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by Cyrus Thomas

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THE PROBLEM OF THE OHIO MOUNDS.

By Cyrus Thomas.

CONTENTS

Introduction

CHAPTER I.

Historical evidence

CHAPTER II.

Similarity of the arts and customs of the mound-builders to

those of Indians

Architecture

Tribal divisions

Similarity in burial customs

Removal of the flesh before burial

Burial beneath or in dwellings

Burial in a sitting or squatting posture

The use of fire in burial ceremonies

Similarity of the stone implements and ornaments of various

tribes

Mound and Indian pottery

CHAPTER III.

Stone graves and what they teach

CHAPTER IV.

The Cherokees as mound-builders

CHAPTER V.

The Cherokees and the Tallegwi

INTRODUCTION.

No other ancient works of the United States have become so widely

known or have excited so much interest as those of Ohio. This is

due in part to their remarkable character but in a much greater

degree to the "Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley," by

Messrs. Squier and Davis, in which these monuments are described

and figured.

The constantly recurring question, "Who constructed these works?"

has brought before the public a number of widely different

theories, though the one which has been most generally accepted is

that they originated with a people long since extinct or driven

from the country, who had attained a culture status much in

advance of that reached by the aborigines inhabiting the country

at the time of its discovery by Europeans.

The opinion advanced in this paper, in support of which evidence

will be presented, is that the ancient works of the State are due

to Indians of several different tribes, and that some at least of

the typical works, were built by the ancestors of the modern

Cherokees. The discussion will be limited chiefly to the latter

proposition, as the limits of the paper will not permit a full

presentation of all the data which might be brought forward in

support of the theory, and the line of argument will be

substantially as follows:

FIRST. A brief statement of the reasons for believing that the

Indians were the authors of all the ancient monuments of the

Mississippi Valley and Gulf States; consequently the Ohio mounds

must have been built by Indians.

SECOND. Evidence that the Cherokees were mound builders after

reaching their historic seats in East Tennessee and western North

Carolina. This and the preceding positions are strengthened by the

introduction of evidence showing that the Shawnees were the

authors of a certain type of stone graves, and of mounds and other

works connected therewith.

THIRD. A tracing of the Cherokees, by the mound testimony and by

tradition, back to Ohio.

FOURTH. Reasons for believing that the Cherokees were the Tallegwi

of tradition and the authors of some of the typical works of Ohio.

CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

Space will not permit any review here of the various theories in

regard to the builders, or of the objections made to the theory

that they were Indians, or of the historical evidence adducible in

support of this theory. Simple declaration on these points must

suffice.

The historical evidence is clear and undisputed that when the

region in which the mounds appear was discovered by Europeans it

was inhabited by Indians only. Of their previous history nothing

is known except what is furnished by vague and uncertain

traditions or inferred from the study of their languages and

customs. On the other hand there is no historical or other

evidence that any other race or people than the Indians ever

occupied this region, or any part of it, previous to its discovery

by Europeans at the close of the fifteenth century.

We enter the discussion, therefore, with at least a presumption in

favor of the conclusion that these works were built by the

Indians--a presumption which has not received the consideration

it deserves; indeed, it is so strong that it can be overcome only

by showing that those mounds, or the specimens of art found in

them, which were unquestionably the work of the builders, indicate

an advancement in skill and knowledge entirely beyond that reached

by the Indians previous to contact with Europeans. But all the

genuine discoveries so far made in the explorations of the mounds

tend to disprove this view.

If it can be shown that tribes occupying the mound region at the

time they were first visited by Europeans used mounds, and in some

cases built them, it will be a fair inference that all these

structures are due to the same race until the contrary is proved.

The objection urged by many that the Indian has always been a

restless nomad, spurning the restraints of agriculture, has been

effectually answered, especially by Mr. Lucien Carr. [Footnote:

Mounds of the Mississippi Valley Historically Considered.] History

also bears us out in the assertion that at the time of the

discovery nine tenths of the tribes in the mound district had

fixed seats and local habitations, depending to a great extent for

sustenance upon the cultivation of the soil. So far as the

southern districts, now comprising the Gulf States, are concerned,

it goes further and asserts over and over again that the tribes of

that section were mound-builders when first encountered by the

whites. To verify this assertion it is only necessary to read the

chronicles of De Soto's expedition and the writings of the pioneer

travelers and French missionaries to that section. This evidence

proves conclusively not only that this had been a custom, but that

it was continued into the eighteenth century.

Such statements as the following, attested by various

contemporaneous authors, should suffice on this point:

The caciques of this country make a custom of raising near their

dwellings very high hills, on which they sometimes build their

houses. [Footnote: Biedma, Hist. Coll. La. vol. 2, p. 105.]

The Indians try to place their villages on elevated sites, but

inasmuch as in Florida there are not many sites of this kind where

they can conveniently build, they erect elevations themselves in

the following manner, etc. [Footnote: Garcilasso de la Vega, Hist.

Fla., ed. 1723, p. 69. ]

The chief's house stood near the beach upon a very high mount made

by hand for defense. [Footnote: Gentlemen of Elvas. Bradford Club

series, vol. 5, p. 23.]

The last, which was on Tampa Bay, was most likely near Phillippi's

Point, where tradition fixes De Soto's landing place, and where a

number of mounds and shell heaps have been found. One of these,

opened by Mr. S. T. Walker,[Footnote: Smithsonian Report, 1879

(1880), pp. 392-422.] was found to consist of three layers. In the

lower were "no ornaments and but little pottery, but in the middle

and top layers, especially the latter, nearly every cranium was

encircled by strings of colored beads, brass and copper ornaments;

trinkets, etc. Among other curious objects were a pair of scissors

and a fragment of looking-glass."

An earlier exploration is thus described: "The governor [De Soto]

opened a large temple in the woods, in which were buried the

chiefs of the country, and took from it a quantity of pearls which

were spoiled by being buried in the ground." [Footnote: Biedma.

Hist. Coll. La., vol. 2, p. 101.]

Another chronicler says: "This house stood on a high mound

(cerro), similar to others we have already mentioned. Round about

it was a roadway sufficiently broad for six men to walk abreast."

[Footnote: Garcilasso de la Vega, Hist. Fla., ed. 1723, p. 139.]

(There are good reasons for believing this to be the Etowah mound

near Cartersville, Ga.) [Footnote: Thomas, Mag. Am. Hist., May,

1884, pp. 405, 406.]

The town of Talise is described as being strong in the extreme,

inclosed by timber and earth. [Footnote: Garcilasso, Hist. Fla.,

p. 144.]

Herrera speaks of "a town of 400 houses, and a large square, where

the cacique's house stood upon a mound made by art." [Footnote:

Hist. Am., Stoven's transl., vol. 6, p. 5.]

Father Gravier [Footnote: Shea's Early French Voyages, pp. 126,

136.] speaks of mounds of the Akansea and "Tounika" villages.

M. La Harpe says "the cabins of the Yasous, Courois, Offogoula,

and Ouspie [along the Yazoo about 1700] are dispersed over the

country upon mounds of earth made with their own hands, from which

it is inferred that these nations are very ancient and were

formerly very numerous, although at the present time they hardly

number two hundred and fifty persons." [Footnote: Lu Rarpe, Hist.

Coll. La., part 3, p. 106, New York, 1851.] (This seems to imply

that there were numerous mounds unoccupied.) "In one of the

Natches villages," says Dumont, "the house of the chief was placed

on a mound." [Footnote: Mem. Hist. La., vol. 2, p. 109.]

Another writer says: "When the chief [of the Natchez] dies they

demolish his cabin and then raise a new mound on which they build

the cabin of him who is to replace him in this dignity."

[Footnote: La Petit, Hist. Coll. La., vol. 3, pp. 141, 142, note.

Also Lettres edifiantes et curioses, vol. 1, pp. 260, 261. See Du

Pratz. Histoire Louisiane, 1738, vol. 3, p. 16.]

According to Bartram, in the Cherokee town of Stico the council-

house was on a mound, as also at Cowe. [Footnote: Bartram's

Travels, pp. 345, 367.]

The same writer says [Footnote: Ibid., p. 516.] the Choctaws

raised mounds over their dead in case of communal burials.

It is apparent from Jefferson's language [Footnote: Notes on

Virginia. 4th Am ed., 1801, pp. 142-147.] that the burial mounds

of Virginia were of Indian origin.

These references, which might be indefinitely multiplied, are

sufficient to bear out the assertion that history testifies that

the southern tribes were accustomed to build mounds.

It is a matter of surprise that so little is to be found regarding

the mounds in the older records of the Northern States. There is

but one statement in the Jesuit Relations and no mention in the

writings of the Recollects, so far has been found, and yet one of

the missionaries must have passed a good portion of the winter of

1700 in the very midst of the Cahokia group. Colden notes that "a

round hill was sometimes raised over the grave in which a corpse

had been deposited." [Footnote: Hist. Five Nations, introd., vol.

1, London, 1755, p. 16.] Carver noticed ancient earthworks on the

Mississippi near Lake Pepin, but knew nothing of their origin.

[Footnote: Travels, ed. 1796, Phila., p. 36; ed. 1779, London, p.

57.] Heckewelder observed some of these works near Detroit, which

he was informed had been built by the Indians. An account of them

was published in a Philadelphia periodical in 1780 or 1790. This

description was afterwards given briefly in his "History of the

Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations."

These older records mention facts which afford a reasonable

explanation of some of the ancient monuments found in the northern

section of the country; as for example the communal or tribal

burials, where the bones and remains of all the dead of a village,

region, or tribe, who had died since the last general burial

(usually a period of eight to ten years) were collected and

deposited in one common grave. This method, which was followed by

some southern tribes, has been described by Bartram, [Footnote:

Travels (1791), p.516.] Dumont, [Footnote: Memoires Hist. La.,

vol. 1, p. 246.] Romans, [Footnote: Nat. and Civil Hist. Fla., pp.

88-90.] and others, but most fully by Jean deo Brebeuf. [Footnote:

In his account "Des ceremonies qu'ils [les Hurons] gardent en leur

sepulture et de leur deuil," and "De la Feste solemnelle des

morts."--Jesuit Relations for 1636, pp. 129-139. See translation

in Thomas's "Burial Mounds of the Northern Section of the United

States," Fifth Annual Rept. Bur. Ethnol., p. 110. See also

Lafitau, "Moeurs des Sauvages," vol. 2, pp. 447-455.]

It is a well-attested fact that northern as well as southern

Indians were accustomed to erect palisades around their villages

for defense against attack.

Some evidences of mound building by northern Indians may be found

in the works of comparatively modern writers. Lewis C. Beck

[Footnote: Gazetteer of the States of Ill. and Mo., p. 308.]

affirms that "one of the largest mounds in this country has been

thrown upon this stream [the Osage] within the last thirty or

forty years by the Osages, near the great Osage village, in honor

of one of their deceased chiefs." It is probable this is the mound

referred to by Major Sibley, [Footnote: Featherstoubaugh, Excur.

through Slave States, p. 70.] who says an Osage Indian informed

him that a chief of his tribe having died while all the men were

off on a hunt, he was buried in the usual manner, with his

weapons, etc., and a small mound was raised over him. When the

hunters returned this mound was enlarged at intervals, every man

carrying materials, and so the work went on for a long time, and

the mound, when finished, was dressed off to a conical form at the

top. The old Indian further said he had been informed, and

believed, that all the mounds had a similar origin.

Lewis and Clarke mention not only the erection of a mound over a

modern chief, but also numerous earthworks, including mounds,

which were known to be the work of contemporaneous Indians.

[Footnote: Travels, Dublin ed., 1817, pp. 30, 31, 55, 67, 115,

117, 122-125, etc.]

L. V. Bierce [Footnote: Historical Reminiscences of Summit County,

Ohio, p. 128.] states that when Nicksaw, an old Wyandotte Indian

of Summit County, was killed, "the Indians buried him on the

ground where he fell, and according to their custom raised a mound

over him to commemorate the place and circumstances of his death.

His grave is yet to be seen."

Another writer says: "It is related by intelligent Indian traders

that a custom once prevailed among certain tribes, on the burial

of a chief or brave of distinction, to consider his grave as

entitled to the tribute of a portion of earth from each passer-by,

which the traveler sedulously carried with him on his journey.

Hence the first grave formed a nucleus around which, in the

accumulation of the accustomed tributes thus paid, a mound was

soon formed." [Footnote: Smith's History of Wisconsin, vol. 3,

1834, p. 245.]

