

## EXCAVATION AT **THE** GLEN MEYER REID SITE LONG POINT, LAKE ERIE

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### *ABSTRACT*

The Reid Site (Ad Hc-5), is a late (circa A.D. 1300) Glen Meyer village located two miles north of Long Point, Lake Erie. Excavations resulted in the definition of a one acre double palisaded village with six longhouse structures. Reid burial patterns provide the first substantial set of data regarding this little known aspect of Glen Meyer Culture.

Preliminary analysis of the Reid Site artifacts, in conjunction with settlement and burial pattern, offers significant insight into the composition of late Glen Meyer Culture. Most significant, however, are the insights Reid offers with regard to the Glen Meyer/Pickering amalgamation question, and the resultant formation of the Middleport horizon of the Ontario Iroquois Tradition.

### *INTRODUCTION*

The Reid Site was initially recorded by Thomas Lee in his 1949 survey of southwestern Ontario. At that time Lee placed Reid within his newly formulated Glen Meyer focus. During the period from May 19 to July 14, 1976, a crew of nine students excavated the Reid Site.

The Reid Site is located two miles north of Long Point, Lake Erie, adjacent to Deidrich Creek. Occupying an elevated knoll, Reid is 70 feet above present lake level. The area surrounding the site consists of a series of large knolls and dry hollows, and forms part of the Norfolk sand plain (Fig. 1). At the time of Lee's survey he recorded the site as several acres in size owing to the fact that virtually every knoll yields some artifactual remains. Excavations were concentrated on the knoll which yielded the most promising surface collection.

### *SETTLEMENT PATTERN*

Through the energetic efforts of the four women — five man crew, over 29,000 square feet of the Reid Site was excavated, recorded and backfilled, without the assistance of power equipment. The one acre village is double palisaded, and contains at least six long-house structures (Fig. 2). No middens were located within the immediate site area, the majority of artifacts being derived from the over 700 pits located inside and outside of the house areas.

### *HOUSE ONE*

House Number 1 is 185' long by 24' wide and is oriented E-W across the long axis of the knoll. It is noted that the east end of House 1 extends well beyond the palisade. Despite extensive test trenching no palisade could be located beyond the end of this house and it is therefore concluded that the Reid Site was abandoned shortly after construction of the easterly extension of House 1. Medial hearths, bunklines and large support posts upwards of one foot in diameter and three feet deep are noted in the interior of this, the longest, house at Reid. Pits within this structure were predominantly circular, although large rectangular pits with squared off bottoms were also noted.

