

THE OGAMS OF THE SUN TEMPLE

By

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Summary

On the walls, and within a cave of a group of tower rocks in Colorado, various inscriptions have been discovered that appear to be comprised of letters of the Ogam alphabet. Ogam was in use, principally in the British Isles, between 400 and 900 AD. Some examples of Ogam have also been located in mainland Europe, but it is not considered to have been brought to the New World, particularly before the time of Columbus. The script found in America also contains certain properties that, specialists say, are not inherent in the Ogam script of the Old World. On that basis, the American version has been dismissed as inauthentic. Nevertheless, when translations of the Colorado Ogams have been attempted, they appear to make linguistic sense and refer to certain astronomical and solar alignments that have subsequently been observed to actually occur. Certain engravings, associated with the inscriptions, also appear to contain affinities with an Old World religion.

THE OGAM ALPHABET

Before describing the inscriptions and engravings that have been found on the tower rocks in Colorado, it is important that we discuss the Ogam alphabet, as used in the British Isles, in some detail.

OGAM, (sometimes spelt Ogham), pronounced "Oh-m", was an alphabet used by the Celts. In essence, is a coded notation that uses parallel lines in groups to represent letters. About 500 Ogam inscriptions have been found in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England dating from between the 4th and 7th

centuries AD. Many of these inscriptions have been deciphered, but there are also inscriptions in the archaic forms of Gaelic and Pictish that have not been deciphered. Similar markings, that some have said date to as early as 500 BC, have been found on standing stones in Spain and Portugal, the area of the Iberian Peninsula from which the Celts who colonized Ireland may have come. The majority of Ogam inscriptions are to be found in Ireland where there are 369 verified examples of Ogam writing surviving today. These exist in the form of gallán (standing stones). Whilst all surviving traces of Ogam are inscriptions on stone, it was probably

more commonly inscribed on sticks, stakes and trees. Inscriptions generally take the form of a person's name, and the name of a place, and were probably used to mark boundaries and burials, etc..

THE ACTUAL origins of Ogam remain obscure. The name Ogam (or Ogham) was derived from that of the Celtic god of literature and eloquence, Ogma, who is credited with its' invention of the alphabet. It has been suggested that it evolved out of a system of tallies used for accounting. Today most scholars believe that it was developed in Ireland during the 4th and 5th centuries. However, if the truth be known, as the Ogam scholar Damian McManus has stated in a recent book, 'Where, when, and by whom the Ogam alphabet was invented is not known.... The nature of the Ogam script is such that it is impossible to pin point its source of inspiration or to identify its formers in time and space with any degree of accuracy.' (1). It is also important to note that the Celtic god "Ogma" was linked with the Gaulish god "Ogmios" whose golden speech was recorded in Gallic artwork as a fine chain linking the tip of his tongue to the ears of a group of his followers. This, in itself, seems to provide another pointer for the possibility that the Ogam alphabet originated, not in 4th century Ireland, but much earlier in the Celtic homeland of mainland Europe. Furthermore, Stuart Piggott in *Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles* (2) illustrates and discusses amulets, which appear to be Ogam-inscribed, that were professionally excavated at Windmill Hill (circa 3250-2200 BC.). In all seventeen such inscribed artefacts were excavated at Windmill Hill, and Piggott has compared the carvings with certain Breton and Scottish rock carvings.

Whatever the antiquity of Ogam may actually be, all that is certain is that it was adopted and further developed by the first (Gnostic) monks in Ireland around 350 AD, and was used by these monks as a monumental script between 450 and 800 AD. This has led some

to conjecture that Ogam may have originated in Libya, from where the first Gnostic missionaries are thought to have come. The succeeding Roman Catholic Benedictines used it for literary purposes between ca 700 and 900 AD.

The fourteenth century manuscript known as *The Book of Ballymote*, which is now in the possession of The Royal Irish Academy in Dublin, Ireland, illustrates over one hundred varieties of Ogam. For our purposes it will only be necessary to describe the basic content of the alphabet. The Ogam alphabet consisted of 20 letters, and was comprised of fifteen consonants, divided into three sets of five, and a further set containing five vowels. Each set was known as an Aicme. (Figure 1). Five more letters forming a further set (the diphthongs EA, OI, UI, IA, and AE) were probably added at a later date. Each letter was formed by incising a group of lines across, above, or below a single line known as a midline, (or stemline, or stave). The midline, originally known as a Druim, was usually the edge of the object, either stone or wood, on which the inscription was carved. (Figure 2). When the inscription was carved on stone, the letters were read from the bottom upwards, but in other instances when the script was later used in manuscripts it was read from left to right. In keeping with Druidic concepts, each of the Ogam's twenty letters bears the name of a tree that was held to be sacred. For example: A-Ailim (Elm), B-Bithe (Birch), C-Coll (Hazel). The group containing the diphthongs was also associated with particular trees, e.g., UI (Iphin) represented the Honeysuckle tree. Thus, each letter had a special significance. It is important to realize, however, that not all of the twenty plants of the Ogam were found in the post-Christian Celtic world of the British Isles. This fact would seem to lend some credence to the theory that Ogam predates the first century AD.

THE LINGUISTIC information preserved in Ogam is sparse, but it is sufficient to reveal a

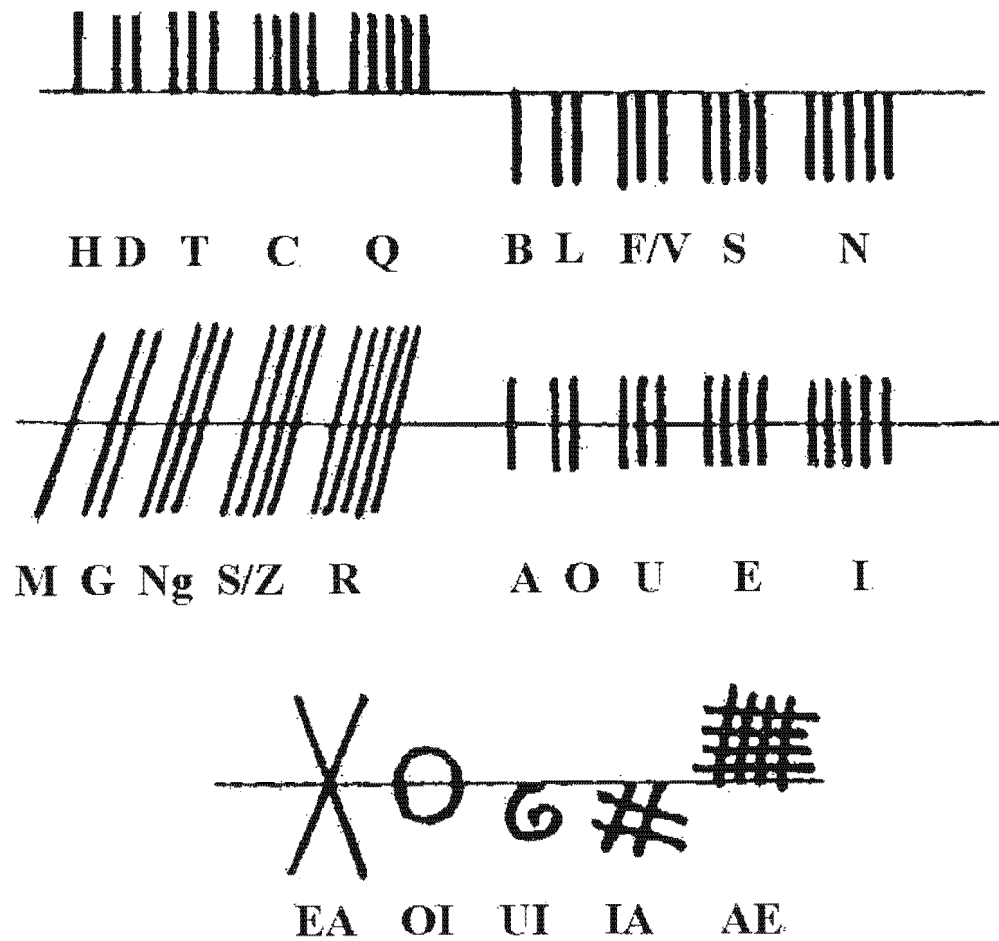


Figure 1: The Ogam alphabet.



Figure 2: Ogam stone from Burnham, County Kerry, Ireland.

Photo: Ian Thompson.

form of Gaelic much older than Old Irish, the earliest well-documented variety of the language.

THE AMERICAN OGAMS

As stated above, the main corpus of Ogam inscriptions are to be found in Ireland, although a good number are also found in Scotland and England and, albeit to a lesser extent, in the European mainland. However, many inscriptions and markings consisting of parallel linear grooves have been found carved on rocks from all over the world. Such markings range from simple to complex and, whilst some appear to resemble Ogam in varying degrees, the vast majority are not Ogam at all, and probably simply represent tally marks or calendrical counts of some kind. Of interest to us are the claims of Ogam inscriptions that have been said to have been located in the Americas, especially on the East Coast of North America, and which, it is said, can be read with a form of the Celtic language. One particular example, a petroglyph in a rock shelter in the mountains of Wyoming County, West Virginia, has become almost a focal point for the argument over the existence and authenticity of Ogam writing in the Americas. Whilst the Wyoming County glyphs are possibly quite valuable evidence pre-Columbian contact, they have yet to be demonstrated to be Ogam. So far, they have not been translated to an acceptable degree of scholarship. However, generally speaking, the fact remains that claims of pre-Columbian Ogam writing being in existence in the Americas have been disputed by various experts and scholars of the script.

