

**THOMAS AND ALBERT WIGGLESWORTH.
RAILROAD BUILDER, DOCTOR TO THE NAVAJO
A MEMOIR**

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS: HOW THE NAVAJO CAME TO NORTH AMERICA

Every man is a quotation from all of his ancestors.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882). *The Complete Works*. 1904. ²

From the Evening STAR, 16 May 1946:

**Congress Told Plenty in Navajo About Indian Children's
Needs. More Money Vital For Schools, Chief Explains Fluently**

(By the Associated Press) About the liveliest person in Washington today is a sturdy, 86-year-old Navajo Indian chief, Chee Dodge. He's in town with a delegation of Navajo braves, trying to convince Congress it should ante more cash for the education of his tribe. Chief Dodge has been to the Interior Department and to the House and the Senate to explain that there are 20,000 Navajo children, but only schoolrooms enough for 6,000.



Henry Chee Dodge
First President of
the Navajo Nation ³

He went before the House Indian Affairs Committee yesterday to speak his piece, in Navajo. The translation was supplied by his son, Tom, who wore a tan sports coat, a neatly matching tie and pocket-handkerchief, and looks like the successful lawyer he is.

When he felt a point needed amplification, the aged chief would leap to his feet, shake his magnificent head of white hair, wiggle a dramatic finger, and then turn loose a torrent of Navajo. And a torrent of Navajo can leave the most verbose member of Congress at a loss for words.

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It turned out the old boy had a sense of humor, too. Once, without waiting for a translation, he came up with a reply in perfect English. He then explained to the astonished committee that he spoke Navajo only because many of the 22 delegates with him knew no English. "Actually I had a tremendous education for my day," he assured the committee. "I went to school for two months." ⁴

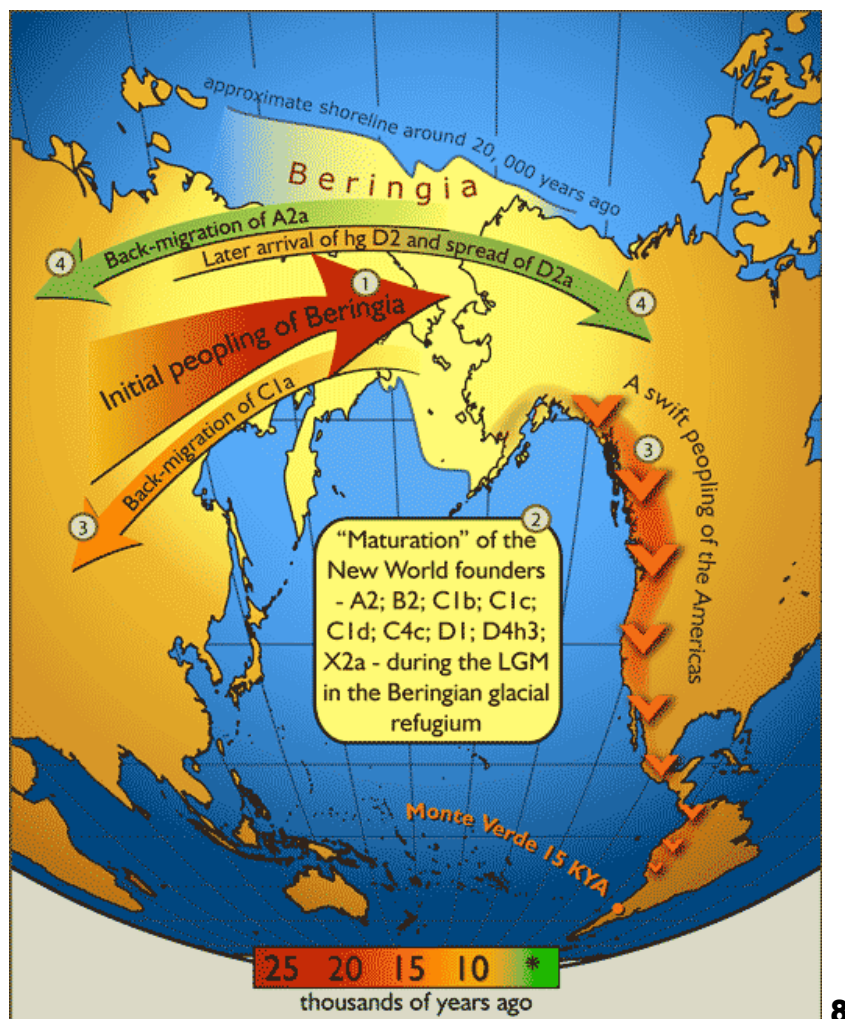
This is the story of Dr. Albert Matthew Wigglesworth. It is therefore also necessarily the story of the plight of the American Indian, especially the Navajo of the desert and mountain area broaching the northern ends of New Mexico and Arizona and the southern ends of Colorado and Utah. This would be the Mesa Verde and San Juan Basin areas roughly centered on the four-cornered conjunction of the afore-mentioned states - the only place in the United States where four states meet, and accordingly reputed to be the most photographed spot in the entire country.

