

The Ancient Los Lunas New Mexico Hebrew 10 Commandments Stone

Compiled by Glen W. Chapman From Various Sources- April 2006

An Ancient Hebrew Inscription in New Mexico

Fact or Fraud?

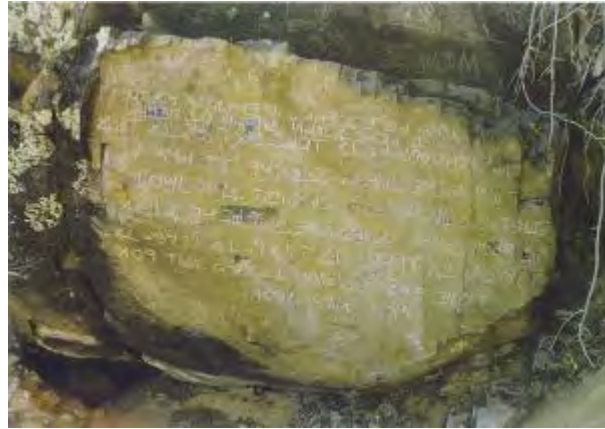
by James D. Tabor

The standard textbook wisdom that we all learned from grade school on up is that the Americas were discovered by the Europeans either in 1492 by Columbus, or perhaps even a few hundred years earlier by the Vikings. There seems to be an aversion among the establishment historians to even consider the idea that ancient Mediterranean peoples might have traveled to the Americas in the centuries before our era. Except for certain “fringe” scholarship, particularly promoted by Mormon historians, the standard view is considered indisputable. The very idea that “primitive” peoples from Cyprus, Phoenicia, Greece, or Iberia had the sailing sophistication to cross the Atlantic is thought to be improbable if not absurd.

There are a few notable exceptions. Dr. Cyrus Gordon, one of the greatest living historians of ancient Near Eastern civilizations has promoted the idea that such peoples reached the New World for the past several decades. Actually, when one digs around a bit, it turns out that the historical and archaeological evidence is quite impressive. It has been well documented by Barry Fell in his major study, [*America B.C.*](#) (New York: Pocket Books, 1989).

One of the most fascinating sites Dr. Fell surveys is located south of Albuquerque, New Mexico, a few miles west of a little town called Los Lunas. The site has been known as “Mystery Mountain” by the locals for many years. At the foot of a mini-Masada like natural plateau there is an inscription written in paleo-Hebrew. The inscription contains a slightly abridged version of the Decalogue or Ten Commandments. Anyone who is familiar with the Hebrew language, and the well-established ancient Hebrew alphabet used prior to the Common Era, can easily read this inscription.

The question is—how did it get there? Is it a fraud, perpetrated by some pranksters for amusement purposes? If so, it could not be much older than this century since the paleo-Hebrew alphabet was only discovered from archaeological inscriptions in the Middle East over the past 100 years. Or, is it possible that it was put there much earlier, by Jews or Israelites who had settled in the area we know as New Mexico when paleo-Hebrew was in common use—that is in the centuries B.C.E. To even suggest such an idea, for most, is to immediately dismiss it. However, when the Los Lunas inscription is placed in the wider context of an abundant amount of evidence, such as that presented by Dr. Fell, that ancient Mediterranean peoples did visit the New World, it becomes not only plausible but perhaps the only logical explanation for the existence of this text.



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In September, 1996 I visited the Los Lunas site with a group of associates for an initial survey of the evidence. I have also interviewed Prof. Frank Hibben, local historian and archaeologist from the University of New Mexico, who is convinced the inscription is ancient and thus authentic. He reports that he first saw the text in 1933. At the time it was covered with lichen and patination and was hardly visible. He was taken to the site by a guide who had seen it as a boy, back in the 1880s. Thus we have eye-witness evidence, going back over a hundred years, that the inscription existed. This alone is impressive, since it is rather preposterous to imagine some pranksters or forgers operating with a knowledge of paleo-Hebrew in the late 1800s, when this ancient alphabet was not even fully known to the scholars.

Associated with the inscription is the mountain itself, which shows evidence of fortification and ancient habitation, whether by native Americans or whomever. The Decalogue inscription is located at the foot of the mountain, on the north, at the only accessible pathway going up. The top of the mountain is a flat plateau with many ruins. The whole area is covered with drawings on rocks called petroglyphs. One of the most interesting of these petroglyphs is what appears to be a sky-map, laid out on a flat rock, recording the positions of the planets and constellations during a solar eclipse. Researcher David Deal, to whom we owe credit for a drawing of the site, has identified the eclipse astronomically as occurring on September 15, 107 B. C. E. I have run that date on a sophisticated computer calendar that does conversions to the ancient Hebrew calendar and surprisingly, that date turns out to fall on Tishri 1st, or Rosh HaShanah of that year—107 B.C.E.! Mr. Deal, who first did the astronomical calculations, was not even aware of this correlation. It might well be the case that the ancient Israelites who lived on this mountain, and left their inscription of the Ten Commandments at the “Gate” of the camp,

I have become tentatively convinced that the Los Lunas inscription offers solid evidence that ancient Israelites explored and settled in the New World in the centuries before the Common Era. Whether we can precisely date this encampment, based on Mr. Deal's astronomical evidence, remains in discussion. However, I have little doubt, nor does Dr. Gordon, who is one of the world experts on ancient inscriptions, that the text itself is authentic and was written sometime B.C.E. Beyond this we can not go at this point in time. What is needed is a rigorous archaeological examination of the whole mountain and its human artifacts. It was obvious to us, even from our brief survey last Fall, that the site has been inhabited by successive peoples. We would have to have coin and pottery evidence to more precisely identify these remains and correlate them, if possible, with the inscription itself. The author is in the process of investigating possibilities for just such an investigation, led by qualified experts in archaeology. In the meantime I would encourage any of our *Bulletin* readers who are interested in this subject to read Dr. Barry Fell's book, *America B.C.*, which is readily available in major bookstores.

Imagine hiking near Los Lunas, New Mexico, and coming upon a huge basalt boulder inscribed as shown in the illustration.

This is obviously not an Indian petroglyph. Rather, it is the Ten Commandments set down in an old Hebrew script. The script and its translation seem unmysterious. What everyone wants to know is: Who chiseled it and when? It was apparently discovered in the 1880s. Harvard anthropologist Frank C. Hibben visited the site in 1930 and pronounced the inscription to be at least 100 years old. Who in New Mexico in 1830 knew ancient Hebrew? The inscription may be much older, for the whole boulder, weighing 60-80 tons, is tipped 20-30°, probably by geological forces, so that the lines of script are tilted.

(Underwood, L. Lyle; "The Los Lunas Inscription," *Epigraphic Society, Occasional Publications*, vol. 10, no. 237, 1982.)

Commandment Stone right here in Los Lunas?

Below you'll read the most interesting information. I've copied most of the article from the following site but if you use the link then you'll also find PICTURES: <http://members.aol.com/KHoeck777/Comstone.html>

America's ancient Indian's called it the "Cliff of the Strange Writings". It has been named Phoenician Rock or the Commandment Stone. It is called today Inscription rock. Located west of Los Lunas, New Mexico at the base of Mystery Mountain (also called Hidden Mountain) this rock has been raising some eyebrows.

The strange chiseled characters on the volcanic basalt rock were undecipherable by America's early European settlers and to the "native" Indians. (Hence, the mountain's name - Mystery). The local residents had been made aware, by the Indians, of the unusual inscription as early as the year 1800. Why is this rock causing such excitement?

The stone preserves an abbreviated form of the Ten Commandments as written in Exodus 20, which is very exciting, but what makes this stone an enigma is the fact that **the writing is clearly semitic in origin**. The ancient Hebrew inscriptions were once thought to be a combination of Greek, Hebrew and Phoenician characters but now are clearly seen as a form of Hebrew writing dating to approximately 1000 B.C.! The Greeks "borrowed" from the Phonetic alphabet so the characters would be familiar. The Hebrews and the Phoenicians were neighbors which, in their trading environment, shared the same language and alphabet. The style of the characters is strikingly similar, almost identical, to that used on the Moabite Stone in the days of the Israelite kings Omri and Ahab. The Moab stone was engraved by captive Israelites for the Moabite king, Mescha, as per its own inscription. After examining the Los lunas site geologist, George Morehouse, estimated the placement of this Decalogue inscription up to 3000 years ago, which would, again, date it around 1000 B.C. **Just how were historians to explain how a seventy ton boulder with Hebrew inscription appeared on this mountain landscape in North America around 1000 B.C.?**

Over two thousand years before Columbus "discovered" America there were people of semitic origin in New Mexico worshipping the God of Israel. How can this possibly be reconciled with known history? It is seemingly apparent that the financial backing to launch a Hebrew-Phoenician voyage of world exploration could have readily occurred during the reign of King Solomon of Israel. Solomon worshipped the true God of Israel and had the means to fund explorative voyages to other lands. With Solomon's main port being located on the Red Sea it would be difficult to explain how his fleet would have entered America through the Atlantic drainage.

(Reference note:1Kings 9:26 And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Eziongeber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom.27 And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon.)

Tarshish , however, had access to the Atlantic. The reign of Solomon was enveloping the entire world. Israel's close neighbor, Phoenicia, and their expert navigators were working with the servants of Solomon from both countries ports. The ships of Tarshish sailed extremely long voyages to bring back all kinds of raw materials and items (copper & other ores, flora & fauna samples, "exotic" animals, etc.).

(Reference note:2Ch 9:21 For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.)

It would help explain the need of three year journeys if the seamen had to cross the ocean to come to these far off isles in America. The fact that the trading ships of Phoenicia did have docks in ancient America can be proved from inscriptions they left behind. (See Dr. Barry Fell's book *America B.C.* and also reading Steven M. Collins *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found! is highly recommended*) The Los Lunas site is located along the Puerco River which is tributary of the Rio Grande River. The Rio Grande is definitely in the Atlantic drainage. It would have been entirely possible for the Hebrew-Phoenician sailors to access the area of the stone.

We must realize that our history was written by the Greeks (and Romans) and is told entirely from their self-glorifying viewpoint which sometimes tends to omit other nations contributions to the world. Columbus didn't discover America. How is it that there were people (some of semitic features) already living in America for centuries before Columbus? Ancient colonists and prospectors? Why is it that some of the words and alphabet characters of these ancients also resemble Hebrew or Iibunic-

Phoenician? How is it that some of the same pagan gods and symbols were worshipped on both ends of the earth simultaneously? And is there any other explanation why the commandments of the God of Israel would be written in the middle of the North American continent **in Hebrew characters**?

The inscription has been translated by the Epigraphic Society as follows:

I (am) Jehovah [the Eternal] Eloah [your God] who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim [Mizraim or the two Egypts] out of the house of bondages. You shall not have other [foreign] gods in place of (me). You shall not make for yourself molded (or carved) idols [graven images]. You shall not lift up your voice to connect the name of Jehovah in hate. Remember you (the) Sabbath to make it holy. Honor your father and your mother to make long your existence upon the land which Jehovah Eloah [the Eternal your God] gave to you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery (or idolatry). You shall not steal (or deceive). You shall not bear witness against your neighbor, testimony for a bribe. You shall not covet (the) wife of your neighbor and all which belongs to your neighbor.

The Los Lunas Commandment Stone is one of several proofs that exist in America that the ancients of Israel, including both the worshippers of the false gods such as Baal and of the True Eternal God, walked on this continent long before Columbus or any of the 14th century European explorers. It is also another proof that biblical history is accurate. In the past, when a "new" world kingdom came into power they had the option of re-writing how their history and the history of those in subjection to them would be remembered. It was not uncommon to strike out the good things achieved by a former power that was now in subjection or exile. Or even to ascribe the glory of the former powers conquests to themselves. The bible, and the history of Israel that it contains, is refreshingly honest in its history of battles won and lost. It does not cover up Israel's mistakes or captivities. God's word is truth. History's word is questionable. It is obvious that the writers of world history knew of these ancient travellers but neglected to tell the story of history from a neutral standpoint. Reality to each of us is what we are taught. Truth is what is absolute, beyond the perception of men and their "reality". History has some explaining to do.

Hebrew Artifacts in America

There are numerous other artifacts with Hebrew on them from these states: Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, New York, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Tennessee, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, California, and probably others in the contiguous 48 states, it would not be surprising to us. I am still amazed that there are some people out there that still falsely believe that North American natives had no written language prior to the arrival of the Europeans in Columbus' time. Two native writing systems (and possibly two more) are known to have survived into historic times: Micmac and Cherokee. The other two are possibly Blackfoot and Hopi. The Hopi (I've heard they won't discuss it) is rumored to be Hebrew. There may have been other written languages as well.

Indian Petroglyphs at the Los Lunas site

The Decalogue inscription is located at the foot of the Hidden Mountains on the north-eastern side, at the only accessible pathway going up. However, there are other artefacts of interest, too. When James D. Tabor did his survey of the whole site in 1996 he reported the existence of some leftovers of an ancient

habitation (see [8](#)). If there was an ancient fortification, as he claims there was, it certainly is not immediately visible from the ground to the untrained eye. However, the whole site, especially the top and the north-eastern rocks and slopes, are covered with petroglyphs.

The researcher David Deal has published a detailed analysis for one of these petroglyphs ([3](#)). It depicts a sky-map, laid out on a flat rock, recording the positions of the planets and constellations during a solar eclipse. It coincides with the solar eclipse on September 15, 107 B.C.E., to be followed by the Jewish "Rosh Ha Shannah" on the next day. This interesting discovery was first published by David Deal back in 1984. "Rosh Ha Shanah" is the first day of the Jewish month of "Tishri". "Ethanin" was the old-Hebrew name for "Tishri" referring to the seventh lunar month of the sacred calendar of the Israelites. It was also regarded as the first month of their secular calendar, especially in an agricultural sense. Like David Deal, James D. Tabor, too, emphasizes the significance between the date of the Los Lunas solar eclipse on September 15 107 B.C.E. and the Jewish New Year. However, he thinks both events were on the same day ([8](#)).

Another interesting petroglyph, whose picture is shown below here for the first time on the Web, seems to portrait an ancient high-ranking mediterranean visitor, possibly wearing a crown. Crowns were unknown to native American Indians. They are of Middle Eastern or Mediterranean origin. The small cross-like symbol in the circle below looks like an artistic representation of the old-Hebrew or Phoenician letter TETH. This might be just a coincidence, but should be taken into consideration in view of the other Hebrew or Phoenician artifacts on that same site.



Left: An unidentified petroglyph depicting a face and with what looks like a crown on its head. It is less than 50 yards away from the Decalogue inscription. Does the circle with the cross below the face represent an old-Hebrew or Phoenician TETH character? See drawing below.



Photo: J.Neuhoff 1996

The Los Lunas Inscription of New Mexico



[Click image for larger picture](#)

The above inscription is very unique for several reasons. First, it is written in an ancient Hebrew script. Second it is located near the small town of Los Lunas in the State of New Mexico, USA. Third, the inscription is of the "Ten Commandments".

Is this inscription an original or a fake. If it is original, this proves that a Semitic people,

probably Hebrews, arrived in the Americas long before Columbus or the Vikings.

The above inscription cannot be a fake for the following reasons. The actual time of discovery of the inscription is not known but was known by the locals as far back as the 1850's. At that time, the script of the text was unknown and therefore undecipherable. It was not until this last century that the ancient Hebrew (paleo-Hebrew) script was discovered in the Near East. Once this ancient script was discovered the Los Lunas inscription could be deciphered and was found to be a copy of the "Ten Commandments".



[Click image for larger picture](#)

When we compare the script on the Los Lunas inscription with the above inscription found in 1993 at Tell Dan in the land of Israel, we find that the scripts are almost identical. Below is a comparison of the scripts from both inscriptions.

Lamed			Aleph		
Mem			Beyt		
Nun			Gimel		
Samech			Dalet		
Ayin			Hey		
Pey			Vav		
Tsade			Zayin		
Quph			Chet		
Resh			Tet		
Shin			Yud		
Tav			Kaph		

The Tel Dan inscription was written around 1000 BCE. Since the Los Lunas inscription uses the same script, it is safe to conclude that the Los Lunas inscription was written by a Hebrew people about 3,000 years ago. Other ancient Hebrew inscriptions have been found around the country including Tennessee and the Mississippi Valley. The "[Archeological Outliers Homepage](#)" includes other ancient Hebrew artifacts found in the United States. The article "[Who Really Discovered America?](#)" also includes some very interesting information on the Los Lunas inscriptions as well as other finds and includes a possible link between the Gold of Solomon and the Gold of Brazil.

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Turning Right at the 'Burning Bush:' Reflections on a National Treasure from Ancient America

By
Roger L. Williamson B.A; M. Div.



Introduction

After retiring from a career in the military, I now teach in public school and teach an Old Testament survey course at the local college. Even though it may be a survey course in Old Testament, one cannot avoid the Hebrew language. While researching paleo-Hebrew I ran into an inscription written in this ancient language. An abridged version of the 10 Commandments, this inscription resided in a desert. Nothing would raise an eyebrow if this inscription were to be discovered in the Sinai somewhere; but the fact that this inscription is found in New Mexico, US of A?

That was two years ago. The degree of my amazement has never faded. The Los Lunas Decalogue is addictive. The stone sticks with you and sticks it to you with more questions than answers. Like some headmaster with a big ruler; this stone challenges old assumptions; requires a mastery of language, research of both Old and New World times.

Consistent is the fact that few are aware of the stone inscription; even the locals. About 10 miles out in the desert I did ask for directions from a lady in a trailer office of a rock crushing company. Trucks loaded with gravel would pull up to this officer trailer and she would record the tonnage or something like that.

“Excuse me, I am looking for directions. I am looking for a mesa nearby called Mystery Mountain. Would you happen to know where this is located?”

“No, never heard of it,” she said.

“Well, it is also called the Los Lunas Decalogue Stone.”

“What’s a “Decalogue?”

“Oh, Decalogue is a word that refers to the 10 Commandments. Do you know of a mesa/mountain that has a stone with the 10 Commandments on it?

“Never heard of it,” she replied, “but I saw people bumping around the desert six month ago. Saw the silly people ruining their truck from that window. We have some crazy people visit this area.”

For the most part, people genuinely want to give you what you are asking for; especially directions and there is a frustration when they cannot.

“Honey,” [I love it when people call you honey] “I don’t know where this mountain you are speaking of is, but you probably have not gone far enough. Keep going and turn right at the burning bush.”

We both fell out laughing and I thanked her. Even the locals are unaware of this awesome stone written in a very old language.

She was right about one thing. I had not gone far enough. With several more hours I put the satellite photo into focus of the Rio Puerco ; railroad tracks and a bridge across. There was only one badly sun faded sign that said: “Mystery Mountain.” I was at the right mesa. Two more hours of wandering around dead end drops I saw the twin peaks and honed in on it. Once I could see the avenue of approach, the first sight of the stone was no more than a 1000 meters forward.



Observations on Physical Features of the Stone

The Los Lunas Mesa has the finest silted sand at its base I can remember. Walking on a very fine sand dune would be a fair equivalent. This finely ground sand will play a part of nature's relationship to this stone inscription.

The Decalogue Stone makes a great first impression. You climb a very small trail for a while and over the first rise, the stone becomes visible. It is big and impressive. The majority of pictures are close up pictures that do not show the relationship with the rest of the rock. Additionally, wonderful scholarship has been done on the script and translation of the stone, but not pausing to consider where it sits, why it sits that way; and the nature of basalt rock itself.

1. Assumption #1: Facing the stone; it is sinking downward to the right.
2. Assumption #2: At the time of the inscription the stone was more or less on a 45 degree level plane.

There is no sliding or rolling with the big stone where the inscription is carved. The ravine it sits in must be an awesome display of water and "sandpaper" silt during the rainy seasons. This water erosion has literally taken the floor out from under the bolder. It is an amazement to me there is the complete inscription still remaining.

From top to bottom, there are nine lines of inscription. From line four downward the surface has been sandpapered smooth. It would not be inconceivable to have the stone complete submerged with rushing water up to the fourth; possibly third line. The very top of the inscription surface bares a more uneven surface and indicates this surface relief is more related to the time of origin.

Would that we could measure nature's rate of erosion or how long it would take for a surface at the top of the stone to be "sanded" to the surface that is from line four down.

It does indicate a long time.

The top edges of the inscription are jagged and have very important markings for observation. The bottom is the exact opposite. Its jagged edges are rounded and smooth. These are again "before" and "after" shots. We are not able to accurately date the stone, but initial observation sure indicates antiquity.

Before considering Assumption #2 further, I want to make a few observations as to the degree of sinking/settling. The script characters are as close to perpendicular (90 deg) from the stone orientation as one could possibly make it. I think it is a fair assumption due to the entire orientation of the inscription. Whoever the author is; just observing the script construction, points to a very block and spatial awareness. With the exception of line two (a mistake I will deal with later), each letter is: 1) Very close to even sizing and 2) Even spacing both between letter and sentences.

It is more probable, this inscriber made these letters when the stone was level to him and waist to low chest high.

Assumption #2 is supported by another feature; the markings on the top edge. This stone surface had to be prepared before any script. If you observe close up the very top left hand edge of the stone you will see what I believe to be the chisel mark. When struck sharply great flakes of stone will shear off on to the floor; leaving a clean surface.

That mark may indicate the size of his chisel.

On the left hand side corner you can see the probable depth of the break off. The indentation is about a thumb's length deep. These marking points of impact are all along the top edge. Like the block and perpendicular script; these preparation points of impact are relatively in line with the stone. This is yet another supporting observation that the stone was more level when it was originally prepared.

Again, would that we could measure the rate of settling with this bolder holding the great inscription. If geologists can measure the rate of movement in the San Andreas Fault, surely, something could be done to measure the rate of nature's working on this bolder. Based on physical evidence, it would be a closer approximation of age than has been reached so far.

The erosion "sanding" process, the letter orientation of the scrip, the preparation marking that cleared the surface for inscription set up for me a relationship between the markings and nature's aging. Not only is this script old, but the physical observation points in this direction too.



