

STRING RECORDS—LEECHMAN

PL. I



CASE CONTAINING STRING RECORD 1, NICOLA VALLEY, B. C.
(Width, 3 in.)

INDIAN NOTES AND MONOGRAPHS

EDITED BY F. W. HODGE



A SERIES OF PUBLICA-
TIONS RELATING TO THE
AMERICAN ABORIGINES

STRING RECORDS OF THE NORTHWEST

BY

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AND

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pp. 10-13, 42-48, 54-61

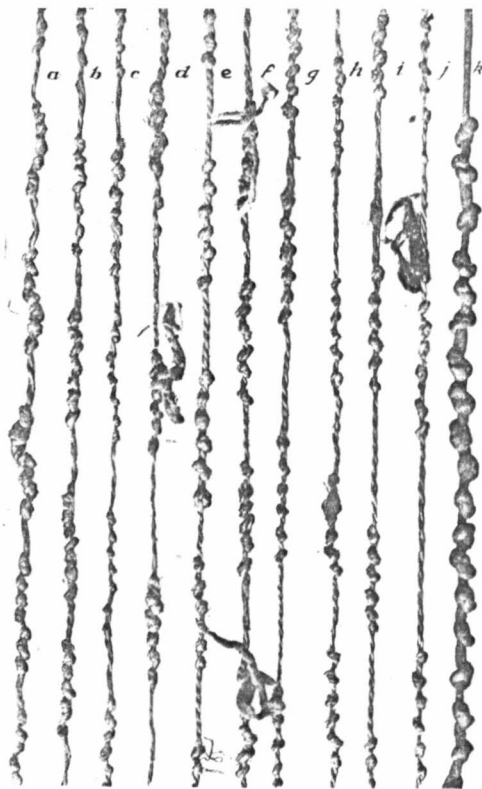
10	STRING RECORDS
	<p>(5) A leather shoe-lace, 16 in. in length, (pl. III, <i>a</i>), with 24 knots fairly equally spaced, but occupying only 7.5 in., the remainder of the strip being without knots.</p> <p>(6) Four dentalium shells (pl. III, <i>d</i>), threaded on fine strips of sinew. The shells are of slightly different lengths, as follows: 0.6 in., 0.98 in., 1.12 in., 1.08 in. The four sinew threads on which they are strung are attached at their ends to a small bit of leather so that the shells lie parallel to one another and in the same plane.</p> <p>The larger ball was tightly wound. Commencing at the inner end the knots were tied in groups (pl. IV, <i>a, b, c</i>), following an initial blank space about two inches long, as shown in the Table, Specimen 1, <i>a</i>, pp. 16-35.</p> <p>The smaller ball has a loose piece of string (pl. III, <i>e</i>; IV, <i>h, i, j</i>), wrapped round it, about 33 in. in length, knotted as shown in the Table, Specimen 1, <i>b</i>, p. 36.</p> <p>After unwinding about 11.5 ft. of the ball itself, it was found to be tied about with a strip of <i>kois</i>, passed three times round the ball and then tied in a half-bow.</p>
	INDIAN NOTES

YAKIMA	11
<p>A little more than two feet of the inner end of the string is left unrestrained by the band. No knot was found at the free end of this string, in which respect it differs from all the others. It is knotted as shown in the Table, Specimen 1, <i>c</i>, pp. 37-38.</p> <p>The shortest string (pl. III, <i>b</i>; VI, <i>d, e, f, g</i>), which is not included in either of the two balls, is 6 ft. 11.25 in. in length, and is notable for more variations in color than any of the others. It is knotted as shown in the Table, Specimen 1, <i>d</i>, pp. 39-41.</p> <p>It will be noted that the rule is six knots in a group, though there are many exceptions. The general character of the knots and markers on these strings may be seen in pl. IV. In the specimen from Yakima, owned by Mr McWhorter (Spec. 2), as shown in the Table, pp. 42-47, seven knots in the group is almost invariable, which makes it much easier to fit into our calendar. The space between groups is probably to be considered as marking Sunday in the Nicola and similar valley specimens.</p> <p><u>Specimen 2</u> is thus described by Mr McWhorter: "I am sending you . . .</p>	
AND MONOGRAPHS	

one of the string records, not thinking it necessary to send both, since they are practically identical duplicates. Both pertain to the record age of a boy, first twenty years, knot for each day. In the years it is the only specimen of its kind that I have ever been able to secure." In a later letter he adds that the specimen, when he received it, was wound on a piece of card instead of being spherical. "Usually," says Mr McWhorter, "these relics are highly prized by the owners."

