

A 17th Century Attigneenongnahac Village: Settlement Patterns at the Auger Site (BdGw-3)

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Settlement remains at the Auger site show features which are thought to be characteristic of the Attigneenongnahac, one of the component nations within the historic Huron confederacy. Of particular interest are: (1) village spatial organization, (2) palisade construction, (3) trash disposal practices, and (4) house construction methods including (a) end wall construction, (b) internal support posts, (c) location and nature of wall bench support structures, (d) large storage vats, and (e) internal pens.

Introduction

The Auger Site, BdGw-3, is an early 17th century palisaded village dating from the European-contact Late Huron phase, located in the territory of northern Simcoe County, Ontario, attributed to the Attigneenongnahac (Cord or Barking Dogs) nation of the historic Huron (Trigger 1976:690; Heidenreich 1971:Map 17; Latta n.d.). This group, like the Attignawanton (Bear) people to the west, claimed residence in Simcoe County for many generations (JR 16:227); archaeological evidence indicates an in situ development from indigenous Middleport settlements (J. Wright 1966; Latta 1976; Kapches 1983). This initial report on settlement patterns of the Attigneenongnahac merits further comparison with other sites attributable to this tradition such as Bidmead (BeGv-4) and Ball (BdGv-3: Knight and Cameron 1983) whose geographical position between the known territories of the Attigneenongnahac and the Arenderhonon (Rock) nation to the east makes its ethnic identification less certain.

Excavation at the Auger site has been carried out during 1982 and 1983 by the archaeological field training programme at the University of Toronto.

Geography

The occupation covers an area of approximately three hectares. It is situated on a Glacial Lake Nipissing terrace on the southeast side of the Mt. St. Louis ridge, overlooking a steep drop to the Coldwater River 150 m below (Fig. 1). To the northwest, the height of the ridge provides shelter from prevailing winter winds. The hillside slope below the site has several permanent springs; these

merge into a small stream at the base of the slope, 200 m from the site, and empty into the Coldwater river two km to the southeast.

The Mt. St. Louis ridge is a large drumlinized till deposit composed of interbedded sands and gravels. It extends more than 17 km north-south by a maximum east-west width of 4 km, with an average elevation of about 200 m above the glacially scoured valleys of the Sturgeon and Coldwater Rivers which follow its western and eastern sides. Soils are grey-brown sandy loams with considerable gravel and occasional very large boulders; they are extremely well drained. The site, facing south-east and located above the top of the mature tree canopy in the valley bottom, warms quickly in the spring. It is sheltered from north and west winds by the height of the Mt. St. Louis ridge.

Vegetation in the area of the Auger Site has been described by Crawford as typical of the Lake Simcoe to Georgian Bay region, within the mixed conifer-hardwood forest of southern Ontario. South of the site is a mature maple-beech stand and a young maple-beech-yellow birch community is growing on an undulating till plain to the east. The site, which is covered with a modern pine forest mixture, includes a number of native colonizers: yellow and paper birch, maple, several cherry species, ash, beech, elm, hawthorne and sumac. The soils are wet and poorly drained in some areas, and around such areas grow many mesic plants, dominated by cat tails in well lighted areas. At the bottom of the slope is a cedar swamp. At its edge hop-hornbeam and ironwood are present, together with a variety of plants including jack-in-the-pulpit, leeks, pepper root and chenopods.

Grey fox and raccoon are the largest modern predators, though black bear have been sighted in the area within living memory. Whitetailed deer are numerous, as are skunks, porcupines, wood-chucks, snowshoe hares, chipmunks, red squirrels and various sorts of mice and voles, together with many species of song birds, frogs, toads and small snakes.

The site is presently planted to Scotch pine. It was farmed in the early decades of the century using a horse-drawn plough which produced a disturbed zone averaging 15 cm in depth over most

of the site; judging by the spread of sherds from identifiable pots, this caused only slight damage to distributional data. Subplough strata are present in many areas, and living floors appear to be essentially intact. Small portions of the site have been destroyed by a road cut through the south end of the village and a small gravel pit which removed some of its southwest area. There is no record of modern structures on the site, though a sparse distribution of contemporary artifacts, restricted to the plough zone, reflects its 20th century utilization.

Site History

The Auger site was reported by A.F. Hunter as Medonte #33 (1902:85-86). During the farming period, the site produced a collection of iron axe heads — perhaps as many as 70 of many different sizes according to Morris Yates, the former owner. The collection was apparently sold or lost, but we may note that the frequency of certain artifact types was originally higher than now appears.

In 1966, the property was purchased by Dr. Wilfrid Auger of Toronto for the purpose of preserving and studying the site. At least two periods of excavation were carried on by Dr. Auger and members of the Royal Ontario Museum's Brodie Club; the eastern palisade area was tested, providing materials for a preliminary artifactual and faunal analysis.

The Wilfrid Auger Memorial Field School, University of Toronto, conducted excavations in 1982 and 1983 under the joint direction of Latta and Crawford; Latta continued work in 1985. During the first two years, an incomplete strip was cut across the northern end of the site from the terrace edge on the east to the limit of occupational debris on the uphill, western side, yielding parts of four longhouses, sections of palisade and associated exterior middens on both sides (Fig. 2). Trenches were subsequently extended to the north and south of this area, producing traces of four other longhouses.

Site Perimeter and Defense Works

The Auger village was a substantial, permanent settlement surrounded by a wooden palisade (Fig. 2). Palisade posts, 12 to 20 cm in diameter, were spaced 20 to 30 cm apart and were firmly set in the ground, extending between 15 and 60 cm below the plough zone.

