

# PREHISTORIC RACES OF AMERICA.

WHAT IS TO BE LEARNED AND SURMISED FROM THEIR REMAINS.

BUCKEYE, Clay County, Ala.,  
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Editor Deseret News:

While traveling in the sunny South as a servant of God, I meet with various ideas concerning the people that formerly inhabited this continent. People seem to wonder and wish they knew about them, how they came here, etc., but if they would lay aside prejudice and search the records (Book of Mormon) of the people who built the mounds and other antiquities, all this wonder would cease, and they would be informed of things that have taken place on this continent; and besides, they would learn more of God and what is required of them in this probation.

While staying with a friend lately I was lent a book or pamphlet to read, containing the following account of the moundbuilders, and thinking it would be interesting and useful to the Latter-day Saints I will send it to you. It is contained in Wilford's Microcosm, Vol. 4, No. 6, March, 1885, entitled,

OLDER THAN THE MOUND BUILDERS, and was written by G. R. Watson, Roanoke, Va.

"If, in this day of careful research, when science has left no region unexplored, a statement should be made revealing to public attention a nation that were in their graves when the earliest known tribes trod over the ground unsuspecting, would the testimony be accepted? It could not be challenged by other than scientific modes, and must reveal that what is hidden to the eye of research is often made manifest to chance rambles, for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed.

What a comfort it would be to fix the date when the mound builder roamed the continent. They came in mysterious bands, those old skillful workers in the mold and clay—shall we say in copper and wood? Their lives are veiled, that history might not read them, and they laid them down to sleep amid the traditions of their worship. They rest amid the monuments of their blind faith. And thus from their silent graves they hold up feeble hands pointing us to their habits and their records. Dead though they be, and unchronicled their doings, they give us to guess the tragedy of their lives and speak of wanderings, of searches of the mindqueries and heart-trials of simple wondering life—unanswered questions they must have been. For knowledge to their eyes her ample page rich with the spoils of time did never unroll.

Yet as we wander through the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys their rude horse shoe mounds lead us to think of restful, simple faith, of temples and cemeteries long before shrines or vaults were known. But what if now—while our minds are battling with the mazes of this early time and striving to grasp the customs and antiquity of those primal men and women—what if spectre-like there rises up before us the phantom of an earlier day, beckoning still backward to the homes of an alleged older people. And what if, when we see their resting-place the ongue of evidence be unloosed to tell us of their broader culture and higher faith! Let us not be blind or biased; what better can we do than, with the Tuscan of old humbly exclaim, *Mirabile dictu!*

Impelled toward their lives through ages where the light breaks at the uncertain dawn before me I pondered long and in silent awe upon the character and period of the ancient mound-builders, when lo, traveling in the mountains of southeast Virginia, I found my sacrilegious feet among the resting places of a people whose name I had never heard, whose lives I take it are to the world an unwritten scroll. But they press forward to be known. We must ask, "Who were these strangers in the land? When did they live?" We must learn from their customs and our imperfect knowledge of those customs. Imperfect we say—for we know them only in death, thanks to the fact that they did not cremate. Time has left but imperfect vestiges of their forms, none of their instruments and utensils.

Accident again brought us upon a plantation in Montgomery County, Va., where these sleeping forms were, disturbed by hundreds and by fifties. This is literally true, and now we cite the two facts that are remarkable and quickly distinguish them from others as yet written of or known.

First, they lay with hands folded over the breast. Second, they lie in rectangles, whose sides bear the ratio 2:1. Two hundred of them lie buried in line of east and west; and by side are 100 buried north and south, thus forming two sides of a quadrangle, and in these unvaried figures in multitudes they lie over the area of this plantation. Are these facts not peculiar and distinctive? You behold no evidence on the surface to warn you that below are a whole nation of men who sleep undisturbed under the trampling of the furious war horse or the roaming beasts. But downward we search, and soon we find them, hands folded over the breast, the stalwart heroes of ages back in the dawning of time. Know you any nation unchristian, thus enwrapped, lying down to the "sleep that knows no wrking?" But more marvel, the graves

