

HISTORY REPORT
ON
CLARENCE CANNON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

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America was discovered before 10,000 B. C. by people who were the ancestors of our modern American Indians. They crossed the Bering Strait from Asia into the North American continent.

The northeast part of Missouri was first thought to be inhabited around 8,000 B. C. These were the Clovis and Folsom cultures. (The proper names used to describe the cultures were taken from the geographical location where archaeologists first found the remains).

The Clovis hunted mammoth while Folsom spear points were found near bison kill sites. Both cults have been found in the lower Missouri Valley but Clovis has been most numerous.

Then for the next 5,000 years a group referred to as the Graham Cave people were believed to occupy the northeast area. These were named for remains found in Graham Cave on Interstate 70 about 50 miles west of St. Louis. Possibly a few of the arrow heads found on the refuge could be similar to those of this culture. These Indians used vegetable as well as animal products and conducted ceremonies and rituals.

Around the time of Christ the Black Sand culture supposedly used the area. They were the first pottery makers. About the same time the Hopewell culture lived and they were known for trading. They were famous for their arts and elaborate earthworks and were the first Indians in the midwest to live in one place for long periods.

The next era was one of the townspeople. They were great communal dwellers. They lived in towns, hunted in groups, and roamed in large parties. They were the first group in the history of the central Mississippi Valley to depend on gardening more than any other activity. Corns, beans and squash were some of their crops. The townspeople led right into the historic Indians, mainly the Fox and Sauk.

The Fox and Sauk (also Sac or Saukee) are Algonquian tribes who moved into Wisconsin and upper Michigan in the 1600's. There they lived until 1730, when the French who used to be an ally turned against the Sauk and about annihilated the tribe. Then the Sauk joined with the Fox and moved west of the Mississippi and settled in Iowa near the Des Moines River.

The Fox and Sauk were cruel, ruthless, and warring tribes. They often fought with the Osage, a central Ozark's tribe. In traveling south they used the old Smith's Trail which went through Ralls, Pike and Lincoln Counties on its way south.

Very wide buffalo trails were discovered on either side of Bowling Green heading southeast to old salt licks in the Mississippi bottomlands. It is thought the Fox and Sauk visited this area in search of buffalo, therefore using the area as hunting grounds.

Pike County history shows that most of the pioneers settled the county about 1800. Early settlements were on Buffalo, Little Calumet, and Noix Creeks in 1808, near Clarksville, 1809, and on Ramsey Creek, 1810. Most of these emigrants were from York District in South Carolina and Lincoln County, North Carolina.

Some of the early names were Watson, Allison, Jordan, McConnell, Burns, Cunningham, Turner, Walker, and Thomas. The settlers on Ramsey Creek were McCoy, Burkalew, Myers, McCue, Edwards, and Harpol. In 1811, Mackey and Templeton arrived on Buffalo Creek.

Life was difficult and rugged for these pioneers. They made clothing out of cotton, wool, and animal skins. There was no money so furs, lead, and gunpowder were often used as a medium of exchange. Furthermore, they arrived ignorant and due to poor educational facilities stayed ignorant.

However, the pioneers were not to live in peace. In 1809 the British furnished the Indians with guns and ammunition and the raids began. The summer of 1811 was really bad and the following winter was worse. In 1812 Buffalo Fort was built two miles south of Louisiana, but the Fox and Sauk still made raids to the south. A family was wiped out on Ramsey Creek and then another fortress was built at Clarksville.

The Fox and Sauk were described as ruthless and cruel on these raids. For example, they often cut and shredded their victims and hung the pieces on bushes.

By 1820, through treaties and pacts the Indian situation was quieted down in this area. However, the Fox and Sauk still roamed the area but mainly for hunting, fishing, and trading and not hostile action. One estimate at this time shows about 3,000 persons in the two tribes.

Here are a few little sidelights about the tribes and the country. Sauk means "people of the outlet" while Fox stood for "red earth people". Black Hawk was the main chief. The tribes have been described as "stingy, avaricious, thieving, passionate, quarrelsome, and bravery was proverbial." After the Indians settled down John Mulherin built the first mill in the county on Ramsey Creek in 1820. Also one of the oldest churches of the county was on Ramsey Creek, a Baptist Church started by Rev. Stephen Ruddell about 1820.

All information was found in the following references at the State Historical Society of Missouri and the University of Missouri Library at Columbia, Missouri.

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