The same author says [Footnote: Ibid., p. 262.] the tumulus at the

Great Butte des Morts (Great Hill of the Dead) was raised over the

bones of Outagami (Fox Indian) warriors slain in battle with the

French in 1706.

According to a Winnebago tradition, mounds in certain localities

in Wisconsin were built by that tribe, and others by the Sacs and

Foxes.[Footnote: Wis. Hist. Soc., Rept. I, pp. 88, 89.]

There is another Indian tradition, apparently founded on fact,

that the Essex mounds in Clinton County, Mich., are the burying

places of those killed in a battle between the Chippewas and

Pottawatomies, which occurred not many generations ago. [Footnote:

Smithsonian Report, part 1, 1884, p. 848.]

CHAPTER II.

SIMILARITY OF THE ARTS AND CUSTOMS OF THE MOUND

BUILDERS TO THOSE OF INDIANS.

The historical evidence is, as we have seen, conclusive that some

of the tribes of Indians were mound builders.

The explorations by the Bureau of Ethnology in the South and West

have also brought to light so many corroborative facts that the

question may be considered settled. These will shortly be given to

the public; only a few can be noticed here, and that in a very

brief and general way.

As the country was inhabited only by Indians at the time of its

discovery, and as we have no evidence, unless derived from the

mounds, of its having ever been occupied by any other people,

every fact indicating a similarity between the arts, customs, and

social life of the mound-builders and those of the red Indians, is

an evidence of the identity of the two peoples. The greater the

number of these resemblances, the greater the probability of the

correctness of the theory, so long as we find nothing

irreconcilable with it.

Architecture.--One of the first circumstances which strike the

mind of the archaeologist who carefully studies these works as

being very significant, is the entire absence of any evidence in

them of architectural knowledge and skill approaching that

exhibited by the ruins of Mexico and Central America, or even

equaling that exhibited by the Pueblo Indians.

It is true that truncated pyramidal mounds of large size and

somewhat regular proportions are found in certain sections, and

that some of these have ramps or roadways leading up to them. Yet

when compared with the pyramids or teocalli of Mexico and Yucatan

the differences in the manifestations of architectural skill are

so great, and the resemblances are so faint and few, as to furnish

no grounds whatever for attributing the two classes of works to

the same people. The facts that the works of the one people

consist chiefly of wrought and sculptured stone, and that such

materials are wholly unknown to the other, forbid the idea of any

relationship between the two. The difference between the two

classes of monuments indicates a wide divergence--a complete step

--in the culture status.

Mexico, Central America, and Peru are dotted with the ruins of

stone edifices, but in all the mound-building area of the United

States not the slightest vestige of one attributable to the people

who erected the earthen structures is to be found. The utmost they

attained in this direction was the construction of stone cairus,

rude stone--walls, and vaults of cobble-stones and undressed

blocks. This fact is too significant to be overlooked in this

comparison, and should have its weight in forming a conclusion,

especially when it is backed by numerous other important

differences.

Though hundreds of groups of mounds marking the sites of ancient

villages are to be seen scattered over the Mississippi Valley and

Gulf States yet nowhere can there be found an ancient house. The

inference is therefore irresistible that the houses of the mound-

builders were constructed of perishable materials; consequently

that the builders were not sufficiently advanced in art to use

stone or brick in building, or else that they lived a roving,

restless life that would not justify the time and trouble

necessary to erect such permanent structures. As the last

inference is irreconcilable with the magnitude and extent of many

groups of these remains we are forced to the conclusion that the

first is true.

One chief objection to the Indian origin of these works is, as

already stated, that their builders must have been sedentary,

depending largely upon agriculture for subsistence. It is evident,

therefore, that they had dwellings of some sort, and as remains of

neither stone nor brick structures are found which could have been

used for this purpose, we must assume that their dwellings were

constructed of perishable material, such as was supplied in

abundance by the forest region in which they dwelt. It is

therefore apparent that in this respect at least the dwellings of

mound-builders were similar to those of Indians. But this is not

all that can be said in reference to the houses of the former, for

there still remain indications of their shape and character,

although no complete examples are left for inspection. In various

places, especially in Tennessee, Illinois, and southeast Missouri,

the sites of thousands of them are yet distinctly marked by little

circular depressions with rings of earth around them. These

remains give the form and size of one class of dwellings that was

common in the regions named. Excavations in the center usually

bring to light the ashes and hearth that mark the place where the

fire was built, and occasionally unearth fragments of the vessels

used in cooking, the bones of animals on whose flesh the inmates

fed, and other articles pertaining to domestic use.

During the explorations of the Bureau in southeastern Missouri and

Arkansas, finding the remains of houses in low, flat mounds was a

common occurrence. Although the wood in most cases had

disappeared, what had not been converted to coals and ashes having

rotted away, yet the size and form, and, in part, the mode of

construction, were clearly indicated. The hard-tramped, circular,

earthen floor gave the size and form; the numerous fragments of

burnt clay forming a layer over the floor--often taken by

explorers for brick-revealed the method of plastering their

dwellings; the charred remains of grass and twigs showed that it

had been strengthened by this admixture; the impressions left on

the inner face of these lumps of burnt plastering revealed the

character of the lathing, which was in some cases branches and

twigs, but in others split cane. The roof was thatched with grass

or matting, the charred remains of which were found in more than

one instance. In probably nine cases out of ten it was apparent

these dwellings had been burned. This was found to be due to the

custom of burying the dead in the floor and burning the dwelling

over them, covering the remains with dirt often before the fire

had ceased burning.

As a general rule the strata are found in this order: (1) a top

layer of soil from 1 foot to 2 feet thick; (2) a layer of burnt

clay from 3 to 12 inches thick (though usually varying from 4 to 8

inches) and broken into lumps, never in a uniform, unbroken layer;

immediately below this (3) a thin layer of hardened muck or dark

clay, though this does not always seem to be distinct. At this

depth in the mounds of the eastern part of Arkansas are usually

found one or more skeletons.

Take, for example, the following statement by Dr. Edward Palmer in

regard to these beds:

As a general and almost universal rule, after removing a foot or

two of top soil, a layer of burnt clay in a broken or fragmentary

condition would be found, sometimes with impressions of grass or

twigs, and easily crumbled, but often hard, and stamped,

apparently, with an implement made of split reeds of comparatively

large size. This layer was often a foot thick, and frequently

burned to a brick-red or even to clinkers. Below this would be

found more or less ashes, and often 6 inches of charred grass

immediately over the skeletons. These skeletons were found lying

in all directions, some with the face up, others with it down, and

others on the side. With each of these were one or more vessels of

clay.

Remains of rectangular houses were also discovered, though much

less frequent than other forms. These consisted of three rooms,

two in front and one in rear. For example, Dr. Palmer found in a

broad platform like elevation not more than 3 feet high the

remains of a house of this form which he traced by the burnt clay.

The lines of the upright walls were very apparent, as also the

clay which must have fallen from them, and which raised the outer

marginal lines considerably higher than the inner area. Dr. Palmer

remarks:

The fire must have been very fierce, and the clay around the edges

was evidently at some height above the door, as I judge from the

irregular way in which it is scattered around the margins.

Excavations in the areas showed that they were covered with a

layer of burnt clay, uneven and broken; immediately below this a

layer of ashes 6 inches thick, and below this black loam. On these

areas large trees were growing, one a poplar 3 feet in diameter.

Below one of these floors were found a skeleton, some pottery, and

a pipe. A large oak formerly stood at this point, but it has been

blown down.

Subsequently the remains of another dwelling of precisely the same

form, that is, two square rooms joined and a third of the same

size immediately behind these two, were discovered in the same

region by Colonel Norris. In this case remnants of the upright

posts and reed lathing forming the walls were found, also the clay

plastering.

Prof. G. C. Swallow [Footnote: 8th Rept. Peabody Museum, 1875, pp.

17, 18.] describes a room formed of poles, lathed with split cane,

plastered with clay both inside and out, which he found in a mound

in southeastern Missouri. Colonel Norris found parts of the

decayed poles, plastering, and other remains of a similar house in

a large mound in the same section.

From the statements of the early writers, a few of which are given

here, it is evident that the houses of the Indians occupying this

region when first visited by the whites were very similar to those

of the mound-builders.

La Harpe, speaking of the tribes in some parts of Arkansas, says:

"The Indians build their huts dome-fashion out of clay and reeds."

Schoolcraft says the Pawnees formerly built similar houses. In

Iberville's Journal [Footnote: Relation in Margry, Deconvertes,

4th part (March, 1699), p. 170] it is stated that the cabins of

the Bayogoulas were round, about 30 feet in diameter, and

plastered with clay to the height of a man. Adair says: "They are

lathed with cane and plastered with mud from bottom to top within

and without with a good covering of straw."

Henri de Tonty, the real hero of the French discoveries on the

Mississippi, says the cabins of the Tensas were square, with the

roof dome-shaped, and that the walls were plastered with clay to

the height of 12 feet and were 2 feet thick. [Footnote: Relation

of Henry de Tonty in Margry, Decouvertes, vol. 1, 1876, p. 600]

A description of the Indian square houses of this southern section

by Du Pratz [Footnote: Hist. La., vol. 2, French ed., 1758, pp.

173-175; English ed., 1764, p. 359.] is so exactly in point that I

insert a translation of the whole, passage:

The cabins of the natives are all perfectly square; none of them

are less than 15 feet in extent in every direction, but there are

some which are more than 30. The following is their manner of

building them: The natives go into the new forest to seek the

trunks of young walnut trees of 4 inches in diameter and from 18

to 20 feet long; they plant the largest ones at the four corners

to form the breadth and the dome; but before fixing the others

they prepare the scaffolding; it consists of four poles fastened

together at the top, the lower ends corresponding to the four

corners; on these four poles others are fastened crosswise at a

distance of a foot apart; this makes a ladder with four sides, or

four ladders joined together.

This done, they fix the other poles in the ground in a straight

line between those of the corners; when they are thus planted they

are strongly bound to a pole which crosses them within each side

[of the house]. For this purpose large splints of stalks are used

to tie them at the height of 5 or 6 feet, according to the size of

the cabin, which forms the walls; these standing poles are not

more than 15 inches apart from each other; a young man then mounts

to the end of one of the corner poles with a cord in his teeth; he

fastens the cord to the pole, and as he mounts within, the pole

bends, because those who are below draw the cord to bend the pole

as much as is necessary; at the same time another young man fixes

the pole of the opposite corner in the same way; the two poles

being thus bent at a suitable height, they are fastened strongly

and evenly. The same is done with the poles of the two other

corners as they are crossed over the first ones. Finally all the

other poles are joined at the point, which makes altogether the

figure of a bower in a summer-house such as we have in France.

After this work they fasten sticks on the lower sides or walls at

a distance of about 8 inches across, as high as the pole of which

I have spoken, which forms the length of the wall.

These sticks being thus fastened, they make mud walls of clay, in

which they put a sufficient amount of Spanish moss; these walls

are not more than 4 inches thick; they leave no opening but the

door, which is only 2 feet in width by 4 in height; there are some

much smaller. They then cover the frame-work which I have just

described with mats of reeds, putting the smoothest on the inside

of the cabin, taking care to fasten them together so that they are

well joined.

After this they make large bundles of grass, of the tallest that

can be found in the low lands, and which is 4 or 5 feet long; this

is put on in the same way as straw which is used to cover thatched

houses; the grass is fastened with large canes, and splints, also

of canes. When the cabin is covered with grass they cover all with

a matting of canes well bound together, and at the bottom they

make a ring of "bind-weeds" all around the cabin, then they trim

the grass evenly, and with this defense, however strong the wind

may be, it can do nothing against the cabin. These coverings last

twenty years without being repaired.

Numerous other references to the same effect might be given, but

these are sufficient to show that the remains found in the mounds

of the South are precisely what would result from the destruction

by fire of the houses in use by the Indians when first encountered

by Europeans.

It is admitted now by all archaeologists that the ancient works of

New York are attributable to Indians, chiefly to the Iroquois

tribes. This necessarily carries with it the inference that works

of the same type, for instance those of northern Ohio and eastern

Michigan, are due to Indians. It is also admitted that the mounds

and burial pits of Canada are due, at least in part, to the

Hurons. [Footnote: David Boyle, Ann. Rept. Canadian Institute,

1886-1887, pp. 9-17; Ibid., 1888, p. 57.]

Tribal divisions.--As the proofs that the mound-builders pertained

to various tribes often at war with each other are now too

numerous and strong to be longer denied, we may see in them

evidences of a social condition similar to that of the Indians.

