

Spoon River Anthropomorphic Artifacts

The Spoon River valley of Illinois has over 2600 documented Native American Indian archeological sites. The following artifacts come from one of the oldest of such sites - some representing Ice Age animals such as camels, rhinos, and mammoths. But how could this be?

The retreating Wisconsin glacier of the last Ice Age and resulting flood waters left the clear Spoon River cobbled in smooth, colorful, anthropomorphic stones. Then around 14,000 years ago this region in Illinois had become a lost Garden of Eden with cool summers and warm winters (source - <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/410.html>). This Shangri-La climate was a hunter's paradise leaving time for expressive art. Paleo Indian collected and composed these stones to form a large variety of rare statuettes.

Recently washed-out of a bottomland cornfield are: 97 RARE Paleo figurines of Shamans, Venuses, Ice-Age Elk, Thunderbirds, Owl, Turtles, Fish, Coyote, Buffalo, Bears, Beavers, Snakes, Camels, Rhinos and Mammoths; Shaman Medicine Stones; Ice Age Erotica; Arrowheads and tools - including a Paleo scalpel; Over 40 Paleo and Archaic Hand Axes, Hammers and Scrapers; 5 Slingshot loads/Game Balls; 11 Coprolites (fossilized Dino poop) - oddly, one is a 5 lb. Illinois-shaped dung.

Also featured are weapon replicas mounted with imitation eagle feathers, beads, turkey feathers, and real Spoon River artifacts on deer bone or wormwood-willow handles from this site. Also, Indian artifacts books and wall chart. Plus, unrelated projectile points.

At the end of this catalogue, we include a published paper with detail evidence of how and when this rare Ice Age art came to be.

ATTENTION:

For ease of stacking and best stability, **STACK FIGURINES WET** with hard water

The mineral in the evaporated water develops a temporary bond.



6. Reflecting Man *Homo cogitatio*

This ancient Ice Age Indian figurine, recovered from a site where arrowheads are found, looks as if it were man-made - part of it was. The ancient artist skillfully chipped between the shoulders so that the head could seat. Hair tied back into a bun, mouth opened in awe, and with saucer-like eyes of one-pointedness, this medicine man figure seems to contemplate thought itself: It's man's ability to recognize and change his behavior that allows him to grow, to become the universe looking back upon itself. The base stone may have been cleaved by the river (from freezing water in a crack) creating the form of a man's body seated cross-legged with elbow on knee. It was river-polished after it broke. His wrist and hand just recently broke off judging by the fresh surface. The head is of the same jasper and also naturally formed. This rare Indian artifact is one of my favorites and was on display in our museum for years. Sienna jasper, 2 parts. 3.5" h; 262 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

98. Mother Stone *Genetrix lapideus*

When I first picked up the bottom stone of this fertility figure, I knew what we had. The breast stone (with one breast exposed) is green Pennsylvanian Period slate. The backside (not shown) of this Stone Age love goddess statuette resembles a young maiden with smaller breasts. The head and hips are some form of hard greenstone high in olivine. Her belly, though a natural inclusion, has also been worked or accentuated with a sharp implement by the ancient artist, forming a fetus. Greenstone and green slate, 3 parts. 6.5"h; 902 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



28. Lone Coyote *Canis latrans*



Nothing symbolizes the wild Midwestern United States at night better than the lone, howling coyote. Thirteen millennia ago, they also heralded the moon. Crystalline pits in the coyote's muzzle form the open mouth and pointed teeth. They contain iron oxide-saturated quartz and citrine crystals resembling sugar-cinnamon or brown sugar sprinkles giving the teeth a wet glistening effect. This pit is a fossilized section of a tapered spiral shell. The head has a deep bubble-pit underneath, which was heavily de-burred (probably with a hard hematite tool) on one side of its rim by the ancient artist. This allows the head to seat securely on the highest point of the body stone. The coyotes' upwardly curved spine is speckled with half-bubble ablations from a coral fossil. Similar ablations on the head were caused by trapped gas emitted from decaying animal life when the rock was seabed mud during the Devonian Extinction 354 million years ago. These



ablations give the canine a realistic ruffled coat. How the ancient artist found the matching tail for this Indian artifact figurine still amazes me - it was likely worked. Cinnamon chalcedony w sparkling crystal teeth, 3 parts. 5.8"h; 697 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

32. Charging Short-Face Bear (extinct) *Arctodus simus*



Another figurine that uses 2 different stone materials that have identical coloration: When the giant Short-Face Bear freely roamed the contiguous U.S. 13,000 years ago, being eaten alive by a rogue was as high a probability as encountering a policeman while driving today (probability comparison only). Many recovered weapons from our site were intended primarily as insurance for an accidental encounter with this formidable animal that stood 11 feet on its hind legs. The massive triangular body stone makes this one of the largest figurines recovered to date. A stubby tail (not seen at this angle) was also with the find. Though the stones of this ancient Paleo Indian figurine are of 2 different materials the colors match perfectly. Very impressive. Ginger quartzite body w ginger jasper appends. 5 parts. 6.3"h; 1632 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

117. Rocky Raccoon *ursus tantillus furunculus*

I used the Latin name "Little sneak-thief bear" because that is precisely what raccoons are. (There is no Latin word for "raccoon" but 'coons *are* a member of the bear family.) These rascally raiders likely robbed food stores of the Paleo/Archaic Indians at the recovery site 13,000 years ago just like they do in rural America today. And they raid without remorse because they seem to know that for the most part, humans find them cute and 'coons chirp in such a way that they almost seem to purr. The fact that they also have masks across their eyes to reduce daytime glare (despite performing their mischief mostly at night) makes them the comical bandits of the animal kingdom. The head is amethyst *metaquartzite* with high concentration of iron hematite (the "mask"), body is **amethyst** quartzite with a lower proportion of hematite, tail with even less hematite. 3 parts. 5.0:h; 804 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



74. Mother & Child Nutcracker

Mater matris & Puer



The Mother is sitting on her knees facing the viewer and holding up her infant. The baby's head is over her left shoulder, and they are face-to-face. The top stone teeters for several cycles once nudged, as if to rock the baby to sleep. To Paleo Indian this would have been quite a novelty. Sparkling red *metaquartzite* w hematite crystal inclusions, tool kit: Bone and nutcracker (shown wetted). Stacked dry. We mist with water in spray bottle to bring out inner beauty of these ancient stones, 2 parts. 5.5"h; 1247 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

47. Catfish *Ictaluridae, Noturus Gladiator*

One of few flint figurines found. The dorsal (top) fin was chipped in a tongue-in-groove fashion by the ancient artisan to seat on the top of the smooth body stone. And indeed, catfish have a spine in their dorsal fin making it as sharp as it is on this figurine. The head was also extensively worked by the ancient artisan. Brown spruce needles were probably used for the fish's whisker-like feelers. Catfish is still enjoyed in this region, but because of pesticide and herbicide field run-off into the rivers, it's safer to eat American pond raised. The clan, however, enjoyed catfish right out of the clear river using spears or possibly fish trap. Note the dappled pattern as if the fish is being viewed through shallow, clear water. Why is the fish colored like Oriental carp? Were Illinois catfish once a lighter color when the rivers ran clear? Caramel, cream, white and gray flint, 6 parts; horizontal and vertical orientation. 8.0"L; 290 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798





37. Bobcat

Lynx rufus

This slick kitty, looking over her right shoulder, could almost pass as a domesticated house cat but it seems unlikely a nomadic clan would have such pets. The stones have a polished patina from extensive handling. By adding a short plume of ripened foxtail grass, the Bobcat becomes a "Lynx" proper. Caramel jasper, 2 parts. 4.0"h; 538 gm
Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



72. Iron Maiden

Virgo Ferrum

Black, heavy and hard: Hematite ("virgin iron") -laden gneiss tool kit. Head is a bone and nut hammer; breast a scraper, chopper and wedge; hips are anvil and hand axe. Each piece feels comfortable in the hand. 3 parts. 7.1"h; 1240 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

50. Prairie Chicken *Tympanuchus cupido*

Chicken breast on the hoof – the body of this chick depicts the most favorite part of the bird. The now endangered avian once flourished across the U.S. in prolific numbers and the flightless bird was probably easy prey for the clan using throwing weapons such as shurikens (flat, sharp-edged stones), discoids and round-stone slingshot loads. The jasper head has a natural pit in its base and seats securely on the body. Like the majority of these Paleo figurines, this was a tool kit - the head was a pecking and bone-scraping tool and the body was a pestle for tenderizing meat and breaking bone for marrow. Both pieces have a sheen patina suggesting they were heavily handled by Paleolithic people. Caramel jasper w crystal fossils and original "sheen" patina, 2 parts. 5.0"h; 543 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798





41. Egg-Laying Turtle *Turtur ovum conservatio*

To the ancient Paleo Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. earth to water (such as frogs and turtles), and water to air (ducks and geese), were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. Probably a good harvest idol or used as a decoy to catch real turtles. The turtles' shell is an unbroken, translucent chalcedony geode. The "tail" is her ovipositor and several round, polished milky-quartz "eggs" or fresh water pearls may have been with the original set.

Turtles lay their eggs in the shoreline of lakes and rivers in early summer on a moonless night. The clan may have celebrated the turtle's arrival. Turtle is considered a delicacy here in Illinois and this little fellow may have been a decoy to lure the real thing up onto the Spoon River shore. (The stone head, tail and feet of a much larger turtle were found, but its soccer-ball sized shell may have been tossed aside when the land was first cleared 200 years ago – or a real shell was used to dress up the ruse.) Translucent honey chalcedony geode "shell" w honey jasper appends, 7 parts; horizontal. Seven polyester "eggs" are included for effect. 6.5"L; 380 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



70. Night Sky Maiden *Virgo polus nocturnus*

Love often drives the artist, and this stone may have been chipped to profile a young woman in the clan. The cranium was also cleaved to reveal the crystalline "brains" of life-force within: Her sparkling mind is open and exposed to the cosmos. The Paleo Indian art form viewed from its front greatly resembles the face of a skull. From its right, a man. We picked this up in 2000 because it's a beautiful geode. At that time, I refused to believe it had been deliberately worked. But in 2002 after the washout discovery, I gave it another look. It was found not far from the red flint surgical blade also found in 2000. Here, I wetted her "brains" to bring them out in the photo. Blue and white chalcedony geode w sparkling crystal-coated botryoidal "brains", 1 pc. 2.5"h; 199 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

53. Diving Duck *Anas urino*

I looked in vain for signs of working and impact on the larger soft stone until I remembered that a smaller, similar piece was found two years earlier from the same site sector. Apparently, this duckling figurine, like so many others, was buried by time with its head still on the base stone – it was recovered first. To the ancient Native American Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. water to air (ducks and geese), were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. Green Pennsylvanian banded glacial slate, 2 parts. 6.3"L; 692 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798





54. Singing Cardinal

Cardinalis cardinalis

Aside from being the Illinois state bird, this avian is a friendly sight at wintertime bird feeders. The male has bright red plumage, and the female has drab reddish-brown feathers to camouflage it while nesting. Red blush w yellow beak jasper, 2 parts, 3.5"h; 212 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



43. Snapping Turtle

Chelydra serpentina

Snappers are common in this area. Their funky looking heads were designed by nature to look like old wood or leaf litter. The snapper will lie still underwater with opened mouth and using his tongue as a lure, attract small fish to their doom. This jasper figure has a conglomerated (naturally cemented stones) jasper head that looks remarkably like a snapping turtle. Snapper is a delicacy in these parts, but this animal affords respect from swimmers and the curious alike. Its bite can remove a digit. This

figure is big enough to have been a decoy to lure larger snappers. To the ancient Paleo Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. earth to water (such as frogs and turtles) were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. Chestnut jasper w jasper conglomerate head, 7 parts; horizontal orientation. 7.0"L; 614 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

38. Mating Cougars

Puma concolor

Her belly laden with unborn cubs, the female holds tiny quartz crystals with a left front paw, (shown wetted) symbolizing she is carrying life. She looks back at her mate who appears to be ready to leap into the mating position: The two felines contour together perfectly. The female's body is a collapsed jasper nodule and the front appears to have been chipped away by the ancient artist to reveal the crystals within. Khaki jasper w heavy alkali patina, 4 parts. 2.9"h; 299 gm Set Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



27. Running Dire Wolf

Canis dirus cursus

Tail pointed down and back, this Paleo artifact appears to be a timber wolf on the chase. The head stone on this figurine makes a convincing canine from all sides. The body stone from the viewers' side gives the illusion its limbs are in motion. It's quite possible this figure represents the formidable but now extinct Dire Wolf, which according to some accounts, went extinct about 12,000 ya and had shorter legs than modern wolves but much larger bodies. Sienna and gray jasper colored by ancient-life carbon, 2 parts. 5.0"h; 1115 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



115. Amethyst Duck

Anaticula amethystus



Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

This rare crystalline amethyst duck has rock vein patterns resembling wings on the back of the bird and it is not completely certain if they were worked. It is however, quite beautiful when wetted in full sunlight. Wetting temporarily cancels out the patina. The body stone was found in the spring of 2002. The head was recovered from the same site in the spring of 2005. To the ancient Native American Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. water to air (ducks and geese), were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. Head and body are **amethyst** metaquartzite. 2 parts. 3.5"H; 394 gm Spoon River



26. Wounded Stag

Megaloceros giganteus

This pre-Columbian figurine with its 8 original pieces assembles in both the horizontal and vertical planes. Like nearly all the other figurines, these pieces were recovered together. This stag may be representative of the extinct Irish Elk which survived to about 7,000 ya. Ice Age deer and elk stood 7 feet tall at the shoulders. Still, these stones arrange to make a disquieting view of the hunt: This buck is down and waiting for the inevitable while the Paleo Indian hunter approaches.

