

Stories in Stone

By FRANK FLEMING, Calgary, Alta.

A peaceful stillness hangs heavily over the land. Through the forested mountain slopes range the grizzly, the elk, moose and mountain goat. The white man has not yet arrived in the country and the interior of British Columbia is still the exclusive home of a primitive people, the redman or Amerindian.

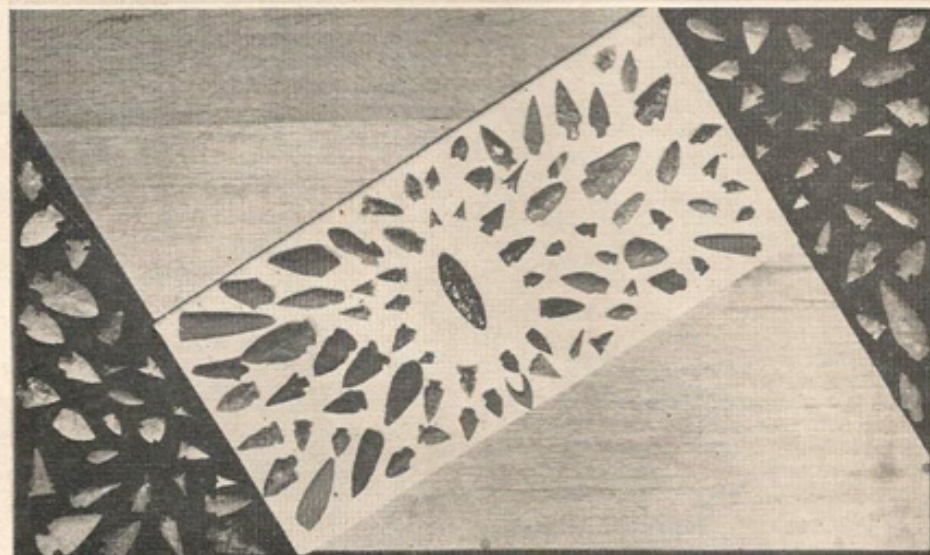
While we know little of these early inhabitants our imagination can fill in many gaps from a sketchy history laboriously carved in stone — household implements, weapons and crude tools. Remnants of these early people have the power to transport the beholder centuries back, into a world strange and exciting. One of the best collections of these Indian artifacts — stories in stone — is possessed by Dr. W. Leonard of Trail, B.C.

Among the many items in this collection are stone hammers and knives, chisels, pestels and mortars, and arrowheads. The purpose of some of the stone implements can only be guessed at. In fact, Dr. Leonard admits that in many cases the fact of their having been wrought by the hand of man is purely a guess. Nature could, in a moment of whimsy, have fashioned some of the more questionable objects such as mortars and pestels. These mortars — called "metates" by Dr. Leonard — were held in the lap of the Indian woman and used for grinding grain.

"Some of these mortars," the doctor said, "were discovered in a pit with other artifacts, and we may be fairly sure they are authentic. However, it's true that a few items here are doubtful; they may have been formed by nature in their present shape."

Beyond doubt the work of man are the stone hammers. One of Dr. Leonard's prize possessions is a hammer of black, highly polished stone, with a knob at one end and a smaller knob at the other. Much labor and patience must have gone into the making of the tool for the achieving of such a high polish would be extremely difficult for a worker without benefit of sandblasting and other modern assistants.

Dr. Leonard described the working of such a piece of stone like this: "A stone of approximately the correct shape was first selected, then with a harder stone it was chipped and flaked until gradually it took the desired form. Then it was



The above collections derive from the interior of British Columbia.

ground smooth with sandstone. The final polishing was probably done in actual use. Hands horny with much grinding, themselves polished the stone to its final degree of lustre."

Dr. Leonard also told of finding miniature pestels in the graves of infants. Since it was impossible for the child to have wielded such a tool they revealed that these early aborigines followed the practice of supplying the dead with the things they might require in the next world — a custom that has been followed by primitive man since the dawning.

Pestels and mortars are implements of agriculture — the grinding and milling machinery of the primitive people — but agriculture was relatively unimportant as a means of livelihood among the aborigines. They were hunters, and in hunting they turned to stone to help them bring down their large and dangerous adversary.

Arrowheads — the native equivalent of our modern shot and shell — form one of the major displays in Dr. Leonard's collection. Some are three inches in length — weapons of war — others, used

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The Shrines of the Mounted Police

By C. D. LA NAUZE, Calgary, Alta.



for hunting small game, are dainty and charming enough for the most fastidious lady to use as jewellery. The small ones are called "bird points".

