Front Cover
Saddle and harness makers, like this unknown businessman from the post-Civil War period, once played a significant role in every Ohio community. They were essential for keeping America's horse-dependent society moving. *Dr. William L. Schultz Collection*

See: "Living Machines"

Left
What questions would come to mind if you were face-to-face with a man who lived in the Ohio Valley two millennia ago? Experts in many fields have searched for both questions and answers. *Ohio Historical Society*

See: "Icon of Ancient Ohio"

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The Adena Pipe

ICON OF ANCIENT OHIO

by Bradley T. Lepper

The Adena Pipe is an icon of prehistoric Ohio. This hallmark of the Adena culture (circa 800 B.C.E.–100 C.E.) has been featured in almost every Ohio history textbook and is one of the most recognized artifacts in the storied collections of the Ohio Historical Society (OHS). Yet, much about the artifact remains a mystery.

During the summer of 1901, William C. Mills, curator of archaeology for what was then called the Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society, made the most remarkable discovery of his long and productive career. On June 21, he began his investigation of the Adena Mound, located on the north side of Chillicothe, in the verdant Scioto Valley. The tall mound was a dramatic feature on the estate of Governor Thomas Worthington, who had christened his home *Adena*, a Hebrew word meaning "delightful place." The mound was named for the estate on which it was situated. A subsequent OHS archaeologist, Emerson Greenman, later applied the name to an ancient

The Adena Mound stood on the west side of the Scioto River at Chillicothe on lands once owned by Thomas Worthington, and its name came from that of the famed estate itself. No excavation of the prominent mound, standing twenty-six feet high and covered by mature trees, was permitted until after it had passed out of the Worthington family hands. *Ohio Historical Society*

A 1938 aerial photograph shows what appears to be the remnants of a ditch and embankment encircling the mound (center). It also shows the nearby Lake Ellensmere from which, it is believed, the dark sand used in the first phase of the mound construction was taken.
Alva McGraw/Jerrel Anderson Collection

culture exemplified by the burial practices and artifacts revealed by Mills's excavations. But in 1901, the mounds remained the largely enigmatic monuments of a lost Native American civilization. And Mills, a pioneer in the young discipline of archaeology, was leading the effort in Ohio to explore these ancient tumuli.

Mills, according to his published report on the excavation, had come to Adena to rescue the contents of the mound from imminent destruction. Joseph Froehlich had purchased the land that included the mound from the Worthington heirs and, Mills reported, "as it occupied a large tract of fine alluvial bottom land, which was valuable for agricultural purposes, he decided upon its complete removal." Mills negotiated an agreement allowing him to excavate the mound before the earth, which comprised its massive bulk, was hauled away to fill a nearby cut made by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad.

In a February 11, 1901, letter to anthropologist James Mooney of the Bureau of American Ethnology in Washington DC, however, Mills told a somewhat different story. After noting that the Worthington family previously had denied all requests to excavate the mound, including one from noted pioneer archaeologist Dr. Edwin Davis, Mills realized that a new owner might not be so opposed to the idea of excavation. He wrote to Mooney, "I at once commenced negotiations for the opening of this mound."

So it appears that, rather than nobly rescuing the contents of a mound facing certain destruction, Mills aggressively went after one of the few remaining archaeological plums of the Scioto Valley and thereby almost certainly accelerated the process of its removal. Indeed, while Mills stated in his report that Froehlich had decided upon "complete removal" of the mound, he also noted the bottom four feet of it were restored following excavation, because "the owner wished to have left a part of the mound to show at least where it stood."

Regardless, Mills's desire to excavate the pristine mound also reflected a proper and reasonable concern for preserving the knowledge and artifacts contained within it. If he excavated the mound, then the objects as well as the information concerning their context would be preserved. If other, less scientifically inclined parties were to excavate or eradicate the mound, the objects within might well have been sold and the contextual information irretrievably lost. Such occurrences certainly were not unusual at the time.

The Adena Mound was a twenty-six-foot-high conical burial mound, which, at one time, apparently was surrounded by a circular earthen embankment and ditch. A 1938 aerial photograph reveals concentric dark and light circles surrounding the mound, resulting in a bull's-eye–like appearance. These marks probably were the remnants of a ditch and embankment. Mills made no mention of such features, so no obvious traces must have been present at the ground surface in 1901. Years of plowing no doubt had degraded the earthen wall and filled in the ditch, leaving only subtle differences in the soil that were visible only from the proper perspective.

