

# Exploring Pictured Rocks—West Half

A backpacker's & spelunker's backcountry guide to the trails, campsites, beaches, overlooks, old growth, waterfalls, caves, shipwrecks, & history of

## Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (PIRO)

Lake Superior :: Alger County :: Munising, Michigan

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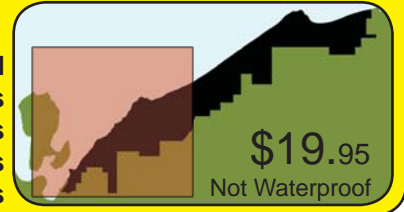
• GPS-enabled

• 550-plus wilderness caves

• 850-plus GPS coordinates

• 13 color USGS maps

• 24 color detail maps



### Pictured Rocks Map Index

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**Danger:** Hypothermia, drowning, crumbling cliff edges, falling rocks, widow-makers, bad ice, etc.  
**Notice:** Not drawn to exact scale. Trails, features, azimuths, elevations, distances, & GPS locations approximate & intended for general reference only—not for navigational use.

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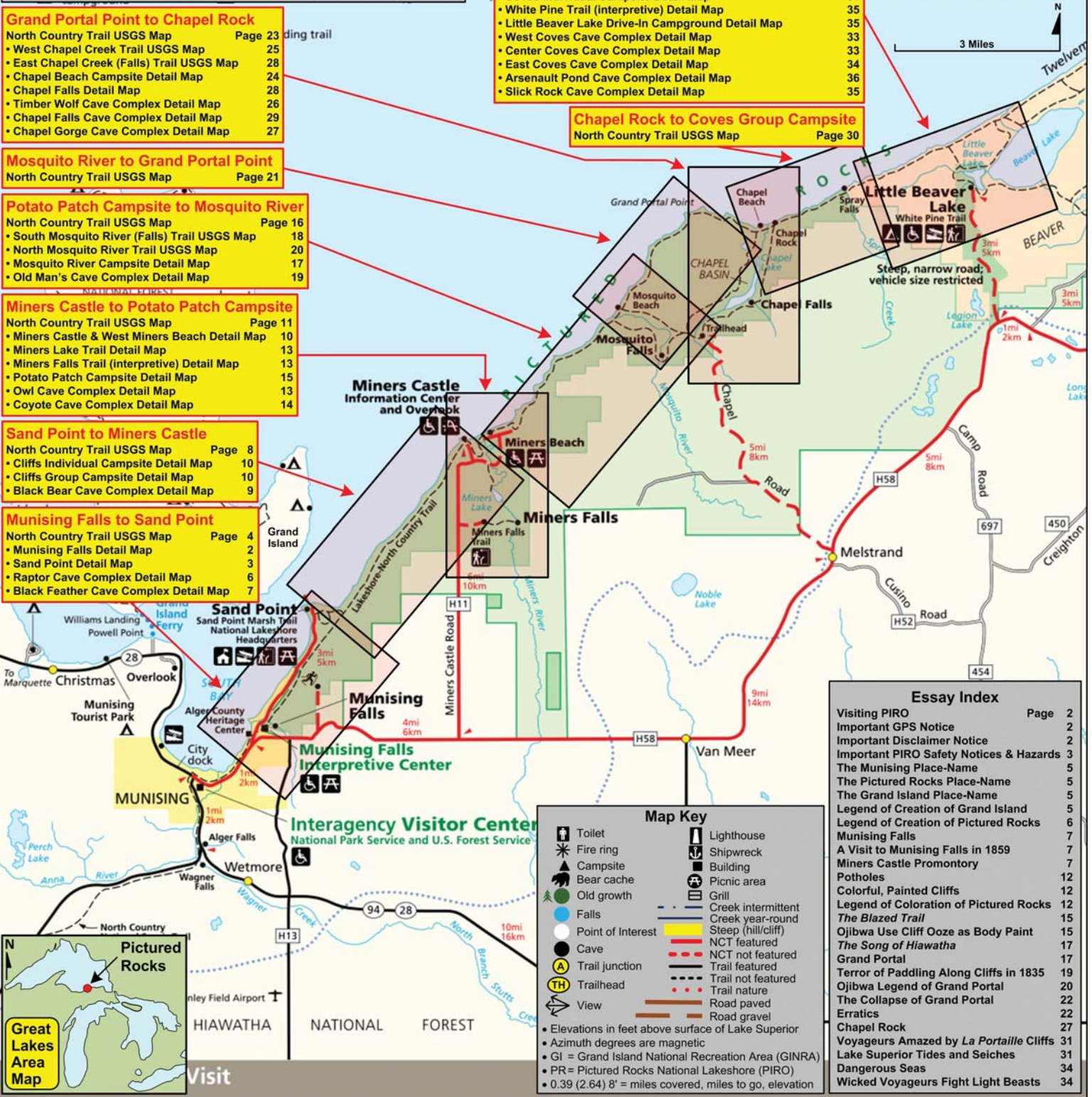
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Take nothing but pictures  
 Leave nothing but footprints  
 Kill nothing but time  
 —The Pictured Rocks Visitor Ethic



