

How the first men lived



Marie Neurath and J. A. Lauwerys

How the first men lived

How

PREPARED BY

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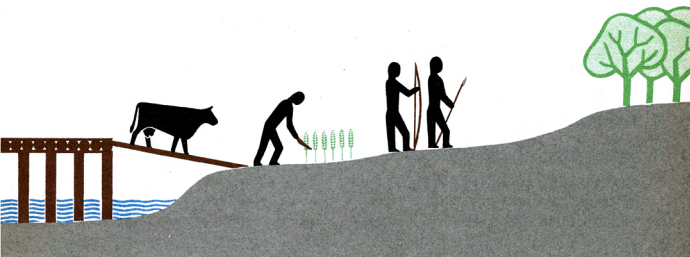


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the first men lived

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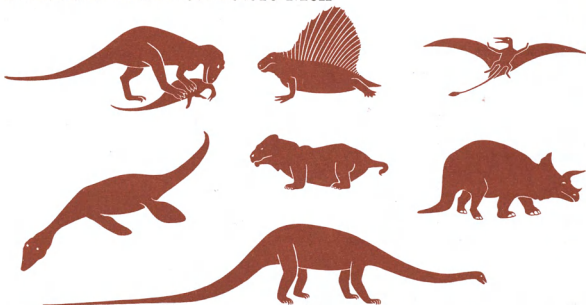


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Monsters that Lived Before Men



The two giant reptiles on the left were as long as buses, the two in the centre as big as camels, those on the right longer than taxi-cabs. The Diplodocus, at the bottom, was as long as a locomotive. All lived millions of years before men.

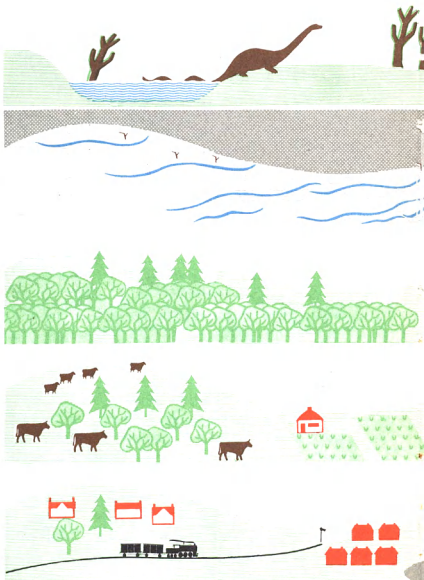
Long before Christopher Columbus first landed in America, long before Julius Caesar lived, man's history had already begun. It began more than five thousand years ago, when men first began to write. But it is much more than a hundred times as long ago as that since the first men lived, and more than fifty thousand times as long ago since creatures like any now living appeared on the earth.

These creatures, which lived when the great coal forests grew, were like large dragonflies. After millions of years came fishes and creatures which could live either on land or in water. Still later there were reptiles. Some were no larger than a tortoise but others were huge monsters as big as a large locomotive. At last there came animals like those we know today, and finally man appeared.

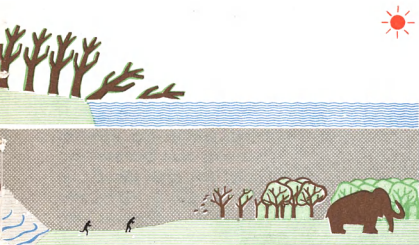
Man Comes on the Scene

All creatures which had lived during the hundreds of millions of years before man came had been content to let themselves fit into the world. Man not only tried to fit himself into the world, he also tried to alter things in the world around him so that they might suit *him* better.

When long ages of intense cold came and thick ice covered much of the earth, some men moved away to warmer places. Some found shelter in deep caves. They began to use fire to keep away wild beasts, such as the giant woolly mammoth, while they slept. Instead of always running from such creatures in fear, men gradually learned to hunt and kill them, using their skins for clothing and their flesh for food.



The top picture shows the earth before man appeared.



Then, about ten thousand years ago, the last ice age ended. Life was no longer so hard. Man made friends with such animals as horses, dogs, cows and sheep, training them to help him and giving them food and shelter in return. Besides gathering wild fruits, berries and herbs, men slowly learned to dig, sow seeds and reap crops.



As the years passed by, people had time for other things besides just trying to find enough food to keep them alive. Forests were cleared, large fields ploughed and planted, houses, temples and churches built.



At last man learned to make coal, steam, electricity and oil do work for him. He built railways, locomotives, roads, motor cars and great cities. He had become the kind of person we know today.



Then man came, learned to find food, farm, and build.

Man Learns a Mighty Secret

How was it that man was able to do all these things which no other living creature could do?

First, his feet and legs were so well made and strong that he could walk with only two limbs instead of using all four. This left his hands and arms free to do all kinds of other things. (Several animals, like apes and moles, have "hands" almost as well made as ours, but they are used all the time for moving about. Other animals, like kangaroos, have two limbs free, but they have no way of grasping things as we have.)

