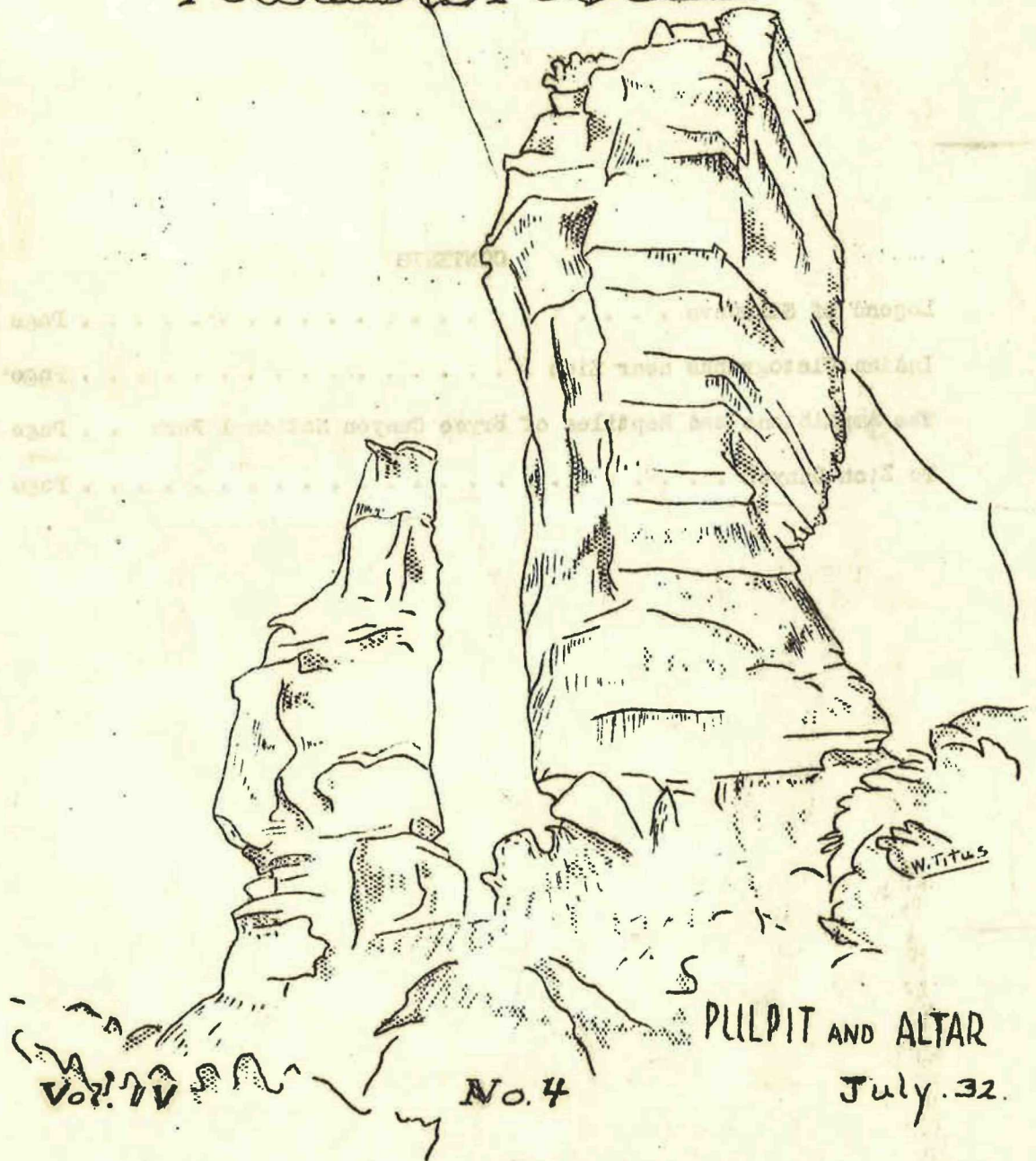


Zion and Bryce Nature Notes



PULPIT AND ALTAR

July. 32.

No. 4

Vol. IV

Zion and Bryce National Monuments

CONTENTS

Legend of Shivavava	Page 1
Indian Pictographs near Zion	Page 4
The Amphibians and Reptiles of Bryce Canyon National Park . .	Page 6
To Zion Canyon	Page 7

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This bulletin is issued monthly for the purpose of giving information to those interested in the natural history and scientific features of Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks. Additional copies of these bulletins may be obtained free of charge by those who can make use of them by addressing the Superintendent, Zion National Park, Utah. PUBLICATIONS USING THESE NOTES SHOULD GIVE CREDIT TO ZION-BRYCE NATURE NOTES.

