Native Americans quickly recognized the superiority of metal over chipped stone when the Spanish and French introduced iron and brass to North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Indians soon began fashioning arrow points, similar to this one, out of metal scraps. Before the introduction of metal Native Americans relied on arrow points made from chipped stone, usually chert.

The bow and arrow remained in use even after the initial introduction of firearms, which were inaccurate and of poor quality. Few Native Americans could repair even minor problems associated with them. The value of guns to Native Americans increased with the introduction of breech-loading rifles in the mid-nineteenth century. This shift to rifle use brought an end to the extensive use of the bow and arrow.