

The Birmingham Anthropological Society
presents

STONES AND BONES



Executive Officers

E. O. Dahlen, President
Mrs. M. S. Hullender, Secretary-Treasurer
Ed Greene, Vice-President

Editorial Board

Dan W. Josselyn, Editor
R. A. Humbard
Mrs. T. E. Rybka
F. J. Parsons

Vol. No. L11

Date September 1958

!!---NEWS FLASH-----NEWS FLASH-----NEWS FLASH---!!

THE SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY has two new members! Scratch that membership of 1388 we gave you in the August issue of Stones & Bones - make it 1390.

And if you don't think that is exciting news, you just don't know! Two more people gathered to the inner circle of archaeology, to spread the gospel and lend financial and moral support to this great neglected cause - that is HEADLINE NEWS in the world of archaeology.

Glance over a few of the famous members. As we glance down the list of imposing names we see the familiar name of Ernst Antevs, the famous geologist so active in archaeology. Junius Bird, American Museum of Natural History - doing so much good work in South America. E.N.Brandt, Associate Editor Saturday Evening Post - and he ought to know good reading matter (a fine gentleman, too - used to be your editor's literary agent). George F. Carter, Johns Hopkins University, who is trying to establish man in America during the third interglacial! Hiroshi Daifuku, UNESCO. Our own Joe Dale of restaurant fame. And our Dave DeJarnett of Mound State Park. And of course, our Dr. Frank J. Soday. James A. Ford, the famous archaeologist of the American Museum of Natural History. (Most of these members are attached to imposing museums, universities or other organizations.) Here is E. S. Ginnane, one of the founders of the Birmingham Anthropological Society. James B. Griffin, University of Michigan, famous archaeologist. Frank C. Hibben of Sandia Cave fame. Lewis H. Larson, who has addressed our Society several times. Professor Lewis and Madeline Kneberg who so ably edit the Tennessee Archaeologist. Of course, the famous Dr. John R. Swanton, author of the monumental Indians of the Southeastern States. But in the space available, we can't begin to give you an idea of the quality of the membership list which is published annually by THE SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY.

We take great pleasure in adding two names to this roster celebre from our own Birmingham Anthropological Society: Mrs. Charles Marion Woolfolk, and Mr. W. H. Tharpe, Jr. And we thank them for the cause of archaeology.

We believe they will enjoy, and profit by, American Antiquity, the Journal published quarterly by the society; and the supplementary publications on major subjects which appear as funds are available.

Reading the Journal is like hunting buried treasure - one never knows what exciting new archaeological discoveries will unfold with its pages. And it is human treasure, the great story of mankind on the way up from the ape to civilization. Armchair exploration, you might call it, from the frozen tundra of the arctic to the humid jungles of the Amazon.

A typical issue will contain about 8-major articles, covering a wide range of subjects ably treated. A section of Facts and Comments might come up with almost anything, from arrow-flaking technique to pretty hot arguments. There will usually be a dozen or so excellent book reviews, lengthy and detailed, by authorities in the field. You get a brief of what is being published, and how it rates, and now and then find just the book you want. There is a lengthy section of Notes and News that tells you just what is cooking in archaeology from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego - the exciting new discoveries and current projects right up to the minute.

If you are interested in archaeology, we don't see how you can afford to miss AMERICAN ANTIQUITY. And how can you know until you have tried it? Why not join up for a year on an experimental basis? Application blanks will be available at the September meeting. We should like to see YOUR name in this Who's Who of American archaeology.

LEADERSHIP

Martin Hullender seems to have come up with an idea. There has been some reluctance on the part of the Birmingham Anthropological Society to affiliate with the more recently organized Alabama Archaeological Society.

Martin came up with the idea that we affiliate - not just to tag along but to play our part in the leadership of this undeniably broader and more potential organization. Specifically, his idea seems to be to get out a Newsletter for the entire Alabama organization - with each affiliate letting everybody know what it is doing, thinking, planning.

It sounds interesting. It sounds a lot better than dragging our feet and standing on our dignity. Where do we go from here? Shall we remain static? Or shall we enlarge our scope and seek greater stimulation and effectiveness? Shall old age mean our Society is set in its ways, or matured to greater wisdom?

Can we play our part in the leadership of Alabama archaeology? It is a challenge. Dare we accept the challenge? Or are we afraid we shall just tag along and lose our identity? It looks as if Martin may have come up with the solution to our reluctance to affiliate. We do hope you will give the matter a lot of thought.

And would you like to read in this Newsletter what is happening in archaeology all over Alabama? How deep is Ed Mahan's excavation at Cathedral Caverns, and has he found another Pleistocene bear?

