

## Hurons in an Algonquian Land

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*Archaeological and ethnohistoric data from the Great Lakes region are assembled in an attempt to situate the Algonquian residents of the southern Georgian Bay littoral region in what has come to be defined as a classic Iroquoian homeland—Huronian. The evidence presented suggests that Algonquian-speaking groups occupied this area for millennia prior to the arrival of Iroquoian agriculturalists, and that they continued to reside in the area up until the mid-seventeenth century. It is suggested that the conundrum of their “invisibility” in the archaeological record is due to a shared material culture with their Iroquoian neighbours but that their presence can be detected when a range of archaeological evidence is considered beyond a stereotypical perception of Algonquian culture, as discussed by Latta (1987:181).*

### Introduction

When the first Iroquoian adventurers entered the region now known as “Huronian,” roughly a millennium ago, they found a landscape little different than their home to the south, yet still clothed in a maple/beechness climax forest (Monckton 1992:7). These exploratory forays into the southern Georgian Bay littoral by small parties of Iroquoians were far different in environmental and cultural impact than the arrival of agricultural communities, circa A.D. 1300, who began settling in the region. It is likely that some experimental horticultural activities were practised at this time by resident Algonquian peoples, associated with their summer fishing camps. This did not, however, entail major forest clearance by relatively large village-based populations. Despite the environmental and social revolution which must have characterised the following centuries, from an Algonquian perspective, early French documents testify to the continued presence of Algonquian-speaking peoples in the region now known as Huronia, 300 years later, albeit in a numerically marginal status.

What should an Algonquian site in “Huronian” look like? As Latta notes with regard to Algonquian sites in Iroquoia: “ethnolinguistic distinctions are not necessarily clearly visible in the archaeological record” (Latta 1987:182). This is not a new question. In fact, it is timely to reconsider this issue on the one hundredth

anniversary of Andrew Hunter’s 1904 report on “Indian Village Sites In North and South Orillia Townships,” in which he attempted to ascertain the defining attributes of “Algonkin” villages on the eastern frontier of historic Huronia. Hunter (1904:106-107) listed the following attributes in order to differentiate Algonkin from Huron sites: 1) an abundance of stone and pottery disks; 2) individual burials; 3) highly decorated pipes and pottery; 4) an abundance of bone needles and awls; 5) more abundant flint tools; and 6) arrowpoints cut from brass kettles. The writers’ knowledge of the material culture of the early seventeenth century residents of this region does not approach that of Andrew Hunter so that we are unable to comment on the majority of his defining attributes. Importantly, however, Hunter’s criteria are primarily quantitative, not qualitative in nature.

### The Pre-Iroquoian Context

Perhaps, the most constructive approach to this conundrum is to begin by considering the pre-Iroquoian landscape. To begin, there is very likely to be a considerable difference between a thirteenth century Algonquian site and a seventeenth century one—much as is the case with Iroquoian sites. Based on the well documented seasonal round and mobility of Great Lakes region hunter-gatherers, one would expect to find sites reflecting seasonal agglomerations at

strategic riverine and lacustrine fish procurement sites—near river or creek mouths and on islands and in sheltered bays adjacent to favourable summer-fall spawning habitat: the settlement pattern archaeologically documented along the Georgian Bay coastline to the west and northeast of Huronia. Locations such as the Atherley narrows (Dougall site [Wright 1972]), the Coldwater, Sturgeon, Wye (Ste. Marie and Heron sites [Smith 1995; Tomenchuk 1995]), and Nottawasaga River mouths (Schoonertown site [Cooke 1990]), Beausoleil (Camp Kitchi site [Ross and d'Annibale 1994; Ross 1995]), Giants Tomb, Beckwith, Hope and Christian Islands, and the Severn Sound, Methodist Point (Methodist Point site [Smith 1979]), Thunder and Kampenfelt Bays come to mind as high potential sites for seasonally occupied strategic fish procurement camps over the long term. Winter hunting grounds in the interior would include any number of cervid yarding areas, surely including the extensive Minesing swamp, and strategic ice-fishing locations in Georgian Bay and on Lake Simcoe. This would have been the settlement pattern as it had existed for millennia prior to the arrival of the first Iroquoian agriculturalists from the south, commencing at around A.D. 1250.

