



THE BASIC PROBLEM was, which one of the many small canyons crossed by the road was the entry to our goal? After one false start, we made our second try up a canyon deceptively narrow at the road but widening out to a point where travel, if not easy, was possible. I put my 16-year-old son Gordon in front with the machete and he soon proved that it is the indispensable tool for opening that country. The canyon, normally dry within days of a rain, was running with a good flow of clear rather yellowish water with a distinct sharp taste (later we found that most of these canyons carried arsenic in the water). The vegetation was typical of the country. Dense stands of chaparral yucca, almost impenetrable even with a machete, grew down the slopes to the shallow benches bordering the stream. Ceanothus of several varieties was common, together with chamise, manzanita, ironwood, and cherry. Trees were sparse—an occasional small grove of live oaks, some sycamores, digger pines and the ubiquitous dwarfed willow. Walking the benches that meandered from side to side of the narrowing canyon we came to a fork. Which way to go? The toss of a coin took us up the left fork. The way soon turned knife narrow with poor footing and heavy brush. We floundered upward for half an hour where the defile opened somewhat at another fork and we found ourselves at the edge of the sandstone reefs. Eager to get started climbing the rocks, we bolted a sketchy lunch washed down with arsenic water. After lunch we split up and spent

several hours investigating every likely outcrop. We found several caves, some large, some small, some smoke-blackened but no sign of paintings and no great single rock resembling the one in the story. So back we went down the machete trail to the fork to try again. (The following year we reworked this canyon and found a superb group of paintings we had been within fifty feet of and had missed in the dense brush.) We followed the other fork for nearly an hour when it began to look promising. Sandstone ridges began appearing on the left and on the right, climaxed by a splendid balanced rock like a giant top on the cliff to our right.

Shortly after, Gordon's friend John Hamilton, ranging ahead, came running back and reported seeing a large isolated rock on the left about a quarter of a mile away. We hurried on, stopping only long enough to kill a rattlesnake disputing our way, and soon saw John's rock. It looked good. Rising out of the chaparral like a giant molar tooth, it dwarfed all other rocks in view. The sight gave us new energy and pushing on, we threaded our way through a yucca patch on a shaly hillside, across a chamise-choked bench, and stood at the foot of it. It was an exciting moment but with two teen-age boys along there was only the barest suggestion of a pause. They were out of sight around the base of the rock before I had caught my breath and frantic shouts soon announced a find. I followed them through the stands of king sized manzanita that skirted the rock and

CAMPBELL GRANT

ANCIENT ART IN THE WILDERNESS

IT ALL STARTED when a burro that was packing our gear into the mountains decided to lie down in a stream and have a good roll. A friend and I had planned a ten-day trip that would take us through one of the roughest pieces of country in the United States, the San Rafael Primitive Area of Santa Barbara County. Our objective was the headwaters of the Sisquoc River where we would fish and photograph condors if we were lucky. Unhappily the burro, rented from a rancher with the assurance that he was a good, stout animal, accustomed to carrying packs, turned out to be neither good nor stout nor accustomed to carrying anything but his own scrawny, miserable self. At the first trail crossing of a creek, his legs began to wobble in midstream and he collapsed in a foot of water. No amount of pushing or pulling would get him up. We had to unpack all our equipment from the wretched beast before we could get him to move.

At this point a group of children, tin cups dangling from each small belt, came hiking up the trail led by Kathy Jackson, a stalwart Sierra Clubber. They sat down in the welcome shade by the stream and soon we were having a typical trailside conversation with Mrs. Jackson. We talked about the ceanothus bloom which was at its peak just then, about the tasty rainbow trout so plentiful in the area we were headed for, about the Indian caves found in the great sandstone reefs of the back country. Did she know of any with paintings in them like the well-known Painted Cave back of Santa Barbara? Yes, she did know of one, had been to it years before. It was a tremendous solitary rock maybe seventy feet high with caves at the base containing paintings. Indian cut hand- and foot-holds led to the top of the rock where a natural cistern held many thousands of gallons of water through the winter months. It was a provocative story and I decided I must see that great rock some day.

