

BASKET MAKER III SITES
NEAR DURANGO, COLORADO

BY
ROY L. CARLSON

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE IN ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO MUSEUM

WITH

INTRODUCTION TO
THE EARL MORRIS PAPERS

BY
JOE BEN WHEAT

CURATOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO MUSEUM

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO PRESS
Series in Anthropology, No. 8
The Earl Morris Papers, No. 1

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO PRESS
BOULDER, COLORADO, JUNE, 1963

Price \$3.50

GN
2
C6
mo. 8
c. 3

BASKET MAKER III SITES
NEAR DURANGO, COLORADO

BY
ROY L. CARLSON

Research Associate in Anthropology
University of Colorado Museum

INTRODUCTION TO
THE EARL MORRIS PAPERS

BY
JOE BEN WHEAT

Director of Anthropology
University of Colorado Museum

University of Colorado Press
Series in Anthropology, No. 3
The Earl Morris Papers, No. 1

University of Colorado Press
Boulder, Colorado, 1971
Price \$1.50

INTRODUCTION TO THE EARL MORRIS PAPERS

For nearly half a century Earl H. Morris was one of the nation's leading archaeologists. He shared in, and was instrumental to, the development of both Middle American and Southwestern archaeology. But it was the Southwest that really absorbed Morris's interest and love, and to the Southwest he returned again and again. Many of the basic concepts of Southwestern Archaeology owe their existence or development to him. (Morris 1917, 1919a, 1921a, 1927, 1936.)

Morris was a man of many-faced genius; yet, he remained, all his life, dedicated to field work. He loved to be actively, physically engaged in the process of baring our archaeological heritage of the encumbering earth of the past.

Earl Morris dug out his first pottery vessel when he was three years old. It is perhaps characteristic that this vessel, a dipper with a broken handle, remained in Morris's collection until his death. His childhood and youth were spent at Farmington, New Mexico, where he was rarely out of sight of some prehistoric ruin. The interest fostered by his parents became both an avocation and a profession. (Morris, n. d., Introduction to Catalogue of E. H. Morris Collection.)

The year 1913 saw the beginning of Morris's long and fruitful association with the University of Colorado Museum. In this year and the next, he excavated a series of sites in Southwestern Colorado: Lion and Johnson canyons, ruins on the Salt Canyon-Grass Canyon Divide, Red Mesa, Red Horse Gulch, and Long Hollow (Morris 1919b) as well as a site near Aztec Ruin (Morris 1915), and another near Farmington, New Mexico.

In 1915 Morris began his long series of excavations in the ruins of the La Plata district. During a part of each field season of 1916, 1922, 1925, 1927, 1929, and 1930, he returned to the La Plata. Most of this work was financed by the Carnegie Institution and the collections deposited in the University of Colorado Museum. These investigations culminated in the magnificent La Plata Report (Morris 1939) published by Carnegie Institution.

Morris was never one to be content with one field season a year. In addition to beginning the La Plata work in 1915, he also carried out extensive excavations in the Gobernador area and less intensive ones in the Upper Rio Grande Valley. Reports have never been published.

During World War I and the immediately following years, Morris was directing the excavations of the vast Aztec Ruin for the American Museum of Natural History. Part of this work has been published (Morris 1919b, 1921b, 1924, 1928), but much remains to be done.

In 1924, Morris, on leave from the Carnegie Institution, whose staff he had then joined, excavated several sites in Canyon del Muerto for the University of Colorado Museum. The following year, again on leave, Morris excavated in a series of sites along the Shiprock-Gallup highway for the Museum. He had previously excavated in this area for the American Museum. None of these excavations have been reported in detail, although brief and passing use has been made of the data (Morris 1938, 1939, 1941; Morris and Burgh 1941).

In 1926 Morris dug in the Mimbres Valley where he salvaged material from seven Classic Mimbres ruins; in 1928 he dug a number of burials at the late prehistoric Hopi site of Kawaikuh. Published reports were never made on either of these excavations.

In 1931 Morris was instrumental in having his long-time field foreman, Oscar Tatman, carry on excavations at a large ruin near Solomonsville, Arizona. Like several others, the results of this excavation were never published.