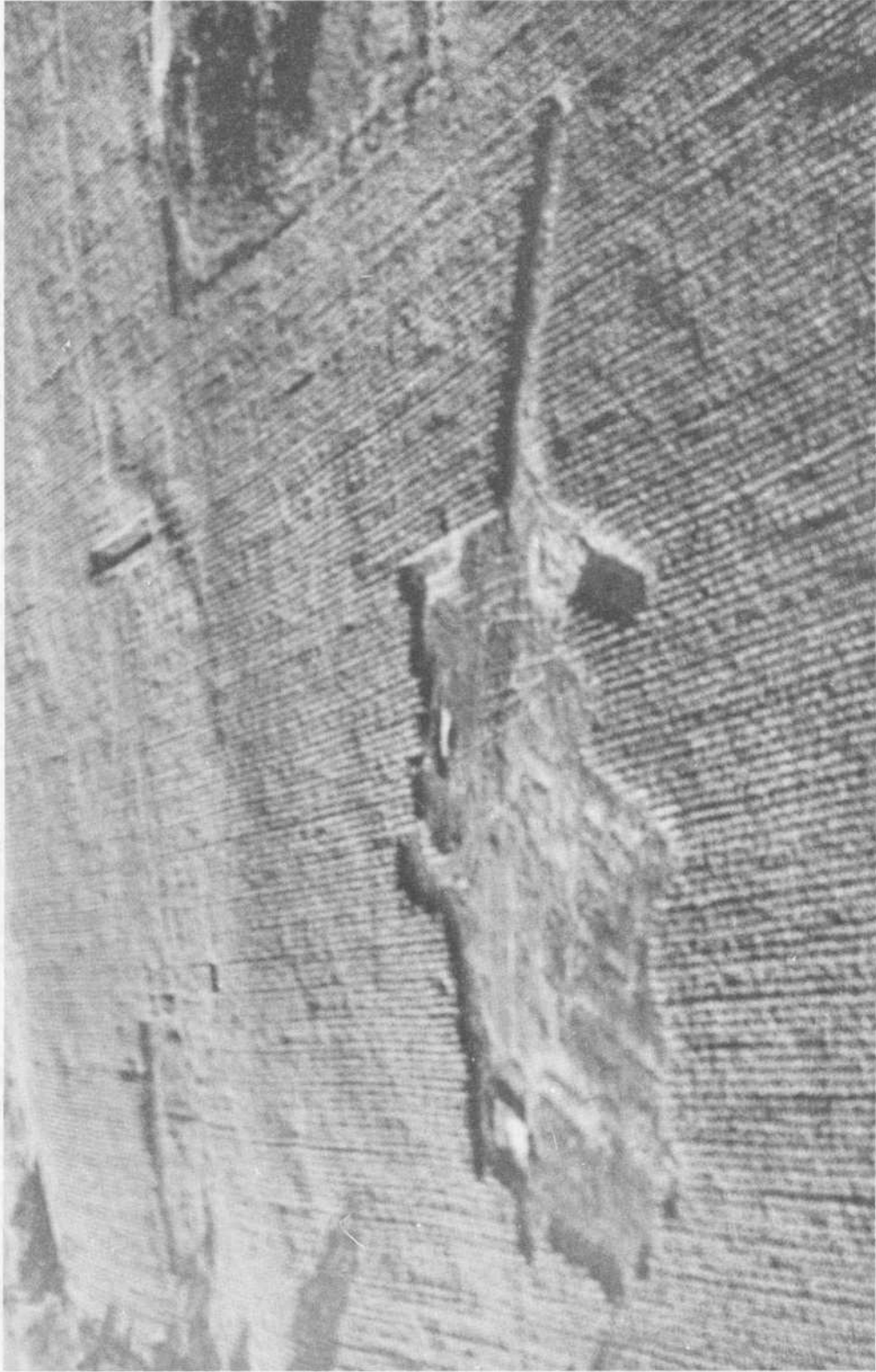


Fig. 1. Aerial view of Reid site.

