

JOINT PUBLICATIONS
MUSEUM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
THE PHILADELPHIA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

No. 1

**Rappahannock Taking Devices:
Traps, Hunting and Fishing**

by

FRANK G. SPECK
ROYAL B. HASSRICK
EDMUND S. CARPENTER



University Museum
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
1946

E
99
.R18
S73

CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
THE ANNUAL ECONOMIC CYCLE	2
TRAPS	3
1. "Hare Gum" or Box Trap	4
2. "Snare" or Spring-pole Noose Trap	4
3. "Mash Trap" or One-Log Dead-Fall	5
4. "Log Mash Trap" or Four-Log Dead-Fall	5
5. "Scratch Trap" or Pen Trap	5
6. "Log House" or Pen Fall Trap	5
7. "Snatch Trap" or Spring-pole Rabbit Snare	6
8. "Fish Net"	6
9. "Snatch Trap" or Board Dead-Fall	6
10. "Bird Trap" or Cage-Fall Trap	6
11. "Robin Trap" or Baited Hook	7
12. "Quail Trap" or Box Fall	7
HUNTING	7
Communal Rabbit Drive or Fall Hunt	8
Throwing Club	9
Bow	9
Crossbow	10
Poisoning of Arrows	10
Stone Sling	11
Blinds and Calls	11
Pronged Pole	12
FISHING	13
Fishhooks	13
Spear	13
Fish Poison	13
Fish Weirs	13
Other Fishing Techniques	14
Turtle Fishing	14
Frogs	14
Carrying Devices	14
The Fishing Focus in Historical Retrospect	14
NOTES	17
REFERENCES	19
ILLUSTRATIONS	

RAPPAHANNOCK TAKING DEVICES: TRAPS, HUNTING, AND FISHING

INTRODUCTION

The information forming the body of this paper was assembled from the notes of the joint authors over a period including four student-group visits in 1941-42 to the Rappahannock settlement at Indian Neck, King and Queen County, Virginia (1). The principal informants were members of the Nelson family, Chief Otho, James Otho ("Little Otho"), Samuel, and Robert Nelson with their families, who have without intermission continued the construction and use of the devices described since their boyhood. The acquisition of these devices is traced to their foreparents, who, so far as oral tradition carries the story, had used the same methods in the preceding generation. Whatever historical judgment on the aboriginal character of these inventions is to be assumed, may be withheld until the subject of taking devices has been more extensively investigated among the immediately adjacent bands and especially among the still intact Indian settlements of the southeastern area, and similarly to the North.

We have felt it advisable and pertinent to include a section describing the annual cycle of activities as exemplified in the modern Rappahannock community. As such, it shows the emphasis placed upon an agricultural economy wherein hunting, fishing, and trapping play a supplementary role.

A word as to the illustrations accompanying the report will explain that the trap-sets photographed were constructed by the Rappahannock men previously mentioned. They were made over a period of several weeks while the investigation was going on and in a manner approved by all of them as being that of the exact pattern. The locations for the sets were selected deliberately in spots where it had been, and occasionally still is, customary to construct them. Photographs showing hunting and fishing methods were likewise taken with this same principle in mind. The natural environment in each case is, therefore, the typical environment for the device.

The Rappahannock people have preserved the devices for taking animals to

a degree rather exceptional when compared with the corresponding knowledge retained among other groups of the Atlantic states. At the present day, the taking of animals by means of bow and arrow, fish spear and hook must be noted as desultory. Traps, however, figure predominantly in the inland focus of community life. At an earlier period the relative importance of the two taking systems may have been the reverse (2).

While the study of the Rappahannock food quest was being carried on, the possibility arose that some practices of conservation of animal resources existed. Attempts to find anything of a positive nature were not productive. Hunting seems to have been seasonal and sporadic, its purpose during the late historic period to vary the round of diet with wild meat and to promote social contacts among the men during less strenuous times of labor in the soil. Agriculture, the main economic food provision, needed no forethought for the future. The animals killed in the hunting party forays could not deplete the stock in the forests. They were, furthermore, of the ranging-habit groups: rabbits, turkeys, quails, muskrats and the furbearers, and a few deer. Had there been beaver in the list of game sought, some notions of conservation might have existed and been remembered. Beaver are residential to certain limited locations and could be depleted if restraint were not observed in their taking. A distinction was, however, discerned among the people in their attitude toward the killing of resident or "tame" creatures and those who came by during the migration periods. This distinction was made by the trappers of birds. It was disclosed in connection with the facts pertaining to the use of the cage-fall trap. The bird victims of this trap device were released if they were red-birds, mocking birds, or resident sparrows because they "belonged there", as the informants explained. When caught they were released, and they said that sometimes the same individual birds were caught time after time as they came for the seeds. It was the "wild birds that

came in as strangers" that were killed and eaten as legitimate victims of the traps. This we take to be a reflection of native principles of conserving animal life in the home environment; perhaps a sentimentality now instead of a practical procedure. It has its sig-

nificance in the retrospect of relationships between the Indians and the animals about them as tenants of their woods and fields. The Indians of the Virginia tidewater strip were and are socially and economically sedentary.

THE ANNUAL ECONOMIC CYCLE

The sustenance activities of the people comprising the Rappahannock group as recalled for a period of some fifty years have been constant, marked only by the changes inevitable in a community where manufactured products and the demands of a rather slowly changing farm marketing agriculture have brought about shifts. Local hunting and fishing pursuits have likewise been limited as to time by innovations in the game and conservation laws of the state. The sequence of the food-producing activities, however, has been held down to an order established by the rotation of seasons and its effect upon living animals and growing things. It was, accordingly, not difficult to obtain from the family heads themselves, in conference upon the subject, a fairly consistent picture of the occupations that were allotted to the seasons in their turn. The work calendar offered may then be put down from the dictation of those consulted, representing the typical group program of farm industry for the recent period and for as far back as we can draw it without resorting solely to the testimony of tradition.

It is given at this point in the culture narrative to serve as an approach to the detailed subject matter pertaining to the methods and devices employed in the business of taking animals and fish by means of weapons, traps, and fishing contrivances, the gathering of food plants and medicinal herbs growing wild, and the raising of food resources in cultivated land. Alternating with the occupations of the food quest is the persistent activity of securing fuel and the materials of home industry as well as the protection of the land holdings from deterioration of weed growth, sterility, overflooding, and blowing away of top soil, and the protection and nourishment of domestic livestock.

The economic cycle through which the activities of the year revolved in the life of the Rappahannock settlements in the period centering around the opening of this century is well remembered by all of the men who, now in their fifties, recall the order of seasonal occupations as of about 1900. In conference with Chief Otho Nelson and two of his brothers-in-law, all over fifty, we arranged the sequence presented below.

1. Mid-January to mid-February. The active economic year began about January twentieth with preparations for the first planting of the ground. The first plowing of the fields was done. Some outdoor sowing was done to start the early vegetable crops by sowing in covered beds. This was for the truck gardens adjacent to the houses and also for tobacco.

This was also the time for the annual clean-up. Fences were mended after the winter blows and snows, the stables were cleared of the accumulations of the winter, and the litter carted to the fields for fertilizer. The ditches dug around the edges of the fields to provide drainage of surface water were also cleared. Brush of new growth on field margins and ditch banks was cut down. The general purpose of work from the middle of January to the middle of February was of this nature, literally "getting ready for the year's farming".

2. Mid-February through to the first week of March. Tobacco was sown outside. New ground was cleared and new land prepared for use. About the first of March it was expected that the first corn would be planted.

3. Mid-March to May first. By May first the tobacco plants were all set out. "Peas"

(beans) were planted. The fishing season began in "branches" (small creeks), and in Occupacia Creek.

4. May first to first week in July. The fields of corn and beans were worked, cultivated and weeded, until they came into maturity about July fourth.

5. July to September. By the middle of September the tobacco was about ready to be cut. The tops were cut off the corn growing in the fields. Feed for the stock was put up, and the gathering of all the crops was begun.

6. September to October first. Gathering of crops continued until all were harvested.

7. Mid-October. The winter wood was cut and hauled in.

8. November first. Work on the farm began to abate with the completion of the harvesting and wood gathering and hauling. Fall grain was sown. Hogs were killed with the coming of cold weather. The "big job" of the year: work was over.

9. Mid-December to Christmas Time and mid-January. The fall hunting took place; the "big-hunts", drives, and still hunting.

Through the Christmas period and on until almost the end of January hunting and social relaxation took time, forming a rest-recess in the round of the year's labor. The serious work of the ensuing year was then ready to begin again as described in the sequence beginning with 1 above.

TRAPS

The twelve trap systems now to be described constitute a relatively full category even as compared with Algonkin groups in the northern forest zone. It appears in a glance southward that the number of taking devices of the trap type is much less than one would expect. To what this condition is due would be difficult to determine at present. One could scarcely believe that the food-producing tradition has dwindled away among the Cherokee and Catawba to a degree greater than the Virginia tribes. And one would be loathe to conclude that in the areas lying south of the Virginia tribal habitat the art of hunting and trapping was less profusely developed than in the Virginia area and northward. It becomes our task, for the present, merely to present the accumulated data on the systems of the Rappahannock. Information from other contingents of the Virginia Powhatan area is in the process of being studied by members of the research group. The material in part has been recorded. We accordingly deem it advisable as a beginning to arrange the Rappahannock data in systematic form to serve as a cue for the investigation, still to be put in finished form, of the traps from the Pamunkey, Upper Mattaponi,

and Chickahominy. This method of treatment will be understood by ethnologists engaged in field work, and its advantages recognized.

