

WONDERS

Seeking the Truth in a Universe of Mysteries

Vol.2 No.4

December 1993

The Yeti



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A quarterly from M.A.H.P/Box 3153/Butler Station/Minneapolis MN 55403

WONDERS

Seeking the Truth in a Universe of Mysteries



VOL. 2 NO. 4

(Whole No. 8) December 1993

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Published four times a year (March, June, September, December) by:

Mark A. Hall Publications and Research

P.O. Box 3153, Butler Station

Minneapolis MN 55403 USA

Individual copies: US\$3 plus \$1 postage/handling for the USA, Canada, and Mexico. Subscriptions in the USA, Canada, and Mexico: \$14.50 for four copies.

Other foreign rates: US\$20.00 for 4 issues. Single copies by air: \$5.50.

EDITORIAL

Defining Terms and Tracks

This issue of **Wonders** attempts to rescue the much-abused term of "Yeti" from decades of loose application around the world. Journalists love words like this one; it makes a great headline. It is short and widely recognized. It is a codeword for mystery and menace. Here I recall the specific definition some have given it for decades and recommend that we heed the history of that use.

The word "Bigfoot" has suffered similarly since it was applied to mysterious track-makers in 1958. The importance of the "Bigfoot" tradition is that it has helped make known much helpful data on the unrecognized primates of the globe. But when used without qualification the word has no specific definition. It has been used to apply to any vague, unknown, uncertain maker of bare footprints that turns up anywhere. In a peculiar twist of form, anthropologist John Napier transferred the name to Asia and applied it to the Yeti! In recent years the Chinese have done much the same when borrowing the term for their "wildmen."

I am concerned with defining our terms when we discuss these topics. The Yeti has a history of four decades pointing to one genus. For the word "Bigfoot," however, we have a confusion of usage even in the Pacific Northwest of North America. This large and environmentally diverse region has room for many different animals. Different unknown primates seem to occupy the area as well.

An early approach to "Bigfoot" reports was to assume that only one kind of primate would be making tracks. Those wishing to sort fake tracks from the genuine arrived at their personal "identifiers of the genuine Bigfoot track." If the premise that only one species was leaving tracks was correct, that would have been a good strategy. Decades of data tell us that the assumption was in error and serves only to retard progress in the field. The time has long passed to discard it. We should be considering and embracing new paradigms to help us determine what is genuine.

THE YETI

by Mark A. Hall

Human beings have always been encountering their poor relations but have been reluctant to acknowledge them. They have been called such names as "wild men," "monsters," and "forest spirits" depending upon the culture of the human observer. These relatives can frequently be equated to what are identified as "fossil men" in the records of physical anthropologists. Some are primates but cannot be properly accorded the label of "man-like." There are fossil types for those primates as well.

Several different genera of primates seem to account for these creatures which are as real as you and I. They live full lives apart from the communities of human beings. In the past many of them interacted with human beings on various levels such as trading and warfare. Those practices have been largely forsaken as time has made humans their mortal enemies. The weapons of our distant ancestors were sufficient to put them permanently on their guard against us. As individuals each species is formidable in capabilities but they all know that humans in a group can and will overwhelm them.

The main cause of this universal split is likely to have been the shortage of good living space. Competition for the better spaces and the resources of those spaces has pushed the poor relations out of sight. They dwell in forests, mountains, deserts, and other regions where they can conceal their presence. Avoiding us is the key to their survival.

Among the most seldom seen of these primates is the Yeti. I will define this type here so that no confusion will remain as to what creature is meant. The Yeti is to the western world the oldest formal acknowledgment of the existence of mankind's poor relations. The measurement for precedence used here is that this type first found its way into the dictionaries of the western world. It arrived under the interchangeable names of "Yeti" and the "Abominable Snowman."

These terms have been borrowed and used around the world so that they might still turn up anywhere. They imply the presence of something large and hairy in such phrases as "the Yeti of the Cairngorms." Here I will pin the names to the one type of primate that seems to have been the origin of the names in its habitat in the mountains of Asia. I will describe how this type is found elsewhere in the world under quite different and little-known names.

The Yeti is a capable relative of humankind. It possesses strength and intelligence sufficient to allow it to adapt to many climates. However, it appears that in competition with similarly adaptable primates -- mankind and the other relatives such as Gigantopithecus and Paranthropus -- the Yeti survives in few and scattered numbers around the world.

How is it that a rare creature appearing in remote mountain regions in Asia should be widely recognized ahead of the other less distant relatives? I think the answer is psychological. In the twentieth century people have been inclined to think that any "new" animal would have to turn up in only in a geographical area that was remote from them, wild in nature, and sparsely inhabited. As the

Yeti grew slowly in recognition in this century, people were willing to consider that a Yeti might still live in a part of the world that met those specifications.

The existence of a "new" animal in someone else's distant backyard is considered "credible." The presence of a Paranthropoid "Bigfoot," a True Giant, and certainly a Yeti in one's own backyard is considered "incredible." This parochial attitude continues to hamper our understanding of the primates. The evidence for the Yeti in Asia occurs elsewhere as well. In the discussion that follows I will draw upon the best work on the subject over the past four decades to define and place the Yeti in the scheme of surviving primates.

The story of the Yeti traditionally starts with tracks in the snows of the eastern Himalayas seen by Lawrence Waddell in 1889. His porters told him they were made by the "wildmen of the snows." In truth we will never know if they were the tracks of the Yeti.

The name "Abominable Snowman" made its first appearance in 1921. C.K. Howard-Bury observed some tracks that were attributed to the **Metoh Kangmi**, a name that was translated at the time with the enduring two words of "Abominable Snowman."

"Yeti" first appeared in the available record in 1937 when the name was used as an equivalent to the Snowman. For decades tracks and glimpses of hairy creatures were assumed to be "the Yeti."

H. W. Tilman summarized the Snowman history in 1948 in an 11-page appendix to his book **Mount Everest 1938**.^[1] People were reporting large and near circular tracks. The prints were arranged close together in a line almost one behind the other.

In 1951 Eric Shipton (1907-1977)^[2] found such prints. He produced a photograph that has greatly influenced all subsequent studies of the Yeti. We will trace the origin of this picture. Shipton and others were conducting a reconnaissance of Mount Everest in anticipation of climbing the mountain. It is worth noting that, similar to previous expeditions, they were engaged in activities other than looking for strange wildlife.

Shipton tells of the tracks in his autobiography. He was with Michael Ward^[3] and Sen Tensing, a Sherpa who had himself seen a Yeti two years before.^[4] In November 1951 the three came upon lines of tracks which were fresh, only a few hours old. The tracks had dislodged balls of snow that had not yet melted under the day's sunlight. Sen Tensing was sure they were Yeti tracks. There were two lines of tracks indicating two track-makers. Shipton writes:

We followed these down the glacier. Gradually, as we descended, the depth of the snow diminished, until there was barely an inch covering the glacier ice. Hitherto the individual footprints had been rather shapeless, but here we found many specimens so sharply defined that they could hardly have been clearer had they been made in wax.^[5]

By comparing different prints Shipton was convinced they had not been distorted by melting. The many clear prints, in fact, convinced Shipton at that point that the ape-like Yeti was a reality.

