

WILLIAM S. DONALDSON
(Received May 23rd, 1964)

The King's Forest Park Site

ABSTRACT

Salvaged material from an Iroquoian campsite, probably at the Glen Meyer stage of development, is described from Hamilton, Ontario. The presence of mottled grey chert as the material for the manufacture of artifacts indicates a relationship to the eastern Glen Meyer focus.

INTRODUCTION

On May 18, 1963, members of The Ontario Archaeological Society excavated an aboriginal site on the west bank of the Albion Creek, in King's Forest Park, Hamilton, Ontario.

This site, first reported to the Royal Ontario Museum by William Fox, a Hamilton high school student interested in archaeology, was rapidly being destroyed by a storm sewer project when arrangements were completed with the Royal Ontario Museum and the Hamilton Department of Works to have The Ontario Archaeology Society excavate what remained as a salvage project.

By May 18, all that remained of the site was the bottom 3 to 4 inches of one of the three ash dumps originally reported by Fox, and a thin scattering of occupational debris immediately west of the sewer excavation. The Society concentrated its efforts on the remains of the ash dump and opened up 5 five-foot squares along the edge of the sewer excavation. Though no settlement patterns were uncovered, a sufficient number of artifacts were obtained from which some conclusions can be made about their original owners.

ARTIFACTS

LITHIC INDUSTRY

A side-notched point (Plate 1, Fig. D) and three end scrapers, all of mottled grey chert, were the only chipped stone artifacts recovered. A score of flint chips indicated that a lithic industry existed on the site.

POTTERY

The pottery sherds from this site show no signs of coil construction and were probably constructed by the paddle-and-anvil method. The tempering is a fine to coarse grit of crushed rock and the surface colouring ranges from light orange-buff to near black. The exterior body surfaces were either smooth, fabric-impressed, or roughened with a cord or thong-wrapped paddle. Unfortunately, there were not enough sherds to derive a meaningful percentage breakdown on body treatment. In many cases the roughened surface has been partially smoothed over.

