

ANCIENT COLORADO VILLAGE AND TEMPLE UNCOVERED

By PAUL S. MARTIN

Chief Curator, Department of Anthropology

The ruins of an Indian village more than a thousand years old, including the largest known Great Kiva, or temple built by prehistoric Americans, ever found, have been discovered and excavated by the Field Museum Archaeological Expedition to the Southwest during its 1938 season of operations.

The buried village, which centuries ago was inhabited by Indians of the "Basket Maker" culture, a people well advanced in the arts, architecture, and agriculture, was uncovered by the writer and his associates at a steep and picturesque point on the south rim of Cahone Canyon, a deep and rocky cut in a high plateau of southwestern Colorado.

At the base of the point the expedition first uncovered the remains of the Kiva, a great circular slab structure, 81 feet in diameter. This apparently was intended to accommodate the people in their religious ceremonies which, no doubt, formed a most important part of their lives. There are indications that it was originally a dance plaza, perhaps only partially roofed. All theories as to its use are necessarily conjectural, as no other structure quite like it is known. It is about two feet deep, and almost a perfect circle.

Near-by were found living quarters. These consisted of rows of masonry-walled rooms that commanded a wide sweep of the canyon, and of subterranean houses that had been laboriously hewn out of the rock. The larger and more spacious rooms contained hearths, and nooks for holding domestic necessities. They were the living rooms proper. Smaller adjacent chambers were used for storage of food and other supplies.

It was evident that one row of these rooms had been ravaged by fire—whether through accident or an attack by enemies is not known. Although the destruction must have been a catastrophe to the ancient Indians, it proved profitable to the Museum archaeologists to dig into the burned rooms, for there we have uncovered finely made pottery, bone implements for the dressing of hides and working of leather, stone axes and arrow points, bone and stone ornaments, and a quantity of charred corn and beans, all of which had been abandoned when the inhabitants scurried out for their lives. By archaeological methods it has been possible to establish that these buildings, and their contents, date from about the year A.D. 700. Every object that could possibly be helpful in reconstructing the daily life of the inhabitants of the village—who were probably the ancestors of modern Indian tribes—was carefully examined. Studying the common as well as the unusual material, the members of the expedition hope through continued work at this and other ancient sites to bring to light another chapter in the story of early man.

Eight years ago work was begun by the first Field Museum expedition into this region, which is in the Colorado drainage area of the San Juan, and on public land north of the Ute reservation. In succeeding years continued expeditions have excavated new sites, collected vast amounts of artifacts and data, and brought to light new and impressive evidence bearing upon hitherto complete mysteries as to the history of these people. The work of the successive expeditions is now co-ordinating into a coherent

story of the development of a single group of people—Indians whose ancestors are believed to have come from Asia at some remote time in the dim past, and who had settled down in the San Juan area about A.D. 500. Successive dates for the various prehistoric sites excavated by the expeditions are well defined. Wooden posts and roof beams from the ruins, cross-sectioned and compared with a master tree-ring chart, lead to the conclusion that these Indians were in this region for seven hundred years, from A.D. 500 to 1200. In successive periods their pottery making and wall construction show marked improvements in technique and artistry, and other signs point that their living conditions bettered and their society became more complex. Sometime after 1200 they migrated, presumably southward, and their descendants apparently are the modern Pueblo Indians.

THINGS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

A Nest of Fossil Dinosaur Eggs

The discovery of fossil eggs of dinosaurs in Mongolia a few years ago introduced new evidence as to the life and habits of these extinct reptiles. Fossil eggs of birds had been known from the Bad Lands of North America, and turtle eggs had been found



Eggs 80,000,000 Years Old

On exhibition in Ernest R. Graham Hall, these dinosaur eggs were found in Mongolia. Had they hatched, there would have emerged from them the saurians known by the name *Protoceratops*.

fossilized in various places, but the possibility of finding the eggs of these great extinct reptiles had remained a matter of speculation.

These dinosaur eggs were first encountered in a bright red sandstone ledge of Cretaceous age, designated as Flaming Cliffs. They lay in a group embedded in soft sandstone, partly washed out by surface water. Beside them were parts of a reptile skull, and elsewhere in the same formation were found skeletons of the small, hooded dinosaur known as *Protoceratops*. From this association of skeletons and eggs in the same rock formation, it is concluded that the eggs were laid by this dinosaur.

A nest of these eggs may be seen at the Museum, in Ernest R. Graham Hall (Hall 38). They are about four inches in length, and are stained a light reddish color. The exhibit shows them on a section of the sandstone in which they were found.

The material was collected by Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews, Director of the American Museum of Natural History, on an expedition in which Field Museum collaborated with the New York institution.—E.S.R.

Prehistoric gold ornaments from Colombia and Ecuador form an attractive exhibit in Stanley Field Hall.

SEWELL AVERY EXPEDITION TO BRITISH GUIANA

Bound for the jungle frontiers along the border between British Guiana and Brazil, Mr. Emmet R. Blake, Assistant Curator of Birds, sailed from New York on July 30, as leader of the Sewell Avery British Guiana Expedition of Field Museum. He hopes to collect a typical cross-section of the bird, mammal, and reptile life in the forests of this little known area of South America.

The expedition, as announced in the July FIELD MUSEUM NEWS, was originally scheduled to leave in September, but departure was advanced because of especially favorable conditions at this time.

The British Guiana boundary has recently been surveyed with the result that many areas may be reached at present which could not be reached a year hence because of the rapid growth of jungle vegetation. The section is practically unexplored zoologically, and it is possible that new species may be discovered by the expedition.

Mr. Blake's project involves exploration in a "lost world." The region is separated from the nearest human habitation by three hundred miles of almost impenetrable jungle. The only way to enter is by airplane and boat. It is possible to fly about two hundred miles inland in a seaplane to a certain pool in the Courantyne River which is the only suitable place for descending. From this point it is necessary to continue the journey on the river in native dugout canoes. This requires a voyage of more than three hundred miles on an extremely tortuous stream which has three major waterfalls around which portages must be made, and more than one hundred difficult rapids which must be skillfully navigated.

The region is especially interesting because, during its work of the past few years, the British Boundary Commission discovered a range of mountains hitherto unknown. These have an altitude of about five thousand feet. Consequently, without doubt the birds, mammals and reptiles of the region will show significant differences from those which were collected in the lowlands of British Guiana by Mr. Blake on his expedition last year.

The expedition personnel will include seventeen men—only one other white man besides Mr. Blake. The boats will be manned by a full crew of Bush Negroes. Mr. Blake will be assisted in collecting by an experienced East Indian collector, as well as native South American Indian hunters and guides. Because the party will be completely cut off from all other means of communication with the outside world, it will have a short-wave radio set and operator as a safety measure.

In January of the present year Mr. Blake returned to this country after an absence of a year during which he collected birds and other animals in the lowland sections of British Guiana as well as on the plains of Brazil. Mr. Blake has collected extensively for Field Museum and other institutions, having been a member of the National Geographic Society's Expedition to the Amazon, the Leon Mandel Orinoco and West Indies Expedition, the Leon Mandel Expedition to Guatemala, the Carnegie Museum Expedition to British Honduras, and the Stanley Field British Guiana and Brazilian Expedition.

The present expedition was made possible through the generosity of Mr. Sewell Avery, of Chicago, a Trustee of the Museum.

A model of a large Minnesota iron mine is exhibited in Hall 36.



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