

# IS IT REALLY EUROPE'S OLDEST SKELETON?



SKELETON FOUND NEAR NEW YORK



SKELETON IN A STONE ENCLOSED GRAVE OF OLD INDIAN REMAINS FOUND IN KENTUCKY



EXPOSED BONES OF INDIAN ORIGIN

"On October 23, 4004 B. C., at 9 o'clock in the morning, man was created by the Trinity."  
This statement was the serious conclusion reached by no less a personage than Dr. Lightfoot, vice-chancellor of Cambridge University in England something like three hundred years ago. He was tremendously pleased with himself to have settled so important a question. Perhaps it is just as well that he did not live to discover that he had missed the mark by a small matter of probably several hundred thousand years, possibly many more.

If Dr. Lightfoot could have seen THE SUN of February 18, 1912, he would have read with interest the story of a skeleton recently found in England. According to this account the skeleton was discovered last October near Ipswich in Suffolk. The recorder of the event classes the bones as "not only the earliest remains of man yet found in England but with the exception of the Heidelberg jaw the earliest found in Europe."

Maybe this is true, maybe not. American authorities on anthropology are waiting for a more detailed scientific account than has yet appeared. But one of them did not hesitate to say the other day that if the skeleton presents the characteristics of modern man which have been ascribed to it "the safe bet would be that it was not deposited 100,000 years ago on the spot where it has just been found."

This does not mean that there has been any dishonesty connected with the discovery. It means that perhaps some one has taken a too sanguine view of the geological evidences of antiquity. Until absolutely convincing testimony to the contrary is forthcoming the anthropologists referred to will believe that such modern type of man as is indicated by these Ipswich bones walked the earth so long ago.

Until then the famous Heidelberg jaw will continue to occupy its present proud position as dean of human bones, for scientists are practically unanimous in placing its age at something like 100,000 years. Naturally in these estimates of prehistoric periods some thousands of years more or less are not insisted upon. No one aspires to succeed Dr. Lightfoot in fixing the precise date of the creation. But there is practical certainty that the sixteen teeth still ornamenting the Heidelberg jaw were doing service so very, very long ago that 100,000 years cannot be far wide of the mark.

The "Who's Who" among human remains is an immensely interesting record, not merely to the scientist but to every-day folks. With one possible exception the Heidelberg jaw as before said is the

oldest known resident. It was discovered in 1907 about six miles from Heidelberg. For twenty years a German scientist, Dr. Otto Schoetensack, had been keeping an eye on a certain sandpit in that locality which was being worked for commercial purposes. He interested the owner and the workmen so much that whenever a bone or anything resembling a trace of human existence was reached work at that point was stopped until the doctor could be summoned.

Dr. Schoetensack was so deeply interested in this locality because, owing to the character of the deposit and the undisturbed condition, its immense antiquity was unquestionable. As the excavation proceeded remains of certain mammalian animals were found which led to the hope that human remains also would be discovered. But it was only after twenty years waiting that the jaw which was to become one of the most famous bones in the world was uncovered at a depth of almost eighty feet and only a foot or two above the very bottom of the deposit.

Of course in these discoveries there are three things to be considered. One must be sure that the relic is actually found at the point claimed, that the overlying deposits of soil, sand, clay or whatever they may be have never been disturbed, and that the characteristics of the remains themselves prove that they did not reach their position at a much later date than the geological conditions would indicate. There is generally room for argument upon one or all of these points, with the result that most human remains for which immense antiquity is claimed have been the subject of persistent wrangling.

In most cases the discussion is due to honest differences of opinion about a genuine relic, the only point at issue being just how ancient it is. Sometimes, however, the entire scientific world is

temporarily drawn into heated arguments over something which turns out to be a fake pure and simple. There was the so-called Calaveras skull, for instance, which created excitement about fifty years ago.

It was found in Calaveras county, California, in 1869 in a mine shaft about 130 feet below the surface, and might indeed have been the relic it caused. If it had been a genuine find it would have meant that America could show proof of human occupation for tens of thousands of years. Unfortunately for this theory the scientists got busy with the skull. They measured it and analyzed it and compared it with comparatively modern Indian skulls, and in effect they said: "Nay, nay. This skull is a mere parvenue."

