

ARCHAEOLOGY

Texas River Terrace Yields Clues to Ancient Americans

Abundance of Stone Artifacts Found Eighteen Feet Beneath Surface Indicates Long Occupancy of Site

SCIENTISTS can add ten thousand years to the age of man in America. Man-made weapons, buried eighteen feet underground, have been unearthed near Austin, Texas, by Prof. J. E. Pearce, anthropologist of the University of Texas, and are hailed as convincing evidence that North America had inhabitants far earlier than archaeologists now concede.

The first discovery was witnessed by Dr. E. H. Sellards, professor of geology at the University, who has studied the geologic formation of the site and pronounces the discovery "highly significant in the early history of man in this part of the world."

The objects consist of flint dart points and slivers from flint workshops scattered in quantities through various strata of old Brushy River terrace, near Round Rock, Texas. At some levels old hearths and kitchen refuse have been found.

The significance of the discovery is that the time scale of America's vague prehistory must be stretched to a great length, like an elastic band. For if the river terrace flints are as old as the geology proclaims them to be, they are still not so old in type as some other Texas relics of man. Hence, the older relics must be given a new status, as having a much greater antiquity than has heretofore been assigned them.

"The find is of the first order of importance," says the geologist, "in that it clearly demonstrates the fact that man was living here, not sparsely, but in numbers, during the time when our broad valleys were being carved and filled by normal stream action."

Referring to scientific doubts and arguments over many reported discoveries of early Americans, Prof. Sellards commented:

"One beautiful feature of the situation lies in the abundance and unmistakable character of the archaeological materials. A few minutes digging at the right place brings to light chips and artifacts to such effect as to settle at

once all doubts as to the archaeological facts.

"Formerly it was supposed that man first appeared in North America from 8,000 to 10,000 years ago. The recent discovery at Round Rock by Mr. Pearce and similar discoveries elsewhere are tending to place the time of the appearance of man on this continent from 10,000 to 20,000 years earlier."

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METEOROLOGY

Air Mass From Yukon Caused Snow in Dixie

SNOWFLAKES falling on palmettos and cypresses around New Orleans, four inches of snow at Memphis, with a like white blanket over a wide section of the South, constituted the only really unusual feature of the cold wave that swept over the country. Otherwise it was a quite ordinary cold wave, U. S. Weather Bureau meteorologists informed Science Service.

The snowfall was due, it was explained, to the impact of a large cold air mass migrating from the Yukon country southeastward into the middle Mississippi valley, and there encountering air of relatively high temperatures laden with a high percentage of moisture.

The heavy snow will be of real benefit in at least one part of the country. For many months there has been a most anomalous drought area, extending from eastern Ohio southward into Tennessee. This is a mixed-farming region, with winter wheat as perhaps the chief grain crop. The long drought had left it in quite unsatisfactory condition, and lack of snow was exposing it to freezing and possible "heaving." Now the snow gives it protection against cold injury, and its eventual melting will at least partially relieve the drought.

Chill championship honors for the cold wave are shared by Yellowstone Park, Wyo., Havre, Mont., and Devils Lake, N. D., each showing a low-temperature record of 32 degrees below zero. But the best American "cold spots" seemed warm compared with what western Canada was able to do. At Prince Albert a temperature of minus 52 was recorded, and at Battleford the lowest thermometer reading was 54 degrees below zero.

Science News Letter, February 2, 1935

Man is the only "cry baby" known in the animal kingdom, says one anthropologist.



WHERE MODERN AMERICANS SEEK FORERUNNERS

Eighteen feet beneath the upper ground level of this terrace, Prof. J. E. Pearce of the University of Texas has found artifacts of ancient man. Inset: Dr. E. H. Sellards, geologist, who pronounces the site "highly significant."