



Air Photo -Ruud Farm Mounds 1986.

Blood Run **The** *“Silent City”*

By

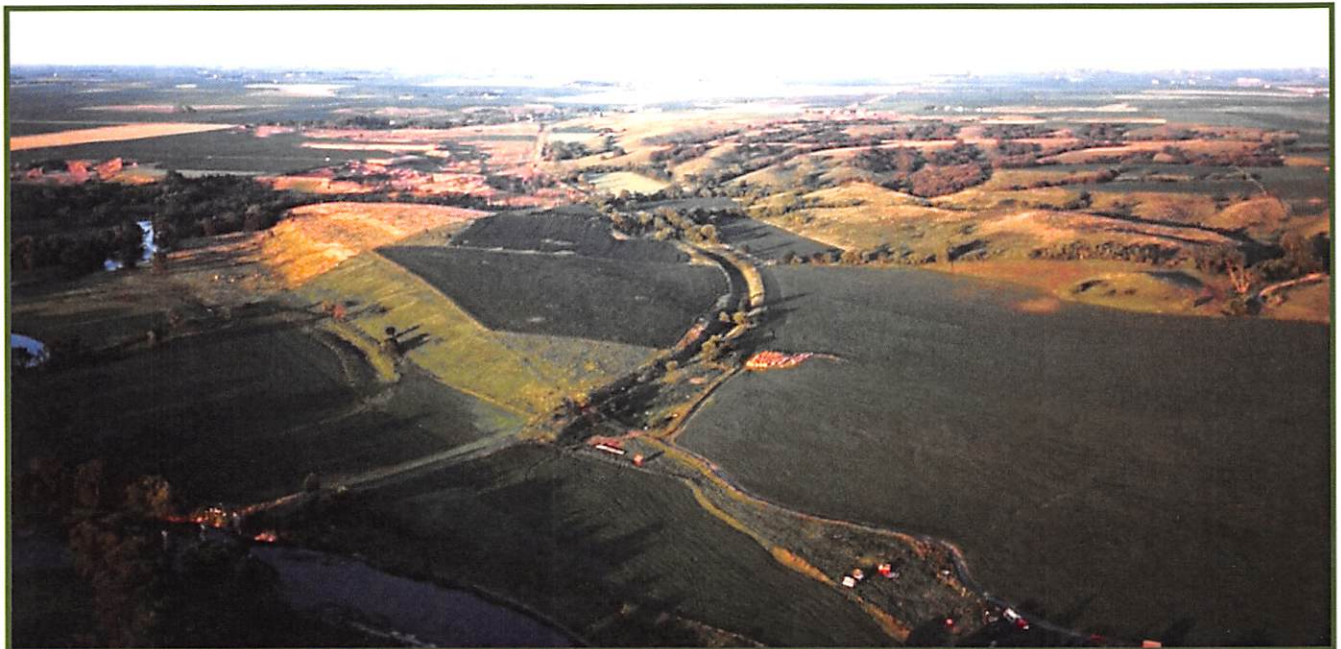
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02.29.12

Blood Run The *“Silent City”*

The Blood Run National Historic Landmark site has been the focus of interest for many archaeologists, historians and geologists, enthusiastic collectors and amateurs for over a century. In the following, by compiling all the information about this wonderful place that has accumulated for generations, we can now offer a fictitious, but plausible, account of an errant French trader who came upon the site very late in the 1700s. While there is no record of such a visit – it could have happened this way.

For days, the French trader and his small party had been moving slowly west across the prairies on a well-worn path. Suddenly he came upon the crest of a bluff. Here he was truly astonished to see a large thriving community spread out along the Big Sioux River valley. He had been told of this place by priests, explorers and other traders at Fort St. Louis on the Illinois River. It was there that he purchased items specifically for the Indian trade. None of the others had actually seen this place but had heard of it from Indians. A few of the Indians that had been to the area volunteered to accompany him. This would be his first venture into this uncharted region – new territory!



Air Photo – Blood Run Site Core Area – Iowa Side



The area was bountiful and rich with resources – buffalo and elk signs abounded and the soils rich for plants. The Big Sioux River was filled with fish. From his vantage point on the high bluff he could see groups, apparently separate villages, of round and long oval houses - hundreds in some places - intermingled with large earthen mounds. Mounds and homes were on both sides of the river. This was a busy place filled with people who should be interested in the beads, kettles and iron knives he and his volunteers had carried on their backs.

