INDIANS IN CANADA

PAST AND PRESENT

AN INTERIM RESOURCE UNIT PREPARED FOR USE BY TEACHERS OF PUPILS OF INDIAN ANCESTRY IN ALBERTA

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been prepared as a resource unit for teachers who are concerned with the education of pupils of Indian ancestry, and also for those teachers less directly concerned with this process but who still have an interest in the history of Indians in Canada.

This project was originally suggested by an enterprise carried out by the staff of the Blue Quills Residential School, Saddle Lake Inspectorate, under the chairmanship of Sister Annette Mageau. When this enterprise was discussed by the Sub-Committee on Instructional Material for Children living in Forested Areas the task of expanding and modifying the contents, and of producing the new material in quantity was accepted by Northland School Division No. 61.

No claim is made that this unit contains any original research, or that it is adequate to satisfy the existing need for a concise description of the history of the Indians in Alberta.

This unit was prepared by

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CHAPTER I

PRE-COLUMBIAN INDIANS

The Origin of the Indians

It is now generally accepted that man, however his creation came about, had his origin in the Old World. The earliest fossil remains of man-like creatures have been found with some frequency in China, Java, the Middle East, Europe, and quite recently in South Africa. The exact location of man's origin is not now certain and possibly never will be, but the fact remains that some hundreds of skeletons of creatures intermediate in structure between men and apes have been discovered, and without exception these have been found in the Old World.

Skeletal remains found in the Americas show a bone and skull structure identical with those of modern man, homo sapiens, a creature who appeared on the earth about one hundred thousand years ago. Therefore, on the basis of this negative evidence it must be assumed that man entered the New World after that time. Estimates of the time of man's arrival on the continent vary from ten to thirty thousand years ago. These estimates are based on several different methods of dating the past, which can be classified as relative and absolute dating.

Relative dating depends on methods which are essentially geological. The stratigraphic sequence of deposits made during the advance and retreat of the continental glaciers makes it possible to order a sequence of moraines or varve clays on the basis that the older deposits lie below the newer.

This allows the investigator to state with some confidence that a certain deposit is older than another. In rare cases it may be possible, where the deposits are associated with annually recurring phenomena such as freezing and thawing, to state an absolute age with some precision, as indicated by Sten de Geer's investigations in Sweden.

Yet another method of relative dating is by the analysis of plant pollens which have fallen into ponds and marshes and have been preserved. Such pollen grains may be

readily identified under the microscope by the palynologist who makes a quantitative analysis of the different species of plants, layer by layer, as revealed by the fossil pollen, and can then reconstruct the vegetation and hence the climate that prevailed in the area at the time of the deposition.

The two most common methods of absolute dating are by the radio-carbon method pioneered by Dr. Willard Libby since the war; and by dendrochronology, a technique used by Dr. A.E. Douglass in the early years of this century.

The radio-carbon method can only be used with organic substances. Briefly, Carbon 14, a radio-active heavy form of carbon is constantly created in the earth's upper atmosphere and all living matter contains a constant proportion of this substance, which, though it is constantly breaking down into the normal Carbon 12, is continually replenished through new intake. At the moment of death, this intake ceases, and the Carbon 14 disintegrates at a fixed rate. The "half life" of Carbon 14 is about 5,700 years. If a specimen of organic matter contains one ounce of Carbon 14 at the moment of death, in 5,700 years it will contain one-half ounce, in 11,400 years it will contain one-quarter ounce, and one-eighth of an ounce in 22,800 years. At the moment, the technique only permits dating up to about 50,000 years ago and is subject to a possible statistical error so that Carbon 14 datings are usually given with a plus or minus error. Nevertheless, this technique checks satisfactorily with other methods of dating, and is still being refined. Other methods of radio-active dating are presently being explored.

Dendrochronology is based on the annual growth rings in wood. It is well known that a dry year produces a narrow, dark ring, and that heavy rainfall produces a light-coloured thick ring. Working in New Mexico, Dr. Douglass collected hundreds of pieces of wood from abandoned Indian dwellings and by painstakingly matching the patterns of wet and dry years, he established a relative chronology for that area going back to A.D. 700. This latter date has now been pushed back to 59 B.C. Archeologists

who locate wooden remains that they wish to date can match the annual growth ring pattern with a master tree ring calendar, and establish the time at which the tree was growing. However, a tree may have been long dead before an aborigine Indian put it to use as a building rafter or dug-out canoe.

As to the evidence of man's earliest residence in America, there is much disagreement. A recent find near Puebla in Mexico suggests that man was here more than 30,000 years ago. Charred bones of dwarf mammoths on Santa Rosa Island off the coast of California have been dated by the Carbon 14 process as being about 29,000 years old. There is no real evidence that these bones, though separated as though jointed for cooking, were burned in a man-made fire. At Tule Springs, in Nevada, split and burned bones are dated as being about 28,000 years old. Carbon 14 tests carried out on cracked mammoth, camel and bison bones found in conjunction with unmistakable signs of human occupancy in Sandia Cave, New Mexico, indicate tentatively that the age of these bones, and hence of human occupancy, was about 20,000 B.C.

There is no doubt about the presence of man here 10,000 years ago. In 1927, J. D. Figgins, was engaged in archaeological work near Folsom, New Mexico where he had previously found an interesting and unusual projectile point about two inches long made of a pinkish brown stone called chert. Down the centre of the fact of the head was a distinct narrow fluting (which assisted in the attachment of a split haft to the head). This point was found embedded between the ribs of an extinct type of bison. Further work uncovered the bones of another twenty-two bison and nineteen Folsom points. Significantly the bison remains were for the most part without the tail bones which indicates that the animals were skinned.

Since that date Folsom points have been found from Alaska to Georgia and it appears that Folsom man, though his own skeleton has not yet been identified, roamed the earth of North America in conjunction with the mammoth, the camel, the bison and with many other vanished species of game.

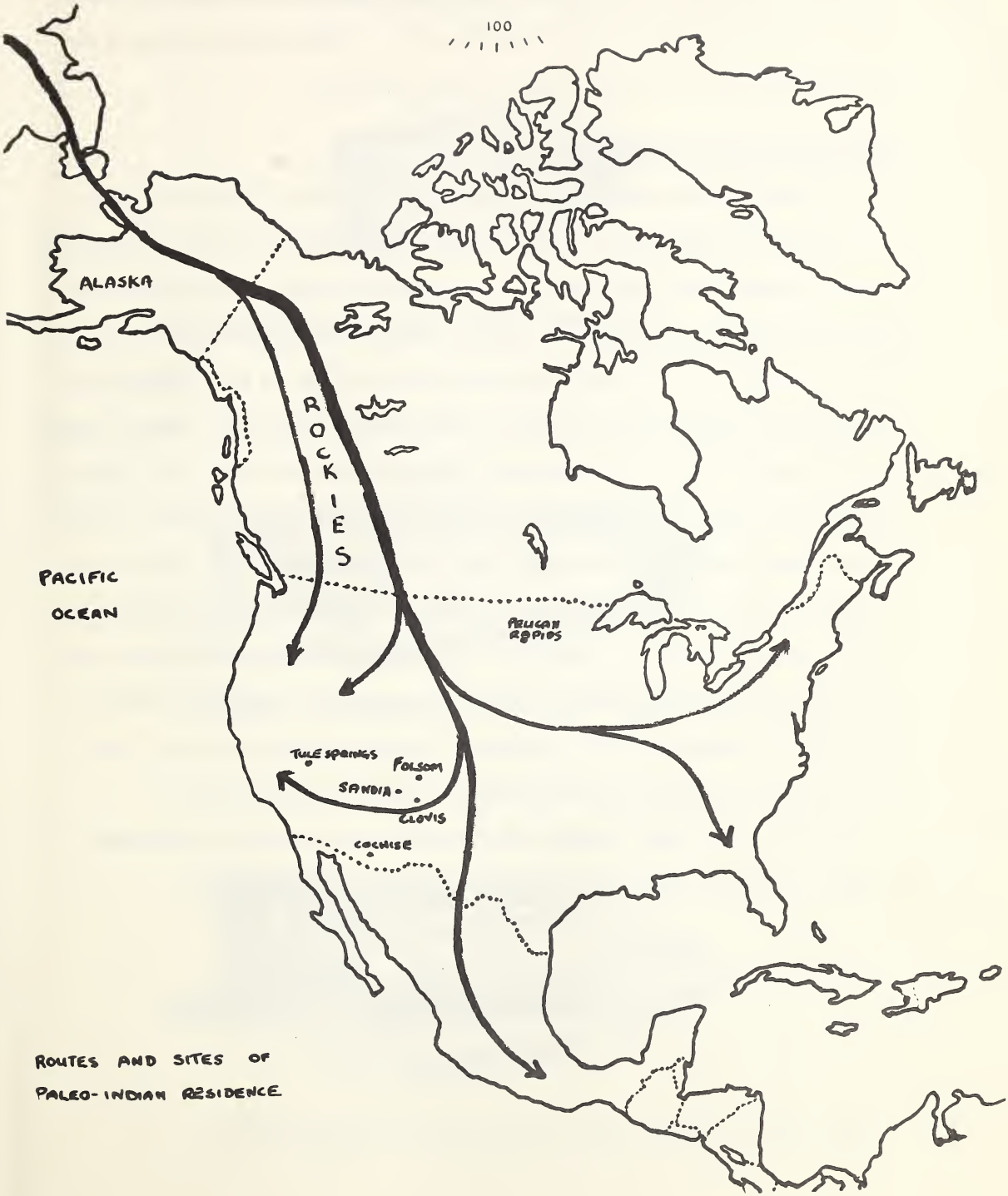
If man did appear on the North American continent even 20,000 years ago it is certain that this was long before man learned to fashion any form of seaworthy boat or canoe, so that the arrival could only have been by land.

The Asian continent at the Bering Strait is less than sixty miles from Alaska and less than 10,000 years ago the Northern Hemisphere was undergoing the last Ice Age, during which age the ice mounted up to a height of 10,000 feet, or about two miles thick in parts of Greenland. Such immense quantities of moisture were locked up in these ice sheets as to lower the ocean levels of the world by about six hundred feet. Since the Bering Strait would become a land bridge between the two continents if only one hundred twenty feet of water were drawn off, man must have been able to cross from Asia to Alaska dry shod until the Ice Age ended.

The first few wandering families of Paleo-Indians differed slightly in physical type from contemporary Indians. The skulls tended to be longer and narrower with a longitudinal ridge. Muscle attachments on the skull and the limbs indicate a more heavily muscled physical type than the present day Indian. On the whole, the ancient Indian is less Mongoloid than the contemporary Indian which suggests that the first immigrants from Asia date from a time prior to the marked differentiation of homo sapiens into Caucasion and Mongoloid races; while this same progressive differentiation explains that successive waves of immigrants were more and more of the Mongoloid type.

The Paleo-Indians lived by hunting. Their weapons were probably wooden spears and clubs which have long since perished. It is considered that these ancient Indians arrived prior to the invention of the bow and arrow, which they discovered independently in later centuries; prior to the domestication of animals; and certainly prior to the discovery of farming. It is perhaps false to write of successive waves of immigrants. Family groups probably drifted slowly from Asia to Alaska, perhaps remaining for a generation in one area while other groups passed round or through their hunting ranges, perhaps making their way in successive centuries along the coast line, or down the

MAP I



ROUTES AND SITES OF
PALEO-INDIAN RESIDENCE

Mackenzie valley east of the Rockies into the Great Plains and on through the steamy valleys of Central America into South America. It is 11,000 miles from Alaska to the Straits of Magellan, but men were there by about 8,000 B.C.

Paleo-Indian Culture and Environment

By 10,000 B.C. men were well established in the Americas. Their mode of life can be reconstructed in part from the objects dug up at their camp sites. The most frequently occurring chipped stone objects are spear and dart points which tend to indicate that hunting was the dominant subsistence activity. The next most frequent items are knives and scrapers used in skinning and carving meat and in dressing the hides. Other stone objects include grinding stones for reducing edible seeds to crude flour, mortars, pestles, grooved stone balls which were connected by thongs to make the "bolas" now commonly associated with South American gauchos, and shaft straighteners and smoothers. Grinding stones were more common than spear heads in the drier areas of the south west and it is probably fair to state that man here had adapted his mode of life to the collection of seeds as opposed to absolute dependence on hunting. However, it remains true that until about 8,000 years ago the Paleo-Indian was essentially a wandering nomad depending for his subsistence on the presence of wild game and sharing the earth with a wide variety of animals which are now extinct or much reduced in number.

A brief list of the larger animals of the Pleistocene fauna serves to indicate both the former abundance and variety of animal life and the present survivors.

SPEAR POINTS FROM PALEO-INDIAN SITES

(ABOUT NATURAL SIZE)

FOLSOM POINT FROM ABOUT 8000 B.C.

CLOVIS POINT FROM ABOUT 10,000 B.C.

ONE-SHOULDERED SANDIA POINT FROM ABOUT 20,000 B.C.

