

EXCERPTS FROM AN
INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD WETHERILL

--THE EARLY YEARS--

With Editor's Note and Remarks
by

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INTRODUCTION

A nine and a half pound boy came to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Wetherill on Thursday last and "Papa Dick" has not regained his ruddy color, although insisting that his nerves are unshaken.

The Mancos Times
Friday, March 18, 1898

For Richard Wetherill II the above note in the personals column of a small Colorado newspaper was the beginning. He was the first child born from the marriage in 1896 of Richard Wetherill and Marietta Palmer. Young Richard's father was a member of the Wetherill family of the Alamo ranch. Not simply ranchers, Richard, his brothers and brother-in-law are credited with the discovery in 1888 of Mesa Verde's ancient cliff dwellings. Together they pioneered in Southwestern archaeology and exploration of the Four Corners region.

Richard II's father was not the first Richard Wetherill. In 1787, coming from the north of England, another Richard Wetherill (then spelled Wethereld) migrated to Dublin, Ireland and began the long succession of moves that eventually carried the family name across the Atlantic. The Englishman's oldest son was also named Richard. He too migrated west--all the way to Pennsylvania in 1814. One of his sons was to become a Quaker missionary and later a trail agent on the Chisholm Trail. His name was Benjamin Kite Wetherill, the grandfather of the baby boy whose life was just beginning in the spring of 1898.

Richard II's grandmother, Marion Wetherill nee Tompkins, contributed equally to the little boy's heritage. Grandmother Marion could trace her ancestry back to Lord Tompkins, a colonial governor of Virginia. His son was captured by Indians and later rescued, only to return and marry an Indian girl. One of their sons was Marion's father. During the 1880's and 1890's Benjamin and Marion's Alamo Ranch just northeast of Mesa Verde served as home base for their own adventurous clan and as a stopping place for visitors touring the area. One such

group of visitors was the musical Palmer family who traveled the country giving "entertainments." They had come to Mancos to see the cliff dwellings and Richard was to be their guide. A year later Richard Wetherill and Marietta Palmer were married. Stories of the family's rich and interesting background must have made a large impression on young Richard Wetherill II as he grew up at the home of his parents in New Mexico's Chaco Canyon.

His father, with the support of the Hyde Exploring Expedition, had begun long-term excavation at the canyon's Pueblo Bonito ruin in the mid-1890's. The project was funded by Talbot and Fred Hyde, heirs to the Babbitt Soap Company fortune and enthusiastic sponsors of much of Wetherill's archaeological work. When excavations at Chaco were halted, the Hyde brothers established a string of trading posts, one of which was Richard's store at Chaco Canyon.

Soon after Richard was born the family set up temporary housekeeping in several of the intact rooms at the rear of the pueblo. Before long a small stone building, the Wetherill's permanent Chaco home, was erected nearby. As more children arrived and the nature of the work shifted from excavation to trading, the house was enlarged and outbuildings added.

The family of Richard and Marietta Wetherill had just had its fifth increase when, in June 1910, Richard was ambushed and murdered by Navajos. The meddling of William T. Shelton, Indian agent at Shiprock, New Mexico, had turned the Indians against their former friend.

Richard's acute remembrances offer a view of life in a time that is far removed from our own. Richard, his parents, sisters, and brother lived in the waning years of the "Old West, a time that is lost, except in history books and in the keen minds of people like Richard Wetherill II.

The Interview

My grandfather Wetherill was appointed by President Grant in 1867 as government trail agent on the old Chisholm Trail. He kept a complete record of everything, but one time my grandmother got mad at him and burned up everything he had. But there is a letter--March 3, 1873. He was still working for the government as a peace-maker between the Indians, cattle drivers and the outlaws. He came west as a Quaker missionary in 1854 to Wisconsin. In 1856 he migrated down to Iowa and that's when he met my grandmother. They were married in a Quaker church at Sioux Falls, Iowa in 1856. The next year they had a baby that died at birth, a girl they had named Alice. My father was the second child.

After the Wetherills got established in Mancos there were the five brothers and the brother-in-law was six, and the old man was seven--seven men in the family. When they first moved in, there were only four homesteads in there (the Mancos Valley). More people kept coming in, but they couldn't get along with the Utes.

At the Wetherill ranch there was no man that ever went by there hungry or wounded. They were all taken care of, nobody was ever turned away. Everybody was welcomed. The Ute Indians all came to be treated for

sickness. Outlaws would come for bullet wounds. But the rest of the town didn't get along that way and said the Utes were picking on folks who homesteaded around there. They wanted to fortify the town. They thought they'd get the Wetherills in there and that'd give them seven more men to help fortify the town.

The Wetherills said, "What for, protection against the Utes-.? They are our friends. We don't fortify against friends!" (The Mancos homesteaders said), "You don't fight them, you feed them!" That's what the Wetherills preached.

They tell me a joke about my father... One time the Ute Indians came tearing into the ranch and told my grandmother that Richard was very sick and dying. My grandmother saddled up a mule and took off. She rode for 15 miles and when she got there it was a little Ute baby. She thought it was her son, Richard. They named alot of their kids after the Wetherill boys.

Another story they tell is that once my father was camped someplace up there around Mesa Verde and he forgot a bottle of kerosene in the camp. Ute Indians came by and grabbed that bottle and one drank a bunch of it. He thought it was liquor, thought he was about to die. That's the way the Indians were. They thought everything in a bottle was liquor. I got all that from my cousins.

My brother was born in 1902 at Creede, and I remember Visiting my grandmother and grandfather at the Alamo Ranch at that time. I know he was a little bit of a guy and my grandmother was a great big woman. My grandmother and grandfather ran more or less a dude ranch. They had this big room with a fireplace in one end and cook stove in the other. There were lots of big people that came there, wealthy people from Europe and back east. She'd bed them down on the floor and they loved it.

Grandmother had two brothers, Jock and Uncle Clate Tompkins, who when I was a little boy was up in his 80's. He chewed tobacco all the time and had both legs cut off. In the early days when he was a young man, he was in Canada and froze his legs off, just had about six inch stubs. He lived with my father's family and would walk around on those little stumps. He had a very long white beard. I used to visit him--he lived in a little house all by himself. He's buried at Chaco Canyon. When he died he was 80 something and they told me tobacco killed him because he always chewed tobacco--slid down that great big old long white beard he had. I used to be fascinated by the old man.

To Richard Wetherill Chaco Canyon is a place of many memories. Excavations of Pueblo Bonito had all but ceased before they had a chance to make a large impression on the youngster. More indelibly recorded in his mind, however, are the adventures of a young white boy who lived in as unique a setting--indeed, as unique a playground--as could be found in any family's backyard. Memories of that playground, where Indians were friends and playmates, where wild bulls were playthings, and where the Chaco trading post was home and security, flooded Mr. Wetherill's recollections. A strong, capable mother and kind, but businesslike father provided the warp in the fabric of the boy's life.

Dad didn't have a favorite horse, but did have his own private saddle horse. He didn't ride much when I was growing up. He didn't have much time, too many other irons in the fire, always had something going.

My daddy had a favorite buggy team. They were trotters--could trot a mile in three minutes. One of those horses got snake bit on the leg. He just swelled up all over. They thought he was gonna die right there. They called in an Indian medicine man. The medicine man went out, gathered all kinds of green weeds. made big poultices, put them all over that shoulder and leg, and cured that old horse. That horse was real fancy. My father always liked the best in buggy horses. My mother had a rubber tired buggy. Dad used a regular old buggy to travel in.

My father used to try and teach me German--would teach me how to count. He was quite a German scholar from what my mother told me. It didn't mean anything to me, but evidently he had done quite a bit of study in German. He went to college somewhere. I don't know where, could have been at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. I have a bunch of his college books. Some of those books were copy-righted in the early 1870's. That was after he graduated from high school.

I didn't know too much about my father. He was always busy or gone or doing something. The kids didn't play around or mess with the business. The business end didn't interest me much, I was too busy playing or getting into mischief. We kind of ran wild in that country. I'd get out there and run ten miles and it never bothered me a bit. Of course, in those days you didn't walk, you ran. All the Indians ran in those days.

