

THE THREE RIVERS PETROGLYPH A GUIDEPOST FOR RIVER TRAVEL IN AMERICA

by

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Summary

The Three Rivers Petroglyph is a yard-diameter deeply carved spiral with legs. The beautifully executed, high quality petroglyph is carved into a polished bolder of fine grained metamorphic sandstone. The pyramidal-shaped rock has fallen into the Neversink River on an old trade route from the Hudson River through the Catskill Mountains of New York, to the valleys in the west. The 42 degree latitude of the site is indicated by the stone, and the spiral gives the geographic scope of its meaning in megalithic distance lines (dl), as would be expected at a megalithic site. These lines correspond to latitude lines of one degree, spaced 60 nautical miles apart. It appears that this petroglyph was created by someone familiar with ocean travel. As usual the shape and features of the stone itself were used as parts of the story being told. The design of the glyph can be shown to be a complex depiction of northeast American river geography. The meaning of the petroglyph is as a guidepost for travel on the Neversink, Delaware, Susquehanna, Allegheny, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers. It is a map of the waterways of America that form a transportation network from the megalithic culture of New England, in the northeast. So, it is a prehistoric version of the "Gate to the West". The petroglyph dates back to the time period when route finding and transportation was by boat, via rivers. The carving can also be shown to depict a walking man with a boat heading west for the Ohio River. The spiral shows it is an ancient megalithic inscription of approximately 1500 BC. The patina and the pecking style were examined to help date the glyph. Supporting illustrations of nearby stone chambers, trade artifacts, and petroglyphs are also explained. See www.geocities.com/howthesungod/, or the new book "How the SunGod Reached America c.2500 BC, A Guide to Megalithic Sites", by the authors, from which this material is excerpted with permission.

THE THREE RIVERS PETROGLYPH

A Guidepost for River Travel in America

(Frost Valley, Neversink River, New York, c.1500 BC)

Introduction

IN 1995 a high quality petroglyph was discovered on a boulder along the Neversink River in the Catskill Mountains in southeast New York (Figs.1&2, Ref.1). It shows a spiral with three "legs" attached to it, indicating to us, that it might be an ancient megalithic inscription. In the summer of 2000 we visited the site to investigate the petroglyph.

The boulder with the petroglyph on it is located on the north bank of the West Branch of the Neversink River near the town of Frost Valley, New York (Fig.3, Ref.1). The petroglyph has a size of 80x70cm. It has been carved in a fine-grained metamorphic sandstone, with a vee-shaped groove about a centimeter deep and a centimeter wide. The boulder itself has a length of c.160cm, a width of c.110cm, and a height of c.100cm. It appears that the stone once was standing on the bank, but was undercut by the river, fell off the bank, and now lies on its backside in the river. High waters and floating ice and debris in Spring months must flow over the stone, and damage the inscription. It looks as though it is also being walked on.

Geographic Inscription

WE WILL SHOW that this is a stylized megalithic inscription with a pure geographic meaning. The spiral has five spaces between its coils (Fig.2), so it indicates that the whole inscription relates to a circular area having a radius of about 5 megalithic distance lines ($=5dl=5^\circ \text{ of latitude} = 5 \times 111 \text{ km} = 555 \text{ km}$) (Ref.3). The center of the spiral is the place where the petroglyph is located, which is on the West Branch of the Neversink River.

The petroglyph is located halfway between the Hudson River in the east, and the

Delaware River in the west. The distances to these rivers are both c.50km. Notice how a small tributary of the Hudson River, Esopus Creek (Fig.3), now a popular whitewater "tubing" river at Phoenicia, NY, runs in a near-perfect circle around Panther Mountain, which is the now-exposed hardened sedimentary plug of a buried meteor impact crater (Ref.5). These are thought to be some of the oldest mountains on earth. Above the upper end of Esopus Creek is small Winnisook Lake with a summer camp on it. This little lake drains southwest, starting the west fork of the Neversink River. Coming down the river about five miles, the petroglyph is at the foot of a straight stretch, prominently on the right bank as the river curves left (Fig.1 shows the view upriver). The Neversink flows south to Port Jervis into the Delaware River (Fig.9). It appears that the Neversink River was a "transportation corridor" through the Catskill Mountains.

FROM OUR other work, such as the study of the petroglyphs at Loughcrew, Ireland, we know that megalithic inscriptions often use the shape and features of the stone itself as parts of the story being told. We start with the assumption that the pointed end of the stone is the top (Fig.8), which later makes sense in a number of ways as we shall see. The rock narrows at the top, because the land north of the Catskills, which includes the Adirondacs, narrows between Lake Champlain in the east, and Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence in the west, which is within the 555km of the spiral. Note that the top of the stone has an upper edge in the center, representing the Adirondack Mountains literally.

The Delaware River

The right leg of the inscription, pointing downwards, represents the Delaware River (see Fig.4) from Port Jervis to the sea, because the shape of the leg closely resembles the shape of this river. Its end is the entrance of Delaware Bay, south of Philadelphia. When we follow the spiral

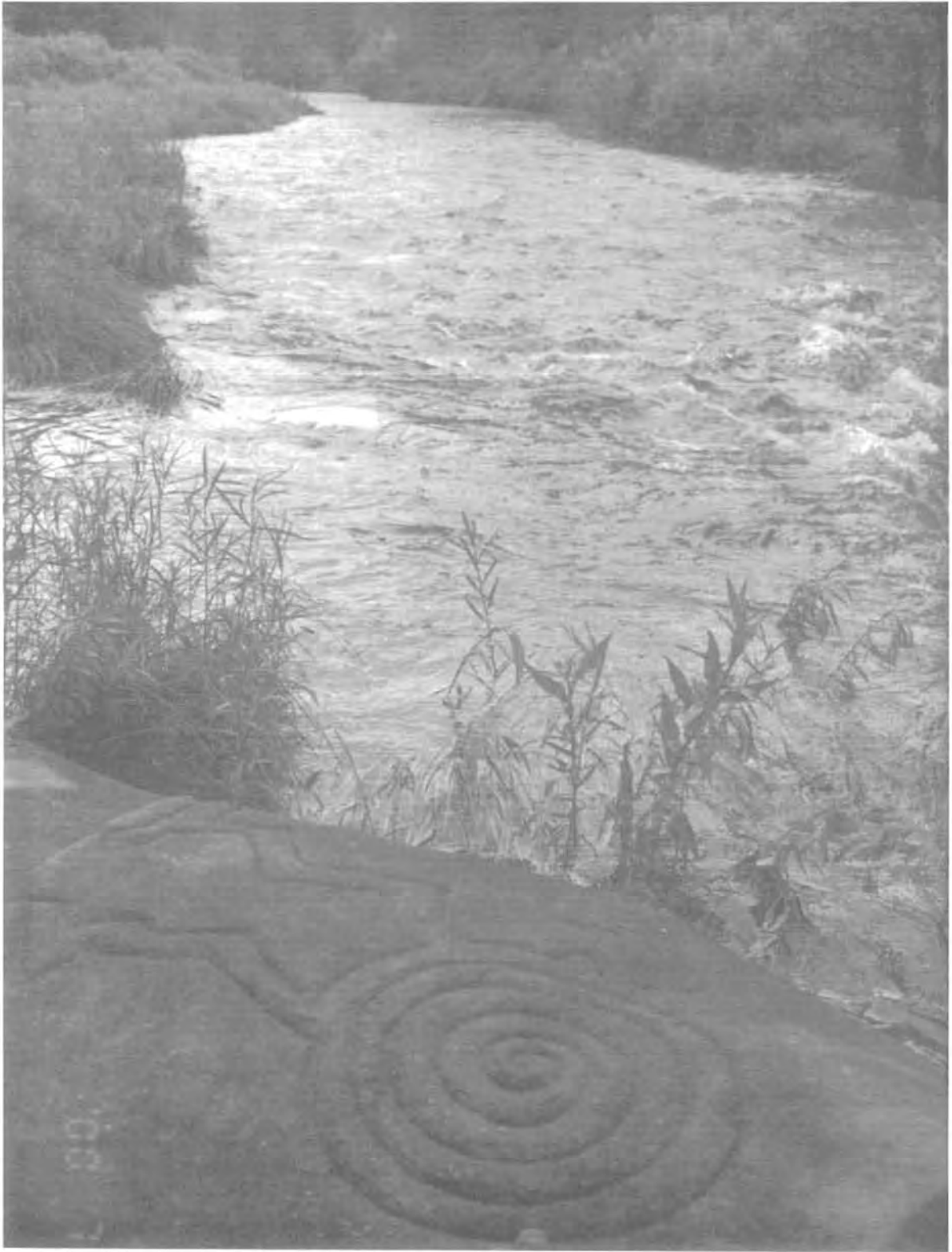


Fig.1 The Three Rivers Petroglyph (c.1500 BC) on the Neversink River, Catskill Mountains of New York looking upstream to the East. July 16, 2000.

from the right leg upwards and left toward the center leg, then the Delaware River is followed from Port Jervis, where the Neversink joins it, to the Susquehanna River near Binghamton (Windsor, Deposit), NY. The shape of the spiral is more or less similar to the shape of this part of the river.

