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# The Mississauga at the Head-of-the-Lake: Examining Responses to Cultural Upheaval at the Close of the Fur Trade

## **Cover Page Footnote**

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# The Mississauga at the Head-of-the-Lake: Examining Responses to Cultural Upheaval at the Close of the Fur Trade

John R. Triggs

*Between 1780 and 1810 the Mississauga, a member of the Algonquian speaking family of native groups in southern Ontario, experienced the disintegration of a 150 year old subsistence economy based on a seasonal round of hunting, gathering, fishing, and participation in the fur trade. Faced with a decreasing demand for furs and the loss of land through a series of surrenders to the Crown, the Mississauga were excluded from participation in the new agricultural economy, and within a period of two decades they became a marginalized people within Upper Canadian society. Excavations at the Beasley site, in Hamilton, Ontario provide an opportunity to examine the Mississauga during this turbulent period in their history. Analysis of artifact assemblages from selected stratigraphic contexts at the site provides unique insight into adaptations occurring at this time. An analysis of glass trade beads, miscellaneous trade goods, native-made lithics, ceramics and faunal remains suggests that despite experiencing cultural upheaval the Mississauga were able to preserve elements of their traditional lifeways and ethnic identity.*

*Entre 1780 et 1810, les Mississauga, membres de la famille des autochtones de langue algonquienne du sud de l'Ontario, ont vécu la désintégration de leur économie de subsistance, vieille de 150 ans, basée sur la chasse saisonnière, la cueillette, la pêche et la traite des fourrures. Confrontés à une demande décroissante de fourrures et à la perte de territoire à cause d'une série de cessions à la Couronne, les Mississauga ont été exclus de toute participation à la nouvelle économie agricole et sont devenus, en moins de deux décennies, des gens marginalisés dans la société du Haut Canada. Les fouilles au site Beasley à Hamilton en Ontario fournissent une occasion d'examiner les Mississauga durant cette période turbulente de leur histoire. L'analyse des assemblages d'artefacts de contextes stratigraphiques sélectionnés offre un aperçu unique des adaptations ayant eu lieu à cette période. Une analyse des perles de verre de traite, des biens de traite variés, des outils de pierre autochtone, ainsi que des vestiges de céramique et zoologiques suggère que, malgré le fait qu'ils aient connu un bouleversement culturel, les Mississauga ont pu préserver des éléments de leur mode de vie et de leur identité ethnique.*

## Introduction

Archaeological investigation of the late-18th- to early-19th-century Beasley fur trading complex seeks to better understand the changing relationship between participants in the fur trade; namely, the Mississauga and Richard Beasley. A wealth of documentation exists for Richard Beasley, the first settler at the Head-of-the-Lake, as the western end of Lake Ontario was known. Considerably less is known of the Mississauga. Although references for this aboriginal group can be culled from contemporary accounts, these often reflect a biased white Euro-Canadian perspective. Richard Beasley's correspondence and records do not mention the Mississauga by name, but use "Indian," despite the fact that they were partners in the fur trade economy for almost two decades. As a social group deprived of the rights of the majority of the population, our knowledge of the disenfranchised Mississauga is greatly enhanced by combining archaeological information with the

sparse documentary sources. In fact, questions posed in the current study can only be addressed through the interplay of historical and archaeological data because one source in itself is insufficient to provide an adequate understanding of the cultural dynamics at this time and place.

Fur trade sites are often characterized as places where two different cultures meet and interact on a daily basis. On these sites, new patterns of behavior resulting from material or non-material exchange may result in a complex cultural dynamic. In some cases, influences on material culture and the less tangible aspects of culture, such as social organization, ideology and belief systems, are reciprocal with both groups adopting or sharing some traits of the other culture. Importantly, these exchanges are not always balanced (Turgeon et al. 1996: 38). In trade transactions, the Euro-Canadian partner provided desired goods to the native partners who perceived the transac-

tion to be an equal or balanced exchange of furs for trade items, despite the fact that in monetary terms the trader received a profit. Viewed in symbolic terms, the actual monetary value of the goods exchanged can be relegated to a lesser role if the transfer of goods serves to maintain a social relationship both parties view as beneficial. The important aspect of such exchanges is that a

...cultural transfer arises from a balance of power between the two groups that conduct exchanges in order to assert themselves and to acquire something belonging to the other. . . . For this exchange to function—even when unequal—it must be based upon some measure of reciprocity. The act of giving entails the expectation of receiving in return (Turgeon et al. 1996: 38).

An unbalanced type of exchange may occur, however, when one partner believes the value of the goods received is not commensurate with the value of items traded. For the Mississauga, the period 1780 to 1810 saw the depletion of resources due to over-trapping and a shift to undesirable types of pelts of lower quality. These new commodities commanded lower prices in the overseas market and as a consequence the native partners were provided with fewer and lower quality trade goods. Changes in the larger market economy and the cessation of the fur trade at the western end of Lake Ontario brought to an end the familiar barter economy that had characterized Mississauga relations with Europeans for over two centuries.

Culture contact situations on fur trade sites can also produce a variety of cultural changes. These transformations may generate new social or biological groups (Turgeon et al. 1996: 38), creolization, and/or material culture imbued with meanings reflecting the duality of the European-native encounter (Mullins and Paynter 2000; Turgeon et al. 1996: 38). In their study of ethnographic collections, Quimby and Spoehr (1951) offer one of the earliest systematic inquiries into material culture changes occurring as a result of contact between natives and Europeans. The application of these findings to archaeological assemblages was later done by Quimby (1966) in one of the earliest acculturation studies in the field of his-

torical archaeology. Research in this field continues although the more recent term "cultural transfer studies" introduced by Turgeon et al. (1996), is perhaps more useful for understanding the nature of contact studies. This concept is intended to reflect the fact that all cultures in contact situations undergo transformations linked with interaction and mutual appropriation of cultural traits. The archaeological study of culture contact requires a systematic approach to analyzing material culture. Despite the development of several classification systems useful for studies in acculturation or culture transfer (Nicks 1970; Cheek 1974; Farnsworth 1992) however, all suffer from the common problem of identifying with certainty the users of specific artifacts. Different cultural groups adapting to similar sets of environmental, social, and economic conditions will often use the same material culture.

At the Beasley site, European-made artifacts are found in association with artifacts which are in many cases attributed to native people. Modified European items such as perforated thimbles and hawk bells found together with cord-marked ceramics and chipped stone tools, strongly point to aboriginal users. On the other hand, when creamware, pearlware, glass trade beads, lead shot, and musket flints, are found in association, the answer is not always as clear. In the development of a trait list for late-18th- and early-19th-century fur trade sites, Nicks (1970) attributes these and other items found at trading posts exclusively to Europeans, apparently without considering the possibility that native people may have been using some of the items themselves. This interpretation was made despite the fact that native people often encamped at trading posts for short periods of time or in some cases even established semi-permanent villages at frontier locations such as Fort Michilimackinac (Stone 1974; Scott 1991).

In contact situations such as these where both cultures are known to have been present on a site and the users' identity may be in doubt, the archaeological context can often provide some insight, offering clues to the systemic context of the artifacts (Schiffer 1972). At

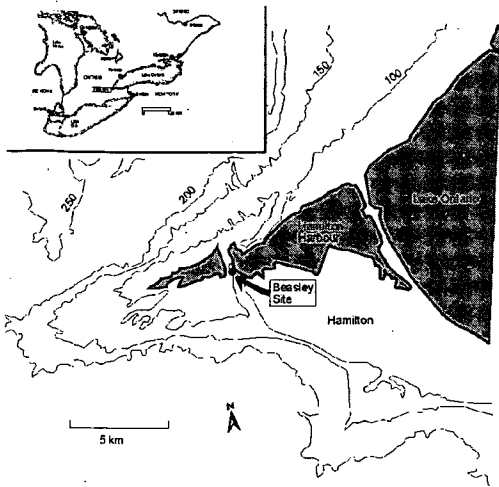


Figure 1. Plan of western end of Lake Ontario—the Head-of-the-Lake.

the Beasley site artifacts were recovered from three different contexts: floor/sub-floor deposits within a military storehouse; a fur trade store; and a floor deposit within a native habitation (Triggs 1997, 1998). This analysis interprets the storehouse/store contexts as comprised of items in storage and not yet in circulation among native people and interprets artifacts from the wigwam context as objects in use; i.e., worn by the people and entering the archaeological record through everyday activities resulting in loss or discard. Importantly, it is the stratigraphic evidence that provides the key to the interpretation.

Stratigraphic recording and analysis at the Beasley site (AhGx-26) (FIG. 1) was carried out using the Harris matrix (Harris 1989). Since excavations began, hundreds of layers, features, and interfaces have been recorded in about 60 separate excavation units in a 165 square-meter area. A large part of the post-excavation analysis has been to correlate layers in separate units in order to construct a complete site matrix (Carter 1999). The stratigraphic sequence at the Beasley site is complex: cultural and natural agents have created not only a deep site—over two meters in depth on average—but also a site that includes buildings associated with the fur trade, the military

presence during the war of 1812, and dwellings and features associated with the native inhabitants.