The near half-century merger (1878-1925) of the Navajo and the Wigglesworths near the Four Corners area of the Mesa Verde - San Juan Basin region of the southwest shall be the focus of our story. Here, these two "tribes" for all time put to rest the Kipling contention that "East is East, and West is West, ⁵ and never ("Barbara Walters-wise" ⁶) the twain shall meet," because, we may now say, it was precisely through the *train* that they *did* meet (about which more later). Actually, the two parties, both of which originated in the far north long ago, approached the area from opposite directions, with the Indians arriving first by a bare 15,000 years!

Navajo legends contend that their people (the *Dineh* - pronounced "din NAY") emerged from "the under-ground" into the southwest USA. Don't you believe it! Rather, it seems that the North American advent of the Indian was more or less a geological "accident" of the last ice age, which caused water from the oceans to be turned to snow and ice and deposited on the enlarged polar ice caps. As the level of the oceans fell a land bridge was exposed between Siberia and Alaska. Now called *Beringia*, it was a lush land link nurtured by the natural fertilizers of sea animals and plant remains. The resulting verdant foliage lured "big game" animals from Asia and then their hunters followed in pursuit.

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It is generally believed that this bridge was further augmented by a glacier-free corridor, estimated as no more than 25 miles wide, through northern Canada; a wall of ice as much as a mile high otherwise stretching from the Atlantic to Pacific and blocking all access south. Scientists generally believe, on the basis of artifacts scattered through the Americas, that the Indians arrived about 30,000 BCE! More specifically, Indians are placed at Mesa Verde, Colorado, by 400 AD - which still represents quite a jump on the Wigglesworths.⁷

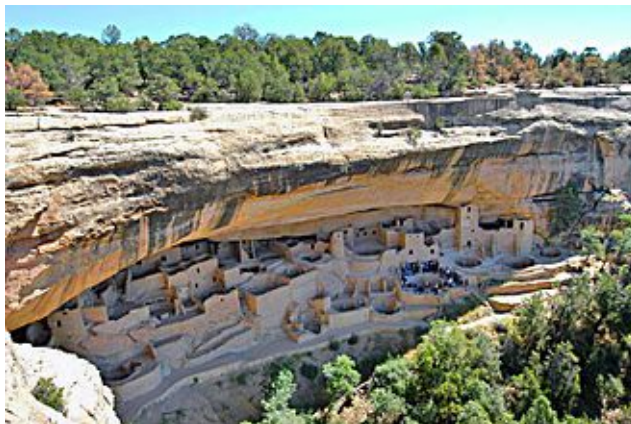


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This map shows the Beringia Land Bridge and the various movements of peoples. For an explanation of the codes in the map's legend see: *The Anthropology.net* ~ "Beyond Bones & Stones. Peopling of the Americas: mtDNA Tells Us of the Beringian Standstill." October

31 2007. [mtDNA = mitochondrial DNA, which is passed down through females. DFJ]

The initial occupants of the Four Corners area (who peaked about 1200 AD) are figured to be the so-called *Anasazi*, that being the Navajo word for "*the Old Ones*." The era of "*big game*" for them is said to have prevailed from about 9000 BC, followed by a period of foraging from about 4000 BC, followed by the advent of farming around 1000 BC. Some farmers began forming villages around 300 BC. It was not until about 900 AD that the Anasazi started building *pueblos*, that being the Spanish word for "village." (One of the most famous pueblos is the Mesa Verde's *Cliff Palace* located in an enormous cave and containing more than 200 rooms capable of accommodating several hundred people.)



