

materials. Thus, Keyes and Orr were aware that in northeastern Iowa there were sites that yielded artifacts attributable to a widespread archeological culture usually called Woodland. They also noted that quite different cultural materials occurring at other sites (or sometimes at the same site with the Woodland) were similar to those found in neighboring states to the east and south. Accordingly, Dr. Keyes realized that they were part of another large archeological culture-grouping customarily designated by archeologists the "Upper Mississippi Phase." He called this characteristic Iowa material the "Oneota Aspect" of the Upper Mississippi Phase, combining an old name for the Upper Iowa River (Oneota) with an archeological classification term (Aspect). Later, when like material in Wisconsin and elsewhere was also classified in the Oneota Aspect, Keyes designated the specific and somewhat distinctive Iowa culture as "Orr focus Oneota," using again a classification term (focus), and honoring Ellison Orr's contribution to Iowa archeology.

Careful test digging had suggested that the Oneota people were more recent than those who left behind the Woodland materials. Either the evidences of Oneota culture lay on top of the Woodland, or else pits containing Oneota artifacts appeared to have been intruded into mounds built earlier to cover Woodland burials. This is what the archeologist calls *relative chronology*.

Moreover, at some of the Oneota sites, Dr. Keyes and Mr. Orr were intensely interested to find a few glass beads and brass fragments. These indicated that some direct or indirect contact had been made with white traders — either there had been trade with Indian tribes who were in touch with the European traders, or these Indians themselves had gone to some fort or trading post, or a trader had come to their village. Moreover, since there seemed to be only a few European-made trade goods, and since the Indians had obviously not yet substituted brass or copper kettles for clay pots, nor metal knives and arrow points for stone chipped tools, these glass and brass objects were certainly evidence of the earliest contacts between the Indian and European peoples in that area.

It was exciting to realize that the sites spanned in time the transition from the undocumented past to the period when European explorers, traders, and government officials furnished source materials for written histories. If the sites could be identified as the early homeland of a certain group of Indian people whose modern tribal name is known, then they would become a "bridge" between written history and archeological history, indicating the direct line of cultural development from the Known (or Historic times) back into the Unknown (the Proto- and Pre-historic times).

Dr. Keyes set himself to this problem with enthusiasm. After consulting many records, histo-

ries, and maps, he suggested in *THE PALIMPSEST* of June, 1927, that the inhabitants of these villages must have been the Ioways. Later, more concentrated study of the problem bolstered this identification in both the Society's quarterly and monthly publications, and it has been generally accepted by other anthropologists. Recent re-examination of available data suggests that the Otos may possibly have been living with or near the Ioways at this time and that their cultural remains were not dissimilar from those of their close relatives — the Ioways.

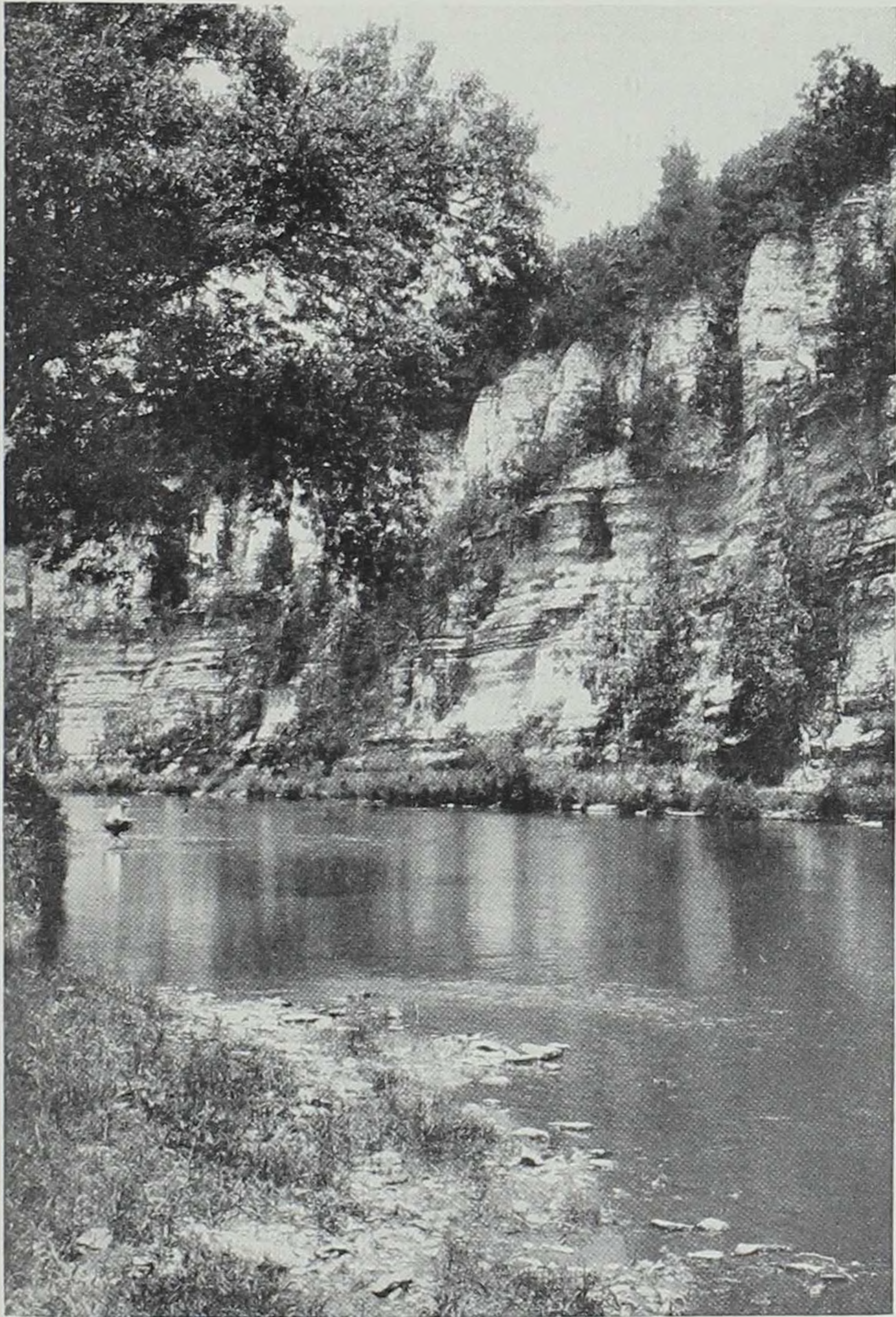
In 1934 the opportunity presented itself for Dr. Keyes to carry his Iowa Archaeological Survey beyond the limits of surface observation and test digging. Federal Emergency Relief Administration funds were made available to him for excavation of "ancient village sites and Indian mounds threatened with destruction." This offered a welcome chance to pursue more intensively some of the many problems that had presented themselves in all parts of Iowa, but which ones should be examined first?

It seemed to both Dr. Keyes and Ellison Orr that concentrated, systematic excavation in Allamakee County might be likely to disclose a great deal of significant additional information about both the Woodland and Oneota cultures — more than any amount of sporadic digging and objects found by chance could tell. Moreover, the pos-

sible historic tie-up between the Orr focus Oneota materials and the Ioway Indians added to the acceptability of this decision.

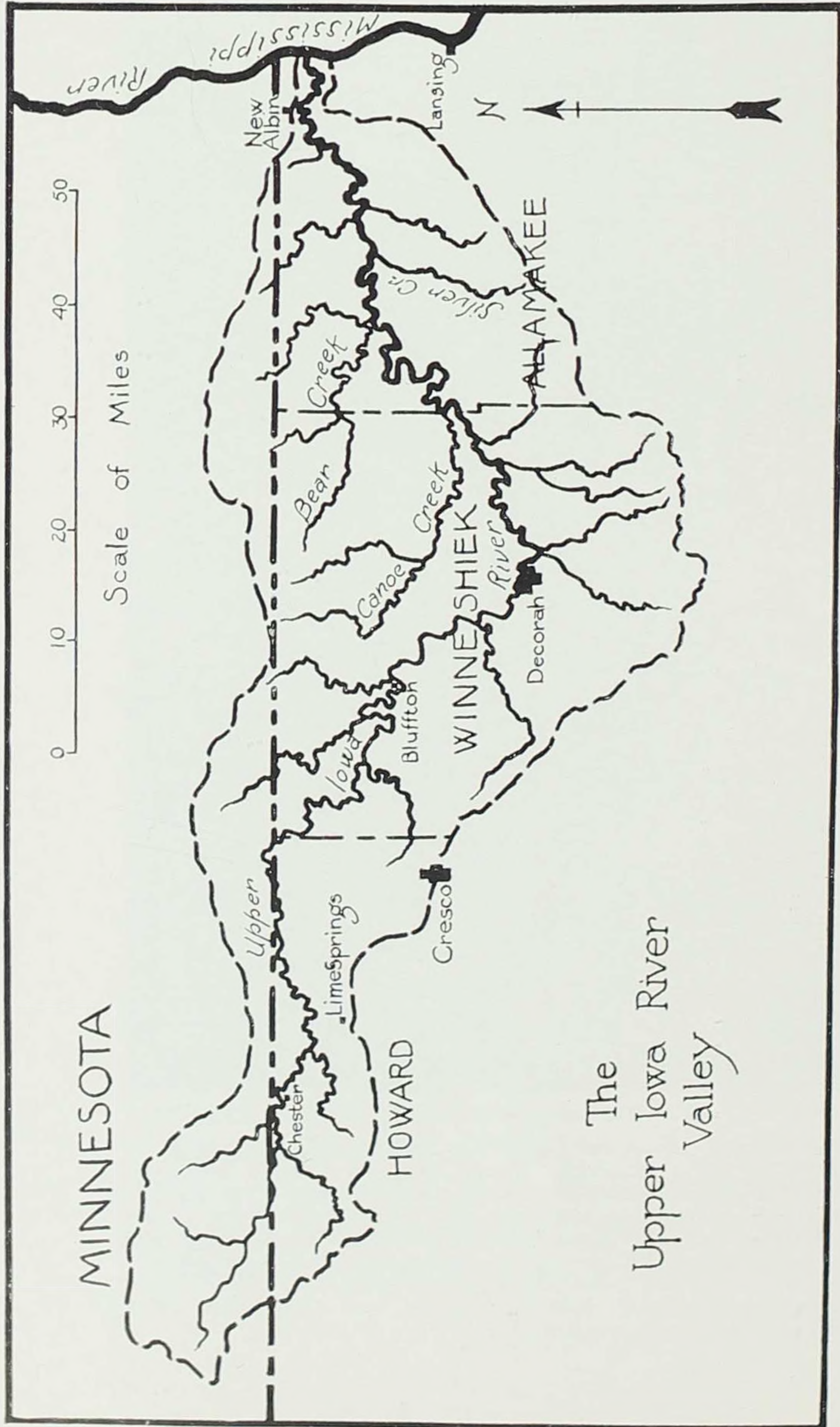
During the summer of 1934 an excavation crew dug at four different sites in the Upper Iowa River Valley. In the fall of 1936, the program was continued at the same and other sites, this time under the auspices of the Work Planning Administration and the Iowa State Planning Board. Ellison Orr was named field director under the supervision of Dr. Keyes. In the October, 1934, issue of *THE PALIMPSEST*, Dr. Keyes described the excavations in broad terms and wrote entertainingly of his and Mr. Orr's difficulties with an untrained and sometimes physically handicapped crew.

