

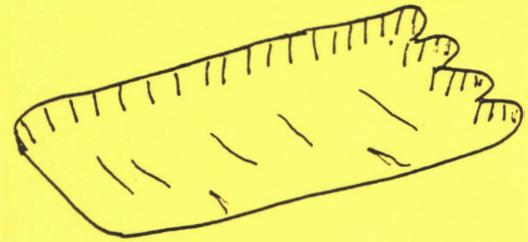
WONDERS

Seeking the Truth in a Universe of Mysteries

Vol. 4 No. 3

September 1995

TRUE GIANTS 1829-1994



& GIANT SNAKES



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WONDERS

Seeking the Truth in a Universe of Mysteries



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EDITORIAL

FADS OF THE MOMENT

Recently I was reading over some Internet traffic passed along to me by Loren Coleman. I came across this sentence. "Almost all legitimate archaeologists accept today that if the Atlantis story has a basis in reality it refers to the destruction of the island of Santorini by a massive volcanic eruption." These words stand out as a reflection of a fad of the moment. It will pass as have earlier fads. A half century ago it was popular to say Atlantis was to be identified with the island of Crete. One day we will tumble to the truth about Atlantis in a way that is not simply an exploitation of the name.

Another fad of the moment is global warming. In the 1970s the chant from the same sources was that "another ice age is on the way." They had facts then to support their claims too. We need a lot more information over an extended period of time to know what the future might be like. In the swirling world of fads we can sit back now and let the "global warming" offset the onset of "another ice age."

Still another fad is the demise of the dinosaurs by way of a cosmic collision with Earth by a comet or meteor. Science writers have swallowed this one whole. What has happened is this. The world of scientists was told to go off and find a giant crater dating around a certain time. With all those people looking, they found one. But there has not been a shortage of giant impacts upon the planet's surface. Pick any point in prehistory; get a lot of people looking; and you might find a crater for that point in time. Such an exercise is a far cry from proving that there is a cause and effect relationship between an impact and extensive extinctions of animals.

We should be wary of these fads that sweep along so many voices who deliver science to the masses. Dissenting voices among the scientific professionals often exist but are not heard clearly. When "all the legitimate scientists" are said to be getting on the bandwagon that is the time to exercise your skepticism. Are we hearing all the viewpoints and is the celebrated one just another fad that will die quietly a few years down the road?

ENCOUNTERS WITH TRUE GIANTS, 1829-1994

by Mark A. Hall

Giant "men" have been met with around the world. Mankind once knew them well. For a time they have been forgotten and are spoken of now only as fabulous legends. The day will come when we will take them seriously again. Their traces have been found and lost with regularity, only a few teeth and jawbones being formally on record. Inevitably we will again find the fossilized bones that will show that *Gigantopithecus* was actually an upright primate. His surviving descendants reach heights of 10 to 25 feet and look like tall, lean men and women. The name of *Gigantanthropus*, once proposed for them, is the more accurate one, meaning "giant man" instead of "giant ape."

There is a basic reason to credit the great heights attributed to them by folklore and by modern sightings. As the heights get taller in modern reports the tracks get progressively bigger.

In previous discussions I have noted how these True Giants are reflected in history and folklore around the world. [1] In North America we have some of the best records of these wonders. Our catholic record-keeping in newspapers has taken notice of these extraordinary creatures. I have alluded to these records in the past. Here I will detail some of these happenings. They are our only chance at this time to get to know these awesome "near-men."

The earliest record before me dates from 1829. It reads remarkably like accounts a century and a half later when it describes the height, stride, and track of the True Giant. The track dimensions given as 9 inches by 18 inches fall neatly on the slope line for True Giant tracks that I first published in 1992. [2] In 1995 I came across this oldest of the stories demonstrating how people have known about True Giants for a long time. So that I will not be accused of fabricating this account I will reproduce in Figure 1 a portion of the original story, which is typically a microfilm record of poor quality.

This newspaper item was first located by Richard Day of Vincennes, Indiana. Using his reference to it I have transcribed it here in its entirety from the records of the Vincennes, Indiana, **Western Sun & General Advertiser** for Saturday, 6 June 1829, Vol. 20 No. 17, page four. The story originates in Milledgeville, Georgia. Okefenokee Swamp is in the southeastern corner of the state. The reference to Lacus Avernus (Lake Averno) alludes to a small lake in Italy that was thought by the ancients to be an entrance to the infernal regions.

From the Milledgeville (Geo) Statesman.

A GIANT STORY

There is a tradition among the Creek Indians that there is, in the trackless gloom of the Okefenokee Swamp, an Island of enchanting beauty, more blissful than any spot on earth. While it is generally thought that this murky fen -- this black sea of Avernus, contains nothing higher in the order of beings than countless armies of mosquitoes, snakes, frogs, and alligators; the Indians say that in the terrestrial paradise

on the island there dwells a race of mortals of super-human dimensions & incomparable beauty. This island, though sometimes seen, is represented as inaccessible from the attribute which it possesses of locomotion; thus eluding approach -- or from the ever varying labarynth of fens and bogs by which it is entrenched and in which the bold invader is confounded who ventures too near this enchanted spot. Thus, lost in inextricable sloughs, a few intrepid hunters were once saved from perishing by a company of women from this island, of surprising form and beauty -- whom they denominated the Daughters of the Sun, or children of the Great Spirit. Having kindly supplied them with refreshments and pointed out to them to fly for safety -- for that their husbands were fierce men and cruel to strangers.*

* This tradition is mentioned by Dr. Moran in 1806 -- See his Geography of that date.

This legend we have hitherto regarded as fabulous, but Mr. John Ostein, residing on the borders of this swamp, in Ware County, and some of his neighbors over the line in Florida, have become satisfied from ocular reality, and they so aver, that it is mainly, a matter of fact! We have their statement in writing, tested by a respectable witness, who has put the paper in our hand, containing the following facts -- we beg the gentleman's pardon -- truths, we should say.

Not long ago, two men and a boy, in the vicinity of this swamp, like our friend Paul Pry, "had a curiosity to know" what could be seen by two or three weeks' pilgrimage into the accessible regions of this dismal empire. -- The season being unusually dry, they pushed their exploration far into the interior, and at the end of a little more than two weeks, found their progress suddenly arrested at the appearance of the print of a foot-step, so unearthly in its dimensions, so ominous of power, and terrible in form, that they were at once reminded of the legend we have mentioned above, and began seriously to apprehend its solemn reality. The length of the foot was eighteen, and the breadth nine inches. The Monster, from every appearance must have moved forward in an easy or hesitating gait, his stride, from heel to toe, being but a trifle over six feet. Our adventurers had seen enough! and began to think of securing a retreat, without waiting to salute his majesty, not doubting but the other part of the story might also prove true -- of his fierceness and cruelty. They happily effected their escape, returned home, and related the history of their adventures, and what they had seen of the "Man mountain." A company of Florida hunters, half horse, half alligator nine in number determined, a few months since, to make this gentleman a visit -- to ascertain if he had a family, and his manner of living. Following for a few days, the direction of their guide, they came at length upon the track first discovered; some vestiges of which were still remaining; pursuing these traces several days longer, they came to a halt on an eminence, and determined to pitch their

inextinguishable sloughs, a few intrepid hunters were once saved from perishing by a company of women from this island, of surprising form and beauty—whom they denominated the Daughters of the Sun, or children of the Great Spirit. Having kindly supplied them with refreshments, and pointed out to them a way of retreat, they admonished them to fly for safety—for that their husbands were fierce men, and cruel to strangers.

This legend we have hitherto regarded as fabulous; but Mr. John Osteen, residing on the borders of this swamp, in Ware county, and some of his neighbors over the line in Florida, have become satisfied from ocular reality, and they so aver, that it is mainly, a matter of fact! We have their statement in writing, tested by a respectable witness, who has put the paper in our hand, containing the following facts—we beg the gentleman's pardon—truths, we should say.

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grasp. The surviving God had opportunity to examine the creature being as he lay extended on the earth, sometimes wallowing and roaring.

His length was thirteen feet, and his breadth and volume of just proportions. Fearing lest the report of their rifles, and the stentorian yells of the expiring giant should bring suddenly upon them the avengers of his blood, they beheld themselves to flight, having first secured the hides of their headless comrades, and returned home with this account of their adventures.

The story of the report, as related above, is matter of fact, and the truth of it is accredited, we are told, by persons living on the borders of this swamp and in the neighborhood of the surviving adventurers.

From the New-England Farmer.
Hints to young Farmers.—Consider your calling the most elevated,

Fig. 1.

A portion of "A Giant Story" from an 1829 edition of the Vincennes Western Sun.