are laid in system: Christian—in long rectangles east and west. Hear you of any nation who so do? Are they not certainly imbued with the spirit of Christian tradition burying to the east? Associate with this the rising of the star in the east, the planting of our corner stone to the east, the wise men of the east and the general tendency of Christian burial. But may they not be merely Indians? It is not shown in the skulls, though those people bury thus (why, we do not now ask) or, were they not mere worshipers of the sun, shown in this site akin to the elevated tribes that once adorned Mexico? Both of these conjectures drawn from the position of their bodies, are made improbable by the simple position of the hands folded upon the shrine from which the divinity has fled. For so they tell us in unmistakable tokens their last undying hope that looking forward to the day when divinity shall return and this mortal shall put on immortality.

But whence came this hope? Certainly they are older than any race known. The most remote of prehistoric races are a mixture of rudeness and paganism compared with these. If descendants of these lately found friends, they (the Mound Builders—Mexicans) are so remote the lapse of time so great that the early purity and definite faith have been lowered and weakened, if not lost, in incongruous myths and superstitions.

Besides, if they were contemporary with known races, where are the evidences of intercourse always found in early nomadic tribes. Could science have overlooked such if they existed? These facts and reflections bring before us a people that must have lived prior to any prehistoric tribes yet heard of. They are imbued with the spirit of Christian belief, they evince customs at least coincident with Jewish rites and the enlightenment of revelation.

Who are these strangers? and whence learned they this wisdom? Can they be kin to the magnificent Solomon, and were their burying grounds planned from the court of the great temple? What can we learn of them? How came they here? and can they at last establish it in our minds that the old world peopled the new and that God hath made of one blood all nations of men.

If I do not weary you I can name one statement that they make to us from their dreary homes. It was learned from them that after death the human frame remains a magnet. Not the slightest particle of their dust but is as truly and powerfully positive or negative as was the individual in life. This was one of the aids which led to the discovery of their bodies. And we cannot in these days of incredulity attach much importance to this fact. No other body of animate existence retains that quality in death. What more practical and corroboration of Paul's pre-scientific wisdom—"There is one flesh of birds, another of beasts, another of men."

And now we must leave them, but not to silence, we hope, though their annals be unwritten, their tombs unlettered. They could have had no written language, no documents no history. Hence were their customs, traditions, beliefs perverted in the course of ages to the strange combination of Christian and Pagan found in Aztec, Toltec and the rites and the architecture of other and later tribes. They may have had a definite assured account of the flood, and Babel become so incongruous by the time the Nabuhs, cliff-dwellers and tribes of Mexico and Peru received it. They certainly are strangers with a new story. Are they not worth our acquaintance?

Can we not enter their stately chambers and "provoke the silent dust" to tell us something of these honored fellow-mortals, their parentage and homes, their wanderings and trials, their battles (if any) or their temples? Can they tell us when their simple vivid faith, marked by such unmistakable theism, gave their souls to God, their bodies to the dust? *Requiescat.* They have passed the inevitable hour, mortals that they were.

This is a correct copy, and if it is worth publishing you can publish it, and if not, you may find room for it in the waste basket.

Times are dull with us at present, but not with the professors of the world. At the present the great revivals are taking the day, and like the Pharisees of old, when full of their kind of religion, it stirs them up to persecute the true servants of God. Nevertheless, we feel like going ahead and doing our part in building up the kingdom of God. The Saints are having much persecution at present. Let every Saint be true to his God, his covenants, his wives and children—come fines and imprisonment, come life or death, is the prayer and feeling of your collaborer in the latter-day work.

J. C. D.

## OPPOSITION AT SHEFFIELD CONFERENCE.

THE ELDERS FOLLOWED THROUGH THE STREETS OF SHEFFIELD BY A HOWLING MOB.

It will be remembered by our readers, that on the occasion of a Conference of the Latter-day Saints in Sheffield, last December, the passions of the rough element of society in that town were so inflamed by a miserable, low-lived apostate (Wm. Jarman), that the meeting of the Saints was broken up almost as soon as commenced, and

it required the utmost efforts of the Elders to preserve themselves from personal violence, a task for which, fortunately, they were physically well qualified.