OUR INTENTION in this paper is to focus upon one particular site in North America that seems to contain an ancient Ogam inscription. In this particular instance, the claim for such an inscription appears to be corroborated by certain astronomical observations that confirm the message of the

attempted translation of an apparent Ogam script that is incised upon the rock. Before proceeding further with the investigation, it would be pertinent to point out certain peculiarities of the Ogams that are said to exist in America.

THE MOST IMPORTANT divergent characteristic of the American Ogams is that they are vowelless. (Figure 3). As can be seen in Figure 1, the Ogam alphabet contained five vowels, and Ogam scholars insist that all of the Ogam inscriptions from the British Isles and the European mainland, that are accepted as authentic, contain vowels. The American Ogams, it seems, are written with consonants only. The small tick marks representing the five vowels are totally absent. Those who maintain the authenticity of such inscriptions also claim that the inscriptions are written in an early form of Ogam that originated outside Ireland, (possibly in the third millennium BC), which was later transferred to Ireland where the vowels were added. It is this that has led many to dispute the fact that such inscriptions are indeed Ogam, especially those scholars who adhere to the accepted notion that Ogam was invented much later in Ireland, that it was based to some degree on the Latin alphabet, and that it contained vowels from the very beginning. Also, in the American Ogams, the strokes that intersect the stemline for the consonantal group **M G Ng S/Z R** are not oblique to the stemline, as in the European Ogams, but perpendicular to it. Another peculiarity is that the American Ogams are not written on a stone where the edge of the stone acts as the stemline, but on the flat surface of a stone.

Claims that Celtic people travelled to the New World are laughable to professional archaeologists and epigraphers. That they also left Ogam inscriptions, written not with vowels as they are in the British Isles, but without vowels, makes the whole scenario even more implausible. However, certain 19th century authorities on Ogam, such as

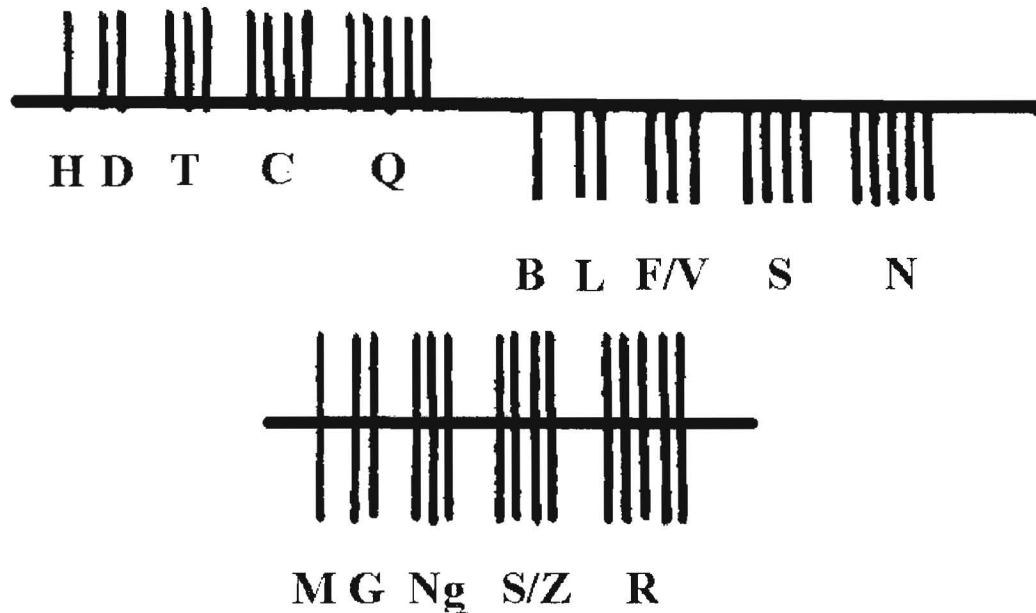


Fig.3: Ogam letters as they appear in inscriptions at sites in America. Note the total absence of vowels. Also, the strokes that intersect the stemline for the consonantal group M G Ng S/Z R are not oblique to the stemline, as in the European Ogams, but perpendicular to it.



Figure 4A: Aghadoe inscription from County Kerry, Ireland, , with apparent vowelless Ogam characteristics.

Richard Brash and R.A.S. Macalister, did report vowelless Ogam inscriptions from Ireland that were found in areas where vowelless Ogam also existed. **Figure 4A** shows one such example reported by Brash. **Figure 4B** shows a stone, first recorded in the *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* in 1972-73, at Casteldearg, Co. Tyrone, Northern Ireland, that is seemingly inscribed with vowelless Ogam. **Figure 4C** shows an example of vowelless Ogam that appears in *The Book of Ballymote* itself. There are many others, but none have ever been accepted as true Ogam by academia. The 19th century scholars had an interest in un-vowelless Ogam, but modern scholars have generally dismissed it as "imitation" or "false" Ogam, or "quasi-" or "pseudo-" Ogam. In referring to the un-vowelless Ogams of Scotland, F.C. Diack's conjectured that such vowelless Ogams were, in fact, *proto-Ogam*,⁽³⁾ but, likewise, this has never been accepted. It should also be noted that, if the aforementioned inscriptions on the Windmill Hill artefacts are indeed Ogam, they are un-vowelless! Of further significance is the fact that two amulets were also excavated at Troy, and although it has never been documented, certain observers have identified both amulets as containing the un-vowelless Ogam strokes B-L ("Bel") oriented horizontally and with a stemline. ("Bel", incidentally, will gain importance later in this text). Finally, it is worth pointing out that some apparently vowelless Ogam inscriptions have also been located in Portugal.

IT IS NOT unusual for ancient scripts to be purely consonantal in nature. A number of ancient script contained no vowels at all, and the vowels have to be inserted by whoever is attempting to read (or translate) the script. This is not as difficult as it sounds. For example, the purely consonantal phrase 'thrd flr flt fr rnt' is easily recognizable to a modern English speaker as meaning 'third floor flat (or apartment) for rent'. But, with

regard to Ogam, even vowelless Ogam is notoriously difficult to transliterate. Often, more than one letter is possible, although translation is facilitated somewhat if the markings have been organized into distinct groups so that it is possible to determine where each letter sequence and each word begins and ends. However, if one is confronted with a series of consonantal Ogam markings without any organized spacing, it becomes extremely difficult to add vowels and split the text into groups of words. Many different permutations could be possible.

THE CRITICISM that the inscriptions in America are not Ogam because they have not been inscribed with the edge of a stone acting as the stemline, as is the case with the Old World variety, is also invalid. There are, in fact, a number of examples in Ireland, Scotland, and England, where the Ogam text has been inscribed on the surface of a stone, as opposed to its edge. **Figure 5** shows a recumbent slab that was once on display near the base of the Gap of Dunloe, close to Killarney in Southern Ireland. It is one of eight stones, all of which had been removed from a nearby cave. The stone not only has an Ogam inscription on its edge, with the edge of the stone acting as the stemline, but also on its surface. It is also interesting to note that the Ogam inscription on the surface only has an implied stemline. Ogams with only an implied stemline, not an actual inscribed stemline, are also common in America. Indeed, the lack of a stemline in some instances is another reason that has been given by experts to refute the legitimacy of the American Ogams.

With regard to the criticism that the Ogam signs for the **M G Ng S/Z R** consonantal group are not oblique to the stemline, as in the Old World Ogams, but perpendicular to it, it is pertinent to point out that, even on stones in the British Isles, transecting Ogam strokes for the **M**-series are sometimes inscribed perpendicular to the stemline. The



Figure 4B: Ogam stone from Castlederg, County Tyrone with apparent vowelless Ogam characteristics. Photo: Scott Monahan.



Figure 4C: Reproduction of a photograph of an Ogam inscription from the Book of Ballymote. The text that accompanies the inscription involves a warning to the god Lug concerning his wife. Critics of the un-vowelled Ogam hypothesis have said that the portions of the final three Ogam strokes that extend above the stemline do not exist, and that the entire inscription actually consists of seven strokes below the stemline. They have said that it does not, therefore, constitute a word, but instead represents the seven birches with which Lug should castigate his wife. The original photograph, taken under ultraviolet light, reveals that the upper portions of the final three strokes do, in fact, exist. The final three Ogam strokes actually intersect the stemline and represent NG. Consequently, the inscription, which was completely vowelless, does form a word that has been translated as “sign” or “omen”.



Fig.5: Recumbent slab, measuring approximately 10 feet in length and 2 feet in width, that was once on display near the base of the Gap of Dunloe, close to Killarney in Southern Ireland. It not only contains an Ogam inscription on its edge, but also on its surface with an implied stemline. Photo: Scott Monahan

Killogrone stone is one such example, where all the M-strokes are at right angles to the edge-stemline except the first, which slopes the wrong way.(4).

THERE IS ALSO the question of the language that was being used. The languages spoken by the Continental Celts had no survivors after the first millennium AD. In fact, extremely little would be known about the Celtic languages were it not for the

British Isles. At the time of the Roman occupation in the British Isles, Brithonic was spoken in Britain, and Goedelic was spoken in Ireland. The Brithonic dialects that have survived into more recent times are Welsh, Cornish and Breton. The Goedelic dialects that have survived into more recent times are Irish, Scottish, Gaelic and Manx. It has been established that the inscriptions in Ireland that were written using the Ogam alphabet during the 4th and 5th centuries AD were in an earlier form of the Irish language that has been termed "Old Irish" or "Primitive Irish".

However, it is not known what language was being used when the American Ogams were inscribed, and the question has arisen as to whether it is legitimate to attempt to recover the Old Irish tongue when translating these Ogams. Those who have attempted to decipher the American Ogams have, nevertheless, used Old Irish sources, and even older Common Celtic sources to try to arrive at a meaningful translation. These sources have been used on the premise that, assuming the people who inscribed the Ogams originated from the Old World in the first place, they contain the closest linguistic roots available to use in an attempt to recover a related, probably earlier, language.

