

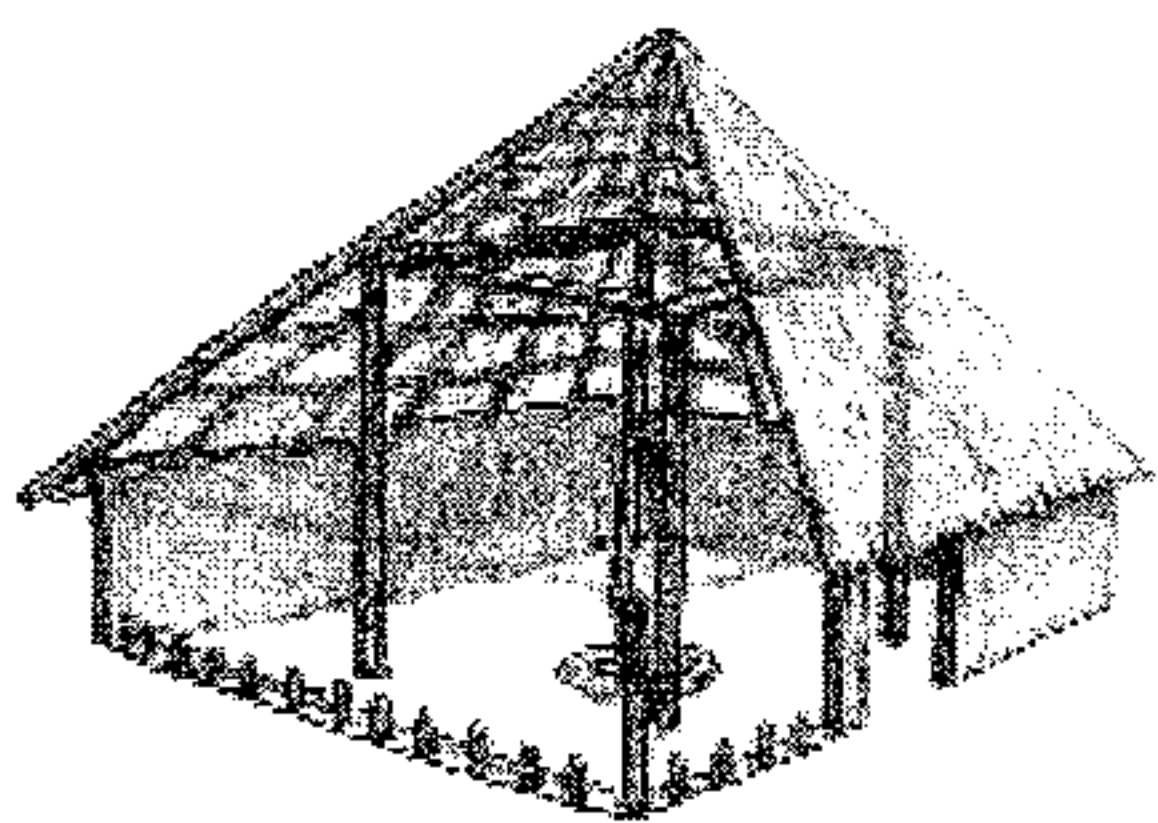
8. **BURIAL MOUND** In 1877 Fredrick W. Putnam of Harvard's Peabody Museum spent five days with a local crew excavating the site. At this point was the village's burial mound, 41 feet in diameter and three feet high. Burials were in a square around the edge in three tiers and 2 to 3 irregular rows. The graves were mostly of the stone box type (a characteristic of the Middle Cumberland Culture) with single extended burials in them. He found many artifacts in the graves and they with the surviving skeletal remains were taken back to the Peabody.

9. **LOW "MOUND"** Once believed to have been a residential mound, this round earthen "mound" is now believed to have been where Putnam deposited the dirt from his excavations. A 1977 State dug trench did reveal that two house sites were under it at the lowest levels.

10. **CREEK AND BLUFF** Spring Creek flows along the northern edge of the village. On its northern and eastern bank is a bluff. The low, rich creek flood plain was cultivated by the women for the production of corn, squash and beans.

(Return toward the village, turn left along the wall line.)

11. **HOUSE SITE** This house site, excavated by the State in 1981 was of post construction and 18 feet. Putnam observed over 100 "house rings", 10 to 50 feet wide and a few inches to 3 feet high. Actually the houses were square, and constructed of wood, cane, mud and thatched roofs.



(Walk to site 3, turn left down the path to the entrance.)