Everything that I did as a little kid, if I did work I was paid for it. If I trapped mice in the store or the house they paid me so much for mice, so much for chipmunks, so much for rats. By the time I was eight years old they gave me strychnine. I'd poison coyotes, bobcats and foxes and skin them out. For the coyotes in those days they paid a bounty of \$2. 00, so my dad would pay me and the bounty he'd take off his county taxes. In those days there were thousands of them. If a cow happened to die someplace I'd put a couple bottles of strychnine in it, then I'd go out in a day or two and make 25 or 30 scalps right around the cow where it poisoned the coyotes. They were so thick, and then rabbits--rabbits by the thousands. Just thick with rabbits, so I had a . 22 and I'd take a buggy in the evening and go out. My sister drove the buggy and I'd shoot rabbits, take them back, take the insides out, hang them up and let them freeze. Then when the freight wagons were going into Farmington or Aztec, they'd put all those frozen rabbits in apple crates. They were shipped to Denver and I got 10 cents a piece for them. I was all the time doing something like that. I got paid for everything I did.

Before me father was killed I had a bunch of goats, 200 Angora goats that were all mine, had been bought from money I earned. My father traded those goats off for 40 head of cows and those cows were all mine at the time he was killed.

I've got a blanket, big red blanket with white squares. It was in the family when I was born. It was one of the first Germantowns and it hung in the end of my father's office. You'd come in the door and there was a big potbellied stove, the floor was covered with rugs and rugs on all the walls, but on one end there was this big red blanket.

Well, he never locked his office. The latch was always open because Indians would come from way out and they could go into the office and lay down there and sleep. Nobody ever stole anything in those days. It got to be where some of the local Indians on cold winter nights would pile in there because it was warm. The place would get so full you couldn't get around. I remember my mother and father talking about what they were going to do to keep those Indians out of there and they finally figured it out.

My father said, "I believe I can fix them to keep them out of there." He put a wooden peg in the wall right in the center of the blanket then he took a skull and mounted it on this wooden peg and he tied the jaws so they'd be open to show the teeth. He lined the inside of the skull with red cloth and stuck a candle up inside that skull.

Needless to say the skull trick worked. The next time Indians came to Wetherill's office they saw a dimly glowing red light filtering from between the jaws of the skull. In its apparently suspended position in front of the old rug the sight cleared the office in short order.

We ate a lot of wild burros in those days. You'd pick about a two year old, butcher it out just like you would a beef. They didn't dress out to too much. Then you would bone out all the meat, cut it in sheets of an inch thick or less. The bigger the sheet the better. You'd salt it good, hang it up on a clothes line or stretched rope, and let it dry. In the summertime you couldn't keep it very long so you had to dry it or it would spoil. But you could keep it fresh for a week. We'd make jerky out of it--I ate lots of jerky, had to live on it lots of times. Burro meat is good meat.

There was a burro buyer from Missouri came out to Chaco Canyon one time. My father contracted to get 100 burros for him. He bragged that nobody could fool him about burro meat, he could tell it a mile away. My father had one of the hired hands go down to the corral, butcher a two year old burro, bang it up and leave the hoofs on. They cut off a great big roast and took it up to my mother. She cooked it up real nice and we had it for supper. The burro buyer thought that was wonderful meat that night, he just ate and ate. Best meat he'd had in a long time, kept bragging on how nice the meat was. After supper my father said, "Well, Mr. So-and-So, how'd you like that meat? That was burro meat!"

We'd eat sheep or cattle in preference if we could, but a lot of times we didn't have them. You could go to a sheep camp and they'd give you a chunk of meat anytime you asked for it, but you weren't always around sheep camps.

Father was good to us, but he didn't have too much time. My dad never said a swear word. He didn't smoke or drink, but I had tobacco hid all over those ruins. My special room was on the east side, one of

those little dark rooms back in there where the ceilings were smoked up. I always had tobacco hid back in there, either Bull Durham or Duke's Mixture. When us kids started smoking we smoked cedar bark to start with. Would pick up any kind of paper and roll it up to make a cigarette. I was around four or five years old.

Father caught me smoking one time. He took me down to his office, had a hot fire going in the stove, set me down by the stove, give me a big cigar and said, "You set down there and smoke that cigar."

I thought it was funny. I started smoking that cigar and pretty soon I got sick. The longer I smoked, the sicker I got. I throwed that cigar and he'd make me dig it out and smoke it some more.

He said, "You've got to smoke every bit,"

Man, was I sick! I'd heave and I'd smoke, I'd heave and I'd smoke. It cured me for a few days.

Sometimes if we got out of hand and my mother couldn't handle it, he'd give us our licking. Seemed like I was always in trouble. My mother didn't spare the buggy whip. I didn't like my mother to whip me. I liked my dad to give me punishment, he was lenient and wouldn't hit hard if he spanked you. But my mom--Oh, God, she was terrible. Mom always used a buggy whip on us. We tried to get away from it. We hid the buggy whip, but they always had buggy whips around everywhere--never could get rid of them.

When I was still small, on that north side there were some rooms dug out, no way into them, straight down the walls. I'd be put in one of those rooms so I couldn't get out. My mother or some of the Indian girls would take me up there and put me in for punishment. They wouldn't leave me in there too long, but sometimes it seemed like it was forever. That was a prison. I finally learned how to climb the walls and get out.

I was going to tell you about my little brother. He'd tag along behind us, always tagging along. We found a way to stop him. We'd take him--he always wore bib overalls--and we'd tie the bottom of his legs up, fill his legs with sand and he couldn't walk. We'd go off and leave him there, just a hollering and screaming! He was immovable!

Morton: When he was a child he was pretty bad, he was mischievous, into everything. Elizabeth was the leader.

Once mother (Richard's mother, Marietta) ordered some very expensive roosters. She wasn't watching one day and when she looked out on Louisiana Lake (at the Cuba, New Mexico ranch) there were the kids taking the roosters way out and making them swim to shore, thought they should be like ducks. Nearly killed those roosters before mother rescued them.

Another time (at Chaco Canyon) they brought in some bulls from the range and had them in the corral. Next thing you knew the children had about killed those bulls playing with them. Mother didn't know they were doing it till Robert came in. He was just a little tot. He had hurt his arm.

She said, "Robert, what happened?" He said, "The bull, he stuck the horn on me." "What's going on?" She went out and there were those others raising Cain in the corral with those bulls. They would ride them, play bullfight with them, lay down in front of them, jump over them.

Richard: All we had to play with was wild animals.

Morton: When they were little they used to go to the fair and they'd see the cowboys. All they needed was an idea and a corral full of animals.

Marietta played with them a lot. She surprised them a lot--Halloween parties. Whatever the occasion was they'd have something in their home for whatever kids were living there.

Richard: I always thought she was a wonderful woman, in fact, she would just fascinate people. She could talk to anybody on any subject. She was very well-read. Her whole family was musical. My mother played everything that was string or brass, also played piano and organ. I played the violin, mandolin, guitar, mouth harp, and Jew's harp. But I never had time, I always had to work. My father never played or sang.

Morton: Marietta helped Richard, her husband, a lot. She kept the home fires burning, kept the Indians in line. Any trouble that was brewing for any reason she straightened out. If they had people around who were not congenial she tried to keep them out on their work. She was a diplomat.

Richard: We went in one time to Albuquerque with a bunch of freight wagons. I remember we were loading when this fellow, Joseph Schmedding, who later wrote *Cowboy and Indian Trader*, asked my dad for a job. My dad hired him. He was pretty much fresh in this country. I remember listening to him because he was a foreigner-- spoke German. He told quite a bit different story about himself than actually was. He was a deserter of the Kaiser's Body Guard. When he came to this country he landed first in Florida, then went to the Southwest. He was a perfect man, quite a guy, learned fast. They had so many different jobs for him. He adapted himself pretty well. After my father was killed he became a trader and was in Kean's Canyon and at Sanders for a long time. He had several Indian trading posts before he wrote the book.

We had another guy that came in. He was an Easterner, Frankel was his name. He was just scarred up all over; he was quite a duelist. He finally got a job from my dad. He was a real dude, well-educated and he later became an Indian trader. Had the Starlake trading post for several years. I never did know what happened to him. Everybody played all kinds of tricks on him. He didn't like chili. One time he went out with some other guys on a collection trip for a couple of weeks. Those guys put chili in everything, in his coffee, even in his sugar. Like to starved him to death.

Schmedding and Frankel were but two of hundreds of people who passed through Chaco Canyon. Ranging from illiterate cowpunchers to Harvard Medical School professors, each seemed to have left his mark on the Wetherill family, but none, perhaps, as deeply as the brothers Hyde.

Previously mentioned as the financiers of the Bonito excavations and backers of the string of trading posts of which Chaco was one, the brothers were largely responsible for making it possible for the Wetherill family to launch a ranching and trading business in the arid New Mexico canyon.