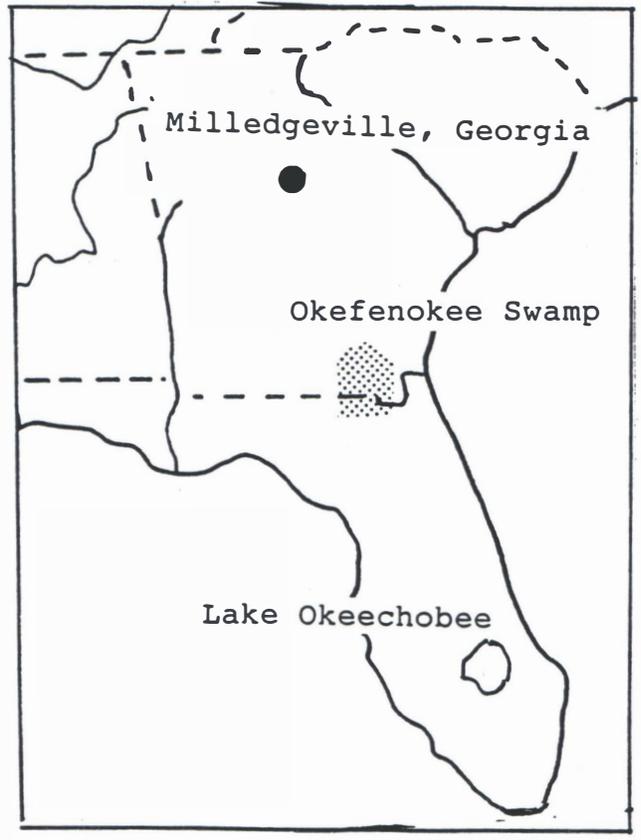


Fig. 2.

A 13-foot giant was reported in the Okefenokee Swamp in 1829.

camp and refresh themselves for the day. The report of their rifles, as one or two of them were simultaneously discharged at an advancing and ferocious wild beast, made the still solitudes of these dismal lakes reverberate with deafening roar. Echo, beyond echo, took up & prolonged the sound, which seemed to die away and revive in successive peals for several minutes. The report had reached and startled from his lair, the genius of the swamp, and the next minute he was full in their view advancing upon them with a terrible look and a ferocious mein. -- Our little band instinctively gathered close in a body, and presented their rifles. -- The huge being, nothing daunted, bounded upon his victims, and in the same instant received the contents of seven rifles. But he did not fall alone; nor until he had glutted his wrath with the death of five of them, which he effected by wringing off the head from the body. Writhing and exhausted, at length he fell, with his hapless prey beneath his grasp. The surviving four had opportunity to examine the dreadful being as he lay extended on the earth, sometimes wallowing and roaring.

His length was thirteen feet, and his breadth and volume of just proportions. Fearing, lest the report of their rifles, and the stentorian yells of the expiring giant should bring suddenly upon them the avengers of his blood, they betook themselves to flight, having first secured the rifles of their headless comrades, and returned home with this account [sic] of their adventures.

The story of the report, as related above, is matter of fact, and the truth of it is accredited, we are told, by persons living on the borders of this swamp and in the neighborhood of the surviving adventurers.

May I suggest that the colorful Creek Indian legend of an enchanted island has nothing to do with "The Monster" or "Man mountain." We find here an early description of the True Giant, all of thirteen feet tall and with a foot and track that matches the modern reports of True Giants. They were known to the American Indians throughout the continent. They have perhaps been present in greater numbers in the northern forests where concealment is more easily achieved.

In the Southeast the Cherokee knew of them in their territory. I will mention here for the first time a reference from the Seminoles, neighbors to the Creek Indians. Robert Greenlee reported this Seminole tale in the *Journal of American Folklore* in 1945:

There is a large hammock up north of Lake Okeechobee where the tall men live. They are as tall as trees. Some of them stand up. Though they have bones like ordinary people, no living Indians have ever seen the giants. A long while ago there was a man, a very smart man, who went up to the cabbage woods and saw the giants. He told the rest of the people about them. These giants stand still all the time like a tree. Others lie down like a log. They are dangerous and have the power to make a person sick.

People go far off into the woods as if they were crazy when they have the giant sickness. They act as though something had hit them. They talk about seeing giants. If a person talks about looking at a giant the medicine man knows what the trouble is. [3]

The newspaper record that is presently known to me jumps ahead to substantially the past forty years. After 1958 the modern tradition of Bigfoot was popularized. Newspaper and magazine speculation about hairy giants and their alleged tracks suggested a context for modern experiences and finds that were actually True Giants. Also, people enthusiastic about the possible existence of "Bigfoot" began to solicit and preserve stories that suggested living hairy giants. For these reasons we find an era of detailed reports of True Giants beginning in the 1960s and carrying on to the present day.

The necessary distinctions among Bigfoot, True Giants, and several other unknown primates in North America have been published previously by me. [4] Also, some clearly described and prolonged contact between the American Indians and True Giants has been cited as told in Boas and Ormsby. [5] Those sources should be read in their original form.

The modern encounters are brief as one might logically expect. Since 1829 our firearms have been sufficient to dispatch these giant primates and they avoid human beings for fear of injury.

A chronology of meetings with True Giants and finds of tracks includes the following incidents:

| | | | |
|-----|------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | 1829 | Okefenokee Swamp, GA | 9 x 18 inch track |
| 2. | 1948 | Cherokee Co., SC | 4 x 9-10 track, 4toes |
| 3. | 1963 | Tuolumne Co., CA | 22 x 40 inch track |
| 4. | 1965 | Pitt Lake, BC | 12 x 24 in., 4 toes |
| 5. | 1968 | Tuolumne Co., CA | 10-12 feet tall |
| 6. | 1969 | Big Horn Dam, Alberta | 15 feet tall |
| 7. | 1970 | Glen Rock, PA | 7 x 14 in., 4 toes |
| 8. | 1972 | Lander, WY | 12 feet tall |
| 9. | 1975 | Corona, CA | 15 inch track, 4 toes |
| 10. | 1976 | Snoqualmie, WA | 8-9 x 17 in., 4 toes |
| 11. | 1976 | Cold Lake, Alberta | 10 x 21 in., 4 toes |
| 12. | 1976 | Corinth, MS | 6 x 15 in., 4 toes |
| 13. | 1976 | Brookhaven, MS | 15-inch track |
| 14. | 1976 | Hallsville, TX | 12 feet tall |
| 15. | 1977 | Saluda Co., SC | 7 x 14 inch track |
| 16. | 1977 | Fort Mill, SC | 5.75 x 12.25 track |
| 17. | 1977 | Riceville, MT | 15 feet tall |
| 18. | 1977 | Clatsop Co., OR | 7.5 x 17 in., 4 toes |
| 19. | 1977 | Abee, Alberta | 23.5-inch track |
| 20. | 1978 | Granite Falls, WA | 6.5 x 14 inch track |
| 21. | 1980 | Yacolt, WA | 12 X 30 inch track |
| 22. | 1988 | Poplar River, Manitoba | 7 x 14 in., 4 toes |
| 23. | 1993 | California, PA | 14 x 30 in., 4 toes |
| 24. | 1994 | Angeles Crest NF, CA | 12 feet tall |

Our sketchy knowledge of True Giants suggests that modern survivors would be found most often in the high mountains of the West and the extant spruce forests of the North. Reports from elsewhere have occurred as indicated for example in Pennsylvania, Mississippi, and South Carolina. The reader can conjecture as well as I as to the reasons that these beings still turn up in these states. Perhaps they are visitors; perhaps a few still reside there. The stories of True Giants told by the American Indians placed the giants all over the continent.

The two reports from Mississippi suggest that the track-maker was traveling east to west through the state in the direction of Louisiana and East Texas.

The following pages provide capsule descriptions of these modern encounters with True Giants. The locations are shown on maps on pages 69 and 73.

Tuolumne County, CA - In December of 1963 a logger from Sonora, California, reported huge tracks in the snow going up a hillside. John Whitt said they were 22 inches wide and 40 inches long and spaced five to six feet apart. They gave the appearance of 3 toes. (See the entry for "Corinth, Mississippi, 1976" for an explanation of this.)

Other tracks were reported in the county along with sightings of something hairy and ten feet tall. Also in December, a sheriff's deputy, Albert Miller, said he found tracks 6 inches wide and 16 inches long. They were spaced 6 to 8 feet apart. Gilroy Hall reported finding tracks over several years: "They were 12 to 16 inches from toe to heel and about 5½ to 6 inches wide -- the print of a man, not a bear." Hall said the stride was 12 to 14 feet. A pilot reported seeing a "10 foot man with an ape-like face" while flying near Pinecrest in January 1964. [6]

Pitt Lake, B.C. - At the end of June 1965 two prospectors found tracks and later observed a standing figure watching them. They were in a valley to the northwest of Pitt Lake, British Columbia. The tracks were in snow and showed only four toes. They measured 10 to 12 twelve inches wide and 22 to 24 inches long. The figure they later saw was standing on a hillside on the other side of a small lake at noontime. It was covered with auburn hair. One observer estimated its height at 10 or 12 feet, the other at 12 to 14 or 15 feet. They moved on, but returned later to find the creature was gone. A full account of what is known can be found in John Green's *Year of the Sasquatch*. [7]

Tuolumne Co., CA - On 8 January 1968 Robert James Jr. was flying north of Yosemite National Park when he and his companion, Leroy Larwick, saw a creature on Confidence Ridge. He said, "We saw the thing from about 50 feet up. It was standing erect and looked like it was 10 to 12 feet tall. I could see its eyes. It had brownish, fuzzy and woolly-looking hair. Not long hair, but kind of matted." After landing the two visited the site by vehicle. They found footprints over 20 inches long. [8]

