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OLD MOUND CITY REFUGE OF NATCHEZ

Bits of History of the Old Indian Village Reads Like Arabian Knight's Tale

Interest in Indian legends and history has been greatly revived locally by the announcement that the Smithsonian Institute and CWA Workers would open the old mound at the mouth of Peachtree Creek, on the north bank of the Hiwassee river, for scientific study.

A complete history of the mound is not available. However, bits of reference gleaned from various sources and pieced together read like pages from some Arabian Knight's tale. About 1775, it was a city of refuge for the Natchez Indians, and later a Baptist Mission was established in 1820 "on the site of the old Natchez town on the north side of Hiwassee river, just above the mouth of Peachtree Creek." It was called by the Cherokee "Gwalgahi," or Frog Place.

In the 19th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, in his "Myths of the Cherokee," James Mooney, who is recognized by historians as an authority on the Cherokee, says: "According to a statement of James Walford, who was born in 1806 near the site of Clarksville, Ga., when this region was still Indian country, the 'Natchez' had their town on the north bank of the Hiwassee, just above the Peachtree creek, on the spot where a Baptist mission was established by the Rev. Evan Jones in 1821, a few miles above the present Murphy, Cherokee county, North Carolina. On his grandmother's side he himself had a strain of Natchez blood. His grandmother had told him that when she was a young woman, perhaps about 1855, she once had occasion to go to this town on some business, which she was obliged to transact through an interpreter, as the Natchez had been there so short a time that only one or two spoke any Cherokee. They were all in one town, which the Cherokee called Gwalgahi, 'Frog Place,' but was unable to say whether or not it had a town house."

W. J. Morgan, of Brevard, who worked for Warren K. Moorehead, archaeologist, of Andover, Mass., and was associated with Dr. Chas. F. Peabody, head of archaeological department of Cambridge University, and the late W. E. Myer, of the Smithsonian Institution, in work in western North Carolina and east Tennessee, in a letter to Fred O. Scroggs, dated November 23, 1927, says:

"The Cherokees have a tradition of a people that are generally known in story as Little People that inhabited the country when they came and that the little people were eventually exterminated. The little people were said to be white. This was long before the coming of the normal size whites. These little people were said to have had a village at the mound at the mouth of Peachtree creek on the north bank of the Hiwassee."

Whether or not Mr. Jennings will find definite evidence of De Soto's visit to this particular Indian village is a matter which only the opening of the mound will determine. Whether it is the site of the ancient town of Guasili seems to be a matter of conjecture among historians. However, members of the Smithsonian Institution believe that objects they expect to find in the mound will reveal that the ancient village of Guasili, mentioned in history as having been visited by De Soto on his expedition into this mountain fastness in 1540, was located at this point. And they have some support in this immediate section.

Most historians are agreed that the village of Guasili was located at the site of the mound in the Natchez valley in White County, Georgia. Mooney says that De Soto, when he began the expedition into the mountain fastness in search of gold mines which he believed to be located in this territory, made a prisoner of a "queen" of an important Indian town on the lower Savannah river, because she refused to furnish the Spaniards with guides and carriers. She was made prisoner "with the design of compelling her to act as guide herself, and at the same time to use her as a hostage to command the obedience of her subjects."

Traveling northward for several months, the Spaniards finally came to a town in the province of Xuala, described by Mooney as probably being "in the Piedmont region about the head of Broad River in North

Sunday Entertainment Given At Macedonia Church December 12

On Tuesday evening December 12, the Macedonia Sunday school presented a program at the church. The walls, windows and stage were decorated with bunches of Christmas holly. Near the front of the building stood a beautiful holly tree covered with all kinds of Christmas ornaments.

The devotional was given by Rev. Wiley Graham, pastor of the church. Following the devotional the children of the smaller classes presented a song of Welcome to the congregation. Recitations were given by the different members of the Sunday school. Prizes were awarded to those saying the best speech, Blanche Thompson, Rosa Mae Cook and Gavvain Little were prize winners. After the speeches were given, four plays were presented by the older members of the Sunday school. The program was enjoyed by a large number of people, among whom were Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Townson of Murphey who sponsored the entertainment and brought the program to a happy ending by serving the Sunday school with fruits and candies.