Another advantage was a fine pair of eyes which could see just as clearly close up as at a distance, so that man could carefully examine the things he picked up with his hands. Even more useful was his jaw, with its many tongue muscles; this gave him the chance of learning to speak, so that he could increase his knowledge by exchanging thoughts with his fellows. The greatest advantage of all was his splendid brain which enabled him to compare one thing with another, to remember the past, plan for

the future, think out problems, and to find new uses for things around him.

It was only by making full use of his brain that man learned one of his mightiest secrets—the secret of fire. When early men first saw fire, it is unlikely that they thought of any possible use for it; they were probably terrified. Perhaps they saw high walls of flame sweeping through the forest; tall trees were charred and blackened, fruit and berries were destroyed, wild animals were madened with terror.

Very slowly men realized that fire could be made to serve them. Its heat could be used to warm their caves, its flames to light the dark night, its terror to frighten away wild beasts.

We do not know for sure how men first got their fires. Perhaps when they were trying to sharpen one stone against another a spark fell on to some dry leaves and set light to them. Perhaps a pile of rotting leaves or grass would become hot enough to catch fire. But other accidents, too, might start a fire.



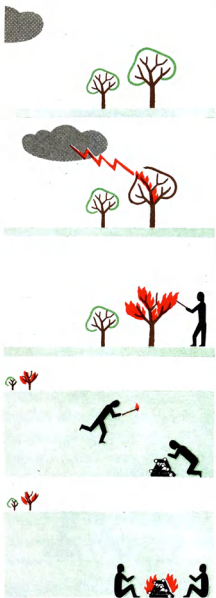
A chain of fires can carry news quickly. The man who sees this ship sinking, lights a fire to pass on the news to the next hill-top. Fire after fire is lit on other hills until a messenger who sees the last one takes the news to the king.

The Chariot of the Sun

A tree might be struck by lightning and burst into flames. People would be frightened at first, but if the fire did not seem dangerous they might venture to light one of their own from it. In some places, too, men may have lit fires from trees set ablaze by hot lava from volcanoes.

One thing is certain. Getting fire was not easy. Once men had it they tried to keep it burning as long as possible. They could do this by lighting it in a shallow hole in the ground. At sunset the hole would be almost covered with turf so that the fire smouldered all night. In the morning the turf would be removed and fresh fuel added.

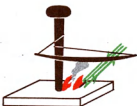
Taking fire from one place to another also was not easy. People could certainly carry fire a short distance by using lighted sticks as torches, but it took many centuries to learn a simple way of carrying fire a long way. Then people living on the islands near Greece found they could keep a tiny fire smouldering inside a hollowed-out stalk of a plant called fennel, and take it where they liked. The ancient Greeks had a story of Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven and gave it to men. Cheating Zeus, King of the Gods, Keeper of Fire, he lit a torch at the chariot of the sun and brought fire to earth in a hollow fennel stalk. In this way, they said, he gave men a power that might go on growing until one day they would be equal to the gods.



Getting fire



Keeping fire



Making fire

Before history began men had nothing much better than the fire-drill to help them to make fire. This was a bow with its string wound round a wooden cylinder which rested on a board. As the bow was drawn backwards and forwards the cylinder whirled round fast and made the board hot. In time a spark flew out and set light to pieces of dry straw placed on the board.

Until about a hundred years ago fire-making was still a slow job. Our great - great - grandfathers used to carry tinder-boxes containing a flint and some dry, powdery fuel to start their fires.

Making fire first became easy only when matches were invented, just before 1840. Since that time we have almost forgotten how hard it was for people to make fires in the past.

Early Men's Struggle for Food



The man floats gourds on the lake until the ducks are used to them. Then, wearing a gourd on his head, he catches the ducks by their legs.

It is easy to understand why early men took so long to find new ways of doing things. Almost all their time was taken up in the struggle to find food for themselves and their children.

Fortunately men can eat, and even enjoy, many more different foods than most animals can. The Bushmen of South Africa, for instance, used to eat grass-seed, lizards and ant-eggs, as well as the flesh of the ostrich and the hippopotamus ; the Indians of Tierra del Fuego, at the tip of South America, eat snails, frogs, toads and sea urchins.

Cave men, too, probably ate many things which we would not eat. No doubt some of them suffered sickness and even death after trying new food-stuffs. The berries of the deadly nightshade looked just as delicious as the blackberry, and the poisonous toadstool as tempting as the wholesome mushroom. So people soon learned to eat only what they had seen other people eat before.

The great difficulty was to find *enough* to eat. During late summer and autumn there were plenty of nuts and fruit, but in winter there were few growing things except

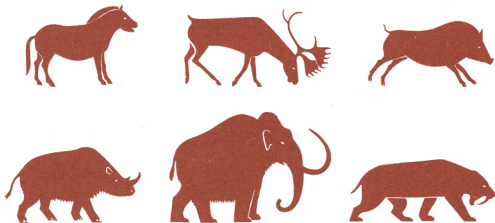
grasses and roots. Then men had to depend mainly on what they could get by hunting and fishing.