The published reports on trap systems of the Canadian tribes by Dr. John M. Cooper and Dr. Julius Lips will provide check material for hunting tribes in regions quite remote from the Virginia area. The nearest material to be considered is that recorded by Dr. Cooper on the Seneca of New York State. The devices known to these people are relatively few. Beyond these sources we have practically nothing to rely upon. In the notes to the following pages reference will be made to instances where the Rappahannock deadfalls, choke traps, and snare correspond to those in publications mentioned. The topic of trap mechanisms in the East is therefore in the mere infancy of its treatment. It may be noted at this point that we have no instance to record either by observation or hearsay that women operated traps for securing food or fur.

Without further attempt to frame a speculative analysis of the trap devices, we present the objective details of the subject.

1. "Hare Gum" or Box Trap

A. Animals caught: Rabbits, "possums", and small game.

B. Location: Along the borders of woods and fields above swamp lands is considered a good spot.

C. Bait: Onion is considered best for rabbits; this is attached to the bait stick while part is rubbed around the entrance in order to destroy the human odor and at the same time entice the victim.

D. Description: A hollow gum log about three feet long and fifteen inches in diameter is plugged at one end (Fig. 18). The log is kept in position by four stakes, two at the side rear and two at the front. A fifth stake may be used to hold in place an improvised slab at the rear which serves as a plug. A slab of bark of sufficient height and width to cover the front opening is cut and placed over this opening in such a manner that it may slide and fit between the two stakes at the front. In order to prevent the slab-door or gate from falling forward, two more stakes are driven in front of the gate, overlapping the edges about one inch.

Two holes are cut at the top of the log -- the first about six inches from the front, the second seven inches directly behind the first. A stick twenty-five inches long and forked at the top is inserted in the first hole so that it rests upon the floor of the trap. This serves as a standard or rest for the "bearing stick". The "trigger" stick is inserted in the second hole. This stick is fourteen inches over all; a reverse fork is at the top, five inches below which is cut a notch. The trigger base is sharpened at the lower end, over which the bait is secured. The "bearing stick", twenty-one inches long, is a straight pole with a short string fastened to the forward end. The string in turn is attached to the gate.

By placing the trigger notch under the top of the opening or hole and then placing the "bearing stick" under the trigger fork and over the forked standard, the weight of the gate upon the system keeps the trap set. An animal upon entering and touching the bait will dislodge the trigger's notch from the top of the hole and destroy the tension, thus causing the gate to fall.

2. "Snare" or Spring-pole Moose Trap

A. Animals caught: "Coons", "possum", mink, and the like.

B. Location: In thickets above swamp-land, or in obvious animal runs.

C. Bait: An ear of corn, a piece of meat, possibly a carcass of a small animal or bird tied on a stick.

D. Description: The spring-pole moose trap is composed of four parts: the spring pole, the noose, a series of nine stakes placed in an approximate circle, and the trigger (Fig. 1).

The spring pole in the example observed is a hickory sapling (15'7") to the top of which is tied the noose rope.

The noose is placed around the circle of stakes in a manner that the knot is between stakes No. 1 and No. 9 and over the trigger. The rope (6'7") is stretched from the end of the bent pole to the trigger.

The nine stakes, placed in a circle (long axis 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", short axis [diameter] 23"), are used to spread the noose. The circle with a long axis is used to compensate for the drawing of the tightened noose. The stakes (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ") are driven into the earth so that about a foot is left above the surface. Stakes Nos. 1 and 9 each have notches ($\frac{1}{2}$ ") slightly below the top (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ ") which serve to hold the noose. Around the circle of stakes, logs and brush are banked "to make it look old" (Fig. 23).

The trigger is composed of two parts: the trigger and the standard. The standard is twelve inches above the surface, at the top of which is an angled tenon cut for one and one-quarter inches. This is used to hold the trigger. The trigger is a rectangular board (18"x5"x $\frac{1}{4}$ ") and six inches from the front is a rectangular hole (1"x2") through which the tenon passes. The bait (an ear of corn) is tied to the rear.

Two men are required to set the trap: one to hold the spring pole, and another to adjust the noose around the semi-circle of stakes.

An animal that breaks away from a trap is said to be "hung": "I hung that mink three times now."

3. "Mash Trap" or One-Log Dead-Fall

- A. Animals caught: Raccoon, mink, otter, opossum, and fox.
- B. Location: Placed near the edge of a sluggish stream in swamp.
- C. Bait: For mink or otter, fish or eel is preferably used; for mink or fox a bird's head or body is used; for opossum a bird or any kind of meat is suitable; for raccoons, a frog. Fish scent is the lure.
- D. Description: Three logs, eight inches in diameter and five feet four inches long are placed side by side; four stakes are used to secure the outside logs or guards (Fig. 2). The center log is then raised and held up by a figure-four device. A log or stone can be placed above the center log to add weight, and two additional guard logs and stakes are needed to keep the added log in position (Fig. 19). A mirror may be put in water near trap. Raccoon reaches for it and is caught by paw.

4. "Log Mash Trap" or Four-Log Dead-Fall

- A. Animals caught: Otters, "pole cats" (skunks), and minks.
- B. Location: Set in the woods near streams or in the swamp. This trap is for fall and winter use.
- C. Bait: The bait is meat or fish tied to the trigger stick beneath the logs.
- D. Description: The log mash trap is made of four heavy hickory or poplar logs about six inches in diameter and about four feet long (Fig. 3). Cross sticks are spread on the ground under the trap so that the animal will not be able to struggle free when the logs fall at the release of the trigger stick when the bait is seized.

The logs are held together by two cross-pieces of hickory which are bound to the logs by a twisted wrapping of yellow birch twigs and stripped hickory bark. The figure-four trigger is made of three pieces of hickory. The meat or fish bait is rubbed around the place where the trap is set to attract the carnivorous victim (3).

This is a variation of the "Mash Trap" wherein the animal is mashed flat instead of having its head crushed and

neck broken as in the "Log Mash Trap". To insure greater weight of the falling logs, some heavy, soggy dead wood or other weighty material may be placed on the log roof.

5. "Scratch Trap" or Pen Trap

- A. Animals caught: Turkeys, quail, and ground birds.
- B. Location: In a pine thicket on high ground (Fig. 21).
- C. Bait: The lure is a trail of corn or grain spread from radiating points leading to the entrance of the trap. The bait is the same liberally sprinkled inside the pen. In setting traps for birds, peas or kernels are placed in woods, the amount being increased toward the end of the week, until the trap is set. Bait should be placed every day. With turkey, the bait is placed there at night so the turkey will find it on returning in the morning (see traps Nos. 5, 6, and 12).
- D. Description: The scratch trap is built in sections so that the birds become accustomed to it and "feel safe" (Fig. 20). The pen, of log house construction, is built on level ground, and the whole is staked down by means of cross-poles over the roof. An entrance at one side is tunneled beneath the bottom stick; this should be about three or four inches in diameter for quail, and the pen should measure about thirty inches square and eight inches high. The same type of trap about three feet high is set for turkeys.

6. "Log House" or Pen Fall Trap

- A. Animals caught: "Partridge" (Quail) and similar birds are taken in this trap.
- B. Location: As for the "Scratch Trap" (No. 5), a pine thicket is the most suitable place.
- C. Bait: Grain is sprinkled around and beneath the pen.
- D. Description: Similar in design and construction to the "Scratch Trap", the "Log House" differs only in that it is supported by a figure-four release.

Robert Nelson, father of Chief Otho Nelson, built his log trap in fitted sections so that he could take it apart

and move it from one set to another during the winter to places where birds were plentiful.

7. "Snatch Trap" or Spring-pole Rabbit Snare

A. Animals caught: Rabbits

B. Location: In a rabbit run beneath fence posts at the edge of fields, or at a briar patch.

C. Bait: No lure or bait is used in connection with this snare. It is sufficient to set it in the runs used by the hares.

D. Description: A noose, tied to the end of a spring-pole trigger is placed around a run. The trigger is set by means of a notched log placed over the run. The noose is suspended by two twig-stakes (4).

At the rear of the "snatch trap" is put a "tangle trap" or noose supported by twigs and tied to a small branch (Fig. 4 shows the relative position and mechanism of the two devices).

8. "Fish Net"

Made of white oak or birch splints, this net is used to catch fish, muskrat, otter, or mink.

9. "Snatch Trap" or Board Dead-Fall

A. Animals caught: This trap is used chiefly for snow birds (juncos). It is important to note that in taking birds about the farm as this killing device does, a form of conservation is practiced. A distinction is made between "birds that stay around all the year" and "foreign birds" that usually come only in winter and leave for other zones in the spring. The birds about the farm such as "field sparrows" (song sparrows), red birds (cardinals) and mockers are not taken. Snow birds are intended to be caught "as they only come in the winter and do not belong here".

B. Location: On a clean spot in the farm yard, or on a path a few yards from a door or window is the most convenient place to set this type of trap.

C. Bait: Grain, meal, and ashes serve as bait. The birds are kept busy scratching in the mixture until

they lose their caution before the trap is sprung.

D. Description: This trap is composed of a three foot board supported by a four inch stick to which is tied a long string; as such it is used as a dead-fall. The string goes to a window or door where it is pulled when birds are seen busily scratching in the mixture beneath the board.

Children catch these birds, pluck them, and suspend them two or three inches over a fire by a string. The string is spun at intervals, and "the birds are parched till the grease runs out".

10. "Bird Trap" or Cage-Fall Trap

A. Animals Caught: This device is used to trap sparrows and snow birds. Here again we should note that all the year around resident birds, such as "swamp robins" (Chewinks) and red birds, are released if they are caught.

B. Location: Any cleared spot where birds are known to gather is a likely place to set this trap.

C. Bait: As for the preceding trap, grain is considered the standard bait.

D. Description: This pyramidal cage-fall trap is made on a base of four sixteen inch splints or slivers tied to form a square and two cords, tied at the four corners, hold the smaller ascending splints in position (5) (Figs. 5 and 22). A figure-four device is used for a trigger. The long trigger stick reaches across the entire length of the floor space of the trap and is tripped when the birds alight on it or move it in their flutterings over the grain bait.

