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THE WALKER SITE

MILTON J. WRIGHT

✓ THE HAMILTON SITE: A LATE HISTORIC NEUTRAL TOWN

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents the description, analysis and interpretation of the Hamilton Site (AiHa-5), a large 6-acre Neutral Iroquois town occupied circa 1638 to 1650 A.D. Analysis of the settlement patterns and the material culture clearly indicates historic Neutral occupancy, but a significantly high (64 percent) incidence of shell tempered pottery also occurs. This presence of foreign pottery raised interpretational hypotheses to account for it, and an influx of foreign female potters is seen as the best explanation. Use of ethnohistoric documentation offers several alternatives for the identification of the foreign population. Finally, the possibility that Hamilton represents a Jesuit "mission" site is raised.

RESUME

La présente étude porte sur la description, l'analyse et l'interprétation des résultats de recherches effectuées au site Hamilton (AiHa-5), grande bourgade de 6 acres habitée vers les années 1638 à 1650 apr. J.-C. par une tribu de Neutres. L'analyse des schèmes d'établissements ainsi que de l'outillage indique clairement que des Neutres ont occupé l'endroit au cours de la période historique, mais l'importante proportion (64%) de poterie dégraissée à la poudre de coquillage pose toujours un problème. Parmi les hypothèses visant à expliquer la présence de cette poterie étrangère, nous retenons celle de l'arrivée de potières d'une autre tribu. L'examen de documents ethno-historiques conduit à envisager diverses possibilités quant à l'origine de cette nouvelle population. Il se pourrait enfin que Hamilton ait été l'emplacement d'une mission jésuite.

Les personnes désireuses de recevoir en français de plus amples renseignements sur cette publication sont priées d'adresser leurs demandes à:

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Musées nationaux du Canada
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Awls

Three iron awls recovered from Hamilton are all of different forms. One (Figure 49:10) is of the bayonette type, made from a rectangular piece of iron. Measuring 116 mm long and 4 mm in thickness, it tapers to a point at either end. This specimen was a surface find. Another awl, from midden A, measuring 107 mm long, 6 mm wide and 3 mm thick, tapers to a point on one end, while the other has been hammered to a circular cross section and terminates bluntly. The widest part of the awl is nearest the blunt end (Figure 49:11). The remaining awl, a surface find, appears to be fashioned from the bail handle of a kettle. It is round in cross section and bipointed, measuring 122 mm in length by 7 mm in diameter (Figure 49:12).

Dagger or Lance Head

This unusual specimen, measuring 189 mm in length, 12 mm in width and 6 mm in thickness, is double bladed, tapers to a point at one end, and is abruptly bevelled to a squared off base at the other end. Short flutes, 30 mm long by 4 mm wide and 1 mm deep, occur on the medial faces of the basal end (Figure 49:13). It comes from the surface of the site.

Miscellaneous Iron

Two round and slightly curved pieces of iron are probably portions of kettle bail handles. They are 78 and 56 mm long with diameters of 4 and 5 mm respectively.

A large rectangular piece of iron, measuring 163 mm long, 40 mm wide and 3 mm thick, has a small rectangular piece of sheet brass or copper, measuring 21 mm by 17 mm by 1 mm, securely riveted to one side.

A curved piece of iron, 79 mm long, 28 mm wide and 3 mm thick, has one rounded and one broken end. Eleven tapered holes pass through the specimen. Their diameters decrease from 8 mm on one side to 4 mm on the other side. Its purpose is unknown.

Glass Trade Beads

Glass trade beads, as at other historic Iroquoian sites, are not uncommon at Hamilton. A sample of 171 complete and 99 fragmentary specimens are available for analysis.

TABLE 47. Hamilton glass trade beads.