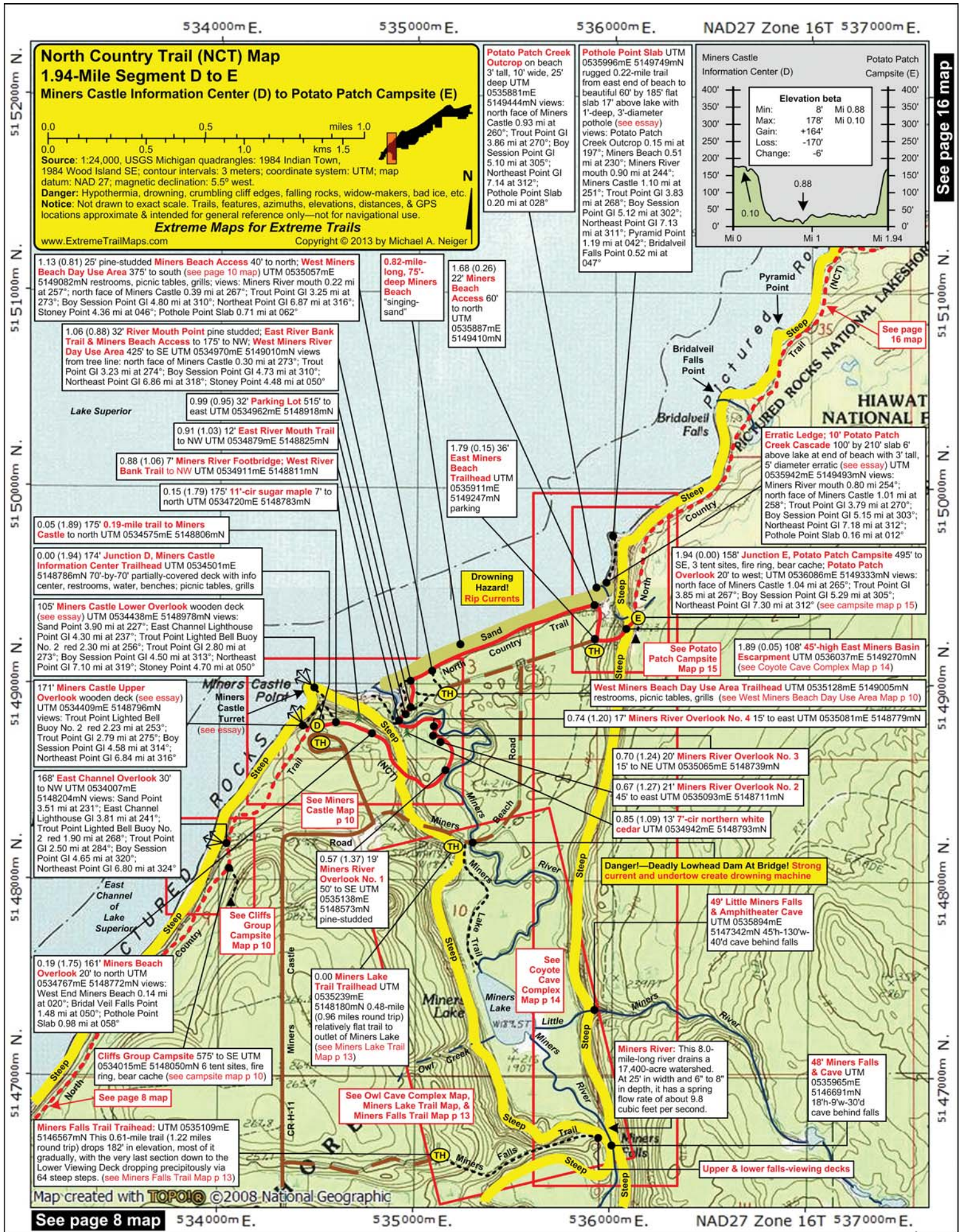
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### Map Key

