

The Prehistoric Indians of Minnesota

The Headwaters Lakes Aspect¹

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THE FIRST prehistoric village site that Dr. A. E. Jenks and the author studied in Minnesota is located in Hines Township, Beltrami County, at the southeastern corner of the southwestern bay of Blackduck Lake. The existence of the village site was reported to the University of Minnesota by Mr. William Schocker of Hines, the owner of the property, who in 1929 had plowed up much pottery, a copper spearhead, human bones, and other objects. The investigation was made in August, 1932.

A sharp bluff rises at the northern side of the village site, and between the foot of the bluff and the newly plowed land was a narrow strip of undisturbed land. Digging in this area disclosed at a depth of eight to twelve inches a gravel subsoil above which was a habitation level extending upward to from four to six inches below the surface, with black topsoil and sod above it. Typical village debris, consisting of ashes and charcoal, potsherds, stone artifacts and chips, and animal and fish bones, was present, sturgeon bones being especially numerous.

There were many fireplaces. The most interesting were three in a line about ten feet apart, each of which was merely a hollowed-out place dug down into the gravel and filled with wood ashes. Each had a badly crushed cooking vessel on top of the ashes. Two of these vessels were nearly complete, so it was possible to restore them, though each was broken into more than four hundred sherds. A fourth fireplace, wide and shallow, had four post holes near it, two at each end, in which it is believed were sunk the upright sticks that sup-

¹ This is the second of a series of articles on the cultures of Minnesota's prehistoric peoples contributed to this magazine by Dr. Wilford. The first article in the series, dealing with "The Mille Lacs Aspect," appears *ante*, 25:329-341; a general introduction, in which the author explains the classification of the cultures to be discussed in later articles, is published *ante*, 25:153-157. *Ed.*

ported a crossbar over the fire. A large pile of rocks, flattened down and covered with ash, was apparently only another fire hearth, as nothing significant was found beneath it or associated with it.

Mr. Schocker reported that before he plowed the site there had been a low ridge beginning fifteen feet south of the area that was excavated. In pulling out stumps on this ridge and in plowing across it he had uncovered human bones. The investigators therefore dug in the area where the ridge had been and found three disturbed skeletons and a fourth that was undisturbed. They were buried in shallow pits from eighteen to twenty-one inches below the existing surface. Two had been so much disturbed that the manner of burial could not be determined, but the others were definitely primary burials, with the leg bones fully flexed on the ribs. One lay on its back with the shoulders elevated; the other was in a sitting or semi-sitting position.

More than nine thousand potsherds were found on the site. A study of them and of the two restored vessels indicates that all the vessels used in the former village had round bases, rounded bodies without definite shoulders, and wide mouths. A few apparently were but slightly constricted above the line of maximum diameter and terminated in very wide mouths with no throats or necks. But most of them had definitely constricted upper bodies and short necks which met the upper body at a distinct angle. The necks were commonly vertical, though some flared outward from the throats and terminated in flat lips, usually thickened at the outer edge.

The decoration of the body area of the Blackduck vessels is much like that of the Aquipaguetin sherds, with one exception.² Nine per cent of the body sherds bear impressions of woven nets, which have fine meshes, with knots or nodes at each point of crossing of warp and woof. This type of decoration is infrequent in the Mille Lacs aspect sherds. Other body sherds found at Blackduck Lake have plain surfaces and cord-wrapped paddle impressions.

A striking difference is found in the decoration of the rim sherds of the two aspects. Roulette impressions are virtually absent at

