Mocotaugan

The Story and Art of the Crooked Knife:
The Woodlands Indian's indispensable survival tool

Russell Jalbert and Ned Jalbert

Mocotaugan

The Story and Art of the Crooked Knife:
The Woodlands Indian's Indispensable Survival Tool

Russell Jalbert and Ned Jalbert

Design Direction, Ken Silvia
Portfolio photography, Luigi Pelletieri
Original and re-drawn art, Jim Owens
Hand crafted binding, Mary McCarthy

Library of Congress Control Number: 2003094804
Mocotaugan

ISBN 0-9742804-0-2

To Lois and Keith.
Thank you.

"The most valuable things I own are my axe,
my wife and my crooked knife."

—Blue Coat, a Northern Cree

"Almost unknown today, this knife is one of the most distinctive antiquities of the 'Man of the North.'"

—Carl Russell, *Firearms, Traps and Tools of the Mountain Men*

"No [Northeastern Woodlands] man ever goes off on a journey without this knife, no matter how short the distance … and [he uses the knife] to make one thousand and one indispensable objects."

—John Wesley Powell, Curator, U.S. Bureau of Ethnology, 1898

Every object has a story. The better we know the story the more we appreciate the object.

—Axiom of curators and collectors

In the realm of material culture, the tool for making an object is often as important as the object itself.

—Axiom of anthropologists

"I used to use a two-handed drawknife.
That goddamned thing. You've got to use a vise
to hold the work. With the crooked knife,
I can work in the woods if I want.
It almost feels as if it's part of me.
If anyone ever comes out with a tool
that rivals a crooked knife,
I'd like to know about it."

—Henri Vaillancourt, modern master birch bark canoe maker

"Why, out of the handy and useful objects which were the first tools of primitive man, did forms progressively emerge until they surpassed the utilitarian purpose of the formed object and became a form for the sake of form, that is to say, a work of art?"

—Sir Herbert Read, art critic

"No one will know
why such a dull stub of a blade
found such a fanciful
handle, as if the one who gripped it
fought with ghosts."

—From a poem, *Worn Tool,* by Stephen Sandy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Illustrations

Acknowledgments

Approximately one hundred people have contributed directly to the writing of this essay. Without exception, these contributors gave most generously of their time and knowledge. We thank them all.

The largest group of contributors to thank are the dozens of archivists and curators of the North American and European museums with known holdings in Woodlands Native artifacts. We especially thank Stephen Loring of the Smithsonian Institution and Laila Williamson of the American Museum of Natural History, who gave us the thrilling opportunity to examine their respective museums' collections of knives in person.

We also thank the staffs of libraries, ranging from Cape Cod Community College to the Library of Congress. We especially thank Gregory Finnegan, chief of reference at Harvard's Tozzer Library of Anthropology.

We thank, too, those individuals we talked to, Native and non-Native, who are dedicated at the grassroots level to preserving and strengthening the traditional culture of the Woodlands Indian. We especially thank Steve Cayard, Theresa Hoffman (Micmac), Richard Silliboy (Micmac) and Aaron York (Abanaki).

Finally, we thank those professionals and amateurs who over the years have shared with us their special knowledge of the mocotaugan. We especially thank Dr. Ted Brasser (anthropologist), Paul Gray (tribal art dealer), and Dr. C. Keith Wilbur (physician). These, and others like them, have provided us with facts, ideas and insights that have helped give us whatever understanding and appreciation we have of this unique artifact of the Woodlands.

Again, we thank the many contributors, one and all, who have made this essay possible. At the same time, we stress that these contributors are in no way responsible for any of the essay's shortcomings. *Only* the authors can be called to account for any error, omission, or point of view.

To the Reader

At first glance, the Woodlands Indian's typical "crooked knife" appears drab and commonplace and at best, as one early New World explorer put it, "peculiar." Under the surface appearance, however, this knife is one of the earliest and most significant of all material objects known today from the entire history of native North Americans.

This essay tries to provide a helpful overview of the knife as an especially distinctive example of the Natives' material culture. For tens of thousands of years, the knife was a truly essential tool for survival; then it also became an instrument for creating some of the Woodlands' finest art. The Natives used this knife to embellish any number of objects that were indispensable for their lifeway, but no object was embellished more fully than the handle of the knife itself. In words and pictures, the essay traces the long history of the knife — from its Stone Age origins, through its transformation with the iron the Europeans introduced to the continent, down to the present day. One portion of the overview provides a context for the reader to examine the role of the knife as a significant factor in the Native American's urge for self-expression through the medium of a visual art. The other portion presents full-page photographs that display that art, plus some facts and ideas that perhaps can help the reader better appreciate that art.

This essay is a work in progress. Our aim is to encourage further exploration of this distinctive knife in all its anthropological and aesthetic aspects. Our hope is that in the not-too-distant future another knowledgeable person like Carl Russell will write something like this:

> *"More people than ever recognize that this knife stands as one of the most distinctive antiquities of the "Man of the North.'"*

Russell Jalbert and Ned Jalbert

The Hudson's Bay Company. 257

NUMBER XIX.

STANDARD of TRADE at the several Factories of the Hudson's Bay Company, subsisting this present Year 1748.

NAMES of GOODS.		AR		MR		YF		CR	
		Quantity valued.	Beaver.	Quantity valued.	Beaver.	Quantity valued.	Beaver.	Quantity valued.	Beaver.
Beads, large Milk	Pounds	½	1	½	1	- -	- -	- -	- -
of Colours		½	1	½	1	- -	- -	- -	- -
of all Sorts		—	—	—	—	1	2	1	2
Kettles, Brass, of all Sizes		1	1	1	1	1	1½	1	1½
Black Lead		1	1	1	1	- -	- -	- -	- -
Powder		1½	1	1½	1	1	1	1	1
Shot		5	1	5	1	4	1	4	1
Sugar, Brown		8	2	8	2	- -	- -	- -	- -
Tobacco, Brazil		1	1	1	1	½	1	½	1
Leaf		1½	1	1½	1	1	1	1	1
Roll		1½	1	1½	1	1	1	1	1
Thread		1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
Vermilion	Ounces	1½	1	1½	1	1	1	1	1
Brandy, English	Gallons	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4
Waters, White or Red		1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4
Broad Cloth, Red, White, or Blue	Yard	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	3
Fine Blue		—	—	—	—	1	5	1	5
Bays, Red or Blue		1	1	1	1	1	1½	1	1½
Blankets	N°	1	6	1	6	1	7	1	7
Duffels, Red, White, or Blue	Yards	1	1½	1	1½	1	2	1	2
Flannel		1	1	1	1	½	1	1	1½
Gartering		2	1	2	1	1½	1	1	1
Lace, broad Orris		2	1	2	1	1½	1	- -	- -
Worsted Binding		2	1	2	1	- -	- -	- -	- -
Awl Blades	N°	12	1	12	1	8	1	8	1
Buttons, Coat	Dozen	12	1	12	1	4	1	4	1
Waistcoat		12	1	12	1	6	1	6	1
Cargo Breeches	Pair	1	3	1	3	- -	- -	- -	- -
Burning Glasses	N°	—	—	2	1	1	1	2	1
Bayonets		2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Combs, Ivory		2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Egg Boxes		4	1	4	1	3	1	3	1
Barrel Boxes		—	—	—	—	3	1	- -	- -
Feathers, Red		2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1
Fish Hooks		20	1	20	1	14	1	10	1
Fire Steels		4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1
Files, large flat		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Flints, Fre.		20	1	20	1	16	1	16	1
Guns, 4 Foot		1	12	1	12	1	14	1	14
3½ Foot		1	11	1	11	1	14	1	14
3 Foot		1	10	1	10	1	14	1	14
Pistols		1	4	1	4	1	7	- -	- -
Gunworms		4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1
Gloves, Yarn	Pair	1	1	1	1	1	1	- -	- -
Goggles		2	1	2	1	- -	- -	- -	- -
Handkerchiefs	N°	1	1½	1	1½	1	1½	1	1½
Hats, laced		1	4	1	4	1	4	1	1
Hatchets		2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Hawk-bells	Pair	8	1	8	1	6	1	6	1
Ice Chissels	N°	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Knives		8	1	8	1	4	1	4	1
Looking Glasses		2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Mocotaugans		2	1	2	1	- -	- -	- -	- -
Needles		12	1	12	1	12	1	12	1
Net Lines		2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Powder Horns		2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Rings, plain		6		8		6		1	

The first appearance in written English of the Indian word "mocotaugan."

The use of *mocotaugans* in the Hudson's Bay Company's list of trade goods in 1748, it seems safe to assume, indicates that the English traders had been using the word verbally for a considerable number of years prior to that year, and had been using it so frequently that even the HBC officials in London chose it to identify the artifact. It is interesting to note, too, that *mocotaugan* is the *only* Indian word used in the list, and that there is also a separate entry for "knives."

Why Call It "Mocotaugan"?

More than sixty native tribes occupied the Woodlands when Europeans first arrived, and most of those tribes each spoke (but never wrote) their own regional variation of one of three major language families: Algonquin, Athabascan and Iroquois. Thus, the distinctive man's knife of the Woodlands Indians was known in native tongues by many names. For example, Frank Speck reported four different Penobscot names for this knife — such as *biketagenigan* and *pekarakenigan*. On the other hand, present day Paul Tamburro, of Indian blood and an independent scholar, says, "The name I had for it was from Micmac — *wahawknigan*."

However, the most common Native word for this knife by far was some form of *mocotaugan*. The largest population of Woodlands Natives spoke various Algonquian dialects, each with its own version of the knife's name derived from a common ancestral root. Since there was no written language in the pre-contact Woodlands, and transcriptions from a variety of spoken dialects into written English were made in the field mostly by men with no particular skills in linguistics, there grew up many English versions of the printed word. Among these versions are *mokotagan, mokutagan, mokuman, mukutan, mokutaken,* and *mohentagen*. The Canadian Museum of Civilization classifies each of its fifty-four Woodlands men's knives as "crooked knife," but further identifies three as *moxkEtaqin,* and various others as *mokk Edaqan, mokuman, mokEtaqEn, mokEtaqin* or *mokutagen.*

But the first Indian word for this particular tool to enter the English language in writing was spelled *mocotaugan*. This spelling first appeared in 1748 on a Hudson's Bay Company list of trade goods, sixty years after the HBC set up its first trading post at Rupert House. Also, *mocotaugan* was the first word used to identify the knife in a major institutional setting, the British Museum, about 1836.

Yet, the word *mocotaugan* has always been, and is still, used only infrequently, in English or in French. The dominant common term for the tool has for years been *crooked knife*. This term was undoubtedly adopted long before 1695, when it first appeared in writing as *couteau croche* (hooked knife) in the French missionary Sebastien Rasles's *Dictionary of the Abanaki Language in North America*.

Since that time and up to today, English speakers have almost exclusively used the English equivalent of that term. Even most major museums use that term extensively to classify this artifact, but they use it along with many other terms such as "basket-making knife," "bent knife," "canoe knife," "curved knife," "carver's knife," "carving tool," "crook knife," "general utility knife," "hooked knife," "household knife," "Hudson's Bay Company knife," "kitchen knife," "man's knife," or simply "knife." One museum, the Detroit Institute of Art, identifies its two mocotaugans as "sculpture."

***"The first Indian word for this particular tool to enter the English language in writing was* mocotaugan."**

Another naming problem is that "crooked knife" is a term used in a variety of ways not at all related to the Woodlands Indian artifact. For example, Malaysia's "tiger claw" knife is also known as a "crooked knife." William Shakespeare, and other authors, used "crooked knife" to poetically describe death's symbolic scythe. And G.K. Chesterton in one of his Father Brown detective stories describes as a "queer crooked knife of the Orient" an object far different from the Woodlands knife.

Given all this confusion, it seems to make sense to use the word *mocotaugan* consistently. Such use is both more precise and more appropriate. Practically, this word clearly distinguishes the knife from all other kinds of knives and from those of other peoples, especially from its near relatives, the palm-up drawknife of the Eskimos and the Indians of the Northwest Coast. Historically, it is the word rooted in the oldest and largest indigenous language family of the Woodlands. It is the first word for the knife recorded in written English. And *mocotaugan* is a word that encourages continued remembrance of the distinctive culture from which it came.

What Dictionaries of Native Languages Say

Drawknife...

An informed review of some well-known Native American language dictionaries tells us that *some* form of the word *mocotaugan* was present in a significant number of Woodlands tribal vocabularies, and that, whatever the tribe, whatever the spelling, the *meaning* of the word in every instance was *drawknife.*

The review was conducted by Gregory Finnegan, chief researcher at Harvard's Tozzer Library of Anthropology. The dictionaries covered the dialects of the Algonquin/Nipissing, Ojibway, Ottawa and Saulteaux tribes — all "Middle Tier" members of the ancestral Algonquian language family. The books consulted were the *Lexique de la Langue Algonquine* by Fr. Jean-André Cuoq, 1886; *A Dictionary of the Otchipwe Language* by Fr. Frederic Baraga, 1878; *Eastern Ojibwa-Chippewa-Ottawa Dictionary* by Richard A. Rhodes, 1985; and *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe* by John D. Nichols, 1995.

All these dictionaries include some variant of the word *mocotaugan,* e.g., *mokoman, môkomÁn, môkodjigan* and *mookojigan.* The *very* strong similarities of these word forms in different Middle Tier dialects indicate clearly that the root word for the Native drawknife was present in the ancient mother tongue; was present in some form in other tiers of the Algonquin language family that was centered in the region between the Great Lakes and Hudson's Bay; and spread throughout an immense area north and east — the area where most mocotaugans have been found.

This evidence of the broad range of some form of the root word strengthens the proposal for adopting the name *mocotaugan* to distinguish the generic Woodlands man's knife from all others.

The Importance of the "Man's Knife of the North"

SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL, IN THE WOODLANDS THAT STRETCH DIAGONALLY FROM THE FAR northwestern tundra of North America south and east through dense forests, rivers and lakes, and down the Atlantic coast to North Carolina, the Native men almost universally used these odd-shaped but highly versatile knives for practically every aspect of their daily life.

Europeans who early ventured into the great Woodlands of the New World again and again were struck by both the great prevalence of this "peculiar" knife and the skill with which the aborigines made use of it. For example:

Captain John Gyles, writing of his captivity about 1696 by the Maliseet Indians in Maine, observed that the crooked knife was part of every man's equipment.

In the northwestern mountains, by 1806 or earlier, traders Hunt and Hankinson were selling imported crooked knife blades to the natives.

John Franklin wrote in his *Narrative, to the Shores of the Polar Sea, 1819-1822:* "Our working party that had shown such skill as house carpenters soon proved themselves to be, with the same tools (hatchet and crooked knife), excellent cabinet makers, and daily added a table, chair or bedstead."

Franklin G. Speck, the eminent anthropologist who lived for years with the Penobscot Indians at the turn of the last century, observed, "The crooked knife is of prime importance. Two to half a dozen are owned by every Penobscot man. I have seen a worker here split out a cedar log a foot in diameter with maul and wooden wedges, and in several hours trim down the ribs and lining of different sizes for a canoe, using only the crooked knife for shaping and smoothing."