It is unfortunate that various complications combined before his death to prevent Dr. Keyes from producing a formal and well-illustrated report in which field data and specimen study were coordinated and these results synthesized with studies of similar materials, particularly those in Wisconsin. The only reports on the excavations by the investigators are the ones — general in nature — that appeared in *THE PALIMPSEST* and the more detailed but uninterpretative FERA and WPA reports. There is also a typed manuscript written by Ellison Orr entitled "The Iowa (Oneota) People of the Upper Iowa River Valley" which contains a wealth of information. It may be found at the State Historical Society of Iowa and at Effigy



From Petersen's *Iowa — The Rivers of Her Valleys*

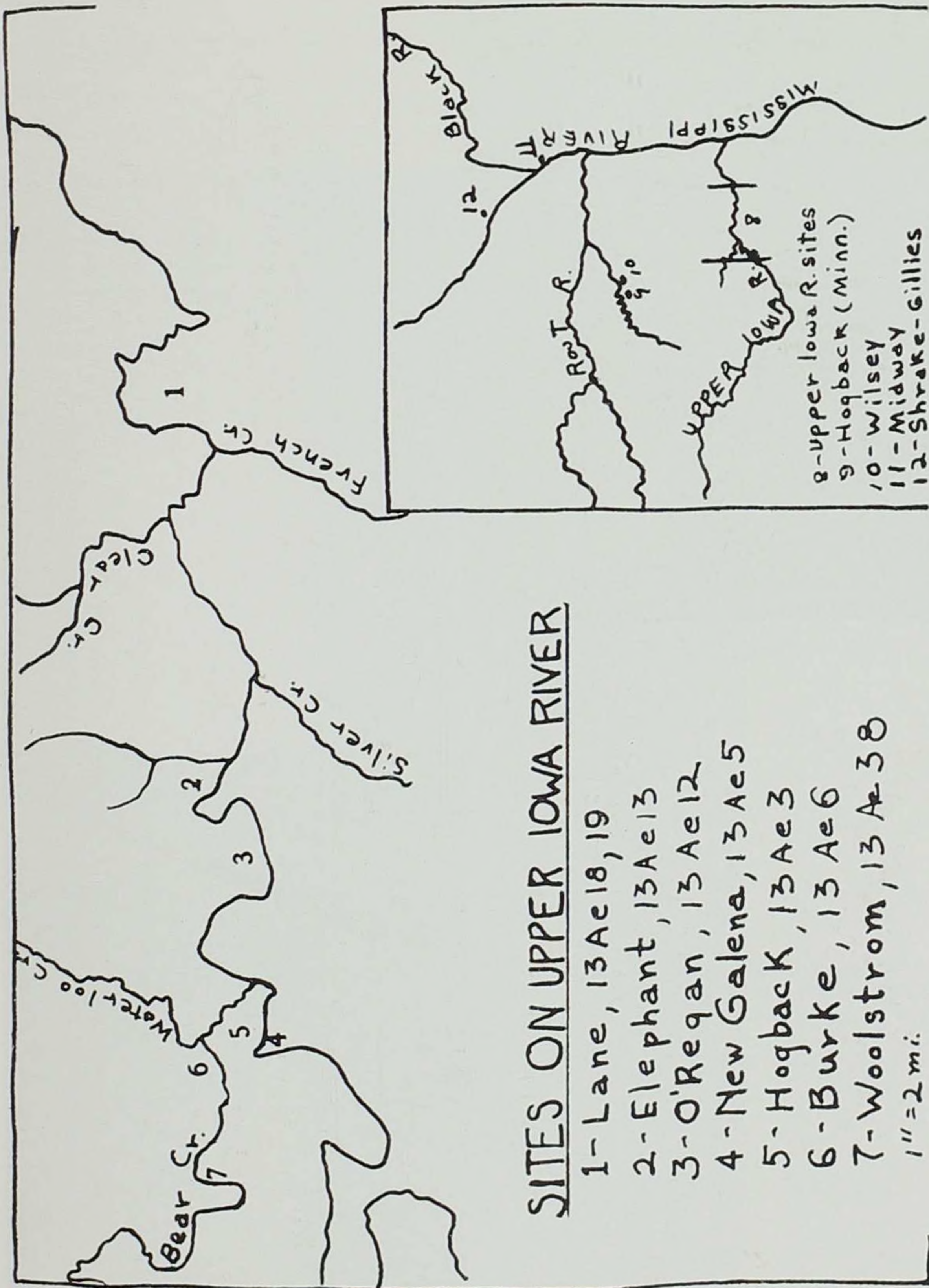
"Just below Decorah the Upper Iowa turns abruptly toward the northeast, twisting its way through deep-cut Galena limestone. Around Freeport the valley widens and the slopes become less precipitous because of the friable character of the St. Peter sandstone. A few miles farther the river flows between bold cliffs of Shakopee and Oneota dolomite. Throughout its course the bluffs are richly festooned with moss and ferns and heavily studded with timber — oak, hickory, elm, basswood, butternut, walnut, and canoe birch being among the more common native trees."



The Upper Iowa River Valley

From Petersen's Iowa — *The Rivers of Her Valleys*

"The Upper Iowa River rises just beyond the northern boundary of the Hawkeye State in the drift plains of Mower County, Minnesota, and flows through the 'Switzerland of Iowa.' The river falls over 700 feet during the course of its 135-mile journey, debouching into the Mississippi just below the Minnesota line in Allamakee County at an altitude of 613.5 feet above sea level. The Upper Iowa drains an area of 1057 square miles, 80 per cent of which lies in Iowa, chiefly in Winneshiek, Allamakee, and Howard counties. Although exactly the same length as the Turkey River, its narrow basin gives the Upper Iowa only two-thirds of the drainage of its neighbor to the south."