As dark as this figurine may appear to some, this moment is the hunter's big reward for his efforts: The buck will feed the clan for days and win him respect among his peers and approval of the chieftain. The twig "spear" was added by the author. The flat red "blood" stone lays double-tongue-in-groove fashion into the recess just below a hole for the spear chipped out by the ancient artisan. Chocolate jasper w alkali patina, and shiny red jasper bloodstone (selected by the ancient artisan to fit perfectly) and rare, green chalcedony (*chrysoprase*) antlers (with natural white coating) as if he had mossy antlers, 8 parts; horizontal and vertical. 6.0"L; 784 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



59. Golden Eagle

Aquila chrysaetos

It doesn't show it because of the gleam from the camera flash on the body stone, but the color on these two stones match perfectly. This dignified piece resembling an adult golden eagle is big - about the size of the baby chick in real life. The is head smoother than the body and so must have been heavily handled. Wear on the "beak" suggests it may have been used as a pecking stone. (For more raptors see our later section on "Thunderbirds" below). Matching honey jasper w sheen patina head. Tool kit: Bone & nutcracker and grinder, 2 parts. 5.3"h; 1651 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



21. Ice Age Elk *Megaloceros giganteus*



Every Hunter's dream – a ruminating stag. To many early tribes of humans capturing the image of your prey was the first step to capturing the prey itself. However, early Indians sincerely respected the animals he hunted and fished. They sustained his family and a large prize such as bull elk would insure wealth and status within the clan. This is especially true because at the end of the last Ice Age, deer and elk stood 7 feet tall at the shoulders. Like nearly all the other figurines, these stones were found together. The Elk's right eye was worked around the socket and the head was slightly chipped underneath to seat on the body stone. Note polished patina on head and body; this figurine was routinely handled or rubbed, maybe even in animal fat or blood. Light cocoa jasper w Bone-colored chalcedony antlers, 3 parts. 5.5"h; 538 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

49. Blue Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

This was one of few pre-Columbian figurines we collected because the stones were beautiful - before we knew they were art (April 2000). The head of this drake contains a nodule - possibly holding a crinoid head fossil. To the ancient American Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. water to air (ducks and geese), were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. Ice blue and white chalcedony, 2 parts. 3.0"h; 290 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



17. Chipmunk *Eutamias minimus*

If this frantic little character dashed across your path twelve thousand years ago, you would certainly stop and quietly wait for him to reappear. This dashing fellow is doing just that, dashing. Wide-open eyes, tail over the back, and limbs in a flurry, he scurries for cover. This may have been a child's toy, though it is larger than the real animal - it's physically the size of a baby tree squirrel. The eye is recessed deep enough to hold a sparkling, smoky quartz crystal recovered nearby. The body stone was glacier-formed w its tail up over its back, which is how these guys sometimes run. Almond jasper w high sheen and smoky quartz crystal eye, 3 parts. 3.8"h; 851 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798





51. Sitting Duck *Anas platyrhynchos*

Duck, as it is today, was also most certainly on the menu in the Late Pleistocene, It's quite possible that stone-age children may have even had pet ducks for the long summer at Site 2601. This pre-Columbian female mallard may have been a child's toy or keepsake. To the ancient Native American Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. water to air (ducks and geese), were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. Umber jasper, 2 parts. 3.1"h; 243 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

45. Soft-Shell Turtle *Apalone spinifera*

This species, now endangered in Canada, can grow up to 19 inches in diameter - and probably much larger near the end of the last Ice Age when rivers were clear and free of pollutants. To the ancient Native American Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. earth to water (such as frogs and turtles) were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. Light brown jasper, nodule body, 7 parts. 6.3"L; 372 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



18. Lazy & Sassy Beaver

Castoriadae canadensis

Some things never change. These stones (found together suggesting they are a set) offer a comic glimpse of married life 12,000 years ago. The stones on the right (Sassy) have heavy lime and sulfur patina either from the soil or deposited by the ancient artisan. To the ancient Native American Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. earth to water (such as frogs, turtles and beaver) were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is

little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. Lazy: Chocolate jasper. Sassy: Cinnamon jasper w lime/sulfur patina, 6 parts total. 2.8"h; 474 gm / set Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



126. Honey Look Bear

Top

Favus simus

Short-Faced Bears of the Late Pleistocene apparently favored honey as well. The bottom of the honey-combed fossil coral headstone had been chipped out by the early Native American Indian artist to seat perfectly on the fossil-ridden body. The raised "front legs" are natural creases in the stone. Honey-combed fossil coral and crinoid bead-laden jasper of golden honey color, 2 parts. 6.4"H; 903 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



127. Everywhere Eyes Eagle

Oculatus undique Accipiter

Like most of our finds, the headstone gives the figure away: Note the spooky pair of eyes observing the observer. This hawk was looking up at us when we first saw it. Light brown jasper, 3 parts. 5.625"L x 4.25"H; 570 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798 lying flat



Top view with tail

125. Spirit Run *Phasma Equinus*

The extinct American horse: This beautiful amethyst spirit animal washed out of the last Spoon River flood and was one of the last figurines we recovered. Wetting temporarily cancels out the patina. The site is no longer accessible, and any remaining figures are likely non-retrievable. It's not immediately visible in this photo, but there is a white crystal "eye" at the appropriate location on the head. Because of aging and patina, the plum-colored granite tail has yellowed slightly. **Amethyst** quartzite w plum granite tail, 3 parts. 7.25"L x 4.125"H; 1092 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



Top view - Note Crystal "eye"



128. Ghost Turtle

Phasma Turtur



Animals that can pass through the veils of the elements - from water to earth, or earth to sky were considered sacred to Paleo and Archaic Indian. Turtles and Frogs are such animals - they can survive land and under water for short periods. White flint w

chalcedony geode, 7 parts. 7.0"L, 685 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



130. Charging Buffalo

Decursus Taurinus



This stone perplexed me at first: I was looking for a camel's body stone. Delores noted that it looked a lot like a bison and we had found the horns to match earlier near its recovery site. Note ancient chip mark to

separate the head from the front leg. The bison's beard hangs in the heads shadow. Carmel jasper w white flint horns, 2 parts. 4.75"L x 3.25"H; 442 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



The neck - where stone was worked

112. Whispering Owl *Noctua verax*

This was one of my favorite figurines recovered from site 2601. The angle in this photo doesn't show both of the owl's eyes but you can see its bulbous nose which gives it a human quality. He is turning his head as owls do. The foreground wing, claw clutching fallen prey, and folded-under tail feathers give the figure a realistic appearance. It has the feel of being handled a very long time ago and the patina reveals it was buried nearly as long.

Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798





88. Swooping Thunderbird *Argentavis magnificens*

This figure resembles an extinct giant bird - most likely an Native American Indian Thunderbird - a Teratorn from the Pleistocene with a beak like that of a condor. Note that both wings butt right up to the body stone at the appropriate angle. The Indian thunderbirds

body stone where its left extended leg (with open talons) join was chipped (bottom foreground in left photo) to hold up its open talon as if to snatch its prey - the only place where the figure was worked. Honey jasper, 7 parts. 5.0"h x 8.0" w; 1531 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



121. Electra Bird *Avis torpedo*

This electric figurine (*torpedo* in Latin actually means "electric") has an iron oxide "beak". These parts were collected from the same spot between 1999 to 2002. Rub stones together in the dark and they produce sparks *within* the stones known as piezoelectric effect. (Wear glasses or goggles when doing this) Metaquartzite crystal with pale yellow milky (Creamy) patina - **piezoelectric**, 3 parts. 6.75"L; 969 gm

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120. Old Red Man *Homo antiquus rufus*

In April of 2011, I was walking along a swathe of washed-down cornfield at site 2601A - about 50 feet east of where I discovered our first figurine. As I turned to look to my left, 15 feet away, there was an ancient face looking back at me. There are no tooling or impact marks on this stone, signifying it was retrieved from the Spoon River by ancient Indian for its appearance, not utility. Red jasper, 1 part. 5.0"h; 935 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

92. Buffalo Woman

Femina bovillus

Kneeling with hair tied into side-buns, this strong female image most certainly appealed to many Stone Age men. The mother principle has a powerful healing effect so this was probably representative of a medicine woman. Likely a tool kit: Head, worn smooth from use, may have been a pecking stone for chipping flint; breasts a hammer; hips an anvil. Hard purplish hornblende, 3 parts. 7.0"h; 1220 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



13. Singing Moon Woman

Femella luna vocalis

This figure, shown side view facing the viewer's left, is made of a rare and beautiful blue/pearly white chalcedony. Her hair forms a crescent pitted moon. Her mouth is open as if signing and she is seated cross-legged with her hands on her knees. She is a bit tricky to stack so once we found the "sweet spot", we stacked wet with a high alkali-content water (like the Spoon River) which, when dry, forms a light removable bond. Blue and pearly white chalcedony, 2 parts. 4.5"h; 409 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



94. Amethyst Lake Woman

Femina stagnum amethystus

Much of North America and Canada were covered by lakes from the retreating Ice Sheet when these figurines became art. This sensual, semi-precious *amethyst* female figurine invokes a passion within, yet her placid, empty face reminds one of a calm lake. The breast stone, though not the same material as the head and base, is of near identical coloration and was worked by the ancient artisan - it was cleaved across the bottom to fit nicely onto the base - but has no sharp edges, attesting to its great age. Particularly beautiful when wetted in bright sunlight (but glares when photographed wet). Wetting temporarily cancels out the patina. Rare **amethyst**



metaquartzite head and hips, hornblende breast, 3 parts. 5.0"h; 1020 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



99. Lady of the North

Regina Hyperborei

This figure consists of 3 different types of stone of similar blonde color but were recovered together. Her face is stained with iron oxide rust from the Illinois soil. Granite base, quartzite breasts, metaquartzite head - 3 parts. 6.13"h; 1726 gm.
Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



2. Sitting Smoke Man

Homo Reses fumeus

Like a column of rising dense smoke on a cold morning, this figure also sits solid and unmovable: The warrior is imposing yet yielding. His square jaw and massive torso suggest a great hunter or warrior tempered by battle with large prey or the enemy. Yet he is aware that the world is an illusion like the clouds in the sky, the fog across a morning meadow, or a column of smoke on a cold dawn. The base stone has layers adding to the figure's heavy smoke-like quality. Light tan and gray smoky metaquartzite, 3 parts. 6.3"h; 1245 gm.
Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

4. Sitting Bones *Reses ossis*

Sitting tall and dignified, this slender elder has an air of experience and utter calm. The body stone by itself resembles a free-standing *Morel* mushroom, which is a springtime delicacy in these parts (and often sells in Chicago restaurants for upwards of \$200 a pound) and likely considered as medicinal by the clan as it was in ancient Chinese medicine. But it's the overall impression of the figure that will make you stop and look over and over again. Honey/caramel swirl jasper w crystal fossil bone-like crinoid stem segments (Indian beads), 3 parts. 7.3"h; 1180 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798





73. Ice Maiden

Virgo glacies

When we found them, we thought these stones to be just a collection of tools, but they stack up to make this female figure of icy qualities. Composed of beautiful white crystal-fossil flint – with three sparkling quartz crystal clusters on the viewer's side of her hips – make up this tool kit: Her head is a steak knife also used for skinning; her breast (wrapped together as some modern women do today with bras) is a hide-scraper and pick; and the body was a bone hammer and nut anvil. The original handy-dandy "Kitchen-Aid". White crystal-fossil flint. Tool kit, 3 parts. 4.3"h; 394 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

3. Heart Song Man *Homo cantio cor cordis*

Singing in the wind with a heart of glass: There is a quartz crystal crinoid stem where his heart would be. This eerie fellow also appears windswept from his left side as if he chanting off into the wind. When one becomes very still, the blissful song of the inner wind is all the thought one needs. To the medicine man singing is means to communicate with all-knowing spirits. Up-welling sensations of emotional bliss accompany sincere song and tell the singer the spirits are singing back. Such overwhelming experiences also occur during the chanting of hymns or mantras. Stack wet with hard water. Honey jasper w crystal fossil crinoid-bead heart, 3 parts. 5.8"h; 678 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



WARNING: EROTICA

7. Medicine Man

Homo remedium



Observational discipline leads to sexual potential and when channeled, culminates in enlightenment accompanied by ecstatic bliss. Green chlorite and red hematite color this ancient glacial slate figure with windswept, awe-struck expression. From its right (left photo) this weathered green figure portrays the shaman a-washed in expanding waves of pristine cognitiveness. The left angle reveals his humble, compassionate side: Upon awakening one recognizes the existential suffering of all beings. In many shamanistic societies, male sexual potency as a spiritual state of mind is symbolized with an erection. Like the flute-playing *Kokopelli* (which had a detachable lingham), a matching 2" lingham stone long enough to reach his lips sits on the base: The promise of explosive release is just a caress away, but one would lose the melody of sparkling bliss. The ancient artisan extensively worked the head, cleaved the base to sit flat and skillfully worked the lingham to sit on the angled top of the base stone. From either side, this stable figure reveals the absolute perfect meditation posture. Sage-green high-quartz, Pennsylvanian Period (300 mya) banded glacial slate, orange discoloration is iron that has weathered out. Body stone has high hematite content but was not used as a tool. 4 parts. 5.5"h; 682 gm



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93. Aquamarine Rain Man *Homo imbrifer*



In global tribal societies, the man who brings rain brings wealth to his and neighboring clans. Wetted and in bright sunlight, this figure is dazzling, so just imagine when it was new out of the river 14,000 ya. Wetting temporarily cancels out the patina. Here, much older and dry it is still eye-catching. It is composed of a mineral colored like no other that we know of - Aquamarine or a translucent teal. This figurine, like all the others, found near Ice Age arrowheads is believed to represent medicine men and is made of an unusual sea-green metaquartzite that is the color of a pending thunderstorm sky. We would like to find more of this material just for use as a semi-precious gemstone. The



photos just don't do it justice. Semi-translucent **aquamarine** metaquartzite, 3 parts. 8.2"h; 1621 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

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8. Waking Dream Man

Morpheus expergiscor perrectus



In the dimension of lucid dreaming all senses are awake while the dream goes on. And in any stratum sexual arousal equates to awareness and this potential energy equates to arousal of the space around one: Passion IS the space. His eyes and mouth are opened wide as if in that final moment before peak experience where one teeters between release and a larger embodiment of being. *Containment* is not the issue: Suspension in this state (Nirvana) can only be accomplished by the *redirection* of the bliss. On this figurine the lingham stone fits along a ridge in the Shaman's lap as if the two stones were molded together. They must have been river-ground and river-polished one-on-top-the-other: Lingham and lap rock contour each other perfectly. It is also likely the lingham was sandwiched between the lap and torso stones when this occurred. Amazingly, none of these stones show signs of being worked by man and the figure can withstand very heavy vibration – as precariously stacked as they appear. All 4 stones are from the same mother rock and probably found together by the clan in the same river eddy pocket. We stacked it wet for greatest stability. Shown dry. A truly magical set of stones. Chestnut chalcedony w high sheen, 4 parts. 4.6" h; 442 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



Organ Stones

Top Row: 3 Brains, center one has exposed crystals.

Second Row: 2 Lungs; 2 Hearts (Because of the beauty of the stone, heart at far right was polished by author - before we realized what we had found)

Third Row: Liver (accidentally polished by author); Small Intestines; 2 kidneys

Forth Row: Liver; Large Intestines; 2 Kidneys



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The Sense of Taste tells us if food is good or bad and other details about the world. For example, some Tibetan shamanistic practices even today use the tasting of urine (then spit and rinse, of course) to determine another's health such as sweet (diabetes) too salty (dehydration) sour (infection) and bitter (cancer) etc. And, of course, the tongue is instrumental in speech. This eerie life-sized red jasper tongue is smooth and unbroken on all sides. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

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The Sense of Smell had to have been important to the Stone Age hunter. From the rear angle one can recognize a very convincing yoni. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



131. Caca

feces

When I first happened upon this stone in 1999, I wasn't sure I wanted to pick it up, even though it appeared the flies had long since finished with it. I was excited when I did pick it up because it appeared to be a meteorite. It is heavy and very hard: I cut a tiny piece from the bottom (smaller image) and sent it into an independent lab for testing. It turned out to be iron hematite. I had trouble classifying this item, and finally settled placing it under "Medicine Man" - as laughter is the best medicine - and may very well been used as such. Brown hematite 2.375" L Weight: 96 gm
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Rear view



Front view



Side view



The stones almost flow ecstatically into each other.