John Wesley Powell, the noted explorer and curator of the American Bureau of Ethnology, reported in 1898 that "no [Northeastern Woodlands] man ever goes off on a journey without this knife, however short may be the distance… [and he uses the knife] to make a thousand and one indispensable objects."

Those thousand and one indispensable objects ranged from the most elemental (fire starter shavings and sliced rawhide thongs, for instance) to the most spiritual (carving ceremonial false face masks). Other objects included ax and adz handles, wigwams, moose hide and bark canoes and their paddles, harpoons for beaver and spears and weirs for fish, vessels for carrying and storing daily necessities, wheels for starting fires, cooking pots, food trays, bowls, ladles, spoons and drinking cups, bows for drills and bows and arrows for hunting, toboggans, snowshoes, snow snakes and snow goggles, tobacco pipes, drums and rattles, lacrosse sticks and dancing sticks, war clubs and cradle boards. The list could go on.

What makes the Woodlands mocotaugan so unusual to the Western eye at first glance is its form: the metal blade is typically set at an angle to the handle, something like a jackknife not quite fully opened. What is even more unusual is that the knife is used by *pulling* the blade toward the body with one hand. The knife is gripped palm upward with the thumb pressed against the handle's underside.

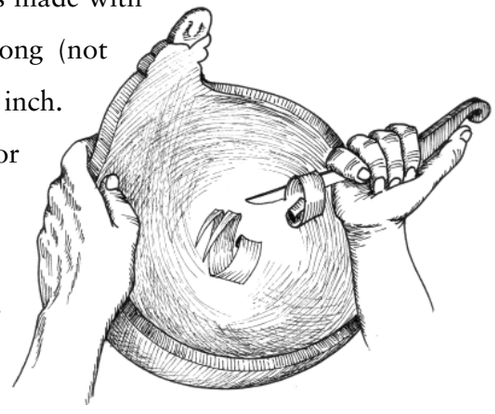
What makes the knife especially distinctive is that it carries on a drawknife culture that was created tens of thousands of years ago, a culture long abandoned in other parts of the world.

This design provides a user with an implement of superb ergonomic efficiency. In pulling the blade toward the body, palm up with the fist at a natural angle, the purchase force of the knife is remarkable. Equally remarkable is how this toward-the-body motion maximizes the small motor control of the thumb, wrist, elbow and upper arm to enable the user to produce work of extraordinary versatility, complexity and precision. Thus the crooked knife was an exceptional tool for the native North American man to use both to carry out many different daily chores and to create significant works of art.

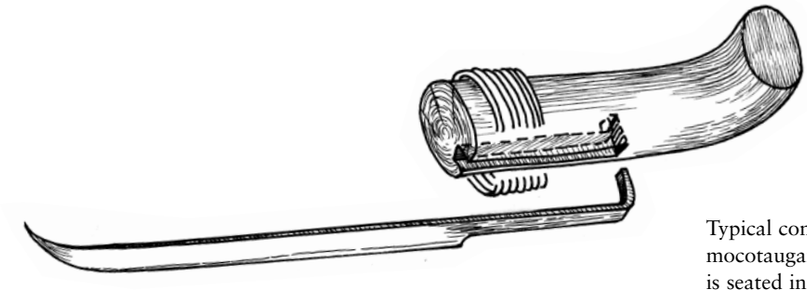
The Anatomy of the Mocotaugan

The Woodlands Indians' mocotaugan was a many-purpose tool. It was uniquely adapted to the Native man's life of hunting and gathering deep in the boreal wilderness. With its upturned tip, the knife could be used for cutting, carving, shaving, gouging and smoothing to take fullest advantage of the plentiful wood, reeds, rushes and hides taken from the surrounding lakes and thick forests. It could be used for heavy-duty work or to produce the finest hair shavings for tinder or the most intricate shapes in a work of art.

What makes the knife "crooked" is not the upturned tip: it is the angular relation of the handle to the blade. The blade of a typical mocotaugan was made with a recycled piece of European steel, was about four inches long (not including the tang) with an average width of about one-half inch. Blades were shaped in many ways; simply made flat on a plane or slightly bowed overall, and often curled up at the tip, some slightly, some sharply and some in truly peculiar ways. One blade at the American Museum of Natural History, for example, looks in profile something like an old-fashioned button-hook; a long straight shaft with its end bent very tightly to about three quarters of a small circle. The tips, too, would be finished in various ways: squared, angled, rounded, or pointed at various angles. The cutting edge was formed mostly by beveling one side only, like a chisel, quite often by tapering both sides equally from the top of the blade, and rarely by sharpening the edge on both sides of the blade.



"The knife was grasped, fingers up, with the thumb steadied against the angled end of the handle. This was no whittling knife. Rather, the crooked knife was a one-handed draw knife that cut by pulling toward the body."
—*C. Keith Wilbur*



Typical construction of a mocotaugan. Tang of blade is seated in the mortice of the handle, then bound for maximum strength.

Both blade and handle were made for either left- or right-hand use.

The handle was first tooled to seat the blade tang firmly, then fixed to the blade with any one of a variety of bindings. These bindings were leather thongs, spruce roots, twine or wire, and occasionally strips of cloth or patches of hide swabbed with pitch, tar or fish glue, and later with rivets and even tape.

Eventually the Indians were offered trades for an imported ready-made, high-quality steel blade, but their poverty still generally required them to make their own. As one observer has noted, the Indians were "master recyclers." Discarded saws, scissors, razors, skillets, trap springs, barrel hoops and even swords and gun barrels were all reworked into knife blades. The most desirable discards were worn-out files: their exceptional high-quality malleable steel made the best blades by far.

At first, these metals were likely worked in ways similar to the historic ways of treating copper. A furnace to create the necessary heat for both reshaping the scrap iron and tempering the resulting blade could relatively easily be generated by a well-tended wood fire set into a hollow in the ground and fanned by blowing through a hollow reed. In a paper published in 1986 in the *Journal Canadien d'Archaeologie,* metallurgists Jean-Luc Pilon and Sandra Zacharias wrote: "In former times, the temperatures and speeds of the heating and cooling process [for the mocotaugan blade] were varied so as to circumvent the need for high temperatures while still producing metals whose properties suited the intended tasks." When the final temper was less than perfect, the user simply would have to sharpen the blade more often. As the Natives adopted the more advanced European technologies — especially the heavy iron "smithy" hammer — they made their knives increasingly effective.

As for the handles, the Indians *always* made their own — again out of anything handy and suitable, usually hardwood, but sometimes bone or antler.

Within this generic form of the knife, there are no two exactly alike. The man who made the knife was typically the man who used it. He shaped both handle and blade to meet his own special needs, to make the most of his own skills, and in some cases, to express his own artistic urgings.

Mocotaugan blades were shaped and heat-treated in a variety of ways to serve a variety of purposes. In addition to the general-purpose shape, the four most common shapes were these: A) a flat, straight blade about one-half to three-quarters of an inch wide for stock removal and rough planing; B) a narrow, flat, straight blade about three-eighths of an inch wide for fine planing; C) a narrow curved blade about the same three-eighths inch width for gouging or hollowing with the grain; and D) a wider curved blade about three-eighths of an inch wide for hollowing or gouging across the grain.

The typical handle would be "crooked" from the blade at an angle of about 30 degrees, sometimes noticeably more or noticeably less. It would be sized for a large or small hand, and engineered in various ways to hold the tang of the blade.

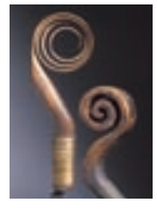
Unlike the mocotaugan …

Eskimos and Indians of the Northwest Coast also used drawknives with blades made of steel, but of a very different form from the Woodlands knife. The blades were typically only one to two inches long, and relatively broad. The handles, made mostly of bone or ivory, were often quite long, likely for both one-handed and two-handed use, and set at little or no angle to the blade. The handles were very infrequently decorated, and even when so treated were typically carved with very simple designs. The highly embellished knife is a remarkably rare exception.

Eskimo Drawknife
Circa 1840 - 1860
Bone, leather, curved reworked steel 3/4" blade, overall 6 1/4" long
Incised decoration on one side only
Collected in Massachusetts
Private Collection

The vast majority of handles carried no ornamentation at all. When present, design ranged from simple and crude to ornamented intricately and with considerable sophistication. The designs themselves ranged from ancient patterns traditional in Woodlands culture to images clearly derivative from the various newly imported European cultures.

The Native Skill of Blade Making



The present-day craftsman David Cameron of Riverport, Nova Scotia, makes the blades of his mocotaugans in much the way he learned from Micmac tribal tradition. For raw steel, he occasionally uses blanks of high carbon he bought years ago. Mostly, though, he recycles old high-carbon kitchen knives he finds in flea markets, old crosscut saw blades and leaf springs from abandoned baby buggies and farm equipment. For shaping and treating his steel, he uses neither the Natives' traditional fire pit nor the common European forge. Rather, he finds a soft, high-temperature kiln brick and scoops out a hollow for the unformed steel to rest in; then he heats the steel with an ordinary propane torch. After annealing the raw steel to its proper hardness, by heating it red-hot then cooling it slowly, he uses an electric bench grinder to shape the blade. Then comes the true artisan's mastery of his material. Cameron describes the process this way:

"I just wave the torch flame back and forth along the blade 'til I see the colour I want. Heated red-hot (again), the tang is bent at an L at the narrow end and then sideways a bit where the tang meets the ground section of the blade. It is also crooked a tad at that place to give it a canoe shape along the back. Then the business end is reheated cherry red and hardened by quenching in motor or cooking oil (peanut oil is best), while the tang is kept cool with a wet rag or leather. The final tempering is done after I hand-sand the blade until it is bright. I gently heat the blade by wafting the flame so I can see the new temper colours flow until the backbone turns dark blue and the edge turns straw to light blue. The edge can be kept cooler during this process by either coating it with heat-sink oil or burying it in a cucumber. As soon as the desired temper colours are reached, the blade is quickly quenched in oil. This gives a springy, break-resistant blade with a hard edge, good for staying sharp."

(See page 160 for an example of Cameron's fine knives.)

How a Modern Master Uses the Mocotaugan

Here's how present-day canoe-maker Henri Vaillancourt of Greenville, Vermont, carves a center thwart for one of his famed hand-crafted canoes, as reported by John McPhee in his classic 1975 book *Survival of the Bark Canoe*.

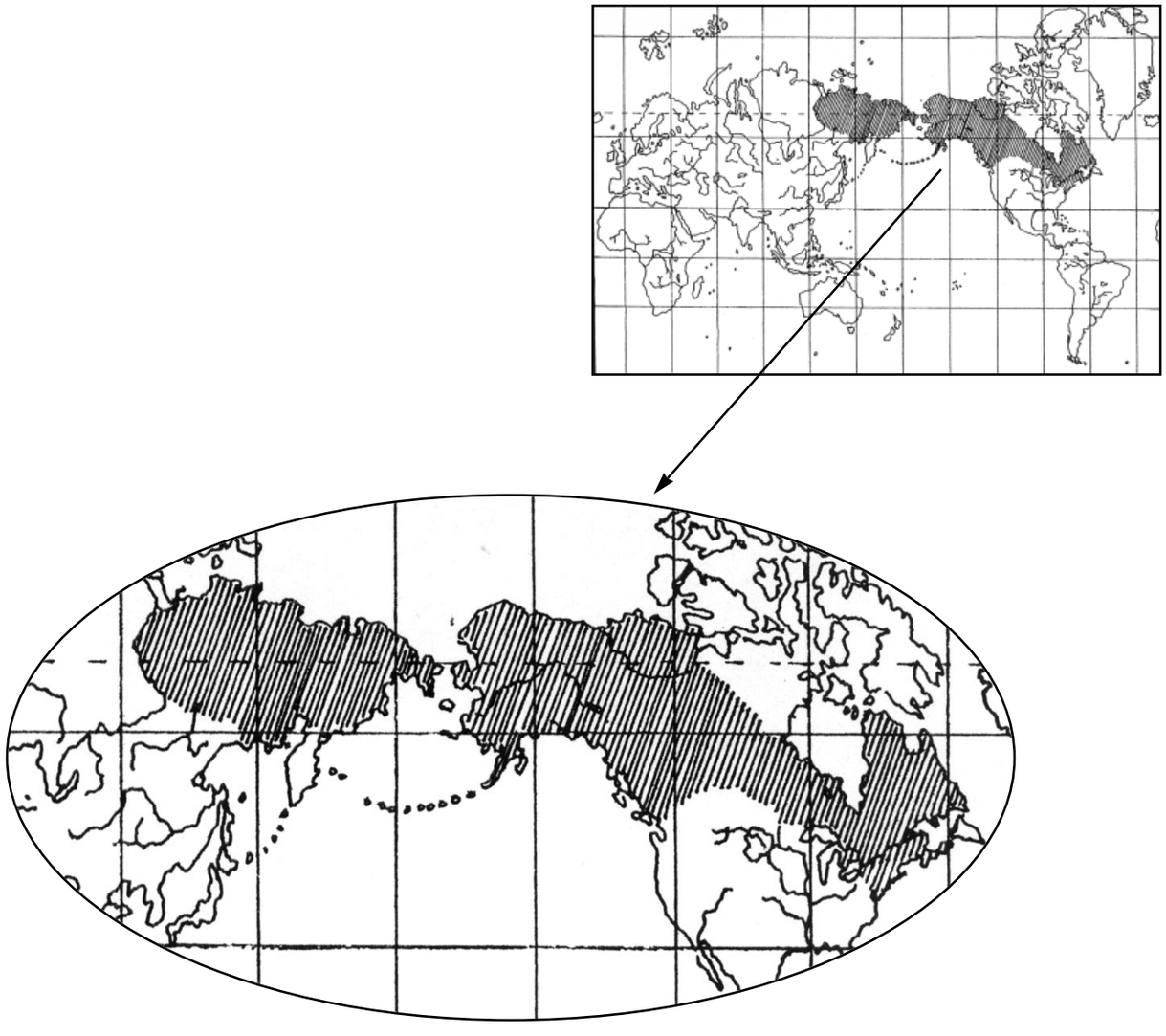
After Vaillancourt had, with an ax, trimmed out a piece of a birch log to a forty-inch, two-by-three board, and seated himself in a rocking chair, McPhee writes:

> *"He then picked up his crooked knife and held its grip in his upturned right hand, the blade poking out to the left. The blade was bent near its outer end (enabling it to move in grooves and hollows where the straight part could not). Both blade and grip were shaped like nothing I've ever seen. The grip, fashioned for the convenience of a hand closing over it, was bulbous. The blade had no hinge and protruded rigidly — but not straight out. It formed a shallow V with the grip.*
>
> *"Vaillancourt held the piece of birch like a violin, sighting along it from his shoulder, and began to carve, bringing the knife upward, toward his chest. Of all the pieces of a canoe, the center thwart is the most complicated in the carving. Looked at from above, it should be broad at the midway point, then taper gradually as it reaches toward the sides of the canoe. Near its ends, it flares out in shoulders that are penetrated by holes, for lashings that will help secure it to the gunwales. The long taper, moreover, is interrupted by two grooved protrusions, where a tumpline can be tied before a portage. The whole upper surface*

should be flat, but the underside of the thwart rises slightly from the middle outward, then drops again at the ends, the result being that the thwart is thickest in the middle, gradually thinning as it extends outward and thickening again at the gunwales. All of this comes, in the end, to an adroit ratio between strength and weight, not to mention the incidental grace of the thing, each of its features being the mirror image of another. The canoe's central structural element, it is among the first parts set in place. Its long dimension establishes a canoe's width, and therefore many of the essentials of the canoe's design. In portage, nearly all of the weight of the canoe bears upon it.

