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# Books

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THE NAVAJO AND PUEBLO SILVERSMITHS,  
John Adair, University of Oklahoma  
Press, Norman. \$4.00.

Against the odds, due to shortages of materials and manpower, the University Press has turned out a beautiful book, illustrated with excellent photographs, written by Sgt. John Adair (now in the Air Forces in England), while he was living among the Navajo and at Zuni, where he became familiar with the history and present practices of silversmithing from the finest native craftsmen. The publication of this book marks the silver anniversary of the founding of the "Civilization of the American Indian" series.

Mr. Adair shares his knowledge completely with us with a play-by-play description of the processes as well as an introduction to the individual artist workmen of today.

The patriot, to which title most of us lay claim, is proud to discover any fine quality or commodity that bears the stamp of the U. S. as does the best work of the Indian. This stamp is the reward of merit for good design and craftsmanship, to serve as a guide not only to the young Indian but to the tourist, offsetting the inevitable effect of commercialism that must invade the home studio when his art is the main source of income. Here is a delicate problem met with understanding by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board with which John Adair was associated as a field worker. The Indian is not regimented as in the assembly line but is allowed to work in freedom, as any artist should, to follow on his own evolution.

Mr. Adair shows us the whole picture, in his comprehensive book, from the history of the beginning of the craft, from the simple, through the baroque to the commercial decadence (due to the competition of cheap imitation) and back via the schools where an appraisal of the older pieces of fine and simple workmanship provide jewelry as fine as that of workers in silver in any country.

I wish that Mr. Adair would do some research on the jewelry of Oklahoma tribes. There is a different quality in it that is very pleasing.

Everyone should read this interesting book. It is far from being a dull scientific book. Mr. Adair even takes time to tell us HOW the Navajo has solved the problem of HOW TO GET ALONG WITH HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW!

This is one of many fine books on the Civilization of the American Indian which belongs on the bookshelf of every Oklahoman, in the opinion of

EDITH MAHIER.

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