UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PIUTE NATIONAL PARK

FILE NO. 0-35
PART 1

PIUTE
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
PROPOSED

IMPORTANT
This file constitutes a part of the official records of the National Park Service and should not be separated or papers withdrawn without express authority of the official in charge. All Files should be returned promptly to the File Room. Officials and employees will be held responsible for failure to observe these rules, which are necessary to protect the integrity of the official records.

ARNO B. CAMMERER,
Director.
Honorable Horace Albright,
Director of National Parks,
Department of the Interior,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Albright:

Your brother Dewey wrote you a letter a short time ago relative to the Rock Writings, foot prints of animals and humans, stone huts etc. that exist from the Round Valley section to Fish Slough through Chicago Canyon and up the branch canyon from Chicago to the old Milner Ranch, then across from the Dehy Ranch and on up to Watterson Meadows and then on the road between Benton and Benton Depot where the foot prints of a woman are shown quite plainly in the rock. These things are scattered as far as known now in an area about 30 miles long by 3 or 6 miles wide. They are both inside of and outside of an Indian Reservation which it is now proposed shall again become a part of the Public Domain by a Bill now before Congress. The reason given in the Bill for this restoration is that the area contains valuable building stone.

The enclosed map shows the area nicely and I have marked out the relative locations of the petroglyphs etc., only approximately as that is all that can be done without a survey.

These things have been a recent discovery and are not well known to the inhabitants here or elsewhere. As far as I know there has been no thorough exploration of the area and no examination by any competent judges of these writings and pictures evidently some thousands of years old are valuable enough to save for posterity.

The reservation lines have been a partial protection to these relics of an ancient people, though many foot prints and petroglyphs and photographs have been taken away, I should say many tons.

The enclosed article from Touring Topics for May is a fair description and the photographs are very good of some of the foot prints which are both natural and artificial.

There are Billions and Billions of tons of the stone outside of the reservation, too much in fact to make it a good safe proposition from a business standpoint, in view of the fact that after spending a lot of money to introduce this stone, destructive competition in the way of a stone trust could run you out and take the market.

There are two motives suggested back of this Bill. One is a Stone Trust that is seeking to acquire the Tufa of the United States. The other is the City of Los Angeles desiring this land to come under the Grant Bill, which proposes to have the United States sell to the City a very large territory in this vicinity. This bill provides for the taking of the lands right up to the reservation line from Township 4 South, Range 33 East. Recently the City purchased the school sections within the reservation, Mr. Ford of the City, denies that the City is back of the Bill.

My interest is partially selfish as I have a quarry on the Eastern side of the reservation, but if Los Angeles is back of
of the Bill, than these selfish interests of mine are fully protected, but there still remains the petroglyphs.

Last August due to the Museum Association here a withdrawal order was made of about four of these sections in different parts of the area containing petroglyphs etc. All that had been discovered at that time but there are several more sections that should be withdrawn now.

The purpose of this reservation was to aid the old and decrepit Piute Indians but it is valueless for this purpose, unless it is of sufficient importance to make it a National Park or Monument and charge the usual fee for going through and turning a part of this same to the Indians, then it would be a perpetual source of revenue. I have interviewed some of the people that came to see these writings after the publication of the enclosed article an they stated they would be glad to have paid $20.00 for what they had seen and consider the money well spent. These people were from Bakersfield, and used the greater part of two days in only seeing one area containing the foot prints.

The Museum Association is not so much interested in preserving these things where they are. Like other museums their tendency is to move those things that are movable into some building, where they may or may last as long as they would have in their native environment where they seem to be very well preserved during the past several thousand years. They also are not anxious for a National Park to preserve them as the rangers might interfere with their study of these relics and probably prevent them from carrying away those things that are loose.

I am therefore sending the stuff on to you with the idea in mind that before this Bill passes, there should be a withdrawal order covering these things, pending the determination of their value and whether it is worth while to save them permanently. If they are good enough for a National Park or Monument, then mining for the precious metals and grazing can be allowed in the area in such a manner as not to destroy or interfere with the petroglyphs etc. There are miles and miles of the stone on all sides of the reservation. It extends up to Adobe Meadows and on to Mono Lake on the North and West. It is several miles wide on the East and South and extends up between Rock Creek and Os River on the West to Long Valley.

