

Artifact of the Month

Tribal Historic Preservation Office

August 2017

The August Artifact of the Month is an iron axe head that was discovered at Brown's Trading Post on the Big Cypress Reservation (a site listed on the [Tribal Register!](#)). Brown's was a central trading location for the Seminoles on Big Cypress, and was built by William "Bill" Brown in 1901. The Seminoles used the Trading Post to acquire items like sewing machines and ammunition, and to sell materials like animal hides and exotic feathers.

It's difficult to trace axe manufacture as many were made by local blacksmiths, however an axe head was often shaped according to its intended use. Axes were considered an incredibly versatile tool, and were used for many functions including chopping, felling, carving, or splitting. Some axes were shaped to suit a specific function, while others were created as an adaptation to local wood types. The shape of our axe head is consistent with those used for felling, and was perhaps used to cut down great oak or cypress trees found throughout the Everglades. Each unique object, no matter how small, helps tell an important part of the Seminole story!

