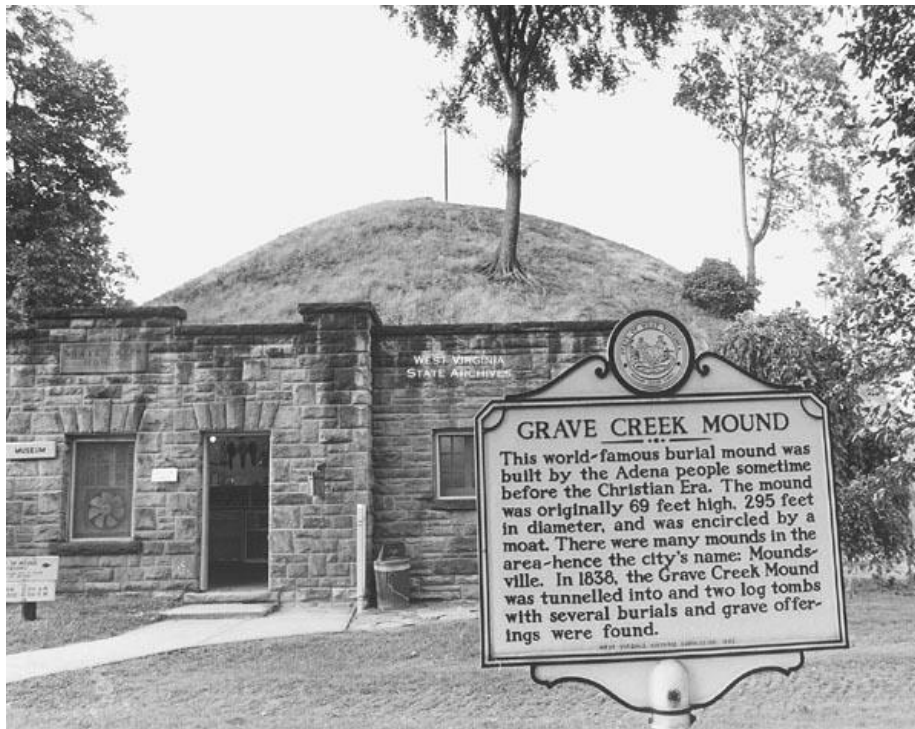


ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY MARCH 19



The Grave Creek Mound, a Native American burial mound located in present-day Moundsville, was opened on March 19, 1838, by Jesse Tomlinson.

CSO: SS.8.20, ELA.8.1, ELA.8.7

Investigate the Document: (*Early western travels, 1748-1846: a series of annotated reprints of some of the best and rarest contemporary volumes of travel, Vol. 3, 917.3 T548*)

1. How would you define “piqued” using the context of the following sentence? "I began to fear that he was piqued with the sharp reprimand I gave him the evening before..."
2. Why was the mound not visible from the river?
3. How tall does Captain Lewis estimate the mound to be?

Think Critically: Using your knowledge of early civilization in the area, what pre-Columbian culture built the Grave Creek Mound? Why do you think this culture chose to make mounds for burial purposes? Do you believe it is essential to preserve ancient burial mounds? Explain.

THE JOURNALS OF
CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS
AND
SERGEANT JOHN ORDWAY

KEPT ON THE EXPEDITION OF WESTERN
EXPLORATION, 1803-1806



Edited with Introduction and Notes by
MILO M. QUAIFE

38349

THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN
MADISON • MCMLXV

not use it without the previous consent of the President; however if he thought proper to go on with me to the Illinois where I expected to winter I could obtain an answer from the President by the spring of the year or before the Missouri would be sufficiently open to admit of my ascending it; and that in the event of the President's not consenting to our wishes, I conceived that the situation of that country was a much more eligible one for a physician than that of Wheeling particularly as he stated the practice which he had acquired at Wheeling was not an object; the D^r was to have taken his medicine with him which was a small assortment of about 100 £ value. remained here all night— The people began to top their corn and collect their fodder—