The Physical Construction of the Script

We have already observed the 90 degree orientation of the script as it relates to the stone. Whoever this chiseler was, he could not have used the same force in preparing the stone as in making the letters. I did not find these letters to be very deep, but it seems to me:

1. the implement used to make the letters was icepick pointed and not like the point of a screwdriver.
2. He did not hammer; he tapped. In the entire construction of this man's statement, he ran the risk of shattering the surface of basalt. One mistake and the entire inscription would require re-surfacing or finding another stone.

Someone suggested this was no scribe or priestly background because any "trained" person would have measured his sentence lines, and chalked out his letters. It is correct, he was no scribe or priestly class (i.e. Levitical background), but not for the reasons put forth above. To the letter; word for word, this is a deliberate inscription; minus his great mistake. It was meticulously achieved in fine tapping.

The Author was familiar with this kind of rock and how to work with it in order to achieve the results he did. There is a high degree of functional skill here.

I know it is a stretch, but the ground in front of the stone is curiously level. Since this is the only level section in the entire approach I wonder if there was something in front of the inscription when the stone was somewhat level.

The Script and Version of the 10 Commandments

The inscription reads from right to left placing the script within a certain family of languages; the Semitic Family.

Minus the three or four letters that have broken off, and minus the period separation points and the caret, there are 216 characters inscribed on the stone. All 22 letters of a Semitic/Phoenician/Paleo-Hebrew alphabet are employed.

The execution of these characters are deliberate and measured: line 1 (28 characters); L2 (21); L3 (28); L4 (21); L5 (28); L6 (29); L7 (25); L8 (25); and L9 (10). Even the smaller last two lines are symmetrically centered. It would be a fair assumption that he has done this before.

David Deal has a wonderful depth to the language of Los Lunas in his book *Discovery of Ancient America*. He writes:

"They (the letters) are clearly and unequivocally a form of paleo-Hebrew. A comparison of alphabets easily proves this point. All but five of the letters found on Inscription Rock are immediately recognized as common forms of paleo-Hebrew." (page 3-4)

David Deal not only penetrates the code of the scripts, but contributes a very accurate translation; and his interest pushes on into the conviction that Hebrew has given the "Ancient America(s)" one of its large linguistic taproots.

Almost all linguistic translators of the Decalogue stone agree that Phoenician Script has a strong foundation. The

important point to learn here is that the letters used in Los Lunas are not homogeneous! The scripts on this stone tell of many scripts from many ports of call.

Lets take it from the easiest to the more difficult. The letter Tet (T) is Greek Script. Iberic script; both northern and southern, display an X. Phoenician script displays the circle X; as does Aramaic and specifically the Estrangela script is no match even close to Los Lunas.

The letter Lamed (L) comes from a Greek port of call. It is heavily used and consistently vertical up and 90 degrees in 21 times. Lamed (L) is used as a prefix (to), and it is the first letter in the word no or not, which is a good part of the 10 Commandments. The way this letter is used is far distant from his semitic relatives. In really old Phoenician script, the letter appears as an upside down shepherd's crook. Pondering the use of this letter, it is also where the ancient chiseler misspells a word by using the letter L and not N. Line 5; the last word in the line: *leMaTsaN*. (in order that). It is not due to his knowing how. The very next word is a verbatim match for Exodus 20; "*YaaRiKooN* (be long). The chiseler is deliberate in many things; even his mistakes.

The Hebrew letter Hhet is used twice in line two and seven for the word "*ahCHarIm*" (any other) and "*teeReZaCHa*" or "murder." This letter is a hard sounding Hhet or "Chet" and is distinguished from the letter Hey. Germans love this hard chet sound as in **achtung!** The letter "hey" is softer sounded as in the word "hay that is stacked in the barn."

The inscriber is showing us something. Whenever there are two alphabetic letters that are phonetically close sounding; he uses different script to distinguish them. In this case the letter "Hey" is a very close match to Phoenician script; but the letter Chet/Hhet is Greek script. His "Chet/Hhet" is not even close to Phoenician. This is not the last time he will use this trick to distinguish close sounding letters.

Would the fact that this person switches language letters to distinguish sounds, **and** uses Phoenician letters as vowel sounds point to his being a **phonetic speller**?

Line 2 (the last word) is a perfect illustration of a phonetic speller. The word is *Pheni*. Literally, it means "my face" and is used often for "**before**" whom ever the possessive is. In Hebrew the "p" sound can be a hard "Pah" or the soft PH with an F sound and is determined by vowel sounds that in the ancient days were totally absent. The author puts the letter "hey" between the first and second letter. There is a mistake here on two counts: 1) The Hebrew text of Ex. 20:3 uses the hard Pah letter sound which he does not indicate, and 2) by putting the letter "Hey" after the Pey letter he creates a PH (f) sound. He misspells the word for the sake of making a "feh" sound. In addition, it is possible that he is using; for the vowel sound 'eh,' **not** the Phoenician "Hey" but the backward "E" which is Greek. The construction of this letter has no distinctive downward stroke on the right side. Yes, he does this several times, but there is enough of a red flag here to raise the question. Deeper still is the curious period mark after the use of his letter N, and before placing the possessive "my." After this possessive is yet another period. Is he getting into trouble here?

There was only one thing left to check with this vowel insertion. I turned to the Septuagint (LXX) to see if there were any clues. "*Heteroi plen eMou*." "others many **of me**") The final phrase in question is clearly not a literal translation from the Hebrew, and I do not see; what might be, some phonics clues to his insertion.

There are other places where the aleph (A) is used as a vowel sound even though the letter is clearly Phoenician. I

find this to be another example of a Greek trait. (e.g. ZaKor)

The letter “dalet” or “D” is used six times in the inscription and is consistently the classic triangle. It’s a close call, but I believe this is also Greek. Of the seven inscriptions from Cyprus to the Nora stone in Sardinia, the Phoenician letter “dalet” triangle is not level or (facing the letter) the right side line goes beyond the base of the triangle mark. Again, as I continue to study, when there is a phonetic similar sounding letter he reaches for Greek to distinguish the sounds. If the “dalet” triangle had an additional stroke on the right side, it might be too much of a confusion with the letters “resh” “R” or the letter “Beyt” “B.”

I will make another close call, but I ponder this for hours, and love it when I can find other inscriptions to compare this with. It is the letter “kaf” or “K.” It is a heavily used letter in both the inscription and in Hebrew. The “kaf” at the end of a word signifies possession (“your”). By my count, it is used 12 times in all lines but one.

In Phoenician script the backside of the letter often extends further than the “>” part of the letter and is often marked with a slant; not completely vertical. This letter is not even close to Aramaic. To me this is important; for any Aramaic connection narrows this person down to a further east orientation, and Aramaic did not come into use until after Alexander. I find little Aramaic connections in the Los Lunas Inscription. There is a connection with Iberic (Spain) and in particular, the southern Iberic script, but the “Kay” sound is also made with a slanted “Z” and as we will see “the hourglass” symbol.

Consistently, I have shown the author’s tendency to lean on Greek whenever there is a phonetic close-call confusion in letter sounds. The two letters are “kaf” and the letter “qof.”

Line 5 is just such a case in point. The word is “**QaDoSho**” (“**holy**”).

David Deal sees this letter with an Iberic signature (**Discovery of Ancient America**, page 4). He has a strong argument; especially with the southern Iberic script. There is clearly little relationship to Phoenician script.

Deal also sees this letter as an authentication letter. No one knew this letter even existed until the 20th century. He writes:

“This evidence suggests that Jewswere living in Spain at sometime after the return of the Judahites to Judeaa from Babylonia, which began in 538B.C.E., and continued from the 4th century through the 1st century B.C.E ...”

Four letters down from this hourglass Iberic letter is “kaf” >| sitting perfectly vertical in the word **Kavod** (glory or honor) with a K as distinguished from a Q. When in doubt he leans Greekward to phonetically assist. This is like showing the tendency of one to use the right or left hand.

Perhaps this is the appropriate place to make another comment on this entire verse.

ZaKor et Yiom heShavat leQaDoSho. Remember the day the Sabbath to holy it. **ZaKor** is a distinctive signature for Exodus 20. Deuteronomy 5:12 uses the word *shamor* (ShMR) meaning to keep.

It is interesting that the letter G is used only once. Line 8 in the word **tiGeNoV** (steal). The construction of this letter is just like our ancient chiseler; blocked and vertical. There is no angle to it and appears the way Germans

make their number one. As heavy as Greek is used, it should be noticed that the letter G in Archaic Greek is the same stroke; just opposite. If you flipped the Los Lunas letter over, you would have a match to 8th century B.C.E inscriptions. It is to say, the only use of the letter is Phoenician, yet, when you observe the use of the letter in other inscriptions; it is almost always angular and not blocked straight vertical like some solid at attention.

“Samech” is the letter S and is also only used once. Line 3 in the word: ***PheSeL*** (image). In Iberic script the letter resembles a lightning bolt in a variety of forms. In Phoenician script this letter is often one vertical line with three horizontal lines drawn through it from top to bottom. Sometimes it is with only two horizontal lines.

Actually I think this man is very conscious that this character looks very similar to the letter “mem” (M). The only use of the samech character (as is found at Los Lunas) comes from Ipsambul in Turkey. Just a comment, but I believe the Ionian and southern coast of Turkey possesses a very faint but a connection that keeps knowing on me. I have lived in Turkey and know how unexcavated its regions are. The author does not appear to be an eastern (Israel) location. He is definitely of the Mosaic faith. The combination of his use of Greek with a Hebrew/Phoenician base would make sense from a Jewish community outside Israel. Dated at about 590 B.C.E; it is the only samech I have found scripted like this. Looking at the famous Moabite Stone, you find them using the triple telephone pole design. A Greek coin found in Sicily 480-475 BCE has the lightening bolt design. It looks like an English M that is standing vertical on its side.

This is truly a “wild weasel” of a letter that has no match; except I do believe the author is very aware of letters being distinct from each other.

The letter for “Samek” on the Los Lunas stone actually looks very close to the “Mem” (M) letter in paleo-Hebrew. The letter “Mem” in paleo-Hebrew has that W look attached to a pole stroke. The only “W” appearance on Los Lunas is understood as the samek in the word ***PheSeL***. This is yet another minor detail, but this confusion of mem and samek constructions points in the direction that Phoenician may be the most recognizably used, but not his “mother” tongue.

The three upward strokes on the left side are consistently blocked with every “Mem.” Inscriptions dating from the McCabean era have this blocked the same as Los Lunas but with a slightly angled (curved) pole stroke that does not appear in a Los Lunas “Mem.” Samaritan script also has the blocked upper set, but the bottom stroke is very different.

“Nun” (N) is used 8 or 9 times in the big rock. When you compare this letter to say the Moabite Stone; a Phoenician/Canaanite script, the “n” is more cursive than Los Lunas. The curvature of the lower leg separates this particular script letter from the Los Lunas’ “N.” This style looks very close to how the letter is made in Southern Iberic script.

The letter “tsade” is used only twice; both times the same way, but the letter marking has no match to any Old World inscription scripts we yet know of. The first instance is in the word ***HoTseTiKa*** (“brought you out”) in line 1 and the word ***MiTsRaIm*** (Egypt) line 3. I do think this is another example of phonetically sounding letters that are distinctively solved by using the Greek letter Z.

The last group of script-letters are; what I call, the curvey ones (for lack of any academic ones). These are the letters “Beyt (B or V), “Ayin” (without a vowel it is soundless), and the letter “Resh” (R). All are consistently Phoenician

in origin.

Mormon Deseret Script and Connections to Los Lunas

Before leaving script observations, I think this would be an appropriate place to consider the “Mormon Connection.” It has oft been suggested that a connection might exist between the Mormon’s early history and the carving of the Los Lunas Commandments. This is a perfectly understandable connection question and follows will all the more questions to ask.

It is my understanding that The Mormon Church did send an investigating team to the Stone and their conclusions were: 1) The stone did not have any Mormon signatures and 2) The stone was not authenticated for the age pre-Columbian historians are proposing for the stone. I would certainly enjoy reading the supportive findings for their conclusion.

As I said of the Commandment Stone; it will stick to you and will stick it to you in continually opening up avenues of knowledge not known. The Deseret Alphabet, devised by Brigham Young in or around 1851 is just such an example. I was unaware such an alphabet was ever devised. The 38 character system was actually devised to: 1) Help non-English speaker to learn English, and 2) to assist Mormon believers to be more exclusive and distinctive as a community of believers.

Young was able to construct this system through an English shorthand specialist; named, George D. Watt.

The future of the Deseret system was similar to the pouring of sidewalks before considering where people walk. Even though the sidewalks are installed, it does not insure where people will walk. After serious efforts to get the new alphabet firmly implanted in use, it finally fell in on its own weight in approximately 1869.

The period of 1851 to 1869 is a critical area for the early discovery of the Commandment Stone. We learned Dr. Frank Hibben of the University of New Mexico was led to the stone by an Indian in 1933, and by Indian testimony, the stone was there long before the history of their own Indian people. The stone was first translated successfully in 1941.

When one circles the 1830’s to the 1850’s, it is prime chronology to both Mormon and American history NOT to pose questions. Where the historical “sidewalk of eyewitnesses” summarily ends with Los Lunas (i.e. 1850’s); curiously this timing begins with the Mormon Migration. It is a cross over that; personally, I would not want to overlook.

We enter one of those areas that always tighten up historians and lovers of history’s mystery: The relationship of Doctrinal belief and an ever, ever changing world Doctrinal belief lives in. The Mormon Church has contributed hugely to American religious life. Though exclusive in their doctrinal convictions/connections with ancient Israel, I have rarely (if never) heard one acknowledge them as the first “diffusionists” historians when it comes to the history of Ancient Americas. They embraced that conclusion long before such pioneers who expanded the historical possibilities for the Americas. With such groundbreaking giants as Dr. Cyrus Gordon, Dr. Barry Fells, and Gloria Farley: 1) the Mormon community may have had only convictions of only Hebrew origins; but now we see Celtic, Iberic, Punic, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Lord only knows what more). And 2) Like the Mormon conclusion; they arrived long before Columbus.

The Deseret alphabet and the syllabary of the Commandment stone have only one connecting character, but it is one that raises my attention. In the Deseret script, the letter N is a perfect match to the Los Lunas Commandment stone. That is a scant miniscule of any significant connect; however, it does turn over yet another stone with an even bigger question on it: Did early and colonial America know paleo or proto-Hebrew script? Without question, the first migrants to American soil knew Hebrew, but “modern” Masoretic Hebrew. In the Deseret alphabet, there are two perfect matches to ancient Hebrew script in the letters L and N; L being the shepherd’s crook symbol and N being that lightening bolt of a symbol. Los Lunas does not use the shepherd’s crook, rather, turns to Greek script. What is the trace on this letters? In the Mormon community, I would love to see someone pursue that; someone like the wonderful scholarship provided by Dr. Brian Stubbs. What Dr. Stubbs has contributed to is the awesome connection between Hebrew consonal roots (and Hebrew plural construction) to languages of both ancient America; especially Indian languages squarely in the Los Lunas matrix. Another scholarly contribution in this area of Hebrew root connections and Ancient Americas is David Deal’s work in Mayan syllabary and words.

I can only venture a suggestion and that is, these two letters came through England. I don’t know what Watt’s shorthand symbols were he was skilled in, but the origins strongly point there. The overwhelming number of Phoenician and Greek letters and words found in Los Lunas are more of a direct link to Old World (Bronze Age) employ. Again, though there are some dating overlaps seen between Los Lunas and Mormon migration; I really believe the Mormons were far to the north of the Los Lunas location. From the 1840’s to the end of the 1850’s, the concentration was on the Great Utah Basin and their early establishment in the area. Finally, I do not see a strong connection in the Inscription Stone and the Mormon community for the simple reason, there is not the faintest hint (even a sign pointer) to any Christian Confession. The Mormon faith, nor any of the array of Christian denominations; especially, of early American age would omit such an opportunity for Christological profession.

Observations on the “big” Mistake:

The question I asked when looking at line 1 through 3 is “when did he recognize his mistake?” Part of the answer to this question lies in the use of the caret and the very accurate spacing (sizing) of the other letters.

When you ponder the positioning of the caret in relation to the period making the end of the sentence, it is not centered over the period. Meaning, he had gone on his merry way and noticed his error only after 1) finishing line two, or 2) finishing the entire Commandments.

Wish I could have seen his face at the point of recognizing his error. How does one say: “Ah Man ...” in paleo-Hebrew? This is just another indicator pointing to a person who has no script, but solely operates on his memory. It is to be observed that he did not quit; rather, he went on deliberately to insure all the commandments are communicated. Meaning, finishing is of higher value than correcting the mistake.

One more thought on the mistake. The mistake points more to the assumption that he was operating on memory rather than text-in-hand. A text in hand would certainly have lowered the probability of this happening.

Script conclusions

1. The inscriber of this stone probably was a man of many ports of call and could speak multiple languages phonetically, but not a man versed in letters. Is it possible to speak a language and not know basically how to write it?
2. Though he clearly displays the Mosaic Faith, he is not of priestly origin. This man is a classic

layperson who is a product of a recitation, ritually practiced enough to display the Mosaic faith by memory.

3. Though he uses Phoenician letters he is not Phoenician: 1) He uses Greek lettering to get him out of phonetic problems; meaning, he points in the direction of Greek origins. 2) In the script itself, there is minimal pointers to Middle Eastern origins; namely, no connection to Aramaic (Estrangela Script). I know that Dr. Gordon sees strong Samaritan signatures. He makes a strong case for it being Samaritan but not on the lettering; rather, the function played by the 10 Commandments. There is a version of the Samaritan 10 Commandments where the 10th commandment is the command to build a Temple on Mount Gerizim. The Samaritans did not hold Jerusalem as the central place of Temple worship. Again, Gordon's conclusion that the 10 Commandments were used as a Mezuzah has problems too. If I understand the use and script of the Mezuzah, the 10 Commandments are not what inside the box. What is contained in the mezuzah box is the **Shema** (Deuteronomy 6:4-9), and the **Vehaya** (Deuteronomy 11:13-21).
4. The connections between the Stone and the Mormon community is not very strong from alphabetical or historical dating of the two.

The Exodus 20 and the Los Lunas Version

When I come to the issue of abridgement (or editing), this is one of those points where everyone seems to understand by saying: The Los Lunas Decalogue is an **abridged** version of the 10 Commandments. It ends there; yet, the more I pursue this investigation, I am finding we **we are not considering what abridging means.**

The author of this stone edits the Exodus 20 commandment variant; raising the first question: How? What has been taken out for the sake of expediency and concerns of space? Again, if doctrinal tradition holds that the Commandments were written by the very finger of God; is there any observations further into the author, who obviously edits the words for the sake of space, rather than some fear of some grave doctrinal sin? It does appear to point to a person who would not have any priestly fear of such Commandment surgery; for the assumption is given that no priestly person would abridge it; rather, find a bigger stone.

Can we find a match elsewhere of an abridgement similar to the Los Lunas Stone? The Ohio Decalogue Stone found in 1860 is also edited, but it is abridged differently.

In the ancient festival of Shavuot; first, an agricultural ritual and later a festival of weeks celebrating the reception of the Torah, or the liturgical usage of the Tefillin (the first or second century BCE Qumran Tefillin), or the ritual recitation of the 10 Commandments in the Nash Papyrus: Is there anything in antiquity that would provide a clue to **what this author includes and what he leaves out?** Is the surgery to the Commandments liturgical/ritual or is it a personal selection? In the author's memory, did he know the entire text of Exodus 20, or have this particular version inscribed from years of worshipful usage; such as some credo? If the author is editing from a memory of the entire Exodus Text, then which text; the Septuagint or a version closer to the later Masoretic Text? Can we view into the author's **intention** some observations of himself as a person via what he includes and what he excludes? Can an abridgement version; such as the one found in Los Lunas, be matched with the same abridgement in the in specific Hebrew communities; such as, the Ashkenazi, the Sephardic community, the Yemintie and Maimonides, or does it have a literal interpretation of the law (Karaites), an "oral" inclusion of the law giving it a later dating in Israel's history?

Now, one might see that there may be some light into this anomaly sitting in the middle of the middle of the United

States with an ancient finger pointing to the beginnings of what is known now as America.

An Analysis of what is included and excluded

I YHWH your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt from the house of slavery. *This is a letter for letter match with the Mastoretic Text.*

Not YHWH to you gods other ones before my face. *The highlighted portion is omitted.*

Not will you make to you images or any likeness which in the heavens above or which in the earth under or which in the waters under the earth. Not will you bow down to them and not will you serve them for I YHWH your God a jealous (God) bring punishment upon fathers upon children on the third and fourth generations to those that hate me. And doing kindness to thousands to those that love me and keep my commandments. *Highlighted portion is omitted.*

Not shall you take the name YHWH your God in vain for not will leave unpunished YHWH one who takes His Name in vain. *Highlighted portion omitted*

Remember the day the Sabbath and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. And day the seventh is Sabbath to YHWH your God, not shall you do any work you and your son and your daughter your male slave and slave girl and your cattle and your stranger who in your gates for six days made YHWH the heavens and the earth the sea and all that is in them and rested he on the day seventh therefore God blessed the day Sabbath and sanctified it. *Highlighted portion is omitted.*

Honor your father and your mother that may be long your days on the land which YHWH your God is giving to you. *Here is a complete match with Masoretic Text, but not the LXX).*

Not shall you murder. *Word for word match.*

Not shall you commit adultery. *Perfect match*

Not shall you steal *Perfect match*

Not shall you testify against your neighbor there false. (*Match*)

(Not shall you covet house our neighbor) Not shall you covet wife your neighbor or his male slave or slave girl or his ox or his ass or all which is to your neighbor. *Highlighted portion is omitted.*

Observations

1. Commandments 2 and 4 sustain the most editing. These two commandments have hugely high **priestly signatures**, and have the highest amount of surgical omissions. Is that yet another indicator that the author is not of scribal or priestly orientation?
2. None of the abridgements alter the meaning of any of the Commandments.
3. Curiously, it is Commandment 5 (Honor Father and Mother) that becomes the longest; even though there are clear places it could be cut down to size without losing its meaning. This is with

the Masoretic Text, and not with the LXX. If our author is going by the LXX (a more ancient text orientation) then he edits out ***hena ew soi genetai*** (that it increase you or be more fruitful to you). The question I ask with this editorial selection is: Why would the parental honor commandment have more space priority than the Sabbath requirements and not working on the seventh day? If this were an old world party who has voyaged a great distance to arrive where they are, one could at least pass the idea that Commandment 5 would have significance on two counts: 1) A very long voyage from their ancestral home, and 2) that their days may be long in the land God gave to you. The combination of distance and survival in a new land has the potential of number 5 being a very 'existential' one indeed.

