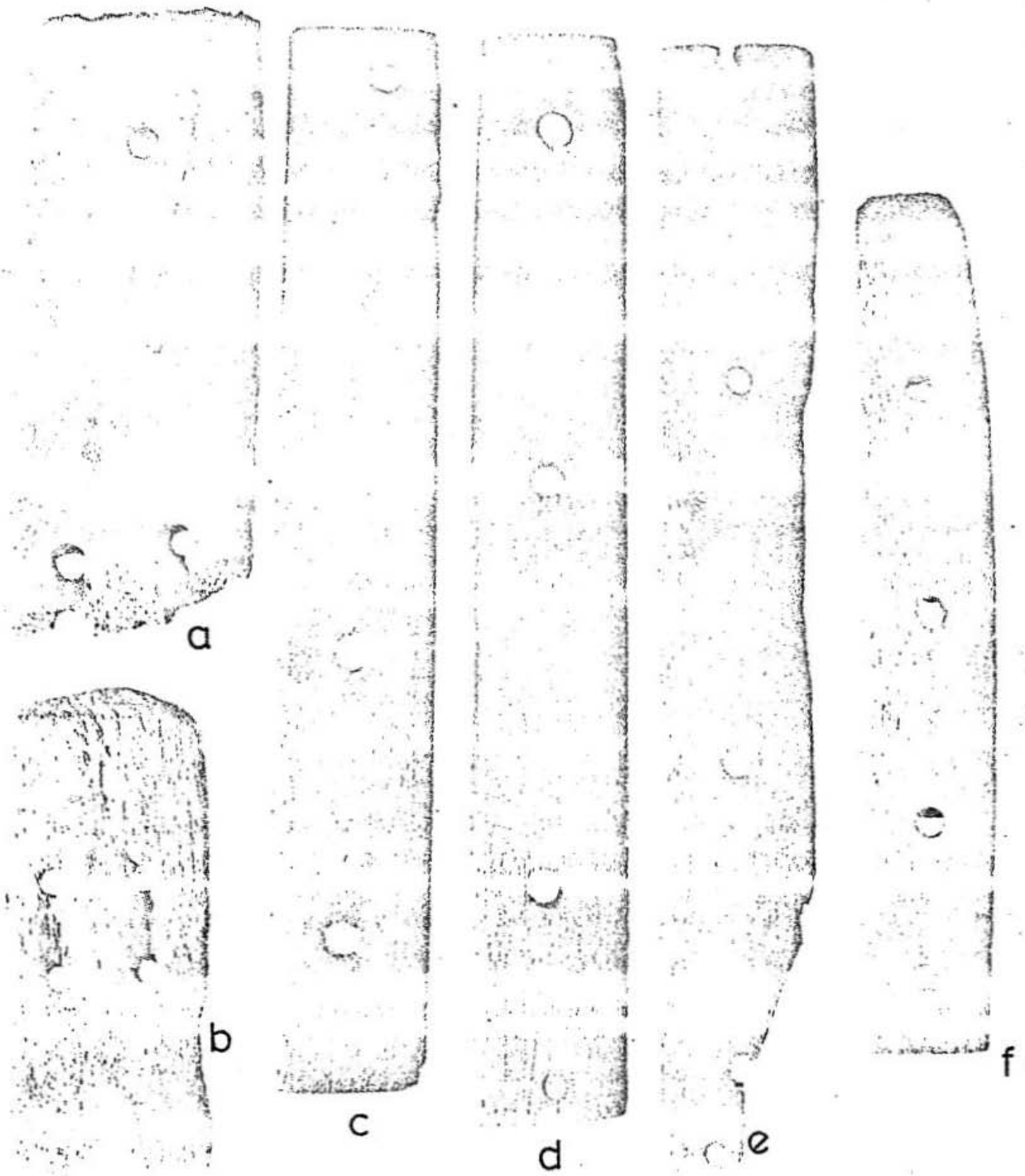
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PLATE 13.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Knife handle, whale bone | N 10544 | Ik. 18 |
| b | " " " " | N 10545 | Ik. 18 |
| c | " " " " | N 10271 | Ik. 17 |
| d | " " " " | N 10341 | Ik. 17 |
| e | " " " " | N 10048 | Ik. 8 |
| f | Ulo handle, whale bone | N 10261 | Ik. 17 |
| g | Knife, toy? wood | N 11235 | Ik. 17 |
| h | Handle? whale bone | N 10029 | Ik. 8 |
| i | Handle fragment, whale bone | N 11340 | Ik. 17 |
| j | Ulo handle, wood | N 10686 | Ik. 3 |
| k | Handle? wood | N 10299 | Ik. 17 |
| l | " " | N 10054 | Ik. 8 |

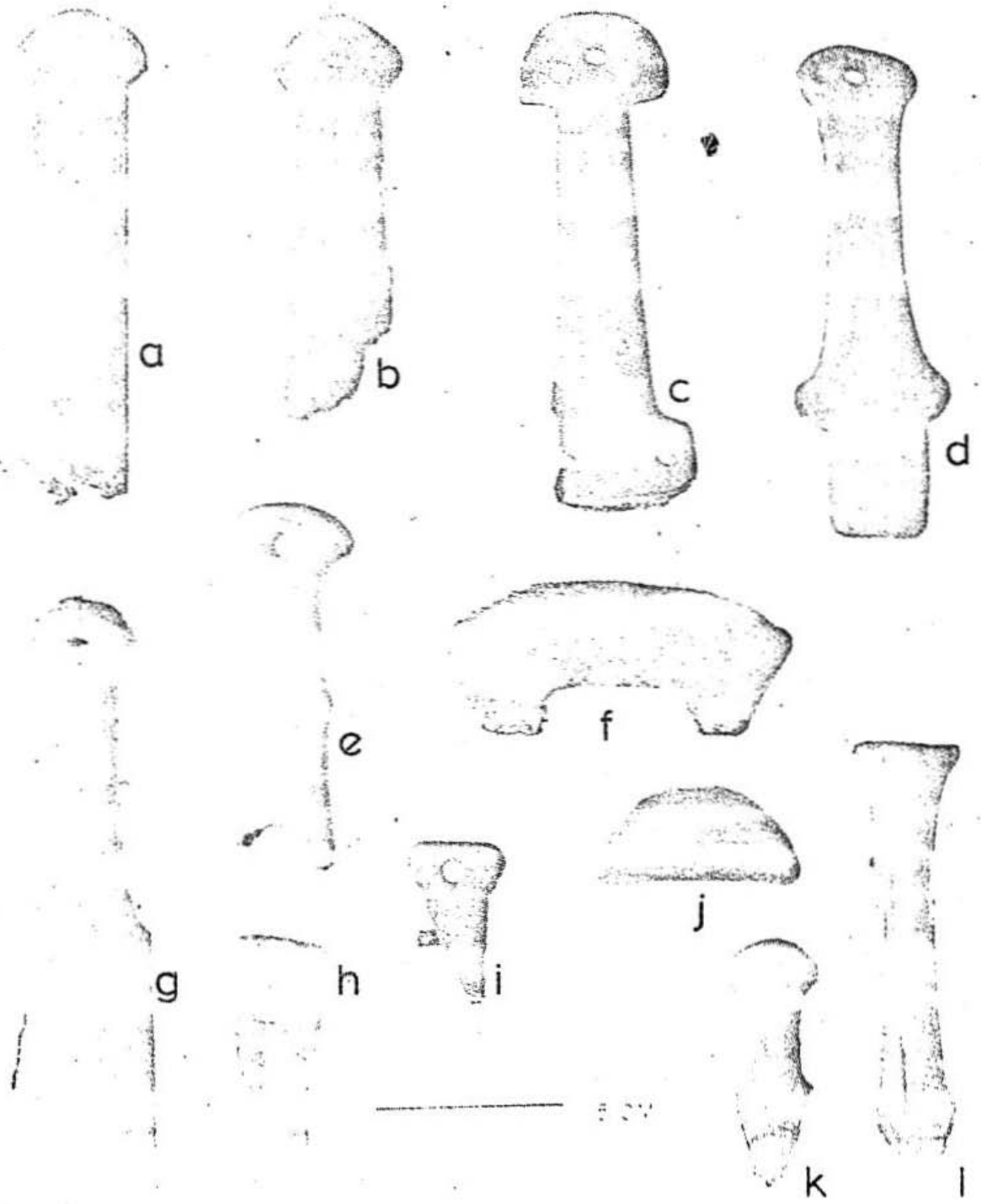
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PLATE 14.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Kayak paddle tip, whale bone | N 10136 | Ik. 17 |
| b | " " " " " | N 10550 | Ik. 18 |
| c | " " " " " | N 10013 | Ik. 8 |
| d | Trace buckle, whale bone | N 11238 | Ik. 17 |
| e | Kayak paddle tip edge fragment | N 10681 | Ik. 3 |
| f | Trace buckle, whale bone | N 11239 | Ik. 17 |
| g | " " " " | N 10080 | Ik. 8 |
| h | Drill mouthpiece, wood | N 10040 | Ik. 8 |
| i | " " " | N 10089 | Ik. 8 |
| j | ? , whale bone | N 10163 | Ik. 17 |
| k | Line tension piece? | N 10100 | Ik. 8 |
| l | " " " ? | N 10044 | Ik. 8 |
| m | " " " ? | M 10188 | Ik. 17 |
| n | Float plug, wood | N 10025 | Ik. 8 |
| o | Edge piece fragment, whale bone | N 10046 | Ik. 8 |

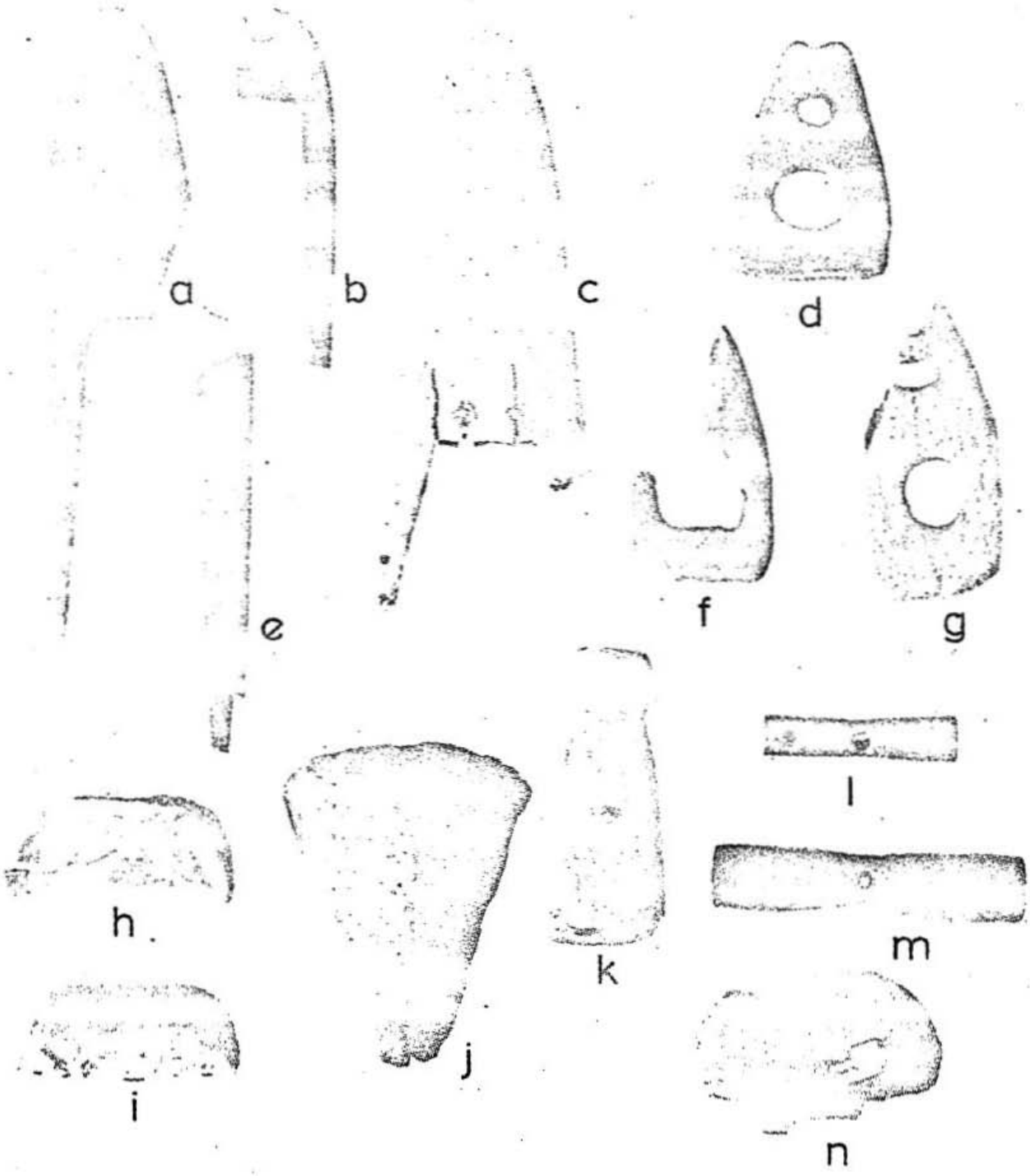
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PLATE 15.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Bowl edge fragment, soapstone | N 10663 | Ik. 12 |
| b | Cooking pot side fragment, soapstone | N 10062 | Ik. 8 |
| c | Lamp, in progress, soapstone | N 10543 | Ik. 8 |
| d | Toy bowl fragment, soapstone | N 10098 | Ik. 8 |
| e | " " " " | N 11341 | Ik. 8 |
| f | Lamp, soapstone | N 10037 | Ik. 8 |

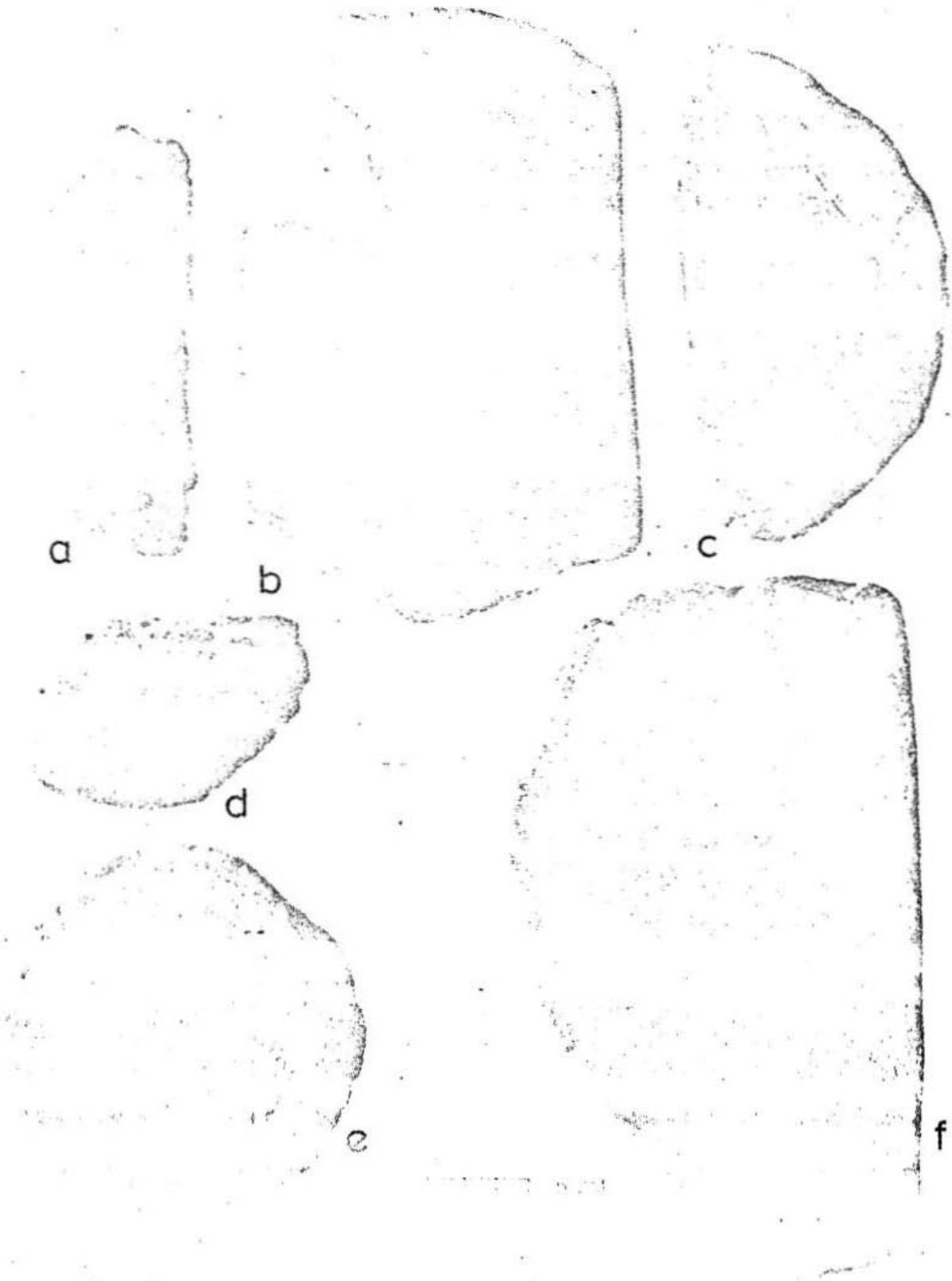
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PLATE 16.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Pegs, wood | N 10254 | Ik. 17 |
| b | " " | N 10132 | Ik. 17 |
| c | " " | N 10254 | Ik. 17 |
| d | ? | N 10368 | Ik. 17 |
| e | ? | N 10367 | Ik. 17 |
| f | Handle, wood | N 10339 | Ik. 17 |
| g | ? | N 10338 | Ik. 17 |
| h | Wound pin, wood | N 10284 | Ik. 17 |
| i | ? | N 11236 | Ik. 17 |
| j | Handle, wood | N 10599 | Ik. 5 |

