

## The Boyd Site: A Report and Appraisal

*by*  
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When the Metropolitan Conservation Authority purchased the Boyd property near Woodbridge, Ontario, for development as a public park, they were informed by The Ontario Archaeological Society that it contained an archaeological site. Since recovery, preservation, and public education are mutual aims of these two bodies, arrangements were soon completed to have this site excavated, the recovered material analysed, and artifacts prepared for inclusion in a public education display planned for this park.

The report submitted here completes The Ontario Archaeological Society's part in this joint venture. Many of the artifacts described below can be seen by visiting the Authority's exhibit in this beautiful conservation area.

The sketch (Plate I) shows the excavated area and physical layout of the site. In his preliminary report, Paul Sweetman<sup>1</sup> has described the excavating methods used and they will not be repeated here. These techniques revealed that modern ploughing extended to the brow of the hill and erosion had mixed the contents of the hillside deposits. This disturbance affected almost the entire occupational level and, in one place barbed wire was found resting on the subsoil beneath six inches of aboriginal remains. For this reason, no artifact could be regarded as being found in-situ.

Though care was taken to ensure their recovery, few carbonized food remains were discovered. Thirty-nine kernels of corn, 2 beans, and 8 plum pits complete the inventory. Two small folded strips of charred birchbark were unearthed. Their use, if any, is unknown.

Thirty clam shell fragments were recovered. Two of these are artifacts and are dealt with below. Another two have a wear pattern that suggests their use as spoons.

This site yielded a large quantity of unworked bone. Though most of the 1049 pieces were from large mammals, mostly deer, the Indian practice of breaking the bone for its marrow and throwing the remains in the fire reduced the number of those sufficiently intact for positive identification to 117. Messrs. Bernard O'Connor and William Renison<sup>2</sup> analysed this material and their findings proved most helpful to the author in determining the nature of the site<sup>3</sup>.

1. Sweetman, 1958.
2. The author is also indebted to Mr. Renison for the excellent photographs used in plates IX and X of this report.
3. Of the 117 identified specimens, 108 were mammal, 6 bird, and 3 fish. The mammal series consisted of 96 deer bone, 4 elk, 2 bear, 1 wolf, 1 rabbit, 1 woodchuck, and 3 human (teeth).

## SHELL

As would be expected by the paucity of this medium on the site, the worked shell inventory is small. Only three artifacts were recovered. One of these is a pendant, or necklace unit, formed by piercing the shell of a small freshwater snail (Plate II, fig. a). The remaining two items are clamshell fragments which have been notched along their edges (Plate II, fig. b). The badly worn condition of this notching would suggest their use as tools rather than ornaments.

## ANTLER

Five antler artifacts were recovered. Two of these were used as awls (Plate II, fig. f) and another two as flaking tools (Plate II, fig. e). The purpose of the remaining artifact (Plate II, fig. c) is unknown. The tip of the tang has been worked to a chisel-like edge and shows considerable use.

## BONE

The worked bone inventory includes 4 flattened deer phalanges (Plate II, fig. j), six beads (Plate II, figs. g-i), a broken netting needle, a possible scraper, 6 awls (Plate II, figs. d, m, n), and a pottery marker (Plate II, fig. l). The small bone chip (Plate II, fig. k) shows signs of use but its purpose is unknown.

## FLINT

Nine complete projectile points, 2 basal portions, and 5 tips were recovered. With one exception, all are small, triangular points (Plate III, figs. b-f). The exception is a notched specimen (Plate III, fig. g). Two knives (Plate III, figs. a, k), two scrapers, and part of a drill were found. One hundred and eighty-six unmodified spalls and 18 cores were recovered during excavation. Thirteen of these spalls and 6 of the cores show signs of dulling or flaking back on one or more edge, indicating their use as scrapers. Another 8 spalls had been retouched for the same purpose. One of the scrapers was made from a mottled brown chert. The rest of the flint is a light bluish-grey to blackish in colour.

## STONE

Four adzes and one small chisel were made of Amphibolite (Plate III, figs. h, l). The adzes are too fragmentary to determine their original shape, but they were well made and possessed a high polish. A discoidal bead of the same material and another of sandstone were unearthed (Plate III, figs. i, j). Two rubbing stones and a sandstone gaming counter complete the lithic inventory.

## CLAY PIPES

One complete pipe, 2 bowls, and 14 stem fragments were found. The whole specimen is a ringed-barrel pipe (Plate III, fig. r). Close examination reveals a repair job by its former owner. The stem of this pipe had been broken and the stub ground to its present sharp taper. The effigy pipe (Plate III, fig. p) is quite natural in form and boasts eyes of shell inlay. Though damaged, the shape of the mouth