4. When you ponder the "covet" Commandments (i.e. the neighbor's house and/or the neighbor's wife), first, they appeared combined into one. When you study the Masoretic Text [Exodus 20:17] coveting the neighbor's house appears first in the order. When compared to the Septuagint (LXX), "wife coveting" is first in order. The Septuagint (LXX) being the older text by far; then is the author aligning to the Greek Septuagint?
5. When one researches the use of the 10 Commandments in the liturgical practice of ancient Israel, what is consistent is it is **not abridged!** We can only assume that the editing on the Los Lunas Stone points to the author himself. The abridgement must be intentional and might well be autobiographical; particularly, when we investigate the omissions of the word for slave and the longest Commandment being the parent-honor commandment.
6. It is an assumption, but I believe a fair one that Commandment 1 conforms to the Jewish tradition. I realize the second half of the first Commandment is caretred, but they are understood as one even though a period was used only (and that is important) **after** he had separated what he thought was one from two.
7. There is not a hint of Christian (Catholic or Protestant variants) in this abridgement.
8. I think it is of interest that the mention of male and female servants, male and female slaves mentioned in two commandments are omitted. The slavery omission I find has a high signature here. He does use the word ***tsavadim*** in reference of the house of slavery in Egypt. Any other reference to slaves is totally dropped. The word for male slave that is omitted is from the same root ***tsavedka*** (your male slave) and ***VaMaTeKa*** (female slave). Is there a difference in remembering the 'Egyptian House of Slavery' and the other two uses of slaves in the Divine injunction? The Commandment "pre-ample" is: "I am the Lord you Godthe House of Slavery." It is as much an historical participatory memory **all** embrac who have that Mosaic Confession, and is different in quality (not in word root usage) from the other references to slaves in the present. The enslavement in Egypt is as important as the God who liberated them. Even long after the liberation from Egypt, few in the old world were free. Enslavement came from being conquered, poverty, indentured servitude to mention only a few. It is well documented in the Prophets, the Kings historian, and Levitical (Torah laws) that even Jews enslaved Jew through charging 'Loneshark' interest; yet, Torah law set the sixth year of Jubilee as a redemption year for such Jewish servitude (slavery), but that did not apply to non-Jews.

One cannot help beg the question: Is the author here free? Is this freedom free from old world servitude/slavery, and now liberated once in the new world? Through the Commandment use of "slavery," is he conscious of this in his slavery omission? If this is as old as the script on the stone, then who ever it is, he is overly aware of who is free and who is enslaved. If we even consider one posed theory that this pre-Columbian party voyaged into the Gulf and up the Rio Grande, more than likely those who did the rowing did not do so via voluntary altruism. Slaves rowed.

9. In line 2 (his mistake insertion), he omits a small thing, but at the same time a pretty significant possession phrase very common in Hebrew (and in the LXX). **LeKah** is the preposition “to you.” In the context of the sentence it is: “And shall not be to you gods; other ones, before my face.” You wonder if Hebrew is his language by faith conviction, but not in native language.

Conclusions

A critical abridgement question would be: If we assume, the author went by memory, then what had he memorized: The complete version of the Exodus 20: 1-17? If this abridgement originated from ritual recitation and liturgical practice: 1) would you not think the entire text be recited rather than any abridgement?, and 2) one would certainly think that the full text of Commandments 2 and 4 would especially be prized memory pieces to be fully recalled in a congregational setting of Temples, or (a post-exilic development) the Synagogues.

In a first to second century BCE document called the Qumran tefillin. What is included in this document is Exodus 20:1-17 and the **Shema** of Deuteronomy 6. The combination of these two passage pieces is well known in the early practice of Israel’s liturgical usage of the 10 Commandments. Translating this small parchment indicates too, a strong leaning to the Septuginta (LXX) commandment format. For example, in the covet commandments, the “neighbor’s house” comes before the “neighbors=’s wife.”

The tefillin is that small box tethered to a leather strap. The leather strap is wrapped around the forearm (left if I remember) and the tefillin box is situated on the forehead. Inside the tefillin is an unedited copy of the 10 Commandments.

So what conclusion can be made from all this remembering of some things and omitting other verse parts? The omissions do not appear to be from a liturgical variant, but intentionally selective choices made by the author himself. In all the research into Israel’s ancient usage of the 10 Commandments, I have always found the full Exodus Text. I believe there are two reasons for that thus far: 1) The Commandments were not recited in the context of ancient liturgy. They were read, and 2) The absence of any editing is fueled by doctrinal respect to the awesome God who gave it. One would not abridge something from the very finger of God.

I cannot get behind the curiosity, but it nonetheless still sticks to my mind; meaning: Is the author’s editing out slavery (as well as oxen and whatnot) or the fact that he selects the honoring of Fathers and Mothers to be the longest Commandment to record in some way telling us about himself? Is this apparently selective display; autobiographical?

Actually, in Hebrew, the centerpiece of Torah is not called the “10 Commandments” rather **eSeRim DeVaRim** (literally 10 Words or sayings). The arrangement here is separate from the Catholic or the Protestant format. In the Hebrew format here; “I YHWH your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt out of the house of slavery and you shall have no other Gods before me,” is considered the first commandment

One thing can bring a partial conclusion: There is not one hint of Christian signatures in the Los Lunas inscription, or from anywhere else on the mesa; not a Cross or a symbol like “Ichthus (the fish). The mesa did not show any signs of Christian influence.

In all the research into ritual recitations (prayers, liturgy) within the worship events in Israel and diaspora communities, I have not been able to find a match to the Los Lunas abridgement. It is not directly related to the Los

Lunas Inscription, or the inscription on the south summit, but it should be observed that any recitation of the 10 Commandments points to an early liturgical usage. In post-Alexandrian times, Israel's history enters; what has been termed the 'Rabbinical Period.' In this time and onward into the Christian era, the 10 Commandments lost its central focus in favor of a broader usage of the Torah's meaning.

Without any liturgical connections, it is difficult to venture in any certainty of formatted recitation. If there was any indication in this direction, it would point also toward the inscription's antiquity; particularly post-exilic timing when the 10 Commandments was a centerpiece to the Torah reception.

Again, one can also see a connection to Septuagint (LXX) origins. This would be in keeping with the script analysis and his use of Greek letters.

The Commandment Stone in relation to the mesa's summit



The summit of the Los Lunas Mesa stands at a height of an impressive 5500 feet. There is a 365 deg distant commanding view from any direction. The Isleta Pueblo Reservation surrounds the mesa. One cannot help but think the very neighboring mesa might well have this ancient Hebrew/Greek script with more of a clue as to the age and intention of these visitors.

YHWH Eloheynu



The immediate connection between the commandment stone at the mesa's base and the summit is located on the south rim is the highest point on the mesa's summit; the south rim. Clearly, the south rim has maintained the highest point even in the erosion of thousands of years. David Deal, in his book **Discovery of Ancient America, 1984**, is certainly correct in saying the positioning of **YHWH Eloheynu** (God our Mighty One) is intentional due to its strategic height. It is the same script, but it is the only clear connection found that links the top to the bottom.

The Zodiac and Map of the Solar Eclipse

This truly exciting and extraordinary mapping of a solar eclipse is found on the east facing of the summit's rim. There will be little to improve the wonderful scholarship given by David Deal, so I confer to his wonderful book **Discovery of Ancient America, 1984**. I seriously doubt what has been painstakingly laid out in analysis can be improved on. The mapping of this event from the stars and constellation is the most exacting point of the entire mysterious mesa. Besides the great religious contributions to the ideas of constructing great civilizations and the best governance of human behavior from the Old World; it was the dept of knowledge acquired from the stars; even in the Bronze Age.

Philosophy gives Thales of Miletus (Ionian Coast) the title of "Father of Philosophy" first and foremost for his prediction of an eclipse we have a pretty exact dating on: 584 BCE. That is because he learned of the mathematical formula announcing this event in the heavens, and did so either from the Egyptians, Persians or Babylonians. It did not come from the west; rather, the east. It came from a meticulous **priestly** 24/7 observation of the heavens; down to the degree of change in any star or constellation.

It would be a fair assumption these visitors possessed a precision knowledge of astronomy and with this knowledge keen awareness of navigational direction. The Phoenicians possessed this level of navigational astronomy. In Old World history, the amazing success of these mariners/navigators coined the “Phoenician Star” to indicate polaris (the north star). Again, it has aptly been established that the calculation of longitude/latitude was not post-Columbian but a 4th century BCE skill (c.f. Eratosthenes).

I find it too close to pose as accident, but the end of the Biblical Israelite age arrived just 3 years later. I know the dismantling of Judah (the southern kingdom) occurred in a series of waves, but 587BCE was the “lights out” for an awesome era. Yes, there was a return and the brief era of reconstruction arrived under Ezra, Nehemiah, and the later prophets; but Ancient Israel would never realize the freedom it possessed millennia before.

If we do two things: 1) Assume the Zodiac; 15 September 107BCE, to be connected with the Commandment Stone at the base of the mesa, and 2) assume the calculations are correct in arriving at this date via mathematical eclipse backdating; then our chiseler/visitor arrives with all the history of an Hebrew age over.

Again, David Deal cannot be improved on in breaking this part of the unanswered known. Consult his work to inspect for his calculations down to the azimuth and elevation.

If one places the Commandment Stone within this post-exilic period and; frankly, post Alexandrian, the problem becomes more complex due to the fact that “Israel” was not in one place. Trying to bring any light on the Commandment Stone in this period of history pushes one headlong into what is meant by diaspora.

The Old Testament record includes the edicts of Cyrus and Artaxerxes (Persian Kings) that allowed for the Hebrews to return to Jerusalem in 538 BCE; but not all the Hebrews returned. Millennia later there are still remnants of very old Hebrew families in the far east; the trans-caucus (Russia), Egypt, Greece (Turkey), Spain, 1st Century BCE Hebrew communities in Rome were considerable; north Africa (Carthage) and not-to-mention an endless number of Old World islands (Cyprus, Sardinia, Malta, etc). And we should not forget Palestine and Old Israel were all a part of the exilic explosion that all plays a part on a Stone in New Mexico. Diaspora means the dispersion of Hebrew Communities throughout the Old World.

The Phoenician and Greek script being the major foundation to Los Lunas, and understanding the dispersion (diaspora) of Hebrew communities throughout the Old World from the return of the Hebrews to Jerusalem and onward, lends strong support to a person who has a Greek orientation and a Mosaic faith by confession.

The “Pits”

Among the many difficulties posed by the Commandment Stone is that in all the pieces of evidence left for one to study; not one piece (epigraphical or otherwise) gives any light into intent. So far, there is no piece of pottery, no bone, nothing that would indicate why these people were in the Americas, and specifically this location.

There are these curious rectangular pits; some with flat basalt stones walled up on three of the four sides. The bottoms of these pits have all silted up and appear to have never been disturbed. These pits are not evenly surrounding the summit’s rim. Most are found to the east, south and southeast.

David Deal offers the suggestion they were built as sentry posts with a security perimeter in mind. That is certainly logical and probably correct, but who was the perimeter to keep out? If we are talking about 1st century BCE dating,

not even the Hohokam or Anasazi cultures were in the area by that time. Not that there was no one, but whom? What would be the need for a military posture?

No one has taken a good look to satisfy my curiosity. For that matter, there has not been, to my knowledge, any serious excavation of this entire area, and I find that extremely strange. When you consider the rectangular pits in the Michigan, Ohio, Georgia, even New Mexico that point to a 2000 year old production of a smelting process for iron, copper, and other abundant minerals in Ancient America at the time; those pits on the summit of Los Lunas become all the more curious. We need someone of the caliber of amateur archaeologist Arlington A. Mallery to: 1) Receive permission from the State of New Mexico, and 2) test these pits for heat signatures and slag deposits.

If this ever turned up positive for smelting, then we have an answer to the question of intent and the more reason they were there in the first place.

Again, there is absolutely no linkage of the pits to Hebrew visitors or any other for that matter, or that they were dug in the same time as the Commandment Stone inscription.

Multiple Symbols on various summit stones

With the exception of the Zodiac map and the inscription YHWH Eloheanu at the south rim, all script comes to an end and the symbols begin. I hope to return to take more pictures. There are hundreds of these symbols, and what I would call, picture symbols. There is a curious set of hands, and when you look closely; two “right” hands next to each other. I am told that is often found, and has a high Indian origin. There are faces, stick figures, head drawings with what appears to be a headdress, what appear to be animal drawings, and more.

What might help in my continued study of this mesa would be further knowledge of Phoenician symbols found in Old World areas. Sharing my disc of pictures with Mrs. Zena Halpern quickly identified a picture that has a strong connection with a Phoenician symbol. The symbol is a stick figure of a person with upraised arms. The figure symbol has a head and legs included.



If one goes to any search engine and types in TANIT SYMBOL Tanit was the goddess of Baal, a very familiar nature religion indigenous to the Canaan area. Tanit has also been called Astarte. The symbol for this goddess is found throughout the Old World; particularly, in Carthage; a Phoenician colony in North Africa. Besides being a nature bound fertility religion, this religion also practiced infant sacrifice. Thousands of small infant bones have been uncovered in the Carthage area known as Tophets.

I have two pictures that show a strong similarity to this Phoenician symbol.

If these two symbols on the summit of Los Lunas were more conclusively connected to the Phoenician nature religion, it would change considerably the composition of who these visitors were.

There are some big assumptions here: 1) That the symbols identified are the symbol for Tanit, and 2) the symbols are linked to the Commandment Stone. Then again, Los Lunas would not be called "Mystery Mountain" from as far back as the time of the Pueblo Indians. The suggestion here of a faint linkage is not a far fetched one. If one reads all the more of Phoenician presence in the Americas and the epigraphical findings that point to such a Bronze Period cultural/trade exchange, it would certainly make sense. If one considers that all the great South American civilizations (Inca, Mayan, and Aztec) practiced infant sacrifice as well, it would certainly raise an eyebrow.

The Mosaic Faith of the Commandment stone and the nature-religion of Tanit are separated by an infinite universe!! Historically, it was the worship of Baal that was so anathematized in Old Testament history.

It is merely a suggestion but one to critically ponder. It would mean the group or party of people occupying Los Lunas were not all of the Hebrew Faith. Their bond was certainly not by conviction; rather, a high probability of **commission**. It is well established from Old World evidence; from uncovered bill of shipments to imperial decrees

which were essentially ancient credit card arrangements that: 1) If ship's captains did not own their ship, then 2) their voyaging/trading were under imperial commission.

Phoenician ships had enormous cargo capacity, and after years of argument, we have discovered sea captains did not limit themselves only to coastal navigation. The discoveries of the Phoenician ships **Tanit and Elissa** revealed both cargo capacity and straight point-to-point navigation over open sea. If I recall the underwater excavation showed an amphora cargo of wine from Lebanon; considered in the Old World to be of finest quality.

It is a raging debate over pre-Columbian transatlantic voyages; yet, little in contested evidence of Phoenician ships consistently closing on the English coast in order to exploit tin; a mineral the Middle East was consistently hungry for in order to make bronze. The Old Testament historian well records Solomon's rich alliance with the Phoenician king Hiram I and the 3-year rule for Hebrew/Phoenician trade flotillas. Over 450 tons of gold from Ophir was received in Jerusalem. We have found evidence (generally accepted) of Phoenician trade routes encircling the entire continent of Africa. Pre-Columbian, Old World shipbuilding technology reached an extremely high level sophistication, and by the 4th century BCE navigators could calculate longitude/latitude way before Columbus' astrolabe.

The question to ask that might place some light on the Los Lunas Inscription might be: What was the composition of these Phoenician crews? It's my suggestion, as with any Old World voyaging crew; they were bonded into an efficient operation by skill function and not by religious confession or national origin. Marine carpenters, oarsmen, cooks, sail makers, navigators, metallurgists, forgers/smelters, farmers, craftsmen with sophisticated architectural experience, masons, and more all might well comprise a voyaging crew. It is likely that multiple languages were heard and out of necessity a high ability to communicate with one another.

When you reach the summit and look out in any direction, it is vast on any point of the compass. You ask the obvious question: They walk?

Gloria Farley brought the word "amateur" to a very high standard. Her work in the Oklahoma area for years and years gives to all those in search of Ancient American a gift beyond measure. Her book, **In Plain Sight**, is an incredible work of patience and the sheer love of learning. Her basic operational assumption leading her to ancient inscriptions, pictographic drawings, Carthaginian coins, and other evidence from multiple Bronze Age cultures was that America's rivers were the highways to the America's interior. With that assumption, some light can be cast on the mystery of ancient Hebrew script located in the middle of New Mexico. The Rio Puerco was a dry riverbed when I visited the stone in early July. Judging from the 30 foot carved walls, it too must be a considerable river to navigate in the rainy season. Rio Puerco is a feeder to the Rio Grande, the southwest's interstate to the Gulf of Mexico for thousands of years and traveler/traders from Carthaginians to Conquistadors; not to mention Indians to cowboys. I can only imagine the epigraphical clues that are yet to be discovered along the Rio Grande.

Before we can have any clue as to intent, Los Lunas will have to cough up more evidence. Is it not interesting that in all the awesome Old World script offered on the mesa, there is not one name; peasant or King that would point to any further identification? In all the specialization of a Hebrew's testament to a Mosaic faith, was the absence of any sign "Bubba Slept Here" due to being eclipsed by the awesome Divine imperatives?

If the theory that these Ancient American visitors from the Old World did arrive with the purpose of extracting what is valuable, one might ask the question: Would the fact that this party is not homogeneous, but part of a diverse crew of nations and religions taking great risk for more riches; would that change the meaning of the

Commandment Stone?

The Los Lunas Commandment Stone in the wider context of other discoveries

There is a glaring observation of the Stone when one compares it to other pre-Columbian Old World discoveries in North America; both Americas for that matter. The Los Lunas Commandment Stone is a complete epigraphical testament to a very ancient time and an awesome testament to a wisdom being lost **in our own time**.

If we look at the findings of Gary Vey and the late William McGlone in the Picket Wire Canyon, we see ligatures (combined letters), a script called Negev Script found in the Sinai area; translations that read up-down, right-left, and left-right. The translations are from short sentences, and incomplete thoughts. Their discoveries are pretty solid translations giving us yet another Hebrew thumbprint of pre-Columbian origin. I wish the ViewZone expedition would have compared their findings with the Los Lunas script, but they completely avoided the Commandment Stone not more than 300 miles to the west southwest. Which script is older; Picket Wire Canyon, or Los Lunas?

Last Look At The Stone

The descent from the summit on the last day brought me back to the Commandment Stone. Taking yet another picture, I put the camera away and sat in the desert dust to ponder not only the stone, but the huge implications of such a thing. In the light of the enormous mounting epigraphical evidence being found throughout North America pointing to Celtic, Iberic, Egyptian, Punic, Phoenician, Greek, and Hebrew (to mention only a few) visitors conducting either exploration/colonization, or a Bronze Age global commerce; Los Lunas continues to be that glowing anomaly. There is not one piece of pottery, bone, a name, or any other evidence that might grant further clues to the identity and intention of this inscriber(s). **Then again, there has been no serious excavation attempt on this desert mesa either.**

Why this academic avoidance? What university academics have done is conclude that it “has” to be a fraudulent hoax, but they produce not item one that would support such a conclusion. This conclusion would be reach without even visiting the location!!!! It is far from scientific. Even the evidence I have proposed as to its antiquity weights more than their quick ‘negation.’

One thing for sure, no academic will pursue where my thoughts lead now. The question I asked at the last visit was: What is inscriber attempting to leave behind for all else to see and read by the inscription?” One can comfortably deal with the stone geologically, historically, astronomically, in script analysis, and the stone relationship to other discoveries. No one has ventured to step back and ponder what this Commandment Stone points to, and in the context of its proposed time of inscription. Let me put it bluntly: Few will touch this stone due to its “religious origin.” AND as has been so thoroughly demonstrated without a shadow of a scientific doubt; anything “religious” is; **1) Without any ‘scientific’ foundation, and 2) Merely demonstrates “cultural expression” without any historical foundation or credibility.**

With the script (both Greek and Phoenician), the connection with the zodiac dating to 107 BCE, the settled position of the stone, and the liturgical use of the 10 Commandments in the 3rd through the 1st century BCE; layers upon layer of civilizations’ usage and understanding of the 10 Commandments are stripped away leaving just the Los Lunas stone.

Without the layered, settled dust of Western Greco-Roman and Christian philosophy, how utterly **radical** are the

ideas conveyed on this stone. **When it was inscribed, and understood at that time**, these ideas were both *life threatening, and life-giving*.

Covenant verses Contract: An Idea so explosive it had the power to depose any Monarch, and replace any King with Moral Sovereignty.

First, what is presented on this stone is the thought that no legal contract; no matter how airtight, will ever have the power to order the moral behavior of any people. Contracts, as we know them now, are merely another form of legalism measured only by the muscular power of human courts and their uniformed enforcers. The Commandment Stone is a Hebrew idea encircled in the word *beriyt* (Covenant); a binding agreement of parties whose authority is granted through its **moral sovereignty**.

The ancient script communicates a radical idea about the governance of human behavior. The essence of contractual law is empowered by collective institutional power; but covenant law is only as strong as the individual's concession to collective moral Presence. Aristotle could only come near *beriyt* (covenant) by the Greek word **Hexis** (proper distance, or equitable mean) or "golden mean." Kant complicates it more by suggesting only the limit of human reason's grasp of the "moral imperative." How down right pure and uncomplicated is this covenant stone as compared with Kant's volumes.

Moral value is not just the median equidistance between two behavioral extremes (Aristotle), or the action of one individual that can be applied "universally as a categorical imperative." Binding Law is based on Moral Presence, not institutional power.