When the long task of writing the La Plata Report was finished, Morris again returned to the field for the Carnegie Institution, this time to excavate the Basket Maker II and III sites near Durango, Colorado. The earlier sites have been published (Morris and Burgh 1954), but a report on the later sites was never completed.

When Morris wrote or spoke about archaeology, it was in polished, perfectionist phrases. He felt the weight and responsibility of his utterances. Writing was to Morris as it is to most of us, a difficult thing to buckle down to, for inevitably there was the lure of the trowel and shovel. Nevertheless, when Earl Morris died suddenly on June 24, 1956, he left a monumental legacy of published reports. He also left an extensive legacy of collections, which have not been analyzed and described, in various museums in the United States. Some of Morris's earliest field work was carried out for the then infant University of Colorado Museum. Through the years, and through various circumstances, Morris's work continued to embellish these collections. The University of Colorado Museum became the repository for most of the material from work in the Southwest carried out by Morris for the Carnegie Institution of Washington. Not only did these collections enrich the holdings of the Museum, but, being gathered together in one place, they afforded a vast reservoir of data pertinent to Southwestern Archaeology. It has long been our desire to make this resource available to the archaeological public.

Most museums which have been in operation for any considerable period of time have accumulated collections which have never been published upon in any complete or satisfactory fashion. Some of these inevitably have no associative data; but many major collections, made by competent archae-

ologists and fully documented, remain buried because of this lack of publication. Such collections often are known to a few archaeologists by reputation, even by footnote or brief-reference type of publication; but by and large, they remain just as buried and unknown as if they had never been excavated. If the not inconsiderable cost of excavation, storage, and curation is ever to be justified, then these collections must be assiduously re-excavated from the museums and placed on record. From the point of view of knowledge, this is even more important, for much of this material could not be duplicated today. Furthermore, so long as they remain buried in the obscurity of museum storage, we, as archaeologists, are denied knowledge which may be necessary to the adequate solution of many of the problems of prehistory.

It is, of course, true that many of the questions we like to ask of our excavations and collections today cannot be answered from the collections and records made in earlier days. But many can, and it is no real excuse to say that publication of these older materials is not justified on this basis. In fact, such publication must often eliminate some questions, and in any event will help to focus our contemporary inquiries and to add breadth to the answers we reach.

Many museums dream of the day when an adequately prepared graduate student will come along and be induced to undertake the preparation of a report on one of these lost excavations. Occasionally one does, and such a report as Haury's *Los Muertos* appears; but for every satisfactory report there are masses of material that are not, and perhaps never will be, prepared for publication if we must wait for that graduate student. Most museum curators cannot, or do not, take on the responsibility of writing reports on these collections. For one thing, most have their hands full with other duties, even if they were competent to undertake the necessary analysis and research to bring to fruition such long-fallow projects.

Thus, for inertia and lack of time, of funds, or of personnel and that elusive graduate student, most lost and buried collections remain lost and buried.

At the University of Colorado Museum we had reluctantly reached the conclusion that adequate reporting of the Museum's extensive unpublished Earl H. Morris collections probably could not be achieved within the normal course of our affairs; hence, we began to search for some way to implement our desire to publish on the collections in our custody. At this point, the opportunity arose to secure the services of Earl Morris's daughter, Dr. Elizabeth Ann Morris Gell, who for the past two years has been working on the important Morris collections from the Red Rock District of northeastern Arizona, provided we could finance the project. For this we turned to the National Science Foundation, which agreed to support our proposal. Elizabeth Morris Gell was, at the last moment, forced to withdraw from the project. To fill the

vacancy thus created, we were fortunate, indeed, to secure the services of Dr. Roy L. Carlson.

Anyone who has attempted to produce a report based on someone else's field work and records will recognize the difficulties under which Dr. Carlson has worked. Morris was a brilliant field worker, gifted with a photographic memory. Many of his field notes and records are full and complete, but in others Morris depended, to a greater extent than most of us, on his memory to fill in details. This memory is now gone. Carlson has been compelled to immerse himself in Morris's personality as a field worker in order to bring to completion the reports left in various stages of preparation. That he has been able to do this is a tribute to his competence as well as to his perseverance.