THE MISSISSIPPIAN PERIOD AND THE SELLARS FARM SITE

AROUND 900 AD A NEW NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL PERIOD DEVELOPED IN THE MIDDLE MISSISSIPPI RIVER VALLEY. KNOWN AS THE MISSISSIPPIAN PERIOD, IT BECAME THE LAST PREHISTORIC CULTURAL PERIOD. IT WAS CHARACTERIZED BY: 1. CONSTRUCTION OF EARTHEN FLAT TOP MOUNDS TOPPED BY A BUILDING 2. PERMANENT FORTIFIED VILLAGES 3. A STRUCTURED SOCIETY 4. RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES. THIS AGRICULTURAL BASED SOCIETY DEVELOPED BECAUSE OF THE CULTIVATION OF MAIZE (CORN.)

WHEN INTRODUCED INTO THE MIDDLE CUMBERLAND RIVER REGION THE NATIVE INHABITANTS ADOPTED ITS BASIC CHARACTERISTICS AND DEVELOPED THEIR OWN INCLUDING: 1. BURIALS IN STONE BOX GRAVES 2. STONE STATUES REPRESENTING ELITE ANCESTORS 3. SHELL TEMPERED POTTERY. AS PART OF THIS MIDDLE CUMBERLAND MISSISSIPPIAN CULTURE THAT EXTENDED FROM SOUTHERN KENTUCKY EASTWARD TO THE HIGHLAND RIM, THE SELLARS FARM VILLAGE SITE WAS ON A TRADE ROUTE SOUTHWARD TOWARD GEORGIA. FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON THE CUMBERLAND VILLAGES WERE ABANDONED BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEAN SETTLERS AND THE AREA BECAME THE HUNTING GROUND OF THE HISTORIC PERIOD TRIBES, CHEROKEES, CHICKASAWS AND SHAWNEES WHO RETAINED SOME OF THE MISSISSIPPIAN CHARACTERISTICS.

AFTER THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR NATHANIEL LAWRENCE RECEIVED THE SELLARS FARM SITE AS PART OF HIS LAND GRANT. IT WAS INHERITED BY HIS DESCENDANTS, THE LINDSLEYS. IN 1877 MRS. NATHANIEL LINDSLEY INVITED ARCHAEOLOGIST DR. FREDERIC W. PUTNAM OF THE PEABODY MUSEUM, HARVARD TO EXCAVATE THE SITE. IN 1909 JAMES SELLARS PURCHASED THE SITE AND CULTIVATED THE VILLAGE AREA. BETWEEN 1923 AND 1939 FOUR STONE HUMAN STATUES WERE UNCOVERED. THE STATE OF TENNESSEE ACQUIRED THE SITE IN 1974. THE FRIENDS OF SELLARS FARM WAS FORMED IN 1999 AND IN 2004 DEVELOPMENT BY THE STATE PARKS BEGAN.



Sellars Farm
State
Archaeological
Area

A WALKING TOUR

WELCOME TO THE SELLARS FARM STATE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA. YOUR TOUR WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH THE SITE OF A FORTIFIED PREHISTORIC NATIVE AMERICAN VILLAGE OF THE MISSISSIPPIAN CULTURAL PERIOD OCCUPIED FROM 1000 AD TO 1300 AD.

THE TOUR BEGINS AT THE INTERPRETIVE KIOSK AT THE PARKING AREA. PROCEED DOWN THE PATH THROUGH THE WOODS INTO THE OPEN FIELD. BEAR TO THE RIGHT ALONG THE TREE LINE INTO THE WOODS.