While my motive for protection may be more or less selfish, it takes a selfish motive to bring these things out. It is hard to believe that the motive back of the Bill to abolish the reservation is entirely philanthropic. Aside from their real value to science, these things have an advertising value and will bring tourists into this country. We have been pretty wellwhip-sawed by a good many big interests and need all that we can get.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]
Memorandum for Mr. Albright:

Relative to the attached.

On July 23 Mr. Frank Parcher, Curator, Eastern California Museum Association, telegraphed the Secretary that certain lands in the area referred to contained petroglyphs and other archeological features which were being destroyed by vandalism, and requested that an investigation of the area be made with view to withdrawing the lands for national monument purposes.

An investigation was made by the San Francisco Division of the General Land Office, which resulted in a recommendation that some 15-3/4 sections (4-3/4 sections in California and 11 sections in Nevada) be withdrawn pending a study as to the desirability of including the lands in a national monument. These lands were withdrawn by Executive Order of August 29, 1929.

Following that, as I get it from the Land Office, the Indian Service, without any reference to the Land Office whatsoever, drew up a bill providing for the abolishment of the Piute Indian Reservation, which also contains considerable exhibits of archeological interest, with view to returning these lands to the public domain. This bill was introduced as S. 2755 and H. R. 7632. Passage of this bill as originally drawn would result in withdrawing even such little protection as they had under Indian Reservation withdrawal. When the Secretary was called upon for a report he referred the bills to the General Land Office, which recommended that the bills be amended to permit the Secretary to withhold any of the Indian Reservation lands believed to possess archeological, scientific or recreational value from disposition under the act until it could be determined that the lands are without such value.

There is nothing therefore that we can do towards giving further protection to the archeological features of the region, and I don’t see where we could object to the passage of the bill abolishing the Indian Reservation as, if amended as suggested by the Land Office, all such exhibits would be given full protection.

You might be interested in knowing that on September 16 Assistant Secretary Edwards forwarded almost our entire file on this matter to Mr. Nusbaum requesting him to advise the Department as to whether, in his judgment, these objects of historic and scientific interest were of sufficient importance to warrant the expense necessary to send somebody to make a personal examination of them. We also transmitted to him some supplemental data.
The receipt of these papers was acknowledged by Chief Clerk Devilin on September 24 but there has been no sign of any report forthcoming from Mr. Nusbaum.

[Signature]
Mr. Wallis D. McPherson,
Bishop, California.

Dear Mr. McPherson:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of January 21, relative to a bill now before Congress which would abolish the Plute Indian Reservation.

Our official interest in this whole matter has, of course, to do with the archeological features. Last summer an investigator of the General Land Office went pretty well all over this area and recommended the withdrawal of about 16 sections, 11 of which are in Nevada and the remainder in California. These withdrawals were made pending a further investigation of the area as to its desirability for national monument purposes.

While the original bills that were introduced in the Senate and House did not provide for any protection of the archeological features, the General Land Office has recommended an amendment authorizing the Secretary to withhold from the provisions of the act any lands of historic or scientific interest until such time as they could be studied and a definite determination made as to their importance from this angle. In this way even though the reservation is abandoned there will still be an opportunity to withhold from entry any areas that might be determined of sufficient importance to preserve for scientific purposes.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) HORACE M. ALBRIGHT

HORACE M. ALBRIGHT,
Director.
MEMORANDUM.

Yesterday the Secretary signed letters to the Chairmen of the committees of the House and Senate handling this bill, transmitting copies of memorandums from the Indian Service and the General Land Office recommending that the bill be amended to provide that the Secretary may withhold from the provisions of the bill any lands of historic or scientific interest until such time as they could be studied and a definite determination made as to their importance from this angle.

The letters referred to have not been mailed, however, as extra copies of the memorandums have to be made. They will probably be mailed today.

