

Minutes of the 838th Meeting of the Brodie Club,
Faunal Laboratory, U. of T. February 16, 1988.

Chairman: W. Carrick

Secretary J. F. Bendell

The Minutes of the 837th meeting were read by Auger and accepted as read.
Moved by Auger, seconded by Sherry.

Guests of members were: S. Munroe, Carrick; V. Esses, Sherry; H. Mattila
and J. Kovacs, Savage; and M. Corkill, Auger.

Since the speaker was to appear at 2030, the meeting began with members
notes and observations.

Boissoneau saw a Bohemian Waxwing at Blackwater, Ontario.

Bodsworth said there was a rumour the C.W.S. found an Eskimo Curlew on
the Anderson River last summer.

Mattila reported the finding of Painted Turtle shells at the Palaeo-Indian
west bog site near London, Ontario. The remains were butchered and near a
fire pit suggesting their use as food.

Savage asked how many warm days and cool nights, as in the recent weather,
before the maple sap begins to rise?

Crosby revisited Big Trout Lake after 15 years and noted some of the old
problems of hygiene (e.g. impetago) were gone but the people had new
problems of obesity, hypertension, and diabetes. Perhaps a fatty diet and
less exercise are to blame. There are also problems with increased
numbers of about 1,000, concentration of people, and the disposal of
sewage. There is a sewage lagoon. Lynx may fetch \$1,000 per pelt.

Bendell saw a Great Gray Owl beside Highway 560 near Highway 144. He also
chased a Snowshoe Hare down the road by van. The hare ran at 30-40 km/hr
for over a kilometer and then was killed in collision with a school bus.
Its pelt was white on the surface but brown below.

The speaker was introduced by Savage: Dr. Peter L. Storck, Curator of New
World Archaeology at the ROM. He talked on the first people of Ontario.

Dr. Storck was hired to find the first people of Ontario and how they
lived; the Palaeo-Indians. The first humans to North America migrated
from Asia to the NW tip of Alaska and the Kenai peninsula and thence
through an ice-free corridor in the last glaciers roughly along what is
now the B.C. Alberta border, about 20,000 years ago. They are known by
their fluted spear tips and called the early fluted culture. The "flute"
is the long groove in the middle of the base of the point designed to join
with a slot in the shaft of the spear. The Palaeo-Indians were hunters
and gatherers and spread and lived over North America from Alaska to New
Brunswick and west and south to Guatemala. In Montana and farther west
they are called to the Clovis culture.

The first people were in southern Ontario roughly 14,000 years ago and occupied an area of approximately the Carolinian Zone. Dr. Storck made a breakthrough in finding evidence of the fluted culture when he found the search of strand lines of Glacial Lake Algonquin gave relatively rich yields of artifacts. Approximately 10,000-12,000 years ago Palaeo-Indians were located about the ancient glacial lake near present London, Collingwood, Alliston, Georgian Bay, Udora, and Lake Simcoe. Remains include: gravers, slitting tool, child's toy, and thick to thin points with rough to delicate fluting. Organic remains consist of 293 g. of bone fragments that have been identified to cervid, white-tailed deer, rabbit, and canid, probably fox.

Why should the first peoples be located on the lake shore? What was their general environment, and how did they live?

There is little information to answer these questions. One speculation is the vegetation was open spruce and arctic shrub with caribou the main quarry. (But this does not conform with the bone remains, J.F.B.). Location on strands may have provided fish and interception of migrating caribou. (It would also give relief from biting insects, J.F.B.). Where was the glacier and what effects did it have? The recovery of bones may be influenced by the practice of returning them to the soil and water to appease the spirits of the animals from whence they came.

There followed a lively question period which revealed the following: Spear points may retain traces of hafting material of plant or animal origin; there is little evidence for a major influence by trans Pacific migration; the Inuit are more recent arrivals to North America than Indians; the original Aleut and Athabaska Indians were the most primitive; Collingwood was the site of a quarry for fluted points; the difficulty caused by disturbed strata in detecting sequence; Palaeo-Indians were in Arizona and Ontario at the same time; geologists helped identify the source of stone from which points were made and dropped 185 km away; A.D. 1,000 marks the appearance of bow and arrow; regretfully, sites are lost steadily to such modern developments as a chicken coop; and people would see the ice front at 50 km but at 300 km it would be out of sight and possibly recognition.

The speaker was thanked by Biossoneau who thought the lecture was terrific and praised the wedding of geology and archaeology. He found the talk of particular interest because the work was done in his own baliwick.

(Note: Dr. Storck has written a booklet called "Ontario Prehistory" in the ROM Insight Series, 1981. J.F.B.).