

2 Troy in Finland, Part 2

Stuart L. Harris, November 2011

Summary

The specific site of Troy in Finland satisfies three difficult conditions set down by Homer:

- Immense foundation stones encircle Troy at its middle extent.
- Flat rocks span the bed of Scamander just past the northeast corner of Troy at its greatest extent
- The heights of Ilium protect the southwest corner of Troy at its greatest extent.

Reasons why Troy is in Finland

Before visiting Troy, I compiled a list of criteria that the Finnish site had to satisfy if it was the real Troy. Two competing sites have problems.

- Schliemann's Troy in Turkey, according to German archaeologists responsible for maintaining the site, could not be Homer's Troy because they buried their dead instead of cremating, and they built in stone instead of wood. There were other problems, but these two were insurmountable.
- Iman Wilkens' site in England on the Gog Magog Hills near Cambridge, is near a battlefield where a great quantity of bronze-age battle gear has been found. This alone is suspicious, as no winner ever left a scrap of metal on a battlefield. To me it has all the characteristics of a natural disaster that killed everyone so completely that not a single person survived to know about the battle and harvest the metal. Nevertheless, Iman has accurately identified a cluster of rivers that bear names from Homer. Clearly Trojans settled here and brought their river names with them, but Greek history accounts for the settlement. It occurred one generation after the Trojan War, by Trojan slaves who won their freedom, obtained ships, and sailed to England, where they remembered a thriving civilization quite apart from the Achaeans. To their dismay, they found the island utterly deserted and had to rename everything.

Felice Vinci proposed that the Trojan War occurred in the Baltic and found a hundred names that followed the exact same geographic sequence as the List of Ships in Book 2 of the Iliad. All he lacked was a single archaeological site among the 100 names.

So the site of Troy in Finland will come under harsh scrutiny, especially from the tourist industry and academic programs that reap glory from Homer. I once asked German academics overseeing Troy if they would be interested in another possible location. No, we are happy working here in the summer, there is more than enough for us to do here.

Very well. I had a detailed aerial photograph that told me where to look for proof. The big three requirements that Homer set down are:

- Immense foundation stones encircle Troy at its middle extent.
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General Arguments for Troy in the Baltic

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The arguments for Troy in Finland fall into two categories, general and specific. Unless otherwise stated, Troy means Troy in Finland.

Wine dark sea - eliminates the Mediterranean and Atlantic, includes the Baltic where dense plankton blooms turn the water a murky red, terrible for snorkeling.

Cremation - eliminates Troy in Turkey. Bronze age Finland had no burials, everyone was cremated; nearly every hill overlooking the sea has one or more cairns to honor the death of rulers, with ashes and bits of charred bone beneath.

Snow in May - eliminates Mediterranean. Homer speaks of freezing to death in a snowfall in May or June without a cloak.

Lots of mist - Mist was a major factor when planning a voyage. An early morning mist is a constant occurrence in the Baltic.

Short nights - Eliminates Mediterranean. One of the major battles in late June was fought right through the night into the next day because there was enough daylight to see.

No pottery - Homer never mentions ceramic vessels, only metal. This is really important! There is basically no pottery in Finland. Everyone used wood, baskets or metal. Most of the metal is missing, but that is because there were no burials or sacred pools to secrete it for archaeologists to find later. Beneath the wine dark seas, however, metal exists. Eliminates Troy in Turkey.

Packed earth floors - Trojan homes had packed earth floors and wooden floors, not tiled floors. Homer describes the packed earth floor at Ulysses hall, large enough to feed 100 suitors. In his bedroom, one bedpost was made from a tree growing in the ground.

Founded circa 1430 BC - Troy was founded by Scamander's descendants around 1430 BC. Eliminates Mediterranean Troy, which is far older.

No Tide - describes both Baltic and Mediterranean Seas, and eliminates England.

Troy lacked access to the Middle Sea - Homer described in minute detail all the seas around Troy, and the winds that blow from them, but none were the Middle Sea. Eliminates Troy in Turkey.

