

Ruthven and the Collection of Andrew Thompson: A Case Study of a Nineteenth Century Antiquarian

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Archaeological Services Inc.

Introduction

Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI) was involved in the development of a management plan for Ruthven Park, the mid-nineteenth century historic estate of Colonel David Thompson, one of the chief proponents of the Grand River Navigation Company. The estate is approximately 640 hectares (1,600 acres) in extent and is situated on the east side of the Grand River north of Cayuga, Ontario (Figure 1). It encompasses an exquisite Greek Revival mansion within a fine example of a nineteenth century picturesque landscape. The Park is managed by the Lower Grand River Land Trust Inc. and is now a National Historic Site open to the public.

The primary purpose of the archaeological component of the project was to undertake an inventory of archaeological features on the property and to provide recommendations for their management (ASI 1997; 1998). One of the more interesting secondary tasks, however, was to undertake a preliminary assessment of the scope and quality of the remarkable Andrew Thompson aboriginal artifact collection consisting of over 3,000 museum quality specimens, collected in the late nineteenth century. This article reports on this collection, currently housed at Ruthven Park.

Documentation of the Aboriginal Artifact Collection

Summary Discussion of Collections

Andrew T. Thompson, was the eldest son of Colonel David Thompson. His aboriginal artifact collection consists of a total of 3,605 artifacts including flaked stone projectile points, bifaces, and other tools, ground stone celts and gorgets, ceramic vessel sherds and smoking pipe fragments, bone tools, and iron trade axes, as well as 21 historic ethnographic items (see Tables 2–5). A journal maintained by Andrew Thompson provides detailed information regarding some of the pieces in the collection and indicates that most of the material was collected locally.

The Ruthven collection constitutes an extremely significant resource given its overall scope and magnitude and the superlative quality of the majority of the artifacts. Virtually every projectile point type recognized in the lower Great Lakes region is represented in the collection, yet it is apparent that the majority of the material is of local origin. This conclusion is based both on the comparatively detailed records that are provided by the journal entries for some classes of material, and the fact that over 90% of the flaked stone tools is manufactured

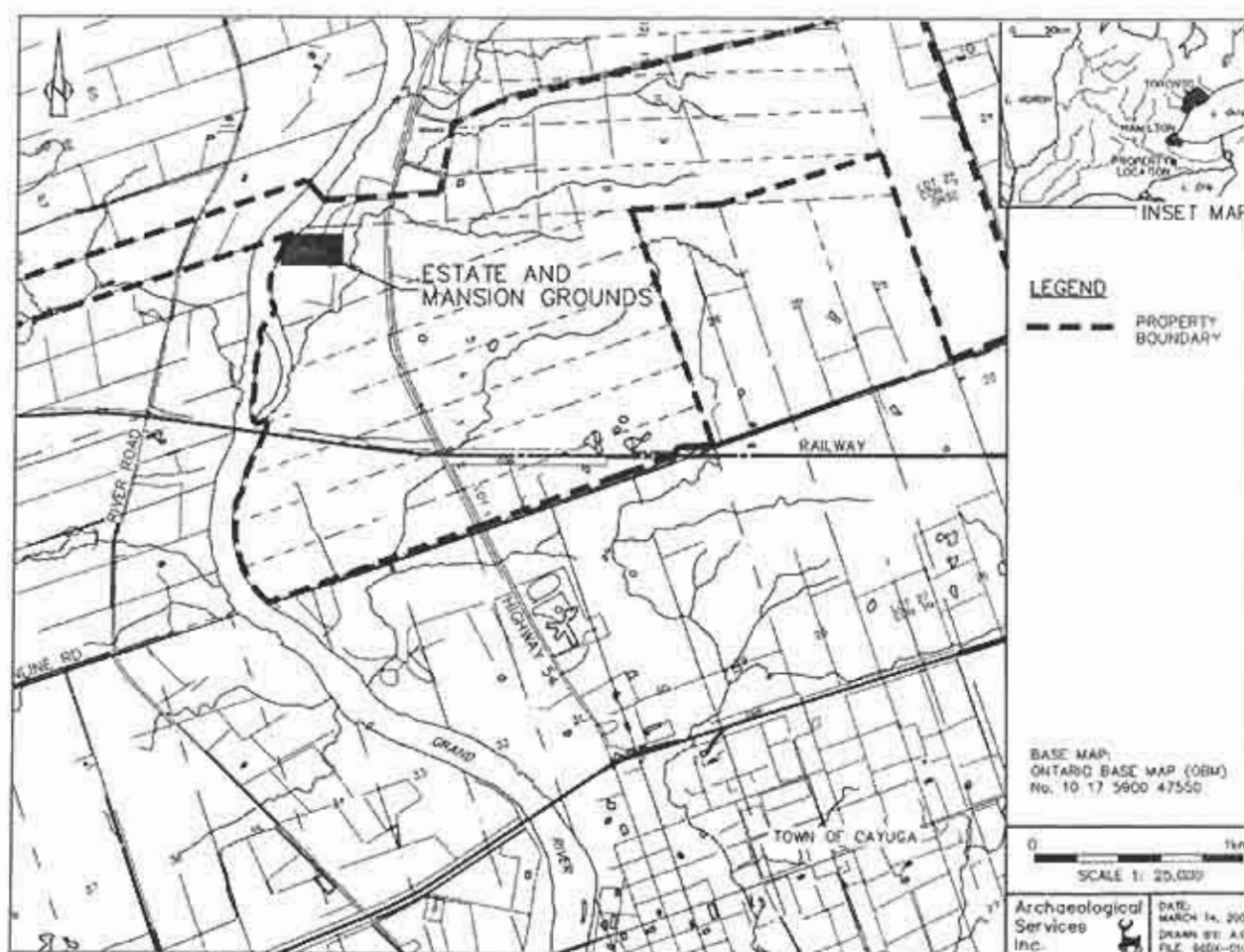


Figure 1. Location of Ruthven Estate

from local Onondaga chert. In light of the fact that the majority of the specimens in the collection are of museum quality, it exhibits considerable potential as a research, teaching and interpretive tool, and must be regarded as a resource of national significance. The collection is also an exceptional example of nineteenth century antiquarianism as practised by social elites. These general themes are given further consideration in the following sections.

The Cultural-Historical Representativeness of the Collection

As a whole, the collection is reflective of the entire pre-contact sequence of human settlement in southern Ontario, from the first colonization of the region approximately 11,000 years ago, through to

the occupations of the peoples that made up the tribal confederacy known as the Neutral in the seventeenth century AD. The eighteenth and nineteenth century aboriginal occupation of the region is also represented in the collection by numerous wooden artifacts.

Nevertheless, establishing linkages between the material in the collection and the culture history and archaeological resources of the immediate vicinity of the estate is more problematic, given the incompleteness of the provenience documentation that has survived. While over 2,400 projectile points were inventoried during the study, for example, only 400 are mentioned in A. Thompson's journal, which was maintained from September of 1887 to September of 1892. The records for the ground stone artifacts are somewhat more complete. There

are journal entries for a total of 231 celts, whereas 221 were inventoried. Of these 221, a total of 130 were matched to specific journal entries. Similarly, the journal records a total of 38 gorgets, whereas 26 were inventoried, and 23 of these were matched to journal entries.

To substantiate the theory that the majority of specimens in the Thompson collection originated on farms within the general vicinity of the Ruthven estate, a brief comparison of three data sets was undertaken.

First, a comparison was made between donor surnames in A. Thompson's journal and surnames that appeared on Township maps published in the 1877 *Historical Atlas of Haldimand County*. Names that appeared in both data sets were then highlighted on copies of the maps, as were their farms. As the journal was started only 10 years after the publication of the Haldimand County atlas, it is reasonable to expect that some direct matches could be made between peoples' names in the journal and those that appeared as landowners in North Cayuga, Seneca and Oneida Townships. Indeed, numerous matches were made between full names listed in the journal and names illustrated in the Atlas, including George Murray, Emerson Martindale, David Rogers, Mrs. J. Thompson, Alex Thompson, and Thomas Lester. Not surprisingly, many of the highlighted farms were adjacent to the Grand River between Caledonia and Dunnville.

Where no Christian name was provided in the journal, as for Mrs. Bain, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Smith, 'Chrysler,' and 'Anderson,' or where the full journal name could not be found on the maps, as for May Rogers, William Stephenson and D. Thompson (N. Cayuga), every farm where one of these eight surnames appeared was also highlighted as candidate properties where these people may have lived.

The second step was to map the locations of registered archaeological sites directly onto the 1877 maps to find out whether any sites lay within the

boundary of a farm where a match was made between map and journal entry names. The result was the mapping of 37 archaeological sites (some of which are multi-component) on 15 properties highlighted during step one of this exercise. The sites comprise two Palaeo-Indian components, seventeen Archaic, one Middle Woodland, eight Transitional Woodland (Princess Point), one Middle Ontario Iroquoian component, one Late Ontario Iroquoian village, three historic Neutral components and one 'Woodland' site. Twelve of the archaeological sites were registered as undetermined pre-contact sites. Thus, almost every period in Ontario pre-contact history is represented among the 37 registered sites, just as the Thompson collection contains specimens from the Palaeo-Indian period through to the historic Iroquoian period.

Finally, the types of specimens were noted for those journal entries where the donor's name matched an archaeological site mapped on the 1877 Atlas. Sometimes, a comparison of these three data sets was illuminating. For example, three entries in the journal indicated that 15 projectile points, one pipe bowl and one gorget were obtained from George Murray. Three archaeological sites can be mapped on the 1877 farm of George Murray: one Palaeo-Indian (AfGx-76), one undetermined pre-

Table 1. Registered Components within 10 kilometres of Ruthven by Chronological Period (1997)

<i>Period</i>	<i>Number of Sites</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Palaeo-Indian	6	3.2
General Archaic	50	26.9
Early Archaic	7	3.8
Middle Archaic	7	3.8
Late Archaic	14	7.5
General Woodland	10	5.4
Early Woodland	4	2.2
Middle Woodland	6	3.2
Transitional Woodland	11	5.9
Late Woodland	14	7.5
Historic Neutral	5	2.7
Undetermined Pre-contact	52	28.0
	186	100.0

