

token for good.—There are some things however which I can state which look a little brighter We had a very interesting two days meeting in August when 4 persons joined the church 3 by letter and 1 by profession of faith. Three more who will be valuable members stand ready to present their letters on the next communion Sabbath.

Bentonsport is a small settlement on the Des Moines river embracing perhaps 50 inhabitants. The church there numbers 14 and two very promising young people who give good evidence of piety will join the church at the next celebration of the Lord's Supper. This church embraces the choice part of the inhabitants and wields almost the whole influence in the place. The standard of piety is an high I think as in any church I have been acquainted with.

Rev. Thomas Dutton

To be continued

MUSEUM NOTES

Two field trips to an Indian village site in South Dakota have been made in recent months by Museum personnel. This ancient village, known today as the Swan Creek Site, is located on a terrace overlooking the Missouri River. Unfortunately the site is scheduled to be flooded by the growing Oahe Reservoir and will eventually be as much as 30 feet beneath the surface of the lake.

The village was more or less continuously occupied from about 1450 to 1790 by various tribes of Indians, predominantly the Arikaras and Mandans. All of these tribes existed during the so-called Mississippian Period, which is dated somewhat arbitrarily from about 1200 to 1800. This same culture existed in a number of places in Iowa along the Missouri River and is known as the Mill Creek and Glennwood Cultures.

The Swan Creek village is located on what is now a small island in the Oahe Reservoir. Wave action is rapidly destroying what is left of the site, and artifacts are found by digging and sifting the remaining soil and by surface

finds at the water's edge. The ground at the village site contains Indian artifacts buried in some areas down to a depth of about 9 feet, the lower layers representing the earlier occupation dates. These layers are made up of fragments of bone, mostly bison, and ash and charcoal from camp fires. Layers of cultural material are separated both in time and depth by other intervening layers of earth.

Occasionally tools and artifacts of stone, bone, copper, shell, and wood were found scattered in these layers; and it may be presumed that these were either lost or discarded by their former owners. The stone is usually chert or chalcedony and has been fashioned into arrow points, knives, scrapers, and drills. The bone was worked into awls, fish hooks, hoes, knives and ornaments. Shell and copper were infrequently found and were usually fashioned into ornaments; though some sheet copper was hafted in bone to be used as knives. Little remains of the wood except a few butt ends of lodge poles imbedded upright in the ground and small pads of charcoal from the camp fires. We can be sure that these people practiced agriculture as occasionally were found small charred corn cobs as well as squash and bean seeds.

The most exciting find that was made was that of the burial of an Indian. Human remains projecting from a bank which was caving off into the river gave away the location of the burial, and nearly all of the skeleton was recovered. A grave offering was found inside the chest cavity and consisted of a rectangular piece of copper sheet, 2 bone awls, 2 bone spatulate objects, fragments of red ochre, and a small number of unidentified objects. They appeared to have been wrapped in leather, a few remains of which can still be seen.

The purpose of the field trip was to increase the museum collection both in the number and in the variety of the artifacts left behind by these early inhabitants of the middle west. Plans have been made to build an exhibit around these artifacts and to re-inter the human remains in the exhibit.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.