After the trees had been cleared from the mound by the landowner, Mills began his excavation from the top of the mound and worked down in five-foot cuts. In the course of removing the first section, the excavators found a broken shell hoe, evidence of the original tools used to create the earthwork.
Ohio Historical Society

During the excavations, the presence of two distinct soil types revealed that the mound had been created in two phases. While burials were scattered throughout the mound, a large central grave pit had been dug into the gravelly subsoil.
Ohio Historical Society

Originally, the mound must have looked quite similar to the Conus Mound in Marietta's Mound Cemetery. That large, conical mound is said to have been 30 feet tall and 130 feet in diameter at earliest report. It is today surrounded by a circular enclosure with walls four feet high and an interior ditch four feet deep and fifteen feet wide. The ditch at Marietta, as well as at Adena, may have been filled with water. Some historically documented tribes of the Eastern Woodlands believed that the spirits of the dead could not cross water. While centuries separate these peoples from the Adena culture, one interpretation of the ditch is as a "ghost-barrier." Such protections might have been regarded as essential for a major cemetery where powerful people were interred.

When standing atop the Adena Mound, Mills said, "One could see, looking directly to the north, the noted Mound City," while to the south was visible "the Chillicothe group of mounds." Few or none

As Mills's crew worked their way down to the base of the mound, they found the dark soil of the original construction so tightly packed as to require pick axes to loosen it. Horse-powered scrapers were used to transport the earth, amounting to six-thousand-cubic yards, to the adjacent railroad right-of-way.
Ohio Historical Society

of these structures likely had been built at the time the Adena Mound was in use, but his observation illustrates the high density of monument-building in this valley and suggests that the activities at Adena may have been the spark that ignited the subsequent explosion of art and ritual that archaeologists have named Hopewell. This culture (circa 100 B.C.E. to C.E. 400) was the outgrowth of the Adena culture, and dates for the two overlap considerably. Essentially, Hopewell represents an elaboration and expansion of the cultural practices begun by the Adena. To look at it in another way, the architects of the Hopewell culture built some of their pre-eminent sites in the shadow of Adena Mound.

Mills and his crew began work at the top of the mound and conducted their excavation in five-foot sections. By the time they began the second cut, they had made a "winding road" up the side of the mound, "so that teams could remove the dirt, which was done by the use of wheel scrapers." The excavation drew curiosity seekers from throughout Ohio. Mills wrote a colleague that "the one impediment we had during the whole work was the many visitors from the country and city. At various times several hundred people would be standing around the edge of the mound."

Mills recorded that "the mound contained about six-thousand cubic yards, all of which was turned over and examined." Eventually, he identified three distinctive strata, or layers. The original mound was composed of a compact, dark sand, which was so hard that Mills's team resorted to the use of picks to loosen it. Mills believed that this sand had come from nearby Lake Ellensmere. At some later time, people enlarged the mound by adding a lighter-colored sand mixed with soil dug up from the immediate vicinity. They added only a few feet of material to the south side of the mound, but more than fifty feet to the north. Finally, the mound was capped with three to seven inches of "leaf mould." Since, in the centuries preceding its excavation, the mound had been covered with trees, this thick layer of organic debris no doubt came from a natural accumulation, just as Mills suggested. Froehlich, by the way, had the trees cut down and taken away in preparation for excavation.

Mills stated that whenever the excavators encountered a grave, "competent men were placed at work to remove the dirt from around it with small hand trowels." Then, they photographed the burials "in place with the implements and ornaments found with them." Before the year was out, Mills not only completed the excavations and analysis, he also wrote his report and published it in the Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society's quarterly journal. This rapid fulfillment of Michael Faraday's famous dictum to "work, finish, publish" would be remarkable by today's standards, but it was characteristic of Mills's efforts and the cause of admiration among his contemporaries.

Mills discovered that burial customs had changed between the first and second stages of construction. In the original mound, the burials were concentrated at the base of the mound, and the corpses were wrapped in bark or coarsely woven cloth and placed inside carefully constructed log sepulchers. In the second phase of construction, the burials were scattered throughout the mound, and log sepulchers no longer were used.

The implements and ornaments associated with the burials were very similar in character in both periods of use, but the offerings were more lavish during the first period. In 1991, when N'omi Greber, archaeologist with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, compared the burials from the two periods, she determined that, of the twenty-three burials in the first stage, twenty included funerary offerings, while only four of the thirteen burials in the second stage had such offerings.