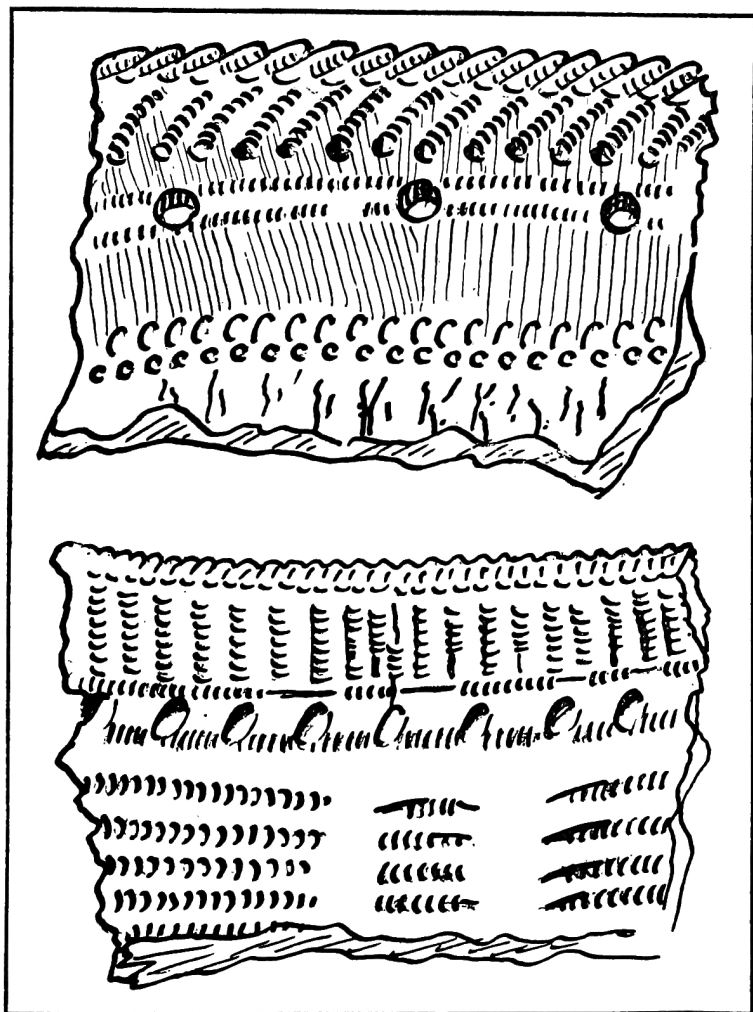
² For descriptions of the sherds from the Aquipaguetin site, as well as pictures of some of them, see *ante*, 25:330-333.

Blackduck Lake, though they were important decorative devices at the Aquipaguetin site. Only four sherds so decorated were found at Blackduck Lake, and these probably originated in the Mille Lacs area. Cord-wrapped stick impressions are more frequent than at Aquipaguetin, and much more uniform in character. The stamp is more deeply impressed, so that the impression of the central element is clear; the cords are more closely wound; and the lines, especially the short oblique ones, are closer together. Punctate impressions are used more often than in Mille Lacs sherds, and are always on the exterior, so there are no external bosses as in some Mille Lacs pottery.³ The punctate impressions vary in shape and depth, as in the Aquipaguetin sherds.

The decorative impressions on rim sherds were placed on a surface that had first been smoothed, or over cord-wrapped paddle or net impressions, or over a surface that had first been marked with fine, closely spaced vertical lines. The latter are known as brush markings, since they appear to have been made by a fine brush. The last type of background was not found at the Aquipaguetin site, but it was found on almost half of all decorated rim sherds unearthed at Blackduck Lake.

It would be difficult to point to any one of the Mille Lacs aspect rim sherds as typical or characteristic, but this is not true of Blackduck pottery. The characteristic Blackduck rim has a flat lip, thickened on the exterior, with closely spaced impressions of a cord-wrapped stick across it. Along the overhang, immediately below the outer edge of the lip, is a band of short oblique lines made with a cord-wrapped stick or a row of punctates. Below this the neck of the vessel is covered with vertical brush lines, over which are bands of short oblique or horizontal lines made with cord-wrapped sticks, which either encircle the vessel or are vertically aligned in short lengths to produce a panel effect. Horizontal rows of punctates border the lines or bands of cord-wrapped stick impressions, or they are placed between them. The characteristic Black-

³ At the Malmo site of the Mille Lacs aspect, external bosses were found on nearly half of the rim sherds.



TYPICAL RIM SHERDS OF THE HEADWATERS LAKES ASPECT

duck rim, as indicated by the sherds, is more pleasingly decorated than any others of the Woodland pattern known to the writer.

