NORTH AMERICAN
BioFortean Review

"It is possible to make progress on a seemingly impossible problem if one just ignores the sceptics and gets on with it."

—Lee Smolin, *Three Roads to Quantum Gravity* (2001)

North American BioFortean Review

Volume 6, No. 1, Issue #14
June 2004

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Strangeark.com

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Publication Policy

Notes from *Science News Letter*, 1937-1938

Honey-Tombed Squirrel In Nest of Wild Bees

Bitter death, with sweet entombment after, was the fate of a venturesome squirrel that somehow cot into a bee tree in Bedford County, Va., reports Prof. Ruskin S. Freer of Lynchburg College

The little animal's body was found by J. B. Watson and Horace A. Watson of Moneta, Va., when they opened up the bee tree to get the wild honey. The squirrel had evidently died in great agony, for its limbs were drawn up convulsively.

The avenging bees had removed everything they could of this invading monster, for the body had been stripped of hair, and its viscera were all cleaned out. But the muscles, bones, and connective tissues were apparently too tough for the bee workers, and so the mummified squirrel was left entombed and sealed over in a mass of honey.

When first taken out, the body was white like unfinished wood, the finders reported. They kept it on a shelf in a farm shop for a long time, but the only change that took place was a darkening of the flesh.

How well bee-embalmment worked is attested by the fact that the dead squirrel was found in the summer of 1928, and turned over to Professor Freer in good condition only a few weeks ago.

—*SNL*, Jan. 16, 1937

Skeleton with Big Teeth May Show Old American Type

Discovery of an ancient skeleton with remarkably big molar teeth is announced by Dr. Cyrus N. Ray, of the Texas Archeological and Paleontological Society.

Dr. Ray, who unearthed the skeleton about 18 miles from Abilene, Texas, believes that it may reveal a prehistoric type of American who camped and hunted in this region. Previous excavations yielded a deeply buried campsite in an eroded river bank, about half a mile distant.

The individual represented by the skeleton had a head very long in proportion to width. Describing the teeth as unusual in both size and shape, Dr. Ray states that the molars "appear to be nearer to the anthropoid pattern"——that is, more ape-like—than any encountered in his previous discoveries.

The first and second molars measure one-half inch from front to back, which means considerably more grinding area than modern man carries on his back teeth. The third lower left molar of the Texas skeleton is even longer, being measured at nine-sixteenths of an inch in length.

Large teeth were a trait of early and primitive humans.

When unearthed, the Texas skeleton was found lying with bent knees, buried in a cist, or primitive coffin made of stone slabs.

—*SNL*, March 20, 1937

Montezuma Had no Zoo—Writer Had Imagination

Montezuma, lord of the Aztecs in Mexico, didn't have any fine zoo for his entertainment. That was just a yellow journalism story perpetrated back in 1684.

So the Bureau of American Ethnology declares, on bringing to light a seventeenth century yellow journalist named Antonio de Solis, who wrote a book on the Mexican conquest without bothering much about facts.

Solis got his zoo story by combining and embroidering records, say the Bureau ethnologists.

Diaz, soldier of Cortez, had described a collection of birds, rattlesnakes, and animals kept at the Aztec capital, presumably for sacrifice. Haklyut, the historian, described discovery of American bison. Solis scrambled these facts and made Montezuma a glamorous figure in zoo history, the collector of a wonderful exhibit of rare beasts.

—*SNL*, Aug. 20, 1938

Eel So Thin It Looks Like Piece of String

An eel so thin that it could be put through the eye of a darning-needle, captured by Dr. Paul Bartsch off the coast of Cuba, has been added to the collections of the Smithsonian Institution. It is about the size of ordinary wrapping twine at its head end, and tapers to tail of silk-thread-like diameter.

Only two similar specimens are known in all the world's museums. A second specimen is in the Smithsonian collections, taken in a brook in New Guinea several years ago. The third was found at the South Sea island of Tahiti by H. W. Fowler of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

—*SNL*, Dec. 17, 1938

Human-Like Tracks in Stone Are Riddle to Scientists

They Can't Be Human Because They Are Much Too Old—
But What Strange Biped Amphibian Can Have Made Them?

What was it that lived 250 million years ago, and walked on its hind legs, and had feet like a man?

No, this isn't an ordinary riddle, with a pat answer waiting when you give it up.

It is a riddle of science, to which science has not yet found any answer. Not that science gives it up. Maybe the answer will be found some day, in a heap of broken and flattened fossil bones under a slab of sandstone.

But as yet all there is to see is a series of 12 foot-prints shaped strangely like those of human feet, each 9 1/2 inches long and 6 inches wide across the widest part of the rather

"sprangled-out" toes. The prints were found in a sandstone formation known to belong to the Coal Age, about 12 miles southeast of Berea, Ky., by Dr. Wilbur G. Burroughs, professor of geology at Berea College, and William Finnell.

Recently Prof. Burroughs was visited, in his laboratory by some Kentucky mountain men, who took him up into their hills and showed him another place where there were many of the footprints. This mountain site, indeed, seems to have been the "Old Kentucky Home" of a whole family of the mysterious animals, for Prof. Burroughs reports that the footprints "range in size from small ones about 4 1/2 inches long to tracks the size I have written you about," which were nearly 10 inches in length.

Newest find of the mysterious footprints was made on a rock outcrop in a pasture near Festus, Mo., about 30 miles down river from St. Louis. Thomas L. Donnell, who found them, poured plaster of Paris into the prints to make casts. He sent the casts to Alfred Baily, director of the Colorado Museum of Natural History, who in turn forwarded them to Charles W. Gilmore, curator of paleontology of the U. S. National Museum in Washington, D. C.

Mr. Gilmore states that some tracks like these, in sandstone of the same geological age, were found several years ago, in Pennsylvania. But neither in Pennsylvania, Missouri, nor Kentucky has there ever been found even one fossil bone of a creature that might have made the tracks.

Mr. Gilmore, searching old scientific publications, discovered that similar tracks had been found on the Missouri bank of the Mississippi river long before. In the American Journal of Science for 1822 there were letters to the editor by Henry R. Schoolcraft, noted early American scientist, and Senator Thomas H. Benton, telling of "human" footprints in the rocks along the waterfront at St. Louis. Mr. Schoolcraft added that these prints even then had long been known to the original French settlers of the city.

Human Size

The footprints are exceedingly curious things. They are the right size to be human—nine or ten inches in length —and they are almost the right shape. Practically everyone who sees them thinks at first they were made by human feet and it is almost impossible to persuade some people that they were not.

If the big toes were only a little bigger, and if the little toes didn't stick out nearly at a right angle to the axis of the foot, the tracks could easily pass for those of a man. But the boldest estimate of human presence on earth is only a million years—and these tracks are 250 times that old!

The highest known forms of life in the Coal Age were amphibians. animals related to frogs and salamanders.

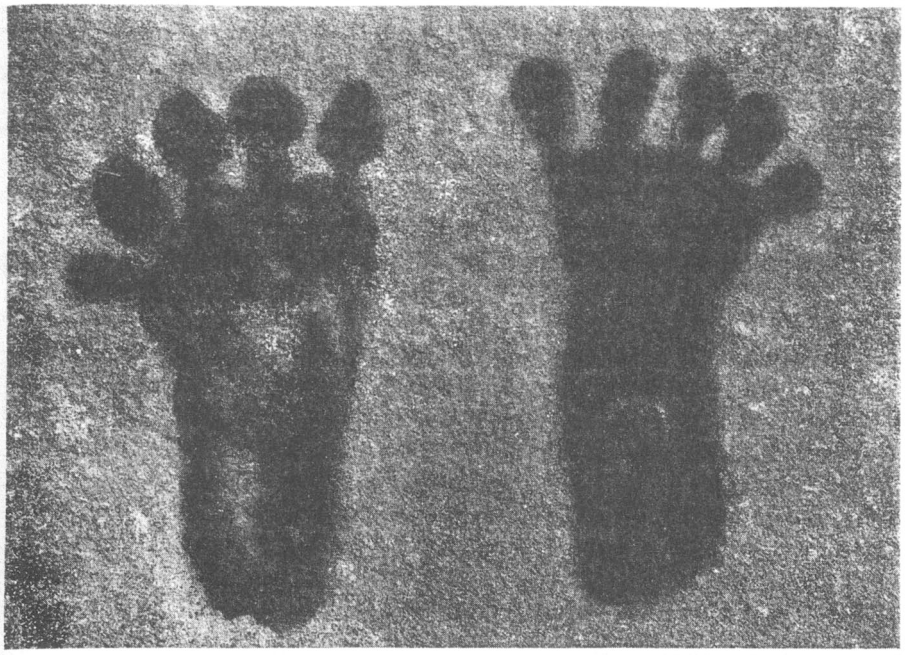
If this was an amphibian it must have been a giant of its kind.

A further puzzling fact is the absence of any tracks of front feet. The tracks, apparently all of the hind feet of biped animals, are turned in all kinds of random directions. At Berea, two of them are side by side, as though one of the creatures had stood still for a moment.

A half-track vanishes under a projecting layer of iron oxide, into the sandstone.

So the riddle stands. A quarter of a billion years ago, this Whats-it That Walked Like a Man left footprints on widely scattered sands that time hardened into rock. Then he vanished. And now scientists are scratching their heads.

—*SNL*, Oct. 29, 1938



These aren't human but they look enough that way to fool almost everybody. They are footprints in sandstone, made ages ago by a still unknown animal in the late Coal Age. These prints are among those studied by Prof. W. C. Burroughs of Berea College, Ky.

Strange Hybrid Sheep Results From Bighorn Cross

A couple of years ago a band of range sheep belonging to the Pitchfork Ranch in Wyoming was grazing under the shadow of the Rocky Mountains, when a bighorn ram from a flock of wild mountain sheep came down from the high peaks and mingled with the domestic ewes.

For years, the stories current among sheepherders of the West about the crossing of the bighorn mountain sheep with ewes of domestic flocks have been passed off largely as fanciful tales of a lonely shepherd's imagination. Rarely, if ever, has a specific case been produced. A few years ago a sheepman of Colorado sent five newly born lambs representing a cross between a Rocky Mountain bighorn and his domestic sheep to the Colorado Museum of Natural History. These had died within a few hours of birth.

Other similar cases have been reported, but in every instance the hybrid lambs did not have sufficient vitality to survive more than a few days at the most.

At the time that the bighorn ram strayed into his flock, the herder told his camp tender

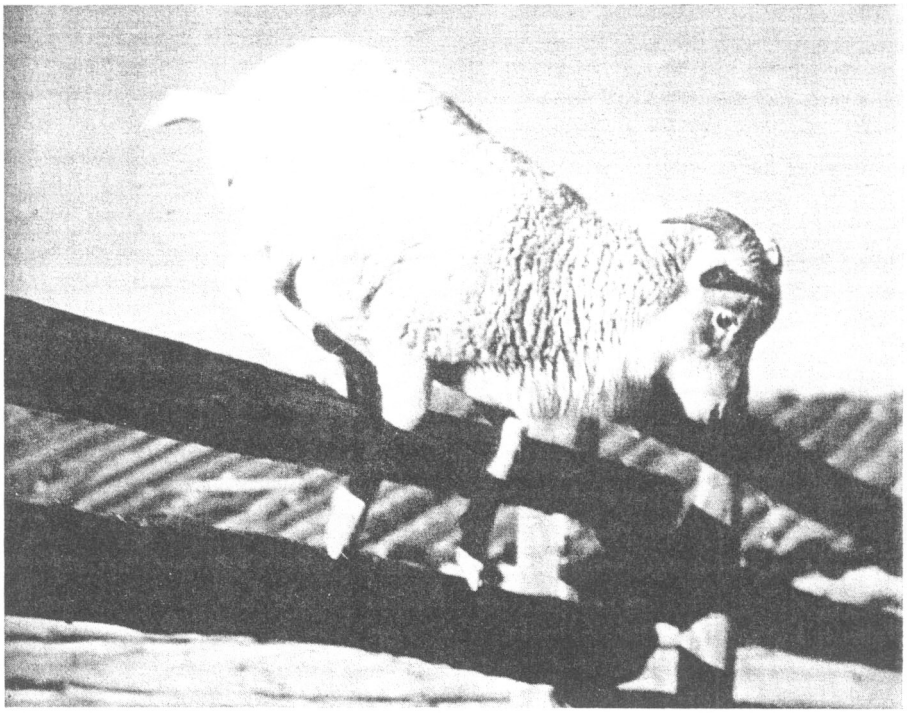
about it and predicted that at least one lamb would make its appearance during the next few months. As soon as the herder had seen the intruder he had chased him back to his own kind far up the snow-capped peaks. Early in the following spring, an odd-looking lamb made its appearance and was promptly taken to the home ranch, for early April is no time for a young lamb to be out on the storm-swept ranges of Wyoming. The balance of the ewes were not to have their lambs till a month later.

For the first few weeks of its life the lamb was weak and sickly and two months passed before it began to look strong and thrifty. It had the characteristic brown spots of the mountain sheep lamb and its coat seemed to be part hair and part wool. The coat of the bighorn sheep is dark-colored hair, not unlike that of a deer.

The actions of this strange youngster have never been those of a domestic lamb. It has the characteristics of its male parent. The lamb prefers to mix with a small herd of goats on the ranch and frequently jumps up on a pile of logs or on the roofs of the low ranch buildings. With apparently no effort at all it can hop over a six or seven foot corral fence. Another curious fact about this creature is that its tail is only about one-third the length of the tail of a domestic lamb.

It is a well known fact that the bighorn sheep is one of the hardiest of animals, grazing as it does all the year round on the roof of the continent. It is not beyond possibility that this cross might be the start of a new breed of domestic sheep that will stand the rigors of Wyoming or Montana winters even better than the merino or rambouillet ewes.

—*SNL*, March 27, 1937



You Don't Have to Believe It

Hunger, Thirst, Sun, Fatigue, Strange Food and Drink And Just the Love of a Tall Tale Produce Weird Beasts

Ronald L. Ives

"—and you know, that cave actually blows smoke rings,
once every thirty-four minutes—"

Another traveler is recounting the wonders of his latest expedition into the hypothetical wilds, equipped with a good imagination and plenty of snakebite medicine. Today, we smile indulgently at these traveler's tales, but not so long ago, each and every yarn was carefully remembered, and passed on (sometimes "improved'' a little) to the next avidly listening ear.

Perhaps the "tall story" is a racial heritage of the days when there was no writing, and wandering minstrels were our newspapers and sources of information. Primitive tribes still retain their histories as legends, passed on by word of mouth from father to son.

Theses on Paul Bunyan

Today, however, the "tall story'' is a part of our literature. Newspapers run "whopper" columns, paying a rather good price for each new tall tale. Several hunting and fishing magazines publish the wildest possible stories sent in by their readers, and the doings of such legendary characters as Paul Bunyan and Juan Catorce are the subject of Ph.D. theses and massive tomes.