BIG GAME ANIMALS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN PLEISTOCENE
(Extinct general indicated by ✡)

1. Carnivora

(Felidae)	(Canidae)	(Ursidae)
Lion ✡	Dire wolf ✡	Grizzly Bears
Puma	Timber wolf	Brown bears
Lynx		Black bears
Saber-tooth ✡		Glacial bears
		Polar bears
		Arctothere ✡

2. Even toed ungulates

(Cervidae)	(Antilocapridae)	(Camelidae)
Giant elk-moose ✡	Pronghorn	Titanotylopus ✡
Caribou	Stockoceros ✡	Camelops ✡
Deer	Hayoceros ✡	Tanupolama ✡
Elk	Tetrameryx ✡	
Moose	Capromeryx ✡	
(Antelope)	(Muskoxen)	
Aberrant antelope	Bootherium ✡	
Saiga ✡	Symbos ✡	
Eucatherium ✡	Muskox	
(Cattle)	(Sheep)	
Yak ✡	Rocky Mountain Sheep	
Superbison ✡	Stone's Sheep	
Buffalo	Dall's Sheep	

3. Odd toed ungulates

   (Horses)

   Giant ✡

   Scott's ✡

   Stilt legged ✡

   Tau"

4. Pachyderms

(Elephants)	(Mastodonts)
Imperial Mammoth ✡	Mastodon ✡
Woolly Mammoth ✡	Stegomastodon ✡
Jefferson's Mammoth ✡	

5. Ground Sloths

   Megatherium ✡

   Mylodon ✡

   Nothrotherium ✡

   Megalonyx ✡

By about 6,000 B.C. the beasts which the hunters followed were essentially modern. The native American horse had gone with the mammoth and the mastodon; the most likely explanation for this is the change in climate as the glaciers retreated to the north. There is an intriguing reference in Elizabethan literature to an English sailor, who, escaping from Spanish hands in Mexico, wandered to the north and returned to England after many years, and included in his account some mention of seeing hairy elephant-like beasts on the plains of what is now the mid-west of the United States. His story is, alas, not supported by any other references.

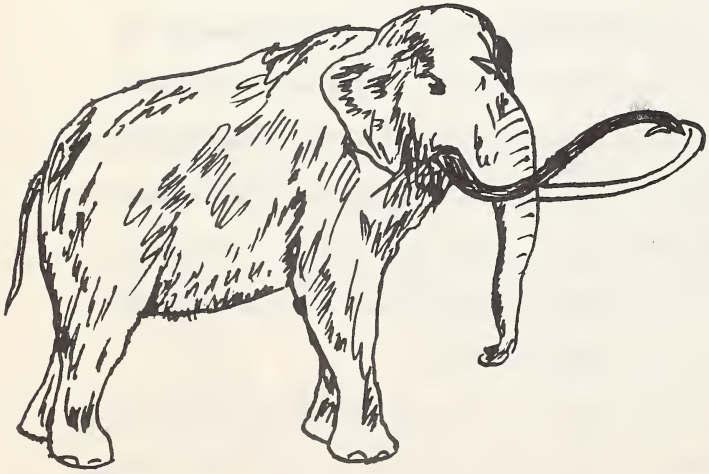
Some time after this retreat of the glaciers occurred the beginnings of agriculture in North America. Cultivated maize (corn) has been found in Bat Cave, New Mexico and has been dated at about 4,000 B.C. In Mexico the same primitive corn has been

EXTINCT FORMS FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN

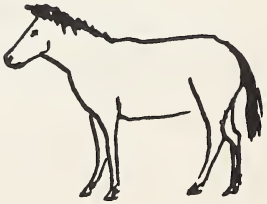
PLEISTOCENE

Lion (Felis atrox)

Camel (Titanotylopus)



Imperial Mammoth



Tau horse

dated in southern Puebla at about 5,000 B.C., and since the parent wild varieties of maize are native to southern Mexico and Central America, the origin of the development of farming must lie to the south of the United States border and must be dated considerably prior to 5,000 B.C. It would appear then that the domestication of plants was an almost simultaneous invention in both the New and the Old World.

The cultivation of various kinds of corn spread from the south-west to the north and east. The oldest type is pop corn and dates, as mentioned, from 4,000 B.C.; the second oldest type, flint corn, is the only kind of corn found archaeologically in the east and in the northern half of the prairies, dating back about one thousand years. The most recent type to appear on the prairies and in the east of North America is called dent corn. The earliest reference to the appearance of this corn in the east occurs in 1705, so that the variety appears to have arrived there in historic times. The present commercial strains of corn raised in the United States are crosses between the Indian flint and dent corns.

A great variety of plants were cultivated by the Indians of North America. A partial list includes:

Sunflower	Nopal cactus
Jerusalem artichoke	Avocado
Corn	Black cherry
Pineapple	Guava
Papaya	Plums
Coconut	All beans except the European broad bean
Tomato	
Banana	Pod mesquite
Peanut	Coca
Sweet potato	Tobacco

Manioc	Sisal
Yam	Cotton
Red pepper	Spinach
Chilies	Cacao (chocolate)
Squash	Cochineal cactus

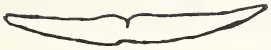
The predominant crops in North America were maize, beans and squash in that order.

The use of metals in North America, excluding Mexico, seems to have been originated in Wisconsin, Michigan and the Lake Superior Basin. The remains of wooden levers, birchbark buckets, hammerstones and charcoal have been found in old mining pits around the shores of the Great Lakes; when the organic remains were tested for radio-carbon the ages, of the organic remains indicate that the Old Copper Culture, as it is called, dates back some six or seven thousand years ago.

The method of mining was to follow veins of pure native copper from the surface outcrops by digging pits. Rocks were cracked by heating and quenching with cold water, and the native copper was pried out with wooden levers. No attempt was apparently made to smelt or cast copper weapons. The metal was shaped by cold hammering and annealing. The most common use of copper was in fashioning socketed spear points, knives, fish hooks, gorges and single barbed harpoon points. Adzes, chisels, wedges, drills, needles, beads and pendants were also fashioned. The use of gorges may need some explanation. A gorge is a slender double pointed device which is the ancestor of the fish hook. The fishing line was tied to a groove in the centre of the gorge, which was concealed in some bait--perhaps a worm. When the bait was taken by a fish, a pull on the line set the gorge cross-wise in the fish's throat and so it could be landed. The illustration indicates roughly the stages in the development of the primitive fish hook.

Curiously enough gorges made from needles with the eyes ground off were used in France not long ago for catching eels.

STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FISH HOOK
(After A. A. Mayer)



Stone gorge

Wire gorge or bricole

Later form of gorge

Double hook

Double barbed hook

Single barbed hook

Hooks were also made from stone or sea shells, and on the North West coast artifical stone shrimp were used as fish lures.

The Old Copper Indians were rather tall and muscular. They had long heads with some sagittal cresting and rather narrow faces. They derived their food primarily from hunting and fishing. The animals that they hunted included deer, elk, caribou, bison, ducks, swans, cranes and owls. They used the spear probably with the assistance of a spear-thrower. Fish were taken with nets, spears, harpoons, hooks, and gorges.

These people appear to be the first in the Great Lakes region to have domesticated dogs. There appear to have been two types of dog; one was about the size of the coyote and the other, probably derived from a cross between the timber wolf and the coyote,

was about the size of a large husky dog. Boats of some kind must have been used by these Indians since they had residences on islands. No remains have been found, so that it is unknown whether these crafts were dug-outs or bark canoes.

The making of pottery seems to correlate highly with the incidence of agriculture. The earliest pottery is rough, unpainted, pointed at the base so that it could not be stood upright on a flat surface, and ornamented as though a rough cord had been applied to the soft surface before firing. The use of pottery in boiling food represents a great advance over the older method of stone boiling by dropping heated stones in the liquid. Direct fire boiling depends on the presence of adequate fuel, of pottery stone or metal containers which can resist the fire, and such conditions were present in the Arctic, and in the prairies and the east where pottery was practiced. In the western sub-arctic stone boiling was the prevalent mode of boiling.

Thus, several of the steps by which man advanced to a civilized state in the Old World were duplicated in the New World. The domestication of animals, the smelting of iron and the introduction of the wheel were wholly or partially absent from the Americas, and no written language ever was invented in North America in pre-Columbian times.

In South America llamas were domesticated and used as pack animals, though the nature of the terrain did not encourage their adaptation for draught purposes. Such animals as were used for draught purposes in the Old World--the horse, the cow, the buffalo and the ass--are not found in the Americas until historic times. Although wheeled toys have been found in Mexico which indicate that the principle of the wheel was not unknown in America, the idea remained undeveloped. The list of animals domesticated in the Americas is confined to the llama, the guinea-pig and guinea-hen and to the dog. It may be of interest to note that the reindeer, closely akin to the caribou, and the European elk, almost indistinguishable from the moose, were both domesticated by the natives of Northern Scandinavia, though not by the Indians of Northern Canada

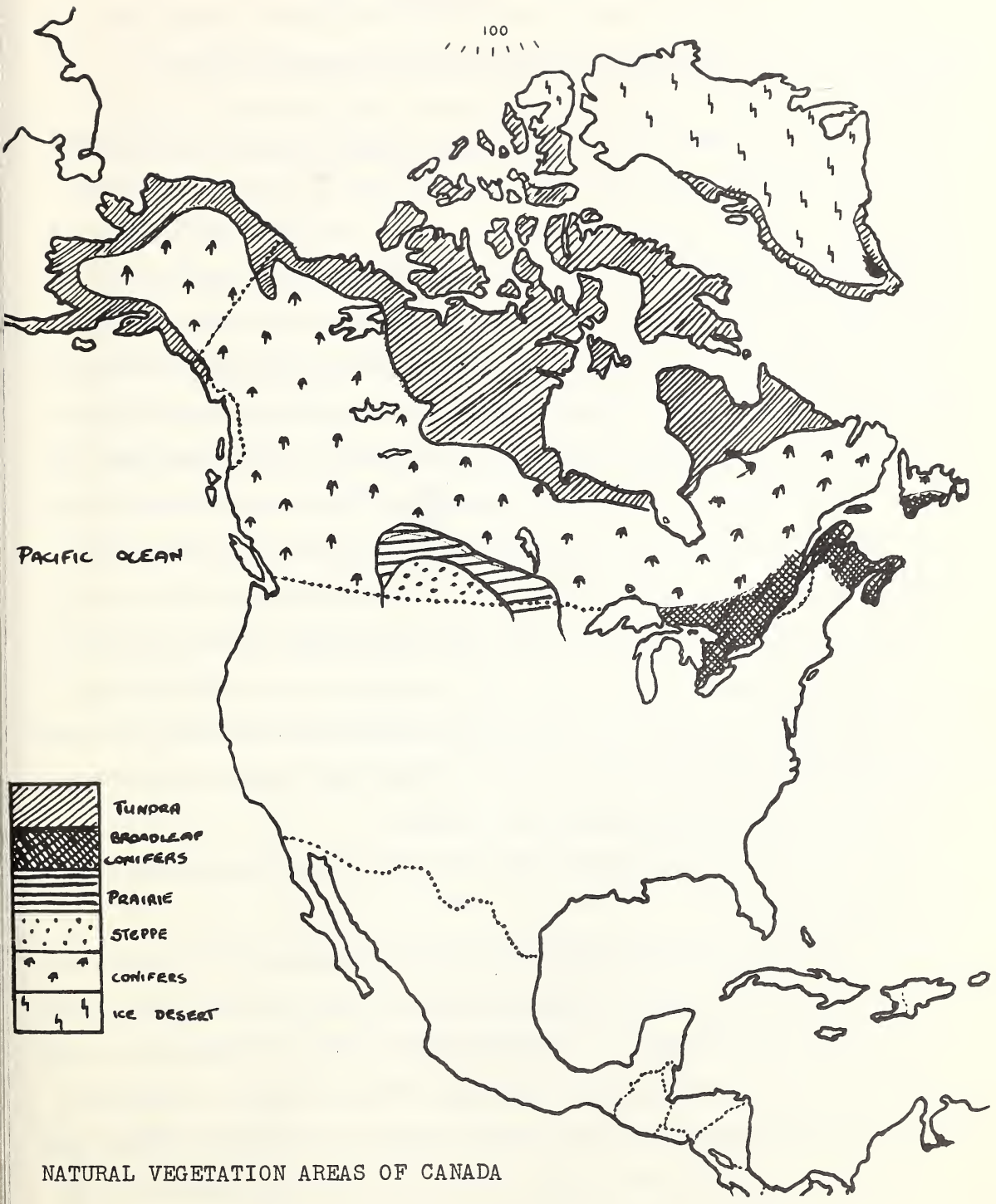
and Alaska. The bison of America is apparently untameable; it is not related to the European and Asiatic buffalo which is readily domesticated.

In their usage of metals, the pre-Columbian Indians never did succeed in extracting metals from ores by smelting, and the extremely high temperatures required to obtain iron from iron ores were beyond their technology.

SUGGESTED PUPIL ACTIVITIES BASED ON CHAPTER I

1. Collect or draw pictures to illustrate a list of animals found both in the Old World and the New World.
2. As above for animals found only in the New World.
3. Study and illustrate the signs of glaciation on topography.
4. Make from stone and wire a collection illustrating the development of the fish hook.
5. Try to make a fire by using a bow drill and describe how or if it was done.
6. Describe how an animal may be trapped by snares or dead falls or pit falls. Make a model of the trap.
7. Try, by breaking stones or by finding natural suitably shaped ones, to make a spear head and attach it to a haft.
8. Explain in what respects a flint spear head is superior and inferior to a copper head. The copper head will be no sharper, for instance, than the stone one.
9. Find out if a brown paper bag filled with water can be used to boil the contents when placed over an open fire.
10. Living on meat alone, an adult may need about 8 lbs. daily. How many moose, deer or caribou would this mean killing for a family unit of six persons in one year?
11. List and collect specimens of the edible roots and berries found in the area.
12. Make specimens or models of such weapons as bows and arrows, bolas, slings, harpoons for the class and describe their use.

