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## THE MEDICINE BUNDLES AND BUSKS OF THE FLORIDA SEMINOLE

William C. Sturtevant

A recent paper by Louis Capron (1953) on some important aspects of Seminole religion is the first major contribution to ethnological knowledge of the Florida Seminole since Spoehr's publications (1941, 1944) on their social organization. Like Spoehr's work, Capron's was carried out largely among the Muskogee-speaking Cow Creek band.

Mr. Capron, a resident of West Palm Beach, has been sympathetically interested in the Seminole and their customs for some twenty years. His interest in Florida history and some anthropological training under MacCurdy at Yale are perhaps important factors leading to his avocational study of Seminole culture. Long and increasing freindship with several Cow Creek Seminole, including one of the outstanding medicine men, resulted in a confidence in his discretion and friendliness which opened to him aspects of Seminole religious belief and practice usually closed to the outsider. His investigation of these subjects, by observation and questioning, has been carried out with tact, so that he is now one of the few outsiders whose opinions and advice are sought by Seminole leaders. My own experience with the Cow Creek leads me to believe that their friendly contact with Capron is one reason for the fact that they are today much easier for the anthropologist to investigate than are the Mikasuki.

The author of the present paper spent three seasons of field work among the Mikasuki band.<sup>1</sup> During the last of these, from May, 1952, to February, 1953, I had the advantage of a set of galley proofs of Capron's report,<sup>2</sup> which was a great aid in investigating the topics he covers (chiefly the medicine bundles and the busk) among the Mikasuki. I have attended parts of two Cow Creek busks (Capron has attended several, and seen parts of the ceremony that I have not), but was unable to attend any Mikasuki ceremonies. My knowledge of the subject is based largely on interviewing an ex-medicine man of the Mikasuki, using as points of departure Capron's paper and to a lesser extent my observations of the Cow Creek busks.

The purpose of this paper is to summarize and supplement Capron's descriptions and indicate wherein they differ from my own data, and to give some attention to the implications of the subjects for comparative ethnology

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<sup>1</sup> Superior numbers refer to notes which have been placed together in the section preceding the bibliography of this paper.

of the Southeast and adjacent regions. Because of the differences in our sources of data, the disagreements between Capron's and my own information are sometimes difficult to evaluate. Capron relies on much observation, and somewhat scattered information from several different informants, specialist and non-specialist, given on many different occasions, and his description refers mainly to the Cow Creek band. My own information comes chiefly from systematic interviewing of a Mikasuki specialist. Thus our differences are due in part to concentration on different bands, in part to differences in knowledge of our informants, in part to the inevitable discrepancies between theory and practice, and lastly to our own different backgrounds and manner of working. It should be said at the outset that there can be no disagreement that Capron has fulfilled his objective, of giving the "skeleton, articulated as carefully as possible, with flesh and skin added where possible," in which "the facts...given are correct [and] the broad picture is authentic" (p. 160). Furthermore, he has made a major contribution to Southeastern ethnology in his discovery and description of Seminole medicine bundles, and in giving one of the most complete accounts of the busk of a single Southeastern tribe. Many busk descriptions have been written before,<sup>3</sup> but few or none are as detailed as Capron's. The outer form alone of the Seminole busk has never before been even adequately summarized, much less described from repeated observations and discussions with participants, as Capron does in his paper.

A popular article by Capron (1942), written at an earlier stage in his investigations, briefly previews some of the data in his present thorough paper, but this first indication of Seminole medicine bundles has been overlooked by all anthropologists concerned with the Southeast.<sup>4</sup>

In his 1953 paper, Capron opens with a brief introduction (pp. 159-161), and then discusses the medicine bundles — their caretakers, origin, function, contents, preservation, and augmentation (pp. 162-172). This is followed by a brief section (pp. 172-175) on some Seminole deities, attitudes towards religion, and ideas about prayer, souls, and afterlife. The major part of the work (pp. 175-208) concerns the busk ("Green Corn Dance"). The purposes, schedule, site and camp layout, ball game, and dancing are first discussed, in connection with the opening days of the ceremony. The important events of the following days are then described in chronological order. The paper concludes with several excellent illustrations, from the author's photographs.

In the following discussion, Capron's material is only briefly outlined (as his paper is readily available) to serve as a framework for the supplementary or contrary information from my own field work. Page references following a statement indicate that it is based on Capron's report rather than my own data.

## MEDICINE BUNDLES

According to Capron, there was originally only one medicine bundle, the contents of which and their uses were received in mythological times from the culture hero (164, 167). The two original medicine men, one of the Tiger sib and one of the Wind sib, were instructed in the use of the medicines by an individual (165) who is identified in myths in my collection as the adopted son of the Corn Mother. During the Seminole Wars, much of the medicine was lost or went West with parties of captives, since small bundles of medicine were made up from the main one for the use of individual war parties (167-168). At the end of the wars, three bundles were left in Florida (168). These exist today (168), and are the basis of modern Seminole ceremonial organization of three groups, each with a bundle and the medicine man who takes care of it, and each holding a separate annual busk including a meeting of the council which governs that segment of the tribe (162).

My informant laid more emphasis on the role of the two original medicine men in the discovery of the medicine. Some specific items are also, traditionally, gifts of various supernatural beings, chiefly the Thunders and associated supernaturals. He also emphasized that during the Seminole Wars there were many small, individual bundles, which were used by war parties. Some of these were lost, but others were combined into larger bundles on the death of their owners. The genealogies of the present medicine bundles are known for a period beginning after the wars, about a century ago. About seventy-five years ago there were nine different medicine bundles of various sizes in existence. Three of these were accidentally destroyed in fires, two of them together about 1895, and the other about 1908. Of the remainder, one is Cow Creek, as it always has been. The other five are today held by three Mikasuki medicine men, but this is a recent development. For a long time each was held by a different medicine man, who could if he wished hold an independent busk. However, two or more medicine men usually joined together to hold a busk (my informant remembers a maximum of four, including the Cow Creek one, in any one year). At present, two men each hold two bundles, but always hold their busks together, since one of them is said not to have sufficient knowledge to run an independent ceremony. This is the Tamiami Trail Green Corn Dance referred to by Capron. The other Mikasuki busk, Capron's Big Cypress Green Corn Dance, is run by the medicine man holding a single Mikasuki bundle, and the Cow Creek busk is independent as it has always been.

Each of the many separate small items in a bundle is individually wrapped in a piece of buckskin, and all are kept together wrapped in a deerskin with the head and leg skin kept on, hair side out (164, 170-171,

190-191). Between busks, the medicine man keeps the bundle at his camp; a few days before the ceremony begins, he hides it in the woods somewhere to the east of the busk grounds (171). Before sunrise on Court Day of the busk, the bundle is brought to the dance ground by the medicine man or his assistant, where the medicine man opens and examines each packet (171). He places these in a different deerskin, in which they are kept hanging from a special stake all during Court Day (171, 191). In the evening, the skin cover is ceremonially laid on the ground, with the packets resting on it; the next morning each packet is again opened and examined, the bundle is re-wrapped in the original (?) skin cover, and the medicine man takes it out and hides it, returning for it some time after the busk concludes (170, 171, 200-201, 208). These twenty-four hours are the only time during the year when the medicine bundle is displayed or handled (159).

According to my informant, most but not all of the items in a bundle are wrapped in deerhide — a few are unwrapped or kept in white cloth. The deerskin packet-wrappings are of incompletely tanned buckskin. This must be prepared by a man only (although tanning is normally women's work), and the maker must fast during the task. The skin is that of a young buck, its hair removed and slightly softened, but not smoked or dyed. When a medicine man dies, all the wrappings of his bundle must be replaced. The outer wrappings of the bundle in which it appears at the busk are only temporary; one to four untanned buck hides are borrowed for the purpose by the medicine man's assistant, and returned to the owner afterwards. In the woods, the bundle is kept in a small wooden structure, often covered with a tarpaulin. The bundle may be moved to a "better place" after the busk is over (and the medicine man must fast when he does so), but it is kept hidden in the woods the year round, not in the medicine man's camp.

According to Capron, each bundle contains six or seven hundred different items, "but the identical things in each of the three bundles" (164). My informant is not familiar with the contents of the Cow Creek bundle — although he believes it contains many items, perhaps as many or more than any Mikasuki bundle — but he is intimately acquainted with the contents of the two Mikasuki bundles he himself has cared for at busks, and knows also a considerable amount about the other three Mikasuki bundles, since he has been an assistant or an associated medicine man at several busks in which they were opened. He maintains that the number of items in the bundles varies, since each was originally made up from the smaller individual war bundles of from one to five or six owners. His estimate of the total number of items in the bundle he knows best, made up from the individual bundles of four or five warriors, is "about forty." Despite his conversion to Christianity some years ago, the subject still carries much of its former affect for him, so that I was unable to obtain a complete, detailed catalog of the contents even of this bundle.

In the following paragraphs, I discuss all the known individual items in the medicine bundles, arranged according to the traditional function of each "medicine." The dozen or so specific items in the Cow Creek bundle as described by Capron will be included with the approximately twenty types of objects in the Mikasuki bundles on which I was able to get information. Terms in single quotes are literal translations of the Mikasuki or Creek (Cow Creek) names.

Most of the objects in the bundles had uses connected with warfare. Some were used for offensive magic, some for defensive purposes, and some to cure serious wounds.

In the first category belongs the object my informant mentioned first when enumerating some of the contents of a medicine bundle. This is the 'Thunder Missile,' a spherical, transparent, crystal-like object about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, which caused the opposing soldiers to become excited, as one feels during a thunderstorm. According to one tradition, this charm was given by an underwater Thunder-being to a man who aided a wounded supernatural 'water puma' belonging to him. This is the "thunder bullet" mentioned by Capron, although the account he gives (from the same informant as the one from whom I gained my information) states that its purpose was to make the Indians invisible to the soldiers, and that it was found at the base of a lightning-struck tree (172). In the same deerskin packet with the 'Thunder Missile' is kept some red powder, 'Bad Face-paint,' formerly used for war-paint.

Another item in the bundle is known (in Mikasuki) as *sápiyî:*,<sup>5</sup> an un-analyzable name. This was described as a powerful, sweet-smelling, silvery powder, especially dangerous to women. In warfare, it was used to cause enemy soldiers to fall asleep in camp. Today, a magical song causes the *sápiyî:* in the bundle to put a person to sleep, even though the singer is far removed from the medicine bundle and its contents. There is a mythical, sweet-smelling, night-blooming plant called by the same name, which causes a form of sickness. Both of these Mikasuki types of *sápiyî:* show strong resemblances to the Creek magical "sabīa," colored crystal-like objects sometimes said to be of vegetable origin, kept by individuals for power in hunting, love, and war (Swanton 1928a:498-501).

'Living Medicine' is a white or reddish powder, like the *sápiyî:* dangerous to women. During war, a medicine man could use this to capture souls of sleeping soldiers, thus making the owners vulnerable when they awoke.

A silvery powder known as 'Sour Medicine' also probably was used in warfare, as I was told it was "good for kill man."

Capron describes a stone, "Power in War" medicine, which was necessary for victory in war. The medicine man fasted and touched the stone with his tongue, causing the power to "work" at a distance (168-169). My informant mentioned no such object, and said that no stone in the medicine bundle was so licked. Further, the terms Capron gives as the Mikasuki and Creek names of this object refer instead to the next item he discusses, the flint for making fire (Mikasuki "cho-no-thlee" = 'flint,' and Cow Creek "sho-no-too Toot-ka" = 'fire flint'). He gives as names for the flint terms meaning 'medicine stone' (169), which my informant recognized as an alternate name for the object to be described next, which however my source specifically denied was ever licked ("that's bad - strong"). The situation is still more complicated, for Capron says that his main informant was requested to tell him about the "Power in War Medicine" by the same man from whom my information derives (168). Another informant is quoted as saying that "cho-no-thlee" was "sometimes there, sometimes gone. That's little stone like old time make fire;" but the Cow Creek medicine man, the source of Capron's Creek term, denied that the object disappeared (169). It is evident that Capron recorded the wrong name for the "power in war medicine," perhaps through error on the part of his first informant, which led to confusion in questioning others about the object. Another complication involves the "live stone" for the sweat-bath, as will be seen. Some of these seeming contradictions probably result from the fact that Capron and I mainly discuss different medicine bundles, he the Cow Creek one and I several Mikasuki ones.

Among the medicine bundle objects used in warfare for defensive purposes is one known as ta:lisóhko:cî: in Mikasuki. The initial and final elements of the name mean 'small stone,' but the central part is apparently meaningless.<sup>6</sup> A less proper name is 'Medicine Stone.' Capron's "live stone" (169) was recognized as another, incorrect (at least in Mikasuki) name for this. This stone was used to ward off bullets. Placing it between his people and the soldiers, a medicine man, singing and shaking a rattle, walked four times around it, magically causing it to increase in size so that bullets glanced off it. Only one Mikasuki medicine bundle contains one of these objects; my informant did not know whether there is one in the Cow Creek bundle. He denied that it has any connection with the busk sweat-bath, although according to Capron's data the main function of the "live stone" is to give this sweat-bath its curative and preventative powers (169).

Another item is known as 'Twins' Plaything,' since it fell from the sky long ago as a gift to the Indians from the supernatural Thunders who are believed to cause the birth of twins. The object is a hard, rock-like spheroid, about one and one-half inches long, and colored red, brown, green and yellow. In war it is used much like the ta:lisóhko:cî: to ward off

bullets; but another and perhaps more important use is for magical weather control. With proper fasting and manipulation of the 'Twins' Plaything' a medicine man could cause rain or windstorms or change the path of a hurricane.

In at least one of the Mikasuki bundles there is a miniature rattle, in form like the modern Mikasuki dance rattles made from a perforated coconut on a stick, but only about three inches in diameter, and harder than a coconut shell — my informant did not know what the receptacle is made from. Capron has seen the coconut shell rattle which is kept unwrapped in the Cow Creek bundle (170-171), but this one is made from a full-sized coconut (L. Capron, personal communication 12/23/52). My informant said that the 'Little Coconut (rattle)' was used with a song by a medicine man during warfare, in order to make warriors unafraid. According to Capron, "it is used only in the War Dance, where its purpose is to whip up emotion" (170).