"So to me, the making of a center thwart seemed a job for a jigsaw, a band saw, a set of chisels, a hammer, a block plane, a grooving plane, calipers, templates and — most of all — mechanical drawings."

All accomplished with a mocotaugan.



From Asia to the New World.

In 1923, Clark Wissler, renowned curator of the American Museum of Natural History, published this map to show the distribution of the common one-handed drawknife culture that spread from Siberia to a large part of North America. Additional evidence accumulated up to the twenty-first century reinforces this view. (See Wissler's classic article "The Story of the Crooked Knife," in *Natural History Magazine*, August 1923 and the Smithsonian's *Crossing Continents* in 1998.)

The Mocotaugan's Ancient Origins

The history of the one-handed drawknife of the Natives of the North American Woodlands originated long ago and far away.

Tens of thousands of years ago, sometime during the last long, long glacial era, some members of the early human species living in the temperate region of Eastern Asia began spreading to other parts of the continent. By 16,000 B.C. or so, the descendants of those first people had reached north and east into Siberia, and as more centuries passed, crossed the 1000-mile-wide Bering Bridge into North America.

These Stone Age people who arrived in the North Pacific were typical of the humankind that emerged in various parts of the world. Each group was small in number and traveled independently, but they shared a basic, single, primitive culture. They were nomads, moving from place to place in search of food, clothing and shelter; and subsisting on whatever they could kill or pick. Their only weapons were their bare hands, a club and a spear.

Their only tools, made of stone, were the maul, the wedge, the ax and the knife. The knives were used from a sitting or squatting position, in a natural toward-the-body movement.

But that shared, single, rawly primitive culture did not last. In *Crossroads of Continents,* one of the most recent studies of the movement from Siberia to the New World, William Fitzhugh and Aaron Crowell write that:

"[This] first migration was only the beginning of the story, for the populations that had settled into the North Pacific region then began a long and complex process of cultural change, adaptation and diversification which generated the brilliant spectrum of hunting, fishing and herding cultures in place at the time of the first contact with explorers."

At some early stage in this process, Fitzhugh and Crowell report, "One particular man was born with a mutated Y chromosome, and when he passed it on to his son or sons, he began a process that eventually produced groups of people with distinct genetic differences."

Most of these new groups — like all other prehistoric groups in different parts of the globe — somewhere in their process of development lost the trait of toward-the-body cutting. But two of the groups, Eskimos and Indians, held to the trait for thousands of years, even after the groups' descendants gained access to iron and its technology.

"For untold thousands of years the men of these tribes continued to use the single-handed Stone Age drawknife as one of the tools most essential to their survival."

The trait was most conspicuous in two general forms: the Eskimo and Northwest Coast woman's ulu, and the man's drawknife. Both of these were first made of easily found and ready-shaped stone, sharpened by chipping or rubbing with other stones, and held in the palm of the hand.

Then came handles. Inevitably form followed function, so handles were attached to the blade at an angle that made the draw stroke still more efficient.

As the aboriginal population continued to grow in numbers, it spread slowly but steadily east and south for several thousands of miles. About 1400 B.C., sub-groups of Paleo-Indians began to form a definable Eastern Woodlands culture. As the migration progressed, sub-groups of 50 to 100 or so stopped and settled into areas of forest and stream that could provide them with food, clothing and shelter year-round.

Eventually some of these sub-groups formed into some sixty Eastern Woodlands Indian tribes, and for untold thousands of years the men of these tribes continued to use the single-

handed Stone Age drawknife as one of the tools most essential to their survival.

As centuries passed, prehistoric people found better stone for their blades — flint, obsidian and slate — that could be honed razor-sharp. The Woodlands people found still another material for their knives — beaver teeth. These beaver teeth knives, as Karna Borlund points out in *The Indians of Northeast America,* "were used as the beaver had originally used its tooth for cutting — by pulling it toward the user."

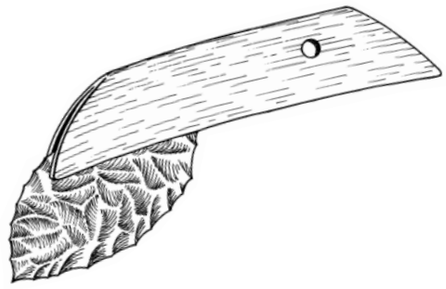
It was these tools of stone and beaver teeth that served the First People of the Woodlands well for so long, up to only five hundred years or so ago.

Evolution of the Mocotaugan

Illustrations A-F are redrawn from *Anthropological Papers*, American Museum of Natural History, *Reports of the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology,* and the *Handbook of the American Indians North of Mexico.*

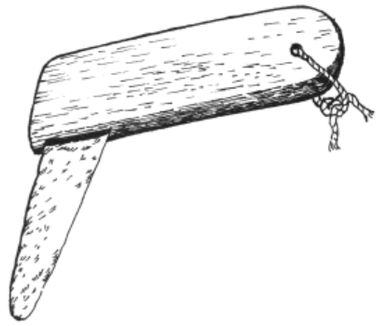
A) The Earliest Stone Age Blade

This was the essential cutting tool of the earliest man in all prehistoric cultures. He made the knife of "found" stone, shaping it to about a four-inch length and sharpening it with another stone to a single bevel edge, like a chisel. He used the knife by gripping it with all four fingers pressing the bulk of the tool into the palm of the hand, then cutting with a toward-the-body motion. This early man would most commonly squat while cutting, using his upper leg to brace the hand holding the object being tooled.



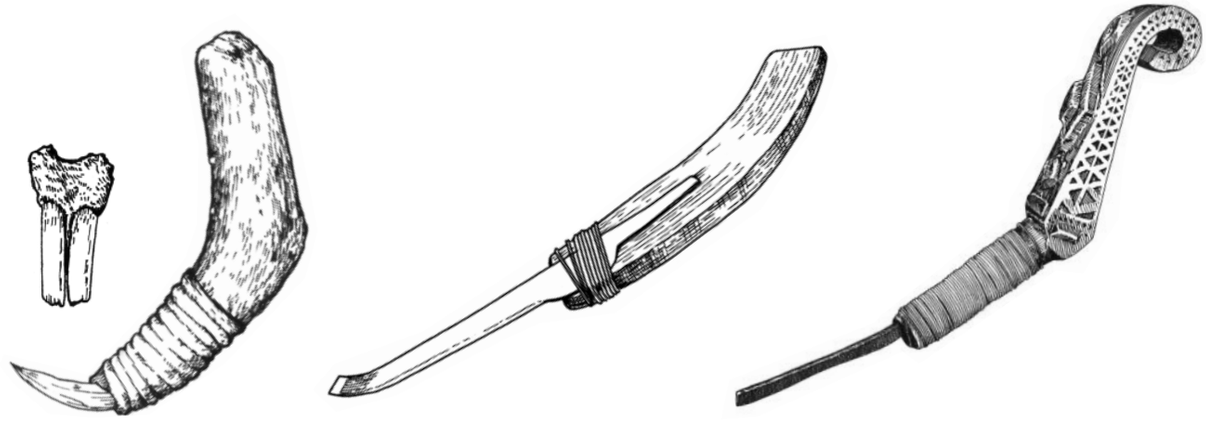
B) The First Major Advance in the Cutting Tool

Somewhere along the continuum of time, some prehistoric man discovered a better way to use the knife made of "found" stone. He fitted that stone into a handle, making a "crook" between handle and blade. Still holding to the toward-the-body technique, he now had a much-improved knife, one with greater pulling power, a wider range of movements, and a surface where he could now place his thumb to help control those movements.



C) The Second Major Advance in the Cutting Tool

Eventually, the Woodlands man learned to "manufacture" a better blade. He had developed ways to find, mine and process flint and similar minerals into blades that were much easier to make, could yield a sharper edge, could keep that edge longer and could be resharpened readily. This rare specimen was unexpectedly unearthed from a cliff-house or burial cave in the Southwest, far from the Woodlands where the crook-handled knife culture flourished. This advanced knife was most likely introduced into this locale by a small offshoot group of Algonquins who are known to have migrated to far south of the Woodlands a thousand years ago or more. Too, the knife might have found its way down through one of the many ancient trade routes that laced North America.



D & E) Two Unique Versions of Early Knives
Some Woodlands men, as late as the 19th century, used beaver teeth as cutting/gouging tools. The large upper incisors were designed by nature exactly as man's earliest knives were used, for a toward-the-body motion. And beavers, often as big as bears, had incisors big enough for men to use as blades. Some Natives simply used two such incisors still attached to their jawbone. Other Natives set one large incisor into a curved handle. Knives like this, excavated along the Ottawa River, have been estimated to be some 5,000 years old.

F) The First Mocotaugans
The Woodlands Native, ever adaptive, quickly took advantage of the revolutionary new blade material introduced with the coming of the Iron Age. The knife shown here is typical in many ways of a very large percentage of the knives made with the new metal. The blade is forged from one of the more easily transformed pieces of discarded steel, a straight razor; the handle, of any hardwood handy, is about as simple as possible; and the lashing together of blade and handle is done crudely with coarse native materials. Most of all, despite all the European forms of knives the Iron Age offered to the Woodlands Natives, this knife retains the millennia-old technique of palm-up, toward-the-body motion, even providing a working surface for the thumb. The one element of this knife that is *not* typical is the relatively shallow angle between knife and blade.

G) The Mocotaugan as Art
The highest form of the Woodlands Native's aboriginal essential tool. Such embellished knives were put together with great care, from making sure that form followed function as purely as possible to detailing every decorative element. Such knives borrowed generously from both European materials and European design motifs. Such knives were, and still are, the kind passed down from one generation to another.

The Revolution of the Iron Age

The Age of Iron came late to the New World. When it did come, it arrived abruptly and spread through the vast Woodlands with extraordinary speed.

Unlike the ancient peoples of most cultures, the peoples of North America stepped directly from the Stone Age to the Iron Age. Most other prehistoric cultures experienced many centuries of a Bronze Age as a transition from Stone Age to the Iron Age. The Woodlands Indians made some occasional use of indigenous copper for ceremonial and ornamental items, and perhaps some axes, but for some reason they never found the way to combine the soft copper with tin to create bronze, a metal that could be put to many practical uses.

The discovery, mining, smelting and shaping of iron began in the Middle East approximately 5000 years ago; in Asia and Africa, 4000 years; and in Europe, 3000. In contrast, the revolutionary metal was completely unknown to the Woodlands Indians up to only about 500 years ago.

About 1500 A.D., Frenchmen fishing far from home waters in the newly discovered Grand Banks began occasionally to set up small temporary camps on the mainland to dry and salt their catches, repair sails and take on fresh water. The permanent exhibit on North American Indians at Harvard University's Peabody Museum describes what happened next:

"During these brief occupations, groups of Indians visited the camps to exchange animal pelts for knives, axes, kettles, trinkets and anything else the French were willing to part with. About the same time, further south, English fishermen were making the same kind of infrequent, brief contact with the Micmacs and Abanakis. Europeans from both countries quickly realized that the profits made from furs in such exchanges were far more lucrative than fishing."

This trade that brought iron and iron technology to the great majority of the Natives of North America was fueled by the Europeans' insatiable demand for furs, especially beaver. The explosive expansion of the trade in the Woodlands was aided by the ancient, many-tentacled, far-reaching network of travel routes that the Indians themselves had knitted together from the innumerable lakes, rivers and streams of their native land.

First came New France's rough and ready red-sashed voyageurs, using the native Indians' remarkable 30- to 40-foot freighter bark canoes. To the south, Dutch trappers operated out of what is now Albany, and English trappers were seeking furs throughout their new colonies.

"The fundamental innovation was not firearms, but the introduction of metal cutting edges."

Soon large trading companies were organized, coming from England, France, Russia and the then-new United States of America. Competition was intense. The politically powerful Hudson's Bay Company led the race. Eventually, HBC was trading European goods for furs at some 4500 trading posts spread over an area that covered 1.48 million square miles of what is now all of Canada and the United States' northern border states from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The Indians for the most part greeted the traders with enormous enthusiasm, both as suppliers of the furs and as consumers of the Europeans' irresistibly appealing new objects. Of all the Iron Age objects, as Daniel Richter points out in *Facing East in Indian Country,* "the fundamental innovation was not firearms, but the introduction of metal cutting edges." The greatest demand was for axes, mauls, and knives.

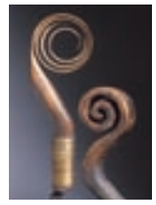
Yet, in this historic process, the Woodlands Indians never abandoned their ancestral one-handed drawknife technique. The natives to a substantial degree accepted ready-made European knives and used them in European fashion for certain tasks, but for cutting and shaping the essential wood, they adapted the new-found material to make better knives for use in their ancient ways. Although the trading companies at some rather early point began to import machine-made blades in basic mocotaugan form, most Indian men could only afford to make their own. As "master recyclers" they made their own out of discarded

metal. They found that the fire pits they had used for copper could generate enough heat to serve as a forge, but they did trade furs for the dense iron hammers strong enough to reshape the scrap iron into a useful blade.

With this new and radically different knife, the Woodlands man could do things impossible — or at least enormously difficult — to do with the best of the stone blades. He could, for example, cut babiche much finer, divide lengths of reeds more evenly, shape and smooth wood more readily, and hollow bowls and masks more precisely. The steel blade not only made his work much easier, it gave him freedom to create far more imaginative art. As C. Keith Wilbur wrote, "Good English steel, salvaged from an old file or even a tired musket barrel, gave new life to the crafting of woodenware."

Thus, the steel-bladed mocotaugan serves as a telling symbol of the first move of the Woodlands Indians from the eons-old Stone Age into the Iron Age.

The Question of European Influence



A number of people argue that the *couteau croche* of the Native American was derived directly from one or another of a steel bladed draw knife introduced to the Woodlands by Europeans. Most often cited as the inspiration for the mocotaugan is the farrier's knife. Also cited, in varying degrees, are the cooper's knife, the pruning knife, the bill hook, the soldier's tranchet, the shoemaker's knife and the lumberman's scribing knife.

To other people, such claims are speculation with negligible foundation. The evolution of the mocotaugan shown here offers sound physical evidence to prove that the mocotaugan was aboriginal to the Woodlands peoples. *(See pages 44 and 45.)* And there is other evidence. Early explorers like Gyles and Franklin commented on the unusual character and omnipresence of the Native's drawknife. Later, the most respected anthropologists confirmed the indigenous origin of the knife. Franklin Speck, for example, devoted several pages of his classic *Penobscot Man* to the knife and its place in Native life, but never raised the possibility that Europe was the source of that knife. An item-by-item search of Hudson's Bay Company's early trade records found listings of several kinds of "push" knives, but no mention of any kind of the one-handed drawknife other than the mocotaugan. Also, among the well-researched books consulted for this essay (see the bibliography) there is not one truly authoritative support for the claim of European origin.

