

Painting with a Passion: Will Evans and the Navajo



Pieces painted by Will Evans
Chair, courtesy of Richard J. Austin
Table, Farmington Museum Collection,
gift of Rebecca Rhein



Above: Templates Will Evans used in his work, made out of handy material, including cardboard advertising Chesterfield cigarettes and Planters peanuts, Robert E. Doyle Collection

At right: Will Evans circa 1926
—Courtesy of Susan E. Woods

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Painting With a Passion— Will Evans and the Navajo



A Farmington Museum Exhibit
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Farmington, New Mexico



Tray
–Robert E. Doyle Collection

Appreciations

The Farmington Museum had previously mounted an exhibit of Will Evans' work in the late 1980s and has collected pieces Will painted. This catalog and exhibit, though, would not have come about without the impetus from Robert Doyle, an avid collector of Will Evans' work, and support from the Margaret Kelly Fund.

The exhibit and catalog would never have the breadth and depth concerning Will Evans' life without the enthusiastic and gracious support of Will Evans' descendants. Foremost, Susan Evans Woods of Provo, Utah, has opened her life to this project, spending hours on the telephone and generously sharing information from her vast files. Susan has edited Will Evans' *Navajo Trails* for publication, which will be a rich companion to this catalog when published. For research in Provo and Salt Lake, Susan, her husband Bob, and son McKay served as extremely hospitable hosts, providing the kind of friendship that will last for years. Other family members have also provided delightful in-person contacts, including Allan L. and Pam Evans Whitmer, Alene Evans King, Beth Burt Evans, Annette Evans Tagg, Ralph W. and Emma Blair Evans, John and Marilyn Jones Golden, and Richard J. Austin.

Other family members have graciously shared recollections and information over the telephone, including Robert B. Evans, David Bruce Evans, Lueen Evans Gardner, Blair Evans, Kenneth Jones, Richard B. Evans, and Florence Walker Cuff.



Pepsi-Cola sign
–Robert E. Doyle Collection



Decanter
—Robert E. Doyle Collection

Numerous others deserve many thanks for this project. In examining materials that replicate sand paintings, the museum has benefited greatly from insights and generous assistance from Herbert Benally of Diné College at Shiprock, and his numerous contacts on behalf of the museum, including his three brothers, Little John Benally, Sam Benally, and Tully Benally. Other contacts pertaining to the Navajo context of these materials have included Bill Hatch, Shirley Lowe, DeWayne Johnson, Esther Cambridge, Ambrose Teasyatwho, Avery Denny, and Timothy Benally. Thanks also go to Cheri Doyle of the Wheelwright Museum, Cynthia Graves of ArtServices, Inc., Mimi Roberts of TREX, Harvard Heath of Brigham Young University, Jack Loeffler, Stuart Hatch, Cassie Dallas, Jim White, Suzy Hastings, and Chester Myers.

The Farmington Museum staff has often responded to my questions and concerns for an exhibit months down the road, when more pressing matters also sat on their desks. Many thanks to Julie Platt Feldman, Bart Wilsey, Dave Meyers, Catherine Davis, Kandy LeMoine, Andrea Logan, Rolanda Jim, Nick Kendziorski, and Hulan Crawford.

Finally, my appreciation to my husband Dave and daughter Marissa, who have had wonderful bonding time while Mommy obsessed. Many thanks.

Liesl Dees
Exhibit Curator

Introduction

Will Evans' painted materials often invoke a variety of reactions—curiosity, bewilderment, delight, and even disapproval—for Will has used images of Navajo sacred beings and painted a wide variety of surfaces—from trays and bottles to his garage door and the interior of a Farmington theater. A trader with the Navajo from the 1890s to the 1940s, Will spent years learning from the Navajo. Their language, customs, and ceremonies became the study of his life. This non-Navajo—this *bilagáana*—amassed a tremendous knowledge about the Navajo during his 77 years. His passion to paint Navajo images stemmed from his strong connections to Navajo life and deep interest in their culture.

In presenting the work of Will Evans, the Farmington Museum has chosen to focus on the man himself and his rich world of cultural interactions. Other publications focus on the stories behind the images and the sacred aspects of Navajo images; this is the story of how one particular trader became drawn into the world of those stories and created his own legacy of artistry. Will painted images from numerous ceremonies, including Blessing Way, Beauty Way, and Life Way. He included numerous figures from those ceremonies, including storm gods, wind gods, rainbow gods, and sun symbols, which he sketched and recorded at the invitation of Navajo friends who frequented the trading posts.

The extent of Will Evans' work may never be truly known, for it appears he painted everything he could get his hands on or was given permission to paint.