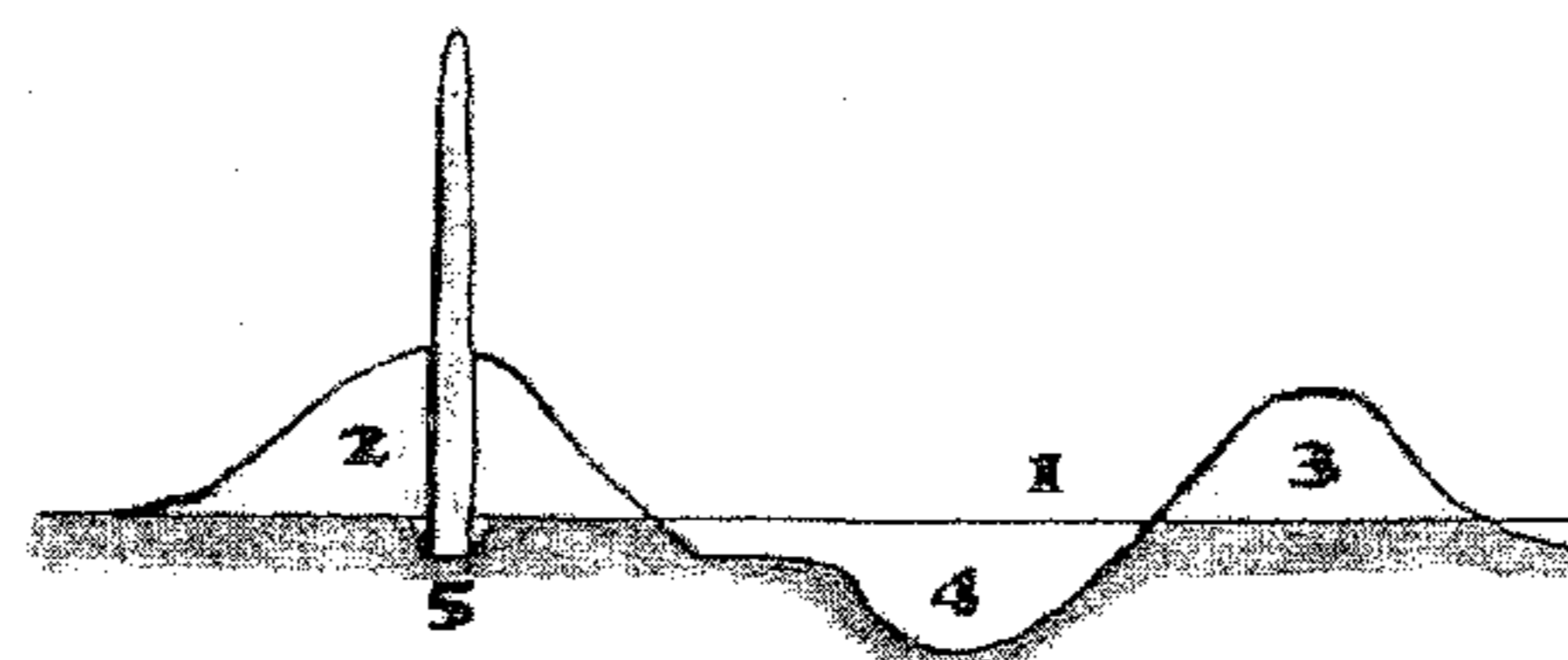
THE WALKING TOUR IS OVER NATURAL TERRAIN, SO WALK CAREFULLY ON THE PATHS. DO NOT WALK ON ANY FEATURES, EARTHEN WALLS OR THE MOUND. THE AREA IS PROTECTED BY LAW SO DO NOT REMOVE ANY ARTICLES INCLUDING STONES, SHELLS, WOOD OR PLANTS. AS YOU WALK THE PATHS, REMEMBER TO SHOW RESPECT FOR THE ANCIENT INHABITANTS WHOSE CHILDREN REMAIN BURIED IN THE AREA AND FOR THE NATURAL SURROUNDINGS.





