

# **Strong Ogamic Evidence at Cumorah**

**By Neil Steede**

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In early April of 2009 I traveled with the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team<sup>1</sup> to the area that I believe to be the location of “Cumorah” detailed in the Book of Mormon as the final battle place. While there, two pieces of incised pottery were shown to me that my team member Jerry Stoner immediately recognized as Ogam script; he was correct. This recognition was of extreme importance for several reasons. To underline the importance of this recognition several concepts must be understood. The first and most important concept relative to this paper is that most any language can be written with most any script.

Though very simple this concept is often misunderstood until fully investigated and thought thru. For example, I can write my name using Egyptian Hieroglyphs. Almost no one will argue with this ability. But, in order to do so one needs to be willing to make some adjustments. For example, spelling the name Enrique with Egyptian Hieroglyphs may force me to change the “que” of Enrique to a “k.” The point is that the Ogam Alphabet can be used to write any language, but to do so it also must be provided some room for adjustment.

Several years ago an inscription was found on a stone that has since been named the Proclamation Tablet. The writing on the stone was claimed to be a phrase in the Hebrew language using an Ogam/Ancient Chinese script. This combination seems so unlikely that only the people

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<sup>1</sup> Hill Cumorah Expedition Team, Inc. See [www.hceti.org](http://www.hceti.org).

that were originally involved seem to really comprehend the significance of this tablet.<sup>2</sup>

One major objection to the authenticity of the Proclamation Tablet is the identification of Ogam as a script. There has been some acceptance of the Ogam on the Colossal Heads at La Venta some 400 years previously.<sup>3</sup> But, until the finding of the Proclamation Tablet there was no evidence of Ogam Script usage at such a late date in Mesoamerica. Moreover, the Ogam markings found on the Proclamation Tablet were not in a classic Ogam style<sup>4</sup> so additional questions were raised.

However, this new find appears to be Terminal Classical Oaxacan pottery with Classical Ogam inscriptions; the implications are overwhelming. The inscription can be found on two shards that fit together, and while the inscription is much too short to be read for message content, still the presence is irrefutable. The incised area contains two segments of script with each



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<sup>2</sup> Steede, Brown, Mangum; The Proclamation Tablet. 2005

<sup>3</sup> a.) Steede, Neil; Ogam-like Inscriptions of the LaVenta Colossal Heads, Mexican Epigraphic Society, 2002, ESRS, PO Box 4175, Independence, MO 64050

b.) Steede, Anthy; Ogam-like Marking at LaVenta, University of Quintana Roo, Mexico 1998.

<sup>4</sup> McGlone, Leonard, Guthrie; Ancient American Inscriptions, ESRS, PO Box 4175, Independence, MO 64050, 1985.

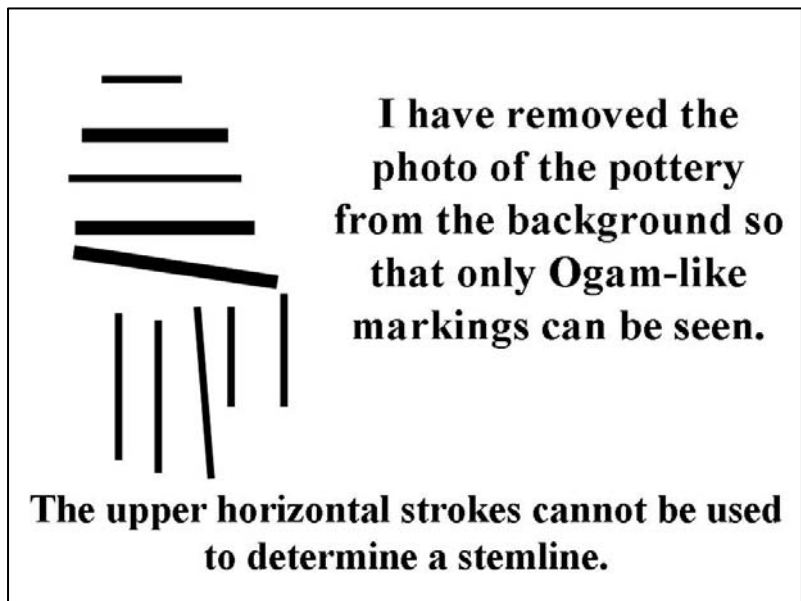
segment turned 90 degrees from the other. Though it is impossible to know the correct orientation of the Ogam with the pieces given, an assumed orientation as illustrated here is used for descriptive purposes.

At the top one can see horizontal lines. The horizontal line at the bottom is slightly thicker than the rest and might be a determinative separating two texts. The rest of the horizontal lines are all of the same relative depth and length. They extend in a

