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Alabama Archaeological Society

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GIFT TO THE ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

We have been informed by the co-trustees of the John and Delia Robert Charitable Trust, John C. Henley III, and Central Bank of the South, that the Alabama Archaeological Society has been selected to receive a most generous gift. We are deeply appreciative of this sizeable donation.

ARROW POINTS NEEDED

We still need the following volumes of Arrow Points to give us a complete set for our archives:

Volume 1 Number 1, 3-6 A11 Volume 2 Volume 3 1 - 4Volume 18 A11 Volume 19 A11 Volume 20 1-4 11 Volume 21 3-6 Volume 22 3 - 6

CHAPTER NEWS

Birmingham Chapter

Our monthly meeting for December was Thursday the 14th. Guest speaker was Dr. Jim Knight from The University of Alabama, who gave a talk and slide show on the recent excavation of Mound Q at Mound State Park.

Bobby Hawkins

Culllman Chapter

The December Cullman Chapter meeting was a get-together at the home of Ron and Kathy Morrow in West Point.

Howard King

Huntsville Chapter

The Huntsville Chapter did not meet in December. We will resume our regular chapter meetings in January; our next meeting will be Monday, January 29. This is not our regular meeting night: the library had a scheduling conflict and moved us to another evening. The meeting will still begin at 7 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Huntsville Public Library on St. Clair Avenue. The public is welcome.

Dorothy Luke

EXHIBIT AT BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM OF ART

"Summoning of the Soul: Treasures from China's Tombs" will open at the Birmingham Museum of Art on Sunday, January 21 and will remain on view through Sunday, February 25, 1990. This exhibition contains major findings from ancient China's earliest dynasties, the Shang, Zhou and Han. It focuses on the development of civilization in southern China, specifically in the state of Chu.

This exhibit has been organized by the Asian Art Coordinating Council and made possible in part by the generous support of the Manville Corporation, the Colorado China Council, and supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities. The Birmingham venue for this tour is sponsored by RUST International Corporation and The Birmingham News and Birmingham Post-Herald.

THE CRUMP BURIAL CAVE

(Note: The following article was printed in the Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution in June 1892.)

This cave was discovered in the summer of 1840, by Mr. James Newman and some of his friends while hunting. It is located on the banks of the southern branch of the Warrior River, in Murpheys Valley, Blount County, Alabama, and is in the steep limestone cliffs where the river entered a gorge and left the valley. The entrance to the cave was about 400 feet above the stream and 40 feet below the plateau above. The opening into the cave was so small that a man could scarcely crawl into it. Procuring lights, the hunters entered the cave. They found it perfectly dry, the air pleasant and cool, and the rooms sufficiently large to accommodate the rather large party of young men. A short distance from the entrance was a room, which proved to be a "burial cave" of the aborigines. They found eight or ten wooden coffins of black and white walnut, hollowed or cut out of the solid, after the fashion of the "dugout" canoe. The coffins were sent to the Smithsonian Institution, where they have been restored as far as possible, and are now exhibited in the department of prehistoric anthropology. Eight have been restored, and there are in addition many parts of coffins. The coffins are about $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, 14 to 18 inches wide, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, and 6 or 7 inches deep. They have been

hollowed out by fire, aided by stone or copper chisels, or hatchets. Traces of the use of both implements are to be seen on the inside. The ends are open.

In proximity to the coffins were twelve or fifteen human skulls, and also a large number of human bones. These were scattered around, showing that there had been disturbance after burial, whether by beasts of prey or otherwise could not be determined. If there were bones of other animals, it was not observed or not reported.