MAP 2



NATURAL VEGETATION AREAS OF CANADA

CHAPTER II

THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN IN HISTORIC TIMES

To a large degree the lives of the Indians were adapted to their physical surroundings. Where the climate was extreme and the soils poor it is useless to look for any agricultural development. The tribal life associated with a horse-buffalo culture and a plentiful supply of meat is not found in the sub-arctic where the game animals are less gregarious and the family unit is the basis of subsistence by hunting and trapping.

For this reason Map 2 is given, illustrating a simplified version of the natural vegetation areas of Canada. The map suggests that in considering the Indians of Alberta the only natural vegetation regions concerned are those of the Coniferous forest, the tall grass Prairies and the short grass Steppes. But in historic times the Indian not only adapted to the climate and the vegetation with its associated animal life, but also responded to the pressures of other cultures. This pressure was applied from the east, from whence came the demand for furs, and a supply of traps, kettles, axes, knives, blankets and beads. Not only goods came in exchange for furs, but with them came the French and English traders and explorers, and with them or before them came bands of Indian entrepreneurs trading on their own account, and dispossessing the resident tribes from their hunting grounds by force of arms.

For this reason some mention must be made of the tribes of Eastern Canada in historic times.

The Indian language families east of the Rockies are divided into four groups; The Athapaskan family being found generally to the north west of the North Saskatchewan River but excluding the Arctic tundras; the Algonquian family extending from the south of the North Saskatchewan River, excluding the short grass Steppes in the south of Alberta and Saskatchewan, to the Atlantic Ocean on the east; the Siouan family found on the steppe area; and the Iroquoian family found in the Niagara peninsula and the

St. Lawrence lowlands and extending south into New York State.

The Athapaskan and Algonquian families roughly coincide with the coniferous forest areas, the Iroquoian families with the broad leaved and coniferous mixed forest where the soils are capable of supporting agriculture.

The Iroquoian Tribes

The Iroquoian tribes are believed to have migrated to the north east from the Mississippi valley and the Gulf of Mexico arriving near Lake Erie and Lake Ontario about one thousand years ago. By 1350, they were firmly settled in New York State. Some of the Iroquoian tribes formed the famous alliance known as the Five Nations--Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and the Mohawk. At a later date the Tuscaroras joined this organization. The Huron Confederacy north of the St. Lawrence was also of Iroquoian tribes but was opposed to the Five Nations.

The Iroquois were agriculturists of the "slash and burn" type, living in communal long houses and raising crops of corn, squash, and beans. Hunting was a secondary occupation.

In common with most Indian tribes the Five Nations sent out war parties of volunteers serving under an accepted leader, and armed with war clubs, spears, bows and arrows. Defensive equipment was furnished by a primitive form of armour made of wooden rods covering the body, and wicker work shields covered with raw-hide. Prior to their introduction to fire arms they appear to have preferred to fight as formed bodies of men in close order. They constructed stockaded "forts" and attacked such forts by rearing their elm bark canoes against the walls and scaling the palisades on the rough bark of the canoe bottom. After they realized the futility of opposing powder and shot with clubs and shields they appear to have revised their strategy and resorted to stealthy raids and ambushes. They were not always successful in their maraudings. Cartier found the Iroquois on the north bank of the St. Lawrence, but Champlain found, seventy years later, that they had been driven south by the Algonquin tribes.

The Iroquois of New York State obtained muskets from the Dutch of New Amsterdam in exchange for furs. When the local supply of beaver was exhausted, they acted as middlemen and bought furs from the tribes to the west. The French Hurons were soon in the same trade. By 1635 it is noted in the Jesuit Relation that indiscriminate slaughter of the beaver would lead to their extermination around Three Rivers. The Hurons and the Iroquois found themselves competing for the supply of western pelts. The Hurons were also armed with muskets, though the French would supply these arms to Christian Indians only, whereupon many Hurons were speedily converted to Christianity.

A commercial war between the Iroquois and the Hurons ensued and was resolved in favour of the former. In an unprecedented winter campaign using over 1,000 braves, they descended on the Hurons in 1648 and 1649 and practically wiped them out. The survivors fled to the protection of the French settlements or were adopted into the tribes of the victors. The Neutral, Erie and Tobacco tribes were eliminated in their turn by 1655. In 1653, not a single beaver skin was sold in Montreal.

But the Iroquois were exhausted with their efforts. They were simultaneously engaged with the powerful Susquehannas to the south, and with the arrival in New France of the Carignan-Salieres Regiment, the Iroquois were forced to sue for peace by 1667, and the channels of trade were re-opened. The chief source of furs now lay to the west of Lake Michigan, and the lower prices obtaining for English trade goods led the Indians to trade with the Iroquois and hence with New York, as it had now become.

The French solution to this problem was to take the trade goods to the trapping grounds. Trading posts were pushed further and further to the west, south and north, and were transported to New France by Lake Huron and the Ottawa River route which avoided the danger of interference by the Iroquois.

The Five Nations shrewdly played the English and French aspirations for dominance against each other and preserved a position of great influence in the eighteenth century.

They supported the English against the French in the War of the Austrian Succession (1756 to 1763), but split in their allegiance during the American Revolutionary War. The losing tribes fled to Canada where they received reserves along the St. Lawrence River. Many of the Iroquois entered the employ of the fur trading companies as canoemen and were scattered over the west.1

The Cree Tribes

The Cree or Kristeneau tribes called themselves "nai ah yah' og"--those who speak the same tongue. Originally they were part of the Ojibwa of Chippewa nation living in bands in the forests between Hudson's Bay and Lake Superior. Armed with English muskets from the Hudson's Bay forts they moved westward, seeking less populated hunting grounds and a more plentiful supply of beaver. Some southern bands of Crees allied themselves with the Assiniboines and pushed west, emerging from the woods onto the prairies on the valley of the Upper Saskatchewan about 1800. The Assiniboines left soon afterwards for the plains of the Missouri.

These Plains Crees now engaged in the pursuit of the buffalo on horseback, and were soon engaged in warfare with the Sioux and the Blackfoort which continued sporadically until the extermination of the buffalo. The last engagement with the Blackfoot was near Lethbridge, Alberta, in 1870 when more than two hundred Crees were killed.

Other bands of Woodland Crees remained within the forests in their movements to the west, driving before them the less well-armed and less warlike Athapaskan Indians. They found the country around Lake Athabasca inhabited by the Beaver and Slave Indians, and when peace was negotiated the Slave and Athabasca Rivers formed a rough boundary between the warring tribes. The Cree advance to the west was halted owing in part to the ravages of smallpox in 1776 and 1782. After additional epidemics in 1816, 1817, 1818, and 1838, the Hudson's Bay Company introduced vaccine inoculation and

1 The late Sir Winston Churchill was partly descended from the Iroquois on his mother's side.

the disease rarely again assumed serious proportions.

The Athapaskan Indians

The Athapaskan Indian tribes include the Chipewyans, Slaves, Dogribs, Yellowknives, Beavers and Carriers. They were hunters and trappers and were less affected by the advent of the white fur traders than other Indians. Their hunting lands are unsuitable for agriculture so that there was little temptation for white settlement. The most important food sources were moose, caribou, bear, beaver, buffalo, geese, ducks, swans, and fish which were plentiful in the numerous lakes. From the Algonquins these tribes learned how to make canoes (though of spruce or cedar bark instead of the more southerly birch), tepees and wigwams.Their cooking vessels were of spruce bark and they practiced stone boiling. They made the finest snow-shoes in North America and perhaps introduced this craft to the Algonquins.

The Siouan Tribes

The Siouan tribes are now regarded as the typical Plains Indians, living by hunting the buffalo and fully deserving of their reputation as "the finest light cavalry in the world." Yet they are but recent comers to the plains of the west. In the seventeenth century, Father Hennepin found them in Minnesota, devoted to agriculture, without horses, and by no means distinguished by their courage and prowess in war. From this area the Siouan tribes were driven by the fiercer Ojibwa, and they reached the Missouri by about 1775. There they traded for horses with the Old Settlers (the plains tribes who resided there before the horse, and supported themselves by agriculture and by hunting the buffalo on foot) and transformed themselves from timid farmers to warlike buffalo hunters.

The Indians of the horse-buffalo culture typical of the Great Plains had a brief existence. Ten thousand years ago the climate was less extreme and the land was covered with lakes, streams, and forests, supported by a heavy rainfall. Here Folsom

man roamed, leaving behind him his distinctive spear points. As the climate became drier, the area became deserted by man. About 1,000 years ago the Indians slowly repopulated this area, having developed varieties of corn that could survive the arid conditions. Between A.D. 1200 and A.D. 1600 the plains were again populated by tribes who did some hunting, but were primarily supported by agriculture. Their villages were built of sod huts and they raised tobacco, beans, corn and squash.

In 1598 the Spanish settlers came to New Mexico, bringing with them herds of sheep, goats, cows, and horses. Horses escaped from these ranches or were rustled by herdsmen who saw their value. These "mystery dogs" as the Indians called them, were first eaten, but later were trained and used for transportation. The advantage of being able to cover hundreds of miles on raids, of being able to outpace the buffalo rendered the horse an immense asset to the plains Indians, who swiftly learned to capture, break and ride them. An engraving of A.D. 1700 shows an Indian tied on his horse, but they soon learned to ride superbly without saddle or stirrups. Within half a century the agricultural life of the Old Settler Indians was dead. They took to their horses, abandoned their fields and hunted the buffalo. By 1880 the horse and buffalo culture was also dead, killed by the railroads, the settlers and the ranchers. The prime period of the buffalo hunters barely lasted from 1750 to 1850, and it was, in all respects, dependent on new factors introduced by Europeans.

With the end of the buffalo, the Canadian Siouan tribes began, after a despairing interval, to reconcile themselves to cattle ranching and farming.

The Impact of the Fur Traders on the Eastern Tribes

By 1760 all the tribes living around the Great Lakes were to some extent dependent of the fur trade. The Indians lived by hunting and trapping animals, especially the beaver, and exchanging the pelts for guns, powder, lead, knives, kettles, hatchets, English rum or French brandy, and for woollen blankets and clothing. The alacrity with which the Indians took to wool attests to its superiority over buckskin which, in

wet weather, is cold, clammy, and miserable, besides being difficult to dry out. The flesh of the animals was used for food and was supplemented by purchased rice, flour and sugar. Corn, peas, beans, squash, watermelons and tobacco were still raised in suitable locations. Trapping was rapidly transformed. The old deadfalls and sinew snares were replaced by steel traps and copper wire snares, and steel fish hooks, hoes and spears became common as their efficiency was realized.

As the tribes were broken and displaced by wars, the remnants fled to other tribes, disrupting the social patterns and traditional sources of authority. The numerous half-breeds complicated the situation further. Religious authority diminished, in part because of the efforts of the missionaries and also because the whites, half-breeds and younger men scorned the old taboos and ceremonies without incurring any supernatural punishment. The native pottery crafts died out forthwith, as did the native arts in general.

When the fur trade of the region ended the Indians were left with a disintegrated culture and no means of livelihood. Some tried farming, others drifted westward, while the remnant went to war with Pontiac. They were defeated.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE COUNTRY

The Peace River Country by Mackenzie, in 1792.

> We entered the Peace River at seven in the morning of the 12th (October 1792), taking a westerly course. It is evident that all the land between it and the Lake of the Hills (Lake Athabasca), as far as the Elk River, is formed by the quantity of earth and mud, which is carried down by the streams of these two great rivers. In this space there are several lakes. The lake, Clear Water (Lake Claire) which is the deepest, Lake Vassieu, and the Athabasca Lake, which is the largest of the three, and whose denomination in the Kristeneaux language implies a flat, low, swampy country, subject to inundations. The last two lakes are so shallow, that from the cause just mentioned, there is every reason to expect, that in a few years, they will have exchanged their character and become extensive forests.
>
> The country is so level, that, at some seasons, it is entirely overflowed, which accounts for the periodic influx and reflux of the waters between the Lake of the Hills and the Peace River.
>
> He described the Peace River below Vermilion Chutes thus:

In addition to the wood which flourished below the fall these banks produce the cypress tree, arrow wood, and the thorn. On either side of the river, though invisible from it are extensive plains, which abound in buffaloes, elks, wolves, foxes, and bears. At a considerable distance to the Westward, is an immense ridge of high land or mountains, which take an oblique direction from below the falls, and are inhabited by great numbers of deer, which are seldom disturbed but when the Indians go to hunt beaver in those parts: and, being tired of the flesh of the latter, vary their food with that of the former. Their ridge bears the name of the Deer (Caribou) Mountain. Opposite to our present situation (at the fort near the forks of the Peace and Smoky Rivers) are beautiful meadows, with various animals grazing on them, and groves of poplars irregularly scattered over them.

The Country Between the Peace and Athabasca Rivers

By R. G. McConnell, 1889-90

The country between the Peace and Athabasca rivers north of Lesser Slave Lake, comprising an area of about 44,000 square miles.... remained entirely unknown until the present exploration was undertaken.

