

Ocean Pendants of Ancient Travelers

(Portugal, Spain, Ireland, and America, c. 2200 BC)

by J.S. Wakefield

In quite a few of the megalithic anta or burial dolmen of Iberia, small inscribed tablets (pendants) of slate have been found. At least one or two of them are now to be seen in most of the archaeological museums in the cities and towns of Portugal and Spain. Photos of them will be seen in tourist brochures and in archaeological publications. They are each unique, but they have common characteristics. Considered anthropomorphic artistic objects, or idols, we show they also have geographic meaning. They represent a crossing of the ocean to the backside of the world, on the other side of the ocean. The pendant accompanied the wearer in burial, to show he/she had made the risky journey to Paradise, and deserved a special place in the Realm of the Dead. Related examples show that they were admired and copied in Denmark, Ireland, Greece, and America during the Bronze Age.



Introduction

The Megalithic Culture of Western Europe lasted from 5500 BC to 1200 BC. The characteristic and well-known features of that culture are visible in the big stone monuments: the passage graves, the dolmens, the stone circles, and the stone rows. The megalithic petroglyphs are less known, but these are very interesting. Several thousands of carvings are identified, and most of these have geographic meanings. They often represent coastlines, islands, and sailing routes. Usually, they are carved rather roughly on the inside faces of upright passage stones or the end stones of passage graves.

An unusual type of petroglyph is to be seen upon the small engraved tablets found in southwest Iberia. Since they have been excavated from passage graves, it is certain they belong to the Megalithic Culture. Figures 1 & 2 show many of them, reduced from their original sizes of about 3½ inches long (10cm). They are almost always about an inch thick, and usually are com-

posed of slate rock. Their surfaces are polished, and usually have inscriptions only on one side. Usually they have a hole or two at the somewhat tapered top, so are considered pendants. In the limited existing literature, they are referred to as religious idols. They are all unique, but share design characteristics. Understanding these objects will contribute to a better understanding of this Culture and its achievements.

It is not known how many of these engraved pendants have been found, but probably there are hundreds. More than 60 are reported to have been found in one passage grave, the Anta 1 do Olival de Pega. We have collected images of quite a few, from archaeological literature, museum exhibits, and tourist brochures. Many tablets have come from the area surrounding the town of Evora, 100 km east of Lisbon, Portugal. They have also been excavated in the tombs of the tholos type at Los Millares, in southeastern Spain, and numerous other places in southwest Iberia.

Background

The Megalithic Culture, starting from 5500 BC, 2,000 two thousand years before the first Pharaohs of Egypt, had developed a Sun God religion, and had developed a tradition of building Sun God temples, facing the western ocean, along the coasts of Western Europe. Today, these churches are called passage graves, because burials have been found in them, like Winchester Cathedral, which also has a long passage and graves in it. Their political and spiritual leaders told them the Earth was a big sphere, just like the sun and the moon. They said that all the known land was surrounded by a sea, and that in the west there was the Empire of the Dead, at the other side of the earth. (As the sun religion was later developed in Egypt, Osiris was called the God of this underworld in the west.)

Impressed by this story, people tried to cross the ocean. At first, they tried to cross at the Tropic of Cancer, at 23°N, in honor of the Sun God, who came north to that latitude each year

before turning south for the winter. Unfortunately, at that latitude, many courageous sailors died because that is the latitude of the windless doldrums of the horse latitudes, where later sailing ship crews ate their horses. Some early Culture Bringers, as they are called in myth in the Americas, apparently made it across, but they were not heard from again because the trade wind patterns of the ocean were not yet understood. Some boats were blown north out of the doldrums, and, following the birds, discovered the Azores Islands. This discovery was commemorated at the highly decorated megalithic tomb of Gavrinis in c. 3600 BC, as explained in our book, *How the Sun God Reached America*. Interestingly, most of the pendants have been found in Iberia around the latitude of 38°N, the latitude of the Azores Islands, considered the western home of the Sun God, after their discovery.

