

officer of the Spanish Royal Engineers wrote, "The Navahos have manufacture of serge blankets and other coarse cloths which more than suffice for the consumption of their own people, and they go to the Province of New Mexico with their surplus and there exchange their goods for such others as they have not, or for implements they need." In 1812 Pedro Pino, who went as a delegate to the Spanish Parliament, wrote of the Navaho, "Their woolen fabrics are the most valuable in our province and in Sonora and Chihuahua as well." *3

31 The picture evoked by these quotations indicates that within the thirty-two years between 1780 and 1812, Navaho weavers, through their imagination, versatility, and increasing skill, had gained widespread recognition throughout the Southwest.

6" 9/11 x 19 1/2 A later picture is given by Charles Bent in 1846. "Navaho war and hunting parties might be found anywhere from the Coconino Plateau in Arizona to the buffalo plains of West Texas. They rarely ventured as far north as the Arkansas [river] and so were little seen at Bent's Fort. They did, however, go often to Taos to trade, many of their woven blankets finding their way into the Bent, St. Vrain and Company store, and ending up finally at the Fort as trade goods valued by the Plains Indians." **⁴

³ Navaho Weaving, Charles Avery Amsden, p. 133.
 *** The Indian Traders, Frank McNitt.

THE PROCESS

10 1/2 Cal. small caps
pt. left x 19 1/2

3

8 1/2

pt.

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align ital bold

The wool

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The sheep that have been ^{raised} produced by the Navaho over a long period of time, are small, are resistant to the desert heat and sudden changes of weather, can survive cold winters, and can exist on a minimum of food and water. Consequently, the fleeces from these sheep are light, and comparatively free ^{of} from grease. The staple of the wool is long and wavy, and is particularly suited to Navaho methods of hand spinning.

Under the adverse conditions of raising sheep on most of the reservation, where flocks range over great distances in order to find enough to eat, heavier breeds, ^{such as} like the Rambouillet, have difficulty in surviving. The crimped wool from the Rambouillet is very difficult to spin by hand, and when it ^{is} ~~has been~~ used it is apt to produce lumpy strands. The traders and the commercial wool buyers, however, have wanted heavier meat-producing animals and heavier fleeces. The difference in the character of the wool between the old-type sheep and new heavier breeds has been one of the major factors in the controversy over introducing the newer strains, for it is the Navaho women who usually control the sheep and they want the old-type wool. While only 10% ^{percent} of the wool crop is used for spinning, ^{percent} and 40% ^{percent} for sale to wool buyers, ^{percent} still that 10%, by the time it has been transformed into fine rugs, brings a greater return than the wool that is sold.

full measure →

Nevertheless, so much Rambouillet blood had been introduced into the Navaho flocks by 1936, in order to satisfy the demands of both traders and commercial wool buyers, that the type of wool needed by the weavers was in danger of extinction. The Rambouillet sheep, though heavier and better meat and fleece producers, did not thrive on reservation pasture. To meet this situation, the Department of Agriculture commenced a project at Fort Wingate, known as the ^{Navajo} Sheep Breeding Laboratory, under the direction of J. O. Grandstaff. Its purpose was to develop a breed of sheep that would have the conformation of the Rambouillet and the wool quality of the old Navaho sheep, while at the same time have the ability to subsist on reservation pasture. During the more than twenty-five years since its inception, this Laboratory has succeeded in fulfilling its purpose. Not only has the mutton conformation been achieved while retaining the subsistence hardiness of the old sheep, but also ^{been} it has actually improved the quality of the wool.

The Bureau of Indian affairs was working with the Laboratory during part of this time, endeavoring to interest the Navaho in improving their flocks. To accomplish this ^{improvement}, it was necessary to keep these new sheep separated from other stock, and this proved to be a very difficult ~~matter~~ ^{to accomplish}. Wherever Navaho breeders would agree to this program, they were loaned three bucks of this new breed. The Bureau, however, did not have the personnel, nor did the Laboratory, to do this ^{e)} much needed field work. The Navaho

themselves as yet have not shown sufficient interest in the project. Perhaps it followed too closely on the sheep reduction program for them to realize what the benefits really were. The Sheep Breeding Laboratory still exists, furnishing bucks to a few Navaho and Zuni breeders, and at the present time there are some one thousand head of this new breed. What seems to be needed is an effort on the part of the Navaho themselves to profit from this long experiment. The Laboratory furnishes wool from these sheep to the Arts and Crafts Guild, already washed and carded ^{and} ready to be hand spun, but many of the weavers think it is too costly. It is hoped that where there are a number of weavers in a given area ~~that~~ they will unite to improve the weaving wool for their own looms. The benefit they would receive would repay them many times over, but changes such as this take time to bring about.

Many goats are also raised by the Navaho, ^{who} ~~They~~ like the meat to eat just as well as mutton, and goat hair (mohair) is also used in weaving. More difficult to spin, it nevertheless produces fine yarn, and rugs made of mohair bring a premium.

In Santa Fe, in 1860, there were a number of German merchants who imported from Germany the fine vegetal-dyed Saxony yarn with intent to sell it to the weavers of the Rio Grande Valley. It is believed by some authorities that some of this wool reached Navaho weavers, possibly while they were in exile at Fort Sumner. Having little or no wool of their own production, they may well have ^{ed} ~~commenced~~ using this soft three-ply yarn if it became available to them at that time.

There are in existence, mostly in museums, a number of extremely handsome and rare blankets woven by Navaho women between the years 1860^N-1880, all made of this fine Saxony yarn. Following this period, American-made Germantown yarn made its appearance at some of the trading posts on the reservation. Heavier than the Saxony yarn, four-ply instead of three, it was used to some extent during the decade that followed, and with this yarn, cotton warp was first used. The cost of the Germantown yarn was a deterrent to the weavers, who, in general, preferred to continue spinning their own wool, and in addition, the traders objected to the use of the cotton warp, which is neither strong nor elastic.

3) Shearing

4 In early times, sheep were shorn with the use of any piece of thin metal that could be honed to as sharp an edge as possible on a stone. But when metal shears were first brought to the trading posts, the Navaho were quick to use them. The shorn wool is sorted carefully, separating the longest hairs to use as warp, removing the shortest to be sold as wool, and saving the remainder for spinning weft threads. Burrs and other matter sticking to the wool are carefully removed.

4) Washing

Usually only greasy wool is washed. Using ^{the} pounded roots of the yucca plant for soap (still preferred by most weavers), and making a rich lather with it in a pan or a tub, ^{the weaver} ⁵ the mixture is poured over the wool as it lies on a slanting board or rock, repeating until all the dirt, sand, and grease have been removed. The wool is then spread out in the sun to dry, and finally stored in sacks ready for use.

