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**COMMENTS:** Brief notes about the U. S. soldiers who left inscriptions on the walls behind Chetro Ketl during the mid 1800s.

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## CHACO INSCRIPTIONS

(Contributed)

IT seems that the ancient inhabitants of the Chaco were not only the ones to use the canyon walls for inscription purposes. Among the numerous Indian pictographs found on the cliff behind Chetro Ketl are engraved the names of several soldiers of the United States Army who passed through the Chaco back in the days when it really took a detachment of the army to go into the Navajo Country and come out with a whole skin.

Two of these inscriptions are particularly well preserved. One is by a Thomas O'Connor, the other by a Charles Behler. O'Conner's inscription is shown in the picture. It reads:

1858  
T. O'Conner  
C. E., R. M. R.

The records of the War Department in Washington, D. C., show that Thomas O'Conner, who was born in Cork, Ireland, and was by occupation a ship carpenter, enlisted July 7, 1856, at New York, New York; was assigned to Company E, Mounted Riflemen, and was honorably discharged July 7, 1861, while his company was enroute to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He was a private.

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PAUL A. F. WALTER, *Editor.*

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The records also show that Charles Behler, who was born in Germany and was by occupation a butcher, enlisted July 3, 1855, at San Antonio, Texas; was assigned to Company E, Mounted Riflemen, and was honorably discharged July 3, 1860, at Fort Union, New Mexico. He was a private.

Company E, Mounted Riflemen, subsequently became Company F, 3rd United States Cavalry. It was stationed on October 31, 1858, at Camp on Rio Chaco, New Mexico, and was commanded by Captain Thomas Duncan. The record of events of the company shows that it marched from Fort Garland, N. M., for Cantonment Burguin, on October 3, 1858; marched from Cantonment Burguin, October 10, 1858, for the Navajo country. A detachment of ten men of the company under Sergeant Duffin left on October 13, in pursuit of a party of five Navajo Indians; overtook them the same evening at sunset, fifty miles away; killed one of the Indians, and recovered eleven head of stolen cattle. The records do not show that Behler and O'Conner were members of this detachment but they are shown present with the company on October 3, 1858.

## NIMAN KATCINA DANCE AT WALPI

*By* HESTER JONES

QUITE away from the rest of the world is the Navajo country. As we drive from Winslow, Arizona, towards Keam's Canyon and the Hopi mesas, the horizon rises over the sloping roadside, suddenly revealing a sky-line of blue terraced rectangles in a thin haze of mysterious distance. Again the roadside rolls up and the vision is gone. But looking back, in a still filmier haze, we see a pile of pale blue that we recognize as the San Francisco Peaks. Sheep and goats cross our course with bells aclang, accom-

panied by shepherd and shepherdess, mounted or not, and a few running jack rabbits and prairie dogs are almost the only interruption in our joggy ride between wide sage borders. Occasional visits with traders break in on our spell of aloneness. One trader has set his stone structure at the foot of a large, round, green hill.

After lunch at Keam's Canyon Indian School, we ride to where the Hopi mesas enter the foreground, and small corn fields add a new note to our view. Eventually the road climbs the first mesa and we follow it into the midst of the stone houses of the Hopi pueblos. Two other Hopi-town mesas can be seen beyond. We walk through two small pueblos and arrive in Walpi just in time to see the departing dancers in the Niman katecina mask descend the road on the mesa edge, wearing brilliantly colored, carved head boards made taller by eagle feathers. In a shady L-corner of the rugged stone walls we seat ourselves on the ground to wait for the dancers to return.

After having seen a large number of Indian dances one learns that an anxious, conscious study of detail as to costume and intricacies of what can be learned of the meaning is properly a matter for the ethnologist who has come not so much just to see and enjoy the dance as to make a report on his observations. Though we made no effort to puzzle over these details, we found, even so, that the simplicity and uniformity of the effective costumes left a rather accurate picture. A mask of painted wood and feathers covered the head. The flat but rounded wooden face was indicated by a vertical line through the center with a different color at each side. Projecting from it on the sides and above was a board about an inch thick, which formed three steps from side to center top. This was painted turquoise blue and at each corner fluttered downy white feathers. This piece was set towards the front of the head mask and at the back rose a single,