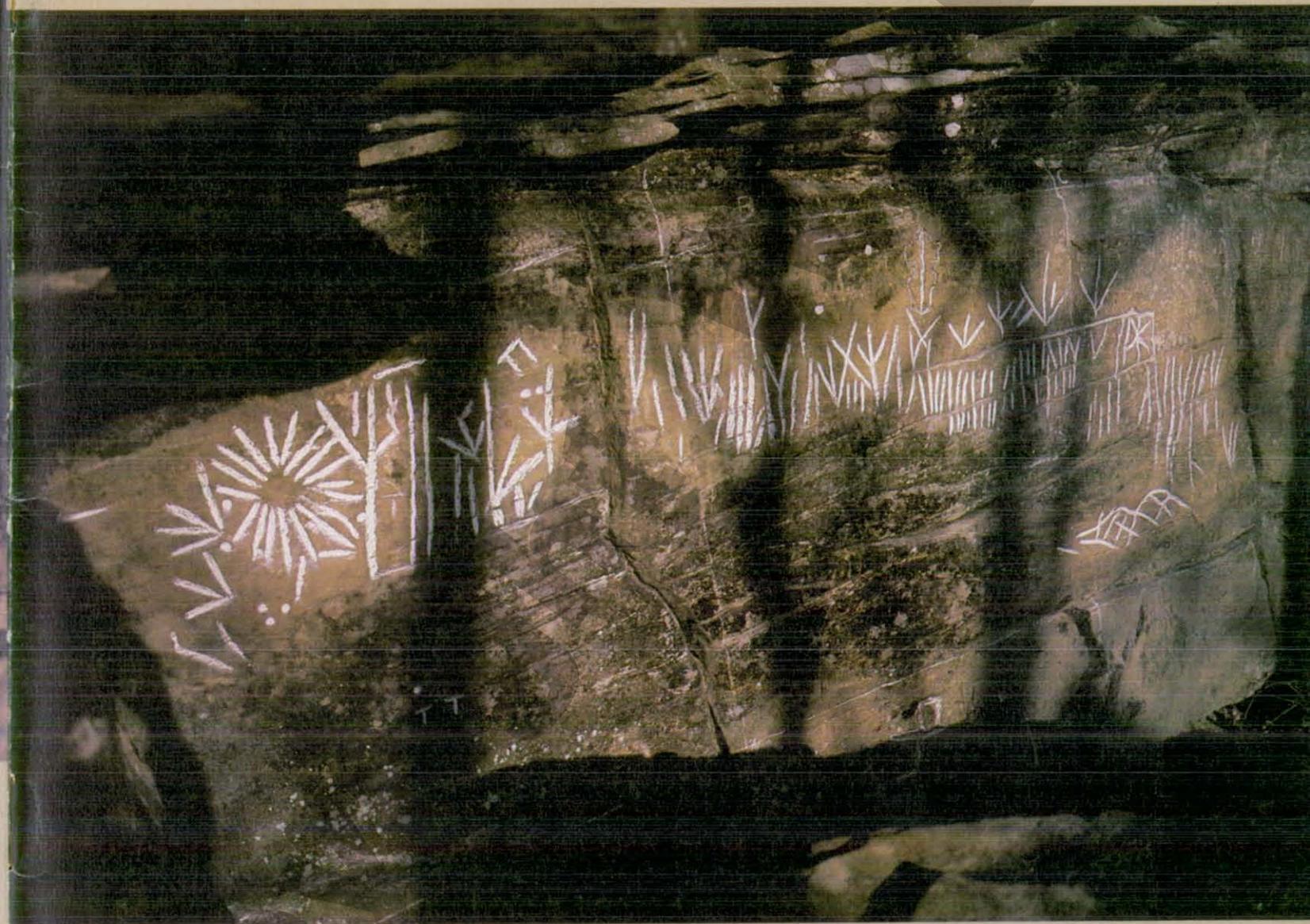


*Wonderful*  
**West Virginia**

MARCH 1983

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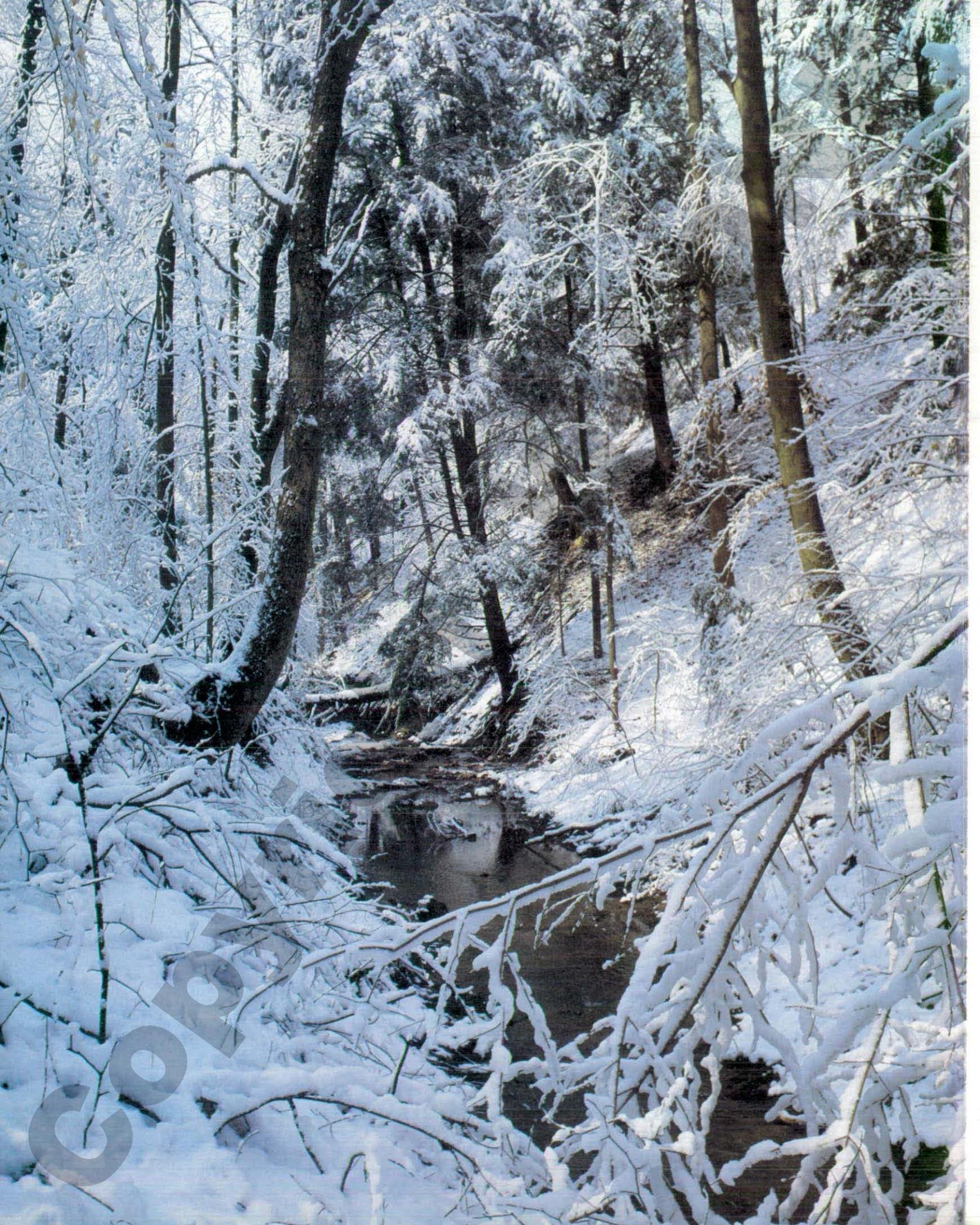
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WYOMING COUNTY PETROGLYPH

“At the time of sunrise a ray grazes the notch on the left side on Christmas Day. A Feast-day of the Church, the first season of the (Christian) year. The season of the Blessed Advent of the Savior, Lord Christ (Salvatoris Domini Christi). Behold, he is born of Mary, a woman.”

translation by BARRY FELL





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# Wonderful West Virginia

VOLUME 47

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COVER—Shortly after sunrise on December 22, 1982, the sun illuminated the entire Wyoming County Petroglyph, as tree trunks cast stark shadows. Copyright 1983 by Ida Jane Gallagher.

INSIDE FRONT COVER—Last snow of the year begins to melt along a hiking trail at Coonskin Park near Charleston. Gerald Ratliff

BACK COVER—Horse Creek Petroglyph in Boone County. Arnout Hyde Jr.

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Wonderful West Virginia Presents  
*The Never-Before-Published Story:*

# WYOMING AND BOONE COUNTY PETROGLYPHS TRANSLATED BY ANCIENT LANGUAGE EXPERT

ARNOUT HYDE JR.

An unusual and exciting chain of events recently occurred, which culminated in a monumental breakthrough in the quest for missing pieces of the puzzle of West Virginia's prehistoric past. The main characters in this real-life drama were an archaeologist, Robert Pyle; an ancient history researcher and writer, Ida Jane Gallagher; and America's leading ancient language expert, Barry Fell. Each made valuable contributions which led to the phenomenal and thrilling discoveries that have unfolded in recent weeks and are revealed for the first time in this issue.

The participants tell the story in the following series of three articles, which should be read in the order in which they appear.

It was my pleasure to be a part of the team which investigated the Wyoming County and Horse Creek (Boone County) Petroglyphs and take photographs at the sites.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Pyle, Gallagher, Fell and the others mentioned in these accounts for their priceless contributions toward a better understanding of the state's ancient history. *Wonderful West Virginia* magazine is privileged and honored to be the first publication to print their amazing findings.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PAST

ROBERT L. PYLE

Some time in prehistory, perhaps as long as 17 centuries ago, someone carved a message into a sandstone cliff overhung by a sheltering ledge in what is now southern West Virginia. Who cut the strange symbols? Why were the carvings done at that location? Precise answers to these questions are unknown. For many years, people assumed that the weathered writings, called the Wyoming County Petroglyph, were the work of American Indians. But a recent translation of the message there by an expert on ancient languages is astonishing and promises new, significant insight into West Virginia's early history.

## WHAT IS A PETROGLYPH?

Any carving or line-drawing on a rock is a petroglyph. Past civilizations have left unimpeachable records of their existence by simply choosing as their medium the most indestructible of materials—stone. Stone does erode, but it erodes very slowly; and marks cut into stone by natural forces or by the hand of man may still be discerned centuries later. Petroglyphs are often covered by soil, their sharpness preserved. Those which are exposed to weathering are worn away to some degree and are frequently coated with moss, lichens, rock mushrooms and microscopic plants, which are extremely difficult to remove. In weathered stone, the trained person can discriminate between natural features and those made by man, and can judge the age of a carving by the degree of erosion and the types of figures represented, along with other factors.

Some societies, such as that of the Egyptians, left elaborate histories in stone that are unmistakably intended to convey specific information. All petroglyphs, however, do not fall into

this category. Some are intriguing, yet indecipherable; others are apparently meaningless graffiti created by some ancient doodler or perhaps by a culture which possessed no written language. Petroglyphs are often discounted as scribbles made by children or random works by shepherds or others who intended to convey no particular message.

Petroglyphs abound where the great civilizations of the earth existed: Egypt, India, South America, Mexico, the Orient, the British Isles and other places. In America, native Indians (The newest terminology is "Amerindian," a word that describes not only the people living here when America was colonized, but also the early, unidentified cultures which have inhabited this continent.) left many petroglyphic records in the West. But in the East, petroglyphs are fewer. Indian petroglyphs usually employ animal forms, tracks and other rudimentary pictures to express simple messages. It has been commonly believed that early native Americans possessed no language or alphabet. But in recent years, amazing conclusions have been reached as to the origins of certain ancient North American petroglyphs. They have been determined to represent European, African, Semitic and other languages, and to have been created hundreds of years before Columbus discovered America. There are many theories about those early visitors, but there is no question that they left petroglyphic records written in languages that can be accurately deciphered. Because of the humble petroglyph, ancient history is being revealed at an exhilarating pace.

There are several recorded petroglyphs in West Virginia. No doubt local residents know of more whose existence has been ignored for various reasons. During an archaeological survey in southern West Virginia, Robert L. Pyle learned of the Wyoming County Petroglyph from his assistant, local resident Tony Shields.



Hamlington Petroglyph in Northern West Virginia.

Robert L. Pyle



Petroglyph at Holbrook, Arizona.

Robert L. Pyle

## INVESTIGATION

At 6:58 A.M. in the predawn darkness of early spring, roosters crowed and dogs barked in nearby valleys, as Tony Shields and Robert Pyle waited for the first ray of light to appear. Water dripped from the ledge behind them as they waited. The sky filled with color; the distant sounds of civilization seemed to fade. As the men turned to behold the ancient petroglyphic message, they felt an awesome affinity to the long-dead scribe who created it centuries ago.

This petroglyph has been known to exist at least since 1964, when two amateur archaeologists investigated and recorded it. The following year, professional archaeologists investigated the site. A thorough study was conducted in 1970 by an archaeologist with the West Virginia Economic and Geological Survey. The results of that study are on file at the State Department of Culture and History's historic preservation unit. The record states that the aforementioned archaeologist noted the sharp contrast with other known petroglyphs in the region (i.e., absence of human or animal features; the sharp, deeply incised lines, etc.) and concluded that the writings were done in late prehistory, circa 1300-1500 A.D. by a people unknown culturally though certainly American Aborigines.

The Wyoming County Petroglyph was mentioned and part of it was pictured in a local history publication. It was commonly presumed to be the work of Indians. The primitive, apparently meaningless, jumble of markings on the standstone cliff withstood the elements, unaffected by centuries of human history, waiting, one might say, for someone to understand the message.

Robert Pyle recognized the unusual qualities of the message wall and believed that the carvings resembled Runic writing or some other ancient language. He assessed the age of the petroglyph at 500 to 1000 A.D. (plus or minus 200 years), based on the discovery nearby of artifacts identified with the Buck Garden Indians (500-1000 A.D.) and the Late Armstrong Indians (100 B.C. to 500 A.D.). Although the petroglyph cliff and overhang form a small shelter of the type commonly used by primitive man, Pyle and Shields found no artifacts or signs of human habitation. (Records of past investigations, however, indicate that artifacts and human remains were removed previously; this is now being researched.)

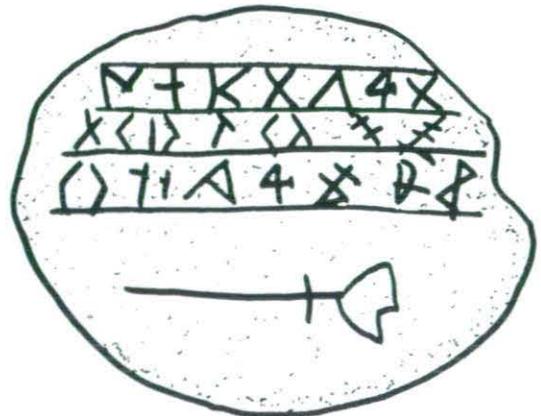
The Buck Garden and/or Armstrong cultures, which were tentatively credited with creating this petroglyph, supposedly had no written "abstract" language, nor, it has been presumed, did the Adena and Hopewell people who existed at an even earlier time. Yet, stone tablets found in Adena and Hopewell mounds are engraved with strange markings recently determined to be Iberian and Hebrew (Semitic) scripts, which language experts have deciphered. (See *Wonderful West Virginia*, March 1981.) Traced to a trans-Atlantic origin, these ancient documents clearly indicate that the American continent was visited and peopled by voyagers from other lands long before Columbus "discovered" it, and that complex native cultures once flourished in America.