Would such a mobile population have experimented with horticultural pursuits? It is probable, given the multi-millennia-long tradition of plant tending and harvesting in the Canadian biotic province and the relatively benign climate of the southern Georgian Bay coastline. Exotic squash or gourds were being used by Saginaw valley native groups from at least Early Woodland times (Ozker 1982:37), while the introduction of tobacco into the Great Lakes region occurred at least 2,000 years ago (Wagner 2000:190). Such species would not require constant tending once established (but note Winter 2000:19 regarding the Kickapoo). Certainly, Sagard was treated to fish and “boiled pumpkins” (Wrong 1939:63) upon his arrival at a Nipissing settlement.

What would their house forms have looked like? Obviously, that would depend upon function, and group size and composition. A wide range of bark and reed mat-covered lodges are documented for post-contact Algonquian bands,

some comparable to those documented archaeologically for earlier Middle Woodland groups, and not greatly different in outline to many early Iroquoian forms. The house structures on the Saugeen Middle Woodland Donaldson site come to mind (Wright and Anderson 1963:11-15), as do the range of Early Iroquoian Elliott village house forms (Fox 1986:15, Figure 4). Sagard described a lodge “erected in the Algonquin fashion” at an island fishing camp in Georgian Bay north of Huronia that accommodated at least eight individuals, had four corners and contained two hearths, and was the site of communal feasts (Wrong 1939:185). This transient shelter was not a “wigwam,” in the sense of a circular lodge.

One would expect a knowledge and use of local toolstones. Drift-derived metasediments and cherts would be supplemented by the use of materials from primary deposits throughout the region. Chief among the latter would be quartz obtained from the massive veins characteristic of Canadian Shield Precambrian outcrops in the Honey Harbour vicinity and Collingwood chert from Silurian Fossil Hill Formation outcrops in the Beaver Valley (Eley and von Bitter 1989:22) to the west. The latter had been exploited since Early Palaeo-Indian times but continued to be utilized throughout the southern Georgian Bay region up until the seventeenth century (Fox 1984). As evinced on these quarry sites, local populations also imported tools of exotic material, such as Onondaga chert from the south. Exotic toolstone and native copper tool distributions from at least Archaic times onward reflect considerable mobility of goods, if not people, within and through the Georgian Bay basin from the west and south.

Ceramic technology was introduced from the south in the form of Early Woodland Vinette I ware (Wright 1972:3, 19, Plate 1, Figure 1) followed by a diversity of pottery making traditions, including Point Peninsula from the southeast (Johnston 1968; Spence and Harper 1968; Wright 1972: 4-5), Laurel from the north and west (Brizinski 1980:148-151; Conway and Adams 1979), Middle Woodland wares from the Lake Michigan Basin, and locally produced Saugeen ceramics (Ross 1995:13). Very little evidence is available concerning ceramic use towards

the end of the first millennium A.D., but what appears to be a locally manufactured imitation of a Princess Point vessel was recovered from the Hunter site on the Huron shore to the west of Georgian Bay (Fox 1990b:Figure 6.6) and Blackduck ceramics are distributed on sites to the north of Georgian Bay (Carscallen 1995:118; Pollock 1975:17-19, Plate 8; Ridley 1966:28, Figure 13c-e). As the Early Ontario Iroquoian ceramic industry evolved in the south, these wares began to find their way into the Georgian Bay basin (Garrad 1969b, 1986; Ross and d'Annibale 1994:3; Smith 1979:53, Figure 13g, 1995:65, Plate 3.1E, F)—distributed as far west as Sault Ste. Marie (Conway 1977:Figure 22A) and as far north as Lake Nipissing (Brizinski 1980:147, 155-159; Ridley 1954:44-47, Figure 19-21) but, interestingly, only in the eastern or “Pickering” form. A few Early Iroquoian sherds are even present in the basal occupation stratum of the Pic River site on the north shore of Lake Superior (Wright 1967:75, Plate IV 7). By the fourteenth century, Iroquoian style—if not manufactured—wares are distributed as far north as Lake Abitibi (Ridley 1956:33, 1966:25, Figure 13f) and as far west as the east coast of Lake Superior (Ridley 1961:143, Figure 9; Wright 1969:Plate X 1, Plate XVI 3). Iroquoian Middleport style ceramics continue to be distributed widely across the Canadian Shield and in Bruce County to the west and, by the end of the fifteenth century, Huron style ceramics are found from Lac Saint Jean in the east (Moreau et al. 1991:54, Figures 8-10) to west of Lake Superior in northwestern Ontario (Dawson 1979:21; Fox 1990c:463).

