

Dead Men Do Tell Tales...

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Skull of primitive man, estimated at over 2,000 years. Found at Marineland, September 29, 1939. Anthropologists from many sections of the Nation have placed their calipers on this skull and are still worried over its origin.

WITH hairy arms dangling at their sides and the tips of their horny fingers almost touching the shells of the beach, upon which they stalked, a thin line of beetle-browed, scowling creatures could have been seen returning, after a day's search for food, to their rude shelters constructed partly underground to protect their families from the blazing Florida sun. The full moon was lifting itself from the waters of the southern sea and one of the hairy ones might have been observed, standing to his full length, beating his breast. He probably bayed at the rising moon, and wondered. Here was man in Florida 20,000 years ago. And it is possible that even then he wondered as he admired the mellow glow of the moon. Wondered what it was all about. Even as we wonder.

The lips of these ancient people, who once roamed the fastness of the Florida jungle, are now dust. Their dreams are departed. Not a single word of their folklore is recorded. But they were men and women as we are. And while they probably did not tax their pygmy minds with the problems of their origin or their destiny, they did wrestle with the eternal problem of sufficient food and shelter for themselves and children.

That a tribe of Nomads, living almost exclusively upon sea food, once inhabited the sea coast of the part of North America now known as Florida, cannot now be doubted. Archaeologists have unearthed many of their bones and not a few of their implements and utensils.

These ancient people possibly did not know the art of making pottery of clay and shell. There is no trace of smoke or fire upon the tons of shells of the oysters and clams they devoured now found throughout the State. The remains of these aborigine are found below the remains of the later so-called American Indian.

The question immediately arises, "What was the arrival date of these very early primitives who first journeyed to Florida presumably to enjoy the warmer winters and the more abundant game?" This is an all-important but baffling question, and one which is taking practically all the time of the archaeologists today. The answer to this query may be found at Vero Beach in our own State, where the fossilized remains of primitive Man were recently found in close association with mammals of the late Pleistocene period. These were known to have lived in Florida from 20,000 to 35,000 years ago.

Scholars have long pondered over the birthplace of pre-historic man in North America. But the question even more pressing is "How long has Man lived in the Americas?" Until we find in America the skeletal materials of man as old as has been unearthed in Asia and Europe, we will be compelled to believe that he migrated to American shores, and the only course possible is across Bering Sea or possibly across the Aleutian Islands to Alaska. But when?

It has been established that the pagan and unschooled Norsemen landed on our eastern shores around the year



1000 A. D. Yet that Man was here seemed to have been of little importance to them. Columbus, the more learned, however, must have worded consider-

Grief for the digger. Here is (top) the skull of an early Timucua Indian, with roots of the cabbage palmetto penetrating nearly every cavity crevice. From mound in Flagler County.

The author showing Judge Lowe of Tavanier, a specie of key conch found in the mounds in Flagler County.

Groups of dead men such as these have told many tales to the Florida archaeologists. Skeletal material unearthed near Marineland (right).



ably about them. Columbus did not seem surprised when he encountered Man upon his new continent. He thought they were Asiatics. He called them Indians as he felt sure he had discovered a new route to India, and it was not until 1513, when Balboa discovered the mighty Pacific, that it was learned the continent of Columbus was an entirely new one and could in no way be accounted for by the sages of his time.

The later Spaniards were much more interested in the quest of gold than in the study of the inhabitants and little thought was given to them. Theories arose however, after a time, and many and varied were the opinions concerning the origin of these red men. Some believed them to have come from Egypt. Others mentioned the Phoenicians and there are some who still hold to the belief that the American Indian is all that is left of the Lost Tribes of Israel. In the early days, the scholars wanted to know only "Who were they?" and the question of time of their occupancy was never mentioned. We wonder, "How long have they been here?"

We, in Florida, have found at Vero Beach, the skeletal remains of these ancients—20,000 years old. We are intensely interested in their history. We do not know who they were—from whence they came. Some day, possibly, we will know all the answers to these perplexing questions. It is the duty of the archaeologist to solve these problems.

