

ANTIQUITIES OF THE SOUTHERN INDIANS, PARTICULARLY OF THE GEORGIA TRIBES

Charles C. Jones, Jr.

Edited and with an Introduction by **Frank T. Schnell, Jr.**



ANTIQUITIES
of the
SOUTHERN INDIANS,
PARTICULARLY
of the
GEORGIA TRIBES

Charles C. Jones, Jr.

Edited and with an introduction by
Frank T. Schnell, Jr.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA PRESS
Tuscaloosa and London

Copyright © 1999
The University of Alabama Press
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0380
All rights reserved
Manufactured in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 • 07 06 05 04 03 02 01 00 99

Originally published 1873 by D. Appleton and Company,
New York

Cover design by Gary Gore

∞

The paper on which this book is printed meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Science—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Jones, Charles Colcock, 1831-1893.

Antiquities of the southern Indians, particularly of the Georgia tribes / Charles C. Jones, Jr. ; edited and with an introduction by Frank T. Schnell, Jr.

p. cm. — (Classics in southeastern archaeology)

Originally published: New York : D. Appleton and Co., 1873.
Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-8173-1004-5 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Indians of North America—Georgia—Antiquities. 2. Indians of North America—Southern States—Antiquities. 3. Georgia—Antiquities. 4. Southern States—Antiquities. I. Schnell, Frank T., Jr. II. Title. III. Series.

E78.G3 J6 1999

975'.01—dc21

99-6213

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data available

INTRODUCTION

Frank T. Schnell, Jr.

In the absence of letters and of recorded memories most easily does one wave of human life sweep over another, obliterating all former recollections save such as are lodged in the womb of mounds, or preserved in the generous bosom of mother earth.
—C. C. Jones, Jr.

In 1906, a young boy visited the Stalling's Island site on the Savannah River just north of Augusta, Georgia. He had been inspired to visit the site after reading what he called an "eloquent eulogy of the mound" in *Antiquities of the Southern Indians, Particularly of the Georgia Tribes*, by Charles Colcock Jones, Jr. (Claflin 1931:3). The Bostonian Claflin family frequently visited their "winter" home near Stalling's Island and not far from Jones's Augusta home. Over the next twenty-three years, he would continue periodic digging there until late 1928, when Mr. and Mrs. C. B.

Cosgrove of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University arrived to conduct slightly more than two months' intensive excavations, funded by Claflin (Stephen Williams, personal communication, December 11, 1998). In 1931, the now grown William H. Claflin, Jr., would publish the landmark report *The Stalling's Island Mound, Columbia County, Georgia*, in the Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology, Harvard University, based upon the Cosgroves', and his own work there. Claflin's publication is, in my opinion, the first "modern" archaeological report produced in Georgia and perhaps the Southeast. By that, I mean that it was the first to clearly demonstrate domestic stratigraphic sequence, an achievement that had eluded his predecessors and many of his contemporaries. Some ten years later, Charles Fairbanks reexamined the significance of Stalling's Island and further clarified the stratigraphic sequence there (Fairbanks 1942). Awareness of the importance of the site continues to grow. It is now a National Historic Landmark held by the Archaeological Conservancy, preserved for its continuing potential to add new knowledge concerning not only the archaeology of Georgia and the Southeast, but as the type site for the oldest ceramic series in North America.

Charles Colcock Jones, Jr., was born in Savannah on October 28, 1831 (Myers 1972:1568). His Jones ancestors had immigrated from England to Charleston, South Carolina, before the founding of the colony of Georgia. His great-grandfather had died in the defense of Savannah during the American Revolution. His father, C. C. Jones, Sr., was a

Presbyterian minister until just after his son's birth, when he moved his family to rural Georgia where, according to one biography, he devoted his energies to "the evangelization of the Negro" (Myers 1972:1567). Jones, Jr., spent his youth at the family plantations of "Montevideo" and "Maybank" in Liberty County, Georgia, near Savannah. In 1848 he attended South Carolina College at Columbia, spending his freshman and sophomore years there. He moved to Princeton in his junior year and graduated with distinction in 1852. He read law in Philadelphia for a year, then entered Dane Law School at Harvard University and graduated with a LL.B. in 1855. After graduation, Jones returned to Georgia and was admitted to the bar in Savannah.