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

One of those copy book axioms which sticks inanelly in our head is "Science is measurement". Time, a very essence of measurement, is at last yielding to science - is itself being measured.

We all remember, from our school days, how wary geologists were about expressing geologic time in terms of years. We were told that the Cambrian began about 500 million years ago - but warned that this date was a pretty broad guess. Now, by the strontium method, the Cambrian is measured, rather than guessed, at 470 million years. And the guess was nothing to be ashamed of.

And we remember that the Cambrian was "the beginning of Abudant life". Prior to that, the hard-shelled forms of life had not appeared to leave obvious fossil records. Little was said about life before the Cambrian, and it was generally assumed that life on earth had begun not long before that time.

Now Dr. Lyman J. Briggs, Director Emeritus, National Bureau of Standards says fossil algae are found in the oldest rocks yet dated - 3 billion, 310 million years (by argon method, rocks from southern Rhodesia). It begins to look as if the astrophysicists might be right in saying the earth was never a molten mass.

There is also a lead-uranium method of measuring geologic time, and according to G. V. Voitkevich the oldest uranium is 5-million years old. To make 5-billion mean something more than government pocket change, if you had had 5 billion dollars 2000 years ago, you could have spent 6849 dollars a day and you would just now be going broke.

Of course, archaeology is more interested in the recent past - say a million years or so, the age of man (and, incidentally, some stars are no older). Although a new method is coming along which it is hoped will date the last 200,000 years accurately, radio-carbon dating is at present our most useful "tool of time".

Dr. deVries at the Groningen Laboratory has developed a method of concentrating samples which enable him to radio-carbon date 60,000 years back. We have been tantalized by "over 23,000 years" for Tule Springs, "over 30,000 years" for Sandia Cave, "over 37,000 years" for the Lewisville, Texas, Clovis point. Perhaps we can hope to date matters more accurately.

It is discouraging to note that much of our seacoast archaeology will be a skin-diving job. At the 1958 Annual Meeting of the Eastern States Archaeological Federation, Dr. George F. Carter, Johns Hopkins, stated that carbon dating of materials from below sea level is now showing quite accurately what the sea levels were for the last 20,000 years - when the level was 200 feet lower than now, due to the immense amount of water trapped in the glaciers of the Ice Age. Atlantic coastal paleo sites of that time are now some 100 miles out in the ocean.

Dr. Robert J. Braidwood comes up with a new date for agriculture some 2000 years older than we have had. This is a radio-carbon date of 9000 years for Jarmo, an archaeological village in the Kurdish hills of northern Iraq. Agriculture was already sufficiently developed to

boast barley and two kinds of wheat, flint sickles, milling stones, ovens. Mmmm - smells like bread baking.

HIEROGLYPHIC

To you who, passing by, pick up a stone
Or ponder on an age-old human bone,
Who walk, long eons hence, my paths again -
These lines I pen.

No dwelling stood of concrete, steel or wood -
Perhaps a leaning cliff, to you how crude!
But judge our homes from what there was within -
The warmth of kin.

My wardrobe was of woven plants, and rough;
Your coverings are made of finer stuff,
And yet we both our shades from spectrum chose -
A rainbow glows.

Though life in little ways is rearranged,
The sound of children's laughter has not changed.
My storied tales with fancied heroes gleamed -
I also dreamed.

Esteem your fleeting thrills, the wine of breath,
The aches of love. Too soon the touch of death.
To you I leave my bones, my joy, my pain -
These things remain.

Elizabeth Cline

HOLY CATS

That may be just an exclamation to you, but cats were sacred with the ancient Egyptians. At death, the family cat was mummified and stored in a sacred vault. Over the several thousand years there was quite an accumulation of kitties - so many that the cat cemeteries have been extensively mined as fertilizer quarries. In 1895 a financially enterprising English firm imported 180,000 cat mummies. Holy cats!
(Excerpted from NATURAL HISTORY)

The regular monthly meeting will be held at the usual time and place, the Birmingham Public Library, 7:30 P. M. Due to a lapse of memory no definite program has been scheduled at time of printing. come and take pot luck.

MORE LEGENDARY PRECOLUMBIAN DISCOVERERS OF AMERICA
Randolph F. Blackford

In my previous talk on this subject (reprinted as a supplement to the April, 1958 Stones & Bones), I named 8-legendary discoverers of America. In order to give a connected account, I shall mention these again in this further record, in their chronological order.

I. ATLANTIS

The first possible legendary discovery of America was, of course, the fabled Atlantis.

II. PHOENECIANS

The second legendary discoverers were the Phoenecians, concerning which I have found further material in Herrman's "Conquest by Man", (1904, Harpers).

