

**THE HOOD SITE: LONGHOUSE BURIALS IN  
AN HISTORIC NEUTRAL VILLAGE**

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*ABSTRACT*

Excavations at the historic Neutral Hood Site produced the first discovery of burials within Neutral longhouses, and despite a relatively small sample size, certain inhumation patterns have been interpreted. A dichotomy between temporary and permanent burials has been proposed, based on the location within the longhouse, the presence or absence of grave goods, and the performance of sacrifice and associated ceremonialism.

It has been suggested that certain age groups may have been permanently interred within the longhouse reflecting the belief that the souls of both the very young and old remained near the village after death instead of proceeding to the land of the souls. To this group I have added the chronically ill, through the examination of the osteological and archaeological data.

*INTRODUCTION*

While substantial archaeological and ethnohistorical information has been accumulated concerning the ossuary method of burial among the Neutral branch of the Ontario Iroquois (Butters 1933, Ridley 1961, Stothers 1972, Wright 1963, Wright 1977). There has been no publication with respect to burials within the longhouse. This may be attributable to the fact that no burials have been found or, more likely, recognized inside a Neutral longhouse.

However, during the summer of 1977, extensive excavations by Mr. Paul Lennox at the Hood Site, and historic Neutral village near Freelton (Fig. 1) dating to circa 1640-1641 (Lennox, personal communication 1977), unearthed six burial features, containing seven individuals.

A study of the nature of these interments, their provenience, and associated cultural materials, in the light of the ethnohistorical information will, despite the small sample size, increase our knowledge of the longhouse burial ritual of the Neutrals.

*ETHNOHISTORIC INFORMATION*

The *Jesuit Relations (JR)* contain abundant information concerning the lifeways of the historic Iroquois, although as Gruber states "The occurrence of death... for the ethnographer, is...relatively rare in his experience..." (Gruber 1971:64-65), and the Jesuits were seemingly not exposed to the mortuary ritual as frequently as they were to other aspects of the native culture. This is in part revealed by the lack of mention of burial within the longhouse.

It is the purpose of this section to examine the Jesuit Relations for information on the beliefs and conceptions of the Ontario Iroquois concerning death, the soul, and the afterlife. The information, which emanates from the literature, will be of aid in the interpretation of data recovered from the archaeological sites.

# HOOD SITE LOCATION

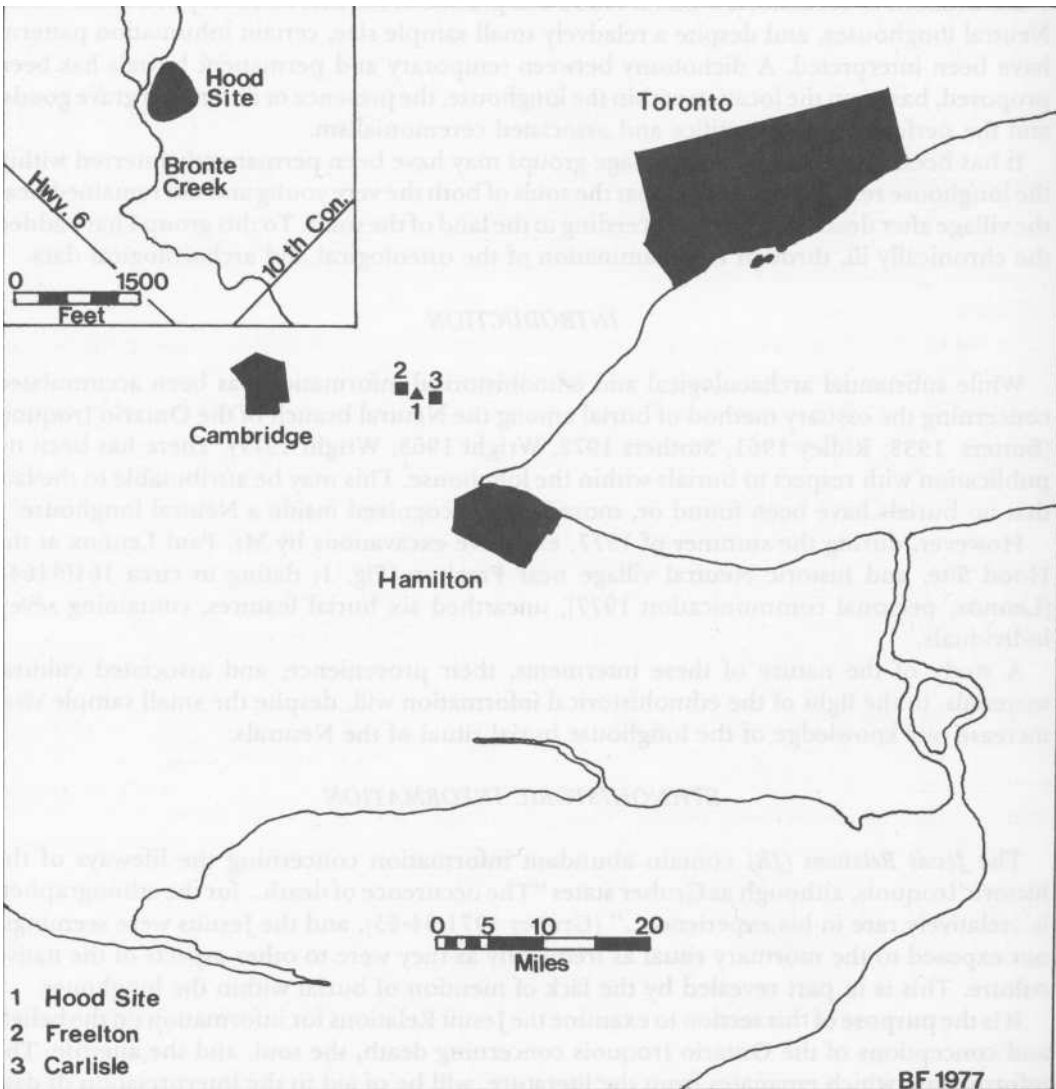


Fig. 1. Hood site location.

