



WRIGHT L. COFFINBERRY CHAPTER
MICHIGAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

COFFINBERRY NEWS BULLETIN

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MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The next meeting will be at 7:00 on October 10th, 2019 in Room 249 Lake Michigan Hall, Grand Valley State University. Dr. Colgan of the Geology Department at Grand Valley State University will be giving a talk on the geologic formation of the Grand River valley and subsequent formation processes.

PRESENTATION ABSTRACT

The Grand River Valley: Evidence and Inferences of Its Origin

Patrick M. Colgan (Professor of Geology, Grand Valley State University)

The Grand River Valley formed during the last deglaciation of the Laurentide Ice Sheet between ~19,000 and ~12,000 years ago. What is most remarkable is that we still know relatively little about the exact origin and timing of events for this impressive valley and river system. Early researchers worked out the relative ages of events based on the cross-cutting relationships of landforms-sediments with the Grand River Valley. Most workers interpret that the valley was cut and then filled with sand and gravel, during large discharge events, perhaps even glacier outburst floods (GLOFs) of moraine-dammed lakes. Complete integration and evolution of the river system then continued into the Holocene after 11,700 years ago, and continues today. In my talk, I attempt to highlight the evidence that is available to reconstruct the origin of the Grand River Valley as well as highlight what is still unknown.

CNB editorial: This issue of the Coffinberry News Bulletin represents an effort to revive this publication. In the past, CNB produced a lot of great archeological and historical content and it is my hope it will again. I (Lynn Chapman) have monopolized most of the contents of this issue simply to get it going. This will have to change in the near future with not only members of Coffinberry contributing but also students and other interested parties. As an undergraduate at GVSU my first publication, a radiocarbon date from the Funk, was in the Coffinberry News Bulletin. I hope other students will publish too. Guidelines for publication are simple. The old CNB published articles concerning archaeology, history and geology concerning the local region (primarily west Michigan). Major articles drawing from external reference material should include references and the author should be clearly indicated. Not something that always occurred in the previous CNB. To start this issue, I have generally followed the traditional format of the CNB but expect we will update the format over time. Submit articles to Lynn Chapman (lynnalanchapman@gmail.com) or to Wesley Jackson (jacksowe@gvsu.edu) via e-mail, mail or in person.

CHAPTER NEWS

The pursuit of a display case to display artifacts is on-going. Wesley Jackson had provided Lynn Chapman with the name of a local manufacturer but sales and distribution seems to be through a California office. Lynn Chapman was going to look into this further and present some examples to the members at the next meeting. Alternately, At the last meeting (September 12th) Brian Geib offered to check with his brother-in-law who has a shop well equipped with wood working tools and may be able to provide us with a display cabinet to our specifications at a cheaper price than purchasing one on the internet. Lynn provided Brian with a description of what we are after and hopefully Brian will have some good news for the Chapter at the next meeting.

We are planning an ambitious series of presentations this year covering the prehistory and history of the Grand River valley. We also plan to pull artifacts representative of the period under discussion out of the collections at GVSU and have out on display for attendees to look at. The schedule and topics to-date are given below:

Meeting Date	Topic	Speaker
Oct. 10 th , 2019	Geology of the Grand River Valley	Dr. Patrick Colgan, (GVSU)
Nov. 14 th , 2019	Paleo	Dr. Dillon Carr (GRCC)
Dec. 12 th , 2019	Archaic	To Be Determined
Jan. 9 th , 2020	Early and Middle Woodland	Dr. Janet Brashler (GVSU)
Feb. 13 th , 2020	Late Woodland	Wesley Jackson (GVSU)
Mar. 12 th , 2020	Late Prehistoric, - Early Historic	Lynn Chapman
April 9 th , 2020	Historic: Ottawa settlement and Fur Trade	To Be Determined
May 14 th , 2020	Historic: Euroamerican settlement	To Be Determined

SOCIETY NEWS

The last Board Meeting of the Michigan Archaeological Society (MAS) was held on June 30th in Lansing at the Michigan History Museum. There was much discussion regarding the transfer of duties from previous officers to the new officers. On May 4th, members of the MAS assisted the Leelanau County Preservation Society with testing an area of the former Leelanau County Poor Farm slated to become a parking lot. Eight MAS members, 6 preservation society members and 10 high schoolers participated in the dig. During testing a previously unknown, earlier homestead remains was detected.

The activities at the Poor Farm have aided in the formation of a new chapter of the Michigan Archaeological Society centered around the Traverse City area. At this time (Sept. 2019) this chapter is still in the process of forming.

Dr. Michael Hambacher, editor of *The Michigan Archaeologist*, gave a status update concerning upcoming issues of the MA. Changes in the people doing layout are delaying the publication somewhat

Vol. 59 Berrien Springs edition was sent out. (This was 2013 I think)
 Vol. 60 (Year 2014) is going to layout/went to layout this summer.