In 1858, Jones married Ruth Berrien Whitehead, and in the next year he was selected as an alderman for the city of Savannah; in the following year he was elected mayor. He was serving as mayor when the Civil War began. Declining re-election, he volunteered for the Chatham (County) Artillery, remaining on leave until a new mayor was elected. By the fall of 1862, he was chief of artillery for the military district of Georgia, which was subsequently enlarged to include the third military district of South Carolina. Preferring artillery, he declined a commission of brigadier-general of infantry. After the death of his first wife in 1861, Jones was married a second time to Eva Berrien Eve of Augusta in 1863. Late in 1865 after the war had ended, he moved with his family to New York, where he practiced law and where he wrote *Antiquities of the Southern Indians*. Returning to Georgia in 1877,

Jones settled in his home "Montrose" near Augusta, Georgia, where he continued to reside and practice law until his death on July 19, 1893.

Antiquities of the Southern Indians and other works of Jones inspired Claflin and many others, both before and after, to seek to understand Georgia's and the Southeast's prehistoric cultural heritage. For a hundred years after *Antiquities* was first published in 1873, every archaeologist working in Georgia would use this book as ground zero for research. Charles Fairbanks *Archeology of the Funeral Mound: Ocmulgee National Monument, Georgia* (1956), William H. Sears's first two reports on Kolomoki (1951a, 1951b), and Joseph R. Caldwell's synthesis *The Archeology of Eastern Georgia and South Carolina* (1952) all cite Jones. Two histories of American archaeology, published one hundred years after *Antiquities*, note Jones's importance (Stoltman 1973:122-123; Willey and Sabloff 1974:60). My first "rare book" acquisition in 1957 as a young student archaeologist was Jones's *Antiquities*. But the impact of this book extends far beyond Georgia. It became a model during the nineteenth century for archaeological reporting. When W. H. Holmes published his obituary of Jones in the October 1893 issue of *American Anthropologist*, he stated that *Antiquities* served as a "handbook [for] students of American Archaeology" (quoted in Bonner 1943:328). Gates P. Thruston, who published another landmark in Southeastern archaeology, *The Antiquities of Tennessee and Adjacent States* in 1890, specifically credits C. C. Jones, Jr., as one of the three individuals to whom he was "greatly indebted." He ex-

presses his greatest debt to Dr. Joseph Jones, "the pioneer of archaeological investigations in Tennessee" (Thruston 1890:vii), an individual whom we will mention again.

William Bartram, Benjamin Hawkins, and others briefly described archaeological remains in the nuclear Southeastern United States in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and a number of individuals such as Thomas Jefferson published brief accounts of excavations. The more comprehensive works of Squier and Davis in the Ohio Valley in the early nineteenth century are well known, but no serious attempt appears to have been made to gather together as much pertinent information as possible in the broad region of the Southeast before Jones published his *Antiquities of the Southern Indians* in 1873. Although Jones leans most heavily upon his experience in Georgia, he drew from individuals in broad sections of the Southeast, citing their works throughout the book. In his preface, Jones explicitly notes that he considered it "appropriate to mention and contrast the antiquities of Virginia, the Carolinas, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee" (Jones 1873:v-vi).

One of his most useful and perceptive informants, whom he quotes as having conducted extensive excavations and research in Tennessee and northern Alabama, was that pioneer of archaeological investigations in Tennessee noted by Thruston, Dr. Joseph Jones of Nashville, Tennessee. As Stephen Williams has pointed out (personal communication, November 1998), C. C. Jones fails to mention in *Antiquities* that Dr. Jones was his own

brother—a younger brother, incidentally, who had accompanied him (Myers 1972:600) on his first visit to the Stalling's Island site in July of 1860!

