UNIVERSAL SERVICE OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY-NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES
SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES — COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

NAME
HISTORIC
Mound City Group National Monument
AND/ OR COMMON
*Amendment to description and statement of significance

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
N/A
CITY, TOWN
Chillicothe
STATE
Ohio
VICINITY OF
X
CODE
39
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
5th
COUNTY
Ross
CODE
141

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
X DISTRICT
OWNERSHIP
X PUBLIC
BUILDING(S)
PRIVATE
X STRUCTURE
BOTH
SITE
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
X IN PROCESS
OBJECT
IMPROVEMENT
IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED
STATUS
X OCCUPIED
X UNOCCUPIED
X WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
X YES: RESTRICTED
X NO: UNRESTRICTED
PRESENT USE
X AGRICULTURE
X COMMERCIAL
X PARK
X EDUCATIONAL
X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
X ENTERTAINMENT
X RELIGIOUS
X GOVERNMENT
X SCIENTIFIC
X INDUSTRIAL
X TRANSPORTATION
X MILITARY
X OTHER:

AGENCY
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: [i applicable]
Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service
STREET & NUMBER
1709 Jackson Street
CITY, TOWN
Omaha
STATE
Nebraska
VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS
Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service
STREET & NUMBER
1709 Jackson Street
CITY, TOWN
Omaha
STATE
Nebraska

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
List of Classified Structures
DATE
1976
Y FEDERAL
STATE
COUNTY
LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service
CITY, TOWN
Omaha
STATE
Nebraska
Mound City Group consists of a grouping of Hopewellian burial mounds (now largely ravaged and reconstructions) surrounded by a low earthen wall. The site is level, well kept, fringed by woods, and on high ground overlooking the Scioto River. Prohistorically, by the end of its development the site had about the same contours it is difficult to determine the actual appearance. Burial mounds were constructed the burned sites of the charnel houses in which the dead were prepared, and when the reached completion were covered with a protective layer of gravel. In the millenium following its abandonment, the site retained its contours but disappeared from view the natural regrowth of vegetation. The remains were easily discernable to the observer in the 1840s, however, when Squier and Davis described the complex of earthen features Looting and agriculture took their toll in ensuing decades, and in 1917 levelling for reconstruction of Camp Sherman severely disrupted most of the mounds and associated for Reconstruction efforts began in the 1920s during renewed scientific investigation. present condition of the property owes most to investigations and corrective restorations and reconstructions that began in the late 1950s and 1960s. Archaeological research at restoration work is still underway, with a view to restoring the contours of all mounds within the Mound City Group.

The Mound City Group lies within a rectangular earth enclosure of approximately 13 a within which are located 23 burial mounds. The earth walls of the enclosure vary in height from 3 to 4 feet, with an entrance or gateway on both the east and west sides. The largest mound of the group was described by early explorers as 170 feet high and feet in diameter. All the mounds are dome-shaped with the exception of one which is elliptical. Just outside the enclosure are two additional mounds.

The following are the historic structures in the national monument:
(Unless otherwise noted they are in excellent condition)

HS-M1 A conical earth burial mound, 35' in diameter and 7' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M2 A conical earth burial mound, 90' in diameter and 10' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M3 An oval earth burial mound, 50'x120'x10' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M4 An oval earth burial mound, 60'x90'x6' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M5 An oval earth burial mound, 60'x90'x6' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M6 A conical earth burial mound, 50' in diameter and 5' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M7 A conical earth burial mound, 100' in diameter and 17' high with 24 sandstone rising to a stone viewing platform on top. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M8 A conical earth burial mound, 55' in diameter and 8' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M9 A conical earth burial mound, 50' in diameter and 4' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M10 A conical earth burial mound, 60' in diameter and 3' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M11 A conical earth burial mound, 55' in diameter and 5' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M12 A conical earth burial mound, 55' in diameter and 6' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

(Continued on Continuation Sheet 10-300A)
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mound City Group National Monument was established by Presidential Proclamation in 1932, to preserve an important assemblage of earthen structures associated with the prehistoric Adena and Hopewell cultures. Mound City Group was closely associated with the origin of American archeology in the studies of Squier and Davis in the 1840s, was among the first sites to open the eyes of Americans to the long and rich native prehistory of their country, has contributed extensively to our understanding of the Hopewell cultural tradition, and is perhaps the best assemblage of Hopewellian funerary features ever for public enjoyment as a historical park.

