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# ARCHAEOLOGY OF SCUGOG ISLAND.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE,  
JANUARY 12TH, 1889, BY

A. F. CHAMBERLAIN, B. A.

In the month of August last, the writer paid a visit to the Mississagua settlement on Scugog Island, Lake Scugog, for the purpose of obtaining some accurate and first-hand information regarding the history, folk-lore and language of the small band of Indians resident at that point. While there, he was enabled to obtain a number of archæological specimens and with these the present paper is concerned.

The basin of the chain of inland lakes between Lake Simcoe and the Bay of Quinte has been the scene of many conflicts between the Mississaguas (and Ojebways) and their hereditary enemies the Iroquois (Mohawks). Many spots have been pointed out where the Ojebways and Mohawks, typical representatives of the great Algonquin and Iriquois races, fought many a bloody fight, and even to-day the Indians tell in story the deeds of their combative forefathers; from the Mississaguas one can learn how in the past they broke the might of the Iroquois, and advancing into what is now the province of Ontario, settled there and were its chief possessors when the English came to occupy it in the closing years of the 18th century. For some time after this, occasional forays took place, a party of Mohawks burned an Ojebway village or vice-versa, but the power of the Iroquois was gone although their name (in Mississagua, Natowe) still has to the Ojebway ear a terrible sound.

The shore of Sturgeon Lake (connected with Lake Scugog by the Scugog river) is said to have been the scene of many battles between the Ojebways and the Mohawks, particularly at Bald Point and at Sturgeon Point.

At these places Indian burial grounds existed, which no doubt have long since been rifled of their valuable contents. *Nawigishkoke* (Mrs. Bolin) one of the most intelligent Indians at Scugog, informed me that Oak Orchard, Sturgeon Point was in ancient times the site of a Mohawk encampment and that large numbers of relics have been found there. The Mohawks also visited Scugog Island in the past. Mrs. Bolin showed me a spot—a gravelly point—about a mile from the Indian village, where, some time ago the washing away of the earth had exposed an earthen kettle which was subsequently destroyed. The kettle, she said, was somewhat different in make to those of her people, and she attributed it to the Mohawks.

In a farmer's field opposite the Indian village, Mrs. Bolin's son George found a beautiful white arrow head, since lost.

Some twenty years ago a grave was opened in the township of Cartwright opposite the end of Scugog Island, from which a knife and other relics were obtained. These Mrs. Bolin had seen and said the interment was no doubt made by some of her people.

In a hollow on the right-hand side of the road from Scugog to Port Perry (it is not known exactly where) an Indian chief of some distinction lies buried. When dying, he exclaimed that the "thunders" were coming after him.

On several farms on the Island relics have at various times been discovered; but little care having been taken of them, they have been mostly lost or destroyed.

Luckily, however, in a conversation with Mrs. Bolin, I learned that Mr. Stevens, a

farmer on Nonquon Island was the possessor of some Indian relics and curiosities, so, early the next morning I started for his house which is a short distance from Scugog Post Office.

Nonquon Island (the Indian name is *Minis-i-noncon*—"woods all in one-spot-island"), is not now insular, although it was once so. It is a small area of land situated to the west of Scugog Island from which a marsh (now dry) separates (or rather separated) it. This marsh was once sufficient to insulate the piece of land and hence the name "island" which it still bears.

Mr. Albert C. Stevens, who is a well-to-do and intelligent farmer is the only resident (except the members of his own family) upon the island, which constitutes his farm.

Mr. Stevens after showing me the relics which he kept in the house (and which are now before the meeting), told me that he had formerly had about a bushel of them, but that they had been lost or given away until these only were left. He did not seem at all disposed to part with what remained, but at last I induced him to make them over to me for a small monetary consideration and they will now, I hope, be saved from the mere curiosity hunter and pre-erved for the benefit of science.

Mr. Stevens showed me over his property and described as well as he could recollect the positions in which the various relics had been found. He had been on the island for about four years and every year he had come across some Indian remains. In his oat field, which lies to the north of the house, he had in all ploughed up some fifteen Indian graves. Not all of the graves, however, contained relics, although all had skeletons in them. Two contained bodies that lay head to head, east and west. Four bodies were buried side by side in a row running east and west. Two only were turned north and south. All the skeletons but these, according to Mr. Stevens' recollection were laid east and west. Of the skeletons, three or four were evidently those of young persons or children. A few, in particular, were remarkably large. Mr. Stevens said that the jawbone of one which he had kept for some time was quite abnormal in size.

Most of the graves were situated on a knoll in the field of oats, overlooking the lake, and not far from the shore. A few, however, were on another knoll some distance to the north. In reply to a question, Mr. Stevens stated that he had not noticed any evidence of mound burial on his farm; the skeletons were simply interred with the earth pretty level over them. He also said that he had found no evidence of connection with the whites, in the graves. There was no iron, nor any articles of European manufacture, nor anything that would lead one to suppose that the Indians to whom the interments belong, had entered into relations with white men.

