

PREHISTORIC ESKIMOS, KEPT INTACT BY SNOWS OF AGES, FOUND IN NORTHERN ALASKA

Dwellings and Implements Are Found Under Three Feet of Ice and Earth by W. B. Van Valin, University of Pennsylvania Field Expert.

Seattle, Wash.—Discovery of prehistoric Eskimos, their dwellings and implements preserved under three feet of ice and earth near Barrow, farthest north point of civilization in Alaska, was announced last night for the first time by W. B. Van Valin, field expert of the University of Pennsylvania, who arrived in Seattle aboard the S. S. Victoria from Nome after two years' experience, says the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. He brought with him skins used by the Eskimos he found preserved against decay in the ice and it is believed whole bodies as well as skulls and clothing.

How long ago the eighty people Mr. Van Valin found lived in the village he excavated he would not venture to say, expressing it however, as his belief that the village had been hidden thousands of years. No legend of modern day Eskimos sheds light upon the antiquity of the village. There is no mention, he said, in the oldest lore of the modern Eskimo of the existence of such a village. He found traces, he said, of villages built on the site of the snow and ice covered town in recent years.

"I am not privileged to discuss my find at length," he said at the Frye Hotel. "I am bound by the university to remain silent upon the details of the discovery, but I am free to say that I believe I have made a new contribution to scientific knowledge of the North."

Has Hundreds of Skulls. Mr. Van Valin's baggage includes hundreds of skulls and scores of implements and clothing he gathered while at Barrow, in addition to still photographs and moving pictures of his work and the natives of the place.

While declining to commit himself upon the matter, Mr. Van Valin indicated that the Eskimos he found had dark hair, disproving the claim of some that the former aborigines of the Northland were blond peoples.

Commenting on the fact that the village was covered by only a few feet of snow and ice, Mr. Van Valin said: "Accumulation in that country is slow and it would require hundreds of years for even a few feet of ground and ice to build itself. The only way in which I can fix the age of the bodies I found at this time is to say that I found a glacier beneath the village that leads me to believe that the people lived after the glacial period. Work of excavation was slow and there were only a few months that the ground was sufficiently thawed to permit the Eskimos I employed to dig. The clothing I found was not like that worn by the natives of today and was for the most part of bear skin. Until accurate cranial measurements have been made by the investigators and scientists at the University of Pennsylvania Museum Mr. Van Valin says all estimates of the age of the bodies he found will be conjecture.

He is firm in his belief that they belong to the remote past, but whether they lived contemporaneously with prehistoric mammoth or during a later period he cannot say.

"All I can say is that these men lived years and years ago and I think thousands of years ago," he said.

Once or twice explorers have brought frozen Eskimo bodies from the North, but each time they have been of men of recent origin, Mr. Van Valin said, and accounted for either in current history or in the legends of natives.

Mr. Van Valin believes his contribution to northern knowledge is unique, not only because it promises to extend that knowledge for centuries further than it has ever gone but because of the completeness of his data.

Fossilized forms which taught the world much of former life in temperate and tropical zones has always been fragmentary, while Mr. Van Valin's village is complete to the tiniest detail of domestic life. Cooking utensils, the tools and instruments of bone and some are still there as well as the ornaments and clothing of the

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