

ARCHAEOLOGY

Shield-Like Paintings of Prehistoric Indian Discovered

Pictographs Found on Walls of Wyoming Canyon Show Resemblance to Heraldic Devices of Medieval Europe

A STYLE of prehistoric Indian art curiously like the heraldic shields of medieval Europe has been found in a remote region of central Wyoming by Dr. E. B. Renaud, of the University of Denver, who made an expedition to the site at the request of Science Service as one of its "archaeological minute men."

Dr. Renaud found painted on the rocks many circular, shield-like devices. Some of the circles have animals or men inside them. Others are divided into segments very much as coats-of-arms are quartered. Sometimes the Indian artist repeated his design on opposing sides of the circle, again in a fashion reminiscent of heraldic art. It is all the more remarkable to see, considering the fact that the Indian artists who made these pictures never, presumably, encountered the Spanish Conquerors with their gay royal banners.

The Indian pictographs have remained unreported to science because they are hidden away in a rocky wilderness known as Castle Rock Garden. There is only one ranch in this vast

territory. Dr. Renaud's attention was called to the hidden pictographs by David Love, of the ranch, and by Dr. Sam Knight, geologist at the University of Wyoming.

With Mr. Love as guide and with Jean Dubois as another assistant, Dr. Renaud set out over miles of rocky, rutty country to the pictograph cliffs. The pictures extend over a district a quarter of a mile long, Dr. Renaud reported. Some are a few feet above the sandy floor of the gulch. Others are high on the walls.

"The most curious, in fact unique, pictographs we saw there, are the shields or circles," said Dr. Renaud. "These disks are found sometimes grouped in panels of 10 or 12. They represent conventional designs, human and animal figures, either one in each circle, or two or three, or else arranged in quarters. Some recall the artistic Pueblo pottery made in the Mimbres Valley of New Mexico, others are more like European heraldry.

"Most of the circular pictographs seem to have been colored. The principal shades still discernible are a strong green, a pale orange, and a purplish red. These are very effective on a background varying from creamy white to yellowish brown."

Age Not Easily Determined

The age of the pictographs is not easy to determine, Dr. Renaud finds. The fact that they are incised on sandstone, rather soft in places, and that colors are still visible would suggest that the pictures are not old. On the other hand, cracks and crevices have occurred since the artists finished their work. The top of the cliff has weathered entirely away in some places, leaving a fragmentary picture. Erosion has also removed some of the rocky ledges, so that pictographs are left on the walls at heights which an artist's hand could not reach now. These facts suggest antiquity.

Further evidence of antiquity was offered by Mr. Love, who said that 15

years ago his father cut down a pine tree which rubbed its branches against one of the colored pictures. The tree which had grown up in front of the picture had 150 annual rings. The stump is still there.

All in all, Dr. Renaud estimates that this pictograph and many of the others were made at least two centuries ago, probably more, and that they are prehistoric, that is to say, "pre-white man."

Dr. Renaud also observed many incised pictures of men, animals and conventional designs of the more generally known type. These may be more recent than the circles.

Drawing men with pointed shoulders was a favorite art style judging from the pictures in the rock gallery. Uplifted arms, frequently shown, represent veneration or prayer. Some of the figures are warriors holding shield and lance.

No representations of horses, or white men, or implements of European origin were found among all the pictures examined by Dr. Renaud.

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MEDICINE

Heredity in Mental Disease Urged for Study in Country

THE COUNTRY HOSPITAL has a great opportunity for research into the inheritance of mental disease, Dr. R. D. Gillespie, physician and lecturer in psychological medicine at Guy's Hospital, London, pointed out at the Congress of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

It will be a long time before the practice of eugenics has much to do with the prevention of mental disease, he said, but at least the ground might be prepared by taking advantage of the opportunities for social research waiting to be used by every mental hospital.

Much of the talk on the early treatment of mental disease is ill-founded, he continued. Exactly what constitutes the early stages of mental disease is none too sure. Mental disease of the type admitted to asylums, even if discovered in what is at present considered an early stage, is usually not susceptible to active treatment of a direct and curative nature.

Recognition of the predisposing conditions before the mental disease has developed is needed. This can only occur outside of hospitals, he said.

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"HERALDIC" ART

These are some of the circular, shield-like pictographs found in a Wyoming canyon. They have been marred by stone and bullet dents made by vandals who used them for targets.