### Partners in Trade—Richard Beasley and the Mississauga at the Head-of-the-Lake

In 1777, at sixteen years of age, Richard Beasley came to the Niagara region from Albany (Ontario Historical Society 1927: 26). Within a few years Beasley established himself as a merchant who traded with the Mississauga and supplied goods to newly arrived settlers. In her diary for June 11, 1796, Elizabeth Simcoe refers to Beasley as the “Indian trader . . . trading being his only occupation” (Robertson 2001[1911]: 324). Between 1786 and 1796 commodities imported by Beasley include items such as shrouds (unspecified articles of clothing), blankets, powder, shot, textiles, silver works, and nails. Contemporary government lists of “Indian presents” (Smith 1850: 513–514) and goods ordered by the British Indian Department for military posts on the Great Lakes (Ferris et al. 1985) indicate that these types of items were distributed to native allies and also functioned as trade goods. Mrs. Simcoe’s comments notwithstanding, Beasley’s other imports dating from this period (goods such as rum, earthenware, window glass, smithing bellows, tumblers, stoves, soap and candles) were probably also intended for the small number of Euro-Canadian settlers beginning to arrive in the region. It is equally possible that the Mississauga or the Six Nations Iroquois settled in many of the newly established agricultural settlements on the Grand River may have been the intended consumers for some of these goods, as suggested by similar items found at the Mohawk Village site (Kenyon and Ferris 1983).

Between 1786 and 1795, Beasley’s shipments to Kingston included furs, predominantly muskrat, and also flour from Beasley’s mill in Ancaster (NAC 1792). The shipment of flour indicates the diversified nature of Beasley’s enterprise, but this may also be viewed as an indication that the fur trade, as a viable economic activity unto itself, may have

been coming to a close. The gradual decline in the fur trade is documented in Beasley's account book as a decrease in quantity, quality and types of furs being traded (predominantly muskrat and deer, with lesser amounts of wildcat, wolf, fox, marten, moose, bear and beaver). Losses were considerable between 1792 and 1794, totaling over £650 (Ontario Archives 1793; hereafter "OA"), an extraordinary sum for an independent trader. Acting on a recommendation from his cousin Richard Cartwright, Beasley was instructed to sell pelts "on the spot" in Canada rather than "trusting to the London market" (OA 1794). By 1795, although muskrats were bringing a good price (OA 1795a) and "rising in value," other pelts were "no better than last year" (OA 1795b). After a hiatus of four years, in which no furs were shipped, correspondence between Cartwright and Beasley between 1799 and 1802 indicate that Beasley's role in the fur trade had changed such that he now functioned as a middleman. Furs brought to Beasley by local traders were forwarded to Cartwright, presumably for a smaller profit, but also at reduced financial risk. However, even this middleman position was short-lived and by August 1802, the date of the last shipment to Kingston, Beasley's involvement in the fur trade was over.

As the fur trade was suffering in the 1790s, Beasley was experiencing enormous losses due to poor fur sales and his inability to collect monies owed (OA 1796). It is during this time of financial stress that he appears to have adopted a policy of land speculation. Numerous requests for land can be found in correspondence with the Surveyor General's Office between 1794 and 1802 (OA 1794-1802). The largest purchase of over 60,000 acres of land, comprising Block 2, later Waterloo Township, was made in 1796. While this strategy of land speculation may have been successful for Beasley, the purchase and sale of land in the western part of the province at this time was ultimately at the expense of his former trading partners, the Mississauga, who were witnessing the end of a lifeway based on the fur trade.

## The Mississauga

The Mississauga were the dominant indigenous cultural group in southern Ontario for about a century from the 1690s to 1784. Due to a peculiar set of historical circumstances, today the "Mississauga" are recognized by historians and ethnohistorians as the people who settled on the north shore of Lake Ontario at the end of the 17th century. At the Head-of-the-Lake, the term was thought to be a reference to the Eagle clan or totem to which a quarter of the population belonged; the Ojibwa word for this clan was *Ma-se-sau-gee* (Smith 1988: 20). Documentary references in the 18th and 19th centuries, however, indicate that the Mississauga ranged widely over a territory stretching from the Detroit border to Kingston and from the Niagara region to Georgian Bay. Consequently, band or clan membership may have been in a constant state of flux during this period such that any mention of the "Mississauga" in the documentary record, when this does occur, should be regarded as a non-specific reference to the any of the numerous Mississauga clans, totems or small bands occupying this large territory. Nonetheless, the shared aspects of Mississauga society in terms of language, lifeways, material culture and ideology serve to identify the Mississauga at the Head-of-the-Lake as a part of this larger cultural entity.

The history of the Mississauga people in the 17th and 18th centuries has been chronicled by modern historians (Smith 1975, 1981) and the Mississauga themselves in the 19th century (Copway 1850; Jones 1861). Their history during this period is one of shifting alliances between the French and British, the colonial powers who were vying for control of the continent. At the close of the Seven Years War, under the newly claimed British territory, the Royal Proclamation recognized the Mississauga as the sole proprietors of the millions of acres of land comprising present-day southern Ontario. Although seemingly noble in principle, the Proclamation essentially commodified land, which in the next four decades would be surrendered as new settlers arrived. The dispossession of the Mississauga (Smith 1981) between 1763 and 1805 is exemplified by a series of treaties in which the land was "sold" to the Crown in exchange for "presents

in perpetuity" and for assurances that the Mississauga would be allowed to continue their traditional way of life and would in no way be denied access to the land which they had relinquished (Smith 1981).

In Ontario, specifically in the region surrounding the Head-of-the-Lake, the surrenders began in 1781 in response to the first influx of settlers/refugees to the Niagara peninsula during the America Revolution. Smith (1981: 72) contends that at the request of the British government to make land available to the new settlers, the Mississauga willingly agreed to the surrenders in order not to interrupt the flow of goods on which they had become so dependent. Another reason for their acquiescence to British demands for land lay in the principle of reciprocity that was an important element of Ojibwa society.

...interaction with Europeans was important because of the valuable technology Europeans brought with them. Reciprocity was necessary to keep the system operating. Without gifts and respect, Europeans would not be so helpful to the Indian people. They would withhold their technology from Indian people. Without gifts and respect, the system would cease to function (White 1999: 111).

Perhaps for these reasons, over the next twelve years, the weakly organized Mississauga at the Head-of-the-Lake, surrendered the region encompassed by the headwaters of the Grand River in the northwest to Long Point on Lake Erie in the south and as far east as the Niagara River. In all, over 3,000,000 acres were surrendered for £1200 worth of gifts (Smith 1981: 74). By 1805, other Mississauga bands had surrendered all land along the north shore of Lake Ontario in several "gunshot treaties"; a term understood by the Mississauga to mean surrendered territory as far inland as could be heard from a gunshot fired on the lakeshore, but interpreted differently by the whites. One year later the remaining Mississauga at the western end of Lake Ontario retained only three small parcels at the mouths of the Credit River, Twelve and Sixteen Mile Creeks.

These land surrenders had devastating consequences for the Mississauga people. Despite assurances of having continued access to the land, the Mississauga soon realized that land sold was land lost. The surrendered lands

were granted to settlers who deforested huge tracts as land was cleared for planting, gradually transforming the former fur trade frontier into an agricultural society. The period of good relations passed quickly as the Mississauga learned the British interpretation of the land surrenders and the meaning of land ownership. Access to the land was denied as they found they were no longer allowed to cross over white persons' farms. Cut off from their traditional livelihood of hunting, trapping, fishing, and horticulture (corn and wild rice), the Mississauga became increasingly hostile. In the mid-1790s, concerned that the Mississauga might attack settlements, the government enlisted the aid of Mohawk Chief Joseph Brant, whom the Mississauga regarded as an ally and spokesperson (Smith 1981: 76, 78), to quell the incipient uprising.

The 1790s were a particularly catastrophic period for the Mississauga in other ways. Smallpox outbreaks in 1793 and 1796 killed as many as one-third of the people in some bands (Smith 1981: 80). Alcohol abuse was rife among the Mississauga at this time as both settlers and traders exchanged rum for fish and venison. Serious malnutrition, coupled with alcohol addiction, contributed to a general apathy among the Mississauga living on the fringes of towns such as York (Toronto) (FIG. 2) and Cataraqui (Kingston) (FIG. 3). Also, in 1797, the looting of native burial sites had reached such proportions that the authorities were forced to issue a proclamation to protect them (Smith 1981: 81). The assault on the population was in some cases very literal as Mississauga women were molested in garrison towns by soldiers and in more than a single instance men were beaten and killed by soldiers (Simcoe 1792 in Cruikshank 1925c: 21; Smith 1981: 77).