By proposing covenant law over contract law, he radically proposes that the glue for civil behavior is not in the power of a Monarch's hand but a revealed Presence that has no representation!! The radical nature of that proposed idea would have shortened his life considerably, or be chained to some oar on a ship for the rest of his short life.

The proposed age of this stone in Los Lunas would mean the only known "law" regulated on its subjects were exercised by Caesars, Pharaohs, Kings, Generals (such as Alexander), and later, Pontiffs of the Imperial Christian Church, Feudal Lords, Emperors. At the time of the inscriber's Commandment Stone, the author proposes by his Covenant, that earthly powers from whatever type or origin are **the law or above the law**. Such earthly powers; as his own individuality are all bound to the Revealed Presence in the Covenant. For then, the stone offered an explosive idea threatening to every city-state, empire, or kingdom known to ancient time.

Pondering another aspect of this Covenant thinking in the context of the Old World, think of how much "religious energy" it took to authenticate and justify a Pharaoh's authority and place over his kingdom/empire. The divine right of any monarch was nothing more than a form of religious **manipulation**. The moral Presence shown in the Sinai Covenant only chooses whom The Presence chooses. In later ages, even the Imperial Christian Church forgot this very important aspect of Moral Sovereignty.

ADONAI EHAD: A radical monotheism that defies any representation.

Thousands of years have demythologized the great contribution granted by Monotheistic Philosophy. It is no longer radical, and frankly, no longer viewed in this time as relevant. Yet, when understood within the context of ancient Old World civilizations, monotheism was a one-of-a-kind religious expression found nowhere else but Israel. The Hebrew Monotheism presented on the Commandment Stone, and considering the time it was inscribed, had **no**

precedent.

At the approximate time of the Los Lunas Commandment stone, what the **immediate effect of “all things are one and none can represent The One,” was to separate from Nature-related cults.** The Babylonians, Sumerians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, Hittites, Romans, Phoenicians, Persians all practiced a form of cultic nature-bound divines represented in statues, poles, animals, abundant forms of nature objects. Deities from Isis, Baal, Tanit, Poseidon, Marduk, to Zeus all had a common feature; namely, they appeared to manipulate nature or at least explain the unknown through mythology, but were never above nature. The goddess Astarte posed a new meaning to ‘temple going.’ If I wanted to ‘ensure’ the increase in my flock of sheep, I went to the temple and had sex with the cultic priestess of fertility. I don’t care how many cultic drum rolls and incense smoke that must have created, but there was no transcendence from the boundaries of natural process.

In fact, when viewed philosophically, the Old World gods and goddesses were understood as just another form of personal enslavement under religious verbage.

Then appears this stone in New Mexico possessing a distinct presence of its own. The author/visitor understood well the inherent **monotheistic contradiction.** The Presence is a passionately experienced reality, yet Invisible, without any equal, or representation. That’s the contradiction: Is yet Is Not. The Hebrew word for this concept is **SheKenNah**, its root means to sit, dwell, abide. If one were to jump overboard in clear Bahamian waters and descend some 10 feet then become aware of the weightless suspension of person, the suspension would be close to **SheKenNah**. The Hebrew concept of Presence is above nature only to drive nature as its own life force.

If the author of this inscription traveled at such an ancient time; and that is what I propose, then distance would take on a whole new meaning. The distance traversed from Old World to the New was felt by every mile; remembered by every stormed peril. He could have left us his name, the name of the ship or its captain; the country of origin, the reason for his being there, even the name of his girlfriend. Instead, he leaves us a sign pointer symbol (The Commandments) that testified to his **facing the daily unknown by embracing the single UnSeen.**

A Lesson from the Old Word redefining the concept of personal Freedom for the New.

As I have attempted to show, the editing of Exodus 20 on the Los Lunas Stone is intentional, and without Old World precedent. From the evidence we have of Ancient Israel, any presentation of the 10 Commandments would be as a whole and without abridgement, and after the 2d century BCE, Rabbinical emphasis was taken away from the 10 Commandments for the sake of emphasizing the whole Torah. The Los Lunas abridgement is without any archeological match.

That being the case, the deleting of every word for slavery (man servant, maid servant) with the exception of one word (first verse) bears pondering notice. **TSaVaDim** in the first verse is an “inherited” slavery, completely devoid of one’s present human condition. The Hebrew mind recites the slavery of Israel (430 years) in Egypt with the intention of a binding taproot that connects past and present experience of suffering. The slavery of Egypt is ancestrally adopted as the context to human liberation brought about by The Presence. Ritual memory retains the first verse, the rest is omitted.

Before America was a mere gleam in the intentional mind of The Presence, freedom was granted to a sovereign people in a desert. In the Old World, personal freedom was a luxury only for the few. Personal liberties were by means (wealth), by the fortunes of war, or inherited family name (social class). Freedom was an exception to the

general rule in Old World cultures and it is within this context the Ancient Hebrew mind offers up its next radical thought. If we were to deal in probabilities, the inscriber of the Stone was someone's property and might well have been chained to the very oar of the ship that brought him to the New World.

One can only theorize, but say once this ancient visitor makes it to the New World all shackles are off. A perfectly appropriate question: If the man is now free to move about and do and be all that he can be, then why retain any mention of **tSaVaDim** (slavery) at all?

The bottom line: **Freedom is and has never been defined as the complete absence of restraint!!!!** For someone by the distance traveled and servitude removed, why would he take the time to chisel out a covenant of restraint? Negation, in Hebrew syntax, leaves nothing to soften it. **Lo TiGeNov** (Not will you steal). Ancient Israel understood that liberation from one sovereign (Pharaoh) was replaced by servanthood to a higher moral sovereignty.

Spinoza was a master of the Hebrew language before his teenage years and understood this concept of Hebraic liberty even at the price of his own Jewishness; not to mention his persecution at the hands of Calvinistic Protestants. To paraphrase his wisdom: "We are only free, when we realize we are not."

Radical thought to be spoken from an ancient past across a millennial bridge into a present culture that taunts: "You can't tell me to do squat!"

Subject to Citizen: A Radical Concept of Private Property and Individual Rights

Already established is the radical concept of "No one above the Law" as presented by the Commandment Stone. The ancient Old World witnessed an endless string of Kings self-proclaimed as "divine." If Kings are subject to Covenant Law; however, not only does the position of the King change, but so do individuals in the kingdom.

Any Monarch, Emperor, Caesar or Czar that claims divine right in anything, or (as in the Pharaoh's position; God-Man) immediately that sovereign becomes the sole property owner of both man and beast in his realm. No matter how benevolent the King; the profit margin from the simplest shoe cobbler is only the king's increase. The king's "possessions" encompass both the shoes **and the cobbler**.

The bottom line: Sovereigns above the law, result in only **subjects in his service**.

The Commandment stone of Los Lunas, turns this concept on its ear. Since all are equal under the Covenant Law and no one is above Covenant Law, **there are no more "subjects" rather citizens**.

Ancient Israel; through the Covenant Law, demonstrated to an Old World that citizens of a tribal republic (which it was) can exist and that a citizen of such a republic can not only possess property, but can benefit from its profits.

What an awesome testament to the value of the human person and one's aspirations to pursue the wages of his work. Here, the Commandment Stone of Los Lunas becomes just as profound as the leathery prophets who arose in other deserts; always calling a people of very short memory, to the lessons learned in the desert.

The word for "speak" in Hebrew is DaVar. Profoundly, it is the root for the word "wilderness" (**MiDeVar**) because, in the shadow of The Presence, even wilderness stones can speak.

The Los Lunas Commandment Stone continues to be the “Mystery Stone” and one who comes to study it never finishes; only quits. We have some indication of Who, and some evidence of When. As to this National Treasure of Ancient America there remains more to find that would grant clues as to Why.

I will return there again, but the Stone’s presence is moving to ponder.

Concise Summary of my Propositions:

1. No one has considered the rate of erosion/settling of the Commandment Stone that may point to a closer dating. The Stone sits at 5:30 o’clock.
2. The Inscription carving was performed when the stone was basically level. The vertical blocking of the letters would have been more difficult to carve at an angle.
3. The Inscription did not come from a man of letters or from a priestly Levitical background. He was thoroughly knowledgeable of working with this type of stone.
4. The Commandment Stone script comes from more than one port of call in the Old World. It is predominantly Phoenician and Archaic Greek, with one letter being Iberic.
5. The author of the Commandment stone uses Greek letters to avoid confusion in same-sounding consonants.
6. The author spoke multiple languages, but was mostly a phonetic speller. He uses consonants as vowel sounds; not done in Hebrew to create the sounds he desires.
7. Since linguistic scripts point in a number of directions, it is a fair assumption to make that neither the current group was not homogeneous; rather, diverse and in all probability the Commandment Stone’s intended audience was multi-lingual.
8. The author is not from the area of Ancient Israel, but more than likely a product of a diaspora community. The southern or Ionian coast of Turkey is my best guess. He is awesomely Jewish by faith; not by nationality.
9. The zodiac configuration at the mesa’s summit is connected to the Commandment stone by at least two symbols; meaning, it is a fair assumption to date the Stone to 1st maybe 2d century BCE.
10. There are absolutely no symbols, letters, anything that would lead to a Christian influence; meaning, it would be a fair assumption the Commandment Stone is **pre-Christian**.
11. There are no points of contact between the abridgement of the Commandment Stone with Ancient Israel’s Liturgical usage of the 10 Commandments. In Israel’s early usage of the 10 Commandments what we find so far is that the Exodus 20 version was **never** abridged! It makes sense that if the Commandments were considered a product of the very finger of God, Ancient Israel would not have abridged it. The author abridges the Commandments on his own **and it is assumed that his abridgment is both intentional and autobiographical**.
12. The Stone is not connected to Mormon influence.
13. Those “pits” could well be a smelting operation if tested for such indications.
14. These people traveled by rivers. They did not walk. The Rio Puerco is directly connected to the stone; yet, we do not have any indication of intent or “why” they were in New Mexico.
15. What is never taken up by any academic scholarship **is what the Commandment Stone points to**. Such a direction is to be avoided because it is “religious” and anything religious has no historical credibility or factual merit. When in fact, what this author leaves behind is considered even more valuable than his own name, where he comes from, and why. It is the radical nature of these ideas presented that the Stone presents directly rather than through layers of Western

Greco-Roman-European interpolation.

16. If the two symbols I have photographed are the Tanit symbol, and we assume the symbols were connected to the inscription on the Stone; then we not only have a group that is not homogeneous, but down right antithetical.
17. This continued study of Los Lunas is open ended, and can be a consuming addiction resulting in more questions than answers. At the same time, I personally have not been the same since the stone fell on me two years ago and has given me more fulfilling and sustaining learning yet encountered.
18. I think I may have found a piece of stone near the Commandment Stone facing that may have been one of the slabs sheered off during preparation; meaning, the carbon dating of the piece's patina may be still possible.



Missouri Cherokee Tribes proclaim Jewish Heritage

by Staff

February 7, 2003

The Northern Cherokee Nation of the Old Louisiana Territory has recently shocked the world by claiming their ancient Oral legends tell of a Cherokee migration made to America from the area known as Masada.

This startling evidence is being offered to the public by Beverly Baker Northup whom is the spokesperson for their organization. The evidence offered in support of this connection to Cherokees escaping the mountain fortress of Masada is based in part of what Northup claims is stories passed down from elders and the similarity between ancient words.

Beverly Baker Northup believes there is a connection between these two peoples based on evidence of Jews of the region around Masada during Roman times wearing braided hair and the similarities that the spokesperson attributes to Hebrew language.

In explaining this connection Beverly Baker Northup is quoted as saying:

"The story has been kept alive among our Cherokee people that the Sicarii who escaped from Masada, are some of our ancestors who managed to cross the water to this land, and later became known as Cherokees. (Please note the phonetic resemblance of Si'cari'i and, Cherokee or Tsa'ra-gi'.)"

Northup claims that the famous scholar Josephus wrote that there were escapees from Masada in which the spokesperson for the Northern Cherokee states that this is evidence that gives credence to this connection between the Cherokee Indians and the Jews.

In addition to other startling claims, there is also the belief by the Northern Cherokee that a rock that was uncovered in Tennessee in 1889 that is named the Bat Creek Stone, proves a transatlantic connection to Jews. Northup believes that the scratched writings on the rock indicate that the stone is evidence of a first century Atlantic Crossing to America by these escaped Jews that later became known as the Northern Cherokee Indians.

The Northern Cherokee attempted to gain full legislative recognition in the State of Missouri in 1985 that was eventually vetoed by Governor John Ashcroft. Governor Ashcroft made the following statement concerning his decision to veto the recognition of the Northern Cherokee:

"The Federal Government has traditionally exercised authority with respect to Indian Affairs. I am not persuaded that the state has such a substantial interest in this area that it should become involved in the recognition of Indian tribes."

Sources among some federally recognized Indian Tribes have stated that Mr. Ashcroft's comments were 100% correct and should be referred to from time to time

THE AMERICAN INDIANS DESCENDED FROM THE ISRAELITES.

THE following curious and interesting account is taken from "The History of the American Indians," by James Adair, Esq. who was a trader with the Indians, and resided among them forty years. He sets out with the hypothesis, that the Indians are descended from the ancient Israelites, which he proceeds to establish by running a parallel between them in several instances. To what degree of credit the arguments are entitled, the reader will judge for himself.

In proof of the Americans being thus descended, he adduces the following arguments: -- Their division into tribes; their worship of Jehovah; their notions of a theocracy; their belief in the ministration of angels; their language and dialects; their manner of counting time; their prophets and high priests; their festivals, fasts, and religious rites; their daily sacrifice; their ablutions and annointings; their laws of uncleanness; their abstinence from unclean things; their marriages, divorces, and punishment of adultery; their several punishments; their cities of refuge; their purifications, and ceremonies preparatory; their ornaments; their manner of curing the sick; their burial of the dead; their mourning for their dead; their raising seed to a deceased brother; their choice of names, adapted to their circumstances and the times; their own traditions; the accounts of our English writers; and the testimonies, which the Spanish and other writers have given concerning the primitive inhabitants of Peru and Mexico.

As the nation hath its particular symbol; so each tribe, the badge from which it is denominated. The *Sachem* of each tribe is a necessary party in conveyances and treaties, to which he affixes the mark of his tribe. If we go from nation to nation among them, we shall not find one who doth not lineally distinguish himself by his respective family. The genealogical names, which they assume, are derived either from the names of animals whereof the Cherubim are said in revelation to be compounded, or from such creatures as are most familiar to them. The Indians, however,

bear no religious respect to the animals from whence they derive their name: on the contrary, they kill them when opportunity serves. When we consider that these savages have been above twenty centuries without the use of letters to carry down their traditions, it cannot reasonably be expected, that they should still retain the identical names of their primogenial tribes: their main customs corresponding with those of the Israelites sufficiently clears the subject. Besides, as hath been hinted, they call some of their tribes by the names of the cherubimical figures that were carried on the four principal standards of Israel.

By a strict permanent divine precept, the Hebrew nation were ordered to worship, at Jerusalem, Jehovah the true and living God, who by the Indians is styled *Yohewah*; which the 72 interpreters, either from ignorance or superstition, have translated *Adonai*, the very same as the Greek *Kyrios*, signifying *Sir*, *Lord*, or *Master*, which is commonly applied to earthly potentates, without the least signification or relation to that most great and awful name which describes the divine essence.

Agreeably to the theocracy or divine government of Israel, the Indians think the Deity to be the immediate head of their state -- All the nations of Indians are exceedingly intoxicated with religious pride, and have an inexpressible contempt of the white people -- They used to call us, in their war orations, *the accursed people*; but they flatter themselves with the name of *the beloved people*; because their supposed ancestors, as they affirm, were under the immediate government of the Deity, who was present with them in a very peculiar manner, and directed them by prophets, while the rest of the world were aliens and outlaws to the covenant. --

When the old Archimagus, or any one of their Magi, is persuading the people at their religious solemnities to a strict observance of the old beloved or divine speech, he always calls

them *the beloved or holy people*, agreeably to the Hebrew epithet *'Immi* (my people) during the theocracy of Israel. It is their opinion of the theocracy, or that God chose them out of all the rest of mankind as his peculiar and beloved people, which alike animates both the white Jews and the red American with that steady hatred against all the world except themselves, and renders them hated or despised by all.

The Indian language and dialects appear to have the very idiom and genius of the Hebrew. Their words and sentences are expressive, concise, emphatical, sonorous and bold; and often, both in letters and signification, are synonymous with the Hebrew language.

They count time after the manner of the Hebrews. They divide the year into spring, summer, autumn, and winter. They number their year from any of those four periods, for they have no name for a year; and they subdivide these and count the year by lunar months, like the Israelites who counted by moons, as their name sufficiently testifies. The number and regular periods of the Indians' religious feasts is a good historical proof, that they counted time by, and observed, a weekly sabbath long after their arrival on the American continent. They began the year at the first appearance of the first new moon of the vernal equinox, according to the ecclesiastical year of Moses. Till the 70 years' captivity commenced, the Israelites had only numeral names for the solar and lunar months, except *Abib* and *Ethanim*; the former signifies a *great ear of corn*; and the latter *robust* or *valiant*; and by the first name the Indians, as an explicative, term their passover, which the trading people call *the green corn dance*.

[He then gives a specimen of the Hebrew manner of counting, in order to prove its similarity to that of the Indians.]

In conformity to, or after the manner of the Jews, the Indian Americans have their prophets, and others of a religious order. As

the Jews had a *sanctum sanctorum*, so have all the Indian nations. There they deposit their consecrated vessels -- none of the laity daring to approach that sacred place. The Indian tradition says, that their forefathers were possessed of an extraordinary divine spirit, by which they foretold things future, and controlled the common course of nature; and this they transmitted to their offspring, provided they obeyed the sacred laws annexed to it. *Ishtoallo* is the name of all their priestly order; and their pontifical office descends by inheritance to the eldest -- there are some traces of agreement, though chiefly lost in their pontifical dress. Before the Indian Archimagus officiates in making the supposed holy fire for the yearly atonement of sin, the *Sagan* clothes him with a white ephod, which is a waistcoat without sleeves. In resemblance of the Urim and Thummim, the American Archimagus wears a breastplate made of a white conch-shell, with two holes bored in the middle of it, through which he puts the ends of an otter-skin strap, and fastens a buck-horn white button to the outside of each, as if in imitation of the precious stones of the Urim.

ON THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

THE basis of all language is instinct, reason, and reflection. Articulations of the human voice, expressing sensations and perceptions, depend for their existence on what is felt or perceived. Were man a being endowed with neither emotions nor ideas to communicate, nor would his sounds be more articulate than those of the brute.

Archaeological evidence of Christ in America

In the Smithsonian upside down in a glass case for one hundred years, the Bat Creek Inscription is a small stone approximately 4.5 by 1.75 inches which was found

in 1889 by the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology. Excavator John W. Emmert was excavating Indian burial mounds in Bat Creek, Tennessee, about 40 miles south of Knoxville.

In one mound was discovered 9 skeletons, eight with their heads pointing north, and one with its head facing south. Under the head of the one facing south was found the Bat Creek Stone and 2 bracelets.

The inscription was originally thought to be Cherokee and was annotated as such. The stone was then archived in the Smithsonian for almost 100 years. However, in the 1960s, some researchers noted that when a photo of the stone was held upside down, it looked like Phoenician and Canaanite scripts. Professor Cyrus H. Gordon of Brandeis University was sent a photograph of the stone, and he immediately recognized it to be Hebrew and translated it "Unto Judah". The letters were similar to those used in the 4th century BC on letter seals and in the 11Q paleo Leviticus in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Inscription found by explorer Gene Savoy in the Andes in Peru linking King Solomon's mines to Peru.

The form of the ancient symbol is significant in itself. Inscribed in the Andes on a tomb wall, and in Tel Qasile Israel on a container once carried there on a Phoenician ship from a distant place called Ophir, the glyph appears to be composed of elements common in the early writing of the Sinai peninsula and, in particular, of the Nabatean people. These written elements, now called "proto-Sinaitic," not only formed the Semitic language that is the forerunner of the later written Hebrew; they also resemble others in the writing of various other cultures that extend across India, the Orient, Oceania, Peru.... Authorities can see some of these elements in the Easter Island script of Rongo-Rongo and in the Brahmi script of South Asia.

from Midwestern Epigraphic Journal, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1993

"An Annotated Transcription of the Newark Decalogue Stone"

by J. Huston McCulloch, Ph.D.

"The Newark Decalogue stone was found during 1860 in an ancient burial mound

ten miles south of Newark Ohio. ... The inscription on the stone has been

translated by McCarty, Naveh, Bloom, Polansky, and others, as containing an abridgement of the Exodus 20 version of the Ten Commandments or Decalogue.

The text begins at the top of the arch over the head of the robed and bearded figure identified as Moses, ...

The text is run on, with no spaces or word dividers. No terminal letter forms, consonant points, or vowel points are used. ...

...

Wyrick, who found the stone, is accused by many (e.g., Lepper 1990) of having personally forged the inscription, copying it from a Hebrew Bible in his possession. However, a careful comparison of my transcription to Wyrick's woodcut shows that Wyrick made no less than 38 significant errors, in which he either made a legible letter illegible, or turned a legible letter into a different letter. This is a 14.8% error rate. He routinely confuses D with R, T with H, and W with Y, and inverts several letters. In only one of these 38 cases (letter 10.9, which he read as Y instead of the actual W, an error he frequently makes elsewhere) does his woodcut give the expected letter where the stone gives an unexpected letter. Yet, the pamphlet in which this garbled text appeared was Wyrick's best attempt at convincing the world that the stone was a genuine Hebrew artifact. Wyrick clearly did not even understand the inscription's peculiar, yet consistently applied, alphabet, and therefore could not have been its author.

Did Wyrick Fake Them?

“Archaeologists, following Whittlesey (1872), have generally believed that the Decalogue and Keystone are hoaxes concocted by Wyrick himself.”

