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No. 12

*The Orringh Stone Tavern and Three
Seneca Sites of the Late Historic Period*

by

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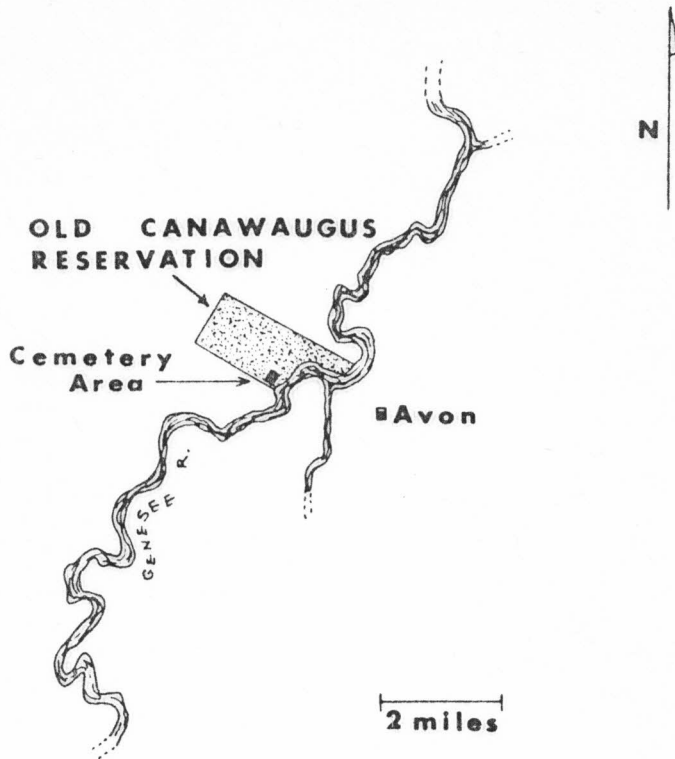


Figure #3

Location of the former Canawaugus Indian Reservation in Livingston County, N.Y.

Canawaugus village was included in a reservation of the same name. In 1936, the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences, under the direction of William A. Ritchie, excavated at the site and found refuse pits and burials of the Late Contract Period as well as some prehistoric burials (Ritchie n.d.).

Six burials were recorded from Canawaugus by Ritchie and others from August 31 to September 4, 1936. The following data was consolidated from field notes in the files of the Division of Anthropology at the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences:

Burial 1.

A young adult female was extended on her back with the head midway between W. and N.W. The right hand was on the upper abdomen and the left hand on the breast. The bones were in fair condition except for the skull which was nearly complete except for the lower side. Depth of the grave was 1 foot 10 inches, width 1 foot 6 inches and the length 5 feet 9 inches. Under the right hand was a mass of vermillion paint. Just above, over the mid-body, lay a sheet of glass. On the north side of the feet was a brass kettle containing a wooden ladle. Over the left knee was an iron awl with a bone handle which had been in a cloth case covered with small, white

seed beads. Fragments of the fabric still adhered to the handle. Between the brass kettle and the left knee was the badly decayed wooden handle of a knife, the blade of which had rusted away. Along the sides of the skull and about the neck were numerous short, tubular, dark blue or black beads which were evidently part of a collar. Traces of a wooden coffin and a few iron nails were present.

Burial 2.

Two feet from Burial 1 was an extended adult female lying on her back and headed W.N.W. Depth of the grave was 1 foot 10 inches, width 1 foot 10 inches, and the length 6 feet. It rested on gravel and was filled with sandy gravel soil. Between the feet rested a brass kettle with a large clasp knife extending above the rim. Above the left hip was a heap of red paint and around the neck numerous short, tubular blue-black glass beads. Fragments of an edentulous skull were found over the right shoulder.

Burial 3.

A senile female was buried in this grave in an extended position at a depth of 1 foot 4 inches and headed N.W. The right hand was over the chest. There was an axe at the right foot with the handle extending up along the right leg. At the right knee there was a bundle of pins surrounded by numerous white seed beads. Above the left shoulder was a brass kettle. The left side of the skeleton and the skull were destroyed by Burial 2.

Burial 4.

