

LATE CERAMICS IN CENTRAL EASTERN ONTARIO: IROQUOIS OR ALGONKIN?

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INTRODUCTION

Collared pottery vessels carrying incising and shallow punch marks occur along the Ottawa River and tributaries in eastern Ontario in the vicinity of the village of Deep River (Figure 1). When these Iroquoian traits were observed in artifact samples, the position and motifs of the decoration enabled identification via established pottery types for Iroquois ware (MacNeish, 1952; Ridley, 1952: 205).

The site locations are remote from Huronia or sites of known Iroquois groups. It was therefore intriguing to find Iroquois-like pottery so distant, some 200 miles, from the accepted homeland of the Iroquois. It was, further, absolutely startling that the rim sherds were so similar as to be identifiable as pre-existing pottery types.

Accompanying the incising and dimpling decorative techniques first mentioned are lower frequencies of linear stamp and notching.

In addition to the well known and typed decorative motifs which include both parallel and opposed obliques and vertical and horizontal lines, there are parallel lines of interrupted decoration (Figure 2). Emerson (1954: 222) found a similar trait at the Benson site. Thus there is still another similarity between Huronia and the Upper Ottawa Valley.

Contribution of data from east central Ontario to an Iroquois Symposium was considered because certain artifacts recovered appeared to have limited identification possibilities, one of which was Iroquois.

Early studies of Iroquois ceramics were probably carried out without the expectation of comparisons from the Ontario-Quebec border at a point 120 miles northwest of Ottawa. Nevertheless, the techniques and motifs observed so far have been directly comparable on a first level basis (i.e., without considering reduced versus oxidized firing, paste, etc.).

LOCATION

The area under discussion is roughly that contained by a circle of 50 miles radius from a point midway along the east border of Algonquin Provincial Park (Figure 1). There are 27 identified Indian sites in the zone. Iroquoian pottery occurs on 44% of these. In 37% of the total number of sites these remains occur as a second component over Middle Woodland deposits. Figure 3 is a chart showing relatively, the number of times an Iroquoian group selected a site which had been occupied by an earlier group. From an inspection of the abscissa the preference for sites previously occupied by Middle Woodland groups is obvious. The y-axis is not relevant for interpretation and is used only to accommodate the identifying names.

Pickering sites appear unpopular but this may be a reflection of paucity of such sites. Some sites produced trade goods alone, others trade goods with Iroquoian or Algonkin remains. Only three sites were solely Iroquoian.

The type of terrain encountered includes lakeside flats: sandy, grassy or gravelled, sandy spits and benches.

STUDY METHOD

To assess the latest occupation of east central Ontario the pottery was studied by con-

sidering overall abundance of individual pottery types; tribal affiliations of the pottery types recovered; tribal affiliations of individual sites; and finally by observation of selected attributes. Table 1 clearly indicates the popularity of Black Necked pottery, which outranks the next most popular types by a factor ranging from 1.56 to 1.75. The closest competitors are Middleport Oblique and cord treated rims. The inclusion of two cording techniques in the list may not be well received by Iroquois specialists. Indeed they may represent early Algonkin people. One is manifested as corded stick impression at CaGi-1 (Mitchell, 1966) and the other as malleating (see Figure 4A) at CaGn-1 (Mitchell, 1968). The second technique is indicative of Pickering time and it associates cord malleated body sherds with mixed dentate impressions and incising on an incipient collar (Figure 4B) (Mitchell, 1970: 33).

Confirming occupation of the area at Pickering time is the occurrence of a vessel carrying lines of solid circular punctate on a well defined collar (Figure 4C) (Mitchell, Butler, Ford and Lance, 1966). Of course not all of these are considered to be Iroquois, but they could be proto-Iroquois or coeval if any of the Iroquoian occupations were early.

In Table 2, the entire list of recovered pottery types is grouped according to the tribal affiliation laid down by MacNeish (1952). Huron types predominate, accounting for 33.6% of the rims, closely followed by Neutral at 22.9%. Lalonde High Collar is listed separately because as a northern Huron type it may not have transferred to the study area in the same way as other Huron types. Also, the Pickering and Pickering-Cree wares could be combined for a total of 23.9% of the overall sample. They are listed separately to show absence of collars on possible Cree spread cord malleated ware, whereas the punctated variety and the dentate stamped-incised combination occur on collared vessels, likely proto-Iroquois material.

Vessel frequencies indicating half per cent figures are shown where two techniques occur on one vessel and definite assignment to a single category cannot be made.

Another look at the sample from the standpoint of geographical distribution is interesting. On the abscissa of Figure 5, sites are arranged in order from west to east along the Petawawa River right out to and including the Ottawa River. Pottery types are shown relative to the distance along the waterways on which they were found. The arrangement appears to give a progressive change. Thus Corn Ear is located only in the eastern portion of the study area while Huron types such as Huron Incised and Sidey Notched are found only to the west. This observation is simple enough. The chart helps to arrange the central group more easily, where wider distribution is encountered. An interesting aspect is the restricted group of types re-covered on the Ottawa River. The vertical double line separates the Ottawa River sites from the tributary sites. The only physical difference is that the tributaries are much narrower with many more rapids and lakes per unit length.