Kept in a small bottle in the medicine bundle are six or seven 'Snake Teeth,' from a rattlesnake. These were used to scratch the limbs of warriors to make them unafraid, prevent cramps in the legs, and generally make them strong and confident. A tale is recorded by Capron about a fasting contest between a rattlesnake and an owl, after which a supernatural called "es-te mat-tee" collected two teeth from the snake and a claw from the owl, for the Indians' medicine (164). Capron gives no data on the function of these objects. Owls' claws are not among the objects in the Mikasuki bundles mentioned by my informant, but a common method for treating a form of muscular cramps, believed to be caused by a rabbit, involves scratching the affected part with a claw from a horned owl, puma, or wildcat, or a rattlesnake's tooth (since all these animals kill rabbits). The myth given by Capron is also referred to in explaining the rationale of the annual autumnal Hunting Dance ceremony.

Another category of medicine bundle objects is those useful for treating serious battle injuries. A type of fine silvery powder called 'Shot Medicine' is one such item, which is said to be useful for reviving someone killed by a bullet. The bundle also contains a small deerskin packet of about half a cupful of 'Fish Eggs,' said to look like dried garfish eggs, one of which added to water and drunk caused purificatory vomiting, thereby curing an abdominal gunshot wound. A buzzard feather quill with a soft wooden stopper, not wrapped in one of the small packets, contains very fine bits of feathery material, called 'Buzzard's Down,' which stopped bleeding when a minute quantity was placed in a shot wound. Another medicine in the bundle is that which Capron calls "shot-in-the-heart medicine," "white medicine," or "white roots." The Creek and Mikasuki names he gives (168) are the same as the ones I recorded, meaning 'White Medicine.' Capron's suggestion (201,202) that this is ginseng is correct — it is *Panax*

*quinquefolium* L., which does not occur in southern Florida. It was used in Seminole War days for curing wounds, and is still an important element in Seminole materia medica. The supply today comes from Oklahoma, but until twenty or thirty years ago south Florida Seminole men made occasional trips north in the peninsula to replenish their supply of this and a few other necessary medicinal plants which do not grow in the Seminole territory. The ginseng in the medicine bundle is kept wrapped in a bit of white cloth.

Capron mentions another medicine in the bundle, which is derived from a snake horn and is said to be more effective than ginseng for shot wounds. A small amount of this placed in the corners of the mouth would revive a dead man. The name given him for this by the Cow Creek medicine man he writes "Hil-eesh tock-fee" (168). The first part means 'Medicine,' but I do not recognize the final element, unless it is the Creek word written tokfē in the traditional orthography, translated as 'brackish,' or perhaps tóksē, 'sour' (both these forms I take from Loughbridge and Hodge, 1914:197). My informant did not mention any medicine resembling this, unless it is the same as the 'Snake Horn' described below.

In addition to objects useful in warfare, the medicine bundles contain a few items which apparently were used only as hunting charms. Among these is the "left-hand horn of the Snake King," which, when the hunter sang, once attracted deer (168). It was broken from the "King Snake" which lived "under [a] rock"; the more powerful right horn could not be gotten (168). According to the information I collected, this object is called 'Snake Horn for Hunting' or simply 'Snake Horn,' and is a small greyish or white sphere, about the size of a No. 8 shot, which originally was obtained by singing out a horned snake which dwelt in a very deep clear pool in a rocky place. The singer aimed a stone at the more powerful blue right horn, but hit the left one instead. Capron's term "Snake King" or "King Snake" seem to identify this being with the snake, with two horns like small deer horns, which was the last to emerge from the hole in a hill from which the Seminole sib ancestors came, according to the origin myth. This being was chosen chief (Mikasuki mikî:, Creek míkko – both often translated 'king') and was at first fed only pasî:, Button-snakeroot, *Eryngium synchaetum* (A.Cray) Rose (which, incidentally, is given as the reason for the believed effectiveness of this plant as an antidote for snakebite).

The charm is clearly the same as a type known to the Creek. According to sources among these people, a horned snake living in a deep hole filled with water was once compelled by singing to come to the surface of the water, where both horns were sawed off (Swanton, 1928a:429; Gatschet, 1888:82-83). Some informants said that such snakes were sometimes found sunning themselves out of the water, when their horns might be obtained. The bits of horn were said to be red, "like sealing wax," whereas the

Alabama knew of yellow, white, red, or blue horns, from four different types of horned snake (Swanton, 1928b:494). Hawkins, in the 1790's, wrote that bits of the horn were carried by warriors in their shot pouches as "a charm, a protection against all ills" (Swanton, 1928a:429), and the Tuskegee Creek in 1904-1905 described a "bundle of magic herbs and fetishes" carried by a war party, which included such horns which "were believed to render the warriors immune to wounds" (Speck, 1907:118). But Swanton's informants (1928b:494), and one of Gatschet's (1888:83-84), spoke of these as hunter's charms only, which apparently were individually owned. It was necessary to keep the powerful charm away from the house, else it would make the owner's children sick (Swanton, 1928b:502).

Also formerly used as Seminole hunting charms were the 'Little People Bones,' of which some bundles at least have "different kinds" in two to four deerskin packets. They look like very small bits of animal bone. The 'Little People' are a class of supernaturals, comprising four types with different appearances and characteristics, but all are less than a foot and a half tall and live in trees. Also mentioned as a hunting charm was 'White Deer Hair.'<sup>7</sup>

The bundle also contains some 'Eagle Tail Feathers,' the use of which fits none of the categories into which the other items fall. These feathers were once used to send messages at great distances — for example, a man might announce the time of his arrival at a destination by magically sending a feather back to his starting point many days travel away. The power of doing this no longer survives, but one who could do so laid the feather on a deerskin at night, placing the charm known as ta:lisóhko:cî: (described above) with it, and perhaps some other medicine around these two. The magically propelled feather arrived at its destination on the same night. Today, some cedar leaves (*Juniperus silicicola* [Small] Bailey) are kept with the feathers in the medicine bundle, to prevent them from causing sickness. Some of Capron's informants said there were "Thunder Bird feathers" in the bundle; my informant told him there were not, although there were eagle feathers (172).

Also kept in the medicine bundle is the 'Flint' used with steel to light the medicine fire at the busk. This is kept in a cowhorn or a wooden container, not wrapped in a deerskin packet. The Cow Creek bundle also contains a flint (169; see above for the confusion in Capron's terminology which involves this item). Another bundle object kept for use at the busk is a whistle about an inch and a half long, called 'Little Tube,' made perhaps of cane or bone. This is blown a short time before the men enter the sweat-bath on the last morning of the busk, and can be heard for a half-mile or so. Presumably, the Cow Creek bundle does not contain one of these, since Capron has been present at this stage of the busk but does not mention any whistle.

Capron describes as an important item in the Cow Creek bundle a stone called the "live stone" (but see above on the confusion in terminology). This is a bit of "the same kind of stone as is used in the sweat-bath,"<sup>8</sup> which acts as a control for the sweat-bath stones – without this object in the medicine bundle, the sweat-bath would be ineffective (169). My informant mentioned no such item, and I incline to the opinion that the Mikasuki bundles do not contain any.

A very interesting category of objects in the Cow Creek bundle is described by Capron, but unfortunately I could obtain little information on anything similar in the Mikasuki bundles – the latter may therefore largely lack such items. These are the eighteen<sup>9</sup> small white horn tips, the traditional function of which is not given. The intriguing thing about these horns is that there is a relatively detailed traditional description of the animal from which each came, which allowed a Seminole Capron accompanied to New York in 1938 to supply Creek names to many of the exotic African mammals in the habitat groups of the American Museum. As examples of the names applied, Capron gives "Big Rabbit," "Water Cow" (166-167), and in his earlier article "cho-fee thlock-o" [for Creek *cofiLákko*, 'big rabbit'] applied to the Axis deer, and "yen-ah schla-kee" [apparently containing Creek *yanása*, 'bison'] applied to the two horned rhinoceros (Capron, 1942: 18). When I inquired about these objects, my informant replied rather vaguely that "long ago" the bundles contained "lots of bones" – among them 'White Deer Horns,' which are no longer in existence. He said that there were no "buffalo" or "big rabbit" horns in the bundles; the latter animal he did not recognize, remarking that the rabbit never had horns. The name which Capron gives apparently as the general term for these horn tips is "ee-ah-pee," which seems to represent the Creek term meaning 'horn.'<sup>10</sup> One of these horns, from the animal called "yen-ah schla-kee," is particularly powerful (167; Capron, 1942:18). Capron's guess that the traditional descriptions of the animals derive from the Negro allies and so-called slaves of the Seminole during and before the Seminole Wars (167) is worthy of consideration, although one would like a more detailed listing of the names and the accompanying descriptions than is as yet available. In his early article (but not the recent one), his informant is quoted as saying that the descriptions came from the culture hero (Capron, 1942:18).

"A twist of bees' wings" is among the few objects listed in Capron's first, popular, article (1942:17), but is not included in the recent paper and was specifically denied by my informant to be a component of the medicine bundles.

Some of the objects in the bundles are so powerful that it would be exceedingly dangerous to touch them with one's hands. For handling these when the medicines are examined at the busk a special utensil is included,

unwrapped, in the bundle. Capron seemingly refers to this as the "sticks" used to pick up the "yen-ah schla-kee" (167; 1942:18), and Greenlee, who came very close to discovering the real importance and complexity of the Seminole medicine bundles, refers to "the quill taken from the wing of a buzzard" in a similar context (Greenlee, 1944:317). Actually, these tongs consist of a pair of the distal wing bones of a buzzard (*Cathartes aura*), the Mikasuki name meaning 'Buzzard's Distal-wing-joint Bones.' They are used in handling the 'Thunder Missile,' the 'Snake Horn for Hunting,' and the 'Little People Bones.'

This exhausts the inventory of items at present known to be contained permanently in the medicine bundles. However, the medicine bundle may be used to increase the potency of other medicines placed in it temporarily. Capron refers to the "private Medicine" of many individuals, which must be "renewed periodically" by being placed with the medicine bundle during the twenty-four hours it is displayed during the busk. The only specific object mentioned is a gun which was given "supernatural accuracy" in this manner (172). My informant explained that certain medicinal plants are made more powerful by being left with the medicine bundle in this way. Not all plants used medicinally may be so treated, but only a few of the more important ones, particularly those used in various purificatory ceremonies of a medical nature but whose chief purpose is the prevention rather than the cure of sickness or misfortune. Seven such medicinal substances were enumerated: Button-snakeroot (*Eryngium synchaetum* [A. Gray] Rose) and Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolium* L.) roots, Redbay (*Persea borbonia* [L.] Spreng.) and Southern Red Cedar (*Juniperus silicicola* [Small] Bailey) leaves, twigs of Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum* [Nutt.] Nees) useful for the bark, twigs (?) of an Oklahoma tree called hoyani:cî: in Mikasuki (perhaps Dwarf Gray Willow, *Salix tristis* Ait.), and roots and perhaps buds of an unidentified plant called ayikchõ:mî:, 'bitter medicine,' in Mikasuki and toho:mî: in Creek. Although any man who wishes to may strengthen some of these for his own use, the presiding medicine man is particularly likely to treat a supply, which he will use and sell during the ensuing year (he may not sell Button-snakeroot, however).

During the day when the bundle is displayed, some tobacco is kept with it, which is smoked by the medicine man and his assistants during the last night of the busk.

According to Capron when "changing conditions" make a new medicine necessary, the Culture Hero causes it to appear in the bundle during the last night of the busk. The medicine man discovers it when he examines the items before wrapping up the bundle in the morning (163, 171-172). My informant said that if a medicine man is "good" and "smart," that is, works hard at his ceremonial duties, doctors "his people" and takes care of

them properly, medicine will "come back" to his bundle during the busk — where it comes from he did not know. On the other hand, a man who does not properly fulfill his role as a medicine man will cause medicine to disappear from his bundle. Whether it is only the 'Living Medicine,' or any medicine in the bundle, which is thus augmented or decreased, or even whether entire items, old and new, can disappear and re-appear, I could not discover.

Capron describes the modern functions of the Seminole medicine bundles as that of tribal palladia. The bundle "contains everything necessary for the Indian's well-being," and one of the main purposes of the annual busks is to renew and preserve the power of the bundles. The medicine bundles are the symbols and the powers around which Seminole ceremonial and political life are organized, are believed necessary for the existence of the group, and can in this sense be considered the "soul" of the Seminole "body." The medicines are capable also of doing great harm or of losing their potency, so must be treated carefully and protected from potentially harmful influences (among which are probably inquisitive or skeptical outsiders) (160, 162, 163, 175). These beliefs make it exceedingly difficult to obtain detailed or reliable information on the esoteric aspects of Seminole religion, and the normal Seminole inarticulateness with outsiders, due in part to inadequate control of English but even more to suspicion of the motives of the questioner, make it well-nigh impossible to explore thoroughly the ramifications, interrelations, and significance of Seminole religious beliefs and practices. What little information I was able to get on these subjects tends to substantiate Capron's estimate of the function and importance of the medicine bundles. I have already mentioned the fact that improper handling of some of the medicines may cause sickness; furthermore, if the medicine man does not properly "take care of his people," not only may the medicine decrease in quantity, but it may actively cause sickness. It is said that in former days the medicine in the bundle "ate" the blood of soldiers killed by Seminole warriors; today, in the absence of slain enemies, the medicine may turn on the people belonging to his own group if the medicine man is lax in his duties. This "eating" of people causes a sickness known as 'shot blood,' characterized by rheumatic pains in the joints and head. Thus another function of the bundles is to provide supernatural sanctions to ensure the proper role performance of the medicine man, the primary religious and political officer of the band. The group organized around a bundle, that is those who regularly attend the busk supervised by the medicine man in charge of a specific bundle, is the largest organized group among the modern Seminole. Only informal association, and of course commonality of culture, unite these bands into the Seminole "tribe."<sup>11</sup>

The newly discovered existence and importance of Seminole medicine

bundles has interesting implications from the comparative and culture-historical point of view. Most of the aboriginal peoples of the Southeast have been displaced to the present state of Oklahoma, where the disruption caused by the removal and the subsequent close association with many other tribes from other parts of the United States have resulted in far-reaching cultural changes. Fortunately, there are a few segments of the original tribes which escaped deportation and have subsequently developed independently — chiefly the North Carolina Cherokee, the Mississippi and Louisiana Choctaw, and the Florida Seminole. The last are by far the least acculturated descendants of the towns of the Creek Confederacy of Georgia and Alabama, and it is plain that study of their culture will cast much light on the pre-removal culture of the Creek. Spoehr has demonstrated this in his study of Creek and Seminole social organization (Spoehr, 1942, 1947). It is necessary, of course, to evaluate the changes and possible changes which Seminole culture has undergone since the tribe split from the Confederacy<sup>12</sup> and moved into a quite different environment in South Florida, undergoing also considerable disruptive pressures due to the Seminole Wars.