On the eastern side of the village, the palisade was composed of three post lines about one-half meter apart, paralleling the edge of the terrace. This palisade line was covered with midden debris to a depth of about 50 cm, beginning some two meters inside the palisade and thinning out quickly

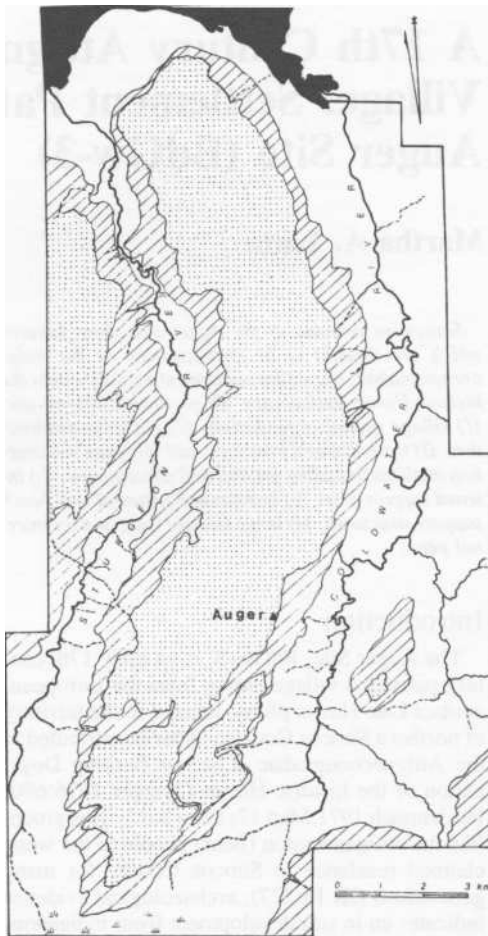


Fig. 1
Mt. St. Louis Ridge and the Auger site, Ontario.

on the slope outside; the midden disappeared completely at about five meters beyond the palisade. Test pits down the hillside show little evidence of artifact dispersal by erosion or soil slump. Since the thickest midden deposit lies over and immediately adjacent to the east palisade post moulds, it appears that most or all garbage was deposited against the wall itself. This suggests that the palisade was impassible in this region of the village, effectively prohibiting garbage disposal down the terrace slope except by throwing it over or through the palisade. This doubtless helped to prevent pollution of the site's water sources, located directly downhill, but it also lengthened the water transport distance.

The western palisade, on the uphill side of the village, was far more complicated (Fig. 3). In this area, the palisade appears to have four primary rows to the north, expanding to seven rows further south; it covers an area approximately three meters wide. This variation may, to some extent, repre-

sent addition and repairs, but the associated midden deposits confirm that it is a form of interdigitated passage through the palisade, perhaps fortified by watchtowers (cf Biggar 1924:155-156, 1929:122; Wrong 1968:91-92; Pendergast 1980).

Thirteen post moulds in the west palisade area contained concentrations of charcoal and ash, and additional patches of fire-reddened sand, ash and charcoal are found throughout the palisade area. This section of the palisade probably burned, perhaps in conjunction with the destruction of the adjoining houses (see below).

In contrast with the east palisade line, the west palisade was almost devoid of cultural remains. Midden deposit began about two meters outside the palisade line and extended, gradually thinning, for nearly twenty meters beyond that point; thus, garbage was carried far enough outside the palisade to prevent it washing back into the village. Two extended midden deposits silhouette what may have been the primary passage through the palisade. No other entrances have yet been identified.

It is probably not accidental that the west entrance is located at the point on the village perimeter most distant from the hillside terrace. This entrance faces the slope leading to the top of

the Mt. St. Louis ridge behind the site, a natural monitor station. It could only be approached, whether from the river valley or from trails along the terrace, by circling the outside of the palisade where any movements would be clearly visible from a hilltop or gate watch position. As it is presently defined, the site appears strategically well planned and defensible against light raids and non-incendiary attacks.

Site Layout, House Spacing and Village Traffic Flow

The houses excavated in 1982 and 1983 (Fig. 2), as well as those uncovered in 1985, are arranged in three uneven rows with their ends pointing southeast toward the ravine edge; space between the east end of House 1 and the east palisade is sufficient for a fourth row. Their west-north-west orientation parallels the direction of the prevailing winter winds (Heidenreich 1971), minimizing wind pressure on the structures and reducing snow entrapment within the village. Huron houses generally run downhill lengthwise to facilitate run-off of rain and meltwater and, in this case, the east

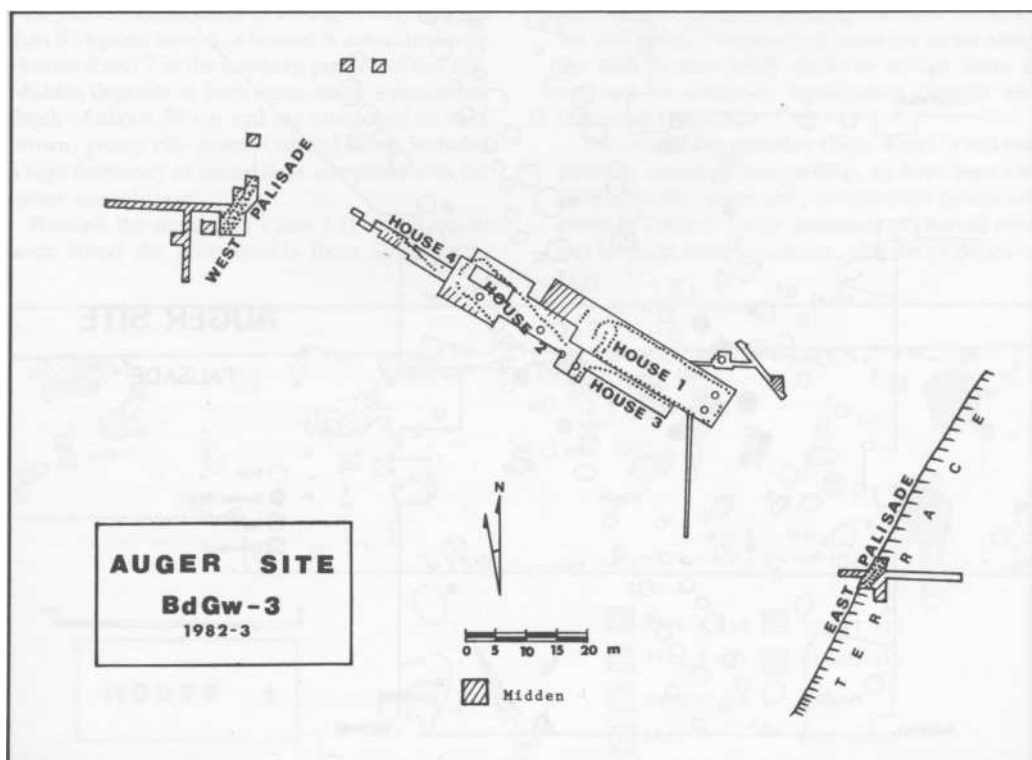


Fig. 2

Auger site excavations, 1982-83.

end of each house is more than a meter lower than its west end.

