

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

HAROLD L. ICKES, Secretary  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
ARNO B. CAMMERER, Director

LAVA BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT  
CALIFORNIA

Lava Beds National Monument, embracing approximately 45,000 acres in the extreme northeastern part of California, was created a national monument by Presidential proclamation in 1925 and placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture. Since 1934 the monument has been administered by the National Park Service under the immediate charge of the superintendent of Crater Lake National Park in southern Oregon.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The name "Lava Beds" suggests to the minds of many a region of aridity. On the contrary, during the spring and early summer months flowers bloom in profusion where there is sufficient soil for plant growth, and animal and bird life is abundant. The area boasts over 400 species of plants, mainly typical of high inland semiarid regions, and many of them extremely rare. The species of fauna number about 40 and of bird, 75.

No accommodations, such as auto service, gas, oil, or food supplies, are available at the monument, but the visitor is seldom more than 20 miles from the nearest service station and never out of sight of the ranches and towns of Tule Lake Valley.

During the summer months an improved free public campground is maintained at Indian Well. Because of lack of water there, visitors are advised to bring with them a sufficient supply for their use.

The ranger in charge, Don C. Fisher, is stationed at Indian Well, where he may be reached by telephone or by mail addressed to Merrill, Oregon. Parties desiring to be conducted to principal points of interest in the monument should make arrangements with him in advance.

VOLCANOLOGY

The monument is located at the north end of the Medicine Lake mountain range and is a region of comparatively recent volcanic activity, containing numerous lava flows, cinder cones, craters, and other volcanic features formed since the Ice Ages.

The most recent volcanic activity is believed to have occurred about 300 years ago. Of considerable interest are the fumaroles or "chimneys" from which steam and other gases formerly escaped. Some of them extend deep into the earth, the greatest measured depth recorded being 135 feet.

Much of the surface of this region is formed of billowy slag-like lava, which flowed out from great fissures in the earth's crust like thick, frothy molasses. It is in this type of lava, known as AA, that the caves and tunnels occur. Over 300 of these are

found within the monument. These lava tubes or tunnels were formed by surface hardening of comparatively small lava flows, the cooled surfaces of which remained as hollow tubes after the molten lava cores were drained away. They range in length from a few feet to several miles. The collapsed portions form long serpentlike trenches of broken rock, from 20 to 100 feet deep and from 50 to 250 feet wide. The uncollapsed portions form natural bridges or caves.

HISTORY

There are evidences that the entire lava beds region was at one time inhabited by Indian peoples whose history was unknown to their successors, the Modocs, a southern division of the Lutuamian Indian tribe, which occupied the country when the white men first came. The Modocs joined with the Klamaths of southern Oregon in ceding their territory to the United States and were moved to the Klamath reservation in 1864. The Modocs were never contented and made persistent efforts to return to their former home, away from their ancient enemies, the Klamaths. It was this condition which brought about the costly war of 1872-73, the only major Indian war ever fought on California soil.

In this conflict a small group of Modoc Indians, under the leadership of Captain Jack, repeatedly repulsed far superior numbers of United States soldiers and inflicted grave losses while sustaining practically none themselves.

The rugged topography of the region formed one of the biggest obstacles for the soldiers. While making their way across the depressions and cracks in the lava flows, they were good targets for Indians hidden in similar natural fortifications. The point at which the major battle of the war was fought, known as Captain Jack's Stronghold, is in the north central part of the monument near the end of one of the older lava flows.

The old fortifications used by the soldiers are still in place and provide mute evidence of the long struggle which did not cease until the water supply of the Indians was cut off by the soldiers.

ETHNOLOGY AND ARCHEOLOGY

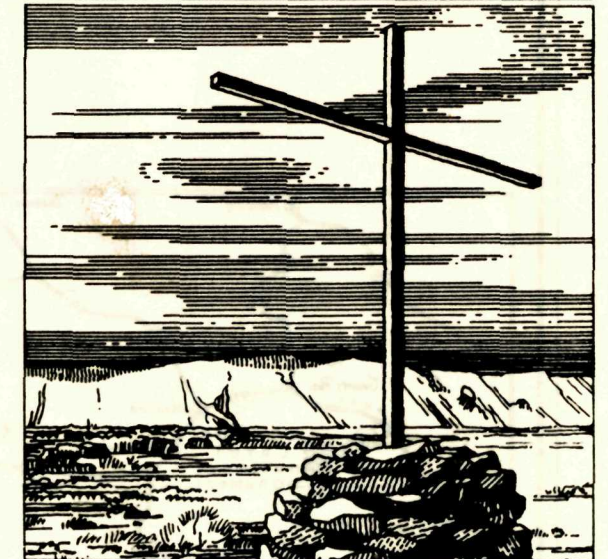
Symbolic Indian writings within the Lava Beds National Monument are of two types and indicate the presence of ancient peoples who have long since vanished from this region. One type consists of paintings (pictographs) in red, yellow, and green ochre on the walls of caves and the sides of natural bridges. These paintings are on an average 10 inches in height and cover a wide range of subjects. The other type consists of carvings (petroglyphs) which are confined to rocky bluffs in the Tule Lake peninsula where the rocks are soft enough to pick with stone tools. On the sheer western face of Petroglyph Point, a detached portion of the monument lying to the northeast, are carved scores of these symbols, many reaching heights of 10 to 20 feet.

