

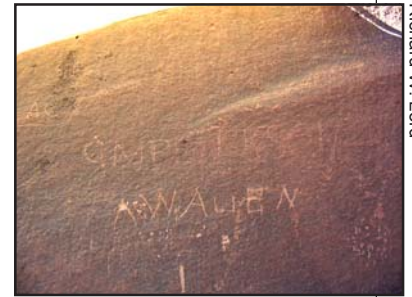
Mormon Petroglyphs at Tanner Wash

Peter J. Pilles, Jr., Coconino National Forest

A FEW NAMES in English letters, a few small panels of prehistoric petroglyphs, and some elements that may be modern copies of the petroglyphs are scattered among the large boulders of Moenkopi sandstone that define the western edge of Tanner Wash, just east of the Old Fort at Joseph City (see page 4). In contrast to the Native American glyphs, which were pecked through the darker surface patina of the stones, the names were lightly scratched in, with single lines, leaving block-printed “calling cards.” These names are nearly invisible, yet they constitute another aspect of the historical archaeology of the Little Colorado. They may also be a tangible reminder of an early friendship.

The clearer of the two inscriptions is “A. W. Allen,” and the name above it is “C. M. Peterson.” Andrew Wainsley Allen was the son of William C. Allen, one of the leaders of the Mormons’ expedition to northern Arizona. Born in Draper, Utah, in 1869, Andrew accompanied his father to Arizona in 1876. While at the Old Fort, Andrew

helped care for the colony’s cattle. C. M. Peterson is probably Charles Mauritz Peterson Jr., rather than his father; it seems likely that the young Andrew Allen would have been friends with someone closer to his own age rather than with the elder Peterson, particularly if these glyphs were made while Andrew was tending cattle. Charles was five years younger than Andrew, was also born in Draper, and he accompanied his parents to Arizona three years after the Allens arrived. Andrew left the Old Fort in 1884, and the Peterson family left in 1891. If the two boys were together when they carved their names on this boulder, it must have been sometime between 1879 and 1884. However, they met again back in Draper, where Andrew married Charles’s older sister Hannah, in 1894.



Richard W. Lord

The names of “C. M. Peterson” and “A. W. Allen” are barely discernible on a boulder on the western edge of Tanner Wash, near Joseph City.

The Little Colorado Colonies’ Lime Kiln

Alan Ferg, Arizona State Museum

WOOD, FIRE, AIR, AND LIMESTONE: not an alchemist’s formula for some arcane substance, but instead, the recipe for making lime. Although all of the early stone masonry at the four original Little Colorado forts used mud mortar, cement (to do brick construction) and white paint were soon in demand—and lime is the critical ingredient in both. To haul in lime from elsewhere would have been prohibitively expensive. To maintain the colonies’ self-sufficiency, men from Brigham City (see page 6) and Sunset (see page 9) built their own lime kiln near limestone outcrops to the south of the colonies.

The kiln stood about nine feet tall, with a D-shaped foundation of large limestone blocks and upper walls of thin sandstone slabs. Inside the kiln, multiple layers of crushed limestone were alternated with loosely stacked wood fuel (to allow airflow) and set alight. The lower limestone walls were lined with bricks (probably made at Brigham City by Brother Behrman; see page 7) so the burning would not convert the walls themselves to lime; had some other type of large stones been available nearby, the Mormons would not have used limestone in the kiln’s

construction. When the fire had burned out, and kiln cooled, a hole was broken in the flat face of the kiln and the lime shoveled out. This type of kiln is referred

to as a semicontinuous vertical kiln because firings have to be done serially by replenishing the materials, usually from the top. The access hole in the flat side of the kiln had to be broken open and then re-closed with masonry each time a load of lime was burned and removed.

This intriguing artifact of nineteenth-century technology now sits alone in the forest, apparently undisturbed since the last time it was used, with the final load of lime still sitting in the bottom. Its remarkable preservation is due to its sturdy construction and—perhaps more importantly—to the protective attitude of the private landowner on whose property it rests, as well as the diligence of the ranch foreman who keeps an eye on it.



Karen Wilhelm

Alan Ferg and avocational archaeologist John Wilhelm look at artifacts next to the Mormon lime kiln.