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NEW SERIES NO. 11

The Simms Collection of Southwestern Chippewa Material Culture

James W. VanStone

April 29, 1988
Publication 1387

PUBLISHED BY FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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The Simms Collection of Southwestern Chippewa Material Culture

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The Simms Collection of Southwestern Chippewa Material Culture

Abstract

The collections of Field Museum of Natural History contain 114 ethnographic objects collected in 1903 by Stephen C. Simms from the Southwestern Chippewa on the Leech Lake reservation in north-central Minnesota. These objects are described and illustrated. Information from previous studies of the Southwestern Chippewa, particularly those dealing with material culture, is included for comparative purposes.

I. Introduction

The Chippewa, or Ojibwa, is, at the present time, the largest tribe north of Mexico (Ritzenthaler, 1981, p. 743). When first encountered by Europeans about 1640, the Chippewa lived north of Lakes Superior and Huron. During the 17th and 18th centuries the French and British established trading posts in their country to engage in the fur trade, resulting in a major expansion of Chippewa territory. By the beginning of the 19th century, four main tribal divisions had emerged, occupying a vast territory between the lower peninsula of Michigan, adjacent parts of Ontario, and the plains of eastern Saskatchewan. The most western of these divisions, the Plains Ojibwa, adopted a bison-hunting economy and resembled other northern Plains tribes. The Northern Ojibwa occupied the forested regions north of the Great Lakes and resembled other northern forest Algonkians, with a total emphasis on a hunting-gathering-fishing economy. The Southeastern Chippewa, farmers, hunters, and fishermen, occupied the lower peninsula of Michigan and adjacent Ontario.

The territory of the Southwestern Chippewa in the 19th century was bounded on the north by the south shore of Lake Superior; it extended around the west end of the lake to the mouth of the Pigeon River, which forms the international boundary. Their territory extended west through the border lakes region as far as the Lake of the Woods and then south on the east side of the valley of the Red River, then southeast, east, and northeast through Minnesota and Wisconsin as far as Lac Vieux Desert on the Michigan-Wisconsin border, then north to Lake Superior through the central part of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (fig. 1). This area was largely within the Great Lakes transitional forest zone (Hickerson, 1962, pp. 2-3).

Anthropological fieldwork among the Southwestern Chippewa, although obviously confined to the reservation period which began in the 1850s, has provided valuable information on virtually all aspects of native life. Outstanding in this respect are monographs by Frances Densmore (1910, 1913, 1928, 1929), who worked in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Ontario between 1905 and 1925. Her general ethnography (1929) provides the most detailed account available of material culture, although Lyford's (1943) study of arts and crafts is also useful. Other scholars who have made significant contributions to our knowledge of various aspects of Southwestern Chippewa culture are Landes (1937, 1938, 1968), who worked on the Minnesota-Canadian border in the early 1930s; Hilger (1951), who undertook fieldwork in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan, also in the 1930s; and Barnouw (1950, 1961), whose research in Wisconsin spanned the 1940s. For the prereservation period, William Warren's *History of the Ojibways* (1885) and Hickerson's (1962, 1970) ethnohistorical studies are significant.

One of the earliest investigators among the Southwestern Chippewa to collect items of material culture was Stephen C. Simms, who visited the Leech Lake reservation in north-central Minnesota in the fall of 1903. Simms, who had no professional anthropological training, joined the staff of Field Columbian Museum (later to be called Field Museum of Natural History) in 1894 during the institution's first year, as Assistant Curator of Industrial Arts. Beginning in 1898 he was a staff member of the Department of Anthropology, a position which he held for 14 years. In 1912 the N. W. Harris Public School Extension, forerunner of the museum's Department of Education, was established, and Simms was appointed Curator in the new department. In 1928 he was selected by the Board of Trustees to be Director of the museum, a position he held at the time of his death on January 28, 1937 (Anonymous, 1937, p. 2).

At the time of Simms's appointment in the Department of Anthropology, George A. Dorsey was the curator-in-charge, having joined the museum staff in 1896. He was to hold that position for 20 years, during the first 10 of which he concentrated on building the North American Indian collections. He accomplished this through a series of expeditions and collecting trips which he undertook himself or entrusted to various assistant curators, of which Simms was the first (Rabineau, 1981, p. 32).

Simms appears to have made his first field trip for the museum to the Iroquois on the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario in 1900. Early the following year Dorsey sent him to Arizona for three months to collect primarily among Athapaskan-speaking peoples who were not previously well represented in the museum's collections. In late 1901 and in the summer of 1902 Simms made two collecting trips to the Crow and Cheyenne reservations in Montana. On the second of these visits he obtained a fine collection of Crow shields, documented with histories, symbolic interpretations, and owners' names. This was one of the most noteworthy additions to the museum's Plains Indian collections.

In 1903 Dorsey instructed Simms to make a trip to the Plains Cree reservations of Saskatchewan. In the summer of that year he spent a little more than a month in Plains Cree country and made a small collection of ethnographic material (accession 851; VanStone, 1983). Before his departure from Saskatchewan, Dorsey had suggested in a telegram that Simms collect in northern Minnesota on his way home. Simms apparently spent about a month on the Leech Lake Chippewa

reservation near Bemidji, making the collection described in this study. Although Simms's trip to Saskatchewan is reasonably well documented as a result of his correspondence with Dorsey preserved in the archives of the Department of Anthropology, there is no correspondence related to the Minnesota segment of his trip. The department's catalog contains only the information that each object was collected on the Leech Lake reservation (VanStone, 1983, pp. 2-6).

II. The Collection

Introduction

In the catalog of the Department of Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History, the Simms collection of Southwestern Chippewa ethnographic specimens (accession 851) is assigned 119 numbers representing the same number of specimens. Some objects, such as bows with arrows, mortars and pestles, and drums and drumsticks, have one number and are counted as single specimens. At the time this study was begun, all but five specimens were located in storage and on exhibit (see Appendix); two of these had been sold and the other three are apparently lost.

The present condition of the Simms Southwestern Chippewa collection is generally good, although a number of skin objects, especially medicine bags, have been damaged by insects. Many objects show considerable signs of use, indicating that they either were part of the cultural inventory at the time the collection was made or perhaps represent family heirlooms retained as souvenirs of the past.

Simms appears to have cataloged his collection himself. Provenience, together with some very brief information concerning materials and use, is to be found in the book catalog and on the catalog cards. When such information is included in the following pages without other documentation, it should be understood to have been derived from the catalog.

Objects in the Simms collection are described here within the following 11 use categories: dwellings, subsistence, transportation, household equipment, clothing, personal adornment, objects associated with religion, musical instruments, games, warfare, and raw materials (see Appendix for catalog numbers). The brief descriptions of artifact types which follow should be read while ex-

amining the accompanying photographs. For comparisons, I have relied heavily on Densmore (1929), although other ethnographic accounts are cited when relevant.

Dwellings

According to Densmore (1929, pp. 22–28), the most common form of Chippewa dwelling was the dome-shaped wigwam consisting of a pole framework covered with birch bark and cattail matting. Also in use was the peaked or ridgepole lodge, which was covered with bark; instead of being dome-shaped, it had a long ridgepole with flat sides that sloped to the ground. A simple bark-covered house was used as a temporary structure in sugar camps. A fourth type of structure, the widely distributed tipi, consisted of a conical framework of poles with a covering of birch bark or cloth.

The Simms collection contains a *model tipi* in rather poor condition, 80 cm high and approximately 52 cm in diameter, consisting of nine spruce poles, only one of which has a short crotch at the upper end. The end of a single pole is fitted into this crotch and the remaining poles are laid against them and tied with string. The upper part of the pole framework is covered with three "birch-bark rolls" (see Densmore, 1928, pp. 389–390), each consisting of two rectangular strips sewn together in a single running stitch with basswood fiber. Split cedar sticks are sewn across the ends to prevent tearing. The lower part of the tipi is covered with a mat of bulrushes consisting of long strips of the material placed vertically, folded over at the top, and held together by lengths of cord passed horizontally through the bulrushes in four places (see Densmore, 1929, pp. 154–155, pl. 60a). The second length of cord passes over the poles to hold the mat in place. A single broad strip of curved cedar with the ends lap-spliced is tied to the poles around the base to provide some rigidity to the model. A piece of patterned cotton cloth with a cedar stick, originally tied horizontally at the bottom, hangs over the entrance and serves as a door (fig. 2).

Subsistence

According to Densmore (1929, pp. 124–125), fishing was an important subsistence activity that continued almost throughout the entire year. The use of nets was the general method of taking fish.

In aboriginal and early historic times, nets or seines were made of nettle-stalk twine, but manufactured twine was available to the Chippewa early in the contact period (Densmore, 1929, p. 154).

The collection contains a badly tangled section of twine *fishnet* which is described in the catalog as a "model," along with a wood *shuttle* which carried the twine (fig. 10a). There is also a square piece of smooth wood around which the twine was passed before making the knot, and this served as a *mesh gauge* (fig. 10b). The shuttle is flat, pointed at one end, slightly concave at the other, and made of birchwood. A portion of the center has been removed to leave a narrow spike of wood extending from near the center of the needle almost to the tip. Both the shuttle and the gauge are described as models. The forms may be European introductions. Similar full-sized implements are illustrated by Densmore (1929, pl. 59b).

The Simms collection contains four self *bows*. Densmore (1929, pp. 146–147) described bows of finished workmanship as being made of hickory or ash, the former being preferred for hunting large animals and for war. The length of a bow varied with the stature of the owner, a typical bow being about 48 inches (122 cm) long. Two of those in the collection are approximately this length, the other two being shorter.

The longest bow is approximately 127 cm in length. Both the back and the front of the stave are flat and 3.5 cm wide at the center. The horn at the upper end is notched in a half diamond pattern, while there are paired V-shaped notches at the lower horn. Both edges of the stave are decorated with incised, recessed triangles at either end; the triangles were apparently painted alternately red and purple, but the colors are badly faded. The upper horn is slotted and, according to the catalog, contained an iron lance point when purchased, but it is now missing. The point was held in place with sinew lashing, into which short red, purple, and white feathers are inserted. According to the catalog, the lance point was for "thrusting." The string consists of two strands of twisted sinew (fig. 3b). According to Densmore (1929, p. 146), bows with "sides cut in scallops" were used when hunting squirrels, but this bow would appear to have been a weapon for war.

The second bow is also 127 cm in length. Both the front and the back of the pine stave are flat, and the stave, which is undecorated, measures 4.5 cm at the grip. Paired V-shaped notches are cut near the end of each horn for attachment of the string, which consists of two twisted strands of

sinew. Accompanying this are four blunt *arrows* with pine shafts of the type used for birds or small game animals. The proximal ends of the shafts are notched to receive the bowstring. The four arrows are fletched with small, whole jay feathers attached to the shaft at each end with sinew (fig. 4d–e).

The third bow, 106 cm long, also has a stave that is flat on both sides. It is thinner than the previously described bows and the grip is somewhat narrower than the limbs. A single side notch is cut at the end of each horn, and the bowstring is a double strand of twisted sinew. The bow is undecorated. Accompanying this weapon are 12 arrows. According to the catalog, six were painted with green pigment and six with yellow pigment, but only the green paint remains. All the arrows are notched 6 cm from the distal end and worked to a point. It seems likely that they were intended to have a bone or metal tip held in place over the notch. All the arrows are fletched with feathers split in half. The barbs have been removed from each end of the vane, exposing about 2 cm of the shaft or spine. Each arrow shaft is feathered with two vanes placed approximately 2 cm from the notched proximal end. Each vane is lashed with sinew parallel to the long axis of the shaft and is not spiraled. In general, the feathers are in very poor condition (fig. 4c).

The stave of the fourth bow, approximately 92 cm long, is flat on the back and slightly rounded on the front. One side is crudely painted with green commercial paint. The grip, which is sinew-wrapped, is not noticeably thinner than the limbs. Paired V-shaped notches have been cut near the end of each horn for the attachment of a bowstring of two-strand, twisted sinew (fig. 3a). The end of one horn, above the notch, is carved to represent a human face, while at the other end a human foot is carved (fig. 5). Densmore makes no reference to bows decorated in this manner. There are eight arrows accompanying this bow, all of which have bone points inserted in slits in the distal end and lashed with sinew. These arrows are fletched in the same manner as those described with the previous bow, except that there are three vanes. The shafts and points of four arrows are crudely painted with commercial green paint (fig. 4b).

According to Densmore (1929, p. 147) and Cooper (1936, p. 3), arrow points of bone were used for shooting deer and moose. A good arrow would travel about 500 feet (152 m), but was most effective for deer hunting when loosed at a distance of about 50 feet (15 m).

Wild rice was and continues to be important to

the Southwestern Chippewa, and the Simms collection contains two *rice-threshing sticks* of wood which are slender and taper to a point. There are knobs at the proximal ends (fig. 4a). Sticks like these were used by men and women to beat the rice stalks they bent over the sides of a canoe so that the ripe kernels would fall into the vessel (Densmore, 1928, pl. 40c; 1929, p. 128).

Transportation

The only objects in the collection associated with transportation are two pairs of *snowshoes*, one pair identified in the catalog as having been used by women and the other by men. According to Densmore (1929, pp. 148, 170), the frames of snowshoes were usually made of ash, the wood being bent by placing it in hot water or holding it near a fire.

The pair of woman's snowshoes has a one-piece frame with a pointed heel where the two ends are lashed with rawhide. The form of this pair of shoes is the so-called bent-toe type (Davidson, 1937, pp. 88–93). There are two straight crossbars mortised into the frame. The netting between the crossbars consists of thick rawhide thongs. According to Densmore (1929, p. 148), horsehide was preferred for the netting in this area because it does not stretch or shrink when wet. The frame between the crossbars was wrapped with red wool cloth on each side prior to being laced. Netting in the toe and heel areas is made of twine. The harnesses are made of twisted two-strand rope (fig. 6).

The second pair, said to have been used by men, has a two-piece frame with the pieces joined at the heel and toe and lashed with rawhide. This is the "Athabascan type" as described and illustrated by Davidson (1937, pp. 70–78, figs. 29–30). The two crossbars are straight with heavy rawhide webbing in between. The sides of the frame between the crossbars were wrapped with white cotton cloth before lacing. In the heel and toe areas the webbing is of heavy twine. The harnesses are made of strips of white cotton cloth (fig. 7).

Household Equipment

The collection contains two *mortars and pestles*. Both mortars are birch logs from which deep rectangular sections have been hollowed out horizontally with an adz and crooked knife (fig. 8a–b). The

pestles, made of the same material, are round and enlarged toward the distal end. On one of them some bark remains at the distal end (fig. 8a). According to the catalog, these implements were used for "grinding corn and medicine."

Ladles and bowls were carved from burled portions of hardwood such as maple and birch, and are noted for their attractive grain (Densmore, 1929, p. 170). There are six wooden *ladles* of varying sizes in the collection (fig. 9), all of which have shovel-shaped, ovoid bowls and, with one exception (fig. 9a), sharply upturned handles. Two ladles have suspension holes at the proximal end (fig. 9c, e), and one has notched decoration along both sides of the handle (fig. 9f). All closely resemble the ladles or spoons illustrated by Densmore (1929, fig. 17b). None is small enough to have been used for eating, but probably served to dip broth and meat from a large container (Densmore, 1929, p. 41) or in granulating maple sugar (Densmore, 1928, pl. 34).

The collection contains a pair of bone *weaving needles* which are flat and spatulate-shaped at the distal end, with a hole near the center (fig. 10d). Such needles were used for making rush and cattail mats for covering the wigwam or tipi. Similar needles are illustrated by Densmore (1929, pl. 9a [g]).

The most common form of *torch* used by the Chippewa was a piece of tightly twisted birch bark. The collection contains a single example that is wrapped at the proximal end with split root (fig. 10g). Another type consists of a flat, oblong piece of birch bark inserted in the split end of a stick (fig. 10e). There are also six flat pieces of bark tied with split root to be used with this type of torch (fig. 10f). Densmore (1929, pp. 149–150, pl. 56) described and illustrated similar torches which were used around camp and when traveling.

The collection contains two *bags*, both made from the skin of moose heads. The smaller consists of two panels of skin, from which most of the hair has disappeared, sewn with sinew to a separate piece of softened hide with the hair removed. There is another piece of the same material at the neck, with slits for inserting ties (fig. 11b). The second bag, much larger and with the hair in good condition, is constructed in the same manner (fig. 11a). Sewing throughout is with sinew. Simms collected bags of similar construction but made of buffalo hide among the Plains Cree, who used them for storing pemmican (VanStone, 1983, p. 16, figs. 22a, 23, 27).

A *cradle board*, in which most of an infant's first

year was spent (Ritzenthaler, 1981, p. 749), consisted of a cedar board with a curved piece of wood which served as a foot brace and a hoop at right angles at the other end to protect the head. This hoop was covered with a blanket in winter or with a thin cloth in summer. Small charms or articles for the child's amusement were hung from the hoop (Densmore, 1929, p. 49). Both the foot brace and the hoop are attached to the board with heavy twine. The ends of the hoop extend through the board and are joined by a crosspiece. This served to raise the head area when the board was placed on a flat surface. A narrow rod is fastened to one side of the cradle board and to this were attached the wrappers of buckskin or cloth which bound the baby to the board (fig. 12). The infant was placed on a bedding of sphagnum moss. Densmore (1929, pp. 48–49, pl. 22a–b) illustrated and described such a cradle board in some detail.