P. P. Patraw, Superintendent

John Gray, Park Naturalist

LEGEND OF SINAWAVA

Based on the Custom of the Piute Indians
By H. L. Reid, Ranger-Naturalist

Many years before the coming of the White man there lived upon the Rio Virgin an Indian tribe known to themselves as the Parrusi. This tribe had its headquarters some fifty miles below Zion Canyon, but each autumn, as was their custom, they came into the canyon to hunt deer and to gather the wild fruit that grew here in abundance.

The tribe was famed throughout the entire southwest for the beauty of its maidens, and many of the romantic braves from surrounding tribes visited the region with the hope that they might win one of these dusky maidens.

Between the young Indian brave and his sweetheart there often developed in that day an affection as full of romance as any known in our own day, but before the young lover could claim the maiden as his squaw, he must prove that he was able to defend her against all opposition by leading her through the Line of Braves. In order to give all an opportunity to express their opposition, word must be sent through the surrounding tribes that on a definite date and at a stipulated time and place, the young brave would stand ready to defend his claim. And should there be those who did not approve, they must be present to issue protest or forever remain silent.

On the day set for the ceremony the young brave, according to the custom, must take the maiden of his choice by the hand and lead her between two lines of braves. If there was anyone within the lines who opposed the young lover taking the maiden as his squaw, he must step forward and oppose the progress of the would-be bridegroom, but if none stepped forward to challenge his progress and he passed through the lines successfully, he thus received the consent of the tribe to claim the maiden.

According to the custom, the opposing brave must meet his rival face to face and stop his progress. Should the would-be bridegroom succeed in passing his opponent by any means - trickery, speed or strength - he was then free to proceed down the line.

Among the beautiful maids of the Parrusi tribe there was none that could compare in loveliness with the Maid of Sinawava, daughter of Chief Sinawava. The fame of this Maiden and of her many virtues had spread throughout the entire Southland, and many were the suitors that came seeking the privilege of leading her through the line of braves. From over the Colorado came the proud Baroneta, Chief of the Navajos. From the Shevitz camp Chief Keloose, and from the Mohaves the stately Too-a-yoo. Of her many suitors there was none more offensive to the Maiden than the big, broad-shouldered, sensual warrior Mok-a-pots, who came wooing her from the desert regions to the north.

But the pleadings of all these braves were in vain. To the comely maiden no whisperings of love were so sweet as those that fell from the lips of her own tribesman - Pahritz.

Pahritz she loved with all the passionate longings of her young soul. He was not so powerful as many of her admirers. He was, in fact, a stripling of a youth with fine features and a keen eagle-eye, bespeaking pride and ambition. He was also gentle and refined and ever willing to sacrifice for the comfort of the Maid of Sinawava.

Each fall as the Parrusi Indians came into this region the Maid of Sinawava and Pahritz would accompany them. As lovers they would wander, hand in hand, up the canyon, often stopping in what is now known as the Temple, their favorite spot, where they whispered to each other the old familiar tale of love, and dreamed of the day when Pahritz would lead her through the line of braves and claim her for his own.

Often in their moments of loving reverie they would be disturbed by the presence, sometimes seen and at other times unseen, of the big, sensual warrior from the desert. For although Mok-a-pots knew that his attentions were offensive to the Maid, yet he nevertheless persisted in forcing them upon her and would often follow the lovers and spy upon them in their sacred moments of love.

Pahritz, although a vigorous, keen-eyed youth, was physically no match for his broad shouldered rival from the desert, and because of this the Maid had often wondered if Mok-a-pots, in his jealousy, would oppose her lover when he would lead her through the line of braves.

In the days of the golden autumn when the Maid of Sinawava had reached the age of eighteen summers, runners were sent to the surrounding tribes with the announcement that during the fall hunt, while the Parrusi were camped in the vicinity of Zion Canyon, the manly Pahritz proposed to lead the beautiful Maid of Sinawava through the line of braves.

Many were the Indian braves that gathered here that fall. The camps extended over the flats and well into the canyon, a thing quite unusual as the Indians disliked the idea of camping within the canyon walls. Within the camp were many braves who had once cast a longing eye toward the Maiden. Some of these braves were experienced men of power and well able to oppose the progress of Pahritz, but realizing the great love that existed between the Maiden and Pahritz, they came to honor and not to oppose.