The Pendants: distances

All of the Ocean Pendant tablets of Iberia show inscribed crosshatching, triangles, or zigzag lines. The up-down waveform is a universal symbol for water, and is, in fact, the Egyptian hieroglyph for water. Thus many of the pendants are clearly depicting water. We have learned, from our study of megalithic petroglyphs, that the up/down lines are used to encode units of distance that are based upon the distance on the surface of the Earth of one degree of latitude. In Egypt, this unit of one degree was called the moira. The moira was applied to curving distances in the west, as well as the latitudes easily measured with a simple Jacob's Staff, when moving to the north or south. Today, we use nautical miles for navigation, where 1° = 60 NM, so one Egyptian moira = 60 NM.

The number of zigzags on many of the pendants is four, so we see they often show the correct size of the ocean, which is four multiples of ten degrees, or 40°, or 2,400 NM, from Iberia to Newfoundland, or Africa to South America. Usually there are three or four big moiras (30 or 40 degrees of latitude) or six or eight half big moiras, which are correct distances at the different latitudes sailed after the discovery of America. Like the pendants, the ocean is



Figure 2: More Ocean Pendants, with below, ceremonial crooks, inscribed with Ocean motifs. (see references)

tapered. The triangles are a stylized modification of the wave/distance motif, and the cross-hatchings are the distance lines laid out, like a fishnet on a globe. After confirmation of land in the west, following Asian explorations in c. 2600 BC, and the confirmation of a return route via the known Azores in c. 2500 BC, sailors were again venturing to the west, via previously explored southern and northern routes.

The Pendants: religion

Most of the tablets have a centered hole, for hanging the objects around the neck of the hero who went on the dangerous journey across the Ocean. Sometimes there are two holes, like eyes. The vee at the upper portion represents the huge land of Greenland, which had been revered as the westernmost known land in the world for about 600 years. The latitude line at the bottom of the vee is the 60°N latitude line of Cape Farvel, and usually the

lines below are inscribed to represent big moiras, or 10° intervals.

Clearly these pendants are meant to be anthropomorphic representations of the Sun God, also the God of the Ocean. These plaques certify that the person wearing it, and buried with it, had taken the Journey across the western ocean to Paradise. These plaques, accompanying the dead, help the dead return to Paradise in the West. The cocaine later put into in Egyptian mummies, which had been obtained in the west, also was meant to help the deceased reach Paradise. The obtaining of these drugs was one of the purposes of later voyages to the west, as first suggested by Perry. In some of the pendants, the eye-holes have little rays around them, like little suns, so these may be Sun God images. Note that one pendant has a stick figure (Figure 3, right) of the Sun God crossing the ocean. The eyed plaques are seen by some researchers as the Owl Goddess,

a representation of the Mother Goddess, in the very old tradition. Such simultaneous meanings of symbols are not unusual, such as the Christian cross, which is both a symbol of torture and resurrection.

The Pendants: dating

From the petroglyphs it can be concluded that these people knew the size of the North Atlantic Ocean, so we call these artifacts Ocean Pendants. From this information their approximate date can be determined. By study of other megalithic sites, we learned that America was discovered via the Bering Sea, c. 2600 BC. A century later the continents were reached via the southern crossing of the Atlantic, between Africa and South America, for the first time (c. 2500 BC). In the same century, America was also reached via the upper north, via Greenland. Since all of these pendants relate to the effort of this culture to explore the backside of the Earth, they are all roughly contemporary with one another.

The Pendant of Crato

Figure 3 (left) shows a photo we took, showing a very simple design, so we think it is one of the older pendants. It was excavated by Portuguese archaeologist A. Isidoro in one of the dolmens in the District of Crato, near the town of Portalegre (Alto Alentejo). This town is located 80 km NNE of Evora, close to the Spanish border. The site is at the latitude of 39°N, the latitude of the West Azores, also at 39°N. Now it is on display in the Museum of Mendes Correa in Porto, in the north of Portugal.

