

In 1967 Ripley P. Bullen presented the initial version of his projectile point classification at the annual meeting of the Florida Anthropological Society. Bullen must have been surprised at the exuberant reception his project received; Florida archaeologists were hungry for descriptive data that could be used to help them interpret site chronologies.

Many of the suggestions made by members of the Florida Anthropological Society subsequently were incorporated into Bullen's first edition of the projectile point guide published the following year (1968) by the Florida State Museum (now the Florida Museum of Natural History). In the Introduction to that 1968 edition, Bullen remarked "students of projectile points wished considerably more detailed information than had been originally contemplated. At the risk of making this guide too lengthy, the author has tried to please all, partially if not completely" (p. 2). In large part because of demand, what Bullen had envisioned as a modest aid to point identification had grown into a small monograph.

And it would grow even more. The 1968 *Guide* stimulated the recognition of more projectile point types as people sought to use the information contained in the publication and as Bullen continued his own research. As a result, a second edition of the *Guide* was published in 1975 by Kendall Books, a company formed by Ripley and his wife Adelaide Bullen (Kendall was Adelaide's maiden name). That expanded *Guide* contained 50 types of points and was 62 pages long, about one-third larger than the earlier edition with its 39 point types and 50 pages.

Bullen put considerable effort into the *Guide*, examining and measuring literally thousands of individual projectile points in the collections of the Florida Museum of Natural History as well as collections elsewhere in the state. Notes in his personal "Projectile Point Typology" file folder curated at the Museum indicate that he already was gathering data for the *Guide* at least by 1957. In that endeavor he was influenced by a somewhat peculiar index card file of points curated at the

Museum. That card file, cross-referenced to specific points in the Museum's anthropology collections, apparently predated Bullen's tenure at the museum and must have been started by earlier personnel.

That card file—containing nearly 5000 individual entries, a yard-high stack--classified Museum points by various physical characteristics. "Types" include "basally notched," "beveled," "bifurcated," and so on through "lanceolate-basally smoothed," "corner-notched," "corner-removed," and on to "wide-stemmed." There even is a category for "freaks," points which defy classification.

Bullen examined every one of the index cards and the vast majority bear his pencil notations. Entries continued to be added during the 1950s when Bullen served as Museum curator and John M. Goggin taught in the University of Florida anthropology department located across town from the Museum. Cards for the point types Pinellas, Ichetucknee, and Tampa, all types defined by Goggin in the early 1950s, were added during that time, and Bullen consulted with Goggin before he published the first edition of the *Guide*. While doing his research Bullen refiled some of the older index cards under the new type names he would define in print in 1968. The categories Marion, Putnam, Levy, and Alachua appear in the file, written in Bullen's hand.

It is clear from the introductions to both the 1968 and 1975 *Guide* editions that Bullen was influenced by the data in this index card file. He explicitly states that his classifications were based on "basal modifications as hafting traits" and things such as "beveled or strongly serrated edges" as opposed to "blade shape, curvature of blade edges, and [in some cases] size" (p. 1 in both editions). The latter were traits he believed could be altered by point resharpening and, thus, were untrustworthy as defining characteristics.

Bullen recognized that any projectile point guide had short-comings. One foible of which he

was cognizant was that the available information on the cultural and temporal contexts for some of his point types was limited because of a lack of excavated specimens. He also knew that the use of outline-drawings of the points was not as satisfactory as more comprehensive illustrations or photographs, but his desire to produce a publication that was low-cost overrode that concern.

Bullen heeded advice from others on how to strengthen his *Guide*. In his Projectile Point Typology file folder is a copy of pages 13-14 of the *Eastern States Archaeological Federation Bulletin 26* issued in 1967. Written in red pencil at the top of page 13 is "Rip: Have you seen this! El," with a line drawn to an article by Maurice Robbins entitled "Report of the Research Committee--Eastern States Archaeological Federation." El, who I believe is Elston D. Fagan of Fort Walton Beach, Florida, whose point collections Bullen examined, had highlighted several of the Robbins committee's admonitions about projectile point classifications then in use in the eastern United States. Those comments included the following: "our distinct impression is that we need better illustrations, more detailed descriptions, and a range of variation for projectile-point types." Bullen took to heart many of the report's comments, such as those regarding the need to adequately define descriptive terms and to provide information on variability.

Ripley Bullen died in late 1976. He left behind a legacy of archaeological research which few people can match. Ripley would be the first to admit that his *Guide* is by no means perfect; it was meant to continue to be revised as new information was gathered. Even so, it remains a valuable tool for Florida archaeology.

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