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A Hillside Midden, King's Forest Park Site

ABSTRACT

This report lists the finds made in an excavation of a midden on the King's Forest Park site subsequent to the Society's excavation carried out in the spring of 1963.

INTRODUCTION

Reports of an area of disturbed, blackened earth containing pot sherds, located on the south side of the north playing field of Rosedale Park led to the discovery of the second midden to be recorded on the King's Forest Park Site, Hamilton, Ontario. The midden was located at the edge of a woodlot and seems to have escaped extensive disturbance through European cultivation for this reason. Previously, one midden and eleven hearths had been excavated.

EXCAVATION

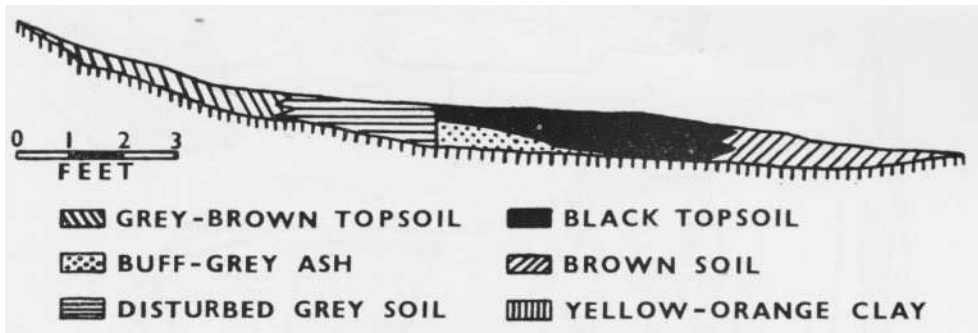
When the reported location was first checked in September, 1965, it was found that the midden was disturbed generally in the northern half and in a few places in the southern half.

A test trench revealed that part of the midden was still undisturbed and a five-foot test-square was then excavated in what was believed to be the richest part of the midden. Some artifacts were obtained and the walls showed four profiles of the refuse accumulation. Since an east-west cross-section of the midden was desired to give the midden profile in Figure 1, excavation of a series of 30 in. squares was begun. The work was soon halted by winter.

In March, 1966, the excavation of 30 in. squares was continued in all four directions to determine the extent of the midden, to gain more profiles and to obtain more analysable artifacts. A total of 137.5 sq. ft. of the refuse deposit was excavated which measured approximately 26 (N-S) by 17 (E-W) ft. No stratigraphic change was noted in the midden material, sherds from the top and bottom of the deposit often belonging to the same vessel.

FOOD REMAINS

Shell fragments of the painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta*) and fish bones predominated in the midden remains. Among the fish represented in the midden deposit were speckled trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), bowfin

**E—W CROSS—SECTION LOOKING N.****FIGURE I**

(*Amia calva*), brown bullhead (*Ictalurus nebulosus*), and possibly the freshwater drum (*Aplodnotus grunniens*).

The only large mammals represented in the remains are the black bear (*Ursus americanus*) and the white-tail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*). Bones of the grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) were by far the most common of the mammalian remains, but a few beaver (*Castor canadensis*) and woodchuck (*Marmota monax*) were also present.

Among the bird remains, bones of the passenger pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*) were the most common, but one blue-winged teal bone (*Anus discors*) was identified, and some turkey bones (*Meleagris gallopavo*), bleached from exposure, may be of the same age as the midden. The remaining avian bones were from rails (*Rullidae*) and various species of ducks (*Anas spp.*).

A single bone from a snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) and one frog vertebra were recovered, together with a number of freshwater clam shells.