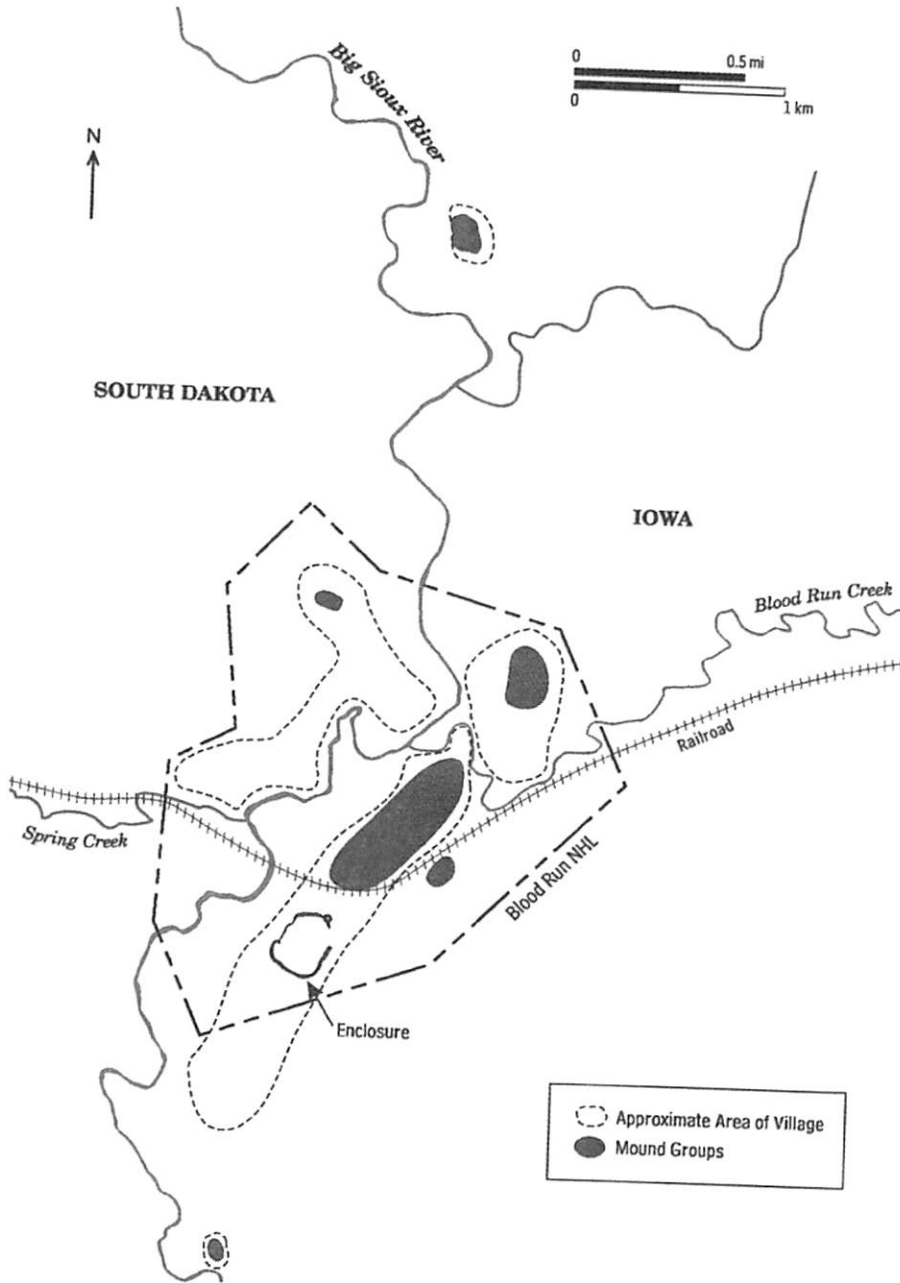
The trader was immediately made welcome in the villages. He soon learned that the residents enjoyed all the benefits of community living – social activities, recreation, religious celebrations, sharing of food and family growth. Additionally, he found that this was a very special place, especially for someone engaged in trade. The site had served as a continuously functioning trade center for over 200 years, drawing members of many tribes, all willing customers.

He stayed for several months and did very well, obtaining excellent furs and beautifully tanned hides in exchange for the trade items he had brought. He left before cold weather set in, escorted and assisted by tribal members, well provisioned with food, some very expensive horses he had purchased and, of course, the furs and hides from which he could expect a handsome profit.



The Rest of the Story

This fortunate trader visited a community that had been formed in the 1400s and flourished to around 1700. He was moved by the size of the community extending along both sides of the Big Sioux River for nearly three and one-half miles.



National Historic Landmark Boundary -2000

Blood Run once consisted of a series of interrelated villages with several groups of large mounds, a fortification, a serpent effigy mound, and a number of distinctive pitted boulders.

While the Omaha and Ioway appear to have been the principal residents, members of several other tribes, most notably the Arikara, probably lived there at times as well. This community was a composite of small villages like today's neighborhoods in a city. Population numbers probably fluctuated from 2,000 to over 5,000 residents during those 200 years. Shortly after A.D. 1700 the citizens of Blood Run virtually disappeared from the neighborhood – remnants of their mounds remain today as mute testimony to their once dynamic culture - a city virtually unknown to the rest of the world - the “Silent City”.

Nearly 120 years ago, about a century after our European trader visited the area, F.W. Pettigrew, a Sioux Falls, physician, wrote an article for the Sioux Falls Press entitled “The Silent City”. In it he described this large and mysterious place on either side of the Big Sioux River where Blood Run Creek enters it, about 15 miles east of Sioux Falls. F.W. and his brother, Richard Pettigrew, the first United States Senator from South Dakota, prepared a detailed map of a small part of the site and kept records that still offer invaluable information to archaeologists. Some years after completing his investigations Dr. Pettigrew offered a lengthy summary of the results of the work, part of which is below:

“A list of some of the articles found either on the village site, or in the mounds is as follows: Three stone axes, three celts, two buffing stones made of coarse sand-stone, two ground sand-stone arrow shaft straighteners, three pipes made of catlinite; two copper serpents; thirteen copper beads; one copper bracelet; one bead of catlinite; one bead from shell; four bone hair beads; one pipestone slab on which is engraved a bird; several small ground stones and stone hammers; fragments of pottery; one bone stiletto; one iron knife; five cut stones called nut holders; one pair grooved sandstone, use not determined.” (Pettigrew 1901:351-353)

Some of the artifacts recovered by the Pettigrews are displayed at the Siouxland Heritage Museum, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, along with notes and maps.

Much of the story of the “Silent City” remains shrouded in mystery. But today we have the collected legends of Native Americans, published accounts by early explorers and site visitors, historical and archaeological investigations and their interpretations through which we can give voice to those who left this place over 300 years ago. In the following pages, by compiling, evaluating and comparing these fragmentary bits of information, we summarize the available facts and offer our attempt at allowing those long-ago residents of Pettigrew's “Silent City” to speak and become known in our history.