“However, in 1861 Wyrick published a pamphlet (reproduced by Schenck) containing his account of the discoveries, and included woodcuts depicting, to the best of his ability, the inscriptions on the stones. A careful comparison of Wyrick's woodcuts of the Decalogue to the actual inscription (McCulloch 1992) shows that out of 256 letters, Wyrick made no less than 38 significant errors, in which he either made a legible letter illegible, turned a legible letter into a different letter, or omitted the letter altogether. Whoever carved the Decalogue stone had only imperfect knowledge of Hebrew, and introduced a few errors of his own. Wyrick, however, piled his own errors on top of these. He clearly did not even understand the inscription's peculiar, yet consistently applied, alphabet, and therefore could not have been its author.”

“Moses on the stone has a mild expression and fine features. He is wearing a turban and flowing robe, and is either holding a tablet or wearing a breastplate. Wyrick's Moses, on the other hand, glares over a projecting nose. He is wearing a beret, Mrs. Wyrick's 19th century dress, and a minister's ecclesiastical shawl. Wyrick was evidently a fine draftsman, but not much at life drawing. Beverley H. Moseley, Jr., former art director of the Ohio Historical Society, has compared the carving of Moses on the stone to Wyrick's woodcut copy. It is his opinion as a professional artist that the same person could not have made these two images.”

“In Wyrick's drawing of the Keystone, he confuses he with taw, so that the inscription TWRT YHWH, (Torath YHWH, The Law of God) appears as HWRH YHWH, or Horah God, which amusingly could be taken to be a reference to a popular Israeli folk-dance. Wyrick therefore could not have produced the Keystone either.”

“Archaeologist Stephen Williams claims that Wyrick was "very committed to the Lost Tribes of Israel as the origin of the Moundbuilders" prior to his discovery of the Keystone, with the implication that Wyrick may therefore have fabricated the Keystone and Decalogue in order to support his pet theory (1991:168).”

“However, Wyrick somehow neglected to mention this alleged obsession in any of his surviving correspondence or even in his very pamphlet on the stones. He was described at the time of the Keystone discovery as merely an "enthusiast for natural science" (by Charles Whittlesey in the Ohio Farmer July 14, 1860, reprinted by Schenck). Wyrick's documented interests, besides mound exploration and surveying, included geo-magnetism, anomalous boulders, river terraces, beaver dams and sorghum processing. “

“In any event, the "Lost Tribes of Israel" would have used the pre-Exilic "Old Hebrew" alphabet, rather than the post-Exilic or "Square Hebrew" alphabet adopted in the time of Ezra by the Jews (by definition the "Unlost" tribe), and which appears, in two versions, on both these stones.

There is therefore no question of a "Lost Tribes" connection here, Williams' misconception to the contrary notwithstanding."

The Bat Creek Stone was discovered in 1889 in an undisturbed burial mound in Eastern Tennessee by the Smithsonian's Mound Survey project.

In 1971, Cyrus Gordon identified the letters inscribed on the stone as Paleo-Hebrew of approximately the first or second century A.D. According to him, the five letters to the left of the comma-shaped word divider read, from right to left, LYHWD, or "for Judea."

In 1988, wood fragments found with the inscription were Carbon-14 dated to somewhere between 32 A.D. and 769 A.D. These dates are consistent with the apparent date of the letters.

Today the stone resides out of sight in a back room of the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

"In November of 1860, David Wyrick of Newark, Ohio found an inscribed stone in a burial mound about 10 miles south of Newark. The stone is inscribed on all sides with a condensed version of the Ten Commandments or Decalogue, in a peculiar form of post-Exilic square Hebrew letters."

"The robed and bearded figure on the front is identified as Moses in letters fanning over his head. The inscription is carved into a fine grained stone that has eluded geological identification. "

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“The robed and bearded figure on the front is identified as Moses in letters fanning over his head. The inscription is carved into a fine grained stone that has eluded geological identification. “

“The stone is black to the eye, although it takes on a brown tone in these overexposed color photographs.”

“The inscribed stone was found inside a sandstone box, smooth on the outside, and hollowed out to exactly hold the stone on the inside.”

“The Decalogue inscription begins at the non-alphabetic symbol at the top of the front, runs down the left side of the front, around every available space on the back and sides, and then back up the right side of the front to end where it begins, as though it were to be read repetitively.”

“Several months earlier, in June of 1860, Wyrick had found an additional stone, also inscribed in Hebrew letters. This stone, shown above, is popularly known as the "Keystone" because of its general shape.”

“However, it is too rounded to have actually served as a keystone. It was apparently intended to be held with the knob in the right hand, and turned to read the four sides in succession, perhaps repetitively. It might also have been suspended by the knob for some purpose. Wyrick found the Keystone within what is now a developed section of Newark, at the bottom of a pit adjacent to the extensive ancient Hopewellian earthworks there (c. 100 BC - 500 AD).”

“The letters on the Keystone are nearly standard Hebrew, rather than the very peculiar alphabet of the Decalogue stone. These letters were already developed at the time of the [Dead Sea Scrolls](#) (circa 200-100 B.C.), and so are broadly consistent with any time frame from the Hopewellian era to the present. For the past 1000 years or so, Hebrew has most commonly been written with vowel points and consonant points that are missing on both the Decalogue and Keystone. The absence of points is therefore suggestive, but not conclusive, of an earlier date.”

Quotes and pictures taken from [Crystalinks.com](#)

The Decalogue stone itself, along with the "Keystone," is in the

Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum at 300 N. Whitewoman Street in Roscoe Village,

Coshocton, Ohio 43812, (614) 622-8710. Alrutz's pamphlet is available from

the museum, as are clear, sunlit photographs of the stones." END of article.

The Grave Creek Stone



Fig. 1.
The Grave Creek Stone
Smithsonian photograph 90-9022
(MS 3146, E.H. Davis Collection, [National Anthropological Archives](#))

The Grave Creek Stone was discovered in 1838 during the excavation of the Grave Creek Mound, in Moundsville, West Virginia, on the Ohio River, about 10 miles south of Wheeling. The stone, an actual photograph of which appears in Figure 1 above, was a small inscribed sandstone disk, about $1 \frac{7}{8}$ " (4.8 cm) wide, and $1 \frac{1}{2}$ " (3.6 cm) high. The reverse side was uninscribed.

In 1838, the mound was reported to have been 69 feet high and 295 feet in diameter at the base, making it the largest of the [Adena mounds](#). Today the mound is preserved in the [Grave Creek Mound State Park](#). According to the Park website, the mound is currently believed to have been built between 250 BC and 150 BC. Figure 2 below shows the mound in its present condition. Note the relative size of the cars and house.



Fig. 2

The Grave Creek Mound today

Lifted from [Home in West Virginia](#) website.

It is not known where the stone itself is today. In 1868 it was in the collection of E.H. Davis, of Squier and Davis fame, before most of Davis's collection was sold to the Blackmore Museum, now part of the British Museum. Fig. 1 above, the only known photograph of the actual stone, is cropped from a photograph of items 60 - 65 of the Davis collection taken shortly before the sale. Nevertheless, the British Museum's North American Ethnographic Collection confirms that the Grave Creek Stone is not at present in the Museum's Squier and Davis collections (personal communication, 12/4/89). According to Barnhart (1986, p. 124n), the stone was probably in the collection of Wills de Hass at the time of his death in 1910, and may have passed from there "to parts unknown." De Hass's papers are preserved in a library in West Virginia, and may provide some information, or even contain the stone itself, but I have not checked this out.

The Cast and Wax Impression

In 1868, however, Davis made a plaster cast of the stone and deposited it in the Smithsonian Institution. In 1990, Donal Buchanan and I visited the Smithsonian's [National Museum of Natural History](#) in order to view the cast and to check out rumors that the Smithsonian had the original. The NMNH in fact has *four* casts of the stone, but no original.



(C) Smithsonian Institution

Fig. 3.

Cast of the Grave Creek Stone.

Smithsonian Institution Photograph No. 6768

(Catalogue No. 7252)

Two of the casts have catalog number NMNH 7252, one NMNH 138470, and one NMNH 325934. The darker of the two 7252s, which I call 7252 #1, is painted realistically and signed at the bottom of the front in pale white ink, "E.H. Davis W. Va." It is shown in Figure 3 above. The white marks under the figure at the bottom are just the remnants of Davis's signature, upside down. The second, lighter colored NMNH 7252 #2 and the two higher numbered casts appear to be derivative casts made from the above NMNH 7252 #1.

The [National Anthropological Archives](#) (MS 3146, E.H. Davis Collection) also has a wax impression of the stone that Davis made at the same time. It is unprotected and badly cracked, but confirms some details that do not show well on the cast. In particular, it clearly shows an X-shaped letter at the left end of the second line, and a lozenge- or

diamond-shaped letter at the left end of the third line, that only partially "took" on the cast.

Our inspection confirmed the view of Charles Whittlesey, (1876) that the drawing by Capt. Seth Eastman, which appeared in Henry R. Schoolcraft's 1850 *Indian Tribes of the United States*, was the only reliable drawing of the stone, of the six depicted by Whittlesey. Unfortunately, many of the early scholars who made serious attempts to interpret the inscription, including Rafn, Jomard, and Bing-Lévy, worked from seriously inferior copies of the stone. This may at least in part account for the total divergence of the early interpretations, as to both language and content.

It should be noted that although Whittlesey (1876, p. 2) presents what he calls a "Copy of Grave Creek Stone -- No. 1. by Captain Eastman, United States Army," what he shows is not actually Eastman's copy of the stone, but rather a *redrawing* of Eastman's copy. Furthermore, his redrawing differs in two important respects from Eastman's -- First, Eastman draws the leftmost letter in the first line with its two verticals meeting at the bottom to form a "V", whereas Whittlesey has them more nearly parallel, and distinctly open at the bottom. And second, Eastman correctly draws the leftmost letter on the third line as a lozenge or diamond that closes at its top, whereas Whittlesey draws this letter to be distinctly open at the top. In a second, 1879 article, Whittlesey includes his redrawing of Eastman again, with the somewhat misleading explanation, "I insert again the only correct copy made by Captain Eastman, United States Army, from the original in 1850, for *Schoolcraft's Indian Tribes*." Williams (1991, p. 84) also reproduces Whittlesey's 1876 illustration, giving an 1879 article by M.C. Read as his immediate source. A true photocopy of Eastman's drawing, from Schoolcraft's book, appears in Barnhart (1986).

A New Drawing

Below is my own attempt to draw the inscription, based on a tracing of the above photograph of the cast, supplemented by our inspection of the actual cast and wax impression.

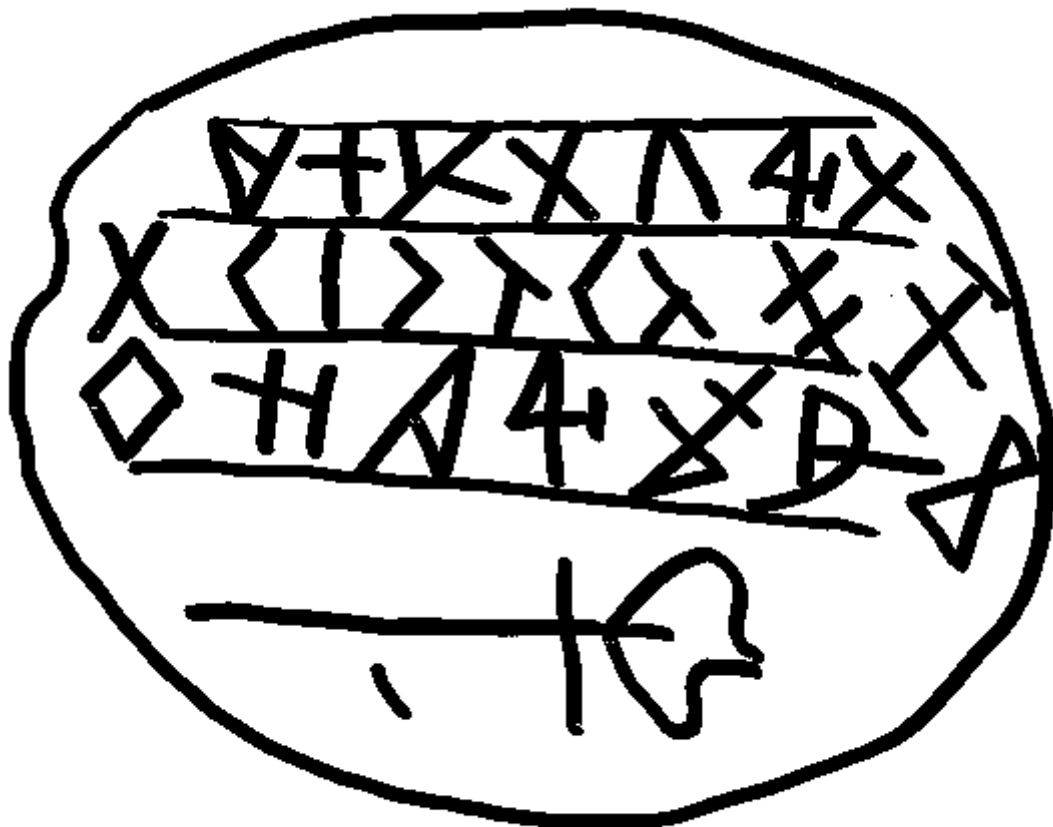


Fig. 4.
The Grave Creek Inscription

It is not obvious from the inscription itself whether the lines are to be read from left to right or right to left, or perhaps even back and forth or "boustrophedon." It is not even obvious which end of the stone is the top. Many of the letters are invertible top for bottom, and two actually appear along with their own inverse. I have merely followed the universal convention of placing the figure at the bottom.

The horizontal guide lines are more shallow than the letters themselves, and are not part of the inscription. In Figure 5 below, I have eliminated them and separated the lines for clarity.

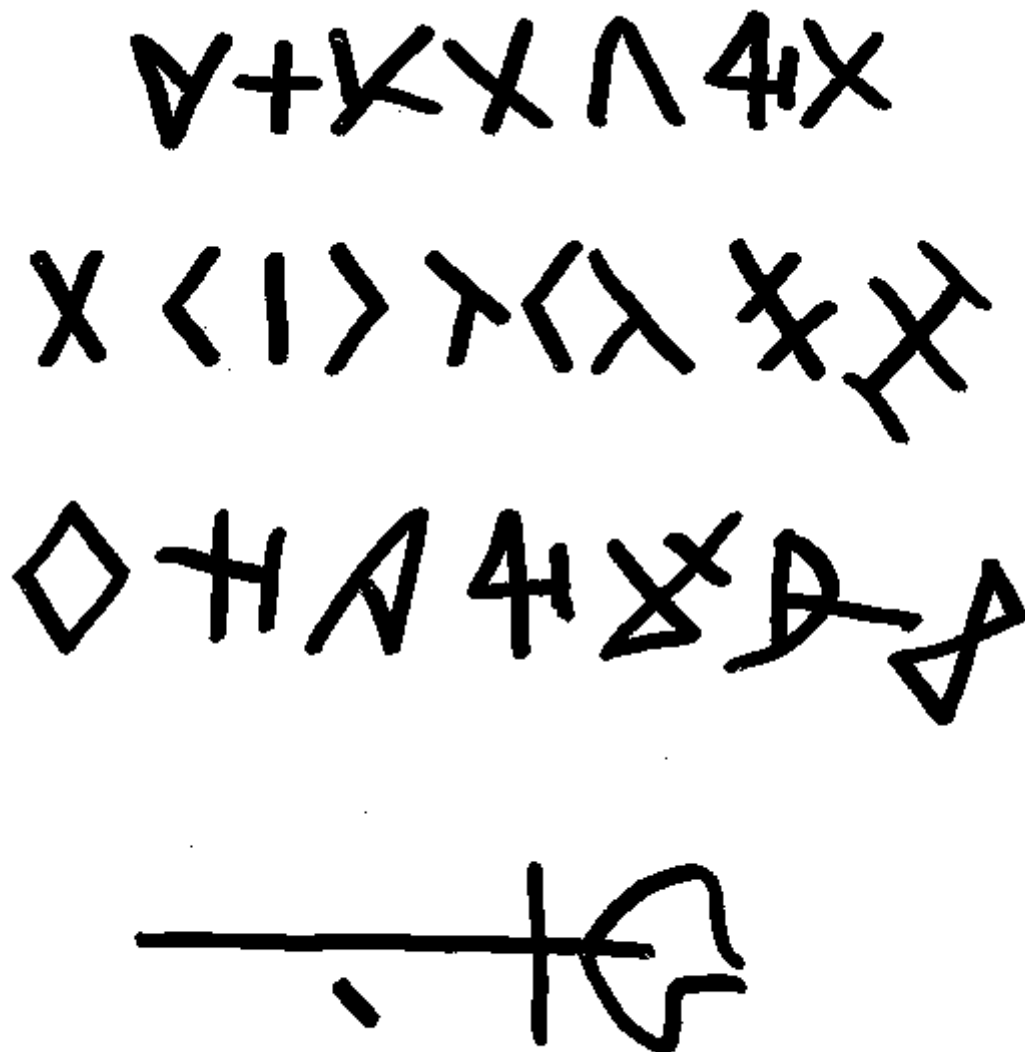


Fig. 5.
The Letters of the Grave Creek Inscription

The principal difference between my drawing and Eastman's is that in the D-like second letter from the right in the last line, Eastman has drawn the crossbar as a faint wavering line, which one might interpret as a stray scratch, while in fact it is straight and bold, and definitely part of the letter. I have drawn the vertical of the "D" to extend down below the crossbar to meet the loop, as Eastman did, since this appears to be what was intended. However, this continuation in fact is not very clear on either the cast or the wax impression. It is therefore not inconceivable that the vertical only extends down to the crossbar, as it appears in Whittlesey's Copy #2, from the *American Pioneer*, May 1843, and Copy #3, used by Jomard.

The Early Controversy

Historian Terry Barnhart has recently published an excellent overview (1986) of the 19th century controversy over the authenticity of the Grave Creek Stone. Schoolcraft, Wills de Hass, and J.P. MacLean supported its authenticity, while E.G. Squier, Davis, and M.C. Read regarded it as a forgery. Barnhart's most interesting observation is that in 1847, Squier had made much of the "singular omission" of any mention of the stone in Dr. James W. Clemens' first-hand, day-by day account of the excavation, which appeared in S.G. Morton's 1839 *Crania Americana*. In 1858, however, de Hass managed to produce the manuscript original of Clemens' account, and demonstrated that Morton had merely taken it upon himself to expurgate the stone's discovery from the published version. Dr. Clemens in fact recorded the inscribed stone on the day of its discovery.

In 1877, the Ohio State Archaeological Society appointed a committee to study the authenticity of the stone. Committee member M.C. Read published a strong denunciation, that included a widely cited experiment to determine if the inscription was alphabetic: He asked four persons who had no training in ancient inscriptions to fabricate twenty or more arbitrary "letters" composed of straight lines and combinations of straight lines. "The result, said Read, was that 'In every case an inscription was produced presenting as many indications of being alphabetical' as that on the Grave Creek stone. Accordingly, Read concluded that the Grave Creek inscription was 'just such a medley of characters as anyone would produce who undertook to invent an inscription to puzzle the curious.'" (Barnhart 1986 p. 120)

Committee member Rev. J.B. MacLean, on the other hand, published his own article in which he "did not hesitate to pronounce its authenticity as incontestable.... Regardless of who found the stone or whether it was discovered inside or outside the mound, all professed witnesses agreed it had come from the mound. To MacLean, this was the unassailable preposition." (Barnhart 1986 p. 122)

Barnhart's discussion stops short of the two influential articles by Charles Whittlesey, already mentioned above. The first, entitled "Archaeological Frauds," (1876) deals at length with the Grave Creek Stone. Whittlesey ominously cites Squier's finding that "Dr. Clemens, in his first account of the opening of the mound, makes no mention of this stone" (p. 5), but himself makes no mention of de Hass's correction of this misconception.

Whittlesey condemns the inscription itself on the very peculiar grounds that even "If the Grave Creek find was free from suspicion as to its integrity, it has undergone so many mutations from transcribers and translators that its value to ethnologists is gone." (1876, p. 5) Whittlesey himself had already demonstrated that most of the copies that had been made of the stone were unreliable. However, even though these inaccurate copies created considerable unfortunate confusion among scholars, they in no way altered the inscription itself or in any way lessened any ultimate value it might have to ethnologists.

It was also true that the many attempts at translation differed completely as to substance and even purported language and alphabet. However, this does not demonstrate that *none* of the proposed translations could be of any merit, but merely that *at most one* could be of any merit. Even if they all proved erroneous (which Whittlesey did not even begin to attempt to demonstrate in either of his articles), it still would not follow that there could *never* be a valid translation. Nor would they in any way hamper any future valid translation. In any event, the disagreement among the translations may have been more the fault of the bad copies the translators had to work with than of the inscription or of the translators themselves.

Whittlesey concludes that "The best authorities in the United States have condemned it during many years. The preponderances of proof as well as of probabilities are decidedly against it." (1876, p. 5) The very title of his article clearly classifies it as a fraud.

In his second, 1879 article, entitled "The Grave Creek Inscribed Stone," Whittlesey intriguingly backs off his earlier position that the stone itself is a clearcut hoax. Instead, he now merely insists that the inscription is *not alphabetic*: "I agree with Prof. Read that the characters on the stone, by whomsoever they were cut, are *not alphabetical or phonetic*. If they have any meaning and are not a mere jumble of characters they must be symbolic or picture writing. It is therefore of small consequence whether the stone is antique or modern, whether it is genuine or a fraud." (p. 66) He concludes, "If Professor Read and myself are right in our conclusions, that the figures are neither of the Runic, Phonician, Canaanite, Hebrew, Libyan, Celtic, or any other alphabet language, its importance has been greatly overrated." (p. 68)

After Whittlesey's two articles the Grave Creek Stone was generally dropped from serious consideration by archaeologists, except as a textbook example of an established hoax. It was so thoroughly discredited that they even lost track of its whereabouts.

