

RESEARCH OF

*Donald R. Repsher, of Bath, Pennsylvania
Friend and Brother of the Lenape*



OUR STONE AGE (*The Lenape Stone*)

John S. Bailey, Buckingham, Pennsylvania; read at Pennsbury Meeting, July 18, 1882. (WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE FINDING OF THE LENAPE STONE AND ITS INTERPRETATION.) (Published in "A Collection of Papers Read Before the Bucks County Historical Society," Volume 1; printed for the Society by B. F. Fackenthal, Jr., Riegelsville, Pa. Marx Room, Easton Public Library, Easton, Pa., H 974.821 B 926-c.)

If by some great convulsion of nature, this beautiful land should be suddenly destroyed, and after a lapse of centuries, like Pompeii, it should be exhumed, or thrown open to the world in its ruined state, the existing nations on viewing our ruins, would conclude we belonged to a grand age.

Thus we, with some characteristic intelligence on beholding the remains of former nations inhabiting this land say, "they were savages and belonged to a 'Stone Age.'" "

Various articles have been published descriptive of the "Stone Age" of Europe and of this country, while the manufacture and use of stone implements has barely ceased with our far western tribes.

In many respects our stone relics correspond with those belonging to the prehistoric age of other countries. Nothing definite can be determined as to the time this country was peopled, or from whence these people came. The gigantic memorials, consisting of great temples, whose sides are covered with sculptured ornaments, and hieroglyphics, of Yucatan, Peru, and other countries of this continent, indicate a point of civilization at one time not much inferior to that of the Egyptians and other nations of the Old World.

If this country were peopled from the Old World, it would be safe to conclude that a crossing had been made at Behring's Straits, at an early period, perhaps, when there was less width of water at that point. (*Other*) theories have been advanced, of crossing the Pacific in ships of large size, while the mildness of that wide stretch of water would also admit of small craft. On landing they first became cave-dwellers on the north Pacific coast, and from thence advanced eastward as mound-builders, and south as temple and monument builders.

Years and centuries, generations and whole nations have passed away, and if their history is written, it remains unearthed beneath the mounds or ruined temples.

To illustrate what may be termed "Our Stone Age," or the epoch appertaining to the existence of the early inhabitants of this part of the country, we herewith present a few implements found and probably made in our own country.

This piece of flint is termed a core, or nucleus, from which the flakes, or points, were cut, or broken. It was found near Point Pleasant at a place noted for its flakes, bits, cores, and broken, as well as perfect, arrow and spear-heads; fully identifying the spot as a place of manufacture of implements consisting of flint, jasper, hornblende and other materials.

The arrow-head, for use, was placed in the end of a split stick, and made fast with the sinews of an animal.

The spear-heads, similar in shape to the arrow-point, but much larger, were fastened in a similar manner to a long handle; both arrow and spears were used for game and war.

The tomahawk was mainly for war purposes. The ax was for domestic purposes; trees were bruised and left to die, yielding firewood, as well as clearing the ground for agricultural purposes. A split-handle was tied, or made secure, on each edge of the stone.

The oblong-stone, with a hole drilled through the narrow end, is a pendant, or ornament, for the nose or neck. While this stone, with a hole at each end, is for a similar purpose, or for a breast-plate.

These flint-balls were hammers. With a split-stick, bent and fastened around them, they could be used for light work

This oddly shaped stone is a shoemaker's last, intended for either foot.

This is part of a scraper for cleaning the meat from the bones of animals.

They also had corn-mills, and pounders, skimmers for removing the skin of animals, and various other articles of stone and needles, pins and ornaments of bone.

Their stone implements were cut, or shaped, with the points of deer-horn, which is as hard as metal; by grinding or rubbing on a stone, they could be brought to an edge and made to cut or flake flint, and other stone

Our aborigines had no fixed habitations but halted where convenience suggested. Their huts or wigwams were small, and made of deer skins, or birch bark, and were carried from place to place.

They had mechanics and artists. The mechanics made their utensils and implements, while the artist adorned them with rude designs; sometimes in beautiful colors. The artistic work on the flesh side of some of their neatly tanned skins, have been the wonder and admiration of enlightened nations. They had kings and rulers, doctors and lawyers, and wise men, or philosophers. Their marriage regulations were enforced. Various modes were adopted in burials; under the ground, in different positions; on scaffolds, and in tree-tops in the open air, and by burning. In a great measure they lived, in summer, on berries. Their meats were preserved in summer by exposure to the sun, and in winter between cakes of ice.

They commonly ate in large parties, or at feasts with no set hours, simply to obey the dictates of nature. Their large animals were roasted whole by burying them under the ground at the side of a hill, placing stones against the meat, then earth on top; the fuel was placed underneath, as in burning lime. Smaller pieces of meat were roasted among stones. Dancing before and after meals was common in devotion, or adoration to the Great Spirit. Men and women ate apart at feasts, but, in their family life, ate together.

