

## INDIAN NOTES

basket is a kind of hollow rectangular figure which, if projected on a flat surface, would be a diamond-shape design sometimes spoken of as "acorn head" or "acorn cup."

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### ARCHEOLOGICAL SPECIMENS FROM ST. CROIX, VIRGIN ISLANDS

FROM Mrs. H. C. Hark, an enthusiastic amateur archeologist long resident on the island of St. Croix, Virgin Islands, the Museum has recently procured a small but unusually interesting collection of specimens, obtained for the greater part from kitchenmiddens on her estate or in its vicinity. It is a matter of good fortune that this collection is rich in ceremonial articles of shell and stone which were not hitherto well represented in the Museum. For example, there are seven three-pointed objects, or zemis, whereas only one example of this class from St. Croix was already on exhibition.

These zemis, all of which are small, the largest not exceeding three and three-eighths inches in length, are figured in fig. 48. Three examples (*a-c*) are carved of shell, while one (*g*) is ground out of coral.

Although all the zemis in the collection are of

INDIAN NOTES

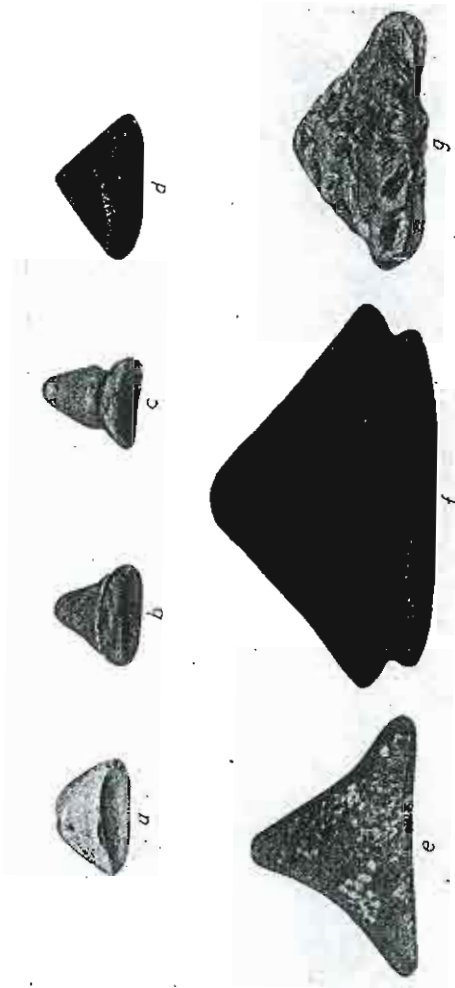


FIG. 48.—Zemis from St. Croix. (Horizontal diameter of *a-d*,  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch; of *e-g*,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches)

## INDIAN NOTES

the typical mammiform class, and undoubtedly pertain to the Taino-Arawak culture, as defined by Mr. M. R. Harrington in his monograph, "Cuba Before Columbus," published by the Museum, not all the stone implements found on St. Croix can be safely classified as belonging to this group. Of the stone celts, however, nearly all are the usual Taino highly polished petaloid variety. They are proportionately very numerous in the Hark collection, and it is interesting to note that fully fifty percent of them are badly broken. Others have been degraded for use as hammerstones. One notched axe, different from all the rest, resembles the cruder examples from St. Vincent in our collections, and may well be of Carib origin. As for the shell celts and gouges, some of which are represented, it is possible that they may be attributable to the Ciboney.

Clearly Tainoan are the stone and shell objects illustrated in fig. 49. In *a* is shown a greenstone artifact which seems to be the hook from a throwing-stick, or atlatl, used to propel darts or javelins, the butt or proximal end of the weapon being arrested and held by the notch of the object, which is set in the end of the atlatl in such manner as to project and catch the dart.

The circular spool-shape ornament (*d*) is probably an ear-plug, or button for insertion in the lobe.