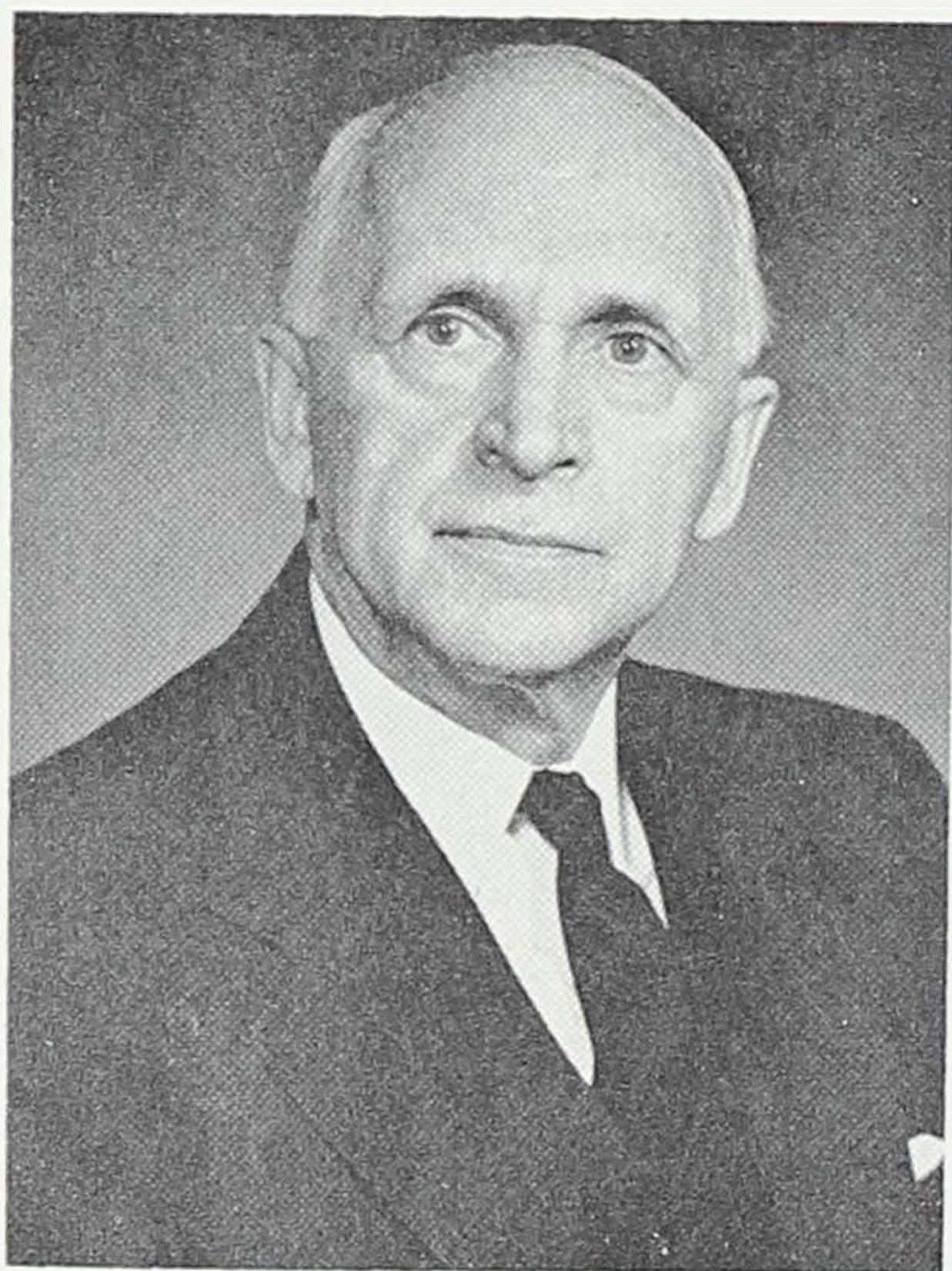


SITES ON UPPER IOWA RIVER

- 1- Lane, 13Ae18, 19
 - 2- Elephant, 13Ae13
 - 3- O'Regan, 13Ae12
 - 4- New Galena, 13Ae5
 - 5- Hogback, 13Ae3
 - 6- Burke, 13Ae6
 - 7- Woolstrom, 13Ae38
- 1" = 2 mi.

From Petersen's Iowa — The Rivers of Her Valleys

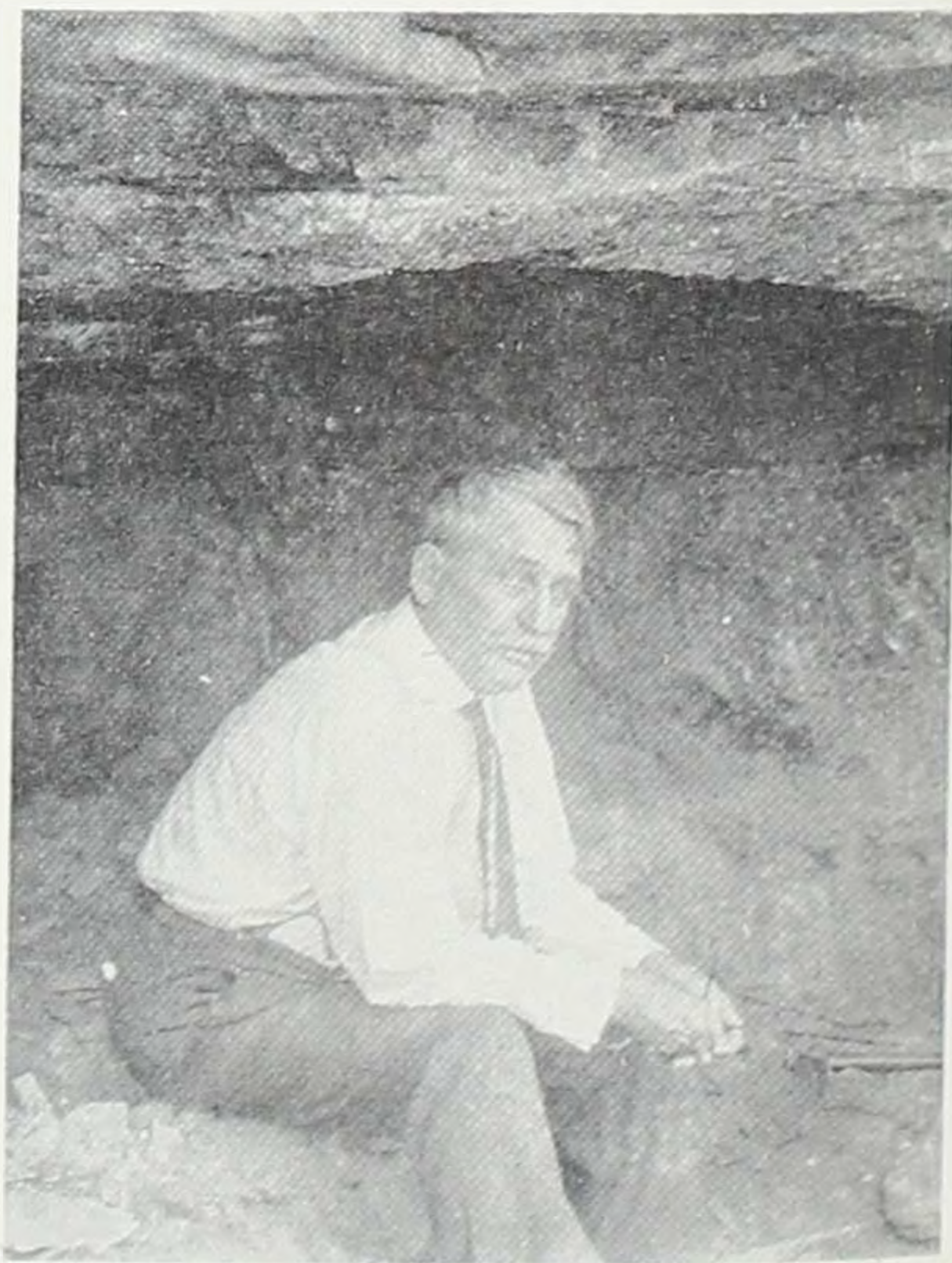
"The Upper Iowa enters Allamakee County through a broad, flat-bottomed valley flanked by steep bluffs, many of them 400 feet high. Almost all of these heights are crowned with bold 'mural escarpments.' Perhaps the most astonishing feature of the valley in western Allamakee County is the series of great loops or oxbows along which the river winds its serpentine course. This water-carved relief is characteristic not only of the main valley but of each little tributary — Waterloo Creek, Bear Creek, Canoe Creek."



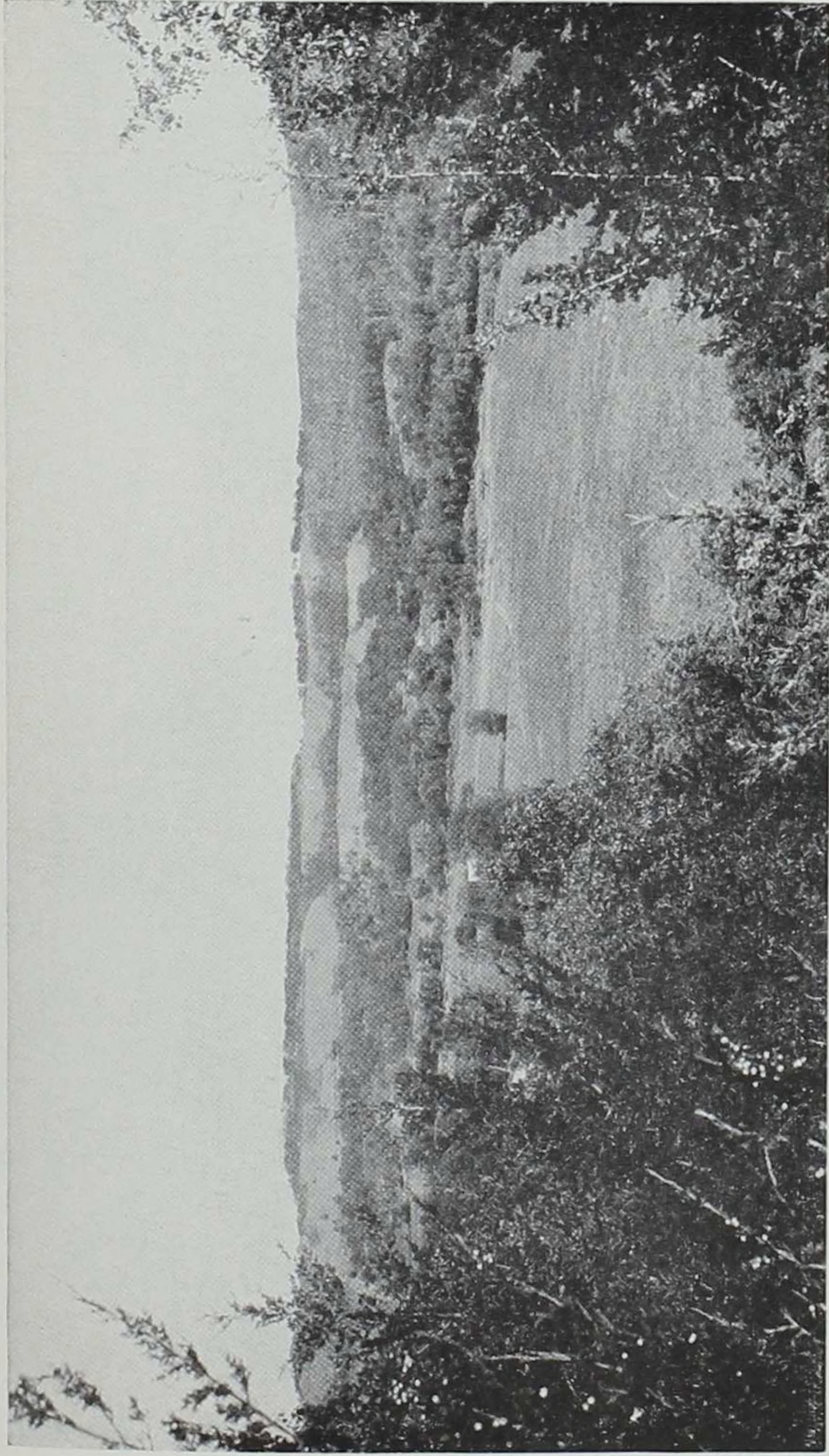
DR. CHARLES REUBEN KEYES

Research Associate of the State Historical Society and Director of its Iowa Archaeological Survey.