Grandchildren, for example, recall that even their purchased turtles from the Woolworth's store were touched up with a Navajo motif. As one of his grandchildren quipped, "The only thing he didn't paint was Grandma."¹ The story of Will's artistic passion and his great drive to paint hinges upon his 50-year relationship with the Navajo. He was not only a trader supplying food and dry goods; Will Evans was an interested, empathetic recorder.

“The only thing he didn't paint was Grandma.”



Gourd and tin
—Robert E. Doyle Collection

Even live turtles got a touch up with a Navajo motif.



Will at work on a tray in his “den” area at Shiprock Trading Company. The three-panel screen in the background appears later in this catalog. Will’s interest in the archaeology of the area is evident in the arrowhead collection behind the screen.

—Courtesy of Susan E. Woods.

Will Evans

The Navajo often refer to people by names which relate to distinctive physical characteristics, and Will Evans had two such two names—*Yishch’ ilí*, or “Curly Head,” and *’Awóshk’al*, or “Missing Tooth in Front”. Will’s more common name, and the one by which his descendants and store are still known to many Navajo, was the second name, *’Awóshk’al*. The impetus for this name came from Will’s childhood when he received a boyhood beating from neighborhood urchins near his home in Wales. Another boy’s hobnailed boot connected with Will’s mouth and dislodged his tooth, thus laying the ground for the name he would carry for years to come.

Born in Pontypridd, Wales in 1877, Will Evans entered a hard-working coal mining family. His paternal grandfather William Evans died as a result of a mining accident, and his maternal grandfather John Coles and father Thomas Evans also labored in the mines.

As a baby in Wales, Will was taken with his parents to a Methodist revival meeting, but loud prayer set young Will to screaming. His mother, Jane Ann, went to leave but found the door locked, and vowed never to return to such a meeting. When Thomas told his mining partner the next day about the event, the miner invited the Evans to a meeting of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By 1885, the Evans, including Will, were baptized into this church—a decision that led them away from Wales, as they experienced taunting and incidents such as the beating which cost Will his tooth. The family began saving their money, including the

“The Navajo knew Will by two names—*Yishch’ ilí* or ‘Curly Head,’ and more frequently, *’Awóshk’al*, or ‘Missing Tooth in Front.’”



Painting of the “Argosy,” Will painted several non-Navajo works, including this ship with its name stemming from the classical story of Jason and the Argonauts. Will’s boyhood in Wales gave him a lasting love of boats, as he recalled as an adult that “I do still remember the thrill I got in the morning by seeing the tops of the masts of a fishing fleet, above the tops of the houses. . . . I have ridden on thousands of miles of ocean since then, but I have never lost the magic of the moment or that seacoast town.”

— Robert E. Doyle Collection

Top: Will, in his early years, building Asa Hatch's home in Fruitland, New Mexico, with Joe Hatch Sr. and Lude Kirk Hatch. Will's construction experience in the 1890s led into his trading post work in 1898.



Bottom: Will Evans (on right) rests his foot on a bag of wool at the C.H. Algert Trading Company in Fruitland around 1908. These bags were a common sight at trading posts and an important part of the trading system, as Navajos sold the wool from their sheep herds, and traders stuffed the wool into large burlap bags. An unidentified companion rests on the bags.



—Courtesy of Susan E. Woods

wages Will earned as a young miner's helper, to immigrate to the United States where they planned to join other church members in Utah. During his childhood in Wales, Will received two or three years of classroom work—all of the formal schooling he would ever have.²

The Evans family, including 15-year old Will, boarded the ship Wyoming in 1892. After passing through Ellis Island in New York, they rode the train to Salt Lake City, where Will's father Thomas found little work. As others learned of Thomas's previous occupation, the Evans learned of coal in the San Juan River valley, and they set out for Fruitland, New Mexico in 1893. Will initially worked as a miner's helper to his father at the Stevens Mine, but he did not care for life in the mines and soon looked for other employment. He found farming jobs in the summer and construction employment on a brick house for Brigham Young, Jr. in Fruitland. His fellow laborers included Navajos from across the San Juan River, and thus began Will's life-long interest in the Navajo people.³

In 1898, Will was given the opportunity to experience Navajo life on the reservation. Because of his construction skills, he joined Joe Wilkins and Ed Dustin on a trip to the Sanostee Valley south of Shiprock, where Joe had a permit to open a trading post. Having left Fruitland on December 7, the three men quickly built a temporary building and stocked it with groceries and dry goods. The Little Water Trading Post opened just as a winter storm intensified. The other two men headed back to the San Juan Valley to obtain supplies, and Will stayed behind to begin his career trading with the Navajo. Will spent a long and lonely winter on the reservation before the other two men returned in March with supplies. He passed the time with activities that became staples in his life for years to come. He learned about the

His fellow laborers included Navajos from across the San Juan River, and thus began Will's life-long interest in the Navajo people.



