

Indians On Land 12,000 Years Ago

BY MARY WARREN
Imagine Indians once stalked through your backyard or camped along the embankment of a neighboring stream or pond.

A local authority on Indian relics, whose private collection numbers in the thousands and includes finds from the Sandhills, says it's entirely possible because Indians traveled game trails up and down Moore County as long ago as 10,000 B.C.

Retired Col. Reid Voss, a resident of Whispering Pines, said Indians from three different periods traveled the Yadkin Trail, the primary game route, and a trail along what is now Morganton Road, then a lesser route.

"The Yadkin Trail—a game trail—is one of the most famous for our area. It comes off the reservation (Ft. Bragg) and comes in near Manly, goes by Mid Pines and generally follows Midland Road to the Pinehurst traffic circle," Voss said. "It then goes out by the hospital (Moore Memorial) toward West End and swings a little north just west of there and goes toward the Pee Dee River valleys."

Among the Indians foraging and hunting in Moore County, he said, were the Cheraw, the Santee, the Catawba, who lived in what is now South Carolina, the Algonquin and the Keyauwee, who lived near what is now Asheboro.

Although the Indians set up make-shift homes, gathered fruits and vegetables, hunted and fished in Moore County, they never built permanent villages in the area, but wandered across it in search of food and materials necessary to their survival.

There are two archaeological finds indicating permanent residence of Indians in nearby Montgomery and Stanly counties. They are at Town Creek Indian Mound near Mount Gilead and Morrow Mountain State Park near Albemarle, where a work site for making points for weapons and tools can be found.

Voss says there are at least 100 known campsites in Moore County. From searching the Whispering Pines area only, he has found at least 400 good relics and about the same number in broken relics.

"I just walk around and pick them up. First you have to find some sign of a camp site. It could

be only an acre in area or it could be five acres. The signs you look for are chips, broken pieces that they took off in making the points. Here in the Sandhills about the only rocks you have are river tumbled pebbles. So you look for chips of flint," said the 30-year member of the N.C. Archaeological Society.

Most of the Indian relics found by him are points from weapons or ceremonial spears, and tools.

They are representative of all three periods of Indian life in the Sandhills and include spear, arrow and dart points as well as hammer stones, tomahawks, knives and different types of scrapers.

One of the best books on North Carolina Indian relics, Voss said, is "The Formative Cultures of the Carolina Piedmont," written by Dr. Joffre Lanning Coe, director of research laboratories of anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He said he uses this book, which contains elaborate descriptions and illustrations, to identify and date the various relics that he finds. An archaeologist would date his finds by the radiocarbon method, which picks up something organic such as charcoal or bone on the relic and from that gives a date, he added.

"The points are named just to identify the particular shape or characteristic of the point. An older one, like the Hardaway, was found on land owned by the person of that name," said Voss. "In most cases, it's a place name. Some are called Rowan, some Guilford, some Yadkin. There's a Morrow Mountain point."

The points may be found throughout the area, but they take their name from where they were first found and identified.

The three periods the relics mark are the Paleolithic, ranging from 8-12,000 B.C., the Archaic, ranging from 1,000-8,000 B.C., and the Woodland, ranging from 1,000 B.C. until first contact with white men.

During the Paleolithic and Archaic periods, the primary weapon used was the spear and possible darts. The primary weapon during the Woodland period was the bow and arrows, while spears were mainly reserved for ceremonial purposes. The tomahawk, hammer stone, knife and scraper were all used in various shapes and forms



DISPLAYS ARTIFACTS — Retired Col. Reid Voss shows off some Indian points, relics he has found in the Sandhills over the years he has spent studying North Carolina Indians.—(Photo by Mary Warren).

throughout all three periods.

"The Paleolithic Indians were nomadic. They followed the big game herds," said Voss, noting the now extinct animals hunted were the woolly elephant or mammoth, the mastodon and the bison, ancestor to the modern day buffalo.

"These animals migrated from the coastal areas, where they stayed in the winter, to the river banks in the piedmont."

The Archaic Indians were also nomadic, still making seasonal moves, although the big game was now mostly extinct and they were hunting the deer and the buffalo as well as small game.

"They had a gathering economy, gathering fruits and nuts. They traveled in families and had many campsites in the Sandhills area. They're called ridge Indians because most of the time their campsites were on the ridge of the rivers rather than on the banks," he said.

"The theory is that these family groups would occupy the same campsites. They knew where the water was and where the game was. I've found relics spanning 5,000 years in the same site."

