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The Largest Mound in America

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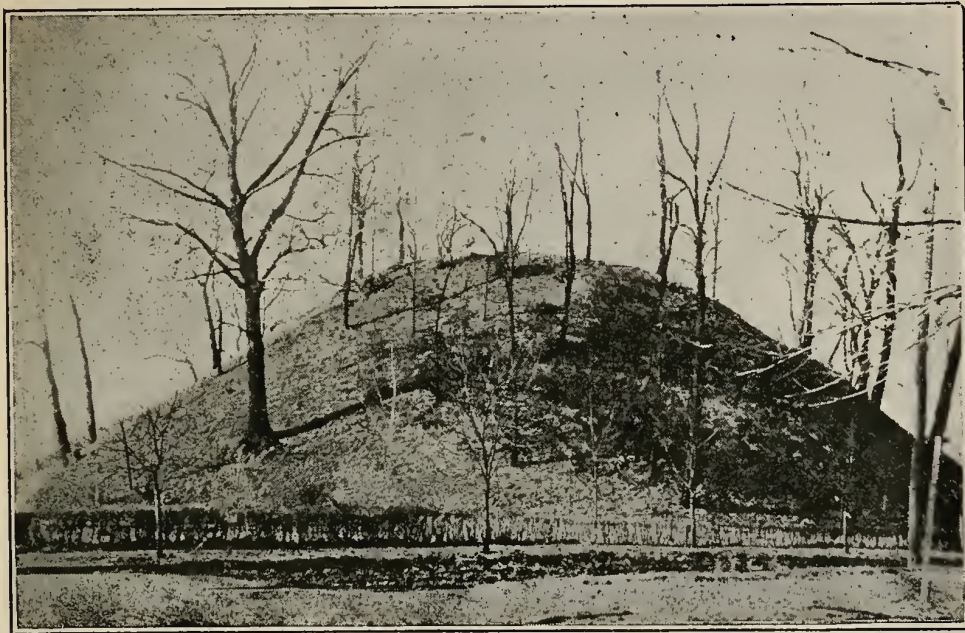
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Abstract: A large mound located at Moundville, West Virginia, is believed to have existed for some three thousand years. Three human skeletons were discovered within the mound's two vaults. A stone located at the mound and now held at the Smithsonian Institute contains an inscription that has never been deciphered. Some Latter-day Saints consider these things to be archaeological evidences of the Book of Mormon.

THE LARGEST MOUND IN AMERICA

BY GOLDEN H. BLACK, LOUIS H. PETERSEN

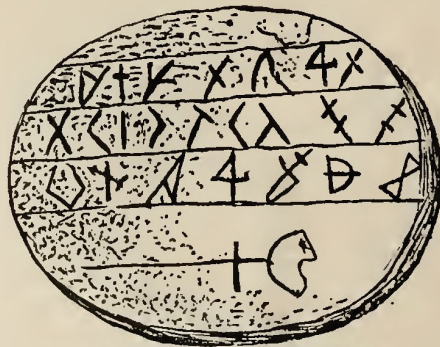
We feel it would be of value to those who are interested in the ancient inhabitants of America to know something of this mound, and especially to those who are familiar with the Book of Mormon.



THE MOUND AT MOUNDVILLE, WEST VIRGINIA

This large and interesting mound is located in the Ohio river valley at the city of Moundville, West Virginia. The mound is nine hundred feet in circumference at the base, and seventy feet in height. This mound was undisturbed by white men until the year 1838. It is believed that this mound has stood more than three thousand years. A man by the name of Jesse Thomalson opened the mound by digging a tunnel, ten feet high, seven feet wide, to the center of the mound. At one hundred and eleven feet they came to a room or vault, eight feet wide, twelve feet long, seven feet high. In this vault they found two human skeletons, the one was surrounded by sixteen hundred fifty ivory beads, and an ivory instrument. Forty feet above this vault another like it was built, which was reached from the top of the mound by a shaft that was sunk from the top. In this vault was found a single skeleton. This was evidently a person of importance, a royal personage, a great chief, or high priest. This skeleton was ornamented with copper rings, plates of mica and bone

beads, and also over two thousand discs cut from shells. The copper rings and bracelets weighed about seventeen ounces. An ivory ornament was found in this vault. Examination showed that from the second vault to the top of the mound there were bits of bones and ashes, and that the entire mound had been built of cremated bodies of the dead builders, piled upon the vault of their dead king and queen. Another chief, who died later, was interred in a top vault. Relics in large numbers have been picked up and a stone image representing a human figure sitting in a cramped position was found. History states that the features of the figure, and especially the nose, were distinctly Roman. Evidence of other vaults in the mammoth mound have been discovered. A strangely engraved stone was found in the upper vault. No relic found in any mound has caused so much controversy as this has. It was placed in the Smithsonian institution. While wax and plaster casts were made of it, and sent throughout the world, in an effort to have its meaning learned, the mysterious characters were never deciphered to the satisfaction of those versed in such things. The stone was, by famous and prominent men of that day, considered the most important discovery of its kind ever made. As we view the mound we cannot but be impressed with the thought that for thousands of years it has stood reminding us of the great people who thronged these valleys when the human race on the earth was young. How many thousands there were who toiled in carrying the soil to make this large mound will never be known. The people who once inhabited the Ohio valley were great mound builders. Below this city, twenty miles south, there was found a smaller mound; in it they found what was called a god. It was made of gold. The Book of Mormon is the greatest evidence the world has that there once was a white and delightful people here, and through their wickedness and dwindling in unbelief they were cursed with the dark skin, a remnant of which was found when this country was first discovered.



Sketch of the stone found in the mammoth mound