The greater part of this district may be described as a gently undulating wooded plain, diversified with numerous shallow lakes, muskegs and marshes. Small prairie patches, manifestly due to forest fires, occur north of the west end of Lesser Slave Lake, at several points along the Loon and Wabiscaw rivers, also on Peace River around Fort Vermilion and at other places, but their total area is relatively insignificant. The principal forest trees are the white and black spruces, the Banksian Pine, the larch, the aspen, the balsam poplar, and the canoe birch.....On the lower parts of the Wabiscaw and Loon rivers a large irregular branched, rough barked cottonwood was noticed.....

The principal watercourse of the district is the Wabiscaw-Loon river. This stream with its numerous tributaries, drains nearly half the region. Among the other rivers are the Pelican, Red, Moose and Tar Rivers draining into the Athabasca; Birch River draining into Lake Claire, and the Red, Wolverine and Cadotte's rivers are tributaries of the Peace River. The main rivers branch in the interior of the district into a multitude of small winding streams, few of which have valleys of any size, and they usually flow in a sluggish manner, often expanding into lakes in the flat districts, but break over steeper slopes of the country in a series of strong rapids. With the exception of the lower part of the Loon River, none of these rivers are navigable by steamers.

A noticeable feature of the district reported on is the multitude of lakes which occur every where scattered over plains, plateaus and ridges. The Lakes range in size from broad sheets of water twelve to fifteen miles in length, to small ponds a few feet across. They are usually shallow and weedy, and in many cases are being gradually filled up with spagnum. Many of the smaller lakes of former times have been completely filled up and are now represented by muskegs. The origin of most of the lakes is due to the numerous shallow depressions in the boulder clay floor of the district being filled with water, but in some instances they appear to have been caused by the damming up of some of the smaller streams by beavers.

The Athabasca River in 1820 by Sir John Richardson

At the new fort, a considerable distance above Pierre au Calumet, a limestone similar to that last mentioned occurs, having its strata waved or dipped both to the east and west. Below this there is a peaty bog, whose crevices are filled with petroleum.

This mineral exists in great abundance in this district. We never observed it flowing from the limestone, but always above it, and generally agglutinating the beds of sand into a kind of pitchy sandstone. Sometimes fragments of this stone contain so much petroleum as to float down the stream. The limestone dips under the water and disappears at Pierre au Calumet, and the pitchy sandstone cliffs which rest on it also terminate there. This spot, situated some miles below an old fort, obtains its name from a bed of yellowish grey compact marl, which forms a small cliff on the bank of the river, and is quarried by the voyagers for the purpose of making calumets or pipes. A portion of this bed, acted on by the weather and the water of the river, is converted into earthy marl, and is much used by the traders under the name of white earth for whitewashing their apartments. Immediately under the marl, and generally covered by the river, there is a bed of limestone almost entirely composed of orthoceratites and bivalve shells.....

In Athabasca Lake we again came upon the edge of the primitive formation. The country around Fort Chipewyan is composed of roundish masses of naked rock, which, heaped as it were on each other, and rising as they recede from the lake, attain, at the distance of a mile from the shore, an elevation of five or six hundred feet. The valleys are narrow, their sides almost precipitous, and the general form of the hills may be termed short conical, but their outline is very uneven. The rocks also form many islands in the lake from two to three hundred feet high, and generally bounded on one or more sides by precipices. The Fort seems to stand on a granite rock.....On leaving For Chipewyan, we paddled through several miles of lake, and then descended the Stony River. Rocks, similar to those in Athabasca Lake, but possessing less elevation, rise above the swampy borders of this stream. At the distance of eighteen miles from Fort Chipewyan, it falls into the Peace River, when the united streams assume the name of Slave River.

The North Saskatchewan River in 1790 by Edward Umfreville

Its current (the North Saskatchewan) is very regular and in the whole distance, we have but one place where the passage is in the least impeded by rapids; and even this place is very trifling, and easily passed with proper care. Every part of the river where the channel is wide, is much incommoded with sand-banks and shoals. The shores and bed of it are muddy and consequently the water is very dirty. What I have often thought worthy of observation during my stay here, has been the very sudden and rapid rise of the water in the river during the summer months, and this without any apparent cause, or extraordinary rains. In the summer of 1786 I observed the water to rise ten feet perpendicularly in the space of twenty-four hours; thence it subsided to its usual height; and then rapidly rose as before. This rising of the water drowns all the Country about the bottom of the river, where the banks are uncommonly low; and it frequently happens, that the people who navigate the trader's canoes are obliged to sleep in them, for want

of a place to put ashore.

All the lower country near the river for a considerable distance, affords no other wood than willows, and a few small poplars. The land is exceedingly marshy, and abounds with all kinds of aquatic birds in the spring and autumn. Higher up, the banks of the river are steeper, and pines become frequent, which are intermixed with a few insignificant elm and birch trees.....

How far the soil of this boundless country may be favourable to the culture of vegetables, I am not enabled to advance. Experiments, which should be our only guide to knowledge in these matters, never having been much made use of; but if the opinion of an unexperienced person could be of any weight, I think I may venture to say, that many parts would admit of cultivation. The Hudson's Bay Company servants have tried Indian corn and barley, by way of experiment, which came to perfection; potatoes, turnips, carrots, radishes, onions, etc., have been lately reared, and found as good as those in Canada; the advantage seems to incline to the one I am describing. It is true that we are situated a few degrees more to the Northward, and about fifty degrees to the Westward of Quebec, but in the four years experience I have had, I have not found a winter so severe as the one I passed near Montreal, where the weather is generally something milder than about Quebec. The cold sets in, and the river ice breaks up, much about the same time as it does there.

The fruits which spontaneously shoot up, are not in such great variety in the wildernesses of Canada as in the country I am speaking of. The natives collect vast quantities of a kind of wild cherries and bring them in for sale. The Hudson's Bay people make an excellent beverage of them, which is grateful to the taste, and is an excellent antiscorbutic. Raspberriers, strawberries, currants, cranberries, and an infinity of other kinds which I know not the names of, are to be found everywhere.....

In valleys and humid situations the grass grows to a great height, which fattens our horses in a short time; but the buffalo usually makes choice of hilly, dry ground to feed on, the blades of grass on which are small, short and tender. When a numerous herd of these animals stay any length of time in one place, the ground is absolutely barren there for the remainder of the season, the grass being eaten off as close as if shaved with a knife.

The South Saskatchewan River by Palliser in 1857

After leaving the eastern limits of the country that is within the influence of the mountains (which may be considered to commence about twenty miles below where it received the Ispasquehow (Highwood) River), the South Saskatchewan flows in a deep and narrow valley, through a region of arid plains, devoid of timber or pasture of good quality. Even on the alluvial points in the bottom of the valley trees and shrubs only occur in a few isolated patches. The steep and lofty sides of the valley are composed of calcarious marls and clays that are baked into a compact mass under the heat of the parching sun. The sage and cactus abound, and the whole of the scanty vegetation bespeaks an arid climate. The course of its large tributaries, Red Deer River and Belly River, are through the same kind of country, except in the upper part of the former stream, where it flows through a rich partially wooded country similar to that on the North Saskatchewan.

The Plains by John Lambert in 1854

> The eye grows weary of travelling over the naked outlines of the successive plateaux, which, divided and bounded by the various rivers noticed, form but subdivisions of the great tract of country stretching from the Missouri and Milk Rivers on the south to the Saskatchewan on the north--this tract itself but a subdivision of the Great Plains--an extent embracing every variety of surface, from large and level plains to abrupt bluffs and ranges of summit hills that might be considered mountains. It is difficult to convey an adequate idea of these dreary solitudes. Let it be remembered that a few minutes reading embraces sections which require tedious weeks to traverse; and that even travelling over them and observing them with the patient labor of months, leaves but a feeling of their vastness, which baffles the effort to express it. The impressive silence of successive days is broken at rare intervals by the crack of some stray hunter's rifle, or perchance by the yell of painted warriors on a foray; but when the twilight wanes over the peaceful camp, when the evening meal is over, and the incidents of the day are recounted, then the "Drowsy ear of night" is roused to listen to the prolonged and melancholy cry of prowling wolves.
>
> The verdure of these regions, though growing thinner and comparatively inferior as we go westward, never entirely disappears anywhere, if the faces of the steep bluffs upon the rivers be excepted; artimesia and small cacti are met with, but not in great quantities, and even where they do appear, not exclusively monopolizing the soil; and though the wild aspect and dull colors of the landscape in many and extensive sections might induce a supposition of barrenness, the idea must be greatly qualified, if not removed by the fact that all these regions are the pasture grounds of frequent herds of various kinds of deer, particularly of the graceful antelope with quantities of inferior game and species of vermin, and last and greatest, the unfailing millions of the uncouth and ponderous buffalo.

The areas thus described by travellers are representative of the difficult geographic regions of this province. In respect of the animals which were once so abundant, the present scene is different, but the general descriptions of terrain are still true. The evidence of human activity, especially in the northern coniferous forests still appears slight in extent and sparse in distribution, and is likely to remain so.

SUGGESTED PUPIL ACTIVITIES BASED ON CHAPTER II

1. Trace the paths of such explorers as Kelsey, Peter Pond, Hearne, Mackenzie, La Verendrye on a map.
2. Find out how the beaver was trapped and what use was made of the pelts in Europe.
3. What skills did the white men have to learn from the Indians before they could travel and live in Canada?
4. Find out from older people if they have any history of movement from other areas.
5. List the garden or field crops that may be grown in the area. Find out the number of days free from frost that such crops as wheat, corn, and oats need to mature.
6. Find out the history of the nearest Hudson's Bay Fort--when it was founded and by whom.
7. Keep weather records of average mid-day temperatures for each month and plot them in a graph. Compare your records with those of other areas.
8. Make similar graphs for rainfall and snowfall, or obtain these from local forestry stations. Find, by melting, how many inches of snow equal one inch of rain.
9. Find out what kind of soil is in your area from maps or from other sources. What crops could be grown on these soils? Try to grow various plants in your own garden.
10. How do the buffalo of the south differ from those of the north--find out from the Wood Buffalo Park wardens or rangers.
11. Emulate the early explorers and write a description of a piece of country with which you are familiar.
12. Make a map of Alberta--write down the names of the various tribes in their areas and reserves, with some notes as to their ways of earning a living.

CHAPTER III

THE INDIANS OF THE NORTHERN CONIFEROUS FORESTS

From this point, the description of the Indians of Alberta will be subdivided into two aspects: the life of the Indians in the Northern Coniferous forests, and the life of those on the southern plains who hunted the buffalo.

The Indians of the northern forests lived in a nice adjustment to the resources of the country. The climate is extreme, with temperatures in the winter being below freezing point for six months of the year and occasionally descending as low as minus 60 degrees. The summers are hot, and mosquitoes and other insects abound in the early summer. The chief game animals are the moose and the woodland caribou and bear. Smaller animals include the beaver, porcupine, muskrat, mink, otter and weasel. Rabbits abound in years of plenty, though they are subject to diseases which appear to recur in regular cycles. Fish are relatively plentiful, though they cannot constitute the chief part of human diet as they are deficient in fat. The country is timber covered, but the size of the trees diminishes to the north, where the barren lands lie. Expeditions onto the Barren Lands by the Indians in search of the musk oxen or the Barren Grounds caribou were undertaken in winter but the radius of these expeditions was limited by the amount of wood that could be carried for fuel.

Periodically the hunting was poor, particularly during the winter blizzards, and famines were not infrequent. The necessity of constantly searching for game meant that the family groups rarely met together except in the summer at places where fishing was good, and when a cooperative hunt for large game was planned.

Housing

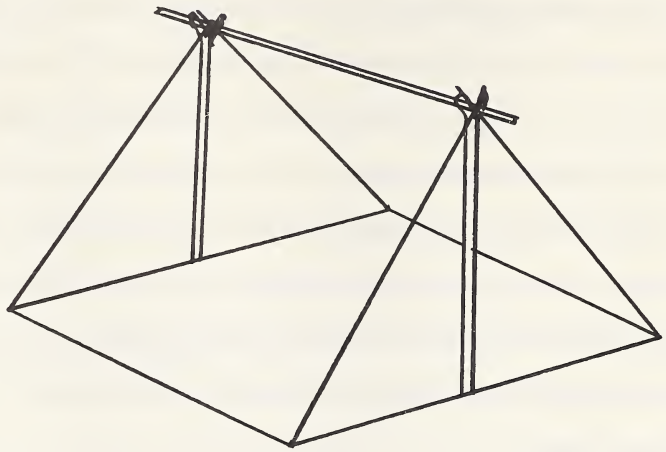
Three forms of houses were commonly in use. The essential quality of all three houses was that they were easily erected and dismantled, and were made of material that could be readily procured on the spot if needed.

The dome shaped wigwam was made of a framework of poles covered with bark. Pairs of poles were set vertically into the ground and bent over and lashed to form a series of arches covering a space about twenty feet by fourteen feet. The vertical frame was strengthened with other poles lashed horizontally. The frame was covered with rolls of birch bark about twenty feet long and three feet wide. A doorway was formed by leaving a loose piece of bark open between two of the vertical supports. The bark was held in place by poles and hide lashings. An opening at the top served to let out the smoke from the fire which was normally in a small excavated hole. The interior was strewn with pine needles. In very cold weather a second covering of bark was added, and the space between the first and second covering was filled with moss to act as an insulation. It was usual when striking camp to leave the framework standing and only remove the birch bark.