An amateur archeologist with a scientific approach to his hobby. He served as assistant director to Dr. Keyes during much of the period covered by the Iowa Archaeological Survey.

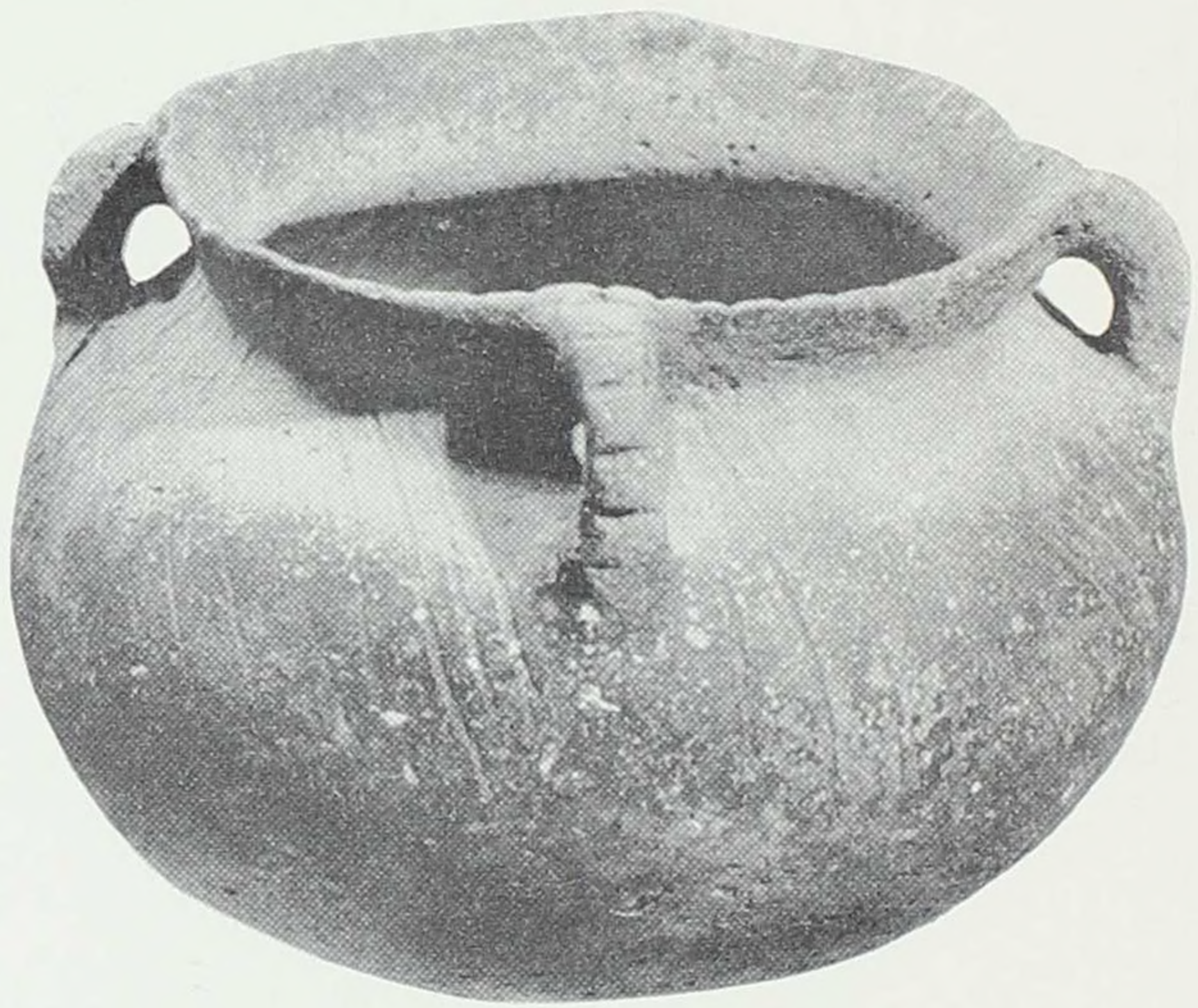


ELLISON ORR



From Petersen's Iowa — The Rivers of Her Valleys

"Since about 1889 geologists, following the suggestion of Samuel Calvin, have substituted the name Oneota for Upper Iowa. . . . historically the Upper Iowa has a better claim to its common name than any other Iowa stream. It was none other than the redoubtable Nicolas Perrot who asserted that the river was 'named for the Ayoos savages' [Iowa Indians] when he became French Commandant of the West in 1685. No other river in Iowa can trace its present-day name back as far as the picturesque Upper Iowa."