A third group of people, including the authors of this essay, have still another view contrary to the claims of the mocotaugan's European origin. In this view, the mocotaugan was indeed indigenous. But beyond that, *the very nature of the mocotaugan influenced a considerable segment of settlers to adopt the Native implement.*

By the 1600s, the cultures that settlers brought from Europe had been molded by the Iron Age for more than two thousand years. Only remnants remained of the once-universal use of the pull knife for cutting; and those remnants were found in tools made only for a few special purposes, such as shoeing horses, shaping barrel staves and pruning vines. These special knives are one-handed drawknives but otherwise do not meet the accepted definition of the mocotaugan. In the farrier's knife, for example, the entire flat side of the blade curves in a single arc from end to end, but there is no angle, or "crook" between blade and handle as in the defining character of the Native knife.

It was these specialized knives that some early settlers brought to the New World. Upon moving into primeval forests, however, many settlers quickly seized on the unique, new-to-them, multi-purpose tool that Woodlands Natives had developed long before for survival in those dense forests.

The Art of the Mocotaugan

SMALL-SCALE SCULPTURE, THE CENTRAL DISTINGUISHING ART FORM OF THE WOODLANDS Native culture, is quite different from that of the tribes in any other part of North America. And the art that graces the handles of some mocotaugans typifies that art form superbly well.

Like all other art forms, the Woodlands' small-scale sculpture was the product of its physical and social environment. The Natives had no choice but to move between summer and winter camps several times every year for the best hunting and gathering according to the seasons. Such movement meant traveling light over difficult terrain, so the art they created had to be durable and easily portable. Furthermore, with few exceptions, such as a shaman's fetish, small-scale sculpture was rarely fashioned as stand-alone works of art. Rather, the art was incorporated into everyday utilitarian objects such as bowls and ladles and peace pipes. In addition, as Robert Ritzenthaler points out in *American Indian Art* magazine (V1, No.4, 1975), "[T]he life of the Woodlands Indian required that an inordinate amount of time be devoted to the food quest, with little leisure to spend on the development of the arts or the creation of specialists." As a result of these factors, Ritzenthaler adds, the keynote features of Woodlands small-scale sculpture are clarity and simplicity.

Portrait of the Artist

We will never know the *name* of the anonymous man in the past who made a particular embellished mocotaugan, but we can know the *kind* of man he was.

This man would be a man, like all other Woodlands men, who strived daily to provide for himself and his family by hunting and gathering in a primeval wilderness. This man made his own tools and weapons, and learned how to do this by watching elders in his tribe.

Unlike most of his fellow tribesmen, however, this man possessed an inherent urge and skill to become a true artist.

embellish (ĕm-bĕl′ĭsh) To make beautiful as by ornamentation; decorate. — The American Heritage Dictionary, Third Edition

This man was almost certainly a member of the Micmac or Penobscot of the far Northeast, or of the Seven Nations of the Iroquois of New York, or the Massachusetts of New England; the Huron, or the Ottawa and Potawatomi of the Eastern Great Lakes; the Winnebago, Mesquakie and Menominee of the Western Great Lakes; or the Cree, Ojibwa and Chippewa of Central Canada.

If this man was an Iroquoian, he was one of a geographic group that created some of the Woodlands' most beautiful, delicate and intricately carved bowls, ladles and masks — art unsurpassed by any other Woodlands tribe.

In creating his art, he selected subjects and forms that caught his eye where he lived and where he traveled. Often, his carvings were personal: One could mark an important date in his life, another reproduce a lucky symbol, and another memorialize a loved one.

This man did not create an embellished knife for any ceremonial purpose, nor to be used as a weapon, nor for scalping as at least one author claimed. He might occasionally have used his ornamented knife as a gift, perhaps to sell or trade, and very likely to display his skill to impress family, friends, rivals and strangers. It is likely that, in keeping with the Native Americans' profound sense of higher powers, this man sang or prayed as he crafted his knife, to appease or appeal to some spirit he believed existed in every part of his endeavor. These spirits would be contained within his own creative process, the object he was making, or the natural object that would affect or be affected by his man-made object, such as the winds, or the waters over which his new canoe would travel.

Examining the Art Whole

In judging whether any given mocotaugan is a work of art, there is no question that the one most important element for a viewer is a matter of the heart — the emotional response, the special surge of surprise and pleasure, that comes simply from viewing the object.

But full appreciation of the mocotaugan as art is a matter of the mind, too. The Viewer who gets the most out his or her viewing experience has some understanding of the physical and social environment, the *context* in which the knife was created. (It is this context that this essay tries to provide to some degree.) The Viewer also gains more from the viewing experience by analyzing in some detail all the physical elements of the object itself.

To "examine the art whole," the prepared Viewer notes closely the originality of the design, the composition of the several parts, the workmanship of the finished product, and the evidence of its antiquity/provenance. Typically, the Viewer sees that the most important element of the art is displayed in that part of the handle that extends above the grip itself. This of course makes the art proudly conspicuous even when the knife is in use. At the same time, the extension seems to accentuate the fundamental "form follows function" nature of the tool.

Originality …
Composition …
Workmanship …
Antiquity

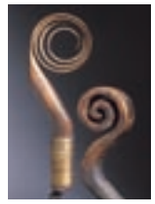
For *originality,* the Viewer looks for the fresh expression of a vision or concept; either in an imaginative variation on a traditional design or an inventiveness inspired by some object of European origin.

For *composition,* the Viewer considers the way the knife's individual components — the blade, the grip, the binding, the ornamentation — are sized, shaped, and finished, then combined to create a harmonious overall design.

For *workmanship,* the Viewer takes into account the level of expertise shown, in the selection of materials, in the complexity of design, in the precision of the cut of every angle and curve, and in the smoothing or texturing of the finish.

For the *antiquity* of a mocotaugan, the Viewer rarely has any documentation to help the examination. Sometimes there is a date inscribed on the knife, but Viewers must rely mainly on physical evidence. They examine the nature of the overall patina, the decomposition of the component materials, such as a leather lashing, and the degree of wear in both blade and handle. The blade shows how frequently the knife was sharpened; the handle shows to what degree that constant strong gripping has gradually worn down the material, especially on the back of the grip and in its thumb rest.

The Special Appeal of the Embellished Mocotaugan



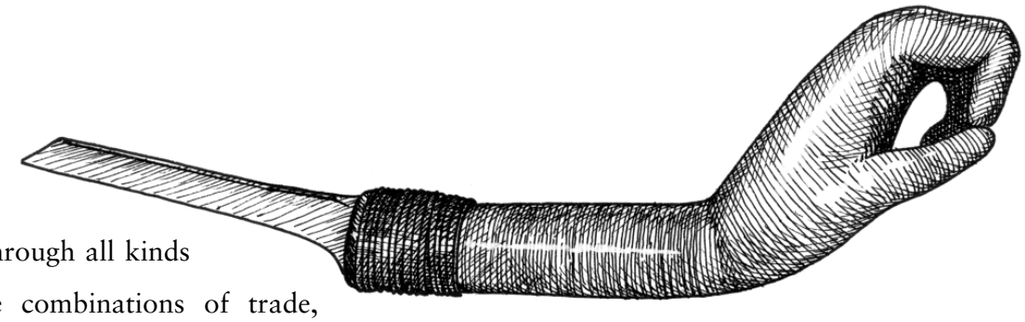
The combination of emotional response and informed analysis contributes significantly to the Viewer's response to any work of art. But the embellished mocotaugan offers one rare characteristic that can carry the Viewer to an even more profound response. The mocotaugan can elicit in the Viewer a purely physical experience, an innate ritual of tactile discovery, that may be unmatched by any other Woodlands art form.

Usually, when an even lightly-informed Viewer has an opportunity to hold an antique art object in hand, such as a quilled basket or a painted robe, he or she handles it carefully, even gingerly, with minimum contact of fingertips. But when the object is a mocotaugan, the same Viewer almost always, instinctively, viscerally, grasps the knife firmly with a whole hand around the handle. The Viewer almost invariably spends time in adjusting palm, fingers and thumb into the same working position as the Native who made it would have held it. The Viewer then, almost always, is prompted by his or her own unconscious to duplicate the Native's traditional toward-the-body motion. Such response to the knife generates an unforced contemplation, a kind of virtual reality, a physical and vivid connection between the mind of the Viewer and the world of the long-ago Native. Such a response is rare indeed with any other Woodlands art object.

In Search of Provenance and Tribal Styles

As with most Indian artifacts collected before the 20th century, it is extremely rare to obtain even fragmentary documentation of the provenance of any historic mocotaugan. The maker's name was never known, and the time, place and circumstances of making the knife were rarely recorded. A mocotaugan-as-art carved in Delaware tribal country, for example, could have eventually been found scores of years later somewhere in Northern Cree coun-

try, arriving there through all kinds of possible combinations of trade, gift, and spoils of war. It is possible, too, that in its journey, one successive owner or another might have, for better or worse, in some way altered the original design.

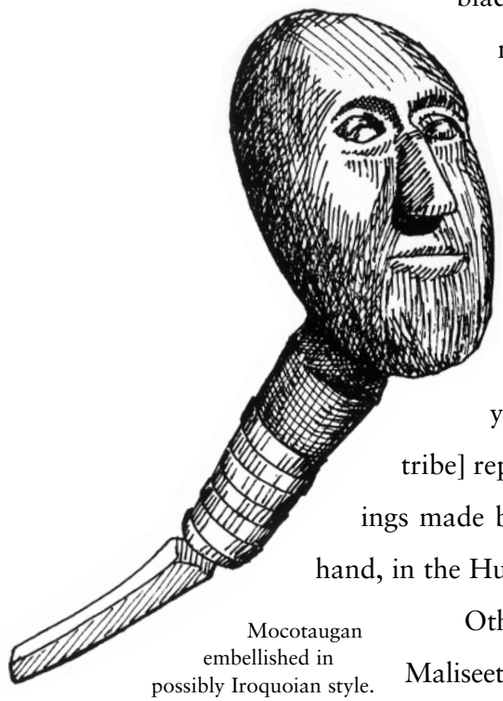


Mocotaugan embellished in Northeast Maritime style.

Drawing of artifact #HM6304 in the Hudson Museum, Orono, Maine

There might, however, be some possibility of identifying a general differentiation of *tribal styles* among Natives in at least three regions of the Woodlands: the Northeast Maritime, the Iroquoian and the Western Great Lakes.

The Northeast Maritime style is found among the Micmac, Penobscot, Maliseet and Passamaquoddy tribes. Overall, these knives are generally shorter than most, with the blades not usually curved at the tip. The handles tend to be shorter, more compact than most, with squared edges. The most prevalent treatment seems to be chip carving. The decorative extension above the grip is commonly of fiddlehead form or a volute closed with a simple cylindrical pass-through opening. Bear, cod and moose were frequent motifs.



Mocotaugan embellished in possibly Iroquoian style.

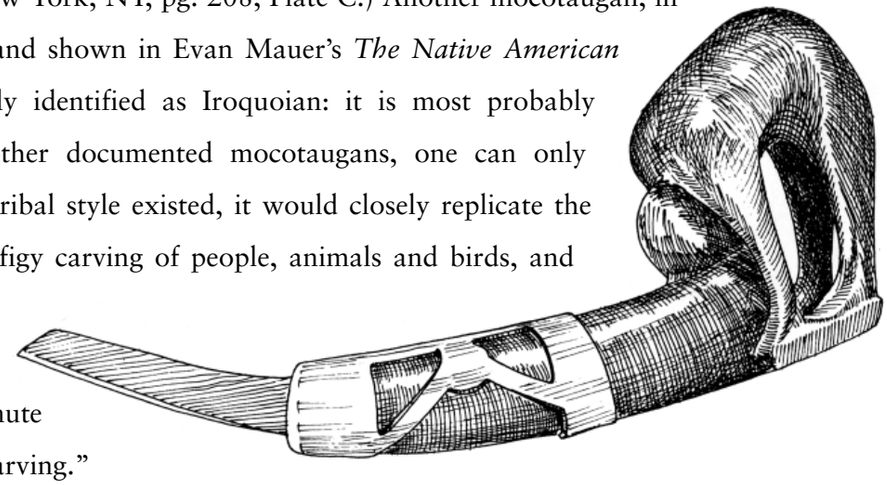
Drawing of a knife in a private collection

Another common form was of a three-dimensional, partially clenched human hand. Frank Speck, who worked for years among the Penobscots, wrote that "The specimen [from that tribe] representing a closed hand is probably among the finest wood carvings made by natives in eastern America." A knife with a similar clenched hand, in the Hudson Museum in Orono, Maine, is perhaps even finer.

Other forms, however, were not uncommon. For example, one Maliseet knife shows stacked hearts. (For more examples of the Northeast Maritime style, see Plate E87 in *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of*

Canada's First Peoples, Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta, 1987.)

The Iroquoian style. Master carvers of the Iroquois created some of the Woodlands' most beautiful, delicate and intricately carved bowls, clubs, ladles and masks. But of all known published examples of mocotaugans, only one, that of a beautiful fully-formed human face, has been identified as Iroquoian. (See *Guide to the Arts of America,* Johnson and Harmer, Rizzoli Press, New York, NY, pg. 208, Plate C.) Another mocotaugan, in the Peabody Essex Museum and shown in Evan Mauer's *The Native American Heritage,* has been incorrectly identified as Iroquoian: it is most probably Chippewayan. Absent any other documented mocotaugans, one can only assume that if an Iroquoian tribal style existed, it would closely replicate the tribes' artistic traditions of effigy carving of people, animals and birds, and would exhibit what noted Iroquoian ethnographer Lewis Morgan called "the minute delicacy and beauty of [the] carving."



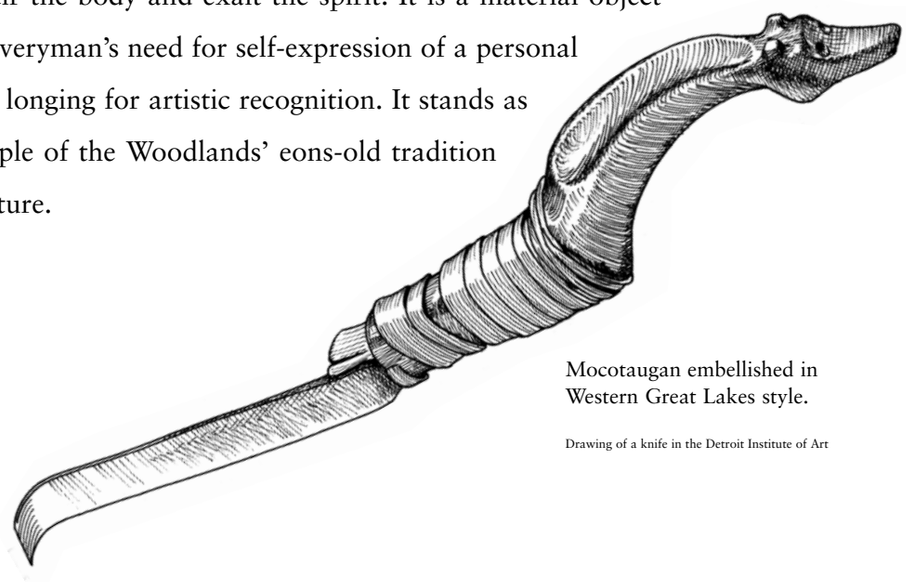
Another outstanding example of the mocotaugan embellished in Iroquoian style.