Exacerbating these problems was the fact that by the late 1790s the Mississauga and western Ojibwa bands were reliant, if not dependent (Ferris 1989: 265), on European goods and the services that had previously been available through the fur trade economy. This dependence on trade goods stems from the American Revolution when firearms, ammunition, axes, iron kettles and wool clothing were distributed freely to the native allies (Smith 1981: 71). However, two decades

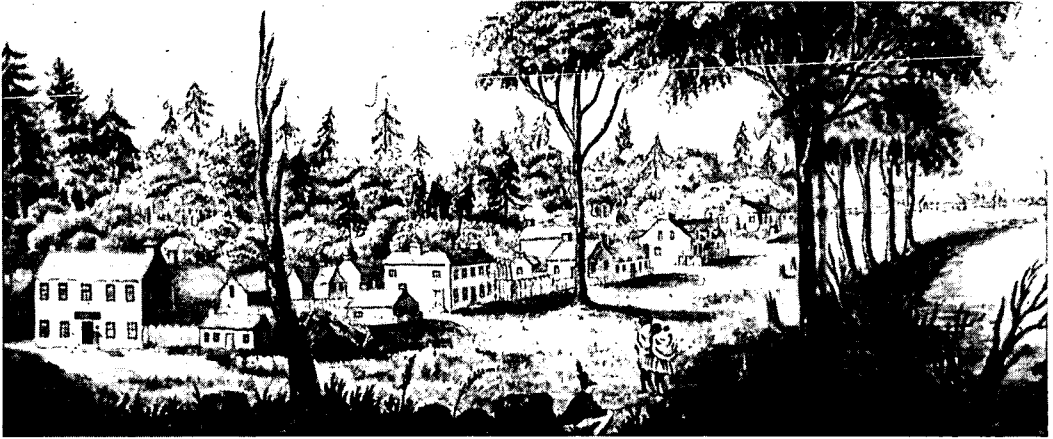


Figure 2. York the intended capital of Upper Canada as it appeared in the Autumn of 1803, by Surgeon Edward Walsh, 49th Regiment. Toronto Reference Library.



Figure 3. A view of Cataract on the entrance of Lake Ontario in Canada taken from Capt. Brant's house, July 18, 1783 by James Peachey.

of unrestricted access to goods had its disadvantages, as blacksmiths were now needed to repair muskets and imported wares became a large part of Mississauga culture (Smith 1981: 81). Although the degree of dependence on fur trade goods is debatable, it is clear that by this period in their history the Mississauga and

other Ojibwa had incorporated European material culture into their way of life (Ferris et al. 1985: 19). With the collapse of the fur trade and the loss of land, the traditional means of acquiring these goods in any quantity was no longer an option for the Mississauga. These changes made poverty an economic reality,

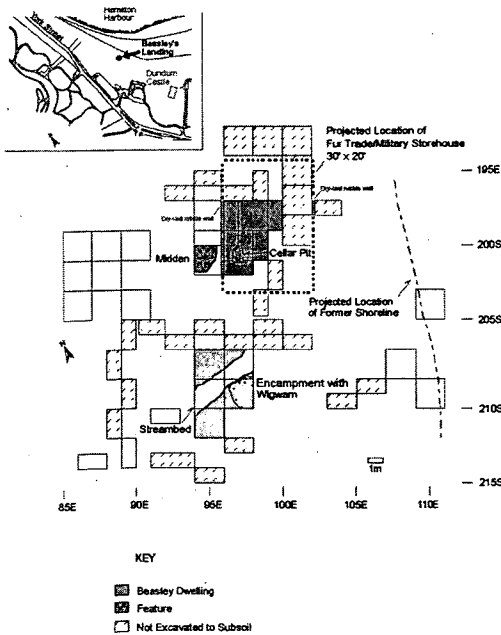


and this social condition came to be seen by the Euro-Canadian population as an inherent genetic trait. The white population could not comprehend the factors that accounted for the social disintegration occurring before their eyes.

There are Mississauga Indians here. They are an unwarlike, idle, drunken, dirty tribe. I observe how extremes meet. These uncivilized people saunter up and down the town all day with the apparent nonchalance, want of occupation and indifference that seems to possess the London beaux in Bond Street (Simcoe in Robertson 2001[1911]: 115).

Euro-Canadian historical accounts of the Mississauga from this period must therefore be read within the context of an emerging, and later, pervasive racism. The Euro-Canadian population was coming into contact with a people who had in less than a generation witnessed the eclipse of a way of life that had characterized their existence for more than 150 years.

Figure 4. Plan of the Beasley Landing Site showing key features.



## Cultural Dynamics at the Beasley Site

At the close of the 18th century the Mississauga were clearly a people in distress. In this context, archaeological remains from the Beasley site provide evidence for understanding the strategies adopted by both Euro-Canadians and native people as they adapted to the new economic circumstances signaled by the end of the fur trade. Four contexts at the Beasley landing site dating to 1785–1815 are discussed: Richard Beasley's dwelling and storehouse; the midden; the War of 1812 period storehouse for trade goods; and the Mississauga encampment. Analyses of stratigraphy and available documentary sources provide the basis for identifying the function of the structures and features and also for constructing a fine-grained chronological framework with which to examine the site diachronically over a 30-year period.

### Richard Beasley's Dwelling and Storehouse

The earliest historic period occupation and first permanent European structure at the Head-of-the-Lake is a dwelling. The remains of this structure comprise a dry-laid rubble wall foundation, traces of a fireplace, a single floorboard and a clay-lined cellar pit measuring about 1.2 m (4 ft) square and about 70 cm (28 in) deep (FIG. 4). Artifacts found in the cellar pit fill include glass trade beads, a musket lockplate and mid-to-late-18th-century ceramics such as white salt-glazed stoneware (FIG. 5a), "rosso antico," creamware and large shards of window glass, suggestive of primary deposition. Analysis of artifacts, stratigraphy, and historical documents identifies this structure as Richard Beasley's dwelling constructed sometime around 1785.

The first depiction of this building is from a 1793 plan of Flamborough Township (FIG. 6). Geographically, the structure was strategically situated at the juncture of roads, trails and the lake route, which together formed a communication network stretching along the Niagara peninsula to Newark, west to the headwaters of the Thames River, northeast to York and southwest to the Grand River where the Six Nations were settled. The location was consid-

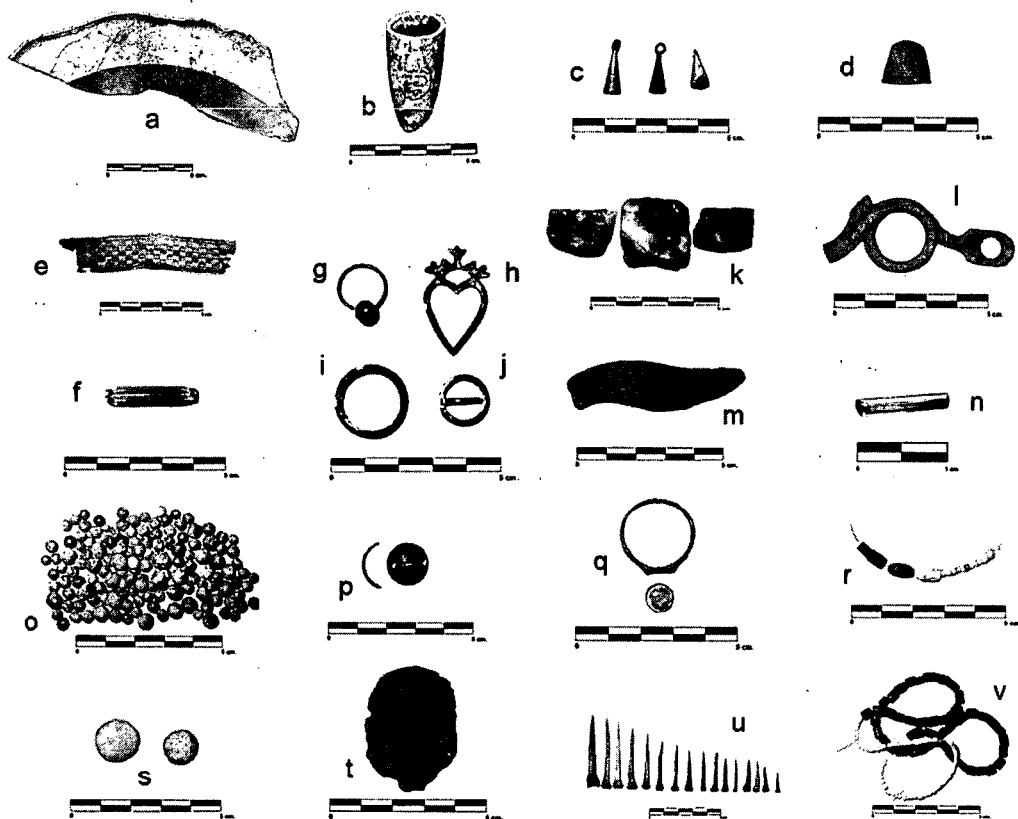


Figure 5. Selection of artifacts found in contexts from the Beasley Landing: a) white salt-glazed stoneware—cellar context (burnt); b) smoking pipe bowl with TD impressed design; c) silver tinkling cones; d) brass thimble; e) silver lace uniform trim; f) tube bead—layered, marvered, striped and ground ends (Kidd IIIa1 type) cellar context; g) silver ear bob; h) silver heart brooch; i) circular brooch; j) circular brooch with clasp; k) grey flint gunspalls; l) modified dragon motif musket sideplate; m) sideplate fragment India pattern musket; n) green glass tube bead (Kidd type Ia10); o) lead shot; p) hawk bell pieces; q) brass finger ring with glass setting; r) tube, wound and seed beads; s) lead musket balls; t) cord-marked native ceramic; u) bone awls; v) black tube and white seed beads (Kidd type Ia2 and IIa11 predominantly).

ered important enough to place on a map and was well known to travelers:

February 10th, 1793. \_ We did not leave the Mohawk Village till noon when we set out with J. Brant, and about 12 Indians, came to an encampment of the Mississagas and slept at the Trader's house (Simcoe 1793 in Cruikshank 1925a: 289).