W.H. Murray^[6] was on the same reconnaissance. In **The Story of Everest** he gives accounts of the tracks seen that year:



Fig. 1. Many reports of Yetis are chance encounters with them by explorers and mountain climbers. The Yetis may venture across mountain snowfields to find and eat a certain mineral-rich moss that grows on rocky moraines and to move between valleys.

At least two had left spoor. It did not resemble the spoor of any known bear or monkey. Shipton and Ward followed the tracks for nearly two miles down the glacier, finally losing them on the lateral moraine.... Pad marks and toe marks could be distinctly seen within the footprints, which were twelve inches long, and where the creature had jumped the smaller crevasses the scabble marks of its nails could be seen on the far side.[7]

Days later Murray was reconnoitering with another member of the expedition when:

Like Shipton and Ward we found the tracks of the yeti, and like them followed the tracks for the better part of two miles (the animal had chosen the best route), until, on our second day, we too had to take to the moraine.[8]

The records of Shipton and Murray show how absurd was the charge made after Shipton's death that he had hoaxed the world with a doctored track.[9] Multiple observers saw the same tracks on the Menlung Glacier in 1951. See Fig. 3 for a drawing based upon the famous photo.

Murray also was convinced that the Yeti was real, and he wrote an article for *Scots Magazine* saying just that.[10]

Following the publication of this evidence a major change occurred in the history of the Yeti. Expeditions were launched for the purpose of looking into the mystery.

The *London Daily Mail* financed an expedition which was reported in two books: Ralph Izzard's *The Abominable Snowman Adventure*[11] and Charles Stonor's *The Sherpa and the Snowman*. [12] Texas oilman Thomas Baker Slick directed efforts to find evidence and to capture a Yeti.[13] Interest peaked and then plummeted after 1960 when Edmund Hillary made the Yeti-hunt part of a much-ballyhooed trip.[14]

The Yeti-seekers all found and reported on the same surprising turn of events. The people of the mountains, valleys, and plateaus -- in Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, India, and Tibet -- knew of several different animals that were seen and could be "tracked" in the area. Unfortunately this complicated picture of the situation never became widely absorbed by the public. Newspaper headlines and cinematic productions always boiled the mysteries down to one "Abominable Snowman" (a.k.a. Yeti).

To be sure the situation was discussed by two primary chroniclers of cryptozoology in their major works: Bernard Heuvelmans in *On the Track of Unknown Animals* in 1955/1958 [15] and Ivan T. Sanderson in *Abominable Snowmen: Legend Come to Life* in 1961.[16] They could not overcome the influence of journalism and Hollywood, however.

A wealth of names for these mountain creatures was gathered. I will not attempt to sort out and explain all of these popular names. In his book Sanderson included one linguist's explanations of the names. That effort was criticized by P.R. Rincen who wrote that "almost all Mongolian, Turkish, and Tibetan names for ABSM [i.e., the different creatures] in this book are explained fantastically." Such disputes indicate the difficulty in deciphering the clues found in languages.[17]

Popular names can be easily overrated and should not be relied upon. The same name or word can be applied to drastically different

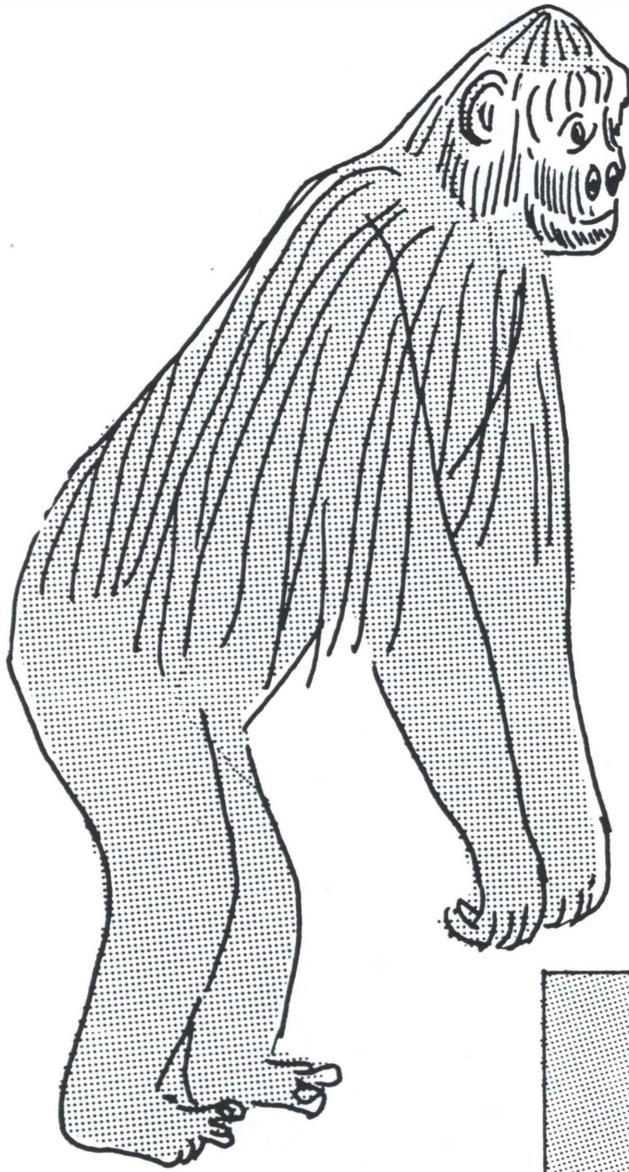


Fig. 2. The Yeti is reported on at least three continents. The consistent description is of a powerful ape-like creature at least five to six feet tall. It has long hair on the upper body.

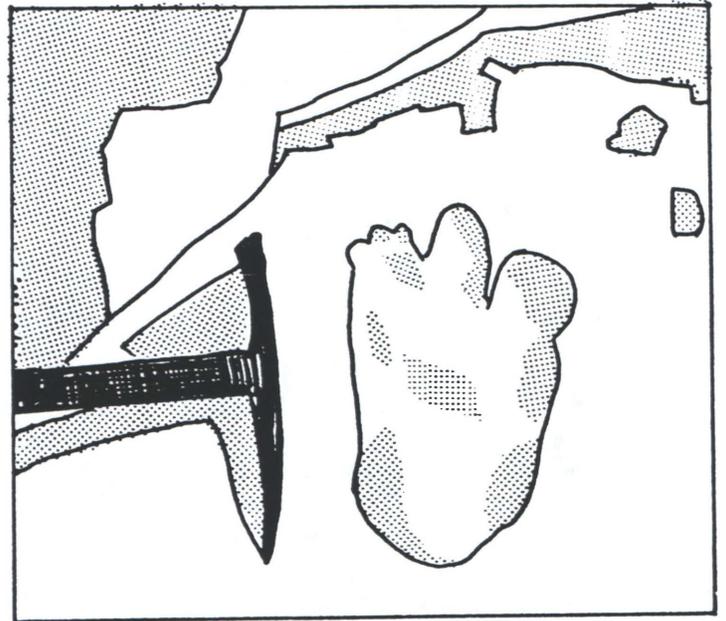


Fig. 3. This drawing is based upon the famous photograph by Eric Shipton in November 1951.

animals, just as in North America the terms "wildman" and "Bigfoot" have had many different applications. (A context that is clear to the speaker is often important to understanding meaning. Consider, for example, the use of "car" in these examples. A woman says, "My husband is outside playing with his car." And when she says of her 4-year-old boy, "My son is outside playing with his car." The context makes it clear that one is a toy and one is not.)