Drawing of a knife in a private collection

The Western Great Lakes style is fluid and carefully executed, and usually appears to be more elegant than the knives of other regions. Two examples, both now in the Detroit Institute of Art, show that the horse was a common motif. One knife was collected from the Ottawa on Beaver Island, off the west coast of Michigan; the other from the Mesquakie of Tama, Iowa. Each knife shows a beautifully elongated horse's head and neck, detailed shaping of the mane, and life-like eyes, ears and muzzle. Similarly, both knives have beautiful long blades, with curved blade tips. The Museum properly classifies both knives as sculpture.

It may be that more Woodlands tribes than these three exhibit some unique features in the art of their mocotaugans through design repertoire, subject matter or treatment, but to date no one has provided much if any conclusive evidence of such differentiations.

In all, the art of the mocotaugan does not immediately strike a viewer as something spectacular, like a beaded war shirt or a false face mask. Yet it is art that can please the eye, engage the mind, stir the body and exalt the spirit. It is a material object that demonstrates everyman's need for self-expression of a personal world view and the longing for artistic recognition. It stands as a remarkable example of the Woodlands' eons-old tradition of small-scale sculpture.



Mocotaugan embellished in Western Great Lakes style.

Drawing of a knife in the Detroit Institute of Art

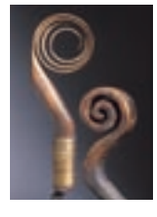
The Influence of European Folk Art

Just as the Natives helped themselves freely to Europe's goods and technology, they borrowed freely from the variety of folk art designs that early settlers brought with them. Many embellished mocotaugans include design elements that can be traced to England, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, and the several Scandinavian countries. Typical of these borrowed elements are the fleur de lis, the shamrock, and floral patterns. After the Dominion of Canada was founded in 1876, Natives began to use the new nation's emblem of the maple leaf.

In terms of total context, the informed Viewer of an embellished mocotaugan keeps in mind that the transfer of cultural characteristics worked two ways. The Natives borrowed from the non-Natives; the non-Natives borrowed from the Natives. For instance, virtually all voyageurs, trappers, traders and soldiers — then settlers themselves — found the mocotaugan so functional a tool in the Woodlands environment that they made the Native knife their own. (Up to one or two generations ago, relatives of this essay's authors kept at least one well-worn *couteau croche* in their tool boxes.)

This transfer applied not only to the *everyday* use of the mocotaugan: It applied also to the *embellishment* of the handle. Some collectors and anthropologists today have concluded that this two-way transfer of cultural design elements was so extensive that no significant differences can be detected between the carvings of Natives and non-Natives.

The early settlers of every nationality took part in this extensive cultural transfer, but it was the French who were the major influence. The French were the first newcomers in any number; they happened to settle in the Eastern Woodlands, where a relatively high proportion of Natives lived; and the general settlement policy of the French was to befriend, cultivate and cooperate with the Natives. In some ways, too, the French folk art aesthetic was similar to that of the Natives. For example, both the French and their Native neighbors had traditionally made frequent use of the chip carving technique.



This intertwining of New World with multiple Old World cultures adds another dimension to the appreciation of the embellished mocotaugan. Here now was both a work of art and a splendid example of acculturation, where the encroaching cultures helped to preserve and enrich the aboriginal people's traditional customs and spirit.

Categories of Designs in the Mocotaugan Handle

Woodlands mocotaugan artists embellished their handles with a variety of design characteristics. Sometimes, but not often, they combined different characteristics into one piece of art. For the most part, the stylistic characteristics that the Natives created can be classified into these nine broad categories.

Animal Effigies: Realistic carvings of animals, either etched, in relief, or in three dimensions. The animals were mostly beavers and bears, but with a good showing of birds of prey and other birds, dogs, frogs, horses, fish, lizards, moose, otters, snakes and turtles.

Chip Carving: Mostly bas-relief shapes of circles, squares and triangles, often stacked.

Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts and Spades: Euro-American symbols and forms, including playing-card suits and iconic symbols, such as the Canadian maple leaf.

Commemoratives: Mark both personal and tribal special events; and include, with and without other embellishment, lettering of dates, names, photographs and other forms of mementos.

Human Effigies: Realistic carvings of both men and women. Rarely forms of complete figures; more commonly, individual features such as faces, hands and heads.

Mixed Media: Combine inlays of materials such as bone, glass, lead, mirrors and silver; more frequently, paints and stains.

Nautical motifs: Realistic carvings of such objects as anchors, barrels, canoes, compass roses and sailing ships.

Pictographics: Illustrate inanimate objects such as flowers, insects, leaves and trees, but also action scenes, buildings and even other mocotaugans.

Scrolls, Volutes and Curves: Include the so-called fiddle or violin handle, both adorned and unadorned, and other fanciful curved designs such as concentric circles and three-dimensional spirals.

A Portfolio of Photographs of Mocotaugan Art

INTRODUCTION TO THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The 35 photographs in this portfolio provide a fairly comprehensive picture of the nature of the embellished mocotaugan. They provide an opportunity, within the limits of two dimensions, "to examine the object whole," to note closely those physical elements — originality, composition, workmanship and signs of antiquity — that determine the quality of the knife as an art object.

The photographs are grouped according to the nine design categories outlined on the opposite page. The knife in each photograph is introduced with a brief comment, and a more detailed description is provided on pages 163-166.

Animal Effigies

These figures can represent everything from a newly discovered and interesting form, such as a horse, to an object of some personal appeal, such as a camp dog, to any one of a number of forest creatures that are revered traditional clan symbols.

PLATE #1

An intriguing story unfolds on this "House of Beaver" knife. The importance of the beaver trade is brought to life in a wonderfully conceived and executed mocotaugan.

PLATE #2

This ambiguous form could be an alligator or snake or another reptile that was possibly the carver's personal manitou.

PLATE #3

The carver has subtly portrayed an owl in a form that carries on the Eastern Woodlands/Plains abstract sculpture tradition.

PLATE #4

The carver of this knife relied on classic North Country imagery to portray the loyal companion and friend, the dog.

PLATE #5

The beaver was a fairly common subject. This rendering is more angular, more cubist than most.

Chip Carving

Geometric in nature due to triangular-shaped “chips,” this carving style provides endless design possibilities, both in the combinations of bas-relief elements and in the ways in which they cover the handle’s surface. This is one of the most common design elements displayed on mocotaugans.

PLATE #6

The beauty, detail and subtlety of chip-carved decoration is exhibited on the back side of this mocotaugan.

PLATE #7

Exceptional craftsmanship was needed to create the lateral and longitudinal piercing and cut-through.

PLATE #8

A profusion of Native and non-Native imagery abounds on this densely decorated small mocotaugan.

Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts & Spades

A strong passion for gaming and gambling inescapably drew the Woodlands Natives to the Europeans' card games. The strong graphics on the cards combined with the long, dreary nights in the camps inevitably prompted the Woodlands carver to use the graphics as the source for his artistic expression.

PLATE #9

An image of a mocotaugan carved into a mocotaugan combined with the four card suits and the name "Malloy" illustrate the diversity of imagery explored on embellished mocotaugans.

PLATE #10

One of the rare examples made with an imported English mocotaugan blade made specifically for trade to the Natives and originally supplied without a handle.

PLATE #11

A mocotaugan for a left-handed user; the smooth handle in a rich brown patina incorporates seven stacked hearts.

PLATE #12

Polychrome paint, chip carving, hearts, and geometrical designs result in a folksy feeling.

Commemoratives

These design elements often memorialize a person or event important in the carver's life. The prevailing imagery includes names of people and places, dates of events such as births and marriages, signatures, and even photographs.

PLATE #13

An unusual choice of embellishment: this mocotaugan has a tonic advertisement revealed under a glass window. Polychrome paint, chip carving and a beautiful tiger maple handle contribute to the outlandish effect of this commemorative.

PLATE #14

Many commemoratives record the makers' lives, anniversaries and important dates. This one is dated 1867 and initialed "AJ," with a lucky shamrock.

PLATE #15

A deep brown patina suggests years of use by the maker of this fine mocotaugan, "GKC"(?) who was most likely a logger by trade *(see Plate #16)*.

PLATE #16

A close up of the rear of the handle *(Plate #15)* shows the tools of the logger's trade. This kind of embellishment gives insight into the maker's world.

PLATE #17

Wives, mothers and loved ones were often kept in memory with the inclusion of their photos or other images. Included here is a tin-type of a mid-19th-century woman.

Human Effigies

These are the rarest of images found on mocotaugan handles. Based clearly on the ancient Woodlands tradition of small-scale sculpture, the representations of human forms, in whole or in part, epitomize one of the finest aesthetic achievements within that tradition.

PLATE #18

Human forms on the whole are the rarest and most collectible imagery on the embellished mocotaugan. This exceptionally beautiful knife exemplifies the beauty, grace and simplicity of the Eastern Woodlands small-scale sculpture tradition.

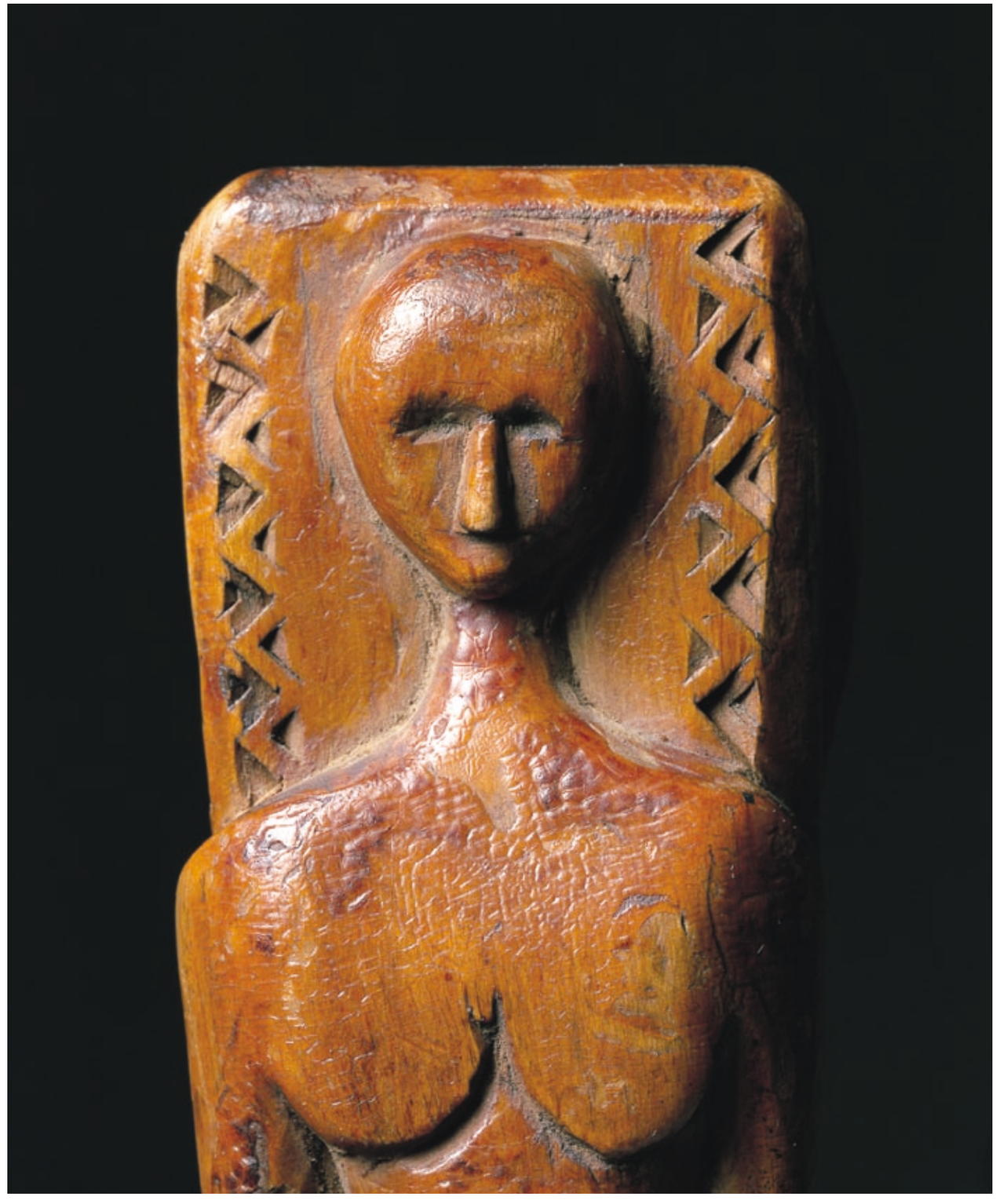


PLATE #19

A close up of the face *(Plate #18)* reflecting the peaceful serenity of the female figure. Note the later shellac sometimes applied to mocotaugan handles.

PLATE #20

Stacked hearts in the palm of a hand and a "ball in a cage" design are carved from a single piece of maple burl, informing the viewer of the remarkable skill of the artist.

PLATE #21

Collected in Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia. This image of a man with a hat may be that of a Briton fisherman, a steamship officer or a train conductor.

PLATE #22

A very, very old mocotaugan,
with a haunting visage.
Its patina and rusting wire
reveal years of use.

PLATE #23

The hand, an ever-popular subject, is this time extended in a "halt" gesture, and was once painted green. Notice the carefully executed fingernails.

Mixed Media

Mirrors, colored glass, lead, pewter and paints all found their way into the oeuvre of the mocotaugan. While demonstrating the Native love of new and unusual materials, these colorful elements add considerable interest through their sparkle, color and vitality.

PLATE #24

A true mixed-media event. This embellished handle has lead and mirror inlays, is both painted and stained, has painted metallic accents and is decorated with both chip carving and pictorial engraving.

PLATE #25

Representing a bird and finely inlaid with pewter, and etched with simple crosshatch decoration, this knife combines European materials with Woodlands abstract sculptural tradition. (This could be included under Animal Effigies.)

PLATE #26

Like a fine gunsmith's work, the engraved German silver heart singularly and simply adds valuable detail and drama to the wooden handle.

Nautical Motifs

The importance to Woodlands Natives of streams, rivers, lakes and oceans is illustrated and emphasized in the carving of boats, barrels, canoes, sailing vessels, and the iconography of the seaman: anchors, roping and compass roses.

PLATE #27

A close up of a ship's barrel carved in full relief on the back of a handle *(Plate #28)* pronounces the importance of the barrel in the maritime culture.

PLATE #28

A steam sailing vessel engraved and painted along with a carved bear traveling in a canoe, and a ship's barrel carved on the reverse, complete the prolific nautical imagery found on this one mocotaugan.

PLATE #29

A close up of the engraved and painted steam sailing vessel found on the front of the handle *(Plate #28)*. Did this ship sail on the ocean or the Great Lakes?

Pictographics

Shallow, two-dimensional graphics span the wealth of the carver's observation and imagination. Everything from flora to fauna, earth to sky, from the natural world to the man-made world, is documented in the pictorial style.

PLATE #30

Pictographic images, usually carved in two-dimensional low relief, were suited to the flat surfaces of the mocotaugan handles. This 20th century example is engraved with a moose, a cod, an eight-point star and a shamrock heart, and is initialed “TI.”

