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*Editors*

Paul A. F. Walter Arthur J. O. Anders

Virginia Jennings, *Editorial Assistant*

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## INDIAN ARTISTRY IN WOOD AND OTHER MEDIA

BERTHA P. DUTTON*

THROUGH THE AGES, the religious tenets of the Indians of the Southwest have been such as the result in strong, all-pervading organization of ceremonial orders, with intricate rites and manifestations. A great deal of this, largely because of non-Indians' misunderstanding or of their deliberate denial of the right of everyone to follow his religious dictates, has been held secret from outsiders. Inasmuch as many of the most artistic works, material and non-material, are created as adjuncts of religious expression, it is doubtful that the full range of the artistry of our aborigines is, or ever will be, appreciated.

An attempt to broaden the general knowledge, however, has been undertaken in an exhibition arranged in the front gallery of the Hall of Ethnology, under the title of *Indian Artistry in Wood and Other Media.*

Certainly, no one among the ancient Indian peoples of the Southwest ever thought of himself as an artist. Producing artistic works was simply a part of the life way, like tilling the fields, building a dwelling, or carrying on household or ceremonial activities. An individual contributed his share in labors of all sorts, from day to day, season to season, and year to year. Not until a short time ago did the pottery makers or picture painters attach their names to the items which they created. Basketry, textiles, and jewelry have never borne identifying names of those who fashioned them. Only most recently, and then to a very limited degree, have the names of figurine makers accompanied their portrayals.

With countless depictions incised, pecked, or painted on smooth rock surfaces over most of the Southwest and reaching far beyond this region, and with certain flat or in-the-round carvings, the Indians have demonstrated their artistic abilities. Since religion was the dominating factor of aboriginal life, the highest artistic attainments and most æsthetic expressions were related to the ceremonial organization. Many of the objects, petroglyphs (characters carved or pecked into a rock surface), and pictographs (figures, devices,

*Curator of Ethnology and Associate in Archæology, Museum of New Mexico and School of American Research.

pit-house villages, occupied the valley. In the southern part, near Camp Verde, are the remains of a group which had its origin further south, on the Gila and Salt Rivers — the group called by the prehistorian, the Hohokam. In the northern section of the valley were other pit-house dwellers who had found their way from the Flagstaff region down over the Mogollon Rim, and settled along the many small streams flowing out of the Rim country.

From about A.D. 1100 to 1400 the population of the valley increased at a steady rate. Most of the newcomers were from the Flagstaff region. The Hohokam apparently either left the valley shortly before A.D. 1100 or mingled with the northern peoples. The northern group has been named the Sinagua. After 1150, most of the villages in the valley were contiguous-roomed masonry structures. Some of the best examples of these villages are preserved today at Tuzigoot National Monument and Montezuma Castle National Monument.

The Sinagua people were irrigation farmers growing corn, beans, squash and cotton. Hunting of game and gathering of wild plants also added greatly to their economy, as did trade in valuables and possibly necessities, carried on with peoples outside of the immediate area. Macaws were traded from Northern Mexico and marine shells from the California coast and the Gulf of California. Other items such as turquoise, argillite and other minerals were brought into the region. Seemingly one of the main prehistoric trade routes in the Southwest was through the Verde Valley.

After A.D. 1300 the Sinagua group evidently began to have difficulties, either among themselves or with other Indians, for after that date most of the villages were larger and were constructed with defense in mind. Villages either were cliff dwellings or were built on top of the steep-sloped hills of the area. Many theories have been advanced to account for abandonment of the valley at about A.D. 1400. Among these, harassment and warfare are most commonly noted. Others include disease, either lack of water or over-irrigation, and religious superstitution. For whatever cause, the Verde Valley was abandoned by the Sinagua early in the 1400's.

Little is known of the history of the area from the time of the Sinagua abandonment until the first *conquistadores* came into the area in the late 1500's. When the Spaniards entered the valley they



encountered an aboriginal people who have been identified with the present-day Yavapai. Just when the Yavapai filtered into the area is unknown, as is the date of entry of the Tonto Apache, the other aboriginal ethnic group associated in later times with the general area.

Historical accounts of the Verde Valley begin with Luxan's narrative of the expedition of Antonio de Espejo to the mines at what is now the town of Jerome, Arizona, in 1583 (Hammond and Rey, 1928). Espejo's route in the valley is described by Bartlett (1942) as going down Wet Beaver Creek, past Montezuma Well, across country to the Verde River, and up the river to the mines. The expedition found little, to its leaders' way of thinking, to justify settlement, and so nothing other than some knowledge of the country came of the trek.

