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# E l P a l a c i o

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## ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUMMER FIELD SESSIONS AND EXCAVATIONS OF THE SCHOOL OF AMERICAN RESEARCH AND MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO

### *Chetro Ketl, Chaco Canyon.*

SIXTY miles north of Thoreau, New Mexico, in Chaco Canyon, San Juan County, there is the most important group of prehistoric ruins in North America, north of the Valley of Mexico. More than a decade ago, the School of American Research of the Archaeological Institute of America, in conjunction with the Museum of New Mexico, began there a series of excavations, centering in the important ruin of Chetro Ketl. With several interruptions this work has gone forward, until at this time the place has become a focal center for American archaeologists. Although many years of work have been done upon this ruin, it is so vast in extent and complicated in its problems, that much remains to be done. Excavations with profit to science in helping to solve the riddle of America before the coming of the White Man, may be conducted at this site for another decade. Each year has brought to the surface new and surprising results, adding here and there a missing chapter in the history of the pre-Columbian Indians, as well as valuable museum collections. Such material, as it should be, is kept in New Mexico, where it may be seen and studied in the future.

Most spectacular among the structures of the Chaco Canyon region is the Great Bowl, sometimes called a "Sun Temple," at the Chetro Ketl ruin. A vast religious sanc-

tuary, whose true purpose and function are gradually being learned through efforts of excavators, it may prove the key to many of the unanswered questions regarding the customs, religion, and social structure of the marvelous race of people who were the true natives of the State.

### *Climatological Investigations.*

Deepest of all the mysteries of the ancient Southwest is that of the disappearance of great populations who had achieved high levels of material and spiritual culture hundreds of years before White men came to America. At one time the desert waste of the Chaco Canyon, now inhabited only by a handful of Navajo Indians and traders, was the permanent home of thousands of prosperous Indians. Obviously, the area could not always have been a desert as it now is. There are too many convincing proofs of large-scale agricultural operations for such a conclusion. Where did these early city-builders obtain the necessary water? To answer this question has led to a new line of research which holds much promise in meeting some of the present day problems of the arid portions of the state.

With the co-operation of various agencies, the School of American Research and Museum of New Mexico have undertaken a thorough study of climatic conditions in the Chaco, including measurements of precipitation, surface flow in the Chaco drainage, and underground flow in the seemingly dry arroyos. It is not beyond possibilities that these studies will reveal water resources capable of recla-

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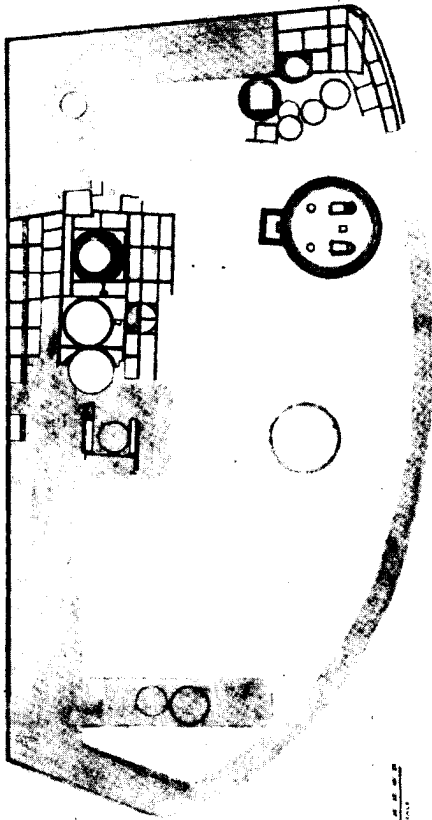
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PAUL A. F. WALTER, *Editor.*

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CHETRO KETL



SHOWING EXCAVATED PORTIONS, AND PARTS REMAINING TO BE EXCAVATED

mation at low cost, which again will make possible, at least to a limited extent, some of the agricultural production which must at one time have been in that region.

The Chaco drainage is vast in extent, and preliminary measurements of underground and surface flows in flood seasons, indicate that ample water is there, though often not evident, to make possible a type of reclamation that has not previously been dreamed of. Since the Chaco region is typical of many of the desert portions of the state, it may well prove that the investigations there will be of inestimable value to the whole semi-arid Southwest.

### *Chaco Research Center.*

Few places in America are better known to the scientific world than Chaco Canyon. The research center for anthropologists, archaeologists, ethnologists, and those engaged in related studies, attracts each year scholars and visitors not only from many states, but from the centers of learning in foreign countries as well.

As in the past, it is planned to have this research center open during the summer months this year, with excavations going on throughout the season. Adequate facilities for study and laboratory work will be provided for qualified scholars in many fields who are expected to carry on their studies there. University students, both from this state and from other states, from California to the Atlantic seaboard, come each year for seminar and study sessions, and to observe the excavations in progress.

It is worthy of note that, in the past few years, since the State has made the Chaco Canyon ruins accessible for automobile travelers, there has been a steady increase of tourists and sightseers to the ruins. This increase should continue with the large amount of publicity which the ruins and excavations are given throughout the scientific world and in travel publications. The United States government maintains a National Monument at Pueblo Bo-



TYPICAL VIEW IN CHACO CANYON

nito, adjoining the Chetro Ketl ruin, and is working hand in hand to bring to this remarkable area its due amount of fame and recognition, so that one day it will rank with the largest of tourist attractions in America. Certainly, nowhere else has New Mexico, or any state, an attraction of greater potential interest to the world—for here, up to eight hundred years ago were a dozen cities of stone, of such fine architecture and workmanship that today their walls still stand against desert storms to a height of four stories.



BATTLESHIP ROCK CAMP, JEMEZ CANYON