It really was, too. In course of investigation some of these shrewd scientists took the gravel which had been inside the skull when found, analyzed that also and discovered that it was modern gravel; that is, it had been laid down many, many centuries later than the deposit in the mine shaft. Finally it came out that some workmen had played a joke on the mine owner by "salting" the shaft with an old skull they had found somewhere else.

To return to the "Who's Who" of bones there is only one rival to the Heidelberg jaw as patriarch of these human relics. This is a fossilized skull found in Java in 1891 by Dr. Dubois of the Leyden University. An account of it was soon published with the result that ever since there has been such a flood of discussion as never was let loose before. Even many scientific journals hailed the skull as the "missing link."

Then the experts ranged themselves in three groups. Some claimed that the skull was not human but simian. Others said it was that of a human being with certain simian (apelike) characteristics,

and a third group declared that it belonged to an intermediate family; in short that it was a relic of the missing link between monkeys and men. This opinion is the one which is now most generally accepted. And that does not class the skull as strictly human, though even more interesting and significant, the Heidelberg jaw may still be allowed to retain its preeminent claim of age.

Next in it in point of antiquity is a considerable number of relics, much younger but nevertheless roughly classed as about 50,000 years old. These belonged to a race or type known as the Neanderthal man, because the first remains of this type were discovered in Prussia in 1856 in a cave at the entrance to a small ravine called Neanderthal. There was an entire skeleton, but as usual the bones had disintegrated badly and were so much damaged by the workmen in getting them out that only the skull and parts of the larger bones finally reached their present resting place in the museum at Bonn. The methods of excavation and preservation had not then reached their present degree of care and skill.

The usual acrimonious discussion followed this discovery, but it has been verified by so many subsequent finds that the Neanderthal type is a recognized one now. Until the discovery of the Heidelberg jaw these were the oldest human relics in Europe. They represent a man of a distinctly primitive type; and the idea that human beings with the modern development indicated by descriptions of the Ipswich bones could have antedated the Neanderthal man is regarded with incredulity by anthropologists of this country.

All scientists who make a specialty of searching for prehistoric human remains have learned to be cautious; but perhaps no others have had so much reason to be wary as Americans. There is a curious absence in this country of any hu-

man remains which can be classed by scientists as of great antiquity. This is, so far as is known, really "the New World" where man is concerned. There are remains of animals which go back to the early ages of the world, and hope is continually sprouting that some one will turn up the human bones to match.

Every little while some amateur antiquarian does utter a loud whoop of triumph and invites the world to behold the skull or even the entire skeleton of a primitive human being. For instance, there were the New Orleans skeleton, otherwise known as "the gasometer skeleton" because it was found near a New Orleans gas tank in 1844; the "Quebec skeleton," the "Natchez petrified bones," found in Florida in 1852; the "Charleston Bones," the "Calaveras skull," before described; the "Rocky Bluff skull," found in Illinois in 1866; the "Man of Pinon" found in the Valley of Mexico in 1884; the "Lansing Man," found in Kansas in 1902; the "Nebraska loess man," found in 1897; ten skulls and other bones found in Gilder Mound, Nebraska, about the same time; other Florida finds, and finally the relics discovered between 1894 and 1899 near Trenton, N. J.

Some of the earliest of these finds vanished in the course of time, but the surviving records were examined by the chief of American anthropology, Prof. Hrdlicka of Washington, who has also made a minutely careful study of all the bones in the above list that are still preserved. In not one case has it been possible to concede to the relics anything like the antiquity of many unquestioned European finds. Even the Trenton bones, for which some claimants assert an age of 10,000 or 15,000 years, are modern compared with the Heidelberg jaw or even the Neanderthal type of remains.

The indications however are that these Trenton bones are the oldest so far dis-

covered in North America. Their finder, Mr. Volk, is a lover of anthropology who has for years investigated the surroundings of Trenton, carrying on the work under the direction of Prof. F. W. Putnam of the Peabody Institute of Cambridge. He has worked with extraordinary care and patience, first making a ditch and then shaving the side walls of it down inch by inch so that every section of the soil would be reached and examined without disturbing the position of its contents.