The petroglyph represents the North Atlantic Ocean, in a stylized way. It is divided into four strips of triangles, each corresponding to 15° of latitude. One after the other, the horizontal lines are situated at 0°N (the equator on the bottom edge), 15°N (the latitude of the southern Cape Verde Islands), 30°N (the Nile Delta and the northern Canaries), 45°N (halfway to the pole), and 60°N (the south point of Greenland, no horizontal line). The hole itself perhaps represents Cape Farvel, the south tip of Greenland, known since c. 3200 BC.

The upright, shaded triangles each have a width of one big moira = 10°

= 600 NM. The lowest strip has four triangles, corresponding to a total width of four moiras = 40° = 2,400 NM. Above it are 4½ triangles, then five, corresponding to a width of five moiras = 50° = 3,000 NM. At the top, there is a strip of four triangles again. More important than the exact distances, is the fact that the order of magnitude is correct, and that the middle of the ocean is its broadest part. Note that each triangle has a width of one moira, and a height of 1.5 moira, so the shapes are proportionate to distance. The shading of the triangles is done with horizontal lines, showing they are stylized small latitude lines. In total there are 18 triangles, possibly encoding the destination in the west, the civilization developing in the Gulf of Campeche at 18°N. At the top of the pendant are four horizontal lines on the left, five on the right. Possibly these encode the discovery of America by the 5th pharaoh of Egypt, of the 4th Dynasty c. 2580-2562 BC.

The Pendant of Pavia

Figure 4 shows an ocean tablet found in the Dolmen of Pavia, 40 km north of Evora, again at 39°N, the latitude of the West Azores. This big dolmen, which was later reused as a chapel, was declared as a National Monument in 1910. The unusual design of the pendant shows the edges engraved all around, showing that at this time, they thought there was land all around the Ocean. The double edge is probably covering coastal Ocean over a width of one big moira, or 10° (=600 NM). At the bottom, three triangles have the same width, so they show the length of the Southern Crossing from Africa to South America, with the wind and current, to be three big moiras, or 30° (= 1,800 NM), which is correct. From this length, it appears they probably landed at the latitude of about 5°N, French Guyana. The fishbone shading on the right edge points upwards, as they are living in the Northern Hemisphere, oriented to the north, but the left side points downward, because the goal of the crossing, Central America, is in the southwest. The edging across the top suggests they know the upper north route around Cape Farvel, Greenland. The dotted lines, if not accidental scratches, would

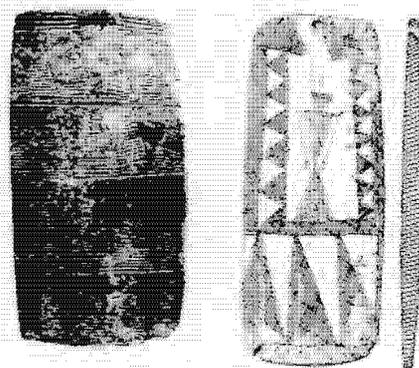


Figure 3: Left; Ocean Pendant of Crato, c.12-14 cm long, found near the town of Portalegre (Altp A:emtekp) in South Portugal at the latitude of the West Azores, 39 degrees N, by archaeologists August Isidoro (Museum of Mendes Correa, Porto, photo by the authors, May, 2007). Right; Pendant of Sesimbra, an Ocena Pendant from Sepultura 9 e Sepultura 11 (Ossario), Estampa 19, in Setubal Arqueologica, Vol 1X-X. (see references)

be showing the holy 23°N line of the Tropic of Cancer, crossed by a line going south, showing that one must sail southwest from Iberia to accomplish the Southern Crossing, with its length and southern location given by the three triangles.