Mills identified the bulk of the human remains as adult males, with a few adult females as well as two or three children. Many, especially from the second stage of mound construction, were too fragmentary or too poorly preserved to identify, but the burials from the mound's first stage of construction, protected by the log crypts, tended to be better preserved, and their identifications are more certain. No human remains from the Adena Mound are retained in the Ohio Historical Society's collections, so Mills's identifications cannot be verified. In 1925, Mills shipped "seven large packing cases" containing 491 ancient American Indian skeletons to Aleš Hrdlika, curator of physical anthropology at the U.S. National Museum, which is now the Smithsonian Institution. Most were from "Fort Ancient Culture

Mills quickly produced reports of his work at the Adena Mound. After publishing in the April 1902 issue of the Society's quarterly, the same text was reprinted the following month as the cover article in the journal of the Records of the Past Exploration Society.
Ohio Historical Society

With masterful understatement, Mills commented that burial twenty-one, which included the Adena Pipe, had "perhaps the richest of the mound finds." Before removal, the artifact was photographed where it was found.
Ohio Historical Society

sites," but at least one, a mature male, was from Adena Mound. What became of the mound's other human remains is unknown.

Mills described burial twenty-one as "perhaps the richest of the mound finds." Located near the base of the mound on the north side, the adult male in this tomb was among the first to be buried in the imposing earthen monument. The man had been placed within a crypt constructed of large logs, up to seventeen inches in diameter, and floored with bark. This rectangular vault was roofed with smaller logs, sticks, and brush. The accompanying funerary offerings included five hundred shell beads, which apparently had been attached to a coarsely woven loincloth. A similar number of bone beads and freshwater pearls had been strung around his neck in three strings. An effigy of a raccoon carved from shell was present. Placed near his head were seven spear points and three knives made from Flint Ridge flint, as well as three antler points. Three additional Flint Ridge flint spear points rested on his right hand. In his left hand, Mills found what a contemporary newspaper account described as the "most important prize" recovered from the mound: the Adena Pipe.

Sean Rafferty is a University of Albany archaeologist who has studied extensively both the ancient smoking pipes of eastern North America and the use of pipes by Native Americans during the historic period. He states that pipes have figured prominently in American Indian funerary rituals since the introduction of tobacco to the region, perhaps as early as 1000 B.C.E. Historically, for example, Winnebago Indians buried certain males with pipes to provide tobacco offerings to spirits encountered on the soul's journey to the next world.

The Adena Pipe, in all likelihood, was the personal possession of a high-ranking, adult male. On his death, the pipe, along with the other accouterments suitable to his station in life, was buried with him. Why the richest burial in the mound occupied a position on its periphery and what relationship this man may have had to the other people with whom he was interred are questions for which we likely will never have satisfactory answers.

The Adena Pipe is tubular and carved from Ohio pipestone, a kind of clay-like catlinite found along the Scioto River near Portsmouth. Unlike most Adena tubular pipes, which are simple hollow cylinders with one end wider than the other, this pipe was carved into the shape of a man wearing ear spools and a loincloth with a feather bustle on the back. Mills, in his presentation at the 1902 meetings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, referred to it as "one of the most wonderful pieces of art taken from the mounds of Ohio." Gerard Fowke, in his authoritative *Archaeological History of Ohio*, published the same year, went further. He reproduced front, back, and side views of the pipe and described it as "one of the finest specimens ever exhumed." The pipe was displayed at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis and later at the 1907 Jamestown Exposition, where Mills touted it as "the highest art of prehistoric culture." The pipe was the highlight of the gold-medal Ohio exhibit,

David R. Barker, Photographer

The Adena Pipe, measuring almost eight inches and shown here near full size, is predominantly hollow and was created by a remarkably gifted artisan. At its most fundamental level, it was a pipe likely used for smoking the potent native tobacco known as *Nicotiana rustica*.

William C. Mills: "Tracer of Lost Civilizations"

William Corless Mills began searching for Native American artifacts in the farm fields of Montgomery County, Ohio, where he spent his youth. He graduated from the Cincinnati School of Pharmacy in 1885 and worked as a pharmacist in several Ohio towns while continuing his education at Ohio State University, eventually graduating with a BS degree in 1898. He continued his education at OSU and received his master of science degree in 1902.

Mills became the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society's curator of archaeology in 1898. The collections of the society were, at that time, displayed in Orton Hall at Ohio State University, and Mills also taught archaeology classes at the university.