- Vol. 61 S-Curve edition. This is in process. This involves editing a very large, detailed cultural resource management report generated when the S-Curve of I 131 was repaired and revised in downtown Grand Rapids. There is much discussion about whether this will be one, two or three volumes. Volume 61 – 63. Years 2015, 2016, 2017
- Vol. 64 The account of Hugh Heward's trip across Lower Michigan by canoe in 1790 plus other articles. Year 2018.

Volume 64 would essentially catch the MA up to date. Remember that you receive the MA only for the years in which you are member. I was not a member in 2013 and therefore did not receive Vol. 59, the Berrien Springs edition.

MAS is also planning to sell merchandise on their website. Things like coffee mugs, tee shirts. Arrangements for this are in-process.

UP-COMING EVENTS

The Michigan Archaeological Society (MAS) fall workshop is coming up. Date and site to be announced. At a board meeting in June Dan Wymer had volunteered the Wooster-Bailey site located in Jackson County for consideration but plans remain to be finalized.

Michigan Archaeology Day is on Saturday, 10/19/2019 at the Michigan History Museum and Archives of Michigan, 702 W. Kalamazoo Street, Lansing MI. Time: 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Free admission and free parking. Website: <https://www.michigan.org/event/2019-michigan-archaeology-day>

Midwest Archaeological Conference Will be held in Mankato Minnesota this year, October 10th through 12th. This is a major event for regional archaeologist. <https://www.midwestarchaeology.org/annual-meeting/upcoming>

ARCHAEOLOGY AROUND MICHIGAN

Norton Mounds Stabilization Project

At the beginning of August, Cardno Company, an environmental consulting and engineering origination hired by the Grand Rapids Public Museum laid down cloth and planted grasses to stabilize the bank of the gravel pit on the west side of the mound group. The work was monitored by Ryan Peterson, an archaeologist on staff at Cardno. Lynn Chapman was also on location, monitoring the activity on behalf of Coffinberry and Dr. Janet Brashler.



Norton Mound N stabilization project in August 2019. Mound N is at the upper left of the photo and the gravel pit is to the right. Ryan Peterson, (in blue shirt) archeologist for Cardno is examining a hole dug for planting grass.

Gravel mining adjacent to the mound group and subsequent erosion of the edge of the gravel pit threatened to eat into Mound N, one of the western most and also one of the three largest mounds of the site. The work performed by Cardno involved laying down a cloth mesh over the side of the gravel pit and then planting plugs of grass at intervals within the mesh. Since there was still three to six feet of surface left between the edge of Mound N and the edge of the gravel pit, the placing of the grass plugs, which involved digging holes about 6 inches deep did not disturb the mound. The holes were examined carefully by Ryan and also Lynn and no artifacts were uncovered.

Lowell Area Historical Museum Fur Trade Interpretive Cabin

In July, 2019 the Lowell Area Historical Society announced the opening of a Fur Trade Interpretive Cabin located in a new park on the north side of the Grand River near the intersection of Bowes and Fulton St. (M-21). The Fur Trade Interpretive Cabin is located within sight of M-21 behind the Walgreens drug store. An open house was held



(Upper Left) The Fur Trade Interpretive Cabin in Lowell Michigan. (Right) a section of the newly constructed trail. (Lower Left) the pedestrian and bike bridge over the Grand River.

on August 23'd however it remains locked except for special occasions since there is nobody on staff at the location. Inside the cabin is a canvas canoe and some fur trapping articles donated to the museum.

Also, of interest, the Fur Trade Interpretive Cabin is connected to a Township Park located on the south side of the Grand River via a newly constructed pedestrian bridge which offers a nice view of the Grand River. Pedestrian and bike trails exist in the Township Park and more trails are planned on the north side of the Grand River as well.

Lowell Area Historical Museum

325 W. Main St. ~ Lowell, Michigan 49331

Phone: (616) 897-7688 history@lowellmuseum.org

Tuesday 1-4pm, Thursday 1-4pm, Saturday 1-4 pm, Sunday 1-4pm

FEATURE ARTICLE**The Voyage of the Felicity and the
Grand River during the American Revolution****Lynn Chapman**

Note: To some extent this is a reprise and enlargement of an article that appeared in the Coffinberry News Bulletin in May, 1959, written by either Edward Gillis or Homer Burch. In the fall of 1779 a British sloop named the Felicity was sent from Michilimackinac down the east coast of Lake Michigan, putting in at the mouth of the Muskegon River, the Grand River and the Kalamazoo River among other places. As far as I am aware this, however brief it may be, is the earliest eyewitness account of the Grand River. It also sheds some light on the activities of the Native Americans and fur traders in the region during the 1770's. This is the earliest eye witness account of the Grand River that I am aware of. The second earliest account, from a fur trader named Hugh Heward, dating to 1790, will be addressed in an up coming issue of the Michigan Archaeologist. When quoting from letters and the log of the Felicity I retain the original spelling but will put clarifications in []. Otherwise I will include the original place names in (), for example, Manistee River (River Mauhesty).

