

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Descartes Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Schopenhauer Bebel Proust  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Langbein Schiller Iffland Sokrates  
Brentano Claudius Schilling Kralik Katharina II. von Rußland Bellamy Raabe Gibbon Tschechow  
Gerstäcker Klee Hölty Morgenstem Gleim Vulpius  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Goedicke  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Puschkín Homer Kleist  
Roth Heyse Klopstock Horaz Mörike Musil  
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**Throwing-sticks in the National  
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Otis T. Mason

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## I. — THROWING-STICKS IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.

By Otis T. Mason.

Col. Lane Fox tells us there are three areas of the throwing-stick: Australia, where it is simply an elongated spindle with a hook at the end; the country of the Conibos and the Purus, on the Upper Amazon, where the implement resembles that of the Australians, and the hyperborean regions of North America.

It is of this last group that we shall now speak, since the National Museum possesses only two specimens from the first-named area and none whatever from the second.

The researches and collections of Bessels, Turner, Boas, Hall, Mintzner, Kennicott, Ray, Murdoch, Nelson, Herendeen, and Dall, to all of whom I acknowledge my obligations, enable me to compare widely separated regions of the hyperborean area, and to distinguish these regions by the details in the structure of the throwing-stick.

The method of holding the throwing-stick is indicated in Fig. 1 by a drawing of H.W. Elliott. The Eskimo is just in the act of launching the light seal harpoon. The barbed point will fasten itself into the animal, detach itself from the ivory foreshaft, and unwind the rawhide or sinew line, which is securely tied to both ends of the light wooden shaft by a martingale device. The heavy ivory foreshaft will cause the shaft to assume an upright position in the water, and the whole will act as a drag to impede the progress of the game. The same idea of impeding progress and of retrieving is carried out by a multitude of devices not necessary to mention here.

The Eskimo spend much time in their skin kyaks, from which it would be difficult to launch an arrow from a bow, or a harpoon from the unsteady, cold, and greasy hand. This device of the throwing-stick, therefore, is the substitute for the bow or the sling, to be used in the kyak, by a people who cannot procure the proper materials for a heavier lance-shaft, or at least whose environment is prej-

udicial to the use of such a weapon. Just as soon as we pass Mount St. Elias going southward, the throwing-stick, plus the spear or dart of the Eskimo and the Aleut, gives place to the harpoon with a long, heavy, cedar shaft, weighing 15 or 20 pounds, whose momentum from both hands of the Indian, without the throw-stick, exceeds that of the Eskimo and Aleut darts [Pg 280]and harpoons, with the additional velocity imparted by the throwing-stick. It must not be forgotten, also, that the kyak is a very frail, unsteady thing, and therefore not much of the momentum of the body can be utilized, as it is by the Northwest Indians in making a lunge with a heavy shaft. The throwing-stick is also said by some arctic voyagers to be useful in giving directness of aim. Perhaps no other savage device comes so near in this respect to a gun barrel or the groove of a bow-gun. Its greatest advantages, however, are the firm grip which it gives in handling a harpoon or dart, and the longer time which it permits the hunter to apply the force of his arm to the propulsion of his weapon. Having practiced with a throwing-stick somewhat, I have imagined also that there was a certain amount of leverage acquired by the particular method of holding the stick and straightening the arm, as in a toggle joint. That implement, which seems so simple, and which is usually mentioned and dismissed in a word, possesses several marks or organs, which help to distinguish the locality in which each form occurs, as well as to define the associations of the implement as regards the weapon thrown from it and the game pursued. These marks are:

1. Shape, or general outline in face and side view, and size.
2. Handle, the part grasped in the hand.
3. Thumb-groove or thumb-lock, provision for the firm and comfortable insertion of the phalanx and ball of the thumb.
4. Finger-grooves, provision for each finger according to its use in the manipulation of the implement.
5. Finger-pegs, little plugs of wood or ivory to give more certain grip for the fingers and to prevent their slipping. The devices for the fingers are the more necessary where the hands are cold and everything is covered with grease.

6. Finger-tip cavities, excavations on the front face of the implement, into which the tips of the three last fingers descend to assist in grasping and to afford a rest on the back of these fingers for the weapon shaft.