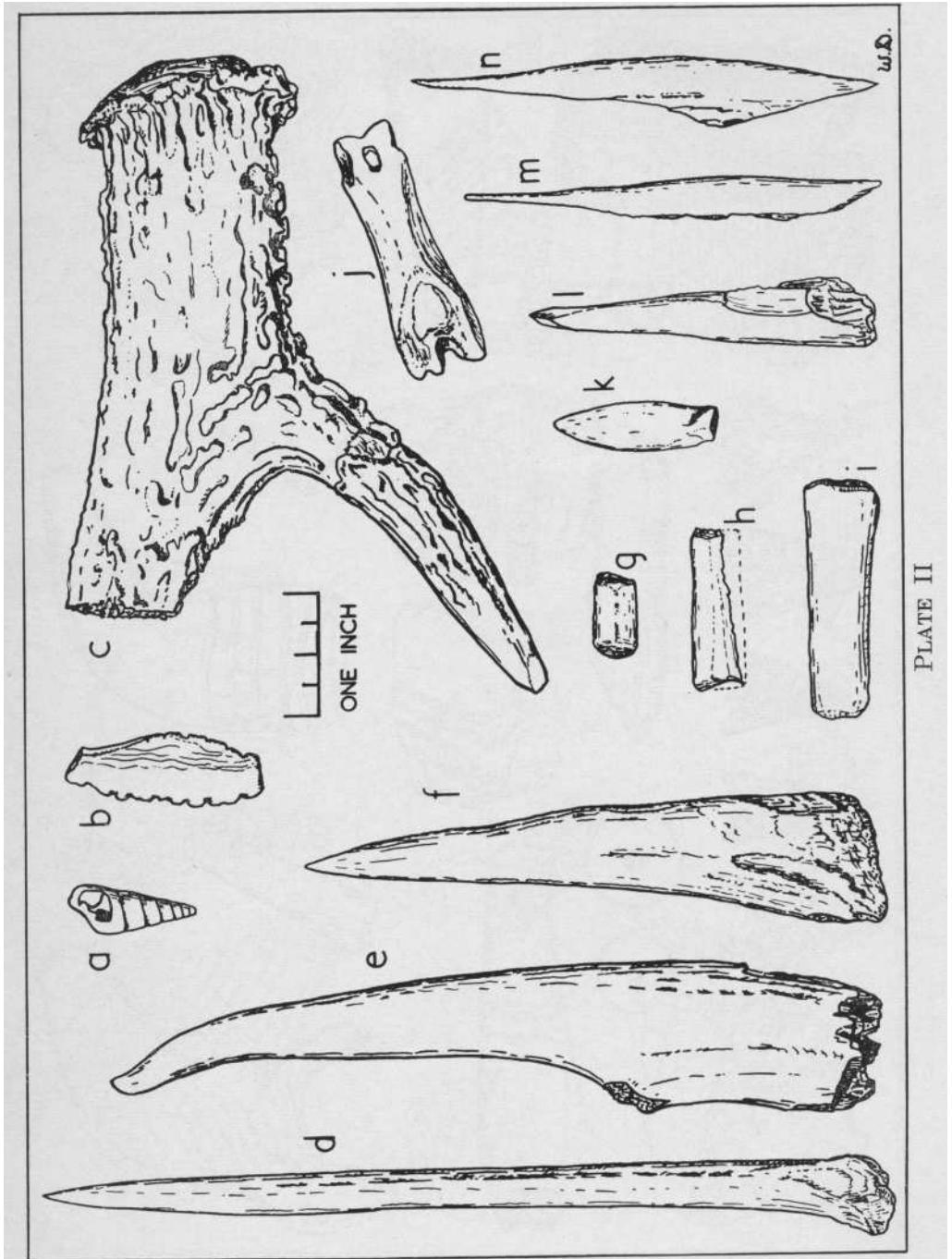


PLATE II

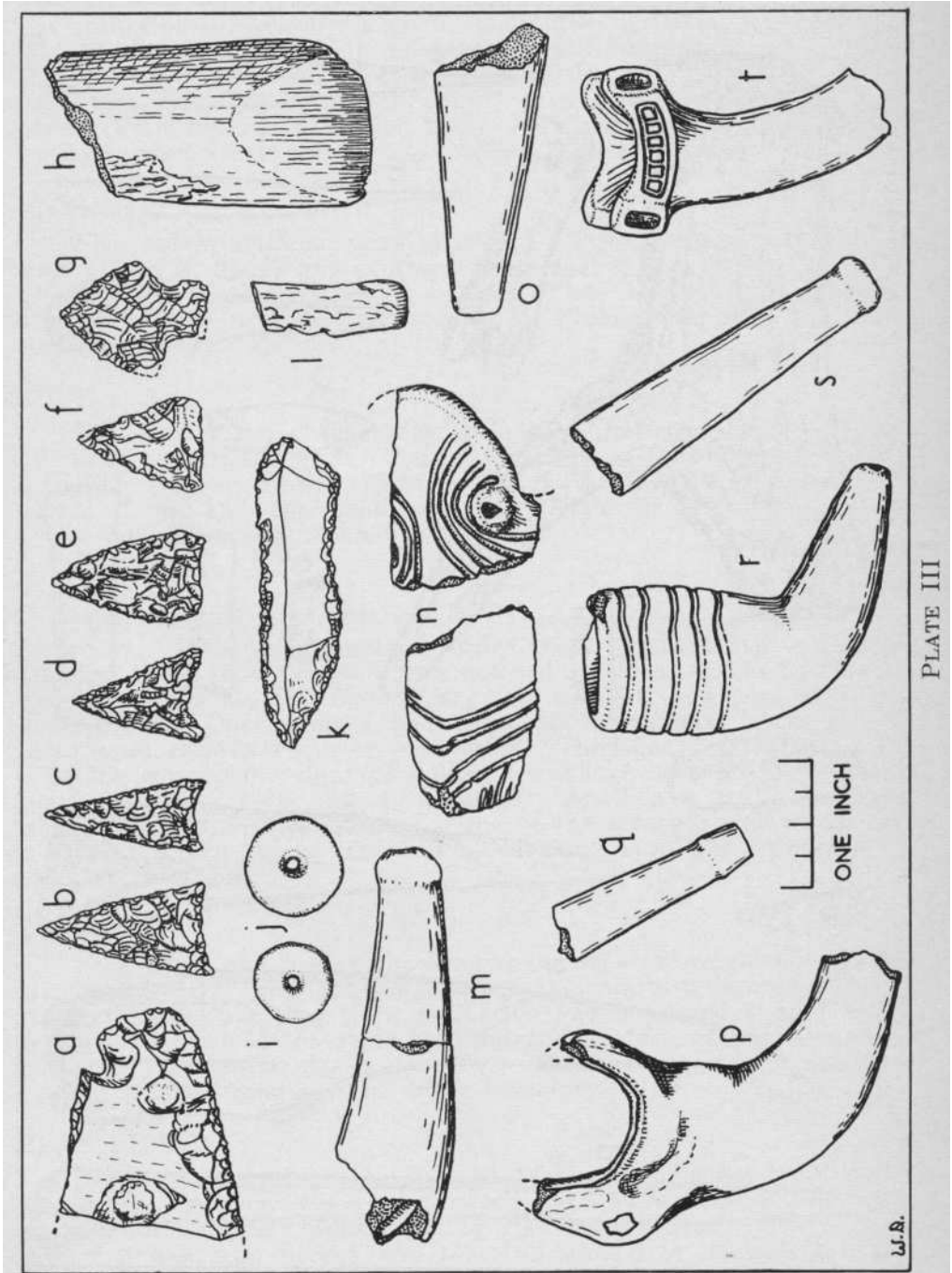


PLATE III

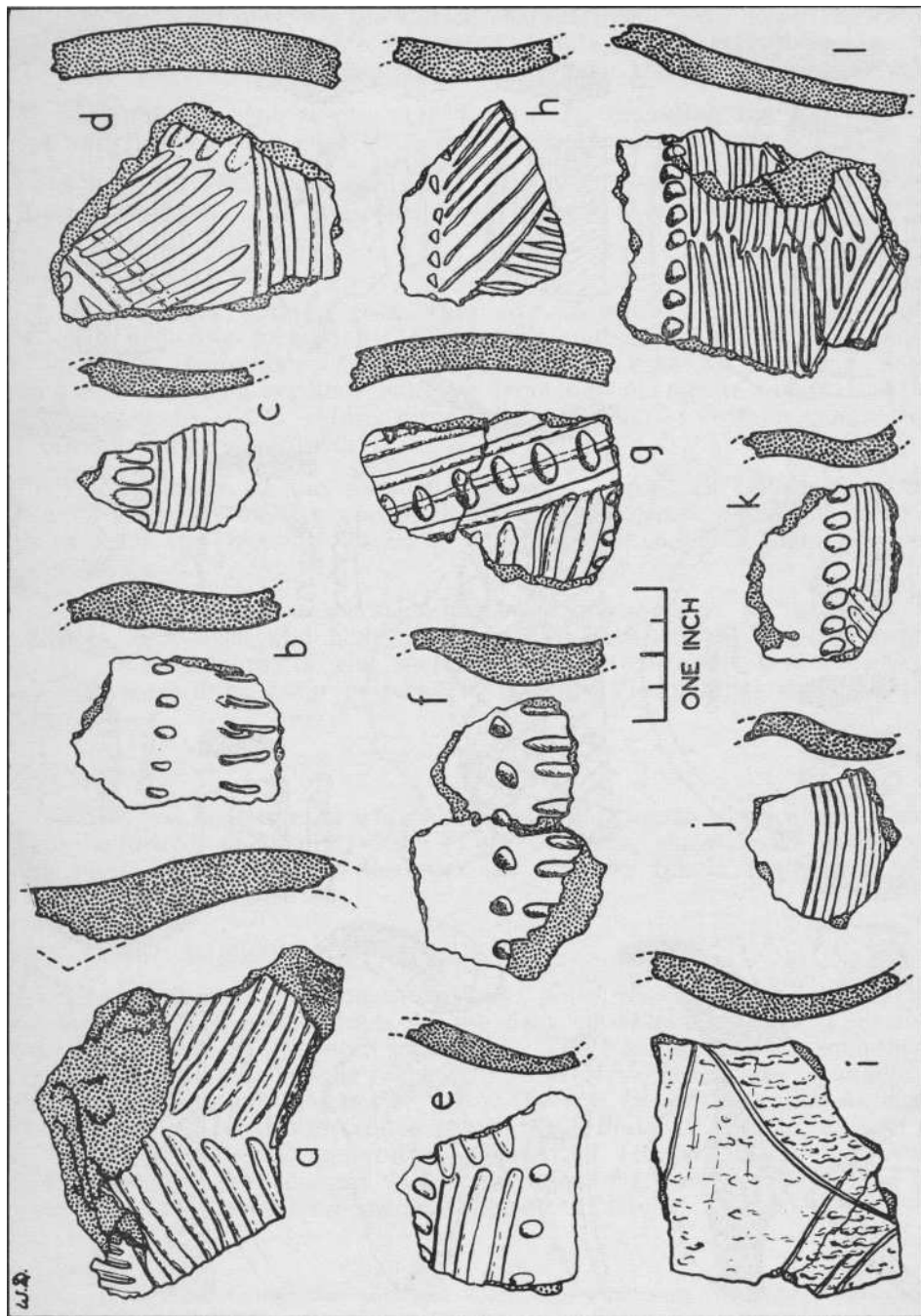


PLATE IV

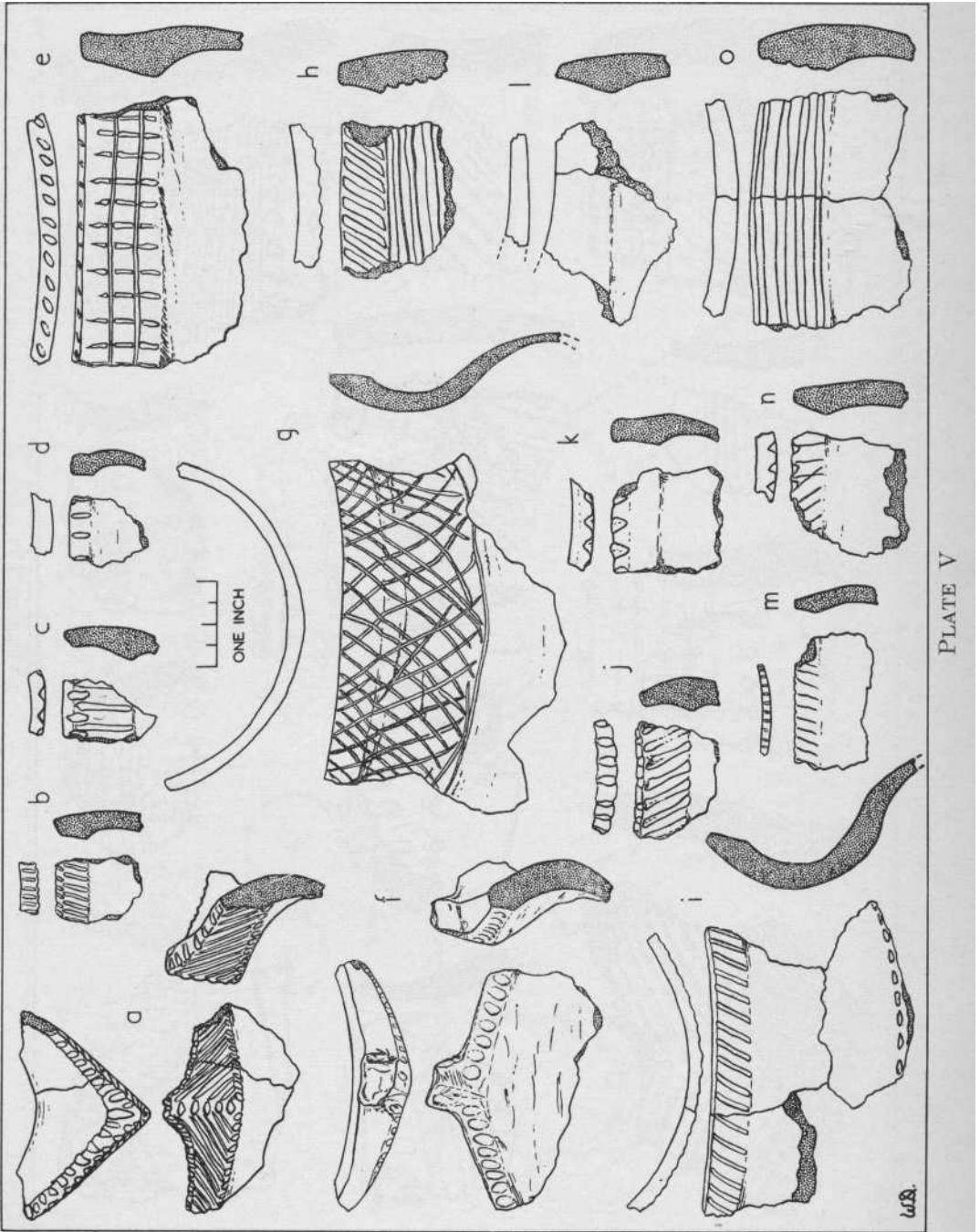


PLATE V

suggests the maker included a set of fangs. The castellated pipe (Plate III, fig. t) is orange-buff in colour and well fired. Boldly incised panels decorate the bowl between the slotted castellations. Two bowl fragments of another effigy pipe were recovered (Plate III, fig. n). To us, the markings and raised eye suggest a frog to be the animal represented.