In 1894 he made several important discoveries on the Abbott farm. Six feet below the surface he found in what is known as yellow drift two heaps of human bones. Later another set of bones was found at a little distance from the first two, but in the same yellow drift. There is no question of the genuineness of these finds and that they are relics of great antiquity.

According to one of the anthropologists at the American Museum of Natural History, where these bones are now displayed, the difficulty in fixing their age is the impossibility of determining the age of the deposit in which the bones were found. In this country it is not easy to tell the age of these deposits. In Europe, where there were well marked glacial epochs, it is another matter. The yellow drift at Trenton may be 10,000 or 15,000 years old. It may be older, but it may also be much younger. So the relics cannot be pigeonholed with a definite age label.

The Trenton bones about which there is the greatest controversy and for which the original claim was that it seemed to date from preglacial times is known as the Trenton femur. It is a fragment of a human thigh bone, and it can also be seen at the museum here. But there is a great deal of doubt as to its belonging in the epoch of the gravel where Mr. Volk himself found it December 1, 1890. It is not questioned that he found it there, but the

general opinion is that it had worked its way there from outside that "horizon."  
So in the end Americans have nothing to prove that when those Heidelberg teeth were serving their owner a thousand centuries ago, or when the Neanderthal men were dodging mammoths and bison and a lot of equally undesirable citizens of that time there was anybody on this continent to dodge an equally varied collection of large hungry beasts. But American scientists are, so to speak, shovelling after some evidence to the contrary. In the course of the excavations which are being made by expeditions sent out by the Natural History Museum some fortunate spade thrust may uncover the relic of our true first families.

In the meantime American men of science are simply loading up with an endless amount of material about the so-called primitive races of this hemisphere, the early Indian tribes, cave dwellers, Aztecs, all the curiously advanced races of the Southern continent. Anybody can find Indian skeletons in this country without half trying, but it is only of recent years that they have been excavated with the systematic care shown at present.

The most extraordinary human relic in this country is the body which is commonly referred to as the "copper woman," although it is that of a man. It is the mummy of an Indian found in a copper mine in Chile which has been worked for many centuries.

The remains are undoubtedly of great age and are of extraordinary interest because they constitute one of the only two cases in which the soft parts of the body have been thus preserved intact. The other case occurred in Sweden, also in a copper mine. In both instances the body was preserved by some action of copper salts.

The one found in Sweden was supposed to be that of a miner who had disappeared only seventy or eighty years previously, but the one now in the Natural History Museum is far more ancient.  
In the museum's collection a curious interest attaches to certain skulls found in prehistoric Peruvian graves and exhibiting unmistakable evidence of the remarkable skill possessed by these early races in an operation which was long supposed to be a triumph of modern surgery. Either for ritualistic purposes or for cures or for some other unknown reason the operation known as trepanning or trephining seems to have been not infrequently performed. In most of these skulls the bone is pierced by an irregular hole, but in one of those shown at the museum the hole is square with the ends of the artificial cuts plainly visible.

## AT THE SHRINE OF ST. RITA IN THE BRONX

### Many People Seeking Relief From Troubles Through the Intercession of the "Saint of the Impossible."

Up in The Bronx there is a little stone church to which hundreds of persons make a pilgrimage each day—the "Miracle Church," they call it. It is now a stone one-story structure at 825 East 148th street, and it is entered by descending a few steps. In the chapel many candles are always burning before the altars, the gifts of persons who seek in their trouble the intercession of Saint Rita—the "Saint of the Impossible."

The church is expected to increase in size within the near future. Its fame has grown through the stories that have spread of wishes fulfilled after a pilgrimage there, of health that has been restored, of broken families that have been reunited, of business troubles brought to a successful ending. All the thousand and one cares and fears that afflict humanity are represented by the pilgrims who kneel each day in the little church.

It is perhaps because Saint Rita was a wife and a mother, then a widow, that she is supposed to give ear to the love-troubled and intercede in their behalf. Her early girlhood was passed in the village of Caucia in the Apennines, near Umbria, the birthplace of St. Francis of Assisi. Her first day is known as the Feast of the Roses and roses are blessed at the altar of her church and distributed among the congregation and sent to various homes upon request.

