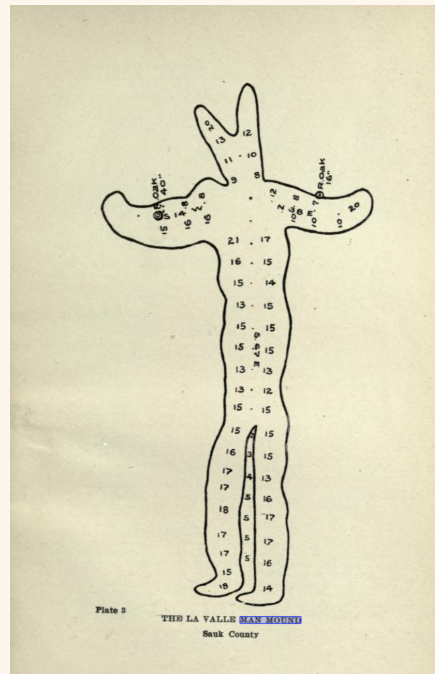


La Valle Man Mound

Complete Research Compendium



The La Valle Man Mound, Sauk County, Wisconsin Plate 9 — Published survey drawing of the destroyed mound (47SK80)

Effigy Mound Sites · Rock Art Catalogue · Horned Anthropomorphs
Driftless Area, Wisconsin · June 2026

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PART I

The La Valle Man Mound

La Valle Man Mound — Research Compilation

Site designation: 47SK80 | Location: Northwestern Sauk County, Wisconsin

Compiled: June 2026

Overview

The La Valle Man Mound was one of five confirmed anthropomorphic effigy mounds ever documented in North America — all located in Wisconsin. It no longer exists. Unlike the more famous Man Mound near Baraboo (now a National Historic Landmark), the La Valle mound was plowed flat, almost certainly before 1886. Canfield's 1872 survey measurements are the only surviving record of the mound itself.

Discovery and Survey

William H. Canfield — the same surveyor who first documented the Baraboo/Greenfield Man Mound in 1859 — discovered the La Valle mound in **1872**, approximately 20 years after his initial work in the area. The site is located near the modern town of La Valle in northwestern Sauk County.

After surveying it, Canfield sent his measurements to Increase A. Lapham. A map of the La Valle site was subsequently published in the *American Antiquarian*, indicating that either Canfield or Lapham forwarded a site sketch to the journal's editor, Stephen D. Peet (Peet 1890: Plate III).

Physical Description

Based on Canfield's 1872 measurements (the sole surviving record):

- **Length:** approximately 230 feet (70 m)
- **Arm-span:** over 110 feet (33.5 m)

-
- **Orientation:** head pointed northeast; figure configured as if walking toward the southwest
 - **Arms:** held out to either side, nearly at right angles to the torso; disproportionately short relative to the figure's overall size
 - **Torso:** disproportionately elongated
 - **Legs:** both relatively straight, terminating in feet that pointed to the figure's right side

The La Valle mound was thus larger in overall length than the surviving Baraboo Man Mound (which was 214 feet / 65 m when intact), though with notably different proportions.

The mound featured a **horned headdress**, consistent with the Baraboo example and two of the three Richland County anthropomorphs. The head of the figure was oriented toward the northeast.

Associated Mounds

Canfield's map indicates the La Valle anthropomorph was situated near:

- One **bird effigy** mound
- One **water panther effigy** mound (with horns or ears)
- Several **geometric mounds**

This grouping is consistent with the broader pattern of effigy mound ceremonial complexes in southern Wisconsin.

Destruction

The mound had vanished entirely by the time T.H. Lewis attempted to relocate it in **May 1886**. Lewis's supplemental notebooks (Lewis 1882–1895a:51) record his trip to Canfield's La Valle site that month: he found several bird and animal-shaped mounds but could not relocate the La Valle anthropomorph. The NHL nomination states plainly: "All surface indications of the La Valle anthropomorph vanished prior to 1886."

The most probable cause is agricultural plowing. This was the fate of the vast majority of Wisconsin's effigy mounds — Sauk County alone once had over 900 mounds, with more than 75% subsequently destroyed. One contemporary farmer in the region noted: *"We were rather irked by the large number of Indian mounds we had to plow down...they were then regarded merely as obstacles to cultivation, and everybody plowed them down."*

Lewis's own notebooks note that other mounds in the region were being plowed flat in fields to the north, east, and west during his 1886 visit.

Context Among Anthropomorphic Mounds

The NHL nomination for the Baraboo Man Mound (Rosebrough 2013) identifies **at least five definitive and one probable anthropomorphic earthen effigy mounds** ever documented — all in Wisconsin, all attributable to the Late Woodland effigy mound ceremonial complex (ca. AD 750–1200):

Site	Location	Status
Greenfield Man Mound	Sauk County (near Baraboo)	Surviving — NHL
La Valle Man Mound (47SK80)	Sauk County (near La Valle)	Destroyed (before 1886)
Eagle Township Man Mound	Richland County	Destroyed
Twin Man Mounds (47RI319) — western figure	Richland County	Destroyed
Twin Man Mounds (47RI319) — eastern figure	Richland County	Destroyed
Probable anthropomorph near Greenfield	Sauk County	Destroyed

The Twin Man Mounds in Richland County were mapped by T.H. Lewis in 1886. They were located approximately three-quarters of a mile northwest of the Eagle Township man mound, just over half a mile north of the Wisconsin River. The existence of the Richland County mounds was not brought to public attention until Lewis's notebooks were discovered in the archives of the Minnesota Historical Society, long after the mounds themselves had been plowed flat.

A number of other mounds previously labeled "anthropomorphic" in 19th-century literature were later reinterpreted as depictions of fork-tailed birds (C. Brown 1908:140), and are not counted in the confirmed five.

Canfield's 1852 Maps (Wisconsin Historical Society)

William H. Canfield drew a set of maps in **1852** illustrating mounds in Sauk County towns, including the **Town of La Valle**. These maps (9 maps on 1 sheet, 48 × 61 cm) are held by the Wisconsin Historical Society:

- **Call number:** H GX9028 S25 C
- **WHS Unique ID:** W0142C8 / Legacy ID: WHi 96831
- **Collection:** Maps and Atlases, Digital Collections
- **Copyright:** No copyright — United States
- **URL:** <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM96831>

These 1852 maps predate Canfield's 1872 discovery of the La Valle anthropomorph, so they may document associated mounds at the site (the bird, water panther, and geometric mounds) without the man mound, or may include an earlier sketch. The WHS archives should be consulted directly.

Primary Sources & Citations

Archival / Manuscript

- **Canfield, W.H. (1872).** Survey map of the La Valle man mound site, measurements sent to I.A. Lapham. [Original location unknown; described in Rosebrough 2013]
- **Canfield, W.H. (1852).** *Maps of Ancient Indian Mounds in Sauk County, Wisconsin*. 9 maps on 1 sheet. Wisconsin Historical Society, Call No. H GX9028 S25 C. WHS ID: W0142C8.
<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM96831>
- **Lewis, T.H. (1882–1895a:51).** Supplemental notebooks. [Minnesota Historical Society archives] — records May 1886 trip to La Valle site; failure to relocate the anthropomorph.
- **Lapham, I.A. (n.d.).** [Received Canfield's La Valle measurements; cited in Rosebrough 2013]

Published Primary Sources

- **Peet, S.D. (1890).** Map of La Valle man mound site. *American Antiquarian*, Plate III. — [Published Canfield's or Lapham's sketch of the La Valle site]
- **Lapham, I.A. (1855).** *The Antiquities of Wisconsin*. American Antiquarian Society / Smithsonian. — [General mound survey; context for the region]
- **Brown, C. (1908:140).** Reinterpretation of some "anthropomorphic" mounds as fork-tailed birds. *Wisconsin Archeologist*.