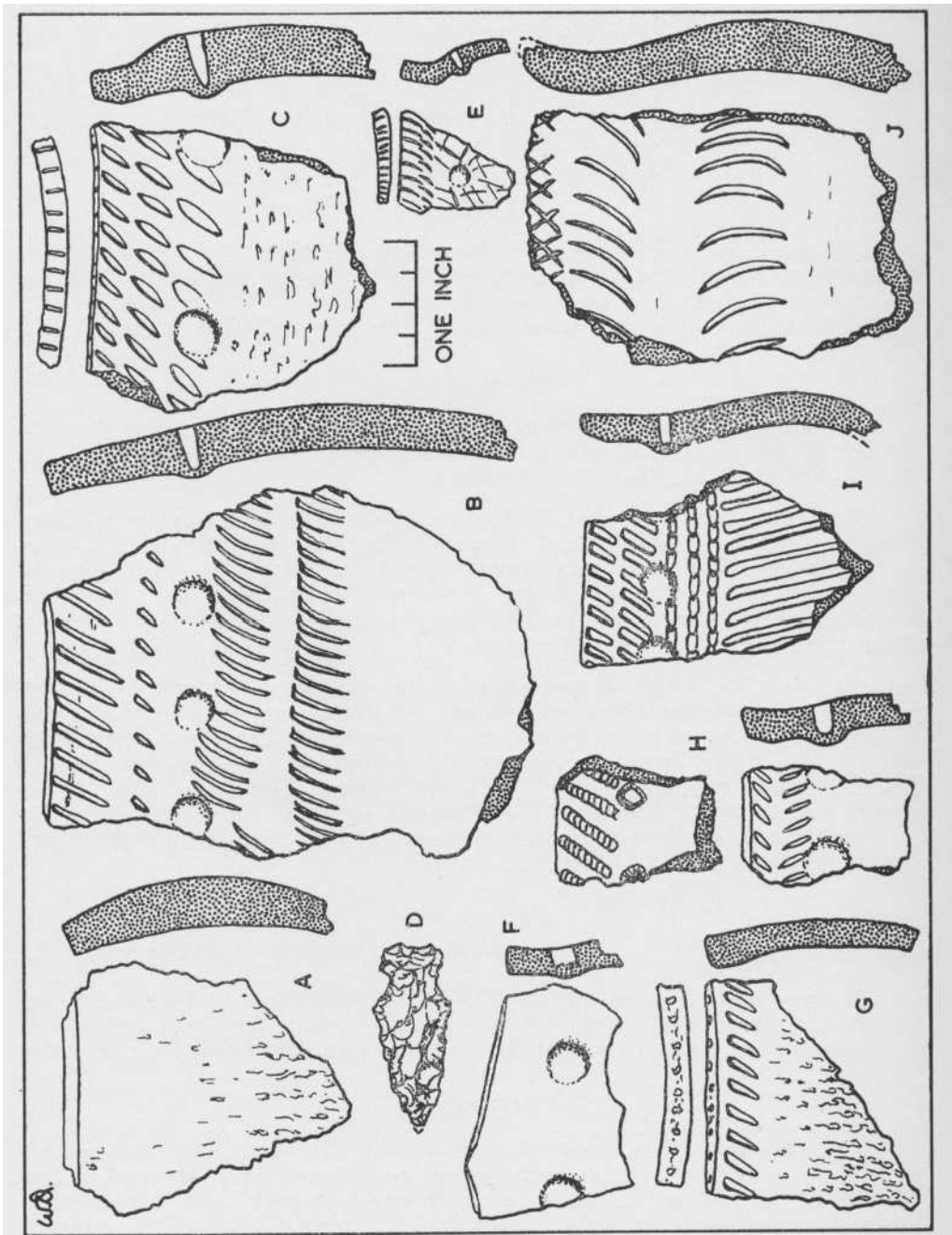


PLATE I

This smoothing of the original texturing is most noticeable on the neck and rim sherds. Several of the neck sherds carry a complex incising reminiscent of the Krieger Site (Kidd, 1954). An example of this neck incising is shown in Plate 2, Figure I.

RIM SHERDS

Fifty-seven of the rimsherds from this site were complete enough for analysis. Where possible, these were typed according to the classifications defined by MacNeish (1952) and Ridley (1958). Variants and unclassified sherds are described in detail and have been grouped under descriptive headings. This was done merely as a convenience in reporting and should not be construed as an attempt to propose new pottery types.

TYPES

PLAIN (11 sherds)

Grouped under this classification are 6 smooth-surfaced sherds (Plate 2, Fig. D), three partially smoothed-over fabric impressed sherds, one of which carries lip punctation (Plate 1, Fig. A ; Plate 2, Fig. B ; Plate 3, Fig. D), a smooth-surfaced, bossed sherd reminiscent of Boys Bossed Plain (Plate 1, Fig. F), and one sherd which has a row of interior punctates that are not deep enough to raise bosses on the smooth-surface exterior (Plate 2, Fig. E).

OBLIQUE INCISED (3 sherds)

The exterior surface on these collarless rimsherds is fabric impressed, with a single row of oblique incising just beneath the lip. Two of them have this exterior texturing nearly obliterated by subsequent smoothing but carry an untouched fabric impression on the lip (Plate 2, Fig. J). The remaining sherd has a less constricted neck and carries a row of punctates on the lip (Plate 1, Fig. G).

PLATE I

CHIPPED FLINT AND POTTERY ARTIFACTS FROM THE KING'S FOREST PARK SITE

- Fig. A—Plain rimsherd showing partially smoothed over fabric impression.
- Fig. B—Impressed Oblique Bossed rimsherd.
- Fig. C—Incised Oblique Bossed rimsherd.
- Fig. D—Side-notched point chipped from mottled grey chert.
- Fig. E—Variant Incised Oblique Bossed rimsherd with random incising on neck.
- Fig. F—Smooth surfaced, bossed rimsherd.
- Fig. G—Oblique Incised rimsherd carrying lip punctation.
- Fig. H—Incised Oblique Bossed rimsherd, showing cord-wrapped stick impression on rim interior.
- Fig. I—Bossed Complex rimsherd.
- Fig. J—Variant Ontario Oblique rimsherd.

