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Kentucky Archaeology

Episode # 104

“WPA Archaeology: Legacy of an Era”

Final Script

(Draft #14)

24:25 minutes

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Series Title

Scene #1) 0:10. Running time 0:10

Series title montage. Music: Sonic Arts library – Network Zone, “Future Route” cut#42 (sting).

Episode Title

Producer’s Note: This script includes comments from two experts. John Elliott worked under William Webb as a project supervisor in Boone County during WPA archaeology. Mr. Elliott was interviewed at his home on camera by the production team in January 1999. Dr. Lathel Duffield is a former professor of anthropology at the University of Kentucky. He is a nationally-recognized archaeologist, scholar and writer, as well as an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Dr. Duffield was interviewed on June 1, 2001 at the University of Kentucky’s Museum of Anthropology. The documentary is produced in accordance to the laws and goals of The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

Scene #2) 0:06. Running time 0:16

“WPA Archaeology: Legacy of an Era”

Dissolve to WPA film “Excavation of Wright Mound (15Mm6), Montgomery County, KY (1937-1938). Music: Period music as an underscore. SFX of shovels, workers and wind. Episode title over wide shot.

Introduction

Scene #3) 0:20. Running time 0:36

Narrator

It was the largest archaeological project ever conducted in Kentucky. (pause) From 1937 until 1941, thousands of laborers, supervisors and scientists excavated over 70 archaeological sites throughout the state.

Continuation of Wright Mound film. Background music rises (under). Dissolve through three archival photos of workers. Mix back to Wright Mound film.

Scene #4) 0:30. Running time 01:06

Narrator

They moved massive amounts of earth (pause). Took nearly 8,000 photographs (pause). And, collected over 300,000 artifacts (long pause) - remnants of the ancient American Indian cultures that flourished in Kentucky for more than twelve-thousand years.

Film and photos of WPA sites, photographers and artifacts. Music: Continues.

Scene #5) 0:15. Running time 01:21

Narrator

It was archaeology at an unprecedented scale (pause). A monumental program whose *origin* had almost nothing to do with archaeology (pause), and, whose *legacy* remains part of a national debate among scholars, scientists and American Indians.

Dissolve to archival photographs of laborers (group shot). Music resolves. Dip to black.

Scene #6) 0:15. Running time 01:36

Narrator

Dr. Lathel Duffield has studied the history of WPA archaeology for decades. Retired from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Dr. Duffield was an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Kentucky. He's also a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. He brings a unique perspective to the subject.

Dr. Lathel Duffield and Gwynn Henderson at UK research facility. Nat sound under narration.

Scene #7) 0:13. Running time 01:49

Interview: Dr Lathel Duffield

Tape #039 (04:12:40) "The motivation was not science. The motivation was to put these people to work. It just so happened that the archaeology was something they could put them to work with. (04:12:53)

Dr. Duffield with name key: Former Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Kentucky.

Scene #8) 0:45. Running time 02:34

Narrator

During the worst years of the Great Depression, nearly 25 million Americans were out of work. (pause) In Kentucky, one in five was unemployed. (pause) In order to provide relief, President Franklin Deleno Roosevelt established a series of federal employment programs called the New Deal. One New Deal program was the Works Progress Administration or WPA. (pause) Throughout Kentucky, the WPA and other federal agencies funded hundreds of labor projects, from road construction and forest conservation (pause) to cultural programs in music, art, history and... archaeology.

Strong transition. Bluesy period music leads to archival film and photographs from the Great Depression. Archives: National Archives via Absolutely Archive, and Special Collections Archive, UK. WPA photo: NEWTKA (Newt Kash rockshelter).

Scene #9) 0:48. Running time 03:22

Interview: Dr Lathel Duffield

Tape #039 (04:03:40) "President Roosevelt when he was elected, established these various "make work" projects. But, it was important to have a project that did not produce goods. It had to provide funds - to be put into the economy - without producing anything to sell." (04:03:54) (04:05:02) "One of the reasons the WPA was really popular here is because at that time this was largely a rural state. So you had a lot of farmers without any kind of income. Also, you had a very rich source of archaeological sites, and this provided the ideal situation for the WPA archaeologists to operate in." (04:05:28)

Dr. Duffield on camera. Dissolve to archival images (stock/UK). WPA photo: 1715BH-1 (Adena mound and farmhouse). WPA film of Kentucky landscape. Wright Mound film of sites and crews.

