

NORTHERN NEWS

First meeting of the committee appointed at the Canadian Eskimo Conference¹

At the round table conference on Eskimo affairs held in Ottawa on May 19-20² a continuing committee was appointed to study the reports and suggestions presented. The members of this committee, which met for the first time in Ottawa on October 16 are: Major General H. A. Young, chairman, His Excellency J. Trocellier, Rt. Rev. Donald B. Marsh, R. H. Chesshire, Commissioner L. H. Nicholson, R.C.M.P., Dr. P. E. Moore, and J. G. Wright.

The Hon. Robert Winters, Minister of Resources and Development, addressed the committee and stressed the need for a practical approach to education to prepare the Eskimo for the changing times in the Arctic. There are at present seven schools for Eskimo in Canada and arrangements have already been made by the federal government to build an eight-room school at Aklavik.

The committee agreed that besides extending facilities for elementary education to all Eskimo children and building camp hostels at schools for those children who live away from the settlements, provision would have to be made for higher education and for technical training for those who showed particular aptitude. Eskimo who give evidence of possessing the necessary qualifications will be enabled to prepare themselves to work as teachers, nurses, or artisans, either among their own people or outside.

Consideration was also given to the problems involved in extending the medical care at present given to Eskimo, and particularly to the programme which has been in effect during recent years for the detection and treatment of tuberculosis. One of the more pressing prob-

lems is to provide convalescent or rehabilitation centres for Eskimo who have been discharged from hospital, but are not capable of returning to the rigorous northern life they have known before. Two such centres will be established in 1953: one at Frobisher Bay, southern Baffin Island, for Eskimo from the Eastern Arctic, and the other at Driftpile, Alberta, for the Western Arctic.

At the Frobisher Bay centre convalescent Eskimo will learn to take up their normal activities again. The Driftpile centre will be something of an experiment where it will be seen if those Eskimo who are unlikely ever to be fit enough to return to the north can adjust themselves to different occupations in areas other than the Arctic.

With the opening up of the North, which has followed the development of air travel, there have been a number of epidemics such as measles, scarlet fever, and whooping cough. In primitive times these were unknown among the Eskimo, and special medical measures are necessary. Ordinary health and medical problems are being met by frequent medical patrols, local hospitals, and nursing stations and by the voluntary work of missionaries, traders, and police throughout the country. Cases requiring specialized surgery or treatment are brought out by aircraft or boat to hospitals in the south.

The committee agreed that, under the direction of the Canadian Handicraft Guild, the development of handicrafts, as a source of Eskimo income has shown good results. Government assistance will be continued. Other small industries such as boat building, fishing for local markets, and the collection of eider-down are to be encouraged.

The naming of the walrus

Although walrus were known to western Europe during the Middle Ages, and indeed many of the medieval ivory carvings were of walrus ivory, knowledge

¹Reprinted from the *Arctic Circular*, Vol. 5, No. 6 (1952) pp. 63-4.

²See *Arctic*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1952) pp. 193-5.

of the animal was limited and often confused. Consequently, it is not surprising that when arctic voyages from north-west Europe became common in the early sixteenth century, walrus were called by a variety of names; of these in English the commonest were walrus, morse, sea horse, sea cow, and sea morse. A recent study by V. Kiparsky ("L'histoire du morse", *Ann. Acad. Scien. Fenn. Ser. B*, Vol. 73 (1952) pp. 1-54) traces the evolution and relationship of the various names that have been given in European languages to walrus. He shows that most of the words may be traced back to the Lapp onomatopoeic word *morssa* derived from the grunting sound produced by the animals. That word was brought to western Europe, changing on the way to *hross*, with the addition of *hval* (whale) to *ros-hval* and eventually, with inversion, to walrus. The Basque whalers brought the Lapp word directly to Britain in the fifteenth century as morse. A similar form of the word, *mors*, reached central and western Europe by the sixteenth century by way of Finnish and Russian. J. BRIAN BIRD

Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska

The Department of Anthropology of the University of Alaska has recently published the first volume of a new series of *Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska*. The first issue includes the following papers:

"Observations on the 'Eskimo type' of kinship and social structure" by J. L. Giddings, Jr.

"Notes on Koniag material culture" by Robert F. Heizer.

"The Aleut-Eskimo community" by W. S. Laughlin.

"The archaeology of Hooper Bay village, Alaska" by Wendell Oswalt. The series will appear at irregular intervals and is to be devoted to arctic and subarctic anthropological studies. The first issue is priced at \$1.50 per copy, including mailing, and can be obtained from the Department of Anthropology, University of Alaska, College, Alaska.