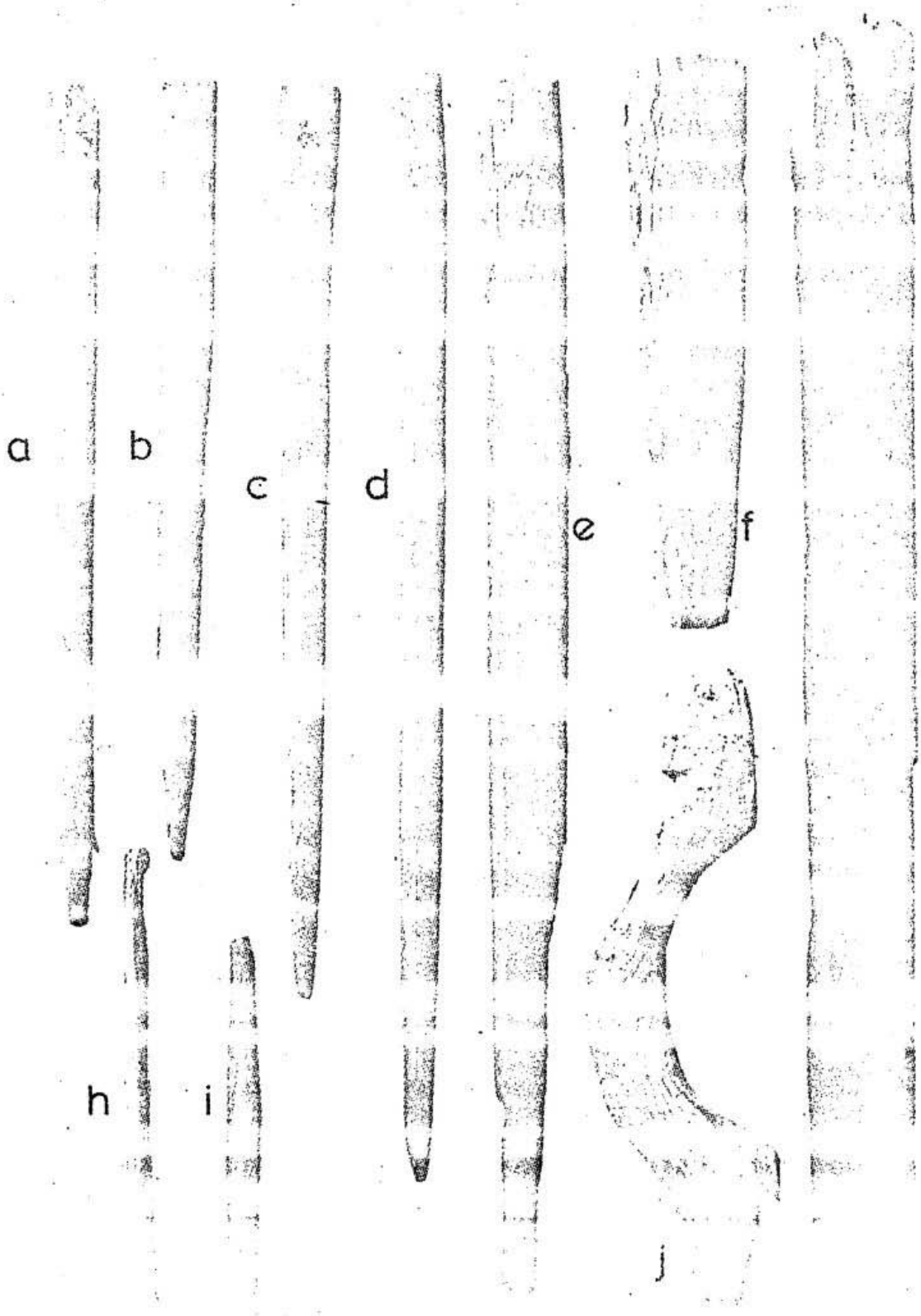
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PLATE 17.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Oval bowl bottom, wood | N 10150 | Ik. 17 |
| b | Cutting board? wood | N 10349 | Ik. 17 |
| c | Spoon, wood | N 10268 | Ik. 17 |
| d | Oval bowl bottom, toy? wood | N 10362 | Ik. 17 |
| e | Cutting board, toy? wood | N 10232 | Ik. 17 |
| f | Spoon, wood | N 10182 | Ik. 17 |


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PLATE 18.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Toy kayak, wood | N 10131 | Ik. 17 |
| b | " umiaq, wood | N 10151 | Ik. 17 |
| c | " knife, " | N 10176 | Ik. 17 |
| d | " rifle, " | N 11234 | Ik. 17 |
| e | " doll, " | N 10329 | Ik. 17 |
| f | Handle, wood | N 10688 | Ik. 3 |
| g | Toy Doll, wood | N 10327 | Ik. 17 |
| h | Ladle, toy? wood | N 10043 | Ik. 8 |
| i | ? | N 10335 | Ik. 17 |
| j | Toy ship, wood | N 11232 | Ik. 17 |
| k | " harpoon head, wood | N 10023 | Ik. 8 |
| l | " bowl, soapstone | N 10347 | Ik. 17 |
| m | Bead, wood | N 10345 | Ik. 17 |
| n | Ornamental piece, copper | N 10079 | Ik. 8 |
| o | Pendant, ivory | N 10019 | Ik. 8 |
| p | ? | N 10330 | Ik. 17 |
| q | Toy lamp, soapstone | N 10020 | Ik. 8 |
| r | " " " | N 11247 | Ik. 8 |
| s | Mica fragment | N 11342 | Ik. 8 |
| t | Toy lamp, soapstone | N 10356 | Ik. 17 |

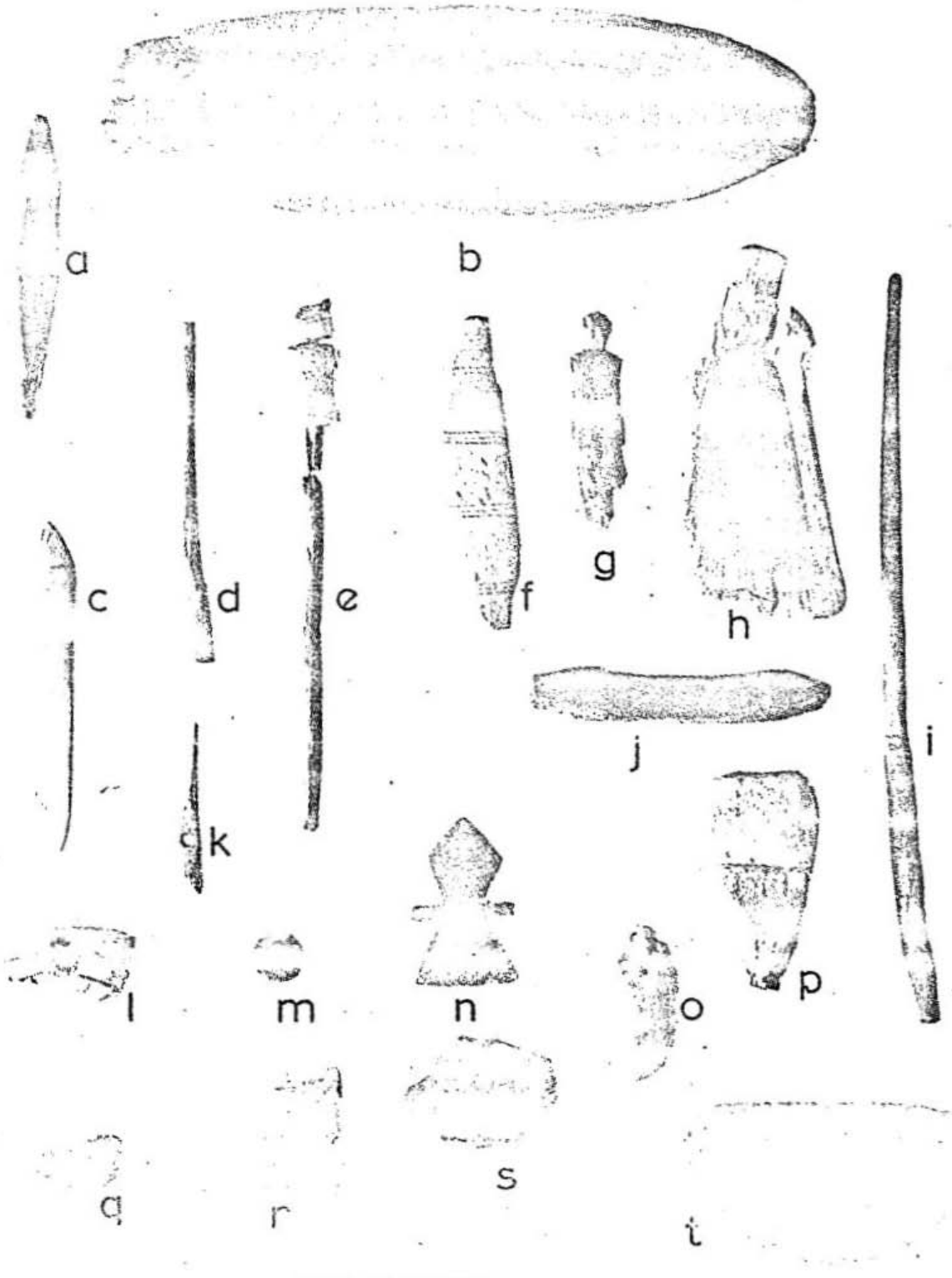
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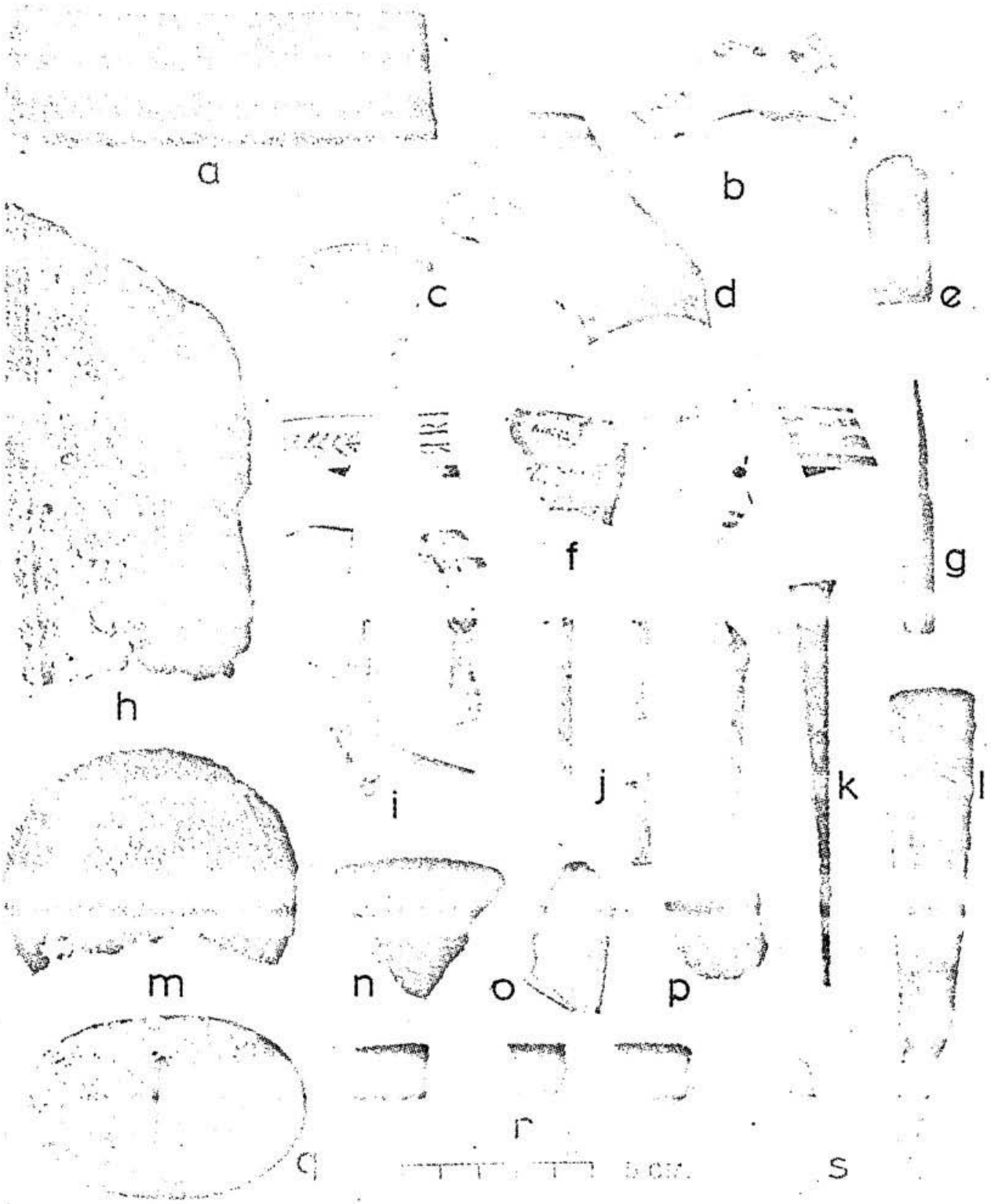
PLATE 19.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Iron band | N 10069 | Ik. 8 |
| b | Ceramic fragment | N 10595 | Ik. 5 |
| c | " " | N 10067 | Ik. 8 |
| d | Pottery fragment | N 10032 | Ik. 8 |
| e | File fragment | N 10591 | Ik. 5 |
| f | Ceramic fragments | N | Ik. |
| g | File, iron | N 10351 | Ik. 17 |
| h | Sheet metal | N 11246 | Ik. 8 |
| i | Kaolin pipe bowl fragment | N 10689 | Ik. 3 |
| j | " " stem fragments | N | Ik. |
| k | Handle inset, iron | N 10342 | Ik. 17 |
| l | Knife, bone handle, iron blade | N 10060 | Ik. 8 |
| m | Container bottom, iron | N 11249 | Ik. 12 |
| n | Bottle glass fragment | N 10677 | Ik. 3 |
| o | " " " | N 10665 | Ik. 3 |
| p | " " " | N 11243 | Ik. 8 |
| q | ? | N 10375 | Ik. 17 |
| r | Gun flints | | |
| s | Copper-band fragment? | N 10604 | Ik. 5 |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Summary.

The use of large rectangular sod, stone and whale bone houses inhabited by several families has been the main criterion for establishing this phase. The greatest dimension of each house is usually at right angles to the direction of the passage. The latter is probably in most cases lower than the level of the floor. A fairly distinct feature consists of lamp platforms projecting out from the sleeping platform into the floor area. The bulging front corner most noticeable in House 8 (Fig. 18), may have been a cooking area. The analysis of the artifacts indicates some changes from the Early Phase, mostly in style. Items of European manufacture were found in all of the house ruins but not in any great quantity. The approximate time span during which the communal houses were in use, A.D. 1770 - 1850, has been estimated from an analysis of the ceramics as mentioned earlier. Bird's Type III house from the Hopedale area no doubt belong to the Communal House Phase although the house plans seem less clearly developed in structural design (Bird 1945 : 133). A transition to large multi-family houses has been estimated by Bird (1945 : 179) to have occurred in the latter half of the eighteenth century, "when white contacts frequently were dangerous and perhaps provided a motive for banding more closely together".

Large plural family houses have been described by the Moravian Missionaries who established their first permanent settlement in Nain in 1771, the average number of inhabitants per house seems to have been about 20 (Kleivan 1966 : 26). A similar figure has been

postulated by Taylor (1968 : 45). The general information would then indicate the use of communal houses along most of the east coast of Labrador during the latter half of the eighteenth century. The use of snow houses during the winter, a development which probably came out of the central Arctic, was apparently advancing southeastward towards Labrador at this time. During his journey in 1773 Jens Haven was told that whereas there were five sod and stone winter houses at Killinek there was only one such structure in use at Kangiva on the east coast of Ungava Bay together with twenty snow houses. Further westward the snow house was the only type of winter dwelling (Hiller 1970 : pers. comm.). On August 30, 1860, Hall visited an Eskimo settlement in Frobisher Bay. Noticing the remains of an older settlement he was told that the Eskimos no longer built such dwellings (sod houses), and states that, "during the last few years Eskimos live almost entirely in Igloos - snow houses - during the winter season," (Hall 1865 : 107).

I strongly feel that the development and use of large communal houses in Saglek Bay must go back to A.D. 1700, if not earlier. Jens Haven's voyage of exploration mentioned above took him along the east coast of Labrador from Nain northward as far as Nachvak Bay. On August 25, the sloop had entered Saglek Bay and Jens Haven gives the following description:

> ".....I looked at their houses of which there are four on two islands very badly situated: for two lie on the N.W. corner of a high hill and have no sun in winter. The land has grass enough but so uneven and rocky that one can scarce walk along. The others stand on a low island about a league farther. There also is grass, dandelion and scurvy grass but it lay open to the sea and there is no harbour." (Haven 1773).

The description of the first two houses fits perfectly with Upernavik Island where they must have been located (Fig. 3). Although we did not locate any large house ruins there, several sections of sod walls indicated that such structures probably had existed. Sod robbing had been very extensive by later inhabitants of the site. The other two houses must have been located at the Ikkusik site (Fig. 3), and were quite possibly tested during our work there. The same report by Haven further states that there were not above 100 inhabitants at Saglek Bay.

It is unlikely that the communal houses had just appeared in 1773. Haven's description of his dealings with the Eskimos certainly leaves the impression that trading baleen for other goods was an expected and usual event. European contact increased in intensity in southern Labrador and Newfoundland around the middle of the sixteenth century with the arrival of Portuguese and French fishing vessels (Kleivan 1966 : 20). Eskimo raids were common and goods of European manufacture probably began to trickle north along the coast about this time. We also know that the Mission at Nain was "forced" to stock flints, powder and shot by 1787 in order to try to prevent the Eskimos from venturing south to trade (Hiller 1967 : 137). Hiller states that in 1764 as many as 18 boats went south to rob the Europeans in the Strait of Belle Isle, "furnishing the whole coast of Labrador as far as Hudson Bay, not only with iron ware but boats, sails, anchors and rope, etc., .... in 1760 European goods must already have been familiar in the northernmost Labrador" (Hiller 1967 : 31). I would think that the above was the case even earlier than 1760 and feel that

communal houses were in use at least as early as A.D. 1700 in Saglek Bay and perhaps even earlier.

Turning to a discussion of how and why the use of communal houses developed it may be interesting to compare events in Labrador with those in Greenland. From Mathiassen's work in Greenland during the 1930's it became evident that the large communal houses came into use sometime after the arrival of European whalers (Mathiassen 1934 : 173). An approximate time span from the beginning of the 17th century to the late 19th century has been suggested by Holtved as the period of communal-house use (Holtved 1944 : 104). Evidence indicates that the area around Disco Bay in northwest Greenland may have been the centre of origin (Hjarnø pers. comm.). From this we may assume that the use of large communal houses began earlier in Greenland than in Labrador. In both areas European contact appears to have preceded the development whether or not that has any direct relation to the matter.

Several theories have been forwarded concerning the origin of the communal houses. Thalbitzer (1914) suggested a relationship and influence of Norse architecture although a considerable time gap between the communal houses and the earlier Norse settlement period seems to argue against this hypothesis. Returning to any influence from later European contact, the idea of a banding together because of fear was mentioned by Bird (1945 : 179) although Mathiassen had earlier dismissed this idea because he felt that the settlements were more scattered during this time than before (Mathiassen 1931 : 129). His subsequent suggestion that the communal houses originally were copies of European type houses, built perhaps by whalers, cannot be

supported.