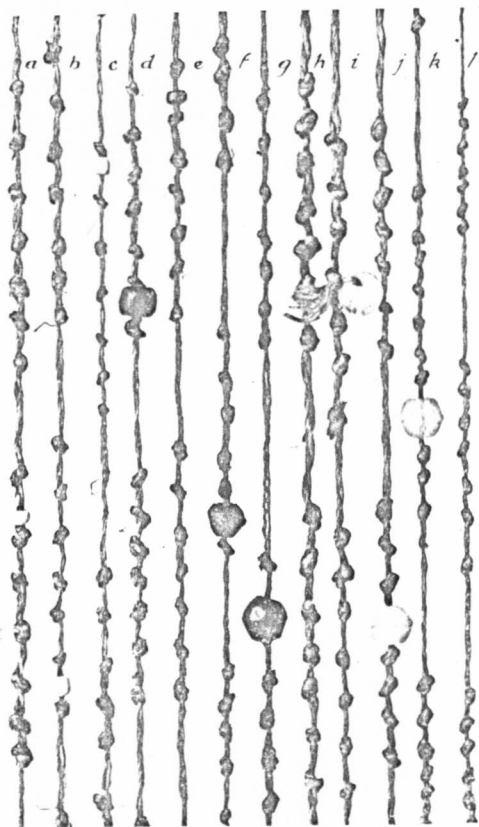
On examination, this record was found to be 40 ft. long and tied into 1,238 knots which are arranged with few exceptions in groups of seven, as may be seen in the typical sections shown in pl. v. There are 44 markers, all beads, and they are placed regularly after every 28 knots, with occasional exceptions. The material throughout the string is, as in the preceding specimen, dogbane (*Apocynum*), the Yakima name for which is *taxu's*, according to Dr Waterman. The record is carefully made, but here and there small shreds of the outer bark still adhere to the fiber. Its color is

INDIAN NOTES



TYPICAL SECTIONS OF STRING RECORD 1. NICOLA VALLEY, B. C.

(Length of sections, 6.5 in.)



TYPICAL SECTIONS OF STRING RECORD 2. YAKIMA.
WASHINGTON. L. V. McWHORTER COLLECTION

YAKIMA

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buff, with the exception of one short length of less than an inch, where it is stained red, apparently without intention.

It is very regular in knotting and marking, as will be noticed in the tabulation, which starts from the inner end. It is worthy of note that the first two or three inches of the string are made with great care and the knots are small, perhaps symbolical of the smallness of the child and of the care it needed.

It is difficult to agree with Mr McWhorter's belief that this record covers a period of twenty years, as only forty-three lunar months are shown. It is probable that he has misunderstood his informant or that the latter was in error himself. The occasional occurrence of six knots in a group where seven would be expected may be laid to errors on the part of the maker, but the solution of the tens and the twelve offers greater difficulties. It is not probable that these Indians were sufficiently expert calendar makers to reckon intercalary days, and the use of the beads shows that the whites had already penetrated the

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	TABLE. SPECIMEN 2				42
INDIAN NOTES	<i>Group number</i>	<i>Number of knots in group</i>	<i>Remarks</i>	<i>Number of marker</i>	STRING RECORDS
	1	7	Knots very small and close together.		
	2-4	7			
	5	10	An opalescent bead occurs after the seventh knot.	1	
	6-8	7			
	9	10	A similar bead occurs after the seventh knot.	2	
	10-12	7			
	13	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	3	
	14-16	7			
	17	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	4	
	18-20	7			
	21	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	5	
	22-24	7			
	25	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	6	
	26-28	7			
	29	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	7	
	30-32	7			

AND MONOGRAPHS	33	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	8	YAKIMA
	34-36	7			
	37	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	9	
	38-40	7			
	41	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	10	
	42-44	7			
	45	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	11	
	46-48	7			
	49	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	12	
	50-52	7			
	53	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	13	
	54-56	7			
	57	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	14	
	58-60	7			
	61	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	15	
	62-64	7			
	65	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	16	
	66-68	7			
	69	7	A similar bead is tied on, not threaded, after the fourth knot.	17	
					43

TABLE. SPECIMEN 2—Continued				44
INDIAN NOTES	Group number	Number of knots in group	Remarks	Number of marker
	70-72	7		
	73	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	18
	74-76	7		
	77	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	19
	78-80	7		
	81	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	20
	82-84	7		
	85	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	21
	86-88	7		
	89	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	22
	90-92	7		
	93	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	23
	94-96	7		
	97	7	A similar bead occurs after the fourth knot.	24
	98-100	7		
	101	6	A blue bead occurs after the first knot.	25
	102-104	7		
				STRING RECORDS