The central position of the medicine bundles in modern Seminole religion is striking in comparison with the Creek. Swanton has written that "tribal medicines or palladia such as are often met with in other parts of America were almost unknown to the Creeks unless we include the 'ark' or war medicine under this head....Nevertheless, there is one apparent exception, the famous copper and brass plates preserved by the town of Tukabahchee" (Swanton, 1928:503). The "ark" is known chiefly from Adair's early description, which probably refers to the Chickasaw rather than the Creek; Swanton mentions a similar object among the Alabama, but not the Creek proper (Swanton, 1928a:408-412, 425). The "war medicine" of the Creek seems to have been individually owned charms (Swanton, 1928a:429; 1928b:502). War parties of the Tuskegee Creek, it is true, are reported to have used a medicine bundle (Speck, 1907:118). The Tukabahchee plates fulfilled much the same function as the modern Seminole medicine bundles, but nothing similar is known from any other Creek town (Swanton, 1928b:502-510, 555-556, 570, 572). Yet both Tuskegee and Tukabahchee were Upper Creek towns, whereas most of the Seminole ancestors were probably Lower Creek. Furthermore, there is rather convincing evidence that both these towns were originally non-Muskogee, taken into the Confederacy at a relatively late date (Swanton, 1922:207-211, 277-279; Speck, 1907:105-106), so that they may well have been culturally somewhat different from the general Creek pattern. A search among the Creek for parallels to the Seminole medicine bundles is best made from two angles: do separate charms occur, similar to the individual items in the Seminole bundles in nature and traditional function? and, are there any objects similar in function if not in makeup to the modern Seminole bundles taken as a whole? Turning first to the individual items, we have already mentioned the Creek "sabā" and

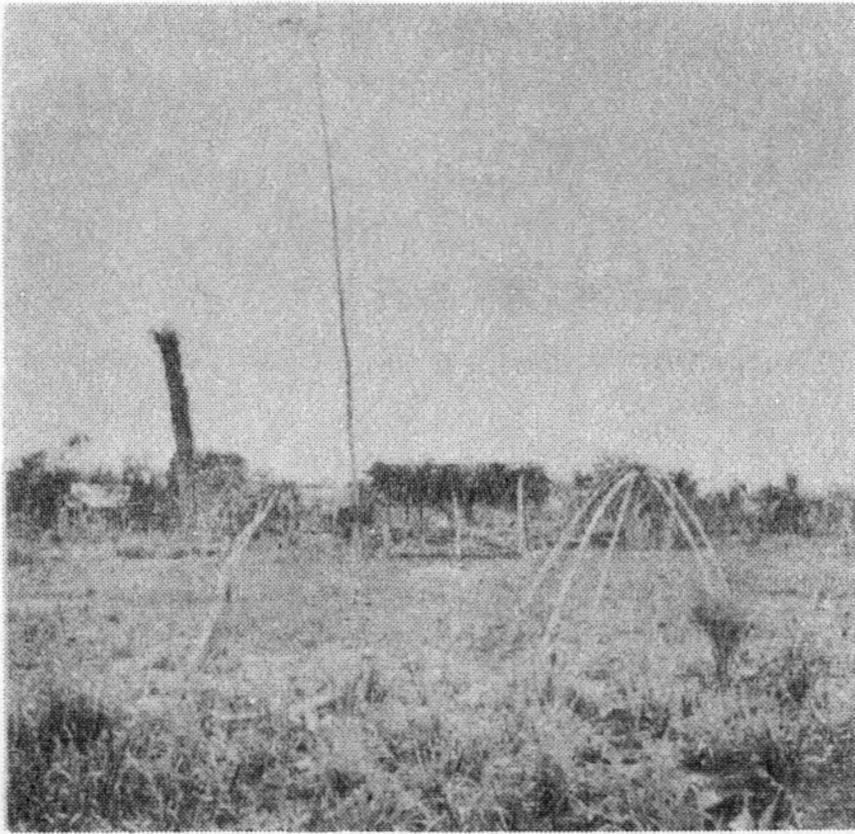
snake horns. These are the closest parallels to the individual Seminole medicines. Similar in function were the bones of the mythical 'man eater' which (perhaps together with the snake horns) formed the "war physic" carried by a warrior in his shot pouch for good luck in war (Swanton, 1928a: 429; Gatschet, 1888:47, 82-83). The Tuskegee war bundle contained snake horns which gave invulnerability, cedar leaves for the treatment of wounds, and probably other items, and was carried to war by the leader or medicine man of a war party (Speck, 1907:118). Adair's "ark," probably Chickasaw, was chiefly or only effective in warfare. It was apparently a hickory-splint basket containing "several consecrated vessels," carried by the leader of a war party and his assistant and never touched by others or placed on the ground. At home it was kept hung on the war pole. It ensured the success of a war party (Swanton, 1928a:408-412). Miscellaneous individually-owned charms effective in hunting, war, love, and weather-control were important among the Creek (Swanton, 1928b:498-503, 630), but none except those mentioned above show any close resemblance to the Seminole items or are reported as associated in a bundle, and none seem to have any connection with the busk ceremonies or any integrative social functions. For the latter, we have only the Tukabahchee plates, unless perhaps the "articles used by various towns during the celebration of the busk and held in great reverence" (such as the "large conch shells out of which the Coweta Indians took their black drink"), which the Indians "had had for a long time and preserved with great care," may be understood in this sense — but there are no details as to what these objects were, except for the conch shells, and "there is no certainty that these things were really palladia" (Swanton, 1928b:503). The Tukabahchee plates do not resemble in form any of the Seminole objects. From the brief available descriptions of them, Swanton concludes that "there can be little reasonable doubt" that these *spatulate* copper and circular "brass" plates "are of Spanish origin" (Swanton, 1928b:510). The possibility should be investigated, however, that they are survivals of the embossed copper plates characteristic of the archeological Southern Cult (cf., among others, Watson, 1950, and Goggin, 1949). It is in their functions that the Tukabahchee plates closely resemble the modern Seminole medicine bundles. They were kept at the busk grounds, buried or housed in a special structure, and were brought out only during the annual busk, when they were displayed with considerable ceremony for just twenty-four hours. "They hold, that the health and prosperity of the town, depend in a great measure upon the proper observance of the rites connected with them." They were so powerful as to be dangerous, for they could be spoken of only guardedly, for fear of dangerous consequences; women could not look at them; if improperly touched or handled, the desecrator would die and sickness and various other calamities would befall the town (Swanton, 1928b:503-510, 555-556, 570, 572). There is however no evidence that they were connected in any way with warfare.

The evidence heretofore on record would indicate that the sacred bundle complex so important among the Central Algonkians and on the Plains<sup>13</sup> reached the Southeast only in a very attenuated form. The Seminole data make plain the need for further investigation among the southern Indians; field work on this problem might even now bring to light new Creek information — certainly the Tukabahchee plates should be re-investigated. This is necessary before a decision may be reached as to whether the similarities of the Seminole bundles to those of other eastern tribes are due to common origin or diffusion, on the one hand, or to convergent development<sup>14</sup> on the other.

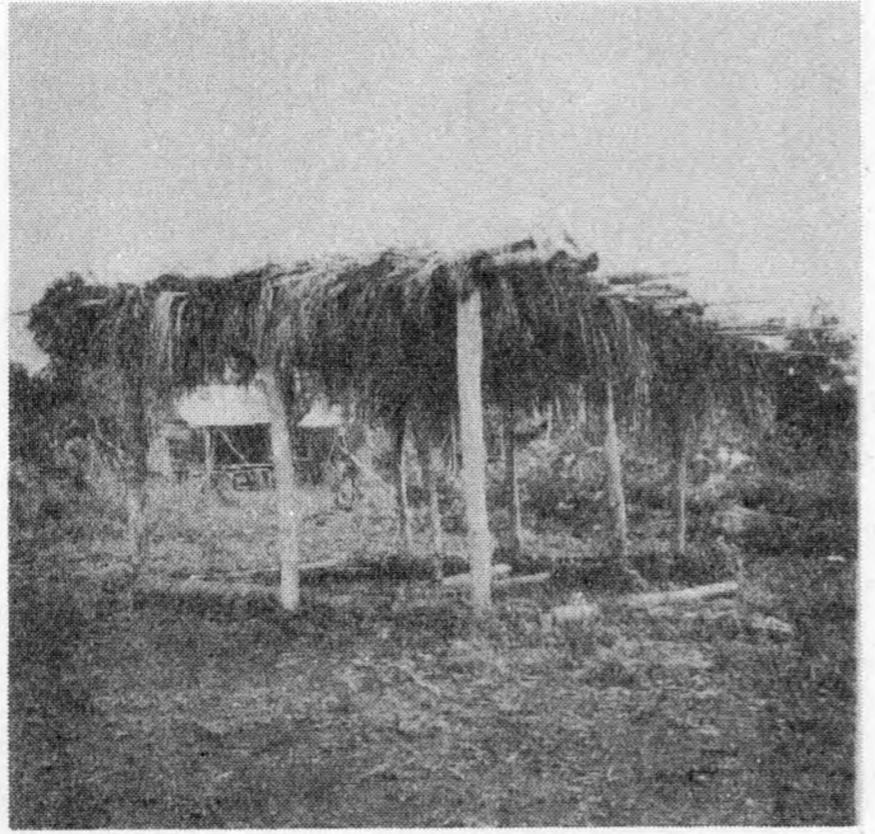
### BUSK

Capron's data on the Cow Creek busk are very full and detailed; my own information from the Mikasuki is quite spotty. Therefore, all that will be attempted here is to outline briefly the highlights of the ceremony, point out where our information is still inadequate, give a little data supplementing that in Capron's work (chiefly some information useful for comparison with the Creek busks), and make a few remarks of a comparative nature.

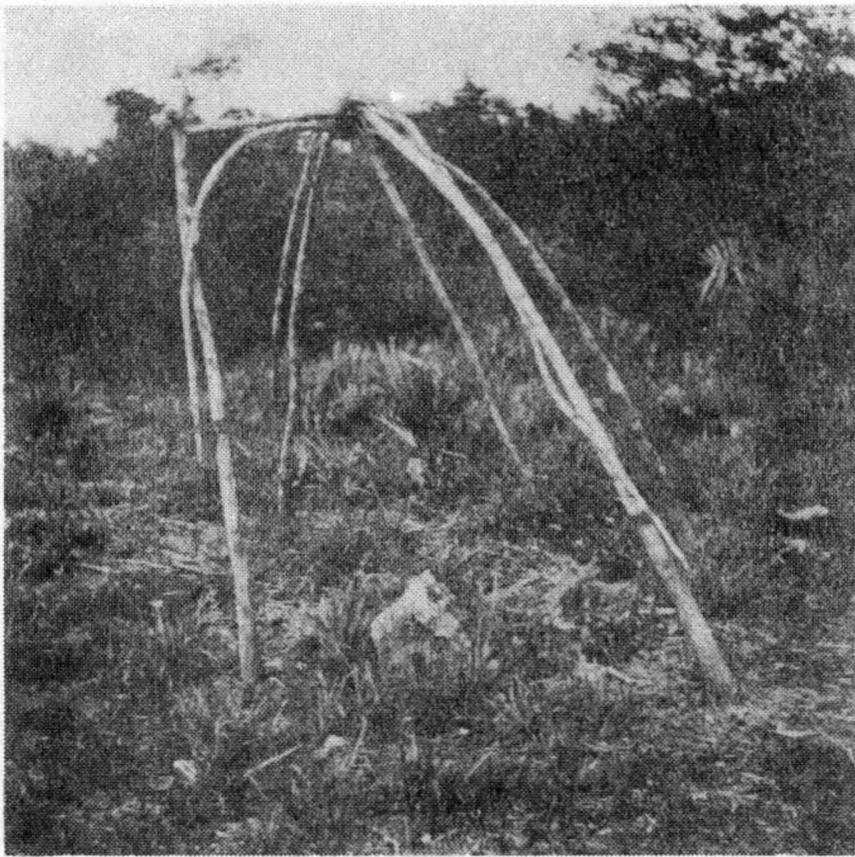
According to Capron, the Cow Creek and the "Trail" Mikasuki busks are held at "the new moon the last of June or the first of July," "Picnic Day" falling "two days after the calendar date of the new moon." The other Mikasuki busk is held when "the Pleiades, which have sunk below the horizon, make their reappearance" (177). The latter date, in the latitude of Miami, is May 25, and the date changes about one day only over a period of two centuries.<sup>15</sup> I was unable to obtain such specific methods of fixing the dates of busks. Recorded dates for Mikasuki busks vary from late April or early May to the end of June or the beginning of July, and for the Cow Creek from late June to mid July. In 1952, the Picnic Day of the "Trail" busk did fall on May 25; but the busk involving the same bundle seems to have fallen in mid June in 1929 (Spencer, 1929:3). The medicine man formerly in charge of this busk said that it was up to the medicine man and his assistant to set the date, which they do when the corn is ripe in the spring. Then the two meet to discuss the date of the busk. They may set it at a new moon a month or so away, but they are just as likely to choose a time just before a full moon, so that the helpers can get water for the medicine on the last night by the light of the moon. In 1952, the new moon appropriate according to Capron, fell on June 22, but the Picnic Day of the Cow Creek busk was June 23, and the "Big Cypress" Mikasuki busk had been held in late April or early May. According to my informant, corn is planted four months before the busk (which marks the date after which green corn may be eaten by the men) — in early February among the Mikasuki, and a month or more later among the Cow Creek.<sup>16</sup> At any rate, the dates of