Because our ancestors all migrated to America, we are apt to believe, too readily, that the first Man surely must have originated on some other continent. This may not be true. Many relics of early man in Florida have been unearthed which may lead to the belief that the first Floridians were the ancestors of the later Maya Indian of Yucatan and Guatemala. Insufficient research, however, has been made and nothing yet has been conclusively proven, but every year adds new evidence to that theory. I think the time will come when scientists will no longer be able to say "purely coincidental" when a new figurine is uncovered from a mound or a pot fragment, or sherd, is found as was recently, showing the typical Maya headdress in bold relief and with all the trappings of that most intriguing of the so-called Indians. We hope to soon be able to buy the arguments of the scoffers with an abundance of proof.

Just to mention a few of the relics of the ancient Maya which

have come to light in our own State. Mr. Montagu Tallant of Breenton, found a little over one year ago in Glades County near Lake Okechobee, a small gold figurine, unquestionably of Maya origin. It is possible in this case that some Spanish ship returning from Mexico, bound for Spain, might have been wrecked and a Caloosa Indian near the coast found the small idol, and, thinking it attractive, had it buried with his other trinkets and valuables.

In Manatee County was found, not so many years ago, a small object of gold which appeared to be a knife blade with the handle shaped in the form of an ivory-billed woodpecker. We cannot claim the story of the shipwreck for this "find," as a similar article with the identical design was found in 1939 in Wakulla County by a group of boys. This blade, however, was made of copper and traced to the copper mines near Lake Superior which had been worked by pre-Columbian man for centuries.

At Marielaland we have unearthed stone beads similar to those found in Honduras and Guatemala. Cushing, of Smithsonian Institution of Washington, while excavating at Caxambas on Key Marco in Collier County, in the late '90s, discovered that many of the freshwater clam shells had drawings upon them—drawings of crude men with the ever-present arm bands and earplugs of the later Maya. These would be pre-Maya. Even the original gold earplugs have been found in Florida.

The Florida Archaeological Survey, a State department, in excavations in Hillsborough County in 1936, located two of these Maya ornaments, each weighing almost an ounce. One of the first so-called perfect "banner-stones" found in Florida was uncovered recently near the Marielaland "dig," and while these mysterious artifacts are found only in pre-historic mounds, the figures of the Maya found on stone in Yucatan and Guatemala all show these mystery stones as part of the ancient headdress.

While we have made no comparisons with the measurements of the Florida pre-Columbian Indian and those of the Maya of Yucatan or Guatemala, we feel that the bones of these dead men will tell some tall tales. Dead men do tell tales to the archaeologist. The fragmentary remains of these people tell the archaeologist all that is known of their life and culture. We have learned from digging into the refuse heaps

as well as the burial mounds many facts which in time will be placed together, making a complete picture of these ancients. We know the aborigine lived in family groups in huts built partly underground to keep off the direct rays of the summer sun. Their tools were of stone, bone and shell. With these they were able to cut down huge trees. They knew how to kindle and keep fire. The earlier groups knew how to make pottery of different kinds, some of which were beautifully incised. Pottery is one of the chief keys to the culture of a pre-historic people.

Food remains taken from the kitchen middens or refuse heaps show they ate animals, fish, birds, insects, reptiles, and their sandstone mortars and pestles would indicate the grinding of grain and nuts. In Florida we find no remains of dog or other domesticated animal. That they believed in a future life is indicated by burials of weapons and food with their dead. We know they made clothing, weapons, tools, games and many ornaments for their persons. They ornamented their bodies with paints of red, brown and azure.

In southeast Florida we found skeletal remains which had been tinted red, probably to signify life. The bones of the dead men tell tales of battles and suffering from dread diseases. The dead men tell the physician and pathologist many truths. No arthritis with so much winter sun. The diet of sea food with its large amount of calcium and phosphorus shows in the bones. The teeth found in the dead along the seacoast are excellent—no caries or cavities, but there is evidence of pyorrhea on many of them. The dead men tell tales of battle and sacrifice; of ruthless abandon and actual killing of the aged. The dead reveal tales of capture of foreign women and, along the seacoasts, tales of brave men lost at sea.