I will define these animals and identify them by consistent type names. Here is my summary of what the Yeti-seekers learned:

1. **Giant Bears.** Stonor and Slick were unanimous in finding that the Dzu-teh (also Chu-teh) was a Tibetan bear. There is a rare and especially large bear in the region.[18] Slick found a track 10½ inches across. The track was undoubtedly that of a bear.

2. **Neo-Giants.** Slick talked with people who identified a "Big Yeti" and a "Little Yeti." The tracks of the two were distinctly different. The track of the "Big Yeti" as Slick found it was 13 inches long. It was the same massive, flat-footed track attributed to the creature in Roger Patterson's "Bigfoot" film in North America. Sanderson suggested the term "Neo-Giant" to identify this primate which appears in Asia and the Americas. Its likely identity among the fossil primates is **Paranthropus**. (See Fig. 4c.)

There is some uncertainty as to what popular names apply in Asia. Sanderson relates that the Chinese identify them as Gin-Sung (apparently "Bear-Man") but his source is not specified.[19] For unknown reasons Sanderson subtended the name "Dzu-teh" under the category of Neo-Giants. There is no doubt what he had in mind, however. He obtained a track-sketch of what he called Dzu-teh from Gerald Russell, one of Tom Slick's team. The sketch shows the massive track of the Neo-Giant described by Slick.[20]

In addition to the characteristic track of the Neo-Giants, there is further evidence in a drawing zoologist Wladimir Tschernezky made by closely interviewing Slavomir Rawicz, a famous witness to puzzling 8-ft creatures. It shows the same Paranthropoid "Bigfoot." [21]

3. **Yetis.** The description and track of Tom Slick's "Little Yeti" identify it as the classic rock-climbing pongid that leaves the track photographed by Eric Shipton. (See Figs. 1, 2, and 4a.) Slick found the same broad track with its characteristic two large toes and three smaller ones. The Yeti-seekers found witnesses to the Yeti's appearances and learned how some had found its lairs and heard its call.

4. **True Giants.** Edmund Hillary and Desmond Doig learned of a giant creature called Nyalmo in north-central Nepal. It was "giant-sized (up to twenty feet tall), manlike, hairy, and given to shaking giant pine trees in trials of strength while other Nyalmos sit around and clap their hands." They thought it was probably the same thing as the Dzu-teh.[22] However, this and other accounts identify them as the True Giants which are probably the survivors of **Gigantopithecus**. (See Fig. 4b.) I described this type in **Wonders Vol.1**.

Heuvelmans and Sanderson came across the True Giants but stepped gingerly around the subject, obviously reluctant to credit something

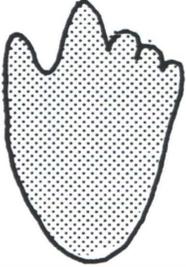
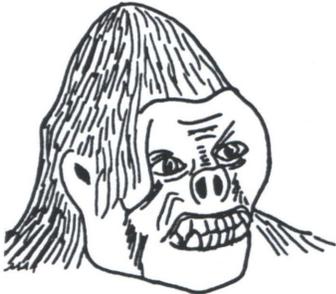
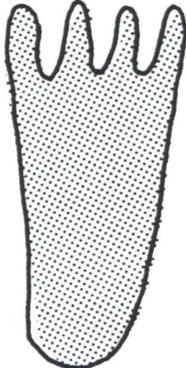
Likely Appearance	Type Name (Probable Fossil Type)	Popular Names	Size	Footprint
<p>a</p> 	<p>Yeti (<i>Dryopithecus indicus</i>)</p>	<p>North America: NApe Asia: Yeti Africa: Kikomba, Apamandi, etc.</p>	<p>5-6 feet tall is typical; can be 8 feet</p>	 <p>9" x 11"</p>
<p>b</p> 	<p>True Giant (<i>Gigantopithecus</i>)</p>	<p>North America: Gilyuk, Chenoo, etc. Asia: Nyalmo, Orang Dalam, etc. Europe: Ferla Mohr</p>	<p>10 to over 20 feet tall</p>	 <p>10" x 21"</p>
<p>c</p> 	<p>Neo-Giant (<i>Paranthropus; Australopithecus robustus</i>)</p>	<p>North America: Patterson's Bigfoot, Sasquatch Asia: Gin-Sung</p>	<p>6-9 feet depending on age and sex</p>	 <p>9" x 20"</p>

Fig. 4. Three of humankind's primate relatives. As suggested in the text, the Yeti, the True Giants, and the Neo-Giants are but three of several types of primates that survive in the wildernesses of this planet.

