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PRESENTATION OF SERVICE AWARD TO RUTH THORNTON

by Dale R. Henning
Annual Banquet, April 12, 1986

It is my great pleasure to visit with you for a few minutes. The subject is our good friend Ruth Thornton who, after 27 years of service, is stepping down as Treasurer of the Iowa Archeological Society.

Ruth's interest in Iowa archaeology has been characterized by service. She was Secretary-Treasurer of the Northwest Chapter, IAS 1957-59, then assumed the multiple tasks of Treasurer, IAS, in 1959.

Through the vicissitudes of late dues payments, membership lapses, shortages of cash, slow production of publications, and generally settling Society affairs, Ruth found time to publish short articles on favorite topics--crosses and medicine among American Indians. In addition, she has maintained her interests in birds, wild flowers, and plants, and, I suspect, a personal interest in every member of our society. We have come to expect a friendly note from our Treasurer along with our annual membership cards.

Both Ruth and Phil Thornton have been active participants in many archaeological projects. Some of the better known sites they have worked on include Simonsen, Turin, Brewster, Phipps, Wittrock, Correctionville, Dixon, and many more.

Phil Thornton has certainly



made his contributions to Iowa archaeology as well. Driving long distances to attend meetings or to get hot, sweaty, even wet to help some poor and partially honest archaeologist obtain data to work with and, I suspect, exercising some patience with the time Ruth has so faithfully devoted to Society business.

The Thorntons have, so far as I know, practiced an open door policy for itinerant archaeologists--a meal, a lunch, and a guest bed have been welcome indeed. We appreciate what you have done for so many of us, Ruth and Phil.

So, after 27 years of service, we offer this certificate. It is a small token of our appreciation, our friendship, and our love. Thank you.

Keyes-Orr Award

Charles R. Keyes and Ellison Orr played prominent roles in the development of Iowa archaeology. One a career archaeologist, the other a lay archaeologist, they labored jointly for over 30 years in an effort to interpret and to preserve Iowa's past. They generated a new enthusiasm and interest in Iowa archaeology which culminated in the creation of the Iowa Archeological Society. The Keyes-Orr award was established to be presented to an individual(s) whenever it was deemed appropriate in recognition of outstanding service to the Iowa Archeological Society and in the research, reporting, and preservation of Iowa's prehistoric and historic heritage. This year's IAS Awards Committee presented the Keyes-Orr Award to two deserving individuals, Dr. Alton K. Fisher and Richard Slattery.

Dr. Fisher has had an illustrious career in the Navy and in the fields of dentistry and oral pathology. He is a retired Rear Admiral in the U.S. Navy and Emeritus Professor of Oral Pathology at The University of Iowa. In addition, he has had a long-time interest in anthropology and archaeology. He was Assistant in Anthropology at the Milwaukee Public Museum from 1927 to 1933 and Research Associate in Anthropology at the same museum from 1937 to the present. He

was co-organizer and charter member of the Iowa Archeological Society in 1951. He organized and contributed the first money to the Charles R. Keyes Memorial Fund to support the first archaeological research by The University of Iowa in the early 1950s. He has volunteered his service as Physical Anthropologist for the Office of the State Archaeologist for the past 10 years where he has taught classes, trained students, and written numerous human osteological reports. The Keyes-Orr award was presented to Dr. Fisher for his dedication and interest in helping organize the Iowa Archeological Society and for his support for the past 34 years.

Dick Slattery has been involved with archaeology for almost fifty years. He began his long "part-time" career in 1937 with Waldo Wedel in western Missouri and Kansas.

Dick's involvement in Iowa archaeology began in 1963 when he moved to the state and joined the IAS. Since then, he has been the president (twice) and on the Board of Directors (1975-78). He received the President Emeritus Award in 1984 from the IAS.

His field experience includes positions as assistant photographer, public relations representative, crew chief, OSA field representative, field assistant, assistant to the director, field director, and supervisor. These jobs have taken him around the state to the Cherokee Sewer site, Chan-ya-ta, Helen Smith site, Milford site, McKinney site, Mines of Spain, Glenwood, 518 project, Blood Run, and Kamps-ville (Illinois). Thank goodness for good health and retirement!

In addition, Dick has taken time to publish. As early as 1946 in Maryland his writings began to appear in print. His first publication in Iowa came in 1975 as



Dr. A. K. Fisher (left) and Richard G. Slattery were the proud and surprised recipients of the Keyes-Orr Award for 1986.

a co-author on the McKinney site in the *Journal of IAS*. He wrote other articles in the *Journal* as well as in the *Newsletter*. He has also authored numerous contract reports for OSA.