Artifacts of stone were not plentiful at the Blackduck site. Only one complete arrowhead was found—a small triangular point with one notch on each side. Other objects of chipped stone discovered are a drill, eleven scrapers, and four knives. Among the latter is an unusual specimen of slate. One of its long edges, which is straight and thick, forms the back. The opposite edge is longer and is convex with a finely chipped bevel on one face and some retouching on the opposite face. There are roughly chipped hollows on each face as though for thumb and finger holds. The knife resembles the so-called woman's knife or "ulo" of the Eskimo. A short tubular pipe of schist and three polishing or abrading pebbles were the only objects of ground stone discovered at Blackduck Lake.

Objects made of bones and antlers were more plentiful. They include the tips of three unilaterally barbed harpoons, three bone awls, two antler tip flakers, and a third flaker made by grinding the tip of a bear's cuspid. Three long bones with rounded ends may have been used in dressing skins. A beaver's incisor had been cut diagonally downward across the labial surface to terminate in a sharp point. An antler tip two and three-fourths inches long had been hollowed out at the base to a depth of an inch and sharpened at the tip to form a projectile point. The two latter objects are common in the culture of the Rainy River aspect and may be intrusive at Blackduck.

Another important site of the Headwaters Lakes aspect is a mound on the property of Mr. William Osufsen of Spring Lake in Itasca County. It is situated at the point where the Bowstring River enters Rice Lake about half a mile northwest of the outlet of Sand Lake. At the mound site a rather level elevated terrace slopes steeply to the river on the south, and less steeply to the lake on the west. The mound is elliptical in shape, with its long axis extending east and west. It was built at the southeast corner of the terrace with its northeast quadrant on the level and the balance on the sloping shoulders of the terrace. Because the sides of the mound merged with the shoulders of the terrace on the south and west, the edge

was not defined and the exact length and width could not be determined by surface observation. The highest point of the mound, its apparent center, was only two and three-fourths feet above the terrace level at the eastern edge. The only notable disturbance was a depression a little to the north of the center, where a pit had been dug for use as a duck blind.

The mound was studied in 1938. An elliptical area thirty-eight feet long and twenty-six feet wide, centered on its highest point and including all its higher portions, was staked off for excavation. The dirt was very rich in potsherds and refuse animal bones, indicating that much of it had been taken from a habitation site.

The most interesting feature of the mound consisted of burials. Seven skeletons were found in circular pits, all less than four feet deep, dug below the original ground level before the mound was built. They were excavated in the yellow sandy subsoil. Each contained a single skeleton placed in a fully flexed sitting position. Two were accompanied by very small complete pottery vessels; with a third was a pair of short bone awls made of ulnae; and a fourth was entirely covered with a sheet of birch bark. The pit burials were all in the western half of the mound, where the original ground level sloped to the southwest.

The original ground level showed clear evidence of having been used as a habitation site. An elongated fire hearth was found immediately west of the center stake, and a circular one in the west end of the excavation. Village debris was everywhere much richer on and immediately above the ground level than in the higher parts of the mound.

Nineteen skeletons found on the ground level had clearly been placed there for burial after the pit burials had been made, because above three of the pits were later burials at the ground level. Eleven of the skeletons represented primary burials with the bodies fully flexed and an original sitting position indicated. The bones of three individuals represented secondary burials. Four skeletons had been so disturbed that the exact position of burial could not be determined, but they had been interred as primary burials. One skeleton had been so disturbed by a later burial immediately above

it that the manner of burial could not be determined. A twentieth burial on this level consisted of charred bones that had been cremated elsewhere and placed between two of the primary burials. Small mortuary pots were associated with two skeletons, and red ochre and birch bark with some.