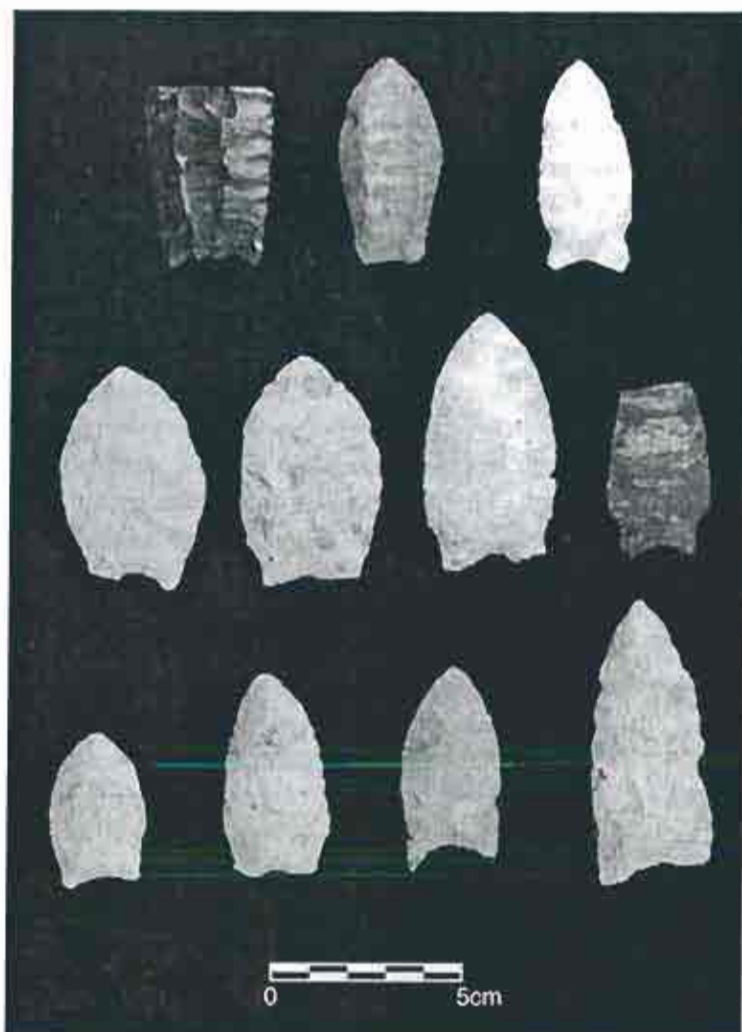


Plate 1. Paleo-Indian points.

contact (AfGx-20), and one with both historic Neutral and Archaic components (AfGx-63). It is probable, therefore, that the projectile points and pipe bowl that Murray gave to A.T. Thompson came from his farm. It is interesting to note that although no Early Woodland components were registered among the 37 sites, gorgets were a common journal entry. Perhaps the undetermined preBcontact site (AfGx-20) on the Murray farm contains an Early Woodland component as a gorget was one item that Murray gave to Thompson.

Another good match between the three data sets is the Thomas Lester farm that contains the historic Neutral 'Indiana' (AfGx-2) site, and the Princess

Point 'Lester II' (AfGx-47) site. Four journal entries were made for Thomas Lester, including one iron trade axe, one gouge, 'crockery,' and 'pottery.' The trade axe most definitely could have come from the Indiana site, and the pottery and gouge could have come from either site.

In six cases, however, where the donor's name matched an archaeological site mapped on the 1877 Atlas, the only specimens that were donated were celts, which are often non-diagnostic artifacts. In most of these instances, only one donation was made despite the fact that many of the farms contain more than one site. It is likely, nevertheless, that these celts originated on the donors' farms.

In summary, this multi-step exercise underscored the likelihood that the majority of specimens in the Thompson collection originated on farms within the vicinity of the Ruthven Estate, as archaeological sites can be mapped onto farms owned by donors to the Thompson collection. No effort was made to verify that the names that appeared on the map also appeared on the assessment rolls as resident landowners, or to find out the names of tenants.

It is suggested that if this extra step is taken, however, more direct matches could be made for those journal names that did not appear on the maps. Based on the foregoing, it would appear that the majority of the collection is derived from local sites discovered by persons who, knowing Thompson's interest in these artifacts, subsequently sold or presented the material to him.

It was also revealing to examine the general character of the material in the collection in light of the inventory of registered archaeological sites within the immediate vicinity of the estate. As of 1997, 139 pre-contact or historic aboriginal sites had been registered within a ten-kilometre radius of the estate. Fourteen of these sites have been classified as multi-

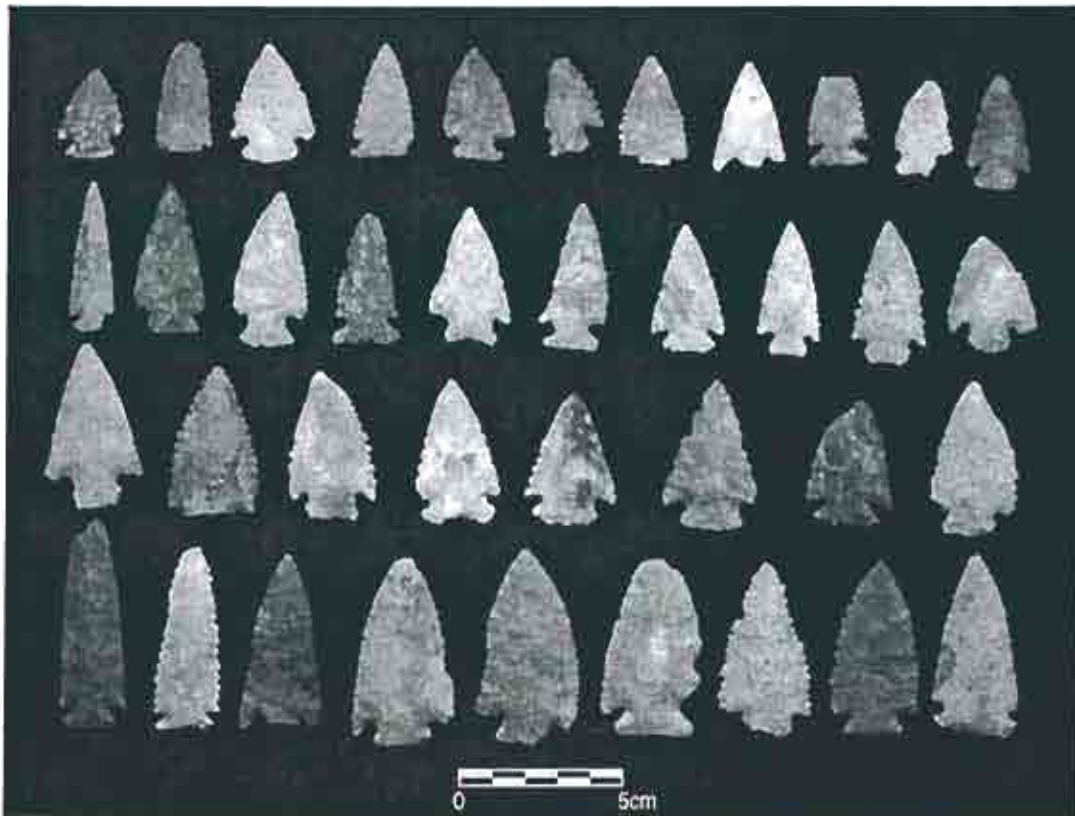


Plate 2. Early Archaic - Nettling points.

component, in that they have yielded material diagnostic of more than one chronological period. Thus, the site inventory includes a total of 186 discrete components (Table 1).

Moreover, subsequent to our examination of the collection, ASI (1998) documented an additional 26 archaeological sites within Ruthven Park itself, consisting of 34 components, including 12 Archaic sites (two Early, five Middle, four Late and one Transitional), four Woodland sites (including two Late Woodland), and five historic period sites, one of which is nineteenth century aboriginal. The remainder are of unknown affiliation. Many of these sites may also have been source locations for some of the collection.

Palaeo-Indian Period

The Ruthven collection contains two diagnostic Early Palaeo-Indian projectile points (circa 11,000

-10,500 B.P.) and 10 Late Palaeo-Indian (circa 10,500-10,000 B.P.) points (Plate 1). Together, these items account for less than 0.4% of the formal flaked lithic tool collection. A total of six Palaeo-Indian components (3.23% of the site inventory) have been identified within a ten-kilometre radius of the estate. All of these points are manufactured from locally available Onondaga and Bois Blanc formation cherts.

Archaic Period

The Archaic period is commonly divided into three sub-periods: Early Archaic (circa 10,000-8000 B.P.), Middle Archaic (circa 8000-4500 B.P.), and Late Archaic (circa 4500-2800 B.P.). Few Early or Middle Archaic period sites have been investigated and they, like Palaeo-Indian sites, are often identified on the basis of the recovery of isolated projectile points.

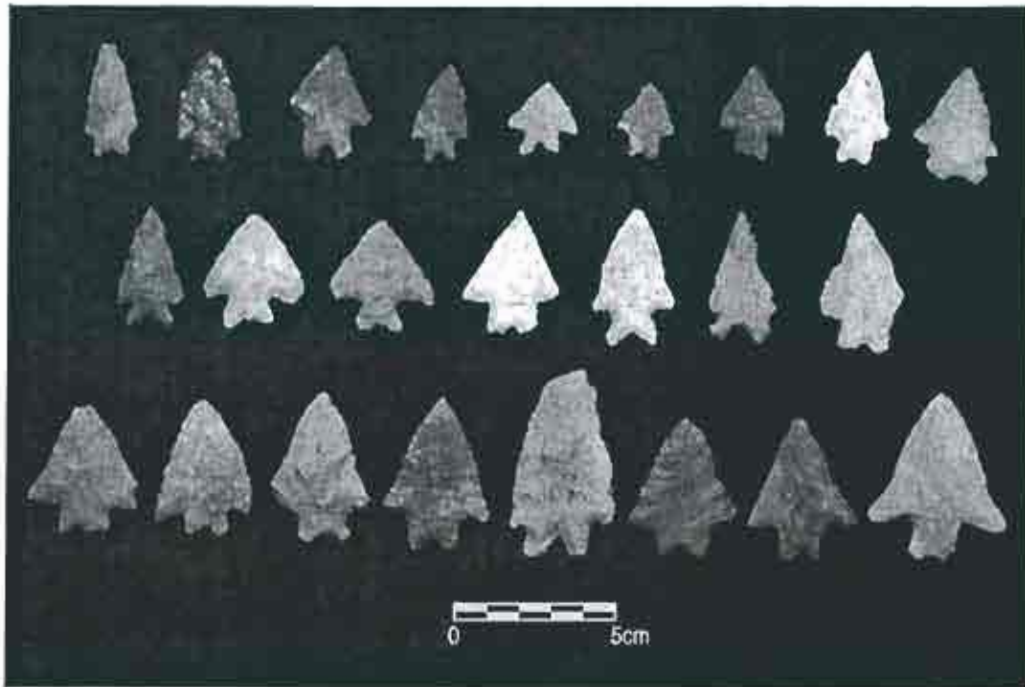


Plate 3. Early Archaic – Bifurcate points.