Called into Senate office giving the above info.
M. Hulls  
Cajitul Br. 465

H. R. 7632

Lands in Sono County to be restored to public domain. Mr. Leabritt says it is desired to preserve certain Indian reservations and wants to know whether this House has or intends to make this request.
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 16, 1929

Mr. Leavitt introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed

A BILL

To provide for restoration to the public domain of certain lands in the State of California which are now reserved for Indian allotment purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That the public lands in townships 4 and 5 south, range 31 east, and townships 4, 5, and 6 south, range 32 east, Mount Diablo meridian, California, temporarily reserved from settlement, entry, sale, or other disposition by Executive order of May 9, 1912, for allotment to Paiute and other Indians, be, and they are hereby, restored to the public domain, subject to the provisions of Public Resolution Num-
bered 29, approved February 14, 1920 (Forty-first Statutes, page 434), as amended by Public Resolutions Numbered 36 and 79, approved January 21 and December 28, 1922 (Forty-second Statutes, pages 358 and 1067), respectively, on dates to be fixed by the Secretary of the Interior.
The Director, National Park Service,  
Washington, D. C. 

February 8, 1930.

Dear Mr. Albright:

I have just received your letter of January 25th.
I am more or less familiar with the investigation and withdrawals following, made by Mr. Leroy Palmer about last August and the circumstances leading up to the investigation.

Early in the year after reading John Von Blon's article which was sent you, I went over the ground myself and found the foot prints and petroglyphs. I was locating quite an area of this ground outside of the reservation at that time and among other locations, located the North West ¼ of Sec 34 T. 3 S. R. 32 E. containing quite a number of foot prints and petroglyphs. I realized the importance of saving these things and went to Bishop and talked with Mr. Parach and others about the importance of them, but could arouse no interest. I then sawed out a very nice foot print of a child and sent it to John Von Blon as custodian and to see what reaction I could get from him as to the value of these things and as to steps to save them.

I exhibited this foot print in several advertising sources and suddenly a big furor was started among the Museum Association. It had been reported to them that I was taking out quantities of these prints and selling them. I was called up on the carpet by a member of the aforesaid association and asked if I had taken foot prints. I admitted the crime and further stated that they were valuable to collectors of antiques, and as long as some one was destined to sell them it might just as well be myself. (No applause) I mentioned that I had brought up the matter of saving them without result and was then informed that no one would take them but myself. (Wrong again as several tons had been taken before I discovered them). Then the statement was made, "well we want to save them." I replied if that was the case, I would help, but in as much as a great many things I had done and attempted to do, such as trying to save the water falls, getting the Tioga Road opened in seasonable time and working on the Montgomery Pass road to connect the West with the West by the shortest most scenic route and connecting Yellowstone- Zion- Cedar Breaks- Grand Canyon National Parks by personally building the 33 miles from Benton to Mono at my expense and irrigating Mono Basin, that my motives had been mis-construed by those opposing me and the powers that be. I wanted it distinctly understood that my motive in this case was a selfish one to a certain extent.

The complaint from the Museum Association brought Mr. Palmer to the scene accompanied by his daughter who is studying archaeology. Mr. Palmer told me that he had seen some of the Fish Slough and the petroglyphs opposite here. He wanted at that time to withdraw a very large area so as to be sure and get all of the petroglyphs etc. I agreed with him and said that if he would do this and not with draw anything East of the line of my claims, that I would not contest his withdrawal of the N. W. ¼ of Sec 34 T. 3 S. R. 32 E. claimed by me.
Director of National Parks A.

I further stated that as far as I knew, there were no petroglyphs on any of the rest of my claims. If I found any I would relinquish back any such lands to become a part of the large area supposed to be withdrawn.

I was somewhat surprised to find that only the North West ¼ of Sec 32, T. 3 S. R. 32 E. claimed by myself, and sections 35-36 in 4 S. R. 32 E. and a section in 5 S. R. 32 E. was all that had been withdrawn. Sections 13-24-36 in this same range and township contain the writings on the cliffs of the canyon leading into Chicago canyon as shown on page 17 of Touring Topics sent you. Sections containing the stone huts were also left out. The location of these things as to sections, except where I have made actual survey are somewhat vague and indefinite and will be until a thorough exploration and survey is made.