Unlike most of his contemporaries (cf. Thruston 1890; Thomas 1894; Holmes 1903), C. C. Jones attempted to be comprehensive in his examination of kinds of evidence, including studying fragments of artifacts and evidence of everyday life—not just whole grave goods. With the exception of a lack of a clear understanding of the extent of the time depth entailed in the history of Southeastern Native Americans and some uses of ethnohistoric interpretation, the validity and durability of Jones's work in this book published more than 125 years ago is astonishing.

Although the principle of stratigraphy in archaeology was recognized on a superficial level, grasping the subtleties of superimposition in reconstructing a domestic historical sequence is always difficult, particularly when there are no templates or precedents to follow. Critical observations about domestic stratigraphy were not apparent in Jones's accounts, and as late as 1929, Georgia's first academically trained archaeologist, Margaret Ashley (Schnell 1999), was having great difficulty in attempting to identify chronological sequence through domestic stratigraphy. Like Thomas Jefferson, Jones recognized stratigraphy as well as relative age differences and its importance in his excavations of particular phenomena such as burial mounds, however. Such observations by Jones served him quite well, as when he observed that with only one exception, all historic burials that he encountered in his excavations of mounds appear

to have been intrusive. Cyrus Thomas noted the same situation in other mounds in his later (1894) volume, in which Jones's earlier work (1873) was cited extensively.

It should also be noted that Jones applied logic and the scientific resources available to him in attempting to establish absolute age. One kind of evidence he used was the size of slow growing trees and, in some cases, the examination of tree rings. Jones did recognize the possibility of relatively great time depth in Indian history. In his discussion of lithics, he states that: "Chronologically considered, the stone periods which they represent may be separated by hundreds and perhaps thousands of years" (Jones 1873:241). Of course, he was probably thinking in terms of a few thousand years, rather than the twelve or more thousand years now accepted. Almost to the mid-twentieth century when radiocarbon dating began to be applied, the extended length of time encompassed in Southeastern prehistory was frequently doubted and often rejected. The first "modern" textbook (Martin, Quimby, and Collier 1947) summarizing North American archaeology (written immediately prior to the widespread use of radiocarbon dating) read by the author of this introduction, managed to squeeze most of North American prehistory into the last four thousand years. Detailed sequences and great time depth, although suspected, continued to elude Jones as it did his successors for many years. There is much comment in recent archaeological literature about the obsession with time and sequence among archaeologists during the first half of this century, but the works of Jones clearly dem-

onstrate the difficulty of developing in-depth interpretations without these two rocks of time and sequence to stand upon.

C. C. Jones also carefully considered the origins of Native American culture. Even before the American Revolution, some writers were performing convoluted and extraordinary mental gymnastics in an attempt to demonstrate that the ancestors of living Native Americans could neither have had the mental nor cultural capability to originate the obviously complex cultures that constructed the earthen tumuli scattered throughout the eastern part of North America, nor could they have manufactured the sophisticated and intricate works of art to be found in prehistoric sites. Many of these attempts to assign prehistoric Southeastern cultural origins to the Old World or to an ancient race ranged from pseudo-academic studies to outrageous frauds. Although not all pervasive, the popularity in certain sectors during the nineteenth century of what Stephen Williams described as *Fantastic Archaeology* (1991), did not seduce Jones in the least.

Jones did not subscribe to either the Old World influences school (as in the thesis of Adair and others about the “Lost Tribes of Israel”) or to the extinct race theories. He clearly and lucidly demonstrates in this book that the prehistoric Indians were direct ancestors of the Native Americans living in the Southeast at contact, and of their descendants living today. The essentially racist theories that contemporary Indians could not have descended from the advanced prehistoric cultures being uncovered might have been very seductive to someone like Jones, who was born during the

era of Indian removal. Instead, he makes the very perceptive observation: "It will be remembered that the North American Indian was generally quite reticent as to his people and their old customs, and frequently denied to the stranger a knowledge of matters which he did not desire either to discuss or to reveal" (Jones 1873:126). This protection of esoteric knowledge is very much in the forefront of Native American activist principles even today.