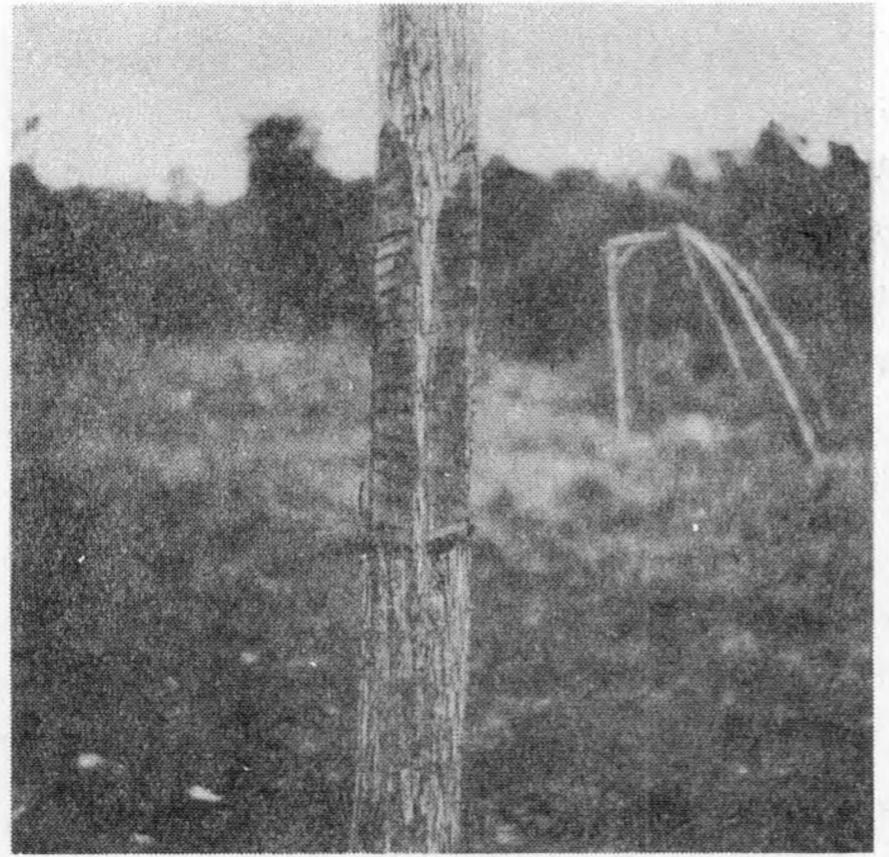
**A**



**B**



**C**



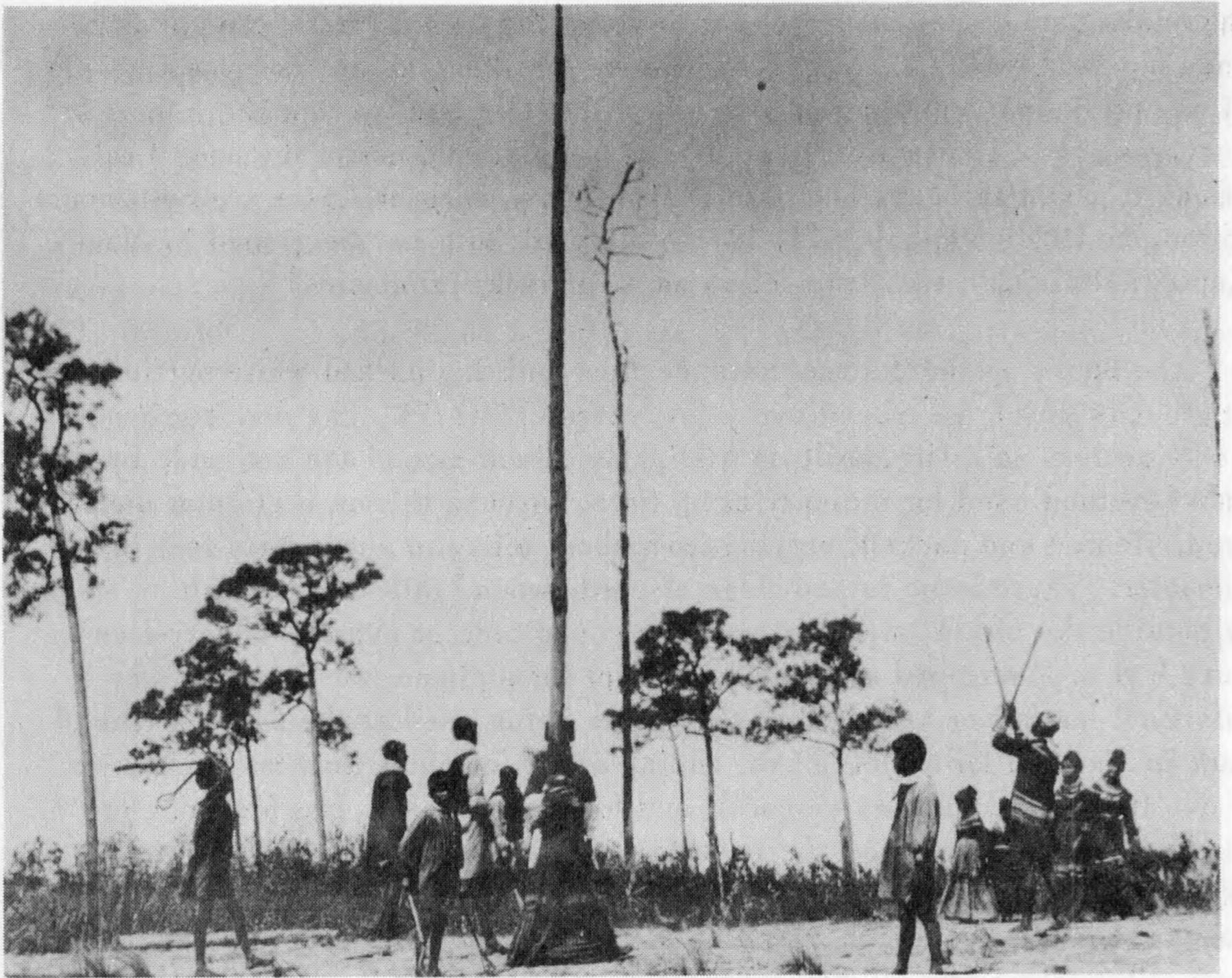
**D**

**Fig. 1.** "Big Cypress" Mikasuki busk grounds in June, 1952. A, Dance area – note medicine bundle stake (left foreground), ball pole, Bighouse, sweat-bath frame; B, Bighouse; C, Sweat-bath frame; D, Scoreboard on ball pole.

the busks vary somewhat from year to year, although normally the Mikasuki ones are held earlier than the Cow Creek. Neither Capron nor myself heard of any preliminary meeting of officials to set the date (except the informal conversation of the medicine man and his assistant), nor of the use of tally sticks to count the days until the busk began — common Creek busk elements (Swanton, 1928b:558-559, 571, 587) — although both are mentioned by MacCauley (1887:522), who here relied on a Mikasuki informant.<sup>17</sup>

The busks are held some distance from both Indian and white settlements, at grounds which are moved every few years (176-177). The dance ground itself centers on a fire, built on a slightly raised mound and not made by the spoke method used for ordinary camp fires. Around this is a circular dance area, cleared and packed, varying from about thirty to about forty feet in diameter. There is no raised ridge of earth around this area. Within or slightly outside the circle is the ball pole, a young pine or cypress twenty-five to forty feet tall, stripped of branches except for a plume left at the tip (my informant had never heard of anything else being used at the top). A ring of bark is removed for a foot or two, ending about four feet from the tip (a hit above this ring counts as a score), and four faces one to two feet long are sliced about five feet from the base to serve as a scoreboard. In the three or four plans given by Capron (179-181) and in the three other Cow Creek dance grounds I have seen, the pole is in the quarter between east and south-east of the fire. At a Mikasuki dance ground I examined, at another seen by Spoehr (1939), and in a diagram drawn for me by two Mikasuki men, the pole is due east or slightly north of east of the fire. Always just on the west edge of the circle is the single arbor, facing east. This is a palmetto- and brush-covered roof, which slopes slightly, its higher edge towards the east, supported by vertical logs and sheltering seats of logs resting on the ground. The arbor is rectangular, twelve to fifteen feet long and ten to eleven feet wide, the roof usually supported by six uprights (Capron's plans and photos, my observation of a Cow Creek example, Spoehr's notes from Cow Creek informants), but occasionally by nine (Mikasuki example examined by me). There are no traditions of the previous use of more than one arbor at a dance ground. When a dance ground is used for the first time, the arbor is built on Picnic Day. Both the Cow Creek and Mikasuki names for the arbor mean 'Big House'; the term is not used for the dance ground as a whole. On the west side of the grounds is a pile of firewood for the dance fire. To the east are the medicine man's fire, the sweat-bath, and the medicine bundle stake. Women do not enter the arbor at any time, and stay out of the dance circle except during dances or the ballgame.

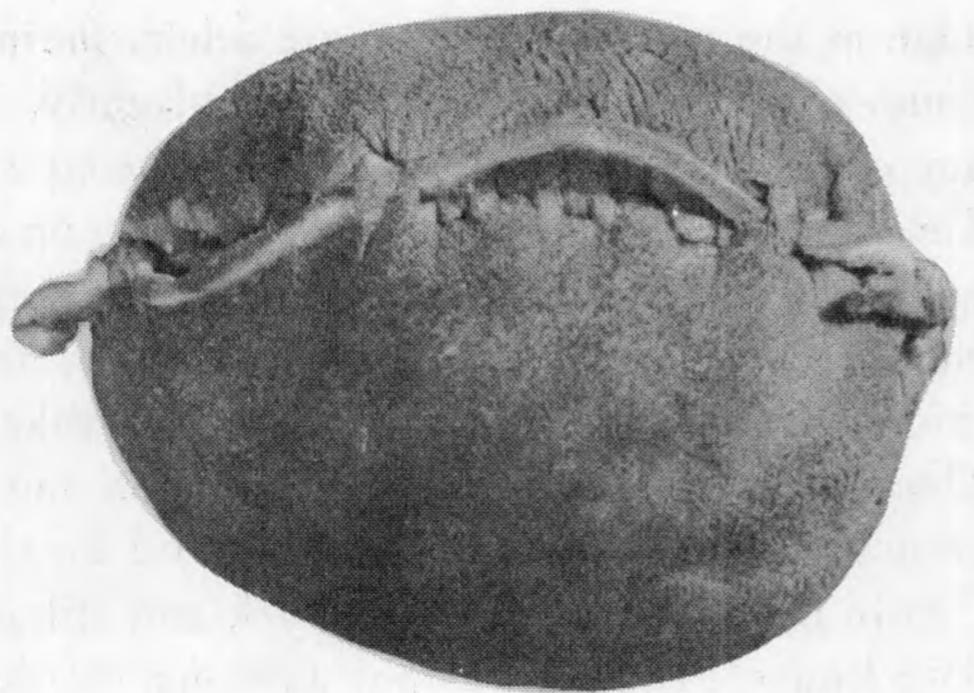
In a circle around the dance grounds are the camps in which the participants live during the busk. Each is from twenty-five to a hundred yards from the dance circle. There is no consistency in the order of their arrangement, although, during the use of one dance ground, a sib occupies the same



A



B



C

Fig. 2. A, Mikasuki ball game at Pine Island, near the present town of Davie, about 1895 (Bur. Amer. Ethnol. photo); B, Ingraham Billie, "Trail" medicine man, with ballsticks and ball (Aug., 1952); C, Mikasuki ball for busk ball game, collected in 1951 - buckskin stuffed with deer hair (Yale Peabody Mus. spec. 145571).

camp in successive years. Capron's charts and my own observations show a tendency, though not a necessity, for there to be a gap in the camp circle towards the east. These camps are much larger than those in which the Seminole extended families live during the rest of the year. Four or five camps hold the one or two hundred participants. In theory, each matrilineal sib has its own camp, occupied by the women of that sib and their husbands and children and the unattached males of the sib. The larger sibs may however sometimes set up two separate camps, and small sibs frequently join with another "related" sib.<sup>18</sup>

The Seminole busk may last from five to seven days (177-178). Informants often say that the busk lasts "four days" – four is the Seminole pattern number – and this appears to be the minimum possible. The important events occur on the last three days, in a fixed order (C,Sp,St).<sup>19</sup>

In former days, the men of a band went on a hunt, a week or two before a busk, to provide meat for the Picnic Day (St). Today, the medicine man buys beeves and groceries (C,St), with the help of "contributions" (C).

The participants gather at the busk grounds over a period of several days before the first day (C,Sp,St), but the medicine man and his assistants tend to arrive early to begin the preparation of the grounds (Sp,St). During these days the camps are repaired and the dance grounds cleaned (C,Sp,St). In the afternoon of each of the four days of the busk except the last, there is a ballgame, of the single pole variety, with the boys and young men playing against the girls and young women; on each of the three essential nights there is dancing after dark (C,Sp,St). Dancing may begin the evening of the day preceding the first day (St, Sp), and Capron once saw dancing begin the night of the third day before the first (178), although he also gives a schedule calling for dancing beginning the first day and "not before" (178). Ballgames apparently begin the same day as the first dancing (St,Sp). The day before the first day is sometimes called "smokin' tobacco leaves" or "smoking" (C), but what this refers to is unclear.

On the first day, the medicine man bathes ceremonially at dawn, as he does each subsequent day of the busk – on the third day, at least, in company with his assistant(s) (C, pp. 163, 189). The rest of the first day is spent in completing the preparation of the grounds, with the men and boys gathering wood for the dance fire in the afternoon before or after the ballgame (C,St). At dusk, the dance circle is swept by the medicine man's two young "helpers" (C), and the dance fire is lit (C,Sp,St). Dancing, consisting mostly of "Crazy Dances,"<sup>20</sup> but with animal dances intermixed, continues until 10 or 11 p.m., when all go to bed (C,Sp,St).

