

THE BAKER

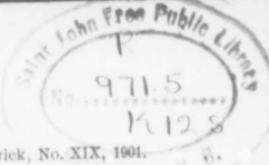
SOME RELICS OF THE EARLY FRENCH PERIOD
IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

BY

SAMUEL W. KAIN AND CHARLES F. B. ROWE.

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ARTICLE V.

SOME RELICS OF THE EARLY FRENCH PERIOD IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

BY SAMUEL W. KAIN AND CHARLES F. B. ROWE.

(Read December 4, 1901.)

From time to time various articles relating to the early occupation of this province by the French have been deposited in the museum of this Society. Chief among these accessions are the articles donated by Dr. A. C. Smith, of Tracadie, N. B., one of our most energetic corresponding members.

Jacques Cartier visited Miramichi Bay and Bay Chaleur in 1534, and from that time until the voyage of Champlain in 1604, there are many reasons for believing that numerous fishing and trading vessels visited our shores. These adventurous sailors carried on an active trade with the natives. The traders wanted furs, and for these they bartered iron tomahawks, knives, kettles, beads, etc. A brief account of such articles used in the trade as we have in our museum, with some others, may be of interest to our members and of some practical use to future investigators.

Kettles.

Before the arrival of Europeans the aborigines made rude earthen vessels. No perfect specimens of these have yet been found in New Brunswick, but from such fragments as have been recovered, it would appear that these articles were quite small. They were also heavy,* and, as Dr. G. F. Matthew has pointed out, were very fragile on account of being imperfectly burned. The metal kettle of the Europeans was therefore very much desired and highly prized.

* Bulletin of this Society, No. X, p. 14, 1892.

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Champlain in his "Voyages" (Vol. II., pp. 83-84) narrates the following incident which occurred at Nausett Harbor, Mass.: "On the 23rd of July (1605) four or five sailors having gone on shore with some kettles to get fresh water * * * some savages coveting them, watched the time when our men went to the spring and then seized one out of the hand of the sailor," with the result that the kettle was lost and the sailor slain.

These kettles have been found in many parts of Canada and are generally made of copper or brass.

Three of these kettles were found in 1879 at Tabusintac interred with human remains. Dr. A. C. Smith brought the discovery before the Society and an account of the find was published.* In this connection it may be of interest to quote what Champlain says in his Voyages (Vol. II., pp. 191-192) about burial customs of the Indians at Quebec: "When a man or woman dies, they dig a pit in which they put all their property, as kettles, furs, axes, bows, arrows, robes and other things. Then they place the body in the pit and cover it with earth." In 1899, Dr. A. C. Smith sent to the Society an account of the finding of some graves of the early French period at Wilson's Point, Shippegan. Here stood an old French fort, now washed away, which has been described by Prof. W. F. Ganong† and is marked on his map as "Denys' Fort."

The following is an extract from a letter by Dr. Smith to the Society, dated at Tracadie, Sept. 19, 1899: "Four circular depressions in the ground, about 100 feet from the shore, were noticed by two men who happened to pass through the woods. In one hole they found the copper kettle which I will forward in a few days. In the kettle they found the skull, arm bones and ribs, but the bones of the lower extremities were outside of the pot. Over the mouth of the vessel was the skin of some animal, and over the skin birch bark. I saw the circular skin covering, but it was too sodden to bring away. In the other holes were found pots, axes, a sword, knives, a harpoon, and a pair of bracelets. In a small pot were some beads."

In a letter written some days later he adds:

"The round holes were four in number; about three feet in diameter and about four feet apart. Clearly they were graves; and

* Bulletin V., pp. 14-19, 1886.

† Proceedings Royal Soc. Canada, Vol. V. (Sec. series) Sec 11, pp. 297-299, 1899,

there are no indications of anything else in the vicinity. Since writing you, I have found on special enquiry that there were human bones in two of the holes. A button was found with the bracelets ; but I have failed to get either. From a reliable friend who saw the button, I learn that the button face 'which was as bright as gold, had a face of a man on it, surrounded by a halo, and a cross at the side of it.' About forty-five years ago a metal box, containing a written document, was found *about* a mile from these graves, but the writing could not be read as the paper was 'rotten.' The box had been cased in birch bark.

"About two years ago, an Indian grave was broken into not far from the site of the graves I write about. I visited the spot and found that the occupant had been buried in a sitting posture ;* the hole was deep, but not more than three feet in diameter. The bones were very much decayed : nothing else was found in the hole."