This concept is innovative and controversial. But the sandstone petroglyph silently supports it. And at the first light of day last March, a puzzle presented itself: Pyle believed that the most perplexing part of the inscription, which looks like a bunch of irrelevant slashes, was not meaningless but was intrinsic to the message. If this script could be traced to a European root, then the local natives/Indians had either learned it from trans-Atlantic travelers, or the petroglyph was carved by someone other than an Indian. Pyle determined to learn which, to seek protection for the site and to ascertain its true significance.



Illustration from a drawing by Hilary Grimm

The seven-inch long, black limestone Decalogue Tablet was found in a spheroidal box of light brown, calcareous sandstone, with a whitish cement at the edges in a small mound near Newark, Ohio, in 1860. Translation of its Hebrew inscription revealed a shortened version of the Ten Commandments.



Sketch of the Grave Creek Tablet found in Moundsville Mound. This South Iberian inscription is carved on a 4½x2-inch grayish, sandstone rock

## RECORDING FOR POSTERITY

In April 1982, Pyle and Shields recorded the petroglyph in several ways and in the greatest possible detail. First the men removed and brushed away extraneous debris. Pyle examined the carvings through a magnifying glass, as he chalked those identifications he judged to be authentic. The chalked characters were then photographed. In the next step, he created a three-dimensional "peel" by brushing liquid latex over the carved stone, strengthening it with cloth, and peeling it off when cured. Pyle then suspended a white cloth over the entire petroglyph,

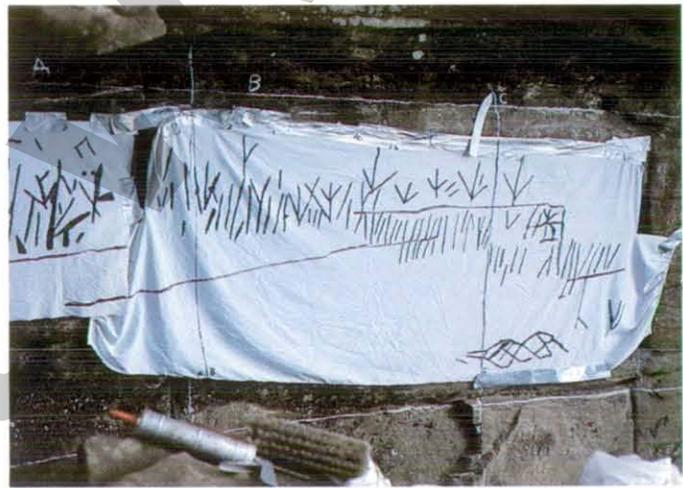
positioning the material to avoid distortion. With a black felt-tip marker, he traced the previously chalked markings onto the cloth.

Pyle noticed additional carvings on a lichen-covered section of the left end wall, which joins the rear petroglyph wall at right angles. He cleaned the wall and exposed the writings. What appeared to be "chicken scratches" and gouges in the sandstone wall were later determined to represent a fully developed and translatable language.

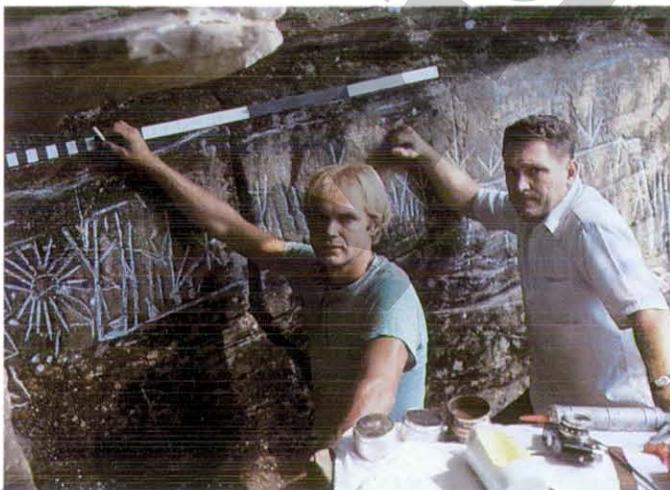
From March to Mid-December 1982, Pyle visited the site about 18 times. In one of the later visits, he noticed that the rock stratum directly in front of the cliff deserved scrutiny and found petroglyphic writing there. It, too, is being investigated.



Robert L. Pyle  
Tony Shields with the equipment necessary for recording the Wyoming County Petroglyph.



Robert L. Pyle  
Cloth in place after being marked with black-tip marker.



Tony Shields and Robert Pyle chalking out the Wyoming County Petroglyph so that it can be clearly photographed.



Robert L. Pyle  
Latex peel held in place with poles specially cut to length.

## PETROGLYPH EDITORIALIZED

Convinced of its importance, Pyle discussed the Wyoming County Petroglyph with a Morgantown newspaper editor. The editorial and photo which subsequently appeared in a Morgantown newspaper set into motion an exciting series of events.

A resident of Morgantown, George Breiding, saw the editorial, clipped it and sent it to Arnout Hyde Jr., editor of *Wonderful West Virginia* magazine. Hyde sent the clipping to Ida Jane Gallagher, a native West Virginian now living in Connecticut. She is a freelance writer specializing in historical research. Gallagher was astounded. The rock carving appeared to be a form of ancient writing which she had photographed in New England and Colorado. Gallagher shot back an enthusiastic message, confirming her interest in finding out more about the petroglyph. And she wanted to see it in person.

Hyde contacted Pyle and asked him to call Gallagher and arrange a visit to the site. Thus, an enthusiastic group of people, whose common goal became the recording and preservation of West Virginia's ancient rock carvings, visited the Wyoming County Petroglyph site in November 1982.

Subsequent events leading to an amazing discovery are related in the following stories in this issue, by Ida Jane Gallagher and Barry Fell.

## YOU CAN HELP

West Virginia's stone carvings are not numerous. Because of their outstanding historical significance, the rare petroglyphs and other archaeological sites in the state should be preserved and made accessible to the public for observation and study.

Everyone is urged to protect these sites and to report new ones to Robert L. Pyle, 1964 Negley Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26505. Reports will be treated confidentially. Helpful information should include: name of landowner, exact location, photograph or rough sketch, approximate size, condition and any known historical background.

Robert L. Pyle, a Morgantown resident, has a GS-9 rating as an archaeologist by the federal government and is qualified to do archaeological investigations on federal projects. He has 27 years of experience in the fields of geology and archaeology, beginning at age 12, under the tutelage of professional people at West Virginia University and the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey. During interim employment in other areas, Pyle has continued independently investigating archaeological sites and geological phenomena. Presently a consulting archaeologist, he conducts federally-required site investigations for industries.

Working on his own, motivated by personal and historical interest, with input to state archives, Pyle has discovered, studied and reported 62 sites, 37 of which have been given official numerical designation as archaeological sites in West Virginia, Missouri, Pennsylvania and Arizona. His experience ranges across the entire spectrum of human influence, from ancient Indian villages, camps and petroglyphs to pioneer habitat and industries, and includes the study and classification of rocks, minerals and plant and animal fossils.

Pyle's efforts are directed toward the acquisition of knowledge concerning man's past history and the preservation of historical and cultural remains. His work is designed to meet the urgent need for the cohesive and comprehensive reporting of human history, especially in the region which includes West Virginia, and the publishing of that information in school textbooks and throughout the public domain, so that those who seek such knowledge will find it readily assessible.



Arnout Hyde Jr.

Under the direction of Robert L. Pyle (second from right), other investigative team members (left to right) Ed Helm, Ida Jane Gallagher and Tony Shields chalk the Wyoming County Petroglyph.

## Part 2

# LIGHT DAWNS ON WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY

IDA JANE GALLAGHER

On an eventful November day in 1982, Robert Pyle, Tony Shields, Arnout Hyde Jr. and Ida Jane Gallagher visited the Wyoming County Petroglyph. They were joined by pilot Edward Helm, who assists Hyde with aerial photography; student pilot Claudia Kingsbury; and Gallagher's father, H. P. "Friday" Meadows, who provided four-wheel drive transportation.

The group scrambled up a steep bank to the rock ledge. A blaze of autumn leaves almost concealed the narrow shelter which lies recessed beneath a cliff overhang. Gallagher's first look at the stunning ten-foot-long petroglyph assured her that it was of major historic value.

Camera shutters clicked repeatedly. Pyle and Gallagher collaborated on the recording. They agreed upon which of the rounded, weathered grooves were the original work and chalked them for clear photographing. This was a decisive step, because graffiti added over the centuries of natural cracks in the rock

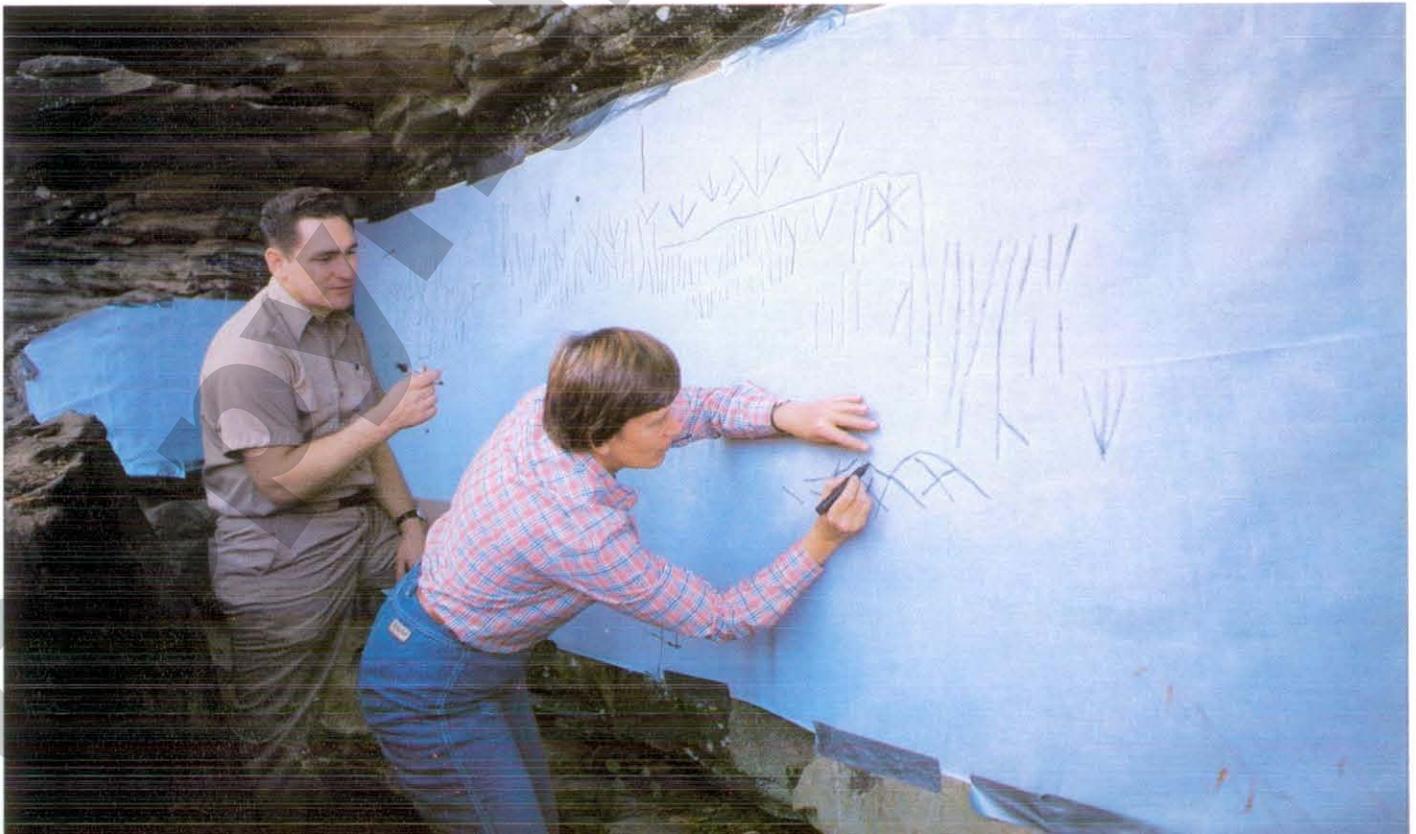
are hard to distinguish from the original incised markings when photographed or transferred to a latex peel. They took more photographs. Again, thin white fabric was stretched across the panel, and the chalked markings were recorded with a permanent ink felt pen.

The sun figure on the petroglyph and the southeasterly orientation of the site made Gallagher wonder if the winter solstice sunrise might be observed from the rock shelter. The winter solstice occurs on the shortest day of the year, December 21-22. Ancient sun-worshipping people held important winter festivals on this day. As the days grew shorter, they feared that the disappearing sun would leave them to die. They appeased the sun god by making blood sacrifices, building huge bonfires, and practicing other superstitious rites. As the days lengthened, they celebrated the sun god's return.

The intriguing prospect that a winter solstice sunrise might

*Robert L. Pyle and Ida Jane Gallagher mark cloth using Pyle's newly developed method of recording petroglyphs.*

Arnout Hyde Jr.

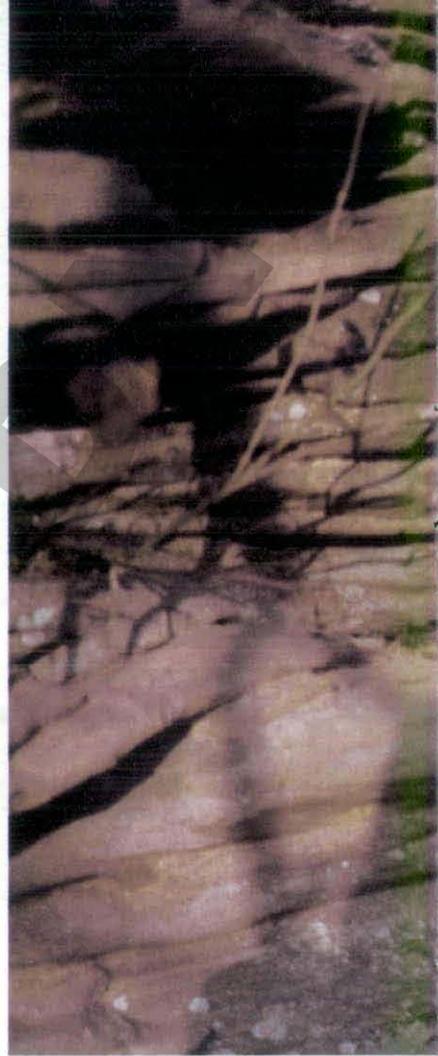


*"Look! Look! It's hitting the panel!" he called. A glimmer of pale sunlight struck the sunburst design on the left side of the petroglyph, and the rising sun soon bathed the entire panel in warm sunlight... As the group watched, the shadow inched from left to right. Before their eyes, light dawned on West Virginia history.*



Copyright 1983 by Ida Jane Gallagher

*Ironically, the rising sun in this photo appears as a star. Caused by a photographic lens flare phenomenon called "diffraction," "spikes" of light radiate outward from a bright light against a dark background in some pictures.*



be connected with the petroglyph added a new facet to what Gallagher had already surmised: the rock carving was created for a specific reason by someone acting under a cultural influence previously unidentified in West Virginia.

As soon as possible, she contacted Dr. Barry Fell, America's leading decipherer of ancient inscriptions. He agreed to undertake the decipherment. Hyde forwarded clear photographs and Gallagher sent the tracings that she and Pyle had made.