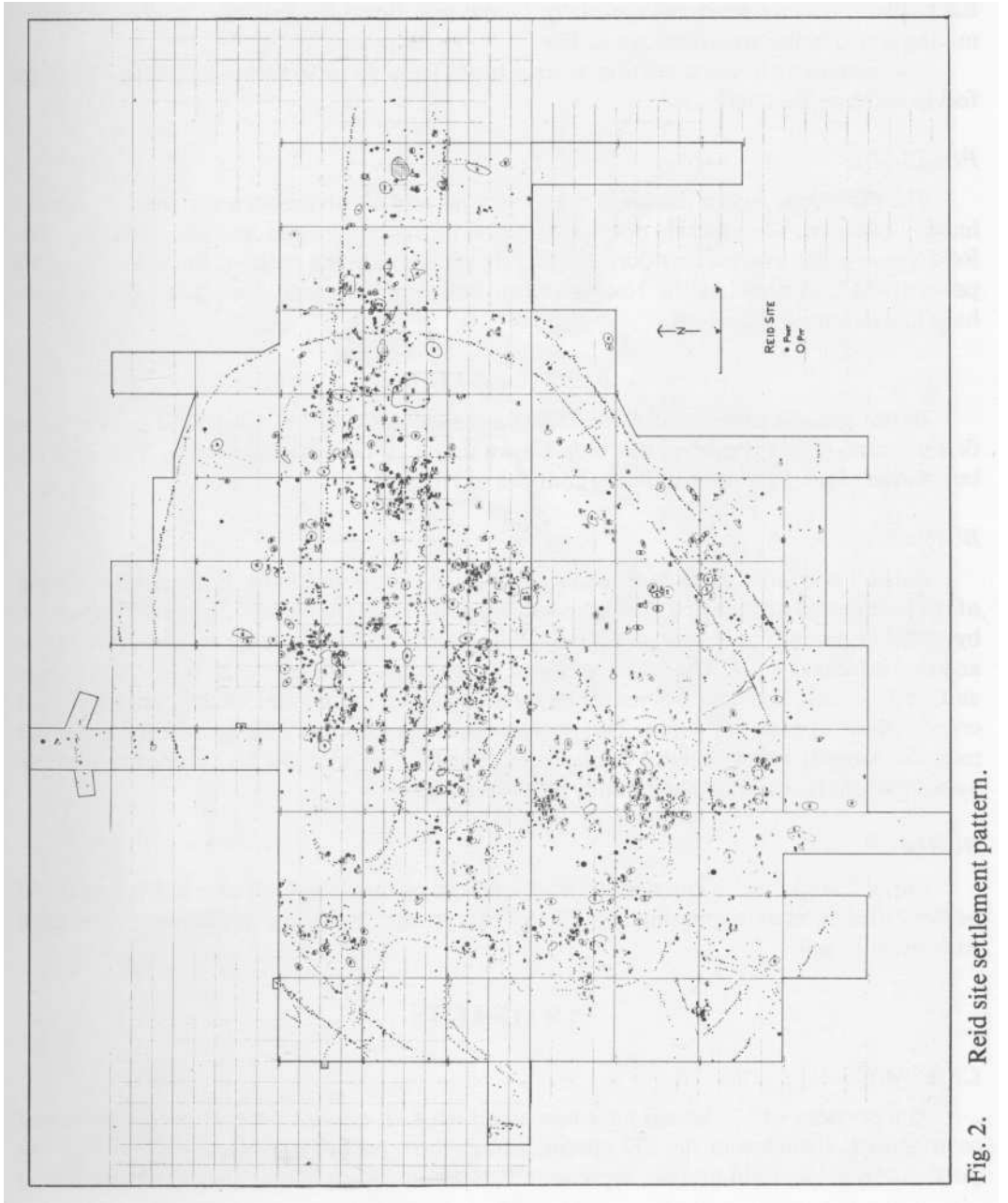


Fig. 2. Reid site settlement pattern.

*HOUSE TWO*

House Number 2 shares a common wall with House 1. Oriented NW-SE this house measures 36 feet in length and 21 feet in width. A single hearth is located in the northwest end of the house, while bunk lines are present along the northern side of this small long-house structure.

*HOUSE THREE*

House Number 3 measures 115 feet in length and 25 feet in width and is oriented NE-SW. Notably House 3 superimposes both House 1 and 2 and gives time depth to the Reid village. Future research, especially faunal and floral studies should assist in determining which house structures are earlier.

The remaining house structures at Reid range from 30 to 56 feet in length and 21 to 25 feet in width respectively.

*PALISADE*

The palisade at Reid is double in most locations and encompasses a site area of approximately one acre. The palisade posts average 3-4 inches in diameter and are closely spaced. Reid also revealed internal corridors and 'cul-de-sacs' within the palisade lines (Fig. 2). This pattern was also noted at the Nodwell, Van Besien and Dewale sites, and is thought to have had defensive functions.

*BURLAL PATTERN*

Burial pattern studies for Glen Meyer are sadly lacking. As such Reid provides the first substantial data regarding this little known aspect of Glen Meyer culture. Two discrete burials were located, both within the confines of House 3.

*BURLAL 1*

Burial 1 contained seven individuals and Burial 2 two individuals. Extensive shattering of the interments was created through wind erosion of the knoll and consequent impaction by heavy farm machinery. Burial 1 is an ossuary burial containing three females, two males and two infants (Fig. 3). The females ranged in age from 17-35 years, the males 35-45 years and both infants between 3-5 years. In three instances the cranial vaults contained post cranial portions of the skeleton. This substantiates the secondary nature of the burial, but may also suggest a new practice in ossuary interments. In addition the composition of the ossuary strongly suggests that a family unit is represented.

*BURLAL 2*

Burial 2 contained 2 individuals, both interred as bundles. Only one individual could be identified, a male approximately 25-35 years in age. No grave goods were associated with either burial.

**ARTIFACTS***CERAMICS*

Rim portions of 277 vessels have been analysed with exterior decorative technique and motif noted. Included in the 277 specimens are three partially restored vessels. The rim portions from the Reid Site are representative of a late Glen Meyer station and seriate at