Finally, Dick has been honored with awards from the Archeological Society of Maryland (1960) and the State Historical Society of Iowa (1983) for his contributions. Dick Slattery has made a lasting impact on the archaeology of Iowa and will continue to do so for many years. The members of the IAS can be thankful for Dick's dedication and diligent service to all of us interested in the past.

IAS T-SHIRTS

Official IAS T-shirts are now available featuring images of Ioway Indians dating from the 1830s: Rantchewaime, Mahaska, and Shauhaunapotinia. Price including postage is \$10.00. Specify small, medium, large, extra large, or extra extra large. Use IAS return address on the *Newsletter*; make checks payable to IAS T-shirt. Proceeds go to the Society.

BLOOD RUN FIELD SCHOOL

Announcements have already gone out for the Blood Run Field School to be held during June. For further information contact Duane Anderson, (319) 353-5175.

OBITUARY: Herbert Sovereign, Mt. Ayr, 1910-1986.

Society members were saddened recently to learn of the death of long-time member Herb Sovereign of Mt. Ayr. Herb collected extensively in Ringgold, Taylor, Union, and Decatur counties and had reported dozens of sites in the region. He was one of the founders of the South Central Chapter of the IAS and was an eager participant in IAS meetings, workshops, and field trips. Herb and his associates hosted the annual meeting in the school gymnasium in Mt. Ayr in 1973--an event still remembered by many of our members. The Society owes a great deal to Herb for his enthusiastic and sustained contributions to Iowa archaeology. He is survived by his wife, Mona.

THE STRANGE CASE OF THE HARPERS FERRY "GREAT GROUP"

by Robert W. Peterson

In archaeology we are occasionally confronted by things that aren't quite what they seem to be. This has been true of my work as a surveyor of mounds in the Upper Mississippi River valley. The story of the Harpers Ferry "Great Group" (13AM79) in Allamakee County is a case in point.

Known as the largest grouping of mounds in North America, the site was located on a broad terrace of the Mississippi River at Harpers Ferry. The information we have about this group comes from a note written by Theodore H. Lewis on May 4, 1892:

This group consisted of 107 tailless animals, 67 birds, 98 embankments that were probably animals 154 embankments and 240 round mound the largest of which is now about 6 feet high. Total number of effigies in sight including 4 surveyed 276. Total number of mounds including surveyed 671. Add 229 small round mounds (estimated) that have been destroyed by cultivation makes a total of 900 mounds of all classes. All except about 50 mounds are cultivated [1892e:13-14].

This constitutes the extent of our available information on the site. There are no maps of the group and there has not been any corroboration by other sources. Did this group of mounds exist or not? Is it an error in research methods? Just how reliable is Lewis's note? You be the judge.

During the fall of 1985 I visited St. Paul and the Minnesota State Historical Society where the Lewis records are kept. I hoped to find additional information on this elusive site. From the trip emerges a picture of Theodore Lewis as a very careful, thorough surveyor. Yet the note on the Harpers Ferry "Great

Group" does not seem to fit with the rest of his work habits or the survey records for other sites.

For example, our information on the group was recorded in 1892, yet Lewis was in the Harpers Ferry area as early as 1884:

I came up [to New Albin, Iowa] on the train Saturday intending to stop at Lansing 1 1/2 hours and then come here on freight but RR accident at Lansing laid us over at Harpers' ferry 2 hours so that freight and passenger got in together. There was 7 cars mostly loaded mashed up. There are Effigies at Clayton, at Harpers ferry 1 1/2 m [mile] below Lansing & 1 in Lansing. I surveyed none of them because they are very dim [1884:1-2].

If the 900 mounds were clear enough to count in 1892 why not count them in 1884? That was not done. Would the mounds have been any clearer in 1892 than they were in 1884? Apparently this cluster was not impressive enough to warrant surveying time. It might be argued that Lewis's plans did not give him the time necessary to work at Harpers Ferry in 1884. Time was not the problem in 1885. In July of that year Lewis was in the Harpers Ferry area tracking down an effigy on the William Klitt farm. "It is still tracable although cultivated 34 years" (1885:30). That Lewis could make out a mound under cultivation for three decades and still not mention some 900 mounds in the same area certainly encourages the question, How real is the "Great Group"?

