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#### GREETINGS FROM THE EDITOR

Hello! As always, it is good to go on a vacation, but it is also good to be back home. Mrs. Mason carried us nicely through the period of my absence by taking on the NEWSLETTER along with her other duties as secretary-treasurer. Your cooperation in sending her news is much appreciated. Mrs. Mason's efforts in filling in are equally appreciated.

Perhaps an account of some of the things I did which have to do with archeology will interest you. From McGregor, my family and I went to Columbia, Missouri to visit Mr. Carl H. Chapman, Director of American Archaeology at the University of Missouri. Many of you will remember Mr. Chapman for his interesting talk at the Society's first fall meeting in Iowa City, November 1951. Mr. Chapman had a very successful field season last summer, his excavations in a southeastern Missouri cave produced materials which are quite early, showing relationship both to Graham Cave with which your editor has been concerned in the past, and with material from northeast Oklahoma which has been reported in detail by Dr. David Bacreis, of the University of Wisconsin, whom you heard in Davenport, last fall. Mr. Chapman plans to spend several seasons in the part of Missouri previously mentioned, extending the work done by his party.

In Oklahoma, after making a limited survey along a stream called Bitter Creek in Central Kay County, I went to Norman, Okla., to visit Dr. Robert Bell, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Bell also had just finished a field season, successfully recovering Archaic material related to the Northeast Oklahoma finds, to the Ozark material, and to Graham Cave. Dr. Bell has for a number of years been conducting research in "Caddoan" sites in eastern Okla. Spiro Mound, which was recently reported in the MISSOURI ARCHEOLOGIST was a Caddoan site. Such sites are quite late in time and quite complex in culture.

Among other recent discoveries in Oklahoma was a site amazingly similar to Iowa Hopewellian in the pottery found there. Many sherd could not have been distinguished from Iowa sherds had they been placed together. There are several localities in Oklahoma where Hopewell culture existed at one time.

The collections from the University of Oklahoma are very fine ones. I recommend their museum to any one who finds himself in the vicinity of Norman, Oklahoma on a trip. They have a great deal of material from Caddo and Spiro sites, and have recently acquired a fine collection of Central American material ... especially pottery.

My own wanderings along Bitter Creek were productive. These sites are almost identical in content as regards artifacts and pottery, and would constitute in archeological terms, a Focus. These sites are late. Diamond-shaped, beveled knives, small triangular points with and without notches, small end-scrapers, flake-knives, and grit and clay-tempered pottery. The pottery sometimes has thickened rims, more often flat or rounded lip, with no thickening of the rim. A series of large, Hopewell-like points are also found. Probably such sites date somewhere after 1300 A.D. In addition to these mentioned, there are numerous small campsites along the creek showing slightly different material hard to classify due to the scarcity of artifacts.

One interesting spot that I visited was the Kay County Flint quarries near Hardy, Oklahoma. Here, for a considerable distance, along the tributary of the Arkansas River, from a point in Kansas South into Oklahoma, the Indians had dug out a high quality flint from the limestone formations along the canyon rims. Strown around on the ground about the quarries wer blank forms, large rejected chunks of flint, some finished pieces, and many chips, flakes and fragments, many of which showe signs of use by the Indians. These quarries extend along the canyon for many miles. Others who have visited them have found artifacts from many different time periods. Almost all of the sites in that locality (southern Kansas and Northern Oklahoma) show great quantities of flint from these Kay County Quarries.

Of course, the Kay county quarries are not the only spots where flint was obtained by the Indians. There are others equally famous, and many flint types are known---their sources, and type names. Flint from the Spanish Diggings was in wide use in the Northern Plains. In the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles a type called Alibates flint was used, and the location of the quarries is know. Nehawka flint comes from a locality in Nebraska. Anyone interested in the archcology of Ohio probably knows of the flint from the famous Flint Ridge. Several unnamed quarries are located in Missouri. Should any member of the Society be interested in writing a paper for our own JOURNAL on the known materials for stone artifacts your editor will see that sources and references for available material are supplied.

#### WATERLOO MEETING

Mr. S. A. Cohagen, who is Secretary of the Henry W. Grout Historical Museum Fund, in Waterloo, Iowa, was host to a group of the Society's members on January 25. Your president, Dr. Field, Clifford Chase, Al Berg, George Kjomo, all of Decorah, and Joe Kennedy of the Effigy Mounds National Monument made the trip to Waterloo. After luncheon at the Hotel Russel-Lamson, Mr. Cohagen conducted a tour of the proposed site of the Museum, which is to get underway this year. For those of you who know Waterloo, it is to be built on the half-block property directly behind the west-side Public Library on Park Avenue, and will be most impressive, according to the party, to whom the plans were shown.

