AMERICA’S ADENA MOUNDBUILDERS

And Their Burial Tablets

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Colonial explorers crossed the Appalachian Mountains and discovered large earthen mounds and geometric earthworks!!

Who built these mounds?

Why?

Criel Mound, South Charleston, West Virginia
The Adena Moundbuilders

Adena built mounds to bury dead.

Adena occupied valleys along Ohio River and its tributaries from about 3000 to 1600 years ago (ya).

Later, Hopewell and Mississippian people also built mounds.
ADENA

3000
To
1600
Years ago
ADENA + HOPEWELL

2200 TO 1500 YEARS AGO
To 500 Years ago
The Adena Moundbuilders

Adena people named after estate of Ohio Governor Worthington.

In 1901 mound on Adena estate was excavated.

Adena mound contained distinctive artifacts that identify the Adena group.
The Adena Moundbuilders

Adena pipe shows squat male, with goitered neck, and stylized hair.

He wears ear spools and a loin cloth feathered in back.
The Adena Moundbuilders

Replica of Adena shaman with a wolf headdress holds the Adena pipe.

Adena may have migrated from Mexico due to their physical type and similar decorative designs. Both groups erected mounds over burial tombs.
The Adena Moundbuilders

Others maintain Adena mounds evolved from burial practices of earlier native people living in the Midwest or Northeast.
The Adena Moundbuilders
Burials of Adena elite contained:

- decorative objects
- copper bracelets
- mica
- pipes
- seed pearls
- tablets incised with symbols
- tablets with ancient writing.
GRAVE CREEK MOUND

This world-famous burial mound was built by the Adena people sometime before the Christian Era. The mound was originally 69 feet high, 295 feet in diameter, and was encircled by a moat. There were many mounds in the area—hence the city's name: Moundsville. In 1838, the Grave Creek Mound was tunnelled into and two log tombs with several burials and grave offerings were found.
Grave Creek Mound on Tomlinson farm. It contained two tombs.
Grave Creek Mound Excavation

Shaft sunk from top

Tunnel to lower tomb

A second tunnel 34 feet above ground reached upper tomb with one skeleton and grave goods including an inscribed tablet.
Replica of the Grave Creek Tablet
Replica of the Grave Creek Tablet

1 ½ x 2 inch tablet
Grayish sandstone
Signs like cross and bird’s head

Three lines of Southwest Iberic (Spain) script on one side translate:

“The mound raised-on-high for Tasach. This tile his queen caused-to-be made.”
Replica of the Grave Creek Tablet

AUTHENTIC?
EARLY COPIES NOT ACCURATE
TRANSLATIONS VARIED
DISPARITY RAISED QUESTIONS

Translation published by Dr. Barry Fell in 1975
Additional Southwest Iberic Tablets

The Braxton County or Blaine Wilson Tablet

Text parallels Grave Creek Tablet

“The memorial of Teth. This tile (His) brother caused –to- be made.” (Barry Fell)

School children Blaine Wilson and his sister found the tablet in 1931.
Additional Southwest Iberic Tablets
The Braxton County or Blaine Wilson Tablet

Did Iberian scribes reach West Virginia by 2100 ya?

Did Iberians inscribe the tablets or teach Adena scribes their alphabet?
An elongated cross with a head and a dot is below the last line of Southwest Iberic script.

Teenager Robert C. Dunnell found the Ohio County Tablet in 1956.
Dunnell took tablet to Delf Norona who worked for Grave Creek Mound Museum. Archaeologist Norona’s original opinion was that Grave Creek Tablet was authentic. He later changed his mind because others said “fake.”
Sam Shaw, editor, Moundsville Daily Echo newspaper, photographed tablet and interviewed Dunnell and Norona.

The Ohio County Tablet, West Virginia

Norona then said the Ohio County Tablet was “planted” to legitimize other finds.

The tablet was lost!!

The Ohio County Stone Deciphered

Donal Buchanan

Dr. Barry Fell in OPES (Volume 8, Number 78) presented his decipherment of two inscriptions from West Virginia: the Grave Creek Tablet and the Braxton Tablet. I am in agreement with his translation with one possible exception: the word he renders (plausibly, I might add) as “QUEEN”, I would read as “WIFE”.
Donal Buchanan, noted decipherer of Southwest Iberic, translated the message.

“This was set up for Lydia, wife, Jacob engraved it.”
The Morristown Tablet

Morristown Tablet was found near Morristown, Tennessee.

Dr. Paul Cheeseman reported it to epigraphic scholars in 1981.
The Morristown Tablet

Inscription is comparable to Grave Creek Tablet. Donal Buchanan found all symbols could be equated.
Conclusion:
the inscription is funerary formula. Either the name “Tadach” is not a personal name or there were two people named Tadach on tablets.
The Morristown Tablet

Did someone make a copy of the Grave Creek Tablet?

Was the Morristown Tablet ancient or modern?

What do you think?
The Genesee Tablet
William Johnson found Genesee Tablet in the Genesee River bed near Belfast, New York in 1975.

Epigrapher Donald Eckler saw tablet in Dana Klein’s collection.

Tablet measures $2'' \times 3''$
The Genesee Tablet

Eckler forwarded a photo to Dr. Fell.

Dr. Fell wrote that the two lines were Iberic script. He called it a trader’s token which says:

“Confirmation. I have pledged to pay in full.”

Was this an early IOU?
The Genesee Tablet

Genesee River was route traveled by Amerindians.

Genesee Tablet on known trading route suggests that natives led foreign traders to America’s interior by water.

St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes provided access from the Atlantic Ocean.

Susquehanna River empties into Chesapeake Bay. Ohio joins Mississippi River that terminates in Gulf of Mexico.
QUESTIONS

Was it possible for Iberian people to cross the Atlantic Ocean by 2100 ya?

Why would Iberians come to America?

Did an Iberian scribe introduce Iberic script to Adena moundbuilders? Why?

If Adena tablet script was invented by native people, what was its source?
CONCLUSIONS

THE GRAVE CREEK TABLET IS GENUINE

THE SCRIPT IS FROM IBERIA

SCRIPT IS OLDER THAN 2000 YEARS AGO