Three years later, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe and his wife, Elizabeth, arrived at Beasley's house where they stayed as guests and feasted on salmon and tortoise (Robertson 2001[1911]: 324). Elizabeth Simcoe's diary

entry of June, 1796 records details of the place and provides the only known depiction of Beasley's house (FIG. 7). Beasley's dwelling is shown as a log cabin situated on a small rise of land near the lakeshore with a wharf visible in the foreground. A pathway leads to the top of Burlington Heights from which another watercolor was produced looking west toward Coote's Paradise on the opposite side of the peninsula (FIG. 8). Elizabeth Simcoe writes

... we set out in a boat to go to Beasley's, at the head of Burlington Bay ... the river and bay were full of canoes; the Indians were fishing; we bought some fine salmon of them. When we

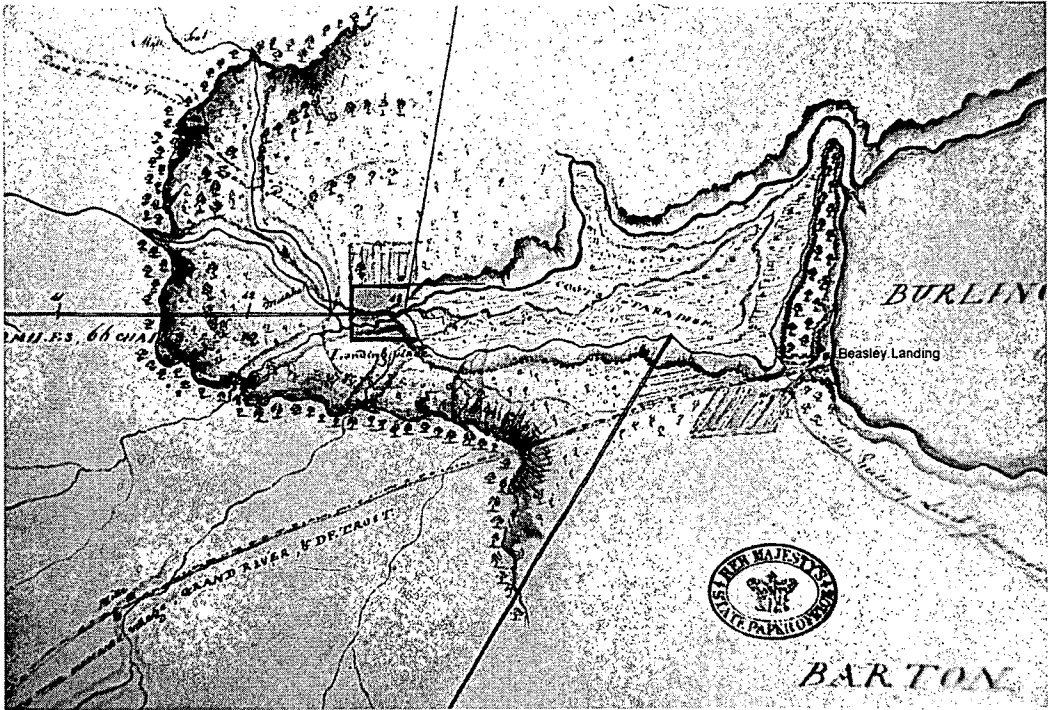


Figure 6. [1793?] Detail from Map of the River Thames from L. St. Clair to Oxford and the Road from Oxford to Burlington Bay and His Excellency Lieut. Governor Simcoe's Route to Detroit from Niagara, February 1793. Public Records Office, London.

had near crossed the bay, Beasley's house became a very pretty object. We landed at it, and walked up the hill. . . the hill is quite like a park with large oak trees dispersed but no underwood." (Robertson 2001 [1911]: 323).

Elizabeth Simcoe's descriptions and sketches allow us to envision Beasley's house and the surrounding landscape and, more importantly, to establish a chronology for the

sequence of construction that occurred between 1796 and 1800. A notice of sale placed in the *Canadian Constellation* on June 21, 1800 mentions a comfortable dwelling house, stables, a 100 x 52 ft (30 x 15.8 m) wharf, as well as a 30 x 20 ft (9.1 x 6.1 m) storehouse. The dwelling house, stables, and wharf are all pictured in Simcoe's 1796 sketch, while the storehouse is not (FIG. 7). A 1798 petition by Beasley

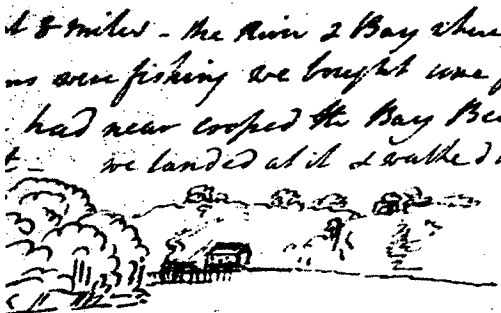


Figure 7. Detail of Beasley's house at the landing from Elizabeth Simcoe's diary, June 11, 1796. Ontario Archives, Beasley Family Fonds F47.



Figure 8. Burlington Bay, from Elizabeth Simcoe's diary, June 11, 1796 (Beasley in background?). Ontario Archives, F47-11-1-0-204.

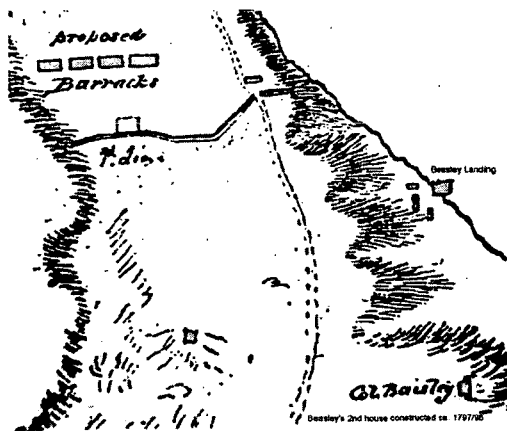


Figure 9. Detail from plan of Burlington Heights, in Lt. Col. R.H. Bruyère's letter to Sir George Prevost of 4 September 1813. National Archives of Canada, RG-8, I, vol 387, p.106.

for obtaining title to disputed land lists the dimensions of the house and describes a barn and outbuildings:

...that your Petitioner has improved the whole of the Broken fronts on those lots and has many Buildings thereon namely a house forty two feet by twenty four an outhouse thirty feet by twenty a stable thirty feet square with a barn and other small Buildings (NAC 1797/99).

The storehouse and wharf formed part of a complex referred to by Beasley as the "landing" (OA 1798) situated on the lakeshore. The other buildings—the house, barn, stables and unspecified outbuildings—were more likely situated on top of Burlington Heights in proximity to the cultivated fields shown on the 1793 plan (FIG. 6). On the basis of the dimensions provided in the 1798 document, the "house" almost certainly refers to Beasley's second dwelling depicted on a plan dated 1813 (FIG. 9) and subsequently described as a "commodious brick cottage" (*Western Mercury* 1833). The foundations of this structure can be seen today inside Dundurn Castle.

Based on this documentary information Beasley's first house would have ceased to be used as a dwelling sometime between 1796 and 1798. An analysis of the stratigraphy and features exposed during the excavation, suggest that this original log house was enlarged and re-used as a storehouse during this period (FIG. 4). Rubble wall foundations exposed in

1997 and 2003 provide evidence for a building measuring approximately 30 × 20 ft (9.1 × 6.1 m), the same dimensions as the storehouse first described in 1798. Analysis of stratigraphy from this area indicates that this later and larger structure was built in the same location as the earlier log cabin.