Fred Hyde, in particular, made an impression on Richard. The younger of the two brothers, Fred was also the more unpredictable.

The first car I ever saw was at Chaco Canyon. Fred Hyde brought an old car in and didn't get all the way with it, so they got a team and pulled it in. He got almost all the way, got stuck in the sand and nobody ever started it after that.

It just stayed out there in that haybarn -- don't know what happened to it. I used to sit in that old car by the hour. I don't think anybody ever got it to run. Nobody knew how to fix it. We played in that thing for years. I don't remember what the Indians thought about it.

You know, Fred Hyde would come, you'd never know anything about what Fred Hyde would do. He might walk in, maybe from Albuquerque, come into the place, just walk on through, say nothing to nobody. You might not hear anything more of him for two or three years, then all of a sudden he'd show up.

Morton: Fred Hyde was telling me about Chaco and how the place was run and how wonderful Dick's mother was to everybody. About the big jobs she did there seeing that there was food for everybody. and a place for everybody to sleep. She was a wonderful cook. Guests came in wagon loads sometimes, and a lot of the family was always there. Fred said she was always nice to everybody and she sure knew business. She helped a great deal in the business. A lot of that Chaco thing ran easy because of her. Fred admired her. She could play any musical instrument and sing and entertain anybody that came along. Fred Hyde was the one who really knew what he was talking about--had been to Chaco a lot. Fred thought Dick's dad was wonderful, that he was really a saint and knew everything. Fred thought he was a very capable man.

Richard: In 1904 we went to the World's Fair in St. Louis. Father was exhibiting for the State of Colorado and the State of New Mexico and he ran both exhibits.

My father took the gold medal for the finest collection of Navajo blankets in the world and, of course, after he was gone mother sold a lot of them. The gold medal and citation are at the University of New Mexico.

We have Apache, Alaskan and Pima baskets which were collected prior to 1900 by a missionary. They were given on consignment to my father to sell during the World's Fair and then what was left over he just bought.

I remember my parents put us kids, when they didn't want us around, in this Helen Goulds playground in St. Louis and when a parade would come by I'd climb over the fence. They always had a chain or tag on us that had Helen Goulds playground on it. The cops would pick me up and take me back down there and put me in the yard again.

At the Fair in St. Louis they had lots of parades. One time my Uncle Win was standing watching and there was a big announcement about this big Arabian stallion. He was snow white with red ears and they had him all done up with lace--said he was imported from Arabia. As he went by Uncle Win saw my dad's brand on him, the triangle on the left hip. It was one of those horses they'd shipped back east. That was how alot of those Arabians and other blooded horses started--just register any old horse. Just like the quarter horses--all colors, kinds and descriptions.

Right after the fair in St. Louis my father got the idea of raising mules, so he had a big old jack from Missouri shipped out to breed to the mares to raise mules. They were worth alot of money in those days as pack animals and to pull wagons. When I was about nine or ten we had about ten head of three year old mules. Well, close to the well was a flat area where we had a great big round-pole corral. The poles to build that corral had been hauled out of Colorado. They put those mules in there and they'd saddle up one of them and put me on it. I'd ride him for a day or two in that corral, then they'd open the gate and let me out on that mule. I was scared to death of those mules. First thing, we'd go right straight out the gap and get out against that fence. I wore a trail two feet deep along that fence riding those mules day after day. I stayed there till somebody came after me. I couldn't get those mules to do anything. I wasn't big enough to pull their necks around until I wore their noses real sore. God, I hated those mules! Sat there all day long on the darn mules. I would finally get them broke, but it took me a long time getting over being afraid of them. They would sometimes buck, but mostly they ran. They were stubborn!

The first store in Chaco Canyon was in e ruin at Pueblo Bonito. The first room was the store and part of the kitchen. To enlarge it they had cut some doorways into the little dark rooms with the beautiful ceilings smoked up. In there is where they had a bedroom and in front was the store. We lived in the back of the store, back in the ruin on the end where it made the curve going back south, right on the corner.

I used to play in the north part of Bonito and there were lots of hiding places, but they filled in all those rooms. We played hide and seek and everything else all over the place, but it was darn hard to find anybody! We went in every hole we could find.

When I was growing up there the ruins looked so different and that rock hadn't fallen into it yet. I caught many a bobcat and fox under that rock. My mother had alot of turkeys that would roost on top of those high walls, and the bobcats would go up there to catch them. I always had traps or poison set to catch those bobcats or coyotes. I used to catch all kinds of animals right along that cliff. They'd come out of

the valley, go up against the cliff and try and find a way out of there. They couldn't go over it.

We had a shallow well down in the arroyo off just to one side from the main channel, right in front of the ruin. They dug down a well 90 feet by the office and never got a drop of water. You get over in that arroyo, go down 15-20 feet and find all kinds of water. We had to get all our water out of that well. There was no other water around except for those springs up in the canyons. When it rained there was alot of water that come down that wash in floods, but it never did hurt anything. Us kids would get down there when there were flood waters and play in that muddy water. We'd find all these places where it was boggy. Had lots of fun in that muddy water, didn't have any other kind.

When it came a real hard rain and the water would run all over we would get out there with a shovel. There were lots of prairie dogs over on the west side of the arroyo, we'd ditch water into those holes and drown them out. The water would fill the hole up, a prairie dog would come out of there and we'd kill them. Maybe we'd get several of them out of one hole. Then we'd build a big fire, make alot of coals, cut their stomachs open, pull out all their intestines and everything, put about a teaspoon of salt inside of them, and sew I them up with a stick. When we got alot of coals, we'd dig a hole right where the fire was, put the prairie dogs in there, cover them over with coals, then cover them over with dirt. We'd go back in eight or ten hours, dig them out, the skins would just fall off. Then you'd have prairie dogs to eat. That's the way the Indians eat them. They'd round them up whenever it rained.

One time I did quite a bit of killing of skunks, both trapping and poisoning. In the fur quotations they said that skunk musk was worth \$8.00 an ounce. I kept trying to figure out how to save skunk musk. I couldn't figure out how to get that musk. One night I poisoned four or five skunks. My mother and father had gone someplace and the maids were all gone. My sisters, my little brother, Bob, and I were the only ones there. I skinned the skunks and cut off their musk bags. I couldn't figure out how to get the musk out of the musk bags. I went down to the kitchen, got the frying pan, cut all those musk bags up, put them in the frying pan and put it on the stove. I didn't know any difference, I was experimenting. I got a licking when the folks came home and I got a scrubbing. My clothes were all buried. I sure got it bad over that! The house smelled a long time--sure got a lot of scrubbing. I didn't figure out for years how to get that skunk musk out.

A little half-breed Shetland named Foxy was my first horse. When we were kids, my sister and I. why, we'd take a little two or three year old colt in the corral and just ride the tail off of it. My sister could out-ride me anytime. I'd get bucked off and she could ride them. Elizabeth was born in 1899 in Chaco. Then later on they'd get a bunch of wild bulls or something in the corral and she'd just ride

those things to death. We caught lots of wild cattle and lots of wild horses in those days.

I was never allowed to ride a saddle until I was about eight years old. I always rode bareback. My parents were afraid I'd get hung in the stirrups. Then I got a boil on my tail bone. I was months with that boil--couldn't sit down. That was from riding on that sweat from the horses for several years, because I always rode bareback. We'd even ride the broncos bareback with a mane-hold. I'd hang on with the mane. It's almost as easy riding with a mane-hold as with a saddle.

There was always something to keep your interest. Up against the cliff was the cow pen and on the east the calf pen. It was my job to do the milking. I'd have to get the cows in in the evening. We'd keep the calves shut up. Sometimes the cows would come in, sometimes you'd have to go out after them. We'd put the calves outside and leave the cows in the corral under the cliff where that waterfall was. There was a big corral in there. That's where we'd ride our bucking horses, in that sand under the cliff. I jumped off that waterfall one time, slid down the chute into that sand underneath, 50 feet or more.

I put on eagle wings another time, got on top of the store and flew off. All that happened was I broke my shoe strings. Up on top where that waterfall is there are alot of big potholes. We used to carry water from there for drinking. The only way up was those old (Anasazi) stairways.

There were lots of times you had to go for water at those springs in Mockingbird Canyon and up the canyon where the new road goes out (Rincon del Camino). We had to carry our drinking water from those places. The family would run out of water and send me out on horseback. I carried bags or cans of some kind. I didn't like it very much, but I could spend lots of time exploring.

We were foot-loose and would do as we darn well pleased. We'd just take off and go where we wanted. You'd find our clothes laying on the arroyo bank and we'd be off naked somewhere on the mesa. We raised the devil. We'd run alot. I could run ten miles and never slow up.