Guides in the wilder parts of the country still collect and tell wild tales of wilderness and mountain country to the "dudes," "palefaces," and "flatlanders" who each year leave their inhibitions and intellects in the city and spend two glorious vacation weeks collecting sunburn, poison ivy, and mountain sickness.

Old books tell us of the wonders of the ancient world, of the dragons, the sea monsters, and the centaurs. We do not believe these tales today, but many a "paleface" has slept timidly in a screened tent from fear of the dreaded "hydrophobia skunk" of the southwestern deserts.

Wide-eyed tourists listen around the desert campfires to the sad tale of Rot-Gut Pete, who vanished between Salome, Arizona, and his cabin one gloomy night. It seems that Pete had been celebrating something or other at the Last Chance Saloon and left shortly after midnight with three sheets in the wind and no pilot. A few days later when Pete showed up missing in his regular haunts, a search party tracked him out into the desert.

Finally, at the base of a very large flycatcher plant, the searchers found a watch forty-two boot nails, eleven buttons, a six-gun, a belt buckle, and two silver dollars. They identified the gun as Pete's by counting the notches. Pete, it seems, had leaned against one of the giant flycatcher plants, and the thing had closed on him. Later, when the plant was gorged, it had opened again, dropping the metallic debris on the ground. You have to be very careful out in the desert!

The Northland, too, has its tales, and some of them were never immortalized by Robert W.

Service. Strangest among the pseudoscientific discoveries are the furred salmon reported from the Coppermine River. It seems that the waters of this Arctic river are cold, and the fish there, after generations of freezing, finally evolved a furry coat to protect them. Now, snug in their fur coats, the salmon gaily plunge in the ice-rimmed pools of the river, and their fur is much prized by the Eskimos, who use it for money. Not so many years ago, a questionably famous Arctic explorer is reported to have spent a summer hunting these strange fish in the high-altitude lakes of Glacier National Park.

Tripodero, Texas Terror

The Texas plains, it seems, are cursed with the presence of a perambulating putty-blower, locally called the tripodero. It seems that the tripodero is ideally adapted for life in the chaparral country. Its legs, like those of a photographer's tripod, are extensible, so that it may rise above the chaparral and look for food. With the legs shortened it can run under the brush without trouble. By generations of evolution, the tripodero has developed a special hunting method. Living by sucking the juices out of its prey, its jaws have grown together, resembling a funnel. When it feels hunger coming on, the tripodero sucks up a mouthful of clay, which it rolls into pellets with its tongue. Later, when the next meal is found, the tripodero blows a pellet at its prey with terrific force and marvelous exactness. Soon it sucks the juices from the animal and goes out in search of more.

"But Mr. Guide, is that true?"

"Sure, madam, didn't you see that dead cow today beside the trail?"

"Yes.

'Well, that was plumb sucked dry, wasn't it?"

"Yes—it was!!!!" It may be years before the paleface learns that this is just another guide's tale.

Jersey Devil Repealed

Northern New Jersey was cursed for years by the appearance of a very terrible monster which defied description. It was reported as the "Jersey Devil" and was a source of considerable worry until someone discovered that the "Jersey Devil" always appeared just after the annual supply of illicit applejack was distributed. Recently, the Jersey Devil has been conspicuous by its absence.

Hunters in the wilds of Bear Mountain, New York State, only a few hours drive from the big city, have suffered the loss of many valuable hunting dogs from the evil machinations of the hodag, a fearsome beast, never seen by man, who lives on a diet of young dogs, each carefully dunked in liquid mud. Attempts to catch this fiendish creature usually end up with a terrible hangover.

Mountaineers have their own special menagerie of weird creatures, and tales of these strange animals are usually told while the guide warms up for an account of how his partner fell off a mountain two miles high last year, and splashed all over the landscape when he hit the rocks. The accident stories may be true, but a standing offer of $100 for a good picture of the rackabore, one of the most commonly reported mountain animals, has been withdrawn after five years because nobody claimed it.

The rackabore, according to guides who claim to know, evolved many generations ago from the javelina, a piglike animal that lives on the plains. It seems that the javelina population of the plains became too great for the food supply during one of the early ice ages and some of the javelinas were forced to move into the hill country. There they developed special legs for hillside travel, short on one side and long on the other. Guides report both “right-handed,” and “left-handed” rackabores, which sometimes mate to produce other wonders, most of which go unseen by credible witnesses.

Obstinacy, according to the guides, is a very strong trait among the rackabores. Once, many years ago, two rackabores, one right-handed, and one left-handed, met on a narrow trail overlooking Grand Lake, Colorado. Neither could turn, and neither would retreat, so that both starved to death on the trail. The two skeletons are now hung in a tree in a college surveying camp, where all may come and see. The bones have a strangely equine appearance.

During the early days, when the Spanish were pushing their New-World empire north from Mexico, strange and wonderful things were encountered. It was then that Pedro Martyr wrote his justly famous De Orbe Novo, in which he collected all the tales available to him. In it we find accounts of the famous Island of the Amazons, visited only once a year by men, and of the giant king Datha, who in his youth had been oiled and stretched daily. Details of the wonderful land of pearls were recounted, and the gold mines of Chicora were first described. Strangely, much stock has been sold in these gold mines, and the area seems to have been the Carolina region, which today produces gold in commercial quantities.

Lost Lake of Mercury

Fray Pedro de Escobar, a member of the Onate expedition of 1604, collected many accounts of strange and wonderful beings who lived on the shores of the Gulf of California, then generally believed to be the strait which separated the mythical kingdom of Anian from the mainland of America. Escobar tells of the tribe of unipeds who lived to the northward. It seems that these strange creatures were built on the same general blueprint as men, except that they only had one leg and hopped about in search of food. Somewhere in the still not-too-well-known desert country of the Southwest there was reported to be a lake of mercury, which shimmered in the desert sun. Apparently, this lake has dried up, for no trace has been found of it in recent years.

Strange and wonderful creatures lived in the wilds of Lower California, according to the old chroniclers. One group had ears so large that they used them for umbrellas while other tribes. called the Patagones, used their feet for the same purpose. One very scholarly reporter tells of a race of tailed men. These tails were so stiff that when the tribesmen wanted to sit down they had to use chairs with open seats. Several tailed men have been reported during the history of the earth, but a whole tribe of them has never been encountered.

Food was very distasteful to some of the mythical tribes of the new world. and they gained their nutriment by inhaling odors of various kinds. Other savages lived wholly under water, even sleeping there—possibly to avoid the bad night air that was reported from the early 1500’s.

Even the ancient Indians had their imaginary creatures, some of which were probably the prototypes of a few reported today. The sandhill perch recently reported from the dust-bowl area is not a new invention. A few years ago, a prominent archaeologist, digging in the Mimbres valley of New Mexico, unearthed a grave more than 1,000 years old. Carefully placed over the

skull was a beautiful pottery bowl, and on it, painted skilfully and in much detail, was a fish, easily recognized as a catfish which two men were dragging along the ground. The fish, as suits an animal that lives on land, had four perfect legs. It was about as big, as judged from the sizes of the captors, as the modern fish that get away.

Mimbres Valley Surrealism

Surrealism seems to be related psychologically to the "tall tale." Mimbres Valley People of 1,000 years ago suffered from that, too. On one of their bowls is painted a perfect "rattlerabbit," whose body to the waist is that of a rabbit, but whose tail belongs to a rattlesnake.

Every old map is shown complete with a galleon sailing on the ocean, and a sea monster lying in wait for luckless seamen. We laugh at this naive belief, but not long ago a group of scientists spent considerable money investigating the Loch Ness monster reported from Scotland. Even today, a request for funds to be used in a hunt for dinosaurs in South America, or ice worms in Alaska, will bring a response, sometimes sufficient to enable a doughty warrior to drink himself into a happy stupor, in which he can dream about the strange animals without leaving the safety of his favorite bar.

Tall stories, perhaps, serve a definite need in our present life. Man has always wanted something to wonder at, or to laugh at, and the tall tale satisfies both needs. While most tall tales are told with tongue in cheek, and accepted with a grain or two of salt (taken atop a teaspoonful of the same), there is another group of stories, just as untrue, but sincerely believed by the teller. Under certain conditions, human brains get a trifle out of order. Insanity is not included in this—it is a semi-permanent disorder. When a man is extremely hungry, thirsty, tired, cold, or drunk, his perceptions get a trifle out of order, and he is given to "seeing things" that are not there, in exactly the same manner as a fever patient has hallucinations. Many of these dreams brought on by abnormal hardship seem very real, and are often believed by the recounter, even it by nobody else. When a man collects too many of these unforgettable dreams of things that never happened outside of his own mind, he is locally reputed to be "bushed." Perhaps Jim Bridger's famous tale of the petrified forest in Yellowstone Park, inhabited by petrified birds, who sang petrified songs, had its origin in too much solitude and hardship. Many famous stories have undoubtedly been inspired by the effects of fever or solitude, or hunger.

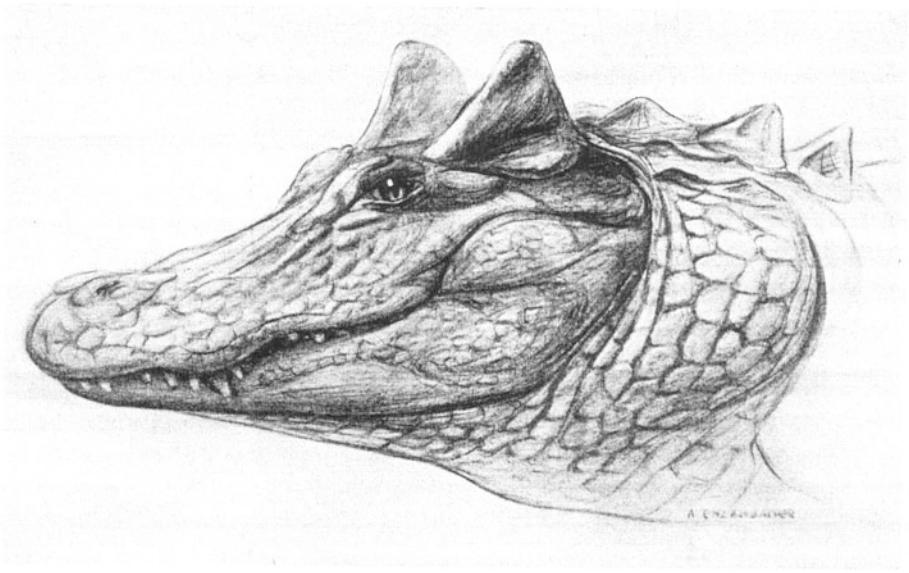
Some of the wild tales told by travelers are based on some mistaken observation of an actual thing. For example, the legendary mermaid of the South Seas may well have had its origin in a poor observation of a dugong, or sea-cow. To a poor observer a sea-cow might look like a mermaid, particularly if the observer wanted to believe that it was a mermaid.

Somehow, the stories told by the best masters of fiction cannot compare with those found in isolated mining camps and heard from half-crazy miners or prospectors, whose brains have been a trifle addled by long years of hardship and solitude, and then stimulated by liquor. Usually, however, the "bushed" miner has only one story, which he tells over and over, while the composer of fiction has to think up a new one each week.

When the stories of Atlantis cease to attract, someone invents a continent of Mu. And when Mu is thoroughly discredited, another mythical land, inhabited by nonexistent beings, is conjured up by the imaginative, the misinformed, and the mentally-out-of-order, for the edification of :the credulous. Somehow, an apocryphal tale is more attractive than the truth and hunting for buried treasure is more attractive than digging in a mine, even though the mine may pay $3 a day regularly, and the buried treasure does not exist.

Guides keep a repertory of tales to the annual crop of palefaces. Despite our high degree of general education, Some “flatland” woman can always be persuaded to carry her camera open and ready all day, so that she can get a picture of the rackabore to send back home, and each year another tourist is persuaded to sleep in the hotel in a high-country town because of the very dangerous effects of mountain dew.

—*SNL*, April 2, 1938



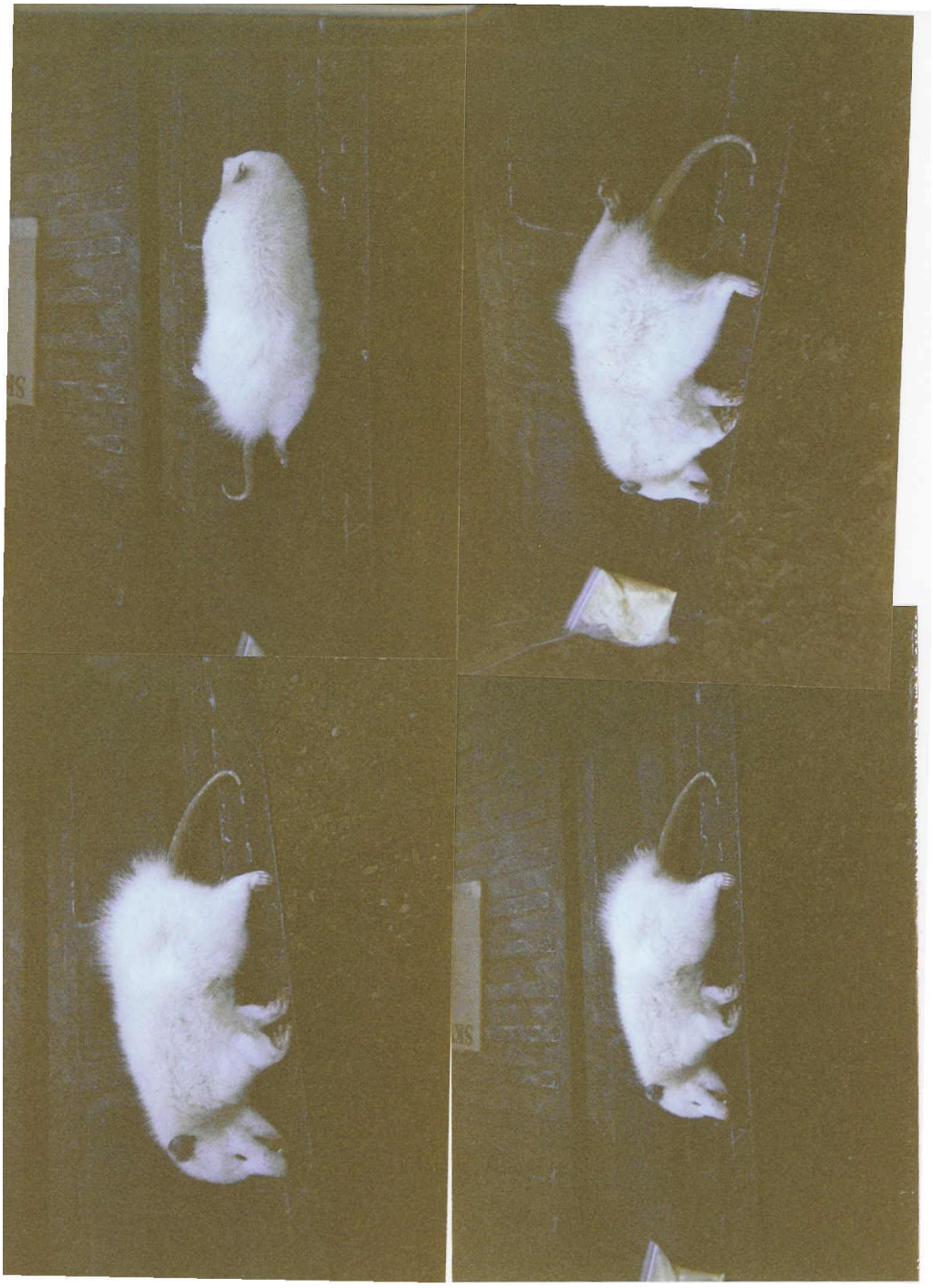
With A Smile

This extinct reptile, new to science, was probably not quite so friendly a creature as the artist here presents him in a drawing based on the fossil skull. The horned crocodile was discovered by the Field Museum Paleontological Expedition to Colorado, and is described in a new publication by Karl P. Schmidt, curator of reptiles and amphibians. The age of the reptile is given as paleocene, which makes it approximately 55 million years old.