### The Midden

A large midden was found adjacent to the Beasley storehouse foundation wall in a stratigraphic context contemporary with the building. Most of the material found in the feature, a pit measuring about 2 m (6 ft 6 in) square and 1 m (3 ft 3 in) deep filled with several layers of oily, black organic sediment, consists of thousands of pieces of highly fragmented animal bone together with chert debitage, and a few pieces of native-made ceramic. European-made objects include a single wrought iron nail, several glass beads, a single piece of lead shot and a smoking pipe bowl fragment. In her analysis of the faunal material from the feature, Rinaldi (2002) argues strongly for an occupation by the Mississauga at this time. This conclusion is based on the recovery of species indicative of the Mississauga seasonal round; e.g., muskrat, deer, freshwater drum and duck. Documentary evidence, discussed below, provides a tentative date for the formation of the midden between 1802 and 1812, after Beasley was no longer active in the fur trade and prior to the occupation of the landing by the British military.

### The Military Period Store House

Between 1802 and 1812 the landing continued to function as a place where goods brought by boat were offloaded and stored. However, by this time Beasley was no longer directly involved in the fur trade and was instead engaged in land speculation and other mercantile pursuits. Despite an 1802–1811 gap in the written records, entries in Beasley's account book (DC 1812–1837) indicate that in 1812 and 1813 he was still active in transshipping goods for settlers. Thus when the British military arrived at Burlington Heights in the fall of 1813, a plan of that date showing three structures and a wharf at the landing (FIG. 9)

suggests that Beasley had constructed two other building between ca.1802 and 1812, in addition to the existing storehouse.

Archaeological evidence for one of these structures has been recovered. Documentary sources indicate that Beasley's house, storehouse and barn were rented by the military from 1813–1815 (NAC 1823). Although only a single military artifact was recovered—a side-plate from an India pattern musket (FIG. 5m)—other artifacts recovered include a variety of trade objects such as glass beads, silver jewelry, thousands of lead shot (FIG. 5o), dozens of identical musket balls (FIG. 5s) and other fur trade goods, none of which displayed the modifications evident on items such as hawk bells, thimbles and tinkling cones recovered from the encampment contexts. All artifacts were found in two primary contexts, a floor and sub-floor layer overlain by several secondary fill layers distinct from those layers associated with the Beasley fur trade period dwelling and storehouse. In view of the fact that this structure is in a later stratigraphic context relative to the Beasley dwelling and storehouse it is interpreted as the trade store used by the British military during the war. Based on the primary contexts from which the materials were recovered, and also on the types of goods found, artifacts within the building suggest storage rather than use; i.e., items possibly intended for native people either as military "presents" or items of trade.

### The Encampment

A short distance away from the structures discussed above is an area identified as a small encampment (FIG. 4). Evidence for a stream bed was found in the form of a shallow channel with sloping slides bisecting the excavation area into north and south sections. On the south side of the former creek a shelter is indicated by eight small posts each measuring about 10 cm (4 in) in diameter. A diverse assortment of artifacts is concentrated within the structure in an area measuring about two square meters and, except for the lithic debitage, relatively few artifacts are found in excavation units on the exterior of the shelter. The evidence strongly suggests a lean-to tent or wigwam, depictions of which are found in

association with native people encamped on the outer periphery of towns such as York (FIG. 2) and Kingston in the late-18th century (FIG. 3).

A documentary source provides evidence for this being a native encampment during the war period. In his War Loss Claim in 1816, Beasley requested compensation for damages done to his property by British soldiers and the "Indians encamped in my meadows" between June 1, 1813 and September 1, 1815 (NAC 1823). Military uniform accouterments recovered provide supporting evidence for the date of the encampment. These include a fragment of a shako plate, epaulette braid and a silver sleeve ribbon/facing (FIG. 5e). These items aside, the remaining artifacts (FIG. 5) include types that are often associated with native people: glass beads, trade silver, lead shot, a chief's button (large ornamental buttons given to "Chiefs" by the British which were worn as a symbol of prestige), spall gunflints (honey-blonde/pale brown and grey), and a trade musket ramrod tip and trigger guard, all of which suggest that this may be the meadow to which Beasley is referring. Other material also supports a native, rather than a European, occupation: a modified pipe stem made into a bead, a ground stone pipe bowl, lithic debitage, native ceramics and modified trade items.

Attributing the encampment to the Mississauga specifically is based on the dwelling style, a wigwam, and the location, on the water's edge near a marsh. This type of settlement pattern is typical of the Mississauga traditional lifeways as related by Copway (1850) and Jones (1861). Also, the fact that the encampment is located in close proximity to the fur trade store is significant since this would have been a familiar place for camping and trading used by the Mississauga for over a generation prior to the outbreak of war.

### Trade Beads

A collection of 3754 glass trade beads and a small number of wampum were recovered from the Beasley fur trade storehouse/dwelling, the military storehouse and the encampment (TAB. 1). These were analyzed to provide information on ethnicity, in light of the fact that bead assemblages may, in certain

Table 1. Inventory of bead types found at Beasley Landing by site context.

Type	Encampment		Military Storehouse		Beasley Fur Trade Storehouse	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Black seed bead circular	10	0.9	0	0.0	35	1.7
Black seed bead oval	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0
Black tube beads	189	17.6	159	27.8	1033	49.1
Blue tube	50	4.6	5	0.9	32	1.5
Blue circular	2	0.2	4	0.7	0	0.0
White tube beads	122	11.3	16	2.8	677	32.1
White seed beads round	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	0.4
White seed beads circular	670	62.3	384	67.1	297	14.1
Wound beads oval	3	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.1
White seed oval	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0
Wampum	1	0.1	0	0.0	9	0.4
Blue/red stripes, marvered, layered, and ground at ends	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0
Light blue seed bead circular	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0
Light blue tube bead	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0
Layered white circular	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
Layered red/white circular	0	0.0	2	0.3	4	0.2
Layered red/black tube	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Yellow tube	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Copper	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0
Green tube	27	2.5	2	0.3	0	0.0
Total	1076	100.0	572	100.0	2106	100.0
Number of types	11		7		16	

circumstances, reflect a conscious selection of specific items on the part of native trading partners. Precisely how great a role "choice" may have played at this time for the Mississauga is open to question as they were clearly a marginalized society at the end of the 18th century, engaged in a barter economy dependent on a dwindling resource. Nevertheless, there may have been an element of selection in their transactions that should not be dismissed out of hand.

Several studies of barter economies not subject to economic and social stress demonstrate regional variation according to the preferences of particular groups (Burley et al. 1996; Karklins 1992; Nicks 1970; Spector 1976; Woodward 1965). For example, a preference for white seed beads among the Iroquois during the early-19th century was observed by Kenyon and Ferris (1983: 40) who found that white seed beads were predominant in the assemblage at the late-18th-century to early-19th-century Mohawk Village. Kenyon and

Ferris (1983: 40), citing Speck (1955: 54), noted that early-19th-century Iroquois beadwork featured simple beaded borders, composed primarily of white seed beads. However, a bead assemblage mimicking this "Iroquois pattern" was found at the Bellamy site in southwestern Ontario—a 1790s Ojibwa encampment. Here a higher proportion of white seed beads (sub-cylindrical or donut shape) was found along with only a very small number of black and white cylindrical beads (Ferris et al. 1985: 13).

These seemingly contradictory findings suggest that there may be underlying factors that should be considered when attributing a unique bead assemblage to a specific ethnic group. One of these factors, as Burley et al. (1996) caution, is that archaeological assemblages may not always reflect the actual preferences of the users—supply is not necessarily reflective of demand—a particularly important consideration when ethnicity is the subject of analysis. Native people were often subjected to the vagaries of the market economy and arti-

cles shipped may reflect simply those in stock at the time of the order and not necessarily the first-choice items.

Despite these potential problems, an archaeologist studying a bead assemblage may be able to exercise control over factors such as changing distribution networks and diachronic variation by incorporating documentary analysis with a detailed study of the stratigraphy. The historical, artifactual, and stratigraphic information suggests the floor and sub-floor layers at both the Beasley fur trade storehouse and the military storehouse represent primary contexts. As a result, the artifacts found in these deposits are interpreted as items not yet in circulation, but in storage. These contexts differ from the encampment in that beads recovered from the wigwam floor almost certainly represent items lost through use. Analysis of the varieties and proportions of beads from each kind of context provides some insight into the difficulties inherent in attributing ethnicity based on this class of material culture.

