

To grow corn, they would first clear the ground, which the men would do. If the tree was small, it would be felled with a ax. If large, a fire would be lit at the base, and then the charcoal would be hacked out and the process repeated until the tree was felled. Then they would break up the ground using a hoe that was a sharp stone tied to the end of a stick. If they didn't want to use a sharp stone, they could use a sea clam, which would do just as well. Then the soil would be turned, using a curved stone on the end of a stick. They made little hills about three feet apart, in which the seeds would be planted. The turning of the soil was something of a community project. If they needed fertilizer, they would use dead fish or horseshoe crabs. Once the corn was planted, it could be used as one of the three sisters, as it would support the beans. At harvest, the husks were stripped from the ripe corn, and spread on mats to dry. If it was not ripe, it would be boiled. To store corn for the winter, they would dig holes in the slopes of hills, about 5 to 6 feet deep, and bury the corn in there. If they wanted to make it into grain, they would use a mortar and pestle.

To make thread, they would take hemp, wild flax, milkweed, as well as the inner bark of several trees. The fibers were rolled under the hand against the thigh to produce thread.

To make pottery, they would powder the clay that they found, and then soak it to prepare it. They would then knead the clay and shape it. After letting it dry for a few days they would fire it. They would then use them for cooking and working.

To make baskets they would either take strips of soaked, supple bark and weave them together, going under and over, and reinforcing the lid with a stronger piece of wood, or they would take hemp fibers and rushes to create woven baskets.

For an easy shelter, they would make a frame of sticks and hang strips of bark over it. This could be easily constructed, and when needed, de-constructed and moved. One or two families could live in these little structures. Sometimes the occupants would just sleep on the earth the shelter was laid on, some would use skins, and more well-to-do occupants had platforms along the edges.

They Americans would also build long houses, which could hold four or five families and were very warm. They were built a bit larger if there were used for ceremonial functions. They were covered with bark or furs and had three to four smoke holes.

When they ran out of materials in an area, they would pack up their houses and move to greener pastures, leaving behind only the skeletons of their long houses behind. Then they would select a new site, usually near some source of water, and settle down there. Some tribes would fortify their villages in order to protect their food and materials from less fortunate neighbors. Some had permanent palisades.

In the family unit, the mother and the father would both show the greatest of affection for their children, and try to reason with them instead of punish them when they did something wrong. A spanking was a rarity, something the parents did not like to do.

In the clan, a group with blood ties to each other would all band together under a common symbol. The tribal social order: there was the chief, the nobles, the Sannops (the common people of the tribe), and outsiders who had joined the tribe, were the lowest class. They had no legal rights and scratched out their existence as best they could.

When they Americans went to war, they would do a war dance. Boys who wanted to take part in the

war dance first had to be 16, and had to prove they were men by surviving in the woods in the winter. The slightest provocation could trigger a war dance (and afterwards, a war path), and tribes were quick to defend their honor with violence. After the war dance was over, the leader of the attackers would give a short speech to ridicule the enemy and boost the courage of his men. Then they would fade into the forest and go on a war path. In the fighting, it was every man for himself.

When warriors would go hunting, which was as soon as the harvest time was over, they would begin at dawn. They would utilize many different methods, including stalking an animal, baiting it, and even making mile-log fences to trap herds of deer. They had a type of dog that the European settlers thought were tame foxes or coyotes, which helped them in the hunting.

When they went fishing, they would make fishhooks out of bone, or use a harpoon or net. To catch the fish, they would sometimes erect a fence that blocked off part of the stream, so the water could pass through but big things, like fish, could not.

The shaman of the tribe was basically a doctor. But he had nothing to do with medicines, and in his way of treating would involve communicating with spirits. Because they believed that disease was caused by an angry spirit, the shaman would attempt to drive out that spirit to cure the patient. The shaman would charge a fee for his help. The larger the payment, the longer and better the ritual.

When someone died, his family would black their faces with soot and mourn for months. A wise and respected man would conduct the burial rituals. The body would be decorated with whatever ornaments the family could afford, wrapped in furs and buried.

When hunting deer, they would sometimes make a big fire to chase the deer in the direction of the hunters. They would make a bread dough from cornmeal and water wrapped in husks and baked in hot ashes. A special treat was a beaver's tail!

When on the move, a pottery jar would hold all the food they would need on the journey, and the women would carry their babies on their backs on cradleboards. They would follow deer paths on their travels.

Men enjoyed performing feats of endurance such as wrestling, leaping and throwing heavy stones. There were many types of games that they would play, including gambling. The hoop and pole game, where players would try and stick a spear through a rolling hoop, was a favorite game. Singing and dancing was also enjoyed.

Round-bottomed pots were supported by stones.

The Woodland Period

By Jack Wooldridge

In this write-up on the woodland period, I am not going to separate into the three main sections of the woodland period, but instead look at how a person's daily life would be in any part of the period. So let's begin!

We will begin with agriculture. To grow corn, they would first clear the ground, which the men would do. If the tree was small, it would be felled with a ax. If large, a fire would be lit at the base, and then the charcoal would be hacked out and the process repeated until the tree was felled. Then they would break up the ground using a hoe that was a sharp stone tied to the end of a stick. If they didn't want to use a sharp stone, they could use a sea clam, which would do just as well. Then the soil would be turned, using a curved stone on the end of a stick. They made little hills about three feet apart, in which the seeds would be planted. The turning of the soil was something of a community project. If they needed fertilizer, they would use dead fish or horseshoe crabs. Once the corn was planted, it could be used as one of the three sisters, as it would support the beans. At harvest, the husks were stripped from the ripe corn, and spread on mats to dry. If it was not ripe, it would be boiled. To store corn for the winter, they would dig holes in the slopes of hills, about 5 to 6 feet deep, and bury the corn in there. If they wanted to make it into grain, they would use a mortar and pestle.

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And they would need something to hold that corn and meat. So pots and baskets would be needed. To make pottery, they would powder the clay that they found, and then soak it to prepare it. They would then knead the clay and shape it. After letting it dry for a few days they would fire it. These would then use them for cooking and working. Round-bottomed pots were supported by stones.

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They would also need somewhere to stay. For an easy shelter, they would make a frame of sticks and hang strips of bark over it. This could be easily constructed, and when needed, de-constructed and moved. One or two families could live in these little structures. Sometimes the occupants would just sleep on the earth the shelter was laid on, some would use skins, and more well-to-do occupants had platforms along the edges.

The Native Indians would also build long houses, which could hold four or five families and were very warm. They were built a bit larger if they were used for ceremonial functions. These were covered with bark or furs and had three to four smoke holes.

When they ran out of materials in an area, they would pack up their houses and move to greener pastures, leaving only the skeletons of their long houses behind. Then a new site was selected, usually near some source of water. Some tribes would fortify their villages in order to protect their food and materials from less fortunate neighbors. Some had permanent palisades. When on the move, a pottery jar would hold all the food they would need on the journey, and the women would carry their babies on their backs on cradleboards. They would follow deer paths on their travels.

In those villages, families operated very nicely. In the family unit, the mother and the father would both show the greatest of affection for their children, and try to reason with them instead of punish them when they did something wrong. A spanking was a rarity, something the parents did not like to do.

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