ARTIFACTS

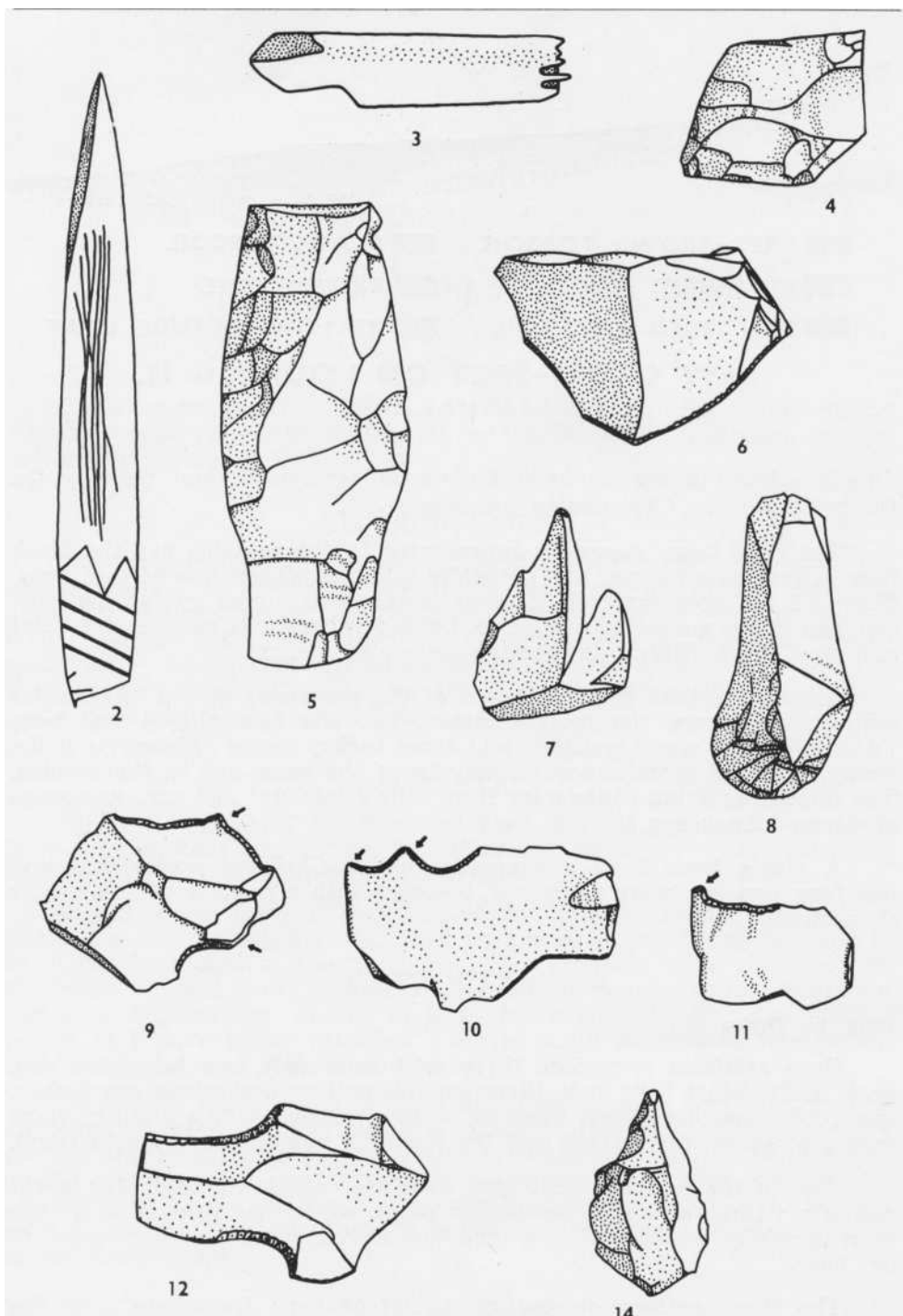
WORKED BONE

Bone artifacts comprised three split bone awls, one fish spine awl, parts of five other bone awls, three possible pottery decorators, one flesher, one crude bone bead, one piece of worked turtle shell, a slightly worn fragment of beaver incisor and the top of a possible three tooth comb.

Two of the complete split bone awls are notable for their fine workmanship. One has a fine, needle-like point, while the other (Fig. 2) has been carefully worked all over and has an incised geometric design at its base.

The three pottery decorators consist of bone fragments with the sharp ends slightly smoothed.

The flesher is a blade of bone whose sharp edges are rounded from use.