Carolina." The principal town is described as being beside a small rapid stream close under a high mountain, and the country round about showed greater evidence of gold mines than any section the Spaniards had visited up to that time.

"Here," Mooney says, "De Soto turned to the west, crossing a high mountain range, which appears to have been the Blue Ridge, and descending on the other side to a stream flowing in the opposite direction, which was probably one of the upper tributaries of the French Broad. Although it was late May, they found it very cold in the mountains. After several days of such travel they arrived, about the end of the month, at the town of Guasili, or Guaxule. The chief and principal men came out some distance to welcome them, dressed in fine robes of skin, with feather head-dresses, after the fashion of the country. Before reaching this point, the queen had managed to make her escape, together with three slaves of the Spaniards, and the last heard of her she was on her way back to her own country with one of the runaways as her husband. What grieved De Soto most in the matter was that she took with her a small box of pearls which he had intended to take from her before releasing her, but had left with her for the present in order not to disconcert her altogether."

"Guaxule (Guasili) is described as a very large town surrounded by a number of small mountain streams which united to form a large river down which the Spaniards proceeded after leaving the place. Here, as elsewhere, the Indians received the white men with kindness and hospitality—so much so that the name of Guaxule became to the army a synonym of good fortune. Among other things they gave the Spaniards 300 dogs for food, although, according to the Elvas narrative, the Indians themselves did not eat them. The principal officers of the expedition were lodged in the 'chief's house,' by which we are to understand the town house, which was upon a high hill with a roadway leading up to the top. From a close study of the narrative, it appears that this 'hill' was no other than the great Natchez mound in White County, Georgia, a few miles northwest of the present town of Clarksville."

Mooney says the Spaniards, according to the narrators of the expedition from Guaxule proceeded "down the river, which grew constantly larger, through an uninhabited country which formed the disputed territory between the Cherokee and the Greeks." This river he identifies as the Chattahoochee.

With the definiteness of this description and location by historians of ancient Guasili, members of the Smithsonian Institution hope to find evidence in the mound at the mouth of Peachtree creek, "on the north bank of the Hiwassee," to prove that this is the site of the ancient Indian village by that name which De Soto visited in his ramblings through these mountains.

They also hope to find traces of a civilization of people who inhabited the land before the coming of the Indians, and perhaps find the missing link between the Indians and the mound builders.

(Next week: The story of 52 skeletons in the mound).

LIQUOR WAS SERVED PUPILS 50 YEARS AGO

Bud Nelson of Topton, Remembers When Schoolmasters Brought Jug and Candy

ANDREWS, Dec. 16 (Special)—That whiskey and red candy were served as a treat to his pupils by a Cherokee county schoolmaster 50 years ago may seem incredible now, but according to the memory of Bud Nelson, of Topton, who declares he was one of the pupils, it was not considered an unusual occurrence in that distant pre-prohibition day. This and other stories on the olden time when liquor was a household commodity have been brought to light by the recent agitation over the repeal of the 18th amendment.

The occasion of the treat referred to was at the close of a school taught at Red Marble school house by David Whitaker who was reputed to be one of the most successful school teachers of his day. Whitaker, it seems, had a unique philosophy of discipline in his school. He did not denounce his pupils for doing anything that their parents permitted them to do so long as their conduct did not interfere with the work of the school. This liberal attitude on the part of the schoolmaster was no doubt well adapted to the spirit of the pioneer days. It probably saved him from many embarrassing situations.

Brought Jug and Candy

His custom was to treat the pupils on the last day of the school term which was regarded by the pupils themselves as an inalienable right. When the last day of school came, as Mr. Nelson relates the story, Schoolmaster Whitaker directed his pupils to form in line outside the log schoolhouse. He then brought a gallon jug and a box of red candy. The candy was distributed first and then the one drinking cup available was passed in turn from pupil to pupil while the schoolmaster meted out to each waiting youngster what in his discretion was a safe and generous treat. What would be the effect of such a procedure in this modern age is indeed interesting to contemplate.