Since the pottery type distribution chart could be manoeuvred into a progressive pattern, the frequency of each tribally affiliated pottery unit was plotted against geographic position. It is apparent from Figure 6 that Huron types predominate to the west and Onondaga is more frequent in the eastern section of the study zone. Lalonde High Collar as a North Huron type and cord wrapped paddle stamping seem to have an even distribution. The inclusion of cord wrapped paddle with Iroquoian types will be discussed later.

One other aspect of the last occupation of east central Ontario may be informative. This is the identity of the occupants of a particular site from an inspection of ceramics recovered. In Table 3 the major sites are broken down into tribal affiliation. The order may be slightly altered by excluding the Lalonde High Collar type from the Huron group. Two sites are Huron oriented, two Onondaga oriented and one equally Huron-Neutral.

OTHER DATA

The hearths are usually round, with a semi-circular profile ranging from 12 to 30 inches in diameter. One roasting pit about 4 by 3 by 2 feet deep was associated with Onondaga sherds only. There are always beaver remains in and around these hearths. A radio-carbon dating on these is in progress.

While there is evidence of smoking, the pipe recovery is very low. Types are bulbous bowl and ring conical. So far, all the specimens come from the Petawawa River and none from the Ottawa.

Projectile points go through a conversion from slightly convex sided, side-notched narrow rounded base to a thin, isosceles triangle form with side notches and concave base as found with Onondaga, to a most carelessly executed, incipient side-notched flake type. One such flake point was found with brass scraps on Traverse Lake and is considered to be not only late but Algonkin.

SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

At the outset of this paper, attention was drawn to the similarity between pottery re-covered from the superior layers of east central Ontario sites and that of southern Ontario. Some dissimilarities will be reviewed also.

Small Sample

The overall ceramic recovery is low. There is a rather restricted "pottery type" range, 17 in all. Sites east of Huronia proper, such as Roebuck and Payne produce orders of magnitude more rimsherds than the sites so far excavated in central east Ontario.

Lalonde High Collar

There is a large range of expression in the Lalonde High Collar type, from thin to thick rims and careless to careful incising. There is only one case where the collar base has been notched and that on the Ottawa River where the Onondaga collection was highest (but not in *that same* site). *None of the Lalonde High Collar type* includes punctating in *the motif*.

Interrupted Element

An attribute which appears in the collection is an interrupted bar pattern. Although this attribute was noted for the Benson site, it seems to be far more frequent here. In east central Ontario the interrupted element is found on collars, necks and shoulders with equal incidence. However, the number of elements on collars is 1 and 2 whereas on necks 3 and 4 and on shoulders reaches 4. Elements are always oriented to the horizontal. The techniques, position and frequency are set out in Table 4.

Black Necked

Black Necked is the most abundant pottery type recovered representing 15% of the total sample. It is found across the entire study area. There are two features of interest. First, most exterior collars are concave and the interiors are 43% concave, 28% straight and 28% convex.

Also, 70% of the Black Necked vessels have an incipient, triangular punctate motif on the interior rim. Inevitably this is very close to the lip.

Collar Heights

These range from 6.5 mm (Huron Incised) to 70 mm (Lalonde High Collar) high but 67%

are between 12 and 32 mm with the highest concentration at 17 mm. It is questionable to give an average which includes Lalonde High Collar where rims have reached 70 mm. The significant point is that most collars are low.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The final aboriginal occupation of east central Ontario is mainly represented by ceramic ware. The area sample size is discouragingly small, reaching factors between 6 and 6000 less, based on rimsherd count, than single sites east of Huronia proper such as Roebuck (Wintenberg, 1936), Payne (Pendergast, 1963; Emerson, 1966) and Summerstown (Pendergast, 1968). In size they resemble those listed for Lake St. Francis by Pendergast (1964) and from Shebishikong 1, Michipicoten 11 and Pic River 1. components (Wright, 1965). At the moment there is no explanation for this. Several sites are present in the area and all of them have presented low artifact returns. However, in the assessment of late sites on the north shore of Lake Superior, Wright (1965) has commented to the effect that even with sparse remains the data at hand must be used, at least initially, to evaluate the cultural position. Similarly, Pendergast (1964) notes that due to the nature of the sites, use of small samples is the only means available to provide insight into the particular local problems, realizing that this may lack the reliability of statistical depth.

Much of the ceramic ware is identifiable with the use of MacNeish's 1952 typology and that of Ridley in the same year. In the Iroquois series, only Huron, Neutral and Onondaga types are found. On a site by site basis, the Onondaga remains appear to favour the eastern portions of the zone, specifically the Ottawa River, whereas Huron pottery is more predominant to the west, although not restricted to it.

At the Radiant Lake 111 station, corded rims lacking collars and with exterior circular punctates appear. They resemble Manitoba Corded Ware superficially, particularly Cemetery Point corded and Winnipeg Fabric Impressed Ware, particularly Alexander Fabric Impressed (MacNeish, 1958). These are not considered to be Iroquois or proto-Iroquois, but rather Algonkian occupation, possibly Cree. Surprisingly they have a C-14 date of 710 A.D. (Lowdon, Wilmeth and Blake, 1972) which provides them with a position of relative cultural priority in this area. As such, there is a favourable environment for eventual contact with any Iroquois or proto-Iroquois groups. Since Algonkian migration or influence is known to have continued for considerable time after this, it is possible that ongoing and possibly reciprocal cultural ruboff occurred in the western area under consideration.