In addition to his excavation of Adena Mound, Mills conducted major investigations at Harness Mound, Mound City Group, Seip Mound (Seip Conjoined Mound), Tremper Mound, and the Baum Village site. He published the results of these excavations within a matter of months in the *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society Quarterly*, setting a high standard for promptness and professionalism.

Mills defined and named the Hopewell, Fort Ancient, and "Intrusive Mound" cultures. He recognized the Adena culture to be an early stage in the Hopewell culture, although Emerson Greenman, in 1932, formally defined Adena as a distinct culture.

James Mooney, a pioneering anthropologist famous for his work among the Cherokees, was so impressed with Mills's program of research that he wrote to him in 1902 expressing his hope that the nascent American Anthropological Association, founded in 1901 "to promote the science of anthropology and to stimulate and coordinate the efforts of American anthropologists," would take "the Ohio plan as the model in archeology."

In 1912, Mills published his landmark *Archaeological Atlas of Ohio*, in which he located mounds, earthen enclosures, and other sites in all of Ohio's eighty-eight counties. A decade later, he worked with the National Research Council on a project "to have the antiquities of a number of states properly classified and mapped."

Mills became the director of the state historical society in 1921. In addition to his work with the society, Mills served as librarian for the Ohio Academy of Science, was a charter member of the American Association of Museums, and was a fellow of numerous scientific societies, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Anthropological Association, and the American Ethnological Society.

William C. Mills sat for a portrait in his Page Hall office at Ohio State University in 1903. Along with his achievements as an archaeologist, he was an assistant editor for the *Ohio Naturalist* and is credited with establishing the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society's natural history department.
Ohio Historical Society, William C. Mills Photograph Collection

In a biographical article about Mills, published in the *Ohio State University Monthly* in 1914, editor Harry F. Harrington wrote "his heart is in the mounds of an ancient past; his eye and hand searching the ruins of forgotten yesterdays . . . his one great passion is the study of a nation's ancestors." In 1923, the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mills's joining the staff of the state society was noted by the passage of a special board of trustees resolution noting that he had elevated the society's museum "from a mere collection of curiosities up to a point where it has become of deep scientific significance and outstanding human interest." He was still serving as director of what became the Ohio Historical Society at his death in 1928.

Bradley T. Lepper

David R. Barker, Photographer

and Mills received an individual gold medal in recognition of his work.

At its most basic and functional level, the pipe was a device for smoking. Rafferty has documented traces of nicotine on tubular pipes from sites of the same time period in West Virginia and Vermont, indicating that tobacco was present in eastern North America at this early period and that it was being smoked in the tubular pipes characteristic of the Adena culture. Although plants other than tobacco contain nicotine, Rafferty states that "tobacco has it in vastly greater concentrations" and notes that it is the only plant that Native Americans are known to have used extensively for smoking.

According to early European descriptions of tobacco use by American Indians, tobacco smoking was a sacred activity largely practiced by men and often restricted to spiritual leaders or healers. Native tobacco, now known as *Nicotiana rustica*, was much more potent than modern varieties, containing much higher concentrations of nicotine than today's commercial varieties, and smoking it could induce altered states of consciousness, including hallucinations.

Tobacco use in large quantities may produce in smokers a feeling of "flying." Rafferty finds a strong cross-cultural association of smoking with birds, which may derive from such a sensation. The majority of effigy pipes from this period studied by Rafferty represent birds, especially ducks. As the tobacco smoke rises from the earth to the sky, so the bird, or perhaps a man under the influence of tobacco, also travels from this world to the overarching "Above World." Among the Seneca Indians, tobacco smoke was a part of rituals of supplication to supernatural beings believed to dwell in the Above World. Men sought their intervention to ensure success in the hunt as well as in battle. Burial twenty-one may, therefore, have been the tomb of a spiritual leader, or shaman, who used the pipe for smoking a potent tobacco to assist him in traveling to the Above World, where he could solicit the aid of spiritual beings in healing the sick or divining the location of game animals.

Many archaeologists have described the figure on the pipe, with its peculiar features, as if it is a portrait of an individual depicted with photographic accuracy. Charles E. Snow, writing in 1957, concluded the man was an "achondroplastic (chondrodystrophic) dwarf." According to Snow, "the heavy-set muscular body and a trunk of normal proportions, the stubby arms and legs, and the enlarged head are all very characteristic." He interpreted the swelling of the neck as a goiter, indicative of a nutritional deficiency, and speculated that swollen joints indicated a spinal infection. To Snow, this array of highly specific characteristics meant that a man possessing them "undoubtedly existed and may have been 'deified.'" In 1991, N'omi Greber agreed with this analysis. University of Arizona archaeologist Christopher Carr and his co-researcher Troy Case accepted this identification and went further. In 2005, they speculated that the dwarf was in a shamanic trance apparently initiated by the awkward, hard-to-hold, bent-legged posture adopted by the man.