From observations in Saglek Bay there does not seem to be any indication of a scattering of the settlements. The number of people observed by Jens Haven in 1773 does not seem unreasonably high or low. The major change from earlier times is that they occupied only four large houses. One gets the general impression that there may have been a slight increase in the population of Saglek Bay. I would estimate that a hundred people or so would correspond to an earlier type winter settlement containing about fourteen family-unit dwellings. This figure is based on an average of 7.5 people per spring camp, as estimated by Taylor (1968 : 45). Holm (1885 : 66) has described a communal house from Angmagssalik in Greenland which had a total number of 38 inhabitants including three children born after the original count was made. In the same description he states that the inhabitants lived in five tents during the summer, which would also indicate an average spring camp population of about seven. The comparatively low number of early houses located could be attributed to the destruction of these features by later inhabitants, perhaps coinciding with a slightly lower population density.

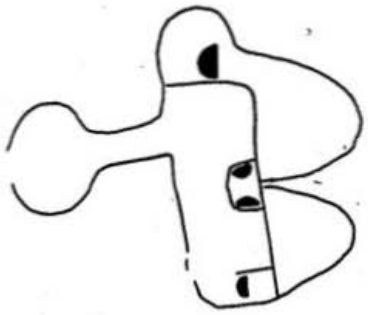
I regard the presence of European whalers as incidental to communal house development among Thule Eskimos. We must keep in mind that the use of communal houses among Eskimo populations pre-dates the Thule culture. The Choris people lived in very large communal houses as early as 1,000 B.C. (Giddings 1967 : 68). There is further evidence to indicate the use of such large structures by the Dorset Eskimos in Ungava Bay (Plumet 1969). It might be more useful to investigate two

other hypotheses concerning the origin of the Thule culture communal houses.

Various forms of Thule Eskimos winter houses have often shown a tendency towards communal aggregation indicating that socially there may always have been a trend toward communal houses. Steensby was an early proponent of this hypothesis and developed the idea partly from drawings made by an Eskimo woman showing a two-family house with a common floor space and passage. Two side platforms have joined to form a small central platform standing out from the dividing walls between the main platforms (Steensby 1910 : 323). A tracing of this drawing and a sketch by Holm of a large communal house which he found in use at Angmagssalik in 1884 (Holm 1885 : 66) appear here as Figure 26. Steensby (1910 :324) states:

> "A house-type such as shown on Fig. 15, which is intended for two families, each having a separate main platform and considerably more space than if they shared a simple, single house, has arisen as the expression of the Eskimo tendency to crowd together a tendency which is binding both in sociological and psychological regards. As soon as the Eskimos can obtain the driftwood, they have been able to satisfy this and thus, on the basis of the known house-type built the long house with a single, long, main platform, on which each family has its 'berth' or division separated at the sides only by hanging skin."

Holtved (1944 : 103), has pointed out that the angular compound houses in the Thule District have platforms which in most cases form a right angle to each other whereas in west Greenland the platforms are in line as shown on Steensby's illustration. Holtved (1944: 103) states further:



Drawing from Steensby (1910:Fig.15)

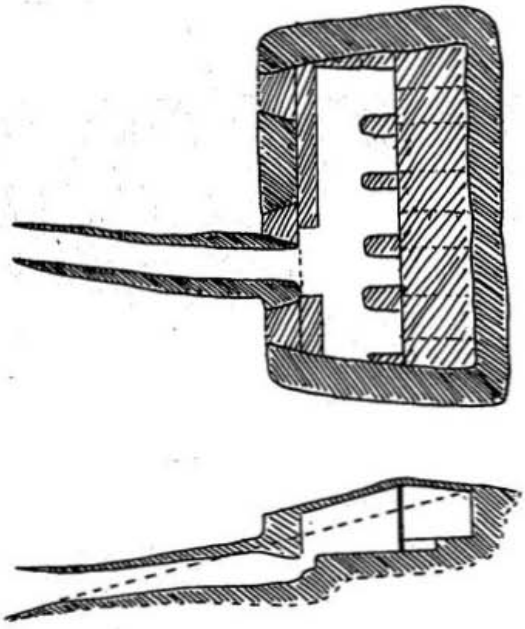


Figure 26 - sketch of Angmagssalik house

> "The transition from these parallel houses to the oblong communal houses seems natural once they have assumed the four-sided form, as of course only the partition needs removing; and the possibility of constructing the roof in one lies in the easier access to driftwood. Thus both the shape and the principle of the oblong, foursided communal house was already latent in the earliest houses of the Inugsuk period. The advantages of it are obvious, from a technical point of view, as it means a great saving in both material and labor to be content with a house of simple form instead of quite a row of small houses. Besides this, however, social considerations may have played some role."

Patterson has stated that, "the origin of the large communal house is intimately connected with the conditions prevalent in subarctic regions," (Patterson 1939 : 74). The availability of building material is no doubt of significance in order to support a large roof structure. House 8 at the Ikkusik site in Saglek Bay produced several large sections of timber which had either been obtained further south or selected from driftwood. In addition we located several sections of whale bone which had been notched and perforated for lashing most probably with baleen. We know that the Thule Eskimos did not live in large communal houses in the early period neither in Greenland nor in Labrador. If we accept the theory that the communal house is an eastern Arctic, <u>in situ</u> development beginning in west Greenland, we are still faced with the question of why there was a selection for this structure. If there was a latent tendency for this development we might ask why it did not manifest itself earlier while the Thule Eskimos inhabited the same region several hundred years prior. I have already alluded to the possible connection between climatic fluctuations and changing cultural patterns. Returning to the climatic

episodes discussed earlier (Chapter I) it is apparent that the time span for the communal house development took place in the cold period of the Neo-Boreal (A.D. 1550 to 1850). Whereas this is a rather general overall trend, we have more specific illustrations of climatic fluctuations. In 1966 the United States Army Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory managed to take a 1,400 meter long core of ice at Camp Century near Thule, Greenland. The core yielded evidence for climatic changes over the last 100,000 years. Of specific interest to this discussion is the fact that the time span approximately between A.D. 1600 and 1730 was a period of prolonged cold (Dansgaard 1970 : Fig. 3). Robert Petersen (1970 : pers. comm.)has recently forwarded an interesting hypothesis relating the communal house development to a decline in whaling. Realizing that whaling was probably never of sole importance to the Thule Eskimo economy it nevertheless provided a very adequate share of provisions for each member of the settlement. In times of plenty there would be little incentive to congregate in large houses except for special occasions when people would get together in the Kazghee, or communal festival house (Hughes 1958 : 371). With a decline in whaling and an increasing dependence on seal hunting the less fortunate family household would likely experience more frequent food shortages as well as problems in obtaining an adequate supply of fuel for cooking and heat. Sharing practises among the Eskimos would indicate that the larger the game species the smaller the problems of sharing. According to Weyer (1962 : 176) "the extent of the distribution depends to a great degree naturally upon the size of the animal .... whales, for instance, are commonly divided among all

members of the community ..... in the case of smaller seals, however, the same rules are not followed." Nansen (1894 : 113) states that, "there are only a few sorts of animals which he (the hunter) can keep pretty well to himself and his family. To these belong the Greenland seal." The communal household would facilitate a greater equality of sharing as Hughes (1958 : 372) points out, "all meals in such a house are always shared in by all, even a larger seal does not go very far when it is brought home." Fuel could also be economized if necessary in one large house and it is possible that the change in settlement pattern from single to multi-family houses coincide with difficult times. As Weyer (1962 : 184) indicates, "especially in time of stress or scarcity the Eskimos are apt to resort to communalism." While this is obviously not the sole reason for the development of communal houses the sharing patterns facilitated by dwelling in a single house are clearly of adaptive significance.

Vibe (1967 : 88) states, "Around 1600 an alteration in the climate created heavy concentration of ice north of Baffin Bay and north of Spitzbergen. The Baffin Bay was still open for ships in 1616 when Baffin discovered it. When the ice began to advance southward it was closed. In the years 1616-1718 very few whaling ships visited Davis Strait." The above mentioned circumstances may have created a situation in which the Eskimos could no longer depend with any degree of certainty on the availability of the whale.

The interaction of several factors may provide a probable hypothesis for the communal house development. The latent tendency for the Thule Eskimos to establish multi-family households (Steensby

1916 : 324), together with easier access to driftwood and savings in material and labor (Holtved 1944 : 103), found primarily in the near subarctic regions (Patterson 1939 : 74), served as the foundation for the development of the communal houses. Climatic fluctuations and worsening ice conditions decreased the probability of catching whales which in turn upset the economic stability of the Eskimo community (Petersen 1970 : pers. comm.). Stabilizing the economic situation and sharing practices became a selective mechanism for the use of the large communal houses.

There remains the question of the communal houses in Saglek Bay and the striking similarity between House 8 at the Ikkusik site and the house from Angmagsalik in Greenland. It would appear that the house style is earliest in Greenland although not by very much. Diffusion is unlikely considering the enormous distance by land and the short time span separating the respective developments. In addition there are no signs of communal houses of this type in northern Greenland and Baffin Island to my knowledge. A diffusion via European whalers cannot be dismissed but seems a bit unlikely and would somehow presuppose that Greenlandic Eskimos were working on whaling ships and subsequently transmitting the idea upon landfall along the Labrador coast. Independent parallel evolution is a possibility if the interacting factors followed a fairly similar pattern in Labrador. Needless to say we need more information through further research in order to throw more light on this aspect.

# CHAPTER V

## LATE PHASE: A.D. 1850 to PRESENT

### Introduction:

As with the two preceding phases this section will also deal with one major aspect rather than the total time span indicated. In the Communal House Phase introduction of Euro-American articles of manufacture was becoming evident, although the overall "material culture" had not been drastically changed.

The Late Phase signifies a time period leading to the present when the artifact complex of the Thule Eskimos has been almost completely dominated by Euro-American manufactured articles. The establishment of the Moravian Mission in Hebron in 1830 is seen as a new major influence on the Eskimos in Saglek Bay. In 1848 the missionaries in Hebron, "refused to allow heathens to remain in Saglek which they (the missionaries) regard as a sealing place solely for Eskimos residing in Hebron, (Kleivan 1966 : 151). It is hard to guess how strongly this policy was enforced. Certainly many of the house ruins tested for this phase had been winter houses. Eskimos to the north and as far away as Ungava Bay were known to travel back and forth to Saglek and could have established temporary residence in the bay from time to time. It is interesting to note that the mission at Hebron must have felt its policy difficult to enforce according to an 1866 entry in the mission diary which reads as follows:

> "In order to retain firm footing in Saglek on account both of it's importance to our people as a fishing-ground, and ... as a point of contact with

> the yet remaining heathen in the north, we sent...
> ..... a small house ..... (Kleivan 1966 : 157).

This small outpost was only maintained for one year when the Hudson's Bay Company established Lampson in Saglek Bay as part of their competition against the Moravian Mission. The post was open for eleven years between 1867 and 1877 (Elton 1942 : 487). It has not been possible to locate any remains of either of these two outposts or gain information as to their precise location.

A large number of ceramic pieces obtained from house ruins and fish camps representative of this phase were studied at the Rochester Museum and Science Center. Without any knowledge of the establishment of the Hebron Mission, Daniel Barber and Charles Hayes estimated the time span of the ceramics to range between 1830 and 1920.

In sharp contrast to the preceding phases, none of the houses belonging to the Late Phase were located on the Ikkusik site. This fact is of some interest with regard to the ecological orientation of the Eskimos. Before contact and even when this was only of a secondary, possibly diffused, nature, the location of a winter settlement facilitated exploitation of several environmental resources. Closeness to the sina (or floe edge), as mentioned earlier, was important. The availability of suitable land containing the elements needed for house construction was important. The Ikkusik site was the best location for a winter settlement in Saglek Bay considering the alternatives. The large number of tent rings indicates that the island as a whole was also very well suited as a place to live during the spring and part of the summer. The fact that we counted over 150 seals on the

pack ice one morning in early July attests to the suitable location of this island. The Ikkusik site did not have a protected harbour. This fact would have been of little concern considering the season during which the site was occupied since boats were not in use. The fact that all the Late Phase houses on Rose Island are located at the Tuglavina site (Fig. 3), may indicate that a more protective harbour was important at this time, hence the possibility that the site was occupied during part of the summer as well as the winter.

## Description of the excavated house ruins.

### House 5:

This very recent house was located at the Tuglavina site (Fig. 4). The structure had been built out of sod and stone although the use of stone had been very limited. The roof must have been supported by a combination of timber and whale bone and probably covered with sod. The main structure was square in outline measuring approximately 16 feet by 14 feet and appeared to have a small alcove in the southwest corner (Fig. 27). The entrance passage faced southeast and had a sand floor with side walls constructed out of sod, stone and whale vertebra sections. The passage roof appeared to have been supported primarily with whale bone. A small (five feet by six feet) storage room was situated on the left side of the entrance to the house. The room had a flagged floor and two of the side walls were lined with upright rock slabs. The floor of the house had been constructed from wooden boards although the fire which destroyed the

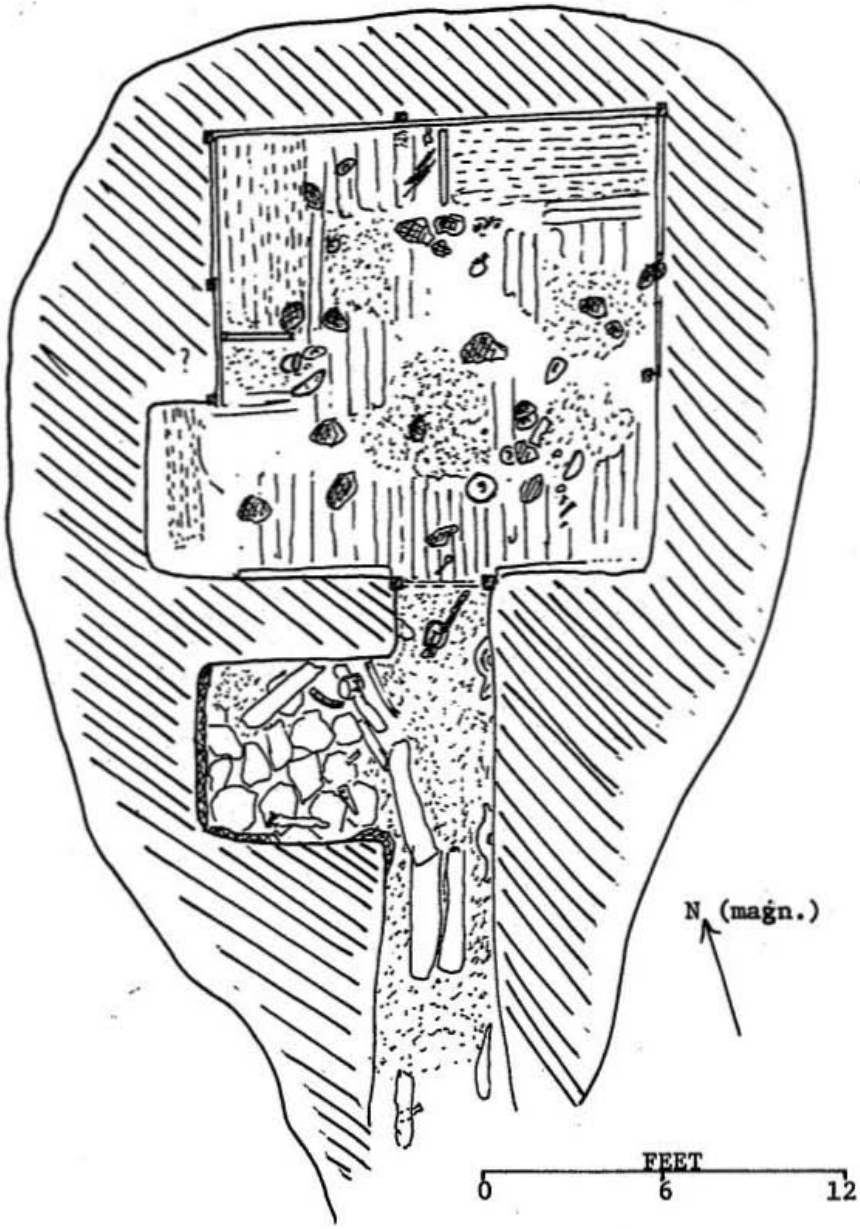



Figure 27 - House 5, Tuglavina site

dwelling made it difficult to assess whether the whole floor had been covered originally. Charred remains indicated that the outline of the room had been framed with upright boards. What appeared to be straw-filled mattresses were located in three areas together with pieces of cloth and charred pages of a bible written in Eskimo. The bible may have been printed in Germany since, for instance, the letter "j" represents a "y" sound. The floor was littered with pots, lids, nails, bullet casings, files of various sizes and shapes, bullet molds and lead ingots, needles, watches and a clock as well as numerous other articles. Two coins were located, the latest of which was a Large Cent from Newfoundland dated 1907. The other was a Canadian One Cent piece dated 1887.