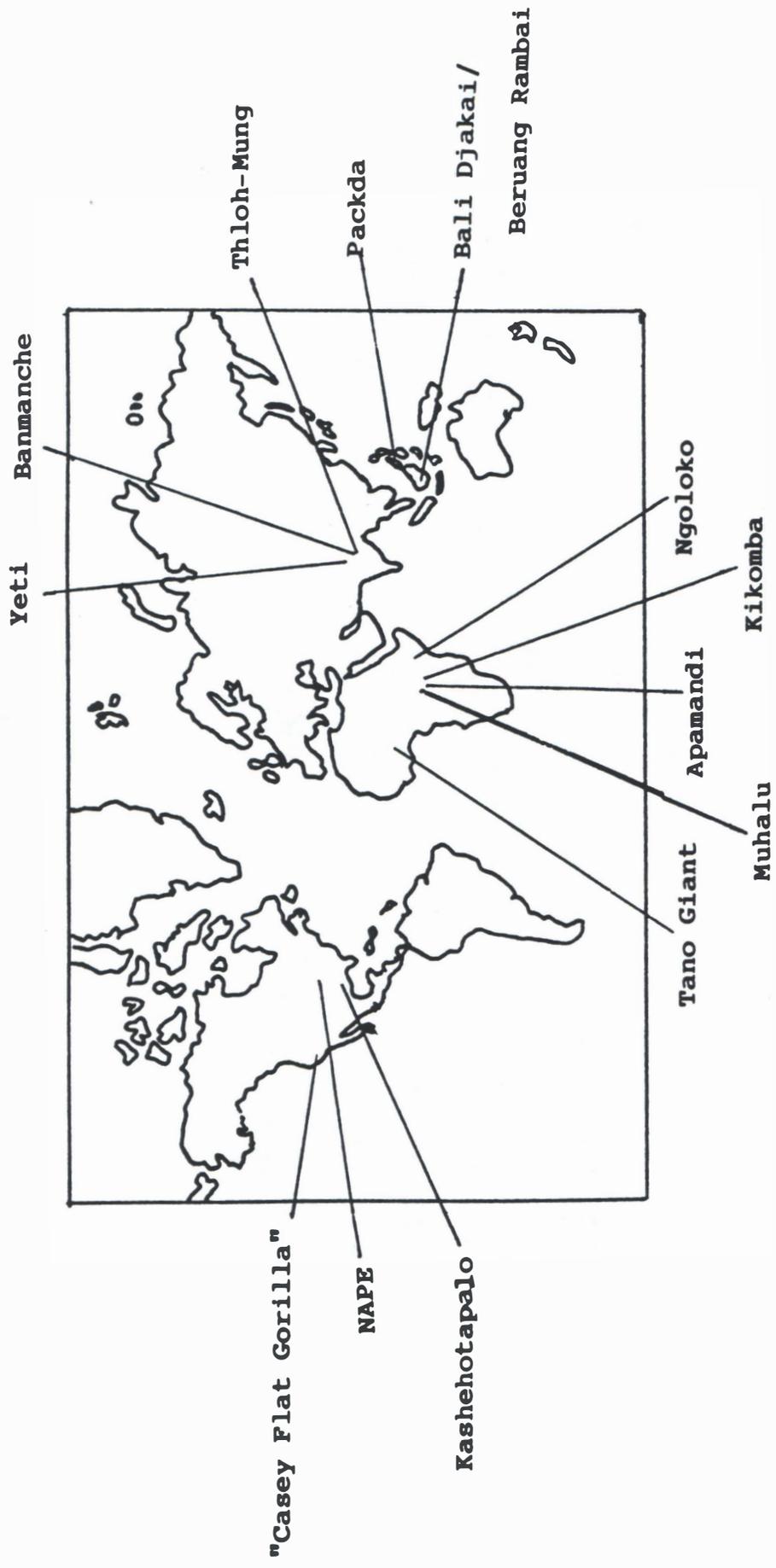


Fig. 5. Names given to the Yeti around the world are shown.

so large. Sanderson included some True Giants (such as the Kung-lu in Southeast Asia) in his category of the Neo-Giants.

5. **Shorter-hominids.** People had encountered "wildmen" that were consistently moderate in size. An animal referred to as the **Meti** left one track found by the Slick team. Slick designated it as "possibly Neanderthal man." The animal, he wrote, "has reddish hair and is about five feet six inches in height." Others call this the **Mi-Go** or **Me-Gu**. As recently as 1987 in Sikkim Rory Nugent was cautioned about running into the **Me-Gu**, a wildman that was expected to run away when it encountered a human being.[23]

6. **Little People.** The presence of small primates in the valleys of Nepal was discovered by Gerald Russell in 1958. He and two Sherpas saw the **Teh-lma** by a river and found many small tracks five inches long. He described them to Sanderson as "clothed in very thick red fur with a slight mane" and as four to five feet tall.[24]

Hillary and Doig identified them as **Thelma** and noted that in Sikkim, Bhutan, and southeastern Tibet they were known as **Pyar-them**.

The same primates are found not only in these mountains of Asia but also in the world elsewhere, for example, in Southeast Asia.[25] Their history indicates this proliferation of types is necessary and is neither a reflection of known animals nor a misperception of a lesser number of types. The merits and particulars of the types other than the Yeti will be left to evaluation elsewhere.

The Yeti has emerged from this cadre of hairy wonders much the same as it fell in with them. It has continued to make rare appearances and leave only its distinctive tracks.

The continuing examination of cryptozoological mysteries has brought to the light the presence of close relatives of the Yeti beyond Nepal and its neighbors. We will meet them after we look at what has been learned about the most famous of the Yetis.

The entry for the "Abominable Snowman" in my 1968 edition of the **Encyclopedia Britannica** is a masterpiece of misinformation. We have to credit Leonard H. Matthews, the Scientific Director of the Zoological Society of London, for having gotten his facts backward consistently throughout his fabulous description of the Yeti.

According to Matthews the Yeti of the Himalayas is:

- (1) a mythical monster,
- (2) supposed to live at about the snow line,
- (3) something never seen alive,
- (4) identified with tracks made by bouncing rocks or balls of snow (or made by bears),
- (5) known to the Sherpas as a bogeyman,
- (6) and debunked by a "scalp" that was alleged to be a Yeti's.

None of these claims is true. They are contrary to the evidence gathered by Stonor, Izzard, Slick, and all who assisted them.

The Yeti was regarded as a real animal, seldom seen, but it was no bogeyman. It lived in the montane forests below the snows that happened to make its tracks obvious. Its tracks were consistent and distinct from the tracks of bears. The "scalps" were identified in print as early as 1955 by Stonor as artifacts made only in imitation

of a Yeti's pointed head. They were costume items to be worn during ceremonies where a person was to represent the Yeti. The elaborate "debunking" of them in 1960 was merely a publicity stunt carried out by the team of Edmund Hillary.

The facts of the life of the Yeti came to light beginning in 1953. Charles Stonor made a trip to Sherpa country as the advance party for the **Daily Mail** expedition. On his way, at Darjeeling in northern India, he inquired of the area's original inhabitants, the Lepchas, if they knew of the Yeti. They responded:

Long ago there was a beast in our mountains, known to our forefathers as the **Thloh-Mung**, meaning in our language Mountain Savage. Its cunning and ferocity were so great as to be a match for anyone who encountered it.... The **Thloh-Mung** was said to live alone, or with a very few of its kind; and it went sometimes on the ground, and sometimes in the trees. It was only found in the higher mountains of our country. Although it was made very like a man, it was covered with long, dark hair, and was more intelligent than a monkey, as well as being larger.[26]

As the human population increased and the forest became less, concluded the Lepcha informants, these animals disappeared. They thought the creatures might survive as the Yeti in mountains to the west in Nepal.

Stonor then traveled into Nepal. There, in the Great Valley and in the deforested and terraced hills beyond, he heard of the **Banmanche**, something hairy and man-like. It was now gone from their territory, however. He was told he might still find it in the Sherpa country to the north.[27]

Stonor went north and within the sight of Mt. Everest found the Sherpas who knew the Yeti well. However, the Sherpas did not want visitors coming to hunt and kill the Yeti. Stonor was told, "We Sherpas are Buddhists, and in any case we do not kill wild animals; the Yeti is something special, and we are much alarmed at the thought of your interfering with it."

When he convinced them that he wanted only to see the Yeti and photograph it, he found he got the same description of the Yeti when interviewing different people. It lived in "boulder-strewn, bleak alpine country" above the tree-line. Encounters with them also occurred below the tree-line according to the stories he heard.

It is covered with stiff, reddish-brown and black hair, rather lighter on the chest, and (according to many) with the hair longest about its head and waist. The head is pointed, and the face bare, with a squashed-in nose like a monkey's. Its call is a loud wailing, yelping noise, most frequently heard in the late afternoon or early evening.

The Yeti was known to walk sometimes on two legs, sometimes on all fours. It fed on small rodents, other small animals, and insects.

Stonor heard from a senior monk at the temple at Pangboche how he had found what was considered to be a lair of the Yeti. Juniper branches had been recently broken and interwoven to make a large man-sized nest in an open shelter of rock. Another such find was recalled

and said to have been identified with the Yeti for certain by the strong and unpleasant smell on the spot.

Sociologist Richard Critchfield found in Tibet that the belief in the Yeti was universal. Tibetans, he writes in **Villages**,:

...take it for granted that a six-foot-tall apeman, with black-brown hair, a monkey face, a robust jaw, no fangs, no tail, and arms that reach down to its knees, is a natural part of the local fauna. In Tashi Palkhiel I found no less than eight villagers, all of them elderly, who claimed to have seen the monster.[28]

The Yeti in Tibet was known to kill yaks by seizing the horns and twisting the neck.