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Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde

Eventually, with the introduction of sheep and horses by the Spanish in the 1500s, the Navajo "successors," (with the Apache) of the Anasazi became an essentially pastoral people, but also developed artistry with turquoise-ornamented silver jewelry and the weaving of baskets, blankets and shawls, for which they are renowned to this day.

One interesting sidelight re the latter two crafts is the frequent adornment of their products with the design known to us as the swastika. Most people born since the 1930's will most likely recall it with repugnance as the symbol of arrogant racial

superiority flouted by Hitler's Nazis. That's really too bad, because the symbol has a more noble connotation as reported in the *1920 Annual of The Franciscan Missions of the Southwest*.¹⁰



A Franciscan monk¹¹



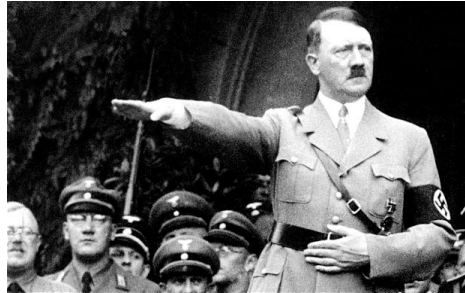
**Jack Wigglesworth's
Navajo blanket¹²**

The *Ae'Nishodi Biae Danaezigi*, or *Men Whose Robes Drag In The Dust*, or more simply, *Long Robes*, report therein that extensive research reveals the swastika in fact to be a fitting symbol of "the ethnic unity of the human race" - by virtue of its prehistoric origin and almost universal use. It is to this day the principal ornament with which some Indians decorate themselves for the performance of their religious ceremonies.

Ruth Underhill's *Here Come The Navajos*¹³ suggests that, "The key to the Navajos comes through their language." With the exception of the related Apache, it is unlike that of any other Indian tribe. "Navajo sounds and Navajo grammar are entirely different," according to Dr. Underhill. They have no f, p, q, r, v, or x - although all are used for renderings in English, and consonants predominate.

War buffs will recall that, precisely because of the uniqueness of their native language, Navajos were pressed into service as

telephone and radio communicators in the front lines during WWII. The Army first stumbled on this bonanza in WWI. It was a unique service provideable only by our American Indians. Most of their languages had never even been written down, and Navajo was further complicated because translation was never word-for-word. (For example, "Hitler" was automatically transposed to *Moustache Smeller*, and Mussolini to *Big Gourd Chin*,¹⁴ while Doc



would become *Medicine Man with Limp* [*Why "with limp" will be made clear in the memoir. DFJ.*] and son Frank would be known as *Turkey Egg* because of his many freckles.



Turkey egg on left.¹⁵

Incidentally, the Wiggs treasure copy #153 of a 325 copy edition of a two volume *Vocabulary of the Navajo Language* produced by the Franciscans at St. Michaels, AZ, in 1912. The Navajo code-talkers operated from Italy to New Guinea in the South Pacific. Some 375 Navajos had been recruited into the Marine Corps by the end of WWII.

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The Navajo language is traceable to tribes inhabiting northern British Columbia and Alberta, the two westernmost Canadian provinces bordering the USA. The language is called Athapascan (variously: athabascan - there being as many spelling versions of Navajo words as of the name Gadhafi, rhymes with daffy), due to its orientation around Lake Athapasca -- Lake of the Reeds, or, (in Navajo) "*there is scattered grass.*"



Geronimo in 1886 on right with some of his Apache warriors. ¹⁶

Another interesting sidelight of the language is the nature of Navajo names. The name "Navajo," means: "*great planted fields.*" It might more appropriately have meant "*adaptability,*" since that is what characterizes the Navajo in great measure. They readily undertook to learn a whole new way of life as farmers and herdsman, whereas the more nomadic Apache stuck largely to foraging and were a generally nasty neighbor. In fact, "*apache*" is the Zuni word for "enemy," and Geronimo (1829-1909) was still rising against the US (not without cause) as late as 1885-86

(although he eventually became a Christian and marched in Teddy Roosevelt's 1904 inaugural parade).

Nor was the wily and courageous Cochise (1815-1874) often mistaken for a really nice guy - especially after 1861 when soldiers justly hanged several of his relatives. Even Edgar Rice Burroughs of Tarzan fame was moved to write two 1927 novels focused on Geronimo or *Goy-ath-lay - the Man Who Yawns*. At one point, he has the wise old chief say, "Some day the *Nalgai Lagai* (white eyes) will keep the words of the treaties they have made with the *Inizhini* (Indians), the treaties they have always been the first to break." Well, one can hope.