The choice of the spot where the ceremony should be held was left to the lovers, and they chose the place now known as the Temple of Sinawava. As the hour of the ceremony arrived the two lines formed across the flat within the Temple. When all was in readiness Pahritz, with grace and gentleness, stepped to the door of the tepee occupied by the Maid and her mother. He stood for a moment in silence while a mother's farewell caress was bestowed upon her daughter. The girl stepped forth radiant and charming. Hand in hand the lovers proceeded to the head of the waiting column, where Chief Sinawava greeted them and bade them proceed between the lines. Slowly, in accordance with the custom of the tribe, they moved forward, the braves in the lines expressing their approval by a series of inarticulate grunts.

Midway the line stood the powerful Mok-a-pots, sullen and revengeful. As the couple approached he stepped forward. Several of the braves, knowing that his attentions had never been received favorably, tried to dissuade him, feeling that what he could not win by love, he should not attempt to take by force. Mok-a-pots, with a broad jealous grin playing across his face, insisted upon his right to oppose.

Pahritz leading the gentle Maiden never faltered. His eagle eye caught the situation at a glance, and the very thought of anyone attempting to take Sinawava from him increased his courage and determination. With her as the prize, death would be sweeter than defeat. Mok-a-pots, realizing his superior strength, stood carelessly awaiting the test. His very carelessness gave Pahritz his opportunity. Every eye was centered upon him. The squaws seated about the campfire, heretofore indifferent to the ceremony, now arose that they might better view the proceedings. The Maid with her heart loudly pounding and with a prayer upon her lips permitted herself to be led forward. Her mind doubted, but her heart trusted.

Mok-a-pots squared himself for the encounter. Pahritz, with the agility of a mountain lion, moved as if to attack on the left, and then with lightning swiftness, so cleverly executed that none knew exactly what happened, dodged to the right passing quickly under the arm of the over-confident Mok-a-pots, taking Sinawava with him. Although failing to realize just what had happened, yet all were delighted. A roar of laughter, mingled with approving grunts, arose from the lines and from the camp of squaws.

Mok-a-pots was humiliated and embarrassed to be thus so cleverly eluded by his smaller opponent. A murderous curl played for a moment upon his lips, and then, in defiance of all the customs of the tribe, he turned and rushed upon his rival from the back. Being thus suddenly attacked from the rear, Pahritz was easily beaten down. He fell to the ground, his head striking upon a sharp rock. Although he was knocked unconscious, the injury was not thought to be serious. An hour passed and he did not recover. The lines

were temporarily broken, and Pahritz was moved to the topee of Sinawava. The shadows of darkness settled over the canyon, and yet no change. With a prayer for his recovery the faithful maiden watched through the long night. As the wee hours of the morning approached he was gradually weakening. The Great Spirit was calling. As the morning sun rose over the Mountain of the Bleeding Heart the spirit of Pahritz was taken to the Indian's Happy Hunting Ground.

After appropriate funeral ceremonies the body, at the request of the Maiden, was placed in a grave in the center of the Temple near the rock now known as the Altar. It was at this spot that the lovers had first talked of going through the line of braves together. A large stone was rolled over the grave to mark the spot.

As the tribe returned to the sunny valleys of the Rio Virgin, Sinawava begged to be permitted to remain for yet a little longer, promising her mother that she would follow within a few weeks at most.

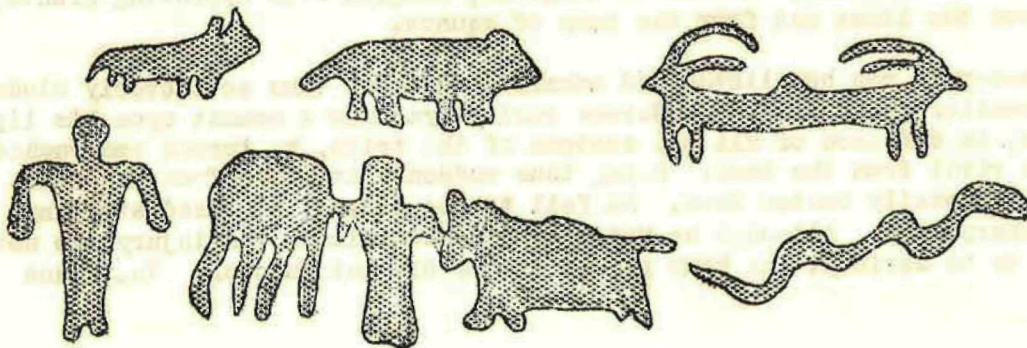
Being left alone she moved her topee near the burial spot. The days passed into weeks, but she was insensible to everything but the whisperings of the wind, which to her was the voice of Pahritz speaking of their love and of the day when he would lead her through the line of braves and claim her for his own.