PACIFIC DISCOVERY

← Red and white are the colors of this Chumash Indian pictograph in the rugged sandstone back country of Santa Barbara County, south coastal California. Our artist-author has carefully reproduced many dozens of aboriginal murals from projections of color slides; otherwise, through either weathering or vandalism they would ultimately be lost. Campbell Grant's copies have been shown at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, University of California in Berkeley, and are this summer at the California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.

→ Pool Rock rose up out of the chaparral like a giant molar tooth. (Author)





rock which we named Pool Rock and found about a dozen caves in the north face. Only two of these had paintings, however, and I shot a roll of Kodachrome slides to record them. I also measured the paintings and took altitude readings. The rest of the morning was spent in fruitless climbing to all nearby rock formations. Returning to Pool Rock, we found a flat boulder with many bedrock mortars. After lunch around the pool we all took a dip, shouldered our packs and started the long trek back to the car.

This was the beginning. The next year I made a number of trips into the back country and brought back more photographs of these amazing aboriginal paintings. In my studio I projected the slides onto paper, made careful tracings and painted them, closely following the original colors.

It was apparent that the bulk of the paintings were in extraordinarily rough and inaccessible country and might be seen by no one except an occasional hunter or forest ranger. On the other hand the few known paintings easily reached by the public had, without exception, been brutally vandalized or destroyed. These facts gave me an idea. How about making a

joined them at the entrance of a small cave, about five feet high and ten deep. I have seen many painted caves since then but that one will always be something special. The walls were heavily smoke-blackened. On the dark surface were many curious creatures in red, white, brown, and black. The principal figure seemed to be some sort of medicine man in horned headdress (see cover). The lesser creatures were mostly headless—a snake, a sinister looking giant lizard, a horned lizard, several impossible-looking things, and some bear tracks carved in the rock. In the flat floor bedrock mortars had been pecked out.

Continuing our way around the rock, we found carved hand- and foot-holds leading upward. This certainly began to look like what we were after. Dropping the packboards, we scrambled up the old trail still dimly seen on the lichen covered surface. At the top were a number of depressions giving the rock the molar-tooth look. The largest of these was full of clear rainwater and big enough to swim in. The boys were soon splashing around in the pool while I began thinking about a camp for the night. Beside the pool a small meadow growing on wind-blown soil led to another higher grassy patch with a good-sized digger pine on it. I gathered a supply of wood here and we soon sat down to a welcome meal of dehydrated soup and steak. That night we slept beneath the pine tree on top of the ancient Indian stronghold. I have never had a more dramatic camp spot.

In the morning we thoroughly checked over our



collection of faithful paintings of these almost unknown art treasures as a permanent record so they could be seen by all? In March 1960 I proposed this project to Dr. V. L. Vander-Hoof, Director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, and showed him my drawings. He was most enthusiastic about the idea and we made an agreement. The Museum was to give me access to any records in their files that might aid me in the search and would cover the basic expenses of the operation. The final paintings were to be the property of the Museum and would be on permanent exhibition.

Since then I have covered many hundreds of miles,

▲ Climbing to the top of Pool Rock, we found a large pool of clear rainwater. (Author)

➤ This is from the actual Kodachrome of the "medicine man in horned headdress" part of the Pool Rock painting. The cover of this issue is from the author's reproduction.



by foot, on horseback, with jeep, truck and car. I have seen the wilderness country of the Santa Barbara region as I had never seen it before. As a fisherman and hunter I had stuck pretty close to the beaten track; now I go everywhere. Some trips were unexpectedly easy and the rewards rich. Sometimes a tough four- or five-day back-pack produced nothing. The best hunting ground has been in Santa Barbara County but many fine sites have been covered in San Luis Obispo, Kern, and Ventura counties. A few of the finds have been made with no advance information but most have been located with the help of