4) Carding

In early times cards consisted of burrs ^{held} in place by strips of leather mounted on small boards with handles at one side. These were replaced when metal cards of American manufacture were procurable at the trading posts. When a weaver is ready to card her wool, she first loosens it by hand, then combs it between carding tools until the hairs lie all in one direction. Carded wool emerges in the form of soft pads called "rovings", ready to be twisted into continuous strands. If a weaver wants to produce good gray color, she mixes wool from black sheep with that of white as she cards the wool. This method makes the finest gray used in many rugs, particularly those from the Two Gray Hills area.

4) Spinning

The Navaho spindle differs from ^{that} those of the Pueblo spinners, and its method of use, ^{also} differs greatly. The spindle consists of a round stick about ^{twenty-five} 25 to ^{thirty} 30 inches long, pointed at both ends. The whorl is a flat disk, four or five inches in diameter, with a hole in the center into which the stick fits. The whorl, which acts as a balance,

is securely fastened to the stick about five inches from the butt end.

The spinner first attaches a roving to the upper end of the spindle, and with the butt end resting on the ground, she starts a roving onto the spindle with a spinning motion of the stick. Then, resting the upper part of the spindle on her thigh, she rolls the spindle with the palm of her right hand in a drawing motion toward her body. With the free end of the roving held in her left hand out from the top of the stick, (page ~~1~~) she stretches the wool as it slips off the top of the twirling spindle. The skill lies in the steady motion of the spindle as she twirls it with her right hand, while at the same ^{time} she uses just the right amount of pull to stretch the twisting strands. As a given length of roving is twisted and stretched into yarn, the spinner winds it onto the spindle just above the whorl, where it is stored until she has a sufficient amount to wind off into a ball. Each successive spinning makes the yarn finer and stronger. All Navaho yarn is spun at least twice until it is smooth and fine, and all yarn is one ply with the exception of the two-ply cords made for the selvages, so characteristic of Navaho weaving.

The quality of the wool, even more than the skill of the spinner, determines the character of the yarn. Coarse, short-fibered wool cannot be spun into smooth fine yarn, but wool from the old-type Navaho sheep almost spins itself. This is why the weavers objected to the introduction of the Rambouillet sheep.

Enduring Navaho
S-1580
Univ. of Texas

Plate
99

Plate
C-15

(as shown in the picture of Old Lady Long Salt)

Since the American occupation of the Southwest, traders and others have tried to introduce the spinning wheel, but

the Navaho women have always rejected it; ^{the probable}

^{because of the}

^{reason being} lack of room in the hogans, and portability

^{spinning wheel}

Perhaps now that so many Navaho move less frequently and

have sufficient space in ^{their} modern houses, they might be more

interested in this less laborious method of hand spinning.

④ Dyeing

Using a wide variety of native plants, the Navaho produce dyes of many colors and shades. The wool from black sheep is never a true black, as it tends to a brownish tinge. Good black dye is made from a mixture of twigs and leaves of sumac boiled four or five hours, and then added to a mixture of powdered native yellow ochre and an equal amount of piñon gum, ^{both mixtures are} stirred together over a fire until a black liquid is formed, which dries to a fine black powder. The tannic acid of the sumac acts as a mordant to produce a rich, permanent black. Indigo, on the other hand, was imported in lumps by the early traders and was used extensively until the end of the 1890s. The indigo, tied in a cloth, was suspended in a large jar of urine which acted as a mordant. Occasionally, some of this dye is still made. The wool was placed in the jar and left until the desired depth of color was obtained. The mordant used with most native plants is an impure alum found in limited quantities in certain regions on the reservation, while ^{some} ~~certain~~ plants require moss or lichen as a mordant.

Aniline dyes, perfected in 1856-57, came onto the market from the first factory in 1864, and were in general use by 1870. They reached the Navaho traders about 1880 when Mr. B. F. Hyatt, trader at Fort Defiance, taught the weavers how to use them. C. N. Cotton, originally a partner of Lorenzo Hubbell, succeeded in obtaining dyes packaged ready for use, including a mordant, and these, under the trade name of Diamond Dyes, were soon available at most trading posts, and were used to dye native hand-spun wool.

Plants
99, 100

4 The Loom

The structure of the loom is both simple and practical. It consists of two parts; the weaving frame and the stationary upright poles and cross beams which hold the weaving frame while in use. Looms are made of native wood, poles of a desired height being set into the ground with top and bottom cross beams. Usually the top cross beam is held in place by natural crotches at the top of the upright poles, while the lower beam is securely tied at the bottom of the loom frame. These cross beams support the weaving frame after the warp has been strung to it.

When a weaver has determined the size of the rug or blanket she will make, she first prepares the warp. A warping frame is made of four poles, ^{of which the are} two long ones, cut some twelve to eighteen inches longer than the rug to be woven. On top of these poles she places two shorter cross pieces, sometimes broomsticks, tying each corner very securely, ^{ing} care being taken that all sides are parallel and the measurements accurate. She then raises this frame a little above the ground on low supports, just high enough so that a wound ball of warp thread will pass beneath the cross sticks. ^{After} Tying one end of the warp thread at the top (usually the upper left-hand corner), ^{she passes} the ball is then ^{and} passed over and under the lower stick, then up over and down under the top stick, thereby creating the cross of the threads, and continuing until the sufficient number of threads have been wound. The winding of the warp is most carefully done, the weaver making certain that the threads

are straight, ^{that} the tension ^{is} even, and that ~~there are~~ ^{are} no ^{ed} twists or crossed threads. She ties the last thread at the diagonal of the first tie.

Next she adds the end cords. These consist of two or three-ply twisted strands of weft threads which have been measured twice the width of the rug. These are twined with each other as the edging is woven in and out of alternate warp threads, ^{the weaver} keeping the spacing and tension even for both the top and bottom edges. Next comes the preserving of the cross formed at the center of the warp by the over and under winding of the warp threads. ^{The weaver} She places a small reed (the length of the rug width) on each side of the cross, tying ^{reeds} them to hold this cross in place. The four poles of the warping frame are then removed, leaving a mass of warp threads, in which the cross is preserved by the reeds, and the top and bottom end cords hold the ends of the warp in place. The end cords are then tied to the weaving-frame cross bars, by weft threads which wind around the bars holding the edges securely to it. The creation of the firm top and bottom edges is one of the perfections of Navaho technique. When the rug is finished it is removed from the loom simply by untying the edges from the loom cross bars. Sometimes this winding thread, which holds the edges in place on the loom, is placed between every two warp threads, sometimes ^{every} three or six, depending on the size, and whether the rug will be woven of coarse or fine material. The bottom cross piece of the weaving frame is then

Plate
101

tied to the bottom cross beam of the loom, and the top piece is laced to the top cross beam by a rope, using large loops by which the tension of the weaving frame can be adjusted. Again great care is used to see that all cross pieces are parallel.

