

**SCULPTURED ANTHROPOID APE
HEADS FOUND IN OR NEAR THE
VALLEY OF THE JOHN DAY
RIVER, A TRIBUTARY OF THE
COLUMBIA RIVER, OREGON**

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Sculptured anthropoid ape heads found in or near the valley of the John Day river, a tributary of the Columbia River, Oregon by James Terry

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JAMES TERRY

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BY
JAMES TERRY



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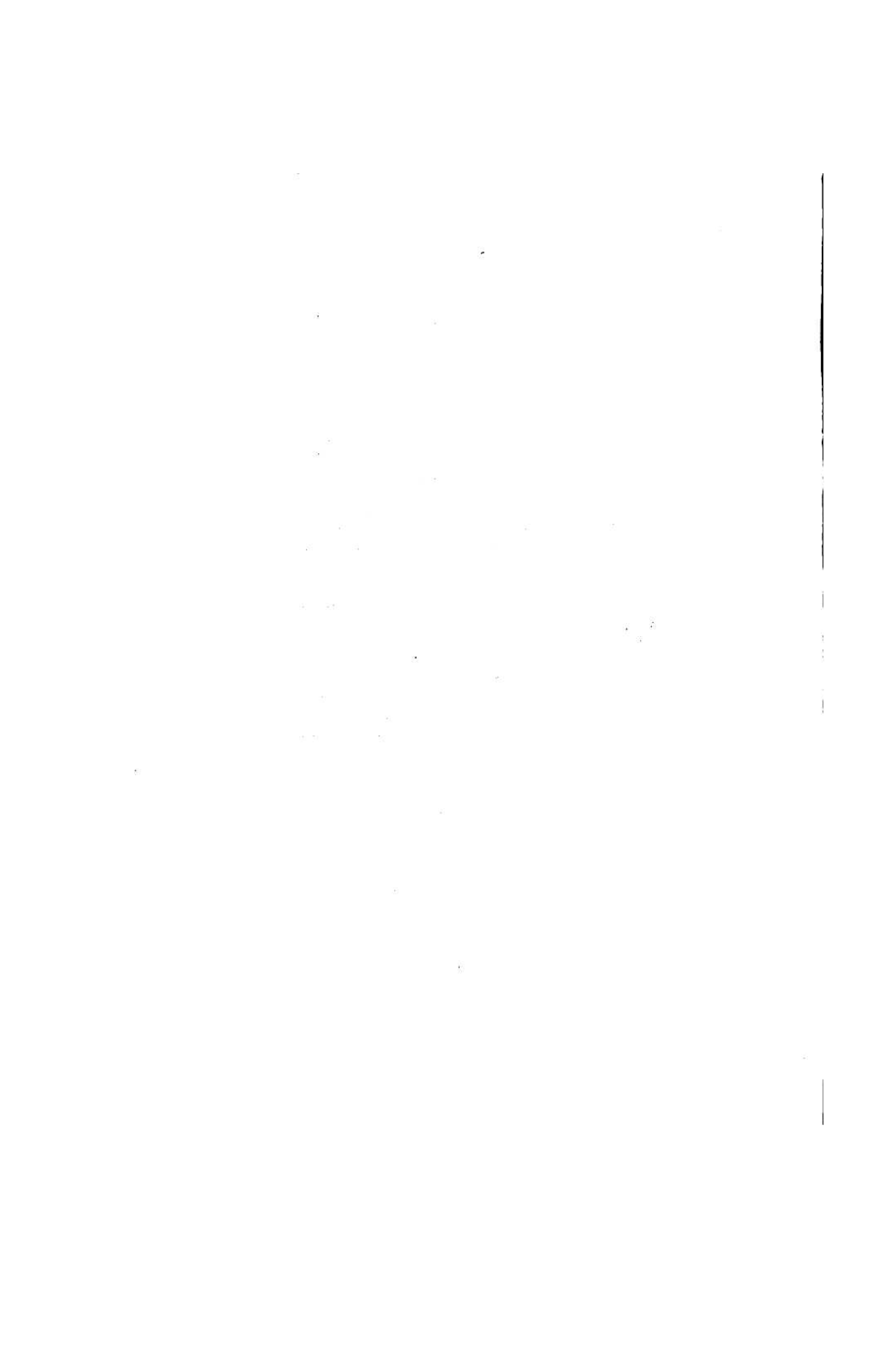
THE Columbia valley and its tributaries offers as rich a field to the archæologist as it has revealed to the paleontologist, and it has been my good fortune to secure a large amount of material there, which will serve as a basis for several papers.

The present paper treats especially of three remarkable stone heads from this region, which are here figured and described for the first time.

The plates of these sculptures were made by the artotype process, being photographs in printing ink, executed by the well-known firm of E. Bierstadt of New York city. Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 are natural size, taken by him directly from the objects. Figures 5 and 6 are half natural size, also taken from the object, by an artist in Oregon, and the negative sent to Mr. Bierstadt for reproduction. I have not had the latter specimen before me in preparing the present paper, but I examined it in 1882, when I obtained the specimen represented on Plate I.

I here acknowledge my obligations to the kindness of Professor O. C. Marsh of Yale University, and Professor T. Condon of Oregon, in permitting me to examine and describe their specimens represented in Plates ~~II and~~ III, IV, & V.

