

The Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences

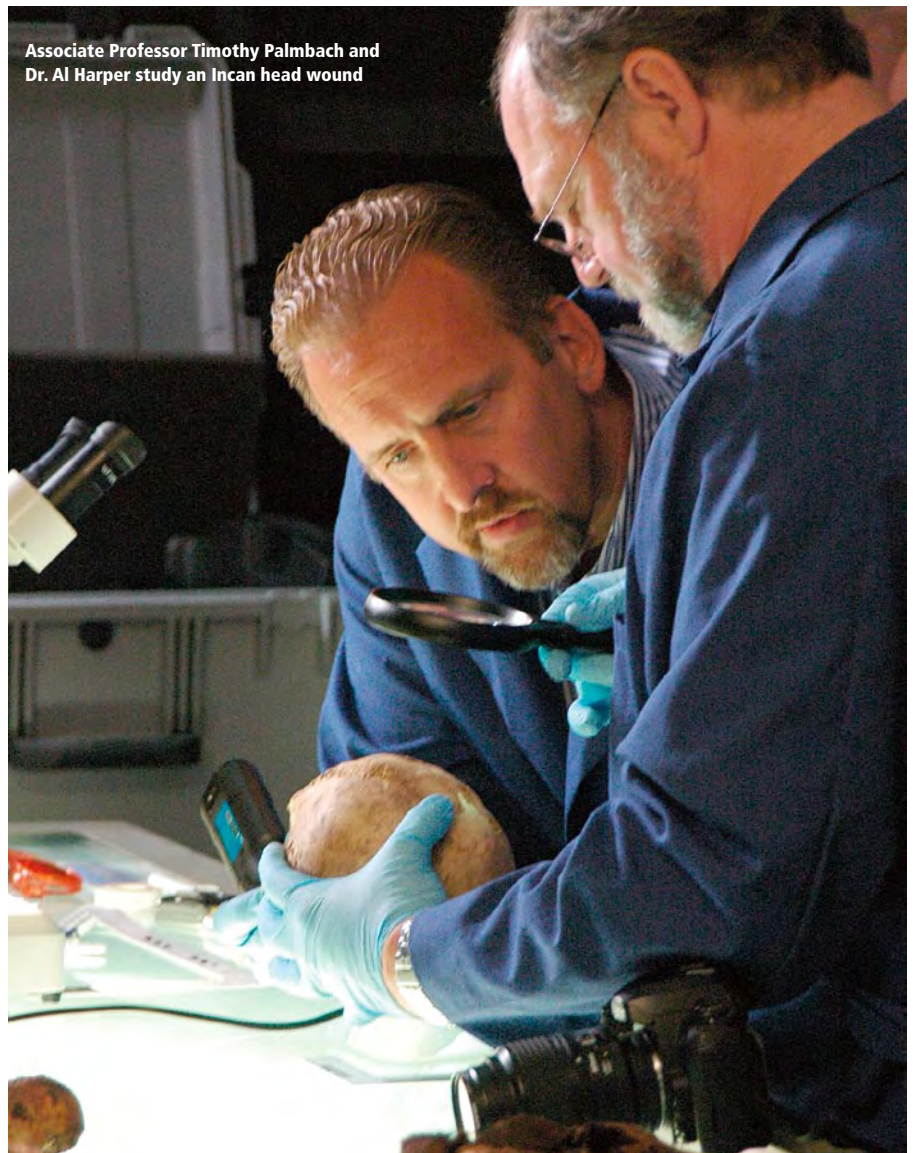
Half a Millennium Later, a Mystery is Solved

Answers to be Unveiled
on PBS/Nova June 26

Dr. Al Harper and Timothy Palmbach may not solve all the mysteries of the universe before they retire, but they're hitting the high points.

Like Sherlock Holmes and his infamous detective's kit of investigatory tools — magnifying glass included — the two packed up their forensics equipment for a journey to an excavated Inca cemetery in Peru. The dry Peruvian soil had preserved hundreds of corpses from a long-fought Inca rebellion, and the archaeologist who found them, Guillermo Cock, an expert on Andean cultures, wanted to know why so many of their faces were crushed. At least one had an unexplained hole in the head. The seventy-five or so corpses also had been prepared for death quite differently than their counterparts. In fact, it seemed they had been buried in a hurry.

Dr. Harper, a forensic anthropologist and executive director of The Henry C. Lee Institute of Forensic Science, and Palmbach, an associate professor and director of UNH's forensic science program, investigated a historic battle that pitted club-wielding Inca warriors against Spanish horsemen. Their research has helped Cock, who was born in Peru, dispute the Pizarro legend. The new research has determined that Francisco Pizarro's legendary lightning campaign, with a band of only two hundred Spanish conquistadores opposing thousands of Inca warriors, did not make for an overnight victory, even though history insists it did. Rather, the Incas fought a long, hard guerrilla war against the Spanish, complete with Inca mastery of Spanish weapons and strategies, Cock says.



The two University of New Haven academics concluded that one of the skull injuries was the result of a gunshot wound, the first documented gunshot wound in the Americas. They used CT scans to identify other injuries. Their work will be featured in

"The Great Inca Rebellion" on PBS/Nova June 26. Check local listings for times.

"This is really icing on the cake for all we do," Palmbach says. "These are great opportunities." ♦