Most of the pipe stems were formed by moulding the clay over a bent twig, but in one case twisted grass or cord was used.

Six mouthpieces were recovered. Four of these are expanded (Plate III, figs. m, q, s) and the other two tapered (Plate III, fig. o).

## POTTERY

Most of the pottery from this site shows a laminated structure and was probably formed by the "paddle and anvil" method described in historical accounts<sup>4</sup>. Crushed quartz was used as tempering and firing has produced a colour ranging from dull orange to yellowish-grey and occasionally black. Many interiors are blackened from carbonization of the food they contained.

The majority of the castellations were formed by building up the collar with strips of clay and moulding them to shape (Plate V, fig. a), but at least two were produced by pinching the collar to form a raised node (Plate VIII, fig. c).

Before analysis, restoration was carried out in an attempt to correlate rim, neck and body sherds. This reduced the original count of 112 rimsherds to 76 rim sections from 62 different vessels. Nine of these were sufficiently restored to indicate the original shape of the vessel.

## BODY SHERDS

Unrelated body sherds were classified according to surface treatment. Seven hundred and thirty-four of these were smooth, 23 decorated with incised or punctated designs<sup>5</sup>, 92 cord or fabric impressed, and 3 ribbed paddle malleated.

## SHOULDER SHERDS

These fall into three classifications: plain, decorated, and textured<sup>6</sup>. All but one of the 19 vessels in the first classification have a similar lack of attention on the neck and body. The exception has a smoothed-over ribbed stamping on the body. On 30 vessels a single line of shoulder punctation is the only decoration below the rim (Plate V, fig. i). Another 12 have an incised design added below this (Plate IV, figs. b, c, e, f, h, k, l). In 2 cases the punctates are omitted (Plate IV, fig. j). Two shoulder sherds are covered with a cord or fabric impression. One of these has a superimposed incised element (Plate IV, fig. i).

4. Sagard, 1632.

5. There is a possibility that some of these may represent the lower portion of shoulder decorations.

6. Neck and shoulder areas of restored vessels are dealt with in the rimsherd analysis and have been carefully checked to avoid duplication here.



## NECK SHERDS

A number of neck sherds could not be associated with recovered rim or shoulder sections. Fifty-three of these were undecorated, 5 were covered with incised designs (Plate IV, figs. a, d, g), and 1 was fabric impressed.

## RIM SECTIONS

The rim sections were divided into groups having general characteristics in common, and individual sections then compared to published pottery types<sup>7</sup>. Though there was considerable variation in each group, most of the sections (with the exception of those in group two) could be identified as recognized types or variants.

GROUP ONE is comprised of vessels having typical "Iroquoian" characteristics : plain, globular bodies, short, constricted necks, and collared rims decorated with incised or punctated designs. Identified in this group are : 6 "Huron Incised" (Plate V, fig. i ; Plate IX, fig. a) and 2 variants (Plate V, figs. d, f) ; 7 "Sidey Notched" (Plate V, figs. a, b, j, m) and 2 variants (Plate V, figs. c, n) ; 1 "Warminster Horizontal" (Plate V, fig. o) ; 1 "Black Necked" (Plate V, fig. h) ; 1 "Lawson Opposed" variant (Plate VIII, fig. e) ; 2 "Seed Incised" variants (Plate V, fig. k). Six other vessels in this group could not be satisfactorily identified. Superficially, four of these resemble "Niagara Collared" vessels (Plate V, fig. l) and one a "Sidey Crossed" vessel (Plate V, fig. e), but the cross-sectional requirements are lacking. The remainder is a small, hard, thin-walled vessel having an incised, cross-hatched design on the collar and neck area—probably a degenerate "Black Necked" motif (Plate V, fig. g ; Plate IX, fig. b) . The top of the castellation on this vessel is missing, but the remainder would suggest a pointed or incipient turret type.

GROUP TWO vessels have a medium high, to high collar<sup>8</sup>, undecorated neck, and unknown body shape. In all cases the collar itself is ill-defined and has a straight or slightly channelled interior. The incised collar decoration consists of hatchured triangular areas (Plate VI, figs. a, c; Plate VIII, figs. a, b) or alternating isosceles triangles and parellelograms (Plate VI, figs. h, d; Plate VIII, figs. g, i, j; Plate X, figs. e, f, g). This treatment is often embellished with lip and basal notching or punctuation.

These vessels pose a problem in identification. Within the limitations described above, there is a subtle change from the finely executed, very high collared vessel illustrated in Plate VI, fig. b, through increasingly shorter, more crudely decorated collars to that illustrated in Plate VIII, fig. g. Others, branching from this line of change, approach the requirements of "Sidey Notched" (Plate VIII, fig. d) and "Lawson Opposed" (Plate VIII, fig. b). Though we cannot, with assurance, classify any of the 13 vessels in this group with MacNeish's pottery types<sup>9</sup> they seem related to "Lawson Opposed" and certain

7. The published works of Emerson (1955, 1956), MacNeish (1952), and Ridley (1952a) were most helpful in accomplishing this task.
8. Emerson, 1956, page 4.
9. MacNeish, 1952.