There are some small ceramic vessels from northern Ontario which are similar in form and design to Huron wares, but different in paste and texture (Wright 1981:55) and appear once again to be “knock offs” by resident potters (Brizinski 1980:59; Mitchell 1975:66). They constitute, however, only a small minority of the vessels recovered from this region (Adams 1979:12; Noble 1982:40-41). One approach to the question of vessel origin is through elemental analysis of the potting material—the clays. This type of analysis has been undertaken to a limited extent in Ontario through x-ray spectrography for

Northern Algonquian wares (Brizinski and Buchanan 1977:63-98), and x-ray fluorescence and trace element neutron-activation analysis for Iroquoian and Central Algonquian wares (Trigger et al. 1980, 1984). The former study, based on Michipicoten area ceramic assemblages and clay sources, indicated that Middle Woodland (Laurel) potters used local clays but that exotic sources were represented among the various Terminal Woodland (Iroquoian, Juntunen, Oneota) wares. The Southern Ontario study of Iroquoian vessels suggested that these articles were moved between villages to a greater extent than previously suspected (Trigger et al. 1980:131). Certainly, the large (and watap-repaired) Sidey-notched vessel recovered from the north end of the Bruce Peninsula (Fox 1990a:13) supports this mobility hypothesis. Obviously, more trace element analysis of artifacts and clay sources is required before definitive answers concerning the locality of ceramic manufacture (but not necessarily, the ethnicity of the potter—see Brizinski 1980:251-261) can be attempted.

### Identifying Algonquian Sites

In discussion with Frank Ridley concerning his research on Lake Nipissing, the senior author was informed ruefully that he had failed to find the Nipissings, only Hurons, as he had discovered a stratified sequence of Iroquoian ceramics spanning approximately six centuries. Based on the associated lithic assemblage, the writer suggested that he had, in fact, been successful. Bifaces manufactured of local materials clearly eliminated a Huron origin, as the evidence from contemporary Iroquoian sites in Huronia indicate that local flaked stone industries did not involve biface production (Fox 1971, 1979). In an article published over 20 years ago, the existence of Algonquian flintknappers on the Cahiague (Warminster) village site was proposed based on the presence of Huronia chert biface rejects (Fox 1981:10). Anyone able to rise above an expedient bipolar technology, was unlikely to be Huron! This may well be what Andrew Hunter was alluding to regarding the abundance of “flints” on some Orillia Township sites (Hunter 1904:107).

In the thirteenth century, the coincidence of the McIlfaterick Pickering-style vessel recovered from the Collingwood chert source area in the Beaver valley (Garrad 1969b, 1986) and the occurrence of Collingwood chert debitage at the Early Iroquoian Bolitho site in Pickering, noted by the senior author, suggests some early connection between the two areas, which continued over the succeeding centuries into Middleport times (Kapches 1988:4). In Huronia, excavations at the late thirteenth century Wellington site have exposed a small house containing substantial quantities of Collingwood chert, canid cremations, and a “small fur-bearing animal ossuary type feature” (Williamson, personal communication 2005). Ceramic mends to a longer house located 40 metres to the south that contained no such faunal features, and very little Collingwood chert, indicate the contemporaneity of these residences and may reflect the sort of inter-ethnic negotiation we are proposing. Others have proposed that Early Iroquoian ceramics on local sites call into question Gary Warrick’s thesis that “Iroquoian expansion into Huronia took place during the Middle Ontario Iroquoian stage,” and it has been suggested that there may be “some small Pickering villages hidden in the woodlots of Simcoe County” (Smith 1995:74). Given the negative results of over 100 years of archaeological survey in Simcoe County, we feel that it is fair to reject this suggestion and the underlying premise that Iroquoian ceramics equal Iroquoian owners and users of such vessels.

If we accept the fact that Early Iroquoian-style vessels resident on Georgian Bay/Lake Nipissing region campsites “did not speak Iroquoian,” then it might be reasonable to assume that speakers of the only other documented language group in the region—Algonquian—were using these vessels. This would explain the evidently transient nature of the discovery sites and the dearth of palisaded Early Iroquoian villages. This is not to say that resident Algonquians did not entertain Iroquoian guests from the south at this time, as noted by Sutton (1999:75), Robertson and Williamson (2003:50-51) and Williamson (personal communication 2005) regarding the earliest movement of Iroquoians into the Barrie area.

