

THE BIRMINGHAM INQUIRER

VOL. 1

NOVEMBER 1956

ISSUE 11

We were extremely fortunate this month, Mr. Donald C. Beatty, our guest speaker, went to considerable trouble to reexcavate (from closets and other storage areas) the artifacts that he collected during an expedition directed by him in the upper reaches of the Amazon River; Blow guns, Python skins, monkey fur and beetle earrings, lithic tools, spinning equipment, poison pots, etc., etc., in a fascinating display were only a part. Dr. Matthew Stirling, Chief of the Bureau of Ethnology at the Smithsonian Institution, and a member of Mr. Beatty's expedition, sent some forty slides of typical scenes of life among the Jivaro Indians back to Mr. Beatty for our further viewing pleasure. A most interesting evening was enjoyed by both our young and adult members and our several guests.

Members Hullender, Wilkinson and Thompson recently attended a short course on Anthropology at the Birmingham Southern College. The course was a fascinating eye opener in anthropology, designed to arouse interest for the student and to give a helping hand and a correct direction. It was well presented with a scholarly, yet delightfully, light and warm touch by Dr. Howard Harlan. We hope to have Dr. Harlan as a speaker during the next year, satisfaction guaranteed.

Stanley Vestal, University of Oklahoma professor, and top Western Authority, says the Indian was not a poor shot after all. In the current issue of "Guns" Vestal quotes a report to the Secretary of War by General George Crook in 1876.

"I have seen our friendly Indians, riding at full speed, shoot and kill a wolf, also on the run, while it is a rare thing that our troops can hit an Indian on horse-back, though the soldier may be on his feet at the time."

Further, he states, "The Indian, like Napoleon, fought as a rule only when they had the advantage of numbers. The Sioux killed about five times as many white soldiers as they lost Indians killed, and wounded approximately four times as many whites. They did this with hardly half enough guns to go around under the best conditions, and with no cannon at all."

Vestal says, "After the greatest effort, only about half of Sitting Bull's warriors were able to obtain weapons, of these, many were old flintlocks, condemned muskets, muzzle-loaders, and smooth bores."

In two World Wars and in Korea thousands of American Indians proved that they could fight better on foot than their ancestors had on horseback.

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Now a report from Toronto, Canada, tells us that the VIKING find of 1930-31 is a hoax. Although the Beardmore Mine Relics, as they are known, was authenticated as being of Norse origin by a Danish authority, Dr. Johannes Broesstead of Copenhagen, they may have been brought to Canada by a modern Norwegian, rather than having been left there by the Norsemen. Walter Dodd, stepson of the man who was supposed to have found these artifacts, recently signed an affidavit at the Ontario Museum. Two years ago the elder Dodd died. Since that time, Walter says his conscience has been bothering him. He says that he was a boy of thirteen at the time of the find, and that he was afraid of his stepfather, therefore, he signed an affidavit at that time as to the authenticity of the find.

A Port Arthur contractor, J. M. Hanson, has said a former Norwegian Army officer gave him objects similar to those the elder Dodd claims he found. Hanson said that he left the relics in the basement of a house Dodd later rented.

After the Piltdown hoax, and now the Viking hoax, we guess, someone will now come up with the discovery that Homo sapiens is a hoax.

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Scott's Catalog, the bible of philatelists, 1957 edition lists a set of four new Israel stamps, to be issued in early 1957. One of these, the ten pruta stamp, will show a Jewish sailing vessel of about 100 A. D. The design is copied from wall drawings found in caves at Beth Shearim near Haifa.

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The December issue of The National Geographic has a rather interesting article on Florida's "Wild" Indians, the Seminole.

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Life Magazine of November 26, tells of the revival of an ancient Iroquois rite of burying the bones of their dead. It seems it was their custom to let the body decompose in the open air, then pile the bones in a common grave and celebrate with a feast. One of these graveyards had been undisturbed since about 1250 A. D., until last summer when it was broken open by a bulldozer, excavating for a housing development.

When the bones were reburied, Chief Big Knife intoned the age-old chant; "So let your spirits thus remain, you whose resting place is before us."

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MESSAGE FROM THE SOCIETY OFFICERS

President	--	Brittain Thompson	3609 Montrose Road	TR 1-0698
Vice President	--	Floyd F. Taylor	1123 No. 16th St.	AL 1-9984
Secretary & Treasurer	--	Martin F. Hullender	202 18th Way SW	58-8900

Meetings: First Friday every Month, 7:30 P. M., Birmingham Public Library, 3rd Floor, Art Room, unless otherwise announced.

December 7th      Guest Speaker      Emel O. Dahlen

Subject:                      The World We Live In

Mr. Emel Dahlen, a graduate engineer in the field of Mining and Metalurgy, has been able to continue his interest in geology regardless of where his vocation has taken him. From California to the Atlantic, and now Birmingham, his avocation has been pursued with considerable vigor, both on the job and during off hours. In addition, he has been delving into the field of lapidary work. He has several fine specimens of minerals and semi-precious stones. He has promised a general discussion of geology and some specific information on the Geology of Alabama. His talk will be augmented by film strips from the recent "Life" magazine discussion of the same subject.

January 4th              Guest Speaker              Dr. Joseph Volker

Subject:                      "Fluoride Analysis for Determining the Age of Fossils"

Dr. Joseph Volker, Dean of the Dental College, University of Alabama, has a widely varied and colorful background in both his academic and non-academic life. The Universities of Rutgers, Indiana, and Rochester have seen him come and go with degrees in the Arts, Sciences, and two Doctor's degrees, one in Dentistry and one in Biochemistry. He became the youngest Dean of a major school when appointed to this position at Tufts College. He has been a Dean at Alabama

since 1948. Special academic assignments during summer periods have placed him in Czechoslovakia, Germany and Austria, Thailand, and Jamaica. Member of many professional and scientific organizations, his interests are varied and enthusiastic. An excellent speaker, Dean Volker's presence assures an informative and enjoyable evening.

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SPECIAL NOTICE:

Election of officers for 1957 at the January 4th meeting.

Attend - - - - Nominate - - - - Vote

Business meeting will be held after the formal program.

"Prejudice is a great time-saver. It enables you to form opinions without bothering to get the facts."

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GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!