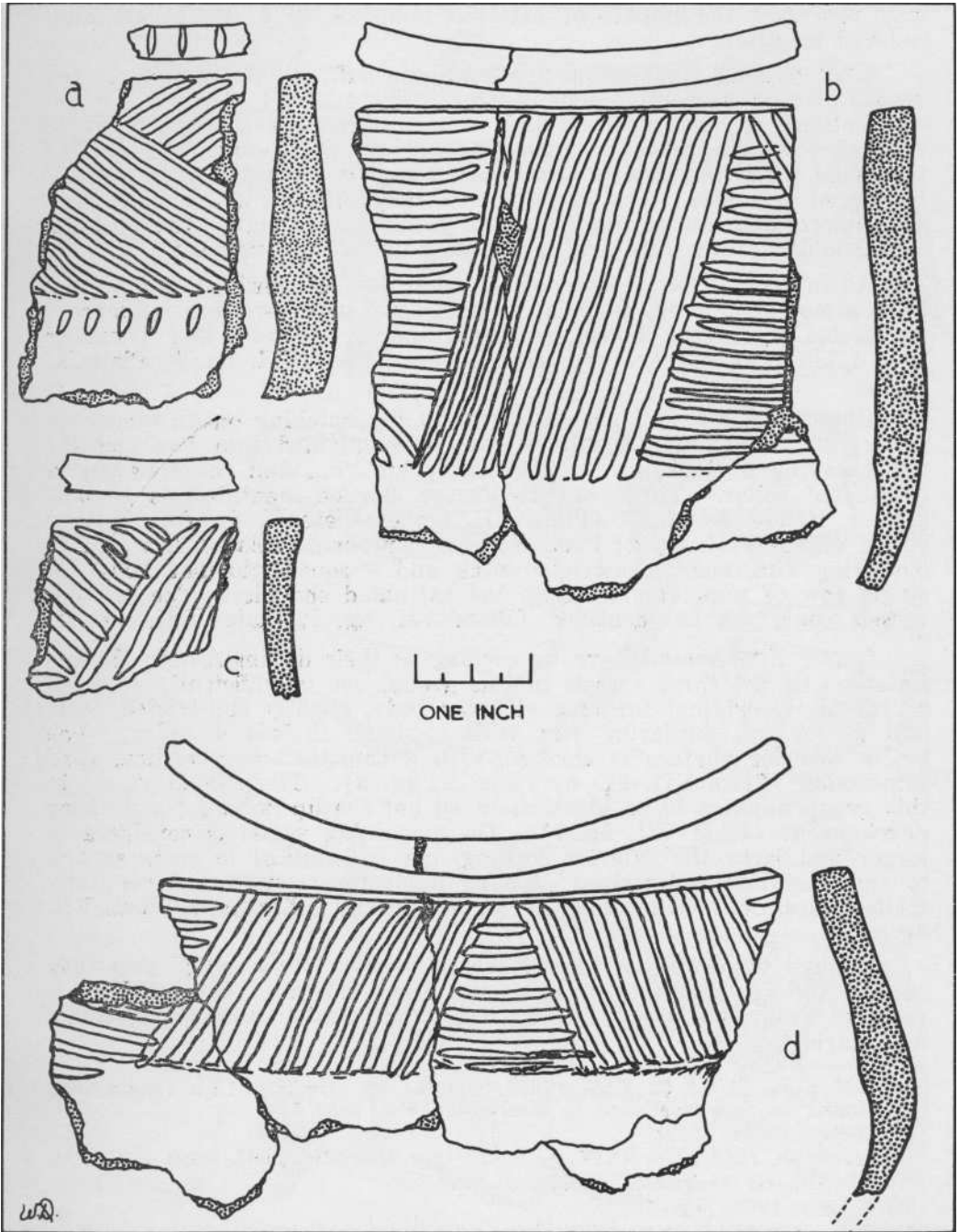


PLATE VI

historic and late prehistoric Cayuga types in Western New York<sup>10</sup> and may represent the impact of external influence on a degenerate high collared tradition<sup>11</sup>.

GROUP THREE rim sections are from light buff, to dull-orange coloured vessels having a medium grit temper. There are 4, 6, or 8 pointed castellations on the medium high collar. There is usually a single vertical row of gashes or punctates below this feature and similar treatment along the base of the collar, which is decorated with incised, hatchured triangles. The slightly constricted neck and globular body are undecorated, but a single row of gashes or punctates often adorns the shoulder. Rim lips are occasionally incised or notched.

As in Group Two, these vessels could not be identified, but appear to be a modification of "Onondaga Triangular" under western influence<sup>12</sup>. Duplicates have been found on the Draper<sup>13</sup>, Squires<sup>14</sup>, and Thomas<sup>15</sup> sites. Three vessels are represented here (Plate VII, fig. j; Plate X, fig. b).

GROUP FOUR vessels are identified by the notching on an otherwise undecorated rim. These vessels can be subdivided into two classes: those having a thickened, usually outflaring rim, and those having a castellated collar. Three of the former can be identified as variant "Dutch Hollow Notched" (Plate VII, fig. e; Plate X, fig. d). Another vessel (Plate VIII, fig. f; Plate X, fig. c), probably related, has a more outflaring rim, short constricted neck and a squat, globular body. A single row of punctates encircles the carinated shoulder. The collared vessels could not be identified (Plate VII, fig. i; Plate VIII, fig. c).

GROUP FIVE vessels have lip cording as their distinguishing characteristic. Of the three vessels in this group, one is sufficiently restored to reveal its original form: a globular body, slightly constricted neck, and a notched, outflaring rim with a short, ill-defined collar. The entire exterior surface is covered with a smoothed-over vertical cord impression (Plate VII, fig. h; Plate X, fig. a). The second vessel in this group appears to be identical in all but the lip notching and collar development (Plate VII, fig. c). The remaining vessel is considerably larger and lacks the exterior cording, but is identical in cross section to that previously described. Collar decoration consists of vertically trailed lines, outlined by notching at the lip and collar base (Plate VII, fig. a).

Though we could not identify these vessels, it was noted that they shared certain characteristics of the Seed series<sup>16</sup>. Lip cording is reported from the Ripley site in New York State<sup>17</sup> and Michipicoten, in Ontario<sup>18</sup>.

10. Ibid, pages 13, 51, 52; Guthe, 1958, pages 61, 69. One vessel has a castellation similar to that mentioned in MacNeish, 1952, page 14.
11. Ridley, 1952a, 1952b.
12. MacNeish, 1952, plate XXIV, fig. 6 and type description; *ibid*, pages 13, 14, 34.
13. The Ontario Archaeological Society collection.
14. Squires, 1958, page 12.
15. Donaldson, W. S., n.d., 'The Thomas Site'.
16. MacNeish, 1952, page 35.
17. *Ibid*, page 25.
18. Ridley, 1958.

