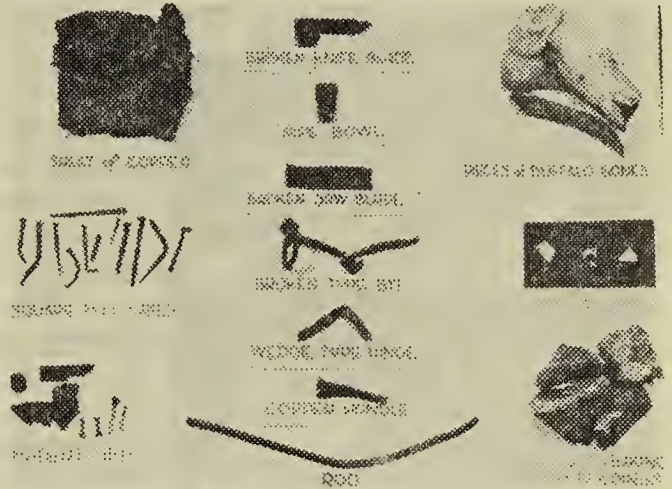


Old Fort Site Found



“SASKATCHEWAN prairie-land has given up a secret it held for more than a hundred years—the site of the original Fort Qu’Appelle, one of the most famous early trading posts in western Canada.

And the secret was given up to a device invented during the last war to save lives—a mine detector. The men with the mine detector did not actually discover the site of the old fort but they did prove the area involved was the correct one.

The man chiefly responsible for finding the site was Thomas Petty, Indian Head public school principal. After ten years of searching, Mr. Petty found what he believed was the site of the fort—the mine detector did the rest”—Regina Leader-Post.

Following is an account of some of the actual work done in the vicinity, written by Len Dreger, assistant at the provincial museum:

On November 6, two D.N.R. men from the Surveys Branch, Mac McConnel of the Bureau of Publications, and the writer visited this site, in the hopes of proving that this was the old fort. The main area where the old fort was thought to have stood was about 100 yards west of the highest level of land which was in the form of a ridge. A depression on the side of a small hill was described to us as the likely site of a side-hill barn.

A mine detector, on loan from the army, and operated by Mr. Bere-skin of the Surveys Branch readily located pieces of metal below the surface. By using it near the pits several places were found where the detector reacted to metal in the earth.

Material was recovered in the first

excavation at a depth of from twelve to fourteen inches, the hole being about eighteen inches square. Charcoal, pieces of fire clay, a buffalo rib bone about five inches long, a small bird, two toe bones which may have been from a coyote or dog, were retrieved. The metal, which started our search at this particular spot proved to be that of an old saw blade.

Other items found were as follows: the bowl of an old pipe; a rusted broken-type horse bit; a wedge type door hinge; an iron rod about thirteen inches long and a number of square hand-made nails. Near the depression which appeared to be the side-hill barn the mine detector lead us to a sheet of copper about eight inches square. About a hundred yards east of here, on the top of the highest knoll, we found a broken knife blade.

In one area the detector set up its loud whining sound every few feet, so we knew that there were a number of metal objects there. After digging we turned up about six square-cut nails, varying in size from about one inch to two and three-quarter inches.

Mr. Tanner, who brought us to the site, has two old rifle barrels and a number of stone hammers in his possession which he collected in the district. Most of these, however, were found at least three-quarters of a mile from the site of the fort. He told us that when he was a youngster going to school, he knew of two skeletons, one about three-quarters of a mile east of the fort and the other about one and a half miles south, and of an Indian grave with two rifle barrels lying crossed on top.