The story of the rose of St. Rita is that in the closing days of her life a relative visited her and asked if she wished any favor. St. Rita requested that a rose be brought from her old garden in Rocca Padana. It was mid-January and even in Italy there are no roses at that time

of year. But on visiting the old home of Rita a rose was found in full bloom; also figs ripened on the trees. These were brought to the infirm saint. She was 70 when she died in the spring following the finding of the rose. Tradition says that her face after death took on the comeliness and beauty of youth, that many miracles occurred, that new stars were seen, that unseen bells were heard to ring.

Then too there is the story of her bees, which from her childhood had always been about her, even taking their place near the door of her cell while she was in the convent. When she died they hovered above her body. Pope Urban VII. requested that one of these bees be sent to him at Rome. It returned after a few hours to Caucia. These bees were at first white, then yellow; they have no sting and make no honey. They do not mate, each dwells in a thorn shaped cell, a gossamer web woven across the entrance during the winter.

St. Rita was extolled in song, story and painting. One old picture shows in six scenes the main incidents of her life before she entered the convent, when about 30 years of age. Giovanni de Amicis, a neighbor, wrote her life, which was also put into verse. Another life was written by Father Cavallucci of the Hermits of St. Augustine and was published in Rome.

This book says that Rita's birth year is in some doubt, but is supposed to be 1386. She was married according to the custom of the time when about 12 and she lived eighteen years with her husband until his death. He is described

as fierce and tempestuous in character, feared by all; but Rita's sanctity and prayers finally won him, tamed his unruly nature and caused him to join in his wife's almsgiving and good deeds among the poor and afflicted.

Then the tragedy of her life began. Her husband was slain by an enemy, and her two sons, growing to be men, swore to be revenged. Her prayer at this time was that this un-Christian wish be denied them. Both died soon afterward and the saint was left alone.

She begged admittance to a convent of Augustinian nuns, but this was at first denied her and she returned to her lonely home to weep and pray. It was this period of suffering that caused her to understand the sorrows of others. Later she was admitted to the order. Her power of working miracles received recognition from many prelates, including the late Pope Leo XIII., who had a picture of her placed in his room.

It has been only within the last few years the fame of St. Rita has grown in the United States. Before that Italy, Spain, Portugal, South America and Canada had honored her.

There are special services at St. Rita's Church each Tuesday in the afternoon and evening. On these occasions hundreds of votive candles burn and the little church is filled to overflowing. While there are many lame and afflicted in the throng of worshippers, the usual appeal to the "Saint of the Impossible" seems to concern troubles that are not physical. There is a special prayer book dedicated to St. Rita and a litany which

recites her virtues, part of which reads:  
O St. Rita, predicted by an angel.  
O St. Rita, remarkable in childhood.  
O St. Rita, enamored of solitude.  
O St. Rita, example of blind obedience.  
O St. Rita, perfectly united to the Divine will.

O St. Rita, of unstriving patience.  
O St. Rita, model of gentleness.  
O St. Rita, perfect type of the Christian mother.  
O St. Rita, mirror of Christian spouses.  
O St. Rita, miracle of fortitude.  
O St. Rita, heroic in sacrifice.  
O St. Rita, generous in forgiving.  
O St. Rita, tender benefactress of thine enemies.  
O St. Rita, martyr of penitence.  
O St. Rita, abased through humility.  
O St. Rita, embracing voluntary poverty.  
O St. Rita, exemplar as a widow.  
O St. Rita, mirror of conventional life.  
O St. Rita, mystical rose of every virtue.  
O St. Rita, sweet honey of the comb.  
O St. Rita, bouquet of fragrant myth.  
O St. Rita, advocate of the impossible.  
O St. Rita, advocate of desperate cases.

Pray for us.  
The "Consolation of Hope in St. Rita" is quoted from her life written by Father Tardi:

O youth or parents or cloistered, O troubled or afflicted, have recourse to her in the great trials of life, and when these appear irreparable do not lose courage; for she, the saint of the impossible and desperate cases at this time, will take pleasure in protecting and consoling you.

The Rev. James P. O'Brien, S. T. L., is pastor of the church.