Male: 7"H, 1575 gm + Female: 3.375"H, 489 gm = Total: 8"H, 2064 gm



The female head is a crystal-filled geode that has had one eye and mouth widened.

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132. YAB - YUM

The co-emergence of the male and female aspects of our being completes us - all men have a feminine side and all woman have a masculine side. The traditional Yab-Yum of Eastern philosophy (termed Vajrasattva and Consort in Buddhist iconology) is an ancient and physical representation of this concept. These two figurines were recovered together in 2007 and at first thought to be two separate artifacts. It was the expressions on their faces that led me to believe these two belonged together. This set is very stable as all stones are nearly flush with each other. Ebony chalcedony and caramel jasper.



The male head has a chipped neck to seat on body. The mouth and right eye are natural depressions, left eye is a natural discoloration in the stone.

Complete Set

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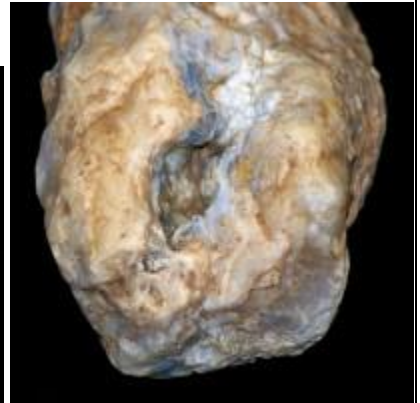
62. Cloud Woman

Femella nebula



To early man, the first step to capturing what one wants may have been to capture its image – and thus a real Venus mate. This chalcedony seductress looks as if she is about to lilt into the air. Hair tied up in a bun, she blushes back over her shoulder with erect nipple. A blue and white botryoidal cavity forms an engagingly open yoni between her "legs" which can be seen from behind and while she is lying on her "back". I found the base stone when it washed out from Glen's (Kneer) Hill in 1998 and it was so beautiful, I kept it as a paper weight. In 2002 I

found her head at the same spot and the base stone took on a whole different dimension. There are two fossil coral (*Heliolites*) imprints from the Devonian Period on her far side. Silky smooth, pure chalcedony; pearly white w pale blue highlights and iron-oxide age spots from long-term burial ~ very sensual, 2 parts; horizontal or vertical orientation. 6.3"h; 830 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



87. Dancing Woman *Femella saltatrix*

Dancing is a human expression of happiness (and sometimes agitation). Breasts swaying with the chant, this beautiful figure seems to glide towards the viewer. Olive green Pennsylvanian Period glacial slate. 8.5"h; 1257 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

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64. Joyful Woman *Femella genialis*



The unfathomable mystery that is woman becomes the human race. To early man, the first step to capturing what one wants may have been to capture its image – and thus a real Venus. Ecstasy is not for the timid. This ancient Love Goddess dwells on the pinnacle of sexual bliss welling-up into a rising blush. Her jaw is locked open. Her open yoni, coated with super-fine clear-quartz crystals, sparkle glistening-wet with arousal. Sex creates more clan members thus prosperity. It engages all senses, heightening awareness. Some forms of shamanism as a reflective discipline holds sex as a sacred act – offering a taste of a broader and deeper state-of-being. Stack wet for best

stability. Milk and honey chalcedony hips w crystal-coated botryoidal yoni/Butterscotch jasper breasts/Caramel jasper head, 3 parts. 6.5"h; 905 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



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95. Fire Belly Woman

Femella succendo uterus



To early man, the first step to capturing what one wants may have been to capture its image – and thus a real Venus mate. This one is really eye-catching for two major reasons. One, she has a crystal eye - long gone cloudy with age and sandy soil. Two, her spine coils her into an arc as every muscle in her body tightens for the release. Her eyes squint and go vacant as her lower lip droops to the left side of her face as if to utter a groan from deep within her soul. Large breasts hanging off to the sides of her ribcage, tightened stomach muscles and twisted pelvis - poses her in such a way that only a man who has been with a woman at peak experience understands. Olive/cinnamon swirl jasper w crystal eye (There is a smooth semi-clear olive quartz "pillow" under her breast stone found with the figure), 4

parts; horizontal and vertical orientation. 3.0"h x 5.3"L; 472 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

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65. Heart-Felt Woman *Femella ardor cor cordis*



Since I couldn't stack any of these pieces, I went horizontal: This art went together like a jig-saw puzzle, but what came out stirred my soul. In many early societies the casting of stones and how they landed foretold fortune. This is probably where the game of craps originated. Here however, these Ice Age Venus stones lay out the figure of a woman with red heart and yoni stone (close-up at right) and for the holder, may have preempted fate for success in love. Cinnamon jasper w red jasper heart and blush jasper yoni, 8 parts; horizontal orientation. 8.0L; 598 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



71. Harvest Woman

Femella messis



The stones of this red, yellow and green *Salsa* chalcedony (a new classification of stone that we named) crop fertility figurine has been heavily handled. This idol may have been used to appease the spirits to bring forth good food gathering. Though all 3 stones have all 3 colors, the color proportions vary: The reddish rootstalk-shaped hips (with oily sheen patina), the angle of the green foliage-like breasts, and the yellowish-white kernel-shaped head, all suggests the clan may have harvested or collected early corn (*teosinte*). Wait a minute. Corn *cultivation* isn't supposed to happen until the Mississippian Indian period 1,200 years ago. But in 13 years we've found no Mississippian points nearby. In any case, early autumn colors must have signaled the clan to migrate south. Head also resembles shelled hazelnut, which still grows around here. The tip of her left breast is missing. Rare **Salsa chalcedony** w original "sheen" patina, 3 parts. 5.3"h; 412 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

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96. Moon Girl

Virgo luna

With playful smile, her hair (tied into a ponytail) flies up as she swings down to flash her inheritance. Like most figurines in our find, it's the head stone that first gets our attention. At first, I thought it to be of a man and suspected it lay on its side. But the body stones would not stack or lay out into any form that made sense - other than the way they turned out. The head was chipped S-curved to fit right up to the body and the legs can only fit with the figure bending over. Recognizing the breast stone, it started to make sense. Note the details of the natural eye, ear and blush nose. Her mouth may have been chipped out by the ancient artisan. The red hair (which covers the scalp perfectly) and red yoni stone with its natural internal extension, as well as the head and torso, all fit like puzzle pieces. Ginger jasper w heavy alkali patina (especially on the head stone) and auburn chalcedony hair and yoni, 7 parts; horizontal orientation. 4.6"w x 5.0"tall (about 5" sq.); 472 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

63. Fang Tooth Hag *Anicula dentis*



Despite the fact that this bug-eyed, snaggle-toothed woman could frighten away a bear, this fertility figure has a high sheen from being heavily handled which gives the surface a silky, sensual feel. Throughout many mythologies the old hag appears to the seeker of knowledge early in his quest. She symbolizes the first opportunity for enlightenment: This feminine principle manifests in the least attractive form to beginners to sort out the weak of heart and less compassionate. The head stone is hollow in back as if it were a red-lined mask (all appearance is an illusion?) It rests in a natural recess on the breast stone, suggesting the two rocks were river-ground and polished together, her head fluttering in the current. She somehow got pregnant because her breasts are supple and full. Her bellybutton, filled with tiny clear-quartz crystals, peeks just above her half-fallen skirt. This ridge and crystal cluster suggest a sparkling seed inside her exposed belly (the birth of awakening). This figure is at first difficult to stack, but once the proper placement is found it's very stable. Stack wet with hard water. High-sheen Caramel blush jasper w crystal bellybutton, 3 parts. 5.5"h; 450 gm
Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



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119. Rising Moon Girl


Virgo circumurgens luna

For some time, these two stones sat separately on my bookshelf mostly because they were found together but more importantly, stones from site 2601B, generally speaking, are rare. So even though this may be considered an abstract, I decided to publish this free-standing figure anyway. Her breasts extend to her sides and there is a cute pregnant belly with a navel. This pregnant Venus has a rising harvest moon for a head. And the moon stone is grooved so fits on top of this female torso stone which stands upright and conveys a universal concept. Jasper body with a pale-yellow quartz crystal head ground round and smooth by Spoon River. 2 parts. 2.6" H; 69 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798


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	<p style="text-align: center;">Female Yoni Charm</p> <p>67. Two Wives</p> <p>This silky smooth and very rare golden chalcedony yoni charm is a sensual delight to behold. The top yoni with open lips contains glistening smoky citrine crystals (dark opening), the bottom yoni just below that holds a botryoidal habit. Both realistic yonis can be seen on the right side of the stone shown at left. There are also 2 realistic nipples on the stone; a distorted one in the left foreground of the left image; and on the other side a full nipple with the stone's contour forming the areola shown in the right photo. A very sexy rock. 1.8"h; 56 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798</p> 
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<p style="text-align: center;">Female Nipple Charm</p> <p>68. Itchy Nipple: Free-standing Lavender sandstone resembles a nursing teat that has been worn smooth from rubbing around the nipple. May have been a pacifier for young and old alike. 2.0"w; 53 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798</p>	
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	<p style="text-align: center;">Female Yoni Charm</p> <p>66. Blushing Virgin: This free-standing hematite yoni charm is smooth from handling and heavy in weight for its size (hematite is a high-grade iron ore), this sensual rock was too unique to have been used as a tool and was valued more for its symbolic value. Red hematite, 2.0"h; 60 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798</p>
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135. Yoni Stone *Vulva crystallus*

This ancient love charm with residual traces of pine pitch adhesive on the rear and one side (right photo) suggest it may have been cemented into a wood carving of a life-size fertility goddess(?) Or it could have been a personal hand tool. The bubble-like botryoidal habit of the cavity with a glistening clear quartz crystal ring surrounded by blush red jasper looks remarkably like the real thing. Photos don't do it justice. (I custom worked the base fitting it to this piece, the paper tag corner shown is just an info sheet and doesn't help hold it to the base.) There are no sharp edges on this stone. We recovered this beautiful smooth beige chert relic with permission from the old Giles Sailor farm on the Spoon River near Dahinda, IL in April 1999. 4.5"h

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Side



Front

134. Mothers Milk Nipple Charm

lactans bimatrix

This beautiful stone is made of what appears to be polished Milky Way chalcedony - which has never before been seen or identified to my knowledge. It is marbled with milky quartz producing what appears to be milk on the "nipple". This breast-shaped stone has a very sensual feel. I found this on the Spoon River bottom on the old Glen Kneer farm: Rare Milky Way chalcedony 1 9/16" Point 350r / Charm is 32 gm (1 oz); 1.5"L Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

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124. Blossum Bosom

Exiguus nucleus

This little nipple charm was found just southwest of site 2601C where the river had washed the site as it was going back down after the 2009 flooding. 1 part. 3.7" h; 319 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



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10. Father of Men

Genitorovis homo

The "head" on this sparkling lingham charm looks as if it had been carved or worked, but this is a naturally formed stone originally found by the clan in the river. This expressive lingham even has "war paint" which turns out to be the natural coloration within the stone. Gritstone, a sparkling sandstone, was prized by early man to work wood and smooth the ends of atlatl spears: We've found a separate flat gritstone sanding block with divots attesting to being used to terminate lances (and possibly to keep fingernails filed down). In the sun, these sparkling (Note white specks.) olive-green gritstone pieces show no signs of such use suggesting it was prized even more highly for its symbolism, 2 parts. 4.3"L; 211 gm
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133. Male Lingham Charm

Homunico lingham



Top View, free-standing

Apparently, men were not the only ones who had erotic charms. This amusing little stone is a free-standing artifact. It is very smooth and well-polished from much handling and possible use as a very personal tool. 3"L x 2.8"H; 237 gm

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9. Little Big Man

Homunico lingham grandis



The head stone of this free-standing prehistoric statuette has an uncanny resemblance to a Native American male with a facial expression of dogged determination. May have also been a male vitality idol to help bring many sons. Highly polished from ancient handling. Coffee bean jasper, 2 parts. 3.8" long – no lie; 266 gm

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118. Red Eye Copperhead

Agkistrodon spp. pupula curialium

There is nothing more unsettling then stepping on or near a copperhead or cottonmouth snake. As a warning to the young, this horizontal figure could also startle the unawares. Copperhead, along Cottonmouths or "Water Moccasins" are notoriously aggressive and are often well-hidden from the weary traveler. The copperhead snake is venomous and its bite very

painful and sometimes deadly and was originally named for the copper like coloration on the dorsal side of its head. The copperhead snake is chestnut colored and has bands that are either dark or brown. The size of an adult copperhead is 20 to 40 inches and young copperhead snakes can be recognized by the yellowish or greenish tip on their tails, and they are more grayish than adults.[3]



The red jasper "eye" recovered nearby fits perfectly in the snake's head eye socket and the eye has been worked by the ancient artisan. There is no eye on the other side. The tail seems to be missing too and it may have been 2 or 3 pieces. Note head fits tongue-in-groove fashion with an "S" form to the first body stone. The second body stone has multiple arcs to position the viper in various sinister poses. The original Archaic Halloween prankster prop. Jasper eye was painstakingly worked by ancient artist. Head and body composed of drab-tan jasper. 5 parts. 15.0" L; 1057 gm



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69. Man-in-Snake w Yoni

Vipera homo volutum

A primal fear: The third stone of the snake is the "head" of the man inside. The snake's stones fit together tongue-in-groove fashion forming this S-shape figurine and the tail is pointed up like some snakes do. The yoni stone was found with the snake stones posing a deep philosophical question. Did the clan believe in rebirth as some esoteric religions of the world do today? All "snake" stones are caramel jasper highlighted with black in-the-stone carbon facial features on the "man". Found with the blush jasper yoni, 7 parts; horizontal orientation. 7.5"L; 229 gm

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90. Green Thunderbolt

Teratornis merriami

Because of the shape of this figure's head, we first thought it to be meteorite so carefully sliced-off a tiny piece from the back of the head (at the viewer's right - where it does not affect the stacking or appearance)



to be tested by an outside lab. The analysis came back negative, but the geologist said it was an "unusual sample" [7] none-the-less. It appears to be a beautiful granite quite heavy in olivine and could pass as a semi-precious stone with a deep, rich green color when cut and polished. The dime-size sample piece is included with the figurine and the place on the head where it was removed has been polished to a high sheen, revealing the inner beauty of the stones. The tail arc where it joins the body appears to have been worked by the ancient Native American Indian artisan to fit the body stone. **Olivine** granite with extensive weathering, 3 parts. 4.5"h; 808 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



wetted

84. Thunderstorm Bird

Avis tonitrus procella

This massive Indian thunderbird statue and egg has more color than most of the figurines we've found. Extraordinarily beautiful when wet. Wetting temporarily cancels out the patina. The dark green color is the shade of the summer sky just before a big thunderstorm - when icy hail lurks above and reflects the greenery below. Rare green **olivine** quartzite with equally rare pink conglomerated quartzite egg (glacier ground), 3 parts. 6.3"h; 1762 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



123. Preening Red Hawk with matching arrowhead

mundities rufus accipiter

Made of a uniquely different chalcedony I call "Peppermint", this avian has its beak dug into its back as if preening or cleaning its feathers. His crown is sticking up at the back of his head. This figure was hard won: The head was discovered in 2000. A crude matching arrowhead made from the same type of beautiful quartz chalcedony is included. The tail stone was found in 2011 - all from the same site on Glen's (Kneer) Hill. A very **rare**

peppermint chalcedony, 3 parts plus arrowhead, 5.1"h; 718 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



79. PiezoElectric Lightning Bird

Ales alitis fulguralis

In ancient Indian mythology, some Thunderbirds created lightning with their eyes. Rubbing these stones together in the dark makes beautiful piezo-electric "lightning" sparks within the stones, which may account for the wear along the edges of these stones. (Wear glasses or goggles when doing this) The figure parts are of the same mother stone and composed of milky metaquartzite. However, after

millennia in the iron-rich Illinois soil, they have acquired a creamy patina. Pale yellow milky (Creamy) metaquartzite crystal, **piezoelectric**, 3 parts. 3.5"h; 605 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



82. Thunderbird and Child

Avis tonitrus & Infantis

Is this a warning to children to keep a weather-eye out for large sweeping shadows and the soft swoosh of death from above? The right wing is free-standing and contours the bird's body as if the wind is in the wing. The left wing is one with the body. We know this to be a figurine set because all these stones were found together. The baby's head is also shaped to fit into the crook of the left wing. It's as if big bird is about to swoop-him-up; a grim

reminder to young mothers not to leave their babies out in the open. Caramel jasper w light alkali patina, 6 parts. 3.8"h; 556 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

58. Brooding Red Hawk

Buteo jamaicensis

Probably represents the Red-tailed Hawk, of which a few are still red all over. Umber jasper, with minute crevices resembling feather patterns (still holding field dirt). Finding a red figurine is rare and suggest they were rare with the River Owl as well. Bird is deep-red jasper. Nest is a collapsed chalcedony geode w sparkling crystal-coated botryoidal "eggs", 6 parts. 3.0"h; 289 gm

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101. First Flight

Aquila chrysaetos

With a protective wing outstretched, this mother Thunderbird is watching over her fledgling about to take its first flight. Wind in its wings, tail feathers trembling for trim and eyes on Momma, this chick has a naturally formed head with two eyes and a hawk-like beak just like Momma's. The fledgling's tail feathers are the only part that has been worked by the ancient artisan. Momma bird is a little darker in color than baby bird - just like in real life. Caramel and butterscotch jasper, 6 parts. 3.8"h; 390 gm total.

