

Newsletter

STONES AND BONES

October 1959

Birmingham Anthropological Society

Morgan-Limestone Chapter

THE ALABAMA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Madison-Huntsville Chapter

Muscle Shoals Chapter

Member of the Eastern States Archaeological Federation

MEMBERSHIP LIST TO AUGUST 24

Secretary Schaefer sends us more names of new and/or paid up members:

- C. K. Brown Rt. 1, Marion Junction, Ala.
- E. D. Burwell, Sr. 405 Holmes St., Huntsville, Ala.
- Charles Cason 3705 Grizzard Rd., N. W., Huntsville, Ala.
- S. W. DuPuy 148 Greenwood Rd., Mountainside, New Jersey
- Bill Ennis 1113-40th St., B'ham. 8, Ala.
- O. W. Hopper Spratt, Ala.
- R. S. Hopper Spratt, Ala.
- James B. McKoy, Jr. 1110 Texar Dr., Pensacola, Fla.
- John Mitchell 601-7th Ave., S. W., Decatur, Ala.
- Dr. John B. Nuckolls 120 Oakslea Place, Jackson, Tenn.
- Paul Ozburn P. O. Box 37, Alabaster, Ala.
- John C. Scott 2650 Halls Mill Rd., Mobile, Ala.
- Arain E. Thompson 101 No. Main St., Tuscumbia, Ala.
- Adrain A. Wilson, Jr. Florence State College, Box 221, Florance, Ala.
- George L. Wilson Rt. 1, Mount Hope, Ala.

Last month apparently we misspelled:
Mr. & Mrs. W. F. Owsley, 909 East 15th St., Anniston, Ala.(apologies)

Ed Mahan sends us a card with his new address:
E. C. Mahan, Rt. 1, Grant, Ala.
"Moving to my lot on Guntersville Lake", he says. Of course, he might let us know if he has room for a fishing archaeologist to pitch his tent, and how to find him. We hear he has a site right at hand. Wow! But then you know Ed - he always comes up with a cave bear or something. And Ed, were any determinations ever made on the travertine skull?

Well, as we make it, we now have 233 members! 'Sfunny we can't get any interesting news items for Stones & Bones from all these people!

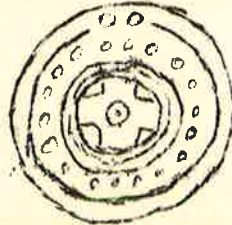


COLLECTORS' ITEM

Emma Lila Fundaburk, Luverne, Ala., writes us that she is publish-

ing only 1,000 copies of her new book on Alabama history, PARADE OF ALABAMA. This will make it a collectors' item within a very few years. And this is one kind of "collecting" we highly recommend. And the clear-cut chapter outline, epic form, looks to be something you can get your teeth into and learn something about the history of our State. Natives, Sixteenth Century Exploration, Seventeenth Century. Colonization: Eighteenth Century, Colonial Intrigue, French Mobile, British Mobile, Spanish Mobile. Territory, Early Statehood: Nineteenth Century, Mississippi Territory, Creek War, Territory to State, Early Statehood, Indian Removal. Antebellum Era, War Between the States, Reconstruction. Recovery and Expansion, Twentieth Century Alabama, Alabama Today.

Both of Miss Fundaburk's previous books, Sun Circles and Human Hands, and Southeastern Indians, Life Portraits, have had excellent reviews and won awards. You can order Parade of Alabama now at the pre-publication (fall publication) price of only \$4.75 (plus .14 sales tax if you live in Ala.). After publication it will be \$7.50 - and you will be sorry. (We have ordered our copy.)



BILIOUS COLIC

- as our grandparents called it, shortly before they died in agony, was experienced by the Indians too. Dr. T. M. N. Lewis, Head, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Tennessee, writes us: We have some gallstones an inch in diameter that occurred with Archaic burials."

So that answers our question about Indians and gallstones, and we are relieved to know they haven't been completely overlooked. But it does make our own look rather small - heap big Injun have heap big gallbladder!