Scene #10) 0:10. Running time 03:32

Narrator

For beginning archaeologists, the WPA provided a rare chance to work in their field.

Video: WS of John Elliott as student at University of Chicago field school. CU of Elliott.

Scene #11) 0:21. Running time 03:53

Interview: John Elliott

Tape #10 (01:04:56) "That was the only opportunity I'd had to practice my profession, which looked like a lost cause in 1933...32-33-34, in the depths of the Depression, farming was bad enough but archaeology and anthropology were worse." (01:05:15)

John Elliott on camera. Name key: WPA Project Supervisor.

Scene #12) 0:12. Running time 04:05

Narrator

One man organized it all. A former Army officer and stern physics professor from the University of Kentucky – William S. Webb.

WPA photo: WEBBFI-1. (Webb and five supervisors).

Scene #13) 0:35. Running time 04:40

Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield

Tape #039 (04:09:48) “Well, he had a nickname called ‘bullneck,’ and uh it kind of summed some things up. He was very aggressive. He had such a mixture in his personality. [cut] He could be very kind and gentle or he could be very gruff and rough. [cut] Very fortunate though, that when the depression hit and WPA archaeology started that they had a man like that because he was a tremendous organizational man. I don’t think he cared for details, but he certainly knew how to get the right people to do the right job. (04:10:36)

Duffield on camera. WPA photos: Webb FI-2 (portrait); WEBBW0-1. (Webb smiling w/ worker; (Elliott archive (Webb with site supervisors); WEBBFI-1. (Webb with three supervisors).

Scene #14) 0:35. Running time 05:15

Narrator

While trained in physics, Webb had a strong interest in American Indians. His interest was born during governmental service with the Seminole Nation in a territory of the United States known today as Oklahoma. (pause) Webb returned to the University of Kentucky in 1908. There he met William D. Funkhouser. (pause) Head of the zoology department, Funkhouser was also fascinated by archaeology. During weekends, the two professors would travel to remote sites in eastern Kentucky to excavate rockshelters. (pause) In order to get a truck for their work, they established the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology at the University of Kentucky. It was one of the earliest programs founded in the southeastern United States.

WPA photo continues. Archival photo: (UK Faculty ca early 1900s) Archival photo: (Funhauser portrait); WPA photo: FUNKHO-1. Funkhouser in rockshelter with arm in hominy hole). WPA photo: NONEG3-1. (Guy in rockshelter with scale). WPA photo: 4299BT-1 (rockshelter). WPA photo: NONEGU-1. (UK Dept. Anthropology truck). WPA photo: NONEGT-1. (UK truck and campsite).

Scene #15) 0:25. Running time 05:40

Narrator

In time, Webb’s reputation as an exceptional administrator drew the attention of national organizations. The Smithsonian Institution recommended Webb to coordinate the archaeology projects of another massive New Deal program, The Tennessee Valley Authority. (pause) In 1937, the WPA approved Webb’s proposal to fund archaeological projects in his home state of Kentucky.

WPA photo: _____ (Webb at TVA project). Archival video: TVA project. WPA photo: 2581JO-1. (Workers excavating mound).

Scene #16) 0:40. Running time 06:20

Interview: John Elliott

Tape#011 (02:03:15) “We did not compete with organized labor. Ah, we used precious little, ah, purchased materials. It was mostly sweat and grunt, and ah, shovels and trowels. Supplies consisted of paper bags, cardboard boxes, uh, photographic materials. Essentially low cost operation. And labor was a cheap, ah, expense item.” (02:03:47) (02:03:57) That’s where it was supposed to go. To keep people alive who were in bad straits.” (02:04:04)

Slow dissolve back to John Elliott on camera. WPA photo: 1673JO-1. (Workers excavating mound). WPA photo: 3662OH-1 (Indian Knoll, Archaic shell midden site); WPA photo: 2108MM-1 (Crew group shot). WPA photo: 2577JO-1. (Older worker).