There has been no conference of the Saints held since then in Sheffield, until Sunday, Aug. 16th, when arrangements were made for conference meetings to be held in the lower room of Albert Hall, a place admirably adapted for the purpose, and capable of seating 500 persons, with a standing capacity for two or three hundred more, which capacity was fully tested at the afternoon meeting. According to appointment Presidents Daniel H. Wells and C. W. Penrose were present, and with them Elder James H. Hart, Church Emigration Agent at New York, then here on a visit, and Elders Geo. Osmond and C. J. Arthur of the Liverpool Office.

President Bennion, of the Sheffield Conference, warned by the experience of last year, had a good force of police present, and subsequent events fully justified the wisdom of the precaution.

In the forenoon, a priesthood meeting was held in the usual meeting-house of the Saints, at which instructive addresses were given by Presidents Daniel H. Wells and C. W. Penrose and Elder C. J. Arthur. In the afternoon, promptly at two o'clock, meeting was called to order in Albert Hall.

In the meantime, the same contemptible creature who created the disturbance last year put in an appearance on the outside of the hall, where he was destined to remain, as the police would not admit him, so he harangued an ever increasing multitude in the street. So vehement was he in his denunciation of the Elders that the curiosity of many of his hearers was aroused, and they were induced to leave him and enter the hall. An immense audience was the result, some appearing to be much interested in the meeting, while others were evidently there for the purpose of creating a disturbance. The scene was a remarkable one and possessed elements of intense interest. Elder C. W. Penrose had already commenced to address the meeting when the hall was rapidly filling with the crowds who poured in from the outside, where the apostate was energetically working to produce an exactly different result. The hall was packed until the police would admit no more. It was difficult at this stage of the proceedings to tell just what would happen next. The large assembly was restless and trembled with suppressed excitement, as the leaves of the forest are shaken by the first breath of a coming tornado. A largest representation of the roughest element of Sheffield was present, awaiting but the slightest signal, or the shadow of an opportunity to repeat the riotous scene of last year and make a rush for the stand. Brute force and ruffianism were there like hounds in their leashes, ready to howl and rend and tear as soon as the apparently slight restraints should be removed or weakened in their moral force. Even the Saints moved uneasily in their seats and craned their necks with anxious expectancy at every little unusual sound, thinking that the storm was about to burst upon them, so that the speaker did not have even the benefit of their undivided attention. And what were the restraining influences operating in the interests of peace and order? On the little platform at the door, whence a few steps descended to the main floor of the hall, some half dozen policemen looked down upon the uneasy multitude below them, with keen eyes and calm and determined demeanor, ready to spring on the instant to the spot where the outbreak might begin. But, evidently, the greatest influence that controlled the crowd was centred in the servant of God, who, sustained by the spirit and authority of the Priesthood, stood before them and looked into their eyes with unblenching earnestness, as he unfolded to them the principles of the Gospel in plainness and power, and controlled the multitude with as much ease as an engineer would control his engine. Occasionally, when the rough element seemed about to break forth into tumult, a timely and energetic rebuke from Elder Penrose would restore comparative quiet, and thus the meeting went on until the close of the discourse, which was replete with instruction and accompanied by the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit.

But with the end of the discourse came the end of that moral control which had been so marvelously exhibited. The meeting was dismissed, and when the Elders left the hall, they were immediately assailed with shouts and cries of a most demoniac character. Escorted by the gallant police, they safely made their way to the little meeting-house of the Saints, in Rockingham Lane, where they took a slight repast.

So threatening and violent had been the mob at the close of the afternoon meeting, that many well-intentioned hints were given by friends that it would be prudent to forego the evening meeting, but the Elders, having been promised protection by the police determined to hold their meeting according to appointment. In the meantime, President Wells was induced, by the persuasions of the brethren, to retire to his lodgings and not expose himself again to the violence of the mob, who seemed to direct their fury principally against him.

