

**Old World - New World Diffusion**

**Part 4**

**Chapter IX**

**ALGONQUIAN MARK WRITING**



The Blanchard stone of Vermont with Ogam inscriptions. Photo by Tim Fohl, NEARA expedition.  
Source : Rock Piles, <http://rockpiles.blogspot.ca/2006/05/vermont-blanchard-stone-from-tim-fohl.html>

## OJEMI - THE AMERICAN OGAMS

If Solutreans came to America 20,000+ years ago with their culture and lithic technology, then it is only logical that they also left their marks and symbols in Rock Art.

Gerry McLoughlin, a member of NEARA (NewEngland Antiquities Reaserch Association), wrote to me in June of 2001 concerning *Putnam County Chamber Ogam*. He had stumbled on a stone chamber site with some ogham-like markings in the State of NewYork. Here is what he wrote:

"Regarding the history of this chamber: We have not been able to get the true history of this or other nearby chambers. There is a farm house close by, but there is no record of the original farmer either building the chamber or having it pre-existent on his land. The local historians dismiss these chambers as being simply colonial root cellars."

I then replied telling him that, to my knowledge, the Ogam inscription read in Algonquian and not Celtic. My reply intrigued him:

"I am interested in understanding more about how the Algonquians came to know about and create Ogam. Is there any online information that you can point me to?"



1. Native Virginian archer, water colour by John White. Created between 1585 and 1586. White, an English artist and cartographer, accompanied the voyage from England to the Outer Banks of North Carolina under Sir Walter Raleigh's plan to settle "Virginia." White was at Roanoke Island for about thirteen months before

returning to England for more supplies. During this period he made a series of over seventy watercolor drawings of Native people, plants, and animals.

2. John White, "A cheife Herowans wyfe of Pomeoc and her daughter of the age of 8 or 10 years." (1585) British Museum, London.

Planet Open Knowledge Foundation

**A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia** (1903, facsimile of original 1588 book) by Thomas Hariot

<http://planet.okfn.org/category/virginia-dare/>

### **How did the Algonquians come to know about and create Ogam?**

There are many possibilities on how the Algonquians acquired Ogam...

- I. The Algonquians are descendants of Ice-Age Solutrean Caucasians from Europe who came across the Atlantic on large skin-boats following the great sea mammals. The proto-Ogam was used by the Paleolithic (Azilian style) and Neolithic (Danubian inscriptions) shamans of Europe.
- II. The Algonquians had old style Solutrean Proto-Ogam and improved it along the way from one Algonquian culture to another independently from the Old World systems.
- III. The Algonquian Medaws or Shamans maintained their magical writing through the ages and shared their teachings with the Celtic Druids who in turn reintroduced them into Europe after they had been forgotten there.
- IV. The Algonquians had Ogam and improved them after contact with pre-Columbian Europeans.
- V. The Algonquians learned it from Irish monks who visited them after Brendan the Navigator.

Ogams are very widely spread in all the areas occupied or once occupied by Algonquian peoples. These contrast with the Picture writing cultures of the North and South Western Plains Indians. These two forms of commemorating were intercultural.



Figure 1

1. Earliest Art in the Americas (c. 13,000 Before Present): Incised Image of a Proboscidean (Mammoth) on a Mineralized Extinct Animal Bone from Vero Beach, Florida. Barbara Purdy et al., *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 2011.  
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305440311001828>

2. Incised gannet bone found at the Torre shelf of Oiartzun, Spain, representing a horse.

3. Deer incised on gannet bone found at the Torre shelf of Oiartzun, Spain.

<http://bertan.gipuzkoakultura.net/eu/15/fr/5.php>

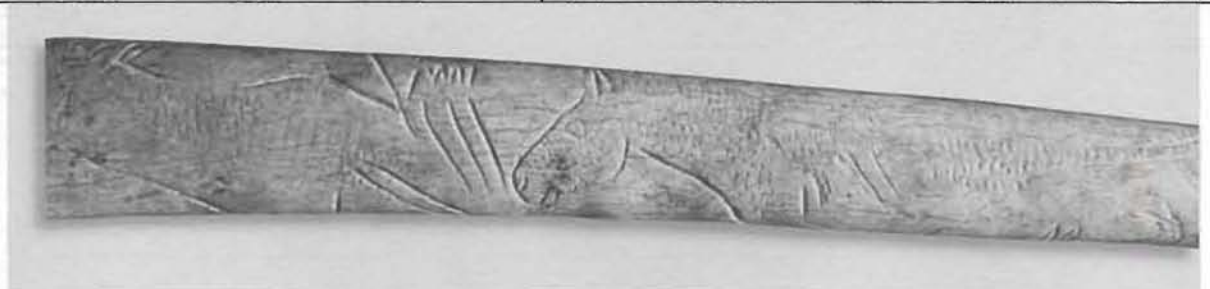


Figure 2



## The Irish Ogham versus American Ogam debate

Ogams? Oh my Gums! How could this be?

For the bonafide and trained specialists the scientific field there can be no debate concerning the presence of Ogham in North America. At worst, they are but tally marks and straight lines and at best, they are magical signs and symbols reserved to the native medicine men and shamans.

The French scholar Joseph Monard, in *Celtic Connection* (pp. 42, 45), was very careful about calling the "Indian marks" anything other but marks:

"A thing about the "ogham" from all over: France, Canada, the U.S.A etc. In my humble opinion, we should not use the term "ogham" for marks that have not been normalized and identified with the other recognized varieties: Irish, Scottish, or Pict. Many of the disorderly bars result from the trial of writing or from the need to engrave hastily on stone, wood, or bone in simple incisions. Curves were inevitably avoided. This is the case with many different primitive writings, like the Coelbreni and the ancient runes, for example. It is my belief that we do not stand much chance in understanding the mark counts in bar patterns along the lines of true oghams. This rather discouraging, but its better not to keep the illusion of having to do with configurations that are not typically oghamic.

There are however no laws to prevent one from trying. I tend to agree with Willem van Oranje (William of Orange): "*Niet nodig te hopen om te ondernemen; niet nodig te slagen om te volharden*," which translates roughly, "It is not necessary to have hope to undertake; it is not necessary to succeed to persevere."

Therefore, few are the scholars of epigraphy who admit to the possibility of the existence of an American Ogam<sup>3</sup>.

Two of their main arguments are the lack or near absence of stemlines (Druim)

<sup>3</sup> Spelling O-g-a-m for American Ogham as proposed by Donald Cyr to differentiate from standard ogham.

and near absence of vowels. Then there is the problem of dating and defacing due to erosion and vandalism.

In order to explain this anomaly, Fell had recourse to the highly contentious "Ogham consaine" or vowelless Ogham. This permitted him to give readings in various medieval languages such as Old-Irish and Arabic. Fell was inspired to do so from a photograph of a slate tablet bearing an ogam scale with Arabic letter equivalent. The photograph was produced from Credo Mutwa's personal collection. A collaborator of David Icke, Credo Mutwa is an African artist and a self proclaimed Zulu witch or shaman who claims to have been tortured by reptilian Alien Masonic conspirators. Needless to mention that the Credo Mutwa artifacts were all destroyed and removed from the scrutiny of science. If the Arabs had ever seen Oghams, it was most likely in the Iberian Peninsula. The claim for an African origin for Ogam was also first proposed by Credo Mutwa the "Alien abductee African Shaman". Of course all this was helped by Fell's oghamic consonantal word list in which consonant clusters are voiced-out in order to make up short Gaelic words. In the hope to extract an intelligible reading from an ogham line, the line is chopped-up in a string of "three letter words". Using this method, one can get words in any language; from Rongo-Rongo to Yoruba or Swahili. It is not true, as Edo Nylan wrote (*Discoveries in Natural History & Exploration*, University of California, 1996) that "*Many people have tried to translate the inscriptions using the Celtic language, but without any success*".

As Steve Moore wrote in the *Fortean Times* of London (quote from *Celtic Connection*, p. 88): "*To say that the Ogam script is "still indecipherable" is simply not true. The alphabet is well known, has been for some time, and a number of inscriptions have been read (mostly names on tombstones). More to the point, though, is the date of the script. It is not known before the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, and is thought to be inspired by Latin writing and especially by Roman numerals. (...) So it is certainly not the script of megalithic builders, who were active in the 4<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> millennia BC.*"

Context is important. It all depends from which culture and cultural area the markings or inscriptions are from. For example, for the Iberian Mediterranean region, it is better to conclude that the Oghams were still in use in Post-Roman Iberia hence showing its upkeep by both Celtiberian and Gaelic (and Pictish) Celts.

Following Fell's Arabic connection, Donald L. Cyr once asked (in *Celtic Connection* p. 87) "*Why would Ogam be used to write Arabic, for Heaven's*

sake?"