Similarity in burial customs.--There are perhaps no other remains

of a barbarous or unenlightened people which give us so clear a

conception of their superstitions and religious beliefs as do

those which relate to the disposal of their dead. By the modes

adopted for such disposal, and the relics found in the receptacles

of the dead, we are enabled not only to understand something of

these superstitions and beliefs, but also to judge of their

culture status and to gain some knowledge of their arts, customs,

and modes of life.

The mortuary customs of the mound-builders, as gleaned from an

examination of their burial mounds, ancient cemeteries, and other

depositories of their dead, present so many striking resemblances

to those of the Indians when first encountered by the whites, as

to leave little room for doubt regarding their identity.

[Footnote: Evidence bearing on this point will be found in the

paper on The Burial Mounds of the Northern Sections, by C. Thomas,

in the Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology.] Nor is

this similarity limited to the customs in the broad and general

sense, but it is carried down to the more minute and striking

peculiarities.

Among the general features in which resemblances are noted are the

following:

The mound-builders were accustomed to dispose of their dead in

many different ways; their modes of sepulture were also quite

varied. The same statements will apply with equal force to the

Indians.

"The commonest mode of burial among North American Indians," we

are informed by Dr. H. C. Yarrow, [Footnote: First Annual Report

Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, 1879-'80 (1881), p.

93.] "has been that of interment in the ground, and this has taken

place in a number of ways." The different ways he mentions are, in

pits, graves, or holes in the ground; in stone graves or cists; in

mounds; beneath or in cabins, wigwams, houses or lodges, and in

caves.

The most common method of burial among the mound-builders was by

inhumation also, and all the different ways mentioned by Dr.

Yarrow as practiced by the Indians were in vogue among the former.

It was supposed for a long time that their chief and almost only

place of depositing their dead was in the burial mounds, but more

thorough explorations have revealed the fact that near most mound

villages are cemeteries, often of considerable extent.

The chief value of this fact in this connection is that it forms

one item of evidence against the theory held by some antiquarians

that the mound-builders were Mexicans, as the usual mode of

disposing of the dead by the latter was cremation. [Footnote:

Clavigero, Hist. Mex., Cullen's transl., I, 325; Torquemada,

Monarq. Ind., I, p.60, etc.] According to Brasseur de Bourbourg

the Toltecs also practiced cremation. [Footnote: H.H. Bancroft,

Native Races, vol. 2, 1882, p. 609.]

REMOVAL OF THE FLESH BEFORE BURIAL.--This practice appears to have

been followed quite generally by both Indians and mound-builders.

That it was followed to a considerable extent by the mound

builders of various sections is shown by the following evidence:

The confused masses of human bones frequently found in mounds show

by their relation to each other that they must have been gathered

together after the flesh had been removed, as this condition could

not possibly have been assumed after burial in their natural

state. Instances of this kind are so numerous and well known that

it is scarcely necessary to present any evidence in support of the

statement. The well-known instance referred to by Jefferson in his

"Notes on Virginia" [Footnote: Fourth Am. ed., 1801, p. 143; p.

146, in 8th ed.] is one in point. "The appearance," he tells us,

"certainly indicates that it [the barrow] has derived both origin

and growth from the customary collections of bones and deposition

of them together."

Notices of similar deposits have been observed as follows: In

Wisconsin, by Mr. Armstrong; [Footnote: Smithsonian Rept., 1879,

p. 337] in Florida, by James Bell [Footnote: Smithsonian Rept.,

1881, p. 636.] and Mr. Walker; [Footnote: Smithsonian Rept., 1879,

p. 398] in Cass County, Ill., by Mr. Snyder; [Footnote:

Smithsonian Rept., 1881, p. 573.] in Georgia, by C. C. Jones.

[Footnote: Antiq. So. Inds., p. 193.] Similar deposits have also

been found by the assistants of the Bureau of Ethnology in

Wisconsin, Illinois, northern Missouri, North Carolina, New York,

and Arkansas.

Another proof of this custom was observed by Mr. J. D. Middleton

and Colonel Morris in Wisconsin, northeastern Missouri, and

Illinois. In numerous mounds the skeletons were found packed

closely side by side, immediately beneath a layer of hard, mortar-

like substance. The fact that this mortar had completely filled

the interstices, and in many cases the skulls also, showed that it

had been placed over them while in a plastic state, and as it must

soon have hardened and assumed the condition in which it was

found, it is evident the skeletons had been buried after the flesh

was removed.

As additional evidence we may mention the fact that in stone

graves, so small that the body of a full-grown individual could

not by any possible means be pressed into them, the bones of adult

individuals are sometimes found. Instances of this kind have

occurred in Tennessee, Missouri, and southern Illinois.

From personal examination I conclude that most of the folded

skeletons found in mounds were buried after the flesh had been

removed, as the folding, to the extent noticed, could not possibly

have been done with the flesh on them, and the positions in most

cases were such that they could not have been assumed in

consequence of the decay of the flesh and settling of the mound.

The partial calcining of the bones in vaults and under layers of

clay where the evidence shows that the fire was applied to the

outside of the vault or above the clay layer, can be accounted for

only on the supposition that the flesh had been removed before

burial.

Other proofs that this custom prevailed among the mound builders

in various sections of the country might be adduced.

That it was the custom of a number of Indian tribes, when first

encountered by the whites, and even down to a comparatively modern

date, to remove the flesh before final burial by suspending on

scaffolds, depositing in charnel-houses, by temporary burial, or

otherwise, is well known to all students of Indian habits and

customs.

Heckewelder says, "The Nanticokes had the singular custom of

removing the bones from the old burial place to a place of deposit

in the country they now dwell in." [Footnote: Hist. Manners and

Customs Ind. Nations, p. 75.]

The account by Breboeuf of the communal burial among the Hurons

heretofore referred to is well known. [Footnote: Jesuit Relations

for 1636. Transl. in Fifth Ann. Rept. Bur. Ethnol., p. 110.] The

same custom is alluded to by Lafitau. [Footnote: Moeurs des

Sauvages, vol. 2, pp. 420-435.] Bartram observed it among the

Choctaws. [Footnote: Travels, p. 516.] It is also mentioned by

Bossu, [Footnote: Travels through Louisiana, p. 298.] by

Adair,[Footnote: Hist. Am. Indians, p. 183.] by Barnard

Romans,[Footnote: Nat. Hist. Florida, p. 90.] and others.

Burial beneath or in dwellings.--The evidence brought to light by

the investigations of the Bureau of Ethnology, regarding a custom

among the mound-builders of Arkansas and Mississippi, of burying

in or under their dwellings, has been given, in part, in an

article published in the Magazine of American History. [Footnote:

February, 1884.] It is a well-attested historical fact that such

was also the custom of the southern Indian tribes. Bartram affirms

it to have been in vogue among the Muscogulgees or

Creeks,[Footnote: Travels, p. 505.] and Barnard Romans says it was

also practiced by the Chickasaws.[Footnote: Nat. Hist. Florida, p.

71] C C. Jones says that the Indians of Georgia "often interred

beneath the floor of the cabin, and then burnt the hut of the

deceased over his head;"[Footnote: Antiq. So. Indians, p. 203.]

which furnishes a complete explanation of the fact observed by the

Bureau explorers, mentioned in the article before alluded to.

Burial in a sitting or squatting posture.--It was a very common

practice among the mound-builders to bury their dead in a sitting

or squatting posture. The examples of this kind are too numerous

and too well known to require repetition. I may add that the yet

unpublished reports of the Bureau show that this custom prevailed

to a certain extent in Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, North Carolina,

Missouri, Ohio, and West Virginia. Instances have also been

observed elsewhere. [Footnote: Jones's Antiq. So. Indians (Georgia

and Florida). pp. 183-185.] That the same custom was followed by

several of the Indian tribes is attested by the following

authorities: Bossu, [Footnote: Travels, vol. 1, p. 251.] Lawson,

[Footnote: Hist. Carolina, p. 182.] Bartram, [Footnote: Travels,

p. 515.] and Adair.[Footnote: Hist. Am. Indians, p. 182.]

The use of fire in burial ceremonies.--Another observance in which

the burial customs of mound-builders corresponded with those of

Indians was the use of fire in funeral ceremonies. The evidences

of this custom are so common in mounds as to lead to the

supposition that the mound-builders were in the habit of offering

human sacrifices to their deities. Although charred and even

almost wholly consumed human bones are often found, showing that

bodies or skeletons were sometimes burned, it does not necessarily

follow that they were offered as sacrifices. Moreover, judging

from all the data in our possession, the weight of evidence seems

to be decidedly against such conclusion.

Among the Indians fire appears to have been connected with the

mortuary ceremonies in several ways. One use of it was to burn the

flesh and softer portions of the body when removed from the bones.

[Footnote: Barnard Romans, Nat. Hist. Florida, p. 90.] Breboeuf

also mentions its use in connection with the communal burial of

the Hurons. [Footnote: Jesuit Relations for 1636, p. 135.]

According to M. B. Kent [Footnote: Yarrow's Mort. Customs N. A.

Indians, 1st Ann. Rept. Bur. Ethnology (1881), P. 95.] it was the

ancient custom of the Sacs and Foxes to burn a portion of the food

of the burial feast to furnish subsistence for the spirit on its

journey.

Pickett says [Footnote: Hist. Alabama, 3d ed., vol. 1, p. 140.]

the Choctaws were in the habit of killing and cutting up their

prisoners of war, after which the parts were burned. He adds

further, in reference to their burial ceremonies: [Footnote:

Ibid., p. 142] "From all we have heard and read of the Choctaws,

we are satisfied that it was their custom to take from the bone-

house the skeletons, with which they repaired in funeral

procession to the suburbs of the town, where they placed them on

the ground in one heap, together with the property of the dead,

such as pots, bows, arrows, ornaments, curiously-shaped stones for

dressing deer skins, and a variety of other things. Over this heap

they first threw charcoal and ashes, probably to preserve the

bones, and the next operation was to cover all with earth. This

left a mound several feet high." This furnishes a complete

explanation of the fact that uncharred human bones are frequently

found in Southern mounds imbedded in charcoal and ashes.

Similarity of their stone implements and ornaments.--In addition

to the special points of resemblance between the works of the two

peoples, of which a few only have been mentioned, we are warranted

in asserting that in all respects, so far as we can trace them

correctly, there are to be found strong resemblances between the

habits, customs, and arts of the mound-builders and those of the

Indians previous to their change by contact with Europeans. Both

made use of stone implements, and so precisely similar are the

articles of this class that it is impossible to distinguish those

made by the one people from those made by the other. So true is

this that our best and most experienced archaeologists make no

attempt to separate them, except where the conditions under which

they are found furnish evidence for discrimination. Instead of

burdening these pages with proofs of these statements by reference

to particular finds and authorities, I call attention to the work

of Dr. C. C. Abbott on the handiwork in stone, bone, and clay of

the native races of the northern Atlantic sea board of America,

entitled "Primitive Industry." As the area embraced in this work,

as remarked by its author, "does not include any territory known

to have been permanently occupied by the so-called mound-

builders," the articles found here must be ascribed to the Indians

unless, as suggested by Dr. Abbott, some of a more primitive type

found in the Trenton gravel are to be attributed to an earlier and

still ruder people. Examining those of the first class, which are

ascribed to the Indians, we observe almost every type of stone

articles found in the mounds and mound area; not only the rudely

chipped scrapers, hoes, celts, knives, and spear and arrow heads,

but also the polished or ground celts, axes, hammers, and chisels,

or gouges.

Here we also find drills, awls, and perforators, slick stones and

dressers, pipes of various forms and finish, discoidal stones and

net sinkers, butterflys tones and other supposed ceremonial

objects, masks or face figures and bird-shaped stones, gorgets,

totems, pendants, trinkets, etc. Nor does the resemblance stop

with types, but it is carried down to specific forms and finish,

leaving absolutely no possible line of demarkation between these

and the similar articles attributed to the mound-builders. So

persistently true is this that had we stone articles alone to

judge by, it is probable we should be forced to the conclusion, as

held by some writers, that the former inhabitants of that portion

of the United States east of the Rocky Mountains pertained to one

nation, unless possibly the prevalence of certain types in

particular sections should afford some data for tribal

districting.

This strong similarity of the stone articles of the Atlantic coast

to those of the mound area was noticed as early as 1820 by Caleb

Atwater, who, knowing that the former were Indian manufactures,

attributed the latter also to the same people although he held

that the mounds were the work of the ancestors of the civilized

nations of Mexico and Central America.

