

The Story of Indian Jewelry

Most of the reservation-made Indian jewelry is produced by the Navajo and Zuni Indians. It is made from 900 fine coin silver which is distributed to the Indians in the form of "slugs" which are one ounce squares of silver. The Indians melt these slugs in crude crucibles and pour the molten metal into equally crude molds of somewhat the approximate size of the article to be made. The silver is then pounded out by hand, generally with a machinist's hammer and using a piece of rail or hammer head embedded in a log for an anvil.

The Indians use crude tools—a few files hammers, pliers and the dies which are used to make the symbolic designs are homemade from old files or cold chisels. Soldering is done by means of a blow torch.

Wire is hand drawn with a draw plate and all twisted wire is made by hand methods. Beads are made in two pieces and soldered together by hand. Rain drop decorations are made on the grounds as are all other decorations used in the jewelry.

The turquoise comes mainly from Nevada and is considered the equal of any in the world. Much of this is cut commercially. However the Indians, especially the Zunis hand-cut turquoise which is made into cluster rings and bracelets. The Indians mount this turquoise with bezels or boxings that are made of pounded silver as the sizes of the turquoise always vary.

The Story of Navajo Rugs

From Navajo land come the most interesting and the most famous of all native weavings—Navajo Blankets and Rugs! The Navajos themselves claim divine origin for the art of weaving; the Spider Man was the instructor, the warp was made of spider web, the upper crosspole was the sky-cord, the lower a sun halo. Historians insist that it was from the Pueblo Indians, Spanish taught, that the Navajos got their first sheep and learned the art of weaving. For of quality work and originality of design the Navajos excel all other aboriginal weavers. And not only is the Navajo weaver the best but she has preserved her art freest from white man's influence. It is the Navajo woman who chooses the poles for the loom, superintends the care of the sheep that provide the wool, shears the sheep, washes, cards and spins the wool and dyes it for use in the famous Navajo rugs.

The rugs are made on crude looms and the blanket or rug is woven from the bottom with the weaver sitting on a blanket in front of the loom. The crudity of the loom does not leave its mark on the weaving for the Navajo squaw is truly an artist. The rugs are no set size or no set pattern and the weavings are all different.

To the Navajo red is the color of the sunshine, white is the light of the morning in the East, grey is the cloudless South, yellow, or sometimes brown, is the sunset of the West and black symbolizes the North. Generally the background is grey with red, white and black or white with red, grey and black.

Navajo rugs wear for years, are easy to care for and popular both in city homes for trophy dens and in mountain cabins.

INDIAN DESIGNS

Out of a remote past has been handed from generation to generation among the Southwest Indians a group of symbolic designs used in decoration and ceremony. It was natural that man, his surroundings, the everyday things of elements and plant growth should be represented by the designs—and understandable that many of the symbols were used by several tribes. Some modern Indian craftsmen interpreting these designs disagree on certain meanings but in a general way it will be found that this pamphlet is an authentic translation of many primitive prayers and stories appearing on Indian decorated jewelry, pottery and in basketry and weavings. Some of them, changed slightly or combined with other ancient designs, appear on almost all of the genuine Indian handicraft.

CEDAR RIDGE TRADING POST CO.
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INDIAN SYMBOLS AND THEIR MEANINGS AS INTERPRETED BY MODERN INDIAN CRAFTSMEN



MAN

HUMAN LIFE

SINGLE CLOUD LADDER
ON WHICH SLEI'FA AND HIS BROTHER WENT TO HEAVEN



ARROWHEAD

ALERTNESS



SPIDER WOMAN

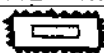
TEACHER OF RUG WEAVER



HOGAN

PERMANENT HOME

FALLING RAIN



ENCLOSURE FOR CEREMONIAL DANCES

RAIN CLOUDS

GOOD PROSPECTS



TURTLE

SACRED



BIG MOUNTAIN

ABUNDANCE



CROSSED ARROWS

FRIENDSHIP



MOUTH OF TALKING GOD

YEIBITCHAI



PATH'S CROSSING

DOUBLE CLOUD LADDER TO HEAVEN



THUNDERBIRD

MESSENGER OF THE GODS



WHIRLING LOGS

ORIGIN OF HUMAN LIFE



FOUR AGES

INFANCY - YOUTH - MIDDLE AND OLD AGE



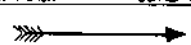
DEER TRACK

PLENTY GAME



BEAR TRACK

GOOD OMEN



ARROW

PROTECTION



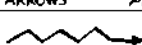
SPIDER

GOOD LUCK



BROKEN ARROWS

PEACE



LIGHTNING ARROW

SWIFTNESS



SQUASH BLOSSOM

FERTILITY



GIVER OF WATER

ADVANCE



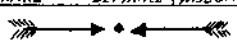
CACTUS FLOWER

COURTSHIP



SNAKE

DEFIANCE & WISDOM



WARDING OFF

EVIL SPIRITS



LIZARD

CONTENTMENT



ENTRANCE TO YEIBITCHAI'S HOME



SACRED

SPRING



SACRED

TOBACCO

PLANT



BUFFALO EYE

ALERTNESS



BUTTERFLY

EVERLASTING LIFE



BAG OF RAIN

ON HUMPBACK YEIBITCHAI'S BACK



SKY BAND

LEADING TO HAPPINESS



RAIN

FAR OFF



FROG

SWAMPS



TURKEY TRACK



A SPRING OR SOMETHING HIDDEN AS FOOD



MEDICINE MAN'S EYE

WISE WATCHFUL



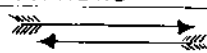
MORNING STARS

GUIDANCE



EAGLE FEATHERS

CHIEF



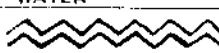
PASSING ARROWS

MUTUAL FRIENDSHIP



HOUSE OF WATER

CAVE SPRING



MOUNTAIN RANGE

ABUNDANCE



SWASTIKA AND CIRCLE

FOUR CORNERS OF EARTH - LARK IN CENTER



SUN SYMBOLS

HAPPINESS



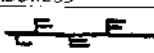
BUFFALO HORNS

SUCCESS



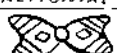
HEADRESS

CEREMONIAL DANCE



CACTUS

SIGN OF THE DESERT



SADDLE BAGS

JOURNEY



TEEPEE

TEMPORARY HOME



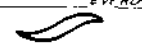
ROCKS

EVERLASTING



DRAGON FLY

PLENTY WATER



CYCLONE

FORCE



RAIN DROP - RAIN

PLENTY CROPS



SWALLOW

AGILITY



HORSE

JOURNEY



BIRD

CAREFUL



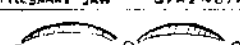
RATTLESNAKE JAW

STRENGTH



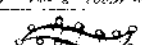
SKY BAND

FAIR & CLOUDY WEATHER



CLOUDS & RAINDROPS

GOOD CROP



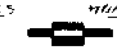
LEAVES

MERE SHEEP



ARROWS

PROTECTION ALL WAYS



COYOTE

TRACKS