

Indian Girl Saves Legends of Race

Anthropology

By FRANK G. SPECK

Dr. Speck is professor of anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania.

From the Indians of Massachusetts, if anyone can be induced to believe that there are any, a marvelous epic is being woven into form. It is an epic of the days before the arrival of the Pilgrims on Cape Cod and the neighboring islands, in the early part of the seventeenth century. It is an epic of a hero and creator couched in the phrases of fable and legend, depicting the creation and transformation of the region now embraced between Boston Bay and Vineyard Sound. With the battering down of the last outpost of the Indian settlements during King Philip's War the dwindling remnants sought refuge on the desolate moors on the extreme end of the Island of Kapawok, "the land covered with clouds", as it was known to them, the Martha's Vineyard of today.

In the picturesque but barren up-

Early American Ware

Archæology

Substantial support for the commonly accepted doctrine that "Irish" potato originated in South America is found in the very ancient piece of Indian pottery now on exhibition in the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, which is pictured on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS-LETTER. It clearly represents two potatoes of good shape and size, one lying on top of the other, with the eyes rudely but realistically shown. How old the jug is no one knows, but Dr. William M. McGovern, of the museum staff, states that it antedates the Inca conquest of the Peruvian coast.

There seems to have been a fashion among these ancient Indians for modeling their pottery in the shape of food plants, for other pieces represent peanuts, corn, squashes, pumpkins, beans and the poisonous tuber from which tapioca is made. These examples of really Early American ware are of great assistance not only to archæologists and anthropologists in the study of the ways of the people who made them, but to economic botanists interested in the discovery of the original homelands of our present-day food crops, whose history, almost without exception, runs far back and blends into the times when there was no history.

Science News-Letter, September 1, 1928

lands of Gay Head they retreated to secure peace and liberty from the encroachments of the land-seizing whites and here they still reside to the number of several hundred. Little known to the outside world, happy in their fishing and seafaring life, they have evaded the prying interests of investigators who have hitherto remained ignorant of the meaning of the legends preserved in the closets of memory of the older generation. Sedulously refusing to communicate legendary secrets to the questions of the white aliens their reserve has been at last penetrated by one of their own race, a young Indian girl, Gladys Tantaquidgeon, who has just returned from Gay Head with a host of treasures of legend and folk-lore to be woven into a scenic epic which, like a tapestry, will depict the primeval age when the giant God, Mashap, created and formed the land; directed

the activities of his children, the Indians, and ruled the storms and waves of the southern coast of Massachusetts, where since his day so many craft have gone down beneath his wrath.

Miss Tantaquidgeon is a Mohegan Indian. The old Indians at Gay Head are a branch of the Wampanoags, the tribe that under King Philip so strenuously opposed the Pilgrims. They welcomed the Indian maiden and loosened their tongues in her behalf. This has enabled her to bring forth a connected story of their ancient and imposing legends to be admired and studied by the hosts of readers who are ever seeking for fragments of folk-lore to reconstruct the classical narratives of aboriginal races. Miss Tantaquidgeon is a student at the University of Pennsylvania in the Department of Anthropology.

Science News-Letter, September 1, 1928

In This Issue—

Indian studies Indians, p. 124—
Peruvian Pottery Potatoes, p. 124—
What did Roger Bacon See? p. 125—
Leprosy and Fungus, p. 127—*Grease*,
p. 127—Measuring Lightning, p. 127—
No More Sub Drownings, p. 127—
Thin Clothes, p. 127—Plague of
Pharaoh, p. 129—*Serum* for Measles,
p. 131—Cuba Once Mainland, p. 131—
Egyptian Vase Factory, p. 131—
Hideous but Harmless, p. 131—
Astronomers to Meet, p. 133—
Totems as Trade-Signs, p. 133—
Finding *Radium*, p. 137



SCIENCE NEWS-LETTER, The Weekly Summary of Current Science. Published by Science Service, Inc., the Institution for the Popularization of Science organized under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Research Council and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. *Medical Progress* is merged into the SCIENCE NEWS-LETTER.

Edited by Watson Davis.

Publication Office, 1918 Harford Ave., Baltimore, Md. Editorial and Executive Office, 21st and B Sts., N. W., Washington, D. C. Address all communications to Washington, D. C. Cable address: Scienservc, Washington.

Entered as second class matter October 1, 1926, at the postoffice at Baltimore, Md., under the act of March 3, 1879. Established in mimeographed form March 13, 1922. Title registered as trade-mark, U. S. Patent Office.

Subscription rate—\$5.00 a year postpaid. 15 cents a copy. Ten or more copies to same address, 5 cents a copy. Special reduced subscription rates are available to members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Advertising rates furnished on application.

Copyright, 1928, by Science Service, Inc. Reproduction of any portion of the SCIENCE NEWS-LETTER is strictly prohibited since it is distributed for personal, school, club or library use only. Newspapers, magazines and other publications are invited to avail themselves of the numerous syndicate services issued by Science Service, details and samples of which will be gladly sent on request.

INTERPRETING week by week, the latest developments in the various fields of science, this magazine attempts also to present its articles in the most pleasing and readable topography and the most convenient arrangement.

The *clippability*, *indexing*, and *automatic dating* of each article are unique features.

This is a *separable* magazine. Each original article can be clipped or torn out without losing or damaging another important article on the other side. These original articles are backed by reprinted quotations or excerpts, short one-sentence items, advertisements, and other material not likely to be clipped and preserved.

Each article is automatically *indexed* by the key word printed in italics just below the heading, or at the end of the article when the article has no heading. Articles can thus be filed easily into any system of classification, whether it be Library of Congress, Dewey, or one of the reader's own devising.

Each article is automatically *dated* by its last line.

All of the resources of Science Service, with its staff of scientific writers and correspondents in centers of research throughout the world, are utilized in the editing of this magazine.