



Looting Spiro Mounds: An American King Tut's Tomb

David La Vere

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How an ancient North American civilization was plundered in the twentieth century

When a group of relic hunters drove their picks into a lost Indian burial crypt in eastern Oklahoma in 1935, they unearthed a vast treasure trove of Mississippian art—considered by many at the time to be America's answer to King Tut's Tomb. They also ignited a controversy that continues to have repercussions throughout archaeological and American Indian communities.

The Spiro Mounds contained some of the most impressive pre-Columbian Indian art ever found. In *Looting Spiro Mounds*, David La Vere takes readers behind the scenes of this discovery to re-create a Great Depression-era archaeological adventure worthy of Indiana Jones.

The looting of the mounds is considered one of the major archaeological tragedies of all time. Today Spiro artifacts are scattered among the world's museums, with some still circulating in the antiquities market and eagerly snatched up by collectors. La Vere weaves a compelling story of grave robbers and lost treasures as he pieces together the puzzle of the civilization that thrived at Spiro from A.D. 800 to 1450. He plumbs the mystery of why the people of Spiro abandoned the site, leaving behind their treasures but no forwarding address.

Looting Spiro Mounds explains what the continuing mystique of Spiro artifacts is all about as the book uncovers a controversy—and a mystery—that lives on to this day.

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