—*SNL*, Dec., 3, 1938

From the Readers: Albinotic Possum

This opossum was found as roadkill in Muskogee County, Oklahoma, by Eric D. Collins, Cherokee Nation Enterprises. It is not a full albino, as the eyes and ears are dark, but the fur is distinctly white. Very interesting specimen.



From the Readers: Hairless Monkey

No, this isn't a Photoshop creation. Kindly forwarded by Petra, this image was taken by her friend Peter in Varanasi, India. They were very curious about what sort of monkey this was, and whether it was a natural case of hairlessness, a diseased animal, or a new species.

After looking at the photograph, I could identify it as a macaque. Langurs are also common primates in India, but don't have the sharp brow seen here. They are more wide-eyed, unlike this "gargoyle" face. From the tail and locale, I guessed this is probably a rhesus macaque. But why is it hairless?

A little research shows that, in fact, there is a known mutation in rhesus macaques which produces this aberrant phenotype. (Lack of hair production in mammals is known as hypotrichosis). The following article provides details on this mutation:

> Ahmad, W., Ratterree, M.S., et al. 2002. Atrichia with papular lesions resulting from mutations in the rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*) hairless gene. Lab. Anim. 36(1): 61-7.

This is a little different from conditions where hair is originally grown, then lost due to environmental or medical conditions. We have seen several interesting cases of hairless animals in the last couple years—this is certainly one of the most unusual.

Book Review: *The Making of Bigfoot*

The Making of Bigfoot
Greg Long
New York: Prometheus Books. 2004. 476pp.

Review by Matt Bille, Science Writer, Colorado Springs, CO

Greg Long's *The Making of Bigfoot* has been advertised as the final word on the 1967 Patterson-Gimlin Bigfoot film. The author, a writer living in Washington State, has certainly put a lot of effort into this work. Unfortunately, his account doesn't end the mystery surrounding the film. Instead, it makes the story more complex and muddled.

Long interviewed everyone he could find connected with the film, with Patterson and Gimlin, and with the film's promotion and distribution. Along the way, he ran down such side issues as what labs might have processed the film and who profited from it. To Long, all this ends with the film debunked as a hoax created by Roger Patterson and the "man in the ape suit" exposed as Bob Heironimus.

I personally would still bet against the existence of a North American ape, which means I would bet against the film being genuine. Despite my inclination to agree with Long on this point, the story Long presents just doesn't hold together.

For one thing, Heironimus is hardly the first to have claimed to be the fellow in the ape suit, and Long doesn't uncover any real evidence that his claim is true or that other claimants are liars. More problematically, Heironimus describes a clumsy, heavy home-made costume made mainly of horsehide, while professional costume-maker Philip Morris claims the film shows a man in one of his gorilla suits, an ensemble made of fabric and Dynel fibers. Long presents both these irreconcilable accounts as the truth, leaving the reader to say, "Huh?" The alleged suit has been long lost, so there's no way to clear this up.

The sasquatch phenomenon has always attracted human beings who were stranger than the alleged ape, and there are plenty of such characters here. Long accepts some stories and discounts others based mainly on his own impressions of the people he interviewed. Long has a bad habit of glossing over or ignoring contradictions in the (mainly anecdotal) evidence.

The book is worth reading, especially for the recent interviews. It does not, however, settle the Patterson-Gimlin story beyond a reasonable doubt. So it just might still pay to keep an eye out when you're driving back roads in the Northwest.

Book Review: *Quaggas and Other Zebras*

Quaggas and other Zebras
David Barnaby
Plymouth (England): Basset Books. 1996. 114pp.

Reviewed by Ronald Rosenblatt, New York, NY

My first and just about only contact with quaggas took place back in the 1970s. I was reading *The World Wildlife Guide for 1972*, and discovered, to my surprise, that the listings for African wildlife in Kruger National Park in South Africa included the quagga. A reference to wildlife in New Zealand also contained the information that moas still lived in New Zealand!

I wrote to the editor, in care of the Viking Press, and got a nice letter back, saying that the inclusion of quaggas and moas among living animals of the world was some kind of error that several authorities who went over the manuscript had failed to pick up. I wrote to a friend of mine with a lot of experience in Southern Africa, and she told me that after reading about what had happened, she had a vision of moas and quaggas dancing about in their shrouds, having come back from the dead.

I never knew much more about quaggas, and so was looking forward to reading *Quaggas and other Zebras* by David Barnaby. Unfortunately, I was very disappointed, for a number of reasons. For one thing, much of the book has nothing at all to do with quaggas and/or zebras, but actually consists of Barnaby's recollections of travel in South Africa, with detailed descriptions of restaurants, book stores, museums, libraries, nature reserves, botanical gardens, and so forth. It all makes for very good reading for tourists visiting Cape Town and the surrounding region. But since when is a book on zoology supposed to be a tourist guide, especially one that has little to do with animals?

Another annoying part of *Quaggas* is the constant repetition of Barnaby's prejudices. We get the anti-Americanism, with Barnaby using the term "gun-crazy" to describe Americans not once, but twice, in the same sentence. Barnaby insists that hunting is responsible for all the species extinctions of the last three hundred years. Any good ecologist could have told him about the role played by feral and exotic wildlife species in destroying habitat and the animals who depend on it to live, just one example of a cause of extinction with no connection to hunting at all.

Barnaby is also relentlessly politically correct. He cannot bring himself to mention a white European male without adding all sorts of accusations of wrong doing. In fact, he goes so far as to blame white Europeans for driving the Son ("Bushman") people into extinction. As it happens, the friend I mentioned earlier is a cultural anthropologist who spent 30 years of her life in the Kalahari and other parts of Southern Africa living with groups of the Son people. I'm sure she would be very surprised to learn that the Son are extinct, and I'm sure the Son would, as well.

Barnaby's whole approach to his subject is superficial. Apart from the tourist-guide stuff, Barnaby just puts in various anecdotes about his own experiences looking at zebras, or the people he met while looking at zebras, or how some zebras look like quaggas, and others do not. For Barnaby, it all seems to come down to how many stripes a zebra should or shouldn't have to be classified as a quagga, presumably a sub-species of the common zebra.

Barnaby never ceases to remind the reader that zebras do have stripes all over, while quaggas presumably had stripes only on the front part of the body. If this, in fact, is all that separated quaggas from other zebras, it is hard to see why Barnaby considers quaggas to have been so zoologically important in the first place, so his interest in quaggas comes across as little more than an eccentric obsession, like those of the people who hang around the shores of Loch Ness in the summer time, looking for the monster.

Barnaby devotes much space to listing all the stuffed quaggas, as well as paintings or drawings or bones of quaggas, to be found in European museums, so many in Germany, so many in England, etc. Barnaby also goes to great lengths to list all the quaggas that ever lived in British and European zoos, circuses, menageries, and the private country estates of people like Lord Rothschild. Exactly what the point of these, and similar lists of mounted quaggas and where they are to be seen, presumably by people as fascinated by quaggas as Barnaby, is hard to say.

The supposed focus of *Quaggas* is a breeding project in South Africa to bring back the presumably extinct quagga by "back-breeding," with carefully selected animals who show some of the traits of appearance as the extinct species. Allegedly, this has been achieved with the tarpan, the aurochs, and Przewalksi horse (which isn't extinct, anyway. If you want to see live Przewalksi horses just visit the Bronx Zoo.). Barnaby refers to this project as being like the "back-breeding" scheme in Crichton's *Jurassic Park*, to bring back living dinosaurs, but he doesn't seem to have gotten the point of *Jurassic Park*, which is that creating genetically altered animals is a very dangerous thing to do, from a number of standpoints. It's attractive to imagine recreating extinct animal species, but the potential ecological fall-out is enormous, especially when it is always a case of when, not if, the genetically altered animals escape into the environment.

As for cryptozoology, the entire 114 page book contains only one paragraph that could be said to refer in any way to cryptozoology. Barnaby mentions some books of English literature in which quaggas are mentioned, such as Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*. Thus, Barnaby writes:

> "There was a popular South African journalist called Lawrence G. Green. He published a lot of his work between hard covers in the 1930's. . . . In his volume called *Great African Mysteries*, Green provides some entertaining paragraphs about the quagga. In a chapter called 'Giants of the Jungle,' he mentions George Grey, the Cape Town foal, and the supposed sightings of quaggas in the twentieth century. There have been several such reported sightings and I have not discussed them in this work because they were all abortive." (p. 104)

Thus, Barnaby tells us that he is not a cryptozoologist, and has no interest in looking for living quaggas, since previous attempts to find them were "abortive." So the only thing that might have made *Quaggas* an interesting book was deliberately omitted.

Quaggas and other Zebras will be of interest only to tourists visiting South Africa, and to people who enjoy being told repeatedly that zebras have stripes.

(There is one odd aspect to Barnaby's mention of George Grey, an English aristocrat who served, if I am not mistaken, not only as Governor of South Africa, but as Governor-General of Canada as well. It seems that every time I research some African cryptid, the name of George Grey seems to pop up, to the point where it is positively spooky.)

[Editor's Note—For readers who would like to try *Quaggas and other Zebras* for themselves, Basset Publications is offering a special deal, pairing this with Barnaby's *The Elephant Who Walked to Manchester*, for a limited time. Contact Chris Moiser at Cmoiser@aol.com for details.]

Book Review: *A Dictionary of Cryptozoology*

A Dictionary of Cryptozoology
Ronan Coghlan
Bangor, Northern Ireland: Xiphos Books. 2004. 273pp.

Reviewed by Chad Arment

First, let me state that I am very pleased to see other authors utilize print-on-demand publishing for cryptozoological works. I know that several authors (Loren Coleman, Karl Shuker, etc.) have worked with Paraview Press, which incorporates POD publishing, and I believe we are going to see a larger movement towards small POD publishers as authors realize the benefits of the improving technology. Until now, regional or specialized cryptozoology books were self-published or published with micropublishers, which made acquiring them difficult. Today, as POD can be directly distributed through Amazon.com and other online bookstores, there is no longer a geographic barrier to distribution.

Coghlan's *Dictionary* is interesting in light of the current trend towards cataloging cryptids. Eberhart's massive two-volume encyclopedia was widely given the praise it deserved, but is limited by price to libraries and the most serious of investigators. Michael Newton has apparently been working on a similar academic project, as his *Encyclopedia of Cryptozoology: A Global Guide to Hidden Animals and Their Pursuers* should be available at the end of the year. Karl Shuker has reprinted (in *The Beasts that Hide from Man*) his supplement to Heuvelmans' famous checklist of cryptids.

Now, this is a dictionary, not an encyclopedia. The entries in Coghlan's text are, with some exceptions, brief and to the point. They include cryptids and non-cryptids (mythical animals and zooform phenomena). The breadth of entries covers historical accounts, modern reports, and general folklore. Recognizable entries are interspersed with lesser-known cryptids. A fair number are regional legends with local names. At a rough guess, there appear to be somewhere between 2500-2800 entries.

There is one feature of the book which I wish was expanded. For an active investigator, it isn't enough to have entries with name and description of the cryptid in question. The source, as complete a citation as possible, is necessary if any further research is to be done. Coghlan's bibliography is unusual in its setup. While some books are listed, many of the sources, especially concerning recent folklore, are websites or magazines. Rather than providing citations individually, Coghlan just points to the title. So, as a reader, I would have no way to know which issue of *Fortean Times*, *Animals and Men*, or *INFO Journal* is the one I need to seek. And, I realize that citing websites, especially forum entries by various individuals, can be confusing, but I do think a little more effort in keeping track of them and recording them properly would have created an indispensable tool. Citations are one of the most important parts of a research book, and authors should spend as much time on them as on any other area. I also noted that some entries are incorrectly cited, which can be a little frustrating when trying to determine the source for the cryptid account.

I did note several entries which point to cryptids I had not yet encountered, so can say that the book is useful. It is probably most useful to those who are just encountering cryptozoology and are looking for a book that covers a wide range of cryptids and mythical creatures.

Rescued from the Past — #3

An 1900s Prehistoric Amazon Monster — An Explorer's Encounter, Crypto Fiction, or a Combination of Both?

Dr. Dwight G. Smith * and
Gary S. Mangiacopra **

"The Lady or the Tiger?"
— Author Frank R. Stockton's
classic 1884 fictional story.

To the present-day serious cryptozoology investigator who undertakes the project of verifying an alleged cryptid encounter that may have occurred in a remote part of the world of one or two centuries ago, one is reminded of the outcome of the classic mystery story of the 19th century, "The Lady or the Tiger?"

To those who remember their high school English literature courses, this was one of the stories assigned for reading and discussion by your teacher—and your first introduction to this classic tale. Written under his pen name of Frank R. Stockton (his true name was Francis Richard Stockton, born 1834-died 1902), the famous story was published in 1884 and has been imitated by many other writers since.

Briefly, the tale concerns a young man of an ancient and barbaric civilization, who is accused of a high crime against its tyrannical ruler. As punishment, a citizen of this nation is place in an coliseum where he is allowed to open one of two doors. One door will grant him freedom and a reward of a of the most beautiful lady as his bride—the other door leads to a punishment by quick death by being ripped to shreds by a vicious tiger!

