

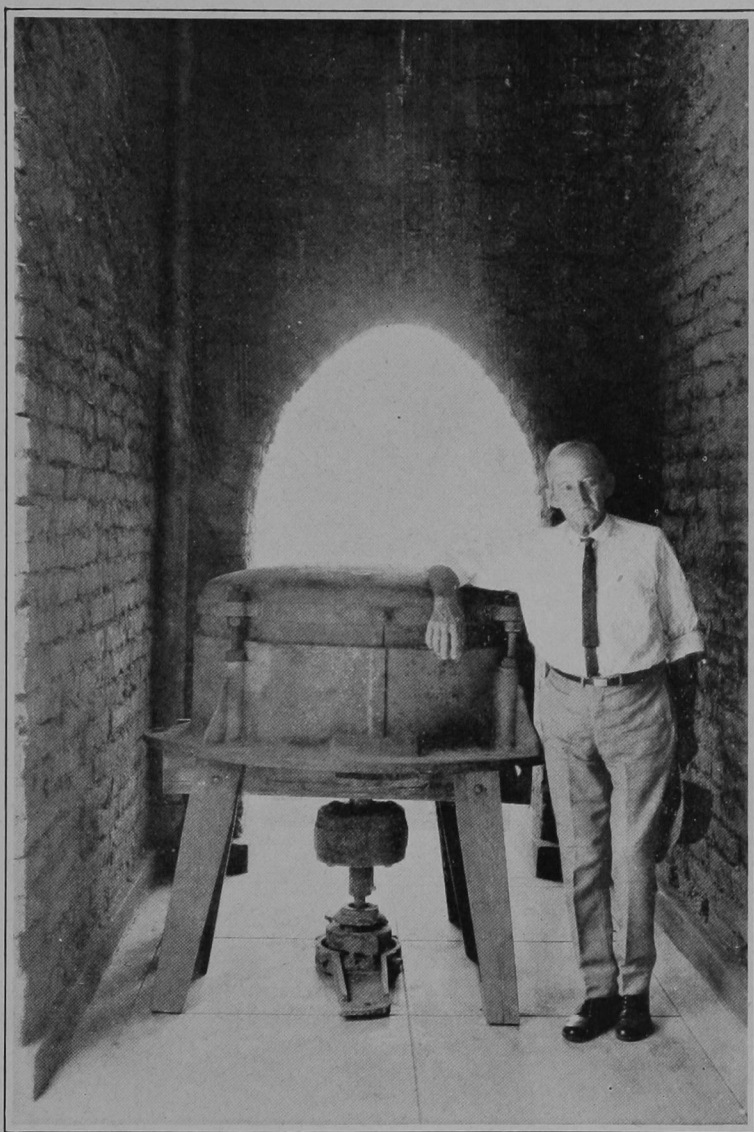
ARIZONA MUSEUM NOTES

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The recent gift to the Arizona Museum in Phoenix of what remains of the first flouring mill in Phoenix, vividly recalls the Bichard Brothers and others who helped to supply the staff of life for the early settlers of the Salt River Valley.

The Bichard Brothers first located at Adamsville, in that day a little town some three and a half miles southwest of the present city of Florence, in Pinal County. Of their operations there, Farish says in his history of Arizona, Vol. 6: "After the departure of Mr. Adams, the founder of the place, who moved to the Salt River Valley, Adamsville became the headquarters of the Bichard Brothers, well known business men of the Gila Valley, who erected a modern flouring mill at the place. The Richards were the first traders with the Pima Villages, and about 1865 became the owners of a primitive flouring mill at Casa Blanca (we remember Mrs. Jack Swilling saying that one of their chief sources of supplies, when they first came to the Salt River Valley, was Casa Blanca) which was destroyed in the winter of 1868 by one of the great floods which occasionally occurred in the Gila Valley. Before its destruction this mill was used to grind corn and grain furnished by the Pima Indians. The Richards constructed a new mill at Adamsville in 1869, which was provided with the most improved machinery of that day, shipped in at great expense from the Pacific Coast, and it was called 'The Pioneer Flouring Mill.' This mill was the first modern flouring mill erected in the territory." All heavy machinery brought to Arizona at that time was shipped from San Francisco in a deep water vessel to the mouth of the Colorado River where it was transferred to a freight barge and towed up the stream to Yuma or some other point on the river, from which it was freighted overland by ox-teams to its destination.

According to James M. Barney, local historian, the City of Phoenix contracted to give the Bichard Brothers the whole of Block 64 of the original townsite on the condition that they erect a flour mill upon the property, work to be begun by May 1, 1871, and the machinery to be on the ground by July, 1872. (This block is bounded by Central Avenue on the east, Jefferson on the north, First Avenue on the west and Madison Street on the south; it is the site of the Luhrs Buildings today). The



The old Bichard Flour Mill, gift to the Arizona Museum,
and its donor, A. W. Gregg

mill seems to have been installed in record time for according to the Prescott Minor: "On July 4, 1871, the Bichard Flouring mill steamed up and made the first flour ever ground in the Salt River Valley."

Two months after the Bichard mill began to operate, it mysteriously caught fire and burned to the ground, causing a loss of about \$10,000 to the company. Although the brothers retained the city block, it could not have been worth more than a few hundred dollars at that time.