There were five or six wooden trays — one was secured and sent to the Smithsonian Institution. It is 18 inches long, 12 inches wide, 1½ inches thick at the bottom, reduced to thin edges at the top, and 3 inches deep. Also six small wooden bowls, a fragment of one only being secured. Scattered about, but near the skeletons and coffins, were found the following objects: About 200 pounds of galena, some of the larger pieces being rudely grooved, similar to the aboriginal stone axes and mauls, as though for warclubs — casse—tetes; a number of arrow and spear heads and other relics; a small copper hatchet, a copper chisel about 5 inches long, and about twenty copper ornaments, most of these having small holes drilled as though for suspension; six or seven large shells (Fulgar carica); some shell disks and beads and pieces of wooden matting about 6 inches square, made of bark or cane and much decayed. One of the copper chisels and some of the galena were in one of the coffins.

The opening of the cave was enlarged, and became a place of some celebrity, being visited by the citizens, neighbors, guests, etc., who carried away such things as suited their fancy. The skulls were carried away by doctors, and the beads were appropriated by the children, while others broke up the galena and carried it away for the purpose of making bullets.

The cave remained in this condition for twenty or more years. During the war for the suppression of the rebellion, the cave was excavated for saltpeter, and was also a hiding-place for refugees. The coffins were badly damaged, as is shown by their present condition, but fortunately were not destroyed. How they could have escaped use as firewood is scarcely imaginable.

The late Rev. William Crump owned the land on which the cave was situated, and from whom it takes its name, and his family still owns it. They had in their possession a few years ago, a number of copper objects, a few stone implements, and two of the large shells, one of which was used at the blacksmith shop for pouring water on hot iron. I made effort to obtain these relics, but failed. They permitted me to visit the cave and collect the coffins and pieces there, which I hauled a distance of 30 miles to the railroad, and shipped them to the National Museum. I spent some time on different occasions in visiting this cave and talking to Mr. James Newman and others who discovered the cave, and obtained from them the facts which I have here recorded and which I regard in every way as reliable. That the cave was a very old burial place is undeniable.

There is a small mound at the foot of the bluff in the narrow river bottom, and around it a number of relics have been plowed up, one of which was a "stone wheel" with a groove around it, probably used as part of a machine for drilling holes in stone and copper.

About five miles north of the Crump Cave, on the mountain of limestone just beneath the overhanging cliff of Millstone Grit, I found and forwarded to the Museum an Indian ladder which stood against the precipice and had been used to mount or climb up to what the people call a "rock house"; i.e., a large, roomy, dry place under overhanging cliffs of stone, probably used like the cave, for burial purposes. This ladder is the trunk of a cedar tree about 8 inches in diameter, is about 14 feet long, has 7 or 8 steps, 18 or 19 inches apart, made by cutting into the tree a scarf about 6 inches high and 2 inches deep. Near the foot of the ladder, but out in the open air, was a rock mound of good size, from which some relics had been dug by parties hunting for buried Indian money.

There are many such houses in the coal measures, and they were used by the aborigines as dwelling or burial places. I have found human bones, and in one instance some beautiful arrow-heads, in a number of such places among the mountains. The aborigines would lay their dead away in rock crevices in wild and retired spots, and cover them with stones enough to protect them from wild animals and leave them in the "Eternal Silence". I have in some instances sent the bones to the Museum; in other cases I left them undisturbed. I have walked many miles for the purpose of making similar investigations through the country formerly belonging to the Creeks or Muscogees, when it was impossible to ride and dangerous even to walk.

In the year 1881 I visited the site of a former Creek Indian village in Brown's Valley, Marshall County, Ala. This was a village of friendly Creeks. They had helped Gen. Jackson in the war against their countrymen, and after peace was made, he removed and settled them on lands of the Cherokees until they were sent west of the Mississippi. The early settlers told me that when one of the Creeks died, they buried him in a corner of one of the huts or wigwams, which in this village were small houses made of logs after the manner of the white settlers, and that when a person was buried in each corner of a hut, it was pulled down and removed to another spot. I had no means of verifying this report. In the Cherokee country they buried their dead in caves in some instances, but generally in the ground, like Americans.