Records of the pioneers who first settled in the Valley River country about the time of the removal of the Cherokee Indians to the west show that whiskey soon became an important article of trade between the settlers and the merchants who established trading posts in the new country.

In the letters written by Colonel Waugh to Walker giving directions as to the conduct of the business frequent reference is made to the making, handling, and selling of whiskey.

Whiskey Much in Demand

Writing from his home in Wilkesboro in 1845, Colonel Waugh said: "Whiskey is much in demand as there will be no brandy made here this year. Do not send your whiskey oil unless you find it will command a good price, say forty or fifty cents a gallon by the barrel. Examine whiskey barrels close that they do not leak. We are selling whiskey at 75 cents retail, so I want you to send me 100 gallons if you can get it hauled."

Again in 1845, he wrote: "I hope you will have good casks made to hold all the whiskey you make. Have it all clarified by running through charcoal so that it will sell for twelve and a half cents a gallon more than common whiskey. I have no doubt that the price of whiskey will be up next spring to 50 cents a gallon."

In another letter dated the same year he wrote: "I want you to have your whiskey made good and by clarifying it you can add at least six months to its age. If you take pains and get your name up you can get at least 10 cents a gallon more."

In another communication of 1846 similar advice was given to Walker: "I want you to have your whiskey put in good casks so that you can keep some of it till it gets old, and you had better have it rectified and colored." In 1848 he directed Walker to send him one barrel of good whiskey, "old and rectified."

In these same old letters, now in the possession of Mrs. Fannie Walker of Andrews, are directions for keeping the stills running and the state of the whiskey market in Charleston and other southern cities.

One of the whiskey establishments well remembered by the older citizens of western North Carolina was Bradley's distillery and saloon near the western end of Nantahala Gorge. This was the terminus of

MRS. JAMES BEARD DIES AT SUIT, 21ST

Mrs. James Beard, 93, died last Thursday, December 21st, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J. A. Keenum, at Suit. She was born in Jackson County where the town of Sylva is now located, and the remains were carried to Bryson City for funeral and interment last Saturday.

She is survived by her husband and four children, one son, Grant Beard, of Bryson City; three daughters, Mrs. Robert Cline, of Ela; Mrs. Fata Wiggins of Bryson City, and Mrs. J. A. Keenum, of Suit. One brother, Mr. Parris who was wounded in the battle of Malvern Hill during the Civil War, also survives.

The Murphy branch of the railroad from about 1885 to 1890 and was the shipping point for goods bought and sold by a large territory.

Bradley's place stood close beside the old Graham county road that wound it way across the mountains to reach the railroad station. Just up the river a short distance the Union Lumber Company had established a big saw mill that employed hundreds of men. All these circumstances conspired to increase Bradley's trade.

Bradley is said to have been well known for his generous hospitality to both stranger and friend and in his home some visitor was nearly always present for a meal or a night's lodging. On week-ends his saloon was the scene of conviviality and high carnival.

Many rumors still survive of the mysterious disappearance of more than one stranger who stopped to dine and drink at Bradley's saloon. But investigation of these rumors reveals that they are without foundation in fact. Bradley's death is reported to have been brought on by his excessive use of his own beverages and with his passing his place of business was closed and disbanded.

Whiskey Sought By Indians

The whiskey and brandy made by the white people were eagerly sought by the Indians. It was not uncommon for the Indians to break into the places where whiskey was stored and help themselves by quenching their thirst and carrying away all they could. Sometimes the Indians would bring in skins or other items to barter for whiskey. When the trade was made they would usually hurry to some secluded spot and drink themselves drunk as quickly as possible.

One of the tragedies that is sadly recalled by many old residents took place in connection with the settling of whiskey by the Indians. It was the accidental killing of young Albert Scott by Bent Tatham at the old Valley River bridge just west of Andrews.

Tatham who owned a distillery had been troubled by the Indians stealing his whiskey. It was found that they came across the Snowbird mountains from Graham county and crossed the Valley river on the bridge which was a wooden-covered structure.