The imprisoned birds to be killed and eaten (juncos) are taken from the trap by a method that prevents them from escaping as would happen by a quick rush, if the edge of the cage were lifted and an attempt made to seize the bird with the hand. The method is to reach between the splints with the long trigger stick and to press down and hold the bird's head or wing until the trap can be raised with the free hand and the bird grasped. Frequently the trigger stick so used kills the victim.

11. "Robin Trap" or Baited Hook

A. Animals caught: Robins and juncos are both taken by this method.

B. Location: There seems to be no specific place for setting this device.

C. Bait: Earthworms are most adapted for the purpose of the trap.

D. Description: The robin trap consists of a bent pin tied to a length of black thread. The worm-baited hook is swallowed by the bird. It is interesting to note that here, as in fishing devices, black thread is considered necessary because of its invisible character.

12. "Quail Trap" or Box Fall

A. Animals caught: As in traps 5 and 6, the quail is the principle bird taken.

B. Location: The trap is placed in likely thickets which the game is known to frequent.

C. Bait: Kernels of corn and grain serve as lure and bait.

D. Description: The quail or "partridge" trap is a box-like affair with holes in the top and at the sides so that the birds will not be afraid to enter. The front is supported by two release sticks referred to by Cooper as "samson-post": a vertical post resting in the notch of a horizontal bait-stick (6). The bait stick, liberally covered with lure, is placed in a V-shaped trough, deep enough to allow easy entrance, with the apex well within the interior of the trap. To insure the proper balance of the box, a so-called "roof" stake is driven into the ground a few inches to the rear of the trap which secures a supporting string fastened to the rear of the box. The entire ground under the box and around the release is spread with leaves and bait so that the quail will be forced to scratch around and in so doing dislodge the bait-stick, causing the box to fall.

HUNTING

Particularly reminiscent of the hunting tradition, aside from the actual methods and techniques still in use which comprise the body of this section, are some of the more obscure elements of belief that make up the daily life of "huntsmen". Among these elements are the clues found in the Rappahannock weather-lore. A red sky means a windy day, an east wind predicts rain, while low hanging smoke implies cloudy or rainy weather. If the sun rises red and drops behind a cloud in less than an hour, it will rain before the day is over. A cloud can "waste off" and not rain, and, when the sun sets red, a clear day will follow. There are some other signs which are not based directly upon observation. Thus, a "hoot owl" calling is a good sign of rain, and, if a kill-deer (plover) flies and cries at night, the following day will be windy. When a cat licks its lips and looks up after eating, the direction to which it looks

will be the source of the next day's wind.

The classification of snow is another indication of the surviving hunting tradition. A "packing snow" is a common term for snow which is good for snow balls, a "marsh snow" is damp and wet, a "sleet snow" is formed when the sun has melted the surface and at night this has frozen and crusted over, while the term "dry snow" is used when it is lightly packed and blowing.

Still more significant are such terms as "lead" for a deer trail, and the more recognizable "coon's holla", "possum holla", "fox den", and "eagle's roost", for the haunts of various animals found in the region.

The common Indian practices of signaling are still observed by these Virginia people. Boys can "talk"

together by calls. The boys communicated their intentions in late afternoon or evening (i.e., after the noon hour) by "whooping" back and forth between their farms. Otho Nelson used to meet Bob Nelson's boys in the field half way between his farm and theirs to start for a trip by calling. Some of the boys had their own calls. In the case of Otho and Bob, the call was the same, but in a different key. It is also stated that when canoeing, a "shiver" (sudden jerk of the body) by one of the occupants served as a warning.

Communal Rabbit Drive or Fall Hunt

At least once a year during the winter months from October until early spring, the Rappahannock men staged a communal rabbit hunt, reminding one of the hunting method found in the Plains, Intermontane, and Desert areas. Without attempting to speculate upon the meaning of the widespread occurrence of the autumn rabbit drive, we shall proceed to describe its interesting particulars as carried out among the Rappahannock people. Suffice to say that inquiry among other surviving bands of the Powhatan area does not disclose as yet equally detailed knowledge of the drive with clubs as we get it from the Rappahannock. We cannot at present account for its isolated occurrence in the East, though connecting links may yet be uncovered in a wider search for its southern distribution (7).

James ("Little") Otho Nelson related a typical rabbit hunt of his younger days somewhat as follows. We may reproduce the narrative as of the present.

At least fifteen or twenty men and boys gather by appointment at a selected farmhouse in the morning, bringing dogs and clubs. The latter are of dogwood and will be described shortly. Some men carry guns, but the others are usually more successful. The men with clubs sometimes carry a rock to use in the thick underbrush, and a man may carry as many as three clubs in case he misses a rabbit in the first throw.

The hunters collect at Old Tom Nelson's place between eight-thirty and nine on the morning of the hunt. Sam Nelson is chosen leader because he is the "dog master". The most successful and oldest hunter is usually considered the leader, though sometimes the man at whose house the party first assembles is selected until the next stop, where the

resident of this place takes charge. In any case, the leader decides all details.

When the dogs are collected and everyone is ready, the hunters form a single line with Sam Nelson in the lead. They travel in Indian fashion until they come to the woods where they intend to hunt. Here they fan out until they are about ten or twelve feet apart, and proceed in this manner. The dogs are in the lead, with Sam Nelson driving them. At the shout, "Roll rabbit out", or "Jump him out of bed", they close in on the rabbit and kill him with the throwing clubs. As many as forty-five to sixty rabbits are killed in three hours. Each man carries the rabbits he kills in his "hapsack", along with a jug of spirituous stimulant.

On the first day, they go north by Beazley's Post Office almost to Carneal Corners (see map, Fig. 6), reaching there about 2:00 p.m. There they circle south and hurry toward Old Man Nat's place, about a mile southeast from their starting point. At Nat's place they spend the night. On some hunts, however, they would stay out in the woods all night, build a fire, and, if cold, throw up a brush windbreaker. Taking the entrails from some of the rabbits, they would tie the legs to a split hickory stick and cook their game over a big fire.

After eating breakfast at Old Man Nat's, they start hunting again in the direction of King and Queen Church, arriving there between 11:00 and 11:30 a.m. When within sight of the church, all sit down to rest for about half an hour. Here the men take out their knives and throw them into a tree as high as they can. A good shot should remain imbedded. Sam Nelson can equal any of the marks with a hatchet, and as leader it is his duty to retrieve all the knives and hatchets by climbing the tree. When Edmund Nelson throws his hatchet at the tree, he cries out, "Hari", equivalent to, "See that knot", although we would not venture to analyze the phrase.

After resting, they go over to the "Swamp" (Root Swamp), going almost to Salvia. "Any animal they see, they jump, and there is plenty of joking and drinking along the way." At the "Swamp" the hunters turn east and go back to Nat's house.

At the end of the day they divide the spoils, everyone throwing his

rabbits into a central pile. Sam Nelson asks each man, "You want a rabbit?" The first may answer, "All right, I'll take two or three." "You want a rabbit?" Sam asks the next man. "No," he may say, "I don't want any. Give mine to so-and-so." Many of the hunters don't need the meat, and so it is the policy that it be distributed according to necessity, though the killer is entitled to the hind quarter, the choice section. Sometimes non-participants are given part of the supply. All rabbits killed by the dogs, regardless of the dog's owner, belong to the leader, Sam Nelson. He is at liberty to do with them as he sees fit. Usually they are divided among the dogs. When the kill is brought home, they say the children "fight" to get the brains of the cooked rabbits.

By this time a feast, supplied by Old Man Nat, is ready. It includes turkey, goose, apple brandy; in short, a "heaped table". At midnight they cease reveling and turn in. Nat took only his share of the spoils, even though he fed and boarded the hunters. The next morning "they took a big drink and went home".

As such, the rabbit drive affords one of the occasions of welcome relief from the routine of the year. The course followed by the huntsmen, as we may picture it, was a fanwise sweep, approximately several hundred feet broad from one end to the other. Each day's hunt covered a roughly triangular course for about six miles through the Rappahannock inhabited country, as indicated on the chart. Within these sections there would be small chance for a rabbit to escape. According to the information obtained, the rabbit drive is devoid of ceremonial aspects. We may surmise, however, that in former times there were formalities connected with the Rappahannock practice.

Throwing Club

The throwing club, as mentioned before, is used chiefly for killing rabbits in the autumn rabbit drive (8). About two feet in length, it is fashioned from the base and trunk of a dogwood sapling (Fig. 7). The club end is the thickened base of the trunk near the ground. The bark is not scraped off. In experienced hands, the club becomes an effective weapon, being thrown in an overhand-sidewise manner which sends it spinning at the victim. Figure 24 shows this method in use by Rappahannock hunt-

ers. The dogwood club is heavy as a whole, the striking end outweighing the grip end. It was never hurled at a rabbit until the animal had started to run. A call or shout was given to start a rabbit when one was spotted in the grass. As the rabbit bounded forward the club was thrown to intercept it, which it invariably did when launched from the hands of an experienced club slinger. Two or three clubs thrown at a victim left little chance of escape. We can testify to the accuracy of judgment of some of the Nelson men who demonstrated the club attack upon tin cans thrown across the ground as a substitute for rabbits. Several dogs attracted by the imitation chase barely escaped being hit and maimed by the bounding missiles. The men observed had not lost their skill in striking the cans. They did much better when the tin quarry was in rapid motion. No throwing at a stationary target was observed.

Bow

The Rappahannock bow has degenerated into a toy and is known today chiefly in this capacity (Fig. 30). If tradition is to be credited, the modern bow has preserved the form and material of the old. It is preferably made of seasoned white oak, but hickory is used if the other cannot be obtained. Split from the outer quarter of a four foot trunk, the piece should be about two inches square. The center fifth of the total length is squared, forming the grip section, while the ends are thinned, producing a rectangular cross-section. During the process of shaping the bow, it is sometimes "steamed" by placing it near a fire. Final polishing is accomplished by means of a piece of broken glass. When finally complete, the bow is put aside and allowed to "season out".