Her mother and friends waited for her return. After many weeks of anxiety a searching party was sent out. The early storms of winter had already placed a blanket of snow over the landscape. The party reached the camp at the mouth of the canyon, but not finding her there they proceeded with difficulty to the grave where they found her topee beside the rock. They entered and found her within, but Pahritz had returned and taken her spirit through the long line of braves and claimed her for his own.

The rock marking his burial place was removed and she, together with all her belongings, was placed with her lover, where they still rest. And if you will but cross the river to the Altar and remain there during the long hours of the night you will still hear the voices of the beautiful Sinawava and the manly Pahritz as they whisper their immortal words of love.

In honor of the old chief and his beautiful daughter, the Maid of Sinawava, and the faithful love that existed between her and Pahritz, the Indians named the valley the Temple of Sinawava.

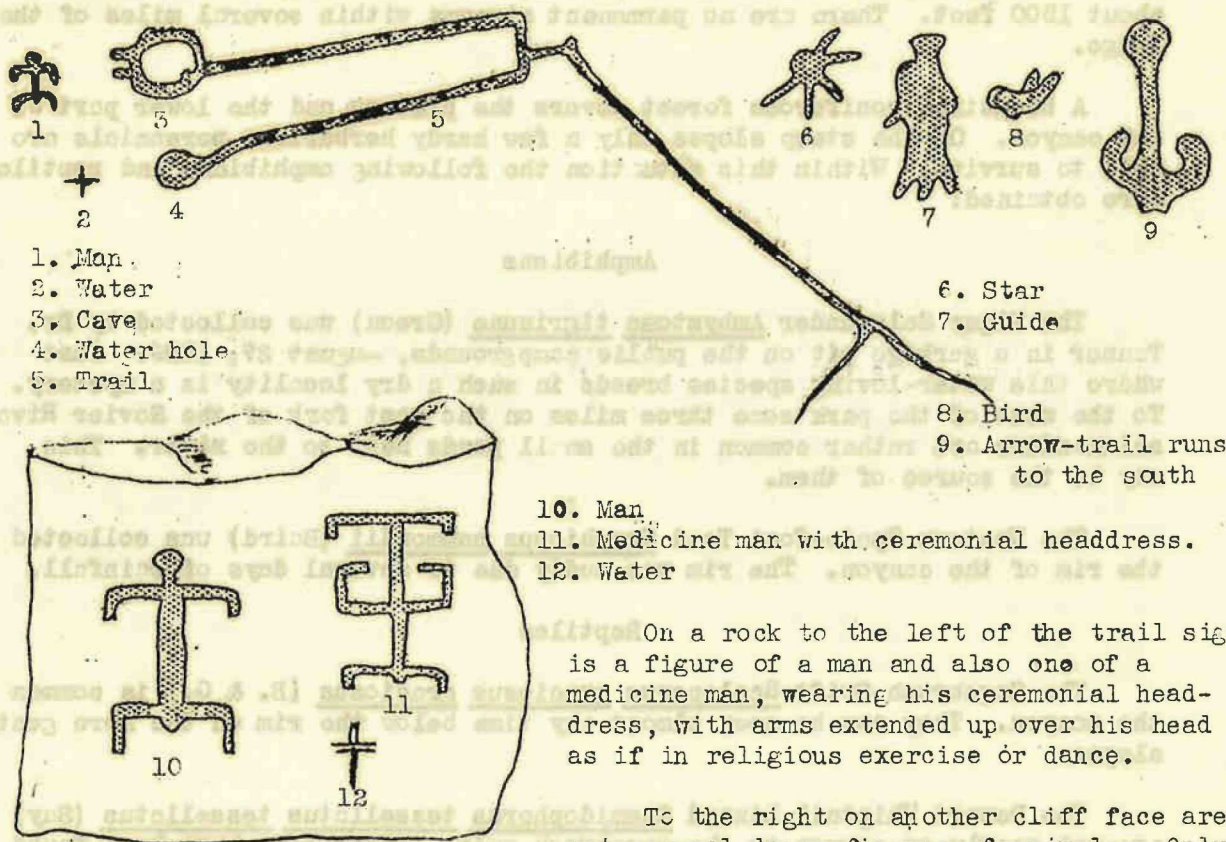
INDIAN PICTOGRAPHS NEAR ZION



INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHS NEAR ZION

A few miles to the southeast of Zion National Park are found some very interesting remains of an old Indian campsite. The campsite is situated on a high bench of the mesa and overlooks a huge wash that extends to the southward. The surface of the bench is the hard level of Shinarump conglomerate that forms the protective cap over many areas of this region.