REMARKS BY MR. THOMAS WILSON.-While this method of coffin burial was unusual, if not unknown in the United States, yet there were similar burials among the prehistoric peoples of other countries. In the center of one of the display rooms in the great Prehistoric Museum at Copenhagen stand two coffins, similar in appearance to those just described, made of the cloven and hollowed trunk of an oak tree. One came from Treenhoi and the other from Borun-Eshoi, Denmark. One contained the body of a man; the other that of a woman. The skeleton of the man had crumbled away; that of the woman was well preserved. From the remains of the clothing they have been able to reconstruct the garment of that period. The material was wool, which had been closely spun, and was of the color known in the United States as "butternut", whether that was the original color, or whether it had been changed by contact with the oak coffin, was not determinable. The garments consisted of a high cap, a wide, roundly cut mantle, a sort of tunic, pieces of wool which had probably covered the legs, while at the feet were remains of leather or skin, which had possibly been shoes. The cap was without a visor, and it and the garment were covered

with a projecting knotted thread, which hung down. The tunic was kept together with a long woolen belt, which went twice around the waist, was knotted in front, and the two long ends hanging down were decorated with fringe. At his left side lay a bronze sword in a wooden sheath lined with skin. At the foot was a round wooden box containing a smaller box of the same kind, which, in its turn, contained an extra woolen cap, a horn comb, and a bronze razor. The bodies in both burials were wrapped in cow-hide. The woman's coffin contained a bronze fibula, or safety pin, a bronze dagger with a horn handle, a spiral finger ring, two bracelets, a torque, and three round and beautifully decorated bronze belt plates of different sizes, with points projecting in the middle.

There is in the National Museum a square of the same cloth from a similar burial, obtained by myself at Frederichsund. In these cases the coffins were different from those at Crump's Burial Cave, the corresponding upper half of the tree trunk having been hollowed out and serving as a coffin lid.

The "London Chronicle" (1767) reports the opening of a mound (barrow) near Wareham, Dorsetshire, wherein was found a human burial in the hollowed trunk of an oak tree. The bones were wrapped in a covering of deer skins sewn together. And here was found what was considered a piece of gold lace wrought into lozenge pattern. (Mrs. Bury Pallister, "History of Lace", P. 3.)

(The above article was written by Frank Burns, U.S. Geological Survey.)

BOOKS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA PRESS

THE FEDERAL ROAD THROUGH GEORGIA, THE CREEK NATION, AND ALABAMA, 1806-1836 - by Henry deLeon Southerland and Jerry Elijah Brown.

The Federal Road, which started as a postal horsepath through a malaria-infested wilderness occupied by Indians, was the primary thoroughfare for pioneer settlers and soldiers entering western Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi.

Sponsored by the Historic Chattahoochee Commission. 232 pp. #216400. Cloth, \$24.50.

PLACE NAMES IN ALABAMA - by Virginia O. Foscue.

This book is the first systematic attempt to account for all the names of the counties, cities, towns, water courses, bodies of water, and mountains that appear on readily available maps of Alabama. Over 2,600 entries provide fascinating reading and a wealth of information for trivia buffs.

192 pp. #76125.1. Paper, \$12.95.

EXCAVATION OF A FRENCH COLONIAL HOUSE SITE

During the summer of 1989 a team of archaeologists from the University of South Alabama began explorations at the early French colonial settlement of Old Mobile, occupied from 1702 to 1711.

This summer's excavations focused on the remains of a single house, one of several along the western edge of town that are thought to have been occupied by Canadians who accompanied the colonizing expedition in 1702. The house was a long, narrow, three-room building (consisting of a central parlor flanked by two smaller bedrooms), with a fenced garden or animal pen attached to one end. All that remained of this house were footing trenches for the wall sills, floors of clay, and some brick rubble from a fireplace.