9th Sep^t

The D^r could not get ready I waited until three this evening and then set out had some difficulty in getting over a rifle one mile below the town, got on six miles and brought too,¹ I was now informed that by some mistake in the contract between the Corporal and the woman who had engaged to bake the bread for the men at Wheeling that the woman would not agree to give up the bread being 90 lbs. and that the bread was left I instantly dispatched the Corporal and two men for the bread and gave him a dollar to pay the woman for her trouble; about the time we landed it began to rain very hard and continued to rain most powerfully all night with small intervals; had my perogues covered with oil-cloth, but the rain comes down in such torrents that I found it necessary to have them bailed out frequently in the course of the night; in attending to the security of my goods I was exposed to the rain and got wet to the skin as I remained until about twelve at night, when I wrung out my saturated cloths, put on a dry shirt turned into my birth; the rain was excessively cold for the season of the year.

10th

The rain ceased about day, the clouds had not dispersed, and looked very much like giving us a repetition of the last evening's frolic, there was but little fog and I should have been able to have set out at sunrise, but the Corporal had not yet returned with the bread—I began to fear that he was piqued with the sharp reprimand I gave him the evening before for his negligence & inattention with respect to the bread and had deserted; in this

¹ The camp for the night was three miles below Bellaire, Ohio.

however I was agreeably disappointed, about 8 in the morning he came up bringing with him the two men and the bread, they instantly embarked and we set out we passed several very bad riffles this morning and at 11 O'clock six miles below our encampment of last evening I landed on the east side of the [river] and went on shore to view a remarkable artificial mound of earth called by the people in the neighbourhood the Indian grave.¹— This remarkable artificial mound of earth stands on the east bank of the Ohio 12 Miles below Wheeling and about 700 paces from the river, as the land is not cleared the mound is not visible from the river—this mound gives name to two small creeks called little and big grave creek which passing about a half a mile on each side of it & fall into Ohio about a mile distant from each other the small creek is above, the mound stands on the most elevated ground of a large bottom containing about 4000 acres of land the bottom is bounded from N. E. to S. W. by a high range of hills which seem to describe a semicircle around it of which the river is the diameter, the hills being more distant from the mound than the river, near the mound to the N. stands a small town lately laid out called Elizabethtown² there are but about six or seven dwelling houses in it as yet, in this town there are several mounds of the same kind of the large one but not near as large, in various parts of this bottom the traces of old intrenchments are to be seen tho' they are so imperfect that they cannot be traced in such manner as to make any complete figure; for this enquire I had not leisure I shall therefore content myself by giving a description of the large mound and offering some conjectures with regard to the probable purposes for which they were intended by their founders; who ever they may have been.—the mound is nearly a regular cone 310 yards in circumference at its base & 65 feet high terminating in a blunt point whose diameter is 30 feet, this point is concave being depressed about five feet in the center, around the base runs a ditch 60 feet in width which is broken or inter[sected] by a ledge of earth raised as high as the outer bank of the ditch on the N. W.

¹ Located within the limits of Moundsville, W. Va. Most travelers upon the Ohio have tried their hands at describing it, even as Lewis does in the following paragraphs. See, for example, *Early Western Travels*, III, 360–62, IV, 114–16; and Thwaites, *On the Storied Ohio*, 64–66.

² Established by Joseph Tomlinson, a well-known pioneer, who named it in honor of his wife. Tomlinson was also the founder of Moundsville, with which Elizabethtown was later incorporated. *Early Western Travels*, III, 360, IV, 114–15.

side, this bank is about 30 feet wide and appears to have formed the entrance to fortified mound—near the summit of this mound grows a white oak tree whose girth is 13½ feet, from the aged appearance of this tree I think it's age might reasonably [be] calculated at 300 years, the whole mound is covered with large timber, sugar tree, hickory, poplar, red and white oak &c— I was informed that in removing the earth of a part of one of these lesser mounds that stands in the town the skeletons of two men were found and some brass beads were found among the earth near these bones, my informant told me the beads were sent to M^r Peals¹ museum in Philadelphia where he believed they now were.—

we got on twenty four miles this day, we passed some bad riffles but got over them without the assistance of cattle came too on the E. side in deep water and a bold shore staid all night a little above sunfish creek.²

11th September.