AND MONOGRAPHS					YAKIMA
	105	6	A translucent red bead occurs after the first knot.	26	
	106-108	7			
	109	12	An opaque blue bead occurs after the seventh knot.	27	
	110-111	7			
	112	7	A small opaque blue bead occurs after the first knot.	28	
	113-115	7			
	116	7	An opaque red bead occurs after the first knot.	29	
	117-119	7			
	120	7	A translucent blue bead occurs after the first knot.	30	
	121-123	7			
	124	6	A translucent blue bead occurs after the first knot.	31	
	125-127	7			
	128	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	32	
	129-130	7			
	131	6			
					45

TABLE. SPECIMEN 2— <i>Concluded</i>		46			
INDIAN NOTES	Group number	Number of knots in group	Remarks	Number of marker	STRING RECORDS
	132	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	33	
	133-135	7			
	136	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	34	
	137-139	7			
	140	7	A translucent blue bead occurs after the first knot.	35	
	141-143	7			
	144	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	36	
	145-147	7			
	148	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	37	
	149-151	7			
	152	7	A translucent blue bead occurs after the knot. A separate thin thread is threaded through it and tied on the outside. It is the only special marker in the specimen.	38	
	153-155	7			
	156	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	39	

AND MONOGRAPHS					YAKIMA
	157-159	7			
	160	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	40	
	161-163	7			
	164	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	41	
	165-167	7			
	168	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	42	
	169-171	7			
	172	7	A small white bead occurs after the first knot.	43	
	173-176	7			
	177	3			
			Then follow five feet of string without knots, bringing the record to an end.		
					47

✓

SOME STRING RECORDS OF THE YAKIMA

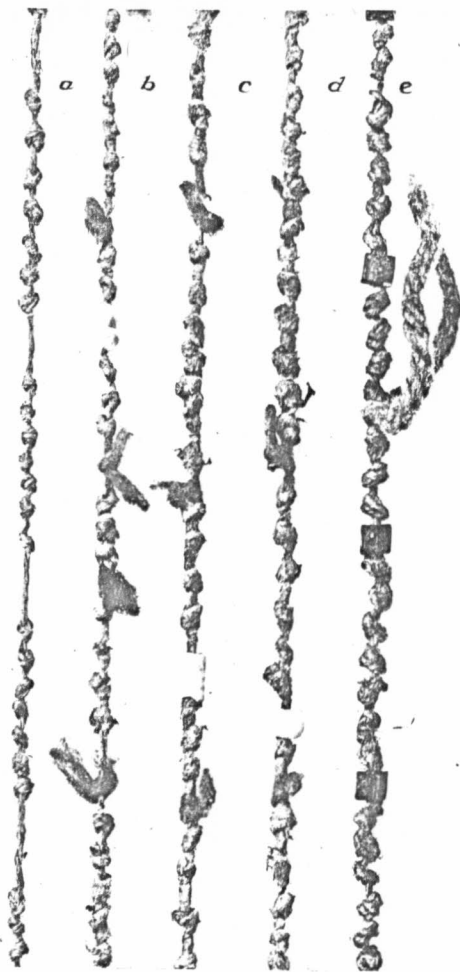
By M. R. HARRINGTON



AFTER Mr Leechman's paper was in type, three more string records were received by the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, collected by Dr T. T. Waterman, who was fortunate enough to get nearly all the data concerning one of them.

The record for which we have the data (Specimen 4), which was purchased from old Sally Jackson, a Yakima, measures about 35 ft. long, the first 26 ft. of which are made of deerskin, the remainder of twisted fiber cord. It contains some 1,577 simple knots, 226 markers of red yarn, three markers of blue yarn, one of green yarn, one of pink yarn, two of dentalium shell, and three consisting of glass beads, one yellow, one blue, and one red. In several

INDIAN NOTES



TYPICAL SECTIONS OF STRING RECORDS 4 AND 6,
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON
(Length of sections, 5.5 in.)

TABLE. SPECIMEN 5				54
INDIAN NOTES	Group number	Number of knots in group	Remarks	Number of marker
	1	1		
	2-3	7		
	4	7	A marker of greenish cotton cloth tied between second and third knots.	1
	5-6	7		2
	7	7	A human hair tied into the third and another into the fourth and fifth knots.	3
	8	7	A marker of red cotton fabric, with black polka-dots, tied between the third and fourth knots.	4
	9-11	7		
	12	7	A marker of narrow yellow ribbon tied between second and third knots.	5
				STRING RECORDS

AND MONOGRAPHS	13	7			YAKIMA
	14	7	A marker, of yellowish thread tied between third and fourth knots.	6	
	15-16	7			
	17	7	A marker of cotton twine tied between fifth and sixth knots.	7	
	18-20	7			
	21	7	A marker of white cotton rag tied between first and second knots.	8	
	22	7			
	23	6			
	24	7			
	25	7	A marker of common cotton twine tied between first and second knots. A marker of cotton rag tied loosely in gap between groups 25 and 26.	9	
	26-28	7		10	
	29	7			
	30-32	7	A marker of green yarn tied between first and second knots.	11	
					55