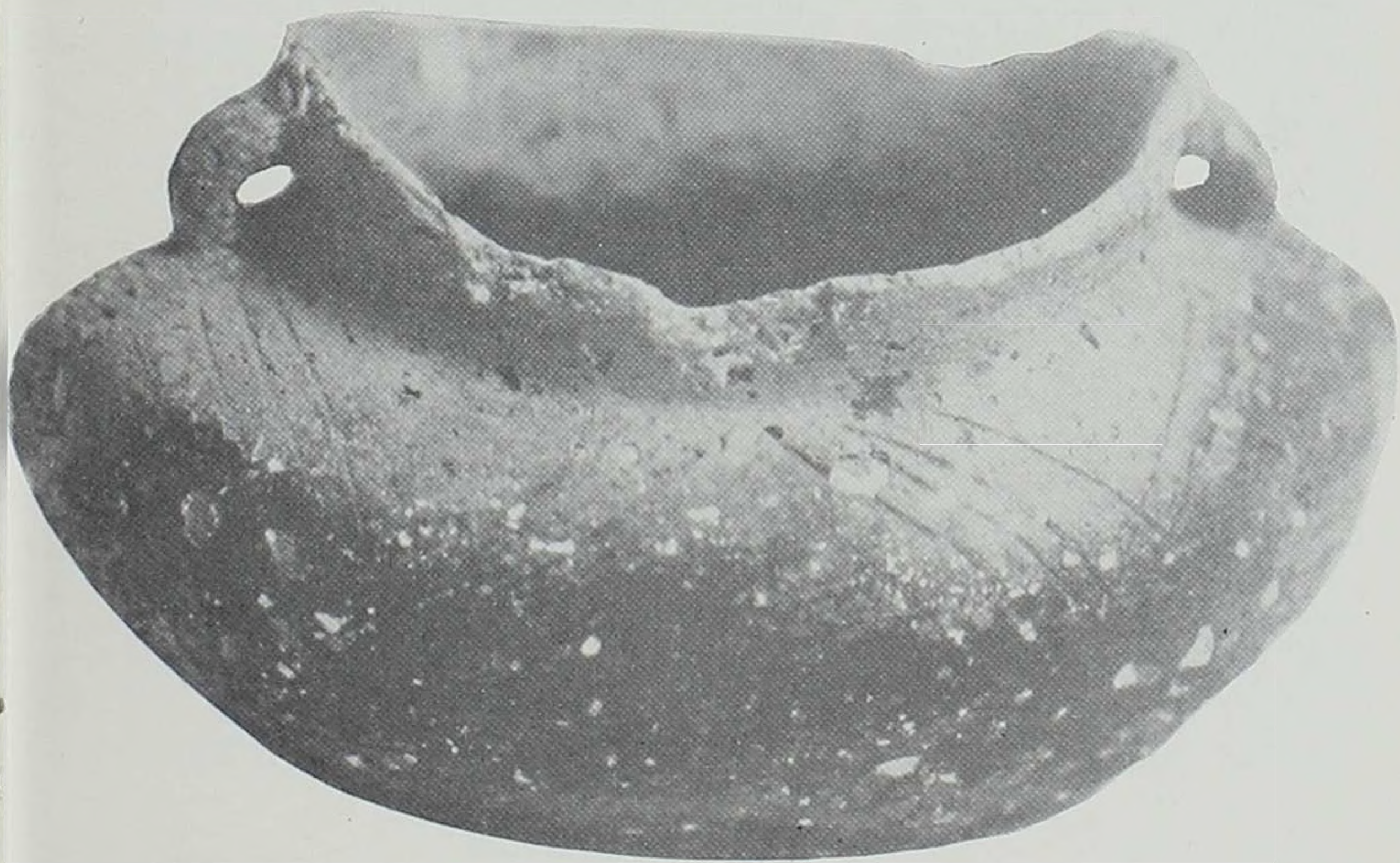


Photos by Ellison Orr

Pottery Vessels from the Hogback Site

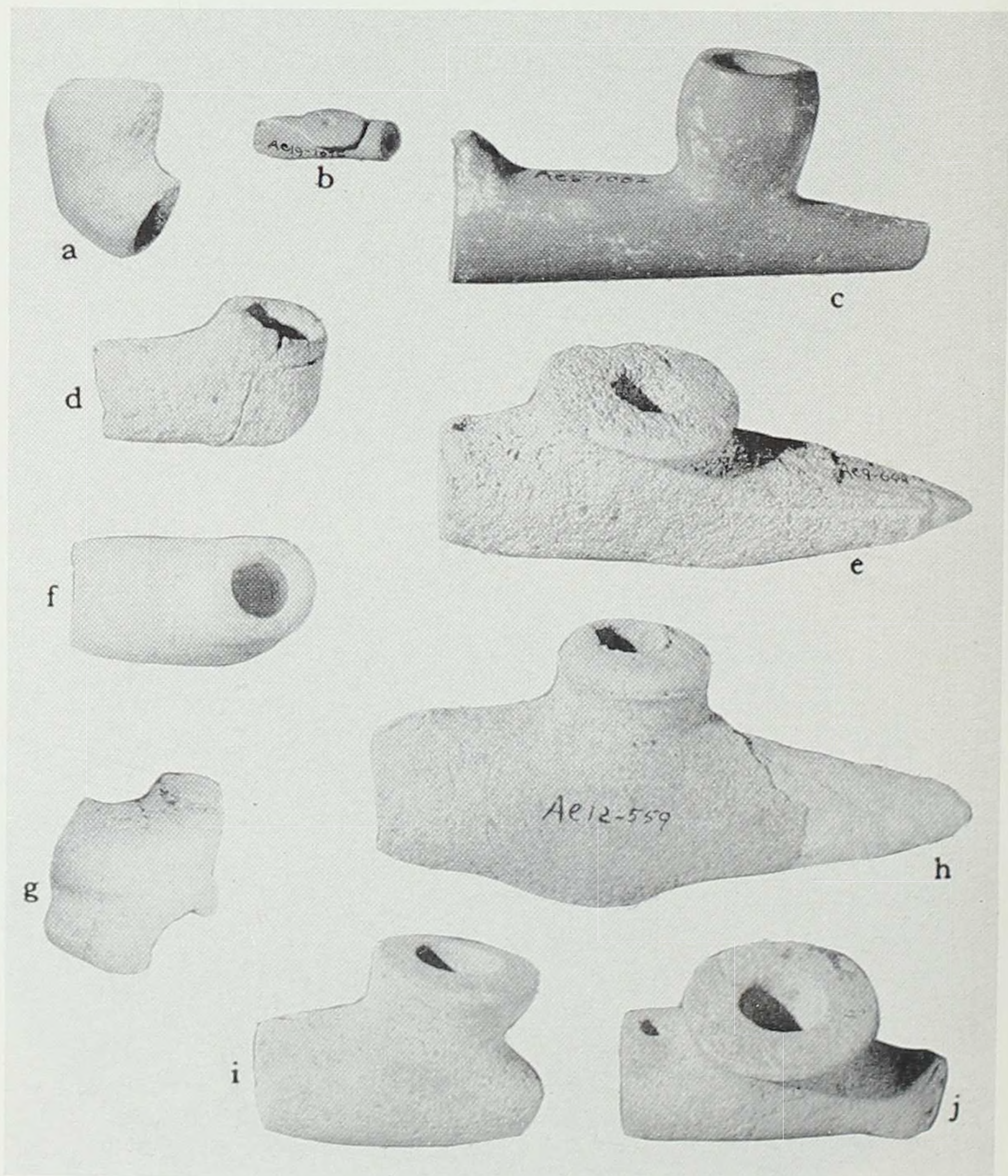


Milwaukee Public Museum Photo

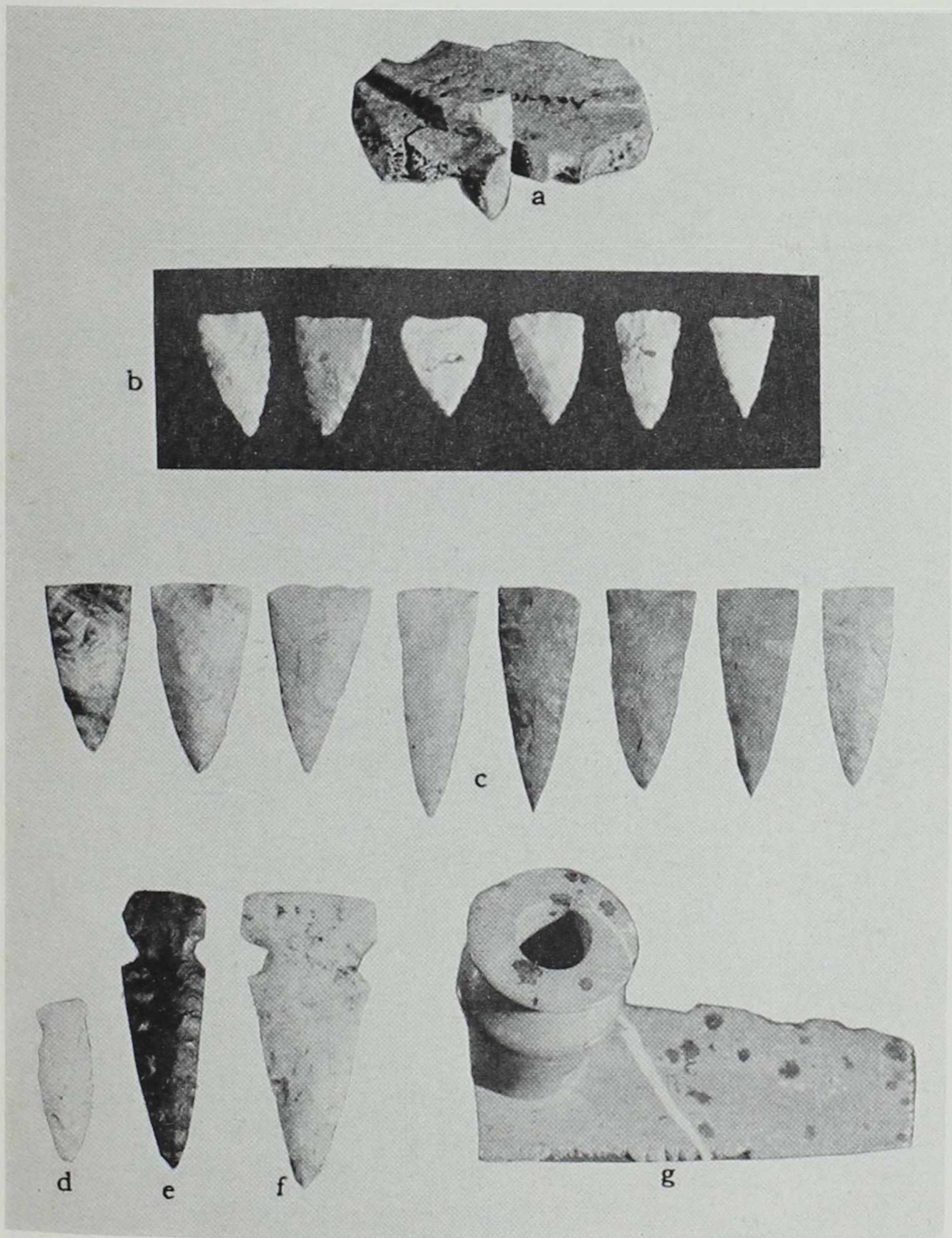


Pottery Vessels, New Galena and Woolstrom Sites

Ellison Orr Photo