Set out about sunrise, passed Sunfish creek 1 Mile &c &c entered the long reach, so called from the Ohio running in strait direction for 18 miles in this reach there are 5 Islands from three to 2 miles in length each—observed a number of squirrels swimming the Ohio and universally passing from the W. to the East shore they appear to be making to the south; perhaps it may be mast or food which they are in search of but I should rather suppose that it is climate which is their object as I find no difference in the quantity of mast on both sides of this river it being abundant on both except the beach nut which appears extremely scarce this season. the walnuts and Hickory nuts the usual food of the squirrel appears in great abundance on either side of the river—I made my dog³ take as many each day as I had occasion for, they were fat and I thought them when fried a pleasant food—many of these squirrels were black, they swim very light on the water and make pretty good speed—my dog was of the newfoundland

¹ Charles Wilson Peale, the famous artist. For an account of his museum see J. T. Scharf, and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1884), II, 946-49.

² Shown on the U. S. A. map 117 miles below Pittsburgh, and this agrees, approximately, with Lewis' statement of the distance traveled this day. The *Navigator* shows Sunfish Creek as another stream, several miles higher up the Ohio.

³ Lewis' dog was not the least interesting member of the famous exploring expedition. He receives frequent mention in the journals kept by the two leaders.

breed very active strong and docile, he would take the squirrel in the water kill them and swimming bring them in his mouth to the boat. we lay this night below the fifth Island in the long reach on the E. side of the river having come 26 miles.¹

12th Sept^r set out at sunrise it began to rain and continued with some intervals until three in the evening passed several bad riffles and one particularly at the lower end of the long reach called Willson's riffle here we were obliged to make a cut a channel through the gravel with our spade and canoe paddles and then drag the boat through² we were detained about 4 hours before we accomplished this task and again continued our rout and took up on the N. W. shore near a yankey farmer from whom I purchased some corn and pittatoes for my men and gave him in exchange a few lbs. of lead, we came 20 miles this day.³

13th This morning being clear we pursued our journey at sunrise and after passing a few riffles over which we had to lift the boat we arrived at Marietta,⁴ the mouth of the Muskingum river, at 7 O'clock in the evening observed many pigeons passing over us pursuing a south East course. The squirrels still continue to cross the river from N. W. to S. E.—Marietta is one hundred miles from Wheeling;⁵ lay here all night wrote to the President

¹ The "fifth island" is John Williamson's Island of the *Navigator*, Grand View Island of the U. S. A. map. On the latter it is laid down 142 miles below Pittsburgh, opposite the town of Grand View, Ohio.

² This operation, Lewis wrote to Jefferson, "is much more readily performed than you would imagine; the gravel of which many of these bars are formed, being small and lying in a loose state is readily removed with a spade, or even with a wooden shovel and when set in motion the current drives it a considerable distance before it subsides or again settles at the bottom; in this manner I have cut a passage for my boat of 50 yards in length in the course of an hour." Thwaites, VII, 271. But when driftwood or clay was intermixed with the gravel the process was impracticable, and resort must be had to horses or oxen. "I find them," concludes Lewis, "the most efficient sailors in the present state of the navigation of this river, altho' they may be considered somewhat clumsy."

³ This calculation fixes the night's camp about nine miles above Marietta, Ohio.

⁴ Marietta, the oldest city in Ohio, was founded in 1788 by the Ohio Company, under the leadership of Gen. Rufus Putnam. The Ohio Company grew out of the effort of the Revolutionary officers to secure payment in land for their military services. The settlers of Marietta were New Englanders and today the town's outward characteristics are strongly reminiscent of its New England origin. Two years before the founding of Marietta, Fort Harmar had been built on its site by a detachment of troops under Maj. John Doughty.