PLATE #31

Extensively exhibited and featured in major publications, this well-executed and engraved knife with pewter inlays has widespread appeal. Its appeal lies in its singular simplicity and basic Woodlands imagery of an evergreen tree.

PLATE #32

Like most pictographic mocotaugans, this knife tells a story. A bird perched in the branches is ready to feed on a flying insect.

Scrolls, Volutes & Curves

Carvers often concluded the design on a handle in two-dimensional concentrically carved circles and three-dimensional spirals or fiddle-shaped scrolls. Fiddling, by both Native and non-Native, was an important Woodlands amusement, so the concept of the fiddle form handle came easily to the carver.

PLATE #33

These two mocotaugan handles particularly well illustrate the fluid, curvilinear and concentric details found on many handles of the scrolls, volutes, and curves category.

PLATE #34

The so-called "fiddle handle." This one is executed in a particularly realistic adaptation of the popular instrument's neck end.

PLATE #35

Like branches of a tree that split and reach towards the sky, the "branches" of this gentle handle design also remain strong and flexible.

The Mocotaugan in Modern Times

By the middle of the 1500s, the North American fur trade was well under way.

Around 1850, the United States Western Frontier was just beginning to open; but the Woodlands fur trade was essentially over. However, the Woodlands Natives were in the midst of experiencing an even greater shock of acculturation than they had experienced with the coming of the Iron Age. Even prior to the 1800s, as Daniel Richter notes in *Facing East from Indian Country,* "Apart from food and shelter, virtually every aspect of Indian material life depended on economic ties with Europe." Especially in the Eastern Woodlands, the Natives had been dispossessed of their land and forced to accept a new people's authority, customs and laws. By 1850, the Native population, especially in the Eastern Woodlands, had decreased significantly, and the quality of their pre-contact way of life had vastly diminished. In place of the first hundreds of explorers, trappers and traders came wave after wave of settlers. By 1850, in what had been New France to the North and English colonies to the south, the estimated Native population was down to perhaps only tens of thousands, while the non-Natives numbered about twenty-six million and were well settled as far west as Minnesota.

It was more than sheer numbers of settlers that so profoundly affected the Woodlands People at this time. The latest Europeans brought with them one of the greatest engines for change that the world has ever known — the Industrial Age. Machinery replaced muscle; mass production replaced craftsmanship. For power, there came dams, waterwheels, windmills; coal, and soon, oil. For transportation, there came roads, bridges, canals, and horse-drawn wagons. By the decade of the 1850s steam engines were being used to fell the virgin forest for lumber, and railroads were pushing ever westward in both Canada and the United

States. As early as 1859, paddlewheel steamships began navigating rivers deep into the Canadian Woodlands.

As part of this collapse of the First People's ancient culture, the mocotaugan was no longer the man of the Woodlands' essential tool for survival. Many of the "one thousand and one indispensable objects" he had once made with his mocotaugan — ax handles, bowls, snowshoes, and so much more, even dolls — were now available to him, ready-made and cheap, at the ubiquitous general store.

Frank Speck, 1912: "Two to half a dozen [crooked knives] are owned by every Penobscot man."

Still, the ancient single-handed drawknife trait strongly persisted. Despite the great variety of ready-made specialized cutting tools — such as jackknives, spoke shaves, chisels and gouges in great variety and available almost everywhere in the vast Woodlands — native men did not abandon their mocotaugan. As late as 1912, Frank Speck reported in his close study of one Eastern Woodlands tribe that had been influenced especially early, aggressively and continuously by the material culture of Europe, "The crooked knife is of prime importance. Two to half a dozen are owned by every Penobscot man."

Assuring the Memory of the Mocotaugan

The first explorers into the Woodlands collected some artifacts of the Native North Americans, and the earliest trappers, traders, missionaries and adventurers collected some, too. Mostly, these men traded some European object for an artifact they viewed as decorative, novel, or exotic; sometimes these men received the artifacts as gifts. When these men returned to their home countries, they often displayed the artifacts simply as souvenirs in specially built curio cabinets. One of the first serious collectors was Thomas Jefferson. He displayed in his home at Monticello many natural and man-made objects that he had instructed Lewis and Clark to gather on their historic journey to the Pacific Ocean in 1804-1806.

Then, about 1850, there began an extraordinary accumulation of Native artifacts, and their preservation. Collectors by the many hundreds, if not more, swarmed into Native territories to buy up artifacts of all kinds. Thus started the wholesale collection of indigenous

material objects in every accessible area of North America. The first territory to feel the brunt was the Eastern Woodlands, because it was closest to the most concentrated numbers of buyers and sellers living in the new big cities.

The great accumulation continued for decades, reaching a peak in the late eighteen-hundreds and ending about 1911, when one collector's field agent wrote, "good relics are scarce is put[t]ing it mildly." As *Collecting Native America,* edited by Barbara Hail and Shepherd Krech III, points out, collecting by the biggest and most notable collectors served mixed purposes — "scientific, historical, educational, entertaining, monumental or commemorative." One of the grander purposes, for example, was that of Canada's David Ross McCord. Moira McCaffrey, in the *Collecting* book, wrote that McCord's goal "was to build a collection that would stand unrivalled on the continent as a testimony to the skill and industry of the original Masters of the Forest and the Prairie." Somewhat similarly, as Hail reports in the same book, Clara Endicott Sears sought to express the beauty and spirituality of Indian culture, primarily for the education of the public. The Reverend Sheldon Jackson, however, collected and sold artifacts to fund his mission of converting and aiding Indians, and building churches for them. Ernest Thompson Seton collected artifacts to encourage Boy Scouts' interest in outdoor life. George Gustave Heye, when working as a young man in Arizona, *Collecting* contributor Sarah Lee Caldwell reports, one day bought a used deerskin shirt, and at once, he says, "I wanted a rattle and moccasins. And then the collecting bug seized me and I was lost." George Heye ended up collecting an estimated one million or more objects.

"Their passion for collecting artifacts was intense. One writer described their collecting method as 'the vacuum cleaner approach.'"

Most of the major collectors were wealthy and cultivated. They were self-taught anthropologists, usually hiring some of the best professionals to gain knowledge and field agents to further add to their collections, but often visiting Native territories themselves to both learn and buy more. Their passion for collecting artifacts was intense. One writer described their collecting method as "the vacuum cleaner approach." For example, one observer said that Heye, when he visited reservations, would "be fretful and hard to live

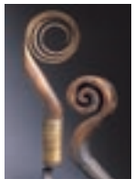
An Egregious Error?

Lewis Henry Morgan was one of the first collectors to apply some of the new European science of ethnography to record the native culture of the North American aborigine. Born in 1818 and living in upstate New York's Woodlands, he was a lawyer who became acknowledged as "The Father of American Anthropology." He studied Native culture closely and was a strong advocate of Native rights. The Senecas adopted him and called him *Tayadaowuhkuh* or "one lying across," for his dedication to bridging the gap between the Indians and the white man.

One of his major contributions was in the area of material culture. About 1850, with a funding of $375 from the State of New York, he meticulously assembled and annotated more than five hundred objects that reflected practically every aspect of the daily life of the Iroquois. He carefully sorted the objects into categories. Under the category "Tools" he listed sub-categories: tools for cooking, tools for hunting, tools for play, tools for shelter, tools for war, tools for work, etc.

But *nowhere* among these many dozens of tools did he list the single most important tool of all, the tool that was used to make many, probably most, of the other tools — the mocotaugan.

Some people might conclude that if Morgan didn't mention it, the Iroquois didn't use it. Yet there seems to be substantial evidence that the Iroquois *did* use mocotaugans. The location of the tribes in what is now upper New York State along the Great Lakes gave them ready access to the metal-bladed knife for almost two hundred years before 1850. Morgan himself wrote of "the minute delicacy and beauty of [Iroquois] carvings," and such carvings were almost certainly achieved only with the mocotaugan. In William Fenton's well-regarded book *The False Faces of the Iroquois,* an old early 20th century photograph shows, as the caption states, "Tom Harris, Seneca of Onondaga Longhouse Six Nations ... smoothing the inside [of a mask] with a crooked knife."



The authors here believe, but are willing to stand corrected, that Morgan did, in fact, make an egregious error.

with until he'd bought every last dirty dishcloth and discarded shirt."

Large-scale collectors at first kept their acquisitions in their palatial homes, or in some other restricted buildings, for private viewing only. Eventually, however, most of the great collections were donated or sold to one or another of the new public museums of natural history that were springing up in profusion throughout North America from about 1840 to 1890. At the federal government level were the United States' Smithsonian Institution, founded in 1847, and Canada's predecessor of today's Canadian Museum of Civilization, organized about 1870. Then came other public museums, funded by states and provinces, universities, and communities ranging from major metropolises to small towns. Those five decades were indeed "The Museum Age," and all in all, an invaluable material record of Native American culture has been preserved for posterity.

But, within the vast corpus of these many museum collections, to what degree is the mocotaugan represented?

A recent survey by this book's authors of museums with important holdings of Native American artifacts indicates that the mocotaugan is hardly conspicuous by its presence. For example, the American Museum of Natural History, with its many thousands of North American Indian artifacts, lists only twenty-nine such knives. The Peabody Museum at Harvard has only six. The National Museum of Man in Canada, among its many tens of thousands of Indian artifacts, lists fifty-four such knives. The Smithsonian, with its many hundreds of thousands of indigenous North American artifacts, lists one hundred ninety-eight, but visual inspection shows fewer than that can be correctly classified as mocotaugans. Furthermore, of the true mocotaugans, very few — hardly half a dozen — could be considered to have any merit at all as art. (At the time of the survey, records of the massive Heye collection, now part of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, was in transit from New York City to its new site outside Washington, and its records were unavailable.)

Rightly or wrongly, for better or worse, it is the private collectors of today who are the principal preservationists of the mocotaugan as an art form. The authors are aware of three

large private collections that comprise a corpus of some of the best known embellished mocotaugans. And even there, the numbers of knives in their collections range from perhaps as few as twenty to no more than one hundred. Surely other great examples remain in private hands, and new examples will continue to surface, but the pursuit of assembling collections still remains small and clearly in the private domain.

"Rightly or wrongly, for better or worse, it is the private collectors of today who are the principal preservationists of the mocotaugan as an art form."

However, although mocotaugans of all kinds are proportionately poorly represented in public museums, and the embellished knives in the hands of private collectors are relatively few in number, the knife — as artifact and as art — still has enough presence to give us confidence that the memory of both forms will never disappear.

The Knife's Presence in the New Millennium

Today, in the early years of the 21st century, it is likely that at least a few thousand Natives, non-Natives and Métis are still using the mocotaugan in their daily lives. This is likely most true in the northern reaches of the Woodlands, where Natives still depend on hunting and trapping for their livelihood. While most mocotaugans are likely general-purpose, the use of the knife perhaps persists most *prominently* in the making of two artifacts that carry particularly significant historic and aesthetic content — the wood splint basket and the birch bark canoe.

Eastern Woodlands Natives made their first splint baskets about two hundred and fifty years ago. Adapting the fabrication introduced by European settlers, and using their steel-bladed mocotaugans, Natives initially made strictly utilitarian baskets specifically for sale to the settlers. Only within the past few generations did the Natives begin to make baskets for the sake of art and posterity. Today, the demand is far more for the delicately detailed narrow splint and sweet grass baskets than for the workaday baskets made simply and quickly with wide splints. Richard Silliboy, a Maine Micmac elder, estimates that within the state's four tribes today there are now about one hundred and ten artists, of whom ninety or so are

Abaznoda Basket.
Late twentieth century 6 3/4" h x 4" dia. Passamaquoddy. Dyed ash splints and sweet grass. Artist unknown. Originally collected in 1987, Trading Post, Perry, Maine.

making baskets. This basket making is part of a broad, organized tribal economic development effort throughout the Eastern Woodlands. For example, the tribes of Maine have joined to form the Indian Basketmakers Alliance. The purpose of the Alliance is "to help elders introduce the younger generation to the ancient art of basket making, and to find markets for their work." The Alliance is supported by the state's Arts Commission, Humanities Council, Office of Tourism and Rural Development Council, and by the federal Department of Agriculture's Forestry Program and National Endowment for the Arts. Similar government-supported economic development through basket-making art is taking place within many Native communities, from the Maritimes on the east into Quebec and Iroquois country to the north and west.

Throughout the world today, the birch bark canoe stands as one of the most compelling icons of Native North American culture. And of the dozen or more distinctive tribal styles of Woodlands birch bark canoes, the Wabanaki is widely acknowledged to be the finest, in both its handling and its aesthetic. There is a special and strong symbiosis between this iconic canoe and the modest mocotaugan. The knife was, and still is, essential to the making of a proper canoe. Both knife and canoe have their origins in the same period of the Stone Age and the same area of Eastern Siberia. Both were a unique product of a temperate zone environment containing thick forests and numerous waterways; and both were absolutely essential for survival in that environment. Both were involved in the Woodlands' first industry — the wholesale manufacture of fleets of freighter canoes for the fur trade. Both can be exceptional examples of how a fundamentally utilitarian object can be changed into a remarkable work of art.

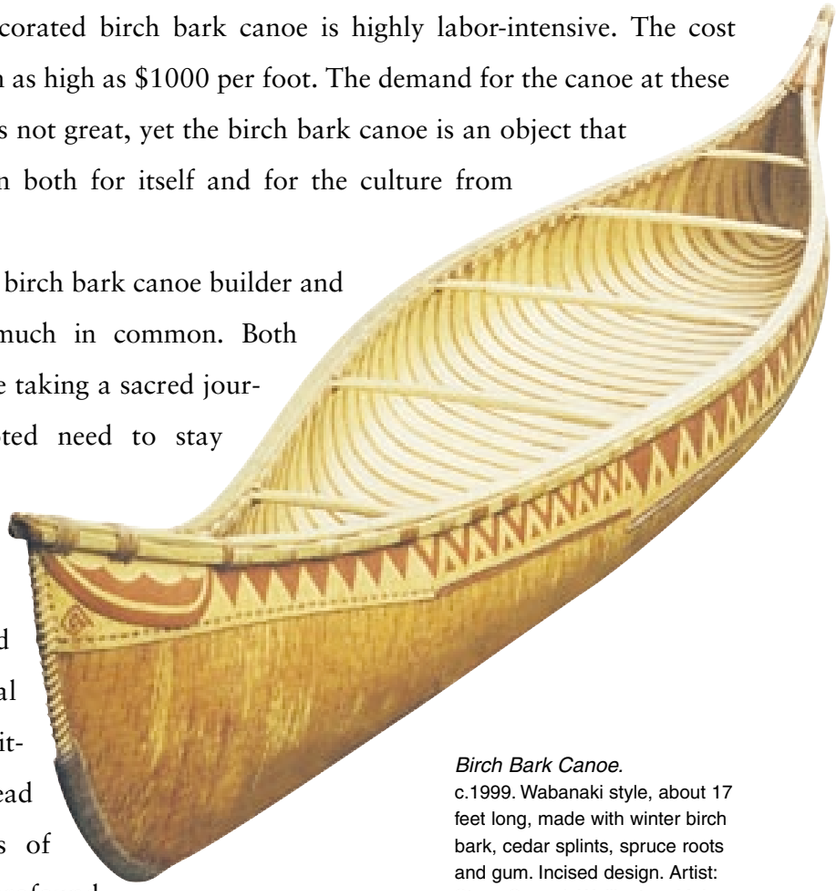
Aaron York, an Abanaki full-time canoe builder, estimates that there are perhaps only twenty to thirty other such builders today throughout Canada and the United States. He

"There is a special and strong symbiosis between the iconic canoe and the modest mocotaugan."

estimates that the average output is about three or four canoes a year, that there are only three or four full-time builders, of whom only a few are Natives, and that among the whole group only three or so can build birch bark canoes of museum quality.