Mound and Indian Pottery.--The pottery of the mound-builders has

often been referred to as proof of a higher culture status, and of

an advance in art beyond that reached by the Indians. The vase

with a bird figure found by Squier and Davis in an Ohio mound is

presented in most works on American archaeology as an evidence of

the advanced stage of the ceramic art among the mound-builders;

but Dr. Rau, who examined the collection of these authors, says:

Having seen the best specimens of "mound" pottery obtained during

the survey of Messrs. Squier and Davis, I do not hesitate to

assert that the clay vessels fabricated at the Cahokia Creek were

in every respect equal to those exhumed from the mounds of the

Mississippi Valley, and Dr. Davis himself, who examined my

specimens from the first-named locality, expressed the same

opinion. [Footnote: Smithsonian Rept., 1866, p. 349.]

The Cahokia pottery which he found along the creek of that name

(Madison County, Ill.) he ascribes to Indians, and believes it to

be of comparatively recent origin.

Most of the mound pottery is mixed with pulverized shells, which

is also true of most Indian pottery. [Footnote: Dumont, Mem. Hist.

La., vol. 2, 1753, p. 271; Adair, Hist. Am. Indians, p. 424;

Loskiel, Gesell. der Miss., p. 70, etc.] Du Pratz says that "the

Natchez Indians make pots of an extraordinary size, cruses with a

medium-sized opening, jars, bottles with long necks holding two

pints, and pots or cruses for holding bear's oil;" [Footnote:

Hist. La., p. 79.] also that they colored them a beautiful red by

using ocher, which becomes red after burning.

As is well known, the bottle-shaped vase with a long neck is the

typical form of clay vessels found in the mounds of Arkansas and

southeastern Missouri, and is also common in the mounds and stone

graves of middle Tennessee. Those colored or ornamented with red

are often found in the mounds of the former sections. It is worthy

of notice in this connection that the two localities--near Saint

Genevieve, Mo., and near Shawneetown, Ill.--where so many

fragments of large clay vessels used in making salt have been

found, were occupied for a considerable time by the Shawnee

Indians. As will hereafter be shown, there are reasons for

believing this pottery was made by the Shawnees.

The statement so often made that the mound pottery, especially

that of Ohio, far excels that of the Indians is not justified by

the facts.

Much more evidence of like tenor might be presented here, as, for

example, the numerous instances in which articles of European

manufacture have been found in mounds where their presence could

not be attributed to intrusive burials, but the limits of the

paper will not admit of this. I turn, therefore, to the problem

before us, viz, "Who were the authors of the typical works of

Ohio?"

As before stated, the answer is, "These works are attributable in

part at least to the ancestors of the modern Cherokees."

As a connecting link between what has been given and the direct

evidence that the Cherokees were mound-builders, and as having an

important bearing upon both questions, the evidence derived from

the box-shaped stone graves is introduced at this point.

CHAPTER III.

STONE GRAVES AND WHAT THEY TEACH.

In order to state clearly the argument based upon these works it

is necessary to present a brief explanation.

There are several forms and varieties of stone graves or cists

found in the mound area, some being of cobble stones, others of

slabs; some round, others polygonal; some dome-shaped, others

square, and others box shaped, or parallelograms. Reference is

made at present only to the last mentioned--the box shaped type,

made of stone slabs. If the evidence shows that this variety is

found only in certain districts, pertains to a certain class of

works, and is usually accompanied by certain types of art, we are

warranted in using it as an ethnic characteristic, or as

indicating the presence of particular tribes. If it can be shown

that graves of this form are found in mounds attributed to the so-

called mound-builders, and that certain tribes of Indians of

historic times were also accustomed to bury in them, we are

warranted in assuming that there was a continuity of custom from

the mound-building age to historic times, or that graves found in

the mounds are probably attributable to the same people (or allied

tribes) found using them at a later date. This conclusion will be

strengthened by finding that certain peculiar types of art are

limited to the regions where these graves exist, and are found

almost exclusively in connection with them.

These graves, as is well known, are formed of rough and unhewn

slabs or flat pieces of stone, thus: First, in a pit some 2 or 3

feet deep and of the desired dimensions, dug for the purpose, a

layer of stone is placed to form the floor; next, similar pieces

are set on edge to form the sides and ends, over which other slabs

are laid flat, forming the covering, the whole when finished

making a rude, box-shaped coffin or sepulcher. Sometimes one or

more of the six faces are wanting; occasionally the bottom

consists of a layer of water-worn bowlders; sometimes the top is

not a single layer of slabs, but other pieces are laid over the

joints, and sometimes they are placed shingle-fashion. These

graves vary in length from 14 inches to 8 feet, and in width from

9 inches to 3 feet.

It is not an unusual thing to find a mound containing a number of

those cists arranged in two, three, or more tiers. As a general

rule, those not in mounds are near the surface of the ground, and

in some instances even projecting above it. It is probable that no

one who has examined them has failed to note their strong

resemblance to the European mode of burial. Even Dr. Joseph Jones,

who attributes them to some "ancient race," was forcibly reminded

of this resemblance, as he remarks:

In looking at the rude stone coffins of Tennessee, I have again

and again been impressed with the idea that in some former age

this ancient race must have come in contact with Europeans and

derived this mode of burial from them. [Footnote: Aboriginal

Remains of Tennessee, pp. 34,35]

The presence of stone graves of the type under consideration in

the vicinity of the site of some of the "over hill towns" of the

Cherokees on the Little Tennessee River, presented a difficulty in

the way of the theory here advanced, as it is well known that the

Cherokees and Shawnees were inveterate enemies from time

immemorial. But by referring to Schoolcraft's History of the

Indians the following statement solves the riddle and confirms the

theory:

A discontented portion of the Shawnee tribe from Virginia broke

off from the nation, which removed to the Scioto country, in Ohio,

about the year 1730, and formed a town known by the name of

Lulbegrud, in what in now Clark County [Kentucky], about 30 miles

east of this place [Lexington]. This tribe left this country about

1730 and went to East Tennessee, to the Cherokee Nation.

[Footnote: Vol. 1, p. 301.]

Some years ago Mr. George E. Sellers discovered near the salt

spring in Gallatin County, Ill., on the Saline River, fragments of

clay vessels of unusually large size, which excited much interest

in the minds of antiquarians, not only because of the size of the

vessels indicated by the fragments, but because they appeared to

have been used by some prehistoric people in the manufacture of

salt and because they bore impressions made by some textile

fabric. In the same immediate locality were also discovered a

number of box-shaped stone graves. That the latter were the work

of the people who made the pottery Mr. Sellers demonstrated by

finding that many of the graves were lined at the bottom with

fragments of these large clay "salt pans." [Footnote: Popular

Science Monthly, vol. II, 1877, pp. 573-584.]

Mention of this pottery had been made long previously by J. M.

Peck in his "Gazetteer of Illinois." [Footnote: 1834, p. 52.]

He remarks that "about the Gallatin and Big Muddy Salines large

fragments of earthenware are very frequently found under the

surface of the earth. They appear to have been portions of large

kettles used, probably, by the natives for obtaining salt."

The settlement of the Shawnees at Shawneetown, on the Ohio River,

in Gallatin County, in comparatively modern times, is attested not

only by history but by the name by which the town is still known.

There is evidence on record that there was an older Shawneetown

located at the very point where this "salt-kettle" pottery and

these stone graves were found. This is mentioned in the American

State Papers [Footnote: Public Lands, Class VIII, vol.2, p. 103,

Gales and Seaton ed.] in the report relating to the famous claim

of the Illinois and Wabash Land Companies. The deed presented was

dated July 20, 1773, and recorded at Kaskaskia, September 2, 1773.

In this mention is made of the "ancient Shawnee town" on Saline

Creek, the exact locality of the stone graves and suit-kettle

pottery. The modern Indian village at Shawneetown on the Ohio

River had not then come into existence, and was but in its prime

in 1806, when visited by Thomas Ashe. [Footnote: Travels in

America, 1808, p. 265.]

As proof that the people of this tribe were in the habit of making

salt the following evidence is presented: Collins, in his "History

of Kentucky", [Footnote: Vol. 2, p. 55.] gives an account of the

capture and adventures of Mrs. Mary Ingals, the first white woman

known to have visited Kentucky. In this narrative occurs the

following statement:

The first white woman in Kentucky was Mrs. Mary Ingals, nee

Draper, who, in 1756 with her two little boys, her sister-in-law,

Mrs. Draper, and others was taken prisoner by the Shawnee Indians,

from her home on the top of the great Allegheny ridge, is now

Montgomery County, W. Va. The captives were taken down the

Kanawha, to the salt region, and, after a few days spent in making

salt, to the Indian village at the mouth of Scioto River.

By the treaty of Fort Wayne, June 7, 1803, between the Delawares,

Shawnees, and other tribes and the United States, it was agreed

that in consideration of the relinquishment of title to "the great

salt spring upon the Saline Creek, which falls into the Ohio below

the mouth of the Wabash, with a quantity of laud surrounding it,

not exceeding 4 miles square," the United States should deliver

"yearly, and every year for the use of said Indians, a quantity of

salt not exceeding 150 bushels." [Footnote: Treaties of United

States with Indian tribes, p. 97.]

Another very significant fact in this connection is that the

fragments of large earthen vessels similar in character to those

found in Gallatin County, Ill., have also been found in connection

with the stone graves of the Cumberland Valley, and, furthermore,

the impressions made by the textile fabrics show the same stitches

as do the former. Another place where pottery of the same kind has

been found is about the salt-lick near Saint Genevieve, Mo., a

section inhabited for a time by Shawnees and Delawares. [Footnote:

C.C. Royce in American Antiquarian, vol. 3, 1881, pp. 188, 189.]

Stone graves have been found in Washington County, Md. [Footnote:

Smithsonian Report for 1882 (1884), p. 797.] History informs us

that there were two Shawnee settlements in this region, one in the

adjoining county of Maryland (Allegany), and another in the

neighborhood of Winchester, Va. [Footnote: C. C. Royce in American

Antiquarian, vol. 3, 1881, p. 186. Virginia State Papers, 1. p.

63.]

Mr. W. M. Taylor [Footnote: Smithsonian Report for 1877, p. 307.

Mentions only known instance of mound with Delaware Village.]

mentions some stone graves of the type under consideration as

found on the Mahoning River, in Pennsylvania. An important item in

this connection is that these graves were in a mound. He describes

the mound as 35 feet in diameter and 5 feet high, having on one

side a projection 35 feet long of the same height as the mound.

Near by a cache was discovered containing twenty one iron

implements, such as axes, hatchets, tomahawks, hoes, and wedges.

He adds the significant statement that near the mound once stood

the Indian (Delaware) village of Kush-kush-kee.

Graves of the same type have been discovered in Lee County, Va.

[Footnote: Eleventh Report of the Peabody Museum, 1878, p. 208.]

Others have been found in a mound on the Tennessee side, near the

southern boundary of Scott County, Va. Allusion has already been

made to the occasional presence of the Shawnees in this region. In

the map of North America by John Senex, Chaonanon villages are

indicated in this particular section.

The presence of these graves in any part of Ohio can easily be

accounted for on the theory advanced, by the well-known fact that

both Shawnees and Delawares were located at various points in the

region, and during the wars in which they were engaged were moving

about from place to place; but the mention of a few coincidences

may not be out of place.

In the American Antiquarian for July, 1881, is the description of

one of these cists found in a mound in the eastern part of

Montgomery County. Mr. Royce, in the article already referred to,

states that there was a Shawnee village 3 miles north of Xenia, in

the adjoining county, on Mad River, which flows into the Miami a

short distance above the location of the mound.

Stone graves have been found in great numbers at various points

along the Ohio from Portsmouth to Ripley, a region known to have

been occupied at various times by the Shawnees.

Similar graves have been discovered in Ashland County. [Footnote:

Smithsonian Report for 1877, pp. 261-267.] These, as will be seen

by reference to the same report (page 504), are precisely in the

locality of the former Delaware villages.

The evidence is deemed sufficient to show that the Shawnees and

Delawares were accustomed to bury in stone graves of the type

under consideration, and to indicate that the graves found south

of the Ohio are to be attributed to the former tribe and those

north to both tribes.

As graves of this kind are common over the west side of southern

Illinois, from the month of the Illinois to the junction of the

Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, attention is called to some evidence

bearing on their origin.

Hunter, who traveled in the West, says that some of the Indians he

met with during his captivity buried their dead in graves of this

kind.