⁵ Lewis' statements of distance commonly agree quite closely with the U. S. A. map; here, however, he has overstated the distance by twenty miles.

THE
JOURNAL OF A TOUR

INTO THE

*Territory Northwest of the Alleghany
Mountains ;*

Made in the Spring of the Year 1803.

WITH

A GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF

THE

State of Ohio.

Illustrated with Original Maps and Views.

BY

THADDEUS MASON HARRIS, A. M.

Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

"Profuit et varios mores, hominumque locorumque
Explorasse situs, multas cum peregrinavit
Aut vidisse ipsum urbes, aut narrantibus illas
Ex aliis novisse." *VIDE, poet.*

Boston :

PRINTED BY MANNING & LORING, NO. 2, CORNHILL.

1805.

WE reached TOMLINSON, a small settlement near Grave Creek, to lodge.⁴⁰ We propose spending tomorrow here in viewing the surprising forts and the "Big Mound," in this vicinity.

[62] WEDNESDAY, June 8

"Behind me rises huge a reverend pile
Sole on this desert heath, a place of tombs,
Waste, desolate; where Ruin dreary dwells,
Brooding o'er fightless skulls and crumbling bones."

WE went out this morning to examine the ancient monuments about Grave Creek. The town of Tomlinson is partly built upon one of the square forts. Several mounds are to be seen. I think there are nine within a mile. Three of them, which stand adjoining each other, are of superior height and magnitude to those which are most commonly to be met with. In digging away the side of one of these, in order to build a stable, many curious stone implements were found; one resembled a syringe; there were, also, a pebble, some copper beads of an oval shape, and several other articles. One of the mounds in Col. Bygg's garden was excavated in order to make an ice-house.⁴¹ It contained a vast number of human bones, a

⁴⁰ Joseph Tomlinson was the son of a Scotch-Irish emigrant who had settled in Maryland, where the former was born in 1745. He explored this region as early as 1770, but made a permanent location in 1772. The first town that Tomlinson attempted to establish (1795), he named Elizabethtown for his wife. It was later merged in Moundsville, West Virginia, of which Tomlinson was also proprietor and founder.—Ed.

⁴¹ The Biggs family was an important one in the pioneer annals of Western Virginia. The father migrated from Maryland, and about 1770 settled on Short Creek above Wheeling. There were six sons noted as Indian fighters of whom General Benjamin Biggs was best known, having served in Lord Dunmore's War and that of the Revolution, and acting as brigadier-general of Ohio County militia during the later Indian wars. His papers form part of the Draper Manuscripts Collection, belonging to the Wisconsin Historical Society. Probably the Colonel Biggs mentioned by Harris was Joseph, he having bought one of the first lots in Elizabeth (now Moundsville).

variety of stone tools, and a kind of stone signet of an oval shape, two inches in length, with a figure in relief resembling a note of admiration, surrounded by two raised rims. Capt. Wilton, who presented the stone to my companion Mr. Adams, observed that it was exactly the figure of [63] the brand with which the Mexican horses were marked.⁴² One of the mounds was surrounded by a regular ditch and parapet, with only one entrance. The tumulus was about twelve feet high, and the parapet five.

THE "Big grave," as it is called, is a most astonishing mound. We measured the perpendicular height, and it was sixty-seven feet and a half. By the measurement of George Millar, Esq.⁴³ of Wheeling, it is sixty-eight feet. Its sides are quite steep. The diameter of the top is fifty-five feet: but the apex seems to have caved in; for the present summit forms a basin, three or four feet in depth. Not having a surveyor's chain, we could not take the circumference, but judged that its base covered more than half an acre. It is overgrown with large trees on all sides. Near the top is a white oak of three feet diameter; one still larger grows on the eastern side about half way down. The mound sounds hollow. Undoubtedly its contents will be numerous, curious, and calculated to develop in a farther degree the history of the antiquities which abound in this part of our country.

