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INDIANA HISTORICAL LEAFLETS No. 1



Indian mound near Evansville. Probably a chief's house and a temple for worship were built on it.

THE FIRST PEOPLE IN INDIANA

WANDERING TRIBES

Many centuries before the white man came to Indiana, Indians were living here. They had black hair, dark eyes, and copper-colored skins. They wandered through the woods hunting animals. They killed the animals with spears which they made out of stone. They ate the flesh of deer, bear, buffalo, beaver, and other small animals, and used their skins and furs for clothing.

As time passed the first Indians began to live in small villages. Some of them built homes of poles and sticks and grass. Others lived in caves in the rocks. They learned how to make knives and tools from stone. Needles and pins were made from the bones of animals. The Indians searched for wild berries and nuts that grew in the woods. They especially liked the meat of the shellfish which they found in the shallow rivers.

The story of how these Indians lived is found in the earth on which their homes and villages stood, and in the floors of the caves in which they lived. The Indians ate so many little shellfish that the shells which they threw away made moundlike heaps. These show us the location of their villages. Tools and ornaments which they made and used are found in these heaps.

MOUND-BUILDING INDIANS

Later other Indians came into Indiana. They built mounds of earth over the bodies of their dead chiefs and warriors. They also heaped up great mounds of earth where they could go to worship their gods.

By digging into these mounds and the village sites nearby men found that these mound-building Indians had learned how to make pottery by molding clay and burning it until it was hard. They made bowls and jars and bottles and

fishes. They had learned how to weave cloth, nets, rope, sandals, and bags from threads taken from the inner bark of trees.

They used many different kinds of tools. Out of stone they made arrowheads, chisels, knives, axes, and spades. Out of bone they made arrowheads, needles, fishhooks, and pins. These Indians liked to wear all kinds of ornaments, such as beads, bracelets, necklaces, earrings and fancy pins. They wore colorful feathers of the birds of the woods in their hair.

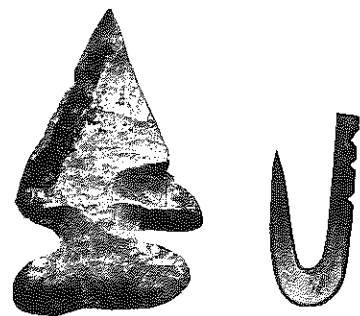
They had gardens in which they grew part of their food, such as corn, beans, and squashes. They dug pits where they stored their food for the winter. They grew tobacco which they smoked in stone or pottery pipes.

Many of their houses had only one room and one door. The walls were made of logs plastered with mud mixed with straw. Sometimes the walls were decorated with painted pictures. A fire was built in the center of the room. There was no chimney, but a hole was left in the roof where the smoke went out.

The lives of these Indians were not always peaceful. Sometimes a tribe of Indians wandered into the hunting ground of another tribe. This made trouble between the tribes and battles were fought. In order to protect their villages they built earth or stone walls around them. Log stockades were built where all the Indians of the village could go to defend themselves when attacked.

Indian mounds in Indiana are found mainly along the banks of the Ohio, Wabash, White, and Whitewater rivers, and the streams that flow into them.

The mound-building Indians left Indiana long before the white man came. Other Indians, probably more warlike hunters from the north, drove them out. These newcomers were the Indians which were in Indiana when the first white man came.



Stone arrowhead and bone fishhook made by mound-building Indians.

INDIAN TRIBES THE WHITE MEN KNEW

The first white man to come to Indiana was a Frenchman named La Salle. He crossed the northwestern corner of the state in 1679. He made friends with Mi-am-i and Wa-bash-i Indians. Today we know that the Wa-bash-i Indians included many tribes—the We-a, the Kick-a-poo, the Pi-an-ke-shaw, and the Mas-cou-ten. They all lived along the Wabash River.

Other tribes of Indians moved into Indiana because it was a good hunting place. They were the Pot-a-wa-to-mi, the Del-a-ware, and the Shaw-nee.

The Indian warriors spent their time hunting and fishing and fighting tribes that were unfriendly. They made their own weapons. These included the bow and arrows, knives, and war clubs made of wood or perhaps of deer horn. They



Pottery vessel made by a mound-building Indian.



These are the houses that the Indians lived in when the white men came to Indiana.

also made canoes. These were long narrow boats pointed at both ends. They were made from long strips of bark sewn together by roots. The floors of the canoes were strengthened by thin braces of white cedar. The Indians used these light, fast boats to travel on the lakes and streams and for fishing. They weighed so little that they could be easily carried from one stream to another.