Lewis's next visit to the terrace at Harpers Ferry was in 1892. At that time he recorded his information about the "Great Group." The note was written as part of his survey for a single bear mound (13AM78) located at the northern end of the main "group." In addition, the "group"

is mentioned in connection with several other sites including 13AM77, 13AM80, and 13AM109. The description for 13AM109 states that the mound is "About 25 feet above the slough...within 250 yards of the S end of the great group" (1892e:14).

Although this statement lends some credibility to the "Great Group," other pieces of information raise more doubts. Throughout the years of the Northwestern Archaeological Survey Lewis was in almost daily contact through letters with Alfred J. Hill, the organizer and financier of the survey. These letters provide a vivid picture of survey conditions, methods, and results plus a record of 19th-century living conditions. In many of the letters Lewis gives information about where he was working and what he was finding. The letters written during the spring of 1892 do not provide any mention of this, the largest group of mounds in North America.

At noon I run to Harpers Ferry, but could find no place to stop off at. Then came down to N. McGregor [Marquette]...

On my way to N. McGregor I saw the ledge called Painted Rock. There are a number of figures painted red, but it is a question whether they can be copied for apparently they are unaccessable, but I will try just the same. If not raining, and if I can get a railroad permit to stop a passenger train I will finish the territory to Harpers [1892a:1].

Today I surveyed 4 mounds [including 13AM74, 13AM75, and 13AM76] three of which were effigies. Will get some more tomorrow if the weather's fit [1892b:1].

Have had one day this week so far and have cleaned up down to the creek just below Harpers Ferry. It is raining today as usual, and while I done some work yesterday above and below Harpers it

rained near half the time [1892c:2].

Since I came here I have surveyed 18 mounds including 10 effigies, and copied a few pictographs all in Allamakee Co and expect to get some more to help out" [1982d:1-2].

These are the only references to the Harpers Ferry area that Lewis made in 1892. What is unusual is that this large group of mounds did not rate any type of mention in the correspondence.

Is it possible that Lewis was overwhelmed by what he found at Harpers Ferry? Is it possible that he was unable to put his findings into words? There may be some validity to this idea. Two very large mound groups that he surveyed in Minnesota and Wisconsin were not mentioned in his letters to Hill. But, if Lewis was unable to describe his thoughts on the group, why did he record his note? It's a contradiction in terms.

The two other large groups present us with further contradictions. Both were completely surveyed; that is, Lewis took the time to carefully measure the mounds and to record his readings. He spent several days with each of these groups. Both sites included some 500 mounds. With 900 mounds, the Harpers Ferry "Great Group" was recorded in less than one day. Lewis does not even mention the procedure he used to count the mounds. Just keeping track of 900 mounds should have taken quite an extensive block of time. From the evidence, though, it does not appear that he spent much time at Harpers Ferry.

Is it possible that Lewis got his information from a local citizen? In many instances he does state that he relied on local citizens for clues about the existence of mounds or for directions to sites. At Harpers Ferry, Lewis does not mention any help that he might

have received from local residents. This is one more possibility that does not shed light on the mystery of the "Great Group."

To complicate the matter further, Lewis states that the majority of the "Great Group" was under cultivation. He also says that survey conditions were far from ideal due to rain. And yet he was able to produce a count of the mound types. Again, all of the evidence leads to a single predominant question: How real is the "Great Group"?

To further compound the mystery of the "Great Group" there is the fact that no other surveyor mentions the site. Between 1870 and 1900 there were several archaeologists doing survey work in the Upper Mississippi River valley. The list included Moses Strong (1878) the assistant State Geologist for Wisconsin; Col. Norris and Cyrus Thomas (1894) both of the Bureau of American Ethnology; and Stephen Peet (1898) long-time editor of the *American Antiquarian* and *Oriental Journal*. To a certain extent, these surveyors duplicated each other's work by visiting some of the same sites. One would suspect that a mound group the size of the one purported to exist at Harpers Ferry would have received a great deal of attention from the other surveyors. Again, this is not the case. In Iowa the closest site mentioned by the other surveyors is in northern Clayton County.

Today the vast majority of the terrace at Harpers Ferry has been so altered that it will probably be impossible to ever reconstruct what once really existed there. And so the question will remain: How real is the Harpers Ferry "Great Group"? You be the judge!

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BOOK REVIEWS

REVIEW OF *BROKEN PATTERN*

Broken Pattern: Sunlight and Shadows of Hopi History. Vada Carlson. Naturegraph Publishers, Inc. Happy Camp, California, 1985. 205 pp. No price given (paper).

