

NAVAJO RUGS
Purchased by Frank Chester and Laura Louise Moore Hendee
in the 1940-1950s
by
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This account is for the Eagan family records and to keep with the rugs.

This box contains eight rugs. Seven are Navajo, and one looks like a different kind, possibly from Mexico. They were purchased by Linda's and my parents in the 1940s and 1950s. Linda recalled that one was given to Mother and Daddy as a wedding gift from our great grandfather, George Washington Seitz (Daddy's grandfather), but we don't know which one. I am sure Mother and Daddy kept several in use in our houses as we were growing up.

At some point, Mother divided the rugs between Linda and me. She had them appraised before sending them to us, and the appraisal tags may be on each rug.

Linda and Jim had a couple hanging in their dining nook for some years.

When I bought my house in Manteca in 1974, I changed one bedroom into a study, decorating it with family and other antiques. I have loved using it as such all these years.

I kept the smallest of the rugs in the entry to the study (picture below) and a larger one in the middle of the room (pictures below). I rotated this one periodically, having each cleaned and sealed and then choosing another from the collection I kept in the upper cupboard in this room.

When I had my latest rug taken out by Coit for cleaning and sealing, I brought all the rest down from the cupboard. The Coit man and I then agreed that the ones that had been previously sealed by the cleaners should be redone with the most up-to-date methods and materials that Coit now uses. So, I sent those six off with him for resealing at \$40 each. He admired them, saying that they were excellent rugs. He said when Coit seals several at a time, they take a picture to place on the outside, as you cannot tell which rug is inside. Two of the earlier-sealed ones did not receive this process, so I taped my own photos to the outside. Here is how they looked prior to shipping to Linda and Jim in September 2016.



I decided this summer to keep just the small eagle rug and one other (photos below) on the floor of my study the rest of my time in this house and to send the other 8 up to Linda and Jim to add to what they already have. They can figure out with their kids what to do with them. If it is ever decided to sell them, be sure to research for the best prices. There is a wide range.

Here are photos of the two I have down in the study as of September 2016:



close-up of rug below



"Ganado red" rug--online description below

Do read the first paragraph below---interesting.

The rug above is a "Ganado red" and includes the features discussed here. Ganado area rugs are known for their striking "Ganado red" color, usually contrasted with natural black, brown, white, and grey elements. Designs are traditionally a **single or double central diamond representing the weaver's home** and the **four sacred mountains portrayed in a triangular geometric in each of the four corners**. They also include a **large central, stepped diamond and many hooked filler motifs**.

For those interested in more details, here they are--all from online:

Ganado, Arizona is home to this Navajo weaving style. From the early 1900s, demand for Ganado-produced fine rugs and blankets has grown steadily and has become world-famous since Lorenzo Hubbell began fostering the art and marketplace at his trading post.

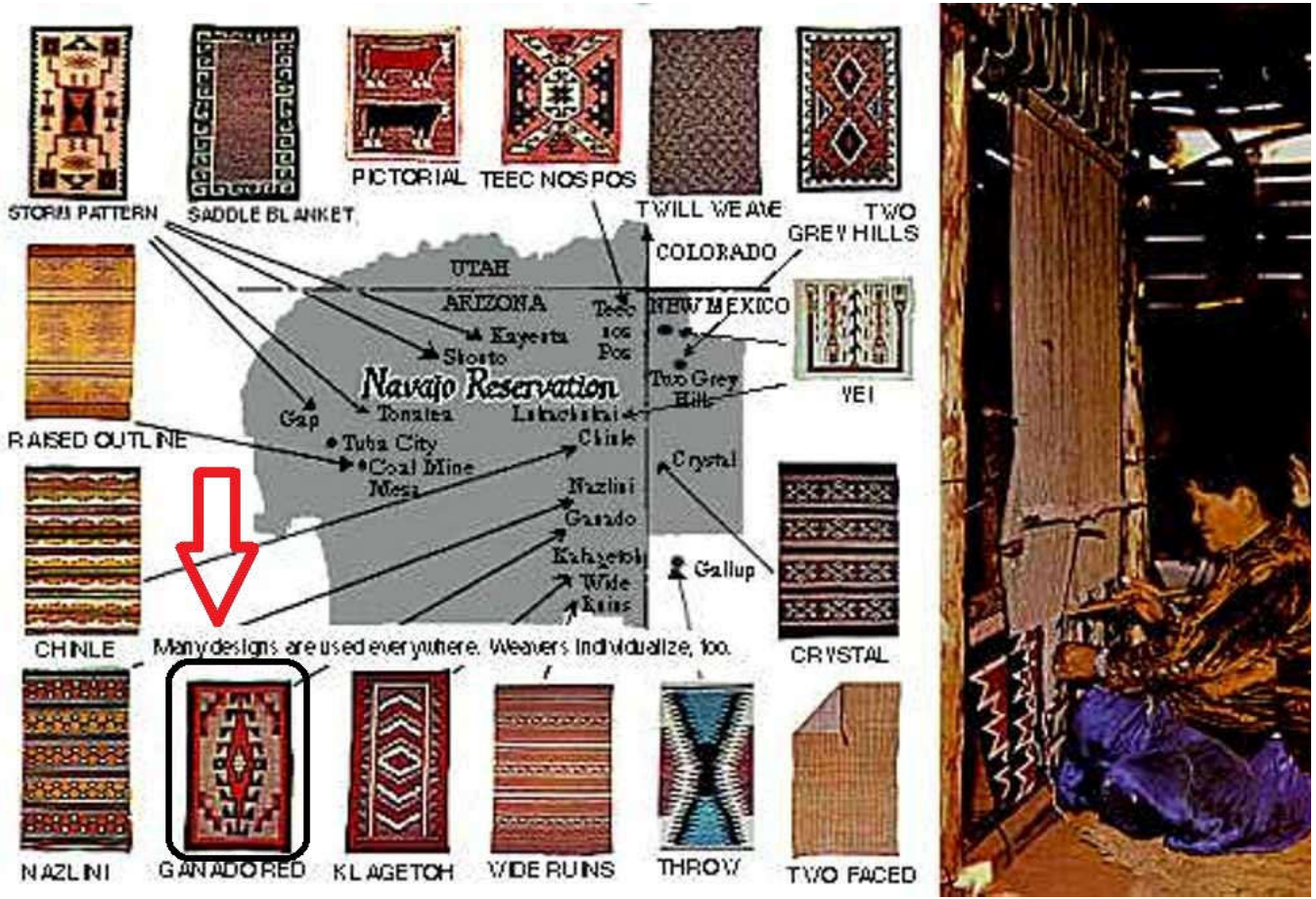
The community of Ganado has been home to Hubbell Trading Post since the 1870s. Trader J. L. Hubbell encouraged weavers to create rug styles that would sell to his clients. The Ganado Red style emerged from local weavers' creative responses to his suggestions.