[64] As there are no excavations near the mound, and no hills or banks of earth, we infer that it must have been

Joseph Biggs took part as a boy in the siege of Fort Henry, at Wheeling; defended a besieged blockhouse in Ohio, opposite Wheeling, in 1791; and finally died in Ohio about 1833. He claimed to have been in seventeen Indian fights in and about the neighborhood of Wheeling.—Ed.

⁴² This singular marking-stone is now deposited in Mr. Turell's Cabinet of Curiosities in Boston.—HARRIS.

⁴³ George Millar had one of the first potteries of this region at Wheeling, and served as mayor of the town (1806-7).—Ed.

principally formed of sods skimmed from the surface, or of earth brought from a great distance. The labour of collecting such a prodigious quantity must have been inconceivably great. And when we consider the multitude of workmen, the length of time, and the expense, requisite to form such a stupendous mound; when we reflect upon the spirit of ambition which suggested the idea of this monument, of great but simple magnificence, to the memory of some renowned prince or warrior, we cannot but regret that the name and the glory it was designed to perpetuate are gone — LOST IN THE DARKNESS OF THE GRAVE!⁴⁴

THURSDAY, June 9

THE route from Tomlinson to Wheeling was very romantic. Sometimes we passed through shaded vales of towering trees, and sometimes on a winding road along the steep sides of a precipice, at the bottom of which flowed the beautiful Ohio. The passage is circuitous and narrow, and guarded from the steep descent to the river by a flight parapet of logs or stones. If [65] you look below, you fear that the stumbling horse will precipitate you among crags and trees to the river's edge; while from above, loofened rocks seem to threaten to crush you by a fall.

ON these declivities grow the mountain raspberry (*Rubus montanus floridus*), in great plenty. It is a handsome bush; and the flower, which is of a pale pink colour, and of the size and appearance of that of the sweet-briar, or hedge rose, gives it a very ornamental appearance. We were told that the fruit is large, and exceedingly delicious.

⁴⁴ For recent study of Indian mounds, consult Smithsonian Institution Report, 1891 (Washington, 1893); also American Bureau of Ethnology, *Twelfth Annual Report* (Washington, 1894).—ED.

FRIDAY, June 10

LEAVE Wheeling, and proceed homewards in our carriage. Lodge at DONEGALA, in Washington County, Pennsylvania.⁴⁵

SATURDAY, June 11

PASS through Washington and arrived at BROWNSVILLE to spend the Sabbath. The remarks I made upon the situation of this place have been transferred to the preceding account of the settlements on the Monongahela river.

[66] MONDAY, June 13

DINED, and spent the afternoon at UNIONTOWN, in company with the worthy Judge ADDISON, Judge ROBERTS, and the Judges, lawyers, and gentlemen of the circuit Court of Fayette County.⁴⁶

UNIONTOWN is the fire town of the County. It is a very pleasant and thriving place, situated near Redftone Creek, and principally built upon one straight street, the side walks of which are neatly paved with large flat stones. It contains about one hundred and twenty houses, many

⁴⁵ Harris returned from Wheeling by a road which followed the route later taken by the National or Cumberland Road from Wheeling to Uniontown, in Fayette County. See Searight, *The Old Pike: A History of the National Road* (Uniontown, Pennsylvania, 1894) for the building and continuation of this road, as well as the Congressional debates thereon.

The town of Donegala has vanished from the map; it was probably at or near the present Claysville, in Donegal Township, Washington County.—ED.

⁴⁶ Judge Alexander Addison was a Scotchman who first entered the ministry; afterwards studying for the bar, he became the first law judge in western Pennsylvania. His opposition to the Whiskey Rebellion, and prosecution of its leaders, and his strong Federalist attitude, made him many enemies among the Western settlers, at whose instance he was impeached and removed from the bench in 1802. Addison was succeeded by Judge Samuel Roberts, who had been born and educated in Philadelphia. Admitted to the bar in 1793, he was a successful lawyer when placed upon the bench (1803), where he remained until his death in 1820.—ED.