



ESRARA NEWSLETTER

Quarterly of the Eastern States Rock Art Research Association

30th member of IFRAO - International Federation of Rock Art Organizations

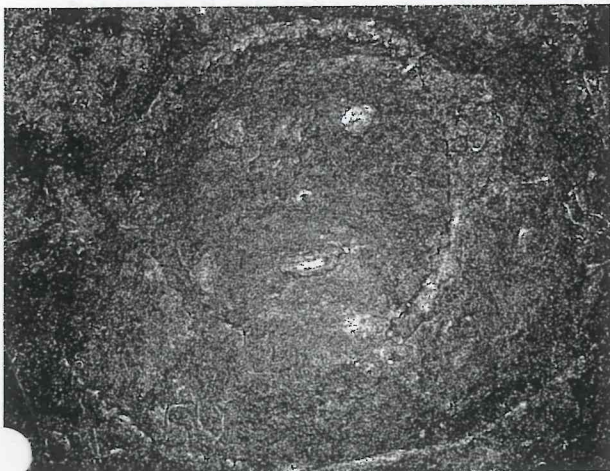
Volume 13, Number 1

Spring 2008

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FACE ON INDIAN'S HEAD ROCK

by Dr. Fred E. Coy, III

The Indian's Head Rock is a large eight ton sandstone boulder that was in 16 feet of water in the Ohio River 40 feet out from the Kentucky shore. The boulder opposite the Ohio town of Portsmouth was the result of landslide deposits consisting of "unconsolidated angular boulders and finer debris; found at base of steep slopes along Ohio River." (Shepard USGS 1964). On the upstream side of the boulder was found the engraving of a round human face, almost one foot in diameter other numerous engraved names and initials dating back to the 1850s literally covering the exposed surfaces. The face on the rock was mentioned in documents as early as 1839 and has been seen from time to time as the river levels were low, however as a result of navigational dams along the Ohio River the rock had not been visible for the past century. On September 9, 2007 the Indian's Head Rock was removed from the river and stored in a municipal building in Portsmouth, Ohio where we were allowed to conduct our examine the rock on Friday, November 9, 2007.



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President's Message...

Greetings to all old and new ESRARA members:

Harry Smith and the CBS Evening News, Charles Osgood and Sunday Morning, a news article in the New York Times, and videos on YouTube including one where a carved human face sings "we will, we will rock you," where isn't there a story (including two in this newsletter) about the Portsmouth Indian Head Rock at the moment? The removal of this boulder, which contains a pecked human-like face as well as nineteenth century names and initials, from the bottom of the Ohio River opposite Portsmouth, Ohio, has resulted in a legal and jurisdictional firestorm involving the Kentucky and Ohio state legislatures, the Kentucky State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). Kentucky has long claimed jurisdiction over the Ohio River, including any submerged cultural resources located on the river bottom such as ship wrecks and (in this case) rock art sites, due to the fact that Kentucky achieved statehood before the other states bordering the Ohio including Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. And, as I am sure the discoverers of the Portsmouth Indian Head Rock are by now most certainly aware, the state of Kentucky will act zealously to protect such resources.

I do not doubt that the actions of the parties who removed the rock from the river bed were well-intentioned. From what I have read in various newspaper articles and seen on television, they clearly believed that they had rediscovered and saved for future generations an important piece of long-lost local history. It is unfortunate that they appear to have been completely unaware that they needed to contact and obtain permission for the removal from both the federal (COE) and state (SHPO) agencies charged by law with the protection of all cultural resources contained within the Ohio River.

My personal feeling in regard to this matter is
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that the Indian Head Rock should have been left in place unless endangered by river traffic or some other form of disturbance. This opinion is based on my belief that Native American peoples (assuming the carving indeed is Native American in origin) created rock art designs at specific physical locations that they viewed as forming parts of sacred landscapes. Such landscapes often are believed to have been created in mythic time and serve to validate the spiritual beliefs of a group. The 18th century Cherokee, for example, told the colonial governor of Virginia that several gigantic foot impressions contained in the James River were "the Track of their God". The modern-day Tukano Indians of Brazil similarly interpret prehistoric petroglyphs they discover in their territory as the creations of mythical spirit-beings rather than having been made by humans.

Because rock art sites are inextricably linked with physical locations once viewed as having spiritual power, they should be left (in my opinion) at those locations if at all possible, even if that location is now at the bottom of the river. I would note that Dr. Fred Coy in his article contained in this newsletter concludes that the Indian Head Rock carving may have been created by non-Native American peoples (i.e., Americans or Europeans) at some point in the early nineteenth century. Even if this is the case, I still believe that the rock and the carvings it contains represent an important part of Ohio River history that should have been left in place unless endangered in some manner.

Hopefully, the states of Ohio and Kentucky will be able to reach a compromise in this coming year regarding the ownership of the Portsmouth Indian Head Rock that will be acceptable to all parties involved. I am sure that we will hear much more about this controversy in the near future as the SHPO offices in these two states try to work toward a solution regarding the preservation and ultimate disposition of this important aspect of the heritage of the upper Ohio River Valley.