The Navajo used no surnames, but had both "private" and public personal names and, like most other Indians, they did not call each other by the highly poetical names common to novels and old movies, such as *Fleet Antelope*, *Running Bear*, or *Soaring Eagle*. (Once again, this paraphrase is courtesy of the Long Robes.) On the other hand, one frequently met such prosy names as *The Liar's Son*, *Frozen Feet*, *Mister Mud*, *Little Horse-thief*, *Squint Eye*, or *Club Foot*. For this reason Navajo were never addressed by the name under which known. It would be an offense against decorum and usually not at all flattering. Hence their bashfulness, too, when asked their name. They'd hedge by saying "*Halla*," the equivalent of the Spanish "*quien sabe*" for "Who knows."

It shouldn't be surprising, then, to learn that most Navajos assumed a second or "public" name, which they used in normal commerce. This practice was virtually forced upon them by book-keeping incident to their wanting to be paid. Needless to say, these self-chosen names were more complimentary, as for example, the equivalent of *Mr. Tall Man -- Qastqin Naez*.

It should go without saying that English translations are generally inaccurate. Thus, *Black Horse* is not a proper

translation of *Bili Lizhini* which literally means "*He whose horse is black.*" Little wonder, then, that the Navajo were generally addressed by the more generic *Qastqin*, which is "*Mister,*" the equivalent of *Senor* in Spanish. It only remains to remark that The Lone Ranger did his faithful Indian companion no honor by calling him *Tonto*, which is Spanish for "Crazy."

Perhaps the most remarkable thing is that shortly before 1300 AD this way of life came to an abrupt and mysterious end in much of the southwest. Why it did is a mystery even today, but the most likely explanation seems to come from the abundant evidence of a severe draught that apparently gripped the region toward the end of the 13th century. This would not, of course, explain the failure of the Pueblo tribes to return to their monumental villages. It seems most likely that they discovered that their lands had in the interim been taken over by many war-like tribes.

Thus, it is generally concluded that the Athapascan predecessors of the Apache and Navajo infiltrated the area through the 12th to 15th century AD. These folk were skillful warriors with a new weapon, borrowed from the Eskimo, a bow backed and strengthened by springy sinew which made them the fastest, hardest, straightest shooters in the west - as the Spanish, Mexican and United States' governments were to discover in turn. It is said that even today Zuni mothers frighten naughty children by telling them that the Apache will come and get them. (The bulk of this early Indian lore is derived from TIME-LIFE's *The First Americans*.)¹⁷

Continuing our historical stage setting, the Spanish incursion, principally along the Rio Grande valley, generally transpired between 1540 and 1821. The Spanish explorer Coronado swept up from Sonora, Mexico, opening up the American southwest in 1540-42, searching for the fabled seven cities of Cibola. Legendary for their gold (El Dorado), they are believed to have been in the general area of the Zuni country around Santa Fe



Francisco Vasquez de Coronado

and, in fact, Zuni, NM, is the only one of the "gold-less" seven cities that survives. (One group split off from Coronado's party to the west and discovered the Grand Canyon.)^{18 19}

As recently as 30 Jun 1986 the *Washington Post* reported the possible finding of one of Coronado's 16th Century camps – the first non-Indian site found in New Mexico - revealing seven iron horseshoe nails, a

sewing needle, a piece of metal horse harness, and burnt beans and corn kernels, together with fragments of pottery of a type made and used by the Spanish in the 1500's. The Indians at that time had neither horses nor iron. Note that Coronado's settlements preceded the more familiar colonization of our east coast!



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Following its independence from Spain in 1821, Mexico became monarch of the southwest until the invasion of U.S. troops in 1846. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ceded the area to the U.S. on 2 Feb 1848. Neither Spain nor Mexico ever succeeded in subjugating the Navajo.

It would take the U. S. 17 years to do so, (although front page newspaper headlines on 7 July 1986 suggest that in their land dispute with the Hopi and the U. S. government the Navajo may not be fully subdued even yet.

