

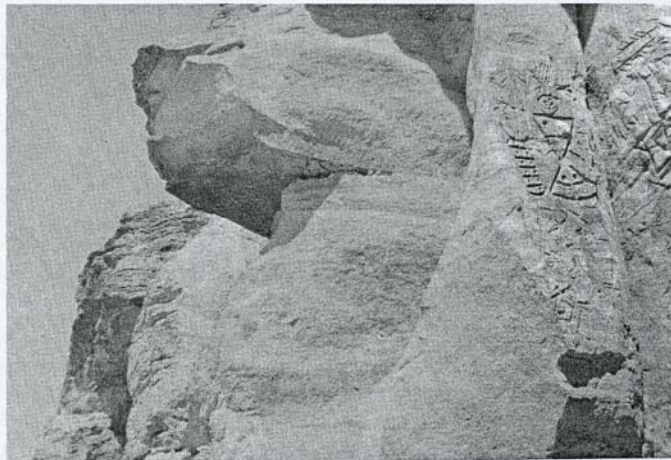
A view at the Indian Hill site taken in 1965 shows petroglyphs on either side of a large vertical joint in the rock. The darker color on some petroglyphs is ink stain resulting from a destructive copying technique.

## Petroglyphs Lost at the Indian Hill Site

The fragile nature of Kansas' petroglyphs was tragically illustrated at the Indian Hill site this fall when a large rock "panel" containing numerous petroglyphs broke away from the cliff face and shattered on the talus below. The panel that fell was a significant part of the site and through the years its petroglyphs had been photographed and copied in various ways by visitors to the site located at Kanopolis Lake in central Kansas. Large masses of rock nearby also fell from the cliff face, but fortunately this area had no petroglyphs. It is not known for certain that these two events occurred simultaneously, but their cumulative effect is to alter drastically the configuration of the massive outcrop containing the site. The fallen petroglyphs are irreplaceable.

We and future generations must now depend solely upon photographs, casts, and other records made of these glyphs in order to appreciate them. Fortunately the petroglyphs at the Indian Hill site have been recorded by a number of people through the years. The site was photographed by Alexander Gardner for his series of stereoscopic views taken along the route of the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division, published in 1868. These photographs and line drawings, ap-

parently copied from the photographs, published in 1869 in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* are the earliest known record of the site and form a baseline for comparative purposes. Black and white photographs of the



A view of the area of the fallen panel at the Indian Hill site taken in 1987 shows that the figure containing two triangles and situated just left of the vertical joint remained after the rock fall. Cracks and joints presaging future rock falls are visible in the photograph.

site on file at the Kansas State Historical Society include a series taken in 1941 by Guy Whiteford of Salina and an extensive series taken by staff of the Society in 1965. Smaller numbers of black and white photographs and color slides taken at various times by archeologists from the Smithsonian Institution, Society staff members, faculty and students at the University of Kansas, and by former Kansas Anthropological Association members Alex and Dorothy Richards of Hays and Leon Janzen of Lorraine are also available.

In recognition of the site's instability a stereophotogrammetric recording was completed in 1985. Contracted for by the Kansas City District of the Corps of Engineers, operators of Kanopolis Lake, the project involved photographing the site using black and white glass negative stereopairs. These were used to produce scaled drawings of the site and to indicate the positions of individual petroglyphs. This record was supplemented by a series of color slides taken of individual glyphs and panels of petroglyphs.

Casts were made of individual petroglyphs at the Indian Hill site by the late George Jelinek of Ellsworth. Apparently some of the glyphs in his series came from the fallen panel. A cast of a large portion of the fallen

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## PETROGLYPHS

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panel was also produced in 1979 under a Corps of Engineers contract to record the site and a copy of the cast is on display at the project office at Kanopolis Lake. In happy contrast to the minimal documentation available for other petroglyph sites in the state, recording at the Indian Hill site approaches comprehensive coverage. While we may be pleased at the recording effort made, there is still cause for concern since no one has yet attempted to interpret the site or its petroglyphs.

The Indian Hill site is unique, but its history is similar to that of other petroglyph sites in Kansas. Aboriginal petroglyphs have not been respected or valued. Names, dates, initials, and designs have been added to the original panels and sometimes superimposed over existing figures. The account of the site published in the 1869 *Proceedings* noted above included this observation about the petroglyphs ". . . while a very large part of these are evidently Indian, and may have useful or curious significations, there are others mixed with them made by white men." Completion of Kanopolis Lake in 1948 increased access to the site with a consequent increase in graffiti. Selected glyphs have been destructively copied by covering them with ink or paint. The resulting darker surfaces of these glyphs have eroded more rapidly since they absorb more heat than the surrounding lighter colored stone and are subject to a higher

fluctuation of temperatures each day. Stained glyphs have also been used as handy targets by target shooters since their darker color causes them to stand out. Some petroglyphs have been reworked, since part or all of their outlines have been cut deeper into the rock, while others have been entirely removed from their places on the parent rock.

The recent rock fall at the Indian Hill site dramatically illustrates the ultimate fate of all petroglyph sites, since geological forces are unceasingly at work shaping and reshaping the landscape. A geological study of the sandstone outcrop containing the Indian Hill site noted many far-reaching cracks and fissures in the outcrop and concluded that ultimately the cliff would erode away. A comparison of the outcrop today with historic photos is also vivid evidence of its disintegration.

What should be the response of persons interested in the preservation of petroglyphs in light of the recent loss at the Indian Hill site? The fallen petroglyphs point to the need for better recordation of all sites. It is incumbent upon us to pass on knowledge of these sites, and accurate and comprehensive records will provide the means to do so, though the petroglyphs themselves may disappear. Interpretation of the petroglyphs is also needed to provide a basis for increased public understanding and appreciation of them. Finally a survey of the physical condition of each site should be made to determine if there are fea-

sible corrective measures to be taken to increase each site's lifespan.—  
*Martin Stein.*

*Author's Note:* I wish to thank Kelly Kindscher of Lawrence for alerting me to the loss of the Indian Hill petroglyphs.

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The original **Menninger Clinic Building** at 3535 West Sixth in Topeka is undergoing rehabilitation for use as a bed and breakfast inn.

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### Leadership Change Slated for Historical Society

Joseph W. Snell, executive director of the Kansas State Historical Society since 1977, has announced his retirement effective May 17, 1988. Robert W. Richmond, the assistant executive director for that same time, will retire effective February 17, 1988.

It was recently announced that Ramon S. Powers of Topeka had been selected as the new executive director. He will join the staff of the Historical Society as the assistant director in February and will assume the top position in May. As the new executive director he will also be the state historic preservation officer. A native of Gove County, Powers has a Ph.D. in history from the University of Kansas and has taught at the college level. Most recently he has been a senior analyst with the state's Legislative Research Department.

#### Kansas State Historical Society

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