

FIVE SKELETONS FOUND AT RIVERTON

Dug Up Back of Faunce's
Fish Cabin on the
River Shore.

SKULL OF ONE CRUSHED IN

No One Can Tell the History of
These Gruesome Relics—A Doc-
tor Says One Was a White
Man.

Special to The Inquirer.

RIVERTON, N. J., Feb. 23.—Workmen who were digging on the Henry A. Dreer Company's property near the river front to-day made a startling discovery. In the soft, mucky soil back of a dense growth of underbrush which screens the river from view they unearthed a human skeleton. A trench was opened and four more skeletons were dug up. They were all the remains of full-sized men.

Doctor Alexander Marcy, of this place, who was notified of the find, examined the skeletons and found that one displayed evidence of comparatively recent burial. This one was evidently the skeleton of a white man of mature age. The skull was fractured and seemed to have been crushed in by a blow.

No one can account for the burial of the bodies. The spot where they were unearthed is just back of Faunce's fish cabin, which is used by shad fishermen in the spring.

Several theories are advanced to account for the skeletons. One is that they are the remains of Indians. Another, and more plausible theory is that they are the remains of men who worked at the fishery long before the present proprietors secured possession. The fishery has been in operation for over a century.

Philadelphia Inquirer
February 24, 1897
pg.8

MOULDERING BONES MYSTERY

Special to The Inquirer.

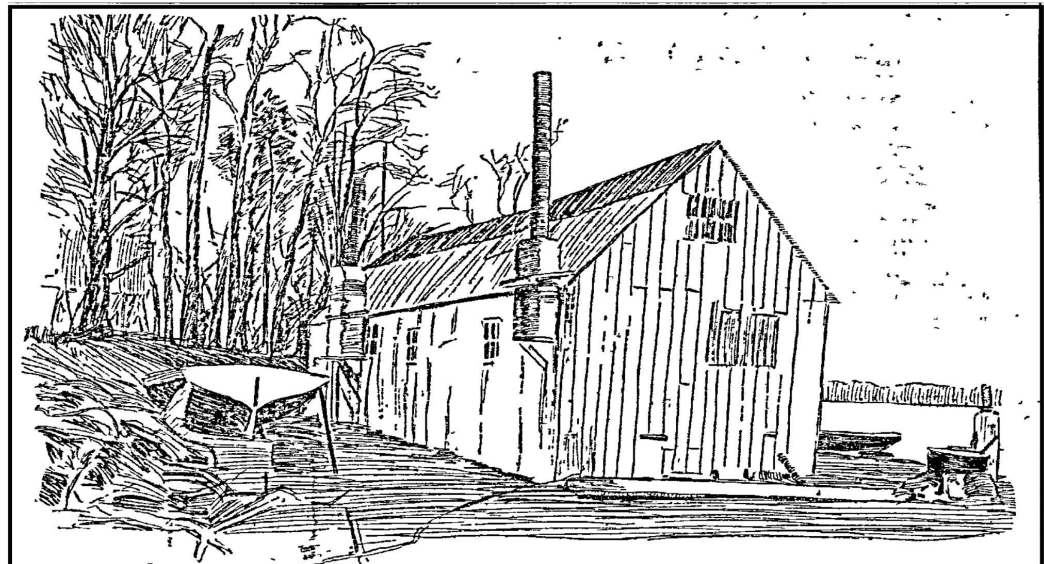
RIVERTON, N. J., Feb. 24.—Further investigation in regard to the finding of five skeletons near the river shore at this place dispels the theory that they are the remains of Indians. Dr. Alex. Marcy, Jr., says the bodies may have been buried a century or more ago. They may be the skeletons of early settlers, of fishermen who lived along the Delaware, or of Dutch sailors who used to trade on the river. The bowl of an ancient Dutch pipe, of fine workmanship, was found, with one of the bodies.

Philadelphia Inquirer
February 25, 1897
pg.5

GRUESOME RELICS OF BY GONE AGES.

Workmen employed by Louis Corner while at work on Monday in clearing and rebuilding the bank along the Delaware at Dreer's unearthed the bones and skulls of several human beings a few feet below the surface in the wet and mucky soil. The place where these uncanny objects were found is a lonely spot a few yards in the rear of the old Faunce fish cabin and is surrounded by dense shrubbery—which gave credence to the many stories circulated regarding how the skeletons got there. But farther investigation into the facts gave rise to different theories. As no Indian relics such as arrow heads and stone hatchets were found in the vicinity, Dr. Marcy's statement that they were not the remains of Indians was verified. The most plausible story is that it was the burying ground of some of the early settlers as it was the custom at that remote period for each farmer to have their own cemetery, or that one of the Dutch vessels that traded on the Delaware river a hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago, was wrecked and the bodies washed ashore and buried, as was the law in those days "when found." The latter seems the more correct as there was found an old Dutch pipe along side one of the skulls which showed remarkable skill in workmanship and design.

The (Palmyra) Weekly News
February 27, 1897
pg.2



The ten skeletons dug up near this old fish cabin at Riverton were found a few feet beyond the boat shown in the picture.

RIVERTON, N. J., Feb. 27.—To-day two more skulls were found in the excavation back of Faunce's old fish cabin, on the river bank. This makes ten skeletons that have been found, in whole or part since workmen began grading at this spot. There is still no clue to the identity of the remains. It is evident that all were full-grown males, but whether victims of a massacre or occupants of some early settler's private graveyard, it is impossible to tell. Diligent search for implements of warfare or domestic use have revealed nothing but the curiously engraved bowl of an ancient Dutch pipe. All sorts of weird stories are afloat, and no one will venture near the old fish cabin after nightfall. Local curiosity having been satisfied with an inspection of the bones, they were placed in boxes and reinterred.

Philadelphia Inquirer February 28, 1897 pg.10

Two more skeletons of human bones were dug up by Corner's men on the Dreer place, last Saturday. At last a reasonable account of so many bones having been found there is given by Wallace Toy, who lives at Pennsville. He states that his father, Isiah Toy,

lived in the old farm house back of the Dreer nursery, a great many years ago and that he frequently spoke of burying twelve men there on the farm. He was quite an important man, a congressman and at one time the largest tax payer in the county, and was also Justice of the Peace for a long period, in which capacity he did the work now done by Coroners and any tramp or person found drowned, for want of a better place, he had buried there.

Clue to the Riverton Mystery.

Special to The Inquirer.

RIVERTON, N. J., March 5.—Wallace Toy, of Palmyra, has thrown some light on the finding of ten male skeletons in a trench near the Faunce fish cabin on the bank of the Delaware River. He says his father, who formerly owned the property, having purchased it eighty years ago, was a justice of the peace and acted as Coroner. He had charge of the disposal of the unknown dead and probably buried unclaimed bodies in one place.

Philadelphia Inquirer
March 6, 1897
pg.7

The (Palmyra) Weekly News
March 6, 1897
pg.2