

Indian Village In Port Elgin Nearly 600 Years Ago

1969

Archaeological findings on the Richard Nodwell property at the top of Market Street Hill, near the lake, have created considerable interest in the town.

Dr. James V. Wright, (National Museum of Man, Ottawa) and his wife Dawn, have spent the past month making excavations on the property and recording their discoveries. The site has now been closed.

Dr. Wright said the Nodwell site is a prehistoric Indian village, approximately two acres in extent that was occupied nearly 600 years ago.

Although the existence of the site has been known for a number of years, the recent excavations by Dr. Wright and his wife were required by the urban expansion of Port Elgin which will probably destroy the site sometime in 1970. Dr. Wright said that the Nodwell family has provided the Bruce County Museum in Southampton with a fine collection of artifacts which are on exhibit.

"The occupants of the site were

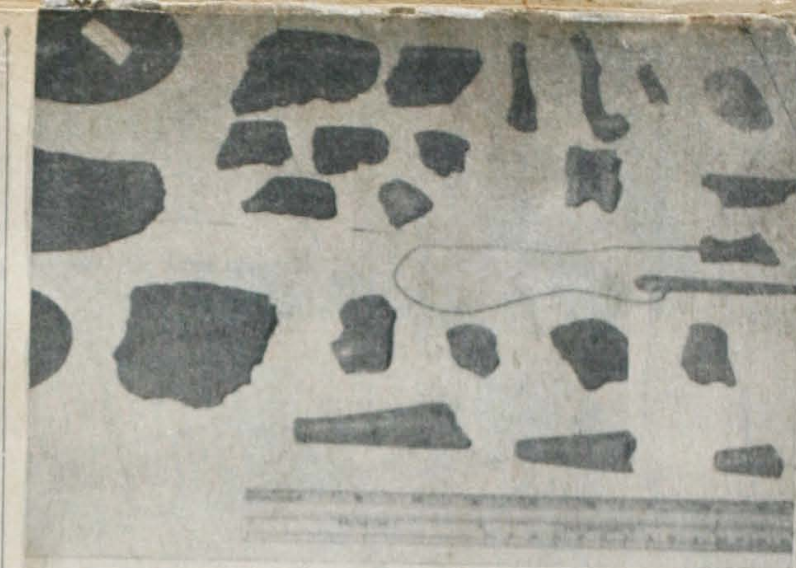
part of a broad expansion of Iroquois peoples who gradually developed into the Huron and Petun tribes to the east, and the Neutral and Erie tribes to the south," Dr. Wright said. "All of these Ontario Iroquois tribes were destroyed in the mid 17th century by the Famous League of the Iroquois."

The occupants of the Nodwell site probably came from Simcoe County and appear to have only remained in Bruce County for a short period before returning east. "Indeed, the Nodwell site is the only Iroquois village site known in Bruce County although a number of small Iroquois camp sites have been recorded", Dr. Wright said.

Excavations revealed that the site was palisaded and portions of six longhouses were exposed. The largest of the houses measured 125' by 27' and contained doorways at both ends and numerous interim posts and pits. Common items found in the pits consisted of pottery and pipe fragments, animal and fish bones, and carbonized corn kernels. Unusual items consisted of an owl manufactured from native copper, fragments of bison and elk bones, and a complete pottery vessel resting on top of skeletons of two small carnivores.

"The Nodwell site will soon share the fate of innumerable sites across Canada. The handful of archaeologists and interested citizens cannot cope with mounting problems. Unless more Canadians become concerned with the destruction of this non-renewable resource of knowledge of Canada's prehistory, it will be but a vague reflection of the more than 13,000 years that has occupied the country," said Dr. Wright.

The effort to record Canada's pre-history is two-fold by the Canadian Archaeological Association



Some of the many artifacts found at the site by Dr. James Wright and Mrs. Wright. The ruler at bottom of the picture gives some idea of their size. Top left is an anvil with pieces of pottery and bone to its right. Below the anvil is a sharpening stone and below

that two chopping stones. The smaller artifacts include pipe bowls, a child's toy consisting of a hollow bone with a piece of sinew attached. The three pieces just above the ruler are pieces of bone pipe stems.

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and by the Council of Canadian Archaeology.

The Council is a professional association of 40 archaeologists who can react quickly to manmade threats to potentially valuable archaeological sites.

The Association includes professionals and non-professionals in a two-year-old society formed to aid the Council.

Dr. Wright is president of the Association and an archaeologist in the National Museum of Man in Ottawa. He graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Arts degree and received his PhD. in Anthropology from the University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Wright suggested that the people of the area visit the Bruce County Museum in Southampton to view artifacts found at the Nodwell property.

Allenford plaque to mark signing of Indian treaty

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A plaque, marking the Allenford Pow-wow of 1855 at which the Ojibway Indians and white men came to a peaceful settlement of the 1854 Treaty of Saugeen, will be unveiled July 20 at Allenford. The recognition of the event has been prepared through the co-operation of the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of Ontario and the Bruce County Historical Society.

It was at the meeting held at Allenford, then known as Floodwood Crossing, that peace was assured in the Grey-Bruce area through white men meeting the Indians halfway and accepting them as equals. The pow-wow was the culmination of the Ojibways' stand for their rights in interpreting the boundaries of the treaty.

The inscription on the plaque will read: "In July, 1855, at nearby Floodwood Crossing (now Allenford) representatives of the Ojibway Indians conferred with government officials at a meeting later called the 'Allenford Pow-wow'. The conference resolved a boundary dispute which had arisen over the terms of the Saugeen treaty of 1854. The Ojibway interpretation of this treaty held 'Cowway's Road', an Indian pathway from Saugeen Village to Lake Huron, to be the boundary of the land ceded by them on the north side of the Saugeen River. At the pow-wow, Lord Bury, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs and the government's principal representative, accepted this interpretation which granted the Indians increased frontage on Lake Huron and removed a major source of friction".

Port Elgin native gets doctorate

Rodger Schwass, vice-president of Acrea Consulting Services, one of Canada's largest engineering and management companies, was this week awarded a Doctor of Education degree at the University of Toronto. Dr. Schwass holds a master of arts in Economics and a Master of Education degree.

Dr. Schwass was born in Port Elgin, a son of Mrs. Dan Schwass of Paisley and the late Dan Schwass. He received his elementary education at S.S. No. 1 Saugeen and attended Saugeen district high school.

After a year as an elementary teacher at Grand Valley, he became associate director of the farm department of CKNX-TV at Winham.

In 1958, he became manager of National Farm Radio Forum, a national educational program for farm people, and at the same time, enrolled at the University of Toronto. He directed Farm Radio Forum for seven years and became host of a national CBC radio program, Country Magazine.

In 1965, he launched his own consulting firm Progress Counsellors Ltd. and in 1967, became vice-president of Hedlin Menzies and Associates, Canada's largest firm of consulting economists.

Dr. Schwass is married to the former Mary Byers of Tara and has two sons and two daughters.



The site of the Indian relics is in the process of becoming a subdivision of some 70 homes. It has been suggested that the required five percent of the land, required for parkland, be set aside

for preservation of the site. Service clubs will meet in the near future to see what financial assistance they can offer.

(Photos by Wright)

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