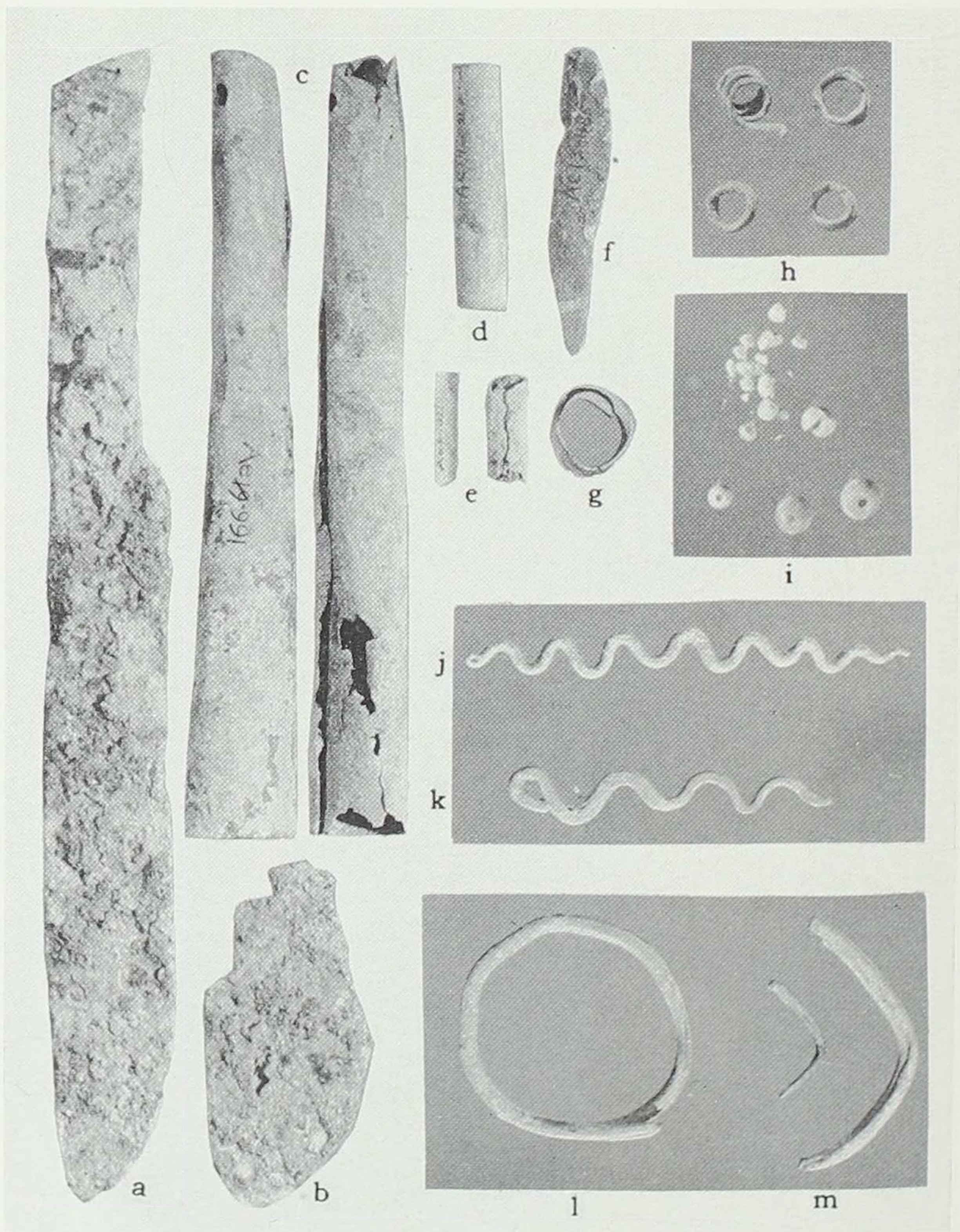


Ground Stone Pipes



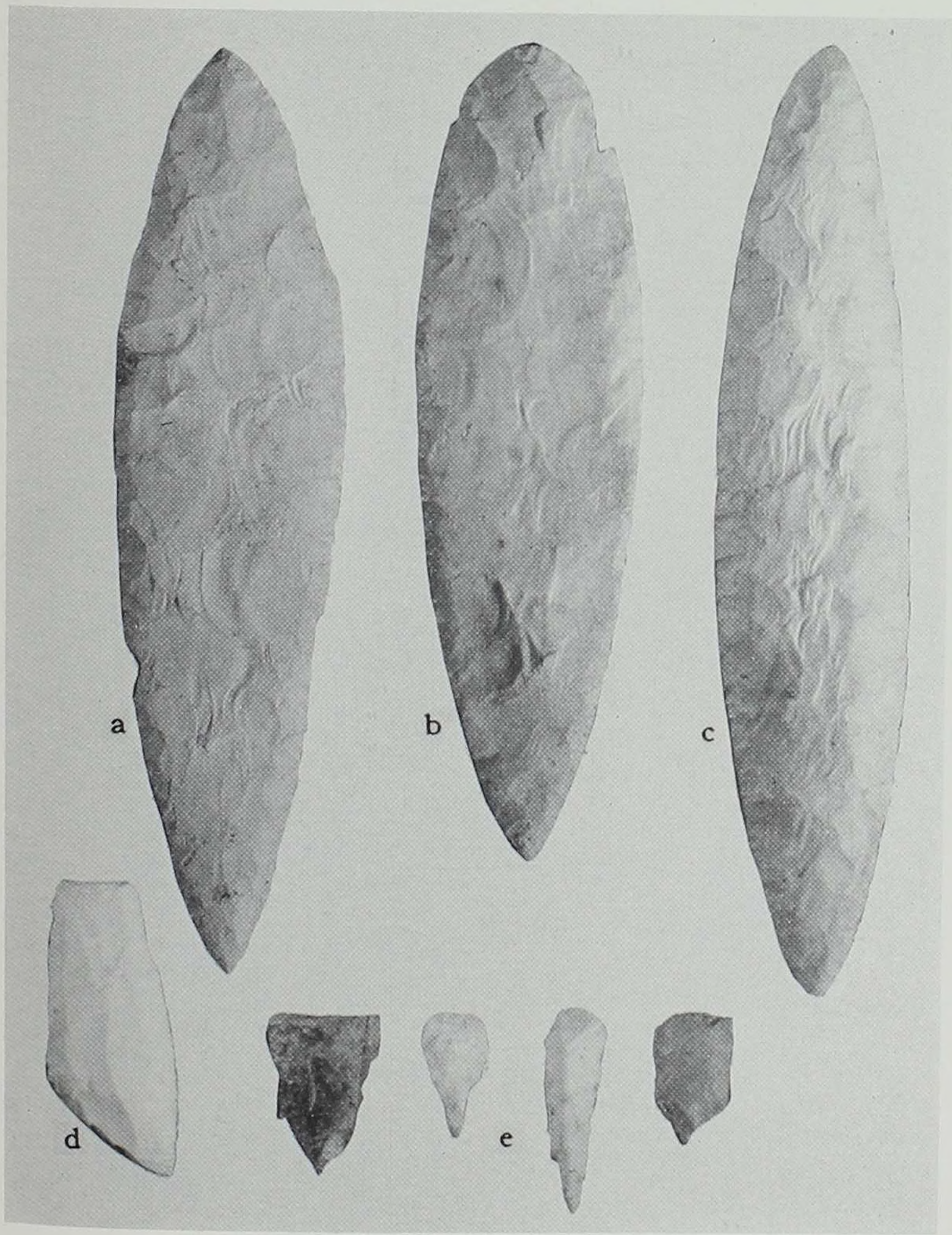
Arrow points and unusual pipe

a. Point in sternum; b. Typical village site projectile points; c. Typical points found with burials; d,e,f. were all found on Upper Iowa in Allamakee County; g. Pipe with burial.