The conical wigwam. A number of long poles are cut, and three (occasionally four) are tied together at the top and spread out at the base. The other poles are then erected in a circle of fifteen or twenty feet in diameter with their tops in the crotch formed by the tied poles. Over the poles is spread either a skin tent or rolls of birch bark, leaving an opening at the top for the smoke to emerge. The bark is secured by laying other poles over it, or hide lashings. The door is made of an old blanket or deer skin. The floor is made of pine branches. The fire is placed in the centre in a slight excavation. Again, in cold weather a double covering was used, the space between the layers being stuffed with moss. As with most of these temporary shelters, the wigwam was often filled with smoke to the extent that the eyesight of the inhabitants was frequently and seriously affected.

The double lean-to. It is not clear whether this form of shelter was copied from the white man's log cabin or whether it was a native invention. Two poles with crotches at the top were driven into the ground a suitable distance apart. A long pole was laid

horizontally in the crotches. Against this apex other poles were leaned from each side, and either thatched with pine boughs or covered with slabs or rolls of bark. There were usually no other furnishings.

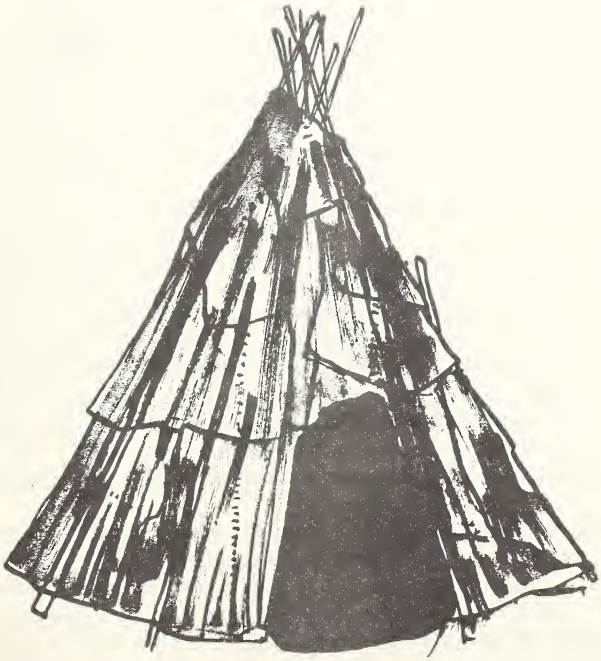


Clothing

The basic material used was dressed skins. It should be emphasized that the Indians did not know how to make leather which is essentially a chemical process. The manufacture of hide for clothing is a mechanical process dependent on scraping the skin free of fragments of flesh and fat, and then manipulating the skin to break up the fibres and render it pliable. In summer the Indians wore a breechcloth of buckskin which passed between the legs and under a belt fore and aft, hanging down over the belt to various lengths. Leggings were made in the form of trouser legs separately attached to the belt. Moccassins, usually without a separately attached sole were worn, and sometimes sewn to the bottom of the leggings. Shirts were made of deerskin with flap sleeves. The remaining garment was a robe of skin with the hair left on, or of smaller hides sewn together in a patchwork quilt effect.

In winter, the moccassins were worn with three or four pairs of blanket or flannel

DOME SHAPED BARK WIGWAM



CONICAL BARK WIGWAM

socks beneath, or fur substitutes before these were available. Detachable fur sleeves were used, and occasionally a cased skin was used as a muff. Mittens with a thumb stall were used on the hands. Blankets were made from rabbit skins, cased, and cut spirally in strips about one inch wide and sewn at the ends with sinew. These strips were woven into blankets, which, though warm, shed hair continually. In historic times tailored hide clothing lined with flannel was made into coats on the European model.

Transporation

Summer transportation was predominantly by canoe, and the best canoe was the Algonquin birch bark. It greatly impressed the French. Gallinoe, in 1669, wrote:

> Si Dieu me fait le grace de retourner en France, je tascheray d'y faire porter un de ces canots pour le faire voire a ceux qu n'en auroient point veu...il n'y a point de voiture ny meilleure ny plus prompte que celle du canot....je n'ay rien trouve ici de plus beau ny de plus commode: et sans cela, il seroit impossible de naviguer au dessus de Montreal ny dans aucune des rivieres de cy pays...

While canoes varied in details of prow and stern the basis was the same. The bark was removed from a large birch tree in one piece of the required size, about twenty feet long and about two feet in diameter. Two round poles of the required length of the canoe were formed as gunwales and the bark sewn to them with split, water soaked fir roots by punching the bark with a pointed bone punch and passing the roots binding through the bark and over the gunwale. Thwarts kept the gunwales in proper distance. The bark now hangs downward like a loose sack from the gunwales. Thin cedar slats were then placed inside the canoe to sheath it completely. These latter were held in place by cedar ribs rendered pliable by heating and driven into place with force below the gunwales. Working toward the ends, the ribs assumed an extremely narrow U shape, and the bark had to be split from the top downward to conform to the narrowing bow and stern. The splits were secured by overlapping the bark and sewing it, and the seam was rendered waterproof by applying well-chewed fir gum which was heated with fire and applied to the seams. When complete the canoe was rigid, waterproof

and could be carried by a single man. It was easily damaged but could be readily repaired. The canoes were lifted from the water at every opportunity, as the bark absorbed water and was noticeably heavier at the end of a day's paddling than at the commencement. For travelling amid broken ice blown up skins were used to protect the fragile bark. After the white man showed the technique, small sails were often used in a moderate following wind.

When portages were to be made around falls or rapids burdens were carried on the back by means of a "tump line," a broad band of hide or cloth passing over the top of the head and not on the shoulders in the European mode. Indians could apparently carry over two hundred pound burdens in this manner for long distances, though the physique of the Northern Indian is by no means impressive.

Some use was made of dogs as beasts of burden, and they were then provided with small balanced packs (parfleches) on each side of the animal. Efficient winter travel depended on dogs, toboggans and snow shoes.

Toboggans were made of birch bark, later of planed birch wood. The material, about ten feet long, had the end curled up to ride over the snow. The thinness gave flexibility and allowed the material to conform to the contours of the ground and eliminated heavy bracing. The sled with runners was unsuitable to the soft snow conditions of the woods though well adapted to the passage of the arctic ice.

The dogs, usually of rather small size, were attached in tandem for convenience in threading through the forest. The fan hitch of the coast was here unsuitable and inefficient. The harness was of rawhide, though webbing is found preferable as the dogs often ate their harness unless the cutting edges of the back teeth were blunted with rocks.

Snow shoes varied in size and shape. In densely forested areas an oval or round "bear paw" shoe was preferred and in more open areas a snowshoe almost six feet long and somewhat narrow was convenient. The idea was to spread the weight of the wearer

over a considerable area and prevent him sinking in the snow. In dry powdery snow the shoe worked well, but in wetter conditions the wet snow clung to the babiche webbing and did not fall through the meshes. The favoured hide filling was of caribou which was relatively unaffected by wet conditions. The webbing was woven in place, not strung in the same manner as the modern tennis racquet, and a high degree of skill was involved in the manufacture.

Hunting, Trapping and Fishing

Hunting. The weapons used were bow and arrows, spears and harpoons. The Indian bow was an ineffective form, whether it took the form of the self, sinew backed or compound bow. The effective range was about one hundred feet. The smooth bore Hudson's Bay musket which replaced it was grossly inaccurate unless at very short range also. In the summer game was shot as the Indians paddled along the river or lake shores. Still, hunting of the larger animals was accomplished by following along the tracks in a series of semi-circular loops to windward of the track to avoid as much as possible giving the animal the scent of the hunter. Stalking an observed animal was also common, and was greatly assisted by the accomplished woodcraft of the Indians. Game trails were frequented and the animals shot as they moved along them. Moose, caribou and deer were pursued when found in the water and dispatched by spear strokes in the kidneys. This was particularly used in the communal hunts on the Barren Grounds after the migrating caribou. The major animals were often propitiated before the killing by a ceremony and prayer which was supposed to allay the annoyance of the animal at being killed. Cleaned skulls were frequently set up on stakes with some trifling present for the same purpose. Communal caribou hunts occasionally took place.

A Deer Hunt described by Samuel Hearne

> Their mode of accomplishing this is to select a well frequented deer path, and enclose with a strong fence of twisted trees and brushwood a space of about a mile in circumference and sometimes more. The entrance of the "pound" is not

> larger than a common gate, and its inside is crowded with innumerable small hedges, in the openings of which are fixed snares of strong, well twisted thongs. One end is generally fastened to a growing tree, and as all the wood and jungle within the enclosure is left standing, the interior forms a complete labyrinth. On each side of the door, a line of small trees, stuck up in the snow fifteen or twenty yards apart, form two sides of an acute angle, widening gradually from the entrance, from which they sometimes extend two or three miles. Between these rows of brushwood runs the path frequented by the deer. When all things are prepared, the Indians take their station on some eminence commanding a prospect of this path, and the moment that any deer are seen going that way, the whole encampment--men, women, and children--steal under cover of the woods till they get behind them. They then show themselves in the open ground, and, drawing up in the form of a crescent, advance with shouts. The deer, finding themselves pursued, and at the same time imagining the rows of brushy poles to be people stationed to prevent their passing on either side, run straight forward until they get in the pound. The Indians instantly close in, block up the entrance, and while the women and children run round the outside to prevent them breaking or leaping the fence, the men enter with their spears and bows, and speedily dispatch such as are caught in the snares or are running loose.

It is on record that three hundred deer have been killed in this manner in two hours.

Meat was easily preserved in winter by freezing in the open air, but on occasion meat was stored beneath the ice in lakes.

In winter, moose were killed by following on their trails. Where the snow was deep and crusted the man was easily born up by his snowshoes, while the animals feet plunged through the crust sometimes lacerating its legs until they bled. By persisting on the trail for several days if need be, the animal was run down and killed. Hibernating bears were sometimes located by dogs or by searching in favourable locations and shot in their sleep. Undoubtedly many animals were encountered by chance or by going to areas where the animal's food was plentiful and then proceeding by stalking or stil-hunting.

Trapping. The chief modes of trapping were and are by snares, deadfalls and by steel traps.

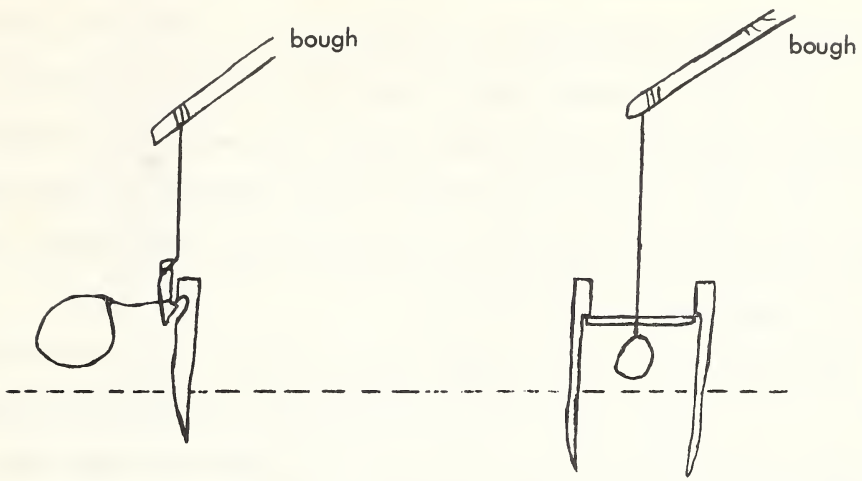
Snares were made of sinew, horsehair, thongs, and later of common braided copper wire. The animal was induced to put its head or feet through the snare by placing it on a runway or trail, or by enticing it in a certain direction by placing bait in a passage made by boughs or hollow logs or tunnels. To prevent the animal pulling loose,

or being eaten by other animals, it was frequently arranged that the snare was attached to a pliable tree branch and triggered so that the animal was hoisted into the air where it was quickly strangled. Forms of such arrangements are illustrated. Deadfalls are arrangements whereby the animal, by seizing a piece of bait or by displacing a piece of wood in its passage, upsets a trigger mechanism and allows a heavy weight to fall on itself. Boughs are placed, if other means are not available, so as to make the animal assume a correct position in relation to the weight that it may be killed. A similar arrangement can allow the animal to be caught alive by using a sliding door instead of a weight.

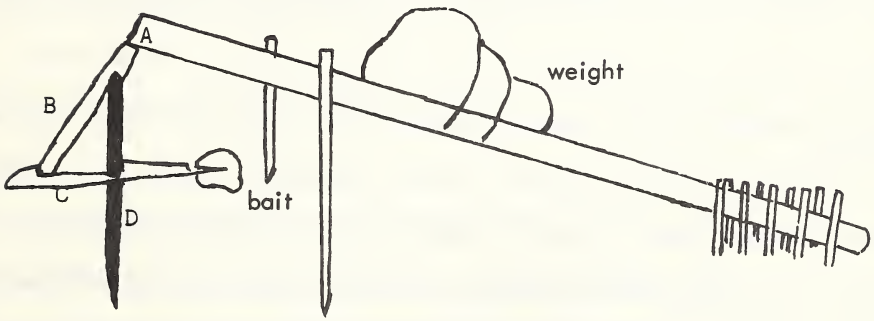
Traps come in sizes suitable for catching animals from the size of weasels to grizzly bears. The latter need to be set by using clamps. Animals are attracted to the trap by scent or sight, or by a combination of methods. Land animals are caught by digging a small hole in the snow. Often soft material is laid in the hole so that the pan is supported and cannot be set off by small birds. The trap, which may have been boiled, smoked or smeared with fresh blood to destroy the human scent, is placed in the hole without using the bare hand, with the jaws of the trap about half an inch below snow level. A sheet of thin paper is often laid on the trap to prevent the jaws being frozen if there is a thaw and refreezing. The trapper then scatters a thin layer of snow over the trap until it is undistinguishable from its surroundings. The trap is chained to a stake driven in the ground, or if the animal is powerful, to a log which will act as a drag. In some cases arrangements can be made to hoist the trapped animal into the air, as illustrated with snares. The bait, lumps of meat or fish, is placed around the trap but not on it. Additional attraction is given by spreading a powerful scent nearby or on the bait. Complicated recipes have been evolved using oil of cinnamon, nutmegs, rotten fish, animal urine, blood and the like. The idea is to cause the animal to investigate the smell.