The first foray by the U.S. against the Navajo was concluded at what would become Ft. Wingate in a peace treaty on 22 Nov 1846. During the next 15 years six other treaties would be drawn up, agreed to and signed:

at Beautiful Mountain, 21 May 1848

at Chinle, 9 September 1849

at Pueblo of Jemez (Hay-mess) 15 November 1851

at Laguna Negra, (just north of Fort Defiance) 18 July 1855

at Fort Wingate, 25 December 1858, and,

at Fort Wingate, 18 February 1861

Only the first treaty (1848) was ever ratified by the U.S. Senate.

Also, during this period the first military post in Navajo country was established at *Ft. Defiance* on 18 Sep 1851. Fort Defiance would be the birthplace of all four of our hero's children.

The treaties were mostly honored in the breach by both sides, although the U.S. managed the best *PR*, and generally succeeded in placing the onus on the hapless Navajo as war alternated with peace into the spring of 1863. At this point the U. S. determined upon an all-out war to subdue the Indians once and for all.

Kit Carson (on right) was chosen to spearhead this effort. He succeeded with a Sherman-like “scorched-earth” campaign that wiped out the Navajo shepherds and other livestock, devastated their cornfields and orchards, burned their hogans, (such as those pictured below at Chinle) and generally laid waste to their country and destroyed their economy. ²⁰



Kit Carson



Navajo Hogan ²¹

The Navajo were virtually starved into submission. Eventually, (1864) half of the tribe (some 8,000) yielded to the 400 mile *Long Walk* from Ft. Wingate (near Gallup) to internment on a 21 acre plot at Ft. Sumner on the Pecos River in eastern New Mexico, where they remained four years as Pres. Lincoln pro-claimed it a Reservation. ²²

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Later in Fort Sumner – in 1881-- Billy the Kid (born in Brooklyn, NY) fared even less well, being put to rest there permanently by a bullet from Sherriff Pat Garrett. ²³

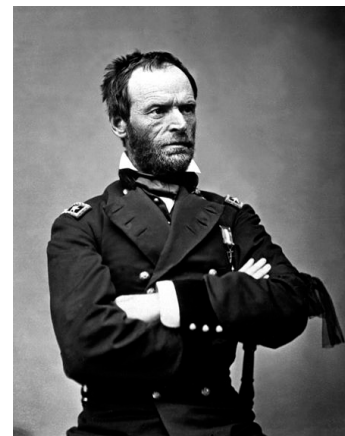


Billy the Kid

Conditions at Fort Sumner were euphemistically described as “far from ideal,” which hardly conveyed the notion of Comanche raids, crop failure, insect infestation, bad water, the depletion of wood for heating and cooking, and the rampant sickness and disease that prevailed there. Little wonder that by the end of four years (1868) the Navajo were making ardent overtures for a return to their homeland.

The U.S. met this request by dispatching no less than General Sherman himself (of the devastating “Atlanta march to the sea” fame) as negotiator. Offered a choice of being sent to the Indian Territory in Oklahoma (of ultimate “Cherokee oil scandal” fame) the Navajo opted overwhelmingly to return to their homeland in a final treaty formalized on 1

June 1868.



General Sherman 1865 ²⁴

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Their trek began two weeks later, in the company of their first Indian Agent, Theodore Dobbs. Soon after, Ft. Defiance was designated the first Agency Headquarters.



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Dr. Wigglesworth (shown above as a new doctor) would arrive in Fort Defiance 36 years later, in December 1904. His contribution to their improved health played a significant part in the Navajo being the largest tribe in the U.S today, numbering about 160,000 in 1980 and 300,000 in 2011. ²⁶

NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

1. Picture of Albert Matthew Wigglesworth from the Wigglesworth Family Collection.

2. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882). The Complete Works. 1904. Vol. VIII. Letters and Social Aims; VI. Quotation and Originality. Taken on 6/13/2014 from Bartleby.com, Great Books On Line. <http://www.bartleby.com/90/0806.html>

3. Portrait of Henry Chee Dodge taken from the Navajo Election Administration website on 9/10/2012. <http://www.navajoelections.navajonnsn.gov/pdfs/110209%20Navajo%20Leaders%20Pictures.pdf>

4. Evening Star, Thursday, 16 May 1946. Associated Press. Copy of original article courtesy of the Library of Congress Newspaper Room.

5. Wikipedia contributors. "The Ballad of East and West." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 16 May. 2014. Web. 12 Dec. 2014.