Modern Scholarly Works

- **Rosebrough, Amy (February 28, 2013).** *National Historic Landmark Nomination: Man Mound*. National Park Service. — **Primary scholarly source** for 47SK80 designation, physical description, destruction timeline, and comparison with other anthropomorphs. Archived:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20151117034449/http://www.nps.gov/nhl/news/LC/fall2015/ManMound.pdf>
- **Birmingham, Robert A. and Leslie E. Eisenberg (2000).** *Indian Mounds of Wisconsin*. University of Wisconsin Press. — References La Valle mound destruction.
- **Birmingham, Robert A. and Amy Rosebrough (forthcoming/recent).** *Ancient Effigy Mound Landscapes of Upper Midwestern North America*.
- **Dexter, Richard W. (January 3, 1976).** *National Register of Historic Places Inventory — Nomination Form: Man Mound*. National Park Service. https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/78000138_text

Institutional Sources

- **Man Mound NHL Master Plan (2020).** Sauk County / Ho-Chunk Nation.
<https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/landresourcesandenvironmentcommittee/page/118918/manmoundnhlmasterplan.pdf> — Contains most detailed modern treatment of 47SK80 (pp. covering the "Other Anthropomorphic Mounds" section).
- **Sauk County Historical Society** (Schuette, William C.). "Man Mound National Historic Landmark."
<https://saukcountyhistory.org/man-mound-article> — Confirms La Valle mound as second of only two known man-shaped mounds at time of Canfield's 1859 survey.
- **Wisconsin Historical Society.** Man Mound photograph and records. <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM77565>
- **Wikipedia: Man Mound.** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man_Mound — Summary with citations to Rosebrough 2013 and Dexter 1976.

Key Gaps / Further Research Directions

1. **Canfield's 1872 original survey document** — location unknown; may be in WHS archives or private hands. The WHS Archives reading room (608-264-6460) would be the first contact.
2. **Peet (1890), American Antiquarian, Plate III** — the published map of the La Valle site. Full-text scans of *American Antiquarian* may be available via HathiTrust or archive.org.
3. **T.H. Lewis notebooks** at the Minnesota Historical Society — the supplemental notebooks (1882–1895a:51) contain Lewis's first-hand account of visiting the La Valle site. Contact: mnhs.org.
4. **Lapham's correspondence** — Canfield's measurements were sent to Lapham; this correspondence may survive in WHS or Smithsonian archives.
5. **Canfield's 1852 maps (WHS W0142C8)** — may show La Valle area mounds predating the anthropomorph discovery; available digitally via WHS.

All information compiled from web sources, the Man Mound NHL Master Plan PDF (Sauk County, 2020), and the Man Mound NHL Nomination (Rosebrough 2013, via NPS). Direct archival research at WHS and MHS would yield additional primary documentation.

Period Illustrations

The following illustration is a survey drawing of the La Valle Man Mound (47SK80) showing the figure's outline, proportions, and numbered measurement points as recorded from the Canfield (1872) survey data. The figure shows the characteristic horned headdress and outstretched arms common to all confirmed Wisconsin anthropomorphic effigy mounds.

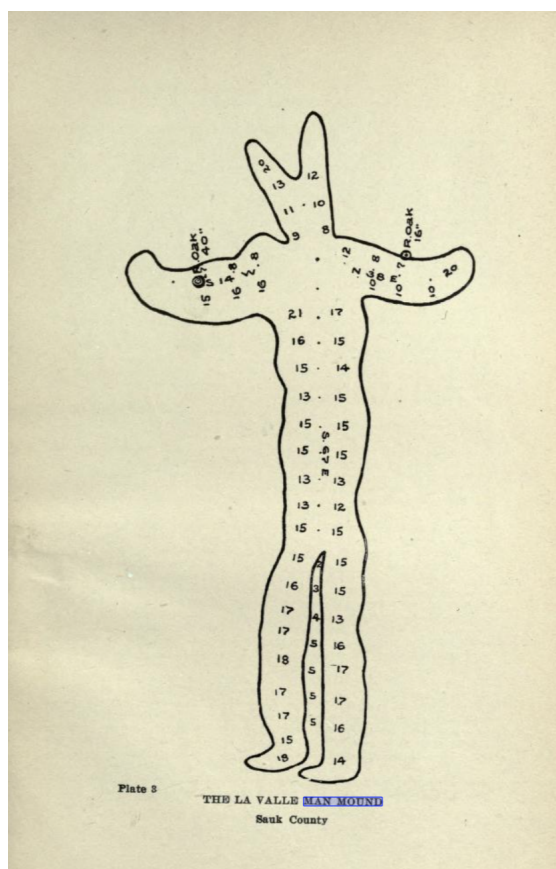


Fig. 1. The La Valle Man Mound (47SK80), Sauk County, Wisconsin. Survey drawing showing measurement points. The figure faces northeast; total length ~230 ft (70 m). Source: published survey record. Image from project research files.

Survey Notes — La Valle Township Context

33. SAUK COUNTY.

La Valle Township.

Group of three effigy and linear mounds (Paddock Group) near Big Creek, N. E. $\frac{1}{4}$, N. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 13. Camp sites at the same place.

Group of several linear and other mounds (Little Baraboo Group), on the Chas. Briggs farm, near the Little Baraboo River, near the center of N. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 34. Several of the mounds now leveled by cultivation.

Surveyed by A. B. Stout, Apl. 3, 1907.

Village and workshop site at **La Valle**, on the Little Baraboo River.

Reported by A. B. Stout, Jan. 4, 1907.

Fig. 2. Published text excerpt describing the La Valle Township mound group, including linear and round mounds (Paddock Group) and the man mound site context.

PART II

Wisconsin's Anthropomorphic Effigy Mounds A Complete Record of All Six Known Sites

Wisconsin's Anthropomorphic Effigy Mounds: A Complete Record

All Six Known Sites — Five Destroyed, One Surviving

Compiled: June 2026 | Primary sources: Rosebrough (2013) NHL Nomination; Sauk County Man Mound NHL Master Plan (2020)

Introduction

Between approximately AD 750 and 1200, Late Woodland peoples built effigy mounds across southern Wisconsin on a scale found nowhere else in North America. Among the hundreds of zoomorphic effigies — birds, bears, water panthers, deer — a tiny handful depicted the human form. Only six anthropomorphic effigy mounds have ever been confirmed or credibly proposed, all in Wisconsin, all attributable to the Effigy Mound Ceremonial Complex. Five are gone. One survives.

This document provides everything known about each site, including physical descriptions, surveyors, illustrated sources, destruction timelines, and archival leads.

The Six Sites at a Glance

#	Site	County	Surveyed By	Date	Status
1	Greenfield Man Mound	Sauk	W.H. Canfield	1859	■ Surviving (NHL)
2	La Valle Man Mound (47SK80)	Sauk	W.H. Canfield	1872	■ Destroyed (before 1886)

3	Eagle Township Man Mound	Richland	T.H. Lewis	1886	■ Destroyed
4	Twin Man Mound — West (47RI319)	Richland	T.H. Lewis	1886	■ Destroyed
5	Twin Man Mound — East (47RI319)	Richland	T.H. Lewis	1886	■ Destroyed
6	Probable Greenfield Anthropomorph	Sauk	Peet / AAS	1883–1885	■ Destroyed (probable)

Site 1: Greenfield Man Mound (Surviving)

Location: E13097 Man Mound Rd, Greenfield Township, Sauk County | Coordinates: 43°29'19"N, 89°40'15"W

Included here as the baseline for comparison with the destroyed mounds.

Physical Description

Originally 214 feet (65 m) long and 48 feet (14.6 m) wide at the shoulders, raised 2.5 feet (0.76 m) above the surrounding ground. The figure lies with its head to the south and originally faced westward. It features two prominent horns (or a horned headdress) projecting from the crown of the head. The lower legs and feet were destroyed by road construction in the early 20th century, reducing the preserved mound to approximately 164 feet. The legs have since been painted across the road surface.

Survey & Discovery

William H. Canfield first surveyed and mapped the mound on **July 23, 1859**, becoming the first European to formally document it. He shared his measurements with Increase A. Lapham, who described it as "the most strange and extraordinary character of any yet brought to light." Lapham's measurements, derived from Canfield's survey: head 30 feet long, body 100 feet, legs 84 feet.

Illustrated Sources — Surviving Mound

- **Canfield's 1859 survey drawing** — Original at WHS Charles E. Brown Manuscript Collection (Sauk County). WHi-77567.
- **Lapham, I.A. (1855).** *The Antiquities of Wisconsin*. — Plate depicting the Greenfield Man Mound; see Plate [human figure mound, Township 9, Range 6 East]. Digitized at: <https://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/Antiquities/> and Google Books: <https://books.google.com/books?id=JecXAAAAYAAJ>
- **Dexter, R.W. (1976).** NRHP Nomination photos: https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/78000138_photos

-
- **WHS Photograph (aerial):** WHi 77565 — <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM77565>
 - **WHS Historical Marker Photo:** <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/record/image/W013QHS/man-mound-historical-marker>
 - **Canfield 1852 map sheet (La Valle & Greenfield area):** WHS W0142C8 — <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM96831>

Status & Preservation

Designated a Sauk County park in 1908. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, November 30, 1978. Designated a **National Historic Landmark**, October 31, 2016. The Ho-Chunk Nation considers the site sacred.