The Pendant of Sesimbra

Figure 3 (right) also shows a pendant excavated in one of the dolmen near the town of Sesimbra, 30 km south of Lisbon, at the latitude of the West Azores, at 39°N. It is on display in the Archaeological Museum of Setubal. This petroglyph has the same Southern Crossing shown at the bottom, with three triangles showing a distance of three big moiras (1,800 NM). The edge at the right is the coast of the Old World, with 6.5 or 7 triangles encoding the Arctic Circle at the holy 67°N [reciprocal of 23°N], where they had to go for the Northern Crossing via Greenland. The thicker edge on the left side is the coast of the New World, with the larger triangles showing that it is the important location of the Realm of the Dead (America). The 5.5 or 6 triangles in the west correspond with Cape Chidley, Labrador, at 60°N, entry to the American Coast in the west.

In the middle of the Ocean is a stick-figure person, the SunGod or Ocean God, which consists of three triangles, also representing the three island groups of the Azores. The large triangles point with great emphasis upward, to this figure. The thick horizontal line the figure stands on is the return route, with the wind and the current, from Newfoundland via the Azores back to the Old World. The tablet can mean that our king, who crosses the ocean is highly esteemed, or it could be more religious, the Sun God who crosses the waters and visits the Realm of the Dead, and returns to the Land of the Living, is our highest God.

Pendants in Porto

Figure 5 shows an Ocean Pendant that is c. 12-14 cm long, in a collection of 15 of similar appearance, but somewhat varying designs. They are in the Museu de Historia Natural, Faculdade de Ciencias do Porto, Portugal, formerly a collection at the University of Porto, now in the Natural History Museum in Porto. You can see how thin these slate tablets are, by looking at the holes at the top. Many of the stones are hung by nylon fishing line in the exhibit, as it appears they are designed to be worn hanging from the neck. Note the vee at the top of the stone, a representation of the big land that had been discovered in the north, Greenland, which comes to a point at Cape Farvel at 60°N. The discovery of Greenland had been commemorated by the construction of the huge megalithic ring complex of Brodgar, Stennes, and Bookan in the Orkney Islands. The three shaded vee patterns illustrate that the seas extend in open water for an extended distance on both sides of Cape Farvel, which indeed it does. The checkerboard squares on this pendant are a symbolic chart of the ocean, eleven squares across, and five rows down.

The pendant beside it, also from the Natural History Museum, has an anthropomorphic appearance, now also representing the Ocean God or Sun God. In the center is a three-sided triangle, representing the highly revered three island groups of the Azores. These Islands had been revered as the western home of the Sun God, from their discov-



Fig.4 Ocean Pendant of Pavia, from Anta Capela de S. Dionisio ou Anta de Pavia, Monumento Nacional, Portugal (see References). Above: Photos front and rear, of the Anta de Pavia (photo by authors, May, 2007)

ery c. 3,600 BC until the discovery of further land to the west, as explained in our book, *How the SunGod Reached America*, c. 2500 BC, *A Guide to Megalithic Sites*. The megalithic tomb most decorated with petroglyphs in the world is the Tumulus of Gavrinis, in the Gulf of Morbihan, Brittany, built in celebration and commemoration of the discovery of the Azores Islands, in the middle of the Ocean.

Many interesting details can be found while looking at the many pendants. For example, the last small reduced pendant image on Fig.2 does not calibrate distances, but has a hole incised on the right side of the stone (the edge of it is broken away), and a hole on the left. These might represent either Iberia on the right, and Newfoundland on the left, or the Mediterranean Sea on the right, and the Caribbean, on the left, like the carved circles on both sides of the Ocean in the huge petroglyph of Serrazes, also found in mid-Portugal.

Related finds

Figure 2 shows some crooks

below the pendants. All the images have been greatly reduced, to show the interesting variety, and yet common characteristics of these objects. It is thought the large stone crooks had a ceremonial function. Note they all are inscribed with similar ocean motifs, so the ocean voyages were important.