In one grave, only, he found that the body (before the earth was deposited upon it) had been covered with roughly split pieces of wood, now decayed, but not bearing traces of European workmanship.

In only three of the graves had relics been found. The corpse in the grave from which the greater number were obtained had the black chisel-like stone (M X) on his breast; the other relics lettered M, were found under his head around the body. The relics obtained from this grave were as follows: hard black stone chisel (M X); copper chisel; seven arrow heads of various sizes; a flat green shuttle-stone (?) (broken in two), with the three holes, the centre one causing the break, smooth on one side only, indented like a comb at one end, and bearing traces of such indentation at the other which is partly broken off; two long triangular shuttle-stones (?), one rather thick, with two holes in central portion, the other, thinner, unperforated and broken off at the wider end; part of the bowl and part of the stem of a brown stone pipe; one piece (now broken into two) of plumbago, used probably for a pigment; one large bone awl; one harpoon point of bone about six inches long (broken in three pieces); a portion of a bone spear-point; two pieces of deer-horns (formerly much larger) bearing the evidence of decay, also another very small piece of deer-horn (also larger formerly); two portions of the jaw of a bear. Mrs. Stevens said that in the same grave there had been found half a handful of grains of silver which had since been lost.

The articles numbered A to L, viz: one thick, broad, smooth pointed wedge shaped stone; one thick roundish chisel-pointed stone; one large curve-shaped whetstone; one small egg-shaped whetstone, both this and the preceding are of sandstone; two broken pieces of whetstone; one thick, broken, pointed stone; portion of a round sandstone implement with small knob at end, fragment hardly sufficient to show the original use; two unfinished, unperforated shuttle-stones, one of brown the other of brownish white stone, both small; one unfinished (broken) shuttle-stone of hard dark material; one imperfect chisel of green stone; one rough chisel of hard dark stone; one piece of burnt deer horn; one large imperfect gouge (?) of green stone; one fragment exhibiting the process of flint-chipping, were ploughed up at different times on Mr. Stevens' farm.

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Slightly to the west of Mr. Stevens' house, and between it and the lake, is a turnip field. The soil was very brown and no doubt had been burnt. The place was evidently the site of a pottery manufacture and perhaps also of an encampment, as in the soil occasional burnt vertebrae of fishes, teeth of animals and the like were to be found. Mr. Stevens and the writer picked up in the field the pieces of pottery here exhibited, most of them quite small, but of varying types of ornamentation. Formerly larger pieces had been found, but no great care had been taken to collect them. Some very small flints and arrowheads were found here but were afterwards lost. The middle of the turnip field bore every appearance of having been the site of a pottery-burning establishment and the small and minute fragments of pottery were almost innumerable. The occurrence of flint chips would also lead us to suppose that arrows were made there; it was perhaps a regular camp for all purposes.

Mr. Stevens said that many of the more curious axes, gouges and chisels which he had from time to time ploughed up had been given away, and were no doubt scattered in all directions.

Regarding the tribe of Indians to whom the interments belonged, the writer is inclined to attribute them to the ancestors of the present Mississaguas rather than to the Iroquois or Mohawks. The opinion of the Indians at Scugog is also to that effect. The Mississaguas and Ojebways have been acquainted with Scugog Island for over a century and a half. To whomsoever they belong, the interments date from a very early period.

The names ~~present~~ Mississagua names of articles of archæological interest are: awl, *migoos*; axe, *wakakwat*; bow-and-arrows, *mitigwab*; chisel, *eshkon*; (i. e. horn); copper, *osawabik* (yellow metal); fish-hook, *megiskun*; iron, *piwabik*; kettle, *akik*; knife, *mokoman*; pipe, *poagan*; pot (of stone), *okakik*; shot, *shishbanwing* (duck-stones); spear, *onit*; stone, *assen*; wampum, *migis*. The name of the chisel, "eshkon" which really means "horn" shows of what material that implement was made in the past; "shot" is rendered by a word signifying "duck-stones," stones for killing ducks with; "copper" is the "yellow metal;" "iron" the metal that "crumbs off."

Names of articles introduced by the whites have descriptive names attached to them as in the case of the word for "shot" cited above. Lead is *oshkikwomin* (meaning it can be cut with a knife); a looking-glass, is *wabimolchichagunun* (where they see ghosts, no doubt referring to the reflected image); a razor is *gashkibadjin* (a scraper); tin is *wababik* (white metal); a trunk or box is *mitigwash* (from *mitig*, wood).

The specimens treated of in this paper are now in the Museum of the Canadian Institute, Toronto, and the desirability of making the collection there as perfect as possible cannot be too earnestly impressed upon those under whose notice objects of archæological interest may from time to time come.