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Skeletons and Pottery Are Found In Peachtree Mound

MOUND HAS BEEN ENTERED FOUR TIMES

52 Skeletons Found When Opened About 50 Years Ago, John McCombs Says

The location of six skeletons represent a portion of the first week's work by archaeologist of the Smithsonian Institution who are digging into the old mound at the mouth of Peachtree creek, on the north bank of Hiwassee river, seven miles south of Murphy, in the interest of scientific study of pre-historic America.

J. D. Jennings, of Chicago, Ill., and William B. Colburn, of Detroit, Mich., archaeologist attached to the Smithsonian Institute are in charge of the excavation work which is a federal project under the Civil Works Administration. Mr. Jennings has charge of scientific and technical work and Mr. Colburn is in charge of the labor and excavation.

Actual work on the mound began the latter part of December and is expected to continue for eight weeks or more. The labor is being drawn from the local re-employment office and about 100 men will receive employment on the projects during that time. Between \$12,000 and \$14,000 will be spent on the project.

Nine Found To Date

During the second week three more skeletons have been located. Skulls have been found in nine places, definite evidence that full skeletons of pre-historic aborigines are located there. Bones have been found at a few other places, but when archaeologist examined them only fragments of bones were unearthed. One of the skeletons was located in the field about 200 feet south of the mound.

Other finds made to date include a clay pot about six inches in diameter and some six inches high, perfect but for a partially broken rim; a small decorated pot about 1 inch in diameter and 1 inch high, the rim being completely gone; several bushels of pieces of broken pottery, fragments of bones and numerous post holes.

One piece of workmanship found is a dark clay goat's head about an inch in diameter and an inch and a half in height. The lower neck part is rough, evidently having been broken off the body or from a piece of ornamented pottery. The eyes, ears, horns, nose and mouth of the goat are almost perfect, and the ornament is easily identified as depicting the features of a goat.

On the southeast corner of the mound, numerous post holes have been located, which, evidently contained supports for some sort of house or fence. The ground around these post holes has not yet been completely excavated.

In the trench on the east side of the mound, a large pit of some kind has been located. The dirt within the pit is a loamy black, and is easily distinguishable from the original red clay surrounding it. Mr. Jennings who is supervising the scientific and technical phase of the excavation, said this was probably a fire pit or burial pit, but could not tell what it is until it has been excavated and examined.

Skeleton Uncovered

One of the skeletons has been partially uncovered. The work of excavating the skeletons is slow and tedious. When a skeleton is located, the earth is removed from around it, leaving a small mound a foot or more in height. Workmen then take small tools and small sharpened sticks and cautiously and gently loosen the dirt from around each bone or fragment, brushing it away with a soft brush as it becomes loose, until the skeleton is finally exposed to view. This tedious work is made necessary from the fact that the bones have almost disintegrated and are easily broken.

The bones crumble easily, and archaeologists treat them with chemicals to harden the texture as soon as they are excavated.

The mound proper has not yet been entered. Three ditches about 6 feet wide and three to four feet deep, have been dug on the north, east and south sides of the mound. The dirt is being removed from the banks toward the mound in thin slices. The excavation work will proceed in this

manner through the entire mound, and every inch of the dirt will receive a thorough examination.

The mound itself has been stated to be in five foot squares, and every tone, bead, stone or piece of pottery will be marked and labeled, the place it was found marked and located on a specially prepared map before being forwarded to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., for minute and detailed examination by its experts.

Dale Lee, local surveyor, is making the survey and maps to be used in connection with the excavation. Oscar Hunt, local high school student and artist, is assisting Mr. Lee. He is also making pencil drawings and outlines of fragments and objects found, which will be included in the report of Mr. Colburn and Mr. Jennings when the work is finished.

Archaeologists in charge of the work plan to make excavations in the field to the east and south of the mound in the hope that discoveries made there will shed some light upon the pre-historic village which once flourished there. They also hope to find evidence there which will reveal the place as the site of the ancient village of Guasili, said to have been visited by Hernando De Soto, intrepid Spanish explorer, on his gold hunting expedition through these mountains nearly four centuries ago.

Whether the skeletons found are those of Cherokee or Natchez Indians, or aborigines of pre-history, will not be known until they have been examined and passed upon by experts of the Smithsonian Institution.