Best Regards,

Mark Wagner

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The who, when and why of the pecked engraving of the human face on the Greenup County, Kentucky Indian's Head Rock is a mute point. The first mention of the Indian Head Rock that we are aware of, recorded November 10, 1839, was in Volume I of the two volume History of Kentucky (1874) by Richard H. Collins:

In Greenup County, opposite Portsmouth, Ohio, is a water-mark called the "Indian Head," a human face rudely carved by the aborigines, many years ago, upon the eastern side of a large rock imbedded in the water of the Ohio River. The "log" kept in the neighborhood shows that the mouth of the figure was:

1839--Nov. 10, 10 1/4 inches out of water.

1846--Oct. 4, 17 1/4 inches under water.

1848--Aug. 15 4 1/2 inches under water.

1849--Sept. 23, top of rock 2 1/2 inches under water.

1851--Sept. 27, eyes to be seen--the lowest measure on record from 1839 to this date.

1854--Sept. 5, mouth just on the water-line--therefore lower than since 1839

In Oct., 1838, the river was lower than ever known by any reliable mark, before or since (up to 1872).

I have spoken with Nelson L. Dawson, Director of Research and Interpretation of the Kentucky Historical Society, about the possibility of Richard Collins' notes on the Indian Head rock being extant. He replied that it would be a long shot but he would research their archives and let me know if they had any of the Collins papers. He later replied by e-mail that they did have a Richard Collins file. A visit to the Kentucky History Center revealed only one small folder and the correspondence it contained was not relevant to the Indian's Head Rock. James J. Holmberg, Curator of Special Collections at the Filson Historical Society replied to my query: "If Collins' notes exist they might be with his papers at the University of Chicago as part of the Durrett Collection." The University of Chicago does have the some of the Richard Collins papers in their Durrett collection. Julia Gardner, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library searched the Collins papers and replied; "it may not be possible to trace the exact reference for his

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information."

Squire and Davis mentioned a rock with a colossal human head cut in outline, in their chapter on "Sculptured or Inscribed Rocks" in *Ancient Monuments* (1848, pp 297-8), that is often quoted as the authority on the antiquity of the "Indian's Head."

There is however a very singular one still in existence a few miles above the town of Portsmouth, the southern terminus of the Ohio and Erie Canal, at the mouth of the Scioto. It consists of a colossal human head cut in outline, upon the vertical face of a large rock extending into the river. It is always under water, except when the river is at its very lowest stages, and is not exposed oftener than once in four or five years. It is familiarly known as the "Indian's Head," and is regarded as a sort of river gage or meter. When the water-line is at the top of the head, the river is considered very low.

Actually I do not believe that Squire and Davis ever laid eyes on the rock and probably obtained their information from other sources.

They located the rock as being a few miles above the town of Portsmouth when the location was directly across the river from downtown Portsmouth, they did not record on which side of the river the rock was located when it is just off of the Kentucky shore, and lastly they described it as a "colossal human head cut in outline" when actually the head was only 24 cm in diameter and it was not cut but pecked. Squire and Davis were familiar with the technique of pecking as they had referred to the technique before in their chapter on *Sculptured or Inscribed Rocks*. In an attempt to check the source of Squire and Davis statements Dr. David J. Meltzer (Editor of the recent re-published *Ancient Monuments*) was consulted about possibility of the Squire and Davis field notes being extant. Dr. Meltzer replied that field notes were scarce and that he could not find any that were relevant to the Indian Head. He did give a date of November 7, 1846 for the visit to Guyandotte Rocks and presumably this was when Squire and Davis were putting together one of the last chapters of *Ancient Monuments* but at a time when they were having personal differences.

From the 1850s until 1920 there were numerous newspaper accounts, postcards and other interests in the rock when it was visible until Ohio River navigational dams in the early 1900s permanently submerged the rock.

Perhaps here would be a good place to talk specifically about petroglyphs in general and on sandstone. Petroglyphs are engraved on rock surfaces in four ways or combination thereof.

1. Scratched. The patina on the rock surface is only slightly broken with a sharp pointed tool. Scratched petroglyphs are mostly found in the west and scratched into the desert varnish on the rock surface.
2. Incised. These are "V" shaped grooves, in cross section, with clean edges cut into the rock surface with a sharp tool.
3. Pecked. These are "U" shaped grooves, in cross section, with rough edges that are bruised into rock by percussion.
4. Abrading. These, again, are "U" shaped grooves, in cross section, with smooth edges made by moving a blunt object back and forth in the groove. Often abrading is used to clean up the pecked or incised lines.