Will, his son Ralph, and wife Sarah pose for a more formal portrait in the months after Ralph's birth in 1903. The family lived in Fruitland at this time, and Will worked a variety of jobs.
—Courtesy of Susan E. Woods



Elder Will Evans, a long way from the world of the Navajo, was photographed in 1910 while serving as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Portland, Maine.
—Courtesy of Susan E. Woods

At right: Sucrets tin
—Robert E. Doyle Collection

Navajo way of life, sketched on the store’s interior, and spent hours writing what he termed “ditties and odes and short stories that had no merit but helped to pass away the time.”⁴

During Will’s years in the Sanostee Valley, he witnessed his first Navajo ceremony involving a sand painting—an experience that profoundly affected his life. ‘Atsidii Nez, or Tall Blacksmith, a customer at Joe Wilkins’ Trading Post, was injured by a runaway horse team and wagon during the spring of 1900. Will was invited to the healing ceremony, so he locked up the store and hiked off to Nez’s hogan. Will later remembered

“What interested me most was the large, strange, and to me, beautiful figure which was being spread upon the floor of the Hogan. The picture—and I shall call it just that—was a single figure about 7 feet long, a long narrow body, arms outstretched and with all the ornaments and embellishments with which a Sandpainting is decorated. The ‘painters,’ or strewers of the colored sands, were finishing up the job as I entered. To say that I was astounded with the artistry of the thing is putting it mildly. I was immediately carried away to a land of enchantment. And figuratively speaking, I have been there ever since. From that day on I have been a sandpainting ‘fan.’”⁵

Over the next few years, Will transported materials for several trading posts and on a freighting trip to Snowflake and Taylor, Arizona he met Sarah Luella Walker. Will and Sarah married in 1902 and settled in Fruitland.⁶ During these early years, Will helped to build a trading post at Two Grey Hills and a school at Tohatchi.⁷ A son, Ralph William Evans, was born in 1903 followed by a daughter Gwendolin in 1908. Will ran the post office in Fruitland from 1904 to 1909 and edited a short-lived newspaper, the *Fruitland Tribune* in 1906.⁸ Will filled in at various trading posts, including stints at both Sanostee and Two Grey Hills in 1907.⁹ He worked for C.H. Algert Trading Company in Fruitland as a clerk before he left in 1909 for New England to serve a mission for the Church of Jesus



Christ of Latter-day Saints. In his absence, his wife Sarah took over the duties of the post office.¹⁰ Two years later, Will returned to Fruitland and, from 1911 to 1917, he kept books for the C.H. Algert Trading Company, which became Progressive Mercantile.¹¹

In 1917, Will purchased the Shiprock Trading Company and moved his family to the small reservation community. The family now included two more children, Richard Perry, born in 1914, and David Joseph, born in 1915.¹² At the time, the trading post stood across a wash, about 125 yards southeast of its present location; a new road caused Will to apply for a license to open the store along the thoroughfare around 1925 and they abandoned the previous site.¹³

As a trader, Will had an interest in encouraging Navajo weavers to develop rugs and blankets that would sell. In his early years at Shiprock, Will encouraged



Top: Will Evans at trading post in Fruitland, New Mexico, circa 1907.
—Robert E. Doyle Collection



Bottom: Will’s Shiprock Trading Company, built in the 1920s, wears his signature design on its exterior
—Photograph by Richard P. Evans, courtesy of Susan E. Woods

“To say that I was astounded with the artistry of the thing is putting it mildly.”

—Will Evans at his first sand painting viewing



Will painted a series of non-Navajo subjects in black, white, and gray.
—Robert E. Doyle Collection

weavers to incorporate sacred figures into their work, popularizing a style of rug often identified with the Shiprock region. Not all Navajos and non-Navajos in the area favored the use of sacred images in this way.¹⁴ Will himself wrote about weavers who sought the protection and blessings from family medicine men to avert the risks of weaving blankets and rugs with sacred figures.¹⁵

These early years in Shiprock were a time of exploration for Will and for his family. Will's son Ralph recollected infrequent trips back to Fruitland but more time with the Navajos, attending ceremonies and squaw dances, watching pony races, and hunting for jackrabbits.¹⁶ Will's daughter Gwen wrote of her father's love for the mountains, enjoyment in wild flowers, and abilities as a camp cook.¹⁷ Will was known for making a slumgullion stew with canned tomatoes, corn, green beans, and corned beef—or whatever else happened to be on the shelf at the time. In the late 1920s, Will traveled quite often to Aztec, Farmington, and Santa Fe to fulfill his responsibilities in the New Mexico State Legislature as a Republican representative from 1929 to 1930. He served on Agriculture, Education, Judiciary, and Mines Committees, which reflected both his regional and personal interests.¹⁸