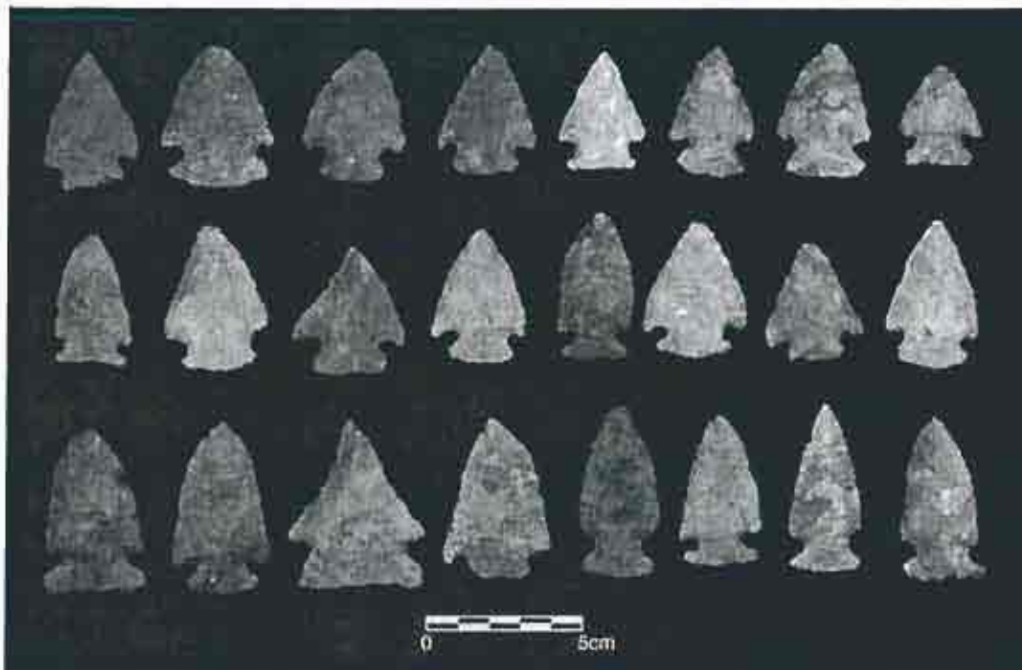


Plate 4. Middle Archaic – Brewerton corner-notched points.

Diagnostic Archaic period projectile points, manufactured from locally available cherts, comprise over 50% of the Ruthven flaked lithic tool collection (Early Archaic — 8.71% (Plates 2 and 3); Middle Archaic — 21.16% (Plates 4–7); and Late Archaic — 26.89% (Plates 8–15). Approximately 40% of the registered components within ten kilometres of the estate have been identified as Archaic. A significant proportion of the sites designated as undetermined pre-contact (27.96% of the registered

components) are also likely to be Archaic period occupations.

Several aspects of the Ruthven Archaic projectile point sample deserve brief comment. The large quantity of Early Archaic period Nettling points (229), for example, is unusually high, particularly when compared to the representation of the preceding Palaeo-Indian period. It is also unusual in light of the fact that only seven Early Archaic components have been identified within ten kilometres of

Table 2. Ruthven Collection – Flaked Lithics

Age (BP)	Period	Point Type	Collection Location & Quantity				Totals	
			Cabinet	Metal Box	Wooden Bozes	Attic	n	%
11,000	Palaeo-Indian	Gainey			1		1	0.0
		Barnes					0	0.0
10,500		Crowfield	1				1	0.0
10,000		Hi-Lo	9			1	10	0.3
9,800	Early Archaic	Nettling	180	37	12		229	7.3
8,900		Bifurcate Base	41	4			45	1.4
8,000	Middle Archaic	Stemmed					0	0.0
6,500		Side Notched	122	2			124	3.9
5,000		Brewerton	449	21	34	4	508	16.1
		Large Side Notched	21				21	0.7
		Ear Notched	13				13	0.4
4,500	Late Archaic	Lamoka	127	5	7	1	140	4.4
3,800		Genesee	155	1	22	1	179	5.7
		Middle Broad Point	35				35	1.1
3,500		Adder Orchard	34	2	2		38	1.2
3,300		Crawford Knoll	186	13	3		202	6.4
		Innes	73	5			78	2.5
		Ace of Spades	116	10	4		130	4.1
		Orient	8				8	0.3
	2,800		Hind	28	6	1		35
2,700	Early Woodland	Meadowood Bifaces/Points	178	15	19		212	6.7
2,200		Adena	48	2	2		52	1.7
2,100	Middle Woodland	Snyder	19	3	2		24	0.8
		Vanport	39	2			41	1.3
1,500		Exotic Bifaces/Points	22				22	0.7
1,450-300	Late Woodland Non-Diagnostic	Points	193	10	5		208	6.6
		Points	79		1		80	2.5
		Bifaces	439	69	61	5	574	18.2
		Scrapers	36		9	1	46	1.5
		Drills, Gravers	48	3	10		61	1.9
		Miscellaneous	13	10	7		30	1.0
		Totals			2,712	220	202	13

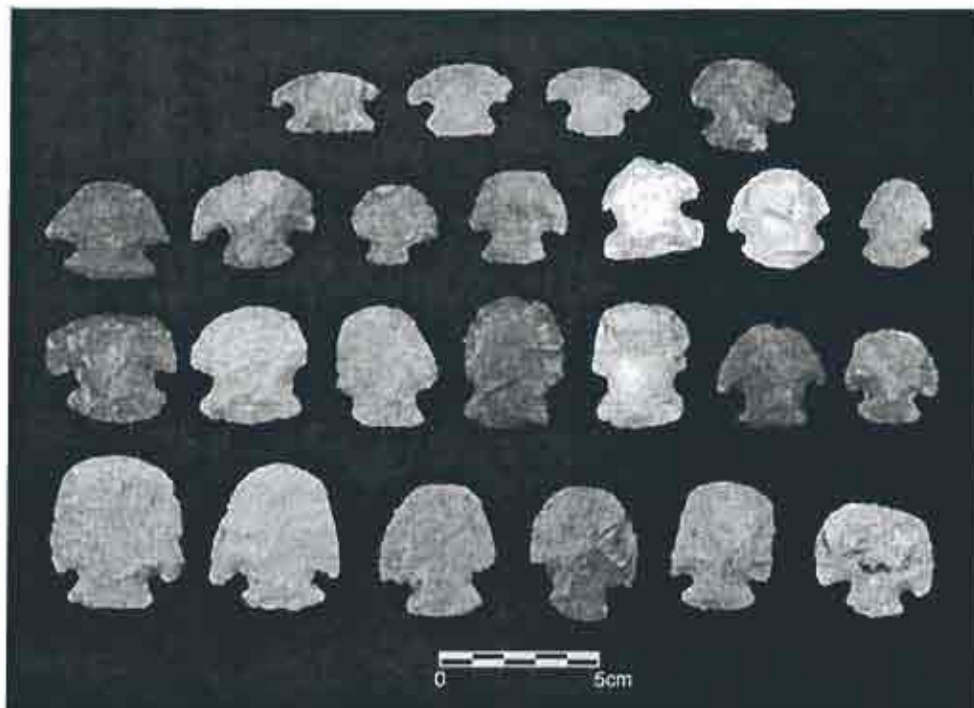


Plate 5. Middle Archaic – Brewerton scrapers.

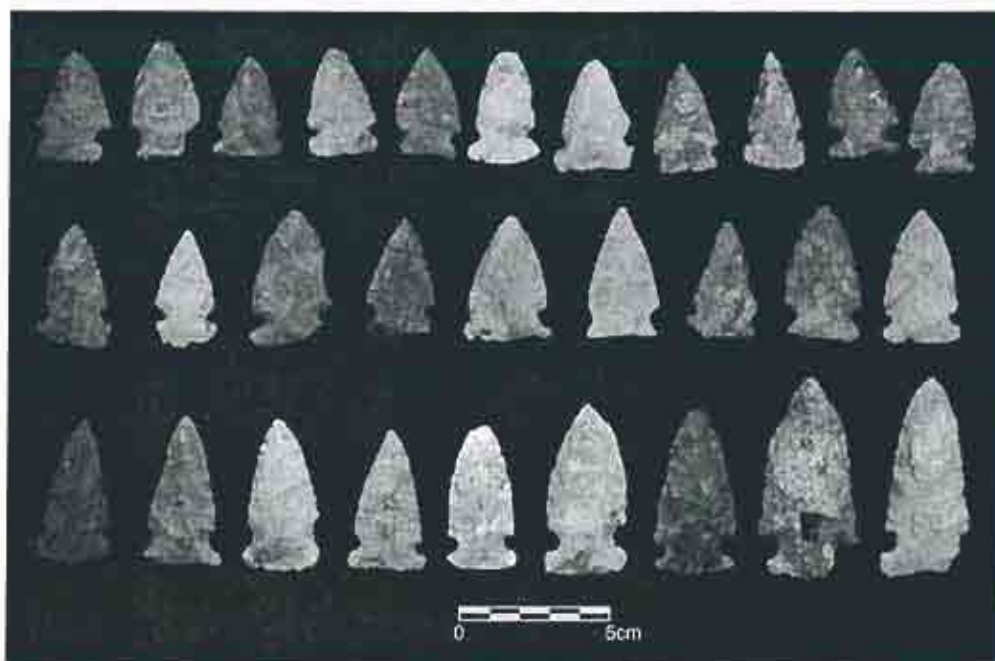


Plate 6. Middle Archaic – Brewerton side-notched points.

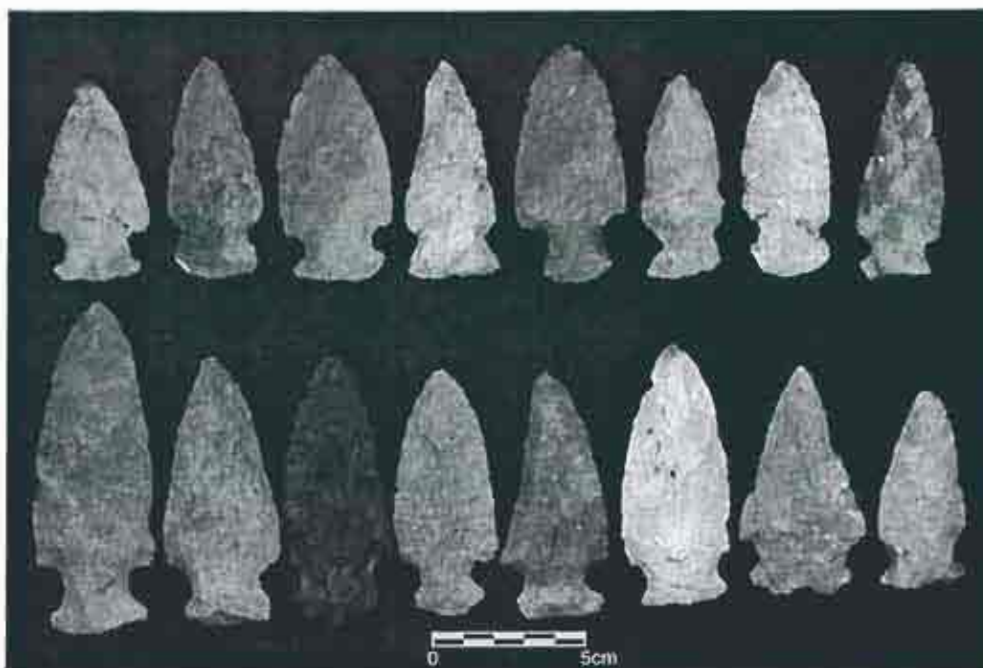


Plate 7. Middle Archaic – Brewerton large side-notched points.