Besides the rectangular-section bow, there was also one with the ends cut down to produce an oval cross-section, but the grip section remained squared. Both forms are found throughout the Powhatan area of recent times. Despite the general use of commercial cord, bow strings are still waxed.

By far the most surprising elaboration in bow manufacture is the addition of an elderwood guard-channel attached at right angles to the grip section. This mechanism serves the dual purpose of protecting the hunter's wrist, as well as guiding the direction of the arrow, since the Rappahannock, as observed, hold the bow in a horizontal po-

sition when shooting. As such, this device is closely allied to the "bow with guard" as noted by Osgood (9) in the Yukon and has close resemblances to Asiatic types.

It should be noted that the toy bow is now not generally known. Boys at Indian Neck had to be shown by their fathers how to hold and discharge it. It is therefore understandable that other details of bow construction are too vague to deserve mention.

Arrows are simple wooden shafts, preferably made of "hog weed" (elder) and are sometimes weighted at the rear to produce better balance. Points, when used, are known as "spikes".

Crossbow

The Rappahannock crossbow, (see Figs. 8 and 25), though again relegated to the status of a toy, is part of the traditional store of knowledge. The stock is cut from a rectangular piece of yellow pine, measuring about three feet in length, about four inches high at the butt, tapering slightly toward the front. A groove is cut along the top extending some seventeen inches from the front. This serves as a guiding channel for the arrows. A notch, seventeen inches from the rear of the stock, holds the bow string when the bow is set. A square hole of proper dimension to hold securely, by wedging if necessary, the squared grip section of an ordinary bow is cut in the stock about nine inches from the front. To operate, the crossbow is held to the shoulder in the manner of a gun. The bow string is placed in the notch, and an arrow is placed in the groove. By pushing the bow string from the notch with the top of the thumb, this manual trigger releases the string and discharges the arrow.

The arrow used with the crossbow is cut from an elder branch and when complete measures about six inches over all. The point, a very hard bone-like spike about one inch and a half long, is fashioned from pitch pine and is partly inserted within the pith of the elder-wood shaft. Generally only one feather is used, and this is tied at the center one inch from the butt.

Poisoning of Arrows

In the early narratives of the Southeast so little mention of the use of poisons in connection with arrows occurs that Swanton, in 1922, expressed

his doubts of its dependability. Instances not to be passed by, however, may be cited as positive notations. One is given by Swanton (10) which he dismisses as probably erroneous, two by Flannery (11), and several by Speck (12). The point is eminently worthy of debate in the future discussion of cultural properties of the total southeastern area. In the immediate Virginia Tidewater area most records are significantly silent. Not so, however, is the testimony among living groups of the tribal descendants. We may first consider the archival sources and then let the contemporary groups attest their traditions.

Despite the difficulty Swanton found in discovering specific reference to arrow poisoning among Virginia Indians, a positive statement is given by Captain Gabriel Archer, 1607, while sojourning for a day at Arahatec (Arrowhattuck) on the James. This was called to our attention by Mr. C. A. Weslager at the last moment. The significant quotation is "One gaue me a Roote where-with they poison their Arrowes" (13). The puzzling nature of the whole question, however, still confronts us. Had the Indians during the succession of contests with the English customarily resorted to the use of poisoned arrows, constant mention of heathenish villainy in warfare would be expected to occur in the narratives of the times. The practice may have been unusual in human conflicts at the time among native peoples of the immediate area. Archer's observation is backed up, however, by his mention of an antidote, "the herbe called in their tongue wisacan, which they say heals poysoned woundes". This herb has been identified as Apocynum androsaemifolium (L.) (14).

Another important but somewhat equivocal source concerning arrow poison in the area comes from a letter written by the Rev. John Clayton, once Dean of Kildare in Ireland, to Dr. Gren in answer to several queries sent to him in 1687. Here is what he wrote, "there (are) traditions of their having an art to poison their darts, but I could never find any solid ground for that report" (15). How this statement is to be taken remains for the critic of sources to decide. One could say about the same thing today concerning the handed-down evidence of "an art to poison arrows" among descendants of the same tribes two hundred and fifty years after Clayton's time. Several instances have come to light among the descendants of

modern tribes from the Catawba of South Carolina through the Powhatan area, somewhat alike in their details, furnishing collective evidence that in the memory of the living groups the use of poison with arrows in warfare was known to their ancestors (16).

How to correlate the historical narratives and living tradition is still a matter to be decided. In the case of the Rappahannock, we have an unsolicited piece of evidence coming from three of the men who knew Edmund Nelson and who had heard from him how the people formerly obtained a poison which they applied to arrows used against enemies. Edmund Nelson died in his eighties about 1880. According to all accounts he was a traditionalist who lived by hunting and wandered in the woods for a living. Edmund was also experienced in the arts of "magic" and taught some of the younger men the methods of luring and taking animals. His tradition was transmitted to Robert P. Nelson, the father of the present chief. Robert was an old man when he died in the 1920's and so we must attribute the following note to a period of a century ago when Virginia Indian customs must have been considerably more intact.

The method of arrow poisoning so handed down is as follows: A bovine liver was pounded up and placed inside an animal's bladder. This made a tight bag with a putrid mass inside of it. Rattlesnakes (or copperheads?) were sought and induced to strike the full bladder as many times as was possible. Thus the contents were impregnated with snake venom. Arrowheads were placed within the bag resting in the mass of putrid liver. These were used in warfare and, tradition adds, resulted in fatal wounds on enemies. Since the point is of some significance in the cultural history of the Southeast, it may be well to add that the legend coming from Edmund and Robert Nelson was independently confirmed by several women who mentioned it to Florence I. Speck.

In addition to the published references to arrow poisoning (see note 16) as known traditionally among the contemporary Mattaponi and Pamunkey of Virginia, several more may now be mentioned. From the Chickahominy of Charles City County aged informants attest the tradition of use of venom from poisonous local snakes mixed with poison ivy leaves in preparing arrow poison.

Finally, it would seem, the accumulated evidence points to a positive answer to the question at issue rather than to a negative one, so far as the traditional sources are concerned. In taking testimony from contemporary informants, due consideration has been given to the possibilities of error and deliberate fabrication, which should satisfy the skepticism of those who may still adhere to a negative view on the Virginia Indians' erstwhile knowledge of "an art to poison arrows".

Stone Sling

The stone sling of almost universal distribution throughout North America is well known here as a means for knocking down small animals and birds. It was also used as a plaything. Jim Johnson had made a specimen recently which is typical of those made in his boyhood. The stone is set in a piece of soft leather about two inches broad. Two thongs, approximately two feet in length, were tied to the two holes at its ends. One of the thongs has a loop for the forefinger. The missile is discharged by twirling the stone and releasing the other thong. The sling differs in no respect from those found in the pockets of country boys anywhere in the East.

Blinds and Calls

The Rappahannock employ the blind for hunting ducks and turkeys. For turkey, the hunter should build the blind in sections, part on one day, and the remainder the next, so that the birds will become accustomed to its proximity. After this, feed should be placed around the blind in the same cautious manner, and actual hunting should not begin until the third or fourth day. The Rappahannock distinguish between the "river" and the "forest" turkey as varieties according to where the birds range.

From the lower leg bone of the turkey, the hunter makes a "yelping bone" or turkey call. This whistle device is used to bring the turkeys back after the flock has "broken up". Another call is made of wood with a horse hair stretched across. A piece of bone is then rubbed over this to produce a note which lures the birds.

For ducks, the hunter should go out about one hour before sunrise and spread feed along the bank, leading it to the

blind to the distance of a good shot. He should then go away and do the same thing the following day but remain in the blind until the ducks approach. If he uses a bow, he will shoot only one and must wait until more return for another shot; but if he has a gun, he should not shoot until a good sized flock has come well within range. A duck-blind is built on the bank.

Pronged Pole

A rather unformalized hunting technique is the use of a straight or pronged pole to catch rabbits. One man attracts the animal's attention while the rabbit is on the nest, and the co-hunter sneaks behind and strikes the victim on the head.

The Rappahannock men also say that birds are killed in marshes at night by using lights or torches and poles with many prongs which ensnare the startled birds as they fly off their roosts. It is also reported that snakes are lured and taken in the same manner.

The flights of Passenger Pigeons are well remembered by one of the oldest men of the tribe, Jim Nelson, eighty-seven in 1942. With his father he shot and ate them when he was a boy. He could not recall having heard of any other method of taking the birds and knew nothing of netting them from the hearsay of his parents.

An observation is, however, pertinent here concerning the former killing of small birds. Some of the men who are now in their sixties inform us that robins and "cherry-birds" (cedar wax-wings) were shot and trapped in the fall when they flocked. They were sold about the country to be eaten. Robins brought two cents apiece and "cherry-birds" one penny. This practice ceased about 1900, according to the recollection of Chief Otho Nelson, when protective laws had made it contraband. He had earned many a penny himself by this means. Several of the men who told of the sport asserted that the robins have increased since then, but that the "cherry-birds" have never been as abundant since those days of hunting them. Besides the birds just mentioned as falling victims of the traps described, other more or less gregarious species were killed in numbers and eaten. Field larks (meadow larks), rusty blackbirds, crow blackbirds (grackles) and cowbirds added to the fare.

Among the fragments of tradition of the hunting age we find another story related by Jim Nelson. It is given as narrated by him as an example of the "long yarns" current among hunters in the Tidewater area. A version was heard among the Nanticoke descendants of Delaware, who relate it with some variations.

