

HOW A BOY EARNED HIS NAME



SUSAN A. HOLLAND • photography MIKE ROONEY

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Rowe Publishing

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the ingenuity of past cultures to adapt and survive in their natural environment. Today we attempt to alter our surroundings to please ourselves, losing our connection with the earth and life's natural rhythm.

I wish to thank Mike Rooney for permitting me the use of his award-winning photography. Thanks to Lisa DeWitt, an instructor at French Middle School in Topeka, Kansas, for her assistance in guiding my effort to write for young people. Both also contributed by critiquing the material. Special thanks to my sister, Mary Lundin.

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Cover petroglyph location: Mountainair, New Mexico

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Introduction

The purpose of this book is to introduce today's youth to the lifestyle that existed in what is now the Southwestern United States before the Spanish arrived in the late 1500s.

A Native American boy had to earn his name, which was normally done by achieving a brave or noteworthy deed. Weapons and tools were crafted of stone, and game was taken either by trapping or killing it with a bow and arrow or atlatl. Women were responsible for food gathering and often the cultivation of crops. Clothing was made of processed hides that were sewn with a bone needle using sinew (tendon from an animal's leg) as thread, and shoes were constructed of leather or woven from yucca fiber. Lessons were taught early in a challenging life, and to survive you had to learn well and remember all you had been shown. The average person's lifespan was 40 years.

The Native American Indians called Anasazi, meaning "Ancient Ones," left their home in the Four Corners region and migrated south to present day New Mexico around A.D. 1300. Evidence suggests several possible reasons for this major relocation. One motive could have been a reoccurring drought cycle that took place every two hundred years. The Anasazi were agriculturalists, and without the annual rains a major food shortage would have occurred. The lack of moisture would also have been responsible for the absence of food for the wildlife they depended on to supplement their diet. Although

highly skilled and able to survive in an environment which could be hostile, the people were perhaps no match for an extended lack of food and water, and to survive, would have been forced to seek a new home. Two other factors could have been overcrowding, since the first people arrived in the Four Corners area around the year 550, and also the depletion of natural resources caused by excessive cutting of timber used in the construction of houses, kivas and for fires. These factors, or a combination of them, could have resulted in social and/or economic pressure that made it necessary for the Anasazi to relocate.

Their philosophies and way of life, deeply ingrained in them over hundreds of years, traveled south with them. This included their multi-roomed dwellings built of rock and adobe, the kiva (their ceremonial structure), and a belief system they had embraced for hundreds of years that was based on strict customs and ceremonies.

Having no written alphabet, information was recorded in the form of petroglyphs and pictographs on rock. Petroglyphs intrude into the rock in the form of pecking, incising, or rubbing. Pictographs, on the other hand, are painted on the surface. The meaning of the symbols is debatable among scholars, and their interpretation in this story is mine.

Let us explore the life of a young man living in the southwest shortly after the year 1300 and see how he might have earned his name.

Excerpt from **HOW A BOY EARNED HIS NAME**

The dogs slowly walked into the shade by the boys and laid down, panting. One of the boys whispered, “Look, a turkey!” The village kept wild turkeys captive to obtain feathers for their prayersticks.

The group was surprised to see the bird out in the heat of the day and quickly took hold of their dogs so they would not chase the bird. It was a fine looking tom turkey, nice and fat, and apparently had been helping itself to corn from their nearby fields. The friends remained very quiet, hoping not to spook the large fowl. They did not move as it slowly came closer and knew there was no way to try and capture it. The boys had helped adults set up woven nets and slowly herd wild turkeys into the enclosures to catch them and knew it was not fun to have one of the turkeys try to attack, peck, or harm you. They were aware of the powerful legs and feet of the birds and how much damage the sharp claws could do. As the turkey came closer they could see it was a male because of the red wattle on its neck and knew if this was the time of year when it was looking for a mate it would be even more aggressive and likely to attack if it felt threatened. Holding their dogs to keep them quiet was becoming more difficult because they wanted to chase the big bird. Suddenly the turkey stopped, looked directly at the group and, sensing danger, fled down the canyon.



Tom Turkey

HOW A BOY EARNED HIS NAME

In the 1400s, a Native American boy growing up in what is now known as the Southwestern United States had to earn his name by accomplishing a notable feat.

Historical tradition and petroglyphs are the basis for this exciting tale of a boy on his journey to acquire a name for himself.



Susan is a native of Topeka, Kansas. After visiting the southwest in the 1960s she became determined to study archaeology and received a degree from Northern Arizona University at Flagstaff.

As Susan pursued her career in the west, southwest, Great Plains, and Hawaii she became more deeply intrigued with petroglyph and pictograph symbols and their meaning. Motivated by a Native American friend who stated that "all things have meaning," she persisted to substantiate that fact by researching the artistic symbols in the Mountainair, New Mexico, region. This book offers an explanation of a few of those symbols.

For Mike, being reared on a farm outside of Topeka, Kansas, instilled a deep love of the outdoors and Mother Nature. With an Economics degree from Washburn



University, Mike survived thirty-five years in the corporate world when he "retired" for his *thirty-five year passion* for photography.

Along the way Mike received some very nice recognitions. In 1997, Mike won an international contest hosted by Kodak that resulted in his photography hanging in the National Geographic "Hall of Fame" along with some of the most outstanding photography in the world. His work has also been published in the several Kansas! calendars.



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