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Ancient Americans

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Abstract: Human bones found in caves along the Sac River near Osceola, Missouri, date to “pre-Indian” times, which Gunnell suggests may be of interest to readers of the Book of Mormon.

his costume. The buck wears overalls and cotton shirt although a buckskin or velvet one is more to his liking. He makes and wears the brown buckskin moccasins, shaped to fit the foot and coming well above the ankle. They are fastened with silver coins. A bright cloth is wound around his head to form a band. His long black, glossy hair is knotted up in the back and wound around with a woolen string made by the squaw, who also does the hair-dressing.

Many strands of wampum, or beads which they make from shells, are worn; also rings, earrings and bracelets, heavy set with turquoise and made by their silver-smiths.

The squaws heed not the prevailing fashions of the day. Their styles date back to the time when only a handful of a fast diminishing race, they were held prisoners by Kit Carson and when freed, adopted the dress worn by the white women of that time.

THE basque is always made of velveteen, high at the neck with long sleeves, and hangs several inches below the waistline, the side seams from the waist down being left open. Coins are used for buttons. The calico skirt is gathered full at the waist with a full gathered flounce just below the knee which hangs to the ankle. Narrow strips of contrasting material around the flounce trim the skirt.

Their moccasins are the same as the men's, also their mode of hair dress. They, too, are heavy laden with silver and turquoise. And all wear the blanket as a wrap.

Most picturesque are the maiden and handsome young brave who have been coming every day to look at and admire me. The maiden is more shy at his approach and the work lags during his stay, but her face beams with joy and happiness which seem to radiate so that even I catch the spirit of it. When he is gone she resumes her work with renewed vigor and swiftness.

Much is said and done which I do not understand. But after one of these visits, she breathed to me that when I am completed and the flowers come into bloom, she is going away for a time with this young lover brave as his bride.

I was happy too and stretched as high as I could that I might hurry the work along. All this time I have been making rapid progress. The rainbow God which

borders my design is finished, except the head and feet, which come in the last bit of weaving.

A breath of spring is in the air and the desert sun stays longer in the sky.

At last I feel myself being taken from the frame and held up to admiring friends. I am thrown over pegs on the wall of the hogan that I might witness what is to follow.

OUTSIDE a feast of roast mutton is being prepared. Bucks are gathering from far and near. While singing, dancing, and feasting are going on, quietly the maiden with her mother, lover, and father enter the lodge.

Her father, the medicine man, who is high priest, physician, painter, singer and dancer, performs the marriage ceremony. He takes the wedding basket in which he mixes corn meal and cedar berries, offering a prayer as he does so. He gives them each a portion to eat and takes some himself, then pronounces a blessing and prays for protection and well being, sprinkling the sacred meal on their heads.

The mother leaves the lodge and they are united as one. She is not privileged to look upon her son-in-law the remainder of her life. Should she do so she believes she would lose her eye-sight.

The happy young couple, unattended, go away for six weeks. They return and build a small hogan by her mother's.

Soon after their return I was affectionately folded, reluctantly tied onto a mustang and rode away with my new master. How enjoyable was the desert air. But not for long; soon I parted company with my master and was one among many of my kind.

THEN one day I was chosen to go on a long journey. I was thrilled with the prospect and keen for adventure. But disappoint-

Alone

By Fay Cram

ALONE? With the shadows
Stealthily creeping
Like wary woodland creatures?
Alone? While the fir trees murmur
Sleepily in a fragrant breeze?
Alone among humming insects?
No, not alone!

ment was mine. I felt myself being crowded, then all was darkness and I became dazed. Would it never end? I was jostled about. Then one day I felt my bindings being loosened; I was rolled out into the light once more. I heard strange voices and looked about me. Pale faces! Am I dreaming or have I gone to the happy hunting ground?

I am put on display among many familiar objects, blankets like myself, pottery and baskets made by other tribes. But the strange pale faces and surroundings are new to me. However, I am happy in this environment and interested in what I see.

Then one day I am shown to friends who love me at sight and vow I shall be theirs to cherish forever. I am presented by the young lover husband to his bride as a wedding gift. What more could I ask of life.

Full of joy we go away together and travel many days through wonderlands beyond description. At last we reach our destination in the heart of a metropolis.

Friends are assembled to welcome us to our new home. And such a home—beauty, love and contentment, it exceeds all I could have even hoped for. I am placed on the wall as a tapestry and live happily ever after.

Ancient Americans

DURING the field season of 1931 the Department of Geology at the University of Missouri conducted an exploration of certain caves in Missouri. In a Sac River cave near Osceola, Missouri, nine human skulls and many bones were discovered in deposits underneath strata composed of cave debris.

A large block of the cave deposit containing the skulls is now in the laboratories at the University for investigation. A preliminary examination seems to indicate that the remains are pre-Indian in age.

The age and racial connection of the skulls will be investigated by scientists of the American Museum of Natural History.

To establish a racial connection with one of the races mentioned in the Book of Mormon would be of great interest to those individuals who have used the book.—*Frank H. Gunnell, Geologist, U. of Mo., Columbia.*