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head waters of Cannon Ball and Hart rivers with his band, said to number 3,000 braves, burning the grass and driving the buffaloes into their reservations for winter food. * * * * *

After being out several days without seeing the object of our search, we resolved to retrace our steps and once more come into civilization. The time passed pleasantly; when we were not hunting for Sitting Bull we were hunting the beaver and the antelope. Many an adventure was ours. On the last day of our stay in the Bad Lands, when we were at the close of a day filled with exciting hunting scenes, I started toward our camp alone. It was only four miles away, yet before I was half way there, my only guide, my instinct, had failed me, and I was lost among the rounded hills. I resolved to climb one in order to direct my course better. Choosing the highest to be seen I rode my pony as high as he could go, and using hands, legs and knees for the rest I finally got to the top. * * * * *

In looking around me I found the top somewhat flat and elongated, and at its highest point stood a pile of stones evidently built by human hands either for an altar or a landmark, and right in front of the pile was lying athwart the ridge a remarkably fine specimen of a tree trunk, about 10 feet long, but broken in several places; of this I took the piece which now lies before you. * *

This specimen was found in the east part of what is called Pyramid park, about 20 or 25 miles south of the Northern Pacific railway. Many logs and stumps occur in this region, not infrequently two to three feet in diameter.

May, 1884.

[Paper K.]

EVIDENCES OF EARLY MAN IN NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA.

—George R. Stutz.

Forty years of my life have been spent in prosecuting the public land surveys of the government. My field of operations has been both sides of the Mississippi river from the northern boundary of Missouri to the international boundary on Rainy lake. I could only read as I ran over the surface of the country undisturbed by modern civilization.

The facts in my possession I give you, perhaps some conclusions. These last you can take for what they are worth.

Some months since the Rev. Dr. J. H. Tuttle of your city, gave us in Duluth a very interesting lecture in which, mixed up with incidents of travel, he gave us stereoptican views of ruins, some of which have a record of over forty centuries. And in that connection, he remarked, that America had no ruins unless the mounds and tumuli of the Mississippi valley could give us a clue to its former inhabitants.

That these earth works have a history and one of a very interesting character and that a race of people occupied the country in a very remote age and that their colonies penetrated the regions in the northeastern portions, not only of this state but of Canada, we have plenty of evidence. In the north, mounds do not occur so frequently but always occupy a slightly position near some natural highway of travel, or on some locality near a lake having the best food supply the country afforded.

They did not live entirely by the chase but cultivated the land. They introduced and cultivated certain fruits. They planted and protected certain forest trees such as the oak, the sugar maple and the linden in regions far beyond where they are indigenous. These forest trees growing as they do in isolated orchards in the extreme northeastern portion of the state, a mountainous, rocky region, stripped of alluvial soil by the stupendous glaciers of two glacial periods, the mountains crumbled to fragments, a debris scattered for hundreds of miles to the south and west, forming the drift hills and alluvial or partially alluvial jack pine sandy plains of Wisconsin and Minnesota, could hardly have had their seeds scattered to the north by any ocean currents, or up stream against the currents of rivers. It hardly seems possible that the seeds of these trees could have been brought from the north and survived the terrible abrasion of centuries of glacial action.

They are all essential for the wants of a half civilized people—the acorns for food, the sugar for diet in connection with the rice and corn they cultivated and the bark of the linden for cordage and twine and in the manufacture of nets and mats.

The alluvial lands in the Mississippi valley, as evidenced by the extensive mounds and numerous tumuli supported a large population. These people penetrated the north and in the ascent of rivers, obstructed by rapids of bowlders and by broad shallow channels, they began to leave monuments of their skill as engineers. Nearly or quite all the streams leading from the Mississippi and

Lake Superior to the north and into the Rainy lake region have been improved by some former race possessing more mechanical skill than the Indians now residing there.

These ancient mound builders, for such we will assume these prehistoric *voyageurs* to be, had two or three important routes from the Mississippi to Lake Superior. The St. Croix river route through Wisconsin was the nearest and most used and at Yellow lake are extensive earth works and tumuli. One mound on the shore of that lake measures about 19 feet in height and is seventy-one paces in circumference. It occupies a slightly locality. Pottery and ornaments common to these people are found in these mounds. A few miles further up the river the line of travel diverged into three routes: Up the main river and over a mile and a half portage to the Brule river and thence down to Lake Superior. The second route by water was up the Eau Claire through the lake of that name and down Pike river or White river and Bad river to Lake Superior. From the mouth of Bad river the extensive copper regions on Keweenaw Point were easily reached. The third and shorter route was over a long portage to the mouth of Sioux river, southwest of Bayfield.

