

## DID PRIMITIVE MAN OF IOWA HAVE MANUFACTURING PLANTS ?

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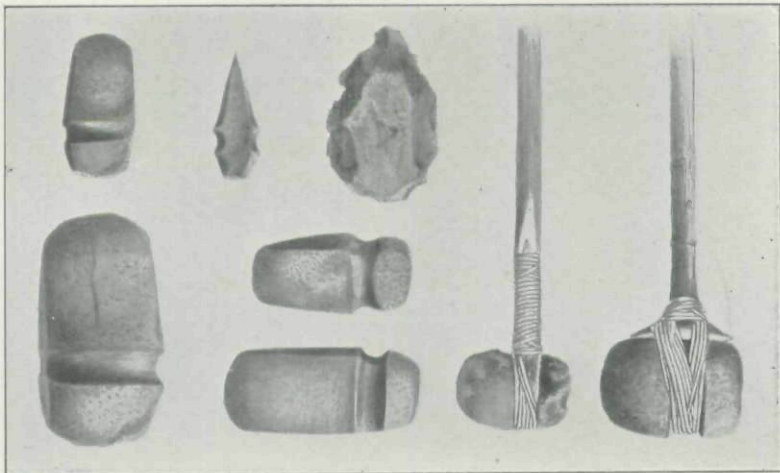
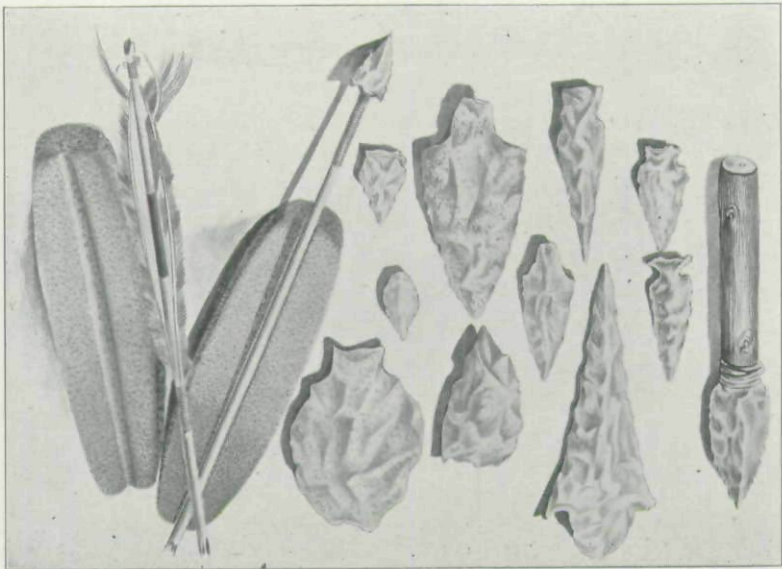
Among animals, man alone uses weapons. His earliest, aside from hands and teeth, were doubtless clubs and stones. Later he learned to combine the two by fastening a stone to the end of his club. In the process of time, this stone, at first a ragged flint or a smooth pebble, came to be elaborately finished and have conventional form as an elegant axe or tomahawk.

Improving upon the idea of a stone at the end of a club, he tied a sharp fragment of flint on the end of a long stick and had a spear with which to stab his enemy, man or beast, before coming to close quarters, or it might be thrown a short distance. The bow, with which small spears might be thrown with greater force and to a further distance, was a later development.

In all countries which have come under the observation of ethnologists, it has been found that the primitive weapons were made of stone; and, very strangely, there is a marked similarity both as to material and shape, in ancient weapons found in countries the most remote from each other.

In some of the countries of the Eastern Hemisphere, researches have shown a regular gradation upward from weapons of roughly chipped flints to those perfect in outline and highly polished, these gradually merging into weapons of bronze and iron, as the knowledge and use of metals progressed.

To primitive man of Iowa, the use of metals was practically unknown. True, a number of ornaments and a few spear or knife heads of copper have been found, but these were probably hammered and rubbed into shape from small masses of native copper such as are still found in glacial debris; or may have been obtained by barter from tribes near the copper mines of Lake Superior; but this use does



SEE OPPOSITE PAGE FOR EXPLANATION OF THESE CUTS.

not indicate any knowledge of the smelting or reduction of copper ores.

In the writer's collection is a tomahawk (the smaller of the two with handles shown in the illustration) found in Marion county, which is so nearly pure iron that it might be forged by any blacksmith. It has not been smelted, and is merely a small piece of very pure red hematite rubbed to an edge and grooved for a handle.

The Indians of Iowa prior to the discovery of America by Columbus were of the great Siouan family. They were fierce warriors and were much more expert weapon makers than the Algonquins of the Atlantic coast. Their weapons were of better material and more artistic in form and finish.

For close combat, their principal weapon was the axe or tomahawk, which was usually made from a fragment broken from a granite boulder, such as are still found scattered over our prairies.

The axes and tomahawks shown in the illustration are all from the writer's collection and found in Marion county. The rough fragment shown is a piece of granite weighing about one and a half pounds which had been battered into a size and form ready for rubbing with sharp sand and gritty pieces of stone to bring it to the conventional form. The axe in the lower left hand corner weighs six and a half pounds, and is probably too large to have been used as a weapon and was for domestic use as an axe. The others weigh from one to four pounds each and fairly illustrate the forms usually found.