In the tale, a young man who has flirted with the king's daughter is accused of a crime against the state, and must therefore be subjected to this fate. But the king's daughter who had bribed the door keeper, had learned which of the two doors holds the tiger—death punishment, or the lady—freedom and life. The young man is in the arena and sees the king's daughter quickly point to a door. He goes to that door she had pointed at and opens it—and there the story ends. It is a prime example of an opened-ended story. The reader must decide from the story of whether the accused man had lived or died: did the king's daughter love the man enough to let him live—even though in the arms of another woman; or was she so consume by jealously that she would let the tiger kill him so that no one else would have him? Thus pointing to the door of which the tiger is behind? And he trusting her, choose that door—and death? Or not trusting her, would go to the door that she was pointing at, knowing that behind that door was the other woman, while the other door held the tiger.

Another tale in a similar view of "The Lady or the Tiger?" seems to have been penned by a Frank Herrmann Schmidt and published in the leading circulation newspaper of its day in New York City. Schmidt described an expedition to the Amazon jungle where he and his companions had encountered a prehistoric monster. Was Schmidt's tale a true and accurate description

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of an encounter with an unknown cryptid in South America; or was it nothing more than the fertile imagination put to paper for money?

Such discussion is best left to the reader as the following Schmidt's account is reprinted for the first time in its entirety since its original publication in 1911. [1]

Titled: "Prehistoric Monsters In Jungles Of The Amazon," there was an anonymously written introduction to Schmidt's about the reports of the encounters of mysterious beasts in the Amazon:

> ''Even before the scientists began to distinguish the never indisputable evidence in fossil remains basins of reptilian monsters there were stories of strange gigantic animals in the far regions of Central Africa, South America and even in the Indian jungle. Amyas Leigh, in his early explorations from the vast Matto Grotto district of Argentina and Bolivia to the upper tributaries of the Orinoco, sets down many instances of the reports of huge amphibian animals brought to him. Von Humboldt heard of them also.
>
> "Scientists are more willing to credit the statement that some surviving forms of the ancient dinosaurs are to be found in the gigantic tropical swamps east of the Andes, because the conditions of heat, vegetation, etc., are to-day nearly what they might have been in prehistoric periods.
>
> "Major George W. Fawcett. F. R. G. S., who traversed the southern section of the Amazonas region to give a scientific report of the great district of Acre and to map the boundary for the Brazilian government, describes many new plants and animals that he discovered, and heard often of the gigantic saurians that the Indians had seen further north. Colonel Julius G. Parker, late United States Consul General at Hertinigue, penetrated further into the Caqueta country than any white man had ever done before and was assured by the highest dignitaries of the Caqueta tribes that terrible amphibious reptiles were to be found further south.
>
> "Charles Johnson Post, American engineer, artist and writer, who crossed the continent at the widest point some years ago, heard the same stories, saw some very remarkable signs and is a firm believer that gigantic animals of some kind exist there. Adriano Fortales, collecting agent of the Itapu Trading Company, wrote an article for a Rio Janeiro newspaper five years ago saying that natives had shown him the head of a dead monster which they had found.
>
> "The following article is by an unscientific man, who, as he says, can merely relate what he saw. It is the most definite and circumstantial account as yet made public. Franz Herrmann Schmidt is an employee of the Hamburg-American Company, with headquarters at Manaos. While seemingly incredible, what he has to tell may in a few years be a matter of common knowledge."

Unfortunately, Schmidt's tale remain neglected for a century before it reappeared. As he begins his account:

> "So many of my friends in Brazil have besought me to make public the account I am about to write, and so many others in the United States and in Germany have laughed at the story when I told it to them, that I have hesitated a long time about mentioning it again. It is not eminent to be called a liar good humoredly, even when it has no means of proving that he is not, but knows that he is telling the truth. If boa constrictors as

thick as trees and over one hundred feet long are common and are admitted to exist, I do not see why the day at home public should not believe that what I saw in the same country is really there."

Schmidt continues his account in company with Captain Rudolph Pfleng, a well-known sailor and trader as the two journeyed to Bogota, Columbia. Our researches can find no account of a Captain Pfleng, but of course these were local Europeans on the South American scene nearly a century ago, most of whom lived and died in comparative obscurity.

"On October 8, 1907, Captain Rudolph Pfleng, who was well known as a sailor and trader, and myself were in Bogota, Columbia, seeking a number of concessions in the Orinoco country, but political conditions is being very unquiet we failed to get them, and on the date mentioned determined to set out at once to penetrate the interior and descend some river on the other side of the watershed to the head of navigation on some branch of the Amazon."

As any good explorer, and also every good novelist, Schmidt carefully describes his route into ever more wilder country and denser jungle.

"From Bogota, with a party of Indian porters, we crossed the mountains to Tomeque, than on to San Martin, the country growing wilder. At Concepion de Aramo we were compelled to organize a new party, but were fortunate to get twelve men who had been rubber gathers and had been out of the regions inhabited by their own tribes."

Schmidt's written account continues as he describes his expedition travels and their search for gold, none of which they had found.

"When we moved on we descended the Arlari and, meeting a rubber prospector's party, learned that the San Maderia and Mamore Railway project being pushed through by Percival Farquahar and some other American millionaires was doing very nicely, so we thought we would get in the back of the new country which it would tap and see if there was anything on which we would care to try to get concessions in Rio Janeiro, so we ascended the Guayabero to the junction with the Ubia and struck south through the great gap there to the Macaya, crossing a watershed. It looked like a very out of the way course, but it was the quickest and easiest traveling, following the zigzagging watercourses, shooting rapids when descending and carrying around them when going up."

Continuing further, Schmidt told of dense forests and the snakes:

"The overland journey from the Guayabero was the worse piece of work I have ever attempted, and I thought that I knew about all there was to know concerning fighting one's way through a country so thickly grown with trees that nearly every one is grown into every other one; where thousands of trees have been engulfed and smothered by the gigantic creepers spread over them; where one can travel for hours and never set foot on real soil unless on the banks of some stream or in some gully gash in the earth."

The first giant snake is described:

"There were hours when we would not hear the cry of a bird or the flutter of its wing or see a snake gliding away to hide. Again, on shelving ground particularly, or around waterfalls, animal and bird life would be abundant. It was at such a spot we

saw our largest snake. The day had been oppressively hot, and just as the sun was getting down late into the west we came to a fine waterfall about ten feet wide, with a fifty foot pool below; it emptying into a brook across which an active man could leap.

"Just where the brook left the pool a great brown log had fallen, making a natural bridge. One of the Indians was about to cross it, seeking some light wood for the night's fire, when he gave a queer cry and came bounding back. I saw Pfleng pick up his rifle and I did likewise. The Indian led us back to the point where he had stood and showed us what a mistake he had made. The log was a great sleeping boa constrictor.

"The terrible creature had caught some sort of an animal by the pool, and having eaten it, as a lump one third of the way down the body showed, grew sleepy and remained where it was in the sunshine, stretched across the brook.

"At first we thought the creature was dead, and came near enough to see that its sides were working either through respiratory or intestinal action. I was for having a shot or two into the parts of the body we could see, but Pfleng argued against it. The snake could be of no use to us, and if we wounded it its trashing about would kill some of us unless we climbed the trees or get out of the vicinity. It was nearly impossible to kill it outright, so why discommode ourselves for the fun of putting a few holes in his snakeship's tough body?

"At least we had a fine opportunity for studying him. For fully a half hour he lay there until the shadows struck him, and then he began to draw forward slowly, and in ten minutes was going into the jungle. I measured with my eye the thickness of the body as compared with a certain stone by which it lay. The two were the same. The thickness of the stone was twenty-two inches, yet the snake's body was thicker further up. From the spot where the head lay to where the plated tail had marked the ground when the snake started to crawl was forty-four feet, and there being two or three loops of the body in between we estimate his full length at sixty-five or seventy feet."

According to Schmidt, the Indians were most aware of giant snakes:

"At least twenty Indians were encountered who had at various times seen this huge animal of animals. Pfleng and I questioned the stupid fellows minutely and were puzzled to find that while they agreed pretty well as to description, actions, &c., there was a wide divergence as to size and as to spots in which the creatures had been encountered. At least two hundred miles apart some of these must be, yet all lay in the general southerly direction.

"Land of Extravagant Vegetation.

"At this point I want to say that I know nothing of natural science or anything of the names of the animals and I do not believe that Pfleng did either, though he pretended to. We simply made up our minds that we would bag one if we could and have a good look at it; perhaps it was some new kind of gigantic alligator or some huge variety of water snake. At least it would be good sport. We had three guides from the waterside who remained with us sixteen days of travel quite as difficult as that which I have described.

"The twelfth day we descended into a long valley with a spot about three miles wide and nine or ten miles long in the centre that showed many spaces of open water

a hundred yards wide or more. It was a shallow lake literally choked with vegetation. Following the stream down; we found that near the head of the lake the influx was augmented by some huge gushing hot springs with a sickening odor and a worse taste. Even in a land of extravagant vegetation, that around the head of the lakes was the most extraordinary I have ever seen, and I believe that the water from the springs had something to do with it.

"The valley was like any other of many we had crossed, and we should merely have detoured the swamp if Pfleng, surveying it with his glasses, had not noticed in two or three spots on the shores of the lakes some huge swathes or crushed tracks such as the Indians had mentioned. We could not inspect these from solid ground.

"The only way we could get at them was from the water, so we cut a tree, made a rude dugout, shaped up some paddles and the second day set it afloat in the open water at the head of the lake. One thing we noticed at once. There was not an alligator, iguana or even a large water snake to be seen anywhere. This in itself was queer. The swamps were full of floating islands where a tree or a big branch had fallen in, gathered a lot of water plants around it and gradually formed a structure on which even small trees grew.

"We had to steer in and out among these, often cutting a path for the dugout through masses of entwining plants on the top of the water. One of the Indians leaning over the bow would keep the machete swinging as we drove the dugout slowly forward with the paddles. At last we got into a pool of open water from which one of the swaths led shoreward, and we put the boat right up into it.

"There was no question but what it had been made by some enormous body being dragged from the water through the plants and mud until solid ground was reached, when a great circular wallow in a sunny spot was made. On the plants nearby were marks of waves two feet above mean level on the average, and great flaglike stocks as thick as my leg were broken off short in the track and the tops mashed into the mud, while the movement of the body had carried quantities of the soft ooze from below the water and spread it like plaster on the crushed plants.

"A very large elephant or hippopotamus could have made a similar track. In making the return journey to the water practically another course had been chosen, the point of entrance being some hundred feet to the east, and a little shelving bank there having been crushed in with the small trees that grew on it, in a way that showed that many tons of weight must have rested on it. The creature that had been able to make like these in the course of a peaceful progress must be a terrible thing if aroused to anger.

"The Indians in the dugout grew more and more frightened, and I confess that I began to watch the water and listen for movements along the shore or among the islands with feelings slightly more tinged with anxiety that I had felt before I saw these evidences.

"Leaving this spot, we proceeded slowly along and soon came to an island which was evidently a favorite sunning spot, as the plants were crushed down all over it and it was plastered with mud dragged up from the bottom. It took much time to get ahead any and it was very late in the day before we crossed one bayou about half a mile wide to examine some similar spots on the further shore. Here we found three spots where some amphibious animal had left the water and returned to it. One was very large and the other two only about half the size.

"Plainly there was more than one such creature in the lake. Another thing which we had not observed previously was that vast quantities of fronds, tender green leaves and broad stretches of flag growth had been ripped off. I have seen spots in which a herd of elephants has fed, and these looked very similar. One tree had a smear of mud on it fully fourteen feet from the ground.

"Encounter With Bullet Proof Monster

"Now we hastened back, following the same track we had cut, and twice we stopped paddling to listen as both Pfleng and I were sure that we heard heavy splashing behind the islands to the east. The Indians were for leaving at once, and in their talks among themselves that evening it was easy to see that they were discussing the matter of remaining longer in such a dangerous region. They were badly frightened. We mounted a guard that night for the first time in weeks, Pfleng and I taking turns with an Indian each. I believe that our men would have deserted us if we had both slept.

"After breakfast we set out again in the dugout, taking our heavy calibre Remingtons with us and a good supply of ammunition. Taking the southern shore we traversed the stretch that seemed to be most affected by the waters from the hot springs, and shortly before noon began to find more wallows as the ground along shore grew firmer. At last we came to one large one which had been used for leaving and entering the water, or else the animal was still on shore. We approached very carefully and a thrill shot through me as I saw that the mud on the weeds and water plants was still dripping. We were close to our quarry.

"With every precaution, the paddles making no noise at all, we advanced to the water line. To have left the boat would have meant going in the mud to our waists, perhaps, and yet we could see nothing but green stuff from where we were. We argued the question in a whisper and Pfleng had just announced his determination to follow the track inland if it was the very last act of his life, when a troop of monkeys was heard approaching, gathering some great blue-black berries from small trees that grew in the mud. We had just made them out when there was a sudden outcry among them, a large dark something half hidden among the branches shot up among them and there was a great commotion.

"One of the excited Indians began to paddle the boat away from the shore, and before we could stop him we were one hundred feet from the waterline. Now we could see nothing and the Indians absolutely refused to put in again, while neither Pfleng nor myself cared to lay down our rifles to paddle. There was a great waving of plants and a sound like heavy slaps of a great paddle, mingled with the cries of some of the monkeys moving rapidly away from the lake. One or two that were hurt or held fast were shrieking close at hand, than their cries ceased. For a full ten minutes there was silence, and coming back to the lake we beheld the frightful monster that I shall now describe.

"The head appeared over bushes ten feet tall. It was about the size of a beer keg and was shaped like that of a tapir, as if the snout was used for pulling things or taking hold of them. The eyes were small and dull and set in like those of an alligator. Despite the half dried mud we could see that the neck, which was very snakelike, only thicker in proportion, was rough knotted like an alligator's sides rather than his back.

"Evidently the animal saw nothing odd in us, if he noticed us, and advanced till he was not more than one hundred and fifty feet away. We could see part of the body,

which I should judge to have been eight or nine feet thick at the shoulders, if that word may be used, since there were no fore legs, only some great, heavy clawed flippers. The surface was like that of the neck. For a wonder the Indians did not bolt, but they seemed fascinated.

"As far as I was concerned, I would have waited a little longer, but Pfleng threw up his rifle and let drive at the head. I am sure that he struck between the eyes and that the bullet must have struck something bony, horny or very tough, for it cut twigs from a tree higher up and further on after it glanced. I shot as Pfleng shot again and aimed for the based of the neck.

