

Those who have made careful studies of subsurface conditions of Oklahoma are of the opinion that other buried ranges may occur in various sections of the state, particularly in the Robberson field of Garvin county, in the Cushing oil field, and in the Inola, Spavinaw region of eastern Oklahoma.

For many years we have known of an exposure of granite along Spavinaw creek east of Grand river, in Mayes county. David Dale Owen was the first geologist to mention this exposure. Drake, Snider and others who studied the granite have been inclined to consider it a dike, but it is now believed to be the summit of a buried granite ridge now being slowly uncovered by erosion.

XXVI. INDIAN PICTOGRAPHS IN THE WICHITA MOUNTAINS

By S. Weidman

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While investigating the problem of Pennsylvanian-Permian glaciation in the Wichita mountains the writer, in September, 1922, discovered some examples of Indian picture writing at the west end of Camels Back mountain, located about eleven miles southwest of Hobart. The picture writing is engraved on the very smooth or polished surface of granite exposed at the base of the mountains, and it occupies a space some six feet in width by five feet in height. The accompanying Figure 7 from a photograph made by G. W. Long, of Hobart, reveals the character of the writing.

The lines of engraving on the polished granite are variable in distinctness, but they are usually about one-half to three-quarters inches in width and one-sixteenth inch in depth. In order to secure a good photograph of the writing the engraved lines on the granite were marked with black crayon. Later the lines in the photograph were retouched for the purpose of making the half-tone engraving shown in Figure 7. Although some obscure markings on the granite are not brought out the main features of the pictographs are shown in the figure.

So far as could be learned by the writer this example of Indian writing was not known by the white men living in the region. However, the Kiowa Indians knew of it. Since the finding of this pictograph other examples have been reported to occur on smooth granite surfaces in the Devils Canon, located some 10 miles west of Camels Back. It is quite probable that further investigation

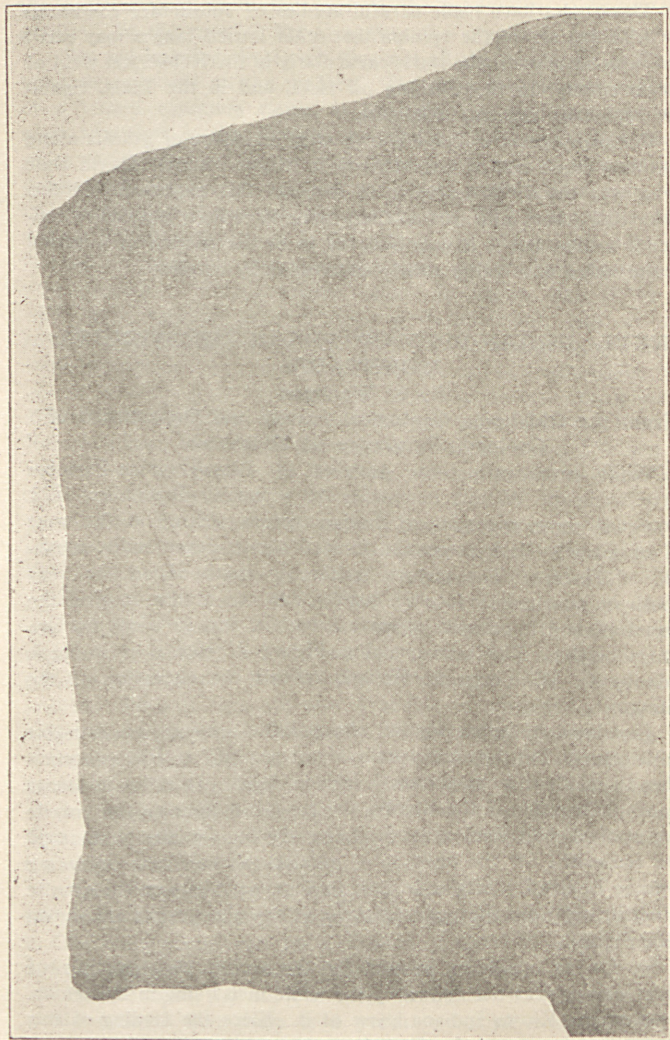


Fig. 7. Indian Pictograph, west end of Canels Back Mountain.

would show the occurrence of still other examples of pictographs in the region for there are numerous places favorably situated at the base of the mountains where the granite is highly polished (probably by Permian glacial erosion) and these smooth surfaces furnish very suitable sites for the engraving of figures.

While the main purpose of the present paper is to place on record the occurrence and character of the pictographs, their possible meaning and their probable date of origin are matters of considerable interest.

The figures in the pictographs are probably intended to represent symbols or signs of ideas rather than actual phenomena. There seems little hope, however, of learning the meaning of the writing.

In response to a letter of inquiry sent to Dr. J. Walter Fewkes, Chief of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D. C., the writer received the following reply:

Jan. 17, 1923.

"Mr. S. Weidman,
Norman, Oklahoma.

Dear sir:

In response to your letter of January 13, enclosing photographs of pictographs, I beg to say that the Indians north of Mexico had no definite system of recording ideas in the form of picture writing or otherwise. Pictographs, such as those of which you send photographs, are usually little more than idle markings by one or more individuals, and there is little likelihood that, in most cases anyone except the Indian or Indians who etched or painted them know anything of their significance. These pictographs are of all ages. The Pueblo Indians of the present day make these etchings on rocks which cannot be distinguished from the most ancient in the same region.

Very truly yours,

J. WALTER FEWKES,

Chief.

Mr. Long, the photographer was told by Jack Doyeto, who is a Kiowa Indian of unusual intelligence and is considered the historian of the Kiowas, that the writings were seen on the rocks when the Kiowas first settled in the region some 90 years ago. Doyeto further stated that he had no knowledge of the meaning of the writings and that it was his belief that the writings were made a very long time ago, "Maybe 500, maybe 1000 years ago."

An examination of the amount of weathering developed upon the rocks upon which the picture writing is engraved and the

adjacent surroundings may lead to the discovery of evidence indicating much weathering since the engravings were made. For example, these are some pictographs near the one shown in Figure 7. at a somewhat higher level, which are now partly obscured from view by large granite blocks which obviously rolled down the slope after pictures were made. Additional evidence of weathering of various sorts, developed on the rocks since the engravings were made may indicate a considerable age to the writings.