Animals that are arboreal, like the marten, may be caught in tree sets. Typically

SNARE ARRANGEMENT TO HOIST ANIMAL OFF GROUND



DEADFALL MECHANISM



The weight "A" presses on part "B" which would move up and lift but for the locking piece "C" which is held onto "D" by the pressure from "B". The animal moves the bait, frees "C" from "D" and the weight drops.

a short log was placed sloping against another tree. On the flattened upper surface of this sloping log a trap was set, and chained or tied to a branch. The animal was attracted by bait, by a feather dipped in scent or by a combination of means. In winter, muskrats are trapped by cutting into the muskrats' house and setting the trap inside on the shelf by which the rats enter and leave the house. The trap is usually covered by water, and chained to a long stick stuck outside the house. After the trap is set, the house is repaired and covered with snow.

After the animals have been caught, they are skinned. The smaller animals are cased, that is, the skin is cut from one hind leg below the tail to the other hind leg and the pelt taken off like a glove. The fur is then turned inside out and the excess flesh and fat removed by scraping. Today, an old table spoon is often satisfactory. The skin is then placed on a stretcher and placed to dry in a cool and shady place.

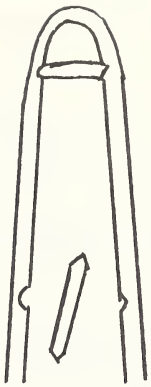
Larger skins are opened out and dried flat by sewing them to a rectangular frame of wood. Beaver skins are usually stretched on a circular frame made of pliable green wood.

Fishing. In the sub-arctic, except near the Great Slave Lake, fishing was secondary in importance to hunting. Fish did, however, provide an important food supply especially as a food for sled dogs. Fish were caught principally by the use of gill nets which set both in open water and through the ice. Fish were also caught by spearing and on hook and line. In summer fish were preserved by drying and in winter by freezing.

Social Customs

In the forest areas the family occupied its own trapping and hunting territory in the winter and subsisted on its own resources. In the summer the family groups tended to gather at favoured fishing places or engage in communal hunts. The Chipewyan Indians particularly made hunting forays into the Barren Grounds in chase of caribou and musk

Three-piece Stretcher



Old form of stretcher

oxen. The annual trek to the fur trader's store also served as an occasion for larger reunions. Each Indian considered himself as a member of a band. Such bands were led by outstanding hunters known to be of high character and shrewdness in bargaining. Within the band he settled disputes regarding hunting territories, aided families in need, and in cases of murder he was assisted by a council who heard evidence and could order the guilty person to leave camp, where he would be shot. Lesser crimes were punished by ostracism.

The position of the band chief was enhanced during the period when the Hudson's Bay Company were the sole buyers of fur, for that company preferred to conduct the trading through the chief. When independent traders arrived, prepared to trade with the individual Indian, the chief was less important and his authority declined.

Personality

It is considered that the modal Indian personality of the Canadian sub-arctic is fairly uniform. There has been observed a constant restraint over the expression of all emotions in public. Face-to-face quarrelling and criticism of other persons is almost unknown. There is a reluctance to command others, competition is discouraged, and much lending

sharing and hospitality is noticed. Violence is abhorred. The reasons for this behaviour appear to be fear of illness and death. Illness is considered to be caused only by wrong-doing or by sorcery by someone whom the victim has wronged. Since violence is forbidden, the injured person can only obtain satisfaction by making his enemy sick. Everyone is in danger of witchcraft and all are potential sorcerers. Witchcraft can be cured by recourse to a medicine man who can remove the intrusive poisonous object or recover the stolen soul of the patient. Sickness not caused by sorcery can be cured by confession of misdeeds in public. Emotions, therefore, shift between the derivation of satisfaction from friendliness, and fear of retaliation if the persons do not please their associates.

SUGGESTED PUPIL ACTIVITIES BASED ON CHAPTER III

1. Make a map showing the vegetation zones of Canada.
2. Make models of Indian clothing using dolls as models.
3. Collect specimens of Indian craft--moccassins, birch bark containers, bead work, etc.
4. Draw or model in clay the animals found in the neighborhood. List the Indian names for these animals.
5. Have adult trappers describe to the children how they catch the various animals, and prepare the skins for sale. Find out the current prices for various pelts.
6. Have the children write descriptive essays on such topics as:

   (a) An imaginary discussion between a fur trader and an Indian on whether the Indian has benefitted or not from the coming of the white man. Let each of the imagined participators present a reasoned point of view.

   (b) How to make camp in winter.

   (c) If you were lost in the woods, which equipment is most necessary, rifle and cartridges, matches or axes and why.
7. Write reports on the appearance and habits of various animals and the use to which their skins are put.
8. Discuss health problems such as smallpox, influenza, and measles with the pupils and have the local nurse, if available, talk on remedial measures.
9. Make plaster of Paris casts of tracks of animals for a class collection.
10. Generally, topics on which the pupils can tell the teacher something that he or she is not well acquainted with will help give the pupils confidence. It is better that they should inform the teacher than the reverse.

CHAPTER IV

INDIANS OF THE SOUTHERN PLAINS

This chapter is concerned with the horse Indians of the southern Alberta plains who were primarily engaged with hunting the buffalo. The climate in the south was rather less severe than in the north, though extreme cold was experienced during the winter. The relatively plentiful supply of food enabled the tribes to live in villages of considerable size, the population of the largest being numbered in several hundreds. The use of the word "village" does not imply any permanence of residence, for the villages shifted according to the movements of the buffalo herds. Only in winter were the locations of the tepee found for long in one spot. Considerable raiding between tribes, for horses, women, honor and the control of hunting lands, necessitated the tribes being concentrated in some numbers, for small parties were always in danger of being wiped out. The entire culture depended on horses, which were the measure of a man's wealth. These animals were obtained by trading, by capture, or by theft or war. The wild horses were taken by direct chase, the Indian using a relay of horses to tire out the wild animal and capturing it by overtaking it and placing over its head, while at the gallop, a noose held out on a long forked stick. In general, the Indians were good horsemen but indifferent horse masters, frequently riding horses that were severely galled by the wretched saddles used without regard for the pain inflicted.

Hunting. Prior to the use of the horse the Indians would hunt the buffalo in a variety of ways. Individual hunters often disguised themselves in wolf skins and crawled up to the herds until they could shoot an animal with their bows and arrows. In favorable locations herds were stampeded over cliffs by setting fire to the prairie grass behind them. These methods were largely superceded when the horse was used in hunting, and individual hunting was frowned upon. Again several techniques were used.

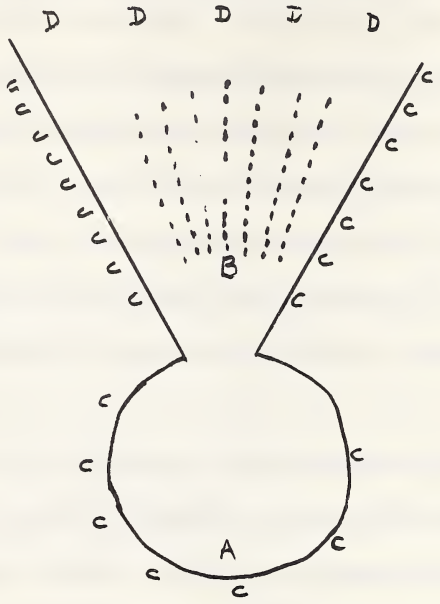
The buffalo surround. Having been appraised by scouts that a herd was nearby, hunters were forbidden to leave the village or to alarm the herd. Persons who disobeyed would have their belongings burned or confiscated and may suffer beating. If necessary, the village may have to be moved to a location nearer the herd. On the day of the hunt, the hunters on horseback surrounded the herd, or cut out from the main herd a suitably sized fragment. Then the hunters ran down the buffalo, shooting them through the lungs with arrows which were so marked that each man knew his own kill. Lances were used when arrows were expended. The killing constituted a man's part in hunting; the women contributed the labour of butchering, skinning and food preparation.

Other methods of hunting the buffalo were used but were uncommon. Techniques of driving the herds over cliffs, or into a man-made enclosure or naturally formed impoundment were rare since the infrequent occurrence of the suitably located cliff and the labour of making a pound were such that the simplicity of the method described above was preferred.

Elk and deer hunting did not attract that same ritual as buffalo hunting, and these animals were taken by stalking and still hunting. Children hunted smaller game with bows and arrows. Some fish were eaten, but they were not a preferred food. Vegetable foods such as cherries, berries, cammass root, prairie turnip were gathered wild, and some trading for corn and squash was carried on with agricultural tribes. The prairie turnip, besides being eaten fresh, was dried and pulverized into flour which could be stored. Much wild fruit was used in the making of pemmican.

In the winter, the Plains Crees used to kill buffalo and use the skin as a decoy to lure wolves within the range of an arrow. The hide of a buffalo was allowed to freeze in such a manner that it could be stood up in the form of the living animal. Beneath the skin a hole was dug out in which one or two men crouched to windward of the buffalo carcass. Wolves were shot down when they approached the meat. Other animals

DIAGRAMMATIC LAYOUT OF A BUFFALO POUND



"A" is the pound, either naturally formed as an amphitheatre or constructed of mounds of earth and brush. The herd "B" is started in the direction of the pound by firing the prairie or by otherwise stampeding it. Arriving between the dirt and brush wings, the herd is kept from breaking out by Indians waving hides and shouting, "C". As the herds pass, the Indians close in behind as "D". In the pound the buffalo circle the wall instead of trying to break out. They are then slaughtered with bows and arrows and lances.

were taken in deadfall traps.

The communal buffalo hunts were summer pursuits. In winter the grazing for horses was poor, the snow may be deep, and the villages existed on desultory hunting and on stored food. It should be noted that the most successful campaigns carried out by the United States Army against the Plains Indians were those which attacked the tribes in winter conditions when the loss of horses, tents and stores placed the tribes in a very precarious condition. The consequences of a defeat in summer were much less disastrous.

The manufacture of pemmican was a relatively simple process. The meat was cut up into thin slices which were dried in the sun on racks of wood. When dry, the meat was pounded between two stones until it was broken into a coarse meal. The pounded meat was then placed in a sack made of buffalo hide about two feet long and one foot wide and was well mixed with melted tallow and marrow. The top of the bag was then sewn up and the pemmican left to cool. It may then be eaten uncooked. Pemmican was good, wholesome food, and were it not for its unprepossessing appearance and a great many buffalo hair left in it through the carelessness of the makers, it would have been very palatable. In some areas, pemmican was mixed with dried wild berries that had been crushed, pits and all.

Cookery and Food

While meat was often roasted, the chief mode of cooking was by boiling.

Sioux Cooking by E.T. Denig, about 1840.

> Some of the dishes prepared by the Indians in their yet uncultivated state of cooks and cookery present a mess not very enticing to the eye of the hungry traveller, and are by no means adapted to delicate stomachs and fastidious appetites. In this class may be placed a favorite one made of blood boiled with brains, rosebuds and the scrapings of rawhide until it becomes the consistency of warm glue. Pounded cherries boiled, with sugar and grease added, is considered a dainty and eaten with great relish. The prairie turnip sliced, dried and boiled, with the dried paunch of a buffalo, or the peas extracted from mice's nests cooked with dried beaver tail or a good fat dog is also much admired

and considered fit for soldiers, chiefs and distinguished guests.

Of the Aricharas Cookery

> Several really palatable dishes are served up, of which the sweet corn is the best. Boiled squash when green are tolerable, though when dried are too bitter. They also make a pretty fair substitute for bread by parching corn and pounding it in a mortar. This is made into rolls and balls and carried along when they travel. It is pleasant to the taste, requires no cooking and will support life for a great length of time. A kind of hominy is made of corn bruised in a mortar and soaked for a time in warm water, which is rather agreeable to the taste. They have a way of cooking a goose that we do not remember to have seen in any cook book. They smear over the goose a thick coat of mud (that is the goose as it is killed with feathers, entrails and everything entire) after which the fowl is put in a hot fire and covered with live coals. Here it is left until the clay covering becomes red hot, then suffered to cool gradually until the fire dies out. The shell is then cracked with an axe, the featers and skin come off with the clay, leaving the flesh clean and well done. Catfish are also served in the same way, but the usual manner of eating these is boiled in water until they fall in pieces and compose a form of soup which is drunk without any seasoning.