Miscellaneous Houses:

Characteristic of this phase is the appearance of small family unit dwellings in the inner fjord zone as well as a few similar structures on the outermost island. Three such structures are illustrated all from the Nakvak Brook site (Fig. 2). In general the walls are built up with sod about three feet in height originally supporting a wooden frame covered with canvas for the roof. The floors were covered with sand or gravel and sleeping platform arrangements could in most cases be noted. The house features at Nakvak Brook were obviously associated with the seasonal pursuit of the arctic char and artifacts contained in them indicated an early to mid-20th century occupation period. One Eskimo family from Nain had their fishing camp on the opposite shore of the Nakvak Brook site and told us that they

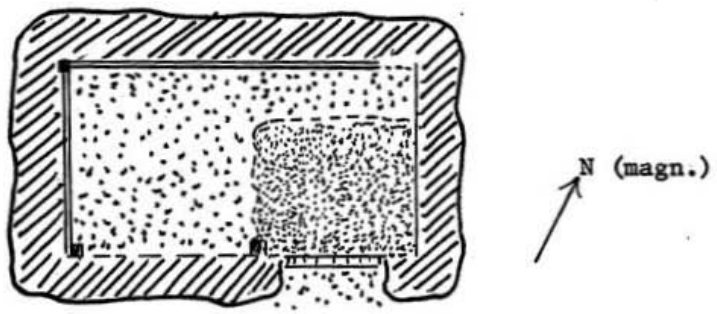



Figure 28,a - House I , Nakvak Brook

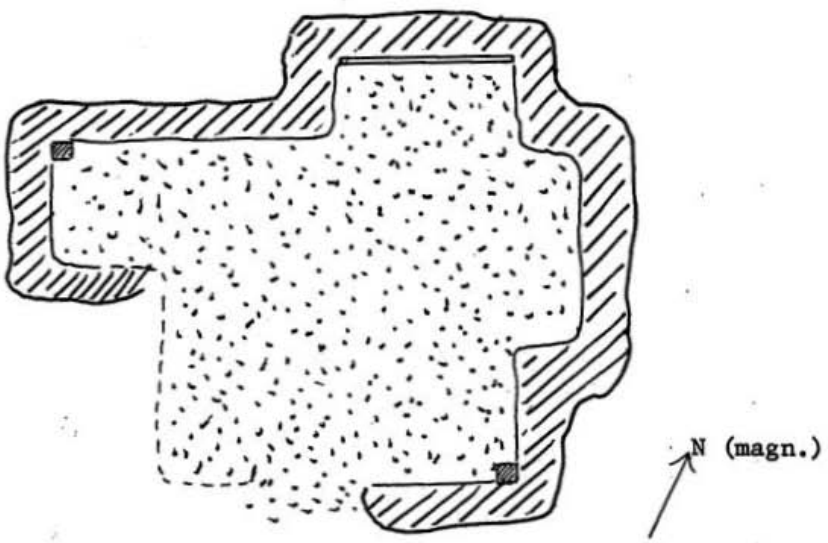



Figure 28,b- House 2 ,Nakvak Brook

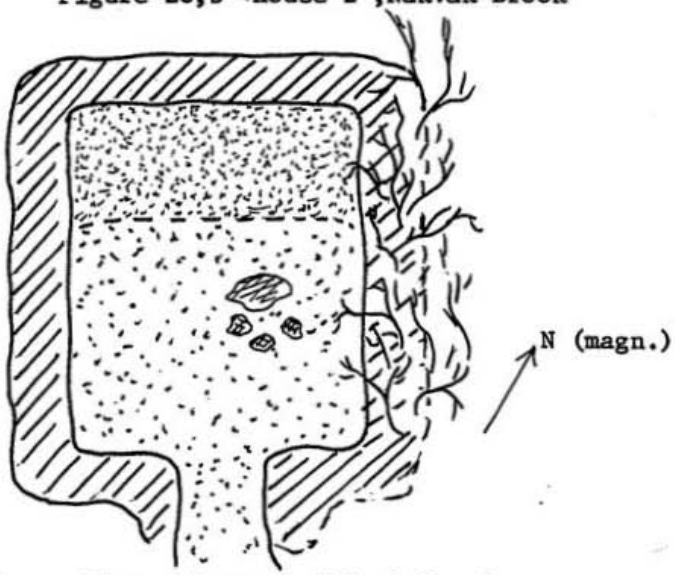



Figure 28,c - House 3, Nakvak Brook

had in fact originally built and lived in House 3 (Fig. 28,c).

## Description of the objects found.

Most of the items illustrated on the following plates are easily identified and represent a heavy infusion of Euro-American material goods. The artifacts represent a cross-section of material found throughout the Saglek Bay area in houses and other structural features belonging to the Late Phase. In addition a large amount of ceramic pieces were obtained presently on loan to the Rochester Museum and Science Center.

## Hunting Implements.

### Rifles:

A few rusty gun barrels and a carved piece of a gun stock were found but the best evidence for the use of rifles came in the form of cartridge casings of which 126 were located. Pl. 20,a to m, show a series of different casings found in various house ruins. The following can be identified: Pl.20,b inscribed "KYNOCH BIRMINGHAM 16", a 16 gauge shotgun shell; Pl.20,d inscribed "W R A co 44 W C F"; Pl. 20,f inscribed "40 65 W C F W R A co."; Pl.20,g inscribed "32 40 W R A co."; Pl.20,h inscribed "W R A co 30 W C F"; Pl.20,i inscribed "250 SAV DC co."; Pl.20,j inscribed "300 SAV DOMINION"; Pl.20,k inscribed "WCF 30"; Pl.20,l inscribed "22 WCF WRA co"; and Pl.20,m inscribed "WRA co 45-70".

Fishhooks:

Three iron fishhooks were located. Pl. 23,g shows a typical hook for jigging.

Harpoon Foreshaft:

Plate 23,f shows the only fragment found of a foreshaft. The specimen has two holes for attachment at the butt end, and is made from whale bone.

Bow:

One wooden fragment of a bow tip was found with shallow notches at the tip for string attachment.

## Transportation.

Sled shoes:

With the exception of a few fragments, the sled shoes for this phase are all made of iron. Pl.23,b,d are typical examples. It is interesting to note that the width of the iron sled shoes is about the same as the width of the older whale bone variety. From personal observation in Nain it would appear that the present day sled shoes have become somewhat wider.

Boats:

Plank nails and painted wooden boards coupled with a relative decrease in kayak paddles and parts suggest the use of wooden boats. An assortment of nails can be seen on Pl. 22. As might be expected the transition from kayaks and umiaqs to wooden boats was later in

this area than further south. In 1862 46 kayaks and 6 umiaqs were still in use in Hebron and the last kayak was seen in use there as late as 1955 (Kleivan 1966 : 46).

## Tools.

Knives, axes, etc.:

Plate 21 shows a few of the typical cutting tools for this phase. Pl. 21,d is a common pocket knife with the blade extended. The ulo, Pl. 21,b is of the modern variety with an iron blade and wooden handle. The iron adze, Pl. 21,g has replaced the whale bone mattock.

Reloading Tools:

The introduction of the rifle brought with it a number of articles necessary for its use. Once the rifle was introduced the mission fought a losing battle with their early insistence against providing ammunition as well as rifles. To make one's own ammunition is far from easy and requires very special tools. Nevertheless the practice of reloading has been widespread at least until the late 1940's (Freeman : pers. comm.). Evidence from Saglek Bay indicates that reloading was practiced at least in the later houses dating around the turn of the century. Pl. 20,o,p,q show three bullet molds. Pl. 20,n is a lead ingot of which four were located.

Sharpening Tools:

Whetstones are still present in this phase but probably were used for the most part to put the final sharp edge on a knife blade.

The iron file Pl. 22,a,c,h, has become the major tool for grinding and sharpening, as the use of slate had almost ceased. A total of 13 files were located.

## Household Utensils.

### Lamps and Cooking Pots:

The use of soapstone lamps for heating and illumination gradually stopped during the late phase in favour of the iron wood stove and the kerosene lamp. Cast iron pots and pans replaced the use of the old soapstone vessels. Pl. 24,a shows a rectangular soapstone lamp found in House 5 on the Tuglavina site. The lamp has no doubt been robbed from a grave and shows the typical "kill" feature of a hole through the centre.

## Miscellaneous and unidentified objects.

In addition to the ceramic pieces 12 kaolin pipe stem fragments were located. Tin cups and bowls as well as lids for cast iron pots were common. A large iron trap was located at the entrance to House 5 at the Tuglavina site. Parts of an old phonograph record as well as a section of the phonograph arm were located at the Upernavik site. Two coins were located in House 5 at the Tuglavina site. Pl. 26,j shows a Newfoundland One Cent piece dated 1907, and Pl. 26,k a Canadian One Cent piece dated 1887. Several bottles were located. Pl. 25,b is a "MINARD'S LINIMENT" bottle from Upernavik Island. Pl. 25,d is a bottle from "THE SINGER MANFC. CO", located in House 5 at

the Tuglavina site. A total of 27 pieces remain unidentified consisting mostly of iron and wood fragments. A total of 301 pieces of lithic material were located, mostly Ramah chalcedony. Typologically the material has been classified as pre-Dorset (two specimens), Dorset (five specimens), waste flakes (288 pieces), and six biface fragments.

## Plates.

The following plates illustrate the objects with a list of their catalogue numbers and place of finding. The place of finding is denoted by the following abbreviations: Ik (Ikkusik site), Tug. (Tuglavina site), Uper. (Upernavik Island site), Nakv. (Nakvak Brook site), Big Is. (Big Island site), and, Bran. Is. (Branigan Island site).

PLATE 20.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | Cartridge casing | N 10891 | Tug. | 9. |
| b | " " | N 11092A | " | 5. |
| c | " " | N 11253 | " | 4. |
| d | " " | N 11090A | " | 5. |
| e | " " | N 10850 | " | 7. |
| f | " " | N 11070 | Uper. | 5. |
| g | " " | N 10730 | Big Is. | 1. |
| h | " " | N 11129 | Tug. | 5. |
| i | " " | N 10744 | Nakv. Br. | 1. |
| j | " " | N 10752 | " " | 1. |
| k | " " | N 11062 | Uper. | 5. |
| l | " " | N 11183 | Tug. | 5. |
| m | " " | N 11091A | Tug. | 5. |
| n | Lead ingot | N 11098 | " | 5. |
| o | Bullet mold | N 11102 | " | 5. |
| p | " " | N 11137 | " | 5. |
| q | " " | N 11223 | " | 5. |

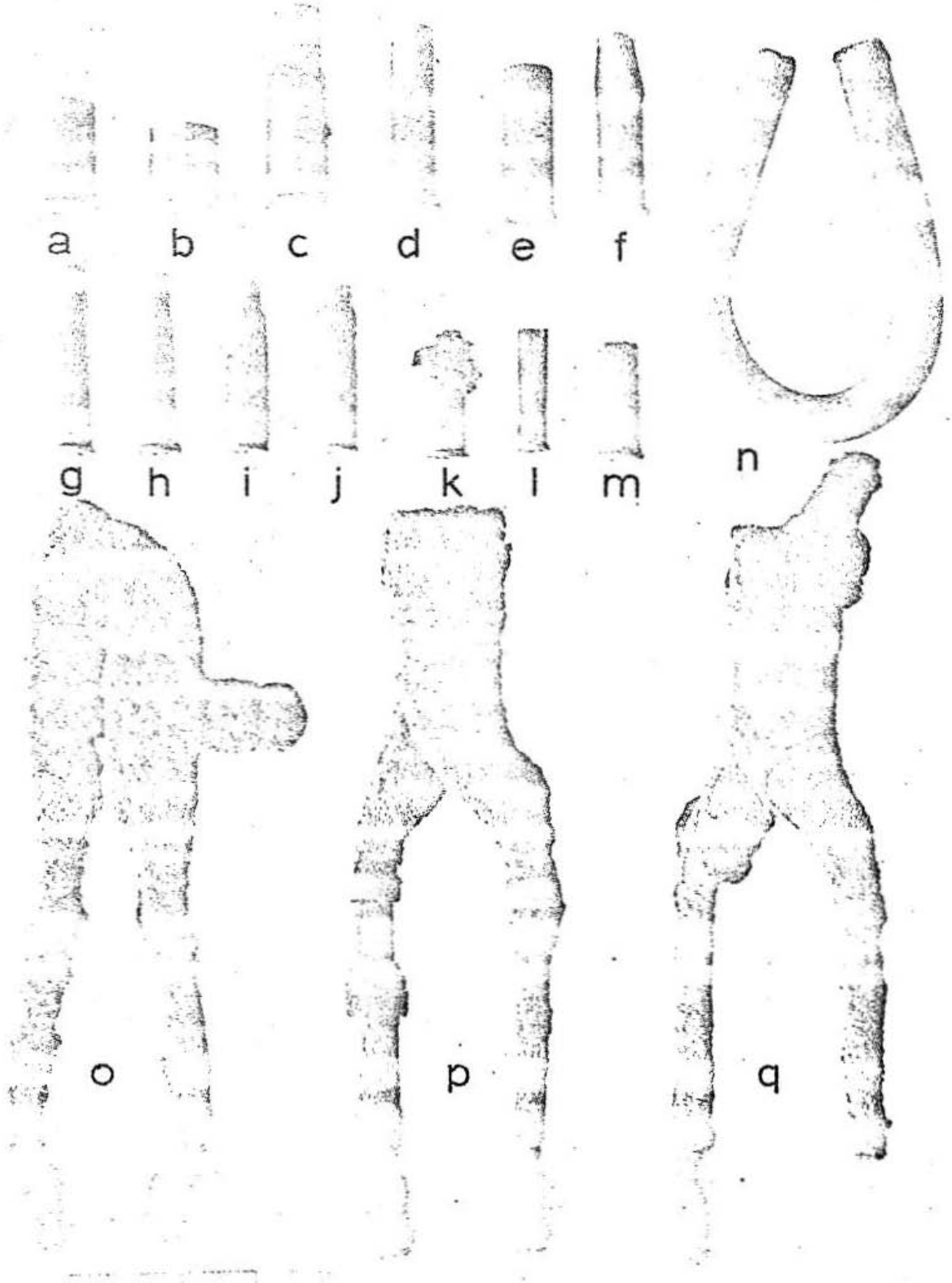

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PLATE 21.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | Knife handle, iron | N 10855 | Tug. | 1. |
| b | Ulo, iron | N 11028 | Uper. | 3. |
| c | Hatchet, iron | N 10756 | Nakv. Br. | 4. |
| d | Pocket knife | N 11114 | Tug. | 5. |
| e | Knife fragment | N 11097 | " | 5. |
| f | Blade edge, slate | N 10777 | " | 13. |
| g | Adze, iron | N 11212 | " | 5. |
| h | Axe, iron | N 11122 | " | 5. |

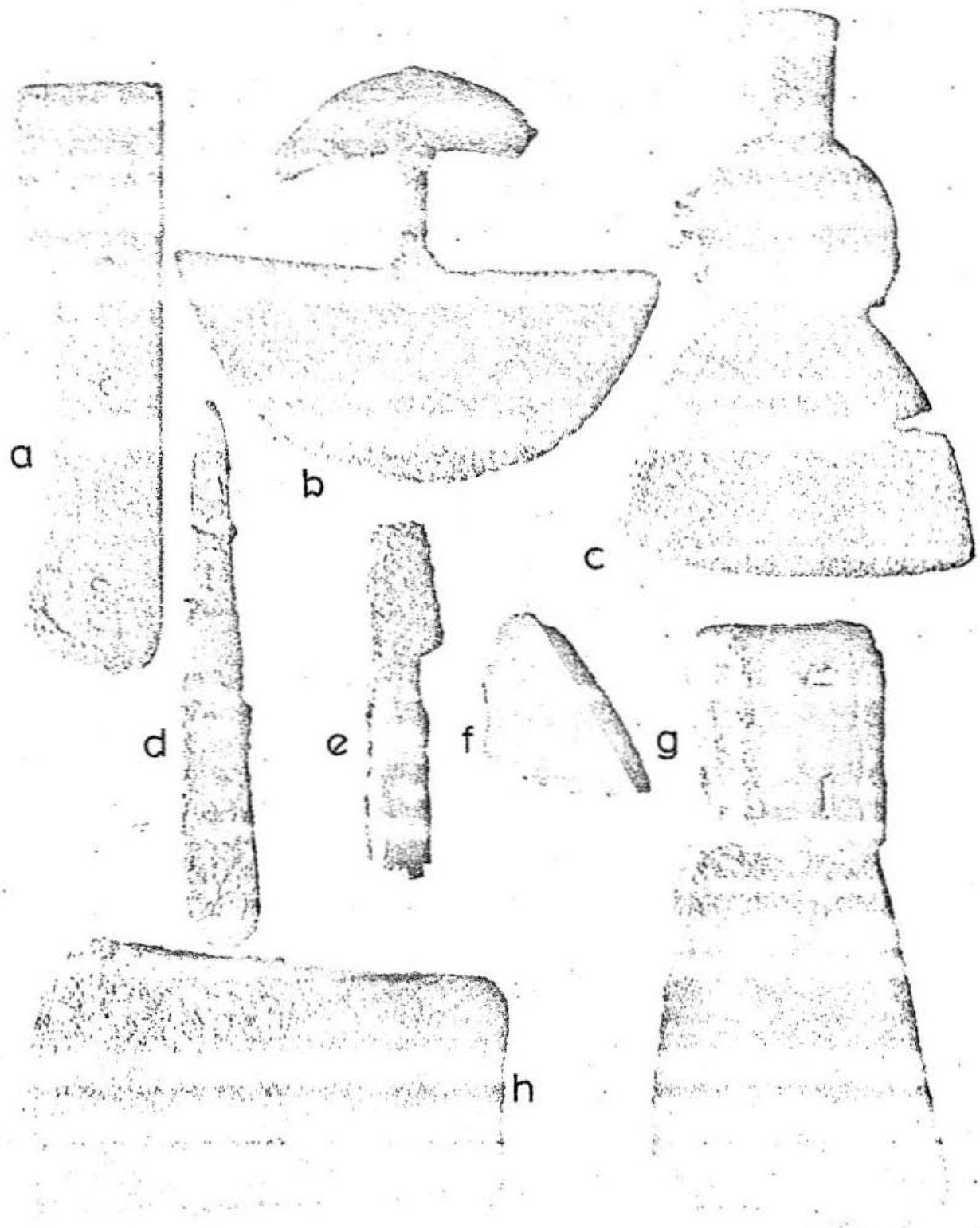
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PLATE 22.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | File, iron | N 11192 | Tug. | 5. |
| b | Whetstone | N 11199 | " | 5. |
| c | File, iron | N 11204 | " | 5. |
| d | Gouge, iron | N 11220 | " | 5. |
| e | Whetstone | N 11202 | " | 5. |
| f | Boat nail | N 10773 | " | 3. |
| g | " " | N 10838 | " | 7. |
| h | File | N 11196 | " | 5. |
| i | Common wire nail | N 10802 | " | 1. |
| j | " " " | N 10914 | " | 14. |
| k | Eyebolt | N 11104 | " | 5. |
| l | Boat nail | N 10757 | Bran. Is. | 1. |
| m | " " | N 10745 | Nakv. Br. | 1. |
| n | Wood screw | N 10740 | Big. Is. | 1. |

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PLATE 23.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | Iron band | N 10859 | Tug. | 10. |
| b | Sled shoe, iron | N 11110 | " | 5. |
| c | " " , whale bone | N 10781 | " | 13. |
| d | " " , iron | N 10762 | " | 4. |
| e | " " , whale bone | N 10782 | " | 13. |
| f | Foreshaft, whale bone | N 10862 | " | 10. |
| g | Fish hook, iron | N 11221 | " | 5. |
| h | Bow fragment, wood | N 11132 | " | 5. |