After all, how would these pioneer agriculturalists of the late thirteenth century have developed knowledge of the region, if not from occasional visits to hunt, fish or, perhaps, trade with the resident peoples? Why not trade corn for fish, as documented frequently in seventeenth-century records (Thwaites 1896-1901:13:249)? Furthermore, once the subsistence benefit of dried corn stores became clear to Algonquian groups, what would stop them from experimenting with corn horticulture? Brizinski (1980:129-131) reports two carbonized corn kernels from a hearth that was radiocarbon-dated to 995±50 B.P. (S-1685) in the Pickering/Blackduck level of the Frank Bay site but assumes that the corn was obtained in trade. Three consistent dates were obtained from the same stratum, and they average out to A.D. 1025 (Brizinski 1980:122). Sagard notes that by the early seventeenth century, the Odawa of Georgian Bay “lead a nomadic life, except that some of their villages plant Indian corn” (Wrong 1939:66-67). This suggests a more sedentary settlement pattern on the part of some Odawa groups, perhaps tribes, such as the Kiskakon (Fox 1990c:473).

If we explore this paradigm a little further, we can envision an escalation of interaction between Iroquoian populations to the south, who appear to have been experiencing a population boom in the fourteenth century (Warrick 2000:440-441), and resident Algonquians, culminating in the widespread occupation of western Huronia, at least, by shortly before 1400. What happened to the Algonquian residents? Did they pack their wigwams into their birch bark (as opposed to elm bark) canoes and head north? Some may have moved to the Shield country or west toward the Blue Mountains but undoubtedly some remained, perhaps as marginal residents of Iroquoian settlements (Robertson et al. 1995:50-51). Inter-marriage between the groups is more than likely, creating a “genetic tapestry” (Moore 2001:51-52) representing the Huron population that was encountered by the French in the seventeenth century.

But did the resident Algonquian population simply cease to exist as an ethnic entity? Did the women begin to wear their hair in the Huron/Petun style, as opposed to the Algonquin

style, documented by Sagard (Wrong 1939:143)? Even if this did happen, and a certain proportion of the population were assimilated, the burgeoning Iroquoian populations needed to maintain at least moderately amicable relations with the remaining Algonquian populations to the east, north, and west if these Huron farmers were to participate in the long distance exchange networks of the Upper Great Lakes. Feasting was the standard mechanism for establishing and maintaining diplomatic relations with foreign peoples and it is perhaps no coincidence that large Lalonde high-collar vessels appear in Huronia during the fifteenth century. It may be that the general demise of these large feasting vessels by the mid-sixteenth century (except on northern Shield sites) reflects the establishment of a certain level of diplomatic stability in Huronia by that time.

Some passing references in the Jesuit Relations indicate the multi-ethnic nature of Huronia during the two decades prior to the dispersal of the Huron. Jerome (Hierosme) Lalemant (Thwaites 1896-1901:21:239) reports, in the Relation of 1640-1641, of the mobile Nipissings that "About the middle of Autumn, they begin to approach our Hurons, upon whose lands they generally spend the winter." Later that winter, "about two hundred and fifty souls, arrived" and "they chose their ground on the same side of the [Wye] river, upon which we were, and at two arquebus shots [200-300 metres] from our house" (Thwaites 1896-1901:21: 243). Three years later, Lalemant (Thwaites 1896-1901:27:55) reports in the Relation of 1643-44 that "at the end of December, not only the Nipissiriniens but also several others of these nomad Tribes, and of the same Algonquian language, who dwell on the shores of our fresh-water sea, came almost to our doors. They set up their cabins quite near us." In the winter of 1637, Le Jeune (Thwaites 1896-1901:13: 15) and the Father Superior (Brebeuf) visited the Bear tribe village of Anonatea, reporting: "thence we went to visit the Algonquins," where they attempted to baptize "one Oraouandindo" (a Nipissing), who claimed not to understand the priests, but was foiled by a "Savage of his own nation who, in fact, understands and speaks

Huron extremely well." The presence of a fluently bilingual individual in an Algonquian community within Huron Bear tribe territory can come as no surprise, given the above observations and the probability that the Nipissing village, which Champlain intended to visit in February of 1616, was located in Huron Bear tribe territory. In fact, the Nipissing tradition of wintering among the Huron Bear tribe may have been of some antiquity, already, by the seventeenth century, given the early entry of this tribe into Huronia. Could it be that some of the original Algonquian residents of Huronia *had* moved north to join the Nipissing peoples?