The next procedure is the tying in of the heddles to form one or more of the sheds through which the weft is passed. The heddles are tied to every other warp thread for a plain weave (p. 106), or to combinations of threads for any other weaving pattern the weaver chooses. Sometimes several heddles are used, as in the diamond-twill or herringbone weaves (p. 107).

Yarn for the side edge cords ^{is} are then tied to the lower beam, and loosely tied to the top beam (p. 108). If the warp threads are light in color, the side edge cords are usually made of weft color threads, made in the same way as the top and bottom edge cords. The loom is now set ^{for the weaver} to commence weaving the rug. Everything about the loom has been made of simple native material, and is completely functional.

4 Weaving

(The simple tools used in weaving number only two, ^{1/m} the comb and the batten, ^{1/m} though every weaver will have several sizes of each. The comb is made of a hard wood into which tines have been cut, like a fork, perhaps three inches in length, with a handle carved out at the opposite end. The comb is used first to beat down the weft as it is passed through the shed. The batten, also made of hard wood, is

a slightly curved piece about thirty inches long and three inches wide, though smaller sizes are also used. One shed is formed by the shed rod (the long upper stick in the picture, ~~pick~~) just above the heddle; the other shed is formed by the heddles. The batten is inserted in the shed and then turned edgewise to make the opening wide enough for the insertion of the weft to be passed through. A true shuttle has never been used by the Navaho, for they insert the weft with their fingers (~~press~~) except when weaving plain long stripes; then a small stick is used, around which weft thread has been wound. As so many of the designs require only a few inches of color at a time, the nimble fingers of the weavers seem adequate. As weaving is done in a sitting position, many weavers do not complete a whole line at a time when this would require moving; ~~so they will~~ ^{but} weave several inches from one position before moving over to complete the line. After the weft has been passed through the shed, the comb is ~~first~~ ^{first} used to press down the weft, then the batten, ^{it is used} also to press down over a longer area. The degree of firmness struck with both comb and batten, determines the tightness of the weave.

The variety of weaves attained by the Navaho weavers is great; ^{the} ~~are many~~ ^{the} from plain weave to tapestry weave, ~~the~~ ^{the} diagonal and diamond twills, ~~and the rare two-faced weave~~ ^{and} which has a different design on each side, ~~also~~ ^{also} the wedge weave, unique to ~~the~~ Navaho weavers. Added to the variety of

Plates
102-104

To design - see
made up for a map.
caption

weaves, are the variations of color and pattern, giving the weaver an extensive choice.

Most of the designs are carried in the weaver's mind. She does not use a diagram or drawing, or counting of threads. The exceptions are some of the very intricate patterns of tapestry sand-painting rugs, or some of the classical designs. Then the weaver makes a sketch in the sand. This carrying of a design mentally is a remarkable feat, for every weaver has many interruptions, and sometimes may be away from the loom for days at a time, yet when she returns to her loom she knows the exact place in her design where she had stopped and what is to come next.

Knitting

The Navaho also practice knitting, though interestingly enough it is usually the men who knit, making leggings or footless stockings. Originally sticks of hard wood were used for needles, later, wire, or the ribs of old umbrellas served well. Regular knitting needles were of course carried by the traders when the demand for them ^{became} ~~was~~ manifest. _{at a time}

As many as four or five needles are used. The knitters create a raised rim at the top of the stocking with a purl stitch, giving a firm edge for longer wear. A knitted or plaited band is added at the bottom to pass under the foot to keep the stocking from working upward.

③ 8^
4^

THE BLANKETS

□ From the beginning of Navaho weaving, blankets and mantas were made for clothing. Beyond personal needs, as the chroniclers have told us, surplus blankets were made for trade. The great period, known as the classic period, was from approximately 1840 to the end of the nineteenth century. During the earliest part of this period, possibly even before, Spanish traders brought a fabric to trade to the Indians known as bayeta cloth. This was imported from England to Spain, thence to New Mexico, and while it was called by the Spanish name, it was in reality English Manchester cloth. Red color predominated, a special shade of red which took the fancy of the Navaho weavers, who unraveled it, and after careful scrutiny to test its strength and evenness, sometimes re^{and}spun it, then wove it into the intricate patterns of these early blankets. Many of the finest examples of Navaho weaving contain the beautiful bayeta, merged into the textiles along with the native handspun wool. Many serapes and blankets of this period were so firmly woven that they were waterproof. They were in great demand and were highly prized.

From about 1890 until the early years of this century, Navaho weaving deteriorated. The weavers commenced making coarser fabrics, largely for sale to the tourist trade as floor rugs. To a considerable extent the traders were responsible for this change. With this^e making of rugs rather than blankets, borders were introduced with patterns of very different character from

Plate 105
some note
in this section

the fine, vigorous designs of the classic period. Mr. J. B. Moore, of Crystal, seems to have been the first to suggest the idea of borders to the weavers of his area. This suggestion carried across the mountains to Two Gray Hills, where it was developed and has been used extensively ever since. In the early 1880s, Mr. C. N. Cotton left Ganado, where he had been a partner of Lorenzo Hubbell, to establish a wholesale business in Gallup, for he was intent on developing an eastern market for both blankets and rugs. With the coming of the railroad in 1882-¹⁸83, the outlook for such a business increased. As the Fred Harvey Company of the Santa Fe Railroad built its Harvey Houses along the length of the line, ^{it} they not only used Navaho rugs in their buildings, but developed shops where the travelers might purchase both rugs and other Indian-made handicrafts. Rug making grew to ^{be} a great business, the entire output being sold to the American public.

In 1920 Miss Mary C. Wheelwright of Boston, who at that time ^{owned} had a shop carrying Indian-made articles for sale, had a talk with trader L. H. ^(Cozy) McSparron at Chinle. One of the questions Miss Wheelwright asked was did he know if the Navaho weavers still knew how to use their old vegetable dyes? Both Miss Wheelwright and Mr. McSparron deplored the trend of commercial dyes and the loss of the fine old designs. McSparron agreed to see what he could do to ^{persuade} interest the weavers in his region to return to the old dyes. After some experimenting, some of the weavers produced borderless simple designs with the wool dyed by their old native methods. Mr. McSparron was

The gray is a mixture produced by carding natural white with some black.

0129

able to sell these at a higher price than those made of commercial dyes, and to sell them as fast as the weavers could produce them. This was the beginning of another great change in the production of rugs, for other traders soon followed McSparron's lead, and, today, thousands of these beautiful rugs are on the market.