There is little space between the sides of adjacent houses: Houses 1 and 3 are separated by less than 50 cm, and Houses 6 and 7 by less than 1 m. In contrast, the ends of Houses 2 and 3 are

separated by 3.5 m, and those of Houses 2 and 4 by 4 m, a pattern which matches Champlain's 1619 observation that ". . . their dwellings ... are separated from one another about three to four yards..." (Biggar 1929:125). These areas between the house ends form three irregular streets running

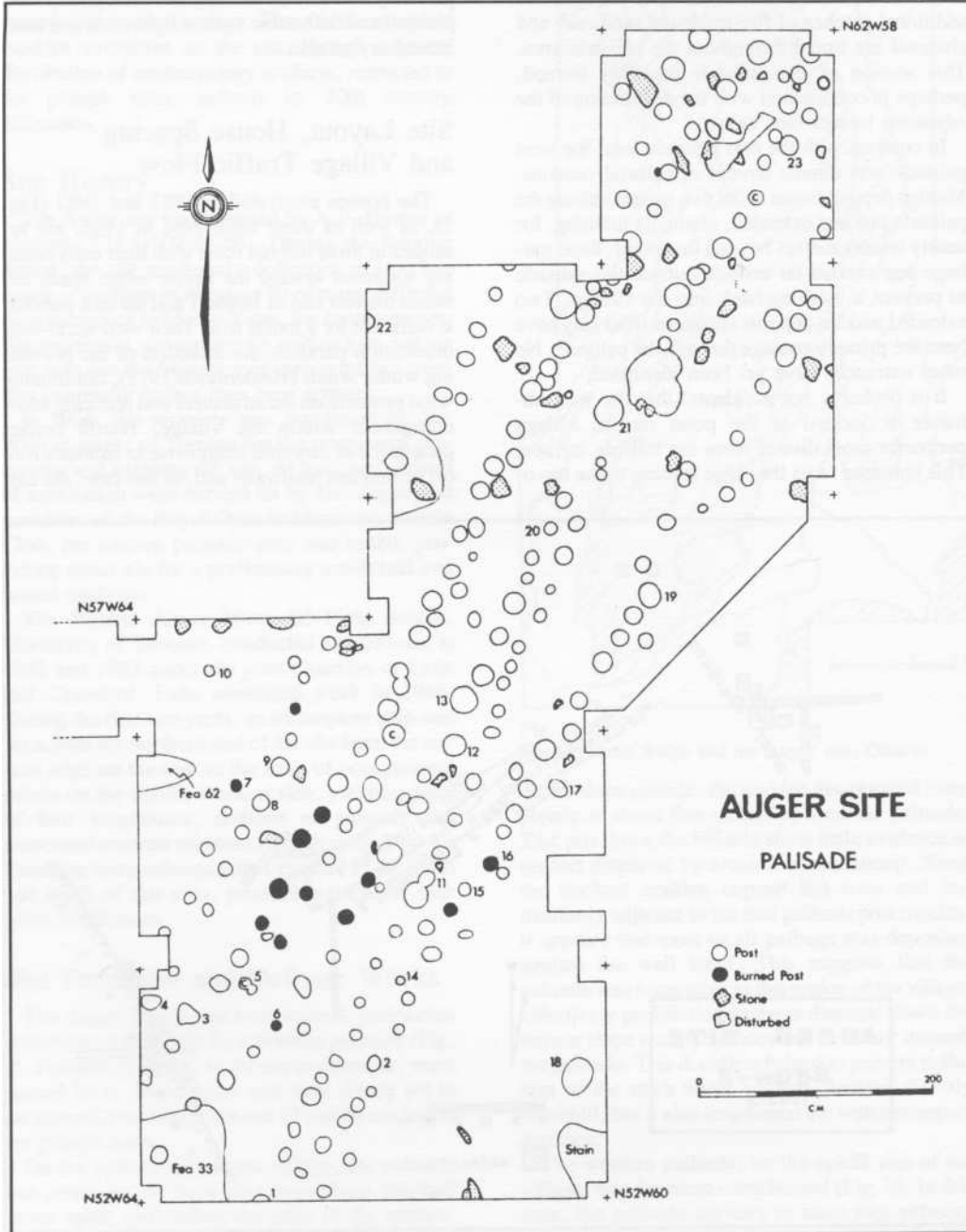


Fig. 3
Auger site, west palisade.

parallel to the terrace edge (cf Wrong 1968:203; JR 15:157, 16:247; Heidenreich 1971:144), comparable to those reported from the Ball and Warminster sites (Knight and Cameron 1983; Sykes 1983). Such streets do not appear typical of Neutral and many southern division Huron sites, where house orientation and shape may be extremely variable (cf Lennox 1984:11; Finlayson 1978).

This compressed pattern of closely packed houses may be contrasted with the open pattern exhibited at the Draper (Finlayson 1978) and Hood (Lennox 1984) sites. It is clearly designed to maximize population density while minimizing village area. This would substantially reduce the extent of palisade to be constructed and defended, but it increased the site's vulnerability to fire, since house walls are immediately adjacent. The compressed pattern may have offered some defensive advantages, funnelling invaders into the streets where they were easily visible from the adjoining houses (Johnston and Jackson 1980:176-178).

Open areas were described in the centres of villages of the St. Lawrence Iroquois and of the Onondaga (Heidenreich 1971:144), and these "plazas" occurred at the Auger and Ball sites (Knight and Cameron 1983), where they generally contain deposits of so-called "interior middens." One plaza, located north of House 2, covers more than 50 square meters; a second is associated with Houses 6 and 7 in the southern portion of the site. Midden deposits in both areas reach a maximum depth of about 50 cm and are composed of dark brown, greasy clay-loam. Cultural debris included a high frequency of faunal bone compared with the house assemblages.

