ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY

March 19

The Grave Creek Mound, a Native American burial mound located in present-day Moundsville, was opened on March 19, 1838, by Jesse Tomlinson.

CSO: SS.8.20, ELA.8.1, ELA.8.7

Investigate the Document: (Early western travels, 1748-1846: a series of annotated reprints of some of the best and rarest contemporary volumes of travel, Vol. 3, 917.3 T548)

1. How would you define “piqued” using the context of the following sentence? "I began to fear that he was piqued with the sharp reprimand I gave him the evening before…"

2. Why was the mound not visible from the river?

3. How tall does Captain Lewis estimate the mound to be?

Think Critically: Using your knowledge of early civilization in the area, what pre-Colombian culture built the Grave Creek Mound? Why do you think this culture chose to make mounds for burial purposes? Do you believe it is essential to preserve ancient burial mounds? Explain.
THE JOURNALS OF
CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS
AND
SERGEANT JOHN ORDWAY
KEPT ON THE EXPEDITION OF WESTERN
EXPLORATION, 1803-1806

Edited with Introduction and Notes by
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THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN
MADISON • MCMLXV
WISCONSIN HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS  Sept. 9

not use it without the previous consent of the President; how-

ever if he thought proper to go on with me to the Illinois whe

I expected to winter I could obtain an answer from the Presi-

dent by the spring of the year or before the Missouri would

be sufficiently open to admit of my ascending it; and that in

the event of the President’s not consenting to our wishes, I con-

ceived that the situation of that country was a much more eligi-

ble one for a physician than that of Wheeling particularly as

he stated the practice which he had acquired at Wheeling was

not an object; the D’ was to have taken his medicine with him

which was a small assortment of about 100 £ value, remained

here all night.— The people began to top their corn and collect

their fodder—

9th Sep!

The D’ could not get ready I waited until three this even-

ing and then set out had some difficulty in getting over a rifle one

mile below the town, got on six miles and brought too, I was now

informed that by some mistake in the contract between the

Corporal and the woman who had engaged to bake the bread

for the men at Wheeling that the woman would not agree to

give up the bread being 90 lbs, and that the bread was left I

instantly dispatched the Corporal and two men for the bread and

gave him a dollar to pay the woman for her trouble; about the

time we landed it began to rain very heard and continued to

rain most powerfully all night with small intervals; had my

perogues covered with oil-cloth, but the rain comes down in

such torrents that I found it necessary to have them bailed out

frequently in the course of the night; in attending to the secur-

ity of my goods I was exposed to the rain and got wet to the

skin as I remained until about twelve at night, when I wrung

out my saturated clothes, put on a dry shirt turned into my birth;

the rain was excessively cold for the season of the year.

10th

The rain ceased about day, the clouds had not dispersed, and

looked very much like giving us a repetition of the last evening’s

frolic, there was but little fog and I should have been able to

to have set out at sunrise, but the Corporal had not yet returned

with the bread—I began to fear that he was pinned with the

sharp reprimand I gave him the evening before for his negligence

& inattention with respect to the bread and had deserted; in this

3 The camp for the night was three miles below Belfair, Ohio.

1 Located within the limits of Monashville, W. Va. Most travelers upon the Ohio have tried their hands at describing it, even as Lewis does in the following paragraphs. See, for example, Early Western Travels, III, 300-62, IV, 114-56; and Whiten, On the Stolen Ohio, 64-66.

2 Established by Joseph Tomlinson, a well-known pioneer, who named it in honor of his wife. Tomlinson was also the founder of Monashville, with which Elizabethtown was later incorporated. Early Western Travels, III, 360, IV, 114-23.
aside, this bank is about 30 feet wide and appears to have formed the entrance to a fortified mound near the summit of this mound grows a white oak tree whose girth is 13½ feet, from the ancient appearance of this tree I think its age might reasonably be calculated at 300 years, the whole mound is covered with large timber, sugar tree, hickory, poplar, red and white oak. I was informed that in removing the earth of a part of one of these lesser mounds that stands in the town the skeletons of two men were found and some brass beads were found among the earth near these bones, my informant told me the beads were sent to M's Peale's museum in Philadelphia where he believed they now were.

we got on twenty four miles this day, we passed some bad raffles but got over them without the assistance of a boat. we came too on the E. side in deep water and a bold shore staid all night a little above Sunfish creek.