The Two Gray Hills region, however, has continued the border-patterned rugs which are woven with ^{natural} undyed wool, white, gray, brown, and black wool; the latter, however, is dyed with ^{the} black dye to produce a true black. ^{color, white} A rich brown color is obtained with dye made from a native walnut.

Occasionally, very large rugs have been made on special order, measuring twenty or more feet wide by nearly forty feet long. Special looms had to be built to accommodate such size, but they were, or are, built to the traditional specifications. Rugs of extremely fine texture have appeared in recent years from the Two Gray Hills area. One weaver, Daisie Tauglechee, spins strands so fine that her woven fabric counts 110 weft threads to the inch. Others are now following her lead, but, so far, these are still bordered rugs and of the undyed wool, except for the black.

Throughout the nearly 175 years that the Navaho women have been weavers, they have produced an extraordinary variety of products; moving quickly from the first simple striped blankets to the superb classic period, through a time of decadence, until in very recent years a new surge of fine quality has appeared. The variety of design seems endless in its use of geometric shapes, the spacing of line and color, and the harmony of the whole, for there are never two exactly alike.

* Navaho Weaving, Charles Avery Amsden, p. 224.

The variety of weaving is also great, for following the old original clothes that were woven, there ^{are} ~~were~~ shoulder blankets, ponchos, serapes, saddle blankets, ^{of} both single and double weave, rugs, Yei blankets (sand-painting blankets), saddle girths, sashes, garters, hair-cords, stockings, and leggings. Weaving is unquestionably the great craft of the Navaho. The finest examples are to be found in leading museums of the world, as well as in many private collections. The new building of the ~~Navaho~~ Arts and Crafts Guild at Window Rock, with its contents of weaving, silver jewelry and other crafts, is evidence of the vigorous production of the craftsmen of today. If the yearly volume of Navaho handicrafts which are sold by the many traders and shops all over the Southwest and elsewhere were added together, the aggregate would be impressive.

THE SILVERSMITHS

42 → 81 →
 Plate 106-III
 between here +
 P. 104
 Plate 10-12

□ The art of silversmithing among the Navaho commenced in earnest soon after the return from Fort Sumner, though there may well have been earlier efforts. That a few individuals knew the craft of blacksmithing before the exile is recorded in Richard Van Valkenberg's ^{b) Brief} "History of the Navaho People". He attributes this knowledge to Captain Henry L. Dodge, the first civil agent to live in the Navaho country, though there may well have been previous knowledge of the craft. Captain Dodge was a veteran of the Washington Expedition of 1849, and he both understood and sympathized with the Navaho. Following his appointment in 1853, Captain Dodge built a house on the eastern slope of the Chuska Mountains not far from Sheep Springs, commencing his work with a Congressional appropriation of \$5,000. One of the first things he did was to bring a blacksmith, George Carter, an ex-soldier, to teach smithing to the Navaho in his area. He also brought a Mexican silversmith. But Captain Dodge's career was of short duration, for he was killed from ambush by the Chiricahua Apaches south of Zuñi in 1856 while on a hunting trip with a group of Navaho Chiefs.

It is probable that the Navaho had worked in metal even in the ^{eighteenth} 18th century, and that inability to obtain silver may well have been the reason ^{why} ~~that~~ they did not work in this medium at an earlier date. While there are a number of references ^{to} of Navaho people wearing silver jewelry prior to the exile, it was

doubtless obtained through trade or capture from ^{the} Spanish, Mexican, ^{or} or even Plains Indian tribes, such as the Utes or Kiowa, who sometimes came in contact with the Navaho. Many of the designs later adopted by the Navaho were of Spanish origin, such as the so-called Squash Blossom, which in reality is the pomegranate blossom, long used by the Spanish in Europe, fashioned for buttons ^{of} of brass or silver, and in iron for ornaments ^{for} for spurs.

One of the early Navaho to ply the blacksmith's trade was Atsidi Sani, who became known as a maker of bridle bits and knife blades. In his authoritative book, The Navaho and Pueblo Silversmiths, John Adair tells of Atsidi Sani ^{1/2} learning the silversmith's art from Nakai Tsosi, a Mexican craftsman who lived near Mount Taylor. ^(Tsoodzit) ^{set all}

As there seems to be no record of any silver work by the Navaho prior to the exile to Fort Sumner, it must have been after their return in 1868 that practice of the art commenced. That it spread rapidly is evident from all the early records of the period between 1870 and 1880, for by the time that Dr. Washington Matthews was stationed at Fort Wingate at the latter date, there were a good many proficient craftsmen. Dr. Matthews employed two Navaho silversmiths, whom he established near his residence where he might observe them at their work, and he left for posterity a detailed account of the art as practiced by these two men. Some fifty years later, Father Berard Haile also left a similar record of his findings over a wider area, for he had been making ^a ^{of silversmiths} ^{of} ^{subjects} this study as well as many others, during his long years on the reservation.

The fine work of the early Navaho smiths was produced with the simplest of equipment, and though during the following decades new tools were added to the smith's work bench, the

technique is basically the same.

The Forge

The forge was a square structure of stones and adobe mud, built to a convenient height with the rear slightly elevated. Air tubes were made of two pieces of wood, grooved and fitted together and lined both inside and out with adobe. The smith sat crosslegged on the floor of his hogan or wherever he had his forge. In later years benches or chairs were used to give a more comfortable sitting position for long hours of work.

Bellows

The bellows was made of sheepskin in the form of a sack about eighteen inches in diameter, held distended by three or more hoops of willow twigs. One end of the bellows was firmly secured to a nozzle and fitted into one of the tubes leading to the forge. The other end was closed by tacking the sheepskin to a round disk of wood containing a leather valve in the center. The bellows had two handles of different lengths, the longer projected downward, resting on the ground, the upper worked the bellows. As the number of silversmiths increased, traders stocked commercial bellows in their posts.

Anvils

The very earliest anvils were simply hard stones. Later pieces of iron, such as parts of plows, or wagons,

were used. After the coming of the railroad, pieces of rails were used and still are used by many smiths. An anvil was fastened to the top of a large log cut to the right height for comfortable work.

④ The
④ Crucibles

The early crucibles for melting silver were made of clay and baked hard in a fire. They were about three or four inches in diameter and had an outward-curved rim and one or more spouts. ^{melting pots} These were not very durable and were replaced by commercial crucibles when these became available. Some smiths have found that cup-shaped pieces of prehistoric pottery from a ruin served the purpose and were more durable than any. ^{other container}

④ The
④ Molds

Some molds are made of ingots for casting a bar of silver to be worked into a bracelet or other ornament. Molds for making casts are incised in a soft stone, preferably pieces of volcanic tuff, a very light pumice-like stone which is found in several places on the reservation.