SKELETON IN SITTING POSITION FOUND IN THE OSUFSEN MOUND

In the mound fill, above the skeletons on the ground level, were eighteen more skeletons, making a total of forty-five in the mound and the pits beneath it. Two were definitely secondary burials. They were a part of a multiple burial in which two skeletons, clearly primary burials and close to each other, were accompanied by the bones of at least two individuals in no anatomical order. The remainder of the skeletons were interred as primary burials with a sitting or semi-sitting position indicated as the original position, though many had slumped backward, and the skulls had fallen forward, as the tissues had decomposed. These upper burials were less disturbed than those on the ground level. In several instances

the latter had been disturbed by the interment of bodies immediately above them, suggesting that the upper level bodies were intruded into an already existing mound covering bodies on the ground level. Small mortuary vessels accompanied three of the burials. One of them very nearly duplicated a vessel associated with a pit burial. Under one of the vessels was a flint knife. Three harpoons were found between two of the skeletons. Associated with one burial were four tubular beads of native copper wrapped around moose hair. In some instances red and yellow ochre had been placed around the bodies. Under several of the skeletons were found sheets of birch bark.

A very different type of burial was found at the center of the mound, but since the duck blind had been dug there, the skeleton was so badly disturbed that the type of burial and the original position of the body could not be determined. It was buried recently enough so that a large lock of black hair was present. Accompanying the burial were a bracelet of alloyed copper, a large ring or loop of pure native copper with a section of loom-woven cloth wrapped around it, an iron ax, an iron box the size and shape of a snuff box encased in leather, and a number of glass beads. Obviously this was an intrusive burial, interred by a people of the historic period in close contact with Europeans. It can safely be ascribed to the Chipewewa, who still live in the area and are known to have occasionally buried their dead in prehistoric mounds.

Buried in the Osufsen mound were thirty-two adults, six adolescents, six children, and an infant. The small number of children is noteworthy, for in most of the burial places of primitive peoples they are present in a much higher proportion. A total of 5,593 potsherds was recovered in the digging. These are so nearly identical with the sherds from the Blackduck village site that a description is unnecessary. They prove a very close relationship between the people who built the mound and those who inhabited the village site. The manner of burial in the two sites is also essentially similar.

The seven complete vessels found at the Osufsen site are all small mortuary vessels, whereas those at the Blackduck site are large cooking pots. The two types differ in respects other than size.

The mortuary vessels are less uniform in shape than the cooking pots, since the former show greater variation in the proportion of height to width and in the constriction of the upper body. The height of one vessel exceeds its breadth. Another, with no constriction of the upper body, has the form of a deep bowl. The lips are not thickened or are only slightly thickened, and only two have cord-wrapped stick markings across the lips. The bodies of all are marked with the cord-wrapped paddle, but none has the vertical neck markings characteristic of the sherds from Blackduck Lake. Cord-wrapped stick and punctate markings decorate the neck areas, but the latter are more common than the former, and one vessel has incised lines. Of two vessels with no special decoration on the neck, one has only cord-wrapped paddle markings, and the other has this area smoothed. The mortuary vessels are of special interest, since they differ from the cooking pots, broken pieces of which make up most of the potsherds found at both the Blackduck and Osufsen sites.

Few artifacts from the Osufsen site were associated with the burials. Objects of chipped stone discovered there include ten arrowheads, nine of which are triangular and one stemmed, seven knives, four side scrapers, nine end scrapers, and a drill. A flat oval-shaped slab of schist, dressed all around its perimeter, is the only object of ground stone found on the site. Bone objects unearthed include three harpoons, unilaterally barbed and with perforated bases, five awls, a whistle made from a section of bird bone dressed at both ends, and a problematical object made by cutting an unidentified long bone obliquely across and dressing the cut edge. A flake had been removed from the end of an antler tip, probably used as a flaking tool. The four copper beads previously mentioned are filled with moose hair, the hair fibres running lengthwise through the tube as though the metal had been wrapped about them. It is likely that they were attached to a costume as tinklers. Because the objects found with the intrusive Chippewa burial are believed to belong to a culture other than that represented in the mound, they are not listed herewith.

Since the potsherds, types of burial, and artifacts of the Black-

duck Lake and Osufsen sites are similar, it has been concluded that they belong to the same aspect. They are the only pure sites of this culture thus far studied by University of Minnesota archaeologists, but small collections of potsherds sent to or collected by them from certain localities in north central Minnesota are predominantly of the Blackduck type.