Perhaps the first fishermen stood knee-deep in a stream, with a stone-tipped stick poised above the water, and speared the fishes. Perhaps they lay patiently on their bellies by the water's edge and made a grab at every likely fish which came near them. Thousands of years had to pass before men learned to fish with rod, line and hook.

Catching animals was much more complicated. Sometimes a man might

kill a rabbit or a hare with a stick or a well-aimed stone. In east Asia small birds were sometimes caught by smearing branches with a kind of thick glue made from the sap of trees. The natives of Mexico floated hollow gourds on the lakes until the wild ducks were quite used to them ; then they swam about with these gourds on their heads and caught ducks by pulling them under water by their legs.

But men wanted animals which would provide more meat, and so they took up big-game hunting.

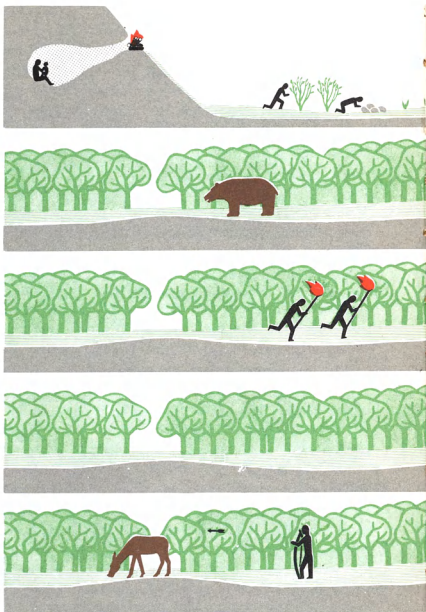


Early men not only killed such animals as the wild horse, the reindeer and the boar ; they also hunted large, fierce animals like the rhinoceros, the mammoth and the sabre-toothed tiger.

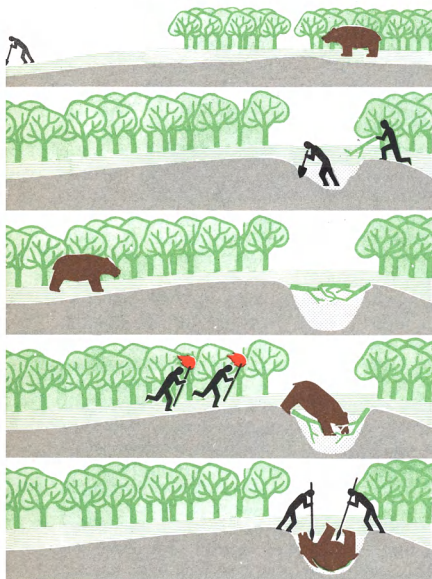
How Cave Men Hunted Big Animals

Try to imagine what happened when a group of hungry cave men, looking for herbs and berries, suddenly spied a bear in the distance. Perhaps they were unarmed. Was the bear hungry like themselves? Would it attack them before they could race back to the safety of their cave with its blazing fire? They were afraid, but they were also hungry, and a bear would mean plenty of meat.

After eyeing them curiously for a time the animal might go loping away into the forest. During the next day or two they would try to discover whether it often came that way. If it did they dug a pit in its path, and lay branches and twigs over the top.



While out looking for food, cave men see a bear. With



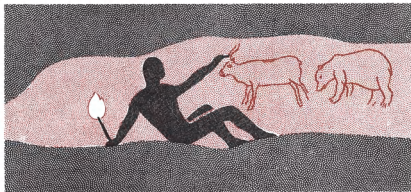
torches they chase him into a pit and kill him with spears.

Then a number of men would lie in wait for it, some crouched behind trees, gripping their spears, others concealed in caves or among rocks, carrying torches. Suddenly the bear comes out from the forest. Immediately men appear with flaming torches, as if by magic, and chase the terrified creature towards the pit. There is a sharp crack of snapping branches as the bear falls into the trap. Shouting with excitement, the spear-men dash out and kill their prey.

Large, fierce animals were hunted in this way even after men had invented bows and arrows to kill smaller creatures.

To hunt deer or reindeer, men sometimes disguised themselves in the skins of those animals and mingled with the herd until they could get near one and kill it.

Pictures Painted Thirty Thousand Years Ago



Thirty thousand years ago, in caves dimly lit by torches, early artists were painting some of the world's first pictures. These often help us to understand how early men lived.

During fairly recent years modern men have learned quite a lot about how cave men lived. One way of doing this was by studying how backward peoples still live today. In remote parts of Africa, Australia and South America there are primitive tribesmen who have not yet caught up with modern ways of life and are still living in the same kind of way as the old cave men did.