I had some doubts as to the motive of the Museum Association as to whether they really wanted to save this stuff or merely keep me from taking them. Facts are that all movable stuff that has been found by them have been taken, such as arrow heads, rubbing stones, etc. I believe that if it had of occurred to some of them that these things could be saved out easily, they would have been removed also. I do not make this as a positive general statement, but as an opinion.

The map I sent you was marked from my own knowledge and from information received from Charley Forbes, son of Pete Forbes that you will remember. Charley Forbes has been the one that has given a good deal of his time in making these discoveries. He regrets now that he has no car available to explore more and an instrument to definitely locate what he has found. I believe Frank Parcer also has assisted him. I have offered my car and time to help him out.

I am enclosing you an article from Los Angeles Times of last Sunday the 2nd, covering explorations of Alan Le Baron Archaeologist for the Geys Foundation of New York. If the statements of this gentleman are true, and these foot prints and petroglyphs resembling chinese, pictographs of animals, are made by our very beginning of the human race, or shortly after they started a million years ago, then I would say that we are not showing our ancestors proper respect by merely withdrawing a section here and there that happens for the time to amuse us, and letting go a vast area that might contain the lowly amoeba and its steps up to animal life. Roek quarries attractively interspersed here and there, except to those who see nothing attractive unless it has a dollar attached to it, will be about as attractive to the general run of humanity, as power plants where the water fall used to be, or the rifled graves of King Tut and his followers, or a group of hot dog stands and bowling alleys and chuck a luck games would be on Glacier Point.

I still insist that regardless of all examinations and withdrawals made to date, that it is my opinion, in order to best serve the public and in order to properly protect these things of unknown value, pending examination by those qualifed to examine and explore it in its entirety, that a withdrawal order should be made to cover the entire area and taking in all of the now discovered points as shown on the map sent you. The land is worthless for anything except stone and a little grazing and possibly placer mining. There are Billions of tons of this stone outside of the area.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]
NEVADA CALLED CRADLE OF MAN

Archeologist Believes All Races From District Traces Life Back to Lowly, Single-Celled Amoeba California-Nevada Border Gives Up Secrets

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 1 (AP)—Man's first home was in what is now the bleak wasteland of Western Nevada and Eastern California, if the conclusions of Alan Le Baron, archeologist, are correct.

After months of study of the ancient writings, fossil remains and megalithic tombs of a considerable territory along the border line between the two States, Le Baron declares himself convinced that the district was occupied by a cultured race antedating the Glacial period.

The history of this territory, as read in its geology and archeological treasures, he declares, “an encyclopedia of life on this earth” and is probably the only “land lying in the latitudes conducive to the growth and evolution of life that has remained constantly above water for a sufficient length of time to permit the complete evolution of animal life.”

BEGINNS WITH AMOEBA

Beginning with the lowly, single-celled amoeba, he states, life is traceable here with “scarcely a single break until it reaches the greatest physical expression in the giant mastodons.”

The section which Le Baron conceives as having cradled the human race he envisions as a subtropical realm of 1,000,000 years ago.

His theory, also advanced by another scientist years ago, holds that the Sierra range...
BEGINNS WITH AMOEBA

Beginning with the lowly, single-celled amoeba, he states, life is traceable here with "scarcely a single break until it reaches the greatest physical expression in the giant mastodons."

The section which Le Baron conceives as having cradled the human race he envisions as a subtropical realm of 1,000,000 years ago. His theory, also advanced by another scientist years ago, holds that the Sierra range was not then in existence to bar the warm moisture-laden winds from the Pacific but where the Sierras now rise there was a low range of hills from which issued sluggish streams that wound a devious way to the ocean.

Terming it "Cascadia," the same coming from the Cascade range of which the Sierras are a continuation, the ancient territory is seen as the "land literally flowing with milk and honey, with giant sequoias, hardwoods and fruit-bearing trees."

MONGOLIAN TRACES

In Cascadia, Le Baron believes, the Chinese written language had its beginning. "Carved on imperishable stone are the characters which determine these people to be the fathers of the Mongolid race and perhaps the fathers of all people," he declares and holds that the migration was from this continent to Asia and not the reverse.