We got up about sunup. I had to go milk first thing. The chore I especially hated was chopping wood. That was one of my jobs, to supply wood to the house. For breakfast we generally had oatmeal, bacon and eggs, biscuits or hot cakes. We always had lots of fruit. Traders would bring in apples and peaches from Farmington and Aztec. Of course, when the fruit season was out we had the dried fruit. For lunch we always had some kind of meat--sheep, goat, kids, rams, and we had lots of chicken and turkey.

During the school term we always had to go to school. It started at 9 o'clock and would last all day. My father generally had a private school teacher there who also worked as a bookkeeper for the store. She taught us kids. There would generally be eight to ten kids that went to school. There were a whole bunch of Hatch kids one time and there were Mexican laborers' kids too. We learned the ABC'S,

multiplication tables, and how to read and write and add two and two. We got out in the afternoon in time to go get the cows.

The horse pasture was on the other side of a little rincon where we'd keep the horses overnight. Down the other side of the canyon was a coal mine. You go north on the west side of the river to the second canyon on the left from Bonito, up into the head of that canyon and the coal mine is on one side. That's where they found all those big old dinosaur hip bones, up in that coal mine canyon. We used the coal to heat and to burn in the stove. Wood had to be hauled in there from a distance and it was easier to haul coal than wood. We used it quite a bit, especially in the winter. They would take a wagon every so often and get a load of coal. Navajo workers dug some, but the hands would go down there and pick it out usually--never used blasting powder. The seam-- was about four or five feet thick. It's tunneled, didn't go back too far--50 feet. No timbering, had a sandstone top and just went back under the cliff. It was soft coal. My father had claims on about three or four sections of coal in there at one time.

When we were living in the house (at Chaco) we had a great big bedroom. That was the kid's bedroom. My father had his bedroom and my mother had her bedroom adjoining it. There was a sitting room, a dining room, then the office and store. They were all there together.

Morton: In their dining room, for their meal at dinner, they always had a little style because they always had guests around. The table was set with nice white tablecloths.

Richard: We had these Indian girls that worked for us. They did housework, took care of me and taught me Navajo. My dad spoke fluent Navajo. My mother spoke it real good too. I learned Navajo before English. My mother kept the records for the Hyde Exploring Expedition when they were excavating the Chaco Canyon Ruins and the only time I had contact with my mother and father would be at night. I can remember those girls teaching me. A few old, old Indians, after I got bigger, would take me out all day. We'd go around those arroyos and sandpiles and they'd teach me Navajo. I'd ask for everything in the house in Navajo. Those girls generally slept in the big room with the kids.

The sitting room was where people would sit down and visit with one another. The office was my father's private place where he did all his business. We had a big cook stove in the kitchen. Then going out the back there was the cellar which was in the ruins.

Morton: They (critics) talk about them (the Wetherills) tearing down walls from the ruin and using rocks to build their houses. The walls were already torn down and laying all over the place because the sheep herders had come in and torn them down to get the timbers for firewood. The Wetherills salvaged the rocks and put them up in their buildings.

Richard: In one of those north side rooms--it's closed in now, can't tell where it was--on top of the ruin was a big hole, like a well was covered over. We had hundreds of pigeons that roosted in that hole.

They'd fly up in the cliffs in the daytime and at night they'd all get in that place in the ruin.

We had lots of chickens that stayed out in the barn in the chicken house. Some of the hens would lay around in those rooms in the ruins. One time I had a setting hen up there. A big old bull snake crawled up under her--wasn't an egg up in there, they were all in that old bull snake.

Our turkeys would roost up along the ruin on the east side.

At the Chaco trading post they traded in sheep skins, goat skins, baskets, blankets, silver, sheep, goats, cows, horses, burros, and lots of arrow heads. They'd give lem a stick of candy for an arrow head. The store had all kinds of that Indian candy.

At one time we each had a big yellow dog--my cousins, Ben and Ida, and myself. Those dogs took care of us. Nobody could touch us or those dogs would eat 'em up. There was a broken window at the back end of the storeroom of the store. I'd go through that window and get candy or steal a can of syrup to eat. I think we had some of the candy that one day and this Indian took it away from us, so we sicked the dogs on him. There was a great big snubbing post in the middle of the corral. This old Indian climbed up that post to get away from the dogs. They were really raising heck. We were so mad at him, we went to gathering wood and building a fire around him. We were gonna burn him at the stake. He got to screaming and hollering so much someone finally heard him and rescued the poor guy. We were just starting to light the fire.

They went by the pound for blankets--30 cents-35cents, it depended on the weave. The better the rug the more they got. The beginners had some awful rough rugs. There was lots of the original wool warp. They didn't use so much of the cotton warp until they got into the Germantown. Most of the wool blankets were made with wool warp they spun themselves. They'd buy the (Germantown manufactured) yarn from the store, it came in those skeins like today, would make a whole rug. out of the Germantown. I've got some big rugs made out of it. Then sometimes the Indians would furnish their own materials. Dad let them handle it. They used the Diamond Dyes, that came in an envelope. That was about the only kind of dye they had. Of course, the early blankets all had dyes the Indians made themselves.

The rugs came from all over the reservation. A blanket might have been made at Chaco Canyon, but they'd call it Two Gray Hills--depends on the weaver and the style of weaving. A Two Gray Hills might be made by a Navajo living at Chaco Canyon. Certain patterns for a certain area don't bear out because they skipped back and forth.

The squaws made all the blankets. All the men could do was to take care of the horses and go to sings--parties, you might say. They never worked. Whenever one of those ceremonies came up, why, they quit, they take off, they go to the ceremonies. They're still doing it today, alot of the older ones are. They just don't stay on the job.

My father used to get boxes of coins, Mexican pesos--dobe dollars, we called them--for the Indians to make jewelry out of. They'd come in there, especially the silversmiths, and buy that just the same as everything else. Not all Indians were silversmiths. There were only just a few of the real silversmiths that made beautiful silver.

Some of the Indians worked on buckskins. They made all kinds of bridles and ropes out of buckskin or hair. They took care of their own skins, making the buckskins out of deer hides. They also had the rawhide from the cows. They'd make the soles of their moccasins from bullhide, which is twice as thick as cowhide. The top part of the moccasins they made out of buckskin. They dyed it red after it was peeled and softened. To tan it they would take brains and keep rubbing brains all over the skins to soften them. They never let it get stiff. To take the hair off they'd dig a hole put the skin in, wet it down, put a bunch of ashes over it, then cover it and let it soak for a few days. Then they'd stretch it across a pole and scrape the hair off. They made a dull knife and kept stripping the hair off. The old strippers were made of the limb of a tree. They'd make a half bow or quarter bow and in the center they'd put a piece of metal and use it like a drawing knife, using both hands to pull the hair off the skin.

My father had the regular tanning vat. He used those vats to soak the skins and he used tanagre roots. It's a plant that comes up early in the spring, like a sweet potato. That's what the Indians used to keep their teeth white. It's full of tannin. They rub that on their teeth and it cleans them and makes them white.

In those days squaws would boil a bunch of meat and the grease that came to the top they'd take and rub all over their bodies. Dirt would roll up on that grease. That's the way they'd take a bath. It rolls the dirt right off. They use the yucca root for soap and to wash their hair. It's better for your hair than soap. Yucca root can be used to curdle milk. You use a little of that stuff out of the yucca root in your milk. It'll make it thick like pudding and you can make cheese that way. It does the same thing as rennet tablets. Cattle love the yucca bloom. As soon as it blooms it puts out a big ball of seed and cattle do wonderful on that seed.

The angelica plant or oshaw grows in the mountains and that root will cure anything. When I was seven or eight years old I got poison ivy on my hand and it just ate in there until there wasn't anything but nerves and blood vessels. My parents did everything to stop it and it kept getting worse. A old Mexican woman came by one day and said, "What's the matter with your hand?" I said, "I've got a sore on there and they can't cure it." She said, "Let me fix it." So she reached down in her pocket and pulled out a root. She chewed it up and spit it all over that sore, cured it right up. That oshaw they use it for anything: stomach, sores, boils. The Indians make a tea out of it to vaccinate their calves for blackleg. It grows in the mountains.

Every summer the Indians send a delegation into the mountains to gather medicines. There are many different kinds of plants they use for different medicines. Every plant has its use.