The top left object of Figure 6 is also a Bronze Age pendant, reported by *Archaeology Magazine*, found in a 2008 dig in the megaron (Palace area) of Mycenae, in Greece. It bears a petroglyph of a sun disc, so is a Sun God pendant of a probable similar date to these others, perhaps inspired by them. The bronze axe head found in Denmark, in the center of Fig.6, from the book by Cooke, carries the same Ocean motifs. It also surely has a similar Bronze Age date, both by the axe head design, and the motifs. On the right of Fig.6 is a pendant found in County Antrim, Ireland, from the referenced book by Dames. It appears to be an Ocean Pendant, carrying an ogham inscription, which needs decipherment. Like the Iberic pendants, it has continental edges, a 60°N latitude line through Cape



Fig.5 Two Ocean Pendants of Porto, the left one is in the collection of 15 pendants exhibited at the Museu de Historia Natural, Faculdade de Ciencias do Porto, Portugal. The "vee" at the top of these pendants is the known land, Greenland, and the squares are a chart of the ocean in latitude lines and distance lines. The 3 center triangles of the right pendant are the 3 island groups of the Azores, in the middle of the Ocean (photos by authors, May, 2007).

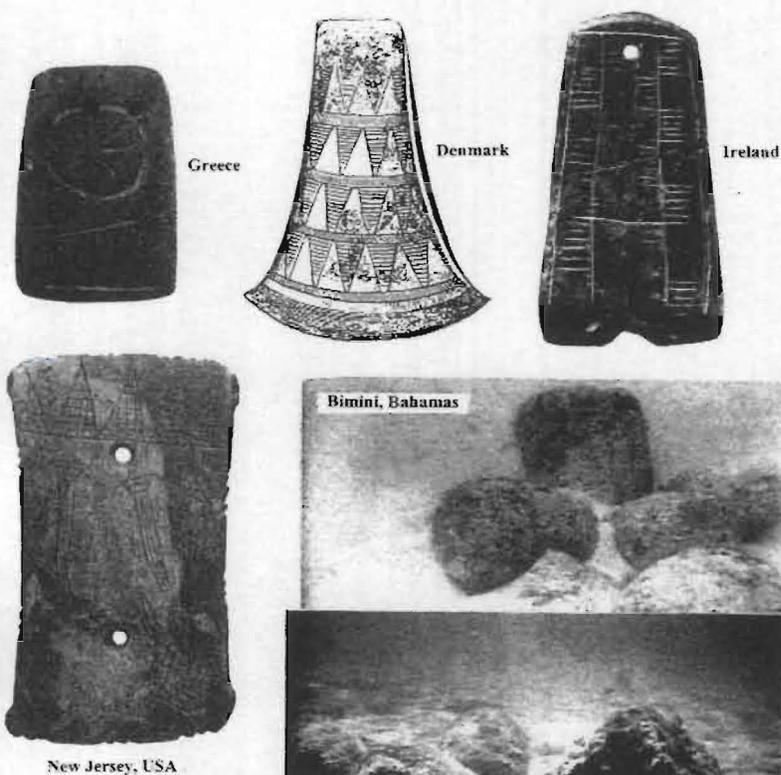


FIG. 17. (S. 1-1) Found in central part of Sussex County. A gorget of pink, hard sandstone, cutuously fluted, being on one side pink and on the other variegated with yellow and green beds. Apparently this stone was considered unusual by the Indians. They had drawn five wigwags near one end, and a snowshoe and other objects at the other end and in the center. There are four notches on each side, made V-shaped, and six at each end. Collection of Phil S. Tooker, Esq., Westfield, New Jersey.