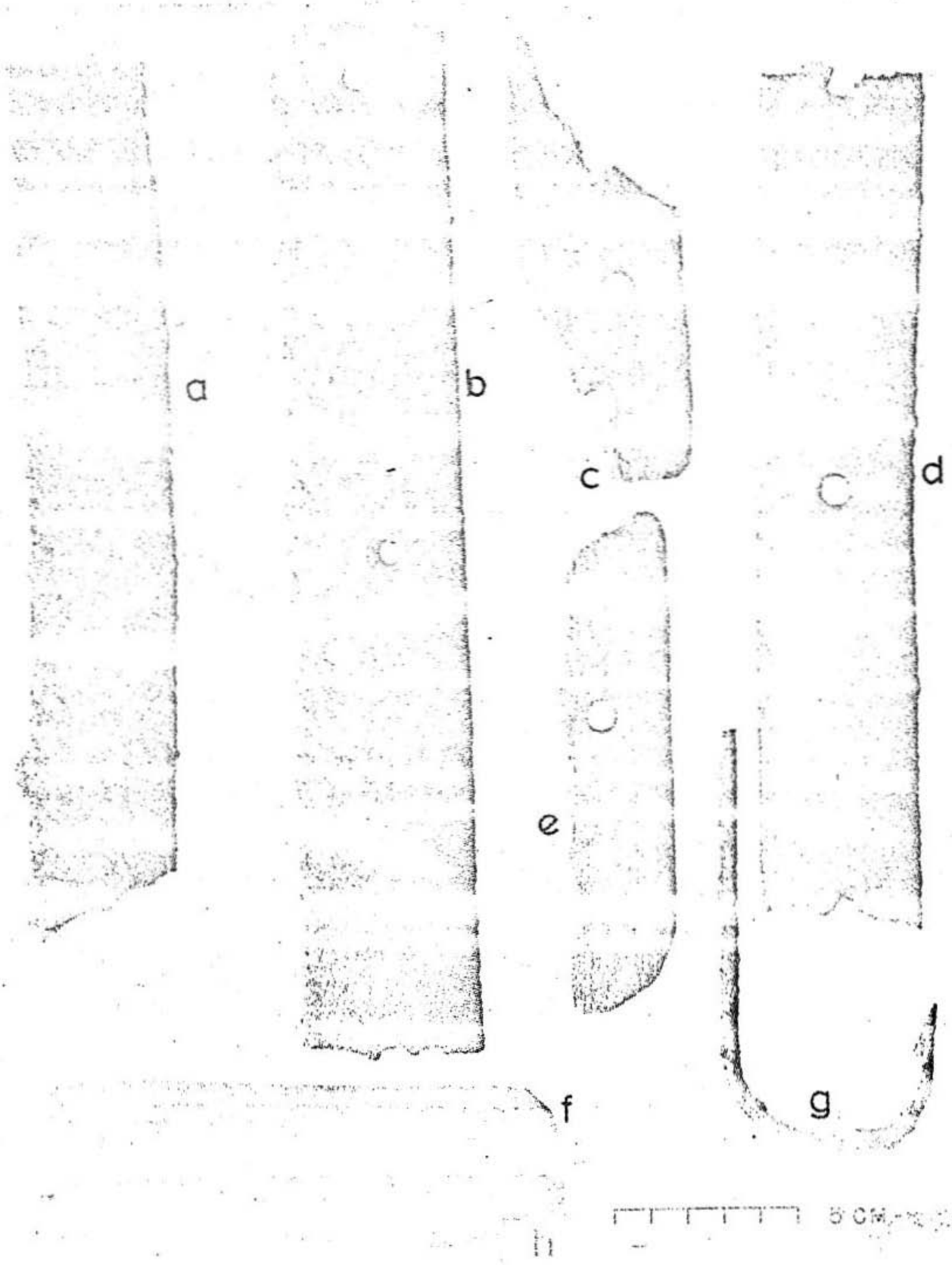
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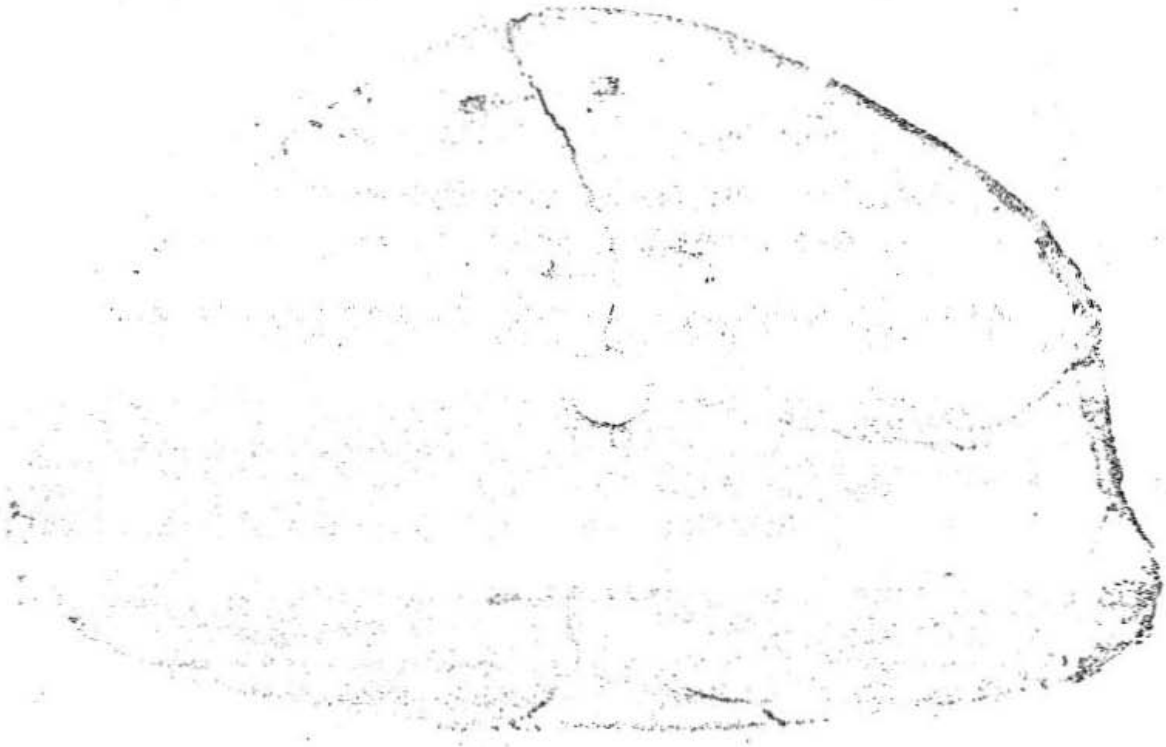
PLATE 24.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Lamp, soapstone | N 11121 | Tug. 5. |
| b | Stove part, cast iron | N 11111 | " 5. |



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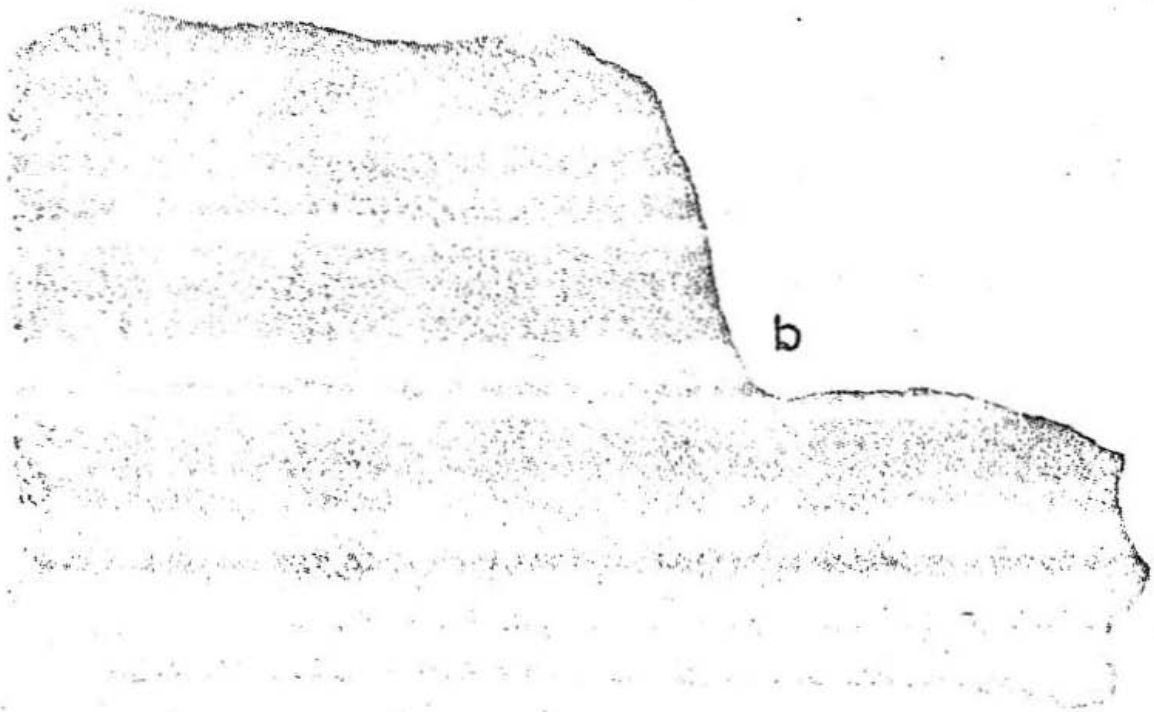

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PLATE 25.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Spoon?, wood | N 10813 | Tug. 1. |
| b | Bottle | N 11086 | Uper. 4. |
| c | " | N 10754 | Nakv. Br. 2. |
| d | " | N 11202 | Tug. 5. |
| e | Spoon | N 11133 | " 5. |
| f | Handle, bone | N 11125 | " 5. |
| g | Handle, wood | N 10912 | " Feat. 5. |
| h | Clock | N 11100 | " 5. |
| i | Bowl fragment, soapstone | N 10807 | " 1. |

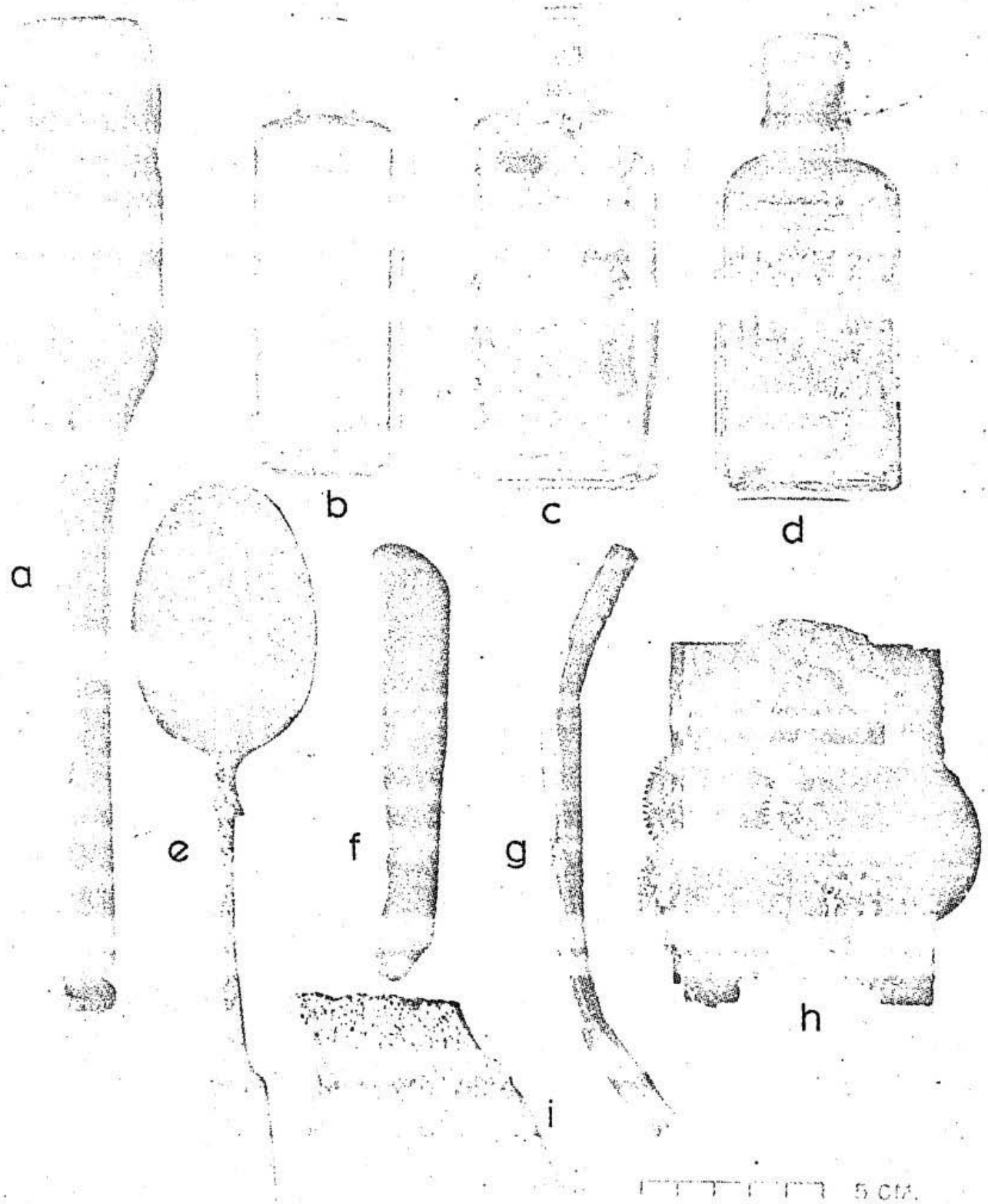
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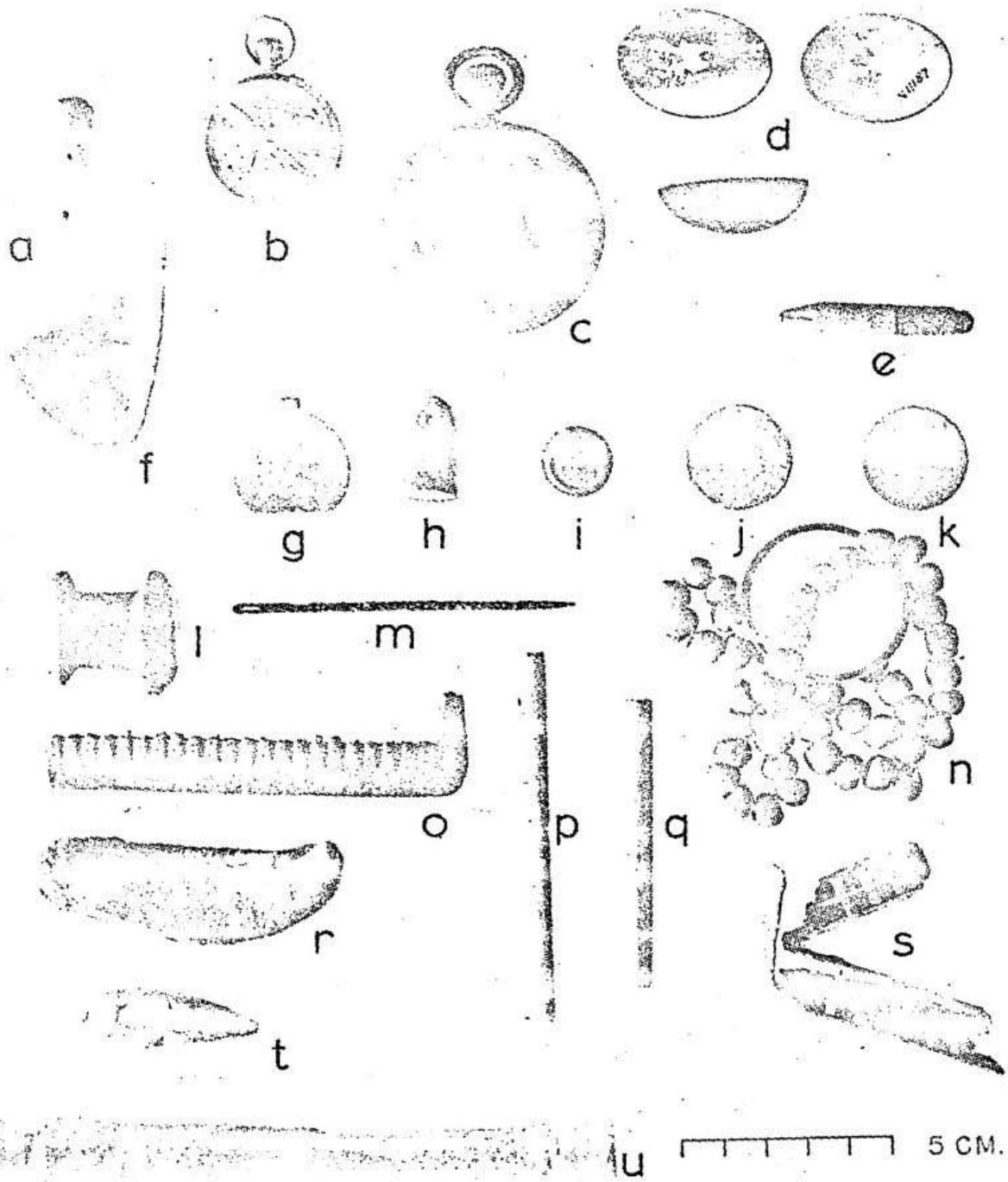
PLATE 26.

| Figures: | | Cat. Number: | Location: | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | Doll | N 10870 | Tug. | 10. |
| b | Watch | N 11093A | " | 5. |
| c | " | N 11094 | " | 5. |
| d | Eyeglasses | N 11187 | " | 5. |
| | | N 10750 | Nakv. Br. | 1. |
| e | Pencil | N 10753 | Nakv. Br. | 1. |
| f | Toy lamp, soapstone | N 10771 | Tug. | 3. |
| g | Ornamental piece, copper | N 11127 | " | 5. |
| h | Pendant, lead | N 11126 | " | 5. |
| i | Button | N 11169 | " | 5. |
| j | Coin | N 11165 | " | 5. |
| k | " | N 11166 | " | 5. |
| l | Spool, wood | N 11171 | " | 5. |
| m | Needle, iron | N 10744 | Nakv. Br. | 1. |
| n | Bead necklace, glass | N 11135 | Tug. | 5. |
| o | Comb | N 10928 | " | 14. |
| p | Tube, bird bone | N 10766 | " | 4. |
| q. | " " " | N 10767 | " | 4. |
| r | Bear tooth | N 10817 | " | 12. |
| s | Harmonica | N 10794 | " | 1. |
| t | Handle grip? | N 11177 | " | 5. |
| u | Telescope | N 11103 | " | 5. |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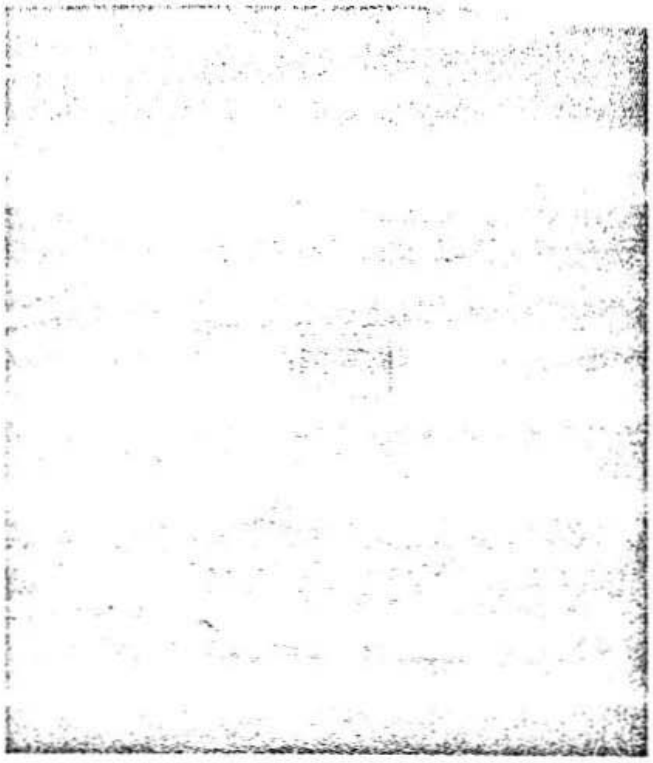