Corded sherds recovered in the westernmost part of the zone were associated with Pickering rims which showed decorative mixtures of dentate stamp and incising on a weakly collared vessel. These suggest proto-Iroquois occupation of the area.

Blackduck Ware (Wilford, 1955) is also found in the east central Ontario sites. This is indicative of Algonkin groups. Wright (1965) has suggested dates between 962 and 1700 A.D. for occupations of the Michipicoten and Pic River type sites. Our Blackduck manifestations put the Algonkin occupation in a geographically correct position for interaction with north early Iroquois groups. If such dates are applicable then they probably were here from the Pickering occupations to the Middle and Late Iroquois occupations, in the west Algonquin Park to North Bay region.

Ridley's multiple deposits at Frank Bay (1954) show Pickering development and at least some specimens (Figures 19h and 20i) have been interpreted by Wright (1966) as possible Blackduck.

No rims similar to documented early Pickering such as Barrie (Ridley, 1958), Frank Bay

Transitional and Primary Transitional (Ridley, 1954) and Miller (Kenyon, 1968) are present in the collections from this area. No exterior bossing (which when coupled with horizontal rows of oblique dentate stamp on a channelled collar are described by Wright (1966: 48) as a major variety of Pickering) has been found here. Yet at Cedar Lake I an incipiently collared rim with a channelled interior carrying oblique dentate impressions occurs. (See Figure 4B of this paper.) There are three horizontal incised lines on the upper neck, subtended by another horizontal row of oblique dentate stampings. If the dentate had been incising, a classic Middleport Oblique would have been identified. As it is, this just described vessel must be ancestral and yet it is not similar to material from sites discussed above as it lacks bossing.

The recovery of Middleport Oblique and Ontario Horizontal rims indicates Middle Iroquois influence in the zone also. A tanged quartz projectile, a notched net sinker and a ring conical pipe cluster support suggestion of a Middle occupation.

Where Middleport Oblique was recovered, it was always accompanied by Black Necked. But Black Necked, with a single exception was always found with Lalonde High Collar. This appears to show the users to be from or influenced by the north of Huronia, possibly sup-ported the Algonkian-Iroquois mixing suggested earlier.

Finally, late Iroquois pottery types including Huron Incised, Sidey Notched and Warminster Crossed also occur. At least two of these types carry well developed overhanging castellations and are considered to represent late occupations of the area by Algonkians or Iroquois. With one occurrence of Sidey Notched, a very low collared, small Black Necked vessel was found. Radiocarbon processing on associated wood charcoal has produced a date of 1630 A.D. (Lowdon, Wilmeth and Blake, 1972). Within the standard deviation of one sigma, this certainly represents the period of known Algonkin-Huron alliance.

Across the ceramic sample an interrupted bar motif is found. It occurs on Black Necked, Sidey Notched and Lawson Incised types. Such an attribute is not an integral part of the Iroquois complex in Huronia, although in rethinking Ontario Pottery, Emerson (1968) notes that Black Necked includes new collar designs which involve crossing or interrupted elements.

It does not seem to be present in sites nearer the study area such as Payne or Roebuck. It was found at Benson (Emerson, 1954: 222). This stamping may be another manifestation of Algonkin influence on Iroquois pottery types in this area. These vessels may have been made by Algonkians. In the late stages we can consider the possibility of Iroquois wives of Algonkians making pottery here, but they would not be steeped in the carelessly chipped small, flake projectile point attribute which suggests a shared traits group. I'm not sure that the Hurons went near the Algonquin Provincial Park area until trouble with southern relations developed.

A final consideration from the ceramic remains centres around the Lalonde High Collar type. One can, in several ways, propose routes by which the various types or site clusters entered this area. Restricting the consideration to indications from Lalonde High Collar vessels, it is possible that this type, and its associated types as shown in site packages such as CaGi-1 (Mitchell, 1966), came into the area via the Lake Nipissing-Mattawa River route to the Ottawa. It may have then backtracked through the Petawawa tributary and the Park to sites like Radiant Lake where it shows in a very weak form. In fact this pottery type is strong on the Ottawa River—a high-collared, boldly-decorated, well-oxidized, large vessel. Slightly west at Montgomery Lake, it is a thinner rimmed, lower collared, well oxidized, slightly smaller vessel. At Radiant Lake 111, farther west, the vessel is semi-reduced fired, poorly decorated and smaller. It must be noted that I may be interpreting a Durfee Underlined vessel as weak Lalonde High Collar at Radiant Lake 111. However, there appears to be a nubbin castellation present. It is comforting to note Pendergast's (1964: 191) comment regarding some small St. Lawrence

River sites sherds: "In many cases these sherds, while undoubtedly belonging to the pottery types mentioned, look slightly foreign and crude in comparison with typical sherds of the type.

In summary, I see early occupation on the western section of the study area, which through the northern river routes reached the Ottawa River section reasonably early. The middle sections then received influence in late time from Huron bands to the west, from development of the earlier Ottawa River occupation backtracking westward on the Ottawa tributaries and possibly from Onondaga influence to the south. Whatever the pattern, there has been occupation of the area since 700-900 A.D. by more than one group. In the area under discussion there has been much opportunity for contact and trait acceptance, sharing or mutation.