7. Index-finger cavity or hole, provision for the insertion of the index finger, which plays a very important part in the use of the throwing-stick.

8. Spear shaft groove, in which the shaft of the weapon lies, as an arrow or bolt in the groove of a bow-gun.

9. Hook or spur, provision for seizing the butt end of the weapon while it is being launched. These may be ridges left in the wood by excavation, or pieces of wood, bone, ivory, &c., inserted. The size and shape of this part, and the manner of insertion, are also worthy of notice.

10. Edges: this feature is allied to the form and not to the function of the implement.

11. Faces: upper, on which the weapon rests; lower, into which the index finger is inserted.

[Pg 281]The figures illustrating this article are drawn to a scale indicated by inch marks in the margin, every dot on the line standing for an inch.

By the presence or absence, by the number or the shape of some of these marks or structural characteristics, the type and locality can be easily detected. The Eskimo have everywhere bows and arrows for land hunting, the former made of several pieces of bone lashed together, or of a piece of driftwood lashed and re-enforced with sinew. The arrows are of endless variety.

It should also be noticed that the kind of game and the season of the year, the shape and size of the spear accompanying the stick, and the bare or gloved hand, are all indicated by language expressed in various parts of this wonderful throwing-stick.



## GREENLAND TYPE.

The Greenland throwing-stick is a long, flat trapezoid, slightly ridged along the back (Fig. 2). It has no distinct handle at the wide end, although it will be readily seen that the expanding of this part secures a firm grip. A chamfered groove on one side for the thumb, and a smaller groove on the other side for the index finger, insure the implement against slipping from the hunter's grasp. Marks 5, 6, 7 of the series on page 280 are wanting in the Greenland type. The shaft-groove, in which lies the shaft of the great harpoon, is wide, deep, and rounded at the bottom. There is no hook, as in all the other types, to fit the end of the harpoon shaft, but in its stead are two holes, one in the front end of the shaft-groove, between the thumb-groove and the finger-groove, with an ivory eyelet or grommet for a lining, the other at the distal end of the shaft-groove, in the ivory piece which is ingeniously inserted there to form that extremity. This last-mentioned hole is not cylindrical like the one in front, but is so constructed as to allow the shaft-peg to slide off easily. These holes exactly fit two ivory pegs projecting from the harpoon shaft. When the hunter has taken his throwing-stick in his hand he lays his harpoon shaft upon it so that the pegs will fall in the two little holes of the stick. By a sudden jerk of his hand the harpoon is thrown forward and released, the pegs drawing out of the holes in the stick. At the front end of the throwing-stick a narrow piece of ivory is pegged to prevent splitting. As before intimated, this type of throwing-stick is radically different from all others in its adjustment to the pegs on the heavy harpoon. In all other examples in the world the hook or spur is on the stick and not on the weapon.



## UNGAVA TYPE.

One specimen from Fort Chimo in this region, southeast of Hudson Bay, kindly lent by Mr. Lucien Turner, is very interesting, having little relation with that from Greenland (which is so near geographically), and connecting itself with all the other types as far as Kadiak, in [Pg 282]Alaska (Fig. 3). The outline of the implement is quite elaborate and symmetrical, resembling at the hook end a fiddle-head, and widening continuously by lateral and facial curves to the front, where it is thin and flat. A slight rounded notch for the thumb, and a longer chamfer for three fingers, form the handle. Marks 5 and 6 are wanting. The cavity for the index finger extends quite through the implement, as it does in all cases where it is on the side of the harpoon-shaft groove, and not directly under it. The shaft groove is shallow, and the hook at the lower extremity is formed by a piece of ivory inserted in a parallel groove in the fiddle-head and fastened with pegs. It is as though a saw-cut one-eighth inch wide had been made longitudinally through the fiddle-head and one-half inch beyond, and the space had been filled with a plate of ivory pared down flush with the wood all round, excepting at the projection left to form the hook or spur for the harpoon shaft. This peg or spur fits in a small hole in the butt of the harpoon or spear shaft and serves to keep the weapon in its place until it is launched from the hand. The Ungava spear is heavier than that of the western Eskimo, hence the stick and its spur are proportionately larger. It is well to observe carefully the purport of the spur. A javelin, assegai, or other weapon hurled from the hand is seized in the center of gravity. The Greenland spears have the pegs for the throwing-stick sometimes at the center of gravity, sometimes at the butt end. In all other uses of the throwing-stick the point of support is behind the center of gravity, and if the weapon is not fastened in its groove it cannot be hurled. This fastening is accomplished by the backward leaning of the peg in the Greenland example, and by the spur on the distal end of the throwing-stick in all other cases.



