

ANCIENT PENNSYLVANIA OIL MINES

PRE-COLUMBIAN OIL M

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The following article is based on the probability that Minoans from Crete were on the Upper Peninsula in Michigan mining float copper from 2450 B.C. to around 1200 B.C., removing between 500,000,000 and 1,500,000,000 pounds of copper and shipping it to their home island of Crete, fueling the Bronze Age in Europe and the Mediterranean. If you have any doubts that they were here, please go to ANCIENT AMERICAN MAGAZINE's web site at www.ancientamericanmagazine.com and watch two excellent video presentations. One is by Jay Wakefield and the other is by Roger Jewell. When the site comes up, scroll down, click on the video boxes and enjoy their wonderful presentations. If you enjoy them and do not subscribe to this magazine, I highly recommend that you do so now. These are exciting times for those of us who believe that Columbus was LAST in discovering America. Conventional archeology has been ignoring, attacking, hiding and destroying the evidence that he was last for the past 120 years. Since Barry Fell wrote his landmark book "America B.C." In 1976, people all over America and the world have been gathering evidence that America was "discovered" and visited many times during the past 20,000 years. The following article presents one small piece of that evidence.

I live in Northwestern Pennsylvania in Franklin Pa. on the Allegheny River. The Allegheny begins in central Pennsylvania, flows north into Western New York then turns south through the Allegheny Mountains. French Creek begins in the far western corner of New York about 10 miles south of Lake Erie and flows south through northwest Pennsylvania about 80 river miles to Franklin Pa. Where it joins the Allegheny. The Allegheny then flows south 100 miles, forming the Ohio at its juncture with the Monongahela at Pittsburgh. The Ohio then flows south to the Mississippi. Franklin can be reached by water by sailing North up the Mississippi or by sailing up the St. Lawrence to Lake Erie and then portaging south to French Creek and riding the creek south to Franklin. (Continuing west on Lake Erie will take you to Michigan.) The strategic and trading importance of this river junction was recognized by the French, the English and the United States, each of them erecting forts there to control the both the Allegheny river and French Creek in the 1700's. Because rivers and lakes were the only highways back then this trading site would have been equally important 300 or 5000 years ago. If the Minoans were

sailing up the Mississippi to Michigan for over a thousand years, then they surely sailed up the Ohio to the Allegheny or down the St. Lawrence and Lake Erie to Franklin. They would have been using the ocean currents of both the Northern Atlantic and Southern Atlantic crossings creating a large trading circle. This trading circle would have gone right through the heart of America. In his book, "Ancient Mines of the Kitchi-Gummi (Lake Superior)" Roger Jewell states that the Minoans were mining Michigan copper and were not a warlike people. Their trading method included establishing trading posts and colonies along their trade routes. They encouraged intermarrying with the native populations, eventually creating a new population and culture friendly to Minoan trade. Thus over the centuries they would have created a huge trading circle and large colonies at places like Mystery Hill in New Hampshire, Poverty Point in Louisiana, The Copper Culture people on the Keweenaw peninsula in Michigan and other large and small posts all along their trading circle. (Recently Dan Byers found a bronze Minoan pendant in sediment that was dredged out of the Ohio River near Cincinnati Ohio. The pendant has been dated to 1700 B.C. Cincinnati is 330 miles down river from Franklin Pa., an easy trip upriver.) I propose that one of their outposts was here in Franklin Pa. and a second at present day Titusville, Pa... What would they have found here worth trading for? The answer may begin at Oil City, eight miles upriver from Franklin, where Oil Creek enters the Allegheny River.

Oil Creek flows through Titusville and enters the Allegheny 20 miles south at Oil City. When Titusville was founded there were at least 2000 oil pits located there along the creek. Colonel Drake "discovered" oil in 1859 by drilling his first well right in the middle of one of these pits. From the History of Venango County Vol. 1, 1890. "These ancient oil pits reach far back of the historic period. These pits are very numerous and bear the mark of antiquity. They are generally oblong in form, about four by six feet in depth, notwithstanding the wear and tear of centuries and the accumulation of extraneous matter. The deeper and larger ones have been cribbed with timber at the sides to preserve their form. This cribbing