Sandstone being quite porous and friable tends to weather by several methods including the usual surface abrading action of wind, rain and freezing and thawing. Probably the most important degradation effect on the surface comes from within the rock; water carrying dissolved salts migrates through the porous sandstone to the surface by capillary action, at the surface the water evaporates leaving the transported salt crystals. As the crystals grow and expand grains of sand are loosened and are eroded rather symmetrically across the surface of the sandstone keeping the configurations of the now more blunted and rounded contours. One can come to some conclusions as to the antiquity of petroglyph in sandstone by the sharpness or blunting of the edges of the engravings.

Our Portsmouth visit to examine the Indian's Head Rock was with a group of individuals that had a vested interest in the rock. The boulder was in the Portsmouth highway garage on some old vehicle tires to keep it from being damaged by the concrete floor of the building. The lower portion of the rock that had been in the river mud was obvious as the rest of

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the rock was covered with names initials and a sketch of a building. Some of the initials and names were done with a fine hand others were rough scribbles. All of the names and initials were incised; some were cleaned up by abrading. These engraved names and initials often overlapped other names and initials but did not invade the engraving of the Indian's Head.

From the Collins History of Kentucky description of the head on the rock being used for a gauge of the river level you might expect that face of the rock would be almost vertical. Making an estimate from the mud lines, as the rock rested on the vehicle tires the slope with the engraving of the Indian Head was calculated to have been less than 40 degrees with the horizontal.

The Indian Head engraving, pecked into the rock, was 29 cm at largest diameter from ear tip to ear tip. The width of the pecked line outlining the face averaged 1.5 cm. The circle for the face was complete 22 cm in diameter with the exception of 10 cm gap in the bottom where the neck would have attached. The ears extended beyond the circle and were outlined with the 1.5 cm width line. The face's right ear measured 6 cm inferiorly to superiorly and 3 cm. medial to lateral, the left ear 8 cm inferiorly to superiorly and 3 cm medial to lateral. The mouth 8 cm wide and 1.5 cm open, there appeared to be some deepening in the center and the mouth appeared to be slightly smiling. The nose was 1 cm in diameter but in the center of the nose was a pit where perhaps a pointed tool or nail had been attached to a string with a pencil or charcoal on the end to outline the face before the engraving. The face outline is remarkable circular with the exception of left side of the face which is slightly flattened. The nose is 3 cm superior to the mouth, the eyes 9 cm apart, center to center, both 2 cm in diameter 6 cm above the nose. Above and lateral to the left eye is a 1 cm X .5 cm break in the face circle. Above and just outside of facial circle is 3 cm grove in line with the center of the nose. The entire face is pecked without any attempt to clean it up by abrading. The peck marks are sharp, which on ordinary conditions out of the water would indicate lack of antiquity. Five cm from the left ear of the Indian Head are the nicely engrave

initials E D C and under the initials the date SEP 1856. There does not appear to be any difference in the blunting between the edges of the engraved initials and the left ear both are quite sharp.

The above explanation of the weathering of sandstone certainly does not hold for a sandstone rock that is continually submerged. In our area there are only two petroglyph sites one here in Kentucky and the other in Indiana that are often submerged in water that I can use for comparison. The one site on Green River, Green River Turkey Rock (15Bt64) is frequently under water and when exposed is covered with the tenacious Green River mud. The pecking are similar in nature to those found on the Indian Head face, quite sharp, the marks in the center of the grooves are not as prominent at the Indian's Head Rock. The second site is the Roll Petroglyph Site (12Cr175) on the Ohio River in Indiana that is frequently under water but it also is scrubbed clean by the current of the river. The petroglyphs are so shallow that it is impossible to tell their original condition.

In an attempt to get a handle on circular, pecked, round face petroglyphs the authorities on rock art in the surrounding states were contacted and several publications were consulted. Dr. Carol Diaz-Granados, iconologist from Missouri: "Can't recall any 'round head' petroglyphs here. We actually do not have any petroglyphs that are specifically round human heads. The Indian Head's Rock head is probably historic, along with the initials and dates!" Ed Lenik from New York: "As you requested, I attached a drawing of a round head that I found in NY several years ago. It was carved by a Euro American in the early 20th century." Mark Wagner, Illinois: "There are no front-facing human heads in Illinois rock art." Jean Allan, Alabama: "I don't recall seeing any 'happy face' petros like that around here but I'll give the subject some thought." Dr. Kenneth Tankersley, Northern Kentucky: "there is the Leo Petroglyph in Irontown, Ohio, which has a similar individual, except it is wearing a headdress, perhaps of antlers." Note; The Leo Petroglyph does not have ears or a nose.

A chart was compiled listing the round face, skull figures, ears, nose, mouth, eyes with data

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obtained from James Swauger's, Petroglyphs of Ohio and Rock Art of the Upper Ohio Valley, Wellman's, North American Indian Rock Art, and Coy et. al, Rock art of Kentucky. A total of 71 faces were analyzed and recorded from , Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. Of this total only one other than the Indian's Rock Head had the four components of eyes, ears, nose and mouth. This one was nicely abraded with paint remaining on the face in a rock house in West Virginia.

My observations:

Several observations were made after a careful examination of a full sized print image of the "Indian's Head."