The Bosphorus was not controlled by Troy - Nowhere does Homer mention control of Black Sea shipping, yet this is one of the principle arguments for Troy in Turkey.

Specific Arguments for Troy in Finland

Olympus was 10 km away. Beginning at Olympos, Hera ran a circle around the battle in one day. Maximum distance would be 10 kilometers away from Troy. Not possible in the Mediterranean.

Mount Olympos was low, not high. Homer never speaks of long climbs up a slope to Olympos.

Lemnos was near Troy. Hera ran from Olympos to Lemnos is just a few hours. Lemnos is a walled city on the western edge of the island. Not possible in Mediterranean.

Imbros, on the same island as Lemnos, was a walled city on the eastern edge of the island.

Specific Arguments for Troy in Finland

The Troad was compact and close to Olympus. Hephaestus the smith went from Olympus to Lemnos for a brief respite, a two or three day round trip.

Mount Ida was covered with springs. Homer frequently described Ida as covered in springs. The entire eastern slope of Musta Ahde next to Troy is covered with springs, hundreds of them, some kind of formation that transports water underground from far away and releases it on the eastern slope. Not possible in Mediterranean.

Age - Troy bordered the east bank of Scamander between the extremes of sea level at 1450 BC and 1275 BC. This narrows the location to within a mile.

Three rivers at Troy - Homer described three rivers near Troy:

- Scamander flowed west past the northern wall of Troy and joined Xanthos.
- Xanthos flowed south below the western wall of Troy and emptied into a bay of the Aegean.
- Simois flowed south parallel to and west of Xanthos and emptied into another bay of the Aegean.

From the map, Simois = Siimaoja, Xanthos = Asteljoki, and Scamander = Naarjarvenoja. Only Naarjarvenoja intersected Xanthos over this stretch, so **Naarjarvenoja defines the north wall of Troy.**

Troy backs up to Mount Ida. Hera ran a full circle around the battle in one day, stopping at Mt. Ida. The Achaeans went to Mt. Ida to cut down timber and returned to their ships in one day. Troy was at the foot of Mt. Ida. Zeus could look down into the city from Gargaron Peak of Mt. Ida. Maximum distance would be less than 1 km east of Troy. **The bottom of the western slope of Musta Ahde may define the eastern limit of Troy.**

Ida's attributes: covered with springs, view into Troy, next to Troy, four peaks, covered with trees, within a day round-trip of Achaean woodsmen. The topo map confirms all of these.

Perimeter walls of wood. Troy had a palisade perimeter. Ulysses stood on the shoulders of Ajax and hiked himself over the wooden wall at a low point. Nothing visible would remain.

High towers of wood caught fire and toppled over during the sack. Nothing visible would remain.

Houses of wood. Buildings in Troy were made of wood, which caught fire and burned during the sack.

The temple of Apollo lay outside the southern gate, accessible to both Trojans and Achaeans alike. Called Mestarinmaki meaning 'Champion Hill'.

Troy was not overly large. Achilles and Hector circled it three times running full speed in battle gear out of arrow range. If they stayed a quarter mile away from the wall, the aerial photo suggests a five-mile circuit, well within their ability.

Barrow of Hector was built not far from a gate of Troy, likely the south or eastern gate. If it was built of earth in an open field, farmers may have leveled it, or concealed it. Look for trees protecting a low earthen mound. Beneath the barrow, in a cist in the earth, lie his remains.

Specific Attributes for only that site

Achaean Beach at the time of the Trojan War, was the nearest beach. It was south of Troy, 1-2 km. There should be a deep-water dock to unload freighters.

Achaean Camp, centered around the beach, was immense to hold 50,000 soldiers, their boats, animals, housing, stores.

Achaean Palisade was nearly impregnable with high wood towers, similar to Troy.

Hamaxitus, a major city, lay perhaps a kilometer north of Troy; much older than Troy.

Unknown city, where Trojan immigrants first settled before building Troy, was not Hamaxitus but very close. Port facilities housed their longboats.

Sminthium, where mice attacked Scamander's people the first night, was south of Troy.