"The animal had remained perfectly still till now. It dropped its nose to the spot at which I had aimed and seemed to bite at it, but there was no blood or any sign of real hurt. As quickly as we could fire we pumped seven shots into it, and I believe all struck. They seemed to annoy the creature but not to work any injury. Suddenly it plunged forward in a silly, clumsy fashion. The Indians nearly upset the dugout getting away, and both Pfleng and I missed the sight as it entered the water. I was very anxious to see its hind legs, if it had any. I looked again only in time to see the last of it leave the land — a heavy blunt tail with rough horny lumps. The head was visible still, though the body was hidden by the splash. From this instant's opportunity I should say that the creature was thirty-five feet long, with a head at least twelve of this devoted to head and neck.

"The Flight.

"In three seconds there was nothing to be seen except the waves of the muddy water, the movements of the waterside growth and a monkey with its hind parts useless hauling himself up a tree top. As the Indians paddle frantically away I put a bullet through the poor thing to let it out of its misery. We had not gone a hundred yards before Pfleng called to me and pointed to the right.

"Above the water an eight of a mile away appears the head and neck of the monster. It must have dived and gone right under us.

"After a few seconds gaze it began to swim toward us, and as our bullets seemed to have no effect we took to flight in earnest. Losing sight of it behind an island, we did not pick it up again and were just as well pleased.

"Since it was apparent that our Remingtons, heavy enough to drop a lion or an elephant in its tracks, were no defence at all against such animals as we had seen, and from the tracks we had reason to suppose there were larger ones in the region, the wisest thing for us to do was to be content, move on as soon as possible, and return with a rapid fire gun or something like that. Also it would have been impossible to get the Indians into the dugout again even with a gun nozzle at their heads.

"When we struck the Madeira we encountered a bunch of the white men on the railroad project. They were mostly young engineers and were Canadians who had not been out long. When we told what we had seen they were very polite about it, but it did not take us long to find out that they thought we were liars or had been crazy from fever or were trying to chi-hike them.

"That was the first of the disagreeable experiences I have had, and when Pfleng

and I separated at Para we agreed to forget the whole thing and say no more about it. He has since died, succumbing to fever March 4, 1909, in Rosario. As I said on beginning this story, I tell it just as it happened, and anybody who reads it, may think what he pleases about it.

"I should say that I have been asked to locate the region and so have worked the matter out as carefully as I can. It is about five degrees thirty minutes south and seventy degrees five minutes west, and can be most easily reached by ascending the Solimoes River."

Truth Or An Adventurer's Tale?

Like many of the tales told by those that have the most fortunate of luck to simply survive the rigors and hardships of the jungles of the Amazon a century ago, we are left wondering of what to make of this tale of some prehistoric cryptid that was shot at?

Was this simply some adventurer's tale told to amuse and hopefully make some money by publishing a tall tale; or was this a truthful and accurate account of something that had befallen the writer?

After a century of time, any possible leads that could confirm or disclaim this Amazonian cryptid is impossible to establish.

Nearly two decades prior, author Mangiacopra made an inquiry to the Library of Congress Copyright Division regarding this article, as it had a copyright noticed attached to Schmidt's story dated 1911. Was this story copyrighted separately by the newspaper company of the NEW YORK HERALD; or was it simply an copyright attachment for an overall general copyright notice for the whole Sunday issue? To pursuit this matter regarding the copyright notice application that may (?) have been submitted to the Library of Congress for copyright protection by either Schmidt or the NEW YORK HERALD did not occur on the part of Mangiacopra for two, then reasons. One, that many copyright records had been lost and destroyed by design or accident of nearly a century past; and second, the hindering factor, a research attempt on the part of the Library of Congress to see if any copyright notice of this 1911 application may still be existence would have required a fee of minimum of $50 quoted—with no guarantees of success of finding anything.

A copy of this article was sent to Dr. Roy P. Mackal of the University of Chicago in 1980 during his explorations into the reputed mokele-mbembe of Africa, of which his findings accumulated into his 1987 book on this cryptid subject. Several pages were given to Schmidt's 1911 account of a possible South American unknown jungle cryptid by Mackal, who had not been able to turned up any evidence on Schmidt's existence. Mackal did consult the Schmidt's entries in the German Encyclopedia DER GROSZE BROCKHAUS (Vol. 16 - 1934 edition) and there were no Franz Herrmann Schmidt listed, assuming, as Mackal stated, that the man was prominent enough to be given a reference in this book edition — assuming that was his true name and not a pen name to keep his identity secret to avoid ridicule for such a report.[2]

For if we were to Americanize the name of Franz Herrmann Schmidt it becomes the name Frank Herman Smith—a generic and common name and may have, in fact, been a pen name.

Another aspect that was not brought out by Mackal was if there was an Schmidt (pen name or not) did he survived any possible future expeditions in the Amazon region? Or was Schmidt just another nameless jungle explorer who went in — and never came out again!

Or could he have possibly return to Germany and did not survive military service of World War I as countless millions did not either?

Checking of the indexes of the NEW YORK TIMES for this name in the general news or in the obituary section and the books review (assuming that he may have written a book of his adventures) revealed nothing listed under this name.

Since the advent of the Internet, it is possible that further checking via this world-wide source might reveal more background information on Schmidt that would be appreciated by the authors.

Schmidt actually mentioned two unknown cryptids that he had encountered in his expedition. The first was a 70 foot-long boa constrictor. This monstrous snake sighting would have made a "tall tale itself; then a second cryptid was also told in the same story? Stretching the truth of one cryptid with a fabricated second one?

The reader is left to his own discretion as to the validity of this 1911 account of an Amazonian cryptid. A situation that is an "The Lady or The Tiger?"—and may never be resolved.

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Search for the Southwestern River Otter

Cryptozoology is methodology, and methodology for zoological discovery even with known species provides pertinent points for hunting unknown species (a primary argument in my *Cryptozoology: Science & Speculation*). With that in mind, Jerry Padilla of the *Taos* (NM) *News* passes this interesting note along, extracted from the University of New Mexico newsletter:

"UNM Research Associate Professor Paul Polechla is in search of an animal subspecies that hasn't been collected in New Mexico for 50 years or in the desert Southwest in nearly 30 years. But the river otter population is thought to live in every other mainland state. Still, that doesn't deter Polechla, whose research on the elusive Southwestern river otter was featured in the June/July 2003 issue of *National Wildlife* magazine.

"'The Southwestern river otter is one the most endangered mammals in North America, even more that the Mexican grey wolf,' Polechla says. 'There's no captive population, and no one has identified an existing population in the wild. For example, we have both wild and stocked populations of Mexican wolf and the black footed ferret.'

"Once a thriving species across the state, the last specimen of a Southwestern river otter caught in New Mexico was by a state wildlife officer in 1953. They stuffed specimen sits in a display at UNM's Museum of Southwestern Biology."

For more information, see:
http://www.unm.edu/news/Releases/03-06-19otter.htm
http://www.nwf.org/nationalwildlife/article.cfm?articleId=789&issueId=62

The Ivory-Billed Woodpecker

Arthur Cleveland Bent
Trenton, Mass.

Order Piciformes
Family Picidae: American Woodpeckers
Campephilus principalis (Linnaeus) Ivory-Billed Woodpecker

The large size and striking color pattern, the mystery of its habitat, and the tragedy of its possible extinction combine to make the ivory-billed woodpecker one of peculiar interest to all Americans who have any pride in the natural resources of their country.

Ever since the days of Mark Catesby (1731) this species has attracted popular attention, and even at that time, as he stated in his *Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands*: "The bills of these Birds are much valued by the Canada Indians, who made Coronets of 'em for their Princes and great warriors, by fixing them round a Wreath, with their points outward. The Northern Indians having none of these Birds in their cold country, purchase them of the Southern People at the price of two, and sometimes three, Buck-skins a Bill.'' At that time the species was found throughout the Gulf States as far north as North Carolina and up the Mississippi Valley as far as southern Ohio and Illinois.

Today it is almost extinct, and indeed during the past 50 years long periods have elapsed when no individuals have been reported from any part of its range. It apparently has been exterminated from all but a few isolated localities in Louisiana, Florida, and South Carolina, where it still clings on in a precarious position.

The ivorybill is primarily a bird of the great moss-hung southern swamps, where mature timber with its dying branches provides a bounteous food supply of wood-boring larvae, but its habits apparently vary in different parts of its range, for the birds I observed in Florida, although nesting in a cypress swamp, did most of their feeding along its borders on recently killed young pines that were infested with beetle larvae. They even got down on the ground like flickers to feed among palmetto roots on a recent burn. In Louisiana, on the other hand, the nesting birds observed confined their activities to a mature forest of oak, sweetgum, and hackberry, and paid little attention to the cypress trees along the lagoons.

Spring.—At what time the winter groups of ivorybills break up and spring activities commence is rather difficult to state, for there seems to be considerable irregularity to the breeding season. Judged from published records of its nests, the period of greatest activity would seem to be late March and early April. According to Audubon (1842): "The ivory-billed woodpecker nestles earlier in spring than any other species of its tribe. I have observed it boring a hole for that purpose in the beginning of March." Scott (1881) reports taking an incubating female in Florida on January 20, 1880, and (1888) of finding a nest containing one young female about one-third grown on March 17, 1887. Ridgway (1898) likewise speaks of shooting a male that left its nest hole February 15, 1898, and Hoyt (1905) states that "in Florida they begin building the latter part of January, and if undisturbed the eggs are laid by February 10th." In 1937 James

Extracted from: Bent, Arthur Cleveland. 1939. *Life Histories of North American Woodpeckers*. Washington: GPO.

Tanner (MS.) discovered a nest in Louisiana from which the fledgling left on March 30, fully 2 months earlier than any previous records from the same locality, and in 1938 apparently the same pair of birds had young the last week in February. In contrast to these dates we find 10 records of April nesting, 5 for May, and 1 (Beyer, 1900) of a young bird just out of the nest in July. The latter records might well constitute second attempts at nesting. The Florida birds, in general, start earlier than those in Louisiana, but at best there seems to be less regularity to the commencement of the nesting period than is found with most of our North American woodpeckers. In this, the ivorybill may register its affinity with tropical birds in general, the ivorybill being the most northern representative of an otherwise tropical or semitropical genus. There is some evidence for believing that ivorybills wander over considerably larger territories in winter than those to which they confine their activities in the spring, but little definite information has thus far been recorded on any of their before and after breeding activities.

Courtship.—Nothing seems to have been written on the courtship of the ivorybill except the observations of Allen and Kellogg (1937):

> Our only observations were made in Florida about 6 a. m., on April 13, 1924. We had discovered this pair of ivorybills at about the same time the preceding morning when they came out of the cypress swamp and preened their feathers and called a few times from the top of a dead pine before going off together to feed. They had made such a long flight the previous day that we were unable to find them again, but that night, still traveling together, they had returned to the same group of medium-sized cypress trees which they had apparently left in the morning and in which there was one fresh hole in addition to four or five other old ones in the near vicinity. On the morning of the 13th, they called as they left these cypress trees and flew to the top of a dead pine at the edge of the swamp, where they called and preened. Finally the female climbed up directly below the male and when she approached him closely he bent his head downward and clasped bills with her. The next instant they both flew out on to the "burn," where we followed their feeding operations for about an hour.

Nesting.—As before stated, while there are a few records of February nesting, the most definite records are for March, April, and early May, as follows:

April 6,—. M. Thompson, Okefinokee swamp, Georgia. Laying
April 9, 1892. E. A. McIlhenny, Avery swamp, Louisiana. Three fresh eggs.
April 10,—. Dr. S. W. Wilson, Altamaha swamp, Georgia. Four eggs.
April 15, 1893. A. Wayne, Florida. A young female about 2 weeks out of the nest
April 19, 1893. Ralph Collection, Lafayette County, Fla. Three eggs.
May 2, 1892. E. A. McIlhenny, Avery swamp, Louisiana. Three eggs.
May 19, 1892. E. A. McIlhenny, Avery swamp, Louisiana. Four eggs, a second laying.
May (early) 1894. E. A. McIlhenny, Avery swamp., Louisiana. Five young, 3 days old.
May 3, 1885. Capt. B. F. Goss, Jasper County, Tex. Three eggs.
July 1897. George G. Beyer, Franklin Parish, La.
March 4, 1904. Brown brothers (Hoyt), feeding young.
March 16, 1904. R. D. Hoyt, Taylor County, Fla. Large young.
March 4, 1905. R. D. Hoyt, Claremont County, Fla. Two eggs, incubation advanced.
March 24, 1905. R. D. Hoyt, Claremont County, Fla. Two eggs slightly incubated (second laying of the preceding).
April 13, 1924. A. A. Allen, Taylor Creek, Fla. Nest completed. Incubation not yet started.
April (early) 1931. J. J. Kuhn, northern Louisiana. Incubating.
May 13, 1934. J. J. Kuhn, northern Louisiana. Probably small young.
April 6, 1935. A. A. Allen and P. P. Kellogg, northern Louisiana. Incubating.

April 9, 1935. A. A. Allen and P. P. Kellogg, northern Louisiana. Building.
April 25, 1935. A. A. Allen and P. P. Kellogg, northern Louisiana. Incubating.
May 10, 1935. A. A. Allen and P. P. Kellogg, northern Louisiana. Small young.

Again quoting from the report of Allen and Kellogg (1937):

> The site of the Ivorybill's nest seems to vary considerably. Audubon states: "The hole is, I believe, always made in the trunk of a live tree, generally an ash or a hackberry, and is at a great height." There are, however, records of their nesting in live cypress, partially dead oaks, a dead royal-palm stub, "an old and nearly rotten white elm stump," etc., indicating about as great a variety as shown by the pileated woodpecker. The lowest authentic nest of which we have found a record, was that described by Beyer (1900) "about 25 feet up in a living over-cup oak," although Scott (1881) mentions what he considered "an old nest evidently of this species," in a palmetto stub only fifteen feet from the ground. The nest which we discovered in Florida, in 1924, was about thirty feet up in a live cypress and there were other holes in the vicinity in similar trees that had apparently been used in years past. The bark had healed over in some cases and scar tissue was apparently trying to close the wounds. Of the four nests examined in Louisiana, three were in oaks and one in a swamp maple. The maple, seven and a halt feet in circumference (breast high), was partially alive, but the top where the nest was located, 43 feet from the ground, was dead and pithy. Of those in oak trees, one was in a dead pin-oak stub about ten feet in circumference and about fifty feet high, standing in more or less of a clearing. The nest was 47 feet 8 inches from the ground. The other two were not measured accurately but were certainly over forty feet from the ground. About the middle of May when it was determined that the first two trees had been deserted, they were cut down, careful measurements taken, and the contents of the holes preserved. The hole in the maple was 5 inches in vertical diameter and 4 1/8 inches laterally, and was slightly irregular at the bottom, as shown in the photographs; that in the oak was more symmetrical with a similar vertical diameter of 5 inches and a transverse diameter of 4 inches. The depth of the maple nest from the top of the entrance hole was 19 1/8 inches, of which 3 inches was filled with chips and "sawdust." This nest cavity was 8 1/8 inches in diameter at the egg level, and the tree itself 18 1/2 inches in diameter at the level of the hole. The nest cavity in the oak was 20 inches from top to bottom with a diameter of 8 1/4 inches at the egg level. The entrance hole went in 3 inches before it turned abruptly downward; the tree at this point was 22 inches in diameter. There was a stub just above the hole in the maple about 4 inches long representing a branch that had apparently died and been broken oft years before and started to heal over. The oak was perfectly smooth at the entrance hole, but on either side, slightly above, were the bases of two large branches that could not have given the opening any protection from the weather. The opening in the maple faced north, two of those in the oaks east, and one west. Audubon states: "The birds pay great regard to the particular situation of the tree and the inclination of the trunk, first, because they prefer retirement, and, again, because they are anxious to secure the aperture against the access of water during beating rains. To prevent such a calamity the hole is generally dug immediately under the juncture of a large branch with the trunk." None of the nests examined by us showed this desire for protection from rain, and the chips at the bottom of the cavity were perfectly dry, though we had had some very heavy rains shortly before they were examined.