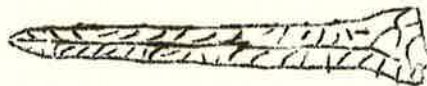
ANNUAL MEETINGS EASTERN STATES ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

The 1959 annual meeting of the Eastern States Archaeological Federation will be held on Sat. & Sun., Nov. 7 & 8, New York State Museum, Albany, New York.

The Program Committee encourages the broadest possible participation, professional and amateur, and request papers on archaeology, Indian history, and ethnology. Limited to 20 min. reading time. You are required to submit an abstract of your paper

beforehand, no longer than two double-spaced typewritten pages, which will be published in the Federation BULLETIN. Submit abstracts to Program Chairman, Irving Rouse, Dept. of Anthropology, Yale Univ., New Haven, Conn., by Oct. 5.

Our information does not cover the point, but usually it is not necessary to be present at such meetings to present a paper. Represent Alabama!



MORGAN-LIMESTONE CHAPTER NEWS
J. P. Knudsen

(CHAPTERS PLEASE COPY: this month Knudsen sends his report on a form containing the following items: Dear Junior Editors: SPECIAL APPEAL, SEND NEWS FOR STONES AND BONES BEFORE 10TH OF MONTH. Previous meeting (Who - What - So What). Next meeting (Who - Why). Items of Special Interest (Digs - Doings - Etc.) We supply the "amen".)

(Knudsen continues) No meetings in July or August, due to conflicts, vacations and summer doldrums.

Next Meeting: Sept. 18 (probably) to discuss plans for the coming Morgan County Fair, at which the Chapter will probably have a booth. Work will continue on our project of photographing pecked, ground, and polished artifacts from the Tennessee Valley.

Items of Special Interest: In re the new membership card. The drawing was done by John Jones Knudsen of Atlanta, Ga., from a point found near Decatur, Ala. It is definitely authentic, and as shown on the card is approximately full size. It is a corner notched Archaic point with a beveled blade, and probably dates to circa 4,000 B. C. if our thinking is anywhere near right. So far as I know the type is not "named" in this locality. These points are found with the usual assemblage of Archaic tools, atlatl weights, stestite pots, etc. Most of them are larger than this specimen. The site from which the point came is in the backwaters of Wheeler Lake some 500 yards from the old south bank of the river. No pottery occurs on the site. Some tools made from lamellar flakes and showing unifaced sharpening in the Paleo tradition have been found on the site, but no Paleo points have turned up. We presume the site (and the point) to be early Archaic.

In re the Journal: An issue will be at the printers before the end of the month containing a monographic article on "Pictographs and Petroglyphs of the Tennessee Valley", by Spence Waters and Jack Cambron. A third issue devoted to 3 or 4 articles on what may be a Paleo-Archaic transition culture will follow shortly.

We will publish a fourth issue if articles are forthcoming. (So help us, we'll scrape the basement floor and see if we have dropped a chip we can write up. Ed. But gosh, some of our members have been in this for years without ever reporting anything! Come on, get it into the stream of history. We offer you editorial and art assistance free. Or consulting service on what in your collection is of greatest interest to prehistorians.)

So far we have not received a single order for the reprints of volumes I and II. Volume I is ready to go when we get the necessary 25 orders. (Your editor went on record in the June issue as wanting a copy of each volume, at \$1.00 per volume, but forgot to send in his check. Tying a string around our finger fight now.

These volumes are particularly informative for amateur archaeologists, and we believe most of us will admit we don't study enough, and that material for amateurs is not easy to come by. If you can somehow borrow back \$2.00 from your wife, or slip \$2.00 out of your husband's pants pocket, we urge you to send same to John P. Knudsen, 1304 Eleventh St., S. E., Decatur, Alabama)



MUSCLE SHOALS CHAPTER NEWS
A. W. Beinlich

For the Aug. 24, 1959 meeting almost everyone joined in the general and informal discussion of the many different types of projectile points that have been found in this area. Several interesting collections of projectile points and possible Paleo tools were displayed.