Among the sites on which such sherds have been collected are four in Cass County. Large numbers of sherds were collected by the writer and some companions in a field belonging to Mr. George Scott on the east side of Mud Lake, and Mr. David Rose of Bemidji found others in Mr. Scott's garden. A somewhat elevated area at the eastern end of the Mud Lake dam was found to be rich in sherds, and when a road was built in the vicinity, both historic and prehistoric burials were uncovered. Sherds have been collected at a village site with mounds at Squaw Point, on the north shore of Leech Lake; and many more were found by Mr. Rose at the west end of the lake at the inlet of the Kabakona River.

The late P. D. Winship of Hubbard County assembled an archaeological collection that is now preserved by the West Central School and Experiment Station at Morris. It includes many sherds of the Blackduck type believed to have been gathered at Fish Hook Lake, near Mr. Winship's home in Park Rapids.

In Clearwater County, sherds of the Blackduck type have been gathered at Itasca, Pine, and Lower Red lakes. Jacob V. Brower illustrates the Itasca sherds in his *Kathio*.⁴ Mr. Rose collected those found near Gonvick on Pine Lake and near the Red River outlet at the west end of Lower Red Lake. He found sherds of the same type in Beltrami County at the outlet of Wolf Lake on the west bank of the Mississippi and at the east end of Upper Red Lake near Waskish. Others were collected in the same county by Miss Elizabeth Shippee at the Knutson dam on the right bank of the Mississippi River near Cass Lake.

Yielding similar sherds in Itasca County have been sites at White Oak Point on the east bank of the Mississippi three miles south of

⁴ See Plate 32. Brower's work is volume 4 of his *Memoirs of Explorations in the Basin of the Mississippi* (St. Paul, 1901).

the village of Deer River, at the outlet of the Bowstring River on the north shore of Bowstring Lake and south of the Chippewa village of Inger, at the Stangland mound on the Bowstring River east of Popple, and at the mouth of the Raven River on the northwest side of Lake Winnibigoshish. Sherds from the latter site were collected by Mr. Rose. In the waters of Lake Winnibigoshish, "many years ago," George F. Kremer of Grand Rapids found a complete pottery vessel almost exactly like the mortuary vessels of the Osufsen mound; it has been presented to the University of Minnesota by his son, Mr. E. G. Kremer of Minneapolis. Blackduck sherds were found in Koochiching County on the east bank of the Little Fork River at the point where it empties into the Rainy River.

It will be noted that the sites on which Blackduck pottery has been found are in the north central part of Minnesota, in an area near the lakes at the headwaters of the Mississippi River and extending northward to the Canadian boundary. From some of the sites in this general area potsherds have not been taken in large enough quantities to establish a preponderance of the Blackduck type. Some small collections from other sites in this area do not contain any of the distinctive Blackduck types. In the southern portion of the territory in which manifestations of the Headwaters Lakes aspect are found, it is apparent that there is some overlapping with the Mille Lacs aspect.

The burials of the Headwaters Lakes aspect differ from those of the Mille Lacs aspect in that the former are predominantly primary while those of the latter are usually secondary. Sites of the Mille Lacs aspect are known to vary in the details of pottery decoration and in the form of the arrowheads. In these two respects the Headwaters Lakes aspect is closer to the Aquipaguetin site of the Mille Lacs aspect than to the Malmo and Howard Lake sites, which are believed to be older. A predominance of triangular arrowheads is characteristic of both the Headwaters Lakes aspect and the Aquipaguetin site; and similarities in pottery decorations include cord-wrapped paddle markings on the bodies, and cord-wrapped stick impressions and punctate markings on the rims. Therefore, in trying to distinguish between the pottery of the

Headwaters Lakes aspect and that of the late sites of the Mille Lacs aspect, the body sherds are of no value, and rim sherds on which cord-wrapped stick and punctate impressions only are used cannot be distinguished. If roulette markings or bosses or both are found to be fairly numerous, the pottery may well be considered as of the Mille Lacs aspect; and if the characteristic Blackduck type sherds with thickened rims, vertical brush marks, cord-wrapped stick impressions, and punctates, or the latter only, are fairly numerous, the pottery may be assigned to the Headwaters Lakes aspect.