**Doing Her Own Marketing.**  
From the Idea.  
A young wife recently went into a grocer's shop and addressed the grocer thus: "I bought three or four hams here a month or so ago and they were fine; have you any more of them?"  
"Yes, ma'am," replied the grocer, "there are ten of those hams hanging up there now."  
"Well, if you're sure they're off the same pig I'll take three of them," replied the young wife meekly.

## THIS MAN PRINTED HIS OWN MONEY

### A War Time Get-Rich-Quick Scheme That Was More or Less Justified Under the Circumstances.

"I paid the other day for a 'shinplaster' of a face value of 10 cents," said an old time printer, "which was one of an issue of war time emergency small change currency out of which, if I had had even an inkling of present day financial ability and a corresponding genius for applying it, I might have accumulated a comfortable wad. This particular relic and reminder of those days of small currency scarcity had in some way come into the possession of a collector of odds and ends of similar curiosities. I accidentally came face to face with it, and as I recognized it as one among thousands of others I had myself printed nearly fifty years ago, with the possibility of its being one that I had put into circulation myself, I did not hesitate to pay the collector's price for it."  
"In 1882 I was working in a weekly newspaper office in a Pennsylvania coal region village. I was a youngster of 17. Besides myself, the office force was the editor, who was not a practical printer, and an apprentice boy. The small change famine had begun to be felt in that town early in the fall. The place was of considerable business importance on account of the coal trade, and as the scarcity of currency increased the situation became a matter of deep concern to every one, if I may except the printing office in which I worked."

"During the three months I had worked there I had received \$4 in cash, in sums ranging from sixpence to four shillings, that being the style of denominating small money in those days in that locality. To be sure, I had traded out orders on a grocery, for crackers and cheese, on a restaurant for oysters, on a bakery for

pie and cake, on a tavern for one week's board, \$3; on a clothier for a linen duster and a ten cent straw hat, and on various other tradesmen who had advertised with us; but these did not relieve my financial embarrassment.

"The small change famine came to such a serious condition that business men had to do something to relieve the stress. Postage stamps were the only things that could be depended on in the way of small currency, but they had a fatal drawback to efficiency owing to their disposition to stick together, so that while a person might have a dollar in postage stamps the available value of it as a circulating medium would not be more than three cents; and as far as postage stamps afforded any relief to me personally they were nil, for to get postage stamps to circulate one had to have money to put down for 'em. No business men began to issue individual notes in denominations of 5, 10, 25 and 50 cents, redeemable in bank notes when presented to the makers in sums of \$5 or over."

"Several of the prominent local business men had their notes printed at our office, I did the work myself. There were ten notes of each denomination made up in a form for the press and printed on one sheet. The impressions were delivered in that way to the persons issuing the notes according to the size of their order for sheets and were cut off by the makers as they wanted them for use. As these shinplasters were issued in large numbers and the signing of them would have been an arduous task the signatures of the makers were engraved in facsimile and printed with the notes. The notes were printed on bank note

paper, some in green ink, some in blue, some in red, according to the choice of the person issuing them. I set up the type for the shinplasters and printed them on the old hand press. They were as good as gold in that place and its vicinity and relieved the financial distress wonderfully, except as it affected that printing office as a printing office.

"I had been instructed by the editor that after printing an order for shinplasters, all of the forms being kept standing, I was to lock the forms in a closet, which I did. I had no instructions though not to unlock the closet and take them out again, and I could see no reason why I shouldn't be enjoying luxurious times as well as any one else. So one evening I took a form of notes out of the closet, put it on the press, pulled off a sheet, and had \$9 in just as good money for that as I had any other."

"I made no undue display of my wealth, but I think that the improvement in my financial affairs was noticed, and if the editor had heard of it I believe he could have gone out and got some credit somewhere, for the people thought he was paying cash. I continued to make issue of funds to myself in this way as circumstances prompted. If I ran a little short of money I took out the form of notes that was handiest and simply pulled off a few sheets. Then I was healed again."  
"If I had been a real financier I might have left that town with a bundle simply by presenting now and then \$5 worth or so of shinplasters to their makers and getting bank notes for them. But I didn't think of that, and although two months passed before the issuing of these individual shinplasters became no longer a necessity, I was soon in such financial straits again that I was obliged to find my way out of town on a canalboat, dire misfortune having overtaken that printing office."