Their acuteness would lead them hundreds of miles in a direct line, without any material deviation, fair or cloudy, with great exactness to the pointy at which they intended to arrive. They could point to that part of the heavens where the sun was, though it were obscured by clouds or fog, and were able to pursue the tracks of man, or beast, on leaves, or grass.

Their memory and wampum-belts would give them dates of treaties with other tribes for preceding ages. Old age was respected.

They counted their years by the winters, the months by moons; they had no weeks, and their days were as so many sleeps.

Being trained from infancy, they were proficient in devices for ensnaring or destroying animals. They shaped canoes from trees by fire and sharp-stones.

Each nation and tribe had their symbols to distinguish them, as snake, eagle, etc.

Friends, shall we picture a band of these aborigines, with their sparkling eyes, large white teeth, faces painted in colors; long, straight hair, the greater part pulled out, and replaced by quills and feathers; ornaments in the nose or on the neck, and rattles around the ankles? If winter, with a long robe of the richest furs trailing the ground and probably armed with bows and arrows? Such scenes were presented in this very spot, nearly two hundred years ago on occasion of their visits to the great white-chief, the only treaty-maker they respected - William Penn.

THE LENAPE STONE

[Note: For additional information on the Lenape Stone, please refer to other informational CD's in this series, as well as related ones by Wipunkwteme]

Having briefly described the people of the latter part at least, of the "Stone Age," We wish to call your attention to an event of Indian history - an event engraved or transcribed on stone, like the sculptures on the temple walls of Assyria or the hieroglyphics on the sarcophagi of Egyptian tombs - an event whose record presents additional evidence that man was coeval with the huge mastodon and other large animals of an undeterminable period; also an event that no doubt occurred in this country and county.

In 1872, a young man named Bernard Hansel, while plowing his father's field, LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE DURHAM ROAD, ABOUT TWO MILES NORTH OF BUCKINGHAM MOUNTAIN, found a part of this stone, or breast-plate, as it may be termed. Nothing in particular attracted his attention, except the few lines drawn upon its face, and it was placed with his collection of arrow-heads, of which he had found great numbers in the

same field.

Since that time he has been on the watch for the other part, and was rewarded by finding it a few months ago while plowing the same field., and near the same spot where the first part was found. This is a singular incident, as they may have broken apart centuries ago; and without the latter part, we would fail to read the first correctly. It might be well to state that the field in which so many relics have been found is near five springs, and was a hunting or camping-ground, being near this great Indian pathway that existed from the Delaware at Point Pleasant, through Bucks, from thence to the falls of the Susquehanna.

The stone is of liver color, perhaps of slate or shale limestone; present length, four and one-half inches; width, one and three-quarter inches, and one-quarter inch in thickness

In order to more fully illustrate the engraving, we have prepared a rough enlarged facsimile; the details are six times the size of the original.

The artist in depicting this event has probably given us as much history in the same space as we would expect of our artists of the present day; and, Mr. President, when the leading painter of America, Benjamin West, in his historical painting of "Penn's Treaty with the Indians," represents men of mature years who were but children and did not arrive in this country until seven years after the treaty, and when William Penn, the prominent feature, was here until the treaty was ratified; while the costumes were not worn for nearly a century after; and the three-story building did not exist; when this great artist is allowed to fancy and produce something of a fictitious nature for the history of the founding of this Commonwealth - then we should allow some license to the savage, with his rude engraving tools, if he should not make perfect curved lines and his perspective should be a trifle faulty.

Our interpretation of the engraving is that the scene or action represents an encounter with one or more huge animals. In the cut, only one is in view, a mastodon (*Mammoth Elephas primigenus*), the same as described as belonging to the European Stone Age. The tusks and proboscis are plainly visible, while the perpendicular lines on various parts of the body must indicate the long hair with which the animals were covered, necessary for the cold climate.

The fossils of the mastodon or hairy elephant are found in many parts of Siberia, and in 1799, an animal nearly complete in its parts was found imbedded in the ice on the Siberian coast. They roamed over Central Europe, from Ireland to the Ural mountains, a from thence across Northern Asia to Behring's Straits, to Canada and the United States.

If we allow the stature of the Indians represented in the engraving to be five feet in height, and if the artist has given us a correct proportion and delineation of the monster, it would measure twenty-six feet in length, eighteen feet in height, twelve feet in depth of body, and in length of tusks on the curved line thirteen feet. These measurements have been exceeded by remains found in many places in this country.

One of the braves has a drawn bow, and an arrow pierces the side of the monster, which signifies that they could fight him with their arrows. Near this brave stands another, with his

spear set upright in the ground, or placed perpendicular showing that their spears are useless; they could not get close enough to use them. A third party is reclining on the ground near a large stone, smoking his pipe. Some of them were cowardly and hid themselves, and left the braves to do the work. Still another is under the monster's feet. We would infer that some were killed by him. He is more destructive than the forked lightning, which is beautifully depicted.