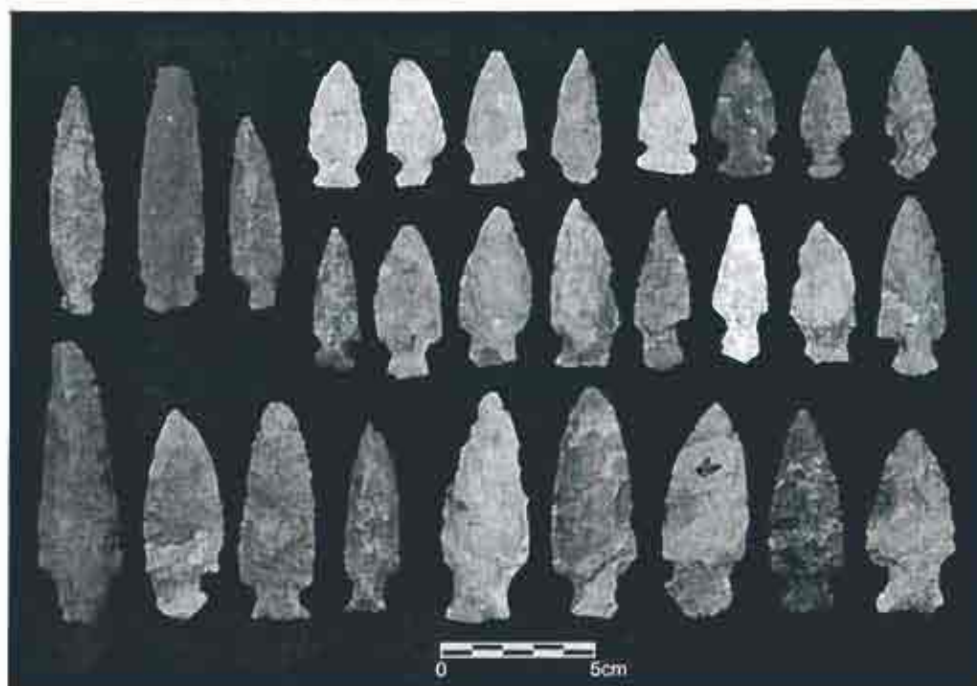


Plate 8. Late Archaic – Lamoka points.

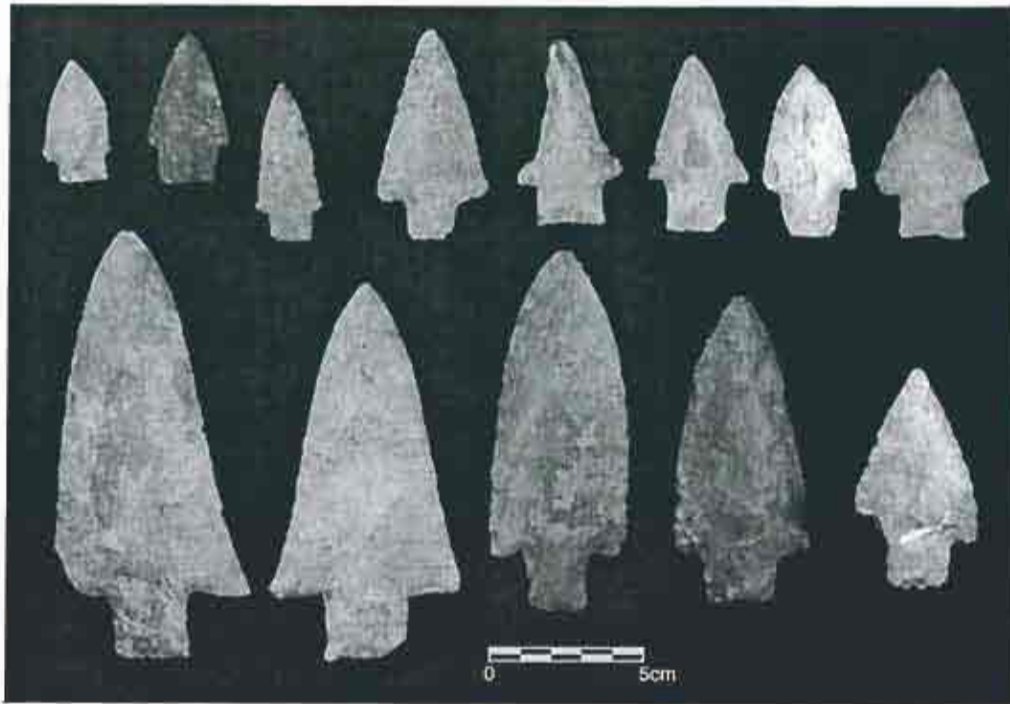


Plate 9. Late Archaic – Genesee points.

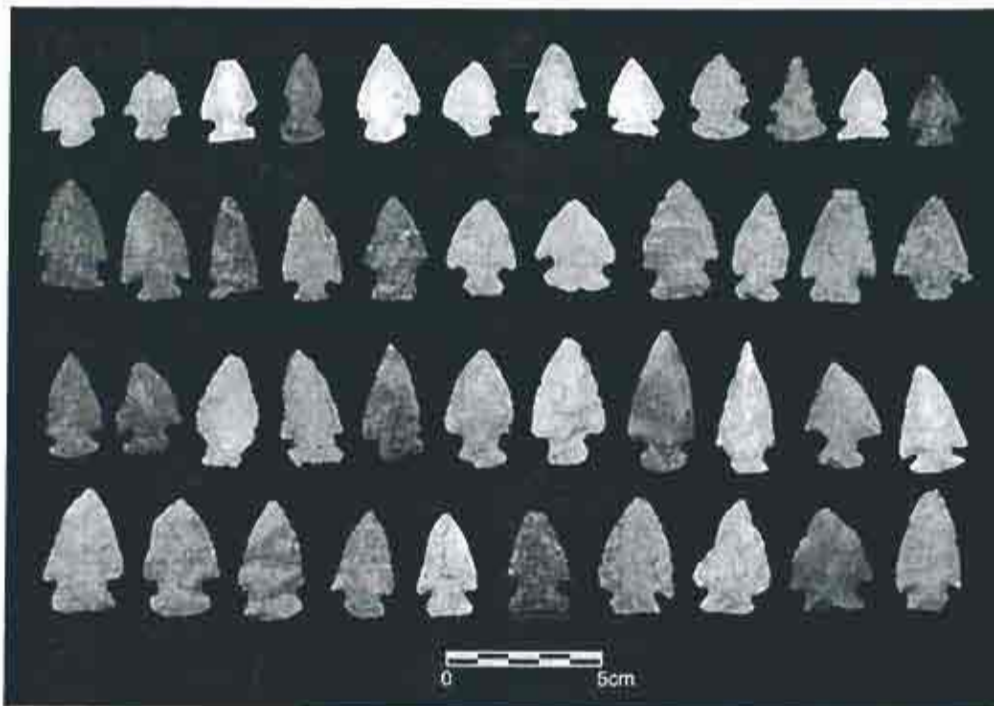


Plate 10. Late Archaic – Crawford Knoll points.



Plate 11. Late Archaic - Innis points.

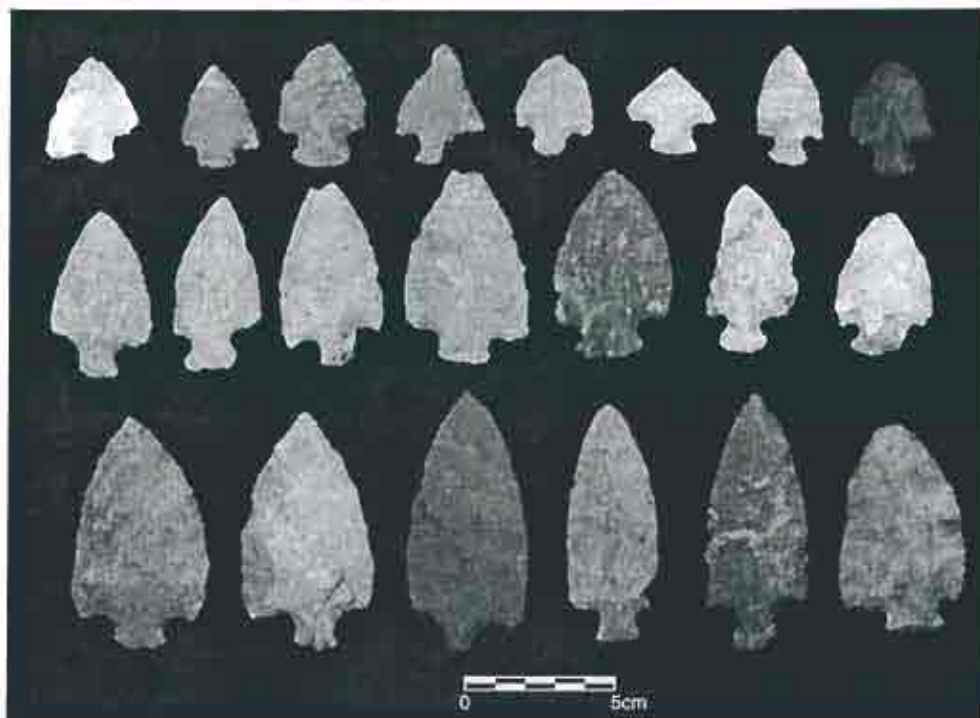


Plate 12. Late Archaic - Ace of Spades points.



Plate 13. Late Archaic - Hind points.



Plate 14. Late Archaic - Polished stone artifacts.

the estate. Although population levels are assumed to have increased throughout the Archaic period, this fact alone cannot account for the unprecedented number of these points in the collection. It is therefore possible that some of this material was recovered from one or more multi-component, quarry sites located at Onondaga and Bois Blanc Formation chert outcrops that are present in the region. Interestingly, a basally notched, Nettling point was recently found on the bedrock at the Peace Bridge site in Fort Erie, having survived the scouring of the shoreline during the Nipissing Transgression between about 5500 and 4000 years ago. This suggests that the Peace Bridge quarry may indeed have been used during early Archaic times, although most evidence of that use has been destroyed. The tools made during that time, however, may have been distributed to nearby inland sites.

The Nettling points display considerable variation in overall size, blade width and coarseness of serration (Plate 2). Many have been reworked, even notched while others are basally thinned, some to the extent that they presage bifurcation of point bases (see also Ellis et al 1991; Wright 1978:60–61 and Plate 1; Stewart 2002). It is also possible that such points had been discarded but reworked by someone in the later time period. It is also interesting to note that several had Brewerton forms but

were well made, finely flaked and serrated. The Bifurcate based specimens include the earlier deeply notched forms and the later broad-bladed, shallow notched forms (Plate 3).