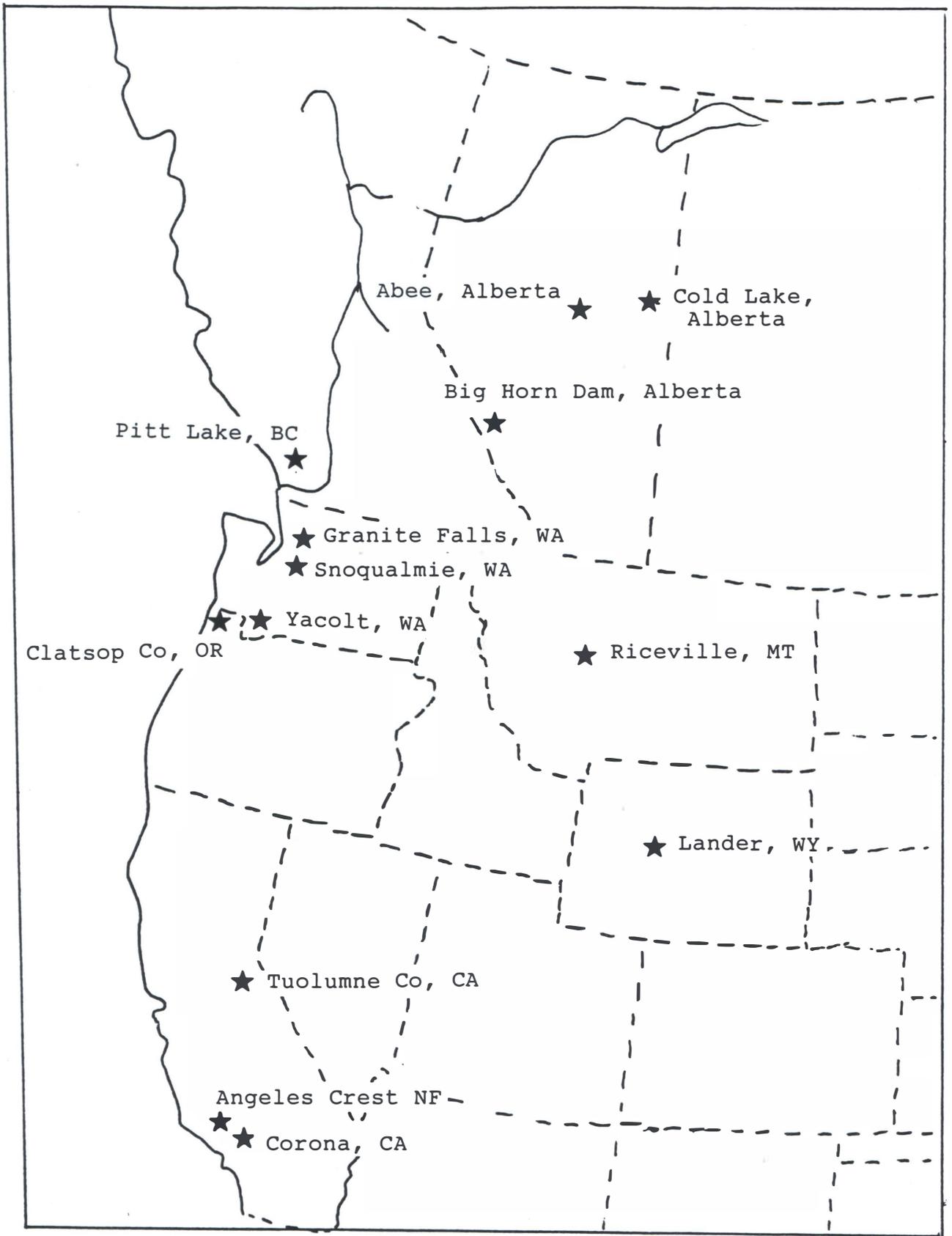


Fig. 3. Locations in western North America where True Giants have been seen or left footprints.

Big Horn Dam, Alberta - One of the most publicized observations of True Giants occurred in 1969 at a construction site in Alberta. On 23 August five workmen reported a sighting at the Big Horn Dam on the North Saskatchewan River west of Nordegg. From a distance of a half-mile the dam builders watched a dark figure move about on a ridge overlooking the site. The observers were Floyd Hengen, Dale Boddy, Harley Peterson, Stan Peterson, and Guy L'Heureux. The man-like figure they saw was as tall as the spruce trees on the ridge, which meant it was 15 feet tall. It watched them, sat down, and then strode away quickly. It was no bear. It was described as hefty, with thin legs taking long strides of maybe six feet. It had rounded shoulders and the head was bent slightly forward. The ground on the ridge was found to be too hard for footprints.

The Stony Indians in the area had been seeing a group of four of the giants as tall as trees. They said little until the report from the dam site

The story was covered extensively in newspapers in 1969. Also, John Green related the facts in **Year of the Sasquatch**. [9]

Glen Rock, PA - In 1970 Dan Manning of Roseto, Pennsylvania, described to me a cast of a footprint made near Glen Rock. The cast was 7 inches by 14 inches and showed only four toes.

Lander, WY - Police near Lander, Wyoming, received reports for a month in 1972 of sightings of a 12-foot tall creature. Two teenagers reported being chased by a tall hairy animal while riding horses near the Wind River Reservation. Its tracks were widely reported to show only two toes. However, Wind River police chief Bill King said the tracks were indistinct and found it hard to make out the size and toes. [10]

Corona, CA - On the morning of 17 August 1975 Bob Houghton of Corona, California, discovered his pet rabbits had been killed and eaten in his yard. By his back door was a track 15 inches long and showing only four toes. During August the Corona newspaper was filled with articles about sightings of a hairy creature, estimated at up to 10 feet tall. The police tried to dismiss everything as a hoax. When Houghton tried to make a report to the police, they referred to him as a "monster nut." [11]

Snoqualmie, WA - In February of 1976 giant tracks were a sensation along the South Fork of the Snoqualmie River near Edgewick. Two men looking for coins with a metal-detector came across some 100 huge tracks running for a quarter of a mile. Jim French and Joe Langston brought back their families and a newspaper reporter. The tracks showed only four toes. According to the **Valley Record**:

The tracks measures 17 inches in length and nine inches wide at the toe. They were six inches wide at the heel and were spaced an average of four feet apart.

After a period of scrutiny it was considered that there were two sets of tracks. The paper also reported:

According to most of the experts, the creatures went west along the north bank of the river for some distance, crossing the area of the lower Cedar Falls Road, and disturbing a dog owned by Tony Philo, owner of the Cascade Golf Course.

At least four Bigfoot experts showed up to see the tracks. One declared them to be fake; three others thought they were not faked. [12]

Cold Lake, Alberta - The Grand Centre **Globe** reported from Cold Lake, Alberta, on 8 June 1976 about giant tracks. Ben Lefebvre found them when his truck got stuck at the Imperial Oil site at Leming Lake. The **Globe** stated:

Ben said the circumstances under which the prints were found rules out a hoax. "When you consider an impression depth of $2 \frac{1}{4}$ inches, it would seem to be impossible that anyone could have carried a mechanical device weighing perhaps one thousand pounds from the place the truck got stuck to the first imprint without leaving other marks. We checked closely, but there were none.

Statistically, the mysterious footprints are 21 inches in length, with four toes. Ten inches wide at its widest point, the imprint indicates a large callous at the outside. In all, five footprints were found, with strides measuring 11 feet, $10 \frac{1}{2}$ feet, 9 feet, $7 \frac{1}{2}$ feet and 10 feet. [13]

Corinth, MS - In the northeastern corner of Mississippi strange footprints were discovered on 14 March 1976. They were 15 inches long and 6 inches wide and showed only four toes. The tracks appeared at two sites some 4 to 5 miles apart. They were found on Smith Bridge Road and at two churches and a graveyard 12 miles west of Corinth.

The **Daily Corinthian** observed:

Some of the prints have 3 toe markings with a faint fourth toe imprint, and others have only 3 toe marks visible.

Two photographs published at the time show four toes clearly. [14]

The True Giants leave imprints of four toes. The fifth toe appears to have lost its usefulness in the line of **Gigantopithecus**. The fourth toe does not always show, as the tracks at Corinth suggest. (It would be erroneous, however, to automatically attribute any and all footprints showing three toes to True Giants. I am not doing that.)

Brookhaven, MS - Eleven months after the notoriety for tracks at Corinth, footprints turned up in Lincoln County, Mississippi. The **Brookhaven Leader** reported on tracks found on 14 February 1977.

Flat footed tracks were described and photographed. They were about 15 inches long or longer. They were found to go back into a heavily wooded area along Buie Mill Road. The **Leader** reported also:

Discovery of the footprints reminded area residents of the recent reports of "a huge, hairy creature" which was reportedly sighted by several residents of an area in Natchez. Residents who reported the "almost human" huge, hairy creature said "Bigfoot" was tall, dark, barefoot and naked. No conclusive findings were reached following investigation by officers in Natchez. [15]

Hallsville, TX - In November 1976 Zollie Owens of White Oak, Texas, was investigating reports by people frightened from a black-berry field by a hairy creature. At a farm near Hallsville he and a friend waited night after night. The **Longview Journal** gave the result:

"We had put out some corn and sat back to wait awhile when we heard a noise and saw him, nearly 12 feet tall, standing at the edge of a clearing," Owens said.

