

# New Mexico May Preserve Early Man Deposits Found in Sand, Gravel Pit



(Editor's note: In a gravel pit in eastern New Mexico, scientists are unearthing a cradle of prehistoric American civilization. Gordon K. Greaves, publisher of the Portales, N.M., News-Tribune here reports on the search for knowledge of the first Americans.)

By GORDON K. GREAVES  
Written For  
United Press International

Portales, N.M. — (UPI) — A 10-foot deep cut through the dry bed of a 12,000-year-old lake on the plains of eastern New Mexico may provide the answers of classic archeological puzzles in the new world.

The bank, cut by bulldozers in the process of mining sand and gravel, has been described by archeologists as the most important early man deposit in the entire new world.

The New Mexico legislature recently appropriated \$100,000 to preserve the site and erect a building over the deposits if it can be acquired by the state.

**Puzzles Could Be Solved**  
Among the puzzles that possibly could be solved by painstaking examination of evidence in the old lake bed:

— Why did the horse, along with the camel and the elephant-like mammoth, disappear from the Americas from Canada to Patagonia, at least 10,000 years before Columbus brought the old world horse to this continent?

— When did the first human being arrive on this continent? There is ample evidence that he didn't evolve in the pattern of early man in Africa.

— When did early Ameri-

can man first start gathering seeds to supplement his meat diet? When did he start cultivating plants?

**Are Slow to Venture**

Archeologists are slow to venture opinions on these questions, but the evidence that has come to light in this site has already caused revision of many prior conceptions about early man.

They are piecing together the life and times of the continent's first human inhabitants. Each year brings new techniques which throw new light on the mystery.

Botanists, for example, have been able to determine what plants grew during each of the ages represented in the layers of the old lake. Nuclear physics has provided the carbon 14 method of dating bones from the bed.

There may even be a challenge for an economist to unravel the question of whether each man was entirely self-sufficient, or depended upon his neighbors. The closest flint quarries to the area are on the Canadian river near Amarillo, Tex., and it already has been determined that at least half the artifacts found in this deposit came from there, leaving the question — Was there trade 12,000 years ago, or did each hunter personally go to the source for his ammunition?

**Game Hunters Question**  
A puzzle to big game hunters is how a man, with possibly a hand-held launcher, could drop a mammoth in its tracks when a modern high-powered rifle seldom can stop an elephant immediately.

Until the recent excavations, it had been speculated

that early man attacked the animals while they were bogged down in the mud. But the position of the bones on the firm gravel beds shattered that theory.

Early man lived continuously on these high plains for at least 12,000 years, and the dried layers of this lake bed have preserved enough of the tools of these ages to enable scientists to draw tentative conclusions about the cultures that evolved.

Students of early man say this lake bed has been an oasis for human and animal life. And although the deposits have been known since 1932, recent excavations have centered attention on the north bank.

## Negro on Tennessee Board of Education

Nashville, Tenn. — (UPI) — Gov. Frank Clement has appointed a Negro educator to the State Board of Education, the first such post ever to be held by a Negro in Tennessee.

Dr. Harold West, president of Meharry Medical College, was the second Negro to be appointed to a high post in the Clement administration within the past week.

Clement earlier had named Willard Bowden, a Negro, to the State Pardons and Paroles Board.

## BOMB FOUND

Portland — (UPI) — A homemade dynamite bomb was found attached to the front door at the home of Ronley J. Duncan, a Portland State College student, and his wife Wednesday.

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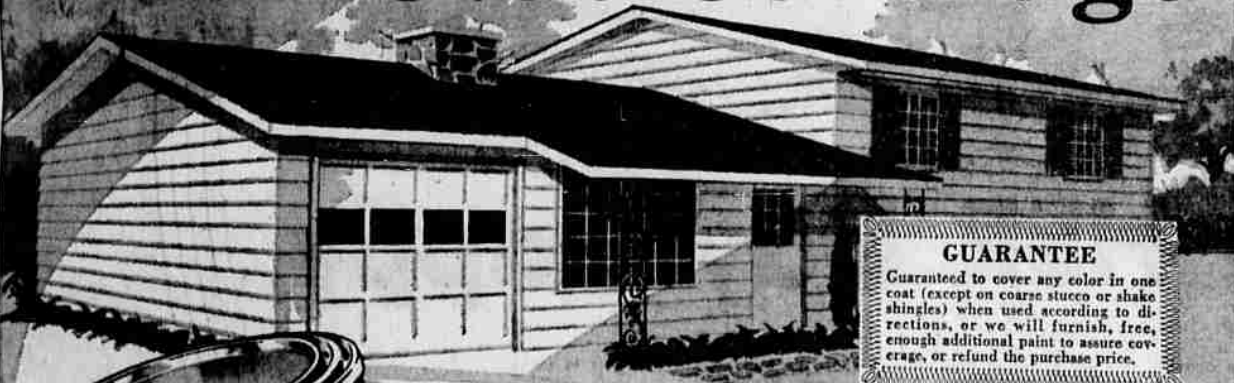
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