1. The round head did include a nose, eyes, mouth and ears.

2. As mentioned above the head was remarkable circular with the center being in the pit in the nose, the circle stopped abruptly leaving a gap at the neck.

3. There was relatively little blunting on the "peck" marks and they appeared as sharp as some of the adjacent dated carved names and initials.

4. The beginning of the circular pecked outline of the head, on the faces' left side, was cut quite sharply the sides being parallel a sharp straight cut, the resulting groove measured 1/2 inch in width. The opposite side of the circular pecked outline of the head also ended with a straight line cut measuring 1/2 inch. There were at least three bruising tool marks that also measured 1/2 inches that were still visible.

Summary:

This large life sized head outline is pecked using a technique that was used extensively by the American Indian. Some authorities contend that a tool was struck with a baton to created the pattern other authorities suggest that the tool was used directly to strike the rock for the pattern. The engraving of the Indian Head probably proceeded and may have been the source of the popularity of the rock as evidenced by the large clear area in which it was located. In the rock art literature of

Pennsylvania, West Virginia, New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Alabama there are a large number of faces, at least 71, mostly oval in shape and many connected with torsos. All of the roundheads that were not attached to a neck or torso were complete circles. There are many face combinations containing eyes, and mouths few with ears or noses but only one other with all four, eyes, ears, nose and mouth plus a round head.

In Conclusion --

It is my thought that the Indian's Head Rock face has several features that make it unique. First, the fact that the sharpness of the pecking marks is about the same as that used on adjacent dated initials indicating they had about the same history. If the engraving of the Indian Head had some antiquity and was in an open exposed area, there certainly would have been considerable amount of blunting at the edges of the engravings. Second, it is unusual for ears and nose to be included with American Indian petroglyphs. Third, there is a pit in the center of the nose that may have been used to draw a circle for the outline of the face, a technique which the American Indian probably would not have employed. Fourth, when this is first shown to individuals the usual response is that it does not look like American Indian. Fifth, and I believe the crucial point, is the precisely cut 1/2 inch starting groove with straight parallel sides at the beginning of the outline of the face on the right side (the face's left side) . On the opposite side the outline stops abruptly also with a relative straight edge. This observation is significant in that the American Indian pecked petroglyph lines are shallow and rounded at the start and at the terminus rather than being deep, straight and square as found on the Indian's Head. These two areas strongly suggest the use of a metal tool; throughout the entire pecking it appears that the tool used was about 1/2 inch wide. There are at least three bruised marks that too are 1/2 inch in length.

From the evidence at hand it would appear to me that there is a strong possibility that the face on the Indian's Head Rock was engraved with the pecking technique using a 1/2 inch metal tool and predating the other carvings on the rock, at the most, by only a few years.

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Postscript

The Portsmouth Daily Times (October 8, 1908)

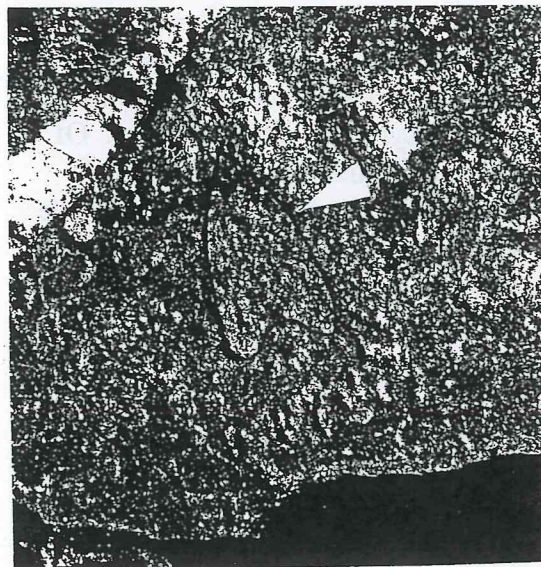
WOULD PRESERVE THE HISTORIC INDIAN ROCK:

Henry Lorberg is going to communicate with the light house department with a view to having the snag boat Woodruff pull up the Indian rock, the idea of Mr. Lorberg being to have the city place the historic boulder in York park, in a position overlooking the river, with an iron railing around it and a history of the rock, as far as obtainable engraved or painted on the face. The wonder is the government hasn't pulled the rock out of its place long ago and crushed it with dynamite as it is an undoubted menace to navigation with the river being between five and fifteen feet.

