

ANTHROPOLOGY

Skeletons of Indian Dwarf Couple Described at Meeting

Abnormality Is of Type Fairly Common Among All Races, But Only One Other Indian Dwarf Skeleton Is Known

SKELETONS of a pair of dwarfs, the rarest abnormality known among prehistoric American Indians, were described before the American Association of Physical Anthropologists, meeting in Chicago, by Dr. Charles E. Snow of the Alabama Museum—W.P.A. Archaeological Laboratory, Birmingham, Ala. Only one other Indian dwarf skeleton, a specimen from Florida now in the National Museum in Washington, D. C., is known to science.

The two skeletons were found buried

a few feet deep in Mound State Monument, Moundville, Ala., and were measured as they lay. The man's skeleton indicated a height during life of between 4 feet 4 inches and 4 feet 6 inches. The woman apparently had measured approximately 4 feet 1 inch. The skull of the male was in fairly good condition, but the woman's skull was so badly crushed that restoration was impossible.

The two dwarfs were of a type fairly common among all races, with normal sized bodies but abnormally short legs and arms and often enlarged heads, technically termed chondrodystrophic dwarfs, Dr. Snow stated. A serious upset of the internal glands that control growth is considered possibly responsible for this kind of dwarfism.

The skull of the little Indian man is very large, and is shaped much as are the skulls of the same type of dwarf among white people, with prominent, bulging forehead and a concave, "nubbin-nosed" face. Arm and leg bones are short and massive, with rugged, highly developed areas for the attachment of muscles.

Both Indian dwarfs appear to have had their own share of physical ailments, for many of the teeth of the man's jaws show cavities and there are evidences of abscesses. There are also evidences of possible arthritis on the joints on the spinal columns of both dwarfs.

No evidence of the dwarfs' lot in life was found with their skeletons. Both were buried faces downward, with legs and arms partly drawn up. There were no funeral gifts accompanying them.

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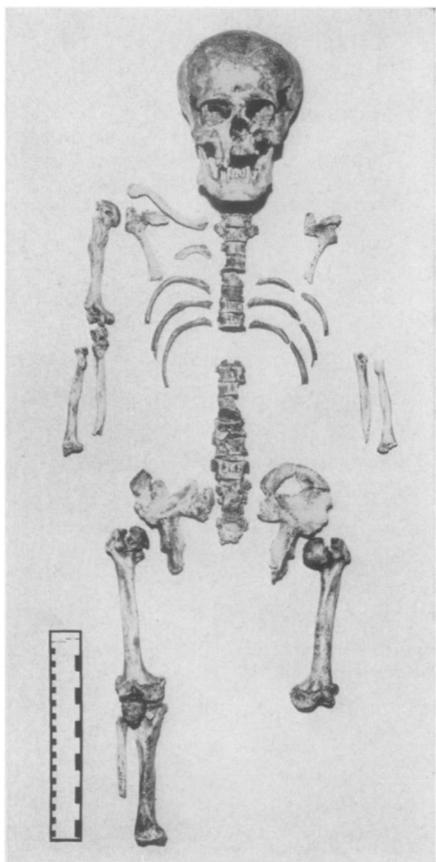
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RARE DWARF INDIAN

Skeleton of one of the two dwarf Indians found at Moundville, Ala., as prepared and photographed by Dr. Charles E. Snow of the Alabama Museum of Natural History—WPA Archaeological Laboratory, Birmingham, Ala. Note extreme shortness of arm and leg bones: the larger black-and-white marks on the measure alongside the right leg mark a height of eight inches to the knee.