



WRIGHT L. COFFINBERRY CHAPTER
MICHIGAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

COFFINBERRY NEWS BULLETIN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Meeting Announcement</i>	2
<i>Abstract of Presentation</i>	2
<i>Chapter News</i>	2
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	3
<i>Archaeology Around Michigan</i>	3
<i>Articles</i>	4

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The next meeting will be at 7:00 on December 12th, 2019 in Room 249 Lake Michigan Hall, Grand Valley State University. Lynn Chapman will be presenting *The Archaic of the Grand River and West Michigan 10,000 – 2,500 B.P.*

PRESENTATION ABSTRACT

The Archaic Period, spanning from roughly 10,000 to 2,500 B.P., covers a large period of prehistory but is virtually unknown in the Grand River valley. This presentation will draw on research in surrounding regions such as the Saginaw and St. Joseph River valleys to provide some picture of what the Archaic in the Grand River valley might have been like. Due to the absence of excavated sites the presentation will focus heavily on projectile point typologies, using, among other resources, information from past issues of the Coffinberry News Bulletin.

Note: I would have preferred that someone else better versed in the Archaic would have given this presentation but the timing was such that experts in the field were busy with other projects. In order to keep our presentation series concerning the Prehistory and History of the Grand River Valley going I am going to give this my best shot.

CHAPTER NEWS

During the last meeting Lynn Chapman had the opportunity to discuss the display case with Brian Geib and gave Brian the go-ahead to begin construction. At the same time Wesley Jackson and student assistants had the opportunity to restore some of Buerl Gursey's artifacts to the display case located outside of the lab.

Lynn Chapman has received permission to begin documenting several collections of artifacts currently housed at the Lowell Area Historical Museum. These collections, consisting of projectile points that have been recovered from area farms. The documentation will consist of taking measurements on the points, ascertaining the types and source material and taking photographs. Site files with State Historic Preservation Office will be updated. Hopefully, the results of these investigations will provide fodder for future articles in the Coffinberry News Bulletin.

Somewhat related to this, Lynn Chapman has been providing the researchers at Lowell Area Historical Museum with information gleaned from old Coffinberry News Bulletins concerning the chapters surveys and excavations at the La Framboise and De Marsac trading posts. Shantell Ford, who has been researching the situation surrounding the La Framboise trading post has been able to incorporate this information into their previous data. La Framboise post remains un-discovered to this day.

The schedule and topics for presentations 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	Lynn Chapman
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	Dr. Jessica Yann
May 14 th , 2020	Historic: Euroamerican settlement	Jeff Seaver

This is the third of the new series of Coffinberry News Bulletins and it is running a little bit thin. I decided to hold off on an article I had planned to submit for this issue until I had more time to write it properly. I am grateful to Alex Michnick for submitting an interesting perspective on the DeMarsac trading post. Unfortunately, nobody submitted anything for the featured artifact or site of the month so we did not write anything. Submit articles to Lynn Chapman (lynnalanchapman@gmail.com) or to Wesley Jackson (jacksove@gvsu.edu) via e-mail or in person.

SOCIETY NEWS

There is nothing to report regarding the Michigan Archaeological Society at large.

UP-COMING EVENTS

There is nothing to report at this time.

ARCHAEOLOGY AROUND MICHIGAN

On November 22^d, 2019 Dr. Janet Brashler, Lynn Chapman and Alex Michnick met with representatives from the Indiana Myaamia (Miami) tribe. The tribe, centered in Fort Wayne Indiana was seeking information regarding what their ancestral ceramic traditions may have looked like. Lynn Chapman gave a 2.5-hour presentation focused on the Late Prehistory of the Southern Lake Michigan region which segued into the uses of Direct Historical Approach in the Great Lakes to connect historically documented tribes with late Prehistoric cultures. It was a fun yet challenging presentation and the conversations before, during and after the presentation were stimulating. While no prehistoric culture has been definitively linked to the historic Miami, we were able to offer some ideas and point them in the direction of future research. Since the presentation they have remained in contact and have requested further research. Lynn Chapman

FEATURE ARTICLE**From the Old World to the New:
Daniel Marsac's Connection to the Atlantean Economy**