The Military Background:

The origins of the Felicity's voyage to the Grand River lie in the political and military situation of the Great Lakes in the years of the American Revolution. The British military maintained garrisons at Michilimackinac, located on the south side of the Straits of Mackinac and also at Detroit. Both of these locations were also major centers of the fur trade. The commander at Michilimackinac was Major Aren't Schuler De Peyster and at Detroit was Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton. Both reported to Governor Fredrick Haldimand at Quebec whose chief of staff, Capt. Behm also figures in correspondence with the commanders. Old Fort St. Joseph, at present day Niles Michigan, was no longer being regularly garrisoned by the British but still operated as a fur trading post. Haldimand corresponded frequently with the commanders of the western posts. The letters from this period survive in the *Canadian Archives* and have been reprinted in the journals of the *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections* (MPHC) and the *Wisconsin Historical Collections* (WHC).

Also important in this story are the roles of Charles de Langlade and Gautier. Charles de Langlade was the son of Augustin Mouet de Langlade, a French fur trader reported to have interests in the Grand River and also Green bay. Charles was also the son of Domitilde, an Ottawa from l' Arbres Croche and sister to La Fourche (Nissowaquet), an Ottawa leader there. As such, Langlade served as an intermediary between the Ottawa and whichever European nation, first French and then British, in power at the Straits (McDonnell 2001). By the time of the American Revolution Langlade had made his residence at Green Bay. Charles Gautier de Verville, usually referred to simply as Gautier, was the nephew of Langlade. Both were employed by the British in the Indian Department as guides and interpreters but this employment

curtailed their trading activities and combined with British stinginess regarding gift giving lessened Langlade and Gautier's influence with the Native Americans (McDonnell 2001:95-97). A counterpart to Langlade at Michilimackinac was a French-Canadian named Louis Chevalier at Fort St. Joseph. Chevalier was described in 1778 as being "so connected with the Potawatomes that he can now do anything with then having lived upwards of thirty years at that place" (MPHC 1886:368¹; Sleeper-Smith 2001).

At the start of the American Revolution, the Great Lakes Native Americans probably knew of the Anglo-American colonists through reputation only. The Delaware had been swindled out of their lands in Pennsylvania through a series of treaties and had mostly resettled in Ohio. The Delaware and the Shawnee were struggling to prevent Anglo-American settlement in the Ohio valley and Kentucky. The Great Lakes Native Americans would have been aware of these events and since the British were already established in the region their sympathies with the British cause. Several events however weakened this loyalty. In 1777, Charles Langlade led a contingent of Ottawa and Ojibwa east to Montreal to join the army General Burgoyne was leading to invade New York. While marching on Albany a series of events caused the Native Americans to leave the British army and return home on August 19th. Subsequently, Burgoyne was defeated at the battle of Saratoga on October 13th, 1777 (Armour and Widder 1986:63; Alden 1969).

American ambassadors to France was able to use this defeat to persuade France to enter the war on the side of the rebels. Native Americans and French Canadians living in the Great Lakes region tended to be more loyal to France than to the British. In January 1778, France declared war on Great Britain and in the summer of 1778 George Rogers Clark with a band of Virginians seized Vincennes, Kaskaskia and Fort Chartres in the Illinois Country (Nestor 2008; Alden 1969). At Detroit, Hamilton was determined to drive the rebels out of the Illinois Country and marched to Vincennes where he took the fort the rebels had built and then set in to spend the winter. Langlade and Chevalier, were sent to recruit Native Americans to join Hamilton to drive Clark out of the Illinois Country; however, they had difficulty in raising a war party due in part to the reluctance of the Native Americans to fight against the French and also because they were departing for their winter hunt (Armour and Widder 1978:90; MPHC 1886:374-375; MPHC 1886:377-378, MPHC 1886:378). Before the war party from the upper Great Lakes could get organized, on February 25th, 1779 Hamilton was captured in a surprise attack by Clark (Armour and Widder 1986:63). With this action, the way to Detroit and Michilimackinac lie open to invasion by the rebels or the French/Spanish out of Louisiana.

To the British military commanders in the Great Lakes, the loyalty of the Native Americans was suspect. There were rumors of an imminent invasion, referring to the Illinois Country "the whole country and many from this post [Michilimackinac] are plundered and the whole country at a loss to know which route the rebels will take next²" (MPHC 1886:369-370). Later in 1778 while Langlade was on the Grand River there were rumors the rebels had reached Milwaukee and, aided by the Potawatomi, were building boats to use for attacking Michilimackinac. The British military also suspected fur traders, many of whom came from the thirteen colonies and were thought

¹ Letter from DePeyster to Haldimand dated August 15th, 1778.

² Letter from DePeyster to Haldimand dated August 31st, 1778, reported to DePeyster by Louis Chevalier.

to harbor rebel sympathies^{3 4} (MPHC 1886:382; Widder 2001; Sleeper-Smith 2001). The overall command of British Canada was under Governor Frederick.