Audubon further states: "The average diameter of the different nests which I examined was about 7 inches within, although the entrance, which is perfectly round, is only just large enough to admit the bird." Beyer (1900) says: "The entrance measures exactly 4 1/2 inches in

height and 3 7/8 inches in width," and McIlhenny (Bendire, 1895) gives the measurements of a typical hole as "oval and measures 4 1/8 by 5 3/4 inches," and Scott (1888) as "3 1/2 inches wide and 4 1/2 inches high." The corresponding measurements of the nests of Pileated Woodpeckers are given by Bendire (1895) as follows: "The entrance measures from 3 to 3 1/2 inches in diameter, and it often goes 5 inches straight into the trunk before it is worked downward." The additional one to two inches in diameter of the nest hole should be kept in mind when searching for reasons why the Ivorybill has proven less successful than the Pileated Woodpecker in its struggle for existence. Thompson (1885) states: "The depth of the hole varies from three to seven feet, as a rule, but I found one that was nearly nine feet deep and another that was less than two." He also claims that they are always Jug-shaped at the lower end.

Of two nests discovered by Hoyt (1905) in Claremont County, Fla., one was 58 feet up in a live cypress about 20 yards from a nest discovered in 1904 by the Brown brothers; the second nest built by the same pair after the first eggs had been taken was in a cypress stub about 70 yards distant from the first and 47 feet from the ground. The opening of the first nest was 6 3/4 inches by 3 1/4 inches, with the trunk of the tree 15 inches in diameter at the nest cavity, which was 14 inches deep. The second nest hole measured 6 by 3 3/4 inches and was likewise 14 inches deep. "The opening in both nests was uneven and rough, and just inside the hollow was much enlarged, being 9 inches across, and unlike the nests of other woodpeckers, was smaller at the bottom than at the top. * * * One marked feature of the nest tree of which I have seen no mention made is that the outer bark of those I have examined was torn to shreds from a point some distance below the nest site to 15 or 20 feet above it. This made the nest tree noticeable for quite a distance. The last nest taken this season had little of this work done."

Allen and Kellogg (1937) say further:

> According to McIlhenny (Bendire, 1895) the female does all the work of excavation, requiring from eight to fourteen days, while the male sits around and chips the bark from neighboring trees. Audubon, however, states that "both birds work most assiduously at this excavation, one waiting outside to encourage the other." Maurice Thompson (1896) likewise reports that both birds work at the excavation. We had no opportunity to check either statement but certainly both birds take part in incubation and feeding the young. The chips are not removed from the vicinity of the nest for each one that we have examined has had piles of chips directly below the opening though, since most of the trees were standing in water, the chips were not very conspicuous.
>
> We camped within three hundred feet of our first Ivorybill nest in Louisiana, in 1935. A pair of 24-power binoculars set on a tripod was trained on the nest opening, and from daylight, April 10, until 11 a. m., April 14, continuous observations during the hours of daylight were made either by the writers or by James Tanner. The nest had been found the morning of April 6, when the female was incubating, but how far along incubation had proceeded we made no effort to determine for fear of disturbing the birds. Contrary to most published accounts, however, the birds were not particularly wary and soon became so accustomed to our presence that they would enter the nest-hole with one of us standing at the base of the tree and later even when one of us was descending from a blind which we built on April 9 in the top of an adjacent rock elm, twenty feet distant from the nest. On April 9, we located a second pair of Ivorybills in the vicinity of a fresh hole about fifty feet up in a dead oak, some two miles to the south of the nest in the maple. The following morning, however, the nest was occupied by a black squirrel and the birds had disappeared.
>
> Briefly summarizing our five-day vigil at the occupied nest, we learned that the

birds took turns sitting on the eggs, working in approximately two-hour shifts when not alarmed, but changing places more frequently when disturbed. Activities usually commenced about six o'clock in the morning, three-quarters of an hour after Cardinals and Carolina Wrens started singing. At this time the female relieved the male after his having spent the night on the eggs. Activities ceased about four o'clock in the afternoon when the male relieved the female on the eggs and went in the nest for the night. This was nearly three hours before dark, which came about seven o'clock.

Eggs.—According to Bendire (1895):

> The eggs of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker are pure china white in color, close grained, and exceedingly glossy, as if enameled. They vary in shape from an elongate ovate to a cylindrical ovate, and are more pointed than the eggs of most of our Woodpeckers. They appear to me to be readily distinguished from those of the Pileated Woodpecker, some of which are fully as large. From three to five eggs are laid to a set, and only one brood is raised in a season. * * *
>
> The average measurement of thirteen eggs is 34.87 by 25.22 millimetres or about 1.37 by 0.99 inches. The largest egg measured 36.83 by 26.92 millimetres, or about 1.45 by 1.06 inches; the smallest, 34.54 by 23.62 millimetres, or about 1.36 by 0.93 inches.

The eggs described by Hoyt (1905) measured 1.46 by 1.09 and 1.48 by 1.07 inches in the first set and 1.43 by 1.10 and 1.43 by 1.08 inches in the second set.

From my own experience and the observation of others, it seems to me that the number of eggs laid by the ivorybill would not normally exceed three, and one or two of these are often infertile. Frequently, if the bird is successful in rearing any offspring at all, a single youngster is the result rather than two or three. Allen and Kellogg (1937) describe three nests in which no young were successfully reared, although at least some of the eggs apparently hatched, while Scott (1888), Beyer (1900), and Tanner (1937 and 1938 MS.) each report single young, and in the type set of three eggs (Ralph collection, Lafayette County, Fla.) two were infertile, and both of Hoyt's sets: contained two eggs each. On the other hand, J. J. Kuhn reports seeing one pair of ivorybills with four young in 1931 and again in 1936 in the same forest where Allen and Kellogg made their studies. In 1932, 1933, and 1934 he observed a pair of ivorybills with two young.

Plumages.—So far as I have been able to find, no one has ever published a description of the natal or juvenal plumages of the ivory-billed woodpecker. The probability is that natal down is absent, although; Scott (1888), who found a nest containing one young in Florida March 17, 1887, says: "The young bird in the nest was a female, and though one-third grown had not yet opened its eyes. The feathers of the first plumage were apparent, beginning to cover the down, and were the same in coloration as those of the adult female bird."

During April 1937, James Tanner, recipient of the Audubon fellowship at Cornell University for the study of the ivory-billed woodpecker (MS.), was able to follow a young ivorybill for over 3 months after it left the nest, and though he never had the bird in his hands, his description is much more complete than Scott's and the most accurate one available: "March 10, 1937: The young ivory-billed woodpecker just out of the nest resembled an adult female in general pattern but with the following differences: The black crest was short and blunt; the tail was short and square; the outer primaries were all tipped with white, instead of being wholly black as in the adult; the bill was shorter than that of an adult and was chalky white instead of ivory; the eye was a dark brown or sepia. One month later the crest was long but still blunt and black, the tail was almost as long and pointed as an adult's, and the eye and bill were beginning to turn color.

"The bird developed gradually from then, until at three and a half months out of the nest (July 14, 1937) its size, proportions, bill, and eye color were the same as those of an adult. By then, scarlet feathers had appeared in the back of the crest. The white wing tips to the outer primaries were almost worn away."

Since Tanner's bird began to show red in the crest when it was three and a half months old, it is probable that the postjuvenal molt is completed by early fall and that thereafter young and adults are similar.

The chief difference between adult male and female ivorybills lies in the crest, which in the male is a brilliant scarlet, not including the uppermost feathers, which are black, like the top of the head, while the somewhat recurved crest of the female is entirely black. Females average somewhat larger than males in most of their measurements, except those of bill and feet, as the following figures (length in millimeters) given by Ridgway (1914) for 15 males and 11 females indicate:

Adult Males: Skins, 420-493 (454); wing, 240-263 (255.8); tail, 147-160.5 (154.4); culmen, 63-72.5 (68.2); tarsus, 42.5-46 (44.2); outer anterior toe, 30-34 (32.1).

Adult Females: Skins, 452-488 (471); wing, 240-262 (256.4); tail, 151-166 (159.5); culmen, 61-67.5 (64.3); tarsus, 40.5-44 (42.6); outer anterior toe, 30-33.5 (31.7).

In both sexes the general color is a glossy blue-black, with the tail and primaries duller or with the gloss less distinct. A narrow strips on each side of the neck, starting below the eye and continuing down to the folded secondaries, as conspicuously white, as are also the secondaries, all but five or six of the outermost primaries, and the under wing coverts. The white nasal plumes and anterior edges of the lores more or less match the ivory-white bill and help to emphasize its size. The iris is pale, clear lemon-yellow in both sexes, and the tarsi and toes are light gray.

Food.—Audubon (1842) mentions grapes, persimmons, and hackberries as food of the ivorybills in addition to beetles, larvae, and large grubs. McIlhenny, in his communication to Bendire (1895), mentions their feeding on acorns, but Maurice Thompson (1885) asserts that "it is only woodpeckers which eat insects and larvae (dug out of rotten wood) exclusively." Allen and Kellogg (1937) report:

> We were never able to follow a bird continuously through the forest of either Louisiana or Florida for more than an hour before it would make a long flight and we would be unable to find it again. Ordinarily upon leaving the nest-tree or its immediate environs the bird would fly at least a hundred yards before stopping. Then it would feed for from a few minutes to as long as half an hour on a dead tree or dead branch before making a short flight to another tree. It might make a dozen such short flights and then, without any warning and for no apparent reason, it would start off on a long flight through the forest that would take it entirely out of sight.

Audubon states that "it seldom comes near the ground"; but the birds we have watched behave no differently from pileated woodpeckers in this respect, sometimes working high up in the trees but at other times within five or ten feet of the ground. The female of the Florida pair which we watched for over an hour on a "burn" sometimes got down on the ground around the seared, prostrate trunks of the saw palmettos, hopping like a Flicker, while her mate stayed on the trunks of the pines five to ten feet up. We never saw the Louisiana birds on the ground but there was plenty of evidence, both in Florida and Louisiana, that a bird will

continue scaling the bark from recently killed trees for the beetle larvae beneath, clear to the base of the tree, until the tree stands absolutely naked with the bark piled around its base.

Frequently they return again and again to the same tree until they have entirely stripped it. At one time we thought this was their chief method of feeding, but we have since watched them digging for borers exactly like hairy or pileated woodpeckers. At one time we watched the female working at a deep gash in the tall stub of a dead gum, which was apparently a favorite feeding place. She clung to the spot for about five minutes, occasionally picking hard, but never chipping off any large flakes that would account for the depth of the hole which was exactly like that made by pileated woodpeckers,—about four inches deep and eighteen inches long. Finally she flew and disappeared in the direction of the nest which was about two hundred yards away. In a few minutes the male ivorybill came to the same spot where the female had been working and he, too, picked at the hole and stayed there for several minutes. At the time we decided that either the ivorybills or perhaps the pileateds had made the gash in the tree for carpenter ants and that the ivorybills were returning each time for more ants. Since the stub was rather rotten and full of woodpecker drillings, we decided to cut it down the next day and make certain of what the ivorybills were securing. Upon examining the hole made by the birds there was, however, no evidence of carpenter ants, and the deep gash followed the tunnels of large, wood-boring beetle larvae (Cerambycidae) of which there were a great many in the tree; the only other available woodpecker food was termites of which there were comparatively few.

Certainly the ivorybills did not do enough digging while we were watching them to uncover any additional borers, so they may have been picking up such termites as appeared in the gash. The birds, while we watched them in Louisiana, divided their time between dead branches of live trees and completely dead trees, but more time was spent knocking off the bark for whatever could be found immediately beneath it than was spent digging deeply for borers. The forest was made up primarily of oak, gum and hackberry, and the woodpeckers showed no preference for species so far as we could determine. In Florida, while the nest was located in a cypress swamp in a live cypress tree, the birds apparently did most of their feeding in the dead pines at the edge of the swamp, scaling off the bark of those small and medium-sized pines that had been killed by fire, or actually getting down on the ground like Flickers, as already described.

The ivorybills are, therefore, apparently somewhat adaptable in their food and feeding habits, but forests of mature trees with their dying branches seem to give them the best habitat for securing their food. The fruits of these trees may likewise add considerably to their attractiveness. The only definite stomach analyses published are of two birds examined by the United States Biological Survey, and reported upon by Beal (1911): “One stomach contained 32 and the other 20 of the wood-boring cerambycid larvae, which live by boring into trees. These constituted 37.5 per cent of the whole food. The remainder of the animal food consisted of engraver beetles (Scolytidae) found in one stomach. Of these, three species were identified— *Tomicus avulsus*, *T. calligraphus*, and *T. grandicollis*. The total animal food amounted to 38.5 per cent. The vegetable food consisted of fruit of *Magnolia foetida* in one stomach, and of pecan nuts in the other. The average for the two was 61.5 percent.”

The ivory-billed woodpecker is represented in the Biological Survey’s collection by the stomachs of three birds. Two of these were males collected on November 26, 1904, at Tarkington, Tex., by Vernon Bailey, and the third was shot at Bowling Green, West Carroll Parish, La., on August 19, 1903, by E. L. Moseley.

The first two stomachs were well filled, and though only the content of the third was received

it was apparently well filled also. This last stomach alone contained a trace of gravel. Forty-six percent of the food was animal in origin, long-horned beetles (Cerambycidae, including *Parandra polita* and *Stenodontus dasystomus*) comprising 45.33 percent, while the remaining 0.67 percent consisted of 3 different species of engraver beetles (*Tomicus* spp.). Southern magnolia seeds (*Magnolia grandiflora*) formed 14 percent of the vegetable food, hickory (*Hicoria* sp.) and pecan (*Hicoria pecan*) nuts formed 27 percent, and poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*) equaled 12.67 percent. Fragments of an unidentified gall formed 1 percent of the content.