Beneath the midden in Plaza 1 (Figs. 2 and 4) were found the post moulds from Structure 5,

poorly preserved and of uncertain size and nature. Assuming that this structure predated the midden, due to the undisturbed thickness of midden deposit overlying the post moulds, it would seem that plazas may not always have been the result of Huron city planning. A space could have opened at any time due to the destruction of one or more houses by fire or natural decay, and the remains of such collapsed structures would have provided the nucleus for further midden deposits.

House Exterior Construction

No two Huron houses are exactly alike, but most of them are similar in design, shape, structural features and organization of interior space. Huron house construction was cooperative, involving extended family groups (cf Wrong 1968:78) under the direction of individuals of greater experience or status.

Some aspects of Huron houses show little significant intrasite variance. The length of the house was probably determined by the number of families planning to occupy it, though this number, and thus the length of house needed, could change with time. House widths were necessarily fairly uniform, since they were determined by the normal height attained by trees of suitable species and diameter for wall poles. Frequency of posts per meter along the wall is also fairly uniform though there is variance of unknown significance (Knight and Cameron 1983).

Two essentially complete (Figs. 4 and 5) and two partially complete houses (Fig. 6) have been excavated at the Auger site; construction details are given in Table 1. Large quantities of charred corn and beans in these structures, plus the evidence of

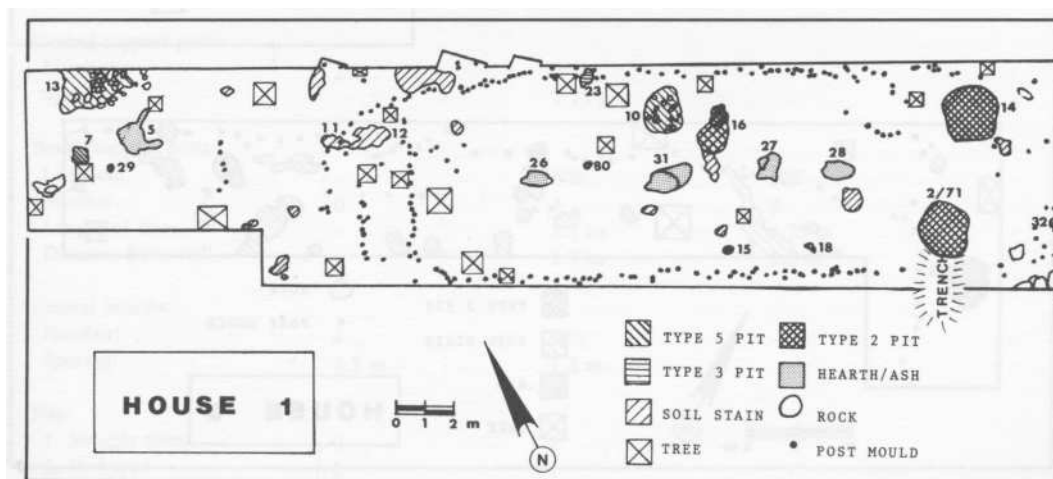


Fig. 4
Auger site, House I and Structure 5.

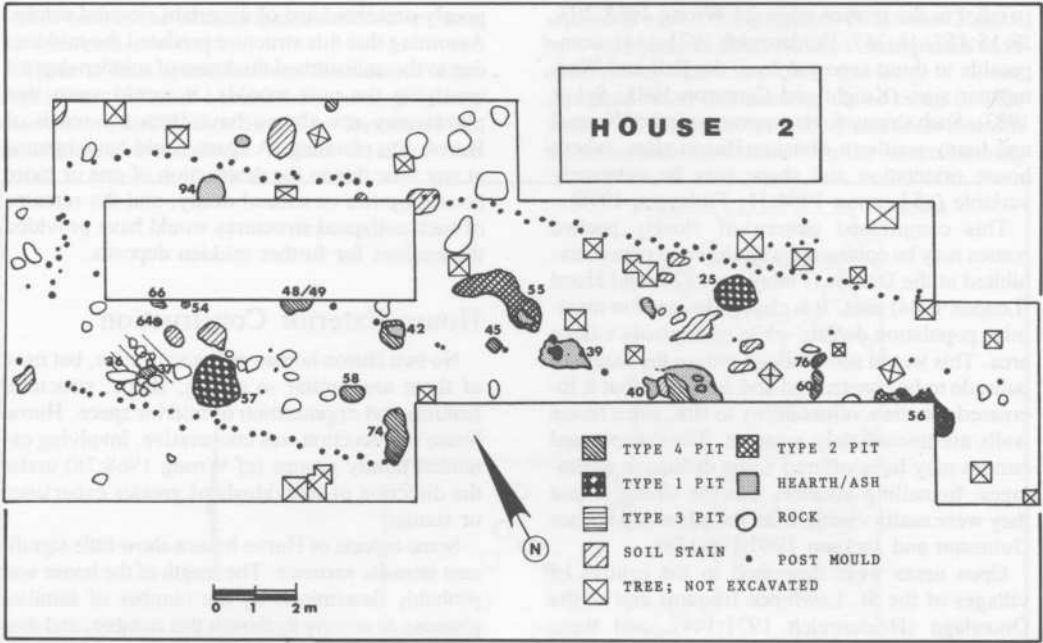


Fig. 5
Auger site. House 2.

