

CENTRE D'ETUDES NORDIQUES

TRAVAUX DIVERS

10

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT LAKE ABITIBI, 1964

RECHERCHES ARCHEOLOGIQUES AU LAC ABITIBI EN 1964

par

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Cores (1) : a chert core, 19 mm. maximum diameter.

Flakes : Figure 3 : 2 and 4 show definite use as scrapers. No. 4, however, has irregular nicks on the reverse side also, suggesting some additional use.

Only 56 other chips came from this preceramic zone. They range from 68 to 13 mm., but most are between 50 and 13 mm. Most of the chert looks inferior. Black or near-black, brown (from beach cobbles), greenish grey, and the bluish grey Nepawa type occur.

BEACH AND TEST PIT (Fig. 3) :

Note should be taken of a few specimens with no stratigraphic associations. Figure 3 : 5 and 11 are good flake scrapers. No 6 is an apparently unfinished tip of a broken bifacial tool. No. 7 is an unusual core, demonstrating interest in short and rather broad flakes of small size. No. 8 is probably a projectile point of lanceolate form, not well chipped, patinated. No. 9 is the only specimen of smoky quartz from this site, and is doubtless a knife. No. 10 is a flake with some vestige of a prepared striking platform.

IROQUOIAN POINT, ZONE 1 (Fig. 4) :

Historic : Most of the material found is fairly recent — a wire nail, a cut nail, a brass washer, and 10 fragments of tinned can. But 13 beads (see Fig. 4:2) of porcelain or glass are much older. One, top left, is of the football-shaped or barleycorn type. The broken glass rod type is seen in top centre. The others are individually made.

Ceramics : 8 rims, 5 decorated, 18 body sherds, from 3 pots.

a) A corniced pot (Fig. 4 : 1), in the Iroquoian fashion, low collared, flat lipped, deeply constricted neck, and castellated in what amounts to a low turret that is flat-topped but pentagonal, rather than the usual square top. The interior is plain, though coated with cooking sediments. Decoration consists of oblique trailed lines meeting in the centre of the castellation and, more steeply, along the narrow collar.