According to a statement made by Dr. Rau to Mr. C. C. Jones, and

repeated to me personally, "it is a fact well remembered by many

persons in this neighborhood [Monroe County, III.] that the

Indians who inhabited this region during the early part of the

present century (probably Kickapoos) buried their dead in stone

coffins." [Footnote: Antiquities So. Indians, p. 220.]

Dr. Shoemaker, who resided on a farm near Columbia, in 1861,

showed Dr. Rau, in one of his fields, the empty stone grave of an

Indian who had been killed by one of his own tribe and interred

there within the memory of some of the farmers of Monroe County.

An old lady in Jackson County informed one of the Bureau

assistants that she had seen an Indian buried in a grave of this

kind.

It is doubtful whether Dr. Rau is correct in ascribing these

graves to the Kickapoos, as their most southern locality appears

to have been in the region of Sangamon County. [Footnote:

Reynolds's Hist. Illinois, p. 20.] It is more probable they were

made by the Kaskaskias, Tamaroas, and Cahokias. Be this as it may,

it is evident that they are due to some of the tribes of this

section known as Illinois Indians, pertaining to the same branch

of the Algonquin family as the Shawnees and Delawares.

That the stone graves of southern Illinois were made by the same

people who built those of the Cumberland Valley, or closely allied

tribes, is indicated not only by the character of the graves but

by other very close and even remarkable resemblances in the

construction and contents as well as in the form and size of the

mounds; the presence of hut-rings in both localities, and the

arrangement of the groups.

Taking all the corroborating facts together there are reasonable

grounds for concluding that graves of the type now under

consideration, although found in widely-separated localities, are

attributable to the Shawnee Indians and their congeners, the

Delawares and Illinois, and that those south of the Ohio are due

entirely to the first named tribe. That they are the works of

Indians must be admitted by all who are willing to be convinced by

evidence.

The fact that in most cases (except when due to the Delawares, who

are not known to have been mound-builders) the graves are

connected with mounds, and in many instances are in mounds,

sometimes in two, three, and even four tiers deep, proves beyond a

doubt that the authors of these graves were mound-builders.

The importance and bearing of this evidence does not stop with

what has been stated, for it is so interlocked with other facts

relating to the works of the "veritable mound-builders" as to

leave no hiatus into which the theory of a lost race or a "Toltec

occupation" can possibly be thrust. It forms an unbroken chain

connecting the mound-builders and historical Indians which no

sophistry or reasoning can break. Not only are these graves found

in mounds of considerable size, but they are also connected with

one of the most noted groups in the United States, namely, the one

on Colonel Tumlin's place, near Cartersville, Ga., known as the

Etowah mounds, of which a full description will be found in the

Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology.

In the smallest of the three large mounds of this group were found

stone graves of precisely the type attributable, when found south

of the Ohio, to the Shawnees. They were not in a situation where

they could be ascribed to intrusive burials, but in the bottom

layer of a comparatively large mound with a thick and undisturbed

layer of hard-packed clay above them. It is also worthy of notice

that the locality is intermediate between the principal seat of

the Shawnees in the Cumberland Valley, and their extreme eastern

outposts in northeastern Georgia, where both tradition and stone

graves indicate their settlement. The tradition regarding this

settlement has been given elsewhere. [Footnote: Am. Antiq, vol. 7,

1885, p. 133]

In these graves were found the remarkable figured copper plates

and certain engraved shells, of which mention has been made by Mr.

W. H. Holmes [Footnote: Science, vol. 3, 1884, pp. 436-438.] and

by myself [Footnote: Ibid., pp. 779-785.] in Science. It is a

singular corroboration of the theory here advanced that the only

other similar copper plates were found at Lebanon, Tenn., by Prof.

F. W. Putnam; in a stone grave in a mound at Mill Creek, southern

Illinois, by Mr. Earle; in a stone grave in Jackson County, Ill.,

by Mr. Thing; in a mound of Madison County, Ill., by Mr. H. R.

Howland; and in a small mound at Peoria, Ill., by Maj. J. W.

Powell. All, except the specimens found by Professor Putnam and

Mr. Howland, were secured by the Bureau of Ethnology, and are now

in the National Museum.

There can be but little doubt that the specimens obtained from

simple stone graves by Professor Putnam and Mr. Thing are to be

attributed to Indian burials, but surely not to Indian

manufacture.

We have, therefore, two unbroken chains connecting the Indians of

historic times with the "veritable mound builders," and the facts

which form the links of these chains throw some additional light

on the history of that mysterious people, the Shawnees.

It may be stated here that in the report relating to the claim of

the Wabash Land Company [Footnote: American State Papers, Land

Affairs, Appendix, p. 20.] is a statement giving a list of

articles furnished the Indians, among which we notice nine ear

wheels. These we suppose to be the same as the spool shaped ear

ornaments found in stone graves and elsewhere.

The engraved shells also form a link which not only connects the

mound-builders with historic times but corroborates the view

advanced in regard to the Shawnees, and indicates also that the

Cherokees were mound-builders. But before introducing this we will

give the reasons for believing that the mounds of eastern

Tennessee and western North Carolina are due to the last-named

tribe.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHEROKEES AS MOUND BUILDERS.

As the evidence on this point has to a large extent been presented

in my article on "Burial Mounds of the Northern Section,"

[Footnote: Fifth Ann. Rept. Bur Ethnol] also in articles published

in the Magazine of American History [Footnote: May, 1884, pp. 396-

407] and in the American Naturalist, [Footnote: Vol. 18, 1884, pp.

232-240] it will be necessary here only to introduce a few

additional items.

The iron implements which are alluded to in the above mentioned

articles also in Science, [Footnote: Science, vol. 3, 1884, pp.

308-310] as found in a North Carolina mound, and which analysis

shows were not meteoric, furnish conclusive evidence that the

tumulus was built after the Europeans had reached America; and as

it is shown in the same article that the Cherokees must have

occupied the region from the time of its discovery up to its

settlement by the whites it is more than probable they were the

builders. A figure of one of the pieces is introduced here.

[Illustration with caption: Fig I Part of an iron blade from a

North Carolina mound]

Additional and perhaps still stronger evidence, if stronger be

needed, that the people of this tribe were the authors of most of

the ancient works in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee

is to be found in certain discoveries made by the Bureau

assistants in Monroe County, Tenn.

A careful exploration of the valley of the Little Tennessee River,

from the point where it leaves the mountains to its confluence

with the Holston, was made, and the various mound groups were

located and surveyed. These were found to correspond down as far

as the position of Fort London and even to the island below with

the arrangement of the Cherokee "over-hill towns" as given by

Timberlake in his map of the Cherokee country called "Over the

Hills," [Footnote: Memoirs, 1765] a group for each town, and in

the only available spots the valley for this distance affords. As

these mounds when explored yielded precisely the kind of ornaments

and implements used by the Cherokees, it is reasonable to believe

they built them.

Ramsey also gives a map, [Footnote: Annals of Tennessee, p. 376]

but his list evidently refers to a date corresponding with the

close of their occupancy of this section. Bartram [Footnote:

Travels, pp. 373.374.] gives a more complete list applying to an

earlier date. This evidently includes some on the Holston (his

"Cherokee") River and some on the Tellico plains. This corresponds

precisely with the result of the explorations by the Bureau as

will be seen when the report is published. Some three or four

groups were discovered in the region of Tellico plains, and five

or six on the Little Tennessee below Fort London and on the

Holston near the junction, one large mound and a group being on

the "Big Island" mentioned in Bartram's list.

The largest of these groups is situated on the Little Tennessee

above Fort London and corresponds with the position of the ancient

"beloved town of Chota" ("Great Chote" of Bartram) as located by

tradition and on both Timberlake's and Ramsey's maps. According to

Ramsey, [Footnote: Annals of Tennessee, p. 157] at the time the

pioneers, following in the wake of Daniel Boone near the close of

the eighteenth century, were pouring over the mountains into the

valley of the Watauga, a Mrs. Bean, who was captured by the

Cherokees near Watauga, was brought to their town at this place

and was bound, taken to the top of one of the mounds and about to

be burned, when Nancy Ward, then exercising in the nation the

functions of the Beloved or Pretty Woman, interfered and

pronounced her pardon.

During the explorations of the mounds of this region a peculiar

type of clay beds was found in several of the larger mounds. These

were always saucer shaped, varying in diameter from 6 to 15 feet,

and in thickness from 4 to 12 inches. In nearly every instance

they were found in series, one above another, with a layer of

coals and ashes between. The series usually consisted of from

three to five beds, sometimes only two, decreasing in size from

the lower one upward. These apparently marked the stages of the

growth of the mound, the upper one always being near the present

surface.

The large mound which is on the supposed site of Chota, and

possibly the one on which Mrs. Bean was about to be burned, was

thoroughly explored, and found to contain a series of these clay

beds, which always showed the action of fire. In the center of

some of these were found the charred remains of a stake, and about

them the usual layer of coals and ashes, but, in this instance,

immediately around where the stake stood were charred fragments of

human bones.

As will be seen, when the report which is now in the hands of the

printer is published, the burials in this mound were at various

depths, and there is nothing shown to indicate separate and

distinct periods, to lead to the belief that any of these were

intrusive in the true sense. On the contrary, the evidence is

pretty clear that all these burials were by one tribe or people.

By the side of nearly every skeleton were one or more articles, as

shell masks, engraved shells, shell pins, shell beads, perforated

shells, discoidal stones, polished celts, arrow-heads, spearheads,

stone gorgets, bone implements, clay vessels, or copper hawkbells.

The last were with the skeleton of a child found at the depth of 3

1/2 feet. They are precisely of the form of the ordinary sleigh-

bell of the present day, with pebbles and shell-bead rattles.

That this child belonged to the people to whom the other burials

are due will not be doubted by any one not wedded to a

preconceived notion, and that the bells are the work of Europeans

will also be admitted.

In another mound a little farther up the river, and one of a group

probably marking the site of one of the "over-hill towns," were

found two carved stone pipes of a comparatively modern Cherokee

type.

The next argument is founded on the fact that in the ancient works

of the region alluded to are discovered evidences of habits and

customs similar to those of the Cherokees and some of the

immediately surrounding tribes.

In the article heretofore referred to allusion is made to the

evidence found in the mound opened by Professor Carr of its once

having supported a building similar to the council-house observed

by Bartram on a mound at the old Cherokee town Cowe. Both were

built on mounds, both were circular, both were built on posts set

in the ground at equal distances from each other, and each had a

central pillar. As tending to confirm this statement of Bartram's,

the following passage may be quoted, where, speaking of Colonel

Christian's march against the Cherokee towns in 1770, Ramsey

[Footnote: Annals of Tennessee, p. 169.] says that this officer

found in the center of each town "a circular tower rudely built

and covered with dirt, 30 feet in diameter, and about 20 feet

high. This tower was used as a council-house, and as a place for

celebrating the green-corn dance and other national ceremonials."

In another mound the remains of posts apparently marking the site

of a building were found. Mr. M. C. Read, of Hudson, Ohio,

discovered similar evidences in a mound near Chattanooga,

[Footnote: Smithsonian Rept, for 1867 (1868), p. 401.] and Mr.

Gerard Fowke has quite recently found the same thing in a mound at

Waverly. Ohio.

The shell ornaments to which allusion has been made, although

occasionally bearing designs which are undoubtedly of the Mexican

or Central American type, nevertheless furnish very strong

evidence that the mounds of east Tennessee and western North

Carolina were built by the Cherokees.

Lawson, who traveled through North Carolina in 1700, says

[Footnote: Hist. of N. C., Raleigh, reprint 1860, p. 315.] "they

[the Indians] oftentimes make of this shell [a certain large sea

shell] a sort of gorge, which they wear about their neck in a

string so it hangs on their collar, whereon sometimes is engraven

a cross or some odd sort of figure which comes next in their

fancy."

According to Adair, the southern Indian priest wore upon his

breast "an ornament made of a white conch-shell, with two holes

bored in the middle of it, through which he ran the ends of an

otter-skin strap, and fastened to the extremity of each, a buck-

horn white button." [Footnote: Hist. Am. Indians, p. 84]

Beverly, speaking of the Indians of Virginia, says: "Of this shell

they also make round tablets of about 4 inches in diameter, which

they polish as smooth as the other, and sometimes they etch or

grave thereon circles, stars, a half-moon, or any other figure

suitable to their fancy." [Footnote: Hist. Virginia, London, 1705,

p. 58]

[Illustration with caption: FIG. 2. Engraved shell gorget from a

Tennessee mound.]

