

Western Reserve and Northern Ohio

HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

No. Twenty-Three—October, 1874.

RELICS OF THE MOUND BUILDERS.

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In July, 1874, the Secretary of the Western Reserve and Northern Ohio Historical Society brought with him from Memphis, Tennessee, a very valuable addition to the collection of relics now in the Society's museum belonging to that mysterious race, the Mound Builders.

They are the generous gift of Colonel L. J. Du Pre, editor of the *Memphis Appeal*, a gentleman whose contributions in print and in manuscript concerning the first known inhabitants of our country are of absorbing interest.

With one exception the mounds from which these articles were taken are located on Mississippi River, about sixty miles below Memphis.

Among them is a skull in good preservation, showing at its base the marks of pressure against a board or other hard substance, producing a flat depression. The skull is said to have been taken from the bottom of a mound about forty or fifty miles below Memphis.

Among the contents of the mounds of this vicinity was a black baked basin, shaped much like a tin wash-basin, which contained a skull lying within it face upward. The material of the basin is similar to that of the black vessels hereinafter described, and the skull (now in Memphis) is in a state of preservation similar to that donated to the society. Both skulls are of uncommon thickness and strength.

The donation contains numerous specimens of pottery. Some of them are of brown clay baked and retaining its color, some of them are black throughout as if made of river mud. They are all mixed with pounded shells in the manner common with the Mound Builders except No. 14. None of this pottery is glazed, although

some of it is very smoothly and handsomely made and some pieces have a hard outside finish that appears something like glazing.

No. 1 is a vase of handsome form, painted red and of smooth, hard surface, nine inches in diameter, six and a half inches high to the shoulder. The mouth or spout is broken away, but may be guessed to have been like number three.

No. 2 is a soft, black porous vessel, not far from round, about eight and one-half inches in diameter, five and three-fourths inches high to the spout, which is one and three-fourths inches wide, and of which about that length remains. This vessel was probably a water cooler, to which use it was by shape and structure well adapted.

No. 3 is a vase of smooth, hard surface—striped in three colors, red, white and brown, about the size and shape of number one. There remains, however, the spout or top of the vase, striped, five inches long in diameter, at the lower end one and five-eighths inches, at the upper end one-half inch aperture. The spout stood upon the top of the vase, and the whole resembled in shape some of the Peruvian vases, used for holding fluids, and closed with a round stone used as a cork.

This and number one are too smooth, sharp and regular in outline to have been formed with the hand. They were very likely moulded, and very nicely too, as the joints do not show. The inside shows the plain marks of fingers pressing the fine brown clay against the moulds. The shells are pounded much finer in this and number one than in the others.

No. 4 is an unbroken pot, five inches in diameter and five high, with a curved mouth two inches in diameter. It is made