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ANTHROPOLOGY

Study Vanished People

► NEW INFORMATION about the origin and ways of life of a puzzling vanished people of Arctic Canada is reported by Dr. Henry B. Collins of the Smithsonian Institution.

The people, the Sadlermiuts, were completely wiped out except for two children in an epidemic, probably typhoid, in the winter of 1902-03. That was before any scientists had had an opportunity to study them. But American, English, and Scotch whalers had described them as very different from other Eskimos. They lived in semi-subterranean stone dwellings. The men wore bearskin trousers and tied their hair in an enormous knot above the forehead.

It has been commonly thought that the Sadlermiut were the descendants of the Thule people who originated in Alaska and spread eastward to Arctic Canada and Greenland some 700 or 800 years ago.

Dr. Collins reports discovery of a "tremendous" Sadlermiut site at Native Point on Southampton Island, a bleak and treeless land mass forming the northwestern boundary of Hudson Bay.

In this abandoned "town" were found ruins of about 75 subterranean houses. The walls were made of stones and blocks of sod and the floor, roof supports, and sometimes even the roof itself were of stone.

More than 100 burials were found at the site itself and along adjacent beach ridges.

In addition, human bones, the remains of the last of the Sadlermiuts who died in the epidemic, were found in some of the house ruins. The two surviving Sadlermiut children had previously been adopted by another group of Eskimos.

The ground outside the houses was littered with the skulls and bones of animals eaten by the Sadlermiuts, mainly seals, walrus, caribou and polar bears.

As a result of what Dr. Collins and his associates found at Native Point and a nearby site of the Dorset people, it seems very probable that the Sadlermiuts, instead of being descendants of the Thule people, had merely been influenced by Thule culture. The scientists found strong indications the Sadlermiuts were related to the Dorset culture. Even the Sadlermiut form of dwelling may have been borrowed from the Dorset Eskimos.

Radiocarbon dating of some of the charred mammal bones from the old Dorset site gave an age of at least 2,060 years.

The excavations of the early Dorset sites and Sadlermiut site gave a picture of cultural development in the frigid Arctic over a period of 2,000 years.

Dr. Collins' study, appearing in the Smithsonian's Annual Report, was made in a joint expedition of the Smithsonian, the National Museum of Canada and the National Geographic Society.

Science News Letter, March 8, 1958

GENERAL SCIENCE

Fair Goes International

► JAPAN has joined the National Science Fair, making this annual event for high school scientists international in scope.

The first of several countries making similar plans to join, Japan expects to send its two outstanding student exhibitors, a boy and a girl, to compete in the Ninth National Science Fair to be held in Flint, Mich., in May. The young Japanese representatives will be the winners of the Science Fair recently held in Tokyo and modeled on those conducted in the United States by Science Service.

Out of 20,000 entries submitted from all over Japan, 272 were chosen as finalists for the Second Japan Student Science Awards and Science Fair. Those judged top winners in the junior and senior high school divisions were given awards by the Prime Minister and the Education Minister on Nov. 4, 1957.

Emperor Hirohito of Japan lent his own collection of marine biology specimens to be exhibited at the Fair and received several of the finalists at the Imperial Palace. Ten boys and girls were invited originally, but when His Majesty heard that parents, teachers and 20 other finalists were waiting outside in a bus, he asked that all of them be included.

At the close of the Fair, the Takaaka Senior High School's marine biology project was taken to the Imperial Palace for the Emperor's inspection, at his request.

Fair exhibits were shown in various Japanese cities and towns to stimulate interest in this year's fair.

Japan's Science Fair is sponsored by the Yomiuri Shimbun of Tokyo and the Osaka Yomiuri Shimbun, leading newspapers, and the Japanese National Council for the Advancement of Scientific Education which includes many top government officials, educators and scientists.

Three official Japanese observers, who were guests at the Eighth National Science Fair in Los Angeles, in 1957, chose seven of the American projects and arranged, through the Asia Foundation, to have them shown in Japan as examples of United States fair exhibits. SCIENCE SERVICE cooperated also as adviser in the organization of Japan's fair.

Science News Letter, March 8, 1958

● RADIO

Saturday, March 15, 1958, 1:30-1:45 p.m., EST

"Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over the CBS Radio network. Check your local CBS station.

Mr. George W. Bailey, executive secretary, Institute of Radio Engineers, New York, will discuss "New Radio Developments."