By about 300 B.C. the prehistoric Indians we now call Hopewell had developed a distinctive culture in the Middle West. For perhaps 900 years these people flourished, their zenith being here in the Scioto Valley of southern Ohio. But by about A.D. 650 the Hopewell culture had faded. Hundreds of years later European settlers found only mounds and ceremonial earthworks to hint at this vanished culture.

The Hopewell are best known for their high artistic achievements and for their practice of erecting earthen mounds over the remains of their dead. From the extraordinary wealth of burial offerings found in the mounds, archeologists have learned a great deal about these prehistoric people. They were excellent artists and craftsmen and worked with a great variety of material foreign to what is now Ohio.

Copper from the Lake Superior region was used for eartspools, headdresses, breastplated ornaments, ceremonial objects, and tools. Stone effigy pipes were beautifully crafted to represent the bird and animal life around them. From obsidian they made delicate chipped blades. Freshwater pearls from local streams, quartz and mica from the Blue Ridge Mountains, shells from the Gulf of Mexico, grizzly-bear teeth from the Rockies, all were used in making the beautiful and elaborate offerings buried with the dead. Pottery of excellent workmanship was made, and even woven fabric of bark and other vegetable fibers has been found preserved through contact with copper objects. Animal bone was used extensively, and wood must have been important in the manufacture of implements and utensils.

The Hopewell Indians lived in small villages near rivers and streams. Some of the villages may have been some distance from their mounds; sites such as Mound City Group served as ceremonial centers. They knew how to raise corn and probably had simple gardens. Their diet was augmented by hunting animals and gathering wild fruits and vegetables. Though their culture was widespread, and they made use of materials of both by trade and travel in distant parts of North America, the evidence of their remains suggests that they were a peaceful and more or less sedentary people.

(Continued on Continuation Sheet 10-300A)
Mound City beginning at a point along State Highway 106 about 308 meters north-northwest of the intersection of State Highway 104 and the entrance to the Chillicothe Federal Reformatory north of Chillicothe, Ohio, the boundary of Mound City Group National Monument follows Highway 106 north-northwest about 500 meters, then turns east-northeast about 460 meters to a point where it meets the Scioto River. It then follows the bank of the Scioto River southeast about 730 meters to a point where it returns about 850 meters west-southwest to the point of beginning.
HS-34  An earth wall, 6' x 4' high, enclosing a rectangular area 840' x 860' with two openings, 13' wide each, at opposite sides. It was reconstructed in 1923 and in 1960.

Other structures at the site which do not contribute to the significance of the site include:

HS-37  Construction stones. About 500 sandstone blocks from Lock No. 35 of the Ohio and Erie Canal lying in a series of jumbled piles. Several of the stones retain carved inscriptions and decoration. They are in ruins.

HS-38  Dock, steps, and wall. A series of steps, walks, and a platform leading from the rear of the mounds, through woods, and down a bank to the Scioto River, to a triangular stone dock, 24' x 26' x 16', with three iron mooring rings. The ensemble has been altered. It is extremely deteriorated and constitutes a severe safety hazard.

Other noncontributing structures within the monument include a modern visitor center, constructed in 1966; the Superintendent's residence, constructed circa 1925; and a farmhouse, constructed circa 1925. **

**Amended information
Continuation Sheet 1  

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HS-M13 A conical earth burial mound, 70' in diameter and 9' high. It has a side revealing a glass enclosed display of the interior. It was reconstructed in 1920.