11th September.

Set out about sunrise, passed Sunfish creek 1 mile & & entered the long reach, so called from the Ohio running in straight direction for 18 miles in this reach there are 5 Islands from three to 2 miles in length each—observed a number of squirrels swimming the Ohio and universally passing from the W. to the East shore they appear to be making to the south; perhaps it may be mast or food which they are in search of but I should rather suppose that it is climate which is their object as I find no difference in the quantity of mast on both sides of this river it being abundant on both except the beach nut which appears extremely scarce this season. the walnuts and Hickory nuts the usual food of the squirrel appears in great abundance on either side of the river—

I made my dog take as many each day as I had occasion for, they were[tl?] Int and I thought them when fried a pleasant food—many of these squirrels were black, they swim very light on the water and make pretty good speed—my dog was of the newfoundland breed very active strong and docile, he would take the squirrel in the water kill them and swimming bring them in his mouth to the boat. we lay this night below the fifth Island in the long reach on the E. side of the river having come 28 miles.

12th Sept set out at sunrise it began to rain and continued with some intervals until three in the evening passed several bad raffles and one particularly at the lower end of the long reach called Wilson's raffle here we were obliged to make a cut a channel through the gravel with our spade and canoe paddles and then drag the boat through we were detained about 4 hours before we accomplished this task and again continued our rout and took up on the N. W. shore near a yankey farmer from whom I purchased some oem and pintasses for my men and gave him in exchange a few lbs. of lead, we came 20 miles this day.

13th This morning being clare we pursued our journey at sunrise and after passing a few raffles over which we had to lift the boat we arrived at Marietta, the mouth of the Muskingum river, at 7. O'Clock in the evening observed many pigeons passing over us pursuing a south East course. The squirrels still continue to cross the river from N. W. to S. E.—Marietta is one hundred miles from Wheeling.
THE
JOURNAL OF A TOUR
INTO THE
 Territory Northwest of the Alleghany
Mountains;
Made in the Spring of the Year 1803.
WITH
A GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF
THE
State of Ohio.
Illustrated with Original Maps and Views.

BY
THADDEUS MASON HARRIS, A. M.
Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

"Profuit et varios mores, hominumque locorumque
Explorasse frus, multas cum peregrinavit
Aut vidisse ipsum urbes, aut narravit illas
Ex alius novisse." VIDS, poet.

Bolton:
PRINTED BY MANNING & LORING, NO. 2, CORNHILL.
1805.
We reached Tomlinson, a small settlement near Grave Creek, to lodge. We propose spending tomorrow here in viewing the surprising forts and the "Big Mound," in this vicinity.

[65] Wednesday, June 8

"Behind me rises huge, a mournful pile,
Sole on this defunct hearth, a place of tombs,
Walls, delusive; where Rats, fatty grills,
Bending o'er frightful racks and crumbling bones."

We went out this morning to examine the antient monuments about Grave Creek. The town of Tomlinson is partly built upon one of the square forts. Several mounds are to be seen. I think there are nine within a mile. Three of them, which stand adjoining each other, are of superior height and magnitude to those which are most commonly to be met with. In digging away the sides of one of these, in order to build a stable, many curious stone implements were found; one resembled a lyre; there were, also, a pefile, some copper beads of an oval shape, and several other articles. One of the mounds in Col. Bygg's garden was excavated in order to make an ice-house. It contained a vast number of human bones, a

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[64] As there are no excavations near the mound, and no hills or banks of earth, we infer that it must have been

Joseph Riggs took part in the siege of Fort Henry, at Wheeling; defended a besieged blockhouse in Ohio, opposite Wheeling, in 1774; and finally died in Ohio about 1813. He claimed to have been in seventeen Indian fights in and about the neighborhood of Wheeling. -- En.

This singular marking-stone is now deposited in Mr. Tomlin's Cabinet of Curiosities at Belvoir. -- Harv.