Behavior.—The uniform direct flight of the ivorybill resembles that of the red-headed woodpecker more than it does the swooping undulating flight of the pileated, and this general resemblance is emphasized by the large amount of white in the wings. When viewed from below, the long pointed tail is quite conspicuous and the wings seem very narrow because the black portion is so much more conspicuous than the white, which apparently cuts off the whole rear of the wing. This is perhaps not so conspicuous when viewed from the side, but even so it is remarkable how ducklike the bird can appear as it flies swiftly and directly up a lagoon, so much so in fact that certain Louisiana hunters have told me that they have even shot at them under such circumstances, mistaking them for ducks. In this connection Audubon's (1842) description of the flight of the ivorybill is quite misleading: "The flight of this bird is graceful in the extreme, although seldom prolonged to more than a few hundred yards at a time, unless when it has to cross a large river, which it does in deep undulations, opening its wings at first to their full extent and nearly closing them to renew the propelling impulse. The transit from one tree to another, even should the distance be as much as a hundred yards, is performed by a single sweep, and the bird appears as if merely swinging itself from the top of the one tree to that of the other, forming an elegantly curved line."

Voice.—Concerning the voice of the ivorybill there seems to be considerable agreement in that the ordinary note sounds like a single blast from a tin trumpet or a clarinet. In the words of Audubon, "Its notes are clear, loud, and yet rather plaintive. They are heard at a considerable distance, perhaps half a mile, and resemble the false, high note of a clarionet." According to Hoyt (1905): "It is a single note and resembles the word Schwenk, at times keyed very high, again soft and plaintive, it lacks carrying capacity and can rarely be heard over 100 yards on a still morning, while the harsh notes of the pileated woodpecker can be heard a full mile." Allen and Kellogg (1937) state that anyone can produce the sound very accurately by using only the mouthpiece of the clarinet. They question whether the loudest calls can be heard half a mile:

It is doubtful, however, if the loudest calls can be heard, under normal conditions, for a quarter of a mile, and some of the weaker ones are scarcely audible at 300 yards. However, when we tested the carrying power of one of our recordings of the common alarm note, kent, amplified until it sounded to our ears normal at about one hundred feet, the call was distinctly recognizable at a distance of 2,500 feet directly in front of the amplifier with no trees or buildings intervening. At a 45 degree angle the sound was not recognizable at half this distance. The birds are so often quiet for such long periods that we can scarcely agree with Audubon's statement that "the bird spends few minutes of the day without uttering them." They seem much more likely to call when they are alarmed, as when they discover an intruder in their haunts. Both birds give the call, but that of the female is somewhat weaker. In addition to this kent note, as it is called by the natives of Louisiana, and because of which they call the birds "Kents," they have a variety of low conversational notes when they exchange places at the nest, which are suggestive of similar notes of the Flicker; but they never, so far as we know, give a call at all similar to the pup-pup-pup! of the pileated, nor have we ever heard them sound a real tatoo like other woodpeckers, such as described by Thompson (1885), and which McIlhenny (Bendire, 1895) compares to the "roll of a snare drum." The

birds in Florida and all those in Louisiana telegraphed to each other by single or double resounding whacks on the trunk or dead branches. Mr. Kuhn who has had years of experience with them, likewise has never heard any notes or tatoos that were comparable with those of the Pileated. Our observations agree with Audubon's, rather than with those of some others, in that "it never utters any sound while on the wing."

Tanner (MS.) reports, however, that in his studies during 1937 he occasionally heard a rapid succession of "kents" given on the wing as one bird flew in to join another.

The calls of the two large species of woodpeckers are so distinct that they should not be confused with each other or with those of any other birds. The fact, however, that ivorybills are continually being reported, even from the Northern States, indicates how unobservant many people are and how necessary it is to stress even such conspicuous differences as those mentioned above.

Winter.—Ivory-billed woodpeckers are apparently not only nonmigratory but also sedentary and perhaps spend their entire lives within a few miles of the spot where they were hatched. At least, once a pair has established a territory it seems to cling to that area winter and summer, and Tanner (MS.) reports one pair using the same roosting hole in December that they used the preceding April. These territories are doubtless several miles in diameter, but the tendency was for the birds to build up small communities in certain areas until in former years, when their distribution was normal, they were reported as fairly common by observers who happened upon one of these communities. On the other hand, there were perhaps always large areas of similar timber uninhabited by them, so that with equal truth by equally competent observers they were called extremely rare. How much farther they range during the winter than during the nesting season has not yet been worked out, but doubtless the area covered at such times is considerably larger, and this accounts for sporadic records of birds in the nonbreeding seasons in areas where no nests have been located and where no one has been able to find the birds subsequently.

The family groups apparently keep together until the following nesting season, and Mr. Kuhn has reported seeing groups of from three to five birds even as late as early March. Hoyt (1905) states that "after the young leave the nest in April they and the parents remain together until the mating season in December. During the summer they are always found in bands of three to five, and I have never seen more than the latter number."

Conservation.—Arthur T. Wayne (1910) records having "encountered more than two hundred of these rare birds in Florida during the years 1892, 1893, and 1894." Today it is doubtful if there are a fourth of that number left alive in its entire range.

A number of theories have been advanced for the increasing scarcity of the ivorybill, that most often mentioned being the destruction of its natural habitat, the virgin cypress and bottomland forests of the South. Commercialization, avarice of collectors, shooting for food by natives, predation by natural enemies that can enter its hole (but not the pileated) are likewise suggested, while Allen and Kellogg (1937) suggest that with increasing scarcity because of their sedentary habits, inbreeding and lack of sex rhythm resulting in weak young and infertile eggs have become increasingly important. At this writing the National Association of Audubon Societies has established a Fellowship at Cornell University for the study of the ivorybill, and it is hoped that the incumbent, James Tanner, may ascertain such facts regarding the bird and its habits that constructive measures for its preservation can be undertaken.

Distribution

Range.—The Southeastern United States; nonmigratory.

The range of the ivory-billed woodpecker extends north to northeastern Texas (Gainesville); southeastern Oklahoma (Caddo); northeastern Arkansas (Newport and Osceola); southeastern Missouri (Little River); southeastern Illinois (Mount Carmel); southern Indiana (Monroe County and Franklin County); and southeastern North Carolina (Wilmington). East along the coast from North Carolina (Wilmington) to southeastern Florida (Cape Florida). From this point the southern limits of the range extend westward along the Gulf coast to Texas (Guadalupe and New Braunfels). West to eastern Texas (New Braunfels, San Marcos, Brazos River, and Gainesville).

The range of the species has been so restricted in modern times that periodically it is feared the bird is on the verge of extinction. It is now known to exist only in a very few remote areas, chiefly in Louisiana.

Egg dates.—Florida: 4 records, March 4 to April 19.

Louisiana: 5 records, March 6 to May 19.

Georgia: 2 records, April 6 and 10.

Texas: 2 records, April 11 and May 3.

The "Blond" Eskimos

Vilhjalmur Stefansson

Beyond al1 other strange reports that have come out of the Arctic, the public seems most interested in those that concern the"Blond" Eskimos. If they are pure-blood natives it seems they ought to look as Chinese as any other Eskimos. Instead, they are so fair of complexion, and otherwise so different from Eskimos or other North American Indians, that they puzzled or astonished the first explorers who visited their country and reminded them of Jews or Europeans. To some of the explorers they even looked as if they might be related to the blondest of North-Europeans, the Scandinavians.

But no Jews, Scandinavians, or other white men are known to history who could have been the ancestors of these "Blond" Eskimos. Are they, then, a freak, what the biologists call a sport? If so you will have to revise a section of the Mendelian laws of inheritance, for light eyes are considered recessive; if they appeared in a brown-eyed race by "accident" they should disappear in a few generations by being bred out. Or, may these peculiar tribes be descended from explorers who were at some time or other lost to history as well as to the life of the civilized world? If so, can we discover even a hint that there may have been some expedition at some time lost in the right district whose members could have survived to blend with the Mongoloid natives and leave descendants so numerous and so Europeanlike? No record has yet been found of an expedition whose story will fit the case. A still greater difficulty arises through the known fact that few blue eyes have resulted in northem Alaska or in Hudson Bay from many generations of Eskimo intermarriage with a far greater number of Europeans than could possibly have been lost from any known expedition, or series of expeditions. To meet that difficulty, biologists have suggested that if the "blondness" of the peculiar Eskimos comes from European blood, then white women as well as white men must have entered into that hypothetical mingling of races.

If white women are required to explain our mystery, then we know of only one possible source—the three thousand Christians whose women as well as men disappeared from Greenland about four hundred years ago.

Popular interest in the "Blond" Eskimos started with my press announcements about them in September, 1912. Because of the many theories and the romantic nature of some of them, this interest has never subsided. Instead, it has grown, and remains world wide, with tangled disputes between rival theorists. Just now the debate is hotter than ever because two of the most prominent living explorers, the Dane, Knud Rasmussen, and the Norwegian, Roald Amundsen, have published books which contradict each other, both as to fact and theory.

II

Since it is around my own "discovery" of the "Blond" Eskimos that the battle of opinions chiefly rages, there is a temptation to begin with an account of how I first visited these people and what I learned among them. But that is not the real beginning of what may possibly be their story, and a historical statement will be clearer. So we start with Eric the Red and the Christian republic which he founded in Greenland. It is difficult to touch that romantic field of little-known history and write about it less than a book. We should like to dwell for instance, on the picturesque tale of outlawry that drove Eric's father from Norway to Iceland about 950 A.D. and himself from Iceland in 982 upon a voyage in which he discovered Greenland. But

we must confine ourselves to a few of those essentials which could have had a bearing on the present "Blond" Eskimo problem.

After the discovery of Greenland Eric spent three years exploring, during which time he formed the plan of starting a colony. Then followed a year devoted to an astoundingly modern publicity campaign in Iceland, part of which consisted in naming the proposed settlement Green Land, "believing that people would all the more desire to live there if it had a fair name." This device and the rest of the propaganda worked so well that, in 986, between five and seven hundred Icelanders (mostly of Norse or Irish blood) were persuaded to emigrate in fourteen ships and to make on the west coast of Greenland the largest pioneer colony ever established in North America (for Greenland is an American island). Contrast the numbers, for instance, with the hundred or so colonists who made the first settlement in Massachusetts, or the one hundred and five who started the first colony in Virginia. The Greenlanders were better men, too, for they had no loss the first year from hunger or resulting disease, as against a fifty per cent loss by the Pilgrims in Massachusetts, and a still higher loss by the Virginians. Even the Spaniards colonizing Florida showed the first year heavy losses that are charged to hardship and lack of suitable food and shelter.

We now look upon the story of the Greenland colony as tragic, but that is the hind-sight of many centuries. At first and for a long time there was noth ing but success. In 1000 A.D. Eric's son, Leif, discovered the mainland of North America; and there followed during the next three hundred years many voyages to Baffin Island, Labrador, Newfoundland, and other parts of North America, perhaps as far south as where New York now stands. Christianity was introduced also in the year 1000 and Greenland finally came to have sixteen churches and a bishopric administered from Rome through the archbishoprics of Hamburg and Nidaros. The country was an independent republic till 1261, or a hundred years longer than the United States has yet been a republic. Then it became a dependency of Norway and gradually decayed through political mismanagement. The Black Death may have been partly responsible, and so may piracy from Europe. There were attacks from the Eskimos, too, doubtless brought upon the Greenlanders by the same sort of mistreatment of "inferior races" that caused the Indian troubles of the later English colonists farther south.

Through the sagas and annals of Iceland, through certain literature written in Greenland and preserved in Iceland, through the church records of the Vatican and the political records of the Norwegian kingdom, we know the history of Greenland clearly down past 1350, and vaguely thence till 1440. Later than that, we have only the flickering light thrown by archaeological and other scientific studies. Still, it is now fairly plain that the colony survived until after Columbus, trading, it appears, with English merchants from Bristol, Lynn, or some other port which specialized in hiding its traffic from its sovereign, who had made a treaty with Norway agreeing to prevent English ships from sailing either to Iceland or Greenland.

Some think there were about three thousand Europeans in the Greenland colony about 1350; others make the figure double. But there is little doubt that the numbers declined thereafter. We do not know to what degree they intermarried with the Eskimos, whether in Greenland, Baffin Island, or Labrador; but if there was little intermarriage, then that is the only case where Eskimos and whites have refrained from mixing freely whenever they had a chance.

With this historical background it is natural that scientific men have always been on the lookout for evidence as to what became of the Christian Europeans. Their deserted homes and churches stand, or lie in ruin, as their monuments along the southwest coast of Greenland. Scholars have always considered it possible that some of the people migrated westward to

the American mainland or to the islands north of the continent, in which case ruins of their buildings and traces of their blood might be found among Eskimos or Indians. No such ruins have been discovered; but some think their blood can be seen to-day in the rosy cheeks of the "Blond'' Eskimos.

The first modern account of a people in the far north who seem to have resembled the present "Blond" Eskimos is found, of all places, in A Natural and Moral History of the West Indies, published in French in 1658 by Cesare de Rochefort.

The North got into De Rochefort's book on the South because he was talking of swordfish, which reminded him of the Arctic narwhal and of his friend, Captain Nicolas Tunes of Flushing, who sailed in the year 1656 up to North Latitude 72° in Baffin Island and there came upon two native peoples. He describes these in great detail, both by skilful word painting and by good drawings. Of their complexion and physical type he says:

> As for the people of this country, of them our travelers found two types, which lived together in good accord and perfect friendliness. One type was tall in stature, with a well-made body, quite fair of complexion and very able at the chase. The other is very much smaller, olive-compiexioned, quite well proportioned save that their legs are short and stout. The first type preferred hunting and there they brought their skill and good disposition into play, while the others occupied themselves with fishing. Both types had very white teeth, close together, dark hair, bright eyes and such clear-cut features that one could not see any striking deformity.

The shorter, olive-complexioned people would be typical Eskimos; those taller and more fair would correspond to mixed-blood descendants from Europeans and Eskimos and might, therefore, have been derived from the Norse Greenlanders, who are known to have made many voyages to Baffin Island and some of whom may, therefore, have settled there.

The next we hear of a people in the Arctic "fair of complexion" is more than a hundred years later and several hundred miles away. But the distance from Baffin Island to Coronation Gulf is not much to cover in so long a period of migration, and it could easily have been the progeny of the Tunes people who were living around Coronation Gulf when Sir John Franklin arrived there on his exploring expedition of 1821. At that time he had already been living and traveling for years with full-blood and half-caste North American Indians. Since the Eskimos are merely one kind of Indian, like the Sioux or Cherokee, there should have been a rather close general resemblance, and for that Franklin was evidently prepared, thinking to find only the type of complexion which we recognize as Indian or Chinese, with the accompanying stiff black hair, brown eyes, and high cheek bones. The only Eskimo whom he saw at close range in Coronation Gulf was an old man whom he found hidden in a crevice among rocks, when the other inhabitants of a village had fled at the white men's approach. Of him Franklin says:

> The countenance (of this man) was oval, with a sufficiently prominent nose, and had nothing very different from a European face except in the smallness of his eyes and perhaps in the narrowness of his forehead. His complexion was very fresh and red, and he had a longer beard than I have hitherto seen on any of the aborigines of America.