THE SUN TEMPLE AND THE INSCRIPTIONS

The site that contains the Ogams in question has been named "The Sun Temple". This is purely a name that has been given to the site by those who have investigated it. The reasons for the name will become obvious, but it in no way reflects any known ancient or local name. This site, and others like it in the region, has been the subject of some very concentrated, painstaking, and thorough research for well over twenty three years. The team of investigators was originally led by William McGlone and Phillip Leonard, but after the death of William McGlone in 1999, Phillip Leonard has continued with the research.

The site is located on private land south of the Arkansas River in south-eastern Colorado, near the mouth of a broad open canyon. It consists of a group of tower rocks that are actually eroded columns of sandstone. **Figure 6A** is a photograph of the tower rocks, and **Figure 6B** is a drawing detailing the location of the petroglyphs, inscriptions, and other features that are dealt with in the following text. Part of the surface of the east facing rock appears to have been purposely smoothed by man, and a simple

ring, that the investigators have termed a "Sun-Ring petroglyph" has been carved on the smoothed surface. (**Figure 7**). Such "Sun-Rings" occur at other sites in the general vicinity, and they usually are found to have an alignment with a Solar event. The carving of the ring at the Sun Temple has been executed so that it is tilted slightly away from a plane perpendicular to a line of the sun. It has also been inscribed slightly oblate, so that when viewed from the sun's direction, it is a circle about a foot in diameter. It is elevated from the bench level of the site, and one can crouch on a shelf below it and place one's head in the centre of the ring to sight the sun.

HIGH ON THE south facing cliff, a heavily patinated inscription was located that appeared to be "Tree" Ogam. Tree Ogam was a legitimate method of writing the Ogam script in the Old World, and it was usually carved on a branch of the specific tree to which it is related. It was inscribed in the same vein as the stave version, except that, instead of the grooves for the letters being incised across a stemline, the grooves were carved as if they were twigs at the ends of branches. (**Figure 8**). For this reason, Tree Ogam is sometimes referred to as "branch" Ogam. The Tree Ogam inscription at the Sun Temple (**Figure 9A**) bears a strong resemblance to such writing. (Compare **Figure 9A** with **Figure 8**). When the inscription was transliterated with the vowels inserted, the inscription read in Celtic '*Foil Bel La Imdae i Bel Mam*'. This was then translated as: **THE SUN RING ALONG WITH THE SHOULDER BY MEANS OF SUN AND HILL**. (**Figure 9B**). The meaning of this somewhat cryptic message will be revealed in the following sub-section, but it was assumed that "the Ring" referred to the Sun-Ring petroglyph. In fact, the word "Ring" was translated from "foil", the Celtic word for "the ring of the sun" with specific reference to the "circle of the sun".(5). (It is interesting to note that, as can be seen in



Figure 6A: The “Sun Temple” tower rocks in south-eastern Colorado, USA.

Photo: David Eccott.

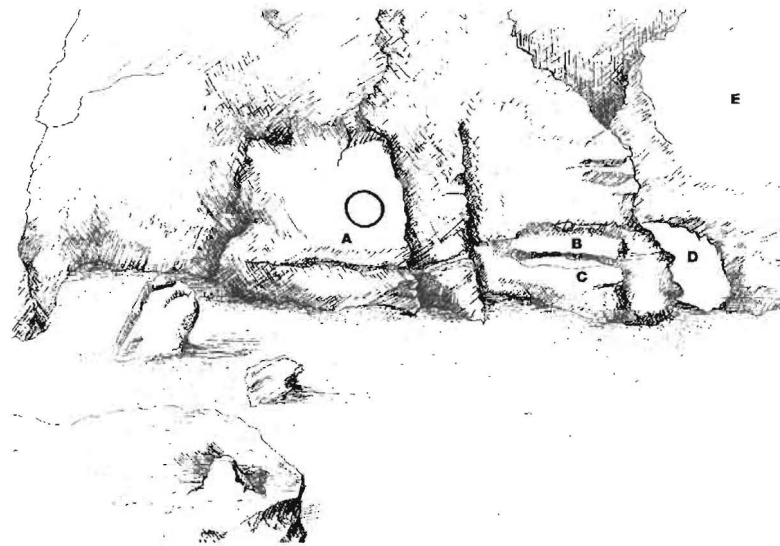


Figure 6B: The Sun Temple. A: Sun-Ring petroglyph. B: Shallow cave. C: Lip of cave with Noble Twins Ogam. D: Large untranslated Ogam-like inscription. E: Tree Ogam. Drawing: Jan McConnell.



Figure 7: “Sun-Ring petroglyph” carved on the smoothed surface of the east-facing rock of the Sun Temple. Photo: David Eccott.

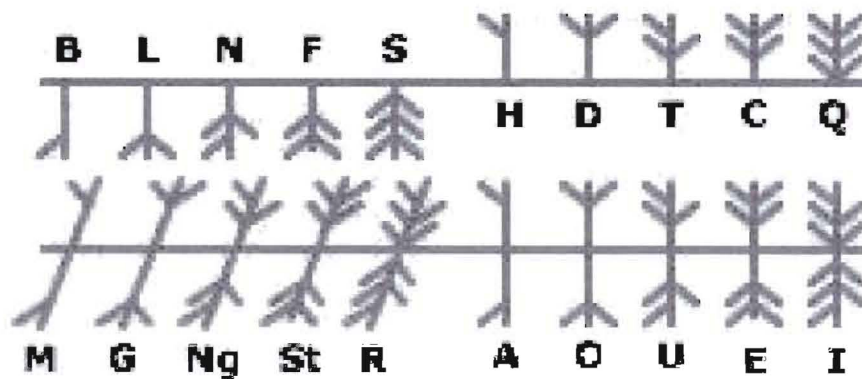


Figure 8: “Tree” (or “branch”) Ogam.



**Figure 9A: Ogam inscription (left), and Tree Ogam inscription (right) at the Sun Temple.
Photo: William R. McGlone.**

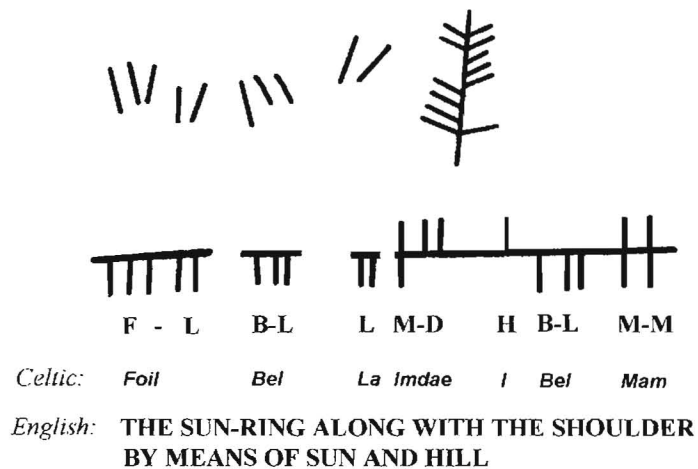


Figure 9B: Diagram of Figure A with transliteration and translation. (Tree Ogam inscription is to be read from bottom to top). This diagram was inaccurate in previous publications. The version reproduced here is correct. Drawing: Phillip Leonard.

Figure 9A, the hole beneath the Ogam strokes for F-L is like a half sun at sunrise, and the strokes of the F-L are like sun rays. The same technique as was also used at another site known as the Anubis Caves that seems to be related to the Sun Temple). The Tree Ogam inscription, combined with the orientation of the Sun-Ring petroglyph, strongly suggested the possibility of an astronomical alignment.

BETWEEN THE east facing rock that contains the Sun-Ring petroglyph and the south facing cliff containing the tree Ogam, there is an elevated shallow cave about seven feet above ground level. Its dimensions are approximately eight feet long, four feet deep, and two feet high. The ceiling of the cave is covered with grooves, most of which are linked by stemlines. Attempts to decipher these inscriptions have been met with varying degrees of success, but two inscriptions in particular, (see **Figure 10**), appeared to confirm the suspicion that there was an astronomical alignment at the site.

Most prominent of the two inscriptions in question was a large circle with horizontal incisions carved in it across a stemline. (This can be seen on the right side of **Figure 10**). Reading from bottom upwards, the incisions spell out the Ogam letters **S/Z** (four strokes through the stem line) and **L** (two strokes below the stemline). By adding the missing vowel, this can be read as the word **SOL** meaning **SUN**, which was used widely by many ancient peoples including the Celts. To the left of the **SOL** inscription there is also a rebus-like inscription that begins with an engraving like an inverted V, and which is followed by, what appear to be, Ogam incisions across a stemline. (This can be seen on the left side of **Figure 10**, and in close-up in **Figure 11A**). The word groupings of this inscription are clearly spaced, and two words seem to have been written. Reading from left to right, the letters of the first word have been transliterated as **Ng (N)**, and the letters of the second word have been transliterated as

TBGH. By adding vowels, the two words can be read as **uin** (which translates as *time* or *season*) and **tobagh(6)** (which translates as *reaping*). Therefore, a complete reading could be **TIME FOR REAPING** or **SEASON FOR REAPING**. (**Figure 11B**).