An adult heading N.W. and facing south was found at a depth of 1 foot in a grave 5 feet 10 inches long, 1 foot 9 inches wide at the head and 1 foot 2 inches at the foot. The hands of the skeleton lay folded on the chest and the skull was crushed and lay on its right side. The remainder of the bones were in poor condition. A plain white dish, broken in half, lay on the left hip. At the foot of the grave and in the left corner was a complete brass kettle. The lower left leg had a lesion of the bone. Scattered over and between the bones of the feet were a few small, white beads.

Burial 5.

The fragments of a child's skeleton headed north were found 1 foot from Burial 4 and 1 foot 10 inches to the south of Burial 6. A sixth year molar was in the skull. The grave was 1 foot 3 inches deep 3 feet 3 inches long and 1 foot 1 inch wide. A clasp knife lay at the knees.

Burial 6.

North of Burial 5 were found fragments of another child's skeleton headed N.W. at a depth of 1 foot 6 inches in a grave 3 feet 10 inches by 1 foot 4 inches. The coffin boards were in a rotted condition, had fallen in and lay close to the bottom. A pair of black glass beads lay at the neck of the

child. At the knees was a pair of scissors with fragments of finely woven textile. Near the left knee was a vanity box containing beads and at the feet was a brass kettle with a broken bottom containing a knife.

The artifacts other than from burials came from refuse pits encountered in the course of the salvage work.

Through the courtesy of Charles F. Wray of West Rush, N.Y., a brief survey was made in 1961 of the material in his collection. All artifacts were found on the surface and included scattered Archaic and Woodland material as well as items from Canawaugus Village. Artifacts of interest to this study included a 1787 coin struck by Connecticut, an 1810 U.S. cent, coffin nails, kettle fragments, knife blade, glass fragments, metal bangle and copper beads. A few clay pipe fragments were also noted.

According to Charles Wray (personal communication) the material obtained from Canawaugus Village both by him and the Rochester Museum was a result of salvage operations when the site was subjected to intensive disruption by heavy machinery.

The Big Tree Farm Site

(Cda 7-4)

Also known as the Wadsworth Mound and the Geneseo Mound, this site is located three quarters of a mile south of Geneseo, Livingston County, New York. It is on the property of William P. Wadsworth on a terrace on the east bank of the Genesee River overlooking the river and its flood plain to the west. The Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences conducted excavations here in 1936 under the direction of William A. Ritchie.

The mound was oval, orientated 42 feet W.N.W. - E.S.E., 26 feet S.S.W. - N.N.E. and 3 feet high at its highest point near the center. Ritchie termed it a Hopewellian mound with a superimposed Seneca occupation consisting of scattered artifacts throughout the topsoil and intrusive burials dated about A.D. 1770 (Ritchie 1938:119-120).

The following account of the three intrusive burials was given:

"Intrusive burial 1.

Plow-broken and disturbed extended skeleton of a child, 6 inches below surface, headed west. Over chest and upper abdomen had been placed a belt or ornament of white wampum, beneath which lay, as if originally sewed on a garment, a large number of small blue glass 'seed' beads. Two ellipsoidal polished agate beads, 1 1/8 and 1 1/4 inches long, lay near the right elbow. Beside the same arm occurred a package containing 12 brass signet rings wrapped in bark. Near the right leg a similar package was found holding 15 spherical brass bells sewed on cloth and leather. A few large and small bells of similar type were upon the chest.

Intrusive burial 2.

Extended skeleton of adult female, 1 foot 6 inches from surface, headed W.N.W., facing E.S.E. Lower arms across body at right