Fell's enthusiasm matched Gallagher's when he saw the material. He immediately identified the script called Celtic Ogam, for it is one of the ancient scripts that he encounters regularly on American stone carvings. He translated the Celtic Ogam into the Old Irish language. Next, he translated the original Old Irish into modern English. According to Fell, the Wyoming County Petroglyph bears this astounding message:

*"At the time of sunrise a ray grazes the notch on the left side on Christmas Day. A Feast-day of the Church, the first season of the (Christian) year. The season of the Blessed Advent of the Savior, Lord Christ (Salvatoris Domini Christi). Behold, he is born of Mary, a woman."*

Before team members recovered from the impact of this astounding translation, Fell reported his decipherment of the script on the left side panel and a brief Algonquian (Amerindian language) text that is inserted in the "turkey track" area above the right section of the main panel. The Algonquian says, "Glad Tidings."

The small left side panel and several carefully inserted mark-

ings on the main panel are in a third script called Tifinag. Fell thinks this is a later addition to the petroglyph. The Tifinag gives this instruction:

"Information for regulating the calendar by observing the reversal of the sun's course." (By reversal is meant the winter solstice, when the sun turns back toward the north after reaching its maximum point in the southeast.)

Fell explains that Tifinag is a Scandinavian Bronze Age script that linguists have identified in Canada, Great Britain and Libya and North Africa. He suggests that Norse seafarers were responsible for the widespread use of the script. The Tifinag on the rock shelter carvings translates into the North African Berber (Libyan) language. Apparently, the blonde Tuareg Berbers preserved the ancient Tifinag alphabet as well as the physical traits of the Norse, who traded with the Berbers and settled in North Africa. Fell's detailed decipherment and comments about the implications of his translation follow this article.

Fell pointed out that team members could verify his decipherment by observing the winter solstice sunrise from the Wyoming County Petroglyph. This statement set off a chain reaction.

Team members had speculated that the petroglyph design that looks like two mountains with a gap between them was a visual clue that the sun would actually rise in a horizon notch. In addition, Fell's preliminary decipherment of the crisscross lines on the figure read, "notch."

But, compass readings did not bear this theory out. Using astronomical tables, the team corrected for local conditions (latitude, elevation, time period, etc.) and estimated that the sunrise point was about 139°. This was nowhere near a gap in the



Copyright 1983 by Ida Jane Gallagher

*First glimmer of sunlight strikes left side of petroglyph at sunrise. (Photographer's shadow is cast on the rock.)*

mountains. They wondered what, if anything, the rising sun would have in store for them.

Icicles clung to the overhanging rocks when Tony Shields, Ida Jane Gallagher, H. P. Meadows and Bradley Toler met at the Wyoming County Petroglyph before sunrise on December 22, 1982. A light covering of snow brightened the clear morning. Shields watched impatiently as shadows moved down the tree trunks on the mountain above the rock shelter and the horizon lightened. At last, the first glimpse of the sun broke over the mountain ridge at 9:05 A.M.

Gallagher began photographing a spectacular sunburst, not realizing until the film was processed that the rising sun looked like a six-pointed Christmas Star. Shields made compass readings and kept an eye on the petroglyph to see where the sun's direct rays would strike it.

"Look! Look! It's (the sun's rays) hitting the panel," he called. A glimmer of pale sunlight struck the sun symbol on the left side of the petroglyph, and the rising sun soon bathed the entire panel in warm sunlight. Shields immediately noticed that the sunlight was funneling through a three-sided notch formed by the rock overhang, the upper left-hand wall of the shelter and a rock shelf that jutted out above the small petroglyph on the lower left wall. A shadow cast by the left wall of the shelter fell to the left of the sun symbol and its adjacent markings. As the group watched, the shadow inched from left to right. Before their eyes, light dawned on West Virginia history.

"That proves it," Shields said pointing to the wall notch. He was the first to realize that Dr. Fell's decipherment never mentioned the horizon. It specified only that a ray of sun would graze the notch on the left side. The ancient scribe was referring to the shelter wall notch!

This most remarkable turn of events served as a reminder that things do not always happen as expected. The group continued to watch as the solar phenomenon demonstrated physical proof of Fell's decipherment.

How appropriate it is that this ancient testament to Christ's birth was carved in the West Virginia hills where mountain folks have deep religious roots.

Early Christians connected Christ's birth with the winter solstice. The Gospels do not specify the day of Nativity. However, in the fourth century A.D. the church fathers set December 25 as the date in order to incorporate the pagan winter festivals of rebirth in the Christian tradition.

Julius Caesar reformed the calendar in 46 B.C., and it was used by Europeans until the 16th century. (American colonies adopted our present-day calendar, the Gregorian, in 1752.) December 25 was the winter solstice date in the Julian calendar. Caesar intended to begin the New Year on December 25, the Roman feast of Saturnalia, but due to an unfavorable waning moon, he put it off until January 1. Thus, between the fourth and 16th centuries, Christmas Day and the winter solstice both fell on December 25. This explains why the winter solstice sunrise was viewed by the author of the ancient message at the Wyoming County site on Christmas day instead of December 21-22 in the Julian dating system.

When Fell heard the news of the winter solstice sunrise, he was greatly encouraged. He had deciphered a similar petroglyph in a Texas cave shelter that gave instructions for determining the equinox (equal days and nights). A research team was present to watch the sun validate that decipherment on the fall equinox, September 22, 1982.

Because of the Christian content of the Wyoming County

Petroglyph, Fell checked old Celtic Bibles where he found exact words and phrases used in the translation. He also made a study of Chi Rho symbols, which are the Greek letters for the name, Christ. They appear in numerous forms in manuscripts and on items associated with the practice of Christianity. He discovered that three Celtic Chi Rho's appear on the Wyoming County Petroglyph. One is the mountain-like symbol that had been such an enigma to the team. The three Celtic Chi Rho's enabled Fell to give a range of possible dates for the petroglyph, which is between the sixth and eighth centuries A.D.

One can only speculate about who inscribed the Wyoming County Petroglyph until researchers accumulate more evidence. West Virginians may never know whether an Irishman, a Berber, an Amerindian or all three made the carvings. But, the undeniable fact is that the petroglyph is there, and its decipherment is validated by a natural phenomenon. Ancient history, however, has a few insights to contribute to this puzzle.

Irish monks possibly reached North America by the sixth century A.D. St. Patrick Christianized the Irish between 432 and 461. By this time the Gaelic people had established a class of learned men, who found a natural place in the Christian establishment. A century after St. Patrick's arrival, Irish monks and scholars began evangelizing abroad. St. Brendan, an Irish monk, supposedly made a voyage across the Atlantic Ocean from Ireland to Newfoundland on the eastern coast of Canada in the sixth century. In modern times Timothy Severin set out to duplicate St. Brendan's voyage in a leather-hulled sailing boat, built to sixth century specifications. His successful voyage, which proved the trip was possible, was reported by NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC in December 1977.

The question that American historians never have answered satisfactorily is WHO were the Amerindians? History books gloss over the fact that Americans have an ancient past. European explorers and settlers observed during America's colonial period that native Americans represented a variety of racial stocks and had developed an amazing range of cultures, from complex urban societies to primitive family units. But the most striking difference was the number of spoken languages. Ethnologists later estimated that more than 50 unrelated linguistic (language) stocks and 700 distinct dialects were spoken north of Mexico! The linguistic stocks had no common vocabulary or grammatical structure.

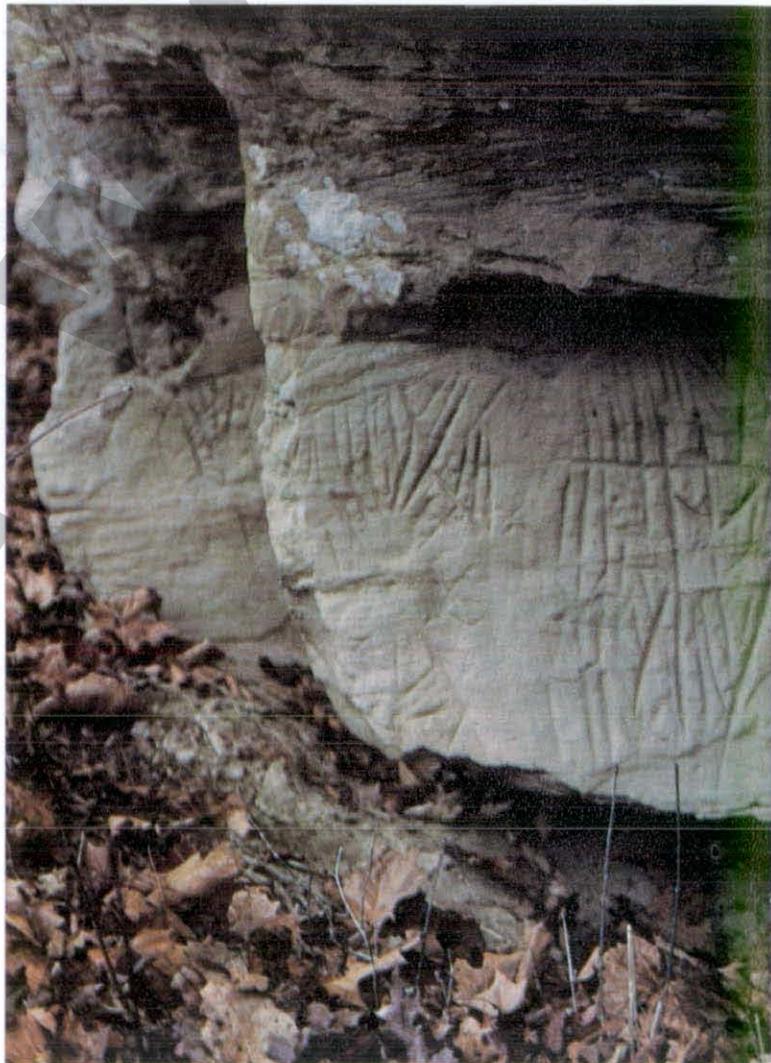
This suggests that successive groups of immigrants reached America, beginning in a distant time when hunters crossed the Bering land bridge between Siberia and Alaska and still continuing today. A growing body of convincing information points to an active period of trans-Atlantic crossings beginning about 2500 years ago; these waves of immigrants were absorbed into the American melting pot along with their customs and languages.

The linguistic evidence that foreign people reached our shores has been preserved on petroglyphs. These stone carvings mark the beginnings of America's historic period. Because they can be deciphered by Fell and others, Americans are discovering that they have an ancient history. Viewed in this context, is it really so strange to find Old Irish and North African inscriptions on the same stone carving that bears American Indian (Algonquian) "turkey tracks"?

## INVESTIGATIVE TEAM VISITS A BOONE COUNTY PETROGLYPH

Shortly after the investigative team visited the Wyoming County Petroglyph, Helm learned of another one in Boone County, from local residents Jerry and Steve Stone. The Stone brothers made arrangements with the land owner for a group of investigators to visit the rock carvings, which are named the Horse Creek Petroglyph.

"Fell called the Horse Creek find.' He believes that it may be stone carving."



Horse Creek Petroglyph in Boone

Petroglyph, 'a sensational  
the world's longest Ogam

On the drizzly afternoon of December 20, 1982, the Stones met Arnout Hyde Jr., Claudia Kingsbury and Ida Jane Gallagher and led them to the site. The group slid down a muddy creek bank to reach a rocky outcrop that holds a series of petroglyphs. When they peered into a low rock shelter, they saw a lengthy series of markings gouged into the rear wall. Gallagher thought that they were the same Celtic Ogam script that the recording team encountered on the Wyoming County Petroglyph. Crouched under the rock ledge—which all agreed was a perfect spot for snakes in warmer weather—they took turns removing silt deposited by creek flooding from the surface of the carvings.

As they took photographs, the rain turned to spitting snow. Further removal of debris and silt, which was necessary for making a permanent recording, was abandoned for a better day. Fortunately, they were able to make clear photographs. These were sent to Fell, and he immediately began decipherment of the lengthy inscription. His translation of the Horse Creek Petroglyph further validated the Wyoming County Petroglyph's inscription.

Fell called the Horse Creek Petroglyph, "a sensational find." He believes that it may be the world's longest Ogam stone carving. It also contains a second script, a short Libyan addition to the original work. Fell dates the Celtic Ogam from the same period (sixth to eighth century) as the Wyoming Petroglyph. The Horse Creek carvings also translate into the Old Irish language. The complete decipherment is given and explained in Fell's article.

The main part of the long inscription of the Horse Creek Petroglyph is written in three horizontal lines. The reading begins with the middle line (see Fell's decipherment) and is translated as follows:

Line 1 (middle)—"A happy season is Christmas, a time of joy and goodwill to all people."

Line 2 (bottom)—"A virgin was with child; God ordained her to conceive and be fruitful. Ah, Behold, a miracle!"

Line 3 (top)—"She gave birth to a son in a cave. The name of the cave was the Cave of Bethlehem. His foster-father gave him the name Jesus, the Christ, Alpha and Omega. Festive season of prayer."

The far left portion of the inscription surrounding the hand translates: "The right hand of God is a shield.—a prayer."

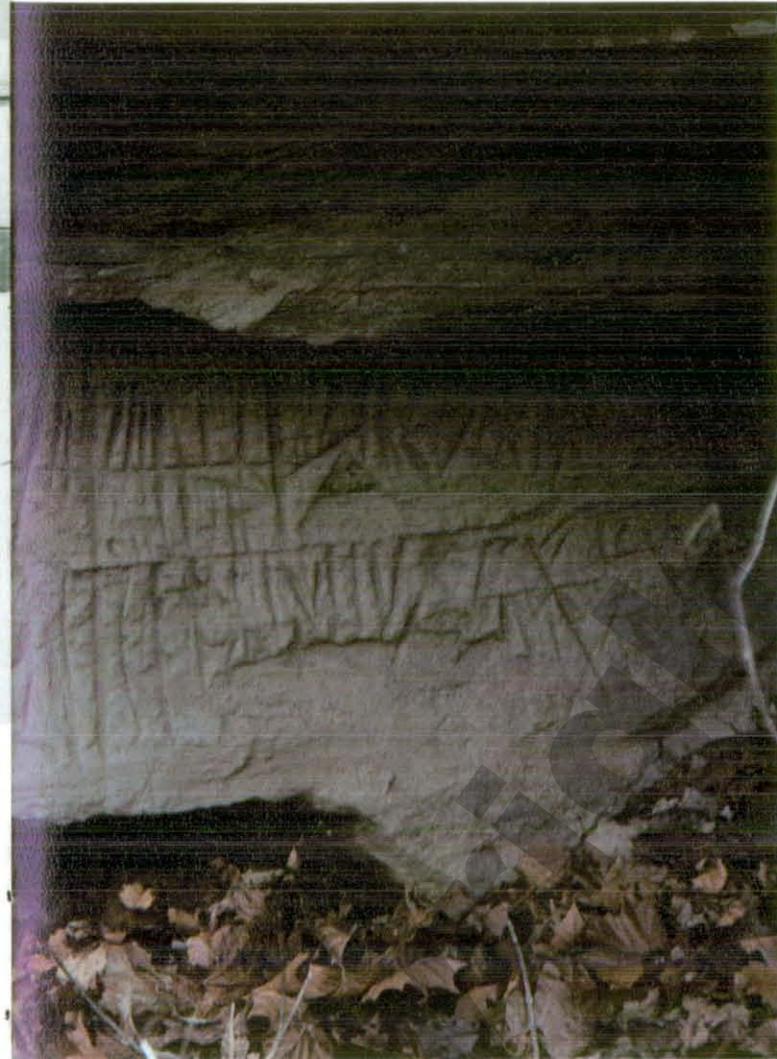
Beneath it on the left is the short Libyan script that says: "The right hand of God."

To the left of this inscription is another petroglyph that bears a partially encircled hand. It appears as a rebus, a type of riddle in which words and phrases are spelled out in the form of the object whose name they represent. Fell says that this represents the Hand of God (Dextera Dei, in Latin). He translates it, "Father, Son, Holy Spirit, One God." The Ogam letter "L" is found at the end of this and other inscriptions, which Fell reads "ele," meaning "prayer."