During these years, Will spent hours learning about Navajo tradition from the Navajo singers, or medicine men. In his own writings, Will recorded the names of some of these men, such as Tłizíí ání Láńí (Many Goats) of Toadlena, Hastiin

Tó Nílchxon (Smelly Water) of Sanostee, and Hataakii Nez (Tall Singer) of Teec Nos Pos.¹⁹ According to his son Richard, other teachers included Doctor John of the Sanostee area and Hastiin Chxóǫ́ (Ugly Man) the Rainmaker from around Two Grey Hills. From the Tocito area, Will learned from Bezhoshie and his son, Hataakii Yazzie (Little Singer). Hastiin Setah (Among Rocks) of Red Rock shared stories with Will, as did Hastiin Klah (Left-handed Man) from Newcomb and Costiano of the Hogback area. In the Shiprock area, Will learned from Siláo Ts'óózí (Slim Policeman), Sandoval, and Neeshk'ahí-N-Begay (Son of the Fat One).²⁰ Will also heard many stories from his friend and Navajo co-worker, Dan Pete, who worked with him at the trading posts in Sanostee and Shiprock and who served as an apprentice medicine man.²¹

As Will witnessed changes occurring among the Navajo in these years, he saw his own role as one of cultural preservation. He recounted that an elderly medicine man told him,

“I know this history as it was taught me by my father, who in turn was taught it by his father, and so on back for generations. I am getting old and will soon return to the Land Beneath. All the old-time Hastoi are gradually passing away. And because the government is sending our children to school they are not acquiring the knowledge of their forefathers and our legends will soon be lost. I want to give the stories to you so they can be written down and kept for our children, as well as their children, who will learn to read and write and thus get these stories in that way.”²²

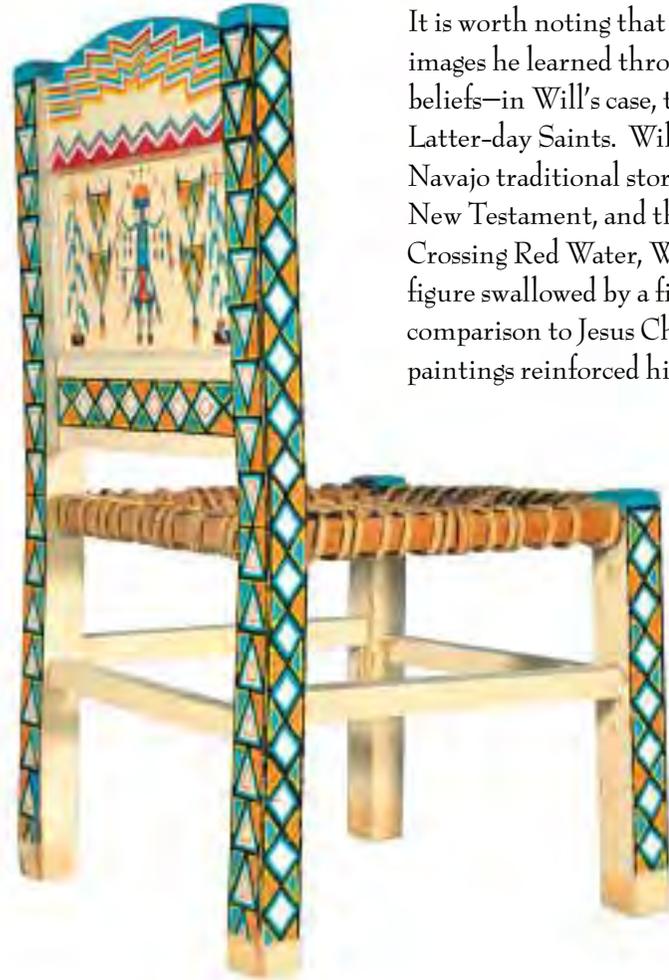
Bucket with “Hogan Gho” scene, This signature Will Evans' design appears repeatedly in his work—on trays, buckets, pictures, and cards to the grandchildren. “Góó,” which Will spelled “Gho,” as he wrote in a time before standardization of written Navajo, in this context means to or toward—“to the Navajo home.”
—Robert E. Doyle Collection.