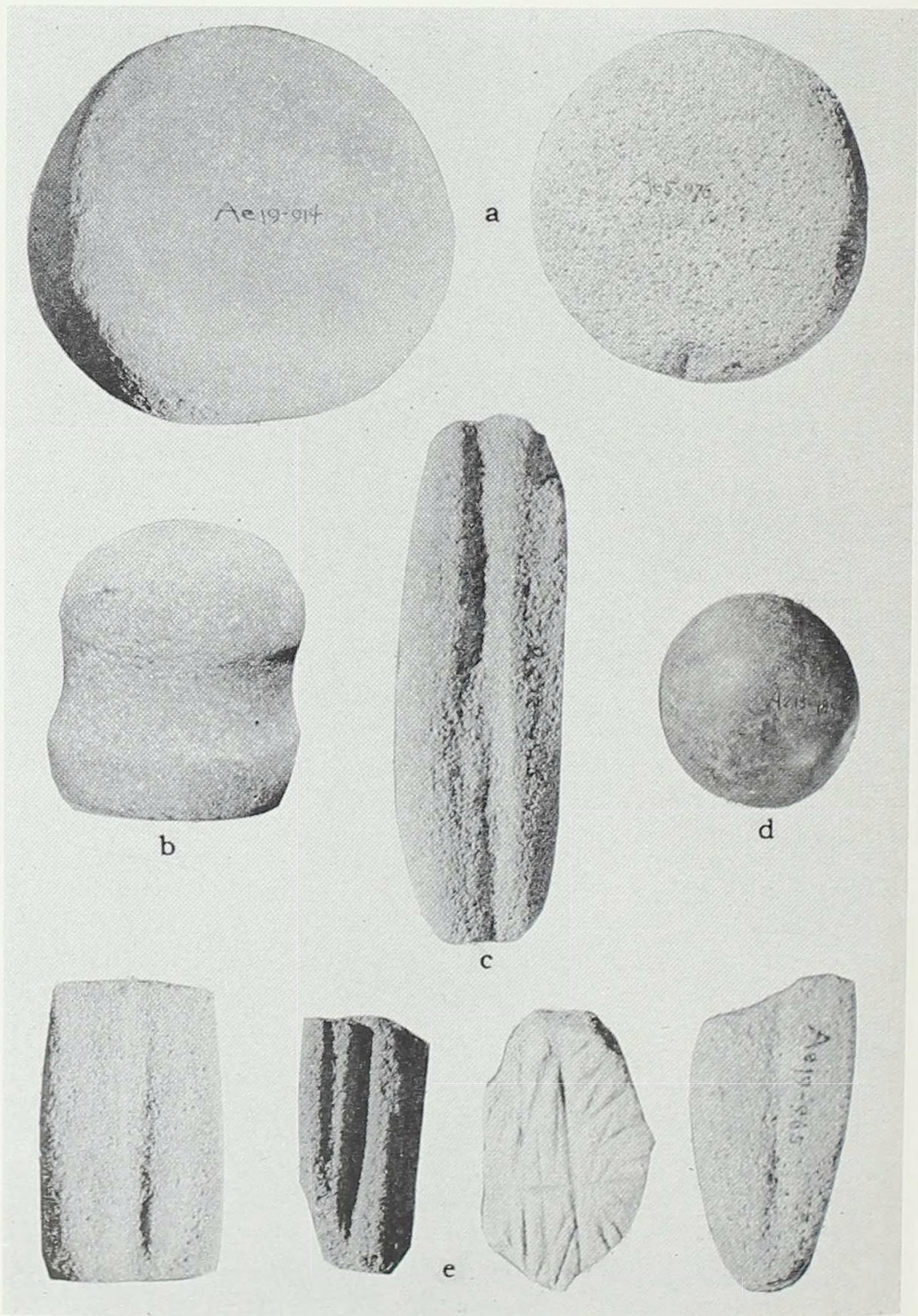


Metal Tools, Ornaments, Glass Beads

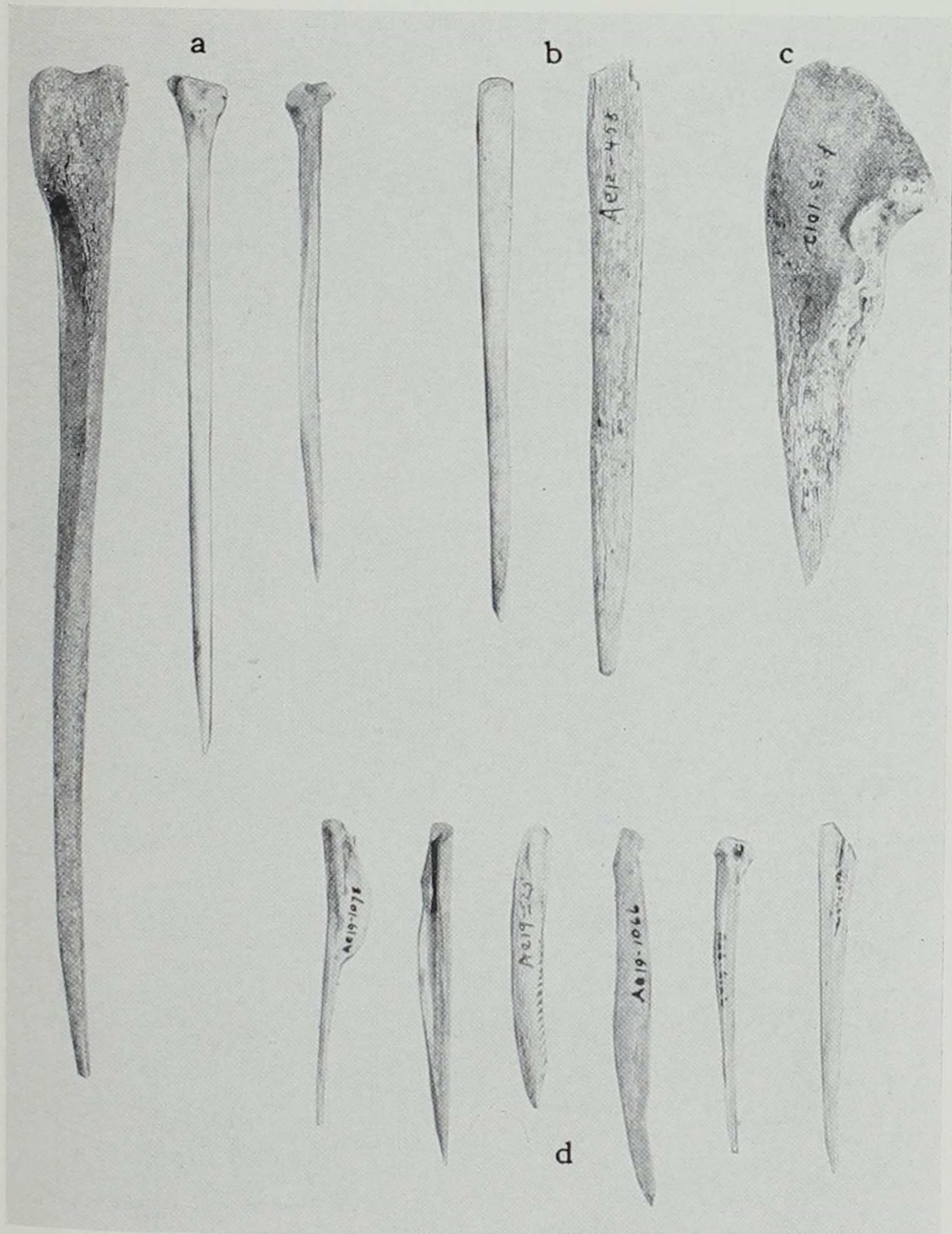
a,b. Iron; c. Ear ornaments; d. Rolled metal tube; e. Rolled metal bead; f. Metal object; g. Metal ring; h. Metal ear coils; i. Glass beads; j,k. Metal serpents; l. Metal bracelet; m. unidentified. Ae 19-1074 (All artifacts in Keyes collection are thus identified, viz.: Ae (Allamakee) 19 (Lane site) 1074 (number of the specimen)).



Chipped Stone Knives and Gravers
a,b,c. Ellipsoid knives; d. Ae 18-553; e. Gravers

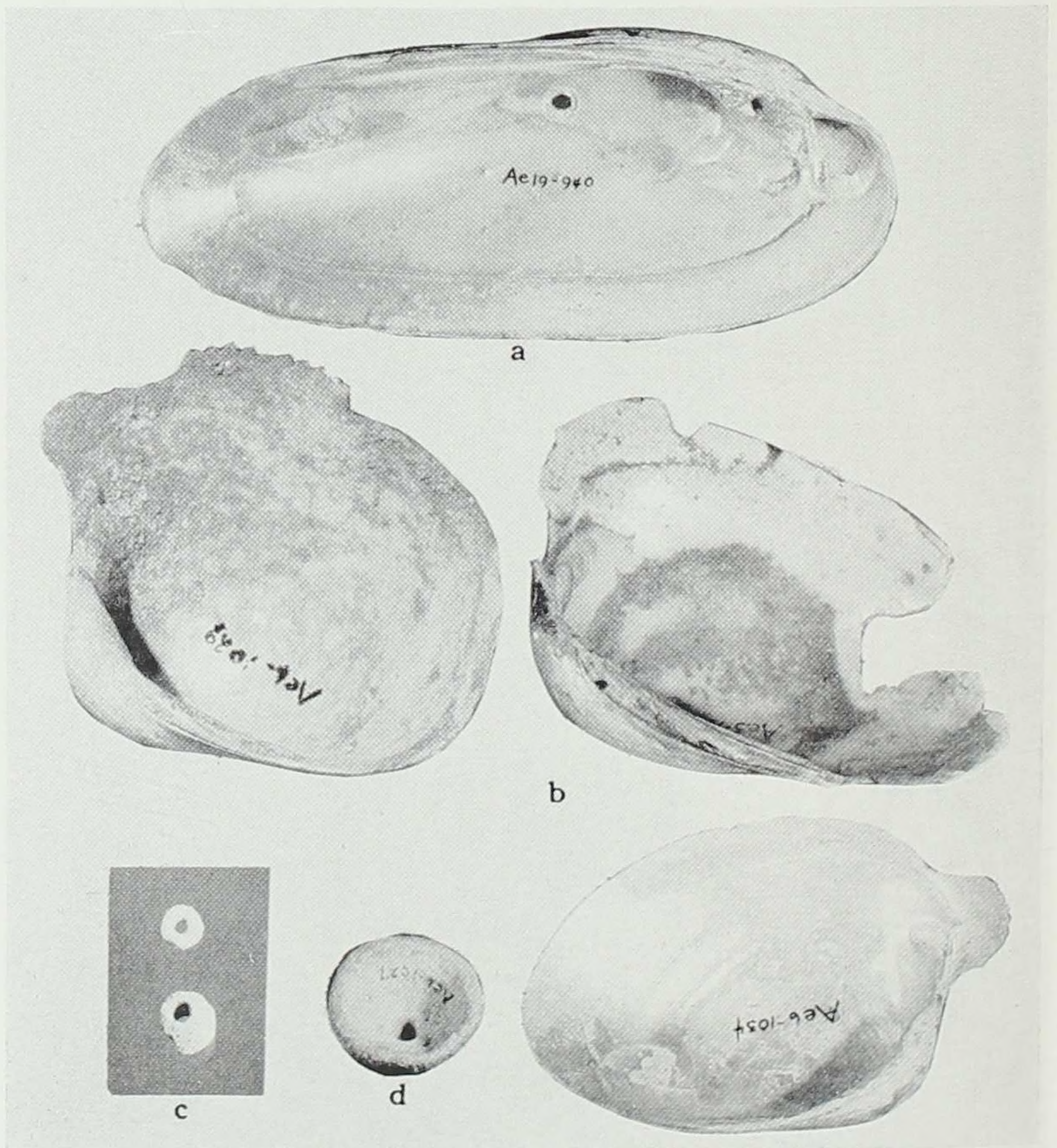


Stone tools for grinding corn, pounding, and abrading. a. Mullers; b. Hammer; c. Arrow smoother; d. Ball; e. Sandstone abraders.



