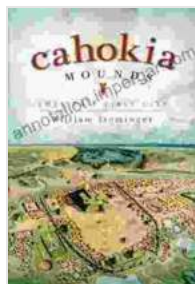


Journey to Cahokia Mounds: America's First City, a Historical Landmark



Cahokia Mounds: America's First City (Landmarks)

by Jordan Hetrick

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English
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Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 214 pages

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Nestled amidst the fertile floodplains of the Mississippi River lies Cahokia Mounds, a testament to the ingenuity and artistry of the Mississippian culture. As America's first city, Cahokia flourished from around 1050 to 1350 CE, leaving behind an enduring legacy that continues to captivate historians and visitors alike.

Monks Mound: The Heart of Cahokia

At the core of Cahokia Mounds lies Monks Mound, an awe-inspiring earthen pyramid that towers over the surrounding landscape. Measuring approximately 1,000 feet long, 700 feet wide, and 100 feet high, Monks Mound is the largest prehistoric earthen structure in the Americas.

This colossal mound served as a ceremonial and administrative center for the city. Its summit was likely reserved for elite residences and religious rituals. The sheer size and complexity of Monks Mound attest to the advanced engineering and organizational capabilities of the Mississippian people.

Woodhenge: A Solar Calendar

Just west of Monks Mound lies Woodhenge, an enigmatic arrangement of wooden posts that once formed a solar calendar. Each of the 120 posts was carefully aligned to mark the solstices and equinoxes. This astronomical observatory allowed the Mississippian people to track the seasons and plan their agricultural activities.

The discovery of Woodhenge in the 1960s provided valuable insights into the sophisticated mathematical and scientific knowledge of the Mississippian culture.

A Vibrant City

Cahokia was not just a ceremonial center but also a bustling city. Residential areas, workshops, storage pits, and trading centers have been identified throughout the site, indicating a population that may have exceeded 20,000 people.

The city's inhabitants were skilled artisans who produced intricate pottery, stone tools, and jewelry. Trade routes connected Cahokia to other Mississippian settlements and even distant cultures.

Decline and Legacy

Around 1350 CE, Cahokia began to decline. The reasons for this are still not fully understood, but factors such as climate change, disease, and warfare may have played a role.

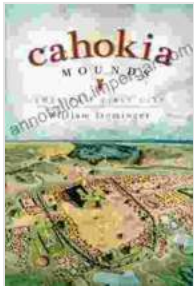
Despite its abandonment, Cahokia Mounds remained a sacred site to Native American tribes. In the 1920s, the site was designated as a state park and later became a National Historic Landmark and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Visiting Cahokia Mounds

Today, Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site offers visitors a chance to immerse themselves in the history and culture of America's first city. The site features walking trails, interpretive exhibits, and guided tours that bring the ancient city to life.

Visitors can climb to the summit of Monks Mound for panoramic views of the surrounding landscape, explore the remnants of Woodhenge, and discover the everyday life of the Mississippian people.

Cahokia Mounds is a testament to the ingenuity and creativity of the Mississippian culture. As America's first city, it offers a glimpse into the advanced societies that flourished in the pre-Columbian era. Through its stunning earthen mounds, astronomical observatory, and vibrant community, Cahokia Mounds continues to inspire awe and wonder in visitors from around the world.

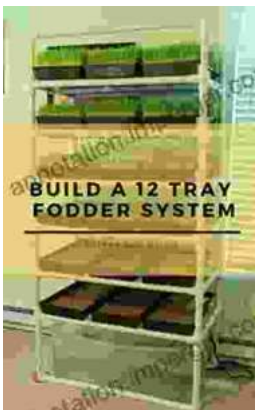


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