

It would seem that the earth-work was constructed in the midst of a large clearing, and that the forest grew up after the disappearance of the occupants. A few saplings, however, may have been permitted to spring up during their occupancy for the sake of the shelter they might afford. These are represented by the oldest stumps above mentioned.

The question, who were the builders, is an interesting one. To answer it we need not go back to a remoter period than the middle of the seventeenth century, when the Iroquois after destroying the Huron Settlements turned their attention to the southwest, and the Neutral Nation ceased to exist. The enclosure was, we may reasonably believe, a fortified village of the Neutrals at the time of their evacuation of this province, nearly a quarter of a millennium ago.

Substantially all that is known of the Neutrals is to be found in Champlain's works, Sagard's History, the Relations and Journal of the Jesuits, and Sanson's map of 1656. A digest of the information contained therein is given in the following pages. The writer has availed himself of one or two other works for some of the facts mentioned. Mr. Benjamin Sulte's interesting and learned articles on "Le pays des grands lacs au XVIIe Siecle" in that excellent magazine, "Le Canada Francais," have been most valuable in this connection.

The first recorded visit to the Neutrals was in the winter of 1626, by a Recollet father, De Laroche-Daillon. His experiences are narrated by himself, and Sagard, who includes the narrative in his history, supplements it with one or two additional facts.

In company with the Jesuit Fathers Brebeuf and De Noue, Daillon left Quebec with the purpose of visiting and converting the Hurons, who were settled in villages between the Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe. After the usual hardships, journeying by canoe and portage, by way of the Ottawa and French Rivers, they arrived at their destination. The ill-fated Brule told wonderful stories of a nation, whom the French called the Neutrals, and Father Joseph Le Caron wrote Daillon urging him to continue his journey as far as their country.

He set out accordingly on the 18th October, 1626, with two