Toilet	Lighthouse
Fire ring	Shipwreck
Campsite	Building
Bear cache	Picnic area
Old growth	Grill
Falls	Creek intermittent
Point of Interest	Creek year-round
Cave	Steep (hill/cliff)
Trail junction	NCT featured
Trailhead	NCT not featured
View	Trail featured
	Trail not featured
	Trail nature
	Road paved
	Road gravel

• Elevations in feet above surface of Lake Superior  
 • Azimuth degrees are magnetic  
 • GI = Grand Island National Recreation Area (GINRA)  
 • PR = Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (PIRO)  
 • 0.39 (2.64) = miles covered, miles to go, elevation



**The Blazed Trail, a Pictured Rocks' novel, movie**  
The Munising and Pictured Rocks area served as the fictional setting for *The Blazed Trail*, a 413-page novel penned by Stewart Edward White (1873-1946) in 1901. Published by McClure, Phillips & Company of New York in 1902, *The Blazed Trail* was the third of nearly 60 novels and books authored by White during his lifetime. Sold by the tens of thousands, serialized, dramatized into a silent movie in 1910, in print for some 30 years, and reissued 64 years later, it became White's most famous literary work. As a bestseller, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, Illinois) said in 1946 it "captured the imagination of the nation."

**The book.** *The Blazed Trail* novel was an epic, 1880s tale about a self-reliant woodsman—Harry Thorpe—who worked and fought his way to the top of Michigan's rough and tumble lumbering business. The novel offers a classic and unerringly-authentic description of the bustling lumber business—including the colorful, wild, violent, and dangerous life of the lumberjack—in the heart of the state's great pine forests. White also did a bit of muckraking when he exposed the widespread corruption in the business, especially the wholesale-thievery—illegal cutting—of vast tracts of remote, government-owned pinelands.

Thorpe is portrayed as the hero in a relentless struggle between his logging company, Thorpe and Carpenter, and their unscrupulous, cut-throat rival, the powerful firm of Morrison and Daly. After a season spent in the Saginaw River Valley, where Thorpe emerges as a savior for Radway, a kind-hearted foreman who had been duped into an impossible contract by the M & D firm, the setting for the action-adventure-filled story shifts north to Lake Superior's Munising Bay, where the village of Munising and the mouth

of the fictional, pine-studded, 50-mile-long Ossawinamakee River are located.

It is along the Ossawinamakee watershed that Thorpe, on a summer-long, solo scouting trip to find Upper Peninsula timber lands worthy of cutting, meets and befriends an Indian called Injun Charlie, who teaches him the ways of the woods, and Wallace Carpenter, whose investment capital leads to a partnership: the Thorpe and Carpenter lumbering company. After legally purchasing vast tracts of pinelands from the state, which the M & D firm had been illegally stripping of timber, Thorpe and his firm enter into a prolonged struggle to log their newly-acquired land.

At the book's midpoint, a heroine named Hilda is introduced and the ensuing love affair between her and Thorpe dominates the story from then on. Despite skulduggery—such as explosions, sabotage, stock market manipulation, and assaults—the M & D never succeeds in permanently disrupting Thorpe's Ossawinamakee River logging operations or in financially ruining Carpenter's investments. *The Blazed Trail* was a classic Horatio Alger, rags-to-riches hero story with a storybook ending: Thorpe finally marries his estranged lover, Hilda.

White, who worked in lumber camps and frequented the Upper Peninsula—at the time, a relatively untouched area he loved to explore—drew heavily on his personal experiences in crafting *The Blazed Trail*. The novel, laced with autobiographical material born of the life White actually lived, was written during a long, cold winter the 29 year old actually spent working in a northern-Michigan lumber camp in 1901. Short on free time, he rose at four o'clock sharp each morning and wrote until eight, when he started work.