Before describing the astronomical alignment that was subsequently detected at the Sun Temple site, it is perhaps appropriate to digress a little to discuss the apparent preference in the transliterations detailed above for **Ng** instead of **N**, and **Z** instead of **S**. Indeed, the Ogam sign for **Ng** consistently replaces **N**, and the Ogam sign for **Z** consistently replaces **S** at sites in America where Ogam is said to exist, and it is another peculiarity that has shed doubt on the authenticity of the markings as being Ogam. Critics have said that these substitutions actually alter and destroy the meaning of the words, and that any resulting translations therefore result in gibberish. Such changes in spelling are especially relevant to certain words in the above translations where, for instance, the Old Irish word for Sun has the apparent Ogam spelling transliterated as "Griang", as opposed to the accepted spelling "Grian". Critics have said that an NG-ending for this particular word is inadmissible. In actual fact, as the Irish scholar Thomas O'Rahilly has noted, there are certain dialects in Ireland today where **N** is often replaced by **Ng**, whilst in other dialects the reverse is true. In Northern Ireland **Ng** is even assimilated to **NN**, and, in other areas, vice versa. Also, in the *Old Irish Dictionary* of the Royal Irish Academy, some words are spelt equally with **Ng** or **N** without any alteration of meaning. It all depends, it appears, upon variation in dialects. An **S - Z** interchange is not uncommon in languages such as Latin and Spanish, and there has been French and English confusion of **S** and **Z** for many centuries. Furthermore, some Ogamists give the sound value for the Ogam letter in question, (consisting of four strokes



**Figure 10: Ogam inscriptions on the ceiling of a small elevated cave at the Sun Temple.
Photo: David Eccott.**



Figure 11A: Ogam inscription at the Sun Temple. Photo: David Eccott.

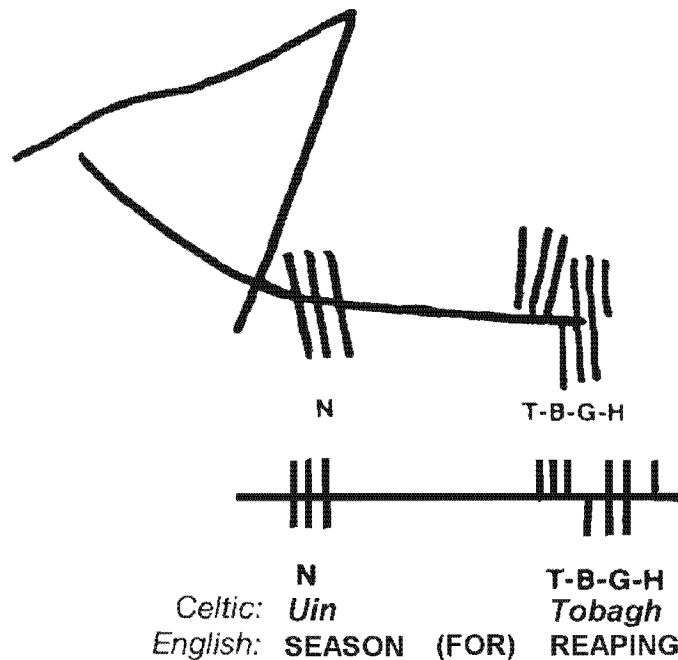


Figure 11B: Diagram of Figure 11A with transliteration and translation. Drawing: Phillip Leonard.

intersecting the stemline), as F(?) / Z (as is the case in Encyclopaedia Britannica), or SS, or ST, all of which seem to be hinting at a variation of dialect. Such consonantal changes and interchanges over time within languages, and even within contemporary dialects, are an accepted fact. For instance, and interchange between **P** and **B** is a very common occurrence. The meaning of words where such changes occur are not altered or destroyed. Therefore, we should not be surprised to see that the people who, supposedly, brought the Ogam script to the New World were seemingly using a certain dialect where such consonantal replacements may have been the norm. It simply suggests an anomaly in their actual dialect. We must

also bear in mind that we are probably dealing with a relatively small unit of immigrants to the New World, not a wholesale invasion by thousands and thousands of people. Therefore, a unique inflection in the dialect of what may well have been a single clan of people, reflected in their inscriptions, is what might be expected to occur.

THE ASTRONOMICAL ALIGNMENT

With the information gleaned from the translation of the inscriptions, it was decided to see if some form of astronomical alignment would take place at the site. The

presence of a Sun-Ring petroglyph suggested that a solar alignment might occur, possibly at the time of the summer solstice. If an observer sits on the ledge just below the Sun-Ring petroglyph with the back of his head resting on the ring itself, he will see, opposite him, a cliff. He will also see a protruding overhang, like a notch on the edge of the cliff, and he will observe that a hollow area is thus formed between the notch and the horizon. (Figure 12). It was proposed that, at the time of the summer solstice, the rising sun, when observed from the Sun-Ring petroglyph, would fit into the hollow area formed by the cliff overhang and the horizon. The suggested alignment was first tested at the time of the 1984 summer solstice, but the rising sun was hidden totally by the cliff when viewed directly from the petroglyph. Furthermore, the shadow cast was far off the Sun-Ring petroglyph to the south.

DESPITE THIS initial failure, the message of the translation of the inscriptions was not abandoned, and it was decided to see if a solar alignment still might occur sometime between the solstice and the equinox at a date important to the ancient Celtic people. The children of the rancher who owns the land volunteered to check at sunrise on succeeding days to find if, and when, an alignment occurred. Success finally came on the 8th of August when the full disc of the rising sun was observed sitting in the hollow formed by the cliff overhang and the horizon.

It was subsequently learned that, (correlating to the Gregorian calendar), the 8th of August is a cross-quarter day. There are four cross-quarter days during the year. Two occur between the summer solstice and the equinox; one in August when the sunrise point on the horizon is moving south, and one in May when it is moving north. Two more occur in February and November between the equinox and the winter solstice respectively. Cross-quarter days were extremely important events for the ancient Celts, and actually set the Celtic Calendar.(7). Figure 13 shows the

photograph that was taken on the cross-quarter day of the 5th of May. The disc of the rising sun, viewed from the Sun-Ring petroglyph, can be seen fitting precisely in the hollow formed by the right-angled notch on the cliff edge and the horizon. Therefore, despite, with regard to ancient Celts being present in pre-Columbian America, what might seem an implausible scenario to some, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the inscriptions are, indeed, Ogam, and that they have been correctly translated - in as much as their messages have been confirmed by a solar event. This is particularly true of the Tree Ogam inscription: **THE SUN RING ALONG WITH THE SHOULDER BY MEANS OF SUN AND HILL**. The "ring" is the Sun-Ring petroglyph, and the "shoulder" is the notch on the cliff edge that, together with the horizon, forms the hollow in which the "sun" rises on the cross-quarter days. The land that stretches away in front of the observer as he views the event from the Sun-Ring petroglyph is actually a mesa, (a tableland of small extent rising abruptly from a surrounding plain), which is, of course, the "hill" referred to in the inscription. The reader should also bear in mind that the decipherment of the inscriptions was made before the astronomical event was observed. In other words, the translations of the inscriptions were not contrived to read as a description of something that had previously been observed.

There is a third inscription in the elevated cave, (seen to the right of the circled SOL inscription in Figure 10), that may also indicate that the solar event was to take place on the cross-quarter days. It was more difficult to translate because the strokes of many of the letters are so equally spaced that it is difficult to determine word groupings. Many different translations are possible as a result, and it has only been tentatively deciphered on a preliminary basis. The first letters are sufficiently spaced to read, and appear to spell out the Ogam consonants for the letters LGNS. By inserting appropriate

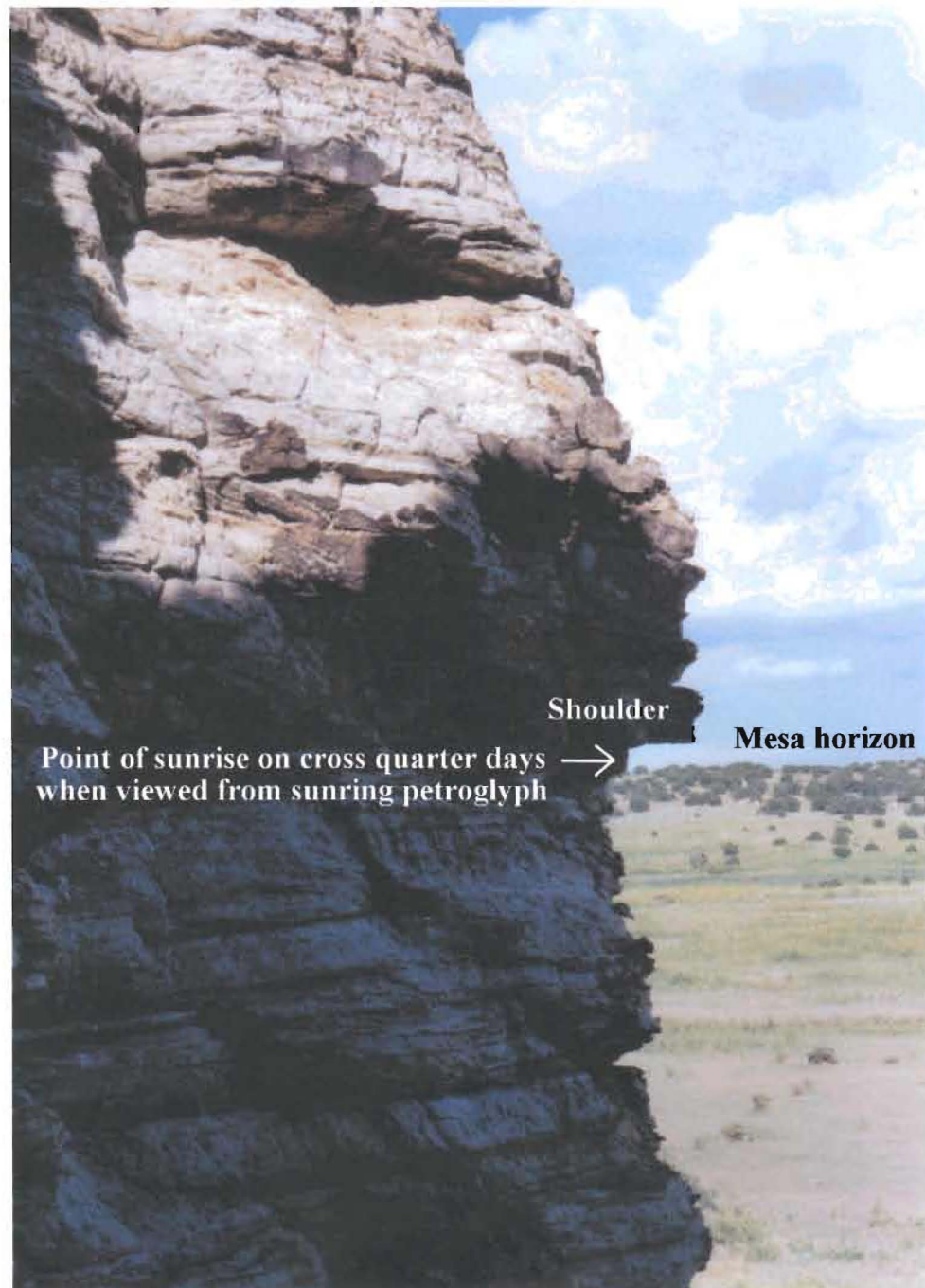


Figure 12: View from the “Sun-Ring petroglyph” showing the cliff with a protruding overhang (“shoulder”) formed by a notch. On the cross-quarter days, the sun appears to rise within the hollow area between the notch and the horizon. Photo: David Eccott.