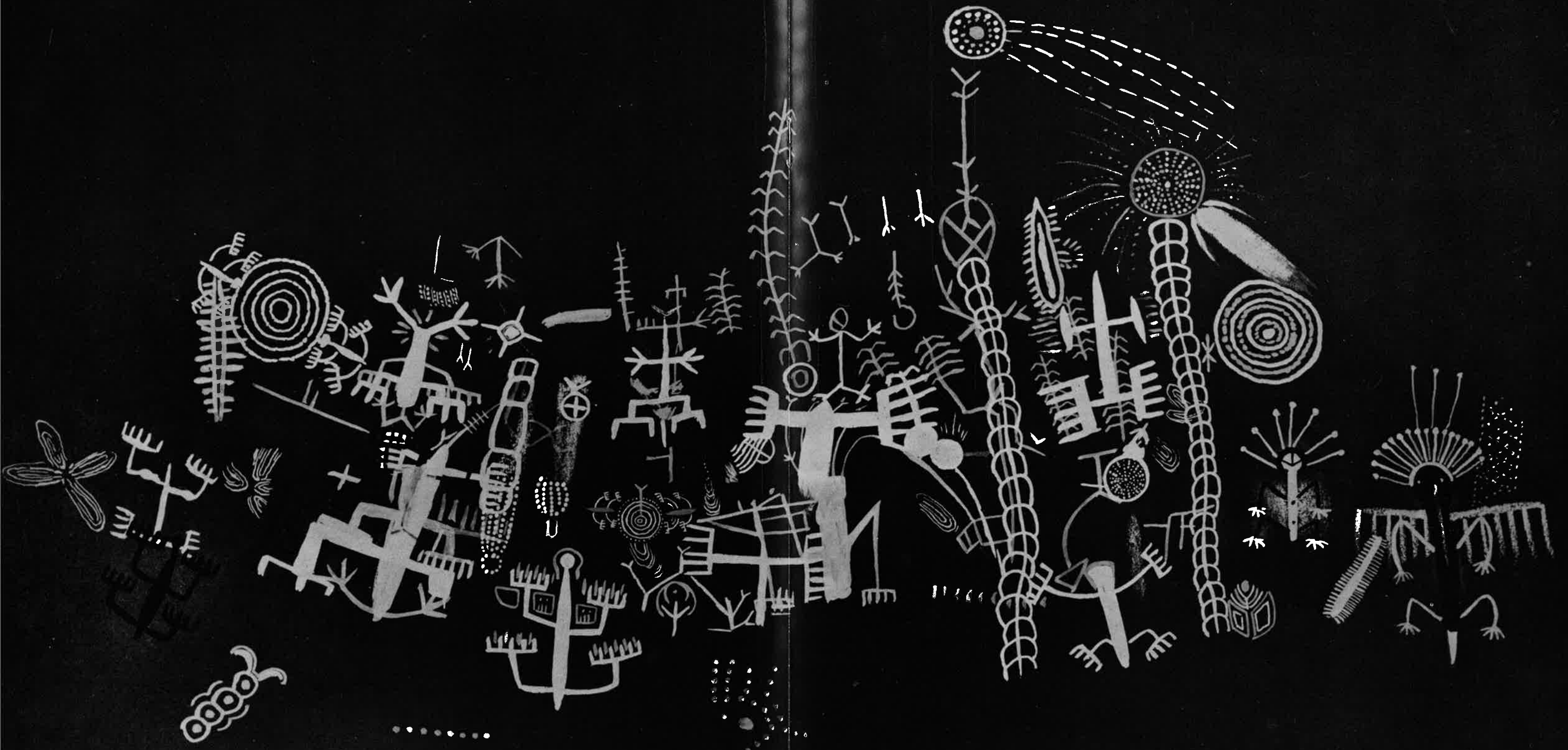
ranchers, forest rangers, hunters, and amateur archeologists.

