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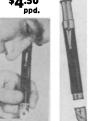
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ARCHAEOLOGY

## **Find Skeletons of Stone Age Cannibals in Ceylon**

➤ A MIDDLE STONE AGE burial place that was also a dump for kitchen refuse, where a cannibal tribe threw the broken bones of their victims, is described by Director P. Deraniyagala of the National Museums, Colombo, Ceylon, in Nature (Dec. 29, 1956).

Six more or less complete skeletons were found in the ancient burial, with fragments of about another ten individuals on top of or underneath them. The bones of animals used as food and stone implements were also found.

The skeletons were flexed and the majority faced east or southeast. Within reach of one skeleton was a bag of 13 sling stones, Dr. Deraniyagala reports.

Skulls showed that this ancient cannibal tribe were a long-headed people with markedly receding foreheads and projecting jaws. They had heavy, diffuse brow ridges. Their teeth were badly worn at an early age, probably due to sand in their food.

Their diet consisted mainly of snails, reptiles and small mammals such as squirrels, porcupine, monkeys, pole-cats and deer. Fire was known but its traces were scarce.

Science News Letter, January 12, 1957

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