

## II. Discourse on the History of Archaeology

### Charles Allen Reed, 1912-2000

by

William D. Tumbull  
Department of Geology  
The Field Museum

and

Barbara Becker  
Academic Affairs  
The Field Museum

Some researchers are true “Renaissance People”. Their interests, skills and training represent an enormous breadth, and their pursuits exemplify the best of interdisciplinary efforts. Archaeology, anthropology, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and The Field Museum recently lost just such a fine scholar, dedicated investigator and loyal friend — Charles Allen Reed II.

At the University, Charles, in addition to teaching and mentoring, carried on a diverse research effort, all of this prior to and while serving as Chairman of his Department for 14 years prior to his retirement in 1980. At the Museum, Reed was a Research Associate, serving at one time or another in the Departments of Anthropology, Geology and Zoology. In that capacity, for over a half-century he took advantage of the Museum’s openness, its vast collections, fine library, and outstanding scientific staff. Reed fitted into this niche as a shining example, one that typifies the best of such interactive and collaborative relationships. Of his many publications, seven were in the Museum’s scientific journal *Fieldiana* (see attached bibliography).

Charles Allen Reed II was born on June 6, 1912 in Portland, Oregon to Gladys and Charles Reed Sr. In 1952 he married Lois Wells. He died on August 20, 2000, following several years of declining health. He grew up on his parents’ farm with an apple orchard beneath Mt. Hood. The Reeds’ second child, Robin, recently commented on those early years: “Charles always had a fondness for the mountainous views of his childhood home. He had many stories of the early part of his life, when a farm in Oregon still operated with a horse and buggy and a whole lot of hard work.” Charles was intellectually curious from an early age, lived close to Nature, and read with a purpose — to know everything. He attended college at the University of Oregon, and then went to Berkeley to earn his doctorate with a thesis entitled *Locomotion and Appendicular Anatomy in Three Soricoid Insectivores* (shrews), a publication that is still regarded as a classic work in the field.

In his long career, Reed held university appointments in biology, zoology, anatomy, pharmacology and anthropology. His first appointment was at Reed College in Oregon, then he joined the faculty of the University of Arizona, and in 1948 that of the College of Pharmacy, University of Illinois at Chicago. Following a period as Curator of Mammals and Reptiles at Yale University’s Peabody Museum (1961-1966), Reed returned to Chicago and soon became the first head of the Department

of Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Chicago. His publications range from mammalian anatomy, reporting with W.D. Turnbull on the strange, highly specialized fossil mole relatives of the mid-Tertiary of North America, to early human biology and culture. Although his central focus on the origins of animal domestication dominated his research interests, he found time for science, history, and even a smattering of poetry and fiction.

Charles' first extensive archaeological field work was on the Iraq-Jarmo Project (Oriental Institute, University of Chicago) led by Robert and Linda Braidwood to investigate the origins of food production. On this trip, he was one of the first scholars to apply methodological collection and research techniques to animal food remains at archaeological sites, thus initiating the modern field of zooarchaeology. He applied comparative work from the start — collecting examples of modern local species, interviewing local hunters on their butchery practices, studying the behavior of animals in their natural habitats, and even raising turtles in the expedition bathtub. He went on to apply his methods in Iraq, Turkey, Iceland, Europe and India. Charles and family lived for a year in Egypt, during which time he collected zooarchaeological materials in Nubia, and conducted salvage archaeology by trying to recover as much as possible before the Aswan Dam would create the huge Lake Nasser, submerging much of historic and prehistoric interest. Further, with the acumen that characterized this gentleman and scientist, Charles, according to S. Goodman, engaged several other zoologists to work alongside him to document the interesting local vertebrate fauna before it would disappear after inundation.

Collaboration with P. F. Turnbull documented the zooarchaeological results of several of those projects. Reed trained students for many years: in Chicago his students, including Barbara Becker, traditionally made use of the comparative osteology collections at The Field Museum, many of which he had collected and donated. Recently, a curator of the U.S. National Museum (Smithsonian) ranked these collections as one of the best in the nation.

