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Some Archaeological Notes from Southern Hildago County, New Mexico

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That was all I saw. Of course after that I got well. I believe that the sacrifice to the plant and drinking the solution made me well so ever since I have had faith in the plant. Jimsonweed simply dries you up. Your eyes are dry and your mouth. You cannot spit or urinate. Some people are afraid to take jimsonweed; they just place the weed on the sore but the cure is slower. When you come to, you just feel dry not sick."

Another account illustrated a use of jimsonweed which is concerned with the more purely magico-religious aspects of Navajo life.

If a girl repulsed a man who wished to have intercourse with her he might get revenge in the following manner. He went to the place where the girl lived and watched until he could get some of her saliva or dirt from the bottom of her moccasins. He took either the dirt or the saliva to a jimsonweed and while singing, tied it to a plant. Then he sang some more songs. The girl would go crazy right away. She would take off her dress and run around naked and everyone would laugh at her. The man would be angry at the girl and would want everyone to know it. The man would call the girl's name as he tied the material to the plant.

While the above practice seems never to have been prevalent it is interesting because the procedure is typical of that employed in one variety of Navajo witchcraft. In fact, its seeming rarity may be due to a desire to conceal any activity based on this pattern.

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SOME ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FROM SOUTHERN HIDALGO COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

DOUGLAS OSBORNE AND ALDEN HAYES

During the latter part of the summer of 1936, the authors, together with Richard Hayes of Hillsdale, Michigan, were making archaeological investigations for the University of New Mexico in the extreme southern part of the small Panhandle of New Mexico in Hidalgo County three miles north of the International Border. The main seat of operations was at Red Spider Ruin (Deer Creek No. 5 of Brand's 1930 survey) which lies between Deer Creek and the road from Hachita to the ranch buildings (Culberson ranch house) of the local Victoria Land and Cattle Company (Diamond A Cattle Company) holdings. The ruin, a site of the Chihuahua complex, is

less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles below the ranchhouse. It is 47 miles by road, south southwest of Hachita, and is 8 to 10 miles east of the Animas Mountains.

Some of the riders of the company, hospitably anxious that we become thoroughly acquainted with the antiquities of the region, told us of a cave some miles up Deer Creek and well into its canyon. The cave contained evidences of ancient occupations. One of the ranch hands brought us a point and bits of yucca or agave cordage from the site. Near this cave was a place which the men called "Fortified Hill." Inasmuch as both of these sites were near the road and only some eight to ten miles up the canyon above a ruin called "Double Adobes" (not to be confused with a site by this name in the Upper Animas Valley to the west) we determined to visit them all in one day. "Double Adobes" (Deer Creek No. 4 of Brand's survey) is a fine Chihuahua site. The Fortified Hill, a few miles farther on, is, perhaps, worthy of a few words. It is of the appearance of the famed "Cerros de Trincheras"¹ but on a smaller scale. The Hill is a roughly truncated, conical mesa 200 to 300 feet high. The north side is cliffed while the south slopes rapidly to the floor of the valley. On the north side are a few small caves which show some smoke blackening. Two oval-sectioned, conical, mortar-holes were observed in the local Cretaceous (Sartén) sandstone (?) which makes up the small mesas. The south side of the mesa, and the more interesting, was fortified by a large number of rough, irregularly placed curving walls of piled up blocks of sandstone. Most of these are low, only about mid-thigh in height, but a few, and those near the top, are about waist or chest high. These semicircles of walls loop out over the low talus at the foot of the small mesa and enclose rather large areas. They become progressively smaller and more semi-circular, or even circular, as the top of the mesa is approached. The breastwork on the top is circular as it so often is at "Trincheras" sites. All likely areas of the mesa side, tiny *rincones*, gully heads, small broken areas, etc., are enclosed by this walling. No pottery was found on or about the hill, and spalls, mostly chalcedony, were rare. One small "Pueblo" type point of the regular small, slender, side notched, square tanged type, was found on the south side of the hill.

The cave mentioned was located in the north and cliffed side of a nearby mesa. It was rather disappointing. The riders had led us to expect somewhat more than the small grotto which we found. There were two rooms, one back of and above the other. Neither of these

1. Sauer, Carl and Donald Brand: "Prehistoric Settlements of Sonora with Special Reference to Cerros de Trincheras," *University of California Publications in Geography*, vol. 5, no. 3, Berkeley, 1931. Plates 8, 12, 13, 14 show views of Trincheras sites that are comparable to Fortified Hill.

was more than 12 by 14 feet and the back one was only about five feet high in the middle. The deposits were collected in the deepest parts of the rooms and in the numerous crannies and cracks of the rock slide at the mouth of the cave. They were only a few inches to a little more than a foot in depth and were remarkably churned up by the efforts of the cowboys. We decided to examine the cave as rapidly and thoroughly as possible to save what little material as might still be available. A few broken bits of reed arrows, some foreshafts, a few points of the "Pueblo" type, some yucca or agave cordage, a fragment of a coiled basket, etc. were recovered. Several sherds of undecorated culinary ware and two of Chupadero ware were discovered. The latter and the points suggest a comparatively late horizon. This material was later lost through an unfortunate accident, but one artifact was so unusual that it was felt that there might be some value in placing a description of it on record in the literature.

From somewhere in the back room, out of the badly disturbed central deposit of fine cave earth and rubbish came a ring made of the claws of a small bird of rapine, probably a hawk or owl. All eight claws of the bird had been removed from their cores and fitted one

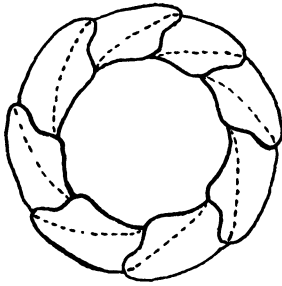


FIG. 1

into the other in regular gradation to form a perfect ring. (See figure 1.)

The ring was (interior measurement) approximately size nine of the Standard Jeweler's scale. The claws were black and shiny and the whole formed a very pleasing and unique ornament. There was no indication that the object had been used in any way. It was not worn as if it had seen service as a ring, nor were there any cord markings present.

Because of the rather fragile nature of the ring it is doubtful if it could have had any regular or prolonged use. The opinion has been expressed that it was merely the result of an idle moment. Inasmuch as neither of the authors has seen, read of, or heard of another such ornament or artifact they would be greatly interested in any references to the same or similar objects which might come to the minds of readers.

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