The bottom of many a boat and barge was torn out by it in the old days when steamboats were plentiful. It would doubtless not be difficult to have the snagboat pull out the boulder but the matter of placing it in the park would have to be attended to by the city and private subscriptions. Mr. Lorberg is sounding the sentiments of officials and citizens on the subject. Portsmouth is the River City, and to preserve the rock in the manner referred to, would be highly appropriate. That the rock rolled off the hill at some remote period seems assured, as it is of the same formation as the summit of the river hills. It is now smooth as a bowling ball, made so by the motion of the water for generations. Histories of the river as early as a date 1811 mention its presence. Formerly the features of a man's face were chiseled into the face of the rock fronting the Ohio shore, and this gave it the name of "Indian Head." The name "Indian Rock" is of much later origin. The human face, a ring some two feet in diameter, with eyes nose, mouth and ears chiseled in, was gradually worn away by the action of the water and has not been visible for many years. The man or boy, who did the carving is reputed to have been E. T. Book, an older half-brother of W. T. Book, of East English street. Book was a very adventurous boy and grew to be one of the best known citizens of the county and state was a captain in the Civil War and Killed in Battle. He carved the face some time in thirties It was very seldom the river became so low that all of the Indian face was visible. It was chiseled on at extreme low water. If the face were still intact it is doubtful if more than two-thirds of the ring would be visible at the present

UNUSUAL IMAGERY AT THE HENSLER PETROGLYPH SITE IN WISCONSIN

Jack Steinbring, Mid-America Geographic Foundation



Late last fall, at a time when grazing light nicely illuminated petroglyphs at the Hensler Petroglyph Site (47DO461), we spotted the image of a lanceolate projectile point with a concave base. Further scrutiny disclosed that by looking at it from the opposite direction, we saw still another one! The one appears to be superimposed over the other, and almost identical to it. Moreover, the size of the two images is virtually identical with similar lithic forms. In seeking a comparison to these petroglyph images, we found the closest match in the Clovis variants of the Debert Site in Nova Scotia. Of course, similarities do not guarantee a relationship, and a lanceolate biface is a lanceolate biface – wherever we go.

While other imagery at Hensler is patently Archaic, a fluted point was recovered within approximately 250 m. north of the Hensler engravings, and gravers, spokeshaves, burins, and snub-nosed scrapers with bilateral spurs have been recovered in the Hensler excavations. Some "food for thought" here!



Drawing at right, after MacDonald 1968:74

MacDonald, George
1968 Debert: A Paleo-Indian Site in Central Nova Scotia
Anthropology Papers No. 16, National Museums of Canada,
Queens Printer, Ottawa

Field Methods in Rock Art

May 12–29, 2008

And an October 2008 Program

SHUMLA field school provides a learning opportunity with a three-week class held in May, between the Spring and Summer semesters. Taught by Dr. Carolyn Boyd, a groundbreaking researcher on Lower Pecos rock art, and Elton Prewitt, an archeologist with long-established experience in the area, this is an opportunity to study with two outstanding educators.

This course, offered through the Offices of Extension Studies at Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas, earns either three or six hours of undergraduate, or three hours of graduate level credit. Participants learn:

- * How to establish a field research design and field data collection protocols.
- * Rock art recording methods, including photography, mapping, sketching, and written inventories.
- * Laboratory procedures, record keeping, cataloguing, and records curation.
- * Rock art data analysis--formulating and testing hypotheses.
- * Current theories regarding the meaning and function of rock art.
- * Archaeology of the Lower Pecos, hunter-gatherer lifeways, and the foraging adaptation.

And you will have an incredible time in the lovely Lower Pecos region of Texas while doing so.

For more information contact the SHUMLA office at info@shumla.org or 432.292.4848.

UPCOMING PROGRAM AT SHUMLA --

Visit Lower Pecos Rock Art with Australian Researcher October 5–10, 2008

SHUMLA is now accepting reservations for the October 2008 Pecos Experience: The Art and Archeology of the Lower Pecos. This week-long program gives participants the opportunity to visit spectacular rock art sites, accompanied by SHUMLA's Executive Director Dr. Carolyn Boyd and a visiting rock art expert. Taking that role in 2008 is Dr. Jo McDonald of Australia, recognized as one of the leading rock-art researchers in Australia.

Drs. Boyd and McDonald explore ideas for research and interpretation of these images. Learn about prehistoric lifeways: create paint from local ingredients, taste food plants cooked in an earth oven, use an atlatl to throw spears, discover fiber arts using local plant fiber, and other examples of the technologies used by Native Americans to survive in this arid environment.

For registration information click [here](#), call the SHUMLA office at 432-292-4848, or E-mail programs@shumla.org.

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CALL FOR REGIONAL EDITORS

For over ten years, the Eastern States

Rock Art Research Association has been (with very few exceptions!) producing and mailing out quarterly newsletters. Our plan started out as one in which four individual rock art researchers, in four different regions of the eastern United States, would each produce just one newsletter a year. This general plan works so well because no one is required to do four quarterlies – an almost full time job! But one newsletter a year is do-able, enjoyable, and rewarding.

ESRARA has been very fortunate to have several excellent regional editors, including Kevin Callahan, Mark Hedden, and Nancy Bryant. I have served as the summer newsletter editor, as well as Managing Editor of the quarterly. And, when someone could not do their quarterly, Nancy or I would pick up the slack (as now).

