

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE
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EXPLORATION OF ABORIGINAL SITES
AT THROGS NECK AND CLASONS
POINT, NEW YORK CITY

- I. THE THROGS NECK OR SCHLEY AVENUE SHELLHEAP
- II. SNAKAPINS, A SIWANUY SITE AT CLASONS POINT

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articles are known from the Iroquois country in this state and in Canada. Neither of the two specimens is made with metallic tools, both showing the laborious saw-cutting which characterizes the work of a stone knife. They form a new accession to the list of coastal Algonkian implements.

Pl. IV, *m*, represents a small disc bead of shell, washed from Deposit A and found on the beach. A few similar beads have been collected, notably at Tottenville, Staten Island, but they are rare. Nevertheless, they are found by thousands in the Iroquois territory, especially from the Niagara frontier westward into Ontario.

METAL OBJECTS

A bead of native copper, made from a small piece of the metal hammered flat and rolled into a little tube, was found by Mr Harrington in his excavations for the American Museum of Natural History, conducted in 1900. Nothing similar was obtained by our explorations.

A triangular arrowpoint (pl. IV, *l*), cut from the side of a worn-out brass kettle, in all probability, was found by our party in Deposit B, near the surface.

TRADE OBJECTS IN GENERAL

In addition to the brass arrowpoint noted above, several other trade objects, presumably of Dutch origin, were found. These consist of a blue glass trade bead, several gun-flints, and round leaden bullets of small caliber, including a buckshot. Stems of trade pipes of white clay, bits of china, and bottle glass also occurred, but whether all are attributable to the later Indians is doubtful.

POTTERY

The pottery from the Schley Avenue shellheap is inferior, on the whole, but that of the later pits, on the edge of the upland, is of rather good quality. The shellheap potsherds, except a few from the topmost layers, are all Algonkian of archaic type, and so badly disintegrated, when possessed of any character or markings, as to be without interest for the purpose of illustration.

Conclusions

vessels were of the pointed-bottom, archaic, Algonkian style, made of a crumbly red clay, heavily tempered with coarse sand. In the middle section of the heap, objects of stone, previously of good workmanship, especially in the lowest part, lapsed somewhat, and more bone and antler implements came into vogue, though these are poor and ill-fashioned.

A difference was noted between artifacts found in the surface soil and the first few inches of shells, and those from all the rest of the deposit. Here were triangular arrowpoints of flint, fragments of well-made pottery of Iroquois form, including even the deep-notched angle, quadrangular rim, and conventional human face of well-known Mohawk type. In the pits belonging to this period, some of which occurred also on the edge of the upland, slightly removed from the ancient dump-holes, were jars of sub-Iroquois style, triangular arrowheads, polished bone implements showing careful workmanship, and shell cups. Near the surface, too, our labors disclosed a glass bead, a brass arrowpoint, bullets, gun-flints, stems of trade pipes, and other objects of the early Colonial barter period.

Although primarily a shellheap site, pits dug by the Indians occurred to the number of forty-two. Of these, about a dozen (indicated by a special symbol on the map) were of relatively modern date, being probably post-European, and belonged to the small settlement of Siwanoy Indians who seem to have camped on their old ground after an absence of some years. To these people may also be attributed Iroquois and late sub-Iroquois remains and Indian trade articles, scattered sparsely here and there over the top of the shell deposits.

Most of these modern pits occurred on the edge of the upland where the principal burials were found, with the exception of a few (Pits 27, 28, and 30, in particular) which were in the hollow. Besides the difference in the nature of their contents, these later pits contained far more specimens than the ancient ones, and the condition of the shells in them was different, for they were fresh and hard in appearance, still retaining their sharp edges, and not being broken and crumbling to lime like the shells in the ancient pits.