As Densmore has noted (1929, p. 158), one of the most useful articles in a Chippewa family was the woven yarn bag which served to contain a great variety of personal possessions. The earliest yarn bags were small, being about 23 cm square, but later they were larger and replaced bags made of cedar bark. Lyford (1943, p. 81) believed that the first yarn bags were probably made of buffalo hair, but commerical yarns and woolen goods made their appearance during the 17th century and were substituted for native products. The earliest material used was cord, made by raveling blankets and cast-off trade clothing which was respun and redyed so that it could be used as the weft thread in weaving bags. Local fibers such as nettle and basswood continued to be used as the warp (Densmore, 1929, p. 158; Lyford, 1943, pl. 81; Whiteford, 1977, p. 40). Densmore (1929, pl. 66) and Whiteford (1977, figs. 1D, 5) illustrated bags made of a raveled blanket with fiber warp. The fine yarn that was obtained from the traders was twisted into coarse yarn by means of a distaff (Densmore, 1929, p. 154, pl. 9a [d]). The fine yarn was passed over a nail above the head of the worker and then wound on the distaff. Native dyes were first used but were later replaced by commercial dyes.

Yarn bags were woven on a frame which consisted of two smooth sticks approximately 90 cm in length and 3 cm in diameter. These were placed upright in the ground at a distance slightly wider than the width of the bag (Lyford, 1943, pl. 40). The weaving method is described in detail by Lyford (1943, pp. 81–83).

A loop of heavy cord to which the necessary

number of warps of the desired lengths were previously attached was then stretched around the top of the rods. Care was taken to space the warp threads evenly as they were attached to the cord. The warps were left to hang unattached at the bottom, no tension being applied in the weaving. The weaver began her work just below the cord at what was to be eventually the bottom of the bag, and worked downward. She twined a pair of variously colored wefts around each warp, one at a time, or around two if the warp thread was very thin, all the way around the bag, placing each round close below the previous one. . . . Several varieties of twining were used. When the warp threads had been covered for almost their entire length, and the bag was the required size, it was removed from the supporting rods and the edge which was uppermost was sewed together in a seam to form the bottom of the bag. The loose ends of the warp were folded over and wrapped to form a corded edge at the top of the bag. Below the cord a space of open work was left, through which a cord was laced in and out to close the bag when it was filled.

Densmore (1929, pl. 67) illustrated such a weaving frame.

The Simms collection originally contained 23 woven bags that have been identified as containers for personal possessions, but one bag is missing. Two small bags are identified in the catalog as having contained medicine and will be described in the section on objects related to religion.

The 22 bags described here range in size from the largest, approximately 50 cm square, to the smallest, which is 9 cm square. Bags of the largest size are the most common and exhibit the characteristic three broad bands of geometric decoration with two minor bands between them (Lyford, 1943, p. 85, pl. 45; Whiteford, 1977, fig. 1A-D). There is also an intermediate size with two major bands of decoration. Of the smaller bags, some have two bands and others three. Geometric designs include zigzags, rectangles, elongated hexagons, various combinations of angles, and what appear to be stylized flowers. According to Lyford (1943, p. 83) and Densmore (1929, p. 158), conventionalized figures of animals as well as figures of men were characteristic of the old nettle fiber bags and the earliest woven bags. Unfortunately, the only bag described in the catalog as depicting

a human figure is the one that is missing from the collection. Many of the bags in the Simms collection show considerable signs of wear. Not all have finished tops as described by Lyford but all bottom seams are sewn with twine.

According to Lyford (1943, p. 81), yarn bags have been made for sale in recent times, especially by the Lac du Flambeau Indians in Wisconsin. It is possible that some of the bags in the Simms collection were made for that purpose, and this ready availability might account for the large number collected. However, the fact that so many show obvious signs of use and repair would seem to indicate that most if not all these bags were in use at the time they were collected. A variety of sizes and decorative motifs are illustrated (figs. 13-19).

Clothing

The only item of clothing in the Simms collection is a *breechcloth* made from two rectangular pieces cut from blue wool blankets and sewn together with heavy thread. This garment measures 127 cm by 46 cm. The breechcloth was attached to the body with a length of buckskin cord. Across one end, presumably the end that hangs down in front, is sewn a woven rectangular beaded band consisting of a geometric pattern of blue and white seed beads with a border of red and white pony beads, also in a geometric pattern. Fine linen or silk thread has been used for the warp and weft. This separate beaded band is attached to the wool cloth with heavy black thread (fig. 20a). Beaded bands like this one were woven on a simple rectangular wood frame (Lyford, 1943, pp. 123-125, pl. 72).

Personal Adornment

The Simms collection contains two *necklaces*. The first is a braided band of multi-strand buckskin from which hang short single strands of the same material ornamented with blue, black, translucent pink, and clear rectangular beads with split deer hooves at the ends (fig. 21d). The second necklace is very similar except that the buckskin band is a single folded strip. Most of the split deer hooves are attached to short strips of buckskin, but every fourth strip is also strung with rectangular translucent blue and yellow beads (fig. 21e). A necklace of bear claws is missing from the collection.

A pair of *leg bands*, described in the catalog as "old style," are made of narrow strips of skunk skin. They were tied around the legs with rectangular strips of red, yellow, and brown ribbon (fig. 22b).

A beaded *collar* consists of a rectangular beaded band sewn on a heavy rectangular strip of cotton drilling. The beaded design consists of a white background with a stylized floral design in dark blue, light blue, pink, translucent pink, yellow, and green seed beads. There is a border of blue pony beads. At one end of the drilling strip is a reinforced button hole, at the other end a metal button (fig. 28f). According to the catalog, this collar was "worn by Chief Flat Mouth," who is shown in a photograph of a Leech Lake band delegation to Washington in 1899 (Ritzenthaler, 1981, fig. 7). His father, also known as Flat Mouth, was 78 in 1852 when he visited William W. Warren while Warren was compiling the *History of the Ojibways* (Warren, 1885, pp. 17, 19).

Objects Associated with Religion

As Ritzenthaler has noted (1981, p. 754), religion permeated every aspect of Chippewa daily life and was highly personal. The supernatural world contained a great many spirits, both benign and malevolent, but of particular concern to the individual were his guardian spirits acquired as the result of vision quests. Dreams were also important and were carefully considered for their possible significance.

The spirits were placated and manipulated through offerings of tobacco and food or through the mediation of shamans. Tobacco was extremely important in religious life and was regarded as virtually a sacred substance. The smoking of tobacco opened all religious and ceremonial occasions, and accompanied an invitation to a feast. Warriors accepted an invitation to join a war party by smoking a pipe that was offered to them (Ritzenthaler, 1981, p. 754).

The Simms collection contains two complete pipes and a pipe bowl. The first complete pipe has an undecorated bowl of black pipestone which, according to Densmore (1929, p. 143), was obtained from deposits in central Wisconsin. The long wood stem has three spiral twists, near the center, decorated with a single incised line. Above the spirals, toward the proximal end, are a series of incised triangles and lines. All these incisions are filled with red pigment. Extending along the

upper surface of the stem is a row of unpainted incised triangles. The stem, which is a solid piece, has not been drilled and the pipe is thus not capable of being smoked (fig. 22a). Densmore (1929, p. 144) noted that ceremonial pipes frequently had stems in excess of 3 feet as this one does. Cooper (1936, p. 15) noted that catlinite pipes were still in use at Rainy Lake in 1928.

The second pipe is small, with a dark stone bowl and a short wood stem; it shows signs of considerable use (fig. 21b). According to Densmore (1929, p. 144, pl. 52a), this style of pipe was smoked by women.

The pipe bowl is made from a very heavy, fine grained stone and shows signs of use (fig. 21c). According to the catalog, there was a stem with this pipe but it is now missing.

In aboriginal times the Chippewa smoked the dried roots of plants and two types of willow bark. When plug tobacco was first available, it was difficult to obtain and was mixed with powdered bark. Densmore (1929, pp. 144-145, pl. 52c-d) noted that the tobacco was cut in a small wooden bowl and then mixed and offered in an oblong tray if a number of people were smoking.

The collection contains two wood *tobacco trays*. The first is rectangular in shape with a shallow oval excavation. Around the edges is incised decoration of straight lines and a zigzag pattern filled with red pigment. There are an incised gun and a pipe in diagonally opposite corners and four-leaf floral designs in the remaining corners. These decorative elements are filled with green pigment (fig. 21a). According to the catalog, this tray was owned by Flat Mouth.

The second tray, which is described in the catalog as "very old," is a hollowed-out piece of wood carved in the shape of a beaver (fig. 20b). It shows signs of considerable use.

A widespread religious rite in the Great Lakes region was the Midewiwin or Medicine Dance, an important ceremony of the Midewiwin (or Mide) Society, a curative society to which membership was obtained through instruction, the payment of fees, and formal initiation. The ritual and instructional aspects of the Midewiwin were conducted by Mide priests. The rite has been described in some detail for the Minnesota and Wisconsin Chippewa by Hoffman (1891), Densmore (1929, pp. 86-96), Ritzenthaler (1953, pp. 182-184; 1981, pp. 754-755), Landes (1968, pt. II), and Blessing (1977, pt. II).

Each member of the Midewiwin Society owned a special bag made of an animal or bird skin, which

was his most valued possession and was usually buried with him; the bag contained medicinal herbs and charms. Each degree of the society had its special bag which designated the degree attained by the owner (Densmore, 1929, pp. 93-94). In describing the ceremony on the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation in Wisconsin in the 1940s, Ritzenthaler (1981, pp. 754-755) identified mink, otter, muskrat, or beaver bags as being associated with the first degree; owl or hawk with the second degree; snake, fox, or wild cat claw with the third; and bear paw or bear cub with the fourth degree. Blessing (1963, pp. 109-110) listed some of the same animal species for the lower degrees of the Midewiwin among the Minnesota Chippewa and further noted that mythical spirit animals were associated with the fifth to eighth degrees. Writing in the early 1850s, Warren (1885, p. 68) noted that the Chippewa's medicine bag

contains all which he holds most sacred; it is preserved with great care, and seldom ever allowed a place in the common wigwam, but is generally left hanging in the open air on a tree, where even an ignorant child dare not touch it. The contents are never displayed without much ceremony.

The Simms collection originally contained 13 *Mide* bags, but two were sold to a private collector in 1949. Each of the 11 bags currently in the collection is different and will be described individually.

There are two bags made of the whole skin of otters. Both skins are slit down the underside between the front paws. The first has a pair of feathers passed through the nose, and the underside of the tail is ornamented with a strip of flannel edged with brown cotton cloth. Rectangular strips of red flannel are attached to the hind legs. There is a single line zigzag pattern of white beads on each piece of flannel (fig. 23b).

The second otter bag has red dyed downy feathers passed through the nose. The legs are wrapped with rawhide and flattened porcupine quills dyed yellow and orange. Paired strips of quill-wrapped rawhide ending in metal dangles and fringes of red yarn hang from three legs. The underside of the tail is lined with blue cotton cloth and edged and decorated with rows of white beads (fig. 23a).

Four bags are made of whole mink skins, have slits on the underside, and are relatively undecorated. One bag is completely without ornamenta-

tion; a second has downy feathers dyed red and purple passing through the nose (fig. 24c). The underside of the tail of the third bag is lined with a rectangular piece of blue cotton cloth ornamented with blue and white beads (fig. 24b). According to the catalog, the head of this bag contains a small bundle of "medicine"; no attempt was made to remove this. The legs of the fourth bag are wrapped with blue, yellow, and translucent pink beads (fig. 24a). The catalog notes that the head contains a shell wrapped in cotton; this has not been removed.

The two bags of whole weasel skins are undecorated and have slits on the underside between the front paws (fig. 25a). According to the catalog, in the head of one of these bags is a "sacred bundle" containing "two *megis* shells and two glass beads." The body contains a "package of herbs for medicine." According to Densmore (1929, p. 93), the shells "were 'shot into the candidate' and into members of the society at a ceremony of initiation." The catalog describes the second weasel skin bag as containing "a small shell wrapped in cotton cloth" (fig. 25d). *Megis* (*Cypraea moneta*) is native only to tropical waters, but its use as currency or for ornamentation has been almost worldwide. These shells were probably available to the Chippewa early in the 19th century. According to Dewdney (1975, p. 71), the *megis* signified initiation into an unspecified degree of the Midewiwin.

A single bag made from a whole skunk skin is slit on the underside between the front paws, and at least part of the inside is lined with cloth sewn to the skin with string. In the head is a small cloth sack which, according to the catalog, contains "medicine." This bag is in very poor condition (fig. 25c).

An undecorated bag made from a whole squirrel skin is slit on the underside in the usual manner. Inside is an oval piece of cedar bark on which is incised a circular design with radiating lines and two beavers (fig. 25b). According to the catalog, the bag also contains "three small bags of medicine."

The last of these bags made from whole skins is that of a black bear cub. The slit on the underside is lined with patterned cotton cloth. Rectangular metal plates are attached to each of the hind legs, and strips of rawhide, to which are attached metal dangles, hang from holes in these plates. The lower part of each leg is wrapped with a narrow strip of red flannel (fig. 26b). According to the catalog, the

bag contains "red paint for face and medicinal herbs." Blessing (1963, pp. 109-110) noted that the black bear, frequently depicted on birch bark records, was a powerful and active guardian spirit who attended the candidates throughout Mide rituals. Although a cub skin or bear paw bag was specifically associated with fourth degree Mide members, a candidate was said to spiritually assume the form of a bear as he progressed through all degrees of the Mide Lodge.

In addition to the whole skin bags just described, there are four small containers described in the catalog as *medicine pouches or bags*. One of these is now missing from the collection. Of the remaining three, one is a square pouch of buckskin made of a single piece sewn up the sides with string. The flap is a separate piece, on the front of which is a floral design in blue, green, pink, grey, white, translucent red, and yellow pony beads. This design, which is spot-stitched and thread-sewn, is not worked on a separate piece but sewn directly to the flap. On the back of the pouch is a loop of buckskin for attachment to a belt (fig. 27b). According to Lyford (1943, p. 123), translucent beads were first used by the Chippewa in the 1860s.

A small bag of black velvet was associated with a medicine bag of otter skin which is now missing from the collection. The bag is made of two pieces sewn together with thread. A narrow separate piece is folded and sewn around the opening. On the front of this small bag is an embroidered floral design in yellow, green, pink, red, blue, translucent yellow, and translucent green seed beads. Around the seam are loops of translucent yellow beads (fig. 27e).

A small, crudely made cloth bag with flap is made of black and red cotton cloth sewn with thread. On the front is an embroidered floral design in yellow, red, blue, and translucent yellow seed beads. Inside are two small bundles of "medicine" wrapped in rawhide, each covered with a rectangular piece of birch bark on the inside of which are incised crude human figures. The bag also contains a small piece of root (fig. 27f).

Two small woven yarn bags are also identified in the catalog as having contained medicine. In method of construction and design, these resemble the larger yarn bags previously described (fig. 27a,c).

A small rectangular wooden *box* has a sliding lid that is badly warped and fits poorly (fig. 10c). Inside are three paper packages which, according to the catalog, contain medicinal herbs.

Shamanism was of considerable importance to the Chippewa, and shamans were feared and respected for their supernatural powers. Of the three classes of shamans described by Ritzenthaler (1981, p. 757), the "sucking doctor," who was also a Mide priest, was exclusively a curer. A characteristic feature of the treatment involved the swallowing and regurgitation of small bone tubes, which were then placed against the body of the patient so that the illness could be blown or sucked out (Densmore, 1910, p. 120, fig. 8, pl. 10; 1928, pl. 46g; 1929, pp. 44-46). The Simms collection contains four hollow bone tubes which the catalog indicates were used for this purpose (fig. 27d).

The collection contains three objects which are simply described in the catalog as having been used in the Midewiwin. The first is a so-called hawk fetish, which is actually the skin, head, and feet of a great horned owl sewn onto a strip of heavy wool. There is a loop of string around the neck. A "turtle fetish" is the desiccated body of a small snapping turtle. It does not appear to have been altered in any way to serve as a fetish. A complete red-throated loon skin contains a small bellows whistle of wood and rawhide in the body cavity (fig. 26a). It is not possible to determine how these objects were used in connection with the Midewiwin. Densmore (1929, pp. 107-111) noted that the Chippewa relied heavily on the use of charms, but the majority of those she described are herbal.

There are two sets of four *pegs* which are described in the catalog as having been used in the Midewiwin. It seems likely that they were used in the construction of a sweat lodge, a small conical tent in which steam was created by throwing water on hot rocks. Steam baths were taken for individual therapy and for ceremonial purification at the Midewiwin rites (Densmore, 1929, pp. 95-96; Ritzenthaler, 1981, pp. 748-749). The pegs in the larger set have a knob and groove at the proximal end and taper to a point (fig. 28e). The pegs in the smaller set have knobs at the proximal end and are narrower for about half their length before tapering to a point (fig. 28d).

Three crudely carved *wooden birds*, one painted red which was in a yarn bag now missing from the collection, are described in the catalog as being used in the Midewiwin (fig. 28a-c). Densmore (1929, p. 76, pl. 29b) described and illustrated carved birds on posts above the graves of Canadian Ojibwa. According to her interpretation, a Midewiwin bark record indicated that a carved

hawk on a post was associated with the second degree and a carved owl with the third. These posts, provided by the candidate for initiation, were eventually placed on the graves of members of the society who had taken these degrees.

Serving an important ritualistic function in the Midewiwin and in the wider context of Chippewa shamanism were birch bark records or cylinders. The bark to be used for these records was removed from the white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) in late spring, the time of the year when the bark was easily removed from the trunk. Trees of 6 to 8 inches in diameter provided the most desirable thickness of bark, which could easily be rolled up. Several rectangular sections were sewn together with split spruce root or bast cord to obtain the desired length. For stability and to prevent splitting as the bark dried, these sections were framed at each end with cedar sticks approximately 0.5 inch in diameter which were split lengthwise and attached with basswood or spruce root cord. Smaller records were usually oval in shape and consisted of a single bark panel. They rarely exceeded 8 inches (20 cm) in length. Larger records could measure up to 20 inches (51 cm) in width and 9 feet (3 m) in length. Although birch bark records in museum collections are frequently stored flat, they were stored by their Indian owners in tightly rolled cylinders.