For an organization to run smoothly, as you all know, everyone needs to pitch in. A couple years ago we lost the services of Kevin Callahan due to an illness in his family. Most recently, Mark Hedden, who had been our winter newsletter editor since ESRARA was founded, was not able to produce this past winter's newsletter. In the 12 or so years since we began producing newsletters, we have not been in this much of a bind. So, we are looking for two or three, potential regional newsletter editors. Nancy Bryant is our excellent Fall Newsletter Editor and has done a marvelous job with it, not to mention filling in at other times!

If you would like to be considered for a regional editor slot, and believe that you can produce a timely, quarterly newsletter once a year, please contact me:

Carol Diaz-Granados, Managing Editor

ESRARA Newsletter Quarterly

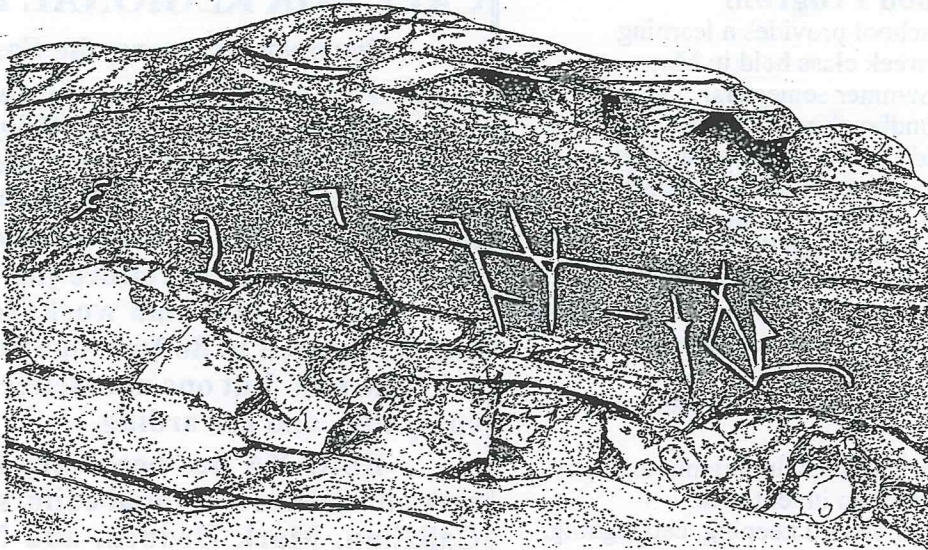
CDiaz-Granados@wustl.edu

(I'll be waiting to hear from you!!)



THE SCATICOOK OR MOLLY FISHER ROCK, KENT, CONNECTICUT

by Edward J. Lenik, New Jersey



On November 18, 1789, Ezra Stiles recorded in his Itineraries and Memoirs that he “found a rock in Kent [Connecticut] on Housatunnock River near Scattikuk, charged with unknown characters. The manner of inscription, by Picking with an iron tool, not by chiszel or engraving.” In another manuscript entry he wrote that “Mark’t on Scaticook” were the initials “BH,” pecked into the rock. He notes that “NB Barnabas Hatch father to Nath hatch settled in Kent in 1741 and lived within 100 rods of this rock.” This entry was accompanied by a very simple sketch map that indicated the location of the rock.

In a letter to James Bowdoin, President of the Academy of Arts & Sciences, Stiles wrote a more detailed description of the Scaticook Rock:

Upon the Summit of Cobble Hill, which commands a View into Scatticook WigWams, stands the rock charged with Characters, the Rock being to this day enveloped & concealed in a Forest...This Rock is alone by itself, and not a portion of a Mountain; it is of white Flint. It ranges N&S & is about twelve to 14 feet long; eight to ten feet wide at the base & on top; six feet high at the N. End, & five feet high at the S. end, of an uneven & rather globular than angular surface...On the Top I did not perceive any Character. But the sides all around appear to be irregularly charged with unknown Characters, made not indeed with the incisions of a Chiszel, yet most certainly with an Iron Tool, and that by Pecks or picking after the manner of the Dighton Rock. The lacunae or Excavations are from a quarter of an inch broad & generally from half to three quarters of an inch wide & from one to two tenths of an inch deep...after a little familiarizing the mode of inscription or engraving, one may clearly & satisfactorily perceive real artificial letters & Marks... And, after a more attentive examination & inspection the sides of this rock all around appeared to be pretty fully charged with character. The engraving did not appear to be recent or new, but very old.

In this 1790 report to the American Academy, Stiles indicated that the rock with its inscription was unknown to both the Euroamerican inhabitants of Kent and the nearby Indians in their wigwams on the west side of the Housatonic River. The Indian settlement was called Scaticook. Stiles recorded the inscription by placing a sheet of paper on the rock and, with his fingers and the blunt end of a pencil, he depressed in into the “Lacunae or excavations.” He rubbed it hard to make the impression, then traced the lines with a pencil while the paper was still over the characters. Included in his report to the Academy were his drawings of the inscription and a more detailed map showing the location of the rock.