Another major drawback was Fell's use of Old-Irish and late medieval British languages to decipher antique inscriptions. This is how he attracted his most critical opponent, prof. Brandan OHehir who remarked that using Old-Irish was inappropriate. OHehir proposed Common Celtic or Old-Celtic as a better vehicle. Most problematic were his readings for the Windmill Hill tablets (c. 2200 B.C.E.) M.B. as MaB = "Son of", and MaBoNa as "Mother Goddess". At this level (-2200), the correct Proto-Celtic forms were \*maccos = "son", "boy" yielding Celtic Goidelic maqos and Brythonic mapos. The "Mother Goddess Mabona" coined by Fell never existed. It was coined from a very late medieval Welsh rendering of Mabon. Compare with the attested Maponos for "youthful/son". M-B at the proto level should translate as: aMBe for "both", "surrounding" as in the astronomical term for "both luminaries (Coligny Calendar-J.Monard). In America B.C., he explains how from inscriptions found at South Woodstock Vermont that M-H M-B spells-out Mahair Mabona for "Mother of Heroes"!?. Again, at this level, it should read Ma-SC-aM-Be from Mescemebi "they darken" as in the case of luminaries. Why the 'Sc' consonantal cluster for 'H'? As Monard explained (in *Celtic Connection* p. 47) : "Since the Latin "H" was essentially an "ornamental fantasy" of the Romans, the original value for this letter "Ɑ" would have to equate with the Greek "KHI", transcribed in Gaulish as an X, also found in both their Greek and Roman alphabets. For the Latin "XS" = KS, they distinguished it from the Greek "KHI" by writing "XS". This practice was continued by the Gallo-Romans in their rendering of Latin."

I suspect that the ancient Celtic scribes alternated a series of four consonants which followed the last letter, thus keeping the count. The 'H' follows the 'S', probably indicating the Brythonic 'S' to 'H' mutation and Goidelic 'SC / SQ' cluster (brythonic 'SP') from a more archaic 'XS' (KHS) ascription. The 'XS' could have latter shifted to the Forfedas (additional letters).

Another ambiguous and misunderstood Ogam letter is -////- for "SD". This is the Gaelic equivalent of the Gaulish barred 'D' : Ð. This letter latter interpreted as 'Z' was more like the English 'TH' sound as in *the* and *that*.

Mahair Mabona is the incorrect rendering of Mahair Mac Og. Mabona cannot be given with Old Irish since it is a forgery from Welsh. The correct Goidelic form is Ogios Maqos Matronas and Maponos Matronas in Brythonic<sup>4</sup>. All of this unfortunately, has created a "fellian" paradigm giving rise to many

<sup>4</sup> Cyr, Donald. "Exploring Rock Art", Stonehenge Viewpoint, pp. 94/120-121.

misconceptions in Celto-oghamic phraseology and abbreviations. Not that I question the existence of the Ogham Consaine, but that the American ogams belong to a logosyllabic sound code. Another problem was to make consonantal sequences fit word patterns. In many of Fell's decipherments such as M-H M-B for M(a)H(aiR) M(a)B(oNa) not all consonants are accounted for. Since there are no breaks in the many stroked sequence it is more than likely that what we are looking at are single words. A good example of the “fellian” interpretation of Ogam is the automatic approach: /// or ||| = B-L for BeL, “the Sun (god)”. Traditionally, in Indo-European, Proto-Celtic and Celtic cultures, these three strokes stood for “Fatality”. The “Fatality” sign is still used today in India as devotional head marks by the Shaivists (followers of the God Shiva). This explains why in the old Beth-Luis-Nion letter ranking order the three strokes alternately stand for ‘N’, ‘Ng (Nc)’ and ‘U’ reading ‘Ncu’ from ‘Ncu < Ancu < Ancouo = “fatality”, “fatal outcome”, “death”. In short, the NG letter was a later evolution from NC, a normal Gaelic shift from the hard ‘C’ to the softer ‘G’.

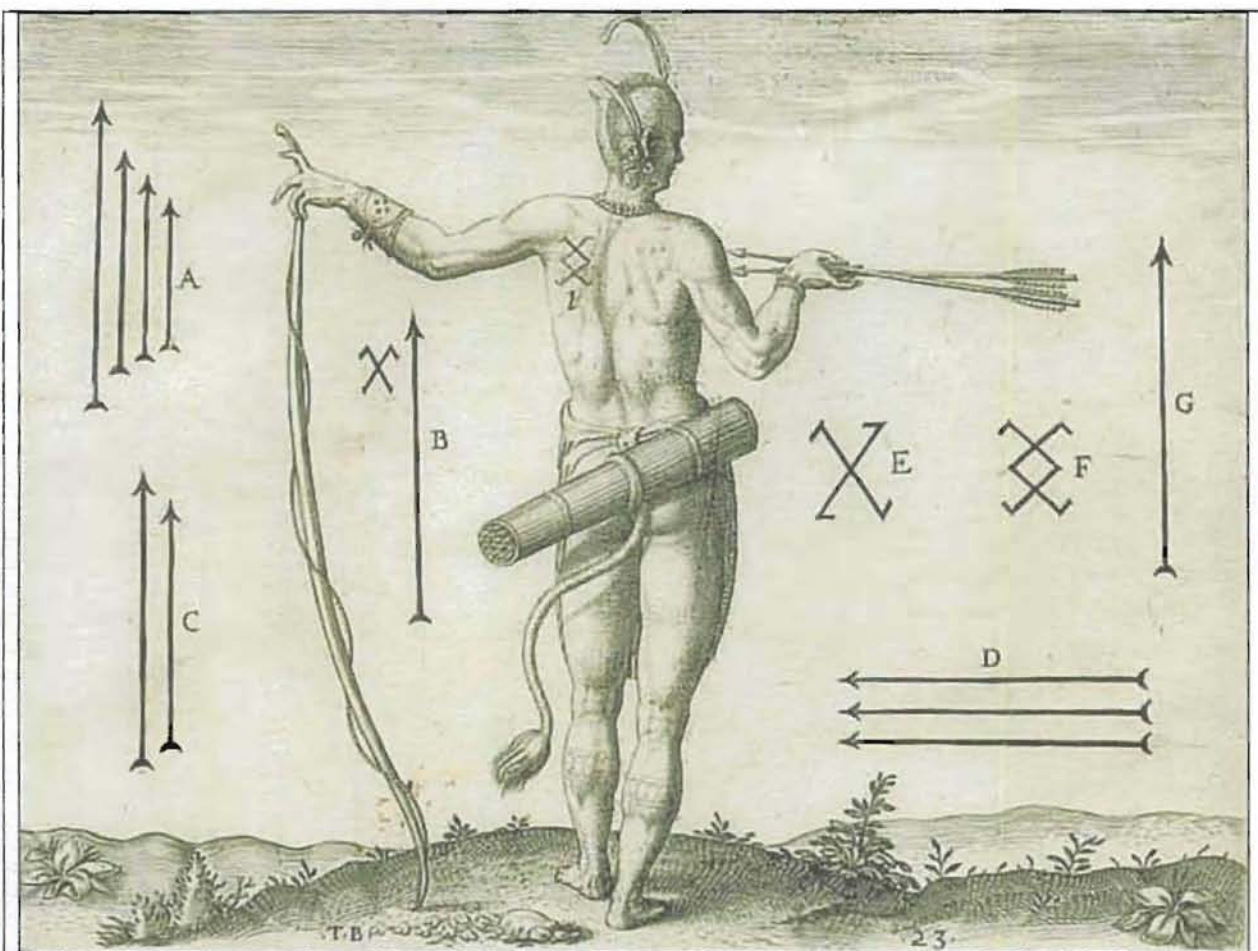
Then there were cases where a Celtic reading was not possible. Was it gibberish from tally marks or Fell's example of Libyan Arabic ogham? Not quite! ...

Should the mark inscriptions found outside the Celtic fringe be qualified as Oghams... Ogams or Ogums maybe? Again, the plethora of peoples claimed by the followers of Fell to be Ogham users is just mind boggling. Debunkers of all sorts are sure to have a fieldtrip. Applying Oghams to any language other than Celtic is like trying to decipher the Dead Sea Scrolls using the Sanskrit alphabet and dictionary. In philological terms, the structure and sounds of Ogham is intimately linked to the essence and spirit of the Celtic language. Only a rune master can read another rune master! In order for there have shifts from one cultural paradigm from another, there needs to be contact. In other words, diffusion from one block to another is more evident in contact zones. Could the North Atlantic have served as a route for European / American pre-Columbian contacts? The East coast Algonquians were throughout their history accommodating shipwrecked victims on their shores. Therefore, after a while they became informed and aware of the provenance of these people. Trusting the sagas, these contacts were not always positive. According to Micmac oral lore, whenever newcomers landed or were washed-up on the beach, they were automatically sent inland where

they were adopted by different tribes. This served many purposes; one, it prevented newcomers from establishing colonial trading ports and outposts, and two, it stimulated the integration process. That the Talamatan (Walum Olum) lithic culture developed in the Northern Appalachians (New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Southern Québec, and Maine) is probably due to a concentration of "eurogeneous" peoples. The Viking sagas relate of Erse speaking Celts living with the Vinland Skraelinger. Many examples of can also be found during the colonial period. In 1674 French aristocrat, Jean-Vincent d'Abbadie de Saint-Castin (1652–1707), was made chief of the Abenaki confederacy and took a native wife, Pidianske (Pidiwammiskwa), the daughter of the Penobscot chief, Madokawando.