When father first started in business he branded his horses with just a triangle. Then the Indians got to working over that brand pretty bad, so he took a two inch pipe, cut it six inches long, split it down the middle and made two bars. He put the triangle on the hip and put two bars on the ribs. It was unheard of branding horses on the ribs. There were hundreds of ways they could add on to the triangle to make a different brand out of it, but they couldn't cover up those two bars on the ribs. With his sheep it was the same. He had earmarks on them, but they could change the earmarks--add to them or cut the ears off. Wool brands weren't used in those days. So what my father did was to burn a cross on their noses.

The Mexicans that would winter out in that Navajo country with their sheep would have maybe 2,000 head in a band. Those Indians would get into some of those areas where there's thick sage-brush and dig a pretty good size hole. Two or three might get down in there and as the sheep would go by through that sagebrush, the Indians would reach out and grab one and pull it down in the hole--just grab a sheep here, grab a sheep there. They'd have that hole full of sheep by the time that band went on by. The herder would be on the end someplace watching his sheep go on through and wouldn't even notice it. I knew about it, but the Mexicans didn't. The Indians stole lots of sheep that way. You had to be prepared for them. They had all kinds of tricks.

In those days there were lots of lakes where herders went to get water. If there was enough rain or snow it would fill those lakes. The Indians would set their traps close to the water.

Back in 1903 there was a drought. It was so dry all the lakes and waterholes dried up and horses died by the thousands. The Indians had hundreds of horses and sheep they moved in around those sand washes and dug wells. A lot of them moved their sheep over towards the San Juan River and into Colorado where there was water. In fact, my father moved a lot of his stock up in around Creede. Then in the fall it started to rain and it rained for about three or four months, just a slow rain.

Everything was brought to Chaco by wagon. The freight wagon that had gone after freight to Albuquerque was over three or four months on the road because of the mud. They could not move the wagon, it just dropped down to the bed. I was expecting a new saddle for Christmas and the wagon didn't get through till April. The load of flour and stuff was full of rat's nests.

I remember I played a joke on one of my father's freighters one time--They had this long building out there that had a room next to the blacksmith shop. It was all stone with a big thick door on it and a hasp so you could padlock it. This big tall old man used to freight out of Farmington. God, he was mean to us kids--onery old sucker! He

came in with his load and ran me off, or did something to me to make me mad. That night he was feeling kind of bad and went to bed early. I happened to go up by the building with the shop. He slept in that old room next door. I saw him go in there and I don't know what struck me, but I locked the door and went on. The old man during the night got the dysentery, couldn't get out of that door and he messed all over the house. He didn't get out till the next day when somebody heard him holler and got the key. He came out of there mad with a Winchester. Was gonna kill the guy who locked him in there. He was the maddest guy you ever saw. He never did find out who locked him in, nobody ever found out who it was.

In those days it took at least two days to get to Albuquerque, about 125 miles. You could take a day and half the night and ride it on horseback. I rode from Cuba to Albuquerque several times and that was 100 miles in a day. People think- you can't do it, but you can. It's pretty rough on a horse. You've got to have a good horse under you and you're not going to just poke along.

The same road that would connect up and go to Seven Lakes went around behind Mesa Fahada. Then the other way you went out the gap to Gallup where you could turn off and go to Thoreau. Thoreau was the nearest railroad station, around 60 miles. They'd generally make it in a day on horseback. In a wagon it would take you two to three days to get out there, depending on the road conditions. In those days whenever it rained you were stuck.

We got the mail once a week, an Indian brought it in by horseback from Thoreau. They had a post office by the name of Putnam in Chaco Canyon that was named for Professor Putnam. My father was the postmaster. People who worked around there and people at other trading posts would get their mail there too.

Going towards Farmington you went down the canyon and you crossed the wash at its mouth up to Meyers Canyon and to Ojo Alamo. Later they built that road up the hill and you could go that way where the bridge is now, but mostly we traveled down the canyon. Right at the mouth of the canyon there was this big sand hill and every time the wind would blow, it blew right at that sand hill. It was a job getting through that sand.

There was a line camp cabin over at Escavada Wash just before you get to the bridge and there was another one up near Mesa Fahada. Old George, the Navajo, lived in that place at Mesa Fahada. A lot of the Navajo that'd been living in the Chaco area were at Fort Sumner after Kit Carson rounded them up. Old George, who was just a young warrior at the time, said that before they were rounded up that they would catch these wagon trains and they'd kill all the people. Then they'd take the babies by the heels, and pop their heads over the wagon wheels. That's how they killed those babies.

Old George said that down there (at Fort Sumner) was terrible. On the way down there it was more or less a death march because the Indians died like flies. A lot of them escaped, came home, and hid out in the mountains. Around Cuba and the Jemez Mountains I found lots of old places where there'd been Indians camped.

In 1907-1908, more or less, they had a diphtheria epidemic and it killed those Indians like flies. There were dead Indians everywhere. That's when alot of those old Indians like Old George died. It just cleaned out whole families. I wore a gob of that (garbled) around my neck all that time--the same way when they had the flu in 1918. There were only about 8,000 Navajos after the die-off. Before that they had an epidemic of smallpox. They're not immune to any of those things. Many of them died with tuberculosis, especially those that were sent off to school. At that time they were shipping alot of them off to Carlisle, Pennsylvania to school.

At Chaco there was lots of activity: horse races, foot races, chicken pulls. The Indians came from all around. The length of cel-ebriation would depend on what kind they were having. Some would last one day, others lasted several days. I think when they had a big Yeibichai dance, there were masks and singing. I participated in some of those. I just had my regular clothes on.

I've been to lots of sandpaintings. I'd just go in the hogan and look at them just like any of the rest of the Indians.

In the Squaw dance the squaws would come up, get ahold of you and they'd dance a little short dance round and round--had to pay 'em to turn you loose. You named the celebration by the dance you were gonna have, a Yeibichai, a Squaw dance, a Medicine dance, or a Fire dance. They had games, would throw rocks or sticks at a mark or something like that, and they had these rabbit hunts. With rabbit hunts they'd get a greasewood stick and cut it off about two feet long. It would have sort of a curve in it and they would make a little hook on the end. That was a throwing stick to kill rabbits. Then they would get out on horses, would be a whole bunch of them together, and make a drive. They'd see a rabbit coming, get ready for him and throw that stick at him. If it connected he was a dead rabbit. They were very accurate, but it's just like everything else, it's practice, practice on throwing and judging the speed of the rabbit.

Another game the Navajos had was called a chicken pull. You bury a sack of money in the ground and leave the top sticking up just barely enough to see it. Then you rode your horse at a run, and there generally was a guy standing there with a whip to make him run, then you'd lean over the side of your saddle and reach down to the ground to get ahold of it and pull it out of the ground. They'd just go round in a circle, circle and circle until somebody would get ahold of it. If you ride a running horse and try to grab a little bit of rag sticking out of the ground it's almost an impossibility. I've been in alot of them, but you try to grab it and before you get it tight in your hand you're by it. They used to use chickens, get 'em by the head, but that was discontinued. Then you'd take off after whoever got it and try and take it away from him. No telling who'd end up with it, there were some of the darndest entanglements with everybody trying to get hold of that sack. I got it a time or two, couldn't take it away from me because I had the fastest horse.

On the Fourth of July my father got alot of fireworks and put on a fireworks display for the Indians and everybody. That was quite a show too.

Dancing, sings and friendly competitions were happy elements of life at the Wetherills' Chaco Canyon trading post. On the darker side, Indian country could be deadly. Time and again strangers traveling alone through Navajo territory had disappeared and, on a few occasions, trading posts had been burned and the traders murdered. Marietta Wetherill was well aware of the dangers, but with many Navajo friends and an intimate knowledge of their language, she could explore the Chaco area in perfect safety.

My mother rode alot in Indian country. One time she was riding up on the mesa at Chaco Canyon and she found a dead man up there. They all got to figuring how he got there. He was an anglo and he had a nice pack outfit. Some of the Indians killed him and took his horse and all his gear. In fact, mother saw two different dead men. One of them was up the canyon, a white man. Indians would just knock over people that traveled by themselves. They just shoot 'em and take all their stuff. A man traveling by himself with a good outfit was taking his chances. Lots of people disappeared in Indian country.

Bill Finn was a cowpuncher, a real good cowpuncher. He could ride anything, broke broncs, took care of the horses and cattle, went out on collection trips. He was different because most of these people, like Schmedding and Frankel, didn't know a darn thing. Bill Finn was capable of doing anything. Finn never was too rough with the Indians.