*BELIEFS REGARDING THE SOUL*

There is one belief among the Indians of the Great Lakes area which is generally recognized as universal, that being the notion of the immortality of the soul (JR I:261, III:135, IV:201, VI:175, VII:121, XVI:191, XXVI:127, XXX:27, XXXIX:13, LXVIII:297). The passage of the soul from the body is compared to the abandonment of the cabin or of an exhausted field, in order to seek one newer and more productive (JR XXX:27).

Another commonly held belief is the conception of the location of the land of the souls. The Jesuits relate that the Indians considered that the appointed abode for the souls was toward the end of the earth in a great village in the direction of the setting sun (JRI:289, VI:177, X:143, XII:29, XVI:207, XXVI:125).

Brébeuf, in LeJeune's relation of 1636, stated that not all souls went to the land of the souls, but only those who were strong. The weaker spirits, including the very old and little children, remained in the country in which they lived, where they had their own villages (JR X:143) where "They sow corn in its season, and use the fields the living have abandoned; if any village takes fire... they take care to gather from the middle of this fire the roasted corn, and lay it by as a part of their provisions" (JR X:145).

Le Jeune stated that the Amerindians buried their dead in such a way that their heads pointed to the west in order that the soul would know in which direction it was to proceed (JR XVI:207).

Special treatment was afforded very young infants who died at less than a month or two of age. It is recorded that these infants were buried on, and beside paths so that their souls could secretly enter the wombs of passing women and animate the yet undeveloped fetus, bringing forth the infant once again (JR I:263, X:273).

Concomitant with their belief that the soul is immortal is their conception that life in the land of the souls is in no way different from that of the living (JR I:261, 289, IV:201, VI:179, X:147, XXVI: 125, XXX: 25). All activities that were performed while alive are continued in the afterlife, and is succinctly put in this passage: "What do these souls do when they arrive at their dwelling place?...They hunt for the souls of beavers, porcupines, moose, and other animals, using the soul of the snowshoes to walk upon the soul of the snow..." (JR VI:179).

It was not only the individual who possessed a soul, but all material objects (JR IV:201, VI: 175). Such is the reason for placement of the belongings of the dead person within the grave, for they made use of the souls of the goods in the afterlife just as they would when they were alive. "That the soul may not perish with hunger, they bury with the body a large quantity of provisions: also garments pots, and various utensils of great expense... in order that he may use them and pass his time more suitably in the kingdom of the dead" (JR I: 261).

*BURIAL INCLUSIONS*

The major preoccupation of the Hurons, and no doubt the Neutral, according to the Jesuits was the care taken toward the burial of their dead. This aspect is particularly evidenced in the lavishness of grave offerings (JR I:263, II:135, III:131, VIII:269, X:265, XXIII:31, XLIV: 307), for of the rituals of the Hurons the burial ritual was held most sacred (JR XXIII:31). As stated in the Jesuit Relations: "You might say that all their exertions, their labours, and their trading, concern almost exclusively the amassing of something with which to honour the dead. They have nothing sufficiently precious for this purpose; they lavish robes, axes, and porcelain in such quantities that...you would judge that they place no value upon them; and yet these are the whole riches of the country. You will see them often, in the depth of winter, almost entirely naked, while they have handsome and valuable robes in store, that they keep in reserve for the dead; for this is their point of honour. It is on such occasions they wish to appear magnificent" (X265).

When a person dies, all the articles which he owned were placed with him (JR III:131, VI:31, XLIV:307) as were tokens of friendship given by the survivors.

In the instance of men, articles such as skins, articles of apparel, his bow, arrows, shield, knives, and hatchets would be included, along with kettles, "Matchiaz" (necklaces, scarves, and bracelets), and even his dogs, if they had not been eaten (JR II:135, III:131). In one instance after provisions had been given, a quantity of corn was burned on the dead man as a sort of sacrifice (JR XLII:269).

Inclusions mentioned for women include necklaces and collars, more likely ornamental than functional, spoons, matchias and various other ornaments (JR I:163, III:131).

Primary infant burials and associated ceremonialism received more detailed description by the Jesuits than those afforded the adults.

One instance involves the burial of an infant boy about eight months of age. The child was wrapped in beaver skins, over which was placed a piece of linen cloth. This bundle then was enclosed within a double piece of bark (JR VI:129). When the child was placed in the grave, his cradle was included along with several other offerings, including some milk in a bark ladle which the mother burned as an offering to the soul of the child (JR VI:131). On January 7, 1636, the young son of a sorcerer died, and he was treated similarly as the other infant. His face was painted blue, black, and red, and he was dressed in a red cloak. The infant was then wrapped in bear skins and a robe of wild cat skin, with a white sheet being placed over the bundle. The package was finally tied closely on all sides (JR VIII:257).

The following day, a young girl died whose parents wished to bury their daughter with her two dogs, following the custom that one should be buried with what they possessed and were fond of (JR VIII:267). The body was wrapped in several robes, and included within were trinkets, ornaments, porcelain, two paddles, and bags filled with utensils used by women and girls (JR VIII: 269).

Personal adornment, such as earrings, hair and head ornaments, are not mentioned as grave goods but would most probably be included.

The abundance of ethnohistoric references pertaining to aboriginal interment practices in southern Ontario has dealt with those of the Hurons. The cultural similarities and geographic proximity of the Neutrals to the Hurons has necessitated the use of the assumption that, while their burial practices may not be identical there would likely be sufficient similarity to warrant the use of the Huron references, in the absence of detailed Neutral ethnohistoric reports, to interpret the Hood interments.