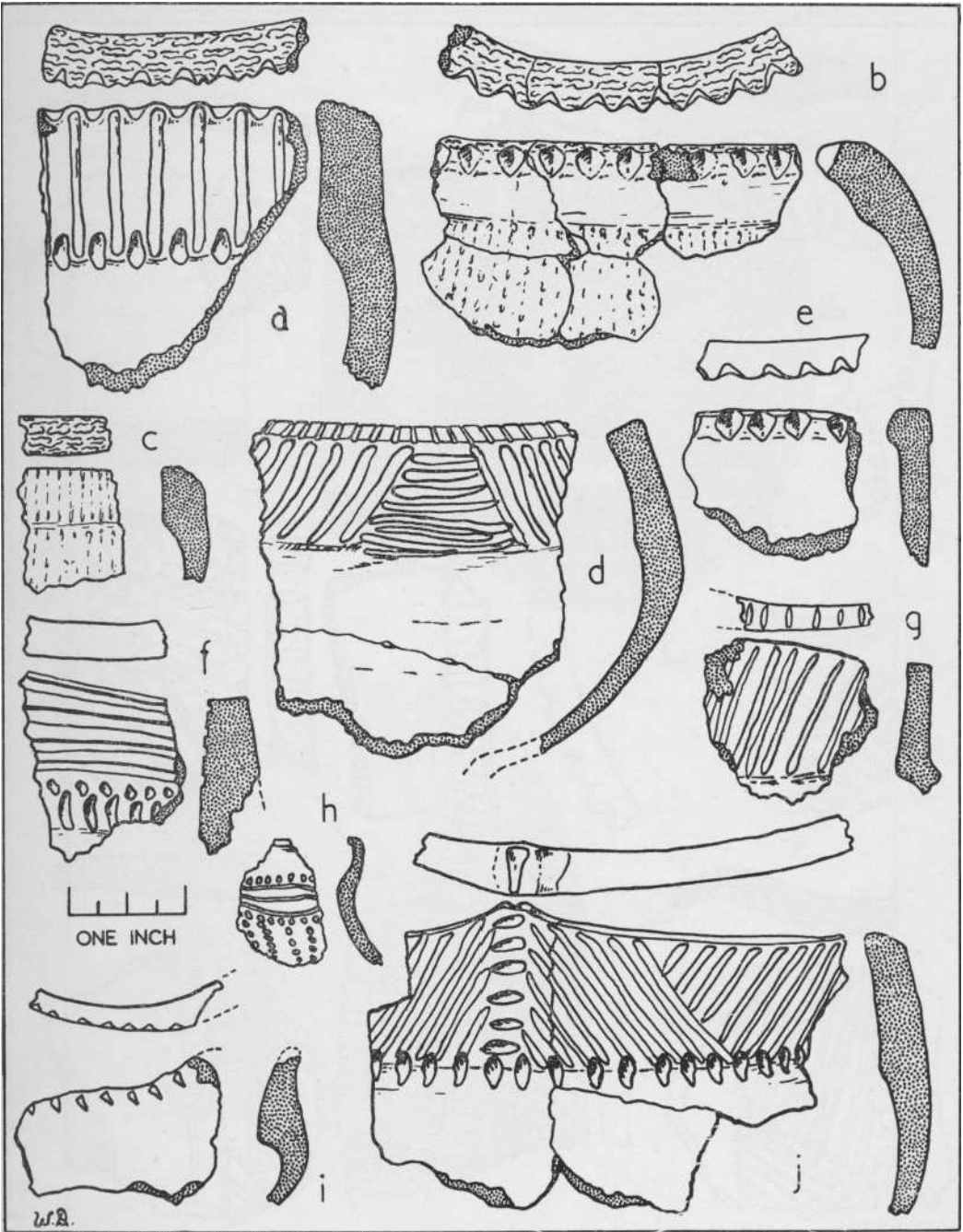
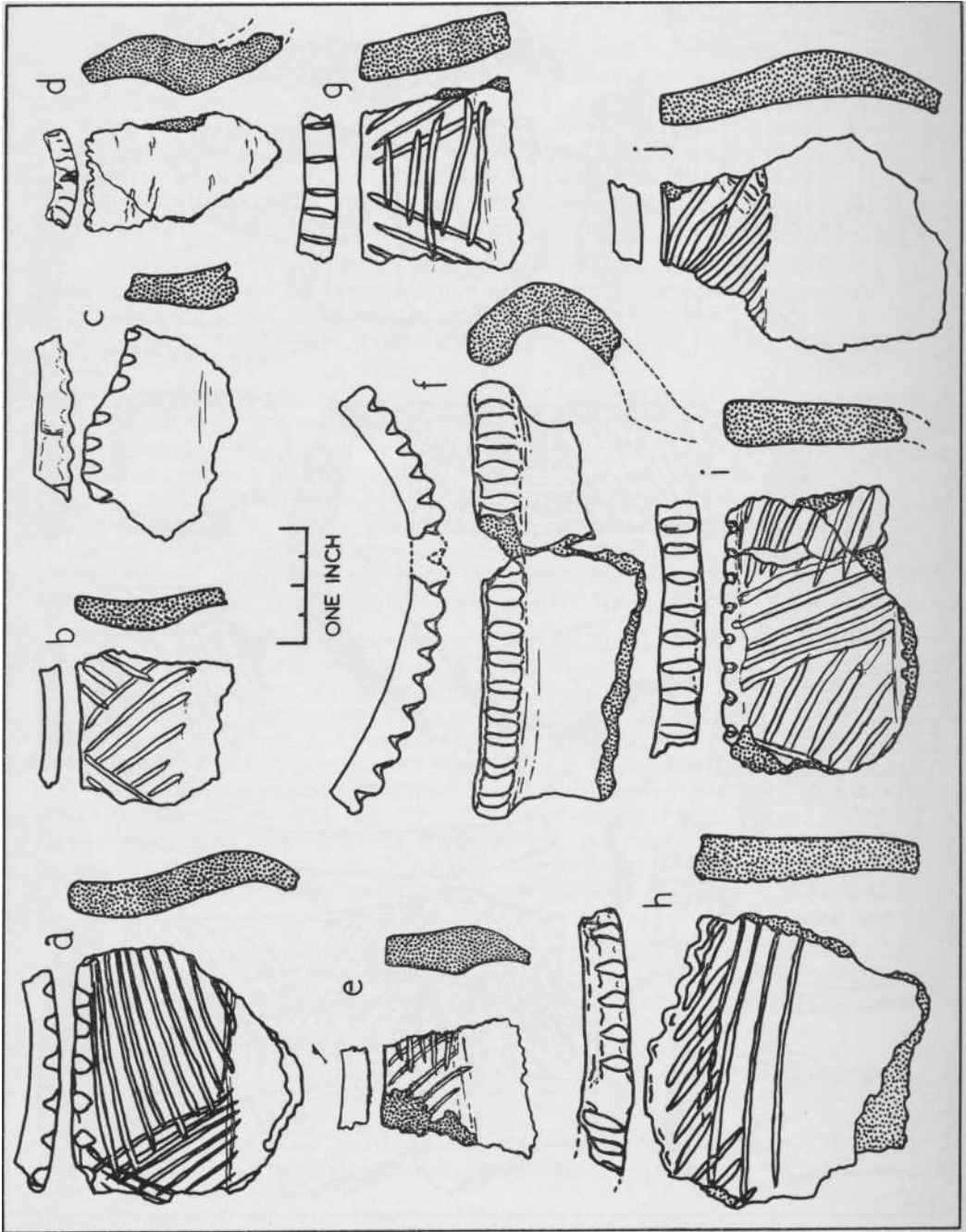