We have in our museum three of these kettles from Tabusintac, and four from Tracadie. It has been reported that similar kettles have been found at Indian Point, Grand Lake. The kettle shown in plate x, fig. 4, was found by Dr. Smith, under the circumstances just described. It is of copper, $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, 12 inches deep, and has a capacity of 15 imperial gallons. The handle is of iron, rectangular in section and passing through copper ears, strongly fastened with three copper rivets to the body of the kettle. The bottom is nearly flat and gently rounded at the sides. This kettle weighs twenty pounds and Mr. Hevenor says the value of a similar vessel now would be about \$10.00.

The other pots from Tracadie, three in number, are small, the smallest being six inches across the mouth and four inches deep.

The kettles from Tabusintac differ in some respects from those found at Tracadie. In the Tracadie kettles the sides are neatly turned over an encircling iron rod so that the rod is not seen. In the Tabus-

* Father Baird, in his Relation of New France, 1616 (Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Vol. iii., pp. 129, the Burrows Brothers Co., Cleveland, 1897) says: "They bury the dead in this manner: first, they swathe the body and tie it up in skins: not lengthwise but with the knees against the stomach and the head on the knees as we are in our mother's womb. Afterward they put it in the grave which has been made very deep, not upon the back or lying down as we do, but sitting. A posture which they like very much, and which among them signifies reverence. For the children and the youths seat themselves thus in the presence of their fathers, and of the old whom they respect. We laugh at them and tell them that way of sitting is the fashion with monkeys, but they like it and find it convenient."

intac kettle, the top sides of the kettle are flattened into a rim three-quarters of an inch wide, and beneath this the kettle is encircled by a broad iron band, to which are welded two circular iron ears for handles. All the Tabusintac kettles have the inner side of rim decorated with diagonal markings, and the handles are distinguished by a peculiar prolongation of the ends beyond the "ears," of from 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and at right angles to the sides, as shown in plate xi., fig 4. In two of the Taousintac kettles, the shape of the bottoms is that of a compressed cone.

Sword.

The double-edged, sharp pointed sword, shown on plate 10, fig 1, was found by Dr. A. C. Smith, in 1899, along with other articles in one of the circular graves at Tracadie. It is very badly rusted. The length of the blade is 2 feet $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches, the handle, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the widest part of the blade measures $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. This sword may have been a present to a chief from the French, or it may have been the sword used by a medicine man in his incantations.*

Knives.

Among the articles found by Dr. Smith, at Wilson's Point, were a number of knives, plate xii., figs. 4-5. They are all badly rusted and about six inches long. They have originally been mounted with wooden handles. Fig. 3 represents a knife in much better condition than the preceding found at Tabusintac in 1879. Knives seem very highly valued by the Indians, and Cartier records that on his first voyage (1534) he gave some knives to the savages in the very region where our specimens were found.

Harpoon.

The badly rusted iron harpoon, shown in fig. 5, plate x., was found in 1899, by Dr. A. C. Smith at Wilson's Point, Shippegan, along with the articles described on a preceding page. It is ten inches long, and though badly rusted, shows evidence of having been a strong

* Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, III., p. 119.

+ "We sent two men ashore with hatchets and knives, beads and other merchandise, at which they showed great joy." Quoted by Prof. Ganong in Canadian History Readings, p. 14, 1900.

implement. It was probably fitted to a wooden shaft and used in the seal fishery which flourished during the period of the early French occupation.

Axes.

Before the arrival of Europeans, the natives used axes of stone. At the best, these were unsatisfactory tools, and in the European iron axe they recognized a good thing. These axes early became an important article of trade, and were sent to America in large numbers. Hundreds of these have been found in Ontario, but with us they are not so common.

Fig. 2, plate x., shows a badly rusted iron axe, found by W. C. Simpson, at L'Etang, Charlotte County, and now in our museum. The eye is oval in shape, the length of the axe is eight inches, and it weighs one and three-quarter pounds.

Fig. 3, plate x., shows a well preserved iron axe in our museum, labelled, "Tomahawk of Milicete Tribe." This poled form, Mr. David Boyle says, is not common in Ontario. In this specimen, the pole measures $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the length of the axe is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the rounded cutting edge is $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the weight is one pound.

Iron Gouges or Scrapers.

Dr. Smith recovered from the graves at Tracadie three curved iron tools that may have been used as gouges or scrapers. They are all pretty badly rusted, but one specimen (fig. 1, pl. xii,) is sufficiently preserved to give a good idea of these tools. It is about $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and the curved scraping edge is $1\frac{5}{8}$ inches wide. This specimen has a knob at the end of the handle. Mr. T. W. E. Sowter* has described and figured very similar implements from Lake Deschenes, in the Ottawa Valley. He says: "Mr. Boyle inclines to the belief that from the small bulb or knob at the end of the handles, they may have been used by means of pushing directly in the hand, perhaps as skin-dressers or flesh-scrappers.