The European-American settlers that soon followed our early trader offer unique descriptions of this wonderful place. Early accounts certainly provided views of the past but - a function of its immense size - no single narration or map offers a full overview. Comparison of these descriptions allows access to a semblance of reality. S.C. Hyde, a local resident, visited the site in the early 1860s and wrote the first published account:

“...the most remarkable of all their relics are situated on a plateau extending back from the east bank of the Big Sioux River, on the south side of a small creek in Township 100, Range 49.

These works are of the most singular character, and bear evidence of great labor and ancient origin. The surface of the earth appears to have been removed to a considerable depth, from a large field being thrown up into pyramids or mounds from fifteen to twenty-five feet high. Of these, there are a great number covering over twenty acres. Some of these works assume the form of an amphitheater composed of circular (sic) terraces rising one above another from the ground. In other places circles have been formed of huge blocks of Sioux quartzite rock. Ornaments of copper, vessels of pottery, pipes and pieces of curious workmanship, cut out of the famous pipe-stone have been found upon these grounds. Not having the appearance of defense, habitation, or burial places, they must have been devoted to athletic feats, public games, and religious exercises.”

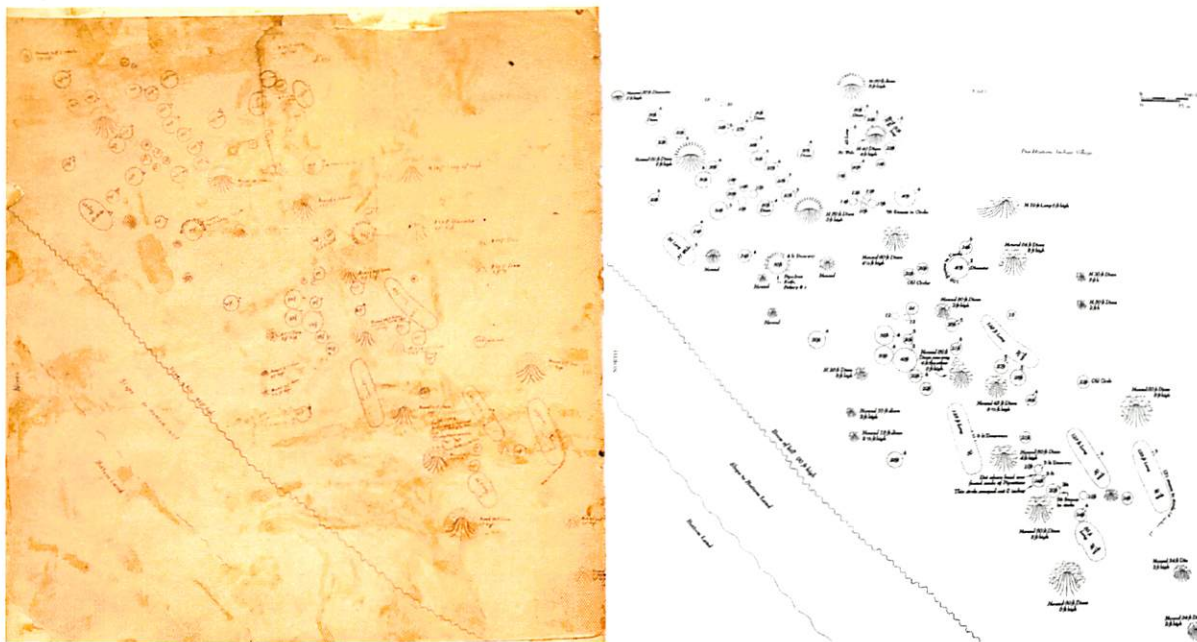


Artifacts from the Blood Run Site

“On the north bank of the creek are the remains of long lines of redoubts and breastworks, having the appearance of an old fortification. Their village, or camping ground, was situated a short distance to the southward.” (Hyde 1872:3-4)

In the last paragraph Hyde describes earthworks located on a high terrace overlooking Blood Run Creek just north of its confluence with the Big Sioux. Shortly after his visit, that terrace became a gravel pit for Rock Island Railroad construction, obliterating all surface features there.

In 1886 Frederick Starr, a highly-respected scientist from the Davenport Academy of Natural Sciences, Davenport, Iowa, described the excavation of four mounds and mentioned the many stone circles or ellipses that dotted the area. Starr describes horse bones, iron tools and ornaments, wampum (probably small circular shell disk beads) and a dog skeleton wrapped in buckskin that were found in those mounds.



1886 Original Pettigrew Map and Copied Version

In 1886 the Pettigrew brothers prepared a map that records a concentration of mounds and boulder outlines south of Blood Run Creek. The stones outlined the edges of houses and were used to anchor the hides and mats that had covered them. Their map illustrates 76 of these house outlines. Most (68) of the lodges were circular, ranging from 12 to 48 feet in diameter; eight were long and oval, ranging from 60 to 123 feet long and 30 to 38 feet wide. They appear to have been informally arranged within the group of mounds. The Pettigrew's work is especially valuable. Shortly after the map was made, all the stones were cleared for cultivation. At this time agricultural land use had joined gravel quarrying as a site-altering activity.

Others augmented the Pettigrew's work, including Cyrus Thomas of the Smithsonian Institution. In a publication that was circulated nationally, he succinctly summarized what was known of Blood Run in 1882, prior to intensive cultivation and railroad construction:

“Along the Big Sioux river, within 10 miles south of Sioux Falls, and principally where the river forms the boundary line between Minnehaha county, South Dakota, and Lyon county, Iowa, there are said to be about 275 mounds. Many of these our assistant visited. They are found situated on both sides of the river in clusters or groups in the highest points of the river hills, or upon the broad terraces of the valleys. One of the groups visited demands special attention. It is situated in the extreme northwest corner of Lyon

county, Iowa and comprises about 50 mounds of the simple conical type, averaging about 4 feet in height. In the midst of the mounds, at times touching the skirt of them, are seen stone rings, circular and oblong, made with the granite boulders of the prairie. It is evident that these mark the site of an old village, the circles and oblong outlines indicating the positions of the lodges, the skin coverings of which were held down with stones. With probably one or two exceptions every circle or oblong form presents a break, namely, a place about 3 or 4 feet wide where the continuity of the figure is broken by the absence of stones. This appears to have been the entrance, and in most instances it is at the southeast, or the point most protected from the cold northwest winds. They average about 30 feet in diameter.



