

GEOLOGY

Carolina "Bays" Dated

Studies of fossil bog pollen in the great elliptical depressions in the coastal plain indicate they originated during later phases of Ice Age.

► THE CAROLINAS' mysterious "bays", great elliptical depressions in the sandy coastal plain now mostly filled with bog deposits, originated during the later phases of the last great Ice Age, studies of fossil pollen carried on by Prof. Murray F. Buell of North Carolina State College indicate. (*Science*, Jan. 4)

Prof. Buell collected samples of soil from one of the bays, known as Jerome bog, taking them at six-inch intervals from the surface down through seven feet of peat and two feet of underlying clay, to the sandy soil at the bottom. Pollen grains preserved in the ancient soils were identified and counted.

Pollens from the lowermost samplings represented such trees as black-gum, native to the region today, indicating a climate not unlike that of the present when the depression was first formed. Above this, in the bottom clay, fir pollen is predominant, together with oak and hickory. This is the kind of forest now found in northern Minnesota, where the typical mixed hardwood forest of the United States meets the southern-most extension of the Canadian evergreen forest. Nearest firs to the "bays" now grow on the tops of the Southern Appalachians, with the mixed hardwoods stopping at lower levels.

It is estimated that a mixed hardwood-and-conifer forest must have developed in the Carolinas area during the Wisconsin period, which was the last great southward advance of the continental glaciers during the Pleistocene Ice Age.

The Carolina "bays", which have noth-

ing to do with bays in the ordinary sense of the word, have been the subject of much scientific controversy. One group of geologists believe they were produced by the impacts of giant meteorites in a single catastrophic shower. Opponents claim origins from less spectacular causes, such as eddying coastal currents, out-breaks of great artesian springs and the collapse of subterranean caves producing surface depressions and sink-holes. Prof. Buell points out that if the first hypothesis is correct, the Ice Age date determined for the Jerome bog should hold for all the bays; if not, the age is valid for this bog only; ages of others will need to be determined by separate studies.

Science News Letter, January 19, 1946

GEOLOGY

Americans Must Become Foreign-Mineral-Minded

► AMERICANS must become foreign-mineral-minded in the future and cooper-

ate with foreign government agencies in appraising foreign ore reserves that may some day be needed in the United States. This is the opinion of Dr. Alan M. Bateman, professor of economic geology at Yale University, expressed at a recent meeting of the Geological Society of America. He gave as a reason the problems faced during the war, of getting enough minerals to keep our industries in operation.

Dr. Bateman stated that he thought American mining companies should, with government cooperation, go into foreign mining of tin, manganese and chrome, in ventures that would afford protection to capital and benefits to the foreign countries.

He declared, "Without the security of return of capital, no capital will be invested in foreign ventures, and without the assurance of benefits to the owning country, no investments will be permitted."

It is Dr. Bateman's opinion that the State Department has an opportunity of leadership in establishing foreign relationships conducive to foreign mineral developments for Americans, and that geologists have a real job ahead of them for the future.

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