The building would have resembled an English "half-timber" house, with the spaces between upright wall posts filled in with a clay and Spanish Moss mixture called bousillage. Because the house is the earliest French structure to be excavated in the region - the only earlier ones are to be found in Canada and on the Atlantic coast of the United States - there were many surprises among the artifacts uncovered during the digging. Some of the most interesting objects are four small lead discs that had been clipped on to bales of cloth destined for export from France to the colony. On one side of each was stamped a fleur-de-lys; the other bears an abbreviated inscription naming the source of the cloth, the Company of the Indies, and the date 1701. The presence of these seals certainly suggests that the house excavated this summer was built soon after the founding of old Mobile in January 1702.

Most unexpected among this summer's discoveries is the great number of Spanish colonial artifacts present at this French settlement. Although the French colonists evidently relied on local Indian potters to provide them with most of their cooking pots and serving dishes, they also owned a small amount of Chinese porcelain and a larger quantity of white tin-glazed ceramics. All of the tin-glazed pottery found so far originally was made in Puebla, Mexico.

Other artifacts seem to suggest that the colonists were striving to achieve a degree of self-sufficiency on this new frontier. The earliest industry may have been brickmaking, with the rather crude, but serviceable bricks used primarily in fireplaces. A few pieces of lead-glazed pottery appear to have been made from local clays, too.

Join THE FRIENDS OF OLD MOBILE and help us learn more about colonial life along the northern Gulf coast. Contributors of \$25 or more will receive subsequent issues of the newsletter ("The Old Mobile Project Newsletter"), with reports on the latest discoveries. Contributions are tax-deductible. Please make your check payable to "University of South Alabama Archaeology Fund" and sent it to:

The Old Mobile Project c/o Dr. Stephen Thomas, Associate Dean College of Arts and Sciences University of South Alabama Mobile, Alabama 36688

PUBLICATIONS

CORNCRIBS: In History, Folklife and Architecture - by Keith E. Roe.

Presents a multifaceted history of ear-corn storage in North America from the time of ancient Indian cultures to the mid-1900's. More than 200 photographs and line drawings.

1988. 116 pp., 11 1/4 x 8 3/4, ill., hardcover. CIP, ISBN-0-8138-0364-0. \$28.95.

THE ORIGIN OF ANCIENT AMERICAN CULTURES - by Paul Shao. Investigates the appearance and background of ancient civilizations in the Americas, emphasizing similarities and contrasts of art forms.

1983. 374 pp., 12 $1/2 \times 9 \cdot 1/4$, ill., hardcover. CIP, ISBN 0-8138-1288-7. \$42.75.

ASIATIC INFLUENCES IN PRE-COLUMBIAN AMERICAN ART - by Paul Shao. Provides extensive evidence (including 300 photographs) that supports the theory of pre-Columbian trans-Pacific contacts between Asia and America. Sheds new light on the origins of the mysterious Mayan culture.

1976. 196 pp., 14 x 11 1/2, ill., hardcover. CIP, ISBN 0-8138-1855-9. \$28.50.

The above books are available from Iowa State University Press; 2121 S. State Avenue; Ames, Iowa 50010. Include \$2 postage for first book; for additional books, add \$.75 each.

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"Popular Archaeology" is America's artifact and amateur archaeology magazine, which offers a world of archaeology. It is a magazine that specializes in amateur archaeology and public involvement in preservation. "Popular Archaeology" continues to be first in publishing the latest discoveries in archaeology, such as the discovery of the Monitor and the newly found Mesopotamian city of Mashkan-shapir.

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Available issues of Journal of Alabama Archaeology Vol. 20-29 each issue		
Stanfield-Worley Bluff Shelter Excavations (Journal of Alabama Archaeology) Vol. VIII Nos. 1 & 2 - Reprint, each issue \$5.00 pp		
Special Publication 1 — Fort Mitchell		
Special Publication 2 — The Archaeological Sequence at Durant Bend, Dallas County Alabama		
Special Publication 3 — Archaeological Investigations at Horseshoe Bend		
Handbook of Alabama Archaeology Part 1, Point Types \$10.00 pp		
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Investigations in Russell Cave, published by the National Park Service		
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