In comparing the Hurons and the Neutrals, Jerome Lalemant, recounting the missionary activities of Brébeuf and Chaumonot during 1640-1641 in Neutralia, noted three areas in which they differed:

"First, they appear taller, stronger, and better proportioned.

"Secondly, their affection toward the dead seems to be much greater. Our Hurons immediately after death carry the bodies to the burying ground and take them away from it only for the feast of the Dead. Those of the Neutral Nation carry the bodies to the burying ground only at the very latest moment possible when decomposition has rendered them insupportable: for this reason, the dead bodies often remain during the entire winter in their cabins: and, having once put them outside upon a scaffold that they may decay, they take away the bones as soon as is possible, and expose them to view, arranged here and there in their cabins until the feast of the Dead. These objects which they have before their eyes, renewing continually the feeling of their losses, cause them frequently to cry out and to make most lugubrious lamentations, the whole in song. But this is done only by the women.

The third respect in which they seem different from our Hurons, is in the multitude and sort of lunatics" (JR XXI:199).

Considering that during the period of the late 1630's there was a major outbreak of smallpox in the region, the description of the greater attachment of the Neutral to their dead may be explained by the suggestion that such a devastating epidemic could have possibly, and likely did, disrupt their traditional burial practices (Noble, personal communication 1977). Perhaps the widespread illness and high mortality did not allow them to keep up with the increased amounts of casualties, and as a result changes, like the storage of corpses in the longhouses, were necessitated.

Furthermore, Brébeuf and Chaumonot visited the Neutrals during the winter when burial would have been difficult even under normal circumstances.

I have assumed therefore, that Neutral interment practices and rituals were basically similar to those of the Hurons despite the fact that Huron ceremonies themselves are not dealt with in any great detail. The various features of the Hood interments will then be interpreted in the light of the belief systems and practices of both Amerindians in general and Hurons in more specific cases.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

The 1977 excavations at the Hood Site uncovered midden deposits, palisade, and 14 longhouses, which were excavated to various degrees (Fig. 2). Extensive areas between the longhouses were also examined. In all but one instance, when conditions permitted such action, the structures were completely excavated (Lennox, personal communication 1977), producing a very representative picture of the internal morphology of the longhouses. The six burial features which were identified would thus tend to reflect quite accurately the nature and distribution of interments within the longhouses.

This section should be prefaced with a short description of the arrangement of the interior of the Neutral longhouse in that differing burial types are found in the various sections. The basic division of the longhouse is between the living and the storage spaces which are located at either end. The boundary between these areas are marked by a set of linear features approximately two metres in from the end wall. Within the storage area, pits of considerable depth and diameter are occasionally found. Regularly spaced ellipsoid features, referred to as slash pits (Noble 1972), run the length of the living portion of the longhouse, about one metre in from each side wall, and their function must have been similar to that of the posts which make up the bunkline in the Huron longhouse.

#### House 2 Feature 9

This burial was located in the living portion of the house, toward the east end, just outside of the slash pit line (Fig. 2 and 8 Table 2).

The infant, approximately one month of age (Table 2), was placed on its right side facing northeast, and oriented to the southeast (Table 2), in a flexed position, with its head in the deeper part of the sloping burial pit.

Included with the infant were various grave offerings. A strand of 30 red beads: 14 tubular glass, 15 round glass, and one tubular catlinite bead, was located around the neck of the infant. Located on the chest area was an articulated portion of tubular shell bead work (Fig. 3), which was either incorporated with the clothing or was itself a separate article, perhaps a breastplate or necklace of some sort.

The anterior ends of the ribs showed evidence of having been burnt, as did some of the shell

beads in the vicinity. The presence of charred corn kernals, acorn, walnut, hawthorn, and wood in the chest area (Austin, personal communication 1977) suggests, and this is corroborated by the ethnohistorical material (JR XLIV:269), the occurrence of some sort of ceremonialism and sacrifice at the interment of this infant. Since roasted corn was believed to be the food of the souls of the very young (JR X:145), such an interpretation seems plausible.