Making an authentic birch bark canoe today is enormously time-consuming, and thus expensive. A builder needs to spend a week or more in the forest searching for one birch tree big, straight and healthy enough to yield a bark sheet of the size and quality needed to build one first-class canoe. In addition, even using some power and other modern tools along with the traditional ax, mocotaugan and awl, the building of an authentic and beautifully decorated birch bark canoe is highly labor-intensive. The cost today of such a canoe can run as high as $1000 per foot. The demand for the canoe at these prices, as one might expect, is not great, yet the birch bark canoe is an object that elicits widespread admiration both for itself and for the culture from which it came.

The modern Woodlands birch bark canoe builder and splint basket maker have much in common. Both builder and maker seem to be taking a sacred journey, expressing a deep-rooted need to stay connected to the land and to help perpetuate their unique cultural identity. Both builder and maker have a profound intimacy with the natural world, an "environmental literacy" with which they can read and understand the secrets of earths and waters, and a profound



Birch Bark Canoe.
c.1999. Wabanaki style, about 17 feet long, made with winter birch bark, cedar splints, spruce roots and gum. Incised design. Artist: Steve Cayard, Wellington, Maine.

adherence to the traditional Native principle of "Seven Generations" — adhering to the past through parents, grandparents and great-grandparents, and contributing to the future through children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The Mocotaugan as a Tool Today

Different people looking at the state of the mocotaugan today are most likely to reach one of two decidedly opposite conclusions about its future. One conclusion is that this knife will become even less used, and less known than it is today. The other conclusion is that this knife will grow in importance as a distinctive antiquity that can tell us much about an important Native American culture.

On the darker side, it may be that the interest of the general public in the mocotaugan at the beginning of the 21st century is marginal. Museum exhibits of Native American artifacts include very few of the knives, even none at all. A small number of books on American Indian history and art may sometimes mention the knife in passing, even citing it as "important," but giving no reason why. A magazine put out by the Fur Trade Museum has published one or two articles about the knife in the last thirty-five or forty years, but better-known popular magazines show no interest in writing about it. There are a few Internet web sites on the subject, but the audience there seems to number no more than a few hundred people with a nostalgic interest in the object. In contrast, there are tens of thousands of enthusiasts collecting the "Art Knife" and being served by numerous clubs, web sites and magazines. One active "Art Knife" category is "Vintage knives that are historic examples of the cultures from around the world." But the historic embellished mocotaugan, though an obvious example of a vintage and artful knife, is nowhere even mentioned.

Indian art magazines tend to pass over the mocotaugan in favor of more spectacular (though culturally less important) works of Native art. Professional journals, too, pay little attention to the knife. According to a literature search at Harvard's Tozzer Library of Anthropology, the only scholarly articles providing an historic overview of the mocotaugan were those written by Otis Tufts Mason, in "The Man's Knife Among the North

American Indians" in *United States National Museum Annual Report for 1897,* and by Clark Wissler, in "The Story of the Crooked Knife" in AMNH's 1923 edition of *Natural History* magazine. The only other scholarly work since those two classics were written was one that discussed the metallurgy of early blades, published in the *Journal Canadien d'Archaeologie* in 1986.

On the far more positive side, the Native American culture is experiencing a remarkable renaissance. The population of Native Americans in both the United States and Canada is much larger than it has been for a century or more. That population is becoming more assertive, more confident. One of their most important priorities is to reinvigorate their ancient traditions, and one way they are seeking to achieve that priority is to restore the values and skills of traditional craftsmanship.

"The Native American culture is experiencing a remarkable renaissance."

At the same time that the First People are taking charge of their lives, the governments of both Canada and the United States are greatly expanding their efforts to assure the success of this renaissance. Just one symbol of that government support is the creation of the Smithsonian's massive new National Museum of the American Indian. Both governments — and states and provinces as well — are providing direct, proactive support for the furtherance of Native arts and crafts.

With Native crafts activity of this scope, and despite the continuous change in tool technology, it is likely that the mocotaugan as a working tool will for the foreseeable future play at least some small role in contributing to the survival of the indigenous Woodlands culture.

Embellished Mocotaugans of Modern Times

These three knives carved in the mid-20th or early 21st century show all the characteristics of the typical high quality embellished mocotaugans of earlier times.

Of the two known carvers, one is a Native; the other a non-Native. Both these men live close to the land: the Native moved from Vermont to the denser Woodlands north of Quebec; the non-Native lives in an eco-village of his own making in Nova Scotia. Both carve their knife handles fully in the traditional form and spirit of Woodlands small-scale sculpture. At the same time, both readily take advantage of new technology: The non-Native uses an electric motor to shape the blade and a propane torch to temper it; the Native uses an electric wood burner to enhance his images.

There are other men (and perhaps some women) who today keep alive the traditions of embellishing the distinctive Woodlands knife in a distinctive fashion. May their numbers increase.

Aaron York, an Abanaki, carves in the finest traditions of Native Woodlands culture. Interpreting his tribe's sacred symbol of the sturgeon, which represents strength and renewal, he has captured the powerful spirit of his people's manitou. His hand-forged blade, brass ferrule and small brass beadwork show a superb craftsman's attention to materials, details, and finishing. This is an exceptional example of a mocotaugan, comparable to the early great ones.

Mocotaugan by Aaron York, 2003
Maple, brass wire and ferrule, hand forged steel 1/2" blade, overall 10 3/4" long
In the form of a fully carved Eastern Sturgeon, wood-burnt decoration
Canada, 2003. Private Collection

David Cameron sought a vision for this knife and came to see a horse for his creation. The horse has long symbolized power and freedom of movement to the Indian people. The carving's upright composition, bulbous form and smooth surface emphasize the horse's basic character. Cameron's selection of materials, and the repeatedly tempered blade, have created a durable tool, and his creativity has imparted it with meaning. By all measures, a fine mocotaugan.

Mocotaugan by David Cameron, 2003
Maple, brass wire, glass beads, hand-forged steel blade, 9/16" wide, overall 9" long. In the form of a fully carved horse's head and upper torso
Canada, 2003. Private Collection

Artist unknown. From early in the Woodlands Iron Age to the present, the hand has been a favorite subject matter for the mocotaugan carver. What makes this knife exceptional is its use of various materials, namely pewter, bone, and Bakelite, to create a classic yet updated form.

The knife is perfectly balanced and has a blade exceptionally well forged and tempered. This knife is a user's dream and a viewer's pleasure.

Mocotaugan—Mid-20th century
Artist unknown
Rosewood, pewter, bone, Bakelite(?), hand-forged stainless steel 5/8" wide blade, overall, 8 3/4".
In the form of a fully carved, partially closed hand
Lunenburg, Nova Scotia
Private Collection

AFTERWORD

by Ned Jalbert

I love the art of the mocotaugan. But I do not fool myself into elevating it to the status of great culture. It is not Michelangelo's "David."

The knife with its rich history and embellished handle is, at the end of the day, only a decorated everyday tool. It is finally a small-scale example of woodcarving in the traditions of Native and European folk art.

The mocotaugan is still "almost unknown," but it *is* important.

It is with little question "one of the most distinctive antiquities of 'the Man of the North.'" It stands as a perfect example of how the physical environment affects a people's lifeways. It stands as one of the clearest symbols of the dramatic process of Old World - New World cultural interchange, both of technology and of art.

Preparing the book has been a journey of discovery. I have gained new knowledge about the knife and have been able to integrate it with all the bits and pieces of my previous level of understanding. I felt compelled to flesh out and articulate some half-formed thoughts I had about the appreciation of the aesthetics of the embellished knife.

I have also gained a memorable experience in bookmaking. I had no idea that publishing a book of this kind required so much time and commitment, so much dependence on the work and talents of others. I also learned that new information, emerging theories and unanswerable questions will always leave the writer feeling that a book can never be complete.

This is a manuscript written as best we could. As far as we know, this essay is the first of its kind in reviewing in some depth both the art and the context of the mocotaugan. Yet I know the essay is only another stage in a long continuum. We are thankful to writers, such as Mason, Wissler, Speck, and Hanson who addressed our subject in some depth before us; and we are hopeful that we in turn have contributed to a better book by writers who will come after.

We trust that the essay makes some contribution beyond organizing historic facts and illustrating the art form of the mocotaugan. In our view, for example, there is merit in presenting the pictorial evidence of the evolution of the mocotaugan from the Stone Age to the 20th century, and merit in the method for classifying the various forms of embellishment. There is merit, too, we believe, in presenting the proposal to use the one word, mocotaugan, to describe the Woodlands Native's indigenous drawknife. We don't believe it will ever happen on a wide scale, custom being what it is, but perhaps there will be some kind of discussion among collectors and curators that will lead to their use of a common name for this uncommon artifact.

In all, the making of this book has been at times overwhelming but always exhilarating. Now I am relieved that the book is finished. It is time to move on; to begin reflecting on how we could have done better.

... And on a More Personal Note:
One of the more important outcomes of this book is the experience of having worked side by side with my father. I have loved the precious time we spent together; the remarkable connection we shared. I have gained a profound new respect for his intelligence, insight and sensitivity; his skills in research and writing.

Few sons have been favored with a dad like mine.

LIST OF PORTFOLIO PLATES WITH ANNOTATIONS

1. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1820 — 1850
   Maple, leather, 5/16" wide steel blade, shellac, glass, red, blue, and black trade cloth, 9 5/8" overall length
   Fully carved beaver and "house" (possibly to represent a trading post)
   Western Great Lakes Area(?)
   Private collection

2. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1850 — 1870
   Maple, sinew, reworked 3/8" wide iron blade, shellac, paint, 7 1/4" overall length
   Fully carved reptile (alligator?)
   Possibly Southeastern United States
   Private collection

3. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1850 — 1870
   Maple, copper wire, and lead ferrule, reworked 7/16" wide steel blade, paint, 10 1/2"overall length
   Abstract fully carved owl
   Eastern Woodlands Tribe(?)
   Private Collection

4. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1830 — 1850
   Maple, brass wire, reworked 5/8" wide steel trade blade, 9 3/4" overall length
   Fully carved dog
   Micmac/Maliseet
   Collected in Ontario, Canada
   Private Collection

5. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1840 — 1860
   Pine, leather wrapping, reworked curved 1/2" wide steel blade, brass tacks, 7 3/4" overall length
   Fully carved beaver, with chip-carved decoration
   Eastern Great Lakes Tribe(?)
   Collected in New York, NY
   Private Collection

6. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1850
   Close up of scroll on rear of handle
   Maple, lead ferrule, reworked curved 1/2" wide iron blade, paper inserts, glass, 10 1/4" overall length
   Chip-carved decoration
   Penobscot
   Collected in Nova Scotia
   Private Collection

7. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1840
   Cherry burl wood, leather, 3/8" wide iron blade, 7 3/4" overall length
   Fully dimensional chip carving
   Maritimes
   Collected in Upstate New York
   Private Collection

8. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1820 — 1840
   Maple, hemp string, pewter ferrule, reworked 3/8" wide steel blade, 7 1/2" overall length
   Profusely decorated chip carving with European symbolism
   Menominee
   Collected in New York
   Private collection

9. Mocotaugan
   Circa: 1860 — 1875
   Mahogany? hemp string, reworked steel 1/2" wide blade, 9 1/2" overall length
   Suits from cards, Mocotaugan and name "Malloy" carved in bas-relief
   Penobscot/Passamaquoddy
   Collected in Connecticut
   Private Collection

10. Mocotaugan
    Circa: 1830 — 1845
    Maple, brass wire, imported curved-tip Mocotaugan 7/16" wide blade, "Wostenholm & Son," "IXC" "...on works" 9 1/4" overall length
    Stacked hearts, top carved with card suits in bas-relief, chip carving, cross hatch decoration

Collected in Ontario, Canada
Private Collection

11. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1850 — 1870
Maple, brass wire, reworked 1/2" wide curved file blade, 10 1/2" overall length
Stacked heart design with plain smooth handle
Penobscot
Collected in Old Town, Maine
Private collection
Exhibited: Worcester Art Museum "Native Heritage" 1999; Worcester, MA
Private Collection

12. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1830 — 1850
Maple, polychrome paint, steel wire, lead ferrule, iron nails, reworked 3/8" wide steel blade, 8 1/4" overall length
Polychrome incised carved heart design, with scored decoration
Eastern Woodlands Tribe
Collected in Santa Fe, NM
Private collection

13. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1860 — 1870
Tiger maple, paper (advertising ephemera), glass, copper wire, 5/16" wide steel blade, 9"overall length
Non-Native
Collected in Maine
Private Collection

14. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1867
Maple, steel wire, reworked 3/8" wide steel blade, 9 5/8" overall length
Dated "1867" with "shamrock" decoration, Initial "AJ," carved fish on rear
Non-Native
Collected in Halifax, Nova Scotia
Private Collection

15. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1840 — 1850
Maple, linen string, 3/8" wide steel trade blade, 11" overall length
Carved initials "GKC"(?) with carved "vine in vase" motif and logger's tools
Micmac/Maliseet? Non-Native?
Collected in Nova Scotia
Private Collection

16. Mocotaugan
Close up of rear of handle (Plate #15)
Showing detail of logger's tools, vine in vase, and heart decoration

17. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1840 — 1850
Maple, photographic tin type, paint, copper wire, reworked 9/16" wide steel trade blade, 12" overall length
Non-Native
Collected in Maine
Private Collection

18. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1840 — 1860
Maple, steel strapping wire, reworked 3/4" wide steel blade, shellac on surface, 11 5/8" overall length
Fully formed woman with stacked heart design on reverse side
Algonquin — possibly Delaware/Leni-Lenape
Collected in Mid-Atlantic States
Private Collection

19. Mocotaugan
Close up of rear of handle (Plate #18)
Showing face and torso of woman with chip-carved edge detail

20. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1850 — 1870
Maple burl, steel wire, reworked 1/2" wide steel file blade, 9 1/2" overall length
Fully carved hand holding a heart, fully carved "ball in box"
Penobscot
Collected in Maine
Private collection

21. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1850 — 1870
Maple, polychrome paint, copper ferrule, reworked 1/2" wide steel shaving blade, steel nails, 9" overall length
Fully carved sailor(?), steamship or train conductor(?)
Micmac/Maliseet
Collected in Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia
Private collection

22. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1820 — 1840
Maple, paint, iron wire, reworked 1/2" wide

steel file blade with curved tip, 8 3/4" overall length
Fully carved man with arms and hands in relief
Iroquois (?)
Collected in Washington, DC
Private collection

23. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1870 — 1880
Oak, leather wrapping, reworked 1/2" wide steel file blade, remains of green paint. Bears museum markings, "A7482"
Fully carved extended hand
Penobscot
Collected in Santa Fe, NM
Private collection

24. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1860 — 1870
Maple, polychrome stain, paint, mirror, lead, converted 1/2" wide steel trade blade, 11 3/4" overall length
Profusely colored, chip-carved and engraved with mirror insert and lead inlays
Penobscot/Passamaquoddy (Non-Native?)
Collected in Pennsylvania
Private Collection

25. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1880
Walnut burl, pewter ferrule and inlays, reworked imported 3/8" wide steel Mocotaugan blade, 8 3/4" overall length
Abstract sculptural representation of a bird with engraved star and crosshatch pattern
Eastern Sioux or Great Lakes?
Private Collection

26. Mocotaugan
Close up of front of handle showing German silver decoration
Circa: 1840 — 1850
Bird's eye maple, rocker engraved German silver, steel wire, iron nails, reworked 1/2" wide iron blade, 8 1/2" overall length
Iroquois?
Collected in Santa Fe, NM
Private Collection

27. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1860 — 1870
Close up of rear of handle (Plate #28)
Showing fully formed rum barrel with chip-carved decoration

28. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1860 — 1870
Maple, polychrome paint, copper wire, reworked 1/2" wide steel blade, 8 1/4" overall length
Fully carved rum barrel, engraved steam sailing vessel with bear in canoe in bas-relief, chip-carved decoration
Micmac /Maliseet
Collected in Chicago, Illinois
Private Collection

29. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1860 — 1870
Close-up of front of handle (Plate #28)
Showing engraving of fully rigged steam sailboat

30. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1920 — 1940
Ash, steel wire, reworked 3/8" wide steel blade, 9 1/2" overall length
Engraved with cod, stars, moose, "shamrock" hearts and initialed "TI"
Penobscot
Collected in Old Town, Maine
Private Collection

31. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1830 — 1845
Maple, pewter ferrule and inlays, converted 3/8" wide steel knife blade, 10 1/8" overall length
Etched with pine tree design and carved stacked devices, initials "GWB"
Micmac
Collected in Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, Canada
Exhibited: Worcester Art Museum "Native Heritage" 1999, Worcester, MA
Exhibited: "Spirit of Nova Scotia, Traditional Decorative Folk Art 1780-1930"; Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1985
Published *Spirit of Nova Scotia, Traditional Decorative Folk Art 1780-1930;* 1985
Private Collection

32. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1860 — 1875
Maple, steel wire, shellac, steel nails, reworked 5/16" wide steel blade, 9 1/4" overall length
Etched design of a bird in branches with flying insect; chip-carved decoration
Micmac
Collected in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia
Private Collection

33. Mocotaugans
Left:
Maple, brass wire, steel nails, converted curved 3/8" wide steel knife blade, 11 3/4" overall length
Carved and steamed from one piece of wood in a continuous spiral
Micmac
Collected in Massachusetts
Private Collection
Right:
Circa: 1880
Maple (?) burl, steel wire, reworked 1/2" wide steel/iron strap blade, 10" overall length
Thick, concentrically carved spirals
Tribe unknown
Collected in New York, NY
Private Collection

34. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1870 — 1880
Maple, stain, copper wire, converted 7/16" wide steel file blade, 10 1/2" overall length
"Fiddle handle" style with chip carving with hearts in punctuated design
Penobscot?
Collected in New York
Private Collection

35. Mocotaugan
Circa: 1870 — 1880
Maple, brass wire, converted 1/2" wide steel knife blade, 9 1/2" overall length
Split "Y" or branching design
Tribe unknown
Collected in Massachusetts
Private Collection

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ackland, D., and Son. Catalog No. 15, Winnipeg, Canada, n.d.

Ackland, D., and Son. Catalog No. 23, Winnipeg, 1923.

Adney, Edwin T., and Howard Chapelle. *The Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America.* Smithsonian Institution: U.S. National Museum Bulletin 230, 1964.

Adovisio, J.M., and Jake Page. *The First Americans: In pursuit of archaeology's greatest mystery*. Random House: New York, 2002.

Baldwin, John, *Early Knives and Beaded Sheaths of the American Frontier: Early American artistry.* Trading Company Publishers: West Olive, Michigan, 1997.

Bell, Theresa. *Gifts of the Forest: Native traditions in wood and bark*. Catalog of an exhibit, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center: Mashantucket, CT, 2000.

Bender, Cora, et al. *The Cultures of Native North Americans*. Kõnemann: Cologne, Germany, 2000.

Berlo, Janet, ed. *The Early Years of Native American Art*. University of Washington Press: Seattle, 1992.

Berlo, Janet, and Ruth B. Phillips. *Native North American Art*. Oxford Press: New York, 1998.

Bjorklund, Karna L. *The Indians of Northeastern America*. Dodd, Mead & Company: New York, 1969.

Brandson, Lorraine. *From Tundra to Forest: A Chippewyan Resource Manual*. Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature: Winnipeg, 1981.

Brasser, Ted J., *"Bo'jou, Neejee!."* The National Museum of Man: Ottawa, Canada, 1976.

Brose, David S., et al. *Ancient Art of the American Woodland Indians*. H.N. Abrams: New York, in association with the Detroit Institute of Art, 1985.

Burgesse, J.A. "Snow Shoes," *The Beaver.* Outfit 271: March 1941.

Cawthorne, Nigel. *The Art of Native North America*. Advanced Marketing Services: New York, 1997.

Coe, Ralph T. *Sacred Circles*. Nelson Gallery of Art - Atkins Museum of Fine Arts: Kansas City, Missouri, 1977.

Driscoll, B. *The Spirit Sings; Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*. Glenbow Museum and McClelland and Stewart Publisher: Toronto, 1988.

Eckstrom, Fannie Hardy. *The Handicrafts of the Modern Indians of Maine: Bulletin III of the Abbe Museum*. Second printing. Jordan-Frost Printing Company: Bangor, ME, 1979.

Ewing, Douglas C. *Pleasing the Spirits*. Ghylen Press: New York, 1982.

Feder, Norman. *American Indian Art*. Harry N. Abrams: New York, 1973.

Fenton, William N. "Masked Medicine Societies of the Iroquois," *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of The Smithsonian Institution:* Washington, 1940.

Fenton, William N. *The False Faces of the Iroquois,* University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 1987.

Field, Richard Henry. *Spirit of Nova Scotia: Traditional Decorative Folk Art, 1780-1930.* Dundurn Press: Toronto, 1985.

Fitzhugh, William and Aaron Crowell. *Crossroads of Continents*. Smithsonian: London and Washington.1998.

Flint Institute of Art. *The Art of the Great Lakes Indians*. Flint, Michigan, 1973.

Furst, Peter T. and Jill L. *Native American Indian Art*. Rizzoli: New York, 1982.

Gidmark, David. *The Algonquin Birchbark Canoe*. Shire Publications Ltd.: Aylesbury, UK, 1988.

Gidmark, David. "A Developing Talent: Steve Cayard, Canoe Builder." *Wooden Canoe* magazine, October 1998.

Hanson, Charles E. "The Crooked Knife." *The Museum of the Fur Trade Quarterly,* v. Summer 1975. Chadron, NE.

Hodge, Frederick Webb, ed. *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*. Smithsonian Institution Bureau of Ethnology Bulletin 30.

Washington, 1912.
Hoxie, Frederick, ed. *Encyclopedia of the North American Indian.* Houghton Mifflin: Boston, 1996.
Isaac, Barbara, ed. *The Hall of the North American Indian.* Peabody Museum: Cambridge, MA, 1990.
Jenness, Diamond. *Indians of Canada.* Bulletin 65, National Museum of Canada, Ottawa. 1963.
Johnson, Harmer. *Guide to the Arts of the Americas.* Rizzoli: New York, 1992.
Kent, Timothy J. *Birchbark Canoes of the Fur Trade.* Silver Fox Enterprises: Ossineke, MI, 1997.
King, J.C.H. *Thunderbird and Lightning: Indian Life in Northeastern North America.* 1600-1900. British Museums Publications Ltd: London, 1982
Krech, Shepherd, III, and Barbara A. Hail, eds. *Collecting Native America 1870-1960.* Smithsonian Institution Press: Washington and London, 1999.
Lathem, Sid. *Knives and Knifemakers.* Collier-Macmillan: New York, 1974.
Latta, D.G., Ltd. *Catalog No. 2.* Edmonton, n.d.
Lothem, Lar. *Collecting Indian Knives: Identification and values.* Krause Publications: Iola, WI, 2000.
Malcolmson, Wilson. "Trade Goods." *The Beaver.* Outfit 279: December, 1941.
Mandelbaum, David G. "The Plains Cree." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History,* Vol XXXVII, Part 2. New York, 1940.
Mandelowitz, David. *History of American Art.* Stanford University/Holt, Rinehart and Winston: New York, 1970.
Mason, Otis Tufton. "The Man's Knife Among the North American Indians," *U.S. National Museum, Annual Report for 1897.* Washington, 1899.
Maurer, Evan M. *The Native American Heritage: A Survey of North American Indian Art.* Art Institute of Chicago, 1977.
McBride, Bunny. *Our Lives in Our Hands: Micmac Indian basket makers.* Tilsbury House: Gardiner, ME, 1990.
McMullen, Ann, and Russell G. Handsman et al. *A Key into the Language of Wood Splint Baskets.* American Indian Archaeological Institute: Washington, CT, 1987.
McPhee, John. *The Survival of the Bark Canoe.* Farrar, Strauss amd Giroux: New York, 1975.
Monro, Dan L., et al. *Gifts of the Spirit.* The Peabody Essex Museum: Salem, MA, 1996.
National Museum of Man. *The Athapaskans: Strangers of the North.* Ottawa, 1974.
Newman, Peter C. *Empire by the Bay: An illustrated history of the Hudson's Bay Company.* Madison Press: Toronto, 1989.
Noble, William C. "The Excavation and Historical Identification of Rocky Mountain House." *Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History No. 6.* National Historic Sites Service. Ottawa,1973.
Page, Daniel H. *Heritage of the North American Indian People.* Borealis Press: Ottawa, 1982.
Painter, John W. *American Indian Artifacts.* George Thassian Publishers: Cincinnati, Ohio, 1990.
Penney, David W. *Art of the American Indian Frontier.* University of Washington Press: Seattle, 1992.
Penney, David W. *Great Lakes Indian Art.* Wayne State University Press: Detroit, 1989.
Petersen, Harold. *American Knives: The First History and Collector's Guide.* Charles Scribner and Sons: New York.
Philips, Ruth B. *Trading Identities: The souvenir in Native American art from the Northeast,* 1600 - 1900. University of Washington Press: Seattle, 1998.
Pilon, Jean-Luc, and Sandra Zacharias. "Mocotagan, Couteau Croche Algonquien: techniques et origins." *Journal Canadien d'Archaeologie,* v. 10. Ottawa, 1986.
Richter, Daniel K. *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America.* Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA and London, England, 2001.
Ritzenthaler, Robert, and Pat. *The Woodland Indians of the Western Great Lakes.* Published for the American Museum of Natural History Press: New York, 1970.
Ritzenthaler, Robert. "Woodland Sculpture." *American Indian Art* magazine, v.1, No. 4. Scottsdale, AZ, 1975.
Rogers, Edward S. *Algonquins of the Eastern Woodlands.* Royal Ontario Museum: Toronto, 1970.
Rogers, E.dward S. *Material Culture of the*

Mistassini. Bulletin 218. National Museum of Canada: Ottawa, 1967.
Rousseau, Jacques. "Mistassini Calendar." *The Beaver.* Outfit 280: September, 1949.
Rue, Leonard Lee. "Barriere Indians." *The Beaver.* Outfit 292, 1961.
Russell, Carl P. *Firearms, Traps and Tools of the Mountain Men.* Knopf: New York, 1967.
Shaw, Robert. "New England Baskets." *Antiques* magazine, August, 1998.
Skinner, Alanson. "Notes on the Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*. Vol. IX, part 1, 1911.
Speck, Franklin G. *Penobscot Man: The life history of a forest tribe in Maine.* The University of Maine Press: Orono, 1997.
Strung, Norman. *An Encyclopedia of Knives.* Lippincott: Philadelphia, 1976.
Tooker, Elizabeth. *Lewis H. Morgan on Iroquois Material Culture.* University of Arizona Press: Phoenix, 1994.
Tooker, Elizabeth, ed. *Native North American Spirituality of the Eastern Woodlands.* The Paulist Press: Mahwah NJ, 1977.
Torrence, Gaylord, and Robert Hobbs. *Art of the Red Earth People: The Mesquakie of Iowa.* The University of Washington Press: Seattle, 1989.
Vincent, Gilbert T., Sherry Brydon and Ralph T. Coe, eds. *Art of the North American Indian: The Thaw Collection.* University of Washington Press: Seattle, 2000.
Waldman, Carl. *Atlas of the North American Indian.* FactsOnFile: New York, 1985.
Weinstein-Farson, Laurie. *The Wampanoag.* Indians of North America Series. Chelsea House: New York, c 1989.
Whitehead, Ruth Holmes. *Elitekey: Micmac Material Culture from 1600 to the Present.* Nova Scotia Museum, Halifax, 1980.
West, W. Richard Jr. et al. *Treasures of the National Museum of the American Indian.* Abbeville Press: New York, 1996.
Wilbur, C. Keith. *The New England Indians.* The Globe Pequot Press: Old Saybrook, CT, 1978.
Wissler, Clark. "The Story of the Crooked Knife," *Natural History : The Journal of the American Museum,* New York, July-August, 1923.
Woodland, Arthur. "Trade Goods of 1748," *The Beaver.* Winnipeg, 1948.

SOURCES OF ANTIQUE AND MODERN EMBELLISHED MOCOTAUGANS

TRIBAL ART DEALERS

Walter Banko, Box 97, Westmount P.O., Montreal, Quebec H32 271, Canada

Kim Cartwright, Bayside Road, Ellsworth, ME 01605, USA

Will Channing, W.E. Channing & Company, 805 Apodaca Hill, Santa Fe, NM 87501, USA

Jeff Cherry, Cherry Gallery, 40 Stissing Mountain Lane, Pine Plains, NY 12567, USA

Donald Ellis, RR3, 1002 Mineral Spring, Dundas, ON L9H 5E3, Canada

Paul Gray, 203 Thomas Road, Old Chatham, NY 12136, USA

Jim Hart and Loretta Carbonaro, 590 S. Lenola Road #PMB 188, Maple Shade, NJ 08052, USA

Jonathan Holstein, 132 1/2 Albany Street, Cazenovia, NY 13035, USA

Ned Jalbert, 57 East Main Street, Westboro, MA 01581, USA

Brant Mackley, Brant Mackley Gallery, 7096 Union Deposit Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, USA

Henry Monahan, Morning Star Gallery, 513 Canyon Road, Santa Fe, NM 87501, USA

Alan Silberberg, Nashoba Trading, 2 Aspen Road, Littleton, MA 01460, USA

Ted Trotta and Anna Bona, P.O. Box 34, Shrub Oak, NY 10588, USA

CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

David Cameron, EarthSea, Box 95, Riverport, NS B0J 2W0, Canada

Aaron York, 750A 26th Avenue, Lachine, Quebec H8S 3Y6, Canada