

Europe Nashville May 30th 1820

Since my residence in this country which has been about 4 years, a number of curiosities have been discovered calculated to excite much ingenious speculation with regard to the antiquity of this country. Every part of the West from Louisiana to the Lakes is in possession of numerous mounds, some representing the form of a sugar loaf, others resembling fortifications constructed with much order and regularity as if designed for great military purposes. — A Mr. Earle of this place whose curiosity led him to an investigation of a mound (not long since) in pursuit of those vestiges of antiquity which constituted the materials in part of his infant Museum, discovered at the depth of 9 feet from the summit a very light earth resembling ashes, immediately above which there was a thin stratum of clay — at 12 feet he discovered charcoal, at 16 feet leaves, and at 17 feet pure ashes with a mixture of lime and substances resembling human bones after having been burned, these substances when exposed to the air crumbled to dust. There are trees ~~in the~~ and which must be

from 130 to 150 years old from their annular rings
or circles —

It has ever been the custom of Asiatic nations
in entering their dead to erect funeral piles —
How far such a custom might have prevailed, or
reached a country so remote as this, by what
means and at what time, is a subject yet unsettled —

In addition to the many curiosities and objects of
antiquity discovered in these mounds, there was found
near Fayetteville in this state, a piece of Roman coin
about 4 feet below the surface of the earth, in a deep rav-
ine washed by torrents, the silver is represented to
be very pure, the letters are rough and much worn,
around the coin and near the edge are the following words
and letters, On one side a figure representing a man,
in high relief ~~with the~~ Commodus — AVG + HEREL.
On the other side that of a woman, with a horn in her
right hand seated on a square base, with the titles
TRPV. IMP. III. COS. II. P. P. —

A piece of coin similar to this was found
several years previous ~~to this~~ in the town of Fayetteville
in this state, in digging for a cellar.
How this coin ~~was~~ by whom brought

at what time, and in what way it may be connected with
the other remains of antiquity, is a source of information
anxiously sought for, — That a correct account
cannot be obtained is presumed, but that a chain of
circumstances relating the best evidence from historical
accounts will throw much light on the subject is well
known —

To solicit this from you in your declining
years, when the mind is anxious to seek repose, after
the toils of a life devoted to the service of your country
I know is unpleasant — my only apology is found
in the remark that I should be at a loss to appeal
to different resources, and have only to add that
a gratification of my solicitude on this occasion
will confer the highest favour on your Ob. St.

W. Patterson

Patterson N. Nashville May 30. 20.

rec^d June 21.

FREE

Jefferson City

Manitello

Almanac

Virginia

NASHVILLE
MAY 30 1860

Thomas

