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MANTRACKS IN THE PALUXY?

Authentic tracks by human beings, sons of Adam, made in the pre-Flood world with dinosaurs in the immediate neighborhood? Or the work of human sculptors over recent decades, centuries or millennia? Do we have sufficient evidence to decide?

A variety of questions come to mind on viewing the film a second time. What is shown and what is told has a measure of emotional impact; for once those conniving, atheistic scientists have been properly trounced.

Yet we arrive for the film presentation in our automobiles, the film arrives by rail, a series of phone calls directed it this way, electricity powered the projector, a moving picture in full color appeared on the screen, airviews were taken from a helicopter (at least this is the rumor and we believe easily), the sound track functions well and we hear the words of men and women recorded first on magnetic tape, then transferred in some manner to the film and synchronized with the lip movements of the speakers. The fruit of these scientists tastes good? Let's not be totally ungrateful. (I personally have found a lot of enjoyment in a more primitive manner of living but want to give credit where credit is due.)

No mention is made in the film that fake human footprints have been displayed for sale here at Glen Rose, Texas over the years. Nor that local residents find themselves hard pressed for money during the depression carved human footprints into chunks of limestone from the Paluxy.

Nor have I been able to locate the human footprint purchased by an Ambassador College representative a number of years ago. The print was about 16 inches long, very life-like, in a block about 6 by 20 by 3 inches, dropped and broken in the middle.

The tale of human footprints starts out "on the wrong foot" in a sense, in a state where people are given to exaggeration, in an area with a reputation for fake footprints, in a fossil layer known for its dinosaurs but lacking mammalian evidence of any kind.

Some "witnesses" hedged in their answers with regard to the tracks; the term "manlike tracks" was used by at least one, to others the term "mantracks" could mean appearing to have been made by man, or resembling tracks men make, as well as the actual footprints of man. Not one was asked with regard to the fake mantracks sold to tourists over the years.

The question of whether human sculptors might have carved these tracks we now see in the riverbed was not explored but dismissed with a single statement that it would tax one's credulity to believe that. The goal was to discover mantracks and present them as mantracks. In so doing the fact of a pre-Adamic world of dinosaurs could be brought into disrepute and the evolutionists defeated. The world would then be only 6000 years old (as Bishop Usher insisted) and all forms of life would have come into existence with Adam. The "Bible and God" would be defended, as if either needs our defense.

There are three conditions under which the continuing trail of a "man" were found. One, in the open riverbed where tracks were considerably eroded. Two, under the gravel bank at the side

of the river. In both places the "toemarks" are frequently obscure and in a few places seemingly overdone. The third place was under the limestone ledge which upon removal should have exposed to our eyes fresh, undoctored, undeniable mantracks. Yet here we were given only a splitsecond glance at the evidence and then closeups of other prints (if I followed the film and narration correctly).

Why, with so much hanging in the balance, couldn't a number of representatives from the "opposition" have been brought to witness the tipping back of the overlying block of limestone? Instead a group of amateurs dead set on disproving both evolution and any pre-Adamic creation "muddied up the stream" (as it says in Ezekiel 34 in reference to the shepherds of Israel). Disproving a pre-Adamic reptilian creation in no way disproves evolution. Why muddy up the evidence?

Prints do cross the river, they were under the gravel bed at the side, and they were under the ledge, but were they even human appearing in their untampered state? Witnesses used the adjective "obscure" a number of times. References to moccasins were made; yet who would walk in mud with his moccasins on (though this might indicate the I.Q. of wearer).

Could prints left by a bipedal dinosaur have been doctored to resemble human prints? Easily. Men have visited the Paluxy for centuries. The river was full of people wading and enjoying themselves on the day we visited. It was common for those examining the footprints of the dinosaurs to put their own feet into the tracks. Early men were seemingly likely to do the same.

A man was shown stepping from one print to the next demon-

strating how the footprints would have been made. His walk was extremely awkward, more reptilian than human, there was the lack of the balancing tail to make the gait right. And his steps were far too large for a man in mud! This aspect of the trail of tracks should be thoroughly examined.

Attention was continually focused on the "toes" of the prints, the fact that the print had a heel and somewhat of an arch. Heels and arches on feet are not that unusual, but human-like toes are another thing. It took imagination to see toes in most prints.

