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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSPECTION AND ASSESSMENT
OF TWO HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES
ON THE SEVERN RIVER, ONTARIO

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ABSTRACT

The discovery and recording of an important archaeological site (dating during the 1685-1713 period) upstream from the village of Fort Severn has raised a number of problems concerning the ethnic affiliation of the archaeological features. Evidence from the small surface collection of artefacts and the visible structural remains is inconclusive but some preliminary working hypotheses are put forward.

The recording of a second archaeological site at the village itself has posed a number of questions as to the extent and degree of disturbance present at the site. From the surface collection of artefacts and the recordable strata visible in the river bank, a positive identification is made of both the initial occupation at the site and its archaeological potential.

INTRODUCTION

During September 1974, M.E. Buss, then Fish and Wildlife Supervisor, Sioux Lookout District, notified the former Historical Sites Branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources about potential historic sites in the Fort Severn area. His letter described some surface collected

than the sides. The edge shows numerous flake scars from striking the battery of a flintlock (Blanchette 1975:45). The wedge gunflints found were used by the English, but whether manufactured in the Netherlands or England cannot be ascertained.

Thimble: One thimble was recovered from the surface (Fig. 8:9). It is brass with slightly tapering sides and a convex top and the sides are patterned with small round perforated impressions. The diameter cannot be measured because it is crushed. Its length is 2.3 cm (Catalogue No. M2154). No chronological indicators are available for thimbles.

Clay Pipe Stems with Spur Heels: Two specimens from the surface are illustrated (Fig. 8:10, 11). One (Fig. 8:10; Catalogue No. M2146) is lettered I and F on opposite sides of the spur heel. These pipes were exported by John Ford of England between 1805 and 1865. He is mentioned as a supplier in the records of the Hudson's Bay Company for the years 1831-35 (Oswald 1975:136; Walker 1971:24). Another pipe made from ball clay (not Kaolin) (Walker 1971:19) (Fig. 8:11) is lettered W and M on opposite sides of the spur heel. This dates it as being manufactured by a William Manby between 1719 and 1763. An earlier William Manby, 1681-1696, (father of the above) is mentioned in the Hudson's Bay Company records as an exporter (Oswald 1975:142).

Bottle Shard: This rounded base black glass bottle fragment (Fig. 8:12) was recovered from the surface of the site (Catalogue No. M2120). It is manufactured from very thick glass (1.0 cm) and has a pushed up base.

Green Bottle Top: This is a free-blown dark-green bottle (Fig. 8:13) dating *circa* 1840-1860, and may have been a medicine bottle (Catalogue No. M2109).

Level Three Artefact Description

Level three (Fig. 3) is the earliest occupation level at the Fort Severn Site. On the basis of the gunflint, the clay pipes, the nails, and ceramics, this level is tentatively dated from 1759 to a date not later than 1800.

Small Trade Beads: The small beads (Fig. 9:1 and Fig. 9:2) are all class IV beads rounded by re-heating. The larger small bead (Fig. 5:2) is a type IVa2 (Kidd 1970:60). The three larger tube beads (Fig. 5:2) are all class Ia beads or simple monochromes of the type Ia19 (Kidd 1970:54) (Catalogue M2210).

Clay Pipe – bowl and stem: This pipe has TD on the spur heel and an encircled TD on the bowl facing the smoker (Fig. 9:3). It fits the shape of types No.'s 12 and 14 (Oswald 1975:39). Shape No. 14 has thin narrow bowls, a narrow but flat based foot, and the lip often at an angle to the stem, which is small and bored. They are dated *circa* 1820-40. They were manufactured by Thomas Duggan, who exported to the Hudson's Bay Company 1807-12, 1815-25, and 1826-32 (1832 with John Ford) (Oswald 1975:135). Shape number 12 (described below) is recorded by Oswald (1975:38) as being manufactured *circa* 1730-1780. The

- Figure 9: Artefacts From Level Three
(Fig. 3) Fort Severn Hudson's Bay Company Site
- 1, 2 glass trade beads
 3. T.D. clay pipe manufactured by either Thomas Duggan (1826-1832) or most likely Thomas Dormer (1774-1770)
 4. Thomas Dormer pipe (1774-1770)
 5. bone button cutting debris
 6. wrought iron nail (pre-1800)
 7. green glass bottle fragment
 8. gunflint, wedge-shaped. Dates (1650 to 1770)
 9. wrought iron nail (pre-1800)
 10. lead strip (cut)
 11. iron staple