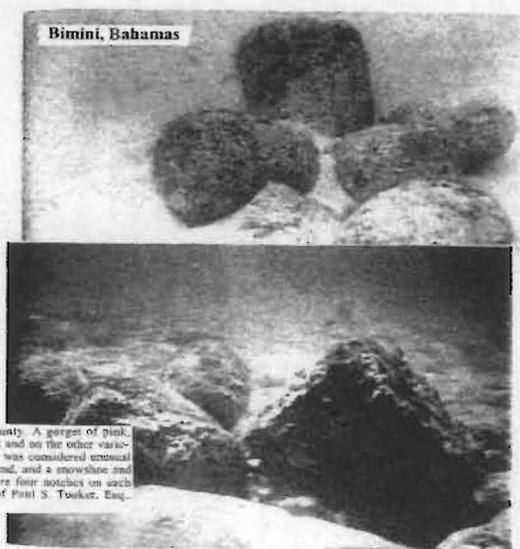


Fig.6 Related Finds: Upper left, Bronze Age SunGod pendant from Mycenae; Center, an axehead from Denmark; and right, Ocean Pendant with ogham from Ireland. Below, American Ocean Pendant/Gorget from Moorehead, and classical fluted column sections off Bimini, 11/29/69 by C.P. Turolla (Ref.37).

Farvel, at the top, and the important 40°N latitude line which runs through the West Azores. This appears to be an Irish version, inspired by the Iberic pendants.

Below, on Figure 6 is an American Indian gorget, or pendant, reproduced with the photo legend. It has a guaranteed authenticity, as it is reproduced from the 1917 work of the great American archaeologist, Warren K. Moorehead. His book does not discuss the object, except in this note, where he calls the mesh triangles wigwags. The snowshoe is probably a land mass, depending upon the orientation of the stone, and the experience of the sailor. Note the classical appearance of the two fluted columns, each with stone capitals. To the right are photos of fluted columns found off Bimini (Ref. 37). Clearly, a classical building is being remembered somewhere. The rectangular

pendant shape with two holes in this position is common among American Indian gorgets. Somehow, this one, found in New Jersey, has been inscribed with Old World motifs, so this can be called an American Ocean Pendant, confirming the Trans-Atlantic crossings in the Bronze Age.