He is as tall as the tree tops. He is more powerful than the sun's rays; more changeable than the moon, which is now a crescent; wonderful as the course of the planets through the heavens. Venus is enlarged as brighter than the others. They were numerous as a multitude of stars which are represented by the crossed lines.

The large rings are the eyelets through the plate. The action is represented as being at the base of a mountain, the ground at an angle of about thirty-three degrees; their wigwams are placed back of the rocks and trees, as in a place of safety. The lake and cave-dwellers of Europe selected sites for their dwellings with the view of being protected from animals.

On the reverse side of the stone are various symbols of tribes, perhaps those connected with the event. Most conspicuous are the turtle, eagle, sea-snakes and reindeer, or elk, with large antlers. Also, plainly outlined on one end is their early history. Large, crooked lines represent water, and a large fish floats in it, while a number of crossed lines are over the water. Near the water lines, five points, or peaks, are represented. Next is a mountain peak with its rocky sides. Directly over the mountain is a cross, and on the off-side of the mountain from the five peaks, is a square tablet, and within its borders are ten dots regularly spaced off.

This history would read: That they crossed the great water; they were acquainted with the five peaks of the Cascade range, their ancestors lived within view of them; they crossed the mountain of rocks or the Rocky mountains, and the ten dots mean there were ten tribes at the crossing, or that ten generations, epochs or cycles had passed by since the crossing; they kept a record of great events, and every fifty-two years was a cycle, when great feasts were celebrated, and every three hundred and twelve years, or six of these cycles, was an extra epoch. Maybe ten of these extra feasts had passed.

Again, proof of age exists in the stone with its milled or ornamental edge which is worn out in many places. This could not be done while in the ground or it would have been uniform over the stone.

My friends, you may say this stone relates to an event of the prehistoric times of this country, that the little ornament could easily have been brought from some point in the west, where the bones of large monsters have been found and described.

This is true, but we have further evidence of their existence here. This large fossil is a section of the vertebrae of some animal larger than the African elephant, that no doubt roamed through our land in those far-off days. It was found about seventy years ago about three miles south of Buckingham mountain, was built in a wall near the Anchor hotel, where it remained for perhaps fifty years. It was supposed to belong to a whale, but the indication of a space for marrow through the centre would prove it as belonging to a land animal. It measures over

twelve inches in diameter, and is over six inches in length, allowing at least two inches to be worn away would make the length of the back of the animal nearly thirteen feet, there being nineteen dorsal vertebrae. Other large bones or ribs were found a few years ago, and finding their way to Doylestown, were placed on exhibition.

Most persons supposed them to belong to a whale, but there is no doubt but that they belonged to a land animal. Again huge fossil remains are being brought to light, just where in New Jersey quite recently, we understand that the complete remains of a similar animal were found at Freehold, only a few miles from this spot.

Albert Koch, a scientist and naturalist of many years ago, says: "It is true we cannot rely much on traditions of the Indians, yet their traditions are founded on events which have actually transpired, and with great care their legends are handed down from generation to generation, and many details may be lost, but in a section of the country in Ohio, watered by the Big Bone river - notice the name - a tradition existed preserved by the Indians:

"That at a certain period many large and monstrous animals came from the eastward, upon which the animals that had previously occupied the country became very angry and at last so enraged by reason of these intrusions, that the red man durst not venture out to hunt any more and was reduced to great distress. At this time a large number of these monsters assembled here, when a terrible battle ensued in which many on both sides were killed and the remainder of the monsters resumed their march towards the setting sun. After the battle, the Indians gathered some of the slaughtered animals together, and offered them as burnt offerings to the Great Spirit."

The Big Bone River, from this took its name. The ceremony of a sacrifice was kept up at this point for a great many years, or until about the beginning of this century, when settlers took up the ground and in their excavations the bones of the mastodon were found, but it was almost forgotten again when in 1839 in cleaning out a spring, a tooth of a mastodon was discovered. Further search disclosed a great many bones and teeth.

In many instances implements of the Indians, together with rocks and stones not belonging to the spot, but giving evidence of having been carried a short distance, and no doubt being thrown at these animals when mired fast, or in a helpless condition, and the bones of the animals themselves are found together, proving without doubt the existence of man and the mastodon at the same period.

This fossil might have been brought from the north by some great drift of the glacial period, when the ice-fields of the Arctic seas, in pushing towards the equator broke through our mountains, perhaps scooped out the bed of our river Delaware and with shuffling current carried forward rocks and fossils. The rocks, with their rounded edges, were left in many parts of our country, and remain as silent mementoes of the time, while the fossils being more perishable would be worn away with the elements.

In conclusion, Mr. President, will you accept our theory that an event as here described did occur, and in our country? If so, we ask to locate the spot at the west end of Buckingham