Figure 29 - Tuglavina site

House 5 before excavation

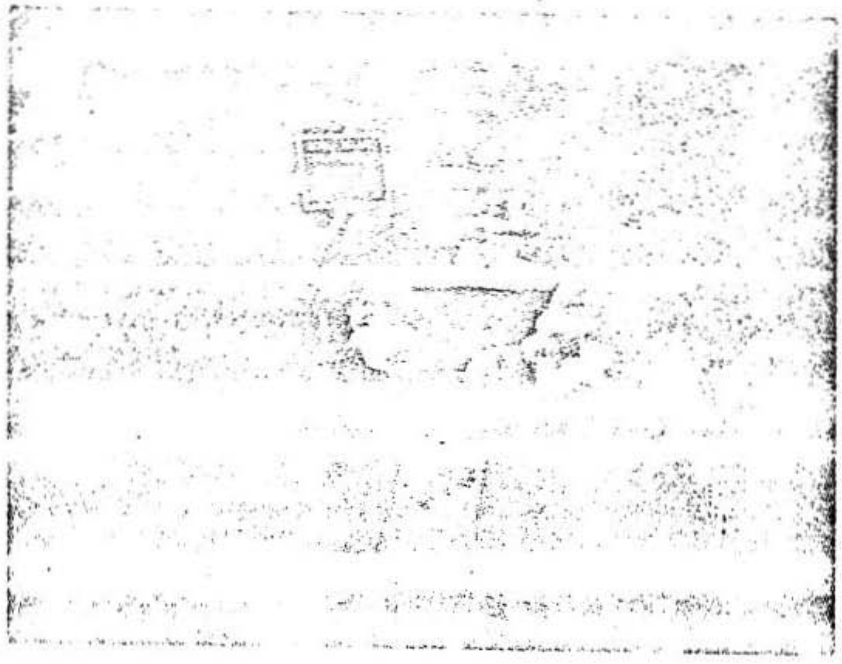

Figure 30 - Tuglavina site

entrance to House 5 after excavation

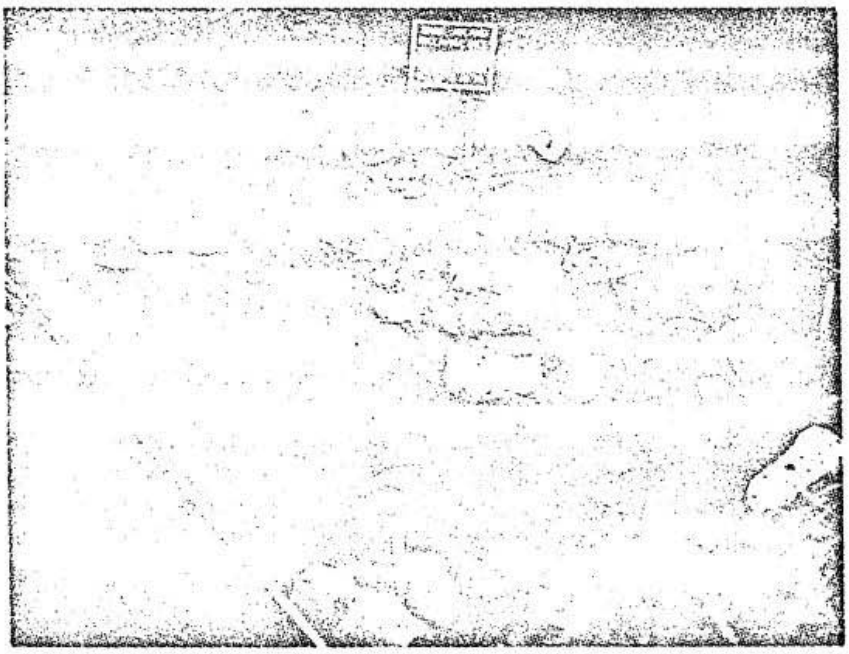

Figure 31 - Tuglavina site

floor area of House 5 after excavation

## Summary.

The last phase of the Thule Eskimo occupation of Saglek Bay marks a distinctive turning point in their cultural development. Trading and Mission pressure disrupted the original economic cycle to some degree and Euro-American manufactured goods gradually replaced most of the aboriginal material. With the establishment of the Hebron Mission in 1830, the increase in cultural changes - ideological, sociological and technological - became more rapid. The settlement pattern was disrupted by the Mission's insistence that the Saglek Eskimos move to Hebron although this met with some resistance.

> "The Missions expansion to the north from Hebron occurred in several stages. The first task of the Hebron Mission, after influence over the Eskimos in the immediate vicinity of the station had been guaranteed, was to win the sizeable population which stayed at Saglek Bay, a few hours journey north of Hebron. A tight rein was kept on these Eskimos, however, by the local angakok, and when he grew old and weak his son took over. But in 1848, the opposition had virtually broken down in Saglek. The Eskimos ... 71 persons in all moved down to Hebron this year." (Kleivan 1966 : 32).

The house ruins tested for this phase show changes in building style, most obviously in size. From the large rectangular communal structures the houses gradually decrease in size. The locations of houses are scattered within the bay from the inner fjord area to the outer islands. In no case are there extensive refuse deposits around these houses. The evidence indicates a more seasonal nature of habitation, probably by those former residents of Saglek Bay who moved to Hebron, oriented towards selective exploitation of the environment

(i.e. fishing and sealing). This is in sharp contrast to the two previous phases where the Eskimos maintained a year-round residence pattern of winter, spring and summer camps within the bay.

Several of the late houses show the Mission influence on building style, although the Eskimos in Hebron, and probably more so in Saglek, were slow to alter their dwelling habits. In 1861 the average number of people per house in Hebron was 12.5, decreasing steadily as one proceeded southward to Okak, Nain and Hopedale (Kleivan 1966:35).

> "The explanation is both the constant inflow of heathens into Hebron for whom the plural family house is the customary dwelling and the marked lack of wooden materials for house construction up here." (Kleivan 1966:35).

The use of wooden framed houses covered with sod and heated with iron stoves presented tremendous problems. The lack of firewood for heat presented a clash between enforced alien cultural values inoperable under existing ecological conditions, something which is still a major problem in Nain today. The fire hazard was certainly apparent considering that three of the later houses we excavated had burned down.

Perhaps the most significant occurence in the Late Phase other than material changes, is the progressive decrease in number of Eskimos permanently settled in Saglek Bay, an event brought about by their centralization in Hebron. With the closing of the Hebron Mission in 1959 the inhabitants were moved south to Nain, Makkovik and Hopedale (Kleivan 1966:194).

# CHAPTER VI

## Conclusions.

An analysis has been made of the archaeological material excavated on seven sites pertaining to the Thule Eskimo Tradition in Saglek Bay, Labrador. The total time span of Thule Eskimo occupation in this bay has been separated into three major phases. Each phase explores the development of this tradition through time from a different perspective, respectively emphasizing the first arrival and appearance of the Thule Eskimos, the development and existence of large communal houses and finally the effect of prolonged and increasing Euro-American influence.

The arrival of the first Thule Eskimos in Labrador is seen as a result of a continued expansion of the Thule Tradition originally present in the northern Arctic from Alaska to Greenland about A.D.950. It has been suggested that climatic factors played an important role for the original expansion of the tradition across the arctic. It is further suggested that a long period of climatic deterioration beginning around A.D. 1200 served as the major factor for the southward movement of the Thule Tradition in the eastern Arctic. An analysis of the artifacts from the Early Phase seemed to indicate a closer affinity with early Thule material from eastern Baffin Island and NW. Greenland than from the central Arctic. Following the migration route of the large Greenland whale the Thule Eskimos gradually advanced southward along the east coast of Baffin Island. A similar southward movement

was no doubt taking place within the central Arctic eventually reaching the southwest coast of Baffin Island. At this point the evidence would suggest that the first Thule Eskimos to reach Labrador originated from the east coast of Baffin Island. Whether they crossed the Hudson Strait via Resolution and Button Islands or at a point further west in the Strait cannot be determined on present evidence.

The fact that the Thule Culture seems to have retained many of its distinctive traits much longer in Labrador than most other areas in the arctic may perhaps be attributed to a greater ecological stability, as well as a basic cultural conservatism. Given minimal external cultural contact and an unchanging environmental situation, the rate of cultural change will likely be slow.

The Thule Eskimos along the east coast of Baffin Island and Labrador appear to have maintained their ongoing ecological adaptation through migration into appropriate geographical locations. By the time they reached Labrador other Eskimo groups in the arctic were already beginning to "look" less Thule. Over a period of time, however, changes were taking place and the most conspicuous of these was the increase in size and change in design of the winter houses. From the smaller round family unit structures at the beginning of the Early Phase the houses culminate into very large rectangular structures in the Communal House Phase. Two major outside factors coincide with this development; increasing Euro-American contact and a climatic cooling period. Even if the development of the multi-family dwelling was a gradual process it must have served a purpose as an adaptive feature of internal arrangement to counter an external factor of change.

Such a feature may have been the attempt to retain an internal economic stability during a period of external ecological instability.

The steadily increasing Euro-American influence during the Late Phase gradually broke down the cultural patterns of the Eskimos in Saglek Bay. Subjected to continued Mission pressure the population finally moved out of the bay in 1848, although a few Eskimo families still occupied the area from time to time both summer and winter. These families' houses clearly reflect the moral attitude and teaching of the Mission, which was to discourage the use of multi-family dwellings, as they return to the smaller single family type structures.

Today several families travel north from Nain when the pack ice finally clears the coast in late spring. They set up their fish camps in the same locations used for centuries by their forefathers as indicated by the countless tent rings in these areas. The present Eskimo inhabitants of the Labrador coast are direct descendants of the Thule people; continuing processes of change have progressively accelerated due to recent Euro-American cultural influences to a point where every traditional aspect of the Thule culture is in danger of becoming a thing of the past.

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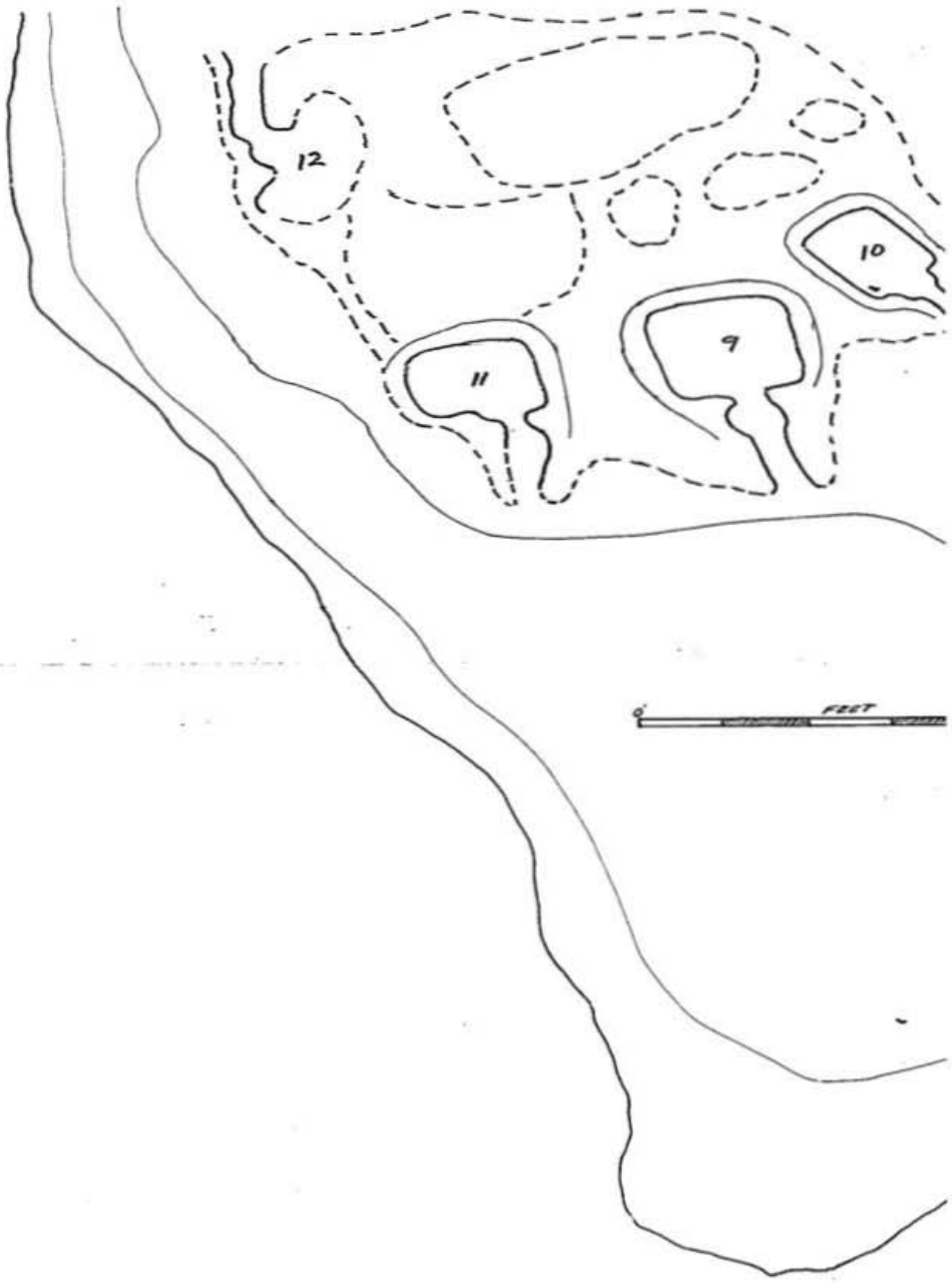
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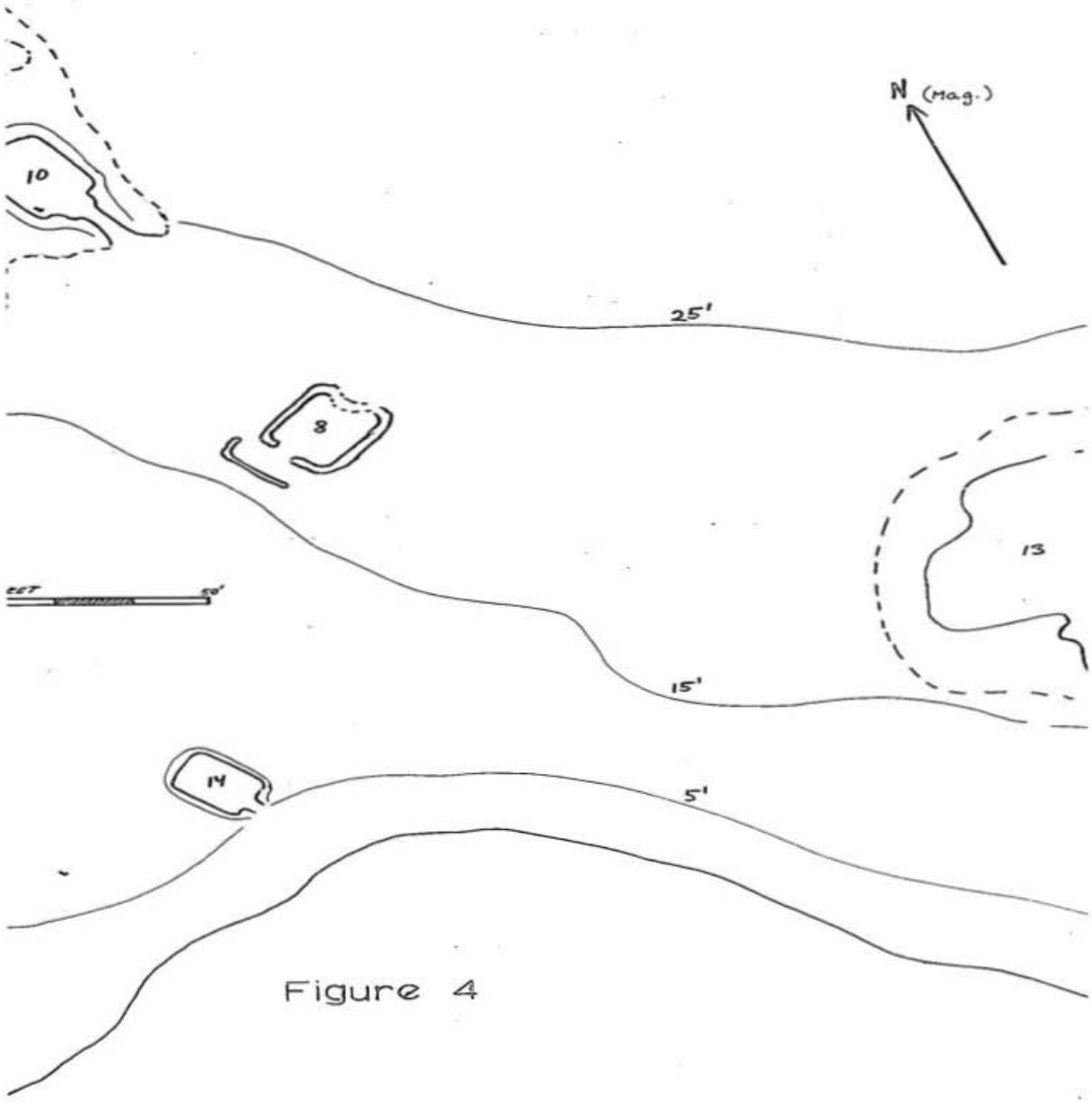