Classification of the bead assemblages was done initially according to the Kidd and Kidd (1970) typology, but is presented below using descriptive categories for shape proposed by Spector (1976), and also to facilitate comparison between assemblages for those unfamiliar with the Kidd typology (TAB. 1). In terms of the proportions of the types of beads, the encampment assemblage is similar to the military storehouse assemblage, but is quite different from the Beasley fur trade storehouse collection. The most numerous beads from the military storehouse and encampment are the white seed beads comprising between 62% and 67% of each assemblage. Black tube beads and to a lesser extent, white tube beads make up about 30% of the remainder of the assemblage. Together, all above-mentioned types comprise between 91% and 97% of the assemblage from each context (TAB. 1). By contrast, black tube beads from the Beasley fur trade storehouse make up almost 50% of the assemblage, followed by a significant proportion of 32% white tube beads and only 14% white seed beads (FIGS. 5r and 5v). It is proposed that the observed differences in bead assemblage com-

position are due to ethnicity, temporal context, and external economic conditions.

Beads recovered from the Beasley trade store context provide some indication of Mississauga dress from the fur trade period. The predominance of black tube beads, for example, matches clothing colors recorded in Elizabeth Simcoe's 1793 description by of the Mississauga in York (75 km or 45 miles from the Head-of-the-Lake):

Some wore Black Silk handkerchiefs covered with silver Brooches tied tight round the head, other silver bands, silver arm bands & their shirts ornamented with brooches, scarlet leggings or pantaloons, & black, blue, or scarlet broadcloth Blankets (Innis 1971: 103 in Karklins 1992: 24).

Other colors were worn, however, as suggested by the variety of beads from the fur trade store. The diverse stock, comprised of sixteen different colors and types (FIG. 5), suggests a response to native demand as Beasley may have found it advantageous economically to have an assortment of colors and types on hand to use as currency for the trade. Also, by virtue of his extended period of trade with the Mississauga for almost two decades prior to the war, it might be expected that Beasley would have had a greater variety of beads than the short-lived military storehouse.

Analysis of beads from the encampment and the military storehouse, both contexts dating more than 25 years later, suggests a change in dress style attributable not only to variation over time, but also to external economic factors beyond the control of the Mississauga. First, there are fewer bead types found during the military period (TAB. 1). Although eleven varieties of beads from the encampment represent a greater range of colors and types than the seven types from the military storehouse (TAB. 1), the Beasley fur trade period is characterized by a greater variety of types. The difference between the military storehouse and encampment is also interesting because the storehouse does not reflect the full assemblage of beads actually worn by native trading partners, but rather those types in stock. Second, it is also clear that during the war period white seed beads

predominate over the black and white tube beads found in the earlier fur trade contexts. This in itself represents a significant change in dress ornamentation for the Mississauga. It is suggested that the reason for the change may have less to do with time and ethnicity than with simple supply economics; i.e., the predominance of white seed beads found in the encampment may simply be a reflection of what was actually stocked by the military for the brief 30-month period that they were stationed at Burlington Heights. Similar proportions of white seed beads in the military storehouse, contemporary with the encampment, suggest that native people to a large degree may have been wearing what was available from this military supply storehouse rather than what was preferred.

This observation notwithstanding, there is another significant difference between the storage contexts (fur trade and military) and the use context represented by the encampment. A total of 27 green beads (FIG. 5n) were found in the encampment compared to two from the military storehouse and none from the fur trade store. The apparent contradiction between what was stored and what was worn may be explainable by the social significance attached to this color. There is some evidence that bead color may have been related to gender preference among the Ojibwa. Karklins (1992: 28) cites a watercolor (c.1821) by contemporary artist Peter Rindisbacher of some *Saulteaux* on the Red River, Manitoba, where men are depicted wearing black and white beadwork and women have necklaces of yellow, green, red and white beads and ear ornaments composed of green beads. Children are also shown wearing beads of assorted colors. The recovery of similarly colored beads at the encampment (yellow and red beads were also recovered in small numbers) not only suggests the presence of females and children during the War of 1812 period, but it is also a reminder that dress style was not entirely dependent on supply of items stocked.

### **Wampum and Trade Silver**

Another aspect of the fur trade period dwelling and storehouse that stands in contrast to the encampment is the presence of

wampum, nine pieces, compared to only one at the encampment. The symbolic and sacred significance of wampum to native peoples is well noted; it functioned as a means of recording and ratifying agreements, as a mnemonic device to recall the verbal "text" of such agreements, and as a status item (Mainfort 1979: 96). Europeans viewed wampum as a form of currency (Demeter 1980: 113) which had value in commercial transactions—purple colors being as much as five times more valuable than white—and to this end manufactured it for the fur trade as early as 1650 (Brose 1970: 20).

The context in which the wampum was found in the fur trade period at the Beasley site provides some insight into how it may have functioned at this point in time when Mississauga society was experiencing widespread social disintegration. Five of the nine wampum found in fur trade period contexts were recovered from a cellar pit together with two other artifacts that pre-date the arrival of Beasley at the Head-of-the-Lake in 1785: a tube bead (Type III<sub>n1</sub>) (Kidd and Kidd 1970) of the type manufactured in the Netherlands from the late-16th century through to the first half of the 17th century (Karklins 1974: 76; Karklins et al. 2001) (FIG. 5) and fragments of a mid-18th century white salt-glazed stoneware plate (FIG. 5a). Other artifacts found in the cellar pit (e.g., large shards of window glass from individual panes and a clasp knife) are considered to be contemporary with Beasley's occupation (ca.1785–ca.1798). The co-occurrence of indigenous and residual finds (Harris 1989: 121) suggests that the cellar functioned as a place where obsolete objects may have been intentionally, rather than accidentally, discarded or simply left behind when the building was abandoned.

To understand the context of wampum with other obsolete items in the cellar pit, it is necessary to consider the declining role of this item in Mississauga society at the close of the fur trade. Karklins (1992: 22) notes that after 1760, wampum and glass beads began to be overshadowed as status items by silver manufactured in Pennsylvania, Montreal, Quebec, and Albany for the fur trade. Viewed in this manner, one possible explanation for the dis-



card of wampum is that it had been supplanted by silver and had a declining social role within Mississauga society, rendering it an obsolete trade article.

The recovery of trade silver items including earbobs, tinkling cones, brooches, janglers and earrings (FIG. 5) from all contexts, military and fur trade periods, seems to provide some support for Karklin's observations (1992: 22). Earbobs recovered from the Beasley site are similar to the type described by Stone (1974) in connection with the British occupation at Fort Michilimackinac. Brooches are predominantly the simple circular style with a single clasp. This type, worn by both men and women, was common not only among the Mississauga but also among the Iroquois and other native North American groups and was popular from at least the middle of the 18th century (Mainfort 1979 in Karklins 1992: 24) to the 1830s (Karklins 1992: 93). Two examples of another late-18th to early-19th-century type, the heart-shaped brooch (FIG. 5) (Becker 1990: 89-90; Nicks 1970: 43), were also recovered. Some silver items are similar to objects recovered from the Fletcher site, a Chippewa-Ojibwa cemetery dating from 1740 to late 1760s (Mainfort 1979): earrings, circular wire loops some of which have a hollow knob attached; tinkling cones, fully enclosed cones with bases and a small wire ring for attachment to garments; and a triangular silver jangler cut from a larger piece of silver, provide evidence for the use of these items since at least the mid-18th century.

Despite the increasing importance of trade silver after the middle of the 18th century, there are several historical references and at least one archaeological example from late-18th- and early-19th-century contexts that suggest that wampum continued to be used as a symbol of the covenant between Europeans and natives. Wampum found at the contemporary Bellamy site comprised almost 16% of the total assemblage of beads (Ferris et al. 1985: 13), suggesting that it still played a symbolic role in western Ojibwa society. Historical documents also describe an 1804 council where the British military officer in charge presented wampum to representatives of the Six Nations

and other tribes in ratification of Richard Beasley purchase of Block 2, Waterloo Township (NAC 1804). Furthermore, an earlier reference indicates that wampum still possessed symbolic value to the Mississauga and monetary value from the perspective of the Europeans.

Letter from William Chewett to E. B. Littlehales, Newark, Aug. 31st, 1794.

Lake Simcoe. . . . during his survey in the winter, about the month of March, being at the house of an Indian Trader . . . some Chippawas and Missassagas came and enquired of Wapinose, a Mississago, the business of the Surveyor—Wapinose made answer that he came to open a line for the benefit of trade, and that both parties would find the advantage from it in a short time. The Chippawas and Missassagas then said they had no knowledge of the sale of those lands, and at length began a dispute with Wapinose for accompanying the Surveyor. Wapinose said he was very sensible of the same, but that surveying did not take the lands from them; however, in order to end the dispute he gave them a wampum belt about the value of 7/6 Halifax currency [author's emphasis] (Simcoe 1794 in Cruikshank 1925b: 24).

The historical and archaeological evidence seems to indicate that although wampum continued in use by the Mississauga the functional role played by this item within their society had changed. Although it no longer functioned as a status item, having been replaced in this capacity by silver, wampum continued to play a symbolic role as a means of ratifying agreements or settling disputes. Viewed in this way the presence of wampum in the fur trade cellar context with other obsolete items may be yet another indicator that the dynamics of the fur trade at the Head-of-the-Lake had changed. After 1799, Beasley acted as an intermediary in the fur trade, no longer engaged in the system of reciprocity that had characterized his trading relationship with the Mississauga for the previous 15 years. Instead, the Mississauga now traded with other independent fur traders in the region for whom Beasley forwarded parcels of furs. In this new system, wampum as an item of exchange would have held little or no value

for a European not directly trading with the Mississauga.

