

RECENT FINDINGS IN ONEIDA INDIAN COUNTRY

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Recent Artifactual Recoveries in Oneida Indian Country

Since 1958, the Chenango Chapter, NYSAA, has produced a steady stream of reports on various site excavations in Central New York within the range of interest of our individual members. Theodore Whitney, our long time editor, has always encouraged us, " that if we are going to dig on a site, we must envision a report as a lasting contribution to the field of archaeology." One of the chapter interests has been a study of the various sites that make up the Oneida Iroquois sequence of villages.

Often times, we find single significant artifacts or have the opportunity to learn of other's finds during our investigations. However, we often fail to take the time to record and present these findings, figuring that the other man will do it some day. I believe we should occasionally present a short article covering some of these recoveries before it is too late, and thereby, at least record their presence or lack of it for the archaeological literature of the area.

Our close proximity to the traditional Oneida Iroquois homeland makes it natural that we should through the years find many of our members searching sites of this most interesting period of time. Usually, we only write our findings as site reports of field work on a particular locus. This article will present a number of findings from a variety of sites, in hopes that the serious student of Iroquois archaeology will be able to make use of the information in his own respective study.

Many of our Oneida Indian sites lie in cultivated field situations as do the four sites mentioned in this article. Much of the material from these fields has been collected in the distant past and has gone unreported - a loss to all researchers. Also, as in the rest of all Iroquoia, the results of burial activity by the less informed still continues and only by luck do we usually find out about these forays. We must naturally discourage this digging whenever possible, but must also be ready to attempt to salvage all the information possible.

The following is a chart of known Oneida sites in sequence with the site's state designation number, dates, general location, and a few comments on certain artifact appearances, so the reader may be able to grasp the following articles presented. As the chart shows, there are a few sites that still need attention, and we hope that in time we will be able to fill in the missing blanks.

There are stories of at least four other sites (either lost or unknown to present researchers). The members of the Chenango Chapter have and will continue to search for these sites as time permits, so that some day we may have more complete information on the sequence.

The Historic
Oneida Site Sequence

Site Name	State #	1969 Pratt Revised Dates	Location	Dominant Beads
Bach	Msv. 8-1	1540-1555	Peterboro	No beads
Diable	Msv. 2-2	1555-1570	Stockbridge Falls	No beads
Cameron	Ond. 8-4	1570-1595	Sherrill	11g3, 11g4, 1Vg1, 1VK*
Wilson	Ond. 9-4	1595-1625	Valley Mills	11a7, 1Val9
Blowers (First clay ball pipe found- 1632±6 years)	Ond. 1-4	1595-1625	Valley Mills	11a7, 11a47 1Val3like
Thurston (First trace of firearms & Jesuit rings)	Msv. 1-2	1625-1637	Stockbridge Falls	11b56
Marshall	Msv. 7-2	1637-1640	Stockbridge Falls	11b56
Stone Quarry (Firearms common, with pipe date of 1649.315)	Msv. 4-2	1640-1650	Munnsville	1a*, 1a1, 111a1, 1a2
Duney	Msv. 6-2	1650-1660	Munnsville	1a2, 1b3, 11b'4, 1b10, 111a3 1a7, 11a1
Sullivan (Many Jesuit finger rings, pipe date of 1654.515)	Ond. 3-4	1660-1677	Valley Mills	1a7, 11a1
March	Ond. 6-4		Valley Mills	
Collins	Ond. 7-4		Sherrill	
Upper Hogan (Pipe date of 1691.621)	Ond. 5-4	1677-1685	Sherrill	11a1, 11a6
Primes Hill	Msv. 5-2	1696-1720	Munnsville	Some Wire Wound Beads
Lanz-Hogan (Red Slate present, pipe date 1746.54)	Ond. 2-4	1720-1745-50	Sherrill	W165, W111c1, W1d2, W1d3
Sterling	Ond. 4	1750-1767	Oneida	
Oneida Castle		1767-	Oneida	

The Marshall Site Msv. 7-2

The Marshall site is located approximately one mile southwest of the Village of Munnsville, New York, on a small knoll about one hundred feet above the valley floor. This site is an historic Oneida Village which has been under cultivation for many years, and to the writer's knowledge, has seen no systematic excavations in the past. Archaeological material indicates the village area is scattered over a couple of acres with no definite concentration to be located. Most of the middens have been dug many times in the past.