## INDIAN NOTES

It is made of a translucent substance resembling alabaster. The other objects are a disc-shaped shell bead with incised decoration and a central perforation (*b*), a long narrow bit of shell which may be a piece of inlay, with short transverse lines scratched upon it (*c*), and a small incised shell pendant (*e*). In the collection there are numerous shell beads of

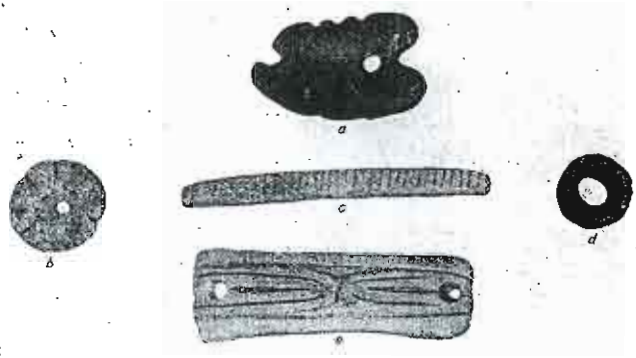


FIG. 49.—Stone and shell objects from St. Croix. (Diameter of *d*,  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch; length of *c*, 3 inches)

the disc variety, some bearing incised ornament, like that shown in the figure; some are made of olive shells, some perforated through the long axes, and others with notches for suspension rubbed into the broader end of the shell.

The collection includes several hundred fragments of pottery and a few restorable vessels, with

## INDIAN NOTES

one entire jar of simple form. Most of the vessels are plain, the shape of the utensils themselves producing the esthetic effect. Some examples are of a fine yellowish ware with very thin sides, but most of them are made of coarse red clay, not infrequently covered with a bright crimson slip. A few of these colored vessels are further adorned with

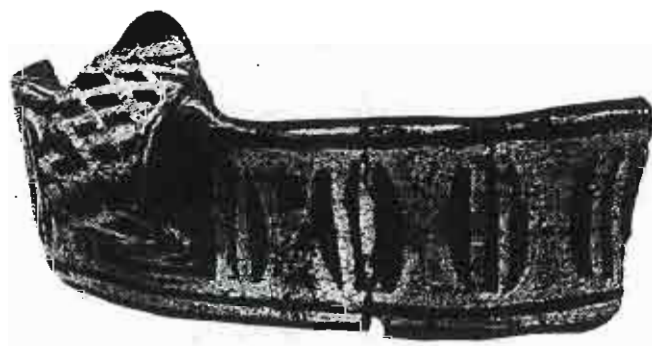


FIG. 50.—Potsherd from St. Croix, showing painted decoration. (Length,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches)

geometric designs in white or yellowish paint, as shown in the sherd displayed in fig. 50. Still others bear incised decoration, but these are rare.

In fig. 51 is shown a coarse platter of red ware, the conventionalized head of a tortoise projecting from one end and the tail from the other. It measures eight and one-half inches in length.

## INDIAN NOTES

A somewhat larger and much better made tray-like bowl with raised ends and covered with a crimson slip is shown in fig. 52. One handle represents a frog's head in crude bas-relief. This vessel is ten and three-quarters inches in length.



FIG. 51.—Platter ornamented with a tortoise head (restored). (Length,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches)



FIG. 52.—Tray-shape pottery vessel. (Length,  $10\frac{3}{4}$  inches)

Another interesting and seemingly unique specimen is the small stand of earthenware shown in fig. 53. The stand appears to have originally been furnished with three legs, one of which is now

## INDIAN NOTES

missing. In its present condition it measures five inches across its longest remaining diameter.

Potsherds and vessels of the types here figured and described seem to belong to the ware made by the Carib; but the Taino, of Arawak stock, are also



FIG. 53.—Earthenware stand. (Maximum diameter, 5 inches.)

represented in the Hark collection by a number of vessel handles in the form of grotesque heads and faces of the familiar types found in Cuba, Porto Rico, Santo Domingo, and Haiti.

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