He said the creature walked upright and was covered with silver hair. With him was a smaller, obviously female creature with red-tinged hair. The larger of the two seemed protective of the other. [16]

South Carolina - In the 1940s four-toed, flat-footed tracks were reported in **Cherokee County**, South Carolina, The tracks were 4 inches wide and 9 inches long. [17]

Over in the neighboring county of York big tracks were back in the news in 1977. A garden at **Fort Mill** was found one morning to be filled with tracks. One of them was a clear imprint showing large toes. It measured 5 3/4 inches wide and 12 1/4 inches long, with a depth of one inch. [18]

The Fort Mill find happened on 12 February. The publicity for it drew attention to hundreds of tracks that were found on 6 February in **Saluda County**, 100 miles south of Fort Mill, west of Columbia. Those tracks measured 7 inches wide and 14 inches long. [19]

In prior years there were other reports not far away. Across the state line from Fort Mill in North Carolina north of Charlotte there were stories of a 10-foot hairy monster in 1974. Around China Grove shrieks were heard in the woods. Police dismissed the report of one woman who said she saw the 10-foot creature because she had previously reported a UFO. [20]

In 1976 Mount Holly, North Carolina, west of Charlotte was the scene of reports of a hairy creature a mere seven feet tall. [21]

Riceville, MT - One of the most extraordinary encounters of the modern day occurred in Montana on 20 August 1977. Three men were chased from a hill in Belt Creek Canyon by what they described as a 15-foot tall hairy creature.

We can note here that hostility from True Giants is not otherwise unknown even in the slim record that we possess. An American



Fig. 4. Locations in eastern North America where True Giants have been seen or left footprints.

Indian named Jimmy Fraser told such a story. As a young Songhee Indian on Vancouver Island he was out hunting when he met a True Giant. It was 18 feet tall and threw trees at him. [22]

The three men in Montana were all airmen from Malmstrom Air Force Base. One of them, Fred C. Wilson, took and passed a polygraph test. The other two airmen wanted their names kept out of it. They confirmed his story to the press but remained anonymous.

They and two youngsters camped for a night on a hill above Belt Creek. The events that followed were reported in the Great Falls Tribune:

The group decided to return to their vehicle about 2 a.m. Aug. 20 when a thunderstorm developed and the two youngsters were several yards ahead, running for the automobile, when one of the men heard a noise as the airmen crossed a barbed wire fence.

"I turned my flashlight and saw this huge creature standing beside a tree about 25 yards away," Wilson said.... "We watched it for about 10 seconds before it moved off into the trees and then we ran for the car."

According to Wilson, the creature was walking upright across a clearing when the men reached the vehicle and one of his companions fired two shots from a shotgun to frighten the "animal" away. "The shots were not fired at the animal, but into the trees adjacent to it," Wilson said. "We were not trying to shoot it. We just wanted to keep it away from us so we could get out of there."

But the three men said the ape-like creature charged instead and got within 20 feet of the vehicle before they drove off. [23]

The first report of the incident contained Wilson's description of the creature.

Wilson jumped the fence, tearing his pants. His car was 500 feet away. When he was 10 feet from the car, he said, the creature charged. "It looked like a semitruck coming at us," Wilson said. "It took 40-foot strides."

Wilson said that when he got in the car and drove off, the creature was 20 feet away. As he looked back, he said, he saw the head of the creature looking over an embankment. "It was hideous. It had small apish-type eyes, a flattened nose, and canine-type fangs which showed when its mouth was open. Its face was totally covered with hair. The head was oblong." [24]

While the man who fired the shotgun may have aimed into the trees it is asking a bit much to expect that the creature would have known this.

Wilson's description of an oval head, the flattened nose, and canine teeth matches the head as described for True Giants around the world.

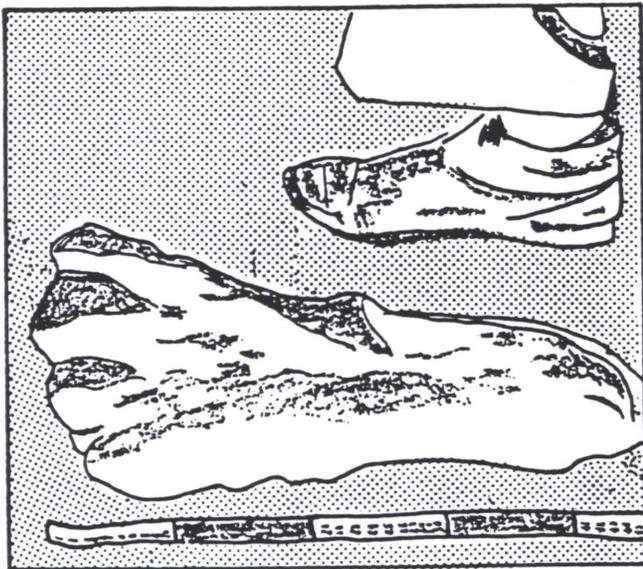
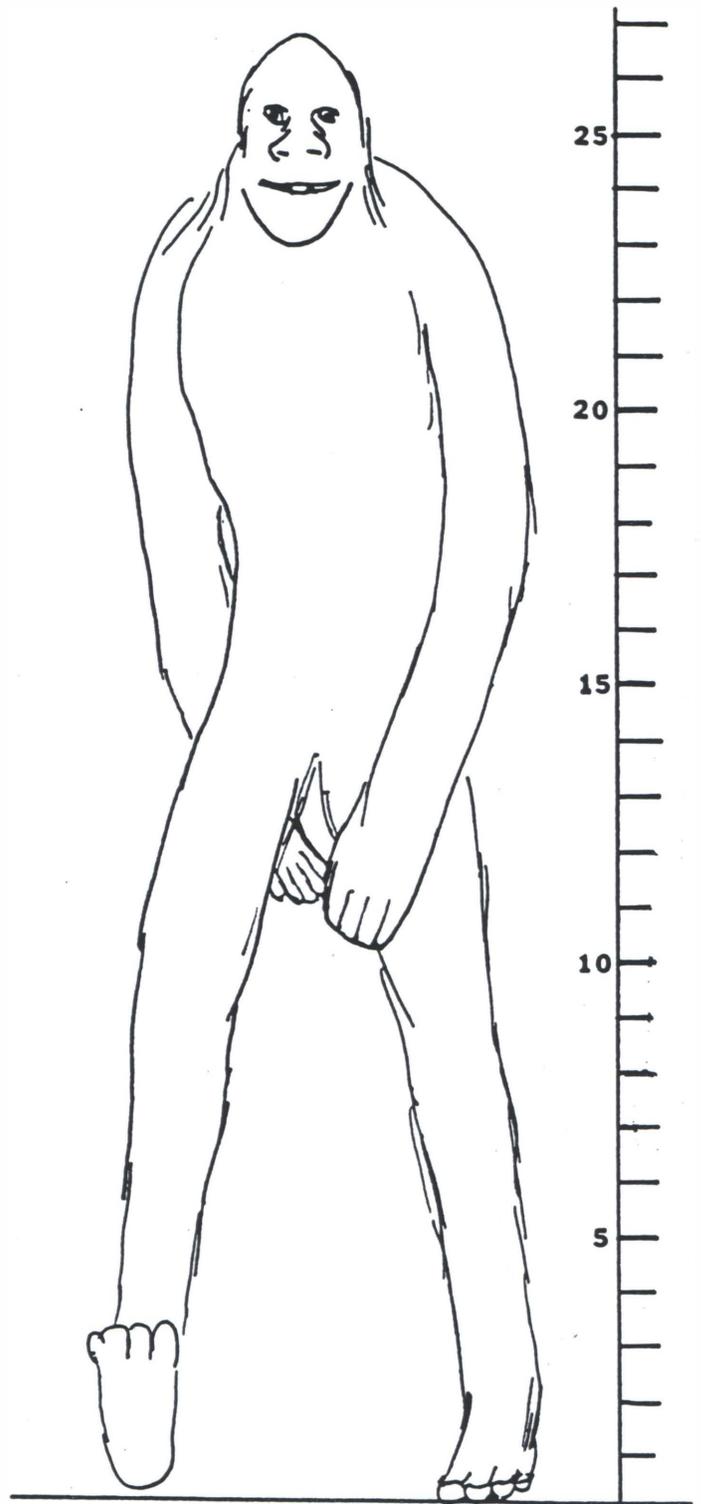
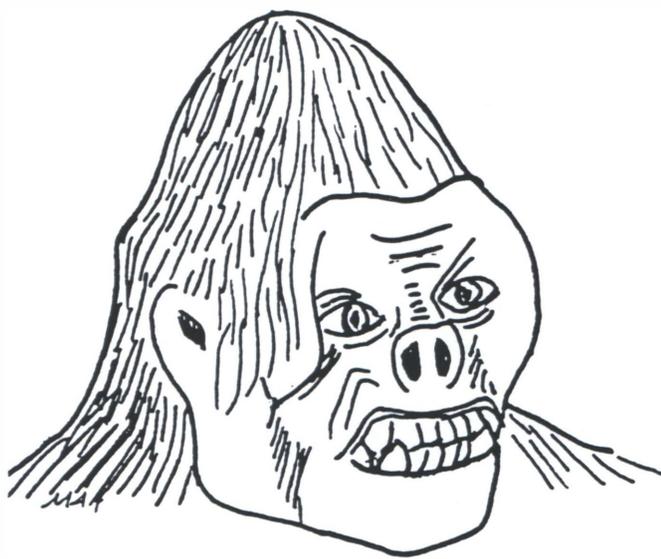


Fig. 5. Modern reports of True Giants and hoary traditions describing them come from around the world. They are distinctive in their size, physical description, and tracks. They exhibit only four toes. The cast illustrated here was made in Tajikistan in Central Asia in 1981. An overview of True Giants is provided in *The Yeti, Bigfoot & True Giants* by Mark A. Hall, published in 1994.