In an attempt to determine the relationship between the two aspects in the southern portion of the area of the Headwaters Lakes aspect, two mound sites, one near the outlet of Mud Lake and one at White Oak Point, were studied by archaeologists from the University of Minnesota.

The Mud Lake mound is half a mile north of the dam at the outlet of Mud Lake, on the west bank of the Leech Lake River. The stream is a short one, flowing east from Leech Lake to Mud Lake, then north-northeast to the Mississippi. It is broad and sluggish, and undoubtedly was important as a route of travel among the aborigines. Along its lower course and at Mud Lake are evidences of the presence of peoples responsible for both the Mille Lacs and Headwaters Lakes cultures, as well as the historic Chippewa.

Mud Lake mound is one of a group of three small, low mounds, all of which had been previously dug into, but the one excavated seemed to have been the least damaged. At the center was an old rectangular excavation extending ten feet north and south for a width of four and a half feet. It had been filled in, and it contained human bones obviously thrown about by the excavators. In the undisturbed area at the western side of the old excavation were found two bundle burials, the lowest bones of which were eleven inches above the original ground level. The bones were in a very poor state of preservation. South and west of the bundle burials, at the edge of the later excavation, were two primary burials. The skeletons were fully flexed, with the knees pointing upward, suggesting an original sitting position. They were much better pre-

served than the bones of the secondary burials. It was concluded that the mound was originally built to cover the secondary burials near the center, and that later the primary burials were intruded at the southwest side. The latter were believed to be burials of the Headwaters Lakes people, since the burial position was typical of that culture and they are known to have lived in the area.

A hundred and eighteen body sherds, two-thirds of which are plain, were found in the Mud Lake mound. Of the thirty-eight rim sherds, not one is a typical Blackduck sherd. Roulette markings, push-and-pull bands, incised lines, cord-wrapped stick impressions, and punctates, all of which are present, indicate without any doubt that the sherds are related to those of the older Mille Lacs aspect sites, such as Malmo. The conclusion was reached that a people of the older Mille Lacs cultures had a habitation site at this point and built the mound, and that later, people of the Headwaters Lakes aspect, who had an extensive village site on Scott's farm three miles to the south, intruded the two primary burials into the mound.

At White Oak Point in Itasca County two mounds were excavated in August, 1940, by archaeologists from the University of Minnesota assisted by workers engaged in a WPA project. The point, which consists of a level terrace well elevated above the Mississippi in an area that otherwise is low and marshy, provides the only good camping spot for several miles along the river in the vicinity. Thus it was a landmark familiar to early travelers, who noted the presence of a circular mound at its southern end. They failed, however, to note three less conspicuous mounds below the terrace on the flood plain of the river. Although they lack symmetry of form and probably were not considered to be tumuli, the investigation of 1940 proved them to be true burial mounds. The mound on the terrace and one of those on the flood plain were excavated.⁵

The first mound had been much disturbed by modern white men, and some of the skeletons buried in it had been disturbed

⁵ The excavations were conducted with the kind permission of the present owner of the property, Mrs. Mary A. Craig of Grand Rapids. Some early references to the mound on the point are cited by N. H. Winchell in his *Aborigines of Minnesota*, 376 (St. Paul, 1911).

by later interments. Nineteen skeletons were discovered. Six of them, the remains of two young adult females, three children, and a fetus, were buried in three shallow pits. They were primary burials, two apparently in an original sitting position and a third fully flexed on the side. The skeletons of three of the children were too badly disintegrated to determine the original position. Eleven bodies were buried on or very close to the original surface of the topsoil, and two others were a little above that level. Much disturbance of these skeletons obscured the original form of burial, but a primary flexed burial was indicated in every case where the remains were sufficiently preserved to determine the original position, which in most cases probably was sitting or semi-sitting. No artifacts were directly associated with the burials.