Figure 13: Sunrise alignment on the cross-quarter day. Although this photograph was taken on the cross-quarter day of May 5th (1985), the alignment is exactly the same on the cross-quarter day of August 8th. Photo: William R. McGlone.

vowels, the word can be transliterated as **Lugnasa.(8)**. Lugnasa was the great pre-harvest festival of the Celts. It was celebrated in early August at the time of the cross-quarter day, and was held in honour of Lug, one of the Celtic sun gods.(8). Furthermore, the tip of the inverted V that precedes the *season for reaping* inscription, seems to be aligned to the rising sun. This, combined with the word *reaping* also suggests a link with the pre-harvest festival of Lugnasa at the time of the cross-quarter day in August. The site, therefore, seems as if it were used for the Lugnasa festival in August, rather than the Beltane festival in May.

IT IS WORHT pointing out that solar alignments on cross-quarter days are observable at ancient sites in other parts of

the world where Celtic people are known to have inhabited. Such an alignment can be seen in **Figure 14** that shows a solar alignment occurring at sun rise on the cross-quarter day in February at Stonehenge in the British Isles.

DATING THE SUN TEMPLE

If the inscriptions described above are indeed Ogam, the question that remains is; when were they executed? There is another inscription that may provide an answer to that question.

On the lower lip of the cave, an intricate motif has been executed on an angled flat section of rock. (**Figure 15A**). It has groupings of small "plus-signs" (+ signs),



Figure 14: Cross-quarter days were important events in the Celtic Calendar. Solar alignments on cross-quarter days are observable at many ancient Celtic sites. This photograph shows a solar alignment occurring at sun rise on the cross quarter day in February at Stonehenge in the British Isles. Photo: Marita Vickroy.



Figure 15A: The “Noble Twins” panel at the Sun Temple. Photo: David Eccott.

approximately one inch high, that are believed to be representations of stars. There are also some larger plus-signs, about three inches high, as well as an apparent Ogam inscription. **Figure 15B** is a diagram that shows the basic pattern of the plus-signs and, in particular, the Ogam inscription itself.

THE WORD GROUPINGS of the inscription are relatively clear, and the first group of Ogam incisions on the left has an obvious stemline. The three strokes intersecting this stemline signify the consonant **Ng (N)**. The second group does not appear to have a stemline, but if an inferred stemline is assumed to continue from the previous one, the consonants **N - S** can be determined. (The fact that the second word does not have a stemline should not prevent it being accepted as Ogam. Ogam inscriptions in the British isles were sometimes written without a stemline, or with an implied stemline. The Castelderg stone from Ireland, shown in **Figure 4B**, is testimony to this). The third group has not been incised next to the first two words, but appears above, and to the right of them. This group also has a stemline and contains signs for the consonants **S - M**. By inserting appropriate vowels, the inscription can be transliterated as *In Neas Saimh*, and translated as **THE NOBLE TWINS**. If this is correct it would seem to imply that the zodiacal constellation of Gemini, dominated by the twin magnitude 1 stars Castor and Pollux, was being referred to, and that the small plus-signs are intended to depict the stars in this constellation. Indeed, there is a remarkable similarity between the basic pattern depicted on the panel and the Gemini constellation, with one arm of stars radiating outward from Castor, and another radiating outward from Pollux..

If we now turn our attention to the large plus-signs shown in **Figures 15A and 15B**, it can be seen that they do not seem to correspond to any visible stars in the constellation. It was thought, therefore, that the large plus-signs may have been intended to represent the

planets. It seemed that there were three large plus-signs inscribed on the panel; two next to the word "twins", and a third in the lower left portion of the panel as shown in **Figure 15C**. Because the large plus-signs appeared to form a straight line, it was suggested that, at some point in the past, when the Gemini constellation passed through the ecliptic, three planets, possibly Jupiter, Saturn, and Venus, either lined up on the ecliptic or formed a triple conjunction. It was also suggested that such a phenomenon might have occurred on the cross-quarter day in August. However, there was some concern amongst the investigators regarding the fact that the large plus-sign in the lower left portion of the panel had actually been incorporated into the first word of the inscription. The horizontal arm of the assumed plus-sign has been used, it appears, as the actual stemline, and the vertical arm for one of the incisions of the Ogam strokes for the consonant N. Nevertheless, NASA's Digi-Star computer revealed that there was a triple conjunction of Venus, Jupiter, and Saturn in the constellation of Gemini before sunrise at the time of the cross-quarter day on August 8th in 471 AD, and that it was visible from the Sun Temple location. However, it was eventually decided not to use this date for an astronomical dating of the site because it was too late to comply with results obtained from cation-ratio dating methods that had been conducted on samples taken from the Sun Ring petroglyph and the Noble Twins panel.. Furthermore, computerized searches for earlier possibilities showed that another triple conjunction between Venus, Saturn, and Jupiter had also occurred in 324 BC.

COMPUTER ASTRONOMY programmes have become considerably more sophisticated since the late 1980s when the Digi-Star computer was employed to detect the triple conjunction in 471 AD. So, in order to verify the result, I used the computer astronomy programme REDSHIFT to search for conjunctions that occurred between

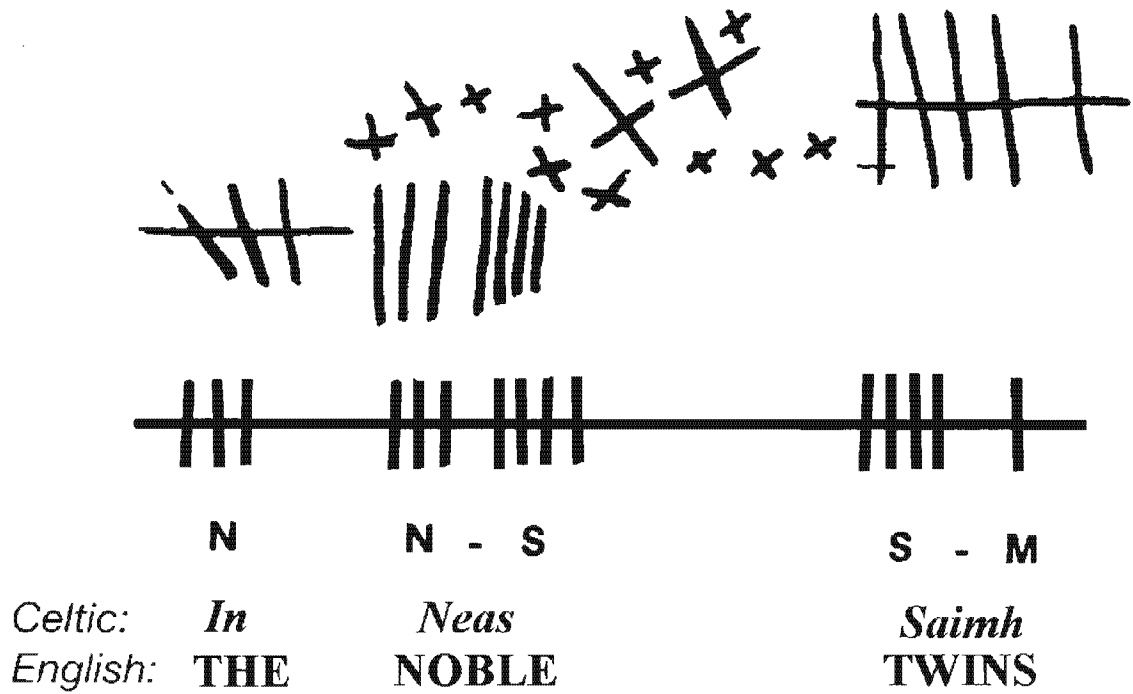


Figure 15B: Diagram of Figure 15A with transliteration and translation. Drawing: Phillip Leonard.