Alexander Michnick

The fifty-year period between the ratification of the United States Constitution in 1787, and the ratification of Michigan's statehood in 1837 was defined by its lack of political presence and the enterprise of individual citizens seeking wealth. Though what we now know as Michigan was the property of the United States, the larger Northwest Territory was the wild west of the early 19th-century. Some individuals created entrepreneurial success from this lack of governmental oversight or regulation. In 1829, Daniel DeMarsac began trading with Odawa Native Americans on the south bank of the Flat River in present-day Lowell, Michigan. Two years later, he would construct a log cabin, and establish a more permanent trading post in the same vicinity, where it operated until 1857, losing business when Odawa in the area were relocated to northern Michigan.¹ During the duration of his time on the Flat River, DeMarsac was integrated within Native American culture in the region, marrying an Odawa woman by the name of Je-nute, and certainly maintaining ties with the trading post of Rix Robinson a few miles downriver, as well as that of Louis Campau, which had been established a few years prior in present-day Grand Rapids to the west.²

The Coffinberry Chapter of the Michigan Archaeological Society has successfully completed two phases of excavation on the DeMarsac site, once in the late 1950s, and the second time during the early 1970s. Due to increased housing development on the site for the past fifty years, no further archaeological investigation has taken place. However, much has been gleaned from artifacts and other material culture recovered from the DeMarsac site. The connection between a solitary trading outpost in the upper Grand River Valley in the 1830s, and the larger context of an industrialized, Atlantean world, is quite apparent. Even in this later colonial period, well after the stroke of independence swept across the United States, the country was tethered by trade and import to its old mother country of Great Britain. Likewise, the remaining strands of French-Canadian influence in the fur trade had not died out, as evidenced by many of the artifacts in the DeMarsac collection.

The William and Mary scholar Donald Linebaugh has provided extensive analysis on the ceramics found at the DeMarsac site. Many of these falls into a continuity of Staffordshire-produced wares imported from England directly, and possibly purchased

¹ Donald Walter Linebaugh, "Nineteenth Century Earthenware From the De Marsac Trading Post Site, Lowell, Michigan," *The Wisconsin Archeologist* 64, no. 3 and 4, (LaCrosse: The Wisconsin Archeological Society, 1983), 264

² *Ibid*, 263.

in Detroit by DeMarsac in his few travels there.³ The most prominent portion of these tend to be transfer-printed ceramics, which were produced from contemporary innovations in Staffordshire, England. One of these improvements was “calico printing machinery [...] used to produce designs for transfer-printed ceramics.”⁴ The products of this innovation can be seen on several tableware vessels, such as the Clyde Scenery pattern produced by Jackson’s Warranted of Staffordshire, printed between c. 1831-1835.

Another printed ceramic type found at DeMarsac’s Trading Post comes from the William Adams and Sons Factory in Stoke-Upon-Trent, a Staffordshire town, which operated from 1829-1850. One distinct Adams pattern that has been recovered from the site is the “Caledonia” print, which was found by Coffinberry members in pink and lavender transfer on multiple vessels.⁵ Linebaugh affirms the presence of a solitary “red transfer sherd” found at DeMarsac’s post, which indeed “had a partial maker’s mark that incorporated the pattern name ‘Caledonia.’”⁶ With transfer-printing technology at the widespread disposal of numerous Staffordshire ceramic producers in the early Nineteenth Century, coloration of the prints that were produced were arguably varied and not an issue of production.

Perhaps a more profound and basic fact of interest in these ceramics is the continual usage of pieces produced in England during the time of DeMarsac’s post operation. This signifies not only the well-known monopoly of Staffordshire ceramic producers, but also the economic relationship that the far reaches of the world had with Great Britain. Considerably, it also allows an understanding of how connected the frontier was to the consumerism of the greater Atlantean world. Further, it demonstrates a worldliness and up-to-date attitude of Daniel DeMarsac in his material choices. DeMarsac was an individual who arguably had a fair amount of wealth in his trading ventures, all the while competing with other traders in the region like Rix Robinson. DeMarsac’s connection to and knowledge of the latest fashions in ceramics shows up through the historic-archaeological record, and ultimately provides a material statement that demands respect for procuring the very latest ceramic types.