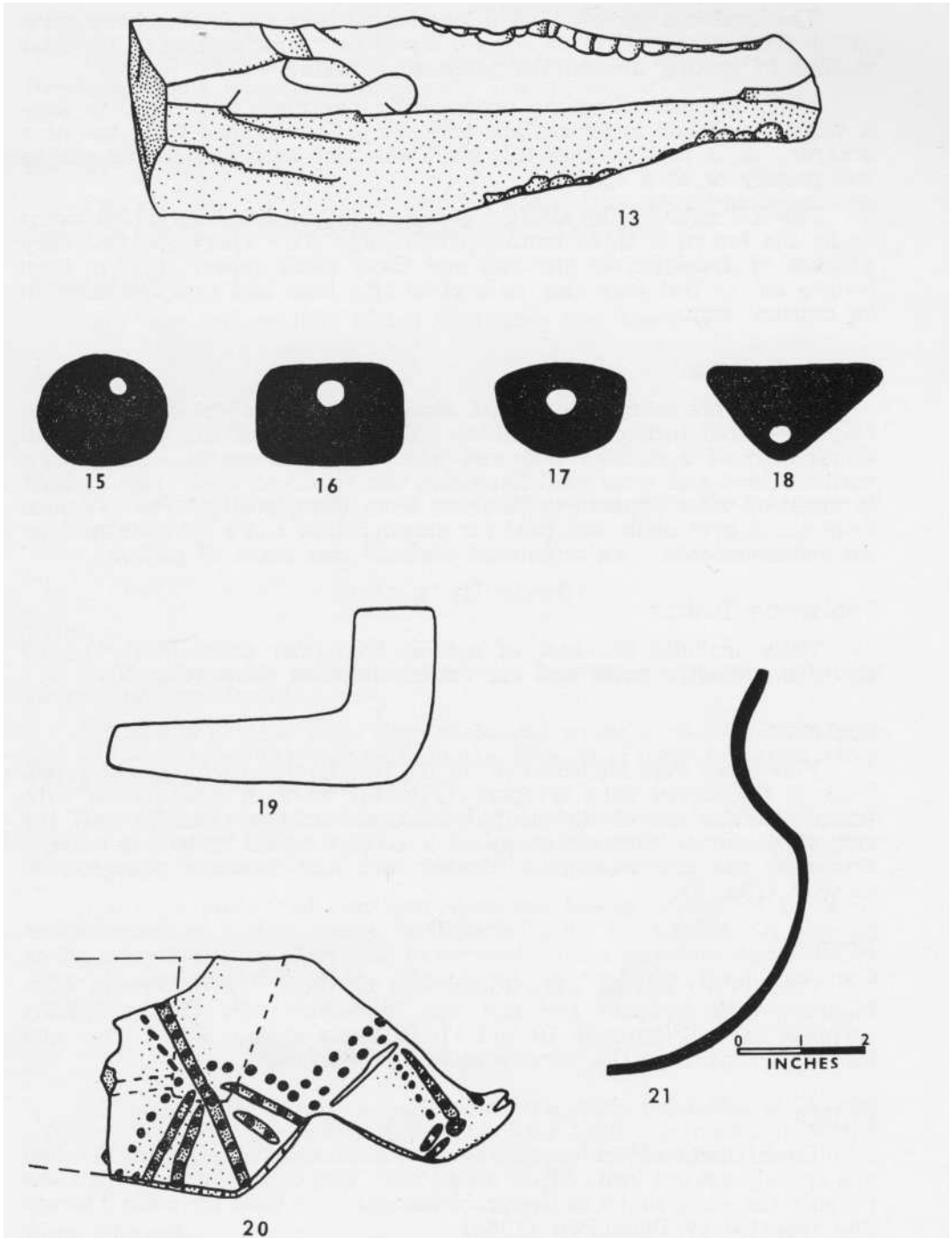


FIGURES 2 - 21 — Drawings of stone, bone and pottery artifacts

Figures 2 and 3 — Bone artifacts

Figures 4 - 14 — Stone artifacts

Figures 15 - 18 — Cross-sections of pipe stems



from the Hillside Midden, King's Forest Park Site.

- Figure 19 — Lateral outline of clay pipe
- Figure 20 — Detail of fragmentary clay effigy pipe bowl
- Figure 21 — Half-section of clay vessel

The bead is a section of bird long-bone whose rough ends show some polish from wear. If this is a bead, it was not manufactured by the later method of cutting around the proposed breaking point.

While reconstructing the turtle shells, one piece was found to have a slightly polished under-surface and one edge smoothed from use as a scraper. It is possible that this shell was used as a tool for smoothing wet pottery or as a spoon.

The last note-worthy artifact is a piece of polished bone which seems to be the top of a three toothed comb (Fig. 3). There are two deep grooves or fractures at one end and three teeth appear to have been broken off, or this may only be a piece of a bone awl that fractured in an unusual way.

LITHIC INDUSTRY

There were many fire-cracked stones and some chert and limestone chips scattered through the midden. The majority of the artifacts and flakes were of a mottled grey and white chert. Some blue and brown mottled chert and some local limestone was also recovered. One artifact is made of what appears to be chert from the deposit at Port Franks, Ontario. A grey shale was used for an anvilstone and a brown sandstone for hammerstones. An unfinished axehead was made of gabbro.