### Miscellaneous Trade Items

All items described below are commonly associated with mid-18th-century to early-19th-century fur trade sites and are found on sites as distant from Ontario as British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Minnesota and Michigan (Burley et al. 1996; Gilman 1982; Mainfort 1979; Mason 1986; Pyszczuk 1997). Although it might be expected that fur trade sites will exhibit regional variation according to the preferences of different native groups for specific items (beads for example), the overall similarities between assemblages from sites separated by thousands of miles but confined to a relatively brief time period defines this as an archaeological horizon. In her study of the North Saskatchewan River, Nicks (1970) suggests that the development of a trait list defining the horizon is the first step in studies of acculturation. In this regard, short term occupation sites such as the Beasley site provide a useful starting point for this type of research.

Because these objects occur in relatively small numbers compared to other categories (beads, faunal, lithics) a detailed analysis on a context-by-context basis has not been carried out. Examples of objects described below are found at the fur trade period storehouse, military storehouse and the encampment. The presence of trade goods in all 1785–1815 contexts suggests they continued to be valued and used. For contexts specifically associated with the fur trade period, the recovery of items of European manufacture that have been modified provides convincing evidence for occupation by the Mississauga rather than simply a periodic, short-lived visit for the purpose of exchanging furs. Perforated and clipped thimbles made into tinkling cones and finger rings, hawk bells, and bone awls indicate that the Mississauga were actually encamped in the area long enough for these objects to have become incorporated into the archaeological record. On the other hand, items actually recovered from inside the military period storehouse are those intended for trade such as

silver brooches, shot, musket balls and gunspalls (and beads)—none of which exhibit the modifications associated with the fur trade period occupation and later encampment. A brief description of the various categories is provided below.

Brass items such as those found in the Fletcher site cemetery (Karklins 1992: 24) were also recovered from the Beasley site contexts: brass thimbles (FIG. 5d), some of which have been perforated for use as tinkling cones and another cut into a finger ring; a finger ring with glass setting (FIG. 5q); copper janglers; rolled copper tinkling cones; hawk bells (FIG. 5p); and a copper bead, again indicate the widespread distribution of these objects as items of adornment for the Ojibwa/Mississauga. Firearms and related equipment include a modified trade musket sideplate with the typical dragon motif that has been cut to resemble a serpent (Reid 1978, 1992) (FIG. 5l). According to Reid's interpretation these trade gun sideplates were often modified to conform to the cosmology of the Ojibwa such that unusable guns would have the side plate removed and the head broken off to disarm the symbol of the underwater panther—Mishipizheu. In this sense the sideplate so modified functioned as a symbolic device for native people.

Firearms are also represented by the numerous spall type gunflints, musket balls, and thousands of pieces of lead shot (FIG. 5o). The flints are all gunspalls rather than the prismatic blade type flints, and are represented by the honey-blonde/pale brown and grey varieties (FIG. 5k). Burley et al. (1996) writes that the blonde flints were manufactured from French flint quarried in the Seine and Marne Valleys. This flint was either shipped as raw material to other countries or flints were manufactured in France and shipped as finished products. During the mid-1790s, when Britain was at war with France, the supply of brown flint was interrupted and a domestic grey flint, mined in the Suffolk region (Brandon, Tuddenham, Lavenham, Mildenhall) became the dominant color. Kenmotsu (1990) notes that native people manufactured gunflints when European flint was unavailable. Burley et al. (1996) comment that, "Ironically, this

may have helped to preserve a technology that was being lost as metal tools replaced stone tools." Interestingly, evidence of some flint maintenance was found in the encampment as indicated by the presence of small flakes of brown French flint (Fisher 2003).

Other objects recovered that are commonly found on fur trade sites dating from this period include a copper kettle lug, a stone pipe (possibly a "*pierre a calumet*" as described by Burley et al. 1996), lead bale seals, which were sometimes clipped and used as jewelry, and smoking pipes. All of the ceramic smoking pipes are marked with "TD" (FIG. 5b) as are all pipes recovered by Nicks (1970: 43) for the North Saskatchewan River Sites dating to the same period. Ceramics (almost exclusively creamware) are numerous as are food bone fragments and lithic debitage.

### Lithics, Ceramics and Evidence for Retention of Traditional Technology

Evidence of cultural continuity at the Beasley site may be present in the form of hundreds of pieces of lithic debitage and coil-manufactured, cord-impressed ceramics (FIG. 5t) recovered from several superimposed layers of black sandy loam in the War of 1812 period Mississauga encampment. On the basis of the physical characteristics alone the ceramics would normally be attributed to the Middle to Terminal Middle Woodland period (300 B.C.—A.D. 900). However, the association of these ceramics and lithics in the same layers containing European-manufactured items such as creamware, window glass, glass beads, lead shot and modified items such as thimbles, hawk bells, and smoking pipes suggests that the seemingly early material may in fact be contemporary with the historic period artifacts. In other words, the archaeological context in this case argues for a retention of traditional technology in the early decades of the 19th century. Cultural continuity has also been noted for the Ojibwa in southwestern Ontario by Ferris (1989: 264) who asserts that there was little change in the traditional seasonal round and technologies employed as late as the 1830s. Although Ferris does not provide evidence of the retention of ceramic technology, instead citing the continued use of the bow

and arrow as a children's toy, he argues that the Ojibwa continued to practice a traditional settlement-subsistence strategy while incorporating European manufactured goods into their material culture. This thesis may be applicable to Mississauga groups living to the east. Unfortunately, to date there are no historic period Mississauga sites in southern Ontario with which to compare the findings at the Beasley site and little has changed in the 15 years since Ferris (1989: 285) decried the dearth of research on Late Historic Native sites in Ontario in general. It is for this reason that the Beasley site assumes added significance as one of only a small number of historic native sites for which published information is available.

Analysis of the lithic debitage (Fisher 2003) indicates that the later stages of tool manufacture, biface trimming and thinning, are represented. The tools represented in the assemblage, including complete tools and non-diagnostic point and drill fragments, suggest that hunting and possibly woodworking was taking place. The area of the wigwam shelter contained more than 700 pieces of debitage, with more than 80% of this sample scattered outside and the remainder found within the structure. Significantly, the non-random patterning of the lithic scatter provides strong evidence that stone-working technology is associated with the habitation, and it is clear from the stratigraphic position of the post-holes that the habitation dates to the historic period. Similarly, the non-random distribution of the ceramic sherds, most occurring in the interior of the structure, provides supporting evidence for the association of this technology with the historic period wigwam.

Comparison between the Beasley site and the early to mid-18th century Playwicki site in Pennsylvania (Stewart 1996) provides some support for the hypothesis that native groups during the historic period retained aspects of traditional lithic and ceramic technology alongside European material culture. Similar to the Beasley site, Playwicki has a lithic assemblage representing all stages of tool manufacture. Also, the presence of coil-manufactured, cord-marked pottery sherds that resemble the Overpeck type, common on Late Woodland and late prehistoric sites in the mid-

range of the Delaware Valley, mimics the findings at the Beasley encampment. Most importantly, though, these classes of material are found in the same context as historic period, European-manufactured artifacts. For Stewart (1996) there is no question that the site is the historic period Lenape town of Playwicki. Antecedents for material culture at Playwicki, recovered from archaeological sites ancestral to the Lenape, suggest that this represents an unbroken continuation of traditional material culture. In the absence of ancestral Mississauga sites, a similar statement cannot be made definitively, although the archaeological context of the finds at the Beasley site argues for continuity in Mississauga lithic and ceramic traditions.

### Faunal Analysis

A sizeable collection of faunal material was recovered from the War of 1812 period wigwam and the pre-war midden. The assemblage consists of 3326 specimens with 505 (15%) identified to family, genus or species (Rinaldi 2002). Mammal species predominate, comprising 71% of the identified specimens, followed by fish (10%), bird (7%), uncertain class (6%), shell (5%) and <1% for reptile and amphibian. The assemblage is dominated by wild species (86% of the minimum number of individuals) with a small proportion of domestic animals. The most common species are duck, muskrat, and white-tailed deer although a wide variety of fauna were identified.

Species found within the midden include freshwater drum, duck, white-tailed deer, muskrat, snapping turtle, coyote, sheep/goat, passenger pigeon and bald eagle (Rinaldi 2002). The variety of fauna suggests a diet rich in protein although deer are clearly the most important dietary element, as measured by two indices (minimum number of elements and food utility index), followed by muskrat and duck. As an economic resource deer were clearly utilized to their maximum potential. Analysis of the faunal remains indicates that deer were butchered on site, cuts of meat cooked, and marrow extracted. The sticky black sediment visible within the midden and in the surrounding area is attributed to this

activity. Deer was equally important as a source of hides for the fur trade as indicated in the Beasley letter book and correspondence in which deer and muskrat predominate among the furs being shipped.