Opened Four Times

When archaeologists delve into the mound they will find that it has already been disturbed, and probably many of the expected valuable relics of pre-historic America will be missing. The mound has been excavated at least four times in the past by relic hunters, according to information gathered from the older residents of the section, but no scientific or technical work has ever been done on it.

About 50 years ago, it is said, the mound was excavated by the Valentine brothers of Philadelphia. Sometime before that it had been entered by other parties. About two years ago, George Barnes, a relic hunter of Tennessee, did some exploring in the mound and in the field adjacent. Some years before Barnes, it is said somebody else explored the mound.

One fact remains undisputed. The mound has been entered before and some valuable relics have been removed. To what extent its contents have been disturbed will not be known until after the Smithsonian experts have explored it, and then probably they will not be able to determine.

According to information obtained from reliable sources, numbers of skeleton have been dug up and plowed up in the field surrounding the mound. One party who claims to be an eye witness to one exploration, declares that 52 skeletons were unearthed in the mound at one time. Numerous necklaces of Indian and trade beads are in evidence as possessions of amateur and professional relic hunters in this section, which have been plowed or dug up in the field or in the mound. Several pieces of pottery have likewise been found.

One of the most interesting stories of the many now being told about the mound and its contents is related by John S. McCombs, 75 year old resident of Peachtree, who lives on the adjoining farm, and who is a descendant of John Sudderth, original homesteader of the large tract of land on which the mound is located.

Mr. McCombs related his first recollections of the mound as a boy who was born and reared on the farm on which the mound is located, and who has played and worked around it for nearly three quarters of a century. The first time he remembers seeing it, the mound was "pretty and round, the shape of a large ball setting on top of the ground."

He related that a man by the name of Alexander, who was one of the first settlers of this section and who saw the mound long before the year 1840, when his grandfather purchased the land from the State of North Carolina, once told him that there were four posts on top of the mound 40 feet apart, evidently supports for some kind of tent or covering.

Opened Fifty Years Ago

The Valentine brothers employed Mr. McCombs and his father to open

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SCHOOL NEWS

M. H. S. GRADUATE IS HONOR STUDENT

Mr. Eueck received a letter from the Dean at Tennessee Wesleyan stating that Margaret Mauney had made an average of B on all subjects for the first term which entitled her to be on the Honor roll.

MURPHY BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Murphy High's basketball teams will play the Cherokee Indians in a double header program Saturday, January 6, and other games are as follows:

Jan. 19—Almond—Here.
Jan. 26—Hayesville—Here.
Feb. 2—Almond—There.
Feb. 10—Bethel at Canton.
Feb. 23—Cherokee—There.

Coach Deaton is trying to arrange games with Bryson City, Copperhill, Cherokee All Stars, Young Harris, Stecoah, Eli, and Robbinsville. These games will come later in the season and will be played in the new gymnasium which is now being built by the C. W. A. in the old exhibit building on the Fair grounds.

NOTICE TO PUBLIC

All bus drivers have received orders from school authorities not to carry any passengers except students.

THE C. W. A. STARTS WORK ON GYMNASIUM AND EXHIBIT BUILDING

Tuesday Jan. 2 ten carpenters were given work by the C. W. A. to convert the Fair exhibit building into a gymnasium and exhibit building.

In making this change the grand stand will be removed and the building will be floored. The building will be used for a public recreational hall and exhibit building. The works will be completed within 10 days.

NEW SENIOR PRESIDENT IN OFFICE

On the recommendation of Frank McNeely, Senior class president on Dec. 15, Hoyt Phillips, vice-president, automatically became president and nominations were accepted for the vacated position. Those nominated were Freeland Ballew and Grace Farker and the former was elected by a large majority.

Hoyt, who is president of the student body and also an honor student of the Senior class, is considered wholly competent for this office.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

Second grade—M. Mayfield.
Paul Hill, Rita Hawkins and Irene Jordan.

Second and third grades—Mrs. E. Patton. Carmel Hombree, Celia Morgan, Kimsey Hall, Carl Palmer, Wayne Hembree, Frederick Gyr, Thomas Hickey, R. V. Dockery, Royickey.

Third grade—Loucine Wells: Melba Holder, Wade Teague, Sue Wells, Betty Fain, Wanda Bowles, J. C. Townson, Frances Hampton, Christine Barton and Charlene Bowles.

