

THE ORIGIN OF THE CAHOKIA MOUNDS  
(ABSTRACT)

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During the recent explorations which have been carried on by Doctor W. K. Moorehead of Andover, Massachusetts, under the auspices of the University of Illinois, four widely scattered mounds of the Cahokia group, northeast of St. Louis, ranging in height from 10 to 35 feet, have been trenched and opportunity afforded for the study of their constitution, structure, and in one case, their relations to the underlying materials of the alluvial filling of the Mississippi Valley. The Illinois Geological Survey was invited to make a geological examination, resulting in the accumulation of evidence decisively favoring the artificial mode of origin of at least those mounds which have been opened and examined. This conclusion is re-enforced by the artificial form of the mounds, their orientation, their grouping, and their geologic setting. Monks Mound, the dominating unit of them all, has not as yet been trenched or tunneled, and hence a positive conclusion can not be drawn as to its origin; but the materials revealed by auger borings made by the writer on the summit and slopes of the mound and its artificiality of form are suggestive that at least a large part of it is due to the work of man.

A full report of the geologic aspects of the Cahokia Mounds is now in press and will appear as Part II of a bulletin of the University of Illinois which treats of the explorations made up to and including the fall of 1922.