The 508 Middle Archaic Brewerton points also make up a disproportionately large part of the collection (16%), both in terms of the frequencies of the other Archaic point types and the inventory of registered sites (a total of seven identified components). The predominance of Brewerton points may, however, be partially attributable to limitations of the existing typologies and the fact that the Middle Archaic, as currently defined, spans a period of 3,000 years. Plate 4 illustrates a selection of classic, corner-notched Brewerton points. These are crude and thick with ground bases. Many have been reworked in the haft as evidenced by intact shoulders and bases but substantially altered blades. This is perhaps most often evident in the classic end-scraper form (Plate 5). While Brewerton ear-notched and Otter Creek forms are present in the collection, side-notched (Plate 6) and large, thick, side-notched, but narrow-bladed forms (Plate 7) are present in greater numbers. While some of these are stemmed and resemble Late Archaic forms, they were included in the earlier categories because of their overall size and crudity.

The Late Archaic period is also well represented

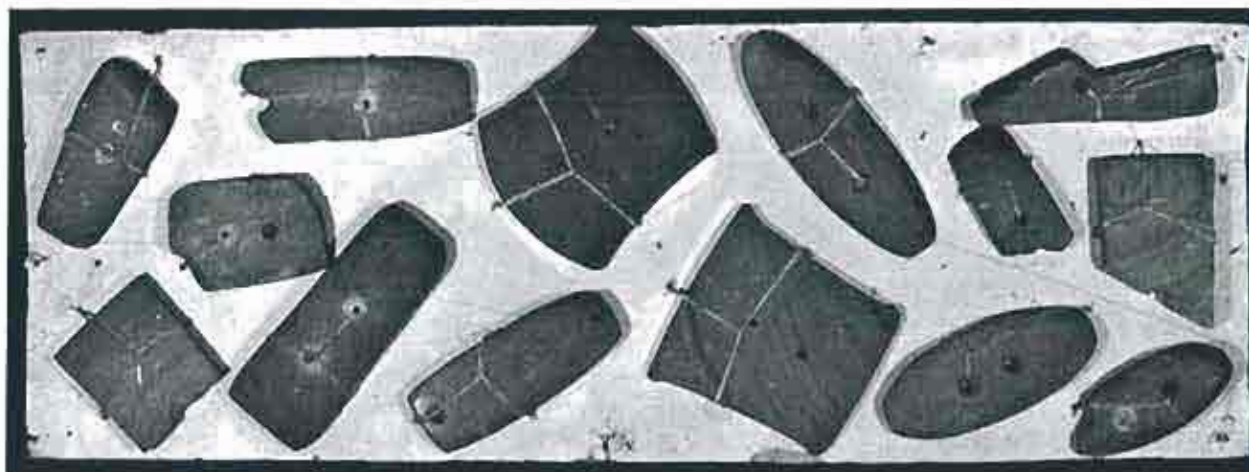


Plate 15. Late Archaic/Early Woodland – Banded slate gorgets.

among the flaked stone tools ($n=845:26.89\%$) (Plates 8–13). While the most common types are Lamoka (140), Genesee (179), Crawford Knoll (202) and Ace of Spades (130), other Broad point and Small point varieties are also represented. Comparable quantities of points have only been found at quarry sites such as the Peace Bridge site (Williamson and MacDonald 1997, 1998). Many of

the Lamoka specimens (Plate 8) are characterised by the presence of cortex on their bases and are of an expanding stem form perhaps foreshadowing the stemmed forms of the subsequent periods. Some of the Genesee points (Plate 9) were reworked in the haft although intentional manufacturing of scrapers and other tools from the pentagonal preform has been noted at the Peace Bridge site. The large size of

Table 3. Ruthven Collection - Ground Stone and Bone

Artifact Type	Collection Location & Quantity				Totals	
	Cabinet	Metal Box	Wooden Bozes	Attic	n	%
Celts						
Axes				112	112	32.6
Grooved axes				9	9	2.6
Adzes				55	55	15.9
Chisels				27	27	7.8
Gorget				3	3	0.9
Preforms				2	2	0.6
Unidentified		2	6	5	13	3.7
Whetstones/Abraders			1	2	3	0.9
Pestles				11	11	3.2
Anvilstones				1	1	0.3
Hammerstones				1	1	0.3
Manoes				2	2	0.6
Beads	1			3	4	1.2
Birdstones				1	1	0.3
Bannerstones		1		4	5	1.4
Bannerstone preforms				1	1	0.3
Boatstones				1	1	0.3
Gorget						
Trapezoidal		1			2	0.6
Other forms			1	21	22	6.3
Pendants				2	2	0.6
Stone pipe bowls				3	3	0.9
Stone tube pipes				1	1	0.3
Miscellaneous				5	5	0.
Non-cultural				23	23	6.6
Iron trade axes				6	6	1.7
Brass kettle fragments				1	1	0.3
Bone tools						
Awls				7	61	2.0
Beads				12	30	3.5
Modified deer phalanges				5	5	1.4
Miscellaneous		2		5	7	2.0
Totals	1	6	8	332	347	100.0

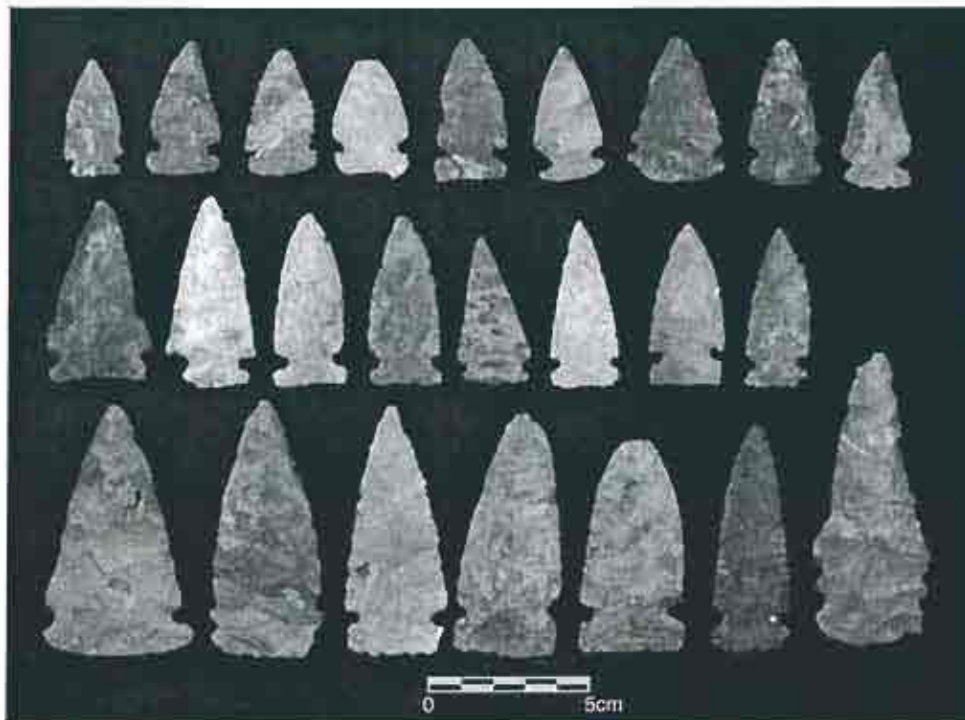


Plate 16. Early Woodland – Meadowood points.

some of the Ruthven Genesee specimens suggests their use as heavy-purpose tools (e.g. butchering knives) and their significant variation in size and morphology is consistent with other assemblages (see Fisher 1987; McEachen et al. 1997:333–334; Robertson et al. 1997:496–498). There is also significant variation in morphology, particularly in blade form, among those categorized as Crawford Knoll points (Plate 10) although only smaller, finely made specimens with some collateral flaking and refined bases were included. It is acknowledged, however, that some may be finely reworked Middle Archaic points or especially small variants of other Small point varieties. There was some obvious overlap among the Innes and Ace of Spades categories (Plates 11 and 12). Those specimens assigned to the Hind category were all very finely made (Plate 13). Numerous artifacts among the ground stone tools (Table 3), including the grooved axes, the bird-stones, bannerstones, slate gorgets, and the boat-stone, also date to the Archaic/Early Woodland periods (Plates 14 and 15).

Woodland Period

The Woodland period has been divided into three sub-periods: Early (2800 B.P.–2300 B.P.), Middle (2300 B.P.–1500 B.P.), and Late Woodland (1450 B.P.–300 B.P.). Moreover, the latter sub-period, which witnessed the fluorescence of Iroquoian society in the Northeast, is divided in Ontario into the Early, Middle and Late Iroquoian stages.

Approximately 8.4% of the flaked stone tools in the collection are diagnostic of the Early Woodland period, whereas four Early Woodland components (2.15% of the total site inventory) have been identified within ten kilometres of the estate. Meadowood bifaces and points made from Onondaga chert comprise over 80% of the Early Woodland flaked stone tool sample (Plate 16), while the remaining items have affinities with Adena material, some of which is made on cherts originating in the Ohio valley (Plate 17). Among the ground stone (Table 3), the trapezoidal gorgets and the tube pipe also date to the Early Woodland period (Plates 14 and 15). These

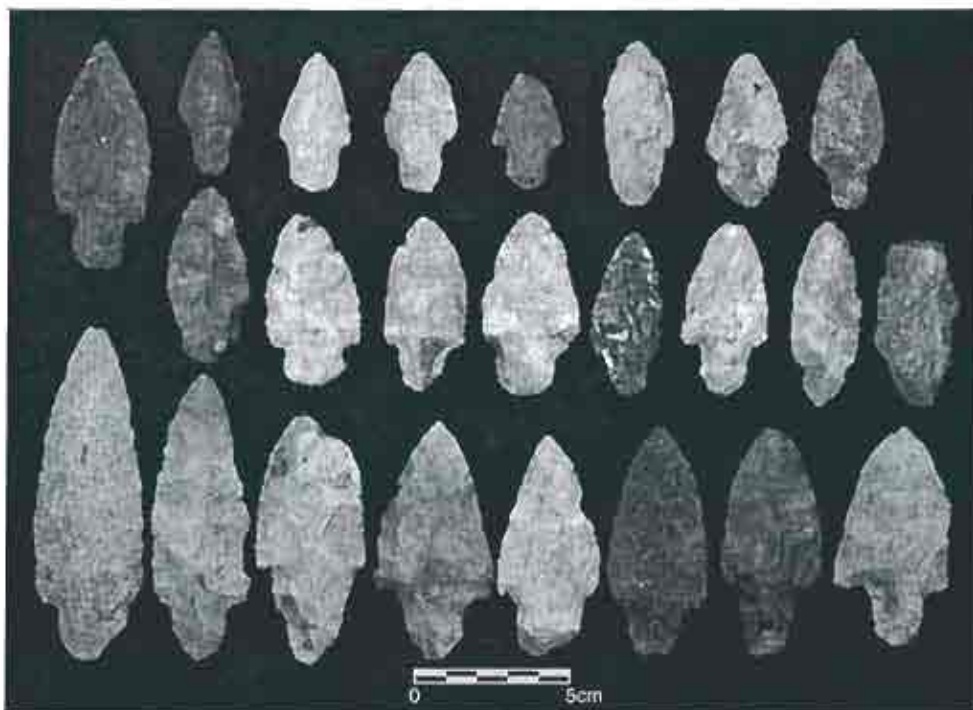


Plate 17. Early Woodland - Adena points.