was roughly done: the logs were split in halves, stripped of their bark and safely adjusted at the corners. The walls seem to be so thoroughly saturated with oil as to be preserved almost entire to this day. These pits are on the west side of Oil Creek about two miles below Titusville in Venango County. They cover perhaps five hundred acres of land and there may be in all TWO THOUSAND pits. In some cases large trees grow in the pits and on the septa that divide them showing their antiquity." These pits were operated by letting them fill with water overnight then skimming the lighter oil on the surface into containers. Some had a door at the bottom that was opened to let the water drain out. The larger ones had ladders and rafts that the laborers used to extract the oil from the pits. These pits were operated over time at varying degrees of intensity. THE OIL FROM THESE PITS WAS NOTHING LIKE THE THICK BLACK TAR YOU SEE IN THE MOVIES. It is golden olive and sweet smelling. Oilmen call it "Pennsylvania Sweet Crude". The oil seeping out of the ground back then was almost clear. ("First sand") It had a very high gas and paraffin content. It was used unrefined by some settlers for lighting. The "third sand", what is drilled today, is darker but still the best unrefined oil in the world. Local old timers relate burning it in their Model T's. When the French arrived here the Seneca were gathering and using this oil. From: "Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania, by Sherman Day, 1843, page 637." "The following appeared in the (Franklin) Democratic Arch. In 1842 relates to this subject: "The Seneca oil from the oil springs on Oil Creek was used by the Seneca Indians as an unguent."..."the other use made of the oil was for religious worship. Here I cannot better describe it than in the imaginative language of the commandant of Fort Duquesne to his Excellency Gen. Montcalm, the unfortunate hero of Québec. 'I would desire', says the commandant, 'to assure your Excellency that this is a most delightful land. Some of the most astonishing natural wonders have been discovered by our people. While descending the Allegheny, fifteen leagues below the mouth of the Conewango (Warren Pa.), and three above Fort Venango (above Franklin, at current Oil City. Author), we were invited by the chief of the Senecas to attend a religious ceremony of his tribe. We landed and drew up our canoes on a point where a small

stream (Oil Creek) entered the river. The tribe appeared unusually solemn. We marched up the stream about half a league, where the company, a large band it appeared, had arrived some days before us. Gigantic hills begirt us on every side. The scene was really sublime. The great chief then recited the conquests and heroism of their ancestors. The surface of the stream was covered with a thick scum, which burst into a complete conflagration. The oil had been gathered and lighted with a torch. At the sight of the flames the Indians gave forth a triumphant shout that made the hills and valley re-echo again! Here then is revived the ancient fire-worship of the East: -here then are the "Children of the Sun".

J.E. Thomas wrote an excellent report published in the "Oil Field Journal, winter 2000-2001" entitled "Prehistoric Petroleum Use in Pennsylvania." On page 20 she relates that Professor J. S. Newberry visited Titusville and the newly discovered Drake Well in 1859 and he "noticed that the bottom-lands on Oil Creek below the town, and where covered with a magnificent forest of hemlock trees, were pitted in a peculiar way: that is, the surface was occupied by a series of contiguous depressions 10 or 15 ft. in diameter and from 1 -3 ft. deep. They were circular and symmetrical, in that respect differing from the pits formed by the uprooted trees." Newberry was taken to a new well being dug, noting, "As it chanced, this well was sunk in one of the pits referred to. It was carried to the depth of about 25 feet in the earth when the rock was reached and the drilling began. Throughout this depth it followed the course of an old well..., which had been cribbed up with timber, and in it was a ladder such as was commonly used in the copper mines of Lake Superior by perhaps the same people who worked the oil well. This ladder was a portion of a small tree of which the trunk was thickly set with branches. These were cut off four or five feet from the trunk. And thus formed steps by which the well owner could go down and gather the oil as it accumulated on the surface of the water just as was done by the old oil producers on the banks of the Caspian and Irrawaddy. Some of the trees which grew over the pits which marked the sites of oil wells were three and even four feet in diameter, thus proving that the wells had been abandoned at least 400

or 500 years ago." Newberry, J.S. 1890, *The First Oil Well*, Harper's New Monthly Magazine 81 (485:7232-729." I would like to clarify here that when these authors state that the pits were from one to three feet deep they are indicating their depth at the surface. My research has revealed that many of these pits go down 25 feet or more below the surface. I wonder how long it would take for a twenty five ft. deep pit 10 or 15 ft. wide to fill with leaves and detritus solid enough to have to be dug out? (Today only few acres of the pits remain from the original 500 acres. The rest have been ploughed under to make way for "Progress".) The site discussed here is not the only place where these oil pits existed. They seem to have been elsewhere in the Northeastern oil fields where the oil had been near the surface, including some in Canada.