Now it so happens that a considerable number of shell gorgets have

been found in the mounds of western North Carolina and east

Tennessee, agreeing so closely with those brief descriptions, as

may be seen the figures of some of them given here (see Figs. 2

and 3), as to leave no doubt that they belong to the same type as

those alluded to by the writers whose words have just been quoted.

Some of them were found in the North Carolina mound from which the

iron articles were obtained and in connection with these articles.

Some of these shells were smooth and without any devices engraved

upon them, but with holes for inserting the strings by which they

were to be held in position; others were engraved with figures,

which, as will be seen by reference to the cuts referred to, might

readily be taken for stars and half-moons, and one among the

number with a cross engraved upon it.

The evidence that these relics were the work of Indians found in

possession of the country at the time of its discovery by

Europeans, is therefore too strong to be put aside by mere

conjectures or inferences. If they were the work of Indians, they

must have been used by the Cherokees and buried with their dead.

It is true that some of the engraved figures present a puzzling

problem in the fact that they bear unmistakable evidences of

pertaining to Mexican and Central American types, but no

explanation of this which contradicts the preceding evidences that

these shells had been in the hands of Indians can be accepted.

[Fig. 3: Shell gorget with engraving of coiled serpent]

In these mounds were also found a large number of nicely carved

soapstone pipes, usually with the stem made in connection with the

bowl, though some were without this addition, consisting only of

the bowl with a hole for inserting a cane or wooden stem. While

some, as will hereafter be shown, closely resemble one of the

ancient Ohio types, others are precisely of the form common a few

years back, and some of them have the remains of burnt tobacco yet

clinging to them.

Adair, in his "History of the North American Indians," [Footnote:

P. 433.] says:

"They mate beautiful stone pipes and the Cherokees the best of any

of the Indians, for their mountainous country contain many

different sorts and colors of soils proper for such uses. They

easily form them with their tomahawks and afterwards finish them

in any desired form with their knives, the pipes being of a very

soft quality till they are smoked with and used with the fire,

when they become quite hard. They are often full a span long and

the bowls are about half as large again as our English pipes. The

fore part of each commonly runs out with a sharp peak 2 or 3

fingers broad and a quarter of an inch thick."

Not only were pipes made of soapstone found in these mounds, but

two or three were found precisely of the form mentioned by Adair,

with the fore part running out in front of the bowl (see Fig. 5,

p. 39).

Jones says: [Footnote: Antiq. So. Indians, p. 400.]

It has been more than hinted at by at least one person whose

statement is entitled to every belief, that among the Cherokees

dwelling in the mountains there existed certain artists whose

professed occupation was the manufacture of stone pipes, which

were by them transported to the coast and there bartered away for

articles of use and ornament foreign to and highly esteemed among

the members of their own tribe.

This not only strengthens the conclusions drawn from the presence

of such pipes in the mounds alluded to, but may also assist in

explaining the presence of the copper and iron ornaments in them.

During the fall of 1886 a farmer of east Tennessee while examining

a cave with a view to storing potatoes in it during the winter

unearthed a well preserved human skeleton which was found to be

wrapped in a large piece of cane matting. This, which measures

about 6 by 4 feet, with the exception of a tear at one corner is

perfectly sound and pliant and has a large submarginal stripe

running around it. Inclosed with the skeleton was a piece of cloth

made of flax, about 14 by 20 inches, almost uninjured but

apparently unfinished. The stitch in which it is woven is

precisely that imprinted on mound pottery of the type shown in

Fig. 96 in Mr. Holmes's paper on the mound-builders' textile

fabrics reproduced here in Fig. 4. [Footnote: Fifth Ann. Rept.

Bur. Ethnol., p. 415, Fig. 96.]

[Illustration with caption: FIG. 4. Twined fabric impressed on a

piece of pottery obtained from a mound in Jefferson County,

Tennessee.]

Although the earth of the cave contains salts which would aid in

preserving anything buried in it, these articles can not be

assigned to any very ancient date, especially when it is added

that with them were the remains of a dog from which the skin had

not all rotted away.

These were presumably placed here by the Cherokees of modern

times, and they form a link not easily broken between the

prehistoric and historic days.

It is probable that few persons after reading this evidence will

doubt that the mounds alluded to were built by the Cherokees. Let

us therefore see to what results this leads.

In the first place it shows that a powerful and active tribe in

the interior of the country, in contact with the tribes of the

North on one side and with those of the South on the other, were

mound-builders. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that they

had derived this custom from their neighbors on one side or the

other, or that they had, to some extent at least, introduced it

among them. Beyond question it indicates that the mound-building

era had not closed previous to the discovery of the continent by

Europeans. [Footnote: Since the above was in type one of the

assistants of the Ethnological Bureau discovered in a small mound

in east Tennessee a stone with letters of the Cherokee alphabet

rudely carved upon it. It was not an intensive burial, hence it is

evident that the mound must have been built since 1820, or that

Guess was not the author of the Cherokee alphabet.]

CHAPTER V.

THE CHEROKEES AND THE TALLEGWI.

The ancient works of Ohio, with their "altar mounds," "sacred

enclosures," and "mathematically accurate" but mysterious circles

and squares, are still pointed to as impregnable to the attacks of

this Indian theory. That the rays of light falling upon their

origin are few and dim, is admitted; still, we are not left wholly

in the dark.

If the proof be satisfactory that the mounds of the southern half

of the United States and a portion of those of the Upper

Mississippi Valley are of Indian origin, there should be very

strong evidence in the opposite direction in regard to those of

Ohio to lead to the belief that they are of a different race. Even

should the evidence fail to indicate the tribe or tribes by whom

they were built, this will not justify the assertion that they are

not of Indian origin.

If the evidence relating to these works has nothing decidedly

opposed to the theory in it, then the presumption must be in favor

of the view that the authors were Indians, for the reasons

heretofore given. The burden of proof is on those who deny this,

and not on those who assert it.

It is legitimate, therefore, to assume, until evidence to the

contrary is produced, that the Ohio works were made by Indians.

The geographical position of the defensive works connected with

these remains indicates, as has been often remarked by writers on

this subject, a pressure from northern hordes which finally

resulted in driving the inhabitants of the fertile valleys of the

Miami, Scioto, and Muskingum, southward, possibly into the Gulf

States, where they became incorporated with the tribes of that

section. [Footnote: Force: "To what race did the mound-builders

belong?" p. 74, etc.] If this is assumed as correct it only tends

to confirm the theory of an Indian origin.

But the decision is not left to mere assumption and the

indications mentioned, as there are other and more direct

evidences bearing upon this point to be found in the works of art

and modes of burial in this region. That the mound-builders of

Ohio made and used the pipe is proven by the large number of pipes

found in the mounds, and that they cultivated tobacco may

reasonably be inferred from this fact.

The general use of the pipe among the mound-builders is another

evidence of their relation to the Indians; while, on the other

hand, this fact and the forms of the pipes indicate that they were

not connected with the Nahua, Maya, or Pueblo tribes.

Although varied indefinitely by the addition of animal and other

figures, the typical or simple form of the pipe of the Ohio mound-

builders appears to have been that represented by Squier and Davis

[Footnote: Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley, 1847, p.

179.] in their Fig. 68; and by Rau in Smithsonian Contributions to

Knowledge, No. 287. [Footnote: 1876, p. 47, Fig. 177.] The

peculiar feature is the broad, flat, and slightly-curved base or

stem, which projects beyond the bowl to an extent usually equal to

the perforated end. Reference has already been made to the

statement by Adair that the Cherokees were accustomed to carve,

from the soft stone found in the country, "pipes, full a span

long, with the fore part commonly running out with a short peak

two or three fingers broad and a quarter of an inch thick." But he

adds further, as if intending to describe the typical form of the

Ohio pipe, "on both sides of the bowl lengthwise." This addition

is important, as it has been asserted [Footnote: Young

Mineralogist and Antiquarian, 1885, No. 10. p. 79.] that no

mention can be found of the manufacture or use of pipes of this

form by the Indians, or that they had any knowledge of this form.

E. A. Barber says: [Footnote: Am. Nat., vol. 16, 1882, pp. 265,

266]

The earliest stone pipes from the mounds were always carved from a

single piece, and consist of a flat curved base, of variable

length and width, with the bowl rising from the center of the

convex side (Anc. Mon., p. 227).

The typical mound pipe is the Monitor form, as it may be termed,

possessing a short, cylindrical urn, or spool-shaped bowl, rising

from the center of a flat and slightly-curved base. [Footnote: For

examples of this form see Rau: Smithsonian Contributions to

Knowledge, No. 287, p. 47, Fig. 177.]

Accepting this statement as proof that the "Monitor" pipe is

generally understood to be the oldest type of the mound-builders'

pipe, it is easy to trace the modifications which brought into use

the simple form of the modern Indian pipe. For example, there is

one of the form shown in Fig. 5, from Hamilton County, Ohio;

another from a large mound in Kanawha Valley, West Virginia;

[Footnote: Science. 1884, vol. 3, p. 619.] several taken from

Indian graves in Essex County, Mass.; [Footnote: Abbott, Prim.

Industry, 1881, Fig. 313, p. 319; Bull. Essex Inst., vol. 3, 1872,

p. 123.] another found in the grave of a Seneca Indian in the

valley of the Genesee; [Footnote: Morgan, League of the Iroquois,

p. 356.] and others found by the representatives of the Bureau of

Ethnology in the mounds of western North Carolina.

[Illustration with caption: FIG. 5. Pipe from Hamilton County,

Ohio.]

So far, the modification consists in simply shortening the forward

projection of the stem or base, the bowl remaining perpendicular.

The next modification is shown in Fig. 6, which represents a type

less common than the preceding, but found in several localites,

as, for example, in Hamilton County, Ohio; mounds in Sullivan

County, east Tennessee (by the Bureau); and in Virginia.

[Footnote: Rau: Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, No. 287,

p. 50, Fig. 190.] In these, although retaining the broad or winged

stem, we see the bowl assuming the forward slope and in some

instances (as some of those found in the mounds in Sullivan

County, Tenn.) the projection of the stem is reduced to a simple

rim or is entirely wanting.

[Illustration with caption: FIG. 6. Pipe from Hamilton County,

Ohio.]

[Illustration with caption: FIG. 7. Pipe from Sullivan County,

Tennessee.]

The next step brings us to what may be considered the typical form

of the modern pipe, shown in Fig. 8. This pattern, according to

Dr. Abbott, [Footnote: Prim. Industry, 1861, p. 329.] is seldom

found in New England or the Middle States, "except of a much

smaller size and made of clay." He figures one from Isle of Wight

County, Va., "made of compact steatite." A large number of this

form were found in the North Carolina mounds, some with stems

almost or quite a foot in length.

[Illustration with caption: FIG. 8. Pipe from Caldwell County,

North Carolina.]

It is hardly necessary to add that among the specimens obtained

from various localities can be found every possible gradation,

from the ancient Ohio type to the modern form last mentioned.

There is, therefore, in this peculiar line of art and custom an

unbroken chain connecting the mound-builders of Ohio with the

Indians of historic times, and in the same facts is evidence,

which strengthens the argument, disconnecting the makers from the

Mexican and Central American artisans.

As this evidence appears to point to the Cherokees as the authors

of some of the typical mounds of Ohio, it may be as well to

introduce here a summary of the data which bear upon this

question.

Reasons which are thought well-nigh conclusive have already been

presented for believing that the people of this tribe were mound-

builders, and that they had migrated in pre-Columbian times from

some point north of the locality in which they were encountered by

Europeans. Taking up the thread of their history where it was

dropped, the following reasons are offered as a basis for the

conclusion that their home was for a time on the Ohio, and that

this was the region from which they migrated to their historic

locality.

As already shown, their general movement in historic times, though

limited, has been southward. Their traditions also claim that

their migrations previous to the advent of the whites had been in

the same direction from some point northward, not indicated in

that given by Lederer, but in that recorded by Haywood, from the

valley of the Ohio. But it is proper to bear in mind that the

tradition given by Lederer expressly distinguishes them from the

Virginia tribes, which necessitates looking more to the west for

their former home. Haywood connects them, without any authority,

with the Virginia tribes, but the tradition he gives contradicts

this and places them on the Ohio.

The chief hostile pressure against them of which we have any

knowledge was from the Iroquois of the north. This testimony is

further strengthened by the linguistic evidence, as it has been

ascertained that the language of this tribe belongs to the

Iroquoian stock. Mr. Horatio Hale, a competent authority on this

subject, in an article on Indian migrations published in the

American Antiquarian, [Footnote: Am. Antiquarian, vol. 5, 1883, p.