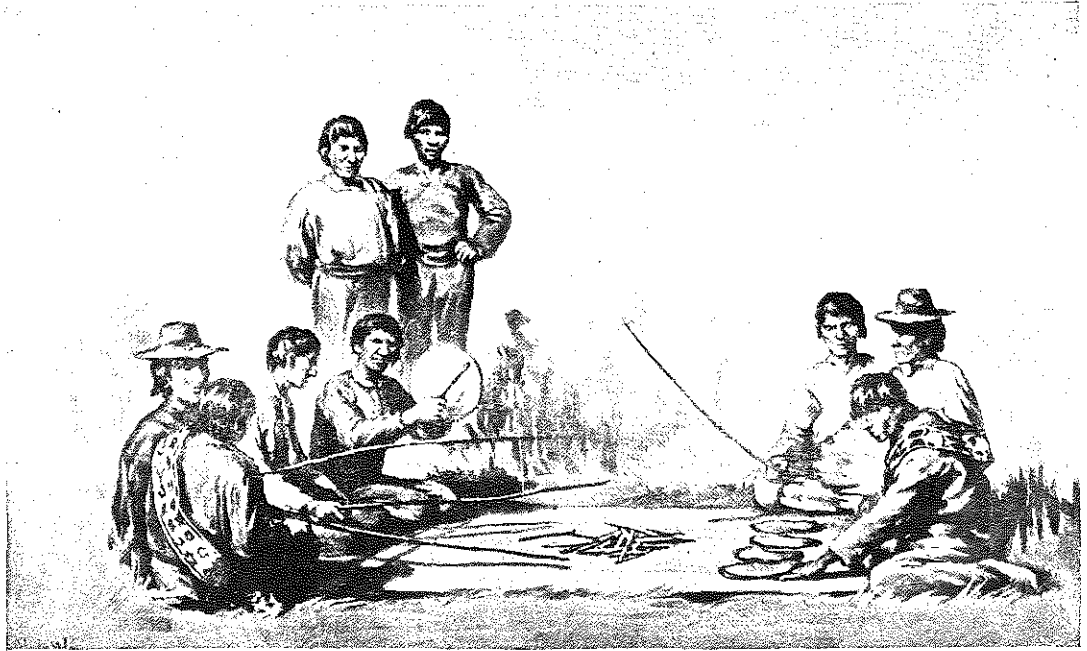
These Indians lived in huts. The huts were made by sticking poles in the ground in a circle. The tops of the poles were then bent together and tied. Willow branches were woven through these poles, and woven mats of reeds and rushes were thrown over this framework.

The Indian men wore very little clothing in summer, usually a breechcloth and moccasins. In winter they had deerskin shirts and high leggings of leather. In very cold weather they wrapped a buffalo robe around themselves.

The Indian women or squaws wore long petticoats that fell below their knees. Their dresses were shorter than their petticoats. Sometimes they had a shawl around their shoulders which could be pulled up over their heads.

The Indians liked to paint their faces with bright colors. They liked to wear ornaments—bracelets, necklaces, and earrings. Some of the men cut their hair short so that it would not be in their way when hunting and fighting, while others kept it long. Sometimes they wore colored feathers in their hair.

The squaws took care of the gardens. They raised beans, peas, pumpkins, squashes, tobacco, melons, and a great deal of corn. They cooked, made all the clothes, and took care of the children. When the babies were small, they strapped them to their backs and carried them around while they did their work.



Indians playing the moccasin game.

The Indians liked feasts, dances, and games. They had special dances for feasts, others to entertain visitors, and still others to honor their dead. They made music with drums, flutes of reed, and rattles made from gourds. They held races and played a game with a ball and network bat like a tennis racket. One of their favorite games was called "moccasin." The Indian who was "it" sat before a half dozen moccasins. He placed his hand under each one and left a stone under just one. The other players had to guess which moccasin covered the stone. The one who guessed right then got to hide the stone. Sticks were used to keep score.

The Indians liked the white man's copper kettles, muskets, steel axes, colored cloth, and blankets. They traded furs for them. But when the white man began to settle on their land and scare away the animals, the Indians did not like it. The Indians began to fight against the white settlers, but they could not drive them away. Finally the Indians were forced to move westward to find new hunting grounds and fishing places.

The friendly Indians who lived in Indiana showed the first white men how to live in the woods. They taught them how to raise corn, tobacco, pumpkin, and squash. We still use the Indian name for many places in Indiana; for example, the Wa-bash, Mau-mee, and Mis-sis-sin-e-wa rivers, Lakes Win-o-na, Wa-wa-see, and Man-i-tou, and the cities of Mun-cie, Ko-ko-mo, and Mish-a-wa-ka.

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