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Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology

Title

Arrows from the Long Ago

Permalink

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Journal

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 27(1)

ISSN

0191-3557

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Publication Date

2007

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LOST AND FOUND

The three brief items that comprise this installment of Lost and Found each describes a rare and rather unusual type of archaeological site that seems so far to have been relatively neglected in the literature. The first article, from the Los Angeles Times, is an early account of a site in Nevada's Arrow Canyon Wilderness Area, in an area that is also characterized by considerable biodiversity and a great deal of rock art. The second, reprinted from Arizona Highways, discusses a site in central Arizona that is situated in a somewhat different context from the others. The third, which is reprinted from the Pacific Coast Archaeological Society Quarterly, describes a site in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park that is currently being restudied by Joan Schneider. Two other, similar sites are reputed to be located in Death Valley and Baja California, respectively (P. Wilke, personal communication 2007). Please note that a number of photographs that originally accompanied the last two articles could not be adequately reproduced here and have been deleted; interested readers are urged to consult the original articles, which are readily available in most libraries.

ARROWS FROM THE LONG AGO

Anonymous

[Los Angeles Times, October 5, 1904]

Unique fissure full of Indian relics to be made attractive. Thousands of arrow shot by bands of Indians for possibly centuries protrude from a fissure several hundred feet long in the rocky walls of Arrow Cañon, about twenty miles from the crossing of the Salt Lake Railroad over the Moapa River. It is the intention of the company to make this cañon with its historic relics one of the scenic attractions on the completion of the railroad.

At a point where the perpendicular wall of the cañon juts out about 200 feet above the cañon bed, the thin, snake-like fissure runs in the rock. Successive generations of Indians have gone to the place at regular intervals and shot their gaily-befathered arrows upward, forming a fringed scarf unique in its oddity. The arrows are so thick that little room is left for more, and owing to the position of the fissure at a height of 200 feet

and under the shelving wall, the relics, protected from the weather, have stuck where they were driven in uncounted years ago.

Already relic hunters are visiting the place and despoiling it of its treasures by shooting the arrows out with revolvers and rifles. In the sands of the bed of the cañon many arrow heads of various sizes and shapes are found buried. It is believed the Indians visited this spot in connection with some rite. Crude, strange figures have been cut by them in the face of the rock wall.

* * *

ARROW FEVER

Allen C. Reed

[Arizona Highways 28(3):11-13, March 1952]

...Herman Womack, of Prescott, field director of the Yavapai Amateur Archaeological Society, another veteran collector [of arrowheads], has devoted the majority of his spare time during the past twenty-four years to this hobby both in building a private collection and in contributing to museums.

It all began when he found an arrowhead in his backyard in Prescott. This launched an ever-widening search until he had covered most of the entire state of Arizona. One of the most interesting experiences in connection with Womack's hobby came about several years ago when a friend, while hunting deer near Fossil Creek, discovered a dry smoke-blackened cave with arrows protruding from the many crevices in the rocky interior. He brought out those he could reach and later took Womack back with him to help build a makeshift ladder in an effort to reach those high in the ceiling of the cave. On this trip Womack obtained some feathered reed shafts, most of which were tipped with hard wood. Still more were left behind out of reach high in a narrow slot in the cave's ceiling. Sixteen years passed before he was to return in an attempt to investigate them. On his return trip he was accompanied by Albert Owsley, of Prescott, the writer. Though this was an unusual type of Indian artifact trip, at the same time it proved exciting.