The way stations for the food supply of these routes of travel are about 100 miles apart, a three to four days' trip. At Bayfield and Ashland the great fish supply was reached. At Ontanagon, Eagle river and Portage lake these people mined large amounts of copper and exported it over the routes mentioned to the extensive markets in the lower Mississippi valley.

To the country north of Lake Superior there were different routes. The most important one was up the Mississippi to Sandy lake; thence across the divide to the St. Louis river (Gichi Gummi sibi of the Chippewas *i.e.* *river of the Great lake.*) From the mouth of East Savannah the combined route from the Mississippi and from Lake Superior continued up the St. Louis and its northerly branch, the Embarras river, to and across the great water shed of the Mesabi mountains, then down Pike river into Vermillion lake. This was the great route from the Mississippi valley to the mining regions of northeastern Minnesota. Farther up the Mississippi there lay an important route from Lake Winnebigoishish to and through Bowstring lake and its extensive wild rice fields, down Big Fork river to Rainy river and then on to the great water way extending along the International boundary for two hundred miles.

On this route the principal town or stopping place was at White Oak Point as ancient mounds and fragments of pottery attest. Another important route from Lake Superior was up Pigeon river to its source; thence across the height of land down the valley of Rainy lake and river to the Lake of the Woods.

There were other lines of travel of minor importance leading into that country, but I have described enough of them to show that the country was occupied. The inhabitants were a mining people, and in order to get the products of their mines to the great populous centers they had to improve the rivers enumerated above, so far as to accommodate their light draft boats. This they have done, and in such a manner as to reduce the transport to the shortest possible distance. Slight dams were built to flood shoals and jetties to direct the water from bank to bank, so as to secure a sufficient depth to float their craft. I am not aware of any relics or works to indicate that they used beasts of burden or any mode of land transportation save packing on men's backs.

The St Louis river falls about 600 feet from the mouth of the Cloquet river to Fond du Lac, at the level of Lake Superior. The distance by the stream is about 24 miles. This section of the river is exceedingly rough. There are some reasons for believing that at Pine Island, 3 miles above Knife falls, the rapids are artificial or partially so—on the Grand rapids 5 miles above and at their head, a dike of bowlders of enormous size, so compactly placed and sloping down stream at such an angle as to revert the force of the highest floods. This dam floods the stream 4 miles to the mouth of the Cloquet river. About 4 miles, just below the mouth of this last stream a dam composed of heavy rocks, all rounded bowlders is thrown at right angles across the river of sufficient height (about 7 feet) to flood the stream above for 12 miles. Throughout this whole distance the scarcity of bowlders in the stream and on the banks would indicate that they had all been removed and placed in that dam.

Two more of these dams occur in Town 51, Ranges 18 and 19, and farther up river at a point $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles above Whitefish, at Swan river rapids and at Cedar rapids. But the most marked improvements are on the Embarras river above Esquegamo lake. This stream is the most northerly branch of the St. Louis river. It makes a cut through the Mesabi mountains which rise, in Town 59, Range 15, to a height above the valley on each side of the

stream of from 500 to 800 feet in the distance of half a mile. But the nature of this channel is now visible at a few points between the seven artificial lakes that have been made by dams of boulders thrown across the valley making the 12 miles of the river from the Esquegamo or lowest lake to Wine portage with its five portages the easiest part of the canoe route from Duluth to Vermillion lake. At the crossing of the wagon road at the bridge is a dam composed of rounded boulders entirely, and of such size that the heaviest spring floods cannot move them from the grade they are placed at. This dam formerly held the water three feet higher than at present and is about 1000 feet long on the south side of the river. It has been lowered laterally to allow canoes to pass without making a portage, and this lowering of the dam has been a damage to the navigation on two shoals between lakes above. I cannot leave this locality without calling attention to some fact that would seem to indicate that quite a settlement of these people resided in the vicinity of these lakes.

On the south side of Esquegamo lake, about forty rods from the shore, situated on a sandy plain, is a mound about twenty feet in diameter and seven feet high. This mound is in a thick growth of jack pines.