Description	Kidd's Classi- fication	Frequency		Length R	Length \bar{X}	Diameter	
		Com- plete	Frag- ments			R	\bar{X}
1. *Op.red tubular	Ia1	20	47	6-40	18.0	3-6	4.2
2. Op.red tubular, flat marvered							
1 side	Ic-	2	0	10-13	11.5	3-4	3.5
3 sides triangu- lar	Ic-	1	2	9	9	4	4
4 sides, square	Ic1	0	2	-	-	-	-
5-7 sides.	Ic3	1	6	9	9	3	3
3. Op.red tubular, flat marvered, twisted.							
4 sides, square.	Ic'1	0	2	-	-	-	-
4. Op.red with black banding, round, tubular, often ground	Ia-	2	1	18-22	20	6-7	6.5
5. Op.red with black banding, ground, faceted, tubular							
3 sided, trian- gular	Ic-	2	2	10-26	18	4-5	4.5
4 sided, square	Ic-	0	1	-	-	-	-
5-7 sided.	Ic-	5	3	15-42	24.4	3-5	3.8
6. Op.red, round tu- bular, twisted, with 4 raised red stripes.	Ic'1	0	1	-	-	-	-
7. Op.red, round tu- bular, Op.black stripes.	Ib1	0	1	-	-	-	-
8. Op.red, Op.white stripes, flat mar- vered, tubular, twisted.							
4 sided, square	Id'1	0	1	-	-	-	-
9. Op.red/"dark" cores, round tubular.	IIIa1	5	13	4-18	8.6	3-5	3.6

Table 47 continued.

Description	Kidd's Classi- fication	Frequency Com- plete	Frag- ments	R	Length \bar{X}	Diameter \bar{X}
10. Op.red with black banding/ "dark core", tubular, ground 5-7 sided.	IIIa-	1	0	20	20	6
11. Op.red/"dark" core, round tubular, twisted 4 raised red stripes.	IIIc'1	0	4	-	-	-
12. Op.red/Op.white/ Cl.core, round tubular, inner 2 layers are corru- gated marvered.	IIIk1	1	0	6	6	4
13. Op.white, round tubular.	Ia5	3	0	4-14	10.3	4
14. Tr.turquoise, round tubular.	Ia12	2	5	4-20	12	2-3
15. Tr.turquoise, flat marvered or ground? 3 sided triangular		1	0	6	6	4
16. Tr.turquoise/ Op.white/tr. turquoise core. Flat marvered tubular, 4 sided square	IIIc1	5	2	15-30	21.4	6-8
17. Tr.blue-green/ Op.white/Op.red/ dark core, flat marvered tubular 4 sided, square, twisted.	IIc'3	4	1	-	-	-
18. Cl.dark purple with Op.white stripes, probably round tubular?	Ib-	0	1	-	-	-

Table 47 continued.

Description	Kidd's Classi- fication	Frequency		Length R	\bar{X}	Diameter	
		Com- plete	Frag- ments			R	\bar{X}
19. Cl.blue/Op.white/ Op.red/Op.white/ Cl.core, round tubular, faceted "star" bead, all but blue layer are corrugated marvered.	IIIk3	3	0	4-7	5	5-6	5.6
20. Cl.blue/Op.white/ Op.red/Op.white/ Cl.core, round tubular, faceted "star" bead, all but blue layer are corrugated marvered.	IIIIm-	4	3	10-33	20.7	11-25	16.3
21. Op.red/Op.white/ Cl./Op.white/Cl. core, round tubular "star" bead, not faceted, ground.	IIIk-	2	0	26-32	29	13-15	14
22. Cl.blue/Op.white/ Cl.blue core, tu- bular "star" bead, ground, 3 sided, trian- gular.	IIIk-	1	0	28	28	6	6
23. Op.red, round.	IIa1	4	0			4-7	6
24. Op.red/Op.black/ Op.red, round.	IVa-	4	0			6-7	6.8
25. Op.red/Cl. light green core, round.	IVa5	29	0			3-7	4.9
26. Op.red/Op.black core, round.	IVa1	6	0			7	7
27. Op.red/Op.black core, 3 "flush							

Table 47 continued.

Description	Kidd's Classi- fication	Frequency		Length \bar{X}	Diameter	
		Com- plete	Frag- ments		R	I
eyes" are 3 white concentric rings on navy blue dot.IVg-		1	0		8	8
28. Tr.turquoise, round.	IIa31	54	0		2-9	4.3
29. Tr.turquoise, round, with 3 white stripes.	IIb56	1	0		7	7
30. Tr.turquoise/ clear core, round.	IVa-	1	0		2	2
31. Tr.blue/clear blue core, 2 "flush eyes" are red star design on navy blue dot.	IVg-	1	0		6	6
32. Op.white/clear core, round.	IVa-	1	0		2	2
33. Op.mauve,round.	IIa46	2			4-5	4.5
34. Cl.blue/Op.white/ Op.red/Op.white/ Cl.core, round, "star" bead. All but blue layer are corrugated marvered.	IVk	2			8	8
35. Tr.light gold	IIa1	0	1	9	9	?