IROQUOIAN POINT

ZONE I

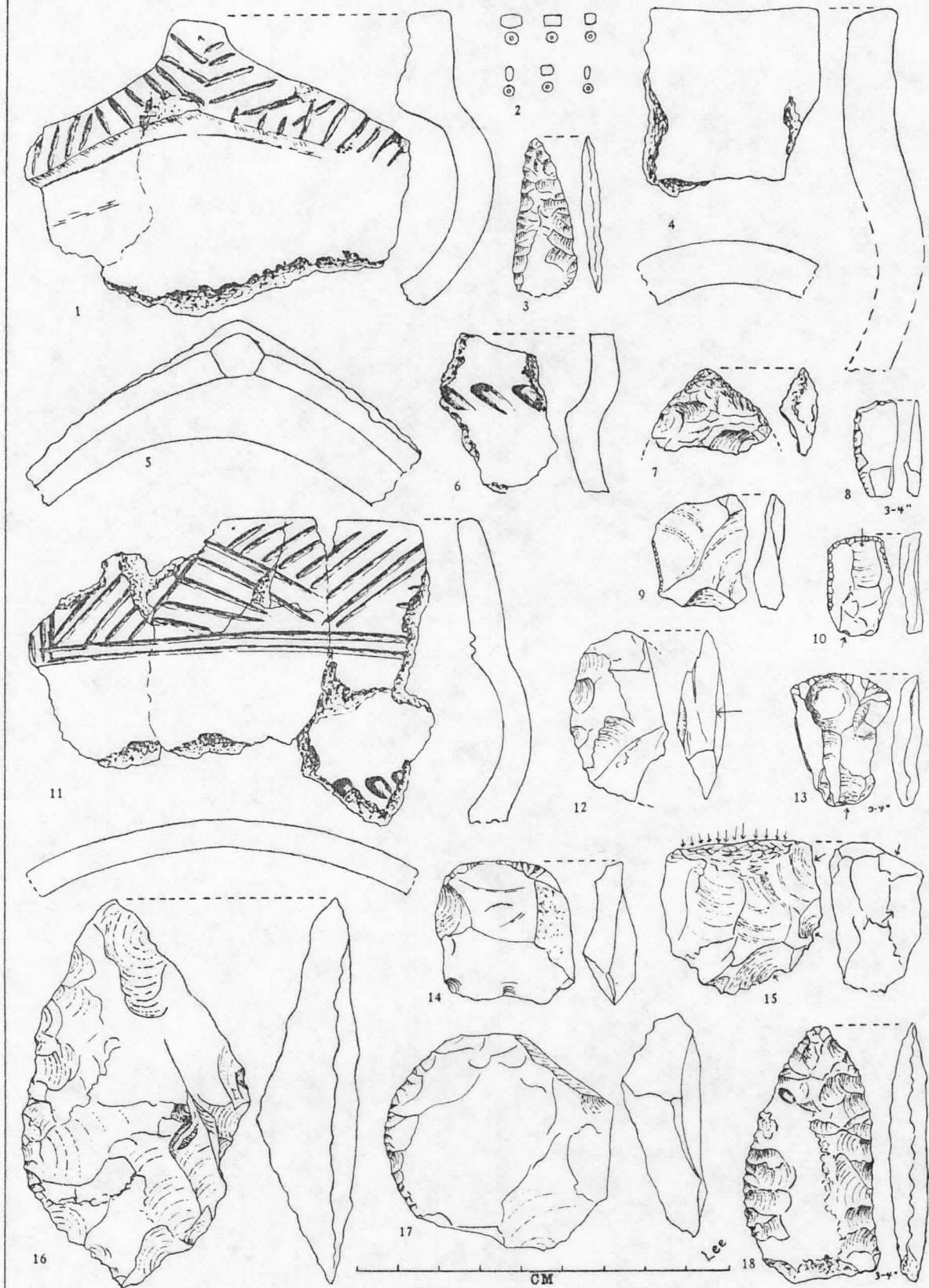


FIGURE 4

could equally well have been left by them as by Algonquin potters. No positive association with any historic item was established, due to soil disturbance, but most of the sherds were so close to the surface as to make that association probable.

✓ The beads on the Iroquoian Point site are possibly, even probably, of two periods. Some, including the football shape (Fig. 4 : 2, top left), were found 3 inches below the surface. Similar beads are reported at Ghost River (Ridley, 1958 : 53).

Other beads, especially the very small specimens, were mainly in the grass roots quite near the surface. Current information on such beads is very scanty, but eventually they should date the deposits. It seems curious, as Ridley has commented, that on this major route of trade and travel, just as was observed at Frank Bay on Lake Nipissing, none of the colorful and widely varied trade beads so common in areas to the south and east has turned up.

Iroquoian : Too little is yet known about this area to attempt tribal designation. Present knowledge would suggest that the corniced pot (Fig. 4 : 1) is just a little earlier than the historic period. Yet these sherds came from a shallow deposit in apparent association with historic beads. Similarly, the Lalonde Collar (Fig. 4 : 11) should indicate a still earlier time. But it too seems to have the same association here. We have to assume, for the moment, that roots, frost, and other agencies have accomplished a little mixing on the site, in the upper zone.

The Lalonde High Collar ware is no surprise here, thanks to the earlier findings of Ridley farther west at Ghost River (1958 : 53), at the Narrows (1956), and at Long Point. Ridley has suggested (communication) that the northern potters copied with modifications the Lalonde features when that ware was at the peak of popularity farther south.

The corniced pot, I believe, is something new in this area, though not unusual farther south. The castellation or "ear", described as contact Huron Flat Top, is discussed by Ridley (1952 : 201).

It is curious that neither site produced a projectile point in this late zone. Most of the stone work, too, is decidedly inferior. Surprisingly, in these circumstances, we are confronted with the survival of certain specialized techniques, including lamellar flaking and, apparently, crude attempts at burins.