While plausible, these interpretations are not conclusive. The artistic conventions of Adena art are insufficiently understood to make such determinations with confidence, and other interpretations are equally intriguing. Art historian Johanna Minich, who is a member of a Hopewell Iconography Working Group, states that she is "not entirely convinced" that the Adena man was intended to represent a dwarf. She argues that the arms are roughly in proper proportion to the body, and the seemingly shortened legs are bent, which may have made it difficult for the sculptor to get the proportions right. She concludes that "if the artist of the Adena man was trying to show us a dwarf, in my mind, it would be more obvious." Minich further suggests the man might be singing rather than suffering from a goiter. Alternatively, the swelling in the neck may depict a large object that the man was swallowing. Our limited knowledge of Adena iconography makes all interpretations more or less uncertain.

The man's loincloth is decorated with a design that Mills described as "a serpentine or scroll-like ornamentation." A feather bustle is attached to the back of it, suggesting that the man is engaged in a dance or other ceremony. Perhaps the man is assuming the identity of a bird-spirit as part of a shamanic ritual in which he flies to the Above World to call on the aid of the supernatural beings residing there. The pipe itself could have been the instrument to initiate such a journey.

Among some historic American Indians, winged

A widely accepted interpretation of the pipe views it as a literal representation of a man who suffered from achondroplastic dwarfism, a genetic disorder in which cartilage does not convert into bone, particularly in the long bones of the arms and legs. *Ohio Historical Society*

David R. Barker, Photographer

Those who challenge the dwarfism interpretation point out that, unlike the typical achondroplastic dwarf, the arms and torso seem to be in proportion to one another. The red color of the back may reflect gradations in the original stone or could have resulted from exposure to heat. *Ohio Historical Society*

David R. Barker, Photographer

Interpretations of the swelling in the front of the neck also vary. It appears, at first glance, to represent a goiter stemming from a nutritional deficiency. Others have suggested, however, that the man might be singing or swallowing a large object. *Ohio Historical Society*

David R. Barker, Photographer

The pattern on the front of the loincloth appears to represent a serpent and is generally interpreted as a reference to the Below World. *Ohio Historical Society*

creatures are denizens of the Above World, while serpents reside in the Below World. The serpentine pattern on the front of the loincloth is consistent with such an interpretation. Shamans possessed the ability to travel to both of these realms to negotiate with the resident beings for knowledge or power.

A similar interpretation of the juxtaposition of Above World and Below World motifs on the front and back of a single artifact is the birdman tablet from the Mississippian-period (900–1500 C.E.) site of Cahokia in Illinois. On one face is an engraving of a composite bird-human being, a presumed shaman taking on the persona of an Above World spirit, or perhaps the bird-spirit itself; on the opposite face, a cross-hatched pattern evokes the scaly serpent skin of an Under World being. Of course, the Cahokia tablet was engraved a thousand years after the Adena Pipe, but some continuities in spiritual beliefs seem to stretch between the epochs of the Adena and Cahokians. Another related example of such iconographic continuity is the feather bustle worn by the man on the pipe.

A particular bird was occasionally depicted on engraved shell gorgets found at the Hixon site, a Mississippian-period village in Tennessee. It resembles a turkey with its flaring tail, but George Lankford, an authority on Mississippian-period symbolism, thinks the feathers were not intended as a naturalistic representation of a specific bird's tail. Instead, he argues that it is an "iconographic pun," or a symbol, that was meant to convey some special meaning about the nature of the bird as well as the human dancers shown holding similarly shaped feather fans in other Mississippian engravings.

A similar bird engraving with fanned tail appears on the Berlin Tablet, a classic Adena artifact found in a mound near Berlin, Ohio. Indeed, such an "iconographic pun" may be represented by the feather bustle worn by the man on the pipe, although we cannot be sure of the precise meaning without knowing much more about its ancient cultural context. Nonetheless, its presence on both Adena and Mississippian artifacts suggests that some symbols shared a cogency, if not a precise equivalence, across more than a millennium in eastern North America.