Since 1976, when we wrote a short article on the site which appeared in the Chenango Chapter Bulletin, we have kept an eye on the surface hunting possibilities as the farmer rotated his usage of the field. Two years ago, the writer and chapter member, Henry Hatton, did find a few items on the field which we felt worthy of mention for the record.

The clay ball pipe stem fragments or any trace of these European made pipes is very rare for this site, as it should be at this early period. We found five stems in one small area in the middle of the field in what appeared to be a refuse feature not noted in the past. Following is the bore diameter measurement of these pieces plus that of three others found in previous years:

1.- 8/64 +	4.- 8/64	7.- 8/64+	Examples 6,8 have fleur-de-lis designs on the stems. Stem # 8 was found by Gilbert Hagerty a number of years ago.
2.- 6/64 +	5.- 7/64	8.- 8/64	
3.- 5/64 +	6.- 5/64+	9.- 8/64+	

The other two artifacts of interest were two shell beads of a type not seen by the writer on any other Oneida site, to date. Plate 2 shows the smaller example. The larger example measures approximately two inches in length and almost an inch in diameter, exclusive of the flange. We would be interested in any reader comment on these unusual beads.

The Thurston Site Msv. 1-2

Recent activity on the well known Thurston site has been basically confined to surface hunting the plowed field which covers all of the occupation area. During the years of 1960-62, the Chenango Chapter selected the site for excavation and much of our information comes from this work.

" The Thurston site owned by Tom Marshall is located on a high gravel shoulder on the northwest corner and adjoining the famed Pratts Hollow glacial kame area. One complete house pattern, fragments of another, many isolated sections of stockade line, a roasting pit, a possible moat and scattered post molds constitute the settlement features. The scattered post molds evidence the presence of structures over much of the somewhat level area." (Whitney, 1964, p2) The site has been thought to be the village, Onneyuttenage, that the Dutch physician, Van Den Bogaart, visited in 1634-1635.

While excavating the longhouse on the Cameron site in 1978, this writer became aware of some activity on the Thurston site.. As we were too involved at the time, I sent chapter member, Douglas Clark,

The Thurston Site Msv. 1-2 (Cont.)

to the site to observe and record the digging taking place. Some metal detecting had located a disturbed burial on the western edge of the site near Locus 1 (Plate 4). Most of the burials in Loci 1 and 2 had been dug in years past and this was one which had evidently been missed by past collectors. Many of these collectors still roam the general area and although their methods are not in keeping with the more scientific approaches, we felt it important enough to at least now present this individual's findings and add it to the record of the Thurston site.

Plate 5 shows the burial placement from Douglas's excellent field notes plus the location of the artifacts that were removed by this local collector. The glass trade beads in the child's burial were basically around the chest cavity. These were probably on a necklace and consisted of the following beads: 3 Thurston opaque round blue beads of medium size, 48 opaque round blue beads with 3 white opaque stripes of medium size, 2 Thurston opaque round blue small beads, 1 medium size chevron bead, 1 blue translucent round bead with 4 white opaque stripes, medium size. 1 red opaque round bead with 3 white opaque stripes with a green translucent core, medium size, 1 dark blue translucent round bead medium size, 2 small round opaque black beads, 1 black opaque seed bead, 1 opaque white seed bead with a clear translucent core, 1 Thurston blue seed bead, 9 opaque yellow seed beads, and 1 milky clear round bead with fine white opaque stripes embedded in the bead's surface, medium size and commonly known as a " Gooseberry" bead. Also found was a string of 101 shell wampum beads with 21 very small shell discs. The wampum beads showed both native and European manufacturing techniques. 2 bear canine teeth were also present near the string of wampum and may have been a part of the necklace.

Plate 6 shows a beautiful Thurston Horizontal native clay pot found in the grave. The three castellations of the pot had a full figure effigy. The collar height was approximately one inch with the height of the pot measuring five inches and the diameter four inches.

Although instances of this type of digging still persists, find the feature, get the goodies and leave, it is important to at least try to keep a watch on these activities and manage to salvage some information without encouraging their activities. Even though many of the chapters of the state associations do try to educate these individuals , this type of clandestine digging will unfortunately still continue.

In 1978, chapter member, Howard Arndt, found while surface hunting a large glass trade bead which was far from common. Following is the description of that bead: Basic color, dark blue opaque with a dark blue opaque core, with a white opaque ring around the core, three white opaque stripes with two small red vertical stripes on these white stripes. The size was 13.5 mm by 14.5 mm. The closest Kidd number would be 1Vbb10 with the exception of the blue colors which are opaque and not as clear as Kidd indicates. The color picture on the following page shows the bead along with a chevron bead found on the Cameron site. The chevron bead has ground facets on each end and is the only one we have seen from that site.