Judging by the remains, the archaeological data reveals among others truths the fact that pre-historic man in Florida led a peaceful and rather comfortable life. There is no evidence of inter-tribal struggle or strife or any desperate effort to wrest a living from the country. Game was plentiful in the wooded areas, and fish abounded in the rivers and the ocean.

From the great numbers of bones found, the dead men tell us that the population of the Americas was large. It has been estimated by Spin-

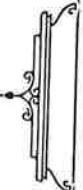
most excellent work of its kind, and it was fabricated over 20,000 years ago. A degeneration of the culture then was noticed and about 2,000 years ago the handiwork of the primitives again showed improvement, and at the time of the Spanish explorers their art almost approached that of ancient Folsom ancestor.

All of this and much more, lead us to state that dead men *do* tell tales—and very interesting tales they are to those who care to read.

merely generalize in a short paper such as this one. We have learned, however, from the tales told by these venerable dead, that man has lived a long time in Florida—possibly 20,000 years or more and there has been a rise and fall in his culture, and his civilization was rising again at the time of the coming of the white man. For instance, the flaking and chipping on the stone arrow points and spear points of the Folsoman, found throughout the North American continent, is by far the

den that the year 1200 A. D. saw 50,000,000 Indians in both North and South America with the densest, of course, in Mexico and the Andean highlands. In North America an especially dense spot was in the Pueblo section and next to that area was Florida and other Gulf States. The colder central and northern States were rather sparsely settled, it is learned.

The subject of archaeology covers such a wide and varied field that it is naturally impossible to more than



The Timucua Mounds At Marineland, Florida . . .

Since the days of the early Spanish occupation, the vicinity of Marineland, Flagler County, Florida, has naturally been a rich field for the study of the antiquities of pre-Columbian times.

From the first penetration of the region of Florida by white men, in the era of the Spanish explorations to the present day, there has been an ever-increasing interest in the mounds and village refuse heaps of the earlier people and a desire to know more of their history.

Scattered along both coasts of Florida, probably ante-dating the Christian era was a large nomadic tribe, with features of the Mongol from Asia, dependent to a large extent upon the hunt. These wanderers whose remains are found to-day nearest the seacoast seemed to have lived almost exclusively upon seafood. At the present time the evidence which will prove the existence of this earlier group is meager indeed, but indications have been noted which warrant the statement that they did exist. The lowest level of the burial mounds at Marineland reveal the skeletal remains of this prehistoric group. This early man did not know of pottery and there is no evidence of the use of fire. The Marineland site consists of a

great number of shell refuse heaps; two burial sites have so far been noted and several large circles of midden material have been observed. This village site together with the burial heaps has been occupied by at least three different groups of peoples. The remains of this large village, possibly last used by the almost mythical chief Saturiwa, can be seen today for several hundreds of yards along the old Sunnethaven River which bounds it on the west.

There are no springs of fresh water found on the site today, although an upheaval of coquina rock near the shore on the west might at one time have been the mouth of a large spring. It is possible the different peoples left the site because of the drying of this spring and others found the flow in later centuries.

A thorough search of the Spanish and French records of the St. Augustine area fails to reveal the name of this particular village. Seminole Indians who have worked and hunted in this section refer to the ancient village as the home of "the old people."

The excavations at Marineland show that after the burials of the earlier people were made—the bodies first being placed in a flexed position on the surface of the earth and then

covered with sand—a stratum of top soil was formed by the passage of time and we can then picture the second group, those who deposited the refuse in the mound at a much later date, erecting their little huts upon the low mound, not realizing that below them were the last remains of their ancestors.

After the second group abandoned the site and grass and weeds took over the refuse piles, then the third people, the Timucua, seeing the grassy knoll left by the former occupants and finding it suitable for their purposes, proceeded to lay their dead upon this mound.

In the flesh the individual whose remains now lie in the lowest level at Marineland mounds, and who no doubt ante-dated the Timucua, was below normal or medium height as measured today. He was stocky and well-muscled, inclined to the use of his right hand more than his left. He was broad-faced, wide-eyed and with just fairly pronounced cheek bones and sloping forehead; with his hair-line not over one inch above his prominent brows. This man was susceptible to pyorrhea and possibly suffered from arthritis. Later excavations may reveal that even this primitive was not the first visitor to Florida.