Overall, there seems to have been a grand melding of different groups in the west Algonquin Park-Lake Nipissing region at a reasonably early time beginning probably 900 years before the Historic documentation of Algonkin bands on the Ottawa River exploration route. In a process of contributing, accepting and changing, various of these groups entered the Algonquin Park region and its surrounding area and penetrated to the Ottawa River at least.

The remains studied in our area may all be Algonkin work including Algonkin expression of Iroquois types. An Iroquois specialist may create interpretations other than those suggested in this paper.

TABLE 1
OVERALL SAMPLE EAST CENTRAL ONTARIO

| Pottery Type | Vessel | | Number of Sites |
|-----------------------|--------|-------|--------------------|
| | f | % | |
| Black Necked | 7 | 14.9 | 5 |
| Cord Malleated | 4.5 | 9.6 | 3 |
| Middleport Oblique | 4 | 8.5 | 3 |
| Cord Wrapped Paddle | 4 | 8.5 | 4 |
| Lawson Incised | 3 | 6.4 | 2 |
| Lalonde High Collar | 3 | 6.4 | 3 |
| Warminster Crossed | 3 | 6.4 | 2 |
| Notched Collar | 3 | 6.4 | 3 |
| Pickering | 2.5 | 5.3 | 3 |
| Sidey Notched | 2 | 4.2 | 1 |
| Roebuck Low Collar | 2 | 4.2 | 2 |
| Huron Incised | 2 | 4.2 | 2 |
| Ontario Oblique | 1 | 2.1 | 1 |
| Ontario Horizontal | 1 | 2.1 | 1 |
| Middleport Crisscross | 1 | 2.1 | 1 |
| Sidey Corssed | 1 | 2.1 | 1 |
| Seed/Uren Corded | 1 | 2.1 | 1 |
| Corn Ear | 1 | 2.1 | 1 |
| Miscellaneous Stamped | 1 | 2.1 | 1 |
| | 47 | 100.1 | |

TABLE 2
EAST CENTRAL ONTARIO COLLECTION BY
TRIBAL ASSOCIATION

| Affiliation | Pottery Type or Technique | Number of Sites Represented | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------|---|-----------|
| | | f | % | f | % (of 16) |
| Huron 33.6% | Black Necked | 7 | 15.2 | 5 | 31 |
| | Warminster Crossed | 3 | 6.5 | 2 | 12 |
| | Sidey Notched | 2 | 4.3 | 1 | 6 |
| | Huron Incised | 2 | 4.3 | 2 | 12 |
| | Sidey Crossed | 1 | 2.2 | 1 | 6 |
| | Seed Corded | 0.5 | 1.1 | 1 | 6 |
| | | 15.5 | 33.6 | | |
| Neutral Wenro 22.9% | Middleport Oblique | 4 | 8.7 | 3 | 19 |
| | Lawson Incised | 3 | 6.5 | 2 | 12 |
| | Ontario Horizontal | 1 | 2.2 | 1 | 6 |
| | Ontario Oblique | 1 | 2.2 | 1 | 6 |
| | Middleport Crisscross | 1 | 2.2 | 1 | 6 |
| | Uren Corded | 0.5 | 1.1 | 1 | 6 |
| | | 10.5 | 22.9 | | |
| Cree/Pickering 18.5% | Cord Malleated | 4.5 | 9.8 | 3 | 19 |
| | Cord Wrapped Paddle | 4. | 8.7 | 4 | 25 |
| | | 8.5 | 18.5 | | |
| Onondaga 10.8% | Notched Collar | 3 | 6.5 | 3 | 19 |
| | Roebuck Low Collar | 2 | 4.3 | 2 | 12 |
| | | 5 | 10.8 | | |
| Northern Huron 6.5% | Lalonde High Collar | 3 | 6.5 | 3 | 19 |
| Pickering 5.4% | Incipient <i>and</i> Defined Collar- Dentate/Incised <i>and</i> Punctate | 2.5 | 5.4 | 3 | 19 |
| Other 2.2% | Corn Ear | 1 | 2.2 | 1 | 6 |
| | | 46 | 99.9 | | |

TABLE 3
AFFILIATION OF INDIVIDUAL SITE PACKAGES

| Site | Affiliation | Type or Technique | Number of Vessels |
|-----------------|-------------|---|-------------------|
| RA3 (CaGn-1) | Huron | Black Necked, Huron Incised, Sidey Notched | 5 |
| | Corded | Malleated | 3 |
| | Neutral | Lawson Incised | 1 |
| | North Huron | Lalonde High Collar | 1 |
| | Onondaga | Roebuck Low Collar | 1 |
| Total | | | 11 |
| M5 (B1Gj-2) | Huron | Black Necked, Warminster Crossed, Sidey Crossed | 4 |
| | Neutral | Lawson Incised, Middleport Crisscrossed | 4 |
| | North Huron | Lalonde High Collar | 1 |
| | Other | Cord Wrapped Stick Impression | 1 |
| Total | | | 10 |
| CaGi-1 | Neutral | Middleport Oblique | 2 |
| | Huron | Black Necked | 1 |
| | North Huron | Lalonde High Collar | 1 |
| | Other | Blackduck (Corded Stick Impressions) | 1 |
| Total | | | 5 |
| A/G | Onondaga | Notched Collar | 2 |
| | Other | Cord Malleated | 1 |
| | Other | Cord Wrapped Stick | 1 |
| Total | | | 4 |
| W1 (B1Gk-15) | Onondaga | Notched Collar | 1 |
| | Onondaga | High Collar | 1 |
| Total | | | 2 |