Reconstructed Ioway Lodges Similar to Some on Blood Run

The number of lodges constituting the original village could not be counted, since about half of the group lies in a field, the original prairie sod of which has been disturbed by the plow of the settler and the stones utilized by him upon his farm. In the undisturbed portion they outnumber the mounds about three to one. The mounds are so intermingled with the stone figures as to show that the two were constructed by the same people. In some instances, where the stone circles nearly touch the skirt of a mound, the wash from the latter has covered the stones upon that side while those on the other side are fully exposed. This seems to indicate that the mounds had been constructed after the circles or lodges had been placed. These boulders are, as a rule, half imbedded in the prairie sod, but this fact does not necessarily imply great antiquity. Investigations had been done among these mounds by Mr. F.W. Pettigrew, of Sioux Falls, but the result did not indicate that they were used for burial.

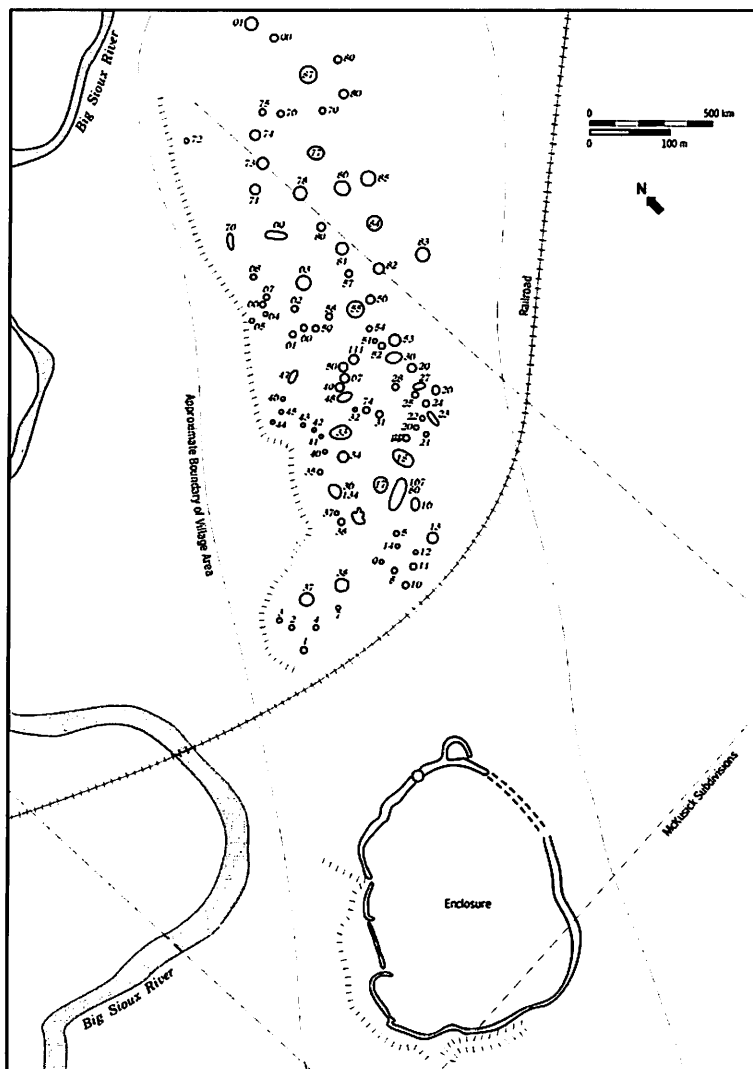
About half a mile up the valley, on the same river terrace, there is another large village site consisting of mounds and circles similar in all respects to those just described. Each of these groups is upon a most beautiful and expansive terrace peculiarly adapted for a permanent village. Groups of mounds, few in number and smaller in size, are to be seen in the vicinity upon

the most commanding points of the river heights, and in these human interments have been discovered. These may therefore be considered as burial places of this people.

About 100 rods to the south of the village remains above described (here, Thomas is referring to the southerly village discussed in the first quoted paragraph) is an irregular earthen enclosure somewhat octagonal in outline, formed by throwing up dirt from the inside.” (Thomas 1894:38-9)

At this time, Thomas offered the best summary of what could be seen on Blood Run. His information was collected when site descriptions could be obtained from local interviews.

T.H. Lewis surveyed and mapped many sites in Minnesota for the Northwestern Archaeological Survey in the 1880s and 1890s; Blood Run was one of few sites that took him outside that state. One of his 1889 maps includes the information recorded by the Pettigrews and accurately locates the mounds, but his notes discuss very few of the lodge outlines.



1889 Lewis Map (South of Blood Run Creek)

Obviously, most stones had been removed by then. He mapped the roughly circular enclosure mentioned by Thomas. It encompassed about 5 acres; the surrounding walls were about two feet high and 18 feet wide. Very likely it was prepared as a redoubt to which the villagers could flee should they be attacked by enemies. The enclosure was soon plowed out of existence; the Lewis map offers our only record.