The Susquehanna River

DOING THIS, one arrives at the middle leg of the figure, which represents the Susquehanna River, because the shape of this leg is similar to the shape of this river. The long "foot" of the middle leg is Chesapeake Bay, because the shape of the foot resembles the shape of the bay. The three sharp peaks to the left point to the major river entrances in the Chesapeake: the Potomac, the Rappahannock, and the James. These places are about 555km from the stone site in the Catskills, as indicated by the spiral.

The Ohio River

When the spiral from the middle leg is followed upward, again the Delaware River is followed from Port Jervis, where the Neversink River joins it, to beyond Binghamton (Windsor, Deposit), NY. The shape of this part of the spiral is exactly the shape of this part of the river. The "nose" of the spiral corresponds to the major river bend, and it points to the beginning of the third leg.

THE BIG UPWARD bow in the petroglyph before the third leg is their route across the Allegheny Mountains to the start of the Ohio (Allegheny branch) River in the west (Fig.4). The shape of the bow does not have a geographic meaning, but does represent the crossing at an altitude that is required between these river basins. In view of the site location of the petroglyph near small creeks in the Catskills, they probably crossed the land between the headwaters of the Susquehanna and the Allegheny Rivers near Coudersport, Pa., a distance of less than 20 kilometers.

As a consequence, the third leg is the Ohio River (Fig.5). This enormous river is much more important to them than the Delaware or the Susquehanna. For that reason the third leg is made of round forms, just like the spiral! Before Pittsburgh the river jogs, and then a side river joins in from the southeast, the Monongahela River. The next part of the leg is a continuation of the Ohio. The first sharp peak points to the entrances of the first rivers of reasonable size on the other side of the Ohio, the Muskingum and the Hocking. The next point is the continuation of the Ohio itself. The final sharp peak points to the Kanawha and Big Sandy, flowing west from the Appalachian Mountains. Again, these places are about 555km from the stone site in the Catskills, as indicated by the spiral. But, as so often in megalithic petroglyphs, there are multiple symbolisms. The right side of the stone is now the Atlantic coast between Chesapeake Bay and the Hudson, and the left side is Lake Erie (Fig.5).

BUT ALSO concerning the Ohio, there are multiple symbolisms. In this case there is besides the first meaning, a second, and even a third meaning. This is the reason why the stylized left leg been shaped from round forms, like the spiral, and unlike the two eastern rivers. Now the first big curved leg (Fig.6) represents the courses of the Kanawha and Big Sandy, with the points being the Wabash, Missouri, and the Mississippi. The right side of the stone is now the Atlantic coast, from Florida to Cape Hatteras, and the left side the Mississippi.

But there is even a third meaning (Fig.7). The curved leg also symbolizes the drainage of the Cumberland and the Tennessee. The Mississippi flows all around the Cumberland and Tennessee, as shown in the petroglyph. The three sharp peaks point to the river entrances on the other side of the main stream, the Arkansas and the Red Rivers, and the third is the Mississippi to Poverty Point and the Gulf of Mexico. Here the left edge of the stone is the Rocky Mountains. These distances are far greater than the 555km of the spiral, so they have made this leg curved, to show "that the open spiral continues here".



Fig.2 Above: The authors study the petroglyph. **Below:** When filled with white aquarium sand, the inscription is easier to see (c.1500 BC).

The Three Rivers Petroglyph

The stone can also be seen another way, giving a superb artistic second meaning (Fig.2): "If you are on foot (the spiral with two legs below), and by boat (foot of the second leg in the boat), and you are heading west (the nose points to the left leg), then this map (the petroglyph) is meant for you!!" Note that all this sophistication, all this information, is worked out in one single, uninterrupted line! Close investigation shows only minor errors (if any), such as the shape of the line just before the start of the first leg, which is the Neversink River, literally.

THIS BEAUTIFUL megalithic petroglyph is a beautiful map of the waterways of America that form a transportation network from the megalithic culture in the northeast. America's Stonehenge (Mystery Hill, Ref.14), the megalithic center in New England, is only 350km away (ENE), which is within the radius of the spiral. The very short piece of straight line in the center of the coils (Fig.2) might be an indication of the approximate direction where the makers of the petroglyph came from: c.65°NE. Because of the three legs, we feel this inscription should be named the "Three Rivers Petroglyph". It is a proof that in this time period this transportation corridor through the Catskill Mountains was used to reach these three rivers from the Hudson. If the stone were standing upright on the bank (Fig.8), the figure would confirm this with "traveling feet". The map in Fig.9 shows an overview of the finding spots of ancient stone structures and artifacts in the region. This map suggests that usually, in order to reach the Delaware from the Hudson, the creeks between Kingston and Port Jervis were used. In that case the West Branch of the Neversink River was primarily used to reach the upper course of the Delaware and the Susquehanna. However, because of the Allegheny Mountains, this was also the only way to reach the important Ohio River. So this petroglyph is a prehistoric version of the

"Gate to the West" taught in American colonial history classes.

When you find a map along the road, there is usually a junction nearby. Here too! To sail the Delaware, you just follow the Neversink to Port Jervis, and go downstream beyond to the sea. However, if you are heading for the Susquehanna or the Ohio, you might have taken the first, second, or third small creek to the right, below the stone site, and carry your skin boat across the land for a portage of about 1.5km to Beaver Kill Creek or Willowemoc Creek. Either of these would bring you to the Delaware near the village of Hancock, NY, 80km northwest of Port Jervis. This portage looks perhaps difficult on the topographic, but should be examined, because it would give a reasonable explanation for the site location of this petroglyph. Old marker stones which might be present near the junctions with these small side creeks should be looked for.

NOTICE ON a map (Fig.9) how close (15km) the Delaware approaches the Susquehanna River near Binghamton (Windsor, Deposit), NY, 110km west of this stone site. Tributaries of the Susquehanna are close to those of the Ohio River, 280km to the west, along the New York/Pennsylvania border. The distance between the headwaters of the Susquehanna and the Allegheny (Ohio) River near Coudersport, Pa., is less than 20km. These short passage areas might provide important corroborating archaeological sites, and should be examined, particularly the railroad pass at Gulf Summit (order the "Gulf Summit NY USGS Quadrangle). A portage only 2 miles in length (3km), is located further south, near Altoona, Pa., called "Horseshoe Bend" (Ref.10). The towns of "Summit" and "Portage", and the "Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site" are located there today. An ancient name for the Ohio is "the Winding River" (c.500 AD, Refs.12,13). This might be a reason, too, for the round forms of the left leg of the petroglyph.