George Miller had one of the first petitions of this region at Wheeling, and served as mayor of the town (1805-7). -- En.

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"Big mound," as it is called, is a most astonishing mound. We measured the perpendicular height, and it was thirty-one feet and a half. By the measurement of George Millar, Esq., of Wheeling, it is sixty-eight feet. Its sides are quite steep. The diameter of the top is fifty-five feet: but the apex forms to have caved in; for the present summit forms a lichen, three or four feet in depth. Not having a surveyor's chain, we could not take the circumference, but judged that its base covered more than an acre. It is overgrown with large trees on all sides. Near the top is a white oak of three feet diameter: one still larger grows on the eastern side about half way down. The mound sounds hollow. Undoubtedly its contents will be numerous, curious, and calculated to develop in a further degree the history of the antiquities which abound in this part of our country.
principally formed of fods skimmed from the surface, or of earth brought from a great distance. The labour of collecting such a prodigious quantity must have been inconceivably great. And when we consider the multitude of workmen, the length of time, and the expense, requisite to form such a tremendous mound; when we reflect upon the spirit of ambition which suggested the idea of this monument, of great but simple magnificence, to the memory of some renowned prince or warrior, we cannot but regret that the name and the glory it was designed to perpetuate are gone — lost in the darkness of the grave."

**THURSDAY, June 9**

The route from Tomblyno to Wheeling was very romantic. Sometimes we passed through shaded vales of towering trees, and sometimes on a winding road along the steep sides of a precipice, at the bottom of which flowed the beautiful Ohio. The paffle is circuitous and narrow, and guarded from the steep declivity to the river by a flight parapet of logs or stones. If [65] you look below, you fear that the tumbling horse will precipitate you among crags and trees to the river’s edge; while from above, hoisted rocks seem to threaten to crush you by a fall.

On these declivities grow the mountain raspberry (Rubus montanus floridus,) in great plenty. It is a handsome bush, and the flower, which is of a pale pink colour, and of the size and appearance of that of the sweet-brier, or hedge rose, gives it a very ornamental appearance. We were told that the fruit is large, and exceedingly delicious.

*For recent study of Indian mounds, consult Smithsonian Institution Report, 1842 (Washington, 1843); also American Bureau of Ethnology, Twelfth Annual Report (Washington, 1844) — En.

**FRIDAY, June 10**

Leave Wheeling, and proceed homewards in our carriage. Lodge at Donegal, in Washington County, Pennsylvania.

**SATURDAY, June 11**

Pass through Washington and arrived at Brownsville to spend the Sabbath. The remarks I made upon the situation of this place have been transferred to the preceding account of the settlements on the Monongahela river.

**MONDAY, June 13**

Dined, and spent the afternoon at Uniontown, in company with the worthy Judge Addison, Judge Roberts, and the Judges, lawyers, and gentlemen of the circuit Court of Fayette County.

Uniontown is the third town of the County. It is a very pleasant and thriving place, situated near Redstone Creek, and principally built upon one straight street, the side walks of which are nearly paved with large flat stones. It contains about one hundred and twenty houses, many

* Harris returned from Wheeling by a road which followed the route later taken by the National or Cumberland Road from Wheeling to Uniontown, in Fayette County. See Smirh, The Old Pike: A History of the National Road (Uniontown, Pennsylvania, 1846) for the building and continuation of this road, as well as the Congressional debate thereof.

The town of Donegal has vanished from the map; it was probably at or near the present Clayville, in Donegal Township, Washington County — En.

**Judge Alexander Addison was a Scotshman who first entered the ministry; afterwards studying for the bar, he became the first law judge in western Pennsylvana. His opposition to the Whisky Rebellion, and prosecution of its leaders, and his strong Federalist attitude, made him many enemies among the Western settlers, of whose instance he was imprisoned and removed from the bench in 1814. Addison was succeeded by Judge Samuel Roberts, who had been born and educated in Philadelphia. Admitted to the bar in 1813, he was a successful lawyer when placed upon the bench (1823), where he remained until his death in 1850. — En.