TABLE 4
INTERRUPTED BAR
ATTRIBUTE

| Site | Type | Technique | Position and Number of Elements | | |
|------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| | | | Collar | Neck | Shoulder |
| RA3 | Sidey Notched | Incised | - | - | 3 |
| RA2 | Black Necked | Incised | - | 2 (High) | - |
| M5 | Black Necked | Stamped | 1 | 4 (High) | - |
| M5 | Sidey Crossed | Incised | 2 | - | 1 |
| M5 | Lawson Incised | Stamped | - | 3 (High) | - |
| M5 | Corded | C.W.P. | 1 | - | - |

TECHNIQUE

TYPES INVOLVED

| | | | | | |
|---------|---|-----|----------------|---|-----|
| Incised | 3 | 50% | BlackNecked | 2 | 33% |
| Stamped | 2 | 33% | Sidey Notched | 1 | 17% |
| C.W.P. | 1 | 17% | Sidey Crossed | 1 | 17% |
| | | | Lawson Incised | 1 | 17% |
| | | | Corded | 1 | 17% |

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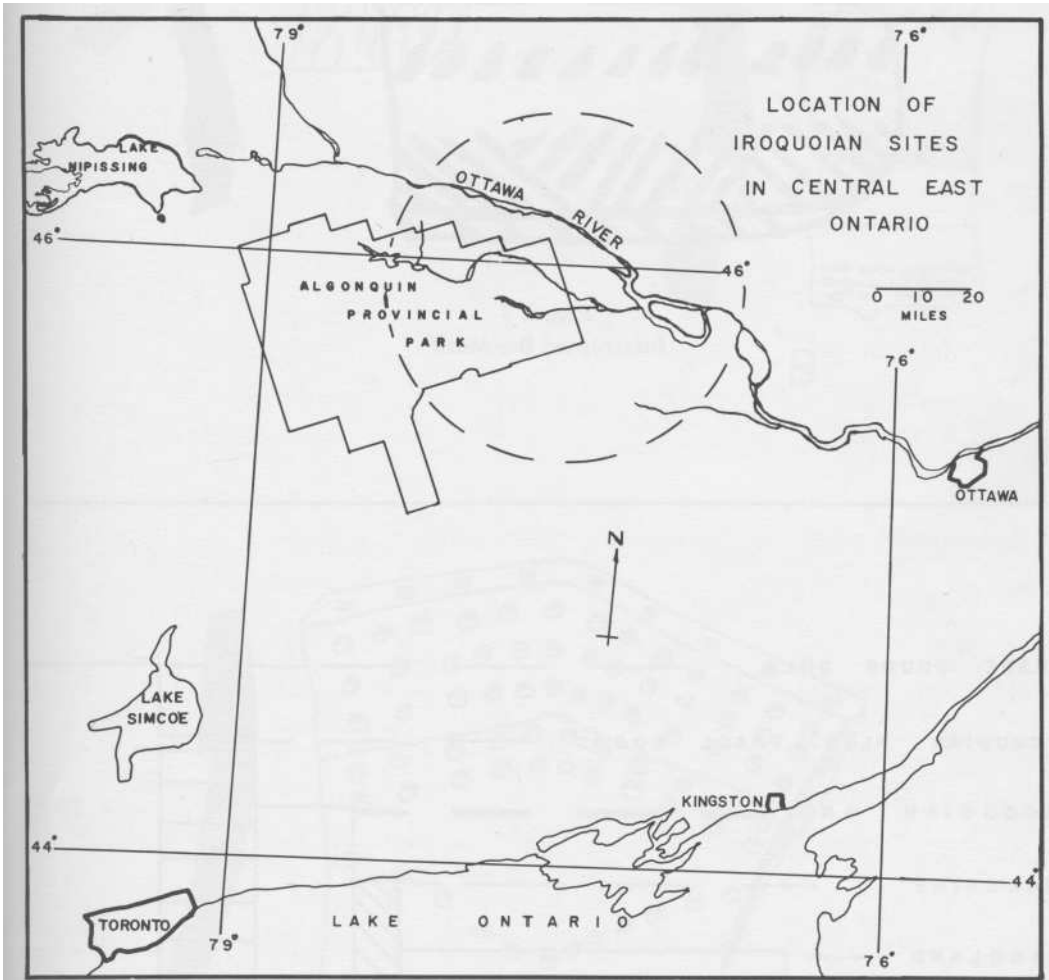