#### Rock Art sites bearing

Ogham-like inscriptions ranging from Georgia, Virginia, Colorado, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Kentucky on to Maine are far too numerous for them to be the sole product of ancient Atlantic European visitors, Irish Settlers or modern vandals.



Algonquian Powhatan of Virginia showing arrow counts and body tattoos as marks of affiliation. "The sundry Marks of the Chief Men of Virginia", by Theodore de Bry (probably after John White). Engraving from book page Plate 23 from "America," Part 1 (1st ed., Frankfurt, 1590–1607) Image courtesy of [www.vahistorical.org](http://www.vahistorical.org).

## The American proto-Ogham

In "Celtic Connection" I proposed a Celto-Algonquian diffusion for the American Ogam giving a short list of Celtic and Algonquian related terms. Professor Wescott was quick to respond informing me that a comparison of both proto languages should yield better results. This is what I did. By this time, it became more and more obvious that the language I was looking at, although it had the feel of it, was not Celtic but Old Algonquian.

For example, it is easy to confuse words such as the Celtic Monid-os/on =

"mountain" and the Abenaki Menaden, also for "mountain". In both cases spelled M-N-D-N in Ogam. But there were many other words such as Celtic Bena = "woman" and Abenaki Bhanem = "woman", although paronymous, do not fit the same letter sequence (B-N/B-H-N-M).

It now became necessary to construct an Algonquian proto-ogham using the Celtic one as a model. It was Ida Jane Gallagher, who in a letter had mentioned that I should look in the direction of the "secret medicine society" or the Medawiwin Lodge. This avenue also yielded many fruits...

One day as I was looking at a photocopy of a picture ogham from Waterloo Quebec, sequences that had given me so much trouble in Celtic were giving audible words in Ojibway. A deer picture with Wawaush sound spelled-out "deer". This first break encouraged me to push further in the search for the Algonquian Tree Ogham letter code. Comparing the proto languages from Celtic to Algonquian, here were the results:

B = P; L = N/N+Y; N = N; F/V:W = W; S = S; H/CH = CH/J; M = M; G = K/G; NG/NC:'N = 'N; Z:ST/SD = SH/SS; R, no R | LL, X = X; TH = TH; PH, no Ph = PS Q = KW/GW; P = P; D, no D | T; A = A; O = O; U = Ô (uh), E | I = E | I.

The next step was to go through the Algonquian mythological and linguistic data bases to verify Medawiwin practices.

Then, a few years ago, Bernette Albert of Madawaska Maine sent me photos of ogams which had never been deciphered by Fell and which, in my eyes, read as Algonquian. I wrote back to her giving my transcription in my new letter code. Mrs. Albert showed this to the local Algonquians giving me their comments:

"Now, I checked with the Micmacs who were puzzled at first but identified the language as Maliseet. They could see some general similarities but enough differences to make the difference. Their interest was somewhat general only, which I suspected in the first place. This was on the American

side.

After that, I went to the Maliseet headquarters on the Canadian side. The different attitudes and interests were remarkable in both the stone and the language. The individual was an "elder" from the Tobique reservation who was totally bilingual in Maliseet and English only. Analysis of the translation of the rock markings produced a few chuckles at times! The end-result was that there were quite a few discrepancies that did not match exactly with the Maliseet words. However, it was felt that their language (as in all languages), changes occur throughout the years. They know the Maliseet language of today only. They surmised the possibility of an Old Algonquin root also. The interest was so great that a copy of all the translations was made. There is an expert with the Jemseg excavation whom they know and they want him to analyze the translations further.<sup>5</sup>

Following this, I sent copies of my Algonquian Ogam monograph to other Algonquian elders informing them that if they had any objections, to let me know. The replies never came so I take it that there were no major objections.

---

<sup>5</sup> Albert, Bernette. undated letter, Spring 1996.



Dr. Jeremiah Lone-cloud, Micmac "medicine man", anonymous postcard photograph, attributed to Climo Studio, ca. 1927, Mi'kmaq Holdings Resource Guide, <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/mikmaq/exhibit.asp?ID=117>

## THE MEDAWIWIN

Not much is known concerning the Medawiwin Society or "Secret Medicine Lodge" this mainly due to the fact that the inner teachings, such as those of the druids, were kept orally from teacher to pupil. The Medaws were known to keep large collections of signs and sigils, and this is attested by a number of observers. The Medaws acted as intercessors between spirits and mortals. They always maintained that picture writing, paintings, markings and rock art

were the work of the "Little People".

The Little People are therefore, the ones credited by the Medaws for the creation and maintenance of the art. That is, they were seen as the creators, curators, as well as the restorers of these works!

Many thought that dwarfs were avatars of powerful spirits and greatly sought after by the educated folk as guardians and curators of national and tribal culture.

Or as Ella Elizabeth Clark, recorder of Indian folktales (English department of the Washington State University, 1927-1961)<sup>6</sup>, remarked, one of the dwarfs of the Micmac lore was very similar to Robin Goodfellow of the British tales.

Interestingly, summer was under the patronage of the Little Folk (insect world) while winter, under the patronage of the Windigo Giant (horned Owl giant).

As tribal custom had it, no storytelling was ever told during the warm season and reserved for the cold months. In summer, the spirit people could get back at those who talked about, or against them. Accordingly, the Little Ones were always eager to listen-in on personal and collective conversations, so naturally, people were very careful with what they said. Evidently, this helped to maintain the Medaws' prestige over the un-educated.

In light of this, it is highly improbable that pictograms and ogams were drawn and carved at the peak of summer. More likely was the fall season just before the first snow when days were getting shorter. Interestingly, the Madawaska ogams relate on this subject and I have found, as with the Celtic examples that content was generally meant for the Spirit World. Contrary to what Fell gives, they never relate on mercantile and mundane matters.

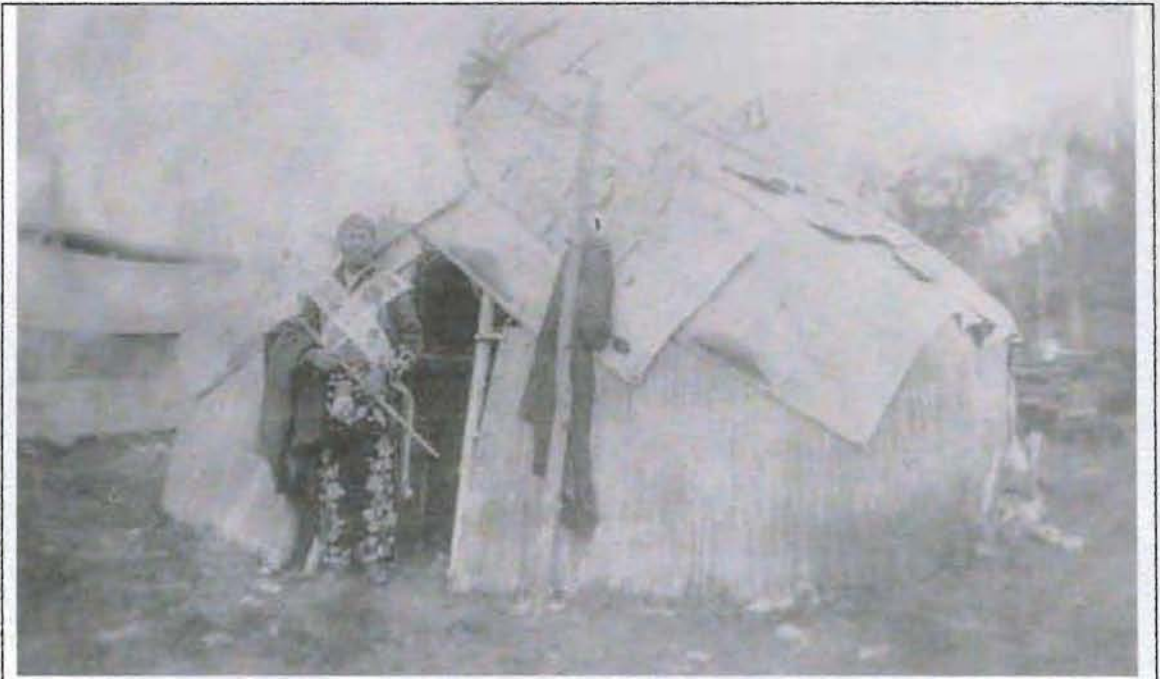
The Algonquians had wandering Medaws and professional story-tellers that went from lodge to lodge. They informed and entertained on the subjects of mythology and ethics; wars and exploits histories and migrations as well as jokes and anecdotes. Story-tellers were estimated according to their play and eloquence. Much focus was put on the power of the spoken word. The body of lore professed was no less great than that of Homer's Odyssey, so it does not come as a surprise if some form of shorthand was used by the shamanic

---

<sup>6</sup> Clark, Elizabeth Ella. "Indian Legends of Canada", p. 115.

class.

Mantra formulas were widely used by the Early Americans. Prime sounds, as we have seen are at the base of the Ogham so one should expect to find them in the Ogam of the Algonquians.