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56. Sky Dream Falcon

Falco rusticolus

Of all the varieties of falcons, this figure resembles most the Gyrfalcon, which habits northern climes and would have been a regular at the River Owl site near the end of the last Ice Age. Other falcons such as the small Kestrel are again flying over the farmlands of Illinois as they slowly make their comeback from DDT spraying in the 1950s. Sharp and dignified, this raptor quietly waits. On top of the head stone, which was worked on its right side by the



ancient artisan, is a deep imprint of a fossil bivalve shell *Mucrospirifer* holding sparkling micro-crystals. This fossil has an uncanny resemblance to a flying falcon. The bottom side of the head stone has another recessed fossil shell of the same species with signs of wear that show it was seated on the body in ages past. (We take great care not to grind figure stones together as wear-marks are clues to original assembly.) The body stone is loaded with fossilized crinoid "Indian beads" resembling tiny bones of the birds' prey. Khaki jasper w "flying" fossil shell on head, 2 parts. 5.0"h; 393 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



114. Red Bird

Acredula curialium

This may have been a representation of a sunset thunderbird, but could have been a cardinal. Cardinals are abundant in Illinois. Today, their feathers are illegal to own, but would have been a beautiful adornment to Paleo / Archaic Indian. This figurine is made of red granite, a material that is rare in this area likely brought down by the last Ice Age glacier. In the left photo I posed the figure with the bird looking over its back preening itself. Its tail is lying flat. The right photo the head is forward, and the tail is up edgewise against the body stone. Red granite 3 parts. 4.5"H x 7.5"L; 776 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



81. Red Thunder

Argentavis magnificens

This beautiful red figurine, hand-polished by the ancient artisan, was first thought to be meteorite (no sample pieces have been removed from the stones), but it is actually a rare form of hematite. Here, this Indian thunderbird has just laid more terror in the skies - and has turned her head to see her egg. Red minerals fill the iron matrix of these stones giving them the appearance of tiny scales or feathers. The smoky metaquartzite egg found near the bird has minute hinge fractures giving it the speckled-egg appearance. Apparently, the egg was glacier-ground and hand-polished by the Native American Indian River Owl as well. Red hematite w blue-black specks (not a tool kit) w smoky metaquartzite egg, 3 parts. 3.5" h; 217 gm total. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



83. Soaring Red-Tail Hawk

Buteo jamaicensis



Red Tail Hawks, though a protected species, are quite numerous in this area. In fact, the Red-Tail was made famous when "Pale Male", a light-colored Red-Tail Hawk, arrived in Central Park in New York City in 1995. I found the body stone first, thinking it might be a small hammer head, but I couldn't find any impact marks on this hard shale piece. Later I went back and found the matching shale head and red sandstone tail. A cute little dead ringer for the real thing. Were some red-tails lighter in color shortly after the last Ice Age? Gray Pennsylvanian glacial slate body with gray and white-stripped glacial banded slate head and red sandstone tail, 3 parts. 3.0h; 164 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



True Color

108. Bathing Mammoth *Mammuthus primigenius*

These 3 stones had me bewildered for about a year. At first, I thought them to be an elk or bison, but elk and bison do not have long tails. So, they ended up getting bagged and tagged "unknown" for 4 more years. When we finally deduced the age of our find, it occurred to me to look for other animals - Ice Age animals that went extinct about the time these stones were first turned into art. I then noticed the head stone had been chipped a specific way. I wondered how long it took the ancient artists to find the trunk to this now extinct pachyderm. The trunk not only looks like the beast is folding it up to eat, it also holds up the head stone against the weight of the body stone - a wholly unique way of stacking stones into a figurine. Note the chocolate/caramel coloration matches these 3 stones perfectly and the tiny cell-like patterns in the stones look almost like elephant skin. Being mottled, it also looks as if the Ice Age beast has shed some of its wool. Smooth chocolate/caramel "Tortoise shell" chalcedony, 3 parts along with 2 sets of "tusks" I fashioned from a near-by bush. 4.2"h x 7.0"L; 935 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



109. Wooly Mammoth

Mammuthus primigenius

To find a figurine of one mammoth could be considered a coincidence. But to find a second must be considered a confirmation just how old these statuettes are. I added "tusks" to the Ice Age animal figurine above and formed them as the clan artist may have done - by coiling cut green bush stems around a tree branch and letting them dry in the sun for a few weeks. The natural twig tusks do not help to support the trunk or head in any way, but rest against the head stone.



Caramel jasper; 3 parts. 4.5h x 6.3"L; 938 gm
Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

110. American Lion Cub

Panthera atrox

This Ice Age animal figurine of the cat has many poses. It sits with its head level and with the terrain as shown above with paws tucked in like a true cat; with head looking skyward; and with the cat standing on its haunches with head level or up. The head stone has a deep, natural groove running along the underside for the complete length of the stone, allowing it to tilt in a 70° arc. Sienna jasper, 2 parts, .4.8"h; 992 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



102. Four-in-One Ice Age Animal

Saiga Antelope *Saiga tatarica*



This little Ice Age animal figure perplexed me ever since we found it in 2002. It turned out to be a 4-in-1 figurine! The antler/horn stone had been carefully chipped out by the ancient artisan on the underside so as to allow it to stack on the head. The head stone of this Ice Age animal figurine was also chipped on its underside so that it would stack on the body stone. See where the ancient artisan chipped them, below. This Ice Age animal figurine may also pose as ... The Saiga antelope went extinct in America around 10,000 years ago and now faces extinction again on the Mongolian steppes of Eurasia.



Water Buffalo *Bison priscus*

With the head placed upside down and the antlers pointed back to become horns, the figure could represent an extinct Ice Age Water Buffalo.



American Musk Ox *Bootherium bombifrons*

By flipping the horns down, the figure becomes the extinct American Musk Oxen.

Ice Age Bison

Bison Antiquus

With the head placed before the body and antlers pointed back to become horns, the figure could represent an extinct Ice Age Bison.



Four-in-One Ice Age Animal

A breakdown of the four Ice Age animals **shown above** showing where the horns and head were worked by the ancient artisan.

Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

107. Stag Moose

Cervalces scotti

This extinct Ice Age animal figure is tall. The body stone is supported in the back by a "leg" stone resembling two side legs of the beast, of which the end can be seen from the front. Stack wet. As precariously as this Ice Age animals figure appears to be stacked, I have stacked it so many times, I eventually found the perfect position (shown here in photos) and it stood on my bookshelf on a bouncy floor for over a year before I decided to bag and tag it. Chestnut jasper w sparkling quartzite antlers, 4 parts. 7.0"h x 5.3"L; 1327 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 /



40.947113, -90.011798

31. Red Cave Bear

Arctodus rufus simus

This free-standing little feller was also found on Glen's (Kneer) Hill. It was the sixth figure we found. Red figurines must have been treasured by the clan since we have found so few of them and the ones we do find, were on the hilltop where high ranking members of the clan would have lived. Not a single red figure has been recovered in the depression that washed out in 2002. All came from the hilltop. Nostrils gathering wind of a foreign scent, this deep maroon chalcedony bear is in the act of rising to a standing posture for a better view. It's quite likely this Ice Age animal figure represents the extinct species Short-Face Bear. Maroon chalcedony, 2 parts. 3.6"h; 291 gm. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



35. Walking Black Cave Bear

Arctodus simus

We first thought these pieces to be petrified wood, which is often times found around the recovery site. It turns out the body stone is translucent smoky metaquartzite layered with iron-rich brown quartzite, giving it the old wood grain appearance. It could possibly be petrified dinosaur poop (coprolites - which we have many samples found at site 2601). The head of this Ice Age animal figurine is made of identical material. This little cub is naturally laid out in relief on this strange material with the head resting on top. Sienna and black "Burnt wood" metaquartzite (?), 2 parts. Vertical orientation. 2.7"h; 137 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798





106. Ice Horse

Equus occidentalis

(Neck and tail may not be original or belong to this figurine)

This Ice Age animal was biologically more like the African Zebra (but without the stripes) than the modern horse and colored more like the stones that represents it. Here, this horse happens to have multiple colors, like some modern horses have today. From above, the horse looks as if it is galloping as back then it was likely food, not conveyance.

The neck and tail stones may not be originals or belong to this Ice Age animal figurine. Cinnamon, caramel and sienna jasper, 4 parts. 4.1"h x 6.3"L; 616 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

103. Giant Beaver

Castoroides ohioensis

This beaver is made of caramel jasper with highly polished head (probably because it was heavily handled by its original owner and may have been a good-luck hunting charm for catching the animal). To the ancient Native American Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. earth to water (such as frogs, turtles and beaver) were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. 3 parts. 4.5"h; 495 gm

Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



104. Big Beaver

Castoroides ohioensis

This Ice Age animal figure is made of cinnamon jasper. To the ancient Native American Indian, animals that could travel between the basic elements i.e. earth to water (such as frogs, turtles and beaver) were special creatures and considered sacred. Knowing that, it is little wonder this figurine was collected from the river by Ice Age Indian. 3 parts. 3.4"h; 397 gm

Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



89. Black Beaver

Castoroides ohioensis

This Giant Beaver is an unusual Ice Age animal figurine in that it is composed of hematite-rich hornblende with long black crystals of prismatic diamond-shaped cross section called spectacular hematite. They sparkle brilliantly in the sun (Note the happenstance sparkle from the camera flash where an eye would be). Shiny objects were rare in the Pleistocene and it is certain that this figure was a keepsake. There probably was black beaver back then as there are today. Even though this figure is pretty in sunlight, it was probably a seldom-used tool kit: The head would have been a good pecking tool for chipping flint; the body could be a bone or general-purpose hammer; the tail a very functional knife with high-iron content. Hornblende, 3 parts. 5.1"h; 639 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



105. Wrong Way Camel

Camelops hester

Though the neck of this Ice Age camel appears to be precariously stacked, the figurine is quite stable. At first, I was not completely sure the wedge-shaped stone was the right neck stone, but it does convey the concept of the undulating neck of the camel gait. The V-notch of the body stone accepts the neck stone almost perfectly. I would stack wet with hard water for long-standing assurance. Sienna jasper, 3 parts. 5.75"h; 400 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



Camel Head *Camelus Titanotylopus*

(Body at-large)

Here is another camel head we found and judging by its size (three inches long) the body of this Ice Age animal figurine must have been pretty large. It may have been cast away 200 years ago when the Spoon River bottomland was first cleared for farming. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

111. Woolly Rhino w Calf

Coelodonta antiquitatis

After finding the larger rhino, I noticed the head of the baby and found its body stone, which was clipped by the ancient artist to accommodate the head perfectly. For both Ice Age rhinos, I took the liberty to code the foot/leg pebbles underneath with an indelible marker - each one carefully labeled RF for right front; LF for left front; RR for right rear; and LR for left rear. These marks can be removed with rubbing alcohol and a Q-tip. (I did this because it took me quite a while to find the right leg-stone placements to make each Ice Age animal figure level. The legs are pebbles found near our house and not the original parts) The white chert horn found with these stones reflected the flash from the camera washing out the minute pits which gives it an ancient ivory appearance to match the other stones. (The horn sits flush with the rhino's face, not behind it as the photo might suggest.) Sienna jasper w white chert horn, 13 parts; horizontal and vertical orientation. Cow: 2.5"h x 7.4"L / Calf: 1.5"h x 3.6"L total weight = 890 gm Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798



Late Paleo Medicine Man Kit

Item #: F27

Type: Medicine Man Kit

Length: Each piece is nearly identical in length = 1 3/4" in a 3 1/4"x 4 1/4" frame

Material: Maroon and Gray Flint

Age: Early Archaic (11,600 - 8,000 BP)

Probable Usage: A beautiful matched set of Contracting Stem point (found 1997 site 2601A); Surgical blade (very rare found 1998 site 2601A) and Knife with smooth rounded spine and very sharp edge (found 1997 site 2601A - just feet from the point).