By carefully watching the trails Tatham was aware of the approach of the Indians and their attempt to steal his whiskey. He and his sons accompanied by Scott determined that they would surprise the Indians with their load of stolen whiskey at the covered bridge and take them at once into custody. The Tatham boys hid themselves near one end of the bridge while Scott and the older Tatham guarded the other end.

When the Indians entered the bridge they found themselves hemmed in so that escape seemed impossible. One Indian more daring than the others made a break for freedom and was halted by Tatham who thrust his gun close up to the Indian's body. The Indian not to be outdone kicked the gun upward which caused it to explode prematurely, the load missing the Indian and taking full effect in the face of Albert Scott who was standing near the end of the bridge. In the confusion that followed the Indians made their escape but Scott lived only a few minutes.

Scott was a popular young man and much loved by Tatham and his family. His death was the occasion of great grief to the entire community and it is said that Tatham's sorrow would have been no greater had it been one of his own sons who was the victim of the accident.

HATTIE PALMER
Notary Public
Scout Office

\$2,181.55 SALES TAX COLLECTED IN CHEROKEE

Tax Relief Greater For First Quarter by Nearly Twenty to One, Figures Show

While the people of Cherokee county were paying \$2,181.55 in the 3 percent sales tax levy, they were saving \$41,344.00 on their property taxes, according to figures made public this week by A. J. Maxwell, Commissioner of Revenue, dealing with property tax relief afforded in Cherokee county by sales tax and other acts of the 1933 General Assembly and sales tax paid for the first quarter.

The figures released by Mr. Maxwell show property tax reductions effected by (1) removal of 15c levy for schools; (2) elimination of levies for current expenses for districts county wide and special charter schools. The figures follow:

Sales Taxes Collected	
July	\$ 503.33
August	594.42
September	1,083.80
Total	2,181.55
Property Tax Relief Afforded as Follows:	
District levies, current expense	\$ 3,744.00
Special charter, current expense	17,442.00
15 cent county-wide levy	14,514.00
Current expense for six-months school	5,644.00
Total	41,344.00

"Figures given represent the actual reductions in dollar levies which were relieved in your county by reason of the fact that the State of North Carolina took over the operation of the entire eight-months school term." Mr. Maxwell said in making the figures public. "In taking over our schools, the State reduced the cost of operation in the schools which amounted in 1932 to approximately \$23,000,000.00 to approximately \$16,000,000.00 for 1933, thereby resulting in a saving to the taxpayers of the State of approximately \$7,000,000.00 in operating cost. The property tax relief afforded for the entire State amounted to \$11,476,540.00.

"Sales taxes collected in your county for the first three months are below the average collections for the entire year as our collections are being improved from month to month. But, after allowing for the reasonable increase in the sales tax collections in your county which are anticipated, it will be observed that the property owners in your county are relieved of property taxes in the considerable amount shown and that the sales tax collections in your county will be far less than the property tax relief afforded.

"The sales tax payments are made by all of the people in the county rather than those who happen to be owners of property.

"If the relief property taxpayers in your county is not fully reflected in the actual levies made in your county for 1933 taxes, it would not be because the relief was not afforded by 1933 legislation, it would be on account of levies being made for purposes which were not included in the levy of 1932, or for increases in debt service requirements or relief work. In saying this, we are not criticizing any local authorities as situations have arisen in some counties on account of debt service requirements, relief purposes, etc., for which local authorities have found that they must make levies for county purposes other than schools or in consideration of relief conditions in their county.

"In 1932 property owners in the State were assessed \$11,476,540.00 for school operating cost. This is now entirely eliminated. In 1932 the State was required to contribute approximately \$12,000,000.00 added to above amount for school operating purposes. In doing this, in a two year period, the State incurred a deficit of over \$15,000,000.00.

"By enactment of the sale tax and economies and consolidations in operation of schools, the State is on a sound financial basis, its revenue now exceeding its expenditures and property has been entirely relieved of all operating cost of schools."

Well Shined Road
It's easy to recognize the sign in Easy street now. You can tell it by the high hats discarded by returning refugees.—Tok Angeles Times