Broken Pattern is a novel about the Hopi Indians of the American Southwest. It is set at the time of Spanish contact when the long-rumored conquistadores arrived in Hopi country in north-eastern Arizona. It provides a plausible story from the Indian point of view of the devastating effects of exploration and disease brought by the Spanish at the time of the Euro-American intrusion into the area.

The story is about two Hopis, Hohtski and Sevansi, whose lives are traced from puberty through marriage, providing a background for the tragic time later in their lives when the Spanish finally arrived. The author is obviously well acquainted with modern Hopi customs as well as with the harsh environment in which they live. She weaves the ceremonial life and beliefs of the Hopi into the narrative in a way that elucidates the pattern of harmony and peace that was to be shattered by the Spanish. She provides ample detail and sufficient character development to engage even the most casual reader and manages to leave a permanent impression of what the Indians endured at a period generally known only through the eyes of Spanish chroniclers.

While this book lacks the vivid descriptive detail of Scott Momaday's accounts in *House Made of Dawn*, it is, nevertheless, compelling reading that anyone with an interest in Native American cultures should thoroughly enjoy. In my opinion it compares well with other acknowledged novels on southwestern culture including

Laughing Boy (La Farge) and *The Man Who Killed the Deer* (Waters). Instructors of southwestern archaeology and ethnology should consider adding this book to their list of supplemental readings as a means of bringing people to life that are often treated much more analytically in the ethnographies.

Duane C. Anderson
University of Iowa

REVIEW OF *EXPLORING BURIED BUXTON*

Exploring Buried Buxton: Archaeology of an Abandoned Iowa Coal Mining Town with a Large Black Population. David M. Gradwohl and Nancy M. Osborn. Iowa State University Press, Ames. 1984. xvi + 206 pp., index, and 162 figures. \$29.95 (hardcover).

This book lucidly describes archaeological investigations conducted at the former town of Buxton, Iowa. Buxton was a coal mining community where a large, predominantly black population of miners and their families lived and worked from 1920 to 1925. The Indians have left behind many scattered clues to their way of life; so too have the people who lived in the town of Buxton. Gradwohl and Osborn show how fast the physical evidence of even very recent human activity can vanish. However, with a combination of excavation, anthropology, oral history, photography, and plans, Gradwohl and Osborn reconstruct Buxton and preserve for us the fascinating record of a unique town and experience in Iowa history. As a former miner noted, "We had our own dentist...doctors...lawyers. Things were good there. And then we moved to Des Moines and stepped back a hundred years" (p. 191).

Exploring Buried Buxton is a good, readable book. It utilizes a wide variety of archaeological

and historical research techniques to report on a unique life-way in Iowa. Two other items of interest pertaining to Buxton are IPBN's 1979 documentary "You Can't Go Back to Buxton" and Dorothy Schwieder's *Black Diamonds: Life and Work in Iowa's Coal Mining Communities, 1895-1925*. Both are recommended for those who wish to follow-up on the remarkable story of Buxton presented to us by Gradwohl and Osborn.

Maxine Schwanke
Cedar Falls, Iowa

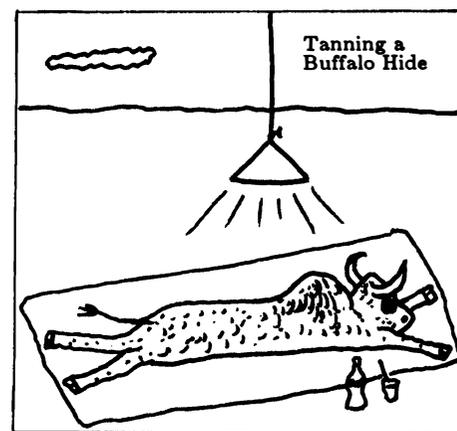
FALL MEETING: 1986

The Fall Meeting will be held jointly with the South Dakota Archaeological Society in Sioux Falls. The meeting will focus on archaeological work at the Blook Run site and will include a field trip. The tentative dates for the event are September 19-21, 1986.

ANNUAL MEETING: 1987

The 1987 Annual Meeting of the IAS will be held in Ames, April 4-5, 1987 in conjunction with the Native American Symposium on the Iowa State University campus.

INCITES



This issue of the *Newsletter* has been computer typeset by Paula Webber.

