

The Mystery of Easter Island

On Easter morning about 236 years ago, a Dutch explorer named Jacob Roggveen landed on a small island not recorded on any of his charts. The little island was about 11 miles in length and stood alone in the South Pacific 1,000 miles from any other island and about 2,000 miles west of Chili. They named the island appropriately Easter Island.

Easter Island is very bleak, with no trees and little grass. Volcano craters dot the barren plains and giant cliffs rise to distances of 1,000 feet. The inhabitants of the island are remote and unfriendly and speak a language that is like Polynesian but their skin is darker than Polynesian. The island has come to be also called "Island of Death".

The mysteries of Easter Island grew out of a strange discovery. Scattered all over the island are huge statues with giant faces carved in stone. All expressions are alike showing anger and fierceness. They all have thin lips, huge noses, wide nostrils, and deep-set eyes, high forehead and long ears. Each head is around thirty feet tall and weighs from fifty to sixty tons. Some stand upright gazing at a barren desert or at the sea while other have fallen on their faces or on their backs.

At last the place where these statues were made was found high up in the crater of a volcano on one end of the island. In this crater are 137 other statues, some nearly completed, some hardly begun. The crater is now abandoned and the tools, left lying around, as if the workers left their work and fled wildly away, still lie there where the work men dropped them.

How the huge statues were moved as far as ten miles from where they were made without the use of trees for wooden rollers is not known. The only explanation the natives give is that they "flew" from the crater. This is perhaps an explanation in that the volcano may have erupted and thrown them out but it hardly seems probable. Why weren't the others now in the crater thrown out or destroyed? Also the statues proved to be breakable, made of crumbly lava, so why didn't they break? No one has found the answers.

The statues may have religious meaning. The natives killed and ate their enemies though they were afraid of their spirits. The statue heads, tho, may be to ward off spirits of the dead. The natives also thought that the "energy of life" was stored in the head and that stone was durable.

No one knows where the first inhabitants of Easter Island came from or who made these ancient statues. No one living there today knows. So little can be found that scientists have no positive answer.

So the mystery of Easter is still unsolved.

Tina Harbison

North Carolina

Of all the states in the Union, North Carolina is among the most distinctive and most interesting. With a recorded history dating back to the sixteenth century when De Soto's expedition passed through what is now the western part of the state and when Sir Walter Raleigh sent to Roanoke Island the first English Colony in America, North Carolina has played a leading part in the development of our country.

During the early part of the last century, North Carolina advanced slowly compared to other states, and as a result became known as "Old Rip Van Winkle" and gained a reputation for being sluggish and backward. Within recent decades, however, it has moved forward so rapidly that today it is looked upon as one of the most progressive states in the entire nation.

North Carolina is the nation's leading tobaccoist and textile producer.

Some facts about this as follows:

Gaston County, with more than 100 textile mills ranks first in the nation.

The largest denim mill in the world is at White Oak Plant, Cone Mills, Greensboro. Also the world's largest overall factory, Blue Bell Glove Company, is at Greensboro.

Cannon Mills at Kannapolis is the world's largest towel mills.

The largest group of cordage mills in the world are at Hickory and Granite Falls.

The world's largest damask mill is Rosmary Manu. Co. at Roanoke Rapids.

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