A total of 1,743 sherds was recovered. Of these 1,493 were body sherds, of which sixty-one per cent have cord-wrapped paddle markings, twenty-two per cent have net or textile markings, and seventeen per cent are plain. Sixteen per cent of the rim sherds are typical Blackduck sherds, and it is estimated that from a fourth to a third of the rim sherds may be classed as belonging to the Headwaters Lakes aspect. The remaining sherds are of the Mille Lacs aspect, having such non-Blackduck features as roulette markings and bosses. They are intermediate in type between the Malmo and Aquipaguetin sherds. Only fourteen artifacts were found. They include six arrowheads, of which two are stemmed and four are triangular, two of the latter having side notches.

Because primary burials predominate, it has been concluded that the mound was constructed by people of the Headwaters Lakes aspect. The earth of which the mound was built contained sherds ascribed to peoples of both the Mille Lacs and Headwaters Lakes aspects, indicating that the former had preceded the latter in occupying the terrace as a village or camp site. This sequence is the same as that exhibited in the Mud Lake mound.

The mound on the flood plain was very different from that on the terrace at White Oak Point. Eleven skeletons found in the former mound were in two distinct groups—one at the northern and the other at the southern end. In the northern group was a multiple

burial in a single, shallow, circular pit, which contained the partial skeletons of two adult males and one adult female interred as secondary burials. With them were the skeletons of two children interred as primary burials in fully flexed positions. Outside the pit was the complete skeleton of an old male, who had been buried lying on his back with arms and legs extended and his head near the edge of the pit. Nearby was a fragmentary skeleton, which was too scattered and had too many bones missing to make it possible to determine whether it was interred as a secondary or a primary burial. In either case it probably was disturbed by the excavation of the pit or the placement of the extended burial. Associated with the scattered burial were a portion of the skull and part of a femur of a large mammal, probably a moose or a bison. These had been enclosed in birch bark.

The southern group, like the northern, had a circular burial pit containing a single skeleton, the primary burial of an old male who had been placed on his back with the body very tightly flexed. West of the pit was the fully extended skeleton of an old female who had been laid on her back; obviously this was a primary burial. Immediately north of the latter were two more burials. One consisted of the long bones and scapula of the left side of an adolescent, including several bones of the left hand and foot, with most of the bones in proper anatomical articulation. This was judged to be a disturbed primary burial. The other burial produced a group of scapulae and arm bones belonging to at least three individuals. Some of the arm bones were in correct anatomical articulation, from which it was concluded that they represented partial secondary burials deposited before complete dissociation of some of the bones had taken place. The bones of the skeletons found in the mound on the flood plain were in a far better state of preservation and gave every indication of being considerably more recent than those of the terrace mound.

The wide variety of types of burial in the second White Oak mound is very unusual and does not point to either the Mille Lacs or the Headwaters Lakes aspect. Full-length burials are unknown

to either, though they are common among the Chippewa, who have lived in this area for about two hundred years. But the absence of any objects of European derivation with the full-length burials is strong evidence that they probably are not of Chippewa origin. The pottery found is more revealing, for not a single rim sherd of the typical Blackduck variety is present among the eighty-four recovered. These sherds are clearly of the Mille Lacs aspect, exhibiting closer relationships to the Aquipaguetin than to the earlier Malmo sherds. The only arrowhead found in the mound is triangular, also a trait of the later Mille Lacs sites. The evidence uncovered by excavating the White Oak Point and Mud Lake mounds, situated only about eight miles apart, suggests that a people of the Mille Lacs aspect, representing an intermediate position between the earlier Malmo culture and the later Aquipaguetin culture, had a camp site at White Oak Point, and built the Mud Lake mound; that they were followed by people of the Headwaters Lakes aspect who built the terrace mound at White Oak Point and intruded two of their dead relatives into the Mud Lake mound; and that they in turn were succeeded by a later group of Mille Lacs aspect people who built the mound on the flood plain at White Oak Point.

The presence of Blackduck type sherds on the Rainy River at the mouth of the Little Fork has been mentioned. Mounds of the Rainy River aspect have been noted all along the Rainy River, so it is evident that peoples of both cultures occupied the Rainy River area. A discussion of the relationships between the two cultures will be presented in a report on the Rainy River aspect to appear in a future issue of this magazine. It may be noted here, however, that adequate evidence exists to prove that the Rainy River aspect preceded the Headwaters Lakes aspect.