Chippewa Grand Medicine Lodge, White Earth. Photograph Collection, Postcard, 1910, Visual Resources Database, Minnesota Historical Society, <http://www.d.umn.edu/cia/faculty/troufs/Bufalo/PB30.html>

## The Medicine Lodge

In the Ojebway tale entitled "The Star Maiden", there is a description of the celestial lodge of the Ethers said to contain the weapons and ornaments of silver worked in strange and grotesque designs. This reflects sacred symbolism both astrological and mythico-mystical. Transmission of knowledge was gained through the power of sign-tools (Mesenahikeweni = "writing", "engraving", "markings"/Mesenehchikani "picture", "icon") contained in the Metewikamikwi or "Lodge for the Mystic Rite". The main

agent of this rite was the Metewa (Medaw), "the Participant in the Mystic Rite". In the Algonquian societies, the Medawin craft, termed "witchcraft" by the missionaries, was closed to the other members. Lodges were probably open to outsiders of equal status. Wandering sages maintained cohesion of teachings over the wide ranging territory of the Alonquians. Celto-Algonquian sages from the tribe of Beotach (from Biutacos = "The Live-One") of Newfoundland were most likely the agents of ogam diffusion in Algonquian culture. I have gone into the detail of this in "The Celtic Connection"<sup>7</sup>.

### Abenaki/Ojebway Months and Tree-constellations

I Fall: Dagwôgw/Tûgwâge, Chieftain Tree: Pshiwahtekwa (Witch-hazel);

1. Oct/Nov: Banibagos/Penàhque-kéezis: Leaf-falling Moon, Tree: S/Sh;

2. Nov/Dec: Mezatanokas: Freezing River Moon/Kushkùdene-kéezis: Freezing Moon Tree: Kw/Gw;

3. Dec/Jan: Bebonkas: Winter-maker Moon/Mùnedo-Keezisoons: Little Spirit Moon: Tree: W;

II Winter: Pon, Bebon/Péboon: Chieftain Tree: Anipy (Elm);

4. Jan/Feb: Alamikos: Greetings-maker Moon/Munedo-Keesiz: Spirit Moon: Tree: M;

5. Feb/Mar: Biaôdagos: Falling-in-pieces-branches Moon/Nuhmàbene-Kkeezis: Sucker Moon: Tree: Ch/J;

6. Mar/Apr: Mozokas: Moose-maker Moon/Onàhbune-keezis: Snow-crust Moon: Tree: P;

---

<sup>7</sup> Boutet, Michel-Gerald, et al. "The Celtic Connection", Stonehenge Viewpoint.

III Spring: Zigwan/Séegwun: Chieftain Tree: Oatoxpyi (Alder);

7. Apr/May: Zigwanigos: Spring Moon/Babooquadàhgiming-keezis: Snowshoe-breaking Moon: Tree: G;

8. May/Jun: Kikas: Planter, Field-maker Moon/Wàhbegoone-keezis: Flower Moon: Tree: D;

9. Jun/Jul: Nokkahigas: Hoer Moon/Odàëmene-keezis: Strawberry Moon: Tree: L;

IV Summer: Nibek/Néebin: Chieftain Tree: Ôkemaxkwa (White Ash);

10. Jul/Aug: Demaskikos: Hay, Grass-cutter Moon/Misquéemene-keezis: Raspberry Moon: Tree: 'N;

11. Aug/Sep: Demezôwas: Harvester Moon/Meen-keezis: Bilberry Moon: Tree: T;

12. Sep/Oct: Skamonkas: Corn-maker Moon/Muhnôomene-keezis: Wild-rice Moon: Tree: N;

V Fall Leap-month: Gwenigizos: Long Moon/Guhguhnoâzh-keezis: Long Moon: Chieftain Tree: 'Pahhkwaya (Reed), 'Pajthesowa (Sun).



Bear With White Paw, Miniconjou Lakota Sioux, photo 1913,  
<http://www.firstpeople.us/native-american/photographs/bear-with-white-paw-miniconjou-1913.html>

## **PRIME SOUNDS IN THE OJEMI**

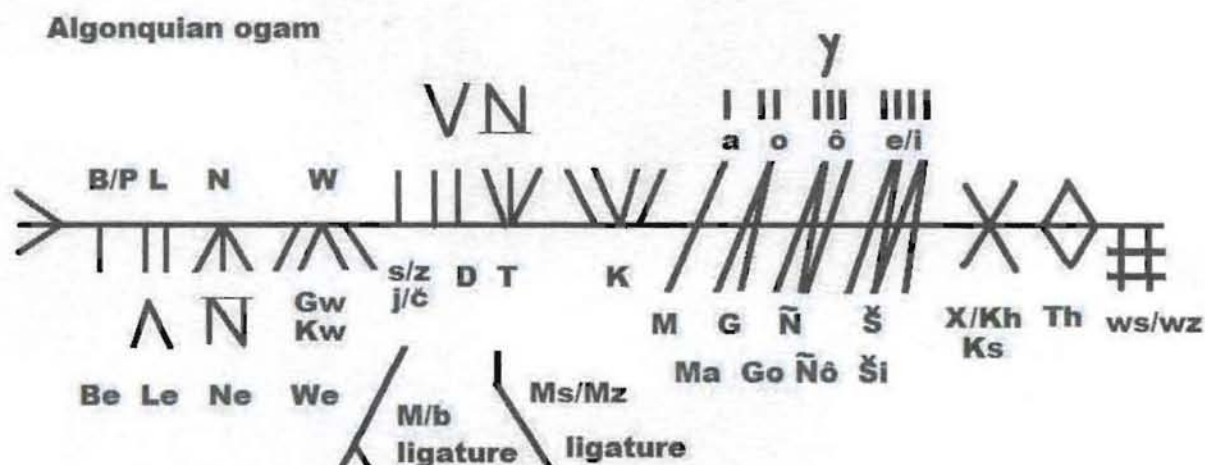
In the Algonquian tradition, the prime sound was Gô (gooh). Gô was pronounced by The Manitou in the form of the World Baby called Wasis.

Wasis, from the Proto-Algonquian root Wehshi = "baby" is paronymous to the Celtic Uasos, the godly hypostasis, Uesos = "knower", one of the Prime Druids, or Uisucios = "shrewd". In a Micmac tale, Glooskap (from kelaweskihewa = "teller of tall tales", "liar"), the Trickster, threatens Wasis Manitou by making all of the most frightening sounds of creation. He howls, growls, roars by the clap of his thunder but is unable to impress the infant deity. In the end, Baby Manitou's Gooh triumphs over the Trickster's most powerful incantations, spells and invocations. The Gô sound mirrors the Og of the Druids and puns with Goa = "Pine" in Abenaki. The Pine Medaw was the most powerful of the Four Prime Medaws. The trigrams are found in both systems, appearing quite often in the Algonquian rock art:

|||, ///: // = Go; ||| = Ô for Goô (Pine); Gôwi (Porcupine quill).

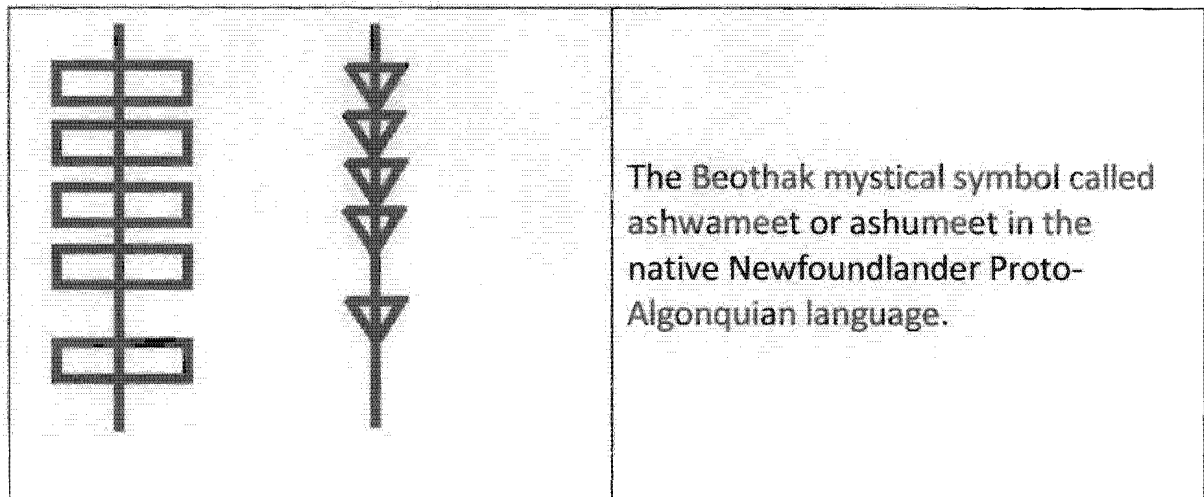
The secret of the Prime Sound (the three porcupine quills), was kept in a pine box owned by Dabaldoag (from \*Tepelenchikewa = "possessor"), the Owner Master.

The Spirit Box, Chipaya Mahka was one of the Manitou's attributes comparable to the Cauldron of Plenty of the Celtic Dagda.