Scene #17) 0:40. Running time 07:00

Narrator

Webb hired some of the best young archaeologists in America. (pause) He established the first systematic methods for field and laboratory work in the state. (pause) Eventually, the WPA would support excavations at 72 sites in 17 counties. (pause) This included four projects run through the Civilian Conservation Corps, which hired younger crews (pause). The archaeological sites were selected to bring jobs to the most economically depressed communities. (pause) Some sites were chosen because they would be flooded due to the construction of dams on the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers.

WPA photo: _____ (Site supervisors at rockshelter excavation). WPA photo: 3255BT (Annis Mound). WPA photo: 2589JO (Adena mound excavation). KY archaeology site map. WPA photo: WORKER-1. (CCC crews in trucks). WPA photo: 7312ML (CCC group shot). WPA photo: 1701JO-1. (WPA crew near RR tracks). WPA photo: ____ (site along river).

Scene #18) 0:35. Running time 07:35

Narrator

The overall research plan focused on four types of archaeological sites: (pause) the shell middens or trash heaps of the Archaic Period (pause), the mounds and earthworks of the Woodland Period (pause), the villages of the Fort Ancient culture (pause) and the towns of the Mississippian culture. (pause) Occasionally, project supervisors would gather together for the excavation of rockshelters in eastern Kentucky.

WPA photo: 596CBN-1 (Archies under tent). WPA photo: WPA photo: 3662OH-1 (Archaic site). WPA photo: 1569JO-1. (Adena mound). WPA photo: 2997GP-1. (Ft. Ancient village). WPA photo: 7513ML-1. (Mississippian town). WPA photo: 4340MF-1. (Elliott & survey crew at Hooten Hollow). WPA photo: 4341MF-1. (Elliott & crew dig). WPA photo: 4350MF-1. (Screener).

Scene #19) 0:40. Running time 08:15

Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield

Tape #039 (04:14:52) Once a project got started it might go as long as two, three years – depending on its size and depending on where they were. They were not concerned about the fact that they could dig through these large mounds and not find anything, as long as the dirt was being moved. And, uh, but in other places like out in western Kentucky with the shell mounds you had artifacts come in hands-over-

fi. (04:15:22 (04:15:28) Between 1937 and 1939 there were at least nine different projects going on – all of varying sizes. Some projects would have as much as a thousand people or so working. (04:15:48)

Dr. Lathel Duffield. WPA photo: 39MM6E-1. (Adena mound). WPA photo: CREWJO-1. (10 workers). WPA photo: 2003MU-1. (Shell mound w/workers). WPA photo: _____ (rockshelter). WPA photo: _____ (Adena mound). WPA photo: _____ (Adena mound). Return to Duffield for close.

Scene #20) 0:22. Running time 08:37

Narrator

The work went on year round. (pause) During the winter, crews would make fires in barrels to thaw the frozen ground. (pause). In the spring, a few floods interrupted the work. (pause) “Shovel” men made about 30 cents an hour. (pause) “Trowel” men made a little more.

WPA film of workers. WPA photo: 2111MM-1. (Wright mound in snow). WPA photo: 4548BE-1. (Workers in snow). WPA photo: 849OH1-1. (Flooded site). WPA photo: 2585JO (Shovel men). WPA photo: 4571BE (Trowel men).

Scene #21) 0:40. Running time 09:17 (UK archaeology lab). WPA photo: 725150-1. (Field laboratory, Marshall County). Video: Human effigy artifact.