The location of all sites is kept confidential and in the locked files at the Museum. It is unfortunate that such a degree of secrecy must be maintained, but anyone visiting the famous Painted Cave off the San Marcos Pass will see the reason why. This fine rock painting has been protected by the owners for a great many years by a heavy iron grill with double padlocks. In spite of this, the locks have been smashed off and in one case the grill was cut with a torch so someone could scribble or carve his name on the painting. In San Luis Obispo County, probably the largest and finest wall painting in North America has been destroyed by art lovers from the nearby oil towns. The ruin has been accomplished not only by countless carved and painted names but even by gunfire. This depressing atavistic urge to destroy ancient works of art or to identify one's self with them through name and date is deeply planted in the simple mind—two thousand years ago, Roman soldiers were scratching their names on Egyptian temple walls. If you cannot curb the vandals, the next best thing is to keep temptation out of their reach.

Indian rock paintings are known as pictographs; rock carvings are called petroglyphs. There are almost no petroglyphs in the Santa Barbara region. A few caves contain straight lines of pecked dots and one interesting cave had forty-nine petroglyphs of bear tracks, probably grizzly. The pictographs are invari-



▲ Copy of the Pool Rock painting. Like most of the paintings in the region, this was done chiefly in red, black, white, buff. The thing like a two-headed horned lizard is gray-brown.



Great painting in Rockettydyne Cave, Jackass Flat area.

ably painted on a smooth sandstone surface in a cave, rock shelter, or depression on a large boulder. The artist would work on the natural yellowish sandstone or on a smoke-blackened wall. The usual colors are red, black, and white with—rarely—yellow, brown, and green. The red is an iron oxide, and is found in every shade from bright vermilion to a dark red-brown. The white is some form of chalky rock and the black is powdered charcoal or an ore of manganese. These pigments were ground fine in small mortars and mixed with animal fat for a binder. The paint was applied by brush, possibly one of frayed wood fiber, or sometimes put on with the finger. The red is the most permanent of the colors; it seems to penetrate the sandstone and can still be traced in caves where the white and black have long since disappeared.

At all sites I have seen there has been some source of water nearby. Most caves with a relatively flat floor had bedrock mortars with sometimes a pestle still in place. Near one pictograph cave was a flat rock with nearly thirty mortar holes. These were used by the women to grind the acorn and chia meal, staples in a rough country where a lizard was considered a delicacy.


There are three things that people invariably ask me about the pictographs. How old are they? Who painted them? What do they mean? These are dif-

ficult questions to answer, though we can make some pretty good guesses. The Mission fathers who were on the spot at the right time were not interested in heathen practices and by the time the anthropologists came along with the questions, the Indians were gone. The answers went with them.

The age of the paintings has been variously estimated at from two hundred to five hundred years, though some may be a great deal older. A slim clue to their age is that no drawings show objects reflecting European contact such as horses, cows, or buildings. It is said that the pictographs at the Painted Cave were old when the Mission was established in the 1780's. This painting is in a wonderfully protected spot and must still look much the same as when first seen by the Spanish. Not so fortunate were paintings in the Nojoqui Valley. An ethnological report of 1882 shows elaborate designs from these caves. All that remains today are a few colored smudges, the result of eighty years' erosion.

The drawings are mainly the work of the Chumash, whose territory stretched from Malibu Canyon west to Point Concepcion, north to Morro Bay, and inland to the west edge of the San Joaquin Valley. At the start of the Mission period, the Indian population along the Santa Barbara coast was the densest in California, numbering well over ten thousand. They are all gone. Less than thirty mixed-breed Chumash living today on a tiny reservation in the Santa Ynez Valley have no knowledge of their tribal traditions.