The second day, Picnic or Feast Day, is spent largely in eating, in

preparation for the following fast. The food for the men is brought by the women from the camps to the Bighouse, where the men alone eat — the women and children eat in the camps (C, Sp, St). No green corn is eaten this day (Sp,St). If the busk is being held in a new spot, the Bighouse is built this day; if at a busk ground previously used, the thatch is repaired now (C,Sp). This is done by the young men, under the direction of an older official (Sp). Also, the birds to provide the white feathers for the next day's Feather Dance, if one is to be held, should be killed on the second day (C,Sp). In the afternoon a ballgame is held (?), and dancing continues from dusk to midnight (C,Sp). Feasting continues with the dancing, and the men's fast begins at midnight (C, Sp, St).

The third day, Court or Fasting Day, is the most important. At dawn, the medicine man and his assistants bathe ritually, and the medicine bundle is brought to the dance grounds, examined, and hung up (C). Meanwhile, the two young helpers of the medicine man prepare two pots of emetic, one of the beaten roots of Button-snakeroot (*Eryngium synchaetum* [A.Gray] Rose) and the other of the inner bark of Southern Willow (*Salix amphibia* Small); both are added to cold water, and the willow drink is given potency by the medicine man or an assistant by singing and then blowing into the pot through a special cane tube (C,St,Sp). Both these plants are important elements of Seminole materia medica, and the strengthening of the medicine through the doctor's songs and breath is an important part of curing procedure (St,C). In the morning, small boys who are not expected to fast the entire period and men unable to be present the next day, are scratched (C). The poles for the Feather Dance, if this is to be danced, are prepared in the morning (Sp), and the dance is done four times, twice in the morning and twice in the afternoon (C,Sp). After the first Feather Dance (C) or after each (Sp), the two black drinks are taken by all the men (but not by the women). They are drunk and rubbed on the body, and the men then go off to vomit in private (C). The purpose on this occasion is the same as that for the use of these and other emetics at other times: to "clean the body" and purify it (St).

At about noon, the men gather in the Bighouse for the annual court or council. This meeting has judicial powers as well as governmental ones — punishments for crimes of the past year are meted out, and various problems of the tribe and group are discussed. Influential men from other groups, usually including some of the other medicine men, are present, and their opinions are sought (C). It is only the most serious crimes which are adjudicated at this time: murders and serious injuries, and, in former times miscegenation and attempting to learn to read and write. The accused gets a chance to defend himself before the group, which then reaches a decision democratically, taking into account not only the nature and circumstances of the crime, but the perpetrator's past behavior and reputation, his influence and friends, and the size and importance of his family and sib<sup>21</sup> (St). This

area of Seminole culture is perhaps even more carefully concealed from outsiders than is the religion, so that it is exceedingly difficult to obtain information on the "criminal code," punishments, case histories, and trial procedures and officers. My informant however, denied the method of punishment in a low hut described by Capron (196). There is no doubt that capital punishment was decreed and carried out until a few years ago -- my data agree in general with that of Capron regarding the 1938 execution -- and I have heard vague references to the levying of fines and to whipping. Ear cropping is traditional, but said to be long obsolete. Whether or not ostracism is decreed by the busk council is doubtful; in at least some cases, an offender remained away from the busk on his own volition, apparently in order to avoid a trial on Court Day. Some of these and other punishments were inflicted also, or only, at times other than during the busk. It is said that the settlement of a crime decreed at the busk closes the matter for all time, and that serious crimes cannot be discussed or settled except at this time, after the men have taken the purifying emetics, when the crimes of the past year are "killed" (St). The granting of amnesty to criminals who succeeded in entering the dance circle unseen is denied by modern informants, although recorded for the Cow Creek Seminole in 1881 (quoted in Witthoft, 1949:70). The Seminole believe strongly in obeying the "law" (defined very broadly), and even young Christians emphasize that Indian justice was and is quick and certain, whereas white justice is long, tedious, and unsure (St).

There are special officials for the "council" meeting. The headman, of the Tiger<sup>22</sup> or Wind sib, may or may not be the medicine man who supervises the rest of the busk. There is a moderator or peace maker of the Bird sib, a "councilman" (perhaps the executioner or enforcing officer?) of the Tiger or Wind sib, and two men from the same sibs who act as "helpers" of the headman. Although a man usually fills any one of these statuses for several years, he may be removed for inadequate performance. Not all offices need be filled at a busk (in 1952 at one Mikasuki busk there was only one "helper" and no "councilman") (St).

In the afternoon, older boys and some men may be scratched and break their fast, although most men wait until the next morning (C,St). The Buffalo Dance "is always danced" in the afternoon, according to Capron (198). Spoehr saw it at sundown and just before dawn the next morning, at both the Cow Creek and a Mikasuki busk in 1939 (Sp). It was not danced at the 1951 Cow Creek busk (St).

During the afternoon, wood is collected for the following night's dancing and a ballgame is played as on other days (C, St, Sp).

At twilight, the medicine fire is lit with the flint kept in the medicine bundle (C,St), and the medicine is ceremonially taken down and laid out (C).

At each cardinal point of this fire an ear of green corn is laid (St, Sp; cf. Swanton, 1928b:555). In former days, all fires in the camps were extinguished on this day and re-lit from this medicine fire – the so-called New Fire ceremony, or as my informant put it, “just like new year.” This, however, is no longer done (St). On the medicine fire is cooked the “third Black Drink” or “Big Pot Drink” (C, pp. 201-202), which is called in both Mikasuki and Creek ‘Gathered Medicine,’ or ‘Big Gathered Medicine’ (the latter to distinguish it from the ‘Small Gathered Medicine,’ which also consists of many plants ‘gathered’ together, but these are different plants and are used medicinally rather than at the busk) (St).

The identification of the plants which go into this third black drink is an area in which there is considerable difference between the data collected by Capron, Spoehr, and myself – at least partly because of varying practices of different medicine men. It seems advisable to record here these differences. Unfortunately, the inadequacy of Capron’s method of writing Creek and Mikasuki words sometimes makes identification difficult. I list and discuss first the plants mentioned by Capron, and then set down the remaining ones mentioned by Spoehr’s and my own informants:

1. Willow root inner bark (*Salix amphibia*), Creek “ac-wa-nah,” Mikasuki “o-kee box-see” (201, 189). Neither my informant nor Spoehr’s mentioned this as a component of the third black drink. Southern Red Willow, *Salix amphibia* Small,<sup>23</sup> is frequently used in medicines, and is called in Creek ahwă:na: and in Mikasuki okibaksî:.

2. Roots of Button-snake root (*Eryngium synchaetum*), Creek “pa-sa,” Mikasuki “pa-see” (201, 189). Neither my informant nor Spoehr’s mentioned this as a component of the third black drink. The botanical identification (*E. synchaetum* [A.Gray] Rose) agrees with that of the plant called pasî: in Mikasuki and pa:ssâ in Creek by my informants, and also with a botanist’s identification of a specimen of “pasa” submitted by Spoehr (1939).

3. Ginseng, Creek “hil-eesh hat-kee,” Mikasuki “ai-yicks hat-kee” (202). This is a plant today imported from Oklahoma (C, St, Sp), where the Creek name is the same (Swanton, 1928b:656). Small (1933:959) identifies ginseng as *Panax quinquefolium* L. The plant, called ayikchatkî: (Mik.) and hilishátkî: (Ck.), was not included by my informant among the ingredients of this black drink, but was recorded by Spoehr (as “hilishatki:”<sup>24</sup>) as an optional component. However my informant did say that if a bit of ginseng root is used by a doctor to treat a patient who dies, the piece from which it came may not be used for other patients until it has been purified (“just like people”) by washing with the ‘Gathered Medicine’ at the next busk.

4. The whole plant of St. John’s wort (*Hypericum aspalathoides* Willd.),

Creek "wee-ah-ko-chee," Mikasuki "a-posh-shee-ka-yee" (202, 209, pl. 14). According to my informant the 'Gathered Medicine' contains the leaves of a plant called hapo:sikâ:yî: (Mik.) or kafócka (Ck.). This is not mentioned by Spoehr, unless this is what his "pofacka" (otherwise unidentified) represents. However, hapo:sikâ:yî: is Pennyroyal (*Pycnothymus rigidus* [Bart.] Small), with which identification Stirling (1941) agrees. A medicinal plant called cisilaykô:mî: in Mikasuki, cissiwi:lanǒ:ma: in Creek, not used in this black drink, is tentatively identified as *Hypericum aspalathoides* Willd. or *H. fasciculatum* Lam. Mr. Woodbury tells me that the leaves, though not the plant size, of *H. aspalathoides* and *P. rigidus* are very similar. Capron's "wee-ah-ko-chee" is not recognizable as any Creek plant name known to me; his "a-posh-shee-ka-yee" plainly represents Mikasuki hapo:sikâ:yî:.

5. Leaves of Redbay (*Persea borbonia* [L.] Spreng.), Creek "too-la," Mikasuki "too-lee" (202, 209, pl. 14). That this is an ingredient, both my own and Spoehr's data confirm. The botanical identification agrees with that of specimens pointed out by my informants, although Stirling (1941) gives the closely related *Persea pubescens* (Pursh) Small (sic – read *P. pubescens* [Pursh] Sarg. or *Tamala pubescens* [Pursh] Small; see Small 1933:922). Spoehr's sample of "tola" was identified, probably erroneously, as the (introduced) avocado, *Persea persea* (L.) Cockerell. The Mikasuki name of the tree is to:lî:, and the Creek tǒ:la.

6. Leaves of Blueberry (*Vaccinium myrsinites* Lam.), Creek "tsa-fuck-in-na," Mikasuki "o-luck-ee" (202, 209, pl. 14). My informant also gave this as an ingredient of this black drink, and his olákî: (Mik.) or câ:faknâ: (Ck.) was also identified as *V. myrsinites*. Spoehr's informant did not mention this ingredient.

7. Leaves of Water-liana (*Cissus sicyoides* L.), Creek "chu-los sho-a-kee," Mikasuki "tsuk-ko-chee"; also of the grapes *Vitis rotundifolia* Mich. (Creek "so-losh-ka," Mikasuki "tsu-ko-chee") and *Vitis caribaea* H. & B. (no names given) (202, 209, pl. 14). The identification of the various grapes in the black drink is confused. Spoehr's informants gave none, but mine mentioned two. One of these, called baLbî: in Mikasuki and páLko in Creek, is Shuttleworth's grape (*Vitis coriacea* Shuttlw.); the other, Mikasuki cóko:cî: and Creek colǒ:skocî:, is a Muscadine or Scuppernong (*Muscadinia Munsoniana* [Simpson] Small). The Mikasuki name of the latter must be represented by the "tsuk-ko-chee" given by Capron for both *C. sicyoides* and *V. rotundifolia*; the last is closely related to *M. Munsoniana*, for Small (1913:757) puts it in the same genus. Further, Stirling (1941) identifies Mikasuki baLbî: as *Vitis Labrusca* L., and Mikasuki "tcokotci" as *Vitis rotundifolia* Mich., which, taken with Capron's and my data, would suggest that at least *V. rotundifolia* and *M. Munsoniana* are not distinguished by the Seminole. Capron's "chu-los sho-a-kee" may represent Creek colǒ:skocî:;

his "so-losh-ka" is unclear – can it be the "colóswa" given by Loughbridge and Hodge (1914:32) with the meaning "muscatine"?

8. Sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*) (leaves?), Creek "too-la hat-ka," Mikasuki "too-lat-kee" (202). The names are better written to:lahá:tka (Creek) and to:lhátkî: (Mikasuki). My informant denied that this is an ingredient of this black drink, and it is not mentioned in Spoehr's notes (1939).

9. Rabbit-tobacco (*Pterocaulon undulatum*) (202). This plant, called picikcalahkayikcî: or acõ:bahcayikcî: in Mikasuki and yanasahiliswâ: in Creek, is not an ingredient of 'Big Gathered Medicine' according to my informant. Spoehr's list does not include it, either. His specimen of "yanasa hiliswa" was identified as *P. undulatum* (Walt.) C. Mohr, as was mine.

The following ingredients are not mentioned by Capron, but were included by my informant or Spoehr's or both:

10. Leaves of Lizard's-tail (*Saururus cernuus* L.), Creek oyihilíswa, Mikasuki yahkakayíkcî:. The plant was included by my informant, and is given as an ingredient by Spoehr without identification under the name "hoi hiliswa."

11. Leaves of Southern Red Cedar (*Juniperus silicicola* [Small] Bailey), Creek aciná:, Mikasuki acinî:. This plant was not included by Spoehr's informant.

12. Leaves of Mistletoe (*Phoradendron flavescens* [Pursh] Nutt.), Creek tohiLíkko, Mikasuki hinLímásókcî:. This, also, is not given in Spoehr's list of ingredients.

13. Leaves of an unidentified plant, probably a grass, called pahihátkocî: in Creek and pahátlo:cî: in Mikasuki. This is not one of the components on Spoehr's list.

14. The bark of "miko hoyanica." An optional ingredient according to Spoehr, this was not included by my informant, who called the plant hoyani:cî: in Mikasuki and míkko hoyani'ca: in Creek. The plant does not grow in Florida, but is now imported from Oklahoma, where, according to Swanton (1928b:655), a medicinal species of *Salix* is called "miko hoyanídja" by the Creek. My informant agrees that it is a kind of willow. An early botanical work (Baldwin, 1843:59) mentions a "*Salix* – 'Dwarf willow'" called "Micco Hoyenejau" by the Creek. Thus this may be *Salix tristis* Ait., the "Dwarf gray-willow" given by Small (1933:415).

15. A plant called "pofackaLako" in Creek. Given by Spoehr without identification, the plant may be kafõ:ckáLakkô: (Mik. hapo:sikâyco:bî:), *Hyptis pectinata* (L.) Poir, if Spoehr's "pofacka" represents kafócka as suggested above. My informant said that hapo:sikâyco:bî: is not used in the 'Big Gathered Medicine.'

