

Discovery of a Giant Skeleton in Iowa – An Archaeological Mystery from 1897



In November 1897, *The Worthington Advance*, a regional newspaper, reported a remarkable archaeological discovery in the state of Iowa, USA. During excavations conducted by the Smithsonian Institution's Division of Eastern Mounds, scientists uncovered the remains of a human skeleton of extraordinary size.

According to the article, the skeleton measured—based on precise onsite measurements—seven feet six inches in height, or approximately 2.29 meters. However, the remains were extremely fragile. Once exposed to open air, the bones reportedly crumbled to dust, preventing further examination or preservation.

John Wesley Powell, then Director of the Bureau of Ethnology and a prominent figure in 19th-century American scientific exploration, was cited in connection with the find. Yet official records from the Smithsonian remain largely silent regarding the outcome or scientific documentation of this discovery.

This incident is one of many similar reports from the late 19th century, when extensive archaeological surveys were conducted throughout the Midwestern United States. These efforts focused on ancient burial mounds—earthworks constructed by indigenous cultures long before European settlement. The origin, purpose, and contents of these mounds continue to intrigue archaeologists to this day.

While some modern scholars argue that such claims may stem from measurement errors or journalistic exaggeration, others question the disappearance or lack of official recognition for several of these finds. The Iowa giant remains one of the more puzzling stories among those early mound explorations.

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