

**COLLECTION:** El Palacio Collection

**CDI  
ACCESSION  
NUMBER:** 000868

**ERRATA:**

**COMMENTS:** Brief note about artifacts associated with the burial of two dogs uncovered by Frank H. H. Roberts from a Basketmaker site in Chaco Canyon. The site name is not given.

**CITATION:** 1927 Recent Finds in Chaco Canyon. El Palacio (23): 485-487.



thickness of the wall doubtless made it as safe as types 1,a and 1,b.

Types 3,b, c, and d are from pueblos in the Chaco Canyon group of New Mexico. All three types may be found in the walls of one pueblo or in different sections of the same wall.

In each of these twelve varieties of construction, the builders have simply taken the best materials at hand, and with the possible exception of 3a, have used them to the greatest advantage. Little progress could be made with such poor material as unworkable boulders of granite, nor with stone which broke into the roughest of rubble. The greatest development in masonry is found in those regions where stratified sandstone could be worked into rectangular blocks, and the highest achievement was reached in the Chaco Canyon and at the Mesa Verde where a great variety of sandstone was used with remarkable skill and understanding. There, in their choice and combination of different types of material, these ancient builders produced walls whose structural details had developed from mere utility into an art. Not content with the natural quarry face of well laid sandstone, they had made great progress in hewing, pecking and grinding, so that the corners of buildings and the jambs of doorways were finished with great precision. The beginnings of architectural ornament are also found in this area, where the smoothed surfaces of building stones have been embellished with geometric symbols, cut with stone tools.

Throughout the Southwest, we find certain defects in wall construction that have persisted in the evolution of this architecture. For instance, cross walls were built between the long walls of communal buildings without bonding the two, and, as has been shown, there was no

system of breaking joints in wall construction. The principle of the arch was unknown, and wooden lintels were commonly used to support the great weight of stone walls above doors and windows.

Most of the ancient pueblos of the cruder types of masonry have been reduced to mere mounds in the many centuries since their abandonment. When excavated their walls are seldom found standing to the height of five or six feet. Once deprived of the protection and support of the earth about them, they deteriorate rapidly from the action of wind and the infrequent but often heavy rains of the region and soon collapse. The preservation of such walls after excavation is one of the most serious problems of the archaeologist.

In striking contrast with these inferior types are the finer masonry walls of the Mesa Verde, the Chaco Canyon, and other groups within the San Juan area. In spite of defects in engineering, and the use of mud mortar, the many notable examples of Pueblo masonry in this region have withstood the action of the elements for more than five centuries, until now, protected from vandalism by our National government, they bid fair to stand for centuries to come, as enduring monuments to our country's first architects.

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## IN THE FIELD

### RECENT FINDS IN CHACO CANYON

The discovery of two deerbones painted red is a bit of evidence that Indians who lived in America 2,500 years ago placed food in the graves of pet dogs so that they would have bones for their journey in the next world. The deerbones were found beside the skeletons of two

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PAUL A. F. WALTER, Editor.