Site 2: La Valle Man Mound (Destroyed)

Site Designation: 47SK80 | **Location:** Northwestern Sauk County, near La Valle (village approx. 43°34'N, 90°07'W)

Discovery & Survey

William H. Canfield — the same surveyor who documented the Baraboo mound in 1859 — discovered and surveyed the La Valle mound in **1872**, approximately 13 years later. Canfield sent his measurements to Increase A. Lapham. A map of the site was subsequently published in the *American Antiquarian* (Peet 1890: Plate III), indicating that either Canfield or Lapham forwarded the sketch to editor Stephen D. Peet.

Physical Description

Based entirely on Canfield's 1872 measurements — the sole surviving record:

- **Length:** approximately 230 feet (70 m) — *longer than the surviving Baraboo mound*
- **Arm-span:** over 110 feet (33.5 m)
- **Orientation:** head toward northeast; configured as if the figure walked toward the southwest
- **Arms:** extended nearly at right angles to the torso; disproportionately short
- **Torso:** disproportionately elongated
- **Legs:** both relatively straight; feet pointed to the figure's right
- **Headdress:** featured horns (consistent with the Baraboo mound)

Associated Mounds at the Site

Canfield's map shows the anthropomorph was surrounded by:

- One **bird effigy** mound
- One **water panther** effigy mound (with horns or ears)
- Several **geometric** mounds

Destruction

All surface traces had vanished by the time T.H. Lewis visited the site in **May 1886**. Lewis's supplemental notebooks (Lewis 1882–1895a:51) record finding the bird and animal-shaped mounds but failing entirely to relocate the man

mound. The NHL Master Plan states: "*All surface indications of the La Valle anthropomorph vanished prior to 1886.*" Agricultural plowing is the near-certain cause.

Illustrated Sources

- **Peet, S.D. (1890).** *American Antiquarian*, Plate III — published map/sketch of the La Valle site. Available on Internet Archive: search for *American Antiquarian* vol. 12 (1890). <https://archive.org/details/americanantiqua50peetgoog>
- **Canfield, W.H. (1872).** Original survey/map — archival location unknown; described in Rosebrough (2013). Possibly in WHS Charles E. Brown Manuscript Collection.
- **Canfield, W.H. (1852).** Maps of Ancient Indian Mounds in Sauk County (includes La Valle area). WHS W0142C8: <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM96831>

Primary Citations

- Canfield, W.H. (1872). Survey of La Valle mound. [Archival — sent to Lapham]
- Lapham, I.A. (n.d.). Recipient of Canfield's measurements. [WHS or Smithsonian archives]
- Lewis, T.H. (1882–1895a:51). Supplemental notebooks. [Minnesota Historical Society]
- Peet, S.D. (1890). *American Antiquarian*, Plate III.
- Rosebrough, Amy (2013). NHL Nomination: Man Mound. National Park Service. [Primary modern source for 47SK80]

Site 3: Eagle Township Man Mound (Destroyed)

Location: Eagle Township, Richland County — north of the Wisconsin River, north of Muscoda (approx. 43°13'N, 90°26'W)

Discovery & Survey

T.H. Lewis discovered and surveyed this mound in **1886** while mapping a dense cluster of Late Woodland ritual sites along the Wisconsin River in Richland County (Lewis 1886a:26–28, 34–51). His reaction, recorded in a letter to his partner Alfred Hill, was understated: "*I have two mds that may be men & will get a horned bird*" (Lewis 1886b). This is the only one of the three Richland County anthropomorphs situated outside the Twin Man Mounds group — it lies approximately three-quarters of a mile southeast of the Twins.

Physical Description

Specific measurements for the Eagle Township Man Mound are less precisely preserved in the published record than those for the La Valle or Twin mounds. From the NHL Nomination (Rosebrough 2013), it is described as a distinct anthropomorphic figure mapped by Lewis at Lewis 1886a:26–28. The Rosebrough nomination notes that the Eagle Township mound, unlike the other Richland County examples, did **not** appear to have horns or a horned headdress — making it one of only two confirmed anthropomorphs without this feature (the other being one of the Twin mounds). It lay immediately adjacent to the broader Eagle Township effigy mound complex, one of the densest concentrations of effigy mounds ever recorded.

Associated Landscape

Eagle Township contained one of Wisconsin's most remarkable mound landscapes. T.H. Lewis surveyed dozens of eagle, bird, bear, and geometric mounds in the immediate vicinity. By 1886, many had already been plowed flat by farmers; Lewis noted destruction ongoing in fields to the north, east, and west during his visit. The township takes its name from the many eagle effigy mounds once present there.

Destruction

Almost certainly plowed flat by early white settlers, consistent with the general pattern across the region. Lewis himself noted active destruction during his 1886 visit. His notebooks and correspondence eventually "found their way into the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society" (Winchell 1911) and the existence of the Richland County anthropomorphs was not brought to public attention until much later, by which time the mounds themselves had been long gone.

Illustrated Sources

- **Lewis, T.H. (1886a:26–28).** Survey maps and notes — Northwestern Archaeological Survey notebooks. [Minnesota Historical Society; microfilmed and available to the public. Collection: Civil Works Administration Subproject 2365 records. University of Minnesota Archival Collections:
<https://archives.lib.umn.edu/repositories/14/resources/1342>]
- **Beaver, J. and Scherz, J. (1993).** "Eagle Mounds in Eagle Township (Richland County, Wisconsin)." — Overlays of Lewis's survey data onto modern maps and aerial photos. Includes figures of Lewis's mound plans. Published in *Ancient America*. Available at: <https://johnthe.com/eagle-mounds-in-eagle-township-richland-county-wisconsin/>

Primary Citations

- Lewis, T.H. (1886a:26–28, 34–51). Northwestern Archaeological Survey notebooks. Minnesota Historical Society.
- Lewis, T.H. (1886b). Letter to A.J. Hill.
- Winchell (1911). Cited regarding Lewis's notebooks reaching Minnesota Historical Society.
- Rosebrough, Amy (2013). NHL Nomination: Man Mound. [Section on other anthropomorphic mounds]
- Beaver, J. and Scherz, J. (1993). Eagle Mounds in Eagle Township.

Sites 4 & 5: Twin Man Mounds — Western and Eastern (Destroyed)

Site Designation: 47RI319 | **Location:** Eagle Township, Richland County — approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile northwest of the Eagle Township Man Mound, just over $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of the Wisconsin River (approx. 43°14'N, 90°27'W)

These two mounds were mapped together by T.H. Lewis in 1886 and are treated jointly in the archaeological record under site 47RI319.

Discovery & Survey

Lewis discovered the Twin Man Mounds in **1886** during the same survey that located the Eagle Township Man Mound. He recorded them at Lewis 1886a:47–50. They lay immediately south of a straight-winged bird effigy mound and just

southeast of a bear effigy mound, within what was already a heavily damaged landscape — Lewis noted other mounds being plowed flat in the surrounding fields.

Physical Description — Western Figure

- **Length:** just over 100 feet (30.4 m)
- **Width:** 60 feet (18.2 m) at widest point, from hand to hand
- **Orientation:** head to the south
- **Posture:** appears to depict a **walking figure** — the left leg was in line with the body, while the right leg was slightly curved and kicked back in a "stepping" posture
- **Arms:** left arm bent at the elbow, hand held further from the body; right arm angled away from the body but bowed slightly, as if bending and moving back toward the torso
- **Head:** featured short horns or projections

Physical Description — Eastern Figure

- **Length:** 100 feet (30.4 m)
- **Orientation:** head to the south
- **Arms:** straight, angling away slightly from the body
- **Legs:** straight, forming a narrow "V"; feet spaced 18 feet (5.5 m) apart and shifted slightly eastward and out of line with the torso
- **Head:** featured short horns or projections

Both figures were constructed side-by-side and are described as "identical" in overall character, though differing in posture details. They represent the only confirmed **paired** anthropomorphic effigy mounds ever recorded.

Destruction

The Twin Man Mounds were almost certainly plowed flat in the years immediately following Lewis's 1886 survey. Lewis's notebooks noted active destruction in the area at the time of his visit. The existence of these mounds was unknown to the Wisconsin Archeological Society and to the public for decades after their destruction, because Lewis's notebooks gathered dust in the Minnesota Historical Society archives (cited by Winchell 1911).