The incised pieces of tuff for casts are cut to approximately the right size and shape and the surface ^{is} perfectly smoothed. A cover piece is then fitted to each mold, making as tight a fit as possible. Grooves are cut at one end of the incised piece to permit the entry of the molten silver, while two or more grooves are cut for air passages.

All molds for casting are greased with mutton tallow. Molds for beads are cut into iron or hard wood, smooth surfaced, so that the silver coin or sheet can be pounded

into the depression, making a spherical half of a bead. Later two of these are soldered together to make the round bead.

④ The Smelting Fuel

Charcoal has always been used for smelting fuel. It is prepared during the summer months ^{from} by making a large fire of piñon or juniper branches. After the flames have died down and only glowing embers remain, the coals are smothered with earth and allowed to cool, ^{forming the charcoal.}

④ The Blowpipe

Originally the blowpipe was hammered out of a piece of brass or copper wire, bent into a tube with a curved, tapering end. It was used in soldering with a lamp or wick of twisted cotton soaked in tallow. The modern blow torch is a highly prized tool used today by most smiths. Some ingenious individuals have fashioned torches from cans by fastening a spout on one side and an ^{opening} ^{forming} on the opposite side into which a rubber tube ^{is} ~~was~~ fastened. Blowing through the tube produced ⁵ enough pressure to blow the flame out of the spout.

④ The Solder

Silver solder is used with borax as flux to make it flow more smoothly.

④ The Materials

Some of the very early smiths worked in copper and brass, making rings and bracelets. The first silver to be used was American coin silver, melted and fashioned to the desire of the craftsman. When the United States Government put a stop to the use of coins for this purpose, some time

in the 1880s, the traders soon procured Mexican pesos in their place. The Navaho smiths preferred the peso silver, for it had less alloy and was somewhat softer. As the traders began to buy jewelry to sell, they provided silver in one-ounce slugs in ^a quality of ~~fineness~~ approximately that of the coins.

④ Stones

^{by the Navaho} Turquoise first was used in the 1880 period. The traders procured stones from ~~the~~ mines near Santa Fe, and later from mines in Colorado and in Utah. ~~Sometimes~~ ^{sometimes} the traders supplied stones that ^{had to} were already cut, ^{and} sometimes ^{were} in chunks that ~~must~~ be shaped and polished. Early stones were set in deep bezels, with the edges coming slightly over the top of the stones, holding them securely in place. As craftsmen acquired greater skills they were able to set stones in a lower setting. Other kinds of stones also were used, ^{malachite}, garnets, cannel coal. ✓

④ Cleaning

^{Silver used to be} The Navaho like their silver well polished. ^{and} ~~Cleaning~~ ^{being ed} used ~~to be done~~ with native alum, then polished with buckskin, but today it is cleaned by ^{being ed} dipping in a diluted solution of nitric acid, then put in a bowl of water and brushed with a wire brush. It is buffed either by hand or with a buffing pad attached to a grindstone, with the pad well covered with jeweler's rouge.

The skill of the Navaho craftsman lies in his ability and judgement in all phases of his work. ^{to} Sprinkling a little borax on the silver as it melts, ^{to} reduces the melting point; ~~it~~

^{ing the silver}
~~must be~~ heated to just the right degree of even moltenness; ~~it~~
^{ing the molten silver} ~~must be~~ poured quickly and evenly, ^{to avoid the formation of} or a slight crust ~~forms~~
 causing brittleness and, later, cracks. There is great skill
 in using the hammer correctly, striking blows with the edge of
 the hammer, ^{producing} and blows of even strength. Coins are hammered by
 hand, the smith singing as he works, obtaining a rhythm of song
 and stroke. The most beautiful of the silver ornaments are the
 hand-hammered ~~silver~~ pieces. The smith must learn to use his
 dies correctly, placing them exactly and striking the ^m die with
 just the right amount of force. These ~~are some of the~~ tech-
^{of course} niques, ^{much} that require time to achieve.

Primarily the Navaho made jewelry for his own adornment and
 that of his family. It was not long, however, until there was
 a ready market and a growing demand for his products. Just
 prior to 1900, the Fred Harvey Company realized this potential
 market, and began to place orders with traders who had silver-
 smiths in their regions. Soon came a demand for lighter (in
 weight) pieces at lower cost, so that ~~soon~~ silversmiths were
 producing two types of jewelry, the old heavy pieces for their
 fellow Navaho, and light-weight cheaper jewelry to sell to the
 white man.

The traders began to stock better tools for the smiths, ^{the}
 dividers, files of many sizes and degrees of fineness, metal
 worker's saws, and gasoline blow torches. The smith usually
 made his dies, with which he stamped designs on bracelets and
 other pieces, from all sorts of worn tools, old railroad spikes,
 old cold chisels, bolts, and other pieces of scrap. The Navaho

never wastes anything; he always seems to find a way to put worn-out scraps to use. And seldom does he ever make two pieces alike; there is always a difference, giving his work that unmistakable quality of hand work, and the uniqueness of Navaho design.

The Navaho learns the techniques and methods of his craft from watching another smith. ~~This is~~ usually a relative, ^{The} and an apprentice pays for his instruction by helping his teacher as soon as he is able. In rare cases when a man is learning from a non-relative, he pays for his apprenticeship in sheep, or cash, or some other ^{material} way. The Navaho, when he does not have the money to buy the tools he needs, shows great ingenuity and resourcefulness in his ability to fashion such tools from old ~~or other~~ material.

ARTICLES OF JEWELRY

3 Conchas

^{called conchas} The round or oval disks are made for ornamenting belts and bridles. Sometimes these are very simple, sometimes ornate with design or turquoise studding.

4 Buckles

Silver buckles are made for belts and bridles; other metals are used for girth buckles.

4 Bridles

Headstalls are mounted with silver bars with various degrees of ornamentation. Conchas are sometimes used ^{on} at joints with larger bars, sometimes a pendant from the cross piece over the head of the horse.

4 Ketohs

Long ago the Navaho adopted the use of a leather wrist guard as a protection from the snap of the bow string.

Later, silver ornaments were added to the guard, or ketoh.

~~Some of the very finest of the silversmith's art are ketohs.~~

Some are of ~~hammered~~ silver, many are beautiful casts, ^{and} some ^{are} set with turquoise. Today they are worn as ornaments and

are always worn on dress occasions. As these have never been made for commercial use, they are the finest of the silversmith's art.