PROJECTILE POINTS

These included one base of a wide triangular point (Fig. 4), one tip of a projectile point and one crude, stemmed point (Fig. 5).

SCRAPERS

Five types were identified out of the twenty-one specimens recovered. Two of the eleven flake scrapers (Fig. 6), were in combination with burins, as was one of the six pointed nose scrapers (Fig. 7). Of the two plano-convex scrapers, one had a crudely flaked underside. There was also one concave-convex scraper and one stemmed plano-convex scraper (Fig. 8).

BURINS

Twenty-two burins were found and of these, three were in combination with scrapers and one was in combination with a slightly serrated flake. Figures 9, 10 and 11, illustrate various burin types and the arrows point to the projecting worked surfaces.

BLADES

These comprised six used flakes, two backed flakes (Fig. 12) and one crudely shaped knife blade (Fig. 13). One of the backed flakes has roughly the same shape as the problematical bone tools from the Thomas Site reported by Donaldson (1962).

DRILLS

Only one crude chert drill was found (Fig. 14).

CORES

Three cores were recovered, one being a bi-polar blade core of limestone, one a limestone pebble core, and one a chert rectangular flake core.

HAMMERSTONES

Two circular, pitted hammerstones, one oblong, pitted hammerstone, and one oblong chipped hammerstone were recovered.

ANVILSTONES

Only one rectangular pitted anvilstone was recovered.

AXEHEADS

One flaked, unfinished specimen was recovered.

PIGMENT

One piece of red ochre was recovered which may have been used as pigment.

CERAMIC INDUSTRY

PIPES

Seven fragments of clay pipes were recovered, but no stone pipe fragments were found.

Six pieces of pipe stem were recovered whose sections varied from one elliptical (Fig. 15), one rectangular (Fig. 16), three trapezoid (Fig. 17), and one trianguloid (Fig. 18).

The broken end of a trapezoid sectioned pipestem had been lightly ground for re-use and all the stems can be classified as modified plat-form type. A general lateral profile of the pipes is shown in Figure 19.

The only pipe bowl recovered does not belong to any of the stem types recovered and is unique in Ontario to my knowledge. It appears to be a stylized bird effigy and is covered with a punctate design. The effigy is upside-down on the *pipe* bowl, so that the head and neck protrude downwards (Fig. 20).

POTTERY

All pottery classification has been done with reference to Wright (1966). The first three seriation tables have been constructed in such a way as to make a convenient pottery comparison between the midden and the Glen Meyer branch sites listed by Wright.

BODY SHERDS

Six types of surface treatment are represented in the five hundred and eighty-five body sherds recovered. These are, in order of frequency: smoothed-over cord, plain, cord malleated, twined fabric impressed, scari-

TABLE 1

BODY SHERD SERIATION

	Plain	Scarified	Fabric Impressed	Cord Malleated	Smoothed-over Cord	Paddle Malleated	Ribbed	Unidentified
f	88	8	28	56	398	1	6	
%	15.0	1.4	4.8	9.6	68.0	0.2	1.0	

TABLE 2

NECK SHERD SERIATION

	Decorated	Plain	Smoothed-over Cord	Scarified	Cord Malleated
f	27	106	94	37	1
%	10.2	40.0	35.5	13.9	0.4

fled and ribbed paddle malleated. The body sherd seriation is recorded on Table 1. Six body sherds were unidentifiable because the exterior surface had split off.

The largest vessel reconstructed showed the body shape to be quite similar to that of several more completely restored vessels from the Woodman site. The profile of a finely made vessel from the Woodman site is illustrated in Figure 21.

NECK SHERDS

Two hundred and sixty-five neck sherds were recovered and are seriated in Table 2. What may be black paint adheres to the surface of two smoothed-over cord sherds.

RIM SHERDS

A seriation of the one hundred and twelve rim sherds recovered is recorded on Table 3. Of the seven decorated sherds from juvenile vessels, six could be identified using Wright's (1966) typology and are included in Table 3. Two rim sherds were Middleport Criss-Cross, two were Woods-men Corded, one was Goessens Punctate, one was Stafford Stamped. The seventh sherd still retained finger marks and had two parallel rows of vertical linear stamp along one edge. Table 4 is a seriation of rim sherd bossing.