The decipherment of the Wyoming County and Horse Creek Petroglyphs represents a new concept of West Virginia's ancient history. It indicates that people from various cultures were here, and the clues that they left behind will continue to undergo intense study.

Ida Jane Gallagher, a Beckley native, is a freelance writer who has been researching and writing about ancient American history since 1977. She does much of the field exploration and photography for her research topics.

Gallagher earned Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts degrees from West Virginia University. She has worked as a journalist and as a teacher of journalism, English and American history. She lectures to historical societies and school groups. She is an active member of Early Sites Research Society (archaeological), New England Antiquities Research Association (historic research, field exploration), and The Epigraphic Society, an international organization that studies ancient scripts.



County before it was chalked.

Arnout Hyde Jr.

# CHRISTIAN MESSAGES IN OLD IRISH SCRIPT DECIPHERED FROM ROCK CARVINGS IN W. VA.

BARRY FELL

*Editor's Note:*

In the following article, America's leading expert on ancient languages details his decipherments of two southern West Virginia petroglyphs, one in Wyoming County, the other in Boone County. Because of the innovative and controversial nature of this material, we have chosen to publish Barry Fell's step-by-step description of his decipherment process, in full, for credibility and so that readers may understand how these translations were made.

The decipherment process is complex and technical in nature, therefore, it is impossible to present it in an easy-to-read style. Readers willing to expend the time and mental energy required to study the material will be astounded and intrigued, as the author takes them through the systematic process which led to his startling translations of mysterious writings etched centuries ago by an unknown person on West Virginia's ancient rock cliffs.

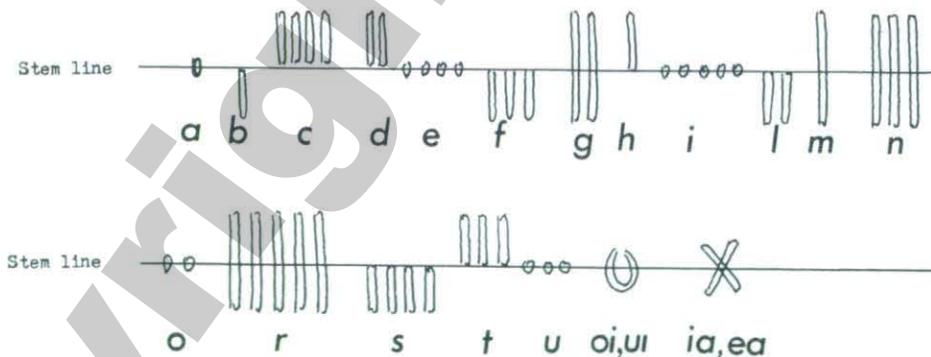
Additional archaeological evidence in the same vein as that presented here has been discovered recently in West Virginia, which seems to further substantiate Fell's decipherments. It is currently being analysed. When studies are complete, details of these additional findings will appear in future issues of this magazine.

The rock-cut inscriptions which are the subject of this article are located at archaeological sites in Wyoming and Boone Counties, West Virginia. They appear to date from the 6th-8th centuries A.D., and they are written in Old Irish language, employing an alphabet called Ogam, found also on ancient rock-cut inscriptions in Ireland. The inscriptions are accompanied by short annotations in ancient Libyan alphabetic script. The Libyan script is used to render two languages in the annotations (1) the ancient Libyan tongue itself, and (2) an Algonquian dialect of the northeastern group, perhaps allied to Shawnee. In this first report I deal only with the Old Irish texts, as these are the most detailed.

The Ogam alphabet is illustrated in Figure A.

Most of our knowledge of Ogam comes from a Dublin manuscript, known as the *Ogam Tract*, composed by an unidentified monk in the 14th century. It describes some 94 varieties of Ogam and other alphabets known to the scribe, but the writer indicates that he knew of some 150 varieties of ancient Irish alphabets. A portion of one of the folio charts in the *Ogam Tract* is shown in Figure B.

Archaeological research shows that Ogam was widely used in many parts of the ancient world. It also occurs on Celtic



The earliest type of Ogam used no vowel signs and is called *Ogam Consaine* (Consonantal Ogam). The West Virginian Ogam inscriptions are written in *Ogam Consaine*.

The scribes employed many variant forms of letters, and on rock faces where space is limited, they often crowded the letters together, even squeezing them in sideways if it would save space.

Here are some of the variant forms encountered in West Virginia:



FIGURE A. The Ogam Alphabet.

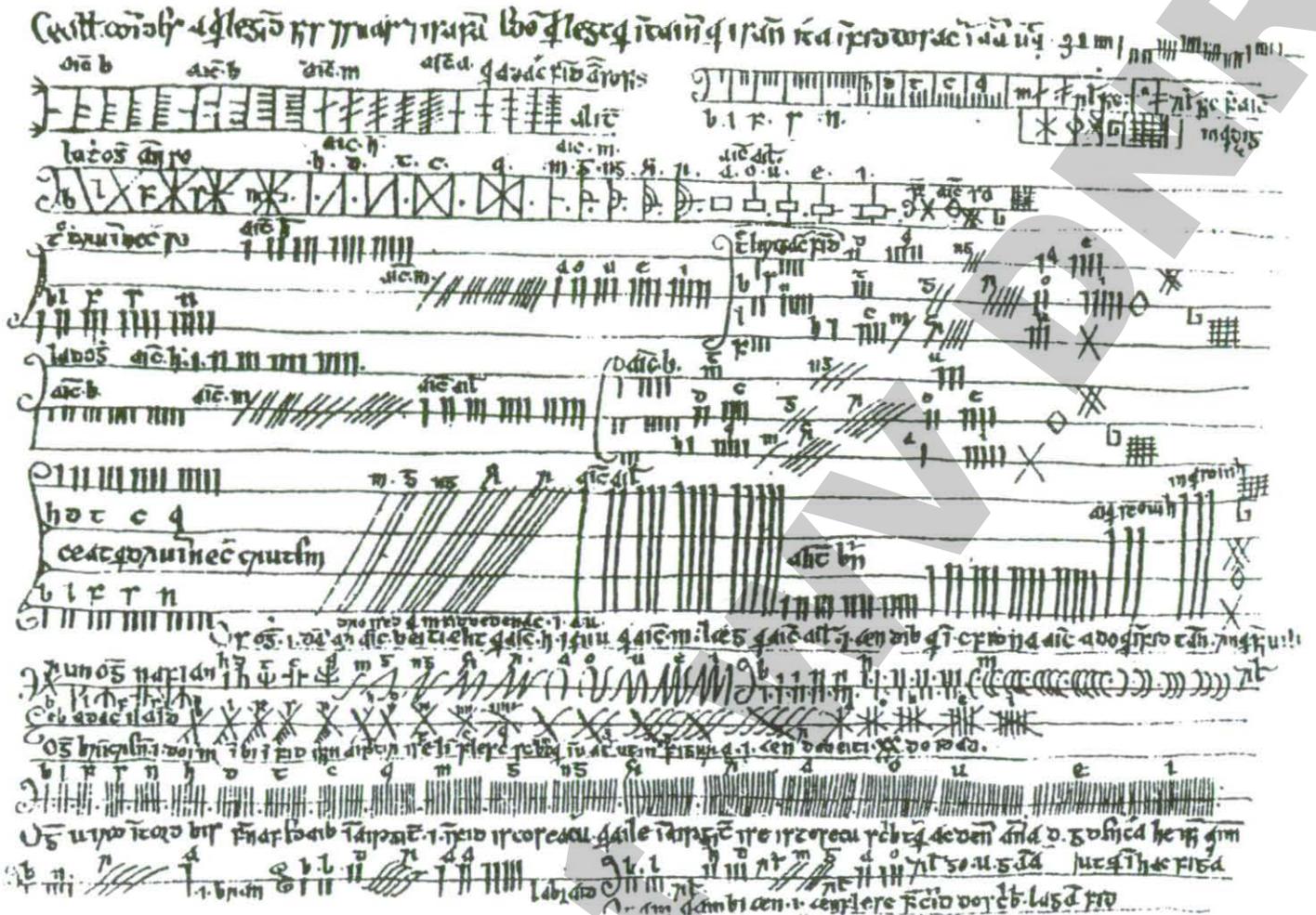


FIGURE B. A portion of one of the folio charts in Ogam Tract.

10  
 Uim ogu ogua. i. ogua doctar mairt. fhu  
 rater do ghu hpe dait toiric gredels icna  
 gal: aca ogu ogu nri ogu ktm t rca ogma  
 Se roim. i. c. na m noyrb e' os. am h. i. m  
 beia noyrb. noyrb noyrb. volus ni eden no  
 reb' r' hla ana noyrb. r' uca h' r' uca. i. m. m.

coins issued in Gaul in the second century before Christ, some hundreds of years before the earliest known Irish Ogam inscriptions.

The scribe relates the mythical account of the origin of Ogam. He tells us that the first Ogam message ever written was the work of a magician named Ogmios, and that it was a warning sent to Lug informing him of a plot to abduct his wife. On line 11 of folio page 309 of the Ogam Tract, the scribe reproduces the supposed warning message sent to Lug. It consists of the Ogam letters "S-N." This is the earliest literary reference to the Ogam Consaine (Consonantal Ogam), for the letters "S-N" are the consonants of the Old Irish word "siona" meaning "warning." The passage in the Tract (Figure C) is marked by the arrow and the word is shown enlarged below the Tract.



FIGURE C. A warning sent to Lug from a magician named Ogmios reproduced in Ogam Tract.

Although the scribe evidently was familiar with Ogam Consaine, he did not give it that name, or any name at all. It was left for the 18th century Irish poet Eoghan Ruadh Ua Suilleabhain (1748-84) to coin the name, "Consonantal Ogam," and he did so in drawing attention to old, undeciphered, rock-cut inscriptions in Ireland, whose meaning remained a mystery (Figure D); for scholars of the day, unable to deal with a written script from which the vowels were omitted, could make no sense of the markings.

The ancient Ogam Consaine inscriptions of Ireland are found mainly in that country's northern section, and there are others of similar type in parts of Scotland. An example is the line of Ogam slashes visible on the capstone of the Bronze Age cromlech (grave monument) at Castleberg, in County Tyrone. In southern Ireland, especially Counties Cork and Kerry, the Ogam inscriptions are fully provided with the vowel points, and these have therefore been deciphered long since. The West Virginian Ogam inscriptions seem to have an affinity with those of northern Ireland.

Irish monastic records state that during the reign of Pope Pelagius (555-561), an Irish ecclesiastic named St. Brendan (Brennain) made two voyages across the Atlantic Ocean, discovering a land far to the west, identified by some historians as North America. It is known that Brendan founded the famous monastery of Clonfert in County Galway in the year 561, by which date his last voyage had been completed. It seems possible that the scribes who cut the West Virginia inscriptions may have been Irish missionaries in the wake of Brendan's voyage, for these inscriptions are Christian. This is evident even before they are deciphered, because the early Christian symbols of piety, such as the various Chi-Rho monograms (of the name of Christ) and the *Dextera Dei* ("Right hand of God"), appear at the sites together with the Ogam texts.

Examples are shown in Figure E, together with corresponding examples from Europe. The Chi-Rho comprises a symbol formed from the two Greek letters that stand first in the name "Christ," Ch (resembling an X) and R (resembling a P). These letters are written separately at the site in Boone County, which is called the Horse Creek Petroglyph. At the Wyoming County Petroglyph, one of the Chi-Rho signs is that shown in Figure E-5. This is a combination of the two letters and closely matches a version used on the Byzantine coins of the Emperor Justinian I (527-565), shown in Figure E-4. A different version of the Chi-Rho is the *labarum* (scepter) type, so-called because it formed the upper part of the *labarum* scepter of the Byzantine emperors. Figure E-1 shows the *labarum* Chi-Rho that appears on coins of Gratian (367-375), and Figure E-3 is the matching version at the Wyoming County site, while Figure E-2 is a late version found on coins issued by the Anglo-Saxon Wulfred, Archbishop of Canterbury (805-833).

Peculiarly Irish is the symbol called by scholars "The Incarnation Initial," of which a simplified version is shown in Figure E-7, taken from the Lindisfarne Gospels (A.D. 700). It consists of a large Chi, always introduced by the scribes at the beginning of the 18th verse of the first chapter of Matthew, where the evangelist writes, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise."

The Wyoming County inscription relates the birth of Christ, and then, after stating that the child was born to Mary, the scribe inserts an Ogam version of the Incarnation initial, shown in Figure E-8. He has inserted some Ogam strokes into the Chi, to make the word "G-ia-N (gaine), meaning "Incarnation." When I first attempted to find the meaning of this sign, I read the Ogam letters in the sequence Ia-n-g (ionga) meaning "notch." As a word for notch, "cab," occurs earlier in the inscription, referring to a notch that the sun will shine through on Christmas morning, this seemed a likely decipherment. But I believe the correct interpretation is that the whole symbol is an Ogam version of the Incarnation Initial.

On a rock face adjacent to the *Dextera Dei* ("Right hand of God") site occur two lines of script not yet deciphered. In the upper line occurs the well known symbol, IHC+ (Figure F), used by the Western Church as a monogram of the name of Jesus. The letters are the first three Greek letters, IES, in the name "Iesos" (Jesus).

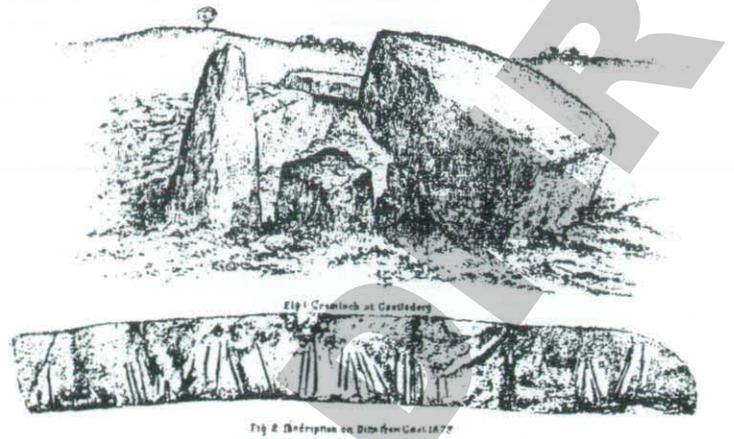


FIGURE D. An Ogam Consaine inscription cut on an ancient tomb at Castleberg in County Tyrone, northern Ireland. Like North American Ogam, there are no vowel points.