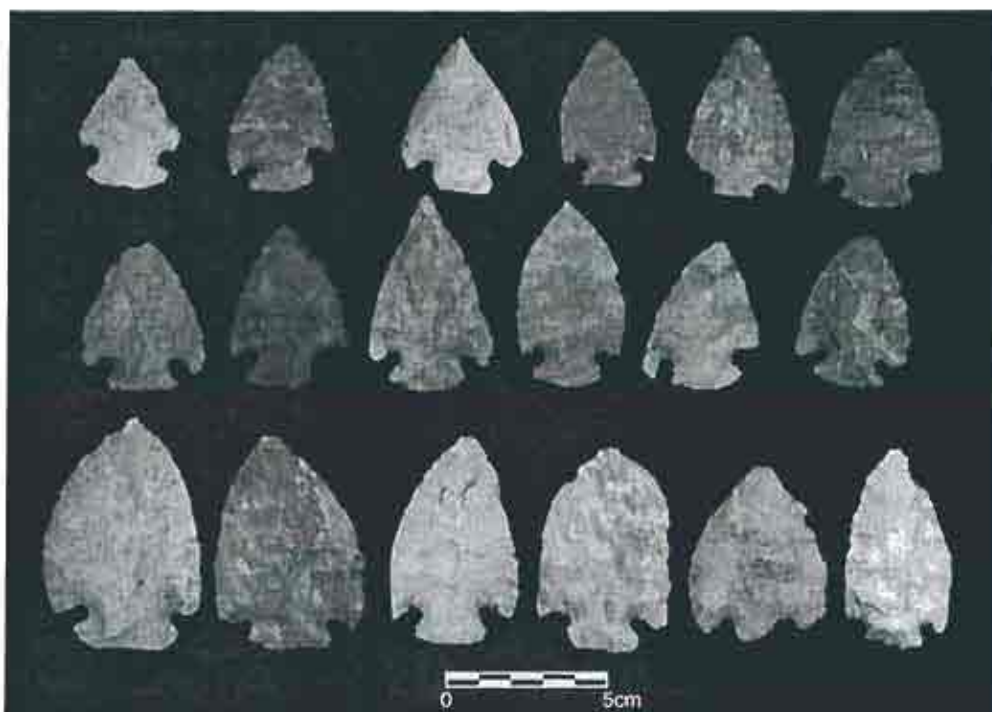


Plate 18. Middle Woodland - Snyders points.

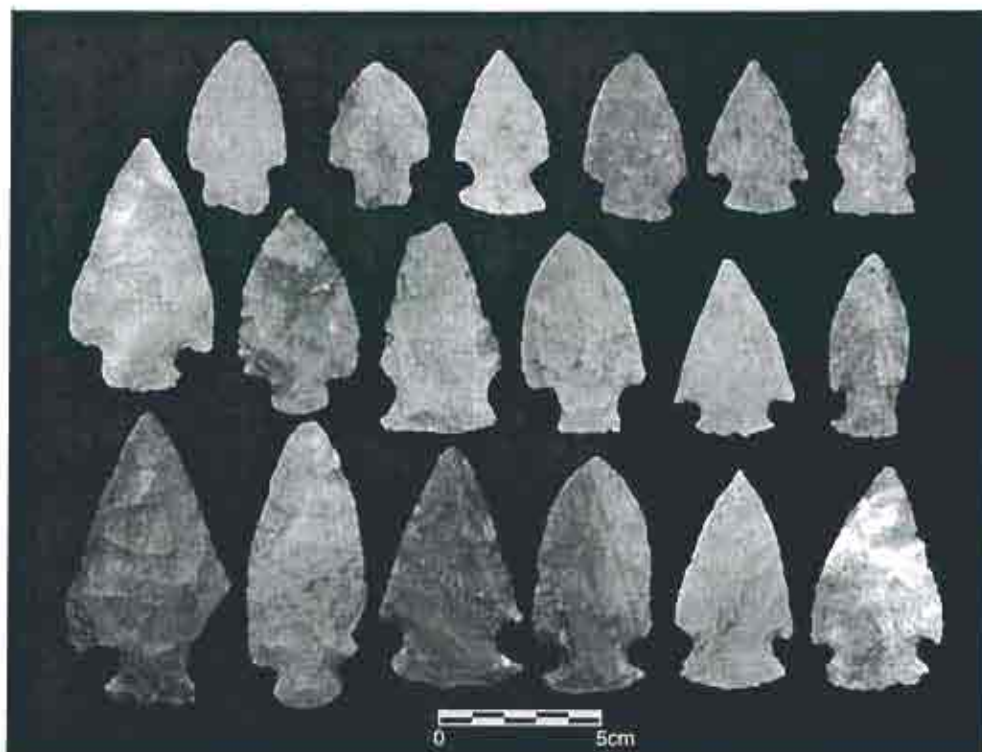


Plate 19. Middle Woodland - Vanport-like points; exotic cherts.

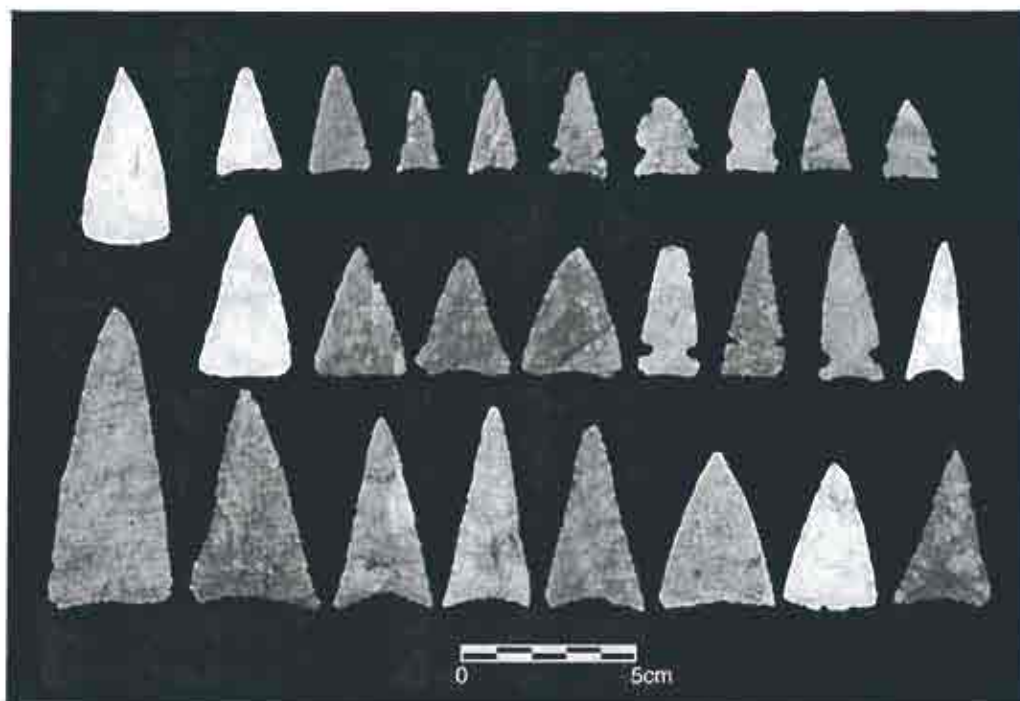


Plate 20. Late Woodland - Triangular and notched points.

traits suggest that the occupants of the region participated in the Early Woodland trade networks that extended throughout much of the Northeast.

Middle Woodland material comprises about 3% of the overall flaked stone sample (Plates 18 and 19). Six Middle Woodland components have been registered within ten kilometres of the estate. Slightly over 25% of the Middle Woodland assemblage consists of items made from exotic cherts, such as Flint Ridge chalcedony from Ohio (Plate 19). The occurrence of such exotic cherts is common on Middle Woodland sites throughout southern Ontario, again suggesting that the local Middle Woodland populations participated within the widespread, Hopewellian interaction systems that flourished throughout the Northeast circa 2000–1700 B.P.

More than 200 projectile points (6.61%) in the collection are triangular — including notched forms — that date to throughout the Late Woodland peri-

od (Plate 20). The collection also includes a comparatively small selection of ceramic vessel sherds and smoking pipe fragments (Table 4). A total of 11 Transitional Woodland and 14 Late Woodland (Iroquoian) components have been identified within the general study area. The latter include special purpose sites, villages and cemeteries. Six iron trade axes and a fragment from a brass kettle were probably recovered from historic period Neutral sites, five of which have been registered within ten kilometres of the estate.

Historic Aboriginal Period

Twenty-one ethnographic specimens were also found in the collection (Table 5). While most of these appear to relate to the aboriginal cultures of the Great Lakes region, six are of exotic or unknown provenience. All of these items were reviewed by Dr. Trudy Nicks, Curator of Ethnology, Department of

Table 4. Ruthven Collection - Ceramic Artifacts

Artifact Type	Collection Location & Quantity				Totals	
	<i>Cabinet</i>	<i>Metal Box</i>	<i>Wooden Boxes</i>	<i>Attic</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Rim sherds						
Transitional Woodland			2		2	1.8
Early Iroquoian			3	4	7	6.3
Middle Iroquoian			1		1	0.9
Late Iroquoian			3	5	8	7.2
Unidentified*				30	30	27.0
Neck/Shoulder sherds				6	6	5.4
Body sherds						
Corded			17	4	21	18.9
Smoothed-over-cord			14		14	12.6
Plain				1	6	5.4
Fragmentary			2		2	1.8
Pipe bowls						
Ring barrel			1	3	4	3.6
Trumpet			1	3	4	3.6
Other				1	1	0.9
Pipe stems						
Round				2	2	1.8
Faceted				3	3	2.7
Totals	0	0	44	67	111	100.0

* to be identified from photographic records

Anthropology, Royal Ontario Museum (ROM). In certain cases, similar items were examined in the ROM collections in order to identify their spatial and temporal affiliations.

Included in the collection are three false face masks (Plates 21–23) and one turtle shell rattle (Plate 24). The original manufacture and function of these items almost certainly rests with practitioners of the False Face Society, a ritual curative society which was established among Iroquoian populations by the mid-nineteenth century. According to William Fenton (1940:421), the Society is a complex, partially secret, organization, consisting of the False Face Company (those that wear the masks and perform rituals) and the Society of Faces (those that have been cured by the Company). The curers in the society usually own a bundle consisting of a turtle rattle and one or more masks decorated with bundles of tobacco. The power of masks is not simply a reflection of style alone, reflective of mythic figures in Iroquoian cosmology, but also of the prestige and grade achieved by the wearer of the mask in the Society. They were originally carved from live trees, painted red or black, trimmed with horse hair and had metal placed around the eyes to indicate the brightness of the eyes of the False Faces. Not only are there clear ritual prescriptions for the use of these masks in curative performances but there are also instructions for how masks must be stored when not in use. While it is acknowledged in the ethnography of the nineteenth century that these objects were often sold to non-aboriginals, they are now considered by both Aboriginal and North American museum communities to be extremely sensitive artifacts and are generally no longer displayed for the public.

