

# The Need for Archaeologists

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**I**T'S a curiously inverted idea that Western Canada, archaeologically, is an adjunct of the United States, to be examined at leisure and as a sideline. Maybe it needs mentioning that those early adventurers who crossed to Alaska didn't know anything about New Mexico and it may have taken a thousand years for the great trek there. So it's a fair assumption that Western Canada has an older archaeological inheritance than the continental U.S.

The idea that we can dawdle any longer needs to be blown up quickly. We need the nucleus of a staff of trained archaeologists, able to seize opportunities when and where they occur. In the case of our own local site it was three years before a trained archaeologist ever came to inspect it. Normally what's going to happen to a site in that length of time? Somebody, one of these days, is going to be lucky enough to find a Yuma site. It is evident that the culture was widespread in Western Canada. Yuma points are a common find in Saskatchewan. Just recently I had the opportunity to examine a small collection from South Central Alberta which contained, amongst other things, a fine assortment of Yuma points. What's going to happen to such a site if there are no trained men around to take it over?

As to the when and where of that wandering migration, if it was by an inland route east of the Rockies, the environmental conditions must have been good enough so that our early adventurers did not starve on the way. It doesn't seem reasonable that at the widest extension of the ice-sheet when the Keewatin glacier intermingled with glaciers from the Rockies that the route could be used. Either the earliest group must have travelled south ahead of an advancing ice front or the journey was delayed till the ice front had retreated far enough to restore favorable environmental conditions. There are reasons for believing that suitable conditions for both plants and animals would exist at no great distance from an ice front.

But when one comes to enquire, one soon finds that not much is known about the retreat of the ice front across South-Western Canada or even what glaciation is represented by that further extension of the ice.

If one considers it vital to take into consideration the whole problem, Canadian as well as American, then, until there is a more adequate study of the last glaciation in Western Canada, our archaeology is trying to get along on one leg. Actually, the dating of the early occupation by man in the U.S. can be questioned on two counts. It has been based on the links between early sites and pluvial periods which may or may not have been correctly correlated with glaciation events—and, second, there has not been, until recently, any way of accurately dating such events.

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## Mammals at Tisdale

K. E. Baines

**T**HE animal commonly known as a mole, but really the Pocket Gopher, is gradually moving into this territory from the west. Their digging was first observed five miles west of here. Now they are common in town and seem to be moving several miles each year. Timber wolves have been seen only a few miles from Tisdale. Beaver have dammed up every stream with any water in it. The dams are only one hundred yards or so apart. They are considered a nuisance by some but most people are glad to see them back. Coyotes are common and spend practically all their time in the unharvested wheat fields catching mice, which are numerous. Skunks are common here and spend considerable time scratching on front of beehives, apparently to eat the bees. They are rarely bad enough to necessitate any special measures to get rid of them. Woodchucks or Marmots will also bother beehives, and occasionally a porcupine will chew on the hand hold.