6. Here Jack Wright is alluding to Barbara Walters, a TV personality since the '70s who was noted for her interviewing skill and a "speech idiosyncrasy" which caused her to pronounce "R" as "W." Thus "train" would be "twain." She was famously parodied by the late comedian Gilda Radner of *Saturday Night Live* who named her "Bawbawa Wawa."

Wikipedia contributors. "Barbara Walters." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 21 Nov. 2014. Web. 12 Dec. 2014.

7. Science News. First Americans Arrived As Two Separate Migrations, According To New Genetic Evidence. *ScienceDaily* (Jan. 21, 2009). Taken from the Science News website on 9/10/2012. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/01/090108121618.htm>

8. The map is from Anthropology.net ~ "Beyond Bones & Stones. Peopling of the Americas: mtDNA Tells Us of the Beringian Standstill." October 31 2007. POSTED BY KAMBIZ KAMRANI IN BLOG, PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY. TAKEN 9/10/2012. <http://anthropology.net/2007/10/31/people-of-the-americas-mtdna-tells-us-of-the-beringian-standstill/>

9. Wikipedia contributors. "Cliff Palace." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 2 Aug. 2014. Web. 11 Dec. 2014.

10. Rev. Cyp Vabre, of Flagstaff, Arizona. "The Swastika Cross" IN: *Annual of The Franciscan Missions of the Southwest*. 1920, No. 8. The Franciscan Missions of the Southwest, Volumes 1 – 10. Published by the Franciscan Fathers, 1913. Original from Cornell University. Digitized May 4, 2012.

11. Drawing of Franciscan robe taken on 9/16/2012 from <http://www.historyfish.net/monastics/gasquetorders.html> . Originally published in Gasquet, F. A., *English Monastic Life*, Methuen & Co., London. 1904. Transcribed by Richenda Fairhurst, Historyfish.net.

12. Picture of Navajo blanket taken from the Wigglesworth collection. This blanket is a Navajo design but of modern manufacture. Read more about Navajo symbols at: Whirling Log: The Swastika Symbol in Navajo Textiles by Dennis Aigner. http://www.whirlinglog.com/Home_Page.html

13. Ruth Underhill. (1883-1984) *Here Come the Navajo!*, (circa 1934-1947). Washington, D. C.: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior.

14. Pictures of Hitler and Mussolini taken from these websites on 9/10/2012.
http://i.telegraph.co.uk/multimedia/archive/02110/hitler_2110666b.jpg
<http://comandosupremo.com/italian-invasion-of-greece-1940-41-part-one.html/benito-mussolini>

15. Image of eggs from Pen and Fork (website) 8/26/12
<http://penandfork.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Turkey-Chicken-Eggs.jpg>)

16. Arizona Historical Society. Taken on 9/11/2012 from the website: Public Domain Review by Adam Green. IN: "Geronimo: The Warrior," by Edward Reilly, published on that website.
<http://publicdomainreview.org/2011/08/29/geronimo-the-warrior/>

17. *The First Americans*. Time-Life Books – New York, 1973. It is not known which edition of this frequently published work Jack Wright consulted, but it was certainly an edition published before 1986.

18. The Coronado Expedition 1540-1542. "Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin." *"This image or media file contains material based on a work of a National Park Service employee, created during the course of the person's official duties. As a work of the U.S. federal government, such work is in the public domain. See the NPS*

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website and NPS copyright policy for more information."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Coronado_expedition.jpg

19. Image taken from the PBS website: "New Perspectives on the West" on 9/11/2012. http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/people/a_c/coronado.htm

20. Kit Carson photo from the Brady-Handy Collection at the Library of Congress (LC-DIG-cwpbh-00514).

21. Navajo Hogans at Cottonwood, Chinle, Arizona. Photo from the Wigglesworth Family Collection.

22. Wikipedia contributors. "Long Walk of the Navajo." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 10 Dec. 2014. Web. 14 Dec. 2014.

23. Original image from the Library of Congress. Image of Billy-the-Kid taken from the Wikipedia website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billy_the_Kid on 9/16/2012.

24. Wikipedia contributors. "William Tecumseh Sherman." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 26 Nov. 2014. Web. 14 Dec. 2014.

25. Photo of Dr. Wigglesworth from the Wigglesworth Family Collection.

Wikipedia contributors. "Navajo Nation." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 13 Dec. 2014. Web. 14 Dec. 2014.