Swamp of the Cadavers was not too far from the tomb of Hector.

Batea Ridge, northwest of Troy, has the burial mound of Batea, beautiful young wife of Dardanus, on its summit.

Flat road between Achaean Camp and Troy. If the Trojan Horse story is accurate, there was a flat road between the Achaean Camp and Troy for the wooden horse to travel, a negotiable river crossing below Troy, and a gentle road up to Troy.

Specific Attributes for only that site

Foundation Stones - Really big foundation stones laid by the giant Poseidon when Troy was middle size. Beyond the foundation stones should be open fields. The aerial photo suggests their position. If farmers and road builders haven't moved them, they should still be there.

Flat rocks and a cold spring at the northeast corner. Spring means flowing water. Just beyond the northeast corner, Hector and Achilles crossed Scamander over flat rocks, where women washed clothes. The water has to be shallow, clear, not flowing too fast, underlain by flat rocks the whole way across. It may be that in addition to Scamander, a rare spring on the west side of Ida came out near the washing rocks. If so, the ground might be soft and mushy.

Hot spring along the northern wall. Spring means flowing water. The hot spring was midway along the northern wall. No one used this hot spring for bathing or washing, so there's something strange about it. Look for a Homeric joke.

Ilium at the southwest corner. Lofty Ilium, a nearly impregnable fortress built atop a cliff, at the southwest corner of Troy. This is a difficult requirement. The Achaean army never even considered attacking Ilium, but went for Troy. Called Ylikulma, maybe that's how Ylium should be spelled. The aerial photo shows the Trojan palisade extended to Ilium.

Bridge to Hamaxitus at the northwest corner. The main road past the west wall of Troy crossed Scamander over a bridge. The present road crosses over a dam that forms a pond, which could be old. Something for archaeology.

West gate faced Xanthos across an open field, big enough that horses could ride side by side. Nothing to see.

Tree at the southeast corner of the palisade - unlikely to find a tree that old, nor should one tree define a location, unless it refers to something completely different.

Road west of Troy out of bowshot that Achilles and Hector traversed. Interesting but not definitive.

Dressed stones of Priam's palace. Only Priam's palace had dressed stones, which housed the families of his sons and daughters. Likely covered by earth, trees and moss. Check to see if locals appropriated the stones in their houses. Good for future archaeologists, possible runes.

Ilus' Barrow was right in the center of Troy, high enough that one could see over the palisade from the top. It could be made of earth rather than stones, with trees growing on it.

Impressions of Troy

I approached Troy via a new highway from Perniö, straight and fast. Around a bend the road plunged down into the old seabed of the Aegean, covered with barley. On the far side loomed a grey cliff, completely out of place. The road ran directly at the cliff, as if to tunnel through, then at the last second swerved to the right and climbed up through a cleft in the rock. The cleft appeared to have been blasted open to make way for the new highway. At the top of the cliff, above road level, was Ylikulma, two sets of houses on either side of the cleft with a magnificent view of the valley below. Yes, lofty Ilium still existed! No wonder it was thought impregnable.

Beyond Ylikulma the highway comes to a major intersection. Nearly all traffic turns left, past Troy and Hamaxitus toward Salo. To the right it soon reverts to a dirt road, as does the road straight ahead. Like most roads, these don't have numbers but names. Topo maps don't bother printing road names or numbers, so I continually got lost. It's not like Crete with neither names nor numbers, because there you can see where you want to go, miles ahead. In Finland, trees crowd the road and block the view, and with all the twists and turns, it takes but a minute to get lost. Several times I came out of the woods back where I started. In 2011 they finally printed a map for part of Perniö with road names, making life easier for the tourist.

I turned left toward Salo and drove slowly along, looking for foundation stones among a thick forest of spruce trees that covered Troy right down to the edge of the road. I went north for more than a half mile and didn't see any big stones, not good, until I got to the farmer's house at the end, who had a few big stones scattered across his lawn. The farm seemed deserted, so I turned right, through the farm and drove along the tractor road that bordered the south bank of Scamander. After about a quarter mile, the forest on my right ended and opened out onto a field of barley. A wall ran along the edge of the forest, perhaps five feet high.