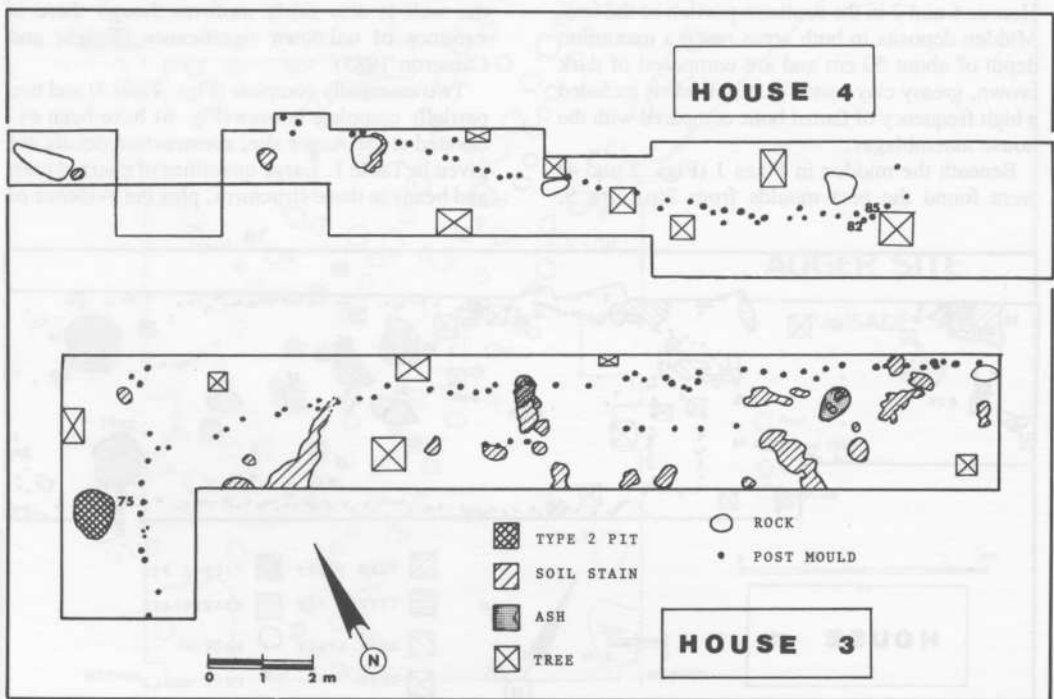


Fig. 6
Auger site, Houses 3 and 4.

charcoal and ash in some of the post moulds, supports an interpretation that these structures were burned, perhaps associated with the burning noted in the adjacent west palisade area.

Structure 5 is an anomalous north-south line of seven post moulds which abut the wall of House 2 at the south; at its northern end, this post line stops abruptly (Fig. 4). This structure may be an external fence or a side wing attached to House 2, or it may possibly be the east end of an indistinctly defined small house which shares a (south) wall with House 2. Associated with Structure 5 are an ash-filled hearth (F5), a rock feature (F13) and a pottery cache (F29). As noted above, this struc-

ture was partially covered by the midden which filled the plaza; it was thus abandoned early in the site occupation period. The following observations do not apply to Structure 5 unless so specified.

The house wall posts are typically Huron in size, 6 to 10 cm in diameter. Individual posts extended as much as 37 cm below the plough line in House 1 and more than 45 cm in House 3, but the average depth of wall posts was around 15 cm. Wall posts were sectioned but none exhibited the alternate in-and outward slant reported from the Warminster Site (Emerson 1961). In Houses 1, 3 and 4, the deepest post molds were found in the eastern, down-slope end of the house wall.

TABLE I
Metric Aspects of Auger Site Houses 1-4

| | House | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Total length | 25.0 m | 23.5 | 16.1 | 12 |
| Greatest width | 7.3 m | 7.7 | | |
| Number of posts | 133 | 95 | 62 | 41 |
| Post density | 3.6/m | 2.7/m | 3.0/m | 3.3/m |
| Ends | | | | |
| Porches | Both | None | None? | None? |
| Windbreak | West end | None | None? | None? |
| Shape: W/E ends | Convex/convex? | Square/? | Square/- | -/? |
| Entrances: | | | | |
| Location: West end | South, end wall | South, end | | |
| East end | East, south wall | | | |
| Size: | 1.5 m (W passage) 2.6 m (SE) | 2.5 m (W end) | | |
| Central support posts: | | | | |
| Number: | 2 | 6 | | |
| Spacing: | | 1.75 m | | |
| Bench support posts: | | | | |
| Location: | | NW | NW | |
| Number | 0 | 4 | 9 | |
| Length of line | | 8.1 m | 4.75 m | |
| Distance from wall | | 1.7 m | 1.0 m | |
| Central hearths: | | | | |
| Number: | 4 | 6(?) | | |
| Spacing: | 2.5 m | 1.8 m | | |
| Pits: | | | | |
| 1. Straight sided | 0 | 2 | | |
| 2. V-shaped | 2 | | | |
| 3. Ceramic pots | 1 | | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Charred grain | 5 | 8 | 1 | 2 |
| 5. Rock features | 1 | | | |

Posts in the center of the long walls are staggered in each case, but they thin to single rows as the houses taper toward the end. This pattern, which also occurs on eight structures at the Ball site (Knight and Cameron 1983), suggests that thick bark planks were woven along the central walls to provide better insulation for the occupied portion of the long house. The unoccupied porches at the ends required less insulation, and thus a thinner wall, so that a single line of posts was sufficient.

Ends and Porches

One composite entrance was defined at the Auger site, an overlapping windbreak which shielded the entrance passage to the west porch of House 1 (Fig. 4). Windbreaks are unknown at the Ball site (Knight and Cameron 1983:134-136) and none has been reported from Warminster (Sykes 1983) or Le Caron (Johnston and Jackson 1980), but a similar element appears on the west end of the longhouse from the Robitaille site (Latta 1976:477). This entrance to House 1 had heavy traffic wear, evidenced by the presence of a low area (F11/12) filled with washed topsoil across the door gap.

The remaining doors were simple gaps in the west ends of Houses 2 and (probably) 3, opening onto streets or the plaza. The vague nature of the east ends of these houses precluded definition of east doors, though they probably existed. Only one side opening was observed, a ramp that led from a deep stratified pit (Feature 2/71 in the east end of House 1) through a gap in the adjoining wall of that house. The ramp was virtually sterile of cultural debris; whether it dates from the original occupation is uncertain, as is its function.

House 1 had porches in both ends, separated from the interior by stout partitions. The east porch produced large quantities of charred corn and beans, and two Type 2 pits located just inside the porch partition were probably related to its function as a storage area. The west porch, on the other hand, was virtually sterile of culture debris; it may have served only as a vestibule. There were no definable porches on the ends of any of the other houses, but a large Type 2 pit, similar to those found in House 1, was situated at the eastern end of House 2, within the area where a porch would have been located (Fig. 5).