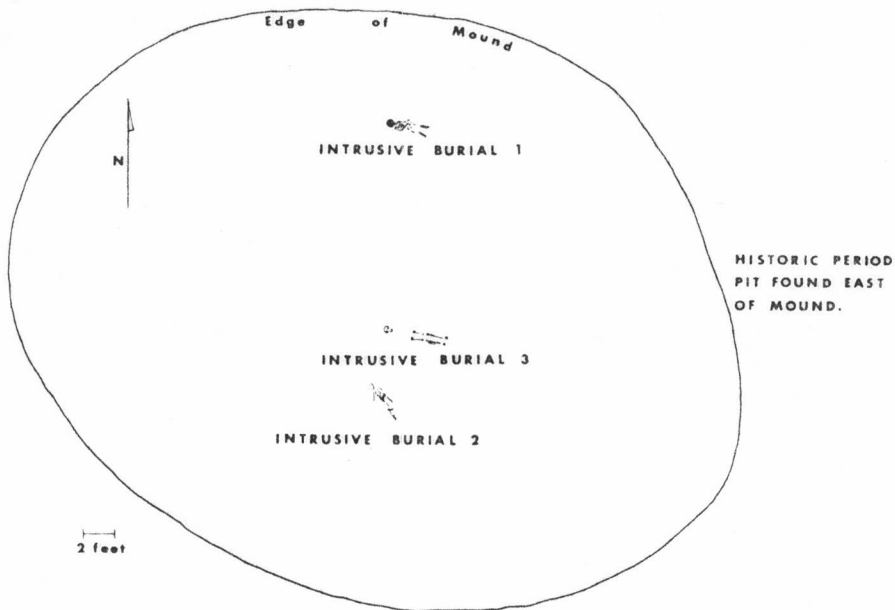


Figure #4

Historic period features associated with the Genesee Mound. This Hopewellian structure was used as a cemetery by the Historic Seneca.

angles. Lower legs disturbed by unknown agency. Bones in poor to fair condition, skull intact. About the neck occurred several strands of white wampum, white barrel shaped glass beads, blue and white glass 'seed' beads and a brass wire-wound cord combined into a necklace from which several short strings of small tubular brass beads hung as a pendant. Six brass bracelets (one wide band, 2 narrow bands and 3 of coiled wire) encircled the left wrist. Just below right wrist lay a cluster of 9 brass thimbles tied from the perforated apices to a rawhide cord attached to a large brass wire spring held in the right hand, evidently the imperishable part of a rattle. A brass ring with glass inset was found on the fourth finger of the right hand. Two brass wire bracelets lay at the left elbow. Near the lower legs were present 2 spherical brass bells, a large number of white wampum and glass 'seed' beads, several cone-shaped brass bangles, and 2 lead dress weights. Where the feet had been were 2 brass clasp knife handles, an iron awl with a carved bone handle and the blade of an iron clasp knife. A large trade axe reposed at the right hip. Wrought-iron coffin nails surrounded the skeleton.

Intrusive burial 3.

Adult male (?) extended on back, headed west. Lay obliquely with head higher than feet. Depth to skull 10 inches, to feet, 1 foot, 7 inches. Only a few crushed portions of the skull remained and nothing was left of the skeleton to the hips, but no clear sign of disturbance existed. Hips and lower legs intact. Along the legs occurred a row of white glass 'seed' beads which had obviously adorned the leggings. An iron clasp knife blade lay beside the right femur."

According to the field notes "a fire pit and refuse were found east of the mound. Seven feet in diameter and 3 feet deep, the upper half consisted of dark earth about 10 inches thick overlying a 3 or 4 inch stratum of white ash and charcoal. In both but chiefly in ash, were bear, deer, wildcat, and beaver bones. Small mammals and domestic hog bones, a few fish, (sturgeon?) some clam shells and charred corn kernels were found. Implements, all defective, consisted of numerous pipe fragments of micmac and trumpet types, brass scraps, pottery fragments, bone comb, stemmed arrowhead, jews-harps, iron nails, metal braid, stone muller, brass ring, gun flints, iron knives, three cornered file and a large iron spike. Below the refuse and implement bearing zone, dense black charcoal filled earth was reached. This covered large fire broken boulders up to a foot in diameter. These rested upon four charred logs. Some of the logs were 6 to 8 inches in diameter. No bones or industrial traces were encountered below the dark earth covering the boulders."

The Sackett Site

(Can 1-2)

On the farm of Charles Sackett, in Canandaigua township, Ontario County, New York, the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences excavated a village of the prehistoric Owasco culture in 1934 (Ritchie 1937). This village area with palisades, circular-house floor patterns, ditches, and refuse had intrusive Late Colonial period Seneca material in the topsoil, two pits, and one grave. It is believed by Ritchie on the basis of historical evidence to be the Seneca town of "Kanandaigua." The town was burned on September 10, 1779 by Major General John Sullivan. It has been estimated that twenty-three large houses existed on top of the prehistoric occupation (Ritchie 1937:33-35).

Burial 1.

According to the field records, this individual was a child about four years of age extended in clay and sand on its back with the top of the head to the west. The skull was in fragments and the bone pulpy. A brass kettle was inverted over the lower legs and feet. Under the skeleton lay six perforated brass thimbles and three hawk bells. A small quantity of purple and white wampum beads and two small glass beads were found near the neck.