Figure 1
Location of Iroquoian Sites
in Central East Ontario

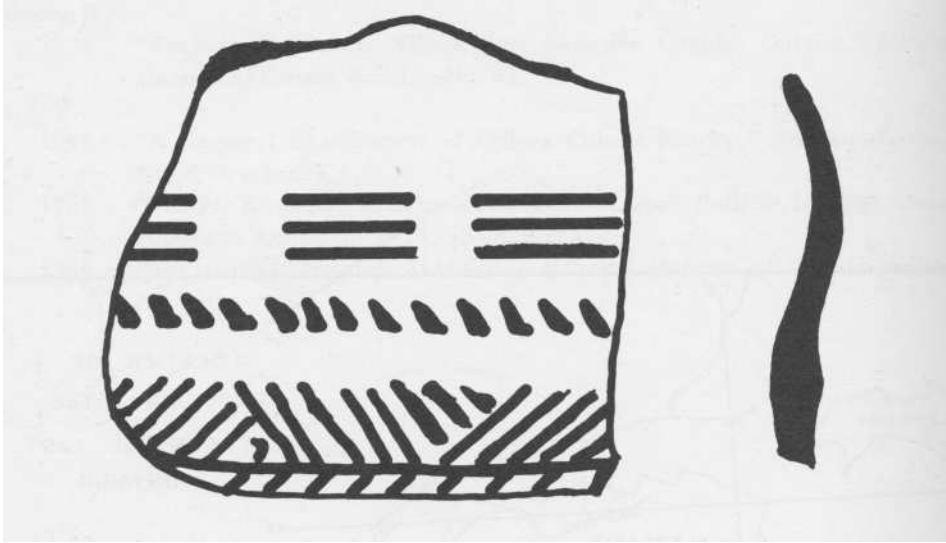


Figure 2
Interrupted Bar Motif

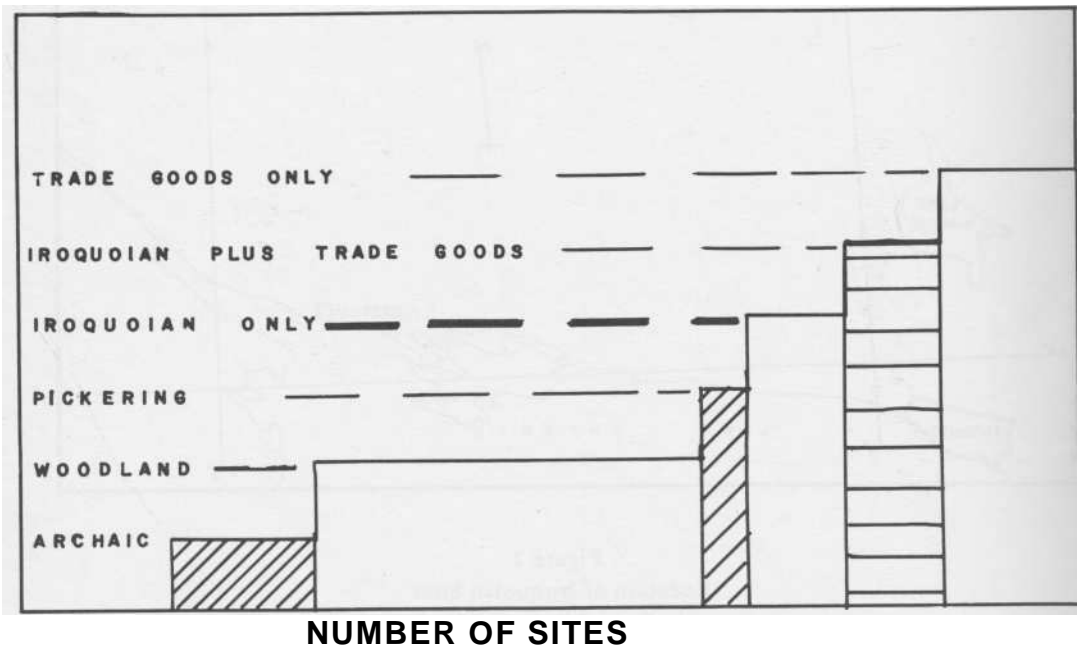


Figure 3
Proportion of Site Types Acceptable