Fourth Grade—S. Svord: Elizabeth Franklin, Katie Higgins, Justine Johnson, Geneva Lovingood, Mourine Lovingood, Louise Mann, Jayne Rieke, Frankie Wilson, Walter Carringer, Willard Hembree and James Abbott Hyatt.

Fifth grade—A. Leatherwood
Wade Ricks, James Brittain, Lowen Lovingood, George Dyer, Grover Hampton, Roberta Carringer, Magdalene Cook, Kate Gray, Jane Hill, Elizabeth McClure, Effie Barbara McIver, Mary Lee Roberts, Helen Wells, Geneva White, Fannie Bell Abernathy.

Sixth grade—Mrs. Axley.
Luther Hampton, Ruby Townson, Jean Daniels, Mary Frances Bell, Josephine Howell.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESENTS HIGH SCHOOL CHAPEL PROGRAM

The alumni association, which was organized by the graduating class of 1932 for graduates of the high school presented a chapel program to the school Monday, Jan. 1.

Twelve former graduates of the high school were present: Buel Adams Grace Bell Mary Witherspoon Leora Hickey, and Bobbie Rector of the class of 1933; Annie Mae Townson, Mary Weaver, Mildred Akin and Frank Ferguson of the class of 1931; Martha Nell Wells of the class of 1930; and Kathleen Axley and John Davidson of previous classes.

Five of these participated in the program, Mary Witherspoon presiding. The program was as follows: Scripture Reading—Mary Witherspoon.

A talk on the Alumni Association—Buel Adams.

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LONG TO SERVE PRESBYTERIANS

Accepts Call To Serve Churches At Murphy And Hayesville

The Rev. Stewart Holderness Long native of Jasper, Ala., has accepted a call as pastor of the Murphy and Hayesville Presbyterian churches, it has been announced by the pulpit committee, composed of M. W. Bell, J. B. Gray, and C. W. Savage. The Rev. Mr. Long will arrive in Murphy in time for services at the local church Sunday morning at 11 o'clock. It is understood.

The Rev. Mr. Long was born in Jasper on April 24, 1908. He was educated in the Alabama and Florida public schools, graduating from the latter in 1925. In April of that year he was taken under the care of the Presbytery of St. Johns, synod of Florida. He attended the University of Alabama for two years, at which institution he was awarded the Johnston Bible prize, given by the late Dr. Thomas H. Johnston, dean of St. Philip's Cathedral Atlanta.

He was then transferred to Davidson College from which he was graduated cum laude in 1929. After leaving Davidson he entered Columbia Theological Seminary. During his senior year he served as assistant in the department of old Testament Literature and Exegesis and was graduated magna cum laude in 1932.

In the summer of 1931 he was assistant to Dr. R. M. Stimson, pastor of the Second Presbyterian church, Chattanooga, Tenn. His first pastorate after leaving the seminary was at Guntersville, Ala., where he served for a year and a half before being called to the present work in the Presbytery of Asheville. His parents live in Sanford, Fla.

Ben Palmer's Baby Died December 27th

Ben Virgil, 3 weeks old son of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Palmer, died at 11 o'clock Wednesday morning, December 27th, at the home of its grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. T. P. Calhoun, where Mr. and Mrs. Palmer have been making their home.

Funeral services were held at the home at 10 o'clock Thursday morning, December 28th, and interment was in Sunset cemetery. The Rev. C. E. Steadman conducted the funeral rites. Pall bearers were Ross Lovinood, A. J. Hembree and W. A. Sherrill. It is survived by its parents.

American Legion To Meet January 12

The first meeting of the American Legion for 1934 will be held at the Scout office on Friday, night, January 12, at 7 o'clock Commander A. W. Lovinood announced this week.

Important business is to come before the meeting and plans will be formulated for the coming year, and Mr. Lovinood said he was anxious that all Legionnaires and ex-service men be present.

NEW YEARS PARTY

Mrs. Noah Lovinood entertained the Good Will Club with a New Years party on Monday evening at her home.