Nathan E. Getman, a pharmacist in Lyon County, Iowa, visited the site as a boy in the late 1800s and described an even more unusual landscape feature in his reminiscences published years after his death:

“...When I came to this county in 1888, a good specimen (sic) was the effigy of a great serpent about 1/8 of a mile long, some three feet high, and four or five feet wide at the base. It was on tilled land then and long ago the weather and plowing has leveled it off with the surrounding terrain. This was just south of the Rock Island Railroad and just this side of the Sioux River.”
(Getman 1960)

Getman was the first to mention the large boulder with hundreds of man-made depressions on its surface. Late in life he expressed regret that Blood Run had not been preserved as he had seen it: “It has always been my regret that this area was not set aside as a state park and the mounds preserved ...” (Getman 1960).



Charles R. Keyes, the founding father of Iowa archaeology, expressed great interest in Blood Run in the 1930s. Keyes and his field supervisor, Ellison Orr, enthusiastically recommended the site for State ownership. Orr produced maps of the visible mound groups both north and south of Blood Run Creek and described three pitted boulders when he visited the site in 1934. In the course of several visits to Blood Run, Keyes carefully interviewed local residents, finding among

other pieces of information further corroboration of the reports of the serpent effigy. Keyes saw a close relationship to known sites in the Upper Iowa River valley and identified the occupants of Blood Run as participants in the widespread Oneota culture.

A small team from the University of Wisconsin-Madison conducted a brief excavation sponsored by the Department of Anthropology and the Center for Climatic Research, again assisted by volunteers from the Iowa Archaeological Society. The most recent excavations on Blood Run took place in the summers of 1985 and '86 with cooperative ventures by the Iowa Office of the State Archaeologist, the Iowa Archaeological Society, and Luther and Augustana Colleges. This work, conducted through funding from many sources* was designed to learn as much as possible about the past occupants as gravel mining ended and the affected area was made presentable. The results of this work affords us much of what is known about the site and the Oneota culture in northwest Iowa.



Volunteers Working the Site – 1985-86.

Oneota culture is simply a traditional way of doing things (their technology) combined with a system of interrelated beliefs - social and religious - that began in the Midwest about A.D. 1200 and can be traced into the early historic period. Among the tribes that participated in the Oneota cultural tradition are the Winnebago, Ioway, Oto, Missouriia, Omaha, Ponca, Osage and Kansa. Oneota sites have been identified across much of Iowa, from central Minnesota and Wisconsin south to central Missouri, east into Indiana and west into central Kansas, eastern Nebraska and South Dakota. While many Oneota groups traced their origins east of the Mississippi River, the pressures of European diseases to which they had little resistance and attacks by more powerful eastern tribes drove them westward. When first contacted by Europeans all but the Winnebago were living west of the Mississippi River.

Oneota village sites contrasted sharply with those of their predecessors. They were generally larger, often encompassing 25 to 100 acres, and were not fortified with extensive palisades and bastions, although some are affiliated with enclosed areas of heaped-up earth. Blood Run is in many ways typical of the culture, differing notably in its immense size and numbers of mounds.

Blood Run occupation areas are visible on the high terraces along the Big Sioux River and overlooked the garden plots, deep storage pits and, probably, additional houses that dotted the fertile bottom lands, today lying under several feet of river silts. The occupants apparently maintained a close relationship with their deceased because the houses and mounds were closely associated. Mounds are rarely found on Oneota sites; Blood Run is unique in the number found there.

While the fortifications, the serpent effigy and many mounds can no longer be seen on the surface, at least 80 mounds and several pitted boulders are still visible in the core area terraces on the Iowa side. Large village units have been identified on the South Dakota side but only one group of eleven severely reduced mounds is known there. On both sides of the river and extending along it for over three and one-half miles, clues to the lifeways of the inhabitants of the 'Silent City' await further study. Still we know a great deal about those silent inhabitants when the available information is sifted, evaluated and compared.

Tribal legends and virtually all of the earliest historic accounts and maps place the Omaha in a location consistent with descriptions of Blood Run. A few decades later, when European traders and explorers came into the region, the Omaha had vacated the site. It is commonly agreed that pressure from the Sioux forced them to abandon Blood Run shortly before 1714, the year they were found living at the confluence of South Dakota's White and Missouri rivers. It is not certain when Blood Run was established, but radiocarbon dates suggest that intensive Oneota occupations began around A.D. 1500.

Characteristic of Oneota people, the Blood Run villagers lived in both round and long oval houses, probably covered with bison hides and woven mats, their edges held down with stones. The houses were intimately associated with the mounds. Some mounds were constructed of 'made' soil (mixed soils purposely blended together) and pounded into place. These 'made' mounds were very hard, even resistant to modern cultivation practices. Burials, usually fully extended, were placed in some mounds while in others few if any human bones have been identified. Sometimes personal items were included with burials. In addition to the mounds, other earthworks included the long serpent effigy, likely built for religious purposes, and the enclosed area, probably for protection. Blood Run residents laboriously pecked out depressions on huge Sioux quartzite boulders, possibly for ceremonial or religious reasons.



Scapula Digging Tools

As our trader found his way through the village he could see that it was honeycombed with deep pits, some four feet in diameter and over six feet deep, dug initially for food storage, then subsequently filled with village refuse and trash. The remains of garden crops encountered in the pits regularly include corn, but squash and many seeds of plants now considered weeds are also found. Also recovered from these pits--along with broken tools and pieces of pottery vessels--are large numbers of animal bones. Bison were readily available and provided the principal meat consumed. A surprising number of dog bones--second only to bison-- have also been found; dogs were butchered and eaten in large numbers. Man's best friend indeed! Some elk, a few deer and smaller animals were also hunted for their hides and meat. Few bird and fish remains have been recovered here even though the Big Sioux valley is a major flyway and the river doubtless teemed with fish. Perhaps this dietary choice was due to the great numbers of bison (and dogs) that were so readily available.