Interview: John Elliott

Tape #010 (01:14:42) “They were used to working in old-fashioned coal mines where you work on your knees with a pick and shovel, ah, in other words handling tools, workin' with tools, and they were dexterous, and uh, ingenious on solving little problems and making little tools [cut] line probes (Pully system). WPA photo: 3283BT-1 (workers building shed). WPA photo: NONEG1-1. (Pully system). WPA photo: 2397BE-1 (Group shot on camera tower). Return to Elliot for close. The fieldwork uncovered post molds that outlined houses, (pause) stockades (pause) and ceremonial but uh, they were all good workers.” (01:15:20)

Scene #22) 0:21. Running time 09:40

Narrator

WPA photo: 4866BE-1 (Gunapish photo of post). WPA photo: 7285MPPe (Stockade post mold). WPA photo: 5622BE-1. (WPA arch of Adena charred wood) and cataloged artifacts, for storage field notes and forms, (pause) and WPA photo: _____ (fire hearth). WPA photo: 8UKMA-1 (Hopewell hole w/Fankhouser) . WPA photo: _____ (log tomb). WPA photo: 2589JO-1. (Adena burial mound).

Scene #24) 0:30. Running time 10:40

Narrator

WPA archaeologists recovered thousands of artifacts. The analysis of these artifacts, and their associated records, revealed the incredible diversity of Kentucky’s prehistoric cultures. Some artifacts were made during an era archaeologists call the Paleoindian Period, which began over twelve thousand years ago. These tools included rare Clovis and other “fluted” dart points used by the earliest hunters and gatherers to occupy Kentucky.

Music: Orchestral stock music. Video of point assemblage, pan from Paleo to Late Prehistoric. Video of field notes and report charts. Video of Clovis point. Lower third time line.

Scene #25) 0:40. Running time 11:20

Narrator

About ten thousand years ago, during the Archaic Period, American Indians made notched or stemmed spear points, (pause) grooved axes, (pause) and banner stones used as counterweights for a new hunting weapon - the atlatl or spearthrower. (pause) They also made personal adornments such as these inscribed hairpins made of animal bone, (pause) and necklaces made from shells .

Video of Archaic artifacts and lifeway scenes. Time line.

Scene #26) 01:30. Running time 12:50

Narrator

About three thousand years ago, during the Woodland Period, stemmed or flared base points testify to the continued use of the spearthrower. (pause) Archaeologists find the first evidence of pottery at this time. These containers were used for storing and cooking foods, including plants raised in family gardens. (pause) The Woodland peoples also made ritual items such as engraved stone tablets and pipes; (pause) ornaments crafted from materials exchanged throughout eastern North America; (pause) cutouts made from mica from the Appalachian Mountains; (pause) necklaces made of shells from the Gulf Coast and Atlantic Ocean; (pause) and, bracelets made of copper from the Great Lakes.

Video of Woodland artifacts and lifeway scenes. Time line.

Scene #27) 02:00. Running time 14:50

Narrator

About one thousand years ago, during the Late Prehistoric Period, the artifacts reflect even more substantial changes in the lifeways of American Indians - the last cultures before European contact. (pause) Arrow heads mark the use of the bow. (pause). Large stone hoes reveal the emergence of farming. (pause) Pottery styles reflect clear cultural differences between regions in Kentucky (pause) - the Fort Ancient peoples of central and eastern Kentucky, (pause) and the Mississippian peoples of western Kentucky. (pause) Late Prehistoric farmers also made beautiful ceremonial and personal objects: (pause) gorgets (**gore jets**) made from sea shells and inscribed with intricate designs; (pause) a small human figurine; (pause) and beautiful pottery with images of what may be themselves.

Video of Late Prehistoric artifacts and lifeway scenes. Timeline. Video: Mississippian mural, Wickcliff Mounds Research Center (Susan Walton)

Scene #28) 00:20. Running time 15:10

Narrator

The WPA collection also contains artifacts from the period when European trade goods first entered the Ohio Valley. These artifacts include both traditional materials and goods obtained from the French and English.

Artifact assemblage. Timeline. Video of catlinite pipe. Lower Shanwee Town mural . (by Robert Dafford) Return to assemblage.

Scene #29) 00:35. Running time 15:45

Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield

Tape #040 (05:01:52) “What the WPA archaeologists were finding was largely this material that enabled them to make these comparisons, trying to get some kind of cultural grouping based on the artifacts

whether it be pottery or flint work or ground stone work or things of that sort. And tried to find out, you know, the commonalties because that suggests some degree of social relationship. This was something they didn't know before and were trying to recreate these groups." (05:02:27)

Artists' rendering dissolves, from Archaic B&W to Cliff Palace Pond, to Adena sketch to Fort Ancient Village, and Mississippian mural from Wickcliff). Return to Duffield for close.