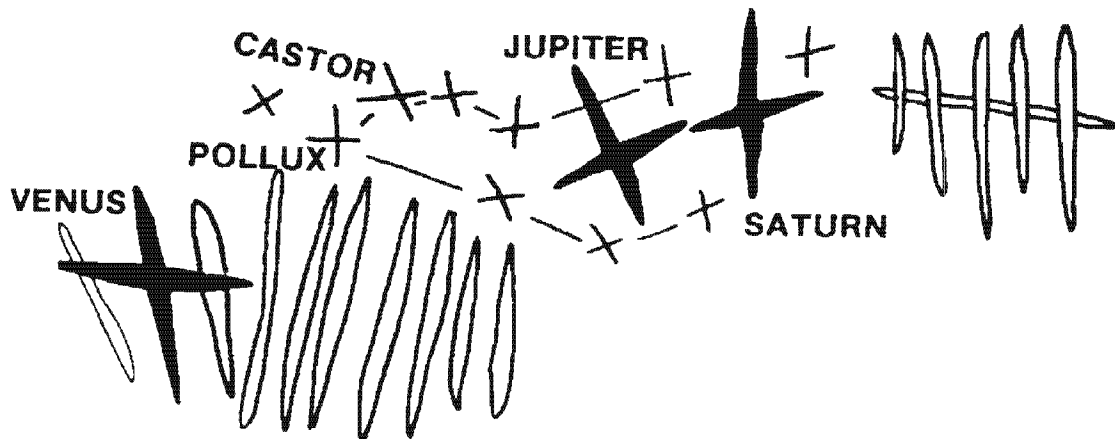


Figure 15C: Astronomical interpretation of the small and large plus-signs on the Noble Twins panel. Drawing: Phillip Leonard.

Venus, Jupiter, and Saturn during the time span of 500 BC to 1000 AD.. I set a viewing location of 103° 42' W and 38° 00' N, which are the co-ordinates for La Junta, the nearest town to the Sun Temple, and set the conjunction-search facility in operation. In order to obtain the closest possible match with the engraving on the Noble Twins panel, it was important that any conjunctions that were detected by REDSHIFT should show the positions of Jupiter and Saturn to be within the boundaries of the Gemini constellation as they had been depicted on the Noble Twins panel. The Gemini constellation forms an oblong shape in the heavens with the stars Castor and Pollux at one extremity, and the stars Tejat Posterior and Alhena at the other extremity. As the Noble Twins panel seemed to show the constellation orientated with Castor and Pollux to the west, and Tejat Posterior and Alhena to the east, it was important that this was also the case with any results subsequently obtained..

SURPRISINGLY, although the 324 BC triple conjunction was detected by REDSHIFT, no triple conjunction was detected for the year 471 AD. In fact, between 500 BC and 1000 AD, REDSHIFT detected 18 triple conjunctions, but only two of them had occurred in the constellation of Gemini. One was the 324 BC triple conjunction, and the other had occurred in 531 AD. In the 324 BC conjunction, which had occurred at 4:14a.m., although the orientation of the conjunction was a match for the Noble Twins panel, the three planets themselves had appeared just below the southern boundary of the constellation. In the 531 AD conjunction, which had occurred at 8:17p.m., the three planets were within the boundaries of the stars forming the constellation, but the orientation of the constellation was completely different to that shown on the panel. Castor and Pollux formed a northern tip of the conjunction, and Tejat Posterior and Alhena, which were also below the horizon, formed a southern tip. Therefore, neither of these two triple conjunctions

appeared to fit the pattern shown on the panel for one reason or another.

Using the same co-ordinates, I then set the conjunction search facility to look for double conjunctions between Jupiter and Saturn that had occurred within the same time span. A total of ninety nine were detected, but only in six of them were the two planets in, or close to the constellation of Gemini. Furthermore, one of those six conjunctions had occurred in 471 AD.

OF THE SIX Jupiter/Saturn conjunctions that had occurred in Gemini between 500 BC and 1000 AD, one in 264 BC had occurred during the night, but the orientation of the constellation was different to that shown on the Noble Twins panel. Jupiter and Saturn were also both outside of the boundaries of the constellation. Another, in 324 BC had occurred below the horizon and would, therefore, not have been visible. Three more, in 384 BC, 531 AD, and 590 AD had occurred during the daylight hours and would, therefore, also not have been visible. This left only one more, which was the 471 AD conjunction.

However, REDSHIFT showed that even the 471 AD conjunction did not fully meet the requirements that were needed to obtain an exact fit with the depiction on the Noble Twins panel. Most importantly, the conjunction had occurred, not of August 8th, but on June 19th. Furthermore, it had occurred just after midday at 1:45p.m., and would not, of course, have been visible. Added to that, the orientation of the constellation was, once more, different to that shown on the Noble twins panel, and Jupiter and Saturn were just outside of the boundaries of the constellation pattern. By turning the clock back a little it was possible to obtain a view of how the two planets and the constellation would have appeared at 4:25a.m., just before sunrise on June 19th. At that time, the orientation of the constellation was a good match for that depicted on the

Noble Twins panel, but Jupiter and Saturn are still just beyond the constellation boundaries itself.

BY TURNING the clock forward on a five-daily basis, however, the whole pattern gradually began to change, and at the beginning of July, first Jupiter, then Saturn began to move into the boundaries of the Gemini constellation. By July 5th, both planets were within the constellation boundaries, but even at 2:30a.m., during the night hours, the constellation was still very close to the horizon, which could have made clear visibility difficult. But, towards the end of July and into the beginning of August, the Gemini constellation began to move higher in the night sky, and by August 8th it was well above the horizon where it would have been clearly visible in the night sky. Also, around the 20th of July, Venus would have been seen moving into Gemini's north-eastern sector. During the remainder of July, Venus gradually passed to the east of Jupiter and Saturn, and by the early days of August, and certainly by August 8th, it would have been seen to the south of the Gemini constellation where it appeared to line up approximately with Jupiter and Saturn on the path of the ecliptic as shown in **Figure 16**. In fact, during the hours after midnight, very much the same pattern would have been seen throughout August. By the end of August, Jupiter began to move out of the constellation boundaries. Generally, therefore, the month of August appears to be crucial. August 8th itself is not too important because, through the centuries, the festival of Lughnasa has been celebrated on a number of dates in August. (9).

The positions of the planets in REDSHIFT are based upon DE102 calculations, and over an extended period from 4712 BC to 10,000 AD they are considered to be better than ten arc-seconds for the inner planets, and thirty arc-seconds for the outer planets. I checked, once more, all of the other conjunctions mentioned above in order to determine

whether moving slightly forwards or backwards in time would produce a pattern similar to that shown on the Noble Twins panel, but no such possibilities emerged. Neither were any meaningful results were obtained by searching for conjunctions between other planets such as, for instance, Venus and Mars, or Jupiter and Mars, etc.. The year 471 AD seemed, therefore, to be a strong candidate for a date that would indicate when the people who inscribed the panel were actually in the area. The date also falls within the accepted time span for when Ogam was in use. Although, technically speaking, the event that occurred during August in 471 AD event was not a conjunction, it was the only one of its kind to occur in 1500 years that matches the design and orientation of, what are assumed to be, the star, planet, and constellation symbols on the Noble Twins panel. To ancient people who, in any case, probably would not have understood the actual technicalities of a true conjunction, it may well have seemed as if the three planets, straddling the ecliptic, appeared to be passing through the gates of heaven on their return to earth.

THE CONFLICT that arose between the astronomical dating and cation ratio dating, which had originally prevented the acceptability of the 471 AD date, was also resolved. The dating methods that were conducted at the Sun Temple and other sites were made using three basic techniques. The first technique that was employed compared the relative degree of repatination of the inscriptions to those of nearby panels containing petroglyph styles having a known age. A second technique compared the inscriptions to others that contained written dates and signatures that had been inscribed by early 19th century settlers in the region. Finally, the experimental technique known as "Cation ratio dating" was also used. By all three methods the sites were determined to be clearly pre-Columbian by a wide margin. The age by cation ratio analysis on samples taken from the Noble Twins panel was 3000 (± 250)