The Grand River Ottawa:

It is from the letters of this period, that the first mention of the Ottawa living on the Grand River, as opposed to the Ottawa using the Grand River as a winter hunting ground are found. However, the situation is not always clear since the Ottawa and Ojibwa were also still wintering in central west Michigan at that time. In letters from DePeyster to Haldimond, dated October 27th, 1778, he mentions sending Langlade and Gautier to the Grand River “near which the Ottawa and Chippewas from this place winter...” (MPHC 1886:376-377). Langlade was carrying presents to the Ottawa on behalf of DePeyster. When Hamilton from Detroit went to Vincennes with most of the troops from Detroit there was concern that Detroit and Michilimackinac would be vulnerable to attack. As a precaution, DePeyster tried to keep most of the Ottawa and Ojibwa around Michilimackinac in the spring of 1779, but wrote:

“The Indians properly called the Grand River Indians, I have advised to go directly to Detroit as it is but a short cut across the country, and I send the chief Matchiguais with his band from Thunder Bay also to hearten the Indians about Detroit...⁵” (MPHC 1886:379).

This is the first reference I have found of a population of Ottawa living on the Grand distinct from those wintering there. However, there are slightly earlier records, June 14th, 1778 of a council held at Detroit between Hamilton and various native Americans bands which list among the attendees “Chippewa from Ouashtanon” which sounds similar to the Anishnaabe name for the Grand River.

In a letter dated July 21st, 1779 DePeyster indicates a war party from the Grand River made an attack on the rebel fort located at the Falls of the Ohio (present day Louisville KY) and also

“...whilst they [the war party] was thus employed another band from their village (i.e. the Grand River) upon a visit to the Rebels at Kiskaskias [Kaskaskia, Illinois], they met on their return and shewed three kegs of rum, but declared they got no other presents, such is the traffic carried on by many nations at present” (MPHC 1886:91).

Fur Traders on the Grand:

Due to their suspicions concerning the loyalty of the fur traders, the British military initially withheld granting licenses to fur traders in 1778 but soon realized that preventing trade would threaten the loyalty of the Native Americans. When the licenses were granted, the authorities kept track of which fur trader was going where and the number of canoes they were taking. Fortunately, the records for 1778 survive among

³ Letter from DePeyster to Haldimand dated June 1st, 1779

⁴ Undated letter from Hamilton to Haldimand 1778: “For the French inhabitants, at all the outposts, I firmly believe there is not one in twenty, whose oath of allegiance would have force enough to bind him to his duty, added to this the greatest part of the traders among them who are called English, are rebels in their hearts” (MPHC 1886:465).

⁵ Letter from DePeyster to Haldimand dated March 29th, 1779.

the Haldimand papers. In 1778 Louis Chabollier⁶ is listed as trading on the Grand River and Hippt (Hyppolite) des Riviers held a license for trading on both the Grand River and Green Bay. Interestingly, the Grand River and Green Bay are exactly the locations which Charles de Langlade had been trading at before the British took over the Great Lakes and Langlade's position in the Indian Department prevented him from engaging in the trade. It has been difficult to track Louis Chabollier through the documentation because of the various spellings of the name. Both the Chabollier and Des Rivieres families seem to be long time inhabitants of Michilimackinac (Sheppard 2019).

On October 5th, 1779 in his final report from Michilimackinac DePeyster reported: "The Indians are all gone to their several winterings. The traders are also sent to their different stations, after having formed a general store, in which they unanimously entered" (MPHC 1886:398). For the Grand River, Pierre Chabollier is listed as a trader; and Lefevre and Bouropa Barthe are indicated as trading on both the Grand River and the Saginaw (Sagina) (MPHC 1886:658). Barthe was a French-Canadian family from Detroit (DCB 2019). The "general store" mentioned by DePeyster is a reference to the first large trade associations formed by the fur traders to pool their resources in order to overcome the difficulties of trading during war time.

Sinclair at Michilimackinac

On October 7th, 1779 Major DePeyster was relieved of command at Michilimackinac, replaced by Lieutenant Governor Patrick Sinclair (MPHC 1886: 523). Sinclair had the responsibility of defending Michilimackinac and dependencies which included Green bay and St. Joseph but he must do so within the constraints of a budget. He was under pressure to cut the cost of provisioning Michilimackinac. Sinclair, who was very suspicious of the French Canadians and Native Americans immediately began making arrangements to move the fort to Mackinac Island for greater security. He also decided to send a vessel up the length of Lake Michigan to find out what was going on and secure some maize. On October 29th, 1779, Sinclair wrote Brehm regarding his concerns with the Native Americans and also provisions:

"Finding the disposition of the Indians in Lake Michigan very wavering and several of depots of corn in the rivers there, I sent on the 21st inst. The sloop "Felicity"⁷ with a careful man Mr. Robinson⁸ as pilot for the lake two Canadians well acquainted with the rivers and Mr. Gautier, Interpreter with some small presents for the Indians, directing them to purchase all the grain, grease and provision in that country, on the credit of the merchants and traders here and to use that of the government if necessary, that where

⁶ A Louis Joseph Chaboillé was born at Michilimackinac on 10/23/1741 (Diane Wolford Sheppard 2016, 2018). A Chaboyé along with Des Rivieres is listed in 1749 as residents of Michilimackinac on the Chartier de Lotbiniere map of the fort (Sheppard 2016, 2018). Armour and Widder (1986:114) give the name as Louis Chaboillez.