C. C. Jones, Jr., was born in Georgia in 1831, just before the Cherokee, Seminole, Choctaw, and Creek Trails of Tears that removed all but a very few remnants of Native American population from the Southeast. Before Jones was ten years old, the Creek and Cherokee population of Georgia and Alabama had been reduced by more than forty thousand souls. Just as the angst brought on by slavery continues even today as a factor in black-white relations, the expulsion of Native Americans from their homelands brought about societal stress as well. Given this background, Jones's position concerning Indian origins in *Antiquities of the Southern Indians* is even more commendable.

As to why the Indians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were so different from those of the fifteenth and sixteenth, Jones concludes: "certain it is that the inroads of the Spaniards violently shocked this primitive population, imparting new ideas, interrupting established customs, overturned acknowledged government, impoverishing whole districts, engendering a sense of insecurity until that time unknown, causing marked changes, and entailing losses and demoralization perhaps far more potent than we are inclined, at first thought,

to believe" (Jones 1873:177). It should be noted that anglophile Jones seems to have had a blind spot in relation to the similar effects upon Indian culture by the English, as he demonstrated in other writings a similar blind spot in relation to African American slavery. Alternative explanations must have been tempting. Nevertheless, he concludes his chapter discussing the "mound-builders" with the observation that "In a word, we do not concur in the opinion, so often expressed, that the mound-builders were a race distinct from and superior in art, government, and religion, to the Southern Indians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries" (Jones 1873:135).

Jones's literary output of historical and archaeological writings was prodigious and well received. Among his correspondence are admiring letters from George Bancroft, Francis Parkman, Sir Charles Lyell, and Oliver Wendell Holmes (Bonner 1943:327). His accomplishments as a writer are not surprising considering his intellectual and family background. In 1972, Yale University Press published *The Children of Pride: A True Story of Georgia and the Civil War*, edited by Robert Manson Myers. Extracted from approximately 6,000 family letters written by Jones, his mother, his father, and other family members, the book forms a remarkable document recounting in intimate and perceptive detail the life of one family in the period from 1854 to 1868. Included is a letter written during the Civil War by Jones, which more vividly invokes the sounds, sights, and atmosphere of a military encampment than any other that comes to my mind.

As I write, the campfires are all dead save that which burns brightly still in front of the guard tent, where "the watchers keep their vigils sharp"; and the stillness is unbroken save by the lazy flap of the tent curtains, the soft ripple of the tide as it gently chafes with the shore, and the occasional note of some waking songbird among the over-shadowing branches. All else is hushed. Not a sound from the stables. No challenge from the sentinels. They are keeping their post, however; for every now and then I can detect the clank of the scabbard against the slings as they come to the about. Even the quiet breathing of the captain, whom I can touch with my hand as he lies sleeping behind me on his camp cot, I cannot hear. And I am holding silent converse with you, my dear parents; and my heart is going forth in warmest love towards you and my sweet little daughter. (Jones, in Myers 1972:xiii-xiv)

All of the family members were prolific and lucid, if sometimes florid, writers. If anyone wishes to have a startlingly vivid view of life in the South during that period, there is no better place to start than *The Children of Pride* and another volume of letters written by a young C. C. Jones, Jr., *A Georgian at Princeton*, published by Myers in 1976. *The Children of Pride* was reissued, in an abridged edition with plates, in 1984.

Jones, although deeply interested in archaeology, primarily considered himself a historian and closely aligned himself with English historian Thomas Macaulay, who contended that a historian must possess an imagination sufficiently powerful

to make his narrative affecting and picturesque, yet must control it so absolutely as to content himself with the material that he finds and refrain from supplying deficiencies by additions of his own. Macaulay had stated that the historian must exercise a self-command that will enable him to abstain from casting his facts in the mold of his hypothesis. Jones espoused this philosophy in his preface to *The History of Georgia*, and because of his position, George Bancroft named him the "Macaulay of the South" (Myers 1972:1568). Jones's historical philosophy shows in his archaeological writings as well.