Although somewhat of a mysterious character and possibly a "wanted man". Bill Finn was, nevertheless, a trusted and faithful employee of the Wetherill family. Ironically, Finn, whose real name was Joe Moody, may have helped play a part in the death of his boss, Richard. Already stirred up against the Wetherills by local Indian agents, the Navajo of Chaco Canyon were further angered when Finn pistol-whipped an Indian while trying to recover the stolen horse of Richard's sister, Elizabeth.

Together the incidents created a volatile atmosphere at the normally tranquil New Mexico settlement. The explosion came late on the afternoon of June 22, 1910.

My father was driving (McKinley County) Sheriff Talle's cattle when he was killed. The sheriff had them over at Seven Lakes, about 15 miles from Chaco. All the lakes went dry and he had to move the cattle someplace to water. My dad told him he could bring them over there and he'd take care of them till there was more water in the lakes again. Talle brought them in and my father and Finn were driving the cattle down the canyon so they could get water, and that's when it happened. Talle wasn't driving the cattle then. I don't know where he was at the time my father was killed. Whether he had gone ahead of the cattle I don't know, because he came in later and left. Father and Finn had the cattle. My father was killed right there by those bushes (in Rincon del Camino, next to the arroyo). The Indians were back in there (near cliff) and in the rocks--must have been about 20 of them. The one that killed him, Chis-chilling-begay, was hiding under the bank of the arroyo. I knew him. I think he was a little mentally off and got talked into it. He wasn't too smart. They were

all shooting at my father and shooting at Finn. I didn't hear shots, that was two miles down the canyon. Finn shot at some of those Indians, his horse went to bucking and stampeded--he was about half broke.

After the Indians killed him they had some kind of a dance around the body--made a trail around it. This other Indian (Pesh-la-ki) went and put a gun up against the side of my father's head and blew it off. That was a different Indian than the one that first shot him.

There was a fence around a pasture right along the road, Finn's horse jumped over it and came in back of the barn. That's when Sloppy came out and took off after Finn with a club. That Indian was hiding up there by the barn, he knew what was going to happen. I didn't see him, I was back by the ruins. Finn started to shoot at him and Sloppy would go over the side of his horse. About the second shot Finn hit that Indian in the flank and the bullet came out next to the backbone.

Finn was trying to get to the house to tell us that the Indians were fighting and killing. He got to the house, jumped off, ran in, and got a Winchester, came out the door on the other side and the Indians were all gone. The Navajo maids were still there, but they disappeared right after that.

When I got to the house Finn was at the front door with a Winchester. Mother and the school teacher both had guns. I went in and I got a gun too. We didn't know what was going to happen. I was paralyzed.

Sheriff Talle was there. Well, he left like a scared rabbit. He went to Gallup to send help and reinforcements because we thought the Indians were gonna kill us--everybody! We could see 'em around up in the cliffs and the rocks on top, and in the arroyos peeking out. They were all naked, faces painted black and their hair all hanging down.

Bill Finn, myself, the school teacher, Miss Quick, and my mother were the only ones (not counting the children) in the house, so we all put blankets on the windows and left peek holes through them. We set there for two days ready to take a shot at them if they got too close. But you could see 'em off at a distance swarming around. You'd just see 'em one at a time. You'd see 'em walk a little ways, take a look, go back out of sight. We expected them to make a charge anytime, but they never did show up. We expected they were gonna kill the whole family and that had been their intention. The Navajo maids and others told us about it afterwards.

(The Indian that was shot did not die.) I talked to his son years later. He was a little boy at the time and remembers cleaning out the wound, running rags through that hole in his father's back.

I don't remember too much about what happened, with the grief and being scared to death. I believe that a Mexican rigged up a buggy. I think it was some of the Mexicans that went down and hauled my father's body in. They put him on a table on the back porch. That was terrible. He was just swelled up and busted by the time the coroner came in there. Half his head was shot away, his brains were all over and the worms got in his head. Oh, it was an awful mess. I'd go out

and uncover him once in awhile and look at him and try to get the worms and flies off of him. His brain was full of maggots. He was swelled and busted open and stunk to high heaven by the time they buried him. Kept swelling up and swelling up and blood all over. I was just paralyzed. I don't remember too much, except about my father. And nobody came, no outsiders.

The coroner and the sheriff from San Juan County finally came several days after it happened. It was days before they buried him. The sheriff came and the coroner and Paul Arrington, Lee Ivy. There was quite a bunch came in. The sheriff (Talle) from Gallup went to get help, but we never heard a word of him no more. I was there at the grave side. There was quite a bunch of men--must have been 10- 12 people around there.

When my mother passed away we buried her ashes up there in my father's grave. That was her request. The first headstone we had was just a rock. We had a bronze plaque put on there later.

I think the first one buried in that cemetery was that baby of John Wade's, then old Uncle Clate. Two or three babies were buried there, then my father. A lot of them were put in there after we left. I think there were a few Navajo buried there. Quite a few graves in there, but no markers on them so we don't know. I think about the only grave that had a name and marker on it was my father's.

Morton: When they (Marietta and the children) had to move, Finn moved with them to see that everything got moved and settled properly. It took a long time to get the stock in. They had a lot of stock stolen from them before anybody could get back over there to take care of it.

Richard: Paul Arrington, Lee Ivy and all these guys from Farmington came over and they went to try and gather the stock. Some were trying to find the sheep, some were trying to find the cattle and some were trying to find the horses. They all worked trying to gather up most of it. Very many of the horses and cattle, especially the sheep disappeared.

Morton: If Marietta hadn't had some of those people she could depend on she would of really had a bad time--especially Bill Finn, who knew all about the stock, how to gather them, how to run them down if they were stolen, which place to go, and how to deal with the party when he got there. The family lost a lot of stock because those Indians just grabbed it, just about wiped them out, ranch-wise and money-wise.

Richard: I never did feel anything against the Navajos. I believe it happened because of the (Indian) agents' agitation--like old Shelton and Stacher. Shelton wanted to be the big king and the Indians would come to my father with their problems instead of him. Caused a lot of jealousy. My father would settle all their disputes and make everybody happy, but, naturally, they wouldn't go to the Indian agent with their problems. The Navajo would come there. My father never locked his office, they'd sleep in there, he made places for them to sleep. If they were hungry they always got something to eat. There were lots of them that were very close friends with my dad. They

didn't have any reason to kill him. It was agitation by the Indian agents-- especially old Shelton. My father always had good relations with the Navajo.

The Indians all owed my father--every one--thousands and thousands of dollars. Probably \$25,000-\$30,000 or more. He was lenient and, of course, after he died that was all wiped out. He gave 'em sheep on shares. For so many sheep they'd give him back half of what was produced.

Morton., Marietta said Shelton even had the Indians get that stock. She sure didn't like him or Stacher very well. They were the troublemakers. She was really frightened and afraid the Indians were going to kill the family. They were keeping the Indians drunk-- Shelton did. That's what happened. They were drunk when they did the killing and he kept them drunk, built up their hate, telling lies. That's what caused it she said. She was terribly upset for a long time after that and wouldn't talk about it for years. The trial was a mean one. Different ones were put up by Shelton to slander her (Marietta), but there was never much of it in print.

Richard: After we moved to Cuba they had a bench warrant out for my mother. I don't remember what it was for, but she rode from Cuba in the wintertime to Aztec on horseback. I was even a witness too, had to testify. They asked me so darn many questions. I was confused. I had to go testify at that big old courthouse, the county seat of San Juan County in Aztec, New Mexico.

(Did the attitudes of Richard's Navajo friends change as a result of the Chaco murder?) No, they were all glad to see me when I'd go over there. Funny thing about it, all the Navajos that I grew up with are dead. The older people don't hardly live over 60 years. Of all those that I knew as a kid not a one of them is living.

By the standards of today's archaeologists, the Wetherill brothers were engaged in a crude, destructive archaeology at Mesa Verde that has been called "pot hunting" by many. When their work is taken in the context of the time, however, it is apparent that the Wetherills were not conducting their excavations much differently than trained archaeologists of the day.

A strong reinforcement of this view was made by veteran National Park Service archaeologist, Al Lancaster, when this editor visited him at s Cortez, Colorado home en route to visit Mr. Wetherill. Beginning his work in 1935, Lancaster had been one of the first persons to enter and work the ruins of Mesa Verde since Richard Wetherill, Dr. Jesse Walter Fewkes and Superintendent Nusbaum had performed excavations there. Both Wetherill and Fewkes had drawn severe criticism from Nusbaum and later archaeologists. When asked if he observed any significant differences among the work of the three early excavators, Lancaster replied, "You couldn't tell any difference between the three."