Pits 1 & 3.

These were features of the preceding Owasco occupation. Artifacts of the Late Historic Period were found in the upper fill as intrusive material. The pits were 4 - 8 feet in diameter.

DOCUMENTARY SUPPORT FOR THE ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA

In the latter part of the 18th and the early part of the 19th centuries, the Genesee area of western New York was just beginning to be opened

Spoons

At least seven examples of pewter are represented from the Stone Tavern refuse by fragments of bowl and handle portions. The two bowls are 15/16 - 1 1/2 inches wide, 5/16 - 11/16 inch deep and 1/16 inch in thickness. Designs on the slightly rounded upturned ends consist of a series of small impressed incisions in a figure "8" pattern on the reverse. One has an indistinct raised design on the obverse. The average thickness of the handles is 3/32 inch.

Springs

One brass specimen from a refuse pit at the Sackett site measures 1 3/4 inches long and 1/4 inch in diameter. From a Canawaugus burial came five springs associated with bead deposits. They range in length from 1/16 - 3 1/16 inches. From the same burial also came a closely coiled spring as part of a thimble rattle. It is 1 5/8 inches long and 9/16 inch in diameter.

Strike-A-Lights

One example was found in a Canawaugus refuse pit. It is an iron oval 3 1/16 inches long, 1 7/16 inches wide and is of flat stock.

Thimbles

These fall into the categories of those with perforated and unperforated tops. All are brass. The unperforated ones, one each from the Stone Tavern refuse and a Canawaugus refuse pit, range from 9/16 - 11/16 inch in diameter at the bases, taper to 3/8 - 9/16 inch at the top, are 9/16 - 3/4 inch high and have patterns of impressed squares on the tops and sides.

Eight examples with perforated tops from a Big Tree burial were probably part of a rattle. Six of the same type were excavated from a Sackett site burial.

Tongs

One pair of iron tongs 11 1/4 inches long and 9/16 inch thick was recovered from Stone Tavern refuse. The fulcrum is 7 3/4 inches from the extremity of 3 7/8 inches diameter finger holes.

Tubes

A brass tube 3 11/16 inches long tapering from a 9/16 - 7/16 inch diameter and having a hole with a maximum diameter of 3/8 inch was found in Stone Tavern refuse. From a Canawaugus refuse pit, a piece of brass was rolled into a tube. It is unavailable for study but is recorded as being 4 3/4 inches long. Also unavailable from another Canawaugus refuse pit is a 1 3/8 inches long piece of silver tubing made from a single strip of metal.

Glass

(All of non-Indian origin)

Beads

Glass beads were scarce in the Stone Tavern refuse, but plentiful in both

Indian burials and refuse pits. The variety of bead types, however, is not great.

The only beads found in Stone Tavern refuse were two seed beads. At Canawaugus, 94 of this type came from three burials. Three burials at Big Tree Farm produced 162 and 33 came from a pit at the Sackett site. All are cylindrical and white. They range in size from $1/16$ - $1/8$ inch long and from $1/16$ - $1/8$ inch in diameter. Seed beads of the same size but different in color came from the Indian sites. They include 19 black and 15 blue-green examples from a burial at Big Tree Farm. A total of 5776 blue-black beads with iridescence were found in three Canawaugus burials, and 22 came from a Sackett burial.

Donut shaped beads ranging from $1/16$ - $3/32$ inch long and $1/16$ - $1/4$ inch in diameter were also plentiful at the Indian sites. A total of 2162 white ones came from burials at Canawaugus and 1019 were found in Big Tree burials. Fifteen gray, 14 black, 4 green and 24 blue beads of the same type were excavated from two Big Tree burials.

One barrel-shaped glass bead, white, with a flowing red inlay came from a Big Tree burial. It is $3/8$ inch long and $5/16$ inch in diameter. Twenty blue barrel-shaped beads came from another Big Tree burial. They range from $3/16$ - $5/16$ inch long and are $1/8$ inch in diameter.

Three prismatic glass beads, one white, one violet, and one black were found in a refuse pit at Big Tree Farm. They range in size from $7/32$ - $5/16$ inch long and $1/4$ - $5/16$ inch in diameter.