Contrast this description with your own mental picture of a Chinese and you will see how the man Franklin saw differed from what an ordinary Eskimo should be.

The next visitors to what is now popularly known as the "Blond" Eskimo Country were P. W. Dease and Thomas Simpson. The summer of 1838, near Bloody Fall on the Coppermine River,

they met an Eskimo family. In his journal Simpson describes the man as being "about six feet high, stout, and well-looking, with brown hair"—again not the description of a typical Eskimo. The following summer Simpson met a small party of natives. Of one of them he says that he was:

> a very stout man, about six feet high, with brown beard, and a countenance that would have been noble, were it not disfigured by a hideous wen on the temple." Of these same Eskimos he says: "I may remark that the men were quite equal to Europeans in stature, broad-chested and full-fleshed." And again: "The slender, agile figure of the latter (Simpson's Indian companions) was strikingly contrasted with the square rugged forms of these natives. It seemed as if, on the northern confines of a new continent, I had together before me descendants of the nomadic Tartar and the sea-roving Scandinavian, two of the most dissimilar and widely separate races of the ancient world.

In 1851 Captain Collinson sailed the Enterprise from the Pacific around the north of Alaska and wintered in Walker Bay, Victoria Island, and was thus the first white man to visit the locality from which the more recent observers have reported the highest percentage of "blondness." He does not, however, like Simpson, speak of being reminded of Scandinavians when he met the natives there, but does say he thought some of them looked like Jews. But the typical Jew, while dark when compared with the average Scandinavian, is very light when compared with a Chinaman and, therefore, when compared with ordinary Eskimos. Collinson may thus have meant the same thing when he spoke of a Jewish appearance that Simpson meant when he spoke of a Scandinavian appearance.

Now the scene shifts five or eight hundred miles southeast to Hudson Bay, and we are dependent for information chiefly on Captain George Comer, that scientist and ethnologist among American whaling captains who is known to scholars as collaborator with Professor Franz Boas, of Columbia University, in books about the Eskimos published by the American Museum of Natural History, New York. Captain Comer writes me that he does not remember the time—and his memory goes back some forty years—when the whalers wintering on Hudson Bay did not know, or at least believe, that there were "White Natives" west of King William Island. There had been extensive intermarriage of whites and natives on Hudson Bay, which made it seem strange to Comer that there should be more "blondness" far to the northwest, where no whalers or traders had ever been. But he explained this to himself, and feels certain that other whalers did similarly, by assuming that a considerable number of men from Sir John Franklin's third expedition, wrecked west of King William Island in 1847, had lived there for years, and that these were their descendants.

But the Captain has studied the history of the Franklin expeditions more carefully since, and has come to the conclusion that, whatever the explanation of the "blondness," it cannot possibly have any connection with Franklin, or with any other known explorer. Moreover, the percentage of "blondness" is far too high for such an explanation, even had those sailors whom we know to have died of hunger immediately after they left their ships really lived amoag the Eskimos for many years.

Captain Comer had more than hearsay evidence of the "White Natives" west of King William Island, for on one occasion his winter quarters on Hudson Bay were visited by a party from there, and the Captain observed among them a greater Europeanlike appearance than he had ever noticed among the Hudson Bay natives, in spite of their extensive blood mixture with white men.

III

I first heard about the "Blond" Eskimos the summer of 1906. I was then at Herschel Island, the chief whaling rendez-vous of the western Arctic. The main topic of conversation among whalers, missionaries, natives, and explorers alike was the disappearance the previous year of Captain Charles Klinkenberg, with his ship the Olga. Then, in middle August, she came back out of the east, with the story that they had discovered "a new race." It was said by the captain and the crew alike that in western Victoria Island, where they had wintered, they had been visited by several hundred people, some of whom were typical Eskimos, while others looked like Europeans dressed in Eskimo clothing. Their weapons and implements were mainly of copper and all their cooking pots were of stone. They had impressed the Olga as the cleanest and in many respects the finest natives they had ever seen, and were all alike thoroughly Eskimo in manners, customs, and language. The absence of white men's wares, as well as what they told, showed that they had had no meeting with Europeans since the almost momentary contacts with the Franklin Search expeditions of 1850 and 1851.

Some of these remarkable things were entered in my diary at the time and many of them were reported in my correspondence with the sponsors of my expedition, but I do not know that any of them got into print. At least if they did, it was only in newspapers which have not come to my knowledge.

What Klinkenberg told about the riches and romance of Victoria Island created a great stir among the whalers, none of whom had ever been there. Captain William Mogg, one of the veterans, secured control of the Olga and sailed east in 1907, returning in 1908 with full confirmation of Klinkenberg's report. I was then again in the Arctic, and interviewed Mogg in October, 1908, on the north coast of Alaska.

In the third year of my second expedition I was finally able to reach Coronation Gulf, where the "blondness" had been reported by Franklin and Simpson, and a year later I got to western Victoria Island where it had been found by Klinkenberg and Mogg.

The "Blond" Eskimos, among whom I lived a year, are interesting for many reasons, only one of which is the light complexions of some of them. But the popular interest is based on the complexions alone, and dates from September, 1912, when I returned to Seattle after a four-year stay in the Arctic and told some reporters that out of one thousand people in the Victoria and Coronation districts I had seen ten or more who had light eyes, and many others who did not look like full-blood Eskimos, even though their eyes were brown. The next several days the newspapers of the world were filled with statements and theories based usually on the supposition that I had said I had discovered a thousand people all of whom were blond, for I had been misquoted by some of the reporters to that effect. This was exaggerating my real statement by about ten thousand per cent, and on that exaggeration most of the "Blond" Eskimo controversy has been based ever since, despite my protests in correct interviews, magazine articles, and books.

The press exaggerations annoyed me from the first. But real trouble started when my partisans began to claim for me that I had "discovered" "a new race of blond people in the Arctic." To protect myself from these friends as best I could, I published in *Harper's Weekly* for October 20, 1912, a statement calling attention to Franklin and others who had reported similar things from the Coronation-Victoria region nearly a hundred years before me. This statement attracted little attention, for the "Blond" Eskimo story in its journalistic form was too good to be allowed to die. My unwelcome champions continued to maintain that it was a great achievement for me to have discovered, at this late date, a whole race that had escaped the attention of previous

explorers. Those of the opposite camp denounced me as a fabricator. Neither faction seemed to read the detailed story printed in Harper's Magazine during the early months of 1913, or the book, My Life with the Eskimo, published late that year, which described how little "blondness" there was, but insisted it was marvelous that there should be any among a normally Chinese-like people. I suggested that the only adequate historical explanation was in the lost colony of Greenland, adding, however, that "apart from the historical explanation, there are, of course, purely biological ones."

Aside from the mere row, the first important development, so far as I remember, was that the newspapers reported the Church of England in Canada to be launching a campaign for sending missionaries to convert "Stefansson's Blond Eskimos." Next some travelers claimed that they had resided with the "Blond" Eskimos a year and had been with them when I got there. Consequently they were the real discoverers. Then a patrol of Royal Northwest Mounted Police made journeys several hundred miles away from the district visited by me, saw no "Blond" Eskimos where they went, and reported that the entire story was fiction. Similar affirmations, explanations, claims, and denials have sprinkled the newspapers from that day to this.

In a way, Captain Roald Amundsen's contribution to the "Blond" Eskimo discussion should be placed near the beginning of a chronological summary, for his 1903-06 Arctic expedition was earlier than Klinkenberg's voyage to Victoria Island. He published nothing on this subject, however, until after my reports had been made public, and nothing very definite till a few months ago. But now that it has come at last, his book has attracted much attention because of the set terms in which he expresses himself, and because of his eminence as an explorer. We translate from the Norwegian edition of *My Life as a Polar Explorer* (p. 209), although the corresponding passages in the American edition are much the same.

I refer to his (Stefansson's) widely circulated book, *The Blond Eskimos*.... The reasonable explanation of the "Blond Eskimos" is perfectly obvious. The Arctic regions have been a favorite field of polar explorers for four hundred years. Expedition after expedition of white men has gone into that region and most of them have wintered there. In addition to these explorers, unnumbered fur traders have pressed northward generation after generation. In all these enterprises the British and the Scandinavians have by far outnumbered all other races. The squawman is an invariable phenomenon of all frontiers, to say nothing of those inevitable promiscuous relations that have dotted the American West with halfbreeds, the South with muiattoes, and Latin America with mestizos.

Blond Eskimos are almost certainly halfbreed grandchildren of half-breed Eskimo mothers and fair-haired, blue-eyed white fathers from the northern countries.... Stefansson's yarn about a special race of Blond Eskimos deserves no more serious consideration than a sensational piece of news in a yellow journal.

From the point of view of scholarship, the only required comrnent on the above personal attack on myself (which the Captain further amplifies in paragraphs I do not quote) is to say that I never wrote or published the book he refers to, nor any book with the title of The Blond Eskimos, that no book or anything else I have ever written claims that there is any "special race" of "Blond" Eskimos, and that, so far from claiming that I discovered the "Blond" Eskimos, I have in all my writings cited all the authorities I knew about who had seen them before my time from Franklin in 1821 to Mogg in 1907. As to the soundness of his opinion on how the "Blond" Eskimos originated and why they are ''blond," the reader of this article is entitled to be told that Captain Amundsen never visited Coronation Gulf or western Victoria Island, except to sail through, far off shore, in August, 1905. Remembering this, we are prepared to find, as

we do, that the opinions of all scientists who have visited or resided in these territories are diametrically opposed to those of Captain Amundsen.

The first scientific traveler to visit the "Blond" Eskimos after my second expedition, was Diamond Jenness in 1914-16, then anthropologist of my third expedition and now head of the anthropological work of the Canadian Government at Ottawa. In some careful and in general excellent studies he made several points: (1) The "blondness" was in his opinion less than stated by previous travelers. (2) Some of it was of what might be called biological origin. (3) The blue, or gray, eyes were probably caused by snow-blindness or by eye disease. (4) He dismissed the possibility that there could have been any blood connection with trappers, traders, whalers, explorers, or other visitors since the time of Columbus; but he opposed equally the likelihood of any connection with the lost European colony of Greenland. Whatever blondness there was had nothing to do with any European blood, in his opinion.

That Jenness observed less "blondness" than Klinkenberg, Mogg, or myself is partly explained, at least, by the territorial limitations of his studies. We had reported the largest percentage of "blondness," as well as the most pronouncedly "blond" individuals, from Prince Albert Sound and Minto Inlet, a district he had been unable to visit. In preferring a biological to a historical explanation of what "blondness" he did observe, Jenness was not proposing a new theory, but was falling in with what might be called my second choice of solutions, the biological one quoted above from p. 202 of *My Life with the Eskimo*. So far from agreeing with Amundsen that numerous white men had intermarried with the "Blond" Eskimos, Jenness says, "There is no evidence of European blood."

Only one scientific traveler has been in the Coronation Gulf district since Jenness. This is the famous Danish explorer, Knud Rasmussen, a specialist in Eskimo studies. In the only book (2 vols.) on his last great expedition so far published (1926), he touches the question of the "Blond" Eskimos rather lightly, evidently reserving it for his full anthropological report. On p. 260 of Vol. II of *From Greenland to the Pacific* (Danish edition), for instance, he writes under a photograph: "Kingiuna . . . had reddish hair and was an out and out type of the 'Blond' Eskimos." Under another on p. 261: "A young woman of the blond type from Coronation Gulf." And so on for many incidental references.

Rasmussen gives Klinkenberg the credit for being the first of modern travelers to report the "Blond" Eskimos and me for being the one whose writings have brought them to public attention. He then goes on to favor my second-choice or biological theory, as Jenness had done before him. But he ignores and, therefore, probably does not favor, the special Jenness view that some of the "blondness" has been caused by a disease, or by snow-blindness. Jenness had maintained, too, that the Coronation Gulf Eskimos did not look very different from other Eskimos. With this Rasmussen disagrees, for he says that:

> among the Copper Eskimos (the Coronation Gulf Eskimos) are found astonishingly many types which, although they cannot be said to be strikingly similar to Europeans, nevertheless appear otherwise than Eskimos usually do.

Dismissing the possibility of any other European source by not even mentioning it, Rasmussen has the following to say about the theory that the "Blond" Eskimos are descended from the expedition of Sir John Franklin (the view formerly held by Captain Comer and the Hudson Bay whalers, as outlined above):

The possibility that there could have occurred blood mixture with the members of the Franklin expedition (lost in 1848) is wholly excluded, for not only is the fate of the Franklin

expedition long ago cleared up, but it would also be unthinkable that such a blood mixture could have taken place a few generations ago without there being many fresh stories about this among the group.

Rasmussen next goes on to argue against the probability that the lost Norsemen could have come so far from Greenland, and ends the discussion by saying:

It is, then, my conclusion that these peculiar types (the "Blond" Eskimo) are due to purely biological reasons which are strictly accidental and for which no rule can be formulated.

This settles the question so far as Rasmussen is concerned, but not to the satisfaction of Jenness, who saw little blondness and charged much of what he saw to snow-blindness in the case of eyes and bleaching in the case of hair. Nor do Jenness and Rasmussen please Amundsen, for they say there is no white blood, while he says there has been much blending with Europeans during the last three generations. And no one of them pleases me wholly. I agree with Jenness and Rasmussen that there has been no mixing with whites of the kind asserted by Amundsen. I agree with Rasmussen about the amount of the blondness, but we both disagree there with Jenness, who saw little. I disagree with Jenness who credits the blue or gray eyes to snow-blindness or disease—and here Rasmussen is against Jenness, too. I disagree with Rasmussen in thinking a biological explanation better than the historical.

The biological view may be correct, I still say, as I said in 1913 when I advanced it as my second choice among theories. My first choice of guesses still remains that the "blondness" is due to white blood and that this blood came from Greenland during the Middle Ages. But it is far from being a proved theory. More scientific study of the problem is needed, and urgently needed, for now that the Victoria Islanders are in touch with civilization, the first white men's epidemic, such as measles, may sweep them any time, killing from fifty per cent to ninety per cent as did the epidemics of a quarter of a century ago when they swept Alaska. Where hundreds die, the dozen or two who have light eyes may die with them, setting the problem of their blood forever beyond the reach of the scientist.
