

## ANTHROPOLOGY

# World's Oldest Cemetery Found in Palestine Caves

## Stone Age Man Chiseled From the Rock of Caves Almost a Foot Taller Than European of Same Time

**T**HE WORLD'S oldest discovered burying ground is in caves of Mount Carmel, Palestine. Stone Age men, women and children more than fifty thousand years ago were laid to rest there with deliberate system and care.

That human beings so early buried their dead in a fixed manner—lying on their stomachs, arms folded with hands toward face, legs doubled up—has been learned by examination of skeletons removed from the cave-cemetery, Theodore D. McCown, American anthropologist, stated to Science Service.

"Whether or not the cave dwellers believed in after life," said Mr. McCown, "they recognized some ritual difference between the living and dead."

When discovered, the ancient skeletons were encased in limestone and breccia which hardened about them in their cave-cemetery. Blocks containing twelve of the earliest Palestinians were cut out and shipped to the Royal College of Surgeons in London, where Mr. McCown is drilling the bones out of their matrix.

### Nine Inches Taller

The most complete skeleton that has so far emerged from the rock shows a Palestine man who stood almost a foot taller than his contemporaries in Europe. This skeleton, Mr. McCown explained, is five feet, ten inches tall, compared with an average of five feet, one inch, in Europeans of the time. The big Palestinian's legs were extremely long, adding at least two inches to his height.

Tall and impressive as he was, however, the Palestine man is not rated as a member of the race of modern man, *Homo sapiens*. Mr. McCown points to the beetling eye brow ridges and the low vaulted skull of the Palestine man, and calls him a kinsman of the ungainly, stooping Neandertal race of Europe. It is now believed that at least two different types of Neandertal men were living in the Old World, fifty to sev-

enty thousand years ago. Mr. McCown calls the Palestine type *Paleoanthropus Palestinus*, meaning Ancient Man of Palestine.

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## ARCHAEOLOGY

## Discover Bronze Age Chief In Great Oak Coffin

**W**ITH an oak tree weighing well over a ton for his massive coffin, a warrior of 1000 B.C. has been discovered at the village of Fels, Denmark.

At the Danish National Museum, coffin and contents have just been examined by museum scientists who pronounce the discovery a relic of Denmark's Bronze Age. The oak tree coffin, because of its size and remarkable preservation, is of exceptional interest.

The oak, felled 3,000 years ago for funeral use, is practically as hard in its hollowed interior as though cut yesterday. From its 43-inch diameter, the tree was 700 to 1,000 years old when

cut. The coffin is over ten feet long and has been figured to weigh approximately 3,300 pounds.

To make the rounded box and lid, Bronze Age woodsmen split the trunk in equal halves, leaving the bark untouched. With flint or bronze axes they hollowed the log, and the two halves fitted together without fastenings.

To the disappointment of museum examiners, contents of the tree trunk coffin have not been preserved so well. Fissures in both ends of the coffin unfortunately admitted ground water, corroding the contents.

There remain a man's woolen cap of coarse weave, remnants of a cowhide in which the body was wrapped, the disintegrated skull, and what seems to be a cloak clasp consisting of a bronze ornament in the well-known Nordic scroll-shield design.

Fels, where the great oak was found, is a village on the southwest coast of Denmark, a port for steamers sailing for England.

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## ARCHAEOLOGY

## Stone Age Germans Had Their Beer

**B**AVARIAN honor, in the matter of beer, stands vindicated at last. No more can the alien lands of Babylonia and Egypt claim to be the birthplace of the great German beverage. Beer has flowed in Bavaria ever since the Stone Age. A recent archaeological discovery proves it.



A WARRIOR'S COFFIN

Bronze Age woodsmen hollowed out a 7-century-old tree to make this coffin weighing about 3,300 pounds for an honored chief.

Dr. Ernst Frickhinger, director of the Museum of Prehistory in Nördlingen, not long ago dug up some broken pottery vessels at the site of a New Stone Age village in southern Germany. In one of them was a dark, glistening mass that appeared to be of organic nature. Dr. Frickhinger submitted a sample to the noted Berlin microscopist, Dr.

Johannes Grüss, who identified it as the remains of the special kind of bread used as the starting-point of the brewing process by all ancient peoples who knew how to make beer at all.

This find constitutes the first evidence that any people of the Late Stone Age drank beer.