⁷ The Felicity was a sloop in British navy, built at Detroit in 1775 for service on Lake Erie. The ship was normally berthed at Detroit (WHC 1888:199). Robertson, in his log, indicates some unfamiliarity with sailing on Lake Michigan. The sloop was equipped with four swivel guns and maned by eight sailors including the sailing master, a boatswain and gunner (WHC 1888:187).

⁸ I have also seen his name given as "Roberts" and perhaps "Robinson". Here I have followed Armour and Widder (1986) and give it as Robertson except in quotes.

they met with refractory disaffected persons they were to seize upon the corn giving a receipt, for what they could lodge in the vessel and destroy the rest" (MPHC 1886; 530).

Voyage of the Felicity:

As Sinclair noted in his letter to Brehm, the *Felicity* sailed on Thursday, October 21st, 1779, with Samuel Robertson as the sailing master (Armour and Widder 1986:123). The winds were out of the south and it took until 2:00 that day before they cleared Waugoshance Point however bad weather forced them to spend the next couple of days running between Waugoshance, the Beaver Islands and Manitou Islands. Thursday, October 26th found them still in the shelter of Manitou Islands having ridden out several storms. Robertson had the crew repairing rigging and went ashore with Gautier to try their luck hunting on the island but with no success. On Wednesday and Thursday, they passed Sleeping Bear dunes and then crossed the lake to the west shore. Robertson was unfamiliar with this part of the lake but thought he was 30 leagues (approximately 83 miles) north of Milwaukee (Millwaukee).

It seems on Friday they crossed the lake again, arriving off the mouth of the Manistee River (River Mauhesty). Robertson refers to the "Point of Sabec" being "5 leagues to the windward", the wind being at that time out of the southwest so this must be a reference to Big Sable Point.

Again, troubled by contrary winds and storms, Robertson took the *Felicity* across the lake to the west shore, arriving nearly at the location he had been two days before. He again re-crossed the lake, the winds turning from the north although the waves were still coming from the southwest, and made his way to Little Sable Point (Little Point Sabel), then went southeast by south. At 3 PM on Sunday, October 31st, they passed the mouth of the White River (River Blanch) and at 5 PM arrived at Muskegon (River Mishegon).

Robertson apparently knew who was trading in the region and sent Gautier with two French Canadians to look for him. Soon after their arrival, Gautier returned to the ship with a trader named Black Piter, and three Ottawa, one of whom was "Lafie du Fableu" a leader from L' Arbre Croche.

"...they give us a present of what venison they had in return for which we give them two bottles of rum and a piece of tobacco with a piece of bread and pork for which they thank'd us and seemed pleased. M. Gautly [Gautier] told them Governor Sinclair's orders at which they gave their not [note] of approbation; he likewise delivered some strings of wampum with 2 gals kegs of rum and a carrot of tobacco to Black Piter which promised faithfully to deliver it to the grand sabra, and also the governors message their with (WHC Vol. 11: 207)"

Robertson also learned that "Pollitt Chaboly" had 150 or 160 bags of maize cached on the Grand River 20 leagues⁹ up the from the mouth but with a man guarding it who may not have had a canoe.

"...he also told me that there was 200 bags of corn there in cack [cache] belonging to M. Legons who fitted him out with trade goods last year but as he had sent

⁹ This would be approximately 75 miles, close to the mouth of the Maple River. See footnote 11 regarding converting leagues to miles.

him no men nor canoe this fall as he had expected it must remain there this winter as the Indians in whose possession it was had left that place for their wintering ground” (WHC 1888 Vol. 11:208).

On November 1st, 1779, Robertson weighed anchor and sailed to the mouth of the Grand River, as he described to “indeavor to get the corn of Chaboleys” (WHC 1888 Vol. 11:208). At 10:00 AM they arrived at the mouth of the Grand River and came up the river

“...2 cappel lengths¹⁰ and moored her with the anchor on the shore the bank being steep to so that we stept from the vessel gunwale on the shoar; the narrowest part of the river at the entrance is about 70 or 80 yards wide, 3 or 4 fathoms deep, upon the bare [sand bar at the mouth of the river] is 2 fathoms” (WHC 1888 Vol. 11:208).

This would have placed the *Felicity* immediately within the mouth of the Grand River, slightly downstream from the center of present-day Grand Haven.

“I immediately sent M. Gautley with 3 hands in the boat up 4 leagues to the first Indian village, in purpose to see if it was possible to get canoes to fetch down the corn (WHC 1888 Vol. 11:208).

