

THE GRAVE OF LITTLE TURTLE.

THE grave of Little Turtle, the noted Miami chief, has long been lost to knowledge, but it is thought that it has at last been found and identified beyond all doubt. The chieftain was buried somewhere on the Fort Wayne site in July, 1812, his death having occurred July 14, and the finding of the grave was within a few days of being an exact century. Mr. J. M. Stouder, to whom belongs the credit of identifying the grave, published the following account in the Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette of August 4. By letter Mr. Stouder informs us that the spot he describes was, perhaps, the last cemetery of the Miamis at Fort Wayne, and that more than twenty-five bodies have been exhumed in that locality. The skull found with the identifying relics has been sent to the Smithsonian Institute for examination, and on its return will be returned to the grave, and steps will be taken toward erecting a fitting monument to the memory of the chief.

ACCOUNT BY J. M. STOUDER.

July 4, 1912, will hereafter be memorable to the citizens of Fort Wayne and Allen county. On that day Albert and Charles Lochner uncovered the grave of Little Turtle, the great Miami war chief.

The brothers had contracted to build a house for Dr. George W. Gillie on Lawton place, and in digging the cellar uncovered several Indian graves. Noticing that whatever was in the graves was appropriated by the laborers, the contractors called off the crew and with the assistance of Dr. George W. Gillie dug the drain in which the grave of Little Turtle was found.

The finders had no idea of the identity of the body. The skull was carefully kept and presented to Dr. M. W. Ivins, dentist at 1118 Rivermet avenue, who had requested the Lochner brothers to save a good specimen for him. The balance of the remains were scattered and carried away by the curious as mementos.

Around the neck of the chief was found the string of silver beads and crosses and in the few remaining tufts of hair on the

back of the skull was the string of white shell beads. The hair was also tied with a buckskin thong, and, from the description given by the Lochner brothers was well preserved. The vermilion war paint was beneath the chieftain's knees, the solid silver armlets on his arms, the anklet and the famous sword, the gun and the remnant of the pistol were at his side. The various other implements had been placed in various other parts of the grave and had probably become disarranged in the digging of the drain. On the breast were the silver discs, believed to be medals. These were fastened together by means of a buckskin thong and are shown in the collection just as they were found.

About a month ago I had occasion to visit the home of Albert Lochner and asked to see the Indian relics that I knew he had in his possession, as I am always interested in such discoveries. I was immediately struck by the apparent wealth and importance of the find and began an investigation as to the identity of the person in the grave. Early in my research work I became convinced that Albert and Charles Lochner and Dr. Gillie had discovered the grave of Little Turtle. I am greatly indebted to Miss Eliza Rudisill, Mr. Howard Hanthorn and Mr. Charles H. Worden for the assistance they have given me in identifying the grave of the greatest chief of his time.

Articles taken from the grave are: Eight silver bracelets, two silver anklets, one heavy metal bracelet, three silver medals, on the inside of one of which is a small remnant of canvas; four silver brooches, one pair of silver earrings and six pendants, one string of silver beads, twenty-three silver crosses, each one inch in length; four silver crosses, each six inches long; one sword, with silver hilt, wrapped with gold braid, which we are certain is that presented to the chief by General George Washington; one string of white shell beads, four metal buttons, one small pocket knife, one large clasp knife of very old design, one drinking cup, one metal spoon, one pair of shears, one hammer, one gun barrel, from which rotted portions of the stock fell when it was lifted from the grave; one pair of bullet moulds, one flint lock, the only remains of a pistol; two flints for gun and pistol, three large knives, one pair of steel spurs, one ax, one tomahawk, one copper

kettle, containing when found beans and corn which went to a fine powder when exposed to the air, and the skull of the great red leader.

That within so comparatively short a period of time as a hundred years the grave of this illustrious man should have been forgotten seems strange, and now that the grave has been found the spot should be appropriately marked by the patriotic people of Indiana.

I have been asked how I know so positively that this is the grave of Little Turtle. Bryce, in his History of Fort Wayne, says that Little Turtle was buried with the sword presented him by General Washington and the medal given him at the treaty of Greenville. I have them both, together with all of his weapons and ornaments.

Jacob Piatt Dunn, secretary of the Indiana Historical Society, says that Little Turtle was buried on the bank of St. Joseph's river and when the interment was made it was considerably north of what was then Fort Wayne.

The final proof came to me Thursday evening. W. D. Schiefer, of the Schiefer shoe store, volunteered the information that while he resided on the old Barnett place in 1875 a man named Hedges, who had been present at the burial of Little Turtle, had pointed out to him the exact location of the grave as well as the old man could remember. Without any suggestions from me, and, although he had not been in that locality since Spy Run was laid out, Mr. Schiefer took me to within one hundred feet of the place where the grave was uncovered. From Mr. Schiefer I have the following statement:

"Fort Wayne, Indiana, August 1, 1912.

"I was personally acquainted with a pioneer resident of Allen county named Hedges, who was present at the burial of Little Turtle, and while living on the Barnett place in 1875, Mr. Hedges visited me and pointed out to me as near as he could recollect the place where Little Turtle's body had been interred on the edge of the farm along the river.

W. D. SCHIEFER."