Through his research Reed was led to consider still more complex issues: environmental reconstruction, sampling methods, and ultimately the motivations for humans to shift from a hunting/gathering life to an agricultural one. He had other collaborators, some within the Museum (Barbara Becker, Hymen Marx) and many outside it (zooarchaeologist Shimon Angress, Robert and Linda Braidwood, Theodore Downs, Dean Falk, Barbara Lawrence, Thomas Lovejoy, Dale Osborn, William Schaffer, and Patty Jo Watson). From about 1980 to the mid-1990's Charles defended science and the scientific method in a protracted exchange with the Institute for Creation Research. In an appendix we offer a sample of this exchange, his August 1, 1982 letter to Dr. Gary Parker of ICR.

In 1986, Charles received the Archaeological Institute of America's Pomerance Award honoring him for his many contributions to archaeology. The award cited two of his publications that were considered extremely influential: *The Origins of Agriculture* (1977) and *Prehistoric Archaeology Along the Zagros Flanks* (1983). The former resulted from the Ninth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, and Reed's service in organizing the conference and editing the book were immense.

For both friends and students of Charles A. Reed, his friendly warmth, contagious enthusiasm and common sense are, and will continue to be missed. He was always eager to share his vast knowledge and experience both with colleagues and with a younger generation of scholars. Charles is survived by his wife, Lois Wells Reed, and their three children, Charles Allen Reed II, Robin Reed and Brian Reed.

### **Selected Bibliography of Charles Allen Reed**

Angress, Shimon and C.A. Reed.

1962 "An Annotated Bibliography on the Origin and Descent of Domestic Mammals 1900-1955," *Fieldiana: Anthropology* 54(1):1-143.

Falk, Dean and C.A. Reed.

1977 "The Stature And Weight Of Sterkfontein 14, A Gracile Australopithecine From Transvaal, As Determined From The Innominate Bone," *Fieldiana: Geology* 33(23): 423-440.

Reed, Charles Allen.

1956 "A New Species Of The Fossorial Mammal *Arctoryctes* From The Oligocene Of Colorado," *Fieldiana: Geology* 10(24):305-311.

---

1960 "Polyphyletic or Monophyletic Ancestry of Mammals, or "What is a Class"?" *Evolution* 14:314-322.

---

1964 "A Natural History Study of Kurkur Oasis, Libyan Desert, Western Governate, Egypt," *Postilla* 84:1-20.

---

1964 *Preliminary Report on the Archaeological Aspects of the Research of the Yale University Prehistoric Expedition to Nubia, 1962-1963*, (with M.A. Baunhoff, K. W. Butzer, H. Walter and D.S. Boloyan). *Fouilles en Nubie (1961-1963)*: 145-156.

---

1968 "The pattern of animal domestication in the prehistoric Near East", in *The Domestication and Exploitation of Plants and Animals*, edited by P. J. Ucko and G.W. Dimbleby, Gerald Duckworth & Co., London, pp. 361-380.

---

1970 "Extinction of Mammalian Megafauna in the Old World Late Quaternary," *Bio-science*, 1: 284-288.

---

1980 "The beginnings of animal domestication," in *Animal Agriculture: Research To Meet Human Needs In The 21st Century*, edited by Wilson G. Pond, Westview Press, Boulder., pp. 1-20.

---

1982 "Answer to Virginia," in *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 26: 39-44. (One of the most profound statements ever penned. W.D.T., see Appendix 3.)

---

1983 "A short history of the discovery and early study of the Australopithecines: The First Find To The Death Of Robert Broom (1924-1951)," in Reichs, Kathleen J., editor, *Hominid Origins: Inquiries Past and Present*, edited by Kathleen J. Reichs, University Press of America, Lanham, pp. 1-77.

---

1984 "In Defense of the Advocacy of Evolution," *Chicago Sun-Times*, October. 13:16.

---

1984 "Prehistoric Domestication of Animals in Southwestern Asia (with D. Perkins), In *Die Anfänge des Neolithiums von Orient bis Nordeuropa*, IX: 3-24.

Reed, Charles Allen and W.D. Turnbull.

1965 "The Mammalian Genera *Arctoryctes* and *Cryptoryctes* from the Oligocene and Miocene of North America," *Fieldiana: Geology* 15(2):i-iii, 99-170.

Schaeffer, William. M. and C.A. Reed.

1972 "The Co-Evolution of Social Behavior and Cranial Morphology" (*Bovidae*, *Caprini*), *Fieldiana: Zoology* 61(1): 1-88.