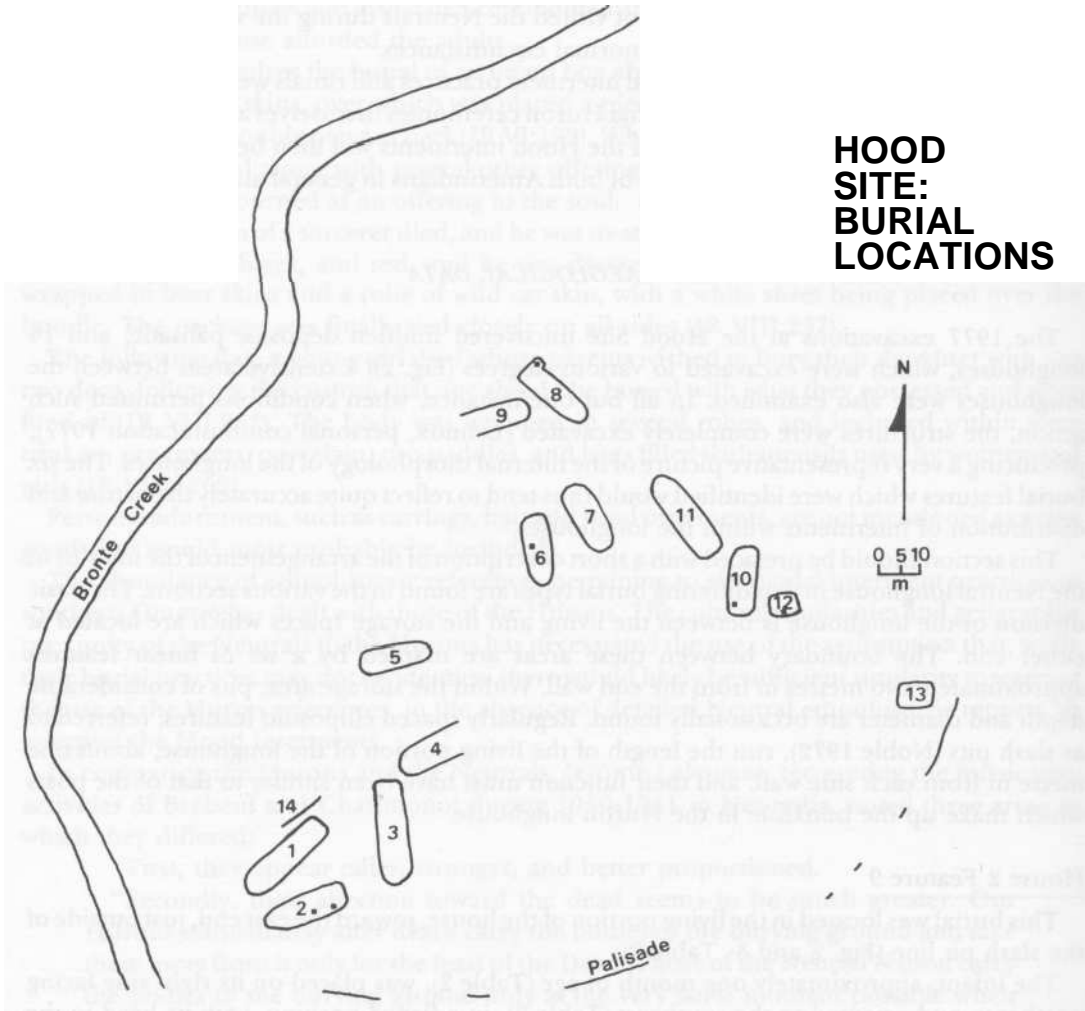


Fig. 2. Hood site burial locations.

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**TABLE 1**  
**LOCATION OF BURIALS\***

House 2 Feature 9

Outside the slash pit line, in the living section of the house, 185 cm in from the south wall, and 365 cm in from the east end wall.

House 2 Feature 23

Outside of the slash pit line, in the living section of the house, 245 cm in from the south wall, and 915 cm in from the east end wall, about half way.

House 6 Feature 38 A, B

Toward the centre line of the house, between the slash pit line and the centre line, 160 cm in from the west wall, and 640 cm in from the north end wall.

House 8 Feature 50

Tucked in the northeast corner of the house, 40 cm in from the east wall, and 100 cm in from the north end wall. This section of the house is the storage area.

House 10 Feature 36

Located in the southwest corner of the house, the storage area, 95 cm in from the west wall, and 200 cm in from the south end wall.

House 12 Feature 7

Along the centre of the south wall, 45 cm in from the south wall.

\*measurements taken from the centre of the feature.

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House 2 Feature 23

The infant buried in an extended position between the south slash pit and centre lines in the dwelling portion of the house (Fig. 2 and 8, Table 1), has been aged to a late fetal stage (Table 3). This was the only infant at Hood that confidently could be identified as fetal, and the Jesuits, remarking on the high infant mortality rate, stated that abortion was not uncommon in such a society (JR I:257-259).

The absence of burning on the bone, floral material, and grave goods, suggests there was no ceremonialism associated with the burial of this infant. Whether this was simply a temporary burial, or an indication of differential treatment afforded to aborted infants, can only be determined when more infants, in this age group are found. At the historic Huron site of Cahigué, and the St. Lawrence Iroquois Steward site, two sets of fetal twins were recovered, of which neither had associated grave goods (Kapches 1976:33), and this may support the contention that these individuals were buried permanently, without ceremony.

House 6 Feature 38

This burial feature is by far the most notable both in nature and lavishness. Located toward the centre of the house (Fig. 2 and 8, Table 1), this feature contained two infants, adjacently placed in extended positions, who were not much more than one month of age (Table 3). The infants were oriented due west, while the feature was aligned with the long axis of the house in northerly direction (Fig. 8, Table 2).

**TABLE 2**  
**CORRELATION OF DIRECTION: HOUSE AND**  
**BURIAL OR BURIAL FEATURE**

Burial	Orientation of House	Orientation of Feature	Orientation of Burial (Head)
House 2 Feature 9	ENE-WSW	NNE-SSW	NW-SE (SE)
House 2 Feature 23	ENE-WSW	NW-SE	NNW-SSE (SSE)
House 6 Feature 38A	NNW-SSE (N-S)	NNW-SSE	E-W (W)
House 6 Feature 38B	NNW-SSE (N-S)	NNW-SSE	E-W (W)
House 8 Feature 50	NW-SE	NW-SE	NW-SE (SE)
House 10 feature 36	N-S	NNW-SSE	N-S (N)
House 12 Feature 7	ENE-WSW (E-W)	ENE-WSW	ENE-WSW



Fig. 3. Hood site, House 2, Feature 9, frontal view; note shell beads beneath ribs.

Artifactual material found with Burial A, and southernmost infant (Fig. 4), consisted of a set of earrings constructed of red tubular glass beads; the left consisting of five strands, and the right of four. As mentioned in the Jesuit Relations, earrings were not uncommonly found on children, and were found as frequently on men as women (JR I:281, XLIV:289). Also found with this infant were six rolled brass beads situated in the area of the left side of the cranium. Three of these beads were left undisturbed, in a shape comparable to the radiating spokes of a wheel, attached by leather thongs which remained preserved within the tubes.





Fig. 4. Hood site, House 6, Feature 38, upper portion of Burial A.

