

## PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY

## MACKENZIE CORRIDOR

(Second Report)

by

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with Appendices by

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*Appendix B*

MACKENZIE RIVER: FORT SIMPSON TO FORT GOOD HOPE

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pp. B1-B78

### Fort Good Hope Area

Situated on the right bank of Mackenzie River at mile 682 is Fort Good Hope  $66^{\circ}15'30''N$ ,  $128^{\circ}38'W$ . The settlement was moved to its present location on the edge of the Canadian Shield in 1836 from Manitou Island directly west from the modern community. Hare Indian River enters from the east and joins the Mackenzie 2.6 miles downstream from Fort Good Hope. An extensive esker complex extends eastward from the Mackenzie immediately north of the settlement for a distance of one mile inland. In places the esker ridge rises to over 200 feet and has been quarried for gravel used in the town. The balance of the surrounding terrain is the relatively flat Anderson Plain which stands at approximately 300 feet A.S.L. in the Fort Good Hope region. The plain is dotted with many small lakes, the largest of which is Ontadek Lake (known locally as Jackfish Lake) located 5.5 miles due east of the Hare Indian/Mackenzie River confluence (Fig. B-17).

Several transects inland were made southeast from Jackfish Creek, a small tributary entering the Mackenzie immediately upstream from the settlement. Reconnaissance and testing was focused on the numerous low ridges and occasional dunes which form the only topographic relief on the otherwise flat ground moraine. A total of 18 one-meter test squares were excavated in the area in four different localities. No archaeological material was recovered either in the testing or from the numerous natural exposures examined.

Reconnaissance north and east from Fort Good Hope was largely confined to the previously mentioned esker complex and to the northwest shoreline of Ontadek (Jackfish) Lake. A large portion of the esker complex is traversed by a well established bush trail along which the remains of numerous contemporary camps of native origin were observed. Natural exposures along the tops and flanks of the esker ridges were examined and a total of six one-meter test squares were excavated between two lakes which flank the main ridge near its eastern termination. No archaeological material was recovered.

Penetration and survey along the eskers to the north arm of Ontadek Lake was accomplished via recent cut-lines leading northeast from the settlement. The distance to the lake is 7.4 miles straight-line but nearly one

mile further by existing cut-line trails. Approximately 1.5 miles of the shoreline along the north arm of the lake was examined and tested.

Reconnaissance in the vicinity of the north arm of Ontadek Lake was successful in locating the remains of one archaeological site designated GH-1 (Fig. B-18). The location of the site is 7.4 miles N 30°E of Fort Good Hope on a cut-line extending along the summit of a small north/south trending esker which slopes steeply southward and terminates at the shore of the lake. Situated at ca. 100 feet A.S.L., the site is contained within the upper 2-3 cm of colluvium derived from the esker immediately upslope from the deposit. The esker itself grades from coarse sand and gravel to fine sand and silt deltaic-like deposit where it terminates at the lakeshore. The cultural material rests directly upon this sand/silt unit at the interface of the A-h and B horizons. The profile exhibits a weak Ae horizon and a strong Bf horizon. The soil type would probably be classified as a regosol.

Initial surface collecting resulted in the recovery of five flakes of chert, ignimbrite, and argillaceous shale; three utilized chert flakes; a large retouched banded grey chert flake; an iron awl; and 31 pieces of burned and calcined bone, none of which could be identified.

Test excavation consisted of three, one by two meter squares placed at three meter intervals which yielded a white seed bead and a small rolled copper cylinder; a fragment of cut antler 73 mm long and tapering from 9 mm to 15 mm; 87 flakes of various fragments, nine of which are identifiable as bird, beaver and possibly caribou (Fig. B-19). Fragments of fire-cracked rock recovered in association with the faunal material is estimated at 10-15 pounds.

The total area of the site extends over no more than 10 M by 5.0 M along the crest of the esker. The component appears to be the result of a single occupation apparently originating in the Early Contact Period. The white seed bead and the rolled copper cylinder or "tinkler" form the basis for this conclusion. There may be a demonstrable temporal connection between site GH-1 and one of the earlier Fort Good Hope trading establishments in the area.

SITE: GH-1

LOCATION: Ontadek Lake 68°18'20"N 128°24'30"W

ASSEMBLAGE:

Surface

Artifacts

1. Flake, retouched. Medium-grey banded chert 90mm X 47mm X 13mm with a striking platform 25mm X 6mm at center.
2. Awl, iron. Rectangular cross-section tapering to rounded chisel-like edge. 95mm X 13mm X 5mm.
3. Flake, utilized, white chert. Use-wear occurring on one edge of ventral side. 28mm X 29mm X 8mm.
4. Flake, utilized, black chert. One side backed by cortex opposite edge showing use-wear. 39mm X 19mm X 6mm.
5. Flake, utilized, black chert. Use-wear on one edge only, 9mm long. 20mm X 7mm X 5mm.
6. Flakes, grey chert, two pieces.
7. Flake, ignimbrite, off-white.
8. Flakes, argillitic shale, grey-brown. Two pieces.

Faunal Remains

1. Bone fragments, burned, 31 pieces (unidentifiable).

Test Pit #1

Artifacts

- ✓ 9. Bead, seed, white. 9mm diameter.
10. Bead, copper, rolled and tapered. 18mm X 5.2mm dia.
11. Core, single platform, white chert. 60mm X 31mm X 21mm.
12. Flake, fossiliferous grey chert.
13. Flake, dark red jasper (chert).
14. Flakes, dark grey chalcedony, two pieces.
15. Flakes, medium grey chert, three pieces.
16. Detritus, medium grey chert, two pieces.

Faunal Remains

*Aves*

2. Metacarpals, 3-4, left proximal end.
3. Ulna, left proximal end.
4. Humerus, left proximal end.
5. Keel (rib facets), two pieces.
6. Ulna, left distal end.
7. Femur, right(?), shaft fragment.
8. Coracoid, right proximal end.