Clatsop County, OR - On 18 November 1977 Glenn Lauper found footprints on a mountainside in Clatsop County, Oregon. Lauper, his wife, and small son were sledding when they found the tracks. They measured $7\frac{1}{2}$ by 17 inches. He noticed tree branches were broken in the area at heights between 6 and 11 feet. He said, "We tried to break a few trees ourselves. Two of us could do it, but it would have been hard for a man to do it alone."

When Lauper returned to the tracks several times he noticed something else. As reported in the Astoria (Oregon) **Daily Astorian**:

Lauper said when he discovered the prints they were separated by a two-foot stride. Then he noticed a similar, but much smaller footprint inside the larger print. From that he reasoned there might also be an infant.

Following the tracks, the stride increased to about six feet, and disappeared into the thick, almost impenetrable brush. The smaller prints weren't in evidence, so -- Lauper theorized -- the large creature must have picked up the infant and carried it through the dense growth.

The prints, Lauper said, were four-toed -- and twice the size of a man's foot. He followed them for awhile, noting the trail detoured through some heavy growth.

"It could have gone an easier way. That's when we discovered hair on the salmonberry brush," he said.

There have been other unpublicized Bigfoot encounters in Clatsop County, Lauper said. No one claims, however, to have actually seen the mysterious creature. [25]

Abee, Alberta - Andy Zachary found tracks behind his store in Abee, Alberta, in December of 1977. The prints were $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches long (60 centimeters). Imprints of toes were visible. Zachary made these remarks: "Those prints were over seven feet apart from heel to toe. It would be impossible for any man or woman to do that unless they were 10 feet tall." [26]

Granite Falls, WA - Two sets of tracks were found on a logging road 15 miles northeast of Granite Falls, Washington. On 29 December 1977 Dan Becker of Snohomish was the first to see them while looking for a place to sled. The tracks ran along a logging road on Green Mountain for close to 200 yards before turning and going up into the woods.

The larger track was 17 inches long with a stride of six to seven feet. The width was not reported. The smaller track was $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and 14 inches long. The stride was four to five feet. [27]

Yacolt, WA - In October of 1980 hunter Darryl Cahoon reported finding several footprints 12 miles east of Yacolt. He said the prints were 30 inches long and a foot wide. [28]

Poplar River, Manitoba - In May of 1988 John Larson was out fishing when he found footprints measuring 7 inches by 14 inches.

The prints had only four toes. Casts were made and photographed. A 14-foot stride was attributed to this line of prints. A constable of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and a Winnipeg university professor were reported to insist that this stride meant the maker had to be 25 to 30 feet, which was termed "highly unlikely." We can agree that such a height associated with a track only 14 inches long is highly unlikely. **If the stride is at all accurately given then it would seem more likely that the track-maker was leaping or running and so exaggerating the stride.** [29]

California, PA - On 1 February 1994 large tracks were found in Washington County, Pennsylvania. A portion of the report assembled by Paul G. Johnson reads this way:

A caretaker of the Mount Zion Church in the Crescent Heights section of West Pike Run Township was burning trash behind the building when he saw a set of large tracks in the snow. The footprints were 31 inches long, 17 inches wide with four toes. The distance from the heel of the left foot to the heel of the right foot was six feet. The witness stated that the tracks were so clear he could see the snow coming up between the toes. [30]

Angeles Crest National Forest, CA - Seven people at a campsite all saw what appeared to be a family of True Giants walk by their camp on 12 November 1994. This was reported in **The Track Record** for January 1995. [31]

John and Elaine Schmoker and their family and friends all watched as three creatures walked near a stream in the pines. They had a good look at them because it happened at 2:30 in the afternoon. The descriptions they gave were recorded as follows:

The male estimated at 15 feet was black, gray, and light brown, as was the female. The 10-11 foot female was described as broad shouldered while the male was slender. Both looked almost human. A juvenile was only about four feet tall and had light brown fur.

This concludes this listing of modern encounters with True Giants. Some will doubt the validity of all of this and the credibility of the people who have told these stories. I urge you to question the wisdom of ignoring or lightly dismissing these stories when they present a consistent picture of one kind of creature.

These stories do not occur in a vacuum. They are consistent with a world-wide picture of creatures described in modern reports and in traditions labeled folklore. The tracks are the same (four-toed) and similar track dimensions and lengthy strides are reported. There is a basis in primate fossils for such a unique creature to have developed its own extraordinary size and abilities.

The record for 1829 is especially significant to the case for the reality of True Giants. A journalist 165 years ago could not know that we would one day be hearing of 13-foot hairy giants with

large footprints of the exact dimensions and long stride contained in the 1829 story.

A parallel exists in the 1836 newspaper account of the lunkasoose in the state of Maine. It identified a giant maned cat that roared. Just the kind of cat reported repeatedly in the twentieth century and logically equated to a survival of *Panthera atrox*. [32]

In both cases, the lunkasoose of 1836 and the "Man-mountain" of 1829, the articles were written because they reflect the presence of real animals. They were rare then and they remain rare today, but both are a natural part of the North American landscape.

The element of twisted and broken trees has been reported from locations where True Giants have been indicated by tracks and sightings. This sign was noted in an article in *Sports Afield* in 1963.

As a young man in Alaska half a century ago Russell Annabel saw for himself the sign left by a True Giant. On the Nelchina Plateau a twisted tree was seen as sign left by Gilyuk. That is the name the Dene Indians in the area gave to the True Giant. Some Indians showed Gilyuk's marker to Annabel and Tex Cobb.

In the center of the flat stood a ruined birch sapling. It had been about four inches through and maybe ten feet tall. Something had twisted the sapling as a man would twist a match stick. [33]

The leaves had not completely wilted which meant it had been done the previous day.

The appearance of broken trees was noted in three of the foregoing encounters with the giants. Glenn Lauper in Oregon reported broken branches at heights of 6 to 11 feet. At Hallsville, Texas, Zollie Owens said he found "two-inch trees snapped in half." And the family at the Southern California campsite said they found broken branches on trees nine feet above the ground.

Looking over these reports we may say that the True Giants are curious about us. They may be watching us more than we know. They were estranged by the animosity of our ancestors. They have the intelligence to communicate with us with speech according to the tales of them from prehistory. We would do well to consider what we might want to say to them in today's world.

Their knowledge of nature is superior to our own. They survive wholly in nature and conceal themselves so well most people will deny their existence. Who would say we cannot learn something from such creatures?

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MORE GIANT SNAKES ALIVE!

by Mark A. Hall

We have to hope that giant snakes will continue to be reported in eastern North America. Such reports would tell us that we have not so altered and decimated the aquatic environment that the snakes have become extinct. While we can only wonder about what might turn up in our future, there is a historical record telling of these monster snakes, so big that they match nothing known from North America and so peculiar that they are not likely to have been imported. With additional research this record could be improved upon.

In previous issues of **Wonders** (December 1994, March 1995) I presented accounts of super-snakes, twelve to thirty feet long, that people have reported in lakes, rivers, and swamps in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Further historical reports have come to my attention from Loren E. Coleman, Randy Garlipp, and my own continuing research. Here are more herpetological wonders from North America presented in chronological order. A look at reports of giant rattlesnakes will appear in a future issue of **Wonders**. I am including a map and key indicating the giant snakes described in this and the previous two articles.

1854 - ILLINOIS

Willard Price in **The Amazing Mississippi** tells a story of a giant snake hunt and casts the entire episode as an election day hoax. According to his version of events, men and women around Cairo, Illinois, repeatedly lied about seeing an enormous snake. Someone created the appearance of a serpent's trail by dragging a boulder with a mule. All of this was done, he says, to lure voters in a rival town away from the ballot box on election day. [1]

We should welcome a re-examination of these events in 1854. It may be that the excitement of legitimate snake reports was exploited at the time. Price's brief treatment does not inspire confidence that he has given us the final and correct word on the subject.

1871 - KANSAS

The Humboldt Kansas **Union** for 16 April 1970 ran this item (credit: Loren Coleman) appealing for information about a one-hundred-year-old story of a 38-foot snake killed at Fredonia.

The Humboldt **Union** has received a request for information regarding the possibility that a "monster" was killed in the area in 1871.

According to the request a monster snake was sighted near Fredonia in 1869. A story supposedly published in the "Humboldt Statesman" in January or February of 1871 reported that a snake 38' 9 " long and 43" in circumference had been killed. It was skinned and stuffed by Doctors Tipton and Barrett and shipped to the Woods Museum.