Is there any evidence of an advanced culture near Titusville and Oil Creek that may have carried out oil mining on a large scale? From the book "Historical collections of the state of Pennsylvania by Sherman Day, 1843, page 250". "The following notice of curiosities in the co. (Crawford County) is from the N.Y. Journal of Commerce of 1830. "On an extensive plain, there is a vast mound of stones, containing several hundred thousand cart loads. (Titusville is located on large extensive plain and is in Crawford County. Author.) This pyramid has stood through so many ages, that it has become covered with soil, and from the top raises a noble pine-tree, the roots of which, running down the sides, fasten themselves in the earth below. The stones are many of them so large that two men can only move them with difficulty, and yet they are unlike any others in the neighborhood. Indeed there are not in the neighborhood any quarries from which so large a quantity could ever have been taken. This artificial curiosity is on the borders of Oil Creek: a name derived from a natural curiosity no less remarkable than the foregoing. Springs exist on its margin, from which there is a constant flow of oil, floating on the surface of the water and running into the creek, which may be seen for a great distance down the stream. The oil is burned in lamps and used in various ways, but is particularly valued for its medicinal qualities. Considerable quantities are annually brought to this city and sold to the apothecaries." I

believe this pyramid no longer exists, and I can find no one locally who knows of it.

In addition to that amazing report there are other tantalizing bits of information from 19th century writers. Here are some: (1.) The 1890 History of Venango County relates that on the highest bluff overlooking Franklin there was a stone formation. "There was first a pit in form like an inverted cone, or like the den of the ant lion. It was regularly formed, some eight feet in diameter, and six to eight feet in depth, and lined with stones neatly laid and forming a symmetrical wall. These stones were brought from a distance, and were nearly uniform in size." This site is directly above a Native American river village site. I believe this was probably an observatory, located on the highest point around to avoid river fog. I have been there and can find no sign of it now, but two cell towers have been built there. (2.) Down river from Franklin a few miles there is a rock on the bend of the river called "Indian God Rock". It sits on the shore facing down river tilted upright at a 50 Degree angle. Its face has been hammered flat and is 14 ft. wide and 22 ft. high. It once was covered with inscriptions and or petroglyphs. Sadly it has been defaced by vandals who have carved hundreds of names, initials and dates on the rock over the years. They are now for the most part unreadable. I believe that it may have initially been a land claim. Interestingly the French under the command of Capt. De Celeron buried a lead plate under the "Rock" in 1749. Supposedly, the plate has never been found. While researching, I found the following in the prior mentioned "Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania. Pg. 311". "Feb.6, Letter from Gov. Clinton. , Fort George, Jan. 29,1750—I send you a copy of a leaden plate stolen from Jean Coeur (Joncaire) in the Senecas' country , as he was going to the Ohio." (The earliest reference to a copy of the petroglyphs on the rock that I could find is one made by Captain Eastman in 1853 and published in Henry Schoolcraft's "Indian Antiquities". I wonder if the petroglyphs he recorded were just the last in a series going back over the centuries. (3) There is a petroglyph site called "Rainbow Rocks" in Venango County. One of the glyphs on the rock is an elephant. (It has been declared a fake by archeologist James L. Swauger, because they looked recent to him and appeared carved by

metal tools.) (4.) A ship petroglyph that closely resembles a ship on a Minoan seal is located on the old Venango Path that runs from Pittsburgh to Franklin. The path was used by Washington to visit the French in 1753. The petroglyph is near a tributary of and close to the Allegheny River a few miles south of Franklin. (Midwestern Epigraphic Newsletter, Vol.26, No.3, 2009, by Jim Leslie and Tom Anderton.) This shipstone and Indian God Rock are at 41 degrees Latitude. (5.) A stone solstice chamber is located near the top of a mountain along the Allegheny River, about 20 miles upriver from Oil City. This chamber is 40 ft. deep into the mountain, with a 7 ft. high, 30 ft. long tunnel with large stone ceiling lintels. The tunnel enters a chamber that is roughly 4 ½ ft. wide by 7 ½ ft. long and 10 ft. high. It has a roman arch with hewn keystones and a spring emerging from a recessed alcove at the rear that flows out through a curved cut 10" wide X 3" deep channel into a 30 inch square basin of native sandstone. The channel and basin are so finely cut that when I first saw them I thought I was looking at poured concrete. At summer solstice a shaft of sunlight creeps down the tunnel wall, and is cut by a well placed stone into a separate shaft of light that enters the crack at the rear of the chamber where the spring emerges. I have personally witnessed this. There is a second chamber about ¼ miles north of this one. It has collapsed but is still recognizable with the top half of the rear wall exposed. This story is being developed for publication by others. (6.) There are three large stones located a few miles above Oil City at the junction of a small tributary of the Allegheny River, also at 41 degrees latitude. This site is a registered Native American site. It is also a few miles south of the chamber described above. Reinoud De Jonge is the co-author of the books "Rocks and Rows" and "How the Sun God Reached America" along with Jay Wakefield. Mr. Jonge believes that these stones depict maps for crossing the Atlantic Ocean and dated them at 2,000 B.C. during the time of the Minoan presence in America.