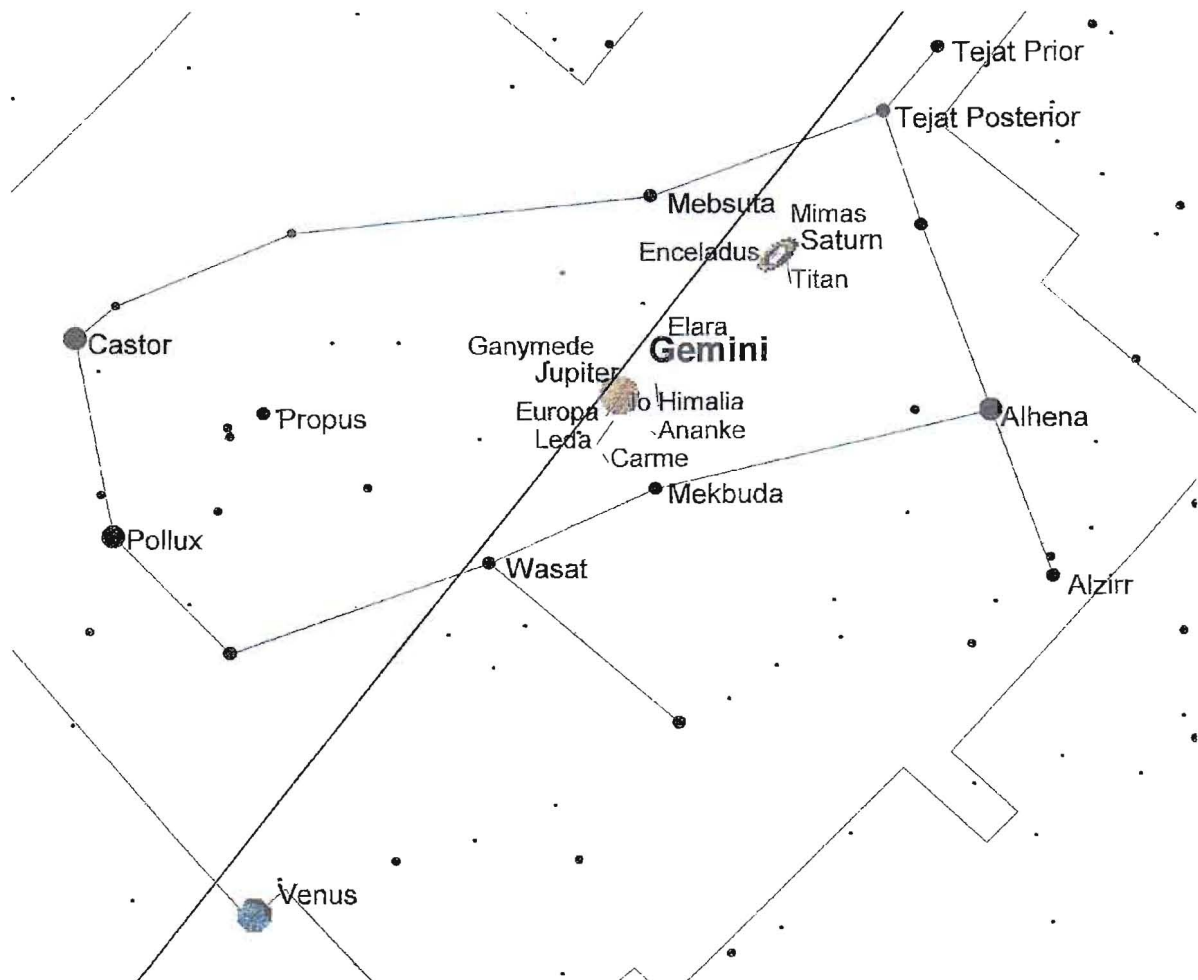


Figure 16:

Print from REDSHIFT.

Viewing location: 103° 42' W. 38° 00' N.

Date: August 8th, 471 AD (Gregorian)

Time: 2.30 a.m. (local time)

The eastern sky, showing Jupiter, Saturn, and Venus straddling the ecliptic, and their positions with regard to the Gemini Constellation. Compare with Figure 15C.

(The discs of Jupiter, Saturn, and Venus have been enlarged for purposes of clarity).

years before the present. Analysis of the Sun-Ring produced dates that fell between 750 and 950 years before the present, which seemed to produce yet another anomaly. However, subsequent careful examination of the Sun-Ring revealed patches of much older patina that indicated that, not only had the Sun-Ring been re-carved at some point, but that the original carving was done considerably earlier than 750-950 years before present. When certain samples from both the Noble Twins panel and the Sun-Ring were re-entered, a date much closer to the 5th century AD was obtained.

THE QUESTION that subsequently arises is why Gemini, (the twins), was of significance to the people who had carved this particular panel at the Sun Temple? An answer to that question may lie in the religion of Mithraism.

THE RELIGION OF MITHRAS

By introducing Mithraism, we are, it must be said, introducing another incongruous factor into an equation that is already unacceptable to mainstream doctrine. Not only that, but to also suddenly introduce a reference to the religion of Mithras may, at first sight, appear to be totally irrelevant to everything that has been said previously in this essay. However, it must be understood that the Sun Temple is not the only site in America where apparent Ogam inscriptions have been found. There are many, but two other sites in particular seem to be inexorably linked, not only by the existence of Ogam inscriptions, but also by mythology and technique of execution, to the Sun Temple. One site, known as Crack Cave, is also situated in Southeast Colorado, and the other site, known as the Anubis Caves, is located in the Oklahoma Panhandle. The Anubis caves, in particular, are imbued with, what would appear to be, Mithric symbolism.

The religion of Mithras has its roots in the

cult of Mithra, the ancient Persian god of light and wisdom, who appears as the „beneficent one“ and ruler of the world. He was supposed to have slain the divine bull, from whose dying body sprang all plants and animals beneficial to humanity. After the conquest of Assyria in the 7th century BC and of Babylonia in the 6th century BC, Mithra became the god of the sun, which was worshipped in his name. The Greeks of Asia Minor, by identifying Mithra with **Helios**, the Greek god of the sun, helped to spread the cult. It was brought to Rome about 68 BC by Cilician pirates whom the Roman general Pompey the Great had captured, and during the early empire it spread rapidly throughout Italy and the Roman provinces where it became a rival to Christianity. During the early years of the 4th century AD, Mithraism was eventually suppressed under the Roman Emperor Constantine, but it continued to be popular in the provinces where it was often practised in secret. As D. Jason Cooper has said in describing Mithras, ‘For almost 500 years his religion vied with Christianity for dominance of Rome and through the whole of Western Civilization. In ancient times he found followers in the Indian, Persian, and Roman Empires, and as far north as the Russian steppes.... Mithras has been worshipped in more religious traditions than perhaps any other deity in history. Aryan tribal pagans, Hindus, Iranian pagans, Zarathustrians, the Mitanni people of the Middle East, and even the Manicheans have all worshipped him.’ (10).

THE SUN-GOD was known to the soldiers of the Roman Empire as "Mithras Sol Invictus". The principal god of the Babylonians was "Bel" who, in the Old

Testament was referred to as the god Marduk, god of the Sun and battle. Celtic connections to Bel also exist. Ferguson states that the Celtic god Bel(enus) was a sun-god, and was not only equated with the Celtic god Grannus, but that the Celtic divinities were also associated with the name of Mithras, where they became well established in some of the old centres of Gallic origin.(11). Cecil Pascal also points out that there are inscriptions from southern Gaul to the Celtic god Belenus.(12), whilst Robert Graves equates Belenus as a god of the early Irish.(13). The Celtic god "Lug" was also synonymous with the sun-god. Therefore, not only can Mithras, Bel, and Lug be seen as being inter-connected, but it can also be firmly established that strong elements of the Mithric religion had taken root amongst the Celts from very early times. It must also be made clear that, apart from there being places of worship in Rome dedicated to Mithras, there were also Danubian places of worship dedicated to Mithras.

ASTRONOMICAL IMAGERY and symbolism pervaded the cult of Mithras. Mithrasians also celebrated the equinoxes. At Ceasarea, in Syria, a Mithraeum was built that only allowed the sun to shine on the altar on the days of the equinox. The iconography, rituals, and degrees of initiation of the religion are far too complex to discuss in this essay, but certain aspects are worth relating, as they may be relevant to the Noble Twins panel at the Sun Temple.

Firstly, Mithrasians would have found the celestial sphere important because it would have been significant to them in religious terms. Specifically, they had developed a system of correspondences with heavenly bodies. Secondly, the "twins" (*Dioscuri*)

were also extremely important to Mithraism. In traditional Greek mythology, the *Dioscuri* were the twin heroes Castor and Pollux who were the sons of Zeus. It is they who gave their name to the constellation Gemini (the twins). Some criticism has been levelled at the association of the word "noble", as it apparently appears on the Noble Twins panel, with regard to the constellation of Gemini. The reason given for the criticism is that Castor and Pollux were not of the nobility; the inference of the criticism being that the words "Noble Twins" do not, therefore, refer to the constellation Gemini, and that the whole concept of a link to Mithras is therefore inadmissible. However, in Homeric legend, Castor and Pollux are described as being the sons of Tyndareus, a king of Sparta. They were actually worshipped in Sparta as guardians of the state, and the fact that they were the sons of a king would have made them "noble". For this reason, it is not incorrect to assume that the inscription on the Noble Twins panel is referring to Castor and Pollux, and, by association, the constellation of Gemini. In other words, the person who made the inscription was aware of the noble connection.

In the Mithrasian religion, the *Dioscuri* are also equated with the torchbearers Cautes and Cautopates who were minor figures in Greek mythology. In Mithric lore they represent morning and evening, spring and autumn, and the spring equinox and autumnal equinox. Cautes and Cautopates also witnessed the birth of Mithras on December 25th, and Mithras is often shown with one of these torchbearers on either side of him as seen in **Figure 17**, which is a drawing of a relief from the Esquiline in Rome. It depicts Mithras slaying the bull, an important event in his life, flanked on either side by Cautes and Cautopates. The seven stars around the head of Mithras represent the seven degrees of the religion, but there is a certain similarity in the



Figure 17: Drawing of a relief from the Esquiline in Rome. It depicts Mithras slaying the bull, flanked on either side by the twins Cautes and Cautopates.

design of the star pattern to that shown on the Noble Twins panel. Above the head of Mithras can be seen the arch of a cave. Not only did Mithrasians worship in underground temples known as a "Mithraeum" (plural - "Mithraea"), but they also thought of the universe as a cave with star-studded the walls. It may be more than mere coincidence that the inscriptions and the Noble Twins panel are located in a cave at the Sun Temple.

INDEED, the whole concept of "twins" is, in many ways, fundamental to the religion of Mithras. When explaining his sources for information on the Indian god Mitra, D. Jason Cooper refers to the Rg Veda,

written about 1500 BCE.. He explains that Mitra was an important deity of India, and goes on to say that 'In Vedic references, Mitra is normally mentioned with a partner, Varuna. In fact there are only a dozen references to either god, but over a hundred of the two together.. I believe that, like the Nasati, Mitra and Varuna may have originally been twins. This would explain why the two gods are so similar, why they are mentioned together, and why they are linked to paired principles. Mitra is identified with fire, earth, the colour red, morning and day, and the right-hand side; Varuna with water, heaven, evening and night, and the left-hand side.... The sort of

duality Mitra-Varuna displays is an important part of Vedic thought. Between them, the two gods encompass the universe and rule it in the same way they rule the affairs of men. That is, as they bring order to the world of men, so they bring order to the functions of the universe.'(14).