February 1939

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LAVA

BEDS



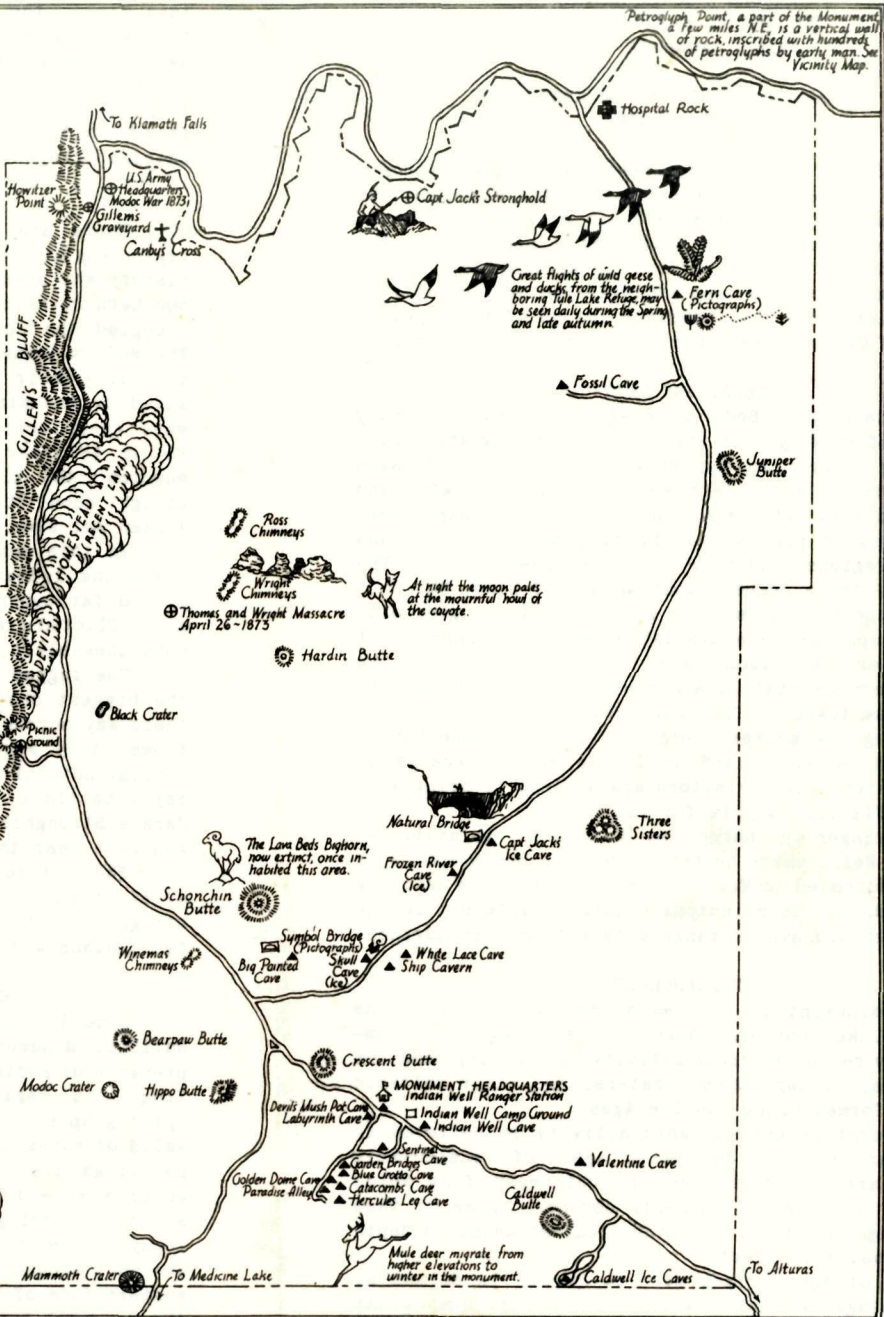
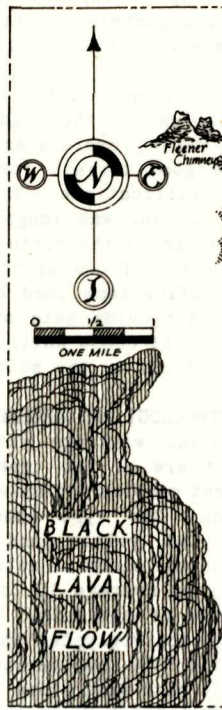
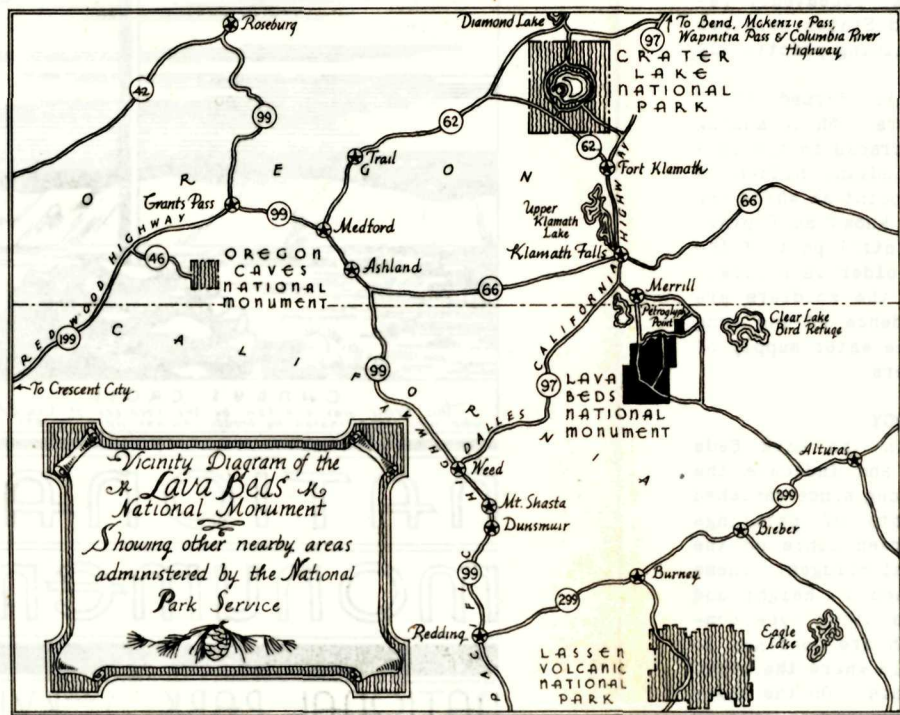
CANBY'S CROSS.  
This cross was erected by the soldiers of Gen. E. S. Canby, who was assassinated by Modoc Indians April 11, 1873.