Sen Tensing, the Sherpa who personally linked the Shipton tracks to the Yeti, described the Yeti he saw two years before as "the height of an average man, tail-less, with a tall pointed-head and covered with reddish-brown hair except on its face, which was bare." [29]

The history of the Yeti tells of the frequency of its tracks in snowfields. Stonor writes that the Sherpas also saw them often. Moving from one valley to another would be reason for them to cross the snows. Another reason has been recorded by Prof. Rene von Nebesky-Wojkowitz who gave a description for the "Snowman" just like the ones above. As explanation for the trips through the snow the local people "say the Snowman likes a saline moss which it finds on the rocks of the moraine fields. While searching for this moss it leaves its characteristic tracks on the snowfields. When it has satisfied its hunger for salt it returns to the forest." [30]

The tracks seen by Eric Shipton, Michael Ward, Sen Tensing, and W.H. Murray are not unique. Tom Slick found and sketched the same track elsewhere. He made a cast of such a print. [31] (See Fig.7b.) A photograph from the 1972 expedition to the Arun Valley shows the same print. [32] Others have described the same track, but photographs are often impractical in conditions of deep snow and misty atmosphere.

Elsewhere in Asia similar ape-like animals have been reported. During the Pleistocene land bridges connected the islands in Southeast Asia. There is no reason to doubt that the animals called the Yeti could not have walked to what are today islands such as Borneo in Malaysia/Indonesia and Palawan in the Philippine Islands.

Adventurer Leonard Clark saw for himself the **Bali Djakai** ("Demon") in the highlands of Borneo in the 1930s. He described the same powerful man-ape hybrid as the Yeti. [33]

The island of Palawan lies to the northeast of Borneo. A Spanish officer stationed there in the 19th century claimed to have seen a man-sized ape. The local people feared the apes and called them **Packda**. It was said to eat the buds of a certain palm tree. [34]

Australia has produced accounts of primates of varied descriptions. They have all tended, unfortunately, to be presented under the single label of "the Yowie." Among them are particular accounts that again suggest the Yeti. [35]

The fossil ancestor for the Yeti is probably **Dryopithecus indicus**. The Yetis would be the descendants of these fossil apes that certainly were alive over 10 million years ago. The fossil finds come from the Siwalik Hills in Pakistan. Elwyn Simons in **Primate Evolution**

writes that "most of the finds of *D. indicus* are comparable in size with the same parts of lowland gorillas, but some are a bit larger, implying the existence of very large apes south of the Himalayas at the close of the Miocene and the beginning of Pliocene times." [36]

Related fossils in the same genus have been found in Europe and Africa. Creatures resembling the Yeti also have been reported from Africa. There is some hint that they may have been known in ancient times even in Europe. Simons notes that "in general, the Indian specimens of *Dryopithecus* resemble closely those of Europe and East Africa." [37] (Simons makes no such associations with the Yeti.)

Across the equatorial regions of Africa we find giant apes that cannot be explained by gorillas or chimpanzees. Sanderson in *Abominable Snowmen* mentions several of these. The "Tano Giant" in West Africa was known on the upper Tano River in Ghana. [38] The *Muhalu* was a similar ape that occasionally ventured into the Ituri Forest in the Congo. [39] A Swiss animal collector, Charles Cordier, had found tracks of an unknown ape and passed along a drawing of them to Sanderson. (See Fig. 7d.)

Cordier later reported in *Genus* on the consistent traditions in the Congo of a giant ape. [40] Here is his description of a large vegetarian anthropoid that he learned of in the eastern forests of the former-Belgian Congo. (The translation from the original French has been provided by Stephen P. Hall.):

It is a black, hairy creature; long, thick hair covers his head and conceals his face when he stoops. He is as large as a man or larger, very broad shouldered, walks always upright, often has a piece of wood in his hand. Climbs trees in order to gather the honey from beehives. Drops flat on the ground if he is surprised. Eats the tuber meke-meke or itenangwa which grows in the humid parts of the forest. Likes the fruit of the ginger plant. Destroys the trunks of dead trees in order to remove the larvae. He screams, especially at night, in a fashion indeed more frightening than the gorilla, but some say it is the cry of the water buffalo.

Cordier found that the same creature was known to different peoples by these names:

Bakano and Bakondjo people	"Kikomba"
Kakumu	"Apamandi/Abamaanji"
Warrega	"Zaluzugu"
Batembo	"Tshingombe"

Stories of a rare creature called the *Ngoloko* are known in the coastal forests of Kenya. J.A.G. Elliott reported accounts of it after hearing the creature himself and finding its tracks in 1917. [41] He first heard of it when camped for the night with a crew of a dhow. They were in the sparsely inhabited area of the Wa-Sanje, a land of lagoons, mangrove swamps, and bush. They all heard a sound that was identified as the cry of the creature called the *Ngoloko* or *Milhoi*. The linguistic origins of the names were not explained.

The incident prompted the telling of encounters with the *Milhoi*. Elliott learned:

...the creature lives an isolated life away in the forests and mangrove swamps, and is comparatively seldom met with. When it lies down it sweeps a place clean, it feeds on honey and drinks blood, herds the buffaloes and drinks their milk, or kills them and eats them as it thinks fit. It smells worse than a lion....

Four of the people in camp had experiences with the Ngoloko. They described a tall creature with clawed hands, big flapping ears, long hair on the upper body, and "a large thumb on each foot."

The following day Elliott came upon tracks judged to be twelve hours old, thus made at the time the cry was heard in camp. The tracks were impressed in crusted sandy mud, conditions considered ideal. Elliott itemized his conclusions from studying the tracks:

- (1) The animal is a biped.
- (2) The print had been made by a pad and not by a hoof, except that, at the point, a deep and sharp hole demonstrated the presence of a large nail or single claw.
- (3) A thumb-mark of considerable dimensions was a special feature; there was no trace of toes, except in one case, where very slight indentations by such seemed to have been made.
- (4) A heel was observed; but the weight of the animal was usually cast forward on to the main portion of the foot and thumb.
- (5) Its weight was judged to be at least twice that of an average man, and probably more.
- (6) A certain part of the spoor showed the animal to be walking slowly; there the stride measured eighteen inches from tip of the toe of one foot to the heel of the other. It had also taken several gambols at one place, and crossed its legs when doing so. When traveling at what I should imagine was a jog-trot, the stride measured eight feet; two strides were found to be nine feet, whilst a considerably greater distance, it is presumed, could be covered when at top speed or jumping.