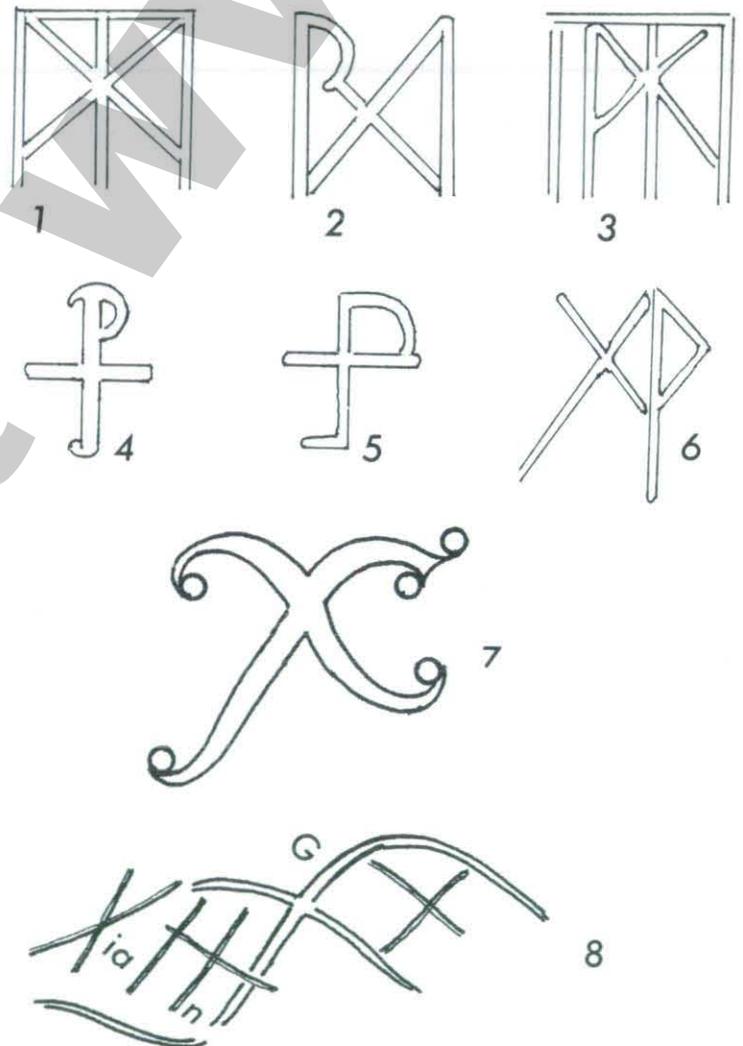


FIGURE E. Early Christian symbols of piety.



FIGURE F. Widely known symbol IHC, used by western church as a monogram for the name of Jesus.

Another pious symbol used by the early Christians is the *Dextera Dei*, or Right Hand of God. An example carved on the 10th century Irish cross of Muiredach, at Monasterboice, is shown in Figure G-4. On page 347 of my book, *Saga America*, attention is drawn to the occurrence of this symbol at American archaeological sites. I have suggested that it implies contacts with Europe around the 10th century, when the symbol was a popular feature in coinage designs. Whether the West Virginian examples should be dated to the 10th century is at present uncertain, but my belief is that its presence supports the idea of continuing Irish contacts over a period of several centuries in the latter part of the first millennium.

Figures G-1 and G-2 show tracings from photographs of West Virginian engravings. The one on the left is made up of Ogam strokes, some of which are arranged to form a hand-like figure. Figure G-3, on the right, shows a hand within a circular nimbus, and the hand is composed of all the Ogam strokes. Figure G-2 is a Libyan inscription placed just beneath the engraving of Figure G-1. Although I do not deal with Libyan texts in this article, it may be noted that the Libyan letters translate as *Yamin Ilahi*, meaning "The right hand of God." This is a fine example of what epigraphers best like to find, bilingual texts that say the same thing in two languages, the one confirming the other.

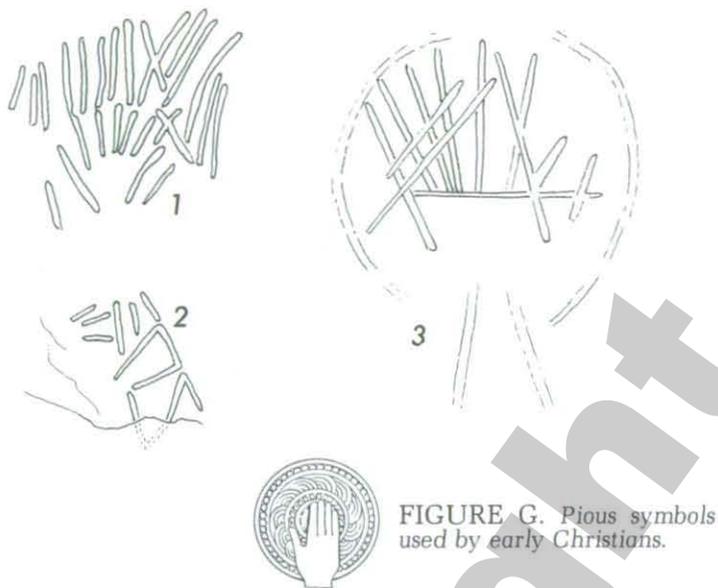


FIGURE G. Pious symbols used by early Christians.

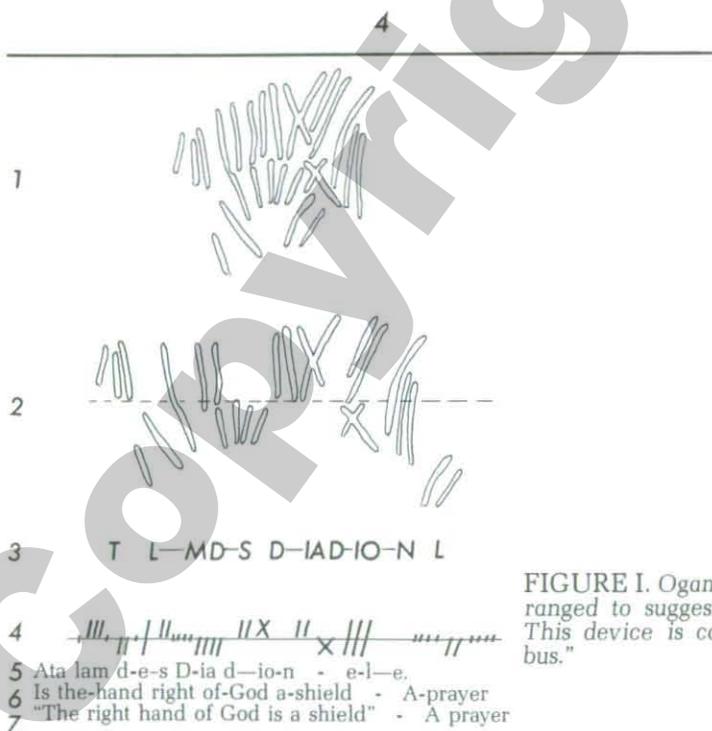


FIGURE I. Ogam strokes arranged to suggest a picture. This device is called a "rebus."

## HOW INSCRIPTIONS ARE DECIPHERED

This is an appropriate point at which to say a little about how the texts are deciphered. When the Ogam strokes are arranged to suggest a picture, the result is what is called a rebus, obviously a device by the scribe to help the reader understand his inscription. The following are the steps by which we can interpret the rebus shown in Figure H.

We note the hand in the lower part of the inscription. In Celtic languages, the verb stands first in the sentence and is followed by the subject. Accordingly, we disregard the first few strokes to the left and look for the word "hand" (*lam* in Old Irish). As expected, the letters L and M are there. They are preceded by three upper-case strokes (T), evidently the verb "is" (see Vocabulary at the end of this article). Thus, in line I-2 we can undertake to separate out the consonants, as shown. Line I-3 shows the succession of consonants we obtain. Line I-4 shows the text rewritten with appropriate vowel points inserted, so as to make a meaningful statement, using all the consonants. The Old Irish, in Latin script, is given in line I-5. A literal English rendering of each word is given in line I-6. In line I-7 the words are rearranged to conform to English grammar, the subject now preceding the verb.



Arnout Hyde Jr.

FIGURE H. Photograph of a rebus on the Horse Creek Petroglyph.

A different type of rebus is shown in Figure J. Here all the Ogam strokes are incorporated into the hand, and there are three transverse stem lines crossing the strokes. This warns us that the Ogam strokes are to be read separately for each of the stem lines, assuming therefore different alphabet values according to whether they stand above, or below, or across, any given stem line. In short, the whole device is a monogram in which various letters have been superimposed. The resulting decipherment (Figure K) yields a sequence of Old Irish words: *Atar, Mac, Sbiorad Noib, Oin Dia*—"Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God." And reference to early Christian literatures, such as the writings of Julian of Norwich, or Pier's Plowman, discloses that the mystical meaning of the *Dextera Dei* is that the hand symbolizes the unified Trinity, the closed fist God the Father, the fingers God the Son and the Palm the Holy Spirit.



FIGURE J. Rebus with Ogam strokes that are incorporated in a hand. Arnout Hyde Jr.

## THE WYOMING COUNTY PETROGLYPH TRANSLATION

The photograph shown here (Figure L) was sent to me in mid-November 1982, by Arnout Hyde Jr. at the request of Ida Jane Gallagher, with a request that the inscription depicted be deciphered if possible. On November 22 I telephoned Mrs. Gallagher, giving her my decipherment and asking if it would be possible to have observers at the site on December 22, in order to check whether the events given in the translation do in fact occur.

FIGURE L. Chalked Wyoming County Petroglyph.



Gerald Ratliff

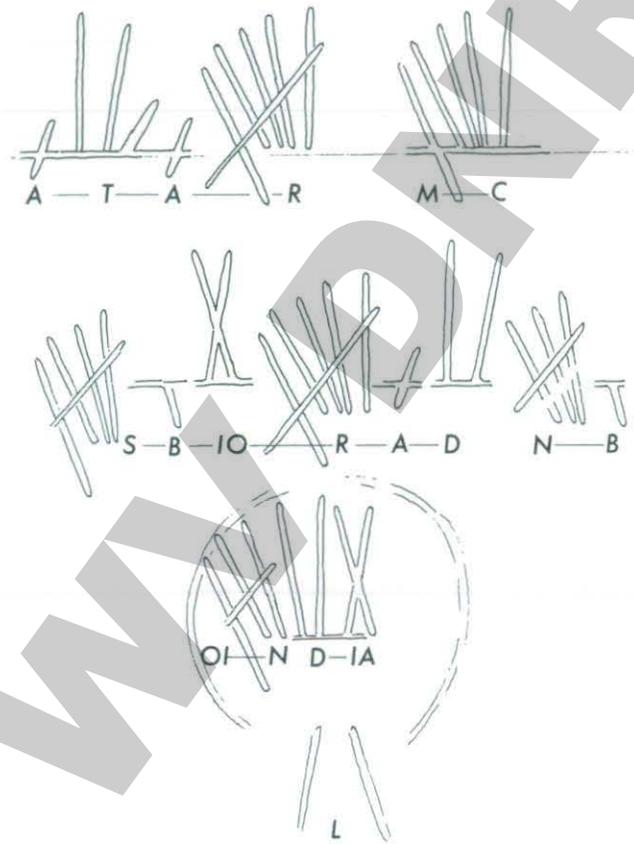


FIGURE K. The decipherment yields a sequence of Old Irish words meaning: "Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God."

The December 22nd visit is described in detail in Mrs. Gallagher's article, "Light Dawns on West Virginia History."

The various sections of the Wyoming County Petroglyph text, as separately deciphered, are numbered on Figure M. Section M-9 is the added Algonquian text, to be discussed in a later article. There is also a Libyan text, some letters of which (appearing as dots in twos and threes, between the Ogam letters) partly overlap the Ogam, but mainly are contained on an adjacent panel not shown here. The Libyan text will be discussed in a later article. Both the Algonquian and Libyan texts appear to be later additions, each making appropriate comment on the Old Irish text.

My translations of lines 1 through 6 of the Wyoming County Petroglyph are given in Figures M-1 through M-6.

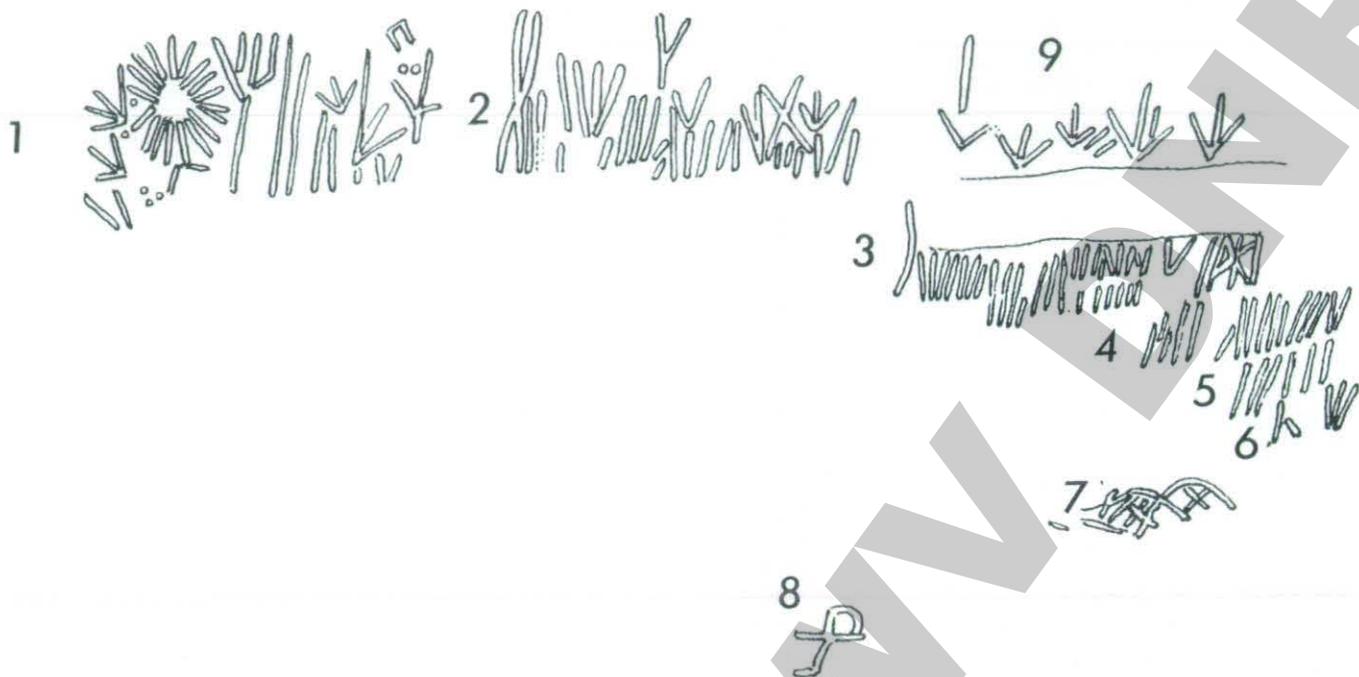
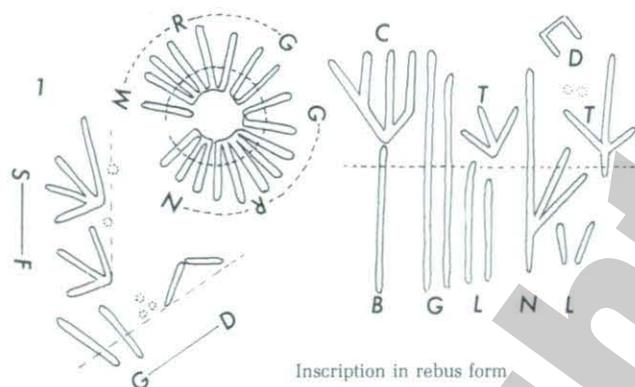


FIGURE M. Diagram of Wyoming County Petroglyph.



Inscription in rebus form

Converting to a uniform stem line, and supplying vowel points, the inscription reads:



S-i-f g-a-d a-m e-r-i-g g-r-e-n cab gl-e-t D. Natal.

"At the time of sunrise a ray grazes the notch on the left side on Christmas Day"

FIGURE M-1. Close-up of line 1 of Figure M.



FIGURE M-2. Close-up of line 2 of Figure M.