The inner, or cambium, surface of a bark record was inscribed with pictorial representations which ranged in style from representational, through symbolic, to abstract images, and in size from large-scale to miniature images. Some records were inscribed on the outer, or paper, side as well. The inscribing of a record was accomplished with a pointed bone tool or, in more recent times, a nail set in a wooden handle. Most records are not colored, but a few have red pigment rubbed in the incisions (Blessing, 1963, p. 106).

The most important birch bark records were those which described the origin, history, and rituals of the Midewiwin. The records served as mnemonic aids, both for the instruction of new members in the various degrees of the Medicine Lodge by Mide priests and to record oral traditions and correct ceremonial procedures. The extent to which ideographic symbols on the records could be understood by the uninitiated depended on the artistic abilities of the craftsman who made the incisions. According to Blessing (1963, p. 107), the majority of records were inscribed in a well-defined manner, but a few crudely incised records

made even representational characters difficult to interpret.

There were no set rules for the number of degrees that a record could contain or the extent to which it was inscribed. This was a matter of convenience for the priest who used it. According to Blessing (1963, pp. 107-108), the most common number of degrees found on records was four; the highest was eight. Priests, who were capable of instructing the higher degrees, were believed to possess exceptional memories and could sometimes remember every phase of the requisite rituals without using the records as a reminder. The records used by these priests were usually not as detailed as were those used by men who were less capable of remembering details and might make mistakes. Instructors with remarkable memories were considered to be holy men and usually spent much time contemplating their records.

A number of investigators have attempted to classify the birch bark records according to their specific functions within the complex Midewiwin ceremonial cycle. Although objections have been raised to all these attempts, Blessing's (1963, pp. 110-111) classification at least has the advantage of simplicity. According to this author, there were three types of records:

1) The "instructional" record was used in preparing a candidate for the initiation ceremony. This type of record contained a number of rectangular figures representing the Medicine Lodge but was otherwise incised with a minimum of characters to avoid confusing the candidate.

2) The "ritual" record was well illustrated and served as a reference for priests who conducted the Grand Medicine ceremonies.

3) The "master" record, in addition to its regular instructive function, served as an historical document. It was profusely illustrated and contained four to eight of the degrees which might be attained by members of the Medicine Lodge.

Equally important as these instructional records were the song records which recorded the personal songs "owned" by individual Mide members. These songs, derived from Chippewa mythology or from a personal vision quest, were both sacred and profane. The contents of a song record could be interpreted only by the composer or the owner (Dewdney, 1975, p. 5). Song records were usually short, consisting of a single panel of bark, and were curved at the ends to minimize the tendency of

the bark to split as it dries. They did not have end sticks, although, as Dewdney (1975, p. 21) emphasized, the absence of end sticks is not a reliable way of telling a song record from an instruction record.

A number of investigators have pointed out that the individual records in museum or private collections may not be of great age. Like the illuminated manuscripts of medieval Europe, the bark records were copied when worn out or damaged, or when additional copies were required. It is possible, therefore, that the contents of a particular record could be very old, perhaps several hundred years old. Although reliable dates for most records generally cannot be determined, a radiocarbon date of 390 ± 70 B.P. (A.D. 1560) was obtained for a record fragment found in an archaeological context in Quetico Provincial Park, Ontario (Kidd, 1965, pp. 480-483; 1981, pp. 41-43).

Dewdney (1975, p. 18) has pointed out that there are no descriptions in the literature of how a copy was made from a worn-out record. He has noted that the nature of the bark and the recopying of records affected the style of the pictography. Recopying encouraged abstraction, which could either lead to the disappearance of certain symbols or to their elaboration into new forms.

The Simms collection originally contained 11 birch bark records, one of which could not be located for this study. Data in the catalog and accession records do not include interpretation of these records. Interpretations of the bark records in other museum and private collections have been attempted by Hoffman (1891), Densmore (1929), Blessing (1963), and Dewdney (1975), but many scholars consider their efforts to be fragmentary and unreliable in certain respects.

Four of the records in the collection are multi-paneled and thus presumably either "instructional" or "master" records according to Blessing's (1963) classification. They will be described individually.

84372—This record consists of four panels, three of equal length and a shorter panel at one end. The total length is 180 cm, the width 36 cm. The overlapping panels are sewn in a running stitch with split spruce root and finished off at the edges with an anchor stitch. At each end the panels are framed with cedar sticks split lengthwise and attached with basswood cord. Splits in the bark at several places on the record have been repaired with basswood cord.

This record is inscribed on both sides, but the

inscriptions on the outer, or paper, side are more detailed. The inscriptions include the following "natural" symbols defined by Blessing (1963, pp. 96-97): bear, beaver, bear tracks, and representations of Mide priests. Other animals, including snakes, are also represented. "Invented" symbols which had to be identified for the uninitiated (Blessing, 1963, pp. 98-99) include the path of life followed by Mide members as well as detours in the path of life (figs. 29-30). Inscriptions on the inner, or cambium, side are much less detailed and include representations of Mide priests and bear tracks. The paper side of this record is illustrated by Dewdney (1975, fig. 83). He identified some of the symbolism as signifying the owner's tenure of office as grand shaman and his local medical practice as a visionary shaman.

84415—Three panels of equal length comprise this record, which is 191 cm long and 30.5 cm wide. The overlapping panels are sewn in double running stitch with split spruce root and the edges are framed with split cedar sticks. The record has been repaired in several places and is badly damaged at one end. It has been inscribed on the cambium side only; the inscriptions include representations of Mide priests, presumably the path of life followed by Mide members, and a variety of what appear to be symbolic and abstract figures. The incisions and surrounding areas are painted with red pigment (fig. 31).

84458—This record consists of three panels of unequal length; the total length is 120 cm, the width 28.5 cm. Overlapping panels are sewn in a running stitch with split spruce root and finished off at the edges with an anchor stitch. There are split cedar end sticks at each end. Repairs have been made with basswood cord and the edges of two panels reinforced with stitching of the same material.

The inscriptions on this record are on the paper side only. Of the records which Blessing examined, none had inscriptions on the paper side only (Blessing, 1963, p. 106). The inscriptions include representations of Mide priests, a number of unidentified animals, the path of life, and possibly an "underground lion," an "invented" symbol which was a powerful guardian spirit characteristic of the higher degrees (fig. 32) and was believed to represent grave danger to a Mide member who neglected the teachings of the Mide Lodge (Blessing, 1963, pp. 98-99).

84383—This record is in the best condition of any in the collection. It is 126 cm long and 27 cm

one end consists of three panels of equal length sewn together with a single running stitch. There are red and black ornaments on the panels in four places with spruce root lacing. The record has been repaired on the paper side with masking tape, and there is a small V-shaped section missing at one end. The inscriptions are on the反面 side only, and include the path of life, representations of Made events, a pair of mythological animals, two fish tails, and a pair of "underground birds." The incisions are filled with red pigment (fig. 33).

The collection contains six short records, each consisting of a single panel. None of these has end stocks. Five are oval in shape and one is rectangular. They are described by Summs in the catalog as song records.

42244 - This rectangular record, 45 cm long, is badly split and has been repaired on the paper side with masking tape. It is inscribed on both sides, primarily with mythological animals, although a bear and at least one bird are recognizable. Human-like figures are also represented (fig. 35).

42245 1-3 - All three of these oval records, each approximately 40 cm long, are crudely inscribed on both sides. Human-like figures are recognizable; there is also a thunderbird, turtle, several snake-like representations, and fish (figs. 36-40).

42246 - This oval record, 41 cm long, is crudely inscribed on the paper side only. There are very few inscriptions, of which only a bear and three human-like figures are recognizable (fig. 41).

42247 - This badly split and curved record is 40 cm long and 4.5 cm wide. Inscriptions are on the反面 side only and are very faint. Human-like figures, bears, and a thunderbird are recognizable.

Musical Instruments

Musical instruments of the Southwestern Campewa include two types of drums, riddles, and the fife (Densmore, 1910, pp. 11-12, pl. 1-2).

The songs of the Made represent the musical expression of religious ideas and are accompanied by the water drum, of which there are three in the Summs collection. The first of these drums is in very poor condition. It is made from a hollowed log, possibly, basswood. It is 35 cm high, 36 cm in diameter at the bottom, and 31.5 cm in diameter at the top. When in use it was partially filled with

water and there is a plug 4 cm from the top. The sides of this drum are undecorated and the head and stock are missing.

The second instrument is similar in shape and size, with the plug in the same position. The bottom is nailed in place and the seams covered with pitch. The head is partly tanned deerskin held in place with heavy twine. The sides are ornamented with paired colored bands of green, purple, yellow, and black paint. Projecting from the side approximately 17 cm from the top are three eagle claws on which, according to the catalog, tobacco and eagle feathers were hung (fig. 41b).

The third drum is slightly taller than the others; its bottom is incised into a groove around the sides. There is a wooden reinforcement band around the bottom, grooved and lashed with strips of commercially tanned hide. The head is of native tanned deerskin held in place with a narrow wooden band wrapped with commercially tanned hide. On the bottom is the incised figure of a bear, the incisions filled with dark blue paint. Around the edges of the bottom is a broad band of light blue paint. On the sides near the bottom are incised half-ovals painted green. At the top of each oval is the incised figure of a bird painted light blue (fig. 41c).

According to Densmore (1910, p. 11), the top of a water drum was dampened before being used and stretched very tight. Considerable care was taken in preparing the drum top in order to secure the desired tone. The top vibrates greatly and produces a sound that carries a long distance.

The Summs collection also contains three *ceremonial drums* which, according to Densmore (1910, pp. 11-12), were used in social dances, in games, and in treatment of the sick. She briefly described the manufacture of such drums (Densmore, 1929, p. 105). The catalog describes the first of these drums as having been used in the moccasin game (see Densmore, 1913, pl. 3; 1929, pp. 114-115; Reagan, 1923, pp. 141-142). It is covered on both sides with a single piece of tanned hide sewn along the edges in an over-under stitch with spruce root. There is a loop handle of the same material at the top. The stock is a straight piece of wood wrapped with coarse cloth and velvet. (fig. 43a).

The second drum, somewhat larger, is covered on both sides with a single piece of tanned hide lashed along the edges with sinew; at the top is a loop handle of sinew. On one side the lower third is painted black. The wooden drumstick, which is

wrapped in bear skin from which most of the fur has disintegrated, has a loop handle decorated with strips of silk and double loops at the distal end (fig. 44).

The third instrument, similar in construction to the others, has a loop handle of hide and is decorated on one side with a human figure painted brown. There is no drumstick (fig. 45).

The collection contains six rattles, one of which is a 16-oz. baking powder can with a wooden handle (fig. 45a). Another is similar in shape, with a frame of bent wood pegged to circular top and bottom pieces (fig. 45c). Both contain small stones or shot. Rattles of this type were illustrated by Densmore (1910, pl. I, 1913, fig. 1, p. 34).

Four rattles are of the tambourine type with sewn covers of hide and loop handles. They are similar in construction to the larger tambourine drums. Two, including the smallest (fig. 45e), are undecorated, while the third, which shows considerable signs of use, has eyes and a mouth outlined in black paint on one side and an undetermined design in red on the reverse (fig. 45d). The fourth tambourine rattle has the upper half of both sides painted red and the lower half blue. Just above the blue half is a painted blue line (fig. 45f). All are filled with small stones or shot. Densmore (1910, pp. 11, 11*) observed tambourine rattles used in treatment of the sick and in the "shooting of spirit power" during a Midewiwin ceremony.

According to Densmore (1910, p. 11), flutes were played to accompany love songs. The collection contains a single flute made from two split and hollow pieces of cedar glued together and open at both ends. There are six finger holes and a cased piece of wood over the air hole. The instrument is decorated with burned designs (fig. 45g). Densmore (1913, pl. I, 1914, pp. 167-168, pl. 7) described the manufacture of such flutes and noted that all Chippewa instruments had six finger holes.

Games

Densmore (1919, pp. 114-115) described Chippewa games of chance and dexterity, but only those of the former type are included in the Simms collection.

The *plate game* was played with a wooden bowl and a number of small figures cut from a variety of materials. The player tosses up the bowl containing the figures, the object being to have certain of them land in an upright position. Densmore

(1909, pp. 116-117, pl. 40g) noted that keeping score was very difficult. Simms (1923, pp. 41-42) described a similar game played by Rainy Lake Indians.

The collection contains a round, smooth-bottomed wooden bowl and 14 small figures. The catalog notes that when the game was collected the playing set consisted of a small brass ring, four small discs, and a miniature elk, woman, canoe, and wigwam. The additional pieces included three miniature canoes, wigwam, and an elk. All the pieces are of stone except the brass ring and the bone canoe (fig. 46a). In addition to this complete game, the collection contains three wooden bowls for the same game. All are symmetrical, round, and have flat bottoms. One very shallow bowl was, according to the catalog, formerly part of a game but subsequently used as a tobacco bowl. Kerne marks are visible on the inside (fig. 46c).

The *stick game* was played with four wooden sticks with markings burned on one side and a number of counters. The players were seated around a blanket spread on the ground; the individual playing held the four sticks in his right hand and dropped them on the blanket. If the sticks fell right side up, or all of them fell wrong side up, the player was entitled to one counter and another turn. Counters were also awarded for various combinations of the right and wrong sides (Densmore 1909, p. 112, pl. 40b). The collection contains three sticks of a set of four used in this game (fig. 47a).

The Chippewa played a variant of the widely distributed *hand game* which involved the concealing of two small objects in the hands of a player, the opponent attempting to guess in which hand the objects were held. The number of players varied and the score was kept with sticks which were stuck in the ground beside the players (Densmore 1909, p. 105). The collection contains 1 set of 11 counters used in the hand game and which are tied with a song of cedar cords (fig. 47b).

Warlike

The Simms collection contains 1 war club of wood carved at one end to represent a buck's head and curved in a war dance. The shaft is decorated near the distal end and then tapers to a point. Presumably something was fastened to the end, perhaps decorative skins, feathers, or cloth (fig. 48a). Densmore (1929, p. 134) noted that during

the assembling of warriors for a war party, dances were held every night prior to their departure.

Raw Materials

Hides of small animals were turned and stretched on a wood frame, then removed when dry and sold in this form to the trader. If a hide were to be used for a medicine bag, it was not turned and put on a frame but dried with the hair side out and stuffed with grass (Densmore, 1929, pp. 163–164). The collection contains a *muskrat drying frame* with a skin in place (fig. 48a). Densmore (1929, p. 164, fig. 15) illustrated such a frame.

The Simms collection contains a *coil of split spruce root* (fig. 47a) and two pieces of *fungus* used as tinder when making fires (fig. 47c). There is also a large quantity of *colored rush for making mats*. The manufacture of rush mats by the Minnesota Chippewa is described in detail by Peterson (1963, pp. 233–250).

III. Conclusion

The primary purpose of this study has been to place on record a collection of Southwestern Chippewa material culture of known provenience acquired by Field Museum at a relatively early date. It is a collection assembled by a man who, although not a professionally trained anthropologist, nevertheless had considerable previous collecting experience and worked under the direction of George Dorsey, an acknowledged authority on American Indian cultures. It is difficult, however, to escape the conclusion that, for Simms, collecting at Leech Lake was an afterthought. His trip to Saskatchewan had, to some extent, been planned in advance, but he was not directed to stop in Minnesota until nearly ready to leave the Plains Cree country in late August of 1903. The fact that Simms apparently had no communication with Dorsey during this phase of his fieldwork indicates the ad hoc nature of the enterprise.

Nothing is known of Simms's collecting methodology at Leech Lake, but his correspondence with Dorsey while he was in Saskatchewan provides a picture, admittedly incomplete, of the collecting rationale and methodology at Field Museum during the early years of this century. Dorsey believed in concentrating money and energy in selected locations, chosen to fill the gaps in the

museum's original collections from the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Field Museum collectors were continually urged to "clean up" in the areas where they were sent. Although somewhat less concerned with the research aspects of fieldwork, Dorsey nevertheless insisted on documentation, an aspect of the work in which Simms was less successful in Saskatchewan and Minnesota than he had been on his earlier field trips to the Crow and Cheyenne reservations (Rabineau, 1981, pp. 32, 34; VanStone, 1983, pp. 2–6).

In Saskatchewan, Simms made a conscious effort to avoid what he referred to as "Hudson's Bay things," thus hoping to obtain only "traditional" artifacts. Since, in 1903, this may have been difficult among both the Plains Cree and the Leech Lake Chippewa, it is possible that some of the objects described in this study were not in actual use at the time the collection was made but were kept as heirlooms by Indian families who were doubtless persuaded to part with them for much-needed cash. It is fortunate indeed that Simms was at Leech Lake early enough to obtain items from the recent past that might soon have disappeared or been dispersed.

Simms was directed to stop at Leech Lake because Dorsey was following his own plan to have as many areas as possible represented in Field Museum's collections. He was thus not particularly concerned about whether a collection from any one area was "complete" or perhaps even representative. Simms and other assistant curators in the Department of Anthropology during Dorsey's tenure were essentially collecting for exhibition purposes, and the objects they collected usually appeared in exhibition cases within a few months of the collector's return from the field.

It is certainly true that the Leech Lake collection fails to convey a comprehensive picture of Southwestern Chippewa material culture; most use categories are very thinly represented. In Saskatchewan, Simms entered each object he purchased, together with the price paid, in a small notebook. Even this minimal record is absent for the Leech Lake material although, as noted in the Introduction, he did make brief notes concerning material and use which were entered in the department's catalog. It is probable that he simply obtained whatever artifacts were available and offered to him.