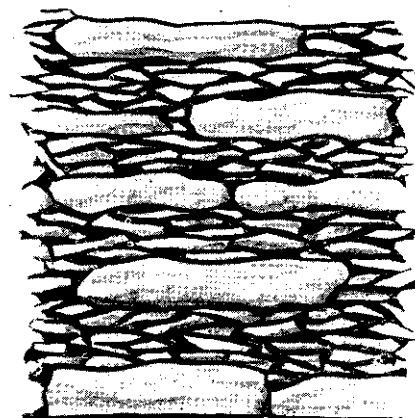
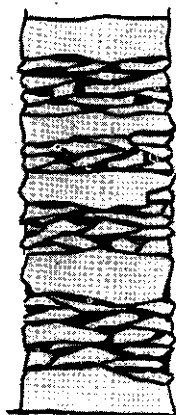
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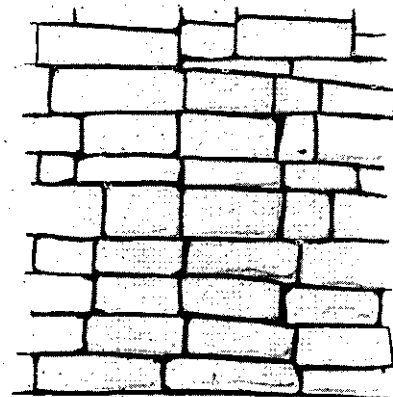
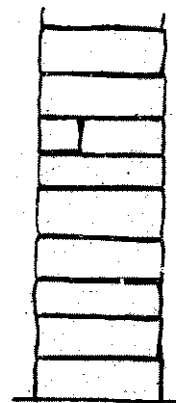
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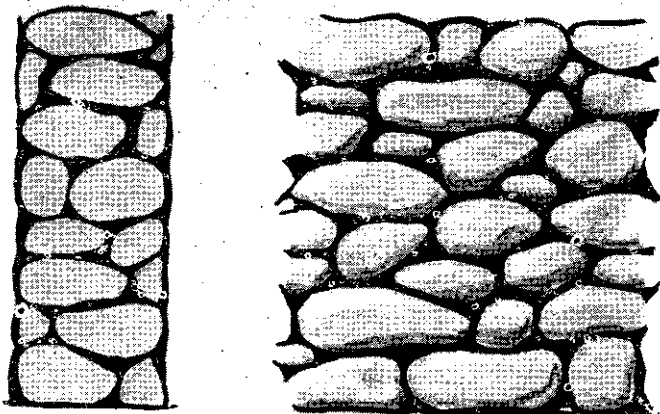
prehistoric dogs by F. H. H. Roberts, Jr., of the Bureau of American Ethnology, son of Dr. F. H. H. Roberts, former president of the Normal University at Las Vegas, N. M., who has just returned from an archaeological expedition to Chaco Canyon, New Mexico. The dogs appear to have been buried with ceremony by the Indians, said Roberts, in discussing his expedition. Whether the dry bones were painted red to fool the dog spirits into thinking there was good meat on the bones can only be conjectured. The dogs belonged to Indians of the last days of the basket-maker civilization that flourished in the southwest many centuries before the Pueblos, he said. Very ancient tribes are known as the basket makers, because they wove all their vessels and containers. In the course of centuries pottery making was learned.