HS-M14 A conical earth burial mound, 50' in diameter and 5' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's and relocated in 1973.

HS-M15 A flat site, depicting a charnel house. It has 159 wood posts geometrical arranged in a circular pattern. It was reconstructed in 1920's and relocated in 1920's.

HS-M16 A conical earth burial mound, 55' in diameter and 3' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M17 A conical earth burial mound, 50' in diameter and 3' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M18 A conical earth burial mound, 90' in diameter and 10' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M19 A conical earth burial mound, 45' in diameter and 3' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M20 A conical earth burial mound, 65' in diameter and 4' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M21 A conical earth burial mound, 50' in diameter and 3' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's and relocated in 1974.

HS-M22 A conical earth burial mound, 40' in diameter and 5' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M23 A conical earth burial mound, 55' in diameter and 3' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M24 A conical earth burial mound, 30' in diameter and 5' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-M25 A conical earth burial mound, 40' in diameter and 7' high. It was reconstructed in 1920's.

HS-26 An earth borrow pit, 127'x60'x4' maximum depth. It was reexcavated in 1921 and 1950.

HS-27 An earth borrow pit, 125'x60'x4' maximum depth. It was reexcavated in 1921 and 1950.

HS-28 An earth borrow pit, 97'x37'x2' maximum depth. It was reexcavated in 1923 and 1960.

HS-29 An earth borrow pit, 115'x60'x4' maximum depth. It was reexcavated in 1921 and 1960.

HS-30 An earth borrow pit, 110'x60'x7' maximum depth. It was reexcavated in 1921 and 1960.

HS-31 An earth borrow pit, 85'x50'x5' maximum depth. It was reexcavated in 1923 and 1960.

HS-32 An earth borrow pit, 137'x110'x10' maximum depth. It was reexcavated in 15 and 1960.

HS-33 An earth borrow pit, 131'x55'x5' maximum depth. It was reexcavated in 1921 and 1960.

(Continued on Continuation Sheet 10-300A)
Mound City was mapped and partially excavated in 1846 by two pioneering archeologists, E. G. Squier and E. H. Davis. The results of their survey of prehistoric earthworks, Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley, appeared in 1848 in the first publication of the newly founded Smithsonian Institution. Though early explorers had noticed many of the mounds, Squier and Davis' work was the first detailed study of prehistoric structures in the Mississippi Valley and is an archeological milestone.

The excavations at Mound City by Squier and Davis produced a great many spectacular objects, most interesting of which were numerous stone effigy pipes. Many were realistically carved in the images of birds, animals, and human heads. These objects, first acquired by the Blackmore Museum in England, were later transferred to the British Museum, London, where they remain today.

During World War I the area comprising Mound City was incorporated into Camp Sherman, a large training center. In 1920-21, after Camp Sherman had been razed, the Ohio Historical Society conducted extensive excavations at the site. These supplemented the information secured by Squier and Davis. A few years later the society restored the earthworks according to the best information available and developed the tract into a State memorial. The 1920-21 excavation brought to light many interesting details of the construction and purpose of the mounds and yielded many fine artifacts typical of the Hopewell culture.

Recent excavations have revealed further information about the mounds and their ancient builders. A more accurate restoration of many parts of the site has been made possible under a program of archeological research.

*The other structures described above do not contribute to the significance of the national monument. These include the several hundred construction stones (HS-37) from Ohio and Erie Canal Lock No. 35, which was dismantled during the 1930s, when the stones were deposited in their present positions on the banks of the Scioto River. The stones, in ruinous condition, lack integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association.*

The steps, platforms, walks, and dock (HS-38) were constructed in the mid- to late 1930s by the Works Progress Administration. The structures do not contribute to the significance of the monument. Further, their condition has deteriorated to the extent that they pose a serious safety hazard.*

**Amended information.**