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#### GENETICS

## 300 Generations Descended From One Pair of Insects

**T**HREE hundred successive generations of descendants of one individual have been reared during the past fifteen years in the laboratories of the Johns Hopkins University. This constitutes the longest single breeding experiment ever carried out, so far as known, Prof. Raymond Pearl, noted Johns Hopkins biologist, stated in announcing its result to the Washington Academy of Sciences. Translated into terms of human generations, it would carry us back to 7,000 B.C., at the dimmest twilight beginnings of the Bronze Age and before the dawn of history.

Crowding 300 generations of a living organism into half a human generation of time was made possible by the use of the little gnat-sized insect *Drosophila*, known variously as fruit-fly and yeast-fly. Its life-cycle can be completed in three weeks, instead of the human thirty years.

The experiment consisted in starting with a single normal male, mated to a female with vestigial wings. Normal males were selected from each hybrid generation, and always bred back to vestigial-winged mates. In the end, the "genes," or hereditary units determining normalcy in wings, were still there, striking evidence of the permanence and persistency of these factors in the reproductive process.

#### Longer Persistence

Prof. Pearl then called attention to far longer persistence in hereditary patterns of other organisms in nature. Some of the lower forms of animal life have come down unchanged through tens of millions of years.

Yet for all this demonstration of potency on the part of the hereditary units, the speaker cautioned against too easy

acceptance of doctrines ascribing all importance to heredity as against environment in human affairs.

"The full implications of the reciprocally determinative influences of organism and environment seem to me to have been generally somewhat less than adequately valued in the last century's development of biological thought," he said, "and certainly an extremely inadequate amount of first-rate research has been put upon the matter."

Nor was he willing to subscribe to the doctrine that birth control, in limiting the reproduction of the "upper classes" while the poor continue to breed, is "ruining the race." Making it plain that he supports the idea of birth control, and especially that he believes in checking the increase of the hereditarily defective, Prof. Pearl declared:

#### Why are They Superior?

"It is assumed that generally speaking and with negligible exceptions the more fortunate social and economic classes are in that position because they are composed of not only mentally, morally, and physically, but also genetically superior people. But it may be alleged with at least equal truth that these very people who are regarded as mentally, morally and physically superior are that way in no small part only because they and their forebears have been fortunate socially and economically.

"The analogy often drawn between human breeding and livestock breeding is in part specious and misleading. In animal breeding it has been learned that the only reliable measure of genetic superiority is the progeny test—the test of the quality of the offspring actually produced. Breeding in the light of this test may, and often does, lead to the

rapid, sure, and permanent improvement of a strain of livestock.

"But when the results of human breeding are interpreted in the light of the clear principles of the progeny test the eugenic case fares badly. The vast majority of the most superior people in the world's history have in fact been produced by mediocre or inferior forebears; and conversely the admittedly most superior folk have in the main been singularly unfortunate in their progeny.

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#### ETHNOLOGY

## Iroquois Indians Had Code for Murderers

**R**ULE number one for murderers: The slayer positively must stay beside his victim until discovered.

It sounds nonsensical, certainly. In this day and age, a murderer defies all laws, takes any chances, saves his skin by any wild maneuver he can think of.

Nevertheless, there used to be rules for murder in America. Iroquois Indians in the Great Lakes country and New York State had strict ones, so an ethnologist has discovered. What is more, an Indian murderer kept the rules, if he knew what was best for him.

How crime has changed in America is vividly shown by these Iroquois ideas on murder, reconstructed by J. N. B. Hewitt of the Bureau of American Ethnology, who has long studied the social organization of these Indians.

An Iroquois murderer, Mr. Hewitt finds, would steel himself to stay right beside the body until some one came along and found him—even if he waited a week in that gruesome company. His hope was that whoever discovered him would take him into custody without violence. Then, his kin would pay an agreed amount of wampum to the bereaved relatives. After financial settlement, the murder would blow over and be forgotten.

The murderer tensely waiting beside his victim knew, however, that there could be another outcome, far less pleasant. If he was found first by a relative of his victim, the enraged relative could slay him on the spot. That was right and proper, according to murder rules, and no weapons were barred.

But, of course, if the avenger slew the murderer then he, in turn, became a murderer. He must stay there beside the two bodies awaiting apprehension.