Many collections are already available for display in the new Museum, which will not only feature the history of Northeast Iowa and Western Wisconsin, but will boast a Planetarium as well! Other features will be displays of the wildlife of the area, early pioneer farm implements, household articles, clothing, newspapers, books and furniture...not forgetting the fine collections of Indian artifacts already waiting to be placed on exhibition when this fine building is completed. Since many of them came from Allamakee County, the group visiting Mr. Cohagen were very pleased.

Mr. Cohagen is to be in charge of the Museum, as he has been "Guardian" of the Memorial Fund for its building. We know how proud he is of this dream of many years standing, and wish him success in the undertaking soon to be realized. He will be most capable in its administration, and the Museum itself will be a wonderful addition to the city of Waterloo, as well as to the State.

#### NEW MEMBERS

We are proud to welcome the following new members to the Society:

George Cowgill, Physics Dept., Iowa State College, Ames

The Library of the University of Pennsylvania, Phila.

The Library of the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla.

Don't forget our Spring meeting...it will be announced soon, so plan right now to come, when we give you the details.

## WHAT IS ARCHEOLOGY?

Many people think that archeology is a treasure hunt. Digging is really hard labor done under adverse conditions--excessive heat or cold, dust, bugs, drought, tropical dampness, and disease. The popular belief is that archeologists unfold the past of strange people--giants, pigmies, and the like. Actually, we find that the ancient peoples were basically human beings, much like ourselves, with the same kind of loves, hates and quarrels.

What, then, is archeology?

Before we can answer that question, we must define the science of anthropology, because archeology is part of that science. Anthropology is the science that treats of man and his behavior. Since the field is broad, it is divided into a number of branches: archeology, ethnology, linguistics, physical anthropology, social anthropology, and applied anthropology.

Archeology reconstructs human history from earliest times to the present. It deals, too, with man's rise from earlier forms. It utilizes the buried and fragmentary remains of civilizations (houses, pottery, tools, etc.) to formulate the histories of peoples for whom no written records exist. It is concerned with the beginnings of cultures and also with cultures and civilizations that are now extinct.

Archeologists seek to gather from ruined buildings and potsherds the same sort of knowledge that historians derive from books and manuscripts. Both Archeologists and Historians strive to recover and to interpret the story of man's past. Years ago, archeologists collected antiquities more for their rarity or their beauty than for what they might tell of the doings and thoughts of the men who made them. However, in recent years, emphasis in archeology has shifted from mere things to the meaning of things.

Since we are attempting to reconstruct the history of the Indians, who left no written records, we are forced to deal exclusively with material remains--houses, pottery, bone and stone tools--and our first task is to build up histories of material culture that will serve as the basis for deductions as to the daily life and the events in the career of the peoples under investigation. In order to work out the complete history of the Indians, it is necessary to excavate not only in places where rich and spectacular finds are to be expected, but also in regions where less showy materials but more important historical information may be obtained.

But many readers will wonder why we are eager to investigate the life of the ancient Indians. In short, why dig up dead Indians?

We are living today in a very sick world. If civilization is to endure, we must push forward in the study of man in every way possible. We must understand man in order to understand the culture he has evolved. In our particular culture science has permitted man to bring some of the physical world under control. This knowledge may be used for good as well as evil. At present much of our scientific knowledge is being used for destructive purposes. Many people blame science for this state of affairs.

Actually, this is an uninformed point of view. The present chaotic condition of the world is not new; it is only worse than ever before. Every major invention, from the time of the first use of fire down to the airplane, though capable of bringing benefit and comfort, has sooner or later been abused and misused. Fire is useful for warmth and cooking, but it may be used for destructive purposes. What the atomic bomb will do to us, no one knows; but everyone is agreed that the study of nuclear physics, if man chooses to make it so, may be beneficial to him.

If through anthropology we can understand all the facets of a relatively simple culture, if we can discover the whys and wherefors of such a culture, then we are better able to understand and attack the greater and more complex problems that must be solved if we are to attain real knowledge of man in the modern world. In other words, archeology contributes to the understanding of the factors that cause civilizations to come into being, to flourish, and then to collapse.

Although we cannot prophesy about the future, we can build upon a solid foundation composed of lessons learned from past experiences of mankind. Progress is made only by trial and error. But we do not have to repeat the same trials and make the same errors.

Thus, digging up dead Indians has a very real significance and holds possibilities that stagger the imagination.

Furthermore, the study of the history of the Indians is important because they have made contributions to our own history and civilization. Few people realize that the following items in our culture have been borrowed directly from the Indians: corn, pumpkins, maple syrup, tobacco, pipe-and cigarette-smoking, succotash, beans, moccasins, toboggans, corncribs, snowshoes and canoes.

Throughout this book we have used the terms "culture" and "civilization". In some places we have used the two words synonymously. Defining these two words is difficult, and the definitions given here are arbitrary and brief.