The man on the pipe is wearing ear ornaments, usually referred to as ear spools, which may be made of hammered copper, ground and polished stone, or wood. At the time Mills discovered the pipe, the function of the ear spools had not yet been settled, although Warren K. Moorehead, a previous curator of archaeology for the Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society, had referred to them as "ear buttons" as early as 1894. Sometimes they were found in the vicinity of the heads of burials, but seemingly as often they were found in the deceased's hands. After discovering the Adena Pipe, Mills wrote to Thomas Wilson, curator of archaeology at the Smithsonian Institution, and suggested that the man's ear ornaments offered a "solution perhaps, to the large copper button-shaped ornaments, of which so many have been found in this valley." The artistic representation of these objects on the pipe helped archaeologists to recognize the function of what had been anomalous objets d'art. Curiously, none of the people buried in the Adena Mound had them.

The Adena Pipe is still an evocative artifact of Ohio's ancient Native American past, even if we do not know its precise meaning. Is it a portrait of a particular Adena shaman, set apart from others by his dwarfism? Is it a representation of a hero from a myth who has taken on the powers of the Above World? Or does it represent the human avatar of a powerful Above World spirit? All of these interpretations are defensible, but without more evidence

David R. Barker, Photographer

The feather bustle on the back of the loincloth is a feature that is often repeated on Adena iconography. The obvious bird reference is commonly thought to represent the Above World. *Ohio Historical Society*

from similar pipes, representations of the same figure in other contexts, or other repeated uses of the symbols used in the sculpture, no one can draw reliable conclusions.

The man who was buried holding the pipe likely was a highly respected leader who perhaps used the pipe to smoke tobacco as a means of gaining access to supernatural powers. His elaborate burial may have honored him for good works performed for his people. The pipe likely was buried with him either because it was too powerful to remain in the living world, or perhaps because his survivors believed that he would need it on his journey to the next world. The man in burial twenty-one was entombed wearing a decorated loincloth. Was he also wearing a feather bustle? If so, the feathers could easily have disintegrated after twenty centuries. He also does not appear to have been wearing ear spools, unless they were of wood or some other perishable material. So, it seems unlikely that the man on the pipe represented the man in the tomb.

The mysteries held by such objects of antiquity form part of their allure. But to look upon a human face from more than two thousand years ago allows us to make an unambiguous connection with those ancient people. Stone spear points, ear spools, and engraved stone tablets are objects of wonder, but to see a representation of a human face is to look into a kind of mirror. The builders of the enigmatic mounds were people like us, with hopes and dreams and families that loved and honored them — in life and in death.

The man on the pipe is a time traveler who provides a personal encounter with a people whose history can be known only by the things they left behind. This is why the Adena Pipe resonates so powerfully with us two millennia after it was buried beneath a small mountain along the Scioto River. TL

A birdman tablet of sandstone, measuring about four inches in length, was excavated in 1971 by professional archaeologists at Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, a remarkably diverse complex of Mississippian-period earthworks in southwestern Illinois. Its two sides reflect a unique juxtaposition of an Above World spirit, a composite bird-human being, with the cross-hatching pattern of a Below World serpent's skin. While it postdates the Adena Pipe by a millennium, many feel both share iconographic references. *Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site*
Pete Bostrom, Photographer

Multiple Mississippian-period shell gorgets have been discovered in Tennessee that, in the eyes of one authority on Mississippian symbols, seem to combine Above World and Below World references, much like the Adena Pipe. In the three "Hixon-type" gorgets shown, a vertical striped pole separates the opposing realms, which are represented by crested birds. One example, in particular, has wings whose feather fans resemble the bustle on the Adena Pipe. *Ancient Objects and Sacred Realms: Interpretations of Mississippian Iconography*

The Berlin Tablet, found in Jackson County by amateurs in the 1870s, is one of several Adena tablets that display representations of raptor-like birds. The bird's head is in the upper-right corner, and the fanlike incising in the upper-left corner is thought to be the bird's tail feathers or wing. Mills found a grooved sandstone tablet in the Adena Mound, although he interpreted it as a whetstone.
Ohio Historical Society
David R. Barker, Photographer

Although none was found at the Adena Mound, numerous stone ear spools like those worn by the man on the pipe have been found at other Adena sites. Holes cut in an individual's earlobes allowed for the insertion of these decorative spools.
Ohio Historical Society

David R. Barker, Photographer

Natural "ink" and graphite residue has been found on several of the Adena tablets, suggesting that they were used like stamp pads to create relief prints on leather. The design produced by the Berlin tablet would have been a "negative" of the incised image. *Ohio Historical Society*