

PAPERS

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OF THE

PEABODY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND
ETHNOLOGY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

VOL. III.—No. 2

EXPLORATION OF MOUNDS,
COAHOMA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

BY

CHARLES PEABODY

WITH SEVENTEEN PLATES

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM

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(See page 3 of cover.)

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EXPLORATION OF MOUNDS, COAHOMA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI.

INTRODUCTORY.

UNDER the auspices of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, an expedition, directed by Mr. W. C. Farabee and the writer, was sent out to conduct explorations in Coahoma County, Mississippi. The work was carried on continuously from May 11, to June 28, 1901, and from May 9 to July 3, 1902. Two mounds were excavated: one on the plantation of Mr. Ellerton L. Dorr, Jr., at Clarksdale, and one on that of Mr. P. M. Edwards, in the town of Oliver, on the Sunflower river, sixteen miles south of Clarksdale. The method of exploration in both cases was the same: that of making successive cuttings down to the level of the surrounding ground, and thus, by throwing the soil from each new cutting into that preceding, making possible a thorough examination of the distance excavated, yet leaving the ground more or less in its original condition.¹ At each five feet, descriptions of the wall of soil in front of the excavators were taken and for these cross sections, reference may be had to the Peabody Museum Laboratory, where they are filed.

DORR MOUND.

The excavation of the Dorr Mound was continued from May 11 to May 18, 1901. The surface measurements were: length, north to south, 90'; breadth, east to west, 60'; height, 9' 6½" above the surrounding field.

The shape resembled a rectangle with the longer sides running parallel northwest and southeast. The surface was covered with rough grass and bushes.

Near the top ran a transverse trench, one foot two inches deep, probably the result of tentative excavations previously made by

¹ In connection with these excavations: in the catalogue of the Peabody Museum the successive "cuttings" are given the name "trenches," also in the Maps and Plans in the Laboratory of the Museum.