J.E. Thomas concludes her report on the oil mines with the following paragraph. "Although the documentary evidence clearly establishes that the Seneca collected and used petroleum from the oil

springs, there is, surprisingly, no oral tradition of this phenomenon according to the Seneca ethnographer Elizabeth Tooker (personal communication 1996). Professionally, Tooker has never heard of petroleum mining or use by the Iroquois or Seneca, and could recall only a single, somewhat analogous anecdote, of an Indian woman drinking kerosene for a stomach ailment in the earlier part of this century. While this quaint practice might be a vestige of some ancient – or even nineteenth century- use of petroleum or its byproducts, such a conclusion over stretches the meager evidence. The implications that Native Americans were actively extracting petroleum as early as the late Woodland are striking. To date, there are no known references of oil or oil residue found in any local or regional archaeological contexts. It must be assumed, however, by the number of pits found on Oil Creek that the practice of oil mining and its use took place over an extended period of time. This, in turn, indicates that the “path” that would ultimately lead to the protean discovery at Drake Well in 1859 was first walked by Native Americans hundreds and perhaps thousands of years earlier.

Finally, what would ancient civilizations have used the oil for? Certainly lighting. It was used in oil lamps. From an article reprinted from “The Uses of Rock Oil. 1860” in “The Oil field Journal 2004-2005 Pg 7” “ I have kept the Breckenridge and Eureka coal oils and the Seneca oil (rock oil) from the celebrated well of Col. Drake of Titusville, for the past five months, for the purpose of lighting my store and for sale. I have tested them all to my perfect satisfaction, and will give the Seneca oil the decided preference as illuminating oil. It gives a more brilliant light, will burn with a larger flame without smoke and is as cheap as any refined coal oil now in use”, ...”Some of our customers, who have tested the matter, say, a lamp full will burn with a full head of blaze, without cessation and without smoke, through 14 hours...W. MURPHY.”

Did Pennsylvania crude oil light the homes and streets of the cities of the Mediterranean? Was it also used for Lubrication, Internal medicine and skin balm? I believe so. I also believe it is very

probable that this oil was the basic ingredient of Archimedes "Greek Fire"; working these 2000-plus pits all at once they would have been mining a lot of oil. One of the figures given in the Roberts report was 15 barrels a season for one well.. A barrel of oil is 41 gallons. 41 gals. X 15 seasons = 615 gals. X 2000 pits = 1,230,000 gallons per year. Transporting the crude oil would have been relatively easy if they were, as I believe, trading wine for oil. Alcohol has always been a highly valuable trading commodity. Large ceramic jars called amphorae used for storing the wine could be filled with oil when empty for the boat trip home. If they were also trading wine for copper in Michigan those amphorae could have been reshipped up the Ohio and Allegheny or down French Creek from Lake Erie and filled with crude oil at Titusville. This re-use of amphorae for shipping home would explain their scarcity in archeological digs here. My conclusion is that Minoans came to Western Pennsylvania to trade for oil in large quantities during the Bronze Age while trading for copper in Michigan... And those other ancient mariners came to Pennsylvania to trade for large and small quantities of oil over the following centuries.

Authors note... At the Drake Well Museum and Park in Titusville, is the site where Colonel Drake "discovered" oil. At the edge of the Park and within view of the Museum building there are several acres of these ancient oil pits. THERE IS NO MARKER THERE TO IDENTIFY THEM. In the museum there is one section depicting Native Americans gathering oil. No one I have met connected with the museum or this area's oil history seems to very aware or care much about these old pits. Other than Judith E. Thomas's excellent investigation and resulting article it seems very little has been done by conventional archeology. She reported attempts at carbon dating of several smaller pits that resulted in a date of about 600 A.D. With a 95% degree of confidence from the pits tested. This is 2,500 years later than the Minoans but admits pre-Columbian use, Perhaps Hopewell. (They did have problems with oil contamination.) Oil preserves wood for a very long time. More testing of the timber from the bottom

of several of these 25 ft. deep pits with a tree ring analysis, matching the ring growth to historic climate should give a more accurate date. I also believe that after the Bronze Age and the end of the Minoan era in 1200 B.C. that their already established peaceful trading circle was used by all the seafaring trading cultures for next 2500 years.

About the author, Mr. Anderton's Great -Grandfather Thomas Anderton founded the Continental Oil Refining Company (CORECO Oil Company) in 1885 in Oil City, Pa. His grandfather Thomas A. Anderton and two great uncles continued in the company business until driven out of business by Rockefeller and Standard Oil in the early 1930's.