Truly astonishing is that one of the pits excavated in 1985 produced a hide bundle that was pressed along one side near the bottom. After the bundle was laboriously unwrapped and cleaned, part of it was identified as a segment of a hanging room divider made of deer hide pieces that had been stitched and bound together. Another piece in the bundle appears to have been half of a large bag. Some of the pieces of this hide had been heavily daubed with red paint made from ground hematite. This find offers verification of the buried dog wrapped in buckskin reported by Frederick Starr in 1886 and alerts us to the possibilities for finding more. How did they happen to be preserved after a few centuries of being buried? These preserved hides are among the many mysteries we find here.



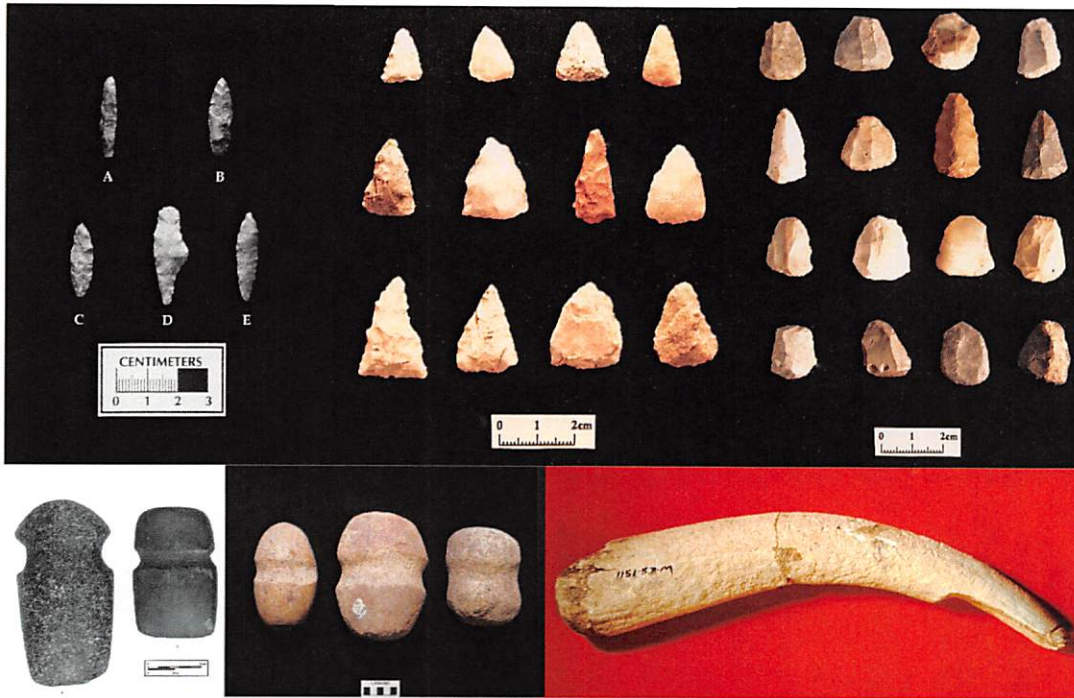
Hide in Pit



Hide Bag

Artifacts found on Blood Run offer important insights to our understanding of life there. Most tools were fashioned from stone found in the readily-available glacial gravels and from materials received in trade. Tiny triangular chipped stone arrow points reflect use of the bow and arrow as a principal weapon. Arrow point size should not be equated with killing power. A well-aimed arrow tipped with one of these tiny points could penetrate and pass through the body of a bison.

Thousands of arrow points and end scrapers have been found on Blood Run. End scrapers were made from a thick roughly triangular stone flake upon which a sharp scraping end was prepared. This small tool was fixed into a handle of wood, horn or antler and was used primarily to remove fat and hair from hides prior to tanning. Other chipped stone tools found at Blood Run include large flaked knives, drill bits, chopping tools, and hundreds of flakes that were used to scrape, cut and saw.



Drills (Upper Left) Arrow Points (Middle Upper) End Scrapers (Upper Right)
 Axes (Lower Left) Grooved Mauls (Lower Center) Antler Handle (Lower Right)
 Tools Used on Blood Run

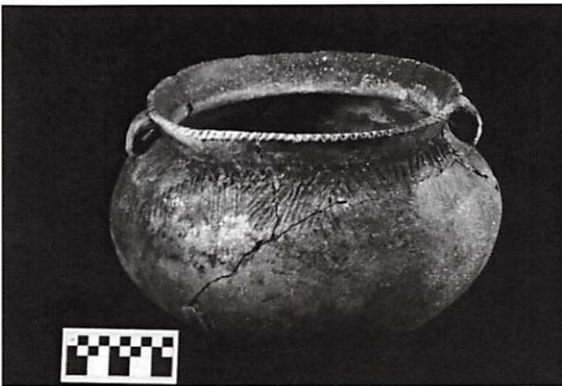
Tools fashioned by pecking and grinding granite, basalt and sandstone, are quite often found on these village sites. Full-grooved mauls made from glacial cobbles were attached to short handles. The women used them for pounding meat that was to be dried and stored. Manos (hand stones) and grinding slabs, used to grind corn and other seeds into flour and for a host of other tasks, are characteristic of Oneota sites. Other pecked and ground stone tools found on Blood Run are full-grooved axes, celts (used like an axe, but with no groove around the central portion), and paired sandstone shaft abraders (used to smooth arrow shafts). Pipes and pipe fragments are also found; many are made of catlinite.



Pipes and Pipe Fragments Typical of Blood Run

The bone tools the Blood Run villagers employed were heavily dependent on the availability of bison. Bison shoulder blades tipped a short-handled hoe or shovel. Hundreds of these digging tools, most worn and broken from hard use, have been found here. Elk were also hunted; their meat, hides, antlers and bones used in many ways similar to those of the bison.