Howard Arndt also found a possible gun mechanism which is shown on Plate 5. The X on the piece shows the evident flash pan. It is badly rusted and not much can be said of the piece for the present. If this artifact is a piece of an early trade gun and not intrusive, then it is an important find for the site. Further research and comparisons may shed some light on this.

The remaining items shown on Plate 7 are basically other surface finds by various chapter members;

Figure C is a brass hawk's bell from the burial.

A,E are the remains of a folding pocket knife.

B is the brass bezel of a Jesuit ring drilled for suspension.

D is a brass bead

F is part of an Iroquoian ceramic pipe.

G, K,H, I are brass projectile points.

L is a drilled bear's tooth.

J,M,N, O are highly polished bone artifacts found in a recently discovered midden near the northern end of the site as shown on Plate 4. Traces of this original midden were revealed during the farmer's plowing. Upon further examination, a shallow layer of midden soil was uncovered with these four bone items being the only artifacts noted along with a good quantity of refuse bone.

We do note the first appearance of Jesuit rings, musket balls, "frock" buttons and clay ball trade pipe stems on these two sites, Marshall and Thurston. The only exception is the pipe found on the earlier Blowers site a few years ago. (McCashion , 1979)

The Thurston Site Msv 1-2 (cont)

As a personal note of interest, only: Last year while talking to the former owner, Henry Jenson, of the lumber yard we now operate, the conversation came around to my hobby of amateur archaeology. Henry mentioned his wife's interest in her family genealogy. She said she had traced it back to the 1600's arriving at a relative who had been a Dutch physician who came to the New World and had even taken a trip into the interior of New York State at that time. As Henry continued with his story, I immediately thought of the journal of Van Den Bogaert and his trip from Fort Orange in 1634, probably to our Oneida site of Thurston. I mentioned the possibility and a few nights later compared notes with his wife on her search of the past. The date, description of the young Dutch physician and exact spelling of his complete name matched perfectly. Although not a scientific discovery, in any sense of the word, it was exciting to realize that her maiden name was Van De Bogaert and that she was a direct descendant of the man who had some 350 years ago traveled to within forty miles of his descendant's 1984 home. And some say that the field of archaeology and history is boring.

The Sullivan Site Ond 3-4

During the early 1970's members of the Chenango Chapter had a brief opportunity to excavate a small portion of this important site. Past work had consisted of surface hunting, some midden excavation, and the usual search for the various burial locations. As the main site had always been in a cultivated field situation, it is still basically intact. We did excavate and record a total of 145 five foot squares in the process, finding hundreds of post molds, many non-disturbed refuse pits and so on.

The site is located on the Valley Mills road a few miles from the village of Munnsville. The Indian village site is spread over one complete field and part of another, with a hedge row dividing the two fields. Two years ago the landowner took a contract with the race track at Vernon Downs to dispose of their horse manure from the barns. He made a couple of new access roads to the site proper and proceeded to fill in the ravine just west of the Sullivan site. This last summer, when a few of us had the opportunity to visit the site, we found approximately eight foot piles of steaming horse manure covering almost all of the main occupation areas of the site. It appears that for the time being, the site will be preserved for the future; for the writer has yet to meet an archaeologist who would be even remotely interested in digging through that much disagreeable overburden to get to the artifactual material.

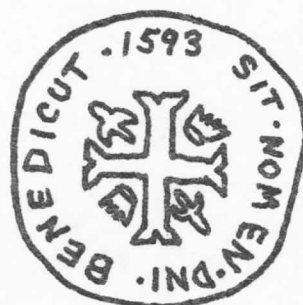
A local collector who did some metal detecting the last year or two on the site was present during the road access work done by the owner with a bulldozer. After viewing the material he found, I felt it was necessary to present the additional artifactual data for the serious researcher, as it will probably be our last look at the site for years to come.

