

TWO GRUESOME FINDS

By the finding of the skeleton of a man near Druid on Shelton Laurel some three weeks ago, the solution of a mystery that occupied the minds of people of that section some years ago seems near solution.

One morning about eight years ago a man named George Thomas in the employ of the Laurel River Logging Company, took his dinner pail and went to work as usual in the woods. That, so far as anyone in that section ever knew, was the last seen of Thomas. Inquiries and searches failed to throw any light on his whereabouts, and gradually his mysterious disappearance faded from the minds of those who knew him.

Three weeks ago an employe of the lumber company in making an inspection of the forest unexpectedly ran upon the skeleton of a man, and immediately interest was revived in the old mystery. Thomas was known to have had a broken leg which had healed with an abnormal growth or knot at the point of fracture. This growth was found on the bones of the skeleton. Another evidence of identification was furnished by his shoes, which were still on the bones of his feet. A local cobbler remembered having placed a half-sole crosswise on one of his shoes, and this half-sole was found on the shoe worn by the skeleton.

Of course the condition of the skeleton made impossible any examination as to the cause of death, but he was known to have been subject to fits, and it is thought that he had fallen victim to one of these attacks, lost his way in the deep woods and probably died of starvation.

Another gruesome find of a more recent tragedy was uncovered by the finding of the charred body of a man near the White Rock section, but across on the Tennessee side, about two weeks ago. This body showed signs of foul play, as the head was literally full of shot. Leaves had been piled over the body and set on fire, making recognition impossible and helping to destroy evidence of the crime. The dead man is said to have been seen going in that direction just before his disappearance, and it is thought he fell a victim to moonshiners.

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