

CULTURE OF A PREHISTORIC IROQUOIAN SITE IN EASTERN ONTARIO

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THE Roebuck site, a prehistoric village of Iroquoian culture in Grenville county, Ontario, about eight miles north of the River St Lawrence, was explored for the Geological Survey, Canada, in 1912 and 1915. It is one of the largest of seven similar sites in the same county.

Here were found large quantities of clam-shells and animal bones. Carbonized corn-cobs, corn, beans, sunflower seeds, vetch seeds, squash seeds, hazelnuts, beechnuts, and butternuts were also found. The people of the site seem to have had the domestic dog, several skulls and lower jaws being found which seem to be too small to be those of the wolf.

Only six chipped stone points for arrows were found. Two of these are triangular and another may have served as the point of a knife. What may have been a point for a spear is chipped from slate.

As compared with chipped stone arrowpoints there was no scarcity of those made from hollow bones and antler tines. Some of both kinds are barbed by hollowing or indenting the base. One of the antler points has four barbs.

Two points for arrows are made of flat pieces of antler and have a slot on both sides for insertion in the cleft end of the arrowshaft, reminding one very much in this particular feature of the Eskimo slate points for toggle-head harpoons. Two other pointed and notched pieces of bone may also have been points for arrows.

The points for harpoons found here were made of bone and antler. All but four are bilaterally barbed, and the majority of these, like most of the points found elsewhere in Ontario and in New York State, have the basal ends broken off.

Bone fish-hooks were found in all stages of manufacture, from the rough blank cut from an animal bone to the completed hook with barb and grooved end for the attachment of the line. One has the shank perforated. The method of manufacture differed from that in Ohio as described by Mills, only one hook being made from each piece of bone.

Large, heavy, curved, and sometimes double-pointed mattock-like objects made from a section of the beam of an antler, some of them with the points slightly polished, may have been used as hoes. One of them is perforated, and another has a narrow groove around the middle. They may also have seen service as bark peelers. Several sharpened antler tines with convenient hand-hold may have been corn-husking pins. Some of the lower jaws of the deer with the coronoid process and condyle removed were probably used to scrape corn from the cobs.

Active grinding stones, both perfect and in a broken condition, were numerous. Some of them were pitted on the flat or rubbed side, showing that they had previously, or perhaps subsequently, been used as hammerstones. A few are bi-pitted. Several roughly spherical hammerstones were also found.

Stone mortars, many of them with hollows on both sides, were found mostly in a broken condition.