The speakers in the evening meeting were Elders Osmond and Hart, who were fortunate in having good order, but little of that uneasy and disturbing influence that had been so well controlled by Elder Penrose in the afternoon. The meeting house was not quite so well filled as before, and those who

were present were apparently much interested in the remarks that were made. On the outside of the hall the same scene was enacted as in the afternoon. A mob, in which the rough and ignorant elements of Sheffield predominated, were harangued and lashed into fury by the lying words and wicked misrepresentations of the before mentioned apostate, and when the meeting was over, the Elders, on coming out, were again assailed by the most unearthly and hideous yells that ever proceeded from human throats. Again escorted by the police, the Elders took up their line of march, surrounded and pursued by a howling mob, who now numbered many thousands. But the police never quailed, and when the mob got uncomfortably close, they would push them aside with a vigor that would send them sprawling out of the way, and often with an impetus that would dash them with force against the opposite wall of the street. In spite of the threatening attitude of the mob and the horrid cries that murdered the peace of the Sabbath evening, and which we think are as peculiar to Sheffield as the excellency of its cutlery, there was a ludicrousness about the scene which was not unappreciated by the brethren. Elder Hart, who occupied a foremost place in the procession, occasionally raised his hat and bowed with a Chesterfieldian grace that could not be excelled by the Prince of Wales at a country cattle show, and which had the effect of adding a double intensity to the vocal performance of the mob. It was not considered wise for the Elders to proceed to their lodgings under these circumstances and thereby expose the houses of their friends to an attack by the mob, and they therefore took refuge in a police station until the mob dispersed, when they repaired to their lodgings without further molestation. Thus ended another Sheffield Conference. The same influences that broke up the Conference last year were again brought to bear against us in this, but with far different results. Experience caused the Saints to be better prepared, and the results were most gratifying. The testimonies of the Elders reached the ears of hundreds who probably would not have heard them but for the efforts of the apostate, who, while he succeeded in inflaming the passions of the vicious and ignorant, caused many reflecting persons to attend our meetings and hear for themselves the principles of our faith.

The *Independent*, a leading paper of Sheffield, published a very fair account of the riot, but got names sadly mixed up, an error which they might have avoided if they had sought information from any of the brethren. We are sure that the *Independent* expresses the sentiments of all right thinking people in Sheffield in deploring the manner in which our Elders were treated on account of their religion, but we really feel more contempt and pity than anger at the excesses of the unthinking mob, many of whom were really ignorant of what they were howling at. As a proof of this, we may mention that Elder Penrose had one of the young local brethren slip cautiously out of the procession into a crowd and ask them what was the reason of the tumult, and not one that he spoke to could give an intelligent answer.

We look for good results from the Sheffield Conference and we know that we express the feelings of all the Elders and Saints who were present, when we say that the Conference was an enjoyable one, and that it was good to be there.

—*Mill. Star.*

## CORRESPONDENCE

WORLDLY VIEW OF "MORMONISM."

A True Portrayal of anti-"Mormon" Sophistry Though Satirically Expressed.

Come Over to Us, and Be as We Are: We Will Bury the Hatchet and Smoke the Pipe of Peace.

Why do you "Mormons" continue to dispute the ground taken against you by profound theologians, deep thinking philosophers, expert scientists, grave senators, learned judges, astute lawyers and far-seeing politicians; editors, poets, orators, actors, itinerant lecturers and circuit-riding preachers; bankers, merchants, mechanics and trades people generally; together with saloon keepers, drunkards, libertines and courtizans, backed by fifty millions of the most enlightened and liberty-loving people on the globe; representing every nationality and color from the fair skinned Caucasian to the African of ebony hue, including babies, invalids, idiots and insane?

ECHO ANSWERS.

Why, against this mighty army of highly-endowed, talented, gifted, honest and virtuous people will you (who number all told not more than two hundred thousand) continue to declare you are in the right? The old fogy notions you entertain about constitutional rights and privileges have been entirely exploded by the most eminent jurists and the wise decisions of learned judges. You are altogether mistaken when you say they discriminate against you in the smallest degree because of your religion. Why, bless your dear hearts, these fair-minded and just persons would scorn to stoop so low as to interfere with the religion either of a person or a sect. They would tell you

most emphatically, if you would only take time to reason with them, that they could not do this without violating one of the fundamental principles upon which the government is founded, and the idea of an officer of the government whose sworn duty it is to administer the law impartially risking his reputation to gratify a little petty spite is altogether untenable; or that, for the sake of position or money, he would be guilty of such an act cannot be admitted for one moment.