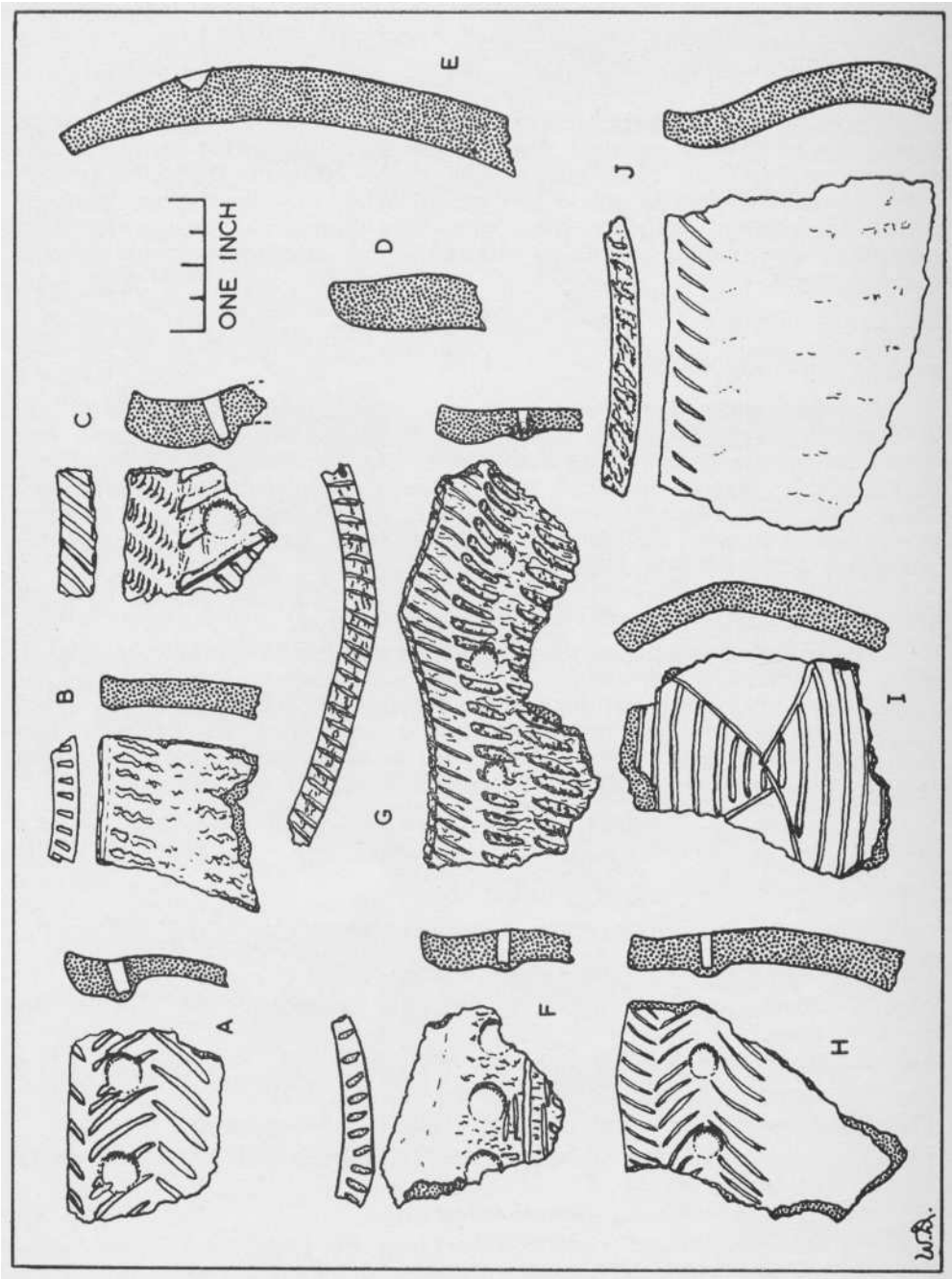


PLATE II

OBLIQUE INCISED BOSSED (1 sherd)

Except for the oblique incising below the lip, this sherd is similar to Boys Bossed Plain (Plate 3, Fig. C).