Fires were made in a variety of ways. The most primitive method was by means of a fire plough. A rod of hard wood was moved rapidly back and forth in a groove made in a dry hard wood slab. If this was done with sufficient speed, a fine brown dust would form, which would begin to smoke and by blowing on it and adding tinder, a fire could be induced to burn. This method was refined by mechanical means. The rod, instead of being pushed back and forth, was rotated rapidly between the palms, later by the use of differing forms of bow-drills.

It was not difficult to do. The equipment needed was a round rod of hardwood about one foot long, some carefully dried hardwood as a base, and a small bow. Wrap the string of the bow around the hardwood rod. With a knife cut out a hollow in the hardwood base so that the edge of the hollow intersects the edge of the plank, place a piece of stone on the top end of the hardwood rod to protect the hand, insert the bottom of the rod into the hole in the hardwood plank, and saw vigorously with one hand on the bow while bearing down with the other hand on the top of the rod. Soon a small mound of brown smoking dust will be forced out of the notch under the turning rod, and can be coaxed into a flame.

In historic times the Indians were introduced to the use of flint, steel and tinder, and later to matches.

Housing

On the plains the Indians adapted the conical bark tepee of the Algonquians to the new situation. The foundation of the "lodge" remained a tripod or tetrapod of poles about twenty-four feet long. These were placed firmly and twenty or twenty-five other poles leaned across the tied apex of the original support. Ten or twelve hides taken in spring time from buffalo which had shed the heavy winter coat were sewn together in a roughly semi-circular strip and fastened to the last poles to be placed in position. The covering was lashed in position, and weighted or staked down at the base. Pointed "ears" to the flaps of the cover were supported on poles and could be adjusted to the direction of the wind so that smoke was carried out of the tepee. The tepee was sometimes lined inside with a floor covering which extended some distance up the walls and prevented draughts. Some tepees were immense and could hold up to one hundred persons, and were made from more than forty hides. The task of making the hide cover was one requiring skill. In the spring the hides were clean and white, and suitable for decoration by paintings depicting the exploits of the owner, but in winter they became dirtier and weatherbeaten, and were discarded yearly.

Transportation

The main method of carrying burdens was the travois, a device occasionally seen in the Eastern Woodlands and possibly adapted by plains dwellers from the dog travois of that area. The travois was a V-shaped structure of wood, tied to the horses withers so that the apex projected above and beyond the animal's head and with the lower end trailing on the ground, and with a framework often in the form of a loosely constructed basket resting on the travois body behind the horse. It was used for transporting the tepee cover, firewood, food, children or sick persons and any other load that could

BUFFALO-HIDE PLAINS TEPEE

About fifteen feet in diameter and the same in height

fit on. The poles were thin and limber so that it cushioned to some extent the unevenness of the ground. Women and old persons occasionally walked with packs if their circumstances were poor. Able bodied men always rode. Streams were crossed by swimming, though coracles made of wicker work covered with buffalo hide, and of circular shape were in use and could be readily made. The plains tribes used neither the toboggan nor the snowshoe except in the north east.

Clothing

Clothing was preferably made of deer skin. The buffalo hide was too thick for use other than as robes. Skin shirts were made for the men of two deer skins sewn together without any tailoring, and with the tail end uppermost. Breech cloths were attached to the belt, as were the hip length leggings. Soft-soled moccassins were replaced by hard soled ones after horses were introduced. The whole body was covered in cold weather and on ceremonial occasions with a buffalo robe. Eagle feather war bonnets covered the head.

The women wore ankle length skirts of two skins as did the men. They also wore belts and short (knee length) leggings fastened with garters. Moccassins for women were soft-soled. Again robes were worn in cold weather.

Children generally went naked or wore a shirt.

Some form of heraldry was involved in the placement of feathers in the headband and in the use of the war bonnet. An upright feather signified that the wearer had touched an enemy first with the coup stick; a backward sloping feather, that the wearer had received a wound in battle; a round mark on the feather, that the wearer had killed an opponent; and a red feather with a notch in it, that the wearer had taken a scalp. The full feathered war bonnet was allowed to the wearer after he had accomplished ten brave deeds in battle. The most famous warriors had the war bonnet with long streamers of eagle feathers trailing down to the ground.

War

The term is perhaps a misnomer. There were often raids conducted into the territory of other tribes for the purpose of gaining honor, horses, food, women or revenge; but these raiding parties did not involve the whole manhood of a tribe. In all the prairies, war was an integral part of manhood. No young man was considered as an adult until he had been on a war party. He was unacceptable as a potential marriage partner until he had slain an enemy. Success in war was the chief avenue to social distinction, and the division of labour left so much of the drudgery to women that men sought war as an outlet to their energies.

Anyone could lead a war party and membership was voluntary; though some tribes insisted that expeditions be approved by a council. Some tribes had a permanent war chief to lead these activities but his authority was shared with the civil powers and was rarely more than nominal over the members of the party. Supernatural sanction was necessary, and usually obtained by means of a "medicine dream" given to the leader before setting out. The weapons used were lance, bow and arrow, war club, and later the musket and rifled firearm.

The actual form of war was by ambushes and raids; the intent was always to take the opposing force by surprise and in inferior numbers. Deeds performed in war were graded according to a varying standard. Among the Blackfoot the following precedence was accorded.

1. Stealing a gun, lance or bow.
2. Taking an enemy's life.
3. Cutting a horse loose from a tepee.
4. Leading a war party.
5. Acting as a scout for a war party.
6. Stealing or capturing shields, war bonnets, or medicine pipes.
7. Driving off loose horses.

INDIAN CHIEF IN FULL CEREMONIAL FORMAL DRESS

Among other tribes the acknowledged deeds of valour were different. For the Crow Indians these were:

1. Touching an enemy, hurt or not, was the coup proper.
   Four men might count coup on the same man, but the honor diminished with successive blows.
2. Snatching away gun or bow in hand-to-hand encounter.
3. The theft of a picketed horse from a hostile camp.
4. Being a pipe owner or raid planner.

A chief was simply a man who had accomplished each of these four deeds.

These exploits were recorded on painted buffalo hides or on the skins of the tepee using a series of conventional pictures. In such pictures pipes indicate captaincy of an expedition; horse tracks indicate the capture of horses; a hand and knife near a horse indicate that the horse was picketed and cut loose from inside the enemy camp; wounds were indicated by a black dot with a dash of red for bleeding; death was indicated by symbolizing three wounds in head, heart, and thigh; coups are sometimes indicated by simple crosses. Sometimes the exploits of a warrior were indicated by distinctive additions to the dress. Among the Crow, a coup striker wore wolf tails dragging behind the heels of his moccassins; a gun snatcher decorated his shirt with ermine skins; a war leader could decorate his shirt and moccassins with human hair or ermine skins.

On public occasions the warriors had the right to relate their exploits as a formal recital, each deed related being saluted with one drum beat. The taking of a scalp was evidence of a killing but did not rate any special notice. The Northern Plains Indians did not torture prisoners.

Communication

The Plains Indians developed certain distinctive methods of communication, of which the most interesting is the sign language, a means of communicating ideas by movements of the hands and fingers in such a way that persons not knowing each others' language could converse with much fluency. The system is now almost unknown, but the signs

were recorded some years ago when there were still a few expert practioners left. They are now of antiquarian interest only.

A written set of conventionalized signs was also used to convey information as to movements of war bands, tribes and individuals. In this method a V-shaped sign indicated a travois with the apex indicating the direction of travel; a black ring or pebble or piece of charcoal indicated camping places, the number of such rings indicated the number of days spent at each camp. A closed tepee indicated that the occupant had left, as did footprints leading away from camp; a tepee with an open door indicated an invitation. The time of day could be indicated by an arc representing the passage of the sun across the heavens and a mark on the arc showed time of day between sunrise and sunset. Various other conventions indicated the sun, moon (which represented also the passage of the lunar month), lightning, rain clouds and stars. These signs were much used on the trail to indicate to stragglers and other interested parties where people had gone and for what period.

Smoke signals were used in some areas, but the messages were confined to simple ideas such as "We are here," "Come here," and the like. They were not common in the north.

Religious Ceremonies

The Indians had an overpowering awareness of supernatural influence. This power is most manifest in the sun, but it pervades the entire world, and may communicate with any person through visions, animate things, such manifestations being usually in the form of speech. The being appearing in the dream vision offers or is asked to give power for some specific purpose. The power is transferred only as a result of specific ceremonies; painting of hands and face, songs to be sung, and taboos to be respected. The power is then transferred by the formal compact and is in effect until the conditions are broken. The power can be transferred to another person by reproducing the conditions of the original transfer. Certain charms are part of the transfer and form a

EXAMPLES OF CONVENTIONAL SIGNS AND MESSAGES

camp
(deserted)

midday

rain

man

woman

lightning

RECORD OF WAR PARTY

medicine bundle; however, the power of the contract lies less in the bundle than in the magic song.

Young men seek visions by undergoing preliminary ceremonies at the hands and under the direction of a man of medicine experience, and then go to some lonely place and fast day and night, while beseeching the earth and sky and all created things to take pity on him in a song composed on the spot. Every man of importance is supposed to have had a vision in which he acquired a supernatural helper, a song, and medicine charms. The song is secret and never used except at the point of death. Some tribes acquired communal sacred bundles or objects, as the sacred arrows of the Cheyenne, the flat pipe of the Arapaho, or the calf pipe of the Teton Sioux which was given to the tribe by the sacred white buffalo calf, and the sacred pipe bundles of the Blackfoot.

Regarding this latter, the pipe bundle was covered in an outer casing of black bear hide over an inner covering of scraped elk hide. Around the middle of the bundle is a broad band of elk skin. The contents are made into two interior bundles, called the primary and secondary bundles. The former is made of red flannel, and contains the pipe stem, a head band of white buffalo skin, with the hair, and an eagle feather to tie on the owner's head. The bundle is always hung so that the stem points to the north, and as a guide the ends of the flannel are tied with differently coloured cords. The secondary bundle contains a smaller pipe stem, the skins of an owl, two loons, two white swans, two cranes, an otter, a muskrat, a rattle, a fawn skin, and a whistle. Tobacco is placed in the bird skins. In a bag kept with the bundle are paints, beads, necklaces, a wooden bowl, a whip and a rope. No one may use any of these objects except the owner, and he must also have a horse for his exclusive use. All the objects in the bag were coated with red paint.

The owner of a pipe bundle is regarded as of great importance both socially and politically. He was entitled to the seat of honor in the tepee, i.e., opposite the man of the household; he was entitled to the best cuts of meat in the hunt; he also carried

out certain duties such as selecting camp sites, arranging Sun Dance rituals, sitting in council, offering prayers, etc. He was also subject to certain tedious taboos; he could not point at an object with his finger but with the thumb alone; his possessions may be borrowed by his neighbours without asking permission; he could not pick up any object that he found; his horse that carried the bundle must be painted in a prescribed manner, etc.

The Sun Dance

The Sun Dance, could, in some tribes, be danced by anybody who had undertaken the necessary preparation, was motivated by a proper desire, and at a propitious time. In detail, with the Blackfoot, it was a tribal ceremony, based on the medicine bundle, with participants drawn from the community at large. With the Oglala, it was undertaken to fulfill a vow, or to gain supernatural aid for one's self or friends. The time selected was when the buffalo were fat, or when the new sage shoots were a span long, when the chokeberries were ripening, or when the moon was rising as the sun set. It must be undertaken while the blood was flowing from a wound. It had varying degrees of severity. In the least severe a valuable offering must be made to the sun, and a minimal wound suffered. In the most extreme form the flesh on either side of the spine was pierced with a sharp stick, and this was repeated on the breast. As many buffalo heads were attached by thongs to these sticks as the sufferer wished. The dancer, after various introductory movements, attempted to break loose from the buffalo heads (or in another form, from the thongs that were attached from the sticks in his wounds to four posts). If the dancer escaped by his own efforts, he completed the dance with the most credit; a weaker person could be aided by his friends, but obtained less credit.

The Doctrine of the Ghost Dance

The doctrine of the Ghost Dance appeared in the period when the plains tribes were undergoing profound despair after the buffalo had gone and the future seemed to hold

no hope. The principle was that a time would come when all Indians, living or dead, would be reunited in a world freed from starvation, death and disease, and without white men. This was to be brought about by eschewing war, theft and ill-will by the Indians. This event was to take place in the early spring, when the innumerable herds of buffalo would emerge from the ground and all would be as it had been. The author, Wovoka, spread his gospel by letter. A free rendering of the content is as follows:

> When you get home you must make a dance to continue five days. Dance four successive nights and the last night keep up the dance until the morning of the fifth day, when all must bathe in the river and then disperse to their homes. You must all do in the same way.
>
> I love you all, and my heart is full of gladness for the gifts you have brought me. When you get home I shall give you a good cloud (of rain?) which you will make you feel good. I give you a good spirit and give you all good paint. I want you to come again in three months, some from each tribe.
>
> There will be a good deal of snow this year and some rain. In the fall there will be such a rain as I have never given you before.
>
> The Messiah says, when your friends die you must not cry. You must not hurt anyone or do harm to anyone. You must not fight. Do right always. It will give you satisfaction in life.
>
> Do not tell the white people about this. Jesus is now upon the earth. He appears like a cloud. The dead are all alive again. I do not know when they will be here, maybe this fall or in the spring. When the time comes there will be no more sickness and everyone will be young again.
>
> Do not refuse to work for the whites and do not make trouble with them until you leave them. When the earth shakes, do not be afraid. It will not hurt you.
>
> I want you to dance every six weeks. Make a feast at the dance and have food that everybody may eat. You will receive good words from me again some time. Do not tell lies.