Provenance: Spoon River valley in Illinois, Knox County site 2601

Date found: Steven Hampton from site 2601A late 1990s. Spoon River Site: 2601 / 40.947113, -90.011798

WEAPON REPLICAS

CAUTION: Artifacts not Cemented in

Red Wing Battle Axe	
Functional	
	
<p>Recovered: 4/3/03 Mounted: Nov. 2003 Site: Knox County, Ill. Spoon River on Hilltop figurine site 2601B Authentic iron hematite axe head artifact from Figurine Site 2601B fitted and anchored (without adhesive) into a 1.75" Dia. polyurethaned Wormwood Willow handle from near the same site. This functional weapon has its handle wrapped with leather cord and accented with real wild turkey feathers and imitation turquoise and imitation bone beads with polyurethaned leather bindings around the stone end. Care was taken not to contaminate the stone. The red ochre coating of the stone has all but worn off or was chipped-off as needed by the original owners to make face paint. The recovery site could have very well been where the chieftain or medicine man dwelled as this was where the red flint surgical blade was also recovered. Note wear on blade edge: this heavy iron-laden weapon was well-used. This weapon clearly shows that the River Owl were using iron millennia before the "Iron-Age". The stone was not worked, but because of its natural tear-drop shaped cross-section, it seats securely into a split-handle form. Functional, but for display only and seller cannot take responsibility for any damage imposed by buyer. The only one of its kind. Waking Dream Shaman (Kokopelli) manikin included. Artifact: 6.25" L x 524 gm. Overall replica length: 33.75"</p>	

Blue Tomahawk

Functional



Mounted: Nov. 2003
Recovered: Mar. 2003

Site: Knox County, Ill. Spoon River bottomland figurine Hill site 2601A.
Authentic iron hematite axe head artifact from Figurine Site 2601A fitted and anchored (without adhesive) into a 1.125" Dia. polyurethaned Willow handle from the same site. This functional weapon is accented with a real wild turkey feather and imitation turquoise and imitation bone beads with leather bindings around the stone end. This hard, naturally sharp slate ax head showing ancient wear contains large amounts of hematite and olivine, which makes it hard enough to chop bone and gives it the remarkable iridescent blue coloration in sunlight. Note areas of weathered-out iron. This weapon clearly shows that the River Owl were using iron millennia before the "Iron-Age". The stone was not worked, but naturally seats in a split-handle form. The only one of its kind in existence. Artifact: 4.5" L x 198.3 gm. Overall replica length: 17.25"



Functional

Black Adze

Mounted: Dec. 2001

Recovered: Mar. 2000

Site: Knox County, Ill. Spoon River bottomland figurine site 2601B.

Authentic artifact stone which is composed of hematite-rich hornblende with long black crystals of prismatic diamond-shaped cross section. Note weathered-out iron as rusty stains on American Indian tool. This American Indian tool clearly shows that the River Owl were using iron millennia before the "Iron-Age". Found at Figurine Site 2601B and fitted into a 1.0" Dia. polyurethaned Wormwood Willow handle from the same site. This functional pecking and chipping tool of the River Owl. judging by the wear, was heavily used to work other stones - possible even some of our figurine pieces. It is accented with a real wild turkey feather with imitation turquoise, imitation rosewood and imitation bone beads with leather bindings around the stone end. Small adzes are quite rare because they are harder to find. Artifact: 4.25" L. Overall replica length: 13.50"




Deer Bone Handle Flint Knife

Functional

Mounted: April 2009
Recovered: Hanna City, IL auction Mar. 2004
Site: Stark County, Ill.

This knife made with an authentic artifact blade is still sharp enough it could skin a deer. Real deer bone handle with authentic artifact flint blade. Blade is not cemented into handle, but bound by wrapped, wet leather thong that has dried to a tight shrink-fit. (Early man cemented such items using hot pine pitch.) Artifact: 2.75" L. Overall replica length: 8.0"

Artifact can be removed for inspection. Caution: Very sharp

	
Functional	
Forked Tomahawk	
<p> Mounted: Nov. 2003 Recovered: Feb. 2003 Site: Knox County, Ill. Spoon River bottomland figurine site 2601C. Authentic hornblende axe head artifact from Figurine Site 2601C fitted and anchored (without adhesive) into a beautiful 1.0" Dia. polyurethaned Knotty Willow handle from the same site. This functional weapon is accented with real wild turkey feathers, imitation turquoise, imitation bone, and imitation rosewood beads with polyurethaned leather bindings around the stone end. This super-hard hornblende battle ax head was well-used with a heavy wear on the front blade. The stone was cleaved from a larger piece by the ancient tool maker and naturally seats in a fork-handle form. Truly a Stone-Age weapon of distinction. Artifact: 8.0" L x 512 gm. Overall replica length: 17.50" </p>	



Functional

Olivine Sickle

Mounted: Dec. 2003
 Recovered: Oct. 2003
 Site: Knox County, Ill. Spoon River bottomland figurine site 2601C.

Authentic dark green olivine hornblende American Indian tool from Figurine Site 2601C fitted into a 1.125" Dia. polyurethaned Wormwood Willow handle from the same site. (Early man cemented such items using hot pine pitch.) This well-worn tool was likely used to harvest grasses for bedding, food crops and self-defense. It was found in the figurine washout location of the River Owl site. It's accented with a real wild turkey feather with imitation turquoise, imitation rosewood and imitation bone beads with leather bindings around the stone end. The stone, when wetted, has a beautiful deep forest green coloration. It was clipped from a larger piece by the ancient tool maker and naturally seats in a split-handle form.

Artifact: 4.0" L, Wt: 101.8 gm. Overall replica length: 15.75"

Caution: Not fully functional until artifact is cemented into handle - artifact may dislodge from moving handle and may be damaged or cause injury if not cemented. Artifact can be removed for inspection.

For display only, not intended for actual use. The seller is not responsible for the use, or misuse of this or any other item sold.



Deer Bone Sickle


Functional

Mounted: April 2009
Recovered: Mar. 2004

This very sharp Paleo Period knife blade is fitted (without adhesive) into a genuine deer bone handle from figurine site. (Early man cemented such items using hot pine pitch.) This Paleo Indian tool may have been used to harvest grass for bedding and other plants for food. It is also sharp enough to be used to process game for its meat and hide. Artifact: 3.325" L. Overall replica length: 9.75"

Caution: Not fully functional until artifact is cemented into handle - artifact may dislodge from moving handle and may be damaged or cause injury if not cemented. Artifact can be removed for inspection. Very sharp

For display only, not intended for actual use. The seller is not responsible for the use, or misuse of this or any other item sold.

	
Jabbing Spear	
Functional	
<p>Mounted: Nov. 2003 Recovered: Point purchased Farm Auction 4/28/02 Site: Unknown County, Ark. Bound with imitation pine pitch and imitation deer sinew, real wild turkey feathers and imitation bone bead and deer hide thong on polyurethaned Red Willow shaft (shaft from Site 2601). The authentic artifact stone tip was bought at auction and hails from an unknown county in Arkansas just 500 miles south of Site 2601. This state may have also been on the route of the migrating River Owl clan. We have added more feathers and beads since the photograph. Artifact: gray chert 3.25" L x 21.5 gm. Overall replica length: 46" and Dia is .875" avg.</p>	

AND MORE ...

Spoon River Anthropomorphic Stacking Stone Paleo-Indian Figurines

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The Spoon River valley in Illinois is host to over 2,600 known archeological sites. In 2002 a cache of unusual stones washed out of a bottomland cornfield. These eerie rocks along with projectile points and hand tools surfaced in groups of two, three or more stones of the same color or material that stack to make plausible figures with recognizable features. Though these odd-shaped rocks are naturally smooth river stones, most show signs of being meticulously worked so that they could be stacked. These newly discovered prehistoric Indian artifacts also suggest that surgery and the use of iron is much older than previously thought.

I. Introduction

Most compelling of this Native American Indian art are free-standing effigies of men and women, some sitting as if in meditation – probably representing medicine men or chieftains. Also found were animal figurines i.e. coyotes, beaver, owls, turtles, fish, snakes, ducks and geese, elk, bear, cougars, and thunderbirds. We know these figures are ancient because extinct Ice Age animals such as mammoth, American lion, short-face bear, woolly rhinoceros, stag, moose, Ice Age camel, and Saiga antelope were also represented.

Stone age man likely believed that capturing the image of his prey, he captured its spirit, making the animal itself easier to catch. Likewise, Native Americans up until very recently considered being photographed bad medicine. But more striking of this Ice Age American Indian art were human fertility figures – both female and male - likely representing Shamans and exotic Venuses. [1] There were human organ-shaped stones of realistic color, possibly used in homeopathic / sympathetic medicine. Some figurines have evidence of dual functions and served as tool kits.

The evidence detailed in the following pages leads us to believe these ancient Indian artifacts [2] are from the Mid Paleo Indian Period [3] of Native American culture in North America near the end of the last Ice Age. This is also known as the Upper Paleolithic Epoch or "Stone Age" proper in Europe, in particular the Magdalenian Culture when most cave paintings were first thought to have been created. This period was also characterized by artifacts such as willow points, bone tools, stone implements and stone points - but before the invention of pottery, beads, bone fishhooks, and the bow-and-arrow with small arrowheads.² For reference, these Indian artifacts were first assembled around the time Göbekli Tepe was erected in southern Turkey - believed to be the first religious temple built by Stone Age man with stone tools. The lance or spear was the principle long-range weapon. A short-range spear, throwing hammer and possibly the 2-string slingshot may have been used for smaller prey.

These figurines were first stacked 9,000 years before *Stonehenge*³ split the seasons and 11,000 years before the *Mayans*⁴ rise above the Yucatan jungle.

It has long been known Native American Indians stacked stones to mark paths, [4] ceremonial places, and used to make petroforms. Stacking stones makes a statement. Why not also depict a concept if possible? Throughout man's history stone have been used for artistic expression.[5] *Totem poles* may be residual expressions of Paleolithic times when Native American Indians stacked stones. The "casting of stones" used to predict the future in many early cultures, may have been founded on ancient art like that of the horizontal figurines of this collection. Anthropomorphic stones

¹ Steven M. Hampton is of Cherokee descent and an amateur archeologist who grew up on the discovery site. He has also published papers in the field of physics and has filed patents on several space propulsion engines.

² Some archaeologists contend the bow and arrow were already in existence in Africa.

³ <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/stonehenge/history-and-stories/>

⁴ <https://www.marc.ucsb.edu/research/maya/ancient-maya-civilization/maya-chronology>

are being discovered world-wide [6] but none that stack to make such expressive concepts as these found in the Spoon River valley discovery site.

These free-standing figurines are unique and very rare Indian artifacts. One cannot go down to a river and collect a handful of rocks that match and come together to make a meaningful and non-abstract statement. First, the rivers in this region have not been clear for thousands of years. What makes these stones even more unique is after two-centuries of farming and erosion, Ice Age riverbeds have been filled-in with so much silt that finding such otherwise perfectly matched stones would now be impossible. Ironically, what exposed these Ice Age figurines was the build-up of riverbed silt that causes flooding in this area: The resulting washouts remove topsoil when flooding recedes.

To otherwise assemble a statue from rocks of uniform color would look generic or nonsensical. Neither could one have sorted out such beautifully matched stones with patina from a quarry, gravel pit or a thousand random washouts. Why were groups of matching river stones of varying specific gravities, near a site where projectile points and tools are found, some buried high on a hill overlooking the river?

The following pages explore the evidence that proves just how old this intoxicating ancient Ice-Age art is, where it came from, and who put it there.

II. Stone Totems

A. Sacred Ground

(First Person Narrative:) A waning screech catapults me out of a daydream. Overhead, a circling hawk parts the sky with a twist of its red tail and I'm back on the bare cornfield where I have been walking for hours. There is a subtle sense of reverence for being on the very ground my distant ancestors once walked. Through the lace of human genetics stretching far back into dark Africa, we are all related, I thought. Sweet moldy scent of fresh earth pulls me back once again to the damp soil. How much have I missed? I vow to railroad my attention to the ground looking for clues, a single glint of reflected light - even for a brief instant – of how life was for the people who, lost to the ages, lived on this land.

Long before recorded history, Native Americans hunted and fished the upper Spoon River valley in Illinois. These ancient people left behind stone axes, hammers, scrapers, and dart tips or "arrowheads." Among these Indian artifacts sprouting in the springtime cornfields along the Spoon River are various other stones with no apparent useful function. Locally called "field stones" these rocks are a nuisance; wearing on the farmer's implements and tripped over by arrowhead hunters.

In some fields along the lazy Spoon are ancient, shallow campsite mounds laying a few feet above flood plain. See Fig. 1 below. It's around these mounds where Indian artifacts - arrowheads, tools and flint chips are found. My foster cousin Dan Strange found a large, beautiful, and complete stone axe head when we were teenagers – we often cultivated these fields on tractors in early summer at site 2601A and 2601C. Glen R. Kneer, my foster father, had a collection of several arrowhead points he had picked up over the years: Sometimes when working a field, a shiny flint point would catch his eye and he would stop the tractor to pick it up.



Figure 1 Site 2601

My favorite place while growing up on our small dairy farm in the mid-1960's was a wide-open hilltop pasture (2601B) overlooking the rich Spoon River bottomland. There, I spent many a hot summer day cutting down thistle plants with a corn knife. The hill was also my get-a-way place to daydream.

I was in my forties when Glen died in 1996. It was then I became interested in Indian artifacts and so set out to find them: I walked the likely places in 10-foot swaths until I cover the whole area. This simple technique made my collection grow quite rapidly. My wife Delores and I would also hunt for artifacts in Dan's field with his permission.⁵ The hill was cow pasture for as long as my foster mother Audrey could remember until she had the top of it deep plowed for cropland in 1998. This brought up artifacts from about a foot down. The hill too had a campsite mound, but was concealed under grass all these years, so wasn't hunted out like sites 2601A and 2601C by visitors in the past. It was ripe for the picking. It is March of 2002, the beginning of my fifth year as a relic hunter and I was alone this time, anxious to find the top-half of a beautiful multicolored, dove-tailed spear point. I found the bottom-half on the hill the previous spring, so that's where I headed. It is there I would come upon a pair of stones that changed my view of the North American Indian forever.

B. Cracked Nut?

(First Person Narrative:) Sun-drenched dewdrops spangle the early morning grass along the edge of the field. The hawk is circling over the misty river bottom now, looking for some unfortunate field mouse foraging in last fall's leaf litter. I turn my attention back to walking the ground. This hobby had become a walking meditation of sorts. What's this? A couple of old red rocks. By now, I am quite conservative with bending over. But if I don't check them out, I'll wonder what they were for the rest of the day and will have to back-track to find them again. I pick up one of the dirt-caked stones. It has no remarkable features other than sparkling red in the dewy morning sun. I make a mental note of their location and slip both heavy stones into my backpack containing a point found nearby on a previous pass.

Later, back at home I wash the red stones with water and a dedicated toothbrush. I study the pieces more intently. Huh. They're heavy for their size. They appear to be crystalline metaquartzite of a deep red color and peppered with black hematite crystal inclusions. The normally clear quartzite is colored bright red by hematite (iron oxide). At first, I thought them to be a millstone and base, but the top piece will not sit flush with the bottom. Next the nutcracker theory was invoked, explaining the fissures in the base and old *hinge fractures*, cracks running parallel to the surface, under the top piece. This area still supports many hickory and walnut trees. The gap between the stones would prevent pulverizing the meat of the nut. This nutcracker, I thought, would at least be a curious addition to the other strange rocks we had found on our arrowhead hunting excursions.

Then one evening about a week later, while casually observing the nutcracker set, the hair raised on the back of my neck. I saw her: A kneeling woman holding up an infant 74. Mother & Child shown in Fig. 2 below. The baby's head is against her left shoulder. With trembling hands, I reaffirmed this conclusion by re-examining the base. The bottom stone appears to have been chipped to divide her knees and its left side was cleaved – across the natural layers of stone – to make both thighs the same thickness. This was a deliberate attempt by someone long ago to make a stone figurine! I re-assemble the stones and study every detail. Anxiously I reach out to pick up the top stone again but stop short, gently nudging it. It rocks left-to-right for several cycles like a dampening spring as if rocking the baby to sleep. This action does not misplace the top stone in the least. To ancient Indian this would have been quite a novelty.