*Key to abbreviations: Tr. - Translucent
Op. - Opaque
Cl. - Clear
/ - Over

In the following, if enough of a particular bead was present to determine its original dimensions and construction, it was considered "complete". A fragmentary specimen had to be sizable enough to permit accurate identification. With one exception, a wire wound "corn bead", the glass beads from Hamilton were manufactured by the tube method (Kidd 1970).

Table 47 presents the 35 distinguishable bead types from Hamilton, their frequency, their size, and also makes reference to Kidd's (1970) well known classification system for glass beads. It should be noted, however, that the colour coding system suggested by Kidd was not available during the analysis. The complete classification according to Kidd's scheme was achieved where possible by comparing particular specimens with Kidd's colour plates and corresponding descriptions. I have also included a generalized colour description for each bead type.

Of particular note are bead types 4, 5 and 10. The black woodgrain-like banding in these opaque red beads makes them almost indistinguishable from the red slate beads described in the lithic section. All three varieties are often ground on the exterior surface to produce long facets similar to those on the lithic counterparts.

Bead type 21 has also been ground. Two examples of this type originally had an exterior clear blue layer and an opaque white layer over the remaining layering sequence given in the description. The total sequence of layers is the same as seen on other large "star" bead types, such as type 20. Beads of type 21, however, have had the outer two layers ground off to expose the red layer. Red apparently was an important or preferred colour among the Neutrals, as is also suggested by Kenyon (1969:36).

Dating the Hamilton Site Using Glass Beads

Unfortunately, the best spatial and temporal study of Neutral glass trade beads remains unpublished. This study, undertaken by Mr. I.T. Kenyon (1969) incorporates a sample of more than 6,500 beads from 13 Neutral sites and numerous other Iroquoian sites in the Northeast. In his study, four sequential periods are discerned for Ontario based upon changing bead frequencies and types. They are referred to, from early to late, as periods 1, 2, 3 and 4 (Kenyon 1969), and dating of the periods was accomplished by using bead samples from documented sites and events in both Ontario and New York (Kenyon 1969:28-34). Kenyon's dates have been incorporated into Figure 30.