There is no mention of a trading post or buildings at the location of Grand Haven although Charles Langlade is reported to have had a trading post there in the 1750s (Lillie 1931) Presumably, the post had not been in use recently and the buildings had rotted away. The village located 4 leagues from where they were anchored would place it approximately 11 miles up the river¹¹. At the present time, Battle Point is seven miles by river from the mouth and Crockery Creek is about ten miles however changes in the river channel and the fact that all these distances are estimates using a unit of measure that varies over time makes it hard to pinpoint exactly where this village was.

Gautier returned to the *Felicity* at midnight having gone up the Grand River 6 leagues (16.5 miles) without finding anyone. When describing the situation, Robertson adds that the Ottawa at Muskegon had told them “that they had all left the lake side upon account of some distemper of which a great many had died; the negro [Black Piter] at the River Mishigon [Muskegon] also told me that, none of the traders had yet passed for the Grand River nor the Kikanamago [Kalamazoo]” (WHC 1888 Vol. 11:208).

This last is a reference to the fur traders coming up the lake from Michilimackinac in the fall to trade with the Native Americans over the winter. The traders may have been delayed by the same bad weather which caused the *Felicity* so much trouble.

Since no one was available on the Grand River, Robertson “therefore determined to get out of the river as soon as possible the season looking like winter with showers of snow and squalls of wind from the N.W.” (WHC Vol. 11:208). Later in the log, Robertson reveals that Sinclair had given him a keg of rum to leave with the people on

¹⁰ A cable is a nautical unit of measure equal to 1/10 of a nautical mile but because of vagueness in how a cable is defined it can mean anywhere from 554 to 721 feet (169 to 220 m). Suffice to say they were anchored near the mouth of the river off downtown Grand Haven.

¹¹ Using 1 league = 2.75 miles. A nautical league in present time is equal to 3 miles (3.45234 miles, 4.83km) however over time and by nationality of the user, a league has varied in size from 2.4 to 4.6 miles (3.9 – 7.4km). I have often seen 2.75 miles used as a conversion and went with that here.

the Grand River but since no one could be found he later left this in a village at Milwaukee (WHC 1888, Vol.11:211).

After leaving the Grand River, Robertson sailed for the Kalamazoo River (Pikanamaso, Kekanamoass) because Gautier thought a trader named Mr. D. Moghill (McDonald?) might be there. On November 1st, they arrived at the mouth of the river where they anchored and fired a shot from the swivel gun to alert the trader to their presence. The surf was running too high to safely launch a boat to go on shore. After remaining an hour with no response and the wind picking up, Robertson set sail intending to go to “the Rivier a Chemame”. They went to the St. Joseph River but could not enter the channel or land on shore nor could they go the “River a Chemain¹²” so they went down the lake to Milwaukee, arriving there on November 3d.

After a short stay at Milwaukee where the Potawatomi were thought to be harboring sympathies for the French and rebels the *Felicity* crossed the lake north by northeast to arrive at the Manitou Islands where they made anchor on November 5th, 1779 in the face of a northwest squall. Concern about the shoal water off Waugoshance Point led Robertson to spend the night there and return to Michilimackinac on the following day (WHC Vol. 11:212).

On the 6th of November, 1779, the day the *Felicity* returned to Michilimackinac, Sinclair wrote Brehm:

“Dear Brehm – This inst., the *Felicity* is arrived from Lake Michigan without accident, her journal kept by Mr. Robertson, who will now direct the wharf for security of the vessels in Haldimond Bay, Michle. Island, and the others work’s during the winter¹³. I enclose to select from it what is only worth attention” (MPHC 1886 Vol. 9:533).

Michle Island was short hand for Michilimackinac Island, present day Mackinac Island. Brehm was to respond on April 17th, 1780:

“His Excellency [Haldimond] very much approves your having sent to collect the corn in the depots made by the Indians upon Lake Michigan and Huron, as a serviceable measure to increase the stock of provisions and a very proper precaution to prevent supplies being formed for the enemy’s use – nevertheless in these critical times you should be extremely careful to avoid giving any grounds of offence to the Indians” (MPHC 1886 Vol. 9:536).

One wonders what offence to the Native Americans and fur traders would have been given had Robertson been successful in his mission and seized the maize reported to have been stored in the Grand Valley? While to the British military such maize represented provisions for an invading force, to the Ottawa and fur traders the stock could very well have been winter provisions and seed needed for planting in the upcoming year. In the same letter Sinclair received official permission to move Fort Michilimackinac to Mackinac Island, thought to be a more secure location from attack by the French and rebels.

¹² I have not been able to ascertain what river is meant by this name. Robertson spells it two different ways in his log.

¹³ While the *Felicity* was sailing on Lake Michigan, Sinclair was busy making arrangements to move Fort Michilimackinac to Mackinac Island, the construction of a wharf and blockhouse were the first steps.