ONTARIO OBLIQUE (10 sherds)

This classification of MacNeish's (1952) has been restricted here to vessels on which the oblique elements have been incised or trailed. Where paddle-edge impressing is used, Ridley's (1958) classification is followed.

Six of these sherds carry a fabric impression on the lip (Plate 3, Fig. H). Another, a variant, has criss-cross incising just below the lip (Plate 1, Fig. J). This sherd, conceivably a variant of Ridley's Cross Hatch Incised, has a row of oblique incising below the inner lip. The remaining two sherds separate the oblique incising with a horizontal element and carry lip incising (Plate 3, Fig. J).

IMPRESSED OBLIQUE (10 sherds)

Only one of these sherds has the paddle-edge impressions across the lip. All have on incipient collar and, with one exception, have the rows of impressions arranged in a herringbone pattern (Plate 3, Fig. A). Since Ridley (1958) sets a limit of 3 rows of impressions in this classification, the herringbone patterned sherds, with 4 rows of impressions, must be considered variants.

IMPRESSED OBLIQUE BOSSED (3 sherds)

One of these sherds is smooth surfaced and lacks the lip impressions (Plate 1, Fig. B). The other two must be considered variants, for they have the decoration superimposed on a partially smoothed-over fabric impression (Plate 2, Fig. G).

INCISED OBLIQUE BOSSED (8 sherds)

With the exception of a variant that substitutes cross hatching for the top row of oblique incising, and a sherd from a small vessel

PLATE II

POTTERY FROM THE KING'S FOREST PARK SITE

- Fig. A—Incised Oblique Bossed rimsherd.
 Fig. B—Plain rimsherd showing lip punctation and partially smoothed over fabric impression on exterior surface.
 Fig. C—Corded Oblique Bossed rimsherd.
 Fig. D—Cross sectional view of undecorated, smooth surfaced rimsherd.
 Fig. E—Cross sectional view of Plain type rimsherd showing vestigial boss hole on interior surface.
 Fig. F—Castellated Bossed Underlined rimsherd.
 Fig. G—Variant Impressed Oblique Bossed rimsherd.
 Fig. H—Incised Oblique Bossed rimsherd.
 Fig. I—Neck fragment carrying complex incised design.
 Fig. J—Oblique Incised rimsherd showing fabric impression on lip.