This report is the first of a series dealing with the previously unpublished Morris materials in the University of Colorado Museum. Others will follow as they are completed and find a place in the publication program of the University of Colorado Studies in Anthropology.

We are grateful to the National Science Foundation and to its review board for seeing the value of undertaking the resurrection of these valuable but long-buried materials. We hope that this work will prove a stimulus to other work of a similar kind, and that in the not too distant future other institutions will find some way of placing in the scientific record the long-unreported collections in their custody.

JOE BEN WHEAT

Curator of Anthropology

University of Colorado Museum

REFERENCES

MORRIS, EARL H.

- 1915 "The Excavation of a Small Ruin near Aztec, San Juan County, New Mexico." *American Anthropologist*, n.s., 17, No. 4: 666-684. Lancaster, Pa.
- 1917 "The Place of Coiled Ware in Southwestern Pottery." *American Anthropologist*, n.s. 19, No. 1: 24-29. Lancaster, Pa.
- 1919a "Preliminary Account of the Antiquities of the Region between the Mancos and La Plata Rivers in Southwestern Colorado." *Thirty-Third Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*. pp. 155-206. Washington, D. C.
- 1919b "The Aztec Ruin." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 26, part 1. New York.
- 1921a "Chronology of the San Juan Area." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 7: 18-22.
- 1921b "The House of the Great Kiva at the Aztec Ruin." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 26, part 2. New York.
- 1924 "Burials at the Aztec Ruin: the Aztec Ruin Annex." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 26, parts 3 and 4. New York.

- 1927 "The Beginning of Pottery Making in the San Juan Area, Unfired Protoypes and the Wares of the Earliest Ceramic Period." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 28, part 2. New York.
- 1928 "Notes on Excavations in the Aztec Ruin." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 26, part 5. New York.
- 1936 "Archaeological Background of Dates in Early Arizona Chronology." *Tree-Ring Bulletin*, 2, No. 4: 34-36. Tucson.
- 1938 "Mummy Cave." *Natural History*, 42: 127-138. New York.
- 1939 "Archaeological Studies in the La Plata District." *Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 519*. Washington, D. C.
- 1941 "Prayer Sticks in Walls of Mummy Cave Tower, Canyon del Muerto." *American Antiquity*, 6, No. 3: 227-230. Menasha.

MORRIS, EARL H. AND ROBERT F. BURGH

- 1941 "Anasazi Basketry — Basket Maker II through Pueblo III." *Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 533*. Washington, D. C.
- 1954 "Basket Maker II Sites near Durango, Colorado." *Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 604*. Washington, D. C.

1917 "The Beginning of History Making in the San Juan Area, United Provinces and the West of the English Colonial Period," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 22, part 2, New York.

1925 "Notes on Excavations in the Aztec Ruins," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 22, part 2, New York.

25 "Archaeological Background of Data in Early Aztec Chronology," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 22, part 2, New York.

1928 "Mummy Cave," *Natural History*, 43, 127-128, New York.

1930 "Archaeological Studies in the La Plata District," *Cronica de Investigaciones Arqueológicas del Departamento de Cochabamba*, 1, 1-10, Cochabamba.

1931 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 227-230, Montevideo.

1932 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 231-232, Montevideo.

1933 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 233-234, Montevideo.

1934 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 235-236, Montevideo.

1935 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 237-238, Montevideo.

1936 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 239-240, Montevideo.

1937 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 241-242, Montevideo.

1938 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 243-244, Montevideo.

1939 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 245-246, Montevideo.

1940 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 247-248, Montevideo.

1941 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 249-250, Montevideo.

1942 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 251-252, Montevideo.

1943 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 253-254, Montevideo.

1944 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 255-256, Montevideo.

1945 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 257-258, Montevideo.

1946 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 259-260, Montevideo.

1947 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 261-262, Montevideo.

1948 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 263-264, Montevideo.

1949 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 265-266, Montevideo.

1950 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 267-268, Montevideo.

1951 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 269-270, Montevideo.

1952 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 271-272, Montevideo.

1953 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 273-274, Montevideo.

1954 "The Site in Wala of Mummy Cave Tower, Cochabamba," *América Indígena*, 1, No. 2, 275-276, Montevideo.