Illustrated Sources

- **Lewis, T.H. (1886a:47–50).** Survey maps and field sketches — Northwestern Archaeological Survey notebooks. [Minnesota Historical Society. Collection: Civil Works Administration Subproject 2365.
<https://archives.lib.umn.edu/repositories/14/resources/1342>]
- **Sauk County NHL Master Plan (2020), Figure Fourteen** — Comparative drawings of all anthropomorphic mounds including the Twins, reconstructed from Lewis's survey data. In the Master Plan PDF, section "Other Anthropomorphic Mounds." (*Note: originally derived from Rosebrough 2013, but Figure Fourteen as numbered appears in the Master Plan document, not the NHL Nomination itself.*)
- **Beaver, J. and Scherz, J. (1993).** Eagle Mounds in Eagle Township. Figures 8 and 9 show mounds still intact in the 1880s which Lewis surveyed. <https://johnite.com/eagle-mounds-in-eagle-township-richland-county-wisconsin/>

Primary Citations

- Lewis, T.H. (1886a:26–28, 47–50). Northwestern Archaeological Survey notebooks. Minnesota Historical Society.
 - Lewis, T.H. (1886b). Letter to A.J. Hill.
 - Rosebrough, Amy (2013). NHL Nomination: Man Mound. National Park Service.
 - Sauk County NHL Master Plan (2020). [Figures Thirteen and Fourteen; text lines covering Twin Man Mounds description]
 - Beaver, J. and Scherz, J. (1993). Eagle Mounds in Eagle Township.
-

Site 6: Probable Greenfield Anthropomorph (Destroyed)

Location: Near the Greenfield Man Mound, Sauk County (Greenfield Township area, approx. 43°29'N, 89°40'W)

This is the most uncertain of the six sites. Its existence as a genuine anthropomorphic mound was reported but never definitively confirmed, and its exact location relative to the surviving Man Mound is not fully established.

History of the Identification

The probable anthropomorph was noted in the following sources:

- **American Antiquarian Society (1885)** — referenced in the NHL nomination as reporting a nearby possible humanoid mound
- **Peet, S.D. (1883)** — early reference in the *American Antiquarian*
- **Peet, S.D. (1898)** — later treatment in *Prehistoric America*

The NHL nomination (Rosebrough 2013) identifies it as "A sixth probable man mound...noted near the Greenfield Man Mound in Sauk County." The caveat "probable" reflects that the shape was documented but not conclusively measured and confirmed as anthropomorphic.

Complicating Factor: Misidentified Mounds

The NHL nomination explicitly notes a recurring identification problem: observers in the 19th and early 20th centuries sometimes attached the terms "Man Mound" or "Woman Mound" to mounds that appeared to have arms and legs (e.g., R. Taylor 1838:90–91). The Effigy Mound Ceremonial Complex also included avian effigies with long forked tails and raised wings, potentially depicting swallow-tailed kites, Thunderbirds, or similar avian spirits — these could superficially resemble a humanoid form. Charles E. Brown (1908:140) later reinterpreted several previously "anthropomorphic" mound reports as fork-tailed birds, removing them from the confirmed list. The probable Greenfield mound falls in this ambiguous category.

Status

Almost certainly destroyed. No surviving record confirms it was still intact when Man Mound Park was established in 1908. The NHL nomination notes: "*By the time Man Mound Park was dedicated, the other recorded anthropomorphic mounds had been destroyed.*"

Sources

- Peet, S.D. (1883). *American Antiquarian*, Vol. 5. [Internet Archive: <https://archive.org/details/americanantiqua50peetgoog>]
 - Peet, S.D. (1898). *Prehistoric America*, Vol. 2 (2nd ed.). American Antiquarian Office, Chicago. [Internet Archive: <https://archive.org/details/prehistoricameri03peetiala>]
 - American Antiquarian Society (1885). Cited in Rosebrough (2013).
 - Brown, C.E. (1908:140). *Wisconsin Archeologist*. [Reinterpretation of some "anthropomorphic" reports as birds]
 - Rosebrough, Amy (2013). NHL Nomination: Man Mound. [Section on anthropomorphic mounds]
 - Sauk County NHL Master Plan (2020). [Figures Thirteen and Fifteen re: probable anthropomorphs]
-

Illustrated Sources: Master Reference List

Primary Survey Documents (Original Records)

Source	What It Shows	Repository	Access
Canfield, W.H. (1859). Survey drawing, Greenfield Man Mound	Plan view of surviving mound	WHS Charles E. Brown MSS Collection (Sauk Co.) / WHi-77567	In person, WHS Madison
Canfield, W.H. (1852). Maps of Ancient Indian Mounds in Sauk County	9 maps on 1 sheet; covers La Valle, Greenfield, and other Sauk Co. towns	WHS Call No. H GX9028 S25 C; ID W0142C8	Online: https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM96831
Canfield, W.H. (1872). Survey map, La Valle Man Mound	Plan view of 47SK80 (destroyed mound)	Unknown — described in Rosebrough 2013; possibly WHS Brown MSS	Contact WHS Archives: 608-264-6460
Lewis, T.H. (1886a). Northwestern Archaeological Survey notebooks, pp. 26–28, 47–50	Field sketches and plans of Eagle Township and Twin Man Mounds	Minnesota Historical Society	Microfilm available to public; Finding aid: https://archives.lib.umn.edu/repositories/14/resources/1342
Lapham, I.A. (n.d.). Received Canfield's La Valle measurements	May include a copy of the La Valle mound plan	WHS or Smithsonian Institution Archives	Contact WHS

Published Illustrations (Accessible Online)

Source	What It Shows	Online Access
Lapham, I.A. (1855). <i>Antiquities of Wisconsin</i> . Smithsonian.	Plates of Greenfield Man Mound and other effigies; 55 lithographed plates total	UW Digital Collections: https://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/Antiquities/ · Google Books: https://books.google.com/books?id=JEcXAAAAYAAJ
Peet, S.D. (1890). <i>American Antiquarian</i> , Plate III	Map/sketch of La Valle Man Mound site	Internet Archive (search vol. 12, 1890): https://archive.org/search?query=American+Antiquarian+Peet
Peet, S.D. (1883). <i>American Antiquarian</i> , Vol. 5	Early reference to Wisconsin anthropomorphic mounds	Internet Archive: https://archive.org/details/americanantiqua50peetgoog
Peet, S.D. (1898). <i>Prehistoric America</i> , Vol. 2	Emblematic mounds including Wisconsin anthropomorphs	Internet Archive: https://archive.org/details/prehistoricameri03peetiala
Sauk County NHL Master Plan (2020)	Figure Thirteen — distribution map of all anthropomorphic mound sites in Wisconsin; Figure Fourteen — comparative plan drawings of La Valle (47SK80), Eagle Township, and Twin Man Mounds (47RI319), reconstructed from Canfield and Lewis survey data; Figure Fifteen — potential/probable anthropomorphs	PDF: https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/land_resources_and_environment_committee/page/118918/man_mound_nhl_master_plan.pdf — <i>See Image Reproduction Guide below for extraction instructions</i>
Rosebrough, Amy (2013). NHL Nomination: Man Mound	Underlying research and figures adapted into the Master Plan. Contains its own comparative figures on the anthropomorphic mounds (cross-reference with Master Plan Figs. 13–15)	NPS (archived): https://web.archive.org/web/20151117034449/http://www.nps.gov/nhl/news/LC/fall2015/ManMound.pdf
Beaver, J. and Scherz, J. (1993). "Eagle Mounds in Eagle Township"	Lewis survey data overlaid on modern maps; aerial photos revealing ghost-mound soil patterns	https://john.te.com/eagle-mounds-in-eagle-township-richland-county-wisconsin/
WHS Aerial photograph of Greenfield Man Mound	WHi 77565	https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM77565
NRHP Nomination photos (1976)	Historical photos of surviving Man Mound	https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/78000138_photos

Comparative Summary

Site	Length	Arm-span	Head Orientation	Horns?	Surveyor	Year
Greenfield (surviving)	214 ft (65 m)	48 ft (14.6 m) at shoulders	South	Yes	Canfield	1859
La Valle (47SK80)	~230 ft (70 m)	>110 ft (33.5 m)	Northeast	Yes	Canfield	1872
Eagle Township	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No (probable)	Lewis	1886

Twin — West (47RI319)	~100 ft (30.4 m)	~60 ft (18.2 m)	South	Yes	Lewis	1886
Twin — East (47RI319)	~100 ft (30.4 m)	~60 ft (18.2 m)	South	Yes	Lewis	1886
Probable Greenfield	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Peet/AAS	1883–85

The Surveyor Biographies

William H. Canfield (1819–1913)

A Sauk County pioneer, surveyor, and amateur antiquarian. Canfield first documented the Greenfield Man Mound in 1859 and the La Valle Man Mound in 1872. He corresponded extensively with Increase Lapham and forwarded his survey data for publication. His 1852 map sheet covering Sauk County mounds is held by the Wisconsin Historical Society (W0142C8). Canfield visited T.H. Lewis at his home in May 1886 during Lewis's Sauk County survey.