TABLE. SPECIMEN 5—Continued				56
INDIAN NOTES	Group number	Number of knots in group	Remarks	Number of marker
	33	7	A marker of pink yarn tied between fourth and fifth knots.	12
	34	7	A marker of white cotton rag tied between fourth and fifth knots.	13
	35	7		
	36	7	A marker of pink yarn tied between fifth and sixth knots.	14
	37	7		
	38-40	7	A marker, a yellow glass bead, strung between fifth and sixth knots.	15
	41	7		
	42-44	7	A marker of short deerskin thong tied between first and second knots.	16
	45	7		
			A marker of cotton rag tied over third knot.	17
				STRING RECORDS

AND MONOGRAPHS	46-48	7	A marker of short deerskin thong tied between seventh and eighth knots.	18	YAKIMA
	49	7			
	50-53	7	A marker of deerskin thong about 3 in. long, tied between first and second knots.	19	
	54	7			
	55	7	A marker of fiber (dogbane?) tied between second and third knots.	20	
	56	7			
	57	7	A marker of deerskin thong tied between first and second knots.	21	
	58	7			
	59-61	7	A marker, a blue bead, strung between fifth and sixth knots.	22	
	62	7			
	63-65	7	A marker of yellow felt tied between the first knot of this group and the last of the preceding.	23	
	66	7			
			A marker, a blue bead, tied on with white thread, between fifth and sixth knots.	24	
				57	

TABLE. SPECIMEN 5—Continued					58
INDIAN NOTES	Group number	Number of knots in group	Remarks	Number of marker	STRING RECORDS
	67	7	A marker of maroon yarn tied between fifth and sixth knots.	25	
	68	7			
	69-74	7	A marker of old-rose figured cotton material tied between fifth and sixth knots.	26	
	75	7			
	76-84	7	A marker of white cotton goods with small black figures tied on just before first knot.	27	
	85	7			
	86	7	A marker, a light green bead, tied on with white thread, as it was too small to string, between the fifth and sixth knots.	28	
	87-88	7	A marker, a dark blue bead, tied on with white thread, between the fifth and sixth knots.	29	
	89	7			

AND MONOGRAPHS	90	7	The deerskin thong part of the record ends here and the dogbane fiber cord begins.	YAKIMA	
	91-93	7	A marker of white cotton fabric with small black figures tied between the fifth and sixth knots.		30
	94	7			
	95-103	7	A marker of the same fabric tied between sixth and seventh knots.		31
	104	7			
	105	7	A marker of red thread, about 8 in. long, tied between third and fourth knots.		32
	106	7			
	107-110	7	A marker, a blue bead, strung on between fifth and sixth knots.		33
	111	7			
	112-113	7	A marker, a light green "Russian" bead, through which has been tied a piece of white cotton twine, strung between fifth and sixth knots.		34
	114	7			
				59	

TABLE. SPECIMEN 5—*Concluded*

60

INDIAN NOTES	Group number	Number of knots in group	Remarks	Number of marker	STRING RECORDS
	115	7	A marker, a yellow glass bead, tied with white woolen yarn, between the fifth and sixth knots.	35	
	116-134	7			
	135	7	A marker of green thread tied between the first and second knots.	36	
	136	7	A marker, an amber-colored bead, tied with white yarn between the fifth and sixth knots.	37	
	137	7			
	138	7	A marker of short deerskin thong, tied between the fifth and sixth knots.	38	
	139-154	7			
	155	7	A marker, a piece of dentalium shell (0.4 in. long), strung and tied between fifth and sixth knots.	39	
	156	1			

The third record (Specimen 6) is the shortest of all, measuring only 13 ft. 4 in. in length, and is made entirely of fiber. It begins in an unusual manner with four small knots, followed by a black bead, then another knot, then a bead, then a knot, then a space 1.8 in. long, in which are strung 7 black beads followed by a knot; then comes 8 in. of bare fiber cord, then a group of 2 knots, after which the groups of 7 knots each run to the number of 73, with one group of ten knots. After the 60th group the Sundays are marked by blue "Russian" beads, instead of by the simple gaps between the groups, and the moons are indicated throughout by tufts of yarn (pl. VI, e) or rag placed at intervals of from twenty-four to thirty-two knots. Only six days of the last week are recorded, after which the string is occupied by 24 green and blue glass beads of the "Russian" variety, evidently intended for marking succeeding Sundays. Nothing but the succession of days, weeks, and moons, seems to have been preserved in this record. It seems purely chronological, a "calendar string," unless the "moon"