Wills de Hass was appointed to head the Smithsonian Bureau of Ethnology's Mound Survey project, but was quickly replaced in favor of Cyrus Thomas. It is not unlikely that this had something to do with his favorable position toward the Grave Creek Stone. Thomas, on the other hand, "took a very strong, almost sarcastic, stance toward the Grave Creek Stone and Schoolcraft's support of it." (Williams 1991, p. 86)

The Bil Stumps Reading

A 1930 article in *Science News Letter* reported in all seriousness that one Andrew Price had at last "cleared up one of the greatest hoaxes in the record of American science," by translating the Grave Creek inscription into "good old West Virginian." (Davis 1930) According to the article, "That hoax, perpetrated by some unknown practical jokesmith, has stood triumphantly undetected for ninety odd years." The inscription, according to Price, reads, in plain English,

BIL STUMPS STONE OCT 14 1838

Price claims that this hoax was inspired by Charles Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers*, published just the year before the Grave Creek mound was opened. In Dickens' novel, Mr. Pickwick discovers a stone bearing the following cryptic inscription:

X
B I L S T
U M
P S H I
S. M.
A R K

After Pickwick announces that he has unearthed "a curious inscription of unquestionable antiquity," the message is ignominiously deciphered as reading

X BIL STUMPS HIS MARK

A diagram accompanying the *Science News Letter* article indicates that Price interprets the three lines on the Grave Creek Stone as follows:

B I L-S T-U M
P S S T O N E
O C T-1 4-1 8 3 8

Over these letters is a transcription of the inscription that is **bad** beyond Whittlesey's wildest imagination. Letters are pushed together or pulled apart and lines added or ignored wherever convenient. Letters from different lines are even joined together, and in several cases letter portions are used more than once in this manner. Even this mutilated transcription must be tortured beyond endurance before it will confess to Price's reading.

The Bil Stumps reading is an amusing spoof that has no true relation to the inscription. Even Williams (1991, p. 87) concurs in this assessment. The only hoax here was that the likes of *Science News Letter* fell for Price's "solution."

The Hough Stone



Figure 6.
The Hough Stone

Photo courtesy Robert B. Miller, Jr.
[Added 8/31/00]

In 1951, Philip R. Hough purchased for \$1 an inscribed stone from an assemblage of unprovenienced Indian artifacts offered for sale by a gun dealer near Steubenville, Ohio. Hough sent a rubbing of the stone to the Smithsonian. He was informed that it closely resembled the Grave Creek stone, and might either be the original or a clever copy. Hough duly reported his find and its circumstances in a note in the *Tennessee Archaeologist* (1952).

In 1988, Hough's grandson Robert B. Miller, Jr., then of Richmond Va., sent a photograph of the Hough stone to the late Victor Moseley, then president of the Midwestern Epigraphic Society. Moseley passed the photo on to me, which is displayed in Figure 6 above.

A close comparison of the Hough stone to the cast shown in Figure 3 above reveals, unfortunately, that it is not the original Grave Creek Stone. Its guide lines are too straight, too evenly spaced, and too parallel. Furthermore, the vertical alignment of the letters does not match that on the cast. It is, however, definitely a deliberate modern copy of the Grave Creek stone, and not, like the Braxton Creek and Ohio County stones, a possible corroborating inscription in the same script. There is no evidence that whoever made it

was attempting to pass it off as the genuine article, and Hough is to be commended for his straightforward reporting of the matter.

Fell

Modern interest in the stone has been revived, at least among amateurs like myself, by the late Barry Fell in his 1976 book *America B.C.* (1976a, p. 21, ch. 11). Fell offers yet another entirely different translation of the inscription, stating that the script is Iberian and the language Punic:

The mound raised-on-high for Tasach
This tile
(His) queen caused-to-be-made.

He argues that although the Iberian script was already known in 1838, the phonetic values of the letters were not completely understood until the publication of Diringer's *The Alphabet* in 1968, so that if the inscription yields an intelligible translation using these values, it must be genuine.

Fell provides the details of his translation in (1976b). In this article, he generally follows Eastman's drawing of the stone. However, it should be noted that he adds a short foot to the third letter from the left in the second line, and then reads it, together with its two neighbors, as a single letter (a Semitic *shin*). I see no evidence of a foot or any connection at the base apart from the guideline, which should not be taken as part of the inscription, and believe this group should instead be read as three separate letters. I have no idea how this change would alter sense of his reading.

Fell's translation is incorporated into an exhibit about the stone in the [Delf Norona Museum](#) at the [Grave Creek Mound State Park](#). The replica of the stone on display there is not an actual cast of the original stone, but merely an artist's reconstruction based on Eastman's drawing.

Humbug?

The Grave Creek Stone plays the lead role in Chapter 4 of Stephen Williams' 1991 *Fantastic Archaeology*, entitled "The American Humbug: They'll Believe Almost Anything!" Williams initially has the stone first noticed by Schoolcraft five years after the excavation among some artifacts taken from the mound by its owner, Abelard Tomlinson. In his next paragraph, however, Williams indicates that Tomlinson actually exhibited the stone about two years after the excavation (p. 82). Either way, he warns, following Samuel F. Haven, that the claim that the stone came from the mound was greatly "weakened by the time that purportedly elapsed between its discovery and the

announcement of the find" (p. 84). He makes no mention of de Hass's 1858 demonstration that Clemens in fact recorded it on the day it was found. Instead, he cautions the reader that "the problem of a time delay is a common thread running through a number of Fantastic Archaeology cases" (p. 85).

Williams places great weight on Read's experiment to determine that the inscription is not alphabetical. "Read ... says: 'It [the inscription] is precisely of such character as would be the result of an ordinary attempt to manufacture an inscription' and that any of the laborers could have made it. Read's well-structured and careful testing should have laid the question of the Grave Creek inscription to rest." (p. 86)

Williams' overall assessment of the stone, echoed in the title of his chapter, is, "Bah, humbug, Mr. Tomlinson." (p. 87)

Kelley

In a critical review of Williams' book, philologist David H. Kelley deals at length with Williams' treatment of the Grave Creek Stone. Kelly is the author of *Deciphering the Mayan Script*, a 1976 text that was instrumental in establishing the phonetic character of the Mayan glyphs. He considers as entirely appropriate Schoolcraft's much-ridiculed, if inconclusive, attempt to identify the alphabet of the inscription.

Kelley writes, "I have a hard time criticizing the view that the inscription is non-alphabetic, for that seems *to me* an obvious fantasy. I think that anyone who could not recognize that obvious fact should, *ipso facto*, disbar himself from any serious discussion of the problem. Williams praises an 'experiment' by Read to determine what geometric forms would be produced by a teacher, a schoolgirl, a druggist, and a college professor asked 'to write down twenty or more arbitrary symbols, not resembling any characters known to them and using only straight lines.' This rubbish is utterly irrelevant to the question of alphabets. If one can match an inscription to a specific alphabet or even to a closely related group of alphabets, it is alphabetic; otherwise, it is not. Inventing imaginary systems (by people familiar with alphabets) seems to have been a useful propaganda device, but such systems do nothing to support Read's conclusion that any of the labourers could have invented such an inscription. 'Bah, humbug, Mr. Read.'" (1995, p. 12)

Kelly goes on to discuss the similar Braxton Creek and Ohio County inscriptions mentioned by Fell, and concludes, "My major point, however, is not to argue that the inscriptions are, indeed, genuine, but rather that I do not find it fantastic to think that they may be. Williams's account makes the Grave Creek inscription look like obvious humbug, but he did not know many important facts which supported Tomlinson's account of the find, and he completely misinterpreted Schoolcraft's comparisons.... Williams's book should not be used as a bludgeon against looking at important but unusual data and trying to put such data in a genuinely appropriate archaeological context." (pp 13-14)

Smith

Most recently, Rev. C. Edward Smith, Jr. (1998) has made a detailed study of Fell's (1976b) translation of the Grave Creek inscription. Smith argues that Fell's interpretation of the text as Punic does not work at all, even taking his letter values as given. Personally, I couldn't tell Punic language from Arabic, but Smith cogently maintains that Fell doesn't seem to see the difference either, using as he does Wehr's *Arabic* dictionary to read *Punic*. Both are Semitic languages, but they belong to different branches of the family, and are evidently quite different in many pertinent respects.

Smith attempts no evaluation of Fell's interpretation of the letters themselves as Iberian script, nor of the authenticity of the stone. He concludes, "we simply do *not* know -- at this point in time and history -- what the Grave Creek Stone says -- only what it does *not* say."

Conclusion

The Grave Creek Stone is long lost. It may turn up some day, but in the meanwhile, a surviving cast, a wax impression, Eastman's drawing, and even a fuzzy photograph of the original give us an adequate indication of its appearance. The Hough Stone is a good copy, but regrettably is not the original.

Although it was amateurishly excavated, and years later there were numerous discrepancies about the details of its discovery, by all accounts it came out of the interior of the mound. Dr. Clemens documented the inscribed stone on the day of its discovery, even though Morton cut this account from the published version of Clemens' report. There is no particular reason to think the stone is fraudulent.

Although David Kelley regards the inscription as obviously alphabetic, there is still no solid confirmation of Barry Fell's identification of the script as Iberian. Fell's translation of the language as Punic has been sharply criticized by Edward Smith. Perhaps future study will establish a consensus about the alphabet, the language, and/or the message.

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The Newark Ohio Decalogue Stone and Keystone

[Symposium -- Nov 6, 1999, Coshocton, Ohio](#)

The Decalogue

In November of 1860, David Wyrick of Newark, Ohio found an inscribed stone in a burial mound about 10 miles south of Newark. The stone is inscribed on all sides with a condensed version of the Ten Commandments or Decalogue, in a peculiar form of post-Exilic square Hebrew letters. The robed and bearded figure on the front is identified as Moses in letters fanning over his head.

The inscription is carved into a fine-grained black stone that only appears to be brown in the accompanying overexposed color photographs. It has been identified by geologists Ken Bork and Dave Hawkins of Denison University as limestone; a fossil crinoid stem is visible on the surface, and the stone reacts strongly to HCl. It is definitely not black alabaster or gypsum as previously reported here. According to James L. Murphy of Ohio State University, "Large white crinoid stems are common in the Upper Mercer and Boggs limestone units in Muskingum Co. and elsewhere, and these limestones are often very dark gray to black in color. You could find such rock at the Forks of the Muskingum at Zanesville, though the Upper Mercer limestones do not outcrop much further up the Licking." We therefore need not look any farther than the next county over to find a potential source for the stone, contrary to the previous assertion here that such limestone is not common in Ohio. [Paragraph updated 8/7/00, per personal communication from Murphy.]

The inscribed stone was found inside a sandstone box, smooth on the outside, and hollowed out within to exactly hold the stone. Click here to view the [stone box](#). Click here for [viewing tips](#).

The Decalogue inscription begins at the non-alphabetic symbol at the top of the front, runs down the left side of the front, around every available space on the back and sides, and then back up the right side of the front to end where it begins, as though it were to be read repetitively.

Click below for

- [additional views of the decalogue stone](#).
- printable [alphabet chart](#). *Chart courtesy Beverley H. Moseley, Jr.*

David Deal and James Trimm (1996, referenced below) note that the Decalogue stone fits well into the hand, and that the lettering is somewhat worn precisely where the stone would be in contact with the last three fingers and the palm if held in the left hand. Furthermore, the otherwise puzzling handle at the bottom could be used to secure the stone to the left arm with a strap. They conclude that the Decalogue stone was a Jewish arm phylactery or tefilla (also written t'filla) of the Second Temple period. Although the common Jewish tefilla does not contain the words of the Decalogue, Moshe Shamah (1995) reports that the Qumran sect did include the Decalogue in their tefilimot. [Sentence added 8/7/01.]

Cyrus Gordon (1995), on the other hand, interprets the Newark Decalogue stone, like the [Los Lunas NM Decalogue inscription](#), as a Samaritan mezuzah.

For a full transcription, see McCulloch (1992), and compare Deal (1996).

The Decalogue stone measures 6-7/8" (17.5 cm) long, 2-7/8" (7.3 cm) wide, and 1-3/4" (4.2 cm) thick (as measured from cast).

The Keystone



Several months earlier, in June of 1860, Wyrick had found an additional stone, also inscribed in Hebrew letters. This stone, shown above, is popularly known as the "Keystone" because of its general shape. However, it is too rounded to have actually served as a keystone. It was apparently intended to be held with the knob in the right hand, and turned to read the four sides in succession, perhaps repetitively. It might also have been suspended by the knob for some purpose. Although it is not pointed enough to have been a plumb bob, it could have served as a pendulum.

The material of the Keystone has been identified, probably by geologist Charles Whittlesey immediately after its discovery, as novaculite, a very hard fine-grained siliceous rock used for whetstones. The photographs here show its natural color. [Added 10/4/99.]

Click [here](#) to view the inscriptions on the four sides:

- Qedosh Qedoshim, "Holy of Holies"
- Melek Eretz, "King of the Earth"
- Torath YHWH, "The Law of God"
- Devor YHWH, "The Word of God"

Wyrick found the Keystone within what is now a developed section of Newark, at the bottom of a pit adjacent to the extensive ancient Hopewellian earthworks there (c. 100 BC - 500 AD). Although the pit was surely ancient, and the stone was covered with 12-14" of earth, it is impossible to say when the stone fell into the pit. (See Wyrick's map of

the Newark earthworks below.) It is therefore not inconceivable that the Keystone is genuine but somehow modern.

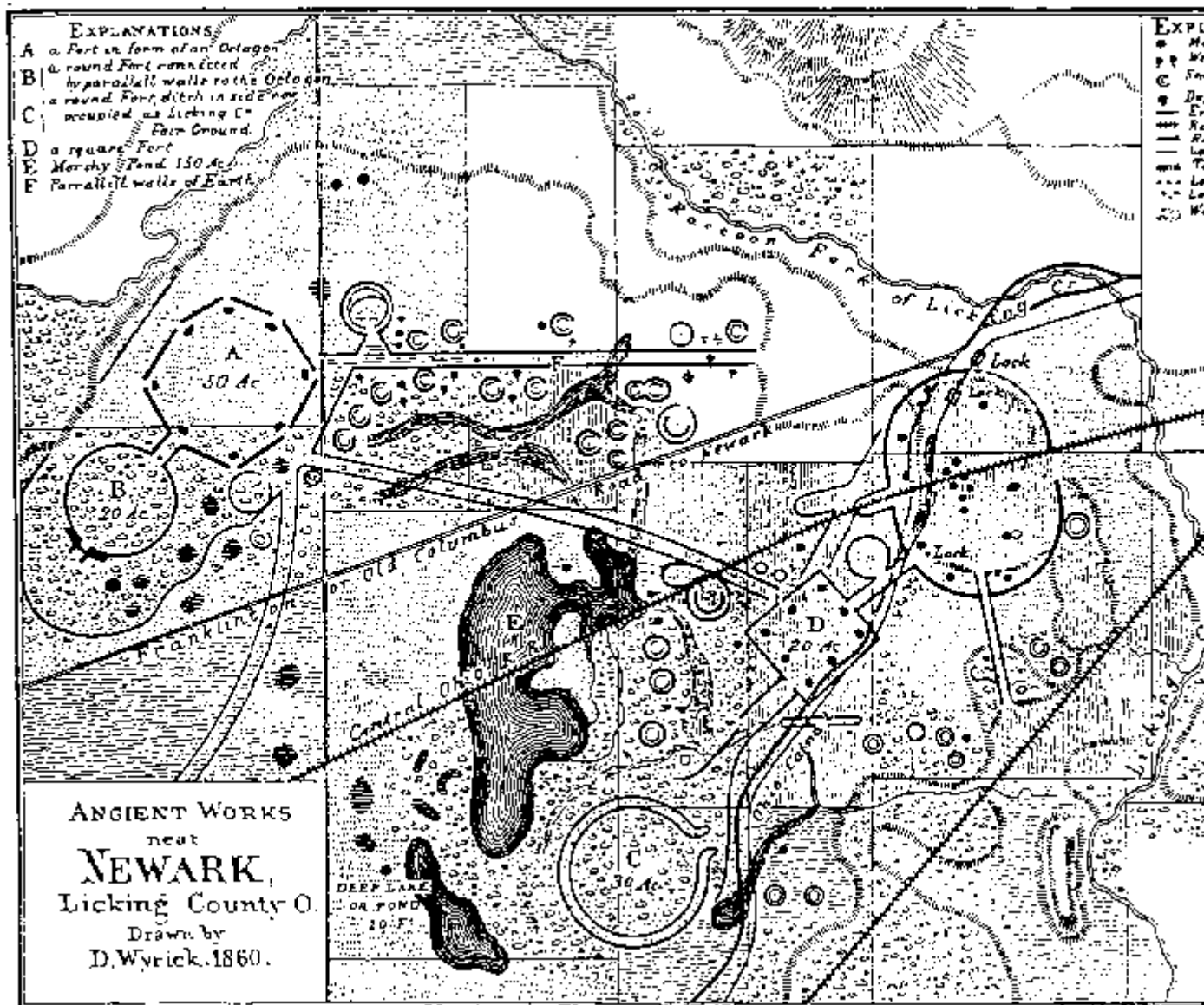
The letters on the Keystone are nearly standard Hebrew, rather than the very peculiar alphabet of the Decalogue stone. These letters were already developed at the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls (circa 200-100 B.C.), and so are broadly consistent with any time frame from the Hopewellian era to the present. For the past 1000 years or so, Hebrew has most commonly been written with vowel points and consonant points that are missing on both the Decalogue and Keystone. The absence of points is therefore suggestive, but not conclusive, of an earlier date.

Note that in the Keystone inscription Melek Eretz, the aleph and mem have been stretched so as to make the text fit the available space. Such *dilation* does occasionally appear in Hebrew manuscripts of the first millenium AD. Birnbaum, *The Hebrew Scripts*, vol. I, pp. 173-4, notes that "We do not know when dilation originated. It is absent in the manuscripts from Qumran ... The earliest specimens in this book are ... middle of the seventh century [AD]. Thus we might tentatively suggest the second half of the sixth century or the first half of the seventh century as the possible period when dilation first began to be employed." Dilation would not have appeared in the printed sources nineteenth century Ohioans would primarily have had access to.

The Hebrew letter *shin* is most commonly made with a V-shaped bottom. The less common flat-bottomed form that appears on the first side of the Keystone may provide some clue as to its origin. The exact wording of the four inscriptions may provide additional clues.

Today, both the Decalogue Stone and Keystone, or "Newark Holy Stones," as they are known, are on display in the [Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum](#) in [Roscoe Village](#), 300 Whitewoman St., [Coshocton, Ohio](#). Phone (740) 622-8710 for hours (note new area code). Plaster casts of the Decalogue stone may be purchased from the Museum.

The Newark Earthworks



This map was published in the 1866 Newark County Atlas. Clarified image copyrighted and reproduced by permission of Arthur W. McGraw.

Wyrick, who had been Licking County Surveyor, drew the most detailed surviving original map of the Newark earthworks, depicted above. He found the Keystone in one the "wells or caches" along the parallel walls east of the Octagon "A".

[The Octagon and adjacent circle "B"](#) are preserved by the [Ohio Historical Society](#), and are now used as a golf course. For your peace of mind, I suggest you wear a bike helmet or other hardhat when you visit them. These earthworks are said to be [aligned to the northernmost setting of the moon](#). Concern has recently been expressed that [proposed](#)

[expansion of the Moundbuilders Country Club](#), which leases the site from the OHS, may encroach on the earthworks. [Added 8/23/00]

[The Fairground Circle "C"](#) is also preserved by the OHS and is the site of the Newark Moundbuilders Museum. A fragment of Square "D" survives as the [Wright Works](#). The curved walls extending from the Octagon south and west to the title box are the beginning of the "[Great Hopewell Road](#)" that once extended as far as Chillicothe.

The Decalogue was found in an earthen mound under the "Great Stone Stack", some 10 miles to the south of the works on this map, but presumably contemporaneous.

Did Wyrick Fake Them?

Archaeologists, following Whittlesey (1872), have generally believed that the Decalogue and Keystone are hoaxes concocted by Wyrick himself.

However, in 1861 Wyrick published a pamphlet (reproduced by Schenck) containing his account of the discoveries, and included woodcuts depicting, to the best of his ability, the inscriptions on the stones. A careful comparison of Wyrick's woodcuts of the Decalogue to the actual inscription (McCulloch 1992) shows that out of 256 letters, Wyrick made no less than 38 significant errors, in which he either made a legible letter illegible, turned a legible letter into a different letter, or omitted the letter altogether. Whoever carved the Decalogue stone had only imperfect knowledge of Hebrew, and introduced a few errors of his own. Wyrick, however, piled his own errors on top of these. He clearly did not even understand the inscription's peculiar, yet consistently applied, alphabet, and therefore could not have been its author.

Moses on the stone has a mild expression and fine features. He is wearing a turban and flowing robe, and is either holding a tablet or wearing a breastplate. Wyrick's Moses, on the other hand, glares over a projecting nose. He is wearing a beret, Mrs. Wyrick's 19th century dress, and a minister's ecclesiastical shawl. Wyrick was evidently a fine draftsman, but not much at life drawing. Beverley H. Moseley, Jr., former art director of the Ohio Historical Society, has compared the carving of Moses on the stone to Wyrick's woodcut copy. It is his opinion as a professional artist that the same person could not have made these two images.

In Wyrick's drawing of the Keystone, he confuses *he* with *taw*, so that the inscription TWRT YHWH, (Torath YHWH, The Law of God) appears as HWRH YHWH, or Horah God, which amusingly could be taken to be a reference to a popular Israeli folk-dance. Wyrick therefore could not have produced the Keystone either.

Archaeologist Stephen Williams claims that Wyrick was "very committed to the Lost Tribes of Israel as the origin of the Moundbuilders" prior to his discovery of the

Keystone, with the implication that Wyrick may therefore have fabricated the Keystone and Decalogue in order to support his pet theory (1991:168).

However, Wyrick somehow neglected to mention this alleged obsession in any of his surviving correspondence or even in his very pamphlet on the stones. He was described at the time of the Keystone discovery as merely an "enthusiast for natural science" (by Charles Whittlesey in the *Ohio Farmer* July 14, 1860, reprinted by Schenck). Wyrick's documented interests, besides mound exploration and surveying, included geo-magnetism, anomalous boulders, river terraces, beaver dams and sorghum processing.