The construction of the Salt River Valley Flour Mill, better known as the Hellings Flour Mill, which was built in East Phoenix (the adobe ruins may still be seen just north of the Public Golf Course and east of the State Hospital on the Tempe Road) was begun before the Bichard Mill, but not completed until over three months after the latter had burned down. According to Farish, the large contract held by the Bichard Brothers for supplying the military posts north of the Gila including McDowell, Date Creek, Hualpai, Verde and Whipple with flour was, after the Bichard fire, awarded to Hellings and Company.

The third mill in the Salt River Valley was built at Hayden's Ferry, now Tempe, by Charles T. Hayden, father of Carl Hayden, our present U. S. Senator. Next came the John Y. T. Smith mill which was located at the corner of First and Jefferson Streets, where the Barrows Furniture Store now is. King Woolsey was associated with Mr. Smith in this enterprise.

The Crisman mill began operations about 1880. The John Gardiner mill between Second and Third Streets on Adams, was started in 1894. Later come the Phoenix Flour mill on Jackson and Ninth Streets, and the Viault Mill on East Van Buren Street.

In 1889, when George R. Williscroft came to Phoenix and started the first foundry in the valley, the old Bichard grinding mill was sold to him along with other old iron. He did not destroy it but kept it until 1902 when he sold it to A. W. Gregg to use for grinding lime at his lime kiln at the end of North Sixteenth Street. (The Arizona School of Music and many other buildings constructed before 1906 used lime ground by the old Bichard mill.) For the last 25 years the old mill has been stored in Mr. Gregg's back yard at 3502 North Central Avenue.

Although the hopper has been removed from the top of the mill and the legs have been taken off, the old French burs and other parts are still in good condition. Mr. Gregg says that some day he will attach an electric motor to the mill and demonstrate for those interested just how flour was produced in Phoenix sixty years ago.

During the summer months, the Arizona Museum kept its doors open to the public every morning as well as every afternoon, as in the winter. Miss Ruby Green, the curator, reported an average attendance of over seventy-five people each day. Many of these people were out-of-town visitors, but according to Miss Green a much larger percentage of home folks visit the museum in the summer than in the winter.

Beginning October first, Mrs. Ethel Clark will be curator at the museum, which will be open to the public from two to five each day excepting Mondays, when it will be closed. Mrs. Clark has been state historian of the Daughters of the American Revolution for nine years, during which time she has given much attention to Arizona history, having compiled a map showing over one hundred historic spots in the state. She has also collected data on the lives of more than one hundred pioneer women of the state.

Clubs and groups of any kind will be welcome to arrange for meetings at the museum, as in the past, provided the programs planned have as their subject Arizona history or archaeology or any other subject covered by the general purposes of the museum.

Louis Tisdale, a former student of anthropology, with special reference to southwest archaeology, under Dr. Byron C. Cummings of the University of Arizona, has been made curator of archaeology for the museum. In July, in company with the state historian, a field trip was made to a site near Gillespie Dam, where the discovery of a prehistoric burial ground had been reported to the historian.

It was indeed a fortunate day for Flagstaff when Dr. and Mrs. Harold S. Colton decided to make it their home. We do not know the exact date about twelve years ago, but it is easy for an interested observer to see what they now mean to that community. They are veritably the life and soul of the Northern Arizona Museum of Science and Art, located in that city.

The museum is at present housed by the Flagstaff Woman's Club, only a few blocks from the center of town, easily accessible to all tourists on Highway Number 66, which is the main east and west highway in Northern Arizona. The museum has set a definite task for itself and has gone about its accomplishment in a business like, scientific manner—archaeology, biology and geology (historic relics are preserved but not stressed) are the subjects covered in addition to art. By Northern Arizona is meant that portion of Arizona north of the Mogollon Rim including Apache, Navajo, Coconino, Yavapai and Mojave counties. Before coming to Arizona Dr. Colton, who is president and director as well as a benefactor of the institution, was Professor of Biology in the University of Pennsylvania, and all departments of the museum show the influence of a highly trained, scientific mind combined with just enough human understanding to make exhibits interesting to the ordinary layman.

So far, archaeology perhaps, has been given more attention than any other subject. Dr. Colton began an archaeological survey of the region in 1916 and has steadily and painstakingly kept up the work since that time. This past summer excavations were carried forward at two sites, the Wilson Ruin, twenty-five miles east of Flagstaff, and at Medicine Cave, twenty miles from Flagstaff, northeast of the San Francisco Peaks.

Mrs. Colton, who as Mary Russell F. Colton, is a nationally recognized artist, holds the official title of curator of art in the museum. She also is a very busy person. From July second to ninth her department conducted an expedition of Hopi Indian arts. This has become an annual event and will doubtless do much to restore the high standard of the native arts and crafts of the Northern Arizona Indians.

From July nineteenth to August ninth the second annual Arizona Artists Arts and Crafts Exhibition was held. It was a most creditable show attended by many Arizona artists in person.

In educational work the Northern Arizona Museum and the Northern Arizona Teachers College (Dr. Grady Gammage, president) have been of mutual assistance.

No one going to Flagstaff should fail to visit its museum, and to study its exhibits; they will give him an understanding of that section of Arizona which he would find it difficult to get in any other way.