Most False Face masks have large distended lips, large noses, deep-set eyes, and forehead wrinkles, as do the Ruthven collection examples. Scholars initially had difficulty identifying diagnostic elements of masks although Fenton's study classified them on the basis of the shapes of their mouths (1940;

1972). The mask illustrated on Plate 21 is rather crude in form, almost unfinished, and consists of an oval distended mouth with a few deeply carved forehead wrinkles. It would appear to have been painted red and black at one time. The mask illustrated on Plate 22, on the other hand, is characterized by a smiling mouth with distended lips, deep-set eyes and numerous crested forehead wrinkles. The labial protrusion, exaggerated facial features, heavy wrinkles and prominent chin were all identified by Fenton (1956) as characteristics of masks produced by Grand River carvers. The mask illustrated on Plate 23 has a slightly crooked mouth, a small nose, deep-set eyes with metal plates, and prominent forehead wrinkles, also a common type at Grand River.

Plate 21. Historic Aboriginal – False face mask.

Plates 22 and 23. Historic Aboriginal – False face masks.

Unfortunately, the masks in the collection were not numbered and therefore can not be provenienced definitively with the collection journal, although there are only three entries in the journal for wooden masks. Journal entry 125, undated, reads "Indian idol, made to represent an enlarged human face. Obtained from the Six Nation Indians by Walter Thompson, many years ago and has been in our family ever since." Journal entry 160 records a "God, like a human face, horse hair whiskers," purchased by Pap Young of York and presented by Mrs. Thompson of Deans, Christmas 1887. It was presented along with the Turtle Rattle (Plate 24). A turtle rattle and a False Face mask, among many other items, were similarly identified in the late nineteenth century Oronhyatekha Historical Collection (Cumberland 1904), currently housed and curated by the Department of Anthropology at

the Royal Ontario Museum. The final journal entry, 184, reads "Indian idol, red, wooden, horse-hair trimmings, bought of the Indian Jamison, Onondaga, Brant County, June 1888." The latter entry may refer to the mask illustrated in Plate 21 given its description as red. In summary, the masks all date to the mid-to-late nineteenth century and probably originate with Six Nations Reserve carvers. Two Iroquoian war clubs were also identified in the collection, one of which (Plates 25 and 26) was presented to Thompson with the Turtle Rattle and Mask at Christmas in 1887 (#158). It is a relatively common Iroquoian war club with exquisitely incised zoomorphological motifs including a small snake/eel, deer/elk, horse, owl, alligator, serpent with drawn bow, canis, weasel, and corn plant. A second Iroquoian war club (Plate 27; Journal Entry 123) was identified in the journal as having former-



Plate 24. Historic Aboriginal – Turtle rattle.

ly belonged to a Six Nation chief. The specimen is wooden and is painted red with incised decoration inlaid with black paint.

A pair of snowshoes is also in the collection. A photograph was shown to Dr. Ken Lister of the Department of Anthropology, ROM, who identified the pair as historic aboriginal on the basis of its style and materials. There is no reference to snowshoes in the journal.

There are two wooden aboriginal pipe stems in the collection. The first (Plate 28) is described in the journal (#107) as an Indian Calumet pipe with a red stone bowl and an almost three foot wooden stem. The red stone bowl is now missing. The stem is carved to resemble the skin of a rattlesnake with a one-foot-long twisted end, and the mouthpiece and bowl attachment areas are inlaid with lead. The piece was apparently presented to Thompson (in the 1880s) by a Charles Brooks of York, who claimed to have had it in his possession for 30 years having acquired it while hunting with people in Minnesota which he identifies as the "Shewanas." Pipes similar in style are indeed present in the midwest ethnographic collection of ROM. A second aboriginal wooden pipe was also identified in the collection

(Plate 29). It is described in the journal (#122) as a wooden pipe, two feet in length, and purchased from a Sioux Indian and presented by an Alex MacDuff. The piece has incised geometric designs inlaid with green paint.

A wampum bracelet of unknown origin and a string of wampum were also identified. While the bracelet consists of white and purple discoidal shell beads sewn on to a woven fabric band, the string simply consists of 24 white discoidal shell beads. The latter may be recorded in the journal under entries 262–281, all of which were presented by a Dr. McGregor of Waterdown. The discoidal shell beads and a number of pottery sherds were found together at an old camp ground near Lake Magog suggesting it may have been an historic Neutral site.

With the exception of two unidentified bows, the remainder of the collection consists of model canoes and loose figurines, the latter of which were probably made for models. The first example (Plate 30) is a cedar model with bow and stern plates made of birch bark and decorated with coloured yarn. There are stamped designs on the side of the canoe as well as pencil drawings of warriors in headdress. It is two feet, six inches in length and resembles some-

Table 5. Ruthven Collection - Historic Ethnographic Aboriginal Artifacts

Artifact & Description

- #122 *Carved Wooden Pipe, Sioux* — length=195mm; height=95mm; width=28mm; incised geometric designs inlaid with green paint
- #158 *Iroquois (Mohawk?) War Club* — ball club carved from single piece of wood; overall length=500mm; shaft width=45mm; ball diam=90mm; incised decoration: ball held in open mouth of serpent/raptor; scale-like renderings along back (spine) of shaft; variety of zoomorphs incised into shaft including, small snake/eel, deer/elk, horse, owl, corn plant (?), alligator, serpent with drawn bow, cow(?), dog/wolf/fox, weasel
- #159 *Turtle Rattle, Iroquoian* — large rattle with skull/neck handle reinforced with wood and wrapped with reed; probably snapping turtle; length=520mm; max length of shell=285mm; max. width of shell=250mm; max. height of shell=95mm; gut stitching on underside
- Large Wooden Canoe with Three Figures* — soft wood (cedar?) construction; bow and stern plates made of birch bark and decorated with coloured yarn; length=740mm; beam width=75mm; height=45mm; stamped and punctate designs on sides of canoe; pencil drawings of warriors with feather headdress and tomahawk on starboard side stern and on port side bow; pencil drawings of flying birds on port side stern and starboard side bow; middle figure in canoe is painted and carrying a bow (string broken)
- "Dugout" Wooden Canoe* — soft wood (cedar) construction; no interior seats; possibly broken (missing bowsprit?); length=335mm; beam width=45mm; height=30mm; incised and punctate floral designs on both sides; red, blue and green painted circles and diamonds on bow
- "Venetian" Style Boat with Paddler* — soft wood construction, figure kneeling and holding long one-ended paddle; length=185mm; beam width=40mm; bow height=135mm; gunwale height=25mm; relief carving of floral motif with tooled background on both sides; incised geometric motifs on bow and stern plates
- Three Loose Figurines* — a) seated male wearing undecorated collared shirt and painted blue trousers; b) seated male wearing shirt with red and blue painted collar, edging and tomahawks on back; leggings; c) seated female with long hair down back; collared decorated shirt and red skirt figures 85-100mm long
- Wampum Bracelet* — white and purple discoidal shell beads sewn on end to woven band measuring 30mm in width and approximately 75mm in diameter
- #262-281 *String of White Wampum Beads* — 24 white shell discoidal beads
- Large Hand Fan* — white painted paper maché (?) handle with painted floral motif in green, purple and black on both sides; woven grass fan; hand-hold wrapped with purple ribbon or fabric; length=500mm; height=350mm; handle thickness=25mm; possibly not of Ontario provenience
- Snowshoe* — wood, sinew, leather
- Iroquois False Face Mask* — carved wooden mask with remnants of red and black paint
- Mask (Exotic?)* — carved wooden mask with incised and painted decoration, lacquered
- Iroquois False Face Mask* — carved wooden mask
- Iroquois False Face Mask* — carved wooden mask with brass inlaid eyes and black paint
- Wooden Bow* — long wood bow with fabric grip, snake scale etching
- Wooden Bow* — short wood bow
- #123 *War Club, Iroquoian* — wooden war club; painted red with incised decoration inlaid with black paint
- #107 *Smoking Pipe, Minnesota* — wooden smoking pipe; partial "twisted ribbon" form; metal insert in receptacle; dense incised decoration overall (primarily hatching), incised chevrons at mouth, incised arrow facing smoker; open work lozenges and circles at approximate mid-point

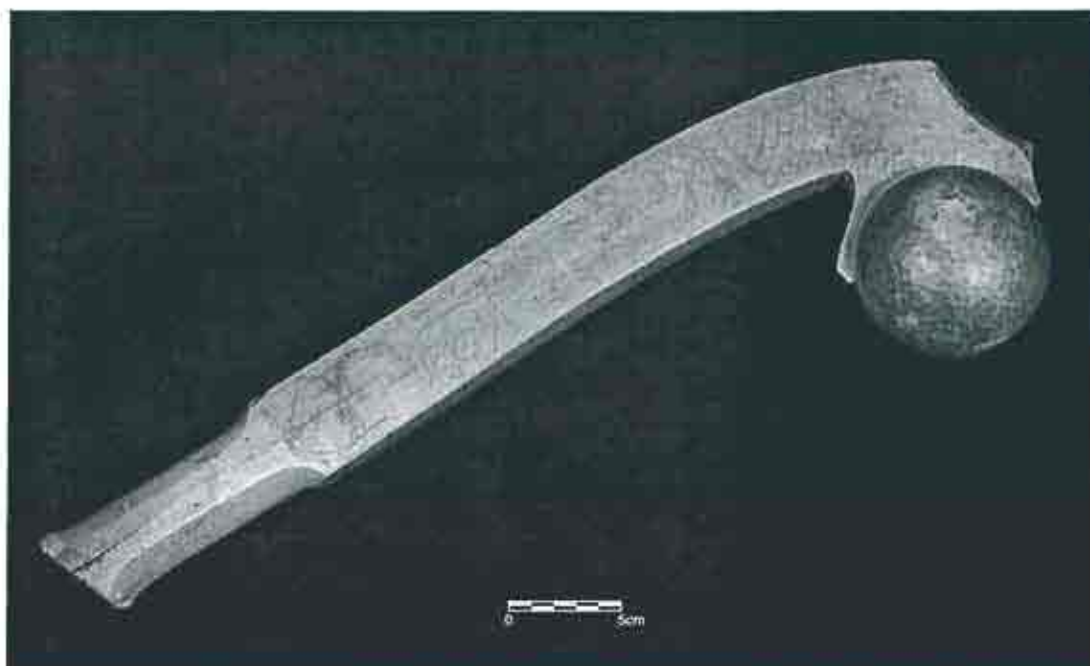


Plate 25. Historic Aboriginal – War club.



Plate 26. Historic Aboriginal – War club; close-up of zoomorphological motifs.