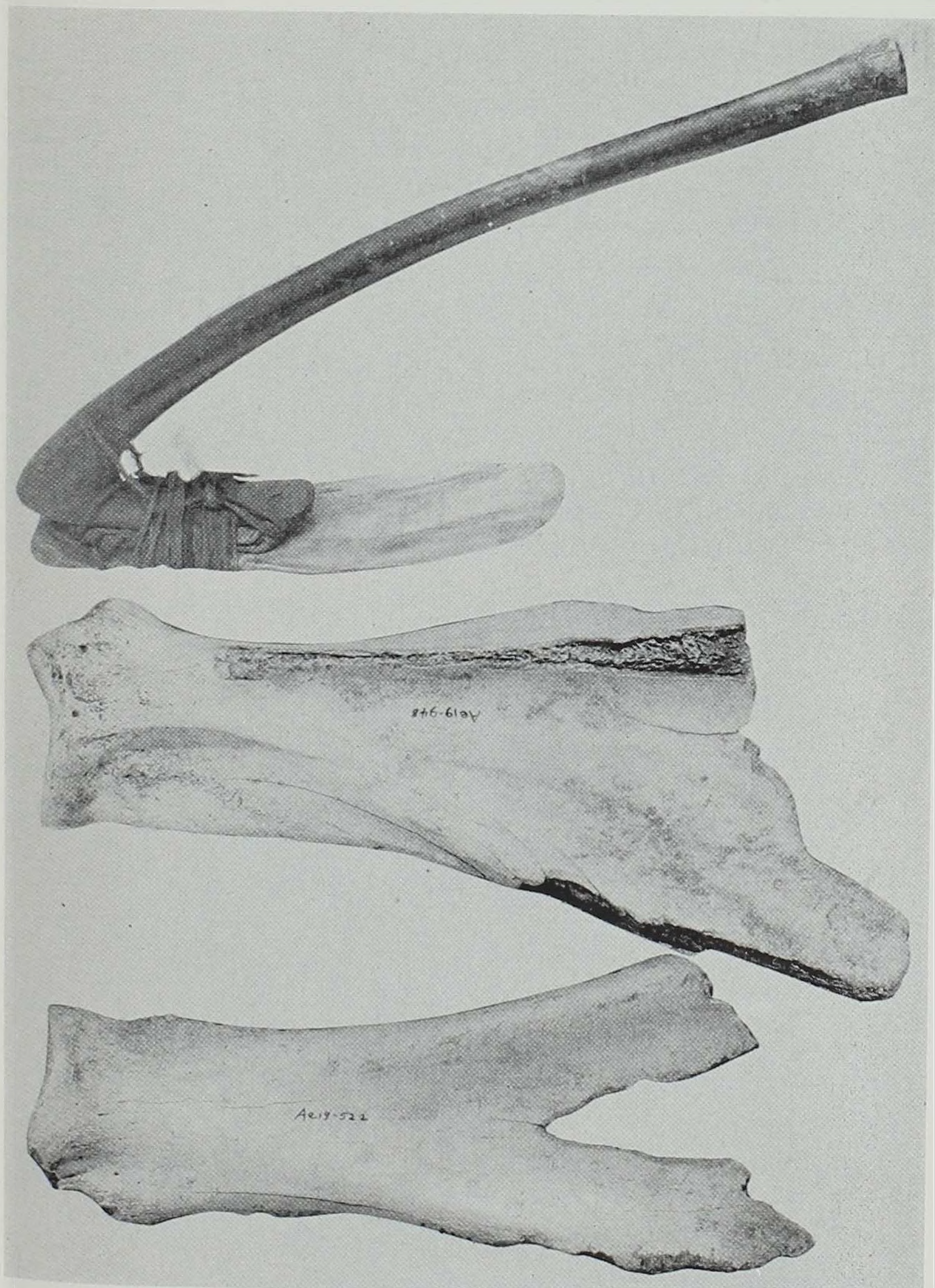
Bone Perforators

a. Awls with one end unmodified; b. Awls with both ends modified; c. Ulna awl;
 d. Fish and bird bones.



Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

Shell Spoons and Ornaments
 a. Pendant; b. Spoons; c. Beads; d. Fossil ornaments.

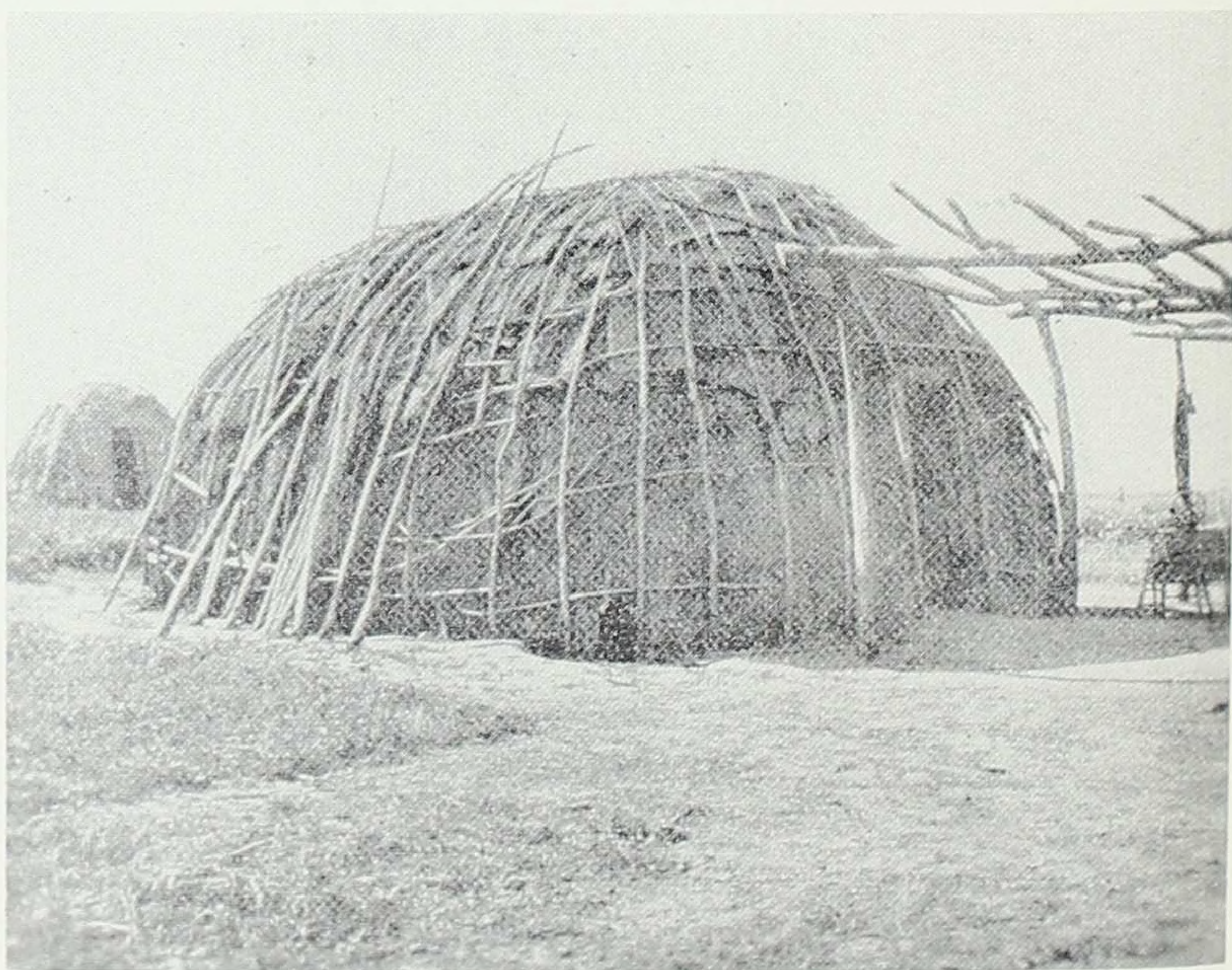


Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

(Top) Show how wooden handle is attached to bone hoe blades.

Ellison Orr Photo

(Bottom) Worn and broken bone hoe blades once used in gardening.



Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology

Ioway dwellings on Kansas reservation; elm bark home and corn drying rack.

Mounds National Monument. Dr. Wilfrid D. Logan, National Park Service, has since written up the Woodland materials in his doctoral thesis at the University of Michigan. The Oneota materials have recently been analyzed by Dale Henning in his master's thesis at the University of Iowa, and by the writer in *The Missouri Archaeologist*.

Evidence of the Orr focus Oneota culture was found at seven of the sites excavated under the FERA-WPA projects. Five of these were on terraces or hills bordering the Upper Iowa River, the first (the Lane site) being about nine miles from the river's mouth and the others ("Elephant," New Galena, O'Regan, and "Hogback") occurring at intervals along an eleven mile stretch upstream. Two of the sites (Burke and Woolstrom) are a short distance up Bear Creek, a small tributary that enters the Upper Iowa from the north in Hanover Township.

This is a rugged and beautiful corner of Iowa that was covered by only one ice sheet in the Pleistocene period. Thus, in contrast to most Iowa rivers which glide through rolling prairie or are bordered by low rounded hills, the Upper Iowa River in Allamakee County takes its meandering course toward the Mississippi through a flat wide valley bottom from which steep bluffs rise to a height of 200-400 feet on either side. Frequent outcroppings of white limestone cap the bluffs and

enhance the river vista. Tributaries enter the Upper Iowa through deep gorges.

In the great oxbows or loops that are formed by the sinuous course of the river, there stand fertile flood-free terraces 60-70 feet high that were once clothed with luxuriant prairie flora. Here the Ioways established their villages. On lower flood plain terraces were alluvial soils of great fertility where good crops of corn, beans, and squash grew easily. Large springs flowed nearby. Back from the bluffs the land continues to rise making divide crests of more than 500 feet above the river floor. Before the white settlers came the bluffs and high land were heavily wooded with a variety of deciduous trees and even some balsam fir, red cedar, and white pine. The Indian villagers were thus provided with wood for fuel and structures, as well as nuts and fruits for food. In the woods were white-tailed deer, black bear, raccoons, woodchucks, rabbits, wild turkeys and other edible animals and birds. In the prairies beyond were elk and, at times, bison. It is no wonder that the river terraces and hills have given evidence of extensive and long occupation by Indian peoples.

On at least two of the terraces investigated — Lane and New Galena — Orr found Oneota peoples had located their villages. More extensive excavation at the O'Regan site might have revealed a village area there too. Cemeteries occurred on three terraces and one hilltop — at the O'Regan,

Woolstrom, "Elephant" and Burke Hill sites. Burials were also intruded into Woodland mounds at the Lane, "Hogback," and New Galena sites.

As Dr. Keyes and Mr. Orr had hoped, this concentration of effort in Allamakee County did reveal much more about the archeological cultures than was known before, more than the specimens alone could ever tell. Now it is possible to understand more completely the way of life of the Indian communities which left behind the Orr focus Oneota cultural remains.