This being the probable method of Simms's collecting, it is all the more surprising to find objects associated with religion, specifically with the Mi-dewiwin, well represented in the collection. There

are 11 Mide bags, each one of which was presumably a valued possession of its owner. Since the bags were usually buried with their owners, it seems likely that at the time they were collected they had lost their religious and supernatural significance. Of equal significance are 10 birch bark records, certainly one of the larger collections in American museums, yet Blessing (1963), in compiling a list of museums outside Minnesota holding birch bark records, makes no reference to Field Museum's collection. Since religion permeated every aspect of Chippewa daily life, it is likely that many objects in the Simms collection described under other use categories were utilized in religious rituals and shamanism.

Religious objects similar to those collected by Simms were clearly in use in 1903 and much later. Densmore (1929, pp. 74-75) described the Midewiwin funeral and burial of the younger Flat Mouth at Leech Lake in 1907, indicating that he was still living at the time of Simms's visit. In the early 1930s Landes worked with the Mide shaman Will Rogers (Pindigegizig). She illustrated his birch bark records (1968, pl. 7, figs. 1, 3) and observed their use, along with other Mide paraphernalia, during his performances. He is also listed among Densmore's informants (1929, p. 4). Half of the 12 practicing Midewiwin informants listed by Blessing (1977, p. 115) were from Leech Lake, and he places this reservation at the center of his most intensive Minnesota Midewiwin "triangle" during the 1930-1960 era.

If the bark records, Mide bags, and other religious objects in the Simms collection were available because of a decline of traditional Chippewa ritual, then it must have been a temporary decline. Although there is little information regarding the pattern of Christian conversion at Leech Lake, some residents, at the time of Simms's fieldwork, may have been in a stage of deliberate abandonment of Indian religious paraphernalia and regarded the collector as a convenient means of disposing of these materials. Such over-rejection by new converts is not uncommon and, in fact, is known to have occurred among neighboring Chippewa bands during the first two decades of this century (Mary Black-Rogers, pers. comm.).

Also significant is the relatively large number of objects associated with household activities, particularly the woven yarn bags, of which there are 22 in the collection. These utilitarian household articles, no longer in use at the time of Densmore's fieldwork, may have been part of the cultural inventory at the time Simms visited the Leech Lake

reservation. Most of them show considerable wear and were probably in the process of being replaced at that time by bags of cloth and canvas.

Speculations such as these are especially provoked by the lack of documentation for the Simms collection. It seems likely that the collection from Leech Lake is representative of Southwestern Chippewa material culture at the beginning of the 20th century, but only comparison with other more extensive and better documented collections can resolve this question.

Acknowledgments

The photographs in this study are the work of Mr. Ron Testa and Mrs. Diane Alexander-White, Field Museum of Natural History. Figures 1 and 5 were drawn by Mrs. Linnea M. Lahlum. For a careful and critical reading of an early draft of this study, the author is grateful to Dr. Edward S. Rogers, Department of Ethnology, Royal Ontario Museum. Several drafts of the manuscript were typed by Mrs. Loran H. Recchia and Ms. Hillary Lewis.

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Appendix

The Simms Collection of Southwestern Chippewa Material Culture (Accession 851)

Following is a list of the Simms Southwestern Chippewa specimens described in this study. It is a virtually complete list of the collection as it appears in the catalog of the Department of Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History, since only five specimens were not located. When museum catalog numbers are preceded by an asterisk (*), the specimens are *not* illustrated. Identifications given here, with a few exceptions, are those provided by the collector.

<i>Dwellings</i>					
84396	model tipi	84412	woven bag	84463, 1-4	pegs
		*84413	woven bag	84420	carved wooden bird
		84436	woven bag	84447	carved wooden bird
<i>Subsistence</i>		*84450	woven bag	84448	carved wooden bird
84353, 1-3	model fishnet, shuttle, and gauge	84451	woven bag	84372	birch bark record
		*84452	woven bag	84415	birch bark record
84424	bow	*84453	woven bag	84458	birch bark record
84433, 1-5	bow and four arrows (bow not photographed)	*84454	woven bag	84383	birch bark record
		*84455	woven bag	84449	birch bark record
84405, 1-13	bow and 12 arrows (bow not photographed)	84456	woven bag	84401, 1-3	birch bark records
				84414	birch bark record
				*84398	birch bark record
<i>Clothing</i>		84402	breechcloth		
84397, 1-9	bow and eight arrows				
84385, 1-2	rice-threshing sticks				
<i>Transportation</i>					
84366	woman's snowshoes	84425	necklace	*84394	water drum
84367	man's snowshoes	84358	necklace	84411	water drum
		84379	leg bands	84434	water drum
<i>Household Equipment</i>		84362	beaded collar	84342, 1-2	tambourine drum
84364	mortar and pestle			84431, 1-2	tambourine drum
84380	mortar and pestle	84400	pipe	84432	tambourine drum
84349	ladle	84395	pipe	84393	rattle
84352	ladle	84346	pipe bowl	84435	rattle
84374	ladle	84363	tobacco tray	84350	rattle
84375	ladle	84444	tobacco tray	*84429	rattle
84376	ladle	84351	medicine bag	84438	rattle
84377	ladle	84417	medicine bag	84392	rattle
84443, 1-2	weaving needles	*84423	medicine bag	84399	flute
84389	torch	84426	medicine bag		
84390, 1-2	torch	84422	medicine bag		
84388	bundle of bark for torches	84441	medicine bag		
84445	skin bag	84365	medicine bag		
84356	skin bag	84442	medicine bag		
84378	cradle board	84421	medicine bag		
84347	woven bag	84404	medicine bag		
84359	woven bag	84418	medicine bag		
84360	woven bag	84357	medicine pouch		
*84361	woven bag	84403	medicine pouch		
84368	woven bag	84440, 1-6	medicine bag		
*84369	woven bag	84354	medicine bag		
84370	woven bag	84355	medicine bag		
84387	woven bag	84439	box containing medicinal herbs		
84391	woven bag	84382, 1-4	bone tubes		
84406	woven bag	*84409	"hawk fetish"		
*84407	woven bag	*84419	"turtle fetish"		
*84408	woven bag	84459	loon skin with bellows whistle		
		84446, 1-4	pegs		





FIG. 1. Map of Wisconsin and Minnesota. The area above the dashed line indicates the region occupied by the Southwestern Chippewa in the mid-19th century (adapted from Hickerson, 1962, maps 1-2).



FIG. 2. Model tipi (84396).

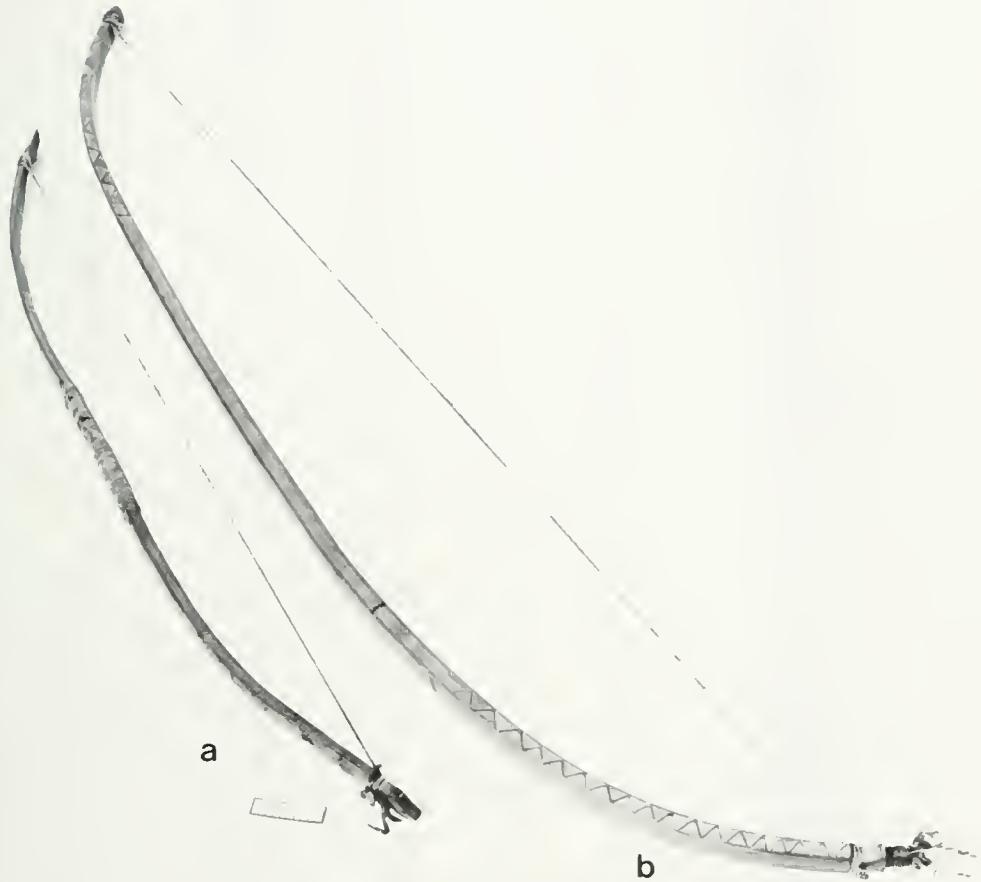


FIG. 3. **a**, bow (84397); **b**, bow (84424).

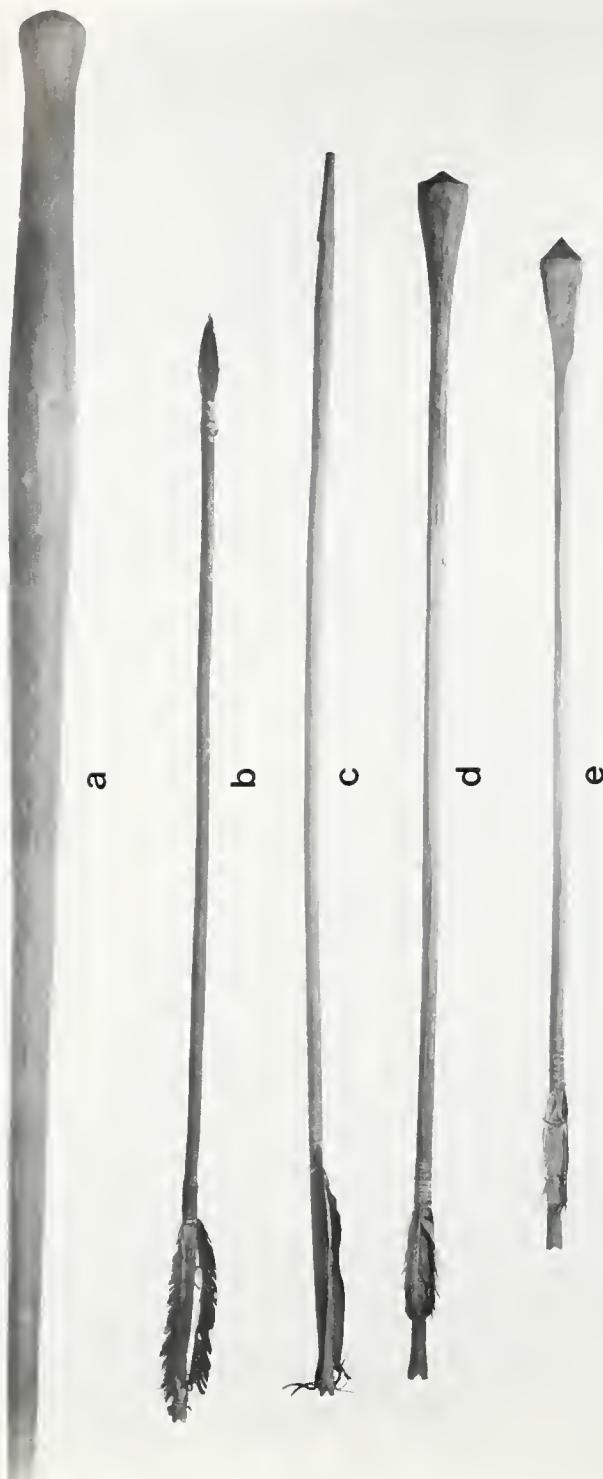


FIG. 4. a, rice-threshing stick (84385); b, arrow (84397); c, arrow (84405); d, arrow (84433); e, arrow (84433).

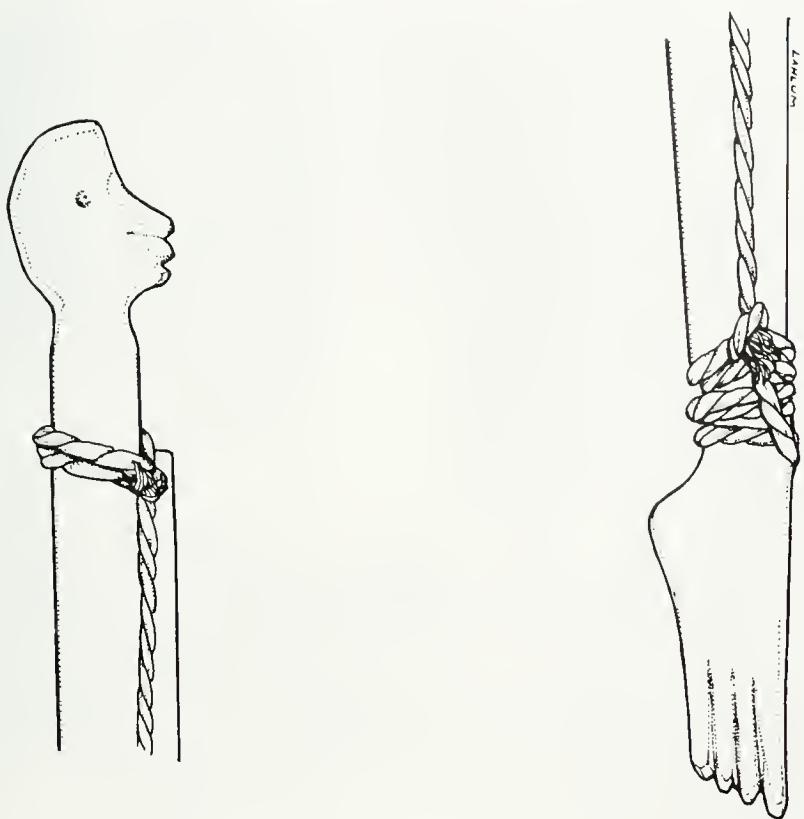


FIG. 5. Bow horns (84397).

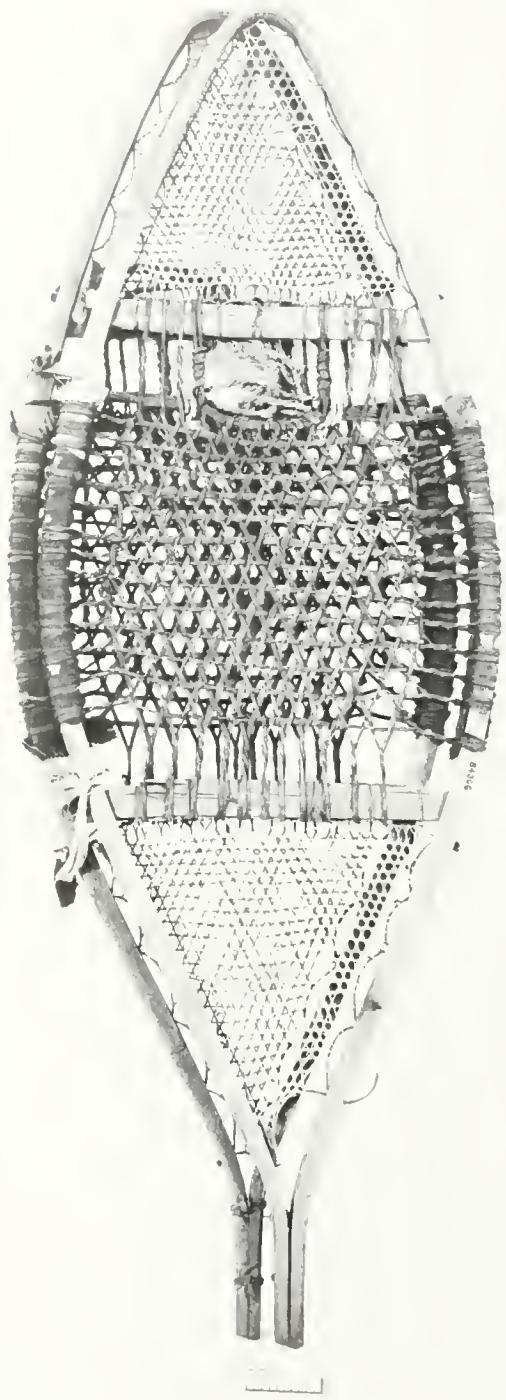


FIG. 6. Woman's snowshoes (84366).