The guests were highly entertained with games and stunts, after which delicious refreshments of cake and coffee and candy were served. Those present were: Mr. and Mrs. Herman Murray, Mr. and Mrs. Homer Ricks, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Crawford, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Moody, Mrs. Cyrus White, Miss Gillie Martin, Miss Mary Akin, Miss Elizabeth Gentry, Miss Emily Sward, Mrs. Bill Brandon, Miss Grace West, Mrs. Thelma Dickey, Messrs. Ralph Adams, Bob Williamson, Virgil Lovinood.

PEACHTREE SCHOOL NEWS

The next Parent Teachers Association will meet Friday night January 12, at 7:30 o'clock in the school auditorium. A prize will be given to the parents with the most children on the Honor roll.

MRS. DICKEY PRESENTS KEY TO MURPHY

Mayor and Business Men Enjoy Sumptuous Repast At Dickey House January 1st

A large bronze key, to be used as the "Key to Murphy", was presented to Mayor Edmund B. Norvell and the town of Murphy by Mrs. Nettie Dickey, proprietress of the Dickey Hotel, following a sumptuous banquet which was attended by twenty-seven business men of the town Monday night, January 1st.

The banquet was one of a number which Mrs. Dickey has given in honor of the business men of Murphy, and which she plans to continue in the future at intervals.

Following the banquet, Mrs. Dickey opened an impromptu speaking program by presenting the large key to Mayor Norvell to be used on occasion when it becomes necessary to welcome some distinguished visitor or enterprise to the town. Mr. Norvell thanked Mrs. Dickey on behalf of the guests and the town.

Among the guests who spoke briefly were G. W. Candler, of Candler's Department Store, who told of coming to Murphy some 46 years ago on the train from Asheville, and Captain Rickett, who said his first trip to Murphy was in 1888, that Mr. Candler was a passenger on that first trip.

Mr. Candler has been in business in Murphy ever since, and Captain Rickett has been conducting trains from Asheville to Murphy and return for the same length of time.

All the speakers congratulated Mrs. Dickey on her sumptuous feast and generosity, and declared that the Dickey Hotel was an institution inseparable from Murphy and was famous from coast to coast as one of the fine hotels of the Appalachian section.

The speakers included Mayor Norvell, former Mayor W. M. Fain, C. W. Savage, E. P. Hawkins, Dr. R. S. Parker, P. C. Hyatt, Mrs. N. E. Olmsted, Mrs. Sherrill, Prof. B. R. Carroll, S. D. Akin, Mr. Candler, Captain Rickett, and others.

The merchants and business men present were:

R. C. Maitox, Hwde; B. R. Carroll Feed, S. D. Akin, Hwde, F. C. Owens, Theatre, David Carringer, W. M. Mauney Drugs, H. G. Elkins, Power & Lights, W. B. Dickey, Merchant, P. C. Hyatt, Merchant, G. W. Candler, Merchant, W. D. Townson, Mfg. Furniture, C. W. Savage, Hotel, J. W. Lovinood E. C. Moore, Noah Lovinood, W. M. Fain, Ex-mayor and Mayor protem, Edmund B. Norvell, Mayor, C. M. Wofford, Wholesale Grocery, Wofford-Terrell, H. M. Whitaker, Fred V. Johnson, E. P. Hawkins, Paul B. Owenby, W. S. Dickey, Grady Crawford and C. W. Bailey.

DRY FORCES TO MEET JANUARY 16

The United Dry Forces of North Carolina will assemble in a State-wide conference at Greensboro, on January 16th, for the purpose of perfecting a permanent organization to continue in North Carolina a constructive program of education in favor of temperance and against the evils of alcohol. J. B. Gray member of the central committee of the state from Cherokee County announced this week. The county and other local units of the organization that fought to keep North Carolina dry in the recent election and desire to conserve the benefits of the recent Campaign and to continue their efforts to keep legalized liquor out of North Carolina, and to improve the enforcement of our present prohibition laws. Many local units have already become permanent, and it is anticipated that the Greensboro meeting on January 16th will set up a permanent State-wide organization. All persons in North Carolina interested in the promotion of temperance are invited to attend the Conference, and all members of the Central Committee, all Candidates, County Chairmen and Managers of the United Dry Forces are particularly urged to be present.

The children of the Marble school were served a special Christmas dinner on Thursday, Dec. 21, by the ladies of the community.

Mr. J. J. Stone of Andrews, our superintendent was present and quite a few people of the community.