Scene #30) 00:15. Running time 16:00

FDR speech

"Yesterday, December 7th, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy....."

Hard visual and audio transition. SFX of explosion. Archival film of Pearl Harbor. FDR "infamy" speech. Archival film of Pearl Harbor. Dissolve to Elliott for close.

Scene #31) 00:30. Running time 16:30
Scene #32) 00:27. Running time 16:57

**Interview: John Elliott
Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield**

Tape #012 (03:15:05) "WPA activity came to an abrupt end with ... advent of Pearl Harbor (03:15:12)
Tape #039 (04:30:32) "Just in a very short period of time – a matter of months – the whole project all the (03:15:21) "People who were on relief employment (uh) got jobs in (uh) defense factories, and, many, and projects closed down and then what materials had to be shipped back to the repositories. And, even the young people went into service. (03:15:39) And, uh, that was the end of WPA." (Ironic smile). (03:15:46) processing of the materials in the lab terminated. Some cases leaving the stuff on the tables, and with only partially completed cataloging. (04:30:59)

Wind SFX. WPA photo: _____ (empty site). WPA photo: _____ (Guy in middle of site).

Scene #33) 00:13. Running time 17:10

Narrator

1 photo: _____ (Webb as older man). Video of monographs. CU of page (descriptive).

During the war, Webb and some of his colleagues continued to work on the WPA collection. They wrote dozens of monographs from field and laboratory records. These detailed publications laid the foundation for the next generation of archaeologists.

Scene #34) 00:58. Running time 18:08

Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield

(05:02:30) "Webb was never a theorist. He was very content just to do his little descriptive stuff, but at the same time that was so valuable because the whole eastern United States was involved in the same thing – trying to find out what we had, you know. And, what was related to what. Time wise at that particular time the whole idea of prehistory would approximately go back to the time of Christ and that was it." (05:03:10) (05:03:20) "It was only with the advent of radiocarbon dating in the late 1940s that things really began to change, modify and so we got different pictures of what we going on prehistorically here in the eastern United States." (05:03:37)

Dr. Duffield on camera. WPA film.

Scene #35) 00:20. Running time 18:28

Narrator

The WPA collection is curated today at the William S. Webb Museum of Anthropology at the University of Kentucky. (pause) The collection is used by scientists who come from all over the country, seeking answers to new archaeological questions.

Video of research facilities at UK Department of Anthropology.

Scene #36) 00:36. Running time 19:04

Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield

Tape #040 (05:14:44) “Unfortunately Webb in some of his excavations failed to recover environmental data, which is very important facet in archaeology today – such as the bones and remains of animals and things of that nature. And so now were going back and testing some of these sites in order to get some sample of this materials But then when you get into these warehouses in the universities and museums, there’s still a lot of materials that have never been analyzed.” (05:15:20)

Video of research facilities. Video of excavation at Wickcliffe Mounds. Video of boxes at research facility.

Scene #37) 00:20. Running time 19:24

Narrator

The legacy of WPA archaeology is as diverse as the ancient cultures it documented. (pause) Economically, WPA archaeology provided over 300 jobs every month to miners, farmers and timbermen from the most impoverished communities of Kentucky.

WPA film. WPA photo: _____ (Group shot). WPA photo: 11 FA-1 (Group shot). WPA photo: _____ (Group shot).

Scene #38) 00:30. Running time 19:54

Narrator

Scientifically, WPA archaeology defined several ancient cultures. (pause) The research documented early and widespread trade among American Indians in eastern North America. (pause) And, it showed that a series of American Indian cultures flourished in Kentucky for thousands of years.

WPA photo: 30 FA1-1. (Survey team). WPA photo: _____ (WPA artifacts). WPA photo: _____ (WPA artifacts). WPA photo: 1716BH (Guy on mound).