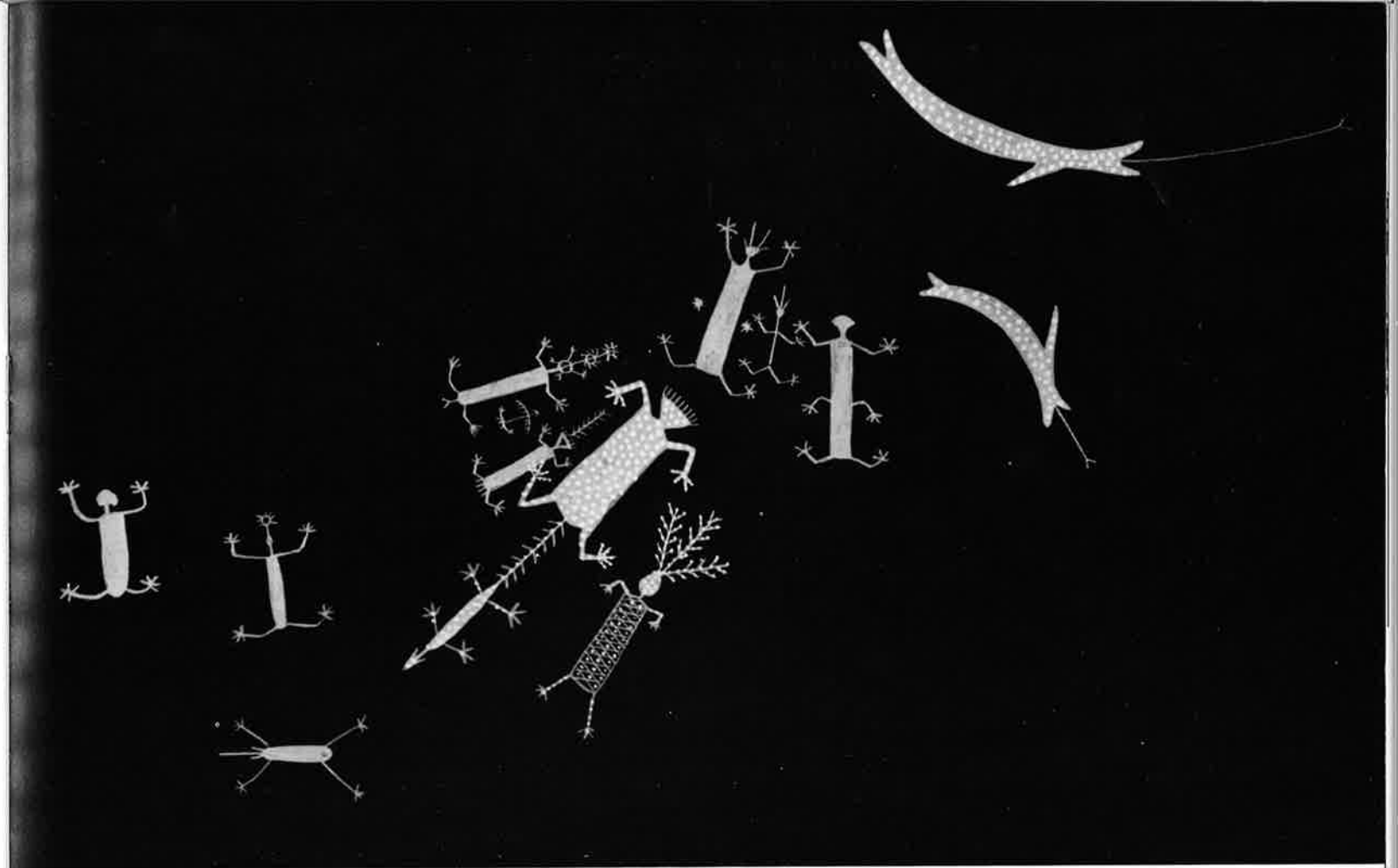
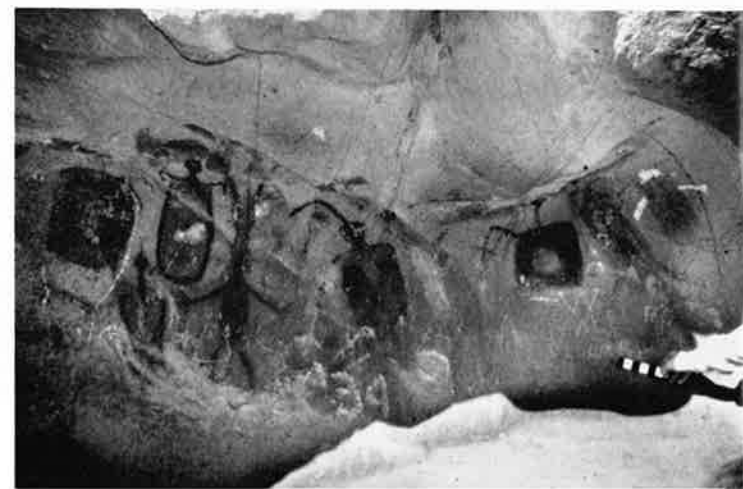
From our knowledge of present-day Indians, it seems likely that the work was done by the shaman or medicine man and was related to tribal ceremonies. The shaman was the interpreter of nature and claimed the power to communicate with the spirits of good and evil. Although some are undoubtedly religious paintings, others may have been of a documentary or recording nature. The pictographs of this region are mostly abstract designs or formalized animal shapes. These include stars, spirals, suns, crosses, insects, lizards, snakes, and human figures.

