

There seemed to be a few important features about this last ash-bed which we noted with some care. We satisfied ourselves that it was above high-water mark, from observations of the shore farther up the river, where the spring floods have been washing away the banks, with their forest growth of large trees, for many years. The bed rested upon the upper surface of what appears to be pleistocene sand of unknown depth. Above this was a fifteen-inch layer of forest humus, mixed with sand, covered by five feet of clean, drift sand, which is overgrown, just at this place, with scrubby trees and a tall pine rampike, about a foot in diameter. Stumps of other trees, with roots in position, in this upper deposit of drift sand, are upwards of two feet in diameter.

Upon reviewing our work in 1914, some time after our return home, it occurred to me that Indian fire-places might be found beneath the forest humus, behind the sand ridge, among the pitch pines farther back from the shore. In accordance with this idea we returned in the autumn of 1915, to investigate. Some holes were made in several places without results, and our task seemed hopeless, when some tiny fragments of clam shells were observed on a hill of black ants. In the absence of a shovel, which we had neglected to bring with us, an excavation was made at the ant-hill with a crudely made digging stick and a graniteware wash-basin, and, beneath some six inches of forest deposit, an ash-bed, about five feet wide and nine inches deep, was exposed. It rested immediately upon the pleistocene sand, and was a duplicate of the bed beneath the sand ridge, being a mass of ashes, clam shells, small animal bones, broken pottery and some chunks of flint. Ashes and clam shells were also found in two or three other openings made among the trees.

Now, it would appear from the foregoing data, that before the forest growth, (that now covers the bluffs or Sand Hills, as they are called, within the peninsula between Constance and Buckham's Bays and the main river) had encroached upon the shore line, there was an acre or so of comparatively level sand at this point, upon which the red hunters made their camp-fires and appeased their appetites with roast clams, and other and varied bounties which field and stream must have yielded them in great abundance; for even within the last half century, game of all sorts was plentiful hereabouts, as was fish, also, in the adjacent waters.

After a while, for some unaccountable reason, possibly one of the red, wilderness tragedies, the story of which is lost to us, this plot of sand was abandoned to the forest, which held dominion over it until there was deposited fifteen inches of vegetable matter. Then the winds began to drift the sand over the edge of the forest, apparently killing it out and forming the ridge, already described, which rises to its greatest height, at its south-eastern extremity, in what has been called the Wendigo Mound. The forest then took possession of the top of the ridge, as did, also, the Indians, whose camp-fires once more glimmered through their branches.

As these late comers had not discarded their pottery, which bears exterior decorations quite similar in design to that found in the earlier beds beneath the forest mould and sand drift; and, as these later fire-places, as well as the earlier ones—which, by-the-way, were found on the level, and not in fire-pits—have shown no traces of European contact, it would seem that these more recent occupants of Big Sand Point were still too early upon the scene to be identified as the same traditionary gentry who kept a sharp-sighted squaw sentinel on the Wendigo Mound, and who man-handled the French traders coming up the river, and purloined their merchandise.