26] remarks as follows:

Following the same course of migration from the northeast to the

southwest, which leads us from the Hurons of eastern Canada to the

Tuscaroras of central North Carolina, we come to the Cherokees of

northern Alabama and Georgia. A connection between their language

and that of the Iroquois has long been suspected. Gallatin, in his

"Synopsis of Indian Languages," remarks on this subject: "Dr.

Barton thought that the Cherokee language belonged to the Iroquois

family, and on this point I am inclined to be of the same opinion.

The affinities are few and remote, but there is a similarity in

the general termination of the syllables, in the pronunciation and

accent, which has struck some of the native Cherokees."

The difficulty arising from this lack of knowledge is now removed,

and with it all uncertainty disappears. The similarity of the two

tongues, apparent enough in many of their words, is most

strikingly shown, as might be expected, in their grammatical

structure, and especially in the affixed pronouns, which in both

languages play so important a part.

More complete vocabularies of the Cherokee language than have

hitherto been accessible have recently come into possession of the

Bureau of Ethnology, and their study serves to confirm the above

conclusion that the Cherokees are an offshoot of Iroquoian stock.

On the other hand, the testimony of the mounds all taken together

or considered generally (if the conclusion that the Cherokees were

the authors of the North Carolina and East Tennessee mounds be

accepted) seems to isolate them from all other mound-building

people of that portion of the United States east of the Rocky

Mountains. Nevertheless there are certain remains of art which

indicate an intimate relation with the authors of the stone

graves, as the engraved shells, while there are others which lead

to the opinion that there was a more intimate relation with the

mound-builders of Ohio, especially of the Scioto Valley. One of

these is furnished by the stone pipes so common in the Ohio

mounds, the manufacture of which appears also to have been a

favorite pursuit of the Cherokees in both ancient and modern

times.

In order to make the force of this argument clear it is necessary

to enter somewhat further into details. In the first place, nearly

all of the pipes of this type so far discovered have been found in

a belt commencing with eastern Iowa, thence running eastward

through northern Illinois, through Indiana, and embracing the

southern half of Ohio; thence, bending southward, including the

valley of the Great Kanawha, eastern Tennessee, and western North

Carolina, to the northern boundary of Georgia. It is not known

that this type in any of its modifications prevailed or was even

in use at any point south of this belt. Pipes in the form of birds

and other animals are not uncommon, as may be seen by reference to

Pl. XXIII of Jones's Antiquities of the Southern Indians, but the

platform is a feature wholly unknown there, as are also the

derivatives from it. This is so literally true as to render it

strange, even on the supposition here advanced; only a single one

(near Nashville, Tenn.), so far as known, having been found in the

entire South outside of the Cherokee country.

This fact, as is readily seen, stands in direct opposition to the

idea advanced by some that the mound-builders of Ohio when driven

from their homes moved southward, and became incorporated with the

tribes of the Gulf States, as it is scarcely possible such sturdy

smokers as they must have been would all at once have abandoned

their favorite pipe.

Some specimens have been found north and east of this belt,

chiefly in New York and Massachusetts, but they are too few to

induce the belief that the tribes occupying the sections where

they were found were in the habit of manufacturing them or

accustomed to their use; possibly the region of Essex, Mass., may

prove to be an isolated and singular exception.

How can we account for the fact that they were confined to this

belt except upon the theory that they were made and used by a

single tribe, or at most by two or three cognate tribes? If this

be admitted it gives as a result the line of migration of the

tribe, or tribes, by whom they were made; and the gradual

modification of the form indicates the direction of the movement.

In the region of eastern Iowa and northern Illinois, as will be

seen by reference to the Proceedings of the Davenport Academy of

Natural Sciences [Footnote: Vol. 1, 1876, Pl. IV.] and the

Smithsonian Report for 1882, [Footnote: Smithsonian Report for

1882 (1884), Figs. 4-8, pp. 689-692] the original slightly-carved

platform base appears to be the only form found.

Moving eastward from that section, a break occurs, and none of the

type are found until the western border of Ohio is reached,

indicating a migration by the tribe to a great distance. From this

point eastward and over a large portion of the State, to the

western part of West Virginia, the works of the tribe are found in

numerous localities, showing this to have long been their home.

In this region the modifications begin, as heretofore shown, and

continue along the belt mentioned through West Virginia,

culminating in the modern form in western North Carolina and East

Tennessee.

As pipes of this form have never been found in connection with the

stone graves, there are just grounds for eliminating the Shawnees

from the supposed authors of the Ohio works. On the other hand,

the engraved shells are limited almost exclusively to the works of

the Shawnees and Cherokees (taking for granted that the former

were the authors of the box-shaped stone graves south of the Ohio

and the latter of the works in western North Carolina and East

Tennessee), but are wanting in the Ohio mounds. It follows,

therefore, if the theory here advanced (that the Cherokees

constructed some of the typical works of Ohio) be sustained, that

these specimens of art are of Southern origin, as the figures

indicate, and that the Cherokees began using them only after they

had reached their historical locality.

Other reasons for eliminating the Shawnees and other Southern

tribes from the supposed authors of the typical Ohio works are

furnished by the character, form, and ornamentation of the pottery

of the two sections, which are readily distinguished from each

other.

That the Cherokees and Shawnees were distinct tribes, and that the

few similarities in customs and art between them were due to

vicinage and intercourse are well-known historical facts. But

there is nothing of this kind to forbid the supposition that the

former were the authors of some of the Ohio works. Moreover, the

evidence that they came from a more northern locality, added to

that furnished by the pipes, seems to connect them with the Ohio

mound-builders. In addition to this there is the tradition of the

Delawares, given by Heckewelder, which appears to relate to no

known tribe unless it be the Cherokees. Although this tradition

has often been mentioned in works relating to Indians and kindred

subjects, it is repeated here that the reader may judge for

himself as to its bearing on the subject now under consideration:

The Lenni Lenape (according to the tradition handed down to them

by their ancestors) resided many hundred years ago in a very

distant country in the western part of the American continent. For

some reason which I do not find accounted for, they determined on

migrating to the eastward, and accordingly set out together in a

body. After a very long journey and many nights' encampments

[Footnote: "Many Nights' encampment" is a halt of one year at a

place.] by the way, they at length arrived on the Namaesi-Sipu,

[Footnote: The Mississippi or The River of Fish; Namaes, a fish,

and Sipu a river.] where they fell in with the Mengwe, [Footnote:

The Iroquois, or Five Nations.] who had likewise emigrated from a

distant country, and had struck upon this river somewhat higher

up. Their object was the same with that of the Delawares; they

were proceeding on to the eastward, until they should find a

country that pleased them. The spies which the Lenape had sent

forward for the purpose of reconnoitring, had long before their

arrival discovered that the country east of the Mississippi was

inhabited by a very powerful nation who had many large towns built

on the great rivers flowing through their land. Those people (as I

was told) called themselves Talligew or Tallgewi. Many wonderful

things are told of this famous people. They are said to have been

remarkably tall and stout, and there is a tradition that there

were giants among them, people of a much larger size than the

tallest of the Lenape. It is related that they had built to

themselves regular fortifications or intrenchments, from whence

they would sally out, but were generally repulsed. I have seen

many of the fortifications said to have been built by them, two of

which, in particular, were remarkable. One of them was near the

mouth of the river Huron, which empties itself into the Lake St.

Clair, on the north side of that lake, at the distance of about 20

miles northeast of Detroit. This spot of ground was, in the year

1776, owned and occupied by a Mr. Tucker. The other works,

properly intrenchments, being walls or banks of earth regularly

thrown up, with a deep ditch on the outside, were on the Huron

River, east of the Sandusky, about six or eight miles from Lake

Erie. Outside of the gateway of each of these two intrenchments,

which lay within a mile of each other, were a number of large flat

mounds in which, the Indian pilot said, were buried hundreds of

the slain Talligewi, whom I shall hereafter, with Colonel Gibson,

call Alligewi. Of these intrenchments Mr. Abraham Steiner, who was

with me at the time when I saw them, gave a very accurate

description, which was published at Philadelphia in 1789 or 1790,

in some periodical work the name of which I can not at present

remember.

When the Lenape arrived on the banks of the Mississippi they sent

a message to the Alligewi to request permission to settle

themselves in their neighborhood. This was refused them, but they

obtained leave to pass through the country and seek a settlement

farther to the eastward. They accordingly began to cross the

Namaesi-Sipu, when the Alligewi, seeing that their numbers were so

very great, and in fact they consisted of many thousands, made a

furious attack upon those who had crossed, threatening them all

with destruction, if they dared to persist in coming over to their

side of the river. Fired at the treachery of these people, and the

great loss of men they had sustained, and besides, not being

prepared for a conflict, the Lenapi consulted on what was to be

done; whether to retreat in the best manner they could, or to try

their strength, and let the enemy see that they were not cowards,

but men, and too high-minded to suffer themselves to be driven off

before they had made a trial of their strength and were convinced

that the enemy was too powerful for them. The Mengwe, who had

hitherto been satisfied with being spectators from a distance,

offered to join them, on condition that, after conquering the

country, they should be entitled to share it with them; their

proposal was accepted, and the resolution was taken by the two

nations, to conquer or die.

Having thus united their forces the Lenape and Mengwe declared war

against the Alligewi, and great battles were fought in which many

warriors fell on both sides. The enemy fortified their large towns

and erected fortifications, especially on large rivers and near

lakes, where they were successfully attacked and sometimes stormed

by the allies. An engagement took place in which hundreds fell,

who were afterwards buried in holes or laid together in heaps and

covered over with earth. No quarter was given, so that the

Alligewi at last, finding that their destruction was inevitable if

they persisted in their obstinacy, abandoned the country to the

conquerors and fled down the Mississippi River, from whence they

never returned.

The war which was carried on with this nation lasted many years,

during which the Lenape lost a great number of their warriors,

while the Mengwe would always hang back in the rear leaving them

to face the enemy. In the end the conquerors divided the country

between themselves. The Mengwe made choice of the lands in the

vicinity of the great lakes and on their tributary streams, and

the Lenape took possession of the country to the south. For a long

period of time, some say many hundred years, the two nations

resided peacefully in this country and increased very fast. Some

of their most enterprising huntsmen and warriors crossed the great

swamps, and falling on streams running to the eastward followed

them down to the great bay river (meaning the Susquehanna, which

they call the great bay river from where the west branch falls

into the main stream), thence into the bay itself, which we call

Chesapeake. As they pursued their travels, partly by land and

partly by water, sometimes near and at other times on the great

salt-water lake, as they call the sea, they discovered the great

river which we call the Delaware.

This quotation, although not the entire tradition as given by

Heckewelder, will suffice for the present purpose.

The traces of the name of these mound-builders, which are still

preserved in the name "Allegheny," applied to a river and the

mountains of Pennsylvania, and the fact that the Delawares down to

the time Heckewelder composed his work called the Allegheny River

"Allegewi Sipu," or river of the Allegewi, furnish evidence that

there is at least a vein of truth in this tradition. If it has any

foundation in fact there must have been a people to whom the name

"Tallegwi" [Footnote: There appears to be no real foundation for

the name Allegewi, this form being a mere supposition of Colonel

Gibson, suggested by the name the Lenape applied to the Allegheny

River and Mountains.] was applied, for on this the whole tradition

hangs. Who were they? In what tribe and by what name shall we

identify them? That they were mound-builders is positively

asserted, and the writer explains what he means by referring to

certain mounds and inclosures, which are well known at the present

day, which he says the Indians informed him were built by this

people.

It is all-important to bear in mind the fact that when this

tradition was first made known, and the mounds mentioned were

attributed to this people, these ancient works were almost unknown

to the investigating minds of the country. This forbids the

supposition that the tradition was warped or shaped to fit a

theory in regard to the origin of these antiquities.

Following the tradition it is fair to conclude, notwithstanding

the fact that Heckewelder interpreted "Namaesi Sipu" by

Mississippi, that the principal seats of this tribe or nation were

in the region of the Ohio and the western slope of the Allegheny

Mountains, and hence it is not wholly a gratuitous supposition to

believe they were the authors of some of the principal ancient

works of eastern Ohio (including those of the Scioto Valley) and

the western part of West Virginia. Moreover, there is the

statement by Haywood, already referred to, that the Cherokees had

a tradition that in former times they dwelt on the Ohio and built

mounds.