To date I have recorded some forty areas and photographed over eighty painted sites. When I look at my topographical maps I realize I have only scratched the surface. My thanks to Kathy Jackson and a very stubborn burro for starting me down an endlessly fascinating trail. 



↑ The author focuses his 35 mm. camera on a circular design that may represent the sun.

➤ An example of the thoughtless or stupid vandalism that competes with natural erosion to destroy aboriginal rock paintings which are known, or exposed to the elements.



First American Artists

Indian Art in America: The Arts and Crafts of the North American Indian. By Frederick J. Dockstader. New York Graphic Society, Greenwich, Conn. 1960. 224 pp., 70 full-color plates, 180 halftone illustrations. \$25.00.

From the eminently qualified mind and hand of the Director of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York, the exceptional publishing organization of the New York Graphic Society, the fine talent of American book designer Peter Oldenburg, and the superb printing craftsmanship of Holland have come a masterpiece worthy of a subject which has long suffered from inadequate presentation to the general public. With *Indian Art in America* on many library and some fortunate home reading tables, there should come a demonstrable increase in knowledge and appreciation of the Indians' contribution to the art heritage and potential of mankind. Such a book is long overdue. Dr. Dockstader points out that, following the officially promoted resurgence of Indian craftsmanship that came in the 1930's, there has been an actual decline in the kind of interest it takes to keep a good thing going and a fresh upswing is in order if we are to allow the more than half a million-strong Indian minority of our population to make its full contribution to our culture. That these earliest Americans have not only made a tremendous contribution in the past but have possibly a still greater one to make in the future is one theme of this marvelously illustrated book. In addition—to look for relation to the story above this review—the Introduction, "The Indian as an Artist," will help, not precisely in interpreting such things as our pictographs represent, but in understanding the spirit behind them (the petroglyph reproduced to the right, here, is the only example of rock art given). That is more important than trying to attach literal meaning to each squiggle.

Dr. Dockstader's style is lively and lucid. While this makes one of the prize gift picture-books and reference albums, reading it is a highly profitable pleasure.

Back-number Reference: "Granite Galleries," by Jay C. von Werlhoof, *PD*, July-August 1958, pp. 16-22 and cover. Illustrates examples of Yokut rock painting from San Joaquin Valley foothills; strikingly different in many respects.



Petroglyph: mountain sheep. Sand Tank Canyon, Inyo County, California. Prehistoric. (Courtesy New York Graphic Society, Greenwich, Connecticut. Original in Museum of the American Indian)