Thousands of clay pots characteristic of Oneota culture were made by Blood Run women. Most of the pottery was made of clay, usually tempered with ground shell. Most vessels were jars with globular bodies, rounded bottoms, constricted necks, and flared rims. Many of the jars were fitted out with a pair of opposed handles and ranged in size from about a quart capacity to as



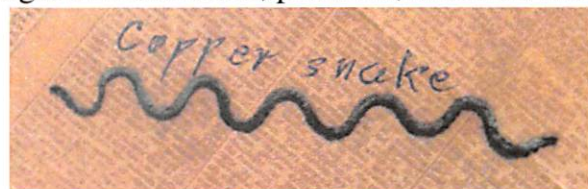
Ageson Pot – Blood Run

much as several gallons. The larger vessels were made for storage and cooking; smaller jars were probably 'personal vessels' used for eating. Most Blood Run pottery was decorated with vertical lines, chevrons and other motifs, usually grouped in units of four and evenly spaced around the upper vessel surface. Vessel shape and the motifs applied to the surface probably reflected the maker's tribe, social position and religious beliefs. Much of the pottery found on Blood Run reflects the presence of Ioway women--perhaps visitors, perhaps wives. Also present

is pottery which exhibits characteristics that suggest Arikara manufacture, corroborating historic reports of regular Omaha trade with members of that Plains tribe and, perhaps, intermarriage.

Catlinite was readily available in the area, as shown by its heavy representation in collections (both public and private) taken from the surface. No other sites in this region offer the sheer numbers of raw chunks and pieces of this material, some of which was brought to the site as roughed-out preforms ready to be fashioned into completed items. These chunks and preforms are rarely found on other regional sites; Blood Run clearly ranked as an important place for processing the stone into ceremonial pipes, tablets, and ornaments. The presence of so much catlinite on Blood Run suggests that the Omaha controlled the quarries near Pipestone, Minnesota, from around A.D. 1350 to perhaps as late as A.D. 1700 when Omaha dominance here began to fade.

Blood Run artifacts also reflect the site's reputation as a robust trading center. Bison robes and red pipestone pipes and other objects were manufactured, then traded in large quantities. In exchange, the occupants received exotic items from across North America, eventually including those of European/American origin that mark the beginnings of the contact period. Among the exotic artifacts found on Blood Run are obsidian flakes from Wyoming and Idaho, flint tools and flakes probably from the Knife River quarries in North Dakota, cherts from southeast Nebraska, and quantities of greenish quartzite from near Chamberlain, South Dakota. Copper pieces originating from the upper peninsula of Lake Michigan include beads, pendants, bracelets and a few hammered copper snakes, one of which is nearly seven inches long. These exotic objects all suggest that trade was important here long before our first trader arrived and Europeans came into the region.



European exchange with Indians near the coasts began in the 1500s and new items quickly made their way through Indian-to-Indian trade and ‘gifting’ to distant villages like Blood Run. Direct exchange between European traders and Native Americans here did not begin until the very late 1600s.



Man-in-the-Moon Bead Metal Tinklers Copper Earrings
 European Decorative Items Characteristic of Blood Run

Among the European-derived objects found at Blood Run are metal ‘Jesuit’ rings (mass produced in France specifically for trade), copper alloy kettles, kettle fragments, cut metal strips and the tubular beads, bangles, coils and other decorative items that were fashioned from them and, of course, many kinds of glass beads. No gun parts have been found on the site but we do see the re-establishment of a lively exchange in marine shell that persisted before Blood Run was established.



Marine Shell Items from Early Contact Period Oneota Sites

Marine shell had been important in the exchange system established by Mississippian people during their period of efflorescence (A.D. 1000-1250) when they controlled the St. Louis locality. Marine shell objects were circulated widely to their preferred exchange partners during that time, including groups across the Midwest and eastern Plains. However, as Mississippian influence declined, marine shell objects were rarely brought into the interior until the fur trade stimulated exchange with groups located here.

Europeans quickly learned that Native Americans highly prized marine shell beads and pendants. Dutch entrepreneurs procured quantities of marine shell and manufactured desirable items from it. Thus we find beads and bangles made of marine conch or whelk that has been cut and drilled to form flat disk and tubular beads.



Marine Shell Runtee – Blood Run

One spectacular marine shell object, a runtee found at Blood Run years ago, tells an interesting tale. A runtee is a flat, circular disk about two inches in diameter and about 1/4 inch thick that was suspended on strings passed through two parallel holes about 1/8 inch in diameter. The two holes were drilled from edge to edge, the cords passed through, allowing the disk (or several disks) to lie flat on the chest of the wearer. The holes were doubtless made with a steel drill, the shell disk clamped in a vise. Surface decoration on the flat surface of the Blood Run specimen was made with a steel-tipped compass. The Dutch manufactured runtees and quantities of other objects for trade with the Iroquois from ca. 1640 to 1664. This runtee was probably traded to the Iroquois, then passed to more westerly groups who subsequently moved it much farther west. That the runtee and other marine shell objects went to Blood Run attests to the importance of this trading center and the relative wealth of the occupants, who could keep it rather than trade it out of the community. This is the only known runtee yet found in Iowa, but over a dozen have been found in somewhat later Arikara graves along the Missouri River in South Dakota. Very likely, those runtees passed through Blood Run where the Arikara regularly traded.

Blood Run, located along the edge of the eastern Plains, was situated in an enviable position for profitable trade relationships. The Omaha at Blood Run had ready access to two vital items of exchange. Bison were plentiful, providing both meat and hides to trade. In addition, the principal catlinite quarries were less than 60 miles away, allowing not just easy access but nominal control of this popular resource for a time. From about A.D. 1350 the easily carved, beautiful stone was in great demand and was widely circulated as ceremonial pipes, plaques, and amulets, many of which were fashioned at Blood Run. Our information suggests that the Ioway were responsible for much of the distribution of bison hides and catlinite objects across the Midwest.