As for the cause of the migration and subsequent settlement of Asia Le Baron's theory is that: "This land of Cascadia was destroyed when the growth of the Sierra Nevada range shut off forever the warm winds from the Pacific. It was a progressive drying up of a land, a process which endured for ages and in the end forced all living things to migrate or perish."

"The same growth of the Sierras which shifted the moisture-laden winds far to the north brought a warmer climate to Alaska and provided food for the migrating animals. And man followed his food supply."

Most of Le Baron's investigations have been on behalf of the Heye Foundation of New York.

Inclement weather has interrupted his research work but he expects to resume it when spring arrives.

COLORADO FIRE
Mr. Wallis D. McPherson,
Mescal, California.

Dear Mr. McPherson:

I have your letter of February 6 with further reference to the withdrawal of lands for the protection of archeological features north and west of Bishop.

Inasmuch as withdrawals made were based upon field investigation by a representative of the General Land Office and the details of the withdrawal were handled by that office, I do not like at this time to complicate the problem more by requesting additional withdrawals without more detailed information than we now have.

I am hopeful that it will be possible for us to send an archeological expert into that country next season to examine not only the lands that have already been withdrawn but also to study other lands as to their desirability for withdrawal and better protection.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD.) HORACE M. ALBRIGHT

HORACE M. ALBRIGHT,
Director.
Among all the strange symbols inscribed on rock, up and down the globe, and especially in Southwestern America, by peoples since passed utterly out of human knowledge it would be difficult to designate any more mysterious or fascinating than certain specimens now revealed just without our own doors. These striking aboriginal works stand in Eastern California, within an easy day's drive from Los Angeles, present distinctive features found nowhere else, and are here described and illustrated for the first time. So there are, after all, some things new under the sun, although of antiquity beyond reckoning; new from the fact that even the most enthusiastic motor explorers have not seen them and the ever-alert scientists do not know of their existence, yet so old that they may anedate history and tradition.

Such are the major petrolyphic (incised) presentations, principally circular forms, located just above the Owens River Valley, seventeen miles north of Bishop and facing Chalfant Valley, in Mono County, hence appropriately referred to as the Chalfant Valley group. Somewhat general inquiry tends to establish that they are the largest of this character ever discovered in the United States, though smaller circles are of common occurrence throughout the Southwest.

They are cut into the eastern escarpment of a high and rough volcanic tableland between the lofty Sierra Nevada and the White Mountains; and while the site is so effectually hidden that it has been completely overlooked except locally, access is easy by walking two miles northeast from the point where the old Bishop-Benton stage-coach route intersects Chidago (pronounced Sherd-go) Canyon. Contact can also be made from the Mt. Montgomery road running northward via Laws. The extensive plateau, through which the Owens River plunges in a mighty gorge, is in the main an Indianless Indian Reservation, the boundary embracing the imposing drawings by a narrow margin. For nearly half a mile the towering wall, surmountable in few places, shows the carvings and paintings (pictographs) of the prehistoric pictorialists—medicine men or other strong factors in tribal life according to surmise.

Five and a half feet is the approximate diameter of the more prominent circle, and its proportionate accompanying figures serve to make up a weird, dramatic procession of human and animal footprints wends its way a hundred yards along the top of a broken rock ridge, twenty miles north of Bishop.

This scene exemplifies the character of petroglyph-pictograph country. The mountains in the background are the Sierra Nevada occurrence throughout the Southwest. Right—This scene exemplifies the character of petroglyph-pictograph country. The mountains in the background are the Sierra Nevada occurrence throughout the Southwest.

A weird, dramatic procession of human and animal footprints wends its way a hundred yards along the top of a broken rock ridge, twenty miles north of Bishop.
Here ens Valley

series more than twenty feet long with the appearance of being connected. The photographic reproduction herewith discloses the details exactly as they are, no "chalking in" having been resorted to. Conspicuous is a quaint device in bold relief on a sunken field, measuring more than two feet across, that vaguely suggests the emblem of the Santa Fé Railway, though palpably very different. A "tailspinner" at the extreme left is six feet in length and a departure in that respect, all others observed being short.