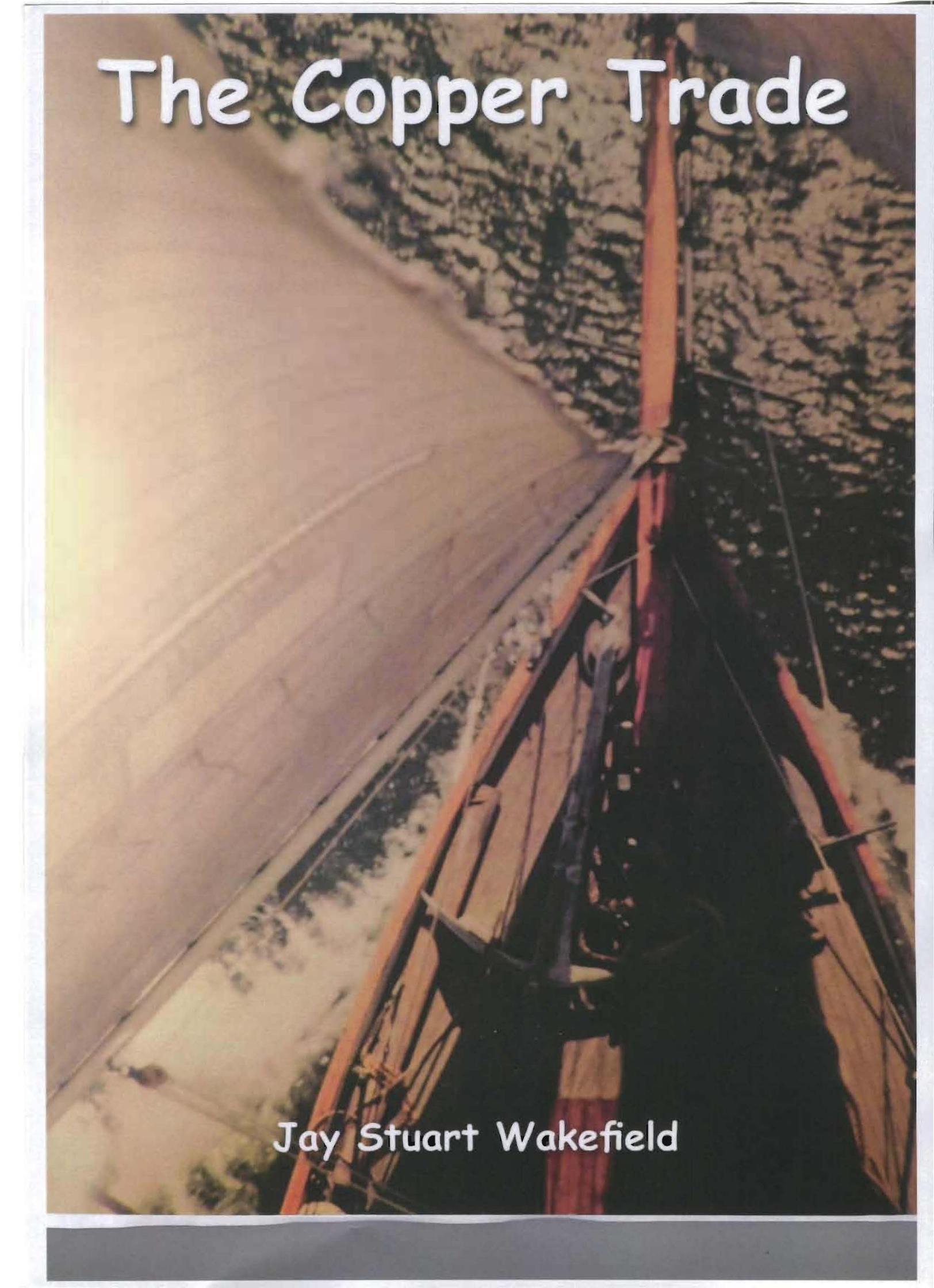
Conclusion

It was a daring thing to cross the Ocean to the west. We think early attempts at the Tropic of Cancer probably cost many lives, in the course of learning the trade wind patterns of the Atlantic Ocean. These slate pendants honor persons who successfully made trips across the Atlantic Ocean, some of the greatest sailing adventurers in pre-history. ■

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The Copper Trade



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“Over and beyond mere living, the human Spirit adds and creates what is better than what was before” -R.Roefield



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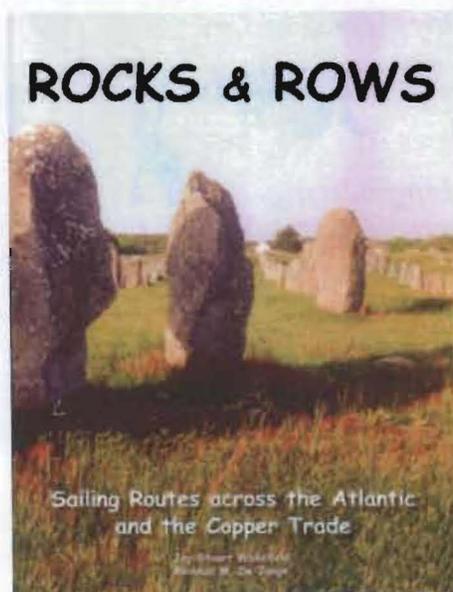
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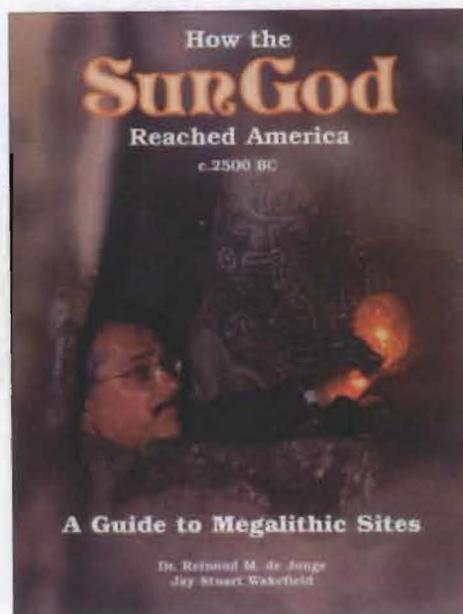
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