By the late 1600s, the Ioway principal villages were near Okoboji and Spirit Lakes in northwest Iowa, but they obviously got around. Some Ioway lived at Blood Run and functioned as itinerant traders with expansive contacts across the Midwest. Ioway people were first described by Fr. Louis Andre' in 1676 when he visited with seven or eight Ioway families then living with the Winnebago near Green Bay, Wisconsin. They stated that their home was some distance west of the Mississippi River and they were poor, their greatest wealth was in buffalo robes and red stone calumet (likely catlinite) pipes; at that time both were significant revenue sources. The Ioway appear to have been professional traders. Indeed, the presence of large quantities of catlinite items along with characteristic Ioway pottery found on many sites in the Midwest reflects an extensive trade network, it's center the "catlinite core" Omaha and Ioway villages located not far from the quarries.

There is every reason to believe that in addition to their Winnebago contacts, the Ioway also regularly went to Missouri villages in the north-central part of that state and to the Sioux villages around Mille Lacs lake in Minnesota. This trade network, which doubtless linked many tribal entities, may have functioned for several centuries prior to contact with Europeans and was probably based on centuries-old networks of long-departed groups.

For some 250 years, Blood Run was a beehive of notable economic endeavor and by the late 1600s it was undoubtedly the premier trading center along the eastern Plains, probably in great measure by maintaining nominal control of the “catlinite core”. Its importance at that time cannot be overestimated. A place of beauty and mystery even today, much important information about the people who lived and traded there still lies buried. That first European trader would experience a different view today. While time and intensive cultivation have taken a toll on the 17th century appearance of Blood Run, much evidence of its glorious past still survives. Today over 750 acres are protected by the states of South Dakota and Iowa, and a federal study has concluded that Blood Run is suitable for inclusion in the national park system.

Many amazing stories of the “Silent City” remain to be discovered, interpreted and shared. The site and its role as a prominent trade center linking the Plains and Midwest deserve a management and protection program that will assure its future as a vital part of our American heritage.

SOME RECOMMENDED READING:

For good information on Iowa archaeology, see:

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2000 *Iowa's Archaeological Past*. University of Iowa Press, Iowa City

For a summary of the Oneota tradition, see:

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1998 The Oneota Tradition. In *Archaeology of the Great Plains*, W. Raymond Wood, editor, pp. 345-414. University Press of Kansas, Lawrence.

For more on Blood Run, see:

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1979 *Oneota Culture in Northwestern Iowa*. Office of the State Archaeologist Report 12. Iowa City.

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2004 Central Siouans in the Northeastern Plains: Oneota Archaeology and the Blood Run Site. *Plains Anthropologist Memoir* 36:339-591.

For exchange networks on the eastern Plains, see:

Henning, Dale R.

2007 Continuity and Change in the Eastern Plains, A.D. 800-1700: An Examination of Exchange Patterns. In *Plains Village Archaeology: Bison-hunting Farmers in the Central and Northern Plains*, Stanley A. Ahler and Marvin Kay, editors. pp. 67-82. The University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

RECENT ACTIONS ON THE BLOOD RUN SITE:

Two seasons of recovery excavations following termination of gravel mining in the Decker tract were conducted in 1985 and 1986 with support from: The Iowa Legislature, Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa, Luther College, Augustana College (Sioux Falls), The Iowa Archeological Society, the South Dakota Archeological Society, the Sierra Club and dozens of students and volunteers from those institutions. In addition to those listed above, money, labor and assistance came from the Fred Maytag Family Foundation, the Siouxland Heritage Museums, the City of Rock Rapids, the Lyon County Historical Society, the Iowa Humanities Board, the Legislative Interim Study Committee* on Recreation, Tourism and Leisure, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, the Blood Run Preservation Group, the Soil Conservation Service, the Iowa Geological Survey, DeWild, Grant, Reckert and Associates, Engineers, the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office and Mike Whye, photographer.

These early efforts encouraged South Dakota to increase its support to the piece of American History. In 2000 as a result of Iowa actions, the National Park Service completed a detailed feasibility study to determine suitability for inclusion in the National Park Service system. The results of that study indicated that it was indeed suitable to be included in the National Park Service system of areas.

In 1987, the State of Iowa purchased 230 acres of the site core and in 1996, South Dakota purchased 203 acres with village occupations. Very recently, the State of South Dakota announced that it will soon become the owner of an additional 324 acres of pristine ridged woodland that offers excellent views of many of the important features of the Blood Run site.

In addition, fund raising efforts have been initiated by South Dakota entities to raise \$1.5 million for a master planning effort. A consultant was retained to work with both Iowa and South Dakota entities for the development of a site master plan. The master plan is being developed. South Dakota has recently increased the fundraising goal to \$2.0 million and is considering the site as a State Park.

*In the late 1980's the Iowa Legislature established the "Recreation, Tourism and Leisure Study Committee". The committee retained a consultant and one of the major projects that they endorsed and took leadership on was the Blood Run project. The committee with special legislative funding supported updated archaeological studies referred to above along with the acquisition of a key piece of property at the site. That property was acquired for the State Historical Society by the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. It is managed for the State Historical Society by the Lyon County Conservation Board. These two actions reflected a true commitment by elected officials throughout the State to the project and a unique and unheard of leadership action by a legislative committee.

Contributions to this work have been made by – Mike Whye – Photographer (Aerial Photos), Wm. Billeck (Archaeologist – National Museum of Natural History) – Smithsonian Institution (Man-in-the-Moon Bead Photo), the National Park Service (National Historic Landmark Boundary Map) – 2000), The Siouxland Heritage Museum, Sioux Falls, S.D. (Original Pettigrew Map), the Illinois State Museum (Hide Photo) and the many regional collectors who allowed study and photography of items they have found. To insure privacy, their names are not listed.



Catlinite Tablet - Blood Run