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THE BIRMINGHAM ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

PRESENTS

STONES & BONES

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ISSUE I

The editors feel sure that all members will wish to begin the new year and Administration with a hearty recognition of the good work, the exceptional work, of the outgoing Administration during the past year. The Society enjoyed no less than a NEW ERA of expansion and interests. The Herculean and inspired work of past Pres. Britt Thompson on our TV program (and many thanks to Educational TV - every Thurs. evening 8:30PM) has been out of this world, and bids fair to be of major help in further organizing Alabama for archaeology - what with letters from all over ! (Confidentially, Britt has a made-to-order TV personality - and the gals like him, so he's crazy if he doesn't like TV.)

And notice that one or another of the Hullenders has been in there pitching, in official capacity, from way back, doing a lot of hard work. We can use a lot more like them.

Call him ambassador at large, undercover agent, or just a smooth operator - any way you take it, Bill Steele, though avoiding office, also deserves recognition for enduring interest in the Society.

In fact, we have a darned nice bunch of folks all the way around.

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We've grown so large, under our past Administration, we don't know each other any more! The coming meeting (Fri., Feb. 7, Public Library 7:30PM) will be an "open meeting". No speaker - anybody, everybody talks or shows artifacts, or just gets acquainted again or what-have-you. Be there! We all want to know you. At this meeting, the date and destination of our next field trip will be announced.

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We shall miss our late Past President, affectionately known to all as Jim Wilkinson. We are putting up a monument to Jim - the finest kind of monument - archaeological books donated in his name to the Public Library. Generations will derive education from his great interest in our most neglected science, and keep his name alive in the book plates. A collection was begun at the Jan. meeting, but some of you may have been missed, and some were not there. Happy hunting, Jim.

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About this NEWSLETTER. Let's make it that - everybody's voice. The editors are supposed to put it together and get it out - not write it. The editorial mind, as we often note, is a very limited mechanism.

Give us some chit-chat, some what's-cooking, some let's-do-it, some humor or facts or theories or anything at all. Make this sheet the Voice of the Society, a monthly get-together. Nothing on earth is so widely read as news, so let's get real newsy.

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Do you belong to the Tennessee Archaeological Society? They are getting out a real Journal now - and concerning our area. It is a MUST for southeastern archaeologists. (Biology Building 6, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn. Regular membership \$3.00 per year, contributing membership \$5.00)

In their good NEWSLETTER, Dec., 1957, there is an excellent list of aims and projects for the coming year. How about some of our own?

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#### THE BOOTLEG SITE

Emile Dahlen

Persistent rumors of artifacts "by the shovel full" at Falls City, Ala., caused Ted, Harriot and Bucky Rybka, accompanied by Pat Dahlen and your president, with Tommy Showmake as guide, to set off one morning in Jan., 1957. Our "guide" was not too certain how to reach the site from the Jasper direction, but maintained resolutely that when we reached the right spot we'd see a soft-drink sign and a red house.

Further directions obtained in Jasper were a bit garbled, as usual, so the left fork was taken instead of the right - and we mean right, period. Additional misdirections further on set the party in the midst of a wildernees that was not known to exist this side of the Canadian border. Wet weather had softened the dirt roads, and so overflowed the numerous creeks that they preempted the roads in many places. Bad driving conditions, the primeval aspect of the country, plus numerous piles of corn-mash sacks that dotted the roadside, caused no end of uneasiness among the party. The only mitigating circumstance was the brightly shining sun by which we attempted to guide ourselves. However, the torturous twistings and turnings of the road made the sun useless as a direction finder.

After several dead ends in farm yards, and much retracing, the car finally stalled on a particularly steep and slippery hill. The party and equipment were unloaded, and then with everyone giving a healthy shove the car slithered into the midst of a family reunion of some sort. A guide was procured here and the intrepid explorers at last set on the right road to home!

After this experience, interest in the site waned temporarily until June, when another attempt was made. Proper directions were available this time and the location was found with no difficulty.

The site seems to have been possibly a flint factory, judging by the large quantity of flakes and defective points in evidence. However,

the land has been cultivated for several generations and no doubt much evidence has been destroyed. Large rocks, as mortars, anvils, etc., may now be a part of someone's fireplace. Time did not permit examination of the areas adjacent to the field, or a nearby creek which might disclose a source of lithic material.

Numerous points, scrapers, graters, chips, a small flint knife, and what appear to be several small potsherds, were collected in about 45 minutes. The graters are small, not too well made, and may be accidental shapes. The potsherds, we hastily admit, may be nothing more than thin layers of ferruginous sandstone that became interbedded in the surrounding strata, eroded out, and was washed as pluvial material to where it was found. If they are potsherds, they are sand tempered, indicating some antiquity. They have no decoration.

Some of the projectile points have been classified in a general way as Woodland. They are mostly cherty and sandstone material, abundant in this locale. The better quality are a fine crystalline type of grey flint. They are mostly stemmed, a few side notched, a couple plain.

Several end scrapers were located, upon close examination, among the spalls, as well as what may be termed a "spokeshave". But these were small and a bit crude, giving the impression the user may have picked up a flake that happened to suit his immediate need.

The find of the day was a perfect flake knife similar to one pictured in "Sun Circles and Human Hands" (Fundaburk and Foreman), Plate 2. It looks to be a true example of lamellar flaking, and was made from the good quality fine grain gray flint mentioned above. We began thinking about - but you guessed it - Paleo!

It is planned to re-visit the site as a Society project in the very near future, to look more closely and explore more broadly.

As a postscript, it should be mentioned that the daughter of the present occupant of the land has a hobby of collecting projectile points, affixing them to arrow shafts, and shooting them about the surrounding countryside. If new shafts, with Archaic or Paleo points on them, are found - don't get too excited.

#### ARTIFACTS AT RANDOM Editorially Speaking.

Some million years ago man chipped his flints  
And here and there has done it ever since -  
The human mind as fixed from that far back  
As fossil print of dinosaur's track.

These fossilized flint chippers never developed writing. The story is told that several Indians were discussing the white man and his strange ways. One Indian ventured that the white man's greatest attainment was his ability to "put things down on paper so they keep".

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Sequoia, as you recall, didn't know if that was "such a much". As a consequence, he was so jeered at that he developed a system of writing the Cherokee language - the only time this feat is recorded in history.

But likely the other Indians were correct, Writing may be man's most important attainment. With it we can preserve all the wisdom of the ages, each small stone of knowledge which a man may here and there contribute, until we have a great pyramid of fact and logic.

And we can speak, as through a great trumpet, to thousands - through the medium of writing.

Yet the vast majority of people have never availed themselves of the great opportunity to use this great medium - to write - save for a letter now and then.

Now you perceive the "commercial". We are soliciting your manuscripts! If you don't think that is a golden opportunity, send a manuscript to almost any other editor - they generally wear medieval armor and you have to hit them right in the eye to do any damage.

If you "can't write", we shall be glad to edit for you - we can split an infinitive as wide as anybody. Or we'll accept your word-of-mouth and mess it up for you in a big way - since you have to sign and take the blame.

We'll be seeing you - in print.

Our Treasurer reminds us that 1958 dues are payable now!