SOCIETY INFORMATION

IAS Officers & Directors

PRESIDENT

Dick Slattery
4106 El Rancho Drive
Davenport, IA 52806

VICE-PRESIDENT

David Carlson
Route 1, Box 113
Otho, IA 50569

TREASURER

Terry Walker
Sanford Museum
117 East Willow
Cherokee, IA 51012

SECRETARY

Debby Ziegrowsky
2432 Petsel Place, Apt. 1
Iowa City, IA 52240

JOURNAL EDITOR

Nancy Osborn
312 Haywood, Apt. 5
Ames, IA 50010

DIRECTORS 1986-1987

Ron Cross
303 S. 2nd Street
Wapello, IA 52653

Roger Natte
2340 19th Avenue N
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Jerry Phillips
Greenbriar Apts., Apt. 91
Council Bluffs, IA 51501

DIRECTORS 1986-1988

M.J. Hatfield
Route 1
Ames, IA 50010

Mike Hosbein
RR 3, Box 198
Cherokee, IA 51012

Dennis Miller
Route 1, Box 37-A
Silver City, IA 51571

DIRECTORS 1986-1989

Shirley Schermer
1008 N. Angus
Maquoketa, IA 52060

Ferrel Anderson
1923 E. 13th Street
Davenport, IA 52803

John Palmquist
Route 1, Box 158
Stanton, IA 51573

Minutes Annual Meeting Iowa Archeological Society Iowa City, Iowa April 12, 1986

President Dick Slattery called the meeting to order at 4:50 in the Illinois Room of the Iowa Memorial Union on The University of Iowa campus in Iowa City.

The minutes were read and approved as published.

Ruth Thornton reported that the Society's total assets as of April 10 were \$5966.04 and that the Society had 374 members. The treasurer's report was approved.

The Society commended Ruth Thornton for her 27 years of steadfast service to the Society as treasurer (Jim Pilgrim/Steve Lensink).

The Society authorized Mary Jane Hatfield to spend \$70 for a booth to publicize the IAS at the upcoming Iowa Library Association meetings in Des Moines (Robert Page/Ron Cross).

Slattery appointed Hatfield and Mike Hosbein to a membership committee charged with increasing membership and publicizing the Society.

Elections were conducted. The following individuals were elected officers and directors:

President	Dick Slattery
Vice-President	David Carlson
Treasurer	Terry Walker
Directors	Ferrel Anderson Shirley Schermer John Palmquist Jerry Phillips

Jerry Phillips will serve the one remaining year of Dan Zwiener's term. Zwiener has moved to Arizona and cannot complete his term.

Slattery described plans for the summer field school at Blood Run in northwest Iowa.

The Society authorized the treasurer to contribute \$500 for the project (Robert Page/Yvonne Chadek).

The following resolutions were adopted following the banquet:

1. The Society wishes to thank Deb Ziegrowsky and the Keyes Chapter for arranging the fine program of the 36th annual meeting and The University of Iowa Memorial Union staff for the facilities and the fine banquet.

2. The Society extends its sincere appreciation to Dr. Raymond Wood of the University of Missouri for his excellent program.

3. The Society thanks those who presented papers and otherwise participated in the 1986 spring meeting making it a success.

4. The Society thanks the officers and directors who have served during the past year including those whose terms ended this year—Dan Zwiener, Toby Morrow, and Terry Walker, and we welcome the new members to the board of directors.

5. The Society thanks Nancy Osborn, Lori and Dave Stanley, and the Keyes Chapter for their fine work on the Society publications.

6. The Society extends its thanks to Ruth Thornton for her 27 years as treasurer of the Society and Terry Walker who is willing to assume the treasurer's position.

7. The Society expresses its sympathy to the widow of Herb Sovereign, long-time member of the Society. He will be sorely missed.

8. The Society expresses our thoughts and best wishes to Clark Mallam in his illness.

9. And finally, the Society thanks all those members who attended the 36th annual meeting, those who participated in the Blood Run Field School, those members who registered sites, and those who recruited new members (Roger Natte/Alton Fisher).

The meeting adjourned.

Annual membership dues are as follows:

VOTING

1. Active - \$10
2. Household - \$17
3. Sustaining - \$25
4. Benefactor - \$250 minimum

NON-VOTING

1. Student (under 18) \$7
2. Institution - \$10

SEND DUES TO:

Terry Walker, Treasurer, IAS
117 East Willow, Cherokee, IA 51012

IOWA ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Eastlawn
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242



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