**TABLE 3**  
AGING OF INDIVIDUALS <sup>1</sup>

House 2 Feature 9		
pars lateralis <sup>2</sup>	23.3mm	late fetal, 1 month
pars basilaris	16.5mm	8-9 months fetal
radius <sup>3</sup>	55.7mm	NB-6 months closer to
humerus	66.6mm	NB-6 months 6 months
ulna	69.9mm	approx. 6 months
breadth of sciatic notch <sup>4</sup>	10.1 mm	NB -1 month closer to
ilium length	33.8mm	NB-1 month NB
ilium breadth	30.7mm	3 months
House 2 Feature 23		
pars lateralis	21.9mm	approx. 9 months fetal
pars basilaris	14.9mm	approx. 8 months fetal
humerus	58.7mm	late fetal
femur	68.6mm	late fetal
tibia	60.8mm	late fetal
breadth of sciatic notch	9.5mm	approx. NB
ilium length	32.7mm	approx. NB
ilium breadth	28.6mm	approx. 3 months
House 10 Feature 36		
pars laterlis	24.4mm	approx. NB
House 10 Feature 36		
suture closure <sup>5</sup>	coronal, sagittal, and lambdoid sutures closed endocranially range 50-80 years $\bar{x}$ =65.4 years	

## Table 3 Continued:

House 12 Feature 7

radius

127.0mm 4½-5½ years

ramus of ischium and  
pubic bone<sup>6</sup>

not fused less than 7-8 years

Age Determination<sup>7</sup>House 2 Feature 23

extreme late fetal to new born

House 8 Feature 50

new born (based on comparison)

House 2 Feature 9 House

late fetal to 6 months (closer to 1 month)

6 Feature 38A, B House

new born to 6 months (slightly older than H2 F9)

12 Feature 7 House 10

5½-7 years

Feature 36

50-80 years with a mean age of 65.4 years

1. The fragmentary nature of the skeletal material prevented a standardized method of aging the remains, such as the use of a single bone. As many elements as possible were utilized to determine an accurate age for the individuals.
2. Redfield 1970.
3. Johnston 1962.
4. Reynolds 1945.
5. Acasdi and Nemeskeri 1970.
6. Bass 1971.
7. To assign relative order to the infants a visual comparison of size and robusticity was employed with the results of the measurements to aid in the final decision.

Clutched in the left hand was a broken raccoon baculum (Deborah Pihl, personal communication 1977) directed with the distal end towards the pelvic region, and it would not seem unreasonable that this represented a symbol of fertility, especially when considering their beliefs regarding the souls of the very young. An infant at the Middleport Perry site also had a baculum included with it, one which belonged to an otter (Kapches 1976:33).

Grave goods included with Burial B consisted of two strands of glass beads. One consisted of six long red tubular glass beads, and the other of at least 196 white, black, and transparent burgundy small round glass beads. Preserved in the area of the brass beads of Burial A was some organic material, presumably bark, which may have been part of a bark lining or covering which enveloped the infants. This practice of bundling infants in bark is reported ethnographically (OR VI:129).

There were several areas of concentrated charred wood over each of the individuals, however, evidence of burning occurring directly on the infants was not present, suggesting the sacrifice was performed on top of the bundle. The extensive adornment of the infants, and their position within the same pit, can only lead to the conclusion that these infants were twins. The extremely fragmentary nature of the skeletal material did not permit a comparison of ages, so it is not possible to determine whether they died simultaneously.

Two other sets of twins have been reported from Iroquoian sites in Ontario (Kapches 1976:33), however, in comparison with the Cahiague and Steward twins, the Hood twins were afforded a much more elaborate burial. The fact that the other sets of twins were fetal must be considered when making comparisons. Grave goods included with the House 6 burials were more extensive and varied, in type and notably colour, than the other Hood interments, and this can only suggest that twins were held in high esteem among the Neutral.

### House 8 Feature 50

The burial was situated in the extreme northeast corner of the house (Fig. 2 and 8, Table 1), in the area designated as storage space (Noble 1972:3), and along with the absence of artifacts is indicative of a temporary burial. It has been estimated that this infant was a recent newborn (Table 3).

Based on the positioning of the skull and left arm fragments, this burial is an extended type oriented in a southeasterly direction, which corresponds with the orientation of the house (Fig. 8, Table 2).

The concentration of floral material which would be suggestive of a ceremony is lacking in this burial, and gives further support to the notion of the impermanence of this interment.

### House 10 Feature 36

Based on less sensitive cranial indicators, this individual has been identified as a male within the 50 to 80 year age range, and therefore is the only adult to have been found at Hood site.

The placing of the individual in a flexed position (Fig.5) corresponds to references in the *Jesuit Relations* concerning the placement of the body in the grave (JR I:265, III:129, X267, XLIV:309). In this instance the body is in a loose flex (Saxe 1971:53) lying on the left side, oriented to the north, and facing in an east-southeasterly direction.

The individual is clearly located in the storage area of House 10 behind the linear features which demarcate the area (Noble 1972:3). The burial was placed in the southwest corner of the house (Fig. 2 and 8, Table 1), and the orientation of the burial corresponds precisely with that of the house (Table 2).