Kendall in his 1809 book *Travels Through the Northern Parts of the United States* writes that around 1760, the symbols on the rock were thought to relate to buried treasure and it was said that up to the year 1774 several efforts were

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made to dig up and find the money. Furthermore, Kendall stated that pieces of the rock were said to have been broken away and sent to New York in an attempt to "decipher" the inscription.

On December 11, 1976, I visited a site near Kent, Connecticut called Spooner Hill. Local legends indicated that somewhere on the hill there was a rock bearing an inscription. I was led to a large glacial boulder located about one-half mile north of Spooner Hill Road by Irving Convoy, owner of the property. Mr. Convoy called this boulder Molly Fisher Rock, based on an old legend of this person and the surrounding area. Here, Convoy showed me a 1930 photograph of the rock and its inscription.

Fisher Rock appeared to have a human-made inscription on it. The rock was a metasedimentary (sandstone) boulder that measured 4 meters (13'6") long by 3 meters (10') wide and average 1.5 meters (5') in height. About 30 centimeters (1') down from its top was a vein of quartz 7 to 10 centimeters (3" to 4") in thickness that completely encircled the boulder. Symbols were cut or incised with a metal tool into the vertical northeastern face of the rock just above the quartz vein.

The symbolism formed a linear pattern with the incised lines or grooves measuring 1 cm. to 1.5 cm. In width and ranged in depth from 2 mm. to 8 mm. There seemed to be 9 or 10 distinct symbols or clusters of symbols and a long horizontal line giving it the appearance of some type of writing (Figure 1.). The meaning of this so-called inscription is unknown.

My study of the inscription and its surroundings raised several questions. We judged that the inscription was carved on a poor location on the boulder. The top of the rock as well as other areas around the stone were smoother and, presumably, would have been better for carving. Another mystery is the reason why this particular rock was selected for carving as there are many glacial boulders located throughout the area. The boulder with its carving appeared to have no discernible relationship to the surrounding landscape. However, it was located just west of an old abandoned woods road. We also observed that some recent digging had taken place around the boulder.

An account of the Molly Fisher Rock and Legend was published in 1930. It states "About 100 years ago a party of professors and students came here just to see this rock and to study the writing on it, but they could make nothing of it." Is this a reference to Stiles' visit in 1789? The published account of the legend also relates a story of buried treasure, the source of which may have been the same as the one recorded by Kendal in his 1809 journal.

The Stiles 1789 and 1790 descriptions of the rock as Scaticook vis-a-vis the Molly Fisher Rock do not agree. Although Stiles drew a map showing the location of an inscribed stone in this area, he wrote that the hill on which it stood was called "Cobble Hill." Furthermore, Molly Fisher Rock is not a block of white flint as described by Stiles. The inscription on Molly Fisher Rock is incised, whereas Stiles noted that he saw "pecked" characters. Finally, Stiles recorded in his manuscript and letter that the Scaticook Rock contained the initials "BH," but we found no evidence of this on Molly Fisher Rock. Stiles believed the symbols were similar to those on Dighton Rock in Massachusetts and had the same Phoenician origin.

(Continued on next page)

The apparent differences between my account and the Stiles account of the rock would seem to suggest Stiles was talking about another site, not Molly Fisher Rock. However, some of these differences can be explained, leading me to think that Molly Fisher Rock is the rock that Stiles visited and recorded in 1789.

-- Stiles 1790 map shows the rock's location in Kent in relation to the Housatonic River, the Indian land and the wigwams on the west side of the river. Its placement was on Cobble Hill, now called Spooner Hill.

-- Stiles description of the rock as "white flint" was a commonly used term for quartz in the 18th century.

-- Stiles drawing "No II" is very similar to the one I produced in 1976.

-- The initials "BH," which Stiles saw could have been removed or have eroded over the intervening 187 years.

On April 11, 2008, I again revisited the site. My own examination indicates the symbols were produced with the use of metal tools during the Historic period. The grooves were not patinated, but the adjacent surface was covered by a dark patina. Others who viewed the rock believed the grooves may be nothing more than irregular natural cracks and veins. If the grooves are truly human-made, then I would attribute them to Euroamerican as the carvers. Among the most likely suspects are the Hatch family, who lived nearby in the 1740s or, perhaps, Moravian missionaries, who lived among the Scaticook Indians from 1750 to 1770.

I also revisited the Indian cemetery on the Schaghticoke (Scaticook) Indian Reservation nearby. Here there are more than 50 grave markers, most of which are plain upright fieldstones. One gravemarker, however, is a formal marble stone containing the following inscription; EUNICE MAUWEE/ A CHRISTIAN INDIAN PRINCESS/ 1756-1860. Eunice, age

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104, was the granddaughter of "Maweseman," baptized in 1743 and renamed Gideon. He was the "headman" or chief of the Indian community. A carefully designed incised pattern is present above the name, consisting of feather compound leaflets with palm fronds and undulating lines. These are Christian design motifs, the former representing triumph over death and the latter baptismal water.