NATIONAL  
MONUMENT

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
ARNO B. CAMMERER, DIRECTOR

# LAVA BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT

and Vicinity



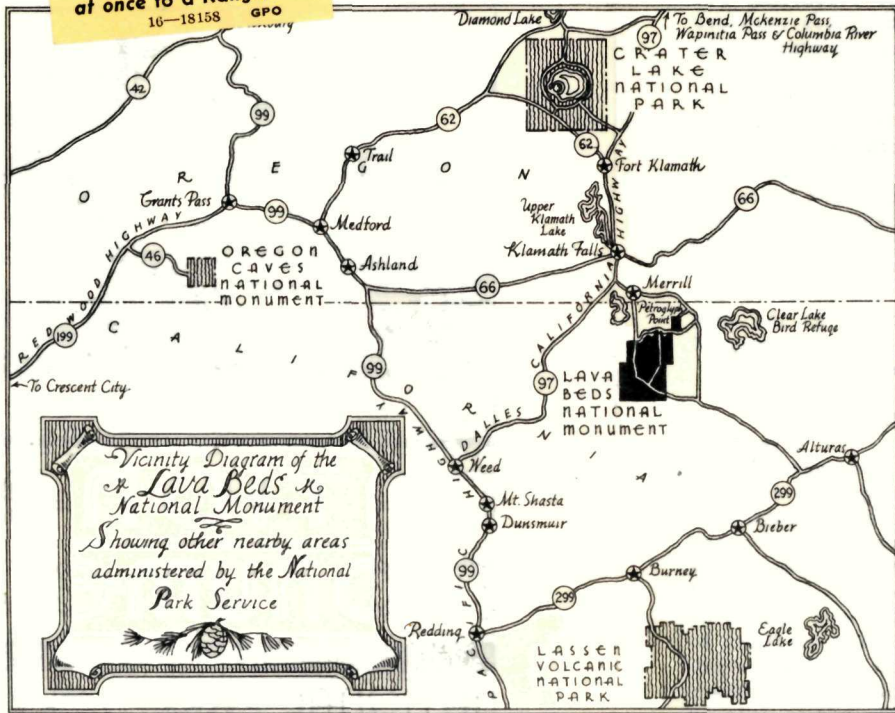
L-Howard Crawford



**TOBACCO** and matches discarded while burning and campfires built in unsafe locations or left unextinguished, cause a third of all forest fires in the National Park System. **Please Help Us Protect Your Parks . . . Be Sure Your Fire is Out!** If you discover a fire report it at once to a Ranger.