## Ranking of prime sounds and mytho-symbology

- I- CHi: Chipayaposwa (Lord of the Dead); 2. Pa/Pe: Pawamiwenwi (Dream Power), Patahkahamwa (The Piercer, or Lesser Transformer), Pemijlewa (Bemola, Wind Bird); 3. Am: Amethkwa (Beaver); 4. Ma: Manetowa (Manitou, Great Spirit), Manetonsa (Little Spirit, Insect), Manachihewa (Honoured Medaw), Mejthapewa (Giant); 5. Da: Dakwenikewapew (Dekskôba, Chief Tousel Headed Man); 6. Lo: Lotenwi (Wind); 7. Og: Ogawenkwaishiwa (Ogawinno, Sleeping Bear); 8. Go: Gôkwa (Porcupine); 9. Ta: Tapelenchikewa (Tabeldak, Owner Medaw); 10. Na/Ne: Nanatawihewewa (Medicineman), Nenaposhwa (Nenabush, the Hero); 11. Ô'n: Ôntehkwa (Crow), Ânankwa (Star, Star Maiden); 12. 'N: 'Niwihy (Spear); 13. Kashyewatesiwa (Kind Medaw); 14. Wi: Wintekowa (Windigo, Giant/Ogre); 15. Esh: Eshkwetewi (Fire), Eshihchikani (Ceremony); 16. She: Shengkwaikwa (Pine Tree Medaw); 17. X (Kex): Kexkinawachitawa (The Marker, Sign-maker); 18. TH: Thejthemawa (Tobacco); 19. KW: Kwethkinakwihowa (The Transformer); 20. PS: Pshiwa (Lynx), Pshikwa (Nighthawk) Pshehkiwa (Buffalo);



## OJEMI TREE ALPHABET

The Beothak (Newfoundland) and Algonquians) were probably of a mixed Algonquian and early European origin or simply Clovis culture descendants of Solutrians South West France. The Beothak or Beothuck (compare with Celtic Biutacoi = "live ones") probably descend from these proto-caucasian peoples. The Beothak mythological symbol drawn by Shanawdihit, the last survivor of the culture, was called ashwameet or ashumeet. In the Abenaki language, agômek = "on the other side", and Agômenoki stands for "Europe". The Agômenoki (from \*ashawakam = "opposite", "on the other side") were foreigners or Europeans. The name probably puns with Ogamonacoi = "the Nothers" or users of the oghams. The Abenaki word for narrator, annalist is ôjemi (from \*achyemewa = "tells a story"). That both the Celts and Algonquians should have so many parallel terms is in itself outstanding. Strange enough, Proto-Algonquian shares not only in lexicon but in structure as well. This would indicate that Proto-Algonquian was at one time, probably early Neolithic, in relation to Proto-Indo-European. The Algonquian languages would therefore have to be grouped with the Nostrasic super-family group and not Amerind. This of course does not exclude a slow trickle of Proto-Celtic influx throughout the ages.

The most outstanding feature with the Ogam (or better Ôjemi) is that, along the same line as the oghams, it spells-out a story when the letters are grouped in a special order. Far from giving gibberish, it relates the most important myth of the Algonquians, that of the Spirit Box:

CHIPAYA MAHKA - DABALOTAOAG - TAHKINO'N KAWESSE (The Spirit Box, Dabadoag touches it, he is blown by the wind)!

1. P- Pakanimoswa (Hazelnut Tree); 2. L- Lotawa Maskihkyiwi (Climbing Grass, clematis virginia); 3. N- Nipenwimenahekwa (Cranberry Bush, viburnum opulus); 4 W- Wikopyiminshi (Basswood, American Linden, Tiliaceae fam.);

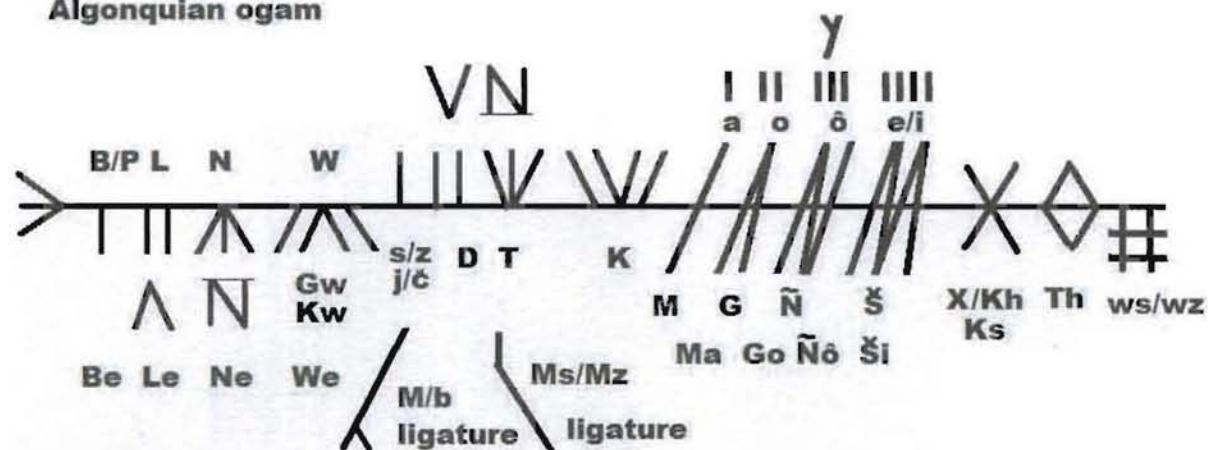
5. CH- Chipayaposwahtekw (Spirit Tree); 6. D- Dapathakochin Kawinshya (Low Thorn Tree, Rose Bush, American Hawthorn, Crabapple Tree); 7. T- Tahkwahtekwa (Thicket, Copse/Coppice); 8. K- Kawaxkwiminshya (Prickly Ash Bush), Kawinshya (Spine Thorn), Kawinshyi (Bramble, Briar, Burr), Kawantakwa (Spruce), Kishekahtekwa (Cedar), Kawimina (Gooseberry),

9. M- Mahkatekwa (Black Ash), Mitewahtekwa (Medicine Pole), Mejshyahtawahtekwa (Forest of Tall Trees); 10. G- Gejki Tepepenawa (Black Cherry), Gipijlewaweshkiayi (Forest of Short Trees); 11. 'N- 'Nenahtekwa (Maple, Hardwood Tree), 'Naxkyaniminshy (Black or red Oak); 12. S/SH- Sakithen (Elder Bush), Shenkwaxkwa (Pine Tree), Shenkihsimewahtewa (Ground Hemlock), Shenta (Conifers);

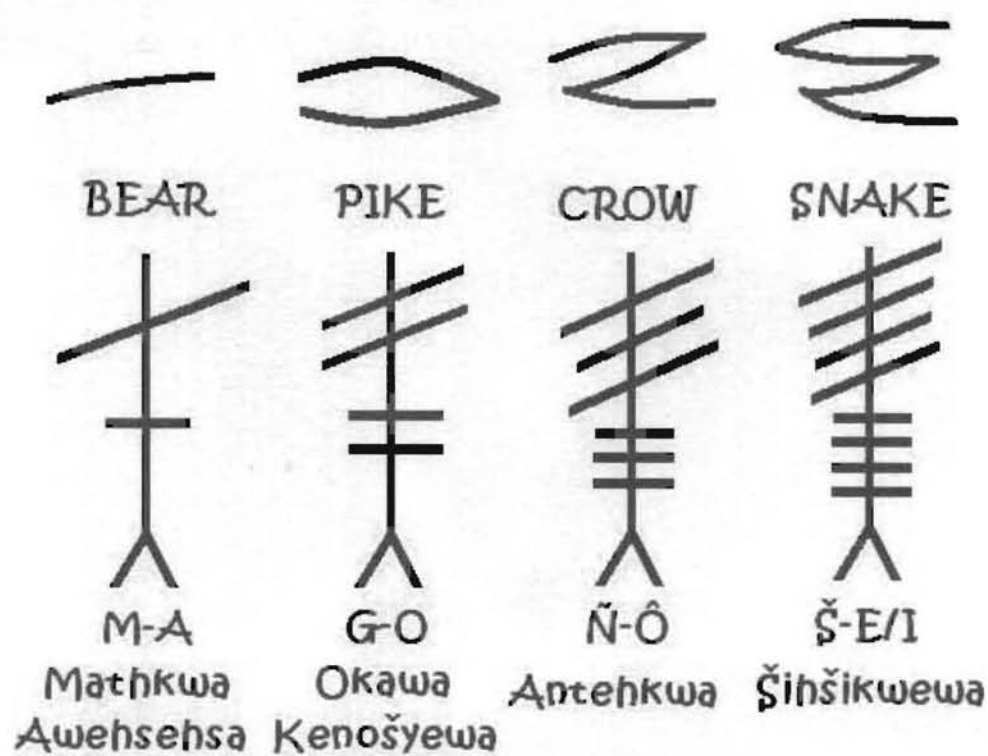
13. A- Anipy (American Elm); 14. O- Oatoxpyi (Alder); 15. Ô- Ôkemaxkwa (White Ash); 16. E/I- Eshpaxkweyawwi (High Trees), Elinahtekwa/Ilinahtekwa (varieties of Spruce, Maple and other hardwoods);









17. X (Kx)- Kôxka (White Cedar); 18. TH- Thejthemawa (Tobacco); 19. KW- Kwetawanyahtekw (Kindlewood Tree); 20. PS- Psehkawasawnimaxkwahtekwa (Flowering Black Ash), Pshiwahtekwa (Dogwood, Witchhazel, Hamamelis, Link Tree).