The following plants are listed as ingredients by Spoehr, with Creek names for which I am unable to suggest botanical identifications or Mikasuki equivalents:

16. "hici pakpaki" (apparently 'tobacco flower(s)')

17. "tokfona"

18. "totkopLako"

19. "cacasila"

The 'Big Gathered Medicine' is boiled until midnight (C, St, Sp), when the four ears of corn roasting by it are added to the pot (St,Sp), and the medicine is taken four times by the men, who then vomit (C). The medicine prevents green corn from making men sick (St, Sp), is a sort of general tonic, making the body strong and healthy, and also prevents gossiping and "craziness" and keeps the people "friendly, rejoicing" during the ensuing year (St). After midnight, whenever the male dancers get hungry they may stop for another drink – but, as a young man told me, it only "makes you weaker and sleepier." Behind the fire on which it cooks sit the medicine man, his assistants, and various men invited to sit with them to help keep them awake, talking, smoking, and telling stories until dawn while the rest of the people dance. Not only is eating forbidden to the men during this night, but also sleeping (St).

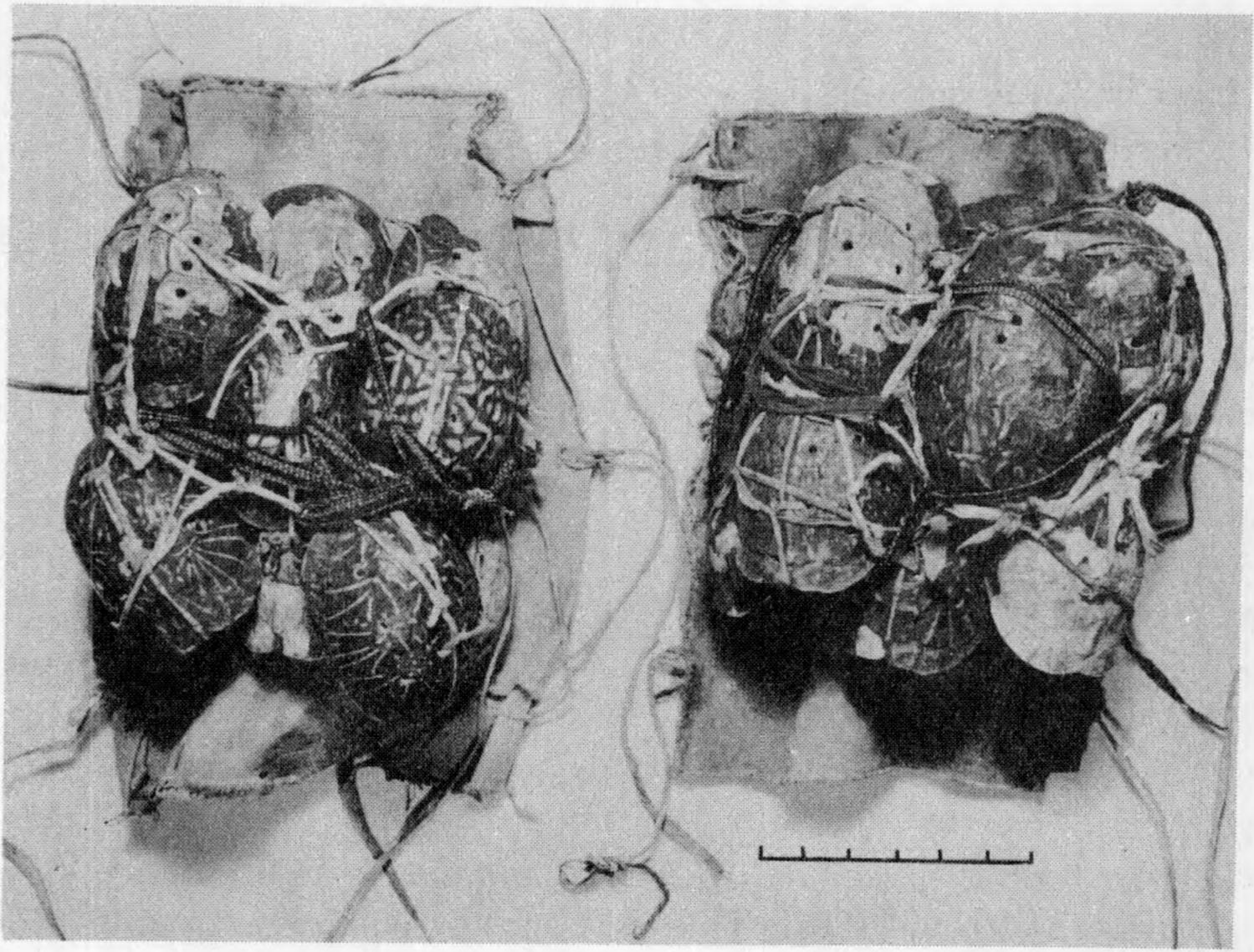
The dance fire has been lit at dusk, and the dances begin soon thereafter and continue nearly continuously until morning (C, St, Sp). Most dances are Crazy Dances, but various animal dances are intermixed at random (St, C, Sp), and at midnight the Corn Dance is first danced, being repeated several times before dawn (C; this was not the case at the 1951 Cow Creek busk).

At midnight, or soon thereafter, the naming ceremony, in which boys receive their adult names, occurs (St,Sp). This is not held every year, but only when there are enough un-named boys aged about 13 to 15 years to make it worth while (Sp); it apparently has never taken place at a busk attended by Capron, since he does not mention it, and it did not happen at the 1951 busk I attended. However, Spoehr observed the ceremony at the 1939 Mika-

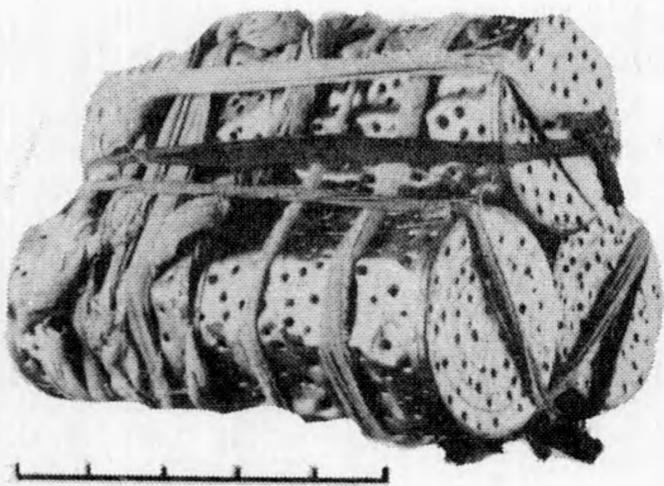
suki busk he attended, and both his Cow Creek and my own Mikasuki informants described it. This is the occasion at which a man receives his adult name, with the result that the Christian boys now reaching adulthood will keep their boyhood names throughout life, since they do not attend the busk (St). The names have been chosen earlier by the sib elders (Sp) or the medicine man in consultation with several older men (St). They are the names of men now dead (St). The boys to be named are seated in a curved line behind the medicine fire, with the medicine man in the center (Sp); the names are given by two men, apparently one for each ceremonial moiety (St, Sp). The namer calls out the new name four times in a loud voice, prolonging the final syllable (Sp, St) – this brings the name “like a spirit” from the afterworld where the previous holder resides (St) – and the boy who is to receive it comes up to the namer (Sp, St). The namer takes from the medicine man a white feather (Sp, St), which has been kept with the medicine bundle all day (St), and places this in a handkerchief tied around the boy’s head (Sp, St). He wears it the rest of the night, placing it in the Bighouse in the morning (St). It is said that formerly scalps were used as feathers are today; those taken during the year were heaped around the ballpole, and the ball games played around them at the busk, until on the last night they were given out with the names, and burnt up the following morning (St).

The dances continue until dawn, when the women leave the grounds to go to the camps to prepare the food which breaks the men’s fast (C). The medicine man now examines the medicine bundle contents, re-wraps them, and carries the bundle out to hide it (C). Meanwhile all the men not previously scratched strip to rolled up pants or a shirt twisted between the legs, rub their bodies with water to prevent the scratching from “peeling” the skin, and submit one by one to a series of long scratches on limbs and torso by six or eight men, older scratchers operating on the older men and young ones on the youths (C, St).

Although Capron (192) once saw the scratching done with three to four sewing needles simply held in the fingers, the normal method involves the use of a tool. Capron mentions and illustrates (192, 210, pl. 15) one consisting of six ordinary sewing needles run through a small rectangular block of wood and bound in with string. A more traditional form, still used at least by the Mikasuki, has four or five sewing needles inserted in a rectangular frame, made by bending the quill of a wild turkey or sandhill crane wing feather at four spots, inserting the small end in the opening of the large end, and wrapping the needles into the frame with thread (St). The original form of this implement was said to use snake teeth in place of the modern needles (St).<sup>25</sup> An example of the quill-frame type was collected in Florida by Harrington in 1908, probably from the Mikasuki (Harrington, 1908; Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, spec. 1/7922). In 1910, Skinner collected one made of two flat pieces of wood with four needles



A



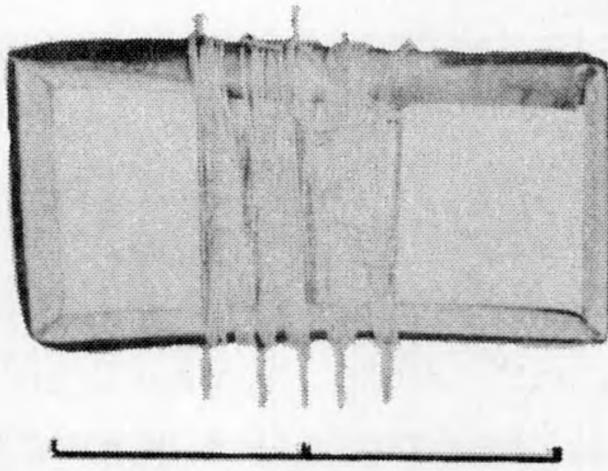
B



E



C



D

Fig. 3. Mikasuki Busk Artifacts (scales in inches). A, Pair of woman's turtle-shell leg rattles (collected in 1910; Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. photo); B, One of a pair of woman's tin-can leg rattles, unwrapped (coll. in 1951); C, Same, wrapped as worn (1952 photo); D, Scratching tool, of needles and wild turkey quill (coll. in 1952); E, Coconut dance rattle (coll. in 1951). (A: AMNH spec. 50.1/2331; B, D, E: Yale Peabody Mus. Spec.s 145566a, 145563, 145565; C: Indian owned.)

between, bound with thread – probably also Mikasuki (American Museum of Natural History spec. 50.1/2348; see Skinner 1913a).

Similar tools were once widespread in the Southeast. The Catawba used fifteen rattlesnake teeth set like a comb in a “split reed” (Swanton, 1946: 564); the Chickasaw also used snakes’ teeth in a split reed, or in a piece of wood (Swanton, 1928b: 540); the Creek traditionally used the jaw of a garfish with teeth in it, but in more recent times have used an “implement” containing needles (Swanton, 1928a:354; 1928b:554); the Yuchi used six steel pins set in a rectangular frame of a shaved turkey quill, with a short feather and a leaf of Button-snakeroot attached at one corner (Speck, 1909:121); the North Carolina Cherokee type also involved a rectangular turkey quill frame, with six to eight needles inserted and bound in with thread – but here, the needles are narrow sharpened splinters of turkey leg bone (Mooney and Olbrechts, 1932:69, pl. 7; Harvard Peabody Museum spec. 73433; Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, spec. 1/8964; Chicago Natural History Museum specs. 15544, 92467, 92468). This last type is undoubtedly pre-Columbian in origin, for nearly identical bone needles have been found in clusters in several archeological sites in the Southeast (Williams, 1954).

According to Capron (192,207) the purpose of this scratching is “to purify the blood and prevent blood poison” during the following year. My informant explained that the blood becomes “too heavy” and must be “let out” to ensure healthiness. Certainly this ritual scratching of all males should not be confused with the dry scratching of children by their parents or mother’s brother as punishment, nor with the deep dry scratching of adults as punishment, nor with the medicinal use of scratching with owl, wildcat, or puma claws or snake teeth in order to cure muscular cramps; none of these involves needles in a frame (St).

After the scratching, fifteen or twenty younger men crowd into the small sweat-bath structure, where the remains of the ‘Big Gathered Drink’ are poured on the stones, which have been heating on a separate fire since about 3:00 a.m. (C, St). This treatment prevents anti-social behavior, “craziness,” to which young men are particularly susceptible (St). After the sweat-bath, all the men, not only those who took the steaming, go off to bathe (C, Sp).

The men return from bathing to the Bighouse, where they await the return of the medicine man from hiding the medicine bundle (C). The feast begins as soon as he comes back, between dawn (C) and 8:00 a.m. (Sp). The food is brought to the Bighouse where the men eat (C, Sp). The most important item eaten is corn from the new crop, which is forbidden to all males before the busk (C, St, Sp); the women may eat it as soon as it ripens, but if men so much as see them cooking it, much less eating it, they will become weak and sick (St). Visitors from other bands may not participate in this corn

eating unless their own busk has already been held, since "it's still the old year for them" (St).

After the fast is broken the people pack up their belongings and leave for home during the afternoon.

Capron mentions twelve different busk dances, briefly describing a few and giving most attention to the "Feather Dance" (186-187, 193-195). There are at least thirty more busk dances known to the Florida Seminole, most of them with animal names similar to most of those mentioned by Capron. Recordings of many of these and some choreographic information on a few are available; but in this place I shall mention only a few of the dances which are interesting for comparative reasons.

A 'Long Dance' is remembered, but has not been danced for many years. An "old people's dance" (Creek "opanka acolî") was given as a busk dance by one of Spoehr's informants, and Frances Densmore recorded an "Old" dance among the Florida Seminole, which she describes as a "social" dance just as she does most of the other busk dances (Densmore, 1942). According to my best informants, the 'Old Man Dance' (Mikasuki naknô:stalîlwî:) or 'Old Man Replica [*i.e.*, Mask] Dance' (Mikasuki naknô:sâ:btalîlwî:) was a separate ceremony in the fall, lasting about four nights and involving a hunt, in which the dancers wore masks, which probably were of bark and perhaps painted. It has been obsolete for fifty years or more. The "Gun Dance" is known to me only from Capron's mention of it, although the shooting of guns during the "Buffalo Dance" was mentioned by my informants and observed by Capron (186).