CASTELLATIONS

There were two varieties: incipient pointed and incipient rounded. The numbers in brackets following each vessel type represent the number of castellations found per vessel. Incipient pointed castellations occurred on one Ontario Oblique vessel (1), one Stafford Dentate vessel (1), one Middleport Criss-Cross vessel (2) and one Scugog Classic Bossed vessel (1). Incipient rounded castellations were found on two Ontario Oblique vessels (1), one Ontario Horizontal vessel (4) and one Stafford Stamped vessel (1). One channelled castellation from a Stafford Dentate vessel had a broken peak and could not be classified. The Scugog Classic Bossed vessel castellation was channelled and was bolder than usual. The Middleport Criss-Cross vessel which was castellated, is the afore-mentioned juvenile vessel of this type, and one Woodsmen Corded juvenile vessel rim sherd represented one half of a castellation. No vessels combined incipient pointed and incipient rounded castellations.

MISCELLANEOUS

Two Ontario Oblique vessels had been drilled. Two holes were drilled near the rim of one ; one either side of a vertical crack. Carbonized food was found adhering to the exterior surface of this vessel in the vicinity of the vertical crack. Apparently, the cracked vessel was held together by a thong or twine.

A half-round fillet was added to the upper face of an Ontario Oblique vessel rim and a clay slip covered part of the decoration of an Ontario Oblique rim sherd.

The clay needed for the pottery possibly was obtained from the creek bank at the north end of the site, where there is a deposit of the

grey clay which is found fired in refuse deposits on the nearby Woodman site of a similar age.

TABLE 3
RIM SHERD SERIATION

	f	%
Ontario Oblique -----	46	41.1
Glen Meyer Oblique -----		
Middleport Criss-Cross -----	7	6.2
Stafford Stamped -----	2	1.8
Ripley Plain -----	6	5.4
Woodsmen Corded -----	3	2.7
Glen Meyer Linear Stamped -----	11	9.8
Goessens Punctate -----	4	3.6
Glen Meyer Necked -----	9	8.0
Goessens Necked -----		
Goessens Oblique -----	1	0.9
Stafford Dentate -----	12	10.7
Ontario Horizontal -----	9	8.0
Iroquois Linear -----		
Scugog Classic Bossed -----	2	1.8
<hr/>		
Total -----	112	100

CONCLUSION

Since only one midden is represented in this report, the material reported represents an incomplete, but probably pure assemblage of the artifacts used by a Southern Ontario Indian group.

Ontario Oblique, Middleport Criss-Cross and Ripley Plain rim types comprised 52.7 % of the midden rim sherds. This rim type percentage is used by Wright (1966) to confirm his chronology of four Glen Meyer branch sites and seems to indicate that the midden material is of a mid-Glen Meyer cultural provenance by Wright's chronology.

The presence of rim types common to both Glen Meyer and Pickering branch sites, such as: Ontario Oblique, Ripley Plain and variations on Stafford Dentate, and the presence of Ontario Horizontal and Scugog Classic Bossed rim types which are noted only on Pickering branch sites, indicate that there was probably contact between the people of the King's Forest Park site and the Pickering branch. It is interesting to note that a major Glen Meyer branch rim type, Glen Meyer Oblique, is absent from the midden assemblage.

TABLE 4
RIM SHERD BOSSING SERIATION

	Exterior		Bosses		Exterior Punctates (No Bosses)		Interior Punctate (No Bosses)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Ontario Oblique	-	-	30	65.1	-	-	-	-
Glen Meyer Oblique	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Middleport Criss-Cross	-	-	4	57.1	-	-	-	-
Stafford Stamped	-	-	1	50.0	-	-	-	-
Ripley Plain	-	-	2	33.3	-	-	-	-
Woodsmen Corded	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Glen Meyer Linear Stamped	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Goessens Punctate	-	-	2	50.0	-	-	1	25.0
Glen Meyer Necked	-	-	4	44.4	-	-	-	-
Goessens Necked	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Goessens Oblique	-	-	1	100.0	-	-	-	-
Stafford Dentate	-	-	-	-	2	16.7	1	8.3
Ontario Horizontal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iroquois Linear	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scugog Classic Bossed	-	-	2	100.0	-	-	-	-

The food remains point to a summer and fall occupation of the site. It therefore seems that the King's Forest Park site was only occupied seasonally, which is in agreement with the finding of the 1965 report on the site.

In summary, it can be said that at least one family of the Glen Meyer people, at some time close to 1200 A.D. (Wright, 1966), made their summer and fall home on the site area. They probably lived a less than comfortable existence through practicing some agriculture augmented by small game hunting and fishing. The fish represented in the midden could be caught in nearby Albion Creek and at its mouth where a marsh probably existed as it does today. Their main small game, the grey squirrel, was no doubt found in the vicinity of the site.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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