Tumbull, Priscilla F. and C.A. Reed

1974 "The Fauna From the Terminal Pleistocene of Palegawra Cave," *Fieldiana: Zoology* 63(3):81-146.

Tumbull, William D. and C.A. Reed.

1960 "Arctoryctes And Some Other Chadronian Fossil Vertebrate Microfossils From Nebraska," *Fieldiana Geology*, 14(3):41-57.

### **Appendix I: The Many Facets of Charles Reed—Poetry**

The following explanation appeared on the reverse side of the poem below.

In the early dawn of a May morning, 1932, I had a dream described opposite. So definite was the dream that I awoke with a thumping heart and panting breath, expecting to die. Thus real can be a nightmare given birth by beauty. I arose and quickly, in the lines opposite, described the beauty but there omitted the dread. I know the morning was in early May, for when I awoke the whole of Hood River Valley was pink with apple blossoms, and blossom time in Hood River is the first week in

May. This little poem (for such I call it) was published years later (1946) in the GARGOYLE, the literary magazine of Reed College:

### PORTRAYAL

Paint thou, said the dream, or die.  
Now I knew I could not paint, and so laughed at myself,  
But dreams have no sense. So took I gold of a beetle's back,  
Orange of a pheasant's tail, and green from the edge of a sun-fleck in the forest,  
Color from the sun and the sky and the cliff and the mud and the mold,  
Thought from the first of things and also those that will come,  
And painted a picture of these on the pool,  
A picture of all these and more; Took the edge of my finger and traced the outline  
And the corner of my handkerchief and filled in the color —  
For these were all I had and I know not how such things are done —  
Until it was perfect and I was content. So I sat, serene as a lotus, soles upturned,  
Lost in the rapture of this I had wrought.  
Then came a breeze and ruffled the pool; Now surely I did not die.

Charles A. Reed, 1932

### **Appendix II: The Many Facets of Charles Reed—Challenge to Creationism**

August 1, 1982

Dear Dr. [Gary E.] Parker [Institute for Creation Research]

In IMPACT no. 108, co-authored by yourself with Luther Sunderland, I find what I regard as an illogicality of argument, which I call to your attention. My point is, that if you are going to use an evolutionary framework to indicate its shortcomings, you should use that framework as it should be used by evolutionists. The example I have in mind is the last paragraph on p. 3 of IMPACT no. 108, where you contrast two reptiles (viper and crocodile) with a bird, indicating an evolutionary dichotomy between reptile and any kind of bird.

This assumption is an evolutionary fallacy, whether perpetuated by Colin Patterson, who should have known better, or by yourself. According to those evolutionists who study the phylogeny of Mesozoic vertebrates, birds evolved from one of the several groups of archosaurian reptiles (dinosaurs, crocodiles, alligators, pterosaurs), more probably from a mid-Triassic lightly-built bipedal dinosaur. So, although birds acquired feathers, warm-bloodedness, and other characteristics which we regard as avian, they are biologically, merely modified archosaurian reptiles. The fact that they are given a different name should not, if one is arguing from evolutionary bases, be allowed to mask the fact that they are archosaurian reptiles. Lizards and snakes, by contrast, are not archosaurian reptiles, but belong to a different group of reptiles, the Lepidosauria, which had its phylogenetic origin from the ancestral stem reptiles in the Permian. The main thing is that all archosaurian reptiles, including birds, should by evolutionary logic be more closely related to each other than any one of them is to any other reptiles. Thus the comparative dichotomy should be: archosaurian/non-archosaurian.

[Omitted paragraph.]

On another subject, I have been wondering about the typical inclusion of Homo sapiens in the Animal Kingdom. If man is not an animal, as he should not be, regarded by creationist standards, he should not be included in the Animal Kingdom. Yet in all the creationist literature I have read (admittedly not all inclusive) I have never seen this topic introduced. The inclusion of humans in the Animal Kingdom was begun, I believe, by Linnaeus in the mid-18th century, although he was himself a devout Christian and as such obviously saw no wrong in what at that time was a systematic innovation. But is not the dichotomy between man and animal thereby ignored? True, humans are protoplasmic beings, but is not their inclusion in the Animal Kingdom more than a taxonomic convenience? Indeed, should not a separate Kingdom be named for Homo sapiens?