for Occupation by Iroquoian Groups

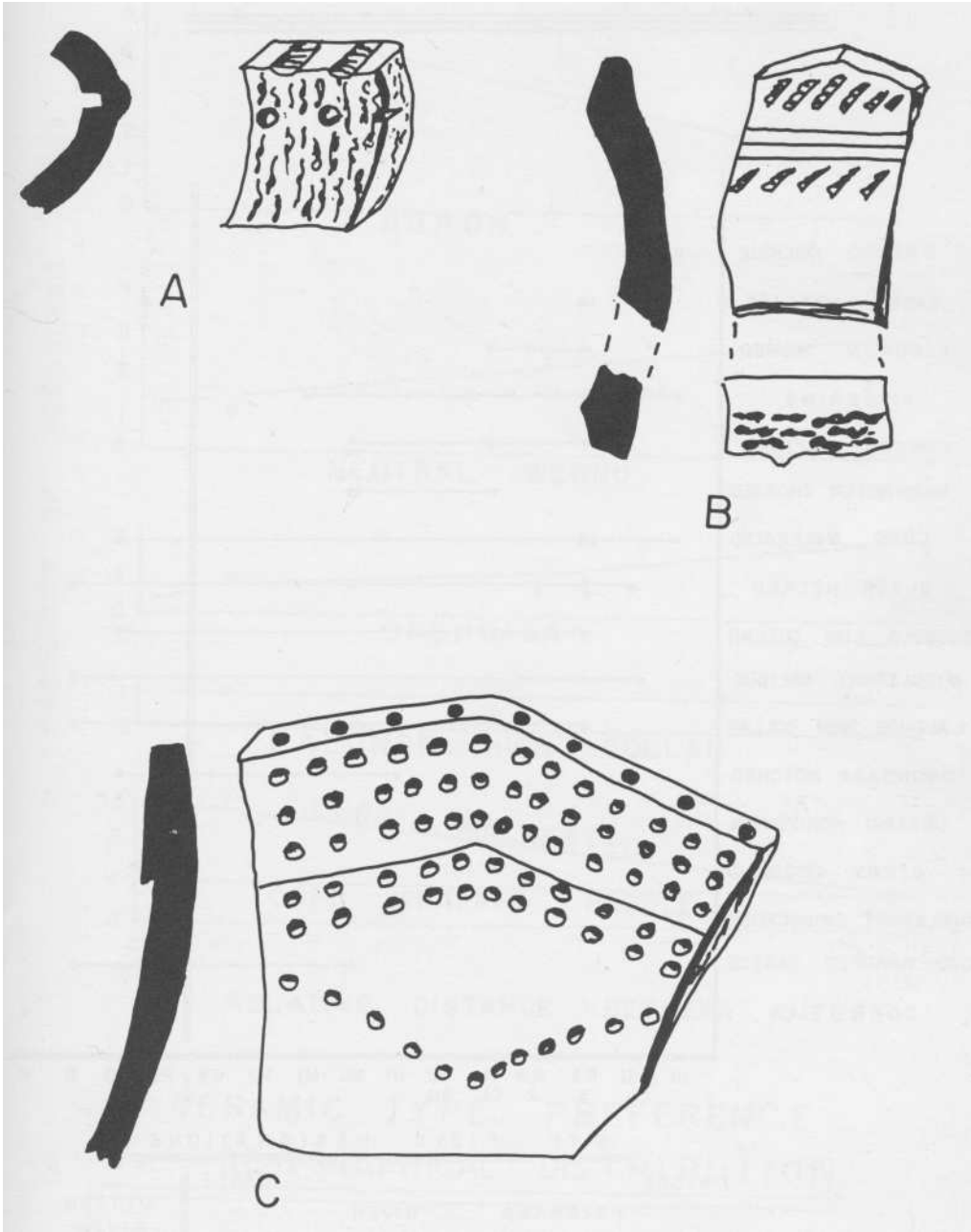


Figure 4

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF POTTERY TYPES

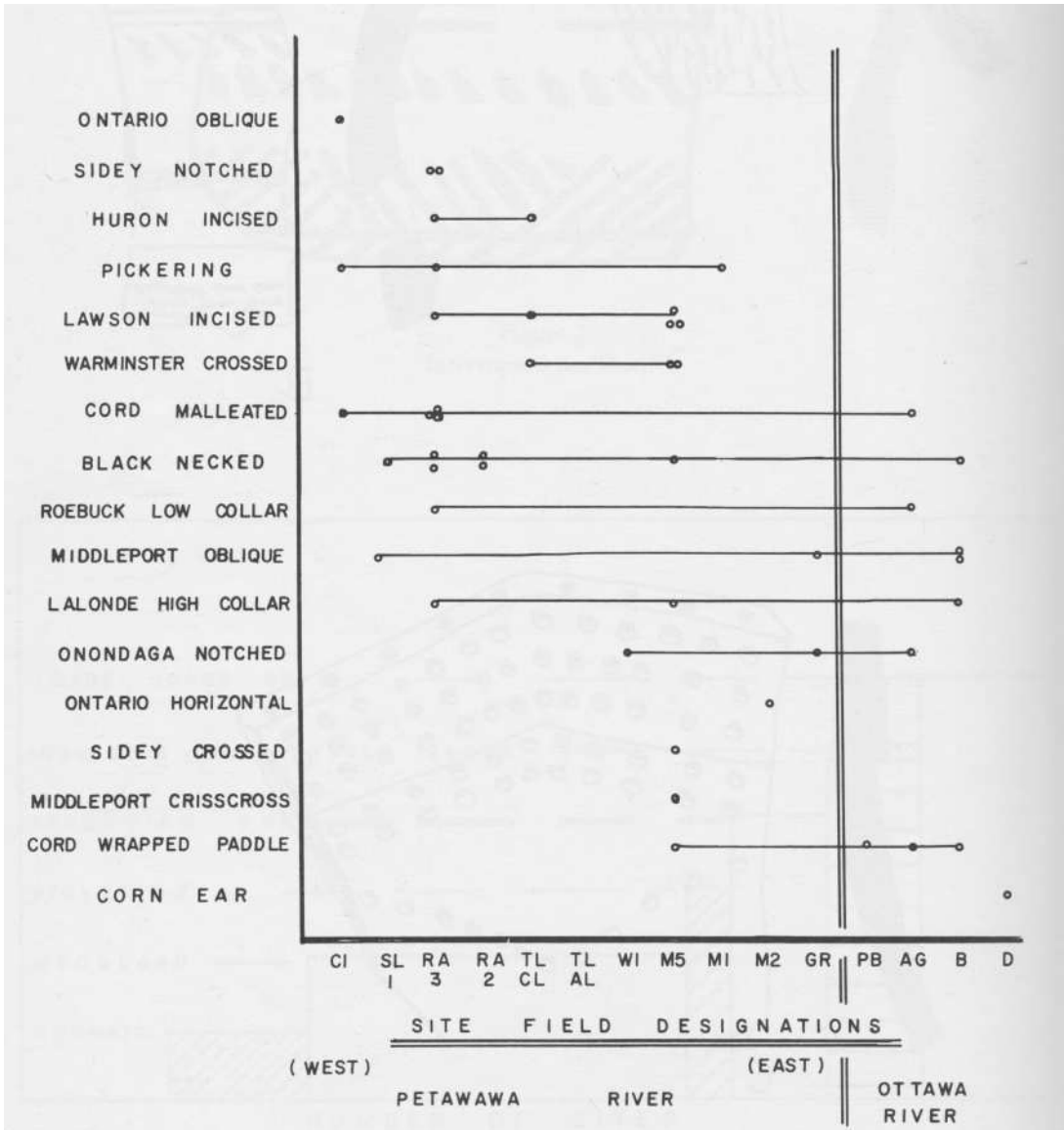