Watching these primitive tribes gives us a good clue to the way in which the cave men lived. But also we have some evidence, and it is

evidence which the cave men themselves have left us. In southern France and northern Spain many stone-age paintings, mostly of animals, have been found on the walls and ceilings of deep caves. Some of these paintings, made perhaps thirty thousand years ago, are extremely beautiful—so beautiful that we cannot help thinking that men must have begun to learn something about drawing and painting long, even, before that.

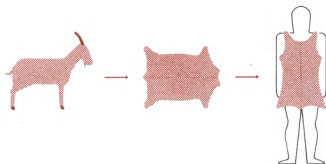
Maybe we shall never know why cave men spent long hours painting pictures in dark caverns where they

would hardly ever be seen. Perhaps they did it simply for pleasure. More likely they believed that if they painted a deer on the wall of their cave, a real deer would be found more easily the next time they went hunting.

These pictures can tell us quite a lot about the cave men of that time, just as old photographs can tell us a lot about our fathers and grandfathers. Some of them are hunting scenes, and show us what weapons and hunting methods were used. Others show men dressed in animal skins and give us a clue about early clothing.

Animal skins must have been very plentiful among those early hunters,

but we cannot be quite certain why people thought of wearing them. It may have been for warmth or the sheer pleasure of dressing up, or it may have been to help men disguise themselves to look like the animals they wanted to stalk. But what we know about backward peoples of today leads us to think that these crude clothes were probably worn to show rank, like an admiral's hat or a king's crown. On special occasions, perhaps when a young man had reached the age to be told the secrets of his tribe or clan, the chief of the bear tribe would put on a bear's skin; the chief of the lion tribe would wear the skin of a lion.



Dried animal skins cut into rough cloaks made a kind of uniform for early chiefs and priests.

How Fire Served the Men of the Bow

By the time of the cave artists, men had learned new uses for fire.

Cooking began thousands of years earlier, possibly when men found some animal roasted by a forest fire. Later, men learned to roast whole animals on a spit, turning the carcass from time to time to cook it evenly. When they could grow wheat, they ground the ears into flour with stones and baked rough bread.

Boiling was more difficult. The first pots, often made of a basket-work of rushes covered with clay, would have cracked over a fire. Water could be heated in them only by dropping hot stones into it. Boiling food began only when men learned how to make stronger pots.

Roasting meat



Baking bread



Warming water



Boiling food





Protection against fierce animals

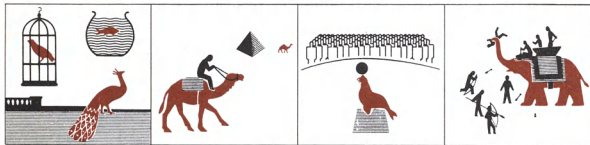


Attraction for friendly animals

Men found, too, that fire was useful for other things besides cooking and making pottery. They noticed that although fierce beasts did not rush past fires to attack them, all kinds of animals came *near* fires for warmth, or out of curiosity. So these bowmen might sometimes make two fires a little apart and lie down in between with their bows and arrows. In time a wolf or a bear would come along. The bowmen would slay it and have meat enough for several days.

But men did not try to kill every animal they saw. Some, like sheep or horses, were quite harmless and men probably killed them only if they could find nothing else. Maybe they thought it unlucky to kill certain animals, just as some people still think it unlucky to kill spiders. These animals were allowed to come near the fire without danger, and in time they ceased to be afraid or shy of men. Some of them probably became regular visitors to the caves.

Man Makes Friends with Animals



Not all animals work as camels and elephants do. Some, like seals and peacocks are kept for amusement. Some of the first animals were tamed mainly as pets.

Have you ever wondered why men first began to tame and keep such animals as horses and cows? Perhaps you can think of an answer straight away: horses to ride on, cows to give milk and butter. That answer is quite simple, but it is also quite wrong. Wild horses are often too weak to carry a man more than a very short distance. Wild cows give hardly any milk and they are inclined to be very fierce, especially when they have young calves.

So it seems, then, that early men did not keep animals for any purpose which we should consider useful, and this opinion is strengthened by what we know about other people, who lived much later. The Burmese, for

instance, kept chickens, but they never ate eggs. The Chinese kept cows, but never milked them.

Men may have kept animals for reasons which do not seem very good to us but which may have seemed very good to them. For example, the Burmese believed that they could tell what was going to happen in the future by splitting open the thigh-bone of a chicken. Even the highly civilized Romans of Julius Caesar's days "told fortunes" by gazing into the livers of certain animals.

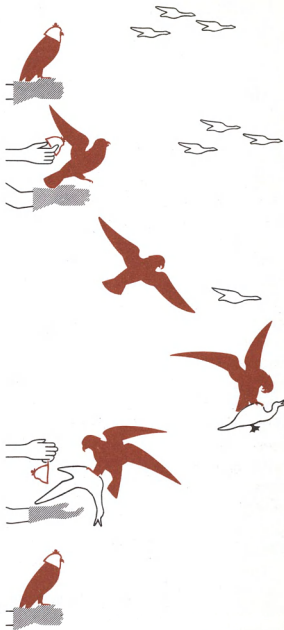
It is also probable that some animals were first kept for no reason at all except that people liked them or were amused by them. There are still backward tribesmen in parts of

Australia who have no useful tame animals, but they keep dingoes (a kind of dog) and wallabies (a kind of small kangaroo) as pets.