4 Bracelets

~~There are many types of bracelets; simple bands of silver one to two inches wide with simple or ornate decoration. Some have mounted turquoise, or other stones. Some are narrow bracelets with or without stones. Then there are narrow bracelets with stamped designs, and many types with mounted turquoise. There are cast bracelets with open design, and with or without turquoise.~~

(The Navajo silversmiths make) ? Some are or even three are heavy and with some

4 Necklaces

~~There are necklaces made of hollow beads of many sizes and shapes, constructed in two pieces and soldered together. Sometimes the so-called squash blossom ornaments are strung at intervals between the beads. Many necklaces have pendant Najah, a design similar to the Arabian hand of Fatima (probably brought to New Mexico by the Spanish). Some early Najah had two little chiselled hands at the ends to ward off the evil eye. This is doubtless a Navaho adaptation, and one also finds small circles with inset turquoise at the ends. Sometimes this nearly circular design is double.~~

There are many other types of necklaces; ^{1/m} strings of turquoise, of shell ground into very fine beads, ^{and} strings of coral.

④ Rings

The earliest rings were plain silver bands; soon some ^{were made with} ~~had~~ simple incised designs. The use of turquoise ^{with silver} appeared in the early 1880s. Some cast rings are made. Most rings now have insets, usually turquoise, but also malachite and garnets, ^{and} or cannel coal, occasionally polished petrified wood.

④ Pins

There are pins of many shapes and designs, both with and without turquoise.

④ Earrings

Both Navaho men and women have worn earrings since the early days. Before the advent of turquoise on the reservation, Navaho men wore silver earrings of several types: round circular loops on which dangling silver beads had been strung; flat slightly decorated rings; and pendants, narrow and cone shaped with spreading flowerlike petals at the ends. Since turquoise became abundant, about 1900, the silver earrings for men have all but disappeared. Instead the men wear large pieces of turquoise in several forms--some edged with silver, others plain with holes drilled in one end for the insertion of string, which in turn ^{is} ~~was~~ passed through the pierced ear. Women too, have long worn earrings, usually turquoise beads strung in loops two to four inches long with the addition of a few bits of red shell at the bottom of the loop. There ^{are} ~~were~~ worn on string passed through pierced ears.

Sometime in the 1920's, the Fred Harvey Company introduced the screwtype fasteners, urging silver-smiths to produce women's earrings to be sold through the Company to the non-Indian market. In recent times Navaho women also wear the screwtype earrings with both silver and turquoise ornamentation of great variety.

4 Buttons

The variety of buttons is great, ~~both~~ hammered silver as well as cast. There are many sizes and many shapes, such as buttons with small turquoise insets, ^{and} plain silver disks, some with incised designs. Coins are often used which have loops soldered on one side. Buttons are used as ornaments of collars, cuffs, blouses, leggings, moccasins, ~~on~~ pouches, and narrow leather straps.

4 Unusual Pieces

The Mother-in-law bells are made from twenty-five^N-cent pieces, hammered into thin bell shapes. The coins are pounded between a round-headed bar into a corresponding receptacle of hard wood or iron. Small clappers are fastened to the inside, ^{and the} ^{then} A bell is fastened to the end of a short string of beads. These are made for older women who wear them on their belts to notify their sons-in-law of their approach.

The Powder Horn was a gracefully designed receptacle to hold a charge of powder. It had a handle on one end, the whole object being shaped like an elongated letter "S". A small chain was fastened to the center for attachment to a belt. When bullets were available, powder horns were no longer made, and as many were probably melted down to make other articles, they soon became very rare.

Tobacco Canteens were beautiful small containers, seldom made any more, and there are only a few in existence, mostly in museums and private collections.

A variety of other pieces are being made today for sale to the ^{non-Indian} American public, such as spoons, silver boxes, and a number of other articles.

When the Navaho Arts and Crafts Guild was founded in 1940, under the direction of René D'Harnoncourt of the National Indian Arts and Crafts Board, John Adair was appointed as the Guild's first manager. Mr. Adair's extensive knowledge of Indian crafts made him the ideal person to commence this Navaho Guild. Ambrose Roanhorse, one of the most skilled Navaho

the Guild has recently moved to

craftsmen, was his assistant, and together they made a solid beginning for the Guild, setting the highest standard for materials and workmanship. Following World War II, when the Guild was re-activated, other managers took Mr. Adair's place, one of whom trained a young Navaho, Ned Hatathli, to follow in his footsteps.

In 1951 the Guild was made a Tribal Enterprise, with Ned appointed as the first Navaho Manager. The Guild grew rapidly under Ned's management as more and more craftsmen brought in their products for sale. Housed at first in the old log building at the Fair Grounds, ^{by} the Tribe ~~has now~~ erected a beautiful new building ^{here} on the highway approaching Window Rock, ^{where} fine facilities display great quantities of rugs, jewelry, and other items coming from the skilled hands of the Navaho. The total output from the looms and forges on the reservation is great, for in addition to all the many traders both on and off the reservation who handle these products in quantity, the total amount of sales by the Guild alone came to a quarter of a million dollars in 1963.

Ned Hatathli went on to become a member of the Tribal Council in 1955, serving in this capacity until 1960, when he was made director of Tribal resources, the position he now so ably holds.

Away from the reservation, there is a quantity of imitation Navaho jewelry on the market. Any purchaser will do well to go to reliable shops or directly to the Guild at Window Rock, where all items bear the seal of the Arts and Crafts Guild, and all are of unique Navaho design.

Plate 113
Ambrose Roanhorse, whose superb work as a master silver-smith has won him many awards, including a decoration from France, is now teaching at the Vocational School at Fort Wingate, near Gallup, where boys and girls are given ~~not only~~^{not only} the opportunity to learn ^{also} all the Navaho Crafts, but ^{also} other occupations, such as carpentry, shoe making, leather work, and dress-making, ^{the} trades that will equip these students for their future lives.

81
 12
 91
THE POTTERS

16925
 Following the Spanish re^{re}occupation of New Mexico, some Pueblo Indians fled into Old Navaholand. During recent archaeological excavations in this area, evidence came to light of the close proximity of these Pueblo groups to those of the Navaho. ^{In} During the ensuing century, pottery fragments from Navaho sites indicate ^{there was a} definite Pueblo influence, ^{such} as sherds decorated with red, black, and occasionally white designs, ^{which} had been fired to the high temperature used by the Pueblo people.

Plate 114
 Later came utilitarian pieces, some of good size, with thin walls made of crumbly clay with sand for temper. Shaped with the use of corncob scrapers, many ^{pieces} had exceptionally beautiful form. These storage jars had pointed bottoms, being held up-right by the use of basket rings or ^{by being} set in depressions in the floor. Water bottles were also made of pottery ^{in early times} with narrow openings with handles on the sides through which horsehair ropes were inserted. These ^{bottles} were flattened on one side for ease in carrying, and some had designs. Legend tells of water bottles being made of the four ^{sacred} colors, white, blue, yellow, and black ^{1 m} and used ^{in ceremonies to} for carrying water for ceremonial purposes, gathered from the four sacred mountains. These water bottles are very rare now, for they were replaced by other types of containers as soon as they became available. Bowls of various shapes and sizes, spoons and dippers and dolls, many with finely executed designs, were the products of years gone by.