Lying below one of these campsites a party with the Park Naturalist recently found several very large rock surfaces covered with a multitude of Indian diagrams or pictographs. One large smooth rock was a trail sign. This is indicated in the following manner. Dr. Keleman, archeologist at the Los Angeles Museum has been kind enough to designate some of the meanings.



1. Map.
2. Water
3. Cave
4. Water hole
5. Trail

6. Star
7. Guide
8. Bird
9. Arrow-trail runs to the south

10. Man
11. Medicine man with ceremonial headdress.
12. Water

On a rock to the left of the trail sign is a figure of a man and also one of a medicine man, wearing his ceremonial headdress, with arms extended up over his head as if in religious exercise or dance.

To the right on another cliff face are cut several dozen figures of animals. Only a few are shown. It is impossible to

determine whether these are animals which existed in the neighborhood or whether they are representations of animals that the Indians might have seen in their various hunting grounds. Pieces of pottery as well as the character of the drawings indicate that they are of very early origin.

THE AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK
K. E. Weight, Ranger-Naturalist

Field work for the purpose of collecting specimens of the amphibians and reptiles of Bryce Canyon National Park was started during the summer of 1931. Previous to 1931 some collecting was done within the park boundary by Dr. Vasco M. Tanner and students of the Brigham Young University.

The thirteen canyons included within the park have been carved from the Paunsaugunt Plateau, the rim of which ranges from 8,000 to 9,000 feet altitude. The park covers an area of 55 square miles, having an average width of 3 miles from the east to west and about 18 miles in length from north to south. From the west rim of the plateau at the Lodge to the east boundary line of the park, a distance of two miles, there is a drop in elevation of about 1500 feet. There are no permanent streams within several miles of the Lodge.

A beautiful coniferous forest covers the plateau and the lower part of the canyon. On the steep slopes only a few hardy herbarious perennials are able to survive. Within this situation the following amphibians and reptiles were obtained:

Amphibians

The Tiger Salamander Ambystoma tigrinum (Green) was collected by Dr. Tanner in a garbage pit on the public campgrounds, August 27, 1929. Just where this water-loving species breeds in such a dry locality is a mystery. To the west of the park some three miles on the east fork of the Sevier River salamanders are rather common in the small ponds next to the river. This may be the source of them.

The Western Spade-foot Toad Scaphiopus hammondi (Baird) was collected on the rim of the canyon. The rim was muddy due to several days of rainfall.

Reptiles

The Sagebrush Swift Sceloporus graciosus graciosus (B. & G.) is common in the canyon. They can be seen almost any time below the rim on the more gentle slopes.