The strange thing is that after animals have been tamed and domesticated for many years they are often altered quite a lot. Domesticated horses are much bigger and stronger than wild horses ; domesticated cows yield more milk than wild cows ; domesticated sheep have far woollier fleece than wild sheep. So although animals may not be of much use to men when they are first tamed, they often become useful later.

Slowly men learned to get much of their food by keeping cattle, sheep and poultry. Instead of remaining hunters, many men became herdsman and shepherds. They learned also to use horses for riding across the plains, and camels for carrying them across the deserts.

Even birds sometimes help men. This hooded hawk perches on a man's wrist. When wild ducks appear the hood is removed. The hawk flies up, seizes a duck, and brings it to the man.

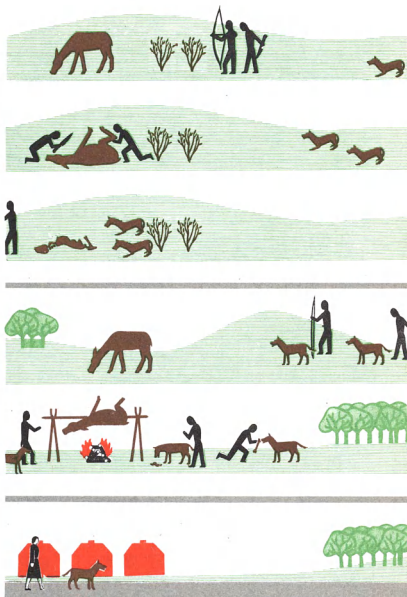


Dog and Man Get Together

The first animals man kept, about twenty-five thousand years ago, were dogs. Perhaps it began when men first threw bones to dogs standing near their fires. Later on dogs would follow hunters. After the kill the hunters took what meat they needed and the dogs ate the rest.

Gradually men noticed that dogs were useful for helping them to follow the trail of animals. When dogs helped in this way men would reward them with bones or pieces of meat. Instead of slinking along behind the hunters, dogs began to walk beside them, with tails wagging.

Nowadays many dogs are not useful to us at all, but they still walk proudly beside us.



The dog becomes a hunting partner and companion

But even today, as for thousands of years past, some dogs still help men who go hunting, not only by following the scent of animals but also by fetching birds which have been shot.

Try to imagine how excited an early hunter must have been the first time his dog retrieved a dead bird. Maybe his arrow had hit a wild duck flying over a lake. The bird would fall into the water far beyond his reach. Just at first he would imagine that his shot had been wasted, and that his prize was lost.

Suddenly he hears a splash and sees the dog striking out into the water. For a moment he thinks the dog is going to steal the bird and eat it itself. But in a short time the dog swims back with the duck in its mouth and drops it at his feet. Today, when people go shooting game, they still take a dog with them to retrieve their pheasants or partridges.

When men became shepherds and herdsmen they found that dogs could be trained to round up their sheep and cattle. In the far north, too, dogs were often used, and still are, for pulling sledges over the snow and ice. In parts of Belgium dogs are still used for pulling small, light carts, and in all parts of the world watch-dogs are kept to frighten away burglars.

In modern well-policed cities, where dogs have very little to do, we still sometimes keep them, just as people first did, mainly because we like them and they seem to like us.



A dog learns to retrieve

A Lesson Which has Lasted Half a Million Years



The first tool-makers had few materials to work with : stone, wood from the forest, bone, horn and leather from animals.

Before men began to tame and keep animals, they had already learned how to use a great number of different tools and weapons such as torches, fire-drills, spears, and bows.



Learning to use tools is a lesson which began more than half a million years ago and is still going on ! We know that apes use sticks to knock down food which is out of reach, and probably the first ape-like men used them in the same way. In time, no doubt, they also used sticks as swords, to fight with, or as spades, to help dig tasty roots out of the ground.

These ape-men, too, certainly picked up stones and handled them. Very slowly they learned just how useful stones can be. With a big stone you can crack open a coconut or an oyster ; with a small one, carefully aimed, you can kill a bird or a rabbit ; you can hit one stone against another to signal to a comrade some distance away.



An even more important discovery was that stones sometimes break when knocked together, and one of them is often left with a sharp edge which can be used for scraping. Stone tools roughly sharpened in this way have been found in many parts of the world.

After thousands of years men found out that one common sort of stone—flint—was more useful than the rest. When flint is given a blow, sharp flakes of stone break off which can be used as crude knives. So men began to make most of their tools from flint, sometimes using the flakes which broke off, sometimes using the larger sharp “core” which remained. By the time of the cave artists, flintworkers were making an amazing number of tools—choppers, saws, knives, drills, harpoons, spear-heads, arrow-heads, and fish-hooks.