The Buffalo Dance is the only occasion on which a drum is used. This is a water drum, made today of a tin can with a buckskin head, formerly of cypress bark or a section of a hollow cypress trunk (the use of cypress "knees" was denied). The other instruments used to accompany dances are two types of rattle. The Mikasuki dance leader still often uses a coconut shell on a stick, with lines of holes drilled in the coconut and *Canna* (*Canna flaccida* Salisb.) seeds or large beads as rattling pellets. Possible substitutes for this are, most commonly, a perforated condensed-milk can alone or mounted on a stick, or a box turtle (*Terrapene carolina bauri* Taylor) similarly punctured and mounted. There is no tradition of the use of gourd rattles.<sup>26</sup> The other type of rattle is the woman's leg rattle. Most modern specimens I have seen consist of a pair of bundles of condensed-milk cans, tied together with cloths and worn one on each calf. Each bundle contains six cans (Capron's "12 to 16" [p. 184] seems excessive). These replace the type still occasionally used, which consists of five to twelve perforated box turtle shells lashed to a cloth or buckskin square, one for each leg. These also contain *Canna* seeds or beads.<sup>27</sup>



A



B

Fig. 4. Dancing during the last night of the 1938 Mikasuki busk at Rock Island in the Everglades. Note the stack of Feather Dance poles in B, upper left. (Photos courtesy of the Junior Museum of Miami.)

The constant accompaniment of all dances is singing, frequently antiphonal and done only by the men. The "words" of the songs are almost always meaningless, although the syllables sung are fixed for each song. Except for a few with rather complex figures, all dances simply circle counter-clockwise around the dance fire. Many involve motions or gestures intended to imitate the animal for which the dance is named.

The "Feather Dance" is unusual in several ways. It is properly called, in Mikasuki, *cita:hayî:* — which has no other meaning beyond the name of this dance.<sup>28</sup> Although it may be called 'Day Dance' since it is performed only during daylight, it is known as "Feather Dance" only in English. It seems to be the only busk dance in which men alone participate, and is the only one in which the dancers carry anything except palmetto leaves. For the Feather Dance, each dancer carries an eight- to ten-foot pole with one or two white feathers at the tip. The dance is performed four times on the third day, twice in the morning and twice in the afternoon. Between performances, and throughout the subsequent night, the poles are stacked against one end of the Bighouse (C, St, Sp). The Feather Dance is not a part of every busk, but, according to Capron, "it must not be allowed to go four years without being danced" (193). My informant explained that once performed, it must be held at four successive busks, but may then be allowed to lapse for one to four years. He said that it is the responsibility of the Bird sib, not the medicine man, to decide to hold it and to manage it. Others may request the Birds to put it on, but do not have the right to do so themselves. The officials who supervise and lead the dance itself are two, one a member of the Bird sib and the other a man whose father was a Bird. Capron is correct in doubting that the only function of this rather elaborate preparation and the relatively complicated dance is "to keep the men awake" (193), yet I did not succeed in eliciting any other explanation. The question of the function and rationale of all other busk dances as well as this one is a subject which requires further investigation. It is difficult to elicit such explanations even from the best Seminole informants, but a serious attempt should be made, since this is one of the weakest points in our data on Creek busks.

The small amount of information on the busk officials collected by myself and by Spoehr (1939) agrees in general with that given by Capron (162, 167, 183), but adds little to it. The main official is, of course, the supervising medicine man. He has one to three assistants, one of whom normally succeeds him on his retirement or death. These may fill most of his functions during the busk. There are also two "helpers," younger men belonging to the Tiger and Wind sibs among the Mikasuki and the Tiger and Bird sibs among the Cow Creek (who lack the Wind sib). These men sweep the dance ground, help keep order, collect the herbs for the black drinks and prepare the third black drink, and round up the men for the scratching. My informant

mentioned a third man, not given by Capron or Spoehr, who acts as a policeman, announcer, and messenger for the medicine man and his assistants during the day. At night there is a dance "boss," chosen by the medicine man and his assistant(s), whose duties are to select the dances and their leaders, urge people to dance and to continue dancing, and see that no men are sleeping. On the last night there are two such bosses, one before and one after midnight.

Some of the functions of the Seminole busk may be mentioned. It marks the beginning of the Seminole new year and provides for the general health and well-being of the people, especially the men and boys, during the following months. The function perhaps most frequently mentioned is to permit the males to eat the new crop of maize without becoming sick; hence the English name "green corn dance." Another important purpose is the annual re-examination of the medicine bundle, to ensure its continued potency and power for good. The political activities of the council on the third day are also essential. This is the time for trying serious crimes, discussing important matters affecting the tribe, and maintaining the informal political connections with the other Seminole bands. The membership of the several bands is defined by regular attendance at the appropriate busks. The busk further is the chief social affair of the Seminole year, the time when the people gather from their scattered camps and associate with old friends, renew old acquaintanceships, and learn the news and gossip of the past year.<sup>29</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The functions of the busk should be examined in more detail; the origin myth of the busk, brief versions of which are in hand, should be investigated more fully for the light it probably will shed on the rationale behind the whole ceremony. The political functions of the council, and the role of the sibs here and in other parts of the busk, call for more investigation. Our data on the ceremonies connected with handling the medicine bundles are inadequate, also. It is to be hoped that enough information can be obtained to evaluate Mikasuki-Cow Creek differences, and to distinguish these from differences due only to varying personnel filling the important offices — if indeed the differences between the Mikasuki and Cow Creek busks amount to more than this. Musicological and choreographic descriptions and analyses of the dances should be made. Enough recordings are available to carry out the musical analyses — although none have yet been transcribed or analyzed except for the few so treated in Densmore's manuscript (1942) — but more observation is required before choreographic description in any detail is possible.

A comparison of the Seminole busks with those of the Creek shows

considerable simplification in the former, although the central importance of the medicine bundles maybe a new or unique feature. Witthoft (1949: 68) has compiled a list of traits apparently always present in the Creek busk before removal of the tribe to Indian Territory. These are given below, with my comments on the Seminole busks added on the right:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Taboo against eating green corn prior to the busk.                  | 1. Present  |
| 2. Setting of the date by male officials at a preliminary meeting.     | 2. Absent, or present only in much reduced form.  |
| 3. Square ground.  | 3. Present.   |
| 4. Erection of "sheds" on the sides of the square ground.              | 4. Only one present.  |
| 5. Direction and color symbolism.                                      | 5. Apparently absent.   |
| 5. Preparation of the square ground.                                   | 6. Present.   |
| 7. Ritual disposal of earth removed from the square ground.            | 7. Absent.  |
| 8. Cleansing of the households.  | 8. Absent.  |
| 9. Prohibition against salt.   | 9. Absent.  |
| 10. Fasting.   | 10. Present.  |
| 11. Concluding feast on new corn and other foods.                      | 11. Present.  |
| 12. All-night ritual observances.                                      | 12. Present.  |
| 13. New fire ritual.   | 13. Absent, but traditional.  |
| 14. Scarification (scratching) for punishment and as a ritual feature. | 14. Present, as a ritual feature.   |
| 15. "Going to water" ritual.   | 15. Present, in simplified form.  |
| 16. Ceremonial hunt.   | 16. Absent as a feature during the busk itself (present in the Hunting or Snake Dance). |
| 17. Seclusion of the men in the square ground at certain times.        | 17. Present.  |
| 18. Granting of amnesty to criminals.                                  | 18. Apparently absent.  |
| 19. Use of herb medicines and purges.                                  | 19. Present.  |
| 20. Priest's blowing into the medicine.                                | 20. Present.  |
| 21. Appointment of "drivers" (as policemen).                           | 21. Present.  |
| 22. Feather dance.   | 22. Present.  |
| 23. Old dance.   | 23. Absent (?); tradition of existence as a separate ceremony (?).                      |
| 24. Gun dance.   | 24. Present (?).  |

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 25. Animal dances.                           | 25. Present.   |
| 26. Use of gourd rattles.                    | 26. Absent (coconut or turtle rattles used instead).   |
| 27. Use of women's turtle-shell leg rattles. | 27. Present.   |
| 28. Use of water drum.                       | 28. Present.   |
| 29. Use of ibis or heron (?) wings.          | 29. Absent; but palmetto leaf fans carried by male dancers, white water bird feathers used on Feather Dance poles. |

Thus, the Seminole busk is in many ways a Creek busk, stripped of almost all except its minimum essential features, but with the addition of medicine bundles. The simplification of the Seminole busk as compared with its Creek antecedents, on the one hand, and the apparent elaboration of the medicine bundle cult and of the Hunting Dance, both seemingly developed from relatively unimportant and un-integrated Creek antecedents (although this should be checked in fieldwork among the Oklahoma Creek), may reflect the decline in the importance of Seminole agriculture under the influence of a new environment and continued harassment by the whites during the Seminole Wars, with a concomitant increased reliance on hunting and increased importance of war and offensive and protective war magic. The Seminole medicine bundles, whether an independent convergent development or not, are of great importance as a possible link between the green corn ceremonialism of the Eastern Woodlands (see Witthoft, 1949), and the Central Algonkian and Plains sacred bundles.

It is obvious that further field investigation among the Seminole is desirable, but the data already known from this tribe point the way for several comparative studies and underline the necessity for more field work among the Creek and other surviving Indian groups of the Southeast.

#### NOTES

1. The field work was made possible by grants from the Department of Anthropology and the Peabody Museum of Yale University, as part of their Caribbean Anthropological Program aided by funds from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research.
2. I am indebted to Miss Helen Palmer of the Bureau of American Ethnology for these.
3. Chiefly referring to the Creek. Most of the previous ones are given, together with Swanton's own observations, in Swanton, 1928b. An important discussion of the state of knowledge on this subject and its implications is Witthoft, 1949.
4. This article was brought to my attention by Charlton W. Tebeau.
5. For the orthography used here for writing Mikasuki, see Sturtevant, 1953, p. 66.

For the Cow Creek language, I use the system worked out by Haas (1940:149-150) for the Creek language of Oklahoma, of which Creek Seminole is a sub-dialect — except that for typological simplicity I substitute a colon for her raised dot and a capital L for her barred l.

6. isohkî: (note the lack of an accent on the second syllable) means 'file, rasp,' but my informant did not know any meaning for the similar element in ta:lisóhko:cî:.
7. The context in which the information was given makes it somewhat doubtful whether this last item is a constituent of the medicine bundle.
8. Some Mikásuki sweat-bath stones I saw, and the Cow Creek ones illustrated by Capron (pl. 11), seem to be the ordinary limestone rocks of south Florida. Capron says the four sweat-bath stones are "of a lime conglomerate" (p. 207).
9. A misprint is involved here. Capron gives the number twice, once as 38 and once as 18. The latter seems correct, for it is the number given in his earlier article (1942:18).
10. yv'pē in the orthography of Loughbridge and Hodge (1914:39).
11. In the last ten or fifteen years the situation has changed considerably, with the conversion of about half the tribe to Christianity. The converts do not attend the busks and have overtly cast aside their beliefs in the bundles — yet it is difficult to find even a Christian who is willing to talk about the bundles or the non-Christian religion.
12. Creek settlement of north and central peninsular Florida began in the first half of the eighteenth century, but there is evidence that rather close contacts with the old settlements to the north were maintained well into the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The beginnings of the Seminole as an entirely independent group had best be set at about 1815-1820.
13. See, for example, Skinner, 1913b, 1915, 1925; Wissler, 1912, 1916, 1920. I hope at some other time to discuss the distribution and significance of sacred bundles in the East and on the Plains.
14. Skinner's suggestion (1913b:92-93) that the Menomini bundles are the result of combining into a single bundle individual charms, of the widespread eastern and southern type, is pertinent here also.
15. For this information I am indebted to Dr. Joseph Ashbrook of the Yale University Department of Astronomy.
16. I am told by Mr. Charles H. Steffani, Dade County Agent of the University of Florida Agricultural Extension Service, that whites in Dade county plant corn in mid-February, while those near Belle Glade do so in late March or early April, and that a difference of a month or more in time of ripening is not excessive for about 100 miles difference in latitude.
17. "Ko-nip-ha-tco," then a young man, later known as Little Billy, and the father of Josie and Ingraham Billy (cf. MacCauley, 1887: 476, 493, 522). Strangely, this informant gave MacCauley only Cow Creek expressions — MacCauley hence did not even

recognize the fact that the Seminole spoke two languages. This is the reason for Capron's incorrect statement (p. 209) that MacCauley's informant must have been Cow Creek since he uses the Creek term for the ceremonial structure of the busk ground.

18. The sib called "Little Bird" in Capron's maps and discussion is the same as that Spoehr (1941:14-15) calls "Talahasee." The identification is based on the fact that my Cow Creek informants gave "Little Bird" as the sib affiliation of individuals assigned to "Talahasee" in Spoehr's fieldnotes (1939). Sib eponymy is complicated among the Mikasuki, and apparently also among the Cow Creek.

19. In the following outline of the events of the busk, I have combined three sources of information; the symbols C, Sp, and St after each statement indicate the sources on which it is based. Capron, 1953, (C), is the most complete account. Spoehr, 1939, (Sp), contains notes on interviews with Cow Creek informants and on two busks Spoehr attended: one Cow Creek (at which he was present on June 18 and again on June 20, Picnic Day, through the end, except for the council meeting), and one Mikasuki (at which he was present from about 5:00 p.m. of the last afternoon, through the conclusion the following morning). My own notes, (St), contain information from Mikasuki informants, and from my attendance at two Cow Creek busks. In 1951, I was present from 2:00 to 11:15 p.m. on July 3, and again on July 7, Court Day, from 2:30 p.m. through the night until 5:00 a.m., just before the scratching and sweat-bath. In 1952, I was allowed to be present from 2:45 p.m. to 11:25 p.m. of the first day.

20. Called "just dance" by Capron (186). The Creek and Mikasuki names are usually, although somewhat inadequately, translated 'crazy dance' - Mikasuki ha:cŕ: and Creek ha:cô: mean approximately though not precisely 'crazy.'

21. Since the principle of sib responsibility holds, members of the damaged sib may temper their demands for punishment in order that a future offense by one of their own sib mates will be more leniently dealt with.

22. *i.e.*, puma, panther (*Felis concolor coryi* Bangs).

23. Unless otherwise noted, the botanical identifications of my plant specimens were made by Mr. Roy Woodbury, University of Miami Botany Department. Capron does not say by whom his plants were identified - perhaps himself?