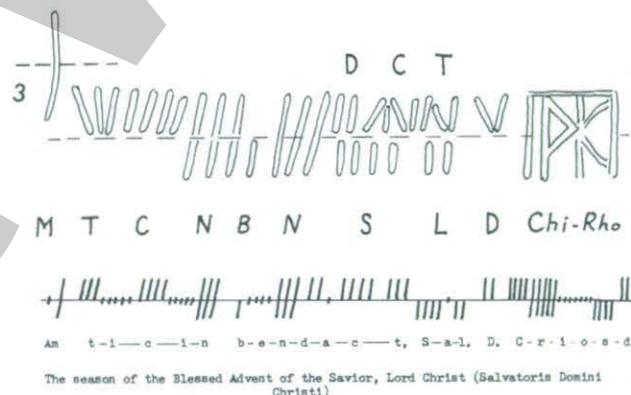


FIGURE M-3. Close-up of line 3 of Figure M.

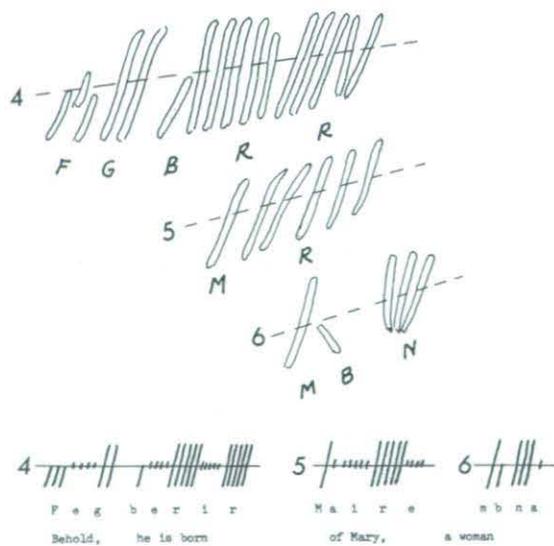


FIGURE M-4, M-5, M-6. Close-up of lines 4, 5 and 6 of Figure M



Arnout Hyde Jr.

FIGURE N. Photograph of Horse Creek Petroglyph.

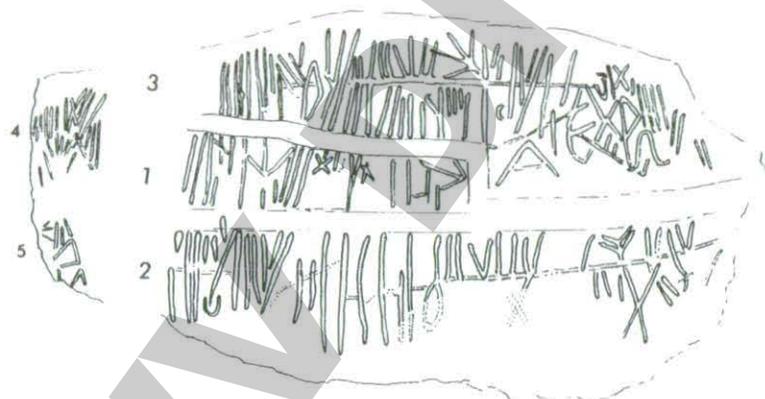
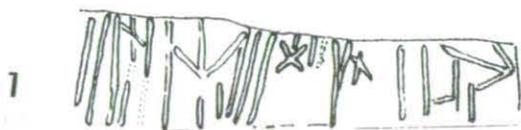


FIGURE O. Diagram of Horse Creek Petroglyph.



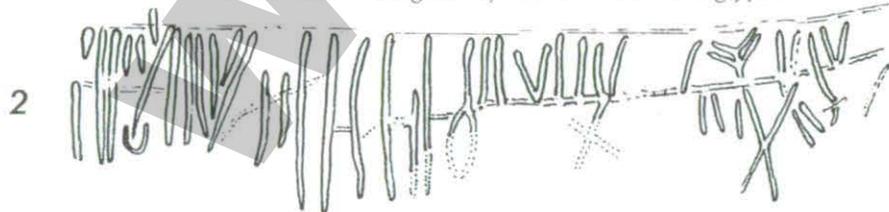
MGN TLGM IATGEA N BT



Am a-i-g N-o-t-l-e-g, Am ait g-ea n b-i-t,

A happy season is Christmas, a time of joy and goodwill to all people.

FIGURE O-1. Close-up of line 1 of Figure O.



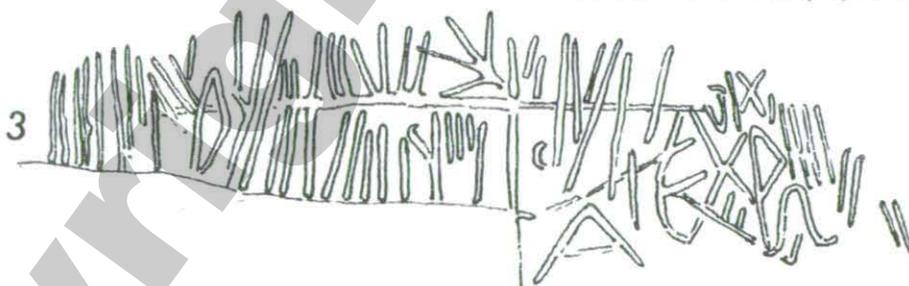
BHGTOI R G L G GBMOIT C DIA H FC IO N D



Ba hog t-o-i-r-a-g l-e-g gab m-o-i-t-a-c Dia ha f-e-c, io-n-ad!

A virgin was with child; God ordained her to conceive and be fruitful. Ah, Behold, a miracle!

FIGURE O-2. Close up of line 2 of Figure O.



R GHMCUIHMNMCSBDLCS TUIG N M OI DIA

A IOS XP Ω AMFL L



R-u-g h-i m-a-c uihm, a-i- n - m c-o-i-s B-e-d-i-l C-o-s, T-u-i-g a-i- n- m oi-d-ea

Alpha Iosa Criosd Omega; am fel e(i)le.

She gave birth to a son in a cave. The name of the cave was the Cave of Bethlehem. His foster-father gave him the name Jesus, the Christ, Alpha and Omega. Festive season of prayer.

FIGURE O-3. Close-up of line 3 of Figure O.

# THE HORSE CREEK PETROGLYPH TRANSLATION

A three-line Ogam text occurs on a rock face in Boone County, West Virginia, called the Horse Creek Petroglyph (Figure N).

The diagram of the Horse Creek Petroglyph (Figure O) gives an exploded layout of the various texts. The two on the left, numbered 4 and 5, have already been referred to under the name "Dextera Dei" or "Right Hand of God." The horizontal lines 1, 2 and 3 comprise the Old Irish text, a short biblical abstract of the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke. The Old Norse three-line rock inscriptions are read in the sequence, first the middle line, next the bottom line, and last the top line. It would seem that this rule applies also here, as the most logical sequence. It would seem that the oldest part of the inscription is the upper right section, with the Chi-Rho, Alpha and Omega. At some later date a scribe decided to cut a Nativity text on the rock in such manner that the culminating event, the actual naming of the Christ Child, would be cited at the point when his text reached the pre-existing sacred signs for the name of Christ. He succeeded, but at a cost of overcrowding his text in the final section, which is consequently difficult to disentangle.

My translation of the Horse Creek Petroglyph is given in Figures 0-1, 0-2 and 0-3.

The West Virginia Ogam texts are the longest Ogam inscriptions recorded from anywhere in the world. They exhibit the grammar and vocabulary of Old Irish in a manner previously unknown in such early rock-cut inscriptions in any Celtic language. The protection of these sites is of paramount importance. It has been an inspiring privilege to work with such historic material.

*Dr. Barry Fell is an emeritus professor at Harvard University. He came to America from New Zealand in 1964. In addition to being a world-recognized authority on marine biology, he is president of the Epigraphic Society, and is editor and co-author of eight volumes of decipherments of ancient inscriptions. He wrote America B.C., which the American Booksellers Association presented to the White House in 1977 as one of the best 250 books published between 1973 and 1977 in the United States.*

*In his writings, Fell documents extensive and profound evidence, along with numerous photographs and illustrations, which supports his belief that America had ancient European, African and Nordic visitors centuries before Columbus landed on its shores. Wonderful West Virginia readers who wish to learn more about this subject may order the following books by Fell from a bookstore: America B.C. (published by Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Company), Saga America (published by Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Company) and Bronze Age America (published by Little, Brown and Company, Boston and Toronto).*

## VOCABULARY

Early Irish words found engraved on West Virginian rocks:

Abbreviations: B, Bethlehem Rock site; DD, Dextera Dei inscriptions; SR, Christmas Sunrise site; L, Latin rendered in Ogam letters; G, Greek symbols; adj, adjective; adv, adverb; n, noun; v, verb.

aig (adj) happy, auspicious B  
aite (adj) joyful, glad B  
am (n) time, season B, SR  
ainm (n) name B  
atar, atair (n) father DD  
Alpha Omega (n) "He that is first and shall be last" G, B.  
ba (v) was, were (from bi, to be) B  
ben (n) woman; possessive case mbna (Irish mna) SR  
Bedil (n) Bethlehem B  
Bedil Cos (n) The Cave of Bethlehem B  
bendact (adj) blessed, L. benedictus SR  
berir (v) he is born SR  
bi (v) to be B, DD  
bit (n) the world, all people B  
bliatain (n) year SR  
cab (n) notch, hollow SR  
cos (n) cave B  
Chi-Rho Criosd or Christus, G. symbols used by early Christians B, SR  
D (1) abbreviation of L. die, on the day; D. Natal., L. Die Natale, on the day of Christmas, lit. "Birthday" of Christ SR  
(2) abbreviation of L. Dominus, Lord, Domini, of the Lord SR  
des (adj) right, right-hand DD  
di (n) day SR  
Dia (n) God, of God B, DD  
dion (n) shield, shelter DD  
doisag (adj) first (O. Irish toisech) SR  
eaglais (n) church SR  
ele (n) prayer DD, BR  
erig-gren (n) sunrise SR  
fec, feg (v) behold! SR, B  
fel, feil (n) feast, Feast Day (of the Church) B, SR  
gab (v) conceive B  
gad (n) ray, sunbeam (O. Irish gat, a dart) SR  
gean (n) good will B  
gian (for gain) (n) nativity, the Incarnation (of Christ) SR  
gle (adj) left, left hand (O. Irish cle) SR  
glet (adj) on the left side SR  
grian (n) sun, gren, of the sun SR  
hi, i (pronoun) she B  
hog (n) virgin, maiden (O. Irish og, oige) B  
iongad (n) miracle B  
Iosa (n) Jesus B  
lam (n) hand DD  
Lam Des Dia right hand of God, L. Dextera Dei DD  
leg, leig (v) cause, ordain B  
mc, mac (n) son; Mac Dia, the Son of God B, DD  
mbna (n) of a woman, possessive case of ben; Irish mna SR  
moitac (adj) pregnant, (n) pregnant woman; apparently an American usage, in Ireland not used for human beings B  
Maire, Muire (n) Mary, of Mary SR  
Natal. (adj) L. Natalis, pertaining to a birth; D. Natal., L. Die Natale, on Christmas Day; see Notleg SR  
noib (adj) holy, sacred DD  
Notleg (n) Christmas, L. Natalica. In later Irish and Gaelic the word became Nollaig, meaning Christmas and (in Ireland) December B  
oidia (n) foster father; at B, used for Joseph B  
oin, oen (n) one; Oin Dia, One God DD  
rug (v) gave birth to B  
Sal. (v) L. Salvator, Savior SR  
Sbiorad (n) spirit, L. Spiritus DD  
Spiorad Noib The Holy Spirit DD  
sif (v) to graze, sweep past, Gaelic siabh SR  
ta (v) is, are, (ata at the beginning of a sentence) DD  
ticin (n) coming, Advent SR  
torag (adj) pregnant, with child; Irish torach B  
tuig (v) give, gave B  
uilm (n) cave, stone chamber or stable (for uaim) B

# Wild Boar Update

TOM DOTSON  
and  
CURTIS TAYLOR



Leonard Lee Rue III

Strange as it may sound, the European wild boar is thriving in southern West Virginia. If ever an animal were suitable for this area of the state, it's the wild boar. It is as sturdy and hardy as the steep mountains and is sometimes as black as the coal which characterizes that region.

The wild boar is one of the few big game animals to fare well in southern West Virginia since the 1800s. Historically, deer and bear have experienced difficulty in maintaining huntable populations there. As a result, big game seasons in the area have been closed or severely restricted. Because of the lack of huntable big game, concerned wildlife biologists of the State Department of Natural Resources decided to introduce the European wild boar. After much study and preparation, a 45-square-mile area in Boone and Logan counties was selected as a release site. Originally, wild boars were to be live-trapped in the mountains of eastern Tennessee in cooperation with the Tennessee wildlife resources agency. But Tennessee's wild boar population in 1970 was low, and live-trapping a sufficient number for release in West Virginia was not feasible.

In January 1971, 15 adult wild boars, including five pregnant sows, were purchased from a game preserve in Tellico Plains, Tennessee and transported to French Creek Game Farm. There they were held for a required quarantine period and for the pregnant sows to give birth. By May 1971, 30 wild boars had been released in Spruce Laurel drainage of Boone County. An additional 12 were released in March 1973. Since that time, the population has expanded and scattered over a 100-square-mile area.

The European wild boar is similar in appearance to the domestic hog. The boar is higher and heavier in the shoulders than in the hips. Its canine teeth are well developed and the lower ones become large, sharp tusks. The hide of a boar is comprised of bristlelike hair and may vary in color from jet black to dark brown, "salt and pepper" and lead gray. Young boars, less than four months old, resemble large ground squirrels in color. They are light brown with alternating brown and black stripes on each side of their body.

Adult male boars average 180 pounds and occasionally reach 250-300 pounds. The largest West Virginia wild boar on record weighed 280 pounds. Adult females are slightly smaller, averaging 150 pounds. Both sexes have been known to live seven to eight years in the wild.

Tracks of wild boars can easily be distinguished from those of deer. The hoof of the boar is more rounded and the dew claws are lower on the foot. Also, when the dew claws of deer are present with the hoof print, they appear directly behind the toes. Dew claw impressions with boar tracks are more lateral, or offset, to the hoof print.

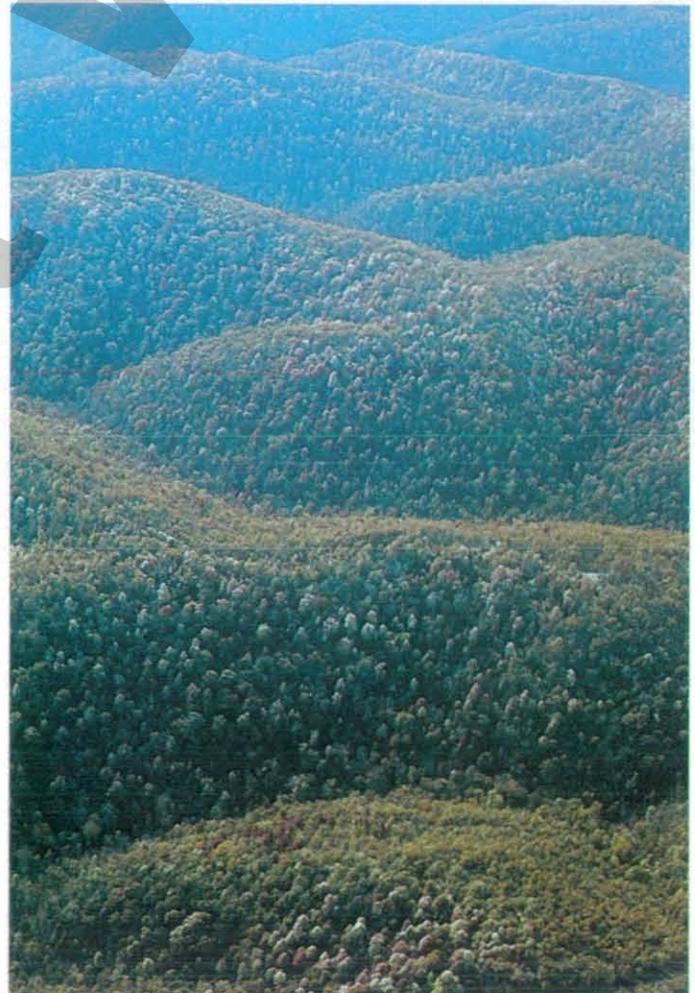
The wild boar is one of the wariest game animals. The slightest noise or movement may send it bolting for cover. Its senses of smell and hearing are well developed, but its eyesight is poor.