The other illustration shows knife, arrow and spear heads, all of which were found in Iowa, except the round or woman's knife near the center, which was found by the writer in the District of Columbia. The longest spear head was found within the city limits of Des Moines a few rods from the 'Coon river.

It has been generally supposed that among the Indians each was his own mechanic and when he wanted a weapon he made it; but if one has an opportunity to examine a large number of weapons found in the same general locality, he will

be immediately impressed by their great similarity in material, form and finish, almost to the most minute details. For instance, inspect the axes and tomahawks in the State Historical Department found in the region including Boone, Ft. Dodge and Webster City, and you will involuntarily come to the conclusion that nearly all were made by the same person.

The same impression will be made upon inspection of weapons from other localities, if you can see enough of them together for the purpose of comparison.

The question at once arises: Were there primitive workshops or weapon manufactories in Iowa? The answer is: It is quite probable there were.

Some Indians would unquestionably have more natural mechanical skill and a better eye for artistic form than others, and when one of these made for himself a tomahawk which was pronounced a thing of beauty by his fellows, it would be but natural in any state of society for the less skillful man to desire it. He would say to the owner: "I wish I could make such an elegant tomahawk; but mine are nearly failures. How many buffalo hides and haunches of venison will you take for it?" The owner, knowing that he can easily make one as good or even improve upon it, names a price and the trade is made. He makes a second and this in turn is bartered to another unskilled warrior, and he soon finds that by employing his time in the manufacture of tomahawks and axes he can supply his family with meat and hides more easily and with more certainty than by hunting.

Then, too, he finds himself becoming more expert; each succeeding weapon requiring less time and labor than the one before and he learns to select the best material for the purpose and where to find it. His reputation as a weapon-maker spreads, the demand increases; a locality is selected where the material is abundant; he trains up his sons, or perhaps calls in others to assist him and work under his directions, and a plant or manufacturing establishment, limited in capacity only by the constantly increasing demand for its output, is in operation.

The same is equally true in regard to the manufacture of

bows, knives, arrow and spear heads, and it is not improbable that the women who became expert potters established similar co-operative manufactories.

Where the material used is imperishable, such as stone and flint, the debris found in heaps and quantities in many ancient workshop quarries, as they are called by the ethnologists, indicates that many workmen were engaged in the manufacture.

Within the city limits of Washington, D. C., are at least two of these ancient manufactories. One is an ancient soapstone quarry of several acres, on which may still be found hundreds of fragments of vessels, large and small, broken at various stages of their manufacture and discarded by the workmen.

The other has car loads of chips broken from quartzite pebbles in the manufacture of knives, arrow and spear heads, besides thousands of these broken at various stages of completion from the rounded pebble with but one chip taken off to the weapon broken at the last stroke before completion.

Strangely, however, the debris in both these ancient manufactories indicates that no finished or completed work was made in this workshop. At the first all fragments found are of rough, incomplete vessels with thick walls covered with marks of the flint chisels, while fragments of such vessels found on village sites in the locality and quite a number of perfect ones which have been dug up, show that they were rubbed perfectly smooth and the walls reduced to a thickness of from one-half to three-quarters of an inch.

Most of the fragments at the arrow factory are merely unshaped chips, but there are many thin leaf-shaped rejects, some of which are so nearly perfect that they might be completed to any one of the usual forms in use for knives, arrows or spears. No completed ones are found, however.

It is conjectured that in both these manufactories the product was in the rough and when bartered the purchaser completed it at his leisure, as the finishing would require, perhaps, less mechanical skill.

The writer has no knowledge of any such workshops having

been found in Iowa, but he has no doubt they may be located if careful search should be made in the mound regions of the State for such an accumulation of debris as should be found on the sites of such manufactories.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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ACTUAL SETTLERS.—The next session of Congress is now near at hand, and we would urge upon the farmers of the interior the importance of taking immediate measures for making an early and strong representation of their interests and wants at the seat of Government. Let petitions be circulated and signed by every settler in the west, urging upon Congress the necessity of immediate action on the subject of pre-emption. Let the voice of the west go forth as one voice, demanding that prompt justice be done to the settler, and his dearly bought rights effectually secured to him by the laws. They are in this Territory the earliest occupants of the country. They have left homes endeared to them by the pleasures of cultivated society, by the graves of their fathers, and as the dwelling places of relatives and friends. They have encountered the privations and sufferings incident to the early settlement of a country. And all this they have suffered and done to better their condition, under the hope and expectation of receiving from the Government the same immunities hitherto granted to actual settlers on its lands. Most of them are resident on their claims—and all of them have expended more or less labor and money on them in the erection of buildings, planting crops, and making other valuable improvements. It is now for Congress to decide whether these improvements shall be secured to the hardy pioneer of the woods who made them, or shall fall a prey to the greediness of the bloated speculator in public lands. We deem it the interest as well as the duty of Government to encourage the settlement of its rich and unappropriated lands by holding out to the emigrant the inducement of perfect security in his possessions and improvements. In most cases their all is invested, and if Government will not protect them they deem it right to protect themselves. They must either stand firmly side by side to maintain their rights peaceably if they can—at any rate to maintain them, or must throw themselves into the arms of the enemy and rely upon the tender mercies of the devouring speculator. The latter they will not do!—*Iowa News (Du Buque), Sept. 2, 1837.*

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