My grandfather told me how he once went hunting wild pigeons. He saw a flock of the birds sitting on the branch of a tree all side by side. He fired at the end of the branch and split it from one end to another. As the split opened it caught the feet of fifty birds and wedged them so they could not get away. He secured his birds. As he was leaving he noticed a red liquid running down the bark of the tree. He thought it was the blood of the birds he killed. He went closer and saw that it was sweet honey running out of the tree where the branch had split. Then he went home and brought back two and a half baskets which he filled with the honey. When he was taking it home he had to cross a branch of the brook. It happened that he was wearing pants that his mother had patched for him without sewing up the seams on the top. The patches were like pockets outside of his pants. When he got across the branch with his honey and the birds, he found that he had scooped up twenty white perch in the patches of his pants without knowing it. That was some luck for a man who only had one bullet. He had aplenty to eat.

Emphasis on the trapping of small animals for food and fur seems to some of us to be diagnostic of a "cultural at-homeness" in the north. Even if only slightly significant as survivals of older interests among modern mixed groups such as the Virginia Indians, such an emphasis may point to the north as the direction where such interests exceed in woodland Indian culture totals. These interests, even at the present day, are less emphatically present among among Indian descendants of the extreme Southeast. Catawba trap systems, known to the tribal descendants of South Carolina, at most number five as compared with the Rappahannock twelve. Are we to inhale the odors of the north in the study of this proportion?

The country inhabited by the present descendants of the Rappahannock offers varied habitats for water life. In Figures 26 and 27 are shown typical swamps and flooded basins where fish and reptiles abound, while the smaller creeks flowing through the region offer still further supplies.

Some of the more typical species include "yellow fish", sun perch, "mullet", sucker, "brooder bass", spawning bass, carp, herring, eel, "cow sucker", bull snake, snapping turtle, and common terrapin or water turtle.

Fishhooks

The fishhooks of the Indian fishermen are varied and somewhat specialized both as to form and use. From the series of collected specimens it will be noted that each is suspended by means of a black thread to insure invisibility in the riley water of the "branches". A float, fashioned from the bark of yellow pine, is threaded on the line, and to the float is attached a small feather to attract the attention of the fisherman when the hook is nibbled. Between the float and the hook a small pebble is tied so that the hook and bait will not float, but rather remain below the surface.

The simplest hook is the "bent pin" (Fig. 9). This is baited with worms or meat and not limited in purpose to any particular kind of fish.

A single barbed hook, similar in pattern to the pin hook, and possibly the aboriginal proto-type, is made from the leg bone or rib bone of the turkey. Three of these may be bound together with "hickory skin" (inner bark) to form a compound hook, if so desired, and it is stated that this type is sometimes used without bait.

The "mullet hook" is made simply by attaching a thorn to the standard line, sinker, and bark float. This type usually has two barbs (Fig. 10a). The thorn or "crook" is bent to the desired shape before it is attached to the line.

The Rappahannock also make a cut bone hook with two or four bilateral barbs. In Figure 10b the double barbed type is shown. An elaborated form of

this hook is made by inserting a transverse bone barb through the main hook. The transverse barb upon a laterally barbed hook is shown in Figure 11. This is not considered so successful, since the secondary barbs or gorges are of little use. No bait is used with these bone hooks.

The "cherb(chub)hook" is really a bone gorge about one inch and a quarter long with double notches at both ends (Fig. 12). The Rappahannock also make a compound gorge. This is composed of three sharpened steel points secured in the center to produce six points. As such, it appears as an elaboration of the bone gorge.

Spear

The Rappahannock fisherman until recently utilized the notched bone-pointed spear as a method for taking fish. It is considered particularly adapted for taking ten to fifteen pound "mulletts" in the deeper waters of the sluggish swamplands. Figure 29 illustrates the technique of fish spearing.

The spear is made of an eight foot yellow birch pole to which is lashed by split willow (?) a bone point. The point is about five inches long, with "catches" (also called "beards") along both sides. Despite the general well-finished appearance of most Rappahannock artifacts, the fish spear is crudely made. Variations in bone points and the method of hafting are shown in Figure 13.

Fish Poison

The Rappahannock use of "fish poison" and the prescription for its manufacture are of interest to the student of the Southeast. The Rappahannock make their poison by putting corn meal into a tub and adding to it fish brine and "stale" water. This is allowed to stand for a while in order to become more potent. The concoction is then poured into the water of sluggish streams where the fish are to be taken. According to the natives, this is "sure death to fish" (17).

Fish Weirs

A fish weir on Hutchinson's pond was made from strips of branches and

wire. The fish swim over the first dam of logs and are retained within the enclosed area by the second higher dam (Fig. 14).

A fish weir of different construction was also used; some logs were driven into the stream bed with a cross-log sunken into both banks for support. An opening between the upright logs served as a sluice next to which a net was placed (Fig. 15).

Other Fishing Techniques

Other aspects of fishing include the use of corn kernels to bring fish near the hole when angling through ice. The fisherman should drop some kernels in the hole and either go away or wait a short time before putting the baited hook down.

For night fishing, automobile tires are burned to ward off mosquitoes. It is said, however, that this practice "attracts snakes which eat the fish".

Turtle Fishing

For catching turtles, especially snappers, the Rappahannock take a six foot pole and poke it into a bank a few feet from shore so that the pole extends about a foot above the surface of the water (Fig. 16). A string is tied to the lower end of the pole and baited with salt pork. "When the pole moves, you know you have a turtle."

Frogs

To catch frogs, the fisherman holds a small flame or coal near a bank of a stream or marsh at night. The frog will jump at it, thinking it is an insect, whereby it will be captured by the hunter's hand.

Carrying Devices

Figure 28 shows Chief Nelson about to remove salted fish from the pronged drying stick of red cedar which hangs near the cook-house door. The fish are secured by running one of the small branches through the gill and mouth and left over night after being soaked in fresh water to drain away the salt.

These people also make a woven carrying bag from "bar (bear) grass" (*Yucca filamentosa*) to bring fish from the pond or stream back home (Fig. 17).

The consumption of fish among twelve Rappahannock farming families located adjacent to Indian Neck is shown in the table on page 15. Figures are approximate, although it may be noted that in giving the number of herring used annually the family heads are quite definite. They buy the fish from each other or trade for them with fishermen living along Rappahannock river (18). Fishing is now done mostly by whites and negroes, since Jim Nelson and his relative ("Boo") have moved back some miles from the river. Jim is crippled with rheumatism from wading the marshes and swamps in his younger days. The figures given represent herring, since they were and are the principal fish taken. The flesh of other varieties is, however, esteemed: "hardheads" (croakers), shad, "stone rollers" or "mulletts" (suckers), yellow perch, catfish, "trout" (weakfish), garfish, sunfish, bass, and "wren fish" (jenny fish) (19).

The estimates represent averages covering a series of years. They may go up or down according to increase and decrease of family dependents. Estimates of amounts of muskrats and raccoons eaten by some of the families are included in the tabulation.

The Fishing Focus in Historical Retrospect

The present situation of the Rappahannock settlements in the rolling inland stretch of country or "neck" between the Mattaponi and Rappahannock rivers lies within the boundaries of an extensive farming section. From Indian Neck to Beazley is the cluster line of population drawn. At the beginning of the investigation it was thought that some families would be found living either on the banks of Rappahannock River or near the brackish inlets running back from the river where fishing might be profitable. Occupacia Creek would be one of the waterways where good fishing chances would come nearest to the farm area inhabited by them. As it turned out, however, no Rappahannock families dwell nearer than three miles to the fishing creeks. And no families have engaged in netting or maintaining fykes as far back as memory recalls their activities. One exception is to be noted as concerns old Jim Nelson who sporadically "hauled net", for herring principally, until a few years ago. The picture for the last three generations, then, shows that the community is

decisively a farming one. To test the validity of this conclusion, several trips were made with Chief Nelson through the districts lying near the river bearing the tribal name, and without result. His own comment upon the circumstance was that his people were inlanders addicted to farming and not fishermen like the Pamunkey and Mattaponi bands. He himself also professed having previously realized the distinction in this respect between his own people and the latter. It appears then that the economic background of the

pre-emption of the fertile bottoms by the early white settlers. The latter entered the territory by way of the navigable river and, following the conquest of the Indians and their decimation in numbers, built plantations on the desirable locations over the sites of evacuated Indian settlements. We do not need to cite references to the manner of settlement by the first white successors of the aborigines in Virginia. The rivers of the Chesapeake coast were the highways, and the plantations lined their shores. Rappahannock tradition

Consumption of Fish and Game among Certain Families of the Rappahannock

<u>Family Heads at Indian Neck</u>	<u>Number in Family</u>	<u>Fish Required (Herring)</u>	<u>Muskrats</u>	<u>Raccoons</u>
Otho S. Nelson (chief)	3	1000		
J. Otho Nelson ("Little Otho")	8-9	1500-2000	300	?
Sam Nelson	3	500		
Jim Nelson	6 (?)	1500	100	10
Merrith Fortune	9	3000		
Edward Williams	3	500		
Vivian Nelson	10	2000		
Mott Byrd	4	500		
Lathers Fortune	4	500		
Stanford Parker	7	1500		
Elokanah Johnson	9	3000		
William Nelson	5	1500		

Rappahannock is unlike that of the other tidewater groups in its lack of water associations for probably a century.

