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THE HAMILTON SITE: A LATE HISTORIC NEUTRAL
TOWN

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ABSTRACT

This paper represents the analysis of the Walker site, a large 10 acre, non-palisaded Neutral Iroquois town occupied circa 1640 A.D. Walker provides a comparative baseline for the study of the Neutral Iroquois, as well as, demonstrating trends and relationships extant during the late part of the Neutral sequence. The analysis also provides needed definitional refinement to the terminal period of Neutral development.

Twelve longhouse structures are analysed and reveal settlement pattern configurations that are unique to the historic Neutral. The analysis of the Walker artifact inventory includes both aboriginal remains and the abundant European (French) trade items. Historic Neutral subsistence patterns are largely defined on the basis of the Walker data, and burial practices of the historic Neutral are clarified by the Walker analysis.

In addition to the archaeological analysis an attempt is made to demonstrate the historic significance of the Walker town. Specifically it is proposed that Walker represents the capital village of the Neutral confederacy, shortly before their dispersal by the League Iroquois in 1650-51. Further, it is argued that Walker represents the main Jesuit mission to the Neutral, established by Fathers Jean de Brebeuf and Joseph Chaumanot in 1640-41.

Date : 1630 - 50.

Table 41. Walker historic trade goods (1630-1650 A.D.)

Item	N	%
Glass beads and tubes	92	28.5
Modified brass and iron scrap	40	12.4
Unmodified brass and iron scrap	40	12.4
Rolled brass tubes and blanks	39	12.4
Strung brass beads	24	7.4
Iron axes and portions	20	6.2
Iron knives	18	5.6
Brass kettles and portions	9	2.8
Metal awls	9	2.8
Finger rings	6	1.9
Brass wire chain	6	1.9
Metal projectile points	4	1.2
Brass banglers	4	1.2
Metal saws	4	1.2
Metal punches	3	.9
Coiled brass wire pieces	3	.9
Iron spears	2	.6
Totals	323	100.3

Glass Beads and Tubes

Ninety-two European glass beads and tubes are analysed according to colour, shape, metrics and provenience. It should be noted that the majority of specimens come from the disturbed ossuary where years of looting have certainly depleted the original glass bead and tube count.

Blue glass beads and tubes predominate with 49 specimens (53.3%); included within these are 44 small round blue beads (Table 42). Forty-two of these small beads could be measured and they have a mean diameter of 5 mm with a range between 4 and 7 mm. The ossuary yielded 29 specimens, while 7 are from middens, 2 surface derived and 4 from House 4.

Table 42. Walker European glass beads and tubes.

Colour	Round Bead	Round Tube	Facetted Bead	Facetted Tube	N	%
Blue	44	4		1	49	53.3
Red	15	8	2	2	27	29.3
Poly- chromatic	2	1	4	4	11	11.9
Opaque	3				3	3.3
Brown	1	1			2	2.1
Totals	65	14	6	7	92	99.9

Of the remaining glass bead assemblage only the small round red beads permit metric examination, having 13 of 15 specimens complete. The beads have a mean diameter of 4.1 mm with a range between 3 and 5 mm. Ten come from the ossuary, 2 from midden D and one from House 1.

Similar specimens to the round blue beads at Walker are noted by Kidd (1949:142) at Ste Marie 1, and help to establish the mid-17th century position of the Walker village.

Metal Trade Goods

More prominent than any single category of trade goods are the collective items produced from reworked portions of disused metal trade goods. This secondary working of iron and brass goods clearly bespeaks of their importance to the historic Neutral, and while many of these items are tools, many are also simply decorative objects.

Modified Brass and Iron Scraps

Personal adornment is characteristic of the historic Neutral, as documented by the early ethnographers (Jesuit Relations), and this is reflected in the modified brass and iron scrap inventory.

A total of 40 pieces of scrap, 9 being iron, possess varying numbers of punched holes, presumably for use as pendants. They may also have served as segments of a breast plate for personal armour, as once suggested by David Boyle

Figure 61.

1, 2	Iron spear points
3, 4	Serrated brass and iron portions
5	Rolled brass ring
6, 7	Brass banglers
8	Coiled brass wire
9, 10	Rolled brass tubes
11, 12	Rolled brass beads
13	Brass beads (strung)
14	Brass chain portion
15	Worked bail fastener
16	Punched and cut brass portions
17, 18	Decorative brass objects
19 - 21	French glass trade beads
22	Graphite paint stone