The Birchim Canyon "Rosetta Stone," is asserted by a modern Indian to be the key to all writings, and about it weaves an amazing legend. The Pinte papoose peering over the top can't read it—yet.

Left—Naughty Baby Rock in the Owens River is said to figure in the legend supposed to be set forth in the "Rosetta Stone."

Neighbors is a slightly lesser circular concept dissimilarly divided and vertical in arrangement, the whole assemblage three times as tall as a man. Wavy parallel lines, wide criss-crossings, a serpent of extreme angularity and other odd shapes leave scant space unfilled and evidence a vast amount of work on the layout. Looming white out of the shadows, spooky of mien and with features startlingly weird, this gigantic figure is guaranteed to produce an eerie sensation if unexpectedly encountered. It confronted me quite suddenly at a turn and I must confess to a decidedly creepy feeling up and down my spinal column! The spell of its blank, chilling stare is awesome. It holds more of mystic charm than the bigger round image, but is neither as artistic nor as attractive; but what a message might it divulge were its rocklocked secret unsealed!

Then we view what appeals as the masterpiece of the lot, itself a part of the inscriptive wall, and an object that must stir the imagination and arouse wonderment and speculation regarding its purpose. This is a projection eight feet beyond the rock body and having a sharp and straight vertical edge extending eighteen feet from top to bottom and the blade cutting due east. Its full length the edge has been beautifully and accurately notched, with corresponding horizontal lines on both sides. Though considerably worn because of the more exposed location the lines are fairly clear, and there remain traces of gravings all over. Near the apex is a cavity, not certainly natural but believed to be so. Means to approach it for close examination could not readily be improvised. A ladder would be requisite.

Did the designers essay a sun dial, calendar, flood gauge or other measuring contrivance, or did a random notion without special significance bring it about? Was it intended as a landmark to be thus peculiarly ornamented or does it call attention to the adjacent symbolisms? Ten steps southward is a higher cliff segment that casts its shadow along the entire edge, but to intimate that this circumstance has any bearing would be a wild guess indeed. In the accompanying photograph, taken November 25, 1928, at sunny high noon, the shade line is just beginning its gradual upward movement at the lower indentations. At the base of the partially-hewn tower, and stretching for miles along the escarpment, is the usually-dry flood channel of half a dozen intermittent creeks having their sources in the White Mountains. During periods of rainfall the water rushes down that wide sandy waste in roaring volume.

The minor depictions in that situation comprise an exhaustive range—big-horn sheep, bear, deer, something that passes muster as a buffalo, the head of a goose, a clearly-sketched dragon fly, three hands in taglio, chicken or turkey tracks, one turtle, plenty of lizards and snakes, indifferent human figures, geometrical designs and a conventionized drawing of the fabled Chinese thunderbird that flapped his wings to make the heavens crash and tumble and the earth tremble.

The formation bearing these and other inscriptions in the expansible plateau area is rhyolitic lava, a very acid volcanic rock—the lava form of granite—and geological authorities pronounce it so hard and enduring that they might remain intact for hundreds or even thousands of centuries, though here subject to severe climatic conditions. A glance at the illustrations will disclose clefts in the rock and consequent breaks in the devices.

The Chalfant Valley group, unseen save by an occasional stroller devoid of appreciation, is not the only important neglected one thereabout. Six miles away, twenty beyond Bishop and within a stone's throw of the Benton road, is a display of human and animal tracks in stone that would arrest the attentive layman or s.
extends some distance from the immense tableland rock body the dramatic procession of footprints wends its precarious way, almost every individual headed northward. It conjures up a dark lost trail into another world. There literally are hundreds of tracks, prominent among others those of a giant who would have required an extra wide No. 12 shoe. Another is the size of a narrow No. 9; the soft baby feet of a child of three years and those of a boy or girl of seven. Here and there the imprint of a hand signifies that the walking was slippery and arduous. Heavy marks of bears' paws, the lighter steps of dogs or coyotes, cats and indistinguishable beasts and wriggling serpents complete the queer march, which begins and ends abruptly where the stone has broken off and crumbled or been swept away by a deluge.