In eastern Huronia, Arendahronons (Rock) tribe territory, Lalemant (Thwaites 1896-1901:21:247) states, in the Relation of 1640-1641, that "The Tontthrataronons, an Algonquin Tribe, numbering about fifteen cabins, were wintering upon the lands of the Mission of Saint Jean Baptiste." Three years later, Lalemant (Thwaites 1896-1901:27:37) reports that these Algonquian peoples formerly resided along the St. Lawrence River and that an entire village had relocated to a place adjacent to the Huron village of Saint Jean Baptiste. Later, he states that the "Algonquin cabins were distant from the village of St. Jean Baptiste a quarter of a league," (Thwaites 1896-1901:27:41). In the same area, Champlain (Biggar 1929 3: 101-103) recorded, in 1616, a bitter dispute between the Arendahronon and Iroquet's Algonkins, situated near (at?) the village of Cahigué. It would seem that there was a long-term relationship between the Rock Tribe of the Huron (Arendahronon) and various Algonquian tribes to the east, possibly based on the former location of this recently arrived Huron tribe (Thwaites 1896-1901:16:227).

There is no doubt that the Odawa allies of the Huron/Wyandot were occupying longhouses in palisaded villages by the late seventeenth century at the Straits of Mackinac (Cadillac 1962). Evidence from the Providence Bay site on Manitoulin Island indicates that, at least during certain times of the year, these Odawa were resident in longhouses by the early seventeenth century (Conway 1987). This population was also utilizing Huron/Petun ceramic vessels among

other wares from Michigan basin groups. Considering the evidence from the seventeenth-century component of the multiple-component Frank Bay site on Lake Nipissing, the Nipissing peoples were almost exclusively utilizing Huron ceramics (Brizinski 1980:168, Table 38; Ridley 1954:48-49, Figure 25) while contemporary Odawa peoples, resident on the Bruce Peninsula to the west of Huronia, were using primarily Huron/Petun ceramics, with a smattering of Michigan basin wares (Fox 1987:5, Figure 3).

### **“Petunia” and the Algonquians**

Looking west to the Blue Mountain region, we may find a useful model for the initial contact period between Iroquoian and Algonquian peoples in Huronia (Garrad and Heidenreich 1978). There, the archaeological evidence indicates that the first Petun Iroquoian agriculturalists entered the region towards the end of the sixteenth century. Once again, this was not vacant real estate. In fact, in February of 1616, Champlain visited and feasted with his Odawa friends, whom he had met on the French River the previous year, at their winter village near Collingwood (Garrad 1999:64). Later during that century, the Jesuits required priests fluent in both the Huron and Algonquin languages at their missions in this region. In the Relation of 1640-41, Pierre Pijart (Thwaites 1896-1901:21:125) reports that there are two villages where Algonquin is spoken among the Petun, in one of which the men go naked (as previously described by Champlain and Sagard for the High Hairs or Odawa). In a letter written to his brother, Henri, in 1648, Charles Garnier states that he and Father Garreau had taken up residence in a town made up of Hurons and Algonquins (Jones 1909:356). In a by then classic scenario, reflecting on the delicate political relations between Iroquoian and Algonquian groups, the murder of an Algonquin led to the withdrawal of that nation from the village called Ekarenniondi, where they had been living with the Petun, and their move to reside with another Algonquin nation two days journey away—presumably to the west (Molnar 1992).

Garrad (1989:16-18) has made a good case for considering the Ekarenniondi of this period to be

the adjacent villages of Plater-Martin and Plater-Fleming—the paired villages named by the Jesuits St. Mathieu and St. Simon and St. Jude. Certainly, these sites date to the 1640s, based on the recovered assemblage of European goods, including a cassock “eye.” The smaller Plater-Fleming village produced evidence of a palisade, longhouses, and Iroquoian ceramics—but also four distinctive bear-jaw tools and five dog burials (Garrad 1969a:54, 1989:15; Pearce 1989:15). The latter are strongly correlated with Algonquian ritual at sites such as Providence Bay, Dunks Bay and Frank Bay to the north and west (Brizinski and Savage 1983:38-39; Prevec 1987:10; Smith 2000). Two bear-jaw tools were also recovered by Garrad (1969a:54) from the adjacent Plater-Martin village, which contained a mixed Huron and Algonquian population (Garrad 1989:17; Jones 1909:356).

Analyses of lithic assemblages on Blue Mountain-region sites dating from the late sixteenth through early seventeenth centuries have identified the use of both local and exotic cherts (Burse 1997:86-87; Fox 1979a). The latter have been associated with Odawa travels on Lake Huron and, later, Lake Michigan (Fox 1990c:463). These cherts were obtained from shoreline deposits at Kettle Point (Janusas 1984) and Saginaw Bay (Bayport) in southern Lake Huron. Later, they were procured from similar deposits at Providence Bay (Manitoulin Island), DeTour Strait, and Traverse Bay (Norwood), to the northwest (Fox 1992:53, Figure 1).

