

Van Buren, Arkansas
June 15th, 1876

Mr. R. W. Trimble,

Dear Sir,

Yours of 2d inst. was rec'd just as I was leaving Little Rock and I have been too much on the go to answer sooner. Between West Point and the Mouth of Little Red River, in White County is a very large graveyard---supposed to be Indian. Just below the mouth of Little Red River, on west side of White River, are some large mounds. The country between White & St. Francis Rivers is quite varied along and near White River the lands are very rich alluvial, yielding abundantly in return for cultivation then the Cache river runs west of Crowley's Ridge with a low flat valley, soil very rich but too wet and overflowed to be of any great value without much drainage. Crowley's Ridge lies immediately west of the St. Francis River from Helena on the Mississippi River to the State line at Chalk Bluff. I know of no old villages or graves in this part of the country. Near the head of the Cache River, just in the state of Missouri, are quite extensive old diggings and some sixteen or more old furnaces. This was supposed to have been after silver.

I am of the opinion that DeSoto spent a winter at Mound Pond some 12 miles below Little Rock on north side of the River. At this place we find a fort containing about 10 acres on what has been a bend of the River and three large mounds---two at the upper end and one at the lower end of the fort. About 5 miles below Little Rock (North Side) is an extensive, but not high mound, called "the Mound", that has been used for a grave yard for many years, and I don't suppose a grave has ever been dug without finding more or less of human bones, brick or earthenware. In Mr. Scott's field 18 miles below Little Rock (North Side) are two Mounds with plenty of burnt brick &c lying loose on the surface. There are many places in the state where extensive diggings have been made for some purpose---as at one point 7 miles South of Little Rock. Several places in Hot Springs and Garland Counties. I have also found several places in Yell County, but many years ago. I once found a man's name, on a Beech tree in Polk County, with the date in 1600 and something, but I forget the exact year as it was in 1846 I saw it. You ask about Pine timber---there is none east of Black and White Rivers below the mouth of White. There is an immense growth of Poplar on Crowley's Ridge and the only Poplar in the State.

I write in considerable haste, as I go on the train this evening. If you desire any further information, and it is in my power to furnish you, I will gladly do so.

Very Resptfly Yours &c
James A. Martin
Box 680, Little Rock.

The above letter is from the R. W. Trimble collection, now owned by the Arkansas History Commission. Mr. Trimble at one time contemplated writing a history of Arkansas, and gathered a lot of material for it, but the work was never completed.