It has been ascertained that there was a Woods Museum in Chicago at that time. "Unfortunately it and the snake went up with the rest of Chicago when Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked her famous lantern in the fall of 1871." [sic]

The **Southern Kansas Statesman** was a newspaper published in Humboldt from October 1870 to May 1872. A quick check of the "History of the State of Kansas" Andreas, 1883, did not produce any reference to either Dr. Tipton or Dr. Barrett in the area of Allen, Woodson, Neosho, or Anderson Counties at that time.

Authorities agree that the largest known snakes are the Anaconda of South America and the Python of Southeast Asia and believe it to be impossible for a large cold-blooded reptile to live in a temperate climate -- let alone in an area where it could get bitter cold.

If anyone has heard any stories about this "Kansas Monster" the **Union** would like to learn about it.

1874 - PENNSYLVANIA

In the Williamsport, Pennsylvania, **Sun-Gazette** for 30 Sept. 1874 (credit: Loren Coleman) there is notice taken of "a large serpent" reported in the summers around Morgantown, Pennsylvania. This town is located in southeastern Pennsylvania where three counties, Berks, Chester, and Lancaster, all meet.

The **Sun-Gazette** writer is suspicious of the validity of the snake. He has written:

During the summer the scourge of the neighborhood is a large serpent, varying in length from fifteen to thirty feet, and whose chief delight seems to be to frighten women and children away from the blackberry and whortleberry patches for which that vicinity is so noted. The snake story is a very good one, and serves a very good purpose in keeping timid people out of the woods, and thus permitting the professional berry gatherers to reap the harvest unmolested by juvenile competition....

1887 - MINNESOTA

Lake Minnetonka, west of Minneapolis/St. Paul, was the scene of a "sea serpent" sighting according to **The Lake Minnetonka Book of Days** compiled by LaVerna Leipold. The entry dated 19 April 1887 reads this way:

Men building the Grays Bay Bridge claim to have seen a 30-ft. sea serpent which lay on the surface for several minutes before disappearing. [2]

A couple of years ago I was told a second-hand account of something seen in Lake Minnetonka as recently as around 1981-83. It was longer than the boat holding the witnesses, so long they could not see either end. It was charcoal gray with yellow stripes banding it.

1892 - INDIANA

Two reports came from southwestern Indiana in 1892 along the bottomlands of the Wabash River. The first was published in the Vincennes, Indiana, **Commercial Weekly** for 22 April.

A SEA SERPENT

Inhabits Horse Shoe Pond Near This City

A Wonderful Aquatic Monster Sixty Feet Long, Seen in Vincennes township by Isaac Daines and Others.

Report, from what seems to be a perfectly reliable authority, comes to the city of a strange aquatic monster resembling a sea serpent, which has been seen in Vincennes township, about six miles below the city. This monstrous reptiles or animal, which is described as bigger and longer than a telegraph pole, resembles a huge snake in appearance and in its movement. It now inhabits Horse-shoe Pond, near the home of Mr. Daines, a highly respected farmer, whose veracity can not be questioned. He has seen the sea serpent, or whatever it is, on several occasions within the last few days, as has also his wife and several hired men and neighbors.

Nr, Daines describes the monster as having a head shaped like that of a sea lion or that of a large dog, and fully as large as the head of a mastiff. Its head and body is long and serpentine, and is fully sixty feet in length. Its color is black on the back and sides. It inhabits the water and does not seem to venture any distance on shore. It glides through the waters of the pond with that easy and graceful movement peculiar to a snake swimming. When in the pond it holds its head up out of the water. Often its hideous head is held six or eight feet from the surface. Though it usually holds its head about four feet out of the water. It often is seen lying at rest upon the top of the water, with its head just projecting above the surface. When any one approaches it at once lifts its head as if to listen.

When approached it becomes alarmed and swim[s] away; if pursued it flees with wonderful rapidity. Mr. Daines, who has seen the serpent, has several times attempted to kill the horrid creature, but failed. He shot it five times, but the balls, which evidently struck it, did not seem [to] harm the monster. It is probable that Mr. Daines will come to the city to collect a crowd of men to go down there armed with Winchester rifles, to kill or capture the sea serpent.

1892 - INDIANA

On 17 June 1892 the Vincennes **Commercial** published this article telling of the creature said to be half as large.

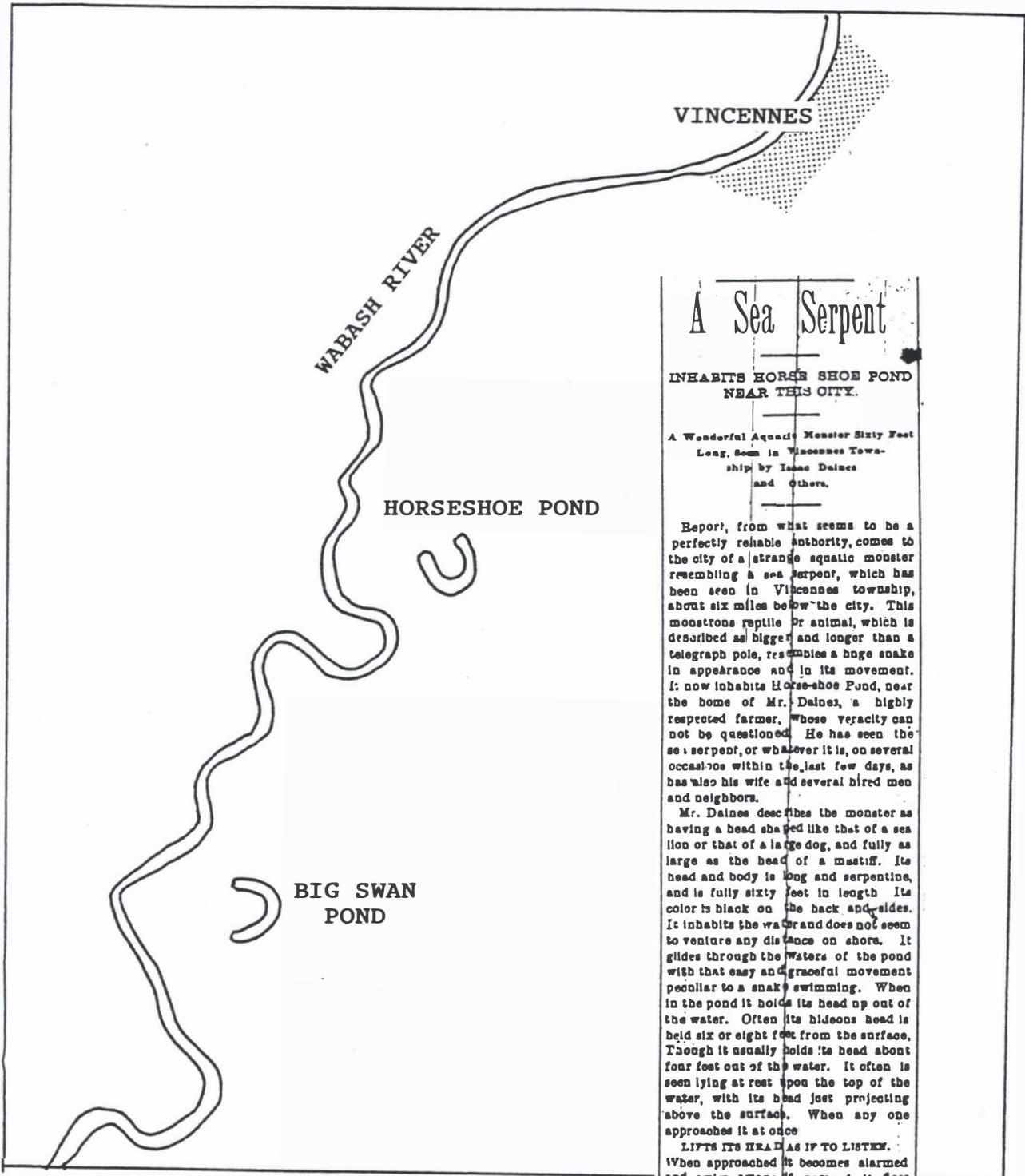


Fig. 1.

Oxbow lakes along the lower Wabash River were the locations for giant serpent reports in 1892.

Acknowledgements: My special thanks to Steven Smith and the Knox County Public Library, Vincennes, Indiana, for assistance when locating the Wabash Valley reports.

SEA SERPENT SEEN AGAIN

By Several Farmers, in Big Swan Pond -- Do Not Know What It Is

Some weeks ago Isaac Daines, who lives south of the city, reported that he had seen some strange monster resembling a sea serpent in a swamp near his home.

Recently the same strange monster was again seen in Big Swan Pond, ten miles south of this city, in Vincennes township, by several parties. Among those who claim to have seen the strange and hideous creature are Robt. L Hedges, William Wood, James Durham, Wildman Nolton, Lee Turnmeyer and other men of good repute for veracity.

The description given corresponds with that made by Mr. Daines. The monster resembles in form a huge snake. It is long and serpentine in shape and movement. Its head, however, is white and similar to the head of a dog in size and shape. It carries its head high above the water when swimming. Its throat is white, its back is black and its sides are spotted or mottled, red and yellow, like the side of a large water snake. The estimated length, as seen, is variously estimated, the average length being twenty or twenty-five feet long.