Plate 8 shows the Sullivan (Moot) site with past excavation areas noted. Plate 9 shows many of the metal artifacts found within the



Actual Size

Coin Found at the Upper Hogan Site OND. 5-4



Drawing of Coin from the Reference Book

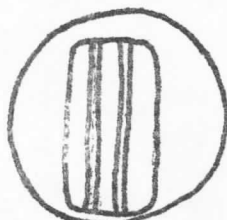
Reference - Monnois Francais p. 330 by Louis Ciani

DOUZAIN - CARLOS X D G : FRANCOR REX . MME TYPE ; O sous
1'ecu. R Meme legende de 1593, AC (lies) Croix echanciu
cantonnee de 2 lis et 2 couronnes. Billon. (H.13 1 fr)

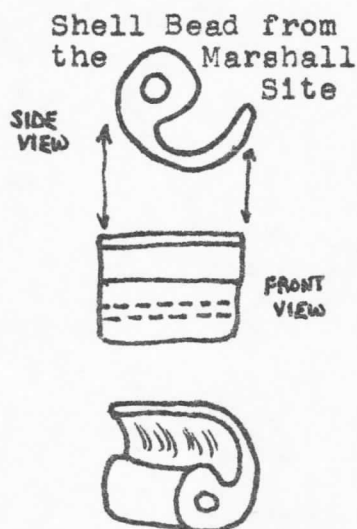
Charles X , Cardinal of Bourbon



Glass Bead from



the Thurston Site



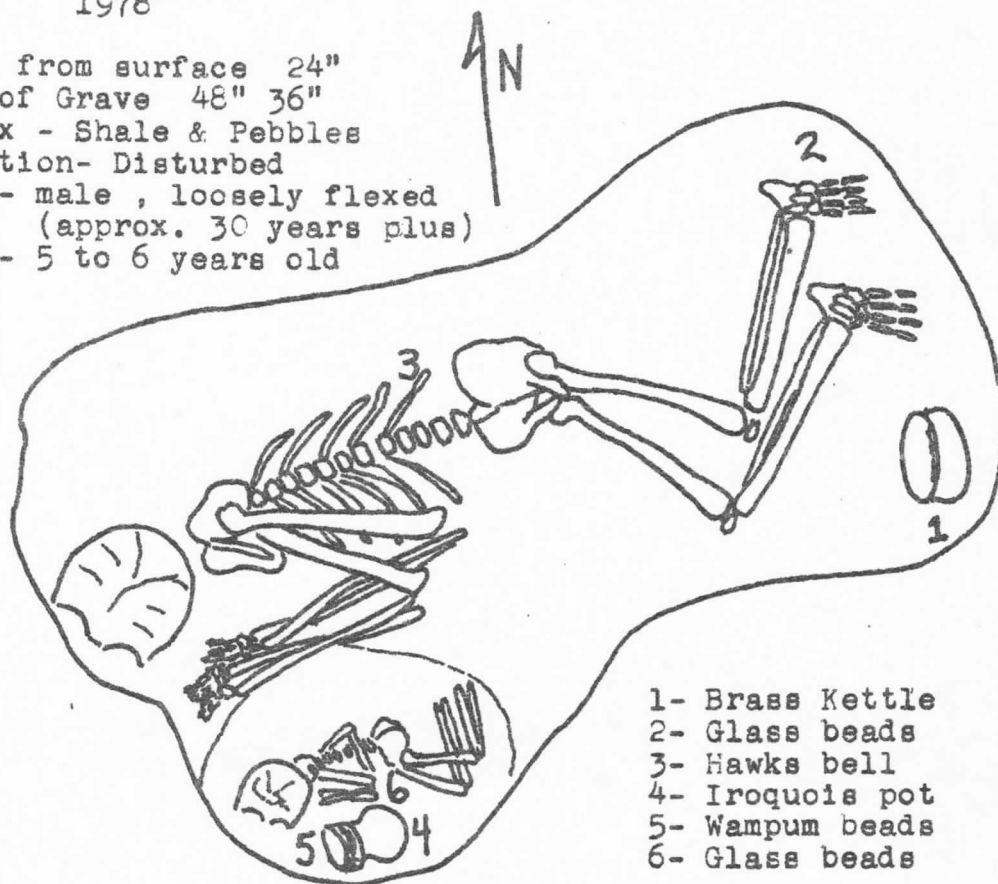
From the Upper Hogan Site



Glass Bottle
Frag.

Burial from the Thurston Site
1978

Depth from surface 24"
size of Grave 48" 36"
Matrix - Shale & Pebbles
Condition- Disturbed
Adult- male , loosely flexed
(approx. 30 years plus)
Child- 5 to 6 years old



Possible Gun Mechanism from the Thurston Site

