

# Ludovic Mann and J. H. Cornyn

1926–1927



An article in the *Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine* for August 1, 1926, featured Niven's Valley of Mexico tablets. Upon reading the piece, Ludovic M. L. Mann, of Glasgow, Scotland, author of a book on Scandinavian petroglyphs, wrote to Niven about his own discoveries. "Quite similar carvings have been found in the Old Hemisphere . . . I have discovered the key to the reading . . ." of such ancient symbols, he went on. Mann requested full-scale drawings of Niven's tablets from the Valley of Mexico.

Niven replied on the 10th of September, incredulous (yet still hopeful) at the prospect of deciphering the tablets. "[I]f you have solved the problem, whether these primitive carvings are the beginning of symbolic writing, astronomical or religious elementals . . ." the scientific world would need to be informed. He had not yet heard the results of the American Museum of Natural History's investigation of the tablets and was anxious to tell them of Mann's investigations. "As soon as you authorize me I will advise them of your great discovery."

On the 27th Mann reported that, "I have just this morning devoted time to the decipherment and interpretation of these very old carvings . . ." He had examined tablet 1389 from Chimalpa. "On applying my key, I find that this human figure represents indubitably the planet-god Jupiter. Probably this tablet was placed in some shrine to that god." Another was tablet 386

No 1389  
Locality: Chimalpa, 6 miles N of Mexico City  
Size 2 1/2" x 1 1/2" Centimeter scale  
Figure 7 Human - Planet God Jupiter - Color red. Found 9/6/24



Rubbing of tablet 1389, discovered at Chimalpa in 1924. Niven's notes at the top of the rubbing are typical.

from Hacienda de León. This, he wrote, "is emblematic of the movement of the Sun during one-quarter of his year, emphasis being given to the interval of one-sixth of his annual round." He continued,

I can prove the correctness of my readings of these hieroglyphs or petroglyphs, by rigorous and precise mathematical means. You can use this information as you please and in any quarter. I am on the eve of publishing a book explaining exactly how to read the rock-markings which are now turning up in every part of the Continent of North America; and if you care to allow me to refer to your discovery of Tablets, and my interpretation of the