In an attempt to define an Algonquian chert utilization profile, the writers recently reviewed lithic assemblages from the cultivated field surfaces of the Petun Plater-Martin and Plater-Fleming villages, as well as from the Connor-Rolling (Garrad 1981) and Glebe villages in the Blue Mountain region. Raw artifact counts, as opposed to weights, were used to compare inter-site patterns of raw material utilization. This admittedly crude measure was deemed adequate, because there appeared to be proportionately similar size ranges for debitage, by chert type, on these villages. For example, the Collingwood chert debitage from all sites included some fragments larger than any of the Kettle Point chert pieces,

while other, more distant materials (i.e., Bayport, Detour, etc.) were present in the form of flakes and tools. Unlike Kettle Point chert, which was often present in the form of blocky fragments, there was only one block of Onondaga chert (derived from primary deposit?). The Plater-Martin site is twice the size of Plater-Fleming and has a larger flaked stone assemblage (Table 1). Both sites have a similar range of chert types, not surprising for contemporary neighbours, which are dominated by local Collingwood and exotic Kettle Point chert. Based on its dominance on virtually all sites in the region, Collingwood chert appears to have been a resource that was shared by both Algonquian and Petun residents. The major difference is in the relative percentages of these cherts: 43 percent of chert on the Plater-Fleming site is Kettle Point chert; whereas only 30 percent of chert on the multi-cultural Plater-Martin site is Kettle Point. The senior author has argued that the arrival on Blue Mountain sites of Norwood chert from the Michigan basin post-dates A.D.1630 and is correlated with the establishment of the Odawa Arbre Croche settlement adjacent to this chert source (Fox 1992:55-56). With this in mind, we were surprised to find, in the total Plater-Martin lithic assemblage, only a single example of Norwood chert (a triangular biface point from an excavation unit in Midden 5) among the thousands of specimens reviewed from this late village site. On the other hand, Detour chert, from the vicinity of the Straits of Mackinac, was better represented (see Table 1, plus two triangu-

lar biface points from Midden 5 excavations). There is also a quartz triangular biface point from Midden 3 on the Plater-Martin village, quite possibly of Algonquian origin. Overall, these twin terminal Petun/Odawa sites are dominated by chert types that are typical of the pre-1630 period (Fox 1979a), including small quantities of Bayport and Onondaga chert (Table 1).

This result is even more surprising considering the assemblage from the Connor-Rolling field surface, which contained very little Collingwood chert. This assemblage was dominated by Kettle Point chert (51 percent), in contrast to Collingwood (21 percent), and it also included considerable quantities of Bayport chert, as well as some Norwood, Detour, and Hudson Bay Lowland chert (see Table 1). Samples from midden excavations mirror this pattern of chert use: abundant Kettle Point chert; little Collingwood; a large fragment of Norwood chert (from primary deposit?), Manitoulin Fossil Hill Formation chert, and triangular biface points of Norwood and Detour cherts. This assemblage stands in stark contrast to the small Collingwood chert-dominated sample from the Glebe village field surface (see Table 1), which is more consistent with assemblages from villages such as McQueen-McConnell (Burse 1997:86-87, Table 1). One possible reason for the reliance on exotic material at Connor-Rolling could be the absence of the site's population (or at least its flintknappers) from the region during the period from spring through fall, together with the difficulty of acquiring local chert during the winter. Another

**Table 1.** *Frequencies of flaked stone by raw material and percentages of identified materials at four sites in the Blue Mountain region.*

Chert	Plater-Fleming		Plater-Martin		Connor-Rolling		Glebe	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Collingwood	127	55.0	471	63.1	18	21.2	34	72.3
Kettle Point	99	42.8	205	27.4	43	50.6	6	12.8
Onondaga	0	0	27	3.6	3	3.5	0	0
Bayport	5	2.2	25	3.4	12	14.1	7	14.9
Saugeen	0	0	2	0.3	4	4.7	0	0
Norwood	0	0	0	0	1	1.2	0	0
Detour	0	0	17	2.3	1	1.2	0	0
Hudson Bay Lowland	0	0	0	0	1	1.2	0	0
Manitoulin	0	0	0	0	1	1.2	0	0
Huronian	0	0	0	0	1	1.2	0	0
Unidentified	32		99		53		25	
Total (all materials)	263		846		138		72	
Total (identified materials)	231	100.0	747	100.1	85	100.1	47	100.0

reason could be that this particular group, as political outsiders, did not have access to the Beaver valley Collingwood chert deposits. This possibility might explain the Pijart reference to two Algonquin villages, at only one of which the men went naked—that is, were Odawa (Thwaites 1896-1901:21:125).