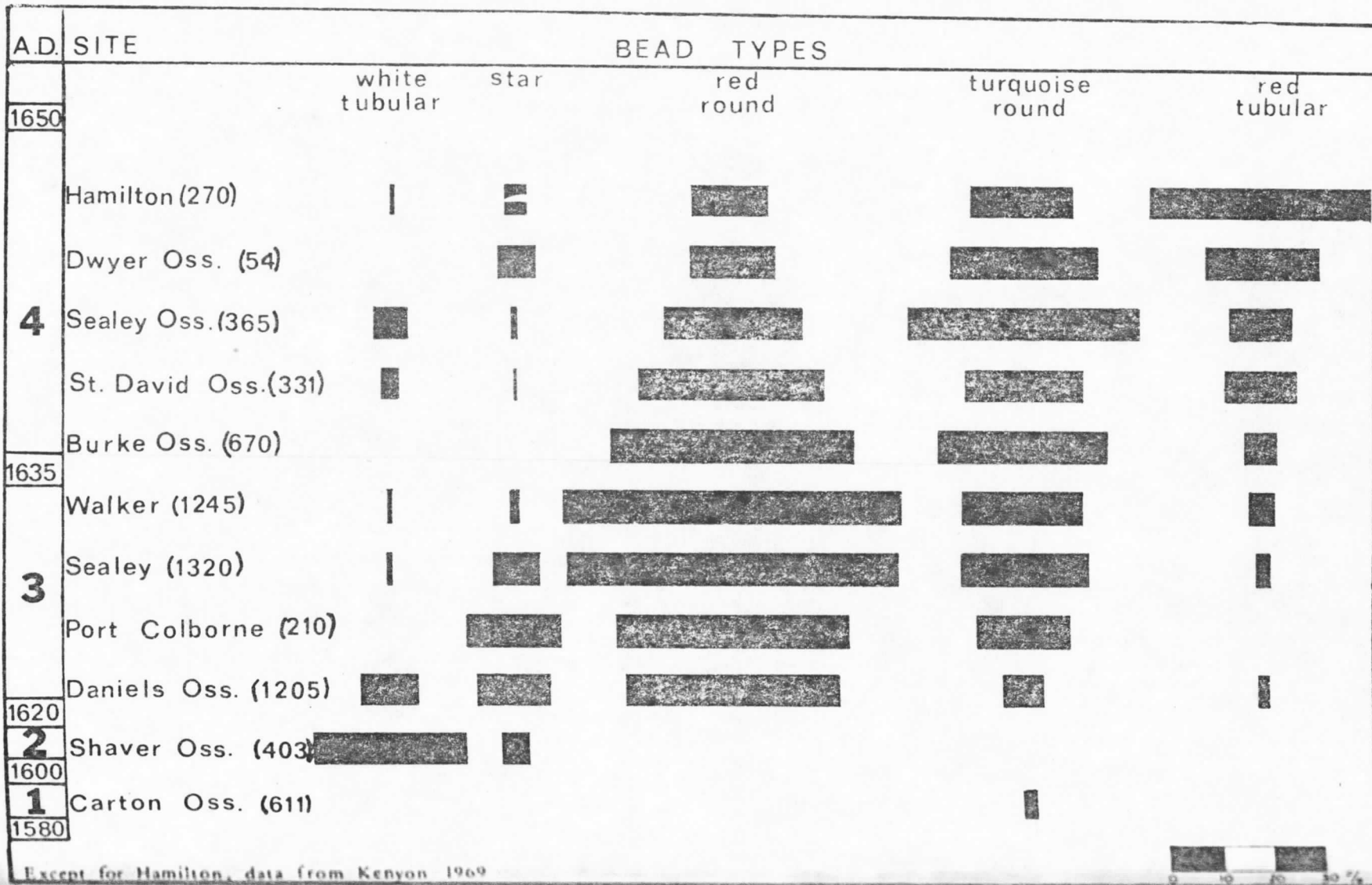


FIG. 50. Frequency distribution of 11 historic period sites for each bead type.

Figure 30 presents the frequency seriation of 5 common bead types as they occur on 11 Neutral sites in Ontario. The data for the production of this chart have come from chart 2 and the text of Kenyon's (1969) study of glass beads. The only original information I have is that concerning the Hamilton site.

In order to seriate my data with Kenyon's, it was necessary to group several of my types. The red tubular bead referred to in Kenyon's study includes types numbered 1, 2, 4, 5, 9 and 10 in my own analysis. The red round bead of Kenyon's study is represented by types 23, 24, 25 and 26 in my analysis, and the star bead in Kenyon's analysis refers to types 12, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 34 in my analysis. The white tubular and turquoise round beads of Kenyon's analysis are the same as types 13 and 28, respectively, of my analysis (Table 47).

Figure 30 shows that the glass beads from the Hamilton site seriate as the latest dating sample in the series of 11 Neutral sites. The Hamilton site's late position in period 4 suggests that the site was occupied until the dispersion of the Neutral by the New York Iroquois in 1650-51.

Cloth Fragment

Adhering to the inside surface of a body sherd from the waterlogged bottom of square 25 of midden A, is an uncarbonized grey cloth fragment 12 mm long and 6 mm wide. The fragment was kindly examined by Mr. J.E. Vollmer of the textile department of the Royal Ontario Museum. He reports that the weave is tabby, extended (Louisine or Cannelle). The weft (?) is cotton (?), Z, used double with an estimated count of 20 ends per cm. The warp (?) is linen (?), Z, with an estimated count of 14 picks per cm.

Microscopic analysis (80x) reveals a slight S twist of individual fibres of doubled threads, a characteristic of cotton, in contrast to the smooth fibres of the single threads which indicate linen. Z spinning is typical of European textiles and the piece is definitely not Indian. It may be "dimity", a textile with doubled threads (usually warp), which is included in some 17th and early 18th century trade inventories. From its weight, the fabric was probably shirting. (Personal communication: J.E. Vollmer, 1977).