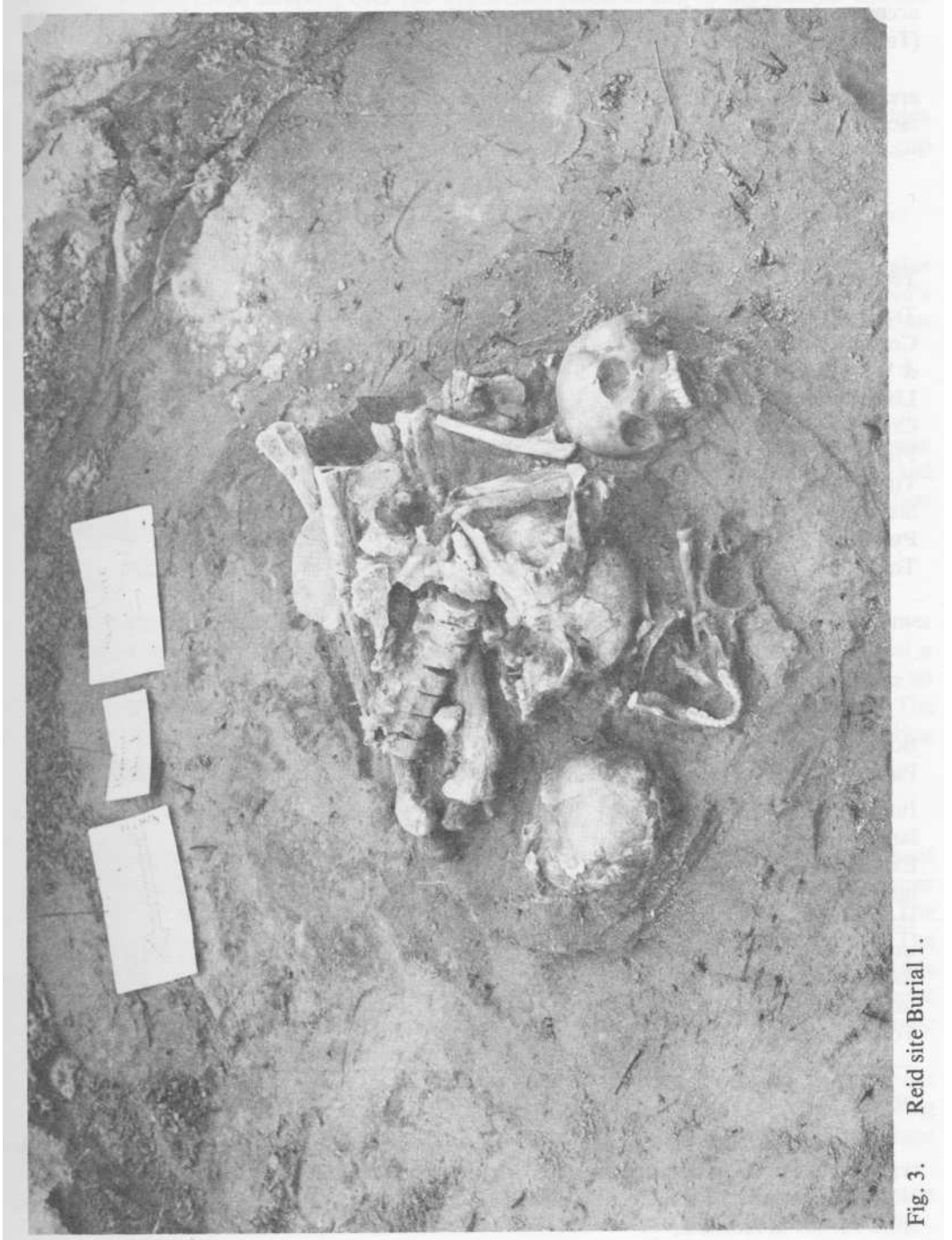


Fig. 3. Reid site Burial 1.

approximately 1300 A.D. Four major decorative techniques of Linear stamping, Cording, Crescent stamping and Incising account for 85% of the rim sample, with all techniques having approximately the same percentage occurrence (Table 1). Notable are the high frequencies of Crescent stamping and the very low percentages of the Push-Pull technique.

Punctates with bosses are present on 34% of the rims analysed. Interior bossing accounts for 58% of the punctated rims, while the remainder possessed exterior bossing (Table 2).

Vessel shape is globular, as evidenced by the three reconstructed vessels. Vessel bodies are predominantly decorated with smoothed-over-cording, while rib-paddling and scari-faction are noted minorities. No sherds exhibiting check stamping were noted.