In his relationships with his Navajo friends, Will experienced a level of trust with the *hastói* who shared their stories and symbols with him. He, in turn, learned stories of the past intended for his ears only, which he never revealed.²³ In addition to sharing serious materials, Will also loved to joke with fun-loving Navajo. For example, Will claimed that owls had foretold the natural phenomena of an eclipse to him, when he had actually read of the event in the newspaper.²⁴

It is worth noting that Will, as all humans do, understood the stories and images he learned through the lenses of his own value system and beliefs—in Will’s case, through the beliefs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Will wrote about the connections he saw between Navajo traditional stories related to sand paintings and the Old Testament, New Testament, and the Book of Mormon. In the Navajo story of Crossing Red Water, Will saw parallels to Moses crossing the Red Sea; a figure swallowed by a fish was similar to Jonah; raising the dead brought comparison to Jesus Christ and to Nephi. For Will, the stories of the sand paintings reinforced his own religious faith.²⁵

In addition to a written tradition, Will recorded Navajo visual images. He attended numerous ceremonies and was allowed to make sketches of the sand paintings—images which are generally not recorded by Navajos. These religious symbols are considered sacred and powerful and are to be viewed only by those initiated into the ceremony. Will compiled a “library” of at least 60 images, which he kept in the kiva room of Shiprock Trading Company. A 1930 Farmington newspaper article also credited Mr. Slim Jones with work on Will’s kiva room, or “den,” calling it “a very striking room, perhaps the most unique in the Indian country.”²⁶ Due to their powerful and sacred nature, these sand painting images have not been reproduced as a part of this catalog.



Chair
—Courtesy of Richard J. Austin

Many of these images are today in the Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections of Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.

In the late 1930s, Will observed difficult economic times for the Navajo, due in part to sheep reduction programs introduced by the federal government. Will suggested a plan for economic development in which the Navajo could build and decorate furniture as a local craft—an idea that, by this time, Will was already implementing himself.²⁷

Visual images from the sand paintings that Will had recorded were incorporated into his own artistic endeavors. He designed and built simple furniture pieces, such as tables and frames, which he painted with Navajo designs. He also painted existing items, like bottles, trays, and metal cans, using Peerless 4 Hour Enamel paint, a brush, cardboard templates, and a steady hand. A niece, Florence Walker Cuff, remembered that “someone was always being surprised at what turned up newly painted after a few days absence, the mantel clock for instance.”²⁸

By the late 1930s, Will had painted the exterior of his Shiprock Trading Company with geometric designs and ceremonial figures. In 1941, Will painted the interior of a Farmington business—the bar room of Harry’s Place, a downtown Farmington eatery. Harry Allen had Will decorate the bar’s interior with sand painting figures, and Will also painted two of Harry’s tanned deer hides.²⁹

The early 1940s were difficult times for Will at the trading post. For years, his children, Ralph, Gwen, Richard, and Dave, operated the post on a daily basis while Will made frequent trips away from the store, leaving for a ceremony in the time that it took to get his hat. Now, the children had dispersed or were unable to assist to the same degree, and Will was left with day-to-day operations. Rationing due to

Visual images from the sand paintings that Will had recorded were incorporated into his own artistic endeavors.



Bottle,
—Robert E. Doyle Collection



Pepsi-Cola sign. The original sign likely came from Shiprock Trading Company, as Pepsi distributors frequently left these types of materials at trading posts. —Robert E. Doyle Collection