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at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Boston, MA.



THANKS TO THOSE CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES FOR THIS SPRING'S QUARTERLY:

Dr. Fred Coy, Mark Wagner, Ed Lenik, and Jack Steinbring. If you have an article, research report, news item,
meeting announcement, award, etc. that you would like published in the ESRARA Quarterly Newsletter, please
send it to:

Carol Diaz-Granados, 7433 Amherst Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63130-2939, or email to: Cdiaz-Granados@wustl.edu



The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors or
editor and not those of the ESRARA organization.

ARARA's 35th Annual Conference in Farmington, New Mexico

May 22-26, 2008

ARARA's 35th annual conference will be held on Memorial Day weekend, May 22-26, 2008 in Farmington, New Mexico, which is in the western portion of the state. Farmington may be reached via air by Great Lakes Airline (to/from Denver), Mesa Airlines (to/from Albuquerque), and U. S. Air Express (to/from Phoenix). Commercial flights into Durango are made by Delta, United, and U. S. Airways. Durango is about a one-hour drive from Farmington. Southwest flies into Albuquerque, which is 185 miles from Farmington, but the drive provides an opportunity to visit several sites en route. Other driving distances to Farmington are 377 miles from Denver, Colorado; 361 miles from Flagstaff, Arizona; and 199 miles from Santa Fe, New Mexico. The 2008 conference will look back on ARARA's history and ahead toward new directions. An Anniversary Committee has been planning events.

The Farmington Best Western Motel is the conference location. It is a full-service motel with 192 sleeping rooms, complimentary hot breakfast, meeting rooms, free high-speed internet, restaurant, lounge, and fitness center. It is on the east side of Farmington and has plenty of parking. The oral presentations, posters, auction, vendor room, and banquet will all be held at the Best Western. For campers, there are several RV parks in the area. Here are a few to get you started: Dad's RV Park, (505) 564-2222; Down's RV Park, (505) 325-7094; Lee Acres RV Park, (505) 326-5207; and Mom & Pops RV Park (800) 748-2807.

They will again have a Thursday evening get together for early arrivals, and it is here that field trip information will be handed out for the Friday trips. The traditional Friday night reception will be held at Salmon Ruins, the location of the original ARARA conference. Our Field Trip Committee has been working with local people to arrange tours to a variety of rock art sites to accommodate all participants and physical abilities. Room reservations at the Best Western can be made by calling (505) 327-5221. Be sure to ask for the ARARA rate.

For more information, check the ARARA website at ARARA.org. You will find the Conference Packet and information on the field trips being offered.

Dr. Fred E. Coy, III Receives 2nd Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. Fred E. Coy was selected to be recognized with the first Lifetime Achievement Award in Avocational Archaeology made by KyOPA. Though a physician by profession, Dr. Fred Coy has worked tirelessly for over 50 years recording archaeological sites, especially rock art sites, throughout Kentucky. He is renowned for his thorough documentation skills, devotion to cultural resource preservation, and willingness to unselfishly share information with colleagues.

In addition to conference papers and publications, Dr. Coy published his research on rock art in "Rock Art of Kentucky" (University Press of Kentucky, 1997). The co-authored tome is widely cited by students, avocationals, and professionals interested in Kentucky archaeology specifically and rock art generally. His research also is published in conference proceedings and peer-reviewed journals like "Tennessee Archaeologist." Dr. Coy regularly submits state site forms for newly discovered rock art sites and gives generously of his time and expertise in working with private landowners with rock art sites.

Dr. Coy has been active in professional organizations, including the Eastern States Rock Art Research Association. He has participated in numerous conferences, including the Powdermill Petroglyph and Pictograph Conference, which was partly funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities.

(Editor's Note: For those of you who may not be aware of Dr. Coy's many achievements, this is his *second Lifetime Achievement Award* in Rock Art research, which goes along with his many other awards, including the *Wellmann Award* from the American Rock Art Research Association).

CONGRATULATIONS DR. COY!

DON'T FORGET TO SEND YOUR

2008 DUES

TO:

Michelle Berg-Vogel
ESRARA Treasurer
PO Box 61
Kampsville, IL 62053

- Inside this newsletter...**
- **Report on Indian Head Rock, KY-OH**
Dr. Fred E. Coy, III, KY
 - **President's Message**
Report on Molly Fisher Rock, CT
Ed Lenik, NJ
 - **Update on Hensler Site in WI**
Jack Steinbring, WI
 - **Upcoming ARARA Conference in**
Farmington, NM
 - **and more!**

ESRARA Newsletter
Spring Newsletter Editor
Carol Diaz-Granados
7433 Amherst Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63130-2939

Winter: (Open)
Spring: (Open)
Summer: (Open)
Fall: Nancy Bryant

Send Items for the Summer Newsletter to:

Carol Diaz-Granados
7433 Amherst Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63130-2939

CDiaz-Granados@wustl.edu

E.S.R.A.R.A.

Quarterly Newsletter Editors