In your simplicity you talk about God doing this and that, raising up prophets among you and making you His chosen people, etc. This would have been very good logic and might have been well received by our great grandfathers, but we have outlived all such nonsense. Science has proven beyond question that a personal God is a myth, a chimera of the brain, a belief in whom is akin to the

BELIEF IN THE VERY ORTHODOX HELL

of a few centuries ago, which so terrified our ancestors and frightened them into an acceptance of religious creeds and dogmas. We would laugh a minister to scorn to-day who would dare presume to tempt our credulity with the bare mention of the name. Henry Ward Beecher, America's greatest expounder of theology, several years ago, uncovered this ancient place of torment and called upon the people to follow him through its sulphurous labyrinths and mark well its fathomless depths and asked them to watch while he singly and alone put out its fires that had blazed continuously for centuries and also to wait while he chained and banished its proprietor with all the attaches of the place and set every captive free. All this he did so effectually and completely as to prevent forever its re-establishment, and the awful hell of yesterday is to-day vacated and entirely abandoned.

Then again the power and authority you attach to the head of your Church, making him God's vicegerent, and a thousand other important things is viewed by all people whose minds are evenly balanced as a delusion and altogether unworthy of intelligent consideration. And, while the people of this nation do not despise you for this, still they pity you and would greatly rejoice if you would abandon these foolish notions and become consistent members of society.

Then this long array of lesser lights following in the wake of your great head with their several heavenly gifts and qualifications is viewed by us as partaking too much of the mythology of the heathen to be tolerated in this enlightened nineteenth century.

Why the Pope of Rome who had assumed this right, and occupied this high position through the dark ages has been shorn of this power and stands dismantled in the presence of a more enlightened civilization; and no amount of labor, no matter where or how extensively exercised, can ever restore Pope Pius to the sovereignty he has for ever lost.

If modern Christendom refuses to sustain a claim that had become sacred by centuries of possession, what chance is there for you, whose existence dates back only half a century? As nobody disputes the right of the Pope to reside in Italy and issue his commands from the papal chair to his archbishops, bishops and priests, neither will the right of the "Mormon" President be disputed as to his residence or the exercise of his ecclesiastical functions, if he will be no more aggressive than the Pope.

This brings us to the consideration of

THAT OBNOXIOUS PRINCIPLE, POLYGAMY;

which you cling to with a tenacity that is worthy of a better cause. No other Christian denomination teaches or practices any doctrine that is so utterly repugnant to the feelings of the masses, and why should you seek to force upon our notice and demand our silent recognition by allowing you to practice undisturbed that which all Christendom recognizes as degrading and degrading in the extreme? We repeat again, we are not your enemies when we only ask you to stop and consider the unwise course you are pursuing, in so doggedly persisting that you are right and everybody else is wrong.

You are eternally quoting such men as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as well as a host of others, in support of your polygamy; to which we reply that if we had those men among us do you suppose that we should sit supinely by and allow them to practice their abominations as they did upon the plains of Mamre and elsewhere? Not a bit of it. They were wandering shepherds and cattle raisers, who could not live in civilized society; they were a law unto themselves and took great pains to keep aloof from all civilized government. Think you that even in this free government we should have tolerated many of the practices that are recorded as having been indulged in by them? No indeed, and unless they would have changed their course of life, there is no question but they would have spent quite a portion of their lives in prison. We wish you distinctly to understand that we have no more respect for the practices of Abraham and his successors than we have for yours; consequently it is no use quoting them to us in justification of your conduct. We repeat, we do not believe in

A PERSONAL GOD

and consequently accept of no revelation purporting to come from him, and when you quote these "ancient worthies" to us, we reply, that, taking the