Although most of his writings were in history, he published a number of items on archaeology and ethnohistory. In fact, his first publication was *Indian Remains in Southern Georgia*, which came out in 1859. Other archaeological and ethnohistorical publications included *The Monumental Remains of Georgia* (1861), *Ancient Tumuli of the Savannah River* (1868), *Historical Sketch of Tomo-chi-chi, Mico of the Yamacraws* (1868), *Ancient Tumuli in Georgia* (1869), *Aboriginal Structures in Georgia* (1878a), *Bird Shaped Mounds in Putnam County, Georgia, U.S.A.* (1878b), *Centres of Primitive Manufacture in Georgia* (1880), and *Silver Crosses from an Indian Grave Mound at Coosawatter Oldtown, Murray County, Georgia* (1881). He published many brief notes in volumes such as the Smithsonian Institution's *Annual Report* for 1885, where he comments on "a primitive store-house of the Creek Indians." Of interest to historic archaeologists is *The Dead Towns of Georgia* (1878c). On one occasion, Jones even delved into folklore, writing *Negro*

Myths from the Georgia Coast (1888). In all, he appears to have published at least eighty papers, pamphlets, and books. Other than *Antiquities*, his best known publication was his massive two-volume *History of Georgia* (1883). The early chapters of *History of Georgia* are well worth reading for the archaeology, since Jones summarizes and updates his conclusions about Georgia archaeology. American historian George Bancroft remarked that in this book, Jones had written the finest state history that he had ever read (in Myers 1972:1568).

Jones's illustrations in *Antiquities of the Southern Indians* demonstrate that his personal archaeological collection was remarkably comprehensive, including not only whole vessels and points but also sherds and lithic fragments as well. It is clear that Jones excavated at a number of sites, but no comprehensive accounting of his field work has been published. This collection, composed of some 20,000 specimens in the 1890s, still exists, although somewhat divided. A 1927 newspaper article cited below notes that Jones had deposited a portion of his collection at the American Museum of Natural History. According to Stephen Williams (1973) in his New Introduction to an earlier reprinting of *Antiquities*, the remaining family collection was purchased from Jones's heirs by that young admirer, William H. Claflin, Jr., although some of the more elaborate pieces are in the Museum of the American Indian, New York. The Claflin collection, including C. C. Jones's material, was given to the Peabody Museum at Harvard University after Mr. Claflin's death.

When Margaret E. Ashley was conducting her

archaeological survey of Georgia in the late 1920s, she consulted Jones's library in Augusta, commenting to a news writer that Jones had "the scientist's attention to detail." The library was housed at the family home "Montrose" near Augusta, where Jones's daughter Ruth Berrien Jones Carpenter still resided at the time of Ashley's visit. According to the article (Hillyer 1927:23), Jones's library consisted of some 4,000 volumes in addition to a complete set of his own publications. Included in the library was an original two-volume 1690 edition of DeBry's engravings of Southeastern Indians, with commentary in Latin.

Based upon his collection, correspondence with others, and personal field observations, Jones wrote *Antiquities of the Southern Indians*. In writing the book, he undertook not just to describe his collections and archaeological observations. He made a major effort to tie these remains with living Indians through use of the direct historical approach, including extensive use of ethnohistoric data. According to one biographer (Avery 1881:625), *Antiquities of the Southern Indians* won him worldwide acclaim. This biographer also states that the book earned him the LL.D. degree from University of the City of New York. He received this degree in 1880 and another LL.D. from Oxford University (Georgia) in 1882.

Antiquities of the Southern Indians is also a good source of ethnohistoric data. The first 135 pages of the book are largely ethnohistorical, with only occasional allusion to archaeological discoveries. He obviously had access to most of the pertinent historical publications for his interpretations. We can