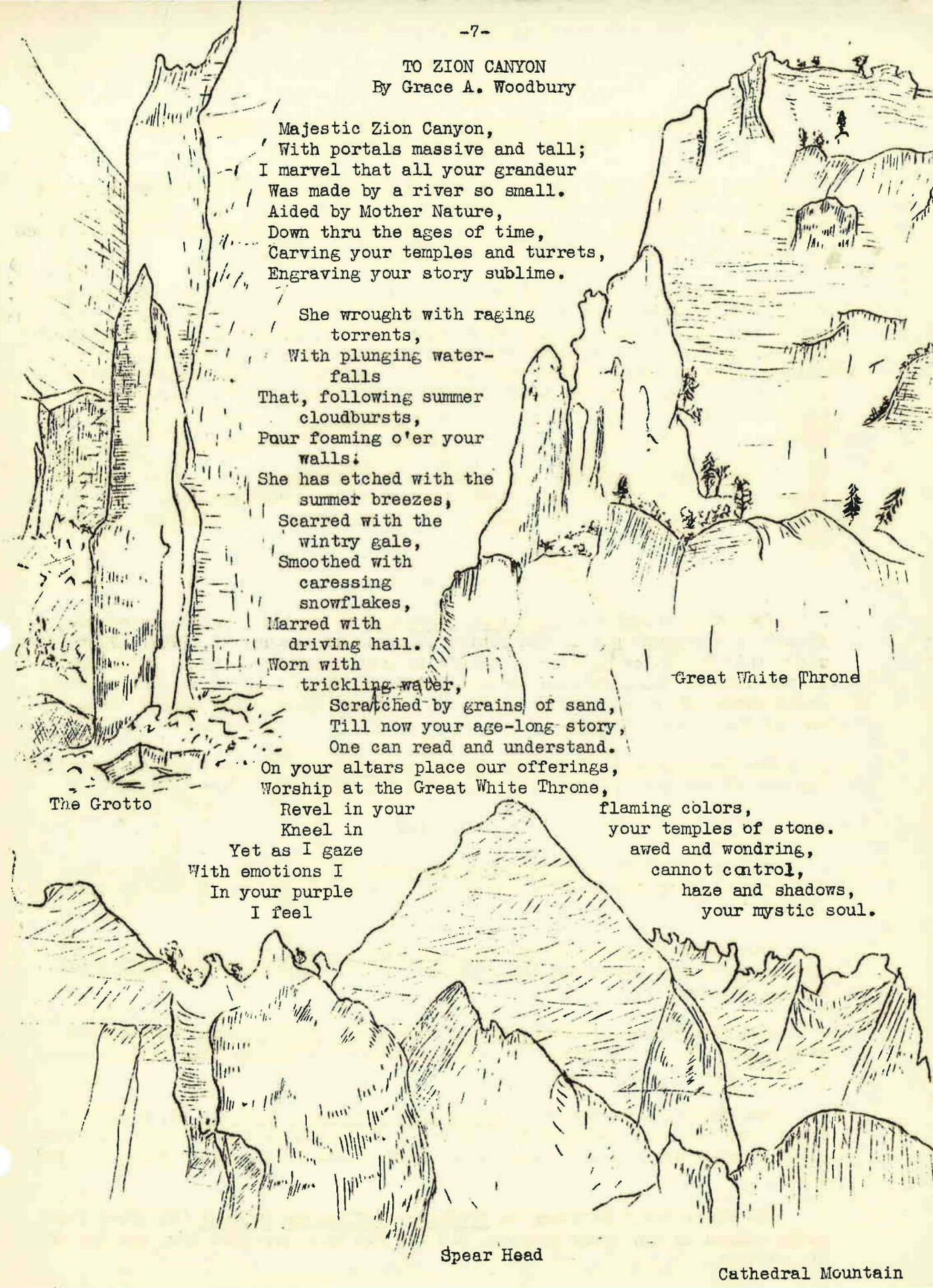
The Desert Whiptail Lizard Cnemidophorus tessellatus tessellatus (Say) are not nearly as common as the sagebrush swift. Specimens have been found only in the canyon.

Girard's Horned Lizard Phrynosoma douglasii ornatissimum (Girard) are very common on the plateau. Their color adaptation serves very well in their protection.

The Wandering Garter Snake Thamnophis ordmoides vagrans (B. & G.) was found near the east boundary line in the main canyon near the Lodge. At this place a small spring, just outside the park, flows to the Paria Valley to the east.

The Great Basin Rattlesnake Crotalus confluentus lutosus (Klauber) formerly common in the lower canyons, has not yet been reported from the top of the plateau.

TO ZION CANYON
By Grace A. Woodbury



Majestic Zion Canyon,
With portals massive and tall;
I marvel that all your grandeur
Was made by a river so small.
Aided by Mother Nature,
Down thru the ages of time,
Carving your temples and turrets,
Engraving your story sublime.

She wrought with raging
torrents,
With plunging water-
falls
That, following summer
cloudbursts,
Pour foaming o'er your
walls.
She has etched with the
summer breezes,
Scarred with the
wintry gale,
Smoothed with
caressing
snowflakes,
Marred with
driving hail.
Worn with
trickling water,
Scratched by grains of sand,
Till now your age-long story,
One can read and understand.

On your altars place our offerings,
Worship at the Great White Throne,

The Grotto

Revel in your
Kneel in
Yet as I gaze
With emotions I
In your purple
I feel

Great White Throne

flaming colors,
your temples of stone.
awed and wondring,
cannot control,
haze and shadows,
your mystic soul.

Spear Head

Cathedral Mountain