

“Indians of the Far West”

(Along the United States – Mexican border circa 1858)

**In *The Illustrated London News*, Vol. XXXII, No. 913
Saturday, April 17. 1858, pp. 400-401**



(Note: A typed transcription of this article is available after the images below.)

This article, which begins on the next page,
is presented on the Stone Quarries and Beyond web site.

<http://quarriesandbeyond.org/>

Peggy B. Perazzo
Email: pbperazzo@comcast.net
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INDIANS OF THE FAR WEST.

NEVER before has the American Government had so many exploring expeditions on foot as at the present time. One of them is engaged in surveying the boundary line between the British possessions and the north-western territories of the United States; some five or six of them are engaged in laying out waggon-roads from the Mississippi to the Pacific; one or two are attending to the Indians on the borders of Mexico; and there is also a fighting expedition on its way to Salt Lake. The last expedition brought to a successful close was that in charge of Major William H. Emory, which had for its object the surveying of the boundary line between the United States and Mexico. All the materials for a complete history of this expedition are now in the possession of the Government printers; and in the course of a few months the public may expect to receive a number of huge quarto volumes on the subject, very extensively illustrated with pictures and maps. In the meantime, however, we have received from Major Emory (through a correspondent) a number of Sketches, from which our readers may gather a pretty correct notion of the races of men who reside along the southern boundary line of the American states and territories.

Our first Sketch represents a Family of Diegeno Indians on their Travels. This people inhabit the San Diego country, and are among its curiosities. They were converted by the Jesuits, who, many years ago, organised missions throughout that country. They became partly civilised, and were industrious and happy, and collected many comforts about them. Naturally lazy, and incapable of self-government, and deeply imbued with all the traits of the wild Indian, they soon degenerated, after the missions had fallen from under the rule of the Church, and have become worse than in their original condition. Many of their women are said to be beautiful, and all of them are well developed and superbly formed. They imitate the whites in dress, and on a single person one may sometimes see odds and ends of clothing from all parts of the globe.

Adjoining the Diegeno, and owning a part of the same great valley, that of the Colorado, is the nation of Yuma Indians. These are said to be a very treacherous people; they conquer by craft and cunning, and delight in midnight attacks; they invite each other to feasts under the garb of friendship, and suddenly fall upon and kill their guests; or, taking advantage of the absence of the warriors from their villages, massacre the old women and the young children, and carry off as prisoners the young women and larger children. They possess but few horses, and carry on their expeditions on foot. Their war weapons are bows and arrows, clubs and knives, with which they make sad havoc among their enemies. They are of the medium height, and of a dark brown colour, and many of the women are beautiful in form. An essential article of dress, worn by the

men as depicted in the Sketch, is a piece of coarse cloth; and the women wear a becoming dress, woven out of the inner bark of the willow, which article is also represented. The front portion is woven plain, but the back into an irregular shape, with a lump on each side, answering the purpose and appearing like a bustle. On this protuberance the women carry their young children, a rope passing around the child, and the ends tied together in front of the mother. Both sexes paint, and the men wear longer hair than the women. Their language is not sweet, but the two damsels before us glory in the soft names of Ma-vah and Le-och. Unmarried women are taken care of by the tribes; when a death occurs in a village it is immediately deserted; and the bodies of their dead they consume with fire. They are fond of games; and squat down and play a game of cards, even upon a journey. Although constantly in the water, these Indians never use canoes, but swim from shore to shore. In their rude way they cultivate melons, corn, pumpkins, and beans, the last being a main dependence, and their favourite animal food is the mule.

The third of our Portraits is that of Mr. Noco-shimatt-tash-tanaki, or Grisly Bear. He is a Seminole, and the principal chief of that part of his nation, consisting of about 2500 souls, who emigrated from Florida a few years ago, and now reside on the prairies west of the Arkansas River. He comes of the same cunning, ferocious, and determined race, some two hundred of whom are still living in the swamps of Florida, in defiance of the power of the Government. Though accustomed to the use of the horse, it will be perceived that our friend prefers to stand forth as a pedestrian.

Another curious race, found in the Valley of the Gila, are the Pimo Indians. They are farther advanced in the ways of civilisation than any other barbarous people on the Mexican frontier. They have among them many great warriors, and yet they habitually work laboriously in the field. They are the owners of fine horses and mules, fat oxen, cows, pigs, poultry, &c. They consider themselves the descendants of the Aztecs, and claim Montezuma to have been of their tribe. Their huts are of an oval shape, not high, built of reeds and mud, and thatched with wheat straw; their country, during the proper season, being covered with fields of the waving golden grain.

The next Engraving represents a Lipan Warrior. He belongs to a tribe residing in Texas, and numbering not more than six hundred souls. Though they have rendered some service to the Americans as guides, they are, in reality, a race of horse thieves; and the fine animal upon which the Indian is mounted is, probably, one of the acquisitions of his last foray.

Another tribe of aborigines is that known by the name of Papagos. They wander over the country from San Javier as far west as the Tinajas Altas. They were at one time a formidable tribe, and waged unceasing war against the Mexicans. They are comparatively well off in worldly goods, planting corn and wheat, and possessing cattle and horses. They are, at the present time, a quiet and inoffensive tribe. The women dress respectably, but the men go nearly naked. One portion of the tribe have a superstition which makes them afraid of water, preventing them from erecting their houses in sight of a river or a lake; while others prefer a residence on the immediate banks of the salt lakes near the Gulf of California.



“Diegeno Indians Travelling.”
(Lived in the San Diego County, California, area)



“Yuma Indians.”
(Lived in the Yuma, Arizona, area)



“Noco-shimatt-tash-tanaki, or Grisly Bear, A Seminole Chief.”
 (Lived on the prairies west of the Arkansas River)



“Pimo Women.”
 (Lived in the area mostly in Arizona and partly in New Mexico)



“A Lipan Warrior.”
(Lived in the state of Texas area)



“Papagos Women.”
(Lived in the area southeast of Yuma, Arizona,
into northwestern Sonora, Mexico)

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Further information about the Indians in the above article is available on Wikipedia:

The Diegueno Mission Indians in the San Diego County area

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

“The **Quechan** (Quechan: **Kwtsaan** – ‘those who descended’, spelled ‘kwuh-tsan’, also in English, **Kwtsan**, **Kwtsaan**) are a Native American tribe who live on the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation on the lower Colorado River in Arizona and California just north of the border with Mexico. Members are enrolled into the Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuma_Indians

“The **Seminole** are a Native Americans in the United States people originally of Florida, who now reside primarily there and in Oklahoma.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seminole_Indians

“The **Pima** (or **Akimel O’odham** also spelled **Akimel O’otham**) are a group of American Indians living in an area consisting of what is now central and southern Arizona.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pima_Indians

“**Lipan Apache** are Southern Athabaskan (Apachean) people whose traditional territory includes present-day Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and the northern Mexican states of Chihuahua, Nuevo León, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas prior to the 17th century.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lipan_Apache_people

“The **Tohono O’odham** are a group of Native American people who reside primarily in the Sonoran Desert of the southeastern Arizona and northwest Mexico. ‘Tohono O’odham’ means ‘Desert People.’ Although they were previously known as the **Papago**, they have largely rejected this name (meaning literally ‘tepary-bean eater’), which was applied to them by conquistadores, who had heard them called this by other Piman bands, who are very competitive with the Tohono O’odham. The term Papago derives from *Ba:bawiko’a*, meaning ‘eating tepary beans’, which was pronounced *Papago* by the Spanish.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tohono_O%27odham