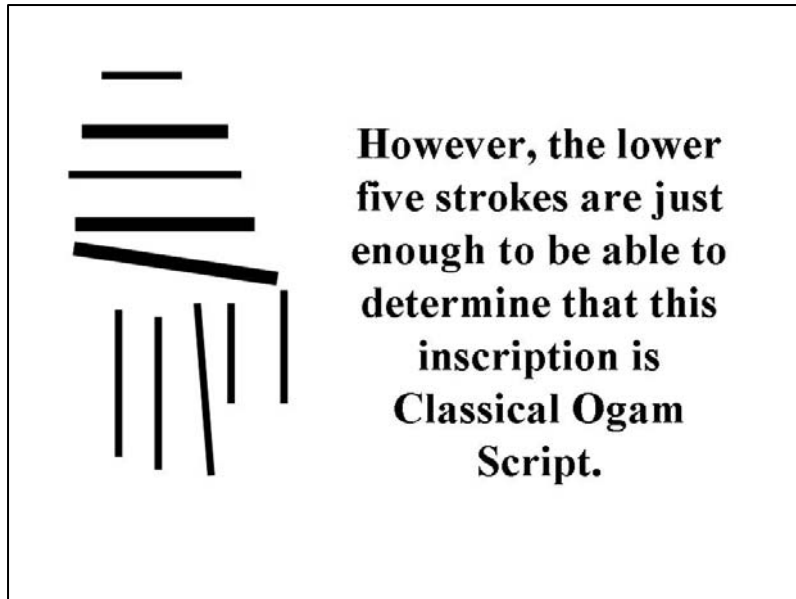


row above the determinator until reaching the broken edge of the pottery. The break occurs on a stroke that demonstrates how deeply the strokes were incised into the face of the pottery.

Of far more interest are the vertical strokes found in the bottom grouping below the determinator. The details in this grouping are a great help in determining the validity of the Ogam claim being



made. The key to this is the arrangement of these horizontal strokes.

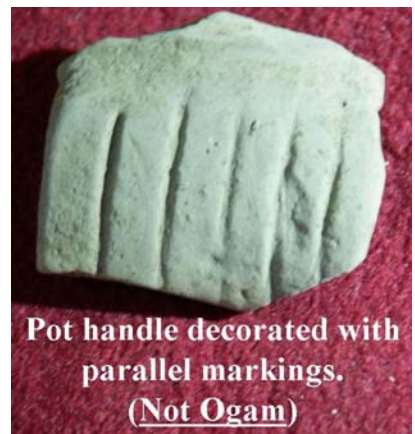


In the lower grouping one can note that there are two strokes that are shorter by almost half. Because of the lack of content it is not known if these two strokes are super-scripts or sub-scripts, but

because of the relative size to the remaining strokes it can be assured that they are not trans-scripts.

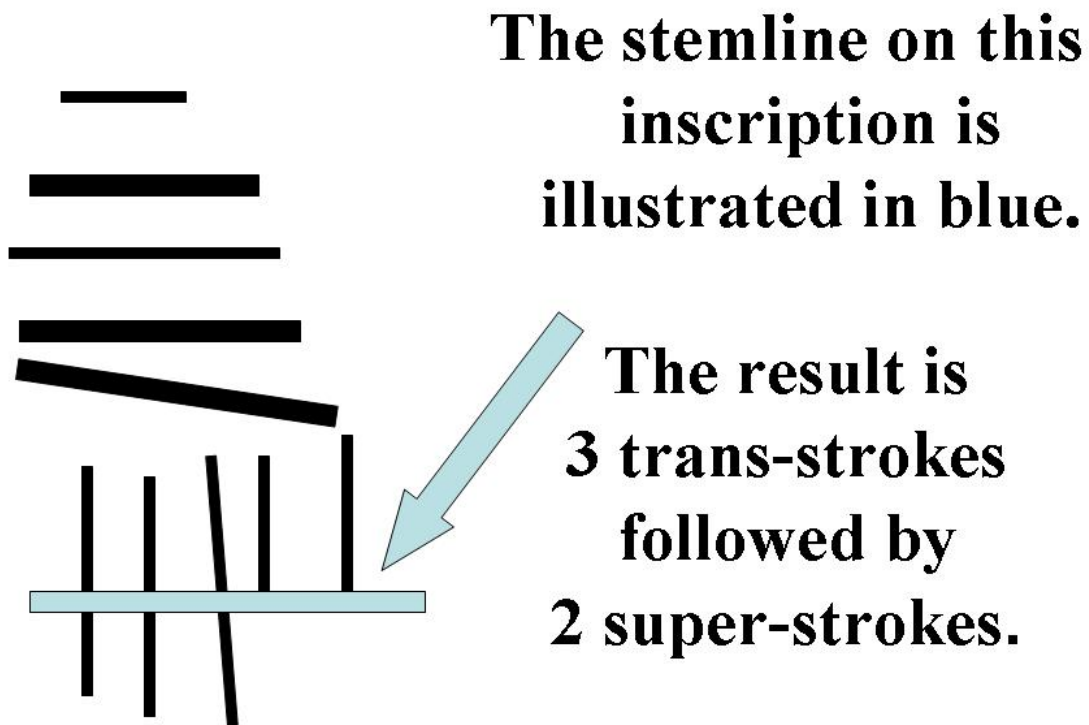
The careful elliptically formed ends of the strokes demonstrate that the varying lengths are deliberate and not coincidental or accidental. The left ends of the horizontal set of strokes are of the same length while it is obvious that the right ends are not. Once again the elliptically shaped ends show that care is being taken in the stroke formation.

As a comparative example, a second piece of pottery which was found among the same group was a type of handle. This handle contains a series of similar parallel lines. However, these lines are clearly decorative in nature. Notice that there are no elliptical ends;



rather the ends are blunt and rounded. This is a stark contrast to the parallel lines of the case for Ogam.

In conclusion, there can be no question as to the difference between the two examples shown. It is extremely fortunate that both examples were found together to permit such a comparison. This circumstance also permits one to conclude the presence of Ogam.



**(Supposing correct orientation)**