The crossing of the legs described here has also been attributed to the Yeti in Asia. This experience caused Elliott to investigate further. He met a man named Heri wa Mabruko who told him the following story:

A long time ago I went out with some Swahili friends into the forest to tap the wild-rubber tree. It was in the Witu District. A Mboni man (a type of bushman) accompanied us. We were at short distances apart, busy at work, when the Mboni caught sight of a Milhoi stalking us from behind. So he let drive with his bow and arrow, and struck the creature, who immediately ran off. We followed, and found the Ngoloko about 400 or 500 yards beyond the place where he had been hit. When I came up, he was lying outstretched on the ground, and still breathing. It was a male, about eight feet in height, and breadth just about the same as two ordinary men standing together. He was covered with a great mass of long, thick, grey hair. It was especially long over the head and upper portions of the body, a single hair being

quite a yard in length. He was built like a man, but he was no child of Adam. He had but one finger and one thumb on his hand, the former terminating in a single hooked claw $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 inches long. The foot possessed a very large prehensile thumb and three toes, one ending, as in the hand, in a great claw. The face was hairless, displaying a dark skin. Nose very prominent and with two nostrils. The mouth was small, but larger than a man's; and the teeth were big. His ears resembled those of an elephant, and were each about the size of my two hands fully extended when holding the wrists together. The cheek-bones were prominent. Forehead low and retreating, like a leopard's. Chin likewise. I did not notice the colour of the eyes, which were big. The eyelashes joined on to the hair round about the face; I did not look at them particularly. The smell was awful, and about ten times as strong as a he-goat.

Fig. 6 is my own drawing of the Ngoloko as interpreted from this description. The large ears and emphasis on single claws seem to be characteristics of the African *Dryopithecus*.

Regarding the knowledge of this genus in ancient Europe, it is possible the *Dryopithecines* were the satyrs of those times. They appear to qualify in physique and temperament for that role. The idea of the satyr as a primitive primate goes back at least to M.W. de Laubenfels in 1949. He graphically compared Pan with a fossil primate, though he had in mind Neanderthal man.[42] Dimitri Bayanov and Igor Bourtsev later made comparisons along the same lines.[43]

Many will find it startling that the Yeti is found also in North America. Specific reports suggesting the presence of the Yeti in North America date back to the 1800s. There is also a creature described in American Indian lore that resembles the Yeti. It is likely that people as individuals have been made aware of its presence as long as humans have inhabited the continent. Also it is likely they were all perplexed as to what to make of it. It appears to have been around in small and scattered numbers since a natural arrival into the New World just as humans, True Giants, and similar species have appeared.

The absence of fossils for *Dryopithecus* in the New World is not a good argument against its presence. There still are no fossils recognized for any recent non-human primates. The circumstances surrounding the lack of recognized fossils were discussed by me in an earlier article.[44]

The first person to suggest formally the existence of this native apelike primate on the North American continent is Loren E. Coleman.[45] As he has pointed out, the most frequent reports originate in the American South. They occur in states from North Carolina westward into Texas. However, they have been reported outside of that region and are not confined to any particular environment. There is space here to present only a thumbnail sketch of the many accounts in recent decades that are clear evidence of the same primate known in Asia as the Yeti.

One of the earliest reports with some detail is from Gallipolis, Ohio, on the Ohio River in the 19th century. The story was reported on 23 January 1869 under the headline "A Gorilla in Ohio."

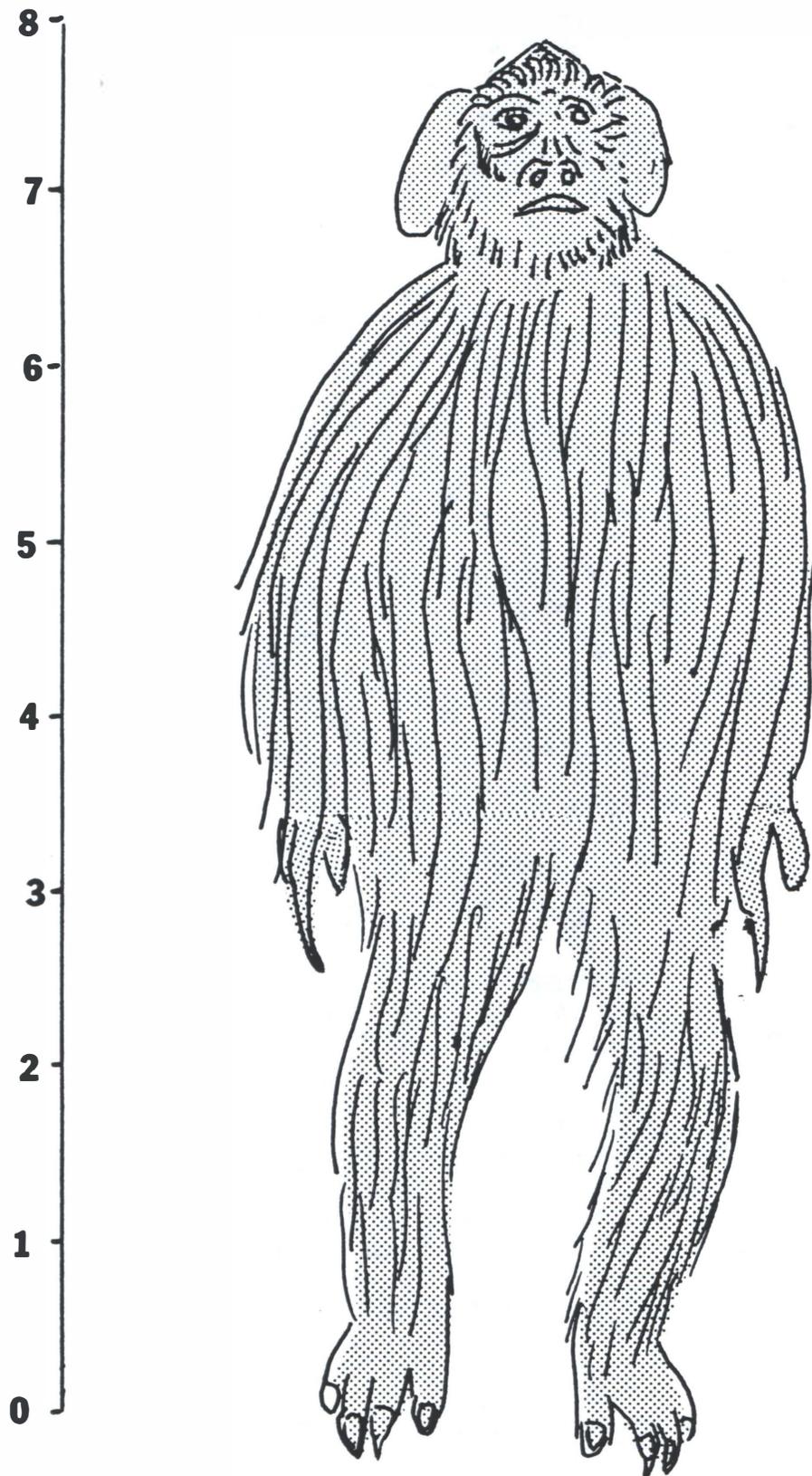


Fig. 6. This drawing shows the 8-foot **Ngoloko** as described in the account of J.A.G. Elliott from the coast of Kenya.

A hairy creature had been haunting the woods near the town. One incident occurred when it leaped upon a man driving a carriage while accompanied by his daughter. The man and creature struggled until the daughter pitched a rock at the animal striking it on the ear. The animal then departed.[46]

Almost a hundred years later another "gorilla" made news down the Ohio River in Trimble County in Kentucky. A calf was killed mysteriously in June 1962. Sightings of "The Thing" were then made in the area. Eventually the reports stopped.[47]

When this episode was recalled in the local press in 1989, people responded that they had seen similar hairy creatures in the state during the 1970s and 1980s.[48]

The modern evidence for the Yeti on the continent has often turned up in such episodes. An unusual animal is seen more than once and briefly becomes a news sensation. It is assumed to be a single anomalous creature. After a fuss of a few days or weeks the episode ends without any resolution. The animal has simply moved on.