This invisible porch raises a question which has been noted by other analysts, the significance of Iroquoian houses that lack post moulds or other evidence of construction in one or both ends. In each case at the Auger site, the west end of the longhouse is clearly defined, with deeply placed posts, and the east end is vague or missing altogether. This is not due to plough disturbance

as the well-constructed west end wall of House 3 is less than four meters from the poorly defined east end of House 2. Similarly, the west end of House 2 is clearly preserved while the line of deep post moulds which constitutes the side wall of House 4 stops abruptly; only a single shallow stain suggests that its end wall turns north rather than south.

Poorly-defined house ends have been reported from most Neutral sites (Fitzgerald 1982, 1984; Lennox 1981:221, 1984; Pearce 1983:2; Williamson 1983a:56, 1983b:7; Wright 1981). Existing Neutral house ends are defined by post moulds or by linear soil stains. Huron houses generally show more extensive end remains consisting solely of post moulds, a fact which appears unrelated to site disturbance factors. All of the houses at the extensively cultivated Ball site appear to have well-defined ends (Knight and Cameron 1983) as do those at the moderately disturbed Warminster site (Sykes 1983) and unploughed Robitaille site (Latta 1976). Bugar reports that one house from the southern division Seed site has an undefined east end.

The absence of end walls may simply be the accidental result of upper soil profile disturbance of the site by farming activities which would have destroyed extremely shallow post moulds (cf Fitzgerald 1984:9). This interpretation is doubtless correct as far as it goes, but it implies a reverse theorem: that post moulds which are most susceptible to plough destruction are those which are shallowest. Post moulds in the east ends of the Auger houses were evidently extremely shallow, if they existed at all, while adjacent wall posts were not.

Open-ended houses may characterize a warm weather occupation in which ventilation would be desirable, an interpretation supported at the Robin Hood site by a lack of heating hearths and ash deposits (Williamson 1983a:56), but this does not apply to the Auger site which appears, from faunal evidence, to have been a year-round occupation. Alternatively, "amorphous ends" may have been constructed with the intention of expansion (Fitzgerald 1984:8-9). No sign of expansion was observed at the Auger site, but it is not unreasonable that the Huron builders might have planned for possible future expansion needs.

Structural stress in longhouses rests on the wall posts which must bear the weight of the house structure and that of snow accumulation on the roof as well as resisting wind pressure. The ends of the house bear relatively little weight and, hence, would not require substantial supports (cf Lennox 1984:16). A loosely constructed end wall could provide extra flexibility for the house frame so that its wall posts might shift and settle without damaging their bark shingles.

A final possibility is that end walls were intentionally removable. In this case, most poles in the "convertible" end of the house would have been set in shallow holes, easily destroyed by ploughing, while a few deeply set poles would have sufficed to stabilize the winter pressure on the southeast, hence downwind, ends. There is no question that ends of Huron houses were removed for house extension; this hypothesis suggests that they might have been removed for other reasons, including ventilation and easy access to grain storage facilities during the height of the harvest.

The sockets for the stabilizing end posts would have been empty whenever the ends were removed and such holes could have been used seasonally for storage pits. This pattern is exhibited by two post moulds in the east end of House 4 and one from the east porch of House 1; all contained masses of charred beans (Table 3, Type 4b). The beans, which are harvested in late summer when additional ventilation would have been welcome, would have been removed when the return of cold weather required the replacement of the house ends. In this case, the houses evidently burnt down during the summer while the holes were being used for storage rather than structural purposes.

These interpretations of missing house ends are by no means mutually exclusive. Indeed, they fit together to form a multifunctional architectural system which has obvious advantages for a variety of personal and structural needs, and which, incidentally, incorporates predictably the effect of modern farming damage on system remains.

House Interiors: Central Aisles

Ethnographic descriptions of Huron houses suggest bilateral personal space allocations separated by a central aisle which contained public traffic areas and hearths used for cooking, heating and light. The central area of Houses 1 and 2, defined by absence of pits, forms an aisle measuring about 3 m in width, which matches Champlain's estimate of "ten to twelve feet" (Biggar 1929:122-123; Wrong 1968:93).

Five post moulds situated along the center line of House 2 have been defined as roof supports (Johnston and Jackson 1980:179; Fitzgerald 1984; Lennox 1981, 1984; Wright 1981). They occur at average intervals of 1.75 m, roughly equidistant between hearths. They are larger than the post moulds associated with sweat lodges (Tyyska 1972) and slightly larger than normal wall posts, 8 to 14 cm in diameter and 20 to 40 cm deep. At least one feature from House 1 appears to be a similar roof support.

Winter snow accumulation places considerable stress on the roof of a wooden structure of this type,

requiring additional structural support in some older houses. Since snow weight would not be a problem in summer, such support posts could have been removed during that season. Evidence for this sort of seasonal roof support is similar to that of the convertible ends: masses of charred corn were found in the post socket in House 1. As with the end posts, this represented temporary storage during the late summer.

The most prominent features within the aisles of the Auger houses were hearths located along their central axes. An average of 2.5 m of unburnt soil lay between each pair of hearths in House 1 and 1.8 m in House 2. In House 1, where the hearths were more regularly arranged, the space between the end hearths and the porch partitions was greater than that between the hearths.

Three types of hearth features were defined at the Auger site (Table 2). The shallow ash-filled basin type was the most common. Such hearths were oval, their long axes paralleling that of the longhouse. Their basins were sharply defined, indicating that they had been intentionally excavated. Presumably, this was a cleaning operation, since the five hearths of this type contained little char-coal and no cultural remains. Two smaller, deeper pits located along the central line of House 2 contained large quantities of charcoal. These may also be hearths, though their size and shape appear less suitable for cooking purposes than the previous features. These two sterile pits could also be large roof-support post sockets.

Four hearthlike features, including F5 in Structure 5, are irregular in shape with mixed lenses of ash, charcoal and burn-reddened sands. These features are generally much larger and deeper than the preceding, and they all contained concentrations of artifacts and charred vegetable remains. They appear to represent larger fires, perhaps for burning trash, rather than carefully tended small hearths. Whatever their function, these hearths were not cleaned.

