



The Archaeology of Patterson Village A 19th Century Company Town in the Township of Vaughan, Ontario

Foreword

It is with pleasure that I introduce *The Archaeology of Patterson Village: a 19th Century Company Town in the Township of Vaughan, Ontario*, by William D. Finlayson. With a career that spans more than 50 years, Bill has made many significant contributions to Ontario archaeology and this volume is no exception.

I first became aware of Bill's work when, as an undergraduate at the University of Toronto in the 1980s, I stumbled upon the Draper Site report¹ in the cavernous book stacks of Robarts Library. I grew up on the eastern fringes of Scarborough, not too distant from the Draper site, and so I felt an immediate geographical affinity for the site that inspired me to read the report with more than a passing interest. Like most archaeologists used to working on a much smaller scale it astounded me to realize that a 15th century village had been exposed in its entirety, complete with longhouses, palisades, and other settlement features.

My fascination with the Draper site continued when, as a graduate student, I conducted a statistical analysis and proposed a sequence of village expansion based on the settlement features published in the site report. This desiccated paper had lain in the bottom of a filing cabinet for about 15 years until 2003. At that time Bill had begun his foray into the world of professional consulting archaeology, and while chatting with him, for the first time as a colleague, I mentioned the paper, and indeed gave it to him to peruse. I did this not without a little trepidation, but also with a modicum of confidence because my dry statistical approach actually confirmed his own ideas about village expansion.

Doing it on a grand scale seems to be the hallmark of Bill's archaeological work. In 1998, Dr. Finlayson published a four-volume, 1,700-page study of his 25-year research program of 76 Iroquoian sites in the Crawford Lake² area north of Burlington which is the most comprehensive study of ancestral Wendat-Huron and pre-contact and contact Neutral settlements ever undertaken in Ontario.

Just as the Draper site represents the first very large Wendat-Huron village site in Ontario to be excavated completely, the Patterson Village site is also the first 19th century industrial community in the province to have been dug on the same scale. There are other similarities too. Both sites were excavated under a CRM (cultural resource management) mandate whereby each was salvaged before being impacted by development. Although the CRM field is highly regulated today, in the 1970s provincial heritage legislation was in its infancy with no guidelines in place as to how such a monumental site excavation should be carried out. This was a brave undertaking.

Another concept that was in its seminal stages in the 1970s was something we refer to today as public archaeology. In 1976, as Executive Director of the newly revitalized Museum of Indian Archaeology, Dr. William Finlayson promoted public education and heritage awareness – an ethos which was to be incorporated into the museum's mission statement. The idea of engaging with the public about archaeology represented a new approach that broke with the traditional image of archaeology for academics alone. This is now an essential element of all archaeological projects, and one that is now

incorporated into the curriculum at Wilfrid Laurier University in the Archaeology and Heritage Studies program. Bill's dedication to the ideals of public archaeology have not waived over the decades and indeed the Patterson Village book embodies these ideals.

As someone who came late in his career to historical archaeology, Bill is to be commended for this significant contribution to the literature. His first experience with Euro-Canadian archaeological assessments was in 2003. In his own words, his "limited experience" with these sites soon translated into an extensive knowledge when in 2004 he began a Stage 1 investigation of the Pickering Airport Lands for the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, later upgraded into an Archaeological Master Plan study. During that project, several 19th century farmsteads and Euro-Canadian sites were assessed and new techniques such as ArcGIS (a Geographic Information System program) and sub-meter D-GPS (Differential Global Positioning System) were employed in mapping and analysis. Interestingly, the thousands of acres of land surveyed for this project had been surveyed between 1976 and 1978, when at that time, only pre-contact sites were documented. Euro-Canadian sites were not even on the radar as significant cultural resources. In my continuing professional relationship with Bill, I was asked to create a ranking scheme for Euro-Canadian farmsteads, which was later published in a glossy volume suitable for the academic and public audience. Since 2005, Bill, as founder of This Land Archaeology Inc., has now carried out Stage 4 assessments of more than 60 Euro-Canadian homesteads and farmsteads. Along the way he has become an expert in 19th century material culture and, whether he would view himself as this or not, a leading figure in historical archaeology in Ontario.

As a print and digital publication, the Patterson Village volume is accessible to both academics working in this field and, equally important, the public. There have been few archaeological investigations of 19th century industrial villages in Ontario. My own work at the industrial village of Indiana at Ruthven Park, National Historic Site on the Grand River is perhaps the only other intensive research archaeology carried out on such a site. Yet, after four seasons of excavation with Wilfrid Laurier University students between 2004 and 2010, I probably only managed to excavate less than 0.1% of the entire village. The research value of the Patterson village site is the rare opportunity it affords to look at the larger picture. For the academic audience, the material presented in the Patterson Village book is invaluable for addressing issues of village layout; organization of domestic, industrial, and institutional (post office, church, and school) space; the relationship between the capitalist entrepreneur and the workers; expressions of identity through material culture; worker health and hygiene; and day-to-day life in a village devoted to industrial output. The public audience will undoubtedly find the volume of immense interest simply because it is an important part of Ontario's history that has not been presented before in an archaeological and historical context. Colour plates of some of the 300,000 artifacts recovered, together with historical images, all of which are contextualized individually within features and buildings found during excavation, add to the allure of the book as something distinct from a local history volume.

I am confident the reader will enjoy this book immensely. The weaving together of history, oral history, and archaeology, serve to engage the audience and demonstrate the value of an interdisciplinary approach in understanding our collective heritage.

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