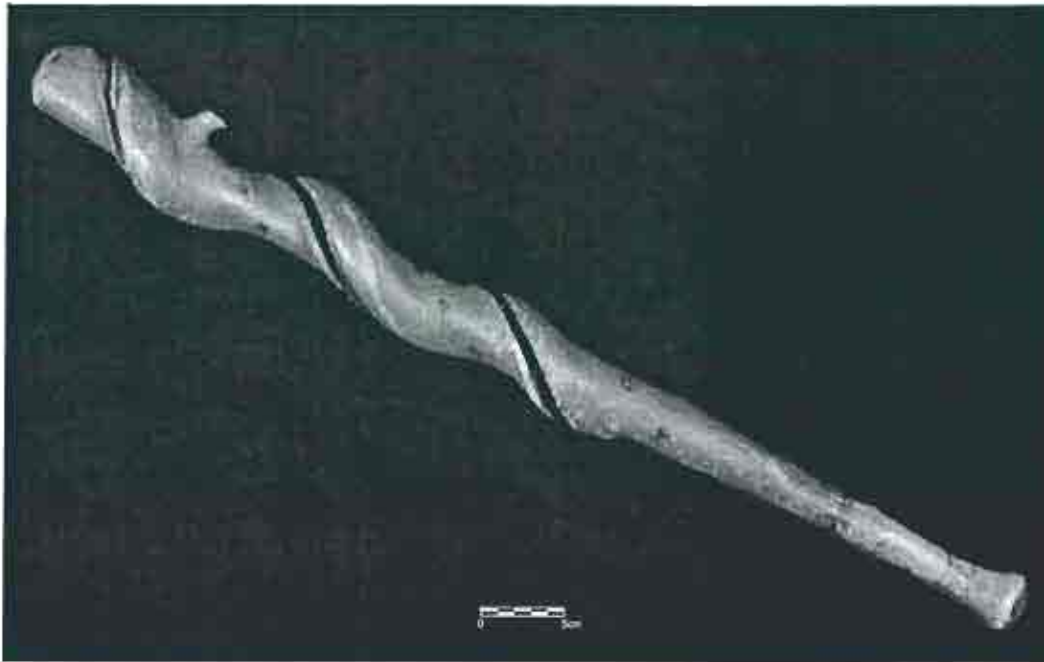


Plate 27. Historic Aboriginal – War club.

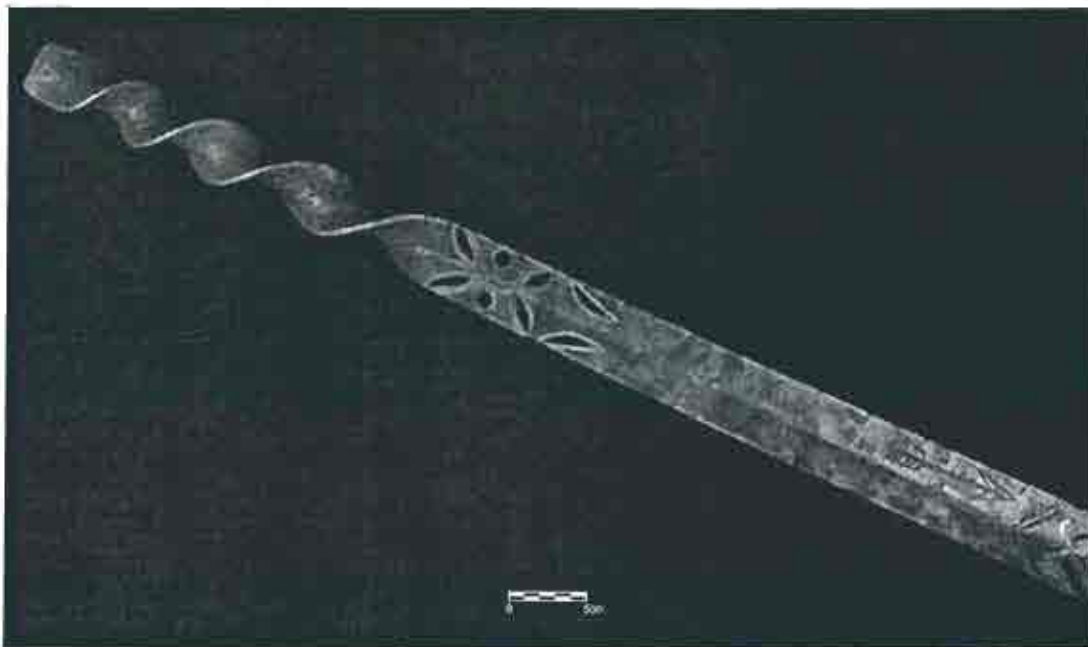


Plate 28. Historic Aboriginal – Three-foot pipe stem.

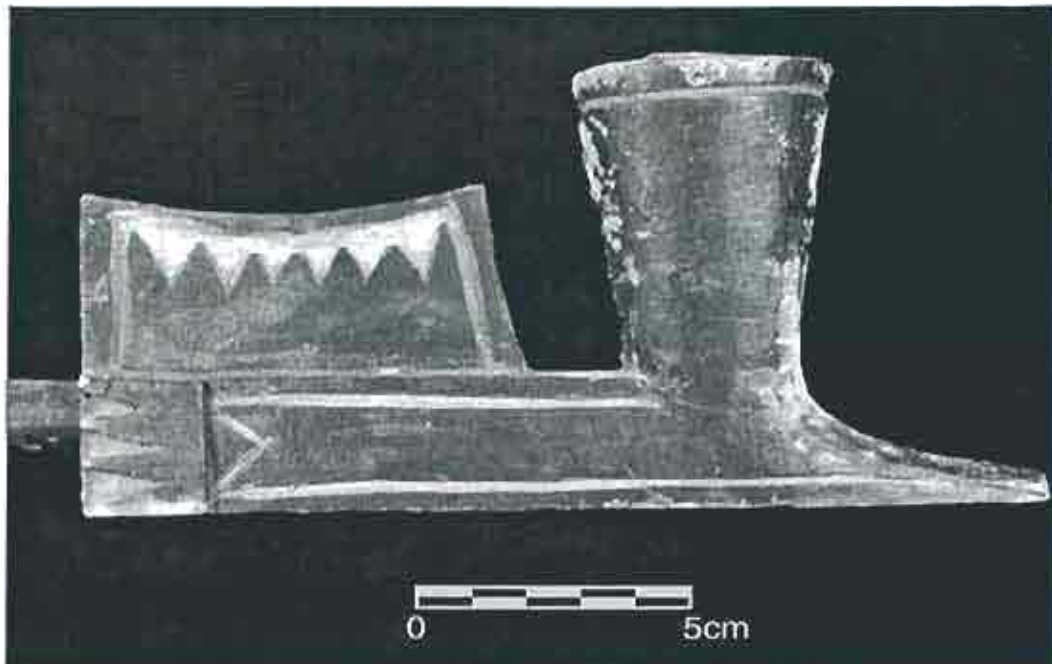


Plate 29. Historic Aboriginal – Siouxan pipe.



Plate 30. Historic Aboriginal – Cedar canoe model.



Plate 31. Andrew Thompson with Aboriginals.

what a canoe carved sometime between 1814 and 1827 by Assigniac, an Odawa leader, to provide a visual traditional history (McClurken 1991). Canoes such as these were also produced throughout the nineteenth century as tourist art, especially by southern Ojibwa. Another empty model canoe as well as three loose figurines may also relate to this trade. None of these items is referred to in the collection journal.

The Collection as a Reflection of the Nineteenth Century Antiquarian Tradition

The Ruthven collection is clearly an exceptional

example of nineteenth century antiquarianism, in that it is a result of the dedicated and selective acquisition of a wide variety of 'antiquities.' As befitted the cultural and intellectual milieu of the latter half of the nineteenth century, many people of wealth were active 'men of letters' and natural historians who were eclectic in their interests. The inception of Canadian professional archaeology can be traced to the activities of such people, who established organizations devoted to the general advancement of the physical sciences and the arts. Professional archaeology was most certainly stimulated by the journals, museums, and research initiated by these groups.

That Thompson was in contact with others who

shared his antiquarian interests may be inferred from journal entry #120, which noted that a wooden club was purchased from a Mr. Boyle of Toronto. In all probability, the vendor was David Boyle who, as an employee of the Canadian Institute, was Canada's first full-time professional archaeologist. Boyle also worked diligently at maintaining contacts with numerous museum and university-based American archaeologists at the Smithsonian Institution and the Peabody Museum at Harvard University. It can be argued that his Annual Archaeological Reports for Ontario laid the foundations upon which Canadian scientific archaeology was based. From 1896 to 1911, Boyle filled the position of curator at the Ontario Provincial Museum, the collections of which later became part of the Royal Ontario Museum.

Thompson's early interest in aboriginal culture appears to have persisted into later life (for example, Plate 31). This is perhaps best evidenced by the influential and perhaps dark role he came to have in the life of local aboriginal society in the 1920s. He was appointed by the federal government in 1923, as a special commissioner to investigate the social and political state of the Six Nations Reserve and to address, in particular, the growing movement to replace inherited Confederacy chieftainship with an elected system of local government. His 1924 report recommended the establishment of an elected council, which was enacted by a federal Order of Council on September 17, 1924. The termination of confederacy rule remains a significant frustration for many Six Nations People today, especially among traditionalists (Weaver 1978:528-536).

Conclusions

The collection of artifacts housed at Ruthven Estate, which were probably recovered from archaeological sites within the general region, is a significant research and educational resource. As the initial objective of the project was to determine the general nature and extent of the assemblage, the classes reported herein should be considered as provisional in nature until such time that further detailed research is undertaken. Such research should prepare

a permanent, detailed record of the artifact type, temporal or cultural affiliation, and metric and non-metric attributes for each specimen. Given the existence of the accompanying journal(s) and other archival sources, the analysis of the collection has the potential to make a considerable contribution to our current understanding of southern Ontario pre-contact history.

Recommendations were also made for the curation of the collection including the establishment of on-site curatorial facilities and practices designed to meet current professional standards (i.e. collections and research policies, climate control and security procedures). Moreover, since the Iroquois False Face Society masks and the Turtle Rattle are considered sacred items among certain constituencies of First Nation communities today, yet have long been vulnerable to private trade and disposition, it was recommended that the masks and the rattle be transferred to an appropriate curatorial facility. Since the Woodland Cultural Centre and Museum in Brantford, specializes in the preservation and promotion of the culture and heritage of the aboriginal peoples of the Eastern Woodlands area, it was approached to seek their direction regarding the appropriate disposition of these items. These objects were transferred to the Woodland Cultural Centre in 1999.

Finally, there is significant potential for the balance of the collection to form the core of an effective interpretive programme. Indeed, using the collection and knowledge of local sites, consideration might be given to the development and implementation of a public educational programme in archaeology in order to increase popular knowledge and consequently increase public support for the protection of valuable regional archaeological resources.

Acknowledgements

Archaeological Services Inc. wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Ms. Karen Richardson, Ruthven Park; Dr. Trudy Nicks, Department of Anthropology, Royal Ontario Museum; and Ken Lister, Department of Anthropology, Royal Ontario Museum.

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