J. T.



SCULPTURED ANTHROPOID APE HEADS,

FROM OREGON.

It is not my intention, in the present brief notice of the remarkable pieces of sculpture here described, to offer any assertions based upon an autochthonous theory as to the origin of man on this continent, or the more generally accepted theory of his migration from the Asiatic continent. The advocates of either hypothesis, in the present state of the science, have but little to substantiate their position. The literature of American anthropology is already so filled with opposing theories that it appalls the student who undertakes to unravel the contradistinctions of its many writers, and hence I shall try to avoid further complication.

I may, however, be permitted to review briefly the theories of some recent writers who advocate a hyperborean origin for primitive man on this continent, more particularly in the region where these sculptures were found. I shall also call attention to some of their statements which appear to be controverted by archaeological research; making no claims for my position as final, but bearing in mind the importance which authentic material should always have in determining any conclusion on the subject.

Philologists have long contended that true anthropologic investigation must look to language as a foundation-stone. Cuno maintains that race is not co-extensive with language; Posche, that anthropology and archaeology must supplant and correct the conclusions of philology; M. Broca, that physical characteristics command the position in determining the consanguinity of races. With these conflicting positions of men eminent in their attainments, it is with a sense of relief that we turn to these specimens of a past people, which by their immutable character reveal to us some light as to their origin.

Most of our archæological material (material strictly archaic, Pre-columbian) north of Mexico is remotely separated from any philological or physiological connections. Particularly is this the case with the stone sculptures of the Columbia valley, unless it be conceded that the tribes inhabiting that valley at the time of European occupancy were related to these remains. To this last I cannot assent, for these sculptures would then probably have held such a high status in their limited development of progress as to have attracted the attention of Lieutenant Broughton, and Lewis and Clark, and been mentioned by them.

Mr. George Gibbs, in his well-known memoir,* speaks of these Indians as follows: "No division of tribes into clans is observable, nor any organization similar to the eastern tribes, neither have the Indians of this territory emblematical distinction resembling the "totem."

Mr. Stephen Powers, in a paper read before the California Academy of Sciences, † mentions that the present tribes of Indians in California all use implements (such as mortars, pestles, pipes, and stone daggers) of a quality inferior to those used by the aboriginals, and that when one of the present Indians is found using an article of superior manufacture, he will acknowledge that he did not make it, but found it. In my intercourse with the tribes of the Columbia valley, the Yakimas, Warm Spring, Nez Percés, and others, they invariably answered my inquiries regarding the origin of these archaic specimens, and the many other sculptured pieces found in this region, by saying that they had no knowledge or tradition concerning them. The lack of any evidence to connect the tribes of this valley with these sculptures warrants us in considering them as archaic specimens dissociated from any relation with historic tribes.

The specimen represented on Plates I. and II. is one of the results of my researches in the Columbia valley in 1882, and is now in my collection at the American Museum of Natural History, New York city. The specimen represented on Plates III. and IV. was found by Professor O. C. Marsh, is now in the collection of Yale University, and was the first one of these sculptures brought to light. Professor Marsh, in his address on Vertebrate Life in America, delivered before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, at Nashville,

* "Contributions to American Ethnology," Vol. I., p. 184. 1877.

† "Proceedings California Academy of Sciences," Vol. V., p. 392. 1875.

Tennessee, August 30, 1877, makes the following reference to this sculpture, and some other similar specimens:

"It is far from my intention to add to the many theories extant in regard to the early civilizations in this country, and their connections with the primitive inhabitants or the later Indians, but two or three facts have recently come to my knowledge which I think worth mentioning in this connection. On the Columbia River I have found evidence of the former existence of inhabitants much superior to the Indians at present there, and of which no tradition remains. Among many stone carvings which I saw there were a number of heads which so strongly resembled those of apes that the likeness at once suggests itself. Whence came these sculptures, and by whom were they made?"

The specimen represented on Plate V. is in the collection of Professor Thomas Condon of Oregon.

These three specimens were found in or near the valley of the John Day River, a tributary of the Columbia. They would be classed by archaeologists as "surface finds," a classification that would cover a large proportion of the archaic remains of the valley, from the fact that the shifting sand dunes, which were largely utilized for burial purposes, are continually bringing them to the surface and exposing them. Each specimen is clearly a complete object in itself, never having formed a part of any larger sculpture from which it might have been detached or broken. They were carved from a dark, pumiceous, basaltic rock, abundance of which is found in the valley.

The specimen on Plates I. and II. is made from an open porous boulder of basalt, the structure of which is very effectively brought out by the print. The exterior has been entirely worked with the exception of about one-half of the surface of the left side, and the top of the second, third, and fourth corrugations, all of which exhibit the natural surface of the rock. The broad, flat nose, with supporting cheeks, and the contractions or corrugations of the forehead, are characteristics of the ape family which will attract the attention of specialists in this branch of zoölogy, a branch with which the writer lays no claim to familiarity. The mouth and chin of this specimen are clearly represented in Plate II.

In Professor Marsh's specimen, shown on Plates III. and IV., the nose is represented by two round protuberances similar to the eyes, but smaller and closer together. The mouth is distended, exhibiting the