In any event, the "Lost Tribes of Israel" would have used the pre-Exilic "Old Hebrew" alphabet, rather than the post-Exilic or "Square Hebrew" alphabet adopted in the time of Ezra by the Jews (by definition the "Unlost" tribe), and which appears, in two versions, on both these stones. There is therefore no question of a "Lost Tribes" connection here, Williams' misconception to the contrary notwithstanding.

Or Was it Rev. McCarty who "Dunnit"?

[Section added 8/25/99]

Archaeologist Bradley T. Lepper now accuses Rev. John W. McCarty and stonecutter Elijah Sutton of having composed and executed the Keystone and Decalogue, planting them where Wyrick would innocently find them. For details, see Mark Coleman's videotaped interview with Lepper (1999).

Lepper's view is based on the presupposition that the stones must somehow be frauds, in conjunction with the entirely circumstantial evidence that a) McCarty knew how to read Hebrew and quickly translated the inscription despite its peculiar alphabet, b) Elijah Sutton was the stone cutter who carved Wyrick's tombstone, along with many other Newark tombstones of the period, and c) the Decalogue stone and Keystone are of approximately the same thickness as a typical Newark tombstone of the period.

Although McCarty did publish an article in a Cincinnati newspaper with a translation of the Decalogue stone within just a couple of days of its discovery, this feat would be no more difficult for a well-trained nineteenth century minister than it would be for any student of American history to decipher a copy of the Gettysburg Address that had been semi-encrypted by consistently replacing half the letters of the alphabet with distorted versions of themselves or even entirely arbitrary symbols. Once a few unencrypted words are recognized, the other letters fall into place quickly.

A few days later, McCarty published a second article, correcting some errors he had made in his initial interpretation. In his first attempt, for example, he read the letters over the head of the carved figure as Mem-Shin-Heth, or Meshiach (Messiah), and concluded, as a good Episcopalian minister, that the figure was intended to represent Jesus Christ. In

his second version, he read these letters correctly as Mem-Shin-He, or Moshe, and conceded that the figure in fact represented Moses. If he had composed the text himself, he would surely have gotten the translation right on his first try, particularly on such an important (and, in retrospect, obvious) point.

Furthermore, the similarity of the thickness of the stones to that of local tombstone stock is entirely irrelevant, given that none of the tombstones Sutton carved (or any other tombstone in Newark) is claimed to be of the same stone as either the Decalogue or the Keystone. Wyrick's tombstone, in particular, is of white limestone that looks nothing like either of the stones.

It seems rather hasty to convict McCarty of composing the two Wyrick stones, simply on the grounds that he happened to be the first Hebrew scholar to come along. This is particularly true, given that there is not yet so much as a *corpus delicti* to indicate that a fraud has occurred in the first place.

Lepper's accusation at least indicates that Rev. McCarty has come a long way since 1875, when Hubert Howe Bancroft wrote, in his monumental 5-volume work on *The Native Races of the Pacific States of North America*, "My father saw a stone tablet taken from a stone mound near Newark, covered with carved characters, which the clergy man of the town [McCarty] pronounced to be the ten commandments in ancient Hebrew. I have no doubt that the figures did closely resemble the ancient Hebrew in one respect at least -- that is, in being equally unfamiliar to the clergyman." (vol. 4, p. 785)

Joseph Naveh, an authority on ancient Hebrew scripts, has examined Wyrick's woodcut of the Decalogue stone, and confirmed that, for all of Wyrick's errors, it does contain a cogent abridgement of the ten commandments in Hebrew language. (Communication reprinted in Schenck, 1982. See also McCulloch, 1992, Deal 1996.) Whatever the merits of the rest of Bancroft's opus, his dismissal of the inscription as not Hebrew, and of McCarty as incapable of reading Hebrew, is entirely without merit.

It should be noted, however, that in 1863, a year before Wyrick's death, he did express a suspicion that he had been the victim of a hoax, in a letter to Joseph Henry, then Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Nevertheless, a close examination of the letter shows that this suspicion is entirely based on faulty chronological reasoning on Wyrick's part. See [McCulloch \(1989\)](#).

The Wilson Mound Stones

One year after Wyrick's death in 1864, two additional Hebrew-inscribed stones were found during the excavation of a mound on the George A. Wilson farm east of Newark. These stones have been lost, but a drawing of the one and a photograph of the other are reproduced in Alritz (1980), referenced below.

The two stones from the Wilson farm, known as the Inscribed Head and the Cooper Stone, at first caused considerable excitement. Shortly afterwards, however, a local dentist named John H. Nicol claimed to have carved the stones and to have introduced them into the excavation, with the intention of discrediting the two earlier stones found by Wyrick.

The inscription on the Inscribed Head can be read in Hebrew letters as

J - H - NCL

In Hebrew, short vowels are not represented by letters, so this is precisely how one would write

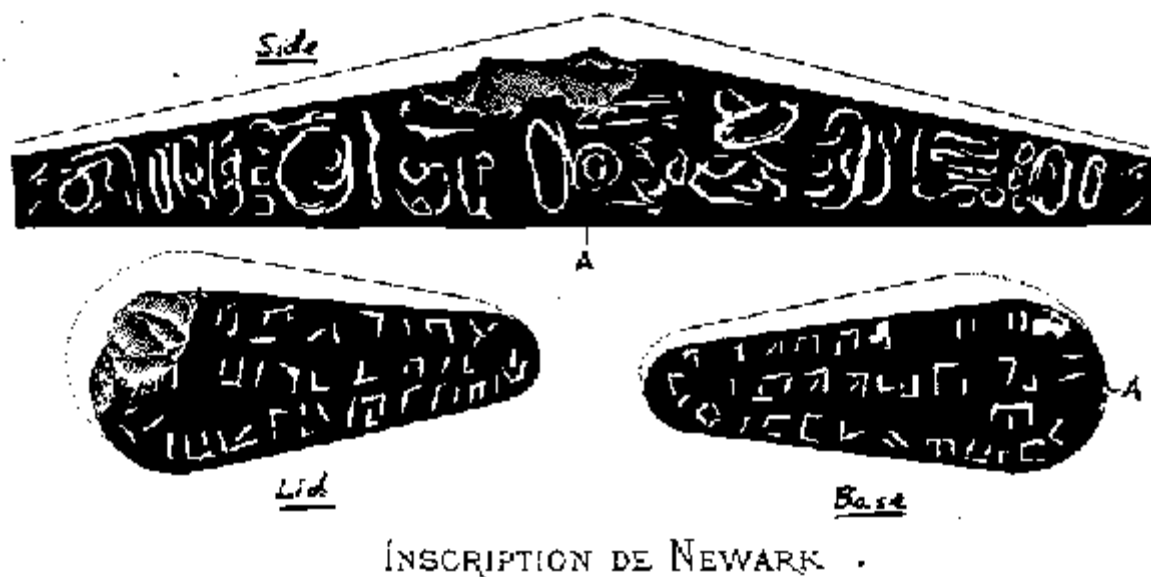
J - H - NiCoL

The Cooper stone is less clear, but appears to have a similar inscription. The inscriptions themselves therefore confirm Nicol's claim to have planted these two stones. Nicol was largely successful in his attempt to discredit the Wyrick stones, and they quickly became a textbook example of a "well-known" hoax. It was only with Alrutz's thorough 1980 article that interest in them was revived.

Although the Decalogue is of an entirely different character than either of the Wilson Mound stones, it is disturbing that Nicol was standing near Wyrick at the time of its discovery ...

Note -- The negative of the sketch of the Inscribed Head was somehow flipped over in producing Alrutz (1980), so that it appears there in mirror image. The profile should face left, not right. With this correction the Hebrew letters have their proper orientation, and may be read right to left as above.

The Johnson-Bradner Stone



Lithograph J. Royer, Nancy. Congres International des Americanistes, vol. 2, p. 192.

Two years later, in 1867, David M. Johnson, a banker who co-founded the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum, in conjunction with Dr. N. Roe Bradner, M.D., of Pennsylvania, found a fifth stone, in the same mound group south of Newark in which Wyrick had located the Decalogue. The original of this small stone is now lost, but a lithograph, published in France, survives.

The letters on the lid and base of the Johnson-Bradner stone are in the same peculiar alphabet as the Decalogue inscription, and appear to wrap around in the same manner as on the Decalogue's back platform. However, the lithograph is not clear enough for me to attempt a transcription with any confidence. However, Dr. James Trimm, whose Ph.D. is in Semitic Languages, has recently reported that the base and lid contain fragments of the Decalogue text. [Click here](#) and select 5/11/98, James Trimm, Johnson-Bradner Stone, to view his report.

The independent discovery, in a related context, by reputable citizens, of a third stone bearing the same unique characters as the Decalogue stone, strongly confirms the authenticity and context of the Decalogue Stone, as well as Wyrick's reliability.

To construct a model of the Johnson-Bradner stone, [click here](#) to display the stone by itself, somewhat enlarged, and then print out its image on light cardboard or on paper that you paste to light cardboard. (I've now solved my earlier technical problem of its not printing out correctly.) Cut out the solid black portions of the three pieces, including the hatched blemish. Ignore the thin lines. Tape point A on the Base to point A on the Side. Continue taping these edges together, bending the Side to follow the base. Tape the two ends of the Side together so that the two identical markings at the ends overlap and so that it stands at a right angle to the Base the whole way around. Tape the lid onto the

upper edge of the Side, so that the blemishes align. The result is roughly coffin-shaped. The original was approximately 3 in. (7.6 cm.) long.

Mr. Myron Paine of Martinez, Calif., has cogently noted that the Johnson-Bradner stone, if bound in a strap so as to be held as a frontlet between the eyes, would serve well as a head phylactery, while the Decalogue stone was being used as an arm phylactery per the Deal-Trimmm hypothesis noted in the first section above. [Paragraph added 3/22/02.]

The Stone Bowl



Photo Jeffrey A. Heck, from cover photo for ["The Mystery of the Newark Holy Stones" video](#).

A stone bowl was also found with the Decalogue, by one of the persons accompanying Wyrick. By Wyrick's account, it was of the capacity of a teacup, and of the same material as the box. Wyrick believed both the box and the cup had once been bronzed (Alrutz, pp. 21-2), though this has not been confirmed. The bowl was long neglected, but was found recently in the storage rooms of the Johnson- Humrickhouse Museum by Dr. Bradley Lepper of the Ohio Historical Society. It is now on display along with the Decalogue stone and Keystone.

An interview in the Jan/Feb 1998 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review* ("The Enigma of Qumran," pp. 24 ff) sheds light on the possible significance of the stone bowl. The interviewer, Hershel Shanks, asked how we would know that Qumran, the settlement adjacent to the caves in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, was Jewish, if there had been no scrolls. The four archaeologists interviewed gave several reasons -- the presence of ritual baths, numerous Hebrew-inscribed potsherds, and its location in Judea close to Jerusalem. Then Hanan Eshel, senior lecturer in archaeology at Hebrew University and Bar-Ilan University gave a fourth reason:

ESHEL: We also have a lot of stone vessels.

SHANKS: Why is that significant?

ESHEL: Stone vessels are typical of Jews who kept the purity laws. Stone vessels do not become impure.

SHANKS: Why?

ESHEL: Because that is what the Pharisaic law decided. Stone doesn't have the nature of a vessel, and therefore it is always pure.

SHANKS: Is that because you don't do anything to transform the material out of which it

is made, in contrast to, say, a clay pot, whose composition is changed by firing?
ESHEL: Yes. Probably. Stone is natural. You don't have to put it in an oven or anything like that. Purity was very important to Jews in the late Second Temple period. (p. 26)

In an article in a subsequent issue of *BAR*, Yitzhak Magen (1998) goes on to explain that in the late Second Temple period, the Pharisees ordained that observant Jews should ritually rinse their hands with pure water before eating, and that in order to be pure, the water had to come from a pure vessel. Pottery might be impure, but stone was always pure. The result was a brief "Israeli Stone Age," during which there flourished an industry of making stone teacups to pour the water from and stone jugs to store it in. After the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD, this practice quickly disappeared.
[Added 8/23/99]

The stone bowl therefore fits right in with the Decalogue Stone as an appropriate ritual object. It is highly doubtful that Wyrick, Nicol, McCarty, or anyone else in Newark in 1860 would have been aware of this arcane Second Temple era convention.

Perhaps the [stone box](#) is another manifestation of the same "Stone Age" imperative: The easy way to make a box to hold an important object (or a prank) is out of wood. Carving it from stone is unnecessarily difficult, and would be justified only if stone were regarded as being significant in itself. According to Wyrick the bowl and box were made of the same sandstone.

Two unusual "eight-square plumb bobs" were also found with the Decalogue. Their location is unknown, though they might also turn up in the Museum's collections.

Dedication

This page is dedicated to the memory of Bob Alrutz, who regreably passed away in 1997. Alrutz was a Professor of Biology at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, who became interested in the Newark stones through his work on Ohio ecology. Without his meticulous investigation of the history of the stones they would be long forgotten.

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Jeffrey A. Heck, producer/director, "The Mystery of the Newark Holy Stones," a professionally-made 23 minute video with re-enacted discoveries, interviews pro and con with Robert Alritz, Bradley T. Lepper and J. Huston McCulloch, and computer-generated disassembly of the Great Stone Stack. \$14.95 + \$5.00 S&H from [NaJor Productions](#) at najor@tcon.net or 1-888-823-2881, or from [Video Media Services](#) at their website or at 1-800-469-8273.

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The Tetragrammaton in the Los Lunas Decalogue

The so-called *Tetragrammaton* is composed of the 4 Hebrew consonant letters YOD HE WAW HE and refers to the divine name. It is commonly rendered as *Jehovah* in the English language, by inserting the 3 vowels "e", "o" and "a" between the consonants. In fact, the Hebrew part of the Bible (also known as the Old Testament) contains the Tetragrammaton more than 6800 times, including some instances inside the Ten Commandments.

The following table compares the Los Lunas Tetragrammaton with those from other ancient Middle Eastern inscriptions:

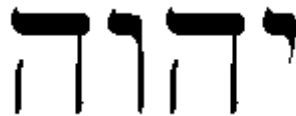
Los Lunas Decalogue in New Mexico

Moabite Stone from 9th century B.C.E.

Lachish Ostrakon from late 7th century B.C.E.

Dead Sea Scroll from 3rd century B.C.E.

Square Hebrew in the centuries after Christ



The Los Lunas Decalogue inscription uses the Tetragrammaton in 3 places. They are carved on the rock surface in old Hebrew letters. And they are probably one of the world's oldest surviving writing samples of the Tetragrammaton!

There is another short stone inscription on the south pinnacle of the mesa. It may have served as an altar. The picture was taken by David Moore on a field trip to Hidden Mountain in 1993. The first line contains the Tetragrammaton in paleo-Hebrew letters. The letters are similar in style to those on the Decalogue inscription stone but appear to be more eroded.

Who really discovered America?

by: William F. Dankenbring

A stone in a dry creek bed in New Mexico, discovered by early settlers in the region, is one of the most amazing archaeological discoveries in the Western Hemisphere. It contains engraved on its flank the entire Ten Commandments written in ancient Hebrew script! Hebrew scholars, such as Cyrus Gordon of Brandeis University near Boston, have vouched for its authenticity.

I visited the site of the huge boulder, near Las Lunas, New Mexico, in 1973 and photographed the Hebrew inscriptions.

A local newspaper reporter guided me to the mysterious site, located out in the middle of the New Mexico desert. We watched for rattlesnakes, as we hiked in to the spot where the boulder lies, unmoved and in situ for who knows how many mysterious centuries.

Who put it there?

Who wrote the incredible inscription of the TEN COMMANDMENTS in an ancient Hebrew dialect.

In December, 1989, it was reported that an American explorer in Peru's highland jungles had found evidence that indicated King Solomon's legendary gold mines may have been in that region. The explorer, Gene Savoy, declared that he had found three stone tablets containing the first writing found from the ancient civilizations of the Andes. The inscriptions, he reported, are similar to Phoenician and Hebrew hieroglyphs!

Reports the San Francisco Chronicle: "The hieroglyphs on the tablets are similar to those used in King Solomon's time and include one identical to the symbol that always appeared on the ships he sent to the legendary land of Ophir, which the Bible described as the source

of his gold, Savoy said" (December 7, 1989).

Savoy is no newcomer to archaeological discoveries. He was the discoverer of the last Inca city of Vilcabamba in 1964. Savoy declared that the three tablets each weigh several tons and measure about 5 by 10 feet. They were found in a cave near Gran Vilaya, the immense ruins of the Chachapoyas Indian civilization which he discovered in 1985.

This discovery is not surprising to me. In my book Beyond Star Wars, I suggest strongly that ancient Peru was the site of the mysterious "land of Ophir."

Hebrews in the Americas 1,000 B.C.?

In 1973, while traveling to do research for an article I was writing for The Plain Truth magazine, I visited with Dr. Joseph Mahan in Atlanta, Georgia, an expert in ancient Indian ethnology of the southeastern Indians of the United States. He showed me samples of pottery uncovered from the waters around the Bahamas, and told me of Indian legends, including that of the Yuchis, stating they had migrated to the area of Florida and Georgia from the region of the Bahamas. According to their legends, the island sank beneath the sea and they fled for their lives.

These same Yuchis later migrated to the Oklahoma territory, where they eventually settled down. Amazingly enough, they show strong evidence that they had contact with the Old World in historic times. They have a custom which is unique among the American Indians. They are racially and linguistically different from their neighbors. Every year on the fifteenth day of the sacred month of harvest, in the fall, they make a pilgrimage. For eight days they live in "booths" with roofs open to the sky, covered with branches and leaves and foliage. During this festival, they dance around the sacred fire, and called upon the name of God.

The ancient Israelites had the virtually identical custom, in many respects. In the harvest season in the fall, on the 15th day of the sacred month of harvest (the seventh month), they celebrate the "festival of booths" for eight days. During this time they lived in temporary booths, covered with branches, leaves, fronds. This festival goes back to the time of Moses and the Exodus from ancient Egypt (Leviticus 23).

How is it that two totally separated peoples observed the identical custom?

Dr. Cyrus Gordon, of Brandeis University in Boston, was privileged to sit in on one of the fall harvest festivals of the Yuchi Indians, and listened to their chants, songs, and sacred ceremonies. An expert in Hebrew, Minoan, and many Middle Eastern languages, he was incredulous. As he listened, he exclaimed to his companion, "They are speaking the Hebrew names for God!"

Dr. Joe Mahan is a strong believer in cultural contacts between the Indians and the East, long before Columbus. He showed me a small tablet containing ancient cuneiform writing of the Babylonians. "This," he said, "was found not long ago by a woman digging in her flower bed, here in Georgia. The inscription appears to be genuine. There is no reason not to believe it is authentic."

Perplexing Mysteries

More and more, scholars are coming to admit that peoples from the Middle East reached the New World long before Columbus or the Vikings. One stone, found at Fort Benning, Georgia, has unusual markings all over it. I saw the stone myself, and took photographs of

it. Professor Stanislav Segert, professor of Semitic languages at the University of Prague, has identified the markings on the stone as a script of the second millennium before Christ, from the Minoan civilization on the island of Crete!

In *Quest of the White God*, Pierre Honore points out similarities between the ancient Minoan writing and the script of the ancient Mayas. Independently of him, other scholars have noted striking similarities between Aztec glyphs from Mexico, and Cretan glyphs on the Phaistos Disc from the island of Crete in the Mediterranean.

In addition to these remarkable discoveries, Dr. Cyrus Gordon told me that Jews were in America in ancient times. The inscription on the stone, he asserts, is in the writing style of Canaan, the promised land of the Hebrews. Concludes Gordon, whom I interviewed at his old, New England style home in the suburbs of Boston: "There is no doubt that these findings, and others, reflect Bronze Age transatlantic communication between the Mediterranean and the New World around the middle of the second millennium B.C."

In 1968 Manfred Metcalf was looking for slabs to build a barbeque pit. Several strange-looking, flat rocks caught his eye; he picked up a large flat piece of sandstone about nine inches long, brushed it off, and noticed odd markings on it. Metcalf gave the stone to Dr. Joseph B. Mahan, Jr., Director of Education and Research at the nearby Columbus Museum of Arts and Crafts at Columbus, Georgia. Mahan sent a copy of the stone to Cyrus Gordon. Gordon reported:

"After studying the inscription, it was apparent to me that the affinities of the script were with the Aegean syllabary, whose two best known forms are Minoan Linear A, and Mycenaean Linear B. The double-axe in the lower left corner is of course reminiscent of Minoan civilization. The single verticle lines remind us of the vertical lines standing each for the numeral '1' in the Aegean syllabary; while the little circles stand for '100.'

Concluded Gordon: "We therefore have American inscripational contacts with the Aegean of the Bronze Age, near the south, west and north shores of the Gulf of Mexico. This can hardly be accidental; ancient Aegean writing near three different sectors of the Gulf reflects Bronze Age transatlantic communication between the Mediterranean and the New World around the middle of the second millennium B.C."

Gordon offers the exciting thought, "The Aegean analogues to Mayan writing, to the Aztec glyphs, and to the Metcalf Stone, inspire the hope that the deciphered scripts of the Mediterranean may provide keys for unlocking the forgotten systems of writing in the New World. A generation capable of landing men on the moon, may also be able to place pre-Columbian Americas within the framework of world history" (Manuscripts, summer of 1969).

Further proof that transatlantic travel and communication existed in the Bronze Age, in the middle of the second millennium B.C., during the time of David and Solomon, and before, comes to us from South America.

In 1872 a slave belonging of Joaquim Alves de Costa, found a broken stone tablet in the tropical rain forests of Brazil's Paraiba state. Baffled by the strange markings on the stone, Costa's son, who was a draftsman, made a copy of it and sent it to the Brazilian Emperor's Council of State. The stone came to the attention of Ladislau Netto, director of the national museum. He was convinced of the inscription's authenticity and made a crude translation of it. Contemporary scholars scoffed. The very thought of Phoenicians reaching Brazil thousands of years before Columbus was viewed with disdain. Few scholars took the stone at all seriously.