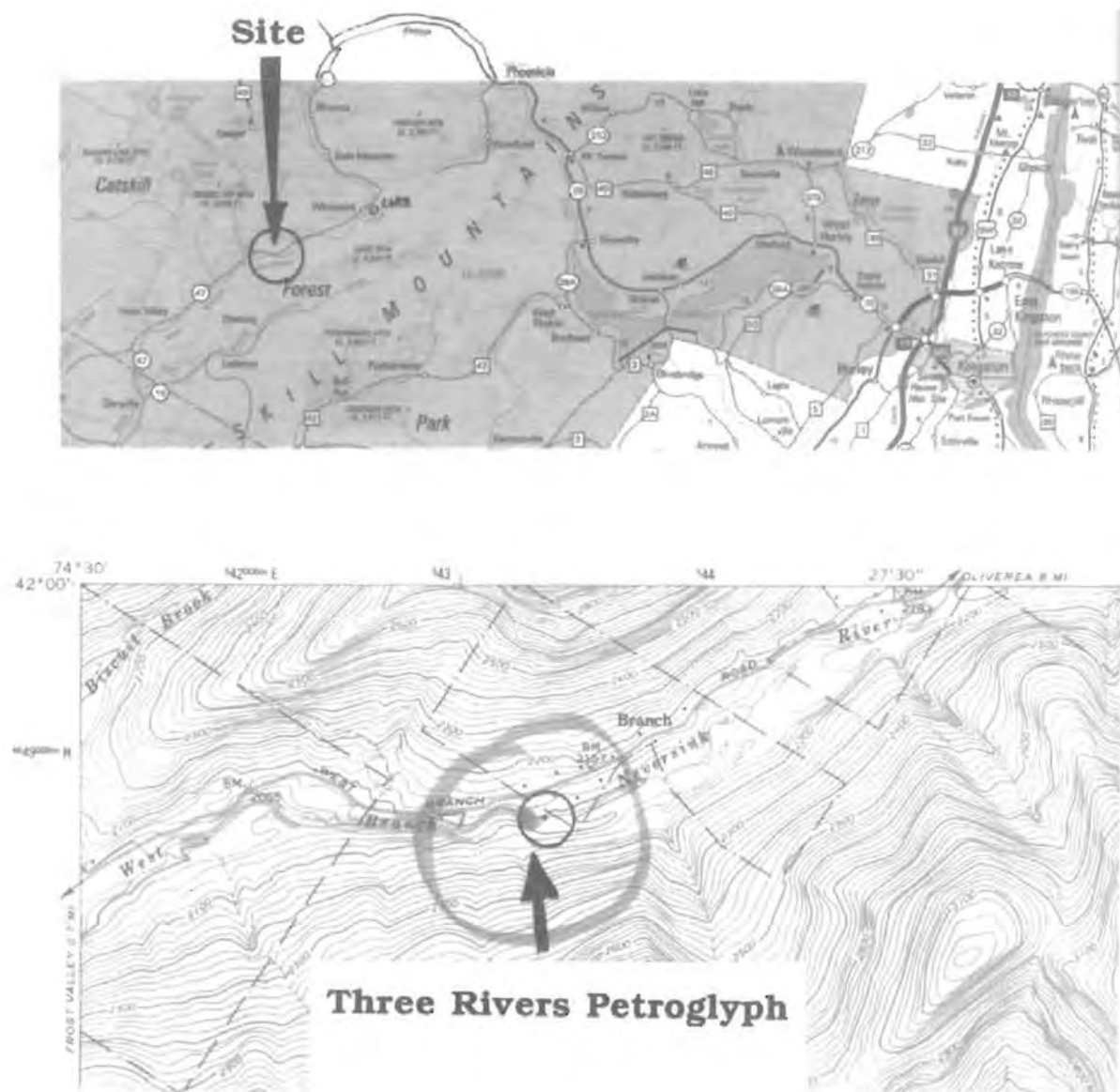


Fig.3 Maps of the site. **Above:** The Three Rivers Petroglyph on the West Branch of the Neversink River, 45km west of the Hudson River (1cm=3.3km). **Below:** Portion of USGS Quadrangle topographic map. The Three Rivers Petroglyph at 42°N, altitude 2100ft.= 640m (1cm=0.24km).

Latitudes

By correctly sizing the distances of the petroglyph, the spiral again demonstrates the use of latitudes, so the community of the man who made the inscription was aware of the astronomic, mathematical and geographic knowledge of the megalithic people, and undoubtedly had a background in sailing at sea. The Atlantic coast is only 150km away, and the Atlantic entrance to Chesapeake Bay, shown in the petroglyph, is exactly 5° of latitude south of this site, as shown by the 5 coils of the spiral. The center of the spiral (meaning the spot where the petroglyph is located), makes an angle of 42° with the lower edge (bottom) of the stone (see Fig.8), encoding the latitude of this site, which is 42°N. We agree with a previous study (Ref.1), that the making of the carving was started at this center. The inscription thus reveals that it was designed in the megalithic fashion (first identifying its latitude).

THE PETROGLYPH is located at the end of a straight halfmile long section of the Neversink River (Figs.1,3), which points 20°WSW in the direction of the shortest distance to the Delaware River, 50km, and also is the correct direction to the place where the Ohio joins the Mississippi. This is near Cairo, Illinois, 1300km away from this site. This place is 5° of latitude south of the petroglyph, at 37°N, as indicated by the spiral ($42^\circ - 5^\circ = 37^\circ$). Clearly, this junction, illustrated in the 3rd leg of the petroglyph, was considered to be the center of the waterways of North America.

Copper from Michigan was brought down the St. Lawrence (47°N) and traded for valuables brought from Europe by traders, who returned to the Old World via Cape Race at 47°N ($42^\circ + 5^\circ$ of the five-wide spiral = 47°). It is not uncommon for multiple symbolisms like this to have been built into megalithic inscriptions, indicating that they were very carefully thought out before the carving was done. No doubt latitudes were sometimes difficult to figure in the overcast skies and

inclement weather that occur in the Catskill mountains. This carver did a valuable service to his community by creating this inscription, probably because several expeditions had badly lost their way.

Neighboring Archaeological Sites

Southeast of this petroglyph site (90km away), on the east side of the Hudson, in Putnam County, N.Y., there has been found a great concentration of stone "chambers". In fact, so many in such a small rocky area, that today's researchers are thinking there was a colony here. Such a colony nearby would certainly be supportive of the need for a transportation corridor to the west through the Catskills. Martin Brech, who lives in the area, gave us a tour of some of the chambers (Fig.10). Notice the standing menhir with celestial alignments in the bottom photo. This is one of the remaining "hundred" chambers that Mr. Brech and others are studying. He said he thinks there were 200 chambers once, but housing development is proceeding quickly in the county, and reducing their number. Unfortunately he reports that local archaeologists are being paid fees from developers for signing "Declarations of Non-Significance" on Environmental Impact Statements, so the corbelled chambers (at least 1st millenium BC, Ref.11), some with inscribed Ogam dedications to Baal, can removed from housing sites. The "professionals" still cling to the "colonial root cellar" explanation.

WE ALSO WENT to see the Cobble Hill Mound in South Granville, and finally found it, covered with trees, behind a nursery business. The nice nursery owner told us "there were two more, smaller mounds, over there, but we just bulldozed them, to make more room for the nursery"!

For an intriguing review of megalithic stones in the river valleys of the East Coast, see Trento's books (Refs.7&8). The transportation corridor from Kingston on the Hudson to Port Jervis on the Delaware (about



Fig.4 The "legs" of the petroglyph, and how well they match with the actual courses of the Delaware, Susquehanna, and Allegheny (Ohio) Rivers on an Eastern US map.





km south of the petroglyph, Fig.9), was replaced at some later date by a 104 mile (165km) road, called the "Old Mine Road", which has stone cairns along the way. "Along the (adjacent) ridge ... there are numerous cuts and tunnels carved entirely by hand tools ... some of these tunnels measure 6 feet wide, 4 feet high, and 500 feet deep" (1x2x150m). "There is no trace of gunpowder or the subsequent blasts, (but there is) evidence of pick and wedge mining. (There are) radial lines of stone piles, hundreds of conical stone piles, all constructed on base boulders... (apparently) the debris of an ancient Old World People, (leaving behind) inscribed amulets, engraved pebbles, aligned rocks.. (Ref.7). Trento shows two photos of these mine tunnels and a rough map in his new book (Ref.8). This mining for copper, iron, and lead was probably going on in the 1st millennium BC.

TRENTO DISCUSSES the Hawley Stone (Fig.11, right), found near the Lackawaxen-Delaware River confluence (30km NW of Port Jervis, 70km SW of the petroglyph). This stone is not yet deciphered. It probably dates from the second half of the first millennium BC. His comments on the Delaware are helpful: "the River travels the same route today that it did some 200 million years ago, (and) before sucked dry by New York City's municipal water needs, (it was) much deeper and more navigable ... there have been inscribed stones found in abundance in the Delaware River Valley. As usual, regional archaeologists, unable to explain the meaning of the etched symbols, have simply put the artifacts aside" (Ref.7).

Figure 11 (left) is a photo of a small metal urn (found by a ten-year old) washed out in a backyard close to Binghamton, NY, in 1973. This is very near the portage we suggest near Windsor/Deposit NY (see Fig.9). On page 79 of his book *Saga America* (Ref.4), Dr. Fell discusses this urn "decorated with Phoenician themes in the upper part which depicts goddess Astarte, with Egyptian-inspired