Shaped somewhat like a pitcher without a spout, such a pot had a loop, a finger handle, near the narrow neck to facilitate pouring. A horsehair rope could also have been inserted in the loop for easier carrying.

Today, only cooking jars, a few bowls, and drums are made, and there seem to be but few potters left. These jars, somewhat similar ⁱⁿ to shape, rounded on the bottom and with a slight flare at the top, ^{and} some with scalloped edges, are all that can be found of recent manufacture. These ^{jars or} pots are made for cooking, ^{or} for preparing dyes for wool, ^{while} and some ^{are} made specially for remedial and ceremonial use. ^{A few} Some of the latter are used as drums with pieces of sheep skin or goatskin stretched over the tops. A new pot is always preferred for a drum and once it has been used for this purpose, it must never ~~again~~ be used for cooking.

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³⁹ In some areas firing ^{of the pottery} is accomplished by ^{the potters first} digging a pit, ^{and then} building in it a large fire of piñon wood. When this has burned down, the coals are raked to one side, the pots put in, usually upside down, ^{then} covered with the hot coals, and left for from four to seven hours. In other areas, ^{then} pots are placed on flat stones, then covered with enough juniper (preferably) to insure the fire ^{then} burning for six hours without replenishing. A few areas have used Spanish-type outdoor ~~bake~~ ovens. After a good fire has burned down, the pots are placed in the oven and left for twelve hours. Pottery making among the Navaho has never approached the superlative quality of that ^{of} produced by the Pueblo craftsmen. ^{as} Probably the Navaho have had less use for pottery, for as they became stockmen, often moving from place to place, pottery was too easily broken, and too difficult to transport.

Following many inquiries in numerous regions, I finally ^{still at work} heard of one potter in the Shonto area. With an English-speaking ^(Betsy and I) interpreter, we set off to find her. After looking at my pictures

Because the Navaho often moved from place to place, pottery was replaced by more durable containers as they became available, with the exception of the jar-type container, which is used also for ceremonial purposes. ^{vessel}

and learning what I wanted to do, she asked us to return in two days, ^{when} and she would be ready. As there are a number of taboos connected with pottery making, I was not at all sure what I would be able to accomplish. For instance, no one must watch the gathering and grinding of potsherds (from ancient pueblo sites) which the Navaho potters use for temper to mix with their clay. This had been ~~all~~ prepared and mixed with the clay ^{before} when we arrived, but our potter did leave the metate (grinding stone) and a few sherds for us to see. May Adson, our potter, was sitting beneath a shelter as we drove up, and greeted us with the usual ^{Navaho} courtesy. We watched her make four pots, ^{employing} using much the same technique as that of the Pueblo potters, using a water-worn stone for smoothing the inside and a piece of corncob as a scraper on the outside.

Before May fired these pots, we had lunch. We had also been watching ^{one of May's} a daughter prepare the meal, which consisted of roasted corn on the cob, boiled mutton, coffee, and fry bread, a dough patted into a round flat cake and fried in deep fat. We produced some fresh fruit from our larder, and as we ate we listened to much Navaho conversation. Finally after a few silent moments our interpreter turned to me and said, "You two look kind of old, but you sure got good teeth!"

Lunch over and everything put away, our hostess built up the fire and placed the pots near it. This was in no sense true firing. She turned the pots occasionally to heat them evenly all around; these were baked rather than fired. Two of the pots we purchased to bring home, but we were sure that, because we had witnessed as well as photographed their making, the others would never

be used, and would be destroyed after we had gone. However, we had had a nice day and had witnessed at least a part of the ^{pottery-making} Navaho process.

When we were packed and ready to leave, May shyly said to us, "We have a new baby in the hogan." ~~Though~~ I had noticed another woman going in and out of the hogan several times during the day, ^{but} she did not join us nor speak to us. We were taken into the hogan where we found a tiny baby less than twenty-four hours old. It was on a small cradle board, sound asleep. Soon, the father would make a ~~new~~ permanent cradle board for the addition to the family. We parted good friends and went on our way, for we had located a basket maker not too many miles away, whom we were to visit the following day.

Plates
116 + 117
② 8
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THE BASKET MAKERS

While the art of basket making is a minor craft among the Navaho, it is practiced with great skill by the few women who still make ^{baskets} ~~them~~. From the time of the return from exile, three types of baskets ^{have been} ~~were~~ made, but in recent years two of these are no longer found, the water bottle and the carrying basket. The water bottle had a long neck and a round base, measuring from twelve to sixteen inches in diameter. It was coated both inside and out with pitch or resin to make it water tight. The carrying basket was a wicker, loosely woven basket with an unfinished edge, used for gathering yucca or cactus fruit or other edible plants. As other types of containers came into the trading posts, these two types quickly disappeared.

From 1868 to the early years of the twentieth century, shallow baskets were made for ceremonial use, for utilitarian purposes, ^{and for} ~~and~~ holding small objects. Archaeological evidence indicates that graves did contain baskets, though in recent times, they are never buried with the dead.

During the past fifty years or more, baskets have been made exclusively for ceremonial use. They ^{are} ~~are~~ shallow, perhaps three to four inches deep and twelve to sixteen or eighteen inches wide. The material used is chiefly sumac, sewn with ~~fine~~ split strips of sumac leaves. ~~The use of~~ A ~~fine~~ bone awl is used to insert the yucca binding strips. The sumac twigs, or small branches, are scraped clean and sorted as to size; pieces to be dyed are

laid to one side, others will remain the natural color. The same dyes as ^{are} those used for wool are prepared for the dying of the sumac. Usually only red, indigo, and black are used, occasionally yellow.

DYES

Red is made from the roots of juniper and mountain mahogany boiled together, ^{and} then ground, ^{with} and alder bark ~~is~~ added to the mixture.

Blue is made from the same indigo dye as prepared for dying wool. A native blue ^{is} is also used, ^{which is made from} by ^{mixed together} mixing a blueish clay and ochre, ^{and} pulverized, and moistened with water.

Black is obtained from coal added to boiling sumac leaves, or from a sulphurous rock, slightly roasted with piñon gum or resin. Added to boiling sumac, this gives a rich, lustrous black.

The basketmaker begins by winding a sumac twig around a small stick ^{to assure} called the "bottom of the basket". In order ^{being ed} that it will be pliable, all material is soaked before using. Sewing is done counter-clockwise, with the exception of one rare ceremonial basket which is made clockwise ^{which} and must be completed in one day. So deft and strong is the sewing that a basket will require only a few minutes ^{of} soaking to make it water tight.