Almost anyone would be willing to swear that every person and mammal represented trod carefully upon that smooth ledge before it had become fully hardened; possibly imperiled and in terror, to escape a flood, the evade enemies, or for some other pressing reason. The balls and toes of the feet sunk in more than half an inch and some of the heels deeper and they look perfect, but—those footprints are handmade! Close scrutiny brings to light plain proofs of chiseling; and there are interspersed geometrical and other figures conflicting with the tracks and chipped at the same time.

What prompted this extravagant and painstaking pedanuous deception? It is marvelously done and the toil its execution entailed almost inconceivable. Was the intent to relate some exceptional occurrence, an epochal migration, the safe deliverance from some dire menace, the capture of bears and assurance of a bountiful food supply, or has it no extraordinary significance? Scattered about are both pictographs and petroglyphs, including grotesque life-size figures of men, but the presence of the path of tracks on the ridge above would hardly be suspected.

Chidago Canyon, framed by heaped masses of gigantic boulders, is a labyrinth of carvings, paintings and combinations where the road crosses the gash. The spectacle runs the gamut of the graphic arts of the time, the figures ranging from the minute to those requiring entire stones for expression. On the skyward surface of a block as large as a house and piled atop others is a large incised likeness of a deer surmounting a four-line circle with a heart in its center. When this comprehensive group first attracted notice, about forty-five years ago, the Smithsonian Institution sent out an expedition to study it and the others then known, but the results were somewhat disappointing. Attempts at deciphering fail now as they did then.

High on the face of well-nigh unscalable bluffs at the head of Round Valley, where they may be glimpsed by any passing motorist, are more than a dozen blood-red human hand prints. With a single exception all were evidently made from the long, slender and daintily-shaped right hand of a woman, pointing upward; the other is from the heavier palm and fingers of a male. Eight of these gruesome marks still are very distinct and valley residents say the color is as bright as when the earliest pioneers beheld them. Some are so dim that they are barely discernible. It seems incredible that they should so long have withstood the blasts of mountain storms and the blaze of summer suns. On the beetling precipice and on boulders that jut into the State highway are superior small pictographs. The stone at this picturesque place is excellent for building purposes and a quarry has been established. Blocks of any size can be sawed out and quantities are shipped to Los Angeles and other cities. Some day the red hands may adorn the cornerstone of a skyscraper!

The Piute and Mono Indians, who still constitute a considerable proportion of the population of Eastern California, and as well the Shoshones of Nevada, stoutly disclaim any knowledge of or relationship to the authors of the rock writings and are in
intelligence and some schooling, soberly informed me that this is the key to the entire system of writings—the Rosetta Stone, as it were; but that it has been translated only to the extent of setting out this amazing legend:

An Indian mother was nursing her first-born, a son, on that spot when the infant suddenly closed his sharp new teeth on her breast and refused to let go. She slapped him repeatedly and tried to jerk him away, but he continued to cling and bite until she screamed in agony. Now there are pat-see-was, or water babies, beautiful creatures that are supposed to look to the well-being of good young Indians and to improve the behavior of the naughty, and presently four or five of these came up out of the stream. By snapping the child sharply on the head with their fingers they made it release its hold. Then they took it under the water with them, not for punishment but to teach it better manners. For inexplicable reasons they decided to keep it there and the poor

died to dread and shun their tokens. They will tell you that all are the handiwork of Hi-na-noo, the first man, whose father was a coyote and his mother a dove. He came into the valley (Owens) from the south-eastward in quest of the mother dove and in the course of his wanderings made the signs to attract her. This was in the fathomless past. One aged Indian said to me that when he was a small boy his grandfather told him the birds probably pecked the markings in the rock.

Plute Long Jim, who recently departed the Pahrump Valley, Nevada, for the Happy Hunting Ground, firmly declined to go nearer than half a mile to an important pictograph site. His awe was not feigned, though he could not make the reason clear. As to their origin he half whispered: "In the night little man so high," indicating with his hand about fifteen inches above the ground, "come an' write um, then run away. Little man all same devil made mark in dark when no can see. He come long before Indian."

