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The Ancient Mounds of Ohio

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Abstract: Considers that the mounds in Ohio had their origins with Book of Mormon peoples.

The Ancient Mounds of Ohio.

By James P. Paul.

The state of Ohio is one of the greatest states in the Union. More than five millions of people live within its boundaries, and one's interest in this fact increases when he learns that the present age is not the only one in which the people centered about that region. In traveling through the state one finds a surprising amount of historical lore of interest to anyone who ever wondered about those mysterious races who lived so many thousands of years ago. There was a time, geologists tell us, when most of what is now Ohio was covered by fields of ice. Then nature relented, the ice melted, and soon hills, valleys, and rivers made their appearance. Some archaeologists believe that a race of people lived there prior to that time; but this has not yet been fully shown. If there were people there then, they disappeared, and after them, probably a very long time after, came a race of mystery, the Mound Builders.

Ohio was evidently the favorite field of these people, for it is dotted over, as is no other state in the nation, with thousands of their relics, and massive, well-preserved monuments of their existence. In more than twelve hundred places are found proofs of their habitation. The origin of these people is lost in obscurity. Many theories are advanced—that they may have descended from some still more primitive race—or have emigrated from Europe or Asia. The scholars agree upon but one point, and that is to say about the origin of these people, "We do not know." One

writer suggests that, perhaps like Topsy, they "just grew up."

One thing seems fairly certain. The race existed and passed away before the race of Indians, of which we have some knowledge, inhabited the country. Practically all the scientists agree upon that point, and it is interesting to read the reports these careful men have made of their investigations.

Exhaustive explorations have been carried on in many parts of the state. Near Circleville (a few miles from Columbus, the state capital), an entire city was discovered and excavated. When the streets of Cincinnati were graded, hundreds of mounds had to be leveled. At the Ohio State University is a large archaeological museum, filled with relics of these people. At Miamisburg, not far from Dayton, stands a heap of earth seventy feet high, on a practically level plain. This is said to be the world's largest mound of its kind, and was probably of great service in signaling and observation. Mounds of all sizes are to be seen today in central Ohio, and by their location it is easily seen that once they formed the bases for long distance signalling. At Newark are some of the most interesting remains which form a true mound city. Here we see a circular inclosure, surrounded by a twenty foot wall exactly a mile long. Within this inclosure is a heap of earth resembling in shape a flying bird. This is known as the Eagle Mound. Also there is to be seen a fort, composed of two parts: one part circular, covering about a quarter of a square

mile of ground, and with a wall some six feet high. This wall is unbroken except at one point where a walled passage leads to the other part. This other is an octagonal fort, with a forty foot opening at each of its eight corners. Directly behind each opening is a huge mound of earth, placed there to protect the defenders of the fort. The ways in which this double fort is adapted to conditions are truly remarkable and speak much for the military genius of those ancient people. The entire mound city is

natti, Hot Springs, and Minneapolis.

"This once populous city must have been the capital of a vast territory for it seems to have been approached by a walled sixty-foot Appian highway and to have contained well guarded government inclosures, walled and moated residences for officials, altars for worship and sacrifice, towers for watchmen, barracks for soldiers, and sepulchres for the distinguished dead." This is but one of the interesting regions.



THE SERPENT MOUND.

The head is in the upper left hand side, the tail (not shown) on the lower left.

bordered by hills, "and from these hills looked down a hundred watch-tower mounds upon the hundred included in the city, and established communication by night with the hundred other mounds of the court; if indeed 'wireless' messages were not flashed by re-signals through chains of towers to the present sites of Buffalo, Cincin-

About fifty miles above Cincinnati is another great inclosure, Fort Ancient. This fort also is double, consisting of two large walled inclosures with a narrow neck connecting. It reminds one of a great dumb-bell. The narrow neck seems to have been the center of many battles, for hundre's of skulls have been unearthed here,

together with many implements of war. The walls of the fort are, even today, in places twenty feet high.

In Adams County, upon the summit of the hill, remains a ridge of earth representing a serpent in the act of swallowing an egg. The serpent is five feet high and from eighteen to twenty feet broad. It is in four graceful coils before reaching the tail, which is twisted into three close coils. The egg is an oval inclosure 121 feet by 60 feet.

The magnitude and uniformity of these elaborate and gigantic earth works mark them as mysterious as the pyramids of Egypt, and as strong evidence that here once lived and loved and struggled a great people—a people with a religion, a government, and a broad domain. Prof. Putnam of the Peabody Institute, discussing the Serpent Mound, says, "Reclining on one of the huge folds of this gigantic serpent, as the last rays of

the setting sun cast long shadows over the valley, I mused on the probabilities of the past, and there seemed to come to me a picture as of a distant time, of a people with strange customs; and with it came the demand for an interpretation of this mystery. The unknown must become known!"

As I have traveled through those regions and have seen the ancient monuments, I too have mused on the probabilities of the past. But to me, and to all who have obtained knowledge of the great restored gospel, there is no mystery. For the Book of Mormon has rolled back the curtain, and clearly tells the story of the migration of those ancient people from the Tower of Babel; how they lived and loved, became a mighty people, upon this continent, finally became extinct and were replaced by the later peoples who migrated from Jerusalem—the forefathers of the American Indians of today.

Thinking on these things, well



Inside the fort at Newark showing two walls, opening between, and the mound behind the opening.

may we cry in the words of the poet:

"O God, that men would see a little clearer,
Or judge less harshly where they cannot see,"

so that they might open their minds to the truth; that they might judge less harshly that American volume of scripture, the Book of Mormon, and thus learn something more of the people who lived upon our continent hundreds of lifetimes ago.

Note: Of special interest to us today is the news that at Chilli-cothe, among the same foothills where the Mound Builders once worked, the Ohio and West Vir-

ginia troops are being trained. Through the ancient mounds and earthworks trenches are being cut for the soldiers' instruction, and the larger ancient mounds are echoing back the roar of giant guns, for here is located the heavy artillery range. In this same place the soldiers of 1812 and 1861 were trained; here Logan, the Mingo chief, held forth; here the soldiers of 1898 were mobilized and trained. And now in the world's greatest war, the same spot is chosen for training the armies of 1917 and 1918. What then can we say of the military genius of the Mound Builders in selecting this region for their great earthworks and defenses?

Conversation.

By John Henry Evans.

II.

WHAT TO TALK ABOUT.

The first question one should endeavor to answer who has made up his mind to improve his conversation is, What shall I say and what shall I not say? Certainly there are some things that are taboo in the conversation of cultivated people.

One of these is the making of one's own personality and doings the center of attention. This does not mean of course that one is never to talk about oneself. In a conversation between two intimate friends, meeting after months or years of separation, each is eager to know all that the other has been doing since they were last together. And it would be the veriest nonsense to dodge the only subject, possibly,

which would be of mutual interest. Even here, however, there might be lurking the danger that the conversation would become a monologue—in which event one or the other would be set down as a bore, "a person who persists in talking about himself when you want to talk about yourself." But in a conversation among several persons it is bad taste for one of the number to avail himself of every opportunity to snatch the general attention from whatever subject is under consideration and to center it upon himself.

"Some persons," as Dean Swift says, "without any ceremony, will run over the history of their lives; will relate the annals of their diseases, with the several symptoms and circumstances of them; will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court, in parliament, in