The Headwaters Lakes culture has in general an appearance of being relatively late. In the southern portion of the area of its occurrence it is later than the older manifestations of the Mille Lacs aspect, but it is succeeded by later manifestations of that aspect. In the northern portion of its area in Minnesota it is definitely later than manifestations of the Rainy River culture. There are three possible

explanations of these phenomena. The Headwaters Lakes culture may have originated among people in the area north of the Mississippi River and south of the Rainy River who temporarily displaced the Mille Lacs people along the upper Mississippi and later withdrew to the north. Or it may be the culture of a group that moved to the upper Mississippi from the east or southeast, temporarily crowding out the Mille Lacs people before moving farther northward. Finally, the Headwaters Lakes aspect may represent a culture which evolved from the older type of Mille Lacs culture, as represented by Malmo manifestations, in the same manner and at the same time as the Aquipaguetin manifestations evolved from the earlier Mille Lacs types.

The pottery of Aquipaguetin and that of Blackduck Lake have several features in common, and both differ from Malmo pottery. In the two former cultures most of the body sherds have cord-wrapped paddle markings, whereas Malmo body sherds are usually plain. In Aquipaguetin and Blackduck pottery, cord-wrapped stick markings in rim decorations occur more frequently than at Malmo, and incised lines, bosses, and push-and-pull stamps are much less frequent. If Blackduck pottery does represent an evolution from the older Mille Lacs type, it has evolved farther than the Aquipaguetin pottery, for it has dropped roulette, introduced vertical brush markings, and has a high frequency of thickened lips.

If the Headwaters Lakes culture is as late as it appears to be, the people responsible for it may in all likelihood be known historically. Although the writer has not definitely established a contact between the prehistoric Headwaters Lakes culture and that of any known historic tribe, in the light of facts now available he believes the Assiniboin to be the historically known tribe most likely to have created the culture. He agrees with the statement of David I. Bushnell, Jr., who writes: "It is quite evident the Assiniboin, about the first years of the seventeenth century, moved northward from the densely forested region surrounding the headwaters of the Mississippi, where they had formed a division of the Yanktonai, to the vicinity of the Lake of the Woods and beyond, where they soon

became allied with the Cree. They continued to move northward and westward, and by the close of the century were living in the region about Lake Winnipeg."⁶ The known movements of the Assiniboin from the headwaters of the Mississippi to the Lake of the Woods correspond with the distribution of the Headwaters Lakes aspect in Minnesota.

Granting that the Mille Lacs aspect is a manifestation of the Sioux tribes, similarities between Sioux and Assiniboin pottery would be expected, and such is the case. One of the great differences between the two aspects is found in the manner of burial, the Mille Lacs aspect burials being predominantly secondary, and the Headwaters Lakes predominantly primary and often in a sitting position. Could it be expected that the Assiniboin, originally a Sioux tribe, would have so changed their burial practices? It is known that they did, for one of the earliest accounts of Assiniboin burials, recorded by Alexander Henry, the elder, in 1775, reveals that burial was made in a grave "of a circular form, about five feet deep and lined with bark of the birch, or some other tree, or with skins. A seat is prepared," he continues, "and the body is placed in a sitting posture with supporters on either side." According to Henry, the Assiniboin considered it a serious duty to place dishes of food at the grave "for the use of the dead, on the journey to the *land of souls*"⁷ — a practice that might account for the mortuary bowls found in the graves of people of the Headwaters Lakes aspect. In view of known evidence, it is possible that the Headwaters Lakes aspect represents the culture of the Assiniboin in the seventeenth century.

⁶ David I. Bushnell, Jr., *Burials of the Algonquian, Siouan and Caddoan Tribes West of the Mississippi*, 42 (Bureau of American Ethnology, *Bulletins*, 83 — Washington, 1927).

⁷ Quoted by Bushnell, in *Burials of the Algonquian, Siouan and Caddoan Tribes*, 42, 43.



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