Perhaps the best example of the sincere concern of the Wetherills for the archaeology of Mesa Verde and other places was that artifacts were not sold piecemeal but as complete collection's -- -most to museums.

Further evidence of the Wetherill family's concern over their admittedly "basic" level archaeology came when Richard tried unsuccessfully to interest Harvard University's Peabody Museum in taking over the Mesa Verde excavations in 1889. After the Hyde Exploring Expedition and Richard Wetherill had joined efforts and eventually settled at Chaco Canyon to pursue the excavation of Pueblo Bonito, it was once again Wetherill's acute interest in archaeology and a sense of "do it right" that brought in an outside institution to direct the dig.

Eventually Richard Wetherill homesteaded an area in Chaco which included Pueblo Bonito, not for any monetary purpose, but simply to protect the huge pueblo that up to that time had been open to plundering by vandals.

Pueblo Bonito was originally on my father's homestead and then he made a deal with Theodore R. Roosevelt to make a monument to preserve it. They'd give him other lands for the ruins.

We never kept any of the pottery. I remember when I was a kid, barrels and barrels full of arrow heads and stuff like that that came out from around the ruins. Oh, they found lots of that stuff, and the American Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian still have lots that came out of the ruins in boxes in the basement that's never been unpacked. They had no place to display it, there was so much of it. All the collections that my father made have been located except one. I don't know which one it was, but I know that there's one still missing. I understand that the government has offered several million dollars for one of the collections. It's in Finland. At the time (late 1800's) nobody was interested in it. My father did everything in the world to get people interested in preservation of the stuff because the Wetherills believed more in preserving it. You see, in those ruins they excavated, when they'd empty out a room they'd fill it up from the next one. They kept those rooms filled up so that they wouldn't fall down.

Of course, there were lots of people like you have today--vandals. Everybody was out for the money, that was all in those days. They were digging up everything they could get a dollar out of and dollars were, scarce. The pots were there for the taking.

Speaking here in general terms, Mr. Wetherill is not referring to the work of his father and the Hyde Exploring Expedition. He is referring, instead, to the wide-ranging practice of digging up Anasazi burials and destroying ruins to collect a few sacks full of artifacts to sell to the highest bidder--a practice that, regrettably, continues today.

As any family does when it's about to make a move, the Wetherill family of Chaco began to clear out all the unwanted, unneeded, or useless items that had collected over the years at the canyon bottom homestead. Richard still remembers what some of those items were and where they were dumped.

My father had lots of glass photographic plates. At one time he had stacks of them. They probably dumped them out in the ruins someplace.

We had lots of that brass trade money with Chaco Canyon trading post on it. There were dollars, nickels, dimes, quarters, and half dollars. Part of it we dumped in that old well out in front of, the building. The rest was buried about seven to eight feet deep in a round hole dug right at the end of that mound on the west side (of Bonito). I threw alot of that trade money in there. Didn't save any. It all went in those two holes, most of it in that well. That 90 foot well they dug through clay never did get any water, just left it there, threw all the trash and everything in. Wasn't over 60-70 feet deep when we dumped alot of that stuff in there. Maybe that's where those plates went.

When the Indians would come in and sell a blanket, horse, a sheep, or cow, we'd give 'em that trade money and they'd use that to buy goods out of the store. I don't know how the rest of 'em (trading posts) handled it, but that's the way they handled it at the Chaco trading post.

After the murder of Richard, the Wetherill family would never again be the same. Leaving the canyon with only a fraction of the stock and all the possessions that could be loaded in wagons, Marietta and the children moved to Farmington to be closer to the court at Aztec, the site of Chis-chilling-begay's trial. Later the family moved to a small ranch in the mountains near Cuba, New Mexico where Marietta tried to bring some sense of order to the chaos of the past months.

Bill Finn had stood by the family and continued to do so until his death in the influenza epidemic of 1918. Richard, only 12 years old when his father was killed, took on an increasingly important role after the move to Cuba. For the young boy school days were almost over. Soon he would have to become, in the image of his father, the hard working,provider for his family.

My sister, Ruth, was born on the 5th of May, 1910. My father was killed on the 22nd of June and on the 23 of June the following year Ruth died. She was buried up on the Jemez Mountains.

A church in Farmington was the first I'd been around. We were hardly ever around churches. My mother used to take me after my father died. I was supposed to go to Sunday School every Sunday, but I played hookey lots of times.

After my father was killed, when we moved over to Cuba, I had to learn Spanish. There was a Spanish teacher for a couple of months and then the next year an American girl came in there who didn't speak a word of Spanish. None of the kids spoke any English, so I acted as interpreter for about three months there in the school. I speak Spanish better than I do any language.

In 1911 my sister, Elizabeth, went to school at the convent in Jemez Indian pueblo. My brother, Bob, also went to school there and lived with a priest.

I've got a bridle that Tom Mix pawned to my mother a few years later for \$50.00. That was when Tom was first starting out in the movie business. He'd been making alot of shorts. I was in one of his pictures. I don't know whether it was 1912 or 1913, but they dressed me up as a girl and put me in long blond curls. I rode this stage coach. The outlaws held it up, killed the driver, the shotgun guards, and one or two salesmen that were in the coach. They took me as a hostage, then Tom Mix came along killed the two outlaws and rescued me. That was one of the silent movies in those days. Those were the days of 5 cent movies. I saw my first movie in Albuquerque. Cost a nickel to go see it. It was along about that same time, but I don't remember exactly.

First job I had after my father's death was driving a buggy around for Ray Miera to all his different projects and places. Then I went to cooking in a cow camp, feeding 15-20 men. I'd have to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning, get their breakfast around 4 o'clock or 4:30. I did cooking in the cow camp when I was 13-14 years old. And then, of course, there were our own horses and stock to take care of. I had to work all the time, day and night.

You see, when we lived in Cuba my mother had traded Chaco Canyon off for a ranch on the mountain and 100 head of horses and we started raising horses. We were right next to the Navajo on the west of Cuba. In 1913 I went out one morning to hunt some saddle horses and I ran into a group of Navajos that were rounding up horses, so I just threw in with them. They were making a general roundup of horses all over that country. So I sent word to my mother that I was going with these Navajos and I didn't know when I'd be home. I was 15. All I had were the clothes on my back and a pair of bat wing chaps.

The Indians had been together four or five days gathering horses. First thing you know they had 400-500 horses. They put them in canyons or arroyos and Indians would camp at each spot the horses could get out and hold them there during the night.

We had nothing to eat but horsemeat. We ate every evening. The different groups would go in and rope out a two year old colt and butcher him. You'd cut off a hunk of meat for your supper and what you'd eat the next day and you'd roast this on the fire coals. All you carried along was a little bag of salt. If you got thirsty you might have to ride seven to eight miles to get a drink of water out of some lake. I didn't have any bedding and the first couple of weeks I couldn't sleep much, but I got so I could lay down anyplace and sleep. I was so tired.

I've estimated 8,000- 10,000 horses in a bunch. I hardly ever tell anybody that because it's hard to believe. It'd be miles across the herd. There'd be maybe 200 or more Indians around them and every so often you'd cut out these horses. You'd have a certain area where you could hold them, and then you'd get rid of one group of these Indians, but you'd get a new bunch for the next area. There were alot of wild horses over in that Largo country. We gathered a big bunch of horses, 400-500 or maybe 1, 000 out in a big valley. We'd spread them out, make a big circle, set all them wild horses running the way we wanted them to run, head them off and run them into the main herd. Then you had them where you could hold them.

One place over on the Largo there was an Indian riding a mule that jumped an arroyo. He must have been riding pretty fast. There was a green cedar tree on the other side that had a long dry limb sticking out. It run right straight through that Indian's chest, stuck out his back and he was up hanging in there. They never did touch that Indian. They just left him. He's probably there yet. They wouldn't touch anyone that was killed violently. I went up and looked at him. It was a horrible sight. You run into alot of those kind of funny things. Those were rough days.

When I quit the roundup we cut all of my horses out and then they gave me a proportion of the unbranded ones. I was accepted like another Indian and I was treated the same way. I had about 100 horses when I came home. We had to make a living that way.

Horses were worth more than cattle in those days. They'd be worth anywhere from \$10-\$15. We'd take a bunch, maybe 100 at a time, down to Albuquerque and sell all of them. Alot were shipped back to the eastern states.