A few years later the valley was again visited by Spaniards in search of mines, this time by an expedition sent out by the settler of New Mexico, Oñate. His lieutenant, Marcos Farfán de los Godos, was in charge of the expedition which arrived at the Jerome mines in November, 1598 (Bolton, 1916, pp. 199-280). Farfán's entry into the valley was over much the same route as Espejo's (Bartlett, 1942). His report on the mines was much more encouraging, but again nothing came of the Spanish venture. There followed a long period of White ignorance of the area which lasted until the Nineteenth Century.

During the early 1800's there roved through Western America that remarkable group of unofficial explorers known as the "Mountain Men." These were the beaver trappers, who first brought knowledge of the West to the young American Republic. Apparently the Verde Valley was visited by some of these trappers who were working out of Taos and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Cleland (1950, pp. 179-182) reports that the Patties, Ewing Young, Pegleg Smith, George Yount and Milton Sublette were in the vicinity of the Verde in 1826. This combined party later split, and half of the group ascended the Verde, trapping as they moved north. In 1829 Ewing Young and forty men left Taos for a trapping expedition at the head of the Salt River. Among the forty was Kit Carson, an apprentice to the trade. This group trapped down the Salt River to

the mouth of the Verde and up this river to its source (Clellan 1950, pp. 225-228).

In 1854 another trapper, Leroux, worked his way up the Verde but apparently never reached the vicinity of present-day Camp Verde (Whipple, 1856, part 3, pp. 14-15). Although records are lacking, it is highly probable that the Verde River and its tributaries were frequently visited by the Mountain Men in search of the fur-bearing animals which were at one time plentiful in the region. Little is known of the work of these men, as many of them were illiterate and others were anti-social, and kept their knowledge to themselves. However, when the army was exploring portions of the west and subduing the Indians in the 1850's and 1860's, the Mountain Men and their knowledge of the country proved invaluable to the soldiers.

The discovery of gold on Hassayampa and Lynx Creeks in 1863 heralded the first settlements in Yavapai County. After years of exploration by the Spaniards, Mountain Men, and the United States Army, the magic word "gold" — which heralded the settlement so much of the west — proved its potency again. Prospectors and miners from California and New Mexico began to pour into the Prescott sector. With the coming of the miners the Indian troubles started. While the Mountain Men had moved noiselessly among the Yavapai and Apache peoples, the miners came among them with gusto and with little regard for anything but quick riches.

On October 23, 1863, General Carleton, in command of the Department of New Mexico, set up the District of Northern Arizona. Its headquarters was established at Fort Whipple, which was first constructed in Chino Valley in December, 1863. In May of 1864 it was moved to the newly-named settlement of Prescott near Granite Dells (Wyllys, 1950, p. 153). The command was set up to protect the newly found mines and the miners from the aroused Indians of the region.

Events were moving swiftly for Arizona in these latter days of the Civil War. The Territory of Arizona was established on February 24, 1863. The Territorial Governor and party arrived at Fort Whipple on January 22, 1864, while the fort was still under construction by Major E. B. Willis of the First California Infantry.

The large group of soldiers and miners provided the impetus for



groups to move into the region — the farmers and ranchers. plies were brought to Whipple via either the California ports thence overland, or up the Colorado River and overland. her way was a long, costly trip. With the discovery of one of the well-watered areas in Arizona and with a ready market in the y and the miners for any and all produce, it was an ideal setup the pioneer farmer and rancher. And it was the reason for the nding of the first White settlement in the Verde Valley.

The first permanent settlers arrived in the Valley in January, 6. Wingfield (1933) gives the best accounts of the founding of first settlement. Accounts of earlier dates, sometimes given, ear to ignore the fact that until the founding of Fort Whipple the town of Prescott, settlement in the Verde Valley would have n virtually impossible, from a security standpoint. Undoubtedly, ng the summer of 1864 and possibly in late 1863, hay cutters e in the valley harvesting the lush growth of black grama and er grasses for sale to the army at Fort Whipple, but they were nsient visitors, not settlers.

The first true settling party was under Dr. J. M. Swetnam, and me from Prescott. The party returned to Prescott in February, 5, after exploring the Clear Creek and Beaver Creek areas. th a new load of supplies the group returned to the Verde and de preparations for a permanent settlement on the banks of Clear eek near where it enters the Verde.

The Swetnam party quickly built a small stone fort, incorporating walls of an old Indian ruin into the building. This fort is portedly still partially visible on the Charles Ward Ranch on north bank of Clear Creek. Soon after building the fort they g a well, dammed Clear Creek, dug an irrigation ditch (after unsuccessful start), and by May had some 200 acres in grain garden vegetables. In August a load of barley was taken to the artermaster at Fort Whipple. At first he refused to buy the poor ality grain, but was finally convinced that his help was necessary keep the small pioneering group on its feet. The grain was purased and orders placed for more produce.

The Clear Creek settlement was not without its troubles, and the fort had been erected with good reason. The Tonto Apache and the Yavapai Indians, who lived in the district, soon found that