According to this source, in the middle of the 18th century an earthenware pot was found in the Azores 940 miles from the nearest mainland of Europe. The pot contained a large number of coins from Carthage and Cyrenacia, dating from about 320 B.C. The German geographer, Richard Henning, argues that these are genuine and show that the Azores were visited by Phoenecians at about that date.

It therefore aroused considerable interest when in 1899 Professor Stanislaus Netto announced that he had discovered what he considered a Phoenecian inscription on a rock near Rio de Janeiro. However, this inscription has been proven a forgery, and so pronounced by the Brazilian Ministry of Education. Other supposed inscriptions, either Greek or Phoenecian, have been reported in Brazil. But official Brazilian authority stated: "Brazilian archaeology denies altogether the existence of Phoenecian inscriptions in any part of the country whatsoever."

III. REFERENCES

Plutarch (46-120 A.D.), in his Dialogue "On the Face of the Moon" recounts that far west of the ocean and in the latitude of Britain lie some groups of islands, beyond which at the edge of the sea stretches a great continent. And a Roman historian about 150 A.D. said that "Far west of the (Atlantic) Ocean there lies a group of islands whose inhabitants are red skinned and have hair like that of a horse."

These suggest legendary discoveries, though discoverers are not named.

IV. ERIC THE RED

We are on solid archaeological ground concerning the precolumbian discovery of Greenland. It is said to be in 985 A.D. that Eric the Red established a colony in Greenland, and hence perhaps deserves major credit for the next legendary discovery of America.

One Bjarni Bardeon, sailing from Iceland to join the Greenland colony, lost his way and the ultimate landfall did not resemble descriptions of Greenland: "It was without mountains, well timbered." (Some have identified this as Cape Cod.) Sailing northeast for two days, more land was sighted but "It had no glaciers and was well timbered." (Some have identified this as Novo Scotia.) Again sailing northeast for

three days he discovered a mountainous land, which some have identified as New Foundland. Four days later he arrived, at last, at Greenland - 996. A. D.

V. LIEF ERICSON

Lief, son of Eric the Red, was intrigued by Bjarni's discoveries and determined to explore these new lands. He bought Bjarni's ship and recruited a crew of 35.

Lief's first landfall, in reverse of Bjarni's is supposed to have been New Foundland, where he landed and because of many large flat stones called it HELLULAND, or "Flat Stone Land". Three more days of sailing brought him to a land he called MARKLAND, or "Land of Mighty Trees". His next landfall was an island, thought by some to have been Nantucket, where the expedition landed, built houses, and spent the winter. The discovery of grapes caused this island to be named VINELAND. When the weather warmed again the expedition returned to Greenland - thought to be 1004 A. D.

VI. THORWALD ERICSON

Lief's brother, Thorwald, with Lief's boat and crew then set forth for further exploration. He found Vineland and the houses Lief had built, and is supposed to have discovered Cape Cod, Long Island, and Hudson River - to judge by the description. Attacked by Indians, Thorwald was mortally wounded, buried, and his crew returned to Greenland. What some consider to be drilled mooring stones at Nantucket are thought to be possible archaeological evidence of this discovery.

VII. THORFIN KARLSEVNI

The next explorer from Greenland was Thorfin Karlsevni, who sailed for Vineland with a crew of forty and his wife. A son, Snorri, born in Vineland is the legendary first European born in the New World.

These last three discoveries are supposed to have been between 1000 A.D. and 1010 A.D.

VIII. HARALD THE RUTHLESS

There are legends of King Harald the Ruthless, of Norway, visiting Vineland about 40 years later. The Rev. Adam Von Bremen, Rector of the Cathedral in Oslo, wrote a history in 1070 in which he said: "King Sven said that beyond this island (Vineland) no habitable land is found in that ocean, but all that is beyond is full of intolerable ice and utter darkness...This was lately tested by the most enterprising Harald, Prince of the Norsemen, who, when exploring with his ships the breadth of the Northern Ocean hardly escaped with safety from the awful gulf of the abyss by turning back."

IX. BISHOP ERIC OF GREENLAND

In the year 1112 Bishop Eric Gnupsen is said to have established his see in Greenland. In 1121, it is recorded in 6-different Icelandic annals, "Bishop Eric sailed for Vineland". John Fiske, the historian, who history I studied in high school, said that Eric Gnupsen was appointed by Pope Pascal II "Bishop of Greenland and Vineland in partibus infidelium".

According to this evidence there could have been an actual colony in the New World. There have been several archaeological discoveries of Norwegian implements, but of course, the Greenland colonies established a brisk trade and there is no telling where trade goods may have traveled.