We understand that DeMarsac most-likely used these vessels domestically, but without question, in the context of the fur-trade he was trading them as well. Natives, as much as the white settlers of the region, regarded Staffordshire ceramics as luxury goods as well as functional vessels. This is reflected in the excavation results of George Davis and Edward Gillis at the Battle Point Site, where among grave goods were “[...] a Mocha ware mug, an old blue Staffordshire bowl, a handle-less cup printed in sepia

³ Donald Walter Linebaugh, “Nineteenth Century Earthenware From the De Marsac Trading Post Site, Lowell, Michigan,” *The Wisconsin Archeologist* 64, no. 3 and 4, (LaCrosse: The Wisconsin Archeological Society, 1983), 274.

⁴ Edmund P. Gibson, Donald Peru, and Ruth Herrick, M.D., “The DeMarsac Trading Post Site,” *The Michigan Archaeologist* 6 no. 3, (Saginaw: The Michigan Archaeological Society, 1960), 45.

⁵ Edmund P. Gibson, Donald Peru, and Ruth Herrick, M.D., “The DeMarsac Trading Post Site,” *The Michigan Archaeologist* 6 no. 3, (Saginaw: The Michigan Archaeological Society, 1960), 46.

⁶ Donald Walter Linebaugh, “Nineteenth Century Earthenware from the De Marsac Trading Post Site, Lowell, Michigan,” *The Wisconsin Archeologist* 64, no. 3 and 4, (LaCrosse: The Wisconsin Archeological Society, 1983), 272.

[...]” and other pieces.⁷ While the Native Americans in the area around Battle Point probably never traded with DeMarsac, it is important to recognize that Native Americans of this portion of Michigan valued Staffordshire-produced ceramics, not because of their function (indigenous-produced ceramics were still quite prominent, especially among the Odawa near DeMarsac’s trading post), but because their stylistic features were appealing. In his competition for profit, DeMarsac arguably presented local Native Americans with trading opportunities that Rix Robinson, an agent of the American Fur Company, could have never afforded them. Scholars like Ruth Herrick have proposed that even though the source of DeMarsac’s trading supplier is lost to history, “it is likely that at least part of it came from Canada with Detroit as a probable port of entry.”⁸ Given DeMarsac’s trips to Detroit in his lifetime, he very well could have made an economic arrangement with one of the local merchants, enabling him to bring in Staffordshire imports directly from Canada, a British territory and recipient of goods from the mother country.

This relationship is quite likely for another reason related to the material culture found at the DeMarsac site. Among the assemblage of artifacts are a series of gunflints, that up until this point in time, have largely gone without identification in the collection. Most recently, a re-inventory project of the DeMarsac site’s collection housed at Grand Valley’s Anthropology Department revealed that many of the flints at DeMarsac resembled French honey-colored type flints that can be found at other sites in the region. A basic definition of French gunflints is thus:

The simplistic assumption of many archaeological studies of gunflints, in North America at least, has been that French flints are usually made of a blonde or honey-colored flint, produced by segmenting blades, and either rounding the heel, or keeping a relatively long segment with two straight striking edges.⁹

French gunflints have often been found to carry all the attributes of rectangular shape and form, however in some cases the rounding of the heel is more aligned with gun-spall type flints, a process of less common manufacturing that included reworking larger flakes off of a main core. A few of these gun-spalls can be found in the DeMarsac collection at Grand Valley, however the majority of those identified thus far belong to the basic flint type. The greater object of French flint presence at DeMarsac reaffirms the sentiment that not only through British Staffordshire ceramics, but through French-produced gunflints, DeMarsac was connected through a chain of suppliers to the wider economic world of the Atlantic. Though at the time, French political hold over Canada had been non-existent since the Treaty of Paris following the Seven Years’ War in 1763, French material culture and usage of items leftover from the old regime were still quite present into the Nineteenth Century, as evidenced by flints in the DeMarsac collection.

⁷ Edmund P. Gibson, Donald Peru, and Ruth Herrick, M.D., “The DeMarsac Trading Post Site,” *The Michigan Archaeologist* 6 no. 3, (Saginaw: The Michigan Archaeological Society, 1960), 49.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ John C. Whittaker and Levin Anais, “Nineteenth Century Gunflints from the Nepalese Armory,” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 23, no. 3 (2019): 628-650.

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.