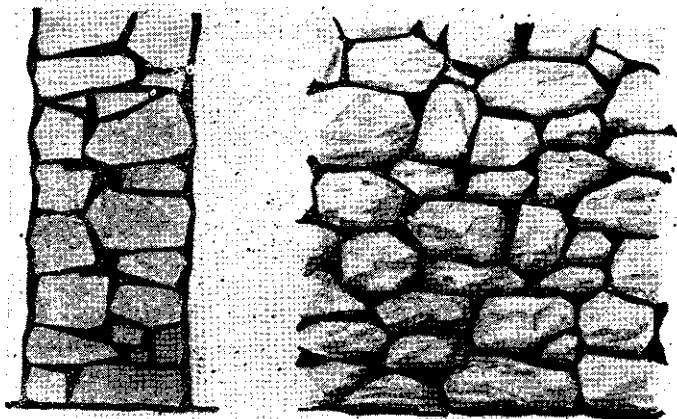
1 c. Slabs and Spalls



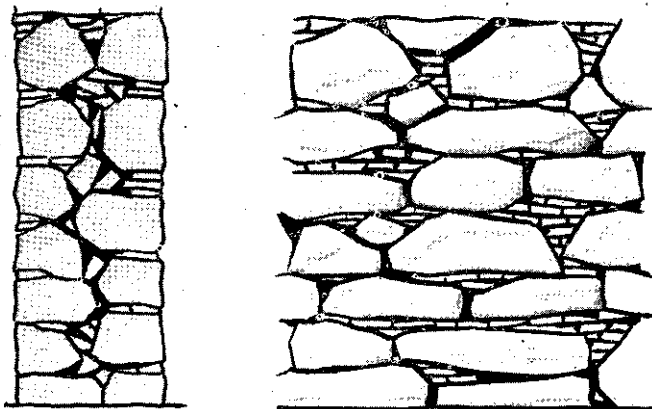
1 d. Rectangular Blocks



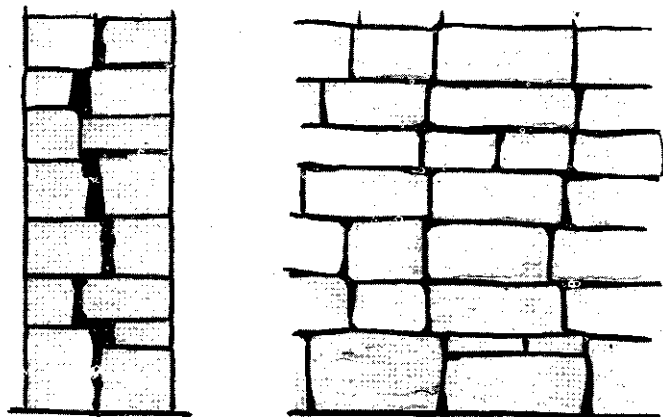
2 a. Double Thickness Boulder Rubble



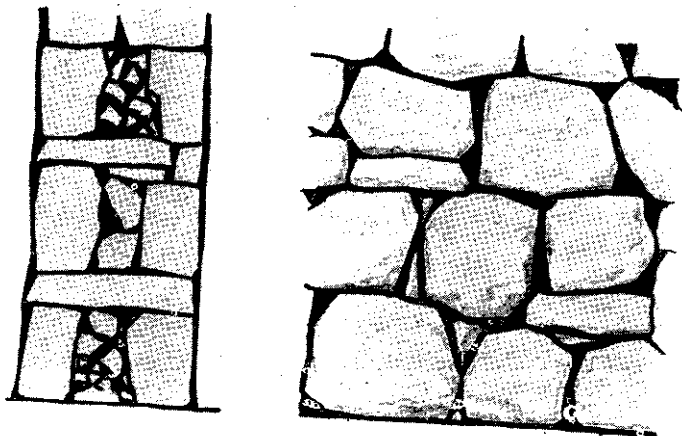
2 b. Double Thickness Quarried Rubble



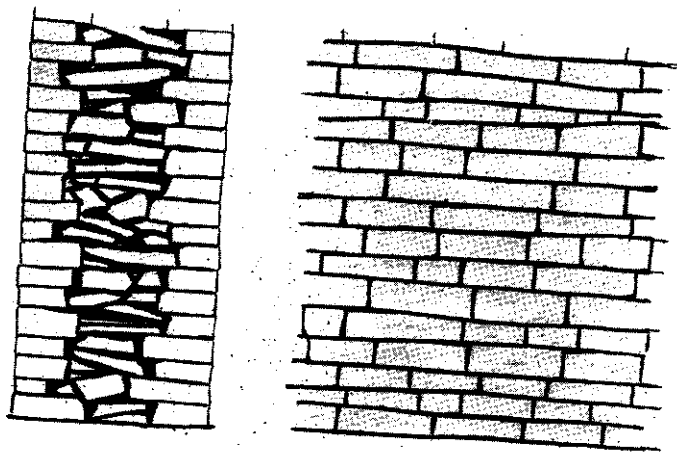
2 c. Double Thickness Quarried or Weathered Rubble and Flat Spalls



2 d. Double Thickness Rectangular Blocks



3 a. Core between Two Faces of Upright Slabs



3 b. Core between Two Faces of Flat Slabs

Definite evidence of the Indians who lived at the time when the change from baskets to pottery was made was discovered by Roberts. Fifteen skeletons were found in two layers of earth. The burials in the lower level had no baskets or containers for food, such as have been found in similar burials. The baskets here had evidently fallen apart and disintegrated from exposure before time covered them with earth. But in the layer of earth above them were bodies accompanied by crude clay jars and bowls. These skeletons of the transition period are of great interest to ethnologists who are studying the types of Indians who inhabited America in the day before the time of Christ. Complete pieces of four bowls which could be patched together, even after so many centuries, were found by Roberts, as well as quantities of fragments of the rough, coarse clay containers made by the first artisans of the region who tried the potter's trade.—*Science Service*.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL RICHES OF MEXICO

Mexico is archaeologically perhaps the richest country in the world, for within its boundaries have been found to date 1,178 sites where relics of one or another sort of prehistoric civilizations exist, reports Director Jose Reygadas Vertiz of the department of archaeology of the Mexican Ministry of Education. Seventy-nine of these sites were added this year and the number is constantly growing, as further explorations are made. Most of the sites are found by federal inspectors on their expeditions, but private individuals often report discoveries. These are then officially checked up. A map is now being prepared in the department of archaeology which will show all the sites now known, and other information pertaining to them. Because of the large number of these