Figure 4

# TUGLAVINA SITE

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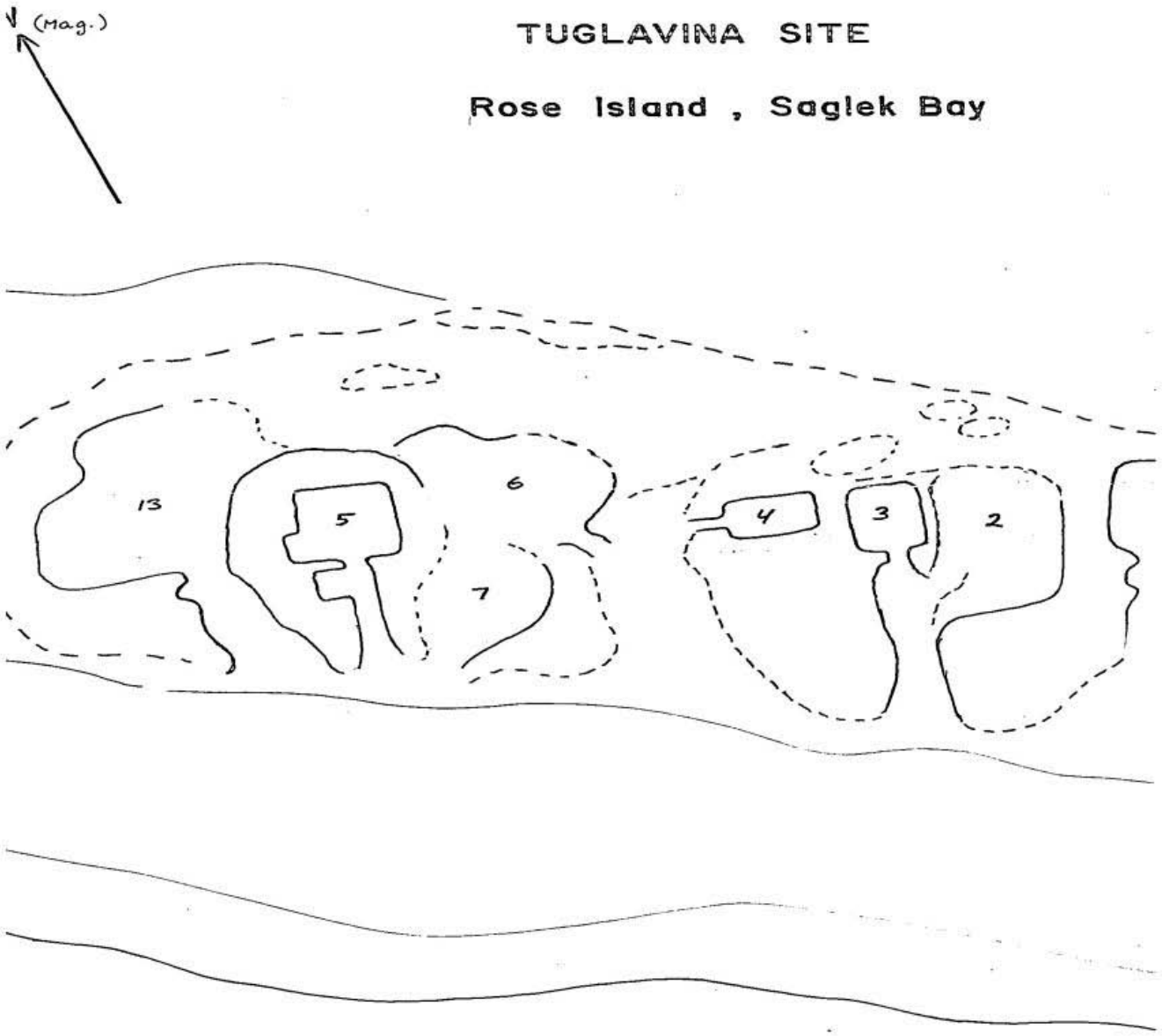

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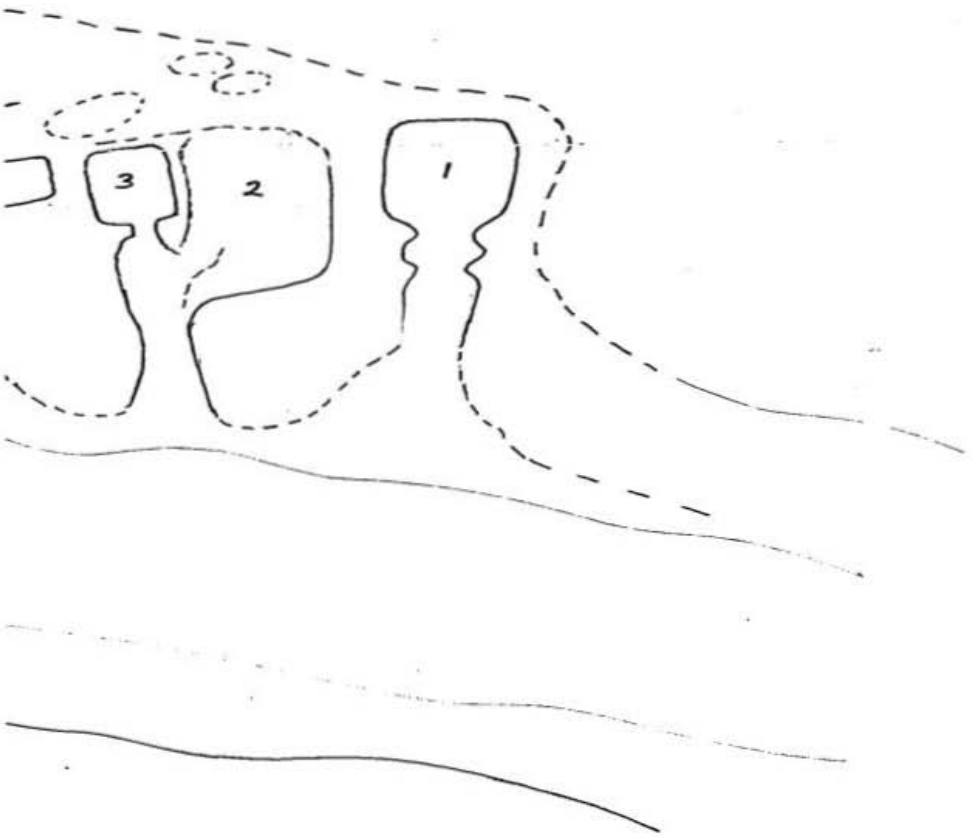
Saglek Bay



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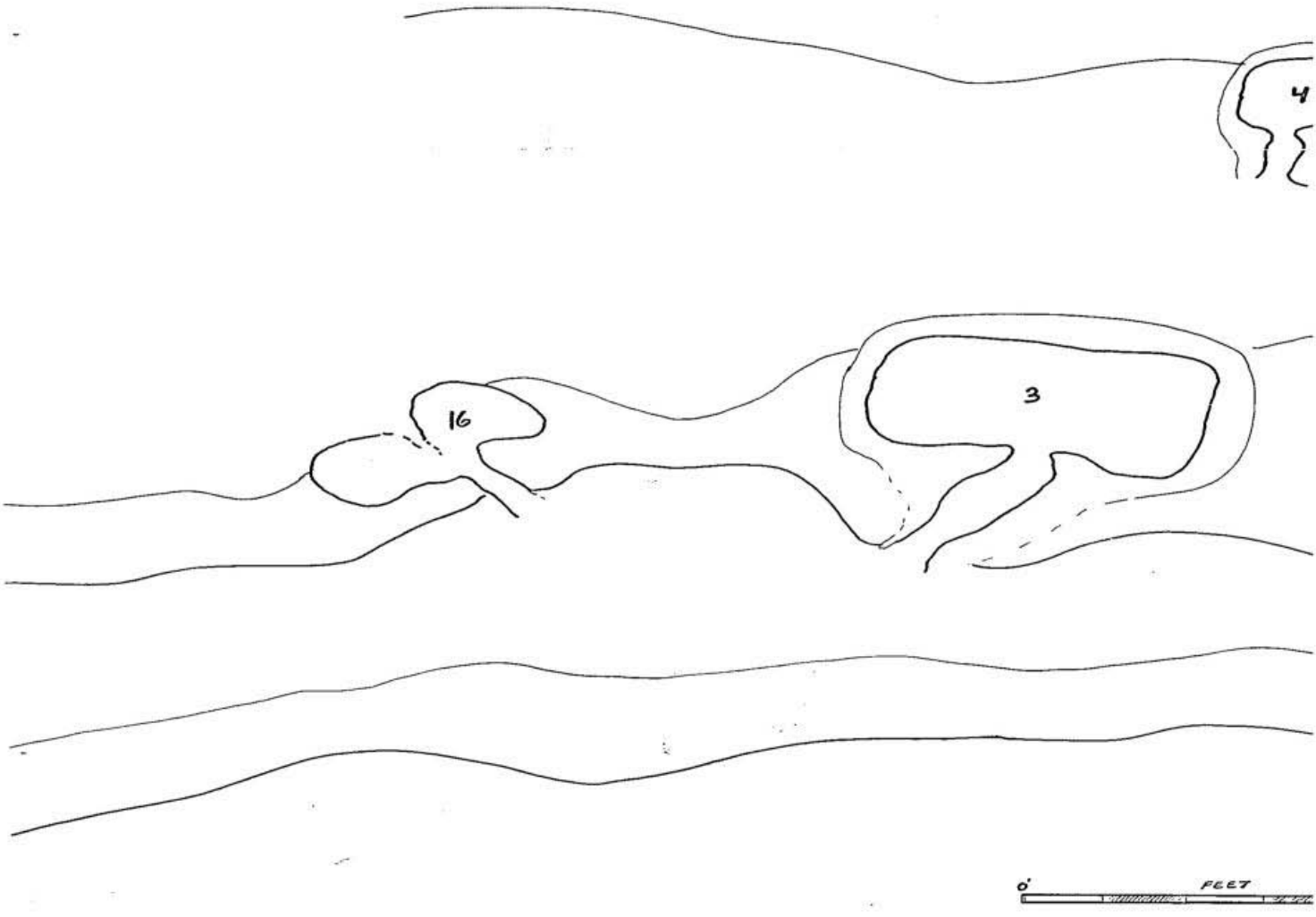
# IKKUSIK SIT

## Rose Island , Sag



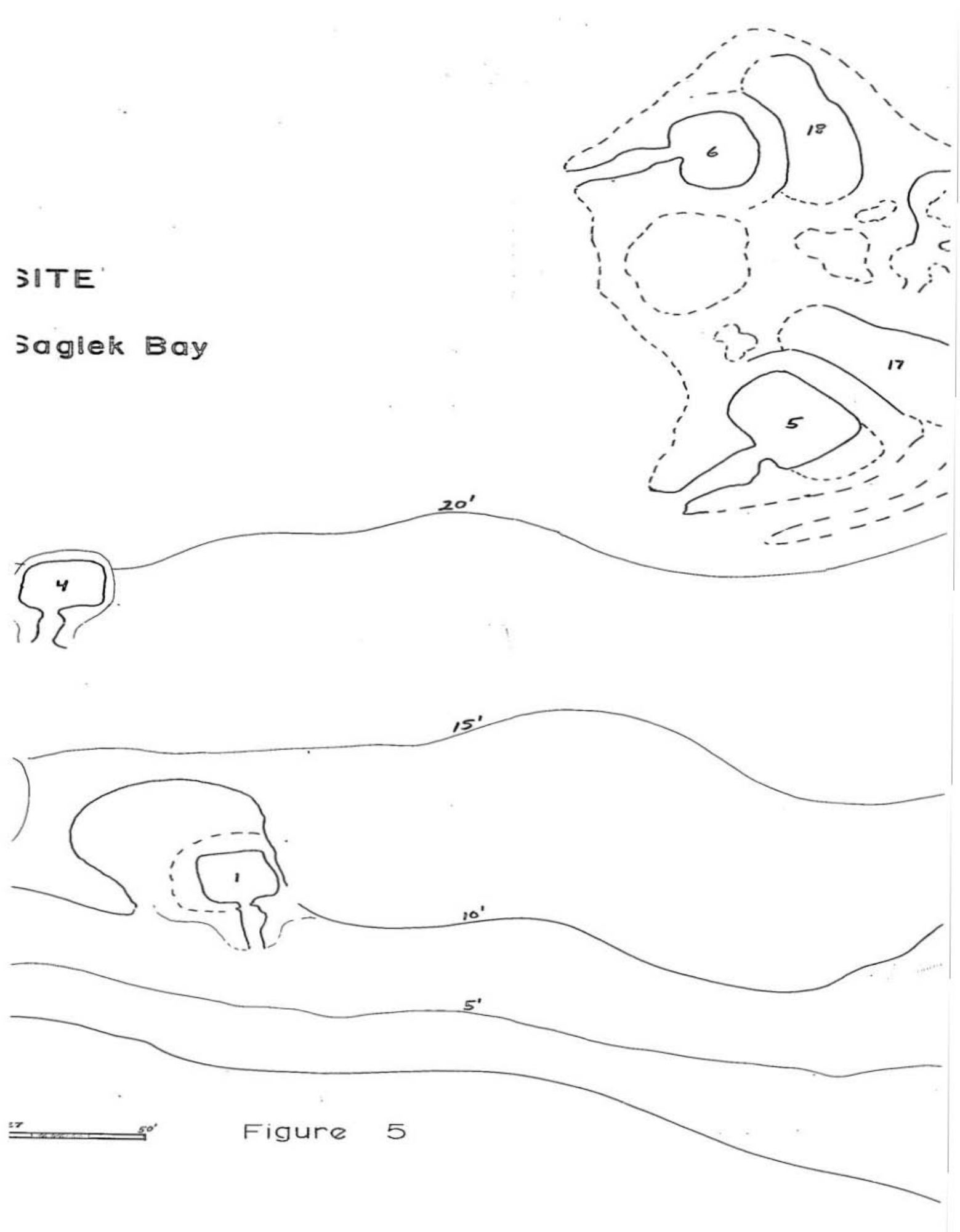
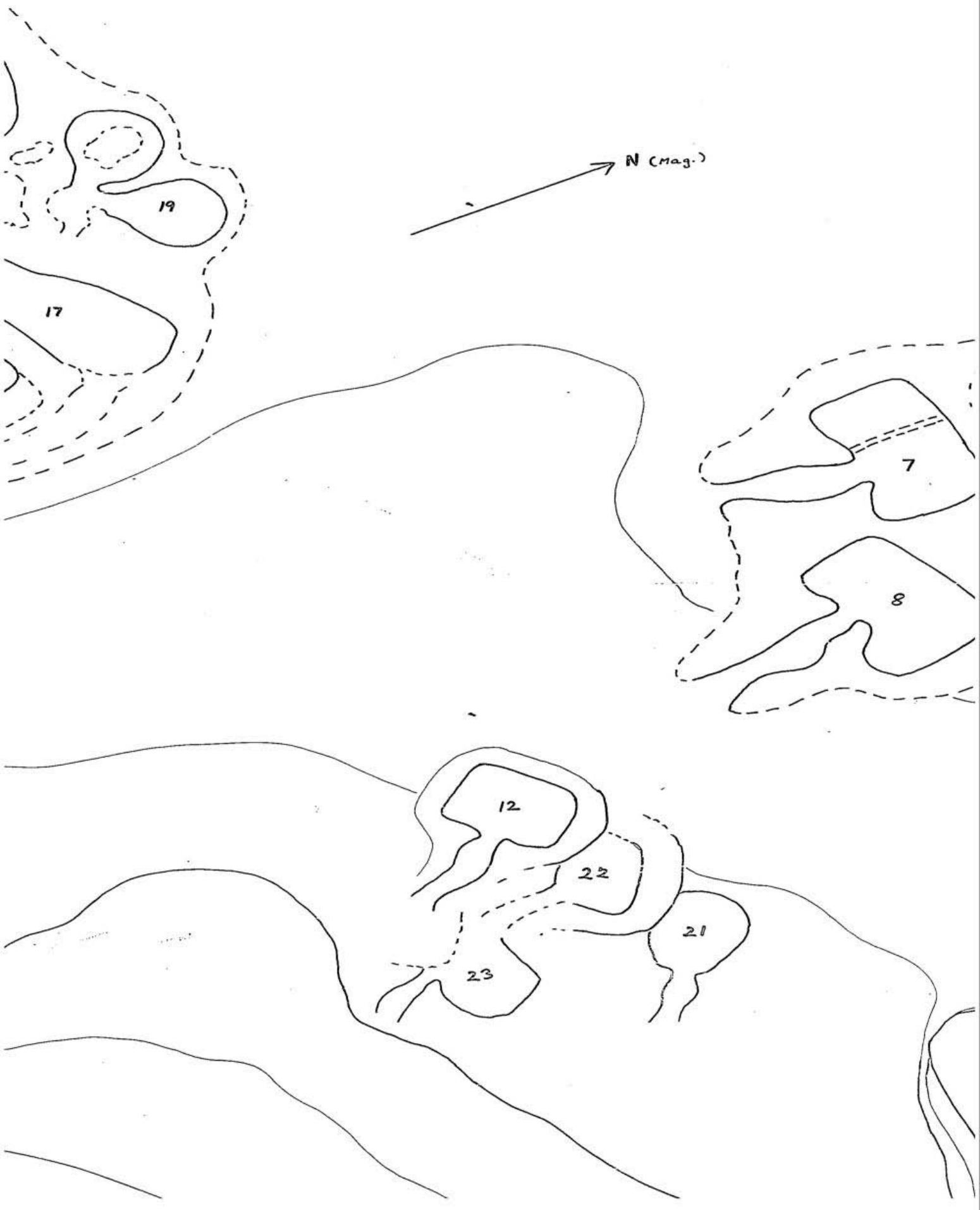