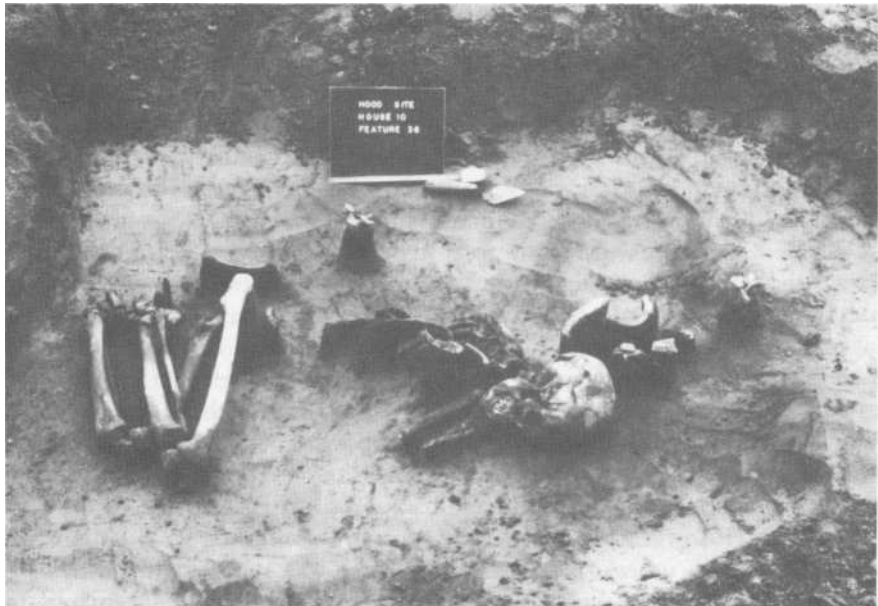


Fig. 5. Hood site, House 10, Feature 36.

The shallowness of the grave, its location in the storage area of the house, and the lack of burial inclusions suggest that this was meant to be a temporary interment. A reference in the Jesuit Relations seems very applicable to the state of this individual, in that if the family of the deceased did not have the means to perform the proper burial ceremony, the body would be interred temporarily until the people acquired the necessary materials (JR III:129). Discussions with Paul Lennox produced further evidence which would tend to support the contention that this individual and his relatives were not materially affluent. In the lithic analysis of House 10 Lennox noted that the house was unique in that it had an abundance of the poorer quality, local Ancaster chert (Lennox, personal communication 1978). The inferred social position of the inhabitants of House 10 as reflected in their inability to procure, through trade, better cherts may also be seen in the sterile, presumably temporary nature of the burial.

While artifactual materials were absent, there was an abundance of roasted corn in the readily identifiable stratigraphy of the pit. Between layers of sterile yellow subsoil on the bottom, and mottled topsoil and subsoil on the top, there were layers of medium and dark stained soil mixed with concentrations of roasted corn. The association of this corn with the individual would suggest the performance of some sort of ceremonialism; however, the bones showed no evidence of burning. The ethnohistoric material suggests that the souls of the very young and the very old, such as this individual, did not travel to the land of the souls toward the setting sun, but remained in villages for the souls near the villages in which they lived, and states that a staple for these souls was roasted corn (JRX:143-145). I would interpret from this burial that the corn was roasted previously, or as a part of the ceremony, and then placed as an offering to the soul. This practice is at variance with the ceremony performed in House 2 Feature 9, and this may be resolved by the theory that sacrifice (i.e. the burning of some floral material on the individual) may have only been performed on interments that were intended to be permanent.

The dentition of this individual illustrates three acquired dental characteristics: premortem tooth loss, dental caries, and attrition.

In general, agricultural societies show a high rate of premortem tooth loss, a higher incidence of dental caries, and a corresponding lower rate of attrition (Ossenberg 1969:32).

Only the first left mandibular molar had been lost previous to death, and the alveolus had since completely resorbed. In a study of Archaic hunting and gathering societies, Pfeiffer has found that premortem tooth loss was most common where tooth wear was heaviest, and that it was the cheek teeth that were most frequently lost (Pfeiffer 1977:200). In the case of this individual the teeth that were worn to the greatest degree were the ones which were still intact.

There were six readily identifiable caries, and they were restricted to the molars and the second premolar, which was adjacent to the lost tooth. In the maxilla, caries were located on the mesial surfaces of the left second molar and the right third molar. Caries were also found on the corresponding distal surfaces of the adjacent teeth, the left first molar and the right second molar respectively. Carious teeth of the mandible were the right first molar, distal surface, and the left second premolar, distal surface, which was adjacent to the lost tooth.

By far the most interesting feature of the dentition is the attrition which has shaped the teeth. The amount of attrition is related to the age of the individual and also to the type of diet (Pfeiffer 1977:201). However, the regularity of excessive tooth wear in certain areas, and the more moderate wear in others (Fig.6), suggests there was more than the two previously mentioned factors involved in the shaping of these teeth. General wear, attributable to the mastication process if found on the left side of both the maxilla and mandible from the first premolar to the third molar. On the remaining teeth, from the left incisor to the right third molar, attrition is excessive in comparison, the result of which is the formation of a flat and continuous occlusal surface.

Maxillary teeth, from the left first molar to the right first molar have had the enamel worn off exposing the dentin, while on the mandible the dentin is exposed from the left first premolar to the right second premolar.

Dr. John Mayhall of the University of Toronto does not consider the wear on the right side either abnormal or excessive for a person of that age; however, the fact that it is noticeably more advanced on the right side may have been in response to the pain and tenderness of the mandible on the left side after the loss of the molar. As a result, the individual would have restricted mastication to the right side, and this may explain the greater relative wear on the right side (Mayhall, personal communication 1977). While the pain would not have lasted over an extended period, eating on the right side may have become habitual, and this is reflected in the attrition of the teeth of this individual. An interesting alternative has been proposed by J. B. Jamieson concerning similar wear patterns caused by paralysis as the result of a stroke. He believes paralysis of the left side could have caused the extensive attrition of the right mandibular and maxillary dentition (Jamieson, personal communication 1977).

#### House 12 Feature 7

This interment was the only secondary burial found at the Hood Site, as was located in an atypical house, with respect to size (Fig.2), and to the absence of features associated with the other houses (Fig.8).

The burial feature was located midway along the southern wall of the house (Table 1), and the orientation followed that of the house wall (Table 2). That this was the sole secondary burial, combined with the nature of the house, it would be of interest, with further study of the house, to see if it had a function aside from habitation.