# Algonquian ogam



## ANIMALS AND THE PROTO-OGAM



|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| BIRD  | MAN   | FISH  | DEER  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| P-B<br>Pelehš   | L<br>Elenyiwa   | N<br>Namewa   | W<br>Wawaškehšiwa   |

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| MINK  | TURTLE  | FROG   | RAVEN   |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| S-Ç<br>Šankwwšiwa   | D-T<br>Tolpwa   | Th-Ø<br>Tentewa  | K<br>Kahkakiwa  |

## Putnam County Stone Chamber Ogam

Background information from Gerry McLoughlin:

"Regarding the history of this chamber; we have not been able to get the true history of this or other nearby chambers. There is a farm house close by, but there is no record of the original farmer either building the chamber or having it pre-existent on his land. The local historians dismiss these chambers as being simply colonial root cellars".

The stone chamber is not a root cellar and predates the colonial period. This would mean that the Ogam stone could not have been picked up from the field by the local farmer to build a root cellar. Many such monuments are found in other areas of New England. According to Gordon Day, an expert on the Eastern woodland Abenaki of New England, mythology tells of two distinct periods: the time when they build circular underground dome-shaped stone corbelled houses and a second period when they built wigwams in wood and bark. The Abenakis call this the Stone time and the Wood time. They were in the wood time when the first Europeans came. Stone shelters therefore belong to a much more remote time. The Abenaki Medawlinnos (shaman-priests) conceived the earth as a principal of personal power and for the solution of difficult oracles never used the shaking tent but retreated into a small dome-shaped hut (Day 1973). To my appraisal and judging from the level of language, a form of Middle-Abenaki which evolved from the old Proto-Algonquian period, the Ogam inscriptions can be no older than circa 1000 AD given - 400 or + 400 years. The patina of the stone can also be a time indicator. When groove marks are whitish, then the engraving is either recent or non-weathered. Then, it could be because the engraved surface was preserved inside the chamber vault away from eroding elements. If the patina is overall the same colour, then it is because it was weathered outside exposed to the elements.

**Site location:**

Route 301 near Carmel Hamlet, Putnam County, New York

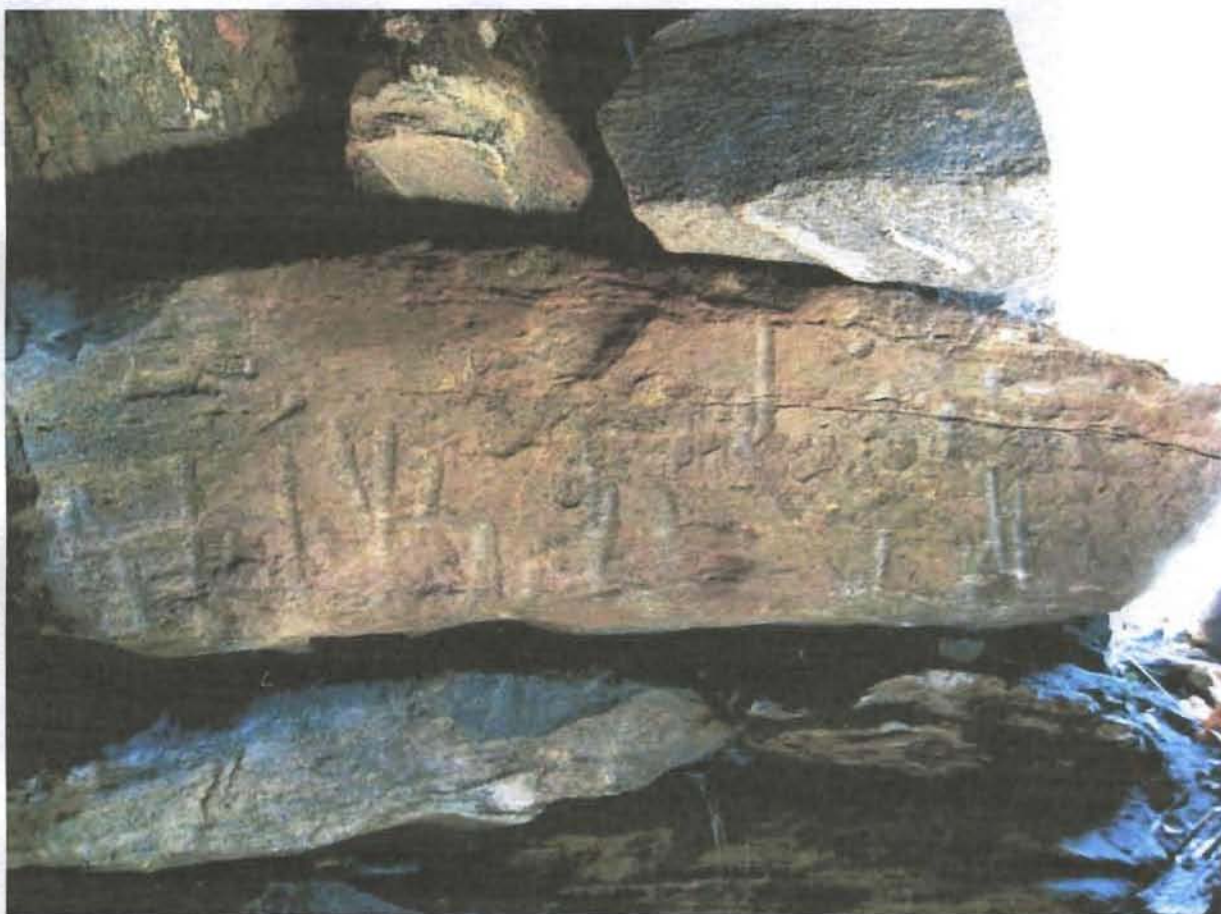


Photo by Gerry McLoughlin

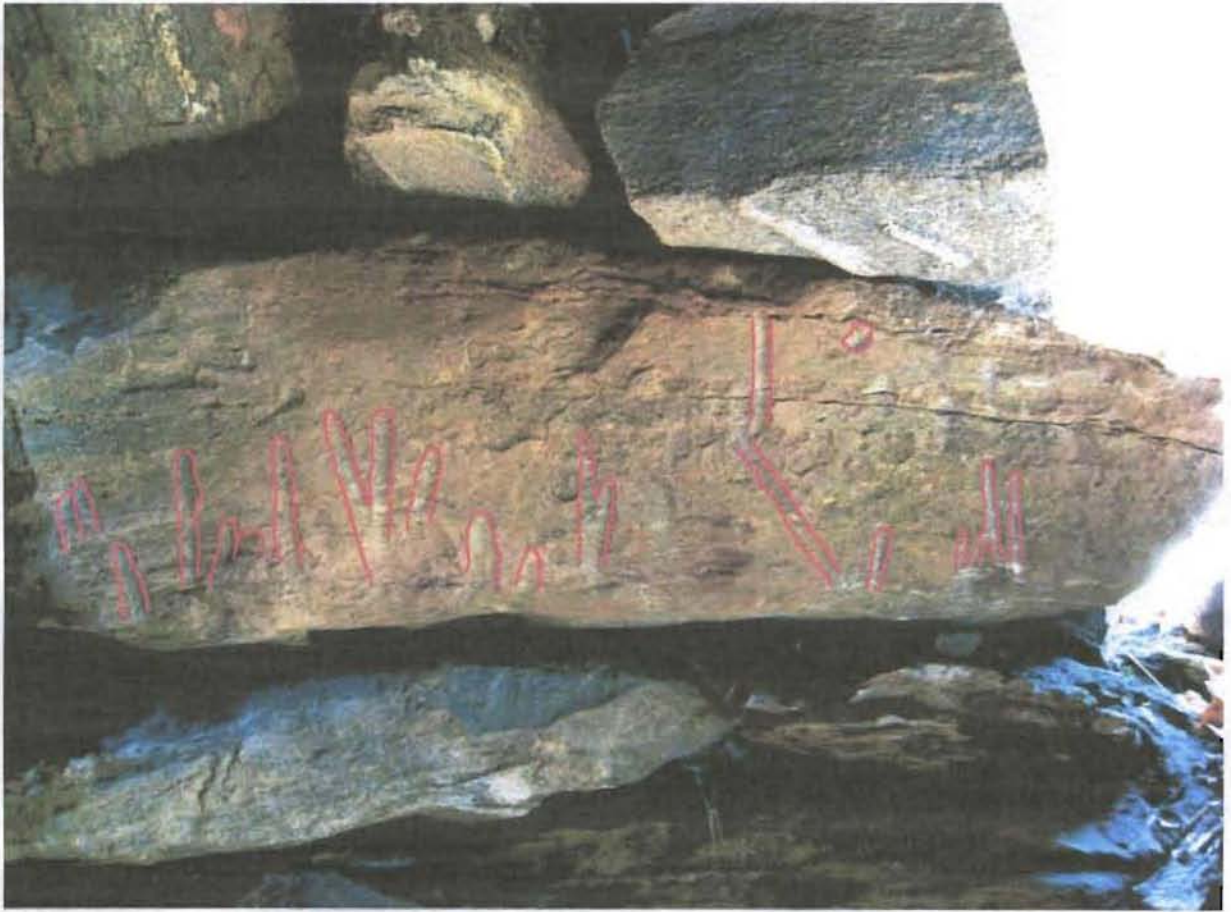
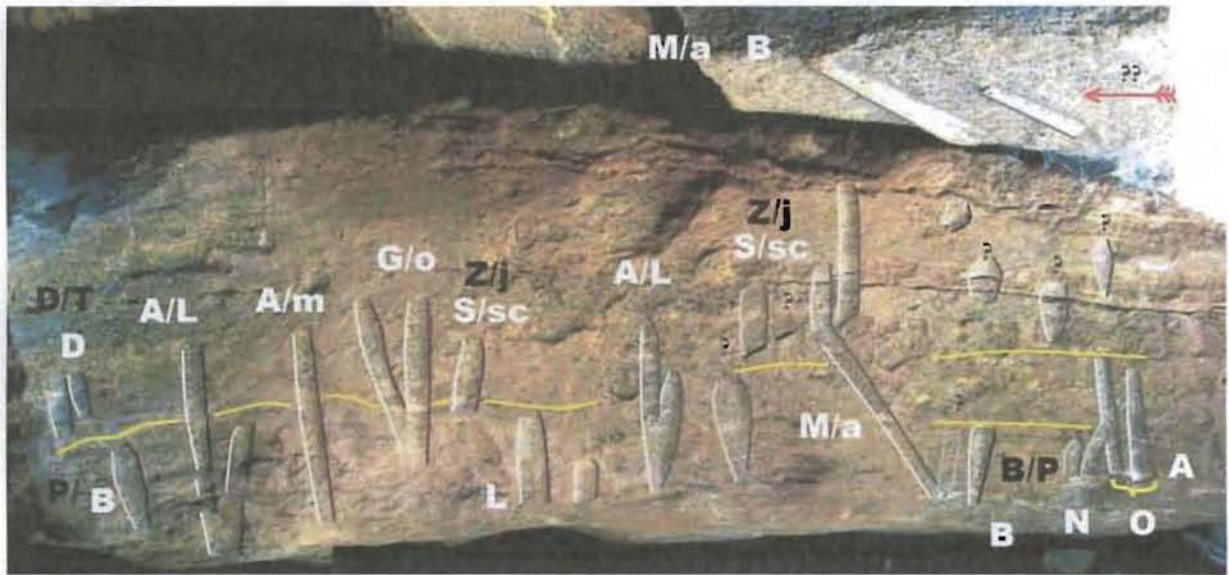