Wild boars often travel in herds of as many as 12 animals. These large groups normally contain several sows and their piglets. Adult males usually travel alone.

As with domestic hogs, wild boars create muddy depressions called wallows. Wallowing in the mud helps to keep them cool during hot weather and also controls pesky insects. Wallows are frequently located in wet depressions along trails or in small streams. Surrounding ground and vegetation is usually trampled and smeared with mud.

Tusking, or the honing of tusks, is another sign of boar activity. Boars select small trees as tusking sites. A tusked sapling appears similar to a buck rub; but boar tracks, hair and the presence of mud rubbed on trees distinguish it from the results of deer action.

The wild boar is omnivorous, feeding on plants or animals, depending upon whatever is most plentiful and easiest to secure. Summer foods include blackberries, huckleberries, apples, herbs, roots, crayfish, insects, salamanders and snakes. In fall, boars feed almost exclusively on oak, hickory and beech mast. Winter and spring



Arnout Hyde Jr.  
Typical of the rough terrain of Boone County where transplanted wild hogs now thrive.



*These boars, the first ones stocked in West Virginia, were penned before being released in the southern part of the state in 1971.*

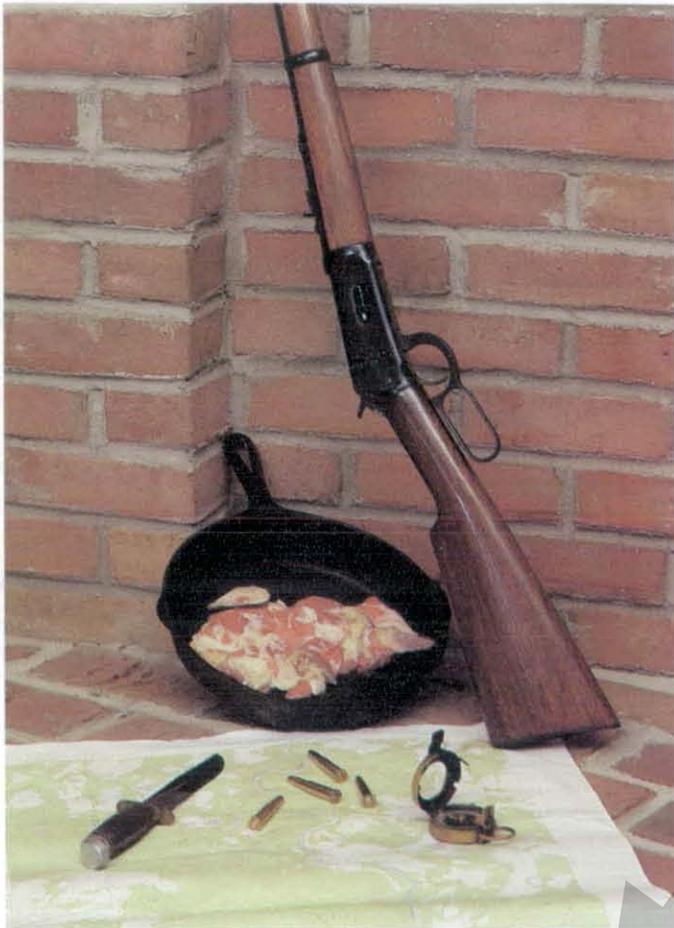
foods include ferns, roots and any remaining mast that can be found.

Boars may be active any time of the day or night. Boar groups containing sows and piglets usually travel less than one-half mile per day. Males may cover as much as four miles in one day. Nearly all movement is related to food. When food is abundant, movement is limited; when it is scarce, boars may range extensively.

Both male and female boars are capable of breeding before they are one year old. Usually, sows bear one litter of four to five piglets each year. They could possibly produce two litters during years of excellent mast crops. Mating may occur in all seasons. Most breeding, however, takes place in either fall or winter, and litters are born in December through March or April through June.

The first wild boar hunting season in West Virginia was held in 1979 and three of the animals were harvested. During the 1982 season, 69 boars were killed. Hunting is by permit only and permit allocations are restricted to guard against overharvest. The number of hunters eligible to receive permits has increased from 200 in 1979 to 1,500 in 1982.

Under the wildlife resources division's current wild boar management program, sportsmen are provided a new big game hunting opportunity. Through the continuation of restricted permit hunting and possible transplants of this animal to other areas in the southern part of the state, the future of the wild boar in West Virginia looks favorable.



Arnout Hyde Jr.

Reliable old Model 94 Winchester 30-30 rests beside a skillet full of tasty boar meat.

### New Gun Models Good for Boar:

Two new caliber rimmed center fire cartridges that outperform any currently marketed Model 94 lever action rifle loads will be introduced by the Winchester Group of Olin Corporation in 1983, according to Brian T. Kelly, vice president and general manager, North American Ammunition.

The new cartridges, designated the 307 Winchester and the 356 Winchester, are designed expressly for the new Winchester Model 94 XTR Angle Eject carbine now produced under licensing agreement from Olin Corporation by the U.S. Repeating Arms Company. Each of the new caliber cartridges are offered in two different weight bullets of flat nosed Winchester Power Point soft point construction. The 307 Winchester comes in a 150-grain and a 180-grain bullet, and the 356 Winchester offers an option of 200-grain and 250-grain bullets.

"Both of these new Winchester cartridges easily surpass the performance of any others now made for Model 94 lever action rifles," Kelly said. "By substantially extending the effective range and potency of one of the world's most popular rifle actions, they're certain to prove a valued addition to modern sporting ammunition."

Tests showed excellent upset of all four bullet weights at ranges up to 250 yards, with a more than 50 percent diameter increase at all ranges. Good hunting accuracy was attained, as well, with 10-shot targets running well under 2.5 inches at 100 yards.

The new 307 Winchester and the 356 Winchester cartridges go on sale this month at retail stores.



Arnout Hyde Jr.

Left to right: Cal. 307 Win. 150 grain; Cal. 307 Win. 180 grain; Cal. 356 Win. 200 grain; and Cal. 356 Win. 250 grain.

### WINCHESTER BALLISTICS TABLE

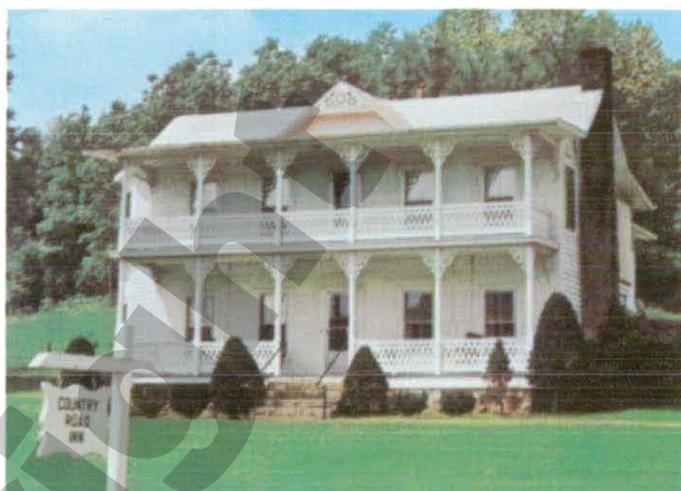
Cartridge & Symbol	Bullet		Barrel Length Inches	Velocity in Feet/Second					Energy in Foot-Pounds						
	Wt. Grs.	Type		Muzzle	100	200 Yards	300	400	500	Muzzle	100	200 Yards	300	400	500
Cal. 307 Win. (New)	150	PP	24	2764	2325	1928	1578	1291	1093	2545	1801	1238	830	555	398
Cal. 307 Win. (New)	180	PP	24	2506	2175	1870	1596	1360	1175	2511	1891	1398	1018	739	552
Cal. 356 Win. (New)	200	PP	24	2455	2109	1793	1513	1281	1111	2677	1976	1428	1017	729	548
Cal. 356 Win. (New)	250	PP	24	2162	1914	1684	1478	1300	1160	2595	2034	1575	1213	938	747

Tucked away in W. Va.'s hills, this charming inn features tasty Italian cuisine and warm, old-fashioned hospitality.



## 'Mamma' Jarroll's *Country Road Inn*

DELMAR ROBINSON



Frank J. Mazzei Jr. and Associates

This Civil War era farmhouse near Summersville is now one of the state's finest restaurants, the Country Road Inn.

Zela, a tiny Nicholas County community, is not on the official highway map of West Virginia. But it would occupy a prominent place on any gastronomic map of the state.

Tourists by the busloads find their way to the village, for it is the site of Mrs. Jarroll's Country Road Inn whose fame has spread across the nation.

Before it gained such a wide reputation, however, the inn had already become popular among the state's discerning diners. There is a home-like quality to the place that appeals to people of this region. This is understand-

able, for the restaurant is located in the Civil War era home of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Jarroll Jr.

That's Mama Jarroll's formal name; but there is nothing formal about her. She is a warm, outgoing, sensitive woman who loves people and loves good food. Her restaurant reflects those loves.

On their second visit to the inn patrons find they are practically members of the family. That is no small honor, for there is nothing small about Mama Jarroll: her heart, her generosity . . . and the goodies that crowd her table.

First-time visitors should be forewarned: do not "load







(above) And this is only the beginning! Regular patrons soon learn not to over-indulge in these delicious appetizers.

Arnout Hyde Jr.

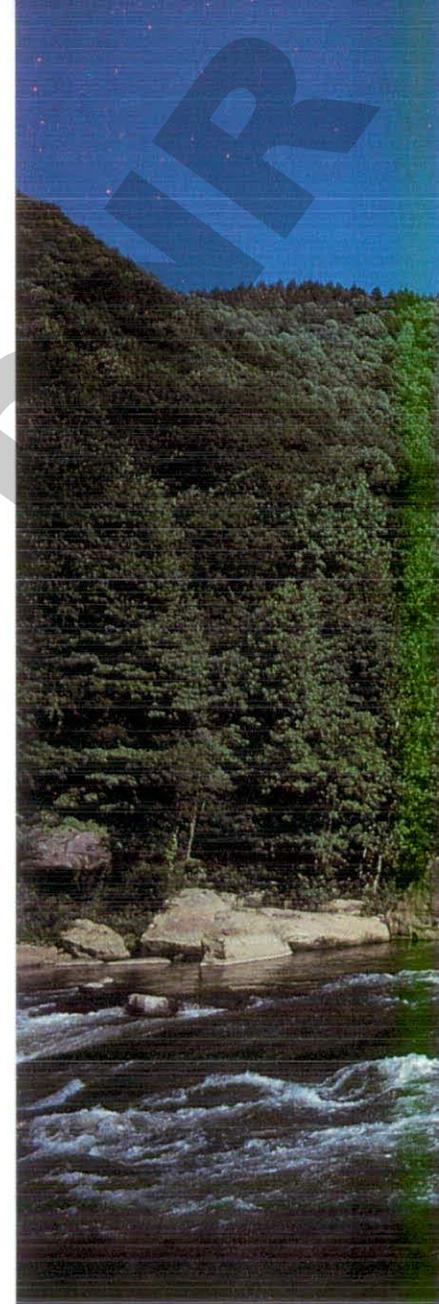


(left) Although most guests protest that they are "too stuffed" for a dessert, most give in and take one when the hostess comes by with a tray full of such mouth-watering temptations as these.

Arnout Hyde Jr.

(right) Whitewater rafters and visitors to the New River Gorge Bridge in the vicinity often wind up a fun-filled day with hearty portions of "Momma" Jarroll's famous food.

Gerald Ratliff



up" on the profusion of appetizers that greet you as you are seated at the table, for there is a substantial quantity of food yet to come.

At a recent dinner there were seven plates of appetizers: Mrs. Jarroll's famed cheese spread, rotini with olives, peppers, pickled cauliflower, marinated mushrooms, sweet-sour carrots and a combination of zucchini, tomatoes, peppers and onions. You could make a meal on these alone, but don't.

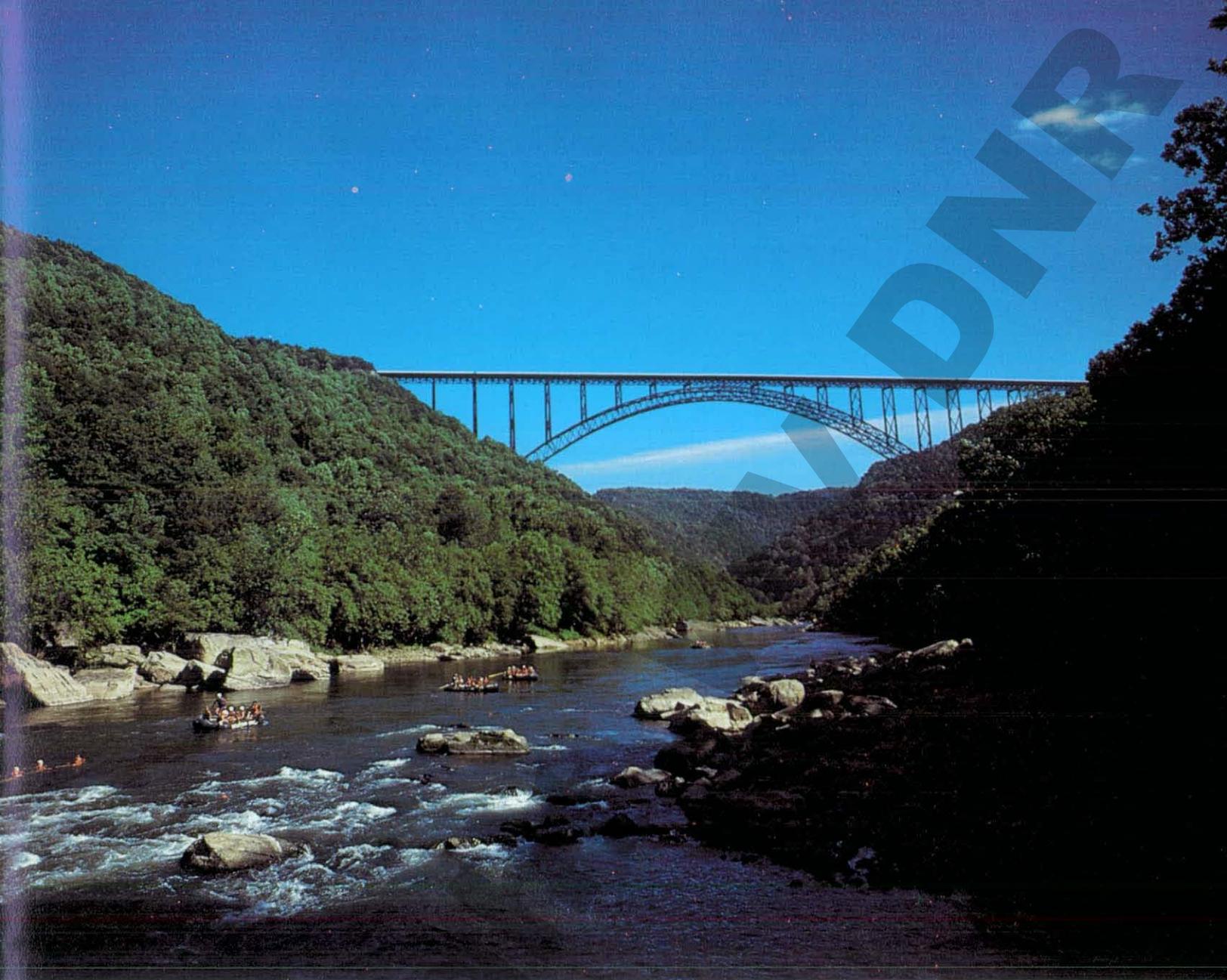
In the early days, Mrs. Jarroll fed her customers like she fed her family, and her family is well fed, indeed. After several importunings from stuffed diners, she has cut back on the size of her portions: they are now merely huge instead of gargantuan.