The other specimen figured (fig. 2 and 2a, pl. xii,) is of different shape and badly rusted. The third specimen has a blade two inches wide.

* Ottawa Naturalist, January, 1900, p. 234.

Leaden Crucifix.

The earliest French traders and settlers who visited this province were accompanied by missionaries zealous to spread Christianity among the aborigines. Many converts were made, and doubtless to such would be presented crucifixes, of which a specimen is shown in fig. 6, pl. xii. This crucifix was found in 1879 at the mouth of the Tabusintac River, at a depth of three inches in the surface loam, and presented to the Society by Dr. Baxter, of Chatham. The exact spot where found is shown on a small map published in Bulletin V, p. 15.

The cross is $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height, and $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in width. It is in one piece, the escutcheon holding the inscription and the figure have been made separately and afterwards soldered to the cross. There is a hole for suspension, and Monsignor Laflamme, who has examined the crucifix, is of the opinion that at one time a chaplet of beads was attached and later separated from it. The inscription is difficult to read, but Monsignor Laflamme considers that if complete it would be I. H. S., as such an inscription is found on several crucifixes.

Toy.

Prof. W. F. Ganong has in his possession a curious lead toy (figure 5, plate xi.) which was given to him by Prof. L. W. Bailey, in 1897. Professor Bailey bought two of them from a man who said he dug them up just below the mouth of the Oromocto. The specimen belonging to Prof. Bailey has on it the letters I. B. and a scratched "1740," which is probably modern. The toy represents an old time four-gun sloop of war, with high stern and ancient bowsprit. It would seem as if this object had been made in a wooden mould from bullet metal. The reverse side is perfectly smooth.

Beads.

The Indians were fond of beads for ornamental purposes. Before the advent of Europeans, they made them from shells, and in some cases from stone. Mr. Duncan London says that beads made from stone have been found in the vicinity of French and Maquapit Lakes, but we have no specimens in our museum. The women wore the beads strung around their necks, arms and wrists, and suspended from their ears.*

* Bulletin of N. H. S. of N. B., viii., 1889, pp. 12-14.

The early French traders introduced glass and porcelain beads in large quantities, and these soon displaced the native article. Most of the beads of this period to be found in the museum of this Society, and at the University, have been recovered from graves. Dr. Smith recovered a large number of colored beads of glass and porcelain from the graves at Tracadie. These were strung on fibres, which Professor Ganong determined to be the root fibres of the spruce. The various forms are shown on plate xi, fig. 2.

The museum of the University has a number of beads recovered from graves at Grand Lake, and very similar to those found by Dr. Smith. The large flesh-colored glass bead or pendant (plate xi, fig. 1) was found on the Washademoak River, and is in the University museum. It is octagonal in form and perforated from end to end.

Fig. 3, plate xi, shows a porcelain bead, evidently made in imitation of the old Indian wampum beads. Its surface is covered with cracks and the hole for suspension is very small. It was ploughed up in 1898, on his farm near Nerepis Station, King's County, by Geo. A. Harding, who gave it to the Society.

In early intercourse with our Indians, the belt or collar of wampum was used as a flag of truce, and served the same purpose as the pipe served in other parts of the continent.

Father Baird states* that beads were generally interred with the remains of women.

* *Jesuit Relations, etc., Vol. III., p. 123.*

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PLATE X.

- Figure 1. Sword, from Tracadie, 2 feet $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long.
 Figure 2. Iron axe, from L'Etang, Charlotte County, 8 inches long.
 Figure 3. Milicete tomahawk, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches long.
 Figure 4. Copper kettle, from Tracadie, $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and 12 inches deep.
 Figure 5. Iron harpoon, from Tracadie, badly rusted. Length, 10 inches.

PLATE XI.

- Figure 1. Glass bead or pendant, found at Washademoak. Natural size.
 Figure 2. Beads, glass and porcelain, from Tracadie. Natural size.
 Figure 3. Porcelain bead, from Nerepis. Natural size.
 Figure 4. Copper kettle, from Tabusintac. Depth, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches; width, $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches.
 Figure 5. Lead toy, from Oromocto. Natural size.

PLATE XII.

- Figure 1. Front view of gouge, from Tracadie, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long.
 Figure 1a. Side view of figure 1.
 Figure 2. Front view of gouge or scraper, from Tracadie, 4 inches long.
 Figure 2a. Side view of figure 2.
 Figure 3. Knife, from Tabusintac, about 6 inches long.
 Figures 4-5. Knives, from Tracadie, about 6 inches long.
 Figure 6. Leaden crucifix, from Tabusintac. Natural size.