This brings to mind the tiny persons possessed of super-natural powers that have played so prominent a part in the strange stories of the Chinese from the beginning of their literature to the present. Where did Plute Long Jim get that corresponding superstitious idea?

Along Rock Creek in Birchim Canyon, ten miles northwest of Bishop and only several hundred yards from the State highway, lies a splendidly preserved tablet so clearly engraved that almost every stroke of the chisel shows white, the surface having been painted red. A Plute tribesman of unusual squaw sought far and wide during the remainder of her life, but never saw the papoose again.

Long afterward, however, its head did emerge from the water, in the form of stone and heroically proportioned, a short distance up the canyon and in the middle of

the Owens River just above the confluence of the two streams. The body remained beneath, anchored forever. In substantiation of this fantastic tale my dusky friend pointed out the huge stone head, in truth a tangible object, which we may call Naughty Baby Rock for lack of a better name. Under its "chin," which does not appear in the illustration because the view is from the back, grows a bushy perennial weed that looks like a bunch of whiskers and in which a pair of birds build a nest and rear their young summer after summer. The Department of Water and Power of Los Angeles has constructed and maintains an auto road into the canyon and to this oddity.

Of course the cold facts are that it was a boulder like hundred of others in the locality but chanced to lie in the course of the swift river and the powerful current did the sculpturing. The water swirling about it and constantly splashing up and freezing and thawing during the winter months causes scaling and disintegration about the neck and eventually the "baby" will be beheaded. It is a phenomenon the public has missed.

The tale of Naughty Baby Rock manifests the surprising faculty for fanciful romancing with which Lo frequently is endowed. His mentality may seem dull, but it functions in whimsical channels.

Whatever the merit of the Indians' contention that their ancestors had no part in
certain of the writings, devoting hours to their destruction. None would ever vouchsafe a reason for a drastic procedure, but obviously there was something in the delineations to which they seriously objected and which they must have been able to interpret. The effects of their harshest measure may be seen today. This is at least a circumstantial link between the authors and effaces of the inscriptions. It removes doubt as to some degree of undertakings.

Professor Julian Steward of the Department of Anthropology, University of California, who has spent much time among the Eastern California natives and made a deep study of the subject, concludes that the rock pictures were made by ancestors of our living Indians, although it is not known precisely what tribes wrought them. Professor Steward's enlightening treatise on the rock symbols of the Southwestern American Indians appeared in Touring Topics for May, 1927, and is recognized as authoritative.

Charles T. Forbes and Frank M. Parcher of Bishop, secretary-treasurer and curator, respectively, of the Eastern California Museum recently organized at Independence, is due credit for constant research in that country and their activities brought much of the information made available for this article. Mr. Forbes, a scholarly young college man, began this labor of love ten years ago and was soon joined by Mr. Parcher, no less earnest a digger for knowledge, and they have covered the ground foot by foot insofar as time permitted. Nowstanding their progress they feel that the burros of hundreds of thousands of self-propelled motor vehicles. The story of the Holmes' eventful and epochal first trip in the Burro, Par- creefer of hundreds of thousands of carvings and paintings have not been disclosed a single implement, these being used not only in the vicinities of the stone circles and consisting of handstones, large and small block obsidian arrowpoints, skinning knife blades, etc., the heavy and the incising must have been done with crude tools of obsidian or quartz; and a few miles below Big Fin are scores of designs and single figures cleanly cut in basaltic lava, a black substance that is adamantine, heavy as iron, and practically everlasting. Master artisanship only could conquer it. There is a deep note of tragedy and ineffable pathos in the ceaseless struggles of races to hand their records understandingly down through the ages to other peoples and their efforts should at least be spared if not permitted. The Indian picture, however, may come to pass when our own elaborate chronicles, though rife in enduring letters of gold and bronze and silver and a thousand other mediums, shall be as uninteresting to our successors on this sphere as the puzzling messages we are striving to solve. In the slow attrition of time stretching into cons history itself becomes but transitory.