Photo by Gerry McLoughlin



**Voiced reading:**

D-B-A-L-A(m) G-S/Z L-(a)L / (o)G M(a)-S B-N-O

D'balam < Debalam / Debelam

G's'lal / G'z'lal || G's'log / G'z'log ? < Gzilal / Gizilag

Ms's < Mis

B'no / Bona < Bna / Bno || Bona

**Closest language match: Western Abenaki**

**Linguistic family group: Algonquian**

**Word translation:**

Debelam < debeloma “talk about someone, mention someone”

Debalem < debalema “own someone, be his master”

Punning with Dabaldak, “The Owner, Master, Lord”, Dabaldak is the Abenaki name for the Great World Spirit Master, Gitchi Manitou

Gizilal < gizila “it can be thus, it can happen, it can be true, perhaps, possibly” cf. gizilla

Gizilog < gizilak “what can happen”

Ms’s < msi “big, great” cf. mamsi

B’na < bona “place, put (in place), set”

### **Translation :**

Debeloma gizila msi bona.

“Talk about someone (Dabaldak), it can be thus, great (put in) place.”

Debalema gizila msi bona.

“(Tabaldak) Be his master, it can happen , great, put in place.”

## **The Abenaki Confederacy**

The Abenaki peoples were not always on the territories where they are found today. European (French, Dutch and English) colonists pushed many of these tribes away from their traditional territories.

The surviving Abenaki language is a mixed confederacy of many bands who converged at the Odanak and Wôlinak communities on the South shore of the St. Lawrence river along the St. Francis and Becancour rivers. These rivers connect, with short portages, to the Lake Champlain and Connecticut, Hudson, rivers.

The Abenakis are usually called the Wôbanaki, “the dawn or eastern people” but called themselves Alnôbai, “humans”. Alnombak or Aln8bak (the figure 8 was introduced by the Jesuits for a nasalized, unrounded 'o' which Day renders as ô).

The Abenaki confederacy occupied the territories east of the Hudson River from its mouth to Lake Champlain, South of the St. Laurence River comprising much of New England and Southern Quebec on to New Brunswick. The Iroquoian tribes were found to the West of this territory on the other sides of Lake Champlain and the Hudson River.

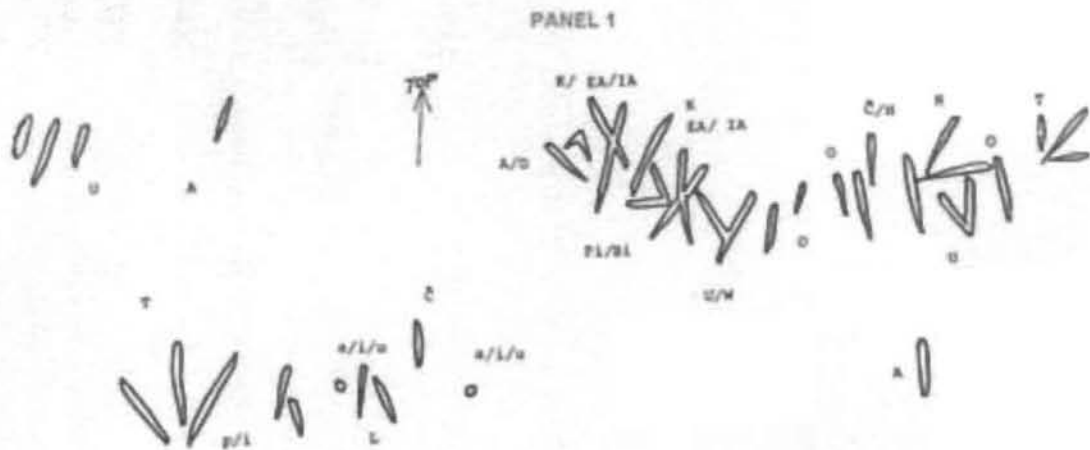
Like the Iroquoians, the Abenaki were agriculturists and lived in semi permanent communities along rivers. Their crop fields covered large areas, some stretching more than 250 acres. Their main crops were maize, beans and squash. They also fished and collected a wide variety of wild plants and fruits such as rice, sprouts, fruits and berries. During winter, they would move north to their hunting grounds chasing beaver, wolf, deer and moose. They resided in dome shaped wigwams covered with elm and birch bark.

| <b>Abenaki Confederacy</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Eastern Abenaki Bands:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amaseconti</li> <li>2. Androscoggin</li> <li>3. Kennebec</li> <li>4. Ossipee</li> <li>5. Pigwacket</li> <li>6. Rocameca</li> <li>7. Wewenoc</li> <li>8. Wôlinak</li> </ol> | <b>Western Abenaki Bands:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>III- Amoskeay</li> <li>Iç- Coheco</li> <li>ç- Coos</li> <li>çI- Mahican</li> <li>çII- Missiquoi</li> <li>çIII- Musee</li> <li>IE- Nashua</li> <li>E- Ossipee</li> <li>EI- Pemigewasset</li> <li>EII- Penacook</li> <li>EIII- Pequaket</li> <li>EIç- Piscataqua</li> <li>Eç- Sokoki</li> <li>EçI- Souhegan</li> <li>EçII- Winnibisauaga</li> </ol> |
| <b>Related tribes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penobscot</li> <li>• Malecite</li> <li>• Micmac</li> </ul>   |  |

## The "Pig Pen" Ogam Rock Shelter

### The Site

Five panels that comprise the "Pig Pen" site follow with Michel-Gérald Boutet's complete site translation and interpretation. Following that is his description of American Ogams, the Medawiwin Society and the Algonquin-type language of the Ogam script.