What does all this suggest? To the writers it suggests that the local Odawa were purveyors of Kettle Point chert for centuries and that the presence of this debitage on villages signals their connection to those sites. The ubiquitous distribution of this material on Blue Mountain region sites indicates that either there were Algonquians on all sites—a lithic version of “talking pots,” or that this material, which they transported over great distances, was shared with their Petun neighbours. The latter seems likely to be the case, given the Odawa reputation for exchange. Given the variable representation of this chert at different sites, by percent of total lithic site assemblage, does a theoretical threshold percentage exist that would begin to argue for an Algonquin residential presence? Certainly, the Connor-Rolling lithic assemblage is extremely suggestive. The probable Algonquian Plater-Fleming assemblage differential is more subtle.

### **Finding the Algonquians in Huronia**

Carrying this hypothesis back towards Huronia, it may be that the Kettle Point chert-dominated Peacock site assemblage in eastern Petunia (McKillop and Garrad 1992:14) reflects an Algonquian affiliation. Considering various small houses on earlier Barrie-area villages, such as Holly and Dunsmore, Robertson, Williamson and associates have alluded to a potential for Algonquian occupants of these sites (Robertson and Williamson 2003:50; Williamson et al. 2000:6). While noting Kapches's (1984:64) caution concerning simplistic interpretations of small and structurally anomalous cabins, they state that the interaction between the Iroquoians of Simcoe County and their Algonquian neighbours appears to have been “well developed from the earliest phases of agricultural settlement in the region” (Robertson and Williamson 2003:50).

Based on the observations of Champlain and later Jesuit observers such as Jerome Lalemant, we know that Ottawa valley Algonquians and the Tontthararonon Algonquians wintered annually among the Huron Rock Nation and that the Nipissing wintered regularly with the Bear Nation.

What could such a settlement look like, archaeologically? It might well include long lodges and it would almost certainly produce Huron ceramics in the associated middens. The wall post pattern and the interior support post pattern (or lack thereof) might differ slightly from those of contemporary Huron longhouses. The assemblage might include bifaces of quartz, or Hudson Bay Lowland chert, or both—these lithic materials were the dominant ones on the three Nipissing sites investigated by Brizinski (1980:67-68, 99-100, 170, Table 39). The debitage would reflect biface re-sharpening and not edge-crushing retouch—an approach used by the Huron to re-sharpen chert arrowpoints with broken tips. Generally, we would expect that “flints...are more abundant,” as noted by Hunter (1904:107).

Considering another of Hunter's criteria, the assemblage might also include stemmed, as opposed to simple triangular, cut brass points (Brizinski 1980:202, Figure 36). Jean-Francois Moreau (1998:4) suggests that “in Algonquian country, the shaft attachment devices (tang) is retained in the making of those points obtained from cutting up copper alloy kettles,” based on their lithic traditions “in a boreal environment.” Lisa Anselmi (2004:378-381) reviews evidence from Wendat, Seneca, Onondaga, Mohawk, and Mahican sites. She notes Moreau's thesis but suggests that “the differences between Iroquoian and Algonquian projectile points may have a basis in the intended function of the form” (Anselmi 2004:382). The lack of tanged forms on Seneca and Onondaga sites and their presence on villages of Algonquian frontier groups such as the Huron and Mohawk is suggestive. Further west, on the Rock Island site, which was occupied primarily by the Potawatomi and Odawa, but also Wyandot (Huron/Petun), between c. 1640 and 1770, “stemmed metal arrowheads...were more popular than the triangular form” (Mason



1986:203). The late seventeenth-century Odawa Dunn Farm Plateau site in Michigan produced a cut brass stemmed point (Brose 1983:232, Figure 7.m). Lyle Stone (1974:277) reports 15 brass stemmed triangular versus two brass triangular points from the Fort Michilimackinac excavations (see also Maxwell 1964:26, Plate 2,I), and the contemporary eighteenth-century northern Algonquian (Odawa/Ojibway) Fletcher site on the Saginaw River produced 4 stemmed, 2 side-notched, and 2 triangular sheet brass points (Mainfort 1979:359).

An Algonquin village could comprise a collection of long lodges, perhaps surrounded by a palisade. Sykes (1983:Appendix A) has made a compelling case for identifying the Warminster archaeological site with Champlain's Cahiague, while Emerson and Russell (1965:7) have gone so far as to suggest that a small house on the site may have been "an Algonkian dwelling." Since the site was determined to consist of two villages, there has been a question of why two separate and apparently contemporary palisade-enclosed Huron villages exist beside each other, separated by a distance of 168 metres? This is not a classic case of Huron village expansion, with palisade extensions (Ramsden 1990:374-375).