Afterwards:

Mention of the Ottawa village not far from the mouth of the Grand River is intriguing. Could this have been Fort Village, the Battle Point site? Battle Point is about seven river miles from the mouth of the Grand River or was it a village at or near the mouth of Crockery Creek? Also, of interest is the fur traders' "caches" of maize. It seems likely that the caches would have imitated the same storage methods employed by the Native Americans; in other words, using holes dug in the ground and lined with grasses and/or bark for seasonal storage. So, it is possible that not all of the cache pits found along the Grand are of prehistoric or of Native American origins.

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ARTIFACT, COLLECTION OR SITE OF THE MONTH

What Is It?

Lynn Chapman

I do not consider myself to be a collector (and hence when I talk to collectors about their sites, I am not a competitor) but as a kid, growing up in Lake City and Midland I occasionally found artifacts or had artifacts given to me. One such artifact is pictured below. I found this in my uncle's garden located about half of a mile east of Henderson Michigan and about a quarter of a mile west of the Shiawassee River. My uncles house was on the south side of creek which I spent much time exploring as a kid, the creek flows into the Shiawassee River not far from his house. There were rumors of mounds having been along the creek but I never found them and now I suspect they had been destroyed by modern agriculture. I recently visited the area and noted that in addition to the junction of the creek and the river, the river in this location

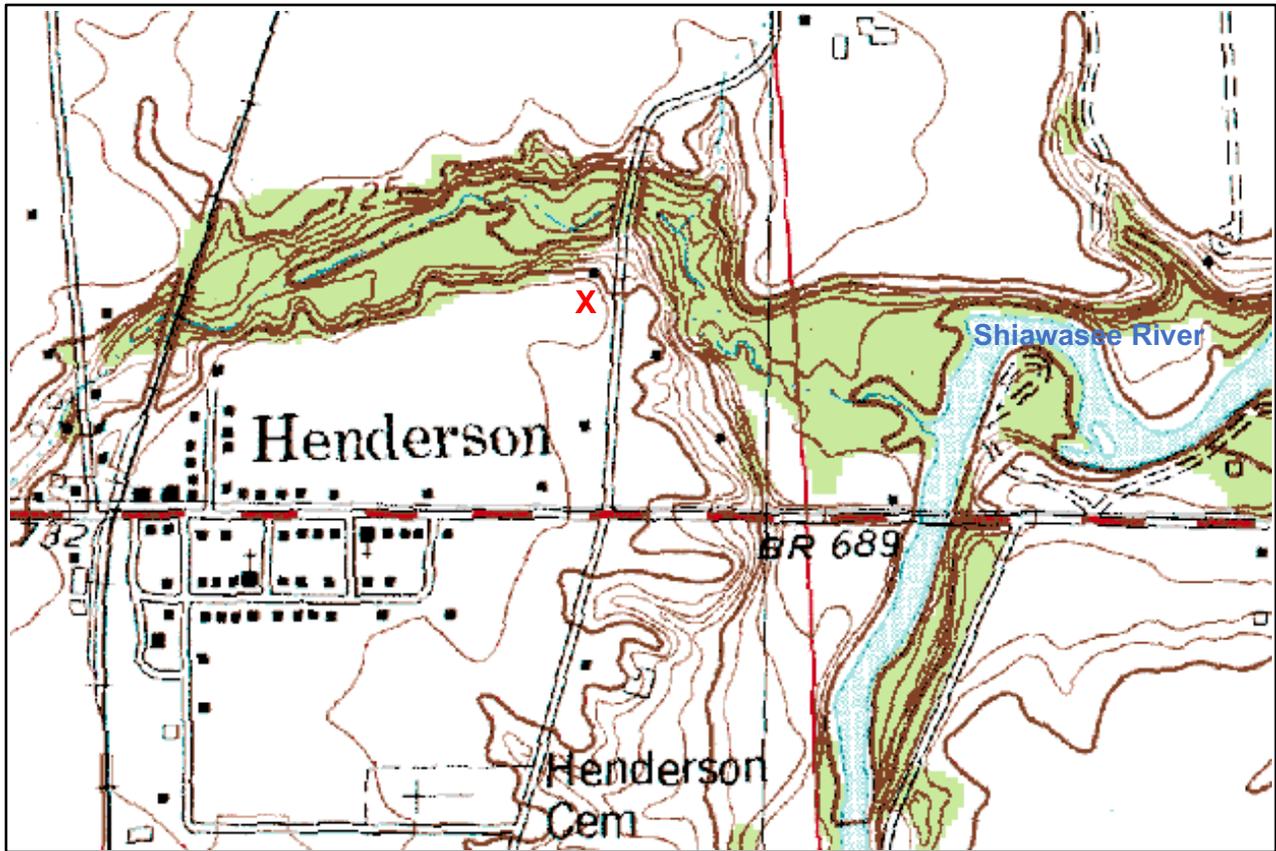
was shallow and consisted of some small rapids which, if these conditions prevailed in the prehistoric, would have made it a good place for crossing and fishing. The former garden was located in the uplands, some distance from the creek.