The field sloped down into a gully, then rose toward Ida, where it ended a quarter mile further. The gully came toward me, a small rivulet that passed through a culvert under the road and emptied into Scamander. This was about where the hot spring should be. I tried to imagine the field at the time of the Trojan War. Where did they stable their horses? I remembered drawing some long rectangular buildings on both sides of this gully, stables. Where was the sewer for Troy? It had to be in the lowest spot, right down this gully. Where did they wash the laundry? Above the point where the gully emptied into Scamander. Yes, it all made sense! The hot spring was the sewer outlet for Troy!

I kept going on the tractor road, entered some woods, took several zigzags until the road turned into a morass of mud with deep tractor tracks. I got out and worked my way through the brush beside the morass to where the tractors crossed Scamander. What a sight! The river ran four inches deep across absolutely flat rock from one side to the other, maybe fifteen feet wide. These

Impressions of Troy

flat rocks were the only place that tractors could cross in safety. The washing pool was just where Homer said it would be.

Was there a road that Hector and Achilles followed? I backed up and noticed an overgrown tractor road branching to the right. Leery of hidden rocks, I walked the road which turned right and followed the boundary of the field, between the field and Ida, but some distance away from the field. The farmer apparently no longer mowed it. If the field represented the maximum extent of Troy, then this road would have been about right for Hector and Achilles.

I drove back to the wall bordering the forest and examined it. Some medium stones, but not many, and the wall was not in good condition, gaps with missing stones. The forest floor came right to the top of the wall, rather flat. At certain places the wall jutted out into the field a little way, and the farmer had left it like that, plowing around the intrusion.

I still had not found any big foundation stones, so I drove up to the church parking lot in the center of Troy, parked, and began to walk the woods toward Ilium. Now the stones appeared, they were everywhere among the trees, about half the size of a VW van. The original wall had been knocked over, the stones scattered. Trees had grown up around them, stones too big to move, so they slowly sank beneath the forest floor. Trees grew so thick along the road that I had not been able to see them. As of today, the trees are uncut and the forest pristine.

But not the stones. In the summer of 2011 Kai, Anita and I revisited the site and could not find them. Kai had a bum hip so we did not do a thorough search, but where I remembered seeing them, they were gone. All we saw were tractor marks criss-crossing the forest in every direction. What was a tractor doing in a forest where nothing grew? The farmer at the end with the stones on his front lawn! He was mining Troy for stones and selling them to developers, carrying them out in his front loader while everyone else was at work. No one paid attention to an old farmer on his tractor. He left the trees so drivers along the road couldn't see what he was doing.

So Troy still stands, but it is fast eroding. None of us spotted anything that looks like a cairn. When the farmer no longer needs trees to shield his activities, he will clear-cut the forest and Troy will look like any other bald hill. If he suspects there are dressed stones under the lichen, engraved with magic runes, he may unearth and sell them.

One other thing has changed. The Commune of Perniö once had its own government, its own police, its own schools, but all that was lost in the recession and now they are just a small group of farmers under the jurisdiction of Salo, who barely knows they exist. Money comes in, a little goes out. As far as I can tell, no one from Perniö even works at Salo, it might as well be another country. The new maps cover the boundaries of Salo and stop, who cares about the rest.

Perhaps the farmer speeded up his activities in the last three years without oversight to hinder him. And once this report is published, I can imagine others will have free rein to do as they please, build a motel facing Troy, a bar on the corner of Ilium.

But the Commune of Perniö is more than just barley fields, it is the center of Western mythology. No other place on Earth harbors such a dense collection of familiar names, all the days of the week for instance. And it raises questions that will not be answered in my generation, nor maybe the next. So let's examine some of the consequences, then the discoveries.

You are invited to contact Stuart Harris about this or any other archeological topics at PO Box 60281, Palo Alto, CA, 94306; Stuart.Harris -at- sbcglobal.net; 650-888-1859