What this strange aquatic creature can be no one seems to know. Those who have not seen it believe it to be a large water-moccasin -- a snake peculiar to swamps and express the opinion that the reported size has been greatly exaggerated. Yet all who have seen the monster express an opinion entirely different. They do not know what it is, yet they all agree in the belief that it is no water-moccasin but a much larger and different looking thing altogether, especially about its head which resembles the head of a dog more than a snake.

1897 - MISSOURI

The Wilkesboro, North Carolina, **Chronicle** for 27 October 1897 drew a story from the St. Louis, Missouri, **Globe Democrat**. Credit for this item again goes to Loren Colman who has provided it from his collection of snakes about which we would like to know more.

FIGHT WITH A MISSOURI PYTHON

Farmers in the vicinity of Lock Springs, Mo., have been greatly harassed for several weeks through depredations on their chickens and pigs, and the mystery was not solved until the other day, when Newton McCrary started on the trail of what appeared to be a monster snake. He traveled a distance of two miles, when he came to the banks of the Grand River, where it appeared the reptile entered the water.

A search of the vicinity later on rewarded McCrary for his persistence. Apparently asleep, after having dispatched several fully grown chickens, lay a reptile of such monstrous proportions

that the man was transfixed with fear. His courage returning, McCrary sent a charge of buckshot into the head of the reptile and precipitately fled. The contortions of the snake as it lashed its tail and body against the ground and trees added to the fears of the now thoroughly terrified man.

Summoning the assistance of neighbors, McCrary cautiously led back an armed party, when, to his satisfaction, the life of the reptile was found to be extinct. It measured 16 feet and the body was as large as an ordinary stovepipe. The species of the reptile is not known, although it looks very much like a python. Early in the spring it was seen several miles up the Grand River, but the reports of the terrified spectators were not generally credited.

1901 - OHIO

From the Hartford (CT) **Courant** for 9 August 1901. Credit: Loren E. Coleman.

A SNAKE OF SIZE (Cleveland Plain Dealer)

Loudonville, Ohio, Aug. 6 - Within the past two weeks a number of boys have rushed to town and breathlessly told of seeing or being chased by an enormous snake. Little or no attention was paid to these stories at first until two responsible men reported having seen the monster, which left a path as though a huge log had been dragged along. One man said it was surely twenty-five feet long.

A big party of men and boys started out to find the reptile and located it in an abandoned barn, near Millbrook. The attack was made with shotguns and clubs and the snake was killed. It measured over twenty feet. It is supposed to have escaped from some circus, two having been in the vicinity this spring.

1933 - NEBRASKA

Randy Garlipp has sent me a copy of an article from **NebraskaLand Magazine** telling of a giant snake reported around Holdrege. [3] The town of Holdrege is located in south-central Nebraska. It is situated between the Platte and Republican Rivers where they come close to each other. This may account for the appearance of a snake if it was moving from one river to the other.

As recalled by Gus Larson, Oscar Bjorklund and this wife were the first to report evidence of the snake. Driving past their pasture they had seen what looked like a pole in the field. It was 15 or 18 feet long. He walked out to it when one end of it rose up and hissed at him. He hastily returned to his car and drove to town to tell others.

A group drove out to the field but saw nothing. Looking further they ran into Charlie Bjorklund, Oscar's brother.

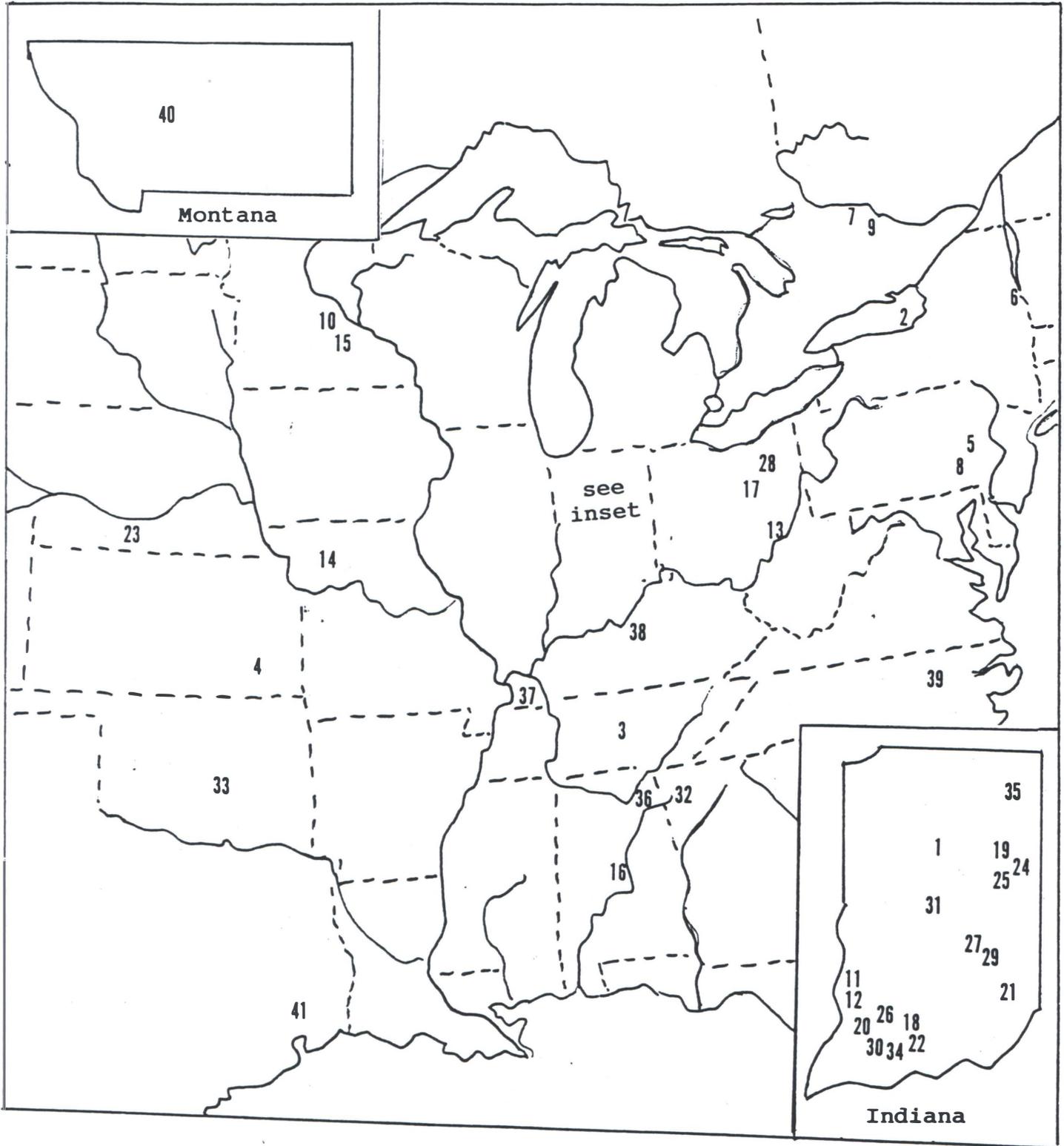


Fig. 2. Giant Serpents in Eastern North America

KEY TO FIG. 2 - GIANT SERPENTS IN EASTERN NORTH AMERICA

| YEAR | LOCATION | LENGTH | IN Wonders* |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. 1838 | Lake Manitou, Indiana | none given | 3(4): 103 |
| 2. 1867 | Lake Ontario | 15 feet | 3(4): 105 |
| 3. 1868 | Tennessee | 29 ½ feet | 3(4); 105+ |
| 4. 1869 | Fredonia, Kansas | 38 feet | 4(3): 80+ |
| 5. 1871 | Ritterville, Pennsylvania | 25-30 feet | 3(4): 106+ |
| 6. 1873 | Drowned Lands, New York | 30-40 feet | 3(4): 107+ |
| 7. 1874 | Ottawa Valley, Ontario | 15 feet | 3(4): 111 |
| 8. 1874 | Morgantown, Pennsylvania | 15-30 feet | 4(3): 81 |
| 9. 1880 | Ottawa Valley, Ontario | 20 feet | 3(4): 111+ |
| 10. 1887 | Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota | 30 feet | 4(3): 81 |
| 11. 1892 | Horseshoe Pond, Indiana | 60 feet | 4(3): 82 |
| 12. 1892 | Big Swan Pond, Indiana | 20-25 feet | 4(3): 84 |
| 13. 1893 | Ohio River | 8-15 feet | 3(4): 113 |
| 14. 1897 | Lock Springs, Missouri | 16 feet | 4(3): 84+ |
| 15. 1800s | Minnesota River, Minnesota | 12 feet | 3(4): 113+ |
| 16. 1900s | Coosa River, Alabama | 30 feet | 4(1): 11 |
| 17. 1901 | Loudonville, Ohio | 20+ feet | 4(3): 85 |
| 18. 1913 | French Lick, Indiana | none given | 4(1): 12 |
| 19. ca 1920 | Adams Co, Indiana | none given | 4(1): 12 |
| 20. 1921 | Petersburg, Indiana | none given | 4(1): 12 |
| 21. 1923 | Napoleon, Indiana | 20 feet | 4(1): 12 |
| 22. 1926 | Jasper, Indiana | none given | 4(1): 13 |
| 23. 1933 | Holdrege, Nebraska | 15-18 feet | 4(3): 84+ |
| 24. 1937 | Adams Co., Indiana | none given | 4(1): 13 |
| 25. 1940 | Berne, Indiana | 18 feet | 4(1): 14 |
| 26. 1943 | White River, Indiana | none given | 4(1): 14 |
| 27. 1943 | Shelby Co., Indiana | 20 feet | 4(1): 14 |
| 28. 1944 | Peninsula, Ohio | 19 feet | 4(1): 23+ |
| 29. 1946 | Norristown, Indiana | 18-25 feet | 4(1): 14+ |
| 30. 1946 | Pike Co., Indiana | none given | 4(1): 17 |
| 31. 1946 | Indianapolis, Indiana | 25 feet | 4(1): 17+ |
| 32. 1940s | Wax, Georgia | 20-26 feet | 4(1): 26 |
| 33. 1950 | Wewoka, Oklahoma | 25 feet | 4(1): 26+ |
| 34. 1951 | Flat Creek, Indiana | 17 feet | 4(1): 19 |
| 35. 1952 | Fort Wayne, Indiana | 18 feet | 4(1): 19+ |
| 36. 1959 | Albertville, Alabama | 30 feet | 4(1): 27 |
| 37. 1962 | Hazel, Kentucky | 28 feet | 4(1): 27 |
| 38. 1965 | Reynolds Lake, Kentucky | none given | 4(1): 28 |
| 39. 1974 | Nash Co., North Carolina | 16 ½ feet | 4(1): 28 |
| 40. 1978 | Cascade, Montana | 20-30 feet | 4(1): 28 |
| 41. 1982 | Ames, Texas | 25 feet | 4(1): 28+ |