Letopis' Severa

Letopis' Severa is a Russian language periodical published by the Northern Sea Route Administration in Moscow and Leningrad, under the editorship of Professors Andreev, Vize, and Efimov. Volume I [or perhaps Number 1; only a large one appears on the title page] is dated 1949, and has 314 pages. It contains numerous articles by well-known Soviet scientists such as Vize, Okladnikov, and Mikhailov. Seventy pages are devoted to notices and reviews of new northern books and about 35 pages to short notes. I have seen only this single copy of *Letopis' Severa* and would be much interested in knowing whether other numbers reached this country.

EVELYN STEFANSSON

The discovery of ancient coins in Kamchatka

The following translation of S. I. Markov's account of "The discovery of ancient coins in Kamchatka" (*Letopis' Severa*, (*Chronicle of the North*), No. 1, 1949, p. 312-3) was made by Evelyn Stefansson.

Recently the collector-numismatist, K. I. Panin of Petropavlovsk on Kamchatka, told me of an unusual find which had been made in the deepest interior of Poluostrov Kamchatka (Kamchatka Peninsula), in a little known and uninhabited place.

In 1944 a worker at one of the local fish-breeding factories (*rybovodnykh zavodov*), O. I. Orekhov, found himself on the middle stream of the Kamchatka river, 200 kilometres from its mouth. On the shore of Ozero Ushki (Lake Ushki), which drains into the Kamchatka river, in the talus at the foot of one of its capes, which consists of a dense complex of rock strata, Orekhov came upon four small copper coins.

In 1948 Orekhov sent his finds to K. I. Panin. This experienced collector found himself unable to date the new-found coins, which were unlike any he had ever seen. He has written the following description of the coins:

Coin No. 1 (circular, with a diameter of 16 millimetres) has on one side a

representation of a bow with a taut bowstring, an arrow, and three letters. About two of the letters, A and N, there is no question, the third is similar to the Russian letter η, but with the first vertical stroke lengthened. The images are all in relief on a flat background. The reverse side has a prominent, humpy drawing which is indecipherable.

Coin No. 2 (circular with a diameter of 14 millimetres) appears to be an authentic fragment of some kind of Arabian (?) coin. On a portion of one side, what was probably the peripheral design of the original coin can be seen without difficulty. Another part shows interwoven Arabian signs. On the other side, placed asymmetrically, is a perfect circle containing symbols which may be numbers. The circle was apparently the centre of the original coin and has an ornamental border. All figures are in relief.

Coin No. 3 (circular with a diameter of 16 millimetres) is very similar to the preceding one in probable technical execution. It is so worn or flattened, however, that it is possible to make out only part of the Arabian (?) signs in its centre. The obverse side of the coin is completely effaced.

Coin No. 4 (circular with a diameter of 21 millimetres) unfortunately is also in an extremely unsatisfactory state of preservation. On each of its sides are different images of a head and profile in relief. No other trace of figure or symbol is visible. But astonishingly, when one takes the coin in one's hand and examines the profiles of the male heads, only one supposition comes to mind—this coin is either *ancient Greek or Roman*.

For clarification we were forced to turn to the expert numismatists of the Leningrad Hermitage. Preliminary examination of the coins gave striking results.

No. 1 appears to be a Greek coin of the Azov-Black Sea colony of Panticapaeum and dates from the third century before our era.

Coin No. 4 on Panin's list was minted about A.D. 17 in the Kingdom of Bosphorus, also at Panticapaeum, which at that time was the capital of the Bosphorus.

According to the conclusions of the specialists, one side of this coin portrays the king of the Bosphorus, Rhescuporis I, and the other side the profile of the Roman Emperor (Tiberius?). In this connection it is well to remember that the king of the Bosphorus had the title "friend of Caesar and friend of the Romans", and Bosphorus coins usually bore the images of both the kings of the Bosphorus and of the Roman Emperors. (See M. N. Tikhomirov and S. S. Dmitriyev, 'Istoriya S.S.S.R.' (History of the U.S.S.R.) Vol. 1, 1948, p. 15).

The other two coins are of eastern origin. One of them (No. 2) has been found to be a "pul" (1/32 of a silver "ten'gi") coined in Khorasan. The date of its minting has not been established.

It would be risky to speculate how these ancient coins from the shores of the Black Sea and from Central Asia reached the Far East of our country. But it is certainly worth noting that although far from any populated areas, they were on the track of the main water routes of Poluostrav Kamchatka.