Of course flint was not the only material early men used for making tools. The Aztecs of Mexico hardly used any flint. They used a very hard transparent mineral called obsidian, from which they made knives, daggers, and even razors. Wood was commonly used for the handles of hammers, axes and knives, while

spears, bows, arrows and clubs were mainly of wood. Then, also, the bones of animals were often used for making hooks, harpoons, drinking horns and handles for daggers. Fine fish-bones were useful for making needles, and the shells of sea urchins sometimes provided ready-made cups or scoops. The sinews of various animals could be used as string or thread, while for tying handles to flint axe-heads fine strips of leather, cut from animal-hides, were often used.



But, still, in most parts of the world flint remained the chief material for tool-making for many thousands of years, and as time went by it became less and less easy to find.



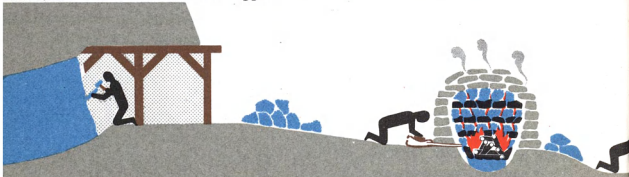
Tools in Flint, Tools in Copper, Tools in Iron



The first mines supplied flint for tools



Later, men mined and smelted copper



Iron tools were made when smelting methods improved



At last men dug mines, and crawled along the dark passages searching for the precious flints. The remains of some of these old mines, which made it possible to go on using flint tools for thousands of years more, can still be seen in parts of northern Ireland and eastern England. Though flint tools were useful, they were easily broken. Something tougher, like metal, was needed.

But pure metals are not very easy to find. To get a regular supply of metal men had to find the stony or earthy ores, and learn to extract metal from them. The ancient Egyptians first began smelting copper about five thousand years ago.

Sometimes the early copper-miners lit fires under a seam of copper ore. When the ore was hot they threw cold water over it, causing it to break into lumps. These lumps were placed in a stone furnace and heated with charcoal, which was kept burning fiercely by means of a blow-pipe. Molten copper ran to the bottom of the furnace. This could be poured into moulds the shape of axe-heads. A copper axe was stronger than a flint one and a blunt blade could be softened by heating and then beaten out sharp again.

Later, iron ore was also mined. It was smelted rather like copper but in a much hotter furnace. Iron was not moulded, but had to be made red hot and beaten into shape on an anvil. An iron axe was sharper and stronger than a copper axe, and when blunt it could be quickly sharpened on a grindstone.

How Early Men Found Shelter



Early men often camped under an overhanging cliff. A few branches with skins stretched over them would be placed at the entrance to keep out the wind and rain.

As men learned to make and use better tools they were able to build better shelters and homes for themselves. For thousands of years early men, with only rough sticks and stones to help them, had to make use of whatever natural shelters they could find—caves, narrow valleys sheltered by trees, overhanging cliffs or rocks which might protect them from wind and rain. In any case, permanent well-built homes would

have been of little use to men who spent their lives wandering from place to place searching for food.

Some primitive people who still live by foraging and hunting, like the Waddis of northern Australia, build no permanent homes. But such wanderers cannot always depend on finding natural shelter just when it is needed. So in time men began to make shelters which they could carry about with them. Sometimes, like

the Waddis, they simply used animal skins which could be hung over the boughs of trees to form a kind of roof. Sometimes, like the American Indians, they made real tents.

Later, when men kept flocks and herds and began to grow crops, they needed places where they could store their tools, cook their food, and sleep securely year after year. These first homes were sometimes made of mud, dried and hardened in the sun, like those of many African Negroes today. Sometimes, when men had axes strong enough to fell trees or to lop off stout branches, homes would be built of logs.

Another building material which has been used from very ancient times

is stone, but since it was so heavy to move about and so difficult to shape it was not often used at first for building ordinary homes.

One of the many difficulties in using stone was leaving openings for doors and openings to let in the light, for the first stonemasons had no knowledge of the arch with which the Romans later built stone bridges. Sometimes the problem was solved by using two or more tall stones as pillars and resting another one on top of them. Sometimes, too, a mound or hillock was hollowed out to make a kind of great room inside the earth ; stones were then used to shore up the roof and sides and to strengthen the entrance.



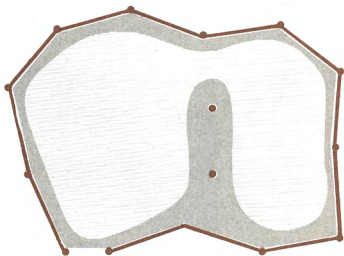
Sometimes a chamber was hollowed under a hill, and stones used to strengthen walls and roof.

Building Homes and Temples

The ordinary houses of the first farmers were often low wooden huts with floors below the level of the ground.