About two miles northeast of this mound opposite the third lake is a grove of plum bushes, ancient burr oak trees, lindens and elms growing on the upland. There are no other trees of these species on the uplands in the whole region.

The prevailing timber is coniferous, mixed with the white birch and aspen poplar. If these lakes are artificial the construction of the necessary dams would have required a large number of workmen a term of years. At Wine portage the stream falls 36 feet over a dam of boulders. In seasons of high water these rapids can be run by canoes coming down stream. The fall is about six feet in a hundred for 600 feet. At this point the channel is straight; another evidence, that it was constructed to be used by boats bound down stream. No voyageur could manage a canoe in a crooked channel where the craft was moving at the rate of speed equal to a railroad train. At the upper end of the portage the dam was raised high enough to flood the water back for nine miles up the valley to a point where the Iron Range Railroad crosses the stream. The lake thus formed covered from 10,000 to 15,000 acres of land, and has been maintained so long that it is filled up with a

vegetable deposit, peat bearing on its surface spruce and tamarac trees, cranberries and the peat mosses. This lake is connected with a similar one, created by a dam on Pike river, which now like the first is filled with peat. The depth of peat in this swamp may give us data from which to calculate the period of time that has elapsed since the valley was flooded. Assuming the deposit to be six feet deep and that it accumulated at the rate of one inch in a hundred years, we have a period of 7200 years.

After passing the divide we reach Pike river, a stream only about two rods wide in Town 80, Range 15. This stream empties into Vermillion lake; it has four dams on it below the one spoken of above. I will describe two of them.

The first, at the crossing of the wagon road from Duluth to Lake Vermillion in Town 81, Range 15. At this point a dam of bowlders has been placed across the valley, the largest of which are several tons weight each. These rocks have been taken from the bed of the stream above. The height of the dam does not exceed four feet, yet it makes the stream navigable for nine miles. When we consider that this country in the valley of Vermillion lake is perfectly paved with rocks, torn from ledges during the glacial period, that these rocks occupy the hill tops, and that in the excavation of the valley, of a stream having a grade of less than six feet to the mile, a stream of great volume would not even move small pebbles, nor have they the slightest action on sand, we should expect that the removal of the finer clays and sands would give more prominence to the bowlders. Here we find a stream running through just such a valley as I have mentioned and for 9 miles one can move along in an average stage of water on a placid canal. I conclude therefore, that the channel has been closed and the rocks piled into these dams. About one-fourth of a mile above Vermillion lake the stream falls over a ledge of altered slates. Above these falls there is a rapid 500 feet in length, in which distance the stream falls about 12 feet. At the head of this rapid the stream suddenly deepens to 10 feet and so abruptly that the stones appear to have been laid up in the form of a wall. For the distance of about 1500 feet above this dam the stream crosses ledges of trap rocks and then opens out into a valley flooded for six miles and a half or to the foot of the next rapids. If the bowlders were removed from the channel above the falls, the stream would drain the valley and destroy the navigation of the stream for canoes for a mile and a half.

VERMILLION LAKE.—This extensive interior lake is thirty miles long, is divided into bays by long capes and is studded with numerous islands, varying in size from a few rods to several miles in length and as diversified in beauty as they are in size. They present every tint of green, and with the surrounding hills they present a landscape seldom surpassed in beauty. On the shores of such a lake, with its abundant supply of fish for food, we are naturally led to look for traces of settlements of this ancient people, and they are there. The whole region north of the Mesabi mountains is covered with bowlders so thickly scattered over the surface, that it is hardly possible to drive a team without first clearing the track. It is *Nicollet's* "land of rocks and water." The first evidence we get of improved land is on a cape about half a mile east of the mouth of Pike river. Although the area is small it is very evident it has been cleared of stones and cultivated. Here grow the oak, the linden and the plum, or they were growing there eighteen years ago, before extensive forest fires destroyed the timber around the shores of the lake. Farther east in Section 25, Town 62, Range 16, is an island of not more than two acres in extent with similar indications; at the mouth of Two rivers lies a spot now occupied by the Minnesota Iron Company and cultivated as a farm and garden. Eighteen years ago it was covered with a dense forest; successive fires destroyed the timber and the company plowed a large area without being troubled by stones. I claim that there is no locality on this lake where that can be done unless the bowlders are first removed, and if they have been removed it was done by human labor, and it was not done by the Indians at present inhabiting the region. Until quite recently these Indians knew nothing about farming and lived entirely by hunting and fishing and by gathering the berries and wild rice of the region. At Sucker bay, on a cape in sections 23 and 24, Town 62, Range 16, the present Indian farm is quite an extensive tract, now cultivated by the Indians, under the direction of a government farmer. Advantage was taken of this favorable locality, because the stones had been cleared off. Here we find additional evidence of the presence of the mound builder, in fragments of pottery which have the marks and the general appearance of similar fragments found in the mounds at Yellow lake in Wisconsin, and at White Oak Point on the upper Mississippi, in Itasca county. There are several other

