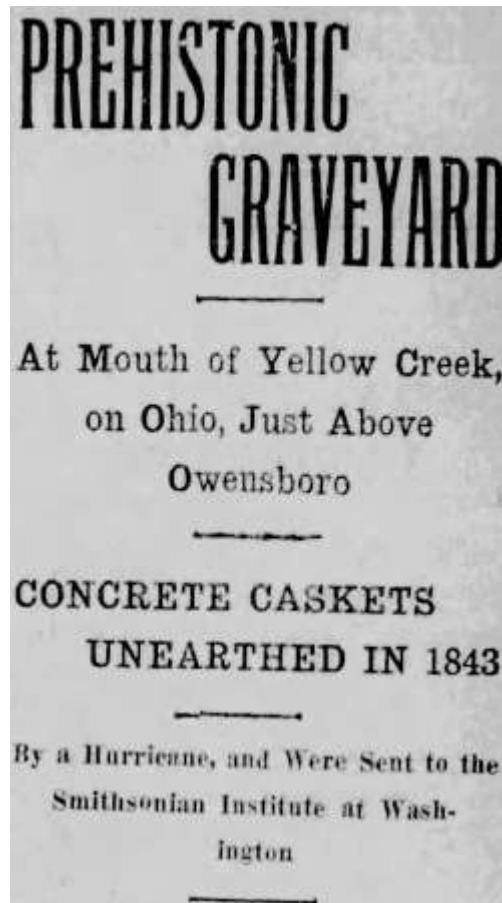


Prehistoric Graveyard Unearthed In 1843

By Jerry Long
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Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY,
Sunday, 25 September 1910, p.1B:



There are but few people now living in Owensboro who are aware of the fact that near this city there is a prehistoric burying ground which is supposed to be of enormous size and which was discovered by accident.

There came a hurricane of considerable force, which crossed the Ohio river at or near the mouth of Yellow creek, a few miles above the city in the year 1843, which destroyed a great many

forest trees. The uprooting of a large yellow poplar, the roots of which sank deep into the alluvial soil just below the creek unearthed two large caskets of enormous size, six feet and a half long by four feet wide and 30 inches in depth, composed of material similar to the concrete we are using at this age, and cemented with a substance as hard as flint.

One of the caskets was perfect. The other had a corner about a yard square torn off by the roots of this huge poplar, which was five feet in diameter. They were discovered by Mr. Walker R. Hawes, who first saw these singular prehistoric relics. He and others hauled them to the waters edge on a sled drawn by oxen. The writer was pilot on the steamer Sylph the first packet to ply between this city and the Falls how the city of Louisville, in 1845, commanded by Captain Preston Lodwick of Troy, Indiana, which is the second oldest town in the state of Indiana. Vincennes has priority.

The Sylph was a small sidewheel boat with an open cabin. She was 115 feet long and light draught. She was a tri-weekly packet and always left Owensboro at 9 a. m. and Sunday was one of the days on which it left. One Sunday morning I was at the wheel — September 1845 I answered a hail just below the mouth of the creek. I then saw lying near the water, these caskets and several people, among them being Walker R. Hawes and Thomas McCreery, who, with others, assisted in getting the heavy caskets on board the boat.

I hope some of those who may see this article may come to my aid in these facts. I was given these relics and sent them to the Smithsonian institute at Washington, D. C.

I mentioned this to Major Weebe Hawes, who is well known in this county, a few years before his death and in his mode of language, he said: "H — h! I know all about it. It covers a thousand acres and I believe that I can get men here to assist in excavating those old Indian relics."

All I know is that I have seen by the banks caving in considerably, but there was a second bank further back when these caskets were unearthed. I hope some enthusiast will make a new effort to make a thorough search and bring to light something prehistoric.

W. H. DANIEL. [Above penned by Capt. Wilson Hunt Daniel (1824-1914)]



Graves were discovered near the mouth of Yellow Creek on the Ohio River north of Thruston