There were several reasons for building huts like this. The builders needed less wood to complete their huts, and at a time when every log had to be cut to size with a stone axe or saw, this meant a big saving of work. Then, too, the solid earth which formed the lower parts of the "walls" kept out the cold better than crudely-joined logs.

Sometimes a ridge of earth was left along the centre of the hut, to divide it into two parts. This ridge made a convenient seat, and also served as a base for the centre supports of the thatched roof.

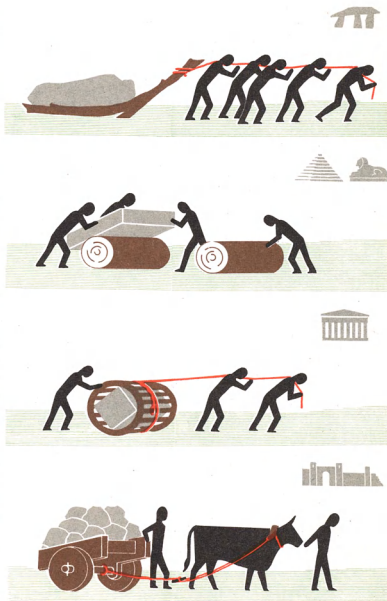


Front, section and ground-plan of an early home

The builders of ancient temples, like Stonehenge in England, worked with huge rough stones which they moved about on primitive sledges drawn by large teams of men. To place one of these great stones on top of two or three "pillar" stones they probably had to make a sloping road of earth leading from the ground to the top of the pillars.

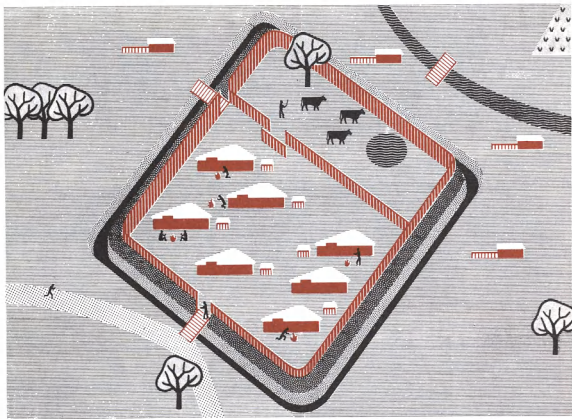
The more civilized Egyptians who built the great pyramids knew how to cut stones into large neat blocks, which they moved on wooden rollers, and the stones used in building the early temples of Crete and Greece were sometimes moved in a kind of cage shaped like a cylinder.

The later Greeks and Romans used smaller stones, cementing them together as we do now, and carried them in carts.



Moving stones for building temples

The God of Growing Things

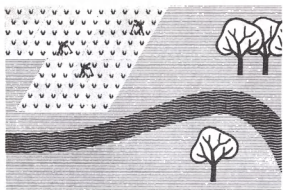


At night a broad ditch and a stout fence protected the homes and cattle of the first villagers. By day, men laboured and cattle grazed in the nearby fields.

After living as wanderers for thousands of years men had at last begun to build homes and villages because they had found a way of living for year after year in the same place. Not only had they cows and sheep

to provide them with meat, but they had also learned to grow grain and vegetables for themselves.

How did men first learn that seeds buried in the hard earth would grow and yield crops? Perhaps when a



wandering tribe found an abundance of ripe wild cereals growing they took as much as they needed and buried some in the ground as a thanksgiving to the God of Growing Things. Months later they might pass the same spot and see that there was again an abundance of grain. Ah ! The God of Growing Things was pleased with their offering ; they must make him another ! Or perhaps when wild grain was being pounded into flour, some of it fell and was trampled into the earth. Again, somebody would notice months later that new grain grew there. If this happened by accident, could it not be made to happen again by design ?

Presently little clumps of growing things would appear around many a

cave and camp—the first farms. This new way of life first began between ten and fifteen thousand years ago, and spread slowly over many parts of Asia and Europe. But agriculture was also begun quite independently by other peoples at other times. The Indians of Central America found a way of cultivating corn almost five thousand years ago ; the people of southeast Asia found out how to grow bananas.

The first farming villages of Europe and Asia were usually settlements of a score or more wooden huts and a few log barns. The whole settlement was completely surrounded by a fence, and sometimes also by high mounds of earth to serve as protection against wild beasts and wandering tribes. Each village was built near a river or stream to ensure a supply of fresh water, and often there would be a pond for the use of the cattle.