Since you are the zoologist within the Institute for Creation Research, I defer to you in answering this question, and suggest that if you answer it in the affirmative - that, indeed, Homo sapiens should not be in the Animal Kingdom - you are the one, with the advice of your colleagues, to propose a new official name for a new human Kingdom.

With all best regards,

Sincerely,

Charles A. Reed

### **Appendix III: The Many Facets of Charles Reed "Answer to Virginia" [Reed 1982] explained:**

Virginia was an intelligent, hard-working, and most attractive young lady majoring in Biology at Reed College; she took my course in genetics there in 1946. Headed for medical school, to become a physician as her father had been, she instead married another pre-med student and had four children while he went through medical school and specialized in experimental physiology. The six of them had been living in Stockholm for the academic year of 1962-63, when we five Reeds had been in Egypt. Quite by chance we all returned across the Atlantic on the same ship in the early summer of 1963. Thus I resumed my friendship with Virginia, and was reminded of the question she had asked in class 17 years before. I began writing on the ship, in odd moments between escorting Brian about the deck. He was two, an extremely active two, but even so nearly half of the present result was finished on the ship, and I showed Virginia the preliminary results at the time.

Matters then intervened, with getting a new house and having new teaching, but in January of 1965 I had some six days to pass in the Grand Hotel in Aswan, waiting for the weekly boat up the Nile, and I added to "Answer to Virginia" then. Indeed, at the time I thought I had finished.

Actually, my own basic idea of the nature of reality, and of the non-reality of all aspects of the supernatural, came to me one spring day in 1946 in what was essentially a vision, an instantaneous intuitive flash of understanding of the unity at the physical level of the universe and all within it, as based upon my knowledge of astronomy, chemistry, geology, paleontology and biology. My increasing knowledge of genetics was the catalyst; various investigators were probing the molecular structure of what we then called "nucleoproteins", stripping away the protein part and exposing what was

already known as deoxyribonucleic acid. The identity of the phosphopentose skeleton and the nucleic bases had been determined, and the concept of 'one gene, one enzyme' had been incorporated into my course earlier that year. The necessity of the mechanistic pattern of life, molded by natural selection, emerged clearly in my mind in that second of revelation. With all this, in the same second, I realized clearly that no room or need for deity existed amongst all those submolecules in what was obviously a genetic code. Since I received my revelation of the lack of need of any supernatural force in the universe in a single intuitive flash of mental construction, building on my knowledge of the time, I have been understandably skeptical of revelations of others claimed to emanate from any such supernatural forces or beings.

As a welcome corollary to my instantaneously new understanding of the total logic of the nature of the universe and my place in it, came the overwhelming relief, as of a physical weight lifted from my being, of the knowledge that the guilt loaded upon me by well meaning elders instructing me in religious dogma in my earlier years was necessarily without foundation; I was instead totally a free entity, with only my own reason and knowledge to guide my actions in my course through life, and I have since lived accordingly, master of my own behavior.

So, as I have written, "I could have answered your question when asked, Virginia," but I am glad that I waited until she was able to understand my answer, for by then I understood it better, too.

In 1965 I thought this essay finished, but in spite of my own opinion that it was as fine as anything I had ever written and probably better than anything I would write, I failed to find an editor who agreed with me. So I put it away. Then early in 1981 I saw a course in adult education, 'Evolution and Creation', listed by a local community college. Thinking such a course, taught in a public college, would be a well-balanced treatment of an emerging problem. I enrolled. The expectation was naive; I quickly discovered that the instructor was a devout creationist who knew no genetics and little evolution, and disbelieved that little. Stimulated by that experience and additional reading in the creationist literature, I excavated "Answer to Virginia" from my files, reedited and added to it, and the final result was then accepted for publication.

### III. Bibliographic/Archival Material Relating to the History of Archaeology

#### A. Works by Our Readership

Jacknis, Ira

2002 *The Storage Box of Tradition: Kwakiutl Art, Anthropologists, and Museums, 1881-1981*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C.

Murray, Tim

2002 "Why the History of Archaeology Matters", Special Section - "Explorations in the History of Archaeology, edited by Nathan Schlanger, *Antiquity*, 76(291):234-238.

Nash, Stephen E.

2000 "James Louis Giddings' Archaeological Tree-Ring Dating in the American Arctic: A Forgotten Legacy," *Arctic Archaeology*, 37(1):60-78.