Central aisle features which were absent from the houses at the Auger site include non-porch partitions and collections of small, shallow post moulds representing sweat lodges (Tyyska 1972) or other communal activities. There were few pits in this area, with the exception of the corn-filled post mould in House 1, and few artifacts were recovered from the aisles. The central aisle, as well as its hearths, was evidently cleaned.

House Interiors: Side Areas

Despite the ethnographic references to side benches (Biggar 1929:123; Wrong 1968:93), archaeological evidence of these elements is far from common in Huron house remains. At the Auger

site, bench support posts occurred along part, but not all, of the north wall of Houses 2 and 3; there are no signs of such posts along any of the south walls. The existing post moulds are approximately the same size and depth as the center support posts, 10 to 12 cm in diameter and 25 to 50 cm in depth: no slash pits have been observed. Since the probability of post mould survival of plough disturbance is proportional to depth, we must presume that some posts were set deeper and some parts of the bench more substantially constructed than others. Perhaps they were intended to bear a heavier load, or possibly they were residential space for persons of high status; the existing bench traces occur in the northeast corner of each house, at a point farthest from the western door. It is also possible that, ethnographic description notwithstanding, wall benches did not always run the entire length of the houses.

A curving line of house wall-sized posts in the northeastern corner of House 1 encloses an area which was comparatively sterile of cultural debris. This may be another bench structure or a special activity area of some sort, but it appears to have been a pen for wild geese (Biggar 1929:130; Wrong 1968:220) or other animals (JR 13:97) being raised in the house. Testing by Betty Levant indicates that soil in this area showed a higher phosphate content than that of the normal house floor.

PitS

Five types of pits were defined at the Auger site (Table 3). With the exception of Type 4b, all were restricted to the side areas of the houses.

Type 1 - deep, straight-sided pits

Both examples occurred in House 2. These pits were nearly round with clearly defined edges, vertical walls and flat bottoms, measuring more than 1 m in diameter and nearly 1 m below plough zone in depth. They contained homogenous brownish clay-loam which was slightly darker than the surrounding yellowish clay. The phosphate content of this fill was higher than that in the surrounding soils, but the only cultural remains were one bean and four corn kernels in the very bottom of F57. The homogeneous fill is not the result of casual dumping which would have produced lenses of different materials or of natural slump which would have destroyed the vertical walls. These pits were intentionally filled with sterile soil obtained from some non-occupied area on the site. Both pits are situated close to the house wall, well back from the normal traffic area; F25 appears to be located under a wall bench. Neither pit was indicated by any surficial depression.

These pits resemble burial features found within houses at the Ball site (Knight and Melbye 1983). If this interpretation is correct, the Auger burials were removed, presumably for ossuary or other reburial, and the pits were refilled rather than being used for other purposes. The special nature of a burial pit might account for the care taken with its backfilling. Alternatively, Type 1 pits may be related in function to Type 2 pits, representing two different stages in the use-life of a single class of feature.

Type 2 - Bell-shaped pits with stratified fill

Eight pits of this type have been excavated at the

TABLE 2
Auger Site Hearths

| | House | Feature Number | Length | | Greatest Depth (in meters) | Nature of Fill | Cultural remains (number) |
|-------------------|-------|----------------|--------|------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| | | | E-W | N-S | | | |
| Hearths Type 1 | 1 | 26 | 1.07 | .53 | .13 | Solid white ash | 0 |
| | 1 | 31 | 1.1 | .61 | .15 | Whitish ash | 0 |
| | 1 | 28 | 1.07 | .67 | .14 | White-brown ash | 1 |
| | 2 | 42 | .64 | .60 | .10 | Ash, sand | 0 |
| | 2 | 94 | 1.12 | 1.28 | .10 | Ash | 0 |
| Type 2 | 2 | 48/9 | .64 | .64 | .30 | Charcoal | 0 |
| | 2 | 45 | .45 | .30 | .10 | Charcoal, greasy soil | 0 |
| Type 3 | 1 | 27 | .75 | .90 | .10 | Sand, charcoal, ash | 8 |
| | 2 | 40 | 1.0 | .50 | .20 | Ash, charcoal, sand | 9 |
| | 2 | 39 | 1.0 | .70 | .15 | Ash, charcoal | 6 |
| | 5 | 5 | 1.17 | 2.0 | .10 | Ash, charcoal, sand | 204* |

* This feature was overlain by the plaza midden: artifact associations may be accidental.

TABLE 3
Auger Site Pits

| | House | Feature Number | Length | | Greatest Depth (in meters) | Nature of Fill | Cultural remains (non-botanical) (number) |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|--------------------|------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| | | | E-W (in meters) | N-S | | | |
| Pits | | | | | | | |
| Type 1 | 2 | 25 | .79 | .80 | .70 | Medium brown fine sand | 0 |
| | 2 | 57 | 1.36 | .95 | .94 | Dark brown fine sand | 0 |
| Type 2 | 1 | 14 | 1.90 | 1.94 | .78 | Stratified | 26 |
| | | 2/71 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.6 | Stratified | 67 |
| | 1 | 16 | .55 | .70 | .80 | Stratified | 5 |
| | 2 | 56 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | Stratified | 161 |
| | 2 | 55 | .50 | .80 | .60 | Stratified | 63 |
| | 3 | 75 | .90 | .70 | .70 | Stratified | 89 |
| | north of H I | 1 | 2.4 | 1.85 | 1.08 | Stratified | 638 |
| Type 3 | 1 | 23 | .40 | .62 | .44 | Macmurchy Scalloped pot | 164 |
| | 2 | 66 | .24 | .24 | .18 | no rims | 18 |
| | 5 | 29 | .10 | .10 | .28 | Huron Incised pot | 12 |
| Type 4a | I | 15 | .30 | .30 | .25 | Charred seeds | 0 |
| | 1 | 18 | .10 | .12 | .20 | Charred seeds | 18 |
| | 2 | 37 | .70 | .40 | .20 | Charred seeds | 0 |
| | 2 | 54 | .17 | .14 | .20 | Charred beans | 0 |
| | 2 | 58 | .60 | .24 | .40 | Charred seeds | 1 |
| | 2 | 60 | .30 | 1.20 | .20 | Charred seeds | 0 |
| | 2 | 64 | .26 | .22 | .14 | Charred beans | 0 |
| | 2 | 74 | .50 | 1.50 | .10 | Charred beans | 19 |
| | 2 | 76 | .80 | .40 | .20 | Charred seeds | 0 |
| 5 | 7 | .15 | .18 | .12 | Charred corn | 2 | |
| Type 4b | I (E end) | 32 | .14 | .17 | .22 | Charred seeds | 0 |
| | I (centre) | 80 | .10 | .12 | .25 | Charred seeds | 0 |
| | 4 (E end) | 82 | .07 | .07 | .26 | Charred corn and beans | 0 |
| | 4 (E end) | 85 | .08 | .08 | .35 | Charred corn | 0 |
| Type 5 | 1 | 10 | 1.2 | 1.6 | .80 | Gravel | 0 |
| | 2 | 36 | 2.5 | 2.5 | .70 | Rocks, charcoal | 18 |
| | 5 | 13 | 2.1 | 1.4 | .90 | Rocks. overlain by midden | |