* "Giant Snakes and Mystery Mounds in North America," **Wonders** 3(4): 91-116 (December 1994).

"Giant Snakes in the Twentieth Century," **Wonders** 4(1): 11-29 (March 1995).

Charlie told us he had been cultivating corn when something frightened his dog. Wondering what it was, he had climbed down from the tractor to investigate. There, looking like a green dragon in the cornstalks was the biggest snake he had ever seen.

"It ran me off!" Charlie exclaimed. Then he had gone looking for a club to use as a weapon, but when he returned the big serpent had gone.

The group from town found a trail of the serpent crossing the tilled ground. It pushed aside the soil on top of the furrows but did not disturb the bottoms. They traced it to a large plum thicket but found nothing further. The snake was not heard of again. As usual, it was assumed that it must have escaped from a circus. What else could it be?

The subject of giant snakes in North America is now in the "ethno-known" stage of cryptozoology. They are known to ordinary people but have not been acknowledged otherwise. The American Indians knew these enormous reptiles and made them part of their monumental artwork and gave them many names. [4] As the new Americans arrived and settled across the continent they have also run into the snakes. These newer Americans have greatly reduced the wetlands that seem to be the favored habitat of the snakes. [5]

The cant we hear from the scientific community is that there is "no scientific evidence of native giant snakes in North America." Given that science is the product of people paid to do scientific work as a profession, we can readily agree that scientific evidence is nonexistent. How could there be any? The presence of such snakes has never been considered and refuted. Their presence has never been considered at all. Science has been silent on the history of such snakes on the continent. All we have seen are occasional and ad hoc dismissals out-of-hand of individual reports. There is nothing to indicate that one scientist has spent so much as one day in his or her life seriously considering the possibility of native snakes as the source of this history.

Would we really be served now by some scientist sitting down for a day and writing a long dissertation on how such snakes are unheard of. Certainly not. We already know that scientists are completely ignorant of such things.

The statements of scientists do not represent a thoughtful and careful scrutiny of this subject. Their observations and arguments are in support of a blinding paradigm. For them, "There are no large undiscovered animals left in North America." Their responses are the same to all reports of cryptids, no matter how numerous or explicit. The accuracy and sources of reports do not even matter because the paradigm is fixed in the minds of biologists.

At some point in the coming century that paradigm will be replaced by another: "Large undiscovered animals are numerous in North America though their populations are small, just as they are numerous throughout the world." All my writings in cryptozoology have and will serve to support the validity of this new paradigm.

Some scarce animals like these American giant snakes may not survive to be sought by future biologists. Our continued neglect

of them may mean they will be extinct before we have given them serious attention. In the present circumstances one of these giant snakes would have to be run over by a bus filled with sober herpetologists before they and their history would be recognized. Such incidents do not happen. Knowledge does not fall from the sky and hit us on the head like Newton's apple. Specimens do not crawl into a laboratory and expire beside a bottle of preserving fluid. Some thought, some vision, and some effort are required.

What I have placed before you is the first step in a telebiological approach to an ethno-known enigma, survivors of unknown species of giant reptiles. Telebiology is by default the province of amateurs. They will provide the energy to collect and study the records of such unusual snakes. Progress is in their hands.

The views of the lazy biologist will be that this is an accumulation of escapees from circuses and private owners, exaggerations of commonplace snakes, and outright fabrications put into the common press.

There is no evidence to support such dismissals. But the lazy biologist does not require evidence when turning up his nose at such reports. It is only those who take a positive view of the reports who are required to support their statements with evidence.

Lazy biologists outside of North America seem especially eager to propose that this continent has been overrun with careless circuses. They imagine that traveling circuses have been disgorging all manner of exotic animals into the countryside, conveniently explaining away whatever cryptids are reported here.

There is a better case to be made for real animals that have always existed in the wild. The presence of rare but still unknown animals is the norm, not the exception, for reasons given in my book **Natural Mysteries**. [6]

Today there are but patches of surviving wetlands where once they were extensive. In such places the giant snakes may have survived into our time. There is not likely to be room for the largest snakes that were reported in the last century. Still some enormous and quite unknown type of snake may yet be seen and touched by someone willing to take up the challenge of finding them.

NOTES

1. Willard De Mille Price, *THE AMAZING MISSISSIPPI* (NY: John Day Co., 1962), 111-12.
2. LaVerna E. Leipold, *THE LAKE MINNETONKA BOOK OF DAYS: A DAY-BY-DAY HISTORY OF THE LAKE MINNETONKA AREA*, Minnesota Historical Society.
3. Gus Larson, "Python Posse," *NEBRASKALAND*, October 1970, 8-9.
4. Mark A. Hall, "Giant Snakes and Mystery Mounds in North America," *WONDERS* 3(4): 101-102 (December 1994).
5. Mark A. Hall, *NATURAL MYSTERIES* 2nd ed (Mpls: MAHP, 1991), 1-22.
6. *Ibid.*, 22-25.

MORE ABOUT...

THE YETI.....Daniel Taylor-Ide grew up in India and has been fascinated by the Yeti all his life. He has searched for the Yeti and for a species of tree bear. His story is told in *Something Hidden Behind the Ranges: A Himalayan Quest* (San Francisco, Mercury House, 1995, \$14.95, ISBN 1-56279-073-0).

"THE HAIRY MAN" OF ALASKA.....Many names given to the "wildmen" of Alaska are cited in Bill Sherwonit's "Legends of the Hairy Man: Alaska's Sasquatch" in *Alaska Magazine*, October 1995, pp. 24-27 (Credit: Mindy Ashner).

THE EASTERN CATAMOUNT...Mountain lions have been seen in Vermont every decade since 1881. Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and eastern Canada have their recent sightings, as discussed in Anthony Brandt's "Lions on the Haunt" in *Outdoor Life* for January 1996, Vol. 197 No. 1, pp.14-16, 18 (Credit: Lori Bohall).

GREAT SWAMPS IN OHIO.....The Marshes of Southwestern Lake Erie is a historical view and a present-day snapshot of the natural history of the wetlands at the western end of Lake Erie. The Black Swamp is briefly treated. The authors, Louis W. Campbell and Claire Gavin, mention only in passing that "tales of monstrous snakes appear in early writings." Published by Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio, 1995.

CRYPTOZOOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION.....An introduction to sources and methods in the pursuit of unknown animals has been privately published by Chad Arment. His 65-page book is *The Search for Enigmatic Animals: A Guide to Cryptozoological Investigation Techniques* (1995). It sells for \$10 from Chad at 7905 S. Kessler-Frederick Road, Tipp City, Ohio 45371.

BOOKS.....More book dealers are recognizing cryptozoology as a category of books to trade in. Two of these dealers are:

Steven Simpson, Natural History Books
23, Melton Street
Melton Constable, NR24 2DB
England

Tel. 01-263-860-170
Fax. 01-263-860-175

Paul Gritis, Natural History Books
P.O. Box 4298
Bethlehem, PA 18018, USA
Tel./Fax. (610) 954-0466

MEGAMOUTH...A rare megamouth shark washed up dead on a beach at Fukuoka City, Japan, on 29 November 1994. It was thought to be a female. The length and weight varied in reports from 4.5 to 4.81 meters and 790 to 800 kg. The first megamouth recognized was discovered by accident off Hawaii in 1976. This would be the first megamouth found on the coast of the Sea of Japan. Others have turned up along the Pacific Ocean.