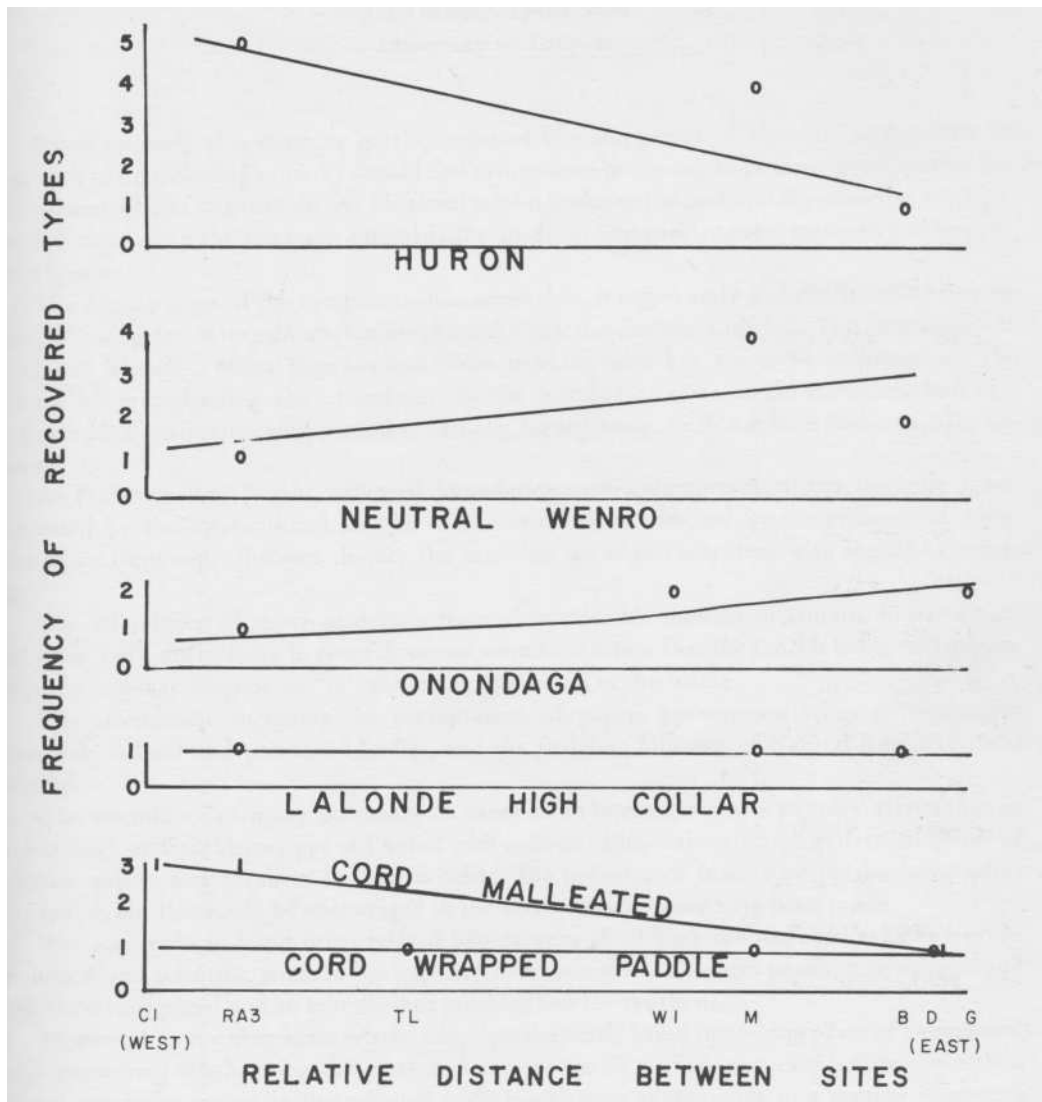


Figure 5
Geographical Distribution of Pottery Types



CERAMIC TYPE PREFERENCE Vs.
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

Figure 6
Ceramic Type Preference vs. Geographical Distribution