Theodore H. Lewis (T.H. Lewis, 1852–1916)

A professional surveyor from St. Paul, Minnesota, who conducted the Northwestern Archaeological Survey in partnership with Alfred J. Hill from the 1880s into the 1890s. Lewis surveyed tens of thousands of mounds across multiple states with exceptional precision. He discovered the three Richland County anthropomorphic mounds in 1886 while mapping the Wisconsin River corridor. His notebooks and correspondence were preserved at the Minnesota Historical Society (later microfilmed for public access). He also visited the La Valle site in 1886 and failed to relocate the man mound there. Lewis's notebooks are the sole surviving records for the Richland County anthropomorphs.

Increase A. Lapham (1811–1875)

Wisconsin's first scientist; a botanist, geologist, and antiquarian. He surveyed and described mounds statewide between 1849 and 1852, publishing the results as *The Antiquities of Wisconsin* (Smithsonian Institution, 1855) — the foundational reference for Wisconsin effigy mounds. He received Canfield's measurements and may have drawn or forwarded the La Valle site sketch that appeared in Peet's *American Antiquarian*. His cast-iron mound models (including a "trunk and arms of a man" model) were shown at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition.

Stephen D. Peet (1831–1914)

Founder and editor of the *American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal* (1878–1910). He published the La Valle man mound map (Plate III, 1890) and wrote several volumes on Wisconsin effigy mounds, including *Prehistoric America* (1898). His publication is one of the few places where the La Valle mound site was given an illustrated treatment in print.

Research Gaps and Archival Leads

For all Richland County mounds:

- **T.H. Lewis notebooks** at the Minnesota Historical Society are the essential primary source. Microfilm is available to the public. The relevant notebook is cited as Lewis 1882–1895a, pp. 26–28 and 47–50. Contact: Minnesota Historical Society Library, 651-259-3300, or online finding aid:

<https://archives.lib.umn.edu/repositories/14/resources/1342>

For La Valle (47SK80):

- **Canfield's 1872 original survey** — contact WHS Archives (608-264-6460) to request a search of the Charles E. Brown Manuscript Collection, Sauk County series.
- **Peet (1890) Plate III** — the published map. Locate vol. 12 of *American Antiquarian* (1890) on HathiTrust or Internet Archive.
- **Lapham correspondence** — WHS Archives holds Lapham papers; may include Canfield's La Valle measurements.

For illustrations:

- **Sauk County NHL Master Plan (2020), Figures Thirteen, Fourteen, and Fifteen** — These are the primary published source for comparative drawings of all six anthropomorphic mound sites. See the Image Reproduction Guide section below for step-by-step extraction and reproduction instructions.
- **UWDC Lapham digitization** — The full-text Lapham *Antiquities* is digitized. The specific plate showing the Greenfield Man Mound is identified as the "man figure" in Township 9, Range 6 East (Sauk County). Navigate the plates at: <https://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/Antiquities/>

Full Citations

Primary / Archival

- Canfield, W.H. (1852). *Maps of Ancient Indian Mounds in Sauk County, Wisconsin*. WHS Call No. H GX9028 S25 C. ID W0142C8.
- Canfield, W.H. (1859). Survey of Man Mound, Greenfield Township. [WHS Archives, Brown MSS]
- Canfield, W.H. (1872). Survey of La Valle Man Mound. [Archival; referenced in Rosebrough 2013]
- Lapham, I.A. (n.d.). [Received Canfield's La Valle measurements; correspondence WHS]
- Lewis, T.H. (1882–1895a:51). Supplemental notebooks. Minnesota Historical Society.
- Lewis, T.H. (1886a:26–28, 47–50). Northwestern Archaeological Survey notebooks. Minnesota Historical Society.
- Lewis, T.H. (1886b). Letter to A.J. Hill. Minnesota Historical Society.
- Lewis, T.H. (1886c). Papers re: May 1886 Sauk County visit. Minnesota Historical Society.

Published Primary

- American Antiquarian Society (1885). [Noted probable Greenfield anthropomorph; cited in Rosebrough 2013]
- Brown, C.E. (1908:140). Reinterpretation of mound forms. *Wisconsin Archeologist*.

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- Lapham, I.A. (1855). *The Antiquities of Wisconsin*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution.
<https://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/Antiquities/>
 - Peet, S.D. (1883). *American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal*, Vol. 5. <https://archive.org/details/americanantiqua50peetgoog>
 - Peet, S.D. (1890). *American Antiquarian*, Plate III. [La Valle site map]
 - Peet, S.D. (1898). *Prehistoric America*, Vol. 2, 2nd ed. Chicago: American Antiquarian Office.
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 - Taylor, R. (1838:90–91). [Early mound descriptions; some later reinterpreted as avian]
 - Taylor, S. (1843). [Richland County mound notes; cited in Rosebrough 2013 as "possible anthropomorph"]
 - Winchell (1911). [Documents Lewis notebooks reaching Minnesota Historical Society]

Modern Scholarly

- Beaver, J. and Scherz, J. (1993). "Eagle Mounds in Eagle Township (Richland County, Wisconsin)." *Ancient America*. <https://johnthe.com/eagle-mounds-in-eagle-township-richland-county-wisconsin/>
- Birmingham, R.A. and Eisenberg, L.E. (2000). *Indian Mounds of Wisconsin*. University of Wisconsin Press.
- Birmingham, R.A. and Rosebrough, A. (recent). *Ancient Effigy Mound Landscapes of Upper Midwestern North America*.
- Dexter, R.W. (January 3, 1976). NRHP Nomination: Man Mound. NPS.
https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/78000138_text
- Rosebrough, Amy (February 28, 2013). *National Historic Landmark Nomination: Man Mound*. National Park Service. [**Primary modern source for all five destroyed mounds**] Archived:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20151117034449/http://www.nps.gov/nhl/news/LC/fall2015/ManMound.pdf>
- Sauk County / Ho-Chunk Nation (2020). *Man Mound National Historic Landmark Master Property Plan 2020–2040*.
<https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/landresourcesandenvironmentcommittee/page/118918/manmoundnhlmasterplan.pdf>
- Schuette, W.C. (n.d.). "Man Mound National Historic Landmark." Sauk County Historical Society.
<https://saukcountyhistory.org/man-mound-article>

Institutional

- Minnesota Historical Society. Civil Works Administration Subproject 2365 records: T.H. Lewis survey transcriptions. Finding aid: <https://archives.lib.umn.edu/repositories/14/resources/1342>
 - Wisconsin Historical Society. Man Mound photograph (WHi 77565):
<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM77565>
 - Wisconsin Historical Society. Canfield 1852 maps (W0142C8): <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM96831>
 - Wisconsin Historical Society. Man Mound historical marker photo (W013QHS):
<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/record/image/W013QHS/man-mound-historical-marker>
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PART III

Horned Anthropomorphs in Upper Midwest Rock Art

Horned Anthropomorphs in Upper Midwest Rock Art

A Catalogue of Sites Connecting Petroglyph/Pictograph Traditions to the Wisconsin Man Mound Complex

Compiled: June 2026

Introduction

The horned human figure — a standing or seated anthropomorph with projections from the head — appears across the rock art of Wisconsin's Driftless Area, the broader Upper Midwest, and the Mississippian Southeast. This iconographic tradition almost certainly shares cosmological roots with the horned headdress worn by the Wisconsin anthropomorphic effigy mounds (La Valle, Baraboo/Greenfield, Eagle Township, and the Twin Man Mounds of Richland County), all built within the Late Woodland effigy mound complex ca. AD 750–1200.

The dominant narrative figure underlying this imagery is known in Ho-Chunk oral tradition as **Red Horn** (Hešúka) — a supernatural warrior son of Earthmaker, with a red body, long red braid, and living miniature human heads as ear ornaments. The same figure is known among the Iowa as "He Who Wears (Man) Faces on His Ears." The Red Horn cycle was transcribed by cultural anthropologist Paul Radin in the early 20th century, long before most of the rock art depicting him was identified. The convergence of oral tradition and rock art iconography provides one of the strongest culture-historic links in Upper Midwest archaeology.