TABLE 1.  
REID RIMSHERD DECORATIVE TECHNIQUE AND PROVENIENCE

Technique	One	Two	House			Six	Other	N	%
			Three	Four	Five				
Trailer / Incised Cording (Impressed & Wrap Stick)	31		9		1		22	63	22.7
Linear Stamp	14	5	13	1		3	25	61	22.0
Crescent Stamp	13	3	10	4	1		27	58	20.9
Plain	16	4	6			2	25	53	19.1
Turtle Suture Stamp	3	4	6	1			15	29	10.5
Push-Pull				1			6	7	2.5
Totals	4		2					6	2.2
	81	16	46	7	2	5	120	277	99.9

TABLE 2  
REID RIMSHERD PUNCTATE AND BOSSING PROVENIENCE.

Boss and Punctate Element	One	Two	House			Six	Other	N	%
			Three	Four	Five				
Interior Boss — large	11		9	1		2	15	38	40.9
Exterior Boss — large	4	1	2	3	1	1	15	27	29.0
Interior Boss — small	5		1		1	2	7	16	17.2
Exterior Boss — small	3		1	2			6	12	12.9
Totals	23	1	13	6	2	5	43	93	100.0

### PIPES

Portions of 41 ceramic and lithic pipes from Reid proved to be most informative, with types traditionally attributed to Glen Meyer and Middleport present in the same pits. Notable are a large punctate decorated pipe and a large incised pipe bowl, both derived from Pit 351 in House 3.

### LITHICS

Reid contained abundant lithic materials, especially chipping detritus. Projectile points are represented by over 200 specimens with triangular and side notched forms present. Triangular points with straight or concave bases are most prevalent. The remaining inventory included drills, scrapers, over 100 whetstones/ abraders and 53 net sinkers. Ground stone cell and adze portions are also present.

### BONE AND ANTLER

Sixty-eight portions of worked bone and antler were recovered, the bulk of which were derived from house pits. Conical socketted antler projectile points, awls, beads, cup and pin gaming units and a one-eyed needle comprise the majority of specimens.

### FAUNA

Faunal analysis for Reid has not been completed; however, we can note several major species present. Most prevalent are fish remains; this is not unexpected in view of Reid's immediate proximity to Lake Erie. Also represented are bear, deer, turtle and numerous small mammal remains.

### FLORA

Flotation studies of the pit fill has yielded numerous floral remains. Notable among these are corn, sumac, hawthorn, butternut, wild cherry, walnut and acorn. It is expected with further analysis that more specimens remain to be identified, especially those that may be cultigens.

### DATING

Ceramic seriation of the Reid rimsherd inventory, places Reid in late Glen Meyer times (circa A.D. 1300). Four radiocarbon dates, from pits in House 1 and House 3, reveal a range from an early date of A.D.  $1235 \pm 80$ , to three later dates circa A.D.  $1400 \pm 80$  (1-9581-9584). Such dates would suggest that some component mixture is present. The extent of this possible mixture can only be ascertained with further analysis, considering both artifacts and settlement pattern, in conjunction with additional radio-carbon samples.

### CONCLUSION — SPECULATION

Excavations at the Reid Site have provided significant new data regarding settlement pattern, burial pattern and artifact assemblages for late Glen Meyer. Longhouse structures from Reid are highly variable in size, with a range from 30 feet to 185 feet in length. The longest house at Reid is a clear forerunner to later structures in Middleport times. The burial pattern for Glen Meyer unknown heretofore, is defined on the basis of Reid and is of ossuary type. Artifact assemblages from Reid are representative of late Glen Meyer with definite indications of a continuum to Middleport times. In particular the ceramic pipes are indicative of this continuum.

Reid is also noteworthy for the artifactual material it does not contain. In particular the absence of Pickering traits is unusual (Wright 1969). Certainly at this late date Pickering influences should be present in this area. Also, Reid's lack of affiliation to Uren sub-stage sites is noteworthy (Wright 1966).

The full significance of Reid will only be established with the completion of a thorough site analysis, in conjunction with additional data from other late Glen Meyer stations.

Of particular interest is the distribution of sites. Late inland Glen Meyer villages are known (Lee 1951, 1952; Fox 1972; Noble 1975; Wright 1966), but their precise relationship to villages such as Reid on Lake Erie remain unclear. The position of the Uren site remains somewhat of an enigma in Ontario pre-history (Noble 1975:52). Excavations here, and additional data from late Glen Meyer stations will assist in clarifying this contentious period of Iroquois development. Reid has afforded a major contribution towards this end.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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