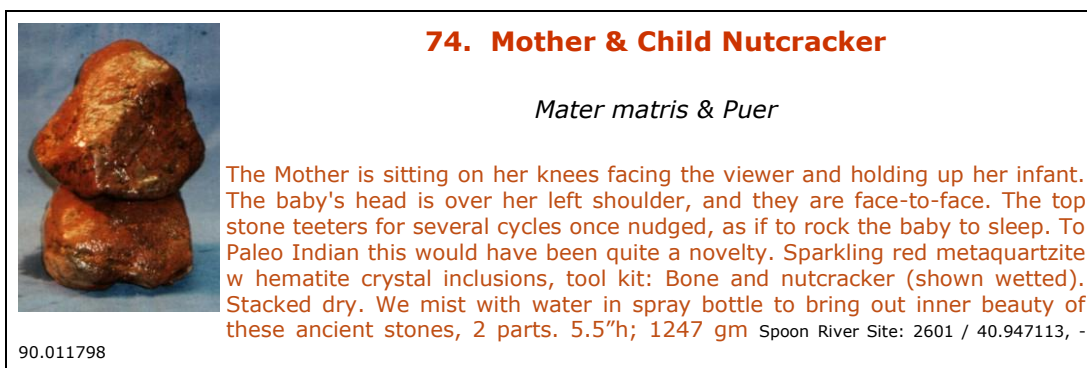


Figure 2 First Figurine Discovered

⁵ Warning: Artifact hunting at these sites is no longer allowed by the property owners.

Curiously, from any angle the work reveals a variety of lingham profiles. This figurine may have been a female fertility, male potency idol, or a wedding gift. The bottom stone has a bowl-like depression from much use. Having been used as a bone-and nutcracker and left standing to be exposed to hundreds of years of weathering and then buried for thousands more, the bottom stone had acquired a few ancient fissures from water standing and freezing in its bowl-like depression. However, this Indian artifact is beautiful when wet revealing a bright, translucent red stone peppered with occasional black streaks of hematite crystals. Thousands of years ago when these stones were unsullied, fresh out of the Spoon River and dried, they probably looked much like they do today when wetted.

C. Strange Stones

Since the initial discovery of the rocking nutcracker, my wife Delores and I have found other stones that assemble into even more plausible figurines. Most of these figurines were found lying together in a cornfield washout near the river's edge. They may have been left standing assembled and covered by centuries, nay millennia of rain-washed soil and plant debris until pulled up and tumbled by the action of the plow.

These Indian artifacts are stacking stone figurines which consists of separate pieces because early man did not have a way to effectively carve stone. Carving quartz is a difficult and time-consuming task, even today and virtually impossible in the stone age. Many of these stones would have been too dangerous to work without eye protection. It was much easier to stack or otherwise arrange stones to display a concept. Aside from hide-painting, these people had no other medium to express themselves. In Europe, cave painting had been practiced for about 40,000 years. Just a few thousand years ago the Ojibwas of Red Lake, Minnesota left ancient petroglyphs, mostly of giant Thunderbirds, carved or painted onto the soft limestone cliff faces. On the contrary, there are no caves or cliffs near our recovery site. So, these people used their most abundant resource for artistic expression – river stones.

Dozens of these Indian art figurines had been deliberately chipped on the undersides of some of their stones to stack together and in one special case to define facial features. One chalcedony figurine of beautiful carnelian grade has a piece that, like flint tools made of the time, was completely chipped into a woman's head with hair tied into a bun and hollowed out underneath to seat on the torso. Another figurine, 102. Four-in-One Ice Age Animal has head and antler stones that were painstakingly cut in relief to assemble into five different Ice Age animals. The chipped surfaces of all these figurine stones show long-term weathering, smooth edges, and patina, ruling out farm implements and historic man as being the sculptor. In other stones there are matching wear marks, even in deep recesses, revealing the way to stack some of these figurines.

It is far from coincidence these river stones, found on a hill and in a bottomland washout with datable arrowheads - stack to produce expressive works of Indian art in recognizable forms: The odds of finding two or more natural stones together, of the same primal material, in clusters that make a statement are otherwise astronomical. We are conditioned to think art as being made of a single piece of material wholly formed by the hand of man.

How is it possible to find so many matching stones in one place? In most areas of the world only a glacier or massive flood could bring together such a diversity of odd stones from a geological deposit. In order to answer the question of where these stones came from and how old they are, we must first look at the geologic history of Illinois.

III. Prehistoric Illinois

A. Bedrock, Illinois

Because of the immensity of past Ice Age glaciers and their scraping effect upon the land, the geology of Illinois is unique. Moraines were scraped-up and piled ahead of the glacier's leading edge as it pushed southwestward. In this area, these ancient moraines, once seabed from countless eons past, were left behind in receding bands as the glaciers retreated after the last Ice Age. After four glaciations, Illinois has been scraped to the bone with variations in bedrock from the Cambrian Period 550 million years ago to the Cretaceous Period 65 million years ago. It's like the whole state was scraped down as watershed towards the Mississippi River exposing a cross-section of the history of life on Earth. See Fig. 3 below Geologic Map of Illinois.

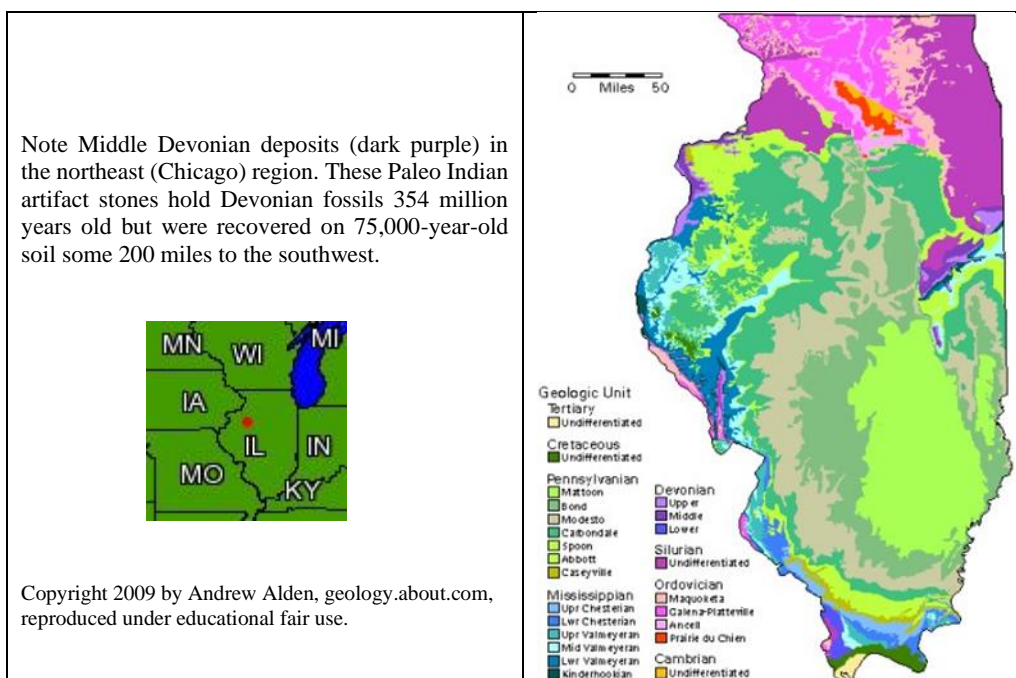


Figure 3 Geologic Map of Illinois

The bedrock in the recovery area varies by county and in this particular region Stark, Knox and Fulton counties along the Spoon River, the bedrock is from the Pennsylvanian Period 300 million years ago (mya). Below that is shale from the earlier Mississippian Period 335 mya. There is presently little exposed bedrock in Illinois, but in this region Pennsylvanian Period bedrock was exposed by the third major ice sheet of the Illinoian Ice Age (between 250,000 to 135,000 years ago) when that ice sheet was over one mile high and stretched across the landscape as far as the eye could see. We all know how heavy water is. Imagine the weight of a one-mile-thick sheet of ice. This whole region eventually filled with silt from that retreating glacier which is where we get most of our clay subsoil. The fourth and last retreating Wisconsinan ice sheet left our rich fertile topsoil. But this soil is much richer in history.

B. Older Than Dirt

Fortunately, many of these stones have fossils and we can date to when they were formed. Nearly all these rocks come from a geologic stratum of the Devonian mass extinction 354 million years ago. In the seas lived sponges, corals, ammonoids, trilobites, brachiopods, sharks and bony fishes. On the land, short primitive plants appeared along with the first trees only 3 feet high. The first wingless insects crawled from the seas to escape predation by the arachnids. Soon the arachnids followed. Shortly thereafter the first reptiles appeared on land to feed on the insects and the arachnids. There are still many unanswered questions about life on earth and the mass extinction in the Devonian Period. But our core question here is, how did 354-million-year-old rock end up on the surface of 75,000-year-old soil?

To the northeast Illinois region lies a vast arc of moraines. See Fig. 4 below Quaternary Geology of Illinois. This arc outlines the fourth and last ice sheet, the Wisconsinan of that same ice age between 75,000 and 14,000 years ago. At the height of the last Ice Age, the Wisconsinan ice sheet only extended down through, and just south of, the Chicago region along a line running south to southeast (the green area on the map below) from Harvard through Rochelle, Princeton, Bloomington-Normal, Effingham, Decatur, and Paris Illinois. However, this region ends just 25 miles east of the recovery site but right at the headwaters of the Spoon River. When the final giant ice sheet retreated, even though the Spoon itself was not covered by this fourth and final ice sheet, the Spoon River valley became a-washed clearing away any riverbed silt or debris accumulated over the previous eons. The Wisconsinan also provided glaciologists clues on how glaciers transported and deposited material. In New York City, for example, before it was settled in the 1800s, large boulders peppered the landscape, brought down by the Wisconsinan.⁶

⁶ The last of those boulders can still be seen in Central Park.

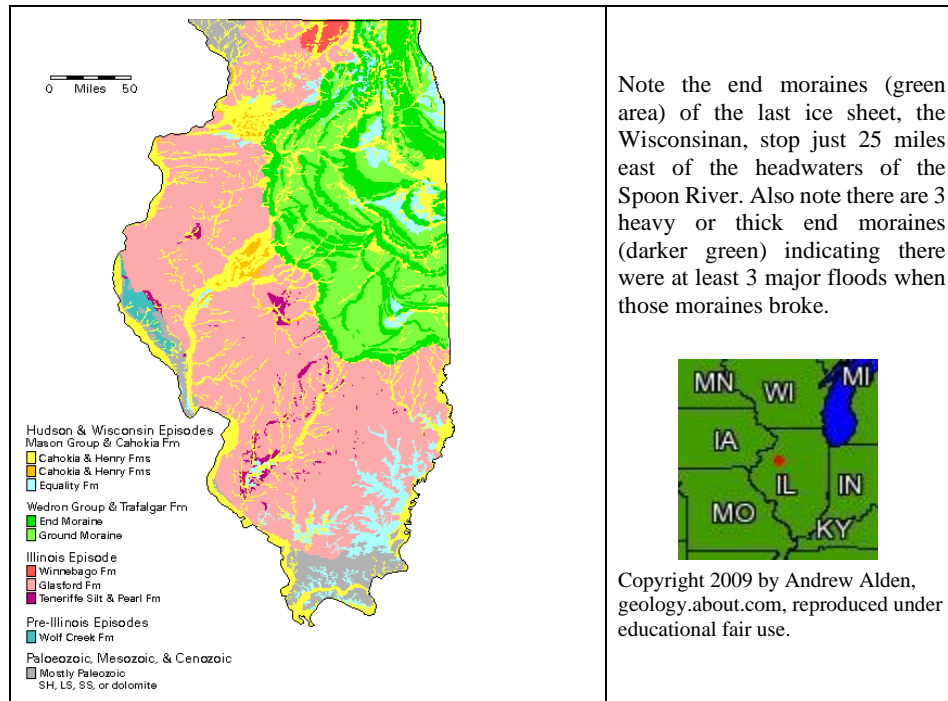


Figure 4 Quaternary Geology of Illinois

Beneath the end moraines of the Chicago-to-Paris arc in Fig. 4 above, lies bedrock from the Upper Devonian Period 354 mya with its fossil evidence of that mass extinction. Near the end of the last ice age the end moraines forming this giant arc contain torn-up rock from this period. Some of these rocks may have been held captive by the Wisconsinan glacier for tens of thousands of years. When the giant Wisconsinan ice field thawed about 18,000 years ago, it dropped its load of stones and silt called "end moraines" which often held back lakes of water. When these moraine dams broke, the raging flood waters flushed rivers and streams. Torrents of melt water swept through the riverbeds throughout Illinois. See Fig. 5 below of the Illinois river system. The residual end moraines in the Chicago-to-Paris arc are evidence that there were at least three major floods throughout the Illinois river system during the last big thaw. Scraped-up Devonian rock of various materials ranging from quartzite, metaquartzite and jasper - to amethyst, younger Pennsylvanian slate, shale, and sandstone were washed down the headwaters of the Spoon River. The raging torrents ground and polished these stones as if in some giant rock tumbler. All Illinois tributaries of the Mississippi River were awash - the whole Illinois basin was flooded - the state probably looked like a giant lake or inland ocean. As the waters slowed, the riverbeds had been cleared of silt and light debris like a giant sluice. The now smooth stones with similar specific gravities had settled into eddy pockets of the Spoon - especially near bends and meanders.

After all the flooding was over gravity continued to hammer on the river stones, albeit in less dramatic fashion, using water and pebbles as a chisel: Since glaciers follow the course of rivers, the exposed rocks were washed down and further polished by flowing water and sand. After it all settled, the ice and floods had cobbled many sections of the crystal-clear riverbeds – paved with smooth stones, some rare and semiprecious – into beautiful cobblestones of endless shapes and colors. These polished stones would have looked remarkably beautiful under clear water. Who wouldn't have picked up such interesting and shiny stones in a world where shiny objects were rare? And how could one resist a stone face looking up through the sparkling water?