There are many examples of such appearances by the Yeti. Here are a few of them. During early 1979 a gorilla-like thing meeting the Yeti's appearance was seen in North Carolina. It became known as "Knobby." [49] They have appeared periodically in Oklahoma and Texas. During the late 1960s "the Lake Worth Monster" was a sensation in Texas. Appearances were again a focus of newspaper coverage. It prompted a book by a local author, Sallie Ann Clarke.[50] Regrettably parts of it were fictionalized, reducing its value as a record of events. Along the Red River of the South there were similar accounts of "manimals" in the 1970s. It is likely that some but not all of the basis for the famous Fouke Monster in Arkansas can be attributed to the American Yeti.

The American South has traditions of swamp creatures leaving hand-like tracks in Alabama and of screaming "hants" in Mississippi. The southern tier of American states seem to have always been frequented by the American Yeti.

Isolated individuals have experiences with the Yeti also. Such happenings tell us the most about the animals because we tend to get more detailed information. A 12-year-old boy, Nathan Russell, gave an account of something seen near Central, Arkansas, in 1970. He came across it sitting in a tree.

It jumped out of the tree like an ape, letting its arms swing in front. He made a loud, hard breathing noise that made you quiver all over and scared me to death. We just stood there and stared at each other. He had sort of a gleam in his eyes and I couldn't move for about three minutes after I saw him. Then I began to run and it was chasing me. It stayed about two yards behind me until I got to within half a quarter from the Rasdon's home.[51]

His described the pursuer as "5 feet 8 inches tall" with arms half as long as his own. The head was bald, no hair on the neck, but he said, "...from the neck down half way there was long hair. And: "From there down the hair was short like a hound's. It also had human ears and eyes like a hog's." [52]

Another such encounter was collected by the late George Haas. Haas was well-known during his life as a chronicler of "Bigfoot" lore in California. He obtained the following account of something in Arkansas from the brother of Curtis Sharp.[53]

One July night, in 1938, about 11:30 p.m., Curtis Sharp, 15, was walking home alone after taking his girl friend home from a church social. His path led along a trail in a wooded area near Mountain Home, Arkansas, in Baxter County. There was bright moonlight. Thinking he heard something or someone behind him he looked back but saw nothing. The second time he looked back he saw what he thought was a huge bear or gorilla which was following him on its hind legs. The beast was about 7 feet tall and was about 25 feet away when first sighted. He stopped and the thing stopped. Then he ran and the thing ran after him. He could hear its pounding feet and soon he could hear its heavy breathing seemingly right over his shoulder. It never touched him. About $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from home he smashed into and somehow managed to get through a barbed-wire fence tearing his clothes to ribbons and badly scratching himself. Evidently the creature stopped at the fence because he did not hear or see it after that. Reaching home he woke up the entire family and told them he had been chased by a huge gorilla or bear that walked and ran upright like a man. They could see that he was badly frightened. Nobody believed him because no bears or gorillas were known in that area. The entire family kidded him for some time afterwards but he stuck to his story.

Other families in the area heard mysterious screams within a two-week period that same month. Eldon Downing, a neighbor two miles away, reported hearing "blood-curdling screams" at 9:00 p.m., seemingly within ten feet of his front door. Altogether, 3 families in the neighborhood heard and reported screams, all just after dark. The local people decided that it was "a panther that had lost its mate" although no panthers were known in that area.

Compare the Arkansas encounters with the following description of the **Kashehotapalo**. David I. Bushnell Jr. obtained it when interviewing the members of a small band of Louisiana Choctaw Indians. Their numbers had been reduced to ten or twelve people. Early in the 20th century they were still living a few miles north of Lake Pontchartrain. Among the "legends" recorded there was this one.

Kashehotapalo is neither man nor beast. His head is small and his face shriveled and evil to look upon; his body is that of a man. His legs and feet are those of a deer, the former being covered with hair and the latter having cloven hoofs. He lives in low, swampy places, away from the habitations of men. When hunters go near his abiding place, he quietly slips up behind them and calls loudly, then turns and runs swiftly away. He never attempts to harm the hunters, but delights in frightening

them. The sound uttered by Kashehotapalo resembles the cry of a woman, and that is the reason for his name (kasheho, "woman": tapalo, "call").[54]

The "cloven hoof" attributed to it recalls the same attribution to the satyrs of the Ancient World. Such a perception might stem from the near-circular shape and split-appearance of the toes common to Yeti tracks found in America and Asia.

There are similarities in the screams and in the playful nature of the creatures in Arkansas and the creature in the Choctaw legend.

As stated before, the American Yeti is not confined to the swamps south of the Ohio River. Tracks have been found in Pennsylvania, Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota. We know this only because in recent decades an effort has been made to preserve such reports and findings.

Loren Coleman himself found an ape-like print in a creekbed near Decatur, Illinois, in 1962.[55] (See Fig.7f.) He has called this creature the NAPE, for the North American Ape. Further north episodes of Yeti appearances made news in Iowa in 1975 and again in 1978. The first took place on the Skunk River near Lockridge, Iowa. Later it was seen in central Iowa in Humboldt County and neighboring counties. Editor Steven Hakeman of the **Humboldt Independent** photographed and sketched a track showing the characteristic Yeti track. (See Fig. 7e.) I chronicled these events in Iowa in an article in **The Minnesota Archaeologist** in 1979.[56]

Going still further north we find accounts of the American Yeti from northern Minnesota. Bigfoot-seeker Mike Quast lives in the Fargo, ND--Moorhead, MN area. He has gathered accounts and track observations that suggest the presence of a small group of them -- possibly a family unit.[57]

The Yeti has appeared even further afield. Accounts from California in 1891 tell of the "Casey Flat Gorilla." [58] It had a stooped posture, was six feet tall, had a head like a human, and was covered with shaggy hair.

In Labrador around 1913 people had seen "apes" with peculiar tracks supposed to be split at the front into two toes.[59] All these accounts suggest that the American Yeti is adaptable to many environments and could turn up anywhere in the USA and Canada.

Sanderson in **Abominable Snowmen** relates some information from Central America. It suggests that the Yeti might be known in the highlands of Guatemala.[60] (It should not be confused with the **Sisemite**, which appears to be an entirely different being.) If we better understood the fragmented reports from South America, we might find the Yeti has populated that continent as well.

The reports from Asia, Africa, and North America all describe similar apes larger than anything recognized. They could be explained by the survival of one genus, **Dryopithecus**, which has succeeded in a limited way. From what little we know, they do not appear to be numerous in any one place. By listening to what individuals know about this Yeti we could learn much more. Like the Sherpas, we should consider the Yeti something special and treat it with respect.

Today we lack the patience and the will to study it and our other extraordinary primate relatives. The reasons for this lie within ourselves and not within the evidence for the Yeti and the rest.