Bottles

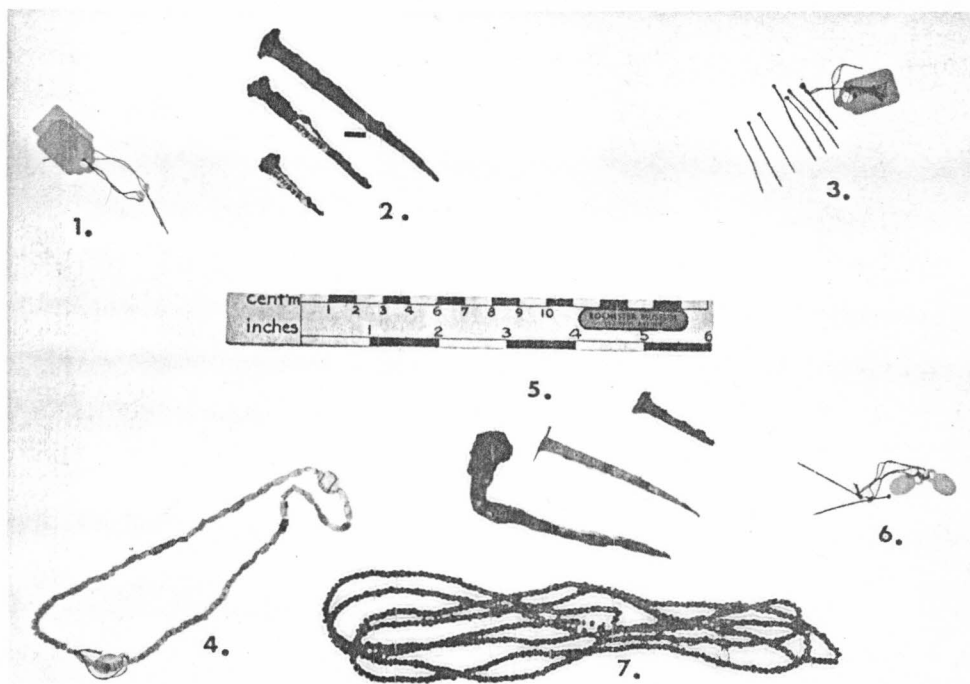
A square-ended case bottle base and cylindrical bottle base are represented in the Stone Tavern refuse. They are olive green and show evidence of iridescence. The bottom of the cylindrical specimen from the Stone Tavern refuse has a deep "kick up" or pontil and has $1/4$ inch average thickness glass. The case bottle base has $3/16$ inch average glass thickness and a maximum basal width of 3 inches. McKearin (1941:439) describes these as follows:

"Another early type of bottle often encountered is the tall tapering four-sided case bottle used for rum and other spiritous liquor. They are called case bottles because of the fact that they were made to put in a wooden box or case holding a dozen bottles. They were usually blown from dark olive-green or olive-amber glass and as a rule had a capacity of about a quart and a half to scant 2 quarts. While some of these bottles may have been produced in American bottle houses, it is probable that most of them are of Continental manufacture."

The two necks assumed to be from the bottles described above have an average width of $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches and are $5/32$ inch thick (excluding rim). Unfortunately the lack of fragments did not allow adequate total height measurements of these bottles.

Two similar olive green fragments were found at Canawaugus Village and two at the Sackett site. It is estimated on the basis of small fragments

TRAIT	DESCRIPTION		ORIGIN	S.T.	CAN.	B.T.	SAC.
GLASS							
Beads	Seed Type	cylindrical, white	Non-Indian	2	94	162	33
		" black	"			19	
		" blue green	"			15	
		" blue black	"		5776		22
		donut shaped, white	"		2162	1019	
		" gray	"			15	
		" black	"			14	
		" green	"			4	
		" blue	"			24	
	Other Types	barrel shaped, white, red inlay	"			1	
		" " blue	"			20	
		prismatic, white, blue or violet	"			3	



MIXED ARTIFACTS FROM THE STONE TAVERN AND INDIAN SITES

1. White seed beads, Stone Tavern (STH 373)
2. Wrought iron nails, Stone Tavern (STH 181, 399, 238)
3. Pins, Stone Tavern (STH 307)
4. Glass and shell beads, Big Tree Farm (AR 29788)
5. Wrought iron nails, Canawaugus Village (AR 42273), (AR 42287)
6. Pins, Canawaugus Village (AR 29920), (AR 29868)
7. Black seed beads, Canawaugus Village (AR 29848)