Noticeable by its absence was the skull or any part of it, and along with the absence of numerous other bones, indicates the body had decomposed to an advanced stage by the time of reburial. An age of 5 1/2 to 7 years has been determined from the remains present (Table 3).

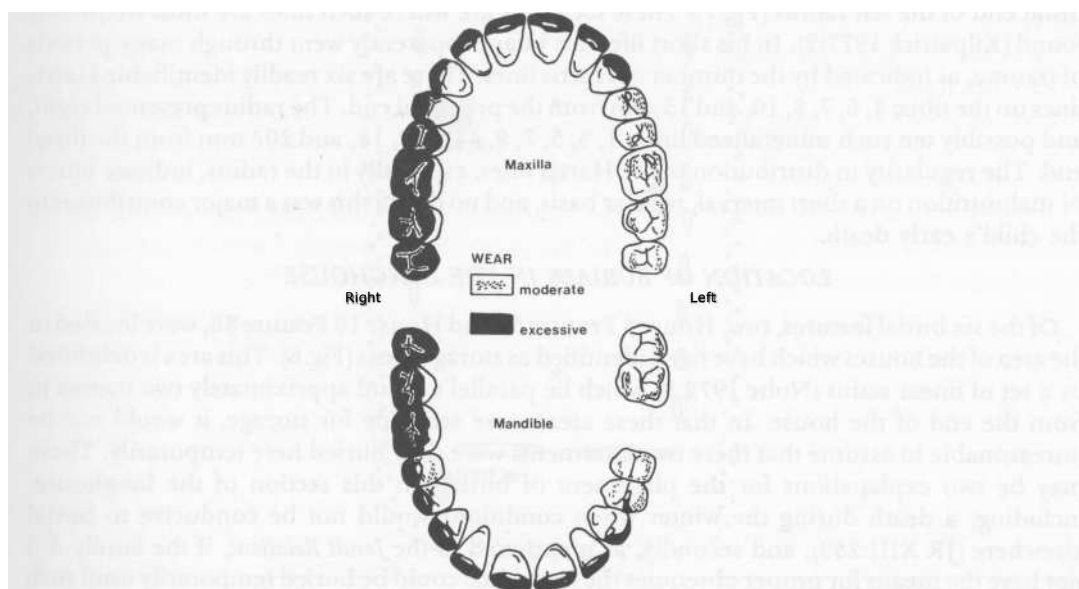


Fig. 6. Hood site, dentition of adult from House 10 Feature 36.

Included within the burial was a disarticulated strand of red glass and catlinite beads, and an iron trade axe, suggesting the child was male, in that articles placed with the dead were those which were owned by the person, or which would be used by the soul in the afterlife (JR 111:131, V:31, XLIV:307).

Probably the most notable feature of the interment is the evidence of ceremonialism that was performed. The burial pit presents three distinct layers; the lower containing the bones, the middle layer, which was composed of a concentration of roasted corn kernels and cobs, butternut, and charcoal (Austin, personal communication 1977), and an upper layer of topsoil and subsoil fill intermixed with charcoal.

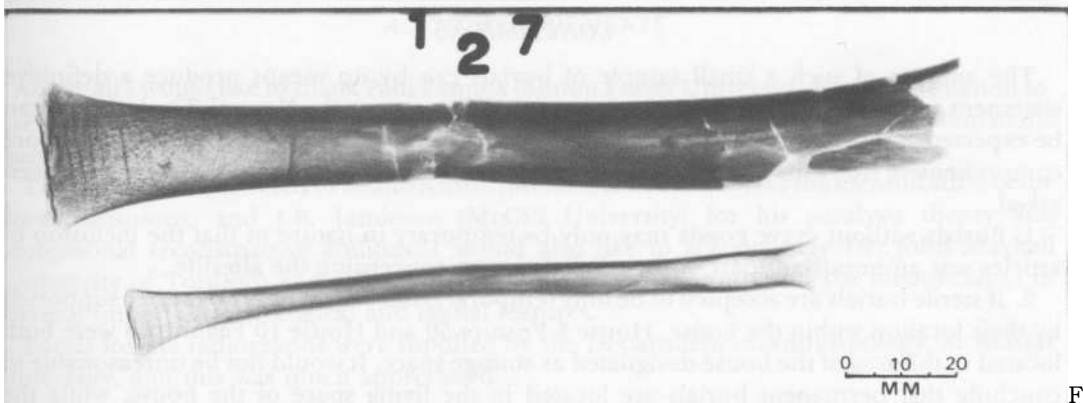
The femora were the only bones which showed evidence of burning, and this was restricted to the distal ends. The absence of burning on the other bones, particularly the tibia, suggests that this occurred during the reburial of the bones. Large amounts of charcoal and charred corn located above the bones indicate some sort of sacrifice took place over the remains.

In contrast to the burial in House 10 which had been covered with already roasted corn, this secondary burial had the roasting performed directly on the burial as did the House 2 Feature 9 infant. The presence of roasted corn further corroborates the ethnohistoric evidence which mentions that such corn was the food of the souls who remained in the area of the village (JR X:145). It may be included that the chronically ill were not capable of making the journey to the land of the souls, and this conclusion has been arrived at by the evidence presented by radiographs of the bones of this child.

During periods of extended illness and malnutrition, bone growth is retarded, and upon resumption of bone growth transverse scars of increased bone mineralization are laid down across the diaphyses of the long bones (Janssens 1970:15). These Harris lines are only laid down during the period of bone growth, which results in the lines rarely being found in adults, since the lines of childhood have resorbed. A recent study of the adult femora from the Neutral Shaver Hill ossuary (Kilpatrick 1977) uncovered only two which demonstrated the trait. The Harris lines found on this child were located on the proximal end of the right tibia, and the distal end of the left radius (Fig.7). These locations are where such lines are most frequently found (Kilpatrick 1977:2). In his short life, this infant apparently went through many periods of trauma, as indicated by the number of Harris lines. There are six readily identifiable Harris lines on the tibia: 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 15 mm from the proximal end. The radius presented eight, and possibly ten such mineralized lines; 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 14?, 16, 18, and 20? mm from the distal end. The regularity in distribution of the Harris lines, especially in the radius, indicate illness or malnutrition on a short interval, regular basis, and no doubt this was a major contributor to the child's early death.