PLATE VII



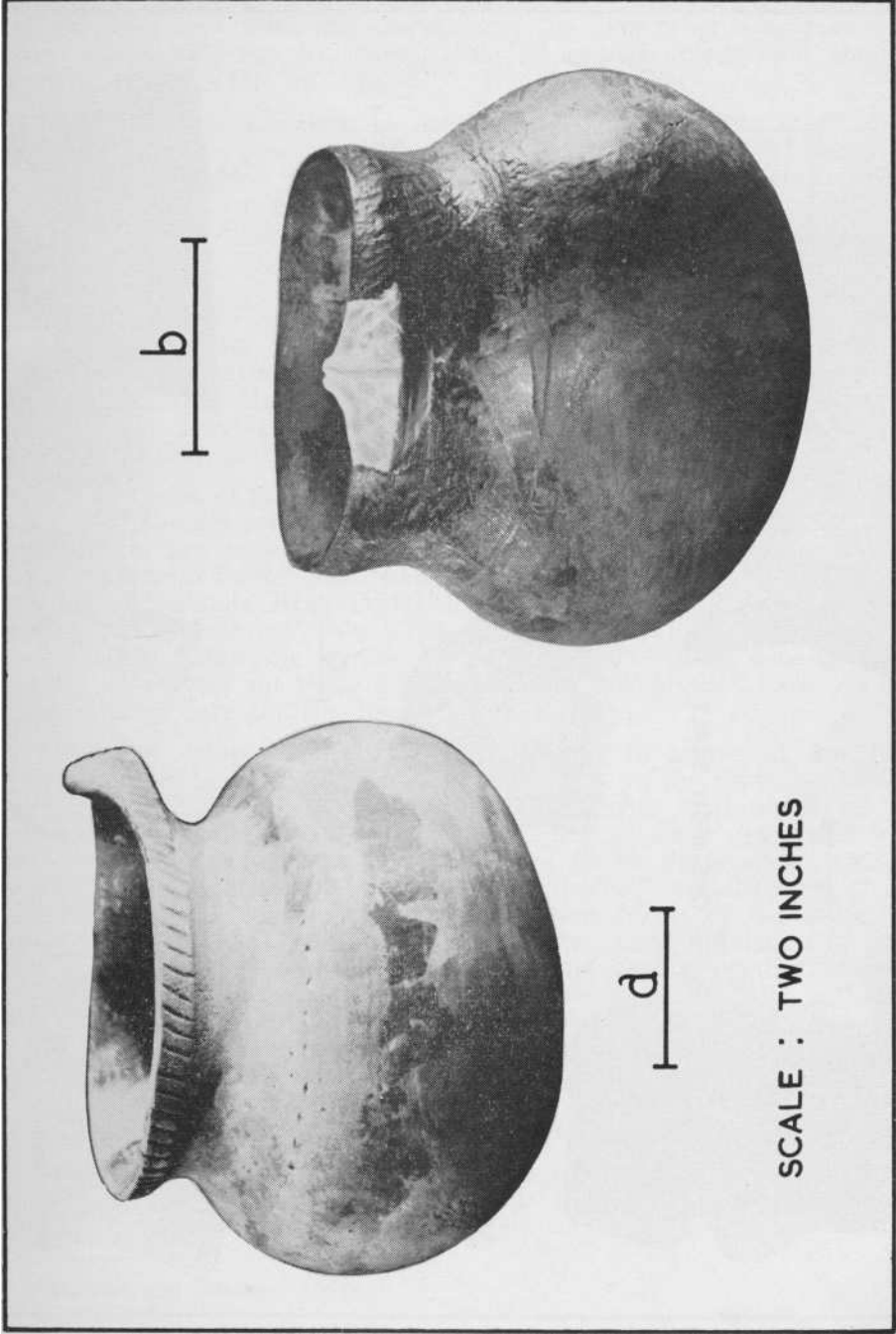
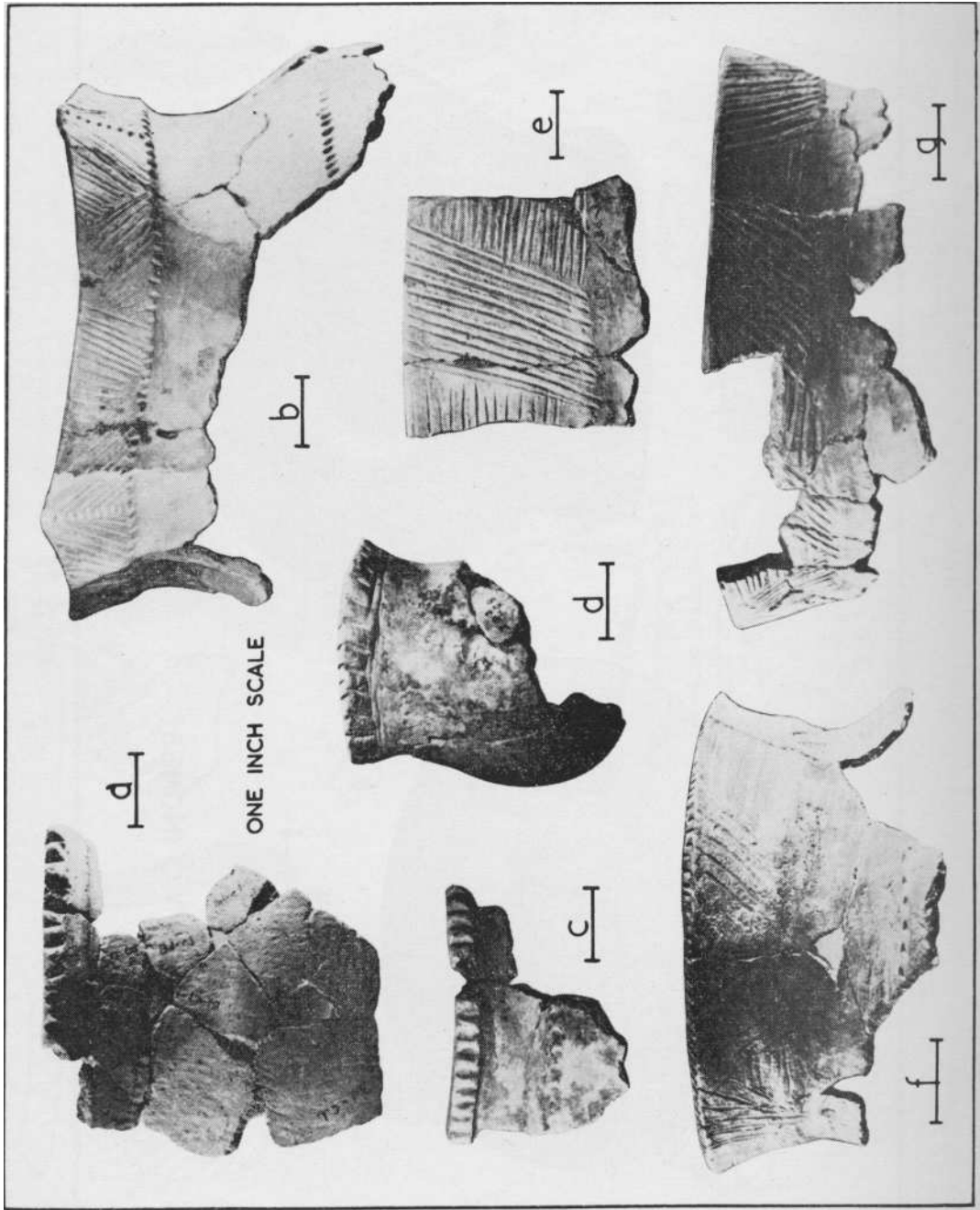