PLATE X.

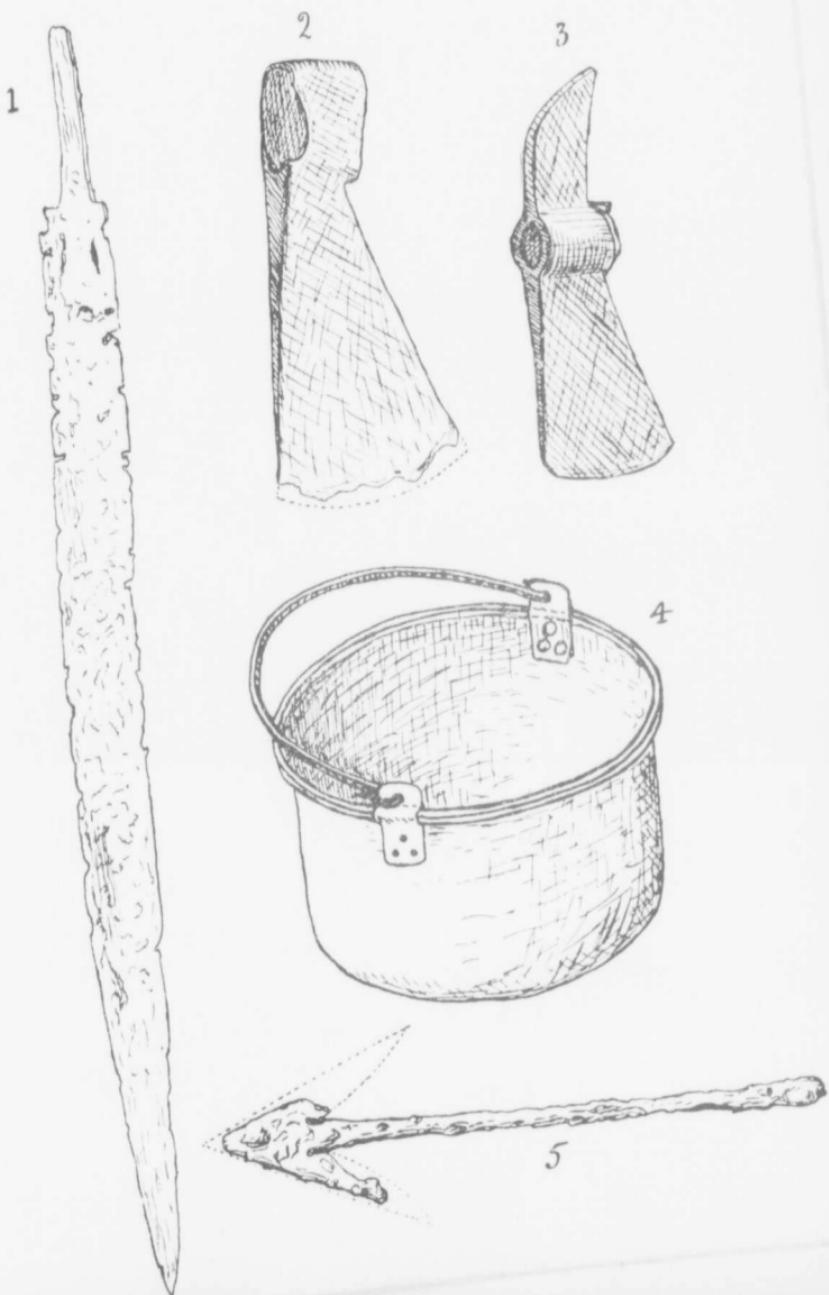
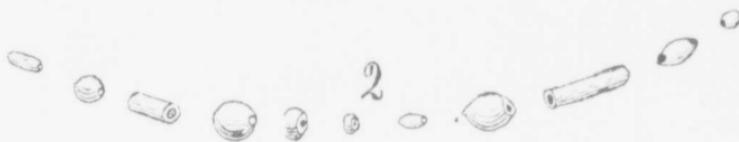


PLATE XI.

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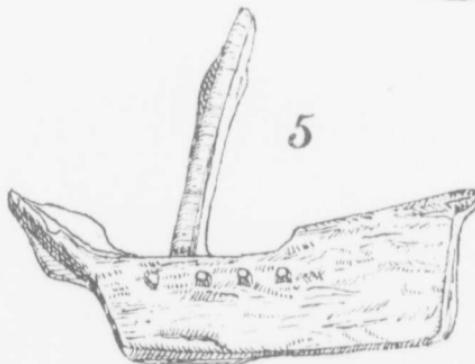


PLATE XII.