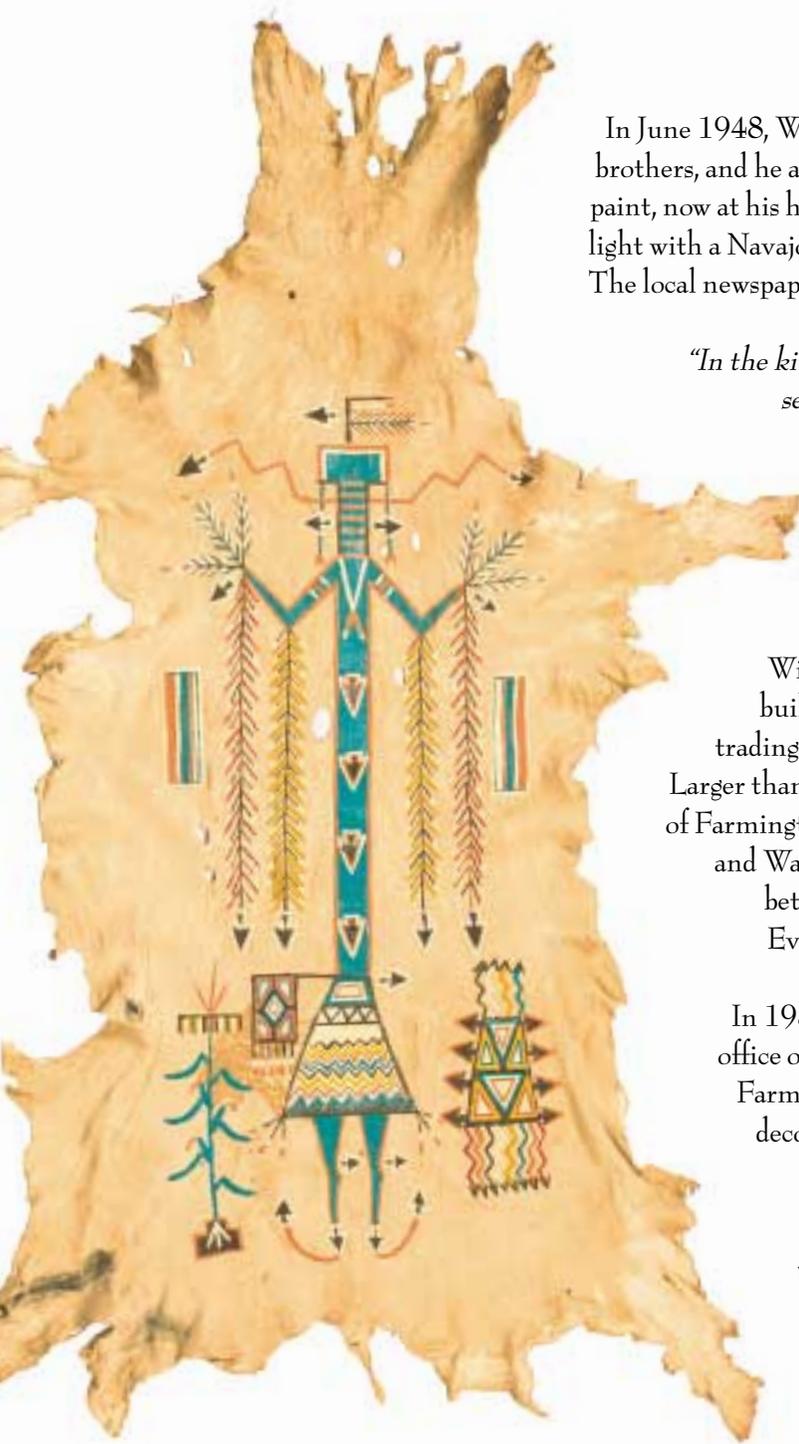
World War II and the tail end of economic hard times from the 1930s left the store short of funds. In 1943, Will wrote to his son Dave who was serving a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Hawaii, explaining that he had sold \$160 dollars worth of pieces which he had painted—funds which allowed his wife Sarah to have dental work and helped Dave with expenses on his mission.³⁰ Will was active in the 1940s in his church’s missionary efforts among the Navajo. His daughter-in-law Beth Burt Evans remembers that he used his knowledge of Navajo ceremonies to explain the connections he saw between Navajo tradition and Mormon faith, drawing figures from sand paintings in the dirt floors of Navajo hogans he visited.³¹

Throughout his lifetime, Will cultivated other creative endeavors, including music and writing. As an accomplished violinist, he was the lone non-Navajo in an orchestra at Shiprock with Jacob Morgan, who was later Navajo Tribal Chairman. Will’s abilities ranged from fiddling tunes for local square dances to classical music and sacred songs, such as *O Lord Most Holy* and *Living for Jesus*.³² He frequently led singing, with a rich tenor voice. In 1924, he began writing essays he called “Navajo Trails,” which commenced publication in the *Farmington Times-Hustler* newspaper in 1928 and continued until his death in 1954.³³ Will wrote and published numerous journal articles and he intended to publish a book on sand painting illustrated with his drawings.

“Someone was always being surprised at what turned up newly painted after a few days absence, the mantel clock for instance.”



Kitchen cabinet. Will often constructed simple furniture himself, but he was certainly ready to paint ready-made pieces such as this cabinet when given the permission. His son Dave recalled, “He would have painted the piano if mother would have let him.” —Robert E. Doyle Collection



In June 1948, Will sold Shiprock Trading Company to the Jack brothers, and he and Sarah moved into Farmington.³⁴ He continued to paint, now at his house on Behrend Avenue, ornamenting the porch light with a Navajo figure and the garage door with a large sun symbol. The local newspaper reported a visit to the Evans' home stating

*"In the kitchen there is one chest of drawers painted only a severe, plain white. When Will Evans was asked why there were no figures on it, his wife answered the question before Will could get his mouth open. 'Will Evans,' she said, 'you just leave that alone—there's going to be one thing here that doesn't have Indians all over it.'"*³⁵