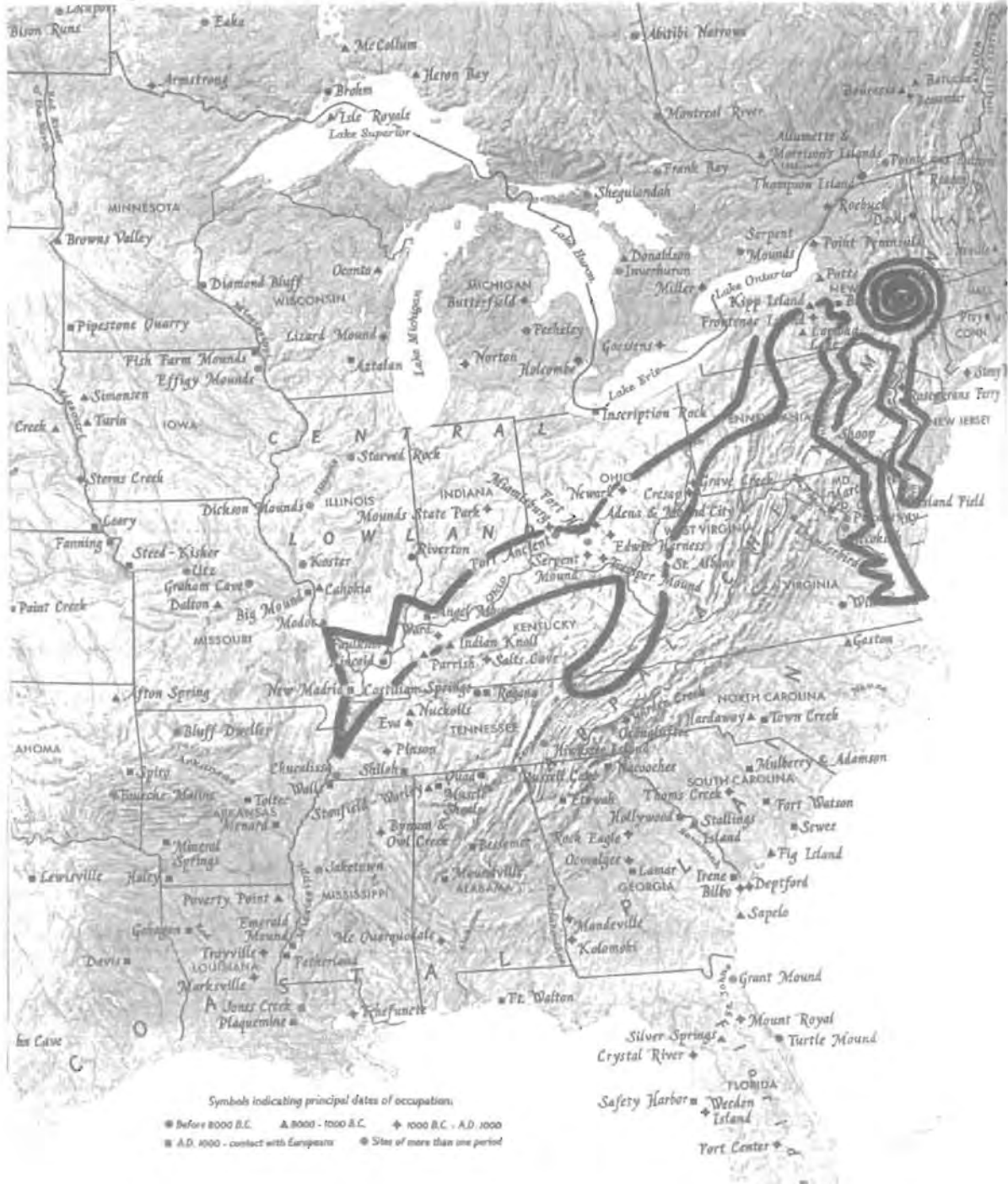
ornament below, apparently African rain-dancers. The style, of mixed derivation, recalls the work of Cypriot Phoenicians around 600 BC, when such objects were manufactured for distribution and sale, mainly to semi-civilized barbarians, by traders from Carthage. The urn was discovered in an excavation carried out by the Middlebury Archaeological Research Center near the junction of the Susquehanna and the Chenango Rivers, New York. Phoenician inscriptions had earlier been recognized in the Susquehanna region by Phillip Beistline and Dr. William W. Strong" (Ref.4).

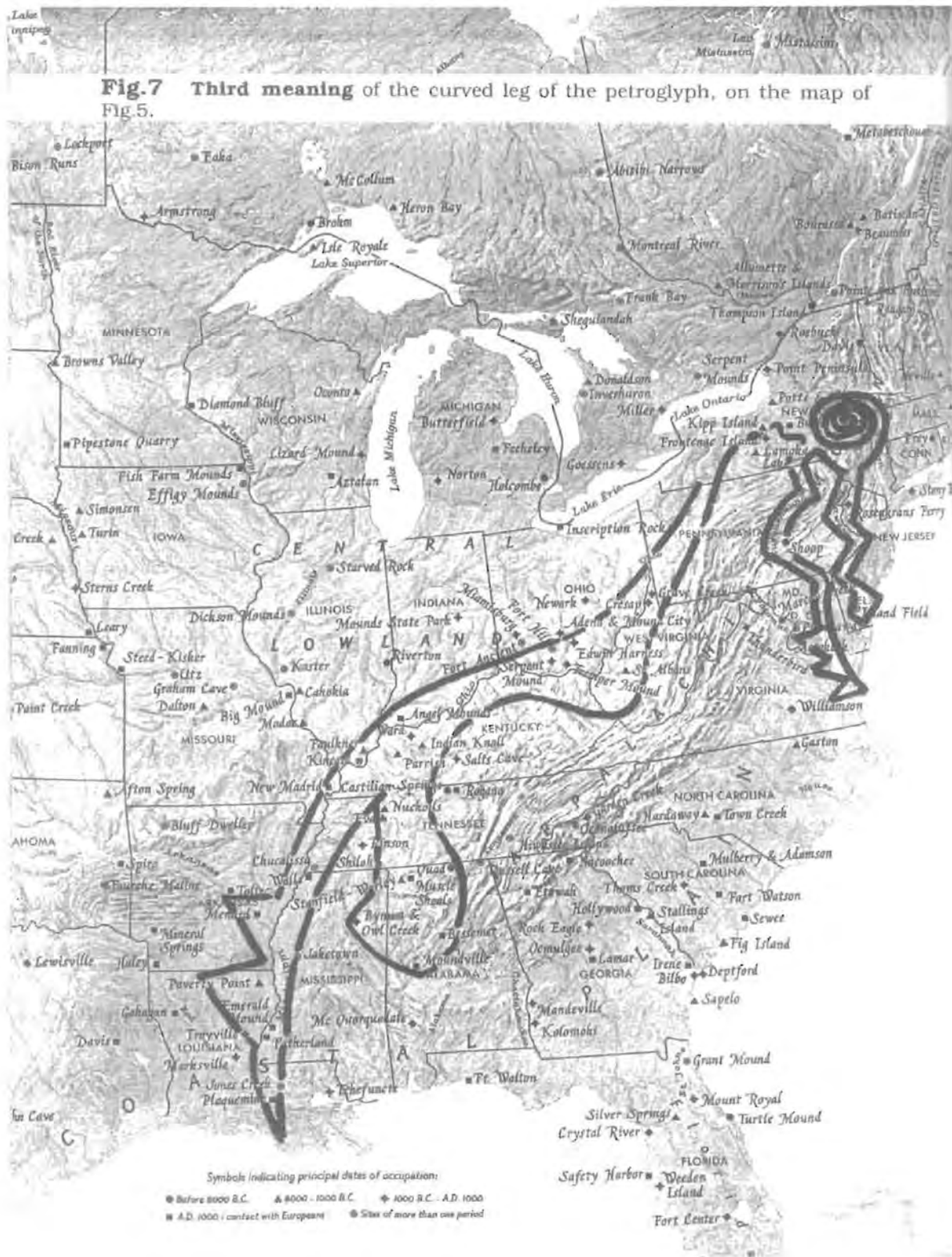
Near Elmira (75km west of Binghamton, and 185km west of the petroglyph), on a tributary of the Susquehanna, is an ancient set of earthworks called Fort Hill. Trento explains, "that it is an embankment, 270 feet in length, 6 to 9 feet wide at the top, and higher than his head" (80x3x2m), maybe older than the 1st millennium BC (Refs.7,8).

Other relics have been found near the probable portage near Coudersport. One of these is the Genesee Stone (Ref.6). This stone was found on the Genesee River before 1975. "Barry Fell deciphered the stone ... identified it as the Iberic alphabet and Punic language." The authors Warren Dexter and Donna Martin illustrate their book with maps of rivers and relic site locations. Prominent is the Genesee/Allegheny/Susquehanna junction near Coudersport. "The Genesee flows northward across New York State into Lake Ontario. At its beginning is a short portage between it and the western branch of the Susquehanna River as well as a short portage to the Allegheny River" (pg.53, Ref.6). "Punic inscriptions cover the "Susquehanna Stones" in Pennsylvania" (probably 300 BC - 200 AD). In the same valley, the late Dr. W. Strong collected 500 inscribed stones comprising Celtiberian, Phoenician, and Basque grave markers, from a Bronze Age settlement, about 800-600 BC (Ref.11).



Fig.6 Second meaning of the curved leg of the petroglyph, on the map of Fig.5.





Mertz reviews a cardinaly-oriented boat burial found in a mound on Vincent Island, in the Pigeon River, Tennessee, as reported by the Thomas Report to the Smithsonian, which probably dated from the 1st millenium BC (Ref.25). She goes on to say that "Huntingdon stands today on a site which in Revolutionary War times was known as Standing Stone. Here at this spot an ancient stone marker once towered on a promontory. Amazed explorers described the stone as an obelisk - fourteen feet high, broad of base, tapering to six or seven inches at the top, covered on all four sides with undecipherable letters, believed by some who first saw it to have been Egyptian Hieroglyphics. This stone is only one of a great many recorded standing stones that earliest travelers and explorers found marking the trail from the Atlantic to the Ohio by water - a trail of standing stone markers found as far west as Lancaster, Ohio. Diaries of various early wanderers through this then wild region - David Zeisberger, Conrad Weiser, George Groghan, Hechwelder, Gist and Peter Kalm - all faithfully testify to these standing stone markers having been there before their own time" (Ref.10).