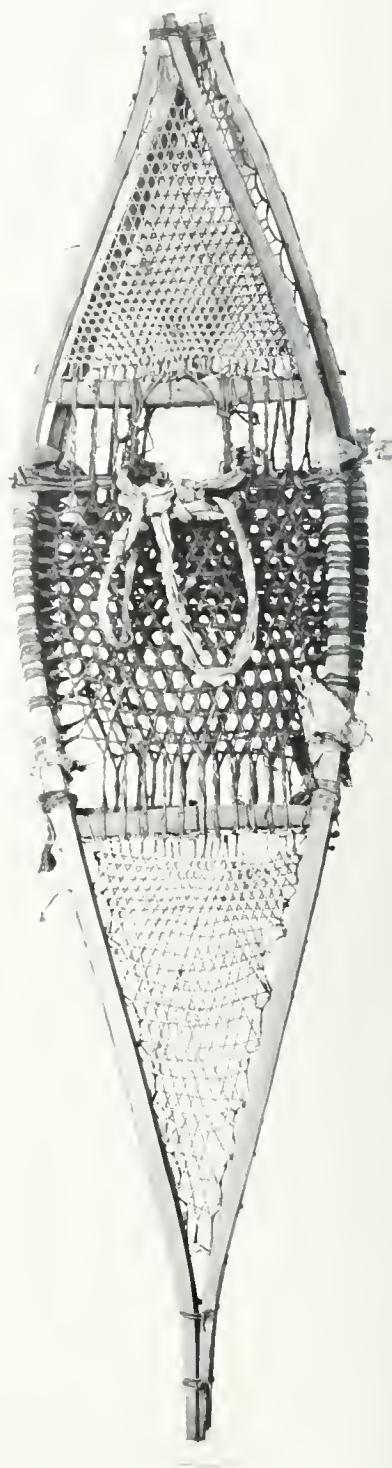


FIG. 7. Man's snowshoes (84367).



a



b

FIG. 8. a, mortar and pestle (84380); b, mortar and pestle (84364).

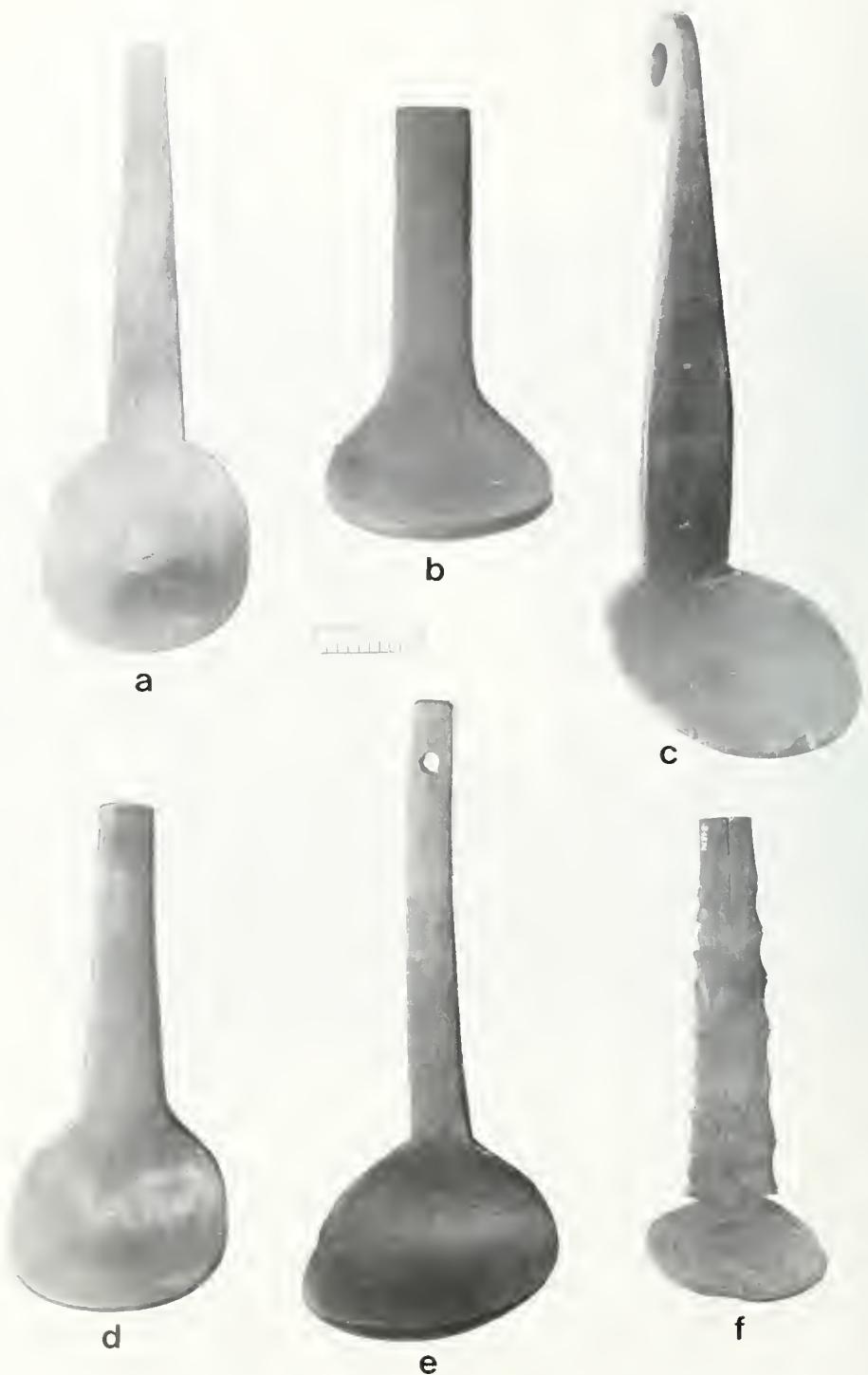


FIG. 9. a, ladle (84352); b, ladle (84377); c, ladle (84349); d, ladle (84375); e, ladle (84376); f, ladle (84374).

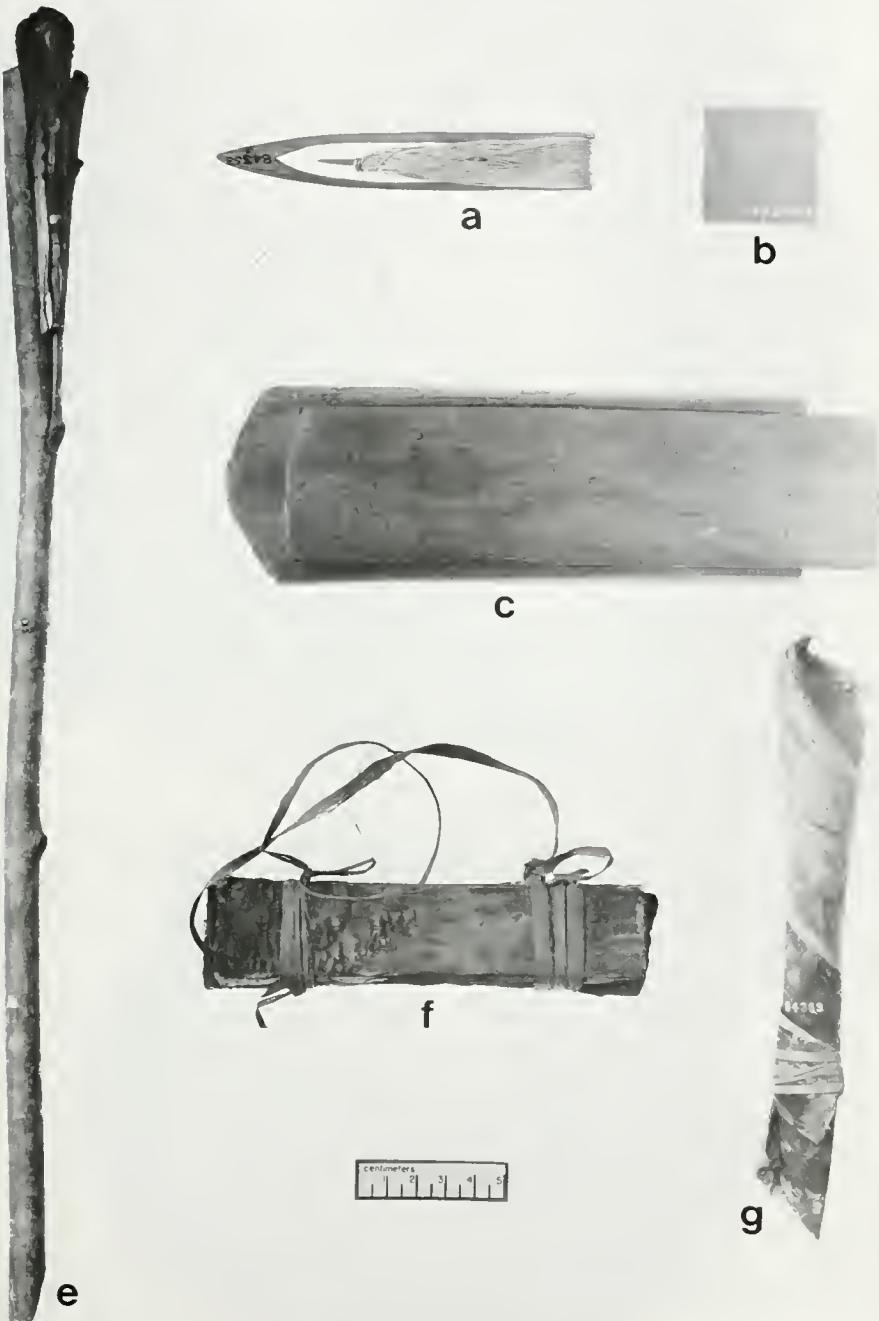


FIG. 10. a, net shuttle (84353); b, mesh gauge (84353); c, box (84439); d, weaving needle (84443); e, torch (84390); f, bundle of bark for torches (84388); g, torch (84389).



a



b

FIG. 11. a, skin bag (84356); b, skin bag (84445).



FIG. 12. Cradle board (84378).



FIG. 13. Woven bag (84347).



FIG. 14. Woven bag (84360).

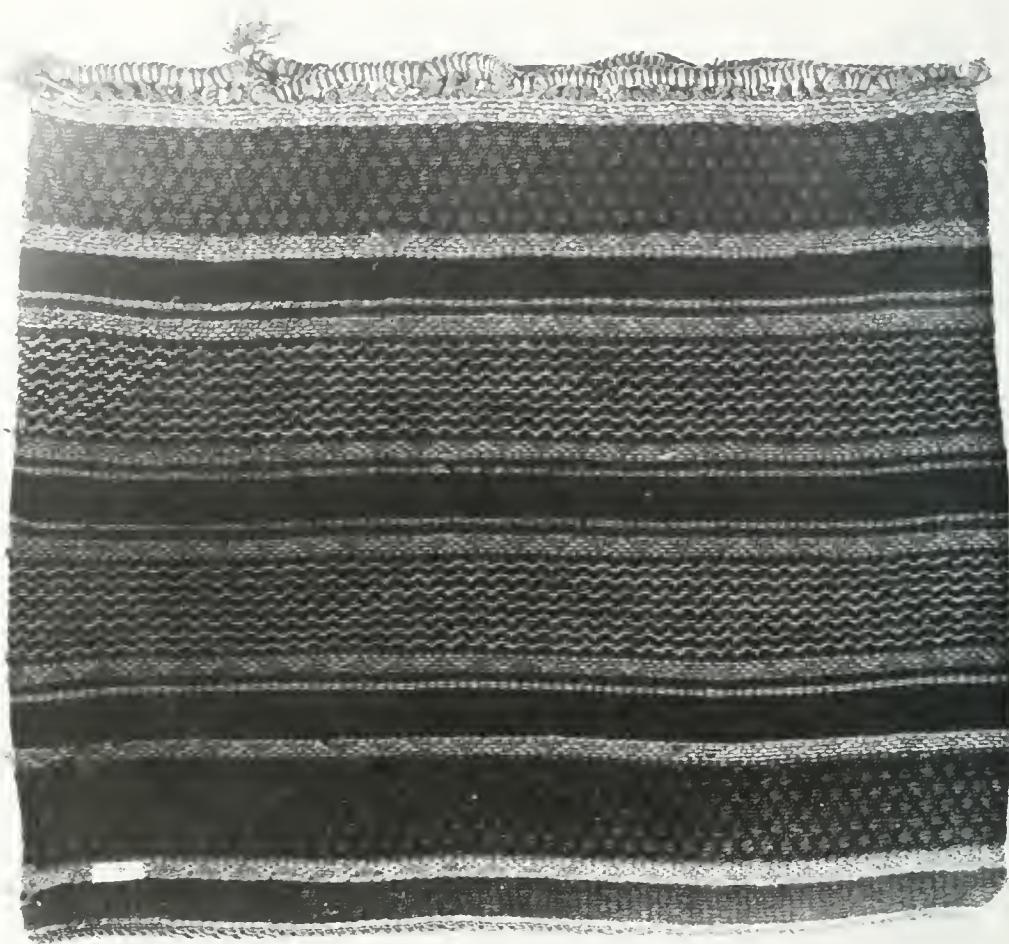


FIG. 15. Woven bag (84406).



FIG. 16. Woven bags (84391, 84387).



FIG. 17. Woven bags (84412, 84436).

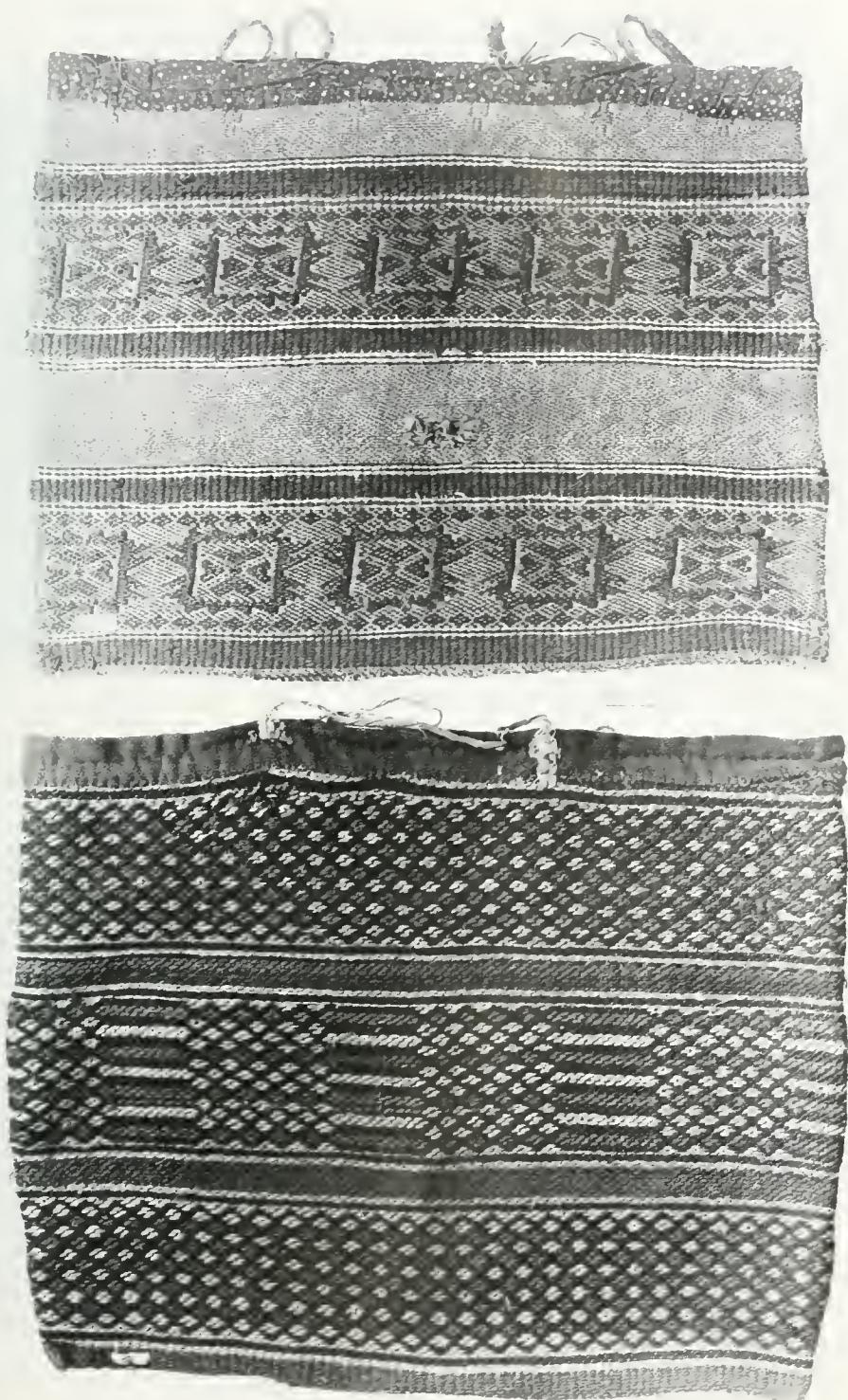
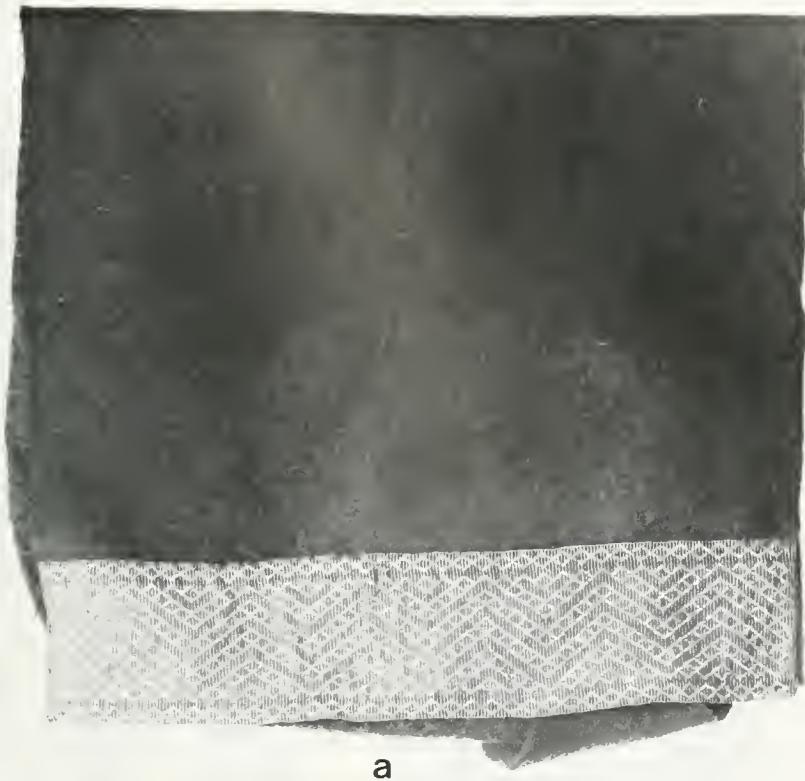


FIG. 18. Woven bags (84451, 84368).