The word "culture" as used by anthropologists does not mean the improvement and refinement of the mind, an action which implies a conscious, voluntary effort. Culture in the anthropological sense embraces the sum total of human behavior and activities which are handed on by precept, imitation, and social heritage. This includes all customs, habits, usages, attitudes, beliefs, religious and political ideas, and material products, such as the methods of building houses, of manufacturing all kinds of artifacts (weapons, pottery, ornaments, baskets, cloth), of planting and harvesting.

When a culture becomes complex and advanced, especially in a material way, it is customary to refer to it as a "civilization" (e.g., the Maya civilization); but in reality, culture covers all the elements of civilization and does not necessarily connote any degree unless the term "high" or "advanced" is used.

#### HOW THE ARCHEOLOGIST WORKS

The archeologist is often asked, "How do you know where to dig?" In choosing a site to excavate, the archeologist is guided by his past experience and his knowledge of the problems for a given area. Usually no excavation is undertaken until an archeological survey has been made.

During a survey an archeologist searches out evidence of ancient houses, graves, village sites, mounds, etc. This usually entails much walking over a specified area and a careful scrutiny of the ground. A record is kept of all the graves, middens, mounds, and house ruins which are observed. Collections of potsherds and stone tools are made at each site and later studied and compared with similar collections from other areas. Then, with all the information provided by the survey, the archeologist can intelligently select a site for excavation.

Another question frequently asked the archeologist is, "How do you dig these ruins after you find them?"

After a site has been chosen, it is usually mapped with surveying instruments. This is done before digging starts. The actual excavation depends in part upon the type of site that is to be investigated. In general, excavation consists of peeling or stripping down the site, layer by layer. In a mound, a refuse heap, a midden, or a town, the top layer would be completely removed, then the next layer, and so on, down to the bottom. Ideally, it would be like removing the layers of a cake.

Actually, the removal of the strata is not that simple, for the reason that they were not laid down in a clear-cut fashion. Usually, the archeologist arbitrarily decided that each layer shall be, for example, six inches thick. Then the site is stripped down in six-inch layers or steps. By means of a surveying instrument, some stakes, and string, this can easily be done.

Sometimes the archeologist first cuts a trench through a mound or a refuse heap. By examining the vertical face of the cut or trench, he can many times distinguish the "natural" layers--that is, the strata of dirt deposited by man--and can remove them one by one.

In order to locate pit-house depressions, old camp sites, house floors, and other archeological features, the archeologist often sinks a trench (perhaps three feet wide). This may vary in depth from a few inches to several feet and may be hundreds of feet long. In this way, he can "pick up" or run across features that otherwise are hidden by the top-soil. But after the "feature" has been found, he may resort to the stripping technique. If a house floor or some other obvious level of occupancy is found, digging proceeds along that level.

Altho' much digging is done with picks and shovels, they are not the only tools employed. When skeletons, pottery, postholes, implements, etc., are encountered, the digger then resorts to a trowel, a grapefruit knife, brushes, and perhaps even a bellows!

There are no set rules for digging a site. It is only after years of training and actual digging experience that a man becomes a good "dirt" archeologist.

Often the objects found are so fragile that they must be strengthened before removal. In cases where the earth is moist, pottery, bone, and shell objects are allowed to dry slowly and are then treated with a thin solution of celluloid and acetone. There are numerous methods for the preservation of all kinds of materials.

During the excavations the archeologist maintains a careful record showing the find-spot of every object, the construction features, and all other details. Theoretically, then, it would be possible to replace each object in its original position. Because interpretations are based on the sum total of information extracted from the excavation, meticulous note-taking is of paramount importance. Digging a site usually entails the reading and understanding of the unintentional record left by people who possessed no system of writing.

The complete interpretation of an excavation cannot be made until much laboratory work has been completed. The proportion of digging time to laboratory work is about one to three--that is, three months of digging to nine months of lab work.

In the laboratory all the excavated materials are cleaned, mended, and re-stored, when necessary. After this has been done, classifying begins. The archeologist sorts his materials, placing like with like, and then makes comparisons with similar or identical materials from nearby sites. The only way one can learn to classify this material is by doing it under the supervision of a competent archeologist.

When all the materials have been classified, the archeologist can then determine whether one or more cultures are represented at his site and whether some materials are older than others. He can also determine the relationship of his site to other sites on the neighborhood. In this way, the excavations yield a historical record. True, it is not the kind of document or history book to which we are accustomed. It is an unwritten story, and it takes an archeologist to read and translate or interpret it.

(We are indebted to the University of Chicago Press for the foregoing material, taken in part from the fine book, "Indians Before Columbus", published by the U. of C. Press, and written by Martin, Quimby, and Coillier. Your editor recommends it highly as a fine addition to your library.)