The Mysterious Ohio Connection of the 3rd Leg

THOUGH MOST archaeologists claim that there was never an Iron Age in America, steel executive and engineer Arlington Mallery has shown otherwise (Ref.2). In his excellent book "The Rediscovery of Lost America" are photos of both Viking and Celtic style iron furnaces along the Ohio River and in Virginia. His photos show remains of iron implements, some cladded, such as shovels, and there is a photo of a group of 60 pound iron bars lined up against his garage. Such colonies of a Pre-Columbian iron industry on the Ohio would date from the 1st millenium BC. He found skeletons stacked 3-5 deep, and believed that Black Death had reached these settlements. Also, Caesar's defeat of the Celtic fleet off Brittany in 51 BC could have sent waves of refugees west or isolated

overseas settlements through loss of the fleet.

A LOT MORE study of the mysterious so-called Adena and Hopewell peoples is needed, who are credited with the Serpent Mound, the enormous astronomic circles, squares and octagon earthworks that were up to a quarter of a mile in diameter every two miles along a 14 mile stretch near Chillicothe, Ohio, and covered four square miles with walled avenues at Newark, Ohio. Carl Munck has found mathematical relationships between these huge monuments and other megalithic monuments, as well as evidence for a spherical mathematics, and a global longitude/latitude grid system based on a Giza meridian, which appears to be a very fertile area for more study (Ref.19). The global scale of these findings is reinforced by Stecchini, who states that "all the measures of the ancient world constituted a rational and organic system ... the figures I have succeeded in establishing so far, suggest that Pre-Columbian American units agree with those of the Old World" (Ref.24). A former Director of the US National Park Service has written a historical perspective on these monuments, with his opening chapter entitled "The Great Dying" (Ref.18). There is a Cherokee legend of their defeat of the "Moon Eyes" (blue eyed) people at Fort Ancient, Tenn, and there are many related colonial era stories, such as a colonist in Virginia saving himself from death by speaking "Welsh" with his captors. Nine ancient hilltop dry-stone wall structures (6"x6"x600") in the southern tip of Illinois are laid out E-W at 38°N, in the same pattern as the Azores, which are at this same latitude. These structures indicate the ongoing importance of the Azores and the SunGod to people who had their roots in the Old World (Refs.9,21). These structures may date from the first millennium AD.

European readers may find hard to believe the quantity and quality of artifacts that have come out of the ground in the US that are unreported, largely unknown, undated,

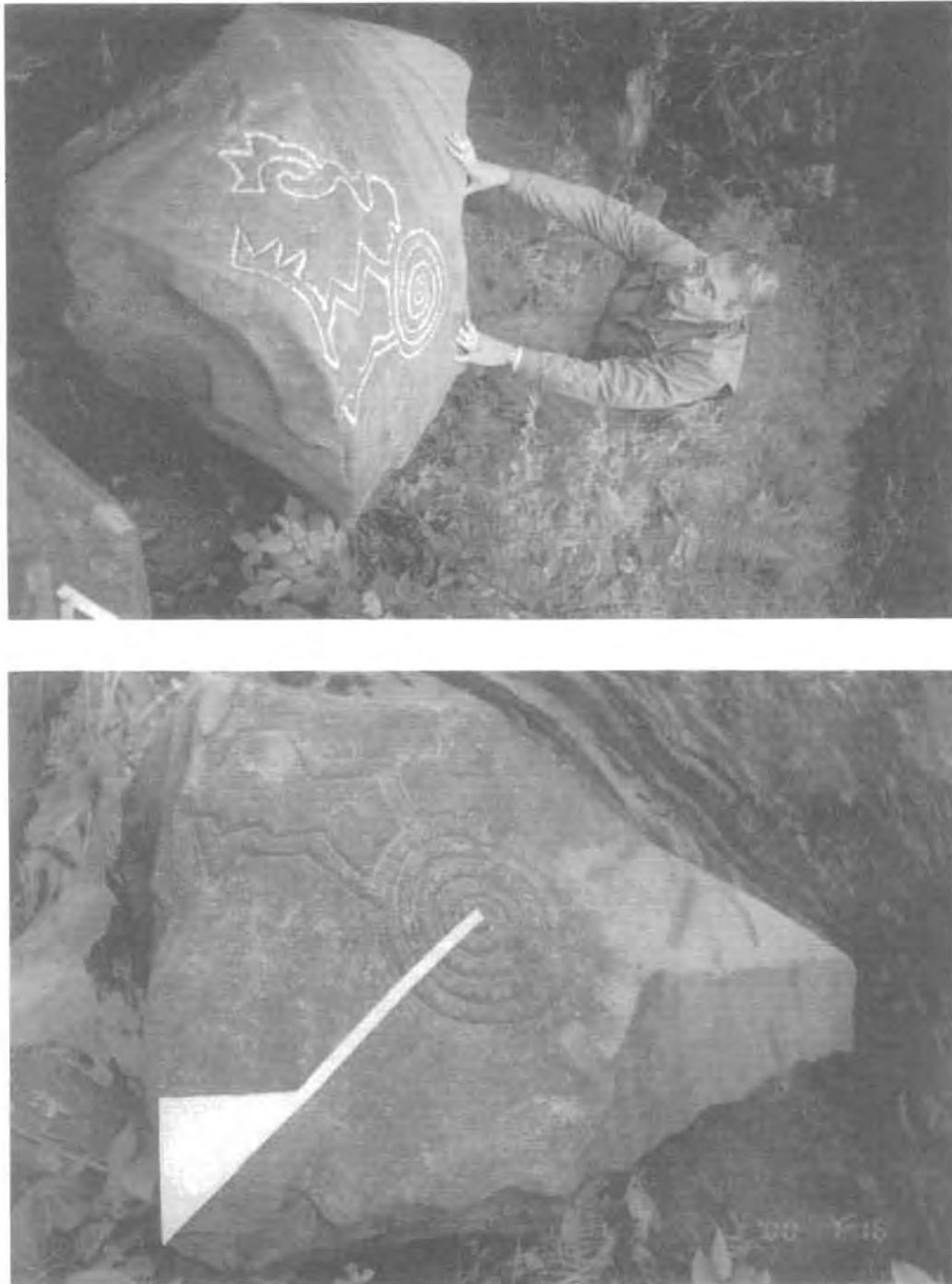
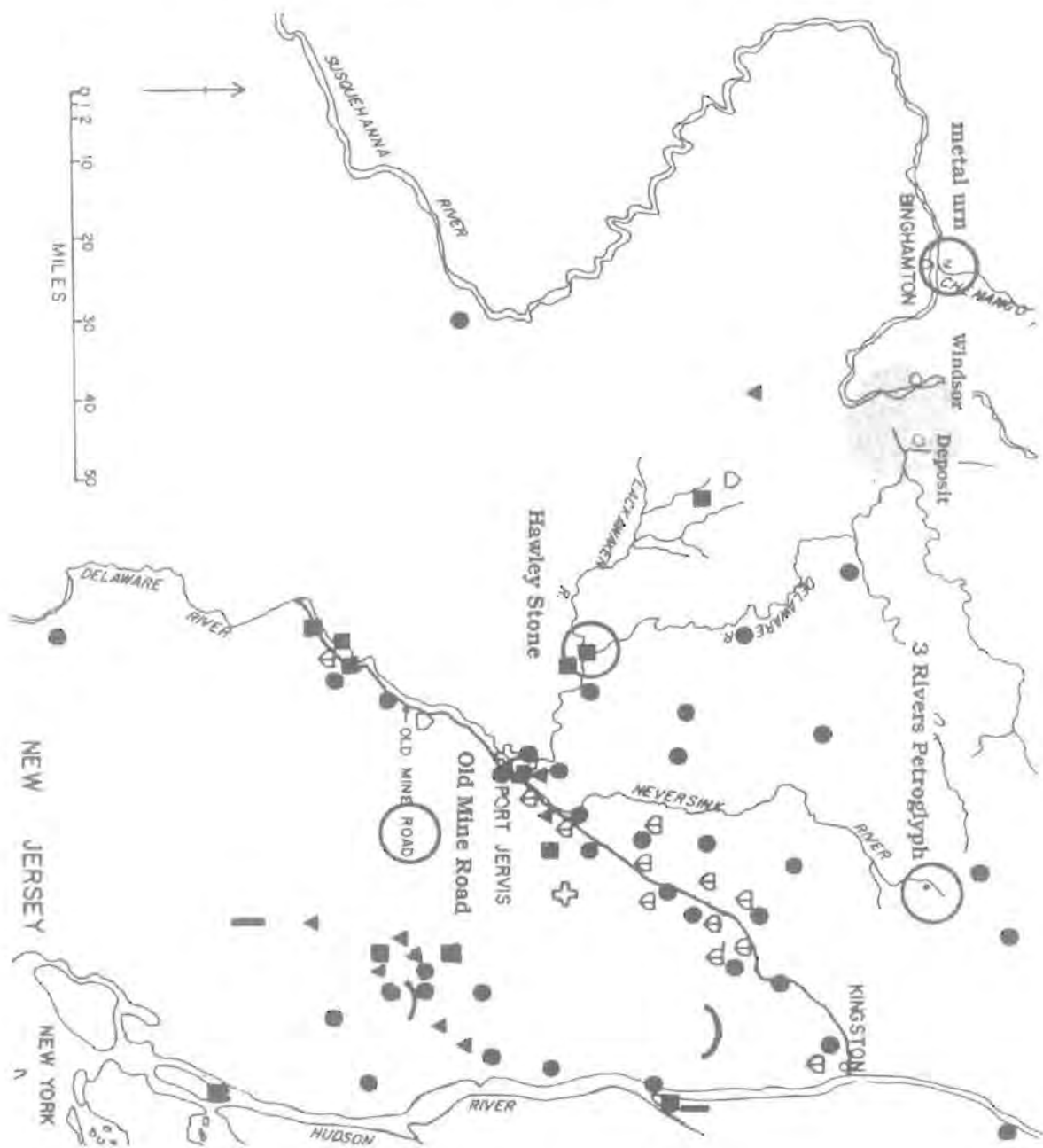