Figure 5


N (Mag.)
19
17
7
8
12
22
21
23


N (Mag.)
11
7
8
15
12
22
21
23

# IKKUSIK SITE

## Rose Island , Saglek Bay

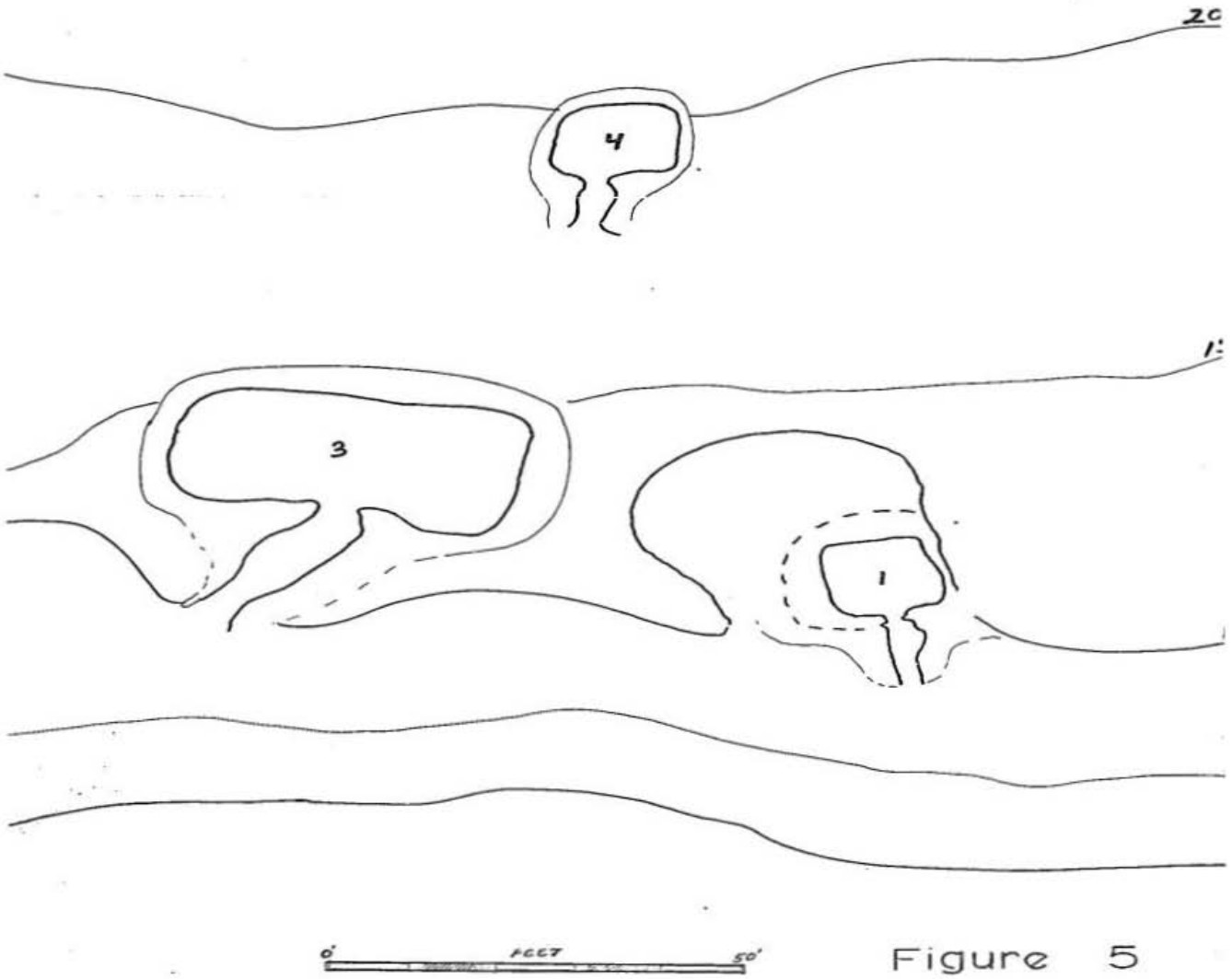
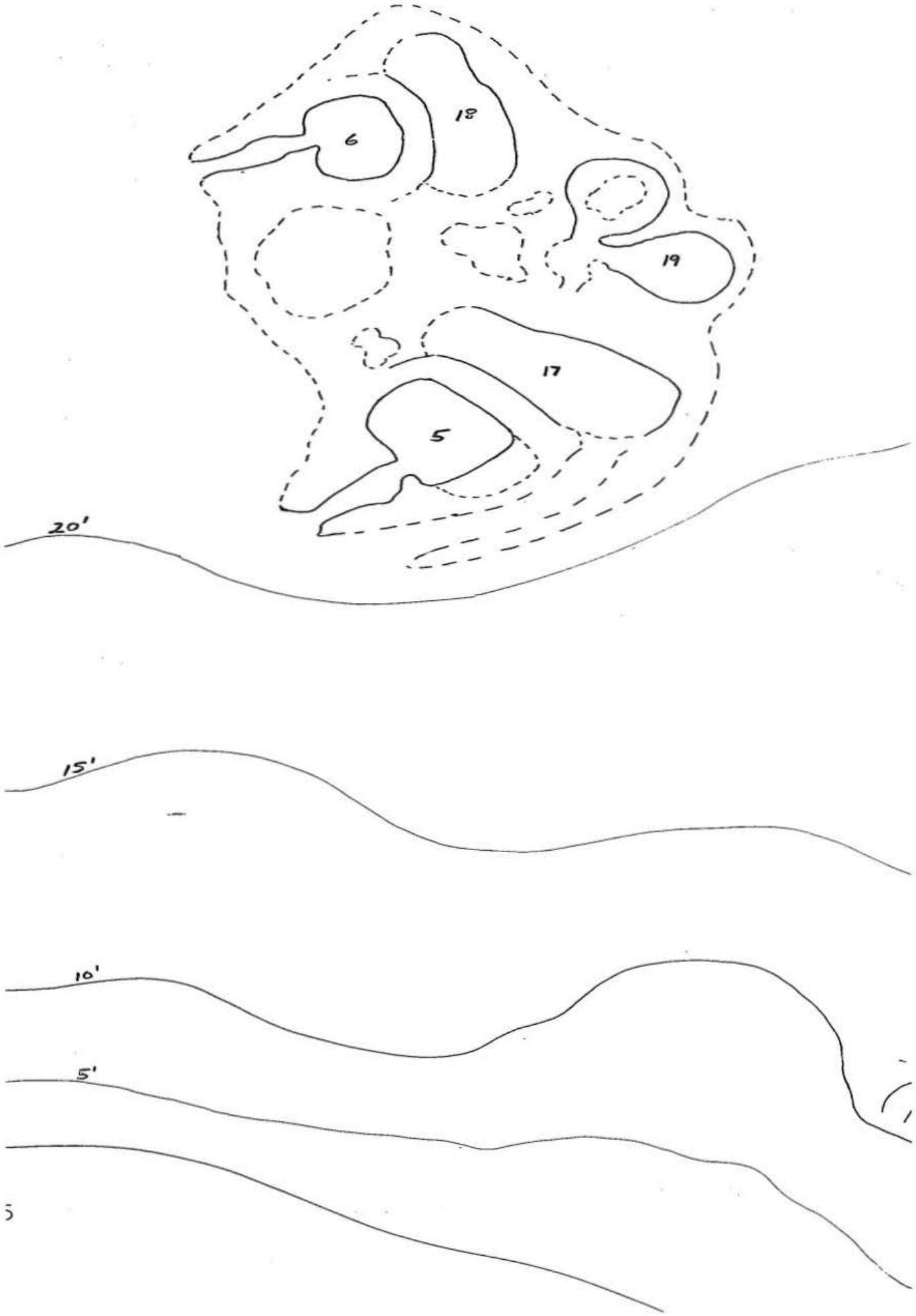
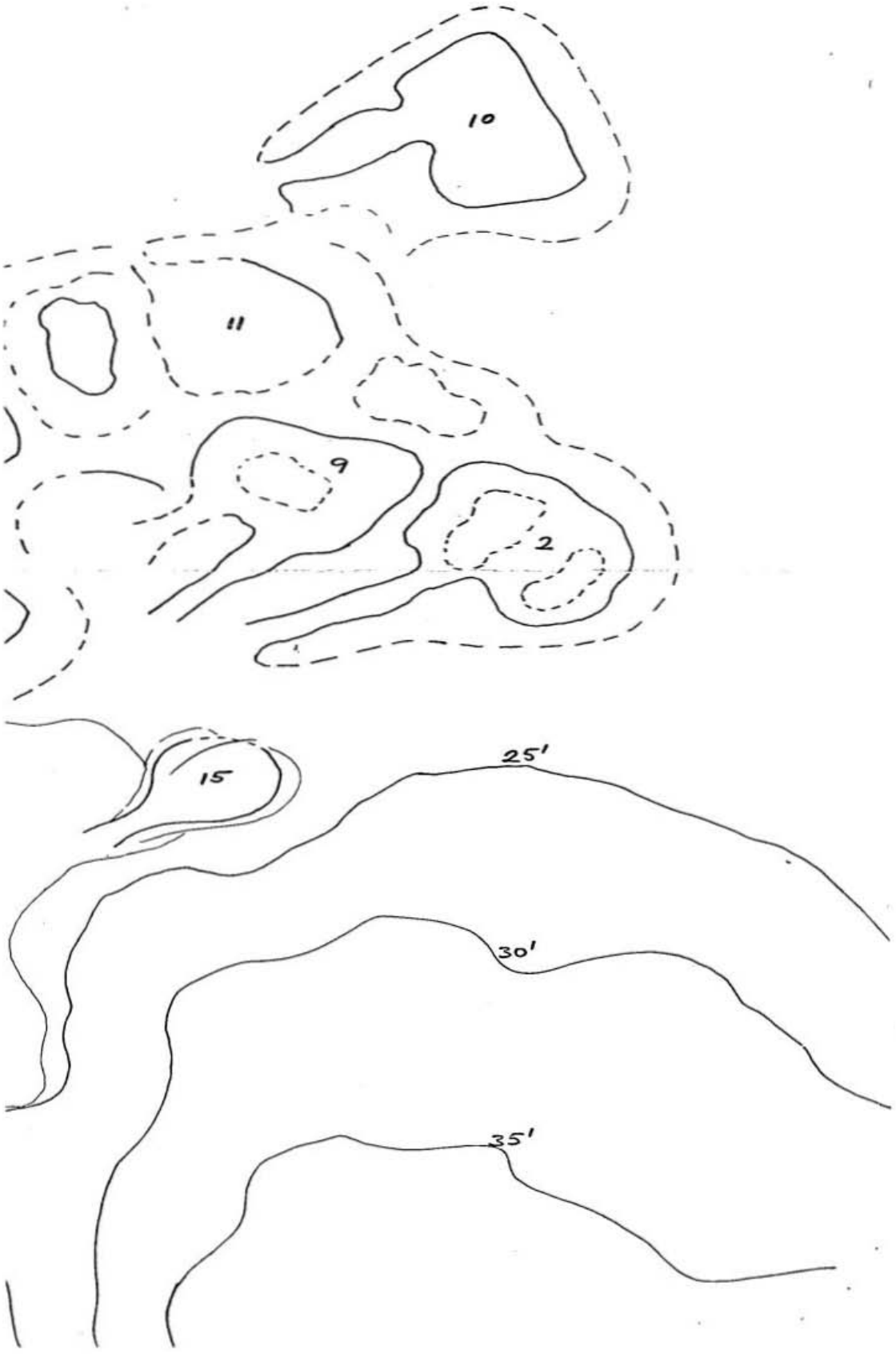



Figure 5


6
18
19
17
5
20'
15'
10'
5'


N (Mag.)
7
8
12
22
21
23

2 of 2.



IKKUSIK SITE

Rose Island , Saglek Bay

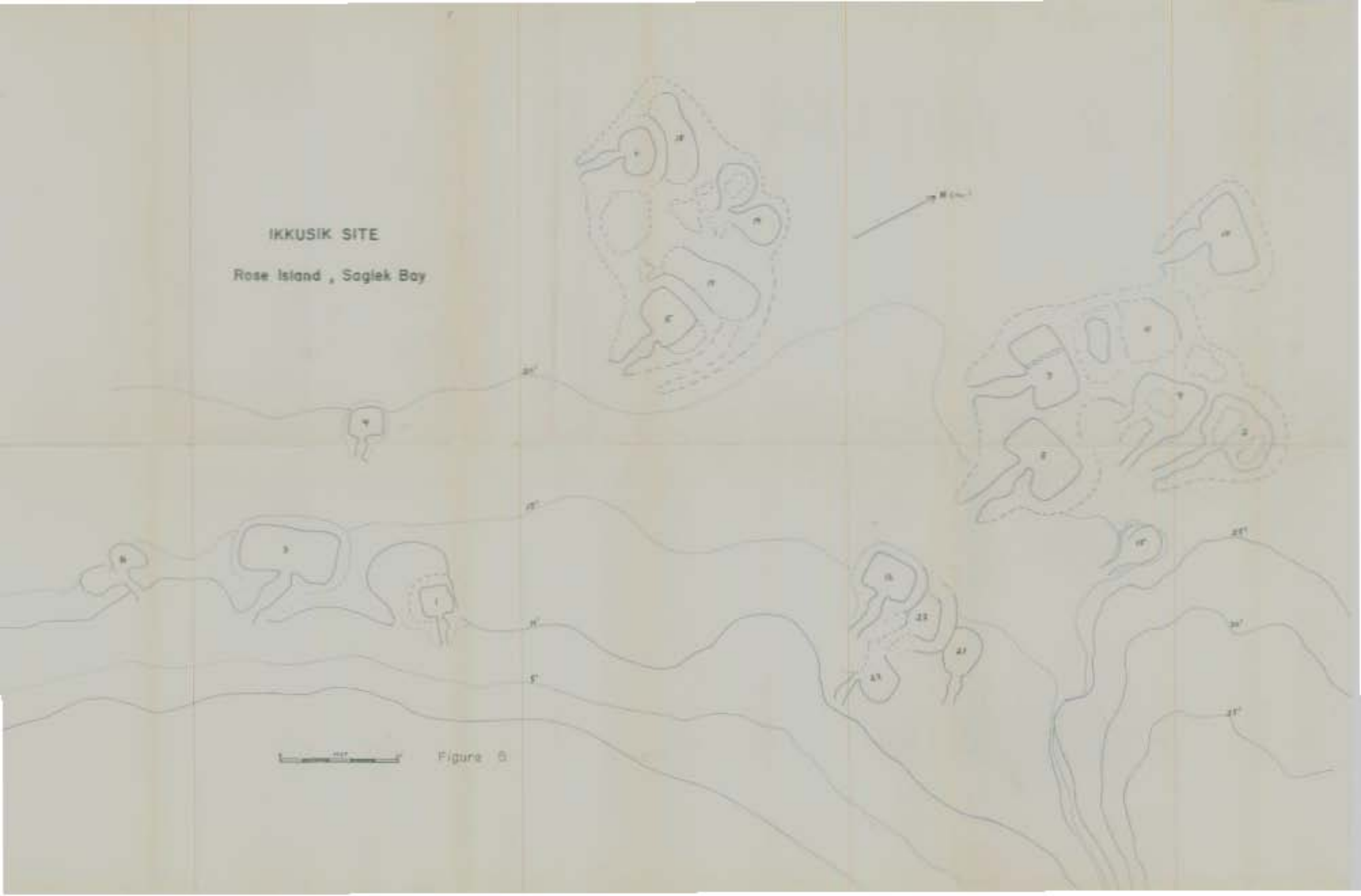


Figure 6

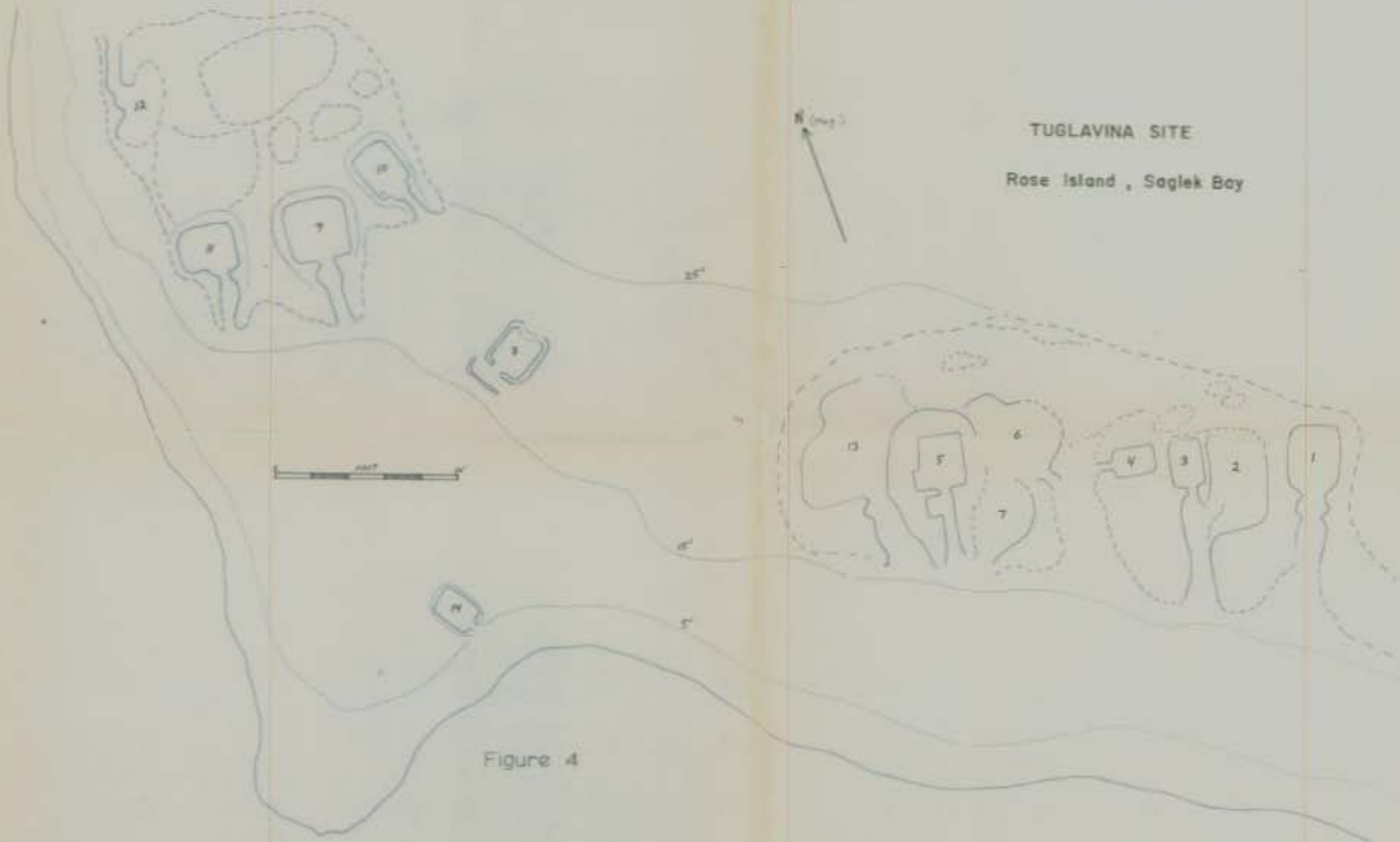



Figure 4