In regard to the Sept. editorial question about wampum, as discussed at our July meeting, it was emphatically stressed that wampum was used freely during early colonial times but that nothing definite was known about the prehistoric use of wampum. Also it was pointed out that the shell beads of various types that have been found locally cannot be classed as wampum with the meager information available.

One of our members, Leo M. Craft of Sheffield, Ala., has gone to Korea to work as a technical advisor and supervisor in an ammonia plant. He will be away for at least 18 months. (If he writes any archaeological letters, hows about sending the meat along to Stones & Bones?)

BIRMINGHAM ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWS

We meet on the first Friday of each month, 7:30 P.M., B'ham. Public Library. Visit us any times - our programs are varied, interesting.

Our September meeting was a thorough review by Dan Josselyn of the basic scientific methods which do make surface collecting a science. It was pointed out how elementary these basic methods are, and that they had produced more results in the past few years than all the other kind of "collecting" since it was begun by De Soto. This parallels man's experience that scientific method has enabled him to accomplish more in the past hundred years than in the previous million.

Map, mark and report your artifacts - or you accomplish nothing but destruction. We are studying not pots, but people. We hunt for facts, not artifacts. Pots and artifacts separated from their story are useless. Artifacts are "Indian writing" - keep them legible. If you cannot study and report your artifacts, make some arrangements, even if in your will, that they will ultimately be studied - and provide adequate information along with them. Don't collect selectively, just the "pretty" artifacts, but good samples of everything, including chips - a good percentage of which will prove to be small tools. Archaeology, like charity, begins at home - scout your immediate neighborhood, especially suburban areas shortly to be destroyed, get the facts and artifacts before the bulldozer. The speaker showed a map of 46 sites all within two miles of his home, most of them already destroyed, yielding among other things never reported from this area a mid-section of a fluted point, and both Marksville and Hopewell pottery - history saved! Exercise every care and all of your intelligence - remember the famous Midland skull which the amateur had sense enough to leave alone until professionals arrived. Remember that scientific ethics are absolute - you might fool your God now and then, but you cannot fool the truth - you can only destroy it. Eleventh Commandment for amateur archaeologist: Thou shalt not destroy the history of mankind.

The DEAD SEA SCROLLS will be the subject of a talk by Dr. Albert Gessmann before the Birmingham Anthropological Society, Friday, Oct. 2, at 7:30 P. M., Birmingham Public Library. Visitors are welcome.

Dr. Gessmann, Ph. D. in Linguistics, is schooled in ancient languages, including Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, in which early versions of the Bible were written. He is Head of the Dept. of Languages, Talladega College. Dr. Gessmann's discussion of the Scrolls will interest many.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE BIBLE REOPENED

John the Baptist came up from his preparation in the region of the Dead Sea preaching, "Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah." (John I, 23) We have learned that the writers of the Scrolls, in retreating to the desert, considered they were fulfilling Isaiah's prophesy, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (XXXX, 3). John came "preaching baptism...for the remission of sins" (Luke III, 3) - a custom of the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls. John taught, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none" (Luke III, II) - a guiding rule of the writers of the Scrolls. John said, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat. III, 12) - and the Scrolls are full of the imminence of the "end of days" and Messianic redemption.

Can all of these be mere coincidences? Or was John a member of a related sect, possibly even of the pious little band who wrote the Scrolls?

These were the tenets adopted by Christ, John's second cousin, who was baptised by John, and said of John "among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." (Mat. XI, II). And four of John's disciples, Andrew and Simon, Philip and Nathanael, formed the nucleus of Christ's disciples. And Christ gave Simon the Aramaic name of Cephas (Peter in the Greek), meaning "the rock". "And upon this rock I will build my church." (Mat. XVI, 18)

Are we, then, much nearer the source of Christianity in the Dead Sea Scrolls than we have ever been?

Are the Scrolls authentic? Have they really been hidden and untampered for at least 1900 years, as the radio-carbon tests, the style of Hebraic writing, and the scholars say?

