

that long--two of them. They took care of that, first. And they cut into this here--what they call--this gristle--they cut it out in full length. Why? They use that as kind of a tape for broken ax handle or broken ax or even splice ropes--
(Did that come from one of the legs?)

Jess: No, the back. They slice it in three or four slices like a rope severed. And they take that bow or arrow--they take a slice of it and warp it around it.
(Is that different from the sinew?)

Jess: It's different from the sinew, yes.

(Do you know what piece he's talking about? Is it that strip of gristle you find a little section of in a chuck roast?)

Jess: It grows on the back. It's about that thick. And it comes about that long--gristle. That's the first two things they got out. Now in deer, when they killed deer in the early days, the women always took care of the soup bones--and when they get through taking care of their meat, while they're eating their meat, they break those bones that they didn't use for those bone pipes, you know, and take the marrow out of those bones, and they accumulate it in great big cans--jars--crock. Why? They used it for waterproofing. You could waterproof your moccasins and the water never goes through. Snow, or anything. That's the best water-proofing there is--deer marrow. Yeah.

(Did they always use those leg bones for pipes whenever they had deer?)

Jess: Oh, yeah. Most of the young men--the old men used a pipe, but the young fellows that were learning to smoke, they used these. I've got one--you've seen that. (referring to tubular pipe made from deer cannon bone and wrapped with sinew).

Bob: I was going to say, here, that there wasn't any reason why a farmer couldn't have his meat the year around: Because he sugar-cured the hams--he had them in this smoke house, and they were so absorbed with salt, with preserves. And if they got too salty, you could just let it soak a while and you'd have nice bacon all summer long. It wasn't anything unusual for a farmer to have this thing full--this smoke-house full--and he'd have meat the whole year around.