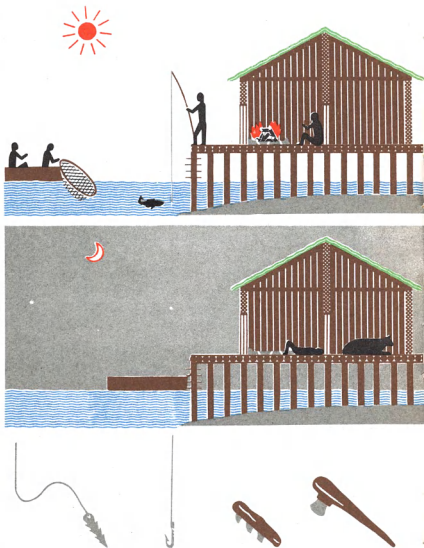
Crops were grown in the fields adjoining the village, and flocks and herds grazed in the nearby meadows. At sundown the cattle were driven into a compound inside the fence and all gates closed for the night.

The Lake Dwellers

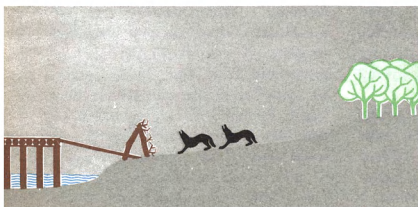
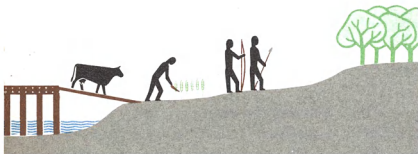
Once men became farmers they became men of property. They had hoes and axes, growing crops, barns filled with grain, and homes of their own which they were determined to protect carefully.

Many of the first farming villages were fenced and surrounded with mounds, but others were built on piles over the waters of lakes for added protection. Although the first lake villages were built more than ten thousand years ago, many more grew up when men had learned to use tools of copper and iron.

Remains of these old villages have been found in many parts of Europe, from the British Isles to the Black Sea Coast. Similar villages built over lakes and rivers still exist



Many early settlements were built above water. At night the villagers knew how to make harpoons, fish-



*barriade was used to keep enemies and wild animals away.
hooks, saws, axes, sickles, spears, bows and arrows.*

in Borneo, New Guinea, West and Central Africa, and near the mouths of the Amazon and Orinoco rivers, in South America.

Some of the lake settlements of the Bronze and Iron Age were far too large to be called villages. In some cases as many as fifty thousand stout wooden piles were driven into the bed of a lake to serve as foundations for buildings. At Laibach, in Yugoslavia, where a lake used by these old farmers has now completely dried up, ancient pottery and tools of very fine craftsmanship have been found in recent years.

The people who lived in these settlements were no longer savages or barbarians. They were men and women who were beginning to build up a civilization, and they were standing on the very threshold of history.

The Magic Marks Which Led to Writing



Part of a sentence written by a priest who lived in ancient Egypt.

In some of the more fertile parts of the world, especially in the valleys of the Nile and the Euphrates, crops could be grown more easily than elsewhere. Some people had time for other things—playing music, making up stories, erecting buildings, serving as priests and law-givers.

Amongst all these people the priests were long thought to be the most important. They not only offered prayers and sacrifices to the gods ; they also studied the movements of the sun, moon and stars, gave men a calendar, forecast when the rains would come, and fixed the times for

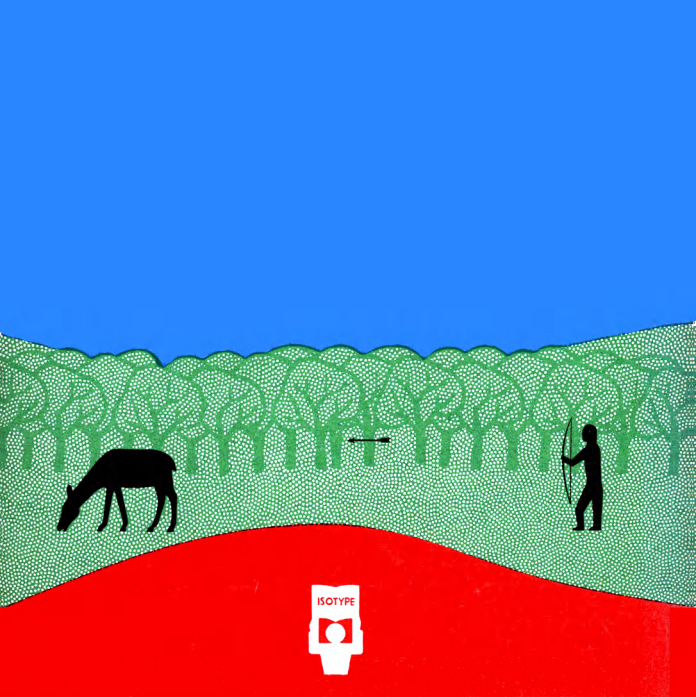
sowing and reaping. They were the guardians of all things mysterious.

The time came when the priests wanted to make records of these mysteries. Often, too, they wanted to keep records of what tributes of grain and fruit had been brought to them for their services. So they began to make marks on tablets of soft clay or on animal skins to remind them of these various things.

These were indeed magic marks, for in time they grew into whole written languages. They were the beginnings of the records on which our knowledge of history depends.



These ancient Babylonian words mean “ eldest son ”.



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