## CUMBERLAND GULF TYPE.

The Cumberland Gulf type is the clumsiest throwing-stick in the Museum, and Dr. Franz Boas recognizes it as a faithful sample of those in use throughout Baffin Land (Fig. 4).

In general style it resembles Mr. Turner's specimens from Ungava; but every part is coarser and heavier. It is made of oak, probably obtained from a whaling vessel. Instead of the fiddle-head at the distal end we have a declined and thickened prolongation of the stick without ornament. There is no distinct handle, but provision is made for the thumb by a deep, sloping groove; for the index-finger by a perforation, and for the other three fingers by separate grooves. These give a splendid grip for the hunter, but the extraordinary width of the handle is certainly a disadvantage. There are two longitudinal grooves on the upper face; the principal one is squared to receive the rectangular shaft of the bird spear; the other is chipped out for the tips of the fingers, which do not reach across to the harpoon shaft, owing to the clumsy width of the throwing-stick. In this example, the hook for the [Pg 283]end of the bird-spear shaft is the canine tooth of some animal driven into the wood at the distal end of the long-shaft groove.



## **FURY AND HECLA STRAITS TYPE.**

In Parry's Second Voyage (p. 508) is described a throwing-stick of Igloodik, 18 inches long, grooved for the shaft of the bird-spear, and having a spike for the hole of the shaft, and a groove for the thumb and for the fingers. The index-finger hole is not mentioned, but more than probably it existed, since it is nowhere else wanting between Ungava and Cape Romanzoff in Alaska. This form, if properly described by Parry, is between the Ungava and the Cumberland Gulf specimen, having no kinship with the throwing-stick of Greenland. The National Museum should possess an example of throwing-stick from the Fury and Hecla Straits.



## ANDERSON RIVER TYPE.

The Anderson River throwing-stick (and we should include the Mackenzie River district) is a very primitive affair in the National Museum, being only a tapering flat stick of hard wood (Fig. 5). Marks 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are wanting. The index-finger cavity is large and eccentric and furnishes a firm hold. The shaft-groove is a rambling shallow slit, not over half an inch wide. There is no hook or spur of foreign material inserted for the spear end; but simply an excavation of the hard wood which furnishes an edge to catch a notch in the end of the dart. Only one specimen has been collected from this area for the National Museum; therefore it is unsafe to make it typical, but the form is so unique that it is well to notice that the throwing-stick in Eskimoland has its simplest form in the center and not in the extremities of its whole area. It is as yet unsafe to speculate concerning the origin of this implement. A rude form is as likely to be a degenerate son as to be the relic of a barbaric ancestry. Among the theories of origin respecting the Eskimo, that which claims for them a more southern habitat long ago is of great force. If, following retreating ice, they first struck the frozen ocean at the mouth of Mackenzie's River and then invented the kyak and the throwing-stick, thence we may follow both of these in two directions as they depart from a single source.



## POINT BARROW TYPE.

Through the kindness of Mr. John Murdoch, I have examined a number from this locality, all alike, collected in the expedition of Lieutenant Ray, U.S.A. (Fig. 6). They are all of soft wood, and in general outline they resemble a tall amphora, bisected, or with a slice cut out of the middle longitudinally. There is a distinct "razor-strop" handle, while in those previously described the handle is scarcely distinct from the body. Marks 3, 4, 5, and 6 are wanting. The index-finger hole is very large and eccentric, forming the handle of the "amphora." The [Pg 284]groove for the harpoon or spear-shaft commences opposite the index-finger cavity as a shallow depression, and deepens gradually to its other extremity, where the hook for the spear-shaft is formed by an ivory peg. This form is structurally almost the same as the Anderson River type, only it is much better finished.