Fig.8 Above: The top of the boulder now points downstream, to a rapid in the middle of the small Neversink River. **Below:** The spiral makes an angle of 42° , showing the local latitude, 42°N . The upper edge on top of the stone represents the Adirondack Mountains (c.1500 BC).

Fig.9 The location of the 3 Rivers petroglyph, the metal urn, the Hawley Stone, the Old Mine Road, and the Windsor-Deposit area. The little shield figures are hand-chipped tunnels identified by Trento, and the other figures are stone piles, walls, menhirs, chambers or dolmen (Ref.7)



unstudied, and ignored by professional archaeology in the US. Hopefully these objects have not been lost, but have only disappeared into private collections. Fascinating examples of this state of affairs are the Richardson and Wilmington tablets (Fig.15) found with a mica plate (10"x13") under a mound in Ohio in 1879, reported in 1881. The mound had a diameter of c.43 feet, and a height of c.7 feet. Similar mounds were nearby (Ref.9). Corliss calls these the "most interesting relics from the Mound Builder's Period that have ever been found" (c.500 BC - 200 AD), with well-dressed male and female persons, animals, and blocks of strange glyphs (Ref.9). Evidence in the Old World is a problem too. Copies and Greek translations of a column of the Temple of Neith, telling the story of Atlantis, which were given by Egyptian priests to Greek Historian Crantor (310 BC) are thought to have been burned in the Library of Alexandria (Ref.25). The column may now lie under the City of Cairo.

Two 6"x8" golden metal plates were reported sedimentary rocks, not glaciated rocks. They are not igneous because there is even a mudstone inclusion in one of them, and there are faint stratification lines in the other (Fig.13). They are fine-grained metamorphic sandstone, meaning they have been fused under heat and pressure, to almost a quartzite. Remember that Panther Mountain, at the head of the creek, has been shown to be a plug of hardened sedimentary rock itself. This might be some of it (Ref.5). The rocks show iron oxide weathering, fairly deep into the stone (1-2mm). As can be seen on the sample, and by the abrasive damage on the petroglyph, the oxidized surface is much less hard than the deeper stone. Notice on the stone how the groove is lighter-colored where it is cut through the oxidized layer on one of the samples. Yet the glyph groove walls are dark, showing the patina of re-oxidization over considerable time.

The person who made the Three Rivers

found by Joseph Smith "in a hollow cavern" atop a mound or hill on his farm in the early 1800s. You may visit the mound, though the tablets are gone, now called the Angel of Moroni Monument at the Joseph Smith Farm in Palmyra, NY, near I-90 south of Rochester, NY. Three lines of the "hieroglyphic" inscriptions that Smith copied from the plates are reproduced and discussed as having been identified as Egyptian, Chaldean, Assyrian and Arabic in Trento's book (Ref.8). Smith wrote about these tablets, which formed the basis of his Book of Mormon, which he said told a tale of ancient Israelites who came to America in 600 BC. Archaeologists have not declared these plates to be fakes.

Dating

To study the geology of the creekside boulder, the authors removed for study two small pieces of river rock from the streamside nearby, which looked similar to the stone of the inscription. Both the petroglyph and the samples appear to be stream-eroded

PETROGLYPH on the Neversink was undoubtedly skilled in metal tool use, because the details of the carving have been beautifully done. The "pecking" method is clearly seen in Figure 12. The fellow chose a fine grained hard rock with a smooth, water polished surface. We know that people from the end of the "Stone Age" had knowledge of the qualities of stone. The inscription was probably carved with a bronze or iron tool. A substantial amount of copper and bronze artifacts have been found in the surroundings in New England (Ref.11). Some early iron had metal impurities in it that serendipitously gave some early tools and weapons the qualities of steel. The author's groove (Fig.13), with a steel tool, took quite a lot of impact force. Since this petroglyph shows the river routes to Virginia and Ohio, it might have been carved by an iron tool manufactured in the USA.

The petroglyph dates back from the time

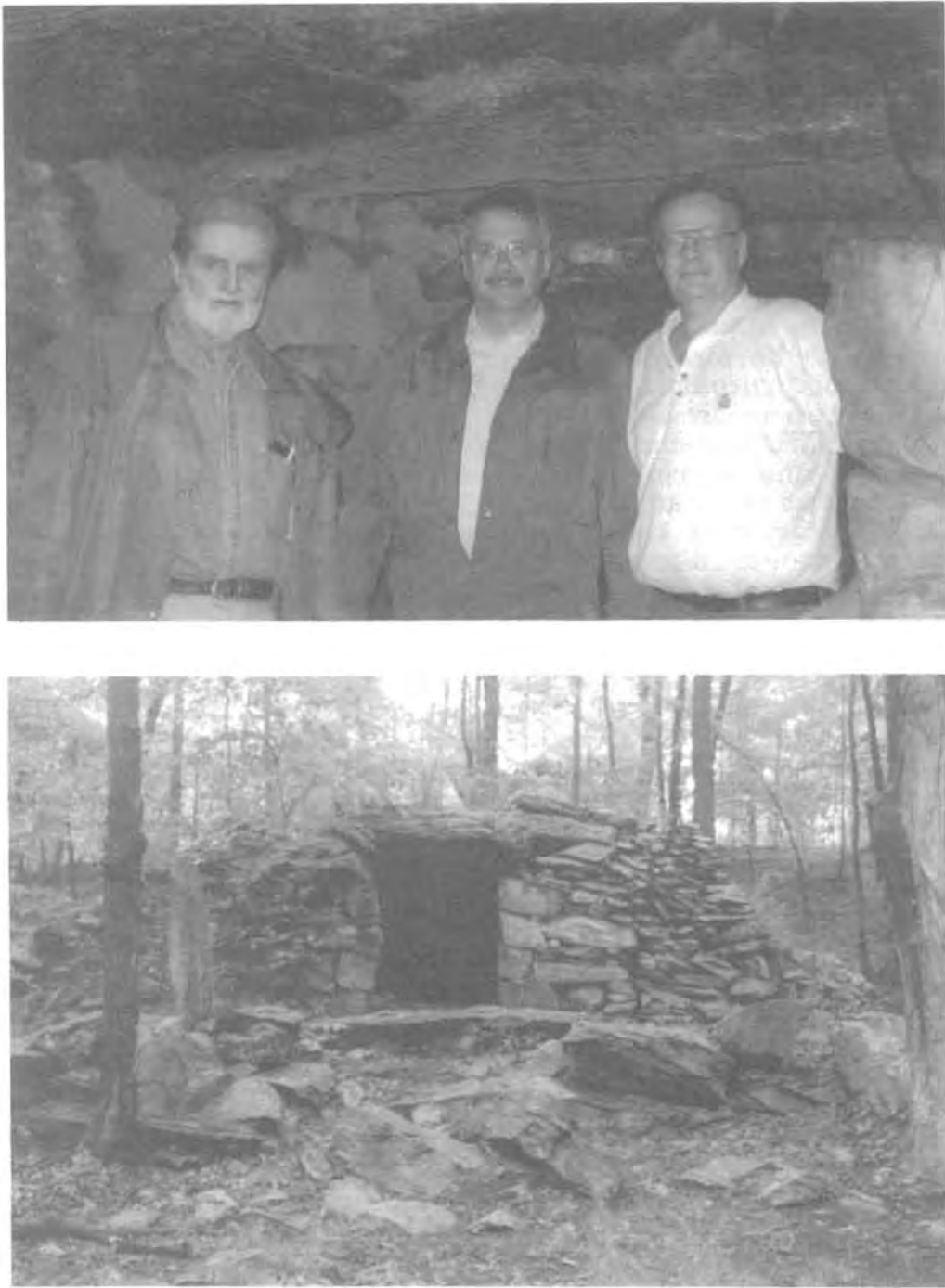


Fig.10 **Above:** The authors with Martin Brech (left). in the "California Hill Chamber" in Putnam County, N.Y., July 15, 2000. **Below:** Note the menhir at the left side (behind a tree) outside the chamber, which is lined up with other megaliths on astronomic and geographic lines (1st millenium BC).