24. In transcribing Spoehr's Creek words, I substitute the phonemic equivalents (in Haas' [1940:149-150] transcription) for his phonetic symbols.

25. Capron (192) guesses that claws or snake teeth may have preceded needles, but his implication that the insertion of the needles in a frame is a recent invention is certainly misleading.

26. Nor of anything resembling the curious rattles from Silver Springs (Neill, 1952), which do not look at all Southeastern, although the "hard, round, and buckshot-like" seeds in the receptacles of these specimens are those of *Canna flaccida*. I have to thank Dr. Neill for showing me these.

27. For a photograph of Creek coconut and leg rattles very similar to the Seminole types, see Speck, 1907, p. III.

28. Cf. the similar Creek dance called "tcitahaia" (Swanton, 1928b:609).

29. The only other occasion on which a whole band gathers is the Hunting or Snake Dance in the fall, which is a less important ceremony. This is a uniquely Seminole ceremony, as yet undescribed in print, which shares many features with the busk but lacks the more important ones, although other, non-busk, features are present.

Capron omits mention of the extensive drinking of beer, wine, and whiskey which is an informal but constant part of both the busk and Hunting Dance. Although sometimes complained about by the older men, it rarely leads to serious difficulties and certainly lubricates social relationships and adds to the enjoyment of many participants. There is evidence that this is by no means a recent feature of the Seminole busks.

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#### Abbreviations:

- AA                    *American Anthropologist*, New Series. Lancaster; Menasha.
- AMNH-AP            *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*. New York.
- BAE-AR             *Annual Report of the Bureau of (American) Ethnology*. Washington.
- BAE-B              *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin*. Washington.
- FA                   *The Florida Anthropologist*. Gainesville.
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## A NOTE ON FUTURE ISSUES

Papers which have been accepted for publication and which will appear shortly in *The Florida Anthropologist* include "Archaeology on Rocky Point, Florida," by William W. Plowden, which is a contribution from the new chapter of the Society in the Tampa area; "The Davis Mound, Hardee County, Florida, by Ripley P. Bullen, and "Further Notes on the Battery Point Site, Bayport, Hernando County, Florida," by Adelaide K. and Ripley P. Bullen. The Rocky Point and Davis mound papers were received by the editor in November, but considerations of space, and balance of content between archaeology and ethnology, has delayed publication. A more recently submitted manuscript, which we expect to publish soon, is "A Peruvian Tasseled Fabric," a study of a specimen in the Carter collection at Florida State University by Ina Van Stan.

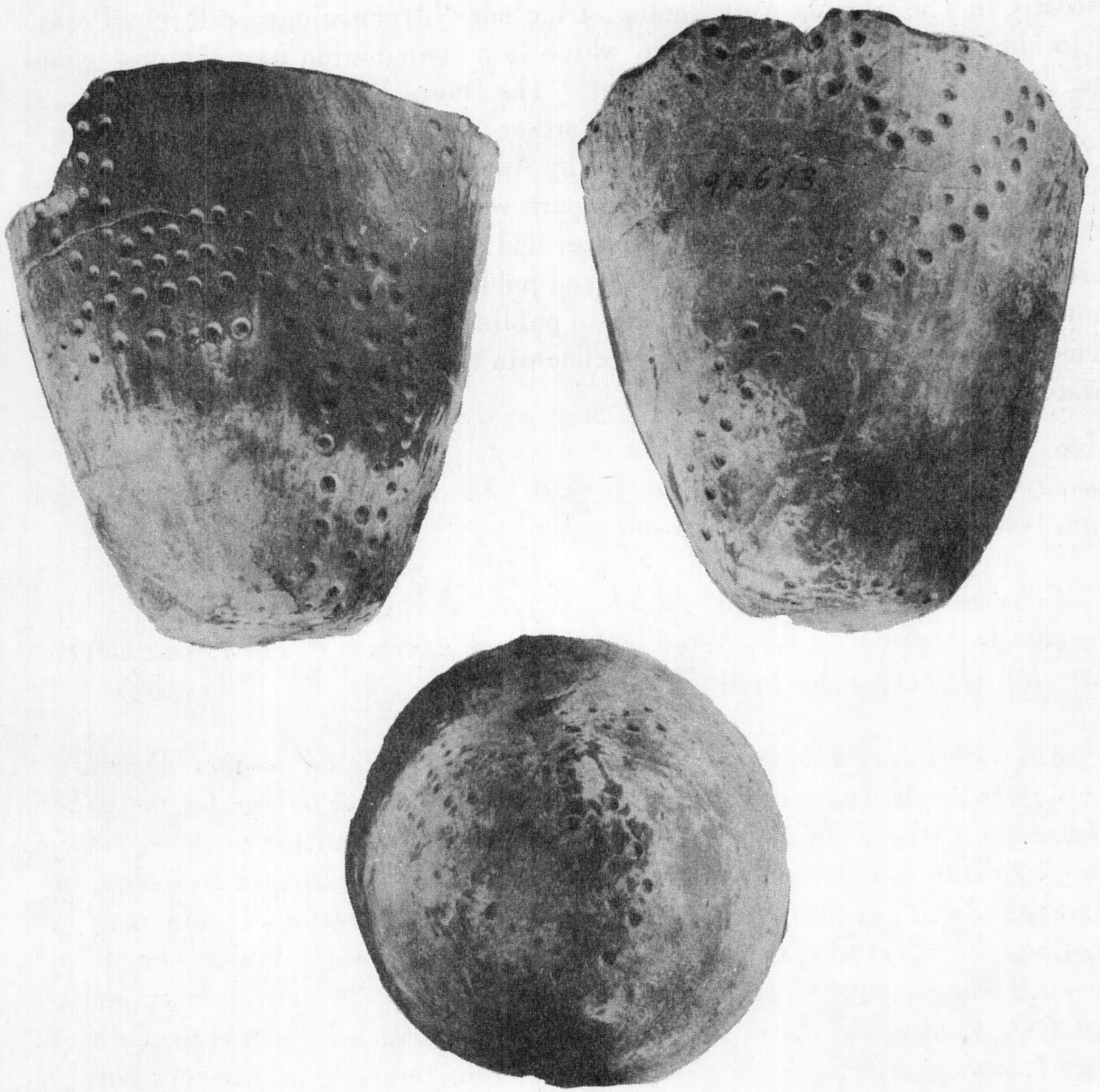


Fig. 1. St. Johns Punctated vessel found near Deland, Florida.

## A UNIQUE ST. JOHNS PUNCTATED VESSEL

Ripley P. Bullen

Most of the chalky pottery found in the St. Johns River area is either plain or decorated with check stamping. It is interesting, therefore, to note the St. Johns Punctated vessel illustrated in Figure 1. It was found about five years ago by Eddie Ward, now of Gainesville, Florida, on the St. Johns River near Deland and recently presented by him to the Florida State Museum (Cat. No. 92613).

Unfortunately, all of the vessel was not found. The remaining lower portion is three and one-half to four inches high, three and five-eighths inches outside diameter at the top, and one and three-eighths inches outside diameter at the bottom. Walls are fairly thick, varying from one-quarter to five-sixteenths of an inch, and both inner and outer surface exhibit vertical smoothing marks. The small base is flattened so that the vessel will stand on a level surface without other support.

In spite of a fair range in depth and diameter, individual punctations all were made with the same pointed tool, as each exhibits the same characteristic pit, reflecting the condition of the tip of the tool.

The interesting feature of this vessel is the punctated design. Punctations near the broken edge clearly indicate a curvilinear design, for the upper part of the vessel, although, due to the fragmentary condition of the specimen, we are unable to determine the pattern. This design is brought downward to the base of the vessel by a double-curved line of punctations (below the catalogue number) which, when they reach the base, join a double row of punctations around the periphery of the base. Nearly diametrically opposite, two other portions of the upper design are also brought downward to the base. This feature starts out as two double rows, which shortly join to form four rows, but lose one row just before the final bend towards the base.

Thus, different portions of the design have been joined by rows of punctations which meet each other around the periphery of the bottom of the vessel. If we had the whole design we might know why the artist felt this joining of design elements to be necessary. Or was it just a whim? In either case, the decorative treatment of this vessel seems to be unique for Florida ceramics.

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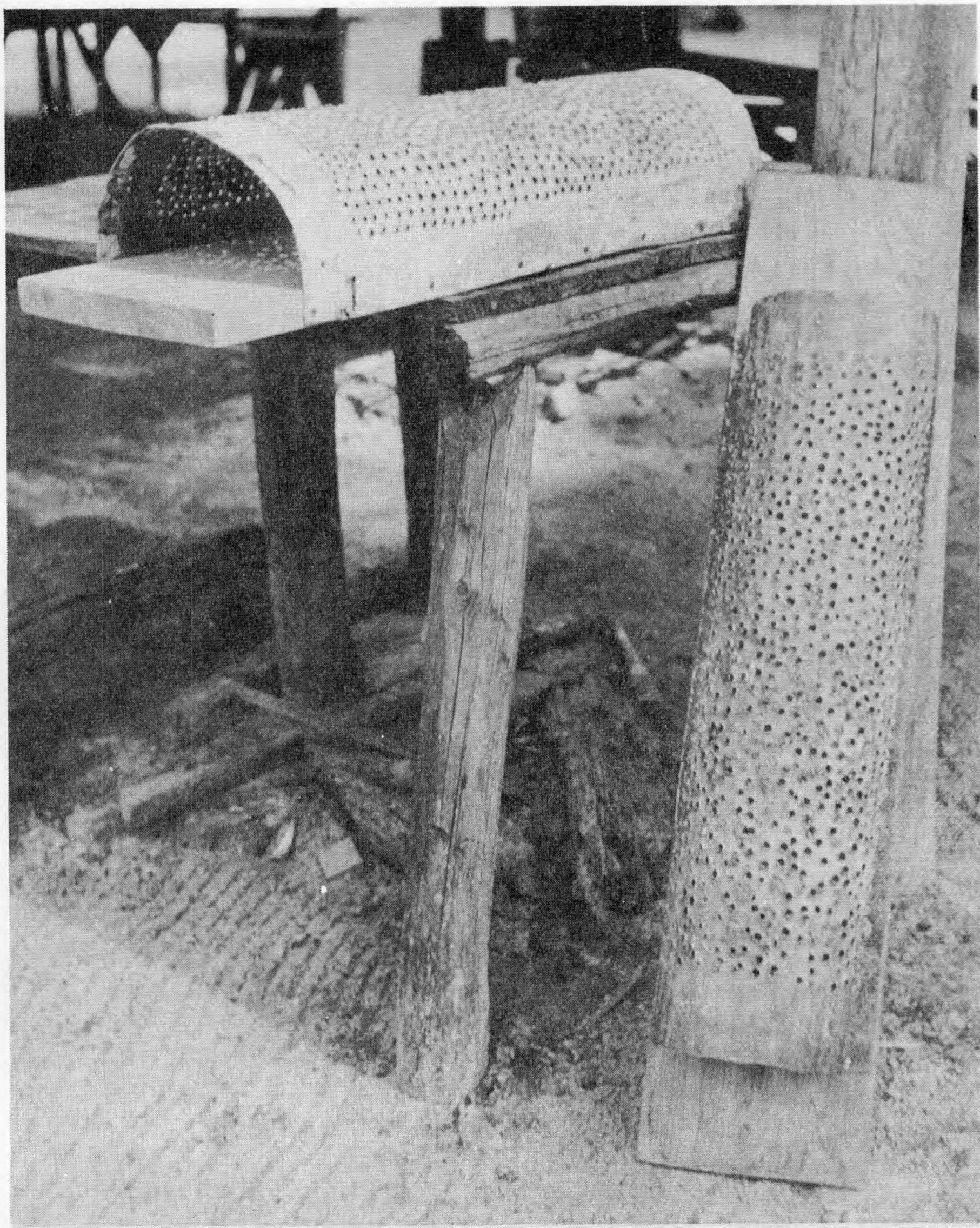


Fig. 1. Tin graters of the Mikasuki, reminiscent of West Indian implements.

## GRATERS OF THE MIKASUKI SEMINOLE

Wilfred T. Neill

Apparently, graters seldom were used by Southeastern Indians. Certainly there are few references in the literature to such artifacts. Swanton (1946) makes no mention of them at all. The root crops of the Southeast, such as coontie and *Smilax*, were prepared by chopping or pounding rather than by grating. However, graters are made by the present-day Mikasuki Seminole of Florida.

Two of these artifacts are shown in an accompanying photograph (Fig. 1). They were brought to Silver Springs from Big Cypress Swamp by a family of Seminole. Each specimen is about a yard in length. The utensils are constructed entirely of white man's materials: boards, tin, and nails. Nevertheless, they are somewhat reminiscent of the large cassava graters from the West Indies.

As far as I know, sweet potatoes are the only plant product that the Seminole often prepare by grating. After shredding, the sweet potatoes are made into a sort of pone. A very similar dish finds favor among rural whites in the Southeast.

Evidently graters are not a recent invention of the Mikasuki. Older Indians informed me that the implements had been manufactured for generations.

In referring solely to Mikasuki graters, I do not mean to imply that such utensils are lacking among the Muskogee-speaking Seminole. However, I have observed them only among the Mikasuki or Hitchiti-speaking group.

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

**William C. Sturtevant**, a graduate student in anthropology at Yale University, is writing his doctoral dissertation following three seasons of field work among the Mikasuki Seminole. His review of Neill's *Florida's Seminole Indians* appeared in the December, 1952, number of this journal. After accepting an invitation to review Louis Capron's report, "The Medicine Bundles of the Florida Seminole and the Green Corn Dance," which appeared in Bulletin 151 of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Mr. Sturtevant happily expanded his paper to the present significant contribution to Southeastern ethnology.

**Wilfred T. Neill**, who contributes the note on Mikasuki graters, is president of the Florida Anthropological Society. Since publication of his work on the Seminole in 1952, Dr. Neill has extended his research into the archaeology and ethnology of Florida's Indians. He is director of the Research Division, Ross Allen Reptile Institute, Silver Springs.

**Ripley P. Bullen** is curator of social sciences of the Florida State Museum, Gainesville, and treasurer of the Society.

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