Although it seems that the Noble Twins panel is alluding to the Gemini (twins) constellation, a deeper, hidden meaning, possibly relating to a mythological incident, may also exist on the panel. Mithric symbolism is often highly cryptic in nature, and often delineated in such a manner on purpose so that it would be difficult for the uninitiated to understand the inherent implications. However, the fact that the word *Saimh* (Twins) has been written, not next to the first two words of the sentence: *In Neas* (The Noble), but next to the two large plus-signs in the upper right sector of the panel, may suggest that the aspect of "twins", or more pertinently, "duality", was being reinforced. If we also consider that, because the large plus-sign at lower left was incorporated into the Ogam text, there was doubt that it actually represented a planet, perhaps the two large plus-signs at upper right were intended to represent an acting-out of some myth involving Jupiter and Saturn. Astronomically and mythologically, the gods Jupiter and Saturn are not regarded as twins, but in Mithric lore there was a certain amount of interaction between them. According to Cooper, 'Many Mithraea show paintings of Saturn handing the thunderbolt over to Jupiter, indicating a transfer of cosmic rulership to the latter god.' This transfer of power signified a change of ages from the Golden Age.

THE SUGGESTIONS contained in the previous paragraph must remain purely

speculative. There are gaps in our knowledge of the religion of Mithras, and, as D Jason Cooper states, 'scholars have been unable to arrive at anything approaching a consistent interpretation of Mithrasian symbology.'(15). For this reason, assuming that the Noble Twins panel does relate to some aspect of Mithrasian religion, it is difficult to provide a fully satisfactory understanding of the panel, its link to the Gemini constellation, and the astronomical event in 471 AD.

ORIGINS

If the issues outlined above have persuaded the reader to at least give some consideration to the theory that Celtic people were responsible for the inscriptions and related carvings at the Sun Temple, then he may well enquire as to exactly where in the Old World these Celtic people emerged from.

THE QUESTION of origin is a difficult one to answer with any degree of precision. It must be remembered that "Celtic" is a linguistic and not a racial term. It applies to people who, although they may be of widely different physical type and origin, spoke, or who now speak, a Celtic language. For many centuries Celtic speakers occupied vast areas of Europe. They dominated an area that stretched from the shores of the Atlantic in the west to the Carpathians in the east; and from the great plains of the North to the northern coasts of the Mediterranean. The only two factors that may provide some clues, enabling us to pinpoint the original homeland in the Old World of the Celts who traversed the Atlantic and reached the shores of the New World, are linguistics and iconography.

As Colin Renfrew points out, 'The Celtic languages survived best in the areas which the Romans did not reach, or at least did not dominate. So that the languages of the

Continental Celts, as they are termed, are known to us only from a limited number of inscriptions.'(16). As mentioned earlier, the Celtic languages formerly spoken in the British Isles are the only ones that have discernible descendants in more recent times. From the evidence supplied by those languages that have descended from the original Brithonic and Goedelic tongues, it has been possible to classify the Celtic languages into two groups; P-Celtic and Q-Celtic. Renfrew explains that 'in Brithonic the sound *qu-* appears as *p-*, whereas in Goedelic it remains as *q*, later becoming *k*. Thus the numeral 'four' and the pronoun 'who' appear in Welsh as *pedwar* and *pwy*, and in Irish as *cethir* and *cia*.'(17). Therefore, P-Celtic includes Welsh and Breton, and Q-Celtic includes Irish and Scottish Gaelic.

It has been possible to determine that the people who wrote the Ogam inscriptions in America were Q-Celtic speakers. However, we must not be too hasty in concluding that they therefore came from Ireland, even though Ireland is also the country where the majority of Ogam inscriptions are found. We must remember that the Celts who colonized Ireland probably originated in the Iberian peninsular, where Ogam inscriptions, particularly of the unvoiced variety are also located. It has also been demonstrated that the central and western parts of Iberia were inhabited by a people speaking a Celtic language, and that these people can be equated with the Celtiberians mentioned by the classical writers.

There is also the question of religious iconography to be considered. From the apparent Mithrasian symbology that appears with the Ogam inscriptions, particularly in the Anubis Caves of the Oklahoma Panhandle, it seems that there is an affinity, not so much with the Celts of western Europe, but with the Celts of Anatolia, the name used by the ancient geographers for Asia Minor. It is not possible to detail these affinities in this essay but, at the time of

writing, a paper on the topic is soon to be published.(18).

IN THE 4th CENTURY BC, the Celts invaded the Greco-Roman world, conquering northern Italy, Macedonia, and Thessaly. They plundered Rome in 390, sacked Delphi in 279, and penetrated Asia Minor, where they were known as Galatians. Although the linguistic significance of these people has been disputed by some scholars on the grounds that they were not important to the actual origin of the Celtic languages, they did, nevertheless, introduce a Celtic tongue into Asia Minor. A problem has arisen, however, with their link to the Celts who supposedly reached the New World, in as much as it is thought that the Celts of Asia Minor were P-Celtic speakers; thus conflicting with the apparent Q-Celticism of those who reached the New World.

IT IS, OF COURSE, quite possible that the Anatolian Celts, who would undoubtedly have had contact, and been influenced by facets of the Mithrasian religion, in turn carried such influences to the Celts of western Europe. The fact that such cultural traits were transferred from Asia Minor to western Europe can be demonstrated by events that occurred in the musical heritage of the British Isles, especially Ireland. We are not speaking here of the music of Baroque, Classical, Romantic, or even modern composers, but of folk songs; the musical wild flowers, which contain strong elements that hark back to the modes of ancient Greece and Asia Minor. These ancient modes, within which was contained our modern diatonic scale, were named either after a city that seemed to have a preference for a certain mode, or after different districts of Asia Minor where particular modes were said to have been in use. Certain ancient modes of Asia Minor were absorbed by the Celtic people who had invaded the area, and were preserved through the process of oral transmission throughout the centuries. A fact that is sometimes not widely appreciated is

that Celtic culture is rich in folk song, and Celtic folk songs are invariably modal in nature. For instance, in Irish traditional music, the Ionian, Dorian, Aeolian, and Mixolydian modes are most popular. It is significant that the Ionian and Dorian modes occur most frequently, but it is even more significant that these are not the names by which they would have been known to the ancients. The reason for this is that mediaeval scholars misinterpreted a Latin text by Boethius and, as a consequence, the names of the modes became transposed and confused. The erroneous nomenclature persisted, and has become the norm for us today. But, in actual fact, the mode that became known as Ionian is, in reality, the Lydian mode; pertaining to Lydia in Anatolia, and the mode that came to be known as Dorian is actually the Phrygian mode; pertaining to Phrygia in Anatolia. So, it can be seen that these ancient modes of Asia Minor, (the Lydian and Phrygian respectively), have been preserved throughout the centuries and have been transmitted to the cultures of the Goedelic speakers of Ireland where they re-surfaced, probably time and time again, in folk songs that would have been sung to commemorate important people and events through the ages. Old songs may have been forgotten as new ones took their place, but the underlying tonal structure of the melodies remained modal. The actual route of transmission would probably have been via Europe into Iberia, where the (mediaeval) Phrygian mode (Greek Dorian) has become an important part of the Spanish flamenco. From Iberia the modes would have been transmitted to Ireland where modal-based folksongs have survived the longest due to the people and their culture not having been subjected to Latin or Anglo-Saxon dominance. If ancient modes can be transmitted and preserved in such a way, then the same should hold true for religious traits. Therefore, although we cannot be certain, perhaps Iberia was the starting point for those Celts who reached the New World.

DURING THE fourth century AD, Mithrasians began to be persecuted by Constantine and the Christians. There is some evidence from fourth century inscriptions in Rome that a mission may have been set in operation to send the movement underground.(19). The Christian faith, which had been well established in Celtic Britain by the 4th century AD, spread to Ireland during the 5th century AD when Saint Patrick and other British missionaries founded a new church in Ireland, which then became the centre of Celtic Christianity. The mechanism is far from certain, but perhaps, as Christianity began to spread throughout the western world and, under Constantine, into Asia Minor, Celtic groups from Asia Minor, who had been initiated into Mithraism, attempted to escape persecution by merging with western Celts who shared, or had previously absorbed, their religious beliefs. Possibly they sought refuge, first in Iberia, and then beyond the shores of western Europe. Once again, this is pure speculation, but such a scenario would coincide with the date of 471 AD that has been assigned to the Noble Twins panel.

CONCLUSION

Many questions remain unanswered, and firm conclusions are therefore, by necessity, impossible in many cases.

DID THE OGAM alphabet originate, not in Ireland during the 3rd century AD, but sometime before then? We do not know for certain, but some evidence would seem to suggest that it did. Was there ever an unvowelled form of the Ogam script? Again, we cannot answer in the affirmative, but certain evidence appears to suggest that this was the case. It is known that the Celtic people used the Ogam alphabet, but did they ever bring an unvowelled form of it to the New World before the time of Columbus? Professional archaeologists and epigraphers remain

adamant that Celtic people did not reach the New World before Columbus. Yet, when the inscriptions of the Sun Temple are transliterated and translated using Old Irish sources and common Celtic roots in an attempt to reconstruct a more ancient language that was probably spoken by the Celts, the inscriptions make linguistic sense. The astronomical alignments, of which the inscriptions speak, have been subsequently observed, and appear to occur. If, then, Celtic people did bring an unvowelled version of Ogam to the New World, were they also practising a form of Mithrasian religion in the tower rocks of Colorado? Again, we cannot say for sure, but associated petroglyphs, especially in the Anubis caves of the Oklahoma Panhandle, also seem to portray Mithric symbolism. If the inscriptions are not Ogam, and were not the work of Celtic people, then who did execute them, and who carved their related petroglyphs? We do not know, except to say that the indigenous Indians of North America did not celebrate festivals connected with quarter days and cross-quarter days, etc.. What is the Noble Twins panel really intended to represent, and when was it

actually executed? We cannot be certain, but the explanations outlined above may provide pointers worthy of serious consideration.

We may probably never know the full answers to many of these questions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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