FIG. 19. Woven bags (84370, 84359, 84456).



a



b

FIG. 20. a, breechcloth (84402); b, tobacco tray (84444).

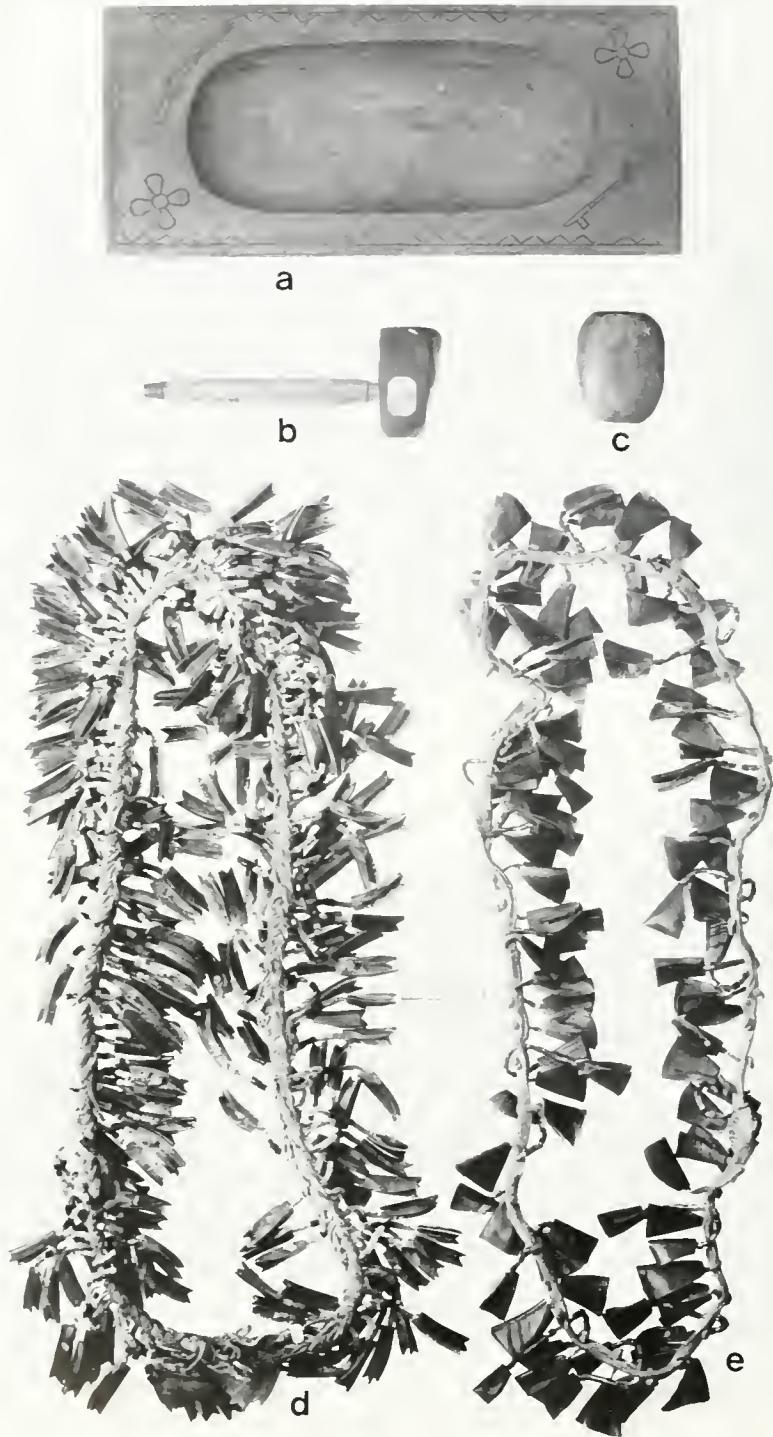


FIG. 21. a, tobacco tray (84363); b, pipe (84395); c, pipe bowl (84346); d, necklace (84425); e, necklace (84358).



FIG. 22. a, pipe (84400); b, leg bands (84379).

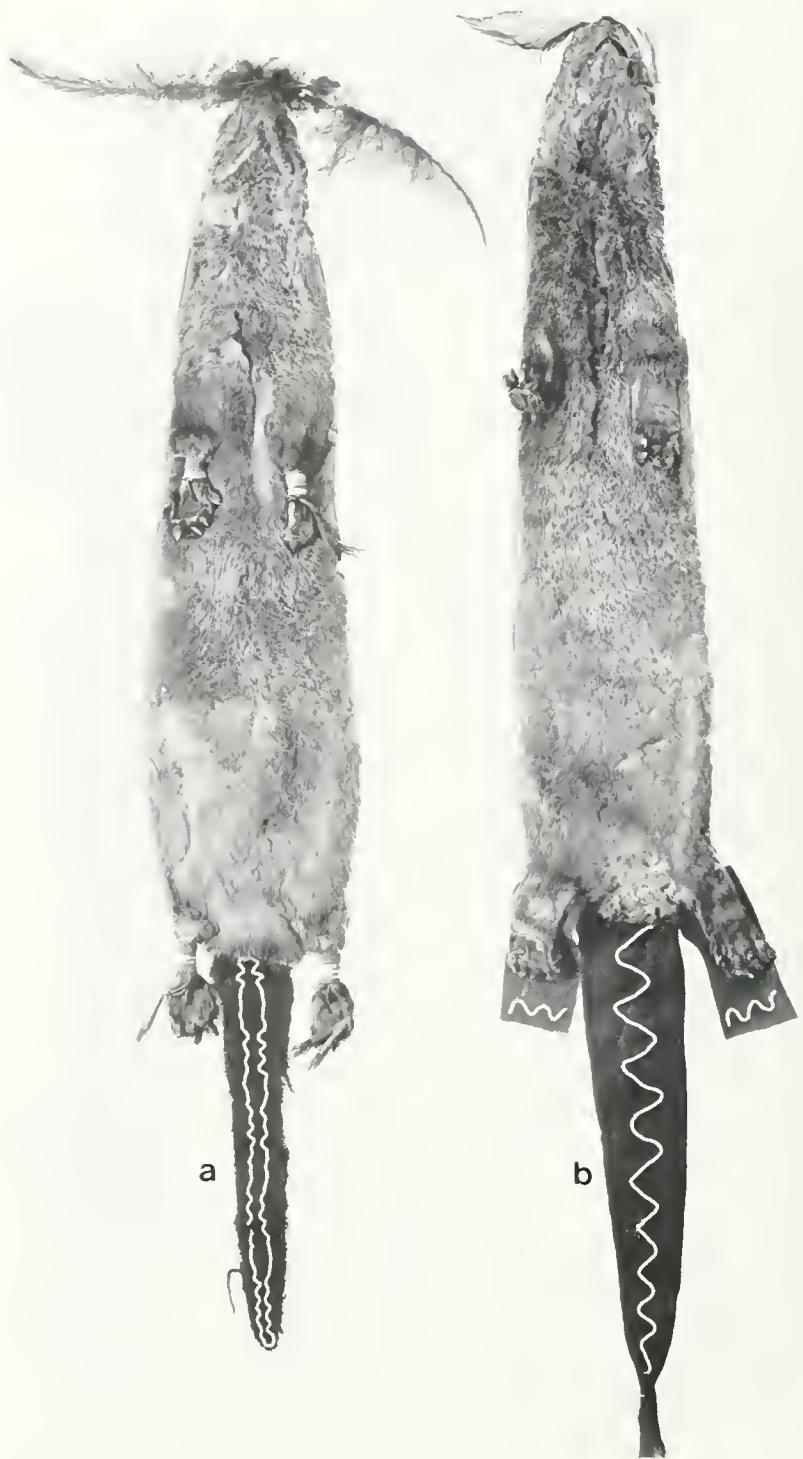


FIG. 23. **a**, medicine bag (84417); **b**, medicine bag (84351).

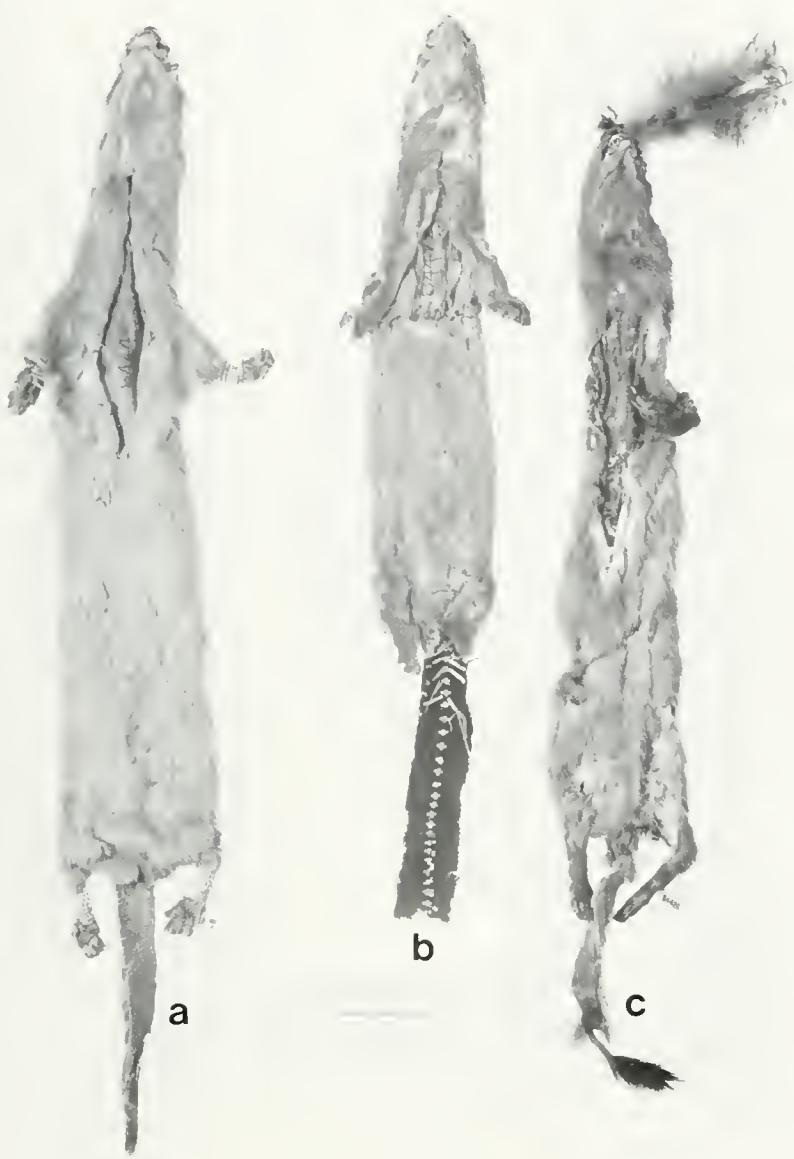


FIG. 24. a, medicine bag (84441); b, medicine bag (84422); c, medicine bag (84426).

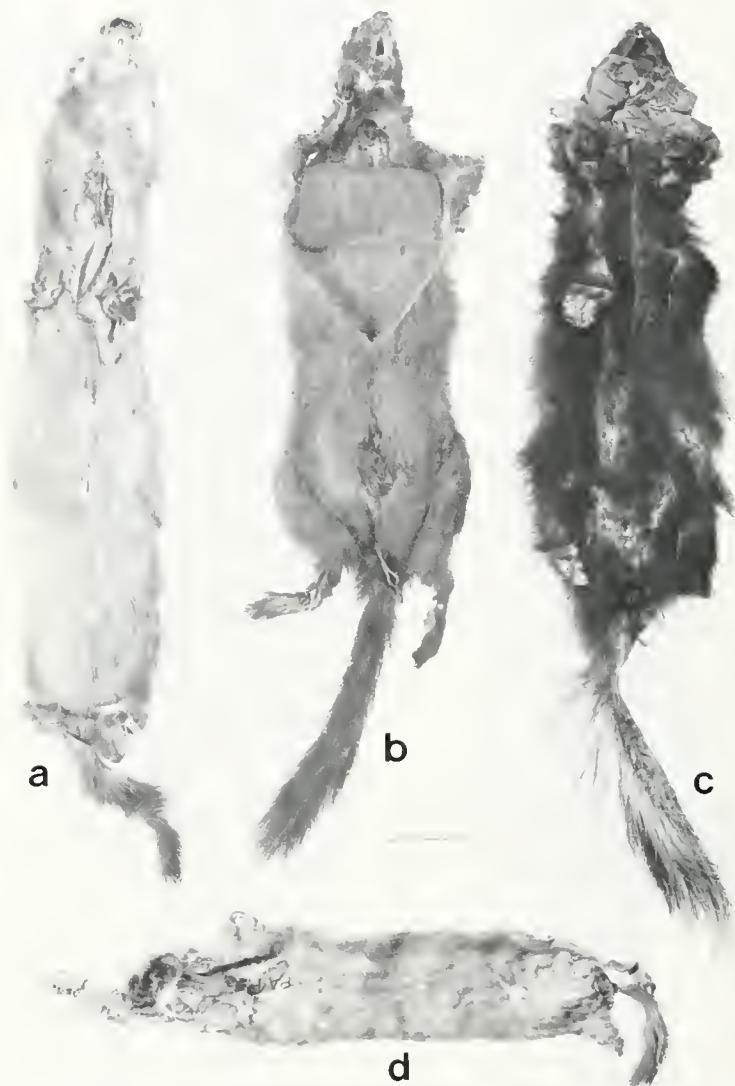


FIG. 25. a, medicine bag (84365); b, medicine bag (84404); c, medicine bag (84421); d, medicine bag (84442).



FIG. 26. **a**, loon skin with bellows whistle (84459); **b**, medicine bag (84418).



FIG. 27 a. medicine bag (84355); b. medicine pouch (84357); c. medicine bag (84354); d. bone tubes (84382); e. medicine pouch (bag?) (84403); f. medicine bag (84440).

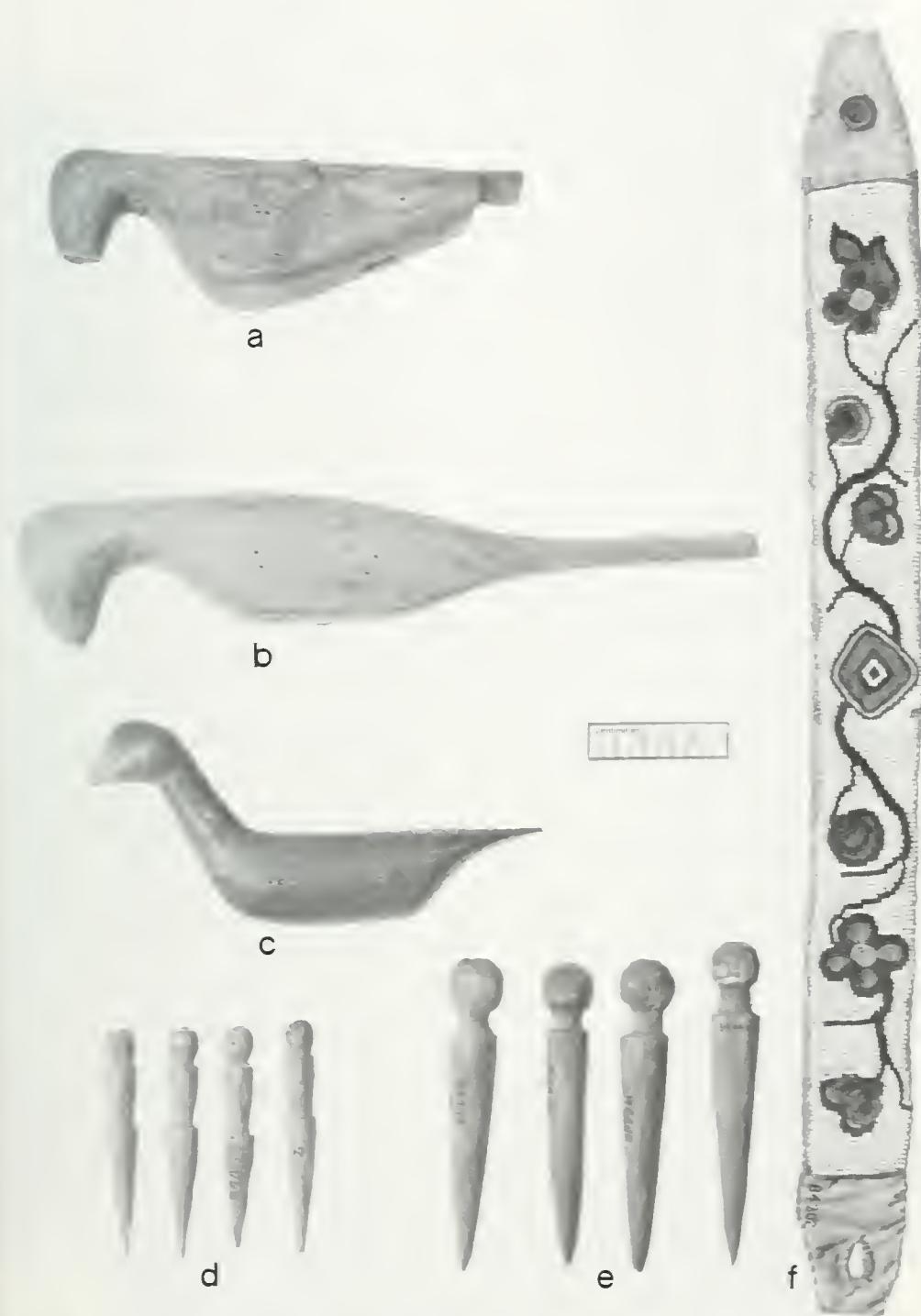


FIG. 28. a, carved wooden bird (84447); b, carved wooden bird (84448); c, carved wooden bird (84420); d, wooden pegs (84463); e, wooden pegs (84464); f, beaded collar (84382).