From this point we may speculate somewhat on the possible circumstances accountable for the differences encountered. A direct historical approach to the problem may suggest an explanation. The weakness of the fishing focus in the food quest of the tribe may be a development brought about by the withdrawal of its ancestors from the Rappahannock river shores to the woods of the hinterland forced upon them after the

recounts the destruction of Indian villages and the pursuit of the fugitives throughout the wooded "necks". Surface archaeology of the river basin shows abundance of evidence of a denser native population on the flats and knolls bordering the river than in the pine and hardwood elevations of the "necks". The river lands are decidedly more fertile than the light, sandy divides. Artifacts recovered from both terrains show no differentiation in types of implements, of burials, village locations, or other known characteristics. And Captain John Smith's map of Virginia

(1606) marks Rappahannock villages on the river bluffs and inlets. In short, the signs we may go by point to the extirpation of the Indians from the river lands and the survival of their descendants in the wooded highlands beyond. The problems of surviving names of people in the Powhatan area is rather clearly expressed by Bushnell:

The occurrence of the names on the Rappahannock should be accepted as proof that at some time before 1670, when Northern Indians were invading Maryland and harassing the English settlements and native villages, many of the Indians whose lands had thus been invaded sought refuge across the Potomac in Virginia. The different groups may have been rather small, but of sufficient size to cause their old tribal names to become identified with the sites they occupied (20).

In summary, let us suppose that the Rappahannock, like the Mattaponi and Pamunkey, had a river focus of culture in colonial times which was lost when the whites preempted the lands because of the greater fertility of the lowlands and the attraction of fishing. Captain Smith's map shows thirty-four villages including five King's houses on the north bank of the Rappahannock river while only seven villages are shown along the south shore, and for fifteen leagues along this southern side there are no towns marked whatsoever. This

fact may substantiate the concept of Rappahannock hunting grounds on the southern hinterland to which the Indians retired when white pressure became a serious threat to their way of life along the river.

If the Rappahannock were forced to vacate their river holdings and remove to their hunting territories, it is not a difficult point to explain that the Pamunkey and Mattaponi were able to retain their river shore location on the two rivers bearing their names respectively. These two bands of the Powhatan Confederacy were able to preserve their identity after the disintegration of the Indians and to establish themselves on lands of their own choice through treaties with the Virginia authorities. They actually extorted treaties and acquired "reservations" guaranteed them by the Commonwealth: the Mattaponi in 1658 (21), the Pamunkey in 1677 (22). This insured them possession in perpetuity of lands of their own choosing. Their fishing activities were not destroyed by their being deprived of some of their village sites along the fishing waters. Fishing activities, therefore, have continued supreme in the economy of the Pamunkey and Mattaponi. Not having been driven, as a last resort, into the wilderness back from the rivers, they were not forced to depend upon agriculture and hunting as were the Rappahannock.

(1) The students in the Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania, who participated in the various branches of the field work in question between 1938 and 1943 were: Louise Barrett, W. L. Bliss, E. S. Carpenter, L. G. Carr, S. Connor, H. W. Forman, R. B. Hassrick, G.D. Howard, J. Kremens, M. A. Mook, S. W. Pennypacker, Mary C. Rowell, C. E. Schaeffer, Anne Shafer, R. Solenberger, F. S. Speck, T. Stern, L. F. Watson, and C. Williams. The sketches and figures are by R.B.Hassrick and V. S. Eldredge.

(2) The Native language of the erstwhile Rappahannock has been obsolete for over four generations. The English as spoken by the people, however, has its own dialectic peculiarities which are being recorded in the course of the field work in the area. Such local terms and expressions, pertaining to the subject of this report, are placed within quotes: "Hare gum", "Mash trap", "Snatch trap", "Scratch trap", etc.

The Rappahannock descendants inhabiting King and Queen, Essex, and Caroline counties now number some 300 individuals, about 26 families, and represent the surviving Indian population of this branch of the former Powhatan Confederacy. Speck has described various activities of these people and traced an outline of their background. There is no exaggeration in saying that such local communities of direct Indian descendants in the modern American social galaxy offer opportunities for folk-study known to few outside of those who come into intimate contact with them.

(3) Figure 3 is from a model made by Chief Otho Nelson; length of logs in model is eighteen inches, with a diameter of three and one half inches.

(4) Among the Seneca, Cooper (1938) found a spring-pole rabbit snare which in principle closely resembles this rather more elaborate Rappahannock device.

(5) It has been noted that this "cross-tie" method of construction as found within the Chesapeake area differs from those traps made farther south by the Catawba, Choctaw, Cherokee, and others who use the so-called "cross-beam" method: a bowed stick bent over the apex and tied to hold the splints in position.

(6) It is interesting to note that Cooper found the "samson-post" confined chiefly to the northern Algonkian, northern Athapaskan, and the Northwest Coast Indians. Its occurrence among the Algonkian-speaking Rappahannock seems to be the most southerly extension of this release thus far recorded. Flannery, p. 16, no. 20, likewise has records of the "samson-post" limited to the northern Algonkian.

(7) Concerning the Chickahominy Indians on the river of that name in Virginia, E. P. Bradby, chief of the Eastern Division of the tribe, writes as follows:

My people one hundred years ago, and maybe a few years less, did hunt small game with clubs. If father and mother were living today they would be more than one hundred years old, and my mother often spoke of the men getting together in groups and going rabbit hunting with clubs. I presume these clubs were made of some kind of hard wood like dogwood, hickory or oak. Before the white man came I don't know if the Indians here had dogs or no, but they did one hundred years ago. Rabbits were clubbed to death. (E. P. Bradby, correspondence, June 2, 1945).

(8) It is pertinent to note here that the Nanticoke descendants of Sussex County, Delaware, located in Indian River Hundred, formerly killed rabbits with an identically similar throwing club of hardwood. They did not, however, hunt as a band of hunters with dogs, but individually.

(9) Osgood, p. 68.

(10) Swanton (1922) for the Southeast quotes from Davila Padilla (Historia, pp. 205-217) a deSoto chronicler of 1559, that

every Indian used a bow as tall as his body; the string is not made of hemp, but of animal nerve sinew well twisted and tanned. They all use a quiver full of arrows made of long, thin, and very straight rods, the points of which are of flint, curiously cut in triangular form, their wings very sharp and mostly dipped in some very poisonous and deadly substance.

In a footnote on page 233, Dr. Swanton says,

this statement is probably erroneous, as the use of poisoned arrows among our southern Indians is denied by all other writers.

(11) Flannery, for the use of arrow poison by the Indians at the Falls of the James, quotes Newport, Discoveries..., 1607, (Amer. Antiq. Soc. Trans. and Coll., Boston) 1860, and for the traditional use among the Virginia Indians cites Clayton, Letter, 1687, in Bushnell, as two Southeastern examples.

(12) John Brickell, 1737, makes the generalized statement that the Indians of North Carolina used the gall of the panther for arrow poison. (Speck, 1946, p. 10.)

(13) E. Arber and A. G. Bradley, I:xlvi.

(14) Gerard, p. 93.

(15) Bushnell, p. 43.

(16) Among the Catawba, Speck, op. cit., received information of the traditional use of poisoned arrows. Venom, extracted from poisonous crotalids, was used to saturate meat, and into this small quartz points were placed.

Speck, 1928, states that among the Powhatan

a tradition is related by the Mattaponi concerning the poisoning of arrowheads by their ancestors. It is said by Powhatan Major there that the stone arrowheads with the flat sides,

and especially those with corrugated edges, were intended to carry a poison made from rattlesnake venom-glands mixed into a paste. The corrugated arrowheads of white quartz answering to this requirement are relatively abundant in the tidewater region. While traditions of former economic properties should not be totally ignored, one feels nevertheless highly skeptical about their sources.

A similar tradition is current on the Pamunkey Reservation.

(17) The custom in question has not so far been recorded among the other Powhatan bands along the brackish tidal waters of rivers nearer to Chesapeake Bay. There the drugging of water would be ineffectual as accounting for its absence.

(18) Prior to the period when fish began to be bought from outsiders, i. e. about 1900, the method of preservation was by smoking. A few men continued to smoke their fish after this, but salting them down in barrels has now become the sole process.

(19) Identity of local name suggested by Mr. V. E. Junette.

(20) Bushnell, 1937.

(21) Speck, 1928, correspondence between Chief Custalow and L. C. Garnett, Assistant Attorney General, June 26, 1916.

(22) Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, vol. V.

REFERENCES

- Arber, E., and Bradley, A.G., Editors
1910 Travels and Works of Captain John Smith, 2 vols., Edinburgh.
- Bushnell, D.E., Jr.
1910 Virginia from Early Records. American Anthropologist, vol. 9, no. 1.
1937 Indian Sites Below the Falls of the Rappahannock, Virginia. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, vol. 96:4, Washington, D.C.
- Cooper, J.M.
1938 Snares, Deadfalls, and Other Traps of the Northern Algonquians and Northern Athabascans. Catholic University of America, Anthropological Series, no. 5, Washington, D.C.
- Flannery, R.
1939 An Analysis of Coastal Algonquian Culture. Catholic University of America, Anthropological Series, no. 7, Washington, D.C.
- Gerard, W.R.
1907 Indian Contributions to English. American Anthropologist, vol. 9, no. 1.
- Lips, J.E.
1936 Trap Systems of the Montagnais-Naskapi Indians of Labrador Peninsula. Statens Etnografiska Museum, Smarre Meddelanden, no. 13, Stockholm.
- Osgood, C.G.
1936 Contributions to the Ethnology of the Kutchin. Yale University Publications in Anthropology, no. 14, New Haven, Connecticut.
- Smith, Captain John
See Arber and Bradley.
- Speck, F.G.
1925 The Rappahannock Indians. Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, Indian Notes and Monographs, vol. 5:2, New York.
1928 Chapters in the Ethnology of the Powhatan Tribes of Virginia. Ibid, vol. 1:5.
1946 Catawba Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing. Joint Publications Museum of the University of Pennsylvania-The Philadelphia Anthropological Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Swanton, J.R.
1922 Early History of the Creek Indians and Their Neighbors. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology. Bulletin 73, Washington, D.C.