In the book, White makes reference to several Upper

Peninsula place-names: Pictured Rocks; the village of Munising; Seney; Shingleville, probably a reference to Shingleton; the Munising Furnace Company's log dock in Munising Bay; and the South Shore Railroad, which connected the region with the Straits of Mackinac. The title of the book may well have been borrowed from the name of the old stage line—The Blazed Trail—that traced the rim of Beaver Basin, connecting Munising and Grand Marais.

Critics faulted the book for its lack of a well-developed plot, claiming much of what transpired was the result of luck or coincidence, not a logical, cause-and-effect succession of events. White was also criticized for failing to fully develop either of the novel's female characters, Hilda and Helen.

**The movie.** With *The Blazed Trail* novel a best seller, the Nestor Film Company—which built the first real movie studio in what was to become known as Hollywood, California—developed it into a silent, black-and-white movie in 1910. Produced by David Horsley, *The Blazed Trail* starred William H. Clifford.



**The Blazed Trail novel**

feet of surface.

Near the western extremity of the range, these colors assume a surpassing brilliancy, with a metallic lustre. Streaming over a

gracefully curved surface, having an area of several thousand yards, they mimic, on a gigantic scale, the stripes on our national flag, as it waves in the breeze; or, a pass-

ing down a fractured ledge, are contorted into long zigzag lines.

Upon close examination, these colors are found to proceed from slimy exudations, and to retain

their brilliance only while fresh.

When the face of the cliff has become dry, they possess a more faint and often mottled appearance. Then may sometimes be found depicted, upon a back-

ground of white, yellow or dun, as if rudely dabbed in by the artist, those vague similitudes, in which the imagination may realize verdant landscapes or fierce battle scenes; perhaps, if sufficiently vivid, a full set of Raphael's Cartoons. As a whole, the general effect of the coloring is so striking, that the appellation conferred upon these cliffs is well deserved. Thus strangely drawn, upon as strange a canvass, they add, at least, wonderful beauty and effect to the greater wonders which Nature has here displayed.

The lower portion of the cliffs consists of a brick-red, iron sand, while the upper is grey, or yellow, and contains sufficient carbonate of lime to cause a feeble effervescence with acids...

These rocks, at many points, are tinted white, red, yellow, and green, by oxide of iron, carbonate of copper, and saline incrustations, and the tints extend upward, from the water's edge, in broad stripes, not dull and blended, but brilliant and well-defined. When the whole face of a cliff is lighted up by a clear sunlight, the effect is magical...

[At the Amphitheater, just west of Grand Portal] the phenomena of colors are most beautifully and conspicuously displayed. These cannot be illustrated by a mere crayon sketch, but would require, to reproduce the natural effect, an

**Ojibwa use cliff ooze as body paint, dye, & purgative**

In his 1822 *Report to the Secretary of War of the United States on Indian Affairs*, Reverend Jedediah Morse, minister of the First Congregational Church in Boston, Massachusetts, explained how the Ojibwa utilized the substances oozing from the Pictured Rock cliffs. After interviewing two Lake Superior Indian traders—Messrs. Morrison and Holiday—in 1820, Dr. Morse learned the local Ojibwa used the ooze from the *Great Rocks* situated east of Grand Island Harbor for medicinal and decorative purposes:

These rocks [known as the *Great Rocks*] form the greatest curiosity, and are the most stupendous object, in this part of the country. A substance, (a species of *salts*.) oozes from these rocks, which the Indians use as a purgative; also a green substance, used by the Indians in painting themselves, their pipe stems, &c. The rocks are of the *grindstone* species, and excellent in their kind.

In his 1995 book entitled, *A Face in the Rock—The Tale of a Grand Island Chippewa*, author Loren R. Graham noted the local Ojibwa used the oozing pigments from the cliffs of Pictured Rocks for body paint and dye. After paddling to the base of the cliffs in their birch-bark canoes, they gouged out a variety of pigments, which they preserved in little containers fashioned from birch bark. If the "vivid streaks of pigmentation" were out of reach, the Ojibwa would sometimes ascend or descend the cliffs, occasionally with ropes fashioned from vines, to collect the ooze. According to Graham, the sandstone cliffs provided the Ojibwa with "a full palette of strong colors": "ocher, calcimine, argent, verdigris, ivory, black, slate, mahogany, vermilion."