These data, though slender, when combined with the apparent

similarity between the name Tallegwi and Cherokee or Chellakee,

and the character of the works and traditions of the latter,

furnish some ground for assuming that the two were one and the

same people. But this assumption necessitates the further

inference that the pressure which drove them southward is to be

attributed to some other people than the Iroquois as known to

history, as this movement must have taken place previous to the

time the latter attained their ascendancy. It is probable that Mr.

Hale is correct in deciding that the "Namaesi Sipu" of the

tradition was not the Mississippi. [Footnote: Am. Antiquarian,

vol. 5, 1883, p. 117.] His suggestion that it was that portion of

the great river of the North (the St. Lawrence) which connects

Lake Huron with Lake Erie, seems also to be more in conformity

with the tradition and other data than any other which has been

offered. If this supposition is accepted it would lead to the

inference that the Talamatau, the people who joined the Delawares

in their war on the Tallegwi, were Hurons or Huron-Iroquois

previous to separation. That the reader may have the benefit of

Mr. Hale's views on this question, the following quotation from

the article mentioned is given:

The country from which the Lenape migrated was Shinaki, the "land

of fir trees," not in the West but in the far North, evidently the

woody region north of Lake Superior. The people who joined them in

the war against the Allighewi (or Tallegwi, as they are called in

this record), were the Talamatan, a name meaning "not of

themselves," whom Mr. Squier identities with the Hurons, and no

doubt correctly, if we understand by this name the Huron-Iroquois

people, as they existed before their separation. The river which

they crossed was the Messusipu, the Great River, beyond which the

Tallegwi were found "possessing the East." That this river was not

our Mississippi is evident from the fact that the works of the

mound-builders extended far to the westward of the latter river,

and would have been encountered by the invading nations, if they

had approached it from the west, long before they arrived at its

banks. The "Great River" was apparently the upper St. Lawrence,

and most probably that portion of it which flows from Lake Huron

to Lake Erie, and which is commonly known as the Detroit River.

Near this river, according to Heckewelder, at a point west of Lake

St. Clair, and also at another place just south of Lake Erie, some

desperate conflicts took place. Hundreds of the slain Tallegwi, as

he was told, were buried under mounds in that vicinity. This

precisely accords with Cusick's statement that the people of the

great southern empire had "almost penetrated to Lake Erie" at the

time when the war began. Of course in coming to the Detroit River

from the region north of Lake Superior, the Algonquins would be

advancing from the west to the east. It is quite conceivable that,

after many generations and many wanderings, they may themselves

have forgotten which was the true Messusipu, or Great River, of

their traditionary tales.

The passage already quoted from Cusick's narrative informs us that

the contest lasted "perhaps one hundred years." In close agreement

with this statement the Delaware record makes it endure during the

terms of four head-chiefs, who in succession presided in the

Lenape councils. From what we know historically of Indian customs

the average terms of such chiefs may be computed at about twenty-

five years. The following extract from the record [Footnote: The

Bark Record of the Leni Lenape.] gives their names and probably

the fullest account of the conflict which we shall ever possess:

"Some went to the East, and the Tallegwi killed a portion.

"Then all of one mind exclaimed, War! War!

"The Talamatan (not-of-themselves) and the Nitilowan [allied

north-people] go united (to the war).

"Kinnepehend (Sharp-Looking) was the leader, and they went over

the river. And they took all that was there and despoiled and slew

the Tallegwi.

"Pimokhasuwi (Stirring-about) was next chief, and then the

Tallegwi were much too strong.

"Tenchekensit (Open-path) followed, and many towns were given up

to him.

"Paganchihiella was chief, and the Tallegwi all went southward.

"South of the Lakes they (the Lenape) settled their council-fire,

and north of the Lakes were their friends the Talamatan

(Hurons!)."

There can he no reasonable doubt that the Alleghewi or Tallegwi,

who have given their name to the Allegheny River and Mountains,

were the mound-builders.

This supposition brings the pressing hordes to the northwest of

the Ohio mound-builders, which is the direction, Colonel Force

concludes, from the geographical position of the defensive works,

they must have come.

The number of defensive works erected during the contest shows it

must have been long and obstinate, and that the nation which could

thus resist the attack of the northern hordes must have been

strong in numbers and fertile in resources. But resistance proved

in vain; they were compelled at last, according to the tradition,

to leave the graves of their ancestors and flee southward in

search of a place of safety.

Here the Delaware tradition drops them, but the echo comes up from

the hills of East Tennessee and North Carolina in the form of the

Cherokee tradition already mentioned, telling us where they found

a resting place, and the mound testimony furnishes the

intermediate link.

If they stopped for a time on New River and the head of the

Holston, as Haywood conjectures, [Footnote: Nat. and Aborig. Hist.

Tenn., p. 223.--See Thomas, "Cherokees probably mound-builders,"

Magazine Am. Hist., May. 1884, p. 398.] their line of retreat was

in all likelihood up the valley of the Great Kanawha. This

supposition agrees also with the fact that no traces of them are

found in the ancient works of Kentucky or middle Tennessee. In

truth, the works along the Ohio River from Portsmouth to

Cincinnati and throughout northern Kentucky pertain to entirely

different types from those of Ohio, most of them to a type found

in no other section.

On the contrary, it happens precisely in accordance with the

theory advanced and the Cherokeee traditions, that we find in the

Kanawha Valley, near the city of Charleston, a very extensive

group of ancient works stretching along the banks of the stream

for more than two miles, consisting of quite large as well as

small mounds, of circular and rectangular inclosures, etc. A

careful survey of this group has been made and a number of the

tumuli, including the larger ones, have been explored by the

representatives of the Bureau.

The result of these explorations has been to bring to light some

very important data bearing upon the question now under

consideration. In fact we find here what seems to be beyond all

reasonable doubt the connecting link between the typical works of

Ohio and those of East Tennessee and North Carolina ascribed to

the Cherokees.

The little stone vaults in the shape of bee-hives noticed and

figured in the articles in Science and the American Naturalist,

before referred to, discovered by the Bureau assistants in

Caldwell County, N. C., and Sullivan County, Tenn., are so unusual

as to justify the belief that they are the work of a particular

tribe, or at least pertain to an ethnic type. Yet under one of the

large mounds at Charleston, on the bottom of a pit dug in the

original soil, a number of vaults of precisely the same form were

found, placed, like those of the Sullivan County mound, in a

circle. But, though covering human remains moldered back to dust,

they were of hardened clay instead of stone. Nevertheless, the

similarity in form, size, use, and conditions under which they

were found is remarkable, and, as they have been found only at the

points mentioned, the probability is suggested that the builders

in the two sections were related.

There is another link equally strong. In a number of the larger

mounds on the sites of the "over-hill towns," in Blount and Loudon

Counties, Tenn., saucer-shaped beds of burnt clay, one above

another, alternating with layers of coals and ashes, were found.

Similar beds were also found in the mounds at Charleston. These

are also unusual, and, so far as I am aware, have been found only

in these two localities. Possibly they are outgrowths of the clay

altars of the Ohio mounds, and, if so, reveal to us the probable

use of these strange structures. They were places where captives

were tortured and burned, the most common sacrifices the Indians

were accustomed to make. Be this supposition worthy of

consideration or not, it is a fact worthy of notice in this

connection that in one of the large mounds in this Kanawha group

one of the so-called "clay altars" was found at the bottom of

precisely the same pattern as those found by Squier and Davis in

the mounds of Ohio.

In these mounds were also found wooden vaults, constructed In

exactly the same manner as that in the lower part of the Grave

Creek mound; also others of the pattern of those found in the Ohio

mounds, in which bark wrappings were used to enshroud the dead.

Hammered copper bracelets, hematite celts and hemispheres, and

mica plates, so characteristic of the Ohio tumuli, were also

discovered here; and, as in East Tennessee and Ohio, we find at

the bottom of mounds in this locality the post-holes or little

pits which have recently excited considerable attention. We see

another connecting link in the circular and rectangular

inclosures, not combined as in Ohio, but analogous, and,

considering the restricted area of the narrow valley, bearing as

strong resemblance as might be expected if the builders of the two

localities were one people.

It would be unreasonable to assume that all these similarities in

customs, most of which are abnormal, are but accidental

coincidences due to necessity and environment. On the contrary it

will probably be conceded that the testimony adduced and the

reasons presented justify the conclusion that the ancestors of the

Cherokees were the builders of some at least of the typical works

of Ohio; or, at any rate, that they entitle this conclusion to

favorable consideration. Few, if any, will longer doubt that the

Cherokees were mound builders in their historic seats in North

Carolina and Tennessee. Starting with this basis, and taking the

mound testimony, of which not even a tithe has been presented, the

tradition of the Cherokees, the statement of Haywood, the Delaware

tradition as given by Heckewelder, the Bark Record as published by

Brinton and interpreted by Hale, and the close resemblance between

the names Tallegwi and Chellakee, it would seem that there can

remain little doubt that the two peoples were identical.

It is at least apparent that the ancient works of the Kanawha

Valley and other parts of West Virginia are more nearly related to

those of Ohio than to those of any other region, and hence they

may justly be attributed to the same or cognate tribes. The

general movement, therefore, must have been southward as

indicated, and the exit of the Ohio mound-builders was, in all

probability, up the Kanawha Valley on the same line that the

Cherokees appear to have followed in reaching their historical

locality. It is a singular fact and worthy of being mentioned

here, that among the Cherokee names signed to the treaty made

between the United States and this tribe at Tellico, in 1798, are

the following: [Footnote: Treaties between the United States of

America and the several Indian tribes (1837), p. 182.]

Tallotuskee, Chellokee, Yonaheguah, Keenakunnah, and

Teekakatoheeunah, which strongly suggest relationship to names

found in the Allegheny region, although the latter come to us

through the Delaware tongue.

If the hypothesis here advanced be correct, it is apparent that

the Cherokees entered the immediate valley of the Mississippi from

the northwest, striking it in the region of Iowa. This supposition

is strengthened not only by the similarity in the forms of the

pipes found in the two sections, but also in the structure and

contents of many of the mounds found along the Mississippi in the

region of western Illinois. So striking is this that it has been

remarked by explorers whose opinions could not have been biased by

this theory.

Mr. William McAdams, in an address to the American Association for

the Advancement of Science, remarks: "Mounds, such as are here

described, in the American Bottom and low-lands of Illinois are

seldom, if ever, found on the bluffs. On the rich bottom lands of

the Illinois River, within 50 miles of its mouth, I have seen

great numbers of them and examined several. The people who built

them are probably connected with the Ohio mound-builders, although

in this vicinity they seem not to have made many earthen

embankments, or walls inclosing areas of land, as is common in

Ohio. Their manner of burial was similar to the Ohio mound-

builders, however, and in this particular they had customs similar

to the mound-builders of Europe." [Footnote: Proc. Am. Assoc. Adv.

Sci., 29th (Boston) meeting, 1880 (1881), p. 715.] One which he

opened in Calhoun County, presented the regular form of the Ohio

"altar."

A mound in Franklin County, Ind., described and figured by Dr. G.

W. Homsher, [Footnote: Smithsonian Report for 1882 (1884), p.

722.] presents some features strongly resembling those of the

North Carolina mounds.

The works of Cuyahoga County and other sections of northern Ohio

bordering the lake, and consisting chiefly of inclosures and

defensive walls, are of the same type as those of New York, and

may be attributed to people of the Iroquoian stock. Possibly they

may be the works of the Eries who, we are informed, built

inclosures. If such conclusion be accepted it serves to strengthen

the opinion that this lost tribe was related to the Iroquois. The

works of this type are also found along the eastern portion of

Michigan as far north as Ogemaw County.

The box shaped stone graves of the State are due to the Delawares

and Shawnees, chiefly the former, who continued to bury in

sepulchers of this type after their return from the East. Those in

Ashland and some other counties, as is well known, mark the

location of villages of this tribe. Those along the Ohio, which

are chiefly sporadic, are probably Shawnee burial places, and

older than those of the Delawares. The bands of the Shawnees which

settled in the Scioto Valley appear to have abandoned this method

of burial.

There are certain mounds consisting entirely or in part of stone,

and also stone graves or vaults of a peculiar type, found in the

extreme southern portions of the State and in the northern part of

Kentucky, which can not be connected with any other works, and

probably owe their origin to a people who either became extinct or

merged into some other tribe so far back that no tradition of them

now remains.

Recently a resurvey of the remaining circular, square, and

octagonal works of Ohio has been made by the Bureau agents. The

result will be given in a future bulletin.

End of The Project Gutenberg Etext of The Problem of Ohio Mounds

by Cyrus Thomas