A number of other questions present themselves with regard to this apparently unique Huron settlement. From a defensive standpoint, why does the exposed southern flank of the south village display only a 3-4 row palisade, similar to the topographically more defensible eastern and western flanks (bordered by streams); or the north, east and west sides of the north village, for that matter? Why are the palisade structures of both villages strongest for the walls facing each other (5-7 rows for the south and 4-5 rows for the north village), as noted by Sykes (1983:83)? Ramsden (1990:378) notes: "The palisades that surround Huron villages typically consist of two or three rows of posts...."

And if this complex is Cahiague, why did Champlain not note the double village structure? Perhaps, he did, and we have not recognized it. Describing his diplomatic duties in arbitrating between the feuding Algonkin and Huron factions at Cahiague during February of 1616, Champlain refers to the *tentes des Algommequins*,

initially, and then he refers to the Algonkin residences as *cabannes* thereafter five times (Biggar 1932:285-292). This is the same term that he uses to describe Huron residences or longhouses. At the close of negotiations, Champlain states that the *Algonkins deslogerent pour faire retraite en leur village*, which is translated as the Algonkins "struck camp to withdraw to their village" (Biggar 1932:295). This translation sounds as if they are breaking a tent camp, but the meaning could be simply that they were leaving the lodges of the Huron, where the council had been held, and withdrawing to their village. The Algonkin village could have been situated at a distance of "a quarter of a league" (a little over a kilometre), as it was several decades later (Thwaites 1896-1901:27: 41), or it could have been situated 168 metres away (Sykes 1983:67), being one of the Cahiague villages.

Referencing another site in historically-documented Algonquian territory—a campsite in an area occupied by the Matouweskarini band in southeastern Ontario—von Gernet (1992:122) observed "the 'Iroquoian' character of the diagnostic artifacts," noting: "many of these specimens would not be out of place on a prehistoric Huron site several hundred kilometres to the west. There is little but the geographic location of the site to suggest that the assemblage might properly be associated with Algonkins" (see also von Gernet 1993).

## Conclusions

Early seventeenth-century records identify two cultural groups resident in the southern Georgian Bay littoral region. They were characterised by differing languages and subsistence strategies. A variety of material culture attributes also differentiated these peoples, to greater or lesser extents, including personal attire, decoration and hair styles—Polly Wiessner's "emblemic style" markers of ethnicity (Shennan 1994:18, 20-21)—lithic technology, and house forms. The former are particularly ephemeral, within the archaeological record (but see Fox 1980:94) Clearly, the only way that future researchers could begin to identify the ethnic identity of villages or village segments

or precincts in Huronia will be through careful review of the entire constellation of material culture attributes contained within the archaeological record, while looking for differences in degree rather than of kind. As noted by Sian Jones, “if archaeologists persist in assuming that there is only one ethnic meaning or association to be ‘extracted’ from a particular monument or a particular style of material culture then they will never be able to understand the multiple strands of practice involved in the reproduction and maintenance of ethnicity in the past” (Jones 1997:141). Finally, Robertson and Williamson (2003:51) have noted the complex challenge of identifying, through the archaeological record, the temporal and spatial extent of an Algonquian occupation in the southern Georgian Bay region—an area blanketed by the extensive evidence of Iroquoian activities: “the archaeological evidence for interaction between [‘Iroquoian’ and ‘Algonquian’] groups within Simcoe County remains elusive, and may only be seen in subtle ways, if we recognize that material culture and language are not necessarily correlates.”

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La compilation des données archéologiques et ethnohistoriques provenant de la région des Grands Lacs vise à situer les résidents algonquiens dans la région littorale du sud de la baie Georgienne, région qui a fini par être appelée la patrie des Iroquoiens classiques - la Huronie. L'enregistrement laisse croire que des groupes de locution algonquienne ont occupé cette région pendant des millénaires avant l'arrivée des agriculteurs iroquoiens, et qu'ils ont continué à y résider jusqu'à la moitié du XVIIe siècle. On suggère que l'énigme de leur "invisibilité" dans l'enregistrement archéologique est dû au partage de leur culture matérielle avec leurs voisins iroquoiens mais que leur présence peut cependant être détecté quand on considère un éventail de témoignages archéologiques au-delà d'une perception stéréotypée de la culture algonquienne, tel que discuté par Latta (1987:181).

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