The "Horns of Light" Interpretive Framework

An alternative interpretive lens — not mutually exclusive with the Red Horn identification — comes from Peter Lamborn Wilson's essay "The Shamanic Trace" (*Escape from the Nineteenth Century and Other Essays*, Autonomedia, 1998; also circulated as *Drifting in the Driftless: Psychotopology of the Wisconsin Driftless Region and the Effigy Mounds*). Wilson, who conducted fieldwork in the Driftless Area through the "Avocational Archaeology Group" at Dreamtime Village in West Lima, Wisconsin — in collaboration with Prof. J. Scherz (UW-Madison) and Ho-Chunk lore-master Merlin Redcloud — argues that the horn projections on anthropomorphic figures across the region consistently represent **horns of light**: the luminous emanations of a shaman in a state of heightened consciousness or

spiritual transformation. He writes:

"The 'horns' remind us of the horns (of light) on the shadman and his disciple in Indian Cave (located near West Lima, WI); the rays of light emanating from the head of the shaman on the New Albin Tablet; and the various elaborate hair-pieces in the Gottschall Cave mural, all symbolizing illumination — a universal archetype."

Wilson explicitly links the man mound horns, the Indian Cave shaman-and-disciple figures, the New Albin Tablet shaman, and the Gottschall "hair-pieces" as expressions of a single iconographic idea: illumination, spiritual power made visible. This reading converges with, rather than contradicts, the Red Horn identification — Red Horn is himself a light-bearing, celestially-identified supernatural warrior.

This catalogue covers the most important sites in Wisconsin and surrounding states where horned anthropomorphs appear, ranked roughly by iconographic relevance to the man mound tradition.

WISCONSIN SITES

1. Gottschall Rockshelter (47Ia80)

The Red Horn Sequence — Primary Site

Field	Data
Location	Iowa County, southwestern Wisconsin; near Muscoda; small valley draining to the Wisconsin River
Site Designation	47Ia80; National Register of Historic Places
Setting	Sandstone overhang, approximately 60 ft wide × 30 ft tall
Discovery / Excavation	Rediscovered 1974; systematically excavated from 1982 by Robert J. Salzer (Beloit College)
Medium	Pictographs (painted); approximately 40 individual images
Dating	Salzer: ca. AD 900–1000; stylistic parallels with some Mississippian Southern imagery ca. AD 1200
Cultural Affiliation	Late Woodland / early Mississippian; identified by Ho-Chunk Nation as ancestral site

Panel 5 — The Red Horn Figure

The site's central iconographic feature is **Panel 5**, which Salzer and Rajnovich interpreted as a narrative depiction of the Red Horn cycle. The right-most and most elaborate figure has:

- **Upper body:** covered by an "Akron Grid" tattoo pattern with concentric circles on the shoulders — a Mississippian marker of high-status warriors
- **Lower body:** a kilt or skirt with nested diamond design at the waist

- **Ear ornament:** a "long-nosed god maskette" — a prosopic earpiece also found as a copper artifact throughout the SECC sphere
- **Head:** possible headdress or horn projection consistent with Red Horn's iconographic identity

Other figures in the panel carry Mississippian iconographic elements: chained forelocks, forked-eye designs, and rayed circles. The panel has been interpreted as depicting a specific episode in the Red Horn oral narrative — likely a contest with giants or water spirits.

Significance for Man Mound Research

Gottschall is located in Iowa County, immediately adjacent to Sauk County (where the La Valle and Baraboo Man Mounds stood) and just north of Richland County (Eagle Township and Twin Man Mounds). The temporal and geographic overlap between the painted rock art at Gottschall and the construction of the anthropomorphic effigy mounds is nearly exact. Both traditions portray a horned or specially-adorned supernatural human figure in a landscape along the Wisconsin River corridor.

Key Sources

- Salzer, Robert J. and Grace Rajnovich (2001). *The Gottschall Rockshelter: An Archaeological Mystery*. Prairie Oak Press. ISBN 9780970448224.
- Schrab, Geri and Robert F. Boszhardt (2016). *Hidden Thunder: Rock Art of the Upper Midwest*. Wisconsin Historical Society Press. ISBN 9780870207679.
- Boszhardt, Robert F. et al. (2023). "A DStretch Application For Selected Pictographs In Southwestern Wisconsin (with a focus on the Gottschall Rockshelter)." *ResearchGate*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369757536>
- *Wisconsin Archeological Society Newsletter*, Spring 2015 (Vol. 15 No. 1). "Questioning Gottschall: The Lady in Red (Horn)."
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2. Tainter Cave

Largest Rock Art Assemblage in Wisconsin

Field	Data
Location	Crawford County, Wisconsin; Driftless Area; near the top of a hill in sandstone bluff terrain
Also Known As	Tombstone Cave; Arnold Cave
Setting	True deep cave (not a simple overhang); dry sandstone interior
Medium	Pictographs and petroglyphs; 100+ images — more than any other known Wisconsin site
Dating	Radiocarbon dated to ca. AD 700; corresponds with diagnostic pottery sherds recovered in cave
Cultural Affiliation	Late Woodland; possibly Oneota component; site of national/international significance per MVAC

Horned and Anthropomorphic Figures

- **Birdman:** a human-avian composite figure, consistent with Falcon Warrior / Red Horn iconography. Birdmen appear across the Mississippian world as representations of supernatural warriors; this is one of the most northerly documented examples.
- **Headless Human:** a standing human figure lacking a head — likely a specific ritual or narrative image (decapitation is a recurring motif in SECC and Red Horn contexts; Red Horn is associated with severed heads)
- **Long-horned bison** (*Bison occidentalis* type): a ceiling image with four stumpy legs and two long, widespread horns possibly representing the extinct *Bison occidentalis* (went extinct ca. 5000 BP) or alternatively caribou. If a Paleo-Indian/Archaic date is confirmed, this would be the oldest image at the site by millennia.
- **Sky and Earth Scene:** a cosmological composition depicting layered zones — consistent with the Upper/Middle/Under World tripartite cosmology shared by Ho-Chunk and related peoples.
- **Bow Hunter** and **Deer Hunters:** narrative scenes of human-animal interaction.

Key Sources

- Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center (MVAC), UW-La Crosse:
<https://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/past-cultures/specific-sites/rock-art/#content-130110>
- Schrab, Geri and Robert F. Boszhardt (2016). *Hidden Thunder: Rock Art of the Upper Midwest*. Wisconsin Historical Society Press.
- Tainter Cave entry, Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tainter_Cave
- Boszhardt, Robert F. "Pictographic Compositions at Tainter Cave in Southwestern Wisconsin." Academia.edu:
https://www.academia.edu/99662727/PictographicCompositionsatTainterCaveinSouthwestern_Wisconsin

3. Roche-a-Cri Petroglyphs

Publicly Accessible; Horned Human + Thunderbird Panel

Field	Data
Location	Roche-a-Cri State Park, near Friendship, Adams County, Wisconsin
Also Known As	Friendship Glyphs
Setting	Vertical sandstone outcrop face in state park; accessible via stairs
Medium	Petroglyphs (carved) and pictographs (painted); mix of Oneota imagery
Dating	Petroglyphs estimated pre-AD 900; pictographs 400–500 years old
Cultural Affiliation	Oneota; identified as ancestral Ho-Chunk
Access	Open to public; Wisconsin DNR

Horned Anthropomorph

A pictograph depicting a thunderbird and a **horned human figure** together in what has been interpreted as a transformation scene: a man transforming into a thunderbird as he takes flight. The lightning bolt arcing toward the horned figure situates him between the Upper World (thunderbird) and the human realm — a liminal position consistent with the shaman/spirit-traveler role assigned to horned figures across the Upper Midwest.

The remainder of the petroglyphs include birds, canoes, and geometric designs typical of Oneota rock art. The combination of a horned human with a thunderbird is particularly significant — the Thunderbird/Water Spirit opposition is the fundamental cosmic axis in Ho-Chunk cosmology, and horned beings typically inhabit the border zone between the two.

Key Sources

- Wisconsin DNR: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/rocheacri/history>
 - ArtDose Magazine: "Before We Were Wisconsin: The Indigenous Rock Art at Roche-a-Cri."
<https://artdosemagazine.com/2025/08/03/before-we-were-wisconsin-the-indigenous-rock-art-at-roche-a-cri/>
 - Roche-a-Cri Petroglyphs, Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roche-a-Cri_Petroglyphs
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4. Samuel's Cave

Headgear-Wearing Human Figure; Oneota Period

Field	Data
Location	La Crosse County, Wisconsin
Setting	Naturally-formed rockshelter; sealed by landslide for 150+ years before 1878 discovery
Discovery	1878 by Frank Samuels, while trapping raccoons
Medium	Petroglyphs and pictographs
Dating	Oneota period, ca. AD 1300–1600
Cultural Affiliation	Oneota
Condition	Substantially damaged by weather and vandalism since 1878

Horned/Headgear Figure

A carved petroglyph of a **human figure wearing headgear** is the site's most prominent anthropomorphic image. The image is the lead illustration on MVAC's Rock Art page. Whether the headgear represents horns, a crested hat, or a horned headdress consistent with Red Horn iconography is not definitively established in published literature, but the figure's prominent placement and the site's Oneota date (overlapping with Mississippian Red Horn iconography) make it iconographically significant.