Auger site, all associated with the ends and side areas of longhouses. Two large pits were located near the east end of House 1 and a smaller one, much disturbed by a rodent burrow, near its center. House 2 had one small pit in the center and a larger one associated with the undefined east end of the house. An extremely large pit was accidentally discovered in an unexcavated house north of House 1, and two further specimens were intercepted by a I x 50 m trench in the south end of the site. These features appear to be common, perhaps universal, characteristics of Auger site houses. They resemble storage pits, usually smaller, described from other Iroquoian sites; see, for example, Feature 8, House 10 and Feature 15. House I I at the Hood site (Lennox 1984).

Type 2 pits were bell- or V-shaped in profile and filled with lenses of soils, rocks, ash, charcoal, charred vegetable matter and artifacts; sterile and culture-bearing strata alternated in most cases. Most measure between 1 and 2 m in top diameter and 50 to 150 cm in depth. All contained abundant cultural remains. Feature 1, for example, produced 429 ceramic sherds, 2 pipe bowls and 49 bones as well as large numbers of seeds from maize, beans, plum, sumac, raspberry, ragweed and various grasses, according to Monckton. Despite the presence of a fragment of human occipital bone in Feature 110, they do not appear to be burial pits. The nature of the fill suggests that they were open for a period of time so that trash disposal and natural slump contributed to their formation.

These pits appeared as greyish-brown stains on the occupation floor, but two pits were visible before excavation as depressions in the ground surface. Such depressions seem to have been common on Huron sites at the beginning of this century (Hunter 1899, 1901) and have been noted at other Iroquoian sites (Keron 1983:6; Fox 1985:31). The Auger features do not appear to be potholes or stump removals, for their internal strata are undisturbed. Clearly, they are occupation remains of such original size and depth that centuries of soil formation and decades of ploughing have failed to eradicate them.

Wide, deep pits inside poorly lighted longhouses would surely have been troublesome; they were evidently covered in some fashion. Given the proximity of these features to the grain storage area of House 1, and given their contents, they may be equated with the grain storage vats described by Sagard as "... grandes cuues ou tonnes . . . posees en leur porche, ou en quelque coin de leurs Cabanes" (Wrong 1968:104), (326). Such "casks," lined with bark and set in holes within the longhouse, were used to store maize after it had been well dried and shelled; they also held precious personal possessions (Wrong 1968:95), (321). The fact that the pits at the Auger site contained relatively little grain is further support for dating the end of occupation in the summer; maize drying and shelling was an autumn occupation. The holes, emptied of their previous season's holdings, were used for temporary trash disposal. When needed for the new crop in the fall, they could be cleaned by digging out their contents to produce a pit similar to the Type 1 features described above.

Type 3 — Oval to round cache pits

Each contained substantial amounts of a single vessel which was apparently set into the ground. All of the vessels were broken and none was of unusual size or decoration. It seems likely that the caches were designed to protect the vessel's contents, but there were no indications of the nature of those contents.

Type 4 — Small oval to round pits and post moulds

These caches contained large quantities of charred beans and/or corn, surrounded by black fill; they rarely produced any other sort of cultural remains. They were extremely variable in size and shape, and most of them appear to have been temporary constructs rather than permanent storage facilities. Some (labeled 4b in Table 3) were post moulds from seasonally removable portions of the houses including ends and central roof supports.

Type 5 — Rock features

Three features consisted of accumulations of rocks covering more than four square meters in area; they lacked distinctive soils or borders. The rocks are generally too large and irregular, and of the wrong material, for any artifactual use. They were accompanied by pockets of charcoal or darkened soils and by a small number of artifacts which may have been accidental associations, particularly in the case of F15 which was completely buried by the plaza midden. F15 was evidently constructed early in the site occupation, which supports an hypothesis that the rock features resulted from the initial clearance of occupation floors.

Conclusion

The settlement remains from the Auger village exhibit several aspects of planned rather than fortuitous construction. The palisade, with its entrance on the back side of the village, implies strategic calculations which overrode requirements of personal convenience. House construction involving removable end walls, provided for ventilation and the possibility of future expansion. The organization of houses around streets and open plazas facilitated movement of people and their possessions within the village; it may also have provided a defense mechanism. The standardization of house and palisade posts reflects quality control in the selection of building materials.

Auger houses often contain large pits, probably grain storage vats, while small pits for refuse disposal were uncommon. Hearth pits were maintained, to a varying degree, by cleaning and disposal of their contents. The communal area of the house was kept free of rubbish and of internal structures. Basically, the Auger residents appear to have been tidy people.

The tidiness does not reflect a short site occupation (Fitzgerald 1984:12), (22), for the middens would have required several years to accumulate. If, as has been postulated, the houses burned down, then the absence of personal belongings is even more striking. This is yet another indication of summer destruction: most of the occupants of the houses were probably absent at the time of the fire.

The Auger village exhibits an orderly residence design for long-term occupational stability representing an effective regional environmental adaptation. These attributes of house construction and space utilization represent an initial definition of settlement patterns characteristic of the Attigeneonongnahac nation. To the extent that these patterns resemble or differ from traits and practices at other Huron sites, they provide a useful basis for further studies of ethnic variation within the Huron tradition.

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