How much effort would it take with a pebble or a bit of sandpaper to improve a track? The tracks in the riverbed have been exposed to human view for centuries and it is certainly within the realm of possibility that someone or some dozens of people had some innocent fun doctoring up a couple of prints to leave a personalized "signature" in the river. What cave does not have a few human handprints on the wall. Today we might be more apt to carve our initials or print "Kilroy Was Here," but in a riverbed one would want footprints.

Each bare human foot that stepped into a print would tend to improve it. Oils from the skin, perspiration, a little rubbing of the toes. No malice need be involved, just having a bit of fun and no thought as to the geologic or theologic implications to discovery teams a century later. (A print showing "mudcracks" was pointed out, yet a carved print etched deeper by solution would show the same with harder seams standing in relief).

Or was recent doctoring done?

Why did we have to send a blind man to Glen Rose to bring

back the evidence with his fingertips of claws on the end of tracks presented to the public as human? And he made casts of these prints which we should still have at Pasadena. Why did local residents "come clean" with him and tell of the depression days and the "chislers" of human tracks? No, I wouldn't blame those who did a bit of sculpturing to keep body and soul together for self and family. The tourists were led on by their own imaginations with a minimum of conscience bothering comments needed to keep the conversation about "giants in the earth in those days" going.

The case for human tracks in the limestone in the bed of the Paluxy River is far from convincing. It has too much that remains to be demonstrated clearly. It would not be hard to "lift another stone" and examine a pair or two of "virgin" tracks, experts in fossil footprints doing the work, not amateurs like ourselves.

A reconstruction of earth history might be made putting man that far back in the sedimentary record. The many thousands of feet of Cretaceous and Tertiary sediments of the Gulf Coast would all have to be put down since Adam. Internal evidence for time would have to be considered. Tertiary sediments in other areas of the world would have to be reoriented in any archeological reconstruction. Remember that if sediments are classed with man they rightly belong to Archeology, with the term geology taking a secondary role. Corroborating evidence should not be hard to find as many square miles of cretaceous rocks are exposed and no prints of deer, horses or cattle are found, much less human tracks. The deposits seem rightly assigned to a pre-Adamic world.

The conclusion of early theologians is that the Flood did

relatively little damage to the earth and left comparatively shallow deposits. An olive tree survives, pre-Flood rivers are in the same places (pretty well an impossibility if the Cenozoic deposits are Flood deposits), two pillars were made before the Flood and are said to have survived, the term "drift" and "diluvium" were used for surface deposits left by the Flood and/or by ice, there is some evidence of pre-Flood mapping of the coastlines of the continents though it is not conclusive, and there are many archeological sites designated pre-Flood which are on top of Cretaceous and Tertiary deposits.

The evidence of the preceding paragraph should not be shoved aside by the "discovery" and photographing of "mantracks" in a Texas community with a reputation for giving the tourists what they want to see.

Geologically the bed containing the tracks dips eastward and southward under the Cretaceous, Tertiary and Pleistocene deposits of the Gulf States. Locally the Paluxy is a swift flowing narrow river today but in a far wider bed (suggesting a far larger river in the recent past). This bed is partially filled by recent deposits, the Park having a very broad floodplain as its parking area. The limestone beds locally overlie the footprint bearing bed and rise thirty and forty feet on both sides of the valley. The sequence is clear, first underlying beds, then a deposit of soft limey material that would take footprints, then an easily eroded thin deposit to cover them, then repeated beds of limey material that turned to limestone with time and with pressure from overlying rocks, which are many thousands of feet in thickness in the region

of eastern Texas.

Footprints of man in a previously carefully identified pre-Adamic layer have about the same effect as the Piltdown "man" had on the anthropological authorities of that day, "At first sight, Piltdown man was a completed surprise. He had the skull of a modern man -- an imposing brain case and a vertical forehead with slightly ridged brows. But he also had the primitive jaw of an ape. It was almost exactly like a chimpanzee's jaw except that the molars were ground down, the way a man's teeth are worn by chewing. Unfortunately, a small section of the jaw that could have proved whether it fit the skull, a point of attachment called the condyle, had been broken off...not only man-brained and ape-jawed, but appeared to have a middle-aged skull, a young jaw and an elderly set of teeth!" The First Men page 56, The Emergence of Man Series put out by Time-Life.

The film on Glen Rose has similar incongruities, a film convincing to the casual and over enthusiastic viewer but if carefully considered a second time with even a small measure of caution, one is inclined toward skepticism and I think with very good reason.