

EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTHWEST RETURNS WITH COLLECTIONS

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to the Southwest

From June to October this year, excavations on the Lowry ruin, begun in the summer of 1930, were continued. Probably the most interesting single fact ascertained this season was that the culture of the Lowry ruin is an offshoot of one known as that of Chaco Canyon. The locale of the parent culture is nearly 300 miles southeast of the Lowry ruin. Thus this extension northward and westward is greater than ever supposed.

The question may arise: How is it ascertained that the Lowry ruin is a Chaco Canyon type?

First, from the ground plan or layout of the village. The Lowry ruin belongs not to the cliff-house type, but rather to the mesa type; that is, it is built on a mesa top between two canyons. All the rooms are clustered about the central row of chambers. If this ruin were of the Mesa Verde type, which was to have been expected in this region, the living quarters would be grouped around numerous kivas.

Second, the style of architecture classifies it as of the Chaco Canyon type. The construction of the stone walls consists of tabular, well-cut slabs of sandstone, chinked with many sandstone spalls. The doors and ceilings, instead of being squat and low, as in the Mesa Verde type, are high, a distinctly Chaco feature.

Third, the pottery, although manifesting many local variations, comes nearer to Chaco than to any other group.

The beginnings of the Lowry pueblo were humble and unpretentious, but as the centuries passed the occupants conceived greater building plans. Thus it is that there are distinguishable five separate building periods and probably seven occupations. The final result was a terraced pueblo, in stages one, two, and three stories high, which contained approximately 80 rooms and was able to house 200 to 400 people.

What the reasons were for the various withdrawals is not clear. The time between each varied probably from 50 to 100 years. The Chaco people were ultimately driven out, and the rooms were reoccupied by Mesa Verde people, who made certain changes and additions. The earliest date is not at present known, but the middle period of the pueblo was probably somewhere between A.D. 800 and 1000.

The most startling discovery was that of mural decorations on the kiva walls. These paintings are well preserved and represent symbolical ideas of either the origin of man, or rain and lightning.

Most puzzling was the failure to find any burial grounds. In the centuries of occupation many people must have died; but where and how the dead were disposed of is still unknown. This is tantalizing, for it is from graves that archaeologists usually obtain the maximum information regarding the past history of any people. It is possible, though not probable,

that there is a burial ground undiscovered as yet; that cremation was practised and that the crematories are yet to be found; or that the dead were placed in crevices along the canyon rim, and that the rains which have fallen during the ten or more intervening centuries, have washed into the canyon and finally into the rivers all evidences of burials.

As a result of the expedition, which was financed from funds provided by Julius Rosenwald and the late Augusta N. Rosenwald, the Museum received 70 pieces of pottery; 400 potsherds, bone tools, and fragments of prayer sticks; 100 photographs; ink drawings of every potsherd; ground plans, cross sections, drawings of restorations, and 1,200 feet of motion picture film.

FOSSIL RHINOCEROS SKULL

A splendid skull of the great woolly rhinoceros, *Coelodonta antiquitatus*, has recently been received at the Museum from the Royal Museum of Brussels, Belgium, and has been placed on exhibition in Ernest R. Graham Hall (Hall 38).

The woolly rhinoceros was common in Europe and in Siberia as a member of the fauna of the third glacial period. It was related to the white rhinoceros of Africa and was of similar size. It is characterized by a thickening of the bones of the nose to support a long horn which was directed forward. A second lesser horn arose from the face closely behind the first. The body was covered with a heavy coat of woolly hair which enabled the animal to endure the extreme cold of the glacial period.

A remarkable specimen preserved at the Museum of Leningrad has the side of the face still covered with golden brown wool. These rhinoceroses became extinct before the close of the glacial period.

Selected examples of birds of Paradise, the most curiously and gorgeously plumaged group of birds from New Guinea, are on exhibition at the Museum.

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENTS —RAYMOND FOUNDATION

Five more free motion picture programs of the autumn series for children, provided by the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures, remain to be given on Saturday mornings during November and December.

Following is the schedule of the dates and the titles of the films to be shown on each:

- November 7**—Maizok of the South Seas
Magic Gems
- November 14**—The Eve of the Revolution*
A Trip to Banana Land
Unselfish Shells
- November 21**—The Declaration of Independence*
The Hamster Family
A Jungle Roundup
- November 28**—The Pilgrims*
Animals Prepare for Winter
Children of the Sun
- December 5**—Winter Birds
Snowflakes
Mr. Groundhog Wakes Up
Skating in the Spreewald

*Yale Chronicles. Gift of Mr. Chauncey Keep to the Museum

Each program is given twice, at 10 A.M. and at 11. Children from all parts of Chicago and suburbs are invited to attend.

BASKETRY MATERIALS EXHIBITED

An exhibit of the principal materials used in basket making has been added to the economic botany collections in Hall 28. In world importance, four materials stand out above all others, according to James B. McNair, Assistant Curator of Economic Botany. They are the willows and rattan, which furnish the most used materials in Europe and North America; mucroo, a material peculiar to South America; and bamboos, which are the most popular basket material of the Orient.

However, nearly all parts of native plants—roots, stems, bark, leaves, fruits, seeds and gums—have been used by North American Indians, and by the aborigines of other lands, in basket making, and a large collection of such materials is also included in the exhibit.

Photographs of African Plants

A collection of forty excellent photographs of remarkable plants of South Africa has been presented to Field Museum by Herbert Lang, who, with Arthur S. Vernay, led the Vernay-Lang Kalahari Expedition for the Museum.

The famous Natural Bridge of Virginia is represented by a faithful miniature model in the Department of Geology.

Mummies in the Egyptian hall (Hall J) range in date from about 2300 B.C. to A.D. 200.

EXCAVATIONS ON THE LOWRY RUIN IN COLORADO



View of kivas, one above the other, opened by Field Museum Archaeological Expedition to the Southwest. In the upper left corner of photograph are seen some of the symbolical mural paintings representing lightning. (See article in first column of this page.)



1931. "Basketry Materials Exhibited." *Field Museum news* 2(11), 3–3.

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