The second most common taxa, muskrat, were probably obtained from the marshy environment in the vicinity of Beasley's landing or from nearby Coote's Paradise. These animals are a dependable and abundant food source and it seems likely that they were being eaten by the Mississauga in addition to being hunted for fur. Among the muskrat specimens there is evidence for selective exploitation; 63% of the muskrat specimens are young (juvenile, immature and sub-adult) and 37% are adult. Rinaldi (2002: 14) attributes this preference to the biannual molt pattern of the young. The predictability of the high quality young pelt explains its predominance over mature muskrats, which shed year round resulting in variable pelt quality at any given time. However, an exploitation pattern such as this in which young muskrats are favored, if continued over a long period of time, eventually would have been detrimental to the breeding population.

Duck are the most frequent taxa in the collection and were probably selected as a readily available and important dietary item. Duck meat is oily, tasty, and high in fat, making it suitable food for the long winter season. Elements found on the site indicate that ducks were being butchered into main sections of breast, wing, and leg and then cooked for consumption.

The faunal remains from the midden point to a people still active in the fur trade who exploited deer, muskrat and probably coyote as food sources and as commodities to be traded. The remains of aquatic fauna such as fish, turtle and amphibians indicate that the diet was supplemented with these food items as well as a small amount of domesticated animals (sheep/goat). Evidence of seasonality based on migratory bird patterns, fish spawns, and deer antler, point to a late winter to early spring occupation but there are also indications that the landing may have been occupied year-round (Rinaldi 2002: 17).

Traditionally, the Mississauga relied almost exclusively on hunting and fishing and followed an annual cycle divided into four seasons (Smith 1981: 71). In the winter small bands traveled into the interior to family hunting grounds in search of deer, duck, pigeon and muskrat. These small bands reunited into larger groups at the close of winter in preparation for maple sugar making and also to exploit the salmonid (Steelhead/Rainbow trout) runs at mouths of large rivers such as the Credit on the north shore of Lake Ontario. At the beginning of May people dispersed and again went to family campgrounds where women planted corn. During the summer months the Mississauga collected berries and other edible plants and toward the end of summer harvested corn and wild rice from the river flats. Fall signaled a return to the river mouths for the landlocked Atlantic salmon run.

At the Head-of-the-Lake a group of Mississauga led by Wahbanosay returned to their camp at Burlington Bay in the spring to trade with Richard Beasley. Here, according to custom, the wigwams were set close together in a small encampment (Jones 1861). This is corroborated by the faunal evidence, which clearly indicates that the Mississauga were living at the landing site in a base camp in the late winter to early spring. However, other seasonal indicators within the faunal assemblage further suggest that the Mississauga camped at the Beasley landing periodically throughout the year. If so, this may signal a disruption to the traditional seasonal round—a change possibly brought about by the many factors associated with the decline of the fur trade economy and the land surrenders occurring after 1780 and before the War of 1812.

In other regards the faunal evidence from the midden accords well with the written record. In Mississauga society everyone belonged to a clan or totem as well as a hunting group and at the Head-of-the-Lake the hunting group led by Wahbanosay belonged to the Eagle totem. Interestingly, three bald eagle bones found in the midden provide a tantalizing link between the material world of the Mississauga and the spiritual realm of the people of the Eagle totem, suggesting continuity of tradition. Moreover, the

recovery of numerous freshwater drum otoliths (earbones) (Bathurst 1998) is also of interest in this regard. Ojibwa and other native groups are known to have harvested freshwater drum, particularly during the spring spawn. In addition to their value as a food source aside, the ivory-like otoliths may have had symbolic significance. The possible symbolic significance attached to otoliths has been noted by (Hubbs and Langer 1958: 116) who point to the widespread distribution of these bones on native sites, sometimes far from the range of the fish.

The much smaller faunal assemblage from the War of 1812 period Mississauga encampment includes similar species as the midden with the notable exception of muskrat and coyote and the addition of new species such as catfish and walleye. Although speculative, the absence of muskrat, which formed a significant component of the earlier fur trade assemblage, may be attributable to a dwindling population due to over-hunting or possibly a lack of demand for these furs. Certainly, a year-round occupation at the landing in the previous decade would have negatively impacted the muskrat population. Also it is clear from the Beasley account book that although muskrats were bringing a good price in 1795, between 1799 and 1802 no furs were shipped. In either case, the impact on the traditional lifeways of the Mississauga would have been devastating. Not only may a valuable food source have no longer been available, but the means by which trade goods were obtained may also have disappeared. This would have resulted in a change to the seasonal round and perhaps greater reliance on the other food sources such as deer and domesticated animals.

## Discussion

The events unfolding at the Head-of-the-Lake at the end of the 18th century necessitated adaptive responses by both Europeans and native people. As the fur trade economy drew to a close, and a new influx of settlers transformed the frontier into an agricultural society, Richard Beasley appears to have adopted a strategy of diversification. Throughout the 1790s and into the early years

of the 19th century Beasley divested himself from direct involvement in the fur trade and instead acted as a middleman for others still engaged in this pursuit even though a decline in the quality of furs, combined with a poor overseas market, signaled the end of the fur trade era in this part of the continent. As an independent merchant governed by balance sheet economics, the losses sustained by Beasley between 1792 and 1796 required the adoption of a new economic strategy. In anticipation of the large numbers of immigrants beginning to arrive in the region at this time, Beasley turned to land speculation, purchasing tens of thousands of acres in adjacent townships and other regions being opened up for settlement. It is also evident that during this period and for years after, Beasley's merchant activities included provisioning incoming agricultural settlers.

For the Mississauga these events had devastating consequences. The land that formed the foundation for the Mississauga's existence based on a seasonal round and participation in the fur trade economy was viewed by the European population as a commodity to be sold, cleared, and settled. Nonetheless, in response to government demands for land surrenders, and in order to maintain a system of reciprocity through which needed goods could be obtained, the Mississauga divested themselves of the very commodity that would ensure the survival of their traditional lifeway. Cut off from access to the land and struggling with the widespread depletion of the population of fur bearing animals, the Mississauga were forced to adopt new strategies for survival.

Archaeological and historical information together suggest that these strategies may have included a change in the traditional seasonal round as furs became less important for the subsistence economy. Evidence for exploitation of muskrat for food and fur present in archaeological contexts dating to the 1790s is absent in contexts dating to the War of 1812 period. This may be a response to decreasing demand for these furs as items to be traded, but the disappearance of muskrat from later contexts may be related to unsustainable hunting strategies based on over-exploitation of young animals. Other faunal

evidence suggests a disruption to the traditional seasonal round as it appears that the Mississauga may have been encamped at the landing at various times throughout the year.

In addition to changing the seasonal round, the decline of the fur trade may have increased the Mississauga's reliance on lithic and ceramic traditions. Analysis of the lithic debitage indicates that although European-manufactured items continued to form an important part of the Mississauga's material culture, stone tools were being manufactured on site for activities such as hunting and woodworking. Similarly, the presence of native-made ceramics, within the same contexts as the lithics and in association with other European-made items, may also indicate a continuity of traditional ceramic technology. This practice may have been born out of necessity for people who had limited means of obtaining European goods such as iron or copper pots.

Though faced with these fundamental cultural changes, it also appears that the Mississauga continued to maintain traditional values. This is reflected in items that functioned in a symbolic sense in the Mississauga belief system. Bald eagle bones found in both the fur trade period midden and the later War of 1812 period encampment may have held spiritual significance for the people of the Eagle totem. Likewise the presence of numerous otoliths in various contexts appears to signify a connection to traditional beliefs. A modified dragon-motif musket sideplate provides further evidence for the perpetuation of Mississauga cosmology.

Evidence for the maintenance of other aspects of ethnic identity during this period of cultural upheaval is less conclusive. Analysis of beads from the fur trade contexts suggests that Beasley may have stocked a wide variety of colored beads specifically for the Mississauga. Almost equal numbers of black and white beads suggests a preference for these colors and match contemporary descriptions of other aspects of Mississauga dress. However, during the later military period the predominance of white seed beads in contexts representing both storage and use points to a pattern where people may have been wearing

what was available rather than what was preferred.

This is perhaps symptomatic of the situation in which the Mississauga found themselves at this period in their history. No longer the valued partners in the fur trade, their role was now the same as the many native groups allied with the British in the conflict with the United States. In terms of numbers, this new military role paled in comparison to the more populous Iroquois allies. This fact may have served to relegate the former status of the Mississauga, as a unique group of trading partners whose preferences it would have been in the best interests of Richard Beasley to satisfy, to a member of the collective group of "Indian allies."

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