In 1966 Dr. Jules Piccus, professor of romance languages at the University of Massachusetts, bought an old scrapbook at a rummage sale containing a letter written by Netto in 1874, which contained his translations of the markings on the stone and a tracing of the original copy he had received from Costa's son. Intrigued, Dr. Piccus brought the material to the attention of Cyrus H. Gordon. Dr. Gordon, the head of the Department of Mediterranean Studies at Brandeis and an expert in ancient Semitic languages, as well as author of some 13 books, was amazed. He compared the Paraiba inscription with the latest work on Phoenician writings. He discovered that it contained nuances and quirks of Phoenician style that could not have been known to a 19th century forger. The writings had to be genuine!

Gordon translated the inscription as follows: "We are Sidonian Canaanites from the city of the Mercantile King. We were cast up on this distant shore, a land of mountains. We sacrificed a youth to the celestial gods and goddesses in the nineteenth year of our mighty King Hiram and embarked from Ezion-geber into the Red Sea. We voyaged with ten ships and were at sea together for two years around Africa. Then we were separated by the hand of Baal and were no longer with our companions. So we have come here, twelve men and three women, into New Shore. Am I, the Admiral, a man who would flee? Nay! May the celestial gods and goddesses favor us well!"

The Navy of King Solomon

Cyrus Gordon believes the king mentioned in the script can be identified as Hiram III who reigned 553-533 B.C. The inscription seems to verify an unusual statement found in the Old Testament. An ancient Biblical chronicler wrote:

"And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon" (I Kings 9:26-28).

In the days of Solomon there was an alliance between Hiram, the king of Tyre and the Israelites under Solomon. They were not only allies, but very friendly toward one another (II Chronicles 2:2-12). Israelites and Phoenicians even worked together to build the Temple of God in Jerusalem (vs.13-18). This alliance included shipping together, although the Phoenicians were known to jealously guard the secrets of oceanic navigation from other nations. We read in II Chronicles 8, beginning verse 8:

"Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth, at the sea side in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent him by the hands of his servants ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought them to king Solomon" (v.17-18).

In the heyday of Solomon silver was "not any thing accounted of" (11 Chron. 9:20). We read, "And the king made silver in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycamore trees that are in the low plains in abundance" (v. 27). Solomon had his own personal fleets and dominated world trade. "And king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom" (v. 22).

There is archaeological evidence, in fact, that the fleets of Solomon and Hiram of Tyre circumnavigated the globe, sailing from Ezion-geber, a port at the terminus of the Red Sea, near modern Aqaba or Eilat! Hebrew customs, discovered by the early English settlers in the Americas, were found among some of the Indian tribes, including the wearing of

phylacteries! Minoan and Phoenician coins have been found, and inscriptions of ancient Phoenician and Minoan scripts, in Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and the Star of David was even found in an ancient ruin of the Pueblo Indians in New Mexico! In the middle of the second millennium, B.C., and down to the time of Solomon, circa 1000 B.C., oceanic travel by maritime powers in the Middle East seems to have been fairly common.

Amazing Discoveries in Mexico

Were Hebrews in the Americas long before Columbus? More evidence comes from the investigations of Dr. Alexander von Wuthenau, whom I interviewed at his home in Mexico City. His living room was filled to overflowing with terra cotta pottery figures and objects d'art.

In his book *The Art of Terra Cotta Pottery in Pre-Columbian Central and South America*, Dr. Von Wuthenau published scores of photographs of these art objects. He tells of his astonishment, when he first noted that in the earliest, lower levels of each excavation he encountered -- not typical Indian heads -- but heads of Mongolians, Chinese, Japanese, Tartars, Negroes, and "all kinds of white people, especially Semitic Types with and without beards" (p. 49).

At Acapulco, von Wuthenau found that early Semitic peoples lived in considerable numbers. "The curious points about these essentially primitive figures are that, first, there is an emphasis on markedly Semitic-Hebrew features," he declared (p. 86). Female figures found in the region are also markedly Caucasian, with delicate eyebrows, small mouths and opulent coiffures.

Cyrus Gordon, who has studied the collection, points out: "In the private collection of Alexander von Wuthenau is a Mayan head, larger than life-size, portraying a pensive, bearded Semite. The dolichosephalic ("long-headed") type fits the Near East well. He resembles certain European Jews, but he is more like many Yemenite Jews."

Near Tampico, the early Huastecan culture reveals portrait heads with a predominant Semitic, white element, but also Negroid features appear. At Veracruz, meanwhile, a figurine of a female dancer possesses the features just like those of a Frenchwoman of Brittany! She wears a headdress reminiscent of Phoenician fashion. Also at Veracruz a figure with a false beard, styled like an Egyptian beard, had a snake-like protrusion on the forehead.

Again and again, figures with definite Semitic features have been found. A sample of Maya ceramic painting shows a lady with a flower who has an undeniable Negroid character. The figure has an affinity with Egyptian painting, says Wuthenau. yet it was not found along the Nile, but in Central America! On the Pacific coast of Ecuador, also, evidence for the presence of early Hebrews has been found. Also discovered was a figurine of a lovely girl who wore a headdress with a remarkable Phoenician affinity. Other Ecuadorian heads show definite Semitic features. Clearly, the Semites penetrated a large part of the American continent in "prehistoric" times!

Discoveries in South America

In the past century, several Brazilians have found inscriptions on rocks along the Amazon river. Over a period of 50 years, four men, including two who were scientists, uncovered inscriptions which they independently concluded were Phoenician in origin.

The first man, Francisco Pinto, in 1872 found over 20 caves deep in the Brazilian jungle and uncovered about 250 strange inscriptions upon the rocks. He thought they were Phoenician, and Brazil's Director of History and Geography corroborated his suspicions. A German philologist who studied the markings in 1911 felt they were genuine.

In the 1880s, Ernest Renan, a French scientist, combed the jungles and found several more inscribed stones. In the 1920s a scholar by the name of Bernardo da Silva discovered many more inscriptions along the Amazon. It makes good sense. It explains why the Mayans, who considered Quetzalcoatl as the bringer of their arts and laws, depicted him as being unusually blond!

When the Spaniards discovered the New World in the early sixteenth century, perhaps fifty million inhabitants lived in the Western Hemisphere, speaking over 900 languages.

Such linguistic diversity has long puzzled scholars, and logically attests to a diversity of origins. Carleton S. Coon reported that the conquistadores "commented on Montezuma's light skin, but did not remark that this ruler rarely exposed himself to the bright sun." Coon adds: "George Catlin, in his portraits of the Mandan Indians, depicted some of them as blond. . . .

Another case of allegedly aberrant Indians is that of the Pomo, Hupa, and neighboring tribes in north-central California whose beard growth seems to have been Caucasoid when they were first seen" (Coon, *The Living Races of Man*, p.154).

Another mystery to ethnologists is the existence of a white skinned, red-bearded tribe discovered by builders of Brazil's Trans-Amazon Highway. Called the Lower Assurinis because they live south of the route of the highway, they have ear lobes (which is uncharacteristic of other tribes), and their language differs from traditional dialects in the region.

Sir Walter Raleigh in his *History of the World* mentioned that the Indians he encountered used many Welsh words long before the Welsh were known to have come to America. Linguistic studies prove that the Welsh language is very closely akin to ancient Hebrew!

The Mystery of New Zealand's Maoris

There is evidence among the Maori and people of eastern Polynesia that the sun was deified as Tane and that Ra, the sun god, was the tutelary god of Borabora. The Maoris, also, made use of ancient solar observatories. "At Kerikeri, in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, there is a miniature Stonehenge, the blocks standing about 7 feet out of the ground; and near Atiamuri, north of Taupo, there are other great monumental blocks -- some fifty of these still standing erect" (*Maori Symbolism*, p.137).

Interestingly, ancient Maori traditions relate that since antiquity the Maoris have observed ceremonial and dietary laws very similar to those of the ancient Hebrews. They even kept the seventh day "Sabbath" as a day of rest! Also, every 7 times 7 years -- or 49 years -- they observed a Jubilee Year similar to that of the ancient Hebrews." These similarities simply cannot be explained away as "mere coincidence"! The Maoris, like the Hebrews, even had a "sacred month" given over to Harvest thanksgiving, corresponding to the Hebrew month of Tishri and the Festival of Tabernacles.

How can these fascinating facts be explained? Such similarities must be more than mere coincidence. Like the Yuchi Indians of North America, the Maoris, at some very early stage

of history, must have come in contact with ancient Hebrew mariners, roaming the seven seas, who taught them Hebrew customs and left behind signs of Hebraic influence!

How was this contact achieved? Was the ancient world covered by a global cultural continuity, indicating a globe-girdling civilization?

Ancient Maps of the "Sea Kings"

In his book *Maps of the Ancient Sea Kings*, Charles H. Hapgood tells of the Piri Re's map of 1513 A.D. Studies of this map show that it correctly gives latitudes and longitudes along the coasts of Africa and Europe, indicating that the original mapmaker must have found the correct relative longitude across Africa and across the Atlantic to Brazil. This amazing map gives an accurate profile of the coast of South America to the Amazon, provides an amazing outline of the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico (supposedly not yet discovered!), and -- incredibly enough -- shows a part of the coast of the Antarctic Continent which was not discovered, in modern times, until 1818!

This map does not stand alone. A world map drawn by Oronteus Finaeus in 1531 gives a truly authentic map of Antarctica, indicating the coasts were probably ice-free when the original map was drawn (of which Oronteus Finaeus' map was a later copy). The Oronteus Finaeus map was strikingly similar to modern maps of the Antarctic. How could this be?

Another fascinating map is the map of Hadji Ahmed of 1559. It is evident that the cartographer had some extraordinary source maps at his disposal. Says Hapgood: "The shapes of North and South America have a surprisingly modern look, the western coasts are especially interesting. They seem to be about two centuries ahead of the cartography of the time. . . . The shape of what is now the United States is about Perfect" (p.99).

Another map of the Middle Ages, the Reinel Chart of 1510 -- a Portuguese map of the Indian Ocean -- provides a striking example of the knowledge of the ancients. Studying the identifiable geographical localities and working out from them, Hapgood was astounded to find that "this map apparently shows the coast of Australia . . . The map also appeared to show some of the Caroline Islands of the Pacific. Latitudes and longitudes on this map are remarkably good, although Australia is shown too far north" (ibid., p.134).

How can such remarkable accuracy be explained on the basis of almost total ignorance of the earth during that time? Obviously, at an earlier period of earth's history, sea-faring nations must have travelled around the world and accurately mapped the major continents, and fragments and copies of their ancient maps survived into the Middle Ages and were copied again.

Concludes Hapgood: "The evidence presented by the ancient maps appears to suggest the existence in remote times . . . of a true civilization, of a comparatively advanced sort, which either was localized in one area but had worldwide commerce, or was, in a real sense, a worldwide culture" (p.193).

How advanced was this ancient culture? Says Hapgood, "In astronomy, nautical science, mapmaking and possibly ship-building, it was perhaps more advanced than any state of culture before the 18th Century of the Christian Era." He continues: "It was in the 18th Century that we first developed a practical means of finding longitude. It was in the 18th Century that we first accurately measured the circumference of the earth. Not until the 19th Century did we begin to send out ships for purposes of whaling or exploration into the Arctic or Antarctic Seas. The maps indicate that some ancient people may have done all these

things" (Maps of the Ancient Sea Kings, p.193).

What ancient society could have been responsible?

Is there really any doubt?

The evidence is overwhelming. The Semitic features discovered in Mexico and South America, the Hebrew and Phoenicians inscriptions, the Hebrew religious customs found in the Americas, and similar customs in far off New Zealand among the Maories of ancient times, all attest to the fact that worldwide oceanic travel, trade and commerce was occurring during the time of the Solomonic Empire!

Hapgood says such mapmaking would indicate economic motivations and vast economic resources. Further, organized government is indicated, since the mapping of a continent such as Antarctica implies much organization, many expeditions, and the compilation of many local observations and maps into a general map under central supervision. He adds that it is unlikely that navigation and mapmaking were the only sciences developed by this ancient people. Such a comprehensive enterprise could only have been achieved during a relative time of world peace, and by a very powerful and extremely wealthy kingdom! What ancient kingdom could have accomplished this?

Biblical Evidence Confirms It

Based on Biblical evidence, from the Scriptures, there can be no doubt. The ancient Israelite kingdom of king Solomon, noted for its wealth, peace, and power, and incredible trade empire, must have been involved in leaving this ancient world-wide evidence behind -- including Hebrew customs, language, and practices.

God told Ezekiel, "And say to Tyre, O you who dwell at entrance to the sea, who are merchants of the peoples of many islands and coastlands. . . The inhabitants of Sion and [the island] of Arvad were your oarsmen; your skilled wise men, O Tyre, were in you, they were your pilots. The old men of Gebal [a city north of Sidon] and its skilled and wise men in you were your calkers; all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in you to deal in your merchandise and trading" (Ezekiel 27:3, 8-9).

Ezekiel goes on, "Your rowers brought you out into the great and deep waters; the east wind has broken and wrecked you in the heart of the seas . . . When your wares came forth from the seas, you met the desire, and the demand, and the necessity of many people; you enriched the KINGS OF THE EARTH with your abundant wealth and merchandise. Now you are shattered by the seas . . ." (vs.26, 33-34, Amplified Bible).

This sounds like the description of a globe-girdling nautical nation -- one which brings its wealth from afar! -- one which travels throughout the entire earth in its quest for material goods and trade!

We also read in the Bible: "For the king [Solomon] had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks" (I Kings 10:22).

Is it not significant that Ferdinand Magellan circumnavigated the globe, requiring three years -- from 1519-1522? Is it not meaningful that Sir Francis Drake, the first Englishman to circumnavigate the world, took three years to do so (1577-80)?

But there's even more evidence!

"You Resemble a Sinner of Canaan!"

Mariano Edward Rivero and John James von Tschudi in *Peruvian Antiquities* (1857) point out that after the most thorough examination and minute comparison, the religious rites of the American Indians plainly present many points of agreement with those of the Hebrew people (p.9). Continue these authors: "Like the Jews, the Indians offer their firstfruits, they keep their new moons, and the feast of expiations at the end of September or in the beginning of October; they divide the year into four seasons, corresponding with the Jewish festivals. . . . In some parts of North America circumcision is practised . . . There is also much analogy between the Hebrews and Indians in that which concerns various rites and customs; such as the ceremonies of purification, the use of the bath . . . fasting, and the manner of prayer. The Indians likewise abstain from the blood of animals, as also from fish without scales; they consider divers quadrupeds unclean, also certain birds and reptiles, and they are accustomed to offer as a holocaust the firstlings of the flock" (ibid.).

Surely, all these parallels are not mere coincidence! Can anyone in their right mind consign these similarities to mere "accident"?

Say Rivero and von Tschudi: "But that which most tends to fortify the opinion as to the Hebrew origin of the American tribes, is a species of ark, seemingly like that of the Old Testament; this the Indians take with them to war; it is never permitted to touch the ground, but rests upon stones or pieces of wood, it being deemed sacrilegious and unlawful to open it or look into it. The American priests scrupulously guard their sanctuary, and the High Priest carries on his breast a white shell adorned with precious stones, which recalls the Urim of the Jewish High Priest: of whom we are also reminded by a band of white plumes on his forehead" (p.9-10).

These two reputable scientists of the last century also point out, "The use of Hebrew words was not uncommon in the religious performances of the North American Indians, and Adair assures us that they called an accused or guilty person *haksit canaha*, 'a sinner of Canaan'; and to him who was inattentive to religious worship, they said, *Tschi haksit canaha*, 'You resemble a sinner of Canaan'" (ibid.).

Though such evidence does not prove that the Indians themselves were Jews or Israelites, it does show that long before Columbus, Hebrews had reached the New World and had left their imprint upon its inhabitants. There undoubtedly was some intermarriage. Such incredible parallels are beyond the remotest possibility of being due to mere chance!

Why should it seem strange that peoples of the ancient world-in particular Phoenicians and Hebrews -- reached the New World and travelled to South America, and even crossed the Pacific? Is it really so incredible? The trouble is, most of us of the present generation have been brainwashed to think that the ancients were merely superstitious savages, terrified of sailing out to sea lest they fall off the edge of the earth.

But the Phoenicians had already sailed out beyond the "Pillars of Hercules" (Straits of Gibraltar) by 1200 B.C. They developed the keel, streamlined their ships, covered the decks, and improved the sail. Their ships were from 80-100 feet long and used a single square sail besides oars. Their ships could average 100 miles in a day's time (24 hours). They were busy traders. Commerce was their principal aim. Tyre and Sidon, their home ports, were cities of immense wealth. Did ancient Phoenicians reach the New World? The evidence is inescapable.

Also interesting is the fact that the Quichua word for the sun, Inti, may very likely be derived from the Sanscrit root Indh, meaning "to shine, burn, or flame" and which corresponds to the East India word Indra, also meaning "the sun." It is also significant that the pre-Incas worshipped the invisible, Creator God, the Supreme Being, by the appellative Con, very similar to the Hebrew Cohen, the word for "priest," from the root Kahan meaning "to meditate in religious services, to officiate as a priest."

When all is said and done, Rivero and von Tschudi declare: "It cannot be denied, that the above tradition of the creation of the world, by the invisible and omnipotent Con, the primitive happy state of men, their corruption by sin, the destruction of the earth, and its regeneration, bears a distinct analogy to the Mosaic chronicle of the earliest epoch of the history of the human race . . ." (Peruvian Antiquities, p.149).

The Gold of "Ophir"

In the book of Isaiah we read the enigmatic statement: "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir" (Isa. 13:12). Where was the legendary "Ophir"? What was this "golden wedge"?

The Hebrew word for "wedge" is leshonah and refers to a "tongue," an instrument of some kind. The wedge of gold was, then, a bar or instrument of gold-literally, a "tongue of gold."

What could this "tongue" of gold have been? The gold of Ophir was not a scarce commodity since Solomon received 44 tons of it in a single year. Ophir was a place famous for its gold. Could it be that Isaiah was referring to a particular instrument of gold -- something famous in Ophir?

The Inca Empire was famous for the quantity and quality of the gold it produced. The Incas of modern Peru have a tradition that their earliest king was Pirua Paccari Manco. In modern Quichua Pirua means a granary or storehouse. The first dynasty of kings, called the Pirua dynasty, included the first eighteen kings in the king list. One of the commonest titles of the early kings was Capac which means "Rich."

One of the first kings was Manco Capac who founded the city of Cuzco ("Navel" in the special language of the Incas). Manco Capac is generally regarded as the progenitor of the Incas. Legends of the Incas tell us that he got rid of his three brothers and led the people of Cuzco. We read, "He took with him a golden staff. When the soil was so fertile that its whole length sank into the rich mould, there was to be the final resting place" (Markham, The Incas of Peru, p.50, 53).

Another story calls this golden staff a "sceptre of gold about a yard long and two fingers thick" (Markham, Royal Commentaries of the Yncas, p.64). Could this have been the "golden wedge" or "tongue" of Ophir?

John Crow relates another tradition of the ancient Incas. It is the story of "the Golden Wedge, according to which the Sun, wearied of the crude, barbaric ways of the uncivilized Indians, sent two of his children, a son and a daughter, to lift them from their primitive life. Placed on the earth near the banks of Lake Titicaca, these two children of the Sun were given a golden wedge which they were to carry with them wherever they wandered; and on the spot where this wedge sank without effort into the ground and disappeared they were told to found their mother city. When the divine pair reached the vicinity of Cuzco, their talisman slid into the earth and vanished from sight" (The Epic of Latin America, p.25).

Was this mysterious talisman -- this "golden wedge" -- the same thing mentioned by the prophet Isaiah -- the "golden wedge of Ophir"?

There is a close resemblance between the Pirua dynasty and the Hebrew word Ophir. In Hebrew, Ophir ("ph" can be pronounced either as an "f" or a "p") was the name of a place rich in gold (I Kings 9:28); sometimes the term Ophir was used for gold (Job 22:24). Ancient Peru would certainly fit the Biblical description of Ophir. It was famous for its gold. In the Temple of the Sun in Cuzco was a fantastic display of wealth. The four inside walls were covered with paper-thin sheets of gold. A giant golden figure of the Sun hung suspended over the main altar. A huge silver room was dedicated to the Moon. Surrounding the Temple of the Sun and several chapels was a huge stone wall, covered with a cornice or crest of gold a yard wide. Inside the Temple were decorations of gold and silver flowers, plants and animals. The Spaniards sacked the Temple and seized all the gold and silver ornaments.

From 1492 to 1600 about two billion pesos' worth of gold and silver flowed out of Spain's New World colonies -- at least three times the entire European supply of these precious metals up to that time. The total production of gold and silver in the Spanish colonies between 1492 and 1800 has been estimated at six billion dollars.

Historian Fernando Montesinos visited Peru from 1629-1642, a century after the conquest by the Spaniards. He travelled fifteen years through the country collecting material for a history of Peru. Montesinos wrote *Ophir de Espana, Memorias Historiales y Politicas del Peru*. He believed Peru was the Ophir of Solomon. He contended that Peru was first settled by Ophir, the grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:29).

Montesinos has been ridiculed and derided by historians. But since the early settlers of Peru were white-skinned and red bearded; since there was abundant gold in the region; since the name of the Pirua dynasty may correspond to the Hebrew Ophir; since the voyages of Solomon's fleet took about three years to complete; and since the "golden wedge" of Ophir could very well correspond to the "golden wedge" of Manco Capac; and since there is so much overwhelming evidence of cultural contacts between the ancient Peruvians and the Israelites, with close affinities in cosmology; and since there is definite evidence of the presence of ancient Semitic peoples in Peru, Equador, and the Western Hemisphere -- it seems very likely that Montesinos was right! Indeed, there is strong reason to believe that Peru was the ancient Ophir of the Bible!

When we examine all the evidence, the picture comes startlingly clear. Ancient Semites -- early Hebrews -- sailed to the Western Hemisphere 2,500 years before Columbus. Much of this knowledge has been lost to mankind. But now a great deal of it is being re-discovered. The ancient Israelites were here before us! They left signs of their presence everywhere -- in customs, language, religious similarities, archaeological artifacts, and even the Ten Commandments inscribed on a remote stone in a dry creek bed in New Mexico!



Picture of Ancient Ship Found in Burrows Cave Illinois