Scene #39) 00:30. Running time 20:26

Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield

Tape #040 (05:07:18) “If it had not been for WPA we would be still way back in the dark ages so to speak simply because we would never have the funds to run excavations as we’ve done now. To get, [cut] five hundred thousand dollars to work on one archaeological site would be almost impossible.” (05:07:48) (05:07:53) “So our data base would be greatly, greatly diminished. And we would still be looking and trying to find out things. And without that kind of earlier knowledge base the theories that we have today and the approaches that we have today would probably still be yet to come.” (05:08:12)

WPA film. Return to Duffield for close.

Scene #40) 00:20. Running time 20:46

Narrator

However, culturally, the legacy of WPA archaeology is more complex. (pause) Some view this massive work relief program as an important step in the investigation of America’s past. (pause) Others view it as cultural exploitation.

WPA photo: _____ (Workers on site). WPA photos “time-lapse” dissolves showing excavation of Robbins mound. Woodland flute music of Tommy Wildcat, “Fire People.”

Scene #41) 00:30. Running time 21:16

Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield

Tape #039 (04:29:00) “Just as there is great cultural diversity among American Indian groups, there is a great deal of political differences as well. Some groups would feel every confident that yes, “This is the way we can learn because archaeologists can tell us about our past. Others would see this as a way of desecrating uh, sacred grounds, burial grounds and recovery of artifacts that should be left with the dead. So there’s no consensus in all of this.” (04:29:30)

WPA photo: _____ (Adena mound). Dr. Duffield on camera. Video: Intertribal powwow, Minnetrista Cultural Center, Muncie, Indiana.

Scene #42). 00:40. Running time 21:04

Narrator

The burials of American Indians are rarely excavated today unless threatened by erosion or construction. Under terms of The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, American Indian tribes are often consulted *before* the excavation of graves (pause). The goals of American archaeology have also changed since the early 1940s. Archaeologists are focusing their research on the lifeways of American Indians. (pause) This research is giving us a more comprehensive picture of the first peoples to call Kentucky home.

Video of Nelson-Gay Mound. Video of pottery workshop, KHC conference. Video of Sharpsburg Mound. Video of archaeologists at Cliff Palace Pond. Video of Dr. Berele Clay at Mt. Horab. Video of crew at overlook at Cliff Palace Pond. Artwork of Cliff Palace Pond (by Rex Robinson).

Scene #43) 00:20. Running time 21:24

Interview: Dr. Lathel Duffield

Tape #040 (05:09:54) “There is a very rich prehistory in the United States and it is one that deserved to be preserved and protected. [cut] We should do all that we can to help manage these resources – not only for now but the future as well. (05:10:12)

Close with Dr. Duffield. Dissolve to dedication. Music resolves. Fade to black

Close

Scene #44) 00:08 seconds. Running time: 21:34

Dedication

In memory of Mr. John B. Elliott

Slate of white text over black.

Scene #45) 00:20 seconds. Running time: 21:54

Funding credits

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Announce (Law): Funder logos. Credit music: Scientific Breakthrough, “Designer Estrogens” cut#5.

Scene #46) 0:14 seconds. Running time: 22:12

KHC announcement

More information about this series is available at the Kentucky Heritage Council's website, or by calling area code (502) 564-7005.

Music under. Lower third graphic with KHC logo, website www.kyheritage.org and phone number (502) 564-7005, and website address (tbd).

Scene #47) 00:32 seconds. Running time: 22:42

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Slate #3) Production Team: Producer, Tom Law; Videographer Beth Fowler; Edit, Ken Yoder; Sound Design, Sonic Arts Digital Audio Services, Cincinnati, Ohio; Narrator, Bill Hartnett.

Slate #4 Music: Woodland Flute Music: Tommy Wildcat (www.cherkoeeproud.com); Guitar, Ed Cunningham; Banjo, Jeff Roberts.

Slate #5) Archives: University of Kentucky, William S. Webb Museum of Anthropology, Special Collections, National Archives, Absolutely Archives, Wickcliff Mounds Research Center; WCET-TV.

Slate of white text over black.

Scene #48) 00:08 seconds. Running time: 22:50

Production credit

Voyageur color logo, and loon call.

Scene #50) 00:10 seconds. Running time: 23:00

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Music out. Fade to black.