PLATE IX



GROUP Six consists of six of those small vessels commonly called "seed pots", though we suspect that some of these are actually toy vessels made by children. With the exception of the illustrated body punctated vessel (Plate VII, fig. h), these were all crudely made and sloppily decorated (Plate VIII, fig. d).

After the classification described above had been achieved, 3 vessels remained. One of these (Plate VIII, fig. h) would duplicate the castellated section illustrated in Plate VIII, fig. c, if the exterior incising and interior punctates were omitted. The other two sections are from medium high collared vessels which were probably castellated (Plate VII, figs. f, g).

## APPRAISAL

A sample of 62 vessels from a disturbed site is hardly sufficient to substantiate positive statements on the tribal and temporal position of its inhabitants. However, when considered as a whole, the recovered material does provide some useful information on their cultural and temporal position in the prehistory of our province.

Though most of the identified rim types can be duplicated on Middle Period and Contact sites, many of those traits considered diagnostic of these periods are missing or present in minor quantity only. "Black Necked" pottery forms less than 2% of the sample. "Rolled Face" and classic "Lalonde High Collar" rims are absent, as are the "plain globular" and "trumpet" pipes, so popular on Middle Period sites in the vicinity<sup>19</sup>. Since the earlier Webb-Middleport traits, usually found in minor quantities on these latter sites, are not present here, we can assume a later date for the Boyd.

An upper temporal limit is more difficult to arrive at, for little has been published on the Contact Neutral sites to the west. However, a rough estimate can be ascertained by noting that most of the "Huron-like" vessels are not as well developed as those associated with European material and rim interiors tend to be flattened or slightly concave. The "notched flat-topped" and "turret" castellations of the Contact period are missing, although incipient forms of the latter are present (Plate V, fig. f). This would suggest some difference in time. The presence of such accepted Contact traits as the small triangular points and castellated pipe<sup>20</sup> might seem to contradict this, but these items would seem to have enjoyed a longer history, for small, triangular points have been recovered from sites of the late Middle period<sup>21</sup> and castellated pipes (all lacking the classic stem decoration) have been encountered by the author on precontact sites. Several of this type have been reported from prehistoric sites in New York State<sup>22</sup>.

The worked deer phalanges tend to confirm this assumption, as the "flattened variant" was the only type recovered. Emerson<sup>23</sup> noted a gradual preference for this type over the earlier "cup-and-pin" variety

19. Emerson and Popham, 1952.

20. Ridley, 1952a.

21. Ritchie, 1952, plate 3, figs. 1 to 10.

22. Parker, 1922, plate 67, fig. 4; Guthe, 1958, plate XXV, fig. p.

23. Emerson and Popham, 1952.



during the Middle Period, and its total absence from Contact Huron sites. This would indicate an occupation later than those at Black Creek and Downsview, but somewhat earlier than the contact period

Cultural relationships are more difficult to determine, for most of the identified pottery types are found over a wide geographic range<sup>24</sup>. Such traits as notched collars and lip cording might point to greater influence from the peninsular area<sup>25</sup>. This connection is tenuous at best but there is certainly less heritage from the "Roebuck" culture to the east<sup>26</sup>. If the relationship of the unidentified vessels in Group Two could be established, it might help clarify matters.

Hunting apparently played an important part in the economy of this site, for large quantities of mammal remains and flint chips were recovered. In view of the disturbed nature of the excavated area and paucity of vegetal remains, the possibility that this might have been a seasonal hunting station cannot be ignored. A more thorough investigation for undisturbed areas and possible settlement patterns would have been required to settle this problem, and that was beyond the scope of this salvage excavation. In any case, an abandoned site would offer a convenient open area on which to camp and evidence of this practice has been found before<sup>27</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the internal evidence and reference material available to the author, we would suggest that if more than one occupation is involved, the first occurred during the transition stage bridging the Middle and Late Prehistoric Iroquoian periods and final abandonment took place before the introduction of European trade goods into the area. If in fact only one occupation exists, we would advance the date to include it wholly within the latter period, possibly about 1500 A.D.

The similarity of much of the unclassified pottery to types found in western New York State heightens the awareness that little has been published on sites in peninsular Ontario. We would recommend work in this and the intervening area to test the possibility of cultural ties with the Boyd.

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January, 1960.

24. MacNeish, 1952.
25. Ibid, pages 25, 43.
26. Wintemberg, 1936.
27. Kidd, 1949, page 14.

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