

CORRESPONDENCE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BLUNDERING

The dictionary defines "mistake" as the interchange of one thing for another through haste, etc., and a "blunder" as a mistake or error of a gross kind, through carelessness, ignorance, or stupidity.

In Vol 1. XXIV, Nos. 2-3, 1935, of the *Museum Journal of the University Museum, Philadelphia*, reference was made by the author to the discovery of three bone awls in a deep hearth in Burnet Cave, near Carlsbad, New Mexico. These "bone awls" have since proven to be horse bones and do not appear to have been worked at all. Two of the bones are the splint bones of a horse, and one is a nasal bone, probably of a horse also.

These particular bones resemble very closely those that have been worked into awls, as shown in Figure 3, and it is easy to mistake them for actual awls. Both are from cave deposits. Of the "awls" shown in the illustration, the first, second and fourth specimens in the top row, counting from left to right, and the first and third specimens in the bottom row are actual awls from Basketmaker caves in Utah. The other three specimens, from Burnet Cave, New Mexico, are not awls. Left-hand specimen in top row, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches long.

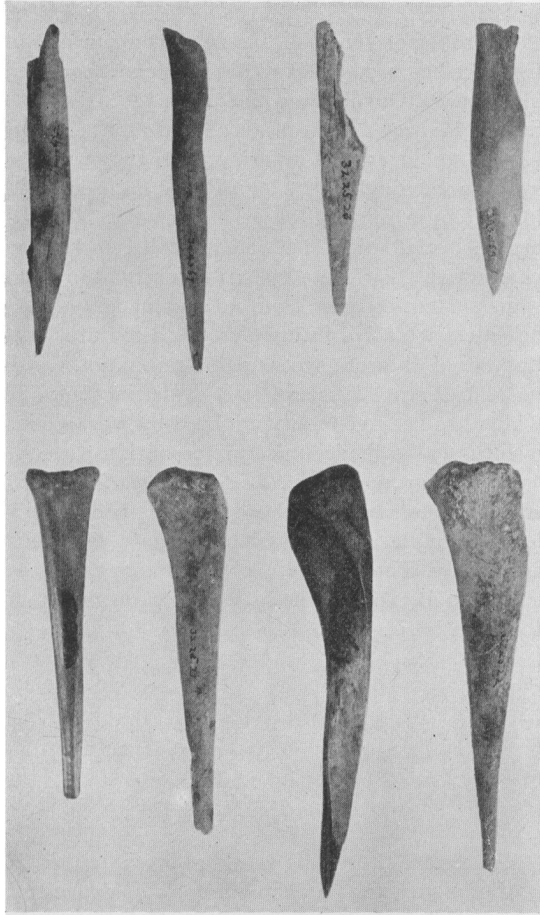


FIG. 3

This brief notice is not only to correct an unintentional mistake, but to point to the necessity for careful examination of animal bones in archaeological deposits.

EDGAR B. HOWARD
University Museum,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

SURVEY METHODS

Apropos of Mr. Robbins' letter on survey methods, the Van Epps-Hartley Chapter has used an exactly similar method of designating sites, in its survey of this area. Our method was upset recently by the adoption by the New York State Planning Board of an official number system for New York State topographic quadrangles, differing from that which we had been using, and which was the seemingly more logical system used by Mr. Robbins, by the Gila Pueblo, and by a number of other surveys. Since it *is* an official system, we will use it, but it might be well for others who are contemplating such work to check with their state boards before making an extensive survey according to some system of their own, no matter how good it may be. For the benefit of outsiders who will later refer to their data, it is advantageous to reduce the number of different systems to a minimum. On the other hand, where there are no official state systems, it is of distinct advantage to make use of a system which has been generally adopted by workers in other states and which might eventually be made uniform for nation-wide site surveys under the aegis of some such group as the *Society for American Archeology*. The system which Mr. Robbins describes, which we formerly used, and which is on the whole the most logical simple system which is generally applicable, meets these conditions admirably. The Society could well advocate the general use of this scheme, or some modification of it, in reducing survey data throughout the country to a common basis.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER
Secretary-Treasurer
Van Epps-Hartley Chapter
N.Y.S. Archeological Association

SHOULD WE DAMN THE PRESS?

There are those who would abbreviate this title.

Some years ago a companion and I drove to Florida to investigate a report which had reached us concerning a burial mound the contents of which had been exposed by a Gulf storm. Our automobile had been left for safe keeping at the police station in Pensacola and our belated return had caused some anxiety on the part of the chief; in fact, newspaper headlines had already proclaimed, "Scientists Feared Missing." The news of our return soon reached the press