A pictographic panel with abstract designs possibly representing animals accompanies the carved figure.

Key Sources

- MVAC, UW-La Crosse: <https://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/past-cultures/specific-sites/rock-art/#content-130096>
 - MVAC Tumblr: <https://uwlmvac.tumblr.com/post/152691466483/samuels-cave-located-in-la-crosse-county>
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5. Gullickson's Glen

Human Figures; Mixed Woodland/Oneota Context

Field	Data
Location	Driftless Area, southwestern Wisconsin (exact county not published)
Setting	Small overhanging rockshelter
Medium	Petroglyphs
Dating	Occupation ca. 2000 BP; petroglyphs no older than 800 years ago
Cultural Affiliation	Middle Woodland and Oneota (both represented in excavated levels)

Anthropomorphic Content

Human figures appear in the petroglyph assemblage alongside bison, deer, elk, thunderbirds, geese, fish, wolf, and bear. The human figures have not been specifically described as horned in published literature, but the site is part of the Driftless Area rock art tradition catalogued in *Hidden Thunder* and relevant to the broader iconographic complex. Quartzite implements possibly used for making petroglyphs were recovered from the Oneota level.

Some sections of the wall have collapsed, destroying portions of the record.

Key Sources

- MVAC, UW-La Crosse: <https://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/past-cultures/specific-sites/rock-art/#content-130023>
- Schrab, Geri and Robert F. Boszhardt (2016). *Hidden Thunder: Rock Art of the Upper Midwest*. Wisconsin Historical Society Press.

6. Indian Cave

Shaman and Disciple with Horns of Light; Wilson Primary Reference

Field	Data
Location	Near West Lima, Richland County, Wisconsin (Driftless Area)
Setting	Narrow, low natural fissure cave/shelter
Medium	Petroglyphs
Dating	Late prehistoric, ca. 250 BC–AD 1500 (no diagnostic artifacts; typological estimate)
Cultural Affiliation	Unknown; likely Late Woodland or Oneota

Horned Figures — Shaman and Disciple

The MVAC panel description records: two seated human figures, one in profile with a bird-like figure perched above the shoulder; a **standing human figure wearing headgear with arms outstretched**; a large bow strung with arrows aimed at a large mammal; and a long curved line underscoring the complete panel.

Peter Lamborn Wilson, who conducted fieldwork in the immediate area (Dreamtime Village, West Lima), specifically identifies **two horned figures at Indian Cave as a shaman and his disciple** — both bearing what he terms "horns of light," the luminous projections of shamanic illumination. This pairing of teacher and student in a ritual context is significant: it suggests the cave was used for initiation or instruction, with the horned figures marking participants in a transformation rite.

The posture of the standing figure — **upright, arms outstretched, wearing headgear** — is strikingly reminiscent of the anthropomorphic effigy mounds, which all depict a figure with arms extended to either side. West Lima is in Richland County — the same county as the Eagle Township Man Mound and the Twin Man Mounds (47RI319), placing Indian Cave directly within the man mound landscape rather than adjacent to it.

Key Sources

- MVAC, UW-La Crosse: <https://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/past-cultures/specific-sites/rock-art/#content-130069>
- Wilson, Peter Lamborn. "The Shamanic Trace." In *Escape from the Nineteenth Century and Other Essays*. Autonomedia, 1998. (Also circulated as *Drifting in the Driftless: Psychotopology of the Wisconsin Driftless Region and the Effigy Mounds*.)

7. Larson Cave

Human Figure Wearing Headgear; Social Group Panel

Field	Data
Location	Southwestern Wisconsin (exact county not published)
Setting	Small naturally-formed cave/shelter
Medium	Petroglyphs
Dating	Late prehistoric, ca. 250 BC–AD 1500
Cultural Affiliation	Unknown; Late Woodland or Oneota

Two rows of stick-like human figures, some joined at arms, with apparent gender differentiation ("males" slightly taller). One figure appears to carry something; **another wears headgear**. The panel fronts the cave entrance, functioning possibly as identification or cosmological statement for approaching visitors.

Key Sources

- MVAC, UW-La Crosse: <https://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/past-cultures/specific-sites/rock-art/#content-130077>

8. Bell Coulee Shelter

70+ Images Including Bison

Field	Data
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Location	Exact location not publicly disclosed; southwestern Wisconsin
Medium	Petroglyphs and pictographs
Image Count	70+ including seven bison
Cultural Affiliation	Unknown

Limited published information is available. The site has been covered in the *Hidden Thunder* volume (Schrab & Boszhardt 2016). The presence of bison iconography is consistent with other Driftless Area sites.

9. New Albin Tablet

Iowa — Portable Engraved Artifact; Shaman with Radiating Light

Field	Data
Location	Found at New Albin, Allamakee County, Iowa (upper Mississippi River, just south of Minnesota border)
Current Repository	Likely local historical society; exact current location not confirmed in published sources
Discovery	1915, during excavation for a cellar at the residence of August Welper
Medium	Pipestone tablet, engraved on both sides with carved notches along the edge
Dating	Ca. AD 1000–1800; assumed Oneota based on geographic and cultural context
Cultural Affiliation	Oneota; geographically in the upper Mississippi River corridor

The Shaman Figure

Peter Lamborn Wilson, in "The Shamanic Trace," describes the New Albin Tablet as bearing an image of **a shaman with rays of light emanating from the head** — one of his central examples of the "horns of light" motif linking the man mound horns to a pan-regional shamanic illumination iconography.

The tablet's location — New Albin sits where the Upper Iowa (Oneota) River enters the Mississippi — places it at a major confluence site, a geographic type consistently associated with ritual and mortuary activity in the Upper Midwest. Allamakee County is within the broader effigy mound territory: the Fish Farm Mounds State Preserve is located just south of New Albin along the Mississippi bluffs.

The tablet is a **portable** artifact rather than fixed rock art, but it participates in the same iconographic tradition. Pipestone (catlinite) objects were prestige and ritual items traded across the Upper Midwest; a pipestone tablet with a shaman figure at New Albin situates the "horns of light" iconography within the same trade and ceremonial network that connected the Wisconsin mound-builders to the Mississippian world.

Research Note

Published archaeological literature on the New Albin Tablet is thin; the primary descriptive reference in the context of this iconographic tradition is Wilson's essay. The artifact warrants direct examination at whatever repository currently

holds it. The Allamakee County Historical Society (Waukon, Iowa) is the probable repository.

Key Sources

- Wilson, Peter Lamborn. "The Shamanic Trace." In *Escape from the Nineteenth Century and Other Essays*. Autonomedia, 1998.
 - IAGenWeb / Allamakee County history: <https://iagenweb.org/allamakee/history4/NACentennial.htm>
 - Iowa Archaeology blog (Allamakee County petroglyphs):
<https://iowaarchaeology.tumblr.com/post/73430394458/petroglyphs-from-allamakee-county-iowa-photo>
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OUT-OF-STATE SITES

9. Picture Cave

Missouri — The Red Horn Panel; Most Elaborate Published Sequence

Field	Data
Location	Warren County, Missouri (private land; site location restricted)
Setting	Two-cave system in limestone terrain
Medium	Polychrome paintings
Image Count	290+ individual images
Dating	Ca. AD 900–1100 (Mississippian period)
Cultural Affiliation	Mississippian; ancestral to Osage, Omaha, Ponca, Quapaw, and Kaw nations

The Red Horn Panel

Picture Cave contains the most iconographically elaborate published depiction of the Red Horn figure. Key features of the main figure:

- **Head:** disproportionately large relative to body — indicating a mask, not a naturalistic head
- **Ear ornament:** "long-nosed god maskette" painted in white — the most diagnostic iconographic marker of Red Horn across the SECC sphere
- **Right hand:** carries what was initially interpreted as a severed head with white plume, though closer inspection shows shoulders and upper torso — possibly a smaller figure
- **Body:** polychrome painting consistent with Mississippian warrior iconography

The site sits within the Mississippian cultural sphere that connects the Cahokia world-system to the upper Wisconsin River valley. The long-nosed god maskette found at Picture Cave is the same symbol type found as copper artifacts throughout the SECC trade network, including in the upper Midwest.