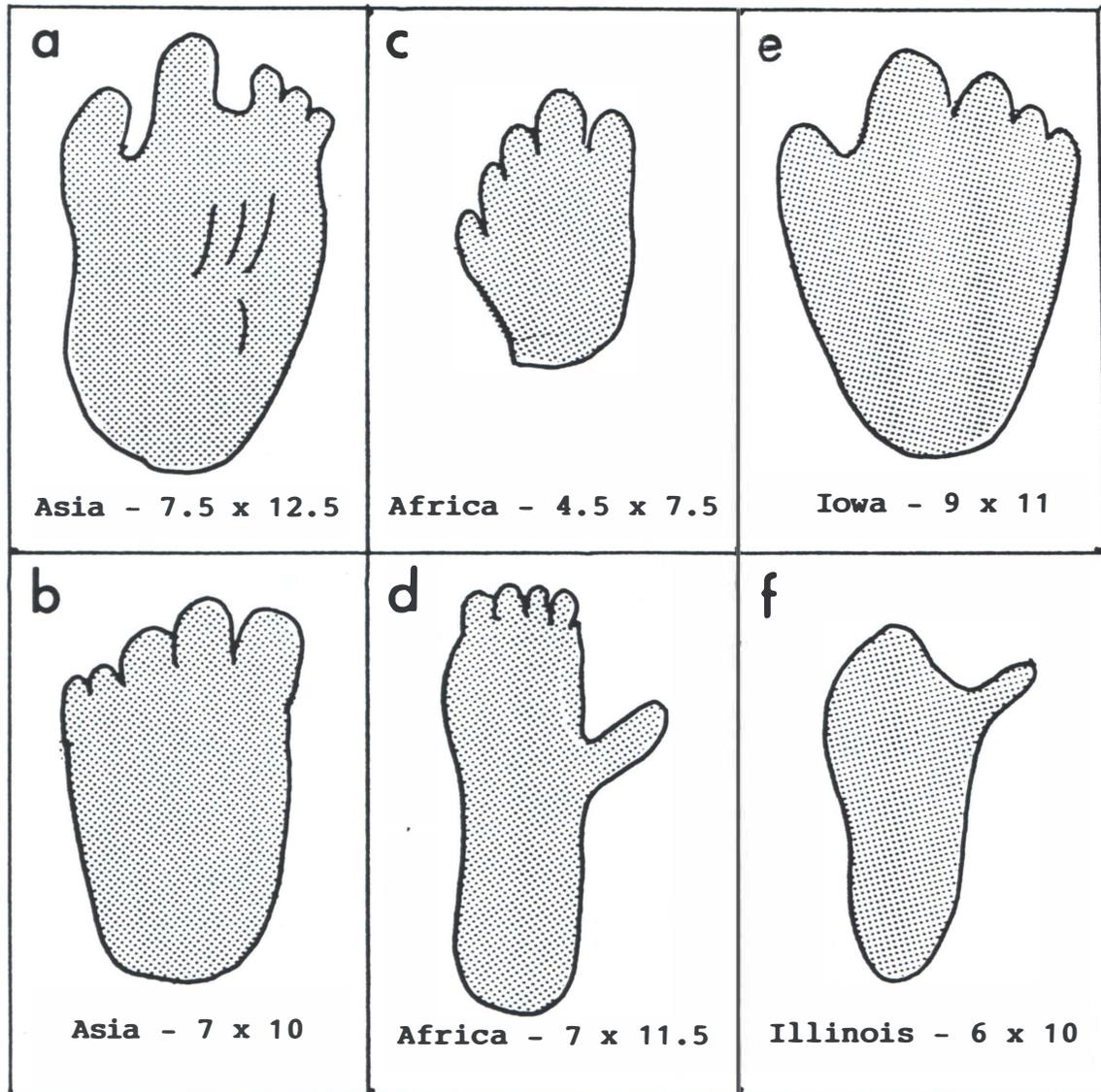


Fig. 7. These tracks are attributed to the Yeti in Asia, Africa, and North America. The outlines are drawn to the same scale. The dimensions for width and length are given in inches.

a. Eric Shipton's track found in 1951 on the Menlung Glacier. The track was studied in some detail by Wladimir Tschernetzky, *Nature* 186:496-7 (7 May 1960).

b. Tom Slick's track found in 1957 in Nepal. This outline is based on a photograph of a cast shown opposite page 33 in Coleman, *Tom Slick and the Search for the Yeti*. Text discussing the track is on page 88.

c. Charles Cordier's track of the *Apamandi* from the Congo. Recorded in Sanderson, *Abominable Snowmen*, 469, No. 20.

d. Charles Cordier's track of an unknown ape in the Congo. Recorded in Sanderson, *Abominable Snowmen*, 468, No. 10.

e. Track found and photographed by Steven Hakeman in Iowa in 1978.

f. Loren Coleman's track found in the Illinois in 1962. From his photograph published in his *Mysterious America* (Faber, 1983).

NOTES

1. Harold William Tilman, MOUNT EVEREST 1938 (Cambridge: University Press, 1948), 127-37. The life of Bill Tilman (1898-) and his writings are included in the ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MOUNTAINEERING by Walt Unsworth (London: Hale; NY: St. Martins, 1975), p. 226. Hereafter this work will be abbreviated as EOM. Many climbers who appear in the history of the Yeti are similarly described in the EOM.
2. Eric Shipton, EOM, pp. 209-10.
3. Michael Ward (1925-), EOM, p. 233.
4. Eric Shipton, THAT UNTRAVELLED WORLD (NY: Scribners), 196. Faced with an unflinching witness in Sen Tensing, Edmund Hillary, in his desire to dismiss the Yeti, was forced to imply that the man was drunk at the time (NOTHING VENTURE, NOTHING WIN, NY: Coward McCann & Geoghegan, 1975, p.238). Also discussed in Loren E. Coleman, TOM SLICK AND THE SEARCH FOR THE YETI (Boston: Faber: 1989), 98.
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18. For remarks on bears in the region see: Stonor, SHERPA AND SNOWMAN, 120; Sanderson, ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN, 250-1; Slick, "Yeti Expedition," 6; Hillary and Doig, HIGH IN THE AIR. 31, 100-101.
19. Sanderson, ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN, 243, 325.
20. Ibid,, 469, No. 15.
21. The drawing appears in Arthur Clarke, MYSTERIOUS WORLD (NY: A&W, 1980), 17. For the account of Rawicz see Slavomir Rawicz and Ronald Downing, THE LONG WALK (NY: Harper, 1956), 232-34.
22. Hillary and Doig, HIGH IN THE AIR, 31.
23. Rory Nugent, THE SEARCH FOR THE PINK-HEADED DUCK (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991), 70-72, 77, 79, 81, 82.
24. Sanderson, ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN, 263, 267-8.

25. Mark Hall, "Mysteries in Southeast Asia," WONDERS 2(3):49-56.
26. Stonor, SHERPA AND SNOWMAN, 11-12.
27. Ibid., 26, 34.
28. Richard Critchfield, VILLAGES (NY:Anchor/Doubleday,1983 ed),48.
29. Shipton, THAT UNTRAVELLED WORLD, 196.
30. As quoted from Nebesky-Wojkowitz, WHERE THE GODS ARE MOUNTAINS (1956) in Sanderson, ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN, 266.
31. Coleman, TOM SLICK AND THE SEARCH, photo opposite p.33, and p.88.
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.....US\$14.50 postpaid in North America; Elsewhere US\$19.

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