X. PRINCE MADOC OF WALES

Chronologically the next discoverer was Prince Madoc of Wales in 1175 A.D., a legend treated in my former paper.

XI. UNKNOWN EXPLORER IN "KING'S MIRROR"

It would seem that the Scandinavians may have continued their explorations in the New World in the 13th century, for in a book called the "King's Mirror" published in this century there is mention of GENUNGAGAF which was supposed to carry the waters of the Atlantic into the "Western Ocean". This has been supposed to refer to Hudson Strait, Hudson Bay entrance, with its tides of thirty feet.

XII. THE LOST COLONY

The tie between the Greenland colonists and Norway seems to have been one of no more than a brisk trade until the King of Norway persuaded the Greenlanders to accept his sovereignty - for which they were to have the protection of the laws of Norway, and the Norwegians were to send at least 2-ships a year to Greenland. The Norwegian King insisted that only licensed ships might take part in the Greenland trade, with the result that shipping practically ceased and the Eskimo began attacking the colonies. The annexation was about 1260 and after 1410 Greenland was practically lost to the world until its reappearance in history in 1576.

This has given rise, of course, to various theories about the "lost colony". One version has it that the Greenlanders migrated to the mainland of America.

XIII. THE KNUTSEN EXPEDITION

As early as 1342 there is supposed to have been a "mass migration" from Greenland, along with a desertion of Christianity. And the King of Norway, as the story goes, selected Sir Paul Knutsen to head an expedition to force them back into the fold. A letter to Sir Paul was dated the Feast of St. Simon and St. Jude (Oct. 28), 1354. It concluded, "Whosoever defies this our command shall meet with our serious displeasure and receive full punishment". However, there is no official account of the expedition sailing or returning.

There have been various attempts to prove this expedition did sail, and in their search for the defecting parties visited the American continent. One of these attempts was based on a stone tower at Newport, Rhode Island, which early Norse visitors were supposed to have built. As is the case with most legends, this evaporated into thin air when the tower was recently excavated by archaeologists and found to be only early American.

XIV. ANTONIO ZENO

In my former paper I mentioned the legend of the Antonio Zeno expedition in 1364.

XV. BIANCA

My former paper also mentioned the Bianca legend, 1436.

XVI. POTHORST-PINING

The spherical shape of the earth was demonstrated by Aristotle (B.C. 384-322). Eratosthenes (B.C. 276-196) determined the circumference of the earth quite accurately. Hipparchus (ca. B.C. 160-120) devised the stereographic and orthographic projections for maps, to transfer spherical geographic surfaces to flat paper.

But with the destruction of the ancient civilizations this geographic knowledge was lost to the Christian world, and indeed the early Church denounced the spherical theory of the earth as heretical because of literal translation of the Scripture. Christians, therefore, lived for a long time on a flat earth. Since anyone nearing the edge of this flat earth might fall off, maritime exploration was somewhat discouraged.

But in 1409 Ptolemy's (Claudius Ptolamaeus, A.D. 87-150) "Geographica", in which was collected the sum of ancient geographic learning, was re-discovered and translated from the Greek into Latin by Angelus. It immediately exercised a dominating influence upon geographers.

Among other things, it paved the way for seeking a western route to India. Eratosthenes' estimate of the circumference of the earth had been discarded, and the earth was supposed to be much smaller than it is further encouraging the seeking of a western route to India.

In a letter dated June 25, 1474, an astrologer and cosmographer of Florence named Paolo Tuscanelli assured King Alfonso of Portugal that a voyage of 5,000 miles due west of Lisbon would arrive at the Chinese city of Quinsay - a large city much praised by Marco Polo. The legend is that King Alfonso and Shristian I of Denmark two years later sent out such an expedition with at least two ships. The skipper of one and commander of the fleet was Didrich Pining. The other skipper whose name we have was Pothorst.

Carsten Grip, Burgomaster of Kiel, in 1551 wrote a letter in which he spoke of the purpose of this expedition to find "the new islands and the continent to the north". This letter and other material led a Dr. Larsen to study the subject and to write a book, "The Discovery of America Twenty Years Before Columbus" - published 1924.

This, then, was the first legendary "discovery" based on the concept of a spherical earth.

August 3, 1492, Columbus set sail, officially commissioned to "discover and take possession of certain islands in the sea of whose existence Columbus knew" - specifically, a fabulous island of Cypangu that Alonso Martin Pinzon claimed to know about. Oct. 12, 1492, Columbus discovered an island which he decided was not Cypangu, and which he named San Salvador.

However, it was already named Guanahani by the natives who inhabited it. Proving there had indeed been a precolumbian discovery of America many thousands of years ago, as modern archaeology is learning. It, too, is still hidden in the mysteries of the past.