Long before freshly made pasta became the "in" thing at big city restaurants, Mama Jarroll was making her own spaghetti and noodles fresh daily, almost to order. Be-

cause of this, reservations are a must, for she must know how much pasta to make for the evening dinner.

Diners have a choice of entrees: lasagna, spaghetti with meat ball, beef cacciatora, Italian sausage and spaghetti, and a long-simmered chicken scallopini. The Italian sausage is another specialty and is distributed to stores and supermarkets throughout the state, as is the cheese spread and fresh pizza.

For vegetarians there is an eggplant parmesan, and Mrs. Jarroll will prepare special dishes to suit individual preferences. "I have one man who cannot eat tomatoes or tomato products, but he will call ahead and I will have something special prepared for him." For others she prepares garlic-free dishes. Not on the menu but available if ordered in advance are several veal dishes. Incidentally, most of the food is well-seasoned but not strong and harsh as some hurry-up sauces are.



Now, after this, and when most patrons are protesting they can't eat another bite, Mrs. Jarroll brings in a large tray with various desserts. Be advised to make your choice quickly, for she will suggest you take two if you can't make up your mind.

An early favorite of mine was the biscuit tortoni, a rich frozen dessert, but I think my allegiance has begun to shift to her daughter Kathy's brandied fruit served with cake. It is surprising, despite all protestations of being stuffed to the eyebrows, that room can somehow be found for dessert.

I forgot to mention that there is a complimentary bottle of wine on the table and that an Italian tossed salad, topped perkily with a mandarin orange segment, is served. And of course there is toasted Italian bread and plenty of butter, as if who needs them.

The restaurant is popular with whitewater rafters who

work up an appetite on the close-by Gauley and New Rivers. Nearby is Summersville Lake and Dam, another visitor attraction. Mrs. Jarroll gets a steady patronage from summer residents at the lake. Also, less than 40 miles away stands the New River Gorge Bridge, one of the state's most interesting sites.

It is because of its proximity to these attractions that Mrs. Jarroll gets so many tour buses from around the nation, but here in West Virginia her restaurant is an attraction in its own right, the destination for many day trips from Princeton and Charleston.

The restaurant is located eight miles southwest of Summersville on W. Va. Rt. 39. There isn't very much of Zela, so when you see the road sign slow down and watch for the Country Road Inn sign directing you up the hill. Reservations are a must: (304) 872-2165, or write The Country Road Inn, P.O. Box 137, Summersville WV 26651.

# The Murder of Nicholas Ramsey

KENNETH L. CARVELL  
and  
WILLIAM R. MAXEY

Hikers traveling old trails and lanes in the forests of the Mountain State often come across the unexpected—an old farm site, log cabin, springhouse, millrace or logging camp. Perhaps the most surprising experience is to encounter a long-forgotten family burial ground, or even more startling—a lone gravestone. Although there is usually an interesting story connected with all such isolated markers, perhaps no grave has a sadder tale behind it than one on a lonely hilltop in the southwestern section of Nicholas County.

The date on this stone, September 13, 1861, and its location, approximately a mile from the battle site of Carnifex Ferry, suggest a Civil War grave. The encounter at Carnifex Ferry, however, was a one-day battle on September 10 of that year, and the word “murdered” is not commonly found on military markers. The true story of this solitary grave gives insight into the strife among civilians during the Civil War, particularly in border counties where northern and southern sympathizers lived side by side.

Riley Ramsey and his son Nicholas spoke out strongly in their support of the Union, although they lived in an area where confederates dominated, and where most northerners kept their loyalties a secret. Following the rebels' defeat at Carnifex Ferry, local southern sympathizers hungered for revenge, so they arranged for one of their men to bushwhack Nicholas Ramsey as he returned from a three-day trip into Fayette County.

As Nicholas and a friend paddled a canoe across the Gauley River near Wood's Ferry, a shadowy figure of a man watched from the cliffs above. When the boat passed beneath him, he raised his rifle, took aim and fired. The bullet whizzed by Nicholas, barely missing his head. Instantly, the two men dived into the rapids and swam underwater to the safety of the tree-covered bank.

Nicholas and his companion ran through the woods until they came to a house. After telling the occupants about their ordeal and being given dry shoes and clothing, the two friends continued their homeward journey on foot.

When Nicholas came to the now abandoned country road which led up the mountainside to his farm, he said goodbye to his companion and started up the hill alone.

About 50 feet down the lane from the gate to Nicholas's homestead, a man crouched behind a clump of bushes and clutched his rifle. He waited.

A shot rang out, then another. The first one struck Nicholas in the head, the second one in the chest. He died instantly.

Swiftly, the assailant dragged the body a few feet off the path and covered it with brush.

Many times during the next three days, a young wife carried her infant son to the farm gate, where she anxiously awaited the return of her husband from Fayette County. On the third day, searchers discovered his body.

Family members dug the grave and buried Nicholas at the spot where he was slain.

After the Civil War, his father and brother built a loose stone wall around the grave. In 1908, Nicholas' son James placed a marker which stood until recently.

*Editor's note: Between the time this story was written and photographer Gerald Ratliff visited the grave to take pictures, the inscribed stone marker disappeared. If any readers have information concerning its present whereabouts, please contact one of our editors or photographers.*



William R. Maxey

*Solitary gravestone on a lonely hilltop in Nicholas County.*

*After the Civil War, the murdered man's father and brother built this stone wall around his grave.*

Gerald Ratliff



# Moody March Weather Can Alter Blooming Order of Wild Flowers

ROBERT LEO SMITH  
Professor of Wildlife Management  
West Virginia University

Photos by OSBRA EYE



A sudden change from cold to warm temperatures at the end of March can bring the very early and later spring flowers out together.

Cold days of March can force the early spring flowers to stay below ground, while sudden warm days can stimulate both flowers to bloom together. Spring beauty can find itself in company with bloodroot and Dutchman's-breeches.

Normally, spring beauty is one of the very earliest of spring flowers. The fragility of spring weather—chilly nights and chilly days, chilly nights and warm days, frosts, warm rains, bright sunny days and overcast days—all seem to be reflected in the fragile beauty of this flower.

Spring beauty is found in damp to moist areas in the leafless spring woods. In places, the plant may carpet large patches on flats and hillsides with pink.

Spring beauty is a delicate plant, hardly more than four inches high. It has long, slender, somewhat sprawling leaves and slender-stemmed blooms that appear in clusters at the top of the plant.

The flowers have five white to pink petals notched at the tip and delicately veined with crimson lines that lead to the center of the flower. There bees and early butterflies, attracted by the fragrance, will find drops of nectar.

Its blossoms open only on bright days when insects are about. On dark and cold days, the flowers are closed.

Shortly after the flowers have faded, spring beauty disappears, its leaves dying a few weeks after it blossoms. Leaving behind many small seeds in tiny capsules, the plant retreats underground and spends the greater part of the year as a starchy bulb or tuber buried in the forest floor.

The bulbs, shaped like potatoes with tiny eyes protruding, are tasty and highly attractive to wild turkeys. These birds may dig away at the forest floor in an effort to secure this food.

Also in bloom is the bloodroot, an unusual flower. The bloodroot cradles its bud in the folds of a pinkish-veined, delicate, pale green, silvery leaf.

As the stem lengthens and the flowers begin to open, the partially opened leaf still encircles the stem. Even when the leaf has unfolded, it still is united to the flower stalk at the base.

The bloodroot's flower is startling white. There usually are eight long narrow petals. Because every other petal is longer than its neighbor, the flower appears square, rather than circular.

The petals surround 24 stamens, white-stalked with golden anthers. The stamens surround a pistil with a large, yellow, two-lobed stigma.



*Bluebells*



*Blue violets*



*Bloodroots*



*Dutchman's breeches*

The stigma opens to receive pollen from neighboring flowers before its own anthers ripen. By the time its anthers are ready to shed pollen, the stigma has shriveled.

This is a precaution against self-fertilization. Cross-fertilization is accomplished by early bees that come to the bloodroot for the first sample of pollen, important in feeding the bee brood.

The bloodroot flower appears robust, but actually is delicate and ephemeral. The petals fall quickly, and the white bloom disappears as fast as an early spring snow. The bloodroot is open on sunny mornings and early afternoons. The petals rise upright in the afternoon and close at night and on cloudy days.

After the flowers stop blooming, the leaves of bloodroot continue to develop, reaching six inches or more across and possessing a stem or petiole 10 inches long.

Deeply lobed, green above and pale below, the leaves make the bloodroot one of the most beautiful foliage plants on the forest floor.

The leaves and flowers arise from fleshy root stalks in which the food is stored. That enables the flower to blossom before the leaves have had a chance to function. This rootstalk gives the bloodroot its name, because when cut, it exudes an orange juice that resembles blood.

Indians used the juice of the bloodroot as a dye for war paint and for designs on clothing and other articles. The roots, which are extremely poisonous, have sedative and expectorant qualities that made it useful as a cough syrup. Many farmers once used it as a bronchial remedy for horses.

While the bloodroot's most unusual feature is its reddish sap, another spring flower, Dutchman's-breeches, possesses attention-getting blooms. Its flowers, which give the plant its name, suggest baggy pants hanging on a line and blowing in the wind.

Each flowering stalk holds four to 10 whitish flowers. Each flower has four petals, united in pairs. Two form a large, heart-shaped sac, the breeches. The other two are small and narrow, forming protection from the stigma over the protruding stamens.

Creamy white, stained with yellow and occasionally tinted with pink, the flowers are visited by bees. Only long-tongued species, such as the bumblebee, can reach the nectar. Shorter-tongued bees feed on the pollen.

Below the flowers stand clusters of rich, bluish-green, feather, compound leaves, which are deeply dissected.

As attractive as they appear, the leaves are poisonous, especially to cattle, because they contain a toxic alkaloid, cucullarine.

Dutchman's-breeches belong to the genera *Dicentra*, which makes it a close relative of the popular household plant, bleeding heart.

Accenting the whiteness of most of the conspicuous spring flowers are the porcelain blue flowers of Virginia bluebells. Look for bluebells in moist, rocky woods, along streams and in bottomland forests. Often growing in colonies, bluebells are among the most spectacular spring wild flowers.

A member of the Boarage family, which is characterized by rough, coarse plants, the Virginia bluebell is a beauty. Unlike most early spring flowers, it has an abundance of leafy foliage.

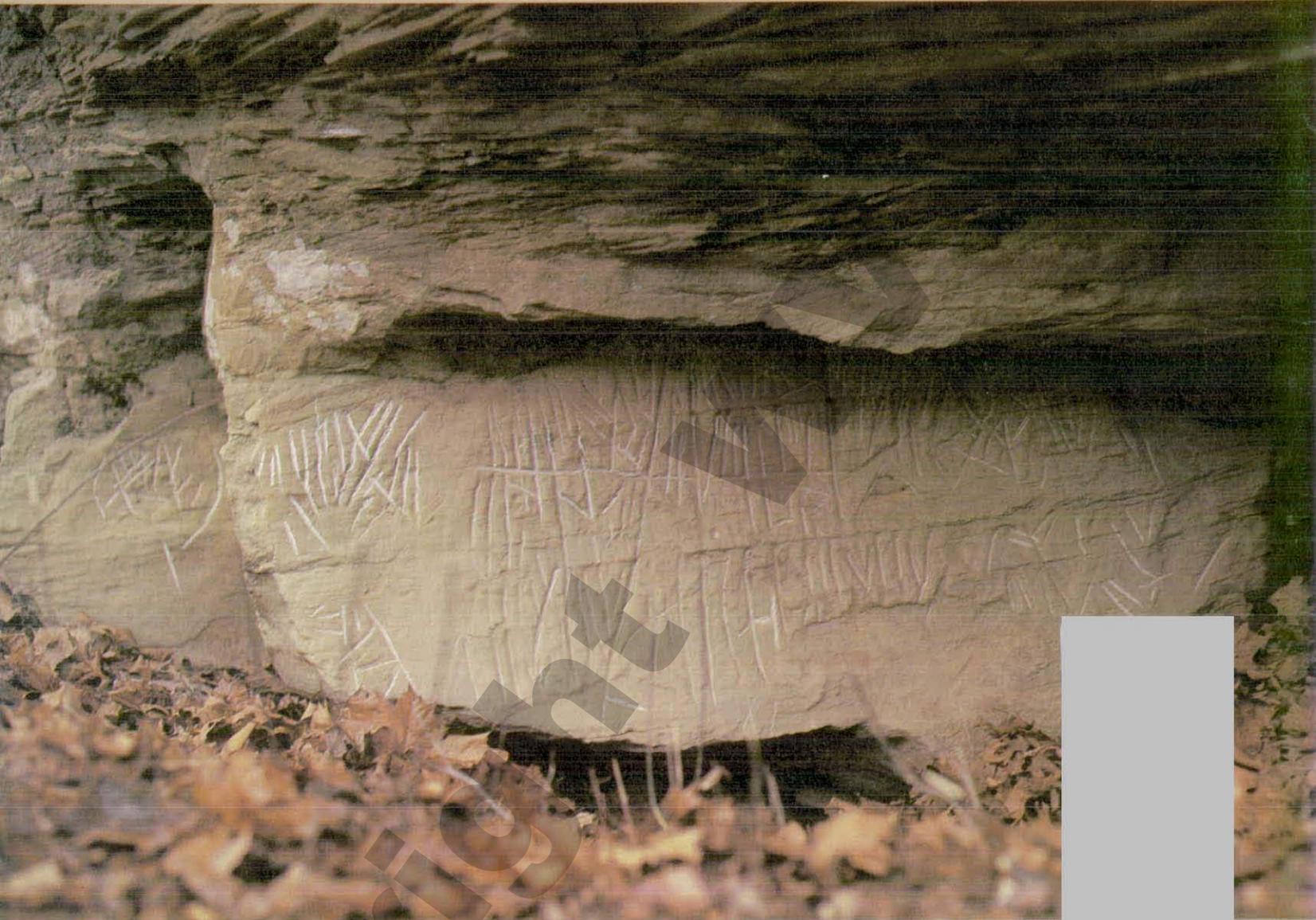
Above and among the foliage are loose clusters of bell-like flowers. Beginning as pink buds, the flowers turn blue as they unfold. Held erect at first, the flowers soon droop on the stem, giving them the bell-like appearance responsible for the plant's name.

As these first flowers of spring begin to fade, they will be followed by another rush of blooming: trilliums, violets, lady slippers and others.

Stimulated by warm days and warm rains, the flowers come quickly and disappear nearly as fast. To see them, you have to be alert. Otherwise, the flowers of spring will pass you by.



*Carolina spring beauty*



## HORSE CREEK PETROGLYPH

Line 1 (middle)—“A happy season is Christmas, a time of joy  
goodwill to all people.”

Line 2 (bottom)—“A virgin was with child; God ordained her to  
and be fruitful. Ah, Behold, a miracle!”

Line 3 (top)—“She gave birth to a son in a cave. The name of the cave  
was the Cave of Bethlehem. His foster-father gave him the name  
Jesus, the Christ, Alpha and Omega. Festive season of prayer.”

translation by BARRY FELL

