

A PLEA FOR THE CAHOKIA MOUNDS

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One of the most beautiful of all Mississippi Valley Indian monuments—the Powell mound, which was located about a mile and a half west of the main group of Cahokia mounds—has recently been destroyed. Placed exactly east-west, steep, narrow and fifty feet high, the Powell mound was the most symmetrical tumulus that the writer has observed in seventeen states. Its destruction is a most lamentable loss to American archaeology.

During the surveys which resulted in the preservation of Monks Mound and other tumuli, Messrs. Cowen, Seever, and Myers, as well as the writer, urged the preservation of the Powell mound in a small separate park. Mr. Seever later offered to buy the structure and a small surrounding tract, intending to hold it until the State could reimburse him, but in spite of all efforts the mound was demolished. Gratitude, however, is due Dr. Arthur P. Kelly for making observations at the time of its destruction and for saving as much of the Indian material as possible.

Indiana has recently selected several mound-groups to be made into State parks, and Ohio has already exceeded all other states in appreciation of her Indian antiquities; the local parks and mound-groups are visited annually by thousands of tourists. The unfortunate loss of the Powell mound in Illinois should emphasize the necessity of protecting the remaining Cahokia mounds from further commercial developments. Monks mound, the largest known Indian mound, has been preserved for future generations, and the adjoining terraced mound on the Merrill estate to the west, a beautiful structure crowned with large trees, should be taken over without delay. Some tumuli lying east of Monks mound have been plowed over for generations, their surfaces lowered and their contours changed, but we have accurate descriptions of their appearance fifty years ago and it would be possible to restore them at a reasonable cost.

There is a growing tendency throughout the United States to protect and preserve our archaeological as well as our historical monu-

ments and shrines. Many of those already cared for have far less reputation than famous Cahokia, yet the commercial exploitation of Cahokia continues apace. Not merely all archaeologists, but thousands of our citizens who have seen Cahokia, join in earnest recommendation to the officials of the great State of Illinois that the remaining monuments of the famous site be purchased and preserved.