The new religion swept the country. The tribes took up the dances and danced until they fainted. White authorities tried to stop the dancing in the United States, and in the state of tension many Indians were massacred. This ended the Ghost Dance for the Plains Indians.

Social Customs

In a society where the men's activities predominated in economic affairs, the women settled into a life of quiet drudgery without power or real tribal responsibilities, in contrast to their role in the agricultural tribes where descent was reckoned through the mother's line and property descended not from father to son but in the maternal lineage. In historic times on the plains, women were an economic asset, since the men could kill more buffalo and thus procure more saleable goods (meats, hides and robes) than one woman could treat. Thus, polygamy was common. The life span of men was estimated to be about half that of the women, due to wars and hunting accidents.

The North American Indians were very permissive with their children and corporal punishment was rare though by no means absent. The idea that ill treatment of a child could cause its health and personality to be adversely affected was widespread. Discipline was often administered by an uncle or aunt, or by the grandparents. The parents avoided this duty because they wished the children to regard the home as a refuge from harm. Moral lectures and ridicule were more frequent than chastisement.

Children's games were often in direct imitation of adult activities. Girls played at house, while boys hunted such small game as song birds, later graduating to rabbits and buffalo calves. Young boys were taken out on mock war parties under the direction of an experienced warrior.

Limited membership men's societies were common on the northern plains; sometimes an initiation fee was required of candidates; at other times when a vacancy occurred the club might offer gifts to distinguished persons to join, or a man might express his desire to join. Sometimes a variety of graded clubs existed and members transferred from the junior clubs to the senior on a basis of age.

Although on the plains culture wealth, as measured by the possession of horses and wives, was a source of prestige, there was considerable display of generosity, carried on occasion to extreme lengths. At "Give away feasts" men gave away meat, clothing,

bows and arrows, robes, guns and even wives. The donations, however, were carefully planned. Those who had helped the giver in the past received the most valuable gifts; then came the turn of friends and relatives; then came the turn of those with whom the giver wished to be on friendly terms; and last were the charity gifts to the poor and widows. The recipients were expected to go through the camp publically extolling the generosity of the donor. The donor was frequently pauperized by the extent of his generosity, but not for long. The receivers of gifts were expected to emulate his example by holding "give aways" of their own, when the original giver would receive the equivalent of his donations back with interest. The system acted in many respects as a primitive insurance system. When one had a surplus of meat it was a good investment to give it away to one's friends, since the favour was expected to be returned. The Indians still taunt the white man with miserliness and counting the costs of friendliness and charity; but the insurance aspect of gifts must be taken as implicit in the donations.

The personality of the Plains Indians was dominated by the need for status and recognition which could be gained by visions, public self-torture, success in war, the destruction of property and the public display of generosity. Status was obtained and the ego gratified with varying degrees of public exhibitionism. The Plains Indian was not essentially the impassive, sententious and grave person that is often accepted in literature. Emotions were often displayed in extravagent manners. Grief was displayed with loud wailings, and self-mutilation such as gashing the breast and body, or by mutilating the hands by cutting off finger joints. The notion of warfare was dominated by prestige considerations. The stealing of horses was by no means utilitarian. The possession of a large horse herd was of no practical value once a certain number were acquired--a few fleet horses for the hunt, ordinary mounts for the family group and some pack animals. The surplus was purely for ostentation--the purchase of wives and goods for donation. The actual raid was less concerned with the killing of enemies than with returning without loss; the best captains were those who returned without dead.

The coup was counted by the first man to touch an enemy not by the first to kill one; and the coup could be counted on women equally with men. It is difficult to avoid the notion that plains warfare was a highly stylized and formal game, not an attempt to control territory or to exterminate enemies.

The means of obtaining personal prestige among the Plains tribes disappeared with the buffalo. No longer could a man display his wealth in robes and horses. The war path was forbidden. From being able to support as many as forty wives on the products of the buffalo, it was as much as a man could do to support one wife with her family. Bereft of any source of motivation for life the Indian personality was suppressed and its egocentrism discouraged by the removal of all outlets for physical display of personal prowess.

SUGGESTED PUPIL ACTIVITIES BASED ON CHAPTER V

1. Find out all the uses that the products of the buffalo were put to--horns, flesh, bones, paunch, intestines, and manure.
2. Make some pemmican from this recipe. Finely chop some dried beef, mix with raisins, pour on some melted suet, and stir well. Leave to cool.
3. Make an Indian Headdress. With cotton cloth make a skull cap, and to the rear of it attach a tail of material about two feet long and six inches wide. Gather about fifty long feathers from the wings of geese or turkeys, and some soft breast feathers. Glue or bind soft feathers around the base of the wing feathers. Cut pairs of slots in the edge of the skull cap and tail piece. Insert the wing feathers in these slots and sew or glue in position. Pierce the quills about three inches from their bases and thread fine twine or silk through these holes to help keep the feathers erect. Sew on strings to fasten the bonnet under the chin. Ornament the front with a piece of beaded cloth or bright colored flannel. Sew on little pieces of fur where the bonnet ties are attached to the skull cap. The skull cap can also be covered with small feathers sewn on.
4. Try to write some Indian messages in sign writing.
5. Find out the stories of famous Indians such as Chief Joseph, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Rotten Belly, Poundmaker, Chat Kah (Left Handed), Almighty Voice, etc.
6. Find out and write down Indian legends from older people.
7. Find out the causes of the disappearance of the buffalo-hide hunters; improved fire-arms, railroads, land needed or taken for farms and ranches, deliberately exterminated to keep food from supporting the nomadic habits of the tribes, etc.
8. Read accounts of travellers and dwellers on the plains, Parkman's Oregon Trail, for example.

CHAPTER V

THE INDIAN TODAY

The number of Indians in Canada is now about the same as it was in pre-Columbian times, about 200,000, though in this figure must be reckoned a considerable number with a greater or lesser admixture of white blood. Unlike the government of the United States, the Canadian authorities never regarded the Indians as independent nations, but as subject peoples in the sense that they were and are in all respects within the jurisdiction of the laws of the country. By Treaties Nos. 6, 7, and 8, of 1876, 1877, and 1899, the Indians of Alberta relinquished their claim to ownership of lands of the province in exchange for reserves of one square mile per family of five; the right to hunt, trap, and fish, subject to government regulations; certain Treaty presents, medals and flags; and annual payments which were typically of the order of $5 for tribal Indians, $15 for headmen, and $25 for chiefs. The provisions varied somewhat with each treaty. Certain legal provisions exist in regard to property held on a reserve; while Indians may enter into contractual obligations, no property held on the reserve my be seized for debt except for such actions as may be brought against them by other Indians.

The reserves are governed either by elected Band Councils or chiefs otherwise selected by the tribe as they may choose. One or more reserves is administered by an appointed agent of the Federal government, and forms an agency in charge of a Superintendent. The funds accruing to the collective bands are administered by the council and may be used for any purpose benefitting the band. When an Indian voluntarily leaves the band and gives up his status under the Indian Act he may claim his share of the band funds and ceases to be entitled to the provisions of the Act. The term "reserve" does not imply that the Indians are confined to that area; they are free to seek employment outside it and to travel as extensively as they may need without surrendering their status.

Education is the responsibility of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Indian Affairs Branch, of the Federal Government. This Department operates Indian Day Schools; seasonal schools in those areas where the population is so scattered and migratory that a permanent school is impracticable; Residential Schools for those children who are orphans or whose parents are unable to care for them properly; and Hospital Schools for children in sanatoriums. The policy of the Indian Affairs Branch for some time has been to integrate Indian students into the provincial public school systems, paying for these services by a tuition agreement.

The vast majority of Indians support themselves by multiple occupations. Neither trapping, fishing, logging nor casual labor are, in general, sufficiently well paid to enable the Indians to follow one occupation exclusively, and recourse is frequently necessary to grants from Welfare Authorities. The great increase in population due to the increased survival of infants and children means an increasing pressure on natural resources, while the policy of requiring the children to attend school has to some extent necessitated that the Indian family live near to a settlement and thus narrows the areal base from which these resources are drawn. Add to this a long period of depressed markets for fur and fish, and the problem is acute. The unimproved natural resources of the Indian ecumene will not, if they are now, be adequate to support the future population in a manner acceptable to society or tolerable to the Indian. Inevitably then, some Indians, and perhaps the majority, must look outside the present reserves and outside the traditional occupations to earn a living.

The majority of Indians do not possess saleable skills, nor do they generally possess the same orientation toward selling their labour, in a predictable pattern, to employers in exchange for money, that is typical of the white economy. The basis of Indian aboriginal life is that of seeking present satisfaction for pressing needs and sharing with others what is not needed immediately, in the hope that when the others have a surplus, the gift will be reciprocated. So, if an Indian is employed, his neighbors seek to enjoy

his good fortune without embarrassment; he is accustomed to a supportive and communal environment instead of a competitive and individual milieu. This tends to stifle any material progress of the individual.

Though such tests as have been made show that the Indian children are in no way less intelligent than their white peers, in general, the Indian child, through language difficulties, cultural differences, and the lack of specialized instruction, does not advance educationally at the same rate as the white child. Indian children progress more slowly through the grade structure and tend to leave school much earlier. To a large degree, this dropout from school is caused by a feeling of incompetence and is compounded by a feeling that what the children learn in school is not realistically related to the occupations which they feel will be available to them when they seek employment. To some degree it is felt that education is a ladder up which they are lured by a dream which progressively dissipates into nothing as they near the end of the ladder. The present availability of vocational programs is an increasingly effective counter-measure to this frame of mind.

There also exists a prejudice against Indians on the part of segments of the white population based on various observed instances and unreasoned opinions, whereby the whole race is stereotyped.

The general tenor of these complaints may be noted:

a) the Indians are dirty and have unsanitary habits;

b) the Indians cannot be relied on as a source of labour;

c) the Indians, when they have money, immediately get drunk and buy luxuries and then expect support from taxpayers;

d) Indians are stupid;

e) Indian females are completely immoral;

f) Indians are not making any attempt to help themselves;

g) Indians are dishonest; they steal; they borrow money with no intention of paying

it back;

h) Indians are an inferior race.

The other stereotype of the "noble red man", stoic, brave and impassive is equally false, though less prevalent.

It has been noted that the epithets applied by the Nazi concentration camp guards to the inmates bear a close resemblance to those applied by slaveholders in the Southern States of America one hundred years ago to their slaves: they were lazy, immoral, dirty, stupid, incapable of progress on their own, and generally of "Inferior Races"; but the inmates of the camps were Frenchmen, educated cultivated, and in many cases in the camp for outstanding deeds of initiative against the German Reich--and once released, they resumed their normal patterns of behavior. Similarly, many negroes, after and before slavery, have disproved the reliability of the stereotype image.

The behavior of persons in unnatural situations is definitely atypical. On the fringes of white society, the Indian is in an unnatural situation, whereas the white man is "at home." The stereotype image of the Indian tends to be formed from atypical, if common, observed behaviour patterns which partly stem from the unnatural situation, whereas they are commonly attributed to original sin or to inherited character traits.

The following quotation from J.A.C. Brown's, The Social Psychology of Industry (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, Ltd., 1962), p. 270, may be applicable:

> If, for example, we could regard crime, mental disorders, family disorganization, juvenile delinquency, prostitution and sex offences....as evidence not of individual wickedness, incompetence, perversity, or pathology, but as human reaction to cultural disintegration, a forward step would be taken.

The Indian culture has disintegrated, and it has disintegrated more in areas where their society is in contact with another and a numerically superior society, with values at variance with those of the Indian. Bereft of an accepted status in the alien society, the Indian tends to relapse into apathy, regression or other behaviour conditioned by frustration.

This in no way suggests that the Indians, as a society, are suffering from mass psychosis, but that in some ways some behaviour in some areas may be a frustration reaction. Many Indians at present have little in common with white society; the language and mode of thought are different; the range of economic activity is more restricted; the patterns of behaviour spring from different motives and values. Education can broaden the area of congruence between white and Indian society, to the point where the one does not appear alien to the other, and where the Indian can offer if he wishes services that are required by society and are paid for on a sufficiently rewarding scale.

This process which approaches "psychological engineering" is likely to be long, difficult and frustrating to all involved, and makes demands on society in general not on the Indian alone.

It is the task of white society not to force the Indian into a white mold, nor to "improve" him whether he likes it or not, nor to indulge in social engineering by uprooting the Indians en masse, but to move over and leave a place by the fire for him, to give him social and economic mobility so that he may aspire to any position if he merits it, so that he may stay on the reserve if he chooses, and leave it as he wills.

On the part of Canadian society it must offer encouragement and opportunity; on the part of the Indian it entails flexibility and persistence. The old days are gone. The buffalo will not return. The stream must now join the river; not in amorphous anonymity, but in merging, giving an added richness and flavour to the larger flow.

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HARE
NAHANI
DOGRIB
YELLOW-KNIVES
SLAVE
CHIPEWYAN
BEAVER
HAIDA
SARSH
KOOTENAY
BLACKFOOT
BLOOD
PIEGAN
NOOKA
CREE
ASSINIBOINE
OSIBWA
CREE
CREE
NASKAPI
MONTAGNAIS
MICMAC
IROQUOIS
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ESKIMO
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SIOUAN
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