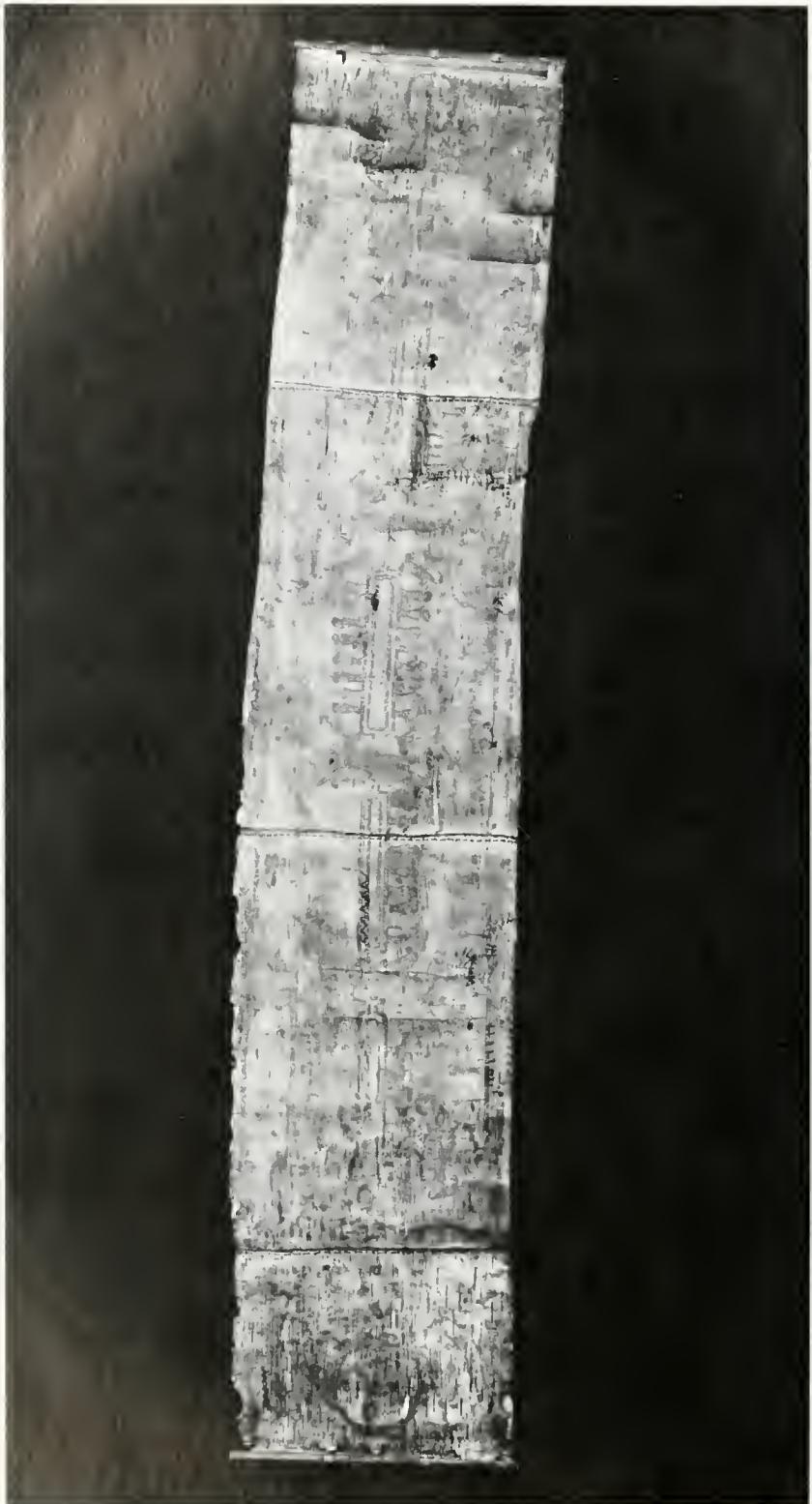


FIG. 29. Birch bark record (84372).

FIG. 30. Birch bark record (detail) (84372).

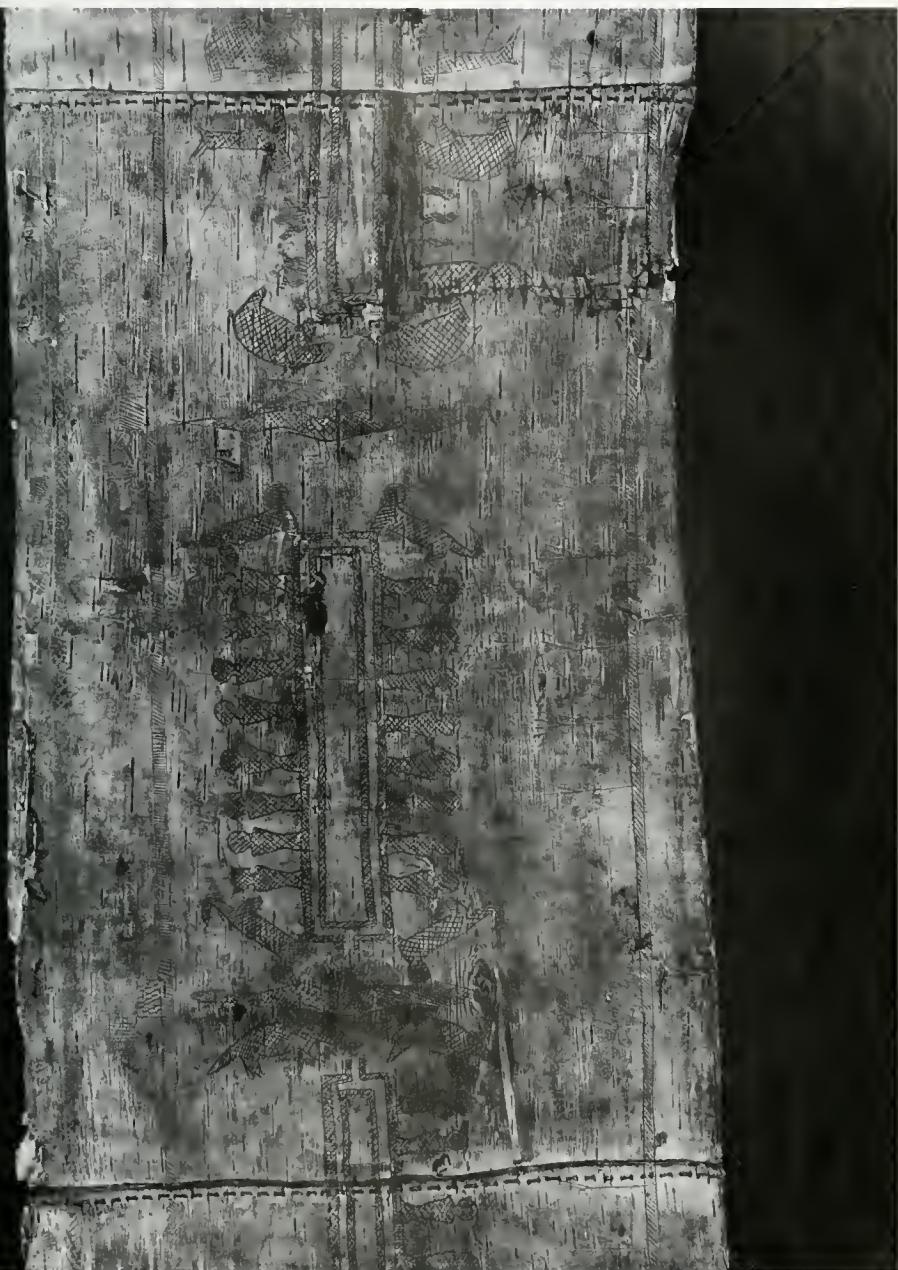




FIG. 31. Birch bark record (84415).



FIG. 32. Birch bark record (84458).

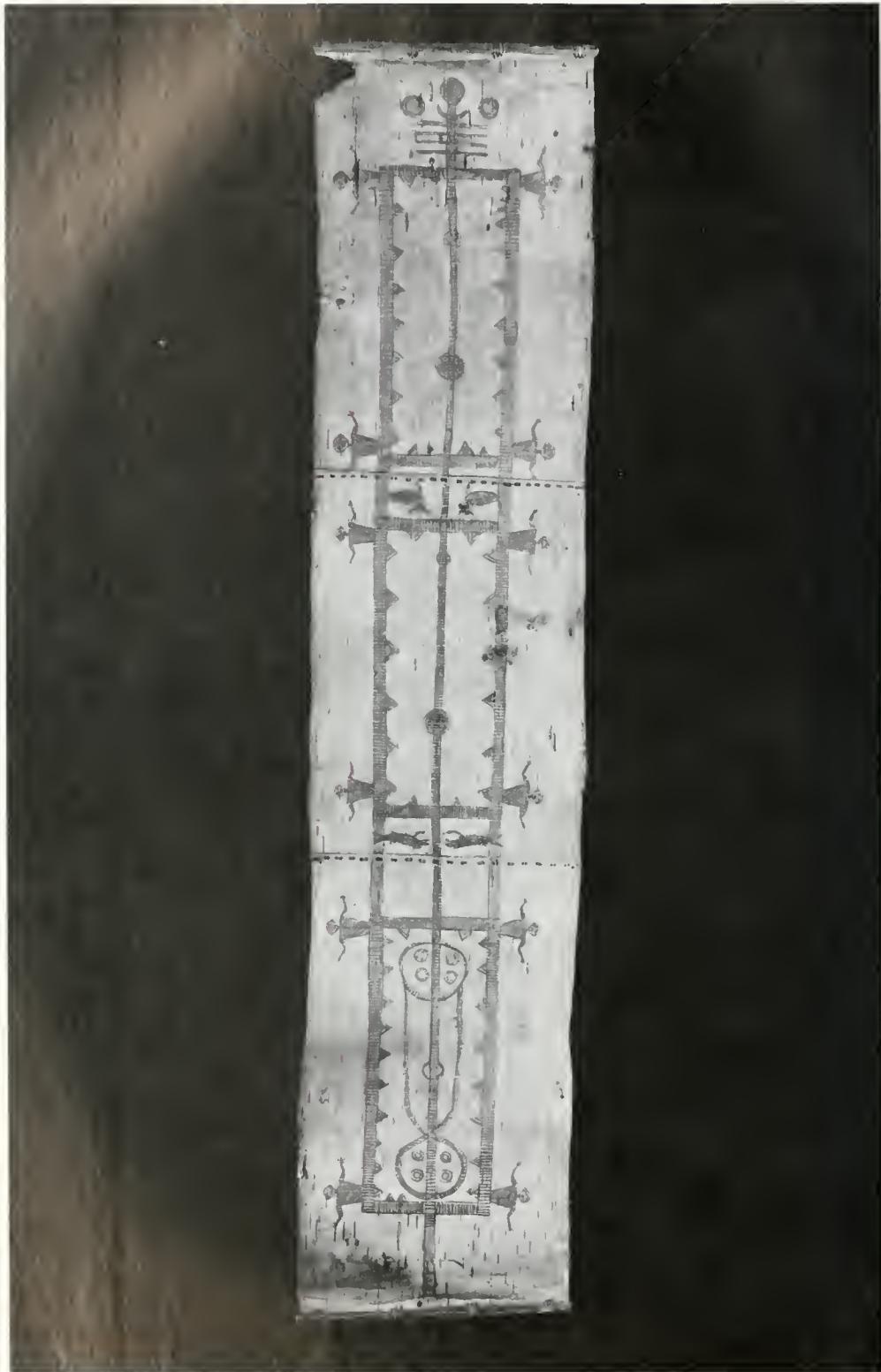


FIG. 33. Birch bark record (84383).

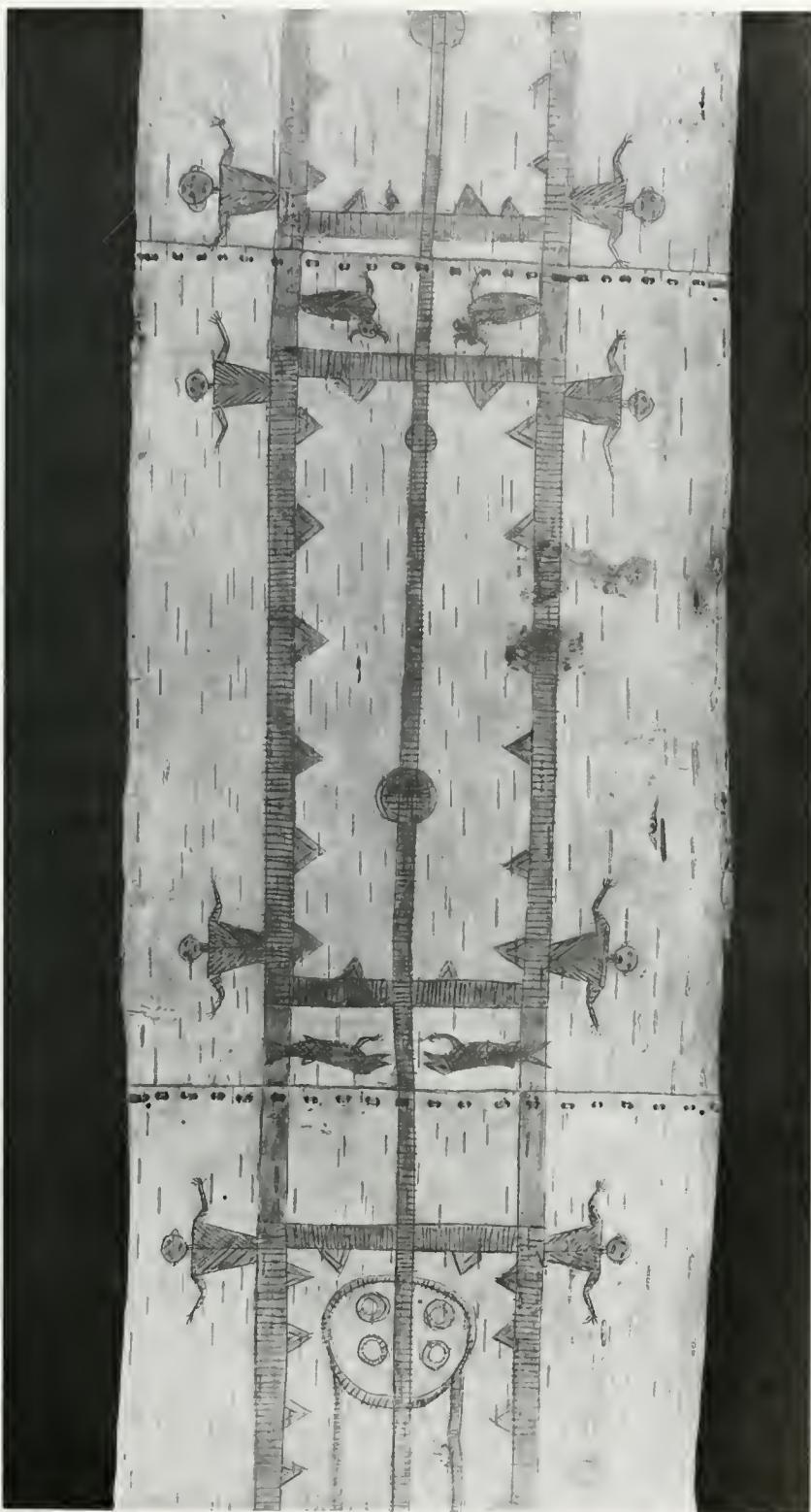


FIG. 34. Birch bark record (detail) (84383).



FIG. 35. Birch bark record (84449).



FIG. 36. Birch bark record (side 1) (84401-1).



FIG. 37. Birch bark record (side 2) (84401-1).



FIG. 38. Birch bark record (84401-2).



FIG. 39. Birch bark record (side 1) (84401-3).



FIG. 40. Birch bark record (side 2) (84401-3).