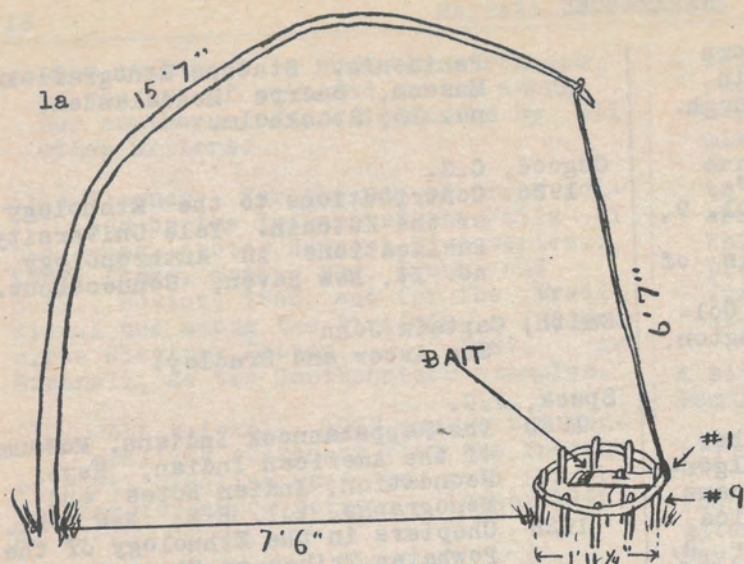


Fig. 1: Spring pole trap for large animals.
a. (Above) Plan, mechanism and details of spring pole.
b. (Above right) Top of standard for trigger.
c. Drawknot at spring pole.
d. Drawknot at trigger.

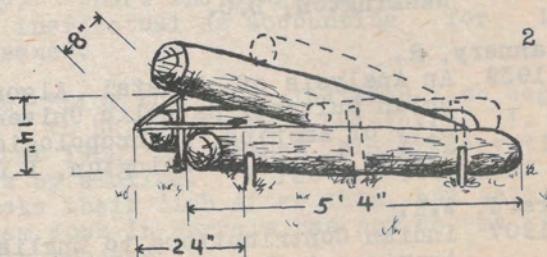


Fig. 2: Details and dimensions of "Mash Trap", with log weights on top.

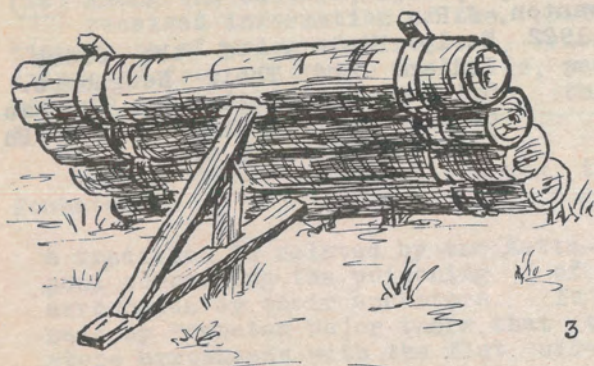


Fig. 3: Model of log "Mash Trap" (width $17\frac{1}{2}$ in., depth 10 in.)

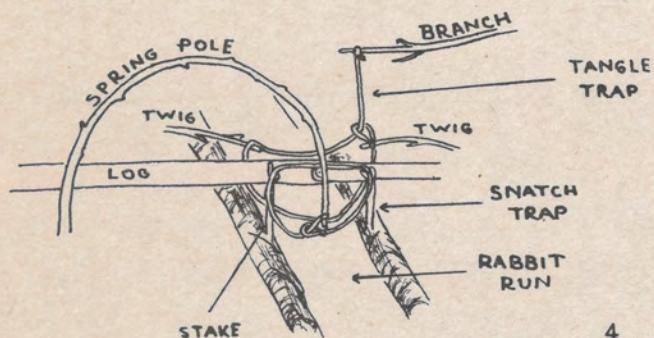


Fig. 4: Details of set-up of snatch trap.

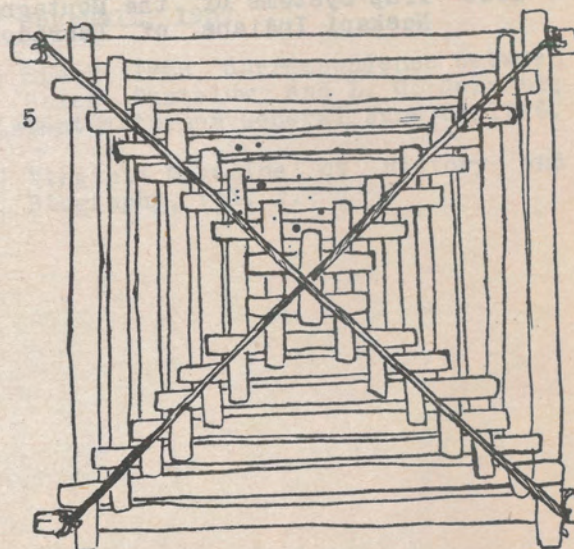
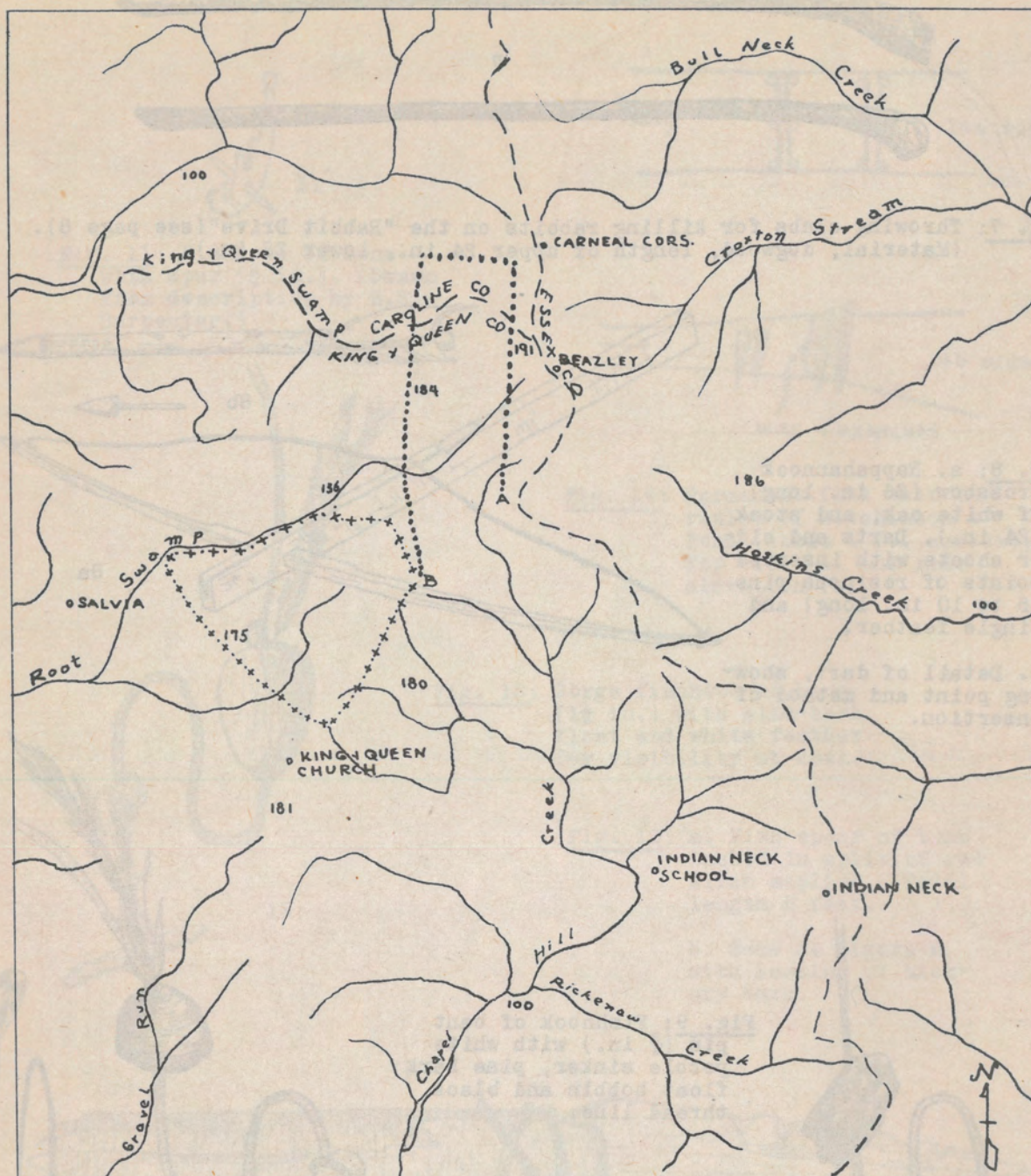


Fig. 5: Top view of cage-fall trap for taking birds, showing crosstie method of fastening the structure. (Diameter 16 in., height 5 in.)

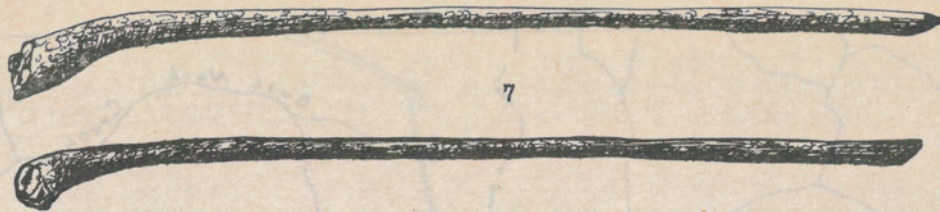


..... Route taken on first day of hunt
 Route taken on second day of hunt

Miles

Fig. 6: Rappahannock Territory and Route Taken in Fall Hunt.
 (Numbers refer to altitude in feet.)

A. Old Tom Nelson's place.
 B. Old Man Nat's place.



7

Fig. 7: Throwing clubs for killing rabbits on the "Rabbit Drive" (see page 8).
(Material, dogwood, length of upper 24 in., lower 28 in.)