The nearest I've ever come to being killed by any animal was with mules. I had an outlaw mule when we were in Cuba. The only way you could get near that mule was to put your rope around her front feet and tie it to a post. You'd finally get a saddle on her, but had to leave that rope on her front feet to get on her and then had to get the rope on her front feet to get off of her. She'd kick the daylights out of you if you got anywhere near her heels.

I'd been riding her nearly all day and I came up to a sheep herder. My rope was done up loose over the horn, with the loop hanging down the left side. I don't know why I did it, but I thought she was pretty well rode down. I just rode up and stepped off that darn mule, instead of getting the rope on her front feet. Gol darn! that mule left there like a flash of lightning and my leg was hanging through a couple of loops of that rope. She drug me down through a cactus pile, drug the heck out of me. Finally my boot came off. The mule went around where the burros were and the sheep herder caught her and tied her up to a tree for the night. That Mexican picked cactus out of me most of the night--boy, was I mad. I got on that mule the next morning, I was so mad I was gonna ride her to death. I rode her to Chaco Canyon that day, whipped her with a double rope every foot of the way, about 90 miles. I stayed that night at Chaco Canyon... the next day I got on that mule and whipped her every foot of the way home. She never did get over that. God, I hated that mule.

When we moved into that Cuba country we weren't too far from the Navajos and they'd steal our saddle horses. I would ride down there looking for them. The Indian men knew me (they weren't there), but the squaws didn't. I'd ride up to a hogan and talk to them in Mexican. All those Navajos over there spoke Mexican. I asked did they see any horses of such and such a brand? No, they didn't know anything about the horses. So I'd just go out and set beside the door. Then the squaws would all get together and talk in Navajo.

"What's this guy hunting?"

"He's hunting the horses hobbled up the canyon there." I'd go and get my horses and go home. They finally found out that I could talk Navajo.

I did that with the Mexicans too. I'd speak English. I pulled up to a herder's camp in the Valle Grande one time. He was an old man. I talked English to him. He couldn't talk English, and he could only understand a little bit. I'd make signs--something to eat. He motioned me to come on. Took me up to his sheep camp where he had on a pot of beans and tortillas. I talked English to him saying, "What do you call these in Spanish?" "Fri-HO-les!" I'd say, "Fri-JO-les."

"No, No, No. Si, Si, Si! Frrri-HO-les!" We'd go along. Then I'd say, "What do you call this?" "Carr-r-ne ! " I'd say, "Kar-ne." "No, No. No! Carr-r-ne!"

He was teaching me Spanish, how to pronounce the words and I'd talk to him in English. I'd ask him all kinds of things in English. Make him understand by pointing at a sheep or horse and find out what they called it in Spanish. He'd explain to me the correct way to say it. After I kidded him along quite awhile I started talking Mexican to him. That old man did cuss me out! I sure got a kick out of it. He called me every name he could think of for making a fool of him. He finally got to laughing and thought it was funny.

Bert McCarrol and I one time moved 4,000 cattle down in the valley to a different range. Bert and I would settle down at night and to amuse ourselves, you know what we'd do? We had a louse fight every night! We'd get lousy just being around those Indians and trading posts. And, God, our clothes were just full of lice. We'd take two lice and put them in a tin plate. He'd take one off himself and I'd take one off myself and they'd fight to the death. When one got killed you knew your own louse, so you'd pick him out, put him in your shirt collar, and fight him the next night. That's absolutely a fact!

In those days you couldn't get around those Indian trading posts without getting lousy. If you sat on a blanket you'd get lousy. First thing you know you'd get covered with lice. But when you had a lot of hot sun and red ants you'd take your clothes off, stir up an ant bed, and keep stirring your clothes around in it, turning them over. The ants would clean up those nits. You'd shake off the ants and put your clothes on. Lice would be in the seams of your clothes mostly. Head lice are different. I never was bothered with those, but I get within a mile of one body louse and it'd get on me. Cowpunchers from someplace else would come into camp and to play a joke we'd put lice down their shirt collars. The difference between a louse and a cootie is that one had military training and the other didn't that's one of them jokes from way back there when they had the cooties during WWI in France.

But, Oh boy, the Indians used to be lousy. These little Indian kid's hair would be white from their heads out to the end of their hair with them darn nits, and their bodies were covered with lice. Those old squaws would sit around and pick lice all day.

After I got older I was gonna kill a guy one time. He was a sheep inspector, deputy sheriff, a brand and cattle inspector, and everything else--smart aleck bastard! I was out working and my brother was at the ranch when one of the neighbors brought in a bunch of sheep going through our property to his place. That inspector came through there and quarantined the sheep on our property, said they had scabs. He left, so my brother drove the sheep off the property and on the road to their own home. The inspector caught up to him, told my brother to get the sheep back on our property. I happened to come home that evening and I got my brother and we went down to where the sheep inspector lived--he had a wife and a couple of kids. I went down there to kill and I was loaded for him. I was gonna kill him. I begged him to go for his gun because I was ready to kill him. I cussed him for every dirty low-down S. O. B. you could think of, begged him to go for his gun. I had a six-shooter, Colt .45, single action, short barrel, but he wouldn't do anything. So I told him, "I'm moving those sheep off there and you'd better not put them back on because you'll die if you do!"

Later I got to thinking what a damn fool a person is who wants to go kill a man with a wife and a couple of kids. If you've got a gun on it gives you nerve. You do things you wouldn't otherwise, then you ruin your life and their life and their family's life, just because of a six-shooter. I wouldn't carry a six-shooter after that. I always carried a rifle, not a six-shooter. I've been mad enough to kill a guy lots of times, but I didn't have a gun. I'd cool off and forget. I didn't make any families unhappy or leave a bunch of kids without a father--my own or somebody else's. You're asking to be killed when you carry a six-shooter, because there's always somebody better than you. If you don't have a gun, you're damn sure innocent of killing somebody.

During the years at Cuba and at other New Mexico and Arizona locations the family called home, Richard Wetherill grew to maturity. When World War I began to draw America's young men across the Atlantic, Richard tried to enlist. He was stymied in his efforts because the powers-that-be felt the young cowboy had too many financial obligations to risk the hazards of combat. Not to be deterred, Richard sold all of his assets, paid off his debts and signed up with the Navy. Within one month of entry into the service he had gone from a cow camp in Arizona to a victory parade in San Francisco.

The ultimate irony of Richard's military service was that the young man, long accustomed to the arid, open spaces of the desert, would become a crewman within the cramped, dank hull of a submarine. After two years of naval duty, mostly in Hawaii, Richard returned to his mother's Arizona home where Marietta introduced him to Morton LeRue.

Marietta Wetherill had been telling the attractive young railroad employee about her adventurous son for months and, although there

wasn't exactly a case of love at first sight, Richard and Morton were soon wed.

Those first years of marriage were hard on the young couple. The pressures of having almost no money and few jobs might have destroyed a weaker bond, but not that of Richard and Morton.

From there on it was a rough deal because you couldn't get a job. All the banks and cattlemen went broke. Before WWI cattle were only worth \$40.00, but during the, war the price jumped to \$200. All those cattlemen went wild, borrowed money from the banks, mortgaged everything they had to get the money to buy more cattle. They overstocked the range and when the war was over cattle prices dropped back to \$40.00. It broke every bank and every cowman in Arizona. They had to sell everything. If they had 10,000 cows it took every damn one of them and it still didn't pay off the mortgage at the bank. That was the end of the cows, there were no more cows. There was no more cowpunching.

Paralleling the fate of cowhands all over the Southwest, Richard struggled along finding whatever jobs he could to support his wife and young children. Eventually a position with the U. S. Forest Service became available. Richard took the job and worked as a ranger riding the back-country of northern New Mexico on horseback until his retirement in 1952.

During World War II as a 45 year old grandfather, Richard took a leave of absence from his Forest Service duties to join the Navy's Seabees in the South Pacific. Morton and the children, plus Marietta, moved to southern California during the two years of Richard's duty, Morton working as an electrical installer in an aircraft plant and Marietta caring for the children.

The war years brought in enough income for the family to pay their debts and make real estate investments that, after their retirement, would allow them freedom from financial worries. That new-found freedom also allowed Morton and Richard to spend a large part of each year after retirement in the quiet Mexican fishing village of San Blas.

Today the couple divides time between their residence at Gilbert, Arizona and summer home near the edge of the Colorado River gorge at Marble Canyon, Arizona. With visits each year from literally hundreds of relatives, as well as scores of people simply inter-ested in learning more about the Wetherill family, Richard and Morton Wetherill are constantly kept busy sharing their experiences and remembrances. To all who visit these pioneers comes the feeling of having, for at least a few precious hours, relived the things of which history is written.