### Panel 1 Translation:

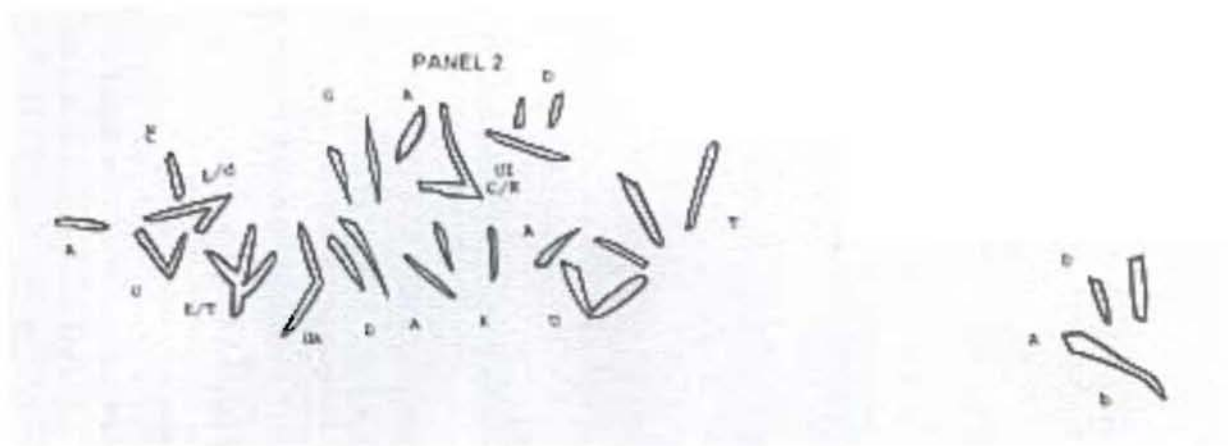
WA ADIA-PIAWO-OCEMIWOT-TEPALOCI - A

"Say (about) Syrus (Hunting Dog Star), He comes (to) tell a story the way that it is."

[with a possible cross-reading]:

WAH ATHPYEMANAHKWANI - TEPALOCHIWA

"Sound colour-strand the way that it informs"



**Panel 2 Translation:**

GAKTA AEDJLEWA DAKWIT

"Great Hawk along with, in the company"

DA (enough)

**Panel 3 below, with four parts**



WI- WE- = say, tell, call, name



2.

O-O-a-N-a-L

HOUSE:  
CONCL pl of Odam =  
"village",  
"town",  
"settlement"

AL- = how, on, like,  
the way that etc.

ICH- = see

GL- = good



4.

DEHAL- = can,

DEHELO- = tell, talk, about, discuss, mention

L-NI-a-O  
D-NI-a-L



3.

BI-a-I  
B-a-I

DAI/DAIY = come, arrive

NI/PI



1. Call, tell, say

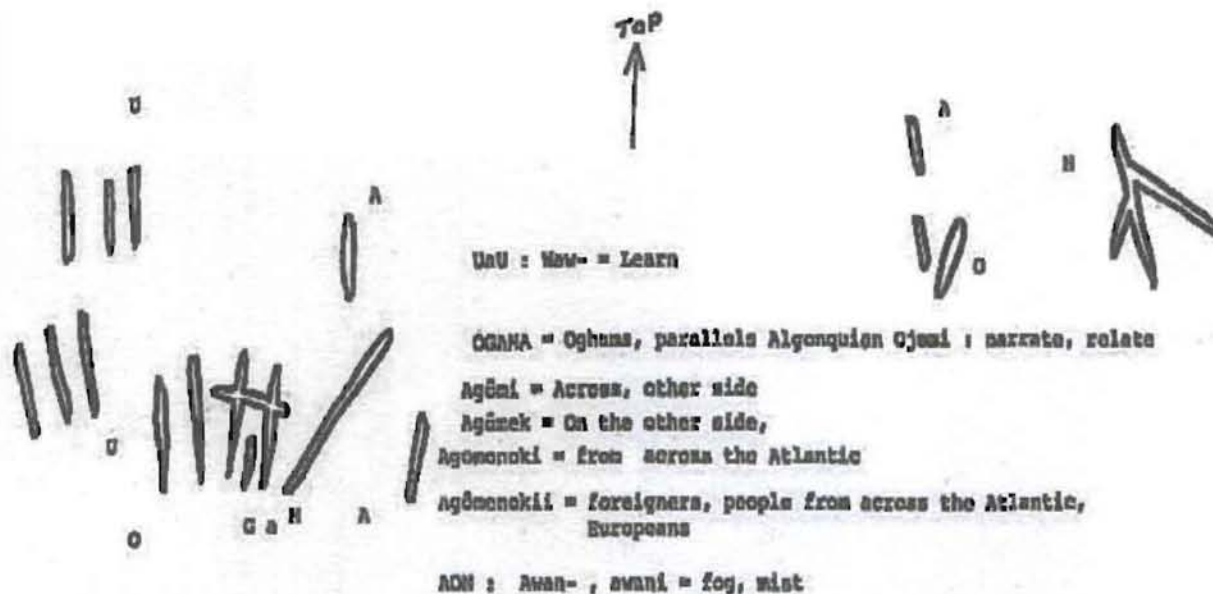
2. Villages, settlements

3. Come, arrive

4. discuss, mention, talk, tell

Conn see villages - Call - Discuss

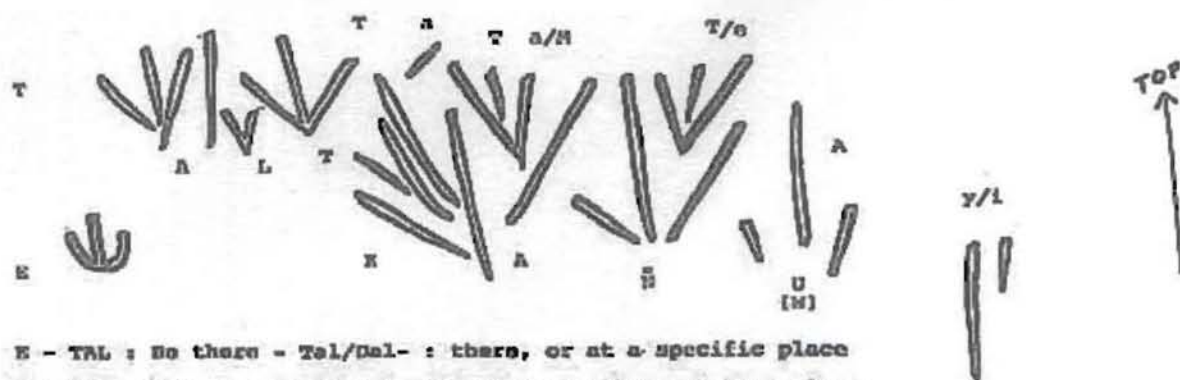
Panel 4 Below



Wah OGANA - ANANI

Learn of the people from across the Atlantic, Learn Oghams - from across the mist.

## Panel 5 Below



### **Complete Site Translation**

WA ADIA-PIAWO-OCEMIWOT-TEPALOCI - A GAKTA AEDJLEWA  
DAKWIT WE ODANOL DEBALA

BAI WAW-OGAMA AWON - E TAL TALTA-KATAM NATAWI

"Say (about) Dog (Star), He comes (to tell a story the way it is). Great Hawk (star) along with (others). Thats all.

Say, talk about Odanol, the Settlement, (Village) come learn Ogam from (across) the Mist.

Be there at that place, someone there in former time.

### **The Language**

The Old Algonquian language seems to be an evolved stage of Proto-Algonquian probably showing early differentiation of a form of Eastern Algonquian according to Boutet. It is more primitive than Western-Abenaki - for example, the name "Adia" (pl. Adiak) for Dog, dog star, is now obsolete in the Abenaki dialects. The next closest matches are Menomini and Fox languages.

### **Remarks on the Message**

#### *"Dog Star"*

The Dog Star plays an important part in the cosmo-mythological cycles of the Algonquians. From what Boutet gathers from the ogams, the Hawk Star is to be found in the company of the Dog Star. Although he is not sure which star is the Hawk in Algic cosmology, it is nevertheless possible to conclude that if the Dog Star Sirius is to be found in the company of the Hawk Star - it could be possibly be Procyon in Canis Minor?

In the Chippewa tale, *The Broken Wing*, we are told that the Hawk constellation was composed of six stars, that is, a nest of six young hawks - most likely the Pleiades constellaton. The eldest of the six was called Gray Falcon and the youngest was called Pigeon Hawk. The Hawks are again assigned to the winter skies along with the Owl Star (Ella Elizabeth Clark, 1960).

#### *"Come learn Ogams from (across) the Mist"*

This shows that the Medaws - the priests who wrote the ogam - were quite aware of a land across the Mist and that it was where ogam originated.

### **The Southern Quebec Ogams**



Ogham like markings on a stone from Vale Perkins, Potton Township, Québec. Artifact discovered by Gérard Leduc near lake Memphremagog. Redraw by M.-G. Boutet

Left to right:

L- a- N / V – A – O/G (b) – T – A – H – M/A – T – a – L

Lana Otahma-bi Tal

Right to left:

T – a – L – M/A – A – H – T - O (b) – A - N / V – a- L

Talamahtoan-bi Val

---

## References

**Day, Gordon M.** *Western Abenaki Dictionary*. Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service, paper 128, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Gatineau, Quebec, 1994.

"The Celtic Connection" by Michel-Gérald Boutet, 1996, Stonehenge Viewpoint, P.O. Box 30887, Santa Barbara, Ca 93130-0887. More ogam translations and Amerindian connections by Boutet, and related articles by other writers.

"Midwestern Epigraphic Journal, Vol 14, 2000"

---

Correspondence address:

Michel-Gerald Boutet  
[boutios@cgocable.ca](mailto:boutios@cgocable.ca)