The Woodland period was the beginning of permanent villages,

where agriculture was the main staple of their livelihood and although they were no longer nomadic, they still hunted and fished, Voss said. "This period is when the bow and arrow was used and pottery was developed. Pottery was used for both storage and cooking."

Pottery was made by the women in the tribes and the designs in pottery were passed from mother to daughter. The pottery making technique was also passed from generation to generation.

He said it was during this time that the tribal system was developed and a study of the pottery uncovered several indications of their lifestyle.

"The newlywed brave went to live with his wife's family for a number of practical reasons," he said, adding one of which was the prevention of intermarriage. "This helped form the tribes and it wasn't as likely that these villages would war against each other."

Voss says most of us are familiar with the Indians of the Woodland period because most of the pictures we see are depicting their life, showing planted fields and pottery.

This is also the period when a lot of the ceremonial practices began. During this time they built temple mounds and religion played a major role in their lives.

In the early 1750s, when they first made contact with the English settlers and became knowledgeable in the use of guns, he said, they began to lose their technique for making points.

"They lost their technique after guns were introduced. They used old chips and the old surfaces were reworked into points," he added.

Most of the points made in all three periods were made from materials taken from the Uwharrie mountains, however some points were made from white or milky quartz found in the Sandhills.

"To shape the points," said Voss, "they used a hammer stone to rough shape a piece of flint. These were traded between tribes or family groups and these people took them back to their campsites to finish into points."

The major tribes still living in North Carolina are the Cherokee in the western part of the state and the Lumbee, who live in the southeastern region.

DIVIDED GEOGRAPHICALLY

Moore County is abruptly divided, marking, geologists say, the ancient presence here of shore and sea. The upper two-fifths of the county are part of the Piedmont Plateau Province of clay and rock, with rolling hills. In the south, the landscape changes almost within feet to the sandhills.



Yadkin Road Was Earliest-US 1 The Latest

Paean To Moore

Mrs. J.M. Guthrie, has written: "Someone has said that God alone makes history, but he does so by the agency of men." We feel that he has worked powerfully through our people in producing for us a history which we are proud to record for our sons and daughters to read after we shall have passed into oblivion. And when this fair country of ours shall have grown so many times richer and developed itself so far beyond the dreams of the most ambitious sons of the present, then still will its youth read with pride of the struggles and ambitions of their forefathers. Though five more and even

greater courthouses stand on the site of the present one, yet shall we know that history of which we will also be proud was made in the present building."

Here's one of her poems on Moore County:

"Our beloved old Moore County, the far away we roam Will always call us backward to our first love, and home.

When memory opens up her Book, and by her side we sit, We see on hills of sandy white, peach

trees where robins flit. And, on beyond a still, blue lake, where perch lurk-wary and swift:

While thru the softly mumuring pines, long rays of sunshine sift.

In forests deep, we hear the p-u-t of turkey, wild and shy. And in the broom sedge, growing near the brown quail, hidden lie.

We see again cold winter dawns,

where herds of wild deer drink At hidden springs, in woodland depths or at the river's brink.

Long, starlit nights, low mockingbird calls, clean scent of newly turned loam

The heady sweetness of jessamine blooms, these memories come of home.

So children of Moore County, though scattered East or West, Will always love this county, wherein their heart finds rest.

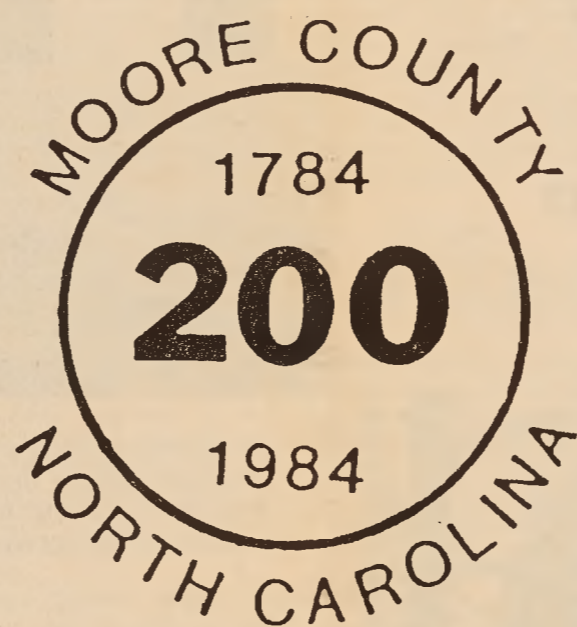
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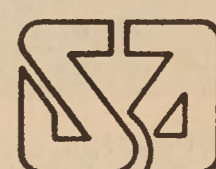
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