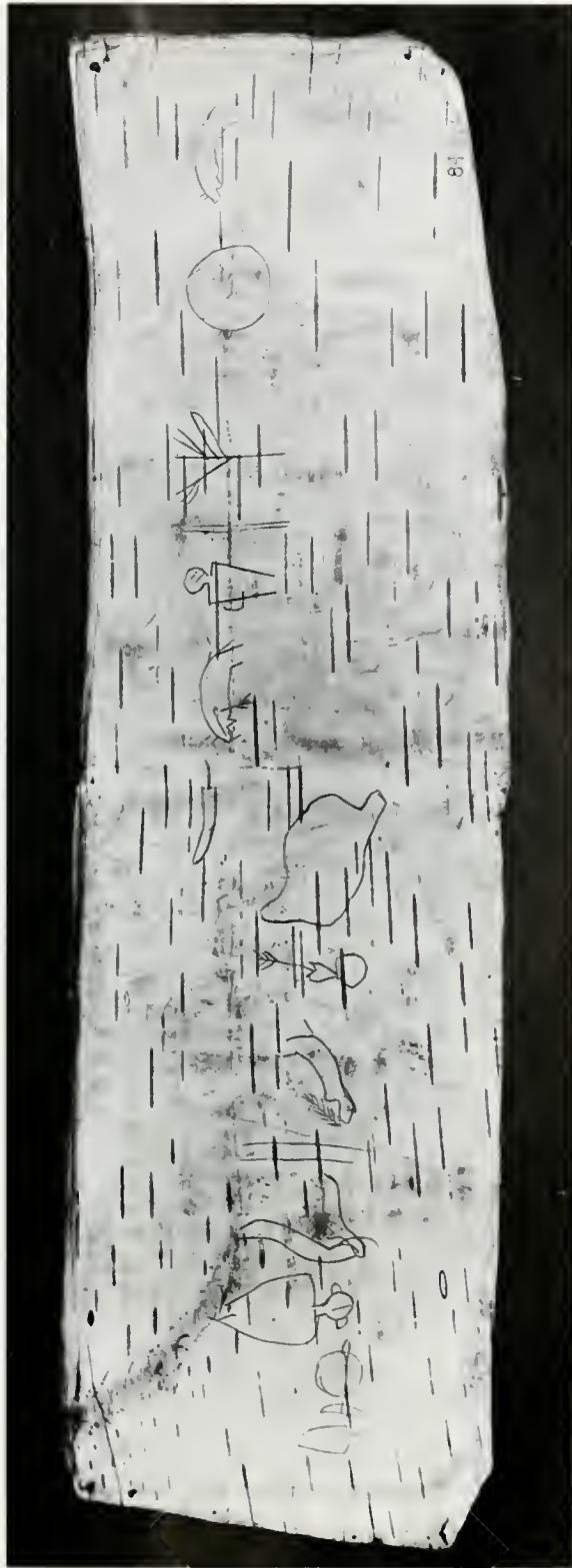


FIG. 41. Birch bark record (84414).

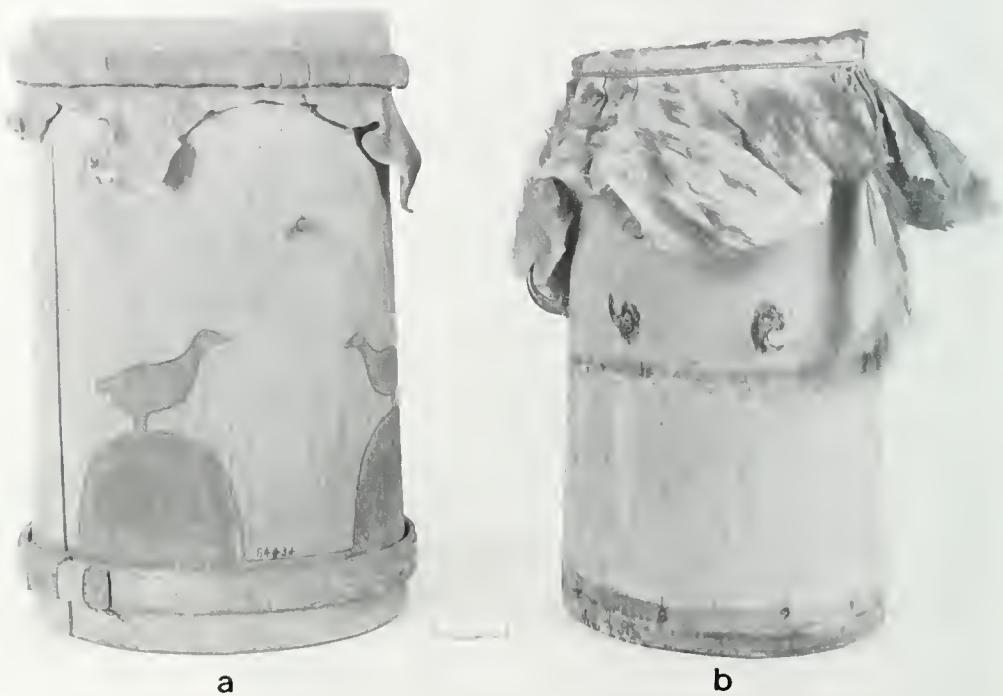


FIG. 42. a, water drum (84434); b, water drum (84411).

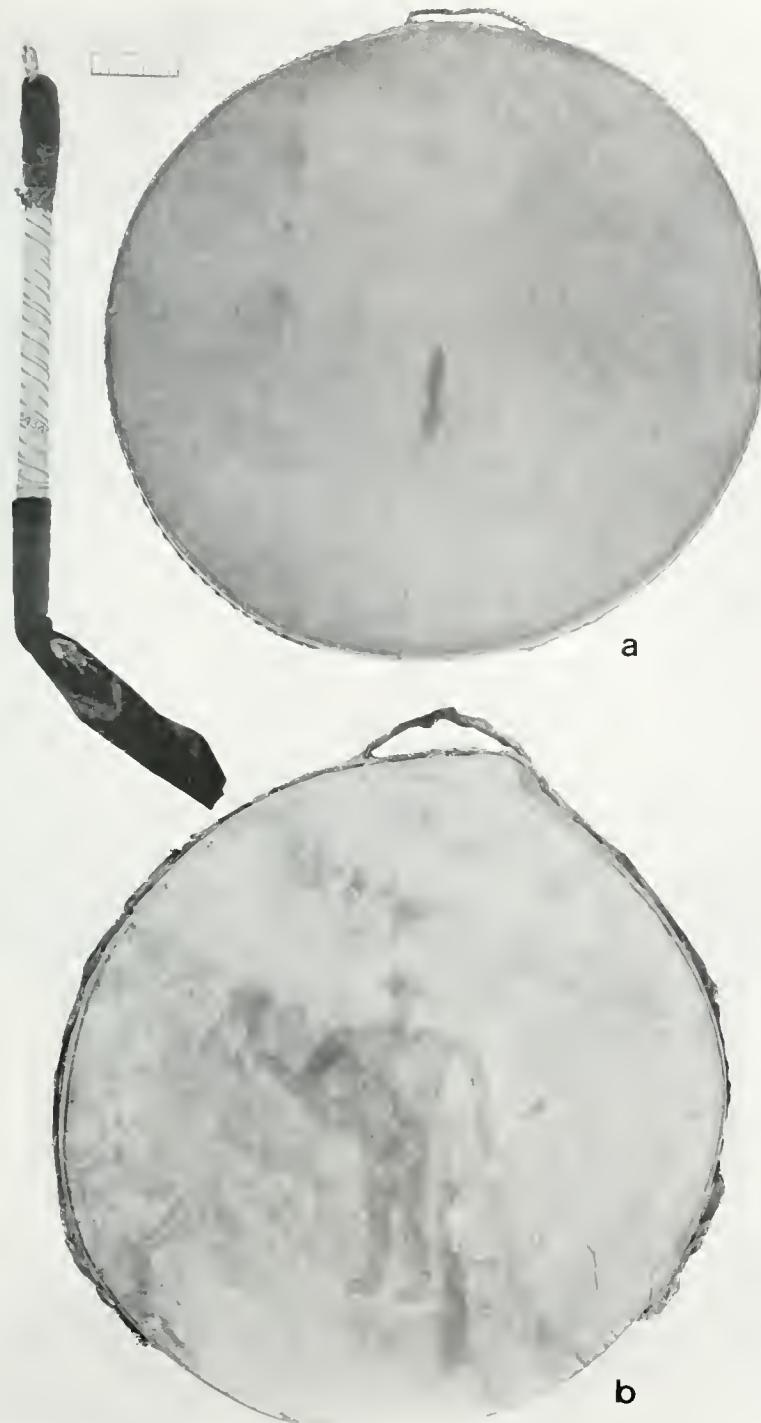


FIG. 43. a, tambourine drum and stick (84342); b, tambourine drum (84432).

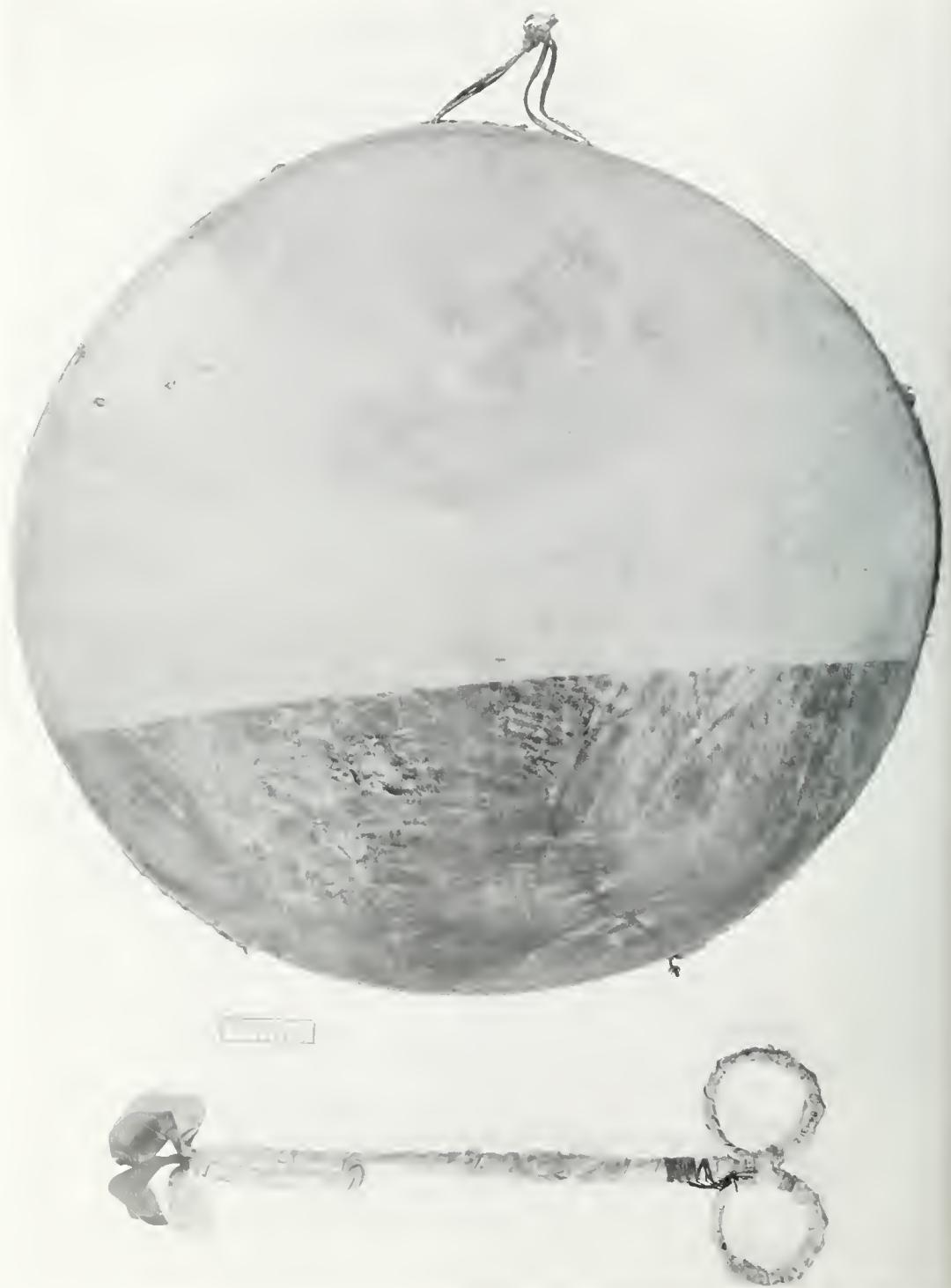


FIG. 44. Tambourine drum and stick (84431).

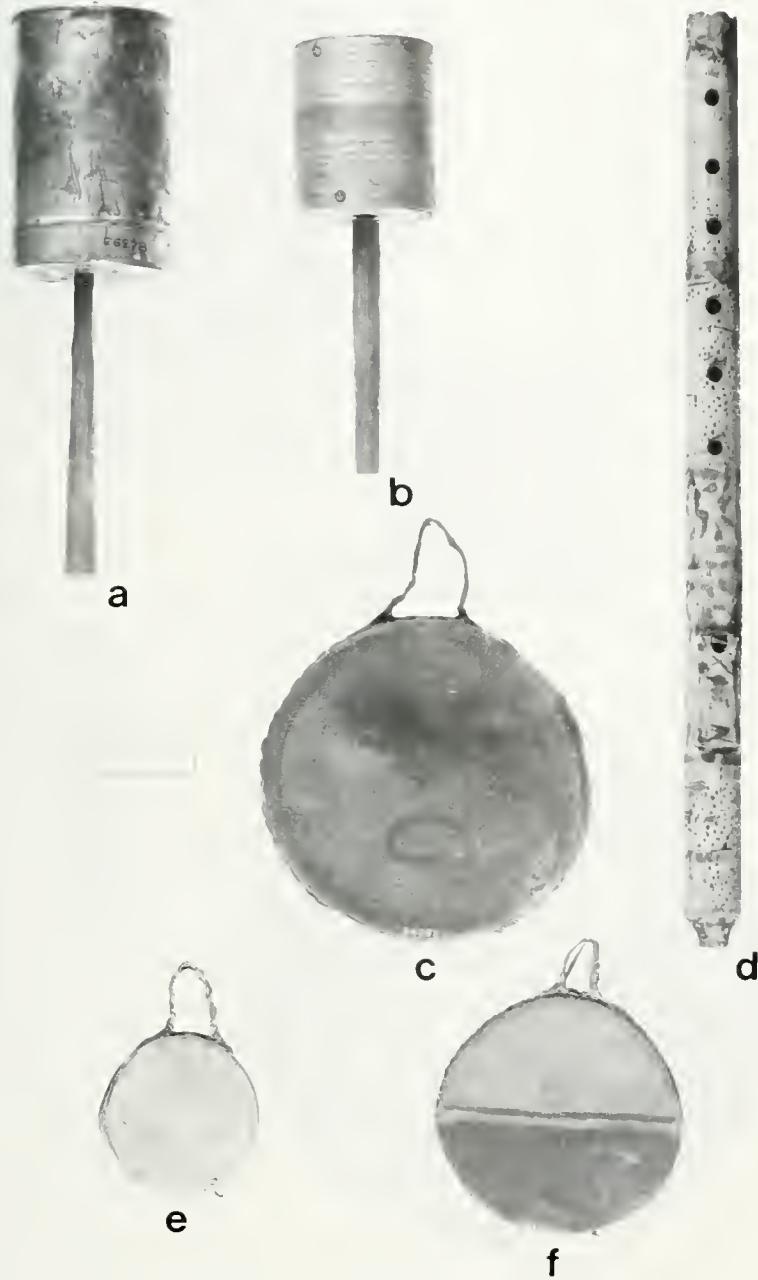


FIG. 45. a, rattle (84393); b, rattle (84435); c, rattle (84392); d, flute (84399); e, rattle (84438); f, rattle (84350).



a



b

FIG. 46. a, plate game (84428); b, bowl for plate game (84430).

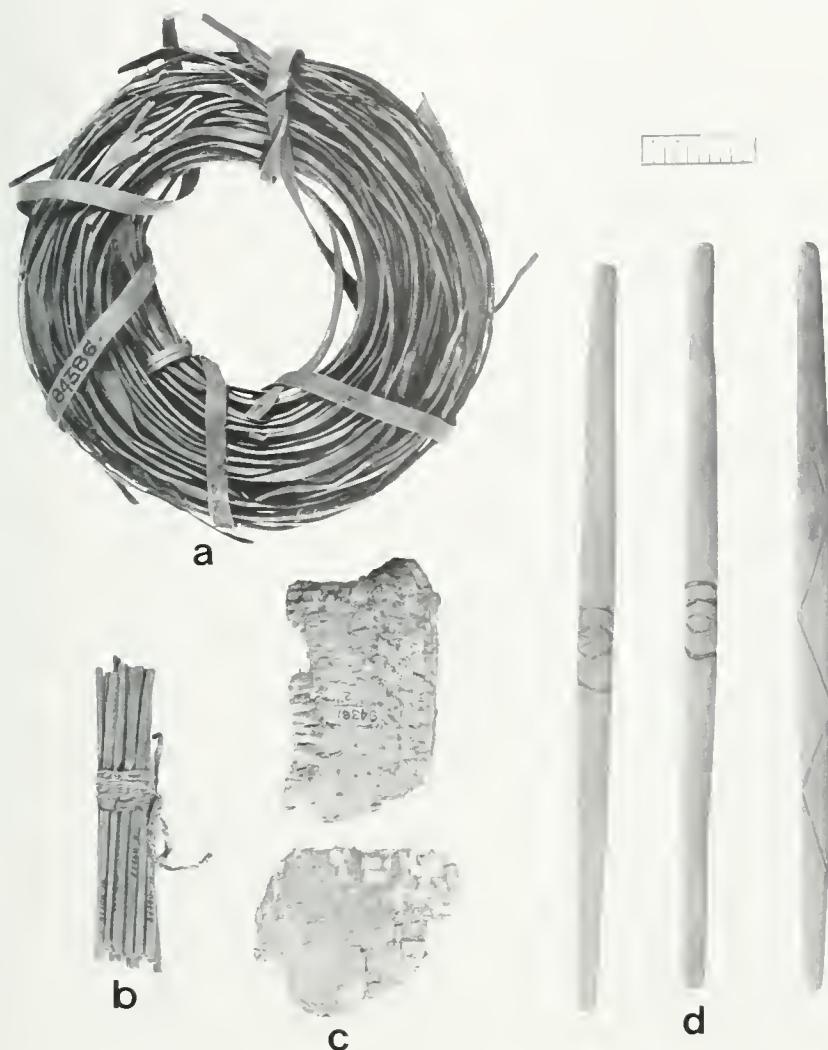


FIG. 47. a, coil of split spruce root (84386); b, counters for hand game (84460); c, fungus (84381); d, stick game 34348).



FIG. 48. a, muskrat skin on drying frame (84344); b, war club (84345).

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