Almost as if by a double modern miracle, these Scrolls somehow in considerable part preserved on perishable papyrus and leather are corroborated in the undeceitful language of stone. Able archaeological excavation of the Khirbat (ruins of) Qumran all but brings to life the authors of the Scrolls, proving beyond doubt they had retired here for a life of religious austerity to prepare for what they were convinced was the imminent Messianic coming and the "end of days" - the chief message of Christ. They hid the Scrolls because of Roman conquest which destroyed or dispersed them.

Here at Qumran it was written, "the priest shall stretch out his hand to pronounce a blessing with the first portion of the bread and wine". The parallels with Christianity are almost perfect.

Qumran, built about 100 B. C. and destroyed by Vespasian's soldiers in 68 A. D., bridges across the most vital years of Christian

history. Radio-carbon tests prove the Scrolls were written during this time. These people were Essenes, or closely allied sect, with which Christ is traditionally associated. Heretofore this small Jewish sect has been hardly more than a legend, only the elder Pliny, Josephus, and Philo having written about them from apparently personal knowledge.

The total impact of the Scrolls, which is already profound among scholars, will be years in reaching full tide. Essene material has now been found in eleven caves. Caves one and eleven contained some virtually intact scrolls, but most are fragmentary. Cave four contained tens of thousands of fragments representing almost 400 Scrolls. Fragments are purchased from Bedouin discoverers at \$18 per square inch - but many fragments are smaller than that. The mere task of fitting pieces together is monumental.

And there are the usual sad problems of archaeological vandalism. Tourists compete with the limited resources available, buy manuscript and smuggle it out of the country. A "dealer" buried a bushel basket of manuscript in damp soil - and ruined it irrevocably. Caves are rifled inexpertly, with much destruction.

At least parts of every Old Testament book except Esther have been reported among the Scrolls or fragments of the some 600 different works recovered. We appreciate their importance when we learn that they are a thousand years older than the oldest heretofore known Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament.

But we cannot fully appreciate this without a brief review of the archaeological shortcomings of our previous sources of the Bible. One is shocked to note some scholars expressing relief that the Dead Sea Scrolls do prove the Old Testament tradition antedates the Christian era. Our former sources actually left much room for doubt!

For the Bible is far from coming down to us in the untampered original. It is much like an ancient city built of the rubble of an older city, which in turn was built of the rubble of cities still older yet. The archaeological problem has been to recreate the oldest of these cities.

And the Bible has already been, as we might say, inexpertly excavated and re-excavated from old documents. There have been missing fragments inviting guesswork, and many editorial revisions have obviously invited sectarian bias. There have been actual forgeries.

True origins are lost in the rubble of antiquity. For example, books are attributed to Moses which were obviously written many centuries after he was supposed to have lived. "Moses" books were plainly reworked again and again to conform with succeeding prophetic developments, and again for post-exilic consumption when Jewish religion had been contaminated with Zoroastrian concepts. And with each writing "Moses" was encumbered with still more of the mythological and magical. If there was a Moses, every effort has been made to make him unbelievable.

Of the 73 psalms ascribed to David in the Masoretic text (many more in the Greek Septuagint and practically the entire Psalter in the Syriac version), many reflect the post-exilic thought of hundreds of years later. Some writings attributed to Solomon are plainly as late as the Christian era.

If we dig deeper in hopes of finding some "original manuscripts" the oldest are disappointingly late. Among the oldest, the St. Petersburg Codex of the Latter Prophets was written in 916 A. D. The Masoretic marginal annotations do make references to older standard codices, now lost, such as Codices Mugah, Hilleli, Zambuki, Jericho, Sinai, Machzor rabba, Ezra, and Babli - but of these the oldest seems to date from about 600 A. D. - already victims of the errors of centuries of poor communications, sectarian ferment, dogma formulation, personal renditions and allegorical interpretations.

And remember that until 1488 all of the many thousand copies of the Bible were handwritten, copied from handwritten manuscripts, with all the inevitable errors, illegibilities, and personal preferences as copyists became their own editors.