localities on the lake that show signs of similar improvements and the planting of oaks, lindens, elms and plum trees.

The query naturally arises: What induced these people to occupy these northern regions? Could it have been the summer resort of a people who admired the beautiful scenery and the excellence of the food supply—the fish, the rice and the game? It hardly seems possible that they would devote time and labor in improving these rivers if they did not have something more weighty to transport than ordinary baggage or provisions. The indications are that they were miners and came here to work the mineral deposits, and that these improvements on the streams were made to transport their products to a southern market.

On the north side of the bluff in section 27, Town 62, Range 15, is an excavation made in solid jasper, one of the hardest rocks known, and exceedingly tough and consequently difficult to break. The depth of this cut is not known, as the sides have given way and the pit is partially filled. Here masses of rock, from three to ten cubic yards in size, have been detached and removed out of the cut to the dump. There are no marks to indicate how these immense blocks of jasper were detached, or what mechanical appliances were used to hoist them out of the cut and place them on the banks. There are evidences that fire was used in working certain portions of the rock; in the dump pile fragments of charcoal and ashes are quite frequently found. A gravel walk is still visible and in tolerable repair, leading from the cut to the dump. This evidently was built for carrying out the materials of the mine. An examination of the bluff a short distance to the east of this cut disclosed a slate vein, carrying a notable quantity of yellow and red ocher. This may have been the material mined for; whatever it was the vein has been worked to the westward for the distance of several hundred feet across a flat, and to a depth below water level. For 200 miles to the eastward, along the international boundary, are improved river courses and ancient diggings, requiring a vast amount of labor and leaving monuments in stone of the patience, skill and industry of this ancient people.

I regret that I have not time to describe localities farther to the eastward or to enlarge on the engineering skill displayed in the construction of the stone dams. They effectually stop or hold the water at a given height in its low stages, and let it down an easy grade over a wide expanse in time of floods.

I conclude that this semi-civilized people cultivated the soil; they planted and cultivated certain forest and fruit trees; they cultivated the wild rice; they understood pisciculture and stocked the interior lakes and lived largely on a fish diet; they improved the navigation of rivers leaving lasting monuments of their engineering skill, and they worked the mines for ochers or paints, for the precious metals and for copper.

America has ruins; America has a history; but it must be read in the footprints of this ancient people.

December 2, 1884.

[*Paper L.*]

THE MOUND BUILDERS IN NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA; THEIR OCCUPATIONS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL.—*Geo. R. Stuntz.*

The "Mound Builders" who have left such abundant proofs of a comparatively dense population in the Mississippi valley and along its tributary streams have left traces of their occupancy of the country to and beyond the northern boundary of this state. In Town 58 north, Range 16 west, a circular mound 20 feet in diameter and seven feet high, is located at the south side of Esquegamo lake in a very pleasing and beautiful locality, commanding an extensive view of the Mesabi mountains and in common with this class of mounds, so situated as to command a view of the earliest rays of the rising sun. This mound is built from the sand and alluvial soil of the neighborhood. The chain of lakes to the north, extending up the valley of the Embarras river to and through the Mesabi mountains, cannot be surpassed in the beauty of its Alpine-like scenery.

The Embarras river route was the great thoroughfare through which this people reached the mining regions of Vermillion lake, from their settlements on the Mississippi river and their mining towns on Lake Superior. From the Mississippi the route lay through Sandy lake, across the divide to the east Savanna river, a tributary to the great St. Lawrence drainage system. Following this stream down and the St. Louis up, Embarras river is reached and ascended through the chain of lakes before spoken of, to the height