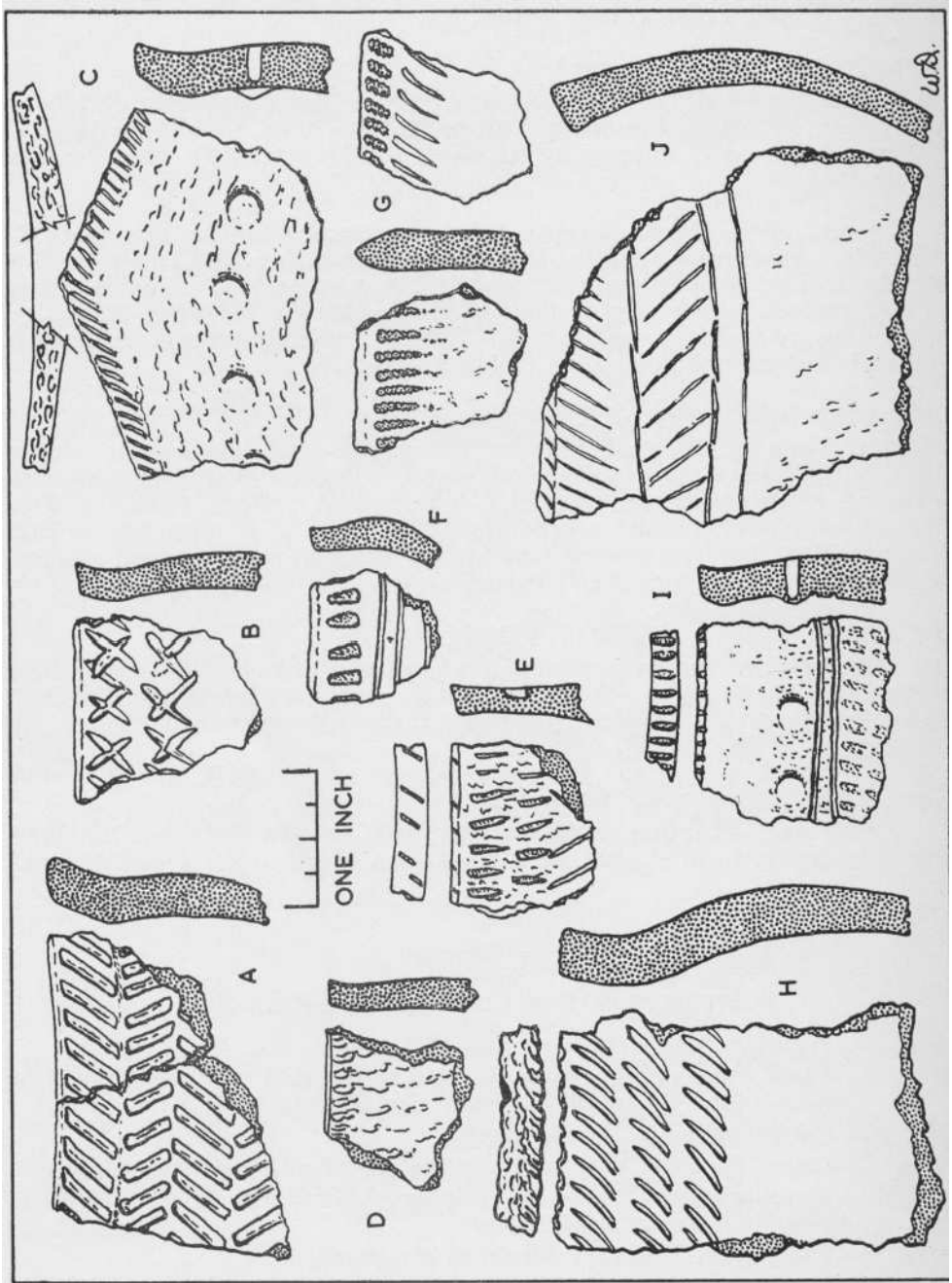


PLATE III

having random neck incising (Plate 1, Fig. E), these bossed sherds all carry typical Ontario Oblique decorations (Plate 1, Figs. C, H ; Plate 2, Figs. A, H) . Three sherds have an interior row of oblique incising and a fourth has oblique cord-wrapped stick impressions (Plate 1, Fig. H).

CRISS-CROSS INCISED (1 sherd)

This collarless, smooth-surfaced sherd carries two rows of criss-cross incising below the rim (Plate 3, Fig. B).

CORDED OBLIQUE BOSSSED (1 sherd)

This sherd has a row of oblique corded stick impressions below the rim. Beneath this, deep, blunt incisions form a complex neck design around the bosses. The same tool was used to incise the rim lip (Plate 2, Fig. C).

STIPPLE IMPRESSED (3 sherds)

A smoothed-over cord or fabric impression covers the exterior surface of these sherds. Beneath the rim is a band of stippled impressions, formed by pressing the sutured edge of a turtle plastron into the moist clay. Along the interior slope of the pointed rim is a similar band and beneath this is a row of oblique incised lines (Plate 3, Fig. G).