Will painted a number of other large-scale murals and building exteriors, including ceremonial figures on the trading posts at Hogback, Waterflow, and Mancos Creek.³⁶ Larger than life figures from Will's brush enlivened the interior of Farmington's Totah Theater. The Avery Hotel in Farmington and Walter Stallings' filling station, located on the highway between Farmington and Bloomfield, also sported Will Evans' trademark designs.³⁷

In 1952, the voters of Farmington elected Will Evans to the office of City Police Judge for a two-year term on the Greater Farmington ticket, and, in true Will Evans' fashion, he decorated the interior of his office at the police station.³⁸

Will painted two deerskins, including this piece, owned by Harry Allen of Farmington. A Farmington Times-Hustler article from April 25, 1941 also reported that Will painted the interior of the bar room at Allen's downtown establishment, Harry's Place.
—Robert E. Doyle Collection

Top right: Many Farmington residents remember Will's murals in Farmington's Totah Theater, with Will's lamps flanking the Storm God figure.
—Courtesy of Susan E. Woods

Bottom right: Will painted several trading post exteriors, including these figures on Eddy Lake's trading post at Waterflow, which according to his wife Sarah's journal, he painted in June of 1949.
—Farmington Museum Collection, gift of Farmington Museum Foundation

Bottom: Will often constructed simple furniture, such as this lamp. Granddaughter Marilyn Golden recalls that in Will's later years, Wallace Furniture in Farmington would call when they received a new shipment of lampshades.
—Robert E. Doyle Collection





As Police Judge, Evans emphasized fair treatment for all races, and, drawing on his experiences as a trader, allowed Navajos to use jewelry as security against fines assessed in court.³⁹ In his “Navajo Trails,” published in the Farmington newspaper, Will once expressed his strong belief that “It seems to me that Navajos should be treated as human beings no matter what the issue may be. What is ‘sass’ for the white man should be ‘sass’ for the Navajo.”⁴⁰

His wife Sarah’s journal records that Will occasionally sold his hand-painted pieces, but the vast majority of his work was given away to friends and relatives. As Will’s health began to fail, one of Sarah’s journal entries commented that “Will had a very dizzy spell pass over him, his head fell against a jar he was painting and the brush fell from his hand.” Will ran for Police Judge a second time in 1954 but this time lost the race, and his health continued to fail. Will Evans died on December 6, 1954.⁴¹

Most of the buildings which Will painted have been torn down or changed; the exteriors of the trading posts at Hogback and Waterflow still remain, although they have fallen into disrepair. The painted items Will gave as Christmas or anniversary gifts continue to surface in the homes of his family and friends. Will’s friend and Farmington newspaper man Orval Ricketts summed up Will’s work when he wrote

*“Happy indeed is that man who has successfully adjusted his vocation to his avocation. In Will Evans, Indian trader and scholar and artist, too, I see one who has nicely combined his talents as merchant with his ability to portray in story and picture the lore of the Navajo Indians.”*⁴²



Top: Card table –Robert E. Doyle Collection
 Bottom: Table –Farmington Museum Collection, gift of Charles Dustin
 Right: Coaster –Robert E. Doyle Collection



Will painting a table using his usual “Peerless 4 Hour Enamel.” When this photograph ran in the *Farmington Daily Times* on October 11, 1952, Will wrote a caption for this image, stating “said Mrs. Evans one day ‘If you would care to do it I would like to have you paint the dining room table top.’ No sooner said than accepted. What could be more appropriate on a dining room table than the *Gods of the Harvest?*”

–Farmington Museum Collection, gift of Charles Dustin.





Originally these pieces attached as a tri-fold screen. The three panels on the right comprise the screen's front; the other two back panels are similar to the panel at left.
—Robert E. Doyle Collection.



Lamp with a two-gallon whiskey bottle base, notably stamped "For Display Purposes Only,"

Right: Coaster

Far right: Template image.

