

## The Mystery of “Cletus”

The skeletal remains of a male, who was perhaps in search of gold, were found by archaeologist Rob McQueen of Summit Envirosolutions within, I believe, the last year or so in the Cortez Hills in Nevada in the vicinity of the Cortez gold mine (located 70 miles SW of Elko in northeastern Nevada). This man was a victim of either suicide (single gunshot wound to the head) or murder (ribs also show evidence of a possible stabbing). Thus, he is a bit of a mystery because several scenarios as to the actual cause of his death can be developed. Students at the University of Nevada, Reno, who were responsible for cleaning the bones and taking preliminary measurements, have named the man, Cletus.

The remains include a somewhat damaged cranium with a clearly visible through and through gunshot wound (entry right temple, exit left temple) and mandible, and, with the exception of a few small bones, the complete skeleton. The man was edentulous (or completely toothless) at the time of his death.

According to physical anthropologist and anthropology professor, Dr. Richard Scott of UNR, who has temporary ‘custody’ of the skull and skeleton, the remains probably date to the 1930s based on items found in what was left of a pocket. These items include some .22 shells, a belt, and some fabric. Measurements of the leg bones indicate that the man was approximately 5’8” tall and preliminary analysis of the skull indicates that he was between the ages of 40 and 50 at the time of his death. The tibia has been sent out for complete forensic/DNA analysis.

Craniometric analysis of the skull was conducted using FORDISC, an interactive discriminant functions program created by Stephen Ousley and Richard Jantz of the University of Tennessee. This analysis indicates that the man was most likely of European/Egyptian lineage (possibly from Spain, which was inhabited by the Moors for hundreds of years).