Controversy

Picture Cave was controversially sold at auction in 2023, raising concerns about access and stewardship. The sale generated coverage in *Cultural Property News* and drew responses from descendant communities.

Key Sources

- Fuller, Michael et al. (2023). "Picture Cave in Missouri: New Research." *AIRA* 48. ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370359948PictureCaveinMissouriNewResearchinAIRA48Fulleretal_FINAL
 - Picture Cave, Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Picture_Cave
 - Hotcak Encyclopedia: "The Redhorn Panel of Picture Cave: An American Star Map." <https://hotcakencyclopedia.com/ho.RedhornPanelStarMap.html>
 - Memories of the Prairie: "Picture Cave: the Mississippian Sistine Chapel." <https://memoriesoftheprairie.com/blog-1/2023/07/29/picture-cave-in-warren-county-missouri/>
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10. Devilstep Hollow Cave

Tennessee — Falcon Warrior/Red Horn; SECC Southern Terminus

Field	Data
Location	Cumberland County, Tennessee; Head of Sequatchie Unit, Cumberland Trail State Park
Setting	Cave in Sequatchie Valley
Medium	Engravings, mud glyphs, and paintings
Image Count	22 known images
Dating	Mississippian period
Cultural Affiliation	Mississippian
Access	Within state park lands

The Falcon Warrior

The cave's most prominent figure: an upright bird with outstretched wings/arms, **each hand clutching a mace** — both a Mississippian weapon and a symbol of priestly/warrior authority. This figure is identified as the **Falcon Warrior**, a manifestation of the same Red Horn/Morning Star figure who appears at Gottschall and Picture Cave.

Additional imagery includes: woodpeckers; fish; a face with serpents for eyes above a toothy grin, with wavy lines suggesting a severed or disembodied head. The decapitation/severed head motif recurs across the SECC world in association with Red Horn.

Devilstep Hollow documents the southward reach of the iconographic complex that also produced the Wisconsin man mounds. The Falcon Warrior mace-holding posture mirrors the "arms outstretched" posture of the Wisconsin anthropomorphic mounds at geographic scales of roughly 700 miles.

Key Sources

• Ancient Art Archive: <https://www.ancientartarchive.org/devilstep-hollow-cave/>

• Devilstep Hollow Cave, Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DevilstepHollowCave>

CULTURAL FRAMEWORK: RED HORN, THE HORNED FIGURE, AND THE MAN MOUNDS

Red Horn in Ho-Chunk Oral Tradition

Red Horn (Hešúka, also called "He Who Wears Human Faces on His Ears," "Red Man," "One Horn," and related names) is a culture hero in both Hoc (Ho-Chunk/Winnebago) and Iowa oral traditions. Key attributes:

- **Physical:** entire body red from head to toe; long red braid; living miniature human heads growing from his earlobes (or placed there as earbobs)
- **Role:** one of five sons of Earthmaker; sent to earth to rescue humanity from giants, water spirits, and malevolent forces
- **Celestial identity:** associated with a star, possibly Alnilam in Orion's Belt, though the identification is debated; also connected to Morning Star
- **Arrow identity:** as chief of the *herok'a* (small hunting spirits), he is spiritually identical with the arrow

The Red Horn cycle was recorded by Paul Radin in the early 20th century from Ho-Chunk oral performances, decades before the Gottschall paintings were identified as depicting the same narrative.

The "Long-Nosed God Maskette" Connection

The **long-nosed god maskette** — a copper or shell prosopic earpiece with an elongated proboscis — is found throughout the SECC trade network from Cahokia to the upper Midwest. It represents the living faces on Red Horn's earlobes made material. The maskettes appear at sites ranging from Florida to Wisconsin, documenting a shared iconographic and narrative tradition.

Connecting the Man Mounds to the Rock Art

The following parallels link the Wisconsin anthropomorphic effigy mounds directly to the horned anthropomorph rock art tradition:

Feature	Man Mounds	Rock Art (Gottschall, Tainter, etc.)
Horned headdress	Present on La Valle, Baraboo, Eagle Township, and one or both Twin Mounds	Red Horn's defining attribute; present at Gottschall Panel 5, Roche-a-Cri, and implied elsewhere
Arms outstretched	All man mounds; arms nearly at right angles to torso	Indian Cave standing figure; Devilstep Hollow Falcon Warrior
Long body proportions	La Valle 230 ft; elongated torso noted in Canfield's survey	Red Horn described as disproportionately elongated in some narrative passages

Head orientation	Northeast at La Valle and Baraboo	Celestial/directional orientation is consistent with Red Horn's star identity
Location	Wisconsin River corridor, Iowa/Sauk/Richland counties	Gottschall in adjacent Iowa County; all sites in same Driftless Area watershed
Temporal overlap	AD 750–1200 (Late Woodland effigy mound complex)	Gottschall ca. AD 900–1000; Tainter AD 700+; overlap is direct
Ho-Chunk cultural continuity	Ho-Chunk Nation co-managed the Baraboo Man Mound NHL Master Plan (2020)	Ho-Chunk oral tradition directly names the Gottschall figure as Red Horn

The mound-builders did not depict Red Horn in paint on a sandstone wall: they built his body in earth, at landscape scale, along the same river corridors where the painted panels appear. Both traditions express the same cosmological figure through different media — and both are now recognized by the Ho-Chunk Nation as part of their cultural heritage.

MASTER BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Scholarly Works

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- **Schrab, Geri and Robert F. Boszhardt (2016).** *Hidden Thunder: Rock Art of the Upper Midwest*. Wisconsin Historical Society Press. ISBN 9780870207679. — Covers Gottschall, Tainter, Samuel's Cave, Roche-a-Cri, Twin Bluffs, Indian Cave, and more.
- **Boszhardt, Robert F. et al. (2023).** "A DStretch Application For Selected Pictographs In Southwestern Wisconsin." ResearchGate: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369757536>
- **Fuller, Michael et al. (2023).** "Picture Cave in Missouri: New Research." *AIRA* 48. ResearchGate: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370359948>
- **Radin, Paul (1948).** *Winnebago Hero Cycles: A Study in Aboriginal Literature*. Indiana University Publications in Anthropology and Linguistics. — First transcription of Red Horn oral cycle.

Key Online Resources

- Hotcak Encyclopedia (peer-reviewed; primary source on Red Horn mythology and Gottschall): <https://hotcakencyclopedia.com/ho.Gottschall.html>
- MVAC Rock Art pages (nine southwestern Wisconsin sites): <https://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/past-cultures/specific-sites/rock-art/>
- Red Horn, Wikipedia (with citations): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Horn
- Ancient Art Archive (Devilstep Hollow): <https://www.ancientartarchive.org/devilstep-hollow-cave/>

Adjacent Reference Works

- **Wilson, Peter Lamborn (1998).** "The Shamanic Trace." In *Escape from the Nineteenth Century and Other Essays*. Autonomedia. — Also circulated as *Drifting in the Driftless: Psychotopology of the Wisconsin Driftless*

Region and the Effigy Mounds. Fieldwork based at Dreamtime Village, West Lima, WI, with Ho-Chunk lore-master Merlin Redcloud. Proposes "horns of light" framework linking man mound horns, Indian Cave shaman-and-disciple, New Albin Tablet, and Gottschall hair-pieces as expressions of shamanic illumination.

Archived: <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/peter-lamborn-wilson-escape-from-the-nineteenth-century-and-other-essays>

- **Birmingham, Robert A. and Leslie E. Eisenberg (2000).** *Indian Mounds of Wisconsin.* University of Wisconsin Press. — Chapter on effigy mound cosmology.

- **Pauketat, Timothy R. (2012).** *Cahokia: Ancient America's Great City on the Mississippi.* Viking/Penguin. — Situates Gottschall and Red Horn within broader Mississippian world-system.

All information compiled from web sources, MVAC documentation, academic publications, and Wikipedia (June 2026). Physical access to restricted sites (Gottschall, Tainter Cave, Picture Cave) requires coordination with land owners, the Wisconsin Historical Society, or relevant agencies. Site locations for many rockshelters are intentionally withheld from public literature to prevent vandalism.

End of Compendium

La Valle Man Mound Project | June 2026 All information compiled from web sources, MVAC documentation, Wisconsin Historical Society records, Minnesota Historical Society archives, NPS National Historic Landmarks Program, Sauk County NHL Master Plan (2020), and published academic sources. For primary source access: Wisconsin Historical Society Archives (608-264-6460) · Minnesota Historical Society (651-259-3300) · NPS National Historic Landmarks Program