

ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION.

Dear Editor:

Your report that many Natural History people who returned the questionnaire, which was sent out in the last issue of the BLUE JAY, stated that they were interested in Archaeology, came as no surprise. I have found that everyone interested in the Stone Age is also a keen student of Natural History and it seems to hold that Nature Study has a connecting interest in Archaeology.

Some problems in this science are actually problems in Natural History, For example, prehistoric Indians' favorite method of killing buffalo was by trapping them in pounds. Where are those old Buffalo Pounds? Early explorers and fur traders have written about the Plains Indians killing buffalo by means of pounds. They tell of how these pounds were built, their size and the methods used in getting parts of buffalo herds into them, the method of slaughter and the Indians' use of the animals following the kill. It is claimed that the tribe would live at the site until all the meat was used. Paul Cain, in his book, states that the pounds were used year after year, and in one instance he tells of a site used so long and often that after the stockade rotted down, the dried bones were piled up to sufficient height to take its place.

However, the early explorers were unable to tell us the definite locations of these pounds. They existed long before surveys were made of the plains. Only three or four have been rediscovered in Saskatchewan. Many more must exist and they will all be rich archaeological finds, for, buried in the long decayed bone piles are large quantities of every type of flint and stone tools and all weapons that the Indian ever used.

If the tribes lived at the pound site for a time after each kill, this means the old hearths and camp fire-places (if on uncultivated land) are still in place, although sodded over now. Around these hearths stone age history lays buried. Very little archaeological research has been done below ground level in Saskatchewan, but if such sites are investigated, the award would be amazing.

I suggest, Mr. Editor, that we ask our Natural History observers this question -- "WHERE ARE THE BUFFALO POUNDS?"

Sincerely yours,

Fred Robinson.