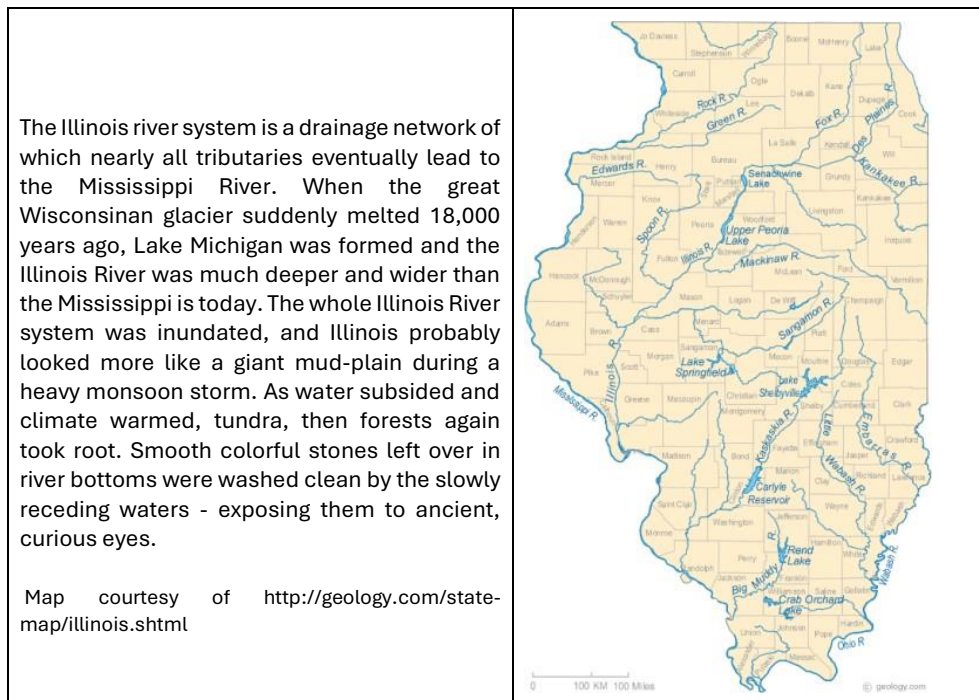


Figure 5 The Illinois River system

C. Devonian Gems

Near the end of the Devonian Period some 354 million years ago - long before Earth's Ice Ages - Illinois, as well as much of the Midwestern United States, was at the bottom of a shallow sea teeming with life. The seabed in this region was iron-rich and oily with decayed sea life. (Much of the ancient plants that came later during the Pennsylvanian Period (300 mya) became coal in this region.) The resulting oily mud was buried by tectonic action and baked under immense heat and pressure in the earth's crust. After the water had steamed away, smooth, reddish-brown mass rich in silicates was left. Most of this material became microcrystalline jasper. Some of the silicates crystallized into cavities such as geodes but also within Devonian fossils, sometimes replicating the original animal in great crystalline detail. In the eyes of archaic man these stones must have seemed as if they were alive - a gift from the mysterious river and Mother Earth's poetic license.

The common name of *Jasper* is a term which refers to a member of the chalcedony family of microcrystalline quartz which includes flint, agate and opal. *Chalcedony* (silicon dioxide - often with some iron and aluminum) itself is an opaque to translucent quartz, usually white with pale blue or gray tint and with a wax-like luster. Chalcedony has been considered a semi-precious stone since the 15th century and it is considered a gemstone when it interferes with light such as opal and carnelian. See Venus figures 62. Cloud Woman and 70. Night Sky Maiden, in the above catalogue. Another member of the chalcedony family is *flint*, a tough glassy quartz which breaks and chips easily but keeps a sharp edge. Its color scales the rainbow and was the primary material of projectile points, knives and other tools.

Chert is silica-rich and similar to flint but not as glassy - almost dull - and not as tough but was also fashioned into tools. *Agate* forms in bands or rings in rock cavities with successive layers growing in parallel rings usually towards the center of some stones. We have found a beautiful red and yellow *carnelian agate* figurine - 15. Star Eyes Baby shown in Fig. 6 below.

Microcrystalline quartz such as jasper, however, usually comes in varying shades of yellow, brown, and red depending on the amount of iron present in its formation. Jasper, a chalcedony, becomes various gemstones the more it interferes with light. Jasper can also hold fossils such as crinoids. Their stem segments are commonly called "Indian beads" and when found loose, were drilled in their centers and worn like jewelry by Paleo Indian and some later tribes of Native Americans.



15. Star Eyes Baby

Infantis oculatus sidereusa

This cheeky little tyke is even cuter in real life. The head is red and yellow carnelian agate w sparkling clear crystal eyes. Body is fire (red and yellow) carnelian as well. This Paleo artifact was probably a child's toy or mother's keepsake; 2 parts. 2.0"h; 66 gm **SOLD**

Figure 6 A rare Carnelian Agate Figurine

Other such jasper fossils would include small mollusks, sponges and other creatures often in crystalline form. Over millions of years in water saturated mud, some of the carbon and oils from those extinct sea creatures became displaced with silicates which precipitate to form quartz crystals within the fossil cavity. Jasper colored blue, gray or black is from the carbon of this ancient sea life and, depending on the quality, is usually waxy smooth and classified as a rarer form of chalcedony such as 134. Mothers Milk Nipple Charm in the above catalogue.

In one special case we found a few pieces of a rare chalcedony that can only be described as colored like decayed animal matter. Despite the grotesque description, it's made up of many colors in a beautiful swirl pattern with fossil remnants. A geologist told me that he had never seen such a chalcedony before, so we took the liberty to name it *Necro Chalcedony* such as pieces assembled into figurine 77. Great Grandfather's Bones shown in Fig. 7 below.

77. Great Grandfather's Bones

Proavus ossis

The head stone on this eerie figure has a gap that runs near completely through the stone with fossil crinoid stems (Indian beads) attached inside its mouth like ancient, abandoned bones (must have been a gas pocket in the Devonian seabed mud). If this very rare moldy-green/gray opaque fossilized chalcedony figurine is any indication, the clan bound-up the corpse of deceased loved ones in a knees-to-chest fashion at death to make transport and burial easier, as some indigenous people of Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim still practice today. All three stones are of the same rare chalcedony. The body stone has an iron oxide "patch" on the back which can only come from long-term burial in the iron-rich Illinois soil. A very rare find. Waxy smooth Necro chalcedony (a new classification of stone that we named) colored by ancient-life carbon and loaded with crinoid stem fossils, 3 parts; horizontal and vertical orientation. 3.9"L; 267 gm **SOLD**



Figure 7 A rare Necro Chalcedony Figurine

Recently we found another pair of stones made of a lesser grade of this material, 75. Father's Bones (also sold) but contained citrine crystals for a third eye. Another new and equally rare stone we named Salsa Chalcedony is 71. Harvest Woman (available above). There are other new chalcedonies in our Ice-Age Paleo Indian art collection we have yet to name.

Sometimes a large fossil such as a crinoid's head would form a steam pocket, allowing beautiful quartz crystals to grow within to become a *geode* or a collapsed jasper nodule. A few have beautifully colored crystals, tinted by various minerals. Many jasper geodes were torn out and broken up by glacial action and ended up as river stone.

Sandstone is a sedimentary rock made predominantly of fine, round grains of quartz sand. *Gritstone* is similar to sandstone but made of angular grains and was prized by early man for its sanding abilities. It sparkles quite brightly in sunlight. *Quartzite* is also a sedimentary sandstone with much larger grains of round to irregular shape. Many of our quartzite figurines are downright beautiful in bright sunlight. See 10. Father of Men, also available above.

Metaquartzite is quartzite that had been heated by the Earth so that the grains are fused together (metamorphic) into a singular crystalline mass, often times with streaks, making the individual grains almost indistinguishable. Without a microscope it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the latter two from each other. We are featuring many varieties of metaquartzite in the above figurines.

Semiprecious gemstones are found in this area and archaic man surely appreciated them. Shiny items were extremely rare and highly prized. Palm-sized stones of any kind were few and far between after the flooding subsided and plant

life took over. Some semi-precious stones such as carnelian (a fire-red and yellow chalcedony) and *amethyst* (a clear quartz crystal colored violet-to-purple by tiny traces of iron) were even more rare. *Citrine* is amethyst crystal that has been slowly cooked in the earth's crust. It has a clear yellow to golden color and considered valuable to gemstone collectors. See the "teeth" in 28. Lone Coyote in the above catalogue. Pieces of beautiful, *coprolite* or dinosaur dung are also occasionally found in this area. Most eerie, and comical, is the 5 lb. dino dung we found that is shaped like the state of Illinois.

Olivine is made primarily of peridot, which is a beautiful semi-precious olive-green gemstone colored by iron and magnesium and has a sheen luster. Sometimes olivine can manifest abundantly in quartzite and metaquartzite. See 84. Thunderstorm Bird in the above catalogue. Olivine can also be found in granite and in varying degrees in jasper. See 90. Green Thunderbolt also in the above catalogue. Other green rocks may include sedimentary shale and slate, which are usually colored by chlorite, such as 7. Medicine Man in the above catalogue.

Gneiss (pronounced "nice") is a hard metamorphic rock found primarily in mountain ranges. The mass of a growing mountain range and the Earth's heat folds and tempers various minerals such as quartz and the softer feldspar like a steel Katana sword worked by a Japanese bladesmith. It is forged into a material much harder than any one of the original components making rocks such as gneiss like 72. Iron Maiden in the above catalogue, and *hornblende* but like the Samurai sword is resilience to impact. Gneiss is usually marked with striations or streaks like its cousin *schist*, a softer and finer grained stone. Hornblende is tougher and has a dark grainy appearance.

Hematite is prized as an iron ore and a gemstone. It develops in many rocks from granites to limestone. Sometimes it forms shiny crystals called *spectacular hematite* which describes the black, highly reflective crystals such as 89. Black Beaver in the above catalogue. We are offering a beautiful red hematite 81. Red Thunder. The Paleo Indian of Spoon River valley may have prematurely started the Iron-Age by use of this mineral, not just for their Indian art, but as tough and dependable tools.

D. Patina & Surface Variations

Stone patinas on figurines are the result of mineral deposits from soil. This process usually requires great lengths of time. But not all such depositions occur at the same rate for a given square yard of soil. Actually, differences in stone patina can be due to soil conditions that may vary by the inch. For example, a dead field mouse in a burrow may change the soil ph. to alkali in a twelve-inch circle for decades.

The amount of water that drains through a patch of soil can also vary by the inch and water balances soil ph. but also increases iron oxidation. So, some of these Indian artifacts have parts with slightly different patinas even though they were buried a few inches apart. You will even notice variations in patina on a single stone. Some stones buried in a run-off may have no patina at all. Red-brown iron oxide (rust) stains (from bits of iron in the rich Illinois soil) on stone and flint Indian artifacts are "birthmark" signs of long-term burial. These birthmarks, some as tiny specks, are also a sure sign that Indian artifacts such as arrowheads and tools are genuine.

Some of these fine collectible art pieces are polished with a clear, almost sheen patina as if hand-rubbed smooth by the original owners. Many of these artifacts left behind by the Paleo Indian, we named them The River Owl, at this site have this sheen patina on the head stones only, indicating they may have been carried or held like good luck charms by the owners. Like a photograph, a head stone might have been a reminder of a loved one. Or having the animals' spirit by the head gives the hunter the psychic edge. Fortunately for us, these figurines had their heads – left behind by the River Owl – for what would one day become their final autumn.

IV. Ice Age Illinois

A. The Before Time

The question of when humans first came to North America has been hotly debated for over a century, especially now with the recent interest in the last Ice Age. According to established theory, sometime during the Pleistocene, around 15,000 years ago, the last great eastern ice sheet, the Laurentian, reached down only to Wisconsin and was already receding.[7] Early Paleo Indian had immigrated across the Bering Sea by the land bridge of the Aleutian Island chain (known as Beringia) from Siberia into North America and followed a corridor south between the retreating ice sheets, perhaps to hunt woolly mammoth. We don't know what these prehistoric people who made this art looked like as no skeletal remains have been found. They may have looked like the Aleuts of the Aleutian Islands stretching between Asia and Alaska. Some quite possibly had Caucasian features inherited by the Solutrians of France.

A more recent theory propose prehistoric Solutreans of Ice Age France also sailed west to America across the Atlantic Ocean along the south ridge of the polar ice cap more than 18,000 years ago. It is thought they brought Clovis point technology (earlier, similar points were found in France) and genetic diversity (such as red hair and large noses) to Native Americans.[8] However, genetic markers found in Native Americans of various tribes point more towards

Asian ancestry. Even more recent findings [9] suggest that humans came to North America as far back as 50,000 years ago.

The exact date humans came to North America will not be found soon, but the Hebior and Schaefer Wisconsin mammoth sites about 350 miles northeast of our recovery site were recently carbon-dated to 15,000 to 16,500 years ago and contained artifacts that were basically cutting and skinning tools.[10]

B. Shangri-La Lost

What was the climate like when people first came here? Northern Illinois has an unusual climate history due to its latitude and geology. The Chicago region in particular was once under the southern edge of the Wisconsin ice sheet. When this massive ice sheet started to retreat 18,000 years ago, it depressed the land and created a wide basin.

Much of the city of Chicago lies on beach and lake sediments deposited by Lake Michigan and its predecessor glacial Lake Chicago. After the Wisconsin glacier retreated from the Chicago region, it still occupied and dammed the northern end of the Lake Michigan basin, forming glacial Lake Chicago. This lake, which covered most of present-day Chicago, was higher than modern Lake Michigan.

“By analyzing pollen and fossilized vegetation in this ancient Ice Age lakebed scientists have determined that at the closing of the last Ice Age, the southwestern Chicago region and the northern half of Illinois was like no other place on earth.” [11]

Following the retreat of the glaciers, vegetation invaded the newly ice-free terrain. From about 18,000 to 16,000 years ago, open tundra-like vegetation with scattered spruce (*Picea*) trees covered the landscape. Both white spruce (*Picea glauca*) and black spruce (*Picea mariana*) were present, as was larch (*Larix laricina*). These trees are all common today in the boreal forest or taiga of Canada. Although the glaciers had retreated, the climate was still quite cold. About 16,000 years ago, the spruce forest became denser, and closed forest developed. This spruce forest lasted for about 1,000 years, until about 15,000 years ago, when climate warmed and deciduous trees became more abundant, including balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*), black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), and ironwood (*Ostrya virginiana* or *Carpinus caroliniana*). Balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) also was present, as was spruce, although not as abundantly as before.

This late-Pleistocene forest of spruce and deciduous trees is unusual in that a forest of similar composition does not occur anywhere today. The implication is that the climate was unlike any climate in North America today. The presence of spruce suggests cool summers, whereas the deciduous trees imply relatively warm winters. Thus, the climate may have been more equable than it is now. Although the Laurentide ice sheet, which still existed to the north, may have kept the summers cool, it may also have blocked arctic air masses from extending into the Midwest during winter.[12]

There was a warming trend and a thickening of forestation between 15,000 to 13,000 years ago. According to some, this environment may have driven mammoth and other large fauna out of their cool grazing lands reducing their numbers into sparsely populated small herds in this region. [13]

About 14,000 years ago, at the height of this paradise, the Wisconsin glacier had retreated to the present shoreline of Lake Michigan, about 250 miles NE of the recovery site. [14] This made the recovery site a very pleasant place for humans to live. It was a lost Garden of Eden with cool summers and warm winters and smaller game were abundant.

The River Owl Clan

Summer along the Spoon River in the late Paleo-Indian period around 14,000 years ago. Stones played a pivotal role in everyday life and may have been used like writing to express complex concepts. In particular, shiny and/or colorful stones were highly prized and traded like fine projectile points. In summer months the clan would camp along the Spoon to hunt and fish. At site 2601 they left behind a cache of stones that was their art.

Graphic courtesy of Dubose Archaeology Webquest.



Figure 8 The River Owl Clan representation

V. Dating the Art

A. What is the Point?

The Illinois State Museum has catalogued mostly Late Archaic and Woodland points in the northern Spoon River region - with just a scattering of Mississippian points. So there seems to be a large time gap in Indian artifacts from this site between the Paleo Period and the Late Archaic Periods. That's over 2,000 years!