—Robert E. Doyle Collection

Footnotes

- ¹ Annette Evans Tagg and Lueen Evans Gardner, telephone conversations with the author, 28 January 2001; Alene Evans King, interview with the author, 29 April 2001.
- ² Richard P. Evans, Manuscript, "My Father, William Evans," pp. 5-12, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ³ Draft, *Navajo Trails*, edited by Susan Evans Woods, pp. 8-12.
- ⁴ Draft, *Navajo Trails*, pp. 21-31; Will Evans, "Autobiographical Information Data given to John MacClary," 25 September 1937, p. 3, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ⁵ Will Evans, "The Origin of Navajo Sandpainting," *New Mexico Folklore Record*, Volume IX, 1954-1955, p.4; Draft, *Navajo Trails*, p. 76; Will Evans, Lecture, "Sand Paintings. Nature and Origin Of. A Talk. Before the San Juan Archaeological Society," Farmington, New Mexico, 12 December 1938, p. 3, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ⁶ Will Evans, "Autobiographical Information Data given to John MacClary," p. 5.
- ⁷ Ralph William Evans, *Life History of Ralph William Evans*, Salt Lake City, 1979, p. 25.
- ⁸ Sarah Walker Evans, Reminiscences, 23-24 April 1951, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Post Office database information, courtesy of Jim White; Ralph William Evans, p. 36.
- ⁹ Frank Leland Noel and Mary Eliza Roberts Noel, Manuscript, "Eighty Years in America," compiled by Jennie Noel Weeks, 1962, p. 81; Correspondence, Will Evans to Sarah Evans, 24 June 1907, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ¹⁰ Sarah Walker Evans, Reminiscences; Post Office database information, courtesy of Jim White.
- ¹¹ Richard Evans, in *Our Valley*, compiled by Rosetta Biggs, Mesa, Arizona: Biggs, 1978, p. 41; Laurance D. Linford, *Navajo Places: History, Legend, Landscape*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000, p. 171.
- ¹² Ralph William Evans, p. 2.
- ¹³ David Joseph Evans, *Life History of David Joseph Evans*, Farmington, March 1999, p. 14; Manuscript, "Indian Country/Family History Tour. Evans Family Reunion, Cortez," 1984, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ¹⁴ Nancy J. Parezo, *Navajo Sandpainting: From Religious Act to Commercial Art*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991, pp. 44-45.
- ¹⁵ Draft, *Navajo Trails*, pp. 194-196.
- ¹⁶ Ralph William Evans, p. 46.
- ¹⁷ Gwen Evans Jones, Miscellaneous Material in the Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ¹⁸ Records of the State of New Mexico, Library Legislative Council Service; information from the *New Mexico Blue Book, or State Official Register, 1929-30*.
- ¹⁹ Draft, *Navajo Trails*, p. 74.
- ²⁰ Richard P. Evans, Manuscript, Forward to "Navajo Indian Traditions Compared with Ancient and Modern Scripture," Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.



- ²¹ Draft, *Navajo Trails*, pp. 81-82.
- ²² Draft, *Navajo Trails*, pp. 286-287.
- ²³ Draft, *Navajo Trails*, p. 182.
- ²⁴ Draft, *Navajo Trails*, pp. 347-348.
- ²⁵ Will Evans, Lecture, "Sand Paintings. Nature and Origin Of. A Talk. Before the San Juan Archaeological Society." pp. 9-10; Will Evans, "A Talk. On Book of Mormon Evidences. Given Before the M.I.A. Kirtland, New Mexico," 3 January 1939, pp. 7-9, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ²⁶ *Farmington Times-Hustler*, 11 July 1930.
- ²⁷ Beth Burt married Will's son Richard in 1940, and Beth Burt Evans remembers that, by that time, Will's painted furniture enlivened the family's living area at the trading post. Beth Burt Evans, interview with the author, 29 April 2001; Correspondence, Will Evans to M.K. Sniffen, 31 October 1938, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Draft, *Navajo Trails*, pp. 448-449.
- ²⁸ Florence Walker Cuff, "Heaven with the Evans," March 1982, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ²⁹ *Farmington Times-Hustler*, 25 April 1941.
- ³⁰ Correspondence, Will Evans to David Evans, 25 September 1943, "Appendices to David J. Evans' Mission to Hawaii 1941-1943," compiled by Bruce Evans.
- ³¹ Correspondence, Will Evans to Levi Edgar Young, 29 December 1942, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; Beth Burt Evans, interview with the author, 29 April 2001.
- ³² Draft, *Navajo Trails*, pp. 105, 432; music in the Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ³³ Navajo Trails Manuscript, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ³⁴ Sarah Walker Evans, Journal, booklet 1, p. 3, compiled by Susan Evans Woods, 1997.
- ³⁵ *Farmington Daily Times*, 31 January 1952.
- ³⁶ *Farmington Daily Times*, 31 January 1982.
- ³⁷ Sarah Walker Evans, Journal, booklet 1, pp. 3, 7.
- ³⁸ *San Juan Valley Sun*, 29 May 1952.
- ³⁹ Undated article, "Navajos 'Pawn' Jewelry to Pay Fines," Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
- ⁴⁰ Draft, *Navajo Trails*, p. 110.
- ⁴¹ Sarah Walker Evans, Journal, booklet 1, p. 12; booklet 5, p. 16; booklet 6, p. 33; booklet 7, p. 4.
- ⁴² Orval Ricketts, "Will Evans, Merchant and Scholar," 1938, Will Evans Collection, housed in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.