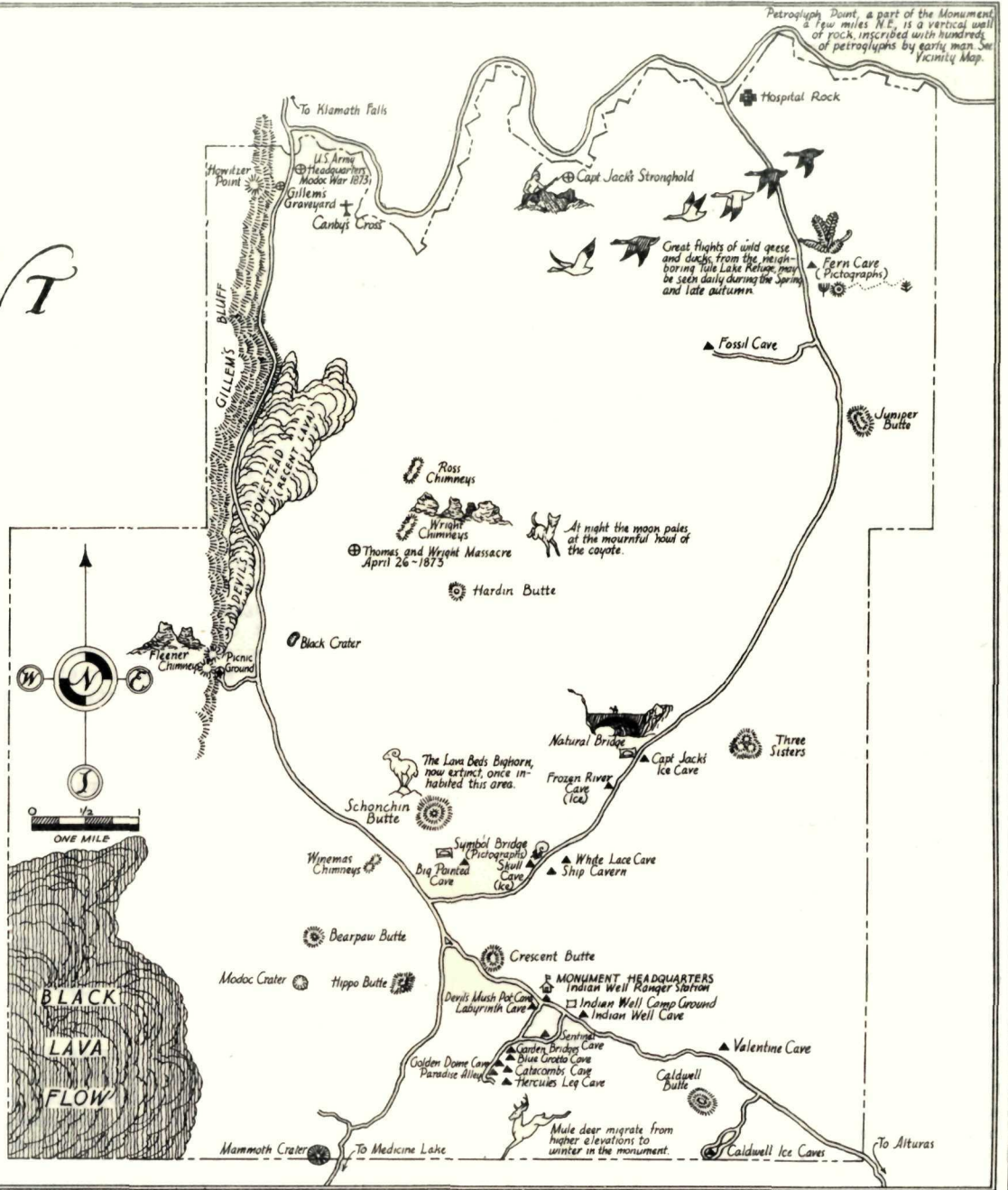
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# LAVA BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT and Vicinity



Vicinity Diagram of the Lava Beds National Monument Showing other nearby areas administered by the National Park Service

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Petroglyph Point, a part of the Monument, 19 miles N.E. is a vertical wall of rock, inscribed with hundreds of petroglyphs by early man. See Vicinity Map.

Great flights of wild geese and ducks from the neighboring Yale Lake Refuge may be seen daily during the Spring and late autumn.

At night the moon pales at the mournful howl of the coyote.

Mule deer migrate from higher elevations to winter in the monument.