To add to the confusion, we found “war points” (points M, N and O in Fig. 9 below) without notches so designed to stay in its victim when the shaft is pulled out. In contradiction, older Clovis, Dalton and San Patrice points of the Early Paleo-Indian Period are also designed to stay in prey so the lance can be re-used. But many of the points found at the site were of the domestic variety - atlatl hunting darts. These points are notched to stay on the shaft when pulled from prey for reuse and would cause the shaft to bounce should the prey try to escape.[15] Perhaps the war points were designed by the River Owl. But a peaceful society usually sags in weapons technology. Did a stone-age tribe with higher technology invade the clan? This seems unlikely, as resources were abundant throughout the entire region during this period. Eventually, population in the region grew and conflicts did break out. Thus, it seems these points are likely from the Late Woodland Period.

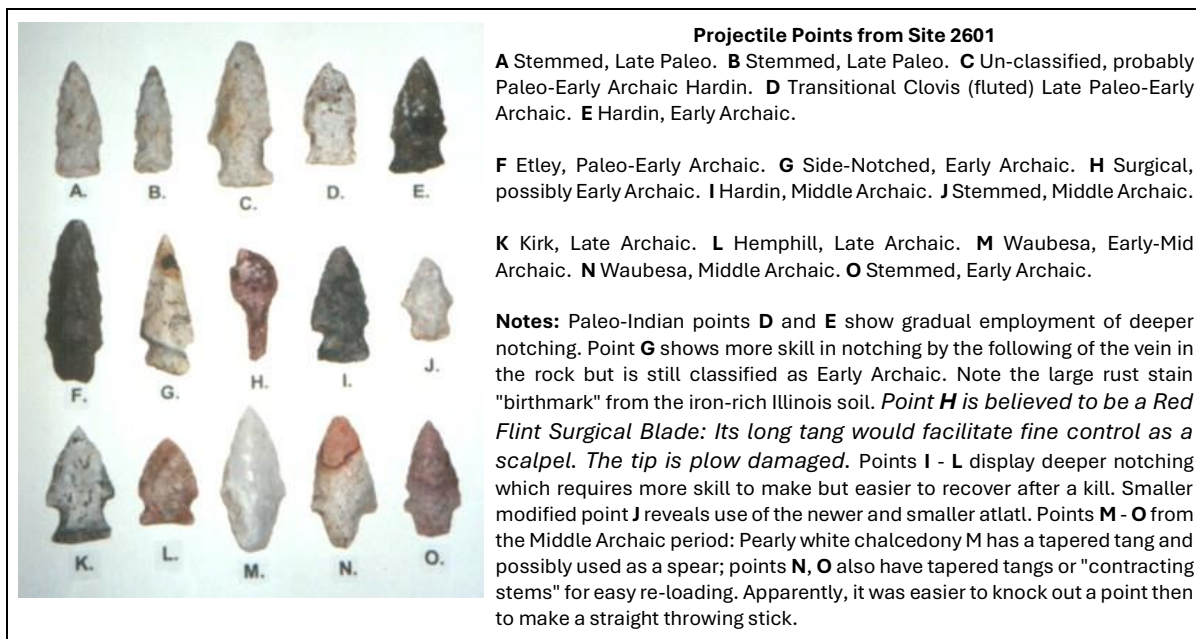


Figure 9 Projectile Points from Site 2601 with a surgical blade “H”.

First, there is no known way to date stone within historic context, either by atomic differentiation of broken surfaces or by radio-carbon dating. The only present means of dating stone is by its association with projectile points and even that is largely guesswork by the classification of point styles.[16]

Second, since projectile points are much older than our memories, point-typing is a tricky business. Anyone claiming to be an expert - usually is not. There are many conflicting opinions in types. First, technologies of any type, from record playing turntables to cell phone wrist watches can co-exist. Plus, variations in styles can occur by an artist all in one day at the same locale. The best any “expert” can do is to come close to classifying the age of a point. [17]

Atlatl point L in Fig. 9 above has on it what appears to be specks of black pitch on its far side and if this is the case, it can be accurately dated to within 200 years. But since I don't have access to carbon dating (the sample may be too tiny to carbon date anyway) the actual age of this Indian art was difficult to determine with certainty. I had to find another way to estimate its age. Burial depth is the usual means for determining the age of a relic. However, since farm ground around here has been repeatedly tumbled, soil layers don't give us a meaningful timeframe for these relics, so I went online hoping to find a solution.

My research brought up conflicting results, which means that most established sources can only guess the approximate age of stone relics from this area. I then approached the age problem from two fronts:

- Insights into the life of these people by observing the art.

- The established ruler of age i.e. the technology of points.

This was undeniably a creative and uninhibited society as the art speaks for itself. But no evidence for copper smelting or pottery has been found at this site, suggesting that the art was created well before 5,000 BP (Before Present or years ago).

Interestingly, this archaeological site contained Early Archaic points as referenced by the Illinois State Museum.[18] Also see Fig. 10 below.



Figure 10 Primitive artifacts from Site 2601.

Obviously, there are no set standards for point dating. Like all technologies, point-making probably overlapped in types and didn't change very rapidly at first. Also, the crudeness of a point may be due to inferior materials such as low-grade chert or the skill of the ancient craftsman.

Individual craftsmanship aside, many of our points do not have such deep notching and refined edges, suggesting these points were crafted before the Early Archaic Period – commonly referred to as “field points” and considered of little value. We've found many points from the Middle Woodland Period, probably from passing hunting parties.[19] After 12 years searching, we have found only a few points from the Mississippian Period.

Despite all the point typing, the age of these figurines still could not be narrowed down.

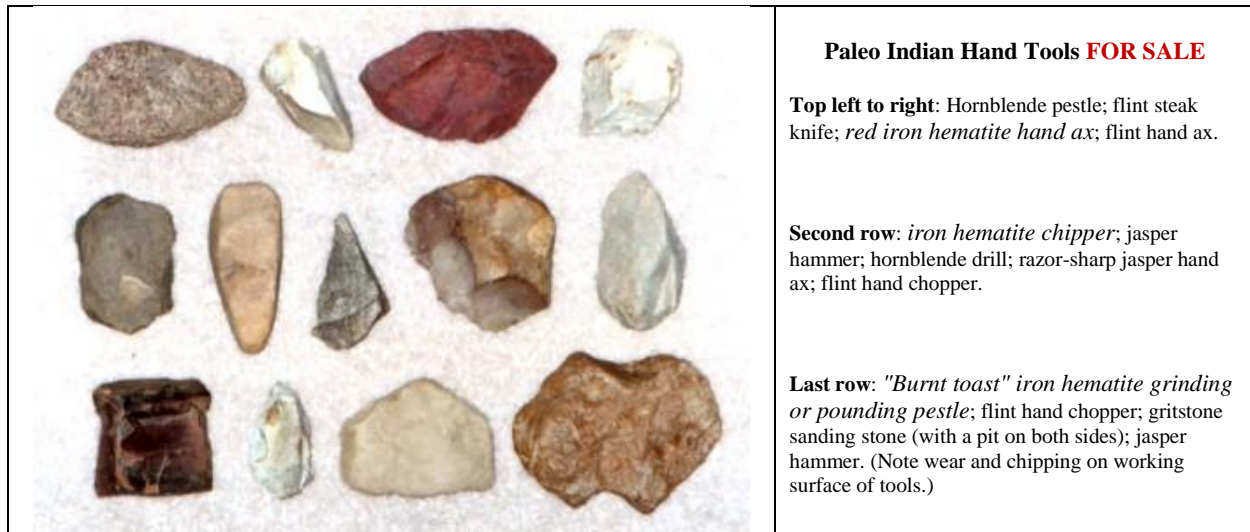


Figure 11 Paleo Indian artifacts with iron hematite tools.

Then a Paleolithic hand axe was recovered, see Fig. 11, second row above. Then a mammoth figurine was found. Then a camel, a lion, another mammoth, and even a rhinoceros figure was recognized. More Paleo tools washed up.

There are two major factors in determining if a rock is a stone-age tool: Does it fit comfortably in the hand; and is it functional or useful. These two criteria are often overlooked by the average artifact collector. But in many ways, when it comes to dating, such tools are more valuable than a dubious projectile point as we have seen. In our case, such ancient tools turn back the clock on what was believed to be the time period of human occupation in the northern Spoon River region and narrows down the age of these figurines.

Since most experts believe Ice Age animals went extinct during the Late Paleo Period, this sealed the age of these figurines to be of the Middle Paleo Period before 13,500 BP and just after 14,000 BP.

B. Their Demise

Fourteen thousand years ago the northern Spoon River Valley region was paradise on Earth. Then suddenly everything changed. A geological black-layer deposit of carbon containing nano-diamonds at over 50 locations in North America tells the tale: About 12,900 years ago a huge Ice Age comet hit the atmosphere just above Canada. The discoverer, Geologist James Kennett, also found an abnormally high percentage of these nano-diamonds in a Greenland Glacier at the 12,900-year layer. What happens next is like something out of a Doooms-Day sci-fi movie: The exploding comet created a giant white-hot tornado setting forests ablaze killing off just about everything in North America. The remaining vegetation would have been charred, forcing starvation upon surviving megafauna. The comet likely done-in Paleo Indian in this region as well. This comet melted a good portion the Laurentide Ice Sheet and the resultant flood waters changed the Atlantic currents. [20] This caused a devastating flood or "Mississippi tsunami" which burst into the Gulf of Mexico and redirected the warmer currents of the Atlantic.

This combined with ash and soot in the atmosphere, plunged the Northern Hemisphere into a Mini-Ice Age for another 1,200 years until 11,700 BP. [21] More evidence of such a catastrophic change lies in Lake Chicago lakebed:

“At this time, the climate cooled again, and spruce became more abundant and black ash less common. During this time birch (*Betula*) and alder (*Alnus*) were also important components of the vegetation.” [22]

C. Later Clans

The summers here had become one month shorter than today, and rivers had dropped to their near present levels. By the end of this Mini-Ice Age 11,700 years ago, the climate warmed and conifer forests became mixed with deciduous trees peppered by high grasslands and low, reedy river bottoms The ancient Chicago lakebed tells us ...

“Then from about 12,000 to 11,500 years ago, the vegetation changed very rapidly as climate suddenly warmed at the transition from the Pleistocene to the Holocene.” [23]

Around 11,700 BP the climate became warmer and drier in Illinois promoting the growth of northern conifers and central hardwood forests.[24] Early Archaic Indians came into the region to hunt small game with *atlatl* spears [25] then moved to Missouri, Arkansas and points farther south including Louisiana.

In summer months the Missouri/Arkansas people would migrate north into this area by foot to hunt deer and elk.[26] In accordance with the various projectile points that have been recovered from this region over the past century or more, these migrating tribes would likely canoe back down to their southern home in autumn.[27] These nomadic tribes consist of small family groups - more like clans than tribes - who followed the rivers. They returned each spring to their "Happy Hunting Ground" that was home to their mysterious great ancestors who first came down from the Great White North.



Conclusion

These mysterious Indian artifacts are stones originally scraped-up from Devonian bedrock, crafted and carried down by glacier. During the Big Thaw flood, they were washed out of the moraines and tumbled down several riverbeds throughout Illinois and turned into polished cobbles and stones. The receding flood waters panned out these river stones with similar specific gravities into groups of eddy pockets in the clear Pleistocene riverbeds. Then about 14,000 years ago the Paleolithic Indian people of this site selected the stones that formed these meaningful statuettes. They then disappeared from the face of the Earth by a cataclysmic comet leaving just their tools and art behind. Until further attempts are made by other archeologists and collectors in the field, these tools and figurines are the only art of their kind available to the Indian artifacts' connoisseur.

Endnotes/Bibliography

- [1] <http://sped2work.tripod.com/shaman.html>
- [2] <http://www.indians.org/articles/indian-artifacts.html>
- [3] <http://museums.ncl.ac.uk/flint/archrit.html>
- [4] <http://www.neara.org/Bryant/missouri.htm>
- [5] http://www.marja-leena-rathje.info/archives/cat_rock_art_archaeology.php
- [6] <http://www.daysknob.com/>
- [7] Four glaciations covered Illinois in the past, the Nebraskan, Kansan, Illinoian and a small portion of the Wisconsinan. www.geology.about.com
- [8] *America's Stone Age Explorers*, 2004 WGBH Education Foundation
- [9] <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2004/11/041118104010.htm>
- [10] <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/stoneage/clovis.htm>
- [11] <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/410.html>
- [12] Ibid.
- [13] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/3318932/How-forests-wiped-out-woolly-mammoths.html>
- [14] <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/410.html>
- [15] The clan used willow to build yurts, and mount tools and weapons as this wood is straight, lightweight and amazingly strong. The author has replicated tools and weapons using willow growing near the recovery site.
- [16] To see their sample points, visit *Native Americans: Prehistoric: Archaic* www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/pre/htmls/a_weapons.html

[17] Most of my information, however, came from the Illinois State Museum and Lar Hothem's excellent book *Indian Artifacts Of The Midwest, Book 5*.

[18] "Archaeologists believe that the trend toward small stone projectile tips, and the shift from making these points with tapered bases, as opposed to thinner-necked notched bases, is evidence for the replacement of the atlatl by the bow and arrow. This change in point size and style occurred most typically around 1,350 years ago, but some researchers argue that the bow and arrow was introduced earlier in some areas of North America." Grant Keddie, Curator of Archaeology, Royal BC Museum
www.rbcm1.rbcm.gov.bc.ca/history/atlatl

[19] To see their sample points, visit *Native Americans: Prehistoric: Archaic*
www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/pre/htmls/a_weapons.html

[20] http://www.livescience.com/animals/070521_comet_climate.html

[21] Ibid.

[22] <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/410.html>

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] The silent and powerful atlatl is a stick of wood, antler or bone with a hook on one end that extends the distance and penetration of a thrown dart (or small spear) by 2½ times. This weapon is so effective; its Paleo prototype is commonly held to be responsible for the extinction of many ice age animal species. The Atlatl has been around since 20,000 BP in Europe (and probably longer) and about 10,000 years in America. It now enjoys a revived popularity among enthusiasts. Also see www.atlatl.net/article.asp?articleid=3 and www.anthro.mankato.msus.edu/prehistory/ancienttech/atlatl.html

[26] *Prehistoric Indians* www.caa-archeology.org/~caamicp/eastside/preind.html Native Americans
www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/pre/html/archaic.html See the Midwest U.S. 16,000 years ago
www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/larson/

[27] On the one hand, one can argue that this does not mean that there is a 2,000-year gap in artifacts from this area: Nineteenth and early twentieth century farming was shallow tilled and may have yielded up many transitional points that have long since disappeared into American society – traded off on schoolyards and playgrounds for new glass marbles – or sold at some estate auction for a fraction of their real value. Such activity would have gleaned them from the fields. Yet on the other hand, farmers and their families even just 50 years ago didn't have the time to actively hunt for points so the odds should allow at least one Mississippian point to surface on newly plowed ground.