DESIGNS

Designs are limited to geometrical shapes, ^{and} tiered block designs, sometimes used in a single row, sometimes ^{rows} double, with the second inverted. Sometimes a single open unit is used, sometimes bands with no geometric ^{are used} forms. Always there is the "trail" or "path of exit",

the "spirit path", a narrow strip where the design does not quite meet, for the Navaho believe that to complete the circle would imprison the spirit of the maker. This is also true of some Pueblo potters, for a similar trail will be found on much decorated pottery. When a basket is nearly complete, the rim is finished in a herring-bone, or false braid, technique. The final end of the rim is always directly above the spirit path. In ceremonies where a basket is full, the medicine man knows where the spirit path is by finding the end of the rim, and the basket is placed so that the spirit path always faces the east.

Baskets have numerous ritual uses; as drums by turning them upside down and beating ^{on them} with small drum sticks; ^{as} to contain ^{ers) of} ritual paraphernalia, such as prayer sticks, medicine bags, ^{and} fetishes, ^{and} other articles; ^{for use in} as containers, ^{and} for ritual baths; ^{for example,} as food containers in certain ceremonials; ^{for} corn-meal porridge in wedding ceremonies, this use having given them the name of wedding baskets. Occasionally baskets are used as portions of masks in certain nine-night ceremonials, and in certain minor rituals in the hogan.

Strict taboos exist in connection with basket making, as with all the other crafts. While a woman is making a basket she must not be touched by anyone. No one may step over the materials being used to make a basket, otherwise the material will break. Should a man make a basket, he will become impotent.

full
measures

Blood must never touch a ceremonial basket. Should this taboo be broken, harm will come not only to the maker, but also to the singer who used it. In silversmithing, too, the craftsman must not make certain pieces of jewelry while his wife is pregnant or some disaster will occur.

Other crafts pursued by the Navaho are many kinds of leather work, both decorated and plain, ^{the} saddles, shoes and moccasins, pouches, straps and belts, hobbles, quirts and ropes. In early times the Navaho became good tanners, for they made shields, quivers for their arrows, and leather cap ^{like} helmets. To whatever craft the Navaho turns ^{his} talents, he will execute it with skill and dexterity.

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THE PAINTERS

□ Aside from the ancient rock paintings

1 The ~~fine~~ art of painting is a comparatively new venture for the Navaho. However, as early as 1901, Dr. Kenneth Chapman, while working at Chaco Canyon, discovered a Navaho boy making drawings with colored pencils. But it was not until much later that any serious work was done. In 1932, the Santa Fe Indian School commenced a class in painting under the direction of Dorothy Dunn, in which several of the now-famous Navaho painters had their start. In that same year three Navaho boys made a series of murals in the School dining room under the supervision of Olive Rush, the well-known Santa Fe artist, who had great interest in developing the painters' art among both Navaho and Pueblo Indian students.

40
41
Plate 118
Such famous painters as Gerald Nailor, who painted the murals in the Tribal Council room at Window Rock, and murals in the Department of Interior in Washington, had his start in Miss Dunn's class. And there were many more: Andrew Tsihnajinnie, Ha-So-De, Quincy Tahoma, and Harrison Begay, whose portrait is here, as well as one of his fine paintings. ^{artists} Later there were Beatien Yazz, Wade Hadley, and others. Today ^{are} ~~there are~~ many more young Navaho doing excellent work at the new Institute of American Indian Art in Santa Fe.

One interesting aspect of paintings by Indian artists, not only Navaho, but many others ~~tribes~~ as well, is their method of work, which is instinctively oriental ~~in approach~~. Pictures are

painted from knowledge and inner vision rather than from a direct approach. Instead of an easel, a Navaho painter works on a flat surface. There is always an extraordinary sense of design,

skilled sure draftsmanship, and the Indian's subtle use of color. Museums all over this country and in Europe own examples of Indian painting, many of them by Navaho artists. One can truly say that all American Indians have artistic potential. The amazing amount of talent that is coming to light at this new Institute, now in its third year, is ample proof of this.

Plate
1/18a

latent ability

align
 PART III
The Coming Way

12"

24" Weiss Sec. II

opt.

10" betw. words of title

Photo 119

(10/12 Cal. x 19 1/2)

Plate 119

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT } 18th Weiss Ser. II

30th L. Weiss
3 1/2 picas
5 picas

Prior to the occupation of the Southwest by the United States, the Navaho existed as bands of people, usually either clans or groups of clans. They were united only by language and by tribal culture, but they had no political entity or sense of responsibility to these isolated groups. There were chiefs, or head men, chosen by each band, but there seemed no need for any further government. Certainly the Spanish Government of the seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries did not realize the independence of these Navaho bands, nor did the Mexican Government during its twenty-five-year duration. Nor was it fully comprehended by our Government until the time of the exile to Fort Sumner, if then. It was during these years that General Carlton tried to establish a simple form of self-government, but the old order of family and clans seemed unchangeable and any other form was incomprehensible to the Navaho.

There were many notable characters among the chiefs of the early 1800s, most of them destined to become prisoners of war --- exiles to Fort Sumner. The names of twenty-eight Navaho leaders appear on the treaty of 1868, signed by General Sherman for the United States, and the Navaho leaders for their respective bands, including such personages as Barboncito, Manuelito, Narbona, Ganado Muchos, and others.

After the return to the reservation in 1868 and the establishment of the Agency at Fort Defiance, the old order continued.

The first civil agent to the Navaho, Captain Henry L. Dodge, utilized the Navaho leaders to assist him in maintaining law and order. As time went on and more agents appeared on the scene, they found it necessary to be more autocratic. By 1901, the Bureau of Indian Affairs divided the Navaho Country into six districts (including the Hopi), with an agency in each. This system of smaller areas of jurisdiction greatly facilitated the work of each agency, but it did nothing to bring the tribe together as a whole. Communication was still difficult, and in many areas, travel was possible only by foot or on horseback. Each political change in Washington brought a new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, ^{who} and usually each had new ideas and adopted changes in policy that must have been bewildering to the Navaho.

It was the discovery of oil on the reservation in 1921 that brought to focus the need for Tribal Government for all the people. This discovery, located in the San Juan District near Shiprock, immediately brought about discussion as to whether oil leases were to be executed by this District Agency, or by the Tribe as a whole. The treaty of 1868 required the consent of at least three fourths of all adult male Navaho from all parts of the reservation, to determine the cession of any region. Therefore, the Secretary of the Interior ruled that these oil leases should be for the benefit of the whole tribe, and authorized the Indian Commissioner to sign oil and gas leases in their behalf. At the same time the establishment of the first Council was designated, to be selected from this large percentage of the male population. The next year a