Even as a kid I knew to associate flakes with lithic tool manufacture, but I did not find any other artifacts, flakes etc. associated with the object so it appears to have been an isolated find.



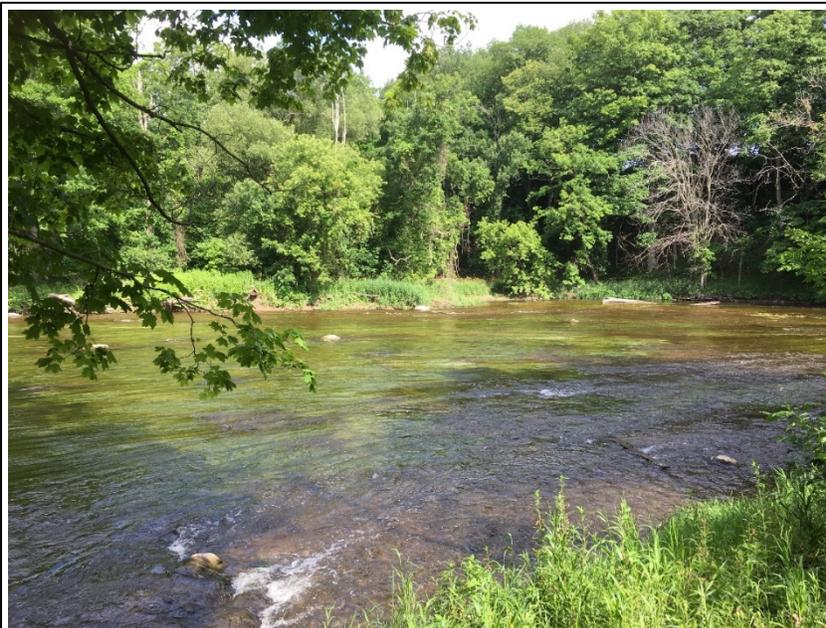
Photo of the artifact and the opposite side.

The artifact is 5 cm long and 2.5 cm wide where it is broadest. Thickness varies but where the ridge running the length of the artifact is thickest it is almost 1 cm thick. The material does not seem to me like Bayport chert although that is what would be expected in the Saginaw valley but Bayport also exhibits some variability. The edge closest to the ridge (top in photo) is/was sharp, unfortunately as a kid I used to shave bark from branches so wear analysis is now out of the question. I thought then, and still do, that it is either a knife or a scraper, or both, but I have never seen another quite like it from Michigan.



Location of the find on the 700 ft elevation indicated by the red X. The house just north of the find spot used to be that of my uncle.

During a recent visit to the area I found that another house had been built to the south of my uncles' former residence and that the garden is no longer there. Much of what used to be garden consumed by the new house or is now under lawn grass.



The Shiawasse River to the east of the find spot. The mouth of the creek is in the center of the photo.

WRIGHT I. COFFINBERRY CHAPTER
of the
MICHIGAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The W. L. Coffinberry Chapter of the Michigan Archaeological Society was organized in 1951 for the purpose of obtaining and recording information on the aboriginal inhabitants of the State of Michigan, to preserve their cultural evidence, and to disseminate knowledge concerning them.

Regular meetings are held on the second Thursday evening of each month, September through May, beginning at 7:00 P.M. at Room 249, Lake Michigan Hall, Grand Valley State University. A map and parking instructions are included on the back of the bulletin. Visitors are welcome.

The Chapter publishes a *News Bulletin* at multiple times during the year and the State organization publishes the *Michigan Archaeologist*, periodically as well. These publications are received with membership. The State Society holds an annual meeting in the spring and a workshop in the late summer or fall.

Membership in the Chapter is open to anyone interested in promoting the objectives of the organization, with *concurrent and corresponding membership required* in the Michigan Archaeological Society. Go to <http://micharch.org/wp/> to visit the web site of the Michigan Archaeological Society which also contains a membership page and forms.

Classes of Membership:

Individual / Family	\$25.00
Foreign	\$30.00
Institutional	\$40.00
Foreign Institutional	\$45.00

Dues are payable on January 1 to the Treasurer of the Michigan Archaeological Society.

Coffinberry Chapter Officers:

President:	Lynn Chapman
Vice President:	Wesley Jackson
Treasurer:	Don Spohn
Secretary:	Brian and Brenda Geib
Board:	Dr. Janet Brashler, Ken Price, Greg Baldus
Coffinberry News Bulletin editors:	Lynn Chapman, Wesley Jackson, Alex Michnick

Coffinberry Chapter Michigan Archaeological Society

- **Meets on the second Thursday of each month, September through May.**
- **Meetings are held between 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm.**
- **GVSU Allendale Campus (see map).**
- **On M-45 (Lake Michigan Drive), 8 miles west of downtown Grand Rapids.**
- **Lake Michigan Hall, Second floor, Room 249.**
- **Parking in Lot M in front of Lake Michigan Hall is open after 6:30 pm.**