Fig.11 Left: Metal urn found near the confluence of the Chenango and Susquehanna Rivers, Binghamton, NY (c.600 BC, photo by Trento, Ref.7).
Right: Hawley Stone. The inscribed block found near the Lackawaxen-Delaware River confluence. The inscription (chalked for photo) has yet to be deciphered (probably c.200 BC, photo by Dr. V. Leslie, Ref.7).

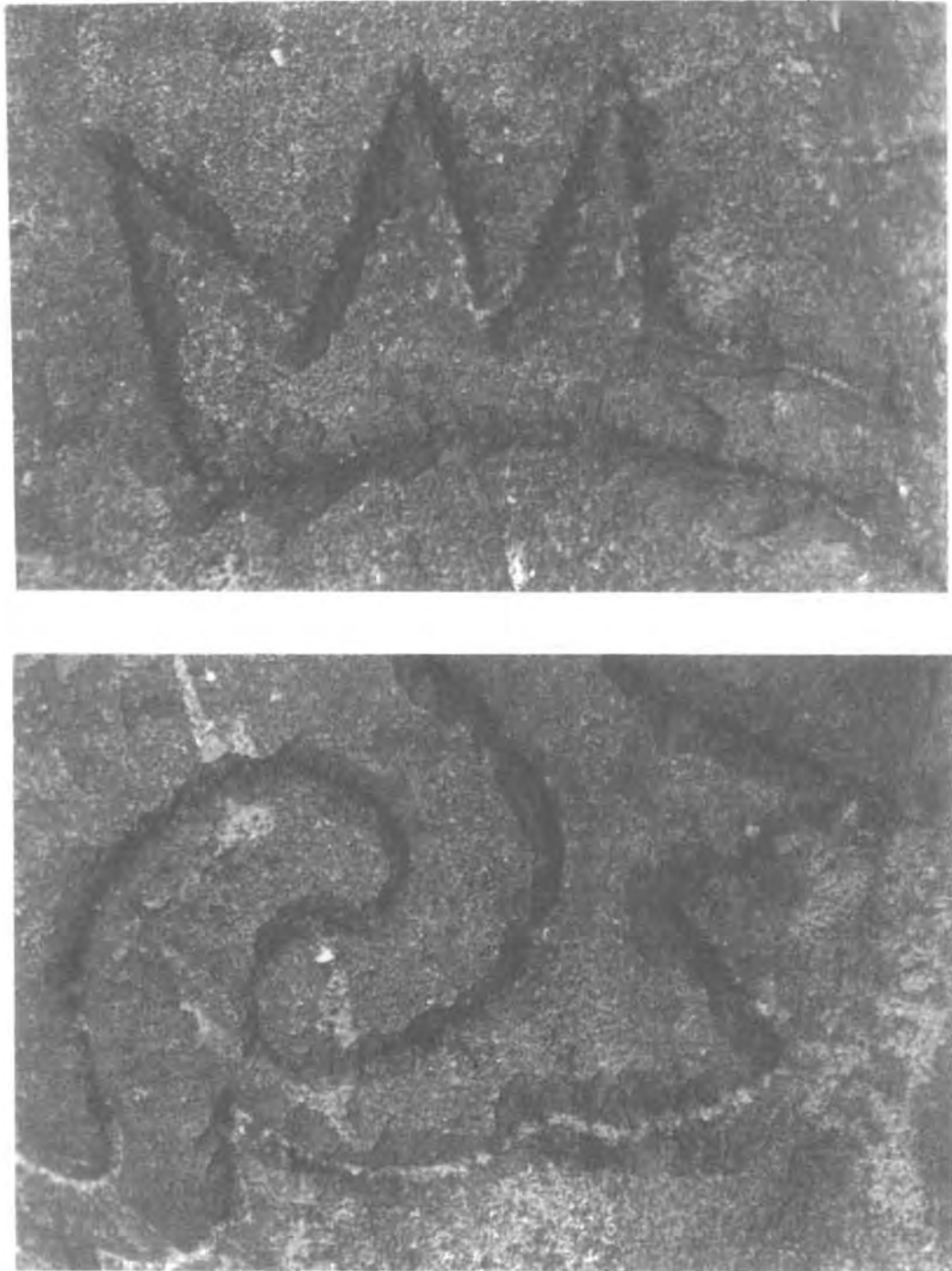


Fig.12 Close-ups showing the "pecking" style of the petroglyph, and the dark patination of most of the deep grooves (c.1500 BC).



Fig.13 Below: Fresh groove cut by authors in a similar fine-grained metamorphic sandstone sample from the site. Note brightness of the fresh cut compared with the discoloration of the old chip, which is darkly weathered, like the petroglyph. The depth of the surface oxidation of this old rock can be seen at its right edge, where the rock was split.

period when route-finding and transportation was by boat, via the rivers. In America there are more maps like this one, but they are not deciphered yet. At Walnut Island in the Susquehanna River (SE Pennsylvania, 280km south of the petroglyph) two "coilshaped figures" were recorded (below Safe Harbor Dam, but above Holtwood Dam) prior to the construction of a power dam and the subsequent inundation of the site (Refs.1,8).

THE SPIRAL is a very old megalithic symbol, in Europe used often in the fourth and third millennia BC. Probably, the meaning was still known in the second millennium BC, because their consistent use in inscriptions continues for a long period. Some old petroglyphs of rivers are known in Ireland, and some newer, more stylized ones are found in the rest of Europe (Refs.3,15), but these are not very common, especially the use of parallel grooves. Indication of river entrances by sharp peaks has not been previously seen. The last mentioned features, and the way the petroglyph is performed, point to a late megalithic date. It is for sure that the petroglyph dates after the megalithic discovery of America, c.2500 BC (Ref.3). Referring to the closely related cup and ring petroglyphs, Barry Fell (Ref.11) states, that in general: "large numbers of (these) examples are known from regions where metallic ores occur", and he adds: "Petroglyphs of this kind may be among America's oldest legacies of visits by people from the Old World". It is for sure that the petroglyph dates from before 1000 BC, because spirals in stone having a geographic meaning, were simply not carved by the cultures that came after the megalith builders. Lenik and Gibbs (Ref.1) confirm that "the surface of the rock including the glyph and the flake scars are patinated" (Figs.12-14). Also because of the likely use of the petroglyph to aid travelers between inhabited areas, we think it has a late megalithic date

of c.1500 BC.

Discussion

An article in the NEARA Journal ("A Catskill Mountains Enigma", Ref.1) by Edward Lenik and Nancy Gibbs carefully and usefully researches the site. Due to unfortunate Pre-Columbian professional prejudice, the article concludes a priori that since it must have been created by a pointed metal tool, it must have been created in the last 400 years, probably by an Indian. It has been more recently said that the petroglyph was carved by "hippies in the 60's". But the petroglyph is large, and carefully executed. It shows forethought, and a large amount of work and serious intent. Its location in the river, where it appears to be under water during the snow melt-off in the Spring, and the dark weathering and patina of the old chip and grooves argue that it is not a recent carving. Because of the spiral and the legs, and the geographic meanings of both, we are convinced it is a megalithic petroglyph from the 2nd millennium BC, carved by the megalithic culture of New England, who had bronze, and later, iron tools. We agree that "the aesthetic achievement and technical excellence present in the spiral design suggests that making it was a time consuming, exacting, and important activity".

THE EDGES of the stone should be investigated accurately. The right edge may show details of the Hudson River, or the Atlantic coast, and the left edge may display elements of either Lake Erie, or the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains which run largely parallel. In the immediate area of the stone are stone walls and other lithic features which should be surveyed. We are dismayed that the figure appears to be damaged by being walked upon, or hit by ice or flotsam in the river (Fig.14). In view of the antiquity, high quality, and historic value of the petroglyph, we recommend immediate protection of the site.

