

Indian graves article left a mystery

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dimensions of the chamber were 18x25 feet, with a six-foot ceiling!

The *Progress* described what the workers found: "Ranged in rows on rudely constructed platforms, were twelve skeletons, each with tomahawk and arrowheads at their sides, earrings and bracelets of solid silver lying where they had dropped, and piles of what appeared to have been furs, in the center of the platform, each pile crumbling to dust as soon as exposed to light. A number of tools, made of copper, and hardened equal to the best cast-steel, were also unearthed, and fresh discoveries are being constantly made."

Unfortunately, the *Progress* never again referred to the find or what

the "fresh discoveries" were. One wonders none of the workers or inevitable spectators had the foresight to call in someone from the Indiana University history department.

Cheryl Ann Munson, staff archaeologist at IU's Glenn A. Black Laboratory, says that an effort was made to find out more about the location of that particular site and what became of the artifacts found there. Today they know no more about it than the information contained in the *Progress* article. She says, however, that if the artifacts were correctly described, the Indians buried in the chamber are most probably classified as "historic" Indians, as opposed to pre-historic ones, because the silver ornaments would indicate contact with Europeans.

"We have on record over 17,000 sites in Indiana where there is evidence of Indian habitation," she says. "many of the sites have been reported to us by the public. The laboratory staff are always happy to look at artifacts for identification," Munson says. She also explains that the locations of such sites are confidential in order to protect them from souvenir hunters and vandals.

The *Progress'* only other comment in relation to the Polk Township archaeological find was, "Do copper mines exist in Southern Indiana? That is the question that will naturally arise in the mind of the curious reader."

As for the name of the tribe and why those buried there merited such a splendid chamber, we will probably never know.