STIPPLE PUNCTATE (2 sherds)

On these sherds a shaped turtle plastron tool was pushed into the moist clay to form one or two rows of stippled punctates of varying depth. Below this are rows of oblique or horizontally incised lines of unknown length (Plate 3, Figs. E, F). One sherd has additional punctates on the lip and interior, the latter too shallow to raise exterior bosses (Plate 3, Fig. E)

BOSSSED UNDERLINED (3 sherds)

These sherds carry a horizontal row of external bosses above two horizontally incised lines. Beneath this, and also on the lip, are stippled

PLATE III

POTTERY FROM THE KING'S FOREST PARK SITE

Fig. A—Variant Impressed Oblique rimsherd.

Fig. B—Criss-Cross Incised rimsherd.

Fig. C—Oblique Incised Bossed rimsherd.

Fig. D—Plain type rimsherd showing partially smoothed-over fabric impression on exterior surface.

Fig. E—Stipple Punctate rimsherd showing lip punctation and vestigial boss hole.

Fig. F—Stipple Punctate rimsherd.

Fig. G—Stipple Impressed rimsherd showing incised element on interior surface.

Fig. H—Ontario Oblique rimsherd carrying fabric impression on lip.

Fig. I—Bossed Underlined rimsherd showing stippled impressions on lip.

Fig. J—Ontario Oblique rimsherd from flared-mouth vessel.

impressions from a tool similar to that used on the previous group. Prior to the application of this decoration the cord or fabric impression on the exterior surfaces was partially smoothed over (Plate 3, Fig. I). One sherd carries a low, pointed castellation (Plate 2, Fig. F).

BOSSED COMPLEX (1 sherd)

Descending from the exterior lip of this collarless sherd is a series of decorations consisting of: two rows of oblique bar stamping; three rows of overlapping punctates, the uppermost broken by a row of bosses; parallel oblique incised or trailed lines. A row of oblique bar stamping circles the interior, just below the rim lip (Plate 1, Fig. I).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The recovered artifacts, particularly the exterior bossed pottery, suggests that this site was occupied during the Glen Meyer stage of Iroquoian development in Ontario. The pottery illustrated in published reports on the Glen Meyer aspect available to the writer (Lee, 1958; Ridley, 1954, 1958; Ritchie, 1949) is, with one exception (Lee, 1958, p. 41), all from sites east of Toronto. This material differs from that of the King's Forest Park Site series in several ways. In particular, it favours horizontal linear motifs such as, Iroquoian Linear and Scugog Classic Bossed; it has a much higher incidence of exterior bossing (53% on the Boys site compared to 32% on the King's Forest Park Site), and it lacks the Kreiger-like neck decorations.

Comparisons with the western group of Glen Meyer sites is not possible as detailed reports have not yet been published. It is interesting to note, however, that a mauve coloured chert was preferred by the western group in the manufacture of chipped stone artifacts, whereas the mottled grey variety of the King's Forest Park site was used by the eastern group (Lee, 1958). These differences would seem to warrant further investigation and reporting of Glen Meyer sites, particularly in the Hamilton area.

With high and easily defended ground so near, it appears that defence was not a prime consideration in choosing this site. Its location on the flood plain suggests that it was a seasonal campsite rather than a permanent village.

REFERENCES

- Kidd, K. E., 1954. *A Woodland Site Near Chatham, Ontario*. Trans. Roy. Canad. Inst., 30 (2) 141-178.
- Lee, T. E., 1958. *Appendix to the Boys and Barrie Sites*. Ontario Archaeol. Soc., Publ. No. 4, 39-40.
- MacNeish, R. S., 1952. *Iroquoian Pottery Types*. Nat. Mus. Canada, Bull. 124, Anthropol. Ser. 31, 1-166.
- Ridley, Frank, 1954. *The Frank Bay Site, Lake Nipissing, Ontario*. Amer. Anti., 20 (1), 40-50.
- 1958. *The Boys and Barrie Sites*. Ontario Archaeol. Soc., Publ. No. 4, 18-42.
- Ritchie, William A., 1949. *An Archaeological Survey of the Trent Water-way in Ontario, Canada, and its significance for New York State Prehistory*. Res. Trans. New York State Archaeol. Ass., 12 (1) 1-49.