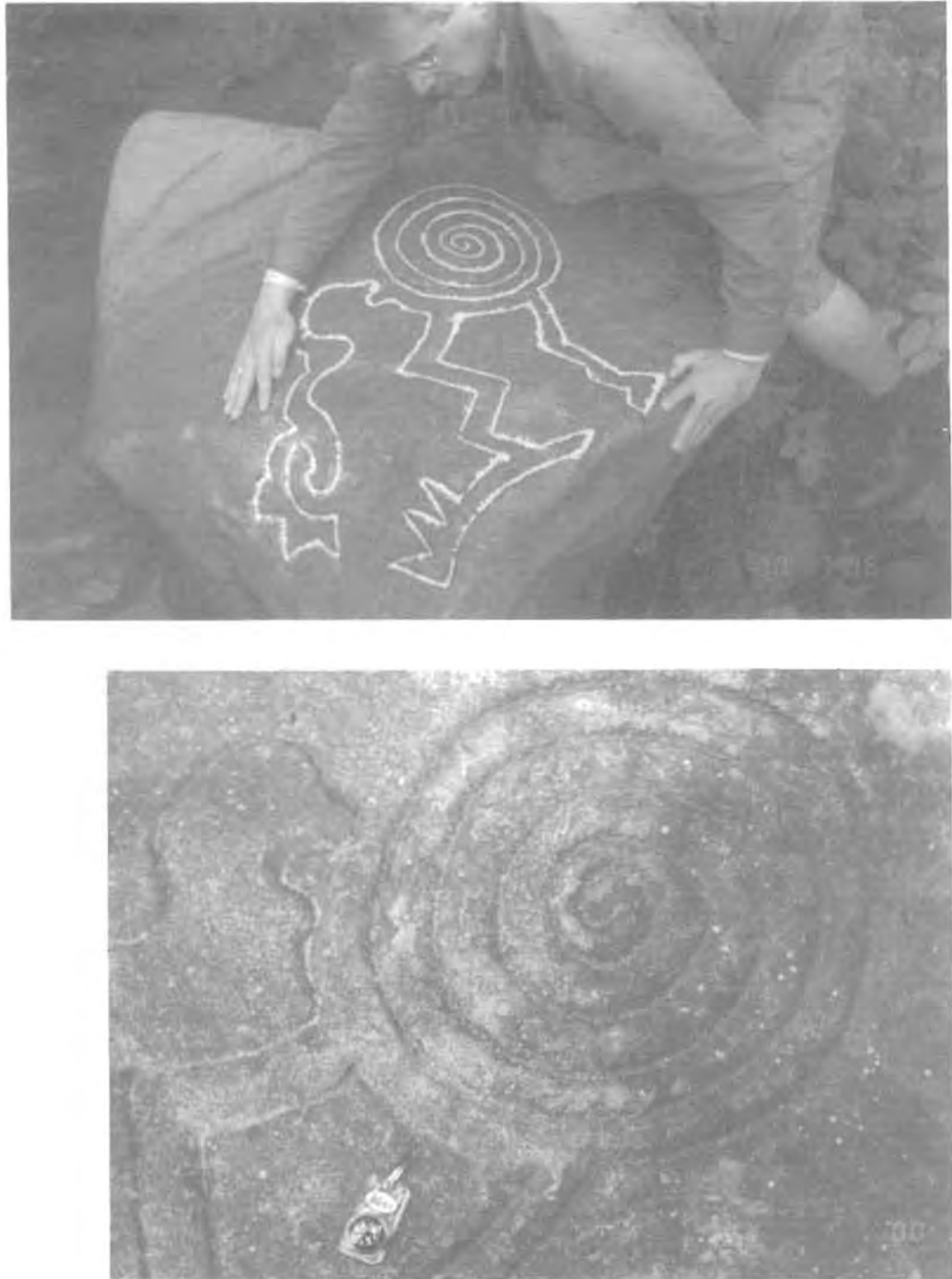


Fig.14 Above: Dr. de Jonge shows the difference between a dark old chip made by the carver (left forefinger, c.1500 BC), and a recent light orange abrasion damage (right forefinger). **Below:** Note the bright-colored damage to the top of the spirals, probably from being walked on.

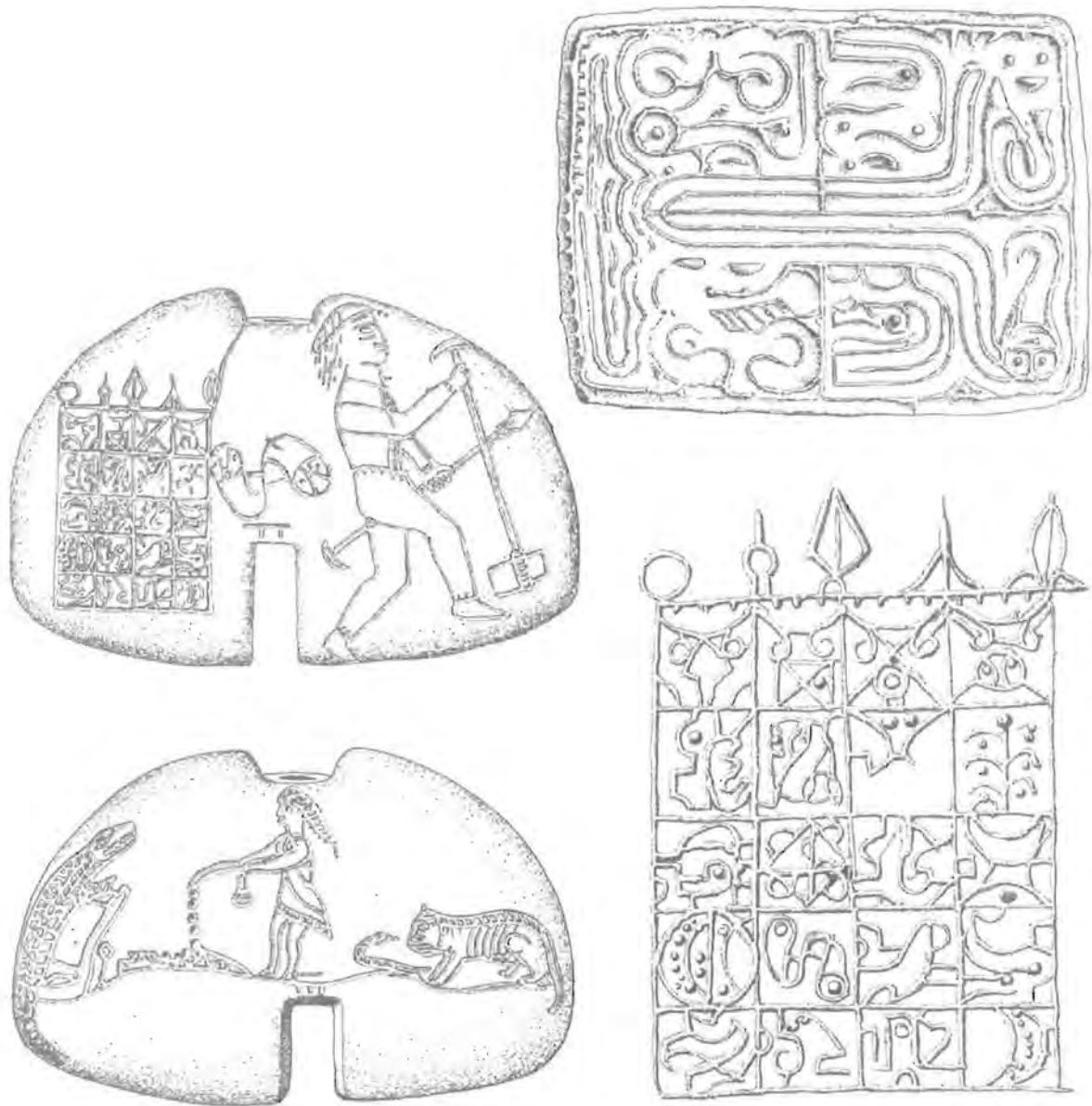


Fig.15 **Right, upper,** the Richardson Tablet. This decorated 3 7/8"x 4 7/8" piece of Waverly Sandstone was found clasped in the left hand of a skeleton in a charcoal and ash filled vault under Sparks Mound in Wilmington, Ohio. Jan. 31, 1879. **Left,** the Wilmington Tablet, found in the center of a pit surrounded by a circular vault of stones filled with charcoal and ashes, also nearly under the center of the same mound on Feb. 12, 1879. **Right, below,** a portion of the upper left Wilmington Tablet "reproduced 2 1/2 diameters" (Ref.9, pg.588, from Welch & Richardson, "American Antiquarian" 4:40-48, 1881). "Mazes and labyrinths are thought to have a history of about 5,000 years" (Ref.21).

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