

Layer 4 (second layer from top) Stratigraphy Card



Site Feature, Layer 4 - Tipi Ring

Tipi Ring

Native Americans on the plains lived nomadic lives, and the tipi was the ideal home for this lifestyle. Some Native Americans moved about constantly. Others farmed and lived in villages for most of the year but went on extended bison hunts during certain seasons. During this hunting season they temporarily abandoned their more substantial grass houses or earth lodges and used portable dwellings known as tipis.

Tipi camps leave very little evidence for archeologists to find. When the camp moved, the poles, stakes, pins, hide covers, and ropes required for assembling the tipi moved with it to the next campsite. Only a widely spaced circle of stones remained. These stones had been placed on the bottom edge of the tipi cover to hold it tight to the ground.

Researchers think that the full-sized Plains tipi evolved out of ancient traditions when the horse was introduced in the mid to late 1500s. Tipi encampments ended in the mid to late 1800s when the Plains tribes were placed on reservations in Oklahoma and no longer allowed to take part in their annual bison hunts.