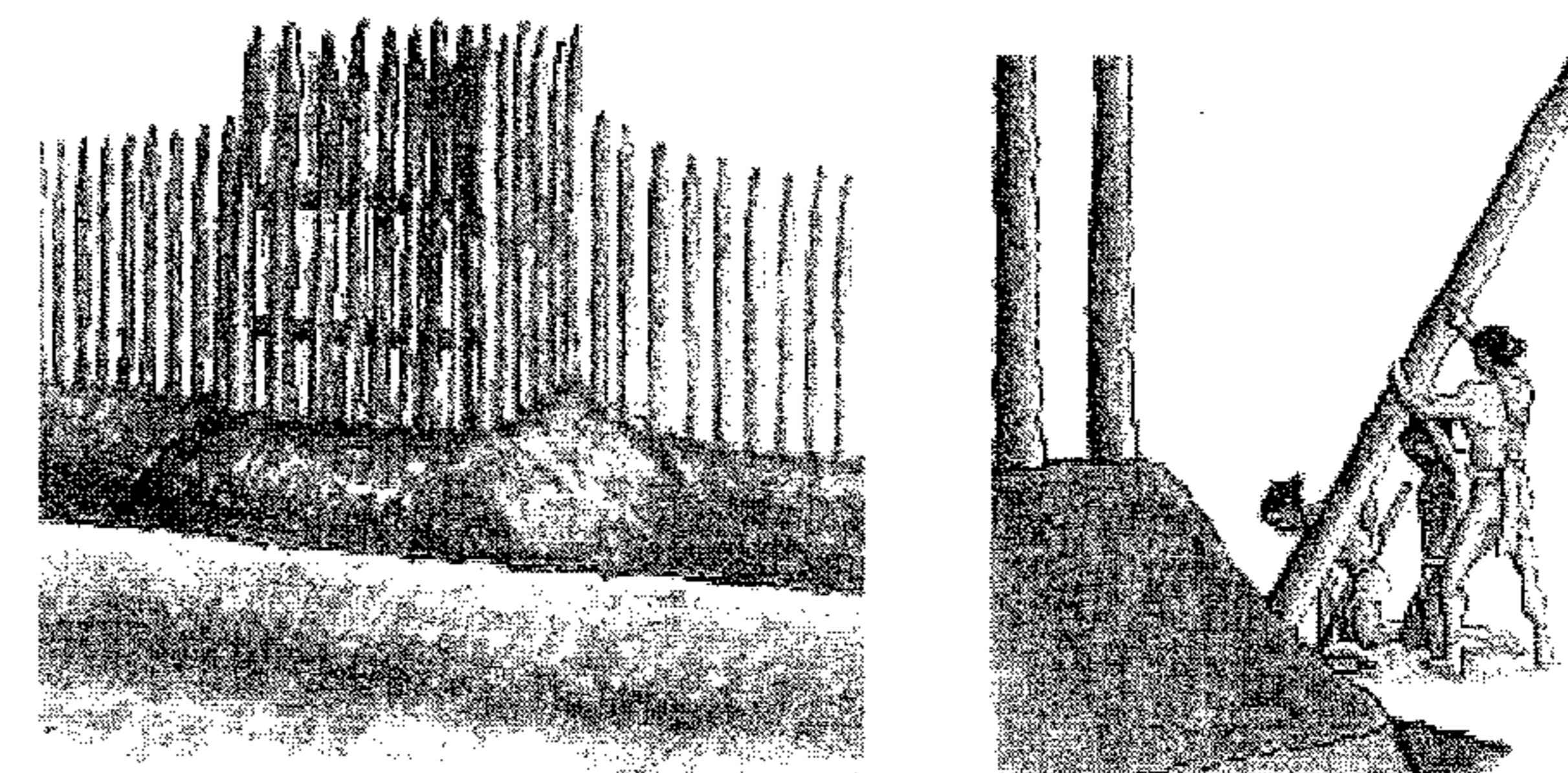
1. **SPRING CREEK** Spring Creek flows northward into the Cumberland River. The village was built in one of its bends so that it would provide natural protection on three sides. It also produced food, fish and fresh water mussels, whose shells were crushed and used in the shell tempered pottery.
2. **LOW MOUNDS** A row of six low mounds stretches along the rise overlooking the creek on the village's South side. Archaeological excavations have found that they contained stone and soil with evidence of fire. A similar mound was on the North side. The purpose is unknown.
3. **ENTRY INTO THE VILLAGE THROUGH THE WALL** At this point, the western most entry into the village was situated. The village was surrounded by a 2,700 feet long, three to four feet high outer earthen wall (3), a three to four feet deep ditch (4), and a four to five feet high inner earthen wall (2) topped by a wooden

palisade (5) probably of cedar. There were three entries on the southern and southeastern sides. An earthen causeway crossed the ditch at these points.



(Walk left along the wall line)

4. **EARLY PALISADE** During a State dig, an early 1000 AD palisade was discovered to the east of the later wall. It formed a slight angle in which a platform was situated for watchmen to see westward at this highest point along the perimeter of the village.



5. **BASTIONS AND WALLS** At every 110 feet along the palisade wall were projecting earthen bastions on which were watch towers. Two of them and a segment of the walls remain in this area because it was too rocky to plow. The ditch can still be detected in the open field to the south.

(Follow the trail through the woods with the walls to your right. As you exit the woods, walk to the right.)



6. **PLATFORM MOUND** You are facing the rear and west side of the flat topped pyramidal platform mound on which was built a structure of importance, either the ruler's dwelling or a council house. It is 15 feet high, 138 by 120 feet at the base and 95 by 75 feet at the top. Putnam dug a trench into it from the east starting at 4 feet and expanding to 14 feet halfway through. He discovered that it was built in three stages with ash on two of the lower ones. No burials or important artifacts were found.

(Continue to the left of the mound, then right to the east front.)

7. **PLAZA** Characteristic of Mississippian villages was a central plaza on which were held games and public events and ceremonies. It was surrounded on three sides by dwellings.