In Dr. Leonard's collection is an arrowhead made of fire-opal, another of opaline while others are carved and chipped from diverse material such as fossilized wood, slate, flint, chalcedony, chert, greyish-green jasper and the most beautiful of all, obsidian — volcanic glass — shiny as ordinary glass, black as pitch, and transparent around the edges.

Some of these stones are not found in British Columbia and Dr. Leonard said this led him to believe that arrowheads were used for trading purposes in the same way we use money. In this way the arrowheads were circulated far from the region in which they were made. Obsidian, for instance, is not found in British Columbia, the nearest natural deposit being in Yellowstone National Park; yet obsidian arrowheads are found in the Kootenays.

The "piece de resistance" of Dr. Leonard's collection was discovered in Northern British Columbia and presented to the collector by a policeman at Kaslo. It is a figurine about six inches high, carved from the tusk of a prehistoric mammal, its rich golden brown color testifying to its age. The statuette depicts an Indian of the Coast tribe known as the Longheads because of their practice of binding infants' craniums to make them slope upward and back from the forehead.

Dr. Leonard, off and on, has spent considerable time studying and hunting for Indian artifacts, and is an authority on them. He said that artifacts can usually be distinguished from native debris by evidence of flaking or chipping.

"The flaking or chipping is a giveaway," he said, "because you'll never find it in natural rock formation. Also, if a stone is not native to the locality in which it is found it is almost certain to be an artifact."

According to the successful collector there are still many of these Indian relics on the river banks and old camping grounds "and," he added, "if you are looking for them your search is not likely to go unrewarded. Anyone can have the thrill of finding and observing the handicraft of an almost forgotten race, people who may have camped centuries ago in your own back yard."

IN 1874 the North West Mounted Police marched across the Canadian West and established law and order on a lawless frontier. Its first headquarters were at Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills of Saskatchewan and one of the first tasks of this young constabulary was to pacify the warlike Sioux, who, pursued by the U.S. Cavalry, had sought refuge in Canada after the Custer Massacre of 1876.

When the Canadian Pacific Railway reached the Plain in 1882 the headquarters were moved to Regina, Saskatchewan, the then capital of the North West Territories. In 1894 a building that had been used as a mess hall was consecrated as a Church of England Chapel and by this simple act a tradition of worship and history has been firmly established.

Its interior is distinct. The quiet dignity of its varnished wood nave with its plain backed seats caused the Queen of England to remark in 1939, "What a beautiful little Chapel and what a quiet atmosphere here". Tablets on the walls commemorate some of those who have served and in serving left behind their mark. Placed there by the then serving members, a magnificent bronze tablet immortalizes the loss of the Dawson Patrol in 1911 when an Officer and three men were frozen to death on the long overland patrol between the Arctic Ocean and the Yukon Capital. Another tablet erected by the members, is to the memory of a Sergeant's wife who was killed by dogs at the lonely outpost of Chesterfield Inlet on the West Coast of Hudson's Bay when her husband was absent on patrol.

In the chancel the original flags that flew over Fort Walsh gravely hang, symbolic of that period of the Force's history. Two magnificent stained glass windows light the altar and depict the scarlet-coated Force in the Last Post and Reveille. The tower is a recent addition and is dedicated to the memory of the men of the march of '74.

The ceremony of Church Parade at Regina Barracks of the now Royal Canadian Mounted Police is still strictly maintained, when recruits in their brown tunics and seasoned men in their scarlet march to fill up the little Chapel. It is customary for members and sons and daughters of the Force to be married and christened there and at times a scarlet coated procession may be seen as a deceased member is borne on the horse-drawn gun carriage to the Force's own cemetery just West of the Barracks. The Bishop of the Diocese is its Chaplain, who wears the Force's long service decoration.

The walls of this Chapel can no longer commemorate all those who have given their life to the service. On the barrack square, adjacent to the Chapel, stands a plain granite cenotaph and on it the names of seventy-one men are carved who have met violent death in the Force. Adjacent is the Museum of the Force where its personal relics are to be seen.

Founded on a tradition of service and wise leadership that grows stronger with the growing strength of the Force, these



R.C.M.P. Chapel at Regina, Sask.

shrines of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police quietly play their part in helping the Force honor its motto "Maintain the Right".

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