Interwoven with politics, the Bible has often been a political pawn. In the Christian era this was begun on a large scale by the pagan Constantine, who called and dominated the first ecumenical council, demanding that the various churches agree upon a unified dogma for the sake of political unity. Constantine was not baptised until shortly before his death, kept the pagan gods on his coins, murdered a son and wife - but called himself the "13th Apostle".

And down the long centuries of questionable literacy the Bible has been a victim of the uncertainties of translations, and translations of translations of translations. A famous example of the possibilities occurred when our Latin and English versions were translated from the Greek translation, the Septuagint, which scholars tell us made an error of translation in Isaiah VII, 14, rendering the prediction "a virgin shall conceive". This error was copied until very recently, and made a tremendous impress upon dogma, but was finally corrected in the Revised Standard Version of 1952 to read "a young woman shall conceive."

Even personal names could not withstand these batterings of time. "Elijah" is "Elias" in Mat. XVII, II, of the St. James Version; and "Isaiah" is "Esaias" in John I, 23. Even the Jewish names for their God, Yahwe and Elohim, were mistranslated into Jehova during the Middle Ages.

The early Roman Christians used the Greek translation, and not until about 200 A. D. did Latin New Testaments begin to appear in Italy and North Africa. The many churches, as those of Antioch, Carthage, Alexandria, Rome, were in little communication and made their own interpretations of the still flexible dogma, well colored by local factors, including other religions (as the Romans began to weave the pagan Saturnalia and the day of the sun-god

Mithra into a "Christmas"). The many independent versions greatly confused the text, so the extreme ascetic Jerome undertook a new translation from the Greek about 384 A. D. - the Vulgata for the common people to read (a privilege later denied them). This was the first attempt at a correct Latin version, though far from the last.

For many centuries revisions were, we might say, only crude "digs" in Bible archaeology. It was tragically late before what we may term Bible "archaeologists" moved in and began to "excavate" with careful trowel and brush in the badly mutilated texts.

By the time of Mill's New Testament in 1707, the first "critical" edition, it was actually necessary to consult and decide between thousands of variant readings!

There is still a more basic problem in the New Testament. Christ's Jewish following in Jerusalem after his death was headed by Christ's brother James and Peter. They split with the late-comer Paul - in fact, thought so little of Paul's improvised interpretations of the doctrines of Christ (whom we never knew) that they tried to kill him. When the Jews in 67-70 A. D. once more went to war against Rome - the war in which the Romans destroyed Qumran - the followers of Christ took a neutral stand, for which they were banned. That was the end of progress for Christ's branch of the church, and it vanished entirely in about 200 years.

This left only the opposition, Paul's Gentile branch of the church, to perpetuate (and elaborate) tradition. The new Testament became dominated by the Epistles of Paul, the ex-Pharisee who said his nearest contact with Christian doctrine was 15-days with Peter and Christ's brother James.

In Matthew XXIII and elsewhere, Christ is represented as bitterly opposed to the Pharisees and their doctrines, where he made a prediction which in the light of events could be interpreted as the bloody, witch-burning, and certainly un-Christian history of Paul's church: "prophets ye shall kill and crucify...upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth."

It might be questioned, surely, if Paul, the ex-Pharisee, was capable of fully representing "Christian" doctrine with so little contact.

Into this confusion excellent new Bible archaeology now introduces both the remarkable Dead Sea Scrolls, and the very pertinent Qumran excavation. We have a chance to review the cumulative Biblical errors of 1900 years, and at the same time to get at the very roots of Christian tradition - which we never have before. For the first time we have Biblical manuscripts contemporaneous with Christ, and in the original Hebrew. For 1900 years they have been untampered.

Perhaps the most inspiring moral of the Bible is the continual search for higher God-concepts * which began with a God demanding infant sacrifice, "the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me." (Ex. XXII, 29) The prophets gradually improved upon this concept - though often martyred for differing with fixed opinion.

We may still get sot in our ways, but are we truly finished with the search for higher concepts? Can the Dead Sea Scrolls contribute even a jot or a tittle? We have confidence many people would like to investigate, and will be interested in a straightforward, objective discussion of the DEAD SEA SCROLLS.