#### *LOCATION OF BURIALS IN THE LONGHOUSE*

Of the six burial features, two, House 8 Feature 50 and House 10 Feature 36, were located in the area of the houses which have been identified as storage areas (Fig.8). This area is delimited by a set of linear stains (Nobe 1972:3) which lie parallel to , and approximately two metres in from the end of the house. In that these areas were set aside for storage, it would not be unreasonable to assume that these two interments were only buried here temporarily. There may be two explanations for the placement of burials in this section of the longhouse, including, a death during the winter when conditions would not be conducive to burial elsewhere (OR XIII:259), and secondly, as mentioned in *the Jesuit Relations*, if the family did not have the means for proper obsequies the individual could be buried temporarily until such a time that the family procured the materials necessary for the ceremonial burial (JR III:129). If the contention of the Jesuits that the Indians' main efforts were secure items for their dead relatives is correct, then these two burial were temporary interments, which would, at some later time, be more ceremoniously treated.



ig. 7. Hood site, Harris lines of longbones from House 12, Feature 7.

Therefore it is possible to differentiate between two types of in-house burial , temporary and permanent. Each burial type is restricted to a certain part of the longhouse: temporary interments are found in the storage areas toward the ends of the house, while permanent interments are in the dwelling section, and are noted by the inclusion of burial offerings.

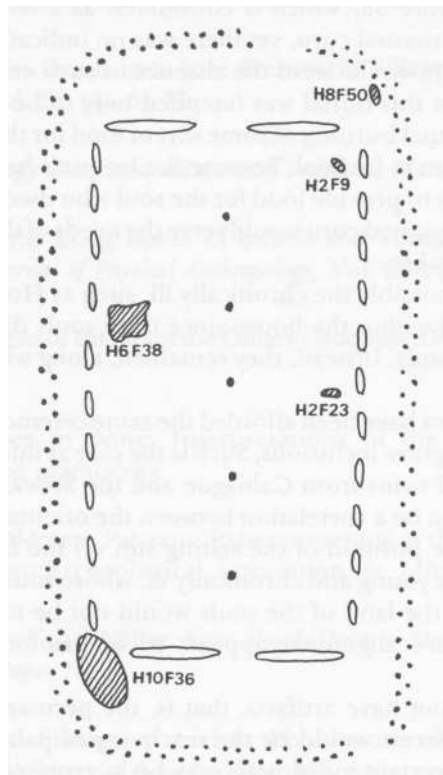


Fig. 8 Burial locations in a stylized Neutral longhouse.

### CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of such a small sample of burials can by no means produce a definitive statement concerning within-house interment practices among the Neutral. The least that can be expected at this time is the presentation of certain trends and problems which only a more comprehensive study may answer. In the case of the Neutral, such questions have never been asked.

1. Burials without grave goods may only be temporary in nature in that the inclusion of articles was an important part of their belief system concerning the afterlife.

2. If sterile burials are accepted to be only temporary, this would only be further supported by their location within the house. House 8 Feature 50 and House 10 Feature 36 were both located in the area of the house designated as storage space. It would not be unreasonable to conclude that permanent burials are located in the living space of the house, while the temporary burials are situated in the storage area of the house. Their temporary nature could be attributed to several factors, including, the lack of goods to perform a proper ceremony, or more possibly, the season of death.

3. Roasted corn and other floral materials were included with the burials, as can be interpreted from the ethnohistoric material, as food for the souls. There seems, however, to be two methods of including this offering, and these correlate with the nature of the burial, either permanent or temporary. An actual sacrifice of food upon the individual was only undertaken if the interment was to be permanent, such as House 2 Feature 9 and House 12 Feature 7. In the case of House 10 Feature 36, which is considered as a temporary burial, there were included large amounts of roasted corn, yet there was no indication of burning taking place directly on the individual. It would seem the absence of such ceremonialism would further substantiate the notion that this burial was intended only to be temporary.

I can only suggest that actual burning of some sort of food for the soul was performed upon the individual if it was meant to be final. Because the Iroquois believed in the multiplicity of souls, it would be necessary to provide food for the soul who dwelt in the temporarily buried body. Simple inclusions of roasted corn would serve the needs of the soul until the proper, and final interment was undertaken.

4. The very young, and possibly the chronically ill, such as House 12 Feature 7, may have been permanently interred within the house since their souls did not apparently make the journey to the land of the souls. Instead, they remained, along with the souls of the very old, near the village.

5. Aborted infants may not have been afforded the same ceremony as those which had been born, in that there were no grave inclusions. Such is the case as inferred from House 2 Feature 23 and the two sets of fetal twins from Cahigue and the Steward site.

6. There does not seem to be a correlation between the orientation of burials and cardinal directions, in particular the position of the setting sun on the horizon. In that permanent burials consisted of the very young and chronically ill, whose souls remained near the village, such directionality toward the land of the souls would not be necessary.

Burial, and burial feature alignment appears to be random, generally following the orientation of the house.

7. The burials that did not have artifacts, that is, the permanent burials, had one basic element: red beads. Of interest would be the discovery of patterns associated with grave inclusions. Importance of certain individuals may be interpreted by the lavishness of grave offerings, such as the twins in House 6.

The within-house interments found at the Hood Site have at least, in conjunction with the ethnohistoric material, shed new light on an aspect of Neutral culture which heretofore had not been examined.



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