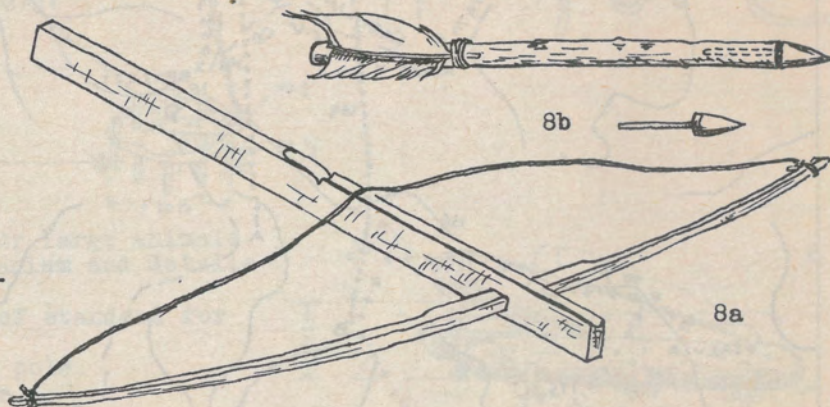


Fig. 8: a. Rappahannock crossbow (36 in. long) of white oak, and stock (24 in.). Darts and elder shoots with inserted points of resinous pine (5 to 10 in. long) and single feather.

b. Detail of dart, showing point and method of insertion.

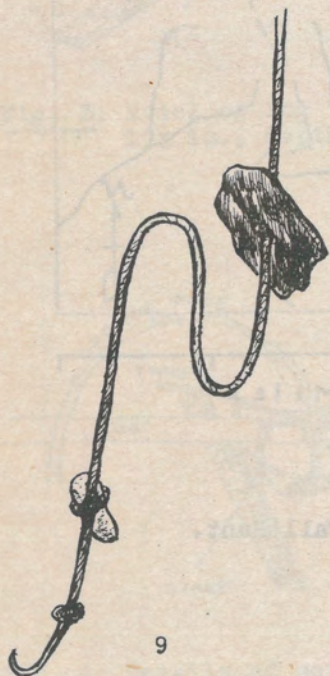


Fig. 9: Fishhook of bent pin ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) with white pebble sinker, pine bark float bobbin and black thread line.

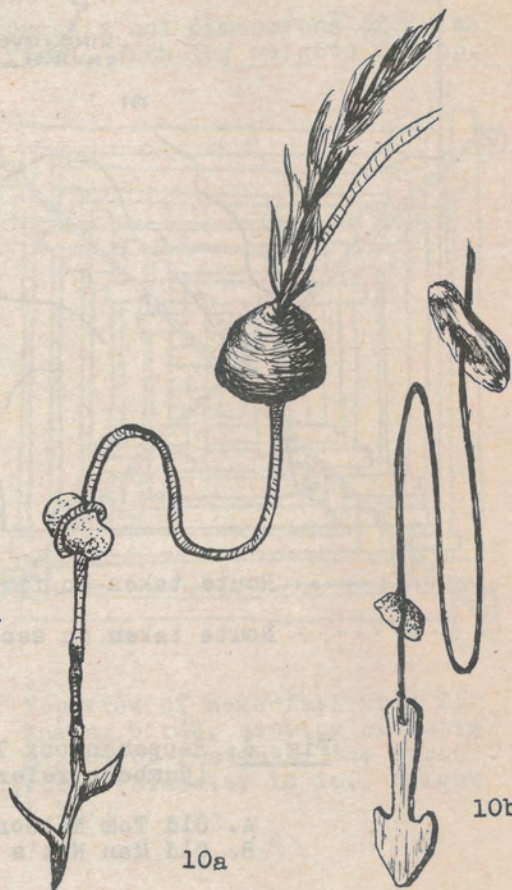


Fig. 10: a. Fishhook of thorn ($1\frac{3}{4}$ in.) with pebble sinker, pine bark float and feather for visibility.

b. Fishhook of bone ($1\frac{3}{4}$ in.).

9

10a

10b

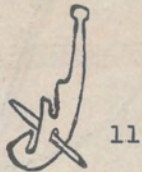


Fig. 11: Fishhook of bone with spur ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.). (Drawn from description by E.S. Carpenter.)

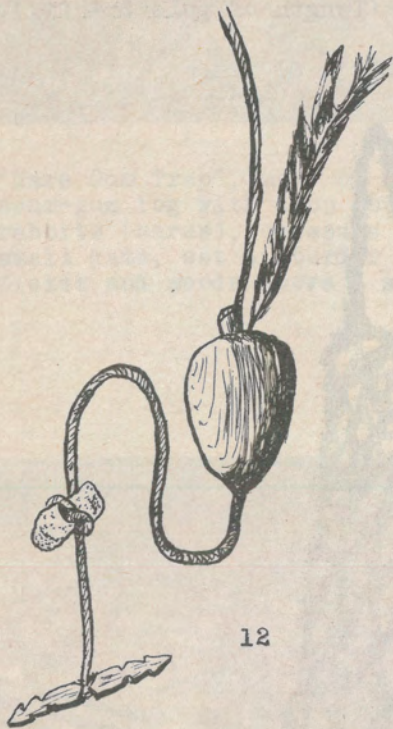


Fig. 12: Gorge fishhook of bone ($1\frac{1}{2}$ in.) with pine-bark float and white feather for visibility at dusk.

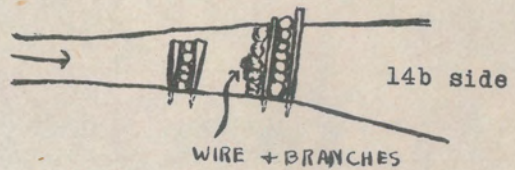


Fig. 14: Permanent fish weir in runlet of Hutchinson's Pond (about 4 ft. across); Top view (a) and side elevation (b).

Fig. 13: a. Fish spear of bone lashed in split of red birch sapling. Total length 8 feet.

b. Same as figure a, with lashing of hickory bark.



13b

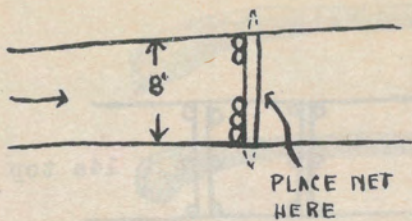


Fig. 15: Fish weir closed with net at opening.

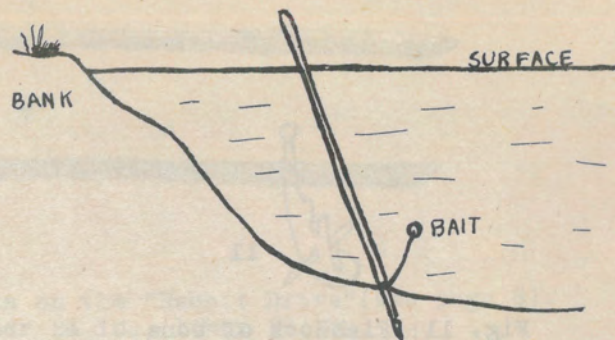


Fig. 16: Device for taking turtles, set along banks of stream or pond (length of pole 3-4 ft.).



Fig. 17: Carrying bag for fish made of "bar grass" (*Yucca filanientosa*) (12 x 14 in.), made by wife of Chief Otho Nelson.



Fig. 18: "Hare Gum Trap", made of hollow sour-gum log with drop door, for rabbits (hares), opossums and small game, set at border of fields and woods above a swamp.



Fig. 19: Smashing trap, "mash trap", of heavy pine logs placed near the edge of a sluggish stream, set for muskrats, mink, otter and raccoon.



Fig. 20: "Scratch Trap", a pen of log-house construction built on high ground in pine thicket, with entrance beneath bottom stick at lower left side, set for quail ("partridges") and ground birds. The same type of trap, about 3 feet high, is set for turkeys.



Fig. 21: Mixed woods of highland type, an ideal haunt for wild turkeys.



Fig. 22: Cage-fall trap, "bird trap", a pyramidal cage of oak or pine slivers held in position by cords tied at the four corners, and crossing at the apex. It is supported at one end by a figure-four trigger and is set in the dooryard for small birds in winter time.



Fig. 23: Spring pole trap, "snare". A choke noose is set around a circle of notched stakes, its loop being sprung by a stout hickory pole bent down for a spring, to choke and suspend large game. The close-up view shows noose and trigger set for action in open oak woods near a swamp.



Fig. 24: Rappahannock men (Sam and Little Otho Nelson) demonstrating hunting of rabbits with hunting clubs (dogwood) and dogs. The "rabbit drive" took place in the autumn after the harvest time and was participated in by groups of from 10 to 15 men with dogs in a two or three day excursion from Indian Neck to Loretto, then to Hunter's Mills and back to Indian Neck, in a communal hunt under a "leader". The throwing club is hurled by a sidewise arm motion to hit the ground ahead of the running rabbit flushed by the men or dogs.



Fig. 25: Rappahannock man with crossbow ready to shoot dart at target (Chief Otho Nelson, 1941).



Fig. 26: Wickenaw (Rickenaw) Swamp near Indian Neck, a typical flooded basin surrounded by high ground in which small game and reptile life abounds. (April, 1941)



Fig. 27: Garnett's Mill Swamp near the home of "Little Otho" Nelson, Indian Neck. A sluggish stream flows through the valley bottom, surrounded by marsh growths, where mullet, dace, catfish, frogs and reptiles abound. (April, 1941)



Fig. 28: "Fish Stick" of trimmed young cedar top hung at side of house door. Salt-fish are washed and placed on the prongs to drain the salt off over night.



Fig. 29: Rappahannock fisherman demonstrating use of notched bone-pointed spear in taking 10-15 pound mullets, from stand on margin of Garnett's Mill pond. The spear is not thrown. (April, 1941)



Fig. 30: Boy aiming with bow and arrow.