Navajo Ganado rugs are probably best known for their bold "Ganado Red" color integrated into the Central Diamond and Four Sacred Mountain design introduced by traders to the Navajo at the turn of the 20th century. While there are many different colors of red used, the "Ganado Red" – a dark red that is almost a maroon – is recognized as traditional. J. L. Hubbell was a trader who played a significant role in saving the art of Navajo weaving. In the 1890s when inexpensive manufactured blankets from Hudson Bay, Pendleton, and others began to supplant the Navajo hand woven blanket, many traders began paying little for them. Some even paid for hand woven blankets by the pound! As a result, the Navajo began weaving to suit the price, creating thick, heavy, poorly woven blankets in simple designs with garish colors derived from the newly available chemical aniline dyes. Juan Lorenzo Hubbell remembered the excellent blankets of the past and knew the artistry of the Navajo weaver was at odds with the current economy. He encouraged his weavers by refusing to buy the poor quality blankets, while paying well for fine weavings. He commissioned water color paintings of the old Navajo blanket designs which he hung in his trading post to encourage his weavers to revive the excellent designs of the past. Many of these paintings can still be seen at the original trading post, now preserved and operated as a National Historic Site. While these designs were to Mr. Hubbell's taste, they did not appeal to the wider market and so he slowly gave over to a bordered design although still incorporating early design elements such as the "Spider Woman Cross" He did not like the bright chemical dyes and discouraged the use of most of the colors available except for the traditional indigo blue and the deep red that would later become known as "Ganado Red". When Mr. Hubbell passed away in the 1930s, the Navajo Ganado rug design gave over to the popular Oriental designs promoted by other traders at the time, but became unique in the Ganado red integrated with the natural blacks, browns, greys, and whites. Today's Navajo Ganado rug design is unmistakable. Similar colors and designs arose nearby the Hubbell Trading Post giving rise to the Navajo Klagetoh rug design as well as the lesser known Sunrise area design.

GERMANTOWN EYEDAZZLER (possibly rug on my floor below)

Brilliant color and bold overall patterns with serrated diamonds, chevrons, and interlocking lines are hallmarks of the "Eyedazzler" style of Navajo (Diné) textiles produced from the late-19th to the early-20th century. The lively approach of Eyedazzler weaving developed out of a period of major cultural and artistic transformation beginning in 1864 when the U.S. government forcefully resettled the Navajo in the Bosque Redondo reservation. From the early 1860s, the Navajo received brightly colored commercial yarns as part of their U.S. government annuities. The new Eyedazzler weaving also incorporated design elements characteristic of Mexican Saltillo blankets, which featured serrated diamonds and zigzag lines. The creator of this blanket fully utilized the intense color of commercially dyed yarns and the Saltillo style to create a spectacular work. Interlocking serrated undulating lines appear to vibrate over the entire surface. The vivid interplay of red and orange hues with brilliant blues, greens, yellow, white, and black produces an energetic, three-dimensional illusion

Obviously, much information on Navajo rugs can be found online. The variety of designs is endless. A "Ganado red" is identified below in this online picture.



the rug I had down prior to the Ganado red above

Perhaps it is the "Germantown Eyedazzler" style discussed above.



Here are two others, plus the one I have kept down in the entry of